

Table 6.1 Typical moves in thesis Introductions

Move 1	<p><i>Establishing a research territory</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a by showing that the general research area is important, central, interesting, problematic, or relevant in some way (optional) b by providing background information about the topic (optional) c by introducing and reviewing items of previous research in the area (obligatory) d by defining terms (optional)
Move 2	<p><i>Establishing a niche</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a by indicating a gap in the previous research, raising a question about it, or extending previous knowledge in some way (obligatory) b by identifying a problem/need (optional)
Move 3	<p><i>Occupying the niche</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a by outlining purposes/aims, or stating the nature of the present research or research questions/hypotheses (obligatory) b by announcing principal findings/stating value of research (optional) c by indicating the structure of the thesis and providing mini-synopses (previews) of each subsequent chapter (obligatory) d by outlining the theoretical position (optional) e by describing the methods used in the study (optional)

Source: based on Swales and Feak 1994: 175 and Bunton 2002: 67

- In these areas, reducing groundwater recharge is an *important* step in reducing land degradation caused by salinity (Lewis 2000: 1).
- The Magellanic Clouds provide a *unique* environment in which to study *many interesting* and astrophysically *challenging* problems (Amy 2000: 1).
- Speech has arguably been the *most important* form of human communication since languages were first conceived (Epps 2000: 1).
- The modeling of fluid flows is of *great interest* to Engineers and Scientists alike, with many engineering problems and issues of scientific interest depending upon complex flow phenomena (Norris 2000: 1).
- Indeed, there appeared to be a story of female agitation for Aboriginal rights in twentieth century Australia that *had largely gone unnoticed up to that point*, and in the context of contemporary feminist politics *was positively denied* (Holland 1998: 1).
- Although it became accepted that episodic recharge might be a factor in the agricultural areas of Western Australia (e.g. Nulsen 1993), *no systematic analyses* of where and when it occurred, and how important it was in the overall picture of groundwater recharge and salinity were carried out (Lewis 2000: 6).
- These observations point to the proposition that in order to recognize the mismatches and to begin to understand the consequences of discontinuities, *there is a need to increase* research knowledge of community social practices and interactions with community literacies (White-Davison 1999: 2).
- *It is important to take issue with* his criticism of the role of structuralism and post-structuralism (Wakeling 1998: 5).

The lists below, from Swales and Feak (1994: 187–189), contain examples of typical 'gap statement' words and phrases which may be useful for the non-native English speaker.

Verbs

disregard	neglect to consider
fail to consider	overestimate
ignore	overlook
is limited to	suffer from
misinterpret	underestimate

Adjectives

controversial	questionable
incomplete	unconvincing
inconclusive	unsatisfactory
misguided	

Noun phrase

Little information/attention/work/data/research
 Few studies/investigations/researchers/attempts
 No studies/data/calculations
 None of these studies/findings/calculations

Other forms

However
 It remains unclear
 It would be of interest to