



## Linguistic Realizations and Rhetorical Functions of Hype in Research Article Introductions of Applied Linguistics

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### Abstract

Hype is increasingly recognized as a key linguistic and rhetorical tool for promotion in research articles (RAs). This study aims to investigate the use of hype in the introduction sections of RAs. Using a corpus of 90 introductions in the field of applied linguistics, the research explores the phenomenon of hype, focusing on its linguistic realizations, target categories, and specific rhetorical functions across the three moves of this part-genre. The analysis reveals that hype is expressed through various words and phrases, with a total of 90 distinct hyping items identified. Most of these expressions are used to strongly embellish and promote different aspects of the author's current research. Among the nine target categories identified, the specific research topic, broad research area, real-world issue, and research primacy were frequently hyped. The analysis also shows that the rhetorical functions of hype differ across the three moves, with each function realized through distinct types and patterns of linguistic resources. Based on these findings, the study offers pedagogical implications for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instruction.

## INTRODUCTION

For the last few decades, the situation of academic publishing has significantly changed as a consequence of marketization and attention economy (Fairclough, 1993; Hyland, 2023). Drawing on Franck's (2016) claim that attention can function as capital or currency when its qualitative value is changed into quantifiable and measurable units, Hyland (2023) described the current competitive nature of publication and citation as driven by attention economy. That is, propelled by metrics-driven incentives, career advancement, and international recognition, scholars are currently under constant pressure to gain the attention of reviewers, readers, and funders. In fact, academic community has long been recognized as a highly competitive enterprise, which gave rise to the phenomenon of what Fairclough (1993), about 30 years ago, termed the "marketization" of academia. Against this backdrop, journals, especially high-impact international journals, seek to establish themselves as competitive commercial products via publishing important research articles (RAs) of the field (Carter, 2016) and in turn, on the researchers' part, publishing in such credible journals has become crucial for their visibility in the

academic community (Deng et al., 2024). To participate in this fierce competition for publicity, researchers strive to make a variety of rhetorical or linguistic choices to demonstrate the perceived value of their research. One way of realizing such an objective is to use promotional resources in their RAs.

As a persuasive rhetorical practice, the use of promotional resources has received considerable scholarly attention. Promotion can take different forms as it can be “realized through those linguistic choices that seek to change or affect the opinions or behaviors of an audience” (Martin & Perez, 2014, p. 1). The literature suggests that it can be realized through linguistic devices such as boosters and attitude markers embedded in stance framework (e.g., Hyland, 2005), lexicogrammatical features such as self-reference and self-citation (e.g., Afros & Schryer, 2009; Hyland, 2000), value-laden vocabulary (Fraiser & Martin, 2009), quasi advertising discourse (Lindeberg, 2004), positive words (e.g., Cao et al., 2020; Vinkers et al., 2015), or hypes (e.g., Hyland & Jiang, 2021a, 2021b; Li et al., 2025; Millar et al., 2019, 2020). Fraiser and Martin (2009), for example, investigated the use of 21 pre-selected positive adjectives (e.g., *pivotal*, *crucial*, *critical*, *vital*, *unique*, *important*, *innovative*, *novel*, *first*, etc.) which attribute status or significance to an otherwise neutral claim in clinical RAs published between 1985 and 2005. Their study found a significant increase in what they call “value-laden vocabulary” (p. 2) over the 20-year time span. A similar pattern was identified in medical RAs with the frequency of 25 positive-sounding words such as *novel*, *amazing*, *innovative*, and *unprecedented* increasing almost nine-fold in the abstracts of RAs published between 1974 and 2014 (Vinkers et al., 2015). In interpreting these findings, they implied that the increasing use of such adjectives may undermine the objective nature of the scientific research. At the same time, Fraiser and Martin (2009) argued that the shift towards the hyperbolic interpretation of data from the more objective representation of them, raises important questions about the evolution of the scientific RA itself and thus must be examined in conjunction with changing attitudes within the community regarding the writing of RAs. In relation to the changing attitude towards the RA writing, Hyland (2005) also noted that successful RA authors not only present factual information of their research but also skillfully manipulate a variety of rhetorical and linguistic features to promote their work.

In fact, it has been increasingly recognized that, within conventions, authors strive to promote their research and that they employ at their disposal various rhetorical and linguistic resources to do so. For example, certain rhetorical structures that are considered standard, if not obligatory, are claimed to be inherently promotional in nature. Genre-based approaches (e.g. Swales, 1990, 2004) have documented how authors tend to follow an established pattern of three rhetorical moves to create a research space (CARS). According to Swales’ CARS model, authors first tend to situate their research and highlight the importance or relevance of the topic (Move 1: Establishing the Territory), then justify the need for the research by outlining a knowledge gap (Move 2: Establishing a Niche), and finally present the purpose of their study, highlighting primary findings and value of the research (Move 3: Occupying the Niche). Wang and Yang (2015) and Martin and Perez (2014) point out that such structures inherently have a promotional function in that they allow authors to foreground the significance of their research topic and the contribution of their research. Besides such rhetorical resources for promotion, authors also use a range of linguistic or metadiscourse resources to express stance towards propositions or various aspects of their research (Hyland, 2005; Hyland & Jiang, 2021b). For example, boosters (e.g. *clearly*, *obviously*, *demonstrate*) enable authors to express certainty or strong conviction while attitude markers (e.g. *important*, *promising*, *interestingly*) convey shared attitudes and values, which perform a persuasive function by expressing assumed agreement. Similarly, authors’ announcing their presence with self-reference is often linked to gaining accreditation for their claims (Harwood, 2005), and self-citation is seen as foregrounding their credentials (Hyland, 2023).

While such promotional resources and strategies have become commonplace, the present study is more specifically concerned with the latest phenomenon called “hype” which has recently attracted substantial attention from English for Academic Purposes (EAP) researchers and practitioners. Hype, defined as “hyperbolic and/or subjective language that authors use to glamorize, promote, embellish and/or exaggerate aspects of their research” (Millar et al., 2019, p. 141), is claimed to be realized by means of words and expressions which impose subjective value on claims to embellish various aspects of the present research. The effect of such devices can be seen if the boldface items from the following examples extracted from the corpus of the present study are removed or replaced by more neutral words:

- (1) **Notably**, while corpora and co-occurrence patterns can be used to identify existing collocations, new word pairs will not be collocates for learners encountering them for the first time.
- (2) Despite the **significant** contribution of this body of research, researchers have argued that our understanding of L2 fluency is still limited.

As an expansion of the earlier studies on the use of positive words in RAs (e.g., Fraiser & Martin, 2009; Vinkers et al., 2015), a wider framework relevant to investigating the authors’ promotional language in RAs is recent work examining authors’ use of such hyperbolic language. Millar et al.’s (2019) corpus-based study of one particular type of medical RAs

(Randomized Control Trials) was the first attempt to conceptualize the term and investigate the use of hype in RAs. Their analysis of the corpus indicated high frequency occurrences of hype and revealed that hype items were mostly targeted at such aspects as the broad research area, specific topic, authors' prior research, research methods, research outcome, research primacy, and conclusion. A follow-up study of interviews with seven authors, Millar et al. (2020) further revealed that the motivation for the use of hype words derived from the pressures felt by the authors to make their work more visible. The authors' desire to gain attention for their work was also reported in Hyland and Jiang (2021a)'s analysis of Covid-19 RAs where authors were found to use hype words far more extensively compared to those in a related corpus of non-Covid RAs, stressing the prospective benefits of their research. Despite the substantial attention paid to the role of hype in medical and biology RAs, however, few studies have attempted to investigate the use of hype in other fields of study, with notable exceptions of Hyland and Jiang (2021b) and Li et al. (2025).

Hyland and Jiang (2021b) explored hype in RAs in a wider range of disciplines (i.e., applied linguistics, biology, electrical engineering, and sociology) and found that the use of hype increased by 19% over the last 50 years, with hypes showing the most prominent rise in the fields of electrical engineering and biology. Hyland and Jiang (2021b) interpreted this finding as indicating an authorial repositioning in response to the changing circumstances of institutional evaluation and metrics-driven career trajectories prevalent in all fields of academic communities. In another recent study, Li et al. (2025) investigated hypes as promotional resources in realizing various moves and steps of RA abstracts in the field of sociology, revealing the sociologists' increasing preference for using hypes to promote research in recent two decades. Their analysis also indicates that the prevalent use of hype is associated with the complex rhetorical move structure to strengthen the promotion of various aspects of the research in this part-genre of abstracts, calling for further studies establishing the link between hyperbolic resources and move structure in other part-genres of RAs.

The introduction section, a part-genre of RAs the present study aims to investigate, has been recognized as the key place where promotional discourse is employed "since this section generally entails a great deal of complexity in terms of rhetorical options, among them the possibility of including promotional elements" (Martin & Perez, 2014, p. 2). This study therefore focuses on introduction as it is in this part-genre that authors project themselves for the first time, that they pave the way for readers to have a clearer picture of the rest of a research paper by introducing the broad research area and the specific topic under investigation, by indicating possible existing gaps, or by stating the value and contribution of the study. Thus the authors would have abundant opportunities to promote various aspects of their research in this part-genre (Na, 2023; Wu, 2025).

The purpose of the study is to investigate how authors in the field of applied linguistics use hyping resources in RA introductions to publicize their work. Specifically, the study will focus on what linguistic items of hype and target areas are used in this part-genre and what rhetorical functions are realized with such hyping items and targets across the three communicative moves of RA introductions. While the existing studies on hype (Hyland & Jiang, 2021a, 2021b; Millar et al., 2019, 2020) tended to confine their analysis primarily to linguistic realizations and target areas of hype in entire RAs, and thus were not specifically concerned with the rhetorical functions of hype realized across the three moves in the introduction section, this study attempts to fill this gap. Drawing up a modified framework of hype words and targets from Millar et al. (2019) and expanding the existing framework by explicating the categories of specific rhetorical functions realized through such words and targets, this study will attempt to conduct a more fine-grained analysis of rhetorical functions of hype in this part-genre of RAs. Specifically, this study seeks to address the following research questions:

- (1) What linguistic items of hype are used in the introduction section of RAs?
- (2) What aspects of research are hyped in the introduction section of RAs?
- (3) What rhetorical functions are realized by using hyping items and targets across the three moves of the introduction?

It is hoped that this study will contribute to the recent literature on hype by proposing a comprehensive move-based taxonomy of rhetorical functions and linguistic realizations of hype in RA introductions and demonstrating the predominance of hype for centrality claims and value arguments in Move 1 and Move 3. It is also hoped that this study will provide empirically grounded pedagogical implications for EAP instruction.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Conceptualization of Hype

Hype is a recent phenomenon that has attracted great attention from researchers, initially in the field of medicine and clinical research, and more recently in other disciplines. Since the present study addresses the phenomenon of hype in RA

introductions, the original conceptualization and later developments of the term will be presented.

The conceptualization of the phenomenon Millar et al. (2019) first termed as hype was made, drawing on a number of insights from previous frameworks and research findings on promotional resources (e.g., Fraser & Martin, 2009; Hyland, 2005; Vinkers et al., 2015; Wheatly, 2014). They originally defined hype as “hyperbolic and/or subjective language that authors use to glamorize, promote, embellish and/or exaggerate aspects of their research” (p. 141). In exemplifying the potential cases of hype, they presented some positively marked phrases (e.g., *it will be enormously important to examine...; Interestingly, the evidence was...*) extracted from Wheatly (2014) and also referred to positive-sounding adjectives (e.g., *pivotal, crucial, essential, innovative, major, promising*, etc.) used by Fraser and Martin (2009) and Vinkers et al. (2015) as representing instances of hype when directed at aspects of the author’s research. In addition to linguistic items, the authors also presented target categories of hype classified according to what aspects of the present research are targeted for promotional purposes by means of such hyping items. Their original scheme for targets consists of seven areas including Broad Research Area, Specific Research Topic, Author’s Prior Research, Research Method, Research Outcome, Research Primacy, and Research Conclusion, whose revised version with more specifications and examples of each target area will be presented in the Methods section of this paper.

Millar et al.’s (2019) conceptualization of hype has paved the way for other researchers to expand, refine, or modify the original scheme in their coverage of linguistic items of hype and target areas. Borrowing the term “hype” from Millar et al. (2019), Hyland and Jiang (2021a, 2021b) further expanded the concept of hype to incorporate other conceptual frameworks or related constructs. For example, in their conceptualization of academic hype that can be applicable not only to RAs in the field of medicine and biology but also to RAs in other broader disciplines, Hyland and Jiang (2021b) incorporated the categories of boosters and positive attitude markers adapted from Hyland’s (2005) framework of stance. According to Hyland’s (2005) stance framework, boosters are epistemic devices (e.g., *demonstrate, show, clear, obviously*) which express the author’s conviction, seeking to assert claims categorically and shut down alternative voices while positive attitude markers indicate the author’s affective perspectives and include evaluations and personal feelings towards content (*important, significant, new, useful, novel, interestingly, importantly, surprisingly*). These two categories embedded within the stance framework were considered as conveying the author’s “personal assessments and comments on either the truth or the value of arguments to express a conviction in claims,” thus serving promotional functions (Hyland & Jiang, 2021b, p. 192). With regards to the classification of hyping targets, they proposed a slightly modified version of Millar et al.’s (2019) classification. In their revised scheme, six targets were presented by removing the last category (Research Conclusion) of Millar et al.’s (2019) original classification in that aspects of Research Conclusion can be subsumed under the category of Research Primacy. Since then, Hyland and Jiang’s (2019b) revised framework of target categories has been mostly adopted in a few of the recent subsequent studies on academic hype (e.g., Hyland & Jiang, 2024; Li et al., 2025), whose modified version will also be used in the present study.

## Empirical Studies on Promotion and Hype in RAs

Although academic discourse, particularly RA writing, is expected to be objective and factual, and thus self-effacing and humble according to traditional academic norms (Hyland, 2000), it has been widely recognized that, within conventions, authors strive to publicize their research by using a variety of rhetorical and linguistic resources of promotion (Martin & Perez, 2014; Swales, 2004; Wang & Yang, 2015). Since the recent phenomenon of hype has been broadly addressed as one of the important promotional resources of RAs, this section will present relevant studies focusing on empirical studies which investigated general linguistic resources of promotion in RAs, genre-based studies which examined promotional moves and steps embedded in RAs or part-genres of RAs, and more recent corpus-based studies which explored the use of hype in RAs.

A substantial body of recent studies have investigated linguistic promotion in terms of the use of positive and negative words in medical and biology RAs (e.g., Cao et al., 2020; Fraiser & Martin, 2009; Vinkers et al., 2015). For example, Vinkers et al. (2015) analyzed the use of pre-determined list of positive and negative adjectives in medical abstracts published between 1974 and 2014 and found the increasing use of both positive and, to a lesser degree, negative words over the period. They attributed the increase in positive words to the authors’ assumption that primary results and their implications should be exaggerated and overstated in order to get their work published. A similar finding was obtained in Cao et al. (2020) who investigated the same list not only in abstracts but also in full texts of medical RAs published between 1990 and 2019. Some scientists, however, argue that such promotional practices have reached a level where objectivity has been replaced by manufactured excitement and sensationalism (e.g., Scott & Jones, 2017; Wheatley, 2014). The editor of *Cell Biology International*, for example, bemoaned the increase in drama words such as *new and exciting evidence* and *remarkable effect* which he believed had turned science into a “theatrical business” (Wheatley, 2014, p. 14).

Another line of research has vigorously examined promotion in RAs through genre analysis in terms of promotional rhetorical strategies. Swales (2004) suggested that his three-move CARS model represents a very promotional rhetorical structure in constructing RA introductions, where “originality (especially in theory) tends to be highly prized, competition tends to be fierce, and academic promotionism and boosterism are strong” (p. 226). Later studies on promotion in RA introductions basically support such a claim (e.g., Afros & Schryer, 2009; Azizi et al., 2022; Lindeberg, 2004; Wang & Yang, 2015). For example, Lindeberg (2004) showed that in Move 1, the research topic is promoted by strengthening its significance (Claims of centrality); in Move 2, the research gap is amplified by presenting previous research as deficient (Statements of knowledge gaps), and in Move 3, the present research is promoted for possible research contributions and values (Boosts of writers' own contributions). Afros and Schryer (2009) also investigated RA authors' promotional strategies in the two fields of humanities (i.e., language and literary studies), demonstrating that in both disciplines, scholars employed two dominant rhetorical strategies to publicize their work including positive evaluation of their own study and negative evaluation of dissenting views. Another study by Azizi et al. (2022) focused on the use of value arguments (i.e., arguments made to accentuate the importance or value of the research) embedded in RA introductions in the field of applied linguistics. Drawing on the Swales' (2004) CARS model, they identified seven types of value arguments realized across the three moves, which then can be further classified into explicit, semi-explicit and implicit arguments depending on what kinds of reasoning and linguistic markers are used. Their analysis indicated that value arguments are quite prevalent in introductions and that most of the arguments are implicitly promoted.

With a narrower focus on the specific move or step embedded in RA introductions, several researchers have conducted more in-depth analyses on rhetorical promotion. For example, an attempt to investigate the subtle ways promotion is realized by different shades of attitudes was made by Wang and Yang (2015) who investigated one particular rhetorical step (Claiming centrality) embedded in Move 1 of RA introductions. Using a corpus of 51 RA introductions in applied linguistics, they examined what appeals and linguistic devices authors employ and how they deploy them to achieve positive evaluation of the significance of the topic or the research area. Their analyses revealed that authors employed four major types of appeals including appeals of salience, magnitude, topicality, and problematicity and that each of the appeals is realized by means of different types of linguistic devices such as indirectly invoked attitudinal expressions for topicality (e.g., *still in its infancy*) and explicitly marked attitudinal expressions for salience (e.g., *most useful*) or negative attitudinal expressions for problematicity (e.g., *great difficulty*). In another study, Martin and Perez (2014) investigated RA authors' rhetorical practices employed in a particular move of introductions from a cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary perspective. Focusing on five steps embedded in Move 3 (Occupying the niche) in the corpora of English texts and Spanish texts within the broad disciplines of health sciences and of social sciences, they revealed that two of the most prominent promotional strategies (Announcing the principal outcome, Stating the value of the present research) associated with Move 3 were frequently used among English-speaking authors.

Another recent strand of research on promotion centers on the phenomenon of hype. In contrast to previous studies on linguistic promotion conducted with a focus on pre-determined positive words or arbitrarily weighted adjectives in RAs, more rigorous methodologies have been adopted by applied linguists, as can be attested in Millar et al. (2019) who manually annotated a small corpus of medical RAs for hyping items and target areas. The analysis of the corpus indicated frequent occurrences of hype words and expressions and further revealed that the hyping items mainly occurred in method and discussion sections to emphasize the expertise of the authors or the strength of the study design. Millar et al. (2019) argue that this focus on selling the research rather than its actual significance can impose “judgments on readers that might undermine objective and disinterested evaluation of new knowledge” (p. 149). In another study of hype in the highly cited scientific papers dealing with the Covid-19 virus, Hyland and Jiang (2021a) examined 400 candidate hype items and found 3.6 items per 1,000 words. This was not only significantly more cases than in a reference corpus from the same fields, but the results showed a significant increase in hyping each month of the study (January to July 2020). The analysis also revealed that the most common words were used to stress certainty and importance (*significant, important, strong, crucial*), contribution (*necessary, essential, effective, useful*), novelty (*first, timely, novel, unique*), and potential (*promising, potential*), and that the most hyped target areas include research methods, outcomes, and primacy. To investigate the phenomenon of hype in other disciplines, Hyland and Jiang (2021b) employed the same inventory of hyping terms, but use them to determine what changes have occurred in a wider range of disciplines including applied linguistics, biology, electrical engineering, and sociology. They found that these hyping features have increased by 19% over the last 50 years, with the most commonly used hype items conveying certainty or centrality and highlighting the contribution of the work. In terms of target areas of hype, they noted the considerable increases in hyping of research primary, methods, and the author's prior research. They interpreted this trend as signaling an authorial shift away from traditional norms of objectivity toward a more overtly rhetorical and evaluative stance towards their work.

Taken as whole, despite some advances in the conceptualization and the scope of analysis, existing studies on hype have

largely neglected the systematic examination of the rhetorical functions achieved through the interaction of hyping items, target areas, and generic move structures. Most research has relied on broad versions of the CARS model or Hyland's (2005) stance framework, with limited attempts made to refine or expand these models. Consequently, important distinctions among rhetorical functions of hype and their different linguistic realizations across the three moves of RA introductions remain underexplored. In addition, while recent studies have identified linguistic items and target categories of hype, these categories remain relatively large-grained, and certain rhetorical functions may have been overlooked. Moreover, many genre-based studies have primarily focused on promotion within individual moves or specific steps rather than examining the dynamic interplay of promotional functions across all three moves.

There is therefore a clear need for more comprehensive and fine-grained analyses that integrate hyping items, target categories, and rhetorical functions within the generic move structure of RA introductions. The present study responds to this need by developing an expanded analytical framework to examine how hype operates rhetorically and linguistically across the three moves of RA introductions.

## METHOD

### Corpus Data

A total of 90 RAs published between 2023 and 2024 in the field of applied linguistics comprise the corpus of the present study. The field of applied linguistics was chosen for two major reasons. The first reason is that since the recent studies on hype (e.g., Hyland & Jiang, 2021a, Millar et al., 2019) have been primarily concerned with the use of hype in medical or biology RAs, this study strives to expand the scope of the analysis into other fields of study, especially the one that belongs to the broad domain of soft sciences. The choice of this field of study was also motivated by the researcher's own expertise and experience in applied linguistics which in turn can help EAP instructors to guide in teaching their second language learners or novice researchers how to utilize promotional resources in their RA writing.

The RAs were chosen from internationally referred journals on the basis of the impact factors. The impact factors of the selected journals (*Applied Linguistics*, *TESOL Quarterly*, *The Modern Language Journal*) are 4.2, 3.9, and 4.0, respectively. Following Ozturk's (2007) advice, care was also taken to consider not only their prestige, representativeness, and stability in style, but also their coverage of general issues in applied linguistics, which would exclude journals specializing in sub-disciplinary areas with a narrower focus. The selected journals publish all types of empirical articles including quantitative, qualitative, discourse-based or mixed-method studies as well as theoretical and review articles out of which only the empirical studies were used for the data of the present study. Articles in special issues, review papers, theoretical articles, forum articles, or short reports were excluded. After further sifting, 124 articles were retained as candidates for final analyses because they contained a separate introduction section distinguished from a literature review section, considering the recommendation that these two sections be preferably treated separately in social sciences for their different functions (e.g., Ozturk, 2007). 30 from each of the three journals were randomly selected from the candidates, constituting 90 introductions. The corpus consists of 52,227 words, excluding the words appearing in direct quotes, footnotes, tables, and figures. The mean length per introduction is approximately 580 words.

### Data Analysis

For the analysis of the corpus, all 90 RAs were firstly read by the researcher in their entirety before the introduction sections were scrutinized. After ensuring that a holistic understanding of the RAs was secured, the analysis of hype in the introduction sections was conducted. The texts were searched for specific linguistic features which could potentially serve to accomplish the rhetorical functions of hype. Since these are potentially open set, an effort was made to be as inclusive as possible in identifying the hyping words and expressions. First, the categories of boosters and positive attitude markers from Hyland's (2005) stance framework were included. This list was supplemented by reference to the recent literature on promotion and hype in academic writing, such as those referred to as "positive words" (Fraser & Martin, 2009; Vinkers et al., 2015), "hyperbolic items" (Millar et al., 2019, 2020), and "hying words and expressions" (Hyland & Jiang, 2021a, 2021b).

The researcher searched for these items and their possible variants to retrieve instances of hype in the corpus. It should be noted that when manually examining each instance of hyping words and expressions, the researcher excluded some items that were not performing a hyping function. For example, the word *significant* was rejected when used as a statistical measure, but seen as hyping when used to modify a centrality claim as in *the significant role of beliefs in L2 learners' interlanguage*

*development*. Following Fraser and Martin (2009), words such as *important* and *essential* were ignored in the negative (as in *not important*), which become devoid of the embellishment feature when used with *not*.

Although the use of pre-identified hyping items enabled the efficient identification of a substantial set of linguistic realizations of hype, there remained the possibility that instances not co-occurring with these markers could be overlooked. To address this concern, the researcher conducted close readings of the texts to identify additional markers that had not been reported in previous studies but nonetheless functioned as indicators of hype in the corpus. As a result, items such as *fine-grained* and *exponentially*, which have not been explicitly listed as hyping items in prior research, were found to perform hyping functions in the present data and were therefore included in the analysis.

As for the analysis of the targets which concern the aspects or areas of the present research hyped by these items, the researcher adopted a modified version of the categories proposed by Millar et al. (2019) which originally included seven targets including Broad Research Area, Specific Research Topic, Author's Prior Research, Research Method, Research Outcome, Research Primacy, and Research Conclusion. It was then decided to drop the last category of Research Conclusion as being too overlapping to distinguish from Research Primacy, as also recommended by Hyland and Jiang (2021a, 2021b) and Li et al. (2025). Instead, three new categories (Real-world Issue, Gap in Previous Research, and Author's Present Research) that represent the rhetorical functions of this part-genre of introduction were added to the framework in order to provide a more fine-grained analysis of the hyping functions accomplished across the three moves in RA introductions. The following are the specifications of nine targets that were identified in the present corpus.

- (a) Broad Research Area: the general field of study that is embellished
- (b) Real-world Issue: the real-world context (entities, problems, issues, populations, etc) that is highlighted (**newly added category**)
- (c) Specific Research Topic: the particular topic under investigation that is promoted
- (d) Gap in Previous Research: the existing studies that were under-researched and thus are exaggerated for their scarcity (**newly added category**)
- (e) Present Research: the present research that should be conducted and whose necessity is amplified (**newly added category**)
- (f) Author's Prior Research: the author's prior work that is self-cited and thus promoted
- (g) Research Method: the methodological aspect of the present research (e.g., method, design, setting, data, analysis technique) worthy of embellishment
- (h) Research Outcome: the results or findings of the present study that are highlighted
- (i) Research Primacy: the aspect of the overall research project considered superior or assigned priority

The addition of the three new categories can be justifiable in that real-world issues and research-related issues are perceived as distinct categories in contextualizing the present study in several move-based studies on RA introductions (e.g., Deng et al., 2024; Na, 2023), some of the hyping items (e.g., *very*, *primarily*, *fully*) were used specifically for amplifying a gap in literature rather than pre-existing categories of a research area or topic, and certain hyping words such as *imperative* and *necessary* were used for intensifying the need for the present research rather than other pre-listed categories of research method, outcome or primacy. Table 1 illustrates nine categories of hyping targets and the examples of each of the target area with a hyping item highlighted in bold. Salient features of the target area that are embellished by the hyping item were underlined.

**TABLE 1**  
*Target Categories and Examples of Hying Items*

Target categories of hype	Examples (hying items in bold)
Broad Research Area (BRA)	According to research, <u>L2 fluency</u> is an <b>important</b> feature of L2 speaking skill...
Real-world Issue (RI)	<u>Such tensions</u> are especially <b>salient</b> in China where approximately 28 million...
Specific Research Topic (SRT)	<b>Notably</b> , a MDM strategy can achieve the respective rhetorical purpose of each...
Gap in Previous Research (GPR)	However, <b>very few</b> studies have assessed the impact of VR-assisted instruction...
Present Research (PR)	It is also <b>necessary</b> to analyze in detail how teachers transform...
Author's Prior Research (APR)	<u>The qualitative findings on...</u> are discussed elsewhere (see <b>Hozknecht, 2019</b> )
Research Method (RM)	... through <u>elicited metaphor</u> as a <b>rigorous</b> research tool in examining learners' beliefs
Research Outcome (RO)	By doing so, we <b>revealed</b> <u>the complex historical and sociocultural construction of...</u>
Research Primacy (RC)	<u>This study</u> may provide <b>useful evidence</b> about the degree to which...

With regard to the move-based analysis of hyping functions, all identified text segments containing both hyping items and targets were then categorized according to the rhetorical functions they realize across the three moves of the introduction of RAs. The three moves within which each hyping function is embedded were largely adapted from Swales' (1990, 2004) CARS model. This model has played a prominent role in analyzing the rhetorical move structures of RA introductions since it describes "the communicative purposes of a text by categorizing the various discourse units within the text according to their communicative purposes" (Biber et al., 2007, p. 23). Those discourse units are referred to as "moves" (Swales, 2004). Although the term "move" has often been aligned with a grammatical unit such as an utterance, clause, sentence, or paragraph, it is better seen as flexible in terms of its linguistic realization. The researcher decided to adopt the names of the three moves (i.e., Establishing a Territory, Establishing a Niche, and Occupying the Niche) from Swales' (1990) original framework because those labels best represent the communicative purposes which each of the hyping functions works towards in the present corpus. Within the CARS schema of three moves, hyping functions were manually annotated by drawing on the hyping items and targets embedded in each of the text segments, while paying attention to a promotional rhetorical shift supplemented with grasping topic breaks in content, a methodology that Moreno and Swales (2018) called a combination of bottom-up and top-down approach whose combined coding approach can "lead to a certain circularity of reasoning" (p. 7). In line with Moreno and Swales' (2018) schemes for annotating a rhetorical step, a rhetorical function was perceived as including new propositional meaning vital to propel the text towards the achievement of the communicative purposes of the part-genre where it occurs. Following the recommendation of Swales (1990, 2004) and Moreno and Swales (2018), the rhetorical chunk was adopted as the unit of rhetorical move analysis, proceeding from the rhetorical function level up to the broader communicative move level. This entails a close analysis of linguistic, syntactic, and content oriented cues to shifts in the communicative purposes of RA authors. To facilitate the judgment of how hype is deployed in the realization of authors' specific rhetorical goals, the whole paragraph where hype was located or several paragraphs were often read and scrutinized for further investigation.

The coding of rhetorical functions of hype was conducted in three phases. In the first phase, 5 randomly sampled texts from the three journals (altogether 15 introductions) were manually and independently analyzed by the researcher and an invited applied linguist who specializes in discourse/genre analysis to identify the potential hyping functions within the three moves. In this process, text fragments that were either ambiguous or could not be readily captured by the previous move frameworks were noted and discussed. The final taxonomy of nine rhetorical functions of hype in RA introductions is presented in Table 2. In the second phase, all the 90 introductions in the corpus were independently coded by the researcher based on the established taxonomy. In the third phase, in order to ensure reliability, the researcher re-coded the hyping functions in their entirety a month later. The intra-coder agreement was approximately 98%.

**TABLE 2**  
*A Taxonomy of Rhetorical Functions of Hype in RA Introductions*

Rhetorical functions of hype across three moves (Hyping targets)	
Move 1: Establishing a Territory	
	Function 1: Embellishing the broad research area (Broad Research Area)
	Function 2: Establishing real-world contextualization (Real-world Issue)
	Function 3: Amplifying the significance of the specific topic (Specific Research Topic)
Move 2: Establishing a Niche	
	Function 4: Intensifying a research gap (Gap in Previous Research)
	Function 5: Amplifying the need for the present research (Present Research)
Move 3: Occupying a Niche	
	Function 6: Promoting authors' prior research (Author's Prior Research)
	Function 7: Embellishing research methods (Research Method)
	Function 8: Highlighting principal research findings (Research Outcome)
	Function 9: Promoting the value of the overall research project (Research Primacy)

It should be acknowledged that target categories presented in Table 1 are closely aligned to the corresponding rhetorical functions identified in the RA introductions of the present corpus shown in Table 2. It should, however, also be noted that while the analysis of target categories of hype primarily concerns the question of what is hyped, the analysis of rhetorical functions of hype explicitly address what the hype is performing rhetorically in the move structure. While previous studies (Hyland & Jiang, 2021a, 2021b; Millar et al., 2019) simply presented areas of hype without further delineating the specific rhetorical function realized with the target area hyped, the analytical value of the present study lies in showing systematic rhetorical patterning across the three moves of RA introductions, not merely in relabeling targets with the functional verb.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Analysis of Linguistic Realizations of Hype in RA Introductions

The analysis of linguistic items of hype used in the introduction of RAs shows that hypes are realized through a variety of words and expressions. A total of 90 distinct hyping items were identified and most of the expressions were found to serve the strong embellishment and promotion of various aspects of the author's present research. Table 3 shows the broad grammatical categories into which each of the hyping word or expression is classified, with frequency of each item presented in parenthesis.

**TABLE 3**  
*Linguistic Realization of Hype in RA Introductions*

Grammatical category	Frequency	Examples
Adjective (51 words)	148 (60.91%)	important(32), essential(9), critical(8), valuable(7), crucial(6), new(5), useful(5), key(4), necessary(4), powerful(4), unique(4), effective(3), imperative(3), prevalent(3), significant(3), substantial(3), central(2), compelling(2), great(2), major(2), novel(2), prime(2), valuable(2), vital(2), clear(1), comprehensive(1), considerable(1), evident(1), fine-grained(1), fundamental(1), ideal(1), innovative(1), interesting(1), main(1), notable(1), noteworthy(1), original(1), persistent(1), pervasive(1), pivotal(1), popular(1), practical(1), prominent(1), promising(1), rigorous(1), robust(1), salient(1), strong(1), surprising(1), unprecedented(1), valid(1), widespread(1)
Adverb (17 words & expressions)	36 (14.81%)	very(5), importantly(4), fully(3), highly(3), notably(3), primarily(3), drastically(2), in fact(2), significantly(2), widely(2), critically(1), exponentially(1), greatly(1), indeed(1), substantially(1), surprisingly(1), vitally(1)
Noun (7 words)	24 (9.88%)	importance(8), insight(8), evidence(4), contribution(1), merit(1), prevalence(1), significance(1)
Verb (6 words & expressions)	20 (8.23%)	contribute to(10), show(4), reveal(2), highlight(2), broaden(1), necessitate (1)
Determiner (8 words & expressions)	14 (5.76%)	much(3), first(3), a large number of(2), a large amount of(2), a great deal of(1), a compelling body of(1), a substantial body of(1), a large bulk of(1)
Self-citation (1 expression)	1 (0.41%)	The quantitative findings on cognitive processes are discussed elsewhere (see Hozknecht, 2019)(1)
90 words & expressions	243 (100%)	

Out of 90 hyping words and expressions that constituted a total of 243 occurrences in the present corpus, the following 29 items were most frequently used with more than three occurrences: *important*(32), *contribute to*(10), *essential*(9), *critical*(8), *importance*(8), *insight*(8), *valuable*(7), *crucial*(6), *new*(5), *useful*(5), *very*(5), *key*(4), *necessary*(4), *powerful*(4), *unique*(4), *importantly*(4), *evidence*(4), *show*(4), *effective*(3), *imperative*(3), *prevalent*(3), *significant*(3), *substantial*(3), *fully*(3), *highly*(3), *notably*(3), *primarily*(3), *much*(3), and *first*(3).

The analysis of semantic categories of the frequently used hyping items illustrated above reveals that they broadly reflect the following seven semantic categories of value which the authors seemed to promote in their RA introductions: 1) centrality that concerns importance or significance of the research area or topic (e.g., *important*, *essential*, *critical*, *importance*, *crucial*, *key*, *significant*), 2) contribution that refers to the value or use of the present research (e.g., *contribute to*, *insight*, *valuable*, *useful*, *powerful*, *evidence*, *effective*), 3) novelty of research methods or the present research (e.g., *new*, *unique*, *first*), 4) necessity of the present research (e.g., *necessary*, *imperative*), 5) magnitude that concerns the degree of interest or the strength of research activity and real-world issues (e.g., *very*, *prevalent*, *substantial*, *fully*, *highly*, *primarily*, *much*), 6) the specific point or argument about the topic that needs special attention (e.g., *importantly*, *notably*), and 7) fact-assertion that concerns the outcome of the present research (e.g., *show*). The top three items in particular relate to a clear assurance of importance of the broad research area or the specific topic (*important*, *essential*) or stress the benefits of the research (*contribute to*), impressing on readers the value of what is being discussed and seeking to coax agreement from them that the research is significant or highlighting the contribution the study is claimed to make to overcoming a given problem or filling a gap.

In an analysis of how hypes are linguistically realized, it was found that in the majority of cases, the hyping item was identifiable as a single word (e.g., *important*, *very*, *evidence*, *much*) while only a small number of items were realized by two words (e.g., *in fact*, *contribute to*), a phrase (e.g., *a compelling body of*, *a large number of*), or a clause as in the last example of self-citation presented in Table 3. Out of the six grammatical categories identified in the present corpus, adjectives (61%), the word class claimed to be prototypically associated with evaluation (Hunston, 2010) were the most frequent form by which hypes were realized, followed by adverbs (15%). While adjectives are used across all three moves of the RA introduction, they are most strongly associated with centrality claims either in terms of the broad research area or the specific research topic (e.g., *important*, *essential*, *critical*, *crucial*, *key*, *significant*, *central*, etc.), necessity statements in highlighting the need for the present study (e.g., *necessary*, *imperative*, etc.), or value arguments (e.g., *valuable*, *new*, *useful*, *unique*, *effective*, *novel*, etc.) in terms of the value of the methods chosen for the study and the primacy of the overall research project. Similar to this finding, Fraser and Martin (2009) found an increase in the use of the authors' "value-laden words" to embellish their arguments. Out of their 21 positive adjectives, 17 were also found in the present corpus (i.e., *pivotal*, *crucial*, *critical*, *vital*, *unique*, *essential*, *key*, *important*, *innovative*, *central*, *necessary*, *major*, *noteworthy*, *new*, *novel*, *powerful*, *first*). Vinkers et al. (2015) also found an increase in the use of overtly positive adjectives in scientific abstracts. The three adjectives (*robust*, *novel*, and *innovative*) that they identified as most prominent in abstracts appeared in the present corpus of RA introductions, yet with a very low frequency. While those two studies suggest that the reporting of results and their implications has become exaggerated and overstated, the present study indicates that the use of hyping items, at least in the case of RA introductions in the field of applied linguistics, are in fact more prevalent in establishing the research area and emphasizing the centrality of the specific topic.

Adverbs, as the second most frequently used grammatical category of hypes, constituted approximately 15 % of the total occurrences. They were classified either as boosters which were used to express the author's strong conviction about the proposition or the real-world situation (*very*, *fully*, *highly*, *primarily*, *drastically*, *widely*, *greatly*, *substantially*, etc.) or as attitude markers which concern the author's subjective judgment, evaluation or emotional response about the proposition addressed within the specific topic under investigation (e.g., *importantly*, *notably*, *surprisingly*), usually with the statements instructing the reader to interpret the argument in a certain way. It is important to note that some of the most frequent adverbs were used to firmly establish real-world contextualization, with a focus on problematicity of the real-world issues or contexts. The recurrent appeals to problematicity were made by employing boosting adverbs along with negative attitudinal adjectives (e.g., *very limited*, *highly problematic*, *drastically reduced*), which warrant settlement of the problems and accordingly, further research.

The third most frequent grammatical category of hypes was the nouns mostly derived from adjectives or the verbs of the same meaning, accounting for almost 10% of the total occurrences. Some of the nouns (e.g., *importance*, *significance*) identified in the present corpus were mostly used to highlight the importance of pursuing a particular topic and conducting the present research (*the importance of this topic*, *the significance of conducting research on*). Other nouns (e.g., *insight*, *evidence*, *contribution*, *merit*) were used to amplify the contribution that the present research can make (e.g., *yield novel insights*, *provide useful evidence*). Interesting, it was found that although verbs constituted about 8% of all the hyping items identified in the present corpus, only a very limited range of verbs were used with only one expression *contribute to* being

predominant in this grammatical category. The hyping expression *contribute to* was used to directly promote the value of present research by indicating the specific area where the present study can make a contribution (e.g., *contribute to CA scholarship, contribute to the critique of the two-tiered system*). Other hyping verbs (e.g., *show, reveal, highlight*) were mostly used to highlight primary findings of the present study (e.g., *We show how the co-participants cooperatively accomplish joking sequences, Our analyses revealed how Mid-western in-service teachers were deeply influenced*). Most of the determiners used in the introduction of RAs relate to the wealth of research conducted on a certain area or topic by referring to its amount and magnitude. Reference to real-world entities offers another source of diversity and magnitude. By appealing to magnitude in the research world (e.g., *much research, a compelling body of research*) or in the real world (e.g., *reading a large amount of online news, a large number of students who have different needs*), the significance of the broad research area or real-world issue seems to be fleshed out and orchestrated.

Taken as a whole, the predominant occurrence of hyping adjectives and adverbs coincide with findings in previous studies. Li et al. (2025), for example, in their investigation of hypes in abstracts of RAs, found that adjectives constitute more than 70 % of the total occurrences, followed by adverbs (22%). Hyland and Jiang (2021a) also listed the top frequent hyping items in applied linguistics, sociology, biology, and engineering, among which adjectives such as *important* and *new* are the most favored hyping items as well. Millar et al. (2019) identified a similarly predominant use of adjectives followed by adverbs in medical RAs.

## Functional Analysis of Hype in RA Introductions

### Overall Frequency of Rhetorical Functions and Targets of Hype

In addition to the analysis of the hyping words and expressions, a functional analysis of hype was also conducted, with a focus on what aspects of the authors' present research are embellished and for what rhetorical purposes those resources are used. As Table 4 shows, a total of 231 rhetorical functions of hype were realized in the RA introductions.

Note that the frequency per 1,000 words as well as raw frequency is presented to facilitate the reader's grasp of the general patterns of occurrence of hype manifested in RA introductions, which in turn enables the comparison of the frequency results with those in other studies. In addition, since the introduction length of the present corpus differs across 90 RAs ranging from 372 words to 1305 words (with the mean length of 580 words), mean occurrence of hype per introduction is also presented in Table 4.

**TABLE 4**  
*Frequency of Rhetorical Functions, Targets, and Linguistic Items of Hype*

Frequency	Rhetorical functions of hype	Targets of hype	Linguistic items of hype
Raw frequency	231	231	243
Frequency per 1,000 words	4.42	4.42	4.65
Mean per introduction	2.57	2.57	2.70

On average, about 4.4 hyping functions were employed in every 1,000 words. The mean occurrence of hyping functions per introduction was found to be 2.6. Furthermore, all of the introductions included instances of hyping functions. The lowest and highest number of such functions in the introduction section of RAs were 1 and 5 respectively, with 2 or 3 functions per introduction mostly adopted. In terms of the frequency of targets and linguistic items used to realize each hyping function, it was found that the vast majority of the rhetorical functions (219 out of 231 instances) were realized with one linguistic item and only 22 rhetorical functions were realized with two linguistic items. Each of the rhetorical functions was found to be realized with one target area hyped. Note that since one particular target area and its corresponding rhetorical function can contain more than one hyping item as in the example of target category 9 (*useful evidence*) presented in Table 1, the frequency of linguistic items of hype is slightly higher than that of targets or rhetorical functions of hype.

In terms of mean occurrence per introduction, the finding of the present corpus seems to be consistent with the one identified by Millar et al.'s (2019) analysis of medical RAs, which revealed that hypes occurred most frequently in discussions and introductions out of the five sections of RAs they investigated, marking 3.9 and 2.8 occurrences per 1,000 words respectively. The high number of hyping functions, as shown in Table 4 by raw frequency, frequency per 1,000 words, and mean per introduction, indicates that hyping functions can play an important role in the introduction of RAs. In fact, without foregrounding the centrality of the research topic and the positive points and novel contributions of a study, it may

be difficult to attract the attention of the readers of the discipline, given the considerable number of other similar papers promoting their strengths (Hyland, 2005). This finding supports the claim by Deng et al. (2024) who suggest that RAs in the field of applied linguistics rely heavily on promotional strategies to evaluate the significance of the research topic and the contribution or value of the present research. Beyond the field of applied linguistics, this finding also supports the claims of the previous studies that revealed the pervasiveness of promotion and hype in RA introductions (Carter, 2016; Martin & Perez, 2014). The scale of hyping functions in RA introductions may suggest a widespread recognition of the competitive nature of contemporary academic publishing. As Hyland and Jiang (2021b) note, underlying this frequency is perhaps the authors' sense of anxiety that they must promote their work to ensure that their voice is heard.

### *Move-Based Analysis of Rhetorical Functions of Hype*

The move-based analysis of the corpus revealed that hypes were realized in all three moves of the introduction of RAs. As Table 5 indicates, the distribution of move-related hypes varied in frequency with hyping functions being highly dense in Move 1 (Establishing a Territory). Almost two thirds of the hyping functions (67%) were located in this move. This result is not surprising, given that in their efforts to situate their research within a discipline and make claims of topic centrality in Move 1, RA authors would often employ hypes to embellish the broad research area, establish real-world contextualization, and amplify the significance of the specific research topic. The analysis also showed that hypes in Move 2 (Establishing a Niche) marked relatively lower frequency, accounting for 11% of the total instances, implying that RA authors tended to use hypes to intensify a gap in previous literature or to amplify the need for the present study only when they feel such hyperbolic statements are warranted. Hypes, marking relatively moderate density, were also found in Move 3 (Occupying the Niche), accounting for 32%. This finding points to RA authors' various rhetorical efforts to effectively present their work by relating their prior research to the present research primarily by embellishing research methods, highlighting primary findings of the present study, and amplifying the value of the overall research project.

**TABLE 5**

*Frequency of Rhetorical Functions of Hype across the Three Moves of RA Introductions*

Moves	Rhetorical functions of hype (n=231)	Targets of hype	Frequency
Move 1 (n=155)	Function 1: Embellishing the broad research area	Broad Research Area	47 (20.35%)
	Function 2: Establishing real-world contextualization	Read-world Issue	37 (16.02%)
	Function 3: Amplifying the significance of the specific topic	Specific Research Topic	71 (30.73%)
Move 2 (n=25)	Function 4: Intensifying a research gap	Gap in Previous Research	10 (4.33%)
	Function 5: Amplifying the need for the present research	Present Research	15 (6.49%)
Move 3 (n=51)	Function 6: Promoting authors' prior research	Author's Prior Research	1 (0.43%)
	Function 7: Embellishing research methods	Research Method	13 (5.63%)
	Function 8: Highlighting primary research findings	Research Outcome	8 (3.46%)
	Function 9: Promoting the value of the overall research project	Research Primacy	29 (12.56%)

To find out how hyping items are used for different targets and rhetorical functions, a more fine-grained functional analysis was conducted. As can be seen in Table 5, nine types of hyping functions were identified in RA introductions. Overall, the analysis revealed that a majority of hyping items were used to accomplish three rhetorical functions (i.e., Embellishing the broad research area, Establishing real-world contextualization, and Amplifying the significance of the specific topic) embedded in Move 1, accounting for 67% of the total hyping functions, with the highest, the second highest, and the third highest occurrence marked by Function 3 (31%), Function 1 (20%), and Function 2 (16%), respectively. Hypes were moderately used to perform four rhetorical functions in Move 3 (42%), with the two rhetorical functions of Promoting the value of the overall research project (Function 9) and Embellishing research methods (Function 7) most prominent, each accounting for 13% and 6%. Two rhetorical functions of intensifying a research gap (Function 4) and amplifying the need for the present research (Function 5) embedded in Move 2 were realized with a relatively judicious use of hyping items, accounting for 4% and 6% of the total hyping functions. A detailed analysis of rhetorical functions of hype further reveals

the various ways hypes are used to play specific rhetorical roles by employing various types of linguistic items and their related lexico-grammatical features. In what follows, the results of the analysis of specific rhetorical functions, targets, and their linguistic realizations of hype embedded in three moves will be presented.

### *Rhetorical Functions, Targets, and Linguistic Items of Hype in Move 1*

With regard to rhetorical functions of hype in Move 1, three rhetorical functions including Function 1 (Embellishing the broad research area), Function 2 (Establishing real-world contextualization), and Function 3 (Amplifying the significance of the specific topic) were identified with three target areas (broad research area, real-world issues, and specific research topic) hyped which all serve as the rationale of the present study. Since the overall communicative function of this move aims to situate the present work in a well-established research area, these three functions all contribute to serving the pragmatic purpose of centrality claims of various kinds.

Firstly, in Function 1, a total of 47 hyping arguments, targeted at the broad research area which concerns the general topic of the paper, were found to make centrality claims in relation to the importance of the broad research area. Since most academics including applied linguists now work in fairly well-established areas of disciplinary inquiry which presumably require little additional effort to promote the novelty, the authors seem to be more concerned with establishing the centrality of the broad research area as Examples 1 and 2 illustrate.

Example 1: Repeated and meaningful practice with the aim of developing second language (L2) knowledge is an **essential component of L2 learning** (DeKeyser, 2007; Ortega, 2007; Suzuki et al., 2019) [Function 1]

Example 2: For several decades now, third-person pronouns that are marked for gender have been a **central focus in the debate on gender-inclusive language use**. [Function 1]

These examples illustrate the writers' tendency to encourage readers to accept that the domain they have identified offers a significant or worthwhile area to traverse. This function roughly corresponds to the claims of centrality defined in Swales' (1990) CARS model as "appeals to the discourse community whereby members are asked to accept that the research about to be reported is part of a lively, significant or well-established research area" (p. 144). The context-based analysis showed that such arguments generally appear at the very beginning of the introduction sections. Out of the total number of hyping arguments (47 occurrences) within this functional category, 32 occurred in the first sentences, and 15 occurred in other places. What makes this finding important is that, in 32 articles out of the total 90 RAs in the corpus, authors start their introductions with arguments having this function. This indicates that, with relatively frequent use of this hyping function, authors want to assert that it is important for them to focus on issues that are central and relevant to the discipline at the very beginning of their introductions. Typical adjectives that serve this function identified in the present corpus were found to be mostly used with nouns like *role, feature, focus, component, and aspect* as in *important role, important feature, key aspect, key component, key drives, essential aspect, essential component, central focus, crucial tools, critical role, significant role, pivotal role, useful tool* or used predicatively with the preposition *to, for, or in* as in *central to, crucial for, critical for, fundamental for, and effective in*. The centrality claim was also made with nouns such as *importance* and *significance* as in *the importance of emotionality* and *the importance of vocabulary learning*.

The analysis also showed that this function was employed to indicate the prevalence of research by demonstrating the magnitude or popularity of the research area. As Wang and Yang (2015) indicated, such hyping words and expressions were usually used along with a non-integral citation with several references provided in parenthesis, or with various research perspectives or research lines introduced regarding a broad research area. This is illustrated in Example 3.

Example 3: Within the realm of applied linguistics, a substantial body of research has compared language use in textbooks with that in natural language corpora to assess the authenticity of textbooks (Biber and Reppen 2002; Koprowski 2005; Cheng and Warren 2007; Shortall 2007). [Function 1]

Typical hyping words and expressions that aim to embellish the prevalence of research include the determiners that modify nouns denoting attention or research as in *much attention, a great deal of interest, a large bulk of studies, and a compelling body of research*. Adjectives that serve the same function of prevalence were also found in the present corpus as in *substantial attention in L2 research, great attention from researchers, widespread attention from researchers, great interest in educational research, a popular focus for research, a popular topic for research, a persistent topic in work on L2 IC, prevalent in the field of applied linguistics, and become prominent in education*. This kind of assertion concerning active

research activity in the broad area was made by the use of adverbs as well, although with a low frequency of occurrence. Adverbs such as *exponentially* and *substantially* that highlight the magnitude of the research activity were used as in *research has grown exponentially*. This finding implies that the appeal to magnitude within Function 1 relates to the prevalence or popularity of a research area by indicating the multiplicity of studies being conducted on it or researchers' perpetual interest in it thereby the general topic is promoted. This finding confirms Wang and Yang's (2015) claim that indicating the prevalence of research is usually influenced by the author's promotional concerns.

Regarding Function 2 (Establishing real-world contextualization), the analysis indicates that promotional appeals were made fairly differently from the ones accomplished in Function 1. Within this functional category, boosters (e.g., *very*, *highly*, *greatly*) as well as attitude markers (e.g., *important*, *critical*, *powerful*, *vital*, *valuable*) were prevalently used to intensify the problematicity or significance of real-world entities. As in Function 1, when the significance of the real-world entities are embellished, arguments within this functional category tended to sustain a positive evaluation with such hyping adjectives as *important*, *critical*, *powerful*, *prime*, *key* and *vital* to modify real-world entities, as in *writing as an important social and cognitive skill*, *teachers as playing a critical role in programs*, *emotions as playing a powerful role in our daily lives*, *linguistic outcomes as the prime focus of teachers*, *literary texts as a key part of the curriculum*, *textbooks as a vital resources*, etc. Example 4 illustrates the use of hyping adjectives to intensify the significance of real-world entities.

Example 4: In many educational contexts, the use of literary texts is viewed as a **key part of the language curriculum**. [Function 2]

Magnitude was also realized with adjectives or determiners, but rather than indicating amount of research activity as in Function 1, magnitude within this rhetorical function was mostly associated with the strength of real-world phenomena as in Example 5.

Example 5: TESOL educators have come to see a **strong push for teaching approaches** underpinned by critical, post-method, culturally responsive, translanguing, multiliteracies and digital literacy framings. [Function 1]

Likewise, prevalence in Function 2 concerned the existence of real-world entities in a particular context. Amplification of the prevalence of real-world issues was realized by the use of adjectives (e.g., *prevalent*, *pervasive*, *salient*), nouns (e.g., *prevalence*), and adverbs (e.g., *widely*). While magnitude centers on research or researchers in Function 1, the appeal to magnitude in the real-world contextualization emphasizes the prevalence of the topic-related phenomenon in the real world. Example 6 illustrates this point.

Example 6: The tension between monolingual ideas and multilingual views is perhaps especially **prevalent in English**. [Function 2]

Real-world entities can also be highlighted in terms of their marking major changes or shifts in the real world or being new, unique, or unprecedented in the real-world, as the following example illustrates:

Example 7: Students have **unprecedented access to an immense pool of instructors**. [Function 2]

While most of the real-world entities illustrated above were positively portrayed by the use of hyping items, some other real-world items such as problems, difficulties, limitations, and constraints of various kinds in the real world can be intensified as well. In the latter case, boosters in the form of adverbs (e.g., *very*, *highly*, *drastically*) were mostly used, as the following examples illustrate:

Example 8: The amount of L2 input in the EFL contexts is **very limited**. [Function 2]

Example 9: When a young person emigrates to a different language-speaking country, their exposure to their heritage language is **drastically reduced**. [Function 2]

In these examples, real-world concern is directly stated by describing unfavorable real-world situations or contexts in which the degree or intensity of the problem tends to be exaggerated so that the authors can convey a sense of urgency. The hyping function of this kind often points to the compelling need for scholarly attention, which will be naturally linked to the need for conducting the present study to remedy the problem.

The last category of rhetorical function of hype embedded in Move 1 is Function 3 (Amplifying the significance of the specific topic). Although Function 1 and Function 3 differ in their level of specificity, hypes in these two categories are

often closely related with centrality claims of the CARS model (Millar et al., 2019). Function 3 allows authors to establish more firmly the significance of the specific topic they have chosen to address and specify an important aspect of the topic they seek to investigate. It therefore both helps to encourage readers' acceptance of the value of the present research they are conducting and promotes their own expertise in this particular topic area. Compared to Function 1 which mainly concerns the embellishment of the broad research area, however, Function 3 tends to be more specific in its scope and range of the topic and thus allows the authors to provide information about for what purposes, under what contexts or conditions, or for what reasons or with what potential results the chosen topic is significant. Examples 10 and 11 illustrate the specific way the significance of the given topic is promoted.

Example 10: Understanding the impact of both factors on language outcomes is essential not only to guide pedagogical and curricular decision making, but also to enhance understanding of vocabulary learning thorough literature on a theoretical level. [Function 3]

Example 11: This is considered crucial since we need to better understand how to alleviate potential 'identity dilemmas' (Barkhuizen, 2021) caused by (intrinsic) epistemological beliefs about the benefits of an effective research-practice relationship. [Function 3]

As can be seen in those examples, the significance of understanding or addressing a key aspect of the topic is represented through the use of hyping adjectives of centrality (e.g., *essential, crucial, important, critical, significant*, etc.) which will in turn become more specific by being conjoined by *to*-infinitive clauses (e.g., *not only to guide pedagogy but to*) or by clauses with conjunctions such as *because, since, as, hence, thus, therefore*, etc. High frequency of this rhetorical function (71 occurrences) employed by the RA authors seems to reflect their strong desire to ensure that their readers are left in no doubt of the specific value of what the topic can offer in terms of accomplishing pedagogical purposes, solving real-world issues, or filling the research gaps, resolving theoretical disputes, etc. The function of amplifying the significance of the topic was also realized through nouns such as *importance, insight, and evidence* by highlighting the centrality of the specific topic as having empirical or theoretical importance, providing new insight, or offering solid evidence of pedagogical usefulness, etc.

Another notable hyping word used in this rhetorical function was the adjective *new*(3) which relates to the novelty or newness of a research topic or a phenomenon, hence the implication that recent development of a particular topic is very likely to add new knowledge or new perspectives to this little-traversed/novel area. Example 12 illustrates this point.

Example 12: This shifting dynamic demonstrates a new conceptualization of the relationship between the school and home domain, moving the field from previous studies that viewed the two as opposing domains for student linguistic development. [Function 3]

Other than using hyping words for centrality and novelty claims, positive attitude markers, which indicate the authors' affective take on what is being addressed, usually about the most interesting, surprising, powerful, effective, useful or noteworthy aspect of the topic or the issue at hand, were also extensively used, marking 9 occurrences of these adjectives as a whole. Examples 13 and 14 illustrate the use of such positive attitude markers in embellishing a particular aspect of the topic. Note that the reason or rationale for the authors' having the affective take on the specific issue or concept that way is usually provided with the clauses including *because, since, given the context, considering the situation*, etc.

Example 13: This is a powerful consideration, given the need to maximize measurement quality within the time constraints of operational testing. [Function 3]

Example 14: This is noteworthy because the type of task influences how private speech is used. [Function 3]

In Function 3, the relatively frequent use of such attitudinal arguments with this function implies that it is important for authors of RAs to promote their research by making sure that readers acknowledge that the topic at hand or the issue under discussion invokes such attitude for a specific reason or given the specific context the issue is situated. The elaboration of the topic in this way renders a particular aspect of the given topic even more prominent and impressive.

In a similar vein, sentence-initial adverbs such as *importantly*(4), *notably*(3), and *surprisingly*(1) were among the prominent features that reflect the author's stance by projecting the personal attitude to the propositions in the text. Hyland (2005) argues that by assuming shared attitudes and values with the reader, authors can "pull readers into a conspiracy of agreement so that it can often be difficult to dispute these judgments" (p. 180). These hyping items represent their attempt to improve readability of what would otherwise be dense and complicated text, pinpointing the part that should be interpreted

as important or note-worthy, or surprising about the specific topic or the issue. As can be seen in Examples 15 and 16, the authors can draw the reader's attention to what the author considers as the most important, note-worthy, or surprising aspect of the topic under investigation, either as a new claim, or a counter-claim, a recent perspective, a new development of theories, or a shift of perspectives, etc.

Example 15: **Importantly**, the level and quality of a L2 learner's integrated mental and physical activity, as well as their affective experience, within classroom learning activity are context dependent. [Function 3]

Example 16: **Notably**, a AMD strategy can achieve the respective rhetorical purpose of each discourse made within a single written text. [Function 3]

Lastly, some other sentence-initial adverbs including *in fact* and *indeed* and adjectives such as *clear* and *evident* served to intensify factuality and certainty regarding a specific topic.

Example 17: **Indeed**, there are several studies to suggest that (student) teachers' grammatical knowledge is mostly underdeveloped (e.g. Alderson and Hudson 2013; Sangster et al 2013; Macken-Horarik et al. 2018) [Function 3]

Example 18: Regarding the latter, it has become increasingly **clear** that the focus ought to be not only on acquisition but also on activation. [Function 3]

The sentence-initial adverb *indeed* in Example 17, as a fact-asserting booster, indicates the author's conviction about the proposition related to a specific topic by presenting evidence in the form of empirical studies that support the author's conviction about the central issue of the topic. This finding provides support to Wu's (2025) assertion that fact-asserting boosters mainly appear in RA introductions, showing how previous studies convey the significance of the upcoming study. As certainty-indicating boosters, two hyping adjectives *evident* and *clear* were identified in the present corpus. In Example 18, the author, by using the adjective *clear*, shows his confidence in the information about the specific issue under investigation and persuade readers to agree with this confidence. It is important to note that these certainty-indicating boosters were found only in Function 3 out of three functions embedded in Move 3. The plausible reason for this is that the specific topic under investigation, compared to other target areas, tends to be more issue-laden and complicated and thus the need for clarity of the topic can be felt by the author in this rhetorical function.

Taken as a whole, the finding that specific research areas are more hyped than broad research areas or real-world issues in this corpus may reflect the authors' desire to increase the reader's greater awareness of the various tracks on which research is running and different perspectives or recent developments made regarding the specific topic and to ensure that readers are left in no doubt of the value of what the specific research topic under investigation can offer.

### *Rhetorical Functions, Targets, and Linguistic Items of Hype in Move 2*

The move-based analysis of the present corpus indicates that two hyping functions including Function 4 (Intensifying a research gap) and Function 5 (Amplifying the necessity of the present research) are performed to fulfill the overall communicative purpose of Move 2 (Establishing a Niche). The analysis further shows that Function 4 is usually employed to highlight the importance of the gap in previous research so that authors in Function 5 can persuade the readers that the study to be reported is essential and worthwhile in filling the gap.

Regarding Function 4, the analysis of the corpus has indicated that previous research that has been already conducted was abundantly presented before this rhetorical function is realized. Targets for hype in this function are thus previous studies that have not been sufficiently addressed in the existing literature. Arguments preceding the gap foregrounded in the text tend to enhance their significance by arguing that what is known is important but what is missing is essential. In realizing Function 4 through the hyping items such as *fully*(3), *significantly*(1), *primarily*(3), and *very*(3), it seems that authors are mainly concerned with persuading their readers that researching areas or topics that are significantly underexplored, under-researched or not fully addressed but bear important relevance to the field is essential so that they can convince the reader that the present research at hand is worthwhile. The following examples illustrate this point:

Example 19: Decades of research indicate that word learning can occur through reading in both first language (L1; Nagy et al. 1985; Sternberg 1987; Cunningham 2005) and second language (L2; Day and Swan 1998; Webb 2007; Pellicer-Sánchez 2016). However, experimental studies have found that intentional learning is more efficient (Hulstijn 1992; Laufer 2005; Lin and Hirsh

2012). In these debates, neither side has fully addressed how word learning occurs through reading. [Function 4]

A more direct indication of a gap in the existing literature was realized through the use of hyping item *very* with phrases like *few studies* as in Example 20.

Example 20: Very few studies have investigated resources for incidental learning of formulas and academic vocabulary. [Function 4]

In order to fulfil the overall communicative function of Move 2 (Establishing a Niche), while authors in Function 4 highlight the importance of a knowledge or research gap in their efforts to pave the way for building a call for the current research, they tend to employ Function 5 (Amplifying the need of the present research) to persuade the reader that conducting the present research is necessary and even imperative, given the identified gap or other rationales or contexts.

Example 21 from the corpus is a case in point, where the need for the present research is intensified through claiming the issue's importance in the research domain or in the real world, with strong attitude markers that signals the urgency to conduct the present research.

Example 21: Considering the significant growth in the EL student population and students from culturally and linguistically diverse background in American classrooms, it has become **imperative to examine the critical awareness of teachers' and educators' experiences with ELs and their preparedness to meet the needs of ELs**. [Function 5]

Targets of hype in this rhetorical function is therefore the author's present research relating to the rationale or the necessity of it. Six types of adjectives such as *necessary*(4), *important*(3), *imperative*(2), *crucial*(1), *critical*(1), and *essential*(1) were used, with most of them preceded or followed by conjunctions that help draw conclusions (*therefore, thus, consequently*) or offer reasons (*because*) or by clauses that help describe the rationale or the urgent situation (*Given the diverse nature of, Considering the significant growth, Provided that*) or by *to*-infinitive clauses that specify the purpose of conducting the research (e.g., *To capture this complexity*). Other types of hyping items were found in the form of verbs (*necessitate*) and adverbs (*vitally needed*), but each of the items were used only once, indicating that adjectives of urgency may be the prototypical markers of this function of amplifying the need for the present research.

### *Rhetorical Functions, Targets, and Linguistic Items of Hype in Move 3*

Four types of rhetorical functions of hype were identified in Move 3 (Occupying the Niche), which are deployed to establish the author's credentials, promote methodological merits of the study, highlight the primary findings of the present research, and intensify the novelty, contribution, and value of the present research.

In Function 6 (Promoting authors' prior research), targets for hype concern the related prior research conducted by the text author. Hyland and Jiang (2021b) argue that self-citation can help portray the authors as experts in this field, and is, therefore, promotional in nature. It was employed only once throughout the whole 90 RA introductions of the present corpus. The scarcity of this function in the present corpus of RA introductions is not surprising, considering the finding of Millar et al. (2019) which indicates that the author's prior research was mainly found in the discussion section of RAs. Another plausible reason for the scarcity of this function may be that the current corpus is compiled only from regular issues of recent years, not from special issues on a particular topic in which self-citation may be more heavy among the renowned authors who have a long history of engagement in a particular area.

Function 7 (Embellishing research methods) was more frequent, with a total of 13 instances of hyping arguments identified within this function. The analysis of the corpus reveals that Function 7 which is employed to emphasize the advantages of research designs, approaches, theoretical frameworks, or analytical tools, the authors explicitly claim that the focus or design of their study is valid, robust or novel, ultimately enhancing the credibility of their research. Although Millar et al. (2019, 2020) found that hypes targeted at the methods occurred mainly in the discussion or conclusion sections in the medical RA corpus, the analysis of the present corpus revealed that authors in the field of applied linguistics often highlighted some aspects of the research design, representing their attempt to build readers' confidence in the data, the setting, the participants, the techniques, or the tools used in their study in RA introductions. The linguistic items that are most strongly associated with this function focus on rigor and validity of the research design or methodology (e.g., *rigorous, robust, valid*) and general positive evaluation used to embellish the conceptual framework or analytical tool (e.g., *valuable, fine-grained*) as well as the suitability or uniqueness of a chosen approach, setting, data, or participants (e.g., *ideal, unique*). The following examples illustrate this point:

Example 22: Therefore, this article examines Iranian English-as-a-foreign-language(EFL) learners' beliefs about L2 fluency through elicited metaphor as a **rigorous research tool** in examining learners' beliefs. [Function 7]

Example 23: We selected two lower secondary schools that have offered CLIL program since 2011. They are located in different geographical areas and have contrasting SES, making them **ideal cases** for studying students' reasons for choosing CLIL program. [Function 7]

While most of the hyping items used to realize Function 7 belong to the grammatical category of adjectives (11 occurrences) as illustrated above, a couple of instances of hype occurred by using nouns (e.g., *insight*, *merit*) by explicitly stating their rare data as providing valuable or unique insights or their research design having methodological merits.

Taken as a whole, embellishment in this function mostly focus on what is valid, robust, unique, or valuable about the technique, procedure, framework or design of the present study when realized in Move 3 of RA introductions. The need to hype methodology in this way is perhaps partly due to the emerging range of available options of research tools, techniques, and data, but is also due to a competitive climate which encourages robust research designs and places pressure on authors to demonstrate rigor as well as uniqueness (Hyland & Jiang, 2021b). Though with relatively limited frequency, authors seem to rely on methodological aspects of their study as targets for hype to promote the merits of the present research based on the validity, rigor, appropriateness, and suitability of the methodology adopted for doing the research.

Function 8 (Highlighting primary research findings), which marked only eight occurrences in the present corpus, focus on research outcomes of the present study as targets for hype. The relative small proportion in hyping primary research findings may be explained by the fact that the rhetorical function of presenting research outcomes itself occurs mostly in results and discussion sections of RAs, as indicated Hyland and Jiang (2021b). It is through this rhetorical function, however, that authors seek to underline the importance of their findings and the weight of their interpretations. The analysis of the present corpus of RA introductions reveals that this function was accomplished exclusively through fact-asserting verbs. A total of eight occurrences of this function were all realized through three hyping verbs including *show*(4), *reveal*(2), and *highlight*(2). Since the targets of hype in this function related to the outcomes of the present research, either emphasizing a note-worthy aspect of the results or highlighting primary findings, the following three verbs targeting these aspects were found to be used to draw the reader's attention to what the author considers as a salient result concerning the overall purpose of the present research (Millar et al., 2020), as Example 24 indicates.

Example 24: Our analyses revealed how Mid-western in-service teachers were deeply influenced by the power of monoglossic English language ideologies despite their willingness to implement RLC responsive teaching practices for their EBLs. [Function 8]

By using such fact-asserting boosters as *show*, *reveal*, and *highlight*, the author's clear stance towards the truth of the primary outcome of the study was revealed, but no further embellishment about the finding itself was made in this function. The low frequency of this rhetorical function indicates that reporting of the results may not be the authors' preferred strategy to promote their work at least in the introduction section of RAs.

The last functional category of hype, Function 9 (Amplifying the value of the overall research project), was found to be abundantly employed in Move 3, marking a total of 29 instances. Research primacy, as a target for hype in this rhetorical function, concerns the overall research project described as superior or assigned priority. In this function, there are ample opportunities for the authors of RAs to promote novelty or interestingness of their present work toward the end of the introduction section. In the present corpus, novelty of the present research was promoted with hyping words such as *new*(1), *novel*(2), *original*(2), and *innovative*(1).

Example 25: The goal of this study is to evaluate affordance of high-immersion VR in terms of their resulting learner perceptions and outcomes to yield novel insights as to how VR-assisted language learning using social VR can inform L2 Spanish learning. [Function 9]

In the competitive environment of academic publishing, authors may be under increasing pressure to demonstrate what is new or novel about their research, as Example 25 illustrates. Novelty was also grammatically realized through the use of determiners (i.g., *first*) in the present corpus, marking 3 occurrences. The following example illustrates the authors' effort to assign their overall research project a superior status in terms of its novelty:

Example 26: To our knowledge, this is the first study to make a direct comparison between these two text types with younger, school-based language learners. [Function 9]

The current emphasis on novelty in academic fields is not without danger in that with RA authors striving to demonstrate novelty in any way possible, the meaning of the term can blur. While on the one hand novelty indicates something truly new in the existing literature, novelty can also reside in demonstrating an established phenomenon under slightly different conditions, or in proposing and testing a new theoretical construct in an established context, acknowledging the accumulative and incremental nature of academic scholarship. The above examples all reflect the latter case where the authors tend to avoid placing an over-emphasis on newness by promoting novelty in a very limited scope and range (e.g., *novel insights into a very specific research issue, the first study conducted with a particular group of learners*).

Amplifying the value of the overall research project in terms of contribution was another important feature with relatively high occurrence in Function 9, making 10 occurrences in the present corpus. The high frequency of hypes targeting the value of their research indicates that it is important for RA authors to specify the relevance of their project to the discipline or specific scholarship and highlight the contribution of their study to the field or a specific topical area.

Example 27: The present study aims to address this research gap and **contribute to conversation analytic (CA) scholarship on turn beginnings** by exploring what the use of the turn-initial “and” by L1 Czech and Finnish students in peer interaction in English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) classrooms tells us about their interactional competence. [Function 9]

In Example 27, the author enhanced the value of the current contribution by firstly identifying the purpose of the present research in terms of addressing a research gap and emphasizing the area of the contribution (*CA scholarship on turn beginnings*) the current study attempts to make in filling the gap. The verb *contribute to*(10) was extensively used to promote the value of the study by explicitly point to a particular area of its contribution.

While primacy of the present study inherently relates to the outcome of the research, the analysis the corpus indicates that this rhetorical function goes beyond this to emphasize the wider importance of the overall research project itself and promote the value of the study in terms of offering insights into the phenomenon, offering empirical evidence or providing pedagogical implications. The following examples illustrate this point:

Example 28: This study may provide **useful evidence about the degree to which spaced retrieval practice may contribute to vocabulary learning in other ways apart from flashcard**. [Function 9]

Example 29: The findings of the study could provide **practical implications for language teachers** to interpret and navigate their identity tensions in relation to the situated activity systems, and for teacher educators and school administrators to understand and help resolve identity-related contradictions in reform settings. [Function 9]

Taken as a whole, although not consistent with the result of Millar et al. (2019) who analyzed five sections of medical RAs out of which only one instance of hypes targeting research primacy occurred in an introduction and the majority of such hypes occurred in a discussion section, the analysis of the present corpus indicated that research primacy is an important target area of hype in the introduction of RAs in the field of applied linguistics. The plausible reason for the relatively higher frequency of this function identified in the present corpus may be that in the cut-throat competitive world in which applied linguists now work, it may be important for researchers to encourage readers to have the awareness of the benefits of the study before they read the rest of the sections of their RAs. It is also possible that the hyping of the value of the overall research project is a means of sending a message of relevance and importance to wider audiences, especially, for the language teachers and practitioners.

## CONCLUSION

The present study explored how and to what extent authors in the field of applied linguistics promote their research by examining these authors' use of hypes that glamorize, publicize, embellish and/or exaggerate aspects of their present research and what rhetorical functions are realized by means of linguistic items and target areas of hype across the three moves of the introduction section of RAs. The findings of the study indicated that the use of hype is prevalent in introductions, that most of the hyping items are realized in grammatical categories of adjectives and adverbs, with moderate use of nouns and verbs, and that nine target areas were hyped, with high frequency of occurrences marked for areas such as Specific Research Topic, Broad Research Area, Real-world Issue, and Research Primacy. The analysis further revealed that hypes were used for different rhetorical functions, with Functions 3, 1, and 2 embedded in Move 1 and Function 9 embedded in Move 3 marking high frequency of occurrences. This study suggests that authors strive to amplify the significance of the

specific topic, embellish the broad research area, establish real-world contextualization, and promote the value of the overall research project in this part-genre of introduction of RAs. Overall, the present study demonstrates that centrality claims, whether the target is the general topic, specific topic, or real-world issue, and value claims of the present study are crucial rhetorical functions realized in the part-genre of introductions. The results of the study provide support to the claim by Azizi et al. (2022) that applied linguists rely heavily on promotional strategies to amplify the significance of the research topic and the contribution of the research findings. Beyond the field of applied linguistics, it is in line with previous studies that have found that promotion permeates RA introductions (Carter, 2016; Deng et al., 2024; Martin & Perez, 2014). The findings of the present study also support the claim made by Hyland (2023) that academics in all fields of study including applied linguistics are currently driven by pressures to gain visibility through their publications and citations, and thus rhetorically and linguistically promoting their work through the use of hypes seems to play an important role in this endeavor. However, there are also concerns raised about the increasing use of hypes in RAs. This is because while hypes may add to the readability and persuasiveness of an argument by clarifying the author's position and strengthening his or her claims, they can also undermine arguments and compromise the integrity of the information being presented (Hyland & Jiang, 2019a; Millar et al., 2019, 2020).

Given such contradictory assessments of the function of hyperbolic language, it is advisable to approach hyping critically and strike a balance between the differing interests of authors and readers of RAs when considering the use of hypes. In this regard, the present study can provide important pedagogical implications for EAP instruction. A critical pedagogical approach could be proposed to help EAP learners promote their research appropriately in the introduction of RAs and RAs as a whole. The prevalent inclusion of hyping functions embedded in the move structure of introductions could be the foundation for designing awareness-raising tasks to remind EAP learners of their presence in RA introductions. Subsequently, case analysis together with the comparison of texts with and without such hyping functions could further raise the learners' awareness of promotional effects of hype. In doing so, learners could be trained to develop a critical awareness of hype as both authors and readers of RAs, and produce their own appropriately promoted RA introductions.

With a better sense of how resourcefully and tactfully expert authors promote their work in claiming centrality and promoting value of research in RAs, EAP learners will then be trained to manipulate lexico-grammatical resources to realize specific rhetorical functions. Following the approach to function-form mapping (Moreno & Swales, 2018), EAP instructors can help establish an expanding framework of hype weaving linguistic resources with specific promotional goals to guide learners through RA introduction writing. The taxonomy of 9 rhetorical functions of hype presented in Table 2 of this paper can be a good starting point where the learners can raise their awareness of the variety of rhetorical functions realized across three moves. By using the detailed information on what kinds of hyping words and expressions are predominantly used in realizing each of the rhetorical functions presented in this study, the learners can better establish a form-function mapping of promotional resources. For example, with regard to Function 3, it should be emphasized that professional authors promote the specific topic they deem important or essential to conduct by providing the specific reasons, rationales, purposes for pursuing the particular line of research rather than simply inserting hyping adjectives of centrality into the texts. It should also be emphasized that the extensive use of or even heavy reliance on some biased words may lead to the loss of objectivity in RAs. Therefore, similar to the suggestion by Hyland and Jiang (2021b) and Fraser and Martin (2009), a fair use of such linguistic devices in order to convey the fidelity of the knowledge and value claims is argued for. Probably, EAP instructors may play a role to address the problem. For example, instructors may help learners or novice researchers distinguish the compelling effect of the hyperbolic language for promotion purposes from the exaggerated one in various contexts (Millar et al., 2019).

Admittedly, the relatively small size of the corpus and the investigation of the single discipline constrains the generalizability of the findings of the study to other disciplinary contexts. However, the small corpus used in this study allowed for a close examination of context-embedded use of hype, which in turn helps contribute to the existing literature on promotion and hype by providing an expanded framework that encompasses linguistic items, target areas, and rhetorical functions of hype realized across the three moves of RA introductions. Nevertheless, larger corpora could be compiled to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the linguistic realizations of hypes and their rhetorical functions in a different part-genre or entire RAs in applied linguistics and other disciplines. Furthermore, an ethnographic approach could be adopted to supplement corpus-based genre analysis so that the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for the use of rhetorical functions and linguistic resources of hypes as well as the effects they produce on readers could be investigated.

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