Unit 6: Reporting and Interpreting Results

Engineering Corpus — Full corpus (163 articles, ~610,000 words)

Overview

The Results section presents what was found. In engineering, results are overwhelmingly communicated through figures, tables, and equations; the surrounding text directs the reader's attention to key features, reports numerical outcomes, and provides brief commentary.

Unlike the humanities, where results sections are dense with p-values and test statistics, engineering results sections are dense with **directional change language** (*increase*, *decrease* at 54.4/10k), **extrema** (*maximum*, *minimum*, *peak* at 24.2/10k), and **comparisons** (*higher than*, *compared to* at 15.5/10k combined). The Results section in engineering is less about statistical significance and more about performance, behaviour, and agreement with predictions.

Before You Write: Conceptualising Your Results Section

Step 1: Identify Your Main Findings

List your findings, starting with the most important. For each, write one sentence in plain language.

Step 2: Decide Your Organising Principle

By test case or configuration; from validation to new results; by parameter; or from general to specific.

Step 3: Plan Your Data Displays

For each finding: figure, table, or text? In engineering, figure

references (60.0/10k in body sections) far exceed table references (10.3/10k).

Step 4: Decide What to Comment On

Brief commentary (6.6/10k) is acceptable in Results, particularly *good agreement* judgments, but save extended interpretation for the Discussion.

Move 1: Directing Attention to Data Displays (10.6/10k)

Engineering results are communicated primarily through figures and tables. This move directs the reader's attention.

Usage	Count	Per 10k	Function
Fig./Figure N shows/presents/illustrates	350	5.7	Figure as grammatical subject
is/are shown/presented/plotted in Fig./Table	104	1.7	Finding as subject, display as location
Table N shows/presents/lists	85	1.4	Table as grammatical subject
it can be seen/observed from	56	0.9	Impersonal observation
as shown/seen/presented in Fig./Table	28	0.5	Parenthetical back-reference
see Fig./Table	25	0.4	Directive reference
Total Move 1	648	10.6	

Key finding: The figure-as-subject construction (*Fig. N shows…* at 5.7/10k) is the dominant way to open a results paragraph. The impersonal *it can be seen* (0.9/10k) is a distinctively engineering construction that removes all human agency from the observation.

Corpus examples:

> *"Fig. 9 shows the SPL evaluated at 'Head Cavities' for some section and for all the 5 investigated configurations." (Fig. N shows* - figure as subject)
> *"Table 3 shows the electric vehicle's energy consumption with and without the proposed ECC under these initial conditions." (Table N shows* - table as subject)
> *"Table 8 shows that the tracking accuracy on a 50 μm-diameter circular trajectory was less than 5 nm and the homing accuracy was less than 1 nm." (Table N shows that* - introducing a finding)
> *"From these figures it can be seen that the ensemble of ascending nodes occupied by the inclined debris fragments is centred at 0° spanning ±60°." (it can be seen* - impersonal observation)

Writer's note: Choose your construction to control emphasis. *Fig. 5 shows X* foregrounds the figure. *X is shown in Fig. 5* foregrounds the finding. *It can be seen from Fig. 5 that X* creates an observation frame. Vary them to avoid monotony.

Move 2: Reporting Findings (134.3/10k)

The dominant move: presenting specific outcomes with numerical evidence.

Key finding: Where the humanities rely on p-values (56.9/10k), engineering relies on **directional change** (*increase/decrease* at 54.4/10k) and **extrema** (*maximum/minimum/peak* at 24.2/10k). Engineering Results describe how things change, how big they get, and how they compare.

Corpus examples:

> *"LCOE for the plant using SC as a power block is 0.0947 $/KWh which is lower than the GC and OC by 31.82% and 48.8%, respectively." (comparative + respectively)*
> *"Results indicate that a collision is likely to occur every 4 years for one satellite out of the entire GEO active satellite population against a 1 cm RSO catalogue." (results indicate* - quantified finding)

"The proposed ECC reduces the electric vehicle's energy consumption by approximately 23.56%." (directional change + approximate quantification)

Usage	Count	Per 10k	Function
increase/decrease/rise/decline/drop/reduce	3,312	54.4	Directional change
maximum/minimum/peak/optimal	1,475	24.2	Extrema and optima
shows/showed that / indicates that	783	12.9	Reporting verb + that-clause
significant(ly)	677	11.1	Marking significance
higher/lower/greater/less than	548	9.0	Comparative reporting
compared to/with	395	6.5	Explicit comparison
the effect/influence/impact of	391	6.4	Effect-framing
approximately / roughly / about [N]	284	4.7	Approximate quantification
results show/indicate/suggest	229	3.8	Results as subject
Total Move 2	~8,180	134.3	

Writer's note: The characteristic pattern is: **[what changed] + [direction] + [by how much] + [compared to what]**. For example: *"The heat transfer coefficient increased by 15% compared to the baseline configuration."* Always include direction, magnitude, unit, and comparison basis.

Move 3: Commenting on Findings (6.6/10k)

Brief interpretive commentary, anchored to data.

Key finding: The distinctively engineering construction is **good agreement** (1.0/10k) — used to judge the match between model

predictions and experimental data. It is a validation marker embedded within the Results section.

Usage	Count	Per 10k	Function
this suggests/indicates/implies /confirms	107	1.8	Brief interpretation
consistent with / in line with / in agreement with	88	1.4	Anchoring to expectations
this is due to / because / attributed to	71	1.2	Brief causal explanation
good/reasonable/excellent agreement	63	1.0	Validation commentary
as expected / not surprisingly / notably	53	0.9	Evaluative comment
may be / might be / could be [explanation]	21	0.3	Hedged explanation
Total Move 3	403	6.6	

Corpus examples:

> *"For the current simulation the measured and calculated turbulence intensity show a good agreement at the various mass loading." (good agreement* - validation)
> *"This is because the proposed ECC is only active within a certain distance, in this work 500 m, of the upcoming traffic signal." (this is because* - brief causal explanation)
> *"As expected, flow reduction is observed when the incident sheared flow encounters the porous tower." (as expected* - confirming predictions)
> *"This is because at very low expansion ratios the turbine is not producing significant amounts of work at any non-dimensional speed line." (this is because* - explaining a mechanism)

Writer's note: Keep Results commentary brief. *This is because* and *this is due to* offer quick causal explanation. *Good agreement* signals validation. Save extended interpretation for the Discussion (Unit 8).

Move 4: Transitioning Between Findings (62.2/10k)

Usage	Count	Per 10k	Function
first/second/third/finally	1,455	23.9	Sequential ordering
however / on the other hand / in contrast	1,139	18.7	Contrastive transition
moreover/furthermore/additionally/in addition	642	10.5	Additive connection
with respect to / in terms of / regarding	468	7.7	Topic-shift markers
similarly / likewise	81	1.3	Parallel transition
Total Move 4	~3,785	62.2	

Key finding: Engineering uses *however* / contrastive markers (18.7/10k) far more heavily than the humanities, reflecting the comparative nature of engineering results. The construction *in terms of* (7.7/10k) shifts the dimension of comparison: *"In terms of accuracy, Method A is superior; in terms of computational cost, Method B is preferred."*

Corpus examples:

> *"In terms of ride comfort, the rms value of the sum of the body accelerations was increased by approximately 5% compared to the proposed observer." (in terms of* - dimension of comparison)
> *"In this case it has been considered only the Head Cavity of the section III because it appears to be the most critical in terms of internal SPL." (in terms of* - narrowing focus)

The Results Cycle

For each major finding, the moves cycle:

Direct (Move 1): *"Fig. 5 shows the variation of displacement with load for all three configurations."*

Report (Move 2): *"The maximum displacement for Configuration A was 12.3 mm, compared to 8.7 mm for Configuration B, a reduction of 29%."*

Comment (Move 3): *"This reduction is consistent with the increased stiffness predicted by the analytical model."*

Transition (Move 4): *"In terms of energy absorption, however, Configuration A outperformed Configuration B…"*

Then repeat for the next finding.

Results vs. Discussion

Feature	Results	Discussion
Numerical detail	Dense (134.3/10k)	Less dense
Figure/table references	High (10.6/10k)	Lower
"Good agreement"	1.0/10k (brief validation)	Extended comparison
Causal explanation	Brief (this is because 1.2/10k)	Extended (may be attributed to)
Hedging	Lower	Higher
Comparison with literature	Brief anchoring (1.4/10k)	Extended discussion

Implications for Writing

Lead with Figures

The construction *Fig. N shows…* (5.7/10k) is the standard opening for a results paragraph. Plan your figures first, then write the text around them.

Quantify Everything

Always state the direction, magnitude, unit, and comparison basis. Vague reports (*"the performance improved"*) are insufficient.

Use "Good Agreement" for Validation

The construction *good agreement* (1.0/10k) signals the match between

prediction and measurement. It belongs equally in Unit 7 (Validation).

Vary Your Display References

Alternate between *Fig. N shows…* (figure as subject), *X is shown in Fig. N* (finding as subject), and *It can be seen from Fig. N that…* (impersonal). Monotonous repetition is a common weakness.