



**WRITING FOR PUBLICATION
IN ENGLISH:
RESULTS SECTIONS**

**January 29, 2015
FRMU Academic Writing**

THE RESULTS SECTION IN AN ARTICLE

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Results <i>or</i> Data Analysis	Results <i>or</i> Data Analysis	Results and Discussion	Results <i>or</i> Data Analysis
Discussion	Discussion	∅	Discussion and Conclusion(s)
Conclusion(s)	∅	Conclusion(s)	∅



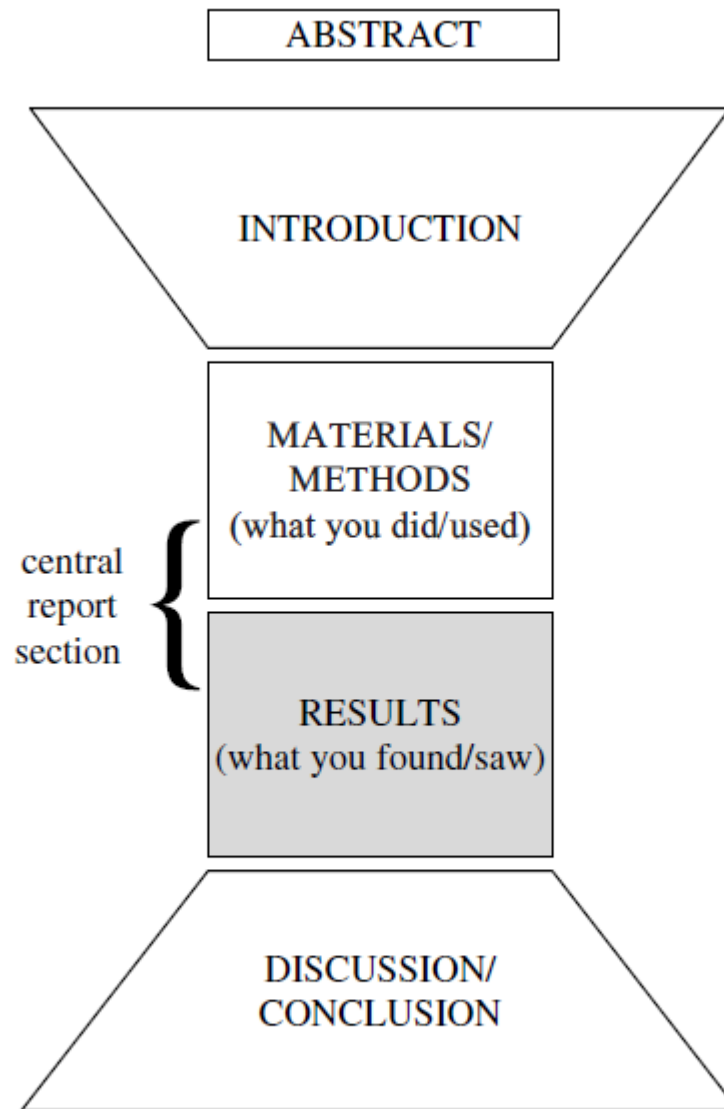


Fig. 1. The shape of a research article or thesis.



THE STRUCTURE OF RESULTS SECTION

1. REVISITING THE RESEARCH AIM/EXISTING RESEARCH
2. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF RESULTS
3. INVITATION TO VIEW RESULTS
4. SPECIFIC/KEY RESULTS IN DETAIL
5. COMPARISONS WITH RESULTS IN OTHER RESEARCH
6. PROBLEMS WITH RESULTS
7. POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS OF RESULTS



THE STRUCTURE OF RESULTS SECTION

1. REVISITING THE RESEARCH AIM/EXISTING RESEARCH

- To what extent your study fulfills the aims you set out in the Introduction
- You might want to go back to the Intro and redefine the original aims in relation to the results you obtained

The main purpose of this work was to...

In this work, we sought to establish a methodology for...

*In earlier studies attempts were made to establish
...*



THE STRUCTURE OF RESULTS SECTION

2. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

- Here, you summarize your methodology (highlight the important aspects of the materials, equipment or methodology you used to obtain your results)

It is apparent that in all / most / the majority of cases...

In this section, we compare / evaluate / present...

The results are divided into two parts as follows:...



THE STRUCTURE OF RESULTS SECTION

3. INVITATION TO VIEW RESULTS

- You can't always write *Figure 1 shows...* Figures and tables don't always *show* things; sometimes they *present* things or *summarize* things.

Figure 1 *contains*
corresponds to
demonstrates
displays
illustrates
lists



THE STRUCTURE OF RESULTS SECTION

4. SPECIFIC/KEY RESULTS IN DETAIL

- The language used to describe specific results includes both language which provides objective description of the results (e.g., *lower*) and subjective, evaluative language or hedging (e.g., *significantly lower, slightly lower*)

Objective: *it was found, remains constant, did not occur ...*

Hedging: *in the majority of cases it was found, tends to remain constant, did not occur in general ...*



THE STRUCTURE OF RESULTS SECTION

5. COMPARISONS WITH RESULTS IN OTHER RESEARCH

- Make sure the location of the reference citation or number is accurate
- Remember that the right place for a reference is not always at the end of the sentence.

As reported by Hyland (2010), ...

This is consistent with results obtained in [1].

The results are qualitatively similar to those of earlier simulation studies.



THE STRUCTURE OF RESULTS SECTION

6. PROBLEMS WITH RESULTS

- Remember that research is not made invalid by inappropriate results if they are presented in a conventional, professional way.

Minimize the problem/focus on good results:

Although this was not obtained experimentally, it can be assumed to exist.

Suggest reasons for the problem:

.... was hard to control and is beyond the scope of this study.

Offer a solution:

... in future, it is advised that/case should be taken...



THE STRUCTURE OF RESULTS SECTION

7. POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS OF RESULTS

- Provide a general explanation or interpretation of what your results might mean. This signals the move towards the Discussion/Conclusion. Use hedging expressions.

This suggests/indicates/implies that...

It seems therefore that...

It could be inferred therefore that these may have ...

Compare the two sentences:

We found that sunbathing is related to the onset of cancer.

It is thought that excessive sunbathing may sometimes be considered as contributing to the onset of certain types of cancer.



LOGIC: WHAT ARE THE ISSUES HERE?

- Wanted: worker to take care of cow that does not smoke or drink.
- As a baboon who grew up wild in the jungle, I realized that Wikki had special nutritional needs.
- The patient was referred to a psychiatrist with a severe emotional problem.
- About two years ago, a wart appeared on his left hand, which he wanted removed.
- People who use birth control methods that smoke are in danger of having retarded children



TENSE CHOICES (SOME TENTATIVE GUIDELINES)

- **to discuss what the review paper itself is doing: present, past or future tense.**
This paper presents research...We have discussed....
- **to present state of current knowledge/general truths: present tense**
The concept of [x] is fundamental to an understanding...
- **to evaluate/comment on another study carried out in the past: simple past or present perfect tense.**
Jones demonstrated that....
- **to refer to a non-specific point in the past and still true today: present perfect tense**
Little previous research has been conducted in...
- **to refer to a group of studies: present perfect tense (implies an evaluation)**
Previous studies have shown...
- **to give definitions: present tense**
X can be defined as...



REPORTING VERBS

Smith (2002) states ...; Jones (1997) contends ...

...proposes ...; ...argues ...; ...claims ...; ... points out ...

... asserts ...; ... believes ...; ... comments

...observes ...;

They conclude ...; ...suggest ...; ...confirm ...; ...concede ...; ...note ...; ...predict ...; ...report ...

The results indicate ...etc.

Use the concordancer to check usage:

- What are the most widely used reporting verbs in your field?
- What words are associated with the use of each reporting verb

Eg. *'argues convincingly', 'tentatively proposes', 'described matter-of-factly'*

NOTE THE SPREAD OF NOMINALISATION (OF REPORTING VERBS):

<i>The statement by x that...</i>	<i>...observation...</i>
<i>The contention that...</i>	<i>...conclusion...</i>
<i>Smith's proposition...</i>	<i>...suggestion...</i>
<i>His argument...</i>	<i>The confirmation of this study provided by....</i>
<i>This claim has been...</i>	<i>This concession</i>
<i>This assertion</i>	<i>Their prediction....</i>
<i>...belief...</i>	<i>A contradictory report from...</i>
<i>...comment...</i>	

GETTING STARTED ON WRITING

- syntactic borrowing/patchwriting
- brainstorming
- mindmapping
- planning
- talk to an interested listener
- writing books by Natalie Goldberg.eg. *Writing down the bones*




SUBMISSION

- Always give your work to another **reader** before submission.
- Check **requirements** given on journal website. Follow them!
- Write a cover **letter** that shows in one sentence why your article is relevant and important for that journal.
- Expect to be **rejected**.
- Take the slightest positivity from reviewers as a sign that you should revise and **resubmit**.
- Address reasonable reviewer **comments**. NB. Reviewers are not paid.
- Accompany the revised submission with a **letter** which gives your response to all reviewer comments – what you changed; why you did not change something but how you nevertheless addressed the comment.
- Expect anywhere between **2** months and **5** years to final publication



SOME COMMON REASONS FOR REJECTION OF ARTICLES (EDITOR/REVIEWER COMMENTS)

- Topic is over-represented in that journal
 - Topic is not timely
 - Topic is not appropriate for that journal
 - Too broad/too narrow → contextualise/aim at broader academic audience
 - Data inadequately analysed/discussed → Balance theory/analysis and data/evidence
 - Methodology inappropriate for topic → explain relevance
 - “Sloppy”, “unacademic” → check accuracy of quotations, include up-to-date references
 - “Sounds like a class paper” → Take up an identity as a member of your scholarly community; eg. voice; debates in your field; objections to your claims
 - “Adds nothing new” → read widely; claim your own ideas; tell what is new
 - Poor structure → check for redundancies; make structure overt
 - Grammar problems → Concordancing; Hire an editor
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Resources for writing skills development

- Writing groups
- Feedback groups
- Journal clubs
- Concordancing
- Texts: eg. *Writing your journal article in 12 weeks* by Wendy Belcher (Sage, 2009)

References on getting published

- Chanock, K. (2008). Guest editorial: Surviving the reviewing process and getting published. *Journal of Academic Language & Learning*, 2(1), E1-E4.
- Kamler, B. (2010). Revise and resubmit: The role of publication brokers. In C. Aitchison, B. Kamler & A. Lee (Eds.), *Publishing pedagogies for the doctorate and beyond*. London and New York: Routledge.
- McKay, S. L. (2003). Reflections on being a gatekeeper. In C. P. Casanave & S. Vandrick (Eds.), *Writing for scholarly publication: Behind the scenes in language education* (pp. 91-102). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

