

Scientific papers:

What they write vs. what they mean.

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| “It has long been known” | I didn’t look up the original reference. |
| “A definite trend is evident” | The data are practically meaningless. |
| “While it has not been possible to provide definite answers to the questions” | An unsuccessful experiment, but I still hope to get it published. |
| “Three of the samples were chosen for detailed study” | The other results didn’t make any sense. |
| “Typical results are shown” | This is the prettiest graph. |
| “These results will be in a subsequent report” | I might get around to this sometime, if published/funded. |
| “A careful analysis of obtained data” | Three pages of notes were obliterated when I knocked over a glass of beer. |
| “After additional study by my colleagues” | They didn’t understand it, either. |
| “Thanks are due to Joe Blotz for assistance with the experiment and to Cindy Adams for valuable discussions” | Mr. Blotz did the work and Mrs. Adams explained to me what it meant. |
| “A highly significant area for exploratory study” | A totally useless topic selected by my committee. |
| “In my experience” | Once. |
| “In case after case” | Twice. |
| “In a series of cases” | Three times. |
| “It is believed that” | I think. |
| “It is generally believed that” | A couple of others think so, too. |
| “Correct within an order of magnitude” | Wrong. |
| “According to statistical analysis” | Rumor has it. |
| “It is clear that much additional work will be required before a complete understanding of this phenomenon occurs” | I don’t understand. |
| “A statistically-oriented projection of significance of these findings” | A wild guess. |
| “It is hoped that this study will stimulate further investigations in this field” | I quit. |