Reporting Verbs

In academic writing, you can refer to ideas or research of others by using reporting verbs, e.g. Brown (2011) states that…. Your choice of reporting verb can show the reader how you feel about the research you are quoting or paraphrasing, e.g. Smith (2010) shows … vs. Smith (2010) advises to…. vs. Smith (2010) challenges …

Using the same reporting word all the time will make your writing sound repetitive. Here is a list of common reporting verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Tentative</th>
<th>Strong (in favour)</th>
<th>Strong (against)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • to show  
• to demonstrate  
• to investigate  
• to explore  
• to state  
• to report  
• to list  
• to describe  
• to outline  
• to note  
• to comment  
• to express  
• to remark  
• to declare  
• to inform  
• to discuss  
• to define  
• to mention  
• to address  
• to present  
• to reveal  
• to find  
• to view | • to suggest  
• to propose  
• to advise  
• to recommend  
• to speculate  
• to hypothesise  
• to reason  
• to imply  
• to postulate  
• to question  | • to assert  
• to advocate  
• to encourage  
• to argue  
• to affirm  
• to believe  
• to appraise  
• to conclude  
• to stress  
• to emphasise  
• to accentuate  
• to urge  
• to insist  
• to claim  
• to convince  
• to satisfy  
• to confirm  
• to support the view | • to challenge  
• to dispute  
• to disagree  
• to refute  
• to negate  
• to object  
• to contradict  
• to dismiss  
• to caution  
• to doubt  
• to oppose |

**Examples**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Your Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jones (2013) notes that using a variety of reporting verbs can improve students’ writing style.</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It has been suggested that using a variety of reporting verbs can improve students’ writing style (Jones, 2013).</td>
<td>Tentative – other opinions may be present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones’s (2013) study affirms that using a variety of reporting verbs can improve students’ writing style.</td>
<td>Strong – evidence in favour of an argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A study by Jones (2013) challenges the view that using a variety of reporting verbs can improve students’ writing style.</td>
<td>Strong – evidence against an argument</td>
</tr>
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