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:

**Neutral**
- 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

**Tentative**
- to suggest
- to propose
- to advise
- to recommend
- to speculate
- to hypothesise
- to reason
- to imply
- to postulate
- to question

**Strong (in favour)**
- 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

**Strong (against)**
- to challenge
- to dispute
- to disagree
- to refute
- to negate
- to object
- to contradict
- to dismiss
- to caution
- to doubt
- to oppose

**Examples**

| Jones (2013) notes that using a variety of reporting verbs can improve students’ writing style. | Neutral |
| It has been suggested that using a variety of reporting verbs can improve students’ writing style (Jones, 2013). | Tentative – other opinions may be present |
| Jones’s (2013) study affirms that using a variety of reporting verbs can improve students’ writing style. | Strong – evidence in favour of an argument |
| A study by Jones (2013) challenges the view that using a variety of reporting verbs can improve students’ writing style. | Strong – evidence against an argument |