

LANGUAGE FOR CITING

Use this sheet to help you:

- use a range of reporting verbs
- use a range expressions that indicate your positions on the ideas of others
- demonstrate a critical approach when referring to the work of other

5 minute self test

Read the statement below and complete the tasks:

"Company X takes outstanding care of its employees" (Brown, 2008).

1. Report the statement in a way that does not show you agree or disagree with it.

2. Report the statement to show you agree with it.

3. Report the statement to show you disagree with it.

Refer to Page 6 for suggested answers

Introduction: making your voice clear

A common complaint lecturers make of student work is that the student's "voice" is not clear. By this, lecturers mean that students often fail to state their perspectives and opinions directly, and students don't incorporate the ideas of others in ways that indicate critical distance and analysis. At the same time, some lecturers criticise the use of the word "I" in texts ('I think...', 'I will present...') and consider it inappropriate in academic writing.

So, how can you write in a way that makes your voice clear? Here are three ways:

1. Follow text-type conventions

You can help make your voice clear by following standard conventions of, for example, the essay or the literature review, and the guidelines specified by your lecturer.

Doing this will ensure you present your central arguments and supporting points in the appropriate sections of the text. (See Study and Research Helpsheets on genres such as the essay, literature review, report and annotated bibliography).

2. Use appropriate connectives

Appropriate use of connectives ("first", "likewise", "therefore", "indeed" etc.) can also help make your voice clear, as they act as "signposts" for the reader that show links between ideas. (See the **Study and Research Helpsheet: Connectives**).

3. Use a variety of reporting verbs and expressions

The purpose of this Helpsheet is to provide you with a variety of terms and expressions to refer to the ideas of others in ways that indicate critical distance and analysis.

Using this language will not only make your writing appear more critical; it will also help you to become more critical about texts. It will mean you do more than just refer to ideas ('he states...' / 'she states...'). Instead, it will help you develop a habit of supporting, attacking, synthesizing, questioning, summarising, and contrasting ideas. And this is what lecturers and supervisors want.

Using this language appropriately

As you consider the language presented below, pay attention to the often subtle but significant differences between terms. Be aware that some of these examples are considered inappropriate for some disciplines (for example, social science and empirical science subjects tend to avoid expressions using the first person, "I"). You may need to consult written work in your own discipline to confirm which examples are acceptable. Alternatively you may wish to speak to your tutor or lecturer if you are unsure.

Reporting Verbs

Use a range of reporting verbs to indicate your positions on the ideas of others:

<p>Author's surname</p>	<p>discusses examines explores investigates questions undermines refers to attacks supports presents dismisses</p>	<p>+ noun phrase</p>
<p>The article</p> <p>He / she</p>	<p>states asserts argues maintains explains claims implies affirms assumes notes accepts acknowledges adds admits agrees concedes denies predicts</p>	<p>+ that + clause</p>

Stating the positions of others

- Smith's argument is that...
- Smith's conclusion is that...
- Smith's claim is that...
- Smith's point is that...
- Smith's point of view is that...
- According to Smith...
- From Smith's point of view...
- The point of Smith's article/paper is that ...
- The substance of Smith's article/paper is that...
- The upshot of Smith's argument/paper/article is that...
- Smith's work/data allows him to draw the conclusion that...
- Smith's work/data leads him to the conclusion that...
- Some theorists, such as Smith (1989) think that...
- It is thought by some theorists, for example, Jones (1980) and Smith (1989) that...

Stating the positions of others tentatively

- Smith's claim seems to be that...
- Smith seems to be claiming that...
- Smith's argument seems to be that...
- Smith's conclusion seems to be that...
- The point of Smith's article seems to be that...

Identifying assumptions

- This assumes that...
- Smith assumes that...
- Smith's assumption is that...
- Assuming ... [then] it follows that...
- The following assumption is being made here...
- One/An assumption of this view is that...
- The point being assumed here is that...
- The assumption on which this depends is ...
- The assumption behind this view is [the point that]...
- Smith's argument depends on the assumption/assumes one thing: ...

Making conclusions based on the works of others

- The conclusion of [all] this is that...
- The result of [all] this is that...
- An outcome of this is that...
- An upshot of this is that...
- A consequence of this is that...
- When Smith's work is looked at closely it is seen that...
- When Smith's argument is analysed it can be seen that...
- Looking at Smith's work/argument [in detail] >>>>>>>
- Analysing Smith's data shows that...
- Developing Smith's work/argument to its logical conclusion shows that...

- It can be seen/shown that...
- One possible consequence of Smith's work is [that]...
- From Smith's work it can be determined that...
- One outcome of Smith's work is [that]...
- The following point can be brought out of Smith's work...
- The following argument can be brought out of Smith's work...
- Using Smith's work it is possible to show that.../argue that...
- Using the work of Smith (1980) and Jones (1989) it can be shown that.../argued that...

Agreeing with the positions of others

- As Smith says...
- I agree with Smith's point [that]...
- This is also Smith's view...
- I will argue a similar view to that of Smith here.
- Here I am following the work of Smith...
- Following from Smith's point...
- I agree with Smith in so far as...
- Not unlike Smith (1980), I am suggesting/proposing/arguing...
- I agree with Smith in respect of his point [that]...
- Along the lines of Smith (1980), I am suggesting/claiming/arguing/putting forward...
- The view I am putting forward here is largely in agreement with [that of] Smith.
- The argument being put forward/espoused here is similar to that of Smith (1980).
- In this matter, I am [largely] in agreement with Smith (1980).

Disagreeing with the points of others

- I do not agree [with Smith] that...
- I will argue/shall be arguing against Smith's view that...
- My argument against Smith is that...
- My disagreement with Smith is that...
- Smith is incorrect when he argues that...
- Smith is wrong to argue that...
- Smith falsely asserts that...
- Smith mistakenly asserts that...
- A weaknesses of Smith's argument lies in his assertion that...
- Unlike Smith, I want to suggest/claim/argue/propose...
- Against Smith, I will/shall be claiming/arguing/presenting the view that...
- Contrary to the views of Smith, I will/shall be/it will/shall
- Smith's argument[s] do not seem to work for the reason that...
- In contrast to Smith's view/argument/data...
- The argument being advanced here is opposed to that of Smith...
- It does not seem to follow from Smith's work/data that...
- Smith's data/arguments are faulty for the reason that...
- Analysing Smith's work in this way, it can be seen/one can see that...
- Problems arise in Smith's work [when it is seen that]...
- The point I am making/being made [here] is that Smith's argument/data/ conclusion does not follow.

Learning Tip

There are thousands of other expressions you can use. Consult academic textbooks and journals to learn more. Another way you can improve your awareness of this language and ability to use it, is to do this task:

Write a short response to an academic journal article that you have read. Compare your review of the article with another review of the same article that has been published in a journal.

Answers

5 minute self test

1. Brown asserts that employees of Company X are treated with exceptional care.
2. As Brown states, Company X offers its employees extraordinary care.
3. Brown mistakenly asserts that Company X provides excellent care to its employees.

(Of course, a huge range of other possibilities exists)