

## TOOLKIT FOR ACADEMIC WRITERS: Wording for Article Critiques

### **About the Argument's Importance:**

Ambitious  
Clarifies early attempts to  
Classic, Ground-breaking  
Exploratory  
Influential  
Informative  
Innovative  
(Un) Necessary  
Obvious  
Part of a larger trend that  
Preliminary  
Reiterative, Redundant  
Relevant  
Seminal, Decisive, Formative, Pivotal  
Significant  
Synthesizing  
Traditional

### **About the Argument's Clarity:**

(Un) Clear  
(Un) Clear methodology  
(In) Explicit  
(Unclear, Unnecessary) Jargon  
Nebulous  
Obtuse  
Straightforward  
Vague  
Well-defined / Well defined (adjective / adverb verb)

### **About the Argument's Ideas, Approaches, Evidence:**

(In) Accurate  
Anecdotal evidence  
Applied, Empirical, Evidence-based  
Applies (in) specific  
Approaches informed by the discipline  
Associates  
Broad scope  
Contradicts their prior statements  
(In) Correctly emphasizes  
Correlates  
Data (Interpretations of data) do (not) match (support)  
Defines  
Does (not) control for/Does (not) account for  
Establishes  
Equivocal  
Flawed  
Implies but does not prove  
(Multi-, Cross-) Interdisciplinary approach  
(Il) Logical  
(Im) Precise

(In) Definite  
Justifies methodology (measurements, participant pool)  
Latitudinal  
Limited  
Loaded language  
Logical leap  
Longitudinal  
(Mis) Representation of text, theory, definition, method, data  
Needs clarification  
Over (under) samples  
Proves  
Recognizes (discards, eliminates) outliers (aberrations)  
Relates  
Relies on (draws from) data collected by the author  
Draws from (relies on) data sets from others  
(Un) Reasonable  
Restricted scope  
(Not) Sound, (Not) Rigorous  
(In) Sufficient support/evidence  
(Un) Supported claim (clarification, contribution, observation)  
(Un) Successful refutation  
Theory-based  
Traces  
Well-developed / Well developed (adjective / adverb verb)

### **About the Argument's Author:**

Ambiguous and never takes a firm stance  
Assumes  
Assertive  
Biased  
Does (not) engage with current scholarship  
Focused  
Objective  
Overlooks details  
Provides (Does not provide) affiliations and funding  
Too focused on sustaining his/her argument  
Transparent

### **About the Argument's Structure:**

(Un) Clear purpose  
Each point is analyzed thoroughly  
Introduction is not supported by the argument (by the data)  
(Un) Necessary information  
(Un) Organized  
(Ir) Relevant data provided  
Repetitive  
Scattered  
(In) Sufficient literature review/background material provided  
Well-crafted / Well crafted (adjective / adverb verb)

Want more possibilities? See the "Verbs" handout on our blog.