

# University of Bejaia

Department of sociology

Module: English

3<sup>rd</sup> year students

Groups: 01+02+03+04.

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## Reported Speech (Indirect Speech)

### What is reported speech?

**Reported speech:** is when you tell somebody else what you or another person said before.

#### A. Reporting Statements:

- When transforming statements, check whether you have to change **pronouns, tenses, places and time expressions.**

**1- Pronouns:** In reported speech, you often have to change the pronoun depending on who says what .**Example:** She says, "My father works in Italy." – She says that her father works in Italy.

**2- Tenses: a.** If the sentence starts in the **present**; there is **no backshift of tenses in reported speech.**

**B.** If the sentence starts in **the past**; there is often **backshift of tenses in reported speech.**

**No backshift:** Do not change the tense if the introductory clause is in a present tense (e. g. He says). Example: He says, "I write poems." – He says that he writes poems.

**Backshift:** You must change the tense if the introductory clause is in a past tense (e. g. He said). Example: He said, "I am rich." – He said that he was rich.

#### Examples of the main changes in tense:

Direct speech	Reported speech
<b>Simple Present</b> He said: "I <b>am</b> happy"	<b>Simple Past</b> He said that he <b>was</b> happy
<b>Present Progressive(present continuous)</b> He said: "I <b>m</b> <b>looking</b> for my keys"	<b>Past Progressive(past continuous)</b> He said that he <b>was looking</b> for his keys
<b>Simple Past</b> He said: "I <b>visited</b> New York last year"	<b>Past Perfect Simple</b> He said that he <b>had visited</b> New York the previous year.

<p><b>Present Perfect</b> He said: " I've <b>lived</b> here for a long time "</p>	<p><b>Past Perfect</b> He said that he <b>had lived</b> there for a long time</p>
<p><b>Past Perfect</b> He said: "They <b>had finished</b> the work when I <b>arrived</b>"</p>	<p><b>Past Perfect</b> He said that they <b>had finished</b> the work when he <b>had arrived</b></p>
<p><b>Past Progressive</b> He said: "I <b>was playing</b> football when the accident <b>occurred</b>"</p>	<p><b>Past Perfect Progressive</b> He said that <b>he had been playing</b> football when the accident <b>had occurred</b></p>

<b>Present Perfect Progressive</b> He said: «I <b>have been playing</b> football for two hours."	<b>Past Perfect Progressive</b> He said that <b>he had been playing</b> football for two hours
<b>Past Perfect Progressive</b> He said: "I <b>had been reading</b> a newspaper when the light <b>went off</b> "	<b>Past Perfect Progressive</b> He said that he <b>had been reading</b> a newspaper when the light <b>had gone off</b>
<b>Future Simple (will+ verb)</b> He said: "I <b>will open</b> the door."	<b>Conditional (would+ verb)</b> He said that <b>he would open</b> the door.
<b>Conditional (would +verb)</b> He said: "I <b>would buy</b> Mercedes if I <b>were</b> rich"	<b>Conditional (would +verb)</b> He said that he <b>would buy</b> Mercedes if he <b>had been</b> rich"

-The modal verbs *could, should, would, might, need not, ought to, and used to* do not change. Example: He said, "She **might** be right." – He said that she **might** be right.

#### Other modal verbs may change:

Model	Direct speech	Reported speech
Can	"I <b>can</b> do it."	He said he <b>could</b> do it
May	" <b>May</b> I go out?"	He wanted to know if he <b>might</b> go out.
Must	"She <b>must</b> apply for the job."	He said that she <b>must/had to</b> apply for the job.
Will	"They <b>will</b> call you."	He told her that they <b>would</b> call her.

### 3- Place, demonstratives and time expressions

In the following table, you will find the different changes of time expressions; demonstratives and place.

Direct speech	Reported speech
<b>Time Expressions</b>	
Today	That day
Now	Then
Yesterday	The day before
.....Days ago	.....days before
Last week	The week before
Next year	The following year
Tomorrow	The next day /the following day
<b>Demonstratives</b>	
This	That
These	Those
<b>Place</b>	
Here	There

**B. Reporting Questions:** also note that you have to:

- transform **the question** into an **indirect question**
- use the question word (*where, when, what, how*) or *if / whether*

Types of questions	Direct speech	Reported speech
With question word (what, why, where, how...)	"Why" don't you speak English?"	He asked me why I didn't speak English.
Without question word (yes or no questions)	"Do you speak English?"	He asked me whether / if I spoke English.

**C. Reporting requests / commands and negative requests:**

Direct speech	Reported speech
"Nancy, do the exercise."	He told Nancy to do the exercise.
She said, "don't be lazy"	She asked me not to be lazy
"Nancy, give me your pen, please."	He asked Nancy to give him her pen.

**D. Other transformations :**

- Expressions of advice with **must, should** and **ought** are usually reported using *advise / urge*. Example: "You **must** read this book .". He **advised / urged** me to read that book.
- The expression **let's** is usually reported using *suggest*. In this case, there are two possibilities for reported speech: gerund or statement with *should*.
- Example:**  
 "Let's go to the cinema." 1. He **suggested going** to the cinema.  
 2. He **suggested** that we **should** go to the cinema.

**Exercise 01 :**

- John said, "I love this town."  
John said.....
- "Do you like soccer?" He asked me.  
He asked me .....
- "I can't drive a lorry," he said.  
He said.....
- "Be nice to your brother," he said.  
He asked me.....
- "Don't be nasty," he said.  
He urged me.....

6. "Don't waste your money," she said.  
She told the boys.....
7. "What have you decided to do?" she asked him. She  
asked  
him.....  
.....
8. "I always wake up early," he said.  
He said.....
9. "You should revise your lessons," he said.  
He advised the students .....
10. "Where have you been?" he asked me.  
He wanted to know.....

**Correction:**

1. John said, "I love this town."  
John said that he loved that town.
2. "Do you like soccer", He asked me. He  
asked me if / whether I liked soccer.
3. "I can't drive a lorry," he said.  
He said that he couldn't drive a lorry.
4. "Be nice to your brother," he said. He  
asked me to be nice to my brother.
5. "Don't be nasty," he said.  
He urged me not to be nasty.
6. "Don't waste your money" she said. She  
told the boys not to waste their money.
7. "What have you decided to do?" she asked him. She  
asked him what he had decided to do.
8. "I always wake up early," he said  
He said that he always woke up early.
9. "You should revise your lessons," he said. He  
advised the students to revise their lessons.
10. "Where have you been?" he asked me. He  
wanted to know where I had been.