

UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DEL ESTADO DE
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ESCUELA SUPERIOR DE HUEJUTLA

LICENCIATURA EN ENFERMERÍA

REPORTED SPEECH

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Reported speech

Abstract

This work intends to present, in a simple way, basic information on how to use Reported speech in English. Also, the difference between reported speech and direct speech will be spotted. This presentation has been designed to be used as additional material for the 6th level of English of Nursing Educational Program at Escuela Superior de Huejutla, under the guidance of the Institutional Program of Foreign Language (Programa Institucional de Lengua Extranjera - PILE) of the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo.

Key words: reported speech, backshifting of tenses, reporting statements, reporting questions.

WHAT IS REPORTED SPEECH?

- *Reported speech* is when you tell another person what you or somebody else have said before.
- So, we can *report* in all of the different tenses we use to speak. E.g. present simple, past simple, future, etc.

In English, we find basically two forms of speaking:

Direct speech and Reported (indirect) speech

speech

Direct speech (somebody says something)	Reported speech (you tell another person what somebody has said)
He says: <i>'I like fishing on vacation'</i>	He says that he likes fishing on vacation.
She said: <i>'I'm starting my new job tomorrow'</i>	She said that she was starting her new job the next day.

- In this presentation, we will learn how to report:

A. Statements

B. Questions

A. Reporting statements

In this case, sometimes we have to change:

1. *pronouns*
2. *tense*
3. *place, demonstrative and time expressions.*

1. *Pronouns*

When reporting what someone has said, very often, you have to change the pronoun. It depends on who has said the original statement.

Example: Susan says: '*My Dad likes pork chops*'.

Reported speech: Susan says that *her* Dad likes pork chops.

2. Tense

We have two situations here.

a. If we use a reporting verb in present, there is no backshifting of tenses.

Present tense

The diagram consists of two grey rounded rectangular boxes. The top box contains the text 'Present tense'. A yellow arrow points from this box to the word 'likes' in the sentence 'She says that she likes chocolate cake.' Below the main sentence, another grey rounded rectangular box contains the text 'Reporting verb in present'. A blue arrow points from this box to the word 'says' in the same sentence. A second yellow arrow points from the top box to the word 'like' in the quoted sentence 'I like chocolate cake'.

'I *like* chocolate cake'

She says that she *likes* chocolate cake.

Reporting verb in present

b. If we use a reporting verb in past tense, then there is often a backshifting of tenses.

Present tense

'I *like* chocolate cake'

Backshift to past

She said that she *liked* chocolate cake.

Reporting verb in past

Examples of the main changes in tense:

Direct speech	Reported speech
Simple present She said: I am an excellent student.	Simple past She said that she was an excellent student.
Present progressive He said: I am looking for a new job.	Past progressive He said that he was looking for a new job.
Simple past She said: I finished the report at 3:00.	Past perfect simple She said that she had finished the report at 3:00.
Present perfect He said: I have seen this movie three times already.	Past perfect He said that he had seen that movie three times already.
Future simple (will) She said: I will take swimming lessons next month.	Modal verb (would) She said that she would take swimming lessons the following month.

3. *Place, demonstrative and time expressions.*

These will change if the context of the reported statement is different from that in the direct speech.

Direct speech	Reported speech
<i>Place:</i> here	there
<i>Demonstratives:</i> this these	that those
<i>Time expressions:</i> today now yesterday tomorrow ____ days ago last month next week	that day then the day before the next/following day ____ days before the month before the following week

B. Questions

In this case, sometimes we have to change

1. *pronouns*
2. *tense*
3. *place, demonstrative and time expressions.*

For pronouns and tenses backshifting, see previous slides in this presentation.

Now, we need to:

1. Transform the question into an indirect question
2. Use a question word (information question)
3. Use *if* or *whether*, in case it is a yes/no question.

With information questions :

We use question words (what, which, who, where, when, why, how)

Direct speech	Reported speech
Why are you here?	He asked me why I was there.
Where are you going?	He asked me where I was going.
Which movie do you recommend?	He asked me which movie I recommended.
When are you visiting Merida?	He asked me when I was visiting Merida.

With yes/no questions :

We use whether or if.

If the question was addressed to the person who is reporting, we can omit me after the reporting verb:

He asked me ... = He asked ...

Direct speech	Reported speech
Do you live near here?	He asked (me) <i>if</i> I lived near there.
Are you buying a new car?	He asked (me) <i>whether</i> I was buying a new car.
Would you lend me some money?	He asked (me) <i>if</i> I would lend him some money.
Did you go to the concert last night?	He asked (me) <i>whether</i> I had gone to the concert the night before.

• Referencias

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