

# **Reported Speech**

**When reporting speech, the tense usually changes. This is because when we use reported speech, we are usually talking about a time in the past (because obviously the person who spoke originally spoke in the past). The verbs, therefore, usually have to be in the past too.**

**The tenses of the reported clause are usually moved back. This moving back of tenses is called BACKSHIFT**

- Changing verb tenses:

<b>Direct speech</b>		<b>Reported speech</b>
Present Simple	→	Past Simple
Present Continuous	→	Past Continuous
Present Perfect Simple	→	Past Perfect Simple
Present Perfect Continuous	→	Past Perfect Continuous
Past Simple	→	Past Perfect Simple
Future	→	Conditional
Imperative	→	Infinitive

**Note that the Past Perfect Simple and the Past Perfect Continuous do not change since no backshift is possible. .**

## **DIRECT SPEECH**

- **Can**
- **May**
- **Must**
- **Shall**
- **Will**

## **INDIRECT SPEECH**

**could**

**might**

**had to**

**should**

**would**

**Note: Past Modals are unchanged**

# Examples:

Direct speech	Indirect speech
<p><b>Present simple</b> She said, "It's cold."</p>	<p><b>Past simple</b> She said it was cold.</p>
<p><b>Present continuous</b> She said, "I'm teaching English online."</p>	<p><b>Past continuous</b> She said she was teaching English online.</p>
<p><b>Present perfect</b> She said, "I've been on the web since 1999."</p>	<p><b>Past perfect</b> She said she had been on the web since 1999.</p>

Direct speech	Indirect speech
<p><b>Past simple</b> She said, "I taught online yesterday."</p>	<p><b>Past perfect</b> She said she had taught online yesterday.</p>
<p><b>Past continuous</b> She said, "I was teaching earlier."</p>	<p><b>Past perfect continuous</b> She said she had been teaching earlier.</p>
<p><b>Past perfect</b> She said, "The lesson had already started when he arrived."</p>	<p><b>Past perfect</b> <b>NO CHANGE</b></p>
<p><b>Modals</b> "I can/will/might see later", he said</p>	<p><b>Modals</b> He said he could/would/might see me later.</p>

- **Changing pronouns, personal and possessive.**
- **Pronouns change (or not) depending on the view of the reporter**

<b>Direct speech</b>				<b>Reported speech</b>		
I	me	my	→	he / she	him / her	his / her
We	us	ours	→	they	them	their

### Direct Speech

John said, "I am coming."

### Indirect Speech

John said that he was coming.

## TIME AND PLACE CHANGES

It is often necessary to make time and place changes in relation to tense changes:

### Time expressions

<b>Direct speech</b>		<b>Reported speech</b>
<b>Now</b>	→	<b>then</b>
<b>Today</b>	→	<b>that day</b>
<b>Tonight</b>	→	<b>that night</b>
<b>Yesterday</b>	→	<b>the day before</b>
<b>Tomorrow</b>	→	<b>the following day / the next day</b>
<b>next day / week / month / year</b>	→	<b>the following day / week / month / year</b>



- **Place expressions:**

<b>Direct speech</b>		<b>Reported speech</b>
Here	→	there
This	→	that
These	→	those

### Direct Speech

John said, “I did **this exercise** last night.”

### Indirect Speech

John said that he had done **that exercise** the previous night.

## CONDITIONAL STATEMENTS

Type 1 conditional statements are reported as follows:

*'If you pass your test, I'll buy you a car' he said.*

*He said that if I passed my test he would buy me a car.*

Type 2 conditional statements are reported as follows:

*'If you passed your test I would buy you a car' he said.*

*He said that if I passed my test he would buy me a car.*

Type 3 conditional statements are reported as follows:

*'If you'd passed your test I'd have bought you a car' he said*

*He said that if I'd passed my test he'd have bought me a car.*

## EXCLAMATIONS

Note the word order in reported exclamations:

*'What a silly boy you are' she exclaimed*

*She told him what a silly boy he was.*

*She told him that he was a silly boy.*

# Indirect statements with mixed tense sequences

## Form of indirect statements with mixed tense sequences

### actual spoken statement

*I've read Tony's book and I don't understand it'*

### indirect statements with mixed tense sequences

*Jim says he's read Tony's book and didn't understand it.*

*Jim said he's read Tony's book and doesn't understand it.*

*Jim said he'd read Tony's book and doesn't understand it.*

*Jim said he'd read Tony's book and didn't understand it.*

# Yes/No question

**When the question is preceded by auxiliary that needs *yes/No* answer it will be used the conjunction if or whether in *the indirect speech***

**The steps how to make *indirect speech*:**

**The question sentence of the indirect speech is *firstly* *changed to be statement***

**It then follows the rules before.**

# Example

## DIRECT SPEECH

Doctor: 'Do you usually take a nap?'

*It is firstly changed to be:*

You usually take a nap

## INDIRECT SPEECH

Doctor asks  
*if/whether* I  
usually take a  
nap

## **actual spoken questions**

**Be:** *'Are you ready?'*

**Have:** *'Have you finished?'*

**Do** *'Do you play chess?'*

**Modals:** *'Can I have it?'*

## **Indirect questions**

*He asked (me) if/whether I am/was ready*

*He asked (me) if/whether I (have)/had finished.*

*He asked (me) if/whether I play/played chess .*

*He asked (me) if/whether he can/could have it.*

# Indirect question-word questions

- In the question using Question Word (QW)
  - To form *indirect speech* the question **is firstly changed to be *statement***
  - QW: **what, when, where, which, why, who, whom**, etc. are used as **conjunction**



actual spoken questions

indirect questions

**Be:** *Where are you going?*

*He asked (me) where I was going.*

**Have:** *'Why haven't you finished?'* *He wanted to know why I (haven't)/hadn't finished.*

**Do:** *What do you think of it?*

*He wanted to know what I (think) /thought of it.*

**Modals:** *'When must I be there?'*

*He asked (me) when he must be/had to be there*

## INDIRECT SUBJECT-QUESTIONS

**actual spoken questions**

**indirect questions**

**Be:** *'Who is in charge here?'*

*He asked (me) who was in charge here.*

**Present:** *'Which firm makes these parts?'* *He asked (me) which firm (makes) made those parts*

**Past:** *'What caused the accident?'* *He asked (me) what caused/had caused the accident*

**Modals:** *'Whose novel will win the prize?'* *He asked (me) whose novel would win the prize.*

# TO-INFINITIVE IN INDIRECT SPEECH

**actual spoken words**

**reported version**

*'Keep a record of your expenses'*

*I told him to keep a record of his expenses.*

*'Don't make a mess in the kitchen'*

*I told him not to make a mess in the kitchen.*

*'How do I prepare the sauce?'*

*He wanted to know how to prepare the sauce.*

*I want to speak to the manager.*

*She asked to speak to the manager.*

# reported speech

Look at the girl on the right. We would turn the statement into the reported speech by changing:

- the verb from the present simple to the past simple
- the personal pronoun I to she
- the possessive pronoun my to her

I love my new dress.



The sentence would then be:

***The girl said she loved her new dress.***

# reported speech

There are several reporting verbs we can use:

→ The most commonly used one is to say.

*She said she was studying.*

→ When the person who we are talking to is referred, we can use to tell.

*You told me you liked your new dress.*

→ We may report something that was said without keeping to the original words, the reporting verb itself may contain that idea or intention. The verbs here can be: to admit, to advise, to agree, to remind, to suggest, to encourage, to insist, to persuade, to warn, to refuse, to urge, among others.

*- I admit it, I did it!*

*She admitted she did it.*

# reported speech

## **Time to practise!**

Look at the images that will appear and change what the characters say into the reported speech. Take in consideration all the changes that must occur: in the verbs, the pronouns and the expressions of time and place.

# reported speech

My mother  
gives me new  
dolls regularly.



# reported speech

*The girl said her mother gave her new dolls regularly.*

My mother gives me new dolls regularly.





# reported speech

My book  
is being very  
interesting!



# reported speech

*The woman said her book was being very interesting.*

My book  
is being very  
interesting!



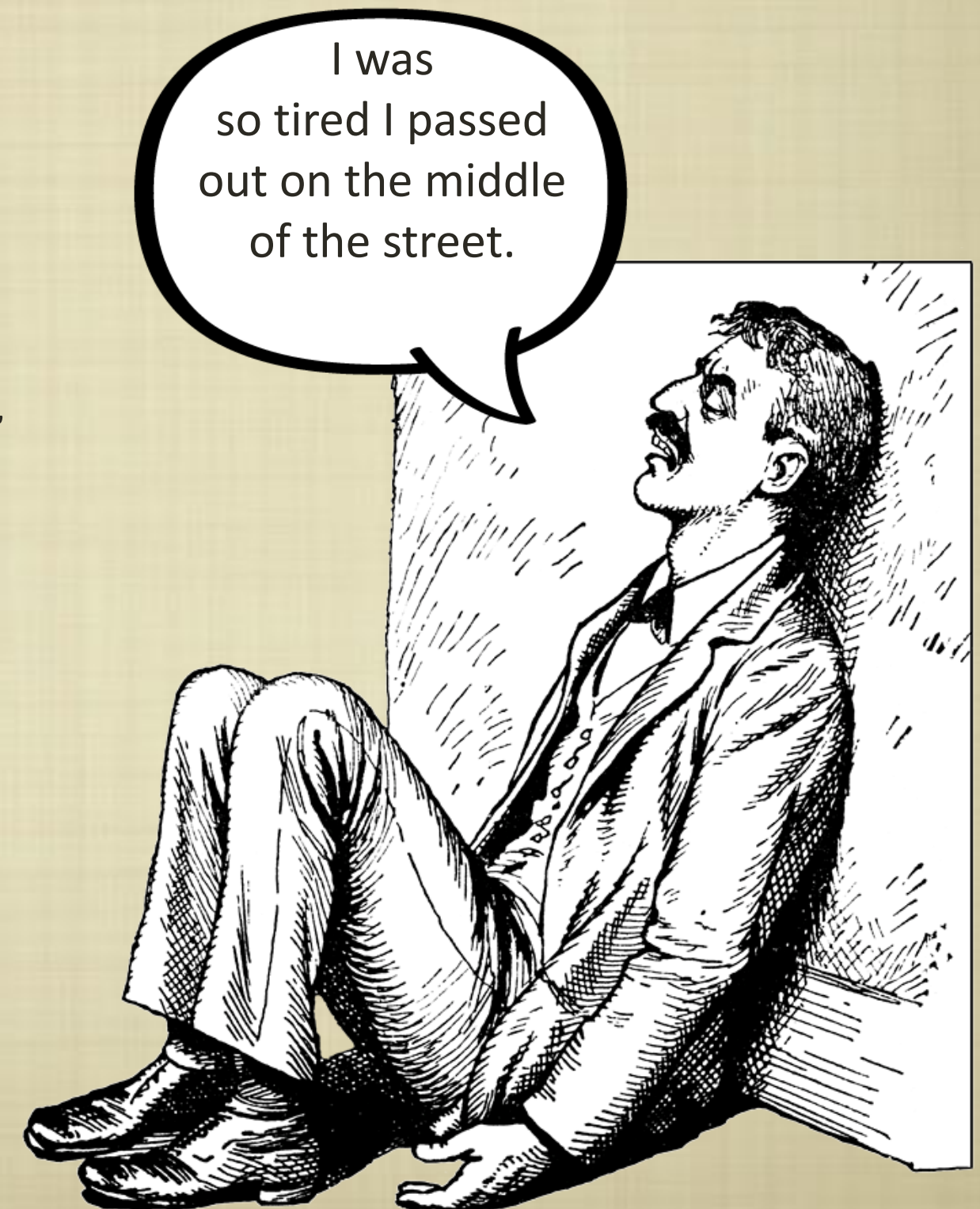
# reported speech

I was  
so tired I passed  
out on the middle  
of the street.



# reported speech

*The man said he had been so tired he passed out on the middle of the street.*



# reported speech



# reported speech

*The woman said it had been years since she  
had had that much fun.*



# reported speech



I will catch  
a fish  
today!

# reported speech

*The girl said she would catch a fish that day.*

I will catch  
a fish  
today!





# reported speech



# reported speech

*The man yelled at me to stop.*

