

15. REPORTED SPEECH

15.1 There are two ways of reporting a speech or conversation – the direct speech and the indirect speech. The indirect speech is also called reported speech.

In direct speech we reproduce the exact words of the speaker. These words are put within quotation marks (inverted commas). A comma is put after the main clause if the main clause comes first. Sometimes a colon is used instead of a comma. The sentence within the quotation marks begins with a capital letter. The punctuation mark at the end of the sentence reported comes before the final quotation mark.

He said, "They haven't come yet."

Rama asked, "What is this?"

"We're going out," said mother.

"When will you be back?" asked father.

Direct speech is used in conversations in books, in plays and in quotations.

15.2 Say and Tell

Say and *Tell* are the reporting verbs most commonly used. *Tell* has a personal direct object. (e.g. me, him, her, them, us, etc., or nouns)

"I am going home," he said to me.

He told me that he was going home.

"The Manager is busy," I told her.

I told her that the Manager was busy.

She said to John, "I'll be late."

She told John that she'd be late.

Say does not have a personal direct object. It may, however, take an indirect object. (e.g. to me, to him, to her, etc.)

"Glad to meet you," he said.

"I'll see you later," she said to me quietly.

In a few phrases *tell* does not take a personal direct object.

tell the time

tell a story

tell a lie/tell lies

tell the truth

15.3 In indirect speech the exact meaning of the speaker's words is conveyed, but his exact words are not necessarily reproduced.

Direct : Shyam said, "I bought a car."

Indirect : Shyam said that he had bought a car.

Direct : Ram said, "My father is in the hospital."

Indirect : Ram said that his father was in the hospital.

Quotation marks are not used in indirect speech. The main (reporting) verb is usually followed by *that*, but it is optional. In spoken English *that* is usually omitted.

He said that he had gone there.

He said he had gone there,

15.4 Change of Tense in Reported Speech

1. When the reporting verb is in the present, present perfect or future tense, there is no change in the tense of the reported statement.

2 - present He says, "They have come." *PP*

d - past He says that they have come.

He has said, "It is important." *SP*

He has said that it is important.

He will say, "I am not interested."

He will say that he is not interested.

The reporting verb will be in the present tense only when

1. reporting a conversation that is still going on,
2. reading a letter and reporting what it says,
3. taking orders and conveying them to others,
4. reading instructions and reporting them, and
5. reporting something that someone says very often.

2. The reporting verb is usually in the past tense. When the reporting verb is in the past tense, the verbs in the reported statement change as shown below.

a. The present simple becomes the past simple.

He said, "I *go* for a walk every morning."

He said that he *went* for a walk every morning.

Sheela said, "I *don't like* Hindi movies."

Sheela said that she *didn't like* Hindi movies.

b. The present continuous becomes the past continuous.

He said, "I *am coming*."

He said that he *was coming*.

She said, "I *am feeling* feverish."

She said that she *was feeling* feverish.

c. The present perfect becomes the past perfect.

The boy said, "I *have done* my homework."

The boy said that he *had done* his homework.

He said, "We *have decided* to meet again."

He said that they *had decided* to meet again.

d. The present perfect continuous becomes the past perfect continuous.

"I *have been waiting* for a long time," he said.

He said that he *had been waiting* for a long time.

She said, "He *has been looking* for his parents since six o'clock."

She said that he *had been looking* for his parents since six o'clock.

e. The past simple becomes the past perfect.

I said, "I *met* him last week."

I said that I *had met* him the previous week.

Oli said, "My sister *broke* her glasses."

Oli said that his sister *had broken* her glasses.

f. The past continuous becomes the past perfect continuous.

He said, "She *was eating* her breakfast."

He said that she *had been eating* her breakfast.

She said, "I *was hoping* to meet him."

She said that she *had been hoping* to meet him.

g. *Will/shall* becomes *would/should*.

Mary said, "He *will* regret it."

Mary said that he *would* regret it.

Arun said, "I *shall* meet you later."

Arun said that he *would* meet me later.

(Note the change of *shall* to *would* when the first person pronoun changes to third person.)

h. The following verbs, however, do not change.

Would, should, ought to, might, could, had better

He said, "She *ought* to behave properly."

He said that she *ought* to behave properly.

The teacher said, "They *might* come again."

The teacher said that they *might* come again.

i. Conditionals of the second and the third types do not change.

She said, "If he were younger I would marry him."

She said that if he were younger she would marry him.

John said, "If I had known earlier, I would not have come here."

John said that if he had known earlier he would not have gone there.

j. Some universal truths remain unchanged.

The teacher said, "The earth goes round the sun."

The teacher said that the earth goes round the sun.

15.5 Pronouns and possessive adjectives of the first and the second person change to the third person.

Babu said, "I have lost *my* bag."

Babu said that he had lost *his* bag.

"You have wasted all *your* money," said father to Nita.

Father told Nita that *she* had wasted all *her* money.

This change, however, does not occur when the speaker himself is reporting his words.

I said, "I have finished my work."

I said that I had finished my work.

16. CONCORD

Concord is the agreement in number and person between the subject and the verb in a sentence.

1. The simple rule is that the verb should agree with the subject in number and person. When the subject is third person **singular**, the verb must be singular. When the subject is third person plural, the verb must be plural.

The pencil is short.

Pencils are short.

A boy eats chocolate.

Boys eat chocolates.

2. Two or more singular subjects combined by *and* take a plural verb.

A boy *and* a girl have come here.

The cow *and* the calf need grass.

His son *and* mine are in the same class.

When the two subjects joined by *and* are treated as one unit, then a singular verb is used.

Bread *and* butter is my favourite breakfast.

Slow *and* steady wins the race.

When the two subjects joined by *and* refer to the same person, a singular verb is used.

The philosopher *and* parliamentarian is seventy.

The cricketer *and* writer is in town today.

My wife *and* secretary is away in Calcutta.

If the subjects represent two different persons, the article *the* or the possessive pronoun *my* is repeated. Then the verb will be plural.

The philosopher *and* the parliamentarian are great friends.

My wife *and* my secretary do not like each other.

3. When two or more singular subjects are joined by *or*, *nor*, *either ... or* or *neither nor*, the verb will be singular.

Jim or his brother is sure to come.
Either Hari or Ravi is certain to win a medal.
Neither the athlete nor the coach is at fault.

When the two subjects connected by *or*, *either or*, etc., are of different persons, the verb agrees with the person of the subject nearer to it.

Either James or you are the culprit.
Neither Paul nor I am responsible.

These sentences can also be rewritten as follows.

Either James is the culprit or you are.
Paul is not responsible, nor am I.

When the two subjects connected by *either or*, *neither nor*, etc., are of different numbers, the plural subject is placed second and a plural verb is used.

Neither the Principal nor the teachers beat the students.
Either my mother or my sisters are sure to be there.

4. When two singular subjects are connected by *not only but also*, the verb will be singular

Not only Lata but also her sister is an engineer.
Not only cinema, but also T.V. has influenced our life.

If the two subjects differ in number or person or both, the verb will be of the same number and person as the subject mentioned second.

Not only the earth, but all the other planets go round the sun.
Not only Nina, but also you are to blame for this.

5. When two singular subjects are connected by *as well as* the verb will be singular.

Mr. Valluvan, as well as his wife, is a vegetarian.
A car, as well as a fridge, is a necessity these days.

If the two subjects connected by *as well as* differ in person or number or both, the verb agrees in number and person with the subject mentioned first.

The moon, as well as the stars, is not to be seen.
My car, as well as two others, was damaged.

6. When two subjects are joined by *with*, *together with*, *along with* or *in addition to*, the verb agrees with the subject mentioned first.

My sister, *along with* her two children, has arrived.
The house, *with* all the furniture, is being auctioned.

7. When the subject of a sentence begins with *each*, *every*, *either of* or *neither of*, the verb is always singular.

Each man and *each* woman needs about 14 glasses of water
every day.

Every boy and *every* girl loves adventure.

Each of the ministers has promised to contribute one
month's pay.

Every one of us is ready to obey you.

Either of the players is good.

Neither of the countries is capable of winning the war.

8. When the subject of the verb is a relative pronoun, the verb agrees in number and person with the antecedent of the relative pronoun.

You, who are the captain of the team, have to show them the way.

Ramesh, who is a well known writer, is talking to us today.

Those who are professional players are not allowed to take part in the tournament.

9. Some titles of books which appear to be plural, are treated as singular as they denote one unit. Similarly, singular nouns which have a plural form are also treated as singular.

Arabian Nights is an interesting book.

Arms and the Man was written by G.B. Shaw.

Physics is an important subject.

Measles is sometimes dangerous.

10. Collective nouns are followed by singular verbs if the nouns are meant to refer to the group as one unit.

The jury has given a unanimous verdict.

The committee is seized of the matter.

The government has already approved it.

The audience has been waiting for long.

17. PUNCTUATION

17.1 Just as we use pauses and intonation while speaking to make our meaning clear, we use punctuation marks in writing to help the reader understand the meaning. Punctuation marks help us identify the various kinds of stops that occur in writing.

17.2 The following are the important marks of punctuation in English.

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|---|--|
| 1. full stop (.) | 7. exclamation mark (!) |
| 2. colon (:) | 8. quotation marks (inverted commas) (" ") (' ') |
| 3. semicolon (;) | 9. brackets () |
| 4. comma (,) | 10. hyphen (-) |
| 5. apostrophe (') | 11. dash (—) |
| 6. Interrogation mark (question mark) (?) | |

Full stop

The full stop indicates the longest pause. It shows the end of a sentence. The full stop is used in the following places.

1. at the end of declarative and imperative sentences.

I am a student.

Bring me a book.

2. after abbreviations.

M.P.

M.L.A.

B.A.

M.A.

When the abbreviation consists of the first few letters of the word, a full stop is used.

Capt.

Col.

Prof.

When the abbreviation is formed by the first and the last letters of the word, the full stop is often omitted.

Mr (Mister)

Dr (Doctor)

Sr (Senior)

Jr (Junior)

