

Reported Speech

Reported Speech is

- A Speech which tells you what someone said, but does not use the person's actual words.
- That means there are two ways of reporting the words of a speaker.
- One way is quoting his actual words called Direct Speech.
- The other way is reporting what the speaker said without quoting his actual words.
- This is Indirect or Reported Speech.

Example for Direct Speech:

- “Going my way, soldier?” a young woman in her pale green suit murmured.

Reported Speech.:

- The young woman in her pale green suit murmured if the soldier was going her way.

The direct speech can occur in three ways.

(i) The actual words in inverted commas

Examples:

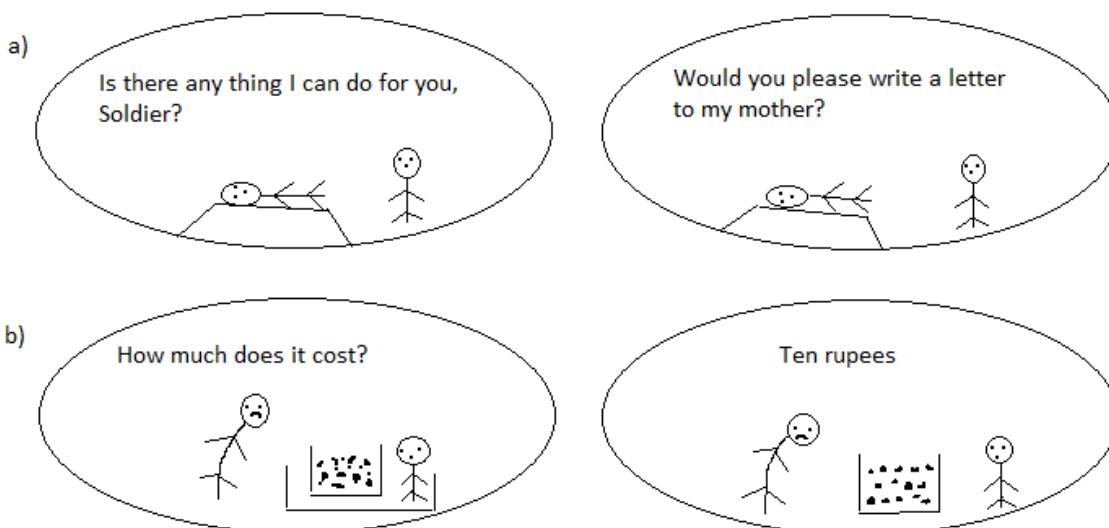
- a) They hushed us: “Sleep, my baby son”.
- b) “With faces washed by many rains
Dried in the morning wind and sun
We started out upon our own”, said the children.

(ii) Actual words in script form

Examples:

- a) Mary : You are tired, Joe. Must you work so late?
Joe : I must, Mary, as you know well. Time is scarce, and I have so much to do.

(iii) Actual words in speech bubbles:



Let us study some examples to understand about the changes to be made in changing Direct Speech into Reported Speech and rules for changing Direct speech into Reported.

1. Statements :

Direct Speech

- “I need to buy a buffalo”,
The old man said.
“Actually, it’s just here in
Kashi Regar’s house.

Reported Speech

- The old man said that he
needed to buy a buffalo.
The old man told that the
buffalo was actually just
there in Kashi Regar’s house

2. A. Yes / No questions & Wh questions

Mary : Can I help you?

Mary asked Joe if/whether she could help him
Johnny asked his father Joe what they should do.

3. “Shall I tell you the story of the glass tree”? Unni said.

What do you want? Panikkan Asked Melkkoran.

Unni asked Mutthashi whether he should tell her the story of the glass tree.
Panikkan asked Melkkoran what he wanted?

4. Instructions / Commands / Requests:

“Unni”, said Mutthashi, “Tell me a story”,

Mutthashi asked / instructed Unni to tell her a story.

Joe : Give me a thread from your wheels Mary. Joe asked Mary to give him a thread from her wheel.

Exclamations and Wishes

Ram - ram, saa ! the old man said
Ram – ram, bhai ! Tansukh said.

The old man and Tansukh wished each other.

Joe : No one shall touch my machine!

Joe exclaimed that no one should touch his machine.

Remember the following points while changing a direct speech into Reported Speech:

1. Speaker to come first.
2. Reported verb to be changed depending on the tone of the speaker.
3. Tense of the verb in the sentence to be reported to follow the tense of the reporting verb say past tense to become past perfect tense.
 A simple present to become a simple past
 A present imperfect to become a past imperfect
 A present perfect to become a past perfect
4. Pronoun related to speaker to take the person (I, II or III) person of the speaker.
 The tense in the direct speech does not change when a sentence in it refers to a universal truth.
 (eg: The teacher said honesty is the best policy)
 Or even when it is relevant to the present time.

Other changes to be made to introduce the verbs speaker utterances:

a. Verbs:

- i. Few verbs often used to report statements: tell, say, add, advise, answer, argue, reply, confess, complain, please, permit, suggest.
 - ii. Few verbs often used to report questions: also , enquire, question. Wanted to know.
 - iii. Verbs used in reporting orders / requests / commands/ instructions would be do, tell, order, urge, beg, request, invite, persuade.
 - iv. Verbs used in reporting surprises are exclaim, surprised, wishing, applied, call to witness.
- b. Connectives: ‘That’ is the connective used to report the statement / exclamations / wishes.
‘What’ is the connective used to report wh - informations.

'If / whether' is the connective used to report 'yes / no' questions
'To' is the connective used to report instructions / commands / requests.

- c. Words expressing nearness in the direct speech are changed to words expressing distance.

Direct	Reported	Direct	Reported
This	that	now	then
Thus	so	these	those
Here	there	today	that day
Ago	before/earlier	tomorrow	the next day
Yesterday	the day before (the previous day)	last week	the week before / the previous week

Some useful points to consider:

1. Reported speech is not always mechanically delivered from direct speech.
2. There are certain contents of language where the use of Reported Speech is natural and appropriate.
Eg: Journalistic reports / film stories.
3. Factual pieces of information or description of events can be expressed in Reported speech.
4. Emotive lines / expressions ; short exchanges between speakers, incomplete lines indicating confusion, fear, anger, etc and repetition of words / sentences indicating strong feelings cannot be reported effectively in the indirect speech. They are best expressed in the direct speech.

EXAMPLE 1:

Report the following conversation between Kuruman Panikkan and Melkkoran to your classmates.

Melkkoran said, "I can build a tree that never grows old and that never sheds its leaves"

Panikkan said, "Is there such a thing, Melkkoran?"

Panikkan said again, "We should have such a tree here too".

EXAMPLE 2:

Report the following conversation between Unni, Amma (his mother) and finally Muttahashi to your friend

"Unni, shouldn't you be finishing your home work?" Amma called out, "It's past ten O'clock".

"I've almost reached the end, Amma", said Unni.

"Hurry up, son"

"Unni", Muttahashi whispered in Unni's ears, "don't rush".

EXAMPLE 3:

Report the following conversation:

Old man: What are you thinking? Have you decided to over look my request of buying a buffalo?

Tansukh: I haven't, I was thinging about Kashi's buffalo.

Old man: Please help me to buy the buffalo.

EXAMPLE 4:

Report the following conversation:

Joe: come here, Mary,

Mary: What is it, Joe?

Joe: Do you see this tiny pointed piece? It is the most important part of my machine.

EXAMPLE 5:

Report the following conversation to your teacher in the class.

Mary : Johnnny, Are you sure?

Johnnny : Yes, what do they want father? What do they mean by it?

Joe : They want to smash me and my machine.

Mary : Johnnny, run and fetch the watch.

EXAMPLE 6:

Report the following conversation to your friend:

“Unni”, said Mutthashi, “Tell me a story”.

“What story would you like, Mutthashi”?

“A nice one”, Mutthashi said, “One that will send me to sleep”.

“Shall I tell you the story of the glass tree?”

EXAMPLE 7:

Report the following conversation.

Old man: Did you hear what I said?

Tansukh: Yes, I did. Have you seen one that you want?

Old man: Yes, if only you could get it settled.....

Tansukh : Where is it?

Old man: It is just here. There is Kashi Regar who lives in your neighbourhood.

EXAMPLE 8:

Report the following conversation

Mary : Don't listen to the boy

We will go away to another place. Only leave us in peace!

Hob : The boy is a young scamp and idler. I would teach him right with a strap.

EXAMPLE 9:

Report the following conversation:

Hob : Where is your husband, mistress ?

Mary : In his bed. He is sick and weary. You would not harm him.

Hob : We are going to smash his evil work.

EXAMPLE 10:

Report the following conversation:

“Who are you?” said Panikkan.

“A mason. Melkkoran is my name.”

“What do you want?”

“Work”

EXAMPLE 11:

Report the following conversation :

“What do you want?”

“Work.”

“Melkkoran, there is no work for you here,” Panikkan said, “Go ask in the neighbouring provinces”.

“There is work right here,” Melkkoran said.

EXAMPLE 12:

Report the following conversation :

Amma : Unni, have you finished your home work ? It is past ten O'clock.

Unni : I have almost reached the end.

Amma : Hurry up, Son.

Muthashi: Unni, don't rush.

EXAMPLE 13:

Report the following conversation :

Old man: I need to buy a buffalo.

Tansukh: Have you seen the one that you want ?

Old man: Yes.

Tansukh: Where is it ?

Old man: It is just here.

EXAMPLE 14:

Report the following conversation :

Mary : You are tired Joe, Must you work so late?

Joe : I must, Mary, as you know well. Time is scarce and I have much to do.

Mary : I wish you could work by day.

Joe : And get a set of broken bones from my neighbours ?

EXAMPLE 15:

Report the following conversation :

Old man : What are you thinking? Have you decided to overlook my request?

Tansukh : No, I have not. Did you say Kashi's buffalo?

Old man : Yes. I need it for my son.

EXAMPLE 16:

Report the following conversation :

Panikkan : There is no work for you here.

Melkkoran : There is work right here.

Panikkan : Where ?

Melkkoran : The Champaka tree is old and worn out. Let us pull it down and build a new tree.

EXAMPLE 17:

Report the following conversation :

Joe: Have you got it Mary ?

Mary: The part ? Yes, Joe here.

Joe: Give it to me and get back to bed.

Mary: Joe, what do you mean ?

Joe: They will not come back tonight.

EXAMPLE 18:

Report the following conversation :

Rajiv: Do you fear death ?

Baba: Life and death are twins. I know both.

Rajiv: Do you believe in life after death ?

Baba: I believe in leading a series of lives in this life itself.

EXAMPLE 19:

Report the following conversation :

Old man: Please see that I am not ruined.
 Tansukh: Who should I save ?
 Old man: Shall we go to Kashi's house ?
 Tansukh: I am not a broker - you old man. Do whatever pleases you.

EXAMPLE 20:

Report the following conversation :

Mary : What is that I thought I heard something ?
 Joe : Only the wind.
 Mary : People are frightened and angry.
 Joe : They will thank me for work one day.
 Mary : but, I am frightened, Joe.

EXAMPLE 21:

Report the following conversation :

Rajiv : Do you have faith in all people's conscience ?
 Baba : I have mighty faith in all people.
 Rajiv : What is your real achievement ?
 Baba : The buildings here are an achievement, but saving a life is a far greater accomplishment.

EXAMPLE 22:

Report the following conversation :

Muthashi : Where is Kuruman Pannikkan going ?
 Unni : To pray at the Champaka Kaavu.
 Muthashi : Who is that ?
 Unni : That is Melkoran. He builds mosques and temples.

EXAMPLE 23:

Report the following conversation :

Muthashi : Unni, tell me a story.
 Mother : Unni is doing his homework. Unni's classes at school are on in full swing.
 Muthashi : Just a small story, Unni.
 Mother : Amma, how can Unni tell you stories all the time ?

EXAMPLE 24:

Report the following conversation :

Rajiv : What is the role of a leader ?
 Baba : According to me, a leader does not bother about what others say.
 Rajiv : Have you drawn inspiration from Gandhi ?
 Baba : Yes, of course. Like Gandhi, I believe in the strength and joys of people.

EXAMPLE 25:

Report the following conversation :

Blandford : I am Blandford and I hope you are Miss Meynell. Can I take you for dinner ?

The elderly woman: I do not know what is all this about, Son. The lady in green told me to wear this red rose.

Blandford : Oh ! Are you not the real Hollis ?

EXAMPLE 26:

Report the following conversation :

Joe : Come here Mary, why did you go to Hob yesterday ?

Mary : To get my patterns mended.

Joe : Did he speak about the machine.

Mary : Yes He was very angry. He said that you are taking away people's bread and milk.

EXAMPLE 27:

Report the following conversation to your friend:

Johny : " Oh ! " Father's work is all spoiled ! "

Mary : No, here is the secret, the most important part, I have saved it. He will build it up again when we get to some peaceful place.

Johny : Mother, why won't he rest and let such dangerous things alone ?

EXAMPLE 28:

Report the following conversation to your friend:

" Tansukhji, shall we got to Kashi's house, ?" the old man said again.

" I am not a broker, you old man ." I heard myself shriek. Do whatever pleases you."