

## UNIT 47. Reported speech (2)

A. It is **not always necessary to change the verb** when you use reported speech. If you report something and it is still true, you do not need to change the verb:

\* direct: Tom said 'New York is more lively than London.'

reported: Tom said that New York is more lively than London. (New York is still more lively. The situation hasn't changed.)

\* direct: Ann said 'I want to go to New York next year.'

' reported: Ann said that she wants to go to New York next year. (Ann still wants to go to New York next year.)

**Note that it is also correct to change the verb into the past:** \* Tom said that New York was more lively than London. \* Ann said that she wanted to go to New York next year. But **you must use a past form** when there is a difference between what was said and what is really true.

Study this example situation:

You met Sonia a few days ago. She said: 'Jim is ill.' (direct speech) Later that day you see Jim. He is looking well and carrying a tennis racket. You say: 'I didn't expect to see you, Jim. Sonia said you were ill. (not 'Sonia said you are ill', because clearly he is not ill.)

**B. Say and tell** If you say **who you are talking to**, use **tell**: \* Sonia told me that you were ill. (not 'Sonia said me') \* What did you tell the police? (not 'say the police') Otherwise use **say**: \* Sonia said that you were ill. (not 'Sonia told that ...') \* What did you say? But you can say something to somebody: \* Ann said goodbye to me and left. (not 'Ann said me goodbye') \* What did you say to the police?

**C. Tell/ask** somebody to do something. We also use the **infinitive** (to do/to stay etc.) in reported speech, especially with tell and ask (for orders and requests):

**Direct:** 'Stay in bed for a few days,' the doctor said to me.

**Reported:** The doctor told me to stay in bed for a few days.

**Direct:** 'Don't shout,' I said to Jim.

**Reported:** I told Jim not to shout.

**Direct:** 'Please don't tell anybody what happened,' Ann said to me.

**Reported:** Ann asked me not to tell anybody what (had) happened. '... said to do something' is also possible: \* The doctor said to stay in bed for a few days. (but not 'The doctor said me ...')