

REPORTED SPEECH

13
UNIT

There are two main ways of relating what people have said.

We can use our own words (for instance, if we don't remember exactly what was said, or if we don't want to quote or repeat the exact words)

E.g (a) Mrs Palit greeted everybody cheerily.

(b) I replied that I had no idea when I was going.

We can report what someone thinks in a similar way.

(c) He thought that Mahua was worried.

OR

We can use the actual words, as if recorded on a tape recorder, to report what has been said.

E.g (a) "Good morning, everybody!" said Mrs Palit.


(b) I told my friends, "I've no idea when I'm going."

(c) He thought : "Mahua's worried."

It is important to remember that we come across both ways of reporting in newspapers, novels, magazines etc.

Points to note:

- The exact words of the speaker quoted in Direct Speech are placed between inverted commas, and a comma or colon is placed immediately before the words quoted. The end mark could be a full stop, a question mark or an exclamatory mark depending on the meaning, context and mood expressed. The first letter within the inverted commas is capitalized.
- There is no comma after Reporting Verbs like said, asked, claimed in reported speech. The end mark in Reported Speech is always a full stop.
- Use of Direct Speech and Reported Speech.

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- a) Direct speech is generally used
 - i) to create a dramatic effect
 - ii) to create a sense of urgency and immediacy
 - iii) because the exact words of the speaker or writer are in some way important
 - iv) because a quote is required from authors, scientists, experts and politicians to lend authenticity
 - v) to make a piece of writing or speech interesting by adding variety in the mode of narration.
 - b) Indirect speech is used when we are interested not in the exact words that someone has chosen, but in the essential information they convey. Far fewer words are used to report what has originally been said.
 - c) We should remember that usually a judicious combination of the use of direct and reported speech enhances the effectiveness of speaking or writing .

A.1 Read and enjoy the following article.

The Road to English

(Adapted from an article by Arishban Bagchi (Hindu college) [The Hindustan Times, 4 October 1996]

1. The great question, after you have failed to put yourself in an engineering or medical college in contemporary Indian society, is whether you'll ever find a job.
2. "Oh! He showed such promise during his early days," says the sister of the neighbour of your aunt in Timbuctoo. "Now look at my Bittoo," she goes on. "In spite of being so brilliant and all, he could only barely manage a grade A+ at MIT, and then he only just managed a well- paid job. How difficult getting jobs must be."

3. The next line reads, "I wonder how your son will find a job, being a non-engineer, and that too in India."
4. Your father's friend, a prosperous doctor, decides to come visiting. Quite predictably, his first question on seeing you is the inevitable, "Why in heaven's name did you not qualify in the pre-medical test?" Followed by the equally inevitable, "Now what are you going to do?"
5. He raves on about his nephew who has just gone to the UK for his FRCS, and his daughter who has just completed her MBBS from AIIMS with top results, and what exciting prospects they have.
6. Your father into whose eyes you haven't dared to look for quite some time, speaks up. "I have lost all hope for him. However, educating him is my duty and I won't shirk from it."
7. Someone speaks up. "Let him go to college to study Physics or Chemistry." Everyone sits in silence. You cannot help feeling a little proud. At length, someone plucks up the courage: "It's quite impossible to educate him any further. Youngsters these days never seem to listen to what we have to say."
8. "I will study English Literature," you say, dropping a bombshell, fearless of the consequences. Amazingly, it works. The crowd hurries to disperse. You are so relieved to see their backs that you don't care. Thankfully, your parents voice no objection, remembering, perhaps, that you did manage to score highly in English in your Board exams.
9. So you finally take English literature as your subject of study.

A.2 Work in pairs and list the speakers in the passage you have just read.

- i. _____
- ii. _____
- iii. _____
- iv. _____
- v. _____

Still working in pairs, answer the following.

1. Did anyone actually say (or write) "Oh! He showed such promise during his early days?" (Yes/No) How can you tell? _____

2. Is "Now look at my Bittoo", said by the same person as the extract in 1 above? (Yes/ No) How do you know? _____

3. In paragraph 4, who says "Now what are you going to do?"
What words help you to know? _____

4. i) In paragraph 5, who is the speaker? _____
Discuss and work out what must have been his exact words. Then write them below.

ii) Underline the verb which tells you how the person must have said this. [Hint:
Try to work out the meaning of this verb.]

5. How many of the nine paragraphs in the passage are reporting what someone has said? _____

6. How many paragraphs include the exact words of the various speakers (direct speech)? _____
7. How many paragraphs have reported them 'indirectly' (indirect speech)?

8. What is your conclusion about how writers report what someone says or has said in a newspaper article such as this?

B. Reporting Verbs


- B.1 A reporting verb is used in both direct and indirect (reported) speech. The reporting verb usually adds to the meaning of each sentence for instance, it may show the speaker's MOOD (e.g. agreed), PURPOSE (e.g. asked), MANNER OF SPEAKER (e.g. shouted). An example is:**

The tourist complained that the hotel was hot and noisy.

In this sentence, the reporting word 'complained' shows that the tourist was clearly unhappy about the arrangements.

Now work in groups of four. Read the following sentences carefully, and circle the reporting verbs. Then discuss and write the ways in which each reporting verb adds to the meaning of its arrangement.

1. "When I was in school, I used to skip a few classes, especially Moral Science because of the bookish manner in which it was treated," confessed the retired IAS Officer.

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2. Saurav's friends protested that he should have been included in the school badminton team, on the basis of his fine performance in the inter-house matches.

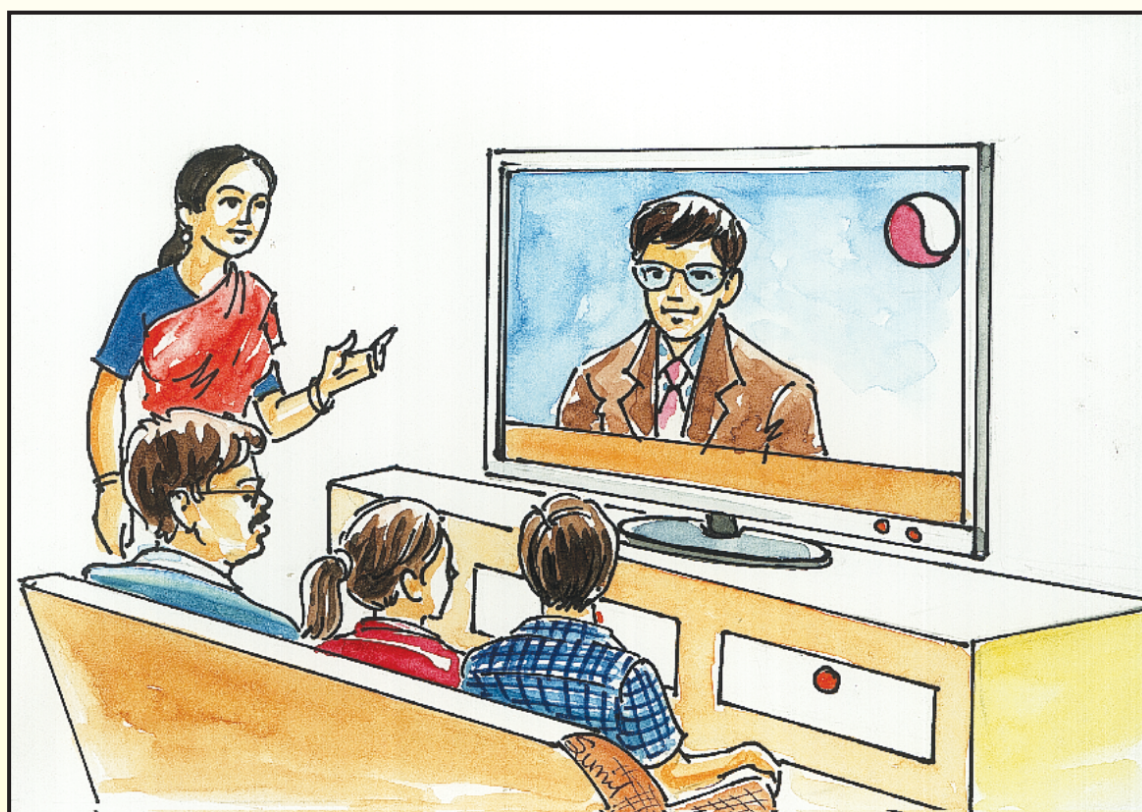
3. "Make a circle, make a circle!" Mira shouted, firmly pulling and pushing the children till a kind of vague circle was formed.

4. The music teacher warned the children against getting carried away and getting out of tune.

5. "Father, you must tell me what you meant exactly when you said that I was the same as every other teenager," Varun insisted.

6. "Oh God! She is coming again," the children whispered to each other, when they saw Mrs. Sharma striding towards their classroom for the third time that day.

B.2 Look at the following example.



The exact words of the Prime Minister: "I shall lead this great country on the path of peace and prosperity. Not only that, but I assure you that I will lower taxes and do everything in my power to reduce inflation."

[Situation: A newsreader reports the words of the Prime Minister on the radio.]

"The new Prime Minister said that he would lead the country on the path of peace and prosperity. He also promised to lower taxes and reduce inflation."

Working in pairs, note the changes the newsreader made while reporting the PM's speech.

Fill in the table below.

Reporting Verbs Used	Changes in Other Words
1. _____	I → a) _____ b) _____
2. _____	Shall → _____

Now do the same with this situation. The following is a conversation that took place between Neeta and Shobhna (in the presence of Shobhna's mother) last week.

Neeta : Can I borrow Rs. 25? I have lost all my money on the bus this morning.

Shobhna : But you asked me for a loan last week as well, you haven't repaid that yet. Sorry, But I can't lend you any more.

Imagine, it is now next week. Shobhna's mother talks about it to her husband in her own words.

"Neeta came in last week and asked Shobhna if she could borrow twenty five rupees. She explained she had lost all her money on the bus that morning. Shobhna reminded Neeta that she had asked her for a loan the previous week as well, and still hadn't repaid it. So she decided she couldn't lend Neeta any more."

Reporting verbs used	Changes in other words	Any other changes
1.	I → _____	In the indirect speech above 'If' was added because
2.	Have → _____	
3.	Me → _____	_____
4.	My → _____	_____
5.	Last week → _____	_____
	Yet → _____	_____
	Can't → _____	_____

Read the exact words of Mrs. Bhattacharya, a resident of Park Street, Kolkata.

"Where do the two of you live? You shouldn't make such a noise in the street. If you do it again, I'll have to complain to the police. So, be careful."

Now think of a situation in which Mrs. Bhattacharya has to report what she said to somebody but not exactly as she has said above (eg. to a neighbour.)

Situation _____

Now report Mrs. Bhattacharya's words. Remember: You can decide whether to use direct or indirect speech forms.

Work with your partner. Read the following. Decide on a likely situation in which what was said has been repeated. Then use your imagination and recreate the original ("direct") speech.

Everyone at the hospital looked after me very well. As soon as I arrived, a nurse asked me how I felt. Then she asked me where I lived and whether she could contact my parents. I explained that you were out today, so she couldn't contact you. After that she asked me how that accident had happened and I said I didn't know.

Situation _____

Direct speech (in dialogue form)

C. Practicing Reported Speech

C.1 Statements: Rewrite the following in reported speech:

- a) Sheela to Rashmi: "You can come and stay at my place if you're ever in Delhi".
- b) Anand to Renu: "I don't know what Gayathri is doing these days. She hasn't visited us for ages".
- c) Teacher to Students: "We shall go on a field trip to study water pollution".

Changes

- Usually present tense is changed into past tense. However, when reporting a conversation that is still going on or when reading a letter or instructions and reporting them, the reporting verb is in present tense. Also, statements that someone makes very often are reported in present tense.

Examples 1. He says that he is on his way.

("I'm on my way" over the telephone)

2. It says here that the hair drier needs a 15 AMP Socket. (reading from instructions)

3. Rani says that she'll never get married.

(statement that is repeated)

- I / we shall/ should normally become he/ she/ they would.
- Modals change to their 'past tense' form: would, could, might.
- Usually *would*, *could*, *might*, *should*, *ought to* and *must* remain unchanged. However, other expressions such as *advised/ urged/ warned/ asked/ explained* are also used to convey the 'modal' meanings.

Examples

1. "You might post these letters for me"

He asked me to post those letters for him.

2. "You ought to/ should/ must read the application carefully".

She advised / urged/ warned me to read the application carefully.

- Similarly 'could' also may be replaced with other expressions depending on the 'modal' meaning.

Examples

1. He said, "I could come tomorrow".

He said that he could/ would be able to come the next day. (Future ability)

2. He said, "When I was a boy, I could eat whatever I wanted".

He said that when he was a boy he could/ was allowed to eat whatever he wanted.

- Past tenses sometimes remain unchanged though in theory the past tense changes to the past perfect.

- a) The past/ past continuous tenses in time clauses do not normally change.

Example He said, "When we were studying in college....."

He said that when they were studying in college.....

- b) A past tense used to describe a state of affairs which still exists when the speech is reported remain unchanged:

Example She said, "I decided to rent the shop because it is on the main road."

She said that she had decided to rent the shop because it was on the main road.

- Pronouns and possessive adjectives usually change from first or second person to third person except when the speaker is reporting his own words.

Examples 1. He said, "I've decided to change my job".

He said that he had decided to change his job.

2. I said, "I cannot tolerate any delay".

I said that I can/ could not tolerate any delay.

3. Rani said that she must have come by bus.

Here 'she' may be ambiguous if Rani is referring to someone else. In such sentences it is necessary to add a noun to avoid ambiguity.

Rani said that her friend must have come by bus.

- **Expressions of time and place in indirect speech.**

Direct

today

yesterday

the day before yesterday

tomorrow

the day after tomorrow

next week / year etc

last week/ year etc

a year etc. ago

here

this

these

now

bring

come

Indirect

that day

the day before

two days before

the next day/ the following day.

in two days' time.

the following week/year etc.

the previous week/ year etc.

a year before/ the previous year

there

that

those

then

take

go

However, these changes have to be adjusted according to logic.

Example: 1. At breakfast this morning he said, "I'll be coming back late today".

At breakfast this morning he said that he would be coming back late

today.

(The reporting is being done on the same day. So today is not changed into that day)

2. He said, "Come here, friends"

He called his friends.

(He asked his friends to go there: this would be rather unnatural or awkward)

C.2 Questions in indirect speech.

Rewrite the following in indirect speech:

a) He said, "Who has moved into the neighbouring house?"

b) He said, "What have you bought for Deepawali?"

c) He said to me, "Why didn't you wear your new dress for the party?"

d) "Is anyone there?" he asked.

e) "Shall I wait for the doctor or come again tomorrow?" she asked the receptionist.

Points to Remember

- If the direct question begins with a question word (when, where, who, how, why, what etc), the question word is repeated.
- Tenses, pronouns, possessive adjectives and adverbs of time and place change as in statements.

- The interrogative form of the verb changes to the affirmative form. The question mark (?) is therefore replaced by a full stop.

He said, "Where does she live?"

He asked where she lived.

- If the introductory verb is 'say', it must be changed to a verb of inquiry, e.g. ask, inquire, wonder, want to know etc.
- If the direct question does not have a question word, 'if' or 'whether' must be used.

C. 3 Commands, requests and advice in indirect speech:

Rewrite the following in indirect speech:

- a) The General said, "Move the tanks to the battlefield immediately."

- b) "Don't drive too fast", the instructor said to me.

- c) "If I were you, I'd buy that property immediately", the agent said to Anwar.

- d) "Why don't you change into something more comfortable?" he said to his guest.

- e) "Go on, taste it", said the cook to the guest.

- You will notice that direct commands, requests and advice are usually expressed by a suitable reporting verb in indirect speech (Refer Section B)

C.4 Let's, let him etc.

Examples

1. He said, "Let's have our lunch before starting the journey".

He suggested that they should have their lunch before starting the journey.

OR

He suggested having their lunch

2. The union leader said to the workers, "Let's show the management what we can do."

The union leader urged the workers to show the management what they could do.

3. He said, "I can't issue the certificate. Let the secretary do it."

He said that he could not issue the certificate and that the secretary ought to/should do it.

4. "The students will complain", the teacher said.

"Let them", said the Headmaster.

The Headmaster said that he did not mind if the students complained.

OR

The Headmaster expressed indifference.

5. "Let the enemy enter the border and then we can launch our attack", said the commander.

The commander wanted to allow the enemy to enter the border and then they could launch their attack.

From the above you will notice that with sentences using 'let' the following changes are usually effected in indirect speech.

- a) Use 'suggest' as a reporting verb when 'let's' expresses a suggestion.
- b) Use urge/advice if let's expresses a call to action.
- c) Use ought to/ should when the speaker is shifting the responsibility to someone or something else.
- d) Whenever let him/them etc indicates the speaker's indifference, use 'didn't mind' or merely state that the speaker expressed indifference.
- e) When 'let' means allow/permit, then use allow/ permit + to.....

C.5 Exclamations

Exclamations usually become statements in indirect speech.

Examples.

1. He said, "What a beautiful scene!"

He exclaimed that it was a beautiful scene.

2. "Good!" he exclaimed.

He gave an exclamation of pleasure/ satisfaction.

3. "Ah, I have finished the assignment at last!" She said.

With an exclamation of relief she said that she had finished the assignment at last.

Thus, you may use giving with--/ an exclamation of delight/ disgust/ horror/ relief/ surprise etc depending on the meaning of the direct exclamation.

Also Note

- a) He said, "Thank you."----- He thanked me.
- b) He said, " Curse the heat." -----He cursed the heat.
- c) He said, "Good luck." ----- He wished me luck.
- d) He said, "Congratulations." ----- He congratulated me.
- e) He said, "Welcome to our college" ----- He welcomed us to their college.
- f) He said, "Can you drive?" and I said, "No". ----- He asked me if I could drive and I said I couldn't.
- g) He said, " Will you help me?" and I said, "Yes". ----- He asked me if I would help him and I said that I would.

C.6 Change the following into indirect speech. Change tense and time expressions only when necessary. You may use a variety of reporting verbs from the box below.

complain	confide	apologise	explain
invite	assure	regret	plead
scold	insist	remind	warn

1. "Human nature changes," sighed the old man.

2. "We'll win the match next week." said Vasu optimistically.

(reporting just after he said it)
3. "I saw him with Akanksha yesterday," she whispered.

4. "Sanjay, I'm sorry we didn't visit you in Bombay last week," Arun said

(reporting immediately after he said it)

5. "This rice tastes awful," he muttered.

6. "Would you like to come to the party with us tomorrow, Gopa?" Sushila asked.

(reporting later in the week.)

7. "Please, Ma, please," they begged. "We'll play on the veranda and porch. We won't take a step off the veranda."

(reporting immediately after)

8. "Don't be a fool," Raghu said roughly, pushing him aside. Even Mira said, "Stop howling, Ravi. If you want to play, you can stand at the end of the line," and she put him there very firmly.

(reporting immediately after)

C.7 Correct the errors in the following sentences. Write the correct sentence in the space provided.

1. The nurse enquired how I am.

2. He said he live in Connaught Circus.

3. They asked when I have arrived.

4. The taxi driver asked where I want to go.

5. I warn Sanjay to be careful while crossing the road.

6. Rohit couldn't understand where all the children are gone.

C.8 You said that.....

Look at the horoscope page from a newspaper. Find your zodiac sign. Imagine that you have come to the end of the week and nothing has happened, according to the horoscope. Write a letter of complaint to Madam Kiran. Report what Madam Kiran said would happen and then describe what actually happened. You may wish to write something similar to the letter in the example below.

Dear Madam Kiran,

I am writing to complain about your horoscope prediction for Virgo last week.

Firstly, you said that my relationships would be successful. In fact, I had terrible squabbles with my mother and with no fewer than three different friends. You assured me that there would be a new admirer in my life who would make me feel confident about my future. Well, I have a new admirer but he is making my life a misery for me.....

Your Weekly Horoscope

by Madam Kiran

ARIES

(21 March – 20 April)

Your most pressing problems demand consideration and if you are smart and tactful you should be able to get rid of them. You have the knack of being impetuous – so be patient if there is trouble in the family or a tight schedule at work. During the weekend there is plenty of scope for romance.

LEO

(24 July – 23 August)

Competition and conflict will annoy you in work and at home. But your approach should be one of cooperation. And for this, you will need to keep your ego under control. Do not let the mounting expenses mount your temper too. The domestic front promises some pleasant moments.

LIBRA

(24 September – 22 October)

All through the week, Librans will be energetic and assertive. However, do not be abrasive as this will only turn off possible contacts and allies. If you need help, do not hesitate to approach your friends. The time for romance starts from the 25th.

SAGITTARIUS

(23 November – 22 December)

Travel plans or faraway contacts bring opportunities that inspire Sagittarians. Around the 23rd and 24th, you should be experimenting, doing more. Take time to sort out mix-ups at work. You will find no room for romance amidst this hectic week.

TAURUS

(21 April – 20 May)

As the moon is in the sixth house, odd erratic ideas impress upon you. But do not be led by them. Go on a short tour, sit and watch TV in the evening or read books. Around the 25th don't instigate trouble or let yourself be a victim. Be willing to work out new ways of getting along.

GEMINI

(21 May – 21 June)

If any innovative plan hits you, do not cast it aside. You are thoughtful and imaginative, you just need its implementation. And once you promote your qualities more actively, you're sure to buy appreciation, money and personal satisfaction. So start right away. Do not neglect your health.

CANCER

(22 June – 23 July)

Tension at work, aroused by competitive colleagues, a noisy office or your own independent attitude might frustrate you. And so will the health of your spouse. But after mix-ups in communication and difficulties, problems fade right away.

VIRGO

(24 August – 23 September)

You will meet with success in relationships. A new admirer should make Virgo girls confident that the future holds the warm companionship they crave. Married girls will also enjoy a new closeness with their husbands. But money matters, especially around the 23rd, will create problems.

SCORPIO

(23 October – 22 November)

Scorpios have a rare chance now to boost their bank balance. Celebrate with a night out. Your confident attitude to work has surprised others and even you. But this time, you are liable to get over-confident, so be on your guard.

PISCES

(20 February – 20 March)

Love affairs will be the thorn in your flesh this week. It will be a rare occasion when you don't snap at your mate. Curiously, this anger will fuel desire, culminating around the 29th when you might get involved in a clash.



CAPRICORN

(23 December – 20 January)

This is the time to make your mark professionally and build an even better reputation. For maximum impact unveil major career moves after the 27th. You will find people drawn to you. Be more expressive and demonstrate your inner feelings. Expose the private you.

AQUARIUS

(21 January – 19 February)

You've weathered a tough period at work, so be ready for a break. Your hard work pays off now. You will make an impact if you propose to your sweetheart. Perk up your social life and use your biggest strength, a take charge attitude. But do not overburden yourself.

D. Reported Speech - Summary

D.1 Read the following extract from *Oliver Twist*, a novel by Charles Dickens.

"Where is my little brother?" cried Nancy, when she reached the police station.

"There are no little boys here, madam," answered an officer.

"Where is he, then?" she persisted, and began describing what Oliver looked like

The officer informed her that he had been driven to the home of a gentleman in Pentonville. When Fagin heard the news, he exploded, "The boy must be found, even if we have to kidnap him."

Working in pairs, a) note down the reporting verbs used in the above passage. Then, b) describe in a few words the mood or purpose of the speakers.

Reporting Verbs		Mood/Purpose/Manner	
i)	cried	i)	worried, anxious, upset, tearful
ii)	_____	ii)	_____
iii)	_____	iii)	_____
iv)	_____	iv)	_____
v)	_____	v)	_____
vi)	_____	vi)	_____

D.2 Below are some common remarks made by youngsters, their parents and guardians. They show the differences of opinions on modern music and film between the three groups. First read them carefully.

(Father) "Is this what you call music?"

(Father's friend) "It's a maddening noise and nothing else!"

(You) "But it's so lively. Can you imagine a party with the sort of music that you had about 20 years ago?"

(An Aunt) "They are so cheap. You can't see these films with your family."

(Your Friend) "The actors and actresses today are so natural."

(Another Friend) "I can't stand the theatrical and 'sing-song' way in which actors deliver their lines in old films."

(An Uncle) "At least the films in our time had meaningful stories."

(Grandfather) "I don't know why you are all arguing. Everyone thinks their time was the best."

On the basis of the above comments, write an article for your school magazine, entitled: "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow." Here are some tips:

- i. Make your article interesting and readable by reporting the feeling in the above speech bubbles.
- ii. Use both 'direct' and 'indirect' ways of reporting.
- iii. Use a variety of reporting verbs to suit the mood, purpose, and manner of the speakers above. You may wish to use some of the reporting verbs listed below.

added	contended (= to express a firm belief)	implied
admitted	chorused (= to say something together)	informed
agreed	considered	objected
advised	declared	protested
announced	forbade (= to stop somebody from saying or doing something)	preferred
asserted (= to make a point strongly)		thundered (=to say something loudly and angrily).

- iv) You may like to read the article "The Road to English" (A1) again, for some ideas.

D.3. Read the following excerpt from a newspaper report.

Tiger numbers up, but habitat a worry

New Delhi: India's tiger population has gone up. On Monday, environment minister JAIRAM RAMESH will announce an increase of over 100 tigers across the country at a three-day international conference of experts on tigers.

But can India keep this rising numbers intact? According to the government's own study on tiger reserves, India cannot hold more than 1000 to 1200 tigers, with its forests having witnessed a degradation in the last two decades.

"Where is the habitat to keep so many tigers safe?" asked Vivek Menon, chief executive officer of the Wildlife Trust of India. "Constant habitat destruction

and illegal mining is causing wildlife stress," said Dharmendra Kandhal, a wildlife biologist.

Hindustan Times- March 28, 2011

- Where do you find sentences in direct speech in the above excerpt?
- Why has the reporter used the exact words of Mr. Menon and Mr. Kandhal?
- Change the sentences in direct speech to indirect speech and then read the excerpt. Does it sound better or worse? Why?

D.4 Given below are notes on a news report covering an operation by Indian Navy that nabbed 16 pirates. Using the notes write a newspaper report. Remember to use a combination of direct and indirect speech. Make the report interesting and dramatic.

NAVY SINKS SHIP, NABS 16 PIRATES.

- 1.1 Indian navy- intensifying search for pirates- following approval of government for aggressive measures.
- 1.2 Saturday- sinking of 'private mother ship'- 400 nautical miles west of Lakshadweep Islands.
- 1.3 16 pirates captured- 12 Iranian and 4 Pakistani sailors held as hostages rescued- 120 pirates captured in last two months- In earlier three operations 104 pirates captured- facing trial in Mumbai courts.
- 2 Saturday operation- began 10 am- naval patrol aircraft spotted 'Morteza'- Iranian traveler used as 'mother vessel' by brigands-offshore patrol vessel INS Suvarna and coast Guard Ship Sangram sent to intercept Morteza- Pirates given warning- ordered to stop- but they fired- Suvarna returned limited fire- disabled Morteza - people seen abandoning ship- according to an official.
 - 2.1 Later 16 pirates and 16 sailors picked up from the waters.
 - 2.2 All being taken to Mumbai; will be handed over to police for investigation said official.

You may write this report in 3-4 paragraphs.

