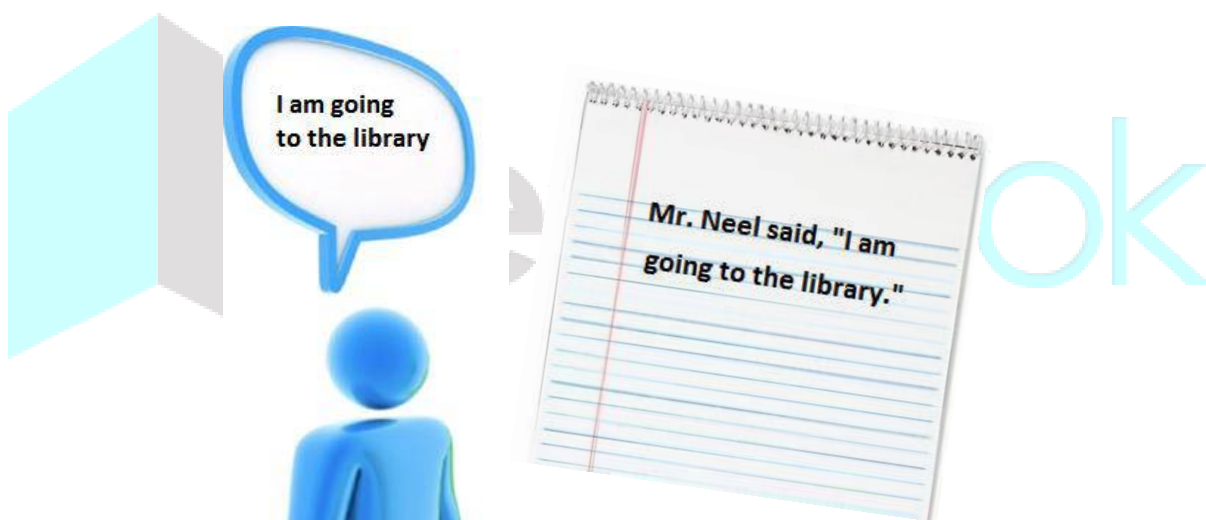


Common Misconceptions in Reported Speech - For SSC, Banking Exams

Misconception 1: Direct speech is not the reporting of speech

Actually, direct speech is reporting of speech by **repeating exactly the actual words** of the speaker. But it is not the reported speech! It is the *quoted speech*.



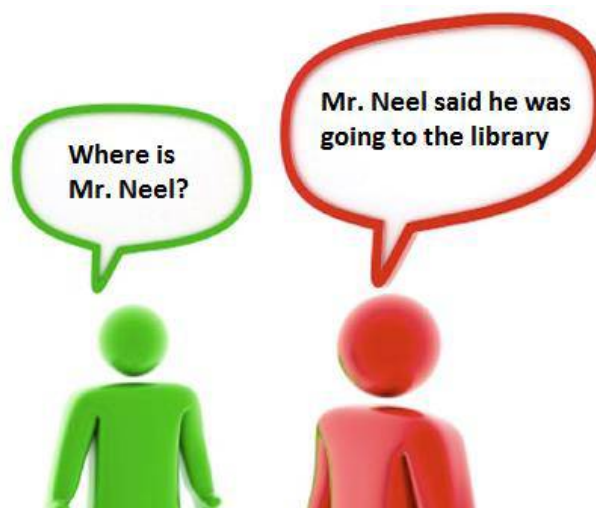
Misconception 2: Indirect speech always includes 'that'

'That' is omitted while reporting questions and commands:

He asked me, "Where are you going?"

He asked me where I was going. ✓

He asked me that where I was going. □





Misconception 3: Indirect speech is 'always' changing the tense to its past form

We use past tense in indirect speech to indicate that what we are saying has happened in the past.




But a statement which is true can be reported in the present tense.

Irin: My name is Irin.  She said her name is Irin.
(Her name is Irin still at this point in time.)

Teacher: The sun rises in the east.  The teacher said that the sun rises in the east. (Today also the sun rose in the east.)

While talking about a future event, backshift to past tense is not required.

“I will help you with this project”, Professor promised.  Our Professor promised that he will help us with this project. (What matters here is the time when the promise will come true – future.)

Misconception 4: ‘Will’ becomes ‘would’, ‘can’ becomes ‘could’, and then ‘shall’ must be changed to ‘should’.

Case 1: “I shall be there”, Ryan said.

Ryan said (that) he should be there. ☐

Ryan said (that) he would be there. ☒

‘Ryan said (that) he should be there’ means he feels he must be there; it is more like an obligation or necessity.

Case 2: “Shall I open it?” she asked.  She asked if she should open it.

In reported questions, shall changes to should. In reported statements, shall changes to would.

Misconception 5: May always changes to might

Case 1: “I may not be there,” he said. ➡ He said (that) he might not be there.

‘May’ indicates his **possibility** of being at that place. When ‘may’ is used to indicate the possibility of something, it becomes ‘might’ in indirect speech.

Case 2: “May I come in?” he asked. He asked if he could come in.

Here, ‘may’ indicates asking **permission**. In such cases, ‘may’ becomes ‘could’ in indirect speech.

“You may wait here,” his secretary said. ➡ His secretary said (that) I could wait in the hallway.

Hopefully, this article will clear all your misconceptions about the usage of reported speech. You can master Direct Indirect Speech in 4 simple steps given below:

4 Steps to Solve Every Question of Direct Indirect Speech – For SSC, Banking Exams

Here's some more study material you can use to strengthen your English:

11 Rules to Understand Gerunds with Examples

Common Nouns and Proper Nouns - Correct Usage

Easily Confused Words Tackled in English

Difference Between Its and It's

6 Easy Tips to Solve Cause and Effect in Verbal Reasoning

More English Study Material

