

Lesson Plan:

Common errors in reported speech

LEVEL Intermediate (B1-B2)	TIME 60 minutes
--------------------------------------	---------------------------

Objectives

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Recognize typical errors in reported speech
- Correct tense, pronoun, and time-expression mistakes
- Use reported speech more accurately in speaking and writing

Materials

- Whiteboard & markers
- Error sentences (prepared or projected)
- Short dialogue or text (optional)

Warm-up (5-8 minutes)

Activity: "What did they say?"

1. Say or write on the board:

Maria: "I am tired."

2. Ask:

"How can we tell someone else what Maria said?"

3. Elicit:

She said (that) she was tired.

Write the sentence but **do not explain yet**.

Noticing stage (10 minutes)

Write several incorrect reported-speech sentences on the board:

She said she is tired.

He told me he will come yesterday.

Anna said me that she was late.

Tom said he was busy today.

Ask students (in pairs) to find the mistake and try to correct it.

Presentation: Common errors & corrections (15 minutes)

Focus on **4 main problem areas**.

A. Tense backshifting errors

"I am hungry.":

She said she is hungry.

She said she ✓ was hungry.

Explain:

When the reporting verb is in the **past**, the tense usually moves back.

B. Reporting verb errors

"I am tired.":

She said me that she was tired.

She ✓ told me that she was tired.

She said (that) she was tired.

Highlight: say → no object

tell → needs an object

C. Pronoun errors

"I am late.":

John said that I was late.

John said that ✓ he was late.

Explain:

Pronouns change to match the **speaker**, not the reporter.

D. Time & place expression errors

"I will call you today.":

She told me yesterday that she would call me today.

She told me yesterday that she would call me ✓ that day.

Common changes:

- today → that day tomorrow → the next day
- yesterday → the day before
- here → there

Controlled practice (10-12 minutes)

Activity 1: Error correction

Students correct the sentences:

1. He said he can help me.
2. She told that she was sick.
3. They said they will meet tomorrow.

Check together and discuss why.

Activity 2: Choose the correct option

1. "I'm angry." = She said / told me she was angry.
2. "I'm busy today." = He told me last Friday that he was busy today / that day.

Guided practice (10 minutes)

Activity: "Report it correctly"

1. Give short direct-speech sentences:

"I can't come."

"We are studying."

2. Students report them:

- She said she couldn't come.
- They said they were studying.

Monitor and correct.

Freer practice (8-10 minutes)

Activity: "What did they say?"

1. Students work in small groups.
2. One student reads a short dialogue.
3. Another student reports it to the group.

Encourage accuracy over speed.

Review & wrap-up (5 minutes)

Ask:

"What are the most common mistakes in reported speech?"

"When do we change the tense?"

Write 2 incorrect sentences on the board and have students correct them orally.

Optional homework

- Rewrite a short dialogue in reported speech
- Find and correct **5 reported-speech mistakes** in a paragraph