

## Advanced English Lesson 12 – The Media – Reported Speech

How are these two sentences similar? How are they different? Do they give the same information?

**Sentence 1:** Miriam, age 16, said: “School is very important to me. Everyone must go to school!”

**Sentence 2:** Miriam, a 16 year old student, said that school is very important to her. In her opinion, everyone must go to school.

Direct speech: Use “quotes” to describe exactly what is said

Examples:

- She said “I am hungry!”
- You said “I lost my pencil! Can I borrow yours?”
- He complained “I’m tired, I want to go to my house.”

Reported speech: use “that” and what was said

1. *Change pronouns (I/you/we/etc. → he/she, etc.)*
2. *Change possessives (my/your → his/hers, etc.)*
3. *Change tense (present → past)*
4. *Change questions → statements*

Examples:

- She said that she was hungry!
- You told me that you lost your pencil, and you asked to borrow mine.
- He complained that he was tired, and he wanted to go to his house.

### Verbs to Describe Speech:

- To say
- To explain
- To tell
- To express
- To discuss
- To give his/her opinion
- To complain
- To clarify
- To ask
- To demand

Change from reported to direct speech, or from direct to reported speech.

1. Last class Alana explained that she’s going to Moheli.

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
The witness said “I saw no one leave the crime scene!”

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
He asked if we could give him some money.

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
She demanded that I share my candy with her.

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
They asked “where is your school?”  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **What is a typical day for an adolescent girl in Comoros?**

“Depends on age and rural versus urban. A teenage girl can be expected to complete chores early in the morning before school, then go to school, come home for three hours to cook for siblings... then go back to school for evening classes. That’s a lot of work!

### **What are some of the common barriers that girls in Comoros face in attending or staying in school? What are some of your general observations?**

“Actually, some girls go to school before boys do. There is a lot of value in education of girls. But where it becomes complicated is that you still are expected to be a mother first and foremost. Your dream is to become a mother.

In Comoros, there is a tradition that parents build a house for their daughter; they begin that process from the moment [a daughter is] born. So girls grow up comparing their house to friends’ – when will it be finished, how nice will it be? So in Comoros, girls already know where they will live and what they will do. Nobody tells us that, it is just part of the culture, it is just assumed. [Parents tell daughters], ‘You are smart but you are so smart and so generous, that you will let your brother finish school because he does not have a house. He needs these skills to be able to find a wife in the future.’ From the outside, you would think this is great that women have agency to own a home and can kick out the men if they want.... But really, there is a lot of pressure to conform and to be what others expect.”

### **Do you have advice for girls who want to continue their education?**

“My advice is – a house is important. I would disagree with any outsider who said otherwise. But education is important too. My house I built myself might not be as big as other people's, but I have accomplished a lot in different areas of my life. It is important to be independent and to have the pride of building your own house. It brings a different kind of satisfaction. My advice is, many things in culture are important; marriage ceremony is important, house.... All of these you can achieve after you have an education. It is all possible.”

### **What should girls do if their parents are not as supportive as yours?**

“Use your brothers and uncles as allies, if they understand that you are giving something up that you may not really want to, they may be able to advocate for you. I have seen a lot of families do that.”

**As someone who is passionate about women's issues, do you feel any restrictions on discussing them publicly?**

“When I came back to Comoros from attending university and living in Madagascar, I remember working on a project and I went to a rural community and started talking to youth about girls’ and women’s empowerment. And they were like, what? Wait, I am not ill-treated, why do I need this empowerment? I had to take a step back; actually I had to take a thousand steps back, and try to think about myself when I was their age. It’s not about being this outside voice that comes in and says that you have a problem or what you are doing is wrong. So what I did was start with just life skills and learning about how they can identify more characteristics about themselves. What they like to do and what they don’t like to do? We just talked about their everyday lives and it was amazing how much that they opened up when I was being sensitive to culture and not having judgment. Because it doesn’t work to go in and say, you are not empowered. Let’s start by talking about things that are going well.”

**You mentioned in a prior interview that you hope to overcome stereotypes about being “Muslim and veiled, and free and feminist at the same time.” How do you do this in your everyday life?**

"We do have the expectations of what it means to be a “good” Muslim – I’m not saying that I have figured out a way to balance everything but what I always try to remind myself is that there are hundreds or thousands of people that think like me. It is about showing people I can be respectful, be a “good” Muslim in Comoros but also share my opinions in a non-provocative way – trying to state things in a constructive way. I think that is what makes a lot of women in my country different, because it is all about the way that you express yourself. It’s really about knowing people and respecting their beliefs. I have opinions and I think that they matter and I bet that you do too and that we could talk and work together.”