

## Chapitre IV : LE DISCOURS INDIRECT

Passer du discours direct au discours indirect signifie rapporter des paroles et modifier ainsi, à des degrés divers, le contexte d'énonciation initial. On entend par contexte l'ensemble des situations dans lesquelles l'énoncé initial a été produit. Le contexte est donc tout à la fois spatial, temporel et "nominal" (personne/chose sujet ou complément dans l'énoncé).

- *He said : "I will be here tomorrow."* (discours direct)

- *He said that he would be there the following day.* (discours indirect)

Quatre points essentiels sont à prendre en compte :

1. Les pronoms (contexte nominal).
2. Les adjectifs démonstratifs (contexte spatial et/ou temporel) et possessifs (contexte nominal).
3. Les adverbes de temps et de lieu (contexte spatial et temporel).
4. La concordance des temps (contexte temporel).

### I. LES PRONOMS

Le passage du discours direct au discours indirect implique que l'on adapte les pronoms au nouveau contexte. Il s'agit purement de logique.

*He said : "I want to speak to you"* devient *He said he wanted to speak to me.*

### II. LES ADJECTIFS DÉMONSTRATIFS ET POSSESSIFS

#### II.1. LES ADJECTIFS DÉMONSTRATIFS

Si le rapporteur prend une certaine distance (spatiale et/ou temporelle) par rapport au discours à rapporter, cet effet se traduit par le changement de *THIS* en *THAT* et de *THESE* en *THOSE*.

- *He said : "I don't want to buy this house"* devient *He said that he didn't want to buy that house* si la maison ne fait plus partie de l'environnement immédiat (*this*). Pour la différence entre *this* et *that*, voir le chapitre sur les déterminants (Chapitre IX).

#### II.2. LES ADJECTIFS POSSESSIFS

- *He said : "My house is more comfortable than your castle"* devient *He said that his house was more comfortable than my castle.*

### III. LES ADVERBES DE LIEU ET DE TEMPS

Même principe de distance ou de décalage par rapport au discours initial et à son contexte.

*HERE* devient *THERE*.

*NOW* devient *THEN*.

Il faut faire attention à d'autres compléments de temps qui changent aussi.

*She said: "I went to Canada last year"* devient *She said that she had been to Canada the year before.*

De même :

- *two days ago* devient *two days before*

- *next month* devient *the following month/the month after*

- *yesterday* devient *the day before/the previous day*
- *the day before yesterday* devient *the previous day but one*
- *tomorrow* devient *the day after/the following day*
- *tomorrow morning* devient *the following/next morning*
- *the day after tomorrow* devient *the next day but one*

## IV. LA CONCORDANCE DES TEMPS

Trois types de phrase vont permettre de rapporter le discours :

1. Les phrases déclaratives.
2. Les phrases interrogatives indirectes.
3. Les phrases infinitives.

### IV.1. LES DÉCLARATIVES

IV.1.a. Le verbe de la proposition principale est au présent ou au *present-perfect* : il n'y a pas de changement de temps dans la complétive (introduite par *that*).

- *I will go to Paris next week-end* donne *He says that he will go to Paris next week-end.*
- *I was in London last week* donne *He says that he was in London last week.*

IV.1.b. Le verbe de la principale est au prétérit : le verbe de la complétive doit porter une marque de passé.

- Un présent devient un prétérit.
- Un *present-perfect* ou un prétérit devient un *plu-perfect*.
- Un futur (avec *will*) devient un conditionnel présent (*would*).
  - "*I want a new car*", *I said.* / *I said that I wanted a new car.*
  - "*I expected to be rewarded*", *she said.* / *She said that she had expected to be rewarded.*
  - "*I have been living here for twelve years*", *she said.* / *She said that she had been living there for twelve years* (ou *here* si l'on se trouve au même endroit lorsqu'on rapporte le discours).
  - "*I have lived here since I was a child*", *she said.* / *She said that she had lived there since she had been a child.*
  - "*I will go to New York next year if I have enough money*", *he said.* / *He said that he would go to New York the following year if he had enough money.*

On note dans ce dernier exemple que *next year* ne changera pas si la phrase au discours direct et la phrase au discours indirect sont produites la même année ; si *he said*, par exemple, fait référence à hier, il va de soi que *next year* a exactement le même sens au passé qu'au présent. Comme pour le complément de lieu, le changement du complément de temps n'est pas systématique: il dépend du contexte.

*"I would go to New York if I had enough money", he said.*

- soit la chose est toujours possible et l'énoncé rapporté reste inchangé :
  - He said that he would go to New York if he had enough money.*
- soit on se réfère à un moment passé et on suit la règle de double antériorité :
  - He said that he would have been to New York if he had had enough money.*

**Remarque :** pour le modal *must* et le quasi-modal *need*, il n'y a pas de changement.

*He said that I must keep on working and that I needn't worry.*

Il en va de même pour *should* et *ought to*.

*He said that we should work more.*

On remarque dans ces dernières formes qu'une transposition au passé de la proposition complétive équivaudrait à un changement de sens. Or, la règle veut que la forme verbale transposée ne change pas s'il y a modification de sens par rapport à l'énoncé initial ; ceci se conçoit aisément dans la mesure où rapporter un énoncé signifie avant tout lui rester fidèle. Reconsidérons le dernier exemple où *should have worked more* aurait eu la valeur d'un reproche et non plus d'un conseil.

#### IV.2. LES INTERROGATIVES INDIRECTES

On appliquera ici les mêmes règles de concordance des temps tout en veillant à ne pas conserver l'inversion sujet-auxiliaire des questions directes.

Les questions indirectes sont introduites par des verbes tels que *ask*, *wonder*, *want to know if/whether...*

*He asked : "Will you come to the party ?" / He asked me if I would go to the party.*

Ici, le changement de *come* en *go* désigne une différence de perspective chez les deux personnes.

#### IV.3. LES INFINITIVES

Ce sont souvent des transpositions d'ordres, de formes impératives. Elles sont introduites par les verbes *ask*, *order*, *tell*, ...

*"Will you close the window", she asked me. / She asked me to close the window.*

*"Get out of here", she ordered. / She ordered me to get out.*

A la forme négative, on notera la place traditionnelle de *not* dans la proposition infinitive.

*She told me not to think about it.*

Cette position peut toutefois varier, surtout en anglais américain, pour insister sur la négation.

*She told me to not think about it.*

Avec les verbes *suggest*, *demand*, et *insist* on aura recours au subjonctif, étudié au chapitre précédent.

*"Don't disturb me", she demanded. / She demanded that I (should) not disturb her.*

## EXERCICES

### EXERCICE 1

Compléter le tableau ci-dessous. La personne qui parle est désignée par *she*.

Discours direct	Discours indirect
<i>tomorrow</i>	
	<i>three days before</i>
<i>next month</i>	
<i>this year</i>	
<i>me</i>	
	<i>had been</i>
<i>here</i>	
	<i>then</i>
<i>my</i>	
	<i>hers</i>

### EXERCICE 2

Mettre les phrases suivantes au discours indirect.

1. He said: "I will go to Japan when I am invited".
2. He asked : "Do you know which teacher taught this class two years ago?"
3. "When will she leave?", he wondered.
4. He said: "I've done something very strange this year".
5. "Take this chair and sit down", he ordered me.
6. He said: "There have been many things going on in this town since I came."
7. "People are not used to learning foreign languages in this country", he remarked.
8. "Come over here and see for yourself", he told me.
9. "How long have you been here?", he asked me.
10. "You never can tell ; there might be a few drops of rain after all", he said.
11. "My mother came for a visit a month ago", she said.
12. "Take your time and relax", he said to me.
13. Gladys said: "If I had known Peter was coming, I would never have gone out and walked that silly dog of mine".
14. "When was the last time we met?", he asked.
15. " If you think I'm going to take this lying down, you're barking up the wrong tree", he said to Liz.

16. "I wish grammar weren't such a tricky subject", he said.
17. "It's the first time I've seen a real bear", he admitted.
18. "I must admit I made a terrible mistake, but don't put the blame on me", he said to her.
19. "If you go on like this, I'm definitely going to get mad", he told me.
20. "The food was finger-licking good but the service was really bad", he complained.

### **EXERCICE 2 BIS**

**Mettre les phrases suivantes au style indirect en utilisant l'amorce *He said that / He asked .../ He demanded et He told me* selon le cas.**

1. I read the paper yesterday.
2. I wish he were less stupid.
3. I'll take the train tomorrow (morning).
4. If I knew him I would certainly talk to him.
5. I've travelled a lot this year.
6. Do you believe him?
7. You never know ; it might snow a little.
8. I'd rather be there (than get bored here).
9. My wife's mother visited us a month ago.
10. Call up your mother!
11. Our children would be happier if they could land a summer job.
12. Don't tell my son!
13. You must come with us.
14. I'll phone him once he has arrived.
15. I've been very uncomfortable since I bought this car.

### **EXERCICE 3**

**Mettre le paragraphe suivant sous forme de dialogue.**

Peter told me not to worry, that I had plenty of time and that the train would not leave without me. I answered that it was an hour's drive to the station and that, consequently, we'd better hurry. Peter said he understood why I was so nervous and that he would start the car while I was closing my suitcase and that he would be waiting for me outside.

We said good bye on the platform. I promised I would give him a call as soon as I arrived, on the following day. He said he probably wouldn't be home until after midnight because he was thinking of dining out with a friend of his.

## EXERCICE 4

### Mettre le dialogue suivant au discours indirect.

I : Good afternoon. Have you been waiting long?

She : No. I've only been here for 10 minutes, since your office opened.

I : Shall we have a cup of coffee? The coffee machine is right over here behind my filing cabinet.

She : I tried to give you a call yesterday but the line was busy all day. Was your telephone out of order?

I : It wasn't. Only I had twenty phone calls to make.

She : Have you read my report?

I : Well, yes I have.

She : How did you find it?

I : Well, I'll level with you. I don't think it's the kind of report that will be needed for tomorrow's meeting. I'm afraid you'll have to do it all over again. Sorry about that.

She : I'd rather you had made this remark earlier. D'you know how much time I've spent on this report? I bet you don't care a rap. You don't, do you?

## EXERCICES COMPLEMENTAIRES

### 1. Transposer les formes suivantes au discours indirect (passé). La personne qui rapporte le discours est désignée par *He*.

*YESTERDAY*

*THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW*

*LAST YEAR*

*HERE*

*I*

*MINE*

*WILL BE*

*TWO YEARS FROM NOW*

*WAS*

### 2. Transposer les phrases suivantes au discours indirect.

- He asked : "Where is my pen?"

- "His aunt left for Canada a week ago", I said.

- He said : "I will not stay here any longer".

- "I don't like sweets so I won't eat any, thank you", she said.

- "If she were a bit more intelligent she would understand this", I remarked.

- "Take this letter and mail it", he ordered me.

- He said : "I've been living here since I was a child".

- "I'll see her in this office tomorrow", I said.

- She said : "I and my husband must go back home before it's dark".
- "What time is it?", he asked.
- He asked : "At what time did she leave the school?"

### **3. Mettre le paragraphe suivant au style direct.**

This student asked me if I had already graded the papers. I replied that of course I hadn't since I'd been sick all week and that he and his friends should wait a little longer. I said the results would be posted the day after. He thanked me and took leave of me.

### **4. Mettre le dialogue suivant au style indirect.**

I : Good morning John. How are you?

J : Fine, thank you.

I : Have you read today's paper? There have been a few interesting things going on in the world over the last two or three days.

J : Really? Well, I've heard of nothing worth exclaiming about.

I : It says on the front page that the Prime Minister is going to Japan the day after tomorrow and that he may stay there until the end of this month.

J : What the hell is he going to spend so much time there for? It's the first time this has happened, isn't it?