Grammar Reference

Indirect speech/Reported speech

Reported speech or indirect speech is used to tell people what somebody else said or thought. Generally, the tense of the verb in reported speech is in the past.

Example:

Direct speech	Indirect speech
"I **have** 10,000 Riel."	He said (that) he **had** 10,000 Riel.
"Lisa **is living** in New York."	She said (that) Lisa **was living** in New York.
"She **went** home."	He said (that) she **had gone** home.
"He **has worked** there since December."	He said (that) he **had worked** there since December.
"I**'m** sure she**'ll pass** the test."	He said (that) he **was** sure she **would pass** the test.

Note: If somebody said something that is still true when it is reported, tenses don't always change.

Example:

"I don't like vegetables."   She said (that) she doesn't like vegetables. (still true)

"Say" or "tell" are often used in reported speech. "Tell" must have an object. "That" is often left out.

Compare:

She **said** she saw David on Friday.

She **told me** she saw David on Friday.

Note: We also change pronouns in reported speech.

Example:

"**We** don't like David." =>   **She/He** said that **they** didn't like David.

"**I'**m hungry."   =>   **She/He** said **she/he** was hungry.