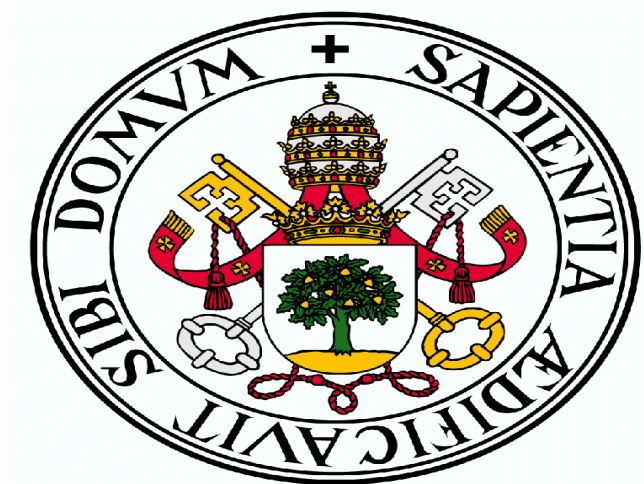# The Reported Speech in its pedagogic dimension

Trabajo de fin del Máster Universitario de Profesor en

Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y Bachillerato,

Formación Profesional y Enseñanza de Idiomas

Trabajo de: Nerea Artesero Bernal

Profesorado: Carlos Javier García Gil

Universidad de Valladolid, Junio 2012

INDEX

Introduction

The topic for the essay is chosen because in our opinion the Reported Speech (R.S.) is a very important linguistic concept to acquire in High Schools.

We remembered that in secondary school, we learnt this linguistic concept just after the passive voice. As it was considered quite a difficult concept, it was taught when we were in the 4th year or in the last two years of High School depending on the school teaching program.

Besides, this concept is generally placed nearly the end of the book, at the last stages of the academic course, as a consequence, teachers have to bear in mind that regarding the class rhythm, it could be that there is no time for reaching that unit. Thus, students have no chance to apprehend that new concept and it is a pity since that concept is extremely used in everyday life and that is why there is a need of learning it to understand it whenever students are in contact with it.

As far as we are concerned, this is not a good idea due to the amount of grammatical changes students need to learn to acquire it, as we will explain in the appropriate chapter.

Above all, we believe that the R.S. learning & teaching process seems quite boring and difficult for students; therefore, as a potential resolution for this conflict, we propose some innovating and creative activities in order to catch

students´ attention and increase their motivation, too. These activities will be different from the ones based on the normative (traditional) grammar that already exist since we incorporate the new technologies support in the activities´ achievement. In our opinion, it is very useful to inform students about the new teaching techniques where the teaching & learning process does not need to be linked necessarily to routine, boredom and passive role.

During my teaching practice, I found out a problematic situation for students linked to the R.S. learning & teaching process.

→The objectives of my essay can be summarized in the following points:

a) Study the question state related to the Reported Speech learning in the English language classroom.

b) Identify difficulties in a comparative-contrastive perspective linked to potential problems students might have in the learning &teaching process.

c) Explore and apply innovating tasks in the class so as to come to a high amount of motivation and pupil´s attention involved actively in the learning & teaching process.

d) Establish guidelines for a new teaching method based on the communicative competence and the task-based method.

e) Notice the divergent methodology techniques regarding either books used at schools or books following the task-based method for instance, the ones from the Official Language Schools.

There are some potential problems observed when the R.S. is taught. On the one hand, most of the students think that this is a very difficult linguistic concept due to the fact that many steps are needed to change from D.S. into R.S.

On the other hand, students only receive the grammatical input related to the R.S. through exercises where no context is specified instead of true and everyday situations linked to the new approaches. That is the reason why, we would like to propose them to the teaching of the R.S. with creative and cooperative activities to decrease the affective filter on students when they feel tension in case they make mistakes in front of the class-group.

Section 1

Chapter 1

There are two ways of reporting what a person has said:

a/ Direct Speech (D.S.)

b/ Indirect or Reported Speech (I.S. or R.S.)

According to ….. "If we use the same words as a speaker to report what he or she says, we are using direct speech. In written language, direct speech is usually signaled by being enclosed in quotation marks":

→A friend is reporting her friends what her mother told her at home.

D.S. would be:

▪ - "Mary, tidy up your room"

▪ - "Not now mum, I am watching TV"

"If, on the other hand, we report what was said by means of a subordinated clause, for example, a that-clause, we are using I.S. or R.S where we give the exact meaning of a speech, without using the speaker´s exact words. That is, we report in our own words".

The I.S. would be:

Mary´s mother forced her to tidy up her room.

And Mary refused not to do it now because she was watching TV.

I.   *Introductory verb*

A. Appropriate reporting verbs

B. The conjunction "that"

C.   "Said" with the appropriate adverb of manner"

The two verbs most frequently used to introduce an indirect clause are "say" and "tell". Spanish students have to be very careful not to mix them up.

A. Appropriate reporting verbs

1. The difference between TO TELL and TO SAY

Both means ‹‹decir››, but **to tell** must be followed by an indirect object, whereas with **to say** it is not necessary. When **to say** takes an indirect object it is constructed with the preposition to; **to tell** is constructed <u>without a preposition</u> when the indirect object precedes the direct object and <u>with to</u> if that is not the case:

- *I told him nothing*

- *I told nothing to him*

The verb **to say** introduces subordinate clauses with that, usually without an indirect object:

- *He said (that) it was too late*

The verb ***to tell*** introduces subordinate clauses with that, usually with an indirect object, and also with infinitives implying an order:

- *He told her that it was too late*

- *He told her to hurry*

But apart from these verbs, there are others more precise that can be used in R.S. as reporting or **"introductory" verbs**.

Particularly, in statements there are very many possible introductory verbs and the choice will depend upon the circumstances of each case:

2→Agree

- *"Yes, it is hot"*

- *He agreed that it was hot.*

3→Advise

- *"If I were you, I would say nothing about it"*

- *He advised me not to say anything about it.*

4→Apologize

- *"I am sorry I broke that vase"*

- *He apologized for breaking the vase.*

5→Complain

- *"This food is cold"*

- *He complained that the food was cold.*

6→Explain

- *"My difficulty is that I can´t see too well at the back of the classroom"*

- *He explained his difficulty (for seeing) to see at the back of the classroom.*

7→Greet

- *"Hello everyone, nice to see you"*

- *She greeted everyone.*

8→Introduce

- *"Peggy, meet Sue"*

- *She introduced Peggy to Sue.*

9→Refuse

- *"No thanks, I don´t drink"*

- *She refused to drink.*

10→Swear

- *"Confound it!"*

- *He swore to confound it*

11→Warn

- *"Careful!"*

- *He warned me to be careful. (He told me is not good enough)*

12→ Introductory verb: asked, enquired, wondered

The introductory verb for statements "say" is changed to "ask" or another verb of inquiry ("inquired", "wondered", "wanted to know") according to the shade of meaning to be expressed. "**Ask**" is usually followed by a **pronoun**.

- *Ask her to take a shower*

B. The conjunction "that"

The conjunction **"that"** can be placed immediately after the introductory verb when turning D.S. into R.S. But, it is not essential and is **often omitted.**

C. "Said" with the appropriate adverb of manner"

Sometimes we have to reorganize the sentence because the tone of the original sentence cannot be preserved only by the use of **"said".**

- *"If you are so clever, why do not try to do it yourself"*
- *He **said sarcastically** that I should try to do it myself*

- *"Do not keep asking silly questions"*
- *She **said angrily/shouted** at me to stop asking silly questions*

As a **conclusion**:

It is **most important to preserve the spirit of the original sentence**. Students must, therefore, not only understand the content but also appreciate the style and tone of the original sentence.

Chapter 2

II. Grammatical/general changes

When turning D.S. into I.S., some changes are necessary.

These changes can be divided into three groups:

A. Tense changes

B. Pronoun and possessive adjectives changes

C. Other changes: place and time

A. Tense changes

1.No changes

When the introductory verb is **in present tenses**, direct statements can be reported with no changes of tense:

- *"This essay **is** too difficult"*

- *He says that this essay **is** too difficult.*

2.Back-shift.

But when the introductory verb is **in the past tense**, and in fact it usually is, in the reported clause the verb is back-shifted (changed) to an earlier time reference.

Simple present	Simple past
*"I never **eat** meat", h/she explained.*	*H/she explained that he never **ate** meat.*
Present continuous	**Past continuous**
*"I **am waiting** for Ann", h/she said.*	*H/she said (that) h/she **was waiting** for Ann.*
Present perfect	**Past perfect**
*"I **have found** an apartment", h/she said.*	*H/she said (that) h/she **had found** an apartment.*
Present perfect continuous	**Past perfect continuous**
*"I **have been waiting** for ages", h/she said.*	*H/she said (that) h/she **had been waiting** for ages.*

Simple past	Past perfect
*"I **took** it home with me", h/she said.*	*H/she said (that) h/she **had taken** it home with her.*
Past perfect	**Past perfect**
*"H/she **had been** here before", h/she said.*	*H/she said that h/she **had been** there before.*
Future	**Conditional**
*"I **will** be in Paris on Monday", h/she said.*	*H/she said (that) h/she **would** be in Paris on Monday.*
Modal present verbs	**Modal past verbs**
*"I **can** go to the meeting", h/she said.* *"I **may** go to the party", h/she said.* *"I **must** go to school", h/she said.* *"I **shall** go to the library", h/she said.*	*H/she said h/she **could** go to the meeting.* *H/she said h/she **might** go to the party.* *H/she said that h/she **had** to go to school.* *H/she said (that) h/she **should** go to the library.*

Conditional	Conditional
*"I **would** like to see it", h/she said.*	*H/she said h/she **would** like to see it.*

But sometimes, the tense changes we have considered above do not take place. The speaker can sometimes, if he wishes, break the concord between reporting and reported verb, **keeping the tense form of the original speech.** In other words, there are some exceptions to the back-shift:

2.1 <u>Universal truths, scientific nature proverbs and habitual uses.</u>

"*Virtue **IS** knowledge", Socrates said.* Timeless, of eternal application. Universal truth.	*Socrates said that virtue **IS/WAS** knowledge.* It has reference to the present day—the time of report—as well as to the time of Socrates.
*"The earth **IS** not flat", Galileo said.*	*Galileo said that the earth **IS/WAS** not flat.*

*"I **AM** blameless", said Socrates.* No reference in the present time, *since* Socrates is now dead.	*Socrates said that he **WAS (NOT IS)** blameless.*
*"Karen **DRINKS** a cup of coffee for breakfast everyday",* Kelly said Habitual action and use.	*Kelly said that Karen **DRINKS** a cup of coffee for breakfast every day.*

2.2 <u>State of affairs and time clauses.</u>

Simple past	Past perfect
*"I decid**ed** not to buy the house because it **WAS** on a main road", h/she said.* Describe a state of affairs which still exists when the speech is reported remains unchanged.	*H/she said that h/she **had decided** not to buy a house because it **WAS** on a main road.*
Past continuous	**Past perfect continuous**

*"We **were thinking** of selling the house but we **have decided** not to",* *h/she said.* It refers to a complete action.	H/she said that they **have been thinking** of selling the house but **had decided** not to.
Past continuous "When I **saw** them they **were playing** tennis", h/she said. We do not know if the action is finished or not.	**Past continuous** H/she said that when he **saw** them they **were playing** tennis.
Past modal auxiliaries *"I **might** be there", h/she said.* "I **would** help him if I **could**", h/she said.	**Past modal auxiliaries** *H/she said that h/she **might** be there.* H/she said that h/she **would** help him if h/she **could.**

B.Pronoun and possessive adjectives

Pronouns and possessive adjectives normally change from the 1st into the 2nd or 3rd person:

*"**I** have forgotten the combination of **my** safe", **h/she** said.*	**H/she** said that **h/she** had forgotten the combination of **his** safe.
*"**I** love Peter", **I** said.* Except when the speaker is reporting his own words.	***I** said **I** loved Peter.*
*"**H/she** came in through the window", **Tom** said.* A proper noun must be inserted to avoid ambiguity.	***Tom** said **h/she** had come in through the window.* ***Tom** said that the **man/the thief** had come in through the window.* It might give the impression that Tom himself had come in this way; but if we

	use a noun there can be no confusion.

C.Adverbs changes

Now *"I am watching TV **now**", h/she said.*	**Then** *H/she said h/she was watching TV* ***then.***
Then *"I have been in London **then**", h/she said.* *"I went to London **then**", h/she said.*	**Before then** *H/she said that h/she had been in London **before then.*** *H/she said that h/she had gone to London **before then.***
Yesterday *"That form ought to have been completed **yesterday**", the official told.*	**The previous day/ the day before.** *The official told me that the form ought to have been completed **the previous day/the day before.***

The day before yesterday *"I saw grandma **the day before yesterday**", my father said.*	**Two days before** *My father said that he saw grandma **two days before.**.*
Tomorrow *"I will eat tomatoes **tomorrow**, h/she said.*	**The next/ following day/the day after.** *H/she said h/she would eat tomatoes **the next/ following day/ the day after**.*
The day after tomorrow *"I am leaving **the day after tomorrow**, Chris´ uncle announced.*	**In two days´time** *Chris´ uncle announced that he was leaving **in two days´ time**.*
This *"H/she is coming **this** week", h/she said.*	**That** *H/she said that h/she was coming **that** week.*

These *"I cooked **these** omelettes for you"*, *his girlfriend said.*	**Those/The** *His girlfriend said that she had cooked* ***those/the** omelettes for him.*
Ago *"My father died **a year ago"**, h/she* *said.*	**Before** *H/she said that his/her father had died* ***a year before**.*
Today *"I play football **today"**, h/she said.*	**That day** *H/she said that h/she played football* ***that day.***
Here *We met **at the bridge** and h/she* *said: "I will be **here** again tomorrow".* *"You can sit **here** Tom", h/she said.* Sometimes it is necessary to introduce a phrase indicating the	**There** *We met **at the bridge** and h/she* *said that h/she would be **there** again* *the next day.* *H/she told Tom that he could sit **on*** ***that chair beside her**.*

exact place.	
*At breakfast, **this morning** h/she said: "I will be very busy **today**".* If the speech is made reported on the same day these time changes are not necessary.	***This morning** h/she said that h/she would be very busy **today**.*

Chapter 3

III. Utterance types

A. Commands

1. "Will you" questions

- *"Will you stop for a moment?"*

- *H/she told me to stop.*

- *"Will you, please, shut up?"*

- *H/she told me to shut up.*

- *"Shut the door, will you?"*

- *H/she told us angrily to shut the door.* (This is more authoritative than polite and often indicates impatience. It is expressed by "**tell**").

Note: There are many ways of **expressing "a command"** in D.S. in English, for instance: "will you" either at the beginning or at the end of a sentence can express a command.

2.The introductory verb "say" changes to a verb of command or request, "tell, order, command".

a)A direct object is introduced:

A direct object, representing the person ordered, it must be included. So in cases, when the person addressed is not mentioned, it is necessary to **add a noun or a pronoun**:

- *"Be quiet!"*

- *I told **them (the children)** to be quiet.*

b) Tense change: imperative→to+inf

The imperative form of the verb in the direct command becomes the corresponding infinitive:

- *"**Run** quickly!"*

- *He **told me to run** quickly.*

- *"**Lie down**, dog!"*

- *He **told the dog to lie down**.*

b.1)Negative commands are expressed by "not+inf"

- *"Do **not move**, boys!"*

- *She told the boys **not to move**.*

B. Offers

1. "Shall I/we" questions

- *"Shall I bring you some tea?"*

- *He offered to bring me some tea.*

- *"Shall I get you a chair?"*

- *She offered me a chair.*

2. "Will you" questions

- *"Will you have some more wine?"*

- *H/she offered me some more wine.*

- *"Will you have lunch with me tomorrow?"*

- *H/she invited/asked me to lunch with him/her the following/next day.*

- *"Will you like a lift?", said Ann*

- *Ann offered me a lift.*

C. Suggestions:"to suggest"+-ing// that….should

1.<u>"Shall I/we" questions</u>

- *"Shall we meet at the theatre?"*

- *He suggested meeting at the theatre/ that we should meet at the theatre.*

- *"Shall we wait here till the rain stops?"*

- *He suggested waiting there till the rain stops.*

D. Polite requests

- *"Do you think you could help me?"*

- *H/she asked me to help him/her.*

- *"Could you/would you wait a moment, please?"*

- *H/she asked me to wait a moment.*

- *"Please, do not tell anyone".*

- *H/she asked me not to tell anyone.*

E. The linking or connective word joining the indirect question to the main clause

1."If" or "whether" when it applies to "yes-no" questions-

a)When the direct question begins with an interrogative such as **"who?", "why?", "what?", "where?", "how?"**, the indirect wh-questions are introduced by the "**wh-word**" which begins the question in direct speech.

- *"**Do** you live here?"*

- *H/she asked him/her **if/whether** he lived there.*

- "***What** is her name?"*

- *H/she asked me **what** her name was.*

a.1) Use of "**If**" or "**Whether**":

Usage generally favours "if" whenever the distinction in meaning is not important:

- *He asked me **if (whether)** I had seen the movie.*

b)"**Whether**" usually expresses a doubt and an alternative possibility or a choice between two alternatives, so it is often followed by the correlative **"or":**

- *"Is it your turn **or** Mary´s?"*

- *She asked him **<u>whether</u>** it was his turn **<u>or</u>** Mary´s.*

b.1)"**Before an infinitive**":

- *"She has not decided whether to sail or fly to America".*

b.2) When it introduces a **concessive clause**:

- *"Whether he essays or not, I do not think he will pass his exam".*

F. Exclamations

⟶An exclamation is a type of sentence which is used to express the speaker´s feeling or attitude. Exclamations must become statements in R.S.

1.<u>What and how</u>

- "***How** beautifully she dances!"*

- *H/she said that she danced beautifully.*

- "***What** a lovely house you have!"*

- *H/she said that I had a lovely house.*

2.Exclamations such as "ugh!" disgust // "oh!" surprise // "ouch!" pain

- *"**Oh**! I did win the prize!"*

- *He **gave an exclamation of surprise** that he had won the prize.*

- *He **exclaimed with surprise** that he had won the prize.*

3.Others

- *H/she said: "happy Birthday!"*

- *H/she **wished** me a happy Birthday.*

- *H/she said: "liar!"*

- *H/she **called** me a liar.*

- *H/she said: **"damn!"***

- *H/she **swore.***

G.Mixed types

⟶All the utterance types we have so far discussed (statements, questions, commands and exclamations) may sometimes occur together.

1.Statement + question

- *"I do not know the way. Do you?"*

- *H/she **said** that h/she did not know the way and **asked her/him if** h/she did.*

2.Command+statement

- *"**Will** you stop for a moment? I need to listen to what is being said on the news".*

- *H/she **told him/her children to stop** for a moment because she needed to listen to what was being said on the news.*

3.Order+statement

- *"Drive as fast as you can. I do not want to be late".*

- *H/she **ordered** him/her to drive as fast as h/she could because h/she did not want to be late.*

4.Suggestion+statement

- *"Suppose you stop working now and go to the bed", h/she said. "You will be much fresher in the morning".*

- *H/she **suggested him/her to stop** working then and to go to the bed because h/she would be much fresher the following morning.*

5.Polite request+statement

- *"Will you help me, please?", h/she said. "I cannot lift it by myself".*

- *H/she **asked me to help** him/her because h/she could not lift it by himself/herself.*

Section 2

Chapter 4

I. __Innovating activities for Reported Speech teaching& learning__

A. Traditional activities

1.Activity 1

The teacher divides the class into 5 groups of 5 students.

The activity consists on the fact that an speech between the first group and the second group are talking, that is, they are using the D.S. Then, the third group will reproduce this oral text coming from the other two groups, using the R.S. and the same process will be repeated for the rest two groups.

2. Activity 2

Some friends, who are divided in 2 groups, are organizing a birthday party for a friend that is not there at the moment. The first group will present their requests for the party   to the second one; for example, the place where the party will take place, the time, gifts they need to buy, and the people who are going to attend the party.

All this information will be reported to a third group who were not able to attend the meeting; therefore students need to use I.S. for this report.

The first and the second group are interacting:

- *-"The party is at my place at 22 o´ clock".*

- *- "Next week, in the party, there will be around thirty guests".*

The second group will reveal to the third one, who was absent in the above interaction, the decisions the other two groups have taken in relation to the party:

- *Peter said that the party was at his place at ten o´ clock in the evening.*

- *Laura claimed that the following week, in the party, there would be around thirty guests.*

3. Activity 3   Reported statements

Sally is looking for a new flat, she has a meeting with the landlady. After that, she is telling her friend, Paul, about it. Report the sentences.

- *-"The rent is 50 pounds a week"*

- *The landlady explained (that) the rent was 50 pounds a week.*

- *-"It is a quiet flat and the neighbours are nice"*

- *The landlady commented (that) it was a quiet flat and the neighbours were nice.*

- *-"The rent includes gas and electricity"*

- *She told me that the rent included gas and electricity.*

- *-"I decorated the living room recently"*

- *Then, she claimed that she had decorated the living room recently.*

- *-"I have replaced all the carpets"*

- *She remarked that she had replaced all the carpets.*

- *-"You can move in immediately"*

- *She stated (that) you could move in immediately.*

- *-"I will give you a ring soon", said Sally*

- *I told the landlady that I would give her a ring soon.*

4.Activity 4   Read and report the questions

- *-How much do you spend on restaurant meals?*

- *They asked me how much I spent on restaurant meals.*

- *-Do you like watching football matches?*

- *They asked me if I liked watching football matches.*

5.Activity 5 Reporting yes/no questions

Report the following questions. **You need to use if.**

- *-"Are you a student?"*

- *She asked me if I was a student.*

- *-"Do you smoke?"*

- *She asked me if I smoked.*

- *-"Is there a phone?"*

- *I asked her if there was a phone.*

- *-"Do you have a cat?"*

- *She asked me if I had a cat.*

- *-"Can I move the furniture around?"*

- *I asked her if I could move the furniture around.*

- *-"Does the flat have central heating?"*

- *I asked her if the flat had central heating.*

B. Innovating activities

My activities are articulated in the **task-based method**; all of the sub-tasks follow a lineal and continual process. The last aim in this method is a final task that will be assessed by teachers replacing the final exam seen like the only way of evaluation in the traditional teaching.

It is not only taken into account the final task but it is also a formative and continual process where every sub-task are taken into consideration. As a consequence, students are given the chance to be assessed and they could notice their improvement in the learning & teaching process during the academic year.

This method goes hand to hand with students overcoming in the communicative approach which implies a high amount of interaction between students. It implies a very positive situation to acquire fluency in oral production and understanding.

In fact, tasks are based on daily and real situations as immersion in the classroom for a future and potential usage outside school.

It is said that these subtasks might begin to develop students´ imagination and would help them to try to catch their attention in the class

through the learning & teaching process. Besides, they would show students how they could use the Reported Speech with an **unconsciously everyday use sense.**

Here we have some examples of activities related to the R.S. linguistic concept usage:

1. <u>Activity 1</u>

<u>**Sign of the Zodiac**</u> in a magazine for teenagers. Students have to report comments and beliefs they have read in the magazine.

Today´s Zodiac said (that);

- *Librans liked to be with friends, but they hated crowds. They were very intelligent, restless people who smiled a lot.*

- *Leos were extroverts. They loved power and independence, but they were also vain. They liked to work hard and play hard.*

- *Calm, Scorpios did not show their emotions. They were tough and determined, but also wise and generous.*

- *Pisceans were full of good nature and they were seldom angry. They were artistic and creative and loved helping other people.*

2. <u>Activity 2</u>

Read the report of an **interview** <u>with Gary Wilmot, an actor</u>. Then, write the actual words of the interview.

I asked Gary what sort of music he liked, and he told me that he had always liked jazz. In fact, he said he played in a jazz band called Sax Appeal. When I asked him where the band played, he told me they mainly played in small clubs.

- *Interviewer   What sort of music do you like, Gary?*
- *Gary   I have always liked (jazz).*
- *Gary   In fact, (I play in a jazz band) called Sax Appeal.*
- *Interviewer   Where does the band play?*
- *Gary   We play mainly in small clubs.*

3.<u>European Language Portfolio usage</u>

In spite of the fact that this instrument does not help directly to learn the R.S. or any other linguistic concept, it is very useful because it implies that students need to think about their learning & teaching process. That means, students have an opportunity of **knowing how their process develops**. A way of foreseeing, on the one hand, the **difficulties** and on the other hand, the **strengths** students have already. On top of that, it is widely known that this instrument is recommended to be used whenever two lessons are finished.

Nevertheless, it is considered even better to pass the questionnaire after explaining each new linguistic concept. That would be the easiest way not to

forget any important grammar point to be fulfilled before going a step further. The teachers need to be always sure that previous concepts have been acknowledged and understood by students and, on the contrary, teachers would know in detail what linguistic concepts they have to repeat and re-teach to reinforce these concepts.

All in all, in our opinion, this instrument could help to **decrease** the amount of **scholar failure or dropping out of school**.

Chapter 5

II.   _Project of investigation_

A. Interview

1. _Why is the R.S. such a difficult linguistic concept for students to acquire in the English?_

2. _Is it the R.S. a useful concept for the teaching & learning process?_

3. _Which is the best method/technique to teach the R.S. in an easy, clear and fast manner?_

4. _How could teachers teach the R.S. using TIC´s?_

5. _Would students understand in a better way the R.S. in English if teachers would make a comparison between the R.S. in both languages; English and Spanish?_

A.1 Conclusions

High percentages of my interviewees suggest that the R.S. learning is quite difficult concept but at the same time they see it as a useful linguistic concept.

On the one hand, they notice their **lack of vocabulary** in English required for changing from D.S. to R.S.

Moreover, the majority of the students attach the difficulty of acquiring the R.S. in the lot of changes required in the transformation. If and only if students make any mistake during the transformation from D.S. to R.S., the whole exercise is wrong. Consequently, students **prefer not to be assessed** on this linguistic concept at High School.

On the other hand, students recognize that the R.S. is very often used in conversations; therefore, it is nearly compulsory to learn it.

Every single interviewee suggests a better method to teach and learn the R.S. A higher implication of students appears when teachers show creative and innovating activities that might help students and facilitate their learning & teaching process.

Students recommend the **support of Information and Communication technology** (TIC´s), for example, a video via online with a native teacher using the R.S. would be the best way to acquire it since it would be used naturally as an everyday concept and besides, this video would help and encourage students to improve their pronunciation.

It is mainly claimed that **translation** is one of the easiest way to catch this new linguistic concept. In other words, direct comparison between Spanish and English.

It is widely known that for students at early training stages translation is constantly required; however, this technique is not entirely reliable since the literal translation from the native language to the second language does not always coincide. Therefore, it could be seen as an easy step to facilitate the

learning& teaching process, but, in my opinion, at the beginning, it would be much easier to learn by heart the tense and pronouns changes (backshifts) and with a lot of practice, acquisition will occur.

My interviewees claimed that online exercises may help and encourage students on their learning.

For instance, we have chosen this website where theory is explained and they have also exercises to practice provided with keys for a self-assessment.

Reported commands

If you put a command into R.S. there are some steps which are the same like in statements: (changing of the person, backshift of tenses, changing of expressions of time).

The form is mostly: form of to tell + to + infinitive.

Affirmative commands	Negative commands
Father: "Do your homework."	Teacher. "Don't talk to your neighbour."
Father told me to do my homework.	The teacher told me not to talk to my neighbour.

B.My own experience regarding the Reported Speech learning.

A good teaching technique will arise the unconsciously necessity to make students to ask new linguistic concepts to teachers in order to be able to deal with tasks in class. Instead of teaching so many concepts at random or because

teachers are force to teach those concepts in the annual teaching program, it is better to **resolve conflicts** and concerns of students to guide them in their learning & teaching process giving them **autonomy**.

Chapter 6

III. *Real sources: articles*

1.Teaching English through literature

Modern languages teachers from primary and secondary schools, who are interested in literature, have found out several cases in which they did not know how to increase the motivation of students towards languages, literature and culture.

The reasons why these teachers think students are not motivated, vary in each case but they give readers some examples such as,

-The tightness in the anual programme.

-The overall lack of interest among students for the acquirement of new knowledge and above all, they do not normally want to have explanations which are not related directly with the examinations and consequently with their final marks.

-A difficult barrier for students to overcome: Students normally despise any other innovation which could imply a supplementary effort apart from the class book.

What could be an alternative method to the book that teachers could use in class?

At the same time, the use of **literary texts** could cover every single area of language learning & teaching process, we might increase the interest of students in **reading**.

The chosen text in this case for its practical development is thought for exercising students in a better comprehension of D.S and I.S.

Firstly, we would start locating those constructions in D.S or in I.S and ask students which ones belong to one or the other speech. Students will have to reorganize the text transforming those constructions which in the original text appeared in D.S. would be converted into the I.S. It will be asked as well, tenses, pronouns and adverbs changes.

To sum up, these type of exercises do not differ so much from the ones appeared in any book; however, these exercises involve some characteristics such as, **real and contextualized situations**, which we probably missed in the exercises of any book.

2.What is the R.S. and why is it important?

When the English teaching-learning process was focused on traditional structural grammar and vocabulary and there was **no applicability into the communicative approach**, the learning of new linguistic concepts became something extremely boring for students. For instance, the transformation from active into passive, from D.S. to I.S., from affirmative to negatives or interrogatives sentences, conditionals, among others.

They nearly became mathematical rules, students had to learn verbs by heart and know how to apply them practically. But, whenever students needed these structures for an everyday life conversation, they were not able to apply them naturally; they needed to think a lot about the required changes.

When the date of the exam was approaching, students were worried about the fact of finding, the "*Reporter Spich part of the exam". Although, there were no concerns about how to apply the rules, if teachers told students something in English to report, they could not deal with it.

Problems for students in the Reported Speech learning & teaching process:

There are some linguistic concepts that create problems in the English class, such as, the passive voice. Nevertheless, unfortunately, it is not the only one that we can find out. In addition to the mentioned concept, there are others like either the tenses differentiation and distinction or the required changes to

46

transform from D.S into I.S. This article is based on the difficulties that students have to overcome when they learn the R.S. Esther María Gordillo, the author of this article, tries to help any pupil with learning difficulties related to R.S. trying to give them solutions and ways for the learning & teaching process to become much easier.

Assuming that students from secondary schools will have problems to understand and acquire the changes required for D.S. to become I.S., the lessons of Esther María Gordillo linked to the R.S. start with an explanation in Spanish about what the D.S. is.

Moreover, for being sure that her students achieve her objective, that is, the understanding of these linguistic concepts, D.S and I.S., she begins giving examples in Spanish and later on she translates them into English. All in all, she always uses the blackboard for this kind of theoretical explanations since this is an easy way of catching the attention of students for a while.
She usually puts this example on the blackboard.

D.S.: Rose said: "I go out"

Then, this example will be transformed into I.S., therefore, students observe both sentences placed on the blackboard at the same time so they can compare the differences between them: this facilitates students´ comprehension.

D.S.: Rose said: - "I am going out"

I.S.: Rose said that she was going out.

These two sentences are placed on the left hand side of the blackboard; meanwhile, on the right hand side, the teacher will write the translation. Students can have a look not only to the R.S. linguistic concept in English but

they can acknowledge that this concept exist also in their own mother tongue which simplifies the problem of comprehension a lot.

ESTILO DIRECTO: Rosa dijo: "Voy a salir" *ESTILO INDIRECTO: Rosa dijo que iba a salir*	*D.S.: Rose said: "I'm going out"* *I.S.: Rose said she was going out*

From this time on, the teacher increases the difficulty of the sentences, adding time, place prepositional phrases, and verbal tenses. But, at this point, the teacher continues using the blackboard for written down both languages, English and Spanish.

ESTILO DIRECTO: Rosa dijo: "Voy a salir mañana ahí" *ESTILO INDIRECTO: Rosa dijo que iba a salir al día siguiente allí*	*D.S.: Rose said: "I'm going out there tomorrow"* *I.S.: Rose said she was going out there the following day*

Once these sentences are understood by students using both languages, the teacher will give them sentences in D.S. which they have to transform into I.S. for homework. It is made for students to rethink in terms of what has been explained in class and they should be honest telling the teacher if they have actually understood the homework or not. If this reflection is negative, the following day will be explained once more this theory to reinforce it. In case no

concerns are arised in the classroom, students are prepared to receive a list with every single needed change to pass from D.S to I.S. and viceverse.

This list is not given to students before understanding what they are studying and being able to explain why is required one change or another. In that list, two groups of changes are specified: one of them related to the verbal tenses changes and the other connected to any other reference word. With a simple look to the list of changes (tense/pronouns/prepositional phrases changes), students would be able to change from the D.S. to the I.S. without making mistakes and with no hesitation during the process.

There are also other reference words which have to be changed, the **possessive pronouns**. This is one of the points that generate higher difficulties for students. It seems extremely difficult for them to understand when in a sentence is said "*my*" in D.S. and this *"my"* has to be changed into *"his/her"* in R.S.

The problem arise because of the existence of three possessive pronouns referring to the 3rd person singular in English, whereas, in Spanish, it only exists one that is used for the three cases of the 3rd person singular.

The solution to this problem does not go hand to hand with the explanation of teachers.   Students need to make lots of exercises of this type so when they have been working with these exercises for a while, the changes will be made with no much effort, independently of the complexity of vocabulary involved in the sentences.

As a conclusion, the author claimed that although this linguistic concept is difficult for students in Secondary Schools, the **solution** to problems goes with the practice. As Einstein said, "the movement is shown walking"; similarly,

in order to acquire a language, in this case, English, the practice is essential and working each linguistic concept a high amount of hours. If that dedication does not take place, then, the acquirement of each linguistic concept will go much slower and it might not be so effective.

We would like to encourage English teachers about the fact that they must try to convince their students about the importance of **every day work** to get a good base of knowledge in the second language.

Conclusions

As we explained in the introduction, we have tried to demonstrate that the R.S. is a very important concept that students at High Schools should acquire to be able to use it in their everyday life outside school.

The pedagogic dimension of the R.S. is evident and teachers have many chances to teach this object of study mixing theory and practice. We have given as example the comparison between what we have called traditional activities in contrast to innovating activities. The main difference we wanted to focus on is that, in the traditional activities, the exercises that teachers present to their students do not have their context specified so ambiguity might arise. Therefore, students would not be able to deal with the R.S. in a daily context because of the fact that they neither understand nor acquire this linguistic concept but what they prompt to do is to learn by heart these exercises for the exam without giving a thought about a future and practical usage in the oral dimension.

Providing that we bear in mind the objectives of the essay, we have analyzed through several articles the reasons why it seems too difficult for most of the students the acquisition of this linguistic concept. In addition, we have interviewed some students asking their opinions related to: firstly, how students face this concept in their learning & teaching process; that means, if they notice that its difficulty is higher than other linguistic concepts they need to learn. Secondly, we were wondering if students could explain us how would be the easiest and fastest manner for them to acquire the R.S. And finally, we allow students to suggest new, creative and motivating techniques to improve methods used by teachers inside the classroom for a better understanding and higher implication of both, teachers and students.

In our humble opinion, we have tried to put into practice our teaching method, as a possible future method for teaching & learning languages. We

think that with the support of the new technologies and sciences of information, teachers will promote the enthusiasm and the desire of learning to their students due to the fact that teachers are approaching students´ modern world elements such as the Internet, music and audiovisual tools to use them in the classroom.

Indeed, we have tried to show that varying the pedagogic methods teachers used in the past, it is beneficial for both, teachers and students since these methods might help them to be more involved in the teaching & learning process.

Above all, we need little by little to remove the label the learning languages process has; that is, languages are useless, it is too difficult to obtain a good knowledge and students do not like to have this subject at High School because they do not understand anything and they get bored in class so the final result is that they fail the exam.

As a final point, as we have said in the previous paragraph, with these techniques that are nowadays attached to the new learning& teaching style, the problems we have mentioned, for example, the lack of interest in learning languages, could be resolved with the cooperation of all of us for a future and better education.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1.   Books

Quirk, Randolph, et al. <u>A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language.</u> London: Longman, 1985.

Alexander, L. G. <u>Longman English Grammar.   </u>London: Longman, 2009.

Murphy, Raymond. <u>English grammar in use: a self-study reference and practice book for intermediate students of English.</u> Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009**.**

Thomson, A. J. and A.V.Martinet. <u>A practical English grammar.</u> Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Gibaldi, Joseph. <u>MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.</u> New York: The Modern Languages Association Of America,1999.

Aston, Paul and Elizabeth Edmondson.<u>Streets Ahead.</u> Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Soars,John and Liz Soars.<u>Headway.</u>Oxford:Oxford University Press, 1991.

2.   Articles

Gurpegui, José A. "Teaching English through Literature." <u>Encuentro journal.</u> Universidad de Alcalá,1989.

http://www.encuentrojournal.org/textos/2.9.pdf

Gordillo, Esther María. "What is the R.S. and why is it important?."

Sevilla: El Lapicero, 2009.

http://www.ellapicero.net/node/3286

3.   Other sources

 <u>European Language Portfolio:</u> Council of Europe, 2011.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/elp/

Alario Trigueros, Ana Isabel, Natalia Barranco Izquierdo, Paloma Castro Prieto, and Carmen Guillén Díaz. <u>Apuntes de Didáctica, Metodología, Investigación e Innovación</u>.   Valladolid: Máster Universitario de Profesor en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y Bachillerato, Formación Profesional y Enseñanza de Idiomas de la Universidad de Valladolid, 2012.

"Reported Speech".Learning English Online: Englisch-hilfen.de. Access on the 3rd of May of 2012.

http://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/grammar/reported_aufforderung.htm