

Impersonal passive

- **The impersonal passive:** is a formal way of reporting thoughts, saying, beliefs and opinions.
- **The verbs that are used in impersonal passive construction.**
(Think, believe, say, report, know, expect, consider, and understand)
- **Examples:**
 - People say that children are afraid of ghosts.
It is said that children are afraid of ghosts.
 - People say that this orchestra is the best in the world.
This orchestra is said to be the best in the world.
 - They think that he will be attending the meeting.
He is thought to be attending the meeting.
 - People say that Mr. Brown owns a lot of land in the north.
Mr. Brown is said to own a lot of land in the north.
 - People think that learning a new language also presents the brain with unique challenges.
It is thought that learning a new language also presents the brain with unique challenges.
- **The rule:**
 - (It + passive construction + that-clause)
 - E.g. The students say that the exam was easy.
It is said that the exam was easy .
 - (S + passive construction + to + inf.)
 - E.g. The students say that the exam was easy.
The exam is said to have been easy.
- **The passive voice of these verbs (Think, believe, say, report, know, expect, consider, and understand):**

| | |
|---|---|
| Present simple: Is / are + | Thought, believed, said, reported, known, expected, considered, understood |
| Past simple: was / were + | |
| Present perfect simple: have / has been | |

• Changes on the verbs after (to):

| | |
|---|---|
| <u>V1(s/es) / V(inf.)</u> His parents say that he goes to school by bus. | <u>To + V (inf.)</u> he is said to go to school by bus. |
| <u>V2</u> People say that this team played well in the match. | <u>To + Have + V3</u> this team is said to have played well in the match |
| <u>Will + V(inf.)</u> The teachers say that we will go on a school trip. | <u>To + V(inf.)</u> We are said to go on a school trip. |
| <u>Don't / Doesn't + V(inf.)</u> The doctor says that you don't do daily exercises. | <u>Not to V(inf.)</u> You are said not to do daily exercises. |
| <u>Didn't V(inf.)</u> Mum says that I didn't have any dangerous diseases in the past. | <u>Not to have + V3</u> I am said not to have had any dangerous diseases in the past. |
| <u>Isn't / Aren't</u> The students say that the exam is difficult. | <u>Not to be</u> The exam is said to be difficult. |
| <u>Wasn't / weren't</u> The students say that the exam was easy. | <u>Not to have been</u> The exam is said to have been easy. |

• Exercises:

1. They say that fish is good for the brain.

It -----.

Fish -----.

2. People think that we use a small percentage of our brain power.

It -----.

We -----.

3. They claim that we remember things we hear in our sleep.

It -----.

We -----.

4. People believe that solving puzzles keeps the brain active.

It -----.

Solving puzzles -----.

5. Experts have proved that exercise is good for concentration.

It -----.

Exercise -----.

6. People say that the exams are disastrous.

It -----.

The exam-----.

7. People know that the sun shines itself.

It -----.

The sun -----.

8. The students say that the exercise wasn't easy.

It -----.

- The exercise-----.
9. People believed that Anna stole the money.
It-----.
Anna-----.
10. The teacher believes that Ali doesn't study well.
It -----.
Ali -----.
11. Experts think that the weather will be cool.
It -----.
The weather -----.
12. They think that the boys didn't arrive on time.
It -----.
The boys -----.
13. It was known that the man was telling the truth.
People -----.
14. It is believed that learning languages improve your decision-making skills.
Scientist -----.
15. It is believed that the thieves have left the country.
People -----.
16. It is known that he is making a lot of money.
People -----.