



## An Introduction to Direct & Indirect Speech

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### Abstract:

*The article named DIRECT-INDIRECT SPEECH is about techniques of teaching direct-indirect speech to the students of all the levels. It includes step by step method of teaching it very easily to the learners. All the necessary changes and rules are discussed very minutely. The present article gives an idea how to teach this topic effectively. All the main rules like change of reporting verb, use of proper conjunction, change in pronoun, change in different forms of verbs and change in words showing nearness into distance words are discussed and explained with examples in lucid language. In English language direct-indirect speech is one of the important topics of grammar. It is also called reported speech.*

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**Keywords:** *Direct-Indirect speech, Grammar, Teaching method*

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### 1. Introduction

*Teaching direct and indirect speech is best done by reading and writing dialogue. By first reading dialogue and working through examples, teachers can illustrate the difference between direct and indirect speech. Direct speech occurs when the person speaking is quoted. Indirect speech occurs when another person paraphrases what the speaker said. By speaking and writing dialogue themselves, students reinforce the principles of direct and indirect speech through practical application.*

### 2. Use of Indirect speech

Indirect speech is used to report the speech of another or someone else.

There are two ways of reporting speech.

1. Direct speech
2. Indirect speech

#### 2.1 Direct speech

What the person actually says is known as direct speech. In other words when we say exactly what someone has said is called direct speech. In short we quote speaker's actual words. So it is also called quoted speech.

#### **For example**

Darshil said "I am a very clever boy."

#### 2.2 Indirect speech

When we report someone else's speech without quotation or exact words, it is called indirect speech. Here we report what speaker says without quoting his exact words.

#### **For example**

Darshil said that he was a very clever boy.

In short reported speech gives the remarks of the speaker as reported by someone else.

There are four kinds of direct speech:

- (a) Statement
- (b) Question
- (c) Command
- (d) Exclamation

### 3. Pattern of reporting statements

- Person + reporting verb + statement (Direct)
- Person + reporting verb + conjunction + statement (Indirect)

Shreeya said, "I read Othello yesterday." (Direct)

Shreeya said that she had read Othello the previous day. (Indirect)

- The following sentence pattern is less commonly used in indirect speech
  1. Statement + person +reporting verb  
Example: "I read Othello yesterday." Shreeya said
  2. Statement +reporting verb + person  
Example: "I read Othello yesterday." said Shreeya

### 4. Rules of changing direct into indirect speech

General rules:

1. Firstly comma (,) and the quotation marks ("...") are removed.
2. Reporting verb is changed.
3. Conjunction is used according to different kinds of sentence i.e. assertive ,interrogative etc.
4. Pronoun is changed according to speaker and hearer.
5. Verb is changed according to the rule of the sequence of tenses( Tenses are changed)
6. Words expressing nearness are changed into words expressing distance.

(1) Removal of comma and the quotation marks:

Example: Direct: Hiral said, "I am very busy now."

Indirect: Hiral said, "I am very busy now."

(2) Change in reporting verb

Reporting verb is changed according to kinds of sentence

Reporting verb	Assertive		Interrogative	Imperative	Exclamatory & wishes
	Indirect forms of reporting verbs				
Said/said to/:	Direct	Indirect	asked, inquired, Demanded etc (Note: asked is generally used here.)	requested, ordered, warned, commanded, implored, suggested, forbade, threatened etc	Exclaimed, Prayed, blessed, Wished, Bade, applauded, confessed,
	said	said			
	Said to	told			
	say	say			
	says	says			
	Say to	tell			
Says to	tells				

Note: We usually use said without an object. Here said remains the same. If said is used with an object, we use different forms of verbs according to types of sentence as it is shown the above column. We can also use reporting verb like accused, admitted, advised, alleged, agreed, apologized, begged, boasted, ordered, promised, replied, suggested, invited ,replied, announced, claimed, interrupted, mentioned, explained etc in place of said/said to/: as per need of statement.

(3) Use of conjunction

Generally conjunction is used after reporting verb or hearer.

Interrogative	Imperative	Exclamatory
If/whether <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No conjunction with 'wh' interrogative words as 'wh' words function as conjunctions</li> </ul>	to ( use in positive sentence) not to( use in negative sentence)	that

(4) Change in pronoun

Pronoun is changed according to gender of speaker and hearer. The pronouns of the direct speech are changed into the third person in the indirect speech.

(A)Pronouns of the first person are changed according to speaker:

First person singular (I)

Speaker	Nominative(I)	Possessive adjective(my)	Accusative(me)	Possessive pronoun(mine)
Male	he	his	him	his
Female	she	her	her	hers

(B) Pronouns of the second persons are changed according to hearer.

Second person singular (You)

Hearer	Nominative(You)	Possessive adjective(Your)	Accusative(You)	Possessive pronoun(yours)
Male	he	his	him	his
Female	she	her	her	hers

(C) There is no change in the pronouns of the third person

Ex .He said ,”He may marry Radha.”(Direct)

He said that he might marry Radha. (Indirect)

(D) When “me” and “us” are used as hearer , pronouns of the second person are changed as under:

Hearer	Nominative(You)	Possessive adjective (Your)	Accusative(You)	Possessive pronoun(yours)
me	I	my	me	mine
us	we	our	us	ours

(E) There is no change in quoted speech, if pronouns are used in place of speaker or hearer.

Example I said, “I am playing.”(Direct)

I said that I was playing.(Indirect)

(5) Change in tense:

When report speech, the tense is usually changed because the person who speak originally spoke in the past.

(A)No change in tense:

a. When reporting or main verb is in present or future tense , there is no change in tense.

Example My father says, “I am reading news- paper.”(Direct)

My father says that he is reading news- paper. (Indirect)

b. When the quoted speech presents universal truth or habitual fact or saying , there is no change in tense

Example My grandfather said, “The earth is round”

My grandfather said that the earth is round

(A)Change in tense: When you report something someone has said you go back a tense, then verb is changed according to the rule of the sequence of tenses.

Direct	Indirect
1. Simple Present A. root verb e.g. play B. helping verb-do/does (in negative) e.g. does not play C. do/does (in interrogative) e.g. Does he play?	1. Simple Past A. Past form of verb is used in place of root verb e.g. played B. helping verb-did is used in place of do/does e.g. did not play C. do/does are removed and past form of root verb is used e.g. He played.
2. Present Progressive *am/is/are+ 'ing' form of verb e.g.is playing	2. Past Progressive *was/were+ 'ing' form e.g. was playing
3. Present perfect *have/has+ past participle e.g. has played	3.Past Perfect *had+ p.p. e.g. had played

4. Simple Past *past of verb e.g. played *was/were e.g. was clever *did + root verb e.g. Did you play?	4. Past Perfect * Use had+ past participle in place of past form e.g. had played * Use had been in place of was/were e.g. had been clever * Use had+ p.p. in place of did+ root verb e.g. He had played
5. Past Perfect	5. Past Perfect(remains the same)
6. Past Continuous *was/were+ 'ing' form e.g. was playing	6. Past Perfect Continuous * Use had been in place of was/were e.g. had been playing
7. Past Perfect Continuous	7. Past Perfect Continuous(remains the same)
8. Modal auxiliaries: shall/will/can/may	8. Shall/will=would, can=could, may=might
9. would/should/might/ought to	9. would/should/might/ought to
10. must	10. had to or remains as must

Note: Do not change the form of principal verb used with modal auxiliaries in indirect speech.  
Example will play - would play

(6) Nearness words becomes distance words

Direct	Indirect
this	that
these	those
here	there
now	then
thus	so
hence	thence
ago	before
come	go
bring	take
today	that day
yesterday	the previous day/the day before
tomorrow	the next day/the following day
next	the following
last	the previous
a month ago	a month before

Note: Change in kinds of sentences is must while direct speech is turned into indirect speech

Direct	Indirect
1. Assertive	Remains the same(No change)
2. Interrogative (Helping verb+ subject+ main verb?) e.g. Raju said to him, "Am I your servant?"	Turn into assertive: (subject +verb +object) e.g. Raju asked him if he was his servant.
3. Exclamatory *sentence pattern: What/how+ adjective/adverb +subject+ verb! e.g. Nupur said, "What a beautiful picture it is!"	Turn into assertive: *Sentence pattern: Subject+ verb +very/really/indeed+ adjective/adverb +noun *Use article before very /really/indeed when exclamatory sentence begins with what
4. Imperative	Remains the same(No change)

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