

DIRECT TO INDIRECT SPEECH

BHARAT SCHOOL OF BANKING – VELLORE-1

Direct and indirect speech

Introduction.

There two ways to convey a message of a person, or the words spoken by a person to other person.

1. Direct speech
2. Indirect speech

Suppose your friend whose name is John tells you in school, “I will give you a pen”. You come to home and you want to tell your brother what your friend told you. There are two ways to tell him.

Direct speech: John said, “I will give you a pen”.

Indirect Speech: John said that he would give me a pen.

In direct speech the original words of person are narrated (no change is made) and are enclosed in quotation mark. While in indirect speech some changes are made in original words of the person because these words have been uttered in past so the tense will change accordingly and pronoun may also be changed accordingly. In indirect speech the statement of the person is **not enclosed in quotation marks**, the word **“that”** may be used before the statement to show that it is indirect speech.

Indirect speech is also called reported speech because reported speech refers to the second part of indirect speech in which something has been told by a person.

Reporting verb: The verb first part of sentence (i.e. **he said, she said, he says, they said, she says,**) before the statement of a person in sentence is called reporting verb.

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Examples.

He said , “I work in a factory”	(Direct speech)
He said that he worked in a factory.	(Indirect speech)
They said , “we are going to cinema”	(Direct speech)
They said that they were going to cinema.	(Indirect speech)

Reported Speech. The second part of indirect speech in which something has been told by a person (**which is enclosed in quotation marks in direct speech**) is called reported speech. For example, a sentence of indirect speech is, *He said that he worked in a factory.* In this sentence the second part “*he worked in a factory*” is called reported speech and that is why the indirect speech as a whole can also be called reported speech.

Fundamental rules for indirect speech.

1. Reported speech is not enclosed in quotation marks.
2. **Use of word “that”:** The word “that” is used as a conjunction between the reporting verb and reported speech.
3. **Change in pronoun:** The pronoun (subject) of the reported speech is changed according to the pronoun of reporting verb or object (person) of reporting verb (first part of sentence). Sometimes the pronoun may not change.

In following example the pronoun of reported speech is “I” which will be changed in indirect speech into the pronoun (Subject) of reporting verb that is “he”.

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Example.

Direct speech: He said, “I am happy”

Indirect Speech: He said that **he** was happy.

Direct speech: I said to him, “you are intelligent”

Indirect Speech: I said him that he was intelligent.

(“You” changed to “he” the person of object of reporting verb)

1. **Change in time:** Time is changed according to certain rules like now to then, today to that day, tomorrow to next day and yesterday to previous day.

Examples.

Direct speech: He said, “I am happy today”

Indirect Speech: He said that he was happy **that day**.

1. **Change in the tense of reported speech:** If the first part of sentence (reporting verb part) belongs to past tense the tense of reported speech will change. **If the first part of sentence (reporting verb part) belongs to present or future tense, the tense of reported speech will not change.**

Examples.

Direct speech: He said, “I am happy”

Indirect Speech: He said that he was happy. (Tense of reported speech changed)

Direct speech: He says, “I am happy”

Indirect Speech: He said that he is happy. (Tense of reported speech didn't change)

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Table for change in tense of reported speech for all TENSES.

TENSE CHANGE - IN - INDIRECT SPEECH

Present simple tense *into* Past simple

Present Continuous tense *into* Past continuous

Present Perfect tense *into* Past perfect

Present Perfect Continuous *into* Past perfect continuous

Past simple *into* Past Perfect

Past Continuous *into* Past Perfect Continuous

Past Perfect *into* Past Perfect

Future simple, will *into* would

Future Continuous, will be *into* would be

Future Perfect, will have *into* would have

Examples.

DIRECT SPEECH	INDIRECT SPEECH
PRESENT TENSE	
PRESENT SIMPLE changes into PAST SIMPLE	
He said, "I write a letter"	He said that he wrote a letter.
She said, "he goes to school daily"	She said that he went to school daily.
They said, "we love our country"	They said that they loved their country
He said, "he does not like computer"	He said that he did not like computer.

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PRESENT CONTINUOUS changes into PAST CONTINUOUS

He said, “he is listening to the music”	He said that he was listening to the music.
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She said, “I am washing my clothes”	She said that she was washing her clothes.
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They said, “we are enjoying the weather”	They said that they were enjoying the weather.
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She said, “I am not laughing”	She said that she was not laughing.
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PRESENT PERFECT changes into PAST PERFECT

She said, “he has finished his work”	She said that he had finished his work.
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He said, “I have started a job”	He said that he had started a job.
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I said, “she have eaten the meal”	I said that she had eaten the meal.
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They said, “we have not gone to New York.”	They said that they had not gone to New York.
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PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS changes into PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

He said, “I have been studying	He said that he had been
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since 3 O'clock"	studying since 3 O'clock.
She said, "It has been raining for three days."	She said that it been raining for three days.
I said, "She has been working in this office since 2007"	I said that she had been working in this office since 2007.

PAST TENSE

PAST SIMPLE changes into PAST PERFECT

He said to me, "you answered correctly"	He said to me that I had answered correctly.
John said, "they went to cinema"	John said that they had gone to cinema.
He said, "I made a table"	He said that he had made a table.
She said, "I didn't buy a car"	She said that she had not bought a car.

PAST CONTINUOUS changes into PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

They said, "we were enjoying the weather"	They said that they had been enjoying.
He said to me, " I was waiting for you"	He said to me that he had been waiting for me.
	I said that it had been raining.

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I said, "It was raining" She said, "I was not laughing"	She said that she not been laughing.
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PAST PERFECT changes into **PAST PERFECT** (tense does not change)

She said, "She had visited a doctor"	She said that she had visited a doctor.
He said, "I had started a business"	He said that he had started a business.
I said, "she had eaten the meal"	I said that she had eaten the meal.
They said, "we had not gone to New York."	They said they had not gone to New York.

FUTURE TENSE

FUTURE SIMPLE TENSE
WILL changes into **WOULD**

He said, "I will study the book"	He said that he would study the book.
She said, "I will buy a computer"	She said that she would buy a computer.
They said to me, "we will send you gifts"	They said to me that they would send you gifts.
I said, "I will not take the exam"	I said that I would not take the

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exam.

FUTURE CONTINUOUS TENSE WILL BE changes into WOULD BE

I said to him, “ I will be waiting for him” She said,” I will be shifting to new home”	I said to him that I would be waiting for him. She said that she would be shifting to a new home.
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He said, “I will be working hard”	He said that he would be working hard.
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He said, “he will not be flying kite”	She said that he would not be flying kites.
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FUTURE PERFECT TENSE WILL HAVE changes into WOULD HAVE

He said, “I will have finished the work”	He said that he would have finished the work.
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She said, “they will have passed the examination”	She said that they would have passed the examination.
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He said, “I will have gone”	He said that he would have gone.
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Note: The tense of reported speech may not change if reported speech is a universal truth though its reporting verb belongs to past tense.

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Examples.

Direct speech: He said, “Mathematics is a science”

Indirect Speech: He said that mathematics is a science.

Direct speech: He said, “Sun rises in east”

Indirect Speech: He said that sun rises in east.

(Tense didn't change because reported speech is a universal truth thought its reporting verb belongs to past tense)

Changes in pronoun in Indirect Speech.

The pronoun (subject) of the reported speech is changed according to the pronoun of reporting verb or object (person) of reporting verb (first part of sentence). Sometimes the pronoun may not change.

1. **First person pronoun** in reported speech i.e. I, we, me, us, mine, or our, is changed according to the pronoun of reporting verb if pronoun in reporting verb is **third person pronoun** i.e. he, she, it, they, him, his, her, them or their.

Examples.

Direct speech: He said, “I live in New York”

Indirect speech: He said that he lived in New York.

Direct speech: They said, “we love our country”

Indirect speech: They said that they loved their country

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2. **First person** pronoun in reported speech i.e. I, we, me, us, mine, or our, is **not changed** if the pronoun (Subject) of reporting is also **first person** pronoun i.e. I or we.

Examples.

Direct speech: I said, “I write a letter”

Indirect speech: I said that I wrote a letter.

Direct speech: We said, “we completed our work”

Indirect speech: We said that we completed our work.

3. **Second person** pronoun in reported speech i.e. you, yours is **changed according to the person of object of reporting verb.**

Examples.

Direct speech: She said to him, “you are intelligent”

Indirect speech: She said to him that he was intelligent.

Direct speech: He said to me, “you are late for the party”

Indirect speech: He said to me that I was late for the party.

4. **Third person pronoun** in reported speech i.e. he, she, it, they, him, his, her, them or their, is **not changed in indirect speech.**

Examples.

Direct speech: They said, “he will come”

Indirect speech: They said that he would come.

Direct speech: You said, “they are waiting for the bus”

Indirect speech: You said that they were waiting for the bus.

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Changes in time and adverbs in indirect speech.

Time and adverbs are changed in indirect speech.

Examples.

Direct speech: He said, “I will buy a book tomorrow”

Indirect speech: He said that he would buy a book
the next **day.**

Direct speech: She said, “I am happy now”

Indirect speech: She said that she was happy **then.**

Direct speech: He said, “I like this book”

Indirect speech: He said that he liked **that** book.

Common Rules

Today changes to **that day/the same day**

Tomorrow changes to **the next day/the following day**

Yesterday changes to **the day before/the previous day**

Next week/month/year changes to **the following
week/month/year**

Last week/month/year changes to **the previous
week/month/year**

Now/just changes to **then**

Ago changes to **before**

Here changes to **there**

This changes to **that**

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Indirect speech for Interrogative (question) sentence.

For changing interrogative (question) sentence into indirect speech we have to **observe the nature of question** and then change it into indirect speech according to its rules for indirect speech. A question can be of two types. **One type which can be answered in only YES or NO and other type which needs a little bit explanation for its answer and cannot be answered in only YES or NO.**

Examples

Do you like music?

(It can be answered in YES or NO)

How are you?

(It cannot be answered in YES or NO but it needs a little bit explanation *i.e.*, I am fine.)

Questions which can be answered in YES/NO.

To change questions (which can be answered in yes or no) into indirect speech, word “**if**” or “**whether**” is used before the **question in indirect speech**. Rules for change in tense of question sentences are same as for change in normal tenses in indirect speech but sentence will not start with the auxiliary verb of the tense. **The word “that” is not used between reporting verb and reported speech as conjunction in indirect speech for question sentence. Question mark is not used in indirect speech.**

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Examples.

Direct speech: He said to me, “do you like music?”

Indirect Speech: He asked me if I liked music. (Not, did I like music)

Or Indirect Speech: He asked me whether I liked music.

Direct speech: She said, “Will he participate in the quiz competition?”

Indirect Speech: She asked me if he would participate in quiz competition.

Direct speech: I said to him, “are you feeling well?”

Indirect Speech: I asked him if he was feeling well.

Direct speech: They said to me, “did u go to school?”

Indirect Speech: They asked me if I had gone to school.

Direct speech: He said to me, “Have you taken the breakfast?”

Indirect Speech: He asked me if I had taken the breakfast

Question which cannot be answered in YES/NO.

To change such questions into indirect speech, the words “**if**” or “**whether**” is not used. The tense of the question is changed according to the rules for change in normal tenses in indirect speech but sentence will not start with the auxiliary verb of the tense. The word “**that**” is not used between reporting verb and reported speech as conjunction, in indirect speech for question sentence. **Question mark is not used in indirect speech.**

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Examples.

Direct speech: He said to me, “how are you?”

Indirect speech: He asked me how I was. (Not, how was I)

Direct speech: Teacher said to him, “what is your name?”

Indirect speech: Teacher asked him what his name was.

Direct speech: She said to him, “why did you come late?”

Indirect speech: She asked him why he had come late.

Direct speech: He said, “when will they come?”

Indirect speech: He asked when they would come.

Direct speech: She asked his son, “why are you crying?”

Indirect speech: She asked her son why he was crying.

Indirect speech for sentence having MODALS, “can, may, must,

Present modals are changed to past modals

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
Indirect speech for sentence having MODALS, “can, may, must, should, ought to”	
CAN changes into COULD	
He said, “I can drive a car”	He said that he could drive a car.
She said, “he can play a violin.”	She said that he could play a violin.

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They said, “we can climb on a hill”

They said that they can climb on a hill.

MAY changes into **MIGHT**

He said, “I may buy a computer”

He said that he might buy a computer.

She said, “he may visit a doctor.”

She said that he might visit a doctor.

They said, “they may go to zoo”

They said that they might go to zoo.

MUST changes into **HAD TO**

He said, “I must work hard”

He said that he had to work hard.

She said, “they must carry on their work”

She said that they had to carry on their work.

I said to him, “you must learn the test-taking strategies”

I said to him that he had to learn the test-taking strategies.

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Indirect speech for sentence having MODALS, should, ought to, might, would, and could”

The modal will not change in indirect speech

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
THESE MODALS DO NOT CHANGE Would, could, might, should, ought to”	
Would	
They said, “we would apply for a visa”	They said that they would apply for visa.
He said, “I would start a business.	He said that he would start a business.
She said, “I would appear in exam”	She said that she would appear in the exam.
Could	
	She said that she could play a violin.
She said, “she could play a piano”	They said they couldn’t learn the lesson.
They said, “we couldn’t learn the lesson”	He said that he could run faster.
He said, “I could run faster”	

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Might

He said, “guests might come”
She said, “it might rain”

He said that guest might come.
She said that it might rain.

John said, “I might meet him”

John said that he might meet him.

Should

He said, “I should avail the opportunity”

He said that he should avail the opportunity.

She said, “I should help a him”

She said that she should help him.

They said, “we should take the exam”

They said that they should take the exam.

Ought to

He said to me, “you ought to wait for him”

He said to me that I ought to wait for him.

She said, “I ought to learn method of study”

She said that she ought to learn method of study.

They said, we ought to attend our classes”

They said that they ought to attend their classes.

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Indirect speech for exclamatory and imperative sentences.

Indirect speech of imperative sentence.

A sentence which expresses command, request, advice or suggestion is called *imperative sentence*.

For example,

- Open the door.
- Please help me.
- Learn your lesson.

To change such sentences into indirect speech, the word “ordered” or “requested” or “advised” or “suggested” or “forbade” or “not to do” is added to reporting verb depending upon nature of imperative sentence in reported speech.

Examples.

Direct speech: He said to me, “please help me”

Indirect Speech: He *requested* me to help him.

Direct speech: She said to him, “you should work hard for exam”

Indirect Speech: He *suggested* him to work hard for exam.

Direct speech: They said to him, “do not tell a lie”

Indirect Speech: They said to him *not to* tell a lie.

Direct speech: He said, “open the door”

Indirect Speech: He *ordered* to open the door.

Direct speech: The teacher said to student, “do not waste time”

Indirect Speech: The teacher **advised** the students not to waste time.

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Direct speech: He said, “please give me glass of water”

Indirect Speech: He **requested** to give him a glass of water.

Direct speech: Doctor said to me, “Do not smoke”

Indirect Speech: Doctor *advised* me not to smoke.

Direct speech: The teacher said to him, “Get out”

Indirect Speech: The teacher *ordered* him to get out.

Indirect speech of exclamatory sentences.

Sentence which expresses state of joy or sorrow or wonder is called exclamatory sentence.

For example.

- Hurrah! We won the match.
- Alas! I failed the test.
- Wow! What a nice shirt it is.

To change such sentences, the words “exclaimed with joy” or “exclaimed with sorrow” or “exclaimed with wonder” is added in the reporting verb depending upon the nature of exclamatory sentence in indirect speech.

Examples.

Direct speech: He said, “Hurrah! I won a prize”

Indirect Speech: He *exclaimed with joy* that he had won a prize.

Direct speech: John said, “Wow! What a nice shirt it is”

Indirect Speech: John *exclaimed with wonder* that it was a nice shirt.

Direct speech: She said, “Hurrah! I am selected for the job”

Indirect Speech: She *exclaimed with joy* that she was selected for the job.

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Direct speech: He said, “Oh no! I missed the train”

Indirect Speech: He *exclaimed with sorrow* that he had missed the train.

Direct speech: They said, “Wow! What a pleasant weather it is”

Indirect Speech: They *exclaimed with wonder* that it was a pleasant weather.

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