

Unit 6

Reported Speech I

Class 12
English Grammar

Direct Speech

When something is being repeated exactly as it was, we may quote his actual words. Usually in between a pair of inverted (“ ”) commas.

Eg - He said, “I am busy now”.

Indirect Speech

When we report what a person says without quoting his/her exact words and omit the use of inverted commas. We always answer the reported speech in the past tense. In indirect speech we use 'that' instead of using inverted commas.

Eg - He said, "I am busy now".

Eg - He said that he was busy then.

Important point to remember while changing from Indirect to Direct speech

- The actual words of the speaker are put within *Inverted commas*.
- The first word of the Reported Speech (actual words of the speaker) begins with a *Capital letter*.
- The *Reported Speech* is separated by a *comma* from the Reported Verb.

Important point to remember while changing from Direct speech to Indirect Speech

- Inverted commas are not used; but the Reported Speech is generally introduced by the conjunction, '*that*'.
- The comma separating the *Reported Verb* from the *Reported Speech* is removed.
- The tense of the *Reporting Verb* is never changed.

- The *Question mark* (?) and the *Mark of Exclamation* (!) are not used.
- Interrogative, Imperative and Exclamatory sentences are put as statements.

Change of Tenses from Direct to Indirect Speech.

Rule 1. If the Reporting Verb is in the Present or Future tense, the tense of the Verb in the Reported Speech is not changed at all.

Eg - He says, "I am ready."

He says that he is ready

Eg - He will say, "I am ready".

He will say that he is ready.

Rule 2. If the Reporting Verb is in the Past tense, the tense of the Verb in the Reported Speech is changed into one of the forms of the Past tense.

i) Simple Present becomes Simple Past

eg - He said, “I **write** a letter.”

He said that he **wrote** a letter.

ii) Present continuous becomes Past continuous

eg - He said, “I **am writing** a letter.”

He said that he **was writing** a letter.”

iii) Present Perfect becomes Past Perfect
eg - He said, “I have written a letter”.

He said that he **had** written a letter.

iv) Simple Past becomes Past Perfect

v) Past Continuous becomes Past Perfect Continuous

vi) Past Perfect and Past Perfect Continuous remains unchanged.

vii) Will changes into would

Shall into should or would

Can into could

May into might

Rule 3. If the Reported Speech express some universal truth or habitual action, the tense of the Verb in the Reported Speech is not changed into the corresponding past, but remains exactly as it is;

Universal truth

Eg - He said, “Two and three *makes* five”.

He said that two and three *makes* five.

Habitual Action

Eg - He said, “I go to temple every Tuesday”.

He said that he goes to temple every Tuesday.

Note: When the Reporting Verb ‘say’ takes an indirect object it is changed into ‘tell’ in the Indirect Speech.

Eg - “We shall go home,” he *said* to me.

He *told* me that they would go home.

Rule 4. In the Reported Speech, the words expressing nearness of time or place are changed into words showing distance.

Eg - He said, “It is raining now”.

He said that it was raining *then*.

Now	<i>becomes</i>	then	Ago	<i>becomes</i>	before
this	"	that	come	"	go
here	"	there	today	"	that day
these	"	those	yesterday	"	the previous day
hence	"	thence	tonight	"	that night
hither	"	thither	last night	"	the previous night
thus	"	so	tomorrow	"	the next day
hereby	"	thereby	next month	"	the following month

Note: If *this, now, here, etc* refer to the same object, time or place that is *present to the speaker* while speaking, then no change is made in the adjective or adverb in the Indirect Speech, as,

Eg - He said, "I will do it *now* or never."

He said that he **would** do it *now* or never.

Eg - She said, "My book is *here*."

She said that her book **was** *here*.

Eg - "*This* is the house I like," he said.

He said that *this* was the house he liked.

Rule 5. The Noun and Pronoun in Vocative Case are turned into objects in the Indirect Speech.

Eg - The teacher said, “*Arun, you* should try harder.”

The teacher told *Arun* that *he* should try harder.

* If the person addressed reports the speech, the Second Person is changed to First.

Eg - He said to me, “*You* are a clever boy.”

He told me that *I* was a clever boy.

** If the pronoun *he* or *she* stands for different persons, the *names* of the persons referred to are inserted in brackets after the pronouns. Besides, Nouns could be used instead of Pronouns whenever possible.

Eg - Arun said to Amit, “I want your pen.”

Arun told amit that he (Arun) wanted his (Amit’s) pen.