

Grammar

Direct-Indirect Speech

eBook

Table of Contents

| Chapter No. | Topic | Page No. |
|-------------|---|----------|
| 1 | Introduction | 1 |
| 2 | What is Direct and Indirect Speech | 2 |
| | 2.1 Direct Speech | |
| | 2.2 Indirect speech | |
| 3 | Rules for converting direct speech to indirect speech | 3 |

Chapter 1: Introduction

Let's begin with an example:

Assume that you went to your doctor for an appointment, but he says to you, "I am very busy, so I cannot attend you" You return home and inform your family about your doctor's response There are following two ways to state the conversation:

1. The doctor said, "I am very busy, so I cannot attend you."
2. The doctor said that he was very, so he could not attend him

Now in above two stated ways, the first one quotes the exact words spoken by the doctor, this is Direct Speech In the second way we are stating about a Past situation in Present time. Therefore we change the actual words of the doctor. This is Indirect Speech.

Let's Study them in detail.

Chapter 2: What is Direct and Indirect Speech

2.1 Direct Speech

When we quote the actual words said by the speaker, we use direct speech. Indirect speech we place the spoken words between the quotation marks (“”) also; there is always a comma after the word “said”.

Example:

Rishabh said, “I am going to play football.”

Anamika said, “I am writing a letter to my mother.”

2.2 Indirect speech

When we are reporting something that has been said by someone but are not using the actual words then we use indirect speech. In indirect speech we change the Pronouns to the second person while referring to the speaker and word “that” is added after the word “said”. Quotation marks and comma are also not used.

Example:

Rishabh said that he was going to play football

Anamika said that she was writing a letter to her mother

Chapter 3: Rules for converting direct speech to indirect speech

RULE 1.

The inverted commas and comma are removed from the speech

RULE 2.

The word “that” is used before the speech

RULE 3.

There is a change of tense in the conversion of direct speech to indirect speech

Following are the rules for the same:

- a. A simple present tense changes to simple past tense

Example:

- Direct: He said, “I am unwell.”
- Indirect: He said that he was unwell

- b. Present continuous tense changes to a past continuous tense

Example:

- Direct: He said, “My mother is writing the letter.”
- Indirect: He said that his mother was writing a letter.

- c. Present perfect tense changes to a past perfect tense

Example:

- Direct: He said, "I have passed the examination."
- Indirect: he said that he had passed the examination.

- d. A present perfect continuous tense changes to a past perfect continuous tense

Example:

Direct: Sonu said to me, "I have been reading for an hour."

Indirect: Sonu told me that he had been reading for an hour.

- e. A simple past tense changes to a past perfect tense

Example:

- Direct: He said, "His horse died in the night."
- Indirect: he said that his horse had died in the night.

- f. Past continuous changes to a past perfect tense.

Example:

Direct: She said to me, "I was waiting for you."

Indirect: She told me that she had been waiting for me

For the rest of the tenses, the tense does not change, but the structure does. Let's see them:

a. Past Perfect

Direct: He said to me, "I had completed my project."

Indirect: He told me that he had completed his project.

b. Past Perfect Continuous

Direct: He said, "I had been playing chess for two hours."

Indirect: He said that he had been playing chess for two hours.

c. Future Indefinite

Direct: Ram said to Meena, "I shall write a letter."

Indirect: Ram told Meena that he would write a letter.

d. Future Continuous

Direct: Rahim said to Ram, "Sita will be waiting for you."

Indirect: Rahim told Ram that Sita would be waiting for him (Ram).

e. Future Perfect

Direct: Sita said to Ram, "I will have completed my work."

Indirect: Sita told Ram that she would have completed her work.

f. Future Perfect Continuous

Direct: Nisha said to me, "I shall have been reading the book."

Indirect: Nisha told me that she would have been reading the book.

NOTE:

- i. The shall of the future is changed into should
- ii. The will of the future is changed into would
- iii. The can and may of the future are changed into could and might respectively
- iv. The tenses will not change if the statement is still relevant or if it is a universal truth We can often choose whether to keep the original tenses or change them

Examples:

- Direct: The teacher said, "The earth goes around the sun."
- Indirect: The teacher said that the earth goes/went round the sun

The past tense is often used when it is uncertain if the statement is true or when we are reporting objectively.

RULE 4.

The Pronouns also change in their form with the change in the speech.

Example:

The boy said, "I need your help now".

The boy said that he needed my help then.

RULE 5.

If time is being mentioned in the sentence, then it will also be changed in the Indirect Speech.

Example:

Sheena said, "I am buying a laptop today".

Sheena said that she was buying a laptop that day.