

TOPIC 3

Direct Speech and Indirect Speech

We are familiar with the word "Reporting". It means to say to a third person, what we have seen or heard.

When you come to the college, suppose you were attacked by a dog. You ran to safety. What do you do when you come to the class? You will share all the rows with your friends. What you are doing is reporting.

Imagine that you are working as a reporter of the Manorama News Channel. You are hunting for sensitive news. You heard

that a Minister with Covid positive
is attending a meeting. & What
do you do then? You run to
the spot, collect the details and
sent it to your News Editor. ~~to~~
He will process the news and
you hear in the Evening News.

What you have done here? You
have reported a sensitive
incident which you witnessed
in person.

Reporting is a skill that all
students of English literature
must master. This will make
you efficient communicators.

P.T.O.

We begin with ~~the~~ reporting the words of a speaker. We can do it in two ways: -

1. We can quote his actual words
2. We can report without quoting the actual words of the speaker.

Let us take an example

Anaswal said, "I am very busy now."

Anaswal said that he was very busy then.

The first way of reporting is called the Direct speech. The second way of reporting is called the Indirect or reported speech.

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The changing of Direct speech into Indirect speech is an important communicative skill.

If you aim at high profiled professions, come on, let us try to master this skill. On we go, but together.

Let us consider the example given above. What are the changes we have made in transforming the Direct speech into the Indirect speech.

1. We have used the conjunction that before the indirect statement.
2. The pronoun I is changed to he that is the pronoun is changed in person.

③ The verb am is changed to was.
Present tense is changed to
Past tense.

④ The adverb now is changed to
then

Now, we can go into the rules for
changing Direct Speech into
Indirect Speech.

In the Direct Speech there are 2
clauses. The first one is the
principal clause. The verb in the
principal clause is called the principal
verb or the reporting verb.

The above said rules for changing
Direct Speech into Indirect Speech
are all centred around the
principal verb.

Rule I

If the Reporting Verb is in the Past tense, all present tenses of the Direct are changed into the corresponding Past Tenses. Thus:

(a) The Simple present becomes the Simple past.

Direct: Eg Mohan said, "Mary likes ice-cream."

Indirect: Mohan said that Mary liked ice-cream.

(b) The Present continuous tense becomes the Past continuous tense

Direct: Ex: He said "My master is writing letters."

Indirect: He said that his master was writing letters.

(c) The present perfect becomes the past perfect.

Eg. Direct: He said, "I have passed the examination".

Indirect: He said that he had passed the examination.

(d) The shall of the future tense is changed to should. The will of the future tense is changed into would.

Rule 2

The tenses may not change if the statement is still relevant or if it is a universal truth. We can choose whether to keep the original tenses or change them.

Eg. 1) Direct - "I know her address," said Gopi.

- Gopi said that he knows her address.

- Gopi said that he knew her address.

- Both are correct

2) ^{Direct} The teacher said, 'The earth goes round the sun'.

Indirect: The teacher said that the earth goes round the sun.

The teacher said that the earth
went round the sun.

- In this example, since this is a
universal truth, maintaining the
present form of the verb will be
better. That would give a more
accurate meaning.

- 3) Direct: "German is easy to learn," she
said
Indirect: She said that German is
was easy to learn.

The past Tense is preferred when it
is uncertain if the statement is
true or when we are reporting
objectively.

Rule III

If the Reporting Verb is in the
present tense, the tenses in the
Indirect' speech do not change.

Ex I

D: He says, 'I am unwell.'

Ind: He says (that) he is unwell

D: He has ^{just} said, 'My master is writing letters.'

Ind: He has just said that his master is writing letters

(3) He says, 'the horse died in the night.'

He says that the horse died in the night.

Rule IV

The pronouns of the Direct speech are changed, where necessary, so that their relations with the reporter and his hearer, are indicated.

Examples

1) D: He said to me, 'I don't believe you.'

Ind: He said he didn't believe me.

2) D: She said to him, 'I don't believe you.'

Ind: She said she ~~is~~ didn't believe him.

3) D: I said to him, 'I don't believe you.'

Ind: I said I didn't believe him.

4) D: I said to you, 'I don't believe you.'

Ind: I said I didn't believe you.

Rule D

Words expressing nearness in time or place are generally changed into words expressing distance. Thus

now becomes then

here " there

ago " before

thus " so

today " that day

tomorrow " the next day

yesterday " the day before

last night - the night before

Ex. 1. ^{D:} He said, 'I am glad to be here this evening.'

Ind: He said that he was glad to be there that evening.

- The changes do not occur if the
speech is reported during the same
period or at the same place.

Eg D: He says, 'I am glad to be
here this evening.'

Ind: He says that he is glad
to be here this evening.

this is changed to that
these " those