

CHAPTER - X

Direct and Indirect Speech

(A) Study the following sentences chosen from your book for class IX :

1. The woman said to her husband, "I met the boy on the road today."
2. "Take Mr Gupta upstairs," Mrs Bethy said to Maggie.
3. Sukumar said to his father, "Are you ever able to meet her in your heart ?"
4. "Oh, how I want to see her !" Sukumar said.

In these sentences, the words of some people have been presented within inverted commas. Mark the punctuation marks. These sentences are said to be in the **direct speech**.

(B) Form of the Direct Speech :

In direct speech :

- (i) The exact words of the speaker are put within inverted commas "....."
- (ii) The first word of the direct speech begins with a capital letter.
- (iii) The verb that precedes the direct speech is called 'reporting verb' ?
- (iv) The quoted words are separated from the reporting verb by a comma (,).

Remember that in modern times most writers use one ('..... .') inverted comma instead of two ("..... ") in direct speech.

(C) Now study the following sentences :

- 1b. The woman *told / informed* her husband that *she had met* the boy on the road *that day*.
- 2b. Mrs Bothy *told / directed* Maggie **to take** Mr Gupta upstairs.
- 3b. Sukumar *asked* his father if *he was* ever able to meet her in *his* heart.
- 4b. Sukumar *said / announced* that *he wanted very much* to see her.

In these sentences, the exact words of the speakers have not been used. But the meaning of their messages has been reported indirectly. So, these sentences are said to be in the reported / indirect speech.

(D) Form of the Indirect Speech :

In indirect speech :

- (i) the inverted commas are omitted.
- (ii) no comma is used after the reporting verb.
- (iii) the reported speech is generally followed by the conjunction 'that'.
- (iv) the reported speech ends with a full stop (.), no matter what type of sentence the direct speech is.

Remember when we change a sentence in *direct speech* into an *indirect one*, we generally take into account four important things namely –

- (1) the tense of the reporting verb.
- (2) the tense of the verb in the direct speech.
- (3) the noun phrases and the adverbials used in it and finally
- (4) the reporter and the time of reporting.

In the sentence (1) the reporting verb is in the past simple tense (said), so the tense of the verb in the direct speech has been pushed back from the past simple to the past perfect tense i.e. from 'met' to 'had met'. Also 'I' has been changed to 'she' (1b).

(E) Reported Speech as per the Reporting Time :

Usually, a speaker's words are reported some time after they are **spoken**. The gap between the speaking and reporting time may be short (only a few minutes) or long (several months). When the speaker's words remain true or unchanged at the time of reporting, there will be no change in the tense of the verb in indirect speech even if the reporting verb is in the past simple tense.

For example : *Mother said, "My son is returning home this evening"* may be reported as *'Mother said that her son is returning home this evening'*, if the reporting is done in the same afternoon. It is, however, possible to change the tense as in *'Mother said that her son was returning home this evening'*, if the reporting is made that day late in the evening.

But if the reporting is done some days later, the reported speech, would be *'Mother said that her son was returning home that evening'*.

Study the following sentences :

1. He said, "I like sweets"..
2. The teacher said, "Bhubaneswar is a city of temples".

When reported they would be *He said (that) he likes sweets* and *The teacher said (that) Bhubaneswar is a city of temples* because the words are still true at the time of speaking.

Remember that the present tense in direct speech is not changed into past tense if the direct speech is a universal scientific or geographical truth or a habitual action.

Look at the following examples :

Direct Speech

1. Father said, "The sun rises in the east."
2. Tutu said, "I go for a walk every morning."
3. The teacher said, "Water boils at 100°C."

Indirect Speech

1. Father said (that) the sun rises in the east. (universal truth)
2. Tutu said (that) he goes for a walk every morning. (habit)
3. The teacher said (that) water boils at 100°C (scientific truth)

(F) Mark how the verbs in indirect speech remain unchanged when the reporting verb is in present tense. Here the present tense suggests that the words were spoken only a short time ago and are still relevant.

Examples :

Direct Speech

1. The traveller says, "I am tired."
2. He will say, "I shall go to bed early."

Indirect Speech

1. The traveller says that he is tired.
2. He will say that he will go to bed early.

Activity - 1

A nationally famous magician has arrived in your city and has presented his performance. His magic show has proved to be amazingly popular. Different local newspapers have given their comments on his performance as follows :

“The show is brilliant,” the Samaj.

“It made me jump up in delight,” the reporters from the Sambad.

“We can’t have a better show,” the Dharitri.

“You’ll love it,” the Dinalipi.

“You shouldn’t miss it,” - the Prajatantra.

“His performance is outstanding,” the Matrubhasa.

Now put their comments in reported speech :

1. The Samaj reported that
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Activity - 2

Last Sunday you met your cousin Makhan in the morning. Hereunder are some of the things he said to you :

1. “I’d like to go to a good college, but my parents can’t afford to pay the fees”
2. “I’m living with a friend and working part-time”
3. “I’m enjoying my work.”
4. “My friend has got a scholarship for his higher studies.”
5. “I’ll tell my mother about our meeting.”
6. “I want to have my lunch with you.”

Report the conversation to your mother the next day using indirect speech :

Activity - 3

Rewrite the following statements in Indirect Speech :

1. Rakhal said, "I shall never forget my childhood days."
2. The children said, "We play football everyday."
3. The man said, "The house is on fire."
4. She says, "I don't like sweets."
5. The guide said, "Puri is famous for the temple of Lord Jagannath."
6. The teacher said, "The earth moves round the sun."
7. Father said, "Spring comes after winter."
8. He has said, "My son is going to hospital for treatment."

(G) You have noticed that when a statement in direct speech is changed into a 'that-clause' (noun clause) in indirect speech, the conjunction is usually left out in conversation and in informal writings.

Let's now see how the sentences in present progressive, present perfect and present perfect progressive in direct speech are changed into indirect speech when reporting verb is in the past tense.

(i) Look at the following examples :

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
1. He said, "I am going home"	1. He said (that) he was going home.
2. I said, "I have done my home work."	2. I said (that) I had done my homework.
3. Rekha said, "I have been working in the garden since morning."	3. Rekha said that she had been working in the garden since that morning.

- (ii) Now mark how a verb in the past simple tense in direct speech is changed in indirect speech.

Examples :

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
1. The peon said, "I posted the letter."	1. The peon said that he had posted the letter.
2. She said, "I took it home with me."	2. She said that she had taken it home with her.

Here the verb in the past simple tense has been changed into past perfect in indirect speech because the actions of 'posting the letter' (as in 1) 'taking it home' (as in 2) took place before the time of saying.

However, the past simple tense form of the verb remains unchanged in the following contexts :

(i) Direct Speech : The teacher said, "India became independent on 15th August 1947."

Indirect Speech : The teacher said (that) India became independent on 15th August 1947.

(ii) Direct Speech : Father said, "I decided to buy the house because it was on the main road."

Indirect Speech : Father said he had decided to buy the house because it was on the main road.

(Statement in (i) and (ii) are relevant or true at the time of reporting)

(iii) Direct Speech : The monitor of the class said, "When the teacher entered the class, all the students stood up."

Indirect Speech : The monitor of the class said that when the teacher entered the class all the students stood up.

- (iv) Direct Speech : She said, "When I left home, it began to rain."
Indirect Speed : She said that when she left home, it began to rain.
(Here in all the cases two actions took place at the same time)
- (v) Direct Speech : "If I were the Primeminister of India, he said, I would raise her economic status to a high level."
Indirect Speed : He said if he were the Primeminister of India he would raise her economic status to a high level.
- (iii) Direct Speech : He said, "When I saw them, they were playing tennis."
Indirect Speed : He said that when he saw them, they were playing tennis.

(Verb in time clauses usually do not change)

Note that past perfect and past perfect progressive forms do not change in indirect speech. But the past progressive is usually but not always changed into past perfect progressive.

Examples :

- (i) Direct Speech : He said, "I had helped my friend a lot before."
Indirect Speed : He said that he had helped his friend a lot before.
- (ii) Direct Speech : He said, "I had been doing my homework in the morning."
Indirect Speed : He said that he had been doing his homework in the morning.
- (iii) Direct Speech : He said, "I was helping my brother in the hour of his need."
Indirect Speed : He said that he had been helping his brother in the hour of his need.

Now mark the use of adverbials, modal verbs, demonstratives and pronouns in indirect speech :

(a) Change of Adverbials in indirect Speech :

From direct speech (changes) to indirect speech.

<i>Now</i>	→	then / at that time
<i>today</i>	→	that day
<i>yesterday</i>	→	the day before / the previous day
<i>the day before yesterday</i>	→	two days before
<i>tomorrow</i>	→	the next day / the following day
<i>this week</i>	→	that week
<i>the day after tomorrow</i>	→	in two days' time
<i>next week / year etc</i>	→	the following week / year
<i>last week / year</i>	→	the week before / the previous week
<i>ago</i>	→	before
<i>a year</i>	→	a year before / the previous year
<i>here</i>	→	there
<i>there</i>	→	there
<i>thus</i>	→	in that way

(b) Change of modal auxiliaries in indirect speech :

Direct Speech		Indirect Speech
<i>Will</i>	→ changes to →	would
<i>Shall</i>	→ changes to →	Should / Would

[*should* is usually used with first person (I, We) and in 2nd and 3rd persons in other meanings.
would can also be used with first persons]

Examples :

Direct Speech : I said, "I shall complain about you to the police."

Indirect Speech : I said that I would complain about him to the police.

Direct Speech : He said, "What shall I do ?"

Indirect Speech : He asked what he should do.

<i>can</i>	→	changes to	→	could
<i>may</i>	→	changes to	→	might
<i>must</i>	→	becomes	→	must / had to / would have to

[When *must* is used in the meaning of necessity, it remains unchanged in indirect speech or changes to *had to*, When it refers to the future, it changes to *would have to*.]

Examples :

Direct Speech	:	I thought, "There must be some mistake."
Indirect Speech	:	I thought there must be some mistake. (certainty)
Direct Speech	:	"I must go soon", said Sarita.
Indirect Speech	:	Sarita said (that) she would have to go soon. (future)

Direct Speech

Indirect Speech

<i>mustn't</i>	→	changes to	→	mustn't / wasn't to
<i>needn't</i>	→	changes to	→	needn't / didn't have to

Note that *should*, *would*, *might*, *could*, *used to* and *ought to do* not generally change in indirect speech.

<i>here</i>	→	changes to	→	there
<i>there</i>	→	remains unchanged	→	there

(c) Change of pronoun / demonstratives (determiners) in indirect speech :

Direct Speech

Indirect Speech

<i>this (time expression)</i>	→	changes to	→	that
<i>(this week)</i>	→	changes to	→	that week
<i>these (time expression)</i>	→	changes to	→	those
<i>(these days changes to those days)</i>				

This, *that* and *these* used as pronouns can become *it*, *they* / *them*. But *this* and *these* used as demonstratives (determiners) usually change to 'the'.

Examples :

He said, "I brought this saree / these sarees for my mother."
 He said that he had bought the saree / sarees for his mother.

(H) Reporting verbs for statements :

You have noticed that the reporting verb in direct speech in most cases is 'say'. But in indirect speech we sometimes replace it by another verb appropriate to the meaning of the statement. Some of such reporting verbs in indirect speech are :

tell, state, announce, declare, promise, order, complain, protest, allege, explain, think, realise, admit, advise, ask, agree, observe, remark etc.

Moreover, when something is said in continuation of another statement, we generally use the reporting verbs '*add*', '*continue*' and '*further*' said. And if something is said in reply to a remark or a question, we use the verbs *reply, answer, respond, deny, refuse* etc.

Note that 'yes' or 'no' are expressed in indirect speech by subject + appropriate auxiliary verb e.g. 'will' in direct speech changes to '*would*' in indirect speech, for 'yes', and for 'no' it changes to *would* and *wouldn't* etc.

Activity - 4

Rewrite the following in indirect speech :

- (i) Rabi said to me, "I know where you were born."
- (ii) Father said, "Morning is at six today."
- (iii) She said, "I'll help you in the hour of your need."
- (iv) He said, "I collected these pebbles at the seashore."
- (v) I said to him, "You didn't keep fit last year."
- (vi) The teacher said to me, "You must work hard for your examination."
- (vii) The doctor said to me, "You mustn't smoke".
- (viii) Sushil said, "We celebrate our Republic Day on 26th January every year ?"
- (ix) He said, "I was playing the violin every morning last year."
- (x) He said, "These are my toys."

(I) Questions in Indirect Speech :

You know there are two types of questions namely (a) Wh-questions and (b) Yes-No type questions. Let's now see how such questions are changed in indirect speech. Look at the following examples :

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
1. Rakesh said to his servant, "Where are you going ?"	Rakesh asked his servant where he was going.
2. My friend said to me, "When did you return home last night ?"	My friend asked me when I had returned the previous night.
3. Gita said to her younger brother, "Who are you talking to on the phone ?"	Gita asked her younger brother / wanted to know from her younger brother who he was talking to on the phone.
4. "Who lives next door ?" He said.	He asked who lived next door.
5. "What happened ?" She said.	She asked what had happened.

Mark that we generally use the verb **ask** to report a question. The other reporting verbs used with question sentences in indirect speech are : **enquire, question, wonder, want** and **know**, etc.

Remember that :

- (i) The conjunction **that** is not used after the reporting verb.
- (ii) The wh-questions are changed into statements beginning with wh-words.
- (iii) The structure of the indirect speech is : subject + ask + person addressed + wh-noun clause i.e a statement beginning with the wh-word with which the question is formed.

(J) Yes-No questions in Indirect Speech :

Look at the following examples :

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
(i) He said to me, "Do you know him ?"	He asked me if/whether I <i>knew</i> him.
(ii) The teacher said to me, "Have you done your homework ?"	The teacher asked me if/ whether I had done my homework.
(iii) "Was it raining heavily at your place last month ?" he said to me.	He asked me if / whether it had been raining heavily at my place the previous month / the month before.

It is evident from the above examples that :

- (i) Yes-No questions become statements beginning with if / whether.
- (ii) the conjunction 'that' is not used after the reporting verb as done in the case of declarative sentences.
- (iii) He asked me if / whether it had been raining heavily at my place the previous month / the month before.
- (iv) the verb ask / enquire / want to know / wonder is used to report the question.
- (v) question mark is not given at the end of the indirect speech.
- (vi) the change of the verb form, person, demonstratives, pronouns and adverbials are the same as they are for statements.

Activity - 5

The wedding of your sister has just been over. Your friend Mahesh asks you a lot of questions about the bridegroom. Now report, in indirect speech, the questions Mahesh asked you.

- (i) What is the name of your sister's husband ?
- (ii) What is he doing ?
- (iii) Where is he posted at present ?
- (iv) Has he ever been abroad ?
- (v) How long did he stay there ?
- (vi) Has he ever gone to Australia ?
- (vii) What salary does he get ?
- (viii) Will his salary increase next year ?

Activity - 6

Suppose your father is a retired headmaster of a high school, The Director, Doordarshan Centre, Bhubaneswar, invited him on the Teacher's Day to give a message to the students. The Programme Assistant asked him the following questions. Report them in indirect speech :

- (i) Why is this day observed in the whole of India ?
- (ii) What difference do you mark between the education imparted now and that which was imparted at your time ?
- (iii) What is your impression on the teachers working at present and those who were working at your time ?
- (iv) Do you think that the system of education has improved a lot ?
- (v) Haven't the students become more knowledgeable than before ?
- (vi) Has their conduct changed for the better ?
- (vii) Will they grow into good citizens of our country ?
- (viii) What message do you have for the students of our country ?

(K) Imperatives in Indirect Speech :

Study the following examples :

Direct Speech

- (i) The teacher said to the students, "Move out of the class silently."
- (ii) The N.C.C. teacher said, "March on boys."
- (iii) "Please help me cross the road", he said to the policeman.
- (iv) Mother said to me, "Don't go to bed late."

Mark the modals in the following sentences :

- (v) He said, "We must have a party to celebrate your success."
- (vi) He said, "I must go there."
(here 'must' is used in the meaning of necessity.)
- (vii) They said, "We must mend the roof properly before the rains set in."

(Here **must** implies selfimposed obligation / or a natural action.

Indirect Speech

- (i) The teacher asked the students to move out of the class silently.
- (ii) The N.C.C. teacher ordered / commanded the boys to march on.
- (iii) He requested the policeman to help him cross the road.
- (iv) Mother advised me not to go to bed late.
- (v) He said that we must have a party to celebrate my success.
- (vi) He said he had to go there.
- (vii) They said they would have to mend the roof properly before the rains set in.

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|---|---|
| (viii) "Can I have a sweet ?" said the little boy. | (viii) The little boy asked to have a sweet / asked if he could have a sweet. |
| (ix) "Could I speak to the Secretary, please ?" said Mr Roy on the phone. | (ix) Mr Roy asked on the phone if he could speak to the Secretary. |
| (x) She said, "Let's go on a picnic to Nandankanan tomorrow." | (x) She suggested their going on a picnic to Nandankanan the next day / the day after or She suggested that they (should) go on a picnic to Nandankanan the next day / the day after. |
| (xi) My sister said, "Remember to bring the umbrella." | (xi) My sister reminded me to bring the umbrella. |
| (xii) Mother said to me, "Don't leave the door unlocked." | (xii) Mother told / asked / advised me not to leave the door unlocked. |

Note :

- (i) When reporting an imperative sentence, we use one of the following verbs *ask, order, request, suggest, tell, remind, command, beg, warn, advise, promise, agree, refuse*, etc instead of '**say**'.
- (ii) We use **to / not to** before the verb of the imperative sentence so that it takes a to + infinitive + noun phrase form.
- (iii) Its structure in indirect speech will then be; *ask / order / request etc + person addressed / not to + the imperative sentence.*

(L) Exclamations in Indirect Speech :

Look at the following sentences and mark how exclamatory sentences become statements in indirect speech :

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
(i) "What a splendid sunset this is !" he said.	(i) He exclaimed in joy that it was really a splendid sunset.
(ii) He said, "Alas ! The poor old man is dead."	(ii) He exclaimed in sorrow that the poor old man was dead.
(iii) He said, "Good luck !"	(iii) He wished me good luck.
(iv) He said to me, "Congratulations !"	(iv) He congratulated me.
(v) He said, "Liar !"	(v) He called me a liar.
(vi) He said, "How dreadful !"	(vi) He exclaimed that it was very dreadful.
(vii) He said, "Hello ! Where do you live ?"	(vii) He greeted me and asked me where I lived.
(viii) He said, "Good morning !"	(viii) He wished me a good morning.

Mark the modals in the following sentences :

(ix) My teacher said, "Can you work out this sum ?" and I said, "No."	(ix) My teacher asked me if / whether I could work out the (that) sum and I replied that I could not.
(x) He said, "Can you go to the circus this evening ?" "Yes", I replied.	(x) He asked me if / whether I could go to the circus that evening and I replied that I could.

Note that :

- (i) Exclamatory sentences become statements in indirect speech.
- (ii) We use 'very' to emphasize the intensity of exclamation in the indirect speech.
- (iii) In some cases statements may fail to convey the meaning or the force of exclamations. In such cases we often use other sentences to convey the similar sense or meaning.

Activity - 7

Turn into indirect speech :

- (i) "Consult a doctor immediately," he said to me.
- (ii) "Hurry up, or you will miss the train," he said to me.
- (iii) "Don't get addicted to tea," he said to me.
- (iv) "Your mouth smells foul. Don't open it," he said.
- (v) The captain said, "Hurrah ! We have scored two goals !"
- (vi) The General said, "Bravo ! You have done wonders !"
- (vii) The teacher said to Nirmal, "What a lazy boy you are !"
- (viii) My friend said to me, "How nice of you to have come !"
- (ix) The traveller said, "Farewell, friends."
- (x) The beggar, "Oh, for a morsel of food !"
- (xi) "If only I had the wings of a dove !" he said.

You have seen how different types of sentences are expressed in the reported speech. Now practise all the types in the following activity.

Activity - 8

"Are you leaving today ?" Maggie asked, "Yes", I replied, "Today is the day of my departure."

"How long will it take to reach your country ? In which part of the country do you live ?" She wanted to know. I replied, "Punjab, in the west."

"Please, put a flower on my brother's grave," She requested me with tears in her eyes.

