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Direct and Indirect Narration

SOME GENERAL TERMS

We can report the words of a speaker in **two** ways—(i) Direct Reporting or Direct Narration, (ii) Indirect Reporting or Indirect Narration.

Direct Narration—It is the method in which the actual words of the speaker are reported within inverted commas. **As**—

Ram said, “I am going.”

Mohan says, “He is my friend.”

Indirect Narration—It is the method in which the substance or idea of the speaker’s words is reported without using his actual words.

The sentences given above in Direct Narration would be converted into **Indirect Narration**, thus—

Ram said that he was going.

Mohan says that he is his friend.

Reporting Speech—The part of the whole sentence outside the Inverted Commas in Direct Narration is called the **Reporting Speech**, and the Verb used in this part is called the **Reporting Verb**.

Reported Speech—The part of the whole sentence in which the actual words of the speaker are written within the Inverted Commas is called the **Reported Speech**, and the Verb used in this part is called the **Reported Verb**.

Rules for Changing Direct Narration into Indirect Narration

The Rules for changing the Direct Narration into Indirect Narration may be divided into **four** groups—

1. Rules for Connectives
2. Rules for Change of Tenses
3. Rules for Change of Persons
4. Other Rules for Miscellaneous Changes.

Rules for Connectives

The whole sentence in the Direct Narration form consists of **two parts**. The first part is outside the Inverted commas which is called **Reporting Speech**, and the second part is within the Inverted commas which is called **Reported Speech**. When the whole sentence is required to be changed from **Direct into Indirect** narration, the two parts of the sentence are joined by some connectives. There are some Rules for using the correct connectives. The following are these Rules—

(1) Assertive Sentences—If the Reported speech is in the form of an assertive sentence, the connective used to join it with the Reporting speech is **‘that’**—

As—

Direct : He said, “He is going home.”

Indirect : He said **that** he was going home.

(2) Interrogative Sentences—If the Reported speech is in the form of an **Interrogative** sentence, it can be connected in **two** ways according to the structure of the Interrogative sentence.

(a) If the Interrogative sentence begins with an **Interrogative Adverb** (**Where, What, When, How, Why**, etc.) or with an **Interrogative Adjective / Pronoun** (**Who, Whose, Whom, Which, What**, etc.), **no connective** is required to join it. It is a **serious mistake** to use **that** to connect such a sentence. **As**—

Direct : He said, “Where are you going?”

Indirect : He asked (me) where I was going.

(Not, **that** where I was going)

Direct : He said, “Who is your friend?”

Indirect : He asked me who my friend was.

(Not, **that** who my friend was)

- (b) If the Interrogative sentence begins with an **Auxiliary Verb**, the connective **whether** or **if** is used to join it (not, **that whether** or **that if**).

Direct : He said, "Is he a doctor?"

Indirect : He asked whether (or if) he was a doctor.

(Not, **that whether** (or if) he was a doctor)

Direct : I said, "Do you smoke?"

Indirect : I asked whether (or if) you smoked.

(Not, **that whether** (or if) you smoked)

(3) Imperative Sentences—If the Reported speech is in the form of an **Imperative** sentence (indicating **command** or **request**), **no connective** is needed but the main Verb of the Imperative sentence is converted into an Infinitive. **As—**

Direct : He said, "Please give me a glass of water."

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

Direct : He said to the servant, "Close the door."

Indirect : He asked the servant **to close** the door.

(4) Exclamatory Sentences—If the Reported sentence is in the form of an **Exclamatory** sentence (indicating **surprise**, **fear**, **contempt** or **wish**), it is changed into an **Assertive** sentence in the Indirect Narration form, and connective '**that**' is used to join it with the Reporting sentence. **As—**

Direct : He said, "May you live long!"

Indirect : He wished **that** you may live long.

Direct : He said, "What a horrible scene!"

Indirect : He observed **that** it was a horrible scene.

Rules for Change of Tenses

Rule 1—It should first be remembered that **no change** is ever made in the **Tense of the Reporting Verb**. But, of course, without changing the Tense, the verb can be changed according to the sense of the

Reported speech. For example, in place of **say** or **said**, we can use **tell** or **told**, or we can use **replied**, **remarked**, **asked**, **observed**, **declared**, etc. according to the sense. But in no case there should be a change in the Tense of the **Reporting Verb**.

Rule 2—If the **Reporting Verb** is in the **Present** or **Future Tense**, no change is made in the Tense of the **Reported Verb**. But, of course, the form of the Auxiliary Verb will change according to the change in Person of the Subject in the Indirect Narration form. For example, **am** can be changed into **is** or **are**; or **do** and **have** can be changed into **does** or **has**, but no change can be made in the **Tense** in the process of this change. **As—**

Direct : He says, "I **am** not feeling well today."

Indirect : He says that he **is** not feeling well today.

Direct : He will say to me, "You **are** not kind to me."

Indirect : He will tell me that I **am** not kind to him.

Solved Examples

Direct : I often say to my friends, "You are all very dear to me."

Indirect : I often tell my friends that they are all very dear to me.

Direct : You say to your father, "My teacher is very kind and sympathetic."

Indirect : You tell your father that your teacher is very kind and sympathetic.

Direct : I will go and say to my father, "I am not satisfied with the job that you have found for me."

Indirect : I will go and tell my father that I am not satisfied with the job that he has found for me.

Direct : Mohan will go to Delhi to tell his uncle, "Are you not finding some job for me?"

Indirect : Mohan will go to Delhi to ask his uncle whether he is not finding some job for him.

Direct : I shall say to my father, "Please let me participate in the marriage of my friend."

Indirect : I shall request my father to let me participate in the marriage of my friend.

Direct : I say to my father whenever I meet him, "I do not want to marry at such an early age."

Indirect : I tell my father whenever I meet him that I do not want to marry at such an early age.

Direct : Mohan will say to his servant, "You are the greatest dunce that I have ever seen in my life."

Indirect : Mohan will tell his servant that he is the greatest dunce that he has ever seen in his life.

Rule 3—If the **Reporting Verb** is in the **Past Tense**, the Tense of the **Reported Verb** is changed according to the following Rules—

(I) (a) **Present Indefinite** is changed into Past Indefinite Tense. **As—**

Direct : He said, "I am unwell."

Indirect : He said that he was unwell.

(b) **Present Continuous** is changed into Past Continuous Tense. **As—**

Direct : He said, "My father is reading his book."

Indirect : He said that his father was reading his book.

(c) **Present Perfect** is changed into Past Perfect Tense. **As—**

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

Indirect : He said that he had passed the examination.

(d) **Present Perfect Continuous** is changed into Past Perfect Continuous Tense. **As—**

Direct : Mohan said, "I have been working hard since July."

Indirect : Mohan said that he had been working hard since July.

(II) (a) Ordinarily no change is made in the **Past Indefinite Tense**, but sometimes it is changed into **Past Perfect Tense**. **As—**

Direct : Ram said, "He visited Delhi last year."

Indirect : Ram said that he visited Delhi last year.

Direct : He said, "The horse died last night."

Indirect : He said that the horse had died last night.

(b) **Past Continuous** is changed into Past Perfect Continuous Tense.

As—

Direct : He said, "My brother was working in this factory."

Indirect : He said that his brother had been working in that factory.

(c) No change is made in **Past Perfect** and **Past Perfect Continuous** Tense.

As—

Direct : He said, "I had finished my work long ago."

Indirect : He said that he had finished his work long ago.

Direct : Ram said, "I had been doing that work for several years."

Indirect : Ram said that he had been doing that work for several years.

Rule 4—**Will** and **shall** of the Future Tense are changed into **Would** and **Should**. **As—**

Direct : He said, "I shall definitely do this work."

Indirect : He said that he would definitely do that work.

Direct : He said, "Ram will go to the market."

Indirect : He said that Ram would go to the market.

Rule 5—**May** is changed into **might** and **can** into **could**. **As—**

Direct : He said, "I can do this work."

Indirect : He said that he could do that work.

Direct : The teacher said, "He may be allowed to go."

Indirect : The teacher said that he might be allowed to go.

Rule 6—There is no change in **Must**. **As**—

Direct : He said, “I must go at once.”

Indirect : He said that he must go at once.

Rule 7—If the Reported speech refers to some **universal truth** or **habitual action**, no change is made in the Tense of the Reported Verb, even if the Reporting Verb is in the Past Tense. **As**—

Direct : The teacher said in the class, “The sun rises in the east.”

Indirect : The teacher said in the class that the sun rises in the east.

Direct : He said, “Man lives by bread.”

Indirect : He said that man lives by bread.

Direct : My friend said, “I am going to write a letter to my father.”

Indirect : My friend said that he was going to write a letter to his father.

Direct : He said, “I have been successful in my work.”

Indirect : He said that he had been successful in his work.

Direct : He said, “Ram’s dog has killed my hen.”

Indirect : He said that Ram’s dog had killed his hen.

Direct : He said, “I do not believe in the orthodox principles of Hinduism.”

Chart of Changes in Tenses

Tense of the Reporting Verb	Original Tense of the Reported Verb	Changed Tense of the Reported Verb
Present Tense or Future Tense	No Change	No Change
Past Tense	Present Indefinite	Past Indefinite
	Present Continuous	Past Continuous
	Present Perfect	Past Perfect
	Present Perfect Continuous	Past Perfect Continuous
	Past Indefinite	{ Generally no change, but sometimes changed into Past Perfect Tense
Past Tense	Past Continuous	Past Perfect Continuous
	{ Past Perfect Or Past Perfect Continuous	No Change
Past Tense	Will or shall	Would or should
	Can or may	Could or might
	Must	No Change
	Universal Truth	No Change

Solved Examples

Note the changes made in the Tense of the Reported Verb in the following examples—

Direct : The Station Master said, “This train is going to Punjab.”

Indirect : The Station Master said that that train was going to Punjab.

Direct : “I cannot believe you ?” said the merchant in anger.

Indirect : The merchant said in anger that he could not believe him.

Indirect : He said that he did not believe in the orthodox principles of Hinduism.

Direct : Ganesh said, “I have been suffering from this disease for six months.”

Indirect : Ganesh said that he had been suffering from that disease for six months.

Direct : He said, “My servant has been working in the field since this morning.”

Indirect : He said that his servant had been working in the field since that morning.

Direct : Mohan said, "I reached the station before the arrival of the train."

Indirect : Mohan said that he had reached the station before the arrival of the train.

Direct : She said in the court, "My husband had been leading an immoral life for several years before I was married to him."

Indirect : She said in the court that her husband had been leading an immoral life for several years before she was married to him.

Direct : He said, "The students were learning their lessons in the class."

Indirect : He said that the students had been learning their lessons in the class.

Direct : "One of the servants had stolen my watch," said Sohan.

Indirect : Sohan said that one of the servants had stolen his watch.

Direct : He said, "I had made all arrangements for the reception of the President before his arrival at Agra."

Indirect : He said that he had made all arrangements for the reception of the President before his arrival at Agra.

Direct : Mohan said, "I was doing my work when Ram came to me."

Indirect : Mohan said that he had been doing his work when Ram came to him.

Rules for Change in Persons

All Pronouns (**I, we, you, he, she, they**) used in the Reported speech are changed according to the following Rules—

Rule 1—Every **First Person Pronoun** used in the Reported speech is changed according to the Person of the **Subject** of the Reporting speech.

Direct : **He** said, "I am doing my work."

Indirect : **He** said that **he** was doing **his** work.

Direct : **You** said, "I am going to Delhi to meet **my** uncle."

Indirect : **You** said that **You** were going to Delhi to meet **your** uncle.

Direct : **I** said, "I am reading **my** book."

Indirect : **I** said that **I** was reading **my** book.

Rule 2—Every **Second Person Pronoun** in the Reported speech is changed according to the **Object / Predicate** of the Reporting Verb.

Direct : Ramesh said to **him**, "**You** are not doing **your** work seriously."

Indirect : Ramesh told **him** that **he** was not doing **his** work seriously.

Direct : Mohan said to **you**, "**You** are not doing **your** work seriously."

Indirect : Mohan told **you** that **you** were not doing **your** work seriously.

Direct : Ramesh said to **me**, "**You** are not doing **your** work seriously."

Indirect : Ramesh told **me** that **I** was not doing **my** work seriously.

Rule 3—**Third Person Pronoun** remains **unchanged**.

Formula

All First Persons	Changed according to the Subject of the Reporting Verb
All Second Persons	Changed according to the Object or Predicate of the Reporting Verb
Third Persons	No Change

Solved Examples

Direct : He said, "I have completed my work with my own hard labour."

Indirect : He said that he had completed his work with his own hard labour.

Direct : You said to your friend, "I am going to Delhi today."

Indirect : You told your friend that you were going to Delhi that day.

- Direct** : My teacher said to me, "You will fail if you do not work hard."
- Indirect** : My teacher warned me that I would fail if I did not work hard.
- Direct** : The watchman said to you, "You cannot pass through this lane at this time of the night."
- Indirect** : The watchman told you that you could not pass through that lane at that time of the night.
- Direct** : My father said to him, "You seem to be proud of your strength."
- Indirect** : My father told him that he seemed to be proud of his strength.
- Direct** : "I cannot give you a single pice," said my father to the street-beggar, "because you are strong enough to earn your livelihood."
- Indirect** : My father told the street-beggar that he could not give him a single pice, because he was strong enough to earn his own livelihood.
- Direct** : I said to my father, "I cannot go to school today because I am not feeling well."
- Indirect** : I told my father that I could not go to school that day because I was not feeling well.
- Direct** : Mohan said to him, "Your brother is a good sportsman."
- Indirect** : Mohan told him that his brother was a good sportsman.
- Direct** : Mahesh said to Ram, "I have lost your purse on account of my carelessness."
- Indirect** : Mahesh told Ram that he had lost his (Ram's) purse on account of his (Mahesh's) carelessness.

Miscellaneous Changes

(i) Some typical words used in the Reported speech are changed as listed below—

Words	Changed Form
Now	Then
This or these	That or those

Hither	Thither
Here	There
Hence	Thence
Thus	So
Come	Go
Today	That day
Tomorrow	Next day
Yesterday	The previous day
Last night	The previous night
Ago	Before

Direct : He said, "I will do this work now."

Indirect : He said that he would do that work then.

Direct : He said, "I came to this village long ago."

Indirect : He said that he had gone to that village long before.

Exercise

Change the following sentences from Direct into Indirect Narration :

1. He said, "I cannot help you at present because I am myself in difficulty."
2. Mohan said, "We shall go to see the Taj in the moonlit night."
3. My father said to us, "We should study together and get a good division in the examination."
4. The servant said, "He met Ramesh when he was coming from the market after delivering the letter."
5. Ram said, "He met his father last Sunday."
6. The watchman cried, "The thieves have broken into the house and stolen away all the property."
7. Ramesh said, "I was having my dinner when the peon called upon me."
8. Mohan said, "I have been studying very regularly since July."
9. My friend said, "He had been running a shop in Bombay before coming to U.P."
10. My mother will say, "You cannot go anywhere at this hour of the night."
11. My father says, "A good student should not waste his time in idleness."

12. Ramesh said, "I am not taking the examination because I am not very confident about my studies."
13. My friend will say to you, "I have never seen a more intelligent person than Ramesh."
14. The teacher said, "The earth moves round the sun."
15. Lord Christ said, "Man is mortal."
16. He said, "I am so confident of myself that I can take the work independently."
17. Ram said, "The matter shall be decided here and now."
18. Mohan says, "I shall go tomorrow."
19. My friend says, "My father is not at home and therefore I cannot go out."
20. His letter says, "I herewith offer you the appointment."

(2) Interrogative Sentences

Interrogative Sentences can begin in two ways—

(i) With Auxiliary or Helping Verb such as—
Is, are, am, was, were, has, have, had, will, shall, do, did, does, can, could.

(ii) With Interrogative Adjective/Pronoun or Interrogative Adverb such as—

Who, whom, whose, which, what, when, where, why, how.

Rules

Rule 1—We can make a change in the Reporting Verb according to the sense, but without making any change in its Tense. For example, in place of **said**, we can use **asked, enquired, demanded**, etc.

Rule 2—Connective '**that**' is not used to join any kind of Interrogative sentence.

Rule 3—If the Interrogative sentence begins with an **Auxiliary or Helping Verb** in the Direct Narration, it begins with **If** or **Whether** in the Indirect Narration.

Rule 4—If the Interrogative sentence begins with an **Interrogative Adverb / Adjective / Pronoun** in the Direct Narration, it will begin with the same **Interrogative Adverb / Adjective Pronoun** in the Indirect Narration also. **No connective** is

needed to join it with the Reporting speech. This is a very important Rule and must be very carefully observed.

Rule 5—The Interrogative sentence is changed into an **Assertive sentence** in the Indirect Narration. In order to change an Interrogative sentence into an Assertive one, the **Subject** is used before the **Verb**, and the Mark of Interrogation should be removed.

Rule 6—The Auxiliary **do** or **does** of the Reported speech is removed, and in their place the **Past Indefinite Tense** of the main Verb is used. **As—**

Direct : He said to Ram, "Do you know his name?"

Indirect : He asked Ram whether he knew his name.

Direct : Ram said to him, "Does Suresh go to school?"

Indirect : Ram asked him whether Suresh went to school.

Rule 7—The Auxiliary **did** of the Reported speech is removed and the **Past Perfect** form of the main Verb is used. **As—**

Direct : I said to him, "Did you go to school yesterday?"

Indirect : I asked him whether he had gone to school the previous day.

Rule 8—If the Reported speech has **do not** or **does not**, in the Indirect Narration, it will have **did not + First Form** of the Verb. **As—**

Direct : He said to Ram, "Do you not know me?"

Indirect : He asked Ram whether he did not know him.

Direct : Mohan said, "Does not Ramesh tell a lie?"

Indirect : Mohan asked whether Ramesh did not tell a lie.

Rule 9—If the Reported speech has **did not**, in the **Direct Narration**, it will have **had not + Past Perfect Form** of the Verb in the Indirect Narration. **As—**

Direct : I said to him, "Did you not promise to come?"

Indirect : I asked him whether he had not promised to come.

Rule 10—The Rules for change in **Pronouns** are the same as applicable in Assertive sentences.

Solved Examples

- Direct** : He said, “What is your name ?”
- Indirect** : He asked (him) what his name was.
- Direct** : Ram said to Mohan, “Where do you live ?”
- Indirect** : Ram asked Mohan where he lived.
- Direct** : Keshav said to his wife, “Which of these sarees do you like most?”
- Indirect** : Keshav asked his wife which of those sarees she liked most.
- Direct** : The teacher said, “Who is the author of this book ?”
- Indirect** : The teacher asked (the boys) who the author of that book was.
- Direct** : He said, “Are you going to Delhi?”
- Indirect** : He asked (him) whether (if) he was going to Delhi.
- Direct** : Mohan said to his friend, “Can you help me in unloading my cart ?”
- Indirect** : Mohan asked his friend if he could help him in unloading his cart.
- Direct** : Ramesh said to the Station Master, “Has the train left ?”
- Indirect** : Ramesh asked the Station Master whether (if) the train had left.
- Direct** : Mohan said to his friend, “Are you in a position to help me now?”
- Indirect** : Mohan asked his friend whether he was in a position to help him then.
- Direct** : My father said to me, “Why are you so eager to go to picture today ?”
- Indirect** : My father asked me why I was so eager to go to picture that day.

Direct : The teacher said to the student, “How can you prove that the earth is round ?”

Indirect : The teacher asked the student how he could prove that the earth is round.

Exercise

Change the following sentences from Direct into Indirect Narration :

1. Ram said, “Are these mangoes sweet ?”
2. He said, “Were you present at the scene of accident ?”
3. He said to me, “Why do you want to go home ?”
4. Ramesh said to him, “How do you do ?”
5. He said, “Am I responsible for your failure?”
6. Ram said, “Who does not know that he is a thief ?”
7. He said, “How can I help you in these circumstances ?”
8. My father said to me, “What have you done with all the money I gave you ?”
9. The teacher said, “Who has prepared this chapter thoroughly ?”
10. My friend said to the Station Master, “When does the Punjab Mail reach Agra ?”
11. He said, “Why did you enter my house without taking my permission ?”
12. He said, “Can I be of any service to you ?”
13. Ram said, “Could I get another chance to try my luck ?”
14. Ram said, “Had I not warned you long ago that the work is difficult ?”
15. Mohan said, “What have you been searching for all these hours ?”

(3) Imperative Sentences

The sentences which carry the sense of **order, request, wish, advice**, etc. are called Imperative sentences. These sentences often begin with **Finite Verb. As—**

Go away; Work hard; Bring a glass of water, etc.

Sometimes these sentences also begin with—**Let, Please, Kindly** and such other polite expressions. As—

Please help me; Kindly leave the seat; Let him come.

Rules

Rule 1—The **Reporting Verb** can appropriately be changed according to the sense, but without making any change in its Tense. For example, in place of ‘**said**’, we can use **requested, asked, ordered, advised, suggested, proposed, forbade**, etc.

Rule 2—The **Reported Verb** is changed into an **Infinitive (to + Verb)**. No other change is made in the Verb. **As**—

Direct : The teacher said to the students, “Work very hard.”

Indirect : The teacher advised the students to work very hard.

Direct : Ram said to his servant, “Bring a glass of water.”

Indirect : Ram ordered his servant to bring a glass of water.

Rule 3—If the Reported speech begins with **Do not**, we remove **Do**, and the main Verb is changed into an **Infinitive**. **As**—

Direct : My father said to me, “Don’t go there.”

Indirect : My father advised me not to go there.

Rule 4—The Rules for change in **Tense** and **Pronouns** are the same as discussed under Assertive sentences.

Rule 5—Some Imperative sentences carry the sense of **prohibition**. In such sentences **forbid** or **forbade** can be used. **As**—

Direct : My father said, “Don’t play in the sun.”

Indirect : My father forbade me to play in the sun.

Solved Examples

Direct : Ram’s father said to him, “Do not be impatient about the result of your examination.”

Indirect : Ram’s father advised him not to be impatient about the result of his examination.

Direct : He said, “Please do not enter my room without my permission.”

Indirect : He requested (them) not to enter his room without his permission.

Direct : The captain said to the soldier, “Go to the batallion office and come back within half an hour.”

Indirect : The captain ordered the soldier to go to the batallion office and (to) come back within half an hour.

Direct : The doctor said to the patient, “Do not smoke so long as you are under my treatment.”

Indirect : The doctor instructed the patient not to smoke so long as he was under his treatment.

Direct : The teacher said to Mohan, “Improve your handwriting if you want to pass.”

Indirect : The teacher advised Mohan to improve his handwriting if he wanted to pass.

Direct : He said, “Save me from this calamity.”

Indirect : He appealed (to them) to save him from that calamity.

Direct : Ram said, “Please come with me.”

Indirect : Ram requested (him) to go with him.

Direct : The teacher said, “Always speak the truth.”

Indirect : The teacher advised (the students) always to speak the truth.

Direct : He said to his friends, “Let us go on a picnic.”

Indirect : He proposed to his friends to go on a picnic.

Direct : I said to my father, “Please let me go to Delhi.”

Indirect : I requested my father to let me go to Delhi.

Exercise

Change the following sentences from Direct into Indirect Narration :

1. Ram said to him, “Please be quiet.”
2. The teacher said to the student, “Do not talk nonsense.”
3. My father said to me, “Work very hard lest you should lose your division.”

4. Mohan said to the servant, "Bring a hot cup of tea."
5. Ram said to me, "Welcome home."
6. He said, "Let the sweets be distributed among the children."
7. He said to me, "Please lend me your fountain-pen."
8. My father said to me, "Speak the truth and be noble."
9. He said, "Let us go for the morning walk."
10. He said, "Please do not disturb me in my studies."

(4) Exclamatory Sentences

The sentences which carry the sense of sudden **joy, sorrow, wonder, disappointment** are called Exclamatory sentences. These sentences generally begin with such exclamatory words as—**Alas, Oh, Hurrah, Bravo, How, What a**, etc.

Rules

- Rule 1**—In place of the Reporting Verb '**said**' some other Verbs as **exclaimed, wished, prayed** are used according to the sense.
- Rule 2**—Connective '**that**' is used.
- Rule 3**—After the Reporting Verb, we use such expressions as **joyfully, sorrowfully, with sorrow, with joy, in astonishment**, etc. according to the sense.
- Rule 4**—Exclamatory sentence is changed into Assertive sentence.
- Rule 5**—The Rules for change of **Tense** and **Pronoun** are the same as used in Assertive sentences.
- Rule 6**—If the Exclamatory sentence in the Direct Narration is **incomplete**, it is made a **complete sentence** in the Indirect Narration by adding appropriate **Subject** and **Verb**.

Solved Examples

- Direct** : He said, "Alas ! I am ruined."
- Indirect** : He cried with grief that he was ruined.
- Direct** : The Captain said, "Bravo ! We have won the match."
- Indirect** : The Captain exclaimed with joy that they had won the match.

- Direct** : He said, "O, what a chance !"
- Indirect** : He exclaimed that it was a fine chance.
- Direct** : His mother said, "May you live long !"
- Indirect** : His mother wished (prayed) that he might live long.
- Direct** : He said, "What a piece of work is man !"
- Indirect** : He exclaimed that man is a strange piece of work.

Exercise

Change the following sentences from **Direct into Indirect Narration** :

1. Ram said, "Alas ! I am ruined."
2. Mohan said, "Alas ! My friend has drowned."
3. Mohan said, "Bravo! We have got the shield."
4. He said, "How happy I am !"
5. My mother said, "May Heaven bless you !"
6. The poor man said, "May Heaven hear my prayers !"
7. Ram said, "Good Heavens ! What a sight it was !"
8. Mohan said, "O ! You have come !"
9. He said, "Could I see my mother at this hour !"
10. Ram said, "O, could I help him !"

(5) Question-Tags

Question-Tags can be added to **two** types of sentences—Interrogative sentences and Imperative sentences. We shall consider them separately.

(I) Interrogative Question-Tags

The following Rules apply in changing the Question-Tags connected with the Reported speech from Direct into Indirect Narration—

- Rule 1**—While changing into Indirect Narration, the Assertive sentence is left out.
- Rule 2**—The Question-Tag is changed into Indirect Narration under normal Rules, but the Question-Tag (which is generally an incomplete sentence) is made a complete sentence. **As**—

- Direct** : He said, "You are a good sportsman, aren't you?"
- Indirect** : He asked whether I was a good sportsman.
- Direct** : I said, "Ram has secured first division, hasn't he?"
- Indirect** : I asked whether Ram had secured first division.

(II) Imperative Question-Tag

The Imperative Question-Tags are changed into Indirect Narration under the following Rules—

Rule 1—In the Indirect Narration the Question-Tag is left out.

Rule 2—Only the Imperative sentence is converted into Indirect form under normal Rules discussed earlier in this chapter. The Reporting Verb is changed into **told, asked, requested**, etc., and the main Verb is changed into an **Infinitive**. **As**—

- Direct** : He said to me, "Bring me a cup of tea, will you?"
- Indirect** : He requested me to bring him a cup of tea.
- Direct** : He said, "Go away from here, will you?"
- Indirect** : He asked me to go away from there.

(6) Sentences beginning with 'Let'

Sentences beginning with '**Let**' express the sense of **order, wish, proposal, imagining, condition**, etc. They are converted into Indirect Narration according to their sense. The Reporting Verb is changed into **ordered, requested, proposed, wished, supposed**, etc. according to the sense. In all such sentences '**Let**' is removed and connective '**that**' is used. Other changes are made according to normal Rules. Some typical points are given below—

Let : Order

Sometimes **Let** suggests **order**. In such sentences **orderd, asked, or directed** are used for the Reporting Verb. In place of **Let** we use **should**. **As**—

- Direct** : The Principal said, "Let no student stand here."
- Indirect** : The Principal **ordered that** no student **should** stand there.

Let : Proposal

Sometimes **Let** suggests **Proposal**. In these sentences the following Rules apply—

- (i) **Proposed** or **suggested** is used for Reporting Verb.
- (ii) Connective **that** is used.
- (iii) **Let** is removed, and '**should**' is used in its place.
- (iv) The **Objective case** coming after '**Let**' is changed into **Nominative case**. **As**—

Direct : The Captain said, "Let us play a friendly match."

Indirect : The Captain **proposed that** we **should** play a friendly match.

Let : Wish

Sometimes '**Let**' suggests **wish** or **desire**. In these sentences the following Rules apply—

- (i) **Requested, wished** or **desired** are used for Reporting Verb.
- (ii) Connective **that** is used.
- (iii) **Should** is used in place of **Let**.
- (iv) The **Objective case** coming after **Let** is changed into **Nominative Case**. **As**—

Direct : The boy said, "Let me go out to play."

Indirect : The boy wished that he should go out to play.

Direct : The man said, "Let me have the first choice."

Indirect : The man wished that he should have the first choice.

Some General Observations

(1) In order to maintain continuity of thought, different sentences in a paragraph are connected with such expressions as the following—

He continued, He further said, He also said, Continuing he said, etc.

(2) As we have stated above, the **Interrogative** and **Imperative** sentences in the Reported speech are changed into **Assertive** sentences. For doing so, the subject is used before the Verb. **As**—

Direct : He asked, "Where are you going?"

Indirect : He asked where he was going.

Direct : He said, "Hurrah ! We have won the match."

Indirect : He exclaimed joyfully that they had won the match.

Direct : He said, "Alas ! he is dead."

Indirect : He mournfully exclaimed that he was dead.

(3) The sense of **Oh, Alas, Hurrah, Bravo**, etc. used in Exclamatory sentences is expressed by such expressions as the following—

He said **sorrowfully** or **joyfully** or **cheerfully** or **surprisingly** or **mournfully** etc.

(4) When words like **Sir, your Honour, your Majesty, Please, Kindly**, etc. are used in the Reported speech, their sense is expressed by using the following expressions with the Reporting Verb, and these words are dropped—

He said **respectfully** or **politely** or **humbly** or **gently** or **reverently** etc. **As—**

Direct : The student said to the teacher, "Sir, mark me present."

Indirect : The student respectfully requested the teacher to mark him present.

(5) In the same way, the sense of **Good Morning, Good Evening**, etc. is expressed by such expressions as 'He greeted him'.

(6) When words like **Yes, No, Certainly, Not at all, Never**, etc. are used in the Reported speech, their sense is expressed by such expressions as—

"He replied in the affirmative or negative."

Direct : Ram asked him, "Will you go to Delhi ?" He replied, "No".

Indirect : Ram asked him whether he would go to Delhi. He replied in the negative.

(7) When some person or thing is addressed to in the Reported speech, or when some special Adjective is used for a thing or person, those words of address or admiration are shifted from there and expressed with the Reporting Verb. **As—**

Direct : The speaker said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my proud privilege to talk to you this afternoon."

Indirect : Addressing the audience he said that it was his proud privilege to talk to them that afternoon.

Direct : The teacher said, "Where are you going, Ramesh ?"

Indirect : Calling Ramesh the teacher asked him where he was going.

Direct : The policeman said, "I will put you behind the bars, you wicked."

Indirect : Calling him wicked the policeman said to him that he would put him behind the bars.

Direct : He said, "Give unto me the light of truth, Reverend Father."

Indirect : Calling him Reverend Father he implored him to give unto him the light of truth.

(8) When '**May**' is used in the sense of **request** or **prayer** in the Reported speech, it is shifted from there and its sense is expressed by such words as 'He prayed' along with the Reporting Verb. **As—**

Direct : He said, "May you live long !"

Indirect : He prayed for a long life to him.

(9) The student can exercise his own discretion too and use certain words from his own side in order to make the sense clear in the Indirect Narration.

Solved Examples

(I) **Direct** : A fawn one day said to his mother, "Mother, you are bigger than a dog and swifter and better-minded, and you have horns to defend yourself: how is it that you are so afraid of the hounds ?" She smiled and said, "All this, my child, I know fully well. But no sooner do I hear a dog bark than somehow or other my heels take me off as fast as they can carry me."

Indirect : A fawn one day said to her mother that she was bigger than a dog, and swifter and better-minded, and she had horns to defend herself : how was it, then, he asked, that she was so afraid of the hounds. At that she smiled and answered to her child that she

- knew all that fully well; but no sooner did she hear a dog bark than somehow or other, her heels took her off as fast as they could carry her.
- (II) **Direct** : But the sea-god cried, "Do not be afraid, noble prince; I have taken pity on you and will help you."
- Indirect** : But the sea-god told the noble prince not to be afraid, and assured him that he had taken pity on him (the prince) and would help him.
- (III) **Direct** : "Curse it !" exclaimed the driver, "Who could have foreseen such ill-luck ? But for the accident we should have caught the train easily."
- Indirect** : The driver exclaimed with a curse that nobody could have foreseen such ill-luck, and said that but for that accident they would have caught the train easily.
- (IV) **Direct** : Once a rich man said to his poor brother, "Why do you not enter the service of the king, so that you may relieve yourself from the baseness of labour ?"
- Indirect** : Once a rich man asked his poor brother why he did not enter the service of the king, so that he might relieve himself from the baseness of labour.
- (V) **Direct** : Finding no remedy she said to herself, "It is better to die than to live in such misery as I am compelled to suffer from a husband who treats me and has always treated me so unkindly."
- Indirect** : Finding no remedy she said to herself that it was better to die than to live in such misery as she was compelled to suffer from a husband who treated her and had always treated her so unkindly.
- (VI) **Direct** : Pt. Nehru said, "Ladies and gentlemen, the whole society is responsible for the prevalence of corruption in the country."
- Indirect** : Addressing the audience Pt. Nehru said that the whole society was responsible for the prevalence of corruption in the country.
- (VII) **Direct** : He said, "Please daddy, let me attend the marriage party of my friend."
- Indirect** : He requested his daddy to permit him to attend the marriage party of his friend.
- (VIII) **Direct** : He said to me, "Are you not going to school today?" I said, "No."
- Indirect** : He asked me whether (if) I was not going to school that day. I answered that I was not.
- (IX) **Direct** : He said, "I am not going to help you, you fool."
- Indirect** : Calling him a fool he said that he was not going to help him.
- (X) **Direct** : "Let us see him today", said Ram.
- Indirect** : Ram suggested (proposed) that they should see him that day.

Revision Exercise 1

Change the following sentences into Indirect Narration :

1. Ram said to Mohan, "I can tell you what strikes me as the most useful medicine in the world." "Can you, Ram ? I should like to hear of it ? What is it used for ?" asked Mohan.
2. "This beautiful girl," said he, "is one whom I have decided to marry."
3. "Can you tell me the address of Mr. Somprakash ?" said the stranger to me, "I have to see him in connection with some important business."
4. He said to me, "Is it the suit you put on last night ?" "No", I said, "that was a different one."

5. "Can you tell me the name of your father ?" said the teacher to the boy, "I want to see him before Sunday."
6. Mohan said, "It is a pleasant time when the sun is setting and the birds are returning to their nests. I want to go for a walk."
7. He said, "Father ! take pity. The purse has been stolen by the servant and not by me."
8. The lawyer said, "My profession is one that needs strenuous work and serious study."
9. "And you are the most naughty boy of the class," said the teacher, "I shall turn you out of the class."
10. The doctor said, "Do not take butter while you are under my treatment, otherwise the disease is likely to be aggravated."
11. Churchill said, "Believe in conciliatory politics but keep the powder dry."
12. The violent man said, "What violence have I done ? What anger have I been guilty of ?" Then the other laughed and to said to him, "Why should we speak ? You have given us sufficient proof of your violent temper."
13. "Your drawing room is excellently decorated," said the visitor : "Where did you find the artist who painted these pictures ?"
14. The sailor said, "We were all frightened when the ship started tilting towards the right. After a few seconds the engine-chamber was flooded and the ship ultimately sank to the bottom."
15. The old woman said, "I have surprised many people by saying that I am seventy-five years old, because I do not look so old on account of my good health."
16. "I shall persuade my friend to give up smoking," said Ramesh to the doctor. "He should recover otherwise his family will starve."
17. He cried to them in agony, "Row back at any risk ! I cannot bear to leave her behind to be drowned."
18. And he said, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him : Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee and am no more worthy to be called thy son. Make me as one of thy hired servants."
19. All her maidens watching said, "She must weep, or she will die."
20. "I am sorry indeed", replied the king, "that my vessel is already chosen; and I cannot therefore sail with the son of the man who served my father."
21. "The person who caused me this injury was wearing a black suit," said the injured person returning to consciousness, "I can recognise him if he is brought before me."
22. He said, "Let him do whatever he can; I am not afraid of him."
23. Mohan said to his brother, "Do not go to the river today. It is in flood and you may drown."
24. "And the game was excellently played by them," said Sohan : "they lost only 4 wickets for 150 runs."
25. The lawyer said, "What could I do if the Magistrate himself was a fool ? But why should you worry about his judgment. Let us prefer an appeal to the High Court."
26. My friend said, "M/s Pannalal Manikchand are a very honest firm. You can safely deal with them."
27. The teacher said entering the classroom, "Why? What is the matter ? The attendance is so thin." The boys replied, "Sir, most of our friends have gone to visit the exhibition."
28. The money-lender said, "Why should I wait for a week ? Didn't you promise to pay me today ? I cannot budge an inch without realising the whole amount from you."
29. He said, "I will help you whenever you need my help but you will have to work at the same time."
30. The holyman said, "Do not be impatient about the result. Leave it to God. You have done your duty, that's all."
31. He said, "My father was groaning with pain when the doctor came. But his medicine was so effective that pain disappeared in five minutes."
32. He said to me, "Your brother has secured first class in B.A. What have you thought about his further studies ?"

33. My neighbour said, "Last night the dacoits raided my house. They searched the entire house and took away the ornaments with them. Didn't you hear the gun-shots?"
34. The servant said, "Sir, somebody has come to meet you. He is waiting outside."
35. He said, "It was raining heavily when I left my house. But I was saved by my overcoat."
36. When the water started boiling, the lid of the kettle was flung aside by the force of steam, and James Watt said, "Oh ! Steam is very powerful. I can work wonders with its help."
3. Kali, the youngest of them began to sob and moan. "What shall I do ?" she cried, "So young to die ! I have not yet seen life." "Peace, child," said Sita, the eldest among them. "wailing will not help us. Let us seek aid from the gods, they will surely hear us."
4. The teacher said to Hari, "Bring your book and stand near me." Hari was a little nervous and replied. "Sir, I bring my book to school everyday but I have forgotten to bring it today." At this the teacher was angry and said, "Why are you not looking into the book of your friend, then ? Are you not ashamed of yourself ?"
5. "I saw your father and he was looking very ill," I said. "Yes", Sita replied, "that is just what worries me." "But why worry", I said, "why not consult a physician ?" She kept quiet for a while and then said, "Alas ! We are too poor for that."

Revision Exercise (Advanced) 2

Change the following sentences from Direct into Indirect Nar-ration :

1. "Why did you not come to school yesterday ?" asked the teacher. "My mother is very ill, sir, and my father has gone to Calcutta", replied Govind. "Is there no one else to look after your mother", enquired the teacher. Govind said there was none and prayed, "Please excuse me for being absent yesterday and grant me leave for today and tomorrow."
2. The master said to the servant, "What have you done with the money I gave you yesterday ?" "I have spent it all, sir, but I will not ask for any today," replied the servant. "Is that the way to talk to your boss?" enquired the master. The servant was sorry and said with folded hands, "Please, forgive my rudeness."
6. Ram : "Please come and tell me something."
Shyam : "What do you want me to tell you?"
Ram : "There is not anything special, for I only want to know how many children were born in Calcutta yesterday ?"
7. "What are you doing here ?" said the Tiger to the Hare. "I am looking at my grandfather's going," replied the Hare. "Where is it ?" asked the Tiger. The Hare said, "It is there under the tree. Have a good look at it, but please don't kill me."
8. "Pardon me, dear master," said Ariel, "I will obey your commands." "Do so," said his master, "and I will set you free."