

Lecture Notes

Grammar: Voice and Narration

Voice

Objectives:

Identify active and passive voice constructions

Explain the functions of active and passive voice

Use voice correctly

What is voice?

- Voice is a grammatical category that applies to the verb in a sentence. It shows the relationship between the doer of an action (subject) and the receiver of that action (object).
- The action remains the same, but the focus changes depending upon the context.
For example: *Do not cross the line. (direct, crisp and to the point)*
You must not cross the line. (indirect & polite with firmness)
- There are two types of voices in English- **active voice and passive voice**.

Active Voice

- Focuses on the subject
- Direct
- Unambiguous
- Easy to understand
- Useful in delegating responsibilities, giving orders to an individual or to a small group

Using active voice makes meaning clear for the readers/listeners and keeps the sentence from being complicated and wordy.

Passive Voice:

- Subject is unknown
- Indirect
- Ambiguous
- Unclear

Usage:

- When the subject is unknown, unimportant and obvious
- To make polite statement and is used for general announcements. For example, in airports, railway station etc.
- Risk of sounding boastful
- When the action is more important than the “Agent” [Agent = one who does the action]

We don't mention the Agent in a passive voice when:

- 1. if we don't know who has done what we are talking about. *Our car was stolen last night.* (We don't know who stole it)
- 2. if we are not interested in who has done what we are talking about or it is not important to mention it. *He has been taken to the hospital.* (What we are interested in is the fact that he has been taken to the hospital and not who has taken him.)
- 3. if it is easy to understand who did something without it being mentioned. *The murderer was arrested last night.* (It is not necessary to mention that he has been arrested by the police because it is self-evident.)
- 4. if the subject of the active voice sentence is something like somebody, people, they, you, etc. *Someone broke the window.* → *The window was broken.*

Active Voice and Passive Voice in different Tenses:

Active Voice	Different Verbs and tenses	Passive Voice	Structural Patterns when changed into Passive Voice
<i>He writes the letters</i>	<i>Present Simple</i>	<i>The letters are written by him</i>	<i>S+ am /is/are+ ptcp</i>
<i>He wrote the letters</i>	<i>Past simple</i>	<i>The letters were written by him.</i>	<i>S+ was/were+ ptcp</i>
<i>He is writing the letters</i>	<i>Present Continuous</i>	<i>The letters are being written by him</i>	<i>S+ is/are being+ ptcp</i>
<i>He was writing the letters</i>	<i>Past Continuous</i>	<i>The letters were being written by him.</i>	<i>S+ were being+ Ptcp</i>
<i>He will write the letters</i>	<i>Future Simple</i>	<i>The letters will be written by him.</i>	<i>S+ will be + ptcp</i>
<i>He is going to write the letters</i>	<i>Going to</i>	<i>The letters are going to be written.</i>	<i>S+V to be (am/is/are)going to+ ptcp</i>
<i>He has written the letters</i>	<i>Present Perfect Tense</i>	<i>The letters have been written by him.</i>	<i>S+ have/has +been+ ptcp</i>
<i>He had written the letters</i>	<i>Past Perfect Tense</i>	<i>The letters had been written by him.</i>	<i>S+ had +been +ptcp</i>
<i>He has to write the letters</i>	<i>to-Infinitive</i>	<i>The letters have to be written by him.</i>	<i>S + have + to+be +ptcp</i>
<i>He must write the letters</i>	<i>Modal</i>	<i>The letters must be written by him.</i>	<i>S+ must+ be +ptcp</i>

RULES:

1. Only sentences containing *transitive verbs* [verbs that takes one or more than one object(s). For example, *paint, write, eat, clean, etc.*] can be changed from active voice to passive voice. A subject—that is, a ‘doer’ of the action—is required to change a sentence from the passive to the active voice.

Active Voice

Agatha Christie wrote the book.

Passive Voice

The book was written by Agatha Christie.

2. For the **Simple Present Tense** use *am, is* or *are* with a *Past Participle* to form the Passive Voice.

Active voice

Once a week, Tom cleans the house.
The waiter carries the trays.

Passive voice

Once a week, the house is cleaned by Tom.
The trays are carried by the waiter.

3. For the **Simple Past Tense**, use *was* or *were* with a *Past Participle* to form the Passive Voice.

Active voice

Dad drove us home.
He caught the ball.

Passive voice

We were driven home by Dad.
The ball was caught by him.

4. For the **Present Continuous Tense**, use *am, is* or *are* with *being* followed by a *Past Participle*, to form the Passive Voice.

Active voice

The waves are washing away the sandcastle.
She is working on the computer.

Passive voice

The Sandcastle is being washed away by the waves.
The computer is being worked upon by her.

5. For the **Past Continuous Tense**, use *was* or *were* with *being*, followed by a *Past Participle*, to form the passive voice.

Active voice

Jimmy was making our costumes.
She was reading a book.

Passive voice

Our costumes were being made by Jimmy.
The book was being read by her.

6. For the **Future Tense**, use *shall* or *will* with *be*, followed by a *Past Participle*, to form the Passive Voice.

Active voice

The choir will sing the next hymn.
We will celebrate her birthday.

Passive voice

The next hymn will be sung by the choir.
Her birthday will be celebrated by us.

7. For the **Present Perfect Tense**, use *have* or *has with been*, followed by a *Past Participle*, to form the Passive Voice.

Active voice

Ali has scored two goals.
I have seen that movie.

Passive voice

Two goals have been scored by Ali.
That movie has been seen by me.

8. For the **Past Perfect Tense**, use *had with been*, followed by a *Part Participle*, to form the passive voice.

Active voice

The hunter had caught a fox.
Sheila had given a gift to Rina.

Passive voice

A fox had been caught by the hunter.
A gift had been given to Rina by Sheila.

9. “Do” verbs:

The *do-verb* is used for interrogative and negative sentences. To change an interrogative sentence with ‘do’ from active voice form into passive voice form, use –

Is/are/am + object of the active verb + past participle form of the verb + by + subject of the passive verb

Active Voice

Do you speak French?

Does she speak French?

Does she do her duties?

Did you speak in French with her?

Did Alice invite you?

Don't you speak French?

I don't speak French.

Passive Voice

Is French spoken by you?

Is French spoken by her?

Are her duties done by her?

Was she spoken in French by you?

Were you invited by Alice?

Isn't French spoken by you?

French is not spoken by me.

Interrogatives:

10. *Wh- questions and how*

In *wh- questions* and *how*, do not change their beginning position when the sentence is changed from the active to the passive. Except for, *who* changes to *by whom* in the passive; (*by whom* changes to *who* in the passive).

Active Voice

Whom did you laugh at?

Who took the book?

Why did he punish you?

Why are they tearing down the old theatre hall?

How was the experiment finished?

How do you write that word?

11. **Can-**

Active Voice

Can you play a violin?

Can anyone cure it?

Passive Voice

Who was laughed at by you?

By whom was the book taken?

Why were you punished by him?

Why is the old theatre being torn down?

How did you finish the experiment?

How is that word written by you?

Passive Voice

Can a violin be played by you?

Can it be cured?

12. **a) Imperatives: request, order, advice, suggestion, prohibition**

The imperative sentence in the passive voice has the following structure:

Let + object + be + past participle

Active Voice

Pick up the box.

Bring it home.

Do it at once.

Passive Voice

Let the box be picked up.

Let it be brought home.

Let it be done once again.

b) When the emphasis is on the person addressed to, the sentence can begin with *you*.

Active Voice

Be patient, please!

Be in the queue.

Passive Voice

You are requested to be patient.

You are requested to be in the queue.

c) When the active voice begins with *do not*, the passive voice has the following structure:

Let not + object + be + past participle

Active Voice

Don't let the door open.

Do not beat the dog.

Let me do it.

Passive Voice

Let not the door be opened.

Let the dog not be beaten.

Let it be done by me.

OR

Let me be allowed to do it.

Don't touch it.

Let it not be touched.

d) The passive form has to begin with *you*, when the object of the verb in the active voice is not given.

Active

Work hard. (No object)

Please lend me some money.

Kindly do this work.

Get me a glass of water

You ought to respect your parents.

You should learn your lessons.

Passive

You are advised to work hard

You are requested to lend me some money.

You are requested to do this work.

You are ordered to get me a glass of water.

Your parents ought to be respected by you.

Your lessons should be learned by you.

e) In *sentences* where God is invoked the passive voice will be as follows:

Active: May God bless you!

Passive: May you be blessed by God!

f) *By you or with you*

In the passive voice, we use: *by/ with* with the agent to refer to by whom the action is being done.

- The door was opened *by* Mr Black. (Mr Black = agent)

with -is used to refer to the instrument, object or material that was used for something to be done.

- The door was opened *with* a key. (a key = the object that was used)
- The omelette was made *with* eggs, cheese and peppers. (eggs, cheese and peppers = the material that was used)

13. If the indirect object of the active voice sentence is a personal pronoun it has to be changed into a subject pronoun to be the subject of the passive voice sentence.

Subject	↔	Object
I	↔	Me
You	↔	You
He/ she	↔	Him/her
It	↔	It

Subject	↔	Object
We	↔	Us
You	↔	You
They	↔	Them

DOUBLE OBJECT VERBS- When we have verbs that take two objects like, for example, *give somebody, something*, we can convert the active sentence into a passive one in two ways:

a. by making the indirect (animate) object the subject of the passive voice sentence, which is also the way that we usually prefer.

b. By making the direct (inanimate) object the subject of the passive voice.

- Rick gave me (indirect object) this book (direct object).
 - *I was given this book by Rick.*
 - *This book was given to me by Rick.*

Some of the verbs that take two objects are: *give, tell, send, show, bring, write, offer, pay, etc.*

TAKE AWAY POINTS

- Transitive verbs have two voices
- Voices: Active and Passive
- Active: projects the subject
- Direct
- Unambiguous
- Passive: hides the subject
- Used only when you can't project the subject for pragmatic reasons
- In passive voice the receiver of the action is highlighted
- In active voice the doer of the action is highlighted

Narration

Objectives:

- Understand narration in English Grammar.
- Why is narration used?
- Rules.

NARRATION: in writing or speech, the process of giving an account of a sequence of events, real or imagined; storytelling. The person who recounts the events is called a narrator. The account itself is called a narrative.

In narration, when we use reported speech, we usually talk about the past (because obviously the person who spoke originally spoke in the past). The verbs therefore usually have to be in the past too.

There are two ways of narrating events or story telling- **direct speech and indirect speech.**

In **Direct speech** the exact remarks or the speech of the narrator is presented by using the exact words or expression of the narrator.

In **Indirect speech** the exact meaning of the remark or the speech is presented without using the narrator's exact words.

For example- **Ravi said, "I am having lunch with my family."** [Direct Speech]

Ravi said that he was having breakfast with his family. [Indirect speech]

RULES:

1. **Pronouns and Adjectives** must change while transforming into a reported speech. First and second person pronouns and possessive adjectives normally change to the third person except when the speaker is reporting his own words. (I = he, she; me = him, her; my = his, her; mine = his, hers; we = they...)

Abhishek said, "*I am* a teacher." } *I* becomes *He*

Abhishek said that *he was* a teacher. } *Am* becomes *was*

She said, "Aditya *is my* son". } *Is* becomes *was*

She said that Aditya *was her* son. } *My* becomes *her*

2. **THIS / THESE/ THAT:**

This used in time expressions becomes *that*.

For example- She said, "*She's* coming *this* week". } *This* becomes *that*

She said that *she was* coming *that* week. }

This and That used as adjectives usually change to *The*.

For example- He said, “I bought **this** pearl/**these** pearls for my mother”.

He said that **he** had bought **the** pearl/**the** pearls for his mother.

This and These used as pronouns can become *it, they/them*.

For example- He came back with two knives and said, “I found **these** beside the king’s bed”.

He came back with two knives and said he had found **them** beside the king’s bed.

He said, “We will discuss **this** tomorrow”.

He said that they would discuss **it** (**the matter**) the next day.

3. CHANGES IN THE VERB FORM:

<p>Simple present</p> <p>Ravi said, “<i>I play</i> the guitar”</p>	<p>Simple past</p> <p>Ravi said that <i>he plays</i> the guitar.</p>
<p>Present Continuous</p> <p>S/he said, “<i>I am</i> writing a letter”.</p>	<p>Past continuous</p> <p>She said that <i>s/he was</i> writing a letter.</p>
<p>Present perfect simple</p> <p>Mukul said, “I <i>have</i> received an invitation letter to attend a seminar.”</p>	<p>Past perfect simple</p> <p>Mukul said that he <i>had</i> received an invitation letter to attend a seminar.</p>
<p>Present perfect continuous</p> <p>Shruti confided, “<i>I have been</i> busy writing a book on different food habits.”</p>	<p>Past perfect continuous</p> <p>Shruti confided that <i>she had been</i> busy writing a book on different food habits.</p>
<p>Simple past</p> <p>Madhu said, “I <i>went</i> to the school yesterday”</p>	<p>Past perfect</p> <p>Madhu said that she <i>had gone</i> to the school the previous day.</p>
<p>Past continuous</p> <p>Rudra said, “I was reading an article on the importance of life skills”</p>	<p>Past perfect continuous</p> <p>Rudra said that he had been reading an article on the importance of life skills.</p>

<p>Past perfect</p> <p>Raktim said, “ the play had started when I reached the theatre”</p>	<p>No Change in the verb. Only the pronoun changes from <i>I</i> to <i>he</i> here.</p>
<p>Future Time (Simple)</p> <p>Rudra said, “ I <i>shall/ will</i> meet Suman on tuesday over dinner”</p>	<p>Conditional</p> <p>Rudra said that <i>would</i> meet Suman on tuesday over dinner.</p>
<p>Future Continuous</p> <p>“I <i>will/shall be using</i> the car myself on the 24h”, she said.</p>	<p>Conditional Continuous</p> <p>She <i>said (that) she’d be using</i> the car herself on the 24th.</p>

NOTE: All those changes represent the distancing effect of the reported speech. Context as well as the time aspect of the speaker(s)’s point of view must be taken into account while changing the narration.

4. MODAL VERBS CHANGE:

<p>Will</p> <p>He said, “Ravi <i>will</i> speak on time”.</p>	<p>Would</p> <p>He said that Ravi <i>would</i> speak on the importance of English.</p>
<p>Can</p> <p>He said, “I <i>can</i> swim under water for two minutes.”</p>	<p>Could</p> <p>He said that he <i>could</i> swim under water for two minutes.</p>
<p>Must</p> <p>Smriti said, “ the books <i>must</i> be returned to the library co-ordinator”</p>	<p>Had to</p> <p>Smriti said that the books <i>had to</i> be returned to the library co-ordinator.</p>
<p>Shall</p> <p>He said, “We <i>shall</i> meet for lunch sometime soon.”</p>	<p>Should</p> <p>He said that we <i>should</i> meet for lunch sometime soon.</p>
<p>May</p> <p>Rudra asked, “<i>May</i> I take the pictures?”</p>	<p>Might</p> <p>Rudra asked if <i>he might</i> take the pictures.</p>

NOTE: Past modal verbs (could, might, ought to, should, used to, etc.) do not normally change in reported speech.

He said, "I might come".
He said that he might come.

He said, "I would help him if I could".
He said that he would help him if he could.

He said, "You needn't wait".
He said that I needn't wait.

5. IMPERATIVES:

Positive imperative Shut up!	Tell + infinitive He told me to shut up.
Negative imperative Don't do that again!	Tell+ not +infinitive He told me not to do that again.
Imperatives as requests Please give a glass of water.	Ask + imperatives He asked me to give him a glass of water.

6. EXPRESSION OF *TIME* AND *PLACE* IN INDIRECT SPEECH:

Direct Speech	Indirect Speech
Today	That day
Yesterday	The day before
The day before yesterday	Two days before
Tomorrow	The next day/the following day
The day after tomorrow	In two day's time
Next week/year	The following week/ year
Last week/ year	The previous week/ year
A year ago	A year before/ the previous year

ago	Previously/ before
2 weeks ago	2 weeks previously/2 weeks before
tonight	that night
last Saturday	the previous Saturday/ the Saturday before
next Saturday	the following Saturday/ the Saturday after that Saturday

Examples:

“I went to the theatre *last night*.”

He said he had gone to the theatre *the night before*.

“I’m having a party *next weekend*.”

He said he was having a party *the next weekend*.

“I’m staying here until *next week*.”

He said he was staying there until *the following week*.

“I came over from London *3 years ago*.”

He said he had come over from London *3 years before*.

7. QUESTIONS IN INDIRECT SPEECH

Direct question: He said, “Where is she going?”

Indirect question: He asked where she was going.

RULES:

- When we turn direct questions into indirect speech, the following changes are necessary:
 - Tenses, Pronouns and Possessive Adjectives, and Adverbs of time and place* change as in statements.
 - The *interrogative form* of the verb changes to the *affirmative form*.
 - The question mark is omitted in indirect questions*.

- If the introductory verb is *say*, it must be changed to a verb of *inquiry*, e.g. *ask, wonder, want to know etc.*

He *said*, “Where is the station?”

He *asked* where the station was.

- Ask* can be *followed by the person addressed (indirect object)*:

He *asked*, “What have you got in your bag?”

He *asked (me)* what I had got in my bag. (But *wonder* and *want to know cannot take an indirect object*, so if we wish to report a question where the person addressed is mentioned, we must use *ask*.)

He *said*, “Mary, when is the next train?”

He *asked* Mary when the next train was.

4. If the direct question begins with a question word (*when, where, who, how, why* etc.) the question word is repeated in the indirect question:

He said, “*Why* didn’t you put on the brake?”

He asked (her) *why* she hadn’t put on the brake.

She said, “*What* do you want?”

She asked (them) *what* they wanted.

6. If there is no question word, *if* or *whether* must be used:

“Is anyone there?” *he asked*

He *asked if/whether* anyone was there.

8. COMMANDS, REQUESTS, ADVICE IN INDIRECT SPEECH:

Direct command: He *said*, “Lie down, Tom”.

Indirect command: He *told* Tom to lie down.

Indirect commands, requests, advice are usually expressed by a verb of **command/request/advice + object + infinitive**.

A. The following verbs can be used: *advise, ask, beg, command, order, remind, tell, warn etc.*

For example- He *said*, “take your medicines regularly, Tom.”

He *advised* Tom to take his medicines regularly.

B. *Negative commands, requests etc.* are usually reported by **not + infinitive**:

“Don’t swim out too far, boys”, I *said*

I *warned/told* the boys not to swim out too far.

9. EXCLAMATIONS IN INDIRECT SPEECH:

i) Exclamations usually become statements in indirect speech. The exclamation mark disappears.

Exclamations beginning with *What (a) ... or How ...* can be reported by: - *exclaim/say* that:

He *said*, “What a dreadful idea!” or “How dreadful!”

He *exclaimed* that it was a dreadful idea/was dreadful.

To give an exclamation of delight/disgust/horror/relief/surprise etc. if the exclamation is followed by an action *we can use the construction with an exclamation of delight/disgust etc.*

+ *he/she etc. + verb.*

- ii) Other types of exclamation such as *Good! Marvellous! Splendid! Heavens! Oh! Ugh!* etc. can be reported as in (b) or (c) above:

“Good!” he *exclaimed*.

He gave an *exclamation of pleasure/satisfaction*.

“Ugh!” she *exclaimed*, and turned the programme off.

With an *exclamation of disgust* she turned the programme off.

Note also: He *said*, “*Thank you!*”

He *thanked me*.

He *said*, “*Good luck!*”

He *wished me luck*.

He *said*, “*Happy Christmas!*”

He *wished me a happy Christmas*.

He *said*, “*Congratulations!*”

He *congratulated me*.

He *said*, “*Liar!*”

He *called me a liar*.

He *said*, “*Damn!*”

He *swore*.

The *notice said*: *WELCOME TO WALES!*

The *notice welcomed visitors to Wales*.

10. YES AND NO IN INDIRECT SPEECH

“*yes*” and “*no*” are expressed in indirect speech by **subject + appropriate auxiliary verb**.

He *said*, “*Can* you swim?” and I *said* “No”

He *asked* (me) if I *could* swim and I *said* I *couldn't*.

He *said*, “*Will you have* time to do it?” and I *said* “*Yes*”

He *asked* if I *would have* time to do it and I *said* that I *would*.

11. OFFERS AND SUGGESTIONS IN INDIRECT SPEECH

A. OFFERS:

“*Shall* I bring you some tea?” could be reported as
He *offered* to bring me some tea.

B. SUGGESTIONS:

“*Shall* we meet at the theatre?” could be reported
He *suggested* meeting at the theatre.

C. INDIRECT SPEECH: MIXED TYPES:

Direct speech may consist of **statement + question, question + command, command + statement, or all three together.**

Normally each requires its own introductory verb.

“**I don’t know the way. Do you?**” he asked.

He said **he didn’t know the way and asked her if she did/if she knew it.**

He said, “Someone is coming. Get behind the screen.”

He said that someone was coming and told me to get behind the screen.

D. SAY AND TELL AS INTRODUCTORY VERBS:

a. *say* and *tell* with direct speech.

1. *say* can introduce a statement or follow it.

Tom *said*, “I’ve just heard the news”.

or

“I’ve just heard the news”, Tom *said*.

Inversion of *say* and *noun subject* is possible when *say* follows the statement.

“I’ve just heard the news”, said Tom.

say + to + person addressed is possible, but this phrase must follow the direct statement; *it cannot introduce it.*

“I’m leaving at once”, Tom said to me. Inversion is not possible here.

2. *Tell* requires the person addressed. *Tell me. He told us. I’ll tell Tom.* Except with *tell lies/stories/the truth/the time*, when the person addressed need not to be mentioned.

He told (me) lies.

I’ll tell (you) a story.

Tell used with direct speech must be placed after the direct statement:

“I’m leaving at once”, Tom told me.

Inversion is not possible with tell.

Say and *Tell with indirect speech*, Indirect statements are normally introduced by say, or tell + object. Say + to + object is possible but less usual than tell + object.

He *said* he’d just heard the news.

He *told* me that he’d just heard the news.

NOTE: tell ... how/about:

He *told us how he had crossed* the mountains.

He *told us about crossing* the mountains.

He *told us about his* journeys.

TAKE AWAY POINTS:

1. There two ways to convey a message of a person, or the words spoken by a person to other person.
2. There are two types of - Direct Speech and Indirect Speech.
3. In direct speech the original words of person are narrated (no change is made) and are enclosed in quotation mark.
4. In indirect speech the statement of the person is not enclosed in quotation marks, the word “that” may be used before the statement to show that it is indirect speech.

EXERCISES

Change the Narration

1. These people are saying these things. Report them, using *says that*.

a. Paul: “Atlanta is a wonderful city.”

b. Ruth: “I go jogging every morning.”

2. People made these statements. Report them, using said.

a. "Mary works in a bank", Jane said.

b. "I'm staying with some friends", Jim said.

3. Report what the guests said at a wedding last Sunday.

a. Miss Moore: "They'll make a lovely couple."

b. Mr Smith: "They're going to live in Brighton."

4. Change the following statements into the reported speech.

a. "I must go to the dentist tomorrow", he said.

b. "I found an old Roman coin in the garden yesterday and I am going to take it to the museum this afternoon", he said.

5. Write these sentences in indirect speech.

a. "I'm very tired", she said.

b. "I'll see them soon", he said.

c. "I'm going to the cinema", she said.

d. "I see the children quite often", he said.

e. "I'm having a bath", she said.

CHANGE THE VOICE:

1. Complete the sentences with the correct passive form of the verbs in brackets. Use the Present Simple.

- a. English _____ (speak) in many countries.
- b. The post _____ (deliver) at about 7 o'clock every morning.
- c. _____ (the building/use) any more?
- d. How often _____ (the Olympic Games/hold)?
- e. How _____ (your name/spell)?

2. Complete the sentences with the correct passive form of the verbs in brackets. Use the Past Simple.

- a. My car _____ (repair) last week.
- b. This song _____ (not write) by John Lennon.
- c. _____ (the phone/answer) by a young girl?
- d. The film _____ (make) ten years ago.
- e. When _____ (tennis/invent)?

3. Change the following sentences into passive sentences using the words in brackets.

- a. We sell tickets for all shows at the Box Office. (Tickets for all shows/sell/at the Box Office)

- b. Thomas Edison invented the electric light bulb. (The electric light bulb/invent/by Thomas Edison)

- c. Someone painted the office last week. (The office/paint/last week)

- d. Several people saw the accident. (The accident/see/by several people)

- e. Where do they make these video recorders? (Where/these video recorders/make)
