

Chapter 25: Indirect Statement

Chapter 25 covers the following: the formation of all Latin infinitives, active and passive; the formation and translation of indirect statement; infinitives and relative time; and the use of reflexive pronouns and adjectives in indirect statement. At the end of the lesson we'll review the vocabulary which you should memorize in this chapter.

There are three important rules to remember in this chapter: (1) The formula for indirect statement in Latin is a "verb of the head" plus an accusative subject plus an infinitive verb. (2) There is no "that" in Latin, at least not in the sense of "(say/think) that..." (3) Infinitives show relative time.

Okay, I won't lie to you. Here comes one of the hardest things you're going to have to learn in this class, the way Latin says "that" in the sense "I said that ... you're going to have to be a real Roman and work hard here." The reason that what we're going to cover in this lesson is tough is that English and Latin idiom differs so much here that you're going to have to build a deep understanding of how grammar works to move successfully between our and the Roman manner of expressing this type of construction. We learned the principle of relative versus absolute time when we studied participles in Chapter 23. Now you're going to have to put that theory into practice.

If you were studying Latin from the vantage point of a language that expressed indirect statement the same way Latin does, this lesson would be a snap and this presentation fifteen minutes and done. We wouldn't even have to say the words "relative time." But sadly for us that's not the case, or in this case the mood. It's relatively easy for English speakers to learn some things about Latin because our languages operate the same way. Not here. But know this: once you're done with indirect statement, the battle is all but won. Yes, there are still a few foes to slay, like the subjunctive mood, but stretch your hand in victory over the frowning countenance of indirect statement and you can start weaving your laurel wreath even if you can't crown your brow quite yet.

Before we begin the battle, let's suit you up with the proper armor for this fight, a full quiver of infinitives — what is the collective noun for infinitives? Well, if they're infinite, an "eternity" of infinitives? Oh for heaven's sake, I haven't even begun and I'm already off-topic. Such a professor! — yes, all the infinitives Latin has to offer, in all tenses and voices active and passive; present, perfect and future (where, just as with participles, these terms are misleading). We've already studied the present infinitive in both these voices.

So let's start with a chart much like the one we used for participles and insert the proper forms of the Latin infinitive, beginning with the present active, the form you've known almost since day one, the *-are/-ere/- ěre/-ire* forms of the verb. This translates as "to (do whatever the verb means)." An example is *laudare*, "to praise." Please tell me this is not exciting new information for anyone out there.

To make this type of infinitive passive, Latin changes the ending, mostly by adding a long-ī quality which results in *-ari, -eri, -i, and -iri* across the four-and-a-half conjugations. The only

real issue here is that the third-conjugation *-i* present passive infinitive ending is so minimal it's sometimes hard to recognize that it means "to be (whatever)-ed," as do all the present passive infinitives. Thus, for example, *laudari* means "to be praised." All that should be review for you.

Now the fun begins with the perfect active infinitive, formed by taking the perfect active base, what you get when you drop the first-person singular *-i* ending from the third principal part, and add *-isse*. For all the horrors of indirect statement, this is the only new form introduced in Chapter 25. It translates as "to have (whatever)-ed," for instance, *laudavisse*, "to have praised."

Its passive counterpart, the perfect passive infinitive, is formed by taking the perfect passive participle and adding *esse*, not as an ending but a separate word. Like all perfect passive forms in Latin, this will be made up of two words. It means "to have been (whatever)-ed," as in *laudatum esse*, "to have been praised."

Moving to the last two infinitives, both future-tense forms, the future active infinitive is made up of the future active participle (that weird-but-memorable *-urus* form), plus *esse*. Like the perfect passive infinitive, it's two words and translates as "to be (*esse*) about/going to (whatever the participle means)," for example, *laudaturum esse*, "to be about/going to praise," which is "about" as periphrastic as it comes. Why doesn't English have "to will praise"? We have "to have praised." Why is that okay but "to will praise" isn't? If I were King of the Universe, ... never mind. The big thing to remember here is that both the future active and perfect passive infinitives contain two words, one of which is a participle, and since participles are adjectives, they'll change their endings (*-us*, *-a*, *-um*, ...) to accommodate whatever they modify. We'll talk about that more in a moment.

The final form finishing out this chart is the future passive infinitive, which takes the perfect passive participle (the 4th principal part of the verb), and adds *iri*, a separate word, producing a form that translates literally as "to be about/going to be (whatever)-ed," as in *laudatum iri*, meaning "to be about to be praised." Hideous thing, huh? Well, here's some good news then. You don't have to learn this form. It occurs so rarely it's not worth memorizing. I can only assume Wheelock includes it merely to fill out the chart.

Before we go on to examine the use of these infinitives in indirect statement, let's draw attention to a basic fact about these forms. Both present infinitives and the perfect active infinitive are one word; the other three infinitives — the perfect passive and both futures — are two words. Even more notable is the presence of all six possible forms — both voices and all three tenses — which is different from participles where two of the forms (present passive and perfect active) are missing.

The reason infinitives cannot afford to be so lean is about to become clear. Latin needs them for ... indirect statement, another subordinate construction, like ablative absolutes, but even more pervasive in Latin. By "statement" the name of this construction means that it incorporates a thought of some kind. By "indirect" it means that the thought is "indirectly" related, that is, it conveys only the general nature of the thought, not the exact words that were originally used to express it.

A “direct” statement quotes someone’s words directly, in other words, not in other words. For example, “He said, “I’m hungry.” “I’m hungry” were his exact words. That’s a “direct” quote. An “indirect” statement expresses the same idea but doesn’t use the actual words in which it was originally stated. Instead, it reframes the thought in different words. For example, “He said *that he wanted to eat.*” Wanting to eat is the same general thing as being hungry, but “I want to eat” were not his exact words. “I’m hungry” were his exact words. So, “that he wanted to eat” is indirect statement.

To have indirect statement you need a word, most often a verb, which connotes thinking, feeling, seeing, hearing, some sort of activity that’s processed in your brain. These are often and quite rightly termed “verbs of the head.” It’s really not possible to “kick” that you want to eat. You have to say that you want to eat, or believe, understand, perceive, consider, note, judge, conclude, lie, all things which you do with your head, not your feet. And note that English uses “that” to introduce indirect statement, e.g. “He said *that he wanted to eat.*” This “that” is a subordinating conjunction — it introduces a clause — not the demonstrative adjective or pronoun we’ve already learned about, e.g. that man. Consider the following sentence: “He said that that man was hungry.” The first “that” (“He said *that*”) is the subordinating conjunction introducing indirect statement; the second that (“*that* man”) is the demonstrative adjective. And, ay, there’s the rub. While Latin does have a demonstrative form equivalent to English “that,” it doesn’t have the counterpart of the English subordinating conjunction “that,” the one introducing indirect statement. In place of a that-clause, Latin uses an infinitive. So, for example, Latin says “I believe *him to be* a friend,” where English can say either “I believe *him to be* a friend” or “I believe *that he is* a friend.” Latin can’t say the latter. As I was taught, “There’s no ‘that’ in Latin.”

So here’s the formula for indirect statement: (a “verb of the head” plus) an accusative subject plus an infinitive verb. For example, “I believe (“verb of the head”) him (accusative subject) to be (infinitive verb) a friend.” Note the grammatical difference between this construction (acc. subject + inf. verb) and the “that” construction English has and Latin doesn’t. In the “that” construction, the subject is nominative and the verb finite, for example, “I believe that he (nominative subject) is (finite verb) a friend.”

It’s a simple-looking difference but its consequences are far-reaching. To wit, let’s look at the infinitive construction more closely (“I believe him to be a friend”). What case would “friend” be in Latin? How is it functioning inside its own construction? What is “friend” doing grammatically? It’s renaming or modifying “him” through the verb “to be.” So it’s a predicate noun. That means it has to agree with the subject it goes with in case, and the subject here (“him”) is accusative because it’s inside indirect statement. A predicate accusative! Who thought that to be a possibility?

And here’s another complication. Like participles, infinitives show “relative” (not absolute) time. That is, the actual time value of the infinitive depends on the tense of the main verb. So, like participles, “present” infinitives would better be termed “contemporaneous.” Common sense tells you that in the sentence “He needs to do it” the infinitive “to do” is happening at the same time as the needing: “He needs right now to do it right now, today.” But change the main verb to past tense, “He needed to do it,” and now it’s all taking place in the past: “Yesterday he needed to do

it yesterday.” Likewise, “He will need to do it” is all in the future: “Tomorrow he will need to do it tomorrow.” That means these so-called present-tense infinitives like “to do” are not all necessarily taking place in the present. They’re following the tense of the main verb. And just like “perfect” participles, “perfect” infinitives show prior action, that is, action that took place prior to the main verb, whatever tense that main verb might be. For example, “He claims to have done it.” “To have done” is a “perfect” infinitive. The main verb “claims” is present-tense so it has a time value of +0. The infinitive “to have done,” however, is past-tense (i.e. “perfect”) so it has a time value of -1. It shows action prior to the main verb.

Future” infinitives, like “future” participles, show action subsequent to the main verb, and they come with their own set of issues. Translating Latin future infinitives literally produces clunky English sentences like “He needs to be about to do it.” In other words, “He needs now (today) to do it in the future (tomorrow).” English avoids saying this this way because our future active infinitive is so disagreeably periphrastic but I think you see the point about relative time: the infinitive is happening in the future relative to the main verb. If you make the main verb past-tense — “He needed to be about to do it.” — meaning “He needed (in the past yesterday) to do it so that it was done by now (today),” you can see that the so-called “future” infinitive is now happening in the past, actually subsequent to the past, between the past and the present. By being past-tense, the main verb has dragged it back there.

Whenever you’re converting thoughts between relative-time verb forms like infinitives and absolute-time verb forms like finite verbs, there’s no way around dealing with this sort of time value shift. In other words, when translating a Latin infinitive-based indirect statement into an English finite-verb-based that-clause, you’ll have to manage the verb tenses appropriately. If you’re moving from Latin to English, you’ll have to convert relative time to absolute time. Conversely, if you’re turning an English sentence into Latin, you’ll have to translate absolute time into relative time.

Let’s stop and sum up what indirect statement entails. It’s easier to see the rules when you imagine moving from English to Latin, so let’s look at it that way. First, take out “that” — there is no “that” in Latin. Second, turn the subject, which is nominative in English because it’s attached to a finite verb, into an accusative in Latin, because now it’s associated with an infinitive, and infinitives take accusative (not nominative) subjects. Third, make the finite verb an infinitive, and be careful with the tense. So, for example, where English says “I will show that he (nominative subject) is (finite verb) a fool,” Latin will say “I will show him (accusative subject) to be (infinitive) a fool.”

Here’s some good news. You actually know how to do this, or you wouldn’t be able to speak and understand English. You’ve just never thought about it as such, or attached big words like “contemporaneous” to your infinitives. Take this sentence, “I consider her to be my friend.” Now say the same thing but use “that”: “I consider that... she is my friend.” Easy, no? The English verb “consider” slides smoothly back and forth between an accusative/infinitive and a that-clause. So does “believe”: “I believed her to be my friend.” Rephrase the sentence with “that”: “I believed that ... she was my friend.” “Was”! Be careful! Making the main verb past-tense draws the infinitive into the past — relative vs. absolute time — but note how easily that shift

came to you. That's because you know how to do it. So really all you have to do here is be aware of what you do naturally. You're only learning what you already know.

Here I'll show you. Take this English sentence: "I believe that the teacher is a demon in human form." Change it to the way Latin would say the same thing. That is, use an infinitive. That's right: "I believe the teacher to be a demon in human form." And note that "teacher" here would be accusative in Latin. Keep going: "No one has yet discovered that I am the one who killed the demon-teacher." How would Latin say that (without "that")? "No one has yet discovered me to be the one who killed the demon-teacher," where "me" is accusative. "They will claim that you did it." What would the Latin be? "They will claim you (accusative) to have done it." "Who says you can't get away with murder?" Latin? "Who says you (accusative) not to be able to get away with murder?" Wow! That's not really very English, but it makes sense if you think about it. It's just not the way we say it, but we could say it that way. And Romans did say it that way all the time, whenever they used any of their "verbs of the head." We can do it easily with "consider, believe," less so with "claim," never with "say." You're going to have to extend what you naturally do with "consider, believe" to all "verbs of the head." It's that simple, and that hard.

When in doubt teachers always resort to charts, so let's chart out indirect statement. There are nine possibilities, because the main verb can be present, past or future and the infinitive can be present, perfect or future. Using the example sentence "He says that we are writing a letter," where the main verb is "He says," and the indirect statement is "that we are writing," let's turn English idiom into its Latin equivalent, in this case "(He says) us to write." *Dicit*, ("He says ...") *nos litteras scribere* (literally, "us to write a letter.") In English idiom, that would be "He says that we write/are writing a letter." Now what if the infinitive is future? *Dicit nos litteras scripturos esse*. Literally, "He says us to be about to write a letter," or in better English: "He says that we will write a letter."

And here it is with a perfect infinitive: *Dicit nos litteras scripsisse*, meaning literally "He says us to have written a letter." English would say "He says that we wrote/have written a letter." With a future-tense main verb ("He will say..."), things change very little: *Dicet nos litteras scribere* (literally, "He will say us to write a letter."), meaning "He will say that we are writing a letter." Note that the saying and the writing are happening at the same time, in the future. So why don't we make the verb in the "that" clause future? That has to do with an English idiom we'll address in a later lesson. Let's leave it alone for now, but if you absolutely have to know why the present is used here, ask me in person. You *will* see that I *do* not shy away from sharing the mysteries of the future with any eager initiate. Back to the chart.

With a future infinitive, *Dicet nos litteras scripturos esse*, literally, "He will say us to be about to write a letter." In idiomatic English that would be "He will say that we will write a letter," that is, "(In the future) he will say that (further ahead in the future) we'll write the letter." If there were a "plu-future" — and there isn't — it would live right here. Using a perfect infinitive, *Dicit nos litteras scripsisse*, meaning in Latin "He will say us to have written a letter," is the equivalent of English "He will say that we wrote/have written a letter."

No problem with tenses anywhere in this part of the chart, but now let's look at what happens when the main verb is past-tense, "*Dixit* ..." This is where relative and absolute time issues come

into play. Adding a present tense infinitive — *nos litteras scribere* — produces literally “He said us to write a letter.” English would say “He said that we wrote/have written a letter.” The “present” infinitive has a -1 absolute time value here because the main verb is past-tense.

A future infinitive produces the same sort of difficulty: *Dixit nos litteras scripturos esse*, “He said us to be about to write a letter,” which means in English “He said that we would write a letter.” One way to remember this equivalence is to learn the rule that Latin infinitives ending -*urum esse* (or any accusative ending: *-uram, -uros, -uras, -ura*) in indirect statement are equal to “will/would” in English: “will” if the main verb is present or future; “would” if it’s past-tense. It’s really that easy!

Now let’s see what happens if both the main verb and the infinitive are past: *Dixit nos litteras scripsisse*, meaning literally “He said us to have written a letter.” What would be the English that-clause equivalent? “He said that we *had* written a letter.” A -1 time value main verb, plus a -1 relative time value infinitive, adds up to -2 in absolute time. That’s pluperfect (“had”).

Finally, let’s look at something you’ll be seeing a lot of in indirect statement, reflexive pronouns and adjectives. Remember what “reflexive” means? What do reflexive forms “reflect”? That’s right! The subject, a *nominative* subject which up until now was the only type of subject you’ve encountered. That’s why there aren’t nominative forms for reflexive pronouns. This all coming back to you?

But what happens in indirect statement where the subject is accusative? Sentences with indirect statement very often have two subjects: one nominative with the main verb and one accusative with the infinitive. Which one, do you think, makes more sense for the reflexive form to “reflect”? In other words, can a reflexive reflect an accusative subject? No! They have to reflect nominatives — in theory, of course. Roman authors break this rule all the time but it’s still the rule. Let’s learn the rule before we learn how to bend it.

The upshot here is that the accusative reflexive pronoun *se* shows up a lot in indirect statement. People often say that they (meaning themselves) are doing things: “He said that he was hungry,” meaning he himself, not he, that other man over there. Whenever the subject of the main verb reappears in the indirect statement, and it often does as the subject of the indirect statement, this situation produces a reflexive. Consider this example: *Dicit se hoc scire*. “He says that he knows this.” Here, both the “he’s” are the same person. By contrast, here’s the non-reflexive form: *Dicit eum hoc scire*. “He says that he (i.e. someone else) knows this.”

The same principle holds true for the reflexive possessive adjective *suus, -a, -um*. *Discet eam matrem suam esse*. “He will learn that she is his (own) mother.” Here, “his” must refer back to the subject of the main verb. The non-reflexive counterpart of this statement would be: *Discet eam matrem eius esse*. “He will learn that she is his (someone else’s) mother.” I told you that this was going to be rough-going. [Please note indirect statement.] But master this and I assure you that you’re over the hump. [Another indirect statement. See how common it is?]

Let’s review. The formula for indirect statement is simple and straightforward: [a “verb of the head” in the main sentence sets up the possibility of indirect statement which will have] an

accusative subject (“Acc SIS” we’ll call this) and an infinitive verb (“Inf VIS”). Latin doesn’t use a that-clause the way English does because there is “no that in Latin.” And don’t forget that accusative subjects will create accusative predicates!

”Relative time” comes into play because English speakers are forced to switch back and forth between a Latin relative-time verb form (the infinitive) and an English finite verb in a that-clause. Relative-time verb forms change their absolute time value in accordance with the tense of the main verb. The same is true of participles. When applied to infinitives or participles, the term “present” really means “contemporaneous,” that is, happening at the same time as the main verb. “Perfect” means “prior”; the action of the infinitive or participle happened before the time of the main verb. “Future” indicates “subsequent” action, after the time of the main verb. It’s so complicated in theory, but fortunately in practice it’s much simpler, because all the relative-time business only matters when the tense of the main verb is past, throwing everything back one step in time. Thus, when a “present” infinitive is associated with a past-tense main verb, the infinitive’s really taking place in the past (“contemporaneous” with the main verb). Translate it as “was, did, have” or something with a -1 time value. If there’s a “perfect” infinitive with a past-tense main verb, it’s super-simple: “had”! Just say “had.” “Future” infinitives with a past-tense main verb are the equivalent of “would” in a that-clause. Think about it this way: “would” is really “will-ed,” the future tense marker “will” with a past-tense marker “-ed.” Future (“will”) + past (“-ed”) = “would.”

Finally, you’re going to see a lot of reflexive forms in indirect statement — it’s one of their major uses, especially as the SIS (subject of indirect statement)! — so get ready for them. And remember: reflexives “reflect” nominative (not accusative) subjects. Or at least, that’s the rule. For example, *Dixisti te venturum esse*. “You said that you would come.” The same “you” is doing the saying and (future) coming, so the second “you,” the one in indirect statement, is reflexive. But the reflexive isn’t always the subject of the indirect statement. It can be anything grammatically, for instance, *Dixisti eum tecum venturum esse*. “You said that he would come with you.” Here, the reflexive is an ablative of accompaniment.

And just because we talk about other people a lot — the “he said, she said” human habit — very often reflexives in indirect statement are 3rd-person: some form of *se* or *suus*, like *Dixit se suum librum habere*. “He said that he had his own book.” There are two reflexives there: one a pronoun and one an adjective. Make the subject of the main verb plural and look how it changes the English translation: *Dixerunt se suum librum habere*. “They said that they had their own book.” And the teacher says that it’s now time to move on to the vocabulary for Chapter 25.

The first word is *hostis*, *hostis*, m., meaning “enemy.” It’s a third-declension *i*-stem noun (parisyllabic). In the singular this word means “an enemy”; in the plural it means “the enemy.” “The enemy” is a collective noun in English; that is, it’s grammatically singular but it refers to a group of individuals, like “class” or “troop.” Etymologically, *hostis* is related to English “guest” or “host,” both stemming from a sense of “stranger.” Also related is the Greek base *xeno-* from which we get “xenophobia” (“the fear of strangers”).

The next word is *humanus*, *-a, -um*, meaning “human(e), kind, refined, cultivated.” It’s a first/second-declension adjective, employing the same base as the noun *homo, hominis*. Thus, it means literally “pertaining to humankind.”

The next word is another adjective, *immortalis*, *-e*, meaning “not subject to death, immortal.” It’s third declension so it must be *i*-stem. It’s a combination of the prefix *in-* (here, in its assimilated form *im-*) meaning “not,” and the base *mort-* meaning “death,” a base we’ve already encountered in the noun *mors, mortis*.

The next word is a verb: *ait, aiunt*, meaning “he says, they say (assert).” Its conjugation is unclear, perhaps third-*io*. There’s not enough of it attested to make a clear determination. And that’s because this is a “defective” verb, meaning it doesn’t have all its parts. Roman authors use it almost invariably in the third person, although the 1st-singular *aio* and 2nd-singular *ais* are attested in a few works, not many. It also occurs in the present tense mainly, though here and there it shows up in the imperfect, *aiebat*. Be aware that this is a “verb of the head” and often introduces indirect statement: “He says that ...”

The next word is another verb: *credo, credere, credidi, creditum*, meaning “believe, trust.” It’s third-conjugation. The odd-looking perfect base *credid-* is a product of reduplication like *do, dare, dedi, datum*, of which *credo* is probably a compound of some sort. What the affix *cre-* represents is unclear, though some scholars suggest it’s related to the same base that gives us *cardi-* “heart.” In that case *cre-do* originally meant “put one’s heart (into something),” that is, “have confidence in it.” Note that because of its meaning *credo* expects an indirect object, literally “to give trust or be trusting to someone.” It also expects indirect statement, “to believe that...”

Another verb follows: *nego* (1), meaning “deny, say (that) ... not.” Indirect statement also follows *nego* often which is used by Roman authors to negate the indirect statement, producing the sense “I said that something did *not* happen,” which is only a hair’s difference from “denying” it but renders much more idiomatic English. In other words, where we like to say “He says that she did *not* come,” the Romans preferred “He denies (*negat*) her to have come.”

The next word, yet another verb that takes indirect statement, is *nuntio* (1), meaning “announce, report, relate.” That so many verbs in the vocabulary for this chapter take indirect statement can hardly come as a shock.

So here’s another one: *puto* (1), meaning “reckon, suppose, judge, think, imagine.” Do you “think that” this verb takes indirect statement? Etymologically, it’s a fascinating verb. Originally, it comes from a base that means “to prune,” as in “prune or trim a bush.” As Latin developed, its tidy-up-the-garden sense led to another connotation, “clean up one’s financial accounts.” That later evolved into “think.” So, it’s fundamentally a metaphor based on farming, something the early Romans did a lot of and thus affected their “thinking” and vocabulary, as can be seen from other Latin words which are based on agricultural terminology, for instance, *pecunia* (“money”), cf. English “impecunious” — what do you think that means? Good! “Having no (*im-*) money (*pecuni-*)” — *pecunia* comes from a base that means “cattle” (*pecus* in Latin); also, *rivalis*, giving us the word “rival,” which meant originally “pertaining to a river bank (*rivus*),” its adversarial

sense coming from the frequent conflicts Romans had over water rights; and finally *felix* (“happy”), cf. English “felicity” (“happiness”), which stems from a term that means “fruitful, fertile.” These words show that the Romans’ deep ties to the land have clearly shaped their language.

Here’s another first-conjugation verb, *spero*, meaning “hope (for).” Isn’t it nice how many of these verbs which take indirect statement are first conjugation, the easiest of the conjugations to form? *Romanis gratias ago!* The infinitive used with *spero* when it is followed by indirect statement is almost invariably future, for instance, *spero eam venturam esse*, meaning literally “I hope her to be about to come,” that is, “I hope she will come.”

Next, Mr. Wheelock reminds you about the difference between the future active participles *vīcturum* (with a short *ī*) and *vīcturum* (with a long *ī*). The former (*vīcturum*) comes from *vinco* and means “about to conquer,” the latter (*vīcturum*) from *vivo*, “about to live.” That makes the long *ī* in the “live” participle technically mandatory. While it’s good advice, the reason Wheelock brings this up here baffles me. It’s a subtle distinction in relatively rare forms. Put this information carefully and securely... in the back of your brain.

O adulescens! *adulescentis*, m., meaning “young man,” a third-declension (non-*i*-stem!) noun. What’s the accusative plural of this word? [It’s third-declension.] Yes, *adulescentes!* That’s also the vocative, isn’t it, *O adulescentes!*

Next is an adjective: *fidelis*, -e, meaning “faithful, loyal.” It’s third-declension so this one is *i*-stem. Think about what this word expects: you’re faithful or loyal ... to someone. So it takes a dative after it. This is called a “dative with special adjective.” Or you can just say “dative with *fidelis*.” What’s its ablative singular? [Hint: it’s *i*-stem.] Good, *fideli*. And its neuter accusative plural? Yeah, *fidelia*.

And “here’s” an easy word, *hīc* (“here”), an adverb so it doesn’t change form. One thing to note, however, is the mandatory long mark over the *ī*. That distinguishes “here” (*hīc*) from “this man” (*hīc*).

And the final word of this vocabulary list is *nescio*, -ire, -ivi, -itum, meaning “not know,” that is, “be unaware (of), fail to understand.” It’s a fourth-conjugation verb. It’s a combination of *ne*- (“not”) and *scio* (“know,” a “verb of the head”) and as such expects indirect statement. Thus, *nescimus*, for instance, means “we do not know (that ...)” After the classical age as Latin began changing into modern languages, this word embarked upon a fascinating etymological journey. Starting as *nesciens* in Latin, meaning “not knowing, ignorant,” by the 13th century it had taken on the sense “foolish.” By the 14th century it had adopted a sexual connotation, “wanton,” which mellowed to “coy” by the 15th century. Its sense continued to elevate in the 16th century where it came to mean “dainty, subtle.” Over the next two centuries, it became “agreeable,” and from there it was a short step to our word “nice,” meaning “reasonably good.” So etymologically “nice” means “stupid.” No comment.

If you’re still with me and still alive, does the vast swath of grammatical Mordor we just slogged across make even a semblance of sense to you now? And the rules we cited at the beginning —

they looked so “nice”! But how are you? Still *nesciens* in the original sense of the word? If you are, spend another day of your life reviewing this presentation please. If you’re not so “nice” in its Roman sense, then count yourself among the blessed and walk into the light ... of the worksheet for Chapter 25. Here’s a link. In fact, here’s a whole chain.

Catenas tenete, O adulescentes scientes!