

# Tracking Biblical Hebrew Quotatives in Translation

Structural linguistic entropy caused by successive translation of direct speech markers

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# 1 Introduction

In this project I will examine all 306 instances of the Biblical Hebrew quotative **לְאמֹר** (lē'mor) in the Pentateuch and their subsequent translation into Greek, Russian, and Kyrgyz.<sup>12</sup> Each instance is categorized according to the quotative strategy it uses and tracked across all four languages. Using this analysis, I show that linguistic entropy necessarily increases as a result of translation seeking to closely preserve a text's 'original' meaning: clearly visible in the proliferation of quotative strategies across translations. While, through analysis of quotative strategies, I largely analyze structural entropy, with some considerations this measure can be used as a proxy for evaluating the degree of semantic entropy within successive translation. These findings are generalizable to other instances of successive translation more broadly, but especially towards translations which favor the structure and content of the original language over those features which are most natural in the target language.

The primary questions which I address here are: How does translation across typologically distinct languages impact translation by means of the presence and/or absence of forms in source or target language, and how much difference do intermediate steps of translation cause in the final product?

## 1.1 Positionality Statement

Evaluating the translation of the Bible carries with it a great deal of cultural-religious significance for many people: the translators selected and myself included. As a Christian, the Bible is my authoritative religious text and so carries special personal significance. While I attempt to base my evaluations on the text and its translation on general linguistic principles as well as translation philosophies consistent with those revealed by the translators, it is impossible to totally separate my own religious convictions from this work. I believe in the divine inspiration of the original Hebrew texts of the Hebrew Bible, as do the translators I have selected. This belief informs my underlying assumptions about the proper treatment and translation of the text.

## 1.2 Motivations

There are multiple motivations for this work, some academic and some more pragmatic. The primary purposes concern linguistic analysis which is generalizable to other texts and languages, but I include other potential uses as well.

Prior to any analysis of translated works, it is important to note that the work of translation is highly complex and takes into consideration many factors: interpretation, adaptation, audience, vocabulary, style, rhythm, etc. How translators weigh these factors and make their decisions is a far more complex issue than I address here, nor are the conclusions translators reach always obvious to the outside examiner. As a result, my analysis is largely limited to particular grammatical instances of variation introduced via translation. These distinctions are not the most

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<sup>1</sup>I would like to thank my faculty readers, Prof. Jonathan Washington and Prof. Kirby Konrod who read over a draft of this thesis. Prof. Washington also contributed to the Kyrgyz glosses.

<sup>2</sup>Unfortunately, this thesis is an incomplete description of the analysis I have completed. I have attempted to make each section comprehensible even in the lack of full explanation, and look forward to discussing this work further in person, where I will be happy to clarify topics as necessary.

important, nor do they offer the same value to every reader. In many contexts, translators are rightfully unconcerned with them. Discourse functions, style, allusion, parallelism, and poetic tendencies all have their rightful effects on translations, and yet are beyond the scope of this work. A good translation is not defined by absolute consistency, nor the quality of translation be fully represented by numerical data. Nonetheless, the analysis I present can be a useful tool for evaluating the work and effect of translations.

The sheer complexity of the task at hand: evaluating not one but three lengthy translations, makes quantitative analysis, even a highly limited one, a welcome tool. With each added step of translation, potentially relevant factors increase exponentially—quickly leaving us without anything but anecdotal observations. Though I believe examining the effects of translation is important, it would be incredibly difficult to have any one individual do sufficiently in-depth study of a topic such as the translation of the Bible into three different languages. For matters primarily concerned with repeated translation, simply examining distinct analysis of each step (Hebrew, Greek, Russian, and Kyrgyz texts) will not do. Instead the division of labor must involve segments of successive translation at every step. This is why I limit the grammatical constructions I consider, not steps of translation.

To limit the potential interpretations and causes of linguistic changes without sacrificing all semantic impact, a morphologically simple, frequently occurring phenomena with multiple examples of subsequent translation of the same text undertaken with common translation principles is best. This allows us to clearly analyze the uses of the form present, and compare the translation effects resulting primarily from linguistic principles, not from differing translation philosophies, or genre-imposed textual expectations. Further, such an investigation should cover distinct language families and multiple languages to magnify the potential for linguistic impact to be clearly identified. While a truly maximal case is not necessary, the data I present establishes a sufficient basis for evaluating the impact of linguistic differences between languages on translations.

Of course, examining the highly consistent BH quotative as it is translated into three languages (including two language families) by translators with a general unity in purpose provided by an established religious tradition considerably reduces the complexity of the task, this is not its only benefit. Study of direct speech, and of more strict/literal one:many translation has other benefits.

While representation of direct speech has different connotations in different linguistic and cultural settings, quotation in a religious holy text carries especial significance. Such religious texts are themselves claiming to report the speech and acts of significant events, and people in some fashion. The way that this reporting is represented reflects on the role of the text itself. How a text is purported to routinely represent the words and actions of its characters will in turn shape how that text is read, studied and viewed. Readers may get varying impressions on how concerned such a text is with various details and the accuracy of statements as a result of the means used to communicate its record. The value of measuring and understanding how translation and subsequent translation, particularly of instances involving direct speech, can impact the interpretation of a religious text is profound regardless of your textual or religious criticism views since it impacts how readers and practitioners perceive the text in their own language. This perception might shift towards one which is subjectively preferred by one group and disliked by another, but measuring how such a perception shift is caused or impacted by translation is a valuable task for both groups.

This investigation also has uses in other areas of linguistic practice. Bible translation is an outstanding example of a specific type of translation project which makes one text widely available to speakers of different languages. The dissemination of scientific, medical and legal information occurs through translation which prioritizes accurately conveying the original meaning of the text to a new audience. Further study of translation like this can guide efforts to provide clear and accurate medical information for physicians and families all over the world. Understanding and evaluating the consistency of translation lets us effectively allocate resources towards the delivery of reliable documents.

## **2 Background**

### **2.1 Records of Speech**

Producing speech is fundamentally limited by time: verbal speech only lasts for a short while and requires its audience to witness its pronouncement. Yet, preserving speech so that it can be remembered, shared or carried out is incredibly useful. To accomplish this purpose, speech must first be recorded in some fashion, in order that it might be later recreated and subsequently received. Since records of speech have some later communicative act as their goal, it not necessary to draw significant distinction between speech which is recorded and speech which is reported. The purpose of recording speech is to report it, even if only silently to oneself. This extension of one speech act beyond itself, so that it can participate in greater dialogue—reach a broader audience, or receive additional responses, is the basis of all reported speech (Longacre, 1994). Reported speech is done in two primary ways: direct and indirect. In some respect, either of these can be referred to as “quotation”, although in Western culture the connotation is of directly reported speech which is viewed as more reliable (De Vries, 1992; Robles, 2015).

There is some debate over how to properly distinguish indirect from direct speech. A common way is to define directly recorded speech as an utterance which conveys an unedited record of the original speech act, while indirect speech contains an adapted version of the initial utterance (Robles, 2015). This is useful in capturing the spirit of the distinction, but I use a slightly more technical definition here, following the work of Miller-Naudé (2013).

For this work, an instance of direct speech is syntactically isolated from the rest of the sentence, displaying no adaptation of referents or tense to match with its new setting inside a fresh utterance. Because the quoted material must have been spoken before its quotation takes place, it cannot have any knowledge of the features of the quoting act which would be required for expressed agreement. In contrast, an indirect speech act includes a quotation which expresses some syntactic relationship to the utterance which is summoning it in the dialogue. This demonstrates that the original statement has been fundamentally altered in order to take its place inside a new statement (Miller-Naudé, 2013).

### **2.2 Translation**

The practice of translation is a long and storied one, with many different purposes, goals and methods over history.

Translation between different languages is fundamentally an attempt to accomplish the impossible: that is, to convert the characteristics and attributes of a text in one language into that of another language which is not guaranteed to share any of the same patterns, traits or grammatical structures (Alter, 2020). Translation as I address it, and as most of the literature surrounding the matter is concerned, is not simply occupied with creating identical truth values in the target language, but with successfully communicating additional information entailed in the medium and method of original communication.<sup>3</sup> Of the many goals which vie for the translator's attention preserving figurative language, rhythm, voice and mood are but a few that join the queue. Since "there is no perfect correspondence in language", not all of the translator's goals will be fully satisfied (Nida, 1964). Thus, decisions must be made regarding how to prioritize these various goals, and naturally the ordering of these goals should depend on the intended purpose of the translation under construction.

While ultimately a translation's purpose is determined by its translator(s), there are a number of overarching theories which help guide these decisions and can provide a framework by which to analyze and compare translations undertaken by distinct entities. Perhaps the earliest distinction drawn between translation methods is made by St. Jerome, the Bible from Greek and Hebrew into Latin for the Vulgate. In his "Letter to Pammachius", Jerome defends his decision to translate a certain text from Greek into Latin "sense-by-sense" rather than "word-for-word" (Venuti, 2012).

Jerome writes that he believes the "sense-for-sense" translation to be superior in every case, except for translating Scripture. This distinction between "word-for-word" and "sense-for-sense" theories survives until the modern age. In the many years since, these two models have been deemed "formal equivalence" and "functional equivalence", respectively (Alter, 2020). These are joined by new theories including Dynamic Equivalence, the "quality of a translation in which the message of the original text has been so transported into the receptor language that the response of the receptor is essentially like that of the original receptors." (Nida, 1964). This touches on the theory behind "Equivalent Effect", which measures a translation by its ability to reproduce the effect of an original work in a new audience, who may be significantly removed from the original audience and thus require significant adaptation in order to receive the text in a comparable manner. Further, the effect a text would have had on its original audience is certainly up for interpretation and argument, apart from how one might best recreate this effect in another audience. As a result, there is still incredible potential for disparity even among those who agree on their goal. This clearly brings into view a component of all translation, which is that they all rely, in some form or another, on the interpretation of the translator. This is because all reading, even that within the same language, requires some level of interpretation in order to make sense of the author's structure, and arguments (Weissbort & Eysteinson, 2006).

Unable to escape the reality that "there is no perfect correspondence in language", some translators take the approach that interpretation of a text is something to be embraced, and the presentation of the original author's ideas and thoughts in a favorable manner to another audience is part of the courtesy translators ought to afford their authors (Nida, 1964; Venuti, 2012). Famous translation of works like Homer's *Illiad*, and Virgil's *Aeneid* received great praise for adapting or altogether removing sections which were not suitable to the modern reader's sen-

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<sup>3</sup>Creating identical truth values for target and source language very well might be the sole goal of the technical translation used in manuals and elsewhere.

sibilities (Venuti, 2012; Virgil, 1978). George Chapman's translation of the *Odyssey* into English was highly praised for preserving the poetic nature of the original Greek (translating it in iambic pentameter), and in artistic works such as this it is obvious why preserving meter might be valued over maintaining the literal pieces of antiquary idioms which would not be understood by the average reader anyway (**homer-chapman**).

A few notes about Bible translation are especially relevant here. The Septuagint (LXX) is one of the earliest surviving religious translations, and has been incredibly influential in its impact (De Troyer, 2013). While there is not much additional writing from the translators themselves, more history about the LXX's creation is informative. The Septuagint was translated by Jewish scribes living in Egypt who wanted to make the Bible available in Greek, which was much more commonly known outside the scribes and priests (Muraoka, 2016). The translators had extensive knowledge of Hebrew, and would have been trained in the traditional Jewish methods of manuscript preservation, which are notoriously rigid (Hornkohl, 2020; Maman et al., 2007). Because most Jewish scholars would have spoken Greek and Hebrew, a poor translation would not likely have been received well (Aitken, 2012). The story behind the Septuagint's name, meaning 70, is that seventy translators each undertook the work to render the Hebrew Bible into Greek (Jobes & Moisés, 2015). Each worked independently but, when they had finished, each had produced the exact same translation. While this story is not true, it does show us that the translators were portrayed even in ancient times as being concerned with an extremely precise translation of Scripture.

Another ancient translator that can shed light on this topic is Simon Ben Jesus Ben Sira, the grandson of Ben Sira. In the preface to his translation of "The Wisdom of Ben Sira", he laments that he is fundamentally unable to render the full expression of the Hebrew into Greek, but does his best to capture all that he can (Skehan & A., 2010). Crucially, Simon Ben Jesus translated this work around 132 B.C., and most scholars believe the LXX to have been translated during the 3rd Century (Aitken, 2012; Rey, 2011). As a Jewish scribe, even without a concrete canon, Simon Ben Jesus would have regarded the Pentateuch with greater respect than his grandfather's wisdom literature, and so his expressions on translation give us particular insight into what the translators of the LXX might have practiced.

Jerome's highly influential work translating the Vulgate, as well as his aforementioned writing on the topic, also attest to a desire for rendering the Bible in a manner as faithful as possible to the original languages (Kamesar, 2013). Jerome records being taught to defer to Jewish traditions in interpreting and translating difficult texts, and cites Jewish scholarship and customs extensively (Williams, 2008). This is further evidence of an ancient tradition, carried on through history, of extremely careful translation of scripture.

Finding the principles at-work behind translations is much easier in the modern era. The Institute for Bible Translation's website reads, "IBT strives to make accurate and faithful translations which reveal the message of the Bible to modern readers in their own languages." ("Translation Principles", n.d.). Similarly, Philaret Drozdov was a highly influential figure during the translation of the Russian Synodal Version, and has substantial writings on the theological necessity of preserving the meaning of the original text as much as possible.

The last issue pertaining to Bible translation to address is based directly in the translations themselves. All three translations regularly translate phrases with a certain rigidity. Greek and Russian both notably depart from normal language use in order to translate the BH quotative, clearly demonstrating that a fluid or natural translation is not their top priority. Similarly, a few

instances of the Kyrgyz translation (like Exodus 15:1) border on ungrammaticality due to their strict adherence to the structure of text they receive (Bussert & Washington, 2023). That this is clearly present even in the final step of analysis is indicative of a significant trend.

The translations I examine are of Biblical texts which, as previously mentioned, have a long-running history of translation and hold significant importance for practitioners of Judaism and Christianity. The premier factor in the translation of holy texts for their respective religious communities is the claim of divine revelation, which makes their translations more likely to adhere to the original in a close manner, and discourages extensive embellishments or editorial decisions on the part of the translator. It is useful to note that matters of literal or other strict senses of interpretation are an entirely separate issue. The preservation and presentation of a text does impact its usage, but does not define it. I only present evidence to describe the translation philosophies of each work I analyze. Not every translation is built on the same underlying principles of translation, but their work is similar enough to facilitate comparison. This is important because it would do no good to measure translations according to their preservation of minute details of the Hebrew, if these works carried an alternate goal in higher regard, in which case it would be ambiguous whether a more similar translation was lost due to linguistic change, or simply altered for some other reason.

## 2.3 Languages Under Study

To facilitate analysis of all four languages, I present some general background information as well as specific details related to recording direct speech and the use of quotatives. With the exception of the Kyrgyz examples in section 2.3.4, all glosses and translations are mine.

### 2.3.1 Biblical Hebrew

The source language for all of our analysis will be Biblical Hebrew (BH), also referred to academically as Classical, Ancient or Tiberian, and the language used by the authors of the Hebrew Bible (Kutscher, 1982). These terms originate in Rabbinic Hebrew or Ancient Greek contexts, while the original terms used in Hebrew to describe itself were **שְׁפַת כְּנָעַן** (*šəpat kənaʿan*) and **יְהוּדִית** (*yəhūdît*) (Chomsky, 1957). Biblical Hebrew is a member of the Northwestern Semitic language family, and a descendent from Paleo-Hebrew (also called Proto-Hebrew) which was a continuation of the Proto-Canaanite language (Pardee, 2012). The script used in Biblical Hebrew is comprised of 22 consonants with diacritic marks for vowels descending from the Masoretic tradition (Crowther, 2022). BH texts will here be provided with vowel pointing as well as transliteration for the convenience of the reader. Roots comprise only of consonants and so will not be pointed. All Hebrew texts come from the [*Torah, Neviim u-Khetuvim*] = *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (1997).

There is not a surviving community of speakers for Biblical Hebrew, but after a long period of dormancy, Hebrew was successfully revitalized and now is spoken by over 8 million people (Eberhard et al., 2023a; Sáenz-Badillos, 1993).

Biblical Hebrew, like many languages in the Semitic family, uses trilateral roots, has a highly conjugated verbal system, and is primarily Verb-Subject-Object in major constituent order (Garrett & DeRouchie, 2009). It is also generally understood to make aspectual distinctions, both in terms of its two major verbal categories: the perfect and imperfect; but also in its seven verbal

aspect categories, rather than tense-based ones (Arnold, 2003; Kurylowicz, 1973; Paul & Mu-raoka, 2018). These verbal aspect categories are referred to commonly as **בִּנְיָמִין** (binyāmîn, sing. binyām), and are the primary means by which Biblical Hebrew converts roots into productive forms like the passive, reflexive, repetitive/intensive, causative, etc (Dan, 2013). A single root, like **מִלַּךְ** (mlk) can mean “to rule” in the Qal binyam, but “to be coronated” in the Hiphil binyam. The same root gives us the nouns for “king”, “queen”, “dynasty”, “palace” and “dominion” (Brown, 2001 - 1906). BH also makes regular use of pronominal suffixes to express possession, as well as a construct form for nouns, and to form the most prevalent form of the verbal infinitive (Gesenius, 1985 - 1910).

As it relates to the recording of speech, Biblical Hebrew employs the generic speech verb **אָמַר** (ʾmr) heavily, which encodes only the occurrence of a speech-act without any further commentary on its nature, cause or place in dialogue (Cook et al., 2013). This simple usage comprises the first of three quotative frame structures present in BH (Miller-Naudé, 2013). A quotative frame (also called a “dialogue tag”, or a “speech frame”) consists of the utterance itself, the speech verb and other information that accompany the utterance in its context (O’Connor, 1997). An example of a simple quotative frame using the verb **אָמַר** (ʾmr) for the speech verb is given in example 1.

<b>וַיְהִי-אֹר</b> <i>wayəhî-ʾôr</i> and-be:IMPF-light	<b>אֹר</b> <i>ʾôr</i> light	<b>יְהִי</b> <i>yəhî</i> be:IMPF	<b>אֱלֹהִים</b> <i>ʾēlōhîm</i> God	<b>וַיֹּאמֶר</b> (1) <i>wayyōʾmer</i> and-say:3SG.IMPF
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“God said, let there be light, and there was light.” (Genesis 1:3)

There are a variety of other verbs that can occur with speech: **בָּרַךְ** (brk) “bless”, **קָלַל** (qll) “curse”, **קָרָא** (qr) “call”, **עָנָה** (ʿnh) “answer”, **צָעַק** (ṣʿq) “cry”, **צִוָּה** (ṣwh) “command”, etc. These each carry an additional meaning beyond simply noting the presence of a speech-act, and may further describe various parts of the speech-act itself. In Biblical Hebrew poetry these verbs may occur before, during or after a quotation without another generic speech verb, but in narrative passages they always appear alongside a generic speech verb (most commonly **אָמַר**) (Hobbins, n.d.). The use of these verbs in addition to a generic speech verb constitutes the second type of quotative frame: the multi-verb frame (Miller, 2003). Example 2 below shows a multi-verb frame using **עָנָה** (ʿnh) alongside **אָמַר** (ʾmr) to communicate both the content of Abraham’s speech and something about the context in which it occurs (a response to a previous statement).

(2) וַיַּעַן

לְדַבֵּר	הוֹאֲלִיתִי	הִנֵּה-נָא	וַיֹּאמֶר	אַבְרָהָם	וַיַּעַן
<i>ləḏabbēr</i>	<i>hōw’altiy</i>	<i>hinnē-nā’</i>	<i>wayyō’mar</i>	<i>’abrāhām</i>	<i>wayya’an</i>
to–speak:INFC	take.upon.myself	behold–POL	and–he.said	A	and–he.answered

אֶל-אֲדֹנָי	וְאָנֹכִי	עָפָר	וְאַפָּר:
<i>’el-’ādōnāy</i>	<i>wə’anōkî</i>	<i>’āpār</i>	<i>wā’ēper</i>
to–lord.1SG.POSS	and–1SG	dust	and–ash

“Abraham answered and said: Behold, I have taken upon myself to speak to my Lord but I am dust and ashes” (Genesis 18:27)

The prefixed form of the verbal infinitive construct of the root **אמר** (’mr) is used in combination with another speech verb, generic or otherwise, in order to form the final quotative frame, called simply the **לְאָמַר** (lē’mōr) frame, after its signature participant (Miller, 2003). This quotative frame is unique because, unlike the previous components, **לְאָמַר** (lē’mōr) is a distinct form which underwent semantic bleaching, as did similar forms in other Northwest Semitic languages, which renders it now simply a marker of direct speech (Watson, 1983, 1990). It has the base form of an infinitive, meaning that it has never expressed person, number or gender agreement with a subject, and has had any other historical functions already removed by the time of the Bible (Deutscher, 2007; Stadel, 2017). This makes it ideal for our analysis because it is incredibly morphologically simple, and its highly limited usage gives us a high degree of properly understanding its purpose in each original instance. An example of its usage alongside **צוּרָה** (ṣwh) “to command” to convey the contents of the command is given below in example 3.

(3) וַיִּצַו

עֵץ	לְאָמַר	מִכָּל	הָאֲדָמָה	עַל-	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהִים	וַיִּצַו
<i>’ākōl</i>	<i>’ēš-haggān</i>	<i>mikkōl</i>	<i>lē’mōr</i>	<i>’al-hā’ādām</i>	<i>’ēlohîm</i>	<i>yəhwā</i>	<i>waysăw</i>
tree.of	from–all	QUOT	DEF–man	on	God	YHVH	and–he.commanded

הַגֶּן	אָכַל	תֹּאכַל
<i>tō’kēl</i>	<i>’akal</i>	<i>’akal</i>
DEF–garden	eat:INFC	eat:IMPF

“The LORD God commanded the man saying: from every tree of the garden you may certainly eat” (Genesis 2:16)

While the **לְאָמַר** (lē’mōr) frame is the primary quotative frame I am concerned with here, understanding the full range of options available both to the original author(s) and the subsequent translators is key in developing our conclusions.

### 2.3.2 Koine Greek

Koine Greek is the dialect of Greek spoken primarily between 300 BC-600 AD, preceding Medieval and Modern Greek and deriving from Attic Greek (Köstenberger et al., 2020). It was a very prevalent language during much of that time, hence the name κοινή (koinē) which means

“common” (Köstenberger et al., 2020). There are many existing examples of Koine Greek from a variety of linguistic settings, but the most relevant for our purposes is its use by the translators of the Septuagint (LXX) who translated the Hebrew manuscripts they had into the much more commonly used Koine (De Troyer, 2013; Joosten, 2013).<sup>4</sup> All translations of Greek are the author’s unless stated otherwise, all Greek texts come from Swete (1930).

The translators of the Septuagint primarily employ 3 methods of recording speech (Joosten, 2013). The first method is to simply use a generic conjugated speech verb like λεγο (lego) along with the speech content, as is the case in example 4.

- (4) καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεός Γενηθήτω φῶς καὶ ἐγένετο φῶς.  
*kai eipen ho theos Genēthētō phōs. kai egeneto phōs.*  
 and he.said DEF God be:PASS.IMP light and be:AOR light

“And God said let there be light. And there was light.” (Genesis 1:3) - Class 1 Verb

For instances which require more information about the circumstances of speech, Greek can use a 2nd Class verb with the participle form of the generic speech verb λεγο (lego), mirroring the Hebrew construction as well as possible. This is demonstrated in example 13. Often in narrative contexts this will be the present active participle, but it can express other tenses as needed. This is similar to most renderings of the Hebrew quotative in English (CSB, 2017; ESV, 2011; RSV-KJB-NAB *parallel*, 1993). This construction is not natural to Greek, it prefers to place speech verbs in medial position with respect to direct discourse (Bussert & Mahoney, 2022; Muraoka, 2016).

- (5) καὶ εὐλόγησεν αὐτὰ ὁ Θεός, λέγων· αὐξάνεσθε καὶ πληθύνεσθε  
*kai eulogaysen auta cho theos legon auxanesthe kai playthunesthe*  
 and bless:3SG.AOR 3PL.ACC DEF God say:PRES.PART increase:IMP and multiply:PASS.IMP  
 καὶ πληρώσατε τὰ ὕδατα ἐν ταῖς θαλάσσαις, καὶ τὰ πετεινὰ πληθυνέσθωσαν  
*kai playrosate ta chudata chen tais thalasis kai ta petayna playthunesthosan*  
 and fill:IMP DEF water in DEF seas and DEF birds multiply:PASS.IMP  
 ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς  
*epi tays gays*  
 on DEF Earth

“And God blessed them saying, increase and multiply and fill the waters in the seas and let the birds multiply on the Earth.” (Genesis 1:22) - 2nd Class Verb + Quot.

Greek, especially in literary varieties, uses circumstantial clauses to convey further information about the background or concurrent activities of a primary finite verb (Smyth, 1956).

<sup>4</sup>Although not immediately linguistically important for our analysis, it is worth noting that the New Testament was written in Koine Greek. This provides another comparable example to examine Koine treatment of reported speech in a religious setting, even the same religious tradition, although by different authors and in a slightly different time.

- (6) καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς Ἀβραὰμ εἶπεν Νῦν ἤρξάμην λαλήσαι πρὸς τὸν  
*kai apokritheis Abraam eipen Nyn ērxamēn lalēsai pros ton*  
 and answer:3SG.AOR A say:3SG.AOR now begin:1SG.PERF speak:INF to DEF  
 κύριον, ἐγὼ δὲ εἰμι γῆ καὶ σποδός  
*kyrion, egō de eimi gē kai spodos*  
 Lord I but be:1SG.PRES dust and ash

“And answering, Abraham said now I have begun to speak to the Lord, but I am (only) dirt and ashes.” (Genesis 18:27) - 2nd Class Verb +

### 2.3.3 Russian

Russian is a Slavic language of the Indo-European language family with 250 million speakers worldwide (Eberhard et al., 2023c). It is spoken primarily in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, especially in former member states of the USSR. Russian is written using the Cyrillic alphabet, has 6 cases, 3 grammatical genders, and no articles (Wade, 2010). Russian has three tenses: past, present, and future, which in addition to their standard uses, are used to distinguish between direct and indirect speech (Bussert & Forrester, 2022). All Russian texts come from RSV (2004).

Russian records speech primarily through finite speech verbs, but can also use a participle to accompany other verbs (Forbes, 1964; Kolyaseva, 2018). This usage is particularly common in the translations I examine, but is otherwise an awkward and unnatural construction.

I give two examples of Russian quotative use below, in examples 7 and 8.

- (7) И заповедал Господь Бог человеку, говоря: от всякого дерева в  
*I zapovedal Gospod' Bog cheloveku, govorya: ot vsyakogo dereva v*  
 and command:3SG.PERF LORD God man.DAT say:SG.PART of each tree in  
 саду ты будешь есть...  
*sadu ty budesh' yest'...*  
 garden 2SG do:FUT eat:INF.IMPF

“And the LORD God commanded the man saying, you shall eat of every tree of the garden...”  
 (Genesis 2:17) Class 2 + Quot.

- (8) Адаму же сказал: за то, что ты послушал голоса жены  
*Adamu zhe skazal: za to, chto ty poslushal golosa zheny*  
 A 3SG say:M.SG.PERF because 2SG what 2SG listen:3SG.PERF voice wife  
 твоей и ел от дерева, о котором Я заповедал тебе,  
*tvoey i yel ot dereva, o kotorom Ya zapovedal tebe,*  
 2SG.GEN and eat:3SG.IMPF from tree.GEN about REL 1SG command:PERF 2SG.DAT  
 сказав: не ешь от него...  
*skazav: ne yesh' ot nego...*  
 say:PERF.PART NEG eat:2SG.IMPF.PRES from 3SG.M

“He said to Adam, because you listened to the voice of your wife and ate from the tree, which I commanded you saying, do not eat it...” (Genesis 3:17) - Class 2 + Quot.

### 2.3.4 Kyrgyz

Kyrgyz is a Turkic language with over 5 million speakers, 98% of whom are L1 speakers (Eberhard et al., 2023b). It is the official language of Kyrgyzstan, and commonly used throughout Central Asia (Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, etc.). It is an agglutinative language, has 7 cases, no articles and expressed vowel harmony like many Turkic languages (Eberhard et al., 2023b; Johanson, 2006). All Kyrgyz text comes from 2008.

Kyrgyz uses a large variety of quotatives to mark statements involving speech-acts, employing them in direct as well as indirect speech contexts (Benzing et al., 1965; Imart, 1981). These quotatives generally appear after the speech act, but can also follow a placeholder for speech, while the actual speech is recorded later (Bussert & Washington, 2023). Because of this, Kyrgyz is the language under study which is most naturally disposed toward quotative use. This is characteristic of Turkic languages, including Uyghur and Tatar, which employ quotatives similarly (Major, 2021; Sugar, 2019). Kyrgyz relies heavily on quotatives in all types of discourse, and thus presents a useful test case for translating in the direction of greater quotative usage. Two examples of simple uses of the Kyrgyz quotative are included below, in 9 and 10.

- (9) Теңир Мусага мындай деди:  
*Teñir Musaga mynday dedi:*  
 God Moses–DAT thus say–PAST.DIR

“The Lord spoke to Moses, saying,” (Numbers 15:1) - Class 1 + Quot. + Thusly

- (10) Ошондо Кудай Нухка мындай деди:  
*Oshondo Kuday Nukhka mynday de–di:*  
 then God Noah–DAT thus say–PAST.DIR

“Then God said to Noah,” (Genesis 8:15) - Class 1 + Quot. + Thusly

## 3 Methods

### 3.1 Analytical Framework

In order to compare the choices used by translators in rendering direct speech across languages, and to track the subsequent effects of translation on texts I categorize the treatment of verses with respect to their most basic traits, then subdivide them into smaller groups based on more complex characteristics. The order of this progression moves from examining the use/disuse of a sole construction within a language, towards examining the combination of constructions within a language, before moving to analysis over subsequent translations. The simplest of these traits will be the presence or absence of grammatical constructions within the target language: quotatives being the most salient example. These are single-language, single-component analyses, i.e. When does Russian translate the quotative?

Then, renderings of a verse are categorized by single-language interactions between two or more elements of a language. These are single-language, multi-component analyses, like the pairing of a quotative with a speech verb instead of a non-speech verb. The questions asked here are: when does Kyrgyz translate the quotative alongside a non-speech verb, how does speech reported in Greek embedded clauses impact the translation of the quotative, and does the mood (subjunctive, imperative, etc.) of a Russian matrix verb change whether type of participle used to translate the quotative?

Then, of course, there are multi-language, multi-component analyses, which describe the ways translators use different constructions available in their respective languages to create an utterance near the original, whether in formal pragmatics, or audience-effect.

For the purposes of cleanly separating direct reported speech as a linguistic phenomena from the many complicated and overlapping systems employed by language to communicate information in adaptive methods, I draw a distinction between linguistic constructions and syntactic strategies, following Croft (2003). Additionally, the Universal Dependencies (UD) guidelines are a related framework which provides an easy way of holding constant the construction (direct reported speech in our case) which is accomplished in each translation through selecting from the different strategies available to translators. Linguistic constructions are the relationships, states, and actions which language communicates: definiteness, possession, speech acts, etc. Syntactic strategies describe how these constructions are accomplished in any particular language. These strategies are often numerous and can have significant overlap (Croft, 2003). This gives speakers multiple ways to communicate the information they wish to share, allowing them to choose the strategy most useful or convenient for each scenario. A demonstration of the various syntactic strategies possible for communicating the linguistic construction of possession is given below, using English as an example.

- (11) a. Eli's shawl
- b. The shawl of Eli
- c. The Eli-shawl
- d. The shawl belonging to Eli
- e. The shawl belongs to Eli.

In example 11a the possessive 's does this, while example 11b uses a genitive construction formed by the preposition "of". Example 11c turns Eli into a modifier which describes the shawl's origin, and example 11d shows that a participial verb can identify possession through nominal modification. Further, example 11e shows that internal nominal structure is not the only way to express possession. Here, a complete sentence with "the shawl" as the subject and "belong" as the verb, is used.

We could represent these examples as a mapping between five strategies and a single construction, but the inclusion of more constructions would reveal that there is a complex overlap between pairings of constructions and strategies. Tracking this mapping creates an easy way to accurately visualize not only the similarity in strategies employed by various languages, but also to demonstrate the similarities and differences of what these strategies accomplish. In this framework the overlap in function between the same strategy across different languages is made evident, and enables comparison between the versatility of strategies, as well as the multiplicity of strategic choices available to speakers/translators.

With respect to the specific linguistic question at hand, I employ this distinction between constructions and strategies to guide our investigation into how languages accomplish the construction of directly reported speech by various strategies. Each language studied has its own characteristics regarding both construction and strategy usage. Notably, there are distinctions even within each language's use of the same construction, especially when considering cultural norms of communication. The prevalence and implications of directly reported speech varies widely across language: sometimes it is the preferred method for recording all speech-acts, and other times it is reserved for instances where the original utterance is given a high priority of preservation or significance (Adelaar, 1990; Buchstaller, 2014; De Vries, 1992). Additionally, direct reported speech may be the only way to express emotions, thoughts or desires in one language, but entirely inappropriate in such contexts for another. As appropriate settings for the construction vary, so will the frequency of those constructions.

Further, as analysis expands to the full range of grammatical constructions employed in language, the potential mappings proliferate rapidly. In the hands of an experienced speaker these combinations complement one another in order to expand or limit their potential implications to communicate the desired meaning to the intended audience. The recognition that language is not simply independent grammatical constructions which each accomplish a single purpose, but rather the intersection of multiple pairing, and sub-pairings between constructions and strategies yields a far more accurate view of the way in which language is wielded, but also shows how any analysis limited to examining a single construction will be insufficient. Likewise, translation which simply recreates the strategies of one language in another will wildly fail to preserve coherent meaning. Additionally, when working across languages with distinct sets of constructions and strategies, this translation method is impossible. Because some adaptation between strategies is unavoidable, a simple disparity in construction:strategy pairing may represent the best possible translation according to any chosen standard. Only upon the consideration of available strategies can we distinguish the effects of translator decisions from linguistic variety. Moreover, any translation evaluation process limited to investigating a single construction in isolation will omit the compensating and complementary decisions made by translators to account for linguistic variation. Thus, while I focus on direct speech reported with quotatives, interactions with verbs, and other aspects of language are also noted.

## 3.2 Data Collection

To gather sufficient representative data for this analysis, I compile primary and secondary speech words, as well as other relevant contextual information, for every translation of each verse where the Hebrew quotative לְאָמַר (lē'mōr) is used. This contextual information includes formatting differences, textual variants, and clause type. I use the standard critical edition of the Hebrew text, the Biblia-Hebraica-Stuttgartensia (BHS), and a simple search for לְאָמַר (lē'mōr) produces each verse in the Pentateuch (Genesis-Deuteronomy) where the Hebrew writers used the laymor quotative frame to report direct speech.<sup>5</sup> Then I analyze each verse in the Rahlfs critical edition Septuagint (Greek, LXX), Russian Synodal Version (Russian, RSV), and Ray of Hope Bible (Kyrgyz, RHB). Due to differences between traditional chapter-verse assignment, verses in Greek and Hebrew are numbered differently from each other and from the standard division adopted for modern works which is used in both Russian and Kyrgyz.

For classification purposes, I define a quotative as a word which only introduces the contents of speech. Accordingly, they are distinct from Class 1 or Class 2 verbs which entail the act of speech. While speech

Since the BH quotative is built on the infinitive, it nearly always depends on the finite matrix verb of the clause.<sup>6</sup> Examining pairings between matrix verb and quotative is important because not all languages can have a quotative depend on a non-speech verb. If certain verbs cannot take a quotative, translating a Hebrew verb:quotative pair might require the introduction of a speech verb. While this is a strategic change in recording speech, it is motivated purely by typological differences in language and should not be interpreted as translator inconsistency. Still, this example of structural entropy can have semantic impact, as introducing another verb may change the perceived event chronology or aspect.

To capture this factor of quotative usage, I categorize matrix verbs into three classes, which describe their entailment of information relevant to speech acts. First (1) class verbs are 'generic' speech verbs which entail only the occurrence of speech, including its contents and participants as relevant. In Hebrew the verb root אָמַר ('mr) forms only first class verbs. In English, "say" is the best example. In Greek, first class verbs all come from the root of λεγω (lego), and in Russian both сказать (skazat') and говорить (govorit') are used. The Kyrgyz root for first class verbs is де- (de). Second (2) class verbs entail both speech and some additional context about the utterance or discourse. This includes words like "bless", "reply", and "command", but also words corresponding to "hear", "read", or "think". These verbs cannot occur apart from speech (whether spoken or not), but also describe the nature of the speech and/or its reception, as well as its place or role in the discourse. Finally, third (3) class verbs do not entail speech at all, but share a subject or object with the speech act. Class 3 verbs can and often do occur apart from speech, examples in the data include: "come", "arrive", "be angry", "make", and "hasten".

In addition to verb classification, verses are also categorized by other relevant contextual factors which may impact quotative usage or translation. These contextual factors can be divided into two categories: discourse and clausal level factors. At the discourse level, some verses are independent, having no significant context which might impact the recording of speech,

<sup>5</sup>Two instances of the variant spelling: לְאָמַר are also included.

<sup>6</sup>The only exceptions to this rule in our data are Deuteronomy 30:12 and 30:13 which are discussed in greater detail in section ??.

while others are embedded inside other clauses or even other prior speech acts. Direct speech may occur as the contents of a command, a promise, a dream or even a hypothetical scenario. Verses at the crux of a larger piece of dialogue may behave differently in order to emphasize their conjunctive or disjunctive relationship with the surrounding text. At the clausal level, quotatives may be paired with a single matrix verb, with two matrix verbs in roughly equivalent syntactic proximity, or with two verbs which have a subordinating relationship between them prior to their pairing with the infinitive construct of **לְאָמַר** laymor. The BH quotative is most commonly associated with a conjugated finite verb, but may also occur with participles and in modification of other nominal phrases.

In recording and analyzing the texts, no weight is placed on the use or disuse of punctuation since it is not a feature of spoken language, nor is especially prominent in texts proceeding from oral cultures such as that which generated the Bible (Makutoane et al., 2015). There does not appear to be any explicit pattern with respect to punctuation in translation, although this claim is subject to further investigation. Additionally, it is worth noting that the chapter and verse distinctions are relatively consistent across all languages, but there are some variations which occur. These instances are included as notes in the underlying data set, but pose no difficulty to analysis. Finally, no textual variants were identified to have any impact on the verses studied.

Following this analysis and recording of the Hebrew, the corresponding translation forms for the matrix verb and quotative are recorded for each language under study. Although generally straightforward, at times there is ambiguity in translation. In cases where the syntactic relationship between quotatives and verbs changes in translation, the form most closely corresponding to the matrix verb in Hebrew is still recorded. Additional verbs which appear in translation, outside of a specific idiomatic construction being used to translate a Hebrew expression, are noted as a clause level contextual change but not listed alongside the matrix verb deriving from the Hebrew text. Contextual notes which differ from those recorded for the Hebrew are made when translation created new clauses, ended or opened series of statements, and introduced or omitted idiomatic expressions. The summary of all matrix verbs and quotatives are then further categorized according to the combination of their root and grammatical form as a means of comparing differences in form which are the result of gender, person and number conjugation alone. For our purposes there is only one significant difference involved in translating an unconjugated non-finite verb as a conjugated finite one, even though the second case may result in the production of multiple various forms as a result of its new need to express agreement with its subject. Counting the different forms that result simply from conjugation would over-represent the departure from the original form, by causing a single consistent translation decision to register as multiple variations. Appropriately, changes between forms of a single root are recorded as separate instances since translating the same word in BH as the finite and non-finite forms of the same root in Greek for example, is a distinct translation decision and represents the use of another syntactic strategy. At the conclusion of this tiered categorization process simple totals are calculated for each form and category that has occurred. These conclusions can be found... Then, each verse in translation is placed alongside the other verses which have been categorized similarly.

### 3.3 Analysis

The analysis of data collected will proceed in three (3) steps. The first step is intralingual analysis which covers the factors to come into play with respect to recording direct speech within the constraints of a specific language. Specific grammatical constraints, impoverished forms, idiomatic usages, and choices made with respect to a particular native-speaker audience are all included in this analysis. The second step is single-stage interlingual analysis which looks at the relationships between corresponding verses only of adjacent translations. This involves comparing Hebrew and Greek, Greek and Russian, and finally, Russian and Kyrgyz. These represent the closest translation relationships since they are directly proceeding from or into each other. Here, I begin to investigate the interaction between linguistic constraints expressed by each language, and identify unexplained variation arising from translator decisions. Importantly, it is impossible to be certain of the rationale used by any group of translators in every instance of their work, and alternation within language use to capture specific contextual elements, or subtle nuances within the development of the narrative's dialogue can easily escape even a more careful and well-informed search than ours. This does not prevent us from drawing meaningful conclusions about the extent to which these more abstract decisions are made, or from quantifying surrounding decisions made in translation. The final step is multi-stage interlingual analysis: investigating the successive effects of translation on the use/disuse of quotatives across texts which derive from one another. Having built up analysis from the simplest pieces, I assemble a large enough picture of the components functioning within each language and across each subsequent step of translation to accurately represent the effects of multi-stage translation. Introducing multiple instances of translation not only introduces the potential for interference between decisions made by different sets of translators, leaving the door open for an ebb and flow of strategies which are influenced by the text they receive as well as the characteristics of their language. Of course, separating out the many different factors which are at play can be difficult, but the prior evidence from simpler cases will help establish a baseline of behavior. Thus, in order to rule out some of the many potential motivations behind the treatment of each verse in the target language I start with the most specific and strict criteria and progress towards criteria which are more subjective and apply across all languages, as in the case with many discourse features. Our artificial division of analysis steps does not accomplish this completely, nor is it a foregone conclusion that translators first (or most discrete) decisions are based on the limitations of the target language. It is possible that, particularly when working from a prevalent language to a more obscure one, the translation process begins with analysis of the source text. Another method which organizes choices being made in some non-linear order could also be possible.

## 4 Discussion

I begin discussion of results by presenting a simple case of quotative translation across all studied languages which will provide a clear benchmark to measure translation processes against. For this purpose, Genesis 1:22 is used. This is shown in examples 12-15.

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר פְּרוּ וַיְרַבּוּ וַיִּמְלְאוּ (12)  
 ûmil'û ûrabû parû lē'mōr 'ēlohîm 'otām waybārek  
 and-multiply:IMP bear.fruit:IMP QUOT God DOB-3PL and-bless:3SG.IMP

“God blessed them saying, bear fruit and multiply...” (Genesis 1:22) - Class 2 Verb + Quot.

(13) καὶ εὐλόγησεν αὐτὰ ὁ Θεός, λέγων· αὐξάνεσθε καὶ  
 kai eulogēsen auta ho Theos, legōn; auxanesthe kai  
 and bless:3SG.AOR 3PL.ACC DEF God speak:PRES.PART increase:IMP and  
 πληθύνεσθε...  
 plēthynesthe  
 multiply:PASS.IMP

“And God blessed them saying, increase and multiply...” (Genesis 1:22) - Class 2 Verb + Quot.

(14) И благословил их Бог, говоря: плодитесь и размножайтесь...  
 I blagoslovil ikh Bog, govorya: plodites' i razmnozhaytes',  
 and bless:3SG.PERF 3.PL God say:PART.IMPF bear.fruit:IMP.IMP and multiply:IMP.IMP  
 i

“And God blessed them, saying: be fruitful and multiply...” (Genesis 1:22) - Class 2 Verb + Quot.

(15) Анан Кудай аларга мындай деп батасын берди:  
 Anan Kuday alarga mynday dep batasyn berdi:  
 and God 3.PL.DAT thus QUOT blessing.3PL.ACC bless:AUX.3SG  
 «Тукумдап көбөйгүлө...  
 «Tukumdap көбөйгүлө  
 bear.fruit:PL.OPT.FRM multiply:PL.OPT.FRM

“And God blessed them saying, may you be fruitful and multiply...” (Genesis 1:22) - Class 2 Verb + Quot.

These examples are classified as Class 2 speech verbs plus a quotative. The particular 2nd class verb here is roughly equivalent to the English “blessed”, and is paired with a quotative or near-translation of a quotative for languages like Greek and Russian which do not possess true quotatives according to the definition put forth in this paper. In every case the 2nd class

speech verb is finite, being conjugated for person, gender and number as applicable. When a true quotative is used, as is the case in Hebrew and Kyrgyz, it is a non-finite verbal form which appears in a unique syntactic position. A finite verbal form could not be placed in these locations without a conjunction or some other variation to the syntactic structure of the clause being made. In the case of Greek and Russian, a participle is used to translate the quotative as best as possible. A participle is similar to a quotative in several ways, first it is also non-finite and can easily form a circumstantial clause which provides information about actions which occur synchronously with the primary finite verb of the sentence. In both cases the participle must be conjugated according to gender, number, tense/aspect and other features, which sometimes requires providing information which remains ambiguous or unstated in Hebrew or Kyrgyz. Although the participle is a distinct form from a grammatical quotative, the fact that neither Russian nor Kyrgyz would naturally report speech in this way attests to the fact that each is making a concerted effort to translate or preserve the otherwise unusual constructions it receives. While it is true to say that the Greek translators were the only ones who received a true quotative and decided to translate it as a participle, the Russian translators still preserved this unnatural phrasing in their work, knowing it was not typical usage in Greek or Russian.

Example 16 demonstrates how the Hebrew quotative can appear in embedded speech clauses. It is used alongside צוה (šwh) “command” to denote the words which God said in prohibition to Adam (see Genesis 2:16), but here is itself part of God’s speech to Adam at a later date.

וְתֹאכַל <i>wattō'kal</i> and-eat:2SG.IMP	אִשְׁתְּךָ <i>'ištekā</i> wife-2SG.POSS	לְקוֹל <i>laqōwl</i> to-voice	כִּי־שָׁמַעְתָּ <i>kî-šāma'tā</i> because-hear:2SG.PERF	אָמַר <i>'āmar</i> say:3SG	וּלְאָדָם <i>ûlə'ādāma</i> and-to-A	(16)
מִמֶּנּוּ <i>mimmennû</i> from-it	תֹּאכַל <i>tō'kal</i> eat:2SG.IMP	לֹא <i>lō'</i> NEG	לְאָמַר <i>lē'mōr</i> QUOT	אֲשֶׁר <i>šiwwītikā</i> command:1SG.PERF-2SG	מִן־הָעֵץ <i>min-hā'ēš</i> REL from-DEF-tree	

“And to Adam He said, because you have listened to the voice of your wife and you ate from the tree that I commanded you saying, you shall not eat from it...” (Genesis 3:17) -  
 Class 2 Verb + Quot.

In example 17 we see (lemor) used alongside a second class verb in an idiomatic expression, and to provide further elaboration on the speech act. Certainly, naming Noah required pronouncing his name, but only the explanation of why this name is chosen is given following the Hebrew quotative. This shows how the quotative might be used to provide emphasis within a series of speech acts.

(17)

יְנַחֲמֵנִי	זֶה	לְאֹמֵר	נֹחַ	אֶת־שְׁמוֹ	וַיִּקְרָא
<i>yenahamenu</i>	<i>zeh</i>	<i>lemor</i>	<i>noah</i>	<i>eth-shemow</i>	<i>wayyiqra</i>
comfort:3SG.IMPf-1PL	DEM.PROX	QUOT	N	DOB-name-3SG.POSS	and-call:3SG.IMPf
	יָדֵינוּ	וּמֵעֲצָבוֹן		מִמַּעֲשֵׂנוּ	
	<i>yadenu</i>	<i>umeitsevown</i>		<i>mimmaasenu</i>	
	hand.PL-1PL.POSS	and-from-toil.CSTR		from-work-3PL.POSS	

“He called his name Noah saying, this one will bring about rest for us from our work and the toil of our hands...” (Genesis 5:29) - Class 2 Verb + Quot.

Minimal examples of class 1 verbs with quotatives are given in examples 18 and 19.

(18)

אֱלֹהִים	אֶל־נֹחַ	לְאֹמֵר	וַיְדַבֵּר
<i>elohim</i>	<i>el-noah</i>	<i>lemor</i>	<i>waydabber</i>
God	to-N	QUOT	and-speak:3SG.IMPf

“God spoke to Noah saying” (Genesis 8:15) - Class 1 + Quot.

(19) Καὶ εἶπε                      Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς πρὸς Νῶε λέγων.  
*Kai eipe                      Kyrios ho Theos pros Nōe legōn;*  
 and say:3SG.AOR Lord DEF God to N speak:PRES.PART

“And the Lord God spoke to Moses, saying:” (Genesis 8:15) - Class 1 + Quot.

In examples 20 and 21 we see that adding another audience member does not disrupt the translation.

(20)

לְאֹמֵר	אִתּוֹ	אֱלֹהִים	אֶל־נֹחַ	וְאֶל־בָּנָיו	וַיֹּאמֶר
<i>lemor</i>	<i>ittow</i>	<i>elohim</i>	<i>el-noah</i>	<i>weel-banayw</i>	<i>wayyomer</i>
QUOT	with-3SG	and-to-son.PL-3SG.POSS	to-N	God	and-said:3SG.IMPf

“God spoke to Noah and his sons with him saying...” (Genesis 9:8) - Class 1 + Quot.

(21) Καὶ εἶπεν                      ὁ Θεός τῷ Νῶε καὶ τοῖς υἱοῖς αὐτοῦ μετ’ αὐτοῦ  
*Kai eipen                      ho Theos tō Nōe kai tois huiois autou met’ autou*  
 and say:3SG.AOR DEF God to N and DEF SON.PL 3SG.GEN with 3MS  
 λέγων.  
*legōn;*  
 say:PRES.PART

“And God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying” (Genesis 9:8) - Class 1 + Quot.

Class 3 verbs which appear alongside quotatives vary widely based on context, some, like example 22, which is the standard means of expressing the onset of a prophetic occurrence, or like ...

(22) אַתְּרוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה הָיָה דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם  
*el-avram devar-yehwah hayah haelleh haddevarim ahar*  
 to-A word.CSTR-YHVH be:3SG.PERF DEF-DEM.PROX.PL DEF-thing.PL after  
 בַּמַּחְזֶה לְאָמֹר אֶל־תִּירָא אַבְרָם אֲנֹכִי מִגֹּן לָךְ  
*lakh magen anokhiy avram al-tira lemor bammahazeh*  
 to-2SG shield 1SG A NEG-fear:2SG.IMPF QUOT in-DEF-vision  
 שְׂכָרְךָ תְּרַבֶּה מְאֹד  
*meod harbeh sekhorkha*  
 INTENS multiply:INF.ABS reward-2SG.POSS

“After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision saying, do not fear Abram. I will be your shield, your reward (is) very great.” (Genesis 15:1) - Class 3 + Quot.

(23) וְהִנֵּה דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלָיו לְאָמֹר לֹא יִירָשְׁךָ זֶה  
*zeh yiroshkha lo lemor elayw devar-yehwah wehinneh*  
 DEM.PROX inherit:3SG.IMPF-2SG NEG QUOT to-3SG word.CSTR-YHVH and-behold  
 כִּי־אִם אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִמֵּעֵיךָ הוּא יִירָשְׁךָ  
*yirashekha hu mimmeeykha yetse asher ki-im*  
 inherit:3SG.IMPF-2SG 3SG from-bowels-2SG.POSS go.out:3SG.IMPF REL for-IRR

“Behold a word of the Lord (came) to him saying, this one will not be your heir, for when one comes from your seed, he will be your heir.” (Genesis 15:4) - Class 3 + Quot.

(24) καὶ εὐθὺς φωνὴ Κυρίου ἐγένετο πρὸς αὐτὸν λέγουσα· οὐ  
*kai euthys phōnē Kyriou egeneto pros auton legousa; ou*  
 and immediately voice Lord be:3SG.AOR.MID to 3SG.ACC say:PRES.PART NEG  
 κληρονομήσει σε οὗτος, ἀλλ’ ὅς ἐξελεύσεται ἐκ σοῦ, οὗτος  
*klēronomēsei se houtos, all’ hos exeleusetai ek sou, houtos*  
 inherit:3SG.FUT 2SG.ACC this.one but 3SG.M go.out:3SG.FUT from 2SG.GEN, this.one  
 κληρονομήσει σε.  
*klēronomēsei se.*  
 inherit:3SG.FUT 3SG.ACC

“And immediately the voice of the Lord came to him saying, this one will not be your heir, but one that will be born from you, he will be your heir.” (Genesis 15:4) - Class 3 + Quot.

#### 4.1 Difficult Cases

בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כָּרַת יְהוָה אֶת־אַבְרָם בְּרִית לְאָמֵר לְזַרְעֶךָ (25)  
*lezarakha lemor berith eth-avram yehwah karath hahu bayyowm*  
 to-seed-2SG.POSS QUOT covenant DOB-A YHVH cut:3SG.PERF DEM in-DEF-day  
 נָתַתִּי אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת  
*minnehar hazzoth eth-haarets nathattiy*  
 DEM.PROX DOB-DEF-land give:1SG.PERF

“In that day the LORD cut a covenant with Abram saying, to your seed I have given this land...” (Genesis 15:18)

וּכְמוֹ הַשַּׁחַר עָלָה וַיֵּאֲצִיּוּ הַמַּלְאָכִים בְּלוֹט לְאָמֵר (26)  
*lemor belowt hammalakhim wayyayitsu alah hashahar ukhemow*  
 QUOT with-L DEF-angel.PL and-hasten:3PL.IMPF go.up:3SG.PERF DEF-dawn and-when  
 קוּם קַח אֶת־אִשְׁתְּךָ וְאֶת־שְׁתֵּי בְּנוֹתֶיךָ  
*venotheykha weeth-shette eth-ishtekha qah qum*  
 daughter.PL-2SG.POSS and-DOB-two.CSTR DOB-wife-2SG.POSS take:IMP get.up:IMP

DEF-find:F.PL.PART.PASS

“At dawn the angels hastened Lot saying, Get up, take your wife and your two daughters who are with you...” (Genesis 19:15)

	עַל־יָדַי	וְאֶת־הַצְּמִדִּים	אֶת־הַנֶּזֶם	כִּרְאֹת	וַיְהִי	(27)
	<i>al-yede</i>	<i>weeth-hatsemidim</i>	<i>eth-hannezem</i>	<i>kiroth</i>	<i>wayhi</i>	
	on-hand.PL.CSTR	and-DOB-bracelet.PL	DOB-earring	when-see:INFC	and-be:3SG.IMP	
	אָחֹתוֹ	רִבְקָה	אֶת־דְּבָרָי	וּכְשָׁמְעוּ	אָחֹתוֹ	
	<i>ahothow</i>	<i>rivqah</i>	<i>eth-divre</i>	<i>ukheshomow</i>	<i>ahothow</i>	
	sister-3SG.POSS	R	DOB-word.PL.CSTR	and-when-hear:INFC-3SG	sister-2SG.POSS	
	אֶל־הָאִישׁ	וַיָּבֹא	הָאִישׁ	אֵלַי	כֹּה־דִבֶּר	לֵאמֹר
	<i>el-haish</i>	<i>wayyavo</i>	<i>haish</i>	<i>elay</i>	<i>koh-dibber</i>	<i>lemor</i>
	to-DEF-man	and-come:3SG.IMP	DEF-man	to-1SG	thus-speak:3SG.PERF	QUOT
		עַל־הָעַיִן	עַל־הַגְּמָלִים	עֹמֵד	וַהֲגִיחַ	
		<i>al-haayin</i>	<i>al-haggemallim</i>	<i>omed</i>	<i>wehinneh</i>	
		upon-DEF-well	upon-camel.PL	stand:M.SG.PART	and-behold	

“When he saw the earring and the bracelets on the hands of his sister, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister saying, Thus the man spoke to me, he came to the man and behold he was standing by the camels and the well.” (Genesis 24:30) - Class 2 Verb + Quot.

## 4.2 Quotative Omissions

(28)	καὶ ἀνέστη	Ἄβραάμ	ἀπὸ τοῦ	νεκροῦ	αὐτοῦ	καὶ εἶπεν	Ἄβραάμ
	<i>kai anestē</i>	<i>Ἀbraam</i>	<i>apo tou</i>	<i>nekrou</i>	<i>autou</i>	<i>kai eipen</i>	<i>Ἀbraam</i>
	and stand:3SG.AOR	A	from DEF	dead	3SG.GEN	and say:3SG.AOR	A
	τοῖς υἱοῖς	τοῦ	Χετ	λέγων·			
	<i>tois huiois</i>	<i>του</i>	<i>Chet</i>	<i>legōn;</i>			
	DEF son.PL	DEF H		say:PRES.PART			

“Abram stood up from among his dead and Abram said to the sons of Heth, saying...” (Genesis 23:3) - Class 1 Verb + Quot.

- (29) καὶ εἶπε τῷ Ἐφρών εἰς τὰ ὄτα ἐναντίον τοῦ λαοῦ τῆς γῆς· ἐπειδὴ  
*kai eipe tō Ephrōn eis ta ōta enantion tou laou tēs gēs; epeidē*  
 and say:3SG.AOR DEF E in DEF ear before DEF crowd DEF land now  
 πρὸς ἐμοῦ εἶ, ἀκουσον μου· τὸ ἀργύριον τοῦ ἀγροῦ  
*pros emou ei, akouson mou; to argyriou tou agrou*  
 before 1SG be:2SG.PRES hear:2SG.AOR.IMP 1SG.GEN DEF price DEF land  
 λάβε παρ’ ἐμοῦ, καὶ θάψω τὸν νεκρόν μου ἐκεῖ.  
*labe par’ emou, kai thapsō ton nekron mou ekei.*  
 take:2SG.AOR.IMP from 1SG.GEN and bury:1SG.FUT.SUBJ DEF dead 1SG.GEN DEM

“And he spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, If you are willing, hear me: take the price of the land from me and I will bury my dead there.” (Genesis 23:13) - Class 1 Verb, No Quot.

- (30) אַז וַיִּשִׁיר־מֹשֶׁה וּבָנָיו יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לַיהוָה  
*layhwah hazzoth eth-hashirah yisrael uvene yashir-mosheh az*  
 to-YHVH DEM.PROX DOB-DEF-song I and-son.PL.CSTR sing:3SG.IMP-F-M then  
 וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֵאמֹר אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי־גָאֹחַ  
*ki-gaoh layhwah ashirah lemor wayyomeru*  
 for-grow.high:INF.ABS to-YHVH sing:1SG.IMPF QUOT and-say:3PL.IMPF  
 גָּאֹחַ וְרֹכֵבֹו סוּס וְרָמָה בַיָּם  
*vayyam ramah werokhevow sus gaah*  
 in-DEF-sea throw:3SG.PERF and-rider-3SG.POSS horse grow.high:3SG.PERF

“Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the LORD and spoke saying, I will sing to the LORD for He has triumphed greatly, He has thrown the horse and its rider into the sea.” (Exodus 15:1) - Class 1 Verb + Quot.

- (31) Μετὰ δὲ τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα ἐγενήθη ῥῆμα κυρίου πρὸς Ἀβραμ ἐν  
*Meta de ta rhēmata tauta egenēthē rhēma kyriou pros Abram en*  
 after CONJ DEF thing.PL DEM.PL be:3SG.AOR.PASS word Lord to A in  
 ὄραματι λέγων Μὴ φοβοῦ, Ἀβραμ, ἐγὼ ὑπερασπίζω σου,  
*horamati legōn Mē phobou, Abram, egō hyperaspizō sou,*  
 vision say:PRES.PART NEG fear:2SG.IMP A 1SG be.shield:1SG.PRES 2SG.GEN  
 ὁ μισθός σου πολὺς ἔσται σφόδρα.  
*ho misthos sou polys estai sphodra.*  
 DEF reward 2SG.GEN INTENS be:3SG.FUT INTENS

“And after these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision saying, Do not fear, Abram, I am your shield, your reward will be abundantly great.” (Genesis 15:1) - Class 3 Verb + Quot.

(32)	καὶ ἐνετείλατο	τοῖς	Λευίταις	τοῖς	αἵρουσι	τὴν	κιβωτὸν
	<i>and command:3SG.AOR</i>	<i>DEF.DAT.PL</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>DEF.DAT.PL</i>	<i>lift:PRES.PART</i>	<i>DEF.GEN</i>	<i>covenant</i>
	and command:3SG.AOR	DEF	L	DEF	DEF	DEF	LORD
	τῆς	διαθήκης	Κυρίου	λέγων			
	<i>Lord</i>	<i>say:PRES.PART</i>					
	say:3SG.PRES.PART						

“and he commanded the Levites, the ones carrying the ark of the covenant of the Lord saying...” (Deuteronomy 31:25) Class 2 Verb + Quot.

### 4.3 Numerical Summary

The evaluation of all 306 verses in four different languages is a very complex task with great potential to become unwieldy in analysis. Since we have provided a brief explanation of the types of verses which are being studied, and given some sense of the methods and difficulties in categorizing those sentences, we will progress into numerical presentations which make simpler conclusions about the translation process possible.

The first piece of data to be considered is simply whether the quotative is translated in some manner across each language. Since our analysis is based on verses where the Hebrew quotative is present, there can only be fewer than 306 instances of the quotative in translation. The disappearance of quotatives is graphed below in figure 1.

We see that the number of quotatives decreases through Greek and Russian, before recovering significantly in Kyrgyz. Partly this is due to the decreasing preference of Greek and especially of Russian for the employment of quotative forms. Neither language has a pure quotative form and simply adapts other verbal forms to accomplish this purpose. This means that there is not a directly corresponding quotative form in natural speech for either of these languages, making the close translation of such a form less likely to be preserved. This general decrease in quotative use is also influenced by grammatical constraints which prevent the use of the standard translated form of the quotative being used in some cases. Whether because of a strict grammatical impossibility or simply strong linguistic preference, neither Greek nor Russian translate quotatives alongside imperatives, and Russian omits them inside embedded speech clauses. The resurgence of quotatives in Kyrgyz is representative of the abundance of quotative usage relative the other languages under study. While Hebrew expresses a clear and defined use of the quotative, it is far less common than the Kyrgyz, yet this natural propensity does not restore each quotative occurrence studied. Figure 1 shows the frequency of the most common quotative forms for each language in the Pentateuch and the entire Hebrew Bible. These instances are performing all variety of linguistic functions, but give some sense of how common the forms are outside of the scope of our investigation.

To add further depth into our understanding and treatment of the quotative forms employed, we can consider the primary ways of rendering the quotative by language. Figure 2 shows the

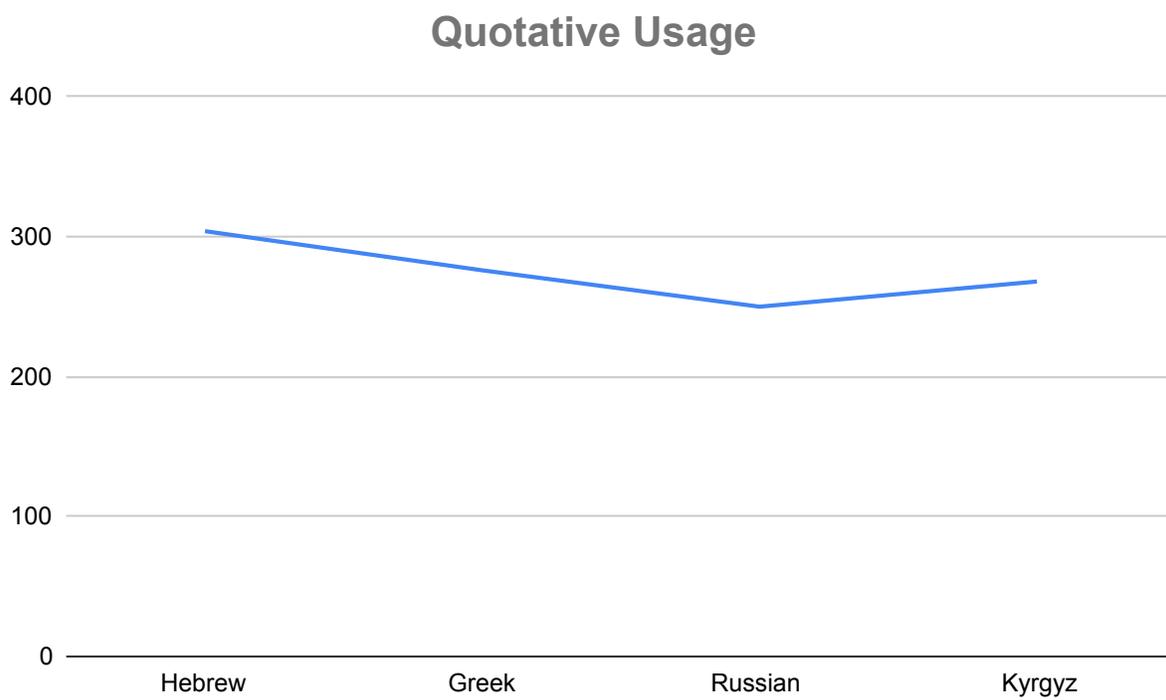


Figure 1: Quotative frequency by language.

Language	Form	As Quotative	Pentateuch	Hebrew Bible
Hebrew	לְאמֹר	306	306	928
Greek	λέγων	215	412	1844
	λέγοντες	43	55	213
	λέγουσα	12	15	34
	λεγόντων	3	3	15
	λέγοντος	1	1	3
Russian	говоря	178	183	354
	сказал	34	796	2389
	сказав	26	26	69
	сказано	5	5	35
	скажи	5	93	268
	говорить	2	46	161
Kyrgyz	деп	111	492	1863
	деди	96	634	2573
	дешти	12	67	253
	деген	9	78	541
	де	3	28	72
	дегенин	2	6	8
	дегиле	2	7	18
	дебе	1	2	11
	дегенден	1	1	1
	дешет	1	5	65

Table 1: The greater prevalence of forms used for translating the quotative.

Quotative Breakdown by Forms

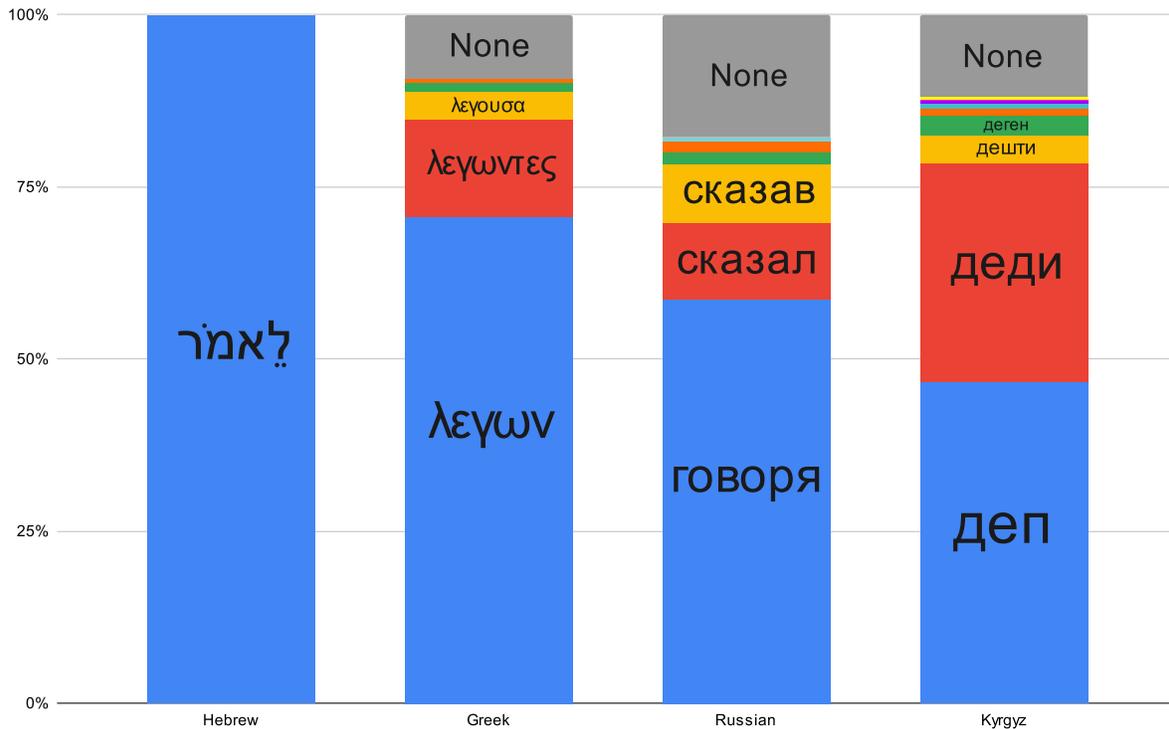


Figure 2: A breakdown of which forms are used mostly frequently to translate quotatives.

progression in variety of forms used to translate the quotative. Each language is presented with its most prevalent form at the base, and forms which appear less than six times are not labeled.

Moving beyond a review of the linguistic backdrops of quotative usage, I address an initial examination of the verses and their translation results. I first examine verses on the presence or absence of a translation of the Hebrew quotative. Then, based on this criteria, I divide each verse into one of eight categories which are shown in figure 2, along with their frequency in the Pentateuch.

Interestingly, only 73.13% of verses are translated with a quotative rendered in all four languages. Notably, the omission of a quotative does not immediately constitute a change from direct to indirect speech, but is still a sizable change worthy of note. While this study is limited to the simplest expressions and analysis of the role that quotatives play within a Biblical text, and thus presents few interpretive effects of quotative translation, there is considerable scholarship which examines more closely the significance of **לְאמֹר** (lē'mōr). These analyses present many interpretive distinctions which would be disrupted by the disappearance of quotatives in translation, and conceals their discovery to original language analysis.

Per figure 2, there are no verses which entirely omit quotatives, and none where only the Russian translation provides a quotative. This confirms the understanding that the translation of the quotative in Russian is an unnatural construction, resulting from translation. Interestingly,

Type	Frequency	Percent
None	0	0.00%
Only Rus	0	0.00%
Only Kir	3	1.02 %
No Grk	9	3.06%
Only Greek	9	3.06%
No Kir	24	8.16%
No Rus	34	11.56%
All	215	73.13%

Table 2: Complete categorization of verses by quotative use/disuse across languages.

in only three verses does the Kyrgyz translation recover the quotatives which have been lost by both Greek and Russian, but there are 34 instances where the Kyrgyz translates a quotative where the Russian had none. Russia, as the language least preferring quotatives, and Kyrgyz, which prefers quotatives the most, comprise the translation step most fraught with potential for the dropping of quotatives, on account of their particular linguistic pairing, as well as their ordering in the translation process. Of the quotative disappearances, together they account for 77% of the total.

Having covered a few simpler levels of analysis, I investigate the primary data set aggregated in the course of this research. In the process of studying each instance of the original Hebrew quotative לְאָמַר (lē'mōr) as they are translated, there are many factors which influence translators' rendering of the text. I have already given some account of the broad linguistic traits which influence this translation, and have given some discussion towards translation effects deriving from the sequential nature of these translations, but now turn to focus on the other verbal components of each verse which are paired with the quotative.

All of the 306 verses are categorized according to their "quotative strategy", which describes the relationship between the quotative, if one exists, and the rest of the verse. Besides the presence of a quotative, the next major division in these strategies is which class of verb appears with the speech act. Further distinctions arise from multi-verb constructions, which pair the quotative with two or more verbs which cannot take the quotative independently. The quotative may also be rendered as a finite verb, joined to the prior verb by means of a conjunction. Other verses translate the quotative as a true infinitive, or append a nominal phrase to clarify the relationship between the speech act, and the given verb. Russian, by means of так (tak), and Kyrgyz, with мындай (mundai), reinforce the guiding nature of directly recorded speech by including a "thusly" word. All of these strategies are recorded alongside each verse, allowing us to track the movement between strategies by language. The abbreviations accompanying the categorization system are provided below in figure ???. Following this is figure ??, which graphically represents the variation in quotative strategies used for each verse studied.

1st Class Verb  
 2nd Class Verb  
 3rd Class Verb  
 1st Class Verb + Quot.  
 2nd Class Verb + Quot.  
 3rd Class Verb + Quot.  
 Multiverb + Quot.  
 No Verb + Quot.  
 Class X Verb + Inf.  
 Class X Verb + Indir. Disc.  
 Class X Verb + Speech Verb  
 Class X Verb + Flipped  
 1st Class Verb + Quot. + “Thusly”  
 2nd Class Verb + Quot. + “Thusly”  
 3rd Class Verb + Quot. + “Thusly”

only a generic speech verb accompanies the speech utterance  
 only a Class 2 verb accompanies the speech utterance  
 only a non-speech verb accompanies the speech utterance  
 a generic speech verb alongside a quotative,  
 a Class 2 verb with a quotative, i.e. the children  
 A non-speech verb with a quotative, i.e. the mother  
 Two or more verbs which cannot be syntactically divided apart  
 The quotative appears as a separate clause  
 Quotative is translated as infinitive selected for by matrix verb, i.e. Mother says  
 Speech is converted to infinitive  
 Quotative becomes finite verb form, usually appears as a separate clause  
 Matrix verb becomes nominalized or an infinitive while quotative becomes a separate clause

Table 3: Descriptions and examples of labels used for figure ??.



This visualization of the data demonstrates how and when the five initial quotative strategies used by Biblical Hebrew spread into the nineteen used by Kyrgyz. Broadly, it shows that the primary strategy, that of a first class verb with the quotative, is translated into Greek with a very high level of consistency, but over 20% of these instances lose their quotative when translated into Russian. The distribution in Kyrgyz shows a large degree of variety, with a considerable number of verses making large changes between strategies.

## 5 Conclusions

In conclusion, I have shown that structural linguistic entropy increases with each translation, and is positively correlated with greater difference between languages (i.e. Russian and Kyrgyz). While it is possible for translations of a substantially different approach to simplify data by consolidating strategies, the general trend of all translation is towards greater entropy. While structural entropy is not equivalent to semantic entropy, the translation of quotatives as finite verbs can impact the aspectual reading of a text, as can other divergent strategies.

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## **A Abbreviations**

1	First Person
2	Second Person
3	Third Person
ABS	Absolute
ACC	Accusative
AOR	Aorist
AUX	Auxiliary
BH	Biblical Hebrew
CONJ	Conjunction
CSTR	Construct Form
DAT	Dative
DEF	Definite
DEM	Demonstrative
DOB	Definite Direct Object
F	Feminine
FRM	Formal
FUT	Future
GEN	Genitive
IMP	Imperative
IMPF	Imperfect
INF	Infinitive
INTENS	Intensifier
IRR	Irrealis
LXX	Septuagint
M	Masculine
MID	Middle
NEG	Negative
NPST	Non-past
OPT	Optative
PART	Participle
PASS	Passive
PERF	Perfect
PL	Plural
POL	Polite
POSS	Possessive
PRES	Present
PROX	Proximate
PST	Past Tense
QST	Polar Question
QUOT	Quotative
REL	Relativizer
RPST	Recent Past Tense
SG	Singular
YHVH	the Divine Name

Table 4: Table of Abbreviations