

THE DISCOURSE FUNCTION OF ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν ("HE ANSWERED AND SAID") IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

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A LARGE PORTION OF JOHN'S STORY ABOUT JESUS consists of direct or indirect speeches. Besides the common verb of speaking, λέγω ("say" or "speak"), which occurs 480 times in the Fourth Gospel, John often employs ἀποκρίνομαι ("answer" or "reply") to introduce an utterance in a conversation. Notably, these two verbs (usually joined by καί) are present in the same quotative frame (i.e., an expression used to introduce reported speech) more than 30 times in this Gospel. In these instances, a number of modern English Bible versions include only one verb and leave out the other in their translations. For example, the phrase ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ in 4:13 is translated "Jesus answered" (NIV), "Jesus replied" (NLT), and "Jesus said to her" (NRSV). The implication of these translations is that the verbal combination ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν is mere pleonasm and has no pragmatic purpose within John's literary scheme.

Yet Abbott mentioned that the Johannine phrase ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν is mainly used to introduce "elementary doctrine or explanation of misunderstanding."¹ More recently, Levinsohn says that the verb ἀποκρίνομαι by itself is John's "default way of introducing a response to a previous speech or non-verbal stimulus."² In contrast,

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¹ Edwin A. Abbott, *Johannine Grammar* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1906), 453–54 n. 1 §2611a, c.

² Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook on the Information Structure of New Testament Greek* (2d ed.; Dallas: SIL In-

the phrase ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν has the rhetorical effect of “highlight[ing] the response,” which often represents “a significant counter” or “a significant new initiative” to a speech or an action.³ Runge analyzes the discourse function of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν under the heading of “redundant quotative frame,” which contains “extra verbs of speaking to ‘frame’ or introduce a speech.”⁴ He notes that discussions in traditional grammars have focused more on the possible Semitic origins of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν than on the function of this device in the discourse.⁵ The use of multiple verbs of speaking for introducing an utterance slows the narrative pace and therefore has “the pragmatic effect of highlighting a discontinuity in the text” and “attracting more attention” to the speech that follows the verbs.⁶ He gives several examples of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν in the New Testament, but all of them are taken from the Synoptic Gospels and Acts.⁷ While Levinsohn devotes a section to the use of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν in this Gospel, a comprehensive analysis of this Johannine feature is still wanting.⁸

This article attempts to fill this lacuna and offer a fuller understanding of this Johannine discourse device. For the sake of convenience, it follows Runge’s terminology and calls ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν “redundant quotative frame.” The following analysis gleanes insights from the studies of Levinsohn and Runge, but it diverges from them in that it does not draw on the presence of the historical present of λέγω (if there is any) within the surrounding context of the redundant quotative frame in order to support a possible “highlighting” effect of this feature. Levinsohn stresses that the historical present of λέγω has the “cataphoric” function of accentuating a

ternational, 2000), 255–56 (cf. 247).

³ Ibid., 256. Levinsohn calls the verb ἀποκρίνομαι alone a “short orienter” and the phrase ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν a “long orienter.”

⁴ Steven E. Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament: A Practical Introduction for Teaching and Exegesis* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2010), 145–62 (145).

⁵ Ibid., 145–48. For instance, Wallace notes that the formulation of a finite verb with a participle (e.g., ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν) is “probably due to a Semitic idiom.” See Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 649–50. See also Nigel Turner, *Syntax* (Edinburgh, UK: T&T Clark, 1963), 155.

⁶ Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 145. See also pp. 148–52.

⁷ Ibid., 152–62.

⁸ Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 255–60 (§15.2).

later speech or event.⁹ His view has been largely taken up by Runge and Fanning,¹⁰ who has recently changed his position and no longer regards this verb's historical present to involve "merely stereotyped uses."¹¹ A thorough investigation of Levinsohn's proposal regarding the forward-pointing function of the historical present of λέγω in John's Gospel is beyond the scope of this study. Also, it seems unwise to build an argument concerning the pragmatic function of one discourse feature (i.e., ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν) on the basis of the pragmatic function of another discourse feature (i.e., the historical present of λέγω), when there is a lack of consensus among scholars about the second. The remainder of this article observes Johannine use of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν, looking closely at several representative examples and considering implications for how to translate this "pleonastic" expression. This study broadly supports Runge's and Levinsohn's claims that the phrase ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν is not merely a pleonastic expression but rather carries out certain pragmatic functions in the discourse. More specifically, it serves to introduce the important speeches in the Johannine narrative that expound theological truths to the addressees or counter the criticism from them.

AN OVERVIEW

In the New Testament, the majority of the occurrences of ἀποκρίνομαι are in the narratives of the four Gospels and Acts.¹²

⁹ Ibid., 248–55; Levinsohn comments on the cataphoric function of the historical present on p. 200.

¹⁰ Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 137–41; cf. idem, "The Verbal Aspect of the Historical Present Indicative in Narrative," in *Discourse Studies and Biblical Interpretation: A Festschrift in Honor of Stephen H. Levinsohn* (ed. Steven E. Runge; Bellingham: Logos Bible Software, 2011), 191–223 (esp. 200–2).

¹¹ Buist M. Fanning, "Greek Presents, Imperfects, and Aorists in the Synoptic Gospels: Their Contribution to Narrative Structuring," in Runge, *Discourse Studies and Biblical Interpretation*, 184 n. 88 (cf. the section on "the historical present" on pp. 181–85). For Fanning's earlier position, see his *Verbal Aspect in the Greek New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), 231–34; Mavis M. Leung, "The Narrative Function and Verbal Aspect of the Historical Present in the Fourth Gospel," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51.4 (2008): 703–20; Stephanie L. Black, "The Historic Present in Matthew: Beyond Speech Margins," in *Discourse Analysis and the New Testament: Approaches and Results*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Jeffrey T. Reed (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 120–39 (esp. 126–27); cf. Friedrich Blass and Albert Debrunner, and Robert Walter Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Robert W. Funk, 10th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 167 § 321 (=BDF hereafter).

¹² Apart from the Gospels and Acts, ἀποκρίνομαι is present in Colossians 4:6 and

Among these, John's Gospel contains the highest rate of this verb's occurrences, with a total of 78 instances (77 are in non-speech contexts and 1 is in a speech),¹³ compared with 55 instances in Matthew's Gospel, 30 instances in Mark's Gospel, 46 instances in Luke's Gospel, and 20 instances in Acts. While ἀποκρίνομαι often appears in a participial form in the Synoptics and Acts,¹⁴ all of this verb's 78 occurrences in John's narrative are in the indicative mood (most often an aorist passive form).¹⁵ Of these 78 occurrences, it appears in connection with λέγω within a quotative frame 32 times; in most cases, the two verbs are linked by the conjunction καί. In these 32 combinations of ἀποκρίνομαι and λέγω, the default tense of the latter verb seems to be aorist. The two exceptional examples are the imperfect indicative verb ἔλεγεν in 5:19 and the present participle λέγων in 12:23. In contrast to the Synoptic tendency of using a participle and a finite verb (i.e., ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν),¹⁶ John is fond of combining two finite verbs, i.e., ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν.¹⁷ John's 2 occurrences of ἀπεκρίθη λέγων (a finite verb with a participle) are in 1:26 and 12:23 in the Fourth Gospel. The analysis of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν below includes these two rare instances.

The following two tables describe these 32 instances of the redundant quotative frame in the Gospel of John. Table 1 charts the basic phenomena regarding this discourse feature. Table 2 shows the translations of this phrase in four English Bible versions.

Revelation 7:13 in the New Testament.

¹³ The 77 instances of ἀποκρίνομαι that occur in non-speech contexts in John's Gospel are located in 1:21, 26, 48, 49, 50; 2:18, 19; 3:3, 5, 9, 10, 27; 4:10, 13, 17; 5:7, 11, 17, 19; 6:7, 26, 29, 43, 68, 70; 7:16, 20, 21, 46, 47, 52; 8:14, 19, 33, 34, 39, 48, 49, 54; 9:3, 11, 20, 25, 27, 30, 34, 36; 10:25, 32, 33, 34; 11:9; 12:23, 30, 34; 13:7, 8, 26, 36, 38; 14:23; 16:31; 18:5, 8, 20, 23, 30, 34, 35, 36, 37; 19:7, 11, 15, 22; 20:28; 21:5. The verb ἀποκρίνη in 18:22 is within a speech.

¹⁴ See Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 231–35; BDF 217 §420.

¹⁵ Both 5:17 and 5:19 contain ἀπεκρίνατο, an aorist middle indicative verb. Abbott notes that this form in these two verses entails a legal sense, namely that Jesus "made a defense" for Himself. The verb ἀποκρίνομαι occurs in the present tense in 12:23; 13:26, 38; 18:22. See Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, 391–92 §2537.

¹⁶ E.g., Matt. 4:4; 12:39, 48; Mark 6:37; 10:3; Luke 4:12; 5:22. Most traditional grammars explain that the New Testament writers' use of the formula ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν (a participle with a finite verb) is due to Semitic influences. See n. 5.

¹⁷ As Abbott comments, John's "deviation from Synoptic usage must have seemed very strange to readers of the earlier Gospels" (*Johannine Grammar*, 453 §2611a).

Table 1: John's 32 instances of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν				
Verse	Speaker	Answer to a question (+/-)	Closing speech of a scene (+/-)	Explanatory or countering speech (+/-)
1:26	The Baptist	+	+	?
1:48	Jesus	+	-	-
1:50	Jesus	-	-	-
2:18	Jewish leaders	-	-	+
2:19	Jesus	+	-	+
3:3	Jesus	-	-	+
3:9	Nicodemus	-	-	?
3:10	Jesus	+	+	+
3:27	The Baptist	-	+	+
4:10	Jesus	+	-	+
4:13	Jesus	+	-	+
4:17	Samaritan woman	-	-	+
5:19	Jesus	-	+	+
6:26	Jesus	+	-	+
6:29	Jesus	+	-	+
6:43	Jesus	+	-	+
7:16	Jesus	+	-	+
7:21	Jesus	+	+	+
7:52	Jewish leaders	+	+	+
8:14	Jesus	-	-	+
8:39	Jewish leaders	-	-	+
8:48	Jewish leaders	-	-	+
9:20	blind man's parents	+	+	?
9:30	blind man	-	+	+
9:34	Jewish leaders	-	+	+
9:36	blind man	+	-	-
12:23	Jesus	-	-	+
12:30	Jesus	-	-	+

13:7	Jesus	+	-	-
14:23	Jesus	+	‡ ¹⁸	+
18:30	Jewish leaders	+	-	+
20:28	Thomas	-	-	-

Table 2: English translations of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν				
Verse	NASB	NRSV	NIV	NLT
1:26	answered... saying ¹⁹	answered	replied	told
1:48	answered and said	answered	answered	replied
1:50	answered and said	answered	said	asked
2:18	answered and said	said	demanded	demanded
2:19	answered and said	answered	answered	replied
3:3	answered and said	answered	in reply... declared	answered
3:9	answered and said	said	asked	asked
3:10	answered and said	answered	said	replied
3:27	answered and said	answered	replied	replied
4:10	answered and said	answered	answered	replied
4:13	answered and said	said	answered	replied
4:17	answered and said	answered	replied	replied
5:19	answered and was saying ²⁰	said	gave answer	explained
6:26	answered and said	answered	answered	replied

¹⁸ If the scene closes at 14:31, the redundant quotative frame in 14:23 introduces the concluding speech of Jesus.

¹⁹ The verb λέγων (“saying”) in 1:26 is a participle (cf. 12:23).

²⁰ The verb ἔλεγεν (“he was saying”) in 5:19 is in the imperfect tense.

6:29	answered and said	answered	answered	told
6:43	answered and said	answered	answered	replied
7:16	answered and said	answered	answered	told
7:21	answered and said	answered	said	replied
7:52	answered and said	replied	replied	replied
8:14	answered and said	answered	answered	told
8:39	answered and said	answered	answered	declared
8:48	answered and said	answered	answered	retorted
9:20	answered and said	answered	answered	replied
9:30	answered and said	answered	answered	replied
9:34	answered and said	answered	replied	answered
9:36	answered and said	answered	asked	answered
12:23	answered... saying ²¹	answered	replied	replied
12:30	answered and said	answered	said	told
13:7	answered and said	answered	replied	replied
14:23	answered and said	answered	replied	replied
18:30	answered and said	answered	replied	retorted
20:28	answered and said	answered	said	exclaimed

Several observations regarding John's use of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν merit comment:

1. Jesus is the speaker in the majority of these 32 occurrences

²¹ The verb λέγων in 12:23 is a participle (cf. 1:26).

of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν, with 18 instances (56%) in which “Jesus” is the verbal subject (1:48, 50; 2:19; 3:3, 10; 4:10, 13; 5:19; 6:26, 29, 43; 7:16, 21; 8:14; 12:23, 30; 13:7; 14:23). As for the remaining 14 instances, the speakers in view are twice John the Baptist (1:26; 3:27), six times the Jewish leaders (2:18; 7:52; 8:39, 48; 9:34; 18:30), once the Samaritan woman (4:17), once Nicodemus (3:9), twice the blind man (9:30, 36), once the blind man’s parents (9:20), and once Thomas (20:28). In the case where ἀποκρίνομαι is not linked to a form of λέγω,²² the proportion where Jesus is the subject of the former verb is approximately the same (24 of 45 instances, i.e., 53%).²³ Thus in the Johannine portrait of Jesus, He often opens His mouth to “answer” (ἀποκρίνομαι) various individuals. Notably, the phrase ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν often occurs to usher in Jesus’ speeches to potential believers or followers (e.g., Nathanael in 1:48, 50; Nicodemus in 3:3, 10; the Samaritan woman in 4:10, 13; the crowd in 6:26, 29, 43; 7:21), His disciples (e.g., 12:23; 13:7; 14:23), and opponents (e.g., 5:19; 7:16; 8:14).

2. It is unnecessary for a question to precede ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν. This phrase may appear in contexts without an explicit question to answer, though the opposite is true in more than half of the cases. Seventeen of the 32 occurrences of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν in John’s Gospel introduce replies to questions that people have asked. Among these 17 instances, Jesus is the speaker 12 times (1:48; 2:19; 3:10; 4:10, 13; 6:26, 29, 43; 7:16, 21; 13:7; 14:23).²⁴ In most cases, the question before this expression concerns the identity or mission of Jesus (see Table 3).

It must be emphasized that in the cases where ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν is not directly related to a prior question, the speech that follows this phrase still in a sense “answers” or “responds to” the preceding action or saying (non-question form) of the interlocutor(s).²⁵

²² This article does not consider the instance of ἀποκρίνομαι within a quoted “speech” in 18:22.

²³ The 24 instances in which “Jesus” is the subject of ἀποκρίνομαι (unaccompanied by λέγω) are in 3:5; 5:17; 6:70; 8:19, 34, 49, 54; 9:3; 10:25, 32, 34; 11:9; 13:8, 26, 36, 38; 16:31; 18:8, 20, 23, 34, 36, 37; 19:11.

²⁴ For the remaining 5 instances in which ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν introduces a reply to a question, once John the Baptist (1:26), once the blind man (9:36), once the blind man’s parents (9:20), and twice the Jewish leaders (7:52; 18:30) are the persons who answer the questions.

²⁵ Levinsohn says that ἀποκρίνομαι can be used for introducing a response to a “non-verbal stimulus.” Runge likewise notes that ἀποκρίνομαι can be found where “there is no question or command in the preceding context that is being answered.” He further refers to R. T. France’s comment on the use of this verb in Mark 9:5–6. See Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 256 (cf. p. 231); Runge,

Approximately 15 instances involve this usage of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν (1:50; 2:18; 3:3, 9, 27; 4:17; 5:19; 8:14, 39, 48; 9:30, 34; 12:23, 30; 20:28). Six times, Jesus is the speaker in view (See Table 4; 1:50; 3:3; 5:19; 8:14; 12:23, 30). For the remaining 9 instances, four times Jewish leaders (2:18; 8:39, 48; 9:34), once Nicodemus (3:9), once John the Baptist (3:27), once the Samaritan woman (4:17), once the blind man (9:30), and once Thomas (20:28) are the speakers.

Table 3: The question before ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν		
	Question	Redundant quotative frame (Speaker: Jesus)
1.	Nathanael: “How do you know me?” (1:48a)	1:48b
2.	The Jews: “What sign do you show to us, seeing that you do these things?” (2:18)	2:19
3.	Nicodemus: “How can these things be?” (3:9)	3:10
4.	The Samaritan woman: “How is it that you, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?” (4:9)	4:10
5.	The Samaritan woman: “You are not greater than our father Jacob, are you?” (4:12)	4:13
6.	The crowd: “Rabbi, when did you get here?” (6:25)	6:26
7.	The crowd: “What shall we do that we may work the works of God?” (6:28)	6:29
8.	The Jews: “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down out of heaven?’”(6:42)	6:43

Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament, 146–47. See also Max Zerwick, *Biblical Greek: Illustrated by Examples* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963), 127.

9.	The Jews: “How has this man become learned, having never been educated?” (7:15)	7:16
10.	The crowd: “Who seeks to kill you?” (7:20)	7:21
11.	Peter: “Lord, do you wash my feet?” (13:6)	13:7
12.	Judas (not Iscariot): “Lord, what then has happened that you are going to disclose yourself to us, and not to the world?” (14:22)	14:23

Table 4: The speech/action before ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν		
	Content of the speech (non-question form) or action	Redundant quotative frame (Speaker: Jesus)
1.	Nathanael’s confession of Jesus’ divine sonship and kingship (1:49)	1:50
2.	Nicodemus’s visitation and initial speech (3:1–2)	3:3
3.	The Jewish leaders’ plot to kill Jesus (5:18)	5:19
4.	The Pharisees’ complaint against Jesus’ self-witness (8:13)	8:14
5.	The Greeks’ desire to see Jesus (12:20–22)	12:23
6.	The crowd’s varied responses to the voice from heaven (12:28b–29)	12:30

3. Approximately one-fourth (9) of the occurrences of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν introduce an utterance that closes a scene in John’s narrative (see Table 5; 1:26; 3:10, 27; 5:19; 7:21, 52; 9:20, 30, 34).²⁶ In most cases, these final utterances are notably long and represent the climaxes of the story. Given the notion of answering that is entailed in ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν, it is not surprising that this device is rarely found with the initial speech of an episode.

²⁶ This list does not include the redundant quotative frame in 14:23 that introduces Jesus’ long answer to Judas’s question in the preceding verse 22.

Table 5: The closing speech introduced by ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν		
Episode	Redundant quotative frame	Closing speech (length)
1:24–28	1:26	John the Baptist’s last speech to the Jews (2 verses)
3:1–15	3:10	Jesus’ last speech to Nicodemus (6 verses)
3:22–30	3:27	John the Baptist’s last speech to his disciples (4 verses)
5:16–47	5:19	Jesus’ last speech to the Jewish leaders (32 verses)
7:14–24	7:21	Jesus’ last speech to the crowd (27 verses)
7:45–52	7:52	The Jewish leaders’ last speech to Nicodemus (1 verse)
9:18–23	9:20	The last speech of the blind man’s parents to the Jewish leaders (2 verses)
9:24–34	9:30, 34	The last two interchanges between the blind man and the Jewish leaders (4 verses and 1 verse)

4. Approximately 24 occurrences of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν introduce speeches that explicate beliefs, clarify misunderstandings, or counter criticism within a conversation. They are located in 2:18, 19; 3:3, 10, 27; 4:10, 13, 17; 5:19; 6:26, 29, 43; 7:16, 21, 52; 8:14, 39, 48; 9:30, 34; 12:23, 30; 14:23; 18:30. In particular, explanatory or clarifying speeches are often present in contexts where someone (e.g., John the Baptist) is testifying about Jesus’ identity or where Jesus is conversing with the disciples or potential believers. Countering speeches are often present in contexts where the interlocutors (e.g., Jesus and His Jewish opponents) are debating or having a disagreement.²⁷ For the present purpose four examples will suf-

²⁷ For the New Testament writers’ use of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν for introducing “significant countering speeches,” see Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 255–60.

fice: (1) In 2:18, ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν introduces the Jewish leaders' counter-question challenging Jesus' authority to interfere with commercial business at the temple. This phrase appears again in 2:19 to usher in Jesus' counter-reply to their challenge. (2) In 3:25–26, the disciples of John the Baptist complain to him concerning Jesus' growing popularity. In 3:27, the redundant quotative frame is used to introduce his clarifying response regarding his subordinate role to the messiah. (3) Three occurrences of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν are found in Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman (4:10, 13, 17). In the first two instances, both of the speeches of Jesus explain the gift of living water. In the third instance, the redundant quotative frame introduces the woman's counter-reply to Jesus' earlier command to bring her husband to meet Him. (4) In 7:50–51, Nicodemus's question to the Jewish leaders implicitly challenges their unlawful condemnation of Jesus. The phrase ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν occurs in 7:52 to introduce their counter-reply to Nicodemus.

5. While NASB consistently renders ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν with “answered and said,” several other English Bible versions seem to regard this phrase as pleneastic and thus leave out either one of the two verbs when translating it (see Table 2 above). For example, NRSV, NIV, and NLT employ only one English verb for rendering ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν. Taking these three English versions together, the most common translations for this phrase are “answered” and “replied.” These two English words basically express the meaning of ἀποκρίνομαι. Other common translations are “said” and “told.” They basically express the meaning of λέγω. Strong English words such as “declared,” “demanded,” “retorted,” and “exclaimed” are occasionally employed to render the entire verbal combination ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν. However, the rarity of these renderings in these English versions suggests that in most cases this Johannine phrase is considered akin to a common verb of speaking that bears little or no rhetorical force.

REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLES

This section will discuss five representative examples of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν within the Johannine narrative. The diagram of each example will show the redundant quotative frame underlined. The analysis will emphasize that this device is used to usher in a number of important speeches within the immediate context of the narrative. Thus the following examples lend support to the claims of Runge and Levinsohn that the phrase ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν performs a highlighting function in the discourse.

1. John 2:18–22 (vv. 18a, 19a): Jesus’ conversation with Jewish leaders at the temple.

- 2:18a Ἀπεκρίθησαν οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ
[“The Jews therefore answered and said to him”]
2:18b [The Jews’ speech]
2:19a ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς
[“Jesus answered and said to them”]
2:19b [Jesus’ speech]
2:20a εἶπαν οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι
[“The Jews therefore said”]
2:20b [The Jews’ speech]
2:21–22 [The evangelist’s comment]

The passage 2:18–22 is the second part of a diptych beginning with verse 12 (2:12–17, 18–22). Occurrences of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν are present in verses 18 and 19. In the first part of this diptych, Jesus drives out the merchants in the temple and the disciples construe the significance of His act in light of Psalm 68:10 LXX (69:10 MT; 69:9 Eng.). Although no character in the scene has asked any question in 2:12–17, John uses ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν in verse 18a to indicate that the ensuing speech of the Jewish leaders is their reaction to Jesus’ earlier interference with the temple’s commerce.²⁸ The redundant quotative frame slows the flow of the narrative and in effect draws attention to the following rhetorical question: “What sign do you show to us, seeing that you do these things?” With this question the Jewish leaders counter Jesus’ temple action and challenge His authority.

The phrase ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν occurs for a second time in 2:19. Instead of simply continuing the discourse,²⁹ it introduces Jesus’

²⁸ J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 163. In fact, the conjunction οὖν and the demonstrative pronoun ταῦτα in 2:18 also suggest that the Jewish leaders’ demand for a “sign” from Jesus targets His earlier act at the temple. See Mavis M. Leung, *The Kingship-Cross Interplay in the Gospel of John: Jesus’ Death as Corroboration of His Royal Messiahship* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 89.

²⁹ Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich give John 2:19 as an example of the use of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν for “the continuation of the discourse” (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed., rev. and ed. Frederick W. Danker [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000], 114).

counter-reply to the Jewish leaders.³⁰ As Michaels comments about the two similar redundant quotative frames in verses 18 and 19, John’s “presentation of Jesus’ response mimics the challenge of the Jewish authorities.”³¹ Both the Jewish leaders’ retort and Jesus’ reply are related to the notion of His replacing the temple in Jerusalem and therefore are important sayings within the Johannine context. Notably, a redundant quotative frame is associated with both of these two *crucial* speeches of the Jewish leaders and Jesus.

2. John 3:1–15 (vv. 3a, 9a, 10a): Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus.

- 3:1–2a [Background information]
 3:2b καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ [“and he said to him”]
 3:2c [Nicodemus’s speech]
 3:3a ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ
 [“Jesus answered and said to him”]
 3:3b [Jesus’ speech]
 3:4a λέγει πρὸς αὐτὸν [ὁ] Νικόδημος
 [“Nicodemus said to him”]
 3:4b [Nicodemus’s speech]
 3:5a ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς
 [“Jesus answered”]
 3:5b–8 [Jesus’ speech]
 3:9a ἀπεκρίθη Νικόδημος καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ
 [“Nicodemus answered and said to him”]
 3:9b [Nicodemus’s speech]
 3:10a ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ
 [“Jesus answered and said to him”]
 3:10b–15 [Jesus’ speech]

Of the six quotative frames in the pericope 3:1–15 (vv. 2b, 3a, 4a, 5a, 9a, 10a), three are formulated with ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν (vv. 3a, 9a, 10a). Levinsohn’s observation that this Johannine phrase serves to introduce and underline countering speeches to the ad-

³⁰ See Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 255–60.

³¹ Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 164.

dressee proves to be largely correct.³² The first occurrence of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν (v. 3) introduces Jesus' initial reply to Nicodemus's opening words (non-question form) in verse 2. The "double-Amen" that begins this reply "serves to draw a contrast between Nicodemus's opening statement and Jesus' response."³³ In His initial speech to Nicodemus, Jesus brings up the important topic of "birth from above," which will predominate in their conversation thereafter. In verse 9, the second occurrence of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν ushers in Nicodemus's counter-question ("How can these things be?"), which represents his response to Jesus' earlier teaching concerning birth of water and Spirit in 3:5–8.³⁴ It is evident that Nicodemus could not understand the thrust of this teaching. In verse 10, the third occurrence of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν introduces the long counter-speech of Jesus (vv. 10b–15), which closes the episode in 3:1–15. Jesus concludes His interchange with Nicodemus by first expressing in a rhetorical question His astonishment at Nicodemus's lack of comprehension ("Are you the teacher of Israel, and you do not understand these things?") and then speaking of the life-giving effect of His own death.

3. John 9:18–23 (v. 20a) and 9:24–34 (vv. 30a, 34a): The Jewish leaders' conversations with the blind man and his parents.

Scene 4 of John 9: The Jewish questioning of the blind man's parents.

9:18	[Background information]
9:19a	καὶ ἠρώτησαν αὐτοὺς λέγοντες
	["And they questioned them, saying"]
9:19b	[The Jews' speech]
9:20a	ἀπεκρίθησαν οὖν οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ εἶπαν
	["His parents answered them and said"]
9:20b–21	[The speech of the blind man's parents]
9:22–23	[The evangelist's comment]

³² Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 259–60.

³³ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 122.

³⁴ Levinsohn comments on the absence of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν in 3:5–8 before Jesus' important teaching about spiritual birth. He says that the absence is because this passage "continues his [Jesus'] argument of verse 3." See Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of Greek New Testament*, 260.

Scene 5 of John 9: The second Jewish interrogation of the blind man.

- 9:24a [Background information]
 9:24b καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ
 ["and said to him"]
 9:24c [The Jews' speech]
 9:25a ἀπεκρίθη οὖν ἐκεῖνος
 ["He therefore answered"]
 9:25b [The blind man's speech]
 9:26a εἶπον οὖν αὐτῷ
 ["They said therefore to him"]
 9:26b [The Jews' speech]
 9:27a ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς
 ["He answered them"]
 9:27b [The blind man's speech]
 9:28a καὶ ἐλοιδόρησαν αὐτὸν καὶ εἶπον
 ["And they reviled him, and said"]
 9:28b-29 [The Jews' speech]
 9:30a ἀπεκρίθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς
 ["The man answered and said to them"]
 9:30b-33 [The blind man's speech]
 9:34a ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ
 ["They answered and said to him"]
 9:34b [The Jews' speech]
 9:34c [Background information]

The episode of Jesus' healing a man born blind in John 9 can be divided into six scenes: (1) Jesus' healing of the blind man (9:1–7), (2) the people's responses to the healing (9:8–12), (3) the Pharisees' first interrogation of the man (9:13–17), (4) the Pharisees' questioning of the blind man's parents (9:18–23), (5) the Pharisees' second interrogation of the blind man (9:24–34), and (6) the blind man's profession of faith in Jesus (9:35–38).³⁵

³⁵ E.g., Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 539; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:775–94.

Scene 4 (9:18–23) contains an occurrence of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν in 9:20a. This scene is largely made up of two speeches. In the first the Jewish leaders question the blind man’s parents, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? Then how does he now see?” (v. 19b). The redundant quotation frame occurs in verse 20a to introduce and highlight the reply of the blind man’s parents (9:20b–21). Their reply is critical for the development of the story because they bear witness that the man has indeed been blind since birth, and it thereby heightens the miraculous nature of Jesus’ opening his eyes.

Scene 5 (9:24–34) unfolds the second interrogation of the man born blind, with a total of seven speeches in this scene. The first five speeches are relatively short and give the impression of a rapid flow of discourse. They are introduced by the following verbs of speaking: εἶπαν (v. 24b), ἀπεκρίθη (v. 25a), εἶπον (v. 26a), ἀπεκρίθη (v. 27a), and ἐλοιδόρησαν καὶ εἶπον (v. 28a). The pace of the discourse begins to decelerate in verse 28, where two verbs of speaking (ἐλοιδόρησαν and εἶπον) introduce the Jewish leaders’ reviling reply to the blind man. Thereafter, the phrase ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν occurs in verses 30 and 34 to introduce the final two interchanges between the blind man and the Jewish leaders. The successive use of two redundant quotative frames further slows the narrative pace and accentuates the content of the closing interchanges accordingly. The speech of the blind man in 9:30 is quite long compared with his previous replies to the Jewish questioning (vv. 9, 11, 12, 15, 17, 25, 27). From the Johannine perspective, this last speech of the blind man is weighty because it asserts the heavenly origin of Jesus, whom this man confesses must come from God (v. 33). In the ensuing verse 34 ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν introduces the Jewish leaders’ definitive rejection of the man born blind, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?” This rhetorical declaration represents the climax of scene 5 and concludes the second Jewish interrogation of the blind man.³⁶ In short, the two consecutive occurrences of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν in verses 30a and 34a give prominence to the Johannine assertion regarding Jesus’ divine origin at

³⁶ The variant ἀπεκρίθη οὖν ἐκεῖνος καὶ εἶπεν is attested in John 9:25 in *Textus Receptus*. If this variant is accepted, there is an additional instance of the redundant quotative frame in John 9. Yet this article has adopted the Greek text of John’s Gospel as attested in NA27/28. The words καὶ εἶπεν are omitted in P66 P75 01 02 03 05 019 032 038 070. This instance of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν is discussed in Levinsohn, *Discourse Feature of New Testament Greek*, 259. For the text of this variant in *Textus Receptus*, see The American and British Committees of the International Greek New Testament Project, ed., *The New Testament in Greek IV: The Gospel according to St. John* (2 vols.; Leiden/Boston: E. J. Brill, 1995, 2007).

the closing of the scene.

John 12:20–36 (vv. 23a, 30a): Jesus' conversations with the disciples and the crowd.

12:20–21a	[Background information]
12:21b	καὶ ἠρώτων αὐτὸν λέγοντες [“and began to ask him, saying”]
12:21c	[The Greeks' speech]
12:22	[Background information]
12:23a	ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀποκρίνεται αὐτοῖς λέγων [“And Jesus answered them, saying”]
12:23b–28a	[Jesus' speech]
12:28b	ἦλθεν οὖν φωνὴ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ [“There came a voice out of heaven”]
12:28c	[The voice's speech]
12:29a	ὁ οὖν ὄχλος ὁ ἐστὼς καὶ ἀκούσας ἔλεγεν [“The multitude therefore ...were saying”]
12:29b	[The crowd's speech]
12:29c	ἄλλοι ἔλεγον [“Others were saying”]
12:29d	[Other people's speech]
12:30a	ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν [“Jesus answered and said”]
12:30b–32	[Jesus' speech]
12:33	[The evangelist's comment]
12:34a	Ἀπεκρίθη οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ ὄχλος [“The multitude therefore answered him”]
12:34b	[The crowd's speech]
12:35a	εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς [“Jesus therefore said to them”]
12:35b–36a	[Jesus' speech]
12:36b	[Background information]

Two instances of the redundant quotative frame are in the pericope 12:20–36 (vv. 23a, 30a). In both instances, the verbal subject is Ἰησοῦς. The instance in verse 23a combines the present indicative verb ἀποκρίνεται and the present participle λέγων. While this kind of combination (ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν) occurs frequently in the Synoptic Gospels,³⁷ it is found only twice in John's Gospel (1:26; 12:23). In verse 12:23 it introduces Jesus' solemn announcement to

³⁷ See n. 16.

the disciples that the long-anticipated “hour” of His glorification has arrived (vv. 23b–28a). This announcement represents Jesus’ reaction to the disciples’ earlier report regarding the visitation of the Greeks. Later in 12:30–32, Jesus speaks to the bystanders who have been discussing among themselves the voice that just came from heaven. This second speech of Jesus in the episode 12:20–36 is also introduced by ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν (v. 30a). Similar to Jesus’ earlier saying in 12:23b–28, this speech is a response not to a question (which is absent from the context) but to a situation, namely the bystanders’ incorrect conceptions regarding the voice from heaven (v. 29). Jesus tells them that His imminent death on the cross will bring about the judgment of the ruler of this world and the drawing of all people to Himself. Significantly, both of the speeches of Jesus that are introduced by the redundant quotative frame in verses 23a and 30a bear Christological overtones in Johannine thinking. It appears that ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν functions to draw attention to these important speeches.

John 20:26–29 (v. 28a): Jesus’ conversation with Thomas.

20:26a	[Background information]
20:26b	καὶ εἶπεν [“and said”]
20:26c	[Jesus’ speech]
20:27a	εἶτα λέγει τῷ θωμᾷ [“Then he said to Thomas”]
20:27b	[Jesus’ speech]
20:28a	ἀπεκρίθη θωμᾶς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ [“Thomas answered and said to him”]
20:28b	[Thomas’s speech]
20:29a	λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς [“Jesus said to him”]
20:29b	[Jesus’ speech]

In the pericope of Jesus’ post-resurrection appearance to Thomas (20:26–29), the phrase ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν (v. 28a) occurs for the 32nd and last time in the Fourth Gospel. This brief pericope contains four speeches in four verses. Jesus is the speaker of the first, second, and fourth speeches (vv. 26, 27, 29), and Thomas is the speaker of the third speech (v. 28). Notably, only this utterance on Thomas’s lips is introduced by the redundant quotative frame. The three utterances of Jesus are introduced simply by a form of the verb λέγω. To borrow Runge’s terminology, the employment of two verbs of speaking to introduce Thomas’s speech creates a sense of “discontinuity” in the interchanges and highlights his confession

of Jesus' lordship and deity accordingly.³⁸ The presence of the adverb εἶτα and the articular name τῷ Θεῷ in the previous verse 27 have the effect of drawing attention to this character, who expressed doubt about the validity of Jesus' resurrection in the earlier scene in 20:19–25. Scholars generally agree that Thomas's radical change in conception and his solemn confession of the resurrected Jesus as "my Lord and my God" (v. 28) mark a high point of the Johannine narrative. In fact, this confession harks back to the early declaration regarding the Logos's divinity in the prologue to the Fourth Gospel (1:1, 14, 18).³⁹ Therefore, the redundant quotative frame in 20:28 introduces an important theological belief, which affirms Christ's supreme lordship and divine status.

CONCLUSION

This article has sought to understand the discourse function of the phrase ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν (redundant quotative frame) that is used to introduce a number of reported speeches in the Johannine narrative. The result of the analysis has been broadly in line with the claims of Runge and Levinsohn that this phrase serves to accentuate the speech that follows. As Runge notes, the use of multiple verbs of speaking carries out this highlighting function by slowing the flow of the narrative and thus creating a sense of discontinuity in it.⁴⁰ In John's Gospel, many of the instances of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν are present in the dialogues between Jesus and the disciples or potential believers (e.g., Nathanael, Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the crowd, and Thomas) or in the interchanges between Jesus and His opponents (e.g., the Jewish leaders in 2:18–22). In the majority of the cases, "Jesus" is the verbal subject of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν. On the whole, the redundant quotative frame often occurs to introduce a speech that explains theological truth to the addressee or counters someone's criticism or challenge.⁴¹ Less frequently, this device is employed to usher in the final speech that closes the scene. Notably, many of the speeches that are introduced by ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν are concerned about the status of Jesus and

³⁸ Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 145.

³⁹ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 2 vols. (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003), 2:1211; Köstenberger, *John*, 579.

⁴⁰ Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 145–52.

⁴¹ Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 256.

thus bear a theological significance in Johannine thinking.⁴² Not all instances of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν in the Fourth Gospel, however, are associated with prominent speeches or events in the narrative. Thus the interpreter should be cautious about reading too much meaning into every occurrence of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν. Yet if the “pleonasm” of ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν has a useful purpose in drawing attention to certain speeches in the discourse, one may ask whether it is appropriate for Bible translators to treat ἀπεκρίθη καὶ εἶπεν as almost identical to the single verb ἀπεκρίθη or εἶπεν. The result of this study suggests that it is wise to consider the pragmatic function of this Johannine feature in a case-by-case manner when deciding its proper English translation or analyzing the emphasis of the discourse.

⁴² Ibid., 256 n. 8; Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, 453–54 n. 1 §2611a, c.