

Sesotho Names as Minor Clauses: A Systemic Functional Linguistics Approach

ʼMasechaba ML Mokhathi-Mbhele

Abstract: *This article explores Sesotho personal names as minor clauses from the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theoretical framework. It discusses these personal names as authentic enacted messages. The study is qualitative and data was collected from class list and employment rolls, radio and TV talk show programmes, neighbourhood, telephone directories and many more. The study displays the evaluation of the awardee in coining the names to reflect the modality of these awardees. It makes new observations that display that Sesotho names function as clauses of exchange thus they maintain the 'social fabric'. They confirm Halliday's features about SFL minor clauses. A hybridization of onomastica and Linguistics as well as that of Morphology, Semantics and Grammar reflects. It further displays the reciprocation of the verbal and the nominal groups which show that the verbal group is actually the basis for the nominal group in the onomastica system of Basotho. It concludes that Sesotho names explicate a social function as minor clauses and it recommends that the grammar of Sesotho be taught from the functional view because this approach shall unearth even those issues overlooked by Morpho-syntactic approach currently cherished by Sesotho grammar analysts. This study has implications for education through curriculum design, advertising linguistics, onomastica studies, journalism, sociolinguistics, historical studies and science and linguistics generally.*

Key words: Minor clauses, vocative, calls, greetings, nominal group, clause as exchange

1. Introduction

Personal names are an inscribed exchange of life experiences that may be personal, social, historical or situational. Some nations express these experiences as personal names to ensure that they remain engraved in sight and existence as long as that community lives. The design they undertake ensures accuracy and appropriateness to the intended situation and message. The names function as enacted messages. Basotho are such a nation and it was interesting to observe that even clause kinds such as minor clauses, least expected to be personal names are pithy to such a description.

Definition of Minor clauses

Halliday (2001, p.95) notes that minor clauses form part of the nominal group. They "realize speech functions realized by major clauses such as exclamations by a particular kind of declarative (as exclamatives) [and] greetings in the form of interrogatives and imperatives." He continues that other forms used in these speech functions are not constructed as propositions or proposals. In his view, many of these do not need to be assigned a MOOD+ RESIDUE structure and it is the intention of this paper's author to establish how far this view applies in the Sesotho language system. Minor speech functions in SFL are sub-categorized into exclamations, calls, greetings and alarms.

Exclamations as the first category are noted by Halliday (2001, p.95) as a limiting case of exchange; they are verbal gestures of the speaker to no one specific addressee. These in the context of Sesotho names reflect as the proposed category of the protolanguage and examples include:

A! [a:]. *Ai!* or *Ayi!* [aji] which amounts to 'wow!', *Au!* [au] which amounts to 'ouch!', *Chehe* [c^héhé] which amounts to 'yuck!', *Na!* [na:] which is actually 'really! or really?' and these are a set from the Sesotho language. A new addition to the proposed minor clauses *Chehe* [c^héhé], may be also used to express disappointment and in its articulation the

speaker normally pulls it and makes lengthening of the first vowel audible to make it [c^hé:hé]. The frustration may be fortified with a weak or strong clap of hands. It is relatively emotional in use. They are a new version as minor clauses because in use they are interjections not personal names. An encounter with their reference as personal names confirms the claim by Kotzé and Kotzé (2004) that "words are not innocent". They are enacted messages of the awardees' experiences and evaluation of the situation, which Eggins (1996) explains as modality.

When an adult interjects at the birth of a baby, an occasion that warrants noisy excitement and well wishes and congratulations inclusive of pride indicates an experience beyond word expression; it plunges deep inside the one who interjects and portrays feelings only understood by the awardee as the directly affected. It leaves other members creating a massive number of unanswered questions and suppositions. The reality of the effect and affect of this birth is buried in the awardee who displays it with just an exclamation. The complete message embedded in the interjection or exclamation name will be obscure to the social members and such is the intention of the awardee. This reference, therefore, contributes a complement to Halliday's (2001, p.95) view that exclamative minor clauses are not directed to anyone in particular because the awardee informs the observer participants of his or her emotional condition at the birth of this baby. In SFL lexical choices are not arbitrary in use.

In Sesotho these exclamations are structurally and meaningfully and functionally contextual as clauses of exchange and clauses of message. Halliday (2001, p.68) explains that "clause is organised as message and as an interactive event involving speaker and writer and audience". This explanation led to Mokhathi-Mbhele (2014, p.91) to describe them as Sesotho personal names that function as enacted messages in the culture of Basotho and it is still observed in this study. She discussed the names as propositions and in Eggins (1996,p.177) explanation "a

proposition is something that can be argued in a particular way...” and these names were coined as exclamations to present the awarders’ feelings about the births. Guma (1971, p.249) presents them as interjectives that reflect “wonders, surprise, sorrow, annoyance, contempt” depending on the context because they can be multifaceted.

A [a:] reflects contextually, with the function of either a surprise or sorrow or embarrassment. Details of the experiences around each birth would explicate the real cause for the name. That these minor clause personal names are evident is exemplified in that A[a] is historically a Lesotho princess born in the third genealogical level of the Lesotho Royal tree and another is a medical doctor of a high rank but they come from different places and families. An interesting observation is that these minor clause names have further displayed character depiction which Basotho refer to as *seromo* [seromɔ] ‘character depiction’ because the utterance of A! may reflect any of Guma’s functions above and in this case A realized the functions of wonder and surprise by being a high ranking medical doctor. It is a wonder and surprise because no one knew the prospect she would follow. Her origin is not tabled but her achievements make society to exclaim A!. With the same sentiment Ai as a loan name from Thembu as it is a minor language in Lesotho would function as a negation word that means ‘no!’ It is normally written as *Hayi!* With this reference, the message is that the birth of the name owner coincided with an incident that left the awarder uttering a denial choice. Ai or Ayi and Au are currently honourable members of parliament and government ministers.

It is further observed that Na [na:] can be either an exclamation or a question, hence why it selects for either an exclamation mark or a question mark that would be contextually relevant. In both the interrogative and exclamative moods, Na can be followed by a complement that might be a 2nd person singular pronoun and produce in the interrogative *Na uena* [na wena] ‘is it true (you)?’ and in the exclamative to say ‘don’t tell me!’ A declarative element is also noted as the response is a confirming exclamation. According to Halliday (2001, p.48) exclamative speech function is enfolded in the declarative and this explains the possibility of a weave of exclamative and declarative in the exclamative interpretation. Doke and Mofokeng (1967, 433) refer to Na as an interrogative noun thus their view justifies its membership to the nominal group.

Minor clauses in SFL also reflect as recognised words. Halliday (2001, p. 95) presents various words which, as a new observation, have corresponding Sesotho words deployed as personal names. Such words with their corresponding Sesotho names comprise:

Terrific! > *Lintle* [dintlé:] ‘How beautiful!’
Botle [bðtlé:] ‘beautiful!’
Botlebosele [bðtlé:bðsele] ‘unbelievable, stunning beauty!’
 `Mantle [mmantlé] ‘mother of the beauty’
 Rantle [rantlé] ‘father of the beauty’
 Seponono [sepɔnɔnɔ] ‘articulate, exceptional, stunning beauty!’

Lintle, *Botle*, *Botlebosele* are expressive and emotive, in need of an exclamation mark, and display the attraction experienced by the speaker. *Lintle* can be uttered with a declarative attitude that says [dintlé:] with HHL tonemes to state the fact of admiration but it is emotive in expression, as the speaker excitedly expresses his/her appreciation and his/her intention is to attract the addressees’ attention and eagerness. As a name it takes LLL tonemes. *Botle* is fundamentally emotive and reflects the immeasurable subjectivity of the speaker in relation to the admired. This attitude is expressed with a lengthening of the last vowel so that it is articulated as [bðtlé:]. This lengthening is substituted with an exclamation mark in writing. All express admiration built on the adjective *-tle* [tlé] ‘beautiful’.

Botlebosele reflects Halliday’s claim that some of the minor clauses are recognized words as members of the nominal group and have a structure, sometimes with transitivity because though transitivity does not apply in this example. The numerative feature *-bosele* [bðsele] which is a qualificative displaces that expected transitivity and maintains intransitivity. *-bosele* ‘different’ is classified as an enumerative qualificative by Guma (1971), Sesotho Academy (1983), Makara and Mokhathi (1993, 1994, 1995) and subsequent analysts of Sesotho based on Guma’s description of Southern Sotho. Mokhathi-Mbhele (2019, p.15) even includes it in the description of Sesotho names as SFL epithets. Note that *-bosele* in this minor clause acquires a function other than that of ‘different’ and that being ‘undescribable’, ‘unbelievable’, ‘beyond word expression’. *-bosele* orients a double feature of exclaiming and presenting content in its usual occurrence though the noted in the grammar books is only that of presenting the ‘different’. This says it bears a co-existing mood display of declarative-exclamative. This is a feature initially claimed to exist in Sesotho names by Mokhathi-Mbhele (2014).

Another new observation is that *-bosele* adds to the vocative function, a virw not noted in Sesotho grammar analyses because Guma (1971, 249-250) only presents nouns, pronouns and verbs as the vocative elements. *Botlebosele* has added that a qualificative such as *bosele*, is permitted to modify another qualificative as is the case with *botle* to form nominalized adjective-enumerative *botle-bosele* [bðtle bðsele] that functions as a minor clause. Another new observation is that a compound such as *Botlebosele* can also concurrently function vocatively and as a personal name as well. It is another new observation not voiced by either Sesotho grammar analysts or systemic because Sesotho analysts only confine the adjective to modify an original, not derived member of the noun class.

A further new observation is that a pattern of the adjectival stem *-tle* ‘beautiful’ is observed and it thus functions as a lexeme or central morpheme that breeds other offshoots by prefixing the lexeme with *Ma-* [mma], *Ra-* [ra], *Li* [di]-, *Bo-* [bō] and complementing it with the enumerative. This says the adjective is significant in the building of minor clauses and thus it contributes to the linguistic relationship of Morphology and Syntax. A further new observation not mentioned in SFL as well is that these minor clauses may delineate gender as is the case with *Mantle* [mmantlé] ‘mother of beauty’ and *Rantle* [rantlé] ‘father of beauty’

marked in the prefixes 'Ma- 'mother of...' and Ra- 'father of...' Mokhathi-Mbhele (2016) places the 'Ma- [mma] 'mother of...' as a deictic marker in the nominal group as well as Ra- [ra] 'father of...' (2019). Presentation of these deictic markers on minor clause names says the nominal group is now being extended with the minor clause features. The opposite adjective of *-tle* is *be* [be] 'bad' and it can bear a variation of male specific without the prefix Ra- stems in the *Mpe* [mpe] 'bad (male specific)' and that of a female in 'Mampe' [mmampe] 'mother of badness (female specific)'.

The adjective stem which developed into *Mpe* and other lexemes is *-be* [be] 'ugly', or 'bad', or 'distasteful', or 'bad mannered', or 'unacceptable', or 'risky (functionally in context) or 'exceptional', or 'frightening / shocking' and a morphophonemic process of *-b-* being inflected the bilabial nasal prefix *M-* with the effect of *-b-* changing to bilabial plosive *-p-* is observed. Thus the adjective has changed from *mbe* [mbe] to [mpe] as preferred in discourse.

Ellipsis germinates in *Mpe* as in full the structure notes as *motho e mobe* [mōt^hō é mōbe] 'a bad person'. Halliday (2001, p.93) clarifies that ellipsis occurs when, in a discourse everything is omitted but only a part is retained. In his words, "Its function in the clause is presupposed from the preceding discourse". The cause for this ellipsis *Mpe*, is that when adults play along with the baby they normally address the baby as *nth'o mpe* [nt^hōmpe] "an ugly thing" or *ngoan'o mbe* [ŋwanōmbe] 'an ugly baby'. These utterances co-opt a baby's language. This is a cultural practice as a protective measure against anticipated bewitchment from any people who may be jealous of the newly born baby's family, who are enjoying the baby's presence. *-be* is observed in this study as another new exclamation minor clause sub-category in the negative as it exclaims *terrible!* or *how bad!*

These observations propose new syntactic observation in the construction of minor clauses as the qualificative - the adjective of quality, *-be*, *-tle* and the numerative stem *-sele* - have been employed to develop the minor clause onomastica system. *-be*, *-tle*, *-sele* form part of the qualificative class in Sesotho as noted by Doke and Mofokeng (1967), Guma (1971), Sesotho Academy (1983), Makara and Mokhathi (1993, 1994) and subsequent authors who engaged in analyzing the grammar of Sesotho but observed in this study as significant elements deployed to describe as members of onomastica. They function more as response moves presupposed from preceding discourse.

Another clause presupposed from the preceding discourse entails a response move *Lenna* [lenna] 'and me too!' and it conforms to Halliday's (2001, p.95) description that minor clause sometimes serve as responses. It explicates a feature that displays the pronoun qualifying to be a member in minor clause onomastica, a note not mentioned in the functionalist description of minor clauses. Neither is it noted in the formalist description of the grammar of Sesotho. Nonetheless, it is observed that they extend the SFL-Onomastica interdependency and literature.

A new additional function of exclamation minor clause is that of appreciation by giving thanks and the names of this effect include:

Tanki [tanki] 'thank you'

Tankiso [tankiso] '(it is a) thanks'

Realeboha [realébōha] 'we give thanks'

Relebohile [relebōhile] 'we are thankful'

They display the appreciation as response moves, that is, they continue to present as clauses presupposed from preceding discourse. An interesting and new observation is their syntactic function is that even though they are uttered as exclamations, in essence, they are declarative independent clauses deployed to function as minor clauses. Such names are awarded to portray the awardee's thankfulness on the baby or desired sex as a blessing to the family. The contexts would be explicit to the addressees in the family.

A further new observation is that these nominal group minor clauses recognized as personal names can be categorized with either a positive or negative decree and they may be direct or indirect, specific or non-specific. The already presented belong to the positive feature and those with a negative attitude match the noted Halliday's example, *Bullshit* which matches the name *Masepatsana* '[masepatsana] 'a piece of shit'. The name is actually a direct insult but how it came to be awarded needs research from the family members particularly because if there is anyone who can provide the history because personal names are taken for granted as "just names" then clarification is apt. More examples pertaining to these various forms of insults include:

Manyala 'shit!'

Leanya [leapa] (with LLL tonemes) 'you suck!'

Tsoenemotho [ts^hwenemōt^hō] 'monkeyman!'

Tsoenetooe [ts^hwenetōwē] 'you monkey!'

Nthoesele [nt^hōesele] 'rubbish'

Leanya [leapa] (with LLL and LHH tonemes) bears the homonym feature (same structure same pronunciation but different reference) because LHH breeds the alternative meaning that says 'you (pl) suckle from...' LHH is preferred for a personal name whereas the owners use the LLL when in the mischievous mood and to the least respected – such as peers – especially when introducing themselves. *Leanya* [leapa] 'you suck!' reflects as a declarative-exclamative minor clause expressed as a response move together with the forwarded sister examples whereas LHH in communication would be an explanatory note that depicts a benefit attained by addressees. A response move reflects in a structure when the speaker gives a response in a discourse intact. Others are clear exclamatives uttered with emotion and high tone.

Tsoenetooe [ts^hwenetōwē] 'you monkey!' is yet another direct insult and Guma (2001, p.249) explains that the suffix *-too* [tōwē] "is used with certain vocative forms to indicate anger, annoyance, insult and occasionally wonder" thus this explanation conforms to the observation that the function of insult reflects in these names. It should be noted that there is an element of power relations in these negative names because those with the volition to name use their power to insult their sub-ordinates, normally their daughters-in-law by awarding such names or their own mischievous daughters

who bred out of wedlock babies and they stand the onus of not being questioned by anyone, not even the heads of houses – husbands or fathers-in-law. The names are a permanent inscription but mainly a permanent reminder to the family and society and everyone who shall have contact with the name owner that his mother is what his name bears. This says minor clauses have a significant function in displaying absolute abuse in the relation of the in-laws and thus reflect these names as clauses with interpersonal meta-function.

Another new observation is *Nthoesele* [nt^hoesele] ‘rubbish’ where it is established that *esele* [esele] in this negative reference does not denote the numerative element ‘different’ but describes the demeaned character of the referent person. In the current description according to Sesotho analysts *esele* [esele] sets aside and differentiates one element from other elements or items not that of being demeaned. It adds to the direct insults. This meaning complements the upheld meaning of different and presents an oversight of another possible function in the description of the numerative by both formalists and systemic.

Additional negative exclamations as personal names reflect the *ridicule function* and such is noted in *Moneng* [mmōnéŋ] ‘look at him/her!’ as well as the interrogative-imperative *Ke’ng* [ke:ŋ] HHL ‘what is it? or LLH ‘what am I?’ with annoyance seasoning the exclamation. HHL is a degrading expression normally uttered with a livid, categorizing attitude uttered with the intention to make the addressee keep quiet, lost for an answer. It may also be a direct considerate question seeking information under acceptable and comfort seeking situations. *Ntelling* [ntélléŋ] ‘(you) belittle me!’ extends the examples with the noted individual and mixed speech functions and it also bears a demeaning feature.

Another new observation entails a co-occurrence of function that makes the exclamation name *Helele* [hélélé] an interjection and a homonym as it may be a jeer across all age groups but a greeting to peers, especially among kinsmen or a fight fanning expression among adolescents or it may be a greeting that marks closeness of those interacting. It marks a shared context of the interaction. This example matches Halliday’s (2001, p.95) explanation of ‘fire’ which he analyses into ‘house on fire!’ or ‘fire broke out!’ or ‘there is fire!’ Such a name would be an exclamative call for attention to the addressed and it portrays reciprocity of Morphology and Grammar or Syntax and Semantics is observed in this explanation.

Calls as the second category refer to “the speaker calling to attention another person or other entity treated as capable of being addressed and such include deity, spirit, animal or inanimate objects.” (Halliday, 2001,p.95). Halliday explains that these elements relate to the clause as exchange and the structural function is that of Vocative. He does not explicitly explain Vocative but forwards examples such as *Charlie, you there, Our Heavenly Father!*. An interesting observation with corresponding Sesotho versions of calls minor clauses is that Basotho have coined personal names such as *Mitseng* [mmitséŋ] ‘call him/her’, *Bitsang* [bitsaŋ] ‘call ...’, *Lebitsa* [lebitsa] ‘you call ...’, though these are taken for granted as

mere personal names and owners are not aware that they are clausal and form part of the grammar of their language, Sesotho. Their significance is overlooked especially by owners as ancestral resemblances.

With calls minor clauses formed from the sub-category of animals Basotho have names depicted examples from the domestic nomenclature such as *Khomo* ‘cow’, *Nija* ‘dog’, *Namane* ‘calf’, *Pitsi* ‘horse’, *Kolobe* ‘pig’, *Mosia* ‘cat’, *Mohloathupa* ‘cat’, *Nku* ‘sheep’. The wild category comprises *Tau* ‘lion’, *Tlou* ‘elephant’, *Mutla* ‘hare’, *Phokoloe* ‘jackal’, *Phiri* ‘hyena’, *Koekoe* ‘speckled bird’, *Nare* ‘buffalo’, *Tšukulu* ‘rhino’, *Lengau* ‘leopard’, *Nkoe* ‘tiger’, *None* ‘antelope’ and many more. Guma (1971,p.249) is aware that animals may name people but based on the history of Basotho. He translates *Nare* as ‘O! man from the Leribe [leribe] district (in Lesotho) and clarifies that *Linare* [dinare] are followers of Chief Molapo of Leribe. They are awarded to display the wishes of the awarders to be likened to these animals and their best lifestyle and significance. Initially they were coined to name regiments and in the contemporary era they are labels of soccer teams from those respective places of the original regiments.

The inanimate objects sub-category may comprise kitchen utensils such as *Khaba* ‘spoon’, *Thipa* ‘knife’ and its obsolete form is *Seepheephe* [seep^hεep^hε] and more. Another reference is formed by artillery and such include *Lerumo* ‘spear’, *Thebe* ‘shield’, *Koto* ‘knobkerrie’ and more. Additional category depicts attire exemplified by *Kobo* ‘blanket’, *Katiba* ‘hat’, *Lieta* ‘shoes, and more. Another category comprises human anatomy that includes *Mahlo* ‘eyes’, *Litsebe* ‘ears’, *Leoto* ‘foot’, *Sefubanyane* ‘(small) chest’, *Letsoho* ‘hand’, *Sephaka* ‘arm’, and more. The awarders normally reveal their wish to benefit and enjoy benefits from these characters in humans during their lifetime.

A new use added to these vocative calls’ minor clauses is that of the clans and totems because Basotho nation originates from culmination of clans and their totems. Some to be presented as clans and totems are personal names from either side and they include:

Clan

Totem

Mofokeng [mōfōkēŋ] ‘a member of Bafokeng clan’
Mutla [mmutla] ‘hare’

Phoka [p^hōka] as an alternative name is used as a ‘morphemized’ and aesthetic name built from *Mofokeng*. Guma (1971, p. 29-30) explains that the morphophonemic process refers to “... those changes that occur in the phonemes or morphemes when certain morphemes are added or juxtaposed to others. ...Their phonemic shape is affected in that all segmental morphemes are made up of a sequence of phonemes.” He clarifies that these morphemes never occur in isolation but are juxtaposed or added to other morphemes such as those that constitute nouns. In his words, “they embrace the changes of phonemes in various morphemes at the morphological level.” This is why [f] on *Mofokeng* has changed to *ph* [p^h] to aesthetically initiate the new name form and the *-e-* changed to *-a-*. Put together they form *Phoka*. The prefix *Mo-* and the suffix *-ng* are omitted.

Note further that the word *phoka* also refers to ‘dew’ and Basotho have a strong belief that a *Mofokeng* must apply dew to infected eyes that secrete a lot of infected white liquid and when eyes are swollen when one gets up in the morning. This says it is medicinally eye drops or ointment to them. It is however, to exclusive to babies of *Bafokeng* (plural) clan as it still helps other babies.

Mokoena [mɔkwéna] ‘a member of Bakoena clan’
Koena/ Kuena kwéna] ‘crocodile’.

Kuena is the spelling introduced by

colonialists yet the accurate inscription

is *Koena*.

Motaung [mɔtaun] ‘a member of Bataung clan’
Tau [tau] ‘lion’

Motloung [mɔtloun] ‘a member of Batloung clan’
Tlou [tlou] ‘elephant’

Mokatse [mɔkatse] ‘a member of the Basia clan’

Mosiea [mɔsija] instead of the known term *katse* [katse] ‘cat’ is used as a personal name.

This clan uses both *Mokatse* and an obsolete word *Mosiea* or *Mosia* as references for the ‘cat’ but *katse* has not been encountered by the author hence why *Katse* is not used as a corresponding name in the table. Guma (1971, p.248) asserts that “names of tribal totems and those of former regiments are commonly used as courteous forms of address. He exemplifies this view with *Mofokeng* and *Phoka* which he interprets as ‘O man of the dew totem’. He notes some as vocative greetings such as *Helele Phoka* ‘I greet you man of the dew!’ In this case *Helele* is a direct greeting and *Phoka* is used aesthetically as a ‘cocooning’ name as it is a homonym that that bears an alternative reference of ‘dew’. All these structures are deployed as Sesotho personal names despite their original syntactic function. Awarders still deploy them as their wish that the named may clothe selves with the characters of these animals. Additional new observation is that some vocative nouns mark a social administrative position yet they are deployed as personal names. Examples are *Morena* [mōrena] ‘Chief’ or ‘King’ as well as *Matona* [matōna] ‘(government) ministers’ and they are used by Guma (1971, p.248) as examples of the vocative interjections.

Halliday further observes the *response to a call* as another sub-category of minor clauses and Basotho use personal names such as *Lenna* ‘and me too’, as well as the word ‘yes’ noted in *Joalo* ‘(yes) that way’ on a rising tone HL. Basotho make use of noun names that express intimacy as in *Moratuoa* [moratuwa!] ‘darling/dear!’, *Lerato* [leratɔ] ‘love!’. The negatively directed include *Mohanuoa* [mohanuoa] ‘the refused or declined one’, *Mohlouoa* [mohlouoa] ‘the hated one’ or ‘the despised one’.

Minor clauses are thirdly categorized into *greetings* and the first sub-category forwarded by Halliday (2001, p.95) is that of *salutations*. Examples forwarded correspond with the provided Sesotho names and they comprise:

Hallo is noted in Sesotho as *Lumelang* [dumélan] ‘hallo!’ and deployed as a name with the same meaning and it may be formal or an informal form of address. *Khotso* [kʰɔtsɔ]

‘peace’ is another greetings form and it is a clip that represents the initiated message that says *Lumela hore khotso e teng* [duméla hōre kʰɔtsɔ e téŋ] ‘agree (with me) that there is peace (among us) or (let us agree that there is peace (among us)). The whole statement is presented as just one word *hallo!* With the same sentiment as *Lumelang* it functions as an alternative of the formal “Good morning, afternoon and evening” because Basotho are monolithic with this greeting throughout the day and eve. When used in a formal setting, a form of direct social status reference is expected. In Guma’s (1971, 249) words, “...the interjective [Khotso] is used to address all and sundry, including people of high rank in the community. *Khotso* is commonly used in greetings as follows: *Khotso ntate* [kʰɔtsɔ ntaté] ‘Hallo sir’, *Khotso m’e* [kʰɔtsɔ mmé] ‘hallo ma’am’” and Guma (1971, p.247) alerts that these complements are obligatory in the formal forms of address among Basotho. The statuses occur where *ntate*, *m’e* are placed.

Both *Lumelang* and *Khotso* are deployed as personal names. They are not time specific and therefore they encompass Halliday’s next sub-category that says *Good morning*. These greetings function as imperatives in the form of polite commands as Halliday (2001, p.95) explains that minor clause speech functions are expressed among others as greetings and greetings are realized by a major clause such as an interrogative or an imperative. Guma (1971, p.183) refers to the polite command imperatives as exhortative or hortative expressions. They are presented as commands realized as politeness because no one is coerced to accept the greeting ‘command’. In his words “...they [hortatives] express polite commands”.

As the term states, the exhortative is used to plead with the addressee to engage in an action. It would be legitimate then to claim that *Khotso* in its full form is an invitation to the addressee(s) by saying *let us* to the agreement to tie an knot about peace being existent and reigning. Halliday (2001, p.87) explains that *let us* is an optative imperative and it denotes ‘wishing’ and it contradicts the *jussive* imperative which is directly ‘ordering’. He clarifies that *Let’s* “is interpreted as a wayward form of Subject ‘you and I’”. He further asserts that there is the intermediate imperative forms that make a significant use of the first and third person and this says the exhortation in these names actually reflects a double feature of the optative-intermediate imperative because *Khotso* uses the first person plural *us* and it is a wish of the speaker.

Speakers use *Khotso* and *Lumela(ng)* alternatively without a glaring difference except the structures themselves. This is despite the fact that elders would prefer *Lumela(ng)* to *Khotso*. Both may take the distinction of the addressee such as the nominal complement in the RESIDUE and thus take *Lumela* or *Khotso m’e* or *Lumela/Khotso ntate*. *M’e* [mmé] ‘mother of...’ is a feminine marker and *ntate* [ntaté] ‘father of ...’ a masculine marker. The *-ng* is a plural marker applicable to both words with the same meaning of greeting the plural even as vocative noun or pronoun, though *Khotsong* is not used as a personal name.

Nonetheless, *Lumelang* and *Khotso* are personal names. *Lumelang* may be used with a positive attitude when the

awarder is in a jubilant atmosphere, cracking a laughter on the baby (by saying it repeatedly). It may also bear a negative attitude to disgrace the addressed. With the negative attitude it sneers at the addressee building a mocking, demeaning, cynical atmosphere. The awarder selects on it to intimidate the addressee(s) to reduce their value to the newly born compared to the right of that awarder to the baby. This awarding is rooted in the demeaning practice that would make this address end with *kajeno* [kadzénō] ‘today!’ or ‘as we speak!’ so that it is articulated as *Lumelang kajeno!* It is a demeaning address in this sense, normally accompanied by a non-verbal act of ridicule. It makes the addressees feel a condescending eerie.

The eerie is felt where *Lumelang* is used to tarnish the Martin and Rose’s (2007) ‘social fabric’ when the awarder sneers at the biological mother about the unaccepted birth of the baby into the patriarchal family. The awarder would even complement it and say *Lumelang moo!* [dumélan̩ mōd̩] ‘hallo there!’ with an insincere playful attitude. The awarder uses it to try and alleviate the pain he or she experiences with this ‘burden baby’ not accepted by its legal family. The baby is a disappointment and its name and its tenor (interpersonal relations) is uncomfortable. Deployment of *Lumelang* as a personal name marks reciprocation of the nominal and the verbal group because *lumela* is a verb distinctly deployed as a noun to name a person.

Another new observation is that in the context of Sesotho, minor clauses deployed as personal names function as *phatic communication*. It breaks ice between participants as forms of address. *Lumelang* and, *Khotso* facilitate phatic communication as initiator moves and the noted thanksgiving names mentioned earlier as response calls. The exchange communication may be as follows:

Initiator: Lumelang [dumélan̩] ‘hallo!’ *Response: Lumela or E!* [duméla] ‘hallo!’ or [ε] ‘yes!’

or *Khotso* [kʰɔtsɔ] ‘peace’ *Khotso or E!*

U or Le phela joang? How are you? *Kea or Rea phela, loma?* [rea pʰela lōna?]

‘we’re fine’
or *hantle*

lona? [hantle lōna] ‘fine, and you?’

Realeboba [realebðha] ‘we thank you’ or

Relebohile [relebðhile] ‘we are thankful’ or

Tanki [tanki] ‘thank you!’ or

Haobokoe [haðbɔkwɛ] ‘let (Him/God) be given thanks / praise’ or

Mokeng [mmɔkén] ‘give Him praise!’ or

Moleboheng [mðlebðhén] ‘give (Him/God) thanks!’

All the thanksgiving response moves are personal names. At times the response move may incorporate complete exhortative structure structured with the terminal *-e* [ε] of the base verb *ate* [atɛ] greeting forms to say *Khotso* (*ha e*) *ate* [kʰɔtsɔ ha e atɛ] ‘let peace reign immeasurably’. This would be represented by the clip *Khotso*.

These names are exclamatives that function as greetings in phatic communication. If it was not for their function as names, they would end with an exclamation mark. Note that this exchange would actually be a greeting between the

initiator and the respondent and it is interesting that it comprises personal names. This is a new observation because prior researchers – formalist and systemic, have not noted that phatic communication is structured with personal names in Sesotho language. The listed final utterances display the function of *giving thanks* and giving praises as well. A further observation already noted by Mokhathi-Mbhele (2014) is that their surnames would form clause complexes (a pair of simplexes that form a complete meaningful message) and there is *Khotso Lesotho* to this effect. This would be a greeting announced by a spokesperson or a leader of Lesotho addressing the Basotho nation at large by making reference to the country’s name but the complex has been deployed to function as a Name-Surname personal name. It displays the quality of an independent clause.

Adding to the direct thanksgiving names is the response that expresses a wish of peace and such is *Ha e phaphathoe* [ha e phaphathwé] ‘let (peace) be pampered’ and from this greeting arises the ellipsed verb name *Phaphatha* [pʰapʰatʰa] ‘give a (comforting) pat’. It is normally followed by a light clap of the left and right of one person’s hands. It expresses the awarder’s wish and hope that the newly born baby is born to bring peace. The word ‘peace’ is replaced by the concord *e* in the greeting (*Khotso*) *Ha e phaphathoe* [ha e phaphathwé] and *Ha* is an exhortative marker for a pleading polite command. Guma (1971, p.183) notes that the hortative prefix *ha* [is used] to express polite commands ...” Sesotho Academy (1983) adds that it purports a plea. The polite command is an invitation to the interlocutor to engage in observing peace-keeping and this proposes maintenance of Martin and Rose’s (2007) ‘social fabric’. The core reason for this plea is that once peace is violated or tempered with it is almost impossible to restore it. Its restoration is more expensive or costly, lengthy and painstaking than its destruction. From this discussion the new observation is that with Sesotho language, Halliday’s (2001, p.95) claim occurs on a broad spectrum as most examples of the forwarded and new functions are exemplified with major clauses. Halliday claims that (minor clause) “speech functions may be realized by major clause”.

The second subcategory accepts the addressee with *welcome* and a corresponding name that denotes a direct translation is *Kena* [kéna] ‘come in’ or ‘welcome’. When the house owner opens the door to a knocking person, it is a welcome gesture. It is worthy, therefore, to note that in Lesotho, at the Maseru border gate, the welcome message advertised as *Kena* (*ka*) *Khotso Lesotho* ‘a peaceful welcome (into) Lesotho’ is formed from personal names that are functionally used as minor clauses. *Kena* even has the quantitative marker that forms *Kenangbohle* [kénaŋbɔlé] ‘come one, come all’. The *-ng* marks plural number and *bohle* fortifies that plurality as a quantifier that denotes ‘all’. Note that the minor clauses as members of the nominal group team up with the numerative and the deictic as the nominal group members. That *Kenangbohle* is a quantifier personal name in the description of Sesotho onomastica was an observation made by Mokhathi-Mbhele (2016) when presenting Sesotho names as the numerative and quantifiers. She warned that *Kenangbohle* bears a negative feature as such a label is directed at a promiscuous woman. As a personal name it

sharpens the appetite to establish the real cause and context for its award as a personal name because it is normally a shameful label.

The third sub-category of the greetings minor clauses comprises the *valedications* and they are uttered as someone leaves others. With the same token the examples forwarded by Halliday have corresponding Sesotho names. *Goodbye* corresponds to *Fonane* [fōnane] ‘goodbye’. Another greeting when someone leaves a place is *Salang* [salaŋ] ‘stay behind’ but it is normally followed by *hantle* [hantlél] ‘well’ to make it ‘stay well’. *Lumelang*, *Fonane* and *Salang* are described by Guma (1971, p.250) as imperative and vocative and based on these features he terms them verb-imperatives. In his words, “verb-imperatives are functionally interjectives. They retain verbal characteristics in that they may have objects, and adverbial extensions” as is the case with *Salang*, *Lumelang* and *Fonane* may bear –*ng* as an acceptable function plural terminal marker, but would not make *Fonaneng* a personal name. All denote *see you!* and this is another one of Halliday’s minor clause examples.

With the valedication of *congratulations*, the corresponding Sesotho name is *Mahofi* [mahōfi] ‘well done!’ For *good health* there is an exclamation *Liate* [diatε] ‘let them (cows as valued wealth among Basotho) multiply’ and it is an optative imperative as it is a wish expressed in the third person. *Liate* is a clip of *Khomo tseo ha li ate* [k^hōmδ tséδ ha di atε] ‘let those cattle multiply (so that we can be taken care of and be in good health)!’ In the same tone Basotho may say *Khokhoba* [k^hōk^hōba] ‘long live! (as *Liate*, the wish is directed at lengthy lifetime that goes yonder expected mortality)’ With the valedication *Hi!* there is *Helele* [hélélél], a general greeting exclamation deployed as a personal name.

The awarders of these greetings-names are excited and proud about the new births and particularly with *Helele* they would even be throwing the baby up in play. Guma (1971, p.249) posits that *Helele* sometimes precedes vocative nouns and exemplifies with personal names that denote members of clans. Such examples comprise *Helele Phoka!* [hélélél p^hōka] *Helele Tau!* [héléléltau] These would be only greetings that cocoon the addressees with their totemic references. That *Helele* and these complement totem nouns are personal names is a new observation because it has not been discussed in accomplished studies on SFL and Sesotho onomasica.

However, *Salang* and *Helele* may contextually bear negative effect in that the awarder may name a baby *Salang* to jeer at the in-laws that the baby is not in their custody and it leaves the related family in pain. *Helele* may also be a sign of such discontentment with the baby’s arrival that they do not want to even touch it. This negative connotation normally takes place when an adult expected to play with the baby to show appreciation politely denies the expectation by recusing self on account of a running nose that may be infectious to the baby and is not willing to go nearer to the baby. Their smile as they utter *Helele* is not genuine, they are angry with the biological mother for reasons such encompass bearing an out of wedlock but they cannot take it out on the baby. In some linguists’ words, ‘they wear a plastic smile’ because the

Martin and Rose’s (2007) ‘social fabric’ between the mother and the matri-linial family or in-laws is torn.

With regard to the *Well-wishings* subcategory whose core message is *your very good health* is observed the political motto of Lesotho which comprises personal names *Khotso Pula Nala* [k^hōtsō pula nala] ‘Peace! Rain! Prosperity!’ These portray well wishes at the National level and members of Basotho nation understand that each name-word is a clip or prop of the enfolded optative messages because the polite imperative marker *let us* has been ellipsed. The verbs after *let us* could be the stative such as, *be*, *have*, *expect*, *work for*, *enjoy*, *etc.* as it is understood to be a ‘silent’ introductory expression of the motto. Thus the message would be *let us have/expect/work for/enjoy Peace! Rain! Prosperity!* Guma (1971, p.249) explains that the choices “*Khotso*, *Pula*, *Nala* are used by Basotho as expressions of acclamation and goodwill”.

The message says ‘Let peace reign so that (in our belief) there will be torrential rains that will breed us good harvest (and we can be merry and continue to live in peace)’. Normally the respondents shout back saying *Ha e ne* [ha e ne] ‘let it rain!’ The wish for prosperity has deployed this name in financial advertisement as the Standard Lesotho Bank has deployed it as one of its investments landscaped as *Nala Accounts*. This deployment says Basotho are beginning to realize the binary value of such their personal names as generational legacy or economic development.

Halliday (2001, p.95) asserts that greetings are well-wishing. He continues to clarify that calls and greetings include some minor clauses which are structured as clauses or nominal groups and this is evident in these names. He posits that they form RESIDUE as nominal complements and evidence is observed in *Pula* and *Nala*. They belong to the nominal group because they are originally nouns which are further deployed to function as onomastica to differentiate people. They are functional because they display the awarders’ modality or evaluation uttered with hope, pride and probably certainty that their expectations are fulfilled by the births encountered.

As observed, these names are interjectives and they function as vocatives when used to address other participants. Guma (1971, p.249) notes that nouns may be used as vocatives and call people and exemplifies with *morena* [mōréna] ‘Chief or King’. Once initiated with a capital, a new observation explicated is that the noun transforms into a personal name *Morena*. Guma (1971, p.249) realizes this transformed structure as a vocative form and this study complements that observation by claiming that the capitalized form is accepted as a personal name. It may be uttered to fulfill various functions of a chief including setting an alarm.

Alarms, in Halliday’s (2001, p.96) categorization of minor clauses form the fourth group. In his view, alarms bear some resemblances of exclamatives in voice quality but are addressed to another party. They are in general derivable from the grammar of the clause. He maintains that they are intermediate between the major clauses - declarative, imperative, interrogative, exclamative - and the minor

clauses. Basotho express the functions borne by these alarm minor clauses as personal names and they include:

a) Warnings:

- look out* > *Bonang* [bɔnɑŋ] ‘look out (plural)’ or ‘look (pl)’
- Quick* > *Akofang* [akɔfɑŋ] ‘be quick (pl)’
- Careful* > *Hlokomelang* [hɔkɔmɛlɑŋ] ‘(be) careful’
- Keep off* > *Tlohang* [tlɔhɑŋ], *Sutha* [sutʰa], *Ntsoele* [ntswɛle] ‘stop bothering me!’ or ‘out of my way!’

More as additional new observations include:

- Watch out* > *Lemohang* [lɛmɔhɑŋ] ‘watch out!’
- Be vigilant* > *Lebelang* [lebɛlɑŋ] ‘be vigilant!’ or *Phaphama* [pʰapʰɑmɑ] ‘wake up!’ or ‘be vigilant!’
- Forget it* > *Lebalang* [lebɑlɑŋ] ‘forget it!’
- Leave me alone* > *Nteseng* [ntesɛŋ] *Ntloheleng* [ntlɔhɛlɛŋ] ‘leave me alone’
- Reprimand* > *Khalema* [kʰalɛmɑ] ‘reprimand’

The newly observed (not mentioned by Halliday) include:

- (Keep) quiet* > *Tholang* [tʰɔlɑŋ] or *Khutsang* [kʰutsɑŋ] ‘(keep) quiet!’
- Come back* > *Khutlang* [kʰutlɑŋ] ‘come back’

Khutlang is double faceted because it may also function as a call. An interesting new observation in this part is that *Khutsang* and *Khutlang* are minimal pairs because they are identical in all sounds in all places except /s/ and /l/ in the same position. These are referred to as phonemes and phonemes are contrastive or distinctive elements in a pair of words. When they occur in the same position in the pair they form a minimal pair. This observation of distinctive phonemes that breed contrastive meanings of these names implores a linguistic inter-dependency between Phonetics, Morphology, Syntax and Semantics phenomena that contributes to their inevitable reciprocity between them as linguistic disciplines. These names may serve as appealing warning calls, a mixed function. Halliday further presents (*direct*) *appeals* as another alarms sub-category.

b) Appeals:

- help* > *Nthuseng* [ntʰusɛŋ] ‘help (me)’, *Thusang* [tʰusɑŋ] ‘help’
- Fire* > *Mollo* [mɔllɔ] (can express gender using either prefix *M’a* ‘mother of... or *Ra* ‘father of ...’
- Mercy* > *Mohau* [mɔhɑu] ‘mercy’ or ‘grace’, *Hauhang* [hɑuhɑŋ] ‘have mercy’, *Nkhauhele* [ŋkʰɑuhɛlɛ] ‘have mercy on me’
- A drink* > *Lenoesa* [lenwɛsɑ] ‘you make ... drink’, *Metsi* [mɛtsi] ‘water’

NB. The *-ng* denotes plural number.

Many of these names are imperative and analysed only as RESIDUE because the subject is fused in the predicator. Such could consist of: predicator > *reprimand* > *Khalema*

(Uena) (you) (singular)	<i>Khalema</i> ‘reprimand’
Subject	Finite-predicator
MOOD	RESIDUE

Keep off!

(Uena) (you) (sing)	<i>Sutha</i> or <i>Tlohang</i> ‘keep off’
Subject	Finite-predicator
MOOD	RESIDUE

Sutha is singular but *Tlohang* ends with a plural marker *-ng*. The cause for this difference is assumed to addresses to a single counter parent, probably the father-in-law during negotiations about the baby and the latter be an address to the whole counter family or village gossipers if the baby is an out of wedlock. Both names are originally of the verbal group and this marks reciprocity of the nominal and verbal group. This is one of the overlooked features in the description of the grammar of Sesotho.

Help!

predicator plus adjunct

Thusang

(Lona) (you) (pl)	<i>thusang</i> ‘help’
Subject	Finite-predicator+adjunct <i>-ng</i>
MOOD	RESIDUE

They confirm Halliday’s (2001, p.95) assertion that some of the minor clauses are imperative.

Nthuseng (takes the object concord that functions as a nominal complement in the RESIDUE. It occupies the initial position once inflected on the verb); New observation is that the alarm minor clauses that warn may form MOOD +RESIDUE structure. Thus *Nthuseng*, originally *Lona thusang* `na is structured as:

(Lona)	<i>Thusang</i>	`na
Subject	Finite-predicator	Complement
MOOD	RESIDUE	

optional predicator + Complement > (be) careful, etc.

(Lona) (you) (pl)	<i>Lemohang</i> (be) careful
Subject	Finite-predicator+adjunct <i>-ng</i>
MOOD	RESIDUE

Extended examples of appeals include:

- Select or Elect* > *Khethang* [kʰɛtʰɑŋ] ‘Select or Elect’

A crucial observation with the optional predicator names in Sesotho is that they do not reflect the optional predicator but an optional subject. This does not reduce it in anyway and it still belongs to the MOOD-RESIDUE because of the optional Subject. This name fathoms from the verbal group but directed and used as a member of the nominal group.

Other examples are nominal groups functioning in principle as Subject or Complement but it is usually impossible to distinguish these two – for example, with the alarm *Fire!* Which in Sesotho is *Mollo* [mɔllɔ] it may mean ‘there’s a fire!’ or ‘fire has broken out!’ or ‘the house is on fire!’ In this case it is essential to observe distinct structural function, that being observing a nominal group element which could be Subject or Complement. In an agnate, major clause is said to have the function of being ABSOLUTE. It is assigned neither to MOOD or RESIDUE. ABSOLUTE is relevant to labels, headlines, lists, and these names may function as absolutes.

Nonetheless, words such as *Mollo!* may serve as an acceptable headline on a newspaper and this says Halliday’s claim may not be the omega. The gender feature also applies to this example as there may be *Mamollo* ‘mother of fire’ and *Ramollo* ‘father of fire’. An additional appeal forwarded is *mercy* and the corresponding Sesotho name is the vocative

Mohau [mōhau] or *Hauhang* [hauhaŋ]. More comprise a *drink* and the corresponding vocative Sesotho names may be *Metsi* ‘water’, *Lebese* ‘milk’, *Lenoesa* [lenwesa] ‘you give ... to drink’. As Halliday (2001, p.96) asserts, these reflect RESIDUE only but in the Sesotho version, *Lenoesa* is an exception because it takes MOOD-RESIDUE thus:

<i>Le</i> (you)	<i>noesa</i> (make ... drink)
Subject	Finite-predicator
MOOD	RESIDUE

It is elliptic because the object has been intentionally omitted.

New observations on the warning names as minor clauses:

- create awareness* in the form of clause complexes exemplified by *Moloi Bosiu* [mōlōi bōsiu] ‘a witch | in the night’. This set is a name-surname;
- reproach* as in the examples *Tholang* [t^hɔlaŋ] ‘(keep) quiet!’, *Khutsang* [k^hutsaŋ] ‘be silent!’
- give instructions or commands* as in *Renang* [rɛnaŋ] ‘rule’, *Anang* [anaŋ] ‘take a bow!’
- call for attention or indicate an announcement to be made* with *Mamelang* [mamélaŋ] ‘listen’, *Imameleng* [imaméléŋ] ‘reflect’, *Shebang* [šebaŋ] ‘look’, *Bonang* [bōnaŋ]
- making demands* with *Mpheng* [mp^héŋ] ‘give me!’, *Isang* [isaŋ] ‘take there!’, *Tlisang* [tlisaŋ] ‘bring here!’, *Fang* [faŋ] ‘give!’, *Nheng* [n^héŋ] ‘give to me!’, *Pheta* [p^heta] ‘repeat!’, *Botsang* [bōtsaŋ], *Btsang* [bitsaŋ] ‘call...’
- requesting explanation* in *Joale* [jwalé] ‘so’ and such would be followed by a question mark if the interlocutors are engaged in a bitter argument and in such a case the clause would be uttered repeatedly. It would be used to provoke the addressed party to take an action detrimental to a physical tug. The tone rises to HH? With either toneme set, it functions as a minor clause that either demeans or elevates interest and eliciting excitement.
- have implications for advertisements* because *Phaphama* is an SABC TV programme that alerts people on various crucial information.
- declares political issues* such as *Kena* (ka) *Khotso Lesotho* and *Khotso! Pula! Nala!*
- denotes an excited addressor eager to be furnished with the desired information* that inquires with *and now!* and the information to be given will be the co-text. Its tone undulates with HL. It should be noted that this word *joale* fundamentally functions as the temporal circumstantial or time adverb *now* HL and it functions as either as an initiating move or a response move. It can also function to elicit information as an interrogative marker. As a personal name in the normal context the tone becomes LH. Mokhathi-Mbhele (2018) presents that tone has a significant effect on Sesotho personal names and these minor clause names support this view.

These new observations complement the claimed functions of the minor clauses and though presented as personal names in this study, these names were originally common nouns and action verbs. They portray a view noted by Mokhathi-Mbhele (2014) that says Sesotho personal names display

verbal group-nominal group reciprocity as verbal structures can be deployed to function as personal names.

2. Conclusion

As Halliday claimed that minor clauses are either imperative or exclamative, the discussed names have extended this view and this says Sesotho names function as minor clauses and an extended production of materials pertaining to SFL-Onomastica is magnified. Sesotho names as minor clause nomenclature is significant in the Functionalist Linguistics. It has implications for education, politics, economics, linguistics, inter-cultural studies and many more. The study has further explicated that words are neither innocent nor arbitrary when employed as personal names.

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