

The Contribution of Linguistic Typology to the Study of Biblical Hebrew in Africa: The Case of Pronouns in Sesotho

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Abstract

African languages and linguistic communities differ in many respects from their Western counterparts. As a result, the standard philological resources available to African scholars of Biblical Hebrew are often inadequate for understanding Biblical Hebrew and for conveying the meaning and function of Hebrew terms and constructions in African languages and societies. This article is based on linguistic typology, which deals with the examination of linguistic features across languages. It compares pronouns in Sesotho to pronouns in Biblical Hebrew and examines their similarities and differences. The purpose of the comparison is to demonstrate how the relevant features of Biblical Hebrew pronouns can be communicated effectively to Sesotho students by determining how the two languages' pronoun systems correspond to one other typologically.

Keywords: pronouns; typology; Biblical Hebrew; Sesotho

Introduction

In current teaching grammars of Biblical Hebrew (BH), African students are conceptually taught BH from the perspective of Western languages even though African languages have some features that are closer to Biblical Hebrew than Western languages. Conceptually, one can say that African students have to go to Europe first before returning to Africa (Naudé and Miller-Naudé 2011, 692). This article seeks to address the question of how Biblical Hebrew can be taught in Africa, specifically to Sesotho-speaking students, without making English a starting point. The answer to this question is that since there are similarities and differences between many grammatical features of these two languages, namely Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho, Biblical Hebrew can be communicated effectively to students in their respective languages through these

similarities and differences. This approach was first proposed by Naudé and Miller-Naudé (2011) for African students and was further applied to Chinese by Chau (2017). This article discusses Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho pronoun systems as an example to show how these features can be communicated effectively to students.¹

Biblical Hebrew is a Northwest Semitic language, while Sesotho is a Bantu language spoken by more than 13 million speakers in South Africa and Lesotho (Eberhard, Simons, and Fennig 2019).² Sesotho is one of the eleven official languages of South Africa. Although Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho are not genetically or geographically related, they nonetheless share some grammatical features.

This article is organised as follows: first, the teaching grammar; second, a description of Linguistic Typology; third, Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho are explained typologically; fourth, an examination of the BH and Sesotho pronoun systems; and fifth, conclusions.

Teaching Biblical Hebrew Grammar in Africa

When examining the issue of teaching grammar, the recent works by Naudé and Miller-Naudé (2011, 690–707)³ and Chau (2017) are key. The work by Naudé and Miller-Naudé is based on the new Biblical Hebrew grammar project piloted for Bible translators in 2011. The core objective of this work was to illustrate that the basic premise of a teaching grammar (as opposed to a descriptive or prescriptive grammar) is that it must describe the grammar to be learned in terms of the grammar known by a student (Naudé and Miller-Naudé 2011, 690). In the case of Biblical Hebrew, it is further argued that the grammars are not adequate for non-Western students since the grammatical concepts of Biblical Hebrew are explained to students from the standpoint of Indo-European languages. African languages have some features which are closer to Biblical Hebrew than Western languages. This project by Naudé and Miller-Naudé is based upon language typology. The importance of typology as a frame of reference is that it unlocks the possibility for non-Western students to learn Biblical Hebrew in terms

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 - 2 The website *Ethnologue: Languages of the World* describes the number of Sesotho speakers as follows: L1 (first language) 5 974 000; L2 (second language) 7 900 000.
 - 3 This is ground-breaking research in terms of teaching Biblical Hebrew grammar in Africa. As a pilot project, it aims to showcase how Biblical Hebrew can be taught in other languages without making English a starting point for non-English speaking students. For instance, see Chau (2017) who demonstrates how Biblical Hebrew can be taught to Cantonese-Chinese speakers. The current article draws on these previous works to demonstrate how Biblical Hebrew can be taught to Sesotho speakers and other communities in Africa.

of the ways in which various features of their languages are the same or different from Biblical Hebrew.

In this research, a thorough explanation of four kinds of grammars is made. The first kind, a universal grammar, describes those features which are present in all languages of the world; the second kind, a descriptive grammar, describes the features of a grammar present in a single language. This type of grammar, say Naudé and Miller-Naudé (2011, 691), does not seek to promote good or bad grammar or proper speaking, but it describes the language as it is spoken and used by the native speakers. The third type, a prescriptive grammar, dictates the rules of the language so that it can be spoken or used properly, and the fourth kind, a teaching grammar, assists students in learning a second (or additional) language. This approach argues that a description of a new language should be taught with reference to the student's home language. The reason for this is that since the already existing grammars are written from the perspective of Western languages (English, Afrikaans, French, German) and not African languages, African languages must be given a chance to contribute to the teaching of the grammar.

Before introducing a new way of teaching Biblical Hebrew grammar, Naudé and Miller-Naudé (2011, 692) delve more into the discipline of Second Language Acquisition (SLA).⁴ This discipline focuses mainly on the development of knowledge and use of a language by children and adults who already know at least one other language. What is also important is the fact that SLA has developed into multiple theories, which differ in a multitude of ways, either in their form or in their content; as a result, not much progress has been made in taking the theoretical basis of SLA forward due to the lack of what they refer to as a “dominating theory”. Regardless of this weak side of the theoretical underpinnings of the discipline, the field of SLA, according to Naudé and Miller-Naudé (2011, 692), has both theoretical and practical importance for the writing of a teaching grammar of BH. The theoretical importance of this field is meant for understanding how language is processed and presented, whilst the practical importance plays a vital role in determining the best practices for teaching and learning. In order to have a thorough understanding of teaching and learning, Naudé and Miller-Naudé (2011, 693) discuss different models and theories. The first model is the psychological model, which encapsulates different sub-models such as behaviourism, cognitive psychology, and the connectionism and interactional approach models. The psychological model argues that differences between languages are deep—this means that language is processed by general cognitive mechanisms that are responsible for a wide range of human learning and information processing. One example of a language processing mechanism is “Language Acquisition Made Practical” (LAMP) (Brewster and Brewster, 1976). This mechanism views language acquisition as a kind of habit formation. This means that

4 For more information on the issue, see, for example, Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991); Long (2011) and McLaughlin (1987).

learning occurs through repeated practice and, through this, controlled knowledge results.

Another example of a processing mechanism is the “Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis” (CAH) (Lado 1964) which explains the role of L1 (first language) and L2 (second language) learning. This mechanism predicts that where similarities exist between L1 (first language) and L2 (second language) structures, there should be no difficulties for the L2 learner. Where there are differences, the L2 learner would have trouble. When put to the test this mechanism failed because it did not predict errors that L2 learners made and did predict some errors that occur.

In contrast to psychological models which propagate the view that language differences are deep, linguistic models such as the “universal grammar” model posit an innate knowledge of principles common to all languages.

Besides the psychological and the universal grammar frameworks, the discourse about SLA and its theories and frameworks has also been examined from the perspective of complexity theory. This theory argues that language can never remain in a stable state, and it cannot be acquired once and for all. The theory further suggests that humans, as language-using agents, assemble language from the resources at their disposal. This theory also emphasises the importance and the uniqueness of L1 (first language) in the acquisition of L2 (second language).

Another important theory was developed by Talmy Givón (1979). His “functional-typology theory” was used to formulate a single grammar in a universal sense which can serve as the basis of teaching grammar. What is also important about the theory is that it is functionalist (as opposed to formalist) in the sense that it views syntax as reflective of functions of human discourse. It is also typological in the sense that it considers a wide range of diverse language rather than a single language or language family (Naudé and Miller-Naudé 2011, 695). In other words, one could say that it is from this theory that the language typology frame of reference emanated. The reason for opting for language typology over SLA to introduce a new way of teaching the grammar of Biblical Hebrew in Africa, according to Naudé and Miller-Naudé (2011, 695), is that SLA did not take notice of the full possibilities of language typology for language teaching.

Defining Language Typology as a Theoretical Approach

Whaley (1997, 7–15) defines typology as the classification of languages or components of languages based on shared formal characteristics. Whaley (1997, 15) goes on to say that it involves cross-linguistic comparison. When explaining typology within the cross-linguistic approach, one needs to investigate a specific language component or feature (for example, the pronominal system or features of pronouns for the sake of this article) by compiling enough information about the component in a wide variety of languages.

This means that for this study one must compare and contrast Sesotho and Biblical Hebrew pronouns. When investigating the formal features of languages, it is possible to group languages into classes based on their genetic relationship or their common origin (language families). In other instances, classification of languages is done according to their geographic locations. Both of these may be combined with grouping languages based upon their typological features. In cases where there are linguistic similarities between languages of different genetic origins, this may be the result of speech communities in which two or more languages co-exist and there is a high degree of multilingualism. In those instances, it is likely that a language can adopt the grammar of another language, like Sesotho adopting some grammatical features of English. Since this study forms part of ongoing research, the typological comparisons will be limited to the pronouns of Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho.

Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho Explained Typologically

This section seeks to describe what type of languages Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho are according to certain linguistic features. Some of these features will be similar whilst others will be different in these languages.

This argument is further stimulated by the works of two Biblical Hebrew scholars. The first is Stephen H. Levinsohn (2010), a translation consultant with the Summer Institute of Linguistic. Levinsohn discovered that the Bible translators with whom he was working were unaware of the important features that their languages, all North-western Austronesian languages, share with Hebrew. The second author, Victor Zinkurature (2001), was a professor of Biblical Hebrew at the Catholic University of East Africa. He argues that English as a medium of instruction is very different from both Biblical Hebrew and Bantu languages. He and his students compared the structure of Biblical Hebrew to those of a number of Bantu languages. These two scholars noticed that there are ways in which BH has important structural connections to non-Indo-European languages. It is the insightful work of these two proponents that triggered my interest in investigating different linguistic features in both Sesotho and Biblical Hebrew to explain exactly how BH and Sesotho relate to one another typologically.

I will briefly mention five of the many linguistic features that can be used to compare Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho. First, both Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho are pro-drop languages. This means that the subject of a proposition is indicated by an affix attached to a verb, rather than by an independent pronoun (see Holmstedt 2013). Second, both Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho lack case marking; nouns are not declined. Third, both Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho are inflectional languages. Fourth, Biblical Hebrew is viewed by most scholars as an aspect-prominent language, whereas Sesotho indicates both tense and aspect in its verbal system. Fifth, in Biblical Hebrew the normal word order is Verb-Subject-Object (Kelley 2018, 110) whereas in Sesotho the normal word order is Subject-Verb-Object. In both languages the position of words may be changed to indicate topic or focus or for rhetorical effect.

The most important features of Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho for the purposes of this article relate to gender and agreement. Some languages have sex-based gender systems, whereas others have non-sex-based gender systems. Biblical Hebrew is an example of a sex-based gender system in that there are two genders, which have their basis in the natural sex of living creatures—masculine and feminine. Sesotho is an example of a non-sex-based gender system. Sesotho nouns are grouped into seven classes.⁵

Both Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho have agreement features. In Biblical Hebrew, agreement of gender and number involves adjectives and agreement of gender, number and person involves pronouns and verbs (Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 2017, 64; Ross 2005, 104; Kelley 2018, 58–63 and 110; Blau 1976, 88).

In Sesotho, words and morphemes called concords (Table 2, Addendum) play a vital role in agreement. In other words, Sesotho has what is called concordial agreement (Mokoena 1998, 101). Therefore, to show this agreement in Sesotho, a verb must always agree with its subject or object in singular or in plural. For example, there is a concord marker indicating the nominal subject based upon the noun classes. In example (1), both the words for “man” and “woman” are in the first noun class and have identical agreement:

(1)
monna *o* *jele*
 man.C1.SG AGR.SBJ.C1.SG ate
 The man ate.

mosadi *o* *jele*
 woman.C1.SG AGR.SBJ.C1.SG ate
 The woman ate.

Even the word for “daughter”, which is derived from “son” by means of a suffix that creates a feminine noun out of a masculine noun (i.e., *mora* (son) > *mora+adi* > *moradi* (daughter)), exhibits the same noun class concord:

(2)
moradi *o* *jele*
 daughter.C1.SG AGR.SBJ.C1.SG ate
 The daughter ate.

5 See Doke and Mofokeng (1985, 107); Jacottet (1955, 26); de Jager (1952, 42–48); de Jager (1953, 47). Other grammars, including Mokoena (1998, 71) and Guma (1971, 42), assert that Sesotho has fifteen noun classes. This is due to the fact that both singulars and plurals are counted together.

By contrast, the noun *pere* (horse) is in noun class 3. When it is the subject of the sentence, a different concord marker must be used:

(3)
pere *e* *jele*
horse.C3. AGR.SBJ.C3.SG ate
The horse ate.

In example (4), plural forms of the nouns “man” and “woman” are illustrated with their agreement concords.

(4)
banna *ba* *jele*
men.C1.PL AGR.SBJ.C1.PL ate
The men ate.

basadi *ba* *jele*
women.C1.PL AGR.SBJ.C1.PL ate
The women ate.

Concord markers are also used to indicate agreement of nouns with adjectives. For example, the phrase “good men” must include a concord marker to express agreement between the noun and the adjective:

(5)
banna *ba* *molemo*
men.C1.PL AGR. AGR.SBJ.C1.PL good
Good men.

The use of concord markers with possessive nouns, relative pronouns and quantifiers will be described below.

We can now contrast Biblical Hebrew with Sesotho. In Biblical Hebrew, agreement refers to linguistic components such as adjectives, pronouns, verbs, which must agree in gender, number and, in certain contexts, in definiteness (Kelley 2018, 70; Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 2017, 293; Seow 1995, 104; Ross 2005, 95). In Sesotho, adjectives that are used to describe a noun are brought into agreement with that noun by using the appropriate adjectival concord markers (Mokoena 1998, 101; Doke and Mofokeng 1985, 118).

Beside the aspect of agreement, both languages are inflectional; affixes are used to mark number (singular/plural), person and gender (only Hebrew marks gender). In Hebrew, inflected verbs have agreement for gender and number, whilst for adjectives and nouns the agreement is for person, gender, number and definiteness. For instance, the perfect verb *kātabtī* (I wrote) has the *-ti* suffix showing first person singular, whereas *kātabnū*

(we wrote) has the *-nū* suffix showing first person plural. In terms of gender, Hebrew uses the suffix *-āh* for marking third person feminine singular in the perfect verb *kātebāh* (she wrote), etc. (Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 2017, 78–79; Kelley 2018, 106–08; Seow, 1995, 145–46).

In Sesotho, suffixes like *-ile* are used to form perfect verbs. The suffix is affixed in place of the final vowel of the stem, as in *roma* (send) > *romile* (sent) and in verbs ending in (-y) as in *tsamae(y)* (walk) > *tsamaile* (walked). Other verb classes are indicated in the grammars (see Mokoena 1998, 109; Doke and Mofokeng 1985, 177).

Overview of the Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho Pronoun Systems

Pronouns are words that can stand for a noun or noun phrase (Waltke and O’Connor 1990, 290; Naudé 2013; Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 2017, 283; Kelley 2018, 68). In Biblical Hebrew, pronouns are classified according to the following types: personal, possessive, demonstrative, relative, interrogative and indefinite pronouns.

In Sesotho, a pronoun is a complete word and may stand in place of the noun or right next to it for emphasis (Mokoena 1998, 83; Doke and Mofokeng 1985, 107; see also Jacottet 1971, 26; de Jager 1952, 38; Van Eeden 1947, 46). The following types of pronouns in Sesotho will be described below, namely absolute, possessive, demonstrative, relative and quantitative (Mokoena 1998, 84–88; Doke and Mofokeng 1985, 107; Guma 1971, 92–126).

Personal (Absolute) Pronouns in Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho

In Sesotho, absolute pronouns are those which are independent words rather than affixes (see Table 1, Addendum). These forms include the suffix *-na* (Doke and Mofokeng 1985, 107–08) as part of the form.

The absolute/independent pronoun used to refer to the third person is illustrated for both Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho as follows:

(6) Genesis 13:1

וַיַּעַל אַבְרָם מִמִּצְרָיִם הוּא וְאִשְׁתּוֹ

Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife.

Sesotho 1909

Abrame	a	tloha	Egepeta,	yena	le
Abram	AGR.SBJ.C1.SG	left	Egypt	PRO.C1.SG	and
mosadi		wa		hae	
wife.C1.SG		AGR.POSS.C1.SG		PRO.POSS.C1.SG	
Abram left Egypt him and his wife.					

Genesis 16:5 illustrates two ways in which the subject may be referred to using the agreement marker:

(7) Genesis 16:5

אָנֹכִי נָתַתִּי שְׂפָחְתִּי בְּחִיּוֹבְךָ

I gave my maid into your bosom

Sesotho 1909

<i>Ke</i>	<i>neetse</i>	<i>lekgabunyane</i>	<i>la</i>
AGR.SBJ.C1.1SG	give	maid.C3.SG	AGR.POSS.C3.SG
<i>ka</i>	<i>sefubeng</i>	<i>sa</i>	<i>hao</i>
PRO.POSS.1SG	chest.C4.SG	AGR.POSS.C4.SG	PRO.POSS.2SG

I gave my maid to your chest

Sesotho 1989

<i>Ke</i>	<i>nna</i>	<i>ya</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>neileng</i>
AGR.SBJ.C1.1SG	PRO.SBJ.1SG	AGR.REL.1SG	AGR.REL.C2.SG	gave
<i>lekgoba</i>	<i>lena</i>	<i>hoba</i>	<i>mosadi</i>	<i>wa</i>
girl.C3.1SG	PRO.DEM.PROX.C3.SG	to.be	wife.C1.SG	AGR.POSS.C1.SG

hao
PRO.POSS.2SG

I am the one who gave you this maid to be you wife.

In example (7), personal pronouns in both languages are used to indicate the focus of an utterance confirming the personal or exclusive role of the referent of the pronoun in an event. This use of the pronoun in Biblical Hebrew often occurs in contexts where a speaker boasts about what they have done (Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, 2017, 287) or in cases where pledges or promises are made, or where someone is being confronted with what he or she has done. The translation of the verse in the two Sesotho translations reflects two ways to understand the Hebrew. The usage in the new Sesotho translation (1989) is emphatic. By contrast, the 1909 Sesotho translation does not use the complete personal (absolute) pronoun *nna* (I) with its subject concord *ke* (I) but only uses its subject concord *ke* (I). This is not as emphatic as the usage with a complete personal (absolute) pronoun *Ke nna* (I am) as in the 1989 translation, which more closely reflects the Biblical Hebrew אָנֹכִי נָתַתִּי.

Possessive Pronouns in Sesotho

Possessive pronouns also involve agreement with the person and noun classes as illustrated in Jonah 2:3:

(8) Jonah 2:3

וַיֹּאמֶר קְרָאתִי מִצָּרָה לִּי אֱלֹהִים

And he said: “I cried out from my distress [lit. distress (belongs) to me] to the Lord.”

Sesotho

A re: *Mahlomoleng a ka*
AGR.SBJ.C1.3SG said: distress.C3.PL AGR.POSS.C3.PL PRO.POSS.1SG
ka ipiletsa ho Morena
AGR.SBJ.C1.1SG pleaded to the.Lord.
He said: In my distress I pleaded to the Lord.

The noun *mahlomoleng* (distress)⁶ falls under noun class 3. The agreement marker *a* which is 3rd class plural, links the noun *mahlomoleng* (distress) to the first person possessive pronoun *ka* (my).

In this example, pronominal suffixes or possessive pronoun stems in Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho respectively are used to indicate a possessive dative. The 1909 Sesotho translation does not translate the possessive pronoun stem *ya ka* (my) as in the Hebrew and the 1989 translation; this is not an unusual construction in Sesotho. The *-ng* suffix in *mahlomoleng* (in distress) describes fully the situation in which the speaker finds himself—a distressful situation.

Demonstratives in Biblical Hebrew and Sesotho

Biblical Hebrew demonstrative pronouns are deictic (that is, showing or pointing) words that can take the place of a noun or a noun phrase (Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 2017, 292; Kelley 2018, 69; Ross 2005, 94). Demonstratives can be used as either adjectives or pronouns (Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 2017, 292; Ross, 2005, 95; Seow 1995, 104; Blau 1976, 43). As adjectives, demonstratives can also modify nouns and noun phrases and they must agree with them in number, gender and definiteness (Kelley 2018, 70; Seow 1995, 104; Ross 2005, 95; see example (11) below). As pronouns, demonstratives replace nouns; in other words, they stand as subjects of sentences and they appear without the definite article but agree with the noun in number and gender (Ross 2005, 95; Long 2002, 43; example (10) below).

Furthermore, a distinction is usually drawn between near (at hand) and distant (farther away) demonstrative pronouns (Table 3, Addendum). Distinctions are also drawn between masculine and feminine, and the singular and the plural of the demonstrative pronouns (Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 2017, 291; Ross 2005, 95; Seow 1995, 104; Joüon and Muraoka 1990, 115).

As in Biblical Hebrew, demonstrative pronouns in Sesotho are deictic words that can take the place of a noun or a noun phrase. Sesotho has three positional types of demonstrative pronouns (Table 5, Addendum). Demonstrative pronouns in Sesotho are differentiated according to their specific roles. Doke and Mofokeng (1985, 110; see also

6 *Mahlomoleng* (in distress) comes from the noun *mahlomola* (distress), and the noun comes from the verb *ho hlomoha* (to be distressed).

Guma 1971, 126–31) discuss the following: the first category of demonstrative pronouns (=Biblical Hebrew: near demonstrative) signifies *eō/enwa/ena* (this); *baa/bana* (these): indicating proximity to the speaker. The second category (=Biblical Hebrew: distance demonstratives) signifies: *eō/enō* (that); *baō/banō* (those): indicating relative distance from the speaker. The third category signifies: *yanē/elwa* (that yonder).

(9) Isaiah 29:11

BHS

קְרָא נָא - זֶה

Please read this

Sesotho 1909

E bale hle!

AGR.C5.SG

Read it please!

Sesotho 1989

E bale!

AGR.C5.SG

Read it!

However, the use of a demonstrative pronoun would result in vagueness and ambiguity. Therefore, the translators of the Sesotho Bible used instead the absolute concord marker *e* (it) of class 5 nouns (as shown above in example (9)) which implies a book as the object.

The translators can also use the close demonstrative to indicate closeness to the speaker:

(10) 2 Samuel 13:17

BHS

שְׁלַח-נָא אֶת-זֹאת מֵעָלַי

Please send this (fs) [woman] out of my presence

Sesotho 1909

Lelekela mosadi eo ntle, a

Send woman.C1.SG PRO.DEM.PROX.C1.SG out AGR.C1.SG

tlohe pela ka

be.away before PRO.POSS.1SG

Send this (that) woman out, away from me.

Sesotho 1989

Ntsha mosadi enwa ka mona hona jwale!

throw woman.C1.SG PRO.DEM.PROX.C1.SG out here right now!

Send (throw) this woman out right now!

The 1909 Sesotho translation uses *eo* (this/that), which falls under both the first (close demonstrative) and second (near demonstrative) categories of demonstratives and can be translated as either “this” or “that” in English; one has to be very careful to avoid confusion. The 1989 Sesotho translation is more precise. It uses *enwa* (this) which falls under the first category. From the above discussion, a deduction can be made that both translations agree with the Biblical Hebrew—the only difference is in terms of gender. In Sesotho the issue of gender depends on the context.

Demonstrative pronouns in both BH and Sesotho can be used to modify nouns; in other words, they can be used attributively or predicatively. Attributive usage of demonstratives means that they can be used as adjectives:

(11) Genesis 7:1

BHS

כִּי־אֵתָּךְ רָאִיתִי צְדִיק לְפָנַי בְּדוֹר הַזֶּה

For I have seen that you are righteous before me in this (demonstrative, masc. sing) generation.

Sesotho 1909

Hobane ke⁷ o bone o lokile
 CONJ AGR.SBJ.C1.1.SG PRO.OBJ.2.SG seen AGR.2.SG righteous
lelokong lena
 in.generation.C3.SG PRO.DEM.PROX.C3.SG

For I have seen you being righteous before me in this generation.

Sesotho 1989

Hobane ke o bone hore
 CONJ. AGR.SBJ.C1.1.SG PRO.OBJ.2.SG seen that
molokong ona ke wena
 in.generation.C2.SG DEM.PROX.C2.SG PRO.OBJ.2.SG PRO.2.SG
feela ya lokileng mahlong a
 only.one REL.C1.SG righteous eyes.C3.PL AGR.POSS.C3.PL
ka
 POSS.C1.SG

For I have seen that in this generation you are the only one who is righteous in my eyes.

Although the 1909 Sesotho translation uses *lena* (this) instead of *ona* (this) as stipulated in the above categories of demonstratives in Sesotho, this change does not have any effect in terms of syntactic arrangement and meaning (attributive/predicative).

7 In Sesotho there are two *ke* and they are distinguished by tone. One is copulative (high tone) and the other is a subject agreement marker (low tone).

The prefix *le-* in *leloko* (generation) influences the choice of which demonstrative is to be used, hence *leloko lena* (this generation) instead of *leloko ona*. In fact, *ona* (this) requires the *mo-* prefix as in *moloko* (generation) (1989) to be appropriate.

Demonstrative pronouns usually in pairs function as reciprocal pronouns in both BH and in Sesotho.

Relative Markers

In Biblical Hebrew, the relative markers are not actually pronouns because they do not agree with the nouns they modify. In addition, the relative marker may be implied but not expressed; in other words, the relative marker may be unmarked (that is, the relative is a zero relative). Similarly, in Sesotho the relative marker (Table 6, Addendum) can either be marked or unmarked. However, in Sesotho the relative markers are pronouns and must agree with the noun class of the head noun:

(12) Numbers 34:13

זאת הארץ אשר תתנחלו אותה בגורל

This [fs] is the land [fs] **which** you shall inherit **it** [3fs] by lot

Sesotho 1909

<i>Ke</i>	<i>yona</i>	<i>naha</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>tla</i>
COP.	PRO.C5.SG	land.C5.SG	AGR.REL.C5.SG	PRO.2.PL	shall
<i>arolelana</i>	<i>yona</i>				
divide	PRO.OBJ.C5.SG				

This will be the land, which you shall divide it by lot.

Sesotho 1989

<i>Ena</i>	<i>ke</i>	<i>yona</i>	<i>naha</i>	<i>e</i>	
PRO.DEM.PROX.C1.S	COP	PRO.C5.SG	land.C5.SG	AGR.REL.C5.SG	
<i>le</i>	<i>tla</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>arolelana</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>e be</i>
AGR.2PL	shall	AGR.C5.SG	divide	PRO.OBJ.C5.SG	to.be
<i>lefa</i>	<i>la</i>		<i>lona</i>		
inheritance.C3.SG	AGR.POSS.C3.SG		PRO.C2.PL		

This is the land which you shall divide by lot that it becomes your inheritance

In Biblical Hebrew, resumptive pronouns within the relative clause which refer to the head noun exhibit gender and number agreement with it. In Sesotho, the relative marker agrees with the class of the head noun. In addition, the resumptive construction by means of a pronominal element is also found in Sesotho and it agrees with the class of the head noun.

Quantitative Pronouns

The BH quantifier is בָּל.⁸ Sesotho uses a single stem *-hle* (all) as a quantifier, which, unlike Hebrew, must agree with the noun that the quantifier modifies. The following quantifiers in Sesotho are set out in Table 7, Addendum.

(13) Isaiah 28:8

For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness which leaves no place

כִּי בָל־שִׁלְחָנוֹת מְלֹאֹ קִיא צֹאָה בְּלִי מָקוֹם

Sesotho 1909

... <i>ditafole</i>	<i>tsa</i>	<i>bona</i>	<i>kaofela</i>
Tables.C5.PL	AGR.POSS.C5.PL	POSS.C5.PL	QUANT.C5.PL
<i>di</i>	<i>tletse</i>	<i>mahlatsa le ditshila</i>	<i>tse sa</i>
AGR.C5.PL	full	vomit and filthiness	REL.C5.PL AGR.C5.PL
<i>siyeng sebaka</i>			
leaving	place.C4.SG		

... all their tables are full of vomit and filthiness which are not leaving any space

Sesotho 1989

<i>Tafole</i>	<i>tsohle</i>	<i>di</i>	<i>tletse</i>	<i>mahlatsa le ditshila</i>
Tables.C5.PL	QUANT.C5.PL	AGR.C5.PL	full	vomit and filthiness
<i>ha hona</i>	<i>sebaka</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>le seng</i>	<i>se</i>
there is no	place.C4.SG	AGR.C4.SG	single.one	REL.C4.SG
<i>hlwekileng</i>				
is clean.				

... all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, there is no single place which is clean

The quantifier follows the noun that it modifies and agrees with it in number and noun class. The 1909 translation uses *kaofela* (all of) instead of *tsohle* (all) (1989). The two items are synonymous.

Conclusions

The preceding discussion has demonstrated that typology can be employed for teaching Biblical Hebrew in Africa and will enable African students (in this case Sesotho-speaking students) to study Biblical Hebrew with greater understanding. This is proven by recognising that there are ways in which Biblical Hebrew has important structural connections with Sesotho as demonstrated in the case of the pronoun systems of these two languages. However, the value of using language typology for teaching Hebrew is that it helps student not only to see these connections or similarities, but also to

8 See the thorough discussion on the interpretation and the translation of the Biblical Hebrew quantifier in Naudé (2011, 408–21).

recognise the differences, especially with respect to the third-person pronominal forms in Sesotho, which relate to the seven noun classes. In other words, the Sesotho pronoun system is more complicated than that of Biblical Hebrew. Therefore, Sesotho-speaking students must learn to identify and understand these connections and differences of their language when learning Biblical Hebrew. These connections can only be communicated effectively through the theory of language typology so that Biblical Hebrew can be taught in an effective and efficient way in Africa and around the world.

Addendum: Summary of Pronoun System in Sesotho

Table 1. Personal (absolute) pronouns

PERSON	SINGULAR	PLURAL
1.	'na / Nna (I)	Rōna (We)
2.	Wēna / (You)	Lōna (You)
3.	Class 1. Yēna / (He / She)	Bōna (they)
	2. Wōna (it)	Yōna (they)
	3. Lōna (it)	Wōna; Tsōna (they)
	4. Sōna (it)	Tsōna (they)
	5. Yōna (it)	Tsōna (they)
	6. Bōna (it)	Wōna (they)
	7. Hōna (it)	_____

Table 2. Agreement

Person	Pron. Sing	Concord	Pron. Plural	Concord
1	<i>Nna (I)</i>	<i>ke (am)</i>	<i>Rona (We)</i>	<i>Re (are)</i>
2	<i>Wena / You</i>	<i>o (are)</i>	<i>Lona (You)</i>	<i>le (are)</i>
3	Class 1. <i>Yena/ He / She</i>	<i>o (is)</i>	<i>Bona (they)</i>	<i>ba (are)</i>
	2. <i>Wona / it</i>	<i>o (is)</i>	<i>Yona (they)</i>	<i>e (are)</i>
	3. <i>Lona (it)</i>	<i>le (is)</i>	<i>Wona; Tsona (they)</i>	<i>a / dí (are)</i>
	4. <i>Sona (it)</i>	<i>se (is)</i>	<i>Tsona (they)</i>	<i>di (are)</i>
	5. <i>Yona (it)</i>	<i>e (is)</i>	<i>Tsona (they)</i>	<i>di (are)</i>
	6. <i>Bona (it)</i>	<i>bo (is)</i>	<i>Wona (they)</i>	<i>a (are)</i>
	7. <i>Hona (it)</i>

Table 3. Possessive pronominal stems

Person		Singular	Plural
1		- <i>ka</i> (<i>my</i>)	- <i>ròna</i> (<i>our</i>)
2		- <i>haō</i> (<i>your</i>)	- <i>lòna</i> (<i>your</i>)
3	Class 1.	- <i>haē</i> (<i>his /her</i>)	- <i>bòna</i> (<i>their</i>)
	2.	- <i>wòna</i> (<i>its</i>)	- <i>yòna</i> (<i>their</i>)
	3.	- <i>lòna</i> (<i>its</i>)	- <i>tsòna</i> (<i>their</i>)
	4.	- <i>sòna</i> (<i>its</i>)	- <i>tsòna</i> (<i>their</i>)
	5.	- <i>yòna</i> (<i>its</i>)	- <i>tsòna</i> (<i>their</i>)
	6.	- <i>bòna</i> (<i>its</i>)	-
	7.	- <i>hòna</i> (<i>its</i>)	

Table 4. Possessive pronominal concord

	Singular	Plural
Class 1	<i>wa- /of</i>	<i>ba- /of</i>
2	<i>wa- /of</i>	<i>ya- /of</i>
3	<i>la- /of</i>	<i>a- /of, tsa- /of</i>
4	<i>sa- /of</i>	<i>tsa- /of</i>
5	<i>ya- /of</i>	<i>tsa- /of</i>
6	<i>ba- /of</i>	<i>a- /of</i>
7	<i>ha- /of</i>	

Table 5. Demonstrative pronouns

	Singular	Plural
The first category (close)	<i>eō/enwa/ena</i> (<i>this one</i>)	<i>baa/bana</i> (<i>these ones</i>)
The second category (near)	<i>eō/enō</i> (<i>that one</i>)	<i>baō/banō</i> (<i>those ones</i>)
The third category (far)	<i>yanē/elwa</i> (<i>that yonder</i>)	<i>bāle</i> (<i>those ones</i>)

Table 6. Relative concords

	Singular	Plural
Class 1	<i>ya-/one who</i>	<i>ba-/ones who</i>
2	<i>o- /one which</i>	<i>e-/ones which</i>
3	<i>le-/one which</i>	<i>a-; tse- /ones which</i>
4	<i>se-/ one which</i>	<i>tse-/ones which</i>
5	<i>e-/one which</i>	<i>tse-/ones which</i>
6	<i>bo-/one which</i>	<i>a-/ones which</i>
7	<i>ho-/one which</i>	

Table 7. Quantitative classes

	Singular	Plural
Class 1.	<i>Bohle</i>
2.	<i>Ohle/all</i>	<i>Yohle</i>
3.	<i>Lohle/all</i>	<i>Ohle</i> or <i>tsohle/all</i>
4.	<i>Sohle/all</i>	<i>Tsohle/all</i>
5.	<i>Yohle/all</i>	<i>Tsohle/all</i>
6.	<i>Bohle/all</i>	<i>Ohle/all</i>
7.		<i>Hohle/all</i>

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