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Title: Incipient Grammaticalization of *brata* ‘brother’ as a Reciprocal Marker in Tok Pisin
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This paper examines how a marker of implied reciprocity is in the process of grammaticalizing from the two-place kin noun *brata* ‘brother’ in Tok Pisin (English-based creole spoken as a lingua franca in Papua New Guinea):

- (1) Orait yupela tu i mas was-im lek bilong ol brata
So you.PL also PRED must wash-TR foot of PL brother
bilong yupela (John 13:14)
of you.PL
‘So you (pl.) must also wash your brother’s feet.’
OR ‘So you (pl.) must also wash each other’s feet.’

Encoding of reciprocity in Tok Pisin has never been studied in a systematic way. Standard sources on Tok Pisin grammar list three main strategies, none of which is a dedicated reciprocal construction: First, the reduplicated numeral *wanpela wanpela* (‘each other’ but also used for distributives). Second, reflexive *yet* (ambiguous between a reflexive and a reciprocal reading as French *se* or German *sich*). Third, full or partial verb reduplication (also used for intensification). The possibility of using *brata* as a ‘noun of equivalence’ is not mentioned in the literature but emerged as a strategy for expressing reciprocity from a corpus study of the Tok Pisin bible.

The grammaticalization of two-place nouns denoting ‘comrade’, ‘friend’, ‘neighbour’, or ‘fellow’ into reciprocal markers is a well-known phenomenon during which a concrete noun develops from a nominal predicate to an expression of a relation between clause participants (Heine and Kuteva 2002). This process is attested in a number of languages as diverse as Russian (Slavic), Welsh (Celtic), Hebrew (Semitic), and Hup (a Nadahup language, Amazonia). Grammaticalization proceeds in two different ways and either leads to a bipartite reciprocal anaphor, comparable to English *each other*, as for example *drug druga* in Russian from *drug* ‘friend’, or to a single ‘noun of equivalence’, as in Welsh *POSS(essive) gilydd* ‘to POSS(essive) fellow’.

In Tok Pisin this grammaticalization process is incipient. The *brata*-construction is not unambiguously interpreted as reciprocal like the respective constructions in Russian or Welsh, rather reciprocal semantics are still at best an implicature. Furthermore, it seems to be specific to the bible register. Nevertheless, certain mechanisms characteristic for grammaticalization processes are operative in the *brata*-construction. There is an intimate link between context extension of *brata*, the acquisition of new reciprocal semantics, and concomitant decategorialization, i.e. the subsequent loss of characteristic morpho-syntactic categories, in this case the loss of the singular-plural distinction of the noun *brata* ‘brother’ vs. *ol brata* ‘brothers’ in the reciprocal sense (in which only the plural *ol brata* is possible).

This paper provides new insights into the grammaticalization of concrete two-place nouns into markers of reciprocity. By highlighting an example of this process in its incipient stage, I hope to further our understanding of this diachronically understudied grammaticalization pathway.

Heine, B. and T. Kuteva (2002). *World Lexicon of Grammaticalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.