

Why Mama and Papa

538) world of the child and world of the adult. Collision: baby talk, a pidgin. Seek a common code. nursery words, coinages.

539) some enter adult vocabulary. emotionally tinged mama, papa and higher terms mother, father, mat', otec.

IE mater, pe[shwa]ter. -ter. source of otec, father, mat', mother.

Bulgarian mama. no pronouns or possessives. majka may appear with short pronoun but not mi. One's own mother = mama or majka, in context. May say mojata majka.

540) Phonemic range of nursery terms very limited. No clusters. CV alone.

Stops and nasals predominate. Diffuse over compact. Wide vowels. Compact V is maximal energy, diffuse C with oral occlusion maximal reduction of energy.

541) Always CV, yet in babbling VC common. Russ interjections ap, am. Moving to true speech. transition from C to V best discerned in this order, not at syllable end.

Acute V after acute C; assimilation of the child. The V is allophonic, C is basic.

mama,papa are geminates, same syllable, same V. one utterance – one sentence – one word – one morpheme- one phoneme – one distinctive feature. Earliest stage.

542) 55% of mother words have nasal, only 15 % of father words.

Sucking – also a slight nasal murmur. later this nasal = food, yum yum, desire to eat, longing for the nurse, for anyone absent, expression of discontent, ungranted wish.

543) m > mother term. Or, it is delayed, and papa is the first thoroughly designative verbal unit (first word), Mama as an interjection, papa is the real word. (for some children).

papa = parent present, mama = need.

Oedipal or preoedipal?? the distant, deictic, rudimentarily cognitive papa – heralds transition to referential language. mama – deep early identification.

Check to see how boys and girls work this out. (ha)

544) phonemic m implies the consonant – vowel contrast and is a superstructure upon this contrast. Papa is first word.

More analysis of Murdock's table is needed.

Russ mama – tjatja. palatalization creating with acute dental the optimal contrast with m.

Russ baba, djada, grandma, uncle, introduce voicing. ded grandpa and tjotja, aunt, switch to other vowels. nurse in either mamka or njanja.