

***A MEITHEAL* FOR MOTHERS – THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF GROUP SINGING FOR MOTHERS OF INFANTS AND PREGNANT WOMEN**



Sarah McCarthy
Doctor of Arts Candidate
Victoria College, London



INTRODUCTION

- ***A Meitheal* for Mothers - How Does Group Singing Affect Perinatal Women's Perceptions of Their Well-Being, Peer Support, Maternal Self-Efficacy, Singing Ability, and Creativity?**
- ***Meitheal* – Bonding Social Capital**

- **Why Sing?**
- **Matresence**
- **Hormonal Effects**
- **Loneliness**
- **Social Bonding**
- **Impact on Mother and Baby**



LITERATURE
REVIEW

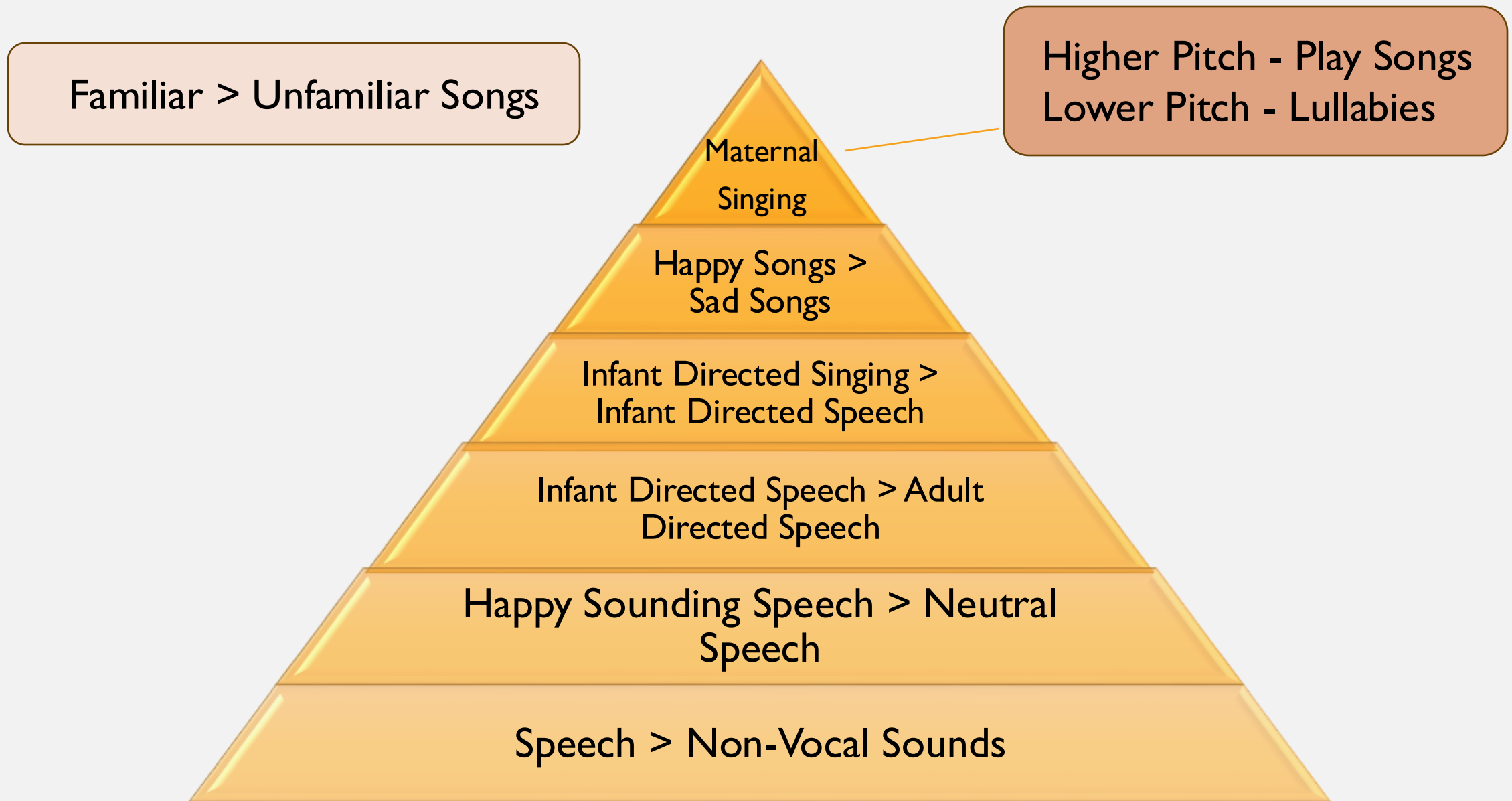


Figure 1. The Hierarchy of Infants' Preferred Sounds (McCarthy, 2024)

DATA COLLECTION



MIXED METHODOLOGY



**QUANTITATIVE - INTERNET
QUESTIONNAIRE**



QUALITATIVE - INTERVIEWS



**PILOT STUDY - RANDOMISED
CONTROL TRIAL**

CONTROL GROUP

- **45 Minute Sessions**
- **Infant Directed
Singing**

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

- **90 Minute Sessions**
- **Infant & Adult
Directed Singing**
- **Google Classroom**
- **Routine Songs**
- **Coffee &
Conversation**

- **WHO – 5: Well-Being Scale**
- **Control Group - Positive Impact**
- **Infants' Feedback**
- **The Formation of Friendships**
- **Learning a New Parenting Skill**



INITIAL
RESULTS

‘...Caoimhe is a bit of a miracle for me and I’m so grateful that we were able to bond over music.....I think we will have that connection forever’ (Megan, Control Group)

‘I look forward to it [the class] weekly and feel rejuvenated afterwards. I know it’s a time where I can bond with my baby and we both enjoy the time together. I look forward to the relaxed, friendly atmosphere and talking to the other mothers and interacting with their babies.’ (Catherine, Control Group)

‘...singing together at the end of class as just a group of women was so enjoyable and got me thinking of hobbies I need to pick back up for myself that I have let slide since having baby!’ (Chloe, Experimental Group)

INITIAL CONCLUSIONS

- **Newborn – Crawling**
- **Infant Directed Singing:
Mother and Baby**
- **Audio Recordings**
- **Coffee & Conversation**



BIOGRAPHY

Sarah McCarthy AVCM, BA Hon (Mus), MA (Mus), MA (Ed.) is a doctor of arts candidate at Victoria College, London. Sarah is a musician, teacher and group singing facilitator based in Cork, Ireland. She has been facilitating participatory group music making for many years with an emphasis on group singing.

Sarah's research focuses on the potential benefits of group singing for women during the perinatal period. This interest stems from her practice of facilitating group singing classes for mothers, their babies and young children.