

Children being and becoming singers in everyday family life in minority world homes

Susan Young, University of Roehampton

Bronya Dean, University of Exeter

ABSTRACT

In this chapter we adopt an anthropological perspective to explain the capacities young children possess which enable them to learn to sing through participation in everyday, family activity. We then present recent research that has explored young children's singing practices in family life at home, organising these practices into four types: sing-along, sociable, solitary and smooth-running. Although these descriptions are confined to one type of contemporary, minority world childhood, they may illuminate similar processes in the lives of children beyond this narrow demographic and may suggest some additional approaches to singing in educational practice.

KEYWORDS

Early childhood, singing, everyday life, homes

Reading across a range of ethnographic studies of young children's singing (our age range in this chapter is 3 to 8 years) in a variety of locations and contexts, the studies suggest that learning to sing occurs implicitly through participation in regular singing activities that occur as part of children's routine, everyday lives. Even if children receive some direct instruction in learning how to sing through deliberate modelling by family members or other adults, by attending some kind of group music session or class, or when they arrive in preschool or early years of schooling, this still forms only a very small part of their overall singing experience. In this chapter, as its title indicates, we focus our attention on children and their family lives in the *minority world*. We adopt this term, minority world, because it highlights

the fact that we knowingly focus on a certain type of childhood that, when viewed globally, is not representative of the majority. The majority of the world's children live in the economically poorer regions of Latin America, Asia and Africa. However, it is predominantly minority world nuclear families living in more affluent countries of North America, Europe, Australasia and some countries of Asia and the Middle East that have received the attention of researchers interested in young children's everyday musical experiences.

Drawing on a number of recent studies, we adopt an anthropological perspective to consider how young children learn to sing within contemporary minority world homes and to explore the types of singing that these environments engender. When describing children learning to sing, we refer to the contextualised acquisition of singing through everyday social interactions in a process similar to the way in which children acquire their first language.

AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

It is now fairly common for children's musical activities and their learning to be considered and theorised in relation to environment and context, and family life at home represents the immediate contextual dimension for young children. But all too often context remains an add-on, conceptualised as sets of variables or external influences that expand outwards like ripples on a pond and the isolated, individualised child of psychology still takes centre stage. The alternative is for context, in the anthropological sense of culture, to be the crucial, all pervasive and determining factor. An anthropological view is interested in how children's singing arises from and is determined by the material and social environment of children's homes, by the values and attitudes held by their family and by their family's cultural practices. Different contexts for musical upbringings vary in their objective characteristics

(the type of home, who lives in it, the material items, activities and experiences that are available) and also their subjective dimensions (the values, beliefs and the norms for upbringing and for music held by the parents). These characteristics create patterns of opportunities and constraints for singing interwoven with expectations and demands, all of which require consideration in understanding how children can be and become singers.

The sub-discipline of biological anthropology is interested not only in the cultural sources of behaviours, but also in their biological origins and how the two have evolved synergistically. This 'bio-socio-cultural' perspective can offer insights into how young children learn to sing implicitly through participation in everyday home life. It endeavours to pay equal attention to the innate potentials for learning to sing that children possess and the co-evolved cultural milieu for singing that they inhabit. For a start, the knowledge that children learn to sing in the absence of direct instruction suggests that they are motivated to learn and, moreover, that they possess capacities that enable them to learn. Two capacities are identifiable from the research literature. The first is young children's innate ability to engage and interact with those who are close to them, their family members and friends, combined with a strong motivation to imitate what those close to them are doing in order to become like them. Tomasello's cultural learning theory (2003) and Trevarthen's ideas on interaction and intersubjectivity (e.g. Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001) both point to what has been described by theorists of language learning as an 'interactional instinct' (Lee, et al., 2009). Meanwhile, music has co-evolved to become a medium that invites and engenders connection and joining in. Theories of music as an adaptive means to enhance cooperation have emerged from recent interests in the evolutionary origins of music (e.g. Schulkin & Raglan, 2014). Thus, children have an aptitude for learning to sing because they have a desire for interaction with others, to connect, imitate and conform and because songs and song-singing have evolved as a medium to foster and reinforce sociability and bonding between human beings. From a

biological anthropological perspective, the innate motivations, based on biological needs for bonding and cooperation, and the unique cultural qualities of song have evolved hand-in-hand.

The second capacity draws from detailed research into the perceptual capabilities of infants (see Trehub, 2015). Another crucial prerequisite for learning to sing is children's ability to perceive musical features in the songs that they hear, to detect pitch and rhythm patterns and to remember them so that they can join in. Clearly young children need exposure to songs and repetition of those songs in their immediate environment, at a certain regularity and frequency, if they are to build a storehouse of musical patterning memories. It would seem that more experienced singers provide young children with a special repertoire of songs that have clear-cut and simplified musical patternings in order to facilitate pattern detection (at least in some societies¹). The more experienced singers then provide consistent repetitions of these songs either sung to young children by family or, increasingly, as is happening in present times, repeated by virtual performers invited into the home via technological devices. Parents, extended family members - and siblings too (see Koops & Kuebel, 2019, in press) - structure young children's opportunities to participate and learn. Parents sing for young children and also buy toys, recordings and technological devices that play songs. Both parents and their children interweave songs into daily family life, in a range of ways and for a range of purposes that we will describe later in the chapter. Importantly, singing within families with young children emerges from family dynamics and processes, and is shaped and formed by those processes. The resultant singing activities are constructed to facilitate certain goals: interaction; closeness; and the emotionally positive and smooth running of family life (Barrett, 2009; Costa-Giomi & Bennetti, 2017; Young & Gillen, 2010). The structures of the songs sung as part of everyday life are flexible; they may be incomplete,

improvised and are often multi-modal, embedded and interwoven into activity both with others, socially, and with material objects.

At the same time young children attend carefully, take great interest, and elicit more song-singing as they attempt to join in with singing events and to draw social meanings from them. Many with experience of caring for young children will be familiar with the 2-year-old who, enjoying a singing lap game, asks for it ‘again’ repeatedly and elicits from the adults many more renditions of the same song. Children attune to and seek out the rewards of musical participation, competences that, in turn, increase repetition, frequency and exposure, and the opportunity to learn. Similarly, for example, older children will have favourite songs that they enjoy and ask to hear during key moments in the day with which they are often associated (e.g. car journeys, falling asleep, care routines). Thus, even very young children exercise agency in shaping the musical environment around them, shown by pleasure and excitement or disappointment and distress when the song happens as they had hoped - or not – and in this way provide themselves with the hearings, repetitions and practice they desire and require (Barrett, 2009; Dean, 2017; 2019).

Depending on the ways that songs are incorporated, and the cues and responses of the adults around them, children come to understand how songs and singing are valued and integrated into their everyday life. Equally, there may be families where song-singing plays only a minor role, where children’s efforts to engage receive less encouragement, or are even restricted. This may be for religious reasons. Some devout Muslim mothers we interviewed were comfortable with their very young children singing a range of children’s songs but declared they would discourage their daughters from singing when they reached school age around 5 years (Young & Street, 2009). There may also be reasons rooted in gender biases.

The pervasive idea that singing is a feminised activity (e.g. Ashley, 2010) may result in some adults being less positively responsive and encouraging to boys when they sing.

To summarise thus far, young children possess motivations and capacities to engage socially with others in musical activities, and they have discriminating abilities. They pay attention to songs, listen carefully, seek out repetitions and, gradually, as their maturing vocal structures allow it, imitate and join in with the singing around them, learning how to sing and how songs can be interwoven into routine, everyday life for various purposes. Clearly, therefore, singing cannot occur without its evolved biological capacities nor its evolved cultural practices within everyday life.

Nor are the evolved cultural practices static and unchanging, they are continually being reformed and reshaped through children's re-enactments and active participations in song-singing activities. The important contribution of the sociologist Corsaro (2005) who showed how young children 'interpretively reproduce' their cultural worlds, as he termed it, has been taken up by those interested in children's singing in preschool centres as a theoretical framework to interpret the processes of spontaneous sociability through improvisational singing that take place in those settings (Werle & Bellochio, 2014; Niland, 2012; Whiteman, 2013). In preschool environments young children are playing with peers of similar age, a very different social context to the typical nuclear family of the minority world home that consists of parents and perhaps one or two siblings. Nevertheless, the work of these researchers shows us ways in which children play with songs, re-working them and incorporating all kinds of resources in processes of mixing and integrating many aspects of their individual musical experiences that have salience to them (see also Gluschankof, 2019, in press). These processes of playing with songs in improvisatory ways also take place in the

home. Corsaro's theoretical position (2005) is valuable because it emphasises the active and agentive contribution of children to the process. This counteracts the tendency in some earlier notions of musical socialisation, enculturation or transmission, to assume the process to be one way; that is, from established traditions, from experts to novices, devoid of any active input from children.

In minority world societies young children are often segregated from the adult community, confined to daycare, preschool and schools, and as a result their singing play less commonly reflects adult musical activities. Instead they draw on the resources that are available to them, mainly from media, such as the music from children's programs, cartoons and films. As Rogoff writes, there is a difference across societies in children's access to and involvement in adult community activities and 'this relates closely to differences in the extent to which adults organise specialised child-focused activities' (2003, p. 299) - or expect children to learn from intent participation in ongoing shared (music-making) activities. In families where the parents are performing musicians there may be adult music-making taking place at home, and, equally, children and parents share home spaces where music from radio and TV reflecting the adults' choices may provide the 'soundtrack' of the home. But for the most part parents arrange for musical activities designed specifically for young children to be present in the home.

CURRENT RESEARCH INTO EVERYDAY MUSIC IN FAMILIES

As we made clear at the start of this chapter, we know that the home lives of children living in minority world countries represent a very specific type of musical childhood that are a product of European and North American culture and that they count for only a very small percentage of early childhoods in a multicultural world. We are also sensitive to the fact that

certain theoretical approaches derived from research with this narrow tranche of children have continued to present a particular view of singing childhoods as a norm, have colonised others (see Gluschankof, 2019, in press), or have hidden key cultural practices from view in others. We are being clear about the cultural specificity of the children who sing in this chapter and do not proceed as if they represent an assumed norm that is automatically applicable to all children.

However, that the available information has been drawn from minority world children is not the only limitation, for it is further narrowed to middle class families, typically the friends and family of academics carrying out the studies, and often families who have particular musical interests (as in Dean, 2017; Forrester, 2010; Gibson, 2009; Gingras, 2012; Ilari & Young, 2016; Wu, 2018; Young, 2012). These limitations are understandable from a methodological perspective. In order to carry out research that accesses the home, considered private and closed to outsiders, there needs to be familiarity and trust with the researcher. Moreover because parents participating in these studies are typically asked to dedicate time and commitment to collecting data, they are likely to have a particular interest in the musical lives of their children. The data is yet further narrowed, however, by the predominance of girls. This bias towards girls seems to have arisen as a secondary sampling decision in response to greater interest among parents with daughters to participate in studies (e.g. Young, 2012; Gingras, 2012; Wu, 2018). Interestingly Dean's study (2017) of spontaneous singing during a typical day of home life included almost equal numbers of boys and girls and this suggests that methodological design may be a factor influencing gender participation. However, given the fact that there are concerns that boys lack interest and motivation for singing (e.g. Ashley, 2010) the shortage of information about boys' everyday music-making at home may suggest that their lack of interest is linked with parental attitudes

and expectations.

THE FAMILY HOME AS A PLACE FOR CHILDREN'S SINGING

Notwithstanding the limitations of data, there are some distinctive and relatively recent changes in the nature of home lives for minority-world, middle class children and some distinctive characteristics of the home as a place for singing that call for our attention and are important to explore further. Because children's singing, as we will go on to show, is intimately interwoven in the humdrum routines and practices of family life, it is transforming hand-in-hand with the changing character of contemporary parenting culture and home lives. These changes are driven by many interacting factors: demography, changing structures of family and work, economics, technological innovations, individualisation, consumption and choice. Middle class parents typically delay starting a family and have fewer children but invest time, energy and resources to their upbringing (Lareau, 2003). Dual employment among parents leads to preschool children being cared for out-of-home and school-age children being enrolled in a range of out-of-school activities. Everything adds up to the increased busy-ness of daily life and a range of ways that families manage their full schedules (Ochs & Kremer-Sadlik, 2013). A new kind of home-based childhood is emerging that is time-pressured, heavily managed and monitored by adults, with little or no outdoor play, in the company of parents and perhaps one or two siblings, with abundant playthings and special equipment designed to occupy, entertain and to ease parenting, and access to several items of digital technology and the rich media they enable. Terms such as 'intensive parenting' (Ennis, 2015) and 'concerted cultivation' (Lareau, 2003) have been arrived at by scholars to capture the nature of this contemporary parenting culture.

The experience of childhood at home, and the nature of music and musical experience in everyday life is changing with the arrival of new technologies, particularly touch-screen

devices (Brown, 2015). As several surveys have revealed, young children now have extensive access to television, DVDs, radio, a variety of computer game consoles, tablets and mobile phones (e.g. Chaudron, et al., 2015). A 2017 survey in the UK revealed that overall screen time has remained about the same, but TV viewing located in family living areas is reducing to be replaced by the independent use of tablets and phones, by their nature more individual, portable into different parts of the home (and car) and offering access to online content (Ofcom, 2017). It is interesting to note, as revealed by surveys, that with the decreasing costs of technology and increasing aspirations to own them, less affluent families are also purchasing touchscreen phones and tablets (Chaudron, et al., 2015; Ofcom, 2017). Therefore, in relation to new, portable technologies there may be more homogeneity between families, cutting across socio-demographic categories. So the discussions on their use in relation to singing in middle class families that we develop here (albeit mainly among girls), may have wider applicability to other social groups.

FOUR TYPES OF SINGING AT HOME

From our reading of studies that have explored young children's (3 to 8 years old) home-based everyday musical experiences, we have arrived at four types of singing – sing-along, sociable, solitary and smooth-running - characterised by different forms of structuring, different aims, and initiated by different family members. We took our own studies (Dean, 2017; Ilari & Young, 2016; Young, 2010, 2012;) as a starting point and supplemented them with recent studies that reflect the contemporary family with its recent shifts in technology and parenting culture (Wu, 2018; Gingras, 2012). We added references to a wider corpus of studies when these could complement or add to the ideas we were presenting. These studies capture mundane, everyday life rather than special events or annual celebrations. This organisation into types is not intended to be a formal analysis, it is a way of bringing together

a range of findings and presenting them in a coherent way. Besides, any attempt to collect singing activities into different groupings is sure to include overlaps and gaps. For example, very quiet sing-along may be present in the solitary world of falling asleep in bed with a commercialised sleep-aid playing lullabies. Equally these four types are not intended to be definitive or exclusionary to other forms of singing, nevertheless they are prevalent enough in the available literature that we have confidence in suggesting that they are fairly typical.

First we introduce the four types and then go on to discuss each in more detail.

‘Sing-along’ singing

This performance model of ‘sing-along’ to TV programmes, to video clips of song and dance numbers, karaoke games or CDs, often with dancing, may be initiated by any family member. Children may need to request permission or assistance to use technologies. In these activities the main aim is the imitation of the performance models provided by the media items, for entertainment and enjoyment.

Sociable singing

This type of singing takes place with siblings, and/or with parents and/or extended family members in the shared spaces of the family sitting room and the car, sometimes enabled by technology, sometimes *a capella*, but the enjoyment, the enhancement of a positive family dynamic and family identity appears to be the primary aim. Anyone may initiate sociable singing and it often takes places at certain times and in certain places that have become a regular part of family ‘culture’.

Solitary singing

This type of singing is solitary and private, and is self-initiated. The main aims appear to be self-entertainment, (when there is little else to do), self-management of mood (to self-soothe in particular) and focus (to increase distraction or concentration).

‘Smooth-running’ singing

This type of singing is woven into regular care routines and daily tasks. The parents’ aim is to motivate, enliven and assist the smooth running of family life and so they are the usual initiators, but once known and integrated into routines, the children may initiate them.

‘SING-ALONG’

As mentioned earlier, the incursion of media-rich musical experiences into young children’s lives via home-based, portable technologies is a newly expanding area of activity which is bringing with it a range singing practices. Children’s media cultures are considerably richer than ever before (Burn, 2014) and children can watch, on demand, videos, DVDs, (pre-recorded) TV programmes and play video games that all contain songs blended with dance, visuals and dramatic narratives. Television has been in family sitting rooms for years, and children have been shown to dance and sing-along to TV programmes, challenging the passive, ‘couch-potato’ conception of TV viewing that can prevail (Marsh, et al., 2005). But the arrival of easy-access short clip cartoons, song and dance videos, particularly via YouTube and karaoke apps is promoting sing-along activity. This is generating forms of hybrid, multi-modal activity in which singing is blended with dancing, and sometimes also story-telling and dramatizing (see Wu, 2018).

Patricia Gingras (2012), researching the musical lives of five families in Rochester USA that each included a 6-year-old girl discovered that all of the participating families relied heavily

on technology to provide background or sing-along music in their homes and cars. She described one family which placed the laptop on the kitchen work counter for sociable family singing. Further insights into how young children include sing-along activities into their lives can be found in Wu's study of four Chinese heritage girls now resident in London. She describes 4-year-old Ellen's enthusiasm for an iPad application 'Frozen Karaoke' (based on the popular Disney film). In the mother's diary there were many reported instances of Ellen playing and singing to the Frozen songs at home and in the car, leading Wu to conclude that the app seemed to be 'Ellen's constant companion'. In a follow-up interview, Ellen's mother describes how her daughter learns the songs through repeatedly singing along with the app in self-motivated practice (Wu, 2018). In this way children are learning to sing songs that music educators are unlikely to include in their usual repertoire because they would be considered too difficult.

A study by one of us, Susan, into young children singing with karaoke at home, also illustrates the use of technology to expand children's home-based singing experiences (Young, 2012). This study included home visits to three sibling pairs of girls to explore karaoke singing in more depth and within the family context. In each case the karaoke singing, as with Wu's collected examples of 'sing-along' activities, took place in the collective family home entertainment space in front of, and sometimes played through, the large screen TV. One family gathered for extended family occasions for karaoke singing that were described with great pleasure, and the two sisters (6 and 8 years old) explained how they practised learning the songs diligently in preparation for these evenings, building up their knowledge through repeat listenings until they were proficient. As with Ellen above, the karaoke equipment served as an independent, individualised practice aid. A favourite with these sisters was the 'High School Musical 2' interactive karaoke game, which was

popular at the time. However, because adults and extended family members often participated in the karaoke sessions, the sisters' repertoire included a wide range of pop songs, not only those aimed at children. In another family the two sisters (also 6 and 8 years) were required to occupy themselves at home for extended periods of time while their mother worked in a home-based office. The karaoke set was part of a range of expensive purchases for indoor entertainment and although the girls sang during a research visit to their home, they were most keen to show how they connected the equipment to play through their father's precious, expensive hi-fi equipment without his knowing; a subversion that spoke of a less coherent family dynamic. Thus, in both families the karaoke singing—and its technology—were interwoven into, and reflected, the interpersonal patterns and emotional dynamics of the girls' family lives (Young, 2012).

The way that singing is heard, received and responded to by family members clearly has a substantial impact on children's motivations to continue and the pleasures they accrue. In the case of Ellen above, however, (according to her mother's account), the motivation to competently sing the Frozen songs appeared to derive from the desire to emulate a close friend, rather than family; although she was not deterred by her parents from spending much time practising the songs (Wu, 2018). Thus for Ellen, sing-along was an important skill for membership of a peer group, beyond the family, but her practising took place at home.

YouTube, providing access to cartoons, TV programmes, music videos and the like has been shown in surveys to be the primary source of online viewing for young children (e.g. Ofcom, 2017). The music, songs, dances, visuals embedded in YouTube viewing provide a wealth of musical experience, albeit defined by the popular media content that is made available. The

constructions of young children as singers embodied in such commercialised musical content warrant further thoughtful explorations that are beyond the scope of this chapter.

Thus forms of engagement in singing co-evolve with the technologies, the media content and the patterns of childhood and family life (Gingras, 2012). Sing-along activities at home may have always been present, whether around piano, guitar or radio, but may be greatly expanded with the opportunities for quick access to repeat performances of songs, karaoke games and apps designed to promote sing-along activities. Both Gingras and Wu found that the children reproduce the 'sing-along' songs '*a capella*' at other times, thus detaching from their media and technology connections to become more personalised and enfolded in family life. On the other hand, children's singing may become even more embroiled in digitized processes. Record and playback can be instant with smartphones and children are growing up with performing for the camera and then wanting to view and hear themselves on playback. Performing singing may be shifting to become part of a range of ways that children learn to present themselves socially and musically through photos and social media and to imagine how their singing will be perceived by an audience, real, virtual or imagined. One of the girls in Wu's study filmed herself with her mother's phone, first announcing her performance 'to camera' and then singing with actions; a clip that was sent to her father working away from home (Young & Wu, 2019, in press).

SOCIABLE SINGING

Away from family life, the ways that songs can be a medium for social engagements in nursery settings, both between children (Whiteman, 2013; Werle & Bellochio, 2014,) and between children and adults (Niland, 2012) has been the focus of some informative studies, but has received less attention at home. One exception is Lisa Koops' growing corpus of

work focussing on many facets of young children's musical lives and these studies reveal instances of sociable singing among family members, parents and siblings, both in the home and in the car (Koops, 2014; Koops & Kuebel, 2019, in press). The car in our view serves as an extension of family life, a micro 'home-on-wheels'. The car is, as Gingras writes, a 'contained environment with easy access to recorded music that has created a new musical setting for families' (2012, p. 199; see also, Lum, 2012).

Sociable singing is often spontaneous and draws on songs that are well-known to the singers, such as traditional children's songs (Costa-Giomi & Benetti, 2017), although siblings have also been observed freely adapting and improvising songs while playing together (Dean, 2017). The use of well-known repertoire for social singing facilitates different members of the family joining in on their own terms (Costa-Giomi & Benetti, 2017). This not only enhances feelings of belonging, but also scaffolds emerging singing. Sociable singing can take the form of group singing between members of the family or can be a song sung by one member of the family for the benefit of another, for example by a child to entertain a younger sibling. Children have also been noticed singing to their pets – dogs and cats, even a rabbit (Gingras, 2012; Dean, 2017).

Sociable singing, linking closely to the interactional instinct, fosters family closeness and identity (e.g. Lum, 2008; Barrett, 2009). As Tudge writes (2008, p. 270) 'children engage in activities and interactions because of a developing sense of identity as someone who engages in those sorts of things in the ways in which they do'. Several researchers have noticed that parents may deliberately introduce songs for their children to sing that relate closely to family musical identity such as songs associated with their own childhood memories, connections with cultural roots (Pettit, 2014), particularly songs in a parent's first language among migrant families (Wu, 2018), and an expression of religious affiliation (e.g. Gibson, 2009;

Ilari, 2018). With the increasing global movement of families and the resulting socio-cultural diversity, parents' introduction of songs associated with identity into family song-singing may play an increasingly important contribution in the affirmation of children's cultural identity.

SOLITARY SINGING

The changing structure of contemporary minority world families discussed earlier results in families that are smaller and more homebound than at earlier times historically or in other places. Minority world children are experiencing indoor and relatively solitary childhoods, and are often expected to entertain themselves playing alone for periods of time. These periods of solitary play are often accompanied by singing. Lori Custodero (2006), for example, found much evidence of solitary, mainly improvised singing play among the ten 3-year-olds she studied at home in the USA. The important contribution of Bronya's study has been to collect and analyse singing from children (ex-patriates in the United Arab Emirates and European-New Zealand families) recorded on small devices tucked in a clothing pocket through a continuous period of home life, oftentimes when they are out of earshot and sight of adults, in their own 'hidden' worlds (Dean, 2017). In solitary situations, Bronya concluded, the children's singing is self-directed and improvisatory, a different type of singing, therefore, engendered by the experience of being alone and further articulated by the immediate surroundings, for example, lying quietly in bed or playing with toys, typically small-scale manipulative toys such as cars, lego, dolls, puzzles (also, Gingras, 2012). Children's solitary singing, while being largely improvisatory, draws inspiration from the music in their everyday environment – children's TV shows, songs from popular radio and other adult-oriented media, and songs learnt outside the home, in early childhood settings or church, for example.

Certain types of parenting practice and beliefs about the importance of independence such as being 'put to sleep', alone, in single occupancy bedrooms, represent specific cultural practices found only in minority world families (Lancy, 2014). Young children in the majority of the world mainly sleep in communal arrangements (Ball & Russell, 2012; Morelli, Rogoff, Oppenheim & Goldsmith, 1992). Two studies have explored younger children's vocalisations as they are left alone to drop off to sleep in the USA (Sole, 2014) and Italy (Addessi, 2009). Interestingly one of the 6-year-olds in Gingras' study (2012) chose to film herself singing while lying in bed alone. Claudia Gluschkof (2016) found that 7-year-olds often value their bedrooms as private space where they can make up songs and explore singing in ways that are not governed by parents or teachers and their views concerning appropriate children's repertoire.

SMOOTH-RUNNING SINGING

Much of everyday family life is taken up with care routines: mealtimes, dressing, hygiene (Costa-Giomi & Benetti, 2017; Dean, 2017; Gingras, 2012), nap and bedtimes (Gibson, 2009; Young, 2018). The use and usefulness of singing within the day-to-day busy-ness of contemporary family life has been noted by a number of studies (e.g. Barrett, 2009; Custodero, 2006; Gingras, 2012; Custodero, & Johnson-Green, 2003; Young, Street & Davies, 2007). These songs take on a functional role, chivvying, enlivening, structuring the task, making it more fun, getting through it more quickly to increase the efficiency and stability of daily life (Sommer, 2012) and keep everyone 'on schedule'. One of the parents interviewed by Gingras commented, 'sometimes I find when we have a job to get done, like getting dressed or something that they're not too crazy about, it helps if we sing a song while we're doing it' (Gingras, 2012, p.144). This type of singing is generally introduced and initiated by the parents, sometimes for their own sake as much as their child's (Barrett, 2009; Custodero, 2006). However, once known to children, they may initiate the songs.

Singing can help in the management and regulation of children's emotional and physical states, particularly when parents decide they need to re-direct these. Young and Gillen (2010), from an international study of home life among 2- to 3-year-olds in international locations noted the way that the Thai mother used a simple chant to soothe her daughter after a fall and the Italian mother introduced an arousing lap-game when her daughter had been woken from a nap. Gibson (2009), studying the musical home lives of families with children aged up to 4 years, found that almost every parent integrated singing into sleep-time routines for the purpose of calming down and inducing sleep.

Singing may help to relieve tedium during car journeys, waiting times or times for 'staying put' when there may be little else to do. Mealtimes became a focus of singing exchanges for Michael Forrester (2010) and his daughter, and while this time was not necessarily tedious, it was a time for remaining seated at the table. The car journey, which may be a daily routine for many children, can be enlivened with singing, either with radio, recorded music, or live, sociable singing between parents and children (Koops, 2014). This example demonstrates how our four types of singing are not clear-cut, for car singing may also include sing-along, sociable singing and self-directed singing.

Drawing on various studies, the songs that are integrated into care and management routines appear to be either ready-made songs, sometimes specifically designed for a care task such as teeth cleaning or simply adopted for that purpose; a ready-made song with changed words to fit the activity; or a song made-up for the purpose.

SOME CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter we began by proposing an anthropological perspective that offers an explanation for how young children learn to sing through participation in everyday activity, thus contributing an anthropological lens to the interdisciplinary study of singing. We went

on to present recent research which has explored singing practices that are integrated into family life at home. Singing accompanies routines and tasks that need to be completed, enhances everyday interactions, expresses emotional connections between family members (including pets), and blends across private, personal, shared, sociable and online worlds. Through these varied activities children learn a repertoire of songs and learn how song-singing is a practice that connects closely with the emotional dynamics, values and identity of their family. When children step into preschool or school, they bring with them their everyday singing lives including the skills and knowledge that they will have accumulated and their associated feelings and identity as singers. Educators start here, with who the children are musically and what they bring, not with a blank sheet.

Understanding everyday home-based musical practices also provides a set of possible approaches to using songs and learning songs in educational practice that might expand the current conventional models based primarily on rehearsal singing of a fixed children's repertoire of songs and songs used primarily as a medium for learning musical elements. Some preschool educators are familiar with an approach to singing which integrates songs into the everyday fabric of the education or care centre, using songs much as parents do, to assist with 'smooth-running' and enhance the sociable ambiance of the class. Teachers responsible for whole curriculum teaching might incorporate similar uses of everyday singing into the fabric of classroom life. A conception of 'everyday, integrated singing' as a model of practice in schools might encourage educators to move towards self-initiated singing activities where children agentively play with songs, sociably with peers, making up songs for particular activities, changing words, improvising songs and deriving fun and enjoyment from the process (see Niland, 2012). The ways that children are using new technologies at home point the way to a wide range of possibilities for independent, personalised learning,

sing-along and imitative approaches making use of apps and games, particularly karaoke apps with their useful backing, instant review and feedback and scoring facilities. While this approach would not replace the need for the specialised teaching of singing and music, it would provide a space in which children can informally interact with singing in their own terms and perhaps go some way to bridging the gap between ways in which singing is learnt at home and at school.

The studies of the everyday life of songs in family life show us how the children have motivations and capacities for engaging in everyday social situations in which the songs are embedded as meaningful moves. The emotional and social aspects of family music-making are central. Lum (2008) warned that if not taken into account, the absence of the emotional and social functions of music will cause a rift between home and school, and thus music education will become increasingly irrelevant to children. In keeping with Corsaro we have emphasised that this is not mechanical copying of a singing behaviours but reappropriation into new contexts which have significance for the child. They are forms of participation in creative and social action and singing with others with whom they have important and positive relationships, whether at home or in the classroom.

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¹ In some societies where children are less segregated from adult music-making, they may eavesdrop and listen in to adult singing more than receive their own child-designated repertoire.