**Question 1: What forms of musilingual mediation were used?**

**Mediation strategies used:**
- Explaining the cultural context (e.g., has lyrics in Spanish but not from Spain)
- Producing a written score (most Latin American music is orally transmitted)
- Writing an English translation of the lyrics (main consideration: had to be singable)
- Rehearsing pronunciation and rhythm patterns through spoken repetition in tempo

**Some of the Spanish verses sung as solos by a native speaker**

**The choral arrangement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song section</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Tuned by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verse A</td>
<td>1. Spanish 1</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse B</td>
<td>2. English</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse C</td>
<td>3. Spanish 2</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge</td>
<td>4. Spanish</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Song arranger (the researcher) and choir director drew on both **linguistic** and **musical** resources in order to make the piece accessible to British amateur singers - e.g., the only Spanish lyrics they had to learn were verse A and the bridge, the rest was sung either in English or by the soloist.

**Question 2: How effective were these in facilitating intercultural awareness?**

Follow-up survey 6 months later: N=45 (85% female, aged 47 to 97)

Most (67%) said they enjoyed singing the song “very much”, but only 39% would “definitely” like to learn another song in the same language.

**What singers liked:**
- Accompaniment
- Different instruments
- Enjoyable musical experience
- The song was very “vocal” produced by the human voice (e.g. humming)

**What singers disliked:**
- Singers enjoyed doing something different. They particularly liked being accompanied on a **cuatro** (small Venezuelan guitar).
- Negative comments mostly focused on difficulty learning the words.
- A few singers also perceived the song as “childish” (too repetitive, mentions a little donkey, etc.) - possibly due to cultural expectations as to what a Christmas carol should be about.

The majority remembered that the song was from a Spanish-speaking or Latin-American country. However, only 14 (less than 1/3) could name the precise country.

**Conclusion:** Mediation had a largely positive effect on intercultural awareness. However, some degree of reticence, misconceptions and ethnocentric assumptions were still apparent in a few participants.

**ABSTRACT**

Just like plurilingual speakers, musicians draw on their semiotic repertoire in order to express and interpret meanings and construct their identities. This work repositions multilingualism in relation to emerging theories of multimusicalism within a social theory paradigm. In this new perspective, musilingual practices are defined as practices involving the productive, receptive or mediating engagement with music and one or more languages. In the illustrative study reported here, singers from a UK community choir were presented with a Christmas carol from Venezuela. To make the piece accessible and engaging for the singers, a number of mediation strategies were employed by the choir director and the song arranger, such as partial translation of the lyrics, musical transcription, language choice in choral and solo parts, and song teaching strategies. It is therefore an example of musilingual mediation. A survey (N=45) conducted six months after the performance showed that mediation was moderately effective in raising the singers’ intercultural awareness. This example of translilingual mediation practices in music represents only one of several promising directions that the new concept of musilingual practices opens up across the disciplinary boundaries of applied linguistics and musicology. Some of these are briefly outlined here.

**New research directions**

1. Multicompetence in musicians (especially in plurilingual contexts)
2. Musical translanguaging
3. Communities of practice in plurilingual / multimusical contexts
4. Music in relation to intercultural competence and intercultural citizenship

**References:**
Available as a separate handout.

**Contact:** maria.fernandez-toro@open.ac.uk