



The International Journal for
Translation & Interpreting
Research
trans-int.org

Mind the Gap! An interpretative phenomenological analysis of solidarity among Ibero-American female translators in the Spanish Wikipedia

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DOI: 10.12807/ti.116202.2024.a06

Abstract: As one of the most popular websites in the world, Wikipedia's success has long resided in the fact that anyone can contribute to this repository of human knowledge. However, behind this democratisation and wisdom-of-the-crowd initiative lie some entrenched inequalities and biases. Most Wikipedia's regular contributors are men from the Global North, which has led to much criticism and speculation. Consequently, the user-generated encyclopaedia has often been accused of both portraying women from a male perspective and downplaying their professional achievements. Against this background, this paper explores the narratives of six experienced female Latin and Ibero-American editors that have been actively involved in the translation of women's biographies in the Spanish Wikipedia. Drawing on interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), this study seeks to ascertain the role of female editors-translators and how they perceive solidarity in the context of their work in the encyclopaedia. Our findings indicate that the participants view solidarity as a transformative activity whereby they collectively unite to promote equality, protect one another against harassment and oppression, and re-narrate women's biographies. Moreover, although most participants did not identify as translators, translation was widely regarded as a means to increase the number of women's articles on Wikipedia and help bridge the gender gap.

Keywords: Spanish Wikipedia, gender gap, translation, female translators, solidarity

1. Introduction

Recent years have seen a renewed interest in the relationship between solidarity and translation. The former, often vaguely defined in scholarship, has been tackled from a wide range of perspectives. Thus far, research in this area has focused primarily on ascertaining how solidarity transpires in armed conflicts (Baker, 2010), identity politics (Baker, 2006), cause-driven endeavours (Pérez-González & Susam-Saraeva, 2012), and as an effective tool to express dissent and combat oppression (Baker, 2016). Featherstone (2012, p. 5), for example, defines solidarity as a transformative activity whereby a "relation [is] forged through political struggle" with the aim to challenge repression and subjugation. The individuals that enter such goal-oriented relation often come from diverse backgrounds and have been shaped by their distinct life experiences. Drawing

on this definition, the present study seeks to gain insight into the cause-driven efforts of six experienced Spanish Wikipedia editors who have been actively involved in the translation of women's articles and identify as female themselves. Their motivation, as will become apparent in the analysis, is twofold. First, to show solidarity with their gender through the creation of articles that contest the narrative of a multilingual user-driven encyclopaedia, where more than 70% of the content available is about (white) men (Graham & Sengupta, 2017). Second, to support one another on a platform that is sometimes perceived to be unwelcoming towards women and not always appreciative of their work.

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was used to analyse the data gathered from one-to-one semi-structured interviews with the participants. IPA is a psychological-based method that aims to study "how people make sense of their major life experiences" by interpreting the psychological processes underlying them (Smith et al. 2009, p.1). To achieve this, IPA draws on three key philosophical principles: phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography (Smith et al., 2009). Phenomenology explores how the world appears to individuals, i.e. the interrelations and correlations between themselves and objects in the form of experiences (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2012). Hermeneutics, or theory of interpretation, refers to the way people give meaning to these experiences (Heidegger, 1962). Finally, idiography emphasizes the relevance of particularity and uniqueness of each case. In other words, it involves providing a careful description of the processes that underpin the meaning that individuals give to their experiences. As Smith et al. (2009) and Smith and Osborn (2015) observe, IPA allows researchers to approach the data from the participants' first-person perspective, which can help explain their positioning and stance towards particular phenomena (Smith et al., 2009). This focus on the individual experiences is critical to provide a first-person account of how volunteer women translators experience Wikipedia and its biases.

IPA has mostly been used in a series of health studies, exploring how patients and families experience diseases, disorders and therapies (see Cassidy et al., 2011; English, 2014; Omari & Wynaden, 2014; Shaw et al., 2014). In interpreting studies, IPA has been employed to analyse the experiences of interpreters for mental health professionals in the context of humanitarian crises (see Williams, 2004; Gallagher, 2015; Molle, 2012; Splevins et al., 2010). In translation studies, Singer's research has used IPA to investigate the development of the translator identity at undergraduate level (Singer, 2021, 2022b, 2022a). Regarding this study, IPA has enabled a closer examination of the participants' understanding of the notion of solidarity as a driving force for change, capable of challenging mainstream narratives about women. In their quest for empowerment, the interviewees have had to grapple with a hostile and conservative male-dominated environment. This gender gap on Wikipedia is not unknown and has been subject to scrutiny in both academia and the media. The following section gives an overview of some studies on Wikipedia and gender and cultural biases, before moving on to discuss the little coverage that the topic has received among translation scholars.

2. Wikipedia and its biases

Launched in 2001, Wikipedia's longevity can be explained by its user-driven philosophy, where "anyone can edit" and contribute to increasing the "sum of all human knowledge" (Wikipedia, 2023a). This quite revolutionary approach to editing marked an important shift in the production of encyclopaedic content. Prior to Wikipedia, encyclopaedias were rarely, if ever, edited by laypeople,

despite evidence of collaborative knowledge production in the modern era (Olohan, 2012). Wikipedia's key to success has long resided in the ability of its editors to exploit the endless resources offered by the Internet. As the number of people who read the news online has soared over the past decade, Wikipedia has swiftly become an unofficial media outlet where ongoing events such as international conflicts, celebrities' deaths, and natural disasters receive due coverage. Through this democratisation of knowledge, readers are encouraged to participate in the narrative and act as cultural mediators.

Unless protected by an administrator or system operator – an editor who can perform technical actions (Wikipedia, 2023b) – all articles on Wikipedia are editable by registered and unregistered users alike. The English-language version, with over 6.7 million articles as of December 2023, is the largest, followed by the Cebuano and German versions. In light of these figures and given Wikipedia's openness, it is therefore surprising that the online encyclopaedia has been in the spotlight for its apparent cultural and gender biases. Those who criticise Wikipedia's lack of balance and representation in certain topics often argue that most of its content is written by white men from either Western Europe or North America (Ford & Wajcman, 2017; Graham & Anasuya, 2017). As a result, Wikipedia has been accused, on occasion, of perpetuating and propagating a Euro-or-Anglo-centric male view of the world. Recent figures seem to confirm these claims. According to Qaiser et al. (2022), less than 20% of the biographies on the English Wikipedia are about women. To counteract this lack of representation, Wikimedia Foundation – Wikipedia's host platform – has promoted a series of initiatives aimed at recruiting more women and people from developing countries, mainly from the Global South. At the local level, Wikimedia chapters – charities that represent the Foundation's interests in a specific jurisdiction – have joined forces with publicly-funded institutions to co-organise marathonic wiki-editing events known as 'editathons'. Across various language versions of Wikipedia, editors have created special themed projects centred on a wide range of topics that go from writing about LGBTQIA+ and indigenous peoples and cultures to women and endangered languages.

However, despite these gestures of goodwill, the gender gap on Wikipedia is still far from being bridged. In the Spanish Wikipedia, the *Mujeres* [Women] wikiproject emerged on 27th September 2015 and is clearly aimed at “creating a suitable space for the participation of women and reducing the gender gap on [the encyclopaedia]” [our translation] (Wikipedia, 2023c). The project lists two overarching objectives and a series of targets. The first goal is to address the challenges that women face to participate on Wikipedia. The second is to pursue and foster strategies that will “positively” contribute to giving visibility to women and, in doing so, bridging the gender gap. At the time of writing, there are 225 participants listed in the project, with the first two having registered their signature – username and timestamp – weeks before *Mujeres* took off. It is worth mentioning at this point that the list shows everyone who has ever registered their intention to participate in the cause. Therefore, the now eight-year-old list is not regularly updated. Contributors to *Mujeres* are expected to help meet the objectives that were devised and set out in 2015. These targets include, but are not limited to, editing, or translating articles about women in history and science, Latin American women, and other missing articles about women (Wikipedia, 2023c).

2.1 Wikipedia and the gender gap

Given its ubiquity on Wikipedia, the gender gap has been subject to constant scrutiny over the last decade. For example, in an article published in 2018, the British newspaper *The Guardian* employed the eye-catching headline “Female Translation & Interpreting Vol. 16 No. 2 (2024)

scholars are marginalised on Wikipedia because it's written by men" (Leonard, 2018). Similarly, in 2020, the Spanish media outlet *El País* published an article about "the women who fight against the gender gap on Wikipedia" [our translation], which also contains the fact-checked subheading "only 16% of the biographies on the platform are about women" [our translation] (Martínez, 2020). In a more recent career column article released by *Nature*, Qaiser et al. (2022) argue that Wikipedia "mirrors society's bias towards male achievements". This observation partly draws on a previous article from the same outlet, where Wade and Zaringhalam (2018) observe that women in science are disproportionately represented in the encyclopaedia.

Amongst the increasing number of studies that tackle the gender gap on Wikipedia, most have primarily focused on ascertaining the reasons behind the much lower participation of women on the platform. For instance, Eckert and Steiner (2013) found that the disparity could be explained by differences in expertise, self-confidence, and interests between male and female editors. Their dataset consisted of articles from 42 U.S. news organizations and blogs as well as 1,336 comments posted by readers. Despite its focus on North America, Eckert and Steiner's (2013) findings are revealing because they showcase widespread attitudes towards the gender gap issue on Wikipedia at the time. In their view, scepticism was prevalent among the commentators, with some blaming women for not joining the community and others "mock[ing] [their] girly interests". Along the same lines, Hargittai and Shaw (2014) also hypothesised that the lack of women's long-term engagement on Wikipedia could be attributed to diverging degrees of Internet skills between male and female editors. Bear and Collier's (2018) survey of 1,598 U.S. individuals yielded similar results, with women reporting less confidence in their expertise than men. Moreover, the respondents' answers suggest that women tended to avoid certain topics on Wikipedia for fear of being involved in sterile discussions.

Shane-Simpson and Gillespie-Lynch (2017) break away from the 'skillset' debate and instead centre on the 'user-driven' aspect of Wikipedia. Drawing on data gathered from a collaborative editing task performed by college students, they discovered that women tended to edit more than men, especially when feedback on their work was perceived as constructive. The cohort also viewed "more critical" or hostile unregistered Wikipedia peers as male. In a similar vein, Ford and Wajcman (2017) call for the online encyclopaedia to change its male-dominated culture, creating safe spaces for women to contribute without being the target of unwelcoming peers. As Wade and Zaringhalam (2018) note, this gender imbalance on Wikipedia leads to – or is symptomatic of – systemic bias, one through which women are often portrayed from a male perspective. To illustrate their point, they quote the example of the physicist Marie Curie, who, despite being the first woman to be awarded a Nobel Prize, did not have an individual article on Wikipedia when the encyclopaedia launched; her scientific achievements were originally included in the article about her husband Pierre. More recently, Menking and Rosenberg (2020) have challenged Wikipedia's "five pillars", arguing that they have played a role in the marginalisation of women. These 'pillars' underpin editing practices in the encyclopaedia and set the ground for collaboration. One in particular, claiming that Wikipedia is written from a neutral point of view, has been persistently contested in academia (Callahan & Herring, 2011; Martin, 2018; Góngora-Goloubintseff, 2020).

Finally, Minguillón et al. (2021) have conducted a quantitative study to gain insight into the number of female editors that contribute to the Spanish Wikipedia. To this end, they gathered gender-related information shared by all active Wikipedia editors in their user pages. Although their research does not

address what prompts women to join or leave the platform, their findings suggest that women represent 11.6% of active editors. Minguillón et al. (2021) concede that this percentage is in any case approximate, because there were many cases in which the lack of sufficient data in the user pages hindered the identification of particular editors. They posit that a possible explanation to this issue is that women are less likely to disclose personal information on their user pages. Regardless of these figures, Minguillón et al. (2021) found that a small group of women participated regularly on Wikipedia, sometimes exceeding the number of edits of the average male editor.

2.2 Wikipedia translation and women

To date, translation and the role of translators on Wikipedia have received moderate attention in the academic sphere. McDonough Dolmaya (2012) paved the way with her study of Wikipedia translators' motivations, discovering that the seemingly altruistic efforts of 'Wikipedians' were primarily cause driven. In short, the translators' personal or professional interests often played a role in their desire to contribute to the encyclopaedia. Subsequent studies, such as those by Jones (2018) and Góngora-Goloubintseff (2021), cast some doubt on the translators' generosity, revealing that their motivation is often of a more obscure and complex nature, fraught with instances of conflict. Notwithstanding these intricacies, the overarching idea of contributing to Wikipedia's cause – making knowledge freely available to others – prevailed amongst participants. Consequently, previous research has almost unambiguously shown that Wikipedia editor-translators have a vested interest in expanding knowledge at the expense of other more tedious tasks such as the maintenance and running of the site (Shuttleworth, 2017; Góngora-Goloubintseff, 2021). Other studies suggest that translation volumes on Wikipedia have increased over the last decade (McDonough Dolmaya, 2017; Góngora-Goloubintseff, 2021), thanks in part to the launch and deployment of the Content Translation Tool (CX), a bespoke WYSIWYG integrated Beta device that enables the quick crosswiki rendering of articles.

Despite these revealing findings, the translators' gender and the role it may play in the creation of articles have been inexplicably overlooked. Moreover, with the exception of Góngora-Goloubintseff's study (2022), most research has gravitated towards the English Wikipedia, although there has been an acknowledgement of the need to investigate other Wikipedia language versions (McDonough Dolmaya, 2017). Consequently, this paper aims to contribute to the increasing body of research in the area, by placing the emphasis on two understudied aspects of collaborative translation on Wikipedia. First, the role of women and how they perceive solidarity in the encyclopaedia. Second, the extent to which their Latin or Ibero-American context and identity have influenced their activity as translators.

3. Method and data selection

Participants were selected following purposeful sampling criteria (King et al., 2019). Therefore, four essential requirements had to be met: a) identifying as a woman, b) being a longtime resident of a Spanish-speaking country or territory, c) have translated at least 10 articles into Spanish over a period of no less than 2 years, and d) have contributed to women's topics on Wikipedia. The research design, data collection methods, and instruments used in this study were approved by the Ethics Committee at Universidad de Santiago de Chile.

The selection process was conducted primarily in the Spanish Wikipedia, through the *Mujeres* portal. As mentioned earlier, such a list comprises users who registered their interest as far back as 2015. Thus, a vast majority of volunteers were either no longer active or, as some perusal later revealed, had made little if any contributions to the project. Having considerably narrowed down the scope of our search to a much smaller number of potential participants, another issue we encountered when trying to establish whether a given contributor met the criteria was the lack of identifiable data such as gender or place of origin in some users' pages. This paucity of information is known to have posed challenges to other researchers (Minguillón et al., 2021). Therefore, these two constraining factors reduced the list of eligible candidates to 25. However, of these, only 12 had enabled the 'email this user' option on their page.

After receiving a positive answer from six participants, semi-structured interviews were undertaken on Zoom throughout June 2023. During this stage, we realised that one of the interviewees had not translated the minimum number of articles outlined in the second criterion. For this reason, and in keeping with the number we had set out to interview, a seventh participant known to meet all the criteria was approached privately via her Twitter account.

The final cohort included four participants originally from or based in Latin America (Chile, Argentina and Mexico), and two from Spain. The participants were sent an informed consent form, which guaranteed their anonymity as well as their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Consequently, the participants' narratives underwent a process of pseudo anonymisation. As a result, the six participants shown in Table 1 below have been given fictitious names.

Table 1. Participants' names and country of origin

Participant	Country of origin or residence
Antonia	Mexico
Constanza	Chile
Dominga	France/Chile
Eloisa	Spain
Loreto	Argentina
Olivia	Spain

The participants engaged in a one-to-one semi-structured interview, conducted in Spanish by the authors. The interview guide explored five key dimensions, namely initial positioning, activity in the platform, solidarity, teamwork, and identity. All questions followed Smith Osborn's (2015) suggestions for IPA interviews, i.e. questions were neutral (not value-driven), jargon-free and open. All interviews were audio recorded and lasted between 45 to 60 minutes.

Audio files were transcribed using a naturalised approach (Bucholtz, 2000), i.e. transcripts follow written discourse conventions. This also implies that non-essential discursive features such as pauses, stammering or laughter were not included. Transcripts were later prepared for IPA analysis, which involved numbering each of the participants' interventions.

According to Smith et al. (2009), IPA involves a six-stage process, which begins with carefully reading each transcript so that the researchers can familiarise themselves with it. This is followed by an initial annotation stage, in which descriptive comments (what has been said), linguistic comments (how it has been said) and conceptual comments (interpretative thoughts written as

questions) are written in columns next to the participants' comments. Based on these annotations, emerging themes were proposed using concept coding (Saldaña, 2016), i.e. providing meso- or macro-level meaning to the fragments. These emerging themes were examined in search of potential connections between them that would allow the identification of superordinate themes. Finally, to understand the phenomenon of solidarity amongst female Wikipedia translators, all superordinate themes were analysed using data drawn from the interviewees' responses.

4. Analysis and discussion

This section examines the participants' narratives about their experiences contributing and translating on Wikipedia and how these relate to the notion of solidarity. It is relevant to note that the fragments presented in this section have been translated from Spanish into English using Hurtado Albir's (2011) translation techniques, mainly transposition, modulation and adaptation, to make the participants' narratives as natural as possible in English (Birbili, 2000). The excerpts conclude with the participants' fictitious names in round brackets.

4.1 Narrating the gap: invisibilisation, deletion, and hostility

First and foremost, participants seem to regard Wikipedia as a reflection of society. A prevalent view amongst them was that the online encyclopaedia is biased towards men, an observation that tallies with Qaiser et al. (2022). To contest such bias, Wikipedia inevitably becomes a site for holistic activism:

...I believe that Wikimedia is firstly a place of activism, consciously or unconsciously, because if you are editing about an underrepresented topic, you are unintentionally doing activism. Wikipedia is a mirror of society... (Loreto)

...It is an activism somehow holistic and complete, because, for example, if you have a goal perhaps, for example, feminist in the beginning, it ends up being something cultural anyways. It ends up rescuing particularities of places that sometimes are invisible or that are not seen... (Antonia)

As becomes apparent from Antonia's remark, this activism is driven by a need "to rescue" what has traditionally been invisibilised, particularly women and ethnic minorities. Dominga and Eloisa raise a similar concern:

...I think [some] women may have some additional degrees, let's say, of invisibilisation. So, indigenous women or lesbian women, I translated several articles of murdered women, of femicide, also of female scientists. So, in some way, [articles] give an idea of some of the struggles women have to face, particularly in Chile, in Latin America... (Dominga)

...You look on Wikipedia to see what they say about [a] person, and you see that they are not there. I mean, you realize that many profiles aren't there. So, I got in touch with a group of female editors here [...] to see how I could contribute [...] to represent profiles that I considered at that time were not on Wikipedia... That was the reason [I joined Wikipedia]: to incorporate them. (Eloisa)

Similarly, Constanza suggests that "it is the absence, it is the lack of visibility that bothers" the participants. Such invisibilisation constitutes a key component of the gender gap on the platform and is not simply limited to the

lack of sufficient encyclopaedic content about women. As Olivia argues, there is a widespread paucity of female editors across Wikimedia projects:

...there is a gender gap in terms of content, there is a gender gap in terms of editors, there is a gender gap in terms of leadership positions within the community, be it administrator, be it steward, be it in chapters, in whatever position we want to specify. I mean, there is an underrepresentation that does not correspond at all with society. (Olivia)

Based on the participants' answers, we hypothesise that this underrepresentation may also influence how women are portrayed on Wikipedia articles. Dominga's response below sheds some light on this issue:

...we see that there is a greater gender gap. For example, on the content about women which is usually shorter, they will be named by their first name and not by their last name or first name plus last name, their family and romantic life are going to be described more in depth; also, something we found relatively recently was that in articles in general no women were quoted...(Dominga)

Regarding the underlying reasons for the much smaller female presence on Wikipedia, all the participants agreed that this is because men have more time to spare and are subject to fewer restrictions or 'filters' to edit articles. As Antonia points out:

...women we don't have the same free time as men, so our contribution is always going to be less at the beginning. When we do have the time to contribute and edit, we start to encounter more restrictions. So, [if] it takes me more days and more time to write an article, a man does not probably need as much time. First, as women focus on care, [that man] has more free time in that regard. Second, because he is a man, he does not go through so many filters regarding who he writes about: if he writes about another man, there are not so many restrictions. Therefore, men can create more [Wikipedia] entries than women. (Antonia)

Behind this permissiveness lies a hostile environment for a minority of users. In their narratives, the participants indicate that women's contributions and articles are more likely to be marked for deletion. Most participants perceived this move by the Spanish Wikipedia administrators as an attack, which could potentially deter other women – especially younger women – from joining the project:

It is quite difficult to dare to create an article, to start with something, because you have that fear of being attacked, of having it deleted. First, I never saw it, I did not see the problem as a woman at first, and then I felt like as more time went on, one realizes that, of course, it is a fear that you will be judged in several ways... (Constanza)

...We always have some issues, especially with some older users, particularly with the flagging to erase things that sincerely do not deserve it [...] [They're] compulsive taggers, as we call them here [...] It is also very clear that they tend to tag with greater ease and less fear in the case of new female users [...] Even though a lot of emphasis is placed on not biting the newbies, but the newbies are bitten and, sometimes, in a rude manner. (Loreto)

Loreto's narrative is consistent with Ford and Wajcman (2017) in that women do not seem to have a safe environment that encourages their contribution to the platform. Furthermore, many participants suggest that male editors appear to have a self-perceived sense of superiority when it comes to

deciding what is deemed acceptable or Wikipedia worthy. This seeming sense of entitlement motivates male users to cast doubts on women's knowledge and contributions:

...Men [...] also have this, this sort of, say, 'ego' when they write up information and assume they know what they are saying [...] With the women I speak to in general, we try to be more cautious, because we know that at some point they can tell us, 'But why do you say this if you do not know about that topic?' [...] [So, there's] both the gender gap and the knowledge gap, because people feel somewhat offended in a way [...]; they feel bad and then they don't come back. (Constanza)

The participants' narratives further elaborate that, in some cases, hostility escalates. They indicate that there has been evidence of stalking and harassment, primarily by male editors, which has prompted many women to leave Wikipedia:

...There's also the issue of harassment on Wikipedia [...] I know how many women have left Wikipedia because of harassment, because they are immediately targeted. [Male editors] try to stalk or dox them by looking at how they can obtain data to give them the worst possible interpretation. And people watch, but people don't participate or defend them. You're in your free time, you don't want to get into a fight, but it happens and even more with women. So, we've lost a lot of female editors, from when you and I started, there are none left. There's practically no one left [...] For those who have got into these issues, even if only minimally, the first time they have had a disagreement with a man, there are many more possibilities for that man to take it personally and go chasing her throughout the years and in all the different places where that woman is. (Olivia)

Olivia's narrative is revealing because it details the hostility of the platform towards female editors. Moreover, as suggested by Eckert and Steiner (2013), there would seem to be a difference in the attitude and confidence between male and female editors, as narrated by Loreto:

...[Men] are more daring when it comes to editing and have fewer problems when it comes to the flagging of their articles; they face their detractors, so to speak, many times, ending the discussion in Wikipedia's village pump, with all the administrators arguing. But women have a lot more doubts when they are questioned. They usually call other women to see if anything can be done. In other words, they do not dare to go argue with the people who flagged them. (Loreto)

Loreto's account provides an insight that, first, is consistent with the findings of Bear and Collier's (2018) in that there is a perceived disparity in the levels of confidence between male and female editors. Second, it highlights the value of turning to other women to resolve potential issues. This support network is further explored in the next section through the lens of solidarity.

4.2 Bridging the gap through solidarity

The participants conceptualise solidarity as a means to face and overcome the challenges and hostilities posed by the Wikipedia space. From the accounts of these female editors, solidarity emerges as a notion that encompasses four critical dimensions: *protection*, *empowerment*, *re-narration* and *inspiration*.

First, Olivia and Constanza both agreed that solidarity is better understood as sorority, i.e., 'women supporting women' as they deal with the issues narrated by the participants. One of the most significant ways of support is

found in the role senior female editors-translators have in mentoring and teaching newcomers how to write Wikipedia articles. Another core element of sorority is the ability to protect one another and stand united against objections raised by male editors. Thus, sorority emerges as a safe space whereby female editors look after each other and work together to avoid the deletion of their articles. As Loreto and Antonia note,

...we see if [the article] has any problems so we can improve it. We try to talk with the administrators to tell them, “Look, this happened, but the article has references; it has an adequate length; it has images; it has this, this, this, [and] this”. In general, with the help of the community, most are saved. If we see that the article has problems, usually I, one of the senior [members], [...] transfer the article from the [female] user who created it to the ‘sandbox’ [space for articles that are undergoing editing], so it won’t get deleted and then she can calmly improve it. (Loreto)

...when they place a flag on it, [which] is a note above the article that says, “this article has no relevance [or] this article will be deleted”. So, I look at the note and if it says, “no, that article has no relevance”, I start with the sources, then I look at what [the member] wrote and sometimes it is the [newcomer’s] mistake, because they are learning and are not told [how to write] the article [...] Then, [I] begin to tell the other person, “you have to improve your writing: it [has to be] written in the third person; avoid adjectives”, and that way we work on it. (Antonia)

Second, the participants highlight the value of organising editing workshops to enhance women visibility on the platform. One of these events, usually supported by local Wikimedia chapters, is called *editatonas*. As described by Constanza, during *editatonas* “women get together to edit many articles, generally about women, in a short time”. These types of events not only allow female editors-translators to increase the number of Wikipedia articles on women, but they also provide them with the resources to learn more about the encyclopaedia. Normally led by senior editors, *editatonas* play a significant role in welcoming, enticing and recruiting new Wikipedia editors. As described by Antonia,

I see solidarity [...] where several people with different interests [and] different abilities come together for a single purpose which, in this case, would be reducing the digital gap. So, in that way, as I tell you, we have gone from all educational levels, from all types of training, but, ultimately, we want the same thing, which is for more women to have better opportunities. How do we do that? First, by giving them the information, by training them. So, from there, these types of alliances emerge and we can work on it. I think the act of editing is the visible part of what's being done, but behind this project there's a lot of work [...] (Antonia)

Antonia’s narrative emphasises the notion of a digital gap, which echoes the Hargittai and Shaw’s (2014) hypothesis that there are differences in the IT skills between male and female editors. To bridge the gap, events such as *editatonas* aim to train female members and empower them to confidently contribute to Wikipedia. Consequently, in this context solidarity is also perceived as a series of transferable skills that enable newcomers to stay longer on the platform and help improve the information available about women.

As a third dimension of solidarity, empowerment of female members is instrumental in the re-narration of articles or entries on Wikipedia. As most of the participants argued, biographies about women are narrated from a male perspective, placing undue emphasis on family relationships and downplaying

personal and professional achievements. This bias is more noticeable in the biographical summary at the beginning of the entry:

...many of the biographies – I’m talking especially about biographies – are thought of from a very sexist point of view. I mean, women are ‘daughters of,’ ‘mothers of,’ ‘sisters of’. When you go to the article of the person [referenced], the husband or something like that, [the woman] doesn’t appear anywhere. (Eloísa)

In many intros to the articles, it reads, ‘sister of; wife of’. For example, the sister of, unfortunately I have to name her like this, Jodorowsky’s sister, who was a very important Peruvian poet. Because she lived in Peru her whole life, the first thing in her article was that she was Alejandro Jodorowsky’s sister... (Constanza)

Eloísa’s and Constanza’s accounts of their experience suggest systemic bias towards men. Thus, they call for other editors-translators to acknowledge this form of micro-invisibilisation of women and adopt a gender perspective, bringing women’s achievements to the fore, when writing up the articles. Olivia further elaborates on this issue, arguing that:

...It is very important to be able to contribute to that gender perspective, to be careful of how we are treating women, because the issue of references is also true. References often treat women’s interests as superficialities. The topic of fashion is treated with frivolity when it is something that has been so basic and so influential in the history of humanity, so important many times for survival. However, for example, we hardly have any content in the Spanish Wikipedia, especially regarding [fashion in] Latin American countries. It is not taken into consideration, because history has also been covered a lot based on milestones and events, such as wars and male interests. So, to be able to narrate the story from another point of view, to be able to narrate women's biographies in a different way from the one it has always been done. To me, it talks about sorority, of trying to change that approach, of talking about the achievements, talking about what you have done with your life, not only who you have married, whose daughter you are, but also, where you have studied, where you have travelled, what interests you have had, what you have achieved, what lives you have changed. (Olivia)

It seems apparent that most participants are driven by a desire to seek justice and contribute to equality. In essence, re-narration is a form of solidarity with their gender and a powerful force that can help inspire future generations of women:

...I have two daughters: I have a teenage daughter and I have a daughter in primary school. So, when I see them doing homework, and that they search and don’t find [an entry], it’s like saying, ‘Oh, I’m going to help. So [next time] when someone, a girl, searches for information, she can find that person that does exist’. (Antonia)

...I think that we are making role models visible for future generations. For example, I found very few references of women and I hope that younger girls at least have more models thanks to what’s being made visible. I think that, in that way, we are at least giving visibility to women who seemed not to exist, but who were there doing many things. (Eloísa)

These two narratives seem to suggest that solidarity is not a present-bound concept, but a dynamic process whereby reparation is done for those women who have been invisibilised throughout history. This visibilisation can in turn empower women to bring about change on and off Wikipedia. As another form

of editing (Shuttleworth, 2017; Góngora-Goloubintseff, 2022), translation has enabled female editors to break cultural barriers and import articles from other language versions of the user-generated encyclopaedia into the Spanish Wikipedia.

4.3 Translation as solidarity

Despite their translation work, most participants viewed themselves primarily as editors. This disassociation has been reported in previous studies (Shuttleworth, 2017; Góngora-Goloubintseff, 2022; Hu, 2023), which have found that the distinction between editing – also understood as creating something from scratch – and translation on Wikipedia is not clearcut. Dominga’s and Constanza’s narratives below further confirm this claim:

I think I wouldn’t define myself as a translator to begin with, because maybe I could define myself that way, but I never really thought of myself that way. I believe that what I am looking for is to add knowledge and make the knowledge that is available in one language or another available in more languages. And well, maybe that somewhat answers the question, right? Of course, I’m interested in making the content accessible, not only in particular, and I translate more from Spanish into French. So, I am very interested in being able to translate content particularly about Chile, which is the country where I’m currently living in, into French, so that it is accessible to more people and so that one can learn more about the history of Chile or Chilean personalities, etc. (Dominga)

Translating is making [things] visible to other people who do not have the possibility of understanding it [...]. Me, for example, [inaudible]. I’m on the edge of the world. I go out on the street, I know three words and I try to go about, but for me to read an article in French, in English, in Italian is complicated. So, I translate it [...]. For example, my dad, who doesn’t understand much of anything, goes to search for something on Wikipedia and if it’s in English he’s going to say it’s not there, it’s not going to exist. So, you bring up something that otherwise would not exist if not translated. And that would be this kind of solidarity... (Constanza)

Again, solidarity comes across as a cause-driven force whereas translation is perceived as a means to an end. In other words, translation on Wikipedia contributes to visibilising women in other languages. Under this reductionist view, translation becomes a much-needed instrument to help reduce the gender gap on the platform. The launch of Wikipedia’s bespoke Content Translation Tool (CX) in 2015 has done nothing but contribute to this perception. As an AI-powered device, CX has significantly eased the editors’ workload, turning translation into a less labour-intensive task. As a result, many editors who had previously not thought of themselves as translators have now become active users of the tool (see Góngora-Goloubintseff, 2021). Olivia, Loreto, Eloísa and Dominga all declared using CX and other MT tools to translate large volumes of women’s articles:

...to translate from one Wikipedia to another, you had to use a code and the templates of a Wikipedia did not have to exist in the [other language] Wikipedia, and well, you had to change everything, all the internal links, search how those articles were on Wikipedia in Spanish, for example, and it was a very laborious process. Those translations were very hard to do, especially the longer the article was. You [were able to] translate in a very long period. Now, with the content translation tool it is much easier to do that and it is getting better and better. (Olivia)

... [I] usually use the Google system that is inside [CX], because I think it is the most intuitive and I see fewer errors. Sometimes having fewer errors is a problem because, when the platform translator sees that there are few changes, it rejects it. Then, you have to see how to change things; and sometimes it has a lot of problems with the references, because the citation format in English and Spanish is not exactly the same. So, it usually makes mistakes, but usually you don't see these errors until you move the article to the main page... (Loreto)

...Well, I don't speak English, I have a fairly low level. I normally use a lot of machine translation, besides the translator given by [CX] itself, which is Google Translator, and I also use DeepL, and then I do have colleagues who speak better English or have a higher level of knowledge. And I release the biography. Maybe I release the translation and always leave it there to be checked, because perhaps some phrases are missing or there are phrases that I have not translated well or that here, in this context, would be said differently. So, in that case there's collaboration. (Eloísa)

As Eloísa's narrative elucidates, proficiency in the source language is not seen as a requirement for translation. This overreliance on the CX often leads to different levels of post-editing, where other women with a higher English proficiency are encouraged to step in and improve the article. This collaborative process is also highlighted by Dominga:

...I sometimes translate from the Wikipedia tool [...] it really leaves like some unwanted points at the end of the translation. [Thus,] collaboration is important, also sharing what we do, because that gives an opportunity to other people, very often women, to also read the article, review it and make the corrections that perhaps for them are easier or more obvious to do, and that others, like me, don't even really see them. So, that allows you to get an article that really has fewer flaws. So, I think it will more likely remain on the site and not be deleted. (Dominga)

Dominga's narrative indicates that post-editing CX-generated articles is usually done in solidarity to guarantee their permanence on Wikipedia. For this participant, creating the article in a different Wikipedia before embarking on its translation is also a way to ensure its preservation. As shown below, Dominga refers to this practice as a 'strategy':

I developed a strategy to create some articles in Spanish, which I noted did not exist in the Wikipedia in Spanish, for example. I wanted to create them, and I found more problems than in Wikipedia in French in terms of requests for deletion. So, my strategy now, when I see that an article in Spanish hasn't been done, which basically means it doesn't exist in any Wikipedia, I start by creating it in French and then I translate it into Spanish. I see that by following this step, the article has a much lower percentage of criticism and likelihood of being deleted. (Dominga)

5. Conclusion

This study has examined how six female Latin and Ibero-American editors-translators have worked towards bridging the gender gap in the Spanish-language version of Wikipedia. Drawing on interpretative phenomenological analysis to better understand the participants' experiences, our analysis has focused primarily on the challenges they have faced and the strategies they have put in practice to overcome them. The findings suggest that these female Wikipedia contributors share similar struggles, the most important of which seems to be the fight for the visibility of women on the platform. Through

strategies such as re-narration and women-led *editatonas* (editing workshops), the interviewees have sought to eradicate Wikipedia's entrenched gender bias. *Editatonas*, in particular, have played an important role in recruiting new women and equipping them with a series of transferable skills aimed at boosting their self-confidence.

In their quest for equality, the participants have turned to solidarity as a form of activism and protection against oppression. Throughout the interviews, it became apparent that these female editors-translators viewed solidarity primarily as a support network – also referred to as 'sorority' – whereby women join forces to help rescue each other's articles and, in some cases, battle against male harassment. This understanding of solidarity tallies with Featherstone's (2012, p. 5) view of solidarity as a relation forged through struggle to challenge inequality and subjugation. Intrinsically related to the concept of support, another application of solidarity is found in the creation and re-narration of women's biographies on Wikipedia. In an encyclopaedia where barely 20% of the biographies are about women, this strategy is essential to provide an unbiased and more representative view of the role women have in society. A common approach amongst the participants was to focus on the personal and professional achievements of the biographees and break away from their family relationships.

Although most participants did not identify as translators, it became clear throughout the interviews that they resorted to translation on numerous occasions to help bridge the gender gap by importing articles about women from other language versions of Wikipedia. In line with previous research (McDonough Dolmaya, 2012; Jones, 2018), translation was almost unambiguously regarded as a cause-driven endeavour, as another form of editing (Shuttleworth, 2017; Góngora-Goloubintseff, 2022), and as a means to an end (Góngora-Goloubintseff, 2022). In this case, translation could be interpreted as another strategy akin to re-narration whereby the participants make content from other language versions available in the Spanish Wikipedia. Moreover, the participants' narratives indicate that AI-powered tools such as CX have contributed to increasing the volumes of translated articles. For the less proficient English speakers, post-editing by senior female colleagues was also an incentive to translate articles and contribute to the visibilisation of women on Wikipedia.

It can be concluded that solidarity, as a multilayered concept, provides reparation to women in history, challenges current values in the Wikipedia establishment, encourages women to remain active editors, and serves as inspiration and empowerment for generations to come. Future studies on the gender gap on Wikipedia could further investigate other forms of solidarity by adopting a cross-lingual perspective. Another potential avenue of research could be to analyse the challenges that underrepresented groups from the Global South face in their aim to achieve equality in an encyclopaedia that anyone can edit. By bringing to the surface Wikipedia's entrenched biases and increasing awareness of the struggles that underrepresented editors face, Wikimedia Foundation could in turn foster strategies geared towards the specific needs of historically invisible groups.

Acknowledgements

This article is part of the DICYT Research Project No. 032351SC at Universidad de Santiago de Chile. The authors would like to thank the six participants as well as Mrs. Isadora Gahona, research assistant during 2023, for her support in the study.

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