Stories of lesbian women have traditionally been silenced through translations, which entails a general lack of adequate language dealing with their sexual identities. On this basis, this translation proposal and analysis approaches the translation of lesbianism from English into Spanish focusing on the classification and analysis of terminology used in lesbian groups. This analysis also delves into the strategies adopted to either conceal or openly display homosexuality, thus opting for either preserving or disputing the taboo surrounding the LGBTQIA+ community. The results reveal a higher percentage of euphemistic and distancing expressions that deem lesbianism a taboo. This, therefore, highlights an evident rejection of lesbian women, which reflects the attitude held towards them both in San Francisco during the 1950s and in Francoist Spain. On the other hand, great attention is provided to the deficit of accurate terminology in the TL when reproducing expressions typically used amongst the LGBTQIA+ community, which may compromise the accurate reproduction of lesbian identity.

KEY WORDS: LGBTQIA+ translation, lesbian translation, literary translation, euphemisms, translation modes.

Queerness Between the Lines: A Proposed Translation and Analysis of Lesbianism in Malinda Lo's *Last Night at the Telegraph Club* (2021)

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Traducir sexualidades entre líneas: Propuesta de traducción y análisis del lenguaje del lesbianismo en** Last Night at the Telegraph Club **(2021)

Las historias de mujeres lesbianas se han silenciado, tradicionalmente, mediante la traducción, cosa que conlleva una carencia generalizada de lenguaje adecuado que aborde sus identidades sexuales. Partiendo de esta base, esta propuesta de investigación aborda la traducción del lesbianismo desde el inglés hasta el español centrándose en la clasificación y análisis de la terminología utilizada entre los círculos de mujeres lesbianas. Asimismo, se profundiza en las estrategias adoptadas para ocultar o mostrar abiertamente la homosexualidad para tratar de evidenciar si se preserva o rebate el tabú que rodea a la comunidad LGBTQIA +. Los resultados revelan un mayor porcentaje de expresiones eufemísticas y distanciadoras que consideran el lesbianismo un tabú. Se pone de manifiesto, por tanto, un evidente rechazo hacia las mujeres lesbianas, reflejo de la actitud mantenida hacia ellas tanto en San Francisco durante los años 50 como en la España franquista. Por otro lado, se presta gran atención al déficit de terminología precisa en la lengua meta a la hora de reproducir expresiones típicamente utilizadas entre la comunidad LGBTQIA+, lo que puede comprometer la reproducción fiel de la identidad lésbica.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *traducción LGBTQIA+, traducción del lesbianismo, traducción literaria, eufemismos, modos de traducción.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Sexual diversity is becoming increasingly present in all spheres of society. Nonetheless, this has not always been the case since being unable to fit into the predominant patterns of society (i.e. heteronormativity) resulted in increasing tensions and conflicts amongst diverse communities for decades. Such hostility towards queerness has triggered attempts at making invisible, repressing, and excluding homosexuality in such fields as literature and, more specifically, fiction. For this reason, few literary works—either original or translations—from the 19th and early 20th century provide accurate representations of homosexuality. Instead, they resort to devices allowing for either a covered depiction or an explicit one albeit in a negative light. Nevertheless, with the advent of gender studies and feminist theories dealing with translation, the development of the gay rights movement, and Queer theory, both literature and translation became mechanisms to challenge conventional disregards towards homosexuality.

In a similar but also completely different way to that of the USA during the 1950s, Spain was under a dictatorship at the time, in which homosexuality underwent severe punishment. Hence, when works that documented and represented homosexuality are produced, rendering them into other languages is interesting to estimate what the reality of queer people—and, in this case, lesbian women particularly—at the time would have been like.

Considering the specific context faced by homosexual people both in the USA and in Spain during the 1950s, this project takes Malinda Lo's young adult novel *Last Night at the Telegraph Club* (2021) as its object of translation and analysis. Revolving around the self-discovery process of and coming to terms with the sexuality of a 17-year-old Chinese-American woman—Lily Hu—during the 1950s, the novel takes a dual approach to the representation of lesbianism. Not only does it display instances of terminology and expressions that either conceal or provide a belittling depiction of lesbianism, but it also evinces the dynamics among women within the community.

On this basis, the present article is divided into four sections, the first of which deals with the main theories that have emerged on gender translation. Within this, special attention has been provided to the attitudes translators hold towards queerness. This is because their attitude conditions the strategies they resort to so as to render references to queerness in the TT, which may in turn have an impact on the translation's reception and the perception—either positive or negative—readers may have towards themselves (especially if it happens to be the case that they belong to the LGBTQIA+ community), as well as towards homosexuality itself. This chapter, likewise, devotes considerable attention to the role that euphemisms and distancing devices play in shaping particular perceptions of homosexuality.

Based on this premise, the project's fourth part provides a detailed analysis and commentary of fourteen excerpts from Lo's novel, whose translation I have performed, reflecting the possible ways in which terminology and distancing devices dealing with lesbianism can be rendered into the TL. This section, in turn, is divided into two parts, the first of which includes an examination of five excerpts reflecting both implicit and explicit references to lesbian women. Following this analysis, a brief conclusion is provided, offering a reflection on the results obtained from the analysis and commentary of the translations. Likewise, it also reveals the limitations found in this examination and proposes

potential lines of analysis that may contribute to the future analysis of LGBTQIA+—and, more specifically, lesbian—translation.

Note should be taken that the translation I propose here is carried out independently from both the official Spanish and Catalan versions. Lo's novel was originally translated into Spanish by the Mexican publisher Crossbooks (2023), while Anna Llisteri performed its Catalan translation under Sembra Llibres as *L'última nit al Telegraph Club* (2023). Although the Spanish translation conveys in a fairly accurate way Lo's purpose of making the novel as accessible as possible for younger audiences, its approach to queer terminology—especially referring to lesbianism—diverges from the purpose of this new translation, which is to align the language with what might have been used in the 1950s, while also offering appropriate solutions for terms that lack adequate equivalents to convey the nuances intended by the characters. Here are some examples that attempt to justify this decision. For key terms in the novel such as "butch," the official translator has chosen to keep them in English, which would not have been common if the text were adapted to the language found in 1950s Spain. The same is true for "queer," a term that—as will be seen in the following sections—could be translated with a more archaic sense, fitting not only the wordplay the author seeks to create but also the novel's context. Similarly, other examples include "gay women," translated as *mujeres* gay, "gay bar," translated as *bar* gay, and "homosexual," used literally to refer to a character who identifies as lesbian.

2. GENDER AND TRANSLATION

Starting in the 1980s, Quebecker feminist translators revolutionized translation by challenging the linguistic mechanisms of patriarchy and heteronormativity. Their aim was to highlight female authors and translators, reshaping social norms to represent minorities marginalized due to race or sexuality (Ranger, 2019, p. 234). These translators reappropriated texts for a female audience through wordplay, grammatical dislocations, and syntactic subversions to expose patriarchal language (Giustini, 2015, p. 3). This approach challenged the traditional perception of women and translation as inferior to men and writing, primarily accessible to men.

von Flotow and Simon (2014, as cited in Ranger, 2019, p. 234) propose three strategies for female translators dealing with male-authored novels that demean women: supplementing the target text, introducing autobiographical commentaries and paratextual materials[1], and "hijacking" the text to make women visible while challenging sexist, homophobic, and racist discourse. These principles, part of von Flotow's second paradigm for translating gender (1997, as cited in Giustini, 2015, p. 1), align with questioning traditional gender dichotomies and reconstructing sexual identities (Giustini, 2015, p. 3; Piñero, 2015, p. 240).

Queer identities, being part of a subculture, require separate examination in translation. Kramer (2010) notes that Queer theory, which challenges traditional gender binaries and is linked to feminist and gender studies, has led to techniques that emphasize queer identities in literature, similar to feminist translators' "womanhandling" of texts (Burton, 2010, as cited in Ranger, 2019, p. 235). Epstein (2017, as cited in Ranger, 2019, p. 234) advocates for "acqueering" texts through strategies like im-

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[1]   These materials include prefaces, footnotes, etc., where translators clarify the references they are translating, why they are problematic in the source text, and why other translations may prove problematic when concealing such references.

plicitly introducing queer identities or adding footnotes, endnotes, translator prefaces, or paraextual materials to discuss queerness and translatorial choices[2].

Spurlin (2014) emphasizes specific procedures for translating queer identities, particularly lesbianism (205). Traditionally, lesbian desire has been domesticated in translation to fit dominant cultural and social values. Recent translations aim to faithfully represent lesbianism, challenging stigmatized perceptions and displaying its performative power for social change. Spurlin (2014) outlines five translation approaches for lesbianism, ranging from concealing it to openly displaying it[3] (209). This last strategy resists censorship that has typically characterized LGBTQIA+ translation, empowering translators to give voice to silenced authors and works in certain historical and social contexts.

Translations of lesbianism are notably less common than references to male homosexual characters. Llopis Mestre and Zaragoza Ninet (2020) highlight this in their study of translations during the Francoist dictatorship (1939-1975), noting that male homosexuality was translated with depreciative terms, while lesbianism was often ignored. Lesbian jargon was often translated using ellipses or deixis, reflecting society's disregard for lesbians (365). Their study shows that lesbian references, if preserved, were often obscured using neutral terms

like "homosexuales" or imprecise translations to mask same-sex eroticism (Spurlin, 2014, p. 1), resulting in the loss of the source text's original sense and nuances. Gramling (2018) argues that neutrally translating lesbian slurs can cast female homosexuality negatively, suggesting it should be concealed (497).

2.1. The translator's role and strategies

Censorship significantly impacts translators' approaches to LGBTQIA+ content, shaping how they convey such experiences. Translators, encountering diverse sexual and gender expressions across cultures, gain insights into the social issues and controversies arising from translation losses due to non-equivalents or contradictory meanings (Spurlin, 2014, p. 3). A key concern is whether to retain or censor homosexual references to align with societal attitudes (Kramer, 2014, p. 530). Historically, authors labeled as "sexual outcasts" (Kramer, 2014, p. 543) faced prejudice, prompting translators to obscure queer references to protect their own reputations during times of widespread condemnation of homosexuality.

Harvey (2014) identifies four factors influencing translations and translators' attitudes: the visibility of the LGBTQIA+ community in the target culture (TC), the presence of an LGBTQIA+ literary tradition in the TC, whether the novel pursues specific "gay objectives," and the translator's own sexual orientation and relationship with the LGBTQIA+ community (296). In conservative contexts suppressing queer terminology and references through legal, social, and educational means (Santaemilia, 2017, p. 13), translators' social perceptions are significantly impacted by their knowledge of or distance from LGBTQIA+ topics (Gramling, 2018, p. 500). Consequently, many translators adopt (self)cen-

[2] Other strategies include changing straight identities to queer ones, removing homophobic, biphobic, or transphobic language or situations, and changing spellings, grammar, or word choices to bring attention to queerness.

[3] These approaches involve shifting the female narrator's gender to that of a man so that the relationship becomes a heterosexual one, eliminating gendered adjectives that identify the narrator as a female, including a female narrator suffering unrequited love for a man, making sapphic desire palpable by othering it, and challenging traditional perceptions of lesbianism by openly displaying it (Spurlin, 2014, p. 203).

sorship to maintain "verbal hygiene" (Gramling, 2018, p. 496) and avoid negative perceptions.

Although this strategy might allow translators to maintain "neutral authorial agency" (Creech, 1993, as cited in Kramer, 2014, p. 530), such neutrality often leans towards supporting heteronormativity. Sedgwick (1990) argues that queer texts should be read from a queer perspective, suggesting translators should faithfully render queer elements rather than conceal homosexual nuances (1990, as cited in Kramer, 2014, p. 530). Modern translators frequently revise stories where queer references were previously hidden, using languages from more accepting cultures to preserve queer references (Gramling, 2018, p. 500). This makes translation a means of resisting oppression and providing visibility to queerness.

Another issue is the extent to which translators should intervene with homosexual characters and experiences, especially historical ones. Spurlin (2014) proposes two approaches: preserving the original ambiguity and potentially derogatory tone or adapting the text to modern terminology, thereby subverting derogatory terms and reflecting a positive view of queerness (8). While faithfully rendering sexual overtones is becoming standard, translators must also resonate with readers' historical consciousness (Kramer, 2014, p. 543). By subverting homophobic remarks, translations become "queered works" (Giustini, 2015, p. 7), validating queer identities and experiences and promoting them positively (Harvey, 2014 p. 302). This manipulation challenges traditional heteronormative and patriarchal patterns, with translators adapting texts to subvert identities associated with submission and perversion (Giustini, 2015, p. 7).

That being the case, Démont (2017) proposes three approaches to translating queer texts, namely misrecognizing translation, minoritizing translation, and queering translation. On the one hand, misrecognizing translation stems as an approach that conceals homosexual desire by portraying it as homosocial desire, reducing it to same-sex social interactions. This strategy, often used to "straighten" the text, can be corrected by comparing the ST and the TT, thus revealing the extent of disruption and potential misrepresentation of the original content (160). On the other hand, minoritizing translation involves completely erasing queerness from the text, aligning the translation with heteronormative societal norms and further "straightening" the text (162). Lastly, queering translation aims to recreate the disruptive force of queer references in the target language TL. It respects the queer meanings in the ST by using techniques to retain these references in the TL or critically assessing previous translations for suppression and assimilation. Through this approach, translators expose censorship and misrecognition by translating faithfully and adding notes to highlight queer nuances, thus addressing the effects of the other two approaches (163). Queering translation, in essence, strives to raise awareness about the importance of the translator's attitude towards homosexuality, providing visibility to traditionally concealed queer subjects.

2.2. Gender translation and readership

Translators play a crucial role in shaping how queer references are received by both the LGBTQIA+ community and society at large. Harvey (2007) identifies two main societal responses to the increased presence of homosexuality in literature due to translation, i.e. outright rejection and open acceptance (142). A translator's ideology and the social-political context of the target culture significantly influence the reception of texts, which may lead to negative reactions,

96

such as offense or censorship, from certain societal sectors. Conversely, translations with negative portrayals of homosexuality may harm queer individuals, leading to self-loathing and hindering identity development.

Santaemilia (2017) argues that including translations of LGBTQIA+ experiences challenges conservative groups (17) and provides positive representations that can be seen as "manifestos of sexual emancipation" (Harvey, 2007, p. 147). These translations help readers explore and understand their sexuality, offering a supportive space where their differences are positively viewed. Additionally, the availability of such translations benefits those outside the LGBTQIA+ community by fostering understanding and altering perceptions, offering new perspectives on queer experiences.

3. METHODOLOGY

The first step taken in approaching Malinda Lo's *Last Night at the Telegraph Club* involved performing a pre-translation analysis that allowed me to identify potential translation problems related to terminology and euphemistic expressions, particularly those referencing the LGBTQIA+ community. Afterwards, I carried out an identification of all the fragments containing terminology related to the LGBTQIA+ community following two main criteria. On the one hand, I focused on identifying euphemistic expressions that could be used to distance the speaking subject from the queer reference. Since the novel primarily focuses on a lesbian community, special attention was given to identifying terminology specific to same-sex relationships between women, particularly given their lack of equivalents in the TL and, when available, they lack the specific nuance that the characters intend to convey.

Following the excerpts' identification, a database was drafted using an Excel table which was divided into four main cells, the first of which introduces the scene happening in each of the fragments. A second column offers the excerpts identified in the ST, each of which ranges from one to fifteen lines. Within each of these fragments, the main lexical object of the translation has been highlighted in bold to make it easier to recognize them. Accordingly, a third column is devoted to the translation of each excerpt performed by me, within which the solution for the elements highlighted in the second column has likewise been emphasized in bold. The fourth and last column elucidates the main translation techniques adopted in rendering each fragment into the TL, followed by an in-depth justification for each choice. All in all, over 68 excerpts were singled out, all of which were translated once the table was compiled.

Table 1. Proposed database model for the excerpts to be translated.

Context in each scene	ST	TT	Translation technique

After compiling each excerpt and their respective techniques following Molina and Hurtado Albir's (2002) categorization, each example was classified based on Démont's three approaches to queer translation (2017) depending on whether queerness is displayed explicitly to challenge its conventional concealing, or whether it is masked to exhibit the way heteronormative patterns are imposed upon the LGBTQIA+ community. In this sense, given the number of omissions identified in the novel, a special emphasis was placed on such examples given their overall contribution to reflecting adverse and distant

attitudes towards the LGBTQIA+ community, thereby "othering" them because of their sexual preferences. In this case, Unseth's (2006) approach to the four main forms for translating euphemisms was taken as the basis to analyze the use and introduction of such references.

The aforementioned classification was followed by a study of the frequency with which each technique was used to translate the 68 examples, as well as the overall effect their choice has on the target text. To conclude, the frequency of use of each technique was analyzed followed by a final reflection from which the main conclusions of the project were drawn.

4. PRE-TRANSLATION ANALYSIS

Prior to delving into this paper's translation proposal, it is essential to present a pre-translation analysis that contextualizes Malinda Lo's *Last Night at the Telegraph Club* (2021). Following Nord's model for text analysis in translation (2005), it is pertinent to introduce Lo's background as an Asian-American YA author based in Massachusetts, known for her contributions to LGBTQ+ and historical fiction. Over the past decade, she has won multiple awards in the YA category, such as the William C. Morris YA Debut Award, the Andre Norton Award for YA science fiction and fantasy, and the Mythopoeic Fantasy Award. Her prolific career includes six novels, thirteen short stories, and various non-fiction articles and essays published in anthologies.

Published in 2021 by Dutton Books for Young Readers, *Last Night at the Telegraph Club* is set in San Francisco during the mid-1950s. It focuses on the social dynamics of LGBTQIA+ communities and the Asian American experience during a time when Red Scare paranoia significantly threatened these communities. In this YA novel, Lo portrays a teenager's journey of self-dis-

covery and identity development concerning her sexual orientation while providing an accurate depiction of the social challenges faced by lesbian women in 1950s San Francisco. The novel explores themes of identity, homophobia, cross-gender impersonation, acceptance, and community within both the LGBTQIA+ and Asian American communities.

Given the author's motivation, the source text (ST) is made accessible to a general readership through simple and clear linguistic structures in standard American English. However, Lo's use of lesbian jargon, especially within the Telegraph Club, and euphemistic expressions outside the club context pose potential translation challenges. These references may lack direct equivalents in Spanish, and the translation must remain accessible to a young audience. Therefore, the primary goal in the translated excerpts provided in the next section is to find possible ways of translating and adapting 1950s lesbian jargon into expressions that could have existed in the target culture (TC), particularly focusing on terminology still lacking established equivalents in the target language (TL).

5. MODES OF TRANSLATION

As has already been stated, this chapter provides exhaustive analysis of several key terms identified in Malinda Lo's *Last Night at the Telegraph Club* (2021), as well as of their translation into the TL taking Démont's three modes of translation (2017) as its starting point. Démont's classification has traditionally been used to compare different translations of the same ST, thus providing examinations of the different treatments that various translations give to the same representation of queerness in a particular work (159). Nonetheless, due to the limitations of this examination—amongst them, the project's lim-

ited length and the lack of other translations with which to compare the present one— , Démont's three modes of translation will be adapted to address the portrayal and rendering of queerness in Lo's novel. Rather than being used to compare translations and expose strategies used to conceal queerness, the present analysis takes each approach (i.e. queering, minoritizing, and misrecognizing translation) to examine the representation of lesbianism in the novel by showcasing instances in which homosexuality is exposed in a rather explicit or an implicit manner in line with the attitude each character exhibits towards the LGBTQIA+ community.

Thus, based on Démont's approaches (2017), each instance has been associated with a particular attitude towards homosexuality. Displays of queering translation appear through either the introduction of translation notes that make explicit the queerness behind the lexical item or terminology that explicitly exhibits homosexuality, in many cases with a positive connotation. Exhibits of minoritizing translation, on the other hand, emerge through the use of terminology and expressions that either conceal or erase the queerness present in the text through distancing mechanisms and the employment of lexical items with various layers of meaning wherein queerness can only be perceived implicitly. Nonetheless, through previous analysis and classification of the translated excerpts carried out, only instances of queering (30 instances, which make up for the 44.2% of examples) and minoritizing translation (38 examples, which make up for the 55.8%) have been discerned. This way, misrecognizing translation will not be accounted for in the present examination.

5.1. Queering Translation

Once the main adaptations to Démont's approaches for the purpose of this study have been introduced, it is pertinent to commence this analysis by referring to instances of queering translation. One of the most prominent cases of this approach to translating queerness stems through the term "dyke" (Lo, 2021, p. 171) which poses a challenge due to its lack of a precise established equivalent in the TL (see Table 2).

Table 2

Context in each scene	ST	TT
After one of Tommy Andrew's performances—a male impersonator that performs at the Telegraph Club—, Lily and Kath—a classmate of Lily—reunite with other women they had already met on their first visit to the Club. Upon noticing a couple leaving the club, they discuss the type of people frequenting the Telegraph Club. Still and all, Lily feels out of place among them.	"I heard that the Five Twenty-Nine Club might be starting up a Saturday night show with a new male impersonator," Sally said. "Have you ever been there? "I heard it's all hookers and dykes, and you can get bennies there under the table," Jean said with a grin. The words shocked Lily, but Jean said them as casually as one might say girl or boy or aspirin.	—He oído que el Five Twenty-Nine Club podría montar un espectáculo los sábados por la noche con una nueva imitadora de hombres. —dijo Sally. —¿Habéis estado allí? —Me han contado que todo son busconas y bolleras, y que te pueden pasar anfetas. —comentó Jean con una sonrisilla. Lily se escandalizó ante sus palabras, pero Jean las dijo con la misma facilidad con la que uno pronuncia «chica», «chico», o «aspirina».

Even if most bilingual dictionaries, such as the Cambridge English-Spanish dictionary (n.d.), take *lesbianas* as an equivalent for "dyke," it fails in rendering the rather demeaning connotation of "dyke." For this reason—and with a view to exposing lesbianism explicitly—, the term *bollera* fits in this context. Being defined as a colloquial and demeaning term used to refer to lesbians by the *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* (DLE, n.d.), *bolleras* conveys similar and more precise connotations and attitudes to those of "dykes" in a more accurate way than *lesbianas*. What is more, *bolleras* fits the resignification that the lesbian community has provided to "dykes," as it is likewise used in the TC to display their pride for their identity.

It is through this lexical choice, which is more specific than *lesbianas*, that the queer references are displayed more clearly, especially as regards the positive added value that the speakers convey to "dyke" in uttering it. Even if one opted for the use of *lesbianas*, it would likewise succeed in exhibiting the queerness explicitly. Nonetheless, the very fact that the purpose in this case is displaying the pride they feel in being lesbians as a challenge to the prevailing heteronormative patterns during the 1950s makes *bollera* the most suitable example of queering translation.

Much on the same line, it is equally relevant to mention a second example—the label "femme" (p. 172)—, which is often used within the dichotomy "butch/femme" in reference to the stereotypical roles associated with lesbian couples (see Table 3).

Defined as "a lesbian who is notably or stereotypically feminine in appearance and manner" (Merriam-Webster English Dictionary, n.d.), this label is taken as one of the most controversial items within the LGBTQIA+ translation field given its lack of specific established equivalents. While it is true that attempts have been made at translating such term following the dichotomy *masculina/femenina*, there is no established use of such expressions as *lesbiana masculina* or *lesbiana femenina* in the TL, given the rather contemptuous tone implied towards the lesbian community. Nonetheless, such choice fails to render "femme's" specific meaning, inasmuch as it preserves the disdainful tone towards the lesbian community by placing both parties (i.e. butch and femme) within the heteronormative binary.

Being such the case, the most suitable option seems to take "femme" as a pure borrowing with the addition of an explanatory footnote where the connotations behind the label are fully

Table 3

Context in each scene	ST	TT
Lily's discomfort is further enhanced as Jean—another teenager that visits de Telegraph Club—asks all of her acquaintances about their impressions upon meeting male impersonator Tommy Andrews.	"What's that supposed to mean?" Jean asked. "Do you know her?" "Not well. I know of her. She was with a friend of mine last year—before the femme she's with now—I forget her name."	—¿Y eso qué quiere decir? —preguntó Jean. —¿La conoces? —No mucho, pero sé sobre ella. Salió con una amiga mía el año pasado, antes de la femme con la que está ahora. No me acuerdo de cómo se llama. 1 Lesbiana que tiene una expresión de género considerada como femenina. Su antónimo es *butch,* cuya traducción en español se acerca a "marimacha" (Glosario Lambda, s.n.).

displayed. In adding such footnote, the queerness behind the label is exhibited. Rather than merely explaining the term's meaning, exposing the stereotypical nuances behind it and the way in which such dichotomy imposes on them the roles usually associated with heteronormative relationships. It is in displaying such binary through explanatory devices that this rendering to the TL may be considered as an instance of queering translation. In fact, exposing the issue behind the label may challenge the heteronormative dichotomy imposed on the lesbian community. Together with the label femme, a third example relevant to analyze the way in which "butches" (267) has been rendered in the TT as *marimachas* given the potential translation challenges it may pose because of its underlying connotation (see Table 4).

Along the same lines as femme, the label "butch" has usually been translated as *lesbiana masculina* (Llopis Mestre y Zaragoza Ninet, 2020, p. 367). Nonetheless, no accepted uses of such an expression have been recorded. This being the case, bilingual dictionaries such as the Collins Spanish Dictionary (n.d.) propose equivalents such as *lesbiana* or *marimacha* to refer to women with an appearance or behavior typically associated with masculinity.

In this context, the label is used in a positive sense because the characters using it are lesbians themselves. Nonetheless, because the main aim turns to exposing another stereotypical role associated with the heteronormative dichotomy, using *marimachas* implies a case of queering translation. This is because through this label there is a straightforward exposure of the heteronormative binary imposed upon lesbian women, which may in turn mean a challenge to such dichotomy.

A similar stance stems from the translation of "same-sex deviate" (264), which I have translated as *pervertidas* (see Table 5, in next page).

According to the DLE, *pervertida* refers to a person whose sexual preferences are viewed as negative or immoral. Minding the context of the fragment, in which words such as "recruited" and Lily's anxious reaction already hint at the headline trying to instill feelings of fear and of the bar being bizarre, the said nuance of debauchery could associate *pervertida* with someone from the LGBTQIA+ community, which conforms with the perception society had of homosexuality at the time. The Collins English-Spanish Bilingual dictionary generally translates "deviant" as *desviado*. However, the DLE does not list "desviado" with the same meaning as "deviant" in English. Instead, *desviado* is defined as "apartar o alejar a alguien o algo del camino que seguía" (DLE). For this reason, synthesizing "same-sex deviate" under a single

Table 4

Context in each scene	ST	TT
Through his statement, Inspector Herington, who commanded a raid on the Club, reflects on the impact the elder women at the Telegraph Club had over the young teenagers visiting it, particularly focusing on their physical appearance.	But soon, some of the girls started to wear mannish clothing and were known as "butches," emulating the older women who had seduced them.	Poco después, sin embargo, algunas de las chicas empezaron a llevar ropa más masculina con la que trataban de emular a las mujeres que las habían seducido, quienes se refieren las unas a las otras como "marimachas".

Table 5

Context in each scene	ST	TT
The day after the police raid in the Telegraph Club, Lily notices a headline deeply discussing the events and naming some of the main women involved in the same. Through this newspaper, Lily learns about Tommy's imprisonment.	The headline on the front page took up the entire width of the newspaper that Lily's father was reading: TEEN-AGE GIRLS 'RECRUITED' AT SAME SEX DEVIATE BAR. Lily felt all the blood rush to her head as she saw it.	El titular de la página principal ocupaba todo el ancho del periódico que el padre de Lily estaba leyendo: ADOLESCENTES 'RECLUTADAS' EN UN BAR PARA PERVERTIDAS. Lily sintió que se le helaba la sangre al verlo.

Table 6

Context in each scene	ST	TT
Despite Lily's attempts at justifying her sexual identity as a product of her self-growth and awakening, rather than as something imposed upon her, Shirley keeps on holding Kath accountable for influencing Lily's identity.	"Kath didn't do anything to me," Lily said. "Of course she did. She's—she's kwai lo. Chinese people don't go to places like that. Chinese people aren't like that. I can see that you're confused. They must have done a number on you—oh, I'm so angry at them for doing this to you!" Kwai lo = foreign devil; derogatory.	—Kath no me ha hecho nada —dijo Lily. —Claro que te ha hecho algo. Es... Es kwai lo; un demonio, igual que la gente como ella. La gente china no va a sitios así. La gente china no es como ella. Ya veo que estás confundida. No quiero imaginarme cómo te habrán tratado... ¡Dios! Estoy tan cabreada con ellas por haberte hecho esto.

linguistic element in the TL such as *pervertidas* better captures the nuance implied in "deviate."

A further example in which an open rejection of homosexuality is seen in the novel stems from Shirley's—Lily's best friend, who is also of Chinese-American descent—association of queerness with evil (271) (see Table 6).

To maintain the foreign phrase introduced in the ST, *kwai lo* is taken as a borrowing in the TT. Using amplification, the derogatory connotation implied towards homosexual people as being a "foreign devil" is preserved to showcase Shirley's adverse attitude towards people from the LGBTQIA+ community. While maintaining the ST's format could have also displayed such an attitude towards homosexuality, including its trans-

lation in-text evinces more clearly how Shirley's association of homosexual people with evil entities displays a train of thought shared during the 1950s which established a dichotomy between what was perceived as standard (i.e. heterosexuality) and what was regarded as deviating from the norm (i.e. homosexuality). What is more, introducing it as an in-text reference explicitly displays Shirley's criminalization of homosexuality as a condition White people suffered from, instead of it being a sexual orientation that can be experienced by people of any race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, or background, thus not being limited to any particular kind of person or group. In a way, making Shirley's association even clearer enables readers

Table 7

Context in each scene	ST	TT
Knowing that her parents will find out about her visits to the Telegraph Club, Lily reveals her sexual identity to her mother. Nonetheless, her mother's rather adverse attitude evinces her negative perception of homosexual identities.	"I know exactly what I'm saying," she said, frustrated. "You're saying you were at this—this club for homosexuals?" Her mother's voice rose on the last, shocking word. Lily had never heard her mother say it before. All she could do was nod, and her mother's face went even paler.	—Sé muy bien lo que estoy diciendo —su voz estaba cargada de frustración. —¿Me estás diciendo que estuviste en ese... en ese antro para invertidas? Su madre alzó la voz al pronunciar esa última palabra tan estremecedora. Nunca antes había oído Lily a su madre decirla. Lo único que pudo hacer fue asentir, y la cara de su madre se volvió incluso más pálida.

to perceive her rejection of White people as being a foreign threat, much in the way Chinese people were deemed dangerous at the time, especially with the rise of the Red Scare.

To conclude this section, it is relevant to highlight the reference to a "club for homosexuals" (277), which I have resorted to translate as *antro para invertidas*, as a way of projecting Mrs Hu's feelings towards her daughter's dwelling with queer women more explicitly (see Table 7).

One possible solution in translating "homosexual" into the TL involves particularization to reflect Lily's mother's disapproving attitude towards her daughter's sexual identity. By translating "homosexuals" as *invertidas*, which carries the same basic meaning as the term in the ST but with an added euphemistic nuance, the translation captures both a derogatory undertone and the novel's societal context. This choice of term makes explicit Lily's mother's realization that her daughter had been involved in the raid on a club typically frequented by homosexual women. Thus, not only does it highlight Mrs. Hu's rejection but also conveys the period's stigmatization and the euphemistic language often used to refer to homosexuality. This approach, together with the choice of translating "club" as *antro*—which the DLE characterizes as being "de mal

aspecto o mala reputación" (DLE)—may enrich the translation by providing cultural and emotional depth to the TT, reflecting the social attitudes of the time, and emphasizing the tension between societal norms and individual identity.

5.2. Minoritizing Translation

Within the identified cases of minoritizing translation, the most evident instance stems from the translation of a fourth example, "queer" (Lo, 2021, p. 99), which is a highly complex label to render in other languages, as *rara* to refer to young lesbian women (see Table 8 in next page).

Most dictionaries, such as the Cambridge English-Spanish Bilingual Dictionary (n.d.), equate "queer" with "homosexual," which fails to capture the full scope of the original term. "Queer" extends beyond the binary of gay/lesbian identities to include non-binary identities. Given these complexities, the most appropriate translation seems to revert to an older sense of "queer" meaning "strange, unusual, or not expected," as defined by the Cambridge English Dictionary (CED, n.d.). While "queer" could be borrowed directly into the TL, it would be unlikely for Spanish speakers of the 1950s to use

Table 8

Context in each scene	ST	TT
At school, Shirley attempts to prevent Lily from growing closer to Kath. To do so, Shirley warns her about Jean by alluding to the affair she had with another girl and, more specifically, the fact that they were caught in public.	Shirley cast a glance behind her at the doors, which remained closed, and then looked back at Lily. "Jean's queer. You don't remember? Somebody caught her in the band room last year with—" Here Shirley grimaced in distaste. "With another girl." Lily's skin prickled. "I never heard that," she said neutrally.	Shirley echó una mirada hacia las puertas que permanecían cerradas tras ella, y volvió a mirar a Lily. —Jean es... ¿Cómo decirlo? Un poco rara. ¿No te acuerdas? Alguien la pilló en la clase de música el año pasado con —Shirley hizo una mueca cargada de repugnancia. —Con otra chica. Al escuchar esto, a Lily se le erizó la piel.

such a label. Considering the oppressive social context of Spain during that period, where homosexuality was severely punished and not openly discussed, it is more fitting to use a subtler label that conceals queerness and requires analysis to discern its layers of meaning.

On this basis, rendering "queer" as *un poco rara* in the TT not only fits successfully both the setting of the novel and the attitude that the speaking character holds towards Jean, but also stems as a case of minoritizing translation. This is because in rendering the original through its old-fashioned sense, the queer connotation is concealed under the nuance of being "unusual." This implies that only in analyzing the word in its context and considering the previous allusions made to homosexuality the underlying association between queerness and being peculiar can be displayed. Thus, because in identifying as a lesbian Jean does not conform with the predominant heteronormative patterns prevailing over society, she is deemed as unusual and different, which propels her to an inferior position within the social ladder. This way, in trying to highlight the rather hostile attitude held towards a lesbian character, queerness is represented through a more general and polysemic lexical item that

allows to mask it in favor of heteronormativity.

Similarly, it is important to note instances of minoritizing translation, where the ST already portrays minoritization and the translation maintains this portrayal. The author aims to highlight the protagonist's sense of disconnect from the women she encounters at the Telegraph Club by introducing the adjective "strange" (225) to reflect Lily's initial unfamiliarity with lesbian women. This implies that their perceived oddity stems directly from their sexuality, using a polysemic term in the ST that itself minoritizes lesbian women by positioning them below dominant social norms. Consequently, it would have been beneficial for the TT to include an explanatory element that elucidates the various layers of meaning in "strange." Nevertheless, to preserve the ambiguity introduced by the author, "strange" is translated as *tan raras* (see Table 9 in next page).

This translation not only preserves the denotative meaning of the lexical item—"unusual and unexpected, or difficult to understand," as defined by the CED (n.d.)—but also captures several underlying connotations that echo those implied in the original. Furthermore, just as Lily distances herself from the women at the club in

Table 9

Context in each scene	ST	TT
Feeling deeply overwhelmed after her encounter with Tommy, Lily reflects on her doubts about her own sexual identity.	Those strange women at the party seemed to see her much more clearly than she saw herself, and it was disorienting.	Parecía que esas mujeres tan raras de la fiesta la veían mucho más claramente que ella misma, y eso la desconcertaba.

the ST since she has not come to terms with her identity yet, this distance is implicitly conveyed through the adjective *raras* in the TT. This term may also allude to other aspects of the women's identity, such as their physical appearance or mannerisms. Nonetheless, these references to their behavior and language subtly reveal Lily's discomfort and unfavorable attitude toward them. Her belief that queerness should be condemned or feared leads her to use an adjective that marginalizes them within her society's hegemonic patterns—a strategy successfully mirrored in the TT through minoritizing techniques.

Another instance in which homosexuality might be concealed but also expanded in the novel can be appreciated through Kath's depiction of Tommy Andrews as "handsome" (96), adhering to her role as a male impersonator rather than characterizing her in feminine terms (see Table 10).

To reflect Tommy's character as a male impersonator, *atractivo* is used as an established equivalent for "handsome." This choice allows the description of Tommy through a masculine adjective, both in the ST and in the TT, emphasizing her acquisition of male features on stage. The term *atractivo*, in turn, can be interpreted in a double sense: not only can it be associated with Kath's perception of Tommy's mannerisms and dress, but it also aligns with her role as a male impersonator and Kath's attraction towards her because of her sexual orientation. This nuanced translation, thus, subtly conceals Tommy's queerness, focusing instead on her compelling stage presence and the masculine persona she embodies.

6. EUPHEMISTIC AND DISTANCING DEVICES

Within the mechanisms introduced to distance the main character from the LGBTQIA+ community, it is pertinent to devote a specific section to the presence of euphemistic and distancing devices in the novel. To do so, the current analysis

Table 10

Context in each scene	ST	TT
While providing Lily with a detailed depiction of the ambiance and consumers attending the Telegraph Club, Kath tells her about Tommy Andrews. In doing so, she also highlights the effect Tommy's performance had on the audience.	"I can't remember the lyrics. You'd know some of the songs. But the whole point of it was, you know, she's dressed like a man. She sings to the women in the audience. She's very… handsome." Kath gave a nervous, self-conscious buff that was not quite a laugh."	—No recuerdo las letras, pero seguro que conocerías algunas de las canciones. La cosa es que iba, ya sabes, vestida como un hombre, y les cantaba a las mujeres del público. Es muy… atractivo, por así decirlo. —Kath bufó con nerviosismo, algo tímida, pero sin llegar a reír

Table 11

Context in each scene	ST	TT
Visiting a drugstore near Chinatown, Lily discovers a novel where the two main female characters have an affair. Reading about them triggers Lily's curiosity over their relationship, even if she feels the need of keeping her discovery a secret.	Maxine pushed Patrice back against the velvet cushions, lowering her mouth to the girl's creamy skin. "You're like me, Patrice, stop fighting the possibility." Patrice whimpered as Maxine pressed her lips to her neck.	Maxine empujó a Patrice contra los cojines de terciopelo y acercó su boca a la piel aterciopelada de la joven. —Eres como yo, Patrice, deja de luchar contra esa posibilidad. —Patrice gimió cuando Maxine presionó los labios en su cuello.

is based on Unseth's classification (2006) of the four main strategies to which translators resort for handling the preservation of euphemistic references. In this case, nonetheless, only two of the categories will be referred to—i.e. translating euphemisms literally and translating euphemisms through equivalent yet not exact expressions—given the lack of instances found of translations of euphemisms using plain language and combinations of the previously mentioned approaches.

6.1. Literal Translation

One of the main cases where literal translation of euphemisms is exhibited in the novel's sixth instance, which is that of "you are like me" (Lo, 2021, p. 38) which is translated as *eres como yo* (see Table 11).

Despite being alone in an intimate setting, neither character explicitly acknowledges their attraction to other women due to the societal stigma attached to homosexuality, especially considering the oppression and discrimination of the 1950s. Therefore, the literal translation choice of *eres como yo* reflects this context. While alternatives like *tú también eres así* could have been considered, they might not have aligned with the author's intent. Both the ST and the TT

aim to demonstrate that both characters refrain from openly expressing their sexuality due to societal repercussions. Thus, the literal translation effectively conveys not only the original connotation but also maintains the focus on the speaker, implying her acceptance of her identity.

A similar instance can be seen through the literal translation of this analysis's seventh instance, "someone like you" (272) as *alguien como tú* (see Table 12 in next page).

Similar to previous examples, using an expression like *alguien así* could have effectively conveyed the intended meaning of the ST. However, the main purpose here is to explicitly highlight Shirley's rejection of Lily based on her sexuality, making a literal translation of the expression appropriate. This choice emphasizes Shirley as the speaker who distances herself from Lily, thereby focusing on their interaction rather than making a general statement about the LGBTQIA+ community.

By preserving Shirley's specific reference to Lily instead of a more general reference that could be captured by *alguien así*, the translation underscores the societal perspective of Shirley's time. This specific reference highlights the exclusion Lily faces within her community due to her "difference." Moreover, maintaining the author's original wording in the TT preserves

Table 12

Context in each scene	ST	TT
Upon realizing Lily's sexuality, Shirley breaks her friendship with Lily off, thereby proving her utter rejection towards her friend's identity.	She took a quick, sharp breath. "If that's what you think, we have nothing left to say to each other. I don't think you should come with me to the Miss Chinatown judging anymore. I can't have someone like you there. You should know that your parents are going to find out. Everyone's going to find out because Wallace Lai's a gossip, and if you won't even bother to deny it, I can't help you."	Respiró hondo y con rapidez. —Si eso es lo que crees, entonces no tenemos nada más que hablar. Creo que ya no deberías venir conmigo al concurso de Miss Chinatown. No puedo tener a alguien como tú ahí. Tus padres se van a acabar enterando. Todo el mundo lo va a saber porque Wallace Lai es un cotilla, y si ni siquiera te molestas en negarlo, tampoco te puedo ayudar.

the deeper layers of meaning behind Shirley's words, illustrating both Shirley's significant change in attitude towards Lily and her embodiment of societal exclusion towards homosexual individuals. In essence, a literal translation not only reveals Shirley's explicit rejection of Lily but also underscores her role in embodying societal prejudices against homosexuals.

6.2. Equivalent Expressions

As for the cases where the ST's euphemisms are translated through a similar yet not exact distancing expression, one of the most evident instances is that of "the way you are" (Lo, 2021, p. 237), which is translated as *de esa forma*.

In this case, even if the form of the original expression has not been preserved, both the original and the translation of the eighth example convey the same meaning and emphasize the distance that the main character still establishes between her and the women at the club. Although a literal translation such as *¿Cuánto hace que te diste cuenta de tu forma de ser* would have been successful in preserving the distance between them, the use of the deictic *esa* is more effective in conveying the disavowal and hesitation that Lily still exhibits towards the LGBTQIA+ community.

Another relevant instance is that of the analysis's ninth and last example, "homosexuals" (277), which is rendered as *invertidas* in the TT.

Table 13

Context in each scene	ST	TT
After confessing each other's feelings, Lily wonders when Kath realized that she identified as a lesbian.	Lily glanced around to double-check that no one was in hearing range. "How long—how long have you known about… the way you are?"	Lily miró a su alrededor para comprobar que no hubiera nadie que pudiera oírla. —¿Desde cuándo… desde cuándo sabes que eres… de esa forma?

Table 14

Context in each scene	ST	TT
Lily's mother disapproves of her daughter's identity, implying that she will not belong in their family so long as she keeps on identifying herself as part of the lesbian community.	Her mother stood up, snatching the newspaper off the table and crumpling it in her hands. She threw it in the trash again. "There are no homosexuals in this family," she said, the words thick with disgust.	Su madre se levantó, cogió el periódico de la mesa, lo arrugó, y lo volvió a tirar en la basura. —En esta familia no hay invertidas —dijo. Sus palabras estaban cargadas de repulsión.

Even though *invertidas* does not present the same nuance behind "homosexuals" nowadays, it could be certainly related to the perception of homosexuality during the 1950s. The term *homosexual* is considered more general and neutral when referring to a person attracted to others of the same gender. Nonetheless, because of the bias and oppression that homosexual people faced at the time, a more derogatory nuance was attached to the term throughout the 1950s that is no longer present nowadays.

In this context, however, because the main purpose is to emphasize Lily's mother's rejection of homosexuality, the use of an equivalent such as *invertidas* seems appropriate. This is because that term still maintains a euphemistic and derogatory nuance behind it. Although a literal translation would have succeeded in preserving the overall significance that the author aimed to convey, *invertidas* displays such rejection in a more explicit and direct way than *homosexuales* or *lesbianas*.

A similar stance emerges in the translation of "a place like that" (269) as *un sitio de esos* (see Table 15).

To portray Shirley's contrary attitude towards homosexuality, "a place like that" (269) is translated as *un sitio de esos* employing particularization. In translating "like that" (which literally would be *como ese*) as *de esos*, a further derogatory connotation is implied. This subtle shift in phrasing intensifies the negative undertone,

Table 15

Context in each scene	ST	TT
Following her discovery of Lily's dwellings on the Telegraph Club, Shirley warns her that she had been seen out of the club after the police raid, thereby implying that her association with homosexual women would be imminent unless she denied it.	"Someone saw you last night—this morning, very early—leaving a nightclub in North Beach. It was raided last night for— Honestly, I can't even bring myself to say it. I told them it was a mistake because what would you be doing at a place like that? But they insisted it was you. It wasn't you, was it? Tell me it wasn't you."	—Alguien te vio anoche, digo esta mañana, muy temprano, saliendo de un club nocturno de North Beach. Anoche hubo una redada por… Sinceramente, no puedo ni decirlo. Les he contado que seguro que se han confundido porque ¿qué harías tú en un sitio de esos? Pero no paraban de insistir en que eras tu. No eras tú, ¿no? Dime que no fuiste tú.

making Shirley's disdain more palpable. The choice of *de esos* suggests a dismissive and contemptuous attitude, reinforcing the idea that such places, associated with homosexuality, are viewed with scorn. Accordingly, this nuanced translation choice not only conveys the literal meaning but also captures the societal prejudice, Shirley's specific bias, and the distance created between her and Lily—as the representative of queer women in the scene—, providing a deeper insight into her character and the cultural context of the time.

7. CONCLUSION

The prime aim of this analysis was to analyze the translation of specific lexicon, terminology, and distancing expressions linked to homosexuality—and, more specifically, to lesbianism—taking as a starting point the perspective of and attitude towards lesbians in the 2nd half of the 20th century. As it has been seen throughout this project, Lo's *Last Night at the Telegraph Club* (2021) includes a wide range of terminology and expressions unique to the LGBTQIA+ community that in many cases have posed difficulties when translating. It is for this reason that an exhaustive analysis of this work should be carried out to exploit the full potential of analysis of the found terms. This is because the length limitations of this work has only made it possible to delve into fourteen excerpts out of the 68 instances of lesbian jargon and distancing devices encountered in the novel. Studies of the linguistic phenomena observed in the novel could prove useful to further analyze both the extent to which the TL lacks fitting expressions to render lesbianism into the TC, and the changes in the attitude held towards the main characters' sexuality perceived towards the end of the novel. The latter point may be especially convenient to

evaluate the progressive self-acknowledgement that the main character undergoes compared to the lexical choices she still makes when referring to women within the lesbian community. Because the situation homosexual people was similar both in the USA and Spain at the time, it would not be unexpected for the character to resort to such expressions in the TL as well, thereby further exposing the identity conflict people within the LGBTQIA+ community faced at the time.

The current examination highlights the significance of extralinguistic factors, such as the socio-political context of the 1950s in the USA and Spain, in selecting suitable equivalences in the TL. However, preserving this context and its associated attitudes has posed major challenges. Specifically, replicating the precise connotations of several ST lexical items has been difficult due to the lack of exact equivalents in the TL. As a result, alternative strategies (44.2% of instances) were employed to better highlight the invisibility faced by the community and to enhance the visibility of lesbian identities as intended by both the author and translator. While the absence of precise equivalents might be understandable for texts from the 1950s, it is unconventional in today's context given the advancements in LGBTQIA+ terminology. Social changes often expand lexical choices within a group, allowing for more accurate representation and challenging previous assumptions. Despite this, the lack of precise equivalents in the TL perpetuates heteronormative and derogatory biases found in many expressions and lexicons, creating a stark contrast between the source and target languages.

The data in this study could spark new insights into the understanding of lesbianism and how translators can highlight how homosexuality was addressed historically. The novel

contains many expressions with distancing and euphemistic undertones (55.8% of instances) compared to more straightforward and inclusive expressions, reflecting the aversion towards the LGBTQIA+ community in the 1950s. Likewise, further research could compare the lexicon in contemporary novels about queerness with translations from the latter half of the 20th century. This would help determine if social changes in the LGBTQIA+ community are mirrored in language. If contemporary novels still use terminology that conceals queerness, it would indicate that language has not yet evolved to reflect social progress towards inclusivity.

Here lies another possible future line of analysis regarding LGBTQIA+ translation, especially considering the role that translators perform. Through a larger corpus containing more translations, different attitudes held towards homosexuality can be exposed by comparing not only translations made in different periods but also works covering different periods in their plots. Analyzing if these expressions are maintained or not could shed light on new aspects within translation. Thus, it could be tested whether, as we approach contemporary texts, translators focus on exposing and giving visibility to the community or whether, in contrast, they keep incorporating elements that conceal queerness that were not actually present in the ST.

The strongest conclusion that may be drawn, therefore, is that research focused on lesbianism is essential to discover major lexical gaps in the TL, particularly since this may pose a significant obstacle in the promotion of inclusiveness and visibility of the lesbian community. What is more, such translations can prove changes in attitudes held towards particular communities, thus exhibiting a turn towards the need of exposing the improper approach to the ongoing rendering of lesbianism until the advent of queer theory. Thus, because of the scarcity of translations of the lesbian community, building and expanding corpora on lesbian translations can be beneficial to exhibit progressive developments in the attitude towards lesbian women, which could prompt greater inclusiveness towards them.

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