

Media Matching

English + Japanese + Arabic



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FOUNDATION

mraish / July 2021



ويكيبيديا
الموسوعة الحرة



ウィキペディア
フリー百科事典



WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

**What are the main barriers
limiting experienced editors
from adding more media?**

**Where could an automated tool
help?**

Different Wikipedias are illustrated differently.

[WMF research](#) shows a wide range of image inclusion rates for different language versions; English is high, Swedish is low.

[WMF research](#) shows that readers engage with images more than with citations, but that the rate of engagement is different in different languages.

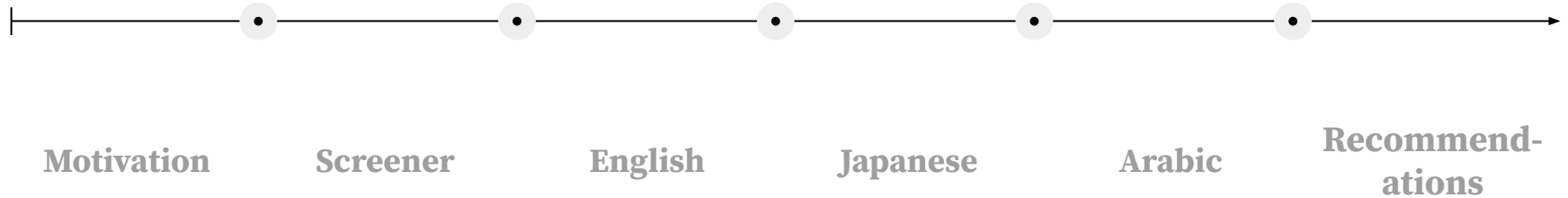
[External research](#) shows that different languages illustrate the same topic with different images; visual diversity rivals textual diversity.

[External funding](#) (Sloan Foundation) aims to add media to millions of content pages.



Study design

- A. Publicly posted screener surveys.
- B. Background and task-structured interviews in three languages.
- C. Identify pain points and recommendations.



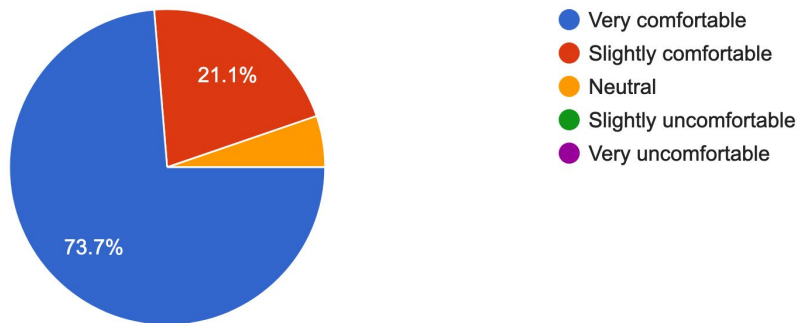
Screeners surveys // Community snapshots



Coral fungus. Photo credit: Magnus Manske, CC BY 2.0, via
Wikimedia Commons

How comfortable are you working with media files?

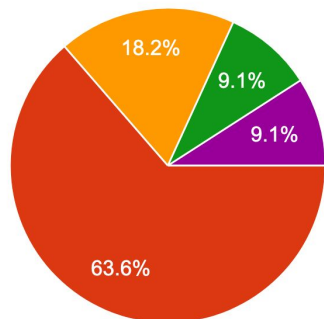
19 responses



**English respondents
are very comfortable
with media.**

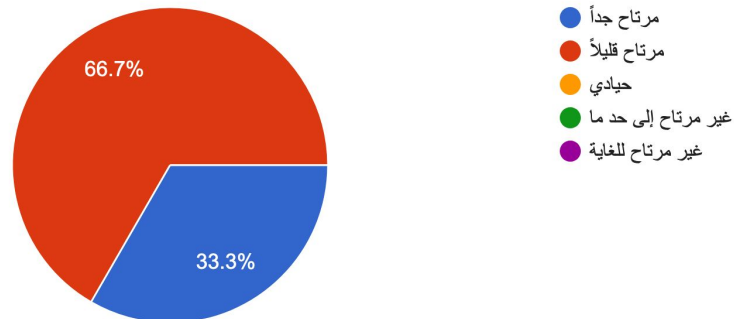
画像や表組みなどメディア資料の扱いは慣れていますか？

11 responses



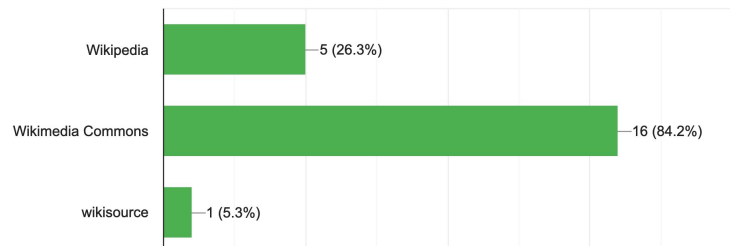
ما مدى شعورك بالراحة أثناء العمل بملفات الوسائط؟

6 responses



Where do you do most of your media work?

19 responses



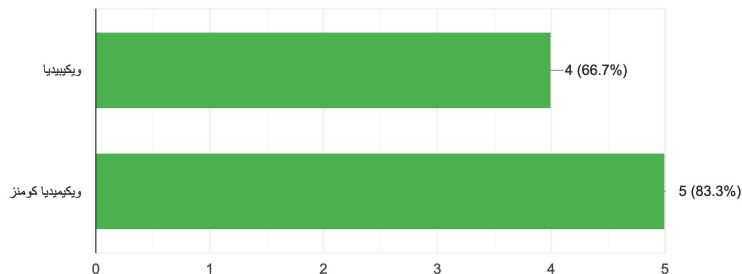
画像や表組みなどのメディアを追加する書き込み（編集）は、下記のどれで行うことが多いですか？

11 responses



أين تقوم بمعظم عملك المتعلق بالوسائط؟

6 responses

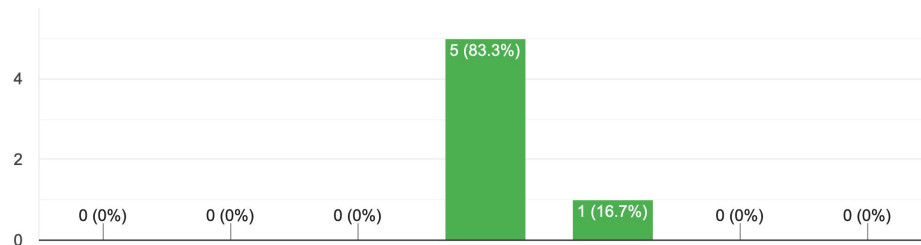
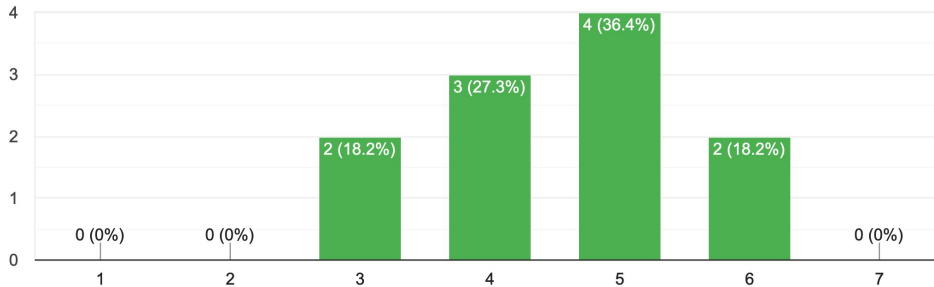
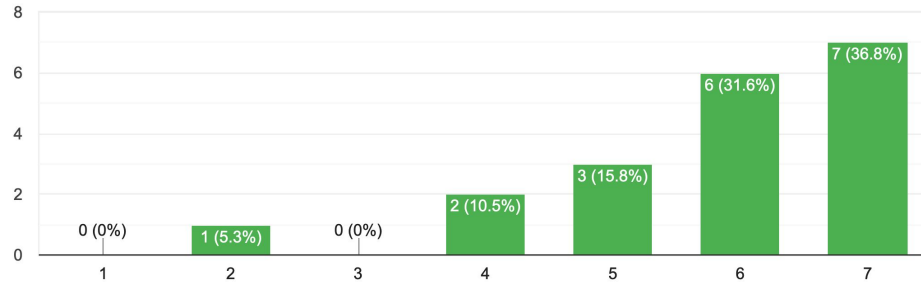


Most English respondents work on Commons, while Japanese and Arabic are more evenly split.

Non-English communities have difficulty accessing Commons.

How **comfortable** are you working with Wikipedia tools and platforms in English?

19 responses

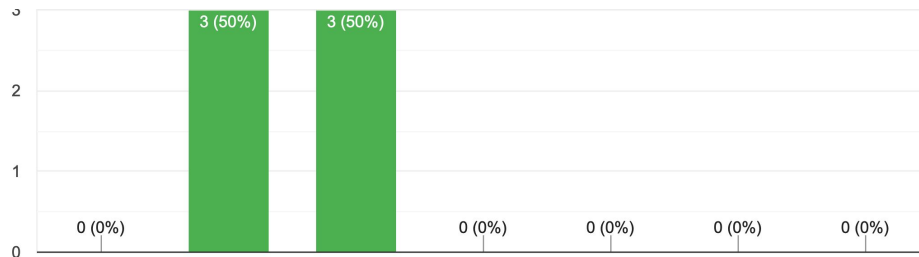
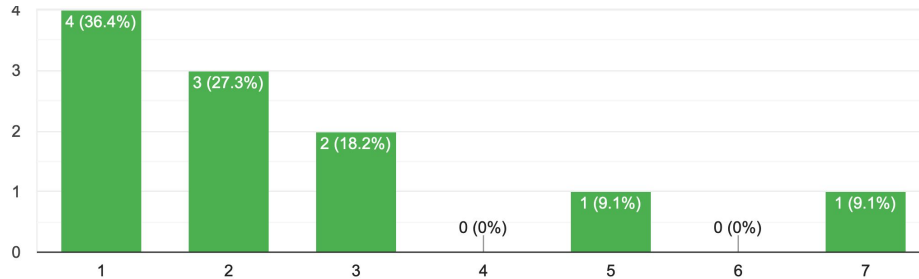
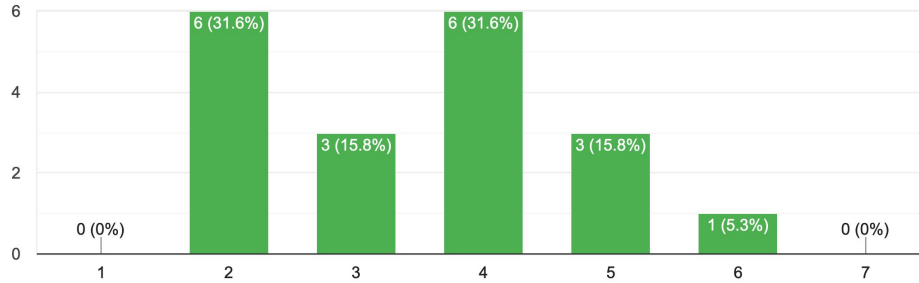


English respondents are comfortable working with English; Japanese and Arabic less so.

Access to English is a persistent barrier for Japanese and Arabic editors.

In your opinion, how many of English Wikipedia's articles **still need media**?

19 responses



Japanese and Arabic participants agree that their Wikipedias need more media.

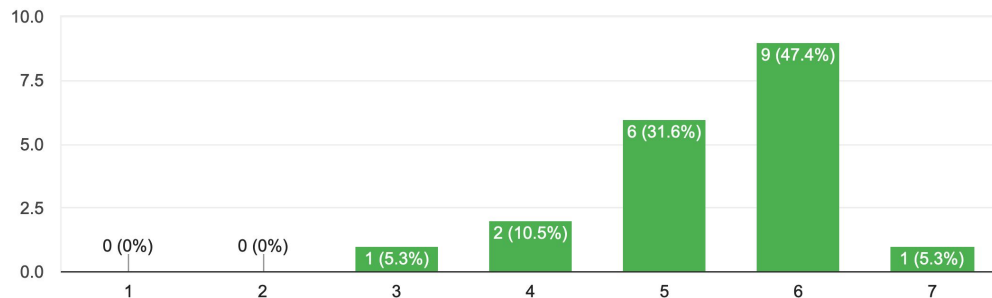
These small groups of community members corroborate previous research.



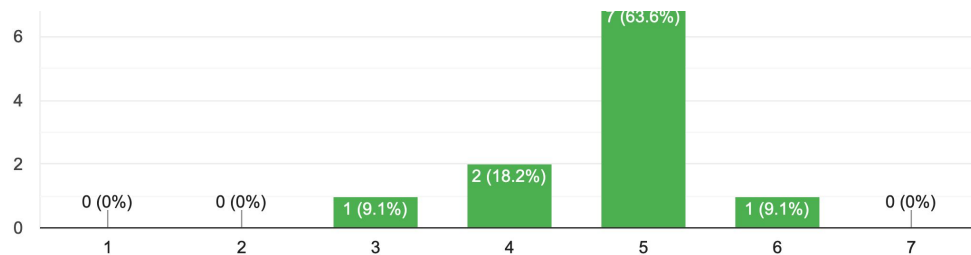
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In general, **how accurate** are the images you see in English Wikipedia for the topic of the article?

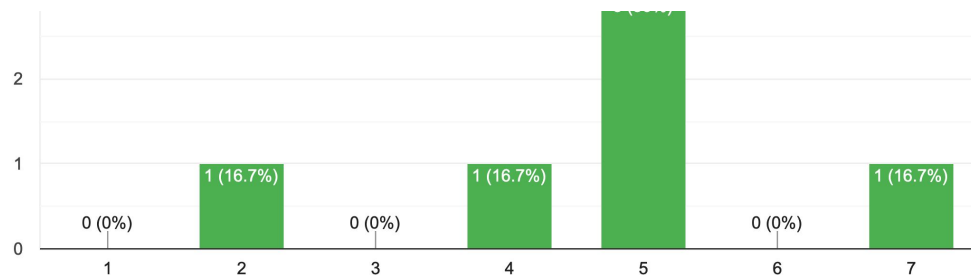
19 responses



English respondents find their Wikipedia's images to be generally accurate.



This is not as clearly expressed by Japanese and Arabic respondents, however.



“What is the biggest challenge to adding more media to [your] Wikipedia?”

Commons doesn't work.

Finding media on Commons.

Commons lacks support for structured data, data-driven media, or geospatial formats.

Figuring out the license for files.

Finding files with the right license for adding to Commons.

English

How does Commons work?

Need to work on the explanation of Wikimedia Commons, which is not generally known.

Difficult to understand the relationship between Commons and Wikipedia.

Proving that an image has been transferred for publication on Wikipedia and that it has been uploaded by the author himself.

Japanese



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Commons works for English.

Suitability of media for articles and for Arab society.

Incorrect/symbolic license information; lack of explanation of topic/source.

More maps/pictures/diagrams need to be Arabized.

Arab editors have difficulty establishing link between picture and article, or even finding the picture at all.

Arabic

“What is the most important thing the WMF could do to improve the way you work with media?”

Commons needs more tools.

Categorize the uncategorized.

Improving the uploader.

Video and audio is highly specialized and poorly understood.

Scroll to zoom would be useful for editors and readers.

Video editor/upload wizard.

English

Commons needs more info.

Support for copy/paste when editing Wikipedia.

Handbook about uploading media.

Automated category names.

Stabilized visual editor.

Import source information to Wikipedia: Beginners need copy/paste.

Japanese



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Commons needs more Arabic.

Need more clarity around license and usage policies.

Need easier downloading options.

Automated categorization based on image content.

WMF-supported team to Arabize and translate videos.

Arabic

Survey trends

The English survey reached very experienced, Commons-focused editors

Arabic and Japanese respondents had more mixed backgrounds.

English respondents are not concerned with verifiability.

If it's on English Wikipedia and properly categorized on Commons, it's accurate.

English editors want tools; Japanese and Arabic editors want information.

How to upload, how to add, how to search;
What's the source, what's the license, etc.



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ويكيبيديا كومنز

هي قاعدة بيانات تحتوي ٣٩٩.٨٣٨.٧٤ ملف وسائط حر الاستخدام، يمكن لأي فرد المساهمة فيها.

صورة اليوم



.Common chameleon (*Chamaeleo chamaeleon*) of Samos

+/- (ar), +/- (en)

تغريدة • تغذية آر أس أس • اشترك • صور الأيام السابقة

Screenshot of Commons main page (7/21/21) after changing language to Arabic. Note English file description of Picture of the Day.

Interview structure

Personal history // motivations

Commons vs Wikipedia(s)

Patrolling

→ What makes an image inappropriate?

Interview task: Add an image

- [Dark-eyed Junco](#) (English)
- [Dark-eyed Junco](#) (Japanese)
- [Landslide](#) (Arabic)

Verifiability

Automated tools stance



What is holding editors back?



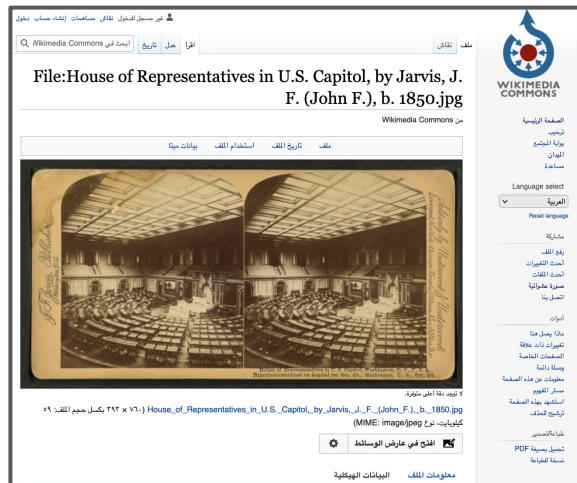
Lenzites betulina. Photo credit: Christian Ferrer, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons



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Making the jump to Commons

- Non-English communities experience a hard break between Wikipedia and Commons.
- Commons is incompletely localized—templates, tools, buttons, descriptions, etc.
- **Arabic** and **Japanese** internet users often shy away from engaging with sites that present a lot of English.
- Even if an editor understands English, others might not.



Left: Example of Arabic Commons interface with English image title.

Below: License information presented via non-logged in Arabic interface.

House of Representatives in U.S. Capitol.	
Jarvis, J. F. (John F.), b. 1850 -- Publisher	اللفنان
.House of Representatives in U.S. Capitol	العنوان
.?Coverage: 1870?-1895?. Source Imprint: Washington, D.C. : John F. Jarvis, 1870?-1895	التاريخ
.Digital item published 1-25-2006; updated 2-13-2009	مجموعة
مكتبة نيويورك العامة	الموقع الحالي
Stephen A. Schwarzman Building / Photography Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs	رقم التصنيف
Catalog Call Number: MFY Dennis Coll 90-F93 • Record ID: 732955 • Digital ID: G90F93_016F •	المصدر
Original source: Robert N. Dennis collection of stereoscopic views. / United States. / States / Washington, D.C. / Stereoscopic views of the U.S. capitol / John F. Jarvis. (Approx. 72,000 stereoscopic views : 10 x 18 cm. or smaller.) digital record	

*I think I only understand about 30% of how to use
Commons.*

...

*I think Wikipedia is easier for me to get into,
because it's more routine for me. For me, Wikipedia
is easier to access.*

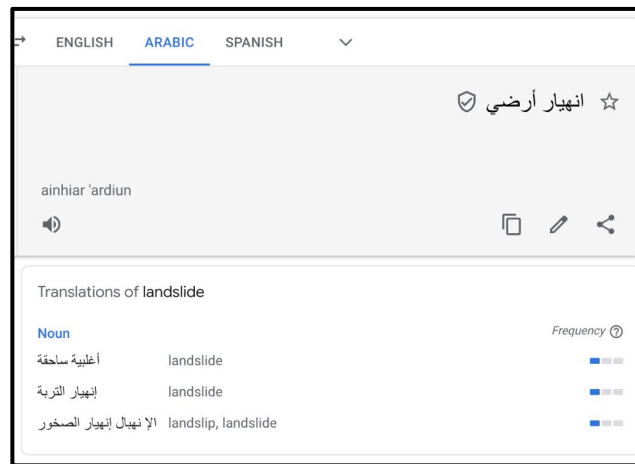
- *Japanese participants*



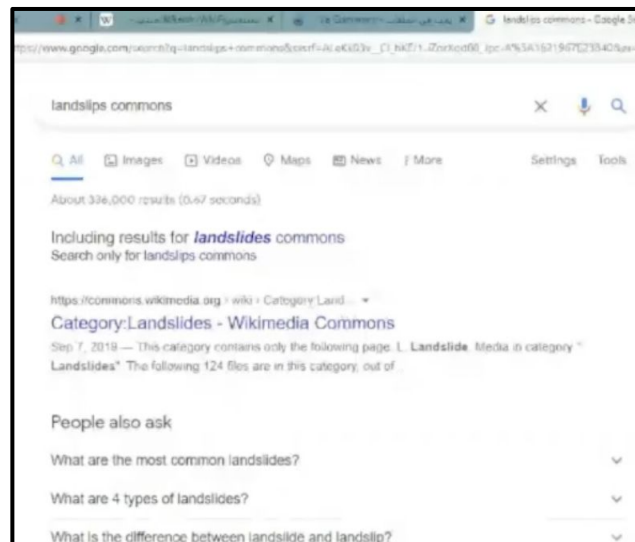
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Needing English to find media

- Experienced **English** editors navigate via categories above all else.
- **Arabic** editors of all experience levels translate search queries into English via external tools.
- **Japanese** editors translate queries; inexperienced editors try **multiple scripts** before giving up and translating.



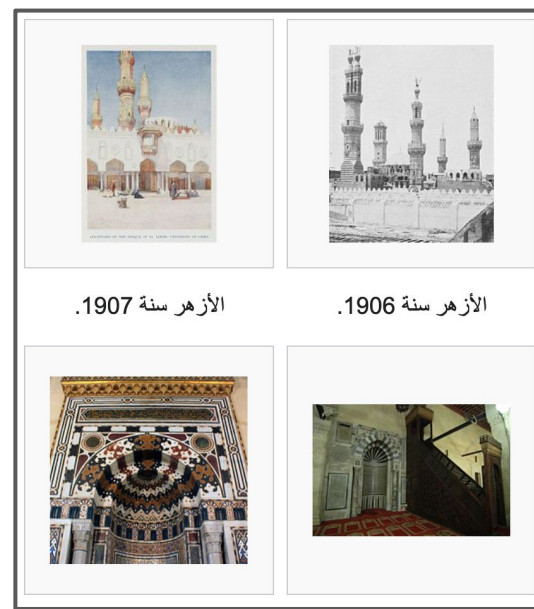
Top: Arabic participant's results when translating *landslide* into English, including “*landslip*”.



Bottom: The same participant's method for finding images on Commons; i.e., Googling “*landslip commons*” to locate Commons categories.

Image captions and descriptions

- **English** editors see adding these as secondary to the main goal of adding images; editors gravitate toward low-effort solutions.
- **Arabic and Japanese** editors often find even Commons file descriptions to be out of reach.



Left: Screenshot of part of the image gallery in Arabic *Al-Azhar Mosque* article showing inconsistent captioning.

Below: Screenshot of image preview for one of the gallery images, showing file description copied from English.



The mitrab in the women's section. Al-Azhar Mosque. (Possibly the mitrab in the Riwaq al-'Abbasi, built in 1901. Compare: https://archnet.org/sites/2311/media_contents/7115)

Opaque license and copyright rules

- **Arabic** editors may lack awareness of the value and importance of license information, and may include incomplete, fake, or “placeholder” information when uploading.
 - Subsequent removal of this media leaves editors with the view that Commons is opaque and best avoided.
- **Japanese** Wikipedia has a strict stance toward licensing; acceptability on Commons isn't enough. Image provenance is constantly challenged, and English information from Commons often isn't useful or accessible to disputants on Japanese Wikipedia.

I've used photos that other people have uploaded. But I've never posted something that I didn't know who had posted it.

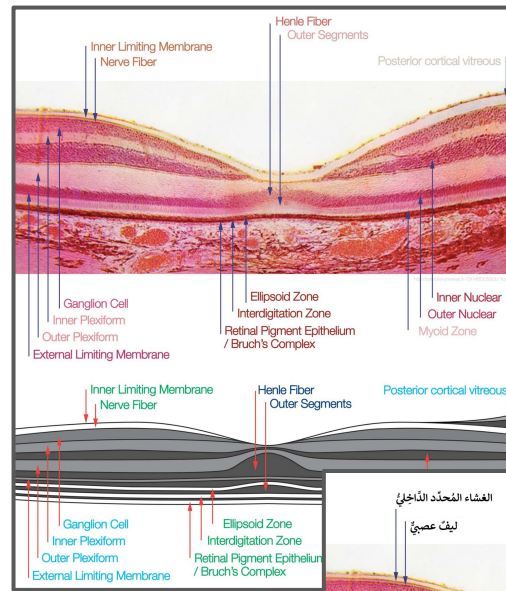
...

When I write an article, I think I have to upload the photos I took myself. I don't use photos that other people have already posted, or search for them and paste them into my articles.

- *Japanese participants*

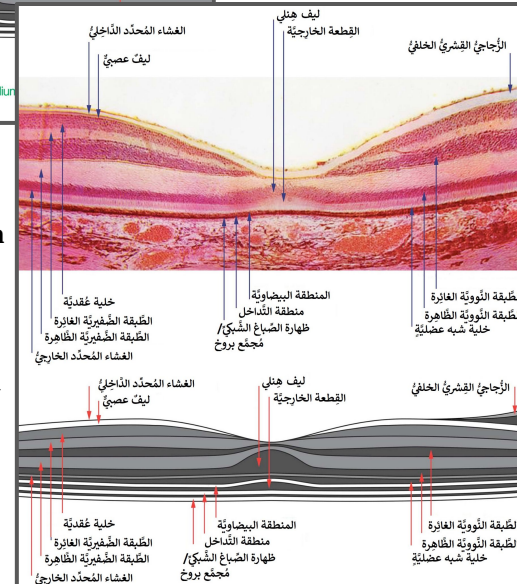
Localizing maps and diagrams

- The **Arabic** community has made the translation of maps and diagrams a high priority. The presence of stylized, specialized text—and general lack of tools—makes this work “exhausting.”
- **Arabic** image translators would benefit from a tool that notifies them if the original English file is updated with new text



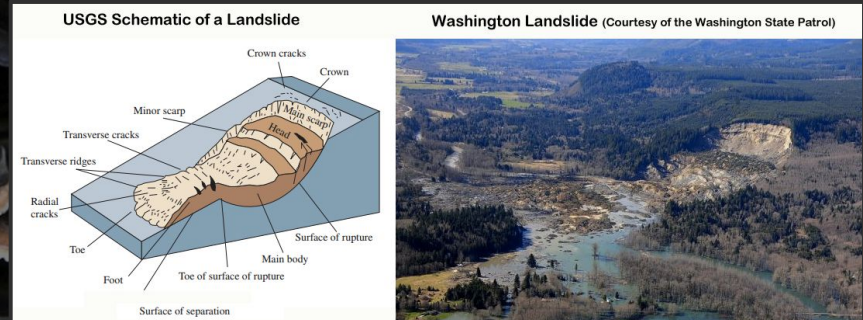
Left: **Macula Histology** diagram requested to be translated by Arabic community member. Diagram credit: [Yoaamb, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons](#)

Right: **Arabic translation of the diagram showing a high degree of attention to orthographic detail.** Diagram credit: [Michel Bakni, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons](#)



The problem with diagrams is that they're not in Arabic. In spite of the fact that [this picture] is expressive and good for the article, I can't use it.

- Arabic participant



Washington landslide. Photo credit: Sam1353, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons



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Recommendations for automated tools



Cynomorium coccineum. Photo credit: Hans Hillewaert, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Make license/copyright information visible.

Different Wikipedias have different norms governing licensing. Making this information more visible within Wikipedia may help streamline the negotiation that is part of adding images in stricter communities.

Include related audio files.

Many editors only use audio when they happen to encounter it. Linking audio with images in recommendations may help audio files to be used more broadly.

“Snapshot” of related articles in same Wikipedia

Many editors already quickly check related articles to get a sense for norms of image placement, number, and type within a given genre of article.

“Snapshot” of same article in other Wikipedias

Many editors—especially non-English editors—travel widely among language versions to identify relevant media that is immune to Commons searches in local languages.

Include support for machine translation in image recommendations

Non-English editors already lean heavily on external translation tools when searching for and adding media. Integrated translation support could help by:

- Suggesting English search queries for use on Commons;
- Translating Commons category names into local languages;
- Translating Commons file descriptions into local languages;
- Suggesting local-language captions or descriptions, and
- Translating captions or descriptions used on other Wikipedias.

Participants were cautiously optimistic about the value of automated tools, while researchers caution that:

Wikipedia's imagery should be used by AI systems with some caution: only considering images from one language edition will likely give these systems a limited, biased view of the world.

- He et al. (2018, p. 9) ([PDF](#))



Conclusions

Experienced **English** editors are limited mostly by what they can do on Commons.

Non-English editors face a number of additional linguistic barriers—even deletion/nomination discussions may be out of reach for them.

Automated tools hold a great deal of promise for non-English communities.



Lycoperdon perlatum. Photo credit: Reinhold Möller, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

THANK YOU

