Genome analysis

MCScanX-transposed: detecting transposed gene duplications based on multiple colinearity scans

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ABSTRACT

Summary: Gene duplication occurs via different modes such as segmental and single-gene duplications. Transposed gene duplication, a specific form of single-gene duplication, ‘copies’ a gene from an ancestral chromosomal location to a novel location. MCScanX is a toolkit for detection and evolutionary analysis of gene colinearity. We have developed MCScanX-transposed, a software package to detect transposed gene duplications that occurred within different epochs, based on execution of MCScanX within and between related genomes. MCScanX-transposed can be also used for integrative analysis of gene duplication modes for a genome and to annotate a gene family of interest with gene duplication modes.

Availability: MCScanX-transposed is freely available at http://chibba.pgml.uga.edu/mcscan2/transposed/.

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Supplementary information: Supplementary data are available at Bioinformatics online.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Gene duplication is a primary mechanism for increasing genetic complexity and diversity (Ohno, 1970). It has long been known that gene duplication occurs via different modes (Freeling, 2009). Large-scale gene duplications including whole-genome duplication (WGD) and segmental duplication have occurred in different eukaryotic lineages such as fungi, plants and vertebrates (Coughlan et al., 2005; Paterson et al., 2010). Single-gene duplications, also widespread in eukaryotic genomes, by mechanisms include local (tandem or proximal) duplication, which creates two nearby duplicated genes (Wang et al., 2012b), and transposed duplication, which ‘copies’ a gene from an ancestral location to a novel (transposed) location via either DNA or RNA-based mechanisms (Cusack and Wolfe, 2007). Different modes of gene duplication may contribute differentially to the evolution of specific lineages (Coughlan et al., 2005).

The retention of duplicated genes following different modes of gene duplication is biased (Freeling, 2009). For example, in Arabidopsis thaliana, following WGDs, genes related to transcription factors, protein kinases and ribosomal proteins were preferentially retained; local duplicates are enriched for genes that encode membrane proteins and function in abiotic and biotic stress; gene families such as F-box, MADS-box, NBS-LRR and defensins are more likely to have transposed than others (Freeling, 2009). Moreover, different modes of gene duplication often show distinct evolutionary consequences (De Smet and Van de Peer, 2012; Wang et al., 2012b). In rodents, transposed duplications show higher degrees of asymmetric sequence divergence than local duplications (Cusack and Wolfe, 2007). In A. thaliana, duplicated genes retained from single-gene duplications, especially transposed duplication, are more likely to show rewiring of gene networks than those retained from WGDs (Arabidopsis Interactome Mapping Consortium, 2011; Wang et al., 2012b).

To study the evolutionary dynamics of duplicated genes, it is helpful to investigate gene duplication modes. Duplicated genes originating from WGD, and segmental duplication can be obtained by using software for detection of gene colinearity (homologous genes are in corresponding chromosomal regions and conserved orders). However, to our knowledge, automated tools for detecting transposed gene duplications are not available.

Transposed duplications in a genome, and the epochs during which they occurred, can be inferred based on colinearity conservation within and between related genomes (Woodhouse et al., 2011). MCScan is an algorithm to scan genomes to identify colinear homologs and duplicated chromosomal regions (Tang et al., 2008). MCScanX is a toolkit for colinearity detection based on an adjusted MCScan (i.e. MCScanX) algorithm and evolutionary analyses of identified colinearity (Wang et al., 2012a). Here, we present MCScanX-transposed, a software package based on execution of MCScanX within and between related genomes, for detecting transposed gene duplications, which occurred within different epochs, as well as integrative analysis of gene duplication modes.

2 DESCRIPTION

2.1 Overview of the MCScanX-transposed package

The MCScanX-transposed package is comprised of one core program named MCScanX-transposed.pl, for detecting transposed gene duplications that occurred within different epochs and other modes of gene duplication including segmental, tandem and proximal duplications, and five downstream analysis programs, for further analysis of identified gene duplications.

The MCScanX-transposed package needs to be executed using command lines, on Mac OS or Linux computers, where Xcode...
or the Java SE Development Kit and ‘libpng’ should be pre-installed, respectively. The user is advised to read the ‘readme.txt’ file that provides detailed instructions on input file formats and command line options.

2.2 Input of MCScanX-transposed.pl

Before the execution of MCScanX-transposed.pl, ‘.gff’ and ‘.blast’ files, containing the chromosomal positions and homologous relationships (generated by BLASTP), respectively, for all genes in a target genome, and at least one outgroup (i.e. related genome that shows gene colinearity with the target genome), should be available. Two types of BLASTP files are needed: (i) an intra-species BLASTP file for the target genome and (ii) inter-species BLASTP files between the target genome and each of the outgroup genomes. We suggest that BLASTP retain no more than five homologs for each query gene (Tang et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2011) to reduce redundant duplication relationships while allowing the identification of fast-evolving duplicated genes.

2.3 Algorithm for detecting transposed gene duplications

Transposed duplications ‘copy’ genes from ancestral loci (parental duplicates) to novel loci (transposed duplicates). Technically, with ancestral and novel loci in the genome identified, a transposed duplication can be discerned if a pair of dispersed (i.e. distant and non-colinear) duplicated genes consists of an ancestral and a novel locus. The MCScanX-transposed algorithm adopts a procedure for identifying transposed duplications based on processing BLASTP output, which has been previously shown to work well in A. thaliana and rice genomes (Wang et al., 2011, 2013).

The intra-species BLASTP file of the target genome is deemed the whole set of potential gene duplications. The MCScanX-transposed algorithm first executes the MCScanX algorithm based on this intra-species BLASTP file, to generate colinear gene pairs. These colinear gene pairs are regarded as segmental duplications. The MCScanX-transposed algorithm then detects tandem and proximal duplications, according to the following criteria: tandem duplications are paralogs consecutive to each other, and proximal duplications are paralogs near each other but separated by a few non-paralogous genes (configurable) on the chromosomes. The remaining dispersed gene duplications, i.e. the BLASTP hits after segmental, tandem and proximal duplications are removed, are searched for transposed duplications. Ancestral loci in the target genome are the inter-species colinear genes generated by executing MCScanX on the inter-species BLASTP files between the target and outgroup genomes. If a dispersed gene duplication consists of an ancestral locus and a novel locus, this duplication is deemed a transposed duplication. For a transposed duplicate, there may be multiple ancestral loci within an epoch. In this case, the transposed duplicate and its ancestral locus with the highest sequence identity are deemed a transposed duplication.

Based on sequential exclusion of the closest outgroup, the MCScanX-transposed algorithm generates transposed duplications that occurred after different speciation events. The transposed duplications that occurred within different epochs (i.e. between different speciation events) are derived by set subtraction of the transposed duplications that occurred after different speciation events.

2.4 Execution of MCScanX-transposed.pl

To execute MCScanX-transposed.pl, the target and outgroup genomes should be specified via the ‘-t’ and ‘-c’ options of the command line. To detect transposed duplications that occurred within a user-specified number (‘-x’ option) of epochs that are marked by different speciation events, multiple outgroups must be entered in the order of divergence from the target genome (most recent first).

On the successful execution of MCScanX-transposed.pl, different modes of gene duplication including segmental, tandem, proximal and transposed duplications are output as separate ‘.pairs’ files, with each line containing one gene duplication. In transposed duplications, the first duplicated gene is the transposed locus. If transposed duplications are classified into different epochs, the transposed duplications belonging to each epoch are also output as a separate file.

2.5 Downstream analysis programs

Five downstream analysis programs are available in the MCScanX-transposed package. The program add_kak.pl can annotate gene duplication modes with non-synonymous (Ka) and synonymous (Ks) substitution rates based on the Nei and Gojobori method (1986). The program detect_dup_modes_for_a_genome.pl provides single-gene query from the MCScanX-transposed.pl output. The program detect_dup_modes_for_a_families.pl provides query for a gene family from the MCScanX-transposed.pl output, which can be further visualized via a phylogenetic tree in which duplicated gene pairs of different modes are connected by curves of different colors, by the program annotate_tree_with_dup_modes. A phylogenetic tree linked to a chromosome ideogram in which each pair of transposed and parental duplicates is demonstrated by a curve of unique color, by the program annotate_tree_with_transposed.

3 USAGE EXAMPLE

To illustrate the usefulness of MCScanX-transposed, we applied it to the genome of Arabidopsis thaliana, using five other eudicot genomes as possible outgroups including Arabidopsis lyrata, Brassica rapa, Carica papaya, Populus trichocarpa and Vitis vinifera. The genome annotations were downloaded from Phytozome (http://www.phytozome.net). For genes with multiple transcripts, the longest transcript was used. The phylogenetic relationships of the six genomes is shown in Figure 1A. BLASTP was executed within A.thaliana and between A.thaliana and each outgroup. For each gene, top five non-self BLASTP hits with E-value < e^-10 were retained. Detailed commands for the usage example is described on the software website.

First, we executed MCScanX-transposed.pl for A.thaliana, specifying A.lyrata, B.rapa, C.papaya, P.trichocarpa and V.vinifera as the outgroups and three epochs to be identified (‘-x 3’). MCScanX-transposed.pl identified 4299 WGD/segmental, 2130 tandem, 784 proximal and 3766 transposed duplications, respectively. Further, MCScanX-transposed.pl identified 904 A.thaliana
transposed duplications that occurred after _Arabidopsis thaliana_—_Arabidopsis lyrata_ divergence, 1114 that occurred between _Arabidopsis thaliana_-_Arabidopsis lyrata_ and _Arabidopsis Brassica_ divergence and 1748 between _Arabidopsis Brassica_ and _Arabidopsis Carica_ divergence. Comparison of the Ks (a proxy of time since duplication) distributions of the transposed duplications that occurred within these respective epochs (Fig. 1B) is consistent with the phylogeny of the four genomes.

These identified gene duplication modes can be further used to study the evolution of a gene family of interest. Here, we show an analysis of 105 _Arabidopsis thaliana_ MADS-box genes (Parenicova et al., 2003). The program `detect_dup_modes_for_a_family.pl` identified 14 WGD/segmental, 6 tandem, 10 proximal and 31 transposed duplications. Based on a ‘Newick’ format tree of the MADS-box family, the program `annotate_tree_with_dup_modes` visualized the phylogenetic tree and annotated it with different duplication modes (Supplementary Fig. S1), and the program `annotate_tree_with_tra_dup` visualized the phylogenetic tree and demonstrated the gene transpositions between genomic locations within different epochs for the MADS-box family (Supplementary Figs S2–S4).

4 CONCLUSIONS

`MCScanX-transposed` is a software package able to detect transposed gene duplications that occurred within different epochs, also useful for integrative analysis of gene duplication modes. `MCScanX-transposed` can be used to study gene duplication mechanisms on both genome-wide and gene family levels.

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REFERENCES


