August 2020 update on the progress of translatE project

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Thanks to all the help from collaborators, our translatE project keeps expanding, in terms of topics covered, members and collaborators. So from this update, we have multiple sections for different components of the project. We hope you will enjoy our August 2020 update.

1. Searches for non-English-language literature on the effectiveness of conservation interventions

As most of you already know, this component of translatE aims to identify non-English-langauge papers that tested the effectiveness of conservation interventions, using the same selection criteria used by the Conservation Evidence project (https://www.conservationevidence.com/), and compare scientific knowledge published in different languages.

1.1. Progress so far

We are so close to completing the screening stage thanks to the extraction of detailed information for 15 languages, by almost 50 collaborators. To date, we have completed searches for **11 languages (Japanese, Spanish, Portuguese, Korean, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Turkish, Persian, Polish, Hungarian, and French)**. Note that in our previous project update, we considered Russian as completed but we got a new collaborator on-board updating the datasets with the latest Russian publications. Thanks SO much again for your help! We also very much appreciate a huge (and very quick!) help from members of the Conservation Evidence (CE) project – all papers identified for the aforementioned languages have been further checked by the CE team, leaving only relevant studies that certainly fulfil the CE selection criteria.

1.2. Preliminary results

For the **nine languages** where we have the final set of relevant papers (two other languages are still going through relevance checking), we identified a total of **268 journals** related to ecology and conservation, screened **90,865 papers** published in **210 journals** spanning **21 countries**. For those nine languages we identified a total of **801 relevant papers**, but the proportion of relevant papers differed among languages.

Figure 1 below shows the number of journals and articles screened, as well as the number and percentage of articles identified as relevant for the nine languages. We will soon share more details with the metadata compiled by our collaborators for each journal screened!
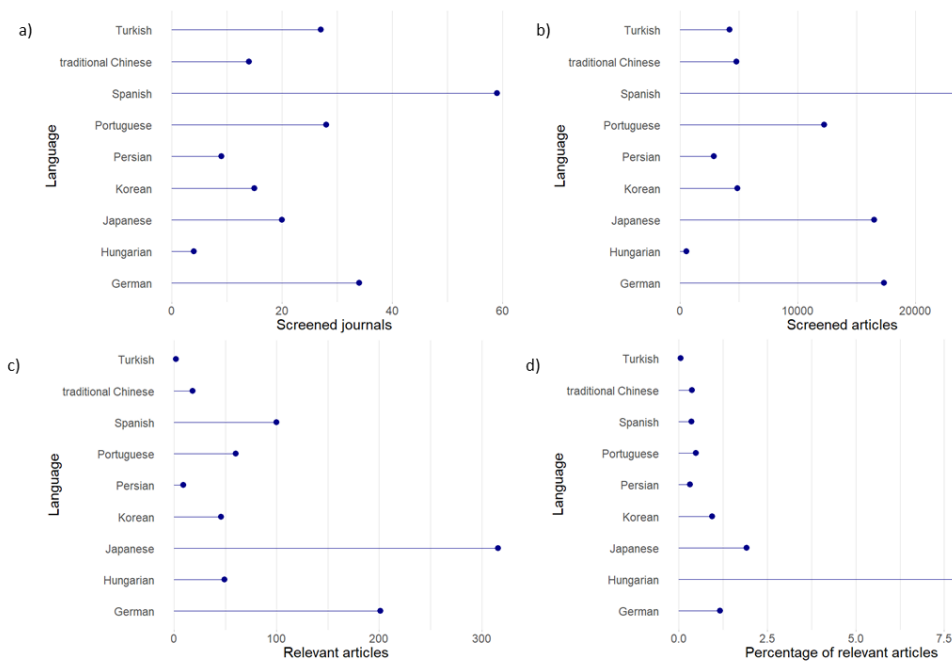
Figure 1. Screening results for nine languages: a) number of screened journals; b) number of screened articlces; c) number of relevant articles; and d) percentage of relevant articles to the project.

We have also updated the map of study locations by language with three new languages (Korean, traditional Chinese and Turkish) (Figure 2). Again, the location of all relevant studies in the seven languages is shown with coloured dots (we are running out of colours!), in comparison with the number of English-language studies, currently stored in the CE database, within each 2-degree grid cell (blue gradation: this is based on Christie et al. in press. The challenge of biased evidence in conservation. *Conservation Biology*). We can see a number of studies added in (obviously) South Korea and Taiwan, with two new studies in Turkey.
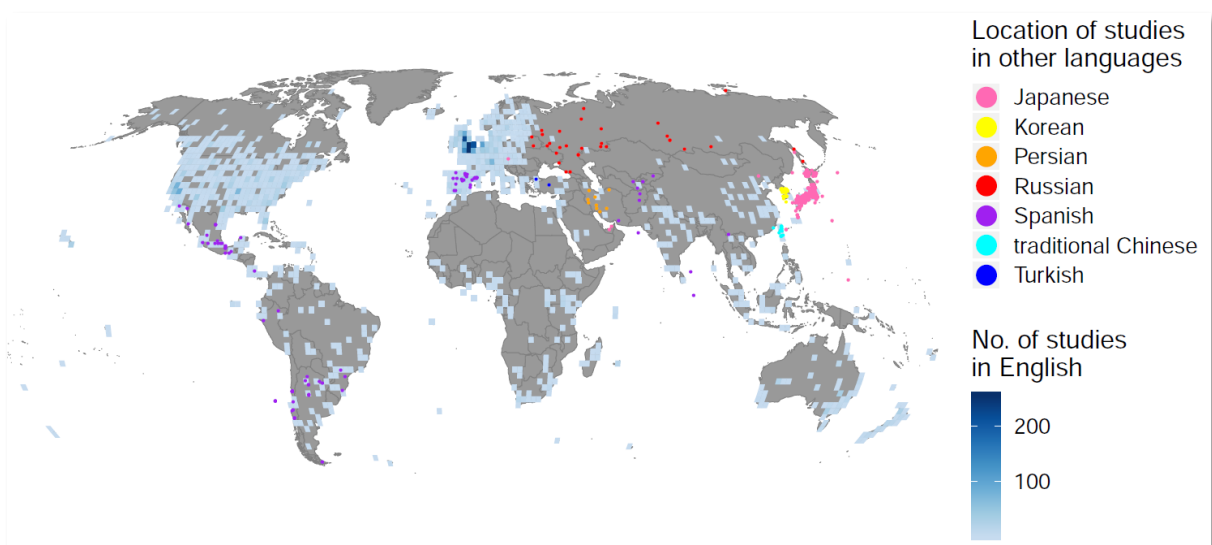

Figure 2. Map of study locations by language.

When focusing only on bird studies, the number and spread of studies have declined for Persian, Russian and Spanish, but many studies in Japanese, Korean and traditional Chinese remained, potentially indicating that those East-Aisan languages can be important when searching for studies on the conservation of bird species (Figure 3).
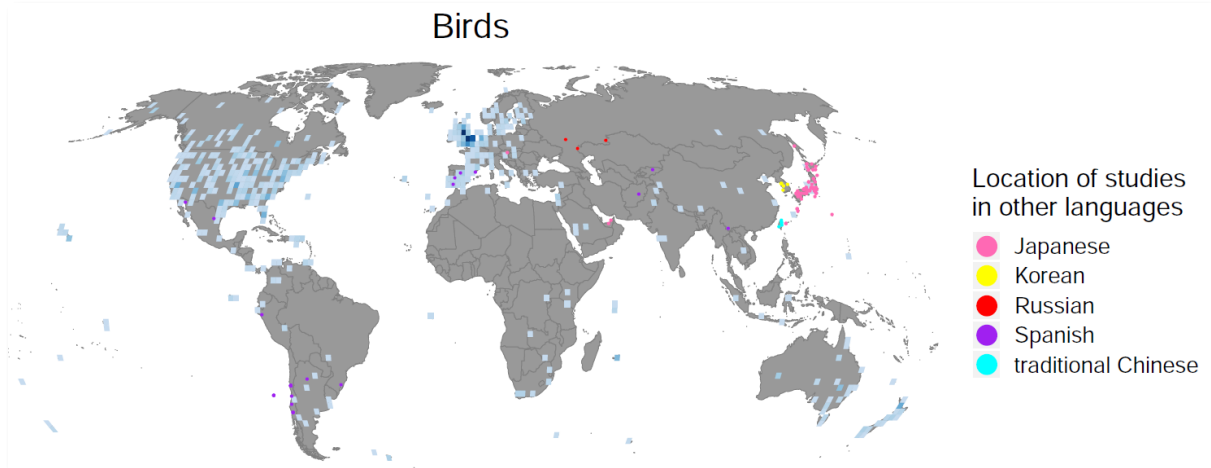

Figure 3. Map of birds study locations by language.

1.3.   What's next?

We are now aiming to finish data compilation for all languages by early Sept, then we will start a deeper analysis of the collected information to test whether non-English-language literature can fill gaps in English-langauge literature in terms of study location and species. For example, we should be able to add all the other languages to the maps above by the next project update in October, and possibly do some species-level comparisons too. We also plan to compare the proportion of study designs between languages, to see how the quality of studies might differ among languages.

2.   Use of English-language and non-English-langauge references in national-level reports on biodiversity and its conservation – recruiting collaborators

The translatE project is not only about searching for non-English-language literature (which aims to understand language barriers to the compilation of global scientific knowledge), but also has many other components. Recently we have started working on another component of the project, which aims to understand language barriers to the application of English-language knowledge on biodiversity conservation. This component tries to understand how decision-makers perceive language as a barrier to the use of science in their conservation decision making.

For this, we are recruiting collaborators to help us list national-level reports on biodiversity and its conservation in non-English-speaking countries, investigate the number of references cited there, and do a questionnaire survey with the authors of the reports. We have already recruited 14 country coordinators so if you are interested in becoming one please visit our website (https://translatesciences.com/recruiting-collaborators-national-level-reports-on-biodiversity-conservation/) or reach out for further details (t.amano@uq.edu.au / v.berdejoespinola@uq.edu.au).

3. Implications of language diversity in biodiversity conservation

As the translatE project is expanding, so is the team. We now have a new project member, Dr Pablo Negret, who is working on understanding implications of language diversity in conservation outcomes for vertebrate species by conducting a thorough analysis on species distribution ranges and language diversity at the global scale. We hope to share some results with you in the near future. Welcome to the team, Pablo!

4. Other news

· We are excited to share our recently developed website https://translatesciences.com/. Here you can find more details about the project (aims, project members, publications etc), resources on language barriers in science, including the list of articles on language barriers (those not by us), and the latest news from the project. We are also planning to upload the list of all the non-English-langauge journals in ecology and conservation, identified through this collaboration. So please visit our brand-new website and let us know what you think!

· Shawan Chowdhury, a PhD student at the University of Queensland is currently summarising protected area studies on insects at the global scale aiming to cover as many languages as possible to avoid language biases in the review. He is looking for enthusiastic researchers to help him search using a specific set of keywords in their non-English language language and collect specific information. He offers coauthorship to collaborators, so if you are interested please contact him at s.chowdhury@uqconnect.edu.au for more details.

Again, big thanks to everyone and stay safe!