

IDENTIFICATION OF HUMAN LARGE INTERGENIC NONCODING RNAs

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ABSTRACT

Large intergenic noncoding RNAs (lincRNAs) are emerging as key regulators of diverse cellular processes. Determining the function of individual lincRNAs remains a challenge. Recent advances in RNA sequencing (RNA-seq). Here, we present an integrative NGS approach to define a reference catalog of >3000 human lincRNAs. Our catalog unifies previously existing annotation sources with transcripts we assembled from RNA-seq data collected from RNA-seq reads across 2 tissue and cell types. We have aligned and assembled the reads to the reference genome version 19 (Hg19). We found that lincRNA expression is strikingly tissue-specific compared with coding genes, and that lincRNAs are typically coexpressed with their neighboring genes. Our integrated, comprehensive, yet conservative

reference catalog of human lincRNAs reveals the global properties of lincRNAs and will facilitate experimental studies and further functional classification of these genes.

Keywords: long noncoding RNAs; RNA sequencing; lincRNAs.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, evidence from numerous high-throughput genomic platforms reveals that even though less than 2% of the mammalian genome encodes proteins, a significant fraction can be transcribed into different complex families of non-coding RNAs (ncRNAs) [1-4]. Other than microRNAs and other families of small noncoding RNAs, long non-coding RNAs (lncRNAs, >200nt) are emerging as potent regulators of gene expression [5]. Originally identified from two human cell types using chromatin state maps as a subtype of lncRNAs, long intergenic non-coding RNAs (lincRNAs), recent studies demonstrate the functional significance of lincRNAs. However, it remains a challenging task to identify all the

lincRNAs existent in various biological processes and systems. Whole transcriptome sequencing, known as RNA-Seq, offers the rapid comprehensive discovery of novel genes and transcripts [6]. With the de novo assembly software such as Cufflinks [7] a large set of novel assemblies can be obtained from RNA-Seq data. Several programs have been used to facilitate the cataloguing of lincRNAs from RNA-Seq assemblies. In particular, recent studies have focused on large intergenic noncoding RNAs (lincRNAs) [8-11], which do not overlap annotated protein-coding regions, as this facilitates experimental manipulation and computational analysis. Recent work has suggested various functions and molecular mechanisms for lincRNAs [12,13], including the regulation of epigenetic marks and gene expression [14,15]. Other studies have inferred and tested the functional role of lincRNAs in processes such as pluripotency and p53 response pathways by associating the expression of lincRNAs with those of protein-coding genes [16]. Despite these intriguing studies of individual lincRNAs, generalizing these findings to thousands of lincRNAs remains a substantial challenge. Collectively, lincRNAs are likely to reflect different families with distinct roles.

A first requirement toward functional categorization is a systematic catalog of lincRNA transcripts and their expression across tissues. In practice, however, researchers studying human lincRNAs are faced with an excessive set of noncoding transcripts of varying or unknown reliability that may not be well defined [10] and have little or no expression data [17], or with very small sets of experimentally validated ones [18]. Transcripts in current annotations of the human transcriptome from the GENCODE/HAVANA [17] or the University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC) Genome Browser [19] are valuable resources, but it is hard to evaluate their biological characteristics in the absence of expression levels and further processing. Recent advances in lincRNA sequencing (RNA-seq) [21] and computational methods for transcriptome reconstruction [20] now provide an opportunity to comprehensively annotate and characterize lincRNA transcripts. Indeed, an initial application of this approach in three Human cell types characterized the gene structure of more than a thousand human lincRNAs, most of which were not previously identified [20].

Here, we present an integrative approach to define a reference set of lincRNAs that unifies existing annotation sources with transcripts reconstructed from RNA-seq reads collected from human tissue. We developed a conservative, broadly applicable pipeline to identify transcripts that are sufficiently expressed and have a negligible potential to encode proteins. We used

these features to test some of the proposed roles and characteristics of lincRNAs in a global and systematic way. For example, we found that lincRNAs—at all expression levels—are expressed in a highly tissue-specific manner—much more so than protein-coding genes. We observed no significant enrichment of correlated coexpression between lincRNAs and their neighboring genes beyond that expected for any two neighboring protein-coding genes. We identified expressed orthologous transcripts in another vertebrate species for 993 human lincRNAs. An additional set of around 4000 other transcripts with high evolutionary conservation but ambiguous coding potential may function as noncoding RNAs or as small peptides. Finally, we highlight 270 lincRNAs that reside within intergenic regions previously associated with specific diseases/traits.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

RNA-seq data sets

We used RNA-Seq H1 embryonic stem cells of Homo sapiens data sample. This tissue that were sequenced using Illumina and obtained from the Sequence Read Archive.

lincRNA classification pipeline

Once the data sample has been obtained from the database. Since the reads of SRA database is non text format we are going to convert the reads to readable which is of text format. To do so we are using a Software called Sratoolkit.2.3.4.3-win64 which converts to text format.

Command to convert sra format to fastq format: fastq-dump.2.3.2 --split-files -A filename ./filename.sra

Quality Checking And Trimming

Once the reads has been converted in to a text form. our next step is to check for the quality of the data. The quality of the data can be checked by using FastQC software based on the Phred score value for ILLUMINA platform. For ILLUMINA platform the standard phred score value is 20. For the data to be good the reads should be greater than 20, if values are lesser than 20 then we should go for trimming using the software Fastx_toolkit.0.0.14 which trims the values which lies below 20 and does not affect for our analysis.

Command for Trimming of data: fastx_trimmer -Q33 -t 4 I input file -o output file

Indexing And Allignment To The Reference Genome

Our next step is to align and index our reads to reference genome that is human genome version 19 (Hg19). We are using BOWTIE AND TOPHAT to index and alignment respectively.

Commands to use bowtie and Tophat

For Bowtie: Bowtie2 –built –f (genome file index file)

For Tophat: Tophat –o output filename –G path of GTF file path of reference genome.

Assembly Of Aligned Transcripts

Once the transcripts are aligned to our reference genome our next step is to do with assembly using cufflinks tools. Assembles transcripts, estimates their abundances, and tests for differential expression and regulation in RNA-Seq samples. It accepts aligned RNA-Seq reads and assembles the alignments into a parsimonious set of transcripts. Cufflinks then estimates the relative abundances of these transcripts based on how many reads support each one, taking into account biases in library preparation protocols.

Command for cufflinks

Cufflink –o outputfile –g path of gtf file/gtf file accepted_hits.bam(Tophat output result).

Cuffcompare

Cufflinks includes a program that you can use to help analyze the transfrags you assemble. The program cuffcompare helps you:

- Compare your assembled transcripts to a reference annotation.
- Track Cufflinks transcripts across multiple experiments.

Command for cuffcompare

Cuffcompare –G path of gtf files/genes.gtf cufflinks gtf file

RESULTS

The output file for conversion of sra format to fastq format

Read 1

Cufflink Output

We have obtained 53843 transcripts which contains both coding RNA and non coding RNA out of that 837 are noncoding RNA and whose fpkm value is greater than 1. Then we filtered out based on class codes then we have got 19 linc RNAs which are known to be novel transcripts.

DISCUSSION

We generated a reference catalog of human lincRNAs based on integrating RNA-seq data from tissues of the transcripts in our catalog are novel and are now identified for the first time using RNA-seq. We annotated each lincRNA with a broad range of structural, expression, and evolutionary features, shedding new light on their global properties and testing or generalizing previous hypotheses. lincRNAs are remarkably tissue-specific compared with protein-coding genes. This possibility was previously raised [12,28] based on differential expression patterns in specific biological systems and has several implications. First, researchers studying a particular system may benefit from RNA-seq profiling followed by de novo assembly in that system. Second, it is consistent with the hypothesis that some lincRNAs interact with chromatin modulators and provide their target specificity. Third, it may indicate that lincRNAs could serve as specific fine-tuners. Fourth, the low level of lincRNA expression in a complex tissue such as the embryonic stem cells may in fact be a by-product of their expression in only a few specific cells. Future targeted perturbations of tissue-specific lincRNAs defined in our study may elucidate their role in tissue-specific processes. Could many lincRNAs act as enhancer elements, promoting the transcription of their neighboring coding genes? Recent studies have demonstrated that several lincRNAs have enhancer-like functions [24,25]. While our coexpression analysis is consistent with this notion, it is insufficient to suggest a global trend in which lincRNAs act as enhancers and. Substantial progress has been recently made toward the essential goal of annotating long noncoding RNA loci. Our study presents an integrative yet conservative computational approach to mapping lincRNA transcripts that can be used for mapping new transcripts in other species. This is critical to overcome major barriers for future experiments (e.g., cloning, expression profiling, gain of function, and loss of function), as well as for the interpretation of genetic association studies. Indeed, 414 lincRNAs in our catalog stand out as located within intergenic regions associated. Future work will be necessary to identify RNA sequence domains that relate to function [26,27], and to further classify lincRNAs into families and it can be connected to network path analysis. Our panorama of lincRNA properties will greatly advance these goals.

CONCLUSION

Present analysis based on paired end linc RNA data sample of homo sapiens ,we have identified 4383 linc RNA transcripts and 19 linc RNA transcripts are known to be novel transcripts.The work can be connected to network path analysis for the further analysis . It will be greater contribution to structural biology and molecular biophysics researchers.Future work will be necessary to identify RNA sequence domains that relate to function.

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