

How balanced is multilingualism in scholarly journals? A global analysis using the DOAJ database

Gimena del Río Riande
Ivonne Lujano Vilchis
Tom Olijhoek

Directory of Open Access Journals



Background

The concept of **balanced multilingualism** (Sivertsen, 2018) aims at establishing “instruments for documenting and measuring the use of language for all the different purposes in research, thereby providing the basis for the monitoring of further globalization of research in a more responsible direction” (p. 2).

One of the goals of the global scientific publishing industry should be to find solutions based on balanced multilingualism and supported by digital infrastructures in which “**the need for communicating in a *lingua franca* does not necessarily imply the adoption of a *lingua unica***” (Balula & Leão, 2019:8).

DOAJ

However, an analysis of the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), the largest database of fully open access journals produced in 130 countries, does not show any balanced multilingualism in the global landscape.

DOAJ promotes linguistic diversity by indexing journals in 80 languages, including dialectal variations, indigenous languages, and languages spoken by less than 50,000 speakers (e.g., Aragonese).

DOAJ offers a simple, clean, curated and open strategy for opening up data about multilingualism in academic publication (updated and downloadable excel file plus api).

<https://doaj.org/docs/public-data-dump/>



DOAJ Application Form

Languages in which the journal accepts manuscripts

Portuguese ▼

Q

Abkhazian

Afar

Afrikaans

Akan

Albanian

Research Questions using DOAJ as dataset

1. How balanced is multilingualism in open access scholarly journals?
2. What are the languages used by open access journals to communicate knowledge?
3. What is the geographic distribution of multilingual journals?
4. What are some of the editorial policies of multilingual journals?

Data Collection and Analysis



Data collected as for April
9, 2022

CSV file

N= 17,564 journals

DOCS

Public data dump

An [exportable version of the journal metadata](#) is available as a CSV file.

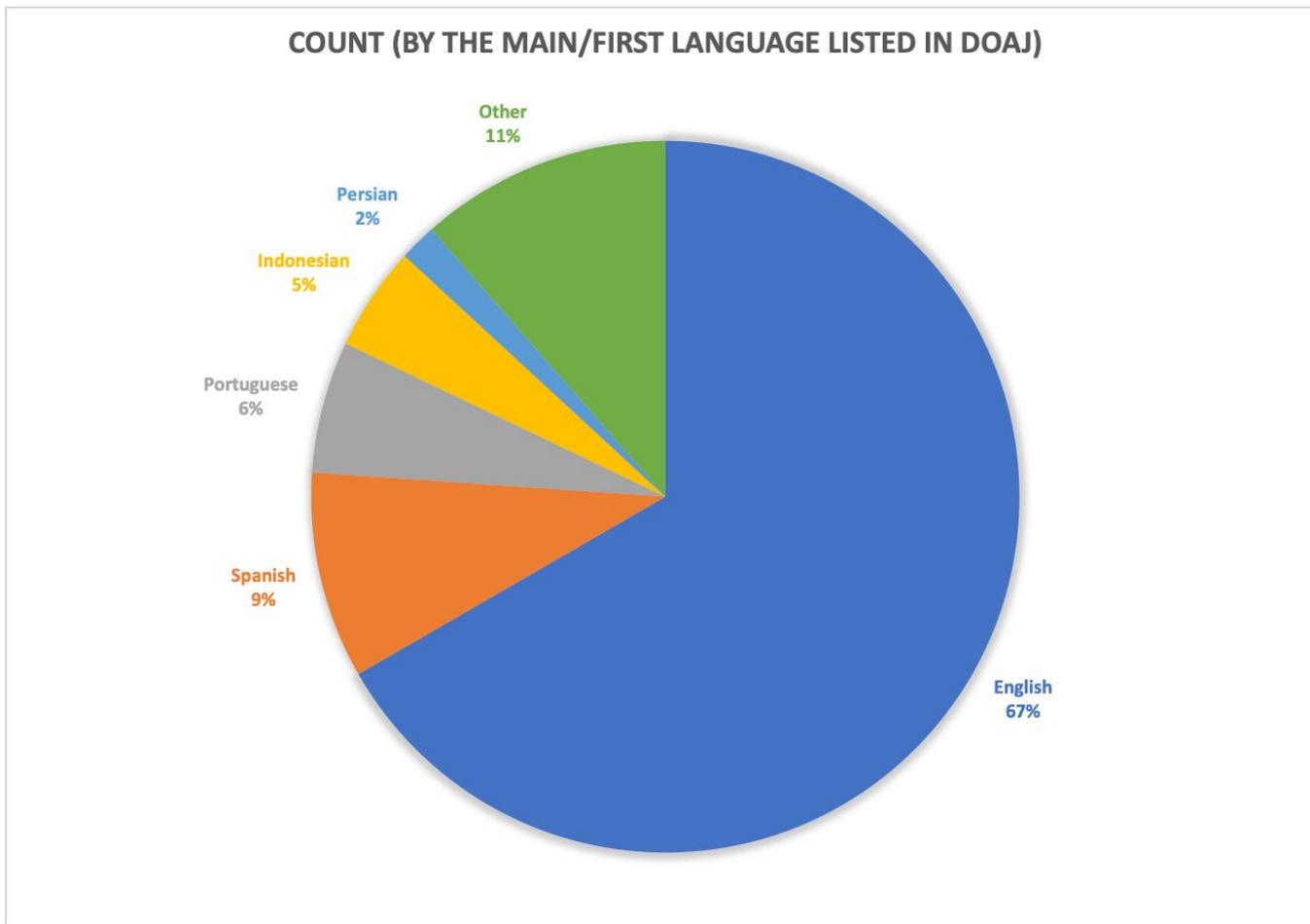
Full data-dumps of the entire journal and article metadata are generated weekly. The files are in JSON format and are in the same form as those retrieved via the API.

[Download the journal metadata](#) (4.4Mb, licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International \(CC BY-SA 4.0\) license](#))

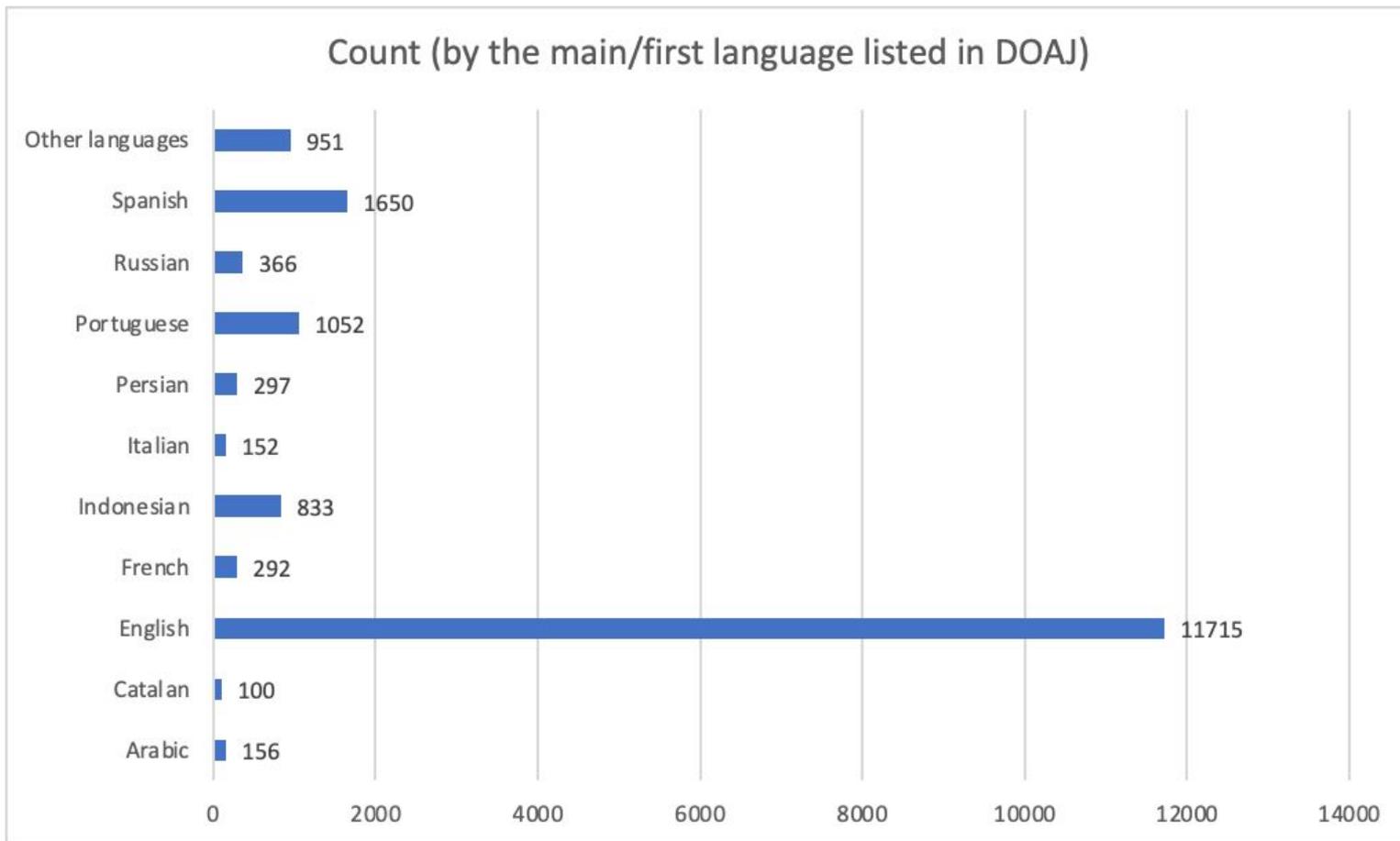
[Download the article metadata](#) (5.5Gb, copyrights and related rights for article metadata waived via [CC0 1.0 Universal \(CC0\) Public Domain Dedication](#))

Each file is a `tar.gz`.

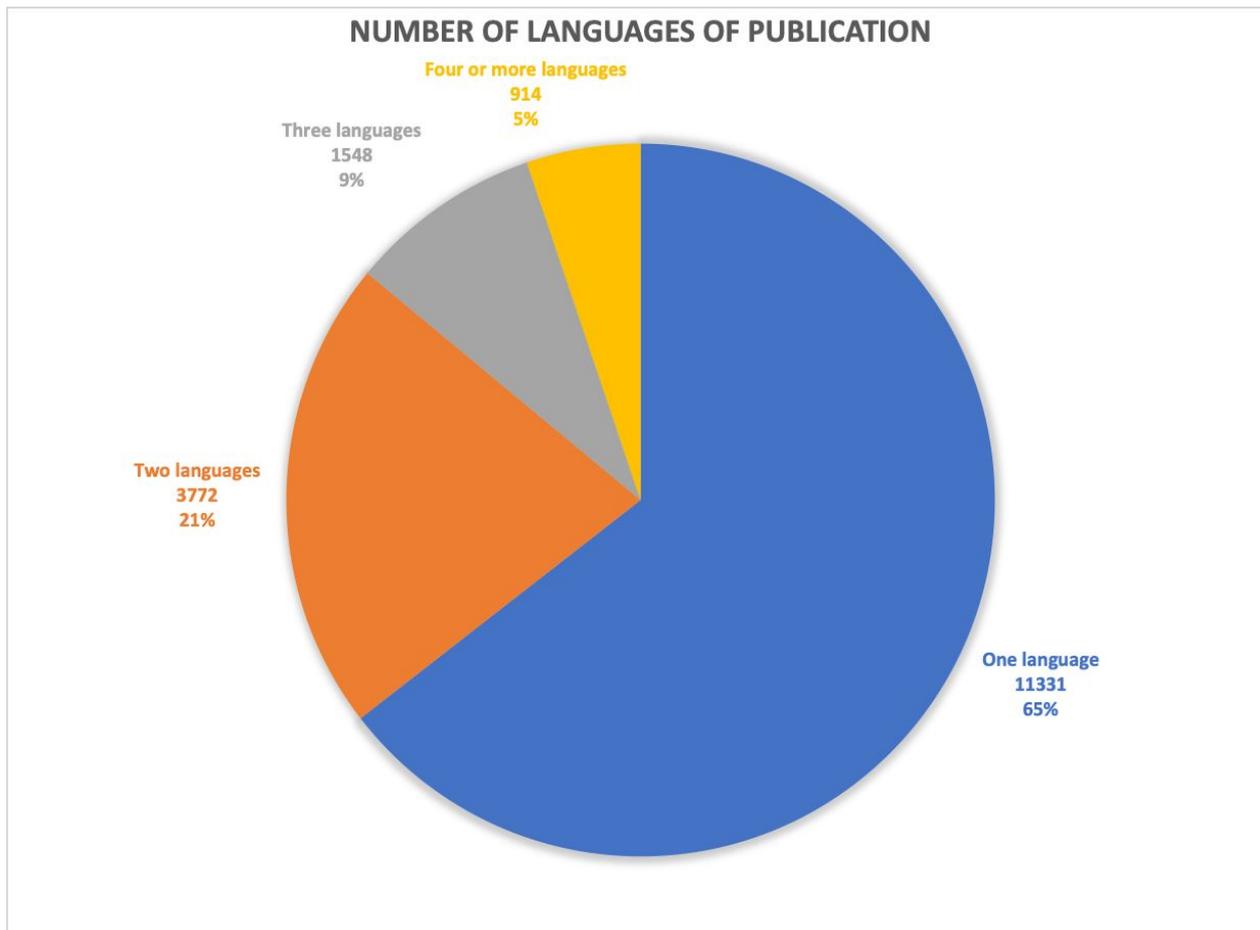
Findings



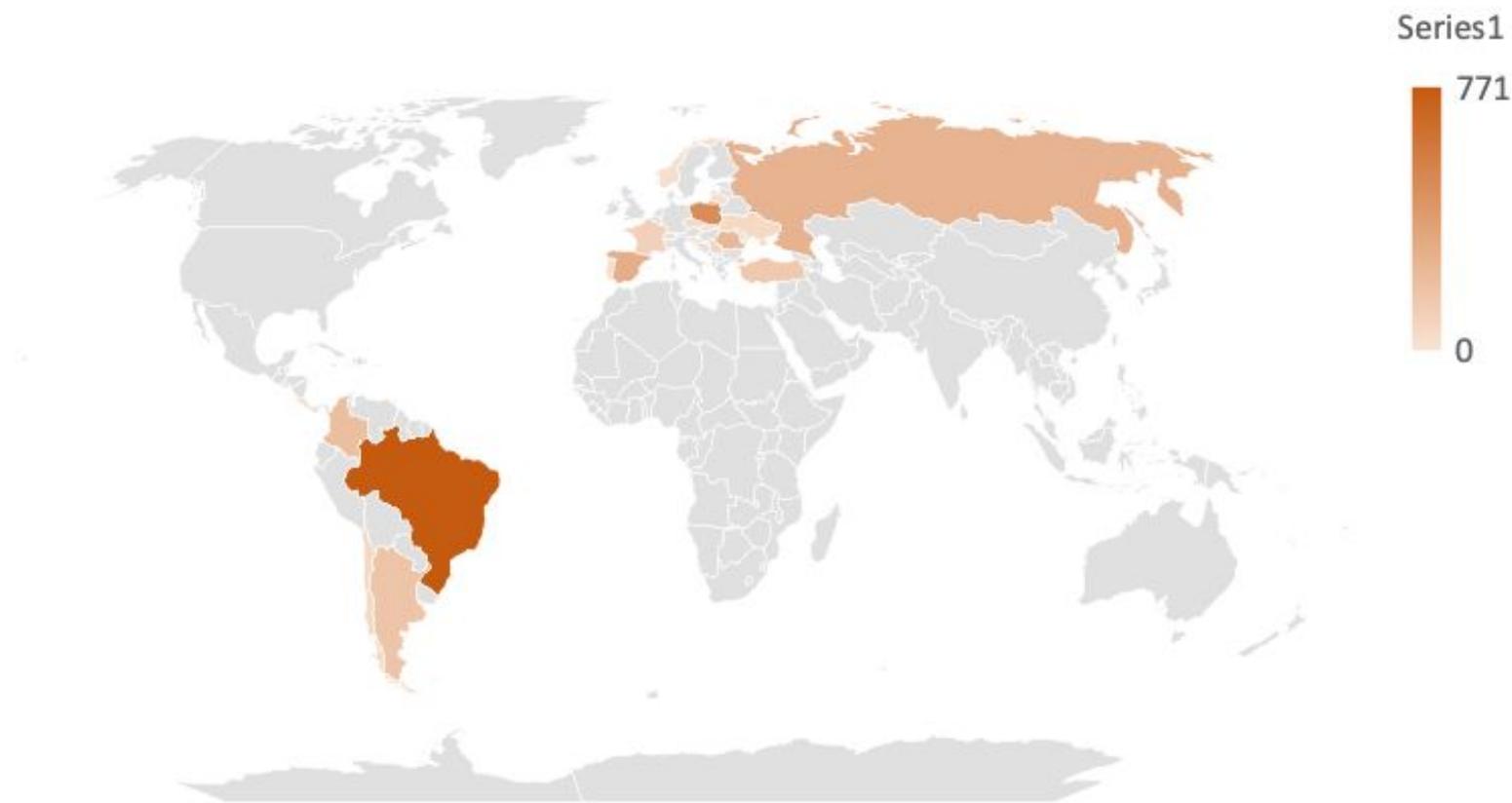
Findings



Findings



Multilingual Journals in DOAJ by country



Powered by Bing

© Australian Bureau of Statistics, GeoNames, Microsoft, Navinfo, OpenStreetMap, TomTom

Multilingual journals by country

Country	1 language	2 languages	3 languages	4+ languages	Total
Argentina	177	96	48	14	335
Brazil	771	335	393	137	1636
Chile	69	59	13	5	146
Colombia	211	112	79	13	415
Costa Rica	42	22	7	3	74
Croatia	59	62	3	22	146
Czechia	63	17	36	16	132
France	115	105	18	15	253
Lithuania	45	30	13	12	100
Norway	39	26	17	38	120

Country	1 language	2 languages	3 languages	4+ languages	Total
Poland	488	180	63	80	811
Portugal	41	43	27	41	152
Romania	243	62	26	27	358
Russian Federation	275	226	15	17	533
Serbia	90	89	13	18	210
Slovakia	29	5	12	4	50
Spain	302	272	155	172	901
Turkey	157	224	18	21	420
Ukraine	61	104	207	25	397

RQ4. What are some of the editorial policies of multilingual journals?

- a) The journal offers volunteer translators
- b) Ask the author if she/he would be willing to translate the article into her/his mother tongue after publication
- c) Have an EB made up of editors based in diverse geographic locations (ex. EPAA (ASU))
- d) Multi-institutional journals
- e) Technologies (?)

INSPIRE



Art meets molecular biology ➤
March 20, 2019 | Issue 46
Step inside a science-inspired art exhibition where students bring biological molecules to life.
Ages: 11-14, 14-16, 16-19 | Keywords: Art, Molecular biology
Article PDF

UNDERSTAND



The changing technologies of drug design ➤
March 20, 2019 | Issue 46
Over several decades, the search for new medicines has progressed from mimicking natural molecules to screening many millions of compounds.
Ages: 14-16, 16-19 | Keywords: Biochemistry, Health
Article PDF



Cells: why shape matters ➤
March 18, 2019 | Issue 46
New techniques are revealing how cells control their shape – and the changes that could give an early warning of disease.
Ages: 16-19 | Keywords: Cell shape and function, Differentiation
Article PDF



The secret life of forests ➤
March 19, 2019 | Issue 46
New research is revealing the previously unknown beneficial effects of tree canopies – and the secret life within them.
Ages: 14-16, 16-19 | Keywords: Microbiology, Environmental chemistry, Mitigating risks
Article PDF



Mercury's mysteries, astronomy education and a new generation of X-ray science ➤
March 15, 2019 | Issue 46
Science in School is published by EIROforum, a collaboration between eight of Europe's largest intergovernmental scientific research organisations (EIROs). This article reviews some of the latest news from the EIROs.
Ages: not applicable
Article PDF



Forecasts from orbit ➤
March 19, 2019 | Issue 46
Aeolus – a new laser-equipped satellite – is designed to give meteorologists the comprehensive wind data they need for better weather forecasting.
Ages: 14-16, 16-19 | Keywords: Satellites, Weather, Laser systems
Article PDF

Discussion

- Where are the data? DOAJ as an alternative to mainstream databases that not necessarily include Global South (also many HSS) journals
- Data openness implies transparency and reuse: DOAJ dataset is CC-BY-SA.
- Who cares about multilingualism? Even there are Declarations (Helsinki, Bibliodiversity, etc.), SIGs (OPERA in Europe), Global South journals seem to care for multilingualism (increase visibility? audience?). Is it a forced multilingualism?
- Who cares about multilingualism? Well know commercial publishers and Funding agencies do not seem to be much interested. Translations remains one sided (EN–SP, for example) and Innovations on the margins (PanLingua)
- Multilingualism – NOT ONLY A PROBLEM INSIDE ACADEMIA

Linguistic diversity

- No English-language information needed on journal website
- Applications reviewed by native speakers where possible
- Support to publishers from global team in local languages
- Collaborative projects supporting journals in Finnish, Danish, French, Chinese

¡Gracias!



Thank you!