Fundamentals of Mass Spectrometry Based Proteomics and Applications for Quantitation

Part II: Quantification using mass spectrometry

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CCR Mass Spectrometry Resource

Fundamentals of mass spec-based quantitation

- Like many other quantification techniques, signal intensity is analyte dependent
- Two types of quantification are possible: relative and "absolute"
- In proteomics, most applications are looking at relative quantification in this case, we are comparing the level of a protein/peptide/modification between different conditions/strains
	- End result of this analysis is always a ratio \rightarrow WT/mut; Treated/untreated
	- Several methods for performing the quantitation
- For "absolute" (targeted) quantitation, comparison of the signal intensity to that of a standard curve is required

Label-free quantification (1 sample at a time)

Peptide chemical labeling (up to 18 samples at a time)

Metabolic labeling (SILAC) (up to 3 samples at a time)

Another way to consider these three approaches

- Label free quantitation
	- Spectral counting
	- Area under curve
- Peptide level labeling
	- iTRAQ up to 8 plex
	- TMT up to 18 plex
- Protein level labeling
	- SILAC cell only up to 3 plex

Increasing reliability by reducing experimental variability

Multiplexing improves throughput

"stitching" data from multiple multiplex experiments can be a challenge if your sample # exceeds that of your reagent

Label-free quantitation (LFQ)

- In LFQ, each sample is processed and analyzed separately
	- Lowest throughput
	- No special reagents are required
	- Quantitation performed either on the number of MS/MS spectra that are linked to the protein (spectral counts) or abundance of the peptide signal

- Spectral counts:
	- Pro: every protein identified will have a count
	- Con: for small numbers, lose discrimination of differences

Spectral Counts – MS2

Quantitation MS1-based Abundance

Label-free quantitation (LFQ)

Abundance – MS1 Spectral Counts – MS2

No special reagents are required

protein (spectral counts) or abundance of the peptide signal

- Lowest throughput

Abundances

- Quantitation performed either on the number of MS/MS spectra that are linked to the

- Pro: because derived from elution profile peak areas, they are large numbers (e3-e10) so see differences for low abundance proteins
- Con: some peptides/proteins will not be able be quantified ("missing value problem")
	- Missing values can be even more problematic in PTM analysis

Stable Isotope Labeling by Amino acids in Cell culture (SILAC)

Heavy

 m/z

- With SILAC labeling, the cells are grown in isotopically-labeled media and then combined prior to sample processing
	- Requires labeled amino acids, intermediate cost, but allows 3-plexing
	- Is compatible with analysis PTMs and minimizes variation in sample processing
	- Is not compatible with human samples and special chow is required for mice
- Like LFQ, quantitation is based on peptide abundances

Multiplexed quantitation with isobaric mass tags

- Peptides are labeled with amine-reactive isobaric tags after proteolytic digestion
	- Requires specific reagent, which can be expensive (~\$125/sample), but allows multiplexing of samples up to 18-plex on Orbitrap or 10-plex on TOF
	- Is compatible with analysis PTMs and all sample types
	- As samples are combined after processing, some variation in processing steps can be observed so replication is critical

Tandem mass tags (TMT)

Quantitation MSn-based

Multiplexed quantitation with isobaric mass tags

- Peptides are labeled with amine-reactive isobaric tags after proteolytic digestion
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	- Is compatible with analysis PTMs and all sample types
	- As samples are combined after processing, some variation in processing steps can be observed so replication is critical
- Quantitation is based on the intensity of reporter ions observed in MS/MS spectrum
	- Co-isolation of peptides of similar mass leads to ratio compression effects
	- Specific instrumental design can be used to minimize this, but that requires increased instrument time which may result in fewer identifications

iBAQ for Comparison Across Proteins

- In general, the relative quantitation is the same protein across conditions
	- Differences in protein sequence (how many peptides, length of peptides, sequence of peptides) determine how it ionizes
	- Assume those effects are consistent for the same protein in different samples or conditions
- When experimental need requires comparison of proteins in the same sample, a different algorithm is needed
	- iBAQ intensity Based Absolute Quantitation
	- iBAQ metric is normalized to the number of identifiable peptides for a given protein to provide a measure of the protein's absolute abundance iBAQ = Σintensity / #theoretical peptides

Data-independent acquisition

Data-independent acquisition

DIA data requires different software for analysis

- originally deconvolute the MS/MS spectra by matching to spectral library
- currently, neural networks are used to predict properties of peptides, such as retention time, ion mobility, or fragmentation, from the sequence so that analysis can be done from sequence file by predicting spectral library
- Quantitation can be performed at the MS1 or MS2 level

Targeted Quantitation

What do relative quantitative proteomic data look like?

Other columns may be included, but frequently:

- Accession number from database
- Gene symbol
- **Ratio**
- p-value
- Raw abundance values

There are multiple points for sample normalization:

- Biological sample (number of cells, total protein)
- Peptide level, injection size
- Total signal intensity for a sample/channel

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Special case – PTM analysis

With PTM analysis, data look a little different because the focus is on the site of modification rather than the protein

- The output will give the sequence and residue numbers of the modified peptide
- Frequently localization scores are given to indicate confidence in which residue has the modification
- Quantitation of peptide abundance should be compared to total protein abundance to see how the modification site changes relative to the protein overall

Proteomics data will associate with the official gene symbol, which means that pathway- and functional-based approaches can be used for mining of the data.

Ingenuity Pathway Analysis $\rightarrow \rightarrow$

National Institutes of Health **DAVID Bioinformatics**

Ingenuity Pathway Analysis

Ingenuity has added new modules for analysis of phosphoproteomic data

Requires different upload format that has a unique phosphosite identifier for each phosphopeptide.

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Analysis of interactome data is unique

- by nature of the experiment, working with subset of proteome
- can require different normalization approaches, for example normalize to the bait protein
- generally focus on only a single direction of change (increase with bait, not decrease with bait)
- it can be helpful to identify PPI to characterize when a complex is coming down

CRAPome – Contaminant Repository for Affinity Purification

- large database of standardized negative controls, aggregated from several leading labs
- provides a qualitative and semiquantitative indication of how likely a given protein is to be identified as a "nonspecific" interactor
- for example, chaperone proteins frequently co-precipitate with overexpressed proteins
- bear to mind even those proteins that are frequently pulled out could have a specific interaction

STRING is a publicly-available tool for mapping protein-protein interaction networks and performing functional enrichment analysis

- allows visualize interaction networks and perform functional enrichment

String-db.org

Same dataset mapping only physical subnetworks

STRING also provides functional enrichment of the dataset

Functional enrichments in your network

Summary mass spectrometry-based quantification

- Multiple strategies with advantages and disadvantages, right approach depends on experimental question
- Relative quantitation of protein across conditions most common, comparison different proteins in the same sample requires special methods
- Replication is important
- Data analysis will link quantitation to gene symbol so that downstream tools developed for genomics also useful
- Experimental design in proteomics is variable, so it is important to consider how the experiment was performed when determining downstream analysis approach

Questions about a specific project?

Please feel free to reach out:

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