A Biocatalytic Manufacturing Route for Januvia®



Challenges in Catalysis III Royal Society of Chemistry

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MERCK



Sitagliptin: A DPPIV inhibitor



Active Ingredient in Januvia® Janumet® Juvisync®

- A first in class dipeptidyl peptidase-4 inhibitor (DDP-4)
- Novel Mechanism for treatment of Type II diabetes
- Major advantages:
 - Oral rather than injectable
 - Unlikely to cause hypoglycemia

Sitagliptin: 1st Generation Route



- 9 Steps, 52% overall yield, >100Kg of sitagliptin prepared
- Two recrystallizations required for ee upgrade, lengthy, expensive

Hansen, K. B., et al. Org. Proc. Res. Dev. 2005, 9 (5), 634

General Asymmetric Aminations



The Aspirational Process



Benefits of a biocatalytic process:

- Eliminate enamine reaction and isolation of its product.
- Eliminate the high pressure hydrogenation and specialized equipment.
- Eliminate heavy metal and carbon treatment to remove it.
 Rh: \$760-\$10,000 per ounce, \$4,061 5 year average
- Provide higher enantioselectivity to eliminate upgrade crystallization with yield loss.
- Economics of biocatalytic process need to be better than those of current process.

 3 isolations, ~74% overall yield (77% from enamine).

• H₃PO₄

CF₃

H₂O

 Insufficient enantioselectivity requires yieldreducing crystallization to upgrade.

Transaminase Reactions

Equilibrium reaction that usually favors the ketone



Reaction mechanism:



Transaminase Processes



Equilibrium tends to favor the ketone; much effort on shifting equilibrium toward product amine reported:

- Pyruvate to lactate using LDH,
- Pyruvate recycled back to alanine using AADH,

These require co-factor recycling (GDH or FDH).

- Pyruvate to acetaldehyde using PDC,
- Amine product removed via resin also prevent product inhibition.
- Isopropylamine to acetone removal by distillation

Fundamental Problem... No Activity in Nature



- Many examples of multi-Kg deliveries on methyl ketones and cyclic at Merck
- ATA-103 and ATA-113 broadest S-selective transaminases,
- ATA-117 broad *R*-selective transaminase,
- Accept variety of substrates, both donor and acceptor, but <u>small substituent cannot be larger than methyl group</u>.

Substrate Walking and Directed Evolution for Sitagliptin



State-of-the-Art Enzyme Evolution



Active Site Homology Model



- The large group fits in the large binding pocket, but not optimally.
- The small group (F₃-phenyl) does not fit in the small binding pocket.



Directed Evolution Tools: Error prone PCR, site directed mutagenesis, Gene Shuffling, Modeling

Transaminase Diversity from CAPS Libs

- 576 mutations from 7 homologs
- Screen 18 plates
- Sequence hits
- > 26 mutations giving 1.25X-5X improvments.
- > 10 times higher hit rate than random mutagenesis.
- > Synthesize new libraries





Evolution for Process Fitness

Evolution rounds 3-9 focused on increasing enzyme activity and in-process stability.

- Generated, sorted (ProSAR), and recombined mutations across the whole protein.
- Successive rounds were screened under increasingly challenging conditions: substrate loading, iPM concentration, co-solvent, pH and temperature

Round #	1 and 2	3	4	5	6	7-9	10-11
substrate g/L	2	5	10	40	100	100	200-275
[iPM], M	0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
cosolvent	5% DMSO	5% MeOH	5% MeOH	10% MeOH	20% DMSO	30-40% DMSO	50% DMSO
рН	7.5	7.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	10
temp, °C	22	30	30	45	45	45	45

• Merck process development began with best round 5 variant.

- Biocatalyst evolution and process development then proceeded in parallel.
- Merck's process changes were reflected in biocatalyst screening conditions.

Minor Enantiomer Never Detected

Head-to-Head Comparison of TA Progeny

Top variant of each round was tested under identical conditions (vial reactions):

Chiral purity of reaction product:





Summary and Current "Final" Biocatalyst



- A transaminase-based process for sitagliptin synthesis was:
 - first <u>enabled</u> by substrate walking and structure-guided directed evolution generating an activity that previously did not exist,
 - then <u>improved</u> 4-to-5-orders of magnitude by state-of-the-art directed evolution technology in parallel with process development.
- Final catalyst contains 25 mutations.
- Of the 16 amino acid residues predicted to be interacting with the substrate:
 - 2 are catalytically essential,
 - 7 were mutated in this catalyst (50%)

Global Map of Mutations

Monomer View



Active Dimer View

Accumulated mutations highlighted in purple

From NO Hits to Industrial Enzyme

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Biocatalytic Asymmetric Synthesis of Chiral Amines from Ketones Applied to Sitagliptin Manufacture

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(sitagliptin phosphate)

(sitagliptin/metformin HCI)





Transamination Process Challenges

- Ketoamide solubility <1g/L in water and only 9-10g/L in DMSO/water
- Second phasing: free base, imine dimer, and ketoamide
- Feed in ketoamide as DMSO solution...to make 50%v/v in water
- pH control: pKa product < isopropyl amine (+ loss to vapor phase)
- pH probe fouling
- Feed in 4M iPr-amine in water with feedback loop
- On pilot scale...eliminate pH cart and use set charge rate 4M iPr-amine
- Acetone removal needed to drive equilibrium
- Use vacuum and nitrogen sweep
- Monitor acetone and conversion with ReactIR (calibrated)
- Enzyme removal during work-up (emulsion issues and regulatory)
- Ppt. enzyme with HCl then filter (kilo scale)
- Extract away enzyme with IPAc/IPA (pilot/factory scale)

Acetone Equilibrium Study



Acetone Equilibrium, pH 10



Kilo Scale Set-up



React IR Acetone Monitoring PAT

Pilot Plant Batches (30 kg or 90 kg)

- 150-375 torr
- 2-10 fps nitrogen sweep of headspace
- 2-4 m/s tip speed
- End of Reaction acetone concentration = <0.2%
- 96% Conversion



Highly scale dependant

Many Factors to Optimize

 FDA filings requires "Quality by Design": A way to allow process changes within a defined "operating space" without having to re-file

Transaminase Factors

- DMSO/Water Ratio and split
- > Agitation
- Vacuum
- Nitrogen Sweep
- ➢ pH range
- > Temperature
- > Order of operations
- Buffer strength
- > Enzyme charge
- > PLP charge
- > iPr-amine initial charge
- Ketoamide addition rate

How do we identify an operating range for this many parameters that may/may not interact?

QbD via DOE Transaminase Results: DOE 1



|Standardized Effect|

- Fractional design: 16 exp. + repeats, 4 center points
- Yield in a set time was used as output

QbD

Transaminase Results: Final (after 2nd DOE)



EOR: 97% sitagliptin, 3% ketoamide , 0.1% dimer, ~1% olefin

Key Features:

- No pH control needed...continuous 4M iPr-amine feed
- No buffering needed
- Reaction time cut to 12h from 21h (better stirring and higher pH)
- Vacuum (150 torr), nitrogen sweep (10 fps), and 4 m/s tip speed gives fast acetone removal
- Enzyme remains ~85% active at EOR...insensitive from pH 7-12 and up to 50 °C after aging 3 days in 50% DMSO.

Work-Up QbD



- Enzyme Gel in downstream extractions – affected settling time and removal of enzyme
- Requires polishing filters
- Extremely poor flux

- Eliminated long filtration times
- More portable (less capital dependence for enzyme removal)
- Cleaner extraction interfaces throughout workup
- General for all enzymes

• Simple: Add 0.5 reaction volume IPA then 0.5 IPAc (or any other alcohol/organic combo)



Final Pure Step



New route use IPA solution

98% yield (vs. 96% in current) Acceptable purity profile

Higher yields and purity...can increase crystallization yields (less need to reject impurities)

- Crude IPA stream has only ketoamide, IPAc, and DMSO as new impurities
- Pure step tolerates up to 13% ketoamide (complete rejection). DMSO/IPAc rejected

<10 ppm protein by size exclusion HPLC and fluorescent detector





- Through Process, 2 Steps
- 88% Yield from Ketoamide
- 7% Increase in overall yield
- ~30% more productivity
- PMI from 38 down to 31
- No special equipment needed
- No metals
- No high pressure hydrogen
- Reneweable catalyst vs. mined







Transamination of Trifluoromethyl Ketones



- Sterically/ Electronically unfavourable



Transamination of Non-Sitagliptin Ketones





Transamination of Diones



Broad Impact

Sitagliptin Transaminase enzyme is a general tool to convert most ketones to enantiopure R-amine... A unique transaminase with wide application

Prior to 2008: Ketone to amine required 2-4 steps and ~2 weeks Post 2008 (sitagliptin transaminase): Ketone to amine requires 1 step and 2 days

- Accelerated Lead Op...Fast prep of >99%ee amines from easy to access ketones
- > High success rate for making R-amines, but S-amines limited to methyl and cyclic ketones
- > Predictable stereochemical outcome (high degree of confidence on absolute stereochem.)
- > Large late stage impact...multiple programs use transaminases

2008 top 200 branded drugs: 48/200 (24%) contain R-transaminase stereocenters 12/200 (6%) contain S-transaminase stereocenters Combined: 60/200 (30%) could use a transamination

2008 top 200 generic drugs: 49/200 (24.5%) contain R-transaminase stereocenters 9/200 (4.5%) contain S-transaminase stereocenters Combined: 58/200 (29%) could use a transamination

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Codexis Operations

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Mechanism





R₁



+H₂O



 R_2

H | 0













Acidic amino acid



Homology Model for ATA-117



Overlay alignment of backbone ribbon structures of homologs and homology model.



- Homology model ribbon structure showing surface of one binding site
 - Active sites are at subunit interfaces.
 - homo
- homology model subunits
 - large pocket
 - small pocket
 - PLP and catalytic residues



Transamination Initial Process Development

Process developments (Rounds 5-7):



Codexis: 40g/L ketoamide 1 in 10% MeOH with 10 g/L round 5TA

Challenges

- Oiling out of ketoamide 1
- Imine formation (1+3)
- pH control
- loss of isopropyl amine
- Conversion (89%)

Solutions

- 50% DMSO rather than 10% MeOH
- Add ketoamide/DMSO solution over 3h
- Control pH to 8.5 with 4M isopropyl amine
- Acetone removal



- Already Marketed...Need to match or exceed filed API Specs
- No new capital allowed...make it fit into the factory
- Must Increase factory productivity (MT/year)...not only quality, but must have better yield
- Through Process...complicates QbD as steps are interrelated

<u>New</u>



QbD Transaminase Approach

- Very large operating space identified in Pilot Plant and Lab 85% conversion in 24h gave passing quality API
- Used the following productivity constraints as outputs in DOE to identify ideal operating space
 - >93.0% conversion (correlated to assay yield)
 - <12h reaction time
 - <0.1% on any new impurities
- Acetone removal drives reaction kinetics and is scale dependant (S/V, agitation, vacuum, sweep)
 - Ran DOE reactions "sealed" on multimax with condenser to be internally consistent
- Ran all experiments using same RM's and one same 4-reactor multimax with continuous pH control (4M iPr-amine feed)...set feed rate in factory

Lessons Learned

- > Initial Activity is not needed to evolve a manufacturing ready enzyme
- Design the enzyme to fit the process needs (or do it in parallel), i.e. evolve the catalyst to fit the chemistry needs (or factory fit)
- Productivity: volumetric efficiency (>0.4M) and time cycles (<20h)</p>
- Use extractions: Enzyme partitions based on density of organic layer so use alcohols (IPA) to adjust organic density...a general work-up
- > DOE works: Going from pH 8.5 to pH 9.8 cut time cycle in half (10h)
- Acetone removal is easy with vacuum and sweep, but you lose iPr-amine as well
- > Fixed charges of base can eliminate pH probes and continuous feedback

New Chemistry Cross Organizational Challenges

Technical (Process Chemistry)

- •Ketoamide solubility <1g/L in water and only 9-10g/L in DMSO/water
- Second phasing: free base, imine dimer, and ketoamide
- pH control: pKa product < isopropyl amine (+ loss to vapor phase)
- pH probe fouling
- Acetone removal needed to drive equilibrium
- Enzyme removal during work-up (emulsion issues and regulatory)

Bioanalytical

Engineering

•Enzyme tracking and removal

- Enzyme supply, storage, "assay"
- Enzyme characterization

Logistical

- Supply chain
- Validation strategy
- PVE's
- Procurement
- Capacity/Demand planning

•Scalability

- Work-up (filter vs. extract)
- Acetone removal (S/V vs. pressure and sweep)
- Fit, time cycles, yields...productivity
- Through process QbD
- Capital Constraints

Analytical

- •Reaction sampling
- Rapid enzyme assay
- Acetone monitoring (PAT)
- pH monitoring (PAT)
- Crude into pure stream (solvents)

Regulatory

- •Enzyme Spec?
- Enzyme in "Final Step"
- API characterization and stability
- Drug Product
- Filing Strategy

Lead Team from: Factory Site, Procurement, Regulatory, Analytical, Engineering (co-lead), Supply Chain

No Precendence Or Procedure for New Chemistry On Marketed Product

Problem and Approach

<u>Problem:</u> No commercially accessible transaminase (*R* or *S*-selective), **nor** any Codexis in-house transaminase showed any detectable activity (LC/MS/MS) on the pro-sitagliptin ketone.

> Detectable initial activity is a prerequisite to directed evolution

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 <u>Approach</u>: Evolve an *R*-selective transaminase on a truncated substrate that maps to established methyl ketone substrates, followed by further expansion of small pocket to accommodate F₃-phenyl :



Structure Guidance for ATA-117 Evolution

- To generate initial activity on pro-sitagliptin ketone, substantial reengineering of the ATA-117 active site would be needed.
- No tertiary structure for this enzyme, nor any close sequence homolog was available to identify binding site residues.

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- Structures of three distant homologous transaminases were reported.
 - Between 24-30% sequence identity to ATA-117.
 - Closest sequence identity among the three is <50%.

% homology	ATA-117	homolog 1	homolog 2	homolog 3
ATA-117	100	29.6	24.0	25.6
homolog 1		100	25.3	25.6
homolog 2			100	47.1
homolog 3				100

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homolog 2			100	47.1
homolog 3				100

• The three reported tertiary structures closely overlap, allowing a predictive homology model to be built:

Initial Activity on Methyl Ketone Surrogate



- ATA-117 is a Codexis catalogue product that was used for this experiment.
- It is an unnatural, close homolog of a wild-type R-selective transaminase.

Evolution round 1a:

- Site saturation libraries of large pocket mutations screened on the methyl ketone.
- Identified multiple single mutants with improved activity.
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 No activity detected with the small pocket mutations in the absence of the key large pocket mutation.

Evolution for Process Fitness

- Evolution rounds 3-9 focused on increasing enzyme activity and in-process stability.
 - Generated, sorted (ProSAR), and recombined mutations across the whole protein.
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Round #	1 and 2	3	4	5	6	7-9
substrate g/L	2	5	10	40	100	100
[iPM] <i>,</i> M	0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
cosolvent	5% DMSO	5% MeOH	5% MeOH	10% MeOH	20% MeOH	25% DMSO
рН	7.5	7.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5
temp, °C	22	30	30	45	45	45

Compounded Fold Improvements



- Rapid, exponential catalyst improvement initially.
- Evolutionary pressure was modified as understanding of the system improved.
- Improvements due to improved substrate binding, gene expression, thermostability, in process stability, and presumably other unknown factors.

Enzyme Catalysts



Guiding Principles for Enzyme Optimization

- Fitness function
- Diversity generation
- •Search algorithm







Automated Parallel SOEing (APS)

APS software automatically generates the location and sequence of primers. X and Y correspond to mutagenic primers.



A script is written to dilute/mix primers, template and reactions for a 1st round of Splicing by Overlap Extension (SOE) PCRs

to generate the necessary fragments.

Λ ×



A second script is written to dilute/mix fragments for a 2nd round of SOE PCRs to generate the full length constructs.





A Non-Standard Mode of Process Development

Standard approach used for Proof of Concept:







Lab

Pilot Plant

Factory

Revised approach used for 2nd Generation Process – where capital constraints are set:



QbD Work-up Approach, Design, Results

• Through process dictates multiple responses in crude stream going into API

<u>Critical Outputs</u> (identified during scale-ups)

Residual NaCl content...impacts API purity

Inputs

- DMSO content...causes high ML loses in pure
- Enzyme residue...detectable down to 0.001wt.% unknown regulatory impact

Pure is run in IPA/water with phosphoric acid, hence need to know IPA/water content as well

Factors	Units	Low	High
A: Ext. 1 IPA:IPAc Ratio	v:v%	40.0	50.0
B: Ext. 1 Org. Volume	L/kg	4.0	7.0
C: Ext. 2 IPA: IPAc Ratio	v:v%	25.0	35.0
D: Ext. 2 Org. Volume	L/kg	3.0	6.0
E: NaOH Charge Amount	Eq. rel. to HCI	0.0	1.2
F: Reaction Concentration	g/L	160	210

Response

Responses	Units	Low	High
Na⁺	m.eq.	0.0006	0.02
Cŀ	m.eq.	0.0006	0.06
DMSO	m.eq.	0.44	5.06
Enzyme	wt%	N.D.	N.Q.

Operational	Factors Investigated	Recast Parameters	New Units	Low	High
•	A: Ext. 1 IPA:IPAc Ratio	Same	wt%	37.5	47.4
	B: Ext. 1 Org. Volume	Ext. 1 IPA Charge	kg/kg KA	1.26	2.75
	C: Ext. 2 IPA:IPAc Ratio	Same	wt%	23.1	32.7
	D: Ext. 2 Org. Volume	Ext. 2 IPA Charge	kg/kg KA	0.59	1.65
	E: NaOH Charge Amount	Same	Eq. rel. to HCI	0.0	1.14
	F: Reaction Concentration	See Rxn document	-	-	-

Pure DOE Key Findings

• Purity Response

- No statistical dependence on investigated factors
- No further investigation planned

Yield Response

• Completely dominated by final supernatant KF

• Mv Response

- PSD impacted by operational (vs. compositional) parameters only.
- Investigated further by additional DOE experimentation
- Disso Temp Response
 - Strong function of solution composition
 - Investigated further by solubility map with the help of PAT group
- Form Response
 - No statistical dependence on investigated factors
 - Investigated further by thermodynamic modeling of water activity due to introduction of DMSO
 - Thermodynamic modeling of water activity
 - Unifac activity coefficient model Implemented in Mathematica or excel
 - Critical water activity determined by CMSE using form turnover studies (0.784@ 75°C)





IPA

Empirical Model

Seed Temp(°C) = $29.38 + \sqrt{2378.76 + 70.70 (wt \%_{API}) - 89.39 (Ratio_{Water+IPA})}$

+16.61 (wt% _{DMSO})

Empirical model to predict disso temp:

- Developed via regression of solubility data
- Applicable Range-

Equation: Exponential Growth

f=y0+a*b^x

Concentration MK-0431 [mg/g(solution wo solids]

260

240

220

200

180 160

140 120

100

80

60

40

20

20

25

30

35

- API = 11.2 28.4 wt%
- DMSO = 0 3.05 eq. DMSO
- IPAc = 0 0.50 eq. IPAc
- **Ratio** $(H_2O/(H_2O + IPA)) = 28 32\%$





Januvia Transaminase Attributes

Ranges

- Ketone Loading: Up to 275g/L in <24h
- Co-solvent: 0 60vol% DMSO (or MeOH)
- Temperature: 30 60 °C
- Enzyme Loading: 3 4.5 wt.% (~0.01 mol%)
- pH Range: 9 11 (no buffer)

Operating

- Ketone Loading: 250 g/L in 10h
- Co-solvent: 50vol% DMSO
- Temperature: 50 °C
- Enzyme Loading: 4 wt.% (~0.01 mol%)
- pH Range: 9.7 10 (no buffer)

Kinetics

- 25 g L⁻¹ h⁻¹ productivity
- Ketone ~5 g/L solubility...mass transfer limited kinetics
- Likely diffusion limited (dilute runs)

De-aminations

Resolution: An alternative to S-transaminase



For ketone preparation



Performance vs. Process Targets

Parameter	Target	ATA-117	1 st active variant	Round 9 variant	Final Round 11
substrate load, g/L	100	2	2	110	275
biocatalyst, g/L	≤5	10	10	5.5	6
reaction time, h	≤24	72	24	24	16
conversion, %	>98	0	0.5	90	95
enantioselectivity, e.e.	>99%		>99%	>99.9%	>99.9%
Productivity (g/L.hr.g _{TA})		0	4.2*10 ⁻⁵	4	5-6

25,000-fold improvement from 1st to 11th round best variant.
Infinite improvement from starting enzyme, ATA-117.

Summary of New Transamination Capabilities

• Previous Transaminase capabiliies



• New Transaminase capabiliies



- Most substrates are converted at higher substrate/ lower catalyst loadings
- Broader S-selective transaminase capabilities are currently under development