

Bioinformatics pre-selection of thioredoxin/glutaredoxin target proteins for the construction of cellular redox regulatory network

Dissertation

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Abstract

The gradually accumulated knowledge of molecular interaction is assembled into biological network to show the global picture of biological system. The biological network construction is usually based on the data from biological databases or literature. Once a specialized or less investigated biological network is focused, the issue of data scarcity in the database and literature emerges.

Redox regulatory network sustains the redox homeostasis in the cell, and its capacity has impact on the functionality of its target protein. One critical step for extending the redox regulatory network is the identification of target protein of thioredoxin (Trx)/glutaredoxin (Grx). However, the redox regulatory network has been better explored in plants than in animal. When the specialized topic, such as the construction of redox regulatory network in human mitochondrion which this thesis is tackling, is focused, little information can be obtained through conventional methods of network construction, such as querying the biological databases or mining of **literatures**

To overcome the data deficiency problem of the specialized topic, a bottom-up strategy is adopted to first identify the oxidation susceptible cysteine, which is an important feature for the chemical reaction mechanism between Trx/Grx and their target protein. In the first part of the thesis, a pre-selection tool for Trx/Grx target protein, termed ROCD, is implemented following a computational decision tree discovered from the study of physicochemical properties. ROCD pre-selected a group of proteins which contains the potential candidate and requires further validation. One of the validation methods for the computational prediction is through search for relevant literature. And again, owing to the same information deficiency issue from the specialized research topic, the directly relevant literature is missing most of the time. The second part of the thesis introduces a network-contexted document retrieval system, termed ncDocReSy, to assist the retrieval of indirectly relevant literature

based on the topology of biological network. ROCD is applied on the pre-selection of Trx/Grx target protein in the mitochondrion of human liver with the physicochemical values suggested from other study and results in 309 potential candidates. After the pre-selection step, ncDocReSy can be used in the process of manual curation of the pre-selection result by providing indirectly relevant literature.

In this thesis work, several bioinformatics facilities assisting resource integration were used, such as the ID mapping service and standard data exchange formats. These facilities help the communication and mutual understanding between different resources and are essential for the integrative usage of bioinformatics resources.

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List of Abbreviations

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Motivation

The chemical reaction of oxidation (withdrawal of electrons from a molecule) is linked to the process of reduction (uptake of electrons by a molecule) and is called redox reaction. Redox reactions are essential for the energy generation in the cell but also create chemical stress if they depart from the normal route. The redox regulatory system is the safeguard for the cellular redox status of the cell and counteracts the oxidative stress. The capacity of the redox regulatory systems has the impact on sustaining the normal function of proteins under oxidative stress.

The chloroplast in plants and mitochondria are organelles where vigorous electron transfer takes place and where reactive oxygen species are generated easily. Due to their central roles in energy metabolism of the cell, the redox homeostasis exerted by the redox regulatory systems in these organelles needs a deeper inspection.

Before an ultimately quantitative model of the redox regulatory network (RRN) can be build, the qualitative properties need to be defined first. One critical step in building a qualitative model of redox regulatory network is to identify the target proteins for the thioredoxin and glutaredoxin (TTG). Thioredoxins and glutaredoxins are the electron transmitters in the redox regulatory system and the reductants for the oxidized metabolic enzymes [Diet08].

The target proteins of thioredoxin and glutaredoxin have been investigated more in plants than in animals. Therefore, very few records could be found in the biological database or scientific literature when the database query targets animal species. However, the conventional method of biological network construction relies on the data from the biological databases or on the critical reading or computational analysis of scientific literature. The data deficiency in the database and literature poses an obstacle when the construction of a specialized and less investigated biological network, such as the redox regulatory network of human mitochondrion, is intended.

Despite little investigation of TTG in animals and humans, the underlining mechanism of chemical reaction between thioredoxin/glutaredoxin and the TTG is the same regardless of species. The prediction of TTG could be partially achieved with a bottom-up strategy by discriminating the existence of functional residue responsible for this specific chemical reaction (Fig. 1.1).

Figure 1.1 The bottom-up strategy of computational prediction of TTG in human mitochondrion. The TTG prediction workflow starts at identifying the tissue- and organellespecific protein set which is followed by the identification of protein bearing cysteine that is oxidizable and re-reducable. The literature search can help the selection of promising candidate for experimental validation.

1.2 Aims

Due to incapability of simple database integration and text-mining of biological literature in answering the confronted biological question (explained later in chapter 3), a bottomup strategy is adopted to preliminarily discriminate the functional residue essential for the chemical reaction between thioredoxin/glutaredoxin and its target. The discrimination method follows a decision rule generated from biochemical research and can be implemented into computer program which allows high-throughput processing. The implementation of such computer program carries out the pre-selection process for the final goal – identification of TTG, and the biologist can further filter the pre-selected result according to his/her domain knowledge or the published literature and then validate the pre-selected candidates by experiment. Resorting to literature is the common strategy for the interpretation of the experimental data and validation of the computational prediction. However, searching for the directly relevant literature concerning the less investigated or novel research topic usually fails. Thus searching for indirectly relevant literature will be beneficial for biologist's manual curation.

Due to the data and literature deficiency problem stated above, one aim of this dissertation work is to adopt a decision rule suggested from biochemical research on the proposed biological question to overcome the data deficiency issue in the biological network construction. The second aim was to assists biologist's manual curation of preselected result by providing relevant literature. Although this thesis focuses on the target protein of thioredoxin/glutaredoxin, the same strategy could be extended to other problems of target protein prediction, such as phosphorylation and ubiquitination, once the predicting rule for phosphorylated or ubiquitinated residue is available.

1.3 Structure

The thesis centers on two major topics as described in chapter 4 and 5 and uses the motivating biological question as an application case for these two work parts. The first three chapters prepare the essential knowledge to understand the two major works and pinpoint the biological question of redox regulation and redox regulatory networks motivating the thesis work. The two middle chapters describe the implementation of the major tools and are followed by an application of these tools to the initially posed biological question and conclusion.

Chapter 2 overviews the various bioinformatics resources for the cellular biology study. The heterogeneity in data structure and software architecture requires communitywide agreement on data structure and communication. Some bioinformatics facilities in help of integration process are thus introduced and will be mentioned in several places throughout the thesis. These facilities provide the knowledge of different biological themes as well as facilitate the communication and mutual understanding of the data content distributed in different knowledge bases. Chapter 3 presents the related works for the two major topics focused in the thesis. This chapter first introduces the biological background needed for the biological question addressed in this thesis. The biological molecules in redox regulatory network and the reaction mechanism of thiol-disulfide exchange, which is the essential reaction in the redox regulatory network, are mentioned here. This chapter also presents experimental and computational methods for the identification of members in redox regulatory network and points out the limitation of existing bioinformatics methodology on the proposed biological question. The limitation from the simple database integration and mining of unstructured text in the literature fosters the adoption of a bottom-up strategy by discriminating the amino acid which bears the desirable property. The discrimination rule is adopted directly from the published literature that endeavors to physical chemistry research. The second part of chapter 3 introduces the document retrieval systems in the biomedicine domain. The components of a document retrieval system are introduced, and the realization of these components is exemplified for PubMed. This second part serves as the background knowledge for chapter 5. Chapter 4 focuses on the work of a pre-selection tool, termed ROCD, for preselection of thioredoxin/glutaredoxin target protein. This pre-selection tool realizes the implement of a decision rule mentioned in chapter 3 to overcome the limitation from the existing bioinformatics tools. Chapter 5 is centered on a literature search tool, termed ncDocReSy, which can be utilized after the pre-selection process, so that the user can further decide promising candidates by reading the provided literature. ncDocReSy can be activated through JAVA Web Start from the result page of ROCD, so that the user can easily move from ROCD to ncDocReSy. The application of aforementioned tools on the pre-selection of target protein is provided in chapter 6. The results from the application of the pre-selection tool and network-contexted literature search are discussed in chapter 7. The work is concluded in chapter 8. The relationship between the chapter arrangement and the developed bioinformatics tools of this thesis work is shown in Fig. 1.2.

Figure 1.2 Chapter arrangement and the resolution strategy for the proposed biological question. The upper panel shows the chapter titles
in this thesis. The lower panel shows the solution steps for the proposed biological **Figure 1.2** Chapter arrangement and the resolution strategy for the proposed biological question. The upper panel shows the chapter titles in this thesis. The lower panel shows the solution steps for the proposed biological question and the chapter of textual description.

Chapter 2

State of the art

With the continual development of experimental technologies for accumulating divergent molecular biology data, the development of bioinformatics is spurred by the diverse range of large-scale data which requires support from computer science for its storage and subsequent analysis [KB03]. With such abundant biological knowledge and the accumulated data from the experiments, bioinformatics resources were enriched by various databases and tools dealing with different types of data in the cellular biology. The various bioinformatics resources can be classified into four categories according to their implication in the different levels of functional hierarchy of the cell (Fig. 2.1). The resources in the bottom category deal with the atomic and residual property of macromolecule and come close to the discipline of physical chemistry, e.g. NetAcet [KBB05] for acetylated residue prediction and PHOSIDA [GGM11] for posttranslational modification. One category of resource has focused on the elementary building blocks of the cellular system–DNA/RNA, protein, and metabolite, e.g. HMDB [WKG+09] for human metabolites and Melina [OMM+07] for promoter analysis. Resources of this category deal with not only the static properties, such as functional region of the gene and three-dimensional structure of the protein, but also the dynamic properties which changes spatially and temporally, such as gene expression and post-translational modification. Another category of resource aims at the interaction between the elementary building blocks, such as protein-protein, protein-DNA, and protein-metabolite interactions, e.g. IntAct [KAB+12] for protein-protein interaction and STITCH [KSF+12] for protein-chemical interaction. The dataset included in this category is dynamic according to the condition of the cellular system. The fourth category of resources integrates the data from lower functional levels, establishes multidimensional

Figure 2.1 Bioinformatics resources categorized into four groups according to the functional hierarchy. The higher hierarchy is composed of the elements from the lower hierarchy. Parallel to the resources of the functional hierarchy is the unstructured knowledge embedded in the scientific literature. Different frame color has been applied to different level in the schematics.

networks and links them to phenotype. This category includes the resources describing metabolic pathway, gene regulatory network, and protein-protein interaction network, e.g. KEGG [KAG+08] for metabolic pathway and MetPA [XW10] for pathway analysis and visualization. Alongside the fore-mentioned knowledge stored in the structured biological databases, millions of journal article host the unstructured knowledge and have fostered the development of tools for information extraction.

Besides their essential function in structuring and exploiting –omics data, bioinformatics resources also adopt methodology from various disciplines, such as applied mathematics, statistics, biochemistry, chemistry, biophysics, to tackle the biological problem. The diverse resources of bioinformatics usually complement each other in terms of data coverage and capabilities. Observed from the current state of bioinformatics, the adaptation of an integrative strategy in bioinformatics could benefit from the merit of various available resources.

One application of integrative methodology on the biological question is exemplified by the work of Muehlberger *et al* [MMB+11]. Muehlberger *et al*. were interested in the molecular factors contributing to the bidirectional interplay between kidney and cardiovascular system and integrated the data from literature-mining, functional annotation of genes/proteins, network analysis, and identification of drug targets. Thus their analysis employed bioinformatics resources from different functional hierarchy (Fig. 2.2).

Bioinformatics databases and tools for cellular biology are very heterogeneous in term of the molecular type and property they concentrate on, such as UCSC genome browser [DKZ+12] for genomic sequence, UniProt [TUC10] for protein sequence and functional information, PDB [RBB+11] for the molecular structure. On the other hand, the same molecular type and its property are dealt by several analogous resources: gene expression data in ArrayExpress [PSK+11], Gene Expression Omnibus (GEO) [BTW+10] and Yale microarray database (YMD) [CWH+02]; pathway information in KEGG [KAG+08], BioCyc [KOM+05], and Reactome [VDS+07]; protein-protein interaction (PPI) data in HPRD [PGK+09], IntAct [AAA+10], and BioGrid [SBR+06]; the biological pathway visualization in Cytoscape [SMO+03] and CellDesigner [FMJ+08]. Each of these analogous resources contains a subset of information for the cellular system which at partly can complement each other. The data on human PPIs that come from six different primary databases show a small overlap, so that one way to increase coverage is to integrate data from different

Figure 2.2 The analysis workflow and bioinformatics resources used in Muehlberger *et al*. (modified from Muehlberger *et al*.) This work combined bioinformatics resources devoted to gene, protein, drug, biological network, and literature mining. The colors applied to the square frame have the same implication as in Figure 2.1.

primary PPI databases [DF10]. Despite the similar type of information obtained from analogous resources, the data format, information granularity, and data annotation mostly are heterogeneous. Thus besides analogous data types, the heterogeneous data from different omics platform and higher level functional groupings (pathway, Gene Ontology, etc) must be integrated when a systematic analysis is conducted.

The integration of biological data has been concerned for long after the explosion of available biological data generated from genome sequence project and high-throughput experiment. The database integration allows the biologist to ask question that span several domains of knowledge through single portal interface [Stei03]. Several data integration approaches and applications have been developed to overcome the data scatter and redundancy issues in bioinformatics. Despite the data integration effort, the integrated database can only answer the question concerning the generally investigated research domains. Besides the structured knowledge from the database, the massive volume of biomedical literature also embeds unstructured knowledge as free text. The text-mining technique has been used to reveal the hidden knowledge from the literature. However, when a novel or specifically focused

question is asked, such as the motivating biological question of this thesis, the simple database integration and text-mining strategies will show little or no information.

During the process of integrated analysis with heterogenous data and tools, several facilities are helpful in enhancing the interoperability, unambiguous information representation, and programmatic efficiency. These facilities include the integrated databases, application programming interface, standard data exchange format, ontology, ID mapping tool, and the integration platform (Fig. 2.3).

Figure 2.3 Facilities essential in integrative bioinformatics. The XML in this figure represents any standard data exchange format, such as SBML, and mzML.

2.1 Biological databases. **2.1.1 Primary databases for biological network construction**

As shown in Fig. 2.1, various biological databases are available for the biomedical research. The most relevant databases for this thesis are the ones in the pathway/network category. Therefore, this section focuses on the biological databases for the work of biological network construction.

Since an organism is a complicated chemical factory, its pathways and networks become manageable only when we divide the whole system into several semi-isolated sub-systems and focus on one sub-system at a time. In the area of biological network study, the biological network of cellular process is classified into three major sub-systems, gene regulatory network, protein-protein interaction network, and metabolic network.

There are several biological pathway/network and molecule databases which provide the building blocks of the biological network. The following paragraphs introduce some of the important biological pathway/network databases and classify them according to the type of database content.

2.1.1.1 Gene regulatory network and its resources

The genome is entire genetic information of an organism including the collection of genes in an organism. It contains static information which is mostly identical among organisms of the same species, although epigenetic modifications alter the use of the genome in dependence on previous life history. Although the genomic information is the same in each cell, the expression of its contained genes varies from tissue to tissue, and time to time. The spatial and temporal variations of gene expression enable the development and homeostatic episodes of the organism. The network which differentially controls the temporal and spatial expression is defined by the gene regulatory network. The gene regulatory network is composed of proteins known as transcription factors and the gene as regulated target of the transcription factors. Transcription factors (trans-regulatory element) recognize specific DNA motifs (cis-regulatory elements) in the gene promoter region and then recruit or intercept the transcription machinery, like RNA polymerase 2. The results would be the synthesis of mRNA or inhibition of the transcription according to the bonded transcription factors in the promoter.

The transcription of genes depends on the binding of adequate transcription factors to its cis-regulatory element. The information concerning the interaction between the transcription factor and its target cis-regulatory element is essential for the construction of gene regulatory network. The transcription factor binding site (TFBS) is usually represented as matrix-based binding site profile and sequence logo in the graphical form. This profile shows the relative frequency of each nucleotide for each base in the transcription factor/DNA binding region (Fig. 2.4). There are two main databases providing the information of transcription factor binding site profile.

JASPAR

JASPAR [SAE+04] emerged in 2004. Its aim was to provide high-quality, experimentally verified, and non-redundant transcription factor binding site profiles. It concentrates on the transcription factor information of multicellular eukaryotes and is open-accessible. It has a web interface and also develops an API for programming tools. In 2010 JASPAR [PTK+09] had its fourth major release. The latest release includes the TFBS from yeast and also computationally derived profiles. In the first version JASPAR contained only transcription factor binding site profile derived from SELEX (Systematic Evolution of Ligands by EXponential enrichment) [PT90] experiment. With the advance of high-throughput experiment, JASPAR also includes the data from ChIP-seq and ChIP-chip experiments. JASPAR now holds 457 non-redundant, curated profiles for species from fungi to vertebrates, and a collection of the other 840 entries of profiles of regulatory regions, profiles derived from computationally predicted method, and profiles bases on protein binding microarray (PBM) experiment.

Figure 2.4 Transcription factor binding site profile and sequence logo of transcription factor Elk1. The transcription factor binding site profile shows the frequency of appearance of different nucleic acid in each position. The sequence logo depicts relative appearance frequency of nucleic acid of each position. Figure is extracted from JASPAR.

TRANSFAC

TRANSFAC® is a database on eukaryotic cis-acting regulatory DNA elements and trans-acting factors [MFG+03]. It covers the whole range of species from yeast to human. The binding site must be experimentally proven for their inclusion in the database. TRANSFA C^{\circledast} is maintained internally as a relational database with a web interface to the public. It provides information about the classification of the transcription factor, the cis-binding sequences, the gene regulated by the cis-element, the nucleotide weight matrices of cis-element, and the cell where the cis-element was discovered experimentally. The content of TRANSFAC® database is organized into six flat files. The web interface also provides the Match® tool, which searches for

putative transcription factor binding sites in DNA sequences based on weight matrices, and Patch[®], whose function is similar to Match[®] but bases on single binding site sequence instead.

2.1.1.2 Protein-protein interaction network and its resources

Many biological functions are carried out by interaction of proteins. These functions might be transcription, post-translational modification, transport, complex formation and temporal and spatial regulation of diverse cellular processes. Signals from the environment are transferred to the responding machinery, such as the gene transcription, through protein-protein interactions. Proteins may interact to form protein complexes in order to exert their catalytic capability. The proteins involved in the same pathway may also form complexes to accelerate the metabolic turnover. Protein-protein interaction networks describe the pair-wise physical interaction between any two proteins. In the graphical representation of such a network, nodes represent the proteins, and edges represent the physical interaction and are non-directional. By studying this network, we can predict the known function of a protein, choose the experimental candidate, and understand the design principle of biological system [SWL+05].

In recent years, the development of high-throughput experimental techniques has generated substantial amounts of protein-protein interaction data deposited in several protein-protein interaction databases. However, protein-protein interaction is an ambiguous phrase which might infer direct physical contact or the association through some mediators between two proteins. Different experimental techniques can detect different kinds of "interactions". There is the need to distinguish the protein-protein interactions based on different experimental strategies, such as yeast-2-hybrid, pull down assays or in vivo fluorescence energy transfer. Besides the experimentally derived data, predicted protein interactions are included in some protein-protein databases as well.

According to the approaches in the collection and presentation of interaction data, the protein-protein interaction databases could be categorized into three groups: (i) primary databases, which include experimentally proven protein interactions coming from either small-scale or large-scale published studies that have been manually curated; (ii) meta-databases, which include only experimentally proven PPIs obtained by consistent integration of several primary databases; (iii) prediction databases, which include mainly predicted PPIs derived using different approaches, combined with experimentally proven PPIs [DF10]. Some of the main primary

databases are introduced here.

IntAct

IntAct [AAA+10][KAF+07] is an open data molecular interaction database. Its main focus is protein-protein interaction data but also captures the interactions for DNA, RNA, and small molecule. The stored data are manually annotated by domain experts from published literature. The annotation of interactor is mapped to identifiers in UniProtKB, ChEBI, Ensembl, and the DDBJ/EMBL/GenBank. The binding sites are also cross-referenced to the InterPro database. It uses the controlled vocabulary developed by the Molecular Interaction group of Proteomics Standard Initiative (PSI-MI) [OH07] and Gene Ontology in its annotation. As of September 2011, it hosts over 275,000 curated binary interactions from 5000 publications [KAB+12]. IntAct can be accessed through web page and web service. The downloadable file is in PSI-MI or PSI-MITAB formats.

MINT

MINT [CAL+10] is a public repository for molecular interactions reported in peer-reviewed journals. All interactions are manually curated by professional curators. Each interaction record has the annotation of used detection method and the type of interaction (direct, association, co-localization, enzymatic reaction), and the interactors are cross-referenced to UniProtKB and RefSeq. It also developed a scoring system to evaluate the confidence of "direct physical interaction" between protein pair. These annotation features might be helpful to experimentalist while picking their candidates.

MINT has adopted the PSI-MI standards for the annotation and for the representation of molecular interactions. MINT is accessible through its web interface, web service, and the downloadable dataset in PSI-MI or tab-delimited format.

Human Protein Reference Database

Human Protein Reference Database (HPRD) [PGK+09] is set up as a resource for experimentally derived information about human proteome including protein-protein interactions, post-translational modifications and tissue expression. HPRD manually derives its content by a critical survey of published literature by expert biologists and through bioinfomatics analyses of the protein sequence. The extensive information contained in HPRD includes protein isoforms, domain architecture, protein functions, protein-protein interactions, post-translational modifications, enzyme-substrate relationships, subcellular localization, tissue expression, disease association of genes

[PNK+04]. PPIs are among the components of HPRD requested most by the users [PGK+09]. HPRD has the highest coverage of reported human PPIs among 6 primary PPI databases in 2009 (the other 5 PPI databases are: DIP, IntAct, MINT, BIND and BioGRID) [DF10]. HPRD data are available for download in XML as well as tab-delimited file formats.

2.1.1.3 Metabolic network and its resources

A living body is like a complex chemical factory. The cooperation of thousands of reactions constitutes the living phenomenon–growth, development, movement, response to stimuli, etc. The product from one reaction might be the substrate of succeeding reactions. A series of reactions carrying out a specific function is organized into pathways, and all the pathways of a living organism are integrated into the metabolic network. Metabolic network depicts all the biochemical reactions carried out in a living organism. These chemical reactions usually transform the substrates to products by a catalytic enzyme.

Metabolic pathway databases store the computationally accessible metabolic pathways which are dispersed in the textbook, scientific publication, and human mind. These databases improve the utility and circulation of metabolic pathway knowledge with the public access through internet. The construction of metabolic pathway databases starts with the collection of metabolic knowledge from the literature. After the completion of several genome projects and the improvement of sequencing technique, biochemical reactions of one species can be inferred from another species through ortholog identification. Like the protein-protein interaction data, metabolic pathway data also have variable confidence [RTD+10][DBJ+07] according to the construction methodology.

KEGG

KEGG is a database that integrates existing data from metabolites, enzymes, reactions, transcripts, and genes to facilitate data mining of biological information [Go10]. KEGG comprises 19 databases categorized into three categories: systems information, genomic information and chemical information [KAG+08]. The main database in systems information category is the KEGG PATHWAY, which contains organism-specific molecular interaction network in cells, such as pathway maps for metabolic, regulatory, signal transduction, cellular processes and human diseases [Go10] [KAG+08]. The genomics information category has two important databases: KEGG ORTHOLOGY and KEGG GENES. KEGG ORTHOLOGY is a database for pathway-based classification of orthologous genes, including orthologous

relationships of paralogous gene groups [KGH+06]. And KEGG GENES is a collection of genes compiled for all organisms with completed and partially sequenced genome from publicly available resources [Go10]. The chemical information category contains information on metabolites, drug molecules, glycans, and reactions, which are stored in the following six databases: ENZYME, COMPOUND, REACTION, GLYCAN, RPAIR, and DRUG [Go10]. KEGG offers several ways to access the database content through the KEGG website, a download at KEGG FTP, and web service.

Reactome

The aim of Reactome is to provide an integrated and qualitative views of human biological processes in a computationally accessible form [VDS+07]. It starts from the reaction level and organizes subsequent reactions into pathways. On the reaction level, the biological process is described as state transition of biomolecules so that the complexity of the many transformations in molecules, such as phosphorylation, transport, and isomerization, can be described in a computable form. The protein and small molecule entities are cross-referenced to popular external databases, such as UniProt and ChEBI, respectively. Every reaction entered in Reactome is backed up by evidence from biomedical literature. Two types of evidence are considered for incorporating data into Reactome - direct evidence, which comes from an experimental assay on human cells, and indirect evidence, which uses sequence similarities to infer from other species on human pathway [VDS+07]. All information in Reactome is expert-curated by PhD-level biologists. In addition to the human biological processes, Reactome holds information on the biological processes of non-human species which are computationally inferred from peer-reviewed curated human reactions. Reactome is accessible through its web interface, web services, or downloadable MySQL database dump.

MetaCyc and its derivatives

The MetaCyc database (MetaCyc.org) is a comprehensive and freely accessible resource for metabolic pathways and enzymes from all domains of life. With 1747 pathways from more than 2170 different organisms, MetaCyc is the largest collection of metabolic pathways currently available. Pathway reactions are linked to one or more well-characterized enzymes, and both pathways and enzymes are annotated with reviews, evidence codes, and literature citations [CAD+09].

The highly curated MetaCyc can serve as a reference for metabolic pathway construction for other organisms with an annotated genome. With the utilization of MetaCyc, the annotated genomes, and the PathoLogic component of the Pathway Tools software [KPK+10], several computationally predicted metabolic networks are constructed and comprises the BioCyc database. BioCyc is a collection of more than 500 organism-specific pathway/genome databases for the sequenced and annotated genomes [CAD+09]. The computationally predicted metabolic networks utilizing the annotation of human genome from Ensembl, LocusLink, and GenBank is termed HumanCyc [RWG+04]. HumanCyc has been moderately curated by human review and literature-based curation. All data in MetaCyc, BioCyc, and HumanCyc is freely downloadable in standard file exchange formats (BioPAX, SBML) and other text-based formats (tabular, attribute-value). Programmatically accessing these databases is through web service, MySQL direct access, and APIs for Java and Perl programming languages.

Edinburgh human metabolic network (EHMN)

EHMN is a high-quality human metabolic network manually reconstructed by integrating genome annotation information from different databases (KEGG, UniPort, HGNC, EntrezGene, Ensembl, Genecard) and metabolic reaction information from literature. EHMN reorganized the metabolic pathways in order to reduce the reaction overlapping between pathways and integrate functionally related small pathways. After the reorganization, EHMN included 2823 reactions in 66 pathways [MSM+07]. The updated version integrated sub-cellular location information and added transport reactions [HMZG10].

2.1.2 Integrated data repository

The number of biological databases has experienced an explosive growth following the fast generation of biological data. Each biological database contains different subset of biological knowledge which fits the developer's interest. When questions that span several domains are asked, researchers have to transverse different databases to assemble the knowledge [Stei03]. It's also common that the relationship between different biological domains is unclear due to the incomplete or missing links. In addition, the different information system and software solution of the dispersed databases are incompatible to each other, which is problematic for programmatic employment [HKT+10]. Database integration aims to provide a single portal for accessing originally dispersed data and a unified interface for programmatic employment.

In the area of inter-disciplinary study, such as systems biology, several integrated databases are present. The following paragraphs introduce two integrated biological databases, which have the interface for programmatic access or provide data dump and are still accessible (Dec 2011), and one toolkit which facilitates the construction of local data warehouse. These resources allow the easy data integration into other systems.

DAWIS-M.D.

DAWIS-M.D. [HKT+10] integrates 11 databases–BRENDA[CSG+09], EMBL [KAA+06], HPRD [PGK+09], KEGG [KAG+08], OMIM [HSA+05], SCOP [MBHC95], TRANSFAC[®] [WCH+00], TRANSPATH[®] [KPV+06], ENZYME [Bai00], GO [TGOC00] and UniProt [ABW+04]–into an unified relational database model and provides the access through the web page, web service, and a network editor–VANESA [JKT+10]. User can inquire the relationships and interactions between 12 biomedical domains–compound, disease, drug, transcription factor, enzyme, gene, glycan, gene ontology, pathway, protein, reaction and reaction pair domain. Apart from aforementioned 11 databases, DAWIS-M.D. is working on the inclusion of protein-protein interaction data from IntAct and MINT. Although the unofficial inclusion of these two databases in the current DAWIS-M.D., IntAct and MINT already can be queried through VENESA.

BNDB

Biochemical Network Database (BNDB) is a data warehouse hosting the data in the domains of sequence of biological object (SwissProt[WAB+06], RefSeq [PTM05], InterPro [MAA+05]), pathway (KEGG [KGH+06], BioCyc [KZM+04], TRANSPATH[®] [KPV+06]), molecule interaction (DIP [SMS+04], MINT [ZMQ+02], IntAct [HML+04], HPRD [PNA+03], BIND [AAA+05], BioGRID [SBR+06], TRANSFAC[®] [MKF+06]), and gene expression (GEO [BTW+07]). BNDB is implemented as a relational database using MySQL. Users can access BNDB through the web interface or the standalone Java-based viewer. A programming interface called Biochemical network library $BN++$ is designed for the $C++$ language [KBB+07][Url17].

BioWarehouse

BioWarehouse [LPW+06] is a toolkit for constructing bioinformatics database warehouse in user's local MySQL or Oracle relational database managers. It differs from the two above-mentioned data warehouses in that it provides only the framework instead of the data content of a data warehouse. The BioWarehouse toolkit is a collection of programs for creating the BioWarehouse schema and for loading data into BioWarehouse. The program for data loading is termed "loader". The

BioWarehouse toolkit has implemented several loader programs each of which parses the flat file of a source database and inserts the data into the data warehouse. BioWarehouse contains loaders for the following source database and data formats [Url18]: BioCyc [KOM+05], BioPax [DCP+10], CMR [PUD+01], eco2dbase [VSC+92], Enzyme DB [Bai00], GenBank [BKL+03], Gene Ontology [GOC12], KEGG, MAGE (MicroArray Gene Expression), MetaCyc Ontology, NCBI Taxonomy [WCL+00], and UniProt.

2.2 Web-based access

Since the life science databases and bioinformatics tools are globally decentralized, the interoperability is one of the concerns when those services are utilized integratively. To allow automated access to these bioinformatics services by software program, the Application Programming Interface (API) has to be provided for each service. Owing to the easy access and prevalence of internet, numerous bioinformatics services are accessible through the web. Besides the web-page access for the human researcher, the web service technology is a popular choice for the web-based programmatic access [SAC+08][KAN+10].

There are two web service models that are chosen by the bioinformatics community. One model is the traditional SOAP (Simple Object Access Protocol)-based web service which encapsulates the client request and the server response in XML following SOAP specification and is transmitted through Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP). The SOAP specification allows the client program to include complex parameters in the request to the service. The use of HTTP protocol allows the SOAP message unrestricted by firewalls. The SOAP-based web service is a suitable API for an analysis service which usually requires complex input with multiple numbers of parameters.

The other model uses Representational State Transfer (REST) by which the required operation and its parameters are encoded as standard HTTP GET or POST request [SAC+08]. The REST-based service is typically rather easy to use and suitable for data-retrieval service [KNT10] from the database.

2.3 Standards for data exchange

Biological data are generated from different sources. The data might be retrieved from the biological databases, the output file of a program, or in any arbitrary format that is defined by any individual. The various formats have made the interpretation of data difficult and error-prone. A unified data exchange format upon the agreement of research community is therefore necessary.

The eXtensible Markup Language (XML) is a popular form chosen by several standard data exchange formats over the other formats, such as flat file, Abstract Syntax Notation One (ASN.1), and the Common Object Request Broker Architecture (CORBA) [AVB01].

The standard data exchange format is usually designed to be domain-specific due to different data requirement in different research fields. The following section is devoted to the introduction of some standard data exchange formats for experimental raw data and biological model.

2.3.1 Biological experiment raw data exchange format

The omics-wide techniques can generate huge amounts of data in a single experiment. Besides the measurement acquired from the experiment, metadata of the experiment, such as experimental conditions, is needed to allow the faithful reproduction of the experimental result by others. Several textual guidance has suggested the minimum information to be revealed about the microarray, proteomics, and molecular interaction experiments: MIAME (minimum information about a microarray experiment), MIAPE (minimum information about a proteomics experiment), MIMIx (minimum information required for reporting a molecular interaction experiment) [OH07].

Complying with the minimum information requirement, several data exchange formats have been proposed to assist the digital dissemination of the omics raw data: MAGE-ML [SMS+02] for the microarray experiment, GelML [GHM+10] for the gel-based proteomics experiment, mzML [MCS+11] for the MS (mass spectrometry)-based proteomics experiment, PSI-MI for molecular interaction experiment [OH07].

2.3.2 Biological model exchange format 2.3.2.1 SBML

Systems Biology Markup Language (SBML) is the effort from a broad community and orientated towards describing biological processes including metabolic pathways, cell signaling pathways, and many others. SBML is continuously evolved, and a version tailing is usually specified when SBML is referred. The versioning system of SBML comprises a *level* number representing substantial changes and a *version* number representing the minor revision of the preceding level. The current release

(Oct 2010) is Level 3 Version 1. A SBML document starts with a model declaration and contains the following components: function definitions, unit definitions, compartments, species, parameters, initial assignments, rules, constraints, reactions, and events. The reaction component is where the transformation, transportation and binding process of biological entities are specified. This component also contains the information of reaction reversibility and mathematical formula describing the rate of the reaction [HBH+10][Url3]. Since its first release in 2001, SBML has been supported by around 230 software programs and is the most successful standard model exchange format [LDR+10].

2.3.2.2 CSML

CSML (Cell System Markup Language) had its first release (CSML1.0) in 2005 and supports the Petri net based network representation. The latest release (CSML3.0) has made CSML an integrated data exchange format which covers widely used data formats and applications, e.g. CellML1.1, SBML Level2, BioPAX, and Cytoscape [NSJ+10]. CSML3.0 supports HFPNe (Hybrid Functional Petri net with extension) [NDMM04] architecture where generic entity and process are introduced to handle any type of objects and relations. The inclusion of biological meanings, simulation model, and layout information makes CSML a language with high expressive power. The tools assisting the transformation of other standard exchange formats, such as SBML and CellML, to CSML are available. Therefore the models deposited in other repositories in SBML and CellML formats could be easily transformed to CSML [NSJ+10][Url7].

2.3.2.3 BioPAX

BioPAX is a community standard for pathway data sharing. The goal of the BioPAX project is to provide a data exchange format for pathway data and support the data models from a wide range of popular pathway databases. The BioPAX ontology could represent the data models from a number of existing pathway databases, such as BioCyc, BIND [BBH03], PATIKA [DBD+02], Reactome, aMAZE [LAC+04], KEGG, INOH [YSN+11], NCI/Nature PID [SAK+09], and PANTHER pathways [MDM+10]. BioPAX supports the description of several types of pathways which are typically represented in databases, literatures and textbooks: metabolic and signaling pathway, gene regulatory networks and genetic and molecular interactions.

The BioPAX language uses a discrete representation of biological pathway. Dynamic and quantitative aspects of biological processes are addressed through the coordination with other mathematical modeling language communities. The visual

properties of the pathway is not included in BioPAX but through the coordination with the System Biology Graphical Notation (SBGN) community.

The BioPAX community has developed the Paxtools Java programming library to support the import, export and validation of BioPAX-formatted data. BioPAX has been supported by several databases and software [DCP+10][Url5].

2.3.2.4 CellML

The specification of CellML was motivated by The International Union of Physiological Sciences Physiome Project, which was aimed to provide a framework for the modeling of the human body. CellML differs from other biological markup languages in scopes of biological systems it covers. The flexibility of the CellML enables the description of electrophysiological and mechanical models as well as biochemical pathway models. In the current release of CellML 1.1, each model encoded in CellML has a unique identifier. When the model identifier is used together with the model's Uniform Resource Locator, each model can be referred by a model's Universal Resource Identifier. The Universal Resource Identifier of model allows the reuse of previously published models in a new model.

CellML model repository (http://www.cellml.org/models/) has stored more than 500 models including electrophysiological and mechanical models, as well as biochemical pathways models. CellML is currently supported by numerous tools and techniques for editing (both visual and textual), validation, sharing and curation (through an online repository), generation of code (for external use), and execution of CellML models [GNC+08][CLN+03].

2.4 Domain-specific ontologies and thesaurus

Ontology is the specifications of the entities, their attributes and relationships among the entities in a domain of discourse. Sometimes it is also referred by the term "thesaurus" or "controlled vocabulary" [RSN07]. Because the ontology defines a common vocabulary in a domain, researchers can use the same term when a specific entity is referred. The common vocabulary allows the unbiased transmission of knowledge among the domain research groups. A large ontology can simply reuse several existing ontologies describing portions of the large domain [NM01].

2.4.1 Gene ontology

Gene Ontology (GO) [GOC12] provides a unified terminology describing the biological processes, molecular functions, and cellular components of genes across species. The terms in GO are organized in a hierarchical structure, in which the children terms is a specialization of parent term via is-a relations. Each term in the hierarchy is assigned a unique zero-padded seven digit identifier (often called the term accession or term accession number) prefixed by GO. The textual definition and the references of such information are provided for each term [Url4]. GO has been adopted by different model organism databases to unambiguously describe the biological processes, molecular functions, and cellular components of gene products. Besides the database annotation, analysis of GO codes is a common analysis process for high throughput experimental data [RSN07].

2.4.2 MeSH

The resource Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) provides a controlled vocabulary developed by the National Library of Medicine (NLM) to index, categorize, and search the data collection in NLM. MeSH terms are organized in a hierarchical structure where the broader headings are at the more general level. The top level of MeSH has 16 categories: anatomy; organisms; diseases; chemicals and drugs; analytical, diagnostic and therapeutic techniques and equipment; psychiatry and psychology; phenomena and processes; disciplines and occupations; anthropology, education, sociology and social phenomena; technology, industry, agriculture; humanities; information science; named groups; health care; publication characteristics; geographicals. Each of these categories is further divided into subcategories.

Each entity in the MeSH hierarchy is termed descriptor, which is used to index citations in NLM's MEDLINE database. Each descriptor is affiliated with several entry terms, which are synonyms, alternate forms, and other closely related terms to the descriptor. MeSH contains 26142 descriptors and over 177000 entry terms in 2011. MeSH is continuously updated according to the emergence of new terms and new research area [Url2].

2.4.3 Open biomedical ontology foundry

Since the utilization of ontology is beneficial in information integration and computer reasoning with data [RSN07], several bodies have devoted to the development of ontology with the application on specific domains. The various ontologies developed by different bodies sometimes have their scale of subject overlapping with each other. One instance of such problem is the ontology about cell type, which had ever had at least four versions from different research groups. Open Biomedical Ontologies (OBO) foundry is an umbrella body for the coordinated development of life-science
ontologies. After the reformation by OBO Foundry, three of the previous uncoordinated cell type ontologies have been merged into a single cell type ontology, which is reused by the fourth ontology. OBO now comprises over 90 ontologies for the knowledge domains in anatomy, phenotype, biochemistry, genomics, molecular biology, taxonomy, medicine, etc [SAR+07] [Url6].

2.5 ID mapping

The current biological knowledge is dispersed in many independent molecular biology databases. If the record entry in a database needs to be referenced, the unique identifier (UID) of the database is always an unambiguous indicator of the data entry other than some text-based descriptor, such as protein/gene name or gene symbol. However, different molecule database has adopted its own unique identifier referring to the same bioentity: HPRD uses HPRD ID, and UniProt uses UniProt ID for protein reference.

For each biological molecule, there are several databases each of which is devoted to certain properties of that molecule: the structure information of protein is stored in PDB, and the interacting protein counterpart is stored in IntAct, HPRD, and others. Moreover the same biological molecule is referred by different UID from varied databases. The ID mapping tool is necessary when diverse datasets need to be compared and integrated. Several ID mapping tools have been developed and dedicated to either gene-centric or protein-centric view [HMS+11]. Here are two examples of ID mapping tools for each view (Table 2.1).

iProClass [WHN+04][HMS+11] is a protein-centered database providing links to over 50 databases of protein family, function, pathway, interaction, modification, structure, genome, ontology, literature, and taxonomy. A database ID mapping service is implemented by the iProClass. It uses SwissProt accession number (SPACC) and identifier (SPID) as the entity identifier for each protein. Through querying iProClass by SwissProt accession number/ID, the IDs or accession numbers of the other databases can be easily retrieved for the queried protein. iProClass is a useful resource for easy ID mapping, such as finding the related PDB ID for a protein, especially when the SwissProt accession number/ID is chosen as the protein entity identifier in the user's application. iProClass is freely accessible from the PIR web site, and the whole data set is downloadable from its FTP site in XML and tab-delimited formats. Besides, a REST-based web service for programmatic access has newly been implemented [HMS+11].

		iProClass ID mapping	DAVID ID conversion	
ID type	Category: Biological object	Protein sequence	UniProtKB, UniRef100, UniParc, RefSeq, GePept, NR	UniProtKB, RefSeq_PROTEIN, UniRef100, PIR_ID, PIR_ACCESSION, GENPEPT_ACCESSION, PIR_NREF_ID*
		Gene and genome	GenBank/EMBL/DDBJ, UniGene, FlyBase, MGD, SGD, WormBase, TAIR, TIGR	ENSEMBL_ID, ENTREZ_GENE_ID, GenBank, GENE_SYMBOL, UniGene, RefSeq_GENOMIC, RefSeq_MRNA, RefSeq_RNA
		Proteomic peptide ID databases	GPMDB, PRIDE, PeptideAtlas	
		Taxonomy	NCBI taxon, NEWT	
	Category: Annotation of biological object	Gene expression	GEO, CleanEx, SOURCE	
		Protein expression	Swiss-2DPAGE, PMG	
		Function and pathway	EC-IUBMB, KEGG, BioCyc	
		Genetic variation and disease	OMIM, HapMap	
		Ontology	GO	
		Interaction	IntAct, DIP	
		Modification	RESID, phosphosite	
		Structure	PDB, SCOP, CATH, MMDB, PDBsum, ModeBase	
		Classification	PIRSF, UniRef50, UniRef90, Pfam, InterPro, PANTHER, COG, SMART, TIGRFAMs	UniRef100
		Microarray		AFFY_ID
Mixed type search			no	yes
Access method		web page, FTP, REST	web page, FTP	
Usability for work			proteomics	genomics

Table 2.1 Protein-centric and gene-centric ID mapping tools (: obsolete)

In contrast to iProClass ID mapping, DAVID gene ID conversion tool [HSS+08] is a gene-centric ID mapping service, which is more suitable for the genomic- and microarray-related work. It integrates around 20 ID types and allows mixture of ID types in one single query. Users can access DAVID ID conversion tool by its web interface or download the entire data file.

2.6 Integration platform

The various scattered biological databases and bioinformatics tools make the integrative analysis of heterogeneous data difficult. Researchers have to spend time on shuttling between databases, manipulating data format, formatting the query, extracting intended information from the result file, and comparing the data sets from different resources. An integration platform which provides a consistent data structure, friendly user interface, and function extensibility would ease the integration process.

For the integrative analysis of cellular systems, an integration platform would be valuable due to the scale and types of data to be analyzed, such as the ones from the high-throughput omics techniques and enzyme kinetics parameters. Several popular integrative platforms have been developed and are supported in a community effort. Common features of these integration platforms include the network-based graphical representation, data import from standard data exchange formats, and database integration which simplifies the data retrieval from different databases. Some of them also allow the network editing, experimental data mapping, network topology property analysis, simulation, and the function extension via the plug-in architecture (Table 2.2).

2.6.1 Cytoscape

Cytoscape [SOR+11] is an open source platform for network analysis and visualization and is supported by the development teams from private and public sectors. It was initially designed for biological research but can be applied to analyze the network in the other areas. The core distribution of Cytoscape provides the function of data integration and visualization. It accepts some standard file exchange formats, such as GML and SBML. The graphical properties of node and edge, like node shape, edge thickness, node color, arrow shape, can easily be changed by the user.

The most attractive feature of Cytoscape is its extensibility. It has a well-documented API which allows the development of Cytoscape plugin by anyone. With the support of various plugin, the function of Cytoscape is largely extended. These additional functions cover: network query and download services, network data integration and filtering, attribute-directed network layout, gene ontology enrichment analysis, detection of network motifs, functional module, protein complex, and domain interaction [CSC+07]. The numbers of published Cytoscape plugin in the year of 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 are 9, 29, 30, and 55, respectively (statistics from the Cytoscape Plugin page in Feb. 2011).

2.6.2 CellDesigner

CellDesigner [FMJ+08] is a model editor and simulator of gene regulatory and biochemical networks. Besides editing and modeling, it has an ODE (ordinary differential equation)-based simulator for symbolic and numerical analysis of chemical reaction networks. It supports input/output in SBML and BioPax formats and represents biological network as process diagram where different states of a molecule are drawn as separate nodes, and the state transition is drawn as arrow. The process diagram will make the network interpretation semantically and visually unambiguous. Since its release as version 4.0 in 2008, CellDesigner also developed a plugin framework. The network data could be obtained from the connected databases: BioModels, PANTHER pathway database, MetaCyc, or may be drawn by users.

2.6.3 VisANT

The special feature of VisANT [HNY+07] is its support of metagraph development. Metagraph allows the implementation of metanodes which contain subnetworks inside the node. The content of each metanode can be contracted or expanded. The network is created by file importing or retrieved from KEGG or Predictome databases [MYC+02]. Predictome was developed by the VisANT team and contains the predicted protein association of 44 genomes bases on three computational methods and large-scale protein-protein interaction data. The nodes and edges in the loaded network can be filtered and removed but not added. User can map gene expression data onto the network in VisANT. The portable file format for the input is KGML, and the output format can be VisML, tab-delimited, or SVG image.

2.6.4 Cell Illustrator

Cell Illustrator is a biopathway modeling and simulation platform which uses hybrid functional Petri net with extension (HFPNe) as the mathematical model, which enables the simulation in discrete or continuous modes. The full function of Cell Illustrator requires a commercial license. It supports the file import and export from SBML, CellML, and BioPAX formats. The CSML models deposited in the CSML pathway library could be directly loaded into Cell Illustrator [NSJ+10].

Table 2.2 Overview of integration platforms **Table 2.2** Overview of integration platforms

2.7 Summary

This chapter presents various bioinformatics resources and tools for cellular biology and classifies them according to the functional hierarchy of cellular system. The capability of different resource complements each other, and the integrative utilization of bioinformatics resources is intended in the systematic study. This chapter also presents the bioinformatics facilities which aid the integrated study in cellular biology. These facilities represent the biological knowledge repository and facilities which aid resource communication and mutual understanding, such as the ID mapping service, standard data exchange format, application programming interface, ontology and integration platform. These facilities are crucial when an integrative and systematic methodology covering multi-omics and dynamic data is adopted [NBG+06], and the tools in each category of facilities keeps evolving with time. Some of these facilities will be used in the work carried out in this dissertation.

Chapter 3

Related work

This chapter presents the related works for the two topics included in the thesis. The first part is devoted to the problem of TTG identification, and the second to the document retrieval system in the biomedical research domain.

3.1 Redox regulatory network and its target protein

Changes in redox balance and development of oxidative stress are associated with many cell functions and life processes including aging, diseases, loss of fitness, and yield [MHMF96] [BG91] [Ferr09] [Diet08]. On the molecular scale, oxidation will change the structure of biomolecules and often switches protein activity or causes protein malfunction. To keep the cellular environment in a proper redox state, cells contain several antioxidants, such as vitamin C, vitamin E, and ubiquinol and also a set of antioxidant enzymes [Diet03]. By decomposing reactive oxygen species (ROS) and reactive nitrogen species (RNS) these antioxidants constitute the first line of defense to avoid damage to macromolecules by uncontrolled oxidation. Once ROS or RNS escape from the first defense line, lipids, nucleic acids and also proteins may get oxidized. A major oxidation reaction of proteins is the reversible dithiol-disulfide transition. Cells have developed two rescue systems that involve thioredoxins and glutaredoxins [MBVR09] [HJB+05] to re-reduce the oxidized proteins and sustain the normal protein structure and function in an oxidizing environment (Fig. 3.1). Thus this system is suitable for reversible regulation of protein functions, e.g. enzyme activities.

The thioredoxin and the glutaredoxin disulfide reduction systems are two main modules within the redox regulatory network (RRN) and prevalent in almost all species. Within the RRN, involved proteins can be classified into several functional elements: redox input elements feed electrons into the network, such as NADPH and glutathione (GSH); redox transmitters distribute the electrons to redox target, such as thioredoxin (Trx) and glutaredoxin (Grx); redox sensors transmit information on the cellular concentration of ROS to the redox network, such as peroxiredoxin (Prx); redox target proteins are enzymes catalyzing metabolic reactions [Diet08]. All the involved proteins bear reversible oxidation prone cysteine residues which allow the protein to switch between its reduced, in which the protein is in dithiol state, and oxidized forms, in which the protein is in disulfide state. The reducing equivalents are transferred from NADPH to the redox target proteins through a set of specific proteins (Fig. 3.1). Thioredoxin and glutaredoxin are the electron donors and recover the activity for the oxidized target proteins.

The relationship between the redox regulatory network and metabolic network is depicted in Fig. 3.1. The RRN functions as the regulatory system of metabolic enzyme but also of transcription factors, translation machinery and many other cell processes [BB05]. In the redox regulatory network, only the redox state of involved proteins is concerned. The redox state of the target proteins of the redox regulatory network will then influence the mass flow of metabolites.

Figure 3.1 Redox regulatory network of the human mitochondrion and exemplarily affected metabolic network. Abbreviations: Trx2: thioredoxin-2, TrxR: thioredoxin reductase, GR: glutathione reductase, GSH: glutathione, Grx2: glutaredoxin-2.

3.1.1 Thioredoxins (Trx) and glutaredoxins (Grx) as redox transmitters

Thioredoxin and glutaredoxin are two protein families both of which possess the Trx-fold, a partial structure of the whole thioredoxin composed of 3 α-helix and 3 β-sheets (N'- $β_1$ - α_1 - β_2 - α_2 - β_3 - β_4 - α_3 - C'). The proper members of both families have the CxxC motif (C: cysteine; x: any one of the 20 amino acids) at their active site with some exception with the CxxS (S: serine) motif. The active site CxxC motif is always located at the Nterminal side of the α_1 helix. In spite of the common fold and motif, Trxs and Grxs show little similarity in amino acid sequence [MBVR09] [CM10] (Fig 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Structure dissection of Trx and definition of the Trx-fold. (A) The secondary structure of the thioredoxin protein. (B) The Trx-fold which is only the partial structure of Trx. The active site CxxC motif is located at the N-terminal of an α helix. (Source: [CM10])

Thioredoxin and glutaredoxin exist prevalently in all organisms. Prokaryotic thioredoxins show about 50% sequence homology. Thioredoxins in mammalian cells (rabbit and calf) are 90% similar and have 27% overall similarity to the *E. coli* protein. Glutaredoxins from *E. coli* and calf show about 30% identical residues [Hol89].

Organisms have developed their specialized subset of Trxs and Grxs, which are located in various cellular compartments. For instance, 19 different thioredoxins have been identified in the genome of *Arabidopsis thaliana* that can be grouped in 6 subfamilies by their protein sequences. Each of the Trx sub-family has different distribution among organelles [BB05][MBVR09]. In addition, there are a large number of proteins

with Trx-like domains in plants. The high number of Grx genes is also seen in *Arabidopsis*. The Grxs are classified in three sub-groups according to protein sequence, and there is extensive heterogeneity within the sub-group in terms of protein size and subcellular location [MBVR09]. The human genome encodes two thioredoxins (Trx1, Trx2), two dicysteinic glutaredoxins (Grx1, Grx2), and several Grx2 variants. Trx1 and Grx1 are cytosolic proteins, and Trx2 and Grx2 locate in mitochondria.

Trx and Grx function as the redox transmitter in the cell. They are not engaged in metabolite turnover but couple redox input elements to the redox state of target proteins and thereby modify the activity of metabolic enzymes, although it should be noted that some Grxs are involved in deglutathionylation and FeS-cluster formation in plants [DP11].

3.1.2 Target protein of redox regulatory network

The proteins connecting the upstream regulatory network and the downstream metabolic network are the target proteins of Trx/Grx. The critical step in expanding the redox regulatory network is to identify the Trx-/Grx- target proteins in order to complete the network. The Trx-/Grx- target proteins are the ones which carry out the thiol-disulfide exchange reaction with Trx/Grx and therefore contain reversibly oxidized cysteines.

Proper Trx/Grx contain two redox-active cysteines which undergo the thioldisulfide exchange with its target protein. The redox active cysteine can exist either in the oxidized or the reduced state according to the redox potential of the environment. When the cysteine is in its reduced state, the cysteine is in the free thiol form. Once the cysteine is oxidized, it forms a disulfide bond with another redox-active cysteine, and this disulfide bond can be reduced again by an enzyme (thioredoxin reductase (TR) or the tripeptide glutathione (GSH)). Owing to the two reversibly oxidized cysteines (ROCs), Trx/Grx carries out the role as the redox transmitter and the reductant for its target proteins.

When Trx/Grx reduce their target proteins which bear the disulfide bond, one of its redox-active cysteines (the one which is closer to the surface and to the N-terminus) attacks the disulfide bond on the target protein and forms an intermolecular disulfide bond with the target protein. This intermolecular disulfide bond is then attacked by the other redox-active cysteine, and an intramolecular disulfide bond is formed between two ROCs of Trx and Grx, and the release of the target protein is followed [KH80] (Fig. 3.3).

Figure 3.3 Thiol-disulfide exchange mechanism. The intermolecular disulfide bond is formed between Trx and its target in Step 2. [source: MHF+06]

The net reaction can be seen as the exchange of free thiols and disulfide bond between Trx/Grx and the target protein.

3.1.2.1 Target proteins from the literature

The chloroplast is the compartment in plant cells where photosynthesis and vigorous light-driven electron transfer take place. The function of Trx and its target proteins in chloroplast has been largely investigated owing to its redox regulation of photosynthetic enzyme activity. The putative and established Trx targets in chloroplast span in several functional categories: Calvin cycle, photosynthetic electron transfer, amino acid biosynthesis, etc [LMZ+07]. The mitochondrion represents another organelle in eukaryotic cells which is the site of respiration including the respiratory electron transfer chain. The pre-mature leak of electron from the electron transfer chains to oxygen generates superoxide which is an active oxidant and can react with lipids and proteins. The target proteins of Trx in the mitochondrion have been explored in plants. The identified target proteins of thioredoxin in plant mitochondria also function in several different cellular processes, such as photorespiration, citric acid cycle, lipid metabolism, and electron transport (Appendix A)[BVT+04].

Fu *et al*. has performed a proteomics identification of Trx1 reduction target proteins from the hearts of the transgenic mice which over-expressed Trx1 (cytosolic thioredoxin). They have identified 78 putative Trx1 reductive sites in 55 proteins which have diverse functions [FWL+09].

3.1.2.2 Interacting proteins from the databases

Several databases host the protein-protein interaction data generated by different technologies. These technologies can only detect the interacting protein pair mediated by non-covalent bond interaction, such as van der Waals', ionic forces, and hydrogen bond. However, the target proteins in the reduction cycle interact with Trx/Grx through intermediate covalent disulfide bond formation which is inaccessible by non-covalent bond-based technique of protein-protein interaction detection. Therefore the interacting counterparts found in most protein-protein interaction database are rarely real target proteins of Trx/Grx within the thiol-/disulfide redox regulatory network of the cell.

Two protein-protein interaction databases were searched for the interacting proteins of Trx1, Trx2, Grx1, Grx2 in human, mouse, and rat. The SwissProt accession numbers of these 12 proteins were used as the query for IntAct and BioGRID, and the returned IDs were mapped to SwissProt accession number through database crossreferencing. Table 3.1 lists the interacting proteins retrieved from the protein-protein interaction database. There were no or few interacting proteins found for Trx and Grx in most cases. Even if some interacting proteins can be retrieved from the protein-protein interaction database, the type of interaction remained unclear.

Besides exploring the individual biomolecule database, search in the integrative database is also conducted. The integrated database DAWIS-M.D. is queried through the network editor VENESA, and there is only one interacting protein retrieved for human glutaredoxin-2 from HPRD (Fig. 3.4). As for human thioredoxin-2, there is no interacting protein retrieved from either HPRD, or IntAct, or MINT.

3.1.2.3 Associated proteins from text-mining

The electronic availability of publications in bibliographic database, such as PubMed, enables the application of text mining and information extraction to biomedical literature. Text mining is the use of automated methods for exploiting the enormous amount of knowledge available in the biomedical literature [CH08]. Owing to the automated information extraction, text-mining tool can reveal the possible association between biological entities which is not collected in the structured database. ANDVisio is the visualization tool for ANDCell database which is constructed through computer linguistic text analysis on texts of scientific publication and database content [PYD+11]. If ANDVisio was used on the proposed biological question, namely the search for human mitochondrial Trx and Grx targets, 12 proteins were found to be associated with human

	IntAct			BioGRID	
	P30480	Q96BK5	Q92905	P02452	P19883
	Q92905	Q53HC9	Q9HC24	Q15080 P08670	
	Q9H3M7	Q9H3M7	P11171		Q96BK5 Q9H3M7
P10599	P25942	Q86XK2	Q8IXH7	P40337	Q99683
THIO HUMAN	Q9Y4K3	O60739	P78330	P25942 P19838	
	P04406	O95990	P40337	P04406	P04637
				P04150	
Q99757	P40692		None		
THIOM HUMAN					
P35754	None		Q04656 P35670		
GLRX1 HUMAN					
Q9NS18	None		Q16881		
GLRX2 HUMAN					
P10639	None		None		
THIO MOUSE					
P97493	None		None		
THIOM MOUSE					
Q9QUH0	None		None		
GLRX1 MOUSE					
Q923X4	None		None		
GLRX2 MOUSE					
P11232	P19357		None		
THIO RAT					
P97615	None		None		
THIOM RAT					
Q9ESH6	None		None		
GLRX1 RAT					
Q6AXW1	None		None		
GLRX2 RAT					

Table 3.1 The interacting proteins for thioredoxins and glutaredoxins retrieved from IntAct and BioGrid

Trx-2 and 4 with human Grx-2 (Fig. 3.5). The relationships between human thioredoxin-2 and its associated proteins are annotated as activity down-regulation, activity regulation, association, and transport regulation and the ones between human Grx-2 and its associated proteins as association and transport regulation. A closer investigation of the identified proteins reveals that they do not necessarily reflect direct redox interactions but indirect relationships, e.g. the release of cytochrome c in cell death regulation in response to oxidative stimuli.

3.1.3 Strategies in thioredoxin/glutaredoxin target protein identification

Figure 3.4 The interacting protein retrieved from DAWIS-M.D. for human glutaredoxin-2

The proteins connecting the upstream regulatory network and the downstream metabolic or other functional responses are the target proteins of Trx/Grx. The critical step in expanding the redox regulatory network is to identify the Trx/Grx target proteins in order to complete the network. The Trx/Grx target proteins are the ones which carry out the thiol-disulfide exchange reaction with Trx/Grx and therefore contain reversibly oxidized cysteines.

3.1.3.1 Experimental method

The experimental technique used to discover the Trx/Grx target protein from a pool of proteins is affinity chromatography, diagonal redox SDS polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis or other redox proteomics approaches.

3.1.3.1.1 Affinity chromatography

In this experiment the native Trx/Grx is replaced by a mutant protein whose second active cysteine is mutated to serine. This mutant is immobilized on the resin before the complex protein sample is applied to the column. The mixed disulfide bond between Trx/Grx and their target protein cannot be broken by the introduced serine which replaces the resolving cysteine. Following washing of the column to remove non-specifically bound protein, the covalently trapped proteins are eluted under reducing conditions. The

Figure 3.5 Associated proteins found by ANDVisio (**A**) for human mitochondrial Trx-2 and (**B**) for human mitochondrial Grx-2. The searched scope includes the literature and database content.

Figure 3.6 Thioredoxin affinity chromatography showing the steps of trapping and reductive elution. The mutated thioredoxin is immobilized on the resin in Stage A, and the intermolecular disulfide bond is formed between the target protein and immobilized thioredoxin in Stage B. The intermolecular disulfide bond is reduce by reductant (DTT), and the target protein is eluted in Stage C. (source:[HHF+05])

potential target proteins in the elution fractions are identified by mass spectrometry or gel-based methods (Fig. 3.6) [HHF+05].

3.1.3.1.2 Diagonal redox SDS or fluorescence-linked 2D polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis

Yano *et al.* [YWL+01] developed a method to identify Trx target proteins in peanut seeds based on two-dimensional gel electrophoresis. The sample of oxidized protein mixture is treated with specific redox system, either Trx or Grx, and the newly formed thiol residues after reduction are labeled with detectable marker. This marker could be the fluorescent dye (mBBr or cyanine) or radioactive molecule (^{14}C) iodoacetamide). Trx/Grx-reduced targets strongly increase in fluorescence. An alternative method employs the often differential electrophoretic mobility of oxidized and reduced forms of the same protein [SD06]. After labeling, proteins are separated by first non-reducing and second reducing electrophoresis. The target proteins of specific redox system can be observed above or below on the diagonal by detecting the labeled marker (Fig. 3.7).

3.1.3.2 Computational method

A Reduction by thioredoxin and labeling of recovered thiol

B Protein separation by non-reducing and reducing electrophoresis

Figure 3.7 Diagonal redox SDS polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis (source: [YWL+01])

Due to the important role in modulating and regulating protein activity, computational prediction of redox-active cysteines is of significant interest. Most of the approaches for predicting redox-active cysteine thiols deal with the catalytic redox-active cysteines by analyzing the protein sequence, secondary structure, physiochemical properties, and database annotation.

Fomenko *et al*.[FXA+07] adopted the observation that selenocysteine is usually located in enzyme active sites and serves various redox functions and developed a procedure for high-throughput identification of catalytic redox-active Cys in proteins by searching for sporadic selenocysteine-Cys pairs in sequence databases. Marino and Gladyshev [MG09] have developed an integrative methodology in bioinformatics to detect thiol oxidoreductases and their catalytic redox-active cysteinyl residues. They tackled this problem by analyzing (i) the amino acid and secondary structure composition of the active site and its similarity to known active sites containing redox Cys, (ii) accessibility, reactivity, and active site location of tested cysteines. They applied this procedure to *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* proteins containing conserved Cys and identified the majority of known yeast thiol oxidoreductases.

A CxxC motif can be found in the active site of many thiol-disulfide oxidoreductases. Gopal *et al*.[GSZK09] used a pattern search of CxxC motif in the

bacterial *Listeria*-genome and allowed only its single appearance in the N-terminus of inspected protein. 29 candidate proteins were found. Followed by further reduction through 3D structure and phylogenetic analysis, almost half of the candidate proteins (14/29) had the structure or functional annotation related to known oxidoreductases or redox-regulated proteins.

Conour *et al*.[CGG04] first used redox related keywords like reduction, oxidation, redox, electron transfer, mental binding, heme, cysteine and disulfide to fish putative redox regulated protein motifs in the InterPro protein signature database. Then the motifs identified by keyword search were manually inspected by researchers.

The most-mentioned physicochemical parameters which relate to the redox capability of the cysteine are the vicinity of two cysteinyl residues, the acid dissociation constant (pK_a) value of the thiol, and the accessible surface area (ASA) of the cysteinyl residues on the inspected protein. Sanchez *et al.* [SRWM08] provided a discrimination rule with exact values of these three parameters–thiol-thiol distance, pK_a , accessible surface area–for predicting the oxidation susceptibility of the cysteine. The oxidation susceptibility of the cysteine indicates the possibility of cysteine oxidation, which is the prerequisite for the later re-reduction of ROC. Sanchez *et al*. used the data mining strategy to find three criteria which distinguish oxidation susceptible cysteine from nonoxidation susceptible ones. The training set was a balanced oxidation susceptible cysteine thiol database (BALOSCTdb) which collected 12 physicochemical parameters for 161 oxidation-susceptible cysteines (OSC) and 161 oxidation-non-susceptible ones (nOSC). The 12 physicochemical properties can be classified into the following categories: 1. distances between the target thiol and other atoms in its spatial neighborhood; 2. pK_a value of the target thiol and other amino acids in its spatial neighborhood; 3. ASA values of the target thiol and other amino acids in its spatial neighborhood; 4. electrostatic potential of target thiol; and 5. name of amino acids in its spatial neighborhood. pK_a is a measure of the strength of an acid in solution. The lower the pK_a value of a cysteine, the easier the cysteinyl thiol residue releases its H^+ cation, which is a step before disulfide bond formation. ASA (accessible surface area) is the surface area which is accessible to solvent for a biomolecule. Since the reagents of a chemical reaction are dissolved in solvent, it is critical for the reaction center to have minimum area exposed to the solvent. The calculated values of 12 physicochemical properties and the classification of the oxidation susceptibility for 161 OSCs and 161 nOSCs formed the training set for the decision tree learning by the C4.5 classifier. They concluded with three physiochemical

properties and their value ranges which help the identification of oxidation susceptible cysteines. The discrimination rule from their work is depicted in Fig. 3.8.

Figure 3.8 The decision tree to predict oxidation susceptible cysteine as developed by Sanchez *et al.* (modified from [SRWM08])

3.2 Document retrieval system for the biomedical research

Document retrieval, more commonly referred to as information retrieval, is the computerized process of producing a list of documents that are relevant to the inquirer's request by comparing the request to an automatically produced index of the textual content of documents in the system [Lidd05]. In the biomedical research field, the fast growing volume of scientific publications from thousands of journals makes it impossible for researchers to browse through all the publication when they search for relevant publication to their work. Thanks to the digitalization of the bibliographic information and the development of natural language processing, several document retrieval systems in the biomedical field have emerged.

Since the document retrieval system serves as the intermediate agent between user's query and the documents, the operation of the document retrieval system could be classified into three phases- document representation, query processing, and matching [Lidd05] (Fig. 3.9). The document representation phase is to choose descriptive terms from a defined term set to represent each document, query processing to translate the free text query received from the user to the equivalent terms in the defined term set, matching to generate the document list by comparing the translated equivalent terms with the index.

Figure 3.9 Components in document retrieval system.(modified from [Lidd05]). The green framed area represents the dynamic process and the red the static process. The indexed doucument could be saved in the database or flat file.

The heart of document representation phase is the document indexing process which represents each document by certain feature. The features are represented by the terms appearing or concepts/keywords discussed in the documents and are targeted during the computer search. The indexing process usually generates the final featuretarget mapping in the form of table, in which the target refers to a document ID or a position in a document.

In the practice of existing biomedical document retrieval systems, two types of features are used as index for the document [LC09]. Some systems adopt the keywordbased indexing strategy by which only illustrative terms are selected as the indexes of an article, such as keywords of an article. This type of indexing requires the human intervention to comprehend the articles and choose the illustrative terms which best describe the article content. The full-text based indexing uses all phrases found in the article as the index and is adopted by full text document retrieval system and web search engines. The full-text based indexing returns not only the document containing the

indexed phrase but also can point out the position of its appearance in the document. During the full-text indexing process, some linguistic operations are carried out to avoid indexing unimportant phrases, such as stop words deletion, and deal with linguistic morphology (stemming). The index data structure of full-text based methodology is termed inverted file in the information retrieval society.

The query processing starts after receiving the free text query which users submit to the document retrieval system. Not all the words in the free text submitted by the user are informative and precise to the question. Some linguistic operations used in the document representation phase are also run in this phase, such as stop word deletion, stemming, and phrase recognition. Another important process of this phase is query expansion. Query expansion adds extra query terms to the original query term set derived from user's free text query. These extra terms may be synonymous terms or terms that are highly associated with the query term, based on co-occurrence statistics preferably computed on the same or a similar document collection as the one on which the search is being conducted [Lidd05]. Query expansion relieves the user from the need to generate all conceptual variants of their search terms [Lidd05].

During the matching phase, the processed user's query is compared with the index of each document, the similarity score is calculated between query and each candidate document, and a ranked list of documents is returned to the user.

The goal of a document retrieval system is to find all documents relevant to user's queries. Two effectiveness measures are intended to be maximized in the design of a document retrieval system: recall and precision. Recall measures the percentage ratio of the number of relevant records retrieved to the total number of relevant records in the database. Precision measures the percentage ratio of the number of relevant records retrieved to the total number of irrelevant and relevant records retrieved [LC09].

The following sections introduce the main document retrieval systems for biomedical research and are concentrated more on the systems which include the document indexing component (Table 3.2).

3.2.1 PubMed

PubMed is a document retrieval system accessing the most widely used bibliographic library in the biomedical research field–MedLine, which is developed by NLM. User usually input query terms in the query box, and a list of bibliography is returned to the user. User then can browse each bibliographic record which includes title, authors, publication date, journal name, summary of the article and other bibliographic data. The bibliographic record might include a link to the website of journal publisher, and user may have the chance to see the full text article depending on the subscription status of the user's institute.

		PubMed	PubMed Central	BioText
	Bibliographic data(MeSH terms, journal name, author name, etc)	Y	Υ	Y
Searchable field	Full text		Y	Y
	Table content and caption			Y
	Figure caption			Υ
	Indexing method	Keyword-bases	Keyword-bases	Full-text based
	Automatic term mapping(translation, MeSH term expansion)	Y	Y	
	Ranking method	Reverse chronical order	Reverse chronical order	Vector space model
	API	eUtility	eUtility	web page

Table 3.2 Biomedical document retrieval system

Every new citation received from the journal publisher is assigned a PubMed Unique Identifier (PMID) and computationally indexed by PubMed. The indexing process is to create multiple machine-readable access points that refer to the different components of the journal citations for use when searching PubMed [Url8]. NLM adopts the keyword-based indexing methodology by using MeSH for the citation indexing. MeSH is a set of controlled vocabulary used for subject analysis of biomedical literature at NLM. MeSH terms are arranged in a hierarchical categorized manner called MeSH Tree Structures. Each article entered in the MEDLINE is read by indexer who chooses the MeSH headings best describing the research subject of the article. These MeSH terms are added into the bibliographic record and later are used as one of the indexed fields of the article (Fig. 3.10). The other indexed fields are journal name, author name, and title/abstract [Url9] [Url10].

Figure 3.10 PubMed literature indexing process. After NLM receives the article citation, the indexer reads the article and chooses the proper MeSH terms to describe the article. The chosen MeSH terms are added to the bibliographic record and later are used as indices.

After users send their query to PubMed, the automatic term mapping (ATM) process is used on the terms entered without a qualifier. ATM looks for the translation tables and indexes in the following order: 1. MeSH translation table, 2. Journal translation table, 3. Author translation table. The translation table works as a synonym table to normalize various syntactic forms of the query terms. ATM first looks for the corresponding MeSH headings for the query terms in the MeSH translational table. Besides the corresponding MeSH headings, PubMed also does automatic MeSH exploding by adding more specific terms beneath those headings in the MeSH hierarchy. The literature list returned to the user contains the citation found in the index table for the found MeSH term set. If no citation is obtained until this stage, ATM keeps looking for

the translation tables and indexes of journal name and author name [Url8]. The retrieved documents are ranked in the reverse chronological order (Fig. 3.11).

Figure 3.11 Automatic term mapping. The query terms entered without qualifiers are first looked up against the MeSH translation table and index followed by journal and author translation tables.

3.2.2 PubMed Central

PubMed Central (PMC) is a digital archive of life sciences journal literature. PMC provides free access to articles from journals that deposit their content in the archive. PMC differs from PubMed mainly in the following aspects [Url12]: 1. PubMed is a database of citations and abstracts for millions of articles from thousands of journals, while PMC archives over one million full-text journal articles. 2. Articles which were published prior to 1966 will be first digitally archived in PMC, and the citation of these articles will be included in PubMed several months after the PMC archiving. Each article in PMC is associated with a PMC unique identifier (PMCID), which is a different set of identifier from PMID. The literature searching process in PMC functions similarly as in PubMed including automatic term mapping and returning the MeSH indexed articles.

3.2.3 PubMed derivatives

PubMed hosts over 21-million citations as in 2012, and millions of queries are submitted each day by users around the world. Over one-third of PubMed queries result in 100 or more citations. Since its heavy usage in the biomedical research area, several PubMed derivatives are developed to facilitate a quickly and efficiently search and retrieval of relevant publications [Lu11].

Lu has reviewed other tools comparable to PubMed at the time of May 2011. Lu categorized the existing 28 PubMed derivatives into four groups according to their most notable features: ranking search results, clustering results into topics, enriching results with semantics and visualization, and improving search interface and retrieval experience. Lu summarized that improving ranking and the user interface seem to be the more popular directions. Most of the improved ranking algorithms rely on the extra information provided by the user. The extra information may be the user's feedback on the retrieved documents, a set of relevant documents provided by the user, and user's "click through" history. The presentation of search results in the 28 tools is primarily list based. Some tools provide the tabular or graph presentations when they are able to extract and display semantic relations.

3.2.4 BioText

Although its heavy usage in the biomedical research community, PubMed only searches over title, abstract, and document metadata, without making use of the full text [HDG+07]. However, the most important evidence supporting the argument of the article is displayed in the figure and table sections of the scientific publication. It is very common for the research to read the abstract in the first place and move to the figure and table caption. Divoli *et al*. conducted a survey over the desirable interface of a biomedical literature search engine [DWH10]. They concluded that 19 out of 20 of their survey participants expressed a desire to use a bioscience literature search engine that displays article' figures alongside the full text search results. The full text search distinguishes from the design of PubMed in that it tries to find a match between the user's query term and the full context of the article beyond the bibliographic data which is indexed by PubMed.

BioText [HDG+07] provides the full text article search which is beyond the searching scope in PubMed. Besides the full text content, BioText also searches for the article title, table captions, table contents and figure captions. It indexes all Open Access articles available at PubMed Central. BioText uses Lucene [Url11] open source search engine to index, retrieve, and rank the biomedical literature.

3.3 Summary

The conventional strategy of biological pathway construction relies on the information stored in database and thorough review of primary literature [VSP+08]. However, biological databases often preferentially contain data of extensively investigated subjects. If the focus is placed on less investigated and more specialized subjects, the data deficiency issue emerges. On the other hand, manual review of primary literature is a tedious and time-consuming work. In addition to manual information extraction from literature, automated text mining is another choice but has the issue of low accuracy [VSP+08]. The construction of redox regulatory network faces the same data deficiency issue. Network construction is hindered if the expected data are missing from the database or text-mining tools or sometimes becomes too rich to handle, since reliable target selection may pose a problem.

The first part of this chapter summarizes that only few Trx/Grx target proteins could be found in the public protein-protein interaction databases by visiting either individual primary database or the integrated one. The same data deficiency problem is also observed through the text-mining tool. When the criteria of organelle, tissue, and species are added into the network construction, barely any target protein can be found. Besides the data scarcity problem from the public molecular interaction database, the uncertainty of the interaction type between proteins is another issue. The putative target proteins of Trx/Grx should interact with Trx/Grx through thiol-disulfide exchange mechanism. However, this type of interaction mechanism between molecules is not annotated in most databases. The lack of available data and uncertainty of the interaction mechanism from the database and text-mining tool thus becomes an obstacle in the network construction process. Therefore, the strategies of simple database integration and text-mining of the unstructured data in the literature currently is not applicable to the problem of identification of target protein of Trx/Grx in human mitochondrion.

One direction for target protein prediction is to use the bottom-up strategy by identifying the functional unit, such as motif and residue, essential for the reversibly oxidizable reaction (Fig. 1.1). Due to the diverse functionality that the known target proteins are involved (Appendix A), the trial of common motif search among the reported target proteins will fail due to the non-conservative protein sequence. However, the conservative motif search is applicable to the identification of new oxidoreductase, as explained in the section 3.1.3.2. Some computational methods are also available for predicting redox-active cysteine, but most works are about predicting catalytic redoxactive cysteines and less focus on regulatory cysteines. And unfortunately, the regulatory cysteine is the cysteine type which must be found in the target proteins of Trx/Grx. In order to identity all types of reversibly oxidizable cysteine, the decision rule devised by Sanchez *et al.* has provided a good starting point for firstly detecting "oxidizable" cysteine. The decision rule from Sanchez *et al.* is thus used for the computational preselection of thioredoxin/glutaredoxin target proteins by detecting oxidation susceptible cysteines. The implementation work is described in the next chapter.

The second part of this chapter talks about the document retrieval system in the biomedicine domain. The document retrieval activity is important for scientist to follow the latest development, idea generation, and explanation of experimental result. This part covers the main document retrieval systems in biomedicine as well as the explanation of some critical steps in those systems. The capability of the existing document retrieval system is to honestly return the document which contains the query terms syntactically or semantically. To enhance the recall of a document retrieval system, the query term expansion is sometimes carried out by incorporating the synonym of user's original query. Therefore, only document implying direct relationship between query terms is returned by the existing biomedical document retrieval systems. When the directly relevant literature doesn't exit, the retrieval of indirectly relevant literature may be beneficial.

Chapter 4

Pre-selection of target protein in the redox regulatory network

In the workflow of redox regulatory network construction, the identification of target protein for thioredoxin/glutaredoxin is an essential process. The target proteins could be the catalytic enzymes in the biological pathways which take part in the metabolic turnover. The capability of the redox regulatory network will affect the state of its target proteins, and this influence will propagate to the corresponding pathway and lead to phenotype change or sickness. In spite of knowing the importance of identifying target proteins, the critical properties characterizing the thiol-disulfide exchange between thioredoxin/glutaredoxin and their target proteins are not clear. One certain thing about the target proteins is that they should contain reversibly oxidized cysteine residues, which implies that the expected cysteine should be "oxidizable" and "re-reducible". Besides the target proteins, the redox active cysteine also exists in the oxidoreductase enzyme and is located in the catalytic active site. Most existing work concerning redox active cysteine focused on the prediction of oxidoreductase enzyme class and left the proteins containing redox active cysteines residing in other regions out of consideration. And the proteins that were ignored are the potential candidates of target proteins.

Reversibly Oxidized Cysteine Detector (ROCD) is a tool for the pre-selection of thioredoxin/glutaredoxin target proteins in the construction of redox regulatory network. The target protein is pre-selected by detecting its bearing of oxidation susceptible

 * Part of chapter 4 has been published in Journal of Integrative Bioinformatics [LDH10]

cysteine residues. The oxidation susceptibility is one of the prerequisites for the cysteine being reversibly oxidizable. ROCD adopted the Cysteine Oxidation Prediction Algorithm (COPA) developed by Sanchez *et al.* as shown in section 3.1.3.2 [SRWM08].

4.1 ROCD architecture

The architecture of ROCD is shown in Fig. 4.1. A command-line program and a web interface were created in this work. The program was implemented in Java and JSP, and the in-house HPRD and iProClass database are stored in MySQL. In the command-line mode, users need to provide: (i) List of SwissProt accession numbers, or to specify the targeted human tissue and organelle (ii) Criteria for the thiol-thiol distance, accessible surface area, and pK_a , (iii) File names to save the output files.

Figure 4.1 The architecture of ROCD. ROCD utilizes five public databases (HPRD, iProClass, PDB, SwissProt, SwissModel Repository) and two external tools (PropKa, Naccess) for the selection of oxidation susceptible cysteinyl residues. The grey shaded region indicate the database wrapper module, the orange shaded region the PDB processor module, the green shaded region the pK_a calculator module, and the blue shaded region the ASA calculator module.

After receiving the necessary parameters, ROCD queries the in-house HPRD for tissue and organelle specific protein data set and iProClass database to find the PDB ID for each SwissProt accession number. The SwissProt sequence entry and the PDB file are downloaded from SwissProt, SwissModel and PDB through HTTP request. After tailoring the original PDB file, the tailored PDB file served as the input for PropKa and Naccess. Finally, it generates four output files – one file for the calculated distances of all thiol pairs, one for all the calculated pK_a for the cysteine residues, one for all the calculated ASA for the SG (cysteine sulfur) atom, and the result summary.

4.2 Implementation 4.2.1 Dependent external software

The values of three critical physicochemical properties have to be determined for the estimation of oxidation susceptible cysteines. The distance between cysteine thiols can be calculated from the atom coordinates in the PDB file. The other two properties are obtained by two external software–PropKa for the pK_a value and Naccess for the accessible surface area.

4.2.1.1 PropKa—**pKa calculator**

The acid dissociation constant is a measure of the protonation/deprotonation tendency. The protonation of the amino acid residue determines several important properties including protein solubility, protein folding and catalytic activity [DTMF06]. Traditionally the pK_a is determined from the titration curves obtained in experiments. Several computational prediction programs for pK_a value are present. Davies *et al.* has evaluated four pK_a prediction programs: MCCE, MEAD (later renamed to PCE), PropKa and UHBD. They concluded that PropKa produced more accurate prediction in their overall test and computationally performed faster than the other three programs [DTMF06]. Besides the fore-mentioned programs, H++ and PKD are two other webbased programs. We chose PropKa as our pK_a calculator owing to our need of a standalone, accurate and efficient program for incorporating into our pipeline.

4.2.1.2 Naccess—**ASA calculator**

The concept of accessible solvent area was proposed by Lee and Richard and defined as the area composed of the trace of the center of a probe rolling over the protein. It can be considered as an expanded van der Waals surface, namely by increasing the van der Waals radius by the probe radius. Lee and Richards approximated the accessible surface area of each atom using the formula:

accessible surface area=
$$
\sum (R / \sqrt{R^2 - Z_i^2}) \cdot D \cdot L_i
$$
, $D = \Delta Z / 2 + \Delta' Z$

where L_i is the length of the arc drawn on a given cross-section *i*, Z_i is the perpendicular distance from the center of the sphere to the cross-section *i*, Δ*Z* is the spacing between the cross-sections, and $\Delta'Z$ is $\Delta Z/2$ or *R*- Z_i , whichever is smaller. Summation is done over all arcs drawn for the given atom [LR71] (Fig. 4.2).

Naccess is an implementation of Lee and Richards's method. It calculates the ASA for each atom in the given PDB file and also provides the ASA for each residue by summing the atomic ASA over each protein or nucleic acid residue [HT93].

Figure 4.2 Definition of accessible solvent area. This figure shows a cross-section of a molecule. The arc drawn in dotted line is the ASA of one cross-section. (Source: [SOS96])

4.2.2 Construction of in-house databases

ROCD relies on five external databases- iProClass, SwissProt, PDB [RBB+11], HPRD, and SwissModel Repository (SMR)[KAK+09]. To shorten the time for the data retrieval, the databases which are queried frequently during the execution have a local copy of the data content on our server. Therefore, we set up the local MySQL database of iProClass and HPRD.

iProClass is a protein-centered database providing links and ID mapping to over 50 databases. We downloaded the iProClass tab-delimited flat file from its FTP site and parsed the selected columns, which correspond to the accession number/ID of other databases, into different data tables in our MySQL database.

HPRD is the other database for which we implemented a local copy. After downloading the HPRD flat file (downloaded on July $21st$, 2010), we extracted the data which are essential for ROCD and parsed them into MySQL tables. The downloaded folder contained 13 text files, and each of the text file contained data for specific domains, such as protein-protein interaction, genetic disease, etc. We selected the text file containing intended data for ROCD and parsed each of selected files into MySQL table. In the end four tables for ID mapping, subcellular localization, protein-protein interaction, and tissue expression were created.

4.2.3 ROCD workflow

The algorithms implemented by ROCD are depicted in Fig. 4.3. The whole pipeline is composed of five modules–database wrapper, PDB processor, distance calculator, pK_a calculator, and ASA calculator.

ROCD retrieves data from its dependent databases by means of in-house MySQL query and external HTTP request, which are performed by the database wrapper. The inhouse iProClass database is used to find the corresponding PDB ID and the residing chains for the queried SwissProt ID (SPID) or accession number (SPACC), the in-house HPRD to obtain human tissue/organelle specific protein set, SwissProt to retrieve the SMR link for the modeled protein structure through HTTP request, SMR to download the model in PDB format through HTTP request, PDB to download the protein structure through HTTP request. When a PDB structure is unavailable for the queried SPID/SPACC, the URL link to the SMR webpage is extracted from the HTML file of the SwissProt webpage, and the modeled structure is downloaded from SMR.

The PDB processor is responsible for modifying the download PDB file in order to comply with the requirement of input format for the subsequent calculation of thiol-thiol distance, pK_a , and ASA. The downloaded original PDB file might contain the atom coordinates from different models and peptide chains. One model represents one resolved structure. When the protein structure is determined by NMR (Nuclear Magnetic Resonance) technique, multiple models are possibly recorded. If the downloaded PDB structure contains multiple models, only the coordinates of the first model is retained so that the PDB file conforms the limitation on atom number in Naccess. In one structural model, it might contain several peptide chains. Some of the peptide chains belong to the ligand which the protein binds to and have to be removed. Only the coordinates of the peptide chains which are indicated from iProClass are maintained for the following

Figure 4.3 The workflow and the five modules to predict proteins with oxidation susceptible cysteinyl residues. The grey shaded region indicates the database wrapper module, the orange shaded region the PDB processor module, the yellow shaded region the distance calculator module, the green shaded region the pK_a calculator module, and the blue shaded region the ASA calculator module. The green colored italic font denotes the database, and the red font denotes another standalone program.

calculation. The output of the PDB processor is a tailored PDB file.

Distance calculator, pK_a calculator, and ASA calculator carry out the calculation of three physicochemical properties from the tailored PDB file. Distance calculator first extracts the coordinates of all thiols of a protein. Sometimes the cysteine residue of a wild type protein was mutated to serine before crystallography for certain reasons. Therefore, the coordinates of certain hydroxyls are also extracted according to the annotation in the "SEQADV" record of the PDB file. Afterward, the distance between any two extracted coordinates is calculated. pK_a calculator and ASA calculator make external calls to PropKa and Naccess programs.

If there is any calculated thiol-thiol distance falling in the user-defined range, the

residue numbers of the cysteine pair are stored in the residue set A. Following distance calculation, pK_a and ASA are calculated by PropKa and Naccess respectively with tailored PDB as the input. If the cysteine residue fulfills the following criteria: (i) being not listed in residue set A, (ii) pK_a and ASA falling in the user-defined range, (iii) locating on the chain as annotated in iProClass, it is stored in the residue set B. In the end, the protein entry and the qualified residues in residue sets A and B are written to the result summary. The result summary from ROCD keeps the following information for each tested protein– 1. SwissProt accession number, 2. SwissProt ID, 3. protein name, 4. PDB ID, 5. peptide coverage in PDB, 6. peptide sequence identity between the tested protein and template which the structure modeling is based on, 7. location of mature peptide, 8. chain symbols and residue numbers of cysteine pair which fulfills the thiol-thiol distance criteria, 9. chain symbol and residue numbers of cysteine which fulfills the pK_a and ASA criteria. During the execution of ROCD, the calculated thiol pair distance, pK_a , and ASA value for each cysteine residue are also written out to separate files for examination.

4.3 Validation of ROCD prediction

The annotation of cysteine residues in Balanced Susceptible Cysteine Thiol Database (BALOSCTdb) from Sanchez *et al*.'s study was used as the gold standard to validate ROCD. BALOSCTdb contains 161 cysteine thiols that are susceptible to oxidation and 161 cysteine thiols that are not.

To validate the ROCD implementation, each PDB ID in BALOSCTdb is intended to be tested by ROCD. However, ROCD only takes SPACC as the input. Therefore, the corresponding SPACCs for all PDB IDs in BALOSCTdb are first retrieved by the ID mapping service of iProClass. The retrieved SPACCs are sent to ROCD later. The parameters were chosen as specified in Sanchez *et al*.–6.2 for thiol-thiol distance, 1.3 for ASA, and 9.05 for pK_a . The result from ROCD concerning the PDB ID in BALOSCTdb is listed in Appendix B.

The compliance of our prediction with BALOSCTdb was checked (Appendix C), and the summary is shown in Table 4.1. Our prediction achieved 77.6% accuracy for the cysteine residues which are marked "oxidation susceptible" in BALOSCTdb and 74.5 % for "non-oxidation susceptible".

		Actual condition	
		Non-oxidation susceptible	Oxidation susceptible
Prediction	Non-oxidation susceptible	120	36
result	Oxidation susceptible	41	125

Table 4.1 Result from testing ROCD against BALOSCTdb

4.4 Examination of thioredoxin target proteins in plant mitochondrion

Balmer *et al.* [BVT+04] collected 46 thioredoxin target proteins in the plant mitochondrion. The target protein of thioredoxin should contain oxidation susceptible cysteines which are re-reduced by thioredoxin during interaction. We use ROCD to test the existence of oxidation susceptible cysteines for these 46 proteins using the following criteria: (i) thiol-thiol distance ≤ 6.2 Å, (ii) accessible solvent area ≥ 1.3 Å², (iii) pK_a \leq 9.05. Since the CxxC motif is found frequently in the enzyme active site of oxidoreductase and should consist of oxidation susceptible cysteines, we also scanned the existence of CxxC motif in these 46 proteins. The result is shown in Appendix D.

Among the 46 proteins, only four had a resolved protein structure. After searching SwissModel–a homology modelling database, we found the modeled structures for the other 26 proteins. For each of the proteins being modeled in SwissModel, the structure was created based on a structure "template", which is an experimentally-determined structure of a close homologue. The close homologue is the protein which shares certain sequence identity with the modeled protein. The structure modeling report from SwissModel indicates the region which is modeled and the sequence identity between the modeled region and the template. For the 26 proteins with modeled structures retrieved from SwissModel, the model could often be built only for a partial peptide sequence of the protein. In the structure model for SPACC Q9ZT91, only 7% of the entire mature peptide is assigned a predicted structure. And the sequence identities between the modeled region and the template range from 34 to 93% for these 26 proteins.

In the end we obtained the structures for 30 proteins, for either the entire or partial
peptide and through either experimental or homology modeling method. 20 out of these 30 proteins have passed the pre-selection of ROCD. In contrast to this ROCD result, there are only 3 proteins containing the CxxC motif in these 30 proteins.

According to this result from ROCD, we can separate 46 proteins into 3 groups: (A) 20 proteins which have an experimentally determined or modeled structure and are predicted to have OSC by ROCD; (B) 10 proteins which have an experimentally determined or modeled structure but no OSC is predicted (P16048 belongs to group A, since one of its three structures has OSC); (C) 16 proteins which have no experimental/modeled structure. When we inspected the ROCD result for proteins in group B, the protein entry "P17614" has an associated PDB ID "1HPC", but this associated structure is for the signal peptide not the mature peptide. Therefore, ROCD is unable to predict the existence of OSC in the mature protein of P17614. For another protein entry in group B, Q9ZT91 has a predicted structure only for a short fragment (29 amino acids) of the mature peptide (403 amino acids), representing only 7% of the mature peptide.

4.5 Summary

The Redox regulatory network is a central and evolutionarily conserved feature of the cell. The inventory of dithiol-disulfide transition proteins is important for *in silico* construction of the redox regulatory network [Diet08]. The goal of this part of work is to predict proteins that undergo reversible oxidization by examining the existence of oxidation susceptible cysteine. We implemented Sanchez *et al*'s algorithm to allow highthroughput and automatic *in silico* pre-selection of dithiol-disulfide transition proteins. There are several phases in the pipeline for achieving automation: database querying and data retrieving, external programs execution, and data processing.

The identification of oxidation susceptible thiols hints to potential thioredoxin/ glutaredoxin target proteins. In comparison to other prediction methods concerning redox active cysteine, Sanchez *et al.* provided a defined algorithm with numerical values to detect the necessary structure and physicochemical properties. In their leave-one-out cross-validation analysis, 80.1% accuracy was reported. By implementing the Sanchez algorithm and adopting their criteria, ROCD achieved an overall accuracy rate of 73.8% when using BALOSCTdb as the gold standard.

We have applied ROCD on 46 known thioredoxin target proteins in plant

mitochondrion. Due to the shortage of resolved structure, the testing on these proteins relied mostly on modeled structures. After omitting the structures with coverage lower than 10% of the entire mature peptide and the one for the signal peptide, 28 proteins with a valid structure were left, and 20 of them were detected to have OSC by ROCD when the Sanchez *et al*.'s criteria were applied. Besides the coverage issue, the sequence identity between the modeled protein and template is also worth inspecting. User should check these values and then choose a subset from the pre-selected proteins for further validation.

The identification of regulated target proteins is a critical step in the posttranslational regulatory network construction. Since the network construction mostly relies on the data stored in the biological database or information extraction from the literature, the network construction work is hindered, once the required data is unavailable from these sources. This work demonstrates a strategy based on physicochemical and structural properties to fill the gap between specialized and limited knowledge deposited in literature and databases, and the advancement of network construction. ROCD is applicable for the thioredoxin/glutaredoxin mediated redox regulatory network. Other regulatory networks, such as the phosphorylation network, also require a target prediction tool like ROCD, if the prediction algorithm is available.

The result from ROCD just provides the predicted candidate for the proposed biological question. The prediction needs to be supported by direct or indirect evidence from the lab or literature. Besides experimental method, verification of the pre-selected candidates for the redox network construction could depend on manual curation by literature reading. However, searching for the directly relevant literature has limitations in particular if less investigated or novel research topic is involved. The indirectly relevant literature retrieved based on the established association between biological concepts is valuable under this literature deficiency scenario. In chapter 5, a literature search tool designated to provide indirectly relevant literature to support manual curation is introduced.

Chapter 5

Network-contexted Document Retrieval System

In the previous chapter, a pre-selection tool–ROCD–for the identification of thioredoxin/ glutaredoxin target protein (TTG) is introduced. ROCD implements the decision rule derived from data-mining on biochemical properties of protein. The computational prediction is to provide the possible candidate for proposed biological question and has to be validated by experimental or manual curation through literature reading. Searching for the directly relevant literature to support the prediction usually results in the literature deficiency when the research topic has been less investigated or is very specific or a novel research field, such as the topic of TTG identification in human which this thesis is tackling. This chapter is describing a network-contexted document retrieval system (ncDocReSy) to help biologists extend the literature search according to the established association between bioentities in the biological network.

5.1 Introduction

All living phenomena of the cell depend on the assembly or interaction of biological entities. Assemblies of interactions form biological network, and the variation of one single bioentity may influence the activity of the other members in the network. The construction of biological network allows the understanding of the biological phenomenon in a systematic way. Depending on the involved bioentities and molecular function of the interaction, biological networks can be classified into three main categories–protein-protein interaction networks, metabolic networks and gene expression networks. After several years of investigation in life science, the knowledge of biological

networks has been enriched and collected in several biological network databases. The availability of well-structured knowledge in biological network databases eases the computational access and advanced processing.

Besides the structured data deposited in molecular databases, the biomedical literatures is published on the scale of over 500,000 per year and hosts unstructured knowledge. Due to the wealth of the published literature, it is not feasible for researchers to manually read all literature and directly access the new knowledge in a comprehensive manner. Literature-mining tools have been developed to help researchers identify relevant papers, recognize the biological entities that are mentioned in the papers, and extract specific facts [JSB06]. The identification of relevant papers–a process known as information retrieval (IR)–is the selection of documents related to the researcher's interest, which is the activity carried out on a regular basis by biologists in order to interpret experimental result and keep up with the latest scientific development.

The vast amount of biomedical publication has provided rich material for the literature-based discovery. Literature-based discovery adopts the transitive inference [Rodr09], best known as Swanson's ABC model [SST06], to build connection between two implicitly linked biomedical concepts. ABC model states that "if A and B are related, and B and C are related, it follows that A and C might be indirectly related" [WKM05]. Swanson has made the connection between fish oil and Raynaud's disease by reading the literature and applying the ABC model [Swan86], which was validated experimentally later [DKS89]. Modern information extraction technique has been used to computationally construct the associations between A and B as well as between B and C by mining the literature and molecular databases and infer the distal relationship between A and C. Some indirect relationship discovery tools utilizing the ABC model have been developed, such as BITOLA [HPMH05] and FACTA+ [TMH+11].

In the scenario of specialized or less-investigated research field, direct supporting reference is usually lacking through conventional literature search engine, such as PubMed and its derivatives [Lu11]. The search of indirect supporting reference is beneficial under this scenario. Apart from the association discovered through text-mining of the literature, the established knowledge of biological network could be the alternative source providing biomedical concept association. The incorporation of biological networks into the literature search can be interpreted as bringing transitive inference into document retrieval. When the ABC model is used in literature search, the model states that "if article A is related to molecule α , and molecule α is related to molecule β, it follows that article A and molecule β might be indirectly related". This chapter presents the network-contexted document retrieval system (ncDocReSy), which is developed to present indirectly relevant publication by conducting the transitive inference following the biological network topology.

5.2 Criteria of ncDocReSy

ncDocReSy is designed to combine biological networks and literature search, where the relevant literature can be viewed in the context of biological network. Names of genes/proteins and chemicals/drugs have been recognized as one of the most frequent category of queries through query log analysis [DMNL09]. Therefore, ncDocReSy focuses on the bioentity networks which consist of genes, proteins, metabolites, and chemical compounds. Thus the inclusion of three major categories of biological networks of cellular process is planned for ncDocReSy. ncDocReSy adopts the more reliable data resources for the construction of biological networks. In the instance of protein-protein interaction network construction, the data resource of experimentally determined proteinprotein interaction is more preferable than of computationally predicted one.

 ncDocReSy is intended to maximize the retrieval of relevant articles which have mentioned the name of specific bioentities, either being an enzyme, metabolite, or chemical, with the correct semantics within the article context. To achieve this, three bibliographic databases are includes, and the named-entity recognition (NER) tool is used to ensure the full name of the expected entity is present and also in the correct semantic type in the article context.

ncDocReSy relies on several external resources for the network construction and literature search. The external resources must be internet-accessible, so that a local installation of the relied resources is waived. But for some resources which lack an API or whose API does not fit our need, a local installation of the resources is used. The document retrieval function of ncDocReSy borrows from existing literature search tools so that ncDocReSy does not depend on the implementation of its own document indexing component. ncDocReSy accesses the primary bibliographic databases PubMed, PMC and BioText directly and retrieves the generated literature list. Although many literature search tools, referred as PubMed derivatives by Lu [Lu11], have been implemented for quick and efficient search and retrieval of publications, these derivatives have

manipulated the raw literature list returned by PubMed according to certain criteria. Because ncDocReSy has implemented its own literature ranking algorithm based on the network context, the preliminary literature list from the primary bibliographic databases is sufficient.

Since ncDocReSy incorporates biological network into document retrieval, an integration platform has to be chosen for graphical representation of biological networks and display of literature search result. Cytoscape became the first choice because of the well-documented API and support from the vast user community.

According to Lu's classification of PubMed derivatives [Lu11], ncDocReSy is a document retrieval system more oriented towards the representation and ranking of literature list under the network context.

5.3 Architecture

ncDocReSy takes advantage of the existing bioinformatics resources in the public domain and avoids re-inventing the wheel. Besides our local database, most of the relied bioinformatics tools or databases are web-based and with APIs provided. The functions provided by ncDocReSy can be divided into three modules: network construction module, document retrieval module, and literature list refinement module. The different resources utilized in each module are described below (Fig. 5.1).

5.3.1 Network construction module

The network construction module is responsible for the construction of bioentity networks including metabolic networks, protein-protein, and protein-chemical interaction networks. The KEGG reference metabolic pathways are pre-constructed based on KEGG data in DAWIS-M.D., formatted in CSML, and saved in a MySQL table.

A CSML parser is created to parse the CSML-formatted pathway data. When the user requests a KEGG reference pathway, the pathway CSML file is obtained from the database and processed by the CSML parser. Besides the CSML file obtained from our local database, ncDocReSy allows users to provide their CSML file which also can be processed by the CSML parser. The protein-protein interaction data are retrieved from IntAct through the Representational State Transfer (REST) service at real time. For protein-chemical interaction information, a protein-chemical interaction MySQL table

has been constructed by parsing the downloaded file from STITCH database [KSF+12] and queried upon request.

 Figure 5.1 Three modules in ncDocReSy. The network construction module is responsible for the bioentity network construction, the document retrieval module for the retrieval of literature lists from the primary literature search engines, and the literature list refinement module for confirming the correct semantics of the matched terms.

5.3.2 Document retrieval module

The document retrieval module carries out the literature search function. ncDocReSy takes advantage of existing biomedical document retrieval systems. The KEGG and UniProt data in DAWIS-M.D. is used for the common name lookup for enzyme EC number/metabolite and protein, respectively. PubMed, PMC, and BioText are used as the external literature search engines. ncDocReSy uses the ESearch module of Entrez Programming Utilities (eUtils) for retrieving the literature list from PubMed and PMC. The query terms are included in a URL string, and the HTTP Get method is used for sending the query and receiving response from PubMed and PMC. The returned literature list from ESearch module is enclosed in XML and is further processed by an ESearch result parser which extracts the PMIDs and PMCIDs. The inquiry with BioText also

occurs through the inclusion of query terms in the URL and the use of HTTP Get method. The response from BioText is a web page in HTML which contains the PMIDs of the articles.

5.3.3 Literature list refinement module

The literature list refinement module is to check if the full name of the intended bioentity appears in the article context and is present in the correct semantic type, such as protein or metabolite. ncDocReSy takes advantage of the named entity recognition function of whatizit [RAG+08] for this purpose. Whatizit has implemented several pipelines which recognize the named entity in different semantic types. The web service of whatizit returns the result in which a semantic type tag and the URL pointing to the data entry in the biomolecular database are appended to the identified entity.

The text submitted to whatizit from ncDocReSy for named entity tagging is either the article abstract from PubMed or a segmented full text article from PMC. The full text article retrieved from PMC through eUtils contains extra tags which describe the content and metadata of journal articles [Url13]. Before sending the full text content to whatizit, different sections, such as introduction, methods, conclusion, and discussion, are identified by the PMC full text parser and submitted to whatizit separately. The full text parser is created by Java Architecture XML Binding (JAXB) [Url14] from the mixed XML schema recovered from two PMC articles (PMC2868029, PMC2584013). The semantic type tagged text from whatizit is parsed to produce the mapping between semantic type and a list of identified bioentity in that semantic type.

5.3.4 Network editor

ncDocReSy is implemented as a Cytoscape plugin, and all the function buttons are displayed in a new tab in the control panel of the Cytoscape workspace (Fig.5.2). The ncDocReSy tab has two main components: network construction component and document retrieval component. The network construction component asks for the userprovided ID of starting bioentity and its molecular type (protein or metabolite) for building the metabolic network. The network construction component also includes buttons for adding protein-protein and protein-chemical interactions. ncDocReSy also provides a CSML importer for constructing network from the user-provided CSML file. The document retrieval component allows users to type in free text query terms separated by space, to choose the document retrieval engines for literature search, to use the phrase search mode, and to restrict the publication year of the returned literature. The last partition of this component asks for parameters for ranking the literature according to the network context. Besides, the literature list refinement button is also in this component.

Figure 5.2 The graphical user interface of ncDocReSy. The ncDocResy tab in the control panel is marked in orange, network construction component in green, document retrieval component in blue, main network view window in red, and data panel in purple.

5.4 Implementation

This section explains the methods implemented in ncDocReSy to construct the biological network, to retrieve the preliminary literature list, to refine the preliminary literature list, to rank the literature based on the network context, and to organize the network layout.

5.4.1 Network construction and CSML importer

The KEGG reference metabolic network is pre-constructed in CSML format and saved in the database prior to user's request. CSML is a biopathway model exchange format and based on Hybrid Functional Petri net (HFPN) architecture [NSJ+10].

First, all available KEGG reference pathway IDs are obtained. For each of the pathway ID, the related reaction IDs are retrieved from DAWIS-M.D. DAWIS-M.D. contains a table where the reaction IDs of each reference pathway are easily found. For each reaction ID, the corresponding reaction equation and the associated enzyme EC number are retrieved. After the reaction equation is parsed and the involved metabolites are identified, a reaction object is created composed of 3-tuple (EC number, list of substrates, list of products), where the EC number is reaction-specific so that different catalytic reaction of the same EC number could be distinguished. Each reaction object corresponds to a process element in CSML. A CSML file is created for each metabolic reference pathway which is the assembly of the included reactions (Fig. 5.3).

Create CSML file for each KEGG pathway

Figure 5.3 The pre-compilation of KEGG reference pathway in CSML format

Besides the metabolic network, ncDocReSy could also display the protein-protein and protein-chemical interactions. The protein-protein interaction is retrieved from the IntAct database through its REST service [ABK+11] in real time. The SwissProt accession number (SPACC) of selected protein and the deactivation of spoke mode are embedded in the request URL which is sent to IntAct. The interaction counterparts for the query SPACC are obtained after parsing the returned document. As for the proteinchemical interaction, the PubChem IDs of the interacting chemicals are retrieved by querying the pre-constructed MySQL table of protein-chemical interaction.

5.4.2 Document retrieval

The document retrieval function is available for each bioentity in the constructed network. One of the query terms sent to external literature search engines should be the common name of the bioentity. The other query terms are any free text phrase which is provided by the user and whose relationship to the bioentity is of user's interest. Therefore, the synonyms of the selected bioentity have to be retrieved in the first place, according to the annotation from KEGG (for EC number and metabolite) and UniProt (for protein).

ncDocReSy provides the option to choose between three biomedical literature search engines–PubMed, PMC, and BioText. PubMed and PMC are accessed through eUtils which requires the query terms to be encapsulated in a fixed URL syntax. ncDocReSy generates two types of URLs for each bioentity's synonym and the free text query phrases (Fig. 5.4). The first URL includes a search field tag "mh" after the common name of the bioentity. Another URL is constructed for phrase search, in which the common name is enclosed in quotes. The search field tagged URL is first used as the query to PubMed/PMC. If no article is returned, the URL of phrase search is used then. The search result returned from eUtils is in XML format and is parsed to obtain the literature list.

BioText is another full text literature search engine which extends the search fields to the figure legends, table captions, and table contents. An URL where the common name and each of the free text query phrases are surrounded by quote is constructed and submitted to BioText through HTTP Get method. The literature list is extracted from the responding HTML page (Fig. 5.5).

The literature list generated in this step is termed preliminary literature list in which the PMIDs are sorted in numerically descending order. Each preliminary literature list is derived from 4-tuple (bioentity entry, common name, free text query phrases, literature search engine).

KEGG Compound ID: C01179

Synonyms: 3-(4-Hydroxyphenyl)pyruvate; 4-Hydroxyphenylpyruvate; p-Hydroxyphenylpyruvic acid **Free text query: oxidative stress**

For PubMed and PMC

MeSH tagged URL:

http://eutils.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/eutils/esearch.fcgi?term=3-(4-Hydroxyphenyl)pyruvate%5Bmesh %5Doxidative%20stress&db=pubmed&retmax=1000000

Phrase search URL:

http://eutils.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/eutils/esearch.fcgi?term=%223-(4-Hydroxyphenyl)pyruvate%22 oxidative%20stress&db=pubmed&retmax=1000000

For BioText

Phrase search URL: http://biosearch.berkeley.edu/index.php?q=%223-(4-Hydroxyphenyl)pyruvate%22%22oxidative%20 stress%22&sumit=Search&view=abstract&sortedby=rel&r=1000&action=submit search

Figure 5.4 Examples of two types of URLs for querying PubMed, PMC, and BioText. This example shows the different URLs constructed when the user searches literature on the metabolite node of KEGG Compound ID C01179 and the free text query phrase "oxidative stress".

5.4.3 Literature list refinement

When the preliminary literature list is retrieved through the phrase search of PubMed/PMC or through BioText, the semantic type of the query terms under the context of identified document is not defined. The identified document might just contain the words that match the query terms syntactically but not semantically correct. One example scenario is that the article mentioning "glutamate receptor", which is a protein, may be returned when only article containing "glutamate", which is a metabolite, is expected. ncDocReSy takes advantage of the semantic-type-specific named entity recognition function of whatizit to determine the semantic type of matched terms in the context of the found document (Fig. 5.5).

For each PMID that is returned by BioText or phrase search of PubMed/PMC, the abstract is retrieved first and submitted to whatizit for named entity tagging. Whatizit provides a web service access by which the query text and the choice of pipeline are submitted. The pipeline "whatizitChemicals" and "whatizitSwissprot" are used for recognizing the named metabolite and protein bioentity, respectively. The next step is to create a term frequency summarization for the identified named entity and free text query

Figure 5.5 Literature search workflow. The literature querying process for PubMed, PubMed Central, and BioText are colored in green, blue, red, respectively. The dashed line represents the workflow of literature list refinement.

phrases. The semantic-typed abstract is parsed, and the frequency of each recognized named entity is recorded. The appearance count of each free text query phrase is searched through pattern match. Only PMID whose abstract contains bioentity name in the correct semantic type and all free text query phrases is saved in the refined document list.

For the document that is retrieved from phrase search of PMC and BioText and fails the abstract inspection, the semantic type checking in the full text article is followed. The full text article is retrieved from PMC. Since PMC uses PMCID as the document identifier, the corresponding PMCID for PMID has to be identified. After the full text article is obtained from PMC through eUtils, it is fed to a full text parser where the text in different sections of the article, such as introduction, methods, conclusion, and discussion, are acquired. The text of each section goes through the term frequency summarization as mentioned above. In the end the term frequency summarization from different sections are merged. Only the document which has the bioentity name in the correct semantic type and the appearance of all the free text query phrases is saved in the refined document list.

5.4.4 Literature summarization

After the document retrieval process, each pairing between different synonym of the bioentity and the free text query string has a preliminary literature list affiliated to. Due to the different synonyms indicating actually the same bioentity, the preliminary literature lists derived from different synonyms of the same bioentity and the same free text query string are merged to one single list. The literature list derived from different 4-tuple (bioentity entry, common name, free text query string, literature search engine) can be summed according to the same 2-tuple (bioentity entry, free text query string), which means the literature lists derived from different common names and literature search engines are merged if the rooted bioentity and the free text query string are the same. The merging process joins the preliminary literature list using PMID as the document identifier. After this process, each free text query string for each bioentity has a joint literature list in which the PMIDs are sorted in numerically descending order. The joint literature list is denoted by D^k_{Ba} , where *k* denotes certain free text query string that user provides, B_α the bioentity which the joint literature list is affiliated to.

5.4.5 Network-contexted article ranking

After the literature summarization, a network-context ranked literature list (ncRLL) is generated for every bioentity node by iterating all bioentity nodes in the constructed biological network. When the ncRLL is being generated for a certain bioentity node, this

node is called focused bioentity (B_f) . The ncRLL of the focused bioentity considers also the joint literature list (D^k_{Ba}) from neighbor bioentities in the same network besides the one directly affiliated to the focused bioentity. In order to rank the literatures, a networkscaled score is calculated for each document ID based on the distance between the neighbor and focused bioentity as well as the upstream-downstream symmetry (Fig. 5.6).

Figure 5.6 Exemplification of network-scaled score calculation for a document d retrieved with free text query string *k* and based on a two-layers network (*l*=2) centered at bioentity f. Abbreviation: W, surrogate ability weight list; RW, region-specific weight; S(*d*, b_f, *l*, *k*), network-scaled score; M, region mark mapping function.

The article ranking process transverses every bioentity node in the displayed network and produces a ncRLL for each bioentity node. The constructed network is split into two regions, plus-signed and minus-signed regions, relative to the focused bioentity node. The plug-signed region contains the upstream reactions and minus-signed region the downstream reactions relative to the focused bioentity node. Thus there are two region-specific weights for each document–one for the plus-signed region and one for the minus-signed region. If the focused bioentity is situated in a directed network, such as the metabolic network or signal transduction pathway, a region mark for the neighbor bioentity is determined in order to incorporate the upstream-downstream symmetry into the calculation of network-scaled score. The direct parent nodes which has an edge

pointing to the focused bioentity has the region mark "+", and the direct child nodes which the focused bioentity has an edge pointing to has the region mark "-", while the focused bioentity bears the region marks both "+" and "-". Any bioentity which connects to a plus-marked bioentity is marked as "+", and the same rule is applied to minusmarked bioentity. The region mark mapping function is represented by $M(B_a)$, where $M(B_\alpha) \subseteq \{+, -\}$ but $M(B_\alpha) \neq \emptyset$, and B_α is any bioentity node in the network.

Before the literature ranking is proceeded, user has to select the number of layers, which is centered at the focused bioentity node and denoted by *l*, to be included in the creation of the ranked literature list. There is a surrogate ability weight list $W = \{w_0, ..., w_l\}$, specifying the weight added to the region-specific weight of the document ID according to the distance between the neighbor node and the focused node. The region-specific weights are calculated for each PMID appearing in certain sub-region and is denoted by RW^{m}_{d} , where *m* represents the sub-region mark, and *d* represents certain PMID. Every RW^{m}_{d} has the base weight "1" and is incremented by w_{i} if the same PMID is in the joint literature list of certain bioentity B_α , where $d \in D^k_{Ba}$, $i = \text{dis}(B_\alpha, B_\beta)$, $i \leq l$, $M(B_\alpha) = m$.

After the two region-specific weights are acquired, the network-scaled score of document *d*, based on a sub-network centered at b_f including the neighbor nodes within *l* layers with the free text query string k , denoted by $S(d, b_f, l, k)$ is calculated by multiplying RW^+ _d and RW^- _d together. In the end, each PMID which is obtained from the document retrieval process will have a network-scaled score $S(d, b_f, l, k)$. The PMID is first ranked by $S(d, b_f, l, k)$ and then by PMID in descending numerical order when several PMIDs have obtained identical $S(d, b_f, l, k)$ scores.

5.4.6 Network layout

The constructed bioentity network, which is composed of bioentities, is shown in the main network view window of Cytoscape workspace. The topology of bioentity network mimics the one displayed in KEGG website that only main compounds undergoing chemical transformation in a reaction are shown. User then can select some bioentity nodes for document retrieval, and this will generate the document retrieval network shown together with the bioentity network. Different types of nodes in the bioentity and document retrieval network have their specific appearance, such as proteins in green diamond and metabolites in black circle. Each node has certain attributes associated with it, such as biomolecular database identifier, molecular type, PMID list, and URL link. These attributes can be found in the Data Panel in the Cytoscape workspace. The edges of

the bioentity network are drawn in solid lines and the document retrieval network in dashed lines (Fig. 5.7).

Since the literature search process in ncDocReSy is based on the selected bioentity node, the document retrieval network is rooted on the bioentity node. The child node of the bioentity node in the document retrieval network is the common name of the

Figure 5.7 The exemplified bioentity network and document retrieval network and the associated node attribute. **A**. The main network view window has been isolated from the Cytoscape workspace. This view shows the partial network of human tyrosine metabolism pathway and the document retrieval network rooted at metabolite node 3-(4- Hydroxyphenyl)pyruvate. The common name nodes are indicated in orange dotted line, free text query nodes in blue, literature search result nodes in red. **B**. The isolated data panel shows the associated attributes of a preliminary literature list node (the square node filled by yellow in **A**), such as PMID and PubMed link.

bioentity. Each common name has a separate node representing it. The child node of the common name node is the node representing use-provided free text query string, and the child node of the free text query node represents the preliminary literature search result from the user-selected literature search engine. The node representing the preliminary literature search result has a "PubMed link" attribute that contains an URL link shown in the data panel. Once this URL link is clicked, a PubMed webpage containing the preliminary literature list is opened in the web browser (Fig. 5.7).

 After literature summarization, ncDocReSy creates a literature summarization node representing the merged literature list and connected directly to the bioentity node. The merged literature list is used later in the generation of ncRLL.

 After the ncRLL is generated, two new node attributes — ncRLL and ncRLL link—are added to each bioentity node and can be viewed in the data panel (Fig. 5.8). The ncRLL_link will show the ncRLL in the web browser once is clicked.

Fig. 5.8 The literature summarization nodes are outlined in blue. The node attributes of the ncRLL and of ncRLL link are outlined in red and green, respectively.

5.5 Result

ncDocReSy is built on Cytoscape which is a well-known, well-documented, and internationally collaborated platform. Therefore, many functions provided by Cytoscape can be used together with ncDocReSy, such as the network layout algorithm and LinkOut function.

ncDocReSy is a bioentity-focused document retrieval system which can be used when a specific bioentity, such as a particular protein or metabolite, is of user's interest. Before the literature search is carried out, ncDocReSy requests a biological network to be constructed around the central bioentity of interest. After the user input the database identifier of the motivating bioentity, the name of related metabolic pathway will be shown to the user. Then the user can choose multiple pathways, and the content of selected pathway will be displayed inside one network. The enzyme node is represented by the EC number and is reaction-specific, which means the same EC number catalyzing different reaction will have a separate node. As for the metabolite, each metabolite is uniquely represented by one node.

 When the user wishes to add the protein-protein or protein-chemical interaction into the network, the EC number is not enough to serve as the bait. The protein members of the EC class have to be obtained prior to the database search. There is a text input area in ncDocReSy where user can specify the NCBI taxonomy number when organismspecific protein members are expected. Once the specific proteins are selected, ncDocReSy can show the interacting proteins or chemicals. Since the number of interacting counterparts is sometimes numerous, ncDocReSy allows the interacting molecules later to be hidden.

In the current version of ncDocReSy, there are three types of bioentity nodes which are allowed to proceed with literature search—enzyme node, protein node, and metabolite node. Before the literature search is started, the user selects the bioentity nodes which they are interested in, gives some free text query string, and select the literature search engines they wish to use. ncDocReSy provides three alternatives of biomedical literature search engines– PubMed, PMC, and BioText. It's possible to select all three alternatives at the same time.

The document retrieval network is shown together with the bioentity network which is constructed before literature search. No matter which types of bioentity nodes user has selected, the different synonyms of the selected bioentities, the free text query string, and the returned literature list from each selected literature search engine are represented by separate nodes. One bioentity can be connected to several synonym nodes, one synonym nodes to several different free text query string node, and one free text query string node to maximum three preliminary literature list nodes. To avoid the exhausted iteration of all synonyms of the bioentity node, the hit-and-move mode allows the literature search to skip the rest synonyms if any reference has been returned by one of the synonyms from PubMed or PMC. For every preliminary literature list node, it is labeled by the abbreviation of literature search engine ("pm" for PubMed, "pmc" for PMC, "Bx" for BioText) followed by the number of returned articles. If the literature list is retrieved by phrase search, the label of node is pink-colored. The preliminary literature list node has a "PubMed link" attribute that can be found in the data panel of Cytoscape. Once the user clicks on this attribute field, a PubMed web page is shown in the web browser with the literatures ranked in reverse chronological order. User can inspect the literature search network and remove the plausible nodes, such as the synonym node with an ambiguous common name or the preliminary literature list node derived from certain literature search engine.

For the preliminary literature list that is retrieved by phrase search and BioText, user can further filter the preliminary literature list by named entity recognition and semantic type checking. This filtering process can be applied on the preliminary literature list node, and a new node of refined literature list is attached to the preliminary literature list node.

The visually displayed network is used in the further process of literature summarization. Different preliminary literature lists that are retrieved by different synonym and different search engines but the same free text query and the same bioentity can be merged. ncDocReSy generates a literature summarization node for each free text query string that has ever been applied to each bioentity node and attaches this summarization node to the corresponding bioentity node. The literature summarization node has a joint literature list attribute which lists the merged PMIDs. After this process, all synonym nodes, free text query string nodes, and preliminary literature list nodes are hidden. User can press the "show hidden nodes" button to recover the hidden nodes.

Following the literature summarization, the network-context ranked literature list can be generated. User can select any free text query string that has been applied so far, and ncDocReSy will create the network-context ranked literature list concerning the chosen free text query string for each bioentity displayed in the current network. This literature list is sorted by the network-scaled score, and the PubMed link for this list is clickable from the data panel under the "ncRLL_link" attribute.

There are several types of node created by ncDocReSy and several attributes for each node. Depending on the node type, only some attributes hold a value. The data type of the attribute content could be a string or list. The Cytoscape LinkOut function can be used on the content of certain attributes, such as the string content of "mainDbId" attribute and the list content of "PMID" attribute, so that the corresponding records in the webpage-based public database can be displayed in the web browser.

5.6 Summary

A network-contexted document retrieval system—ncDocReSy—that combines biological network and literature search is presented. It extends the literature search beyond the motivating bioentity and allows user to browse relevant literature concerning its associated bioentities. These relationships between the motivating and the associated bioentities are confined to catalytic and physical interaction in the current version of ncDocReSy. In order to retrieve the maximal relevant literature, ncDocReSy incorporates PMC and BioText besides conventional PubMed and takes advantage of the advanced search feature from the literature search engines, such as search field qualifier and phrase search. Since one criterion from ncDocReSy is to retrieve the literature mentioning the intended bioentity semantically, the literature refinement function of ncDocReSy embraces the named entity recognition service from whatizit. Besides accessing these external web-based services for meeting the criteria, a heuristic network-contexted ranking algorithm is devised to incorporate network topology into literature ranking. ncDocReSy is implemented as a Cytoscape plug-in, so that the functions provided by Cytoscape can by used together with ncDocReSy.

Chapter 6

Application

Mitochondria represent cell organelles where citric acid cycle and respiratory electron transport chain catalyze energetic redox reactions at high rates. During the electron transport on the mitochondrial inner membrane, electrons may prematurely escape from the route to oxygen and produce superoxide which is a strong oxidant [VLM+07]. Thus the thioredoxin and glutaredoxin systems in the mitochondrion play an important role in protecting this organelle from oxidation and oxidative stress. Several studies have correlated the oxidation of mitochondrial proteins are associated with aging and neural degenerative disease [MHMF96][BG91][Ferr09]. Thus it is valuable to construct the redox regulatory network in human mitochondria and test its capability of maintaining redox homeostasis, and then infer the biological outcomes by the downstream regulated metabolic network in case of oxidative stress.

As mentioned in chapter 3, the target protein for thioredoxin/glutaredoxin system in plant mitochondria and chloroplasts has been reported in many publications but not in the human mitochondrion yet. Due to the specialty of the proposed biological question, the database methodology is not feasible, and mining of unstructured information in the literature also gives little information. Besides, the biological database doesn't specify the interaction type between two biological molecules, and the text-mining method has the problem of accuracy and uncertainty of semantic relation between text-mined biological concepts. Therefore a bottom-up strategy by implementing a decision rule discriminating the type of cysteine residue is adopted to provide pre-selected candidate proteins. After the pre-selection, looking for the relevant literature supporting further discrimination is expected. And again, due to the less investigation and specialty of the research topic, it is hard to obtain the directly supportive literature through conventional literature search engines.

This chapter is devoted to the application of ROCD and ncDocReSy on the motivating biological question—pre-selection of thioredoxin/glutaredoxin target protein in human mitochondrion—to overcome the data and literature deficiency problem. ROCD implements the Cysteine Oxidation Prediction Algorithm (COPA) developed by Sanchez *et al.* [SRWM08] to pre-select the potential TTG by detecting the oxidation susceptible cysteine (Fig. 1.1). ncDocReSy is a bioentity-centered document retrieval system which incorporates the topology of biological network to extend the literature search beyond the initial query bioentity. First, ROCD is used on the protein inventory of human mitochondria to pre-select protein candidates. Then some of these candidates are sent to ncDocReSy for demonstration purpose, so that the relevant literature is retrieved to support the user in manual curation of pre-selected proteins from ROCD.

6.1 Pre-selection of target protein by ROCD

According to the discovery from Sanchez *et al*., the following criteria were used on ROCD web interface to pre-select potential TTGs in human mitochondria: (1) tissue: liver; (2) organelle: mitochondrion; (3) distance of thiol pair: 0~6.2 Angstrom; (4) ASA: 1.3~999 square Angstrom; (5) pK_a : 0~9.05. The result is shown in Appendix E (run on May 21st, 2012).

After ROCD receives the required parameters, the protein set for the human liver mitochondrion is first retrieved according to the annotation in HPRD. This initial protein data set consists of 518 unique SPACC. Since the protein/peptide 3D structure is the essential input for the following calculation, ROCD tries to get the resolved PDB structure or a computationally predicted structure from SwissModel Repository. After this step, 196 SPACCs have experimentally determined PDB structures, and 223 SPACCs have computationally predicted structures. Thus in total, 419 SwissProt accession numbers could be linked to 3D structures described in PDB format. However, the corresponding structure does not always cover the complete peptide sequence of a protein. In many cases, only partial fragments of the mature peptide are experimentally determined or computationally predicted. The coverage of the peptide fragment with 3D coordinates for these 419 SwissProt accession numbers could be as low as 1% (PDB entry 3AGZ for SPACC P11142) of the length of mature peptide. Beside the sequence

coverage issue, there is also the sequence identity issue between the template and the targeted protein. If a computationally predicted structure is used for the calculation of physicochemical properties of the targeted protein, the chosen template might not have a 100% peptide sequence identity to the targeted protein. The sequence identity between the targeted and template proteins ranges from 20% (O60488, Q9BXM7) to 99% (P06576, Q9BUI6).

From the set of 419 SwissProt accession numbers annotated with either experimentally or computationally determined structures, only 309 unique SwissProt accession numbers fulfilled the pre-selection criteria adopted from Sanchez *et al*. The well-known redox transmitters (Trx2, Grx2, Trxr2) and redox sensors (Prx5) of RRN in the human mitochondrion were included in the set of 309 SwissProt accession numbers.

ROCD is accessible through its web interface, and the web page of the preselection result provides hyperlinks to other public molecular databases for certain data field. From the web page result, Cytoscape can be initiated through Java Web Start and preloaded with ncDocReSy, so that user can proceed with literature search after ROCD's pre-selection. The pre-selection result is downloadable in the XML format, and the XML schema of the result file could be found on the ROCD website. The XML-formatted result file and its schema information allow easy parsing of the result file through Java Architecture for XML Binding (JAXB). A tab-delimited format of the result file is also provided for direct loading into Microsoft Excel, and some data manipulation processes, such as sorting and filtering, can be applied from Microsoft Excel.

6.2 Literature search by ncDocReSy

After the pre-selection by ROCD, user might wish to look for relevant publication concerning the pre-selection result and carry out manual curation. This section is devoted to the application of ncDocReSy on the pre-selection result.

6.2.1 Generation of network context-ranked literature list

The first application will demonstrate the procedures leading to the generation of network context-ranked literature list using one of the pre-selected proteins, the aspartate aminotransferase (SPID: AATM_HUMAN), as an example. Before the metabolic network involving aspartate aminotransferase is displayed, ncDocReSy first searches for the metabolic pathways to which the aspartate aminotransferase is associated and

displays the name of each associated pathway as a node in the main network panel (Fig. 6.1). At this stage user can start to apply literature search function on the pathway name node. Figure 6.1 also shows the literature search result using the query terms "phenylalanine metabolism" and "human thioredoxin-2" and the literature search engine PubMed. The literature search returns three articles, and by clicking on the "PubMed link" attribute field, the PubMed records of these three articles are shown in the web browser.

Besides doing literature search on the pathway name nodes, the content of the chosen pathway can be displayed. Figure 6.2 gives the snapshot of phenylalanine metabolic pathway, where aspartate aminotransferase is associated with EC number 2.6.1.1 and carries out the KEGG reaction R00694. When the user requests the display of the pathway contents, ncDocReSy downloads the pre-compiled CSML file from our server and saves it in a local temporary file. Due to the CSML format of the downloaded file, the user can load this temporary file into CellIllustrator (Fig. 6.3).

If a pathway contains too many metabolites and enzymes, the whole network would be too complicated to be comprehended. ncDocReSy mimics the network topology of KEGG map and only displays the major metabolite which characterizes the reaction and hides the presumably less important ones. ncDocReSy also enables user to crop the network, so that only the nodes that are within a defined distance from a selected node are retained in the network view.

The literature search process starts from the selection of bioentity nodes which interest the user. Besides selection of interesting bioentity nodes, user has to give the free text query terms whose relationship to the selected bioentities are user's interest. Figure 6.4 shows that the substrate and product nodes of enzyme EC 2.6.1.1 are selected, and "human thioredoxin-2" is used as the extra free text query terms. Only PubMed is selected as the literature search engine in this example.

Figure 6.1 The associated metabolic pathway for UniProt entry AATM_HUMAN (human aspartate aminotransferase) and the literature **Figure 6.1** The associated metabolic pathway for UniProt entry AATM_HUMAN (human aspartate aminotransferase) and the literature search result on the pathway name nodes. The UniProt entry AATM_HUMAN is associated with 7 metabolic pathways as displayed in the search result on the pathway name nodes. The UniProt entry AATM_HUMAN is associated with 7 metabolic pathways as displayed in the main network view window (the "Metabolic pathways" is the generic name for any metabolic pathway). The string "Phenylalanine main network view window (the "Metabolic pathways" is the generic name for any metabolic pathway). The string "Phenylalanine metabolism" and the free text query "human thioredoxin-2" are sent to PubMed, and three publications are retrieved. These three metabolism" and the free text query "human thioredoxin-2" are sent to PubMed, and three publications are retrieved. These three publications are displayed in the web browser by clicking the URL under the PubMed_link attribute in the data panel. publications are displayed in the web browser by clicking the URL under the PubMed_link attribute in the data panel.

Figure 6.3 The downloaded CSML file of the phenylalanine metabolic pathway is loaded into CellIllustrator. The light blue-colored edges show the linkage between EC 2.6.1.1 and its reactants.

ncDocReSy tries to retrieve the different synonym for the selected bioentities before sending query to the literature search engine. Figure 6.5 shows that 5 synonyms are associated with 3-Phenyl-2-oxopropanoate (KEGG Compound ID: C00166) and more than 20 synonyms with EC 2.6.1.1. When we check the preliminary literature returned with the synonyms of EC 2.6.1.1, most of the synonyms generate the same literature set. The activation of hit-and-move mode can alleviate the exhausted iteration of all synonyms. Figure 6.4 actually shows the literature search on bioentity node EC 2.6.1.1 when the "hit-and-move" mode is on. A preliminary literature list with 3 articles is retrieved by the synonym "aspartate transaminase" and "human thioredoxin-2".

Figure 6.5 Synonyms associated with the EC 2.6.1.1 and its reactants. There are as many as 20 more synonyms for EC 2.6.1.1, two
synonyms for (S)-alpha-Amino-beta-phenylpropionic acid (KEGG Compound ID: C00079) and five syn synonyms for (S)-alpha-Amino-beta-phenylpropionic acid (KEGG Compound ID: C00079) and five synonyms for 3-Phenyl-2 oxopropanoate (KEGG Compound ID: C00166)

After completing the literature search with the different synonyms of the selected bioentity nodes, the obtained preliminary literature lists can be merged based on the same bioentity and free text query string. The merged literature list is represented by a single summarization node as shown in Fig. 6.6. After the literature summarization, the network-context ranked literature list can be generated and displayed through the URL in the "ncRLL_link" attribute field of each bioentity node. Figure 6.7 shows the networkcontext ranked literature list considering the preliminary literature lists within one extension level.

6.2.2 Capability of network context-ranked literature list

The second application will show the capability of network context-ranked literature list using another pre-selected protein, namely the glycine amininotransferase (SPID: GATM_HUMAN), as an example.

After the relevant metabolic pathways for GATM_HUMAN are obtained, two relevant pathways––Glycine, serine and threonine metabolism as well as Arginine and proline metabolism––are extended. GATM_HUMAN is associated to EC 2.1.4.1 in the metabolic pathways. Since the enzyme node is reaction-specific, EC 2.1.4.1 are represented by two separate nodes for two reactions–– KEGG reaction R01989 and R00565. The network is cropped by four layers centered at enzyme node 2.1.4.1 R00565, and ncRLL is obtained by the following steps: (1) The free text query term "human thioredoxin-2" is used. (2) PubMed is chosen. (3) The hit-and-move mode is used. (4) Document retrieval is applied on all the enzyme and metabolite nodes displayed in ncDocReSy. (5) The literature lists obtained by different synonyms are summarized. (6) ncRLL is obtained by considering the bioentity nodes within four layers in the neighborhood. After these steps, each bioentity node displayed in the ncDocReSy has a ncRLL affiliated to it concerning the free text query "human thioredoxin-2". As Fig. 6.8 shows, the input GATM_HUMAN belongs to EC 2.1.4.1. The ncRLL for EC 2.1.4.1 can be seen under the "ncRLL(4)(human thioredoxin-2)" attribute of EC 2.1.4.1 node in the data panel and can be displayed in the web browser by clicking the field under "ncRLL_link(4)(human thioredoxin-2)" attribute.

The document retrieval on the bioentity node "2.1.4.1" and with the free text query "human thioredoxin-2" retrieves no relevant literature list, but a ncRLL can be obtained through network-contexted literature search (Fig. 6.8). The first-ranked journal article in the ncRLL is PMID 20306272. When we check where this article comes from,

we find it is affiliated to metabolite node (S)-2-amino-5-guanidinovaleric acid, which is a substrate of EC 2.1.4.1, and also to other nodes, such as EC 1.14.13.39 and nitric oxide (Fig 6.9). These three nodes are all located in the upstream region of EC 2.1.4.1. The same region is also where the $2nd$ - to $10th$ - ranked journal articles are affiliated to. The $11th$ ranked article is PMID 12855383. This article is affiliated to the metabolite node (S)-2,5-diaminopentanoate, which is a product of EC 2.1.4.1, and also to other nodes like 1,4 butanediamine, glutamate and EC 1.4.1.2 in the downstream region (Fig. 6.10). Judging from these observations, the user can know that there are published articles that link human thioredoxin-2 to the substrate and product of the input protein GATM_HUMAN as well as other upstream and downstream bioentities in spite of no relevant article directly reporting the involvement of the input protein. ncDocReSy gives the user an overview of the published journal articles in the biological network context.

Figure 6.6 Literature summarization. The blue edges show the reaction of EC 2.6.1.1. The summarization node is shown in thickened square in green. square in green.

6.2.3 Capability of full-text search and literature refinement

Another pre-selected protein is lanosterol synthase (SPID: ERG7_HUMAN). The third application chooses this protein for easy demonstration of the capability of the full-text literature search and the literature refinement function. Lanosterol synthase is associated with the EC number 5.4.99.7 as shown in Fig. 6.11. This node of EC number 5.4.99.7 and its direct substrate and product nodes are selected for preliminary and refined literature search (Fig. 6.11). One of the synonyms for EC number 5.4.99.7 is "lanosterol synthase". The query terms "lanosterol synthase" and "thioredoxin" obtain no literature from PubMed but 3 articles from BioText and 13 articles from PMC. Since the preliminary literature list from the query term "lanosterol synthase" and "thioredoxin" is pinkcolored, it means the phrase search mode has been applied to obtain the preliminary literature list. Therefore, the result solely indicates the appearance of "lanosterol synthase" and "thioredoxin" in the full text but does not identify the semantic type of them in the context of the article. To determine the correct semantic type of the matched terms, the refinement process is applied to the preliminary literature lists which are obtained by PMC and BioText. The full text of each article in the preliminary literature list is submitted to whatizit for semantic type tagging. Only the article which describes the queried bioentity in the expected semantic type, such as protein or chemical, is presented to the user. The refinement result shows that only one full-text article contains terms matching the query terms and being in the correct semantic type in the preliminary literature list derived from BioText. And two articles have passed the refinement process in the preliminary literature list derived from PMC.

The products of EC number 5.4.99.7 is "4,4',14 alpha-trimethyl-5 alpha-cholesta-8,24-dien-3 beta-ol". When the literature search is done with one of its synonyms, lanosterol, and "thioredoxin", there are preliminary literature returned from BioText and PMC. But after checking the semantic type, no article passes the refinement process. The reason of this outcome is that the metabolite name "lanosterol" occurs in the preliminary literature under incorrect context, such as "lanosterol synthase" or "lanosterol 14-alpha demethylase", which refers to a protein name.

Figure 6.11 Capability of full-text literature search and the literature refinement function of ncDocReSy. The query with lanosterol synthase and thioredoxin retrieves no article from PubMed but 13 from PMC and 3 from BioText. After the literature list refinement, 2 synthase and thioredoxin retrieves no article from PubMed but 13 from PMC and 3 from BioText. After the literature list refinement, 2 PMC articles (label b) and 1 BioText article (label e) mention lanosterol synthase in the expected semantic type (as a protein). The PMC articles (label b) and 1 BioText article (label e) mention lanosterol synthase in the expected semantic type (as a protein). The Figure 6.11 Capability of full-text literature search and the literature refinement function of ncDocReSy. The query with lanosterol similar outcome applies to lanosterol, but no article passes the semantic type check. similar outcome applies to lanosterol, but no article passes the semantic type check.

Chapter 7

Discussion

In chapter 6, two tools–ROCD and ncDocReSy–developed in this thesis work have been applied to the motivating biological question, namely the pre-selection of potential target proteins for thioredoxin/glutaredoxin. This chapter discusses the results obtained in chapter 6 and attempts a general discussion about each tool.

7.1 Discussion about Reversibly Oxidized Cysteine Detector (ROCD)

ROCD, the first tool, pre-selected 309 human mitochondrial proteins expressed in the liver as the potential candidates of thioredoxin- and glutaredoxin- mediated dithioldisulfide transition for further validation. ROCD is based on protein-specific characteristics which allow for the calculation of three physicochemical properties. Even a structure for a structurally unresolved protein can be computationally modeled based on homologous structures deposited in the SwissModel repository, the model retrieved often only covers part of the protein. Particularly the N- and C-terminal domains often remain unpredictable. Therefore, it is impossible to detect the oxidation susceptibility of all cysteine residues provided some cysteines are absent from the model. The alternative for improving the structural model is to do manual model building with more user intervention. The present version of ROCD only retrieves the structural model generated from the automated modeling procedure of SwissModel repository for structurally unresolved protein. One future extension of ROCD is to allow users to provide their

manually built models, so that the availability and coverage of the protein structure are enhanced.

Due to their high reactivity with other thiols and compounds, cysteinyl residues exist as one of the least abundant amino acids and usually are conserved in functionally important sites. The function of cysteinyl thiols can be roughly classified as: (I) catalytic redox-active Cys, (II) regulatory Cys, (III) structural Cys, (IV) metal-coordinating Cys, (V) catalytic non-redox Cys, and (VI) posttranslationally modifiable Cys [FMG08]. However, in some cases a Cys can fall into more than one of the above categories. The catalytic redox active Cys residues are present in the active sites of thiol oxidoreductases and are directly involved in catalysis and are highly conserved in protein sequences. Glutathione reductase, Grx, thioredoxin reductase, and Trx in the redox regulatory network bear this type of cysteines. Several computational methods have been introduced in section 3.1.3.2 for prediction of thiol oxidoreductases and this type of Cys. The structural Cys residues are involved in the disulfide bond formation which is a major mechanism of protein structure stabilization. This class of Cys can be computationally predicted through the analysis of distance between any two sulfur atoms of Cys residues in the same protein. The metal-coordinating Cys residues are highly conserved and frequently present in the form of CxxC motif, which is also the typical motif of thiol oxidoreductases. The catalytic non-redox Cys residues participate in catalysis but don't change their redox state in the reaction and are highly conserved. This class of Cys could be predicted by sequence or structure similarity to functionally characterized proteins. The regulatory Cys residues reside in the non-catalytic region of a protein and may be reversibly oxidized. The redox state of regulatory Cys is changed by formation of intraor intermolecular disulfide bonds, glutathionylation, and S-nitrosylation, and thus regulates protein activity. The TTG contains this class of Cys and is the focus of the thesis. The identification of regulatory Cys is mostly through experimental method. Several features, such as acid-base motifs and high frequency of charged amino acids in Cys-flanking regions, have been described but are not specific enough. As pointed out in Fomenko *et al*. [FMG08], computational identification of regulatory Cys is a challenge in redox biology. The ROCD tool developed in the thesis adopts the bottom-up strategy for computational identification of regulatory Cys by first pre-select the oxidation susceptible cysteine. Once the principle for the "re-reducible" property is discovered in the future, this principle can be added into ROCD workflow, so that the set of regulatory Cys can be finally determined.

With the advance of proteomics techniques, chromatography coupled with gelbased or mass spectrometry can experimentally identify TTGs or proteins that undergo dithiol-disulfide transitions [HHF+05][RVS+05][YWL+01][SD08]. Due to technical limitation, further experiments are needed to eliminate the false positive proteins. Specificity and sensitivity of the experimental techniques need to be improved in order to overcome the false positive problem and to identify target proteins with low abundance. ROCD has deployed the capability of bioinformatics to provide additional potential target protein candidates to complete the network and also to support the experimental approach. ROCD complements the high-throughput experimental approaches such as affinity chromatography and diagonal redox SDS gel electrophoresis, which can identify specific proteins that are under redox control but are incapable of identifying specific cysteine thiols that are redox-regulated.

ROCD is intended to serve as a TTG prediction module for the automatic construction of redox regulatory network. ROCD pre-selects the TTG by detecting the oxidation susceptible cysteine which is the initial step in the bottom-up TTG prediction (Fig. 1.1). To achieve the final goal *i.e.*, the prediction of TTG, the other additional steps are the prediction of cysteine re-reducibility and the interaction specificity between TTG and Trx/Grx. Some properties have been discussed and provide the plausible directions for resolving these issues, such as the redox potential and torsional energy of the disulfide bond for redox activity [WFH10], the hydrophobic groove on thioredoxin for recognition and docking of target protein [WCH+01] [MHF+06]. The computational implementation of these strategies will complete the bottom-up pipeline and achieve the automatic construction of redox regulatory network.

7.2 Discussion about network-contexted document retrieval system (ncDocReSy)

Following the acquirement of pre-selected protein by ROCD, ncDocReSy is used to provide relevant literature to assist biologists in manual curation, and some examples have been presented in section 6.2.

ncDocReSy combines the biological networks and literature retrieval services of three literature search engines. The criteria of ncDocReSy are to: (a) maximize the returned documents (b) which mention the intended bioentity with correct semantics in its context. The goal of criteria (a) is to increase the recall and (b) to increase the precision in the document retrieval.

7.2.1 The recall issue

The three search engines incorporated in ncDocReSy differ in the bibliographic fields to be searched in and their indexing and search methodology. The searchable field in PubMed is confined to bibliographic records, such as title, authors, journal name, and the narrowest comparing with the other two search engines but the broadest in term of article coverage. PMC and BioText allow the full text beyond the bibliographic records to be searched, but the size of article collection is confined by the number of open accessed journals. As mentioned in Url12, it is advisable to search PubMed and PMC separately for a comprehensive search. The utilization of these three search engines together will complement the shortcoming of each other and enhance the recall.

Besides the differences in searchable fields, the indexing methods adopted by these three search engine have different effects on recall and precision. Considering the two indexing methodologies used in the present biomedical literature retrieval systems, the full-text based indexing has a higher recall because any document whose content contains the terms matching the user's input will be returned. The keyword-based indexing system has higher precision because only documents whose keywords and thus the main topic match the user's query are returned.

The other strategy for enhancing recall in ncDocReSy is the phrase search function. Phrase search is to add double quote around the query terms or the adhesion of "tw"(standing for "text word") qualifier after the query terms. Phrase search is useful when the queried terms appear literally in the article but were not listed in the entry term of the MeSH heading. However, the phrase search will return some false positive results. The article which contains the string "3-chloro-4-hydroxyphenyl acetate" will be included in the returned list if the user's interest is only "4-hydroxyphenyl acetate", while the phrase search is used. Another example of false positive result would be the article containing "4-hydroxyphenylacetate 1-monooxygenase" or "4-hydroxyphenyl acetate decarboxylase", which is enzyme, is returned when "4-hydroxyphenylacetate", which is a metabolite, is intended. The literature refinement function of ncDocReSy enables to solve this problem.

7.2.2 The precision issue

To fulfill the criteria (b), ncDocReSy uses the advanced search features of PubMed by attaching MeSH qualifier, so that the preceding query term will be interpreted as protein or metabolite under the "Chemicals and drugs" category of MeSH by PubMed/PMC. This advanced search feature was found to be only seldom used in an analysis of PubMed logs [BHTH07].

Another optional operation for assuring the correct semantic type is to do literature refinement on the preliminary literature list. The preliminary literature list node is marked differently by ncDocReSy when it is retrieved using phrase search mode. This specially marked preliminary search result and the result from BioText can be further filtered to remove some false positive records. ncDocReSy uses the named entity recognition and semantic type annotation functions from whatizit to identify the records containing the synonym of the intended bioentity with the correct semantic type (protein/metabolite). After this filtering process, the article which contains only "3 chloro-4-hydroxyphenyl acetate" will be removed when "4-hydroxyphenyl acetate" is intended, and so will the one with "4-hydroxyphenyl acetate decarboxylase" for "4 hydroxyphenyl acetate", as exemplified before. As also shown in section 6.2.3, this literature list refinement function can filter out the article which mentions "lanosterol synthase" when only "lanosterol" is desired.

7.2.3 Network-contexted literature ranking

ncDocReSy devises a scoring schema for ranking the literature considering the distancedependent association and upstream-downstream symmetry around the questioned bioentity. The distance-dependent association is represented by a factor which decreases with the shortest distance between the focused bioentity and its ancestor or descendent nodes. The idea of including this distance-dependent association is to use the associated ancestor/descendent bioentities as the surrogates of the focused bioentity, and farther the associated node from the focused bioentity, the weaker the surrogating ability, and the fewer scores the attached document receives. The consideration of upstream-downstream symmetry is from the theoretical reasoning: if the catalytic enzyme of a reaction malfunctions, the amount of substrates and products of the reaction will be accumulated and decreased, respectively. Therefore, if both the upstream and downstream substances of a focused bioentity in a directional network are mentioned in a document, this document is more worthy of an inspection. For each document, ncDocReSy multiplies the total distance-dependent association scores $(RW_d^{\dagger}$ and RW_d^{\dagger} in Figure 5.6) from the upstream and downstream regions of the focused bioentity to reveal this upstreamdownstream symmetry effect. After this multiplication, the network-scaled score for each document is generated, and the document list is ranked by this score. The higher ranked document is expected to have closer neighbor nodes located both in the upstream and downstream regions to be co-mentioned together with the focused bioentity in the same document.

7.2.4 Perspective on ncDocReSy

ncDocReSy provides the user with the opportunity of looking for indirectly relevant literatures based on established knowledge of biological network. In the current version, ncDocReSy includes only the network of physical interaction, such as catalytic, proteinprotein, and protein-chemical interaction network. The integrated biological network could be extended to include other types of biological networks, such as gene regulation and signal transduction. Besides the incorporation of heterogeneous type of biological network, integration of different resources for the same type of network could also be done in the future. The current version of ncDocReSy uses KEGG database as the only resource for the metabolic network, and the inclusion of Reactome and BioCyc data is planed.

During the calculation of region-specific weight, current ncDocReSy includes the surrogate ability weight considering the shortest distance between the ancestor/descendent node and the focused node. However, the surrogate ability depends not only on the distance but also the bioentity serving as the surrogate. If a bioentity is associated with numerous reactions, the surrogate ability from this bioentity is less representative for one specific reaction. The assignment of varied surrogate weight to different molecules in terms of its exploitation popularity would prioritize the more promising literature.

The implementation of literature list refinement downloads the full text and partitions the text into different sections, such as introduction, conclusion, discussion, before submitting to whatizit for the semantic typing. However, ncDocReSy doesn't take advantage of the section where the query terms are found. This information could be utilized by ncDocReSy in the future.

Besides, the returned literature list could be further processed by text mining tools to extract new knowledge.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

Bioinformatics both in terms of application and tool development appears to be in the log phase of growth. Hundreds of biological databases and tools are developed aiming at different aspects of cell biology. With the current state of bioinformatics and the advance of information technology, the adaptation of integrative methodology to tackle biological problem is desirable and feasible. The integrative methodology is featured by the utilization of multi-omics data and multi-disciplines resources. Integrating information from different levels of functional hierarchy offers different perspectives for question resolution.

The starting point of this work was the increase in knowledge on the function and importance of the cellular thiol-disulfide redox regulatory network in controlling development and adaptation of organisms. Thus the motivating question was whether the structure of this regulatory network can be expanded by *in silico* approaches. However, biological databases and biomedical publication are populated with the result from popular research topics. When a less investigated or novel research topics are focused, little or no information can be obtained from the database and literature. The question of Trx/Grx target protein identification, which is a critical step in the redox regulatory network construction, faces the same difficulty that little information can be retrieved from the database and the literature. Concerning the data deficiency issue in the target protein identification, a bottom-up strategy is adapted in this thesis to pre-select some candidates. The pre-selected candidate fulfills partial prerequisites of being the promising

candidate, and the number of pre-selected candidate might be numerous. The preselection result thus requires further refinement by imposing other rules.

One strategy for pre-selection refinement is manual curation by reading relevant literature. However, the scarcity of relevant literature again becomes a problem. Concerning the literature scarcity problem, the network-contexted document retrieval system stated in chapter 5 extends the literature search by incorporating the biological network topology, so that the indirectly relevant literatures are fetched and ranked by network topology. The network-contexted document retrieval can be seen as bringing Swanson's ABC model into literature search (Fig. 8.1).

Figure 8.1 The resolution strategy for Trx/Grx target protein identification in the thesis

Chapter 2 exemplifies various bioinformatics resources for cell biology study and essential facilities for the integrative bioinformatics. The capability of an integrative methodology is fostered by the fast generation of biological data, biological databases, bioinformatics tools, and the advance of information technology. In chapter 3, the biological background of the motivating biological question is provided, and the currently relevant research is introduced. This chapter demonstrates that the method of database integration is not suitable for construction of specialized biological network. Besides the structured data from the biological databases, the restriction from mining the unstructured text in the biological literature is also shown. Due to this data deficiency issue, a bottomup methodology by discriminating the type of amino acid residue, which belongs to the bottom level in the functional hierarchy (Fig. 2.1), is adopted (Fig. 1.1). The discovery from Sanchez *et al*. happens to provide us with this discrimination principle. Chapter 4

focused on the work of Reversibly Oxidized Cysteine Detector (ROCD) which implements the decision rule discovered by Sanchez *et al* [SRWM08] in order to automate the identification of putative elements of the redox regulatory network. The decision rule of Sanchez addresses the oxidation susceptible cysteine residue by considering three physicochemical properties, namely cysteine-cysteine distance, acid dissociation constant (pK_a) and accessible surface area (ASA). ROCD combines the resources from biological databases, computational tools for biochemical properties, and the practice of contemporary web-based information techniques, such as the adoption of XML format in the result file and the web service to access dependent resources. ROCD requests the user to provide the protein list, the value ranges of three physicochemical properties before ROCD execution. The protein list can be obtained by either selecting from the lists of human tissue and organelle or user's manual input. Besides being displayed in the web browser, the ROCD result is downloadable in XML format for further processing. In chapter 5, a network-contexted document retrieval system (ncDocReSy) was introduced to provide complementary access to unstructured knowledge deposited in the biomedical literature. It works as the document retrieval system which is essential for literature-based curation. The purpose of ncDocReSy is to assist the scientist looking for indirectly relevant literature concerning their questioned bioentity for manual curation. ncDocReSy is a network-contexted document retrieval system which extends the document retrieval beyond the bioentity of use's interest and takes the other associated bioentities into account from the systematic perspective. The combination of biological network into biomedical document retrieval in ncDocReSy also allows the easy navigation of literatures concerning all bioentities in a biological network. Several essential elements for integrative bioinformatics have been used in ncDocReSy, such as the use of Cytoscape as the integration platform, the use of integrated database DAWIS M.D., web service as the techniques to access IntAct and DAWIS M.D. The specialty of biological resources used in ROCD and ncDocReSy spans the function level from atom/residue to pathway/network and deals with structured data in the biological database as well as the unstructured one present in the scientific publications (Fig 8.2). In the end, the biological application of ROCD on the human mitochondrial proteins has pre-selected 309 potential target proteins for thioredoxin/glutaredoxin-dependent thiol-disulfide transition. Any of these proteins can be inspected through review of relevant literature retrieved from ncDocReSy, and the promising candidates is finally decided after reading the returned literature.

In summary, this thesis shows that the database-driving or literature-driving biological network construction is currently not applicable to the very specific biological network due to the data deficiency in database and literature. However, a bottom-up preselection process based on certain known biochemical properties of the involved bioentity can identify the group of possible candidates for further detailed inspection. The incorporation of biological network into literature search helps to retrieve indirectly relevant literature while the directly relevant one is not available for the specialized research topic. The two tools covered in the thesis overcome the data deficiency problem in the specialized study.

Figure 8.2 The bioinformatics resources utilized in the thesis. The resources used in ROCD are marked in green and ncDocReSy in red.

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Target proteins of thioredoxin in plants mitochondria. The GOs in green are from UniProt and annotated as "predicted". The GOs in red are
predicted by GoPred [SAC10] Target proteins of thioredoxin in plants mitochondria. The GOs in green are from UniProt and annotated as "predicted". The GOs in red are predicted by GoPred [SAC10]

Appendix B

The calculation result from ROCD for PDB IDs in BALOSCTdb. The PDB IDs in the second column are included in the BALOSCTdb data set. The corresponding SPACC for each PDB ID was obtained by ID mapping service.

Appendix C

Statistics for the validation of ROCD calculation against BALOSCTdb. The data in the first four columns is extracted from BALOSCTdb. The last column shows the compliance of ROCD prediction with BALOSCTdb.

Appendix D

Result from applying ROCD on 46 thioredoxin target proteins in plant mitochondria. The PDB ID in upper case letters are the exact structure entry for the protein, and the PDB ID in lower case is obtained by homology modeling. The fifth column from the left records the sequence identity and the position of the fragment being modeled, and the sixth column indicates the position of mature peptide. The two digits separated by underscore in the seventh column mean the cysteine residue pair, and the eighth column records the qualified residue number and residue name. The last column indicates the position of CxxC motif. If "‐1" is shown in the data value, it indicates the missing information. The data syntax for each column is:

peptideCoverage column-- "chainSymbol"_"peptideCoverage"

modelSimilarity column-- "chainSymbol""peptideResidueNumber" "chainSymbol""peptideResidueNumber" or "spacc"_"pdbModelTemplate"_"sequenceSimilarity"_"modeledResidueStart"_"modeledResidueEnd"_ SwissModel

maturePeptide column-- "peptideResidueNumberStart"_"peptideResidueNumberEnd" NoteG1 column‐‐ [list of chains]_"pdbResidueNumber"("uniprotResidueNumber")_[list of chains]_"pdbResidueNumber"("uniprotResidueNumber") or "peptideResidue"_"peptideResidue" NoteG2 column‐‐ [list of chains]_"pdbResidueNumber"("uniprotResidueNumber")_"aminoAcid" or "peptideResidue"_"aminoAcid"

spacc	proteinName	pdbld	peptide coverage	ity	model_similar maturePeptid e	NoteG1	NoteG2	CxxC motif
P52904	Pyruvate dehydrogenase 20zl E1 component subunit beta, mitochondrial			0.95 P52904 2ozl 60 25 347 S wissModel	20 359			
082450	Branched-chain alpha- keto acid decarboxylase E1 beta subunit	1dtw		-1 O82450_1dtw -1 _-1 67_30_352_S wissModel			249 CYS 86 C YS	
Q9ZPX5	Succinate dehydrogenase 2fbw [ubiquinone] flavoprotein subunit 2, mitochondrial			0.99 Q9ZPX5 2fbw 30 632 67_39_632_S wissModel		175 177	292_CYS	
081233	Superoxide dismutase	NoRecordl nSMR						
P16048	Glycine cleavage system H protein, mitochondrial	1HTP	A 1.00	A35 A165	35 165			
P16048	Glycine cleavage system H protein, mitochondrial	1HPC	A 1.00 B 1.00 A35 A165	B35 B165	35 165		$[A]$ _124(158)_ CYS	
P16048	Glycine cleavage system H protein, mitochondrial	1DXM	A_1.00 B_1.00 A35 A165	B35_B165	35 165			
P37225	NAD-dependent malic enzyme 59 kDa isoform, mitochondrial	NoRecordl nSMR						
P26969	Glycine dehydrogenase [decarboxylating], mitochondrial	NoRecordI nSMR						
Q9ZT91	Elongation factor Tu, mitochondrial	2hcj		0.07 Q9ZT91 2hcj 52 454 93 65 93 Swi ssModel				

CxxC motif column‐‐ "matchedMotif"_"motifLocation"

The pre-selected proteins from ROCD in human liver mitochondrion following the criteria from Sanchez et al. This table shows the The pre‐selected proteins from ROCD in human liver mitochondrion following the criteria from Sanchez *et al* . This table shows the structures are associated with one SPACC. The NoteG1 column is for the cystein pair complying with the dithiol distance criteria. structures are associated with one SPACC. The NoteG1 column is for the cystein pair complying with the dithiol distance criteria. computationally resolved structure was removed from the raw result. Then only one record is selected when multiple PDB computationally resolved structure was removed from the raw result. Then only one record is selected when multiple PDB The NoteG2 column is for the cystein residue complying with the pK_a and ASA criteria. The data syntax for each column is: The NoteG2 column is for the cystein residue complying with the pK a and ASA criteria. The data syntax for each column is: partial result from the raw ROCD result due to page limitation. First the protein entry without the experimentally or partial result from the raw ROCD result due to page limitation. First the protein entry without the experimentally or

peptideCoverage column-- "chainSymbol"_"peptideCoverage" peptideCoverage column‐‐ "chainSymbol"_"peptideCoverage"

'spacc"_"pdbModelTemplate"_"sequenceSimilarity"_"modeledResidueStart"_"modeledResidueEnd"_ SwissModel "spacc"_"pdbModelTemplate"_"sequenceSimilarity"_"modeledResidueStart"_"modeledResidueEnd"_ SwissModel modelSimilarity column-- "chainSymbol""peptideResidueNumber" _"chainSymbol""peptideResidueNumber" or modelSimilarity column‐‐ "chainSymbol""peptideResidueNumber"_"chainSymbol""peptideResidueNumber" or maturePeptide column-- "peptideResidueNumberStart"_"peptideResidueNumberEnd" maturePeptide column‐‐ "peptideResidueNumberStart"_"peptideResidueNumberEnd"

NoteG2 column-- [list of chains]_"pdbResidueNumber"("uniprotResidueNumber")_"aminoAcid" or NoteG2 column‐‐ [list of chains]_"pdbResidueNumber"("uniprotResidueNumber")_"aminoAcid" or chains]_"pdbResidueNumber"("uniprotResidueNumber") or "peptideResidue"_"peptideResidue" chains]_"pdbResidueNumber"("uniprotResidueNumber") or "peptideResidue"_"peptideResidue" NoteG1 column-- [list of chains]_"pdbResidueNumber"("uniprotResidueNumber")_[list of NoteG1 column‐‐ [list of chains]_"pdbResidueNumber"("uniprotResidueNumber")_[list of 'neptideResidue" "aminoAcid" "peptideResidue"_"aminoAcid"

F, H]_303(320)|

132

B]_420(420)|

137

138

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