What the Taq? The Influence of Different Hi-Fidelity Taq Polymerase on 16S rRNA Sequencing

Marc A Sze[1] and Patrick D Schloss[1†]

† To whom correspondence should be addressed: pschloss@umich.edu

1 Department of Microbiology and Immunology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Co-author e-mails:

- marcsze@med.umich.edu

Abstract

Background.

Methods.

Results.

Conclusions.

Introduction

Materials & Methods

Human and Mock Samples: A single fecal sample was obtained from 4 individuals who were part of the Enterics Research Investigational Network (ERIN) and the processing and storage of these samples have been published previously (Seekatz et al., 2016). Clinical data and other types of meta data were not utilized or accessed for this study. All samples were extracted using the MOBIO™ PowerMag Microbiome RNA/DNA extraction kit (now Qiagen, MD, USA). The ZymoBIOMICS™ Microbial Community DNA Standard (Zymo, CA, USA) was used in this study and is made up of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Escherichia coli*, *Salmonella enterica*, *Lactobacillus fermentum*, *Enterococcus faecalis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *Bacillus subtilis* at equal genomic DNA abundance (http://www.zymoresearch.com/microbiomics/microbial-standards/zymobiomics-microbial-community-standards).

PCR Protocol: The five different high fidelity (HiFi) Taq DNA polymerase that were tested were AccuPrime™ (ThermoFisher, MA, USA), KAPA HIFI (Roche, IN, USA), Phusion (ThermoFisher, MA, USA), Platinum (ThermoFisher, MA, USA), and Q5 (New England Biolabs, MA, USA). The PCR cycle conditions were the same for every primer (Kozich et al., 2013) (https://github.com/SchlossLab/MiSeq_WetLab_SOP/blob/master/MiSeq_WetLab_SOP_v4.md). If the HiFi Taq had a specific activation time that was different then 2 minutes that was used instead. The 30 cycle default was used but the cycle conditions started at 15 and increased by 5 up to 35 cycles and was used for both fecal and mock samples. The fecal PCR consisted of all 4 samples at 15, 20, 25, 30, and 35 cycles for each Taq (total samples = 100). Although, the mock communities also had 4 replicates used for 15, 20, 25, and 35 cycles, 10 replicates were used for 30 cycles for all Taq (total samples = 130). For all the mock community samples there was not enough PCR product at 15 cycles for adequate sequencing.

Sequence Processing: The mothur software program was utilized for all sequence processing steps (Schloss et al., 2009). The protocol followed was similar to what has been previously publsihed (Kozich et al., 2013) (https://www.mothur.org/wiki/MiSeq_SOP). Two major differences from the stated protocol were the use VSEARCH instead of UCHIME for chimera detection and the use of the OptiClust algorithmn instead of average neighbor for OTU generation (Edgar et al., 2011; Rognes et al., 2016; Westcott & Schloss, 2017). Sequence error was determined using the seq.error command on mock samples after chimera removal and classification to the RDP to remove non-bacterial sequences (Schloss et al., 2009; Cole et al., 2013; Rognes et al., 2016).

Statistical Analysis: All analysis was done with the R (v 3.4.2) software package (R Core Team, 2017). Data tranformation and graphing was completed using the tidyverse package (v 1.1.1) and colors selected using the viridis package (v 0.4.0) (Garnier, 2017; Wickham, 2017). The total number of OTUs were analyzed using an ANOVA with a tukey post-hoc test. For the fecal samples the data was normalized to each individual by cycle number to account for the biological variation between different people. For both error and chimera analysis, samples were tested using Kruskal-Wallis with a Dunns post-hoc test. Where applicable correction for multiple comparison utilized the Benjamini-Hochberg method (Benjamini & Hochberg, 1995).

Analysis Workflow: The total number of OTUs after sub-sampling was analyzed for both the fecal and mock community samples. From these observations we wanted to next analyze potential reasons as to why some of these differences may have occured. First, analysis of general sequence error rate, number of sequences with an error, and base subsitution were assessed in the mock community for each Taq. After assessing these errors, the total number of chimeras was determined after sequence processing. The fecal samples were analyzed at 4 different sub-sampling levels, 1000, 5000, 10000, and 15000 while the mock community samples were analysed at 3 levels, 1000, 5000, 10000.

Reproducible Methods: The code and analysis can be found here https://github.com/SchlossLab/Sze_PCRSeqEffects_XXXX_2017. The raw sequences can be found in the SRA at the following accesssion number **need to upload still**.

Results

Insert Sub title here

Discussion

Conclusion

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank all the study participants ERIN whose samples were utilized. We would also like to thank Judy Opp and April Cockburn for their effort in sequencing the samples as part of the Microbiome Core Facility at the University of Michigan. Salary support for Marc Sze came from the Canadian Institue of Health Research and the Michigan Institute for Clinical and Health Research Postdoctoral Translational Scholar Program.

References

Benjamini Y., Hochberg Y. 1995. Controlling the false discovery rate: A practical and powerful approach to multiple testing. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society. Series B (Methodological)* 57:289–300.

Cole JR., Wang Q., Fish JA., Chai B., McGarrell DM., Sun Y., Brown CT., Porras-Alfaro A., Kuske CR., Tiedje JM. 2013. Ribosomal database project: Data and tools for high throughput rRNA analysis. *Nucleic Acids Research* 42:D633–D642. DOI: 10.1093/nar/gkt1244.

Edgar RC., Haas BJ., Clemente JC., Quince C., Knight R. 2011. UCHIME improves sensitivity and speed of chimera detection. *Bioinformatics* 27:2194–2200. DOI: 10.1093/bioinformatics/btr381.

Garnier S. 2017. *Viridis: Default color maps from 'matplotlib'*.

Kozich JJ., Westcott SL., Baxter NT., Highlander SK., Schloss PD. 2013. Development of a dual-index sequencing strategy and curation pipeline for analyzing amplicon sequence data on the MiSeq illumina sequencing platform. *Applied and Environmental Microbiology* 79:5112–5120. DOI: 10.1128/aem.01043-13.

R Core Team. 2017. *R: A language and environment for statistical computing*. Vienna, Austria: R Foundation for Statistical Computing.

Rognes T., Flouri T., Nichols B., Quince C., Mahé F. 2016. VSEARCH: A versatile open source tool for metagenomics. *PeerJ* 4:e2584. DOI: 10.7717/peerj.2584.

Schloss PD., Westcott SL., Ryabin T., Hall JR., Hartmann M., Hollister EB., Lesniewski RA., Oakley BB., Parks DH., Robinson CJ., Sahl JW., Stres B., Thallinger GG., Horn DJV., Weber CF. 2009. Introducing mothur: Open-source, platform-independent,

community-supported software for describing and comparing microbial communities. *Applied and Environmental Microbiology* 75:7537–7541. DOI: 10.1128/aem.01541-09.

Seekatz AM., Rao K., Santhosh K., Young VB. 2016. Dynamics of the fecal microbiome in patients with recurrent and nonrecurrent clostridium difficile infection. *Genome Medicine* 8. DOI: 10.1186/s13073-016-0298-8.

Westcott SL., Schloss PD. 2017. OptiClust, an improved method for assigning amplicon-based sequence data to operational taxonomic units. *mSphere* 2:e00073–17. DOI: 10.1128/mspheredirect.00073-17.

Wickham H. 2017. *Tidyverse: Easily install and load 'tidyverse' packages*.

Table 1:

Table 2:

Figure 1: .

Figure 2: .

Figure 3: .

Figure 4: .

Figure 5: .

Figure 6: .

Figure 7: .

Figure S1: .

Figure S2: .

Figure S3: .

Figure S4: .

Figure S5: .

Figure S6: .

Figure S7: .