

transNOESY_platform

USER'S GUIDE

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1. Intro - about the transNOESY_platform

The **transNOESY_plarform** is a free, user-interactive toolbox, created in MATLAB programming suite (2019b update 3, MathWorks). The purpose of this toolbox is to facilitate the implementation of the transNOESY method into NMR metabolomics pipeline^{1,2}. It provides the transformation of conventional ¹H-NMR spectra into transNOESY data and it incorporates various plotting functions-tools for the detailed visual examination of the data. Moreover, transNOESY_platform offers the opportunity of manual and/or semi-automated calibration/alignment of multiple transNOESY peaks from unlimited number of NMR spectra. Another feature of the toolbox is the direct integration of already highly resolved and baseline-free transNOESY signals of metabolites, aiming at their fast quantification by low computational cost integration. Except for the semi-automated targeted profiling, transNOESY_platform provides the option of transNOESY spectra-binning (i.e. bucketing) as well as automated variable shaped bucketing, suitable for untargeted NMR-based metabolomics (e.g. diseases fingerprinting) and multivariate statistical analyses (MVA). It is noteworthy that all results from the spectral analyses performed by the toolbox, are directly exported into user-friendly files format (i.e. tab-limited .txt files), which could be straightforwardly loaded into existing metabolomics planforms-toolboxes for further analyses. Finally, transNOESY_platform provides direct feedback/instructions to the user for each step of its computational processes, therefore is a user-friendly toolbox which can be easily operated by non-NMR experts.

2. Preparing spectra folder

¹H-NMR spectra (e.g. 1D-NOESY) should be in one folder as indicated in Fig. 1. Under each spectrum title (e.g. Spectrum 1, Spectrum 2 in Fig. 1), the experiment folder should be numerical (e.g. 1 in Fig. 1). Please **ensure that only 1 experiment folder exists**.

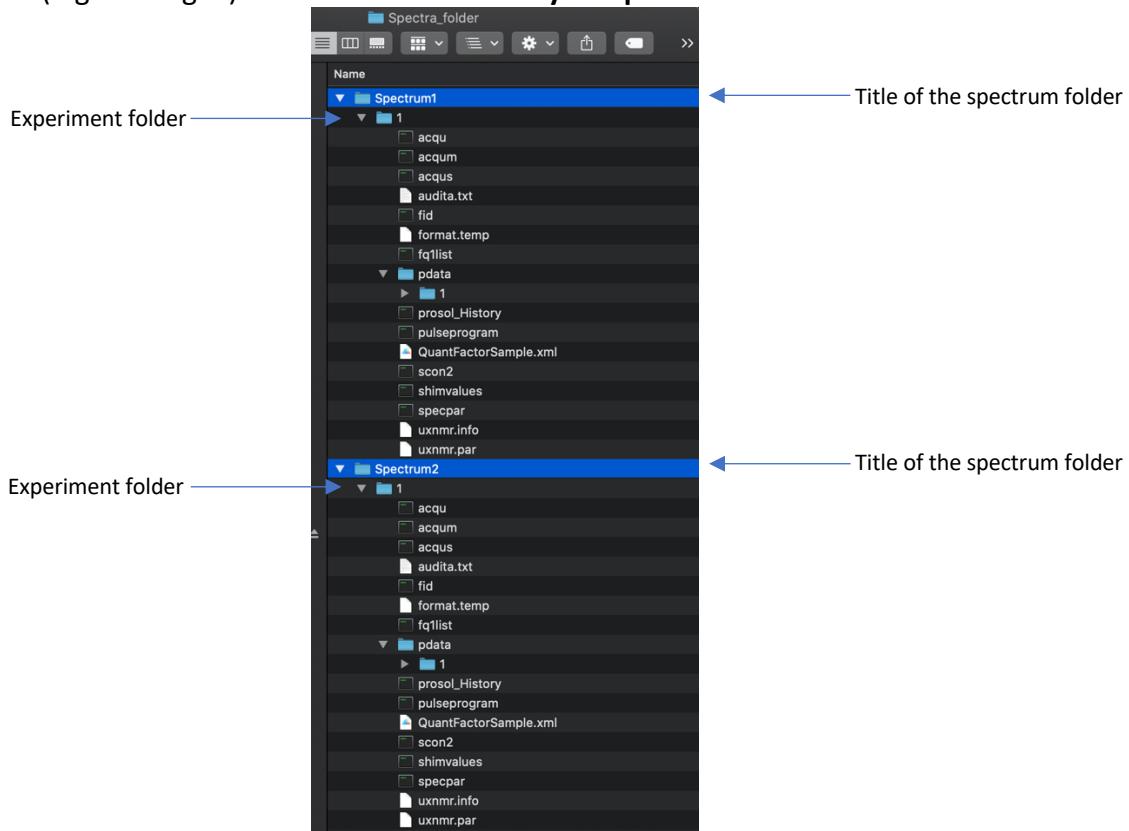


Figure 1. Spectra containing folder; In this example the spectra folder contains 2 1D-NOESY plasma spectra with the depicted structure.

3. Preparing output folder

Before running the GUI, the user should create a folder, where all results will be exported by the GUI.

4. Installing/Running transNOESY_platform

i) Installing/running transNOESY_platform by MATLAB

After downloading the toolbox folder from

https://github.com/pantakis/transNOESY_platform, open the “Set Path” dialog window from MATLAB (Fig. 2):



Figure 2.

and in the popped-up window choose the option “Add with Subfolders...” (Fig. 3) and select the parent folder of the toolbox, which contains the MATLAB code of the GUI.

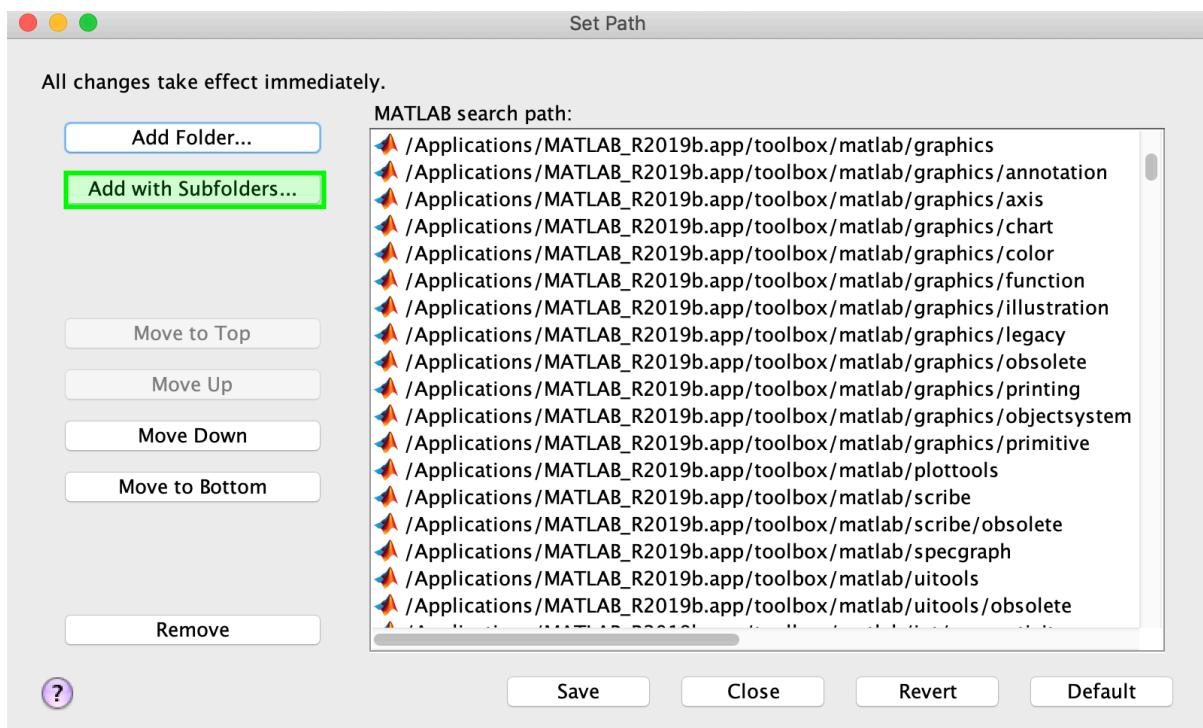


Figure 3.

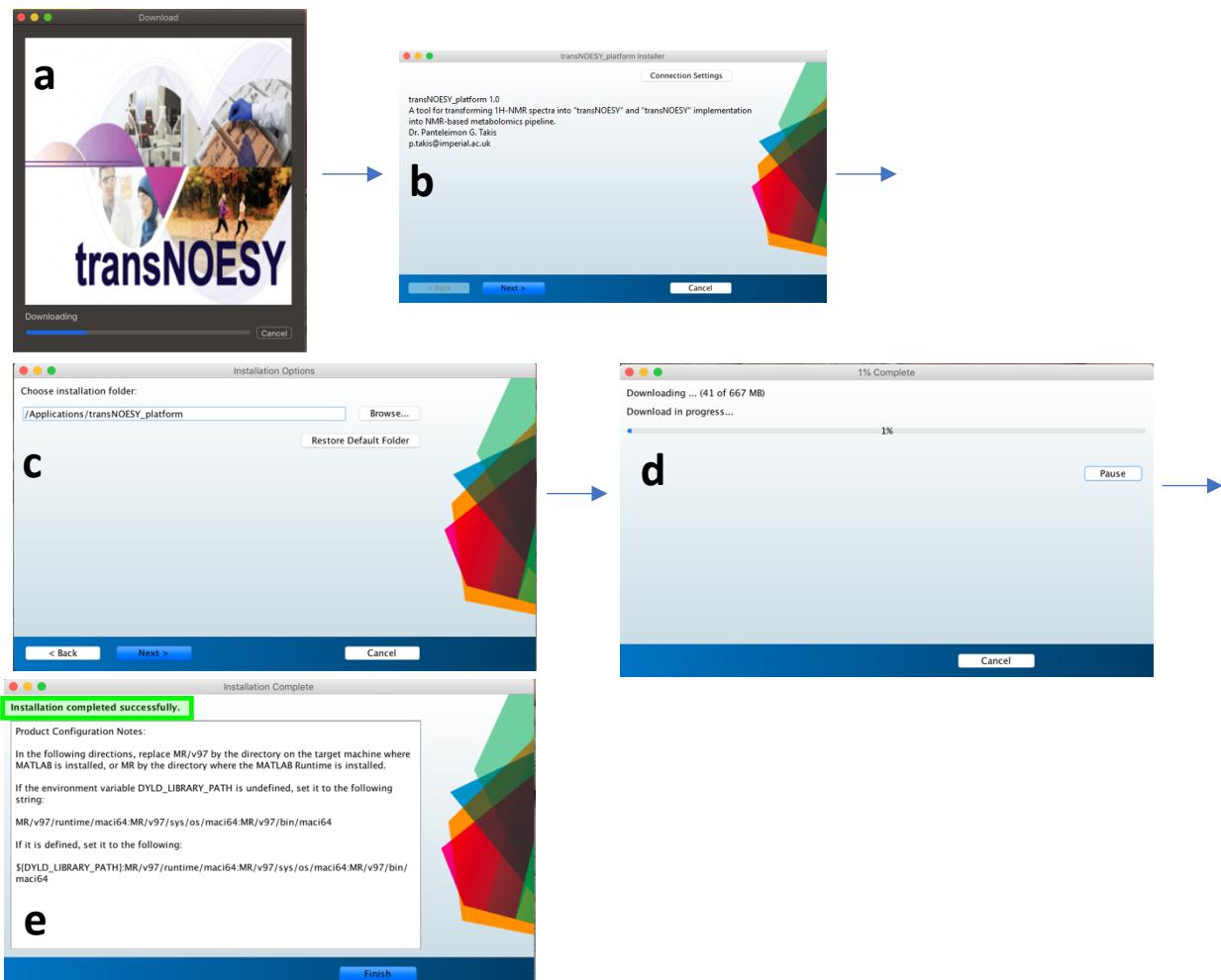
Finally, from the MATLAB command window type: “transNOESY_platform” and press “Enter” so as to launch the GUI (Fig. 4).



Figure 4.

ii) Installing/running transNOESY_platform by the compiled file for MacOS

After downloading the toolbox folder from https://github.com/pantakis/transNOESY_platform, in the folder “Compiled_for_MAC_OS”, double click the file “transNOESY_platform_installer.app”. Then follow the on-screen instructions (internet connection is required) for downloading/installing the MATLAB RUNTIME modules in order to run the toolbox. The following dialog windows (a-e) should appear sequentially on screen:

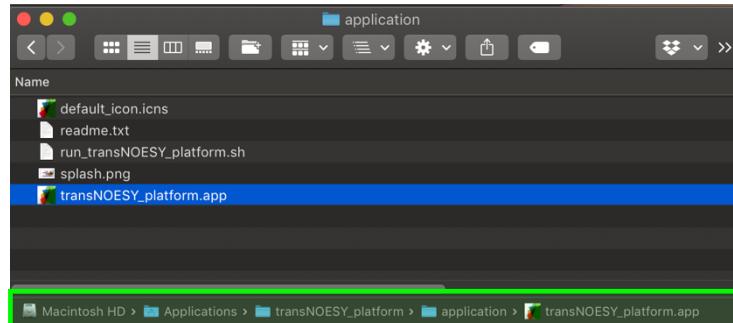


→ In panel c, please ensure that the installation folder is:

/Applications/transNOESY_platform

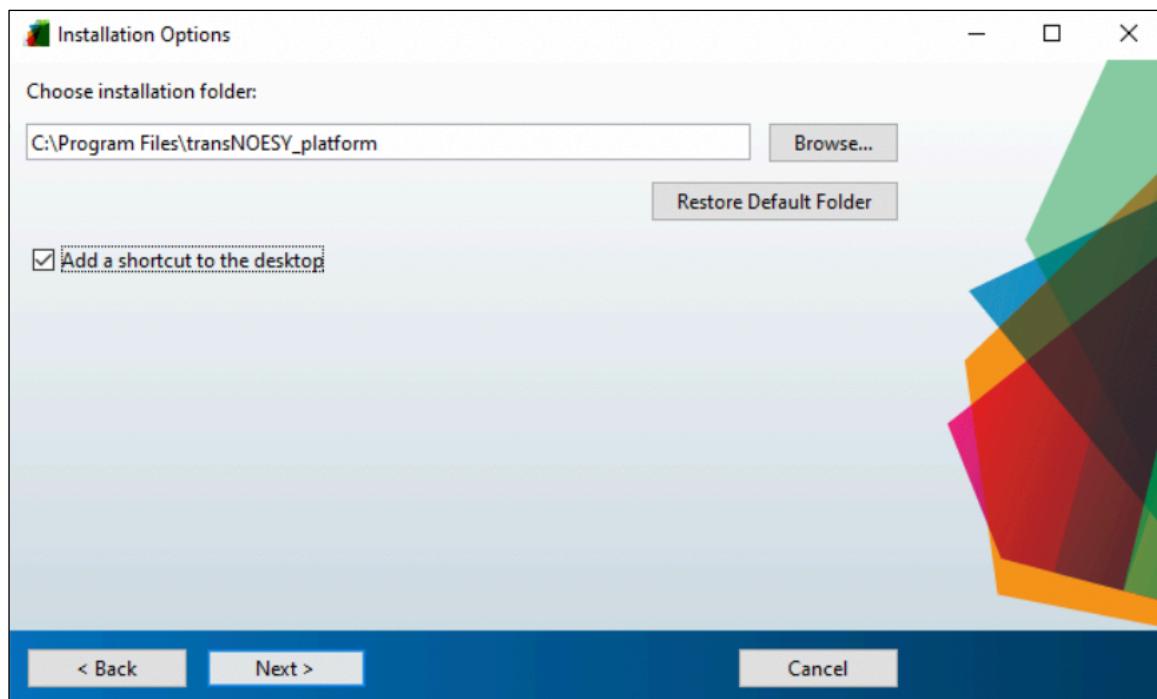
→ In panel e, ignore the Product Configuration Notes, once the installation is completed successfully.

→ To launch the application please double-click the “transNOESY_platform.app”, which should be located in the folder: “**../Applications/transNOESY_platform/application**”, as you could see below:



iii) Installing/running transNOESY_platform by the compiled file for Windows

After downloading the toolbox folder from https://github.com/pantakis/transNOESY_platform, in the folder “Compiled_for_Windows”, double click the file “transNOESY_platform_installer.exe”. Then follow the on-screen instructions (internet connection is required) for downloading/installing the MATLAB RUNTIME modules in order to run the toolbox as indicated above (i.e. for Mac OS). Please ensure that you create a desktop shortcut of the toolbox in order to launch it as shown below:



5. Loading ^1H -NMR spectra

Pressing the button “”, a dialog window opens (Fig. 5) in order to define the parent folder containing all NMR spectra to be loaded into the transNOESY_platform.

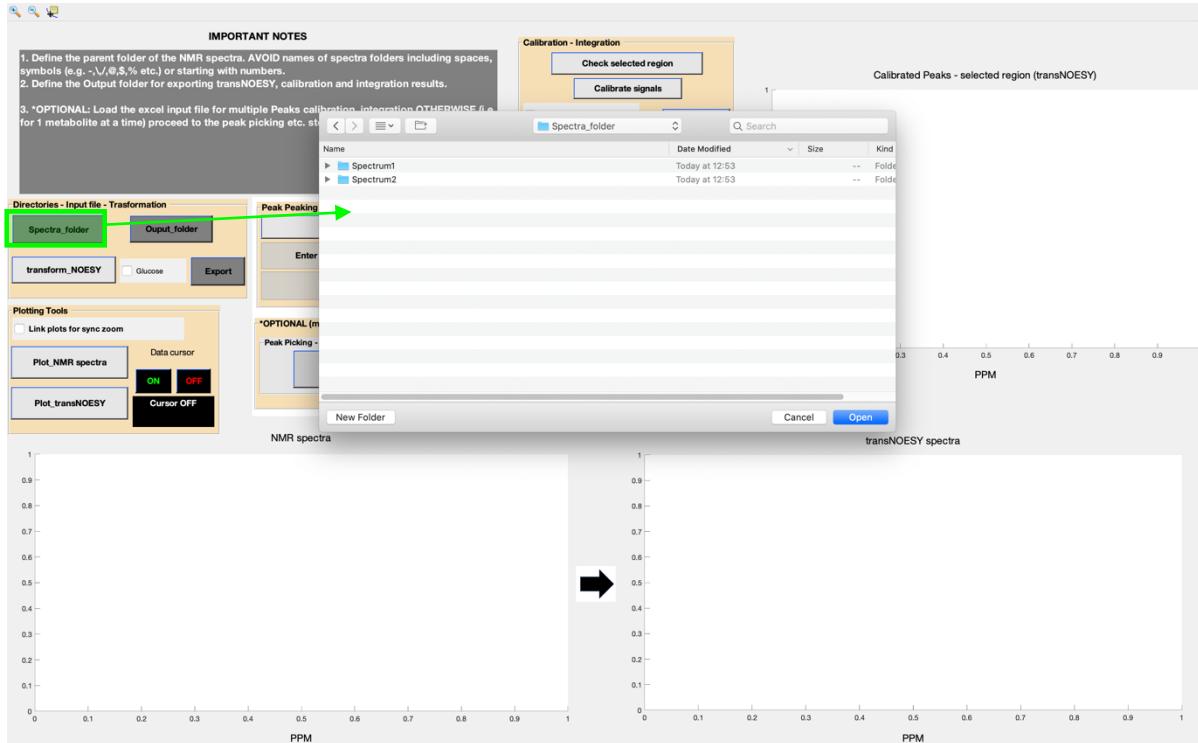


Figure 5.

→ NOTE 1

The “IMPORTANT NOTES” notifications box, informs the user for any errors (Fig. 6a) or the successful (Fig. 6b) reading/loading of the NMR data by the toolbox.

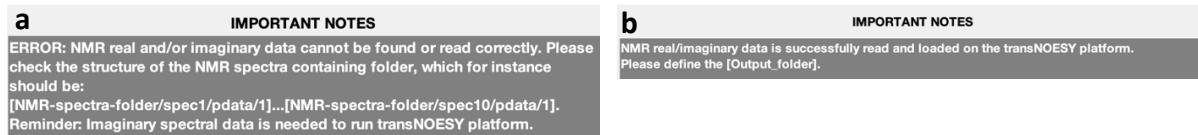


Figure 6.

6. Define output folder

Pressing the button “**Output_folder**”, a dialog window opens (Fig. 7) in order to define the output folder where all processing, transNOESY data etc. will be exported by the toolbox.

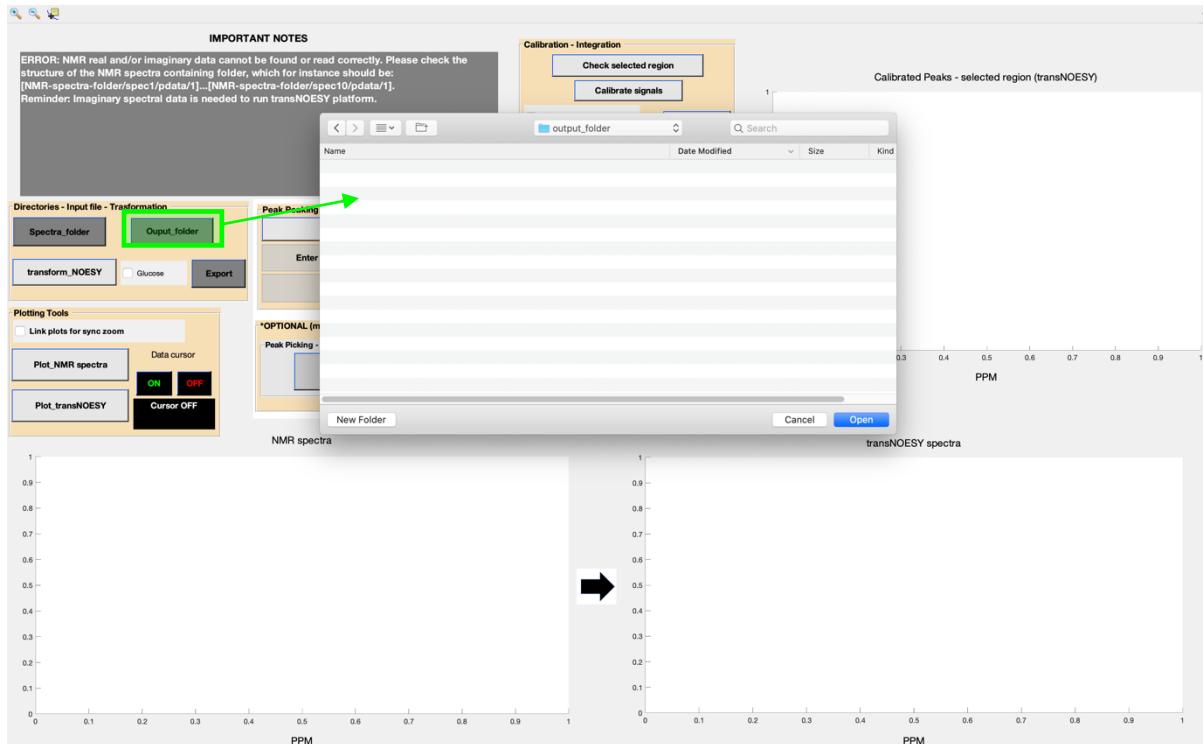


Figure 7.

7. Converting ^1H -NMR imaginary data into transNOESY

Pressing the button “” (Fig. 8), the imaginary spectral data of the loaded ^1H -NMR (e.g. 1D-NOESY) spectra will be transformed into the transNOESY.

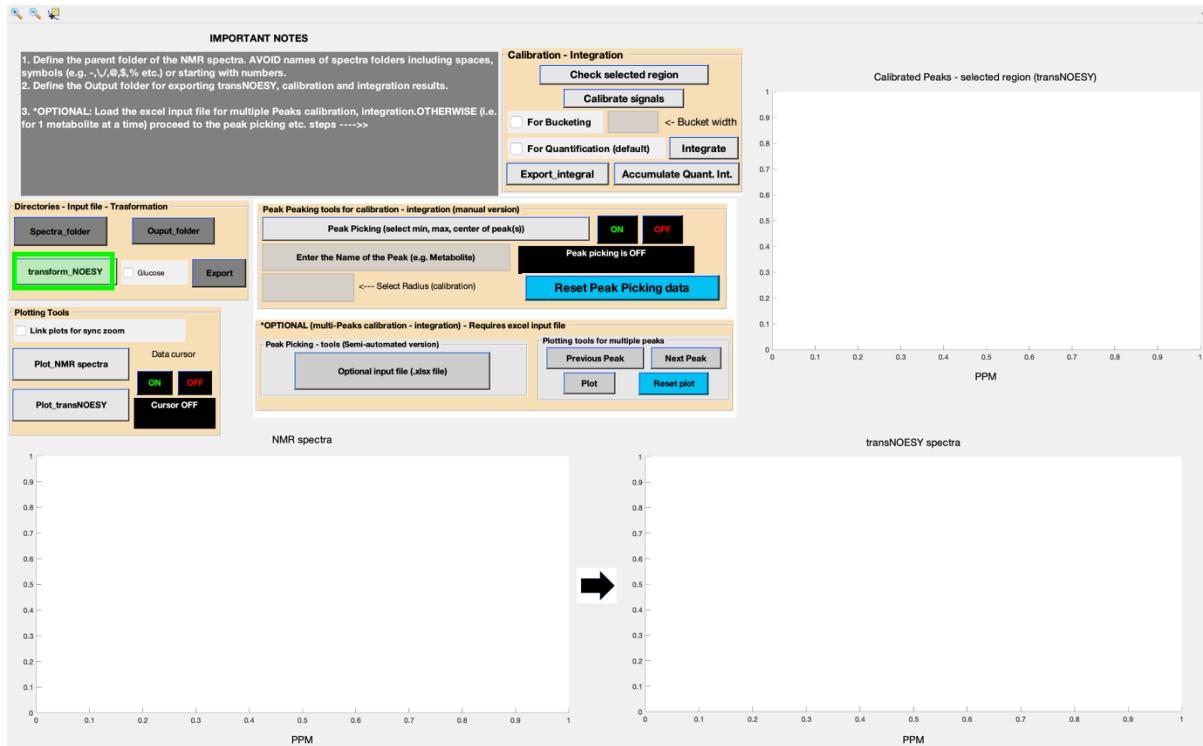


Figure 8.

→NOTE 1

The “IMPORTANT NOTES” notifications box, informs the user for any errors (Fig. 9a) or the successful (Fig. 9b) transformation of the ^1H -NMR data into transNOESY.



Figure 9.

8. Exporting transNOESY data (OPTION: aligned to Glucose)

Pressing the button “” (Fig. 10a), the transNOESY data is exported to the previously defined output folder as a tab_limited .txt file named as: “transNOESY_spectra.txt”.

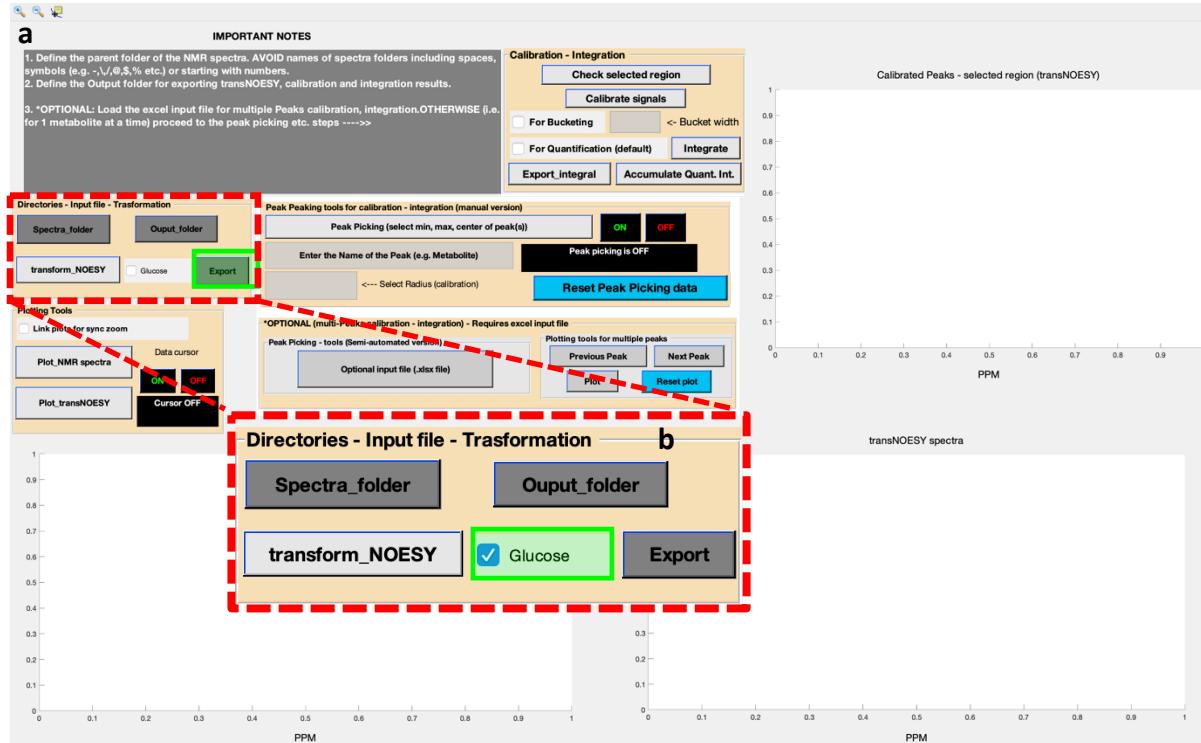


Figure 10.

→ NOTE 1

The “IMPORTANT NOTES” notifications box, informs the user for any errors (Fig. 11a) or the successful (Fig. 11b) exportation of the transNOESY data.



Figure 11.

OPTION: Align transNOESY data to Glucose (Fig. 10b) (“”) doublet and export data to the output folder as a tab_limited .txt file named as: “transNOESY_ALIGNED_to_GLUCOSE_spectra.txt”.

→ NOTE 2

i) The “IMPORTANT NOTES” notifications box, informs the user for any errors or the successful (Fig. 12) exportation of the aligned to Glucose transNOESY data.

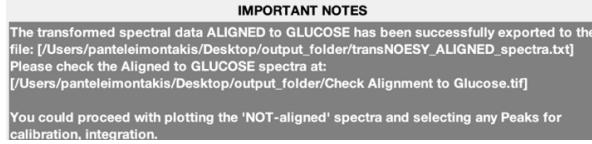


Figure 12.

ii) It is noted that after aligning to Glucose, user could export aligned to Glucose transNOESY data, however, transNOESY_platform employs only the initial (NOT-aligned) transNOESY data for any following analyses.

9. Plotting ^1H -NMR vs transNOESY data (OPTIONS: synchronize plots – use cursor)

Pressing the buttons “  ” and “  ” (Fig. 13a), NMR spectra and transNOESY are both plotted in two panels, respectively (Fig. 13a).

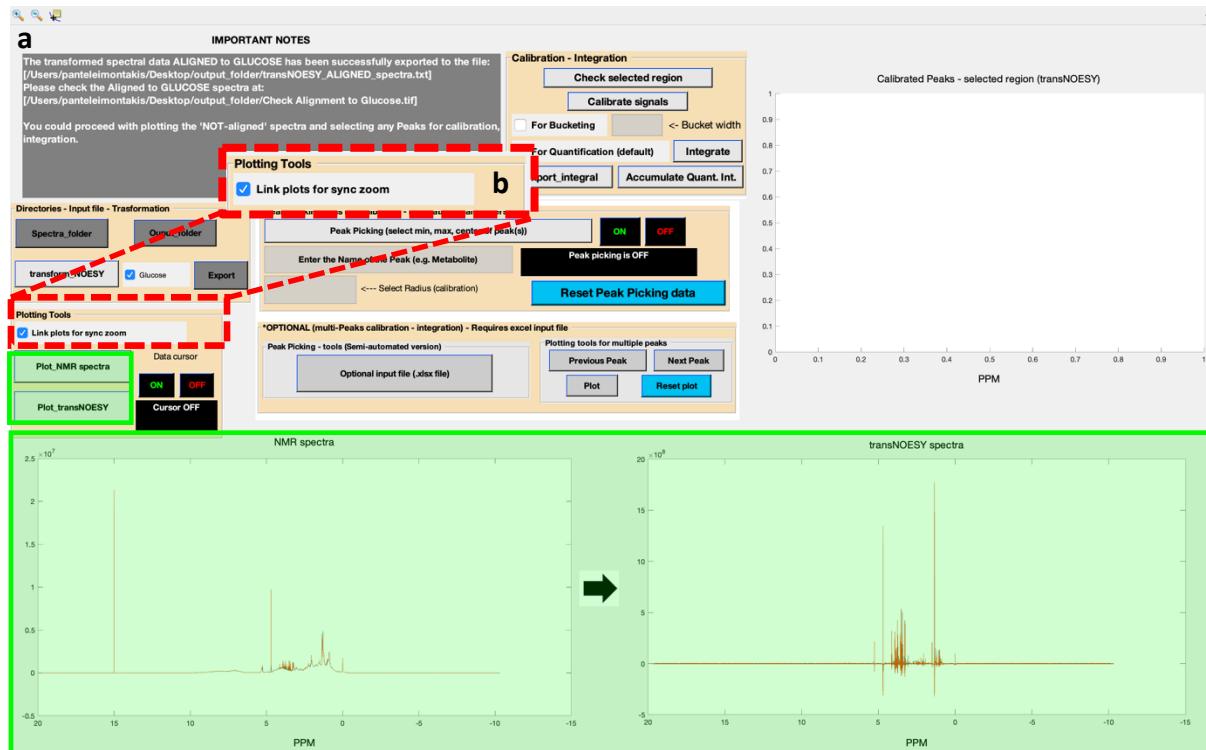


Figure 13.

OPTION_1: Activate synchronizing zoom by the checkbox “  ” (Fig. 13b) for both plots.

OPTION_2: Activate data cursor “  ” by pressing “ON” button, for extracting information of peak positions for both panels independently. Spectral features position is automatically printed in the legend of each panel (Fig. 14) by mouse-over in the spectral area of each panel.

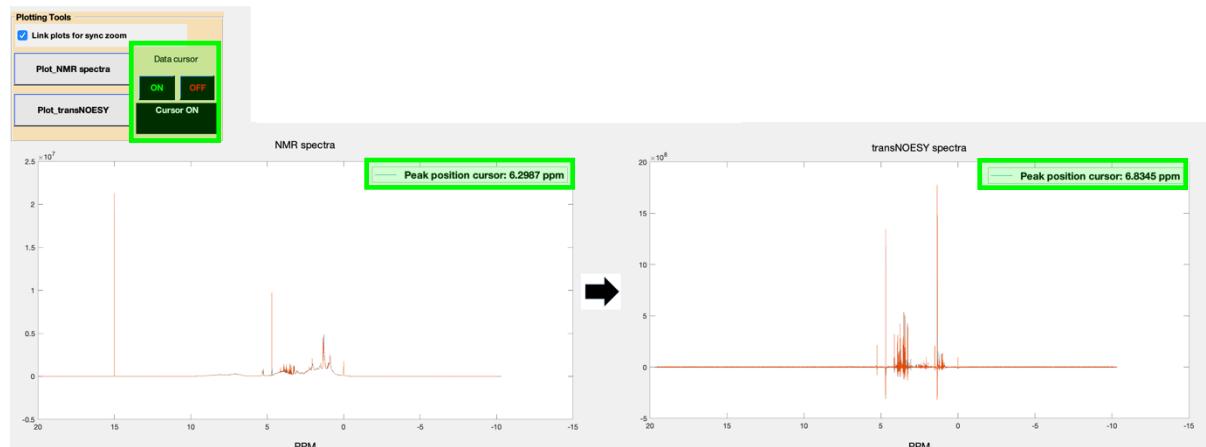


Figure 14.

10. Optional functionalities of transNOESY_platform

10.1 Manual peak picking in the transNOESY data – Calibration of a defined region from multiple spectra to a specific peak – Integration

Activating peak picking by pressing “” button and pressing “” button (Fig. 15a), the user is able to manually define 3 values in the spectral area in order to focus on a specific spectral region (Fig. 15b).

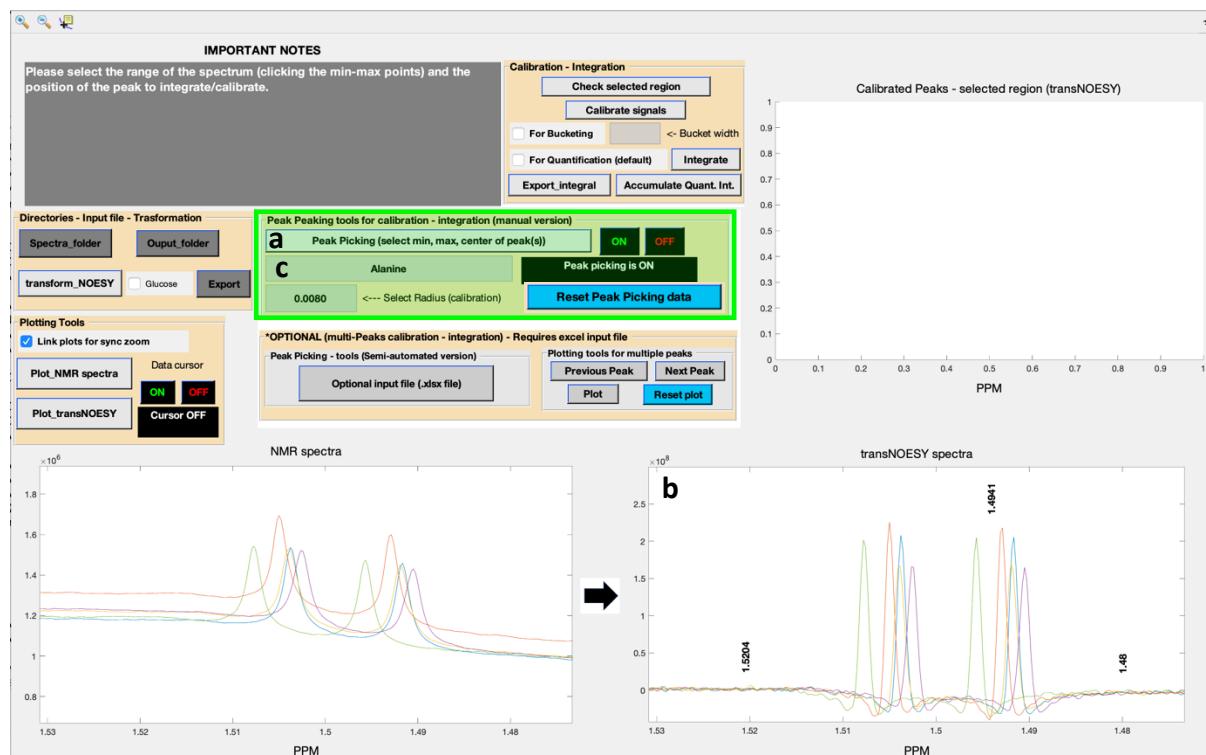


Figure 15.

In particular by clicking on the transNOESY spectra panel (Fig. 15b), user could select:

- i) 2 values to define the min-max ppm of the selected spectral region (see Fig. 15b, values: 1.5204 ppm, 1.48 ppm).
- ii) 1 Ref. value to define the reference ppm value where the selected spectral region will be aligned for all spectra (see Fig. 15b, value: 1.4911 ppm).

User could define any metabolite(s) (or compound(s)) enclosed in the selected region by inserting a unique word (i.e. valine-isoleucine) in the dialog box: “” (see Fig. 15c, name: Alanine).

A 4th value should be inserted in the dialog box: “” (see Fig. 15d, value: 0.0080). This value, termed as radius, drives the algorithm to search/select the spectral feature (i.e. peak) with the highest intensity in the spectral region for all spectra;

[Ref. value – Radius] < highest peak < [Ref. value + Radius],
and calibrates/aligns it at the defined reference value.

The example of acetate metabolite in 5 plasma ^1H -NMR spectra, explaining the step-by-step followed procedure is pointed below:

→Step 1

Assigning the ^1H -NMR singlet of acetate -CH₃ group in the 5 plasma spectra see asterisks in Fig. 16)

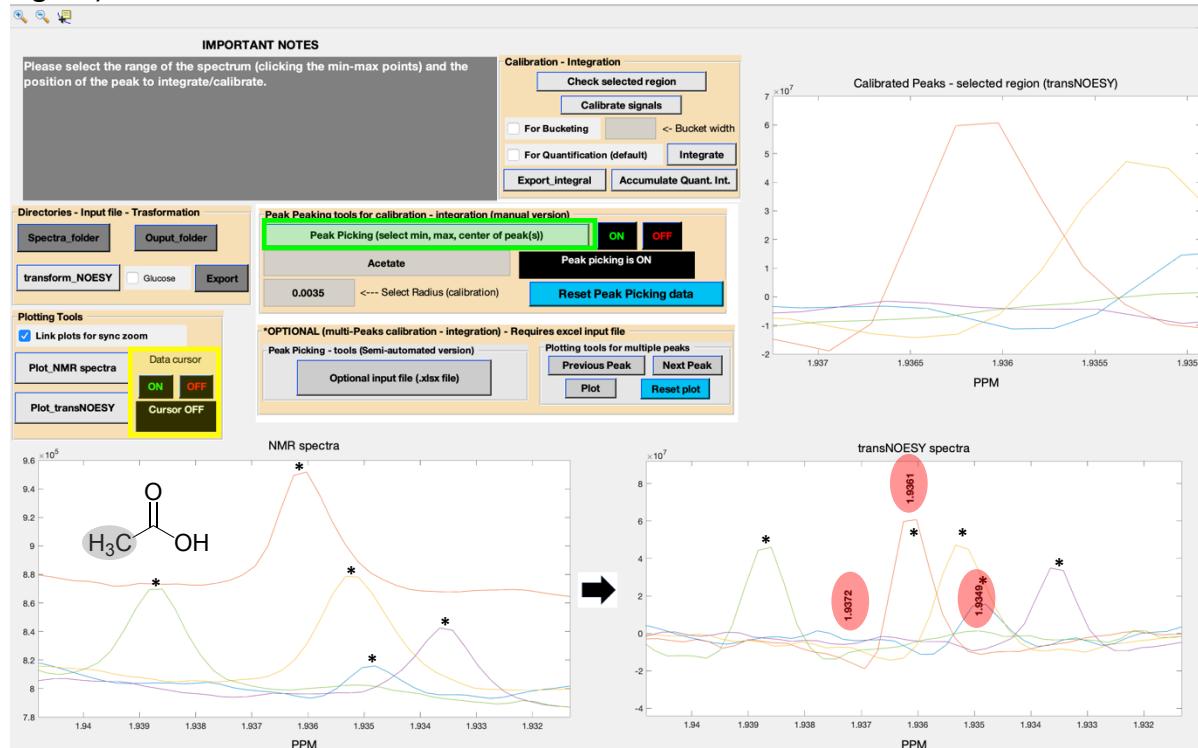


Figure 16.

→Step 2

3 values (Fig. 16 red circles) manually defined by firstly clicking the activated peak picking function (Fig. 16, green highlighted) and afterwards clicking on the spectral area of the transNOESY panel. The min and max values define the spectral region where all 5 singlets of acetate will be aligned according to the reference peak pointed by the 3rd value (i.e. 1.9361 ppm).

→Step 3

To define radius, user could activate “” (Fig. 16 yellow highlighted) and pass the mouse over the peaks of acetate in order to see the positions of the most remote signals of acetate from the reference value (i.e. 1.9361 ppm), and each ppm point of the spectral window will appear at the legend (Fig. 17 green highlighted) of the transNOESY spectra panel.

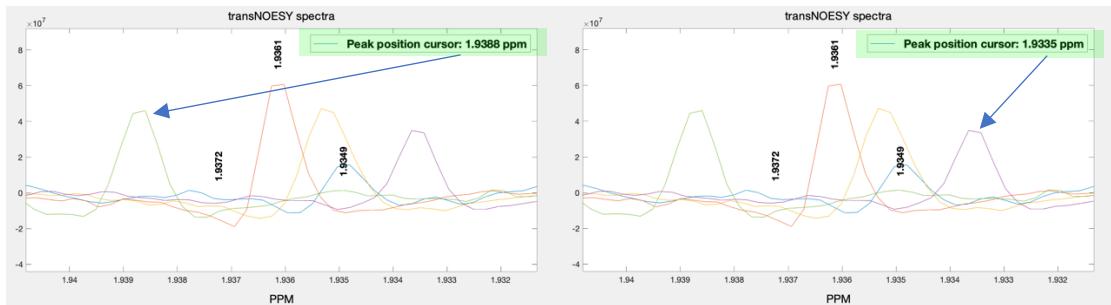


Figure 17.

In this example, the most remoted signals of acetate resonate at 1.9388 and 1.9335 ppm (Fig. 17 green highlighted) and their distances from the reference value (i.e. 1.9361 ppm) are 0.0027 and 0.0026 ppm, respectively.

Consequently, the radius should be at least 0.0027 ppm. For this case, we put as radius the value of 0.0035 ppm, since no any other signal from other metabolites is present at high intensity. In more crowded spectral regions, the radius should be as accurate as possible.

→Step 4

After defining all parameters for the calibration of acetate signals from the 5 spectra, user could see the results of the defined spectral region for calibration in the 3rd panel of the GUI, “Calibrated peaks – selected region” (Fig. 18a), by pressing the “Check selected region” button (see Fig. 18 green highlighted).

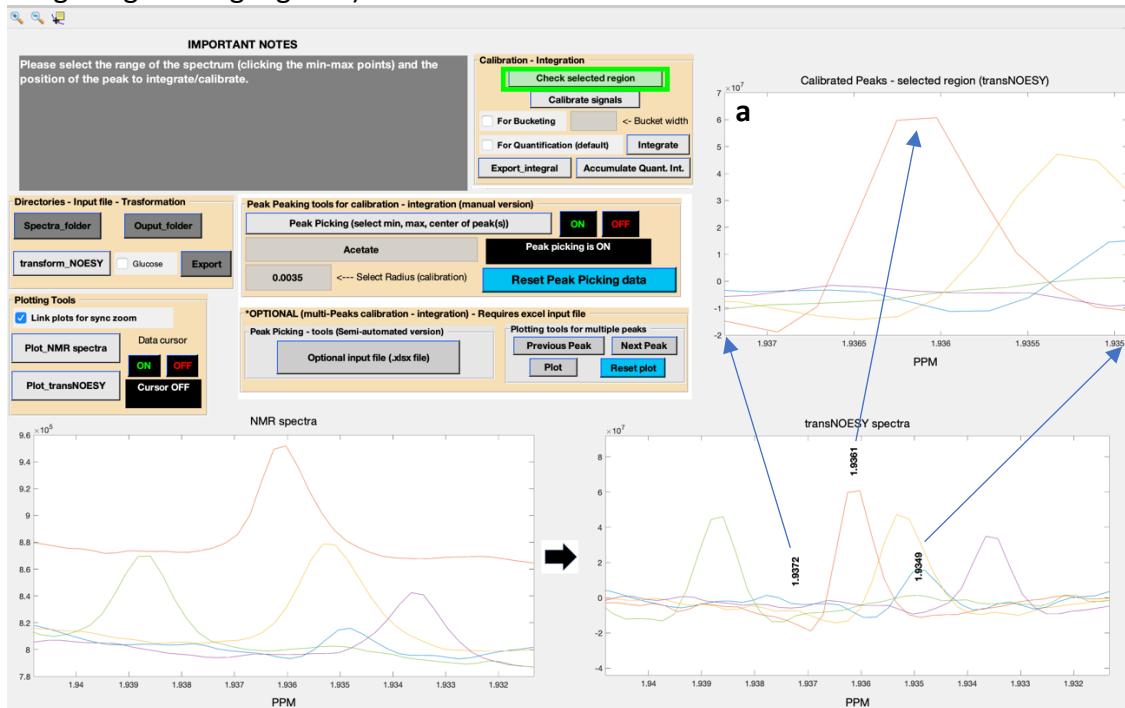


Figure 18.

If the user is satisfied with the selected region, the calibration of the signals will be completed by pressing the “Calibrate signals” button (Fig. 19 highlighted in green). Otherwise, user could redo the process after pressing the “Reset Peak Picking data” button (Fig. 19 highlighted in red box).

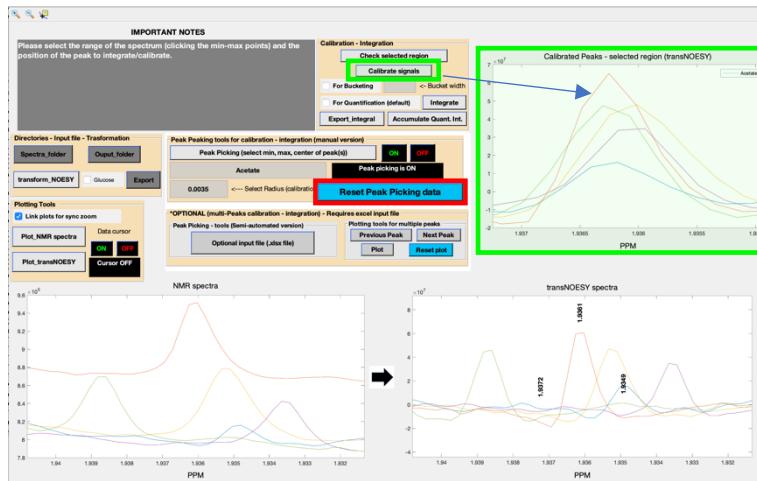


Figure 19

→Step 5

If calibration of transNOESY peaks of interest is completed (i.e. the singlet of acetate for that example), the **integrals** (**OPTION_1:** “ For Quantification (default)”) or the **binning** (i.e. bucketing) (**OPTION_2:** “ For Bucketing <- Bucket width”) of the selected spectral region from the 5 plasma transNOESY spectra could be calculated by pressing “**Integrate**” button and exported to the subfolder of the output folder named as acetate (e.g. in the folder: .../output_folder/acetate/) by pressing “**Export_integral**” button.

OPTION_1_explained: Untargeted analyses – Bucketing

By selecting the option of “ For Bucketing <- Bucket width”, user should specify the bucket size, that should be NOT be < 0.001 ppm. After pressing “**Integrate**” button, user will be informed when bucketing process is finished and be ready for exporting “bucket_table.txt” tab limited file in the subfolder of the output folder, namely in our case: “.../output_folder/acetate/bucket_table.txt”. The exported bucket table could be easily loaded to any multivariate (MVA) statistics toolbox for performing MVA statistics.

OPTION_2_explained: Targeted analyses – Integration for Quantification

By selecting the option of “ For Quantification (default)”, user activates the function of integrating transNOESY signals for any specified metabolite. Integration process takes into account the negative part of the transNOESY signals and provides accurate integration values. **It is very important** that all signals should be integrated by the same way (Fig. 20), as well as the reference signal (if any) for absolute quantification or univariate statistical analyses (e.g. t-test etc.). After pressing “**Integrate**” button, user will be informed when integration process is finished and be ready for exporting “integral.txt” tab limited file in the subfolder of the output folder, namely in our case: “.../output_folder/acetate/acetate-integrals.txt”. The exported integrals file could be easily loaded to any platform for further employment. In addition, the accumulation of all integrals from multiple metabolites signals could be merged into one file named as “Cummulative_integrals.txt” by pressing “**Accumulate Quant. Int.**” button. **Please note that this function is NOT available for bucketing results.**

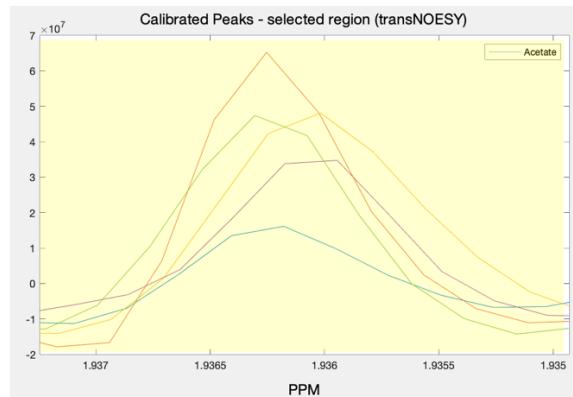


Figure 20. Yellow area highlights the integrated spectral area for calibrated acetate signals in the 5 plasma transNOESY spectral data.

10.2 Semi-automated peak picking for calibration in the transNOESY data for multiple spectral regions – Integration

In the section 10.1 of the user's guide, the manual procedure for calibration/integration regarding 1 spectral region (i.e. acetate signal for 5 spectra) was shown. However, transNOESY_platform offers the option of a semi-automated defining of multiple spectral regions (i.e. signals) (Fig. 21 green highlighted) and their calibration/integration/bucketing.

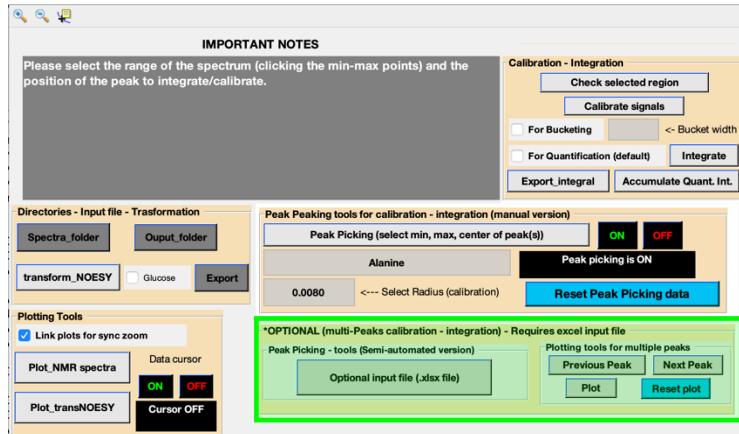


Figure 21.

Namely, the user can skip steps 2-4 of the section 10.1, and upload an excel file (.xlsx) (Fig. 22) by pressing the “” button.

A template of the excel file structure is provided at the Github folder named as “Multiple_Peaks_input_test.xlsx”.

| Metabolites | Min_window | Max_window | Calibration_Center | Calibration_Center_Radius |
|-------------|------------|------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | | | | |
| 2 | | | | |
| 3 | | | | |
| 4 | | | | |
| 5 | | | | |

Figure 22.

An example of this process is described below:

The example of L-alanine and L-valine ^1H -NMR signals semi-automated calibration-integration in 5 plasma ^1H -NMR spectra, explaining the step-by-step followed procedure is pointed below:

→Step 1

The assignment of the ^1H -NMR doublet of L-alanine -CH₃ (Fig. 23a) and the one doublet of L-valine -CH₃ (Fig. 23b) groups in the transNOESY spectra. The spectral areas where the 2 components of each doublet in the 5 spectra are highlighted by blue boxes in Fig. 23.

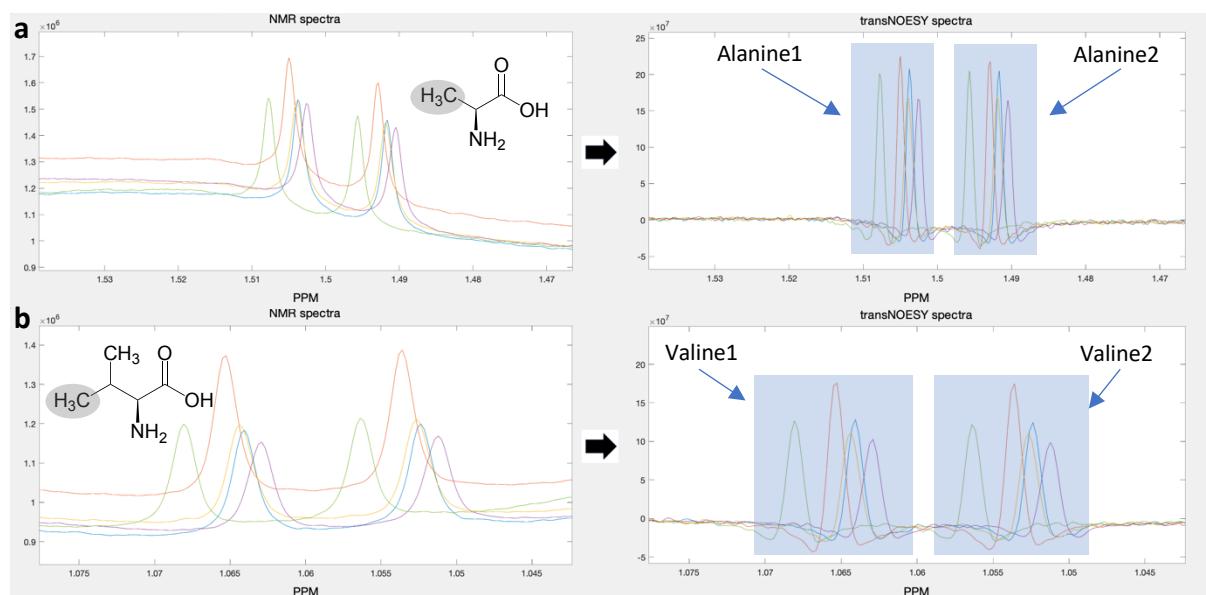


Figure 23.

→Step 2

Employing the transNOESY_platform plotting tools (e.g. data cursor etc.), user could immediately calculate all required values for calibrating each component of the two doublets (Fig. 23), as previously explained in the steps 2-3 at 10.1 section, and include them in the excel file as depicted in Fig. 24.

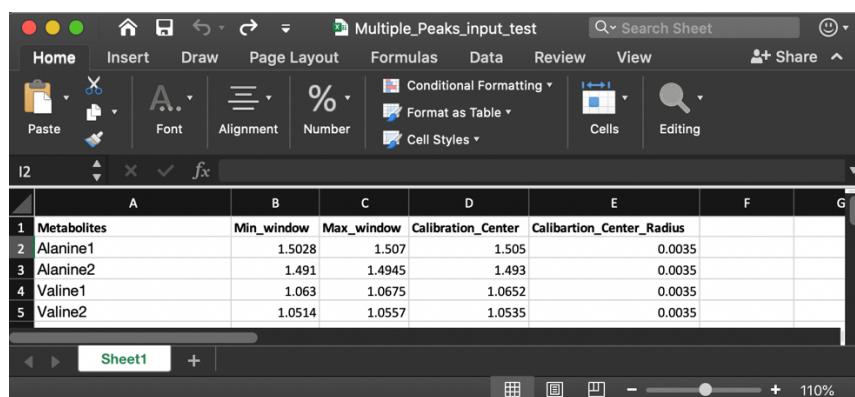


Figure 24.

→Step 3

After loading the excel file () in the toolbox, user could immediately calibrate all peaks to the reference values reported in the excel file (i.e. Calibration_Center), by pressing the “ ” button.

→Step 4

After being informed by the toolbox that the calibration of the peaks is finished, the user can navigate from calibrated peak to peak by pressing the “previous” or “next” buttons in the “Plotting tools for multiple peaks” panel. Each time, user could press “Next Peak” → “Plot” → “Next Peak”

etc. buttons. When pressing “Plot” the calibrated peaks (e.g. Alanine1, Alanine2 etc.) for all spectra are plotted in the “Calibrated peaks” panel of the GUI (Fig. 25).

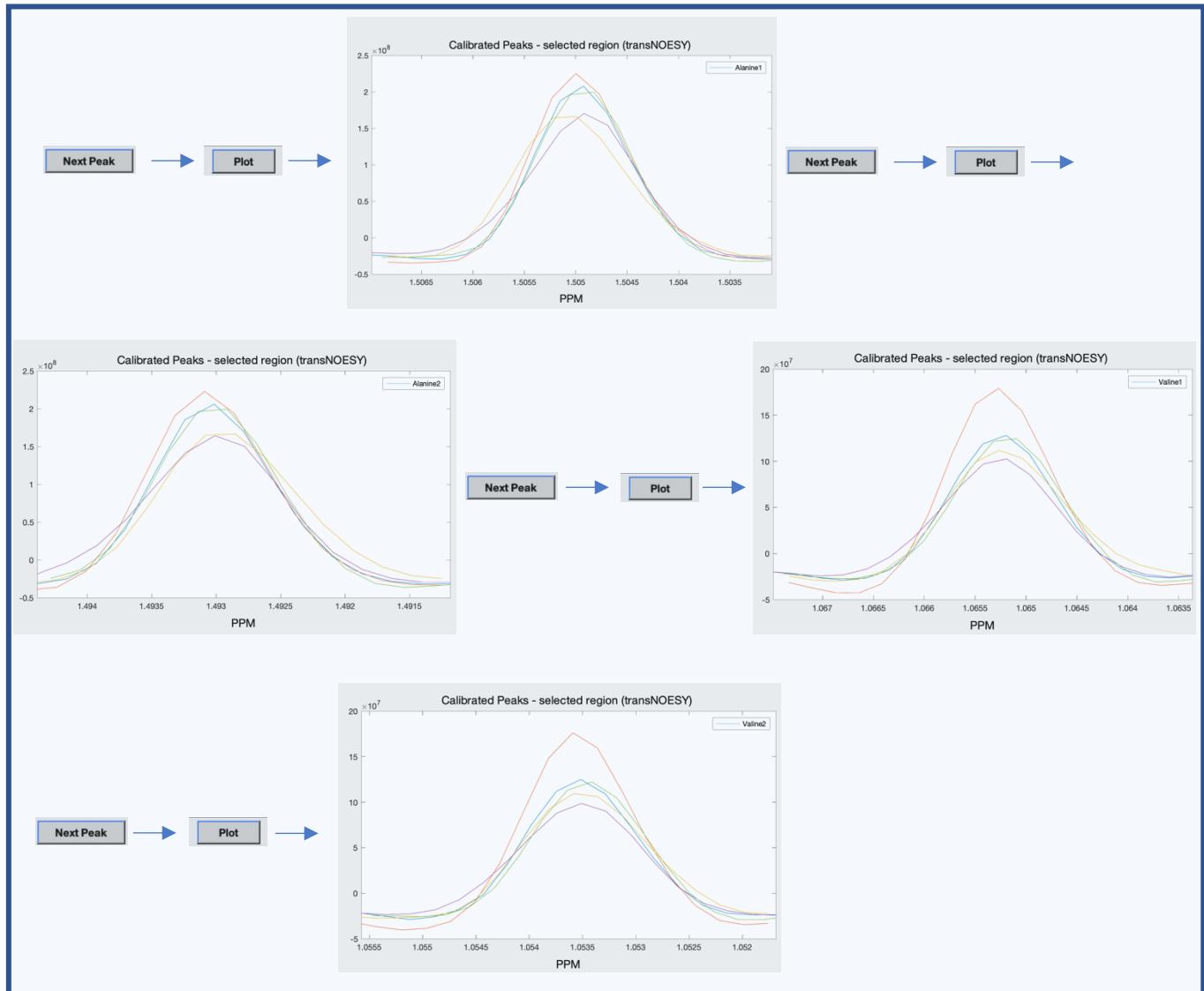


Figure 25.

→Step 5

For integration of peaks or bucketing of multiple spectral regions (i.e. variable shape buckets), the procedure is the same as in step 5 of the section 10.1.

11. Examples-templates

After downloading the toolbox folder from https://github.com/pantakis/transNOESY_platform, in the folder "Examples-Templates", user could find:

- A folder containing 5 plasma samples ^1H -NMR 1D-NOESY spectra: [Five_plasma_spectra].
- The output folder containing all results from the workflow analyses described in sections 10.1 and 10.2 of the user's guide: [Output_five_plasma_spectra].
- The excel file template for multiple peaks alignment-integration which could be also used for variable shaped bucketing: [Multiple_Peaks_input_test].

12. Technical support

For troubleshooting and/or other technical information for the transNOESY_platform, contact Dr. Panteleimon G. Takis *via* e-mail: p.takis@imperial.ac.uk , with title of the e-mail: “Query for transNOESY_platform”

13. Copyright-License

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14. References

1. Emwas, A.-H. *et al.* NMR Spectroscopy for Metabolomics Research. *Metabolites* **9**, 123 (2019).
2. Vignoli, A. *et al.* High-Throughput Metabolomics by 1D NMR. *Angew. Chemie - Int. Ed.* **58**, 968–994 (2019).