[0005] In view of the above, in order to streamline the process of generating stable cell line, there is a need to provide an alternative expression vector comprising a polynucleotide encoding for an alternative glutamine synthetase.

SUMMARY

[0005a] In one aspect, there is provided an expression vector comprising a polynucleotide encoding for a glutamine synthetase with reduced activity compared to a wild type glutamine synthetase; and wherein the expression vector further comprises at least one polynucleotide encoding for a polypeptide of interest; and wherein the glutamine synthetase with reduced activity comprises one or more mutations in (i) the glutamate binding region, (ii) the ATP binding region, (iii) the ammonia binding region, (iv) the congenital GS mutation site, and/or (v) at least one amino acid at the position selected from the group consisting of 12, 19, 91, 116, 160, 172, 176, 181, 194, 198, 199, 230, 260, 271 and 339 of a wild type glutamine synthetase comprising the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, 3, or 4; and wherein the mutation in the glutamate binding region is a substitution of at least one amino acid at the position selected from the group consisting of 134, 136, 196, 203, 248, 249, 253, 299, 319, 338, and 340 of a glutamine synthetase; or the mutation in the ammonia binding region is a substitution of at least one amino acid at the position selected from the group consisting of 63, 66, 162, and 305 of a glutamine synthetase; or the mutation in the ATP binding region is a substitution of at least one amino acid at the position selected from the group consisting of 192, 255, 257, 262, 336, 333 and 324 of a glutamine synthetase; or the mutation in the congenital GS mutation site is a substitution of at least one amino acid at the position of 341.

[0006] In one example, there is provided an expression vector comprising a polynucleotide encoding for a glutamine synthetase with reduced activity compared to a wild type glutamine synthetase. In one example, the expression vector further comprising at least one polynucleotide encoding for a polypeptide of interest. In another example, the glutamine synthetase with reduced activity comprises one or more mutations as compared to a wild type glutamine synthetase. In yet another example, the glutamine synthetase with reduced activity comprises one or more mutations in the glutamate binding region, the ATP binding region and/or the ammonia binding region. In yet another example, (i) the mutation in the glutamate binding region is of at least one amino acid at the position selected from the group consisting of 134, 136, 196, 203, 248, 249, 253, 299, 319, 338, and 340 of a glutamine synthetase; or (ii)

Claims

1. An expression vector comprising a polynucleotide encoding for a glutamine synthetase with reduced activity compared to a wild type glutamine synthetase; and wherein the expression vector further comprises at least one polynucleotide encoding for a polypeptide of interest; and

wherein the glutamine synthetase with reduced activity comprises one or more mutations in (i) the glutamate binding region, (ii) the ATP binding region, (iii) the ammonia binding region, (iv) the congenital GS mutation site, and/or (v) at least one amino acid at the position selected from the group consisting of 12, 19, 91, 116, 160, 172, 176, 181, 194, 198, 199, 230, 260, 271 and 339 of a wild type glutamine synthetase comprising the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, 3, or 4; and

wherein

the mutation in the glutamate binding region is a substitution of at least one amino acid at the position selected from the group consisting of 134, 136, 196, 203, 248, 249, 253, 299, 319, 338, and 340 of a glutamine synthetase; or

the mutation in the ammonia binding region is a substitution of at least one amino acid at the position selected from the group consisting of 63, 66, 162, and 305 of a glutamine synthetase; or

the mutation in the ATP binding region is a substitution of at least one amino acid at the position selected from the group consisting of 192, 255, 257, 262, 336, 333 and 324 of a glutamine synthetase; or

the mutation in the congenital GS mutation site is a substitution of at least one amino acid at the position of 341.

2. The expression vector of claim 1, wherein the mutation in the glutamine synthetase is selected from the group consisting of R324C, R341C, D63A, S66A, E134A, E136A, Y162A, G192A, E196A, E203A, N248A, G249A, H253A, N255A, S257A, R262A, R299A, E305A, R319A, R324A, Y336A, E338A, K333A, R340A, and R341A of a glutamine synthetase, wherein the glutamine synthetase has the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 1, SEQ ID NO: 2, SEQ ID NO: 3, or SEQ ID NO:4.

3. The expression vector of claim 1 or 2, wherein the polynucleotide encoding for a glutamine synthetase with reduced activity is operatively linked to a promoter.

4. The expression vector of any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein only one of the at least one polynucleotide encoding for a polypeptide of interest is operatively linked to a promoter.

5. The expression vector of claim 4, wherein the polynucleotide encoding for a glutamine synthetase with reduced activity compared to a wild type glutamine synthetase is not linked to a promoter.

6. The expression vector of any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the polypeptide of interest is selected from the group consisting of a recombinant protein and a part thereof, a fusion protein and a part thereof, an antibody and a part thereof.

7. The expression vector of any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the polypeptide of interest is the heavy chain of an antibody of interest and/or light chain of an antibody of interest.

8. The expression vector of any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the expression vector comprises two polynucleotides each encoding for a polypeptide of interest, wherein one of the polynucleotides encodes for the light chain of an antibody of interest, and one of the polynucleotides encodes for the heavy chain of the same antibody of interest.

9. The expression vector of any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein the polynucleotide encoding for the light chain of an antibody of interest and the polynucleotide encoding for the heavy chain of the same antibody of interest are separated by polynucleotides encoding an internal ribosome entry site (IRES).

10. The expression vector of any one of claims 1 to 9, wherein the polynucleotide encoding for the heavy chain of an antibody of interest is separated from the

polynucleotide encoding for a glutamine synthetase with reduced activity by polynucleotide encoding an internal ribosome entry site (IRES).

11. The expression vector of claim 9 or 10, wherein the polynucleotide encoding the internal ribosome entry site separating the polynucleotide encoding for the light chain of an antibody of interest and the polynucleotide encoding for the heavy chain of the same antibody of interest is polynucleotide encoding a wild type internal ribosome entry site (IRES), and wherein the internal ribosome entry site separating the polynucleotide encoding for the heavy chain of an antibody of interest from the polynucleotide encoding for a glutamine synthetase with reduced activity is polynucleotide encoding an internal ribosome entry site with attenuated translation efficiency (IRESatt).

12. A host cell comprising the expression vector of any one of claims 1 to 11.

13. A method for preparing stable cell line, comprising:

(a) transforming a host cell having no glutamine synthetase activity with the expression vector of any one of claims 1 to 11; and

(b) culturing the transformed host cell in a medium that selectively allows the proliferation of the transformed host cells comprising an amplified number of copies of the vector to be selected.

14. A method of producing polypeptide of interest, comprising:

(a) transforming a host cell having no glutamine synthetase activity with the expression vector of any one of claims 1 to 11;

(b) culturing the transformed host cell in a medium that selectively allows the production of polypetide of interest; and

(c) collecting the polypeptide of interest from the medium of (b).

15. The method of claim 13 or 14, wherein the medium is a glutamine free cell culture medium.

16. The method of any one of claims 13 to 15, wherein the method does not comprise the use of a glutamine synthetase inhibitor, optionally wherein the glutamine synthetase inhibitor is methionine sulphoximine (MSX).

17. A kit comprising the expression vector of any of claims 1 to 11.

18. The kit of claim 17, wherein the kit further comprises at least one of the following:

(i) a host cell having no glutamine synthetase activity compared to a wild type cell; and

(ii) a transfection medium or means to carry out a transfection.

19. The kit of claim 17 or 18, wherein the kit further comprises a glutamine free cell culture medium.