

Monday Afternoon, November 7, 2022

Applied Surface Science Division

Room 320 - Session AS+CA+EL+EM+LS+SE+SS-MoA

Quantitative Surface Analysis

Moderators: Jordan Lerach, PPG Industries, Hong Piao, FUJIFILM Electronic Materials USA., Inc.

1:40pm AS+CA+EL+EM+LS+SE+SS-MoA-1 Hard Targets: Developing Tools for Quantitative HAXPES, David Cant, National Physical Laboratory, UK
INVITED

'Soft' x-ray based XPS, using aluminium or magnesium anodes, has been a workhorse of surface analysis labs for decades. Over this time, substantial efforts have been made in the development of tools such as sensitivity factors, transmission function corrections, physical parameter databases, simulation software, interpretation methods, and more. Thanks to the existence of such tools, the data obtained from 'soft' XPS, with careful analysis, can provide a strong, quantitative understanding of samples in terms of the relative concentration of elements and their chemistry within the topmost ~10 nm of material. Nevertheless, sometimes 10 nm is not enough.

Until recently, XPS of materials beyond this topmost region of the surface would require either destructive depth profiling of the sample or the use of synchrotron light sources; the former carries its own metrological challenges, as well as ruining a sample, while the latter introduces a plethora of complexities which render calibration difficult. However, recent developments in the design of instruments utilising higher-energy x-ray anodes have begun to make HAXPES instruments more readily available in the lab. This allows far more analysis of samples that previously might have been restricted to synchrotron studies; for example in non-destructive depth-profiling of coated samples with overlayers beyond the ~10 nm limit of 'soft' XPS. Yet with new instruments come new issues; transmission function calibrations that work for the 0 - 1400 eV energy range are not much use for spectra that stretch some KeV beyond, and relative sensitivity factors for each new photon energy and instrument geometry are needed, particularly given the cornucopia of new core levels made available, and the breadth of sensitivity at higher photon energies.

Here we discuss progress towards more quantifiable XPS and HAXPES measurements. A method for the calculation of theoretical sensitivity factors is described, applicable to instruments of any geometry for x-ray sources in the energy range 1.5 - 10 keV, and their validity for depth-profiling of samples well beyond the depths achieved by aluminium sources is demonstrated. We discuss developments in straightforward transmission-function calibrations of standard aluminium sources by the use of a mathematically-defined reference spectrum, as well as progress towards transmission calibration of higher energy sources for which reference spectra do not yet exist. From these developments, the possibility of a 'universal' calibration and sensitivity scheme for both lab- and synchrotron-based HAXPES systems at a range of energies is proposed.

2:20pm AS+CA+EL+EM+LS+SE+SS-MoA-3 Process-Induced Reactions in Interfaces of High-K/Metal Gate Stacks Studied Using HAXPES, Thierry Conard, A. Vanleenhove, F. Mascarenhas, I. Hoflijck, I. Vaesen, IMEC, Belgium

While high-energy photoemission has been in use for decades, it has remained mostly confined to synchrotron radiation facilities. Synchrotron beamlines allow a large flexibility regarding measurement conditions and set-up but are inconvenient in the framework of technological developments, where routine analysis of material systems is needed. The recent availability of performant lab-scale high-energy photoemission spectrometers [1,2,3] alleviate these beamline limitations and thus allow to investigate technological relevant models.

In this presentation, we will demonstrate the potential of HAXPES lab-scale systems regarding application in the semiconductor industry, and more specifically regarding the chemical analysis of interfaces. We will demonstrate the investigation of modifications in layer chemistry of buried layers in multi-layer high-k/metal gate stacks upon thermal treatments. Annealing is one of the critical stages during manufacturing of gate stacks

and chemical modification at interfaces play a major role in device performance. With this presentation we will present results on simple stacks such as TiN/HfO₂/SiO₂/Si as well as more complex stacks such as TaN/TiAl/TiN/HfO₂/SiO₂/Si or W/TiN/HfO₂/SiO₂/Si. Results will be presented obtained both with Cr K α (5.4 keV) and Ga K α (9.25 keV) HAXPES. The respective advantages of these two energies will be discussed in terms of chemical identification, sensitivity and quantification.

Acknowledgement

We are grateful to the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) for funding the HAXPES Lab instrument within the HERCULES program for Large Research Infrastructure of the Flemish government. Project I014018N.

References

- [1]<https://www.ulvac-phi.com/en/products/xps/quantas/>
- [2]<https://www.kratos.com/products/axis-supra-xps-surface-analysis-instrument>
- [3]<https://scientaomicron.com/en/system-solutions/electron-spectroscopy/HAXPES-Lab>

2:40pm AS+CA+EL+EM+LS+SE+SS-MoA-4 Quantification and Reporting of XPS Data Taken Under Near Ambient Pressure Conditions – Chances and Challenges in Acquisition Speed, Beam Damage, Sensitivity, Reliability, Reproducibility and Repeatability, P. Dietrich, Andreas Thissen, SPECS Surface Nano Analysis GmbH, Germany

Over the last fifty years significant developments have been done in photoelectron spectroscopy instrumentation and thus opened new fields of application. Especially XPS or ESCA developed into a standard analytical method in many labs for surface and material characterization. The number of users and the number of publications using XPS data has tremendously increased. But as a side effect it is a challenge to keep the level of knowledge about the method and correct data interpretation at a high level for all users of these data.

To avoid errors in the interpretation of XPS data instrument manufacturers put efforts inside their instruments and software packages to help and guide the user through data acquisition, data quantification and interpretation and finally also through data reporting. By this data can be made compatible with existing ISO and other community standards. But even more, data quality becomes transparent also in times of open source publications and open data repositories.

For the last ten years XPS under near ambient pressure conditions (NAP-XPS) has gained significant attention in the XPS community. The technique allows for standard analysis of samples under pressures up to about 50 mbar. This opens XPS to liquids, solid-liquid interfaces, gas-solid-interfaces, gas-liquid-interfaces. New fields like operando studies on electrochemical systems, corrosion experiments, analysis of food samples, but also studies of biological samples have been added to the XPS portfolio. The background gas pressure in such experiments is beneficial for the analysis of materials, because it avoids beam damages and degradation due to UHV conditions and also enables true non-destructive analysis of all types of degassing samples and insulators. On the other hand, the absorption of X-rays in the gas atmosphere, the emitted electrons from the gas molecules and inelastic electron scattering in the gas influences the spectral distribution of photoelectrons significantly strongly influencing elemental identification, quantification and detection sensitivity. This presentation summarizes the special challenges in the interpretation of NAP-XPS data and uses several reference samples (mostly published in Surface Science Spectra) from different fields of application. Basic concepts for identification and quantification of spectral features are demonstrated. Finally an outlook is presented how close NAP-XPS is to be a routine metrology technique.

3:00pm AS+CA+EL+EM+LS+SE+SS-MoA-5 The Modern Spectrometer – Reliable, Repeatable and Relatable, S. Coultas, J. Counsell, Kratos Analytical Limited, UK; Christopher Moffitt, Kratos Analytical Inc.; C. Blomfield, Kratos Analytical Limited, UK

The outlook of the XPS community has changed significantly in the last decade. The technique has seen constant steady growth due to the rise in surface-based material research – energy storage and harvesting are two such disciplines. This growth of new first-time users needs to be considered, as does the way in which faculties manage centralised analytical facilities. This has led to a change in the philosophy of the workflow of an XPS spectrometer and how the user interacts with the "tool". In this modern era of devolved data and non-expert users the spectrometer itself needs to be reliable, repeatable and relatable. Reliable

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– delivers on the promise, Repeatable – consistency with data acquisition and processing, Reliable – simple, easy-to-use, non-expert. This new philosophy creates new challenges for manufacturers who need to deliver the best spectrometer for this new market whilst at the same time maintaining the expectations and beliefs of the traditional analyst.

The discussion will focus on defining the issues of the current XPS outlook and providing practical, workable solutions. The following topics, when combined together, will illustrate the holistic design principles of a modern spectrometer: Simplified workflow, standard methods, automated routines, parameter logging, calibrated and up-to-date sensitivity factors, processing operators, data output and report generation.

3:20pm **AS+CA+EL+EM+LS+SE+SS-MoA-6 Modulation with Atomic Number of the Shirley Background of the Photoemission Spectra of Transition Metals**, *Alberto Herrera-Gomez, D. Guzman-Bucio*, CINVESTAV-Queretaro, Mexico; *D. Cabrera-German, M. Mayorga-Garay, O. Cortazar-Martinez, J. Torres-Ochoa, A. Carmona-Carmona*, CINVESTAV-Unidad Queretaro, Mexico; *M. Gonzalez Reyna*, UNAM-Mexico; *V. Crist*, XPS Library; *C. Ospina-Ocampo*, Cinvestav-Unidad Queretaro, Mexico

The 2p photoemission spectra of the first-row pure transition metals are similar enough to each other to display a meaningful progression, through the row, of the characteristics of the peaks and background [1]. The same goes for the 3d spectra of the second-row pure transition metals [2]. In addition, there are similarities between the behavior of the peak and background parameters of these two rows, such as the dependence of the intensity of the Shirley background with atomic number. The Shirley background is largest for the first column (3B column of the periodic table), decreases to a local minimum to then rise again to a local maximum on the seventh column (8B). The large value of the Shirley background for the first column elements is correlated with the large asymmetry of the main peak and the presence of strong intrinsic plasmons. This correlation might be due to a similar physical origin [3]. The local maximum in the 8B column coincides with the maximum of permutations of the valence band, as previously pointed out by Castle and Salvi [4]. The physical mechanism of these phenomena will be discussed.

[1] D. Cabrera-German, G.-B. Dulce-Maria, M. Mayorga-Garay, O. Cortazar-Martinez, J.-A. Torres-Ochoa, A. Carmona-Carmona, A. Herrera-Gomez, Peak and background parameters of the 2p core level of the pure first row transition metals, *J. Vac. Sci. Technol. A.* (2022) (in progress).

[2] D.-M. Guzman-Bucio, A. Carmona-Carmona, M.A. Gonzalez-Reyna, A. Herrera-Gomez, Peak and background parameters of the 3d core level of the pure second row transition metals, *J. Vac. Sci. Technol. A.* (2022) (in progress).

[3] A. Herrera-Gomez, D. Cabrera-German, A.D.A.D. Dutoi, M. Vazquez-Lepe, S. Aguirre-Tostado, P. Pianetta, D. Nordlund, O. Cortazar-Martinez, A. Torres-Ochoa, O. Ceballos-Sanchez, L. Gomez-Muñoz, L.G.M. Herrera-Gomez, Alberto., Dagoberto Cabrera-German., Anthony D. Dutoi., Milton Vazquez Lepe., Servando Aguirre-Tostado., Piero Pianetta., Dennis Nordlund., Orlando Cortazar-Martinez., Alejandro Torres-Ochoa., Oscar Ceballos-Sanchez., Intensity modulation of the Shirley background of the Cr 3p spectra with photon energies around the Cr 2p edge, *Surf. Interface Anal.* 50 (2018) 246–252. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sia.6364>.

[4] J.E. Castle, a. M. Salvi, Interpretation of the Shirley background in x-ray photoelectron spectroscopy analysis, *J. Vac. Sci. Technol. A Vacuum, Surfaces, Film.* 19 (2001) 1170. <https://doi.org/10.1116/1.1378074>.

4:00pm **AS+CA+EL+EM+LS+SE+SS-MoA-8 Thin Film Analysis by XPS: Quantitative Modeling of Sputtering and Depth Profile Data**, *Lev Gelb, A. Walker*, University of Texas at Dallas

We present progress in the simultaneous quantitative extraction of both compositional profiles and sputtering parameters from XPS depth-profiles of multilayer films. Depth-profile data are routinely processed to provide “fractional composition vs ion dose” profiles, but such profiles suffer from significant drawbacks: they are constructed assuming that the sample is homogeneous in the probed region, which is not true near interfaces, and it is not normally possible to precisely convert between units of ion dose and depth.

Our approach is to first construct analytical models for both the sample structure and for the erosion process, and then to determine the model parameters (layer thicknesses, interfacial widths, material removal rates, etc.) most consistent with the observed apparent fractional composition profiles. This is done numerically, by comparing simulated and observed apparent composition profiles in a maximum-likelihood framework using an evolutionary optimization algorithm. The only required inputs to the

calculation are the “fractional composition” profiles (above) and models for the inelastic mean free paths (IMFPs) for each tracked peak.

We demonstrate the basic idea by analysis of using synthetic data. The resolution of the extracted depth profiles improves when additional peaks are incorporated in the analysis. Small deficiencies in the structure or sputter model do not strongly affect the extracted compositional profiles, while errors in the IMFPs used have much larger effects. We then discuss promising results obtained from the analysis of experimental data from some well-characterized samples. Finally, we discuss improvements and extensions of this modeling/analysis framework. The sputtering model can be extended to include in-sample mixing and chemical reactions. The scheme can also be extended to use complete spectra as input.

4:20pm **AS+CA+EL+EM+LS+SE+SS-MoA-9 Understanding and Controlling Sample Degradation on Modern XPS Spectrometers**, *David Morgan*, Cardiff University, UK

As XPS systems become ever more user-friendly, with “load-point-click-report” type automated analysis possible, the expertise in understanding samples, their handling and ultimately identifying and dealing with experimental artefacts is slowly eroding.

It has been previously shown that developments in the charge compensation methodology employed, especially the use of dual electron compensation systems, can cause significant damage to a range of inorganic and organic materials [1,2] and in some cases a synergistic effect from the x-rays on the degradation rates can be observed.

Herein, the degradation effect using x-rays and a dual beam neutraliser are explored and discussed, and a delineation of the effects from both neutraliser and the x-rays on a series of polymeric, organic and inorganic materials are presented, together with methodologies to mitigate, or at the very least minimise, such analysis induced damage and propose that which we believe to be a better way of estimating sample damage on a per-system basis than those previously published [3].

[1] L. Edwards, P. Mack and D. J. Morgan, “Recent advances in dual mode charge compensation for XPS analysis”. *Surface and Interface Analysis*, 51 (2019) 925-933

[2] R. McLaren, G. Owen and D. J. Morgan, “Analysis Induced Reduction of a Polyelectrolyte”, *Results in Surfaces and Interfaces*, (2021) 100032

[3] G. Beamson and D. Briggs, “High Resolution XPS of Organic Polymers: The Scienta ESCA300 Database,” Wiley, Chichester, 1992.

4:40pm **AS+CA+EL+EM+LS+SE+SS-MoA-10 XPS Intensity Calibration and Validation Using Polyethylene and Ionic Liquids**, *Benjamin Reed*, National Physical Laboratory (NPL), UK; *J. Radnik*, Bundesanstalt für Materialforschung und -prüfung (BAM), Germany; *A. Shard*, National Physical Laboratory (NPL), UK

For quantitative X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS) analysis, it is necessary to know the *energy-dependent spectrometer response function* ('transmission function') of the XPS instrument. There is a huge variability of transmission functions between different laboratories and instruments, as well as different acquisition parameters for the same instrument. For comparable and reproducible analyses, there is a necessity for a standardised method of intensity calibration and validation.

For intensity calibration, the simplicity of polyethylene's inelastic background can be described by a mathematical function that can be easily reproduced, is continuous, and noise-free. Instrument geometry must be considered due to the anisotropic emission of photoelectrons and the polarization of monochromated x-rays in many commercial XPS instruments. We therefore present geometry-corrected reference spectra of polyethylene for Al K α instruments which are traceable to gold, silver, and copper reference spectra from the National Physical Laboratory (NPL). Polyethylene does not require in-situ sample preparation needing only to be scraped with a scalpel before measurement, making it a suitable method for instruments without an ion-sputtering source. VAMAS study A27 determined that over a kinetic energy range of 180 eV to 1500 eV, intensity calibration with polyethylene deviates by $\pm 6.5\%$ compared to previous NPL method using precious metals. Deviations less than 5%, and as low as 1%, are attainable with careful data acquisition from well-maintained instruments. This intensity calibration method is now being developed as an international standard under the auspices of ISO TC201 “Surface Chemical Analysis”.

Once an instrument has been intensity corrected, it is good practice to validate the calibration by measuring a homogeneous sample of known composition. Ionic liquids have several notable properties that make them

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an ideal material for XPS analysis. Ionic liquids exhibit a high degree of lateral and depth homogeneity, are UHV compatible, and have well-defined stoichiometries. When deposited in recessed sample holder, the meniscus of an IL will be perfectly flat meaning that there are no contributions from sample topographic effects. 1-propyl-3-methylimidazolium-bis(trifluoromethyl sulfonyl)imide (Solapur®) is one such IL candidate, with core levels up to ~800 eV binding energy, making it apt for verifying the quantification of light elements, especially for organic materials. Here we present spectra for Solapur® ionic liquid and discuss how they may be used to validate an XPS intensity calibration.

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