Insight into Solid Oxide Proton Conductors with Dopants by Use of PAS

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Proton conducting solid oxides

- Proton conducting solid oxides have found application in fuel cells, electrolytes, hydrogen sensors and membrane reactors [1]
- Doped BaZrO₃ (BZO) is a material that shows promising proton conduction that depends on the doping elemental and doping concentration [2,3]
- Doping of Zr site by a trivalent element creates oxygen vacancies V₀^{...}
- Protons are incorporated by the hydration of $V_0^{..}$:

 $H_2O + V_O^{"} + O_O^{X} \leftrightarrow 2OH_O^{"}$

 <u>Protons are bonded to oxygen</u> and diffuse in the material by jumping from oxygen to oxygen

[3] Han D, Shinoda K, Sato S, Majima M, Uda T. Correlation between electroconductive and structural properties of proton conductive acceptor-doped barium zirconate. Journal of Materials Chemistry A. 2015;3(3):1243-50.



^[1] Iwahara H, Asakura Y, Katahira K, Tanaka M. Prospect of hydrogen technology using proton-conducting ceramics. Solid State Ionics. 2004;168(3-4):299-310.

^[2] Kreuer KD, Adams S, Munch W, Fuchs A, Klock U, Maier J. Proton conducting alkaline earth zirconates and titanates for high drain electrochemical applications. Solid State Ionics. 2001;145:295-306.

Proton conduction affected by dopant atoms

- Dopants stabilize metal oxide structure but they also contribute to some problems
- Protons can be attracted to dopant atoms due their negative charge; this association causes proton trapping and reduces the proton conductivity [1]
- Important to characterize proton trapping as function of:
 - o Dopant element
 - o Doping concentration
- Necessary to probe proton localization in material (i.e., NMR [1,2])



[1] Yamazaki Y, Blanc F, Okuyama Y, Buannic L, Lucio-Vega JC, Grey CP, et al. Proton trapping in yttriumdoped barium zirconate. Nature Materials. 2013;12(7):647-51.

[2] Oikawa I, Takamura H. Correlation among Oxygen Vacancies, Protonic Defects, and the Acceptor Dopant in Sc-Doped BaZrO₃ Studied by ⁴⁵Sc Nuclear Magnetic Resonance. Chemistry of Materials. 2015;27(19):6660-7.

Complicated metal/oxygen complexes are created; sometimes depending on the concentration of the dopant

How does the proton concentration affect the proton trapping?

Electron density modified by protons:





(Figure from *Chem. Mater.* 2015, 27, 6660–6667)

Proton concentration: T_2 changes with respect to dry samples



(Figure from *Chem. Mater.* 2015, 27, 6660–6667)

Several techniques are used to investigate where protons are trapped, among them NMR and XRD

X-ray Diffraction



XRD diffraction shows the most pure phase; some phase shifts observed in the doped specimens

Metal oxide sample preparation

 $_{\odot}$ BZO, 20% Sc-BZO, 40% Sc-BZO, 60% Sc-BZO and 20% Y-BZO were prepared

by the solid-state reaction method



 $\circ~$ Specimens for PAL were prepared by dry pressing. After sintering, one surface

of the pellet was polished to study surface effects



Hydration of the samples was performed at 300 °C in
Argon atmosphere containing 10% H₂O for 24 hours



Sample characterization

After sintering, all samples showed density higher than 90%

SEM images show surfaces composed of big and small grains; but rather in micro-meter range, than nano-meter range

Material	ID	Density %
BaZrO ₃	BZO	98.6 ± 0.6
BaZr _{0.8} Υ _{0.2} Ο _{3-δ}	Y20	97.9 ± 0.3
BaZr _{0.8} Sc _{0.2} O _{3-δ}	Sc20	96.9 ± 0.7
BaZr _{0.6} Sc _{0.4} O _{3-δ}	Sc40	$\textbf{95.2} \pm \textbf{0.1}$
BaZr _{0.4} Sc _{0.6} O _{3-δ}	Sc60	$\textbf{90.4} \pm \textbf{0.1}$











Specimens measured by use of PAL

Three series of PAL measurements were conducted

series 1

- 1) Electrolyte with no dopant reference: BaZrO₃[BZO]
- 2) Electrolyte with different amount of the same dopant: 20% Sc [Sc20] and 40% Sc [Sc40] BaZrO₃

series 2

- 1) Electrolyte with 60% of Sc dopant [Sc60]
- 2) Electrolyte with 20% Sc- hydrated [Sc20H]

series 3

- 1) Hydrated electrolyte with no dopant: BaZrO₃ [BZOH]
- 2) Electrolyte with 20% of Ytrium 20% Y [Y20]
- 3) Electrolyte with 20% of Ytrium hydrated [Y20H]

Each specimen type was represented by three pellet samples

PAS New Digital System and Upgrade Capabilities

State of the art digital equipment from TechnoAP, Japan was purchased recently, with three PAS technologies in one module:

- PAL (Positron Annihilation Lifetime)
- **CDBS** (Coincidence Doppler Broadening Spectroscopy)
- **AMOC** (Age-momentum Coincidence Spectroscopy)







PAL laboratory (INL – IRC B-1) with modular digital system, purchased in Fall 2019, upgraded in October 2020 CDB is being installed now

Typical PAL spectrum for oxide metal: BZO with SC20H (hydrated)



#128 BzSc20H, shiny 1b_2t

Analysed betw	ween channels	980 and 8192.	Calibrat	tion=0.01042	ns/chann.
Total counts=	5219525	Bkgr./sig	nal=9.96	%	
Fit's variance =	0.9970	Date: 6/21,	/2021	11:30:19 AM	
SAMPLE:					
intensities [%]	lifetimes [n	is] disper	sions [ns]	
44.2(1.3)	0.146(0.044)	0.0000			
55.5(1.3)	0.227(0.047)	0.0000			
0.38(0.14)	1.72(0.27)	0.0000			
SOURCE :					
contribution	20.0000 [%	5]			
intensities [%]	lifetimes [n	is]			
50.0000	0.2604				
50.0000	0.1560				
ZERO CHAN.	994.0457(0.009	9) BACKO	ROUND	72.06(0.32)	[Counts]
RESOLUTION C	URVE :				
ESG fract. (%	5) Shift (chnn	is) FWHN	1 (ns) 👘	tau(left) (ns)	tau(right) (ns)
100.0000	0.0000	0.1715	C	0.0000	0.0000

Kansy LT9.2 program used for PAL analysis

PAL resolution is about 170 ps

Matrix effect taken into account

Na-22 source in 0.5 mil Ti

How positrons behave in metal oxides?

According to the literature:

Predictions versus experiment?

- Point defects in Zr⁺⁴ (negative voids) will attract positrons (deep traps)
- Point defects in dopants (Y⁺³, Sc⁺³ neutral defects) could also attract positrons but we will have shallow traps
- Grain boundary misfit trapping (also point defects) may occur at about 180-200 ps, but this would happen mainly in nano-grains, we deal here with micro-meter grains
- Triple point volume defects, at about 370 ps, but its intensity gets lower with high density
- Point defects in place of O₂(positive voids) are present but they would not trap positrons, so positrons don't see them.
- There is also significant positronium formation in porous metal oxides (before sintering) with the lifetime at about 30 ns, pore size : 2.5-3 nm

[1] J.E. Garay, S.C. Glade., P. Asoka-Kumar and others, J. of Applied Physics, **99**, 024313, (2006) [2] I. Prohazka, J. Cizek, O. Melikhova, and others, J. AM. Ceram. Soc. **97**, 982-989, (2014)



PAL Initial Results – series 1: BZO pure and with Sc dopants

Specimen	T ₁ [ns]	dT ₁	I ₁ [%]	dl ₁	T ₂ [ns]	dT ₂	l ₂ [%]	dI_2	T ₃ [ns]	dT ₃	l ₃ [%]	dl ₃
BZO 1B-2T S	0.1563	0.0006	64.83	0.25	0.2510	0.0026	34.77	0.37	1.843	0.012	0.417	0.107
Sc-20 1B-2T S	0.1557	0.0040	55.23	5.20	0.2390	0.0061	44.40	5.21	1.843	0.136	0.387	0.060
Sc-40 1B-2T S	0.1563	0.0006	55.64	1.28	0.2370	0.0026	44.03	1.31	1.957	0.025	0.350	0.018
BZO 2B-3T NS	0.1625	0.0007	73.06	0.79	0.2645	0.0092	26.49	1.01	2.000	0.057	0.450	0.226
Sc-20 2B-3T NS	0.1615	0.0021	63.35	2.05	0.2540	0.0071	36.05	2.19	1.930	0.028	0.590	0.141
Sc-40 1B-2T NS	0.1620	0.0028	68.21	3.10	0.2593	0.0007	31.27	3.08	1.965	0.007	0.520	0.006

PAL Average values for all three specimen types – for [S] shiny (polished) versus [NS] (not polished) sites – <u>without</u> <u>source correction</u>

specimen	T ₁ [ns]	dT ₁	l ₁ [%]	dl ₁	T ₂ [ns]	dT ₂	l ₂ [%]	dl ₂	T ₃	dT ₃	I ₃ [%]	dl ₃
BZO 1B-2T S	0.159	0.001	69.00	0.60	0.247	0.005	30.47	0.75	1.85	0.01	0.52	0.14
Sc-20 1B-2T S	0.158	0.006	54.48	9.11	0.230	0.008	45.05	9.08	1.86	0.13	0.48	0.08
Sc-40 1B-2T S	0.158	0.001	53.97	2.84	0.226	0.004	45.60	2.80	1.97	0.03	0.43	0.02
BZO 2B-3T NS	0.166	0.000	80.20	0.28	0.270	0.014	19.23	0.53	2.00	0.04	0.56	0.28
Sc-20 2B-3T NS	0.166	0.003	68.25	3.32	0.253	0.011	31.05	3.46	1.93	0.03	0.74	0.18
Sc-40 1B-2T NS	0.157	0.004	51.05	4.74	0.225	0.001	48.55	4.74	1.96	0.01	0.42	0.01

PAL Average values for all three specimen types – for S vs NS sites – with source correction.

- BZO has higher intensity of bulk annihilation I₁ lower intensity of trapping I₂ but longer trapping time, T₂ <u>hypothesis</u>: dopants increase electron density in the site of the trap, but higher electron density around trap also attract more positrons
- In non-polished specimens I₃ and T₃ increase; <u>hypothesis</u>: there are some surface Ps states present

PAL Results – initial Comparison BZO vs Sc dopant concentration



Bar diagram with T1, I1 and T2 and I2 values for shiny sides of the specimens, with 5% of standard error

T-test	T ₁	I ₁	T ₂	1 ₂
BZO shiny / Sc 20	0.7096	0.0511	0.0436	0.0503
BZO shiny / Sc 40	0.2051	0.0009	0.0058	0.0008
Sc 20 versus Sc 40	1.0000	0.9307	0.4981	0.9245

PAL T-test for BZO, versus Sc-20 and Sc-40 shows that BZO intensities for bulk and trapping as well as trapping lifetime are <u>significantly different</u>; and there might be a <u>tendency to lower trapping time</u> with dopant concentration but the initial hypothesis could not be rejected on level of 5% significance (less than 0.05)

PAL measurements were continued – including Sc-60, Y-20, and hydrated samples

Material	ID	Density %	Diameter shrinkage (%)	Thickness shrinkage (%)
$BaZr_{0.8}Y_{0.2}O_{3-\delta}$	Y20 #1	97.7	18.3	17.7
$BaZr_{0.8}Y_{0.2}O_{3\cdot\delta}$	Y20 #2	97.7	18	19.7
$BaZr_{0.8}Y_{0.2}O_{3-\delta}$	Y20 #3	97.6	19.1	20.1
$BaZr_{0.8}Y_{0.2}O_{3\cdot\delta}$	Y20 H #2	98.1	18.2	21.7
$BaZr_{0.8}Y_{0.2}O_{3-\delta}$	Y20 H #2	98.2	18.5	16.9
$\text{BaZr}_{0.8}\text{Y}_{0.2}\text{O}_{3\text{-}\delta}$	Y20 H #3	98.3	18.4	26.2
$BaZr_{0.8}Sc_{0.2}O_{3-\delta}$	Sc20 #1	98.0	17.7	15.0
$BaZr_{0.8}Sc_{0.2}O_{3\cdot\delta}$	Sc20 #2	97.5	17.8	15.0
$BaZr_{0.8}Sc_{0.2}O_{3-\delta}$	Sc20 #3	96.4	17.7	10.0
$BaZr_{0.8}Sc_{0.2}O_{3-\delta}$	Sc20 H #1	97	18.2	22
$BaZr_{0.8}Sc_{0.2}O_{3-\delta}$	Sc20 H #2	96.4	17.8	19.2
$BaZr_{0.8}Sc_{0.2}O_{3-\delta}$	Sc20 H #3	96.3	18.3	23

Hydration procedure: after

polishing, samples were dried at 700 C for 0.5 hrs and then cooled down to 300 C with 10% H_2O in Ar. The hydration was maintained for 24 hrs.

Density measurements were performed before hydration

BZO doped with Sc-60 was brittle, less stable thermally and mechanically than other specimens; it disintegrates in the presence of steam, one of the samples shuttered like glass after the measurement

Average PAL values with sample standard deviation for series 1-4 with source correction – for polished sites inwards

specimen	T ₁ [ns]	dT ₁	I ₁ [%]	dl 1	T ₂ [ns]	dT ₂	l ₂	[%]	dl ₂	T_3	dT_3	l ₃ [%]	dl₃
BZO S	0.158	0.002	<u>68.3</u> 7	1.35	0.246	0.005		31.10	1.40	1.768	0.170	0.53	0.11
Sc20 S	0.158	0.004	56 .74	6.46	0.232	0.006		42.81	6.45	1.835	0.090	0.46	0.10
Sc40 S	0.158	0.001	5 3.97	2.84	0.226	0.004		45.60	2.80	1.973	0.030	0.43	0.02
Sc60 S	0.154	0.000	53.40	0.85	0.231	0.002		46.20	0.85	1.770	0.020	0.39	0.02
BZOH S	0.153	0.003	83.48	3.49	0.238	0.008		16.12	3.48	1.725	0.160	0.41	0.01
Sc20H S	0.150	0.006	<mark>50</mark> .35	6.88	0.231	0.006		<mark>4</mark> 9.25	6.89	1.683	0.130	0.41	0.05
Y20 S	0.151	0.005	<mark>4</mark> 5.92	2.94	0.248	0.004		<mark>53</mark> .63	3.01	1.734	0.080	0.45	0.06
Y20H S	0.151	0.001	<mark>4</mark> 5.42	2.80	0.260	0.005		<mark>54</mark> .06	3.05	1.945	0.160	0.54	0.27

ranges

- $T_1 = 151-158$ ps, $I_1 = 45-84\%$; bulk lifetime and intensity
- $T_2 = 226-260 \text{ ps}, I_2 = 16-54\%$; trapping lifetime and intensity
- T₃ = 1.68-1.97 ns, I₃ =0.39-0.54%; surface positronium states, low intensity since the samples are very dense; no Ps formation inside

The mechanism of trapping is completely different in BZO pure samples compared to doped; there are just in not good trapping sites in pure metal oxides therefore the annihilation in the bulk is so significant in BZO and it increases with hydration – added density

PAL bulk and trapping lifetimes comparison for specimens with different level of Sc doping



Doping with Sc increases trapping intensity.

Bulk intensity I_1 , is decreasing with Sc dopant concentration while I_2 , trapping intensity is increasing. Changes in the lifetimes, if specimen is already doped are not significant.

The difference in I_1 and I_2 intensities between Sc20 and Sc40 are significant. While the same trend is continuing for Sc60, the difference in the values between Sc40 and Sc60 is less than two standard deviations; so this effect is not-linear.

No Ps formation inside in dense and sintered at high temp specimens.

specimen	T₁[ns]	dT ₁	I ₁ [%]	dI 1	T ₂ [ns]	dT ₂	l ₂ [%]	dl 2	T ₃	dT ₃	l ₃ [%]	dl_3
BZO S	0.158	0.002	68.37	1.35	0.246	0.005	31.10	1.40	1.768	0.170	0.53	0.11
Sc20 S	0.158	0.004	56.7 <mark>4</mark>	6.46	0.232	0.006	42.81	6.45	1.835	0.090	0.46	0.10
Sc40 S	0.158	0.001	53.97	2.84	0.226	0.004	45.60	2.80	1.973	0.030	0.43	0.02
Sc60 S	0.154	0.000	53.40	0.85	0.231	0.002	46.20	0.85	1.770	0.020	0.39	0.02

PAL bulk and trapping lifetimes for non-hydrated/hydrated specimens



The mechanism of positron interaction is different at BZO than in the dopants.

In BZO hydration causes significant decrease in trapping fraction (50%) & increase in bulk annihilation.

For Sc20 trapping fraction increases with hydration For Y20 trapping lifetime increases with hydration

Trapping lifetime for Sc20 is lower than for Y20, the mean lifetimes are also significantly different. It is related to their atoms size, density and electron structure

specimen	T1	l1	T2	12	Т3	13	mean lifetime
BZO S	0.158	68.37	0.246	31.10	1.768	0.53	19.394
BZOH S	0.153	83.48	0.238	16.12	1.725	0.41	17.297
Sc20 S	0.158	56.74	0.232	42.81	1.835	0.46	19.717
Sc20H S	0.150	J 50.35	0.231	1 49.25	1.683	0.41	19.619
Y20 S	0.151	45.92	0.248	53.63	1.734	0.45	21.011
Y20H S	0.151	45.42	1 0.260	54.06	1.945	0.54	21.885

0			
9	Se 173 253	Ti 132 206	v
9	Y 189	Zr 142	N
0	La	Hf	T

Conclusions

- The PAL analysis showed drastically different mechanism of positron reaction in the BZO and a response to hydration compared to the specimens with dopants.
- BZO specimens: more bulk annihilation and its fraction increases for hydrated samples; while in doped samples there is more trapping and trapping increases with hydration.
- With more dopant concentration trapping intensity is increasing although this effect is non-linear. The most increase is in the initial stages of doping.
- Trapping lifetime is significantly different in Sc versus Y doped specimens, which is in agreement with the literature and their chemistry.
- Positronium can be formed on the surface of oxide metals, and this effect is more significant when non-polished sides are inwards, still it is less than 1% since the specimens are sintered and dense.

BZO, Sc and Y-doped metal oxides have different signatures

Multi-variate Analysis (MVA)

- Establish the baseline non-defected/non-doped samples, start with reference samples, go through the process of change
- Methods such as principal components analysis (PCA) and regression (PCR) and partial least squares (PLS) will be applied to the PAS lifetime and DB spectra and related to broader bulk properties of the materials.
- Training and Verification sets will be generated based upon known properties.

A = KC

- While the algorithms are more complex, the basic form for PCA/R and PLS is represented by the simple least squares equation shown above.
- In this case, A is a vector representing a spectrum or matrix of spectra.
- <u>C is the "concentration" of the various properties that are represented in the spectrum/spectra of A, e.g. properties may include density, hardness, porosity, etc.</u>
- <u>K is a vector(s) of coefficients</u> that relate the spectra in A (response strength) to the "concentrations" in C.
- Pretreatment of the spectral data in A (e.g. derivatives, rationing, etc.) can <u>enhance</u> the differences and increase the correlations.

Multi-variate Analysis (MVA)

Mathlab can be used for MVA analysis



MVA –extract four independent factorials and find the groupings





Find groupings/clusters in metal oxides For factorials 2 and 3



This technique can show which independent components are correlated, associated or linked to each other

••••

Metals annealing – experiment conducted to find the matrix effect for Ti, but also Cu, Ni and Al







Plans for future

- Perform Coincidence Doppler Broadening (CDB) measurements for the same specimens. The DBS measurements have more sensitivity towards momentum distribution and the effect of different charged states. It is also sensitive to oxygen vacancies.
- Work on relationship between trapping lifetimes and intensities and how they correspond to the void type.
- Attempt to produce BZO doped with materials from a different part of periodic table.
- Perform measurements on specimens that have not been sintered, or have been sintered in lower temperatures than 1500 C.
- Carry out multi-variate analysis to check whether it would allow to extract some properties not visible by use of PAL analysis.

Coincidence Doppler Broadening Measurements with auto-cool system

Positron Annihilation Spectroscopies in IRC B-1 lab Jaga Urban-Klaehn, August 4, 2021



CDB Recognizes charged state and voids chemistry/electron state density

- 1. PAL (Positron Lifetime Spectroscopy) developed in Fall 2019, upgraded in 2020.
- 2. CDB (Coincidence Doppler Broadening Spectroscopy) developed in summer 2021
- 3. TechnoAP module purchased in Fall 2019.
- 4. Liquid Nitrogen auto-cool system developed in summer 2021



Thank you for your attention



Proton trapping:

- Localization of oxygen vacancy is relevant because once the oxygen vacancy is hydrated, the proton on that position could experience an attraction by the dopant atom
 - ➔ proton trapping
- Proton trapping reduces the proton conductivity
- Proton trapping is a function of doping %

Defect clusters:

- Dopant atoms could form association
- Dopant clusters increases proton trapping



(Toyoura et al., 2018)



 \dot{z}_{r} \dot{z}_{r} \dot{z}_{r} \dot{z}_{r}

(Oikawa et al., 2015



OH.

roton trapping



Grain boundary:

- Oxygen vacancies tend to segregate at the grain boundary
- Space charge region is formed
- The proton conductivity can be lowered due to the high resistance at the grain boundaries



(Kjolseth et al., 201

Fig. 1. Schematic grain boundary consisting of a positive core charge compensated by two adjacent space-charge layers. Values of x are defined such that x = 0 at the interface between the space-charge layer and the grain boundary core, while far into the grain interior $x = \infty$. The dotted lines represent concentration profiles in the space-charge layer for the protons and the acceptor dopant under the Mott-Schottky approximation, while the unbroken line represents the potential profile. The Schottky barrier height potential difference is also indicated.

Data Reproducibility – series 1-4

series	ID	specimen	T1	11	T2	12	Т3	13	<t></t>
series 1	29	BZO 1B-2T S	0.159	69	0.245	30.5	1.85	0.44	19.26
	35	BZO 2B-3T S	0.158	68.4	0.243	31.2	1.86	0.44	19.21
	43	BZO 2B-3T S	0.16	69.6	0.253	29.7	1.84	0.68	19.90
series 3	163	BZO 1B_2T S	0.156	66.48	0.243	32.99	1.52	0.54	19.21
		mean	0.158	68.37	0.246	31.10	1.77	0.53	19.39
		sdvevas	0.002	1.352	0.005	1.403	0.165	0.114	0.339
		error	0.011	0.020	0.019	0.045	0.093	0.216	0.017
	30	Sc-20 1B-2T S	0.156	51.5	0.226	48.1	1.72	0.4	19.59
	36	Sc-20 2B-3T S	0.164	64.7	0.24	34.83	1.87	0.47	19.85
	44	Sc-20 2B-1T S	0.153	47.23	0.225	52.21	1.98	0.56	20.08
series 4	442	Sc20, S 3B-2T	0.157	61.2	0.238	38.2	1.82	0.59	19.77
	443	Sc20, S 3B-2T	0.157	56.3	0.23	43.3	1.83	0.42	19.57
	444	Sc20, S 1B-2T	0.165	70.3	0.269	28.74	1.93	0.96	21.18
	445	Sc20, S 1B-3T	0.158	59.5	0.235	40.2	1.79	0.33	19.44
		mean	0.159	58.68	0.238	40.80	1.85	0.53	19.93
		sdvevas	0.004	7.817	0.015	7.937	0.087	0.209	0.59
		error	0.027	0.133	0.063	0.195	0.047	0.392	0.03

Calculate mean, standard deviation, standard error, eliminate outliers



- 1. <u>TechnoAP PAS equipment, http://www.techno-ap.com/index_e.html</u>
- J. Kansy, Microcomputer program for analysis of positron annihilation lifetime spectra, Nucl. Instrum. Methods Phys. Res., Sect. A. 374 (1996) 235–244. doi:10.1016/0168-9002(96)00075-7.
- 3. Garay, J.E., Glade S.C and others, Characterization of densified fully stabilized nanometric zirconia by positron annihilation spectroscopy; Journal of Applied PhysiSc, 99(2), 2006.
- Prohazka I, Cizek J., Melikhowa O., and others, "Positron Annihilation Study of Zircona Nnopowders and nanoceramiSc Stailized by Magnesia and Ceria, J. American Ceram. Soc. 97(1), 2014.

CDS spectrum

