# Introduction to X-ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy (XPS)

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https://ozensoylab.bilkent.edu.tr/

# An Introduction to XPS:

#### I. XPS Operational Principles:

XPS Experiment & Instrumentation Photoemission Process Surface Sensitivity & Film Thickness Analysis Complex Spectral Features Spin Orbit Splitting Charge Compensation XPS Peak Fitting & Baseline Correction & Signal Deconvolution

#### II. Common Types of Analysis via XPS: Survey Scan & Surface Atomic % Composition Analysis Oxidation State & Functional Group Analysis (Chemical Shifts) Depth Profiling

Tisan Doğramaçı Bilkent 1994 1994

# XPS Experiment & Instrumentation



## X-ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy (XPS)



https://jacobs.physik.uni-saarland.de/home/index.php?page=forschung/UHV-Lab-1

### **XPS** Spectrometer Components



Bilken

#### **XPS Experimental Details** Hemispherical Electron Energy Analyzer

#### **Energy Resolution of Analyzer**











#### Energy Resolution Enhancement viz Choice of X-ray Source



Stevie et al. J. Vac. Sci. Technol. A **38**, 063204 (2020) https://doi.org/10.1116/6.0000412

#### Why do we need Synchrotron (SR) based X-rays ?



SR-based X-ray Sources offer:

- High Photon Flux (10<sup>14</sup> photons s<sup>-1</sup> mm<sup>-2</sup> mr<sup>-2</sup>)
- High Energy Resolution (< 10 meV)</li>
- High Spatial Resolution (< 50 µm)
- Tunable Wavelength
- Tunable Time Domain (Pulses)
- X-ray Polarization capabilities



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 The peak and average brightness of lab-based sources, storage-ring based synchrotron radiation sources, and of the X-ray FELs.

https://cerncourier.com/a/making-x-raysbright-times-ahead-for-fels/



C1s spectrum of the saturated (2×2)-3CO layer on Rh(111), with a coverage of 0.75 ML. The spectrum was measured at MAX-Lab in Lund using a photon energy of 328 eV and a data collection time of 900 s.



Normal emission C1s XP spectra taken during uptake of CO on Pt(111), using a photon energy of 380 eV; the topmost spectrum corresponds to a coverage of 0.5 ML and a c(4×2) LEED structure, observed after the measurement. Time between spectra 60 s,  $p=1.7\times10^{-9}$  mbar, time per spectrum 4.8 s

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Steinrück et al. Surface Science Reports Volume 68, Issues 3-4, 2013, 446

#### What kind of samples can be analyzed via UHV-XPS ?

- Solids
- Powders
- Films
- Polymers
- Inorganic salts
- Organic crystals
- Porous materials
- Selected Gases

- Samples should be Ultra-High Vacuum, UHV (10<sup>-9</sup>-10<sup>-10</sup> Torr) compatible.
- Samples should not outgas severely.
- Samples should be dry/pre-dried
- No volatile organics/inorganics
- No liquids

- Conductors
- Insulators
- Semi-conductors



# Photoemission Process



## Electron Energy Levels and Photoemission Process



### Electron Energy Levels and Photoemission Process



## Electron Energy Levels and Photoemission Process



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https://www.specs-group.com/specsgroup/knowledge/methods/detail/xps-chemical-mapping/

# Some of the Characteristic Aspects of XPS Spectra



## XPS Survey Spectrum



#### **XPS Survey Spectrum:**

- Low-energy resolution
- Quick data Acquisition
- Wide energy range
- Reveals all the elements within detection limit



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## High-Resolution XP-Spectrum for a given element: Ni





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https://www.thermofisher.com/tr/en/home/materials-science/learning-center/periodic-table/transition-metal/nickel.html

#### Where does the background (baseline) signal in XPS come form?

0



- Emitted electrons interact with the sample in different ways depending on the depth at which they are generated.
- In (a), electrons emitted without interaction, labeled A, produce XPS photoelectron and Auger peaks. Electrons which undergo at least one inelastic collision, labeled B, contribute to the background.
- Electrons that undergo multiple collisions and do not escape the sample are labeled C.
- (b) shows the XPS spectrum for PET. The orange area shows the contribution to the background signal that results from C 1s electrons. While only the contribution to the background from C 1s electrons is illustrated here, similar background contributions are made by electrons from O 1s and O Auger transitions as well:

forming the vertical "steps" in the baseline observed for every major peak.



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## Survey vs High Resolution XP Spectra



- XPS survey spectrum (a) and high-resolution C 1s spectrum (b) of PET.
- The inset of (b) shows the chemical structure of PET and the assignments of the three peaks in the C 1s spectrum.



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## Chemical Shifts in XPS





## Chemical Shifts in XPS

#### **Oxidation States of Titanium**

Titanium exhibits very large chemical shifts between different oxidation states of the metal; in the diagram below a Ti 2p spectrum from the pure metal (Ti <sup>0</sup>) is compared with a spectrum of titanium dioxide (Ti <sup>4+</sup>).



#### Note :

(i) the two spin orbit components exhibit the same chemical shift (~ 4.6 eV)

#### (ii) **metals** are often *characterized by an asymmetric line shape*, with the peak tailing to higher BE

# while **insulating oxides** yield **more symmetric peak profile**

(iii) the weak peak at ca. 450.7 eV in the lower spectrum arises because **typical x-ray sources also emit some x-rays of a slightly higher photon energy than the main Mg K**<sub>a</sub> **line**; **this satellite peak is a "ghost" of the main**  $2p_{3/2}$  **peak** arising from ionisation by these additional x-rays.



#### Typically: BE of elements increase w/ INCREASING Oxidation (Be aware of Exceptions !)

XPS of Highly Oxidized Silver Films

**Chemical Shifts** 

in XPS-II

J. Phys. Chem. C, Vol. 114, No. 49, 2010 21563

 TABLE 1: Summary of Structural Parameters and XPS BE Assignments for Silver Metal and Various Silver Oxides



<sup>a</sup> Tjeng et al.<sup>22 b</sup> Scatturin and Bellon.<sup>25 c</sup> Waterhouse et al.<sup>29 d</sup> Schon.<sup>26 e</sup> Moulder et al.<sup>48 f</sup> Hoflund et al.<sup>32 g</sup> Hoflund et al.<sup>33</sup>

#### Decreasing B.E. with Oxidation !

The  $Ag/AgO_x$  system was the first reported negative *BE shift of metal cations with increasing oxidation*,<sup>26</sup> although the phenomena was later observed in other systems.

E.g. Cobalt, where *Co(III) exhibits a lower BE than Co(II)*,<sup>34</sup> and **Barium**, where *Ba(II) in BaO shifts to lower BE than Ba(0)*.<sup>35</sup>

#### 21562

J. Phys. Chem. C 2010, 114, 21562-21571

Spectroscopic Evidence for Ag(III) in Highly Oxidized Silver Films by X-ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy

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Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, P.O. Box 999, Richland, Washington 99354, United State Department of Chemistry, University of North Texas, 1155 Union Circle, # 305070, Denton, Texas 76203-5017, United States

Received: August 20, 2010; Revised Manuscript Received: October 12, 2010



# Baseline Correction and Peak Deconvolution



# Baseline Correction and Peak Deconvolution

XPS Data analysis often involves fitting a baseline to the data and peak fitting:

(a) A **Shirley baseline** is shown

(b) three doublets are used to fit the W4f peak.





Emrah Özensoy Bilkent University Stevie et al. J. Vac. Sci. Technol. A **38**, 063204 (2020) https://doi.org/10.1116/6.0000412

## Peak Fitting & Deconvolution in XPS: What to do and What NOT to do ?



## XPS Peak Line Shapes

XPS Peak Line Shapes can be simulated by using:

- «Lorentzian» & «Guassian» and
- their combinations like **«Voight»** line shapes





- Plot of the centered Voigt profile for four cases.
- Each case has a full width at half-maximum of very nearly 3.6.
- Black and Red profiles are the *limiting cases* of the Gaussian (γ =0) and the Lorentzian (σ =0) profiles respectively.



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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spectral\_line\_shape

#### Baseline Correction in XPS



Figure 5: A Shirley background computed from a Ti 2p spectrum.



Figure 6: Metallic Ti modeled using two regions each defining a Shirley background (upper curve) The lower background curve is the Shirley background computed using the combined peaks. The At% column is computed using an RSF of unity for both peaks in the doublet pair, hence the 1:2 ratio in peak areas *p1* and *p2*.

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CASAXPS Peak Fitting Manual

# Complex Spectral Features in XPS Data



#### **Spin-Orbit Splitting**



If we consider the final ionised state of Pd within the *Russell-Saunders coupling approximation*, the  $(3d)^9$  configuration gives rise to two states (ignoring any coupling with valence levels) which *differ slightly in energy* and *in their degeneracy* ( $g_1 = 2J + 1$ )...

$$\begin{array}{ll} {}^{3d}_{5/2} & g_{j} = 2 \times \{5/2\} + 1 = 6 \\ {}^{3d}_{3/2} & g_{j} = 2 \times \{3/2\} + 1 = 4 \end{array}$$

These two states arise from the coupling of the L = 2 and S = 1/2 vectors to give permitted J values of 3/2 and 5/2 via  $J = L \pm S$ , where 2S+1 = multiplicity (e<sup>-</sup> state degeneracy due to spin Q#)

The **Russell-Saunders (L+S)** coupling approximation is best applied **only to light atoms** and this splitting can alternatively be described using individual electron *I-s* coupling.

In this case the resultant angular momenta arise from the single hole in the *d*-shell; a *d*shell electron (or hole) has l = 2 and s = 1/2, which again gives permitted *j*-values of 3/2and 5/2 with the latter being lower in energy.

Adapted from Roger Nix (Surface Science, Queen Marry, University of London

The lowest energy final state is the one with maximum J (since the shell is more than half-full), i.e. J = 5/2, hence this gives rise to the "lower binding energy" peak.

The relative intensities of the two peaks reflects the

degeneracies of the final states  $(g_J = 2J + 1)$ , which in turn determines the probability of transition to such a state during photoionization.

**Spin-orbit splitting is not evident with s-levels (I = 0)**, but is seen with **p,d & f core-levels**.

For heavier atoms the splitting is larger.

#### Complex Peak Features in XPS: Shake-up, Satellite, Multiplet, Tail

- (a) Shakeup peak in the C 1s spectrum of PET due to the  $\pi \rightarrow \pi^*$  transition
- (b) Shakeup peaks due to the excitation of plasmon lines in Si
- (c) Tailing on a metallic peak for Pt 4f, due to shakeup excitations into a continuum of states above the Fermi level
- (d) Multiplet splitting and shakeup peaks in the Ni 2p spectrum from NiO. Multiplet splitting of core level peaks occurs when there are unpaired electrons in the valence levels and often results in unexpected peak splitting. This affects the s orbitals of some transition metals [Mn(II), Cr(II), Cr(III), Fe(III)] and also can be observed for some p and d orbitals



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#### Complex Peak Features in XPS: Use in Oxidation State Assignment

- •Cu2p peak has significantly split spin-orbit components  $(\Delta=19.75 \text{ eV}, \text{ intensity ratio}= 0.508).$
- •It is possible to distinguish Cu oxidation states using satellite features of Cu2p.
- •Cu(II) has an observable collection of satellite features at 943 eV.
- •Cu2p $_{3/2}$  peak in Cu(II) oxide is shifted and is much broader compared to Cu(I) oxide.
- •In Cu(I) oxide, there is only a very weak satellite at 945 eV.
- •Cu2p<sub>3/2</sub> peak in Cu(I) oxide is NOT shifted, but is broader compared to Cu metal.





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https://www.thermofisher.com/tr/en/home/materials-science/learning-center/periodic-table/transition-metal/copper.html

## Detection of Auger Peaks in XPS Spectra



- (a)Nonmonochromatic Mg and (b)monochromatic Al sources show how the photoelectron peaks are at the same BE.
- But, the Auger peaks shift with the use of different sources.

(Note that the satellite peaks are removed by the **monochromator source**)

 In special cases, Auger peaks can be useful for oxidation state analysis where XPS signals are deconvoluted/difficult to resolve.

science/learning-center/periodic-table/transition-



metal/copper.html



#### Surface Charge Accumulation & Differential Charging in XPS



Quantifative Core Level Photoelectron Spectroscopy A primer Juan A Colón Santana https://iopscience.iop.org/book/mono/978-1-6270-5306-8

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Stevie et al. J. Vac. Sci. Technol. A **38**, 063204 (2020) https://doi.org/10.1116/6.0000412 FIG. 9. Cl 2p high resolution spectra from a NaCl sample were obtained using different charge neutralizer conditions. The examples show (a) absent, (b) slight, (c) moderate, and (d) severe charging.

#### Adventitious Carbon

- A thin layer of carbonaceous material is usually found on the surface of most air exposed samples.
- This layer is generally known as **adventitious carbon**. •
- Even small exposures to atmosphere can produce these films. ٠
- Adventitious carbon is generally comprised of a variety of (relatively short chain [1]) • hydrocarbons species with small amounts of both singly and doubly bound oxygen functionality. C-C, C-H



C=0

A+3

5.1

1.33

0-C=0

A+4.15

5.5

1.33

# Enhancing S/N of XPS Data by Averaging (Scanning) Longer Durations of Time

#### **Merit of Collecting More Scans**

Figure of Merit (Y axis) = (Rel Increase in S/N Ratio) / (Expt S/N Ratio X Time Spent)



R H DOGRAM SC

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https://www.nanolabtechnologies.com/visual-guide-charts/

# Common Types of Surface Chemical Analysis via XPS



# Surface Sensitivity of XPS

In XPS, most of the signal comes from within a few atomic layers of the surface, Thus, XPS is described as a **surface sensitive** technique.



# Film Thickness Analysis via XPS



Initial XPS signal  $(I_{o})$  due to clean Substrate (B) is reduced to (I) due to the presence of the surface film (A) by:

 $I = I_{o} \exp\left(-t/\lambda\right)$ 

*t:* Thickness of surface film (A)

 $\lambda$ : IMFP of photoelectrons used in XPS analysis in substrate (B)

If **I & I<sub>o</sub> of B** are measured via XPS, film thickness can be estimated.



# Film Thickness Analysis via XPS-II

XPS data can be used to estimate the thickness, "d", of an overlayer "A" on top of a substrate "B" :

$$I_{A} = I_{A}^{\infty}(1 - e(-d/\lambda^{A}_{imfp}(E_{A})\cos\alpha))$$

$$I_{B} = I_{B}^{\infty}(e(-d/\lambda^{A}_{imfp}(E_{B})\cos\alpha))$$

- $I_A$  and  $I_B$  are the intensities from the overlayer and substrate.
- $I_A \infty$  and  $I_B \infty$  are the intensities from pure A and pure B.
- $\lambda^{Aimfp}(E_{A})$  is the IMFP or attenuation length of electrons traveling through A, with kinetic energies characteristic of the electrons originating from A.
- $\lambda^{A}$ imfp(E<sub>B</sub>) is the IMFP or attenuation length of electrons traveling through A, with kinetic energies characteristic of the electrons originating from B.
- $\alpha$  is the angle of emission of electrons

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# Angle-Dependent XPS Thin Film Analysis



## Angle-Dependent XPS Thin Film Analysis



Escape Depth = 10 nm Sampling Depth < 10 nm

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## Film Growth Analysis via XPS: Layer by Layer growth of BaOx on Al2O3/NiAI(100)



## Depth Profiling via XPS



## Depth Profiling via XPS



Cacovich et al. ACS Appl. Mater. Interfaces 2022, 14, 30, 34228



## Depth Profiling via XPS:

SiO<sub>x</sub>/Si







#### Depth Profiling via XPS: $Pd/TiO_2/Si$ : Tritium Storage for Betavoltaic Battery Systems



# Quantitative XPS Analysis



# Determination of Surface Atomic concentrations without the use of standards

- After baseline subtraction, the area under a peak  $(I_i)$  can be measured.
- But raw areas alone cannot be used to determine relative concentrations.
- Instead, a sensitivity factor (S<sub>i</sub>) that is specific for each transition must be considered to obtain atomic concentration (C<sub>x</sub>):

$$C_{x} = (I_{x}/S_{x})/(\Sigma(I_{i}/S_{i}))$$

E.g., if a survey spectrum showed the presence of both Au & C, and the Au 4f and C 1s peaks had the same intensity, there would be  $\sim$ 17.4 times more C than Au (S<sub>Au 4f</sub>/S<sub>C 1s</sub> = 17.4/1)

There are two types of **relative sensitivity factors (RSFs**): empirical RSF determined with the aid of reference materials and theoretical RSF. Theoretical RSF values will account for all of the area produced by the electrons from a particular orbital, including the main photoemission peak, but also all satellite, shakeup, shakeoff, and multiplet splitting lines as well. Some of these features can be quite far from the main line [as for the Si plasmon lines], and thus the experimental data acquisition should account for this wider scan to capture all of the relevant features. Empirical RSF values often only include the intensity from the main photoemission line.

**TABLE IV.** Sensitivity factors for some commonly analyzed elements (Ref. 102), derived and reprinted with permission from Scofield, J. Electron Spectrosc. Rel. Phenom. 8, 129 (1976). Copyright 1976, Elsevier.

Element	Sensitivity factor	Element	Sensitivity factor	Element	Sensitivity factor
C 1s	1.00	Ca 2p	5.13	Ag 3d	18
N 1s	1.77	Cr 2p	11.5	In 3d	22.4
O 1s	2.85	Ni 2p	21.1	Sn 3d	24.7
F 1s	4.26	Ni 2p 3/2	13.9	Hf 4f	7.95
Na 1s	7.99	Ni 2p 1/2	7.18	Ta 4f	9.07
Al 2p	0.5735	Cu 2p	24.1	W 4f	10.3
Si 2p	0.865	Ga 2p	31	Pt 4f	15.9
Cl 2p	2.36	Mo 3d	9.74	Au 4f	17.4

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'igure 6: Metallic Ti modeled using two regions each defining a Shirley background (upper curve) The lower background curve is the Shirley background computed using the combined peaks. The At% column is computed using an RSF of unity for both peaks in the doublet pair, hence the 1:2 ratio in peak areas *p1* and *p2*.

#### Words of Caution Regarding of Surface Atomic Concentration Determination: Use of Different XPS Features



Figure 4: Germanium Oxide relative intensity to elemental germanium measured using photoelectrons with kinetic energy in the range 1452 eV to 1460 eV.



Figure 3: Germanium Oxide relative intensity to elemental germanium measured using photoelectrons with kinetic energy in the range 262 eV to 272 eV.



- Low energy photoelectrons (270 eV) from the elemental Ge2p line are attenuated due to GeO<sub>x</sub> covering Ge.
- This results in a shallower sampling depth in Ge2p XPS data as compared to Ge3d (1450 eV).
- Surface atomic concentration estimations may differ.

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CASA XPS Manual 2013 Casa Software Ltd. www.casaxps.com

# XPS Analysis Research Examples from Ozensoy Group



# Catalyst Deactivation by Thermal Diffusion of $BaO_x$ Overlayers into $TiO_2$ Substrate



#### Quantitative determination of surface atomic composition of Sulfur-Poisoned & Regenerated Perovskite Emission Control Catalysts:



Emrah Özensoy Bilkent University Say & Ozensoy et al. Applied Catalysis B: Environmental, 2014 (154-155) 51 Kurt & Ozensoy et al. Topics in Catal., 2017 (60) 40

#### Monitoring Thermal Reduction & Activation of Perovskite Catalysts for Alkylaryl Oxidation



#### Unraveling Surface Chemistry of 2D-Layered Double Hydroxide Catalysts



#### Detection of Surface Na<sup>+</sup> Promoters on Mixed Metal Hydroxide Catalysts



#### Elemental Composition & Oxidation State of Pd Nano-discs on Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> Films After S-Poisoning



Interaction of NO<sub>2</sub> with Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> Ultrathin Films Grown on NiAl(100) Substrate: Formation of Nitrite and Nitrate Surface Species with Temperature



#### Oxide-Peroxide Transitions of BaO<sub>x</sub> Overlayer on Pt(111) Substrate upon NO<sub>2</sub> Adsorption & T



#### Functional Group Analysis of Mesoporous g-C<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> Photocatalyst for NO<sub>x</sub> Oxidation & Storage



Topics in Catalysis, 2016 (59) 1305

Bilkent University

**Electronic Nature of Chemisorbed Oxygen Species on Ag(111) MeOH Oxidation Catalyst** 





#### Interaction of Water with $Al_2O_3$ Ultrathin Films Grown on NiAl(100) Substrate



Ozensoy & Szanyi et al. J. Phys. Chem. B, 2005, 109, 8, 3431

#### Surface Chemistry of Quantum-Well CdSe/CdSeTe Photocatalyst for NO<sub>x</sub> Oxidation & Storage





Ebrahimi & Ozensoy et al. ChemCatChem, 2020 (12) 6329

# Introduction to X-ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy (XPS)

https://ozensoylab.bilkent.edu.tr/

Thank You

Doğra

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OzensoyLab Catalysis for Energy, Environment and Sustainability