

Knowledge of the structural behavior of Li-based battery materials at different stages of the charge/discharge cycle can be the key to understanding their performance. Unfortunately, often these materials are only available in nanoparticle form from electrochemical experiments, as polyphasic mixtures or they are only available in small quantities coming from electrochemical cells. This hinders the use of conventional powder X-ray or neutron diffraction, but not of transmission electron microscopy, which can be performed on nanoscale crystallites of the material. However, the conventional imaging techniques such as high resolution transmission electron microscopy and high angle annular dark field scanning transmission electron microscopy can rarely be applied to Li-containing compounds due to their high sensitivity to electron beam damage.

In this lecture, it will be demonstrated that precession electron diffraction can be successfully applied for the solution and refinement of the crystal structure of Li-based battery materials. As an example, the complete structural characterization of  $\text{Li}_2\text{CoPO}_4\text{F}$  high voltage cathode will be shown, including the location of all Li atoms and the determination of their coordination environment.

**Keywords:** lithium batteries, precession, TEM

## MS.81.3

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### Oxygen tilts against polar shifts in the multiferroic $\text{BiFeO}_3$

Brahim Dkhil, *Laboratoire Structures, Propriétés et Modélisation des Solides, UMR CNRS-Ecole Centrale Paris, Grande Voie des Vignes, 92295 Châtenay-Malabry Cedex, (France)*. E-mail: brahim.dkhil@ecp.fr

Multiferroics which simultaneously display magnetic, dipolar and structural order parameters, are currently gaining more and more attention. Among them,  $\text{BiFeO}_3$  (BFO) is the most promising for technology applications and fundamental interest since the polar and magnetic ordering coexist at room temperature.

In this talk after describing the complex situation for bulk BFO, we will focus on our recent results obtained on BFO thin films by combining experimental and theoretical approaches. Our BFO samples were synthesized on different [001]-oriented substrates like  $\text{SrTiO}_3$ ,  $\text{DyScO}_3$ ,  $\text{LaAlO}_3$ ,  $\text{MgO}$ , etc., allowing different mismatch and/or misfit strains. These samples were studied using advanced experimental techniques including high-temperature synchrotron and neutron diffraction, piezoforce microscopy, electron microscopy, hysteresis loop, Raman spectroscopy, ... In addition and for comparison, we also used first-principles approaches, including *ab initio* (LDA, GGA, +U) and effective Hamiltonian to study the impact of the misfit strain on the multiferroic properties and more precisely the consequences on the structure and the phase transitions.

Interestingly, our data demonstrate the key role played by the oxygen octahedra tilts, which are usually neglected, while this structural degree of freedom is very common to perovskite structure. Under strain, both the polar displacements and the oxygen tilts compete and we found that tilts fight against the polarization. This original finding allows explaining the weak experimental enhancement of the polarization reported in the literature. More surprisingly, our results show that the ferroelectric temperature  $T_C$  decreases dramatically with strain while Néel temperature  $T_N$  remains virtually constant. This is in contrast with the behaviour of standard ferroelectrics where strain increases the polar cation shifts and thus  $T_C$ . We argue that the anomalous strain effect on  $T_C$  is caused by an interplay of polar and oxygen tilting instabilities. Therefore, our findings reveal novel and original results bringing a comprehensive view which should be taken into account in a larger manner in multiferroic compounds as they

usually present oxygen tilts and also in any compound displaying the perovskite structure.

**Keywords:** multiferroic,  $\text{BiFeO}_3$ , oxygen tilts

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### Photorefractivity via linkage isomerism: from detecting small responses to engineering large ones

Anthony E. Phillips,<sup>a,b</sup> Jacqueline M. Cole,<sup>a,c</sup> <sup>a</sup>*Department of Physics, University of Cambridge, Cavendish Laboratory, J J Thomson Ave, Cambridge CB3 0HE, (U.K.)*. <sup>b</sup>*Current address: Centre for Condensed Matter and Materials Physics, Queen Mary, University of London, Mile End Rd, London E1 4NS, (U.K.)*. <sup>c</sup>*Department of Chemistry, University of New Brunswick, (Canada)*. E-mail: a.e.phillips@qmul.ac.uk

Materials that exhibit photoinduced linkage isomerism have recently attracted considerable interest for their potential applications as holographic data storage media [1]. When these compounds are exposed to light, a ligand bound to the central metal ion responds by rotating to attach itself in a different coordination mode. The resulting photorefractivity, based on isomerisation rather than the Pockels effect, demonstrates unusual and potentially useful recording kinetics [2]. An important factor inhibiting further exploitation of these materials, however, is the limited amount of photoconversion generally achieved, with less than 20% conversion to the linkage isomer typical in many materials. Here we present recent developments in the detection of small photogenerated populations alongside results suggesting that steric hindrance from the crystal surroundings is an important reason for these limited photoconversion yields.

We focus on the  $[\text{Ru}(\text{SO}_2)(\text{NH}_3)_4\text{X}]\text{Y}$  family, where the *trans* ligand **X** and counterion(s) **Y** vary. At low temperatures, several members of this family exhibit photoinduced linkage isomerism of the  $\text{SO}_2$  ligand to side- or *O*-bound geometries [3].

We present several new ways of probing the photoinduced structural changes in these compounds. First, when analysing single-crystal photocrystallographic data, model comparison using Bayesian statistical techniques can confirm the presence of small minority metastable state populations. As an example, it provides evidence for the *O*-bound MS1 state at 100 K, newly reported elsewhere, in the compound **X** =  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ , **Y** = ( $\pm$ )-camphorsulfonate<sub>2</sub> [4]. Second, XANES experiments at the Ru  $L_{2,3}$  edges provide clear evidence of photoexcitation even in a material (**X** = pyridine, **Y** = chloride<sub>2</sub>) of which single crystals were not available, and in samples of dubious crystallinity.

Finally, we show that DFT models of steric hindrance can help to rationalise the relative populations of different metastable geometries achieved at a given site. These calculations corroborate the differences observed between the Ru sites in a material with  $Z' = 2$  (**X** = isonicotinamide, **Y** = tosylate<sub>2</sub>) [5].

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