doi:10.1017/S143192761301009X
Microsc. Microanal. 19 (Suppl 2), 2013

Singly Anchored Pt and Pd atoms on Co_3O_4 and Their Catalytic Performance

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Efficient use of precious metal atoms is ideal for cost-effective catalytic processes. High dispersion of precious metal atoms on a support is one approach to a full use. Catalyst of Co_3O_4 nanorods anchoring singly dispersed Pt or Pd atoms is highly active for reduction of nitric oxide with H_2 at a relatively low temperature. Co_3O_4 with highly dispersed 0.1% Pt exhibits 100% selectivity in reducing nitric oxide to N_2 in the temperature regime of 150°C-300°C. Catalytic in-situ studies using ambient pressure X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (AP-XPS) showed the active phase is surface doped Co_3O_4 in which a Pt atom bonds with both Co atoms and oxygen atoms. During catalysis in 150°C-300°C Co_3O_4 surface remains its original chemical state. Pd atoms anchored on Co_3O_4 of 0.5% Pd/ Co_3O_4 during catalysis are singly anchored on Co_3O_4 surface, evidenced by the lack of Pd-Pd bonds in in-situ EXFAS studies. During catalysis it forms singly dispersed bimetallic nanoclusters $PdCo_n$. In contrast to pure Co_3O_4 and 0.5% Pd/SiO_2, 0.5% Pd/Co_3O_4 exhibits much higher selectivity to production of N_2 and high activity in reduction of nitric oxide.

The catalysts were prepared by impregnation of Co_3O_4 nanorod with certain amount of H_2PtCl_6 and $Pd(NO_3)_2$ as precursors, respectively, followed by calcination to anchor metal ions to surface of Co_3O_4. Size, shape, and lattice fringe of the as-synthesized 0.1% Pt/Co_3O_4 were characterized with Titan TEM (FEI Titan 80-300, 300 kV FEG TEM with point resolution of 0.2 Å) shown in Figure 1. The measured inter-planar distance of (220), 2.82 Å is the same as pure Co_3O_4 crystal parameter [1], which suggests the impregnation of Pt atoms on Co_3O_4 does not change the lattice of Co_3O_4 since immobilization of notal metal atoms is done upon a well crystallization of Co_3O_4 nanorods through calcination at 450°C. The singly atomic dispersion features were showed in Figure 2 collected in high-angle annular dark-field (HAADF)-STEM mode on JEOL JEM-ARM 200F with a CEOS probe corrector. Bright spots are Pt atoms dispersed on Co_3O_4. The representative images suggested that most of the Pt atoms on Co_3O_4 surface are separately anchored and thus singly dispersed on Co_3O_4 nanorods. We expect that the dispersion of Pt atoms on the surface of Co_3O_4 benefits from the low concentration of the noble metal ions and the generation of oxygen valvancies during calcination even at low temperature and a subsequent filling or/and a restructuring on well crystallized Co_3O_4 nanorods.

0.5% Pd/Co_3O_4 presents morphology similar to 0.1% Pt/Co_3O_4 (Figure. 1). HAADF-STEM does not distinguish Pd from Co atoms due to insufficient Z-contrast resulting from their close atomic numbers. EXAFS and AP-XPS were used to identify the binding environment and oxidation state of Pd in-situ, which showed the lack of coordination of Pd to Pd atoms and Pd to Co atoms, suggesting that Pd atoms are anchored on oxygen atoms of Co_3O_4 and they are singly dispersed under reaction conditions.

References

[1] Xie, X. W. *et al.* *J Phys Chem C* **2010**, *114*, 2116.
[2] This work is supported by the Chemical Sciences, Geosciences and Biosciences Division, Office of Basic Energy Sciences, Office of Science, U.S. Department of Energy under the grant DEFG02-12ER1635 (to FT) and DE-FG02-03ER15476 (to AIF). L.W. acknowledges financial support from Li foundation. Beamline X18B at the NSLS is supported in part by the Synchrotron Catalysis Consortium, U. S. Department of Energy Grant No DE-FG02-05ER15688.

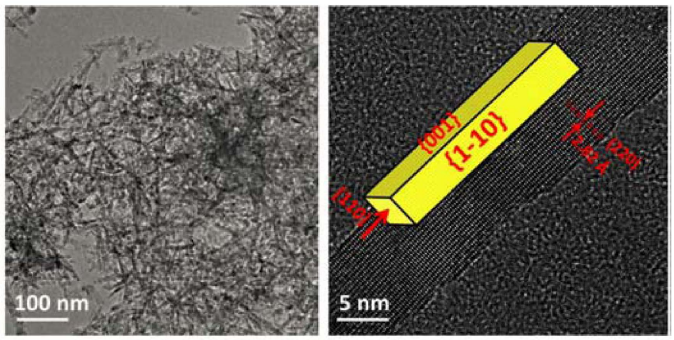

Figure 1. TEM images of Co_3O_4 nanorods anchoring noble metal atoms. (a) Large scale image. (b) High resolution image.

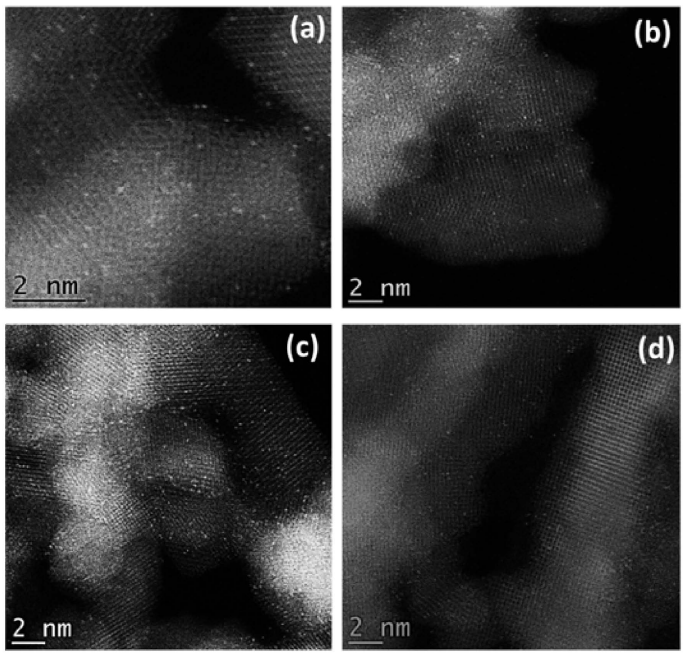

Figure 2. Image of aberration-corrected annular dark-field scanning transmission electron microscopy studies of 0.1% Pt/Co_3O_4 with singly dispersed Pt atoms. Each bright spots with high contrast are Pt atom singly dispersed on Co_3O_4 nanorods.