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Electronic Phenomena in Polyanilines

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ABSTRACT

Polyanilines have been known for over one hundred years. Recent studies of this chemically flexible polymer have demonstrated unusual chemical, electrical, and optical phenomena, both in insulating forms and conducting forms. Polyaniline has three stable insulating forms, leucoemeraldine base (LEB), emeraldine base (EB), and pernigraniline base (PNB). These three forms exhibit differing phenomena ranging from intramonomer luminescing excitons and ring rotation polarons in LEB, to nonluminescing charge transfer excitons and also ring rotations polarons in EB, to a degenerate ground state with bond order parameter solitons and ring order parameter polarons in PNB. The LEB form can be *p*-doped (oxidatively doped), the EB form can be protonic acid doped and the PNB form can be *n*-doped (reductively doped) to form conducting systems. Charge conduction studies of oriented films and fibers demonstrate that three-dimensional order between chains is critical for high conductivities. The ability to derivatize polyaniline at ring and nitrogen positions allows one to test concepts for the control of conductivity as well as improved processing.



Fig. 1 Potential applications of electronic polymers.

INTRODUCTION

The polyanilines are among the oldest known synthetic organic polymers, having been first reported in 1862 [1]. Since the mid-1980's there has been a mushrooming interest in this family of polymers [2-8]. Synthesis of polyanilines and their derivatives have been extensively described [7]. The facile chemistry of this system and its ability to be processed into oriented films [9,10] and fibers [11-13] have opened the opportunity to design in properties for function. This has lead to interest in the potential use of polyanilines and related conducting polymers in a variety of commodity, commodity/electrochemical, and high tech type applications [14, 15]. Figure 1 summarizes the range of technologies proposed. It is noted that a wide range of resistivities from insulating through highly conducting are of potential utility.

We review here the essential differences in the physics of the three different polyaniline insulating forms as well as present a summary of the critical aspects controlling conductivity in the emeraldine salt system. The effects of derivatization are briefly indicated. The parent polyaniline can be prepared in a range of oxidation states ranging from the fully reduced form, leuceoemeraldine base (LEB), 4-NH-C₆H₄-NH-C₆H₄)-x, (Fig. 2a.), to the fifty percent oxidized emeraldine base (EB), 4-NH-C₆H₄-NH-C₆H₄-N = C₆H₄ = N-C₆H₄)-(Fig. 2b), to the fully oxidized pernigranilne base (PNB), $4N = C_6H_4 = N-C_6H_4$)-x (Fig. 2c) [7,16]. The three base forms are insulators. Protonation of EB or oxidation of LEB leads to formation of the conducting emeraldine salt (ES) shown in Fig. 2d as the hydrochloride salt.



Fig.2. (a) leucoemeraldine base; (b) emeraldine base; (c) pernigraniline base; (d) emeraldine hydrochloride salt polymer; (e) poly(orthotoluidine) (emeraldine base form); (f) sulfonated polyaniline (self-doped form).

DERIVATIZATION

The polyanilines are easily derivatized at the ring [17-19] and nitrogen [20] positions. For example, replacement of one H of each ring with a CH₃ group to form poly (o-toluidine), Fig. 2e, enables testing of the roles of interchain separation and crystalline order in determining electronic properties [17,21,22], while replacement of a H on one-half the rings with a sulfonic acid group, -SO₃H, Fig. 2f, leads to a self-doped polymer the conductivity of which is independent of pH for pH \lesssim 7.5 [18,19] (Fig. 3) and exhibits greater thermal and environmental stability [23]. The change in doping level with temperature for emeraldine hychloride and ring-sulfonated polyaniline is estimated by assuming that the entire weight loss measured by thermogravimetry is due to loss of HCl and SO₃H, respectively, Fig. 4. In actuality, loss of polymer fragments may occur as well.



Fig. 3. pH dependence of conductivity of ring-sulfonated polyanilines (*) and the emeraldine hydrochloride form of polyaniline (0) (from Ref. 19).



Fig. 4. Doping levels determined by thermogravimetry of emeraldine hydrochloride (*) and sulfonated polyaniline (+) as a function of temperature assuming that the entire weight loss for each polymer is due only to loss of HCl and SO₃H respectively (from Ref. 23).

SPECTROSCOPY AND PHOTOEXCITATION SPECTROSCOPY

The optical absorption spectrum of LEB [24] is shown in Fig. 5 together with the results of a Hückel calculation for the electronic band structure of LEB carried out assuming that the repeat unit is a single (C_6H_4NH) unit [25,26]. This simple calculation reproduces most of the band structure features obtained in more extensive calculations [27,28,29]. The seven energy bands are derived from the six p_z energy levels of benzene together with the p_z energy level of nitrogen. The lower four energy bands are completely filled while the upper three are empty. It is noted that the valence band is relatively broad (its breadth depending upon the ring torsion angle) while the conduction band is dispersionless. Hence, charge conjugation symmetry is absent in leucoemeraldine base. The exact width and separation of each of the bands are sensitive to the torsion angle the C_6 rings make with respect to the plane defined by the nitrogen atoms [25,29].

Excitation of leucoemeraldine solutions in N-methylpyrrolidone (NMP) with bandgap light produces an intense luminescence peak at 3.5 eV [30], Fig. 6. The magnitude of the luminescence intensity decreases linearly with increasing concentration of imine groups within the polymer chain. The luminescence is nearly zero when the emeraldine base oxidation state is achieved. The decay

time for the luminescence has been measured and found to be ~ 4ns at room temperature [30]. The presence of a similar luminescence in three-ring oligomers [30] and also in the aniline ($C_6H_5NH_2$) monomer [31] supports that the luminescence derives from radiative decay of an intramonomer polaronic exciton [32].







Fig. 6. Absorption and photoluminescence spectra for leucoemeraldine base in NMP, the exciting wavelength for the PL spectrum is ~345 nm (from Ref. 30).

Photoexcitation of LEB films and powders with superbandgap light leads to new intragap absorptions centered at 0.7 eV and 2.9 eV [24,33]. This photoinduced absorption has been described in terms of formation of a ring rotation polaron [24-26, 33]. Because of the large charge conjugation asymmetry in the system there is only one energy level introduced into the gap by the distortion of the ring torsion angles. This polaron differs substantially from earlier studied polarons in polythiophene and polypyrrole and their derivatives in that it has a very large effective mass ($\sim 50 m_e$) due to the effects of a large moment of inertia involved in rotating the polyaniline rings about the N-N axis. Also observed in the photoexcitation spectrum is a bleaching at ~ 2.0 eV associated with the presence of some residual imine groups in the otherwise pure LEB. At long times a photoinduced absorption at ~ 1.4 eV is stable. This absorption is associated with a ring rotation polaron trapped adjacent to a quinoid ring. This trapped ring rotation polaron is readily observed in the photoexcitation spectra of emeraldine base [24,33]. Comparison of the magnitude of the photoinduced ir active vibrations and electronic absorption confirms the large mass of the photoexcited defects.

The optical absorbance of pernigranilne base though similar to that of EB is different in origin. In particular, the 2.3 eV absorption in PNB has been assigned to the excitation across a Peierls energy gap. This Peierls gap has been proposed to arise from two independent contributions, variation in bond length order parameter and variation in ring torsion angle order parameter, [25,34,35]. The effects of these two order parameters recently have been shown to vary additively [29]. Steady state photoinduced absorption experiments show the presence of a photoinduced charge defect of effective $\sim 5 m_e$ and a photoinduced charge defect of effective mass $\sim 300m_e$. Because of the enormous difference in their effective mass and their lifetimes, the low energy peak is associated with a solitonic defect in the bond length order parameter while the middle energy peak is associated with a polaronic defect in the ring torsion angle order parameter [36]. Light induced electron spin resonance studies support these assignments [37]. This is the first known material where two order parameters contribute independently to the bandgap and sustain separate excitations.

CHARGE TRANSPORT

The increase in conductivity of emeraldine salt fiber as a function of elongation ratios (1/10) demonstrates the importance of orientation and crystallinity (which increases with stretch ratio [13-15]). The conductivity, $\sigma(T) \sim \exp[-(T_0/T)^{\frac{1}{2}}]$ suggests the relevance of two models: quasi-one-dimensional variable range hopping (VRH) [21, 22,38] and hopping of charge carriers between granular metallic regions [39]. The dc conductivity of the hydrochloric salt of poly(orthotoluidine) (POT-ES) has the same temperature dependence but with a six-fold larger T₀ indicative of greater localization of the charge carriers. The thermoelectric power for POT-ES shows only a term for variable range hopping without any temperature range where a metallic-like thermopower dominates [21,22]. Self-doped sulfonated polyaniline (SPAN) [19] provides a similar case study.

The temperature dependence of the microwave frequency (6.5GHz) dielectric constant for unoriented emeraldine hydrochlorid (PAN-ES) [40], POT-ES [21,22] and self-doped sulfonated polyaniline [41], Fig. 7, graphically illustrates the importance of interchain interaction in delocalization. Analysis of these data and the data for stretch oriented emeraldine hydrochloric film [30] suggests that the localization length for positive charges in SPAN-ES is ~6A while that for POT-ES is ~8A. Both of these systems have conductivity dominated by quasi-onedimensional variable range hopping. In contrast, PAN-ES has a parallel localization length in the order of 50A and a perpendicular localization length ~20A even at low temperatures [38]. These dimensions which coincide with the estimated size of the crystalline regions strongly support that the threedimensional delocalization of charge carriers occurs within the crystalline regions of PAN-ES.



Fig. 7. Microwave frequency dielectric constant vs. temperature for unoriented PAN-ES (from Ref.38) unoriented POT-ES (from Ref. 22) and sulfonated polyaniline (from Ref. 41).

SUMMARY

The varied chemistry and ability of the polyanilines to be processed together with their environmental stability makes the systems suitable for scientific and technological studies. Several important concepts have emerged including the essential roles of ring rotations in electronic phenomena, and three-dimensional order for high conductivity. These materials remain a laboratory for study of chemical, physical, and technological opportunities in conducting polymers.

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