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Study on the luminescence behavior of lanthanide ions with luminol by flow injection chemiluminescence analysis



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ABSTRACT

This work first described the linear quenching of Ln^{III} (including La^{III}, Ce^{III}, Pr^{III}, Nd^{III}, Sm^{III}, Eu^{III}, Gd^{III}, Tb^{III}, Dy^{III}, Ho^{III}, Er^{III}, Tm^{III}, Yb^{III} and Lu^{III}) on luminol–dissolved oxygen chemiluminescence system and possible quenching mechanism by flow injection analysis. The general equation of the decrement of CL intensity with Ln^{III} concentration, $\Delta I = A \ln C_{Ln} + B$, was given and the interaction model of Ln^{III} with luminol, $lg[(I_0 - I)/I] = rlg[Ln] + lgK$, was established. The sensitive factor *A* was found to be linear with the physical parameters (*Z*, γ_{\pm} , *E*° and ΔH_{hyd}). By plotting *A* against *Z*, it could be seen light lanthanides (LL) and heavy lanthanides (HL) presented a good symmetry. The results showed that the reaction of Ln^{III} with luminol was a spontaneous process by the electrostatic force with the association constants *K* at 10⁶–10⁷ level. The binding constants *K*_D (about 10⁴–10⁵) and the number of binding sites *n* (about 1) of Ln^{III} (La^{III}, Eu^{III}, Gd^{III}, Tb^{III} and Lu^{III}) to bovine serum albumin were first given by FI–CL, and the binding ability of Ln^{III} followed the pattern: La^{III} < Eu^{III} < Gd^{III} < Tb^{III} < Lu^{III}.

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1. Introduction

Lanthanide ions (Ln^{III}), possessing the special features of fluorescence, have been widely applied in different fields [1–3]. The lanthanide family was divided into light lanthanides (LL) from La to Eu and heavy lanthanides (HL) from Gd to Lu. Among these ions, Eu^{III} and Tb^{III} with the luminescence activities were commonly acted as probes [4–8] in the chemical and biomedical analyses [9], such as DNA hybridization assay [10], cell imaging [11,12], *in vivo* sensing [13], protease activities detecting [14], drug delivery monitoring [15] and so forth. Based on the intrinsic fluorescence, the photochemical, photophysical and optical–magnetic properties of Ln^{III} and current trends of lanthanide-based luminescent materials have arisen great attentions and were applied in telecommunications, LED devices and solar energy conversion were summarized by some important reviews [16–19] in recent years. The luminescence behavior of the lanthanide family with an extrinsic probe has rarely been reported.

Luminol (3-aminophthalhydrazide), as one of the most widely used luminescence probes, has stirred particular interest in view

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jlumin.2015.02.002 0022-2313/© 2015 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved. of exciting applications in the fields of chemiluminescence (CL) and fluorescence [20,21]. Although chromatographic separation of Ln^{III} with luminol– H_2O_2 system CL detection has been reported [22,23], the subtle changes of the luminescence behavior for the lanthanide family have not been described and interaction parameters of Ln^{III} with luminol have not been given by CL with flow injection (FI) analysis.

In this work, based on the linear quenching of Ln^{III} (including La^{III}, Ce^{III}, Pr^{III}, Nd^{III}, Sm^{III}, Eu^{III}, Gd^{III}, Tb^{III}, Dy^{III}, Ho^{III}, Er^{III}, Tm^{III}, Yb^{III} and Lu^{III}) on luminol-dissolved oxygen CL reaction, the general equation of the decreased CL intensity with Ln^{III} concentration, $\Delta I = A ln C_{Ln} + B$, was given with the linear range of $0.3-700 \text{ nmol } L^{-1}$, and the interaction model of Ln^{III} with luminol, $lg[(I_0 - I)/I] = rlg[Ln] + lgK$, was established. The relationships of the sensitive factor A with physical parameters (atomic number Z, ionic radius γ_{\pm} , standard redox potential E^{o} , and hydration enthalpy ΔH_{hyd}) were discussed, and the results indicated that the variation of *A* should originate in [Xe] 4fⁿ configurations. The results revealed that the reaction of Ln^{III} with luminol was a spontaneous process by the electrostatic force with the association constants K at 10^6 – 10^7 level. The binding ability of Ln^{III} (La^{III} , Eu^{III} , Gd^{III} , Tb^{III} and Lu^{III}) to bovine serum albumin (BSA) was consistent with the expansion-inducing ability of Ln^{III} by the obtained parameters. According to the general equation of the decreased CL intensity with Ln^{III} concentration, the method for the

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assay of Ln^{III} was developed and applied to the determination of La^{III} in samples.

2. Experimental

2.1. Apparatus

A peristaltic pump of the IFFM-E Luminescence Analyzer (Xi'an Remax Electronic Science-Tech. Co., Ltd., Xi'an, China) was applied to deliver all streams. Polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) tubing (1 mm i.d.) was used throughout the manifold for carrying the CL reagents. A sixway valve with loop of 100 μ L was used for sampling. The CL signal produced in flow cell was detected without wavelength discrimination, and the photomultiplier tube (PMT) output was recorded by PC with a IFFE-E client system. Inductively coupled plasma atomic emission spectroscopy (ICP-AES, IRIS Advantage, Thermo Scientific, America) was used as a reference technique for the comparison of the results among the samples. A water bath (HW.SY11-K6B/C, Leici, Shanghai, China) was used for controlling the temperature.

2.2. Reagents

All reagents were of analytical reagent grade and doubly deionized water was purified in a Milli-O system (Millipore, Bedford, MA, USA) used in the whole procedure. Luminol (Fluka/Biochemika, Switzerland) of 2.5×10^{-2} mol L⁻¹ was prepared by dissolving 0.44 g luminol in 100 mL of 0.1 mol L^{-1} NaOH solution in a brown calibrated flask. The stock solution of BSA (Sigma-Aldrich) with the concentration of 5.0×10^{-5} mol L⁻¹ was prepared with pure water. Ln₂O₃ (99.99%) were purchased from Beijing Founde Star Science and Technology Co., Ltd. (Beijing, China). A series of LnCl₃ stock solutions (1.0×10^{-1}) mol L^{-1}) were prepared by dissolving Ln_2O_3 in 12 mol L^{-1} HCl with subsequent heating to deplete the excess HCl and dilute with water [24]. Samples with different La^{III} content were supplied by Dr. Zhao in College of Chemistry and Materials Science, Northwest University. The stock solutions were stored at 4 °C, and working solutions were prepared daily from the above stock solutions by appropriate dilution as required.

Sample preparation: four samples were weighed exactly and placed in four crucibles, and then every sample (50.0 mg) was heated at 700 °C for 4 h in muffle furnace. After that, each sample was dissolved in 12 mol L⁻¹ HCl. Thereafter, the sample solutions were heated at 80 °C to dry. After cooling to the room temperature, each sample was prepared with purified water in 25 mL calibrated flask. Suitable aliquots were taken and diluted with appropriate multiples for the determination of La^{III} by the proposed CL and ICP-AES methods.

2.3. General procedure

The configuration of the FI–CL system used in the luminoldissolved oxygen system as shown in Fig. 1A, flow lines were inserted into luminol, carrier (pure water), NaOH and Ln^{III} solutions, respectively at a constant speed of 2.0 mL min⁻¹. The whole flow system was washed with purified water until a stable baseline was recorded. 100 µL luminol was quantitatively injected into the carrier stream by the six-way valve and merged with Ln^{III} stream *via* a mixing tube, thereafter, mixed with the NaOH stream. The whole mixed solution was delivered into the CL cell, producing CL emission. The CL signals were detected by PMT at a high voltage of -700 V. The signals were imported to the computer for data acquisition. The CL intensity was recorded as the peak height.

A schematic profile of the equipment in luminol–BSA system was described in Fig. 1B, and flow lines were inserted into luminol/NaOH, carrier, BSA and Ln^{III} solutions at a constant speed

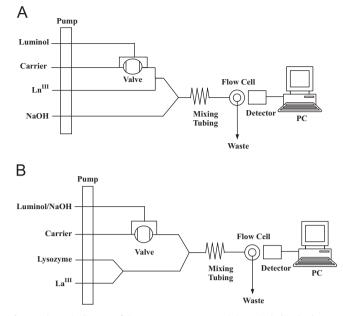


Fig. 1. Schematic diagram of the present FI–CL system. (A) Luminol–dissolved oxygen system; (B) luminol–BSA system; Luminol: 2.5×10^{-5} mol L⁻¹; NaOH: 0.025 mol L⁻¹; BSA: 5.0×10^{-8} mol L⁻¹; flow rate: 2.0 mL min⁻¹; high voltage: -700 V.

of 2.0 mL min⁻¹. The luminol standard solution (100 μ L) was injected into the carrier stream by the injection valve and merged with a mixture flow of BSA and Ln^{III}. The mixed solution was delivered into the CL cell, producing CL emission. The experimental parameters and concentration of Ln^{III} were measured by the decrement of CL intensity, $\Delta I = I_0 - I_s$, where I_0 and I_s were CL signals in the absence and in the presence of Ln^{III}, respectively. The temperature of working solutions was controlled by a water bath, which was kept in a certain range ($T \pm 0.1$ °C) throughout the experiment. Since the speed of detection was rapid, the time of the solution flowing in the tube was short, and the temperature of solutions maintain to constant, so during detection, the error of temperature was negligible.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Optimization of experimental conditions

The flow rate was an important instrumental factor which could affect the ΔI of the CL system. So, the effect of flow rate was tested in the range of 0.5–5.0 mL min⁻¹. Flow rate of 2.0 mL min⁻¹ offering the highest S/N ratio was then chosen as suitable condition considering analytical precision. The length of the mixing tube on the ΔI signals was investigated between 5.0 and 20.0 cm and for the purpose of obtaining the maximum CL signal in the flow cell the optimal length of mixing tube selected for further experimentation was 10.0 cm.

The effect of luminol concentration on the CL intensity was also tested from 1.0×10^{-6} to 1.0×10^{-4} mol L⁻¹, and the optimum concentration was 2.5×10^{-5} mol L⁻¹. NaOH was added into the luminol solution to increase the sensitivity of the system, due to the nature of the luminol reaction. A series of NaOH solutions with different concentration ranging from 1.0×10^{-3} to 1.0×10^{-1} mol L⁻¹ were tested, and 2.5×10^{-2} mol L⁻¹ was the optimum concentration and used in subsequent experiments.

The pH effect of Ln^{III} solutions on luminol-dissolved oxygen CL intensity was tested ranging from 4.0 to 9.0, which were adjusted by HCl or NaOH solutions. It was found that the pH effect for Ln^{III} solutions was the same, and Fig. 2 shows (La^{III} as an example) that

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