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Au nanoparticle-decorated NiCo₂O₄ nanoflower with enhanced electrocatalytic activity toward methanol oxidation

Haixing Gao^a, Yang Cao^a, Yong Chen^a, Xiaoyong Lai^b, Shujiang Ding^c, Jinchun Tu^{a,*}, Junlei Qi^d

^a State Key Laboratory of Marine Resource Utilization in South China Sea, Key Laboratory of Tropical Biological Resources of Ministry of Education, College of Materials and Chemical Engineering, Hainan University, Haikou 570228, P. R. China

^b State Key Laboratory of High-Efficiency Utilization of Coal and Green Chemical Engineering, College of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Ningxia University, Yinchuan 750021, P. R. China

^c Department of Applied Chemistry, School of Science, MOE Key Laboratory for Nonequilibrium Synthesis and Modulation of Condensed Matter, State Key Laboratory for Mechanical Behavior of Materials, Xi'an Jiaotong University, Xi'an 710049, P. R. China

^d State Key Laboratory of Advanced Welding and Joining, Harbin Institute of Technology, Harbin 150001, P. R. China.

Abstract

The performance of direct methanol fuel cells hinges on the activity of the catalyst. To enhance the electro-catalytic activity, a flower-like nanostructure assembled from thin Au/NiCo₂O₄ nanosheet is synthesized via a microwave process combined with deposition-reduction method, where the Au nanoparticles are well dispersed on the surface of the NiCo₂O₄ nanosheet. The Au/NiCo₂O₄ composite nanoflower is successfully applied in the electro-catalytic oxidation of methanol and its electro-catalytic performance is investigated by cyclic voltammetry, chronoamperometry and electrochemical impedance spectroscopy, which exhibits excellent electro-catalytic qualities towards methanol electro-oxidation in alkaline medium, including low onset potential (0.31 V), high current densities (135.9 mA cm⁻²) at 0.60 V (vs. SCE), and desirable electro-oxidation stability (94%) after 500

* Corresponding author. Tel: +86 898 66259764; Fax: +86 898 66259764.
E-mail address: tujinchun@hainu.edu.cn (Jinchun Tu)

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