Analysis of optical properties of solar energy materials

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Outline of the presentation

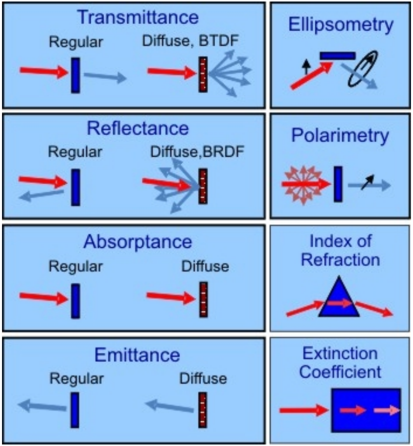
Optical properties of materials

- Optical processus in materials : reflexion, propagation, transmission
- Propagation modes : refraction, absorption and luminescence, diffusion (elastic or inelastic)
- Restricted (and more precise) meaning : complex frequency dependent refractive index or dielectric tensor

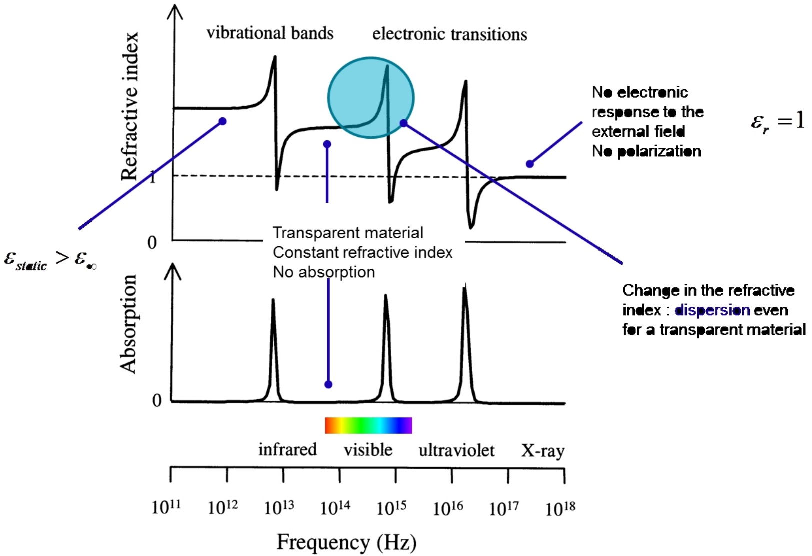
$$\tilde{\epsilon}(\omega) = [n(\omega) - j\,k(\omega)]^2$$

$$\alpha(\omega) = \frac{4\pi}{\lambda} k(\omega)$$

- Need for absolute experimental methods



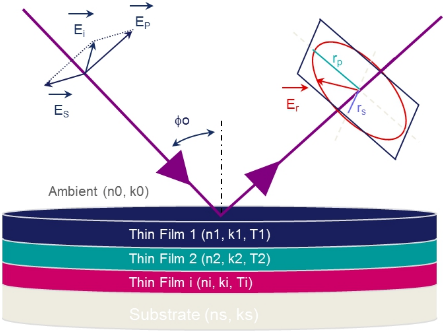
What in which spectral range ?



Ellipsometry : a powerful tool to probe layer thickness and optical properties

Paul Karl Ludwig Drude (1863-1906)

Different behavior of two light beams with orthogonal polarizations after reflexion (1890)



$$\rho = \tan\Psi e^{i\Delta}$$

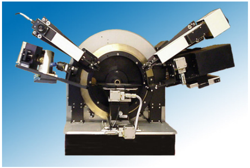
$$\tan\Psi = \frac{|R_p|}{|R_s|} \quad \text{and} \quad \Delta = \delta_p - \delta_s$$

Spectroscopic ellipsometry at UMONS and MATERIA NOVA

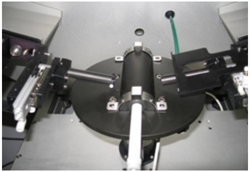
Rudolph Auto EL III SWE

Rudolph S2000 SE

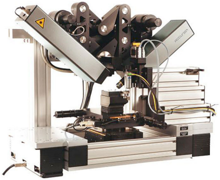
SOPRA GESP5 NUV-VIS-NIR (2001)



SOPRA FTIR-SE (2003)



SOPRALAB ellipsometric porosimeter (2009)



ACCURION Imaging Ellipsometer (03/2012)

Overall spectral range : 250 nm – 18000 nm with control of temperature (-196 K – 650 K), determination of nano- and mesoporosity and spacial resolution better than 1 micron

Optical properties of nickel-chromium oxide layers

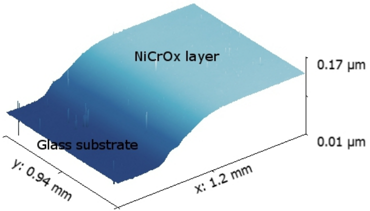
Importance of $NiCrO_x$:

- Interest in solar absorbers manufacturing
- High absorbance
- Good stability in a wide range of oxidizing/reducing environments
- High thermal resistance

Materials and methods :

- Films deposited by magnetron sputter deposition (Materia Nova) on glass substrates
- Roughness by optical profilometry
- Optical properties in VIS-NIR $(350 - 1700 \text{ nm})$ and mid-IR $(600 - 6000 \text{ cm}^{-1})$ by SE analysis

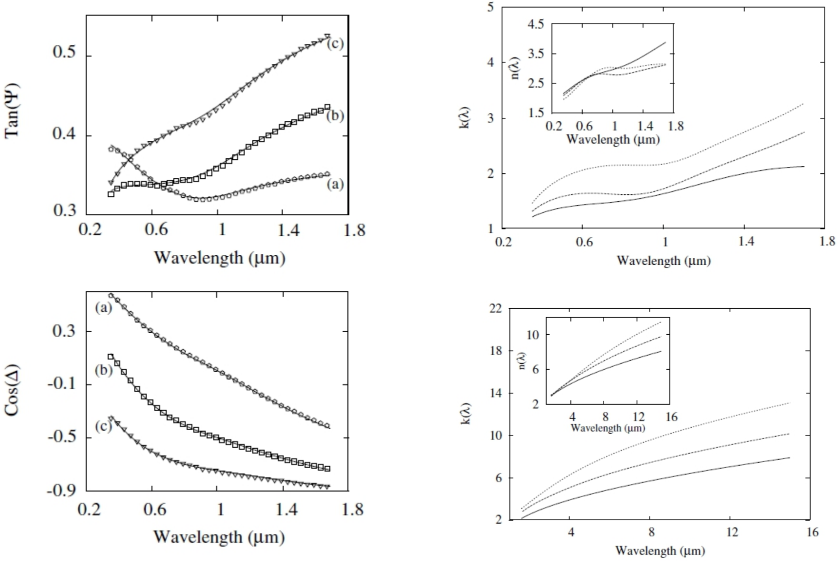
Optical properties of nickel oxide chromium thin films as a function of their chemical composition



Optical profilometry of a $\simeq$ 170 nm-thick $NiCrO_x$ film on model substrate (glass) [Magn. 5x – Area : $0.94 \text{ mm} \times 1.2 \text{ mm}$]

- Roughness parameters $\leq 1 \text{ nm}$
- One-layer model for SE data modeling

Optical properties of nickel-chromium oxide layers



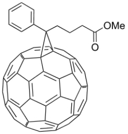
Optical properties of nickel-chromium oxide layers

- Optical modeling with non-interacting Lorentzian oscillators and Drude term for conductivity in the IR range
- Importance of the metal-oxide transition
- Equivalence between electrical conductivity (4-points method) and optical conductivity (FTIR-SE results)

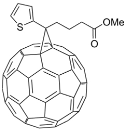
Table 2 Optical resistivity ($\Omega/square$) of the $NiCrO_x$ films. Comparison between FTIR-SE and 4PPT values.

Samples	O_2 (%)	4PPT	FTIR-SE	Diff (%)
$NiCrO_x$-02	20	32.8	34.2 ± 3.8	4.1
$NiCrO_x$-03	25	54.5	54.1 ± 1.0	0.7
$NiCrO_x$-04	30	88.0	82.2 ± 6.6	7.0

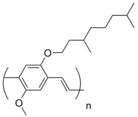
Materials for organic solar cells (OPV) : P3HT-PCBM



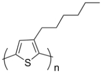
PCBM



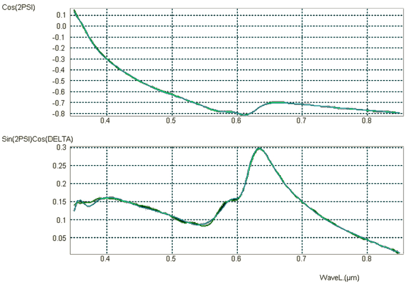
ThCBM



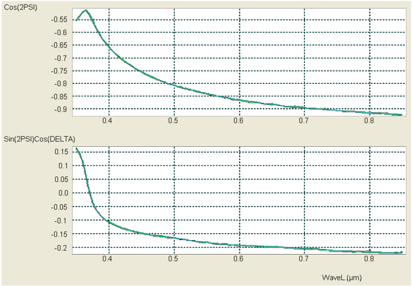
MDMO-PPV



P3HT



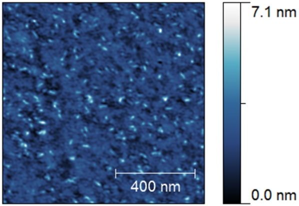
Ellipsometric spectra (Green : data – Blue : fit results) of a 55 nm-thick P3HT film on silicon substrate



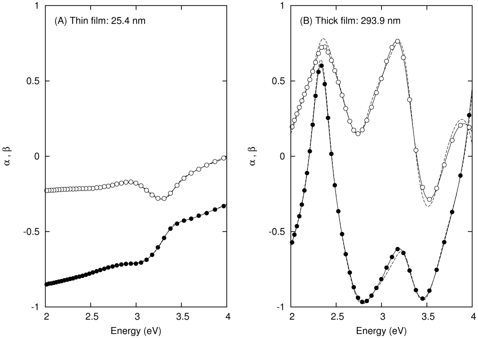
Ellipsometric spectra (Green : data – Blue : fit results) of a 21 nm-thick PCBM film on silicon substrate

Optical response of dielectric matrices embedding silver nanoparticles

- Importance of noble metal nanoparticles (embedded or localized at interfaces) or of metallic gratings to enhance solar light absorption using plasmonic modes
- Polyvinyl-alcohol (PVA) films (20 nm) with high silver content (25% $AgNO_3$)



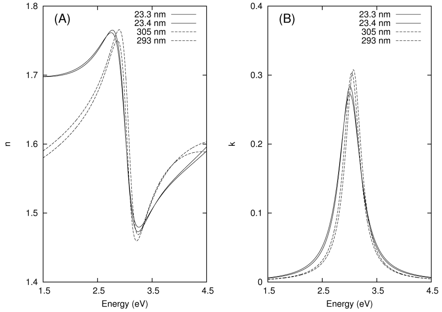
Topography AFM image (non-contact mode) of a 25 nm-thick film

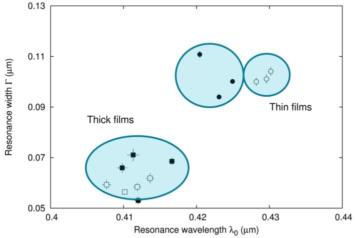


Spectroscopic ellipsometry data (symbols) and fit results (lines) for (A) thin and (B) thick films

Optical response of dielectric matrices embedding silver nanoparticles

- Polymer films (PVA) embedding silver nanoparticles : behavior of thin and thick films at low (2.5%, open symbols) and high (12.5%, plain symbols) doping levels
- Significant difference in the refractive index of thin and thick films at high constant doping levels
- Need for modeling beyond the classical effective media theories (Bruggeman) : island models ('optical percolation')

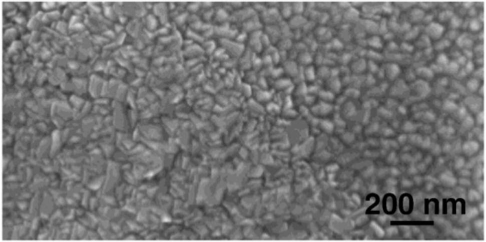




Smart materials with tunable optical properties for control of the solar reflectance/transmittance

Vanadium VO_2 :

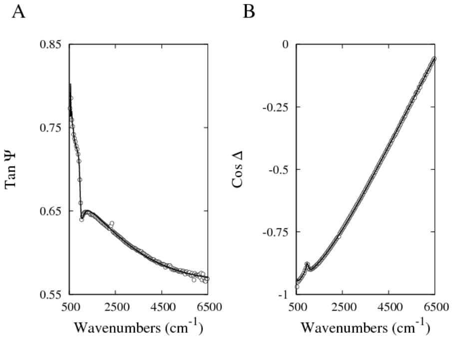
- Thermochromic material with tunable transition temperature (doping)
- Oxyde–Metal transition



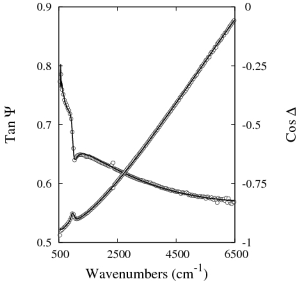
(Lafort et al, Thin Solid Films 2011)

Vanadium oxide : SE data and fit results

mid-IR spectral range and FTIR-SE analysis

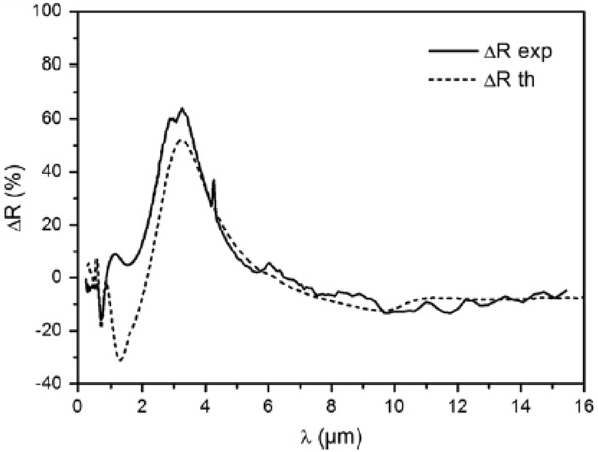


Visible spectral range and standard SE analysis



SE data for a 200 nm-thick VO_2 film

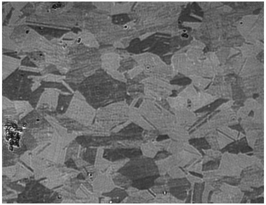
Vanadium oxide : reflexion contrast in the VIS-NIR and MidIR spectral domains

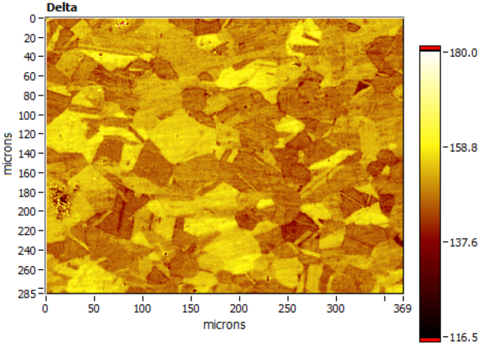


Vanadium oxide

100-nm thick VO_2 film on stainless steel substrate

Local information required on optical properties : IMAGING ELLIPSOMETRY





White light image (polarization mode) → : structural information and contours

Imaging ellipsometry data (Δ image) → : optical properties at the micron scale but increa sing number of data (hypercube)

Multivariate analysis methods required

Resume and conclusions

Resume

- Non-destructive analysis of optical properties
- Large spectral domain covered by spectroscopic ellipsometry
- Determination of porosity, temperature effects and local effects at the (sub)micron scale

Conclusions

- Experimental technique suitable for investigating the optical bahavior of solar energy materials (solar absorbers, PV-OLED, smart materials . . .)
- Need of advanded models for metallic layers, metal-oxide transition and link between AFM and ellipsometric roughness parameters

Thank you for your attention !

Questions ?