Phase Characterization of TiO₂ Powder by XRD and TEM

Kheamrutai Thamaphat¹*, Pichet Limsuwan¹ and Boonlaer Ngotawornchai²

ABSTRACT

In this study, the commercial TiO₂ nanopowder and micropowder of anatase phase and rutile phase have been characterized by x-ray diffraction (XRD) and transmission electron microscopy (TEM). XRD patterns of nano-TiO₂ in rutile and anatase phases exhibit broad peaks whereas both phases of micro-TiO₂ demonstrate very sharp peaks. TEM images show that the grain size of TiO₂ micropowders and TiO₂ nanopowders are 0.3-0.7 µm and 10 nm, respectively. The selected-area electron diffraction patterns of TiO₂ nanopowders in rutile and anatase phases are consistent with XRD results. Key words: TiO₂, anatase, rutile, micro and nanopowders, TEM, XRD

INTRODUCTION

Titanium dioxide or titania (TiO₂) was first produced commercially in 1923. It is obtained from a variety of ores. The bulk material of TiO₂ is widely nominated for three main phases of rutile, anatase and brookite (Kim et al., 2005). Among them, the TiO₂ exists mostly as rutile and anatase phases which both of them have the tetragonal structures. However, rutile is a high-temperature stable phase and has an optical energy band gap of 3.0 eV (415 nm), anatase is formed at a lower temperature with an optical energy band gap of 3.2 eV (380 nm) and refractive index of 2.3 (Brady, 1971).

TiO₂ is mainly applied as pigments, adsorbents, catalyst supports, filters, coatings, photoconductors, and dielectric materials. In recent years, TiO₂ has been well known as a semiconductor with photocatalytic activities and has a great potential for applications such as environmental purification, decomposition of carbonic acid gas, and generation of hydrogen gas (Zhang et al., 2000). In most of these cases, the size of the TiO₂ particles is an important factor affecting the performance of the materials. It is not surprising; therefore, that much research has been focused upon the reduction of the particle size. Much effort has been devoted to the preparation of TiO₂ nanopowders, including sol-gel route, homogeneous precipitation, hydrothermal methods, flame synthesis and relatively new molten salts method (Bilik and Plesch, 2007). They were usually found that different routes often produced different results. Even for the same route, using different amount of the starting materials, the obtained powder size is different (Li et al., 2002).

Consequently, phase and particle size are the important parameters that influence physical properties of material. Several techniques could be used for the investigation of them. However, the particle size determination can be based on direct observation of particles by transmission
electron microscopy (TEM) or scanning electron microscope techniques, in this case, we can also receive the important information on the shape of particles. Data on particle size can be obtained by X-ray diffraction (XRD) technique as the particle size is related to the diffraction peak broadening. It is important to note that TEM and XRD methods allow not only to measure the particle size, but also to identify crystalline phases.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Four commercial TiO₂ samples used in this experiment were provided by Aldrich: (i) 99.7 % anatase, nanopowder; (ii) 99.8 % anatase, micropowder; (iii) 99.5 % rutile, nanopowder; (iv) 99.9 % rutile, micropowder.

XRD measurements were performed on the Bruker D8 Advance diffractometer operating in the reflection mode with Cu-Kα radiation (35 kV, 30 mA) and diffracted beam monochromator, using a step scan mode with the step of 0.075° (2θ) and 4 s per step. Diffraction patterns of both anatase and rutile TiO₂ powders were compared with reference to JCPDS database. Additionally, the morphology of the powder was observed by TEM with a JEOL JEM-2100 ultra high resolution TEM operating at 160 kV.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

XRD

XRD patterns of nano-TiO₂ and micro-TiO₂ in rutile and anatase phases are shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2, respectively. In Figure 1, XRD patterns exhibited strong diffraction peaks at 27°, 36° and 55° indicating TiO₂ in the rutile phase. On the other hand, in Figure 2, XRD patterns exhibited strong diffraction peaks at 25° and 48° indicating TiO₂ in the anatase phase. All peaks are in good agreement with the standard spectrum (JCPDS no.: 88-1175 and 84-1286). From Figure 1 and Figure 2, they were shown that the diffraction pattern peak intensity of the TiO₂ increases with increasing particles size. These results suggested that the nano-TiO₂ powder is composed of irregular polycrystalline. Amorphous revealed a broad pattern with low intensity; however, the effect of the amorphous materials on the broadening of the XRD patterns of nanosized TiO₂ is negligible.

![Figure 1 X-ray diffraction of rutile TiO₂ (a) micropowders and (b) nanopowders.](image1)

![Figure 2 X-ray diffraction of anatase TiO₂ (a) micropowders and (b) nanopowders.](image2)
TEM

TEM was used to further examine the particle size, crystallinity and morphology of samples. TEM bright field images of TiO$_2$ micropowders in rutile and anatase phases are shown in Figure (3a) and (4a), respectively. It is clearly seen that the TiO$_2$ powders in rutile phase consist of both spherical and rod shapes but the particle of TiO$_2$ powders in anatase phase are mostly spherical morphology. Furthermore, it can be estimated that the particle size of samples in Figure (3a) and (4a) are microscale with the grain size about 0.3-0.7 $\mu$m.

TEM bright field images of TiO$_2$ nanopowders in rutile and anatase phases are shown in Figure (3b) and (4b), respectively. It can be estimated that the particle size of powders in Figure (3b) and (4b) are nanoscale with the grain size less than 10 nm. The corresponding selected-area electron diffraction (SAED) patterns of nano-TiO$_2$ powders in rutile and anatase phases are shown in Figure (3c) and (4c), respectively. These are in agreement with XRD results in Figure (1b) and (2b), respectively. In Figure (3c), the SAED patterns of nano-TiO$_2$ powders in rutile phase shows spotty ring patterns without any additional 

Figure 3  Images of rutile phase. (a) TEM image of micro-TiO$_2$ powder; (b) TEM image of nano-TiO$_2$ powder; (c) SAED pattern of nano-TiO$_2$ powder and (d) HRTEM image of nano-TiO$_2$ powder.
diffraction spots and rings of second phases, revealing their well crystalline. On the other hand, the SAED patterns of nano-TiO$_2$ powders in anatase phase (Figure (4c) shows that the brightness and intensity of polymorphic ring is weak, so they are poorly crystallized and partly amorphous.

The crystallinity of nano-TiO$_2$ powders can also be observed by phase-contrast images or Moire patterns. Figure (3d) and (4d) show crystal lattice planes of nano-TiO$_2$ in rutile and anatase phases, respectively. It is seen that, for rutile phase, only one crystal lattice plane (110) with d-spacing of 0.301 nm is obtained, whereas those of anatase give many crystal lattice planes with d-spacing of 0.313 nm for the plane (101).

**CONCLUSION**

In this work, a study has been carried out on the identification of phase and particle size of TiO$_2$ powders using XRD and TEM techniques. All high purity samples were commercial TiO$_2$. From the results, X-ray diffraction patterns can
confirm the TiO₂ phases. Furthermore, the particle size can be clearly indicated by characteristic of XRD pattern; the diffraction pattern peak intensity of the TiO₂ increases with increasing particles size. Additionally, TEM was used to further examine the crystallite/particle size, the crystallinity and morphology of samples. TiO₂ powders in rutile phase consist of both spherical and rod shape; on the contrary, the particle of TiO₂ in anatase phase has mostly spherical morphology.

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LITERATURE CITED