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Atom-to-Solid Core-Level Shifts for the Lanthanides: *nl* Dependence Introduced by Valence Changes

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Free-atom-to-metal shifts of the rare-earth 2p, 3d, 4f, and 5s core-level binding energies have been calculated. For Pr-Sm and Tb-Tm, elements which undergo a valence change on formation of the solid, the shifts are smaller and depend significantly on the nl core-state quantum numbers. Consequently, a unique shift characterizing all core levels of a given element cannot be assumed when a configuration change involving the 4f states occurs on solid formation.

PACS numbers: 71.50.+t, 79.60.Cn

Core-level binding energies determined by probes such as x-ray photoemission spectroscopy continue to provide valuable information regarding electronic structure. One focus of substantial effort is the binding-energy shift between the free-atom state and the metallic phase (see, e.g., Refs. 1-6). This paper reports the first direct calculations of such shifts for all the lanthanide elements; moreover, four different core states, the 2p, 3d, 4f, and 5s, are considered. The valence (or 4f occupancy) change accompanying solid formation is found to produce significant quantitative differences among the shifts calculated for Pr-Sm and Tb-Tm. In particular, the 5s shifts exceed those of the more spatially localized states by as much as 5 eV.

The atom-metal shift $\delta E_B(nl)$ of a level having quantum numbers nl is here defined by

$$\delta E_B(nl) \equiv E_B^{\text{atom}}(nl) - \tilde{\Delta}_{-}(nl), \qquad (1)$$

where $E_B^{\text{atom}}(nl)$ and $\tilde{\Delta}_{-}(nl)$ denote the free-atom and metal binding energies relative to the vacuum zero and the Fermi energy ϵ_F , respectively. This definition is useful because binding energies are generally measured with respect to the same reference levels. Each $E_B^{\text{atom}}(nl)$ is derived from a difference of relativistic Hartree-Fock (RHF) total energies:

$$E_{h}^{\text{atom}}(nl) \equiv E_{ion}^{\text{RHF}}((nl \text{ hole})4f^{k_{a}}(5d, 6s)^{q_{a}}) - E_{atom}^{\text{RHF}}(4f^{k_{a}}(5d, 6s)^{q_{a}}).$$
(2)

For Pr-Sm and Tb-Tm the atomic 4f occupancy k_a and valence q_a differ from their metallic counterparts, as Table I indicates. Multiplet theory serves to place the 4f, 5d, and 6s electrons into the appropriate ground states for both initial and final configurations, while multiplet interactions between the nl hole (nl = 2p, 3d, 5s) and the open 4f and 5d shells in the ionic final state are not included.

 $\tilde{\Delta}_{(nl)}$ is also specified by a total-energy difference:

$$\tilde{\Delta}_{-}(nl) \equiv E_{\text{metal}}^{\text{RHF}}((nl \text{ hole})4f^{k_m}(5d, 6s)^{q_m+1}) - E_{\text{metal}}^{\text{RHF}}(4f^{k_m}(5d, 6s)^{q_m}).$$
(3)

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TABLE I. Atomic and metallic electron configurations of the lanthanide elements. For La, Ce, Eu, Gd, Yb, and Lu the atomic 4f occupancy is maintained in the solid, while for Pr-Sm and Tb-Tm the 4f number decreases by one on formation of the metal.

Element	Atomic configuration	Metallic configuration
La	$5d6s^{2}$	$(5d, 6s)^3$
Ce	$4f5d6s^{2}$	$4f(5d, 6s)^3$
\Pr	$4f^{3}6s^{2}$	$4f^{2}(5d, 6s)^{3}$
Nd	$4f^46s^2$	$4f^{3}(5d, 6s)^{3}$
\mathbf{Pm}	$4f^{5}6s^{2}$	$4f^4(5d, 6s)^3$
\mathbf{Sm}	$4f^{6}6s^{2}$	$4f^{5}(5d, 6s)^{3}$
Eu	$4f^{7}6s^{2}$	$4f^{7}(5d, 6s)^{2}$
Gd	$4f^7 5d 6s^2$	$4f^{7}(5d, 6s)^{3}$
$\mathbf{T}\mathbf{b}$	$4f^{9}6s^{2}$	$4f^{8}(5d, 6s)^{3}$
Dy	$4f^{10}6s^2$	$4f^{9}(5d, 6s)^{3}$
Ho	$4f^{11}6s^2$	$4f^{10}(5d, 6s)^3$
\mathbf{Er}	$4f^{12}6s^2$	$4f^{11}(5d, 6s)^3$
Tm	$4f^{13}6s^2$	$4f^{12}(5d, 6s)^3$
Yb	$4f^{14}6s^{2}$	$4f^{14}(5d, 6s)^2$
Lu	$4f^{14}5d6s^2$	$4f^{14}(5d, 6s)^3$

RHF-Wigner-Seitz calculations of these quantities have been previously described.⁷⁻¹⁰ $E_{met al}^{RHF}$ represents the total RHF energy of *all* the electrons in a Wigner-Seitz sphere of the metal. The final state contains a hole in the *nl* shell as well as an additional 5d-6s conduction electron both to preserve charge neutrality and to describe screening effects approximately. The metallic valence is q_m , the 4f electrons are placed into Hund's rule terms via multiplet theory, and nl -4f multiplet splittings are neglected. For the 2pand 3d states E_B^{atom} and $\tilde{\Delta}_-$ are degeneracyweighted average binding energies of the spinorbit-split $j = l \pm \frac{1}{2}$ levels.^{7,8}

Values of $\delta E_B(nl)$ are presented in Fig. 1. Two significant features are immediately evident. (1) The curves have a common qualitative aspect inasmuch as δE_B is larger for the elements whose 4f occupancies in the atom and the metal are the same (La, Ce, Eu, Gd, Yb, and Lu; cf. Table I), and δE_B is smaller for the elements whose 4fnumber decreases on solid formation (Pr-Sm and Tb-Tm). Exploiting thermochemical quantities



FIG. 1. Atom-to-metal shifts $\delta E_B(nl)$ calculated for the 2p, 3d, 4f, and 5s levels of the lanthanide elements.

such as cohesive energies and ionization potentials, Johansson and Mårtensson have derived⁶ a single, nl-independent shift for each element, and their results exhibit similar overall variation. (2) Differences among the shifts for Pr-Sm and Tb-Tm are apparent on a 1-eV scale. For each of those elements the hierarchical relation

$$\delta E_{B}(3d) < \delta E_{B}(2p) < \delta E_{B}(4f) < \delta E_{B}(5s)$$
(4)

is obeyed, with $\delta E_B(5s)$ separated by as much as 5 eV from the other shifts.

The results displayed in Fig. 1 imply that a unique atom-to-solid shift characterizing all core states of an element *cannot* be assumed when a configuration change itself involving a core state (in this case the 4f) occurs on solid formation. A corollary implication is that a one-to-one correspondence between a macroscopic property, such as the cohesive energy or heat of formation, and δE_B does not exist in that circumstance. Since nl-dependent surface core-level shifts may also be expected, the important connection between those shifts and surface energies discussed¹¹ by Rosengren and Johansson may also require modification when the surface and atomic 4f occupancies differ.

One way of analyzing the impact of the atommetal configuration change is to introduce the nlbinding energy in the $4f^{k_m}5d^{q_m-1}6s$ excited atomic configuration:

$$E_{B}^{*}(nl) \equiv E_{\text{ion}}^{R \text{ HF}}((nl \text{ hole})4f^{k_{m}}5d^{q_{m}-1}6s) - E_{\text{atom}}^{R \text{ HF}}(4f^{k_{m}}5d^{q_{m}-1}6s).$$
(5)

 $E_B^*(nl)$ is the "metal atom" analog of $E_B^{\text{atom}}(nl)$. Each shift may now be written as

$$\delta E_B(nl) = \Delta E_B^{\text{config}}(nl) + \delta E_B^*(nl), \qquad (6)$$

where

$$\Delta E_{B}^{\text{config}}(nl) \equiv E_{B}^{\text{atom}}(nl) - E_{B}^{*}(nl)$$
(7)

is the correction to the atomic nl binding energy due to the configuration change, and

$$\delta E_{B}^{*}(nl) \equiv E_{B}^{*}(nl) - \tilde{\Delta}_{-}(nl)$$
(8)

represents the effective atom-metal shift in the

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FIG. 2. Components of the atom-to-metal shifts. $\delta E_B^*(nl)$ is the effective ("metal-atom"-to-metal) shift which corresponds to both atomic and metallic configurations having the 4f occupancy of the solid. $\Delta E_B^{\text{config}}(nl)$ represents the modification of the freeatom nl binding energy arising from the change to the metallike configuration.

absence of such a change. Figure 2 displays these two components.

It is apparent from Fig. 2 that $\delta E_B^*(nl)$ is essentially independent of nl. The shifts are regularized when no configuration change occurs, showing only a slight decrease across the series which is associated with the lanthanide contraction (an effect also noted in Ref. 6). Comparison of Figs. 1 and 2 makes it evident that $\Delta E_B^{\text{config}}$ is responsible both for the distinction between the δE_B results for Pr-Sm, Tb-Tm and the other elements, as well as for the differences among the shifts

for each member of the former group. The shifts for Pr-Sm and Tb-Tm are reduced because $\Delta E_B^{\text{config}} < 0$ for those elements. This is a consequence of the fact that $E_B^* > E_B^{\text{atom}}$ when the metallike configuration has one fewer 4*f* electron and, hence, greater effective nuclear charge, than the ground atomic configuration.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge productive discussions with J. W. Wilkins and J. R. Smith.

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Bound State between a Crystal-Field Excitation and a Phonon in CeAl₂

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The existence of a bound state between a crystal-field excitation and a low-lying phonon in $CeAl_2$ is suggested. It can explain in a natural way the hitherto unexplained two-peak structure found in magnetic neutron-scattering experiments. Various checks are made to substantiate this suggestion. A similarity is pointed out to the exciton-phonon boundstate problem in semiconductors.

PACS numbers: 75.10.Dg, 63.20.Kr, 71.70.Ch

The intermetallic cubic Laves-phase material CeAl₂, in which the Ce ions have a stable 3⁺ configuration with $J = \frac{5}{2}$, has attracted considerable attention for various reasons. At low temperatures the system exhibits a Kondo effect ($T_{\rm K} \simeq 6$ K) and antiferromagnetic order ($T_{\rm N} = 3.9$ K).^{1.2} It

also shows a strong magnetoelastic coupling leading to pronounced low-temperature anomalies in the c_{44} elastic constant.³ One striking observation⁴ is the appearance of *two* inelastic lines in inelastic magnetic neutron-scattering experiments at energies $\Delta_1 = 100$ K and $\Delta_2 = 180$ K. This

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