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<th>Fundamentals of Ceramic (Glass)-Metal Bonding (II) : Characteristics of zirconia</th>
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<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Iwamoto, Nobuya</td>
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<tr>
<td>Citation</td>
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TECHNICAL REVIEW

Fundamentals of Ceramic (Glass)-Metal Bonding (II)†
— Characteristics of zirconia —

Nobuya IWAMOTO*

Abstract

Environment upon materials has become severer with the development of various energy sources such as nuclear fusion reactor, MHD energy conversion and so on. Zirconia is an important compound as coating material on metal. In this review, characteristics of zirconia for obtaining stabilized form and good mechanical properties have been summed up.

KEY WORDS: (Ceramic) (Interface) (Bonding) (Metal)

1. Introduction

From the olden time an oxide having the following properties such as higher stability in the oxidizing and reducing atmosphere, lower vapor pressure at the higher temperature, lower thermal conductivity, lower specific heat, and higher resistivity against chemical corrosiveness, has been desired more and more. From the standpoint of utilization of nuclear power it has become the necessary conditions to have lower neutron cross section for the choice of oxide material. Furthermore severer environment such as MHD generator and coal liquefication process has demanded higher resistance to corrosiveness of coal ash.

Zirconia was used for refractory material from 1900 and as crucible material from 1906 and as lining material for open hearth furnace in steelmaking in 1916. Now it is widely used as coating material by plasma spraying in the various fields.

It was very important matter to do fundamental study to hinder the disintegration phenomenon due to crystal transformation at about 1100°C.

In this review the author summarized the characteristics of zirconia in the past and the application of analyzing means to know thermal behavior of stabilized zirconia.

2. Phase relationship in the binary systems

2.1 Dietzel’s cation field strength theory

Although many literatures have been presented as for phase relationship between zirconia and other component, there exist many disagreements because of the following causes such as impurities effect, specimen preparation and testing, thermal history, and non-equilibrium condition.

Dietzel derived the rules for the formation of compound between zirconia and other component by using relative field strength, that is to say, the difference of cation field strength between them. In Table 1, the possibility as regards the formation of stable compound is given.

Dietzel said that the formation of compound between two oxides was likely only when the difference between the field strengths of both cations exceeded 0.3, but the

<table>
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<th>n/z^2</th>
<th>Compound formation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Li2O</td>
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<tr>
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<td>P2O5</td>
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</table>

† Received on March 31, 1981
* Professor
compound melted incongruently because of poor lattice stability when the difference was only slightly greater.

2.2 ZrO$_2$-CaO system

It was well known that the addition of calcia to zirconia transformed the zirconia into a cubic form. The reason why the addition of calcia occurs such a stabilization and the information how many contents is necessary to hold cubic structure must be obtained. Many investigators have challenged to solve this problem. The first group concluded that cubic zirconia solid solution could be formed though the stabilizing content of calcia differed depending on the experimental conditions$^2$-$^4$) Figure 1 shows the results. Other investigators showed signs of stable compound.$^5$, $^6$) Figure 2 gives the stabilized region.

Garvie$^7$ concluded that the cubic field may then be described as originating from a solid solution series between cubic zirconia and CaZr$_4$O$_9$ from using lattice parameter measurement and the crystallogographical consideration by russian investigator$^8$). Phase diagram is given in Figure 3.

![Figure 1](image1.png)

Fig. 1 Cubic fields in the system CaO-ZrO$_2$ which show no compound formation$^8$)

![Figure 2](image2.png)

Fig. 2 Cubic field in the system CaO-ZrO$_2$ which show compound formation$^8$)

![Figure 3](image3.png)

Fig. 3 Partial phase diagram (with heating) of the system CaO-ZrO$_2$ $^8$)
2.3 ZrO₂-MgO system

Many investigators have reported the magnesia was effective to stabilize the zirconia in partially cubic modification for commercial usage.\(^9\) From the subsequent heat-treatment on the stabilized zirconia with magnesia, it was found to be unstable.\(^2,12\)

Phase diagrams for the system zirconia-magnesia were presented by several researchers.\(^13-18\) Grain\(^19\) revised the phase diagram and the result is given in Figure 4. He applied the detailed measurement of lattice parameter.

![Diagram of ZrO₂-MgO system](image)

**Fig. 4** Phases relations in a portion of the system ZrO₂-MgO \(^9\)

2.4 ZrO₂-UO₂ system

Evans\(^20\) applied solar furnace to study the phase diagram of this system. A tentative phase diagram based on a composition of some of Lamberton and Muller's findings\(^21\) and on his result is given in Figure 5. The solid solutions are, respectively, face-centered cubic and face-centered tetragonal on the UO₂ and ZrO₂ sides of the equilibrium diagram. However Wolten\(^22\) emphasized the effect of cooling velocity of specimens held at higher temperature on phase separation based on the investigation by Moronov et al.\(^23\) Further Mumpton and Roy\(^24\) indicated the effect of atmosphere to know phase relation and the importance of phase rule point of view.

2.5 ZrO₂-TiO₂ system

Because of inconsistencies in results of this system by previous investigators\(^25,26\) Brown Jr. and Duwez\(^27\) performed study of phase relation of this system. The result is given in Figure 6 and the compound of ZrTiO₄

![Diagram of ZrO₂-TiO₂ system](image)

**Fig. 5** Proposed phase diagram for the system ZrO₂-UO₂ \(^20\)

**Fig. 6** Proposed phase diagram for the system ZrO₂-TiO₂ \(^27\)
was confirmed. Noguchi\textsuperscript{28)} determined liquidus curve by using solar furnace and revised the phase diagram as shown in **Figure 7**.

**2.6 ZrO\(_2\)-CeO\(_2\) system**

Duwez and Odell\textsuperscript{29)} carried out phase diagram study by firing at 2000°C. As shown in **Figure 9**, zirconia and ceria are completely soluble in each other (cubic CaF\(_2\) type of solid solution) from about 24 to 100 mole % ceria. It was determined that this solid solution was retained at room temperature by moderately fast cooling and two phase region (tetragonal and cubic solid solution) extended with the temperature decrease.

**2.7 ZrO\(_2\)-ThO\(_2\) system**

Duwez and Loh\textsuperscript{30)} studied phase relationship of this system by using solar furnace. Tentative phase diagram was given as **Figure 9**. Significant point is that the monoclinic-tetragonal transformation in zirconia rich region becomes lower as 810°C with a maximum amount of 5% solid solution of toria.
2.8 ZrO$_2$-SrO system

Tentative phase diagram of this system was proposed by using solar furnace.$^{28,31}$ The result is shown in Figure 10. The formation of compounds such as SrZO$_3$, Sr$_4$Zr$_5$O$_{19}$, Sr$_3$Zr$_2$O$_7$, and Sr$_2$ZrO$_4$ were reported.

![Figure 10: Phase diagram of the ZrO$_2$-SrO system$^{28,31}$](image)

**Fig. 10** Phase diagram of the ZrO$_2$-SrO system$^{28,31}$

- $C_1$: cubic ZrO$_2$ solid solution
- $D$: ZrO$_2$ solid solution
- $J$: Sr$_4$Zr$_5$O$_{19}$
- $M$: Sr$_2$ZrO$_4$
- $N$: SrZrO$_3$ solid solution
- $Q$: SrO solid solution
- $R$: Sr$_3$Zr$_2$O$_7$
- $T$: tetragonal ZrO$_2$ solid solution

2.9 ZrO$_2$-Y$_2$O$_3$ system

Recently the stabilized zirconia with yttria is noticed from the remarkable stability under thermal cycling.$^{32}$ Duwez, Brown Jr. and Odell$^{33}$ have given tentative phase diagram as shown in Figure 11 and the following considerations as for the stabilization mechanism of yttria on zirconia from crystallographic viewpoint:

1) Although the crystal structure of yttria looks very complex, it shows some resemblance to that of cubic zirconia (CaF$_2$ structure).

2) In the case of solid solutions between MO$_2$ type and M$_2$O$_3$ type oxides, the formation of solid solutions are possible only if the crystal structure of MO$_2$ type oxide is stable with vacant oxygen sites and if M$_2$O$_3$ is

![Figure 11: Tentative phase diagram of the ZrO$_2$-Y$_2$O$_3$ system$^{33}$](image)

**Fig. 11** Tentative phase diagram of the ZrO$_2$-Y$_2$O$_3$ system$^{33}$

![Figure 12: Phase diagram of the ZrO$_2$-La$_2$O$_3$ system$^{36,37}$](image)

**Fig. 12** Phase diagram of the ZrO$_2$-La$_2$O$_3$ system$^{36,37}$

- $A$: hexagonal La$_2$O$_3$
- $C_1$: cubic ZrO$_2$ solid solution
- $C_2$: cubic ZrO$_2$ · La$_2$O$_3$
- $H$: hexagonal La$_2$O$_3$
- $P$: pyrochlore type La$_2$Zr$_2$O$_7$
- $T$: tetragonal ZrO$_2$ solid solution
- $X$: cubic La$_2$O$_3$
type oxide has “holes” which is capable to accept the excess oxygens.

2.10 ZrO$_2$-Sc$_2$O$_3$ system

Ruf, Garret, Domagala and Patel$^{34}$ studied phase relationship using high temperature- Xray diffraction and DTA methods. In the contrary to Duwez et al$^{1}$ prediction, only stable cubic region was obtained beyond 77.5% scandia.$^{34}$ Sekiya et al have given another phase diagram$^{35}$.

2.11 ZrO$_2$-La$_2$O$_3$ system

Rouanet$^{36}$ reported phase diagram of this system using thermal analysis with a solar furnace and X-ray diffractometry as shown in Figure 12, which involved new phase detected by Foex and Traverse$^{37}$.

2.12 ZrO$_2$-Nd$_2$O$_3$ system

Brown Jr. and Duwez$^{38}$ have given the phase diagram of this binary system as shown in Figure 13. As suggested by Ref. 33), there exists wider region of cubic structure.

2.13 ZrO$_2$-Gd$_2$O$_3$ system

Rouanet and Fox$^{39}$ have reported phase diagram of this system using solar furnace and discovered new phase X at high temperature as shown in Figure 14.

![Figure 14: Phase diagram of the ZrO$_2$-Gd$_2$O$_3$ system$^{39}$](image1)

- B' : monoclinic Gd$_2$O$_3$
- C$_1$ : cubic ZrO$_2$ solid solution
- C$_2$ : Cubic ZrO$_2$ - La$_2$O$_3$
- H' : hexagonal Gd$_2$O$_3$
- T : tetragonal ZrO$_2$ solid solution
- X' : cubic Gd$_2$O$_3$

Fig. 14 Phase diagram of the ZrO$_2$-Gd$_2$O$_3$ system$^{39}$

![Figure 15: Phase diagram of the ZrO$_2$-Sm$_2$O$_3$ system$^{39}$](image2)

- A' : hexagonal Sm$_2$O$_3$
- B : monoclinic Sm$_2$O$_3$
- C$_1$ : cubic ZrO$_2$ solid solution
- H' : hexagonal Sm$_2$O$_3$
- P' : pyrochlore type Sm$_2$Zr$_2$O$_7$
- T : tetragonal ZrO$_2$ solid solution
- X' : cubic Sm$_2$O$_3$

Fig. 15 Phase diagram of the ZrO$_2$-Sm$_2$O$_3$ system$^{39}$
2. 14 ZrO$_2$-Sm$_2$O$_3$ system

Rouanet and Foex$^{39}$ studied phase diagram using solar furnace and found the existence of a compound Sm$_2$ Zr$_2$O$_7$ having cubic structure of pyrochlore type as shown in Figure 15.

2. 15 ZrO$_2$-Er$_2$O$_3$ system

Duran$^{40}$ studied phase diagram of this system using high temperature X-ray diffraction and thermal expansion measurements. Figure 16 shows that pyrochlore structure does not form.

![Phase diagram of the ZrO$_2$-Er$_2$O$_3$ system](image)

Fig. 16 Phase diagram of the ZrO$_2$-Er$_2$O$_3$ system$^{40}$

- M (ss) : monoclinic solid solution
- T (ss) : tetragonal solid solution
- F (ss) : cubic solid solution
- H$_3$ : hexagonal compound of type M$_7$O$_{11}$ (70 mole% Er$_2$O$_3$)
- C (ss) : cubic Er$_3$O$_3$ solid solution
- H$_1$ : hexagonal compound (40 mole% Er$_2$O$_3$)

2. 17 Summarized view by Roth$^{43}$

Although the summarized view concerning phase stability of zirconia in binary system has been given, it seems important to check out fundamental points.

1) Divalent Ion: With oxides of smaller ion such as Mg, Ca, Mn, and Ti, stabilized zirconia solid solution can not form. On the other hand, larger divalent ions such as Zn and Be forms, perovskite-type compound though smaller ion does not form compound.

2) Trivalent ion: With oxide of smaller trivalent ion such as La can form cubic zirconia, but very smallest ion as Al, C does not form cubic one. Larger trivalent ions such as La$_3^+$ and Nd$_3^+$ can form A$_2$B$_2$O$_7$ pyrochlore type compounds or solid solutions.

3) Tetravalent ion: Oxides having larger tetravalent ion such Ce and U can form tetragonal zirconia solid solution which exist at room temperature. However in the case of smaller ionic radii does not form stable solid solution, but 1:1 compounds such as ZrO$_2$-TiO$_2$ and ZrO$_2$-SiO$_2$ are formed.

4) Pentavalent ion: Compound such as [Zr$_4$(Zr$_2$Nb$_2$) O$_{16}$O] can be formed with Nb$_2$O$_5$ or Ta$_2$O$_5$.

The authors tried to make stable phase from the starting materials manufactured with coprecipitation. However it was impossible to form stable zirconia compound or solid solution disregard of rule above-described.

3. Phase relationship in the multicomponent systems

3.1 ZrO$_2$-TiO$_2$-VO system

As investigation of the system Zr-Ti-O$^{12,45}$ showed that TiO and mixtures of TiO and TiO$_2$ will form cubic zirconia, Hoch and Mathur$^{46}$ extended phase study in this system. (Figure 17) In Table 2, the region to form single cubic zirconia, which were surrounded with A, B, C, and D, is shown.

| Table 2 Chemical composition to form cubic ZrO$_2$ at 1500°C |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ZrO$_2$         | 37.0| 41.5| 58.0| 40.0|
| VO              | 28.0| 12.5| 12.0| 31.5|
| TiO$_2$         | 35.0| 46.0| 30.0| 28.5|

3.2 ZrO$_2$-TiO$_2$-M (Transition metals of groups V and VI)

As investigation of the systems Nb-Ti-Zr-O$^{47}$ showed the center of the single cubic zirconia phase region from 55 mole% ZrO$_2$, 35 mole% TiO$_2$ and 10 mole% Nb, Hoch and Mathur$^{46}$ studied exchange effect of the elements
such as Cr, Mo, W, V, and Ta instead of Nb and identified the formation of cubic zirconia in all cases.

3.3 ZrO$_2$-WO$_3$-WO$_5$ system

From the necessity to obtain an information on the oxidation behavior of tungsten-zirconium mixture at high temperature, phase relationship of this system was studied by Arias. At 1200°C cubic phase as Zr$_x$W$_{1-x}$O$_{2x-0.9}$, where x is between 0.05 and 0.08 appeared as a homogeneity range along the ZrO$_2$-W$_2$O$_5$ join. At 1300°C the cubic phase has a larger range of solid solution than at 1200°C, but becomes more extensive along the Zr-WO$_3$ join toward metallic zirconium than along the ZrO$_2$-W$_2$O$_5$ join. With the increase of temperature the solid solution of the cubic phase could not be delineated.

4. ZrO$_2$-M (Ti, Zr, Cr, V, Si, Mo and W metals)

After the finding that the addition of Ti on zirconia inverts at lower temperature more slowly and accordingly the resistance on thermal shock is able to alter, several studies were performed to know solubility limit of metallic element in zirconia and to solve the cause why mechanical properties could be altered by addition of metallic element.

Ruh found that the content up to 4% Ti can be retained in substitutional solid solution in zirconia and the soluble content increased with the temperature rise. Ruh and Garrett determined that the content up to 1% Cr can be retained in zirconia solid solution. Ruh, Tallan and Lipsitt studied the effect of metal additions on the microstructure of zirconia and certified that the increased sintering occurred only when compositions above the solubility limit were fired considerably above the melting temperature of metal added. Lipsitt and Ruh studied the compressive properties of titan-modified zirconia at elevated temperatures and observed that the strain to fracture of the aged specimens becomes significantly greater than that for the virgin specimens at room temperature.

Arias studied why the addition of 15 mole% Ti improves mechanical properties such as the thermal shock resistance, the modulus of rupture, and strength in comparison to calcia-stabilized zirconia. Further Arias extended metal sort to be Cr, V and Zr and that other metals added in zirconia improved the thermal shock resistance as well as Ti. Watson, Hill and Chapman investigated the solidification behavior of stabilized zirconia and W mixture. Virk and Johnson studied the fracture behavior of zirconia-Zr composites and reported that residual stress exists (compressive in the oxide phase and tensile in the metal) due to the volume change accompanying the phase transformation in the oxide phase.

5. Impurities in raw material

Inconsistencies in reports as for the inversion temperature of tetragonal-monoclinic zirconia and physical properties can be reduced to the existence of various impurities in raw material. Heffelfinger, Blosser and Henry performed chemical analysis. In Table 3 typical impurities determined with spectrographic and chemical analysis are given.

6. Starting temperature of reaction

Smoot and Ryan applied high temperature X-ray diffraction procedure to know the starting temperature for the reaction of the mixtures between zirconia with yttria, magnesia, calcia, ceria, and combination of calcia and magnesia. The results obtained are given in Table 4. From this table, it will be anticipated that the combination of calcia and magnesia showed appeareance of initial solid solution at temperature lower than calcia alone. From this fact, this way is applied to make stabilized zirconia in Japan.

7. Phase analysis in zirconia systems

Although Duwez and Odell performed quantitative study to determine correct quantities of cubic and monoclinic zirconias, there existed uncertainty as for precision. Garbie and Nicholson applied matrix me-
Table 3. Typical impurities in zirconia (ppm)

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<tr>
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<th>Ca</th>
<th>Fe</th>
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Table 4. Lattice parameter and initial appearance temperature of cubic ZrO2

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>a of initial phase (Å)</td>
<td>5.148</td>
<td>5.142</td>
<td>5.112</td>
<td>5.171</td>
<td>5.091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CaO/MgO 1 : 2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CaO/MgO 2 : 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Stability of thermomechanical properties

Garvie and Nicholson studied relationship between thermomechanical properties such as spalling resistance, stress relief, and microstructure of zirconia. In Figure 18, spalling resistance is given as a function of phase composition. It was recognized that partial stabilized zirconia increases spalling resistance and there occurs quasistatic crack propagation from complex substructure of 1000 Å domains of cubic and monoclinic zirconia.

9. Detection of zirconia polymorphs

McDevitt and Baun applied infrared absorption spectroscopy to identify monoclinic and cubic zirconias. Philipp and Mazdiyasni established the infrared and Raman frequencies of monoclinic zirconia and of stabilized and metastable tetragonal and cubic zirconias. In Figure 19 frequencies and ranges of transmission bands of each zirconia is given.

Fig. 18 Spalling resistance as a function of phase composition

Fig. 19

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10. Transformation mechanism of zirconia

Because of the nonquenchable transformation of zirconia from a monoclinic to a tetragonal phase with a hysteresis over a temperature interval in the neighborhood of 1000°C and no change in the relative proportions of the two phases at any constant temperature within the transformation range with time, Wolten(67) considered that this behavior is typical of the majority of martensite transformation. Wolten performed to make clearly this behavior by applying a high-temperature X-ray diffraction procedure(68).

11. Stability of zirconia under thermal cycling

Stabilized zirconia is often used for coating on engine in aeroplane. Stepka, Liebert and Stecura carried out failure test under thermal cycling on stabilized zirconia with yttria, calcia and magnesia.(69) In Table 5, an example of their experiment is given.

As for the segregation of calcia along the grain boundary when alumina and silica were contained as impurities in raw materials, secondary electron image was given(61). Further the decomposition of stabilized zirconia with magnesia on heating at 1750°C for 3 hours was shown by secondary electron image.(8) In Figure 20, the segregation behavior of stabilized zirconia is shown and it is understood that impurity elements in raw material will play an important role.

Table 5. Cyclic furnace evaluation of various zirconia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specimen</th>
<th>ZrO₂-12Y₂O₃</th>
<th>ZrO₂-3.4 MgO</th>
<th>ZrO₂-5.4 CaO</th>
<th>ZrO₂-5.4 CaO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>*673</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>*650</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Not failed, Cycle: 1 hr at 1248°C and 1 hr to cool to 553°C

Fig. 19 Frequencies and ranges of transmission bands for phases of ZrO₂(65)

Fig. 20 Auger electron image of plasma-sprayed ZrO₂-Y₂O₃ coat(69)
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