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An Enzymatic Ethanol/O₂ Biofuel Cell Powered by Commercial Vodka Fuel

Yi-ming YAN

Lan-qun MAO

Beijing National Laboratory for Molecular Sciences, Key Laboratory of Analytical Chemistry for Living Biosystems, Institute of Chemistry, the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), Beijing 100190, China,;
lqmao@iccas.ac.cn

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全酶型乙醇/氧气生物燃料电池的构筑及性能研究

严乙铭^{1,2}, 毛兰群^{1*}

(1. 中国科学院化学研究所, 北京 100190; 2. 北京理工大学化工与环境学院, 北京 100081)

摘要: 本文以乙醇脱氢酶(ADH)和胆红素氧化酶(BOD)为生物催化剂,以碳纳米管为电极材料,构筑了全酶型乙醇/氧气生物燃料电池.将乙醇脱氢酶负载于单壁碳纳米管(SWCNTs)上,采用亚甲基绿(MG)为 NADH 的电化学催化剂,实现乙醇的生物电化学催化氧化,制备了生物燃料电池 ADH/MG/SWCNTs/GC 的电极(阳极).同时,将胆红素氧化酶固定于单壁碳纳米管上,通过其直接电子转移,实现了氧气的生物电化学催化还原,制得生物燃料电池的 BOD/SWCNTs/GC 阴极.据此构筑了全酶型的无膜生物燃料电池,在空气饱和 40 mmol·L⁻¹ 乙醇磷酸缓冲溶液中该电池开路电压为 0.53 V,最大输出功率密度为 11 μW·cm⁻².以商品化伏特酒作为燃料,该生物燃料电池最大输出功率为 3.7 μW·cm⁻².

关键词: 生物燃料电池; 生物电化学; 单壁碳纳米管; 乙醇脱氢酶; 胆红素氧化酶

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生物燃料电池(Biofuel Cells, BFCs)由生物催化剂在温和的条件下将生物物质转化为电能,具有催化剂活性高、燃料资源丰富、可植入并在体发电以及操作简便等特点^[1-4].目前, BFCs 已成为生物电化学和生物质能等领域的重要研究方向之一^[5-7].

按催化剂的种类, BFCs 可分酶型和菌型两大类;按电极电子转移方式, BFCs 又可分直接型和间接型^[8-10].典型的 BFCs 由阳极、阴极、电解液和隔膜构成.由于生物催化剂的活性较高及其催化的专一性, BFCs 还可以采用无隔膜型,简化电池结构^[11].在生物阳极,生物物质被生物催化剂氧化,产生的电子和质子分别通过外电路和电解质传输给生物阴极;在生物阴极,一般由氧气在生物催化剂作用下,接受电子和质子而被还原.1911年, Potter^[12]发现了大肠杆菌产电的原理,随后 Cohen 构筑了第一个微生物电池堆^[13].近期, Heller 和 Willner 等开展了大量的研究工作,使酶型生物燃料电池引发关注^[14-17].

高性能酶型 BFCs 的构筑需要选择合适的电极材料和优良的生物电化学催化的界面,以提高生物催化剂载量,加速生物电化学催化过程中界

面上的电子转移^[18-20].同时,需探索酶型 BFCs 对生物物质燃料的普适性,拓宽其应用范围.本文利用碳纳米管的物理化学和电学性质,以乙醇脱氢酶和胆红素氧化酶为生物催化剂,构筑乙醇/氧气生物燃料电池,并考察商品伏特酒燃料电池的输出性能.

1 实验

1.1 试剂

将单壁碳纳米管(Single-Walled Carbon Nanotubes, SWCNTs, 平均直径约 2 nm, 长度约 50 μm, 深圳纳米港)置于 2.6 mol·L⁻¹ HNO₃ 回馏 10 h 纯化.乙醇脱氢酶(Alcohol Dehydrogenase, ADH, E. C. 1.1.1.1, 活度 451 U·mg⁻¹)、胆红素氧化酶(Bilirubin Oxidase, BOD, E. C. 1.3.3.5, 活度 5 U·mg⁻¹)、亚甲基绿(Methylene Green, MG)、乙醇、牛血清蛋白(BSA)、氧化和还原态的辅酶(NADH, NAD⁺)均购自希格玛化学试剂有限公司.磷酸缓冲溶液由 Na₂HPO₄ 和 KH₂PO₄ 调配.实验用水二次蒸馏去离子水.

1.2 阴、阳极制备

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将 2 μL SWCNTs 分散液 ($6 \text{ mg} \cdot \text{mL}^{-1}$, DMF) 滴涂于干净玻碳(GC)基底上 ($\phi = 3 \text{ mm}$), 室温干燥后, 浸于 $0.10 \text{ mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ 的 MG 水溶液 3 h, 制得 MG/SWCNTs/GC 电极. 然后, 将 $6 \mu\text{L}$ 的 ADH-BSA 混合液滴涂于 MG/SWCNTs/GC 电极, 再用 $1 \mu\text{L}$ 戊二醛 ($40 \text{ mmol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$) 胶链, 得 ADH/MG/SWCNTs/GC 电极 (阳极). 将 0.3 U BOD-BSA 混合液用戊二醛胶链于 SWCNTs/GC 电极上, 4°C 干燥即得阴极.

1.3 电化学测试

电化学实验以制备的电极为工作电极、铂丝电极为对电极、KCl 饱和 Ag/AgCl 为参比电极而构成的三电极体系进行, 电化学工作站为 CHI 600 (上海辰华), 电解液为 $0.10 \text{ mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ 磷酸缓冲溶液 (pH 7.0). 生物阴极和生物阳极置于一个 10 mL 的电解池中, 电解液中含有 $10 \text{ mmol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1} \text{ NAD}^+$ 和 $40 \text{ mmol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ 乙醇. 商品化的伏特加酒 (KWACZEK Vodka, 酒精含量 $40\% (v/v)$) 与缓冲液按体积比 1:1 混和后作为燃料, 测试电池功率曲线.

2 结果与讨论

2.1 乙醇的生物电化学氧化

图 1 为 SWCNTs/GC 电极 (曲线 a) 和 MG/SWCNTs/GC 电极 (曲线 b) 在缓冲溶液中的循环伏安曲线. 由图 1 可以发现, MG/SWCNTs/GC 电极有两对氧化还原峰, 其势电位分别为 -0.27 V 和 -0.18 V (vs. Ag/AgCl), 分别对应于 MG 两步电化学反应. 其氧化峰和还原峰对称性好, 说明 MG/SWCNTs/GC 电极具有较好的电化学可逆性. MG/SWCNTs/GC 电极 100 周循环伏安曲线与第 1 周伏安曲线几乎重合, 表明 MG 在 SWCNTs 上稳定性很好. SWCNTs 不仅是良好的电极材料, 而且能与 MG 染料分子之间存在 π - π 堆积和疏水相互作用, 实现了电化学催化剂 MG 的固定化.

图 2 给出 ADH/MG/SWCNTs/GC 电极的乙醇生物电化学催化循环伏安曲线. 由图 2 可以看出, 在溶液中存在 NAD^+ 的情况下加入 $40 \text{ mmol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ 乙醇, 电极呈现明显的生物电化学催化活性. 乙醇起始氧化电位约为 -0.18 V , 在电位 0 V 时生物电化学催化氧化电流约为 $32 \mu\text{A}$. 这一结果表明该电极具有较好的界面电子转移性质和生物电化学催化活性, 可实现乙醇燃料的高效生物电化学催化氧化, 可用作生物阳极.

2.2 电池的功率输出特性

ADH/MG/SWCNTs/GC 电极和 BOD/SWCNTs/

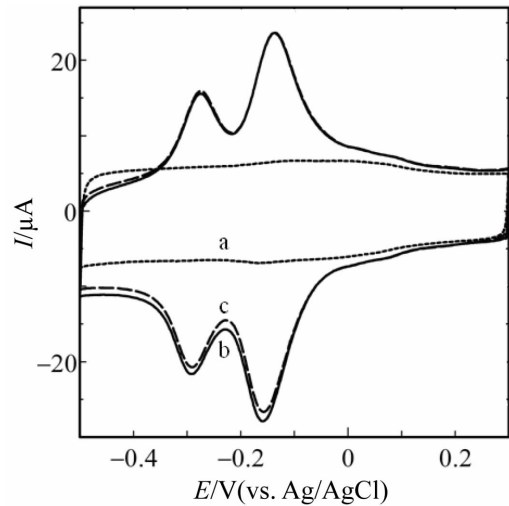


图 1 SWCNTs/GC(a)和 MG/SWCNTs/GC(b)修饰电极在 $0.10 \text{ mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ 磷酸缓冲溶液 (pH 7.0) 中的循环伏安曲线 (曲线 c: MG/SWCNTs/GC 电极, 扫描 100 周) 扫描: $20 \text{ mV} \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$

Fig. 1 CVs obtained at the SWCNTs-modified (a) and SWCNTs/MG-modified (b) GC electrodes in $0.10 \text{ mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ phosphate buffer (pH 7.0), curve c was obtained with the SWCNTs/MG-modified GC electrode after consecutively scanned in $0.10 \text{ mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ phosphate buffer (pH 7.0) for 100 cycles Scan rate: $20 \text{ mV} \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$

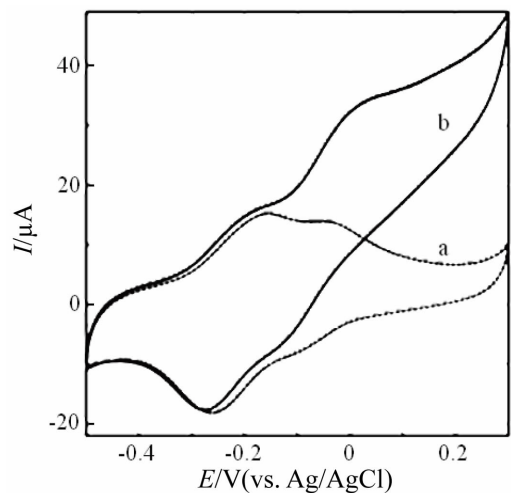


图 2 ADH/MG/SWCNTs/GC 电极在 $0.10 \text{ mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ 磷酸缓冲溶液含有 $10 \text{ mmol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1} \text{ NAD}^+$ 中不添加(a)及添加 $40 \text{ mmol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ 乙醇(a)的循环伏安曲线 扫描: $20 \text{ mV} \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$

Fig. 2 CVs obtained at the ADH/MG/SWCNTs-modified GC electrode in $0.10 \text{ mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ phosphate buffer containing $10 \text{ mmol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1} \text{ NAD}^+$ in the absence (a) and presence (b) of $40 \text{ mmol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ ethanol Scan rate: $20 \text{ mV} \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$

GC 电极组装的生物燃料电池,其工作原理如示意图 3 所示. 辅酶 NAD^+ 存在下,乙醇在阳极发生生物电化学催化氧化反应,失去电子,辅酶转变成还原型(即 NADH), NADH 在 MG 催化作用下实现电化学催化氧化,将电子交给电极,电子经外电路到达阴极. 在生物阴极上,溶液的氧气电子为接受体,在 BOD 的生物电化学催化作用下得到电子被还原为水. 整个过程中消耗了乙醇和氧气,实现了生物化学能直接转变为电能的目的.

为研究电池的可行性,记录了乙醇加入前后该电池的开路电压的变化(如图 4). 由图 4 可以看出,无乙醇燃料时电池开路电压约为 -0.17 V ;溶液

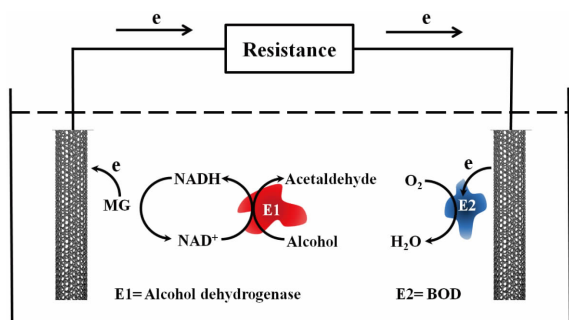


图 3 全酶型乙醇/氧气生物燃料电池工作原理示意图
Fig. 3 Schematic illustration for the principle of ethanol/ O_2 biofuel cell

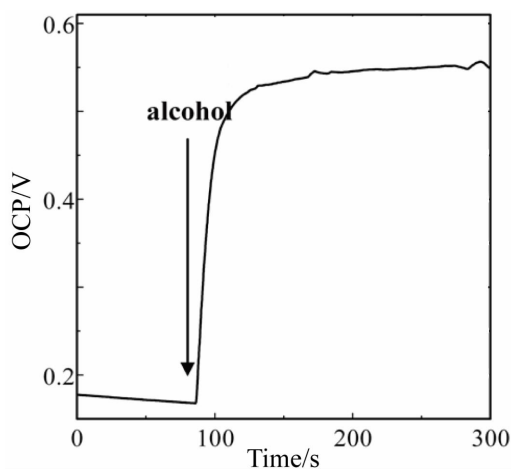


图 4 全酶型乙醇/氧气生物燃料电池的开路电压曲线
Fig. 4 Open circuit potential-time curve of the biofuel cell recorded with the addition of $40\text{ mmol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ alcohol in $0.10\text{ mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ phosphate buffer (pH 7.0) containing $10\text{ mmol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ NAD^+ at room temperature under continuous stirring

中加入 $40\text{ mmol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ 乙醇时, 电池开路电压升至 0.55 V . 这个结果说明, 生物燃料电池在生物燃料存在的情况下有稳定的开路电压, 且存在着将生物化学能转变为电能的可行性. 此外, 由于生物酶催化剂对底物的催化氧化还原有较高的特异性, 可消除电池两极的互相干扰, 而无需电池隔膜, 这大大简化了电池的构造, 有望为生物燃料电池实用奠定基础.

图 5 给出了乙醇生物燃料电池的输出功率曲线. 可以看出, 在空气饱和及溶液含有 $40\text{ mmol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ 乙醇的情况下, 电池开路电压约为 0.53 V , 最大输出功率约为 $11\text{ }\mu\text{W}\cdot\text{cm}^{-2}$, 最大输出功率电流密度为 $38\text{ }\mu\text{A}\cdot\text{cm}^{-2}$.

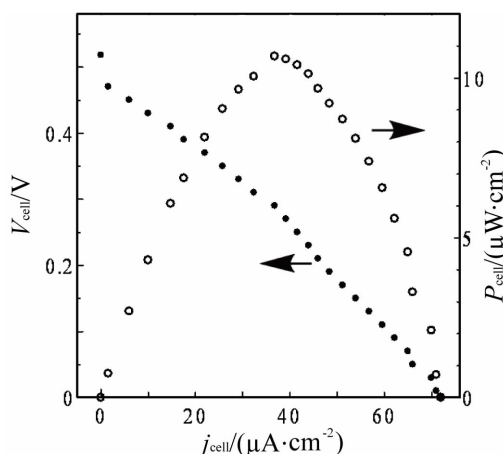


图 5 室温和常压下全酶型乙醇-氧气生物燃料电池的极化曲线(\bullet)和输出功率曲线(\circ)

Fig. 5 Polarization curve (\bullet) of the assembled alcohol/ O_2 biofuel cell and the dependence of the power output (\circ) on the current density. A $0.10\text{ mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ phosphate buffer (pH 7.0) containing $10\text{ mmol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ NAD^+ and $40\text{ mmol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ alcohol was used as electrolyte. Experiments were carried out at room temperature and under ambient air.

图 6 给出了该电池在不同 pH 下的最大输出功率曲线, 从中可以看出电池的最大输出功率随 pH 的增加而缓慢增加, pH = 8 时其工作性能最佳, 最大输出功率约为 $17\text{ }\mu\text{W}\cdot\text{cm}^{-2}$. 然而 pH 大于 8 时电池的最大输出功率降低, 这可能归因于电极生物催化剂活性受 pH 的影响所致, 详细的解释仍需深入研究.

2.3 伏特加酒生物燃料电池性能

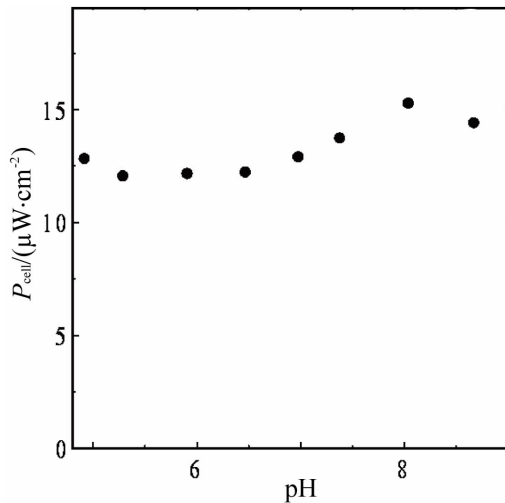


图 6 室温和常压下全酶型乙醇/氧气生物燃料电池在不同 pH 下的最大输出功率曲线

Fig. 6 The pH dependent power density of the ethanol/O₂ BFC in 0.10 mol·L⁻¹ phosphate buffer containing 10 mmol·L⁻¹ NAD⁺ and 40 mmol·L⁻¹ ethanol under ambient air and at room temperature

图 7 给出了市售伏特加酒燃料构筑的乙醇生物燃料电池的功率输出曲线. 从图 7 中可以看出, 伏特加酒可驱动电池输出电流, 以 40%乙醇含量的伏特加酒为燃料, 该电池开路电压约为 0.68 V, 与 40 mmol·L⁻¹ 乙醇作燃料相比, 电池开路电位增加约 0.15 V, 这可能与伏特加酒含有部分其他物质有关. 此外, 伏特加酒生物燃料电池最大输出功率为 3.7 μW·cm⁻², 其输出功率最大时电池的工作电压为 0.2 V, 工作电流密度为 19 μA·cm⁻², 这些结果表明所构筑的乙醇燃料电池具有较强的普适性及潜在的实用价值.

3 结论

采用单壁碳纳米管微电极材料, 实现了电化学催化剂 MG 和生物催化剂 ADH 和 BOD 的固定化, 分别制备了用于乙醇和氧气生物电化学催化氧化和还原的生物阳极和阴极, 实现了乙醇和氧气的生物电化学催化氧化和还原. 用生物阳极和阴极, 构筑了无膜型的乙醇/氧气生物燃料电池, 在空气饱和的含 40 mmol·L⁻¹ 乙醇 pH 7.0 缓冲溶液中, 电池最大功率为 11 μW·cm⁻². 重要的是, 该电池可采用市售伏特加酒为生物燃料, 最大输出功率约为 3.7 μW·cm⁻². 尽管生物燃料电池的输出电压和功率目前仍较低, 但碳纳米管为电极材料的

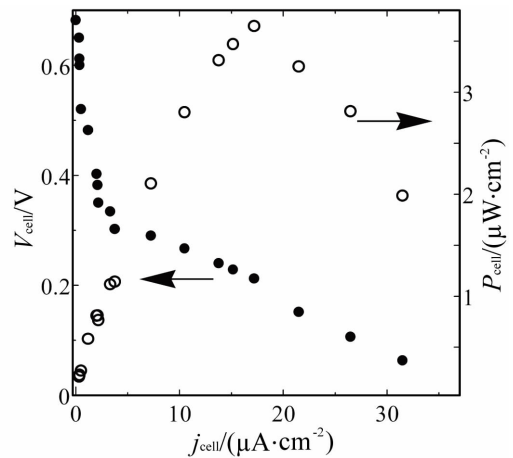


图 7 全酶型乙醇/氧气生物燃料电池伏特加燃料的极化曲线(•)输出功率曲线(o)

Fig. 7 Polarization curve (•) of the assembled ethanol/O₂ BFC and the dependence of the power (o) on the current density with Vodka as the biofuel in phosphate buffer containing 10 mmol·L⁻¹ NAD⁺. Other conditions were the same as those in Fig. 5

生物燃料电池有较强的普适性, 有望为生物燃料电池的实用奠定较可靠的基础.

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An Enzymatic Ethanol/O₂ Biofuel Cell Powered by Commercial Vodka Fuel

YAN Yi-ming^{1,2}, MAO Lan-qun^{1*}

(1. *Beijing National Laboratory for Molecular Sciences, Key Laboratory of Analytical Chemistry for Living Biosystems, Institute of Chemistry, the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), Beijing 100190, China;*

2. *School of Chemical Engineering and Environment, Beijing Institute of Technology, Beijing 100081, China)*

Abstract: This study demonstrates the performance of a new type alcohol/O₂ biofuel cell assembled by using alcohol dehydrogenase (ADH) and bilirubin oxidase (BOD) as the biocatalysts of the bioanode and the biocathode for the bioelectrocatalytic oxidation of alcohol and reduction of oxygen, respectively. To construct the bioanode and the biocathode, single-walled carbon nanotubes (SWCNTs) were used. In the bioanode, SWCNTs were used as the supporting materials for both methylene green (MG) which was used as the electrocatalyst for the oxidation of NADH and ADH. The as-constructed MG/ADH/SWCNTs-based bioanode exhibits a good activity toward the bioelectrocatalytic oxidation of ethanol. In the biocathode, the use of SWCNTs essentially facilitates the direct electron transfer of BOD, and thereby enables the bioelectrocatalytic reduction of oxygen into water at a relatively high potential. An ethanol/O₂ biofuel cell configuration was then assembled by utilizing the MG/ADH/SWCNTs as the bioanode and the BOD/SWCNTs as the biocathode. The biofuel cell gives a maximum power output of 11 $\mu\text{W}\cdot\text{cm}^{-2}$ in the presence of 40 $\text{mmol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ ethanol as biofuel under ambient air in phosphate buffer (pH 7.0). Finally, we demonstrate that the ethanol/O₂ biofuel cell could be powered by commercially available Vodak, giving a maximum power output of 3.7 $\mu\text{W}\cdot\text{cm}^{-2}$.

Key words: biofuel cells; bioelectrochemistry; single-walled carbon nanotubes; alcohol dehydrogenase; bilirubin oxidase