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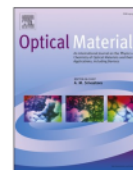
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Research Article

# Chromaticity coordinates of ruby based on first-principles calculation

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## ABSTRACT

Understanding the local atomic configuration is crucial for studying phosphor materials. Their performance in many applications is strongly dependent upon their optical properties. Much experimental and theoretical effort has been made to meet the requirements. Specifically, *ab-initio* studies have extensively reported the absorption spectra and the multiplet energies of phosphors. However, the qualitative analysis on the emitted light has not yet been reported. In this work, we characterized the emitted light of ruby, which is widely studied phosphor material. The absorption spectra of ruby were calculated utilizing the non-empirical discrete variational  $X\alpha$  (DV- $X\alpha$ ) and discrete variational multi-electron (DVME) software. Then, the investigation on the (x,y) chromaticity coordinates of was performed under the standard illuminant D65 utilizing ColorAC software, a chromaticity diagram maker. In this work, we used a ruby model cluster generated from an  $\alpha$ - $Al_2O_3$  crystal. The model consists of seven atoms, where one chromium atom surrounded by six oxygen atoms. We compared the absorption spectra obtained via simple configuration interaction (CI) and those obtained which include energy corrections called configuration dependent correction (CDC) and correlation correction (CC). We successfully reproduced the color that is observed in experiment. The chromaticity coordinates approach red region for higher concentration. The results show that the relation with CDC-CC shows better agreement with experiment. This research confirms the non-empirical calculations based on the DV- $X\alpha$  and DVME methods, in the terms of emitted light.

## 1. Introduction

In the study of phosphor materials, it is very important to understand the local atomic arrangement. The quantum mechanical calculations, also known as first-principles calculations, have therefore gained increased importance not only for deep understanding of various basic properties of materials, but also for design and development of any kinds of new phosphor materials. For several decades, the density functional theory (DFT) calculation method has been employed to solve various problems in material science [1,2]. Various DFT methods have been shown to be very useful for the calculation of molecular orbital and band structure calculations including discrete variational  $X\alpha$  (DV- $X\alpha$ ) method [3–5], plane wave basis pseudopotential (PWPP) [6,7], full potential linearized augmented plane wave (FLAPW) method [8], and Orthogonalized Linear Combination of Atomic Orbitals (OLCAO) method [9–11].

The transitions between multiplets of the impurity states of phosphor materials play an important role in the luminescent process. Basically, these multiplets are determined by the local structure of the material. In order to correctly assign the multiplets from the experiment, accurate information on electronic state and chemical bonding is needed. Unfortunately, there are some difficulties which cannot be solved by the above theoretical approaches. Ordinary DFT calculations based on one-electron methods could not directly calculate the multiplets; therefore, first-principles many-electron calculations i.e. configuration interaction (CI) method should be employed to solve this type of problem. To calculate multiplet states of transition-metal ions in crystals, Ogasawara et al. [12–16] created discrete variational multi-electron (DVME) software, which is based on DV- $X\alpha$  molecular orbital (MO) method. This method has been used effectively on a series of crystals doped with either rare earth or transition metal ions [17–27]. Although multiplets can be directly calculated in simple CI calculations, those energies are

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generally overestimated. On the other hand, although the average energy of multiplets can be well reproduced in a DFT calculation, the multiplets cannot be directly calculated. To decrease the overestimation, CI calculations with corrections based on one-electron DFT calculations were introduced. Even if the theoretical and the observed spectra are more closely aligned when CI is coupled with corrections, the qualitative color reproduced by the theoretical phosphor material is not clear.

In the eye, there are three different types of cones: S, M, and L. The S-cones are responsible for short-wavelength sensitivity, the M-cones for middle-wavelength sensitivity, and the L-cones for long-wavelength sensitivity. This means that the human eye is only capable of detecting red, green, and blue and the brain then extrapolates all other colors based on the intensities of the original three colors. In the 1920s, William David Wright and the International Commission on Illumination (CIE) set out to ensure the wavelength sensitivity of each of these cones developing the CIE standard observer color matching functions and the color space chromaticity diagram [28,29]. With this information, it became possible to qualitatively measure the color of an object as perceived by a standard observer for the first time. This event is regarded as the beginning of colorimetry.

According to the science of colors, chromaticity is one of the common color parameters used for characterization the emitted light. It can be calculated from the absorption spectrum. The most widely-used model comes from the Commission Internationale d'Eclairage (CIE 1931) [30–32]. As the name implies, the chromaticity diagram is an array of potential colors. Each color is specified by a pair of a numerical coordinates, called the chromaticity coordinate. We may use the chromaticity diagram to show how different hues of light mix together. The pure spectral hues of the rainbow are represented by the points on the curved border. Note that any color inside the diagram can be made in different ways, and only colors around the edge of the diagram are unique colors.

For about a decade, we have been studied the optical properties of ruby, such as lattice relaxation effect, molecular orbitals, multiplet energies, absorption spectra, and pressure dependence, [19–21]. Although non-empirical studies have been conducted, qualitative analysis of the emitted light has not been reported. Therefore, in this work, we characterized the emitted light of ruby. The absorption spectra of ruby were calculated with the non-empirical DV-X $\alpha$  and DVME software. Then, the

(x, y) chromaticity coordinates were investigated using ColorAC software. This research is important in confirming the non-empirical characterization of emitted light based on the DV-X $\alpha$  and DVME methods.

## 2. Computational procedure

As illustrated in Fig. 1, seven-atom model clusters were built on a host  $\alpha$ -Al $_2$ O $_3$  crystal with Rh $_2$ O $_3$  structure [33]. To generate the effective Madelung potential, a Cr $^{3+}$  ion was placed in the cluster's core and approximately 13,600-point charges were placed at the outer atomic sites of the cluster. The local structure of the cluster ( $C_3$  symmetry) was preserved during the calculation; 20,000 sample points were used.

Because the DVME technique is discussed in its entirety in Ref. [14], only the mathematical formulation required to understand the rest in this study is explained. We first calculated the molecular orbital using the one-electron DV-X $\alpha$  method, followed by the optical spectra calculations using the many-electron CI calculations as the main core of the DVME method.

In the one-electron calculations, only one electron is considered. The interaction with the other electrons are averaged and treated just as a potential. The Schrödinger equation for the one-electron calculation is expressed as

$$h\nabla^2\psi(r) = \epsilon\psi(r) \quad (1)$$

The one-electron Hamiltonian is expressed as

$$h(r) = -\frac{1}{2}\nabla^2 + V(r) \quad (2)$$

The effective molecular potential  $V(r)$  is expressed as

$$V(r) = -\sum_i \frac{Z_i}{|r - R_i|} + \int \frac{\rho(r')}{|r' - r|} dr' + V_{sc}[\rho(r)] - 3\alpha \left\{ \frac{3}{8\pi} \rho(r) \right\}^{1/3} \quad (3)$$

where  $\alpha$  is 0.7 and the electron density  $\rho(r)$  is given by

$$\rho(r) = \sum_i \rho_i(r) = \sum_i f_i |\varphi_i(r)|^2 \quad (4)$$

where  $f_i$  is the occupancy.

The Schrödinger equation for many-electron calculation is expressed

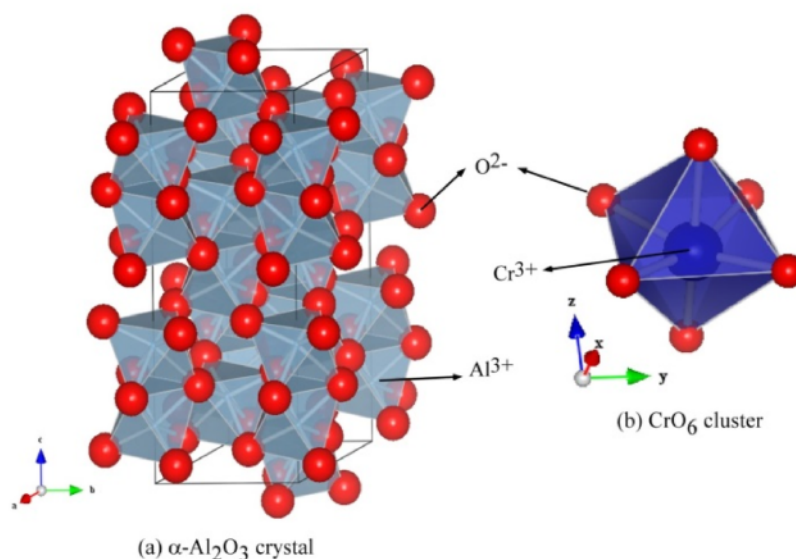


Fig. 1. (a)  $\alpha$ -Al $_2$ O $_3$  crystal structure obtained from Sawada et al. [33] and (b) CrO $_6$  model cluster used in the calculations.

as

$$H\Psi_i = E\Psi_i \quad (5)$$

Here, electron-electron interactions are directly calculated. The many-electron wave function is expressed as

$$\Psi_i = \sum_{j=1}^N W_{ji} \Phi_j \quad (6)$$

$W_{ji}$  is the coefficient of the Slater determinants ( $\Phi_j$ ) used in this calculation, which is expressed as

$$\Phi_j(r_1, \dots, r_n) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{n!}} \begin{vmatrix} \varphi_{j1}(r_1) & \varphi_{j1}(r_2) & \dots & \varphi_{j1}(r_n) \\ \varphi_{j2}(r_1) & \varphi_{j2}(r_2) & \dots & \varphi_{j2}(r_n) \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \varphi_{jn}(r_1) & \varphi_{jn}(r_2) & \dots & \varphi_{jn}(r_n) \end{vmatrix} \quad (7)$$

Here,  $r$  denotes the electron's location.  $\varphi_j$ 's are the molecular orbitals that mostly consist of 19 3d orbitals generated from DV-X $\alpha$  MO calculations. The effective many-electron Hamiltonian for explicitly treated  $N$  electrons is written as

$$H = \sum_{i=1}^N h(r_i) + \sum_{i=1}^N \sum_{j>i}^N \frac{1}{r_{ij}} \quad (8)$$

where  $r_{ij}$  denotes the distance between the  $i$ th electron and the  $j$ th electron, and  $h$  denotes the one-electron operators, which may be written as

$$h(r_i) = -\frac{1}{2} \nabla_i^2 + V_{nuc}(r_i) + V_0(r_i). \quad (9)$$

$V_{nuc}$  denotes the potential owing to the nuclei, whereas  $V_0$  denotes the potential due to the other electrons. As a results, only electrons occupying impurity levels are specifically handled in this calculation. The effective many-electron Hamiltonian can be expanded as follows:

$$\Phi_p | H | \Phi_q = \sum_{i=1}^N \sum_{j=1}^N A_{ij}^{pq} i | h | j + \sum_{i=1}^N \sum_{j=1}^N \sum_{k=1}^N \sum_{l=1}^N B_{ijkl}^{pq} i | j | g | k | l, \quad (10)$$

$H$  is then diagonalized inside the subspace spanned by the Slater determinants  $\Phi$  derived from the impurity-state orbitals obtained from the one-electron MO calculations. This step was performed to get the many-electron wave functions and multiplet energies. The many-electron wave functions for each multiplet state may be explicitly calculated as a linear combination of the Slater determinants using the eigenvector obtained by the diagonalized many-electron Hamiltonian. As a result, we can simply calculate the oscillator strength for the electric-dipole transition (transition probability) between multiplets by

$$I_f = 2(E_f - E_i) \left| \Psi_f \left| \sum_{k=1}^N \hat{r}_k \cdot \hat{e} \right| \Psi_i \right|^2 \quad (11)$$

Here, the initial and final states of the many-electron wave functions are denoted by  $\Psi_i$  and  $\Psi_f$ . Where the energy eigenvalues of these states are denoted by  $E_i$  and  $E_f$ . The unit vector parallel to the direction of the incident light's electric field is represented by  $\hat{e}$ .

Multiplet energies obtained from many-electron CI calculations are usually underestimated because of the 10–50% overestimation of crystal field splitting [34]. In order to enhance the accuracy of theoretical multiplet energies, numerous adjustments such as configuration dependency correction (CDC) and correlation correction [22] are considered. In the CDC approach, the barycenters of  $(t_{2g})^3$ ,  $(t_{2g})^2(e_g)^1$ ,  $(t_{2g})^1(e_g)^2$ , and  $(e_g)^3$  configurations were adjusted to be 0, 10Dq, 20Dq, and 30Dq, respectively. Here, the crystal field splitting 10Dq is determined using the spin-restricted one-electron MO calculation. On the other hand, in the CC approach, the factor  $c$  was calculated from

first-principle calculations based on the consistency of the transition energy of the spin-flip transition from  $(t_{2g})^3$  to  $(t_{2g})^2(e_g)^1$  between the many electron CI calculations and the spin-unrestricted one-electron MO calculations. The Hamiltonian with CDC correction is written as

$$\Phi_p | H^{CDC} | \Phi_q = \sum_{i=1}^N \sum_{j=1}^N A_{ij}^{pq} i | h | j + \sum_{i=1}^N \sum_{j=1}^N \sum_{k=1}^N \sum_{l=1}^N B_{ijkl}^{pq} i | j | g | k | l + D_{CDC}(m, n) \delta_{pq} \quad (12)$$

where  $(m, n)$  denotes the value for  $(t_{2g})^m(e_g)^n$  configuration. On the other hand, the Hamiltonian with CC correction is written as

$$\Phi_p | H^{CC} | \Phi_q = \sum_{i=1}^N \sum_{j=1}^N A_{ij}^{pq} i | h | j + \sum_{i=1}^N \sum_{j=1}^N \sum_{k=1}^N \sum_{l=1}^N c \times B_{ijkl}^{pq} i | j | g | k | l \quad (13)$$

In this case, the effective Hamiltonian including the CDC and CC effects, is written as

$$\Phi_p | H^{CDC-CC} | \Phi_q = \sum_{i=1}^N \sum_{j=1}^N A_{ij}^{pq} i | h | j + \sum_{i=1}^N \sum_{j=1}^N \sum_{k=1}^N \sum_{l=1}^N c \times B_{ijkl}^{pq} i | j | g | k | l + D_{CC}(m, n) \delta_{pq} \quad (14)$$

In order to analyze the color parameters, the CIE 1931 chromaticity diagram in the ColorAC software is used. The emitted light's color is represented by  $x$  and  $y$  graph coordinates. This graph is expressed as a red, green, and blue color ratio. These three colors are the X, Y, Z tristimulus values; they correspond to the band-pass filtered chromaticity response of cones in the human retina. The chromaticity coordinates were calculated based on the transmittance which is obtained from absorbance. Transmittance can be defined by

$$T(\lambda) = \frac{I(\lambda)}{I_0(\lambda)} \quad (15)$$

where  $I_0$  is the intensity of incident light while  $I$  is that of transmitted light. On the other hand, absorbance can be defined by

$$A(\lambda) = -\log \left( \frac{I(\lambda)}{I_0(\lambda)} \right) \quad (16)$$

Therefore, the transmittance can be calculated by

$$T(\lambda) = e^{-A(\lambda)} \quad (17)$$

Then X, Y, Z can be expressed as

$$\begin{aligned} X &= \int_{380}^{780} T(\lambda) P(\lambda) \bar{x}(\lambda) d\lambda = \int_{380}^{780} e^{-A(\lambda)} P(\lambda) \bar{x}(\lambda) d\lambda \\ Y &= \int_{380}^{780} T(\lambda) P(\lambda) \bar{y}(\lambda) d\lambda = \int_{380}^{780} e^{-A(\lambda)} P(\lambda) \bar{y}(\lambda) d\lambda \\ Z &= \int_{380}^{780} T(\lambda) P(\lambda) \bar{z}(\lambda) d\lambda = \int_{380}^{780} e^{-A(\lambda)} P(\lambda) \bar{z}(\lambda) d\lambda \end{aligned} \quad (18)$$

Here  $P(\lambda)$  denotes the standard illuminant D65, which represents natural daylight. Generally, the absorbance is proportional to the molar absorption coefficient  $\epsilon$ , the molar concentration of the particles (in this case, chromium ions)  $c$ , and the sample thickness  $l$ .

$$A(\lambda) = \epsilon(\lambda)cl \quad (19)$$

Therefore a multiplication of the absorbance by a scalar such as  $A_2 = aA_1(\lambda)$  means that the concentration and/or the sample thickness are changed so that  $c_2l_2 = a c_1l_1$  is satisfied. Finally, the  $(x, y)$  chromaticity coordinates may be derived by



$$x = \frac{X}{X+Y+Z} \quad (20)$$

$$y = \frac{Y}{X+Y+Z}$$

### 3. Results and discussion

The experimental d-d absorption spectra of ruby published by Fairbank et al. [35] are shown in Fig. 2 together with two theoretical spectra derived from CI calculations without and with CDC-CC correction. The  $\pi$  spectra are represented by solid lines, whereas the  $\sigma$  spectra are represented by dashed lines. The three broad peaks in the measured spectra are assigned as the transition energies from the  $^4A_2$  ground state to  $^4T_2$ ,  $^4T_{1a}$ , and  $^4T_{1b}$  states, respectively. It is well-known that these transition energies are generally noted as U-, Y- and Y'-bands, respectively. If we compare the spectra of U-band energy, the  $\sigma$  spectrum is higher than the  $\pi$  spectrum. The situation is opposite for Y- and Y'-band energies. The peak positions of U-, Y-, and Y'-bands are at 2.2, ~3.0, and ~4.8 eV, respectively. Nevertheless, the peak position in each peak differs slightly between the  $\sigma$  spectrum and the  $\pi$  spectrum.

The three broad peaks and absolute intensities were successfully reproduced in the theoretical spectra. The U-, Y-, and Y'-bands of uncorrected calculations were found at ~2.5, ~3.7 and ~5.7 eV. When the CDC-CC correction was applied, those peaks moved to lower energies at ~2.3, ~3.3 and ~5.0 eV, respectively. The estimated peak positions were enhanced using CDC-CC correction.

Previously, several calculations on ruby have been performed. In 2000, Prof. Ogasawara's group [14] calculated ruby model clusters consisting of 41, 63 and 111 atoms. The TM ion was positioned in the middle of each cluster. In those clusters, 7, 14, and 26 Al ions were included. The effect of structural relaxation was considered by adopting

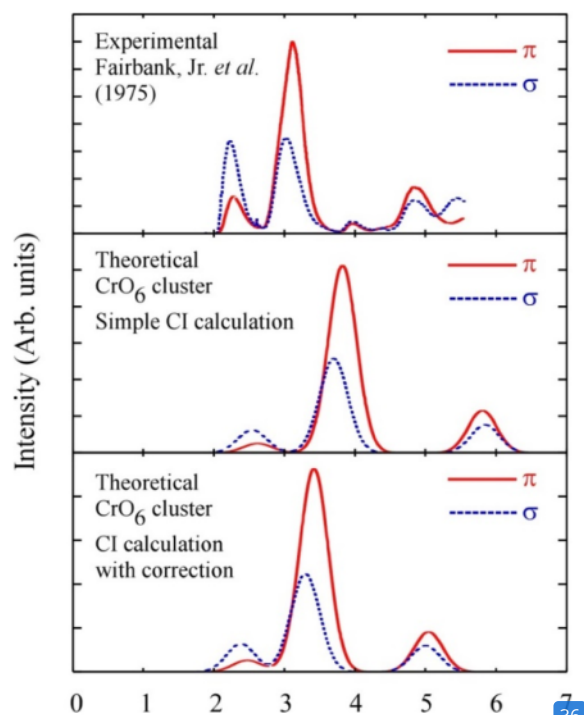


Fig. 2. Experimental and theoretical spectra of ruby ( $\alpha\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3: \text{Cr}^{3+}$ ). The experimental spectra were obtained from Fairbank et al. [35] whereas the theoretical spectra were obtained from CI calculations without and with CDC-CC correction using  $\text{CrO}_6$  cluster.

the results of Kizler's extended X-ray absorption fine structure (EXAFS) [36]. They also considered the CDC-CC correction to improve the accuracy. We have also performed calculations with a ruby model cluster consisting of 63 atoms [19]. Although we treated the cluster similar to Ref. 9, several computation conditions such as the external atomic sites used to produce Madelung potentials and the sample points were different.

Table 1 shows the comparison of U-, Y- and Y'-bands peak position. As we can see, all of the computational results (except for the results from the simple CI calculation) show good agreement with the experimental data provided by Fairbank et al. [35]. The variation between the current and previous results is very small. However, simple CI calculations overestimated the U-, Y-, and Y'-bands' peak position. These findings imply that simple CI calculations with CDC-CC correction is a good method for accurately predicting the absorption spectra of ruby.

Therefore, based on the absorption spectra obtained in Fig. 2, we then evaluate the (x,y) chromaticity coordinates. It was performed under the standard illuminant D65 obtained from the experimental spectra and the theoretical spectra of  $\text{CrO}_6$  cluster that are shown in Fig. 3. The chromaticity coordinates obtained from the experimental spectra are shown by a circle (●); the chromaticity coordinates obtained from theoretical spectra are shown by a triangle (▼); and a square (■) is used to denote CI calculations without and with considering CDC-CC correction. Since the color depends on conditions such as  $\text{Cr}^{3+}$  concentration and sample thickness and/or density, several points corresponding to different conditions were calculated and plotted. The "experimental color" approaches red for higher concentration. In our calculations, the "theoretical color" obtained without and with considering CDC-CC correction reproduced the same tendency. However, in the case of the CI calculation with CDC-CC corrections, the agreement between the theoretical color and the experimental color is quite good. It indicates a CI calculation with CDC-CC correction effectively reproduces the absorption spectra of transition metal ions in crystals.

### 4. Conclusion

The theoretical absorption spectra of ruby were used to compute its chromaticity coordinates under the standard illumination D65. We began by calculating theoretical absorbance spectra with the first-principles DVME technique. The detailed comparison indicates that when CDC-CC correction is considered, the accuracy of the theoretical spectra are considerably enhanced. The numbers of peak, relative intensity between  $\pi$  and  $\sigma$  spectra, as well as the peak positions were well-reproduced in our calculation. These were then displayed on the CIE 1931 color space to get chromaticity coordinates. Next, the result was compared to the experimental data. The higher the concentration, the closer the chromaticity coordinates are to red. The estimated chromaticity coordinates for the spectra obtained by the CI calculation with CDC-CC corrections correspond well with the observed values. Therefore, on the basis of chromaticity coordinates, the agreement between the theoretical spectrum and the experimental spectrum has been quantitatively assessed.

Table 1

The peak position of U-, Y- and Y'-bands of observed spectra and the theoretical spectra.

	U-band (eV)		Y-band (eV)		Y'-band (eV)	
	$\pi$	$\sigma$	$\pi$	$\sigma$	$\pi$	$\sigma$
Expt [35]	2.24	2.27	3.03	3.11	4.85	4.82
Ogasawara [14]	2.31	2.46	3.24	3.40	4.95	4.94
Novita [19]	2.20	2.12	3.17	3.00	4.61	4.60
Simple CI	2.56	2.52	3.80	3.65	5.73	5.81
CI with correction	2.39	2.34	3.42	3.29	5.02	5.05

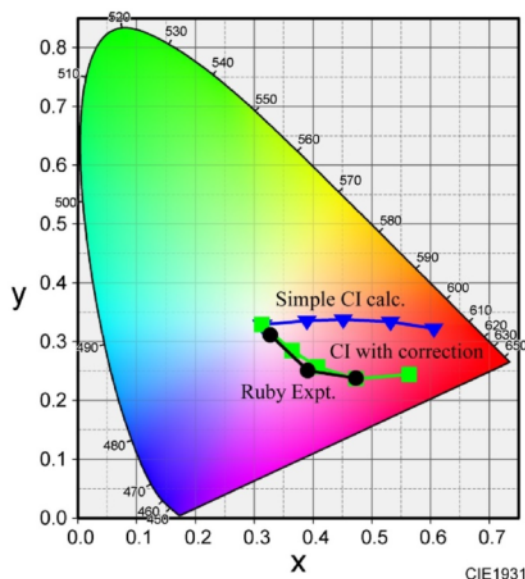


Fig. 3. Chromaticity diagram of experimental and theoretical color coordinates of ruby ( $\alpha\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{: Cr}^{3+}$ ). Ruby's experimental data derived from Fairbank's spectra (●) [35]; theoretical absorption spectra obtained from CI calculations without (▼) and with (■) CDC-CC correction using  $\text{CrO}_6$  cluster are compared. Various concentrations of  $\text{Cr}^{3+}$  are represented by points placed along the lines.

#### Credit authorship contribution statement

**Mega Novita:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing, Draft. **Irna Farikha:** Investigation, Resources. **Rizky Muliani Dwi Ujianti:** Project administration. **Dian Marlina:** Writing – original draft, Visualization. **Benjamin Walker:** Writing – review & editing, Draft, Proofread. **Hironori Kiyooka:** Visualization. **Shota Takemura:** Data curation, Proofread. **Kazuyoshi Ogasawara:** Supervision, Software, Validation.

#### Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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