

^{79}Br quadrupole spin-lattice relaxation in ferroelectric $(\text{CH}_3)_4\text{NCdBr}_3$

D.F.Baisa, E.D.Chesnokov, Z.Czapla ,
A.I.Ovcharenko, S.V.Pogrebnyak, I.G.Vertegel*

Institute of Physics, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine,
46 Nauki Ave., 03650, Kyiv, Ukraine

*Institute of Experimental Physics, University of Wroclaw, Poland

Received May 21, 2003

Investigations of temperature dependence of a nuclear quadrupole spin-lattice relaxation time of ^{79}Br nuclei in ferroelectric $(\text{CH}_3)_4\text{NCdBr}_3$ are presented. It is shown that in paraelectric phase in the vicinity of phase transition temperature relaxation process is determined by critical fluctuations of electric field gradient. In ferroelectric phase relaxation is related to three different mechanisms, namely: lattice vibrations, CH_3 -group reorientations and tetramethylammonium cation motions. According to the results of measurements it is concluded that the phase transition is connected with ordering of tetramethylammonium cations.

Исследована температурная зависимость времени квадрупольной спин-решеточной релаксации ядер ^{79}Br в сегнетоэлектрике $(\text{CH}_3)_4\text{NCdBr}_3$. Показано, что в высокотемпературной фазе вблизи фазового перехода релаксация определяется критическими флуктуациями градиента электрического поля, а в сегнетоэлектрической фазе — влиянием трех механизмов: решеточных колебаний, CH_3 -переориентаций и движением ионов тетраметиламмония. Делается вывод, что переход является переходом типа порядок-беспорядок, связанный с упорядочением ионов тетраметиламмония.

Tetramethylammonium tribromcadmate $(\text{CH}_3)_4\text{NCdBr}_3$ (TMCB) belongs to the family of crystals with a general chemical formula $(\text{CH}_3)_4\text{NMX}_3$, where M — Mn, Ni, Cd; X = Cl, Br, I. Among them $(\text{CH}_3)_4\text{NMnCl}_3$ (TMMC) crystal has been widely studied as quasi-one-dimensional magnetic system with infinite chains $\dots\text{Mn}-\text{Cl}_3-\text{Mn}-\text{Cl}_3-\dots$ separated by tetramethylammonium cations (TMA) [1, 2]. Similarly as in the case of TMMC isomorphous crystals of $(\text{CH}_3)_4\text{NCdCl}_3$ (TMCC) and $(\text{CH}_3)_4\text{NiCl}_3$ (TMNC) exhibit structural phase transitions from hexagonal high-temperature phase to monoclinic low-temperature phase [3, 4]. It was shown that in high-temperature phase of these crystals TMA cations are disordered [2, 5] and order-disorder phase transitions are related

to the ordering of TMA cations and small shifts of the metal-halogen chains [4].

TMCB crystal is another member of this family and undergoes a structural phase transition from hexagonal room temperature phase (space group $P6_3/m$) to another hexagonal phase (space group $P6_1$) and disordered states of TMA cations in paraelectric and ordered in ferroelectric phase are found in it [6–8]. The low-temperature phase exhibits ferroelectric properties along the c-axis. Spontaneous polarization is equal to $1.2 \cdot 10^{-3} \text{ C/m}^2$ at 125 K [9].

NMR investigations of molecular dynamics in TMCB [10] showed that predominant mechanisms of proton relaxation are reorientations of CH_3 -groups and TMA cations. NMR measurements did not show any peculiarities related to the phase transition at

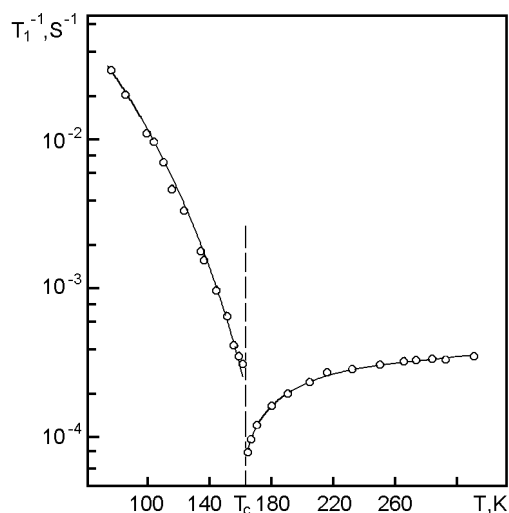


Fig. 1. The temperature dependence of quadrupolar spin-lattice relaxation time T_1 of bromine nuclei in $(\text{CH}_3)_4\text{NCdBr}_3$.

163 K. Most probably very fast reorientations of CH_3 -groups mask slow motions of TMA cations and their changes connected with the phase transition. Temperature dependencies of NQR frequencies of ^{79}Br observed previously [11, 12] confirmed the first-order phase transition. Nakamura [11] proposed that the transition to the ferroelectric phase is related to the displacement of the bromine atoms. On the contrary, our analysis [12] showed that bromine atoms did not take a direct part in the phase transition and critical behaviour of resonance frequencies is caused by the interaction with spontaneous polarization of the crystal.

To obtain further information related to the role of bromine atoms in the mechanism of the phase transition and study molecular and lattice dynamics the temperature dependence of spin-lattice relaxation time T_1 of ^{79}Br nuclei was measured. Measurements were performed by means of pulse spectrometer of ISS-2-13 type using two-pulse and four-pulse (for small values of T_1) methods in the temperature range 77–310 K. Results of relaxation time measurements are shown in Fig. 1.

As it can be seen in Fig. 1 spin-lattice relaxation time exhibits strong temperature dependence and changes in the range of three orders of magnitude in the temperature range under investigation. As the quadrupolar relaxation is defined by fluctuations of electric field gradient (EFG) tensor in a site of resonant nucleus: $T_1^{-1} \sim J(\omega)$, where $J(\omega)$ — spectral density of fluctuations, critical behaviour of some vibra-

tional modes of crystal lattice results in anomalous temperature dependence of relaxation time on approaching the phase transition temperature. Such an anomalous behaviour of T_1 essentially depends on interaction character of critical branch vibration with electric field gradient on a nucleus. According to theoretical considerations for various types of interactions [13] temperature dependence of T_1^{-1} is given with a power formula:

$$T_1^{-1} \sim (T - T_c)^{-n}, \quad (1)$$

where $n = 2, 3/2, 0, 1/2$ in dependence on kind of interaction or logarithmic formula:

$$T_1^{-1} \sim \ln(T - T_c). \quad (2)$$

In our case in high-temperature (paraelectric) phase on approaching the temperature of phase transition the relaxation time T_1 strongly decreases to the value of $70 \cdot 10^{-4}$ s according to

$$T_1 \sim (T - T_c)^{1/2}. \quad (3)$$

It gives evidences for contribution of critical modes to the electric field gradient fluctuations. On approaching phase transition temperature T_c in ferroelectric phase decrease in T_1 to the value of $3 \cdot 10^{-4}$ s is observed and this dependence resembles the critical behaviour, too. However, detailed analysis of experimental data did not show any critical behaviour of relaxation time below T_c (in ferroelectric phase). In this phase the spin-lattice relaxation rate (T_1^{-1}) is well described as a sum of three contributions:

$$T_1^{-1} = At^2 + b \exp(-E_1/kT) + c \exp(-E_2/kT), \quad (4)$$

where $a = 5.82 \cdot 10^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}\text{K}^{-2}$, $b = 5.57 \cdot 10^5 \text{ s}^{-1}$, $c = 6.25 \cdot 10^9 \text{ s}^{-1}$ and $E_1 = 1.95 \text{ kcal/mole}$, $E_2 = 4.86 \text{ kcal/mole}$.

In Fig. 2 the temperature dependence of T_1^{-1} obtained from experimental data (points) and the best fitting of Eq.(4) (curve 4) and dependencies of particular contributions (curves 1–3) to total spin relaxation as functions of $1/T$ are presented. The first term in Eq.(4) (curve 1) in Fig. 2 describes usual Raman two-phonon process (energy exchange between the nuclear spin system) which is predominant at low temperatures. In this process the difference of incident and scattered phonon frequencies is the same order of magnitude as the NQR fre-

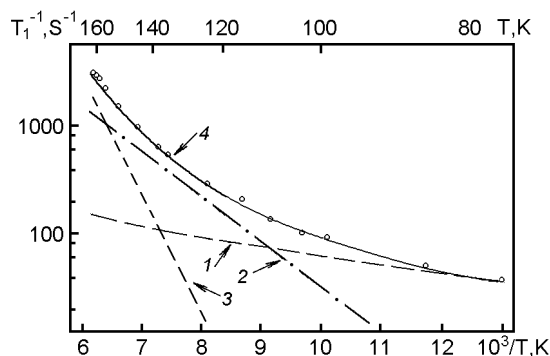


Fig. 2. Dependences of spin-lattice relaxation rate T_1^{-1} in ferroelectric phase of $(\text{CH}_3)_4\text{NCdBr}_3$ (points and curve 4) and particular contributions to spin-lattice relaxation: 1 — $T_1^{-1} = AT^2$, 2 — $T_1^{-1} = b\exp(-E_1/kT)$, 3 — $T_1^{-1} = c\exp(-E_2/kT)$, on inverse temperature.

quency. Such processes are more effective than direct interaction of electric field gradient and lattice vibrations. According to qualitative theory of quadrupolar relaxation based on Debye's model for lattice vibrations and electric field gradient model for point charges [14] the 87

$$T_1^{-1} = a + bT^2 \text{ for } T > 0.5T_D,$$

$$\text{and } T_1^{-1} = cT^7 \text{ for } T < 0.02T_D,$$

where T_D — Debye's temperature. Here one can notice that for TMCB $T_D < 150$ K. Second and third terms describe thermally activated reorientation motions with energies E_1 and E_2 . It is difficult to explain relatively low values of two activation energies with any reorientation motion of such heavy particles as bromine atoms.

These values are comparable with values of the activation energies of CH_3 -group rotation (1.6 kcal/mol) and TMA cation tumbling (4.6 kcal/mol) obtained from proton magnetic spin-lattice relaxation measurements (NMR). Such a good agreement between activation energies obtained from proton magnetic resonance and bromine quadrupolar relaxation leads us to conclu-

sion that the same thermally activated motions, namely: CH_3 -group reorientations and TMA cation tumbling are responsible for relaxation observed both in NMR and NQR measurements. In this way, spin-lattice relaxation of bromine nuclei results from electric field gradient fluctuations (despite of lattice vibrations) caused by reorientational motions of CH_3 -groups (straight line 2 in Fig. 2) and tumbling of TMA cations (straight line 3 in Fig. 2). Near the phase transition temperature the privileged mechanism is related to TMA cation tumbling. The obtained results confirm our previous assumption [12] that bromine nuclei do not take the direct part in the transition and that in TCMB we deal with the order-disorder type phase transition accompanied by ordering of TMA cations.

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^{79}Br квадрупольна спін-решіткова релаксація у сегнетоелектрику $(\text{CH}_3)_4\text{NCdBr}_3$

***Д.Ф.Байса, Є.Д.Чесноков, З.Чапла,
А.І.Овчаренко, С.В.Погребняк, І.Г.Вертегель***

Проведено дослідження температурної залежності часу квадрупольної спін-граткової релаксації ядер ^{79}Br у сегнетоелектричному кристалі $(\text{CH}_3)_4\text{NCdBr}_3$. Показано, що у параелектричній фазі поблизу температури фазового переходу спінова релаксація визначається критичними флуктуаціями градієнту електричного поля, а у сегнетоелектричній фазі — внеском трьох вкладів: граткових решіткових, переорієнтацій CH_3 -груп та рухом іонів тетраметиламонію. Робиться висновок, що фазовий перехід є перехід типу порядок-безпорядок, що пов'язаний з упорядкуванням іонів тетраметиламонію.