

Identifying and Probing Atomic Defects in 2D Semiconductors by Scanning Probe Microscopy

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Two-dimensional (2D) semiconductors provide an exciting platform to engineer atomic quantum systems in a robust, yet tunable solid-state system. In this talk, I will present our efforts to unravel the interesting physics behind single vacancies and dopant atoms in transition metal dichalcogenide (TMD) mono- and multilayers by means of high-resolution scanning probe microscopy [1–6]. I will highlight how to generate atomic defects by different means, and how to identify them based on their characteristic scanning tunneling spectroscopy (STS) fingerprint and density functional theory modelling. Our recent studies on transition metal doped TMDs such as (n-type) Re-doped MoS₂ and (p-type) V-doped WSe₂ reveals the significance of the charge state in the spectroscopic signature of these defects. By substrate chemical gating, we can stabilize three charge states of Re_{Mo}, where two of the charge states exhibit symmetry broken electronic orbitals and a distorted atomic configuration that we assign to a pseudo Jahn-Teller effect [7]. Negatively charged V dopants and dopant pairs in WSe₂ exhibit a series of occupied p-type defect states above the valence band edge, accompanied by an intriguing electronic fine-structure that we attribute to many-body electron interactions [8]. Lastly, I will provide an outlook on our ongoing developments of ultrafast lightwave-driven scanning tunneling microscopy using single-cycle THz pulses to measure the sub-picosecond time dynamics at atomic spatial resolution [9].

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