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偏硼酸锂熔融-电感耦合等离子体发射光谱法结合扫描电镜-能谱测定锡矿石中锡钨锌铜铁锰

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摘要: 锡石不溶于盐酸、硝酸及王水, 测定其中元素含量时通常采用碱熔融分解样品, 电感耦合等离子体发射光谱法(ICP-OES)测定。而传统的过氧化钠或其他氧化性熔剂会引入大量的盐类, 酸化提取后的溶液需要进一步分离或稀释, 这样不仅影响分析的准确度及较低含量元素的测定限, 长时间测定还会引起等离子体信号降低, 造成仪器损伤。本文将锡矿石经偏硼酸锂熔融, 超声波水浴处理, 用ICP-OES法同时测定锡、钨、铁、锰、铜、锌元素含量, 在标准溶液中匹配等量锂盐, 各待测元素之间无明显干扰, 操作简单快捷, 环境污染小。实验过程中结合扫描电镜-能谱(SEM-EDX)微区分析技术, 观察和分析不同熔剂量下样品熔珠的形貌特征和成分差异, 发现随着熔剂与样品比例从小至大, 熔珠表面结构呈现由松散、易碎向细粒、致密均匀的规律性变化, 当熔剂与样品的比例达到7:1后, 熔珠表面形态无明显变化, 当熔剂与样品的比例为8:1时, 熔珠表面能明显检测出硼元素的存在, 说明此时的熔剂过量, 从而实现了应用SEM-EDX技术来确定ICP-OES法分析中熔剂与样品的最佳配比。本研究还探讨了锡矿石样品的熔融温度和时间、介质酸度, 对锡矿石标准物质GBW07281进行分析测定, 方法精密度(RSD)为1.20%~8.06%, 方法检出限为0.0012%~0.0098%, 满足了样品中元素定量分析的要求。

关键词: 锡矿石; 金属元素; 偏硼酸锂熔融; 电感耦合等离子体发射光谱法; 扫描电镜-能谱
要点:

- (1) 采用非氧化性熔剂偏硼酸锂熔融分解锡矿石, 超声波振荡提取熔盐, 前处理简单快捷、准确度高, 环境污染小。
- (2) 通过扫描电镜-能谱微区分析发现随着熔剂的增加, 熔珠表面结构呈松散向致密均匀的规律性变化, 硼残留也逐渐增多, 以此确定了熔剂与样品的最佳配比7:1可实现样品完全熔融。
- (3) 在标准溶液中加入与样品分解流程中引入的0.7%锂盐, 基体干扰可以忽略不计。

中图分类号: O657.31

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锡在地壳中分布较广, 目前已知的锡矿物有20余种, 主要以锡石SnO₂形态存在。锡石不溶于盐酸、硝酸及王水, 即使用硫酸长时间加热或用氢氟酸-硫酸处理时, 也只有一小部分溶解, 所以对于锡矿

石的分析测试, 样品前处理通常采用碱熔融法^[1]。矿石中锡元素的测定方法^[2-3]有: 极谱法^[4-5]、分光光度法^[6]、氢化物发生原子荧光光谱法^[7]、发射光谱法^[8-11]、电感耦合等离子体发射光谱法

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(ICP-OES)^[12-18]、电感耦合等离子体质谱法(ICP-MS)^[19]等。陈义等^[20]采用过氧化钠碱熔,原子荧光光谱法测定高含量的锡;梁文先等^[21]研究了用压片制样X射线荧光光谱法(XRF)快速测定矿石中锡量;刘恒杰等^[22]采用熔融制样X射线荧光光谱法测定矿物中Cu、Pb、Zn、Mo、W、Al、Fe、Si、K、Na、Ti、Ca、Sn等13种主次量元素;陈丽梅等^[23]采用过氧化钠消解铜浸出渣,使用ICP-OES法测定铜浸出渣中的锡含量;肖细炼等^[24]建立了交流电弧-光电直读发射光谱同时测定碳酸盐矿物中银、硼、锡的分析方法;马龙等^[25]采用过氧化钠熔融ICP-MS法测定锡矿石中的锡。这些方法的选择主要取决于矿石本身特征及金属锡含量,同时也受操作条件、试剂的选用等客观因素的影响。

ICP-OES法具有灵敏度较高、线性范围较宽、基体效应较低、不仅能够实现对锡矿石主次量元素的同时测定,且有良好的精密度和重现性,能大大提高测试效率。然而,传统分解锡矿石使用的过氧化钠或其他氧化性熔剂会引入大量的盐类,酸化提取后的溶液需要进一步分离或稀释,这样不仅影响分析的准确度及较低含量元素的测定限,长时间测定还会引起等离子体信号降低,造成仪器损伤。因此,选择适宜的样品前处理方法至关重要。有学者尝试采用一些非传统性熔剂进行样品的前处理。如杨新能等^[26]采用碳酸锂-硼酸混合熔剂高温熔融ICP-OES法测定铁矿石中铬、铌、钼、钨、锡;王学田等^[27]提出了用四硼酸锂作熔剂,熔融制成样片XRF法同时测定钨锡矿石中钨、钼、锡元素含量的分析方法;童晓民等^[28]采用混合熔剂(四硼酸锂:硼酸锂:氟化锂=10:2.5:1,质量比)加氧化剂硝酸锂熔融制样,建立了XRF测定锡矿石中Fe、Cu、Zn、As、Sn、Sb、Pb、Bi等8种金属元素的分析方法。

偏硼酸锂属于高熔点的非氧化性熔剂,具有很强的分解力^[29]。自1964年Ingamells报道了偏硼酸锂是一种很好的助熔剂以来,已成功应用于土壤、硅酸盐岩石^[30],甚至一些难熔的岩石和矿物样品^[31-34]的分解中。黄劲^[35]采取偏硼酸锂熔矿,王水-酒石酸体系提取溶液测定锡矿石中锡钨钼铜铅锌。本文在此研究基础上用偏硼酸锂熔融、硝酸提取,ICP-OES法测定了锡矿石中锡、钨、铁、锰、铜、锌元素的含量,同时结合扫描电镜-能谱(SEM-EDX)微区分析技术,确定了偏硼酸锂熔剂与样品的最佳配比。探讨了锡矿石样品的熔融温度和时间、介质酸度以及基体干扰,通过测定锡矿石标准物质验证了方法的准确度和精密度。

1 实验部分

1.1 仪器及工作条件

iCap6300全谱直读电感耦合等离子体发射光谱仪(美国ThermoFisher公司)。仪器工作条件见表1。

F6010CN控温马弗炉(美国ThermoFisher公司)。

KH2200DH型数控超声波清洗器(江苏昆山禾创超声仪器有限公司)。

用光谱纯石墨棒车制的小石墨坩埚15mL(内径25mm,壁厚5mm,内高30mm,外高35mm),瓷坩埚20mL。

表1 仪器参考工作条件

Table 1 Reference operating conditions of the instrument

工作参数	设定值	工作参数	设定值
射频功率	1150W	冲洗泵速	50r/min
雾化气流速	0.2L/min	分析泵速	50r/min
辅助气流速	0.5L/min	积分时间	长波段5s 短波段7s
样品冲洗时间	30s	垂直观测高度	10mm
		氩气	99.999%

1.2 标准溶液的配制和主要试剂

本方法的标准溶液是按表2所示浓度,适量吸取各单元素储备液配制成混合标准系列,其酸度为5%的硝酸。由于采用偏硼酸锂熔样,样品溶液中引入了大量的锂盐,因此在配制标准溶液时,加入0.7%的偏硼酸锂(与样品溶液相当的锂),并加入一定量的硝酸,使其酸度保持在5%左右,以保证标准溶液的基体和酸度与样品溶液基本一致。

硝酸:优级纯。偏硼酸锂:分析纯。高纯水:蒸馏水经Mili-Q纯化系统纯化,电导率18MΩ·cm。

表2 标准溶液系列

Table 2 Standard solution series

元素	浓度(μg/mL)					
	STD0	STD1	STD2	STD3	STD4	STD5
Sn	0	0.5	5	10	20	-
W	0	0.1	0.5	5	20	-
Zn	0	0.1	0.5	5	20	50
Cu	0	0.1	1	10	50	100
Fe	0	5	20	100	200	500
Mn	0	0.1	0.5	5	20	-

1.3 元素分析谱线和背景扣除模式

利用仪器的性能对每个元素选定2~3条不同

级次的谱线进行测定,然后分析观察每条谱线的发射强度,再考虑元素的检出限、共存元素对其干扰和该元素的线性范围,选择测定元素的最佳谱线波长,并校准谱线。各元素分析谱线的波长、级次和背景扣除模式见表3。

表3 各元素测定波长和背景扣除模式

Table 3 Measurement wavelength and background subtraction mode

分析项目	波长(nm)	级次	左背景		右背景		峰位
			位置	主要干扰	位置	主要干扰	
Sn	189.989	477	1+2	/	11+12	/	7+8
W	239.709	141	1+2	/	11+12	/	6+7
Zn	206.200	164	1+2	/	11+12	/	6+7
Cu	327.396	103	2+3	/	11+12	/	7+8
Fe	259.940	130	2+3	/	11+12	/	7+8
Mn	257.610	131	1+2	/	11+12	/	7+8

1.4 实验方法

1.4.1 样品来源

本次实验的样品采自典型矿区云南马关、麻栗坡地区金竹林、瓦渣、南捞等地的锡砂矿。通过扫描电镜-能谱(SEM-EDX)、X射线衍射分析,初步判定样品中的矿物组成,观察锡矿物性状特征、粒径大小,发现锡石的粒径在400~500μm左右,多大于400μm,再通过重砂分析得到锡的含量在130~135g/m³,均已达到锡砂矿的边界品位(100~150g/m³),直接作为本次实验的分析样品。

1.4.2 样品分解

称取350mg无水偏硼酸锂置于15mL石墨坩埚中,再准确称取50.00mg样品,与无水偏硼酸锂混匀,将石墨坩埚放于瓷坩埚中,再将坩埚置于已升温至1000℃的高温炉中恒温熔融15min。取出坩埚,立即将赤热的熔珠倒入盛有30mL5%硝酸的100mL烧杯中,熔融物立即炸裂为细小的微粒。

将烧杯放入超声波振荡器(温度60℃,频率为80Hz),待熔盐完全溶解清亮后(约15min),移入50mL容量瓶中,用5%硝酸稀释至刻度,摇匀待测。随同试样进行2份空白试验。

将标准溶液系列和待测样品溶液引入ICP-OES进行分析,分别采用锡、铁、铜、锌、锰、钨在激发态下的发射波长(表3)为分析谱线,测定各元素的含量。

2 结果与讨论

2.1 熔样条件实验

2.1.1 坩埚的选择

含锂硼酸盐类熔剂熔样快速,熔样对坩埚材料的侵蚀不严重,熔样引入的外来离子不给以后的测试增添额外的分离步骤,通常偏硼酸锂熔矿可在铂金坩埚和石墨坩埚中进行。在铂器皿中熔融时,熔融物粘附在坩埚壁上很难被洗脱,同时样品中的铁、锰、钴等元素可能被萃入铂坩埚中。在石墨坩埚中熔样,得到的熔珠易于取出。熔样宜在高温炉中进行,空气不能完全隔绝,否则某些金属氧化物易被还原为挥发性的金属而损失。本实验采用石墨坩埚外套一个瓷坩埚。

2.1.2 熔剂与样品的比例

已有文献报道,熔剂与样品的比例(质量比)为5:2至7:1^[30],较低的熔/样比需要较高的熔样温度,较高的熔/样比会给测定引入更多的盐类。实验分别加入250mg、300mg、350mg、500mg、800mg偏硼酸锂,即熔剂与样品的比例分别为5:1、6:1、7:1、10:1、16:1,当熔剂与样品的比例低于7:1时,样品不易形成一个规则的球体,熔珠散落在坩埚中很难收集,实验中对收集不完全而附着在坩埚底部的白色固体物质进行了扫描电镜观察,发现这些白色物质呈片状、球状、块状、絮状,主要为金属氧化物和

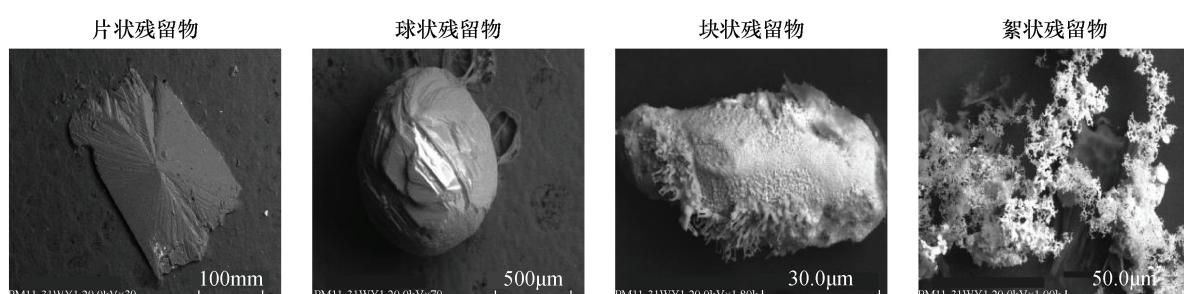


图1 残渣形貌图(扫描电镜图片)

Fig. 1 Scanning electron microscope pictures of the residue.

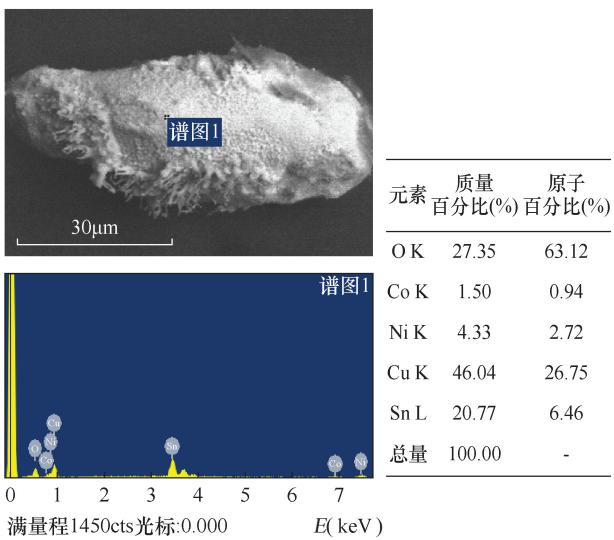


图2 残渣成分能谱数据图

Fig. 2 Energy spectrum diagrams of residue composition.

偏硼酸锂的熔融物,必然导致测定结果偏低。图1、图2所示分别为部分残渣的形貌图和能谱数据图。

熔剂与样品比例为5:1、6:1、7:1、8:1、9:1时,将冷却后的熔珠置于扫描电镜下观察,熔珠的表面结构如图3所示。5倍熔剂下形成的熔珠表面比较平滑(图3a),孔隙较大较多(图3b),容易破碎;

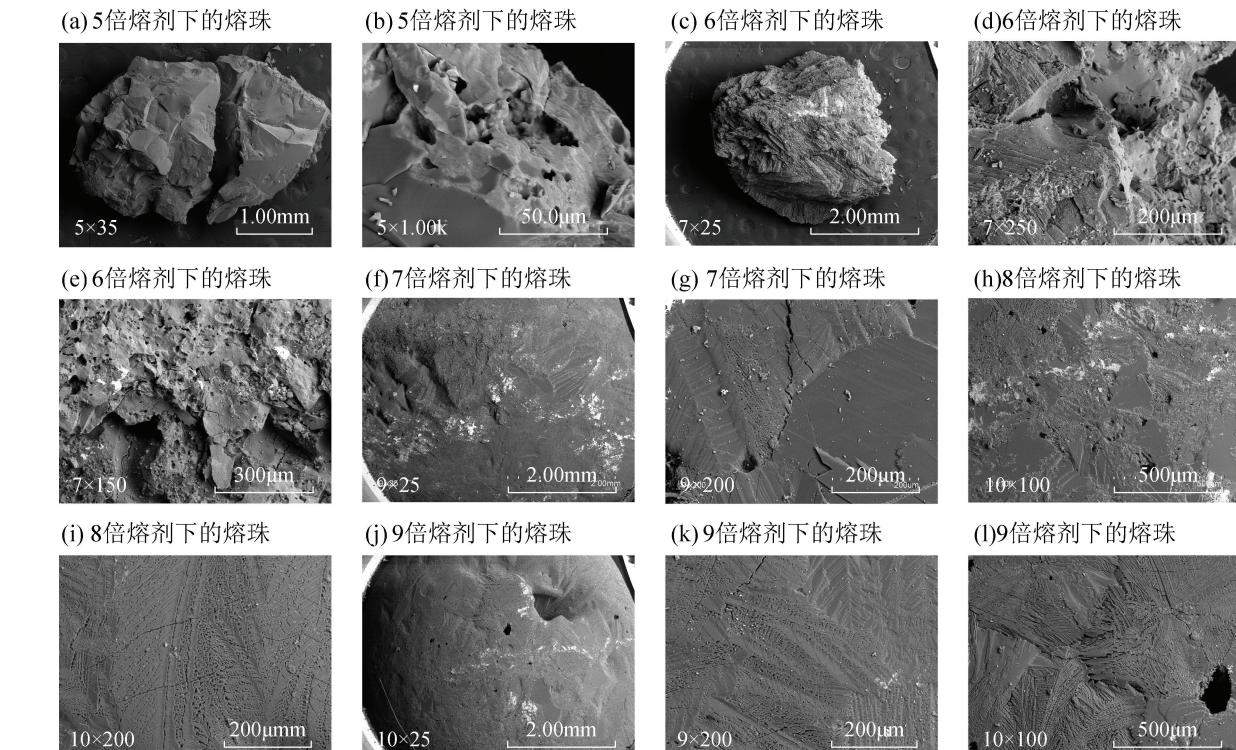


图3 熔珠形貌图(扫描电镜图片)

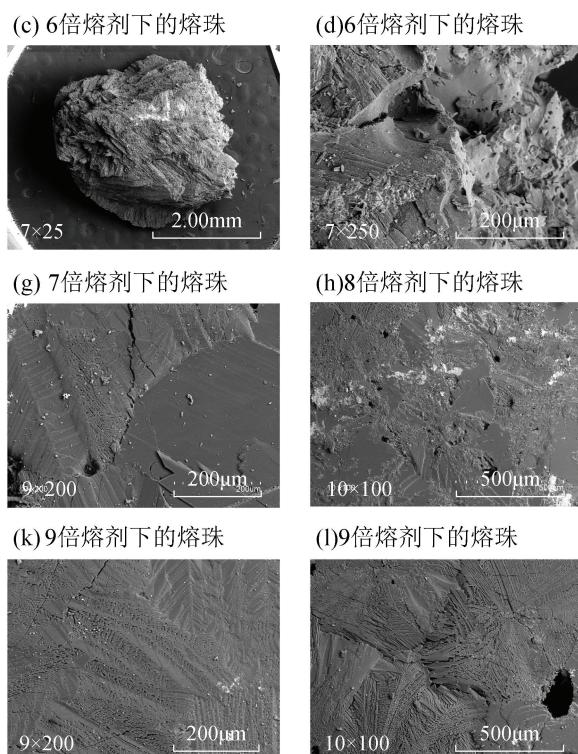
Fig. 3 Scanning electron microscope picture of the residue.

6倍熔剂下形成的熔珠呈层状结构(图3c),也有平滑处(图3d),且孔隙也较多(图3e);7倍熔剂下形成的熔珠颗粒较大较圆(图3f),片状和层状相互交替(图3g),结构更为致密;8倍和9倍熔剂下的熔珠结构与7倍的熔珠结构相似(图3中h~l)。但能谱数据显示含有一定量的硼,如图4所示,可能是硼过量引起的,从而说明熔剂过量。

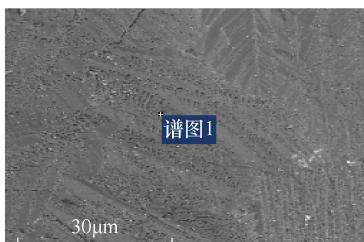
结合残渣和熔珠的扫描电镜-能谱分析结果,实验选择熔剂和样品比为7:1,快速提取,保证样品能完全转移。

2.1.3 熔融时间和温度

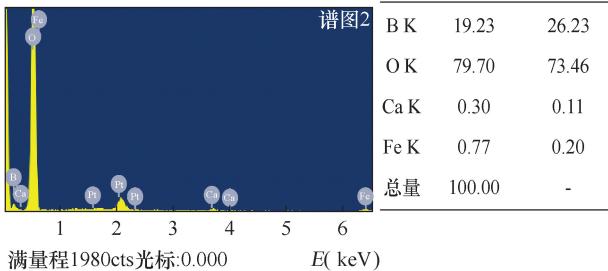
偏硼酸锂为高熔点熔剂,熔融温度在900~1100℃。分别选择熔融温度为900℃、950℃、1000℃、1050℃进行实验,熔融时间均为15min,具体测量数据如表4所示。由表4数据结果表明,熔融温度为900℃时,有时候某些试样不能熔融完全形成熔珠状或提取时有残渣附着在石墨坩埚中,当熔融温度为950℃以上时,样品呈熔珠状,流动性好。并且由数据可知,温度在950℃、1000℃、1050℃时,元素的含量变化相差不大(GBW07281),测定误差满足《地质矿产实验室测试质量管理规范第三部分 岩石矿物样品化学成分分析》(DZ/T



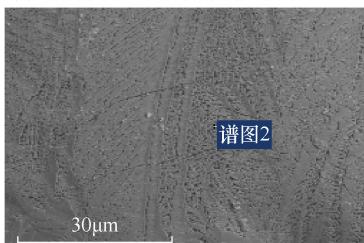
(a) 8倍熔剂下的熔珠成分能谱图



谱图2



(b) 9倍熔剂下的熔珠成分能谱图



谱图1

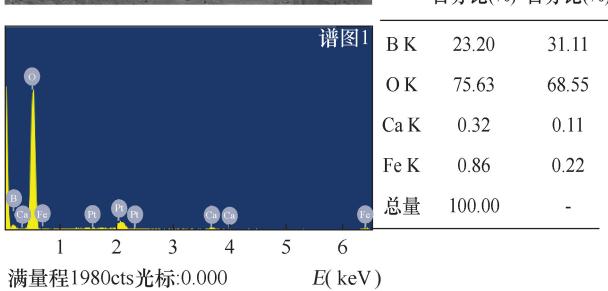


图4 熔珠成分能谱图

Fig. 4 Energy spectrum diagrams of molten bead.

0130.3—2006) 的要求,且趋于稳定,因此选择1000℃为本实验的熔融温度。

表4 熔融温度的影响

Table 4 Effects of fusion temperature

元素	不同熔融温度下的测定值(%)					标准值 (%)
	900℃	950℃	1000℃	1050℃	1100℃	
Sn	3.96	4.32	4.36	4.39	4.28	4.47±0.08
W	0.047	0.058	0.062	0.059	0.056	0.068±0.005
Zn	0.68	0.75	0.71	0.68	0.69	0.74±0.02
Cu	0.25	0.27	0.26	0.25	0.24	0.26±0.01
Fe	24.72	25.16	25.06	25.23	25.09	25.13±0.25
Mn	0.76	0.89	0.93	0.92	0.88	0.91±0.05

样品熔融温度为1000℃时,分别选择熔融时间为10、15、20min进行高温熔融时间条件实验,结果发现熔融时间为10min时,某些试样不能熔融完全,不能形成熔珠状,容易粘附在坩埚壁;当熔融时间为15、20min时试样熔融完全,样品呈熔珠状,流动性好,易于提取。由于过长的熔融时间会造成某些元素的损失,并增大熔融器皿的损耗。通过实验确定熔融时间为15min。

2.1.4 提取溶液酸度的选择

用偏硼酸锂熔融,尽管矿物完全分解,甚至当熔珠溶于稀酸后,还完整地保留Si-O晶体结构骨架碎片,提取时极易析出硅酸,控制提取液的酸度,使分析溶液的pH值在硅酸不易聚合的范围内(pH=1~3),但又要防止铁、铝、钛等元素沉淀或水解;加大提取液体的体积,使硅酸的浓度始终保持在溶解度以下。实验选择30mL浓度为5%的硝酸溶液进行提取。

2.1.5 干扰实验

本法采用偏硼酸锂熔样,会引入大量的易电离元素锂,从而破坏等离子体中的电离平衡,影响元素的测定。本次实验发现锂对待测元素的影响不大,这也说明了等离子体光源基体干扰小的特点。随着锂浓度的增大,对于Fe 259.94nm强度值略有降低,而其他元素降低得并不明显。同时在标准溶液中加入与样品分解流程中引入的0.7%的锂盐,使得样品溶液和标准溶液的基体基本一致,基体干扰可以忽略不计。

2.2 方法检出限

对与样品同时熔融处理的偏硼酸锂熔剂100mg的空白溶液,用5%硝酸稀释至50mL,摇匀,进行10次测定,计算标准偏差,10倍标准偏差再乘以稀释倍数计算方法检出限,得到各元素检出限分别为:Sn 18.66μg/g, W 97.67μg/g, Zn 21.14μg/g, Cu 23.45μg/g, Fe 78.40μg/g, Mn 12.32μg/g。

2.3 方法精密度和准确度

通过锡矿石国家一级标准物质GBW07281,对方法的可靠性进行了验证。应用本法在不同的时间里制样12份,在不同的时间进行测定,统计其标准误差、相对标准偏差(RSD),列于表5。方法各元素测定相对误差为1.33%~8.80%,相对标准偏差为1.20%~8.06%,符合锡矿石分析的技术参数要求。

2.4 锡矿实际样品分析

本次实验的五个样品,编号1~5,分别采自典型矿区云南马关、麻栗坡地区金竹林、瓦渣、南捞等地的锡砂矿,且经重砂分析均已达到锡矿的边界品位。

表5 方法精密度和准确度

Table 5 Precision and accuracy tests of the method

项目	Sn	W	Zn	Cu	Fe	Mn
含量测定均值(%)	4.31	0.056	0.76	0.23	24.61	0.87
标准值(%)	4.47±0.08	0.068±0.005	0.74±0.02	0.26±0.01	25.31±0.25	0.91±0.05
相对误差(%)	4.20	8.80	1.33	6.12	1.40	2.25
RSD(%)	1.20	8.06	2.01	3.21	2.36	3.87

2.4.1 锡含量测定方法的比对

选择3个锡矿样品和GBW07282,采用《锡矿石化学分析方法 锡量测定》(GB/T 15924—2010)与本文方法分别测定样品中的锡,将结果进行比较,计算相对误差,与《地质矿产实验室测试质量管理规范 第三部分 岩石矿物样品化学成分分析》(DZ/T 0130.3—2006)规定允许相对误差相比,相对误差绝对值小于允差误差(表6),说明本文方法能准确测定锡矿石中的锡。

表6 本文ICP-OES方法与GB/T 15924—2010方法测定Sn含量数据对比

Table 6 Comparison of Sn content determined by ICP-OES and GB/T 15924—2010 method

样品编号	Sn含量4次平行测定值(μg/g)	Sn含量测定平均值(μg/g)	GB/T 15924—2010方法Sn测定值(μg/g)	相对误差(%)	DZ/T 0130.3—2006规定允许相对误差(%)
锡矿样品1	12218 11962 12019 10889	11772	12166	3.24	6.39
锡矿样品2	8398 8466 8019 7905	8182	7854	4.18	7.12
锡矿样品3	5005 4879 5612 4784	5070	4783	6.01	8.06
GBW07282	11876 11634 12959 12015	12121	11827	2.48	6.39

表7 酸溶和偏硼酸锂熔融法测定铁、铜、锌、锰、钨数据比对

Table 7 Comparison of iron, copper, zinc, manganese, and tungsten content determined by acid dissolution and lithium metaborate fusion

样品编号	W含量(%)			Zn含量(%)			Cu含量(%)			Fe含量(%)			Mn含量(%)		
	酸溶	偏硼酸锂熔融	相对误差	酸溶	偏硼酸锂熔融	相对误差	酸溶	偏硼酸锂熔融	相对误差	酸溶	偏硼酸锂熔融	相对误差	酸溶	偏硼酸锂熔融	相对误差
锡矿样品1	0.0080	0.0068	8.11	0.014	0.011	12.00	0.010	0.0089	5.82	0.89	0.81	4.71	0.041	0.036	6.49
锡矿样品2	0.037	0.038	1.33	0.015	0.018	9.09	0.022	0.018	10.00	1.75	1.69	1.74	0.17	0.14	9.68
锡矿样品3	0.040	0.034	8.11	0.017	0.020	8.11	0.0044	0.0051	7.37	1.52	1.38	1.38	0.15	0.16	3.23
锡矿样品4	0.036	0.030	9.09	0.28	0.25	5.66	0.070	0.082	7.89	1.84	1.69	4.25	0.068	0.059	7.09
锡矿样品5	0.041	0.040	1.23	0.14	0.13	3.70	0.035	0.039	5.41	1.76	1.70	1.73	0.075	0.062	9.49
GBW07281	0.068	0.057	8.80	0.74	0.76	1.33	0.26	0.23	6.12	25.31	24.29	2.06	0.91	0.81	5.81
GBW07282	0.015	0.013	7.14	0.91	0.96	2.67	0.32	0.29	4.92	24.06	23.80	0.54	0.33	0.34	1.49

2.4.2 酸溶和偏硼酸锂熔融处理样品测定铁铜锌锰钨结果的比对

取5件锡矿样品,采用酸溶与本文的偏硼酸锂熔融方法处理,ICP-OES测定钨、锌、铜、铁、锰元素含量进行比对。酸溶步骤如下:将试料置于15mL带盖聚四氟乙烯坩埚中,加入3mL 50%盐酸于150~160℃电热板上加热蒸干,取下冷却,用水吹洗盖子内侧和烧杯内壁,再加1mL浓硝酸、1mL氢氟酸、0.5mL高氯酸,加盖置于180~190℃电热板上加热至试料分解完全(6~8h),用水吹洗盖子内侧和烧杯内壁并去盖,继续加热至高氯酸烟冒尽,取下稍冷,加入4mL 50%盐酸并吹洗烧杯内壁,加热至盐类溶解完全,取下,冷却至室温,移入25mL塑料容量瓶(或比色管)中,用水稀释至刻度,摇匀备测。

测试数据列于表7中,两种方法测定结果的相对误差为0.54%~12.00%,说明本文方法能准确测定锡矿石中的钨、锌、铜、铁、锰。

3 结论

采用偏硼酸锂熔融,超声波水浴处理,用ICP-OES法测定锡矿石中锡、钨、锌、铜、铁、锰元素的含量,以基体匹配方式消除了基体干扰,各待测元素之间没有明显干扰,方法准确可靠。结合扫描电镜-能谱微区分析技术,观察不同熔剂量下样品残渣和

熔珠的形貌特征,测定其成分,发现当熔剂与样品比为7:1时,样品熔珠颗粒结构致密,且未见硼元素检出,说明样品完全熔融,且熔剂量适中,为确定熔剂与样品的最佳配比提供了理论依据。

采用本文方法,样品前处理简单,熔盐提取快速,分析成本低,环境污染小,能够满足锡矿石中锡、钨、锌、铜、铁、锰含量分析的要求。相比于传统的化学分析方法,该方法更加方便快捷,节省了大量的时间和成本,易于掌握。

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Determination of Tin, Tungsten, Zinc, Copper, Iron, and Manganese in Tin Ore by Lithium Metaborate Fusion – Inductively Coupled Plasma – Optical Emission Spectrometry Combined with Scanning Electron Microscopy–Energy Dispersive X-ray Spectrometry

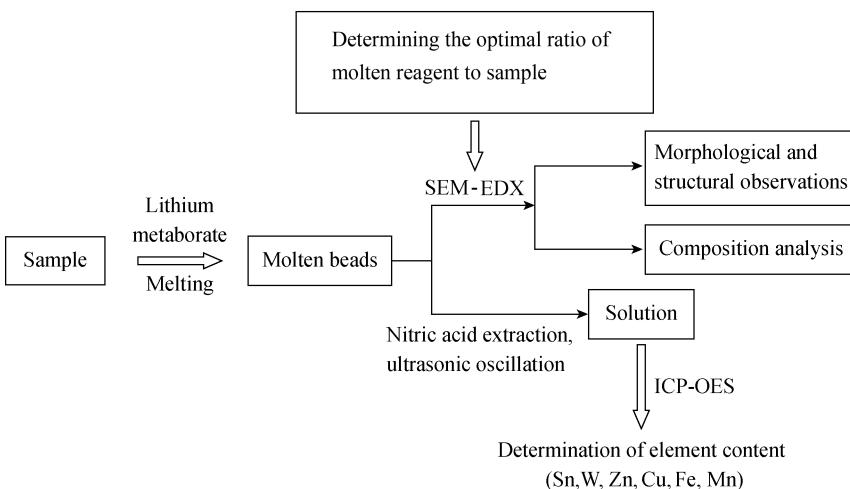
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HIGHLIGHTS

- (1) Tin ore samples were melted by non-oxidizing flux lithium metaborate, and the molten sample was extracted by ultrasonic vibration. The sample pretreatment was simple and fast, with high accuracy and low environmental pollution.
- (2) Scanning electron microscopy-energy dispersive X-ray spectrometry (SEM-EDX) analysis revealed that with the increase of flux, the surface structure of the molten bead changed regularly from loose to dense and uniform, and the residual boron gradually increased. The optimal ratio of flux to sample was determined to be 7 : 1, which melted the sample completely.
- (3) The 0.7% lithium salt introduced in the sample decomposition was added to the standard solution, and the matrix interference was negligible.



ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Tin is widely distributed in the crust, and more than 20 kinds of tin minerals are known, mainly in the form of cassiterite SnO_2 . Cassiterite is insoluble in hydrochloric acid, nitric acid and aqua regia. Even when sulfuric acid is heated for a long time or treated with hydrofluoric acid-sulfuric acid, only a small part of it is dissolved. Therefore, for the analysis of tin ore, the alkali fusion method is usually used for sample pretreatment.

The determination methods of tin in ore include polarography, spectrophotometry, hydride generation atomic fluorescence spectrometry, emission spectrometry, inductively coupled plasma-optical emission spectrometry (ICP-OES), and inductively coupled plasma-mass spectrometry (ICP-MS). The selection of these methods mainly depends on the characteristics of the ore itself and the content of tin, but also depends on the operating conditions, the selection of reagents and other objective factors.

The ICP-OES has high sensitivity, a wide linear range and low matrix effect, which can not only be used to simultaneously determine the main and secondary elements of tin ore, but also has good precision and reproducibility, and can greatly improve the test efficiency. However, when the elemental contents are determined by ICP-OES, traditional sodium peroxide or other oxidizing fluxes introduce a large amount of salts, and the solution after acidification and extraction needs to be further separated or diluted, which not only affects the accuracy of the analysis and the determination limit of lower content elements, but also causes the signal to decrease and cause damage to the instrument during the long-term determination.

Lithiummetaborate is a non-oxidizing flux with high melting point and has strong resolution. Since Ingamells reported in 1964 that lithium metaborate is a good flux, it has been successfully applied in the decomposition of soil, silicate rocks, and even some refractory rock and mineral samples. In this study, the analysis of the elemental contents of tin ores are attempted, which are fused by lithium metaborate and measured by ICP-OES.

OBJECTIVES: To develop a method for simultaneous determination of Sn, W, Zn, Cu, Fe and Mn in tin ores which is decomposed by lithium metaborate and determined by ICP-OES.

METHODS: Lithium metaborate, a non-oxidizing flux with a high melting point, was used to replace the traditional sodium peroxide and other oxidizing fluxes to melt the sample. After ultrasonic water treatment, Sn, W, Zn, Cu, Fe and Mn of tin ores were determined by ICP-OES. Scanning electron microscopy-energy dispersive X-ray spectrometry (SEM-EDX) was used to observe the morphological characteristics of the sample molten beads under different flux amounts and analyze the elemental content in the molten beads. It was found that the surface structure of molten beads changed from loose and brittle to fine and compact with the proportion of flux to sample from small to large. When the ratio of flux to sample reached 7:1, the surface morphology of the molten bead had

no obvious change. When the ratio of flux to sample was 8 : 1, the Boron element was detected on the surface of the molten bead, indicating that the flux was excessive at this time. In this way the optimal ratio of flux and sample was finally determined.

RESULTS: The optimal ratio of flux to sample was 7 : 1, the sample was melted at 1000°C and extracted by 5% nitric acid solution. The method precision (RSD) was 1.20%–8.06% by determination of tin ore standard substance GBW07281. The method detection limit was 0.0012%–0.0098%. Each element was compared by this method with classical chemical analysis methods and the relative error was within 7%.

CONCLUSIONS: The content of tin, tungsten, zinc, copper, iron and manganese in tin ore is determined by ICP-OES method by means of matrix matching. There is no obvious interference between the elements to be measured. The sample pretreatment is simple, the molten salt extraction is fast, the analysis cost is low, and the environmental pollution is small. The method meets the requirement of content analysis of tin, tungsten, zinc, copper, iron and manganese in tin ore. Compared with the traditional chemical analysis method, this method is more convenient, saves a lot of time and cost, and is easy to master.

SEM-EDX is used to observe and analyze the morphology characteristics and composition content of sample residue and bead under different flux amounts, which provides a theoretical basis for determining the optimal ratio of flux and sample.

The low result of lead in the experiment may be due to the high melting temperature of lithium metaborate and the low melting point of lead oxide, which can be further studied in future work. The limitations of a single instrument in detection sensitivity, resolution, analysis rate and efficiency can be solved by the combination of a variety of analysis means, to obtain more abundant information and accurate results, which is one of the most important directions in the development of modern instrument technology.

KEY WORDS: tin ore; metal elements; lithium metaborate fusion; inductively coupled plasma-optical emission spectrometry; scanning electron microscopy-energy dispersive X-ray spectrometry