Surface and Interface Analysis

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PERSPECTIVE ARTICLE

What's in a Name? "ESCA" or "XPS"? A Discussion of Comments Made by Kai Siegbahn More Than Four Decades Ago Regarding the Name of the Technique

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ABSTRACT

In an interview in 1982, which was 1 year after he shared the Nobel Prize, Kai Siegbahn was asked about his opinion regarding the name of the technique he had developed. Siegbahn had named it "electron spectroscopy for chemical analysis" (ESCA), but the community was choosing to call it "X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy" (XPS). Now, more than 40 years later, 20 XPS experts have given their opinions on Siegbahn's response and the name of the technique. Some of these participants have been doing XPS for many years and have provided a historical perspective on this issue. While there is no call in these comments for the community to return to "ESCA"—"XPS" is regarded as a more than an adequate name, and insisting on a name change at this point in time would probably only create confusion. However, some of the participants of this study still consider "ESCA" to be an acceptable way to refer to the technique, especially when it is used in a chemical context.