## Electronic Excitation Energy Transfer

Gion Calzaferri Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, University of Bern, Freiestrasse 3, CH-3012 Bern

Part 1: An experimental approach

*Energy Collection, Transport, and Trapping by Supramolecular Organization of Dyes in Hexagonal Zeolite Nano Crystals* 

Part 2: Theoretical concepts

Förster Energy Transfer Theory

## Förster Energy Transfer Theory

Förster theory

- 1 Weak interaction between donor and acceptor molecules
- 2 J-aggregates and H-aggregates
- 3 Energy transfer between weakly interacting donor and acceptor molecules
- 4 Förster energy transfer radius R<sub>0</sub>
- 5 Selection rules
- 6 Examples of spectral overlap and Förster radius

### Förster Energy Transfer



In order for excitation energy transfer to occur between an electronically excited molecule  $D^*$  and an acceptor A some interaction between  $D^*$  and A is required.

EnT can take place if A possesses transitions which are isoenergetic with transitions of  $D^*$ .

Model:

The energy separations between 2 vibrational states v,v+1 and v',v'+1 of D\* and of A are the same and  $\Delta E$  is twice this separation.

The following resonance energy transfer processes, RET, can take place:

 $D^{*}(0') + A(0) \rightarrow D(2) + A^{*}(0')$  $D^{*}(0') + A(0) \rightarrow D(1) + A^{*}(1')$  $D^{*}(0') + A(0) \rightarrow D(0) + A^{*}(2')$ 



RET can result from different interaction mechanisms.

 $\Psi_i$ : Electronic wave function for the initial excited state (D excited but not A)  $\Psi_f$ : Electronic wave function for the final excited state (A excited but not D)

$$\begin{split} \Psi_{i} &= \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \left( \Psi_{D^{*}}(1) \Psi_{A}(2) - \Psi_{D^{*}}(2) \Psi_{A}(1) \right) \\ \Psi_{f} &= \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \left( \Psi_{D}(1) \Psi_{A^{*}}(2) - \Psi_{D}(2) \Psi_{A^{*}}(1) \right) \end{split}$$

Interaction H' between the initial and the final state:

$$\beta = \langle \Psi_{i} | H' | \Psi_{f} \rangle$$

$$\beta = \langle \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} (\Psi_{D^{*}}(1)\Psi_{A}(2) - \Psi_{D^{*}}(2)\Psi_{A}(1)) | H' | \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} (\Psi_{D}(1)\Psi_{A^{*}}(2) - \Psi_{D}(2)\Psi_{A^{*}}(1)) \rangle$$

$$\langle \Psi_{D^{*}}(1)\Psi_{A}(2) | H' | \Psi_{D}(1)\Psi_{A^{*}}(2) \rangle = \beta_{C}$$

$$\langle \Psi_{D^{*}}(1)\Psi_{A}(2) | H' | \Psi_{D}(2)\Psi_{A^{*}}(1) \rangle = \beta_{ex}$$

$$\beta = \beta_{C} - \beta_{ex}$$

The Coulomb and the exchange interactions lead to two different EnT mechanisms

**The Coulomb interaction**  $\beta_c$  describes a situation in which the initially excited electron on D returns to the ground state, while an electron on A is simultaneously promoted to the excited state.



**The exchange interaction**  $\beta_{ex}$  describes a situation which can be understood as an exchange of two electrons on D\* and A.



 $\beta_{\rm ex}$ 

 $\beta_{\rm C}$ 

The wave functions of D and A must overlap for  $\beta_{ex} \neq 0$ ; short range interaction. <sup>5</sup>

The **Coulomb term** can be expanded into a sum of terms (multipole-multipole exp.





First dominant term: dipole-dipole interaction between the transition dipole moments  $\mu_D$  and  $\mu_A$  for the transitions D\* $\rightarrow$ D and A $\rightarrow$ A\*

Therefore the perturbation  $H'_{C}$  can be expressed as:

$$H'_{C} = \frac{e^{2}}{4\pi\varepsilon_{0}n^{2}} \frac{1}{R_{DA}^{3}} I_{D^{*}} I_{A} K_{D^{*}A}$$

 $\kappa_{D^*A} = (\sin\theta_1 \sin\theta_2 \cos\phi_{12} - 2\cos\theta_1 \cos\theta_2)$ 

See: Dipole-dipole interaction and the orientation factor  $\kappa$ .

#### 1 Weak interaction between donor and acceptor molecules

In order for EnT to occur some interaction between D\* and A is needee.

Strong interaction: the electronic spectra of a mixture of donors and acceptors are different from those of their diluted solutions.

Weak interaction: the electronic spectrum of a mixture of donors and acceptors is a superposition of the spectra of the diluted solutions. Medium and exciton theory

strong interaction: molecular orbital theory

Weak interaction: we follow the arguments given by Th. Förster Annalen der Physik, 6. (2), (1948) 55-75.

To calculate the rate constant  $k_{\mbox{\scriptsize EnT}}$  of EnT between an D\* and A, we must calculate the product  $(\beta_{D^*A})^2 \rho_{D^*A}$ , according to Fermi's golden rule.

$$k_{EnT} = \frac{2\pi}{\hbar} \beta_{D^*A}^2 \rho_{(D^*A, DA^*)}$$

Only the Coulomb term plays a role for weak interactions. The exchange term requires orbital overlap between the D\* and A, which causes larger interaction.

$$\beta_{D^*A} = \beta_C = \left\langle \Psi_i \middle| H'_C \middle| \Psi_f \right\rangle$$

7

Only the Coulomb term plays a role for weak interactions, since the exchange term requires orbital overlap between the D\* and A, which causes larger interaction.

$$\Psi_{i} = \Psi_{D^{*}}\Psi_{A}$$

$$\Psi_{f} = \Psi_{D}\Psi_{A^{*}}$$

$$H'_{C} = \frac{e^{2}}{4\pi\varepsilon_{0}n^{2}}\frac{\kappa_{D^{*}A}}{R_{DA}^{3}}I_{D}I_{A}$$

$$\mu_{D^{*}D}$$

$$\mu_{AA^{*}}$$

 $I_D$  and  $I_A$  = coordinates of the electrons belonging to D and A

$$\beta_{D^*A} = \left\langle \Psi_i \left| H'_C \right| \Psi_f \right\rangle$$
  
$$\beta_{D^*A} = \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 n^2} \frac{\kappa_{D^*A}}{R_{D^A}^{-3}} \left| \left\langle \Psi_{D^*} \left| \boldsymbol{e} \boldsymbol{I}_D \right| \Psi_D \right\rangle \right| \left| \left\langle \Psi_A \left| \boldsymbol{e} \boldsymbol{I}_A \right| \Psi_{A^*} \right\rangle \right|$$
  
electronic transition 
$$\boldsymbol{\mu}_{D^*D} \quad \boldsymbol{\mu}_{AA^*}$$

electronic transition moments

$$\beta_{D^*A} = \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 n^2} \frac{\kappa_{D^*A}}{R_{DA}^{-3}} |\mathbf{\mu}_{D^*D}| |\mathbf{\mu}_{AA^*}| \qquad \qquad k_{EnT} = \frac{2\pi}{\hbar} \beta_{D^*A}^2 \rho_{(D^*A, DA^*)}$$

#### **Electronic Excitation Energy Transfer** Part 2



This equation not only forms a basis for describing the rate of electronic EnT.

It also gives information about the influence of this interaction on the electronic states of  $D^*$  and A.

Before continuing we therefore shortly discuss **J- and H-aggregates**, which are observed if the interaction is sufficiently strong.

This is necessary to make clear under what conditions arguments given later have a chance to be valid.

۰.		

#### 2 J-aggregates and H-aggregates (Scheibe 1932)

Pair of molecules  $A_i$  and  $A_k$  at a distance R.

R is so large that the interaction in the electronic ground state is negligibly small. Electronically excited states:  $A_i^*...A_k$  resp.  $A_i...A_k^*$ 

Negligible overlap of the wave functions between ( $A_i^*$  and  $A_k$ ) and ( $A_i$  and  $A_k^*$ ).

This does not necessarily mean that the interaction between the electronically excited states  $A_i^*...A_k$  and  $A_i...A_k^*$  is so weak that the splitting of these states is negligible.

Ground state: $\Psi_{A_iA_k} = \Psi_{A_i}\Psi_{A_k}$ Energy  $E_0$ Excited state: $\Psi_{A_iA_k^*} = \Psi_{A_i}\Psi_{A_k^*}$ Energy  $E_1$ Excited state: $\Psi_{A_i^*A_k} = \Psi_{A_i^*}\Psi_{A_k}$ Energy  $E_1$ 

 $H'_{\rm C}$  caused by the electronic transition dipole moments.

The excited state is described by a linear combination of  $\Psi_{A_{i}A_{k}^{*}}$  and  $\Psi_{A_{i}^{*}A_{k}}$ 

$$\Phi(c_1, c_2) = c_1 \Psi_{A_i^* A_k} + c_2 \Psi_{A_i A_k^*}$$

$$\left\langle \Phi(c_1, c_2) \middle| H \middle| \Phi(c_1, c_2) \right\rangle = \varepsilon \left\langle \Phi(c_1, c_2) \middle| \Phi(c_1, c_2) \right\rangle \qquad \left\langle \Psi_{A_i^* A_k} \middle| \Psi_{A_i A_k^*} \right\rangle = 0$$
10

 $\Phi_{\rm c}$ 

Φ

Φ

The excitation is collective or delocalized.

$$\begin{split} \Phi_{+} &= \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \Big( \Psi_{A_{i}^{*}A_{k}} + \Psi_{A_{i}A_{k}^{*}} \Big) \qquad \text{symmetric} \\ \Phi_{-} &= \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \Big( \Psi_{A_{i}^{*}A_{k}} - \Psi_{A_{i}A_{k}^{*}} \Big) \qquad \text{antisymmetric} \end{split}$$

In both stationary states  $\Phi_{+}$  and  $\Phi_{-}$  the excitation is on both molecules *i* and *k*.

Phase relation of the wave functions which describe the interaction between  $A^*_{i}...A_k$  and  $A_{i}...A^*_k$  caused by  $\mu_{AA^*}$  ( $\kappa=\pm 2$ ).

The node corresponding to the minus sign in  $\Phi_{-}$  is an excitation node (not an electron orbital node).

At an excitation node, the phase relation between the transition moments of the respective molecular centres change phase. 11

$$\begin{vmatrix} h_{11} - \varepsilon & h_{12} \\ h_{21} & h_{22} - \varepsilon \end{vmatrix} = 0 \qquad \frac{\varepsilon_+ = \varepsilon_1 + \beta_C}{\varepsilon_- = \varepsilon_1 - \beta_C}$$

Exciton splitting caused by the interaction of the configurations due to the electronic transition dipole moments.  $\Phi_{-}$ 



In both stationary states  $\Phi_{+}$  and  $\Phi_{-}$  the excitation is on both molecules.

 $\beta_{C}$  depends on the relative orientation of the transition dipole moments described by  $\kappa_{A^*A}$ .





Selection rules for the transition moment:  $(A_i...A_k) \rightarrow [(A^*_i...A_k)\leftrightarrow (A_i...A^*_k)]$ :





Electronic Excitation Energy Transfer Part 2

3 EnT between weakly interacting donor and acceptor molecules

$$\beta_{D^*A} = \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 n^2} \frac{\kappa_{D^*A}}{R_{DA}^{-3}} |\mathbf{\mu}_{D^*D}| |\mathbf{\mu}_{AA^*}| \qquad k_{EnT} = \frac{2\pi}{\hbar} \beta^2 \rho_{(D^*A, DA^*)}$$

EnT rate constant between 2 levels which are in resonance.

$$D^{*}(0') + A(0) \rightarrow D(0) + A^{*}(2')$$
or
$$D^{*}(0') A(0) \rightarrow D(0) A^{*}(2')$$

$$k_{EnT}(0',0;0,2') = \frac{2\pi}{\hbar} \beta_{D^{*}A}^{2} \rho_{(0',0;0,2')}$$
To find all transitions D\*A  $\rightarrow$  D A\*
we must sum over all states
which are in resonance.
States of the donor: (d', $\delta$ )
States of the acceptor: ( $\alpha$ , $\alpha$ ')
$$2\pi = 2$$

$$k_{EnT(d',\delta;\alpha,a')} = \frac{2\pi}{\hbar} \beta_{D^*A}^2 \rho_{(d',\delta;\alpha,a')}$$



Since EnT can be very fast, it is not sufficient to consider only the lowest v-state of D\*.



We must sum over all iso-energetic situations.

$$k_{EnT} = \sum k_{EnT(d',\delta;\alpha,a')}$$

Spectra in condensed phase are usually broadened due to solute solvent interactions and lattice vibrations.

The initial (i) and the final (f) levels of D\*...A and D...A\* are not well defined.

We may therefore express the density of states  $\rho_{E}$  within on a continuous energy range.

Normalized functions  $S_D(E_{D^*})$  and  $S_A(E_A)$ .  $S_D(E_{D^*}) =$  probability that (isolated) D\* emits photons of energy  $E_{D^*}$ .  $S_A(E_A) =$  probability that A absorbs photons of energy  $E_A$ .

 $S_D(E_{D^*})$  and  $S_A(E_A)$  reflect the shape of the luminescence spectrum of D\* and of the absorption spectrum of A, respectively. <sup>16</sup>



Evaluation of this integral on a purely theoretical basis is often not possible.

Instead of integrating over E we integrate over the frequency v.

$$k_{EnT} = \frac{1}{\hbar^2} \left( \frac{\kappa'_{D^*A}}{R_{DA}^3} \right)^2 \iint_{\nu_{D^*}, \nu_A} \left| \mathbf{\mu}_{D^*D} \right|^2 S_D(\nu_{D^*}) \left| \mathbf{\mu}_{AA^*} \right|^2 S_A(\nu_A) \delta(\nu_{D^*} - \nu_A) \, d\nu_{D^*} d\nu_A$$
17

Connection between electronic transition moments and the Einstein coefficients

$$k_{EnT} = \frac{1}{\hbar^2} \left( \frac{1}{R_{DA}^3} \frac{\kappa_{D^*A}}{4\pi\varepsilon_0 n^2} \right)^2 \iint_{\nu_{D^*}, \nu_A} \left| \mu_{D^*D} \right|^2 S_D(\nu_{D^*}) \left| \mu_{AA^*} \right|^2 S_A(\nu_A) \delta(\nu_{D^*} - \nu_A) \, d\nu_{D^*} d\nu_A$$

Some lengthy calculations result in:

$$\left( \mathbf{\mu}_{D^*D} \right)^2 = \frac{c_0^3}{v_{D^*}^3} \frac{3\hbar}{32\pi^3} \frac{4\pi\varepsilon_0}{n} \frac{1}{\tau_{D^*}^0} \qquad \left( \mathbf{\mu}_{AA^*} \right)^2 S_A(v_A) = \frac{3\hbar}{4\pi^2} 4\pi\varepsilon_0 nc_0 \frac{10^3 \ln(10)}{N_L} \frac{\varepsilon_A(v_A)}{v_A}$$
Inserting this and keeping  $\int_{v_{D^*}} v_{D^*} \delta(v_{D^*} - v_A) dv_{D^*} = v_A \qquad v = \overline{v} c_0$ 

$$k_{EnT} = \frac{9000 \ln(10)}{128\pi^5 N_L} \frac{\kappa_{D^*A}}{n^4 R_{DA}^{-6}} \frac{\phi_{D^*}}{\tau_{D^*}} \int_{\overline{v}} S_D(\overline{v}) \frac{\varepsilon_A(\overline{v})}{\overline{v}^4} d\overline{v} \qquad J_{\overline{v} D^*A} = \int_{\overline{v}} S_D(\overline{v}) \frac{\varepsilon_A(\overline{v})}{\overline{v}^4} d\overline{v}$$

$$k_{EnT} = \frac{9000 \ln(10)}{128\pi^5 N_L} \frac{\kappa_{D^*A}^2}{n^4 R_{DA}^{-6}} \frac{\phi_{D^*}}{\tau_{D^*}} \int_{\overline{v}} D^*A \qquad Spectral overlap integral$$

$$[J] = [cm^3 M^{-1}], k_{EnT} = ns^{-1}$$

# 4 Förster energy transfer radius $R_0$ Luminescence rate of D\*: $\frac{d\rho_{D^*}}{dt} = -\frac{1}{\tau_{D^*}}\rho_{D^*}$ Energy transfer rate: $\frac{d\rho_{D^*}}{dt} = -k_{EnT}\rho_{D^*}$

At a specific  $D^*$ ....A distance, the rate at which  $D^*$  emits light is equal to the rate at which it transfers its excitation energy A. At this distance  $R_0$  we can write:

 $\frac{1}{\tau_{D^{\star}}} = k_{EnT}$  Inserting  $k_{EnT}$  and solving for  $R_0$ :

$$R_0^{6} = \frac{9000\ln(10)}{128\pi^5 N_L} \frac{\kappa_{D^*A}^2}{n^4} \phi_{D^*} J_{\overline{V}D^*A}$$

From this we find the Förster radius  $R_0$  for electronic excitation energy transfer.

$$R_{0} = \sqrt[6]{\frac{9000 \ln(10)}{128\pi^{5} N_{L}} \frac{\kappa_{D^{*}A}^{2}}{n^{4}} \phi_{D^{*}} J_{\overline{V}D^{*}A}}$$

 $R_{\rm 0}$  is equal to the donor- acceptor  $\,$  distance at which the probability for energy transfer is equal to 0.5.

Distance dependence of the energy transfer rate constant:





#### 5 Selection rules

The are no strict selection rules for Förster energy transfer. We can, nevertheless, get a good idea by considering the following proportionality:

$$k_{EnT} \propto \frac{1}{\tau_{D^*}^0} \int_{V} S_D(v) \frac{\varepsilon_A(v)}{v^4} dv$$

This means that the EnT rate constant depends on the extinction coefficient of the acceptor.

If a forbidden transition of the acceptor is involved, the energy transfer rate is small.

$${}^{1}D^{*} + {}^{1}A \rightarrow {}^{1}D + {}^{1}A^{*}$$

$${}^{1}D^{*} + {}^{3}A^{*} \rightarrow {}^{1}D + {}^{3}A^{**}$$

$${}^{3}D^{*} + {}^{1}A \rightarrow {}^{1}D + {}^{1}A^{*}$$

$${}^{3}D^{*} + {}^{3}A^{*} \rightarrow {}^{1}D + {}^{3}A^{**}$$

21

6 Examples for spectral overlap and Förster radius



$J_{D^*A} = \int_{\overline{v}} S_D(\overline{v}) \frac{\varepsilon_A(\overline{v})}{\overline{v}^4} d\overline{v}$				$\mu_{\text{D+C}}$	$\theta_1 = \frac{\theta_2}{\mu_{AA^*}}$
$R_0 = 6 \sqrt{\frac{9000}{128}}$	$\frac{\partial \ln(10)}{\pi^5 N_L} \frac{\kappa_{D^*A}^2}{n^4} \phi_L$	$J^* J_{\overline{v} D^* A}$			$k_{EnT} = \frac{1}{\tau_{D^*}} \left(\frac{R_0}{R}\right)^6$
Dyes	J / cm <sup>3</sup> M <sup>-1</sup>	κ <sup>2</sup>	R <sub>0</sub> / Å	$\tau_{D^{\star}}/ns$	k <sub>EnT</sub> / ps <sup>-1</sup> R=R <sub>0</sub> R=1.5nm
Ox+ / Ox+	4.4×10 <sup>-13</sup>	2/3 4	64 86	3.2	3.1×10 <sup>-4</sup> 1.9 11
Ру+ / Ру+	1.1×10 <sup>-13</sup>	2/3	51 68	3	3.3×10 <sup>-4</sup> 0.5 2.9
Py+ / Ox+	2.3×10 <sup>-13</sup>	4	57 77	3	3.3×10 <sup>-4</sup> 1.0 6.0
Ox1 / Ox1		2/3 4	73 98	3.2	$3.1 \times 10^{-4}  4.1 \\ 24 \\ = 2.4 \times 10^{13} \text{ s}^{-1}$

Connection between electronic transition moments and the Einstein coefficients:

$$\begin{split} B_{D^*D} &= \frac{2\pi}{3\hbar^2} \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{1}{n^2} (\mu_{D^*D})^2 \\ A_{D^*D} &= 8\pi \frac{h\nu_{D^*}^3}{c_0^3} n^3 B_{D^*D} \\ \text{The dimension of } B_{DD^*} \text{ is:} \\ \begin{bmatrix} B_{D^*D} \end{bmatrix} &= \frac{1}{(J \cdot s)^2} \frac{1}{J^{-1}C^2m^{-1}} (C \cdot m)^2 = \frac{m^3}{J \cdot s^2} \\ \text{We check the dimension of } A_{D^*D} &: \\ \begin{bmatrix} A_{D^*D} \end{bmatrix} &= \frac{J \cdot s \cdot (s^{-1})^3}{(m \cdot s^{-1})^3} \frac{m^3}{J \cdot s^2} = \frac{1}{s} \\ A_{D^*D} &= \frac{\nu_{D^*}^3}{c_0^3} \frac{32\pi^3}{3\hbar} \frac{n}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} (\mu_{D^*D})^2 \\ A_{D^*D} &= \frac{c_0^3}{\nu_{D^*}^3} \frac{3\hbar}{32\pi^3} \frac{4\pi\varepsilon_0}{n} = (\mu_{D^*D})^2 \\ \text{Since } A_{D^*D} &= \frac{1}{\tau_{D^*}^0} \text{ we obtain:} \\ \begin{bmatrix} \mu_{D^*D} \end{bmatrix}^2 &= \frac{c_0^3}{\nu_{D^*}^3} \frac{3\hbar}{32\pi^3} \frac{4\pi\varepsilon_0}{n} \frac{1}{\tau_{D^*}^0} \\ \begin{bmatrix} \mu_{AA^*} \end{bmatrix}^2 &= \frac{3\hbar^2}{2\pi} 4\pi\varepsilon_0 n^2 B_{AA^*} \\ \end{bmatrix}$$

Connection between electronic transition moments and the Einstein coefficients:

$$B_{AA^{\star}} = \frac{2\pi}{3\hbar^2} \frac{1}{4\pi\varepsilon_0} \frac{1}{n^2} \left(\mu_{AA^{\star}}\right)^2 \qquad \left(\mu_{AA^{\star}}\right)^2 = \frac{3\hbar^2}{2\pi} 4\pi\varepsilon_0 n^2 B_{AA^{\star}}$$

We now relate the Einstein coefficient weighted with the shape of the absorption spectrum to the molar extinction coefficient  $e_A(n)$  (see Appendix 8.2):

$$B_{AA^*}S_A(\nu_A) = \frac{10^3 \ln(10)}{hN_L} \frac{c_0}{n} \frac{\varepsilon_A(\nu_A)}{\nu_A}$$
 The extinction coefficient  $\varepsilon_A(n)$  is usually given in  $M^{-1}$ cm<sup>-1</sup> = Lmol<sup>-1</sup>cm<sup>-1</sup>. Using this we find:

Dimension of the right side =  $\frac{1}{J \cdot s \cdot mol^{-1}} m \cdot s^{-1} \frac{L \cdot mol^{-1} \cdot cm^{-1}}{s^{-1}} = \frac{1}{J \cdot s} m \cdot 10^{-3} \frac{m^3}{L} L \frac{1}{10^{-2}} \frac{m}{cm} cm} = \frac{m^3}{J \cdot s} 10^{-1}$ 

This is correct since the dimension of  $S_A(n_A)$  is s:

From this we find:

$$\left(\mu_{AA^{\star}}\right)^{2}S_{A}(\nu_{A}) = \frac{3\hbar}{4\pi^{2}}4\pi\varepsilon_{0}nc_{0}\frac{10^{3}\ln(10)}{N_{L}}\frac{\varepsilon_{A}(\nu_{A})}{\nu_{A}}$$

Note that the factor  $10^3$  depends on the dimension used for  $\varepsilon_A(v)$ .