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Raman Spectroscopy for Analysis of Silicon Precursor Layers for Liquid Phase Crystallized Solar Cells

By

Suheir J. D. Nofal

Supervisors

Dr. Othman Zalloum, Palestine Polytechnic University

Dr. Maurice Nuys, Forschungszentrum Jülich, IEK-5

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The undersigned hereby certify that they have read, examined and recommended to the Deanship of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research at Palestine Polytechnic University and the Faculty of Science at Al-Quds University the approval of a thesis entitled:

Raman Spectroscopy for Analysis of Silicon Precursor Layers for Liquid Phase Crystallized Solar Cells

Submitted by:

Suheir J. D. Nofal

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Renewable Energy Sustainability.

Graduate Advisory Committee:

Prof./Dr. _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Prof./Dr. _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Prof./Dr. _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Thesis Approved by:

Name: _____

Name: _____

Dean of Graduate Studies
Palestine Polytechnic University
Signature: _____

Dean of Faculty of Graduate Studies
Al-Quds University
Signature: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

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Abstract

Amorphous silicon thin films based solar cells have a low efficiency comparing to the conventional poly-crystalline silicon wafer based solar cells. To overcome the efficiency limitation, the attempt to crystallize the amorphous silicon thin layers deposited by Plasma enhanced chemical vapor deposition (PECVD) on glass is investigated. the crystallization process is based on zone-melting technology and called liquid phase crystallization (LPC). Raman spectroscopy is used to analyze the properties of the silicon thin layers that is deposited by PECVD process and crystallized by LPC process; for better understanding of these processes. The present thesis provides the possibility of engaging Raman spectroscopy as a characterization method with MATLAB software as the analysis tool to investigate the properties of thin silicon precursor layers for liquid phase crystallized solar cells. The exported data after analysis has been plotted into two different categories; depth profiling as well as two-dimensional mapping. The first category includes three samples deposited on glass by plasma enhanced chemical vapour deposition with different deposition parameters (e.g.: silane concentration, rf power, and pressure) to investigate the influence of these parameters on having amorphous or micro-crystalline structure, as well as hydrogen content and micro-structure parameters. The first sample has a $\mu\text{-Si}$ structure with crystallinity changing with depth. The other two samples have a-Si structures. All samples have nearly a constant hydrogen content and micro-structure parameters with depth. Then, the amorphous samples have been annealed to investigate the influence of annealing on the structural order and hydrogen diffusion. The first one is thermally unstable, only $0.50\ \mu\text{m}$ remains on glass after annealing. While the other is stable and the whole thickness remains unchanged during annealing. All hydrogen has been diffused in both samples. Raman spectroscopy is a useful technique to create

data that can be plotted as depth profiles for the crystallinity, structural order, hydrogen content, and micro-structure parameters for PECVD deposited precursors; hence gives a better understanding of the changes in these properties with depth. PECVD parameters of the last sample (SiH_4 flow rate of 6 sccm, H_2 flow rate of 12 sccm, pressure of 1 mbar, rf power of 25 W, and heater temperature of 450°C) have been taken as the standard, since they deposit an a-Si structure, that is thermally stable after annealing among all samples. The second section includes one sample, which has been deposited by electron beam deposition, cut into five small samples, and then crystallized by liquid phase crystallization with different crystallization parameters (e.g.: laser scan speed and power) to investigate the influence of these parameters on stress inside the crystallized precursors. Three 2D maps have been taken in grain boundaries, where c-Si peak is shifting to lower wavenumbers; hence a tensile stress behavior along grain boundaries is mapped. Two 2D maps have been taken in the middle of a crack, where the stress behavior is varied between a tensile stress on one side of the crack and a compressive stress on the other side. The last 2D maps have been taken at a crack tip, where the crack starts at the surface but does not continue with depth. higher tensile stress has been mapped from the glass side, which does not reach its threshold value to form the crack yet. Raman spectroscopy is a helpful tool in investigate the stress resulted in LPC-Si precursors for better understanding of LPC process. LPC parameters of the first sample (red laser beam of 808 nm wavelength, substrate temperature of 510°C , laser speed of 1 mm/s, and power of 45 W) have been taken as the standard, since they produce a non-cracked precursor with minimum number of grain boundaries among all samples.

استخدام طريقة تحليل طيف رامان في تحديد خصائص الطبقات الرقيقة من السيليكون المتبلورة في الطور السائل للخلايا الشمسية

سهير نوفل

الملخص :

تمتلك خلايا رقائق السيليكون الشمسية فاعلية أقل من الخلايا الشمسية التقليدية. لذلك فإن فكرة تحويل الرقائق اللابلورية إلى رقائق متبلورة على الزجاج يمكن أن يزيد من فاعليتها و تسمى هذه العملية تبلور الطور السائل. توفر هذه الأطروحة إمكانية الربط بين طريقة تحليل طيف رامان كطريقة توصيف مع برنامج ماتلاب كأداة لفحص خصائص طبقات السيليكون الرقيقة للخلايا الشمسية المتبلورة في الطور السائل. تم رسم البيانات التي تم تصديرها بعد التحليل إلى قسمين مختلفين، القسم الأول علة شكل مخططات خطية أما الثاني فعلى شكل خرائط تناهية الأبعاد. يتضمن القسم الأول ثلاث عينات مودعة على الزجاج بواسطة ترسيب بخار كيميائي معزز بالبلازما باستخدام عوامل ترسيب مختلفة (على سبيل المثال: تركيز السيلان، الحرارة، الطاقة، والضغط) لدراسة تأثير هذه العوامل على وجود بنية غير بلورية أو بلورية من القياس المصغر، بالإضافة إلى محتوى الهيدروجين ومعلومات البنية الدقيقة. العينة الأولى لها بنية $\mu\text{-Si}$ مع تبلور متخيرة مع العمق. والعينتان الأخريان لهما هياكل غير متبلورة. تحتوي جميع العينات على محتوى هيدروجين ثابت ومعلومات بنية دقيقة مع العمق. بعد ذلك، تم سئ العينات اللابلورية للتحقيق في تأثير السئ على الترتيب الهيكلي وخروج الهيدروجين من العينات. العينة الأولى كانت غير مستقر حرارياً ، فقط 0.50 ميكرومتر تبقت على الزجاج بعد السئ. في حين أن الأخرى كانت مستقرة حرارياً حيث أن كامل السماكة تبقت دون تغيير أثناء السئ. وقد تم خروج جميع الهيدروجين في كلتا العينات. يعتبر طيف رامان تقنية مفيدة للحصول على المعلومات التي يمكن رسمها كمخططات عمق للترتيب الهيكلي ومحتوى الهيدروجين، ومعلومات البنية الدقيقة لرقائق السيليكون المودعة بالبلازما؛ وبالتالي يعطي فهم أفضل للتغيرات في هذه الخصائص مع العمق. تم أخذ عوامل الترسيب من العينة الأخيرة كمعيار لعمليات الترسيب القادمة، لأنها تودع رقائق سيليكون ببنية غير متبلورة، كذلك مستقرة حرارياً بعد السئ من بين جميع العينات. يتضمن القسم الثاني عينة واحدة، تم ترسيبها بواسطة ترسيب الحزمة الإلكترونية ، وقطعها إلى خمس عينات صغيرة، تم تبلورت بواسطة تبلور الطور السائل بعوامل تبلور مختلفة (مثل: سرعة المسح الضوئي بالليزر والطاقة) للتحقق من تأثير هذه العوامل على الإجهاد داخل رقائق السيليكون المتبلورة. تم أخذ ثلاث خرائط تناهية الأبعاد على حدود بين حبيبات الكريستال المتبلورة، حيث يتحرك طيف رامان لطول موجي منخفض أقل من 520 cm^{-1} . وبالتالي يتم تعيين سلوك التوتّر على أنه شد على طول الحدود. تم أخذ خريطتين تناهية الأبعاد في منتصف الصدع، حيث يختلف سلوك الإجهاد بين إجهاد الشد على أحد جانبي الصدع إجهاد الضغط على الجانب الآخر. تم أخذ آخر خريطة تناهية الأبعاد عند طرف الصدع ، حيث يبدأ الكسر عند السطح ولكنه لا يستمر بالعمق. وقد تم تعيين إجهاد الشد الأعلى من الجانب الزجاجي ، والذي لا يصل إلى قيمة عتبية لتشكيل الصدع بعد حتى الآن. طيف رامان هو أداة مفيدة في التحقق من الإجهاد الذي نتج عنه تبلور السيليكون من أجل فهم أفضل لعملية التبلور. تم أخذ العوامل من العينة الأولى كمعيار لعمليات التبلور القادمة، لأنها تنتج رقائق غير متصدعة بين جميع العينات.

Declaration of Authorship

I declare that the Master Thesis entitled Raman Spectroscopy for Analysis of Silicon Precursor Layers for Liquid Phase Crystallized Solar Cells is my own original work, and hereby certify that unless stated, all work contained within this thesis is my own independent research and has not been submitted for the award of any other degree at any institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the text.

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To my family and friends who first believed I can ...

“I’ve learned that fear limits you and your vision. It serves as blinders to what may be just a few steps down the road for you. The journey is valuable, but believing in your talents, your abilities, and your self-worth can empower you to walk down an even brighter path. Transforming fear into freedom - how great is that?”

Soledad O’Brien

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Symbols

\AA	Ångstrom
<i>ARcoating</i>	Anti-Reflective coating
<i>ASCII</i>	American Standard Code for Information Interchange
<i>a – Si</i>	amorphous Silicon
<i>a – Si : H</i>	Hydrogenated amorphous Silicon
<i>CCD</i>	Charge Coupled Device
<i>c – Si</i>	Crystalline Silicon
<i>d</i>	distance
<i>D</i>	Dipole moment
<i>E</i>	Electric field
<i>FWHM</i>	Full Width at Half Maximum
<i>h</i>	Depth
<i>I_{RA}</i>	Raman Intensity
<i>k</i>	Raman Shift
<i>KOH</i>	Potassium Hydroxide
<i>HF</i>	Hydrofluoric Acid
<i>HWCVD</i>	Hot Wire Chemical Vapour Deposition
$\mu\text{c-Si}$	Micro-crystalline Silicon
<i>PECVD</i>	Plasma Enhanced Chemical Vapour Deposition
<i>EB</i>	Electron Beam Deposition
<i>LA</i>	Longitudinal Acoustic Mode
<i>LASER</i>	Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation
<i>LPC</i>	Liquid Phase Crystallization
<i>LO</i>	Longitudinal Optic Mode
<i>LRO</i>	Long Range Order
<i>Q</i>	normal coordinate of the vibration
<i>R_{SiH}</i>	Micro-structure Parameters

<i>rf</i>	Radio Frequency
<i>MATLAB</i>	MATrix LABoratory
<i>MRO</i>	Medium Range Order
<i>SC</i>	Silane Concentration
<i>SiH₄</i>	Monosilane
<i>SiO₂</i>	Silicon Dioxide
<i>SRO</i>	Short Range Order
<i>T</i>	Temperature
<i>TA</i>	Transversal Acoustic Mode
<i>TO</i>	Transversal Optic Mode
<i>X_c</i>	Crystallinity
α	Absorption Coefficient
α_i	Polarizability of the molecule
ω_{TO}	Width of TO peak centered at 480 cm ⁻¹
θ	SRO

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