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Synthesis of ZnS (II-VI) Nanostructures for Gas Sensors and Effect of Growth Conditions	139
<i>M. Hafeez, U. Manzoor and A. S. Bhatti</i>	
Recent Development of Nanophotonic Integrated Devices and Materials	142
<i>Y. Sugimoto, N. Ikeda, D. Tsuya, H. Oda, K. Inoue, A. Miura, D. Inoue, T. Nomura, H. Fujikawa, K. Sato, N. Ozaki, S. Ohkouchi, Y. Watanabe, Y. Koide and K. Asakawa</i>	
Study of Strain Effects in Multi-Quantum Well Structures of AlGaInP-Based Light Emitting Diodes	145
<i>Hwa-Sub Oh, Jee-Hue Joo, Jin-Hong Lee, Joon-Seop Kwak and Jong-Hyeob Baek</i>	
A Si-doped GaAs/AlGaAs Solar Cell on (311) A GaAs Substrate	149
<i>Ong-Arj Tangmettakitkul, Supachok Thainoi, Somsak Panyakeow and Somchai Rathanathamaphan</i>	
InGaAs Ring-shaped Nanostructures Grown by Droplet Epitaxy	152
<i>Naraporn Pankaow, Somsak Panyakeow and Somchai Ratanathamaphan</i>	
Mesoporous TiO₂ Film for Solar Cell Application	155
<i>Shweta Agarwala, Ho Ghim Wei and G. K. Dalapati</i>	
Effect of Substrate Temperature on In_{0.15}Ga_{0.85}As/GaAs (001) Nanohole Templates Grown by Droplet Molecular Beam Epitaxy	158
<i>P. Boonpeng, S. Panyakeow and S. Ratanathamaphan</i>	
Dependency of In Thickness on the Properties of Self-Assembled InP Ring-Shaped Nanostructures Grown by Droplet Molecular Beam Epitaxy	161
<i>W. Jewasuwat, S. Panyakeow and S. Ratanathamaphan</i>	
Properties of Dilute InPN Alloys Grown by Liquid Phase Epitaxy	164
<i>Tushar Dhabal Das, Sunanda Dhar and Brij Mohan Arora</i>	
Determinants of Bandgap Energies in Semiconductor Nanoalloys	167
<i>C. C. Yang and S. Li</i>	
Fabrication of Iron Silicide Photonic Crystals and Properties of Light Propagation	170
<i>Yoshihito Maeda and Yoshikazu Terai</i>	

Multilayered Structures of Doped and Undoped ZnO <i>Saraswathi Chirakkara and S. B. Krupanidhi</i>	173
Effect of Thickness of GaP Ultra-thin Insertion Layer on the Structural and Optical Properties of InP Quantum Dots <i>Soe Soe Han, Somsak Panyakeow, Somchai Rathanathamapan</i>	176
Determination of Electron Trap Density in Dilute Nitride GaNAs and InGaNAs Semiconductors <i>H. Eshghi and M. Ameri</i>	179
Fabrication and Properties of Non-Stoichiometric Nickel Oxide Films by Radio Frequency Sputtering <i>S. C. Chen, T. Y. Kuo, W. H. Hong, Y. R. Lin and P. C. Kuo</i>	183
Nanoheteroepitaxy of GaN on Nanoporous Sapphire Substrate <i>K. Y. Zhang, Y. D. Wang and S. J. Chua</i>	186
Role of Hydrogen in Optical Properties of CdTe/Mn Bilayer Thin Films of Diluted Magnetic Semiconductor <i>S. P. Nehra, M. K. Jangid, M. Singh and Y. K. Vijay</i>	192
X-ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy Analysis of Plasma-Treated n-GaN Surfaces in Relation to Ohmic Contact Formation <i>L. K. Li, L. S. Tan and E. F. Chor</i>	195
Application of Fourier Transform-based K·P Method to Semiconductor Supperlattices <i>Q. J. Zhao, X. G. Tu and T. Mei</i>	198
Nonlinear Properties and Optical Limiting Performance of Sulforhodamine-B Doped Silica and Polymeric Matrices <i>Sunita Sharma, Devendra Mohan, S. K. Ghoshal and Umesh Gupta</i>	201
White Light Emitting from $\text{Ba}_3\text{MgSi}_{2-x}\text{Al}_x\text{O}_8: y\text{Eu}^{2+}, z\text{Mn}^{2+}$ Phosphor <i>Changyu Shen, Yi Yang and Shangzhong Jin</i>	207
Quantum Dot Laser Diodes with Native Oxide Injection Current Confinement: Static and Dynamic Properties <i>H. X. Zhao, R. Wang, Q. Cao, C. Y. Liu, C. Z. Tong, S. M. L. Nai, J. Wei and S. F. Yoon</i>	210

EFFECT OF THICKNESS OF GaP ULTRA-THIN INSERTION LAYER ON THE STRUCTURAL AND OPTICAL PROPERTIES OF InP QUANTUM DOTS

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Abstract

A systematic study of thickness of GaP insertion layers on the structural properties of InP quantum dots (QDs) was investigated. All samples were grown by conventional solid-source molecular beam epitaxy using a GaP decomposition cell was used as P₂ source for P-based materials. The density of InP QDs directly grown on In_{0.48}Ga_{0.52}P layer is $4.8 \times 10^{10} \text{ cm}^{-2}$, and decrease to $2.4\text{--}3.9 \times 10^{10} \text{ cm}^{-2}$ on GaP layers which depends on the thickness of GaP layer. The effect of GaP insertion layer on the size distribution of InP QDs is also studied in this work.

Introduction

Self-assembled quantum dots (QD) have been widely applied to laser diodes [1] and high efficiency QD intermediate solar cells (QDSCs) [2]. In particular, in order to achieve the predicted high efficiencies in QDSCs, QDs must be uniform in size and periodically distributed in all three-dimensions which lead to the formation of an intermediate band or miniband rather than a multiplicity of discrete quantized levels. Stranski-Krastanov (SK) growth is the prevalent method for the formation of quantum dots (QDs). The most popular technique of stacked QDs is to take advantage of spontaneous self-assembly of coherent three-dimension islanding in lattice-mismatched epitaxy. However, this technique usually results internal strain due to misfit dislocation. The lattice mismatch between InP and In_{0.48}Ga_{0.52}P (lattice matched to GaAs) of 3.8% provides sufficient strain to allow to form QDs via the SK mechanism. Advantageous of QD-based optoelectronic devices is the formation of defect-free, ordered arrays of uniform quantum dots, conditions realized in the InP/In_{0.48}Ga_{0.52}P system. Recently, the strained-compensation technique is an approach for an enhancement of quality of multi-stacked layers of QDs [3]. Here, the GaP is used as strain-compensated layer for InP/In_{0.48}Ga_{0.52}P.

In this paper, we report the structure characteristics of InP QDs due to the use of different 0-4 ML GaP insertion layers on GaAs substrate by molecular beam epitaxy. QD properties are characterized by atomic force microscopy (AFM).

Experimental Procedure

Quantum dots composed of InP within an InGaP matrix were elaborated by molecular beam epitaxy on semi-insulating (100) oriented GaAs substrates using a Riber 32P system via Stranski-Krastanow growth mode. The growth process was monitored by using 15kV reflection high-energy electron diffraction (RHEED) system. The removal of native oxide was performed by

heating the substrate under As_4 beam at $600^\circ C$ until the streaky pattern appeared. The subsequent growth was 300 nm GaAs buffer layer at $450^\circ C$ and followed by a 200 nm $In_{0.48}Ga_{0.52}P$ grown at $480^\circ C$. Then GaP insertion layers with 0-4 monolayers were grown before the growth of QDs. Finally, the high density QDs were fabricated by deposited 3ML InP with temperature of $450^\circ C$ at growth rate 0.5 ML/s. The surface morphology was studied ex situ by atomic force microscope (AFM).

Results and Discussion

InP QD on $In_{0.48}Ga_{0.52}P$ has a high density of about $2-5 \times 10^{10} \text{ cm}^{-2}$. Figures 1 (a)-(e) show images of high density InP quantum dots grown without and with 1-4 ML GaP that have been characterized by atomic force microscopy.

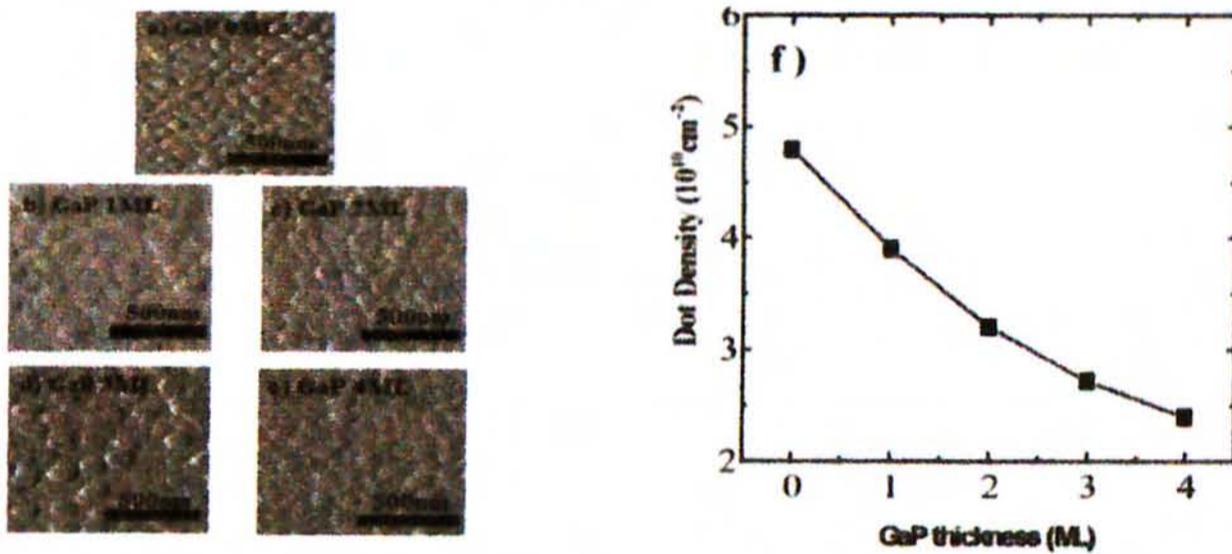


Figure.1 Typical AFM images of InP QDs on (a) 0 ML (b) 1 ML (c) 2 ML (d) 3 ML (e) 4 ML GaP layers and (f) InP QDs density plotted as a function of 0-4 ML GaP thickness.

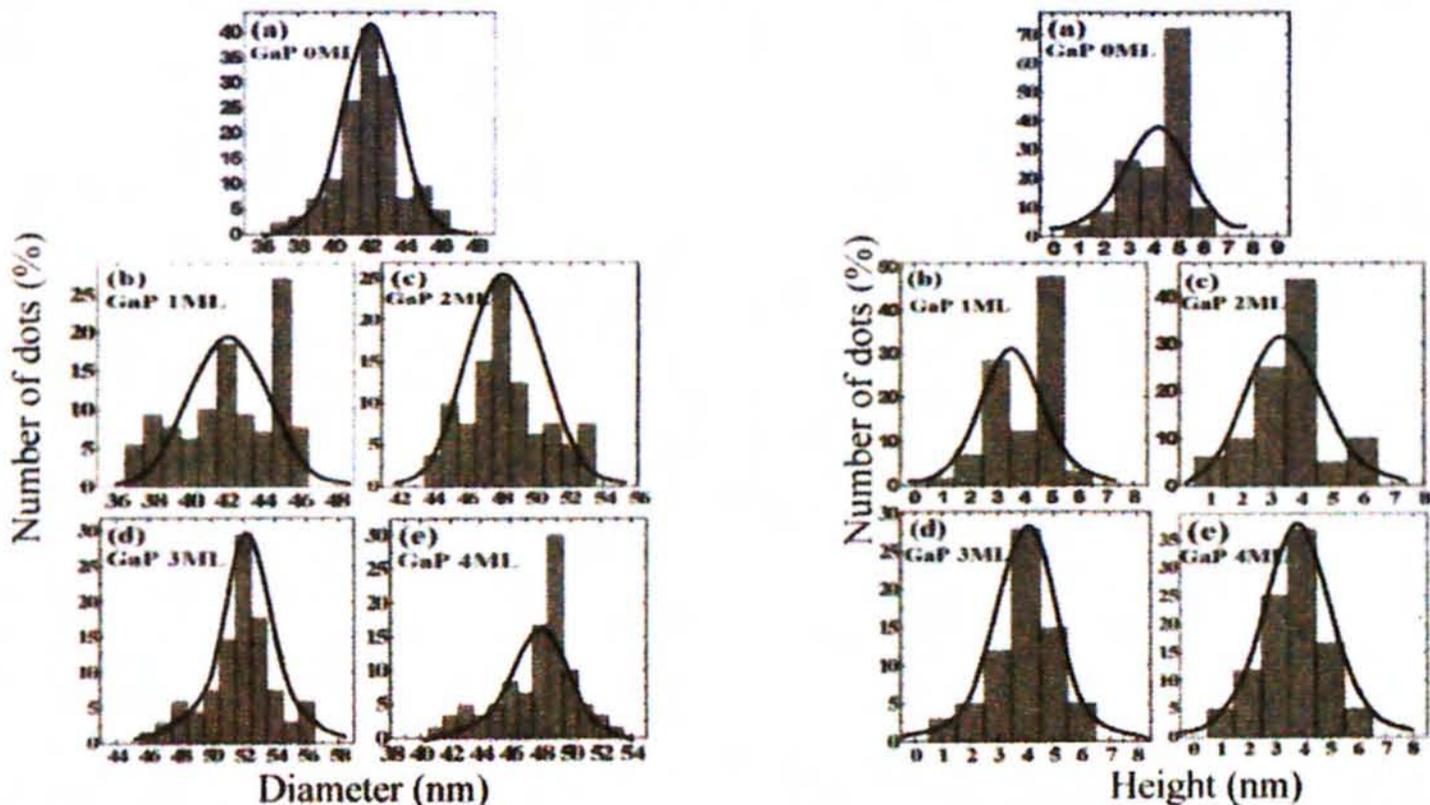


Figure.2 Size (diameter) and height distribution histograms of InP QDs on 0 ML (b) 1 ML (c) 2 ML (d) 3 ML and (e) 4 ML GaP layers.

The dot density decreases approximately from $4.8 \times 10^{10} \text{ cm}^{-2}$ to $2.7 \times 10^{10} \text{ cm}^{-2}$ due to the insertion of 0-4 ML GaP layers. Figure 1 (f) shows the relation of dot density of InP QDs as a function of the GaP insertion layer thickness. The density of 3ML InP QDs depends on GaP thickness because the

diffusion length of In atoms on GaP layer is shorten when increasing these parameters [4]. Figure 2 shows the size and height distributions of the nanostructures with varying deposition thickness of 0-4 MLs GaP layers. It is observed that with increasing GaP thickness, the QDs density decreases and the height and diameter increase. This is also an expected result and is due to an decreased supersaturation at the onset of nucleation which leads to a lower nucleation density. Since the QDs growth conditions are the same, the bigger QD height and diameter and reduced density for the sample grown with the InGaP interlayer indicates that the insertion of the 0-4 MLs GaP layer results in more incorporation of the material. The incorporation efficiency of In during the deposition of an GaP layer reduces as strain increases [5]. During the growth of InP QDs, the segregated indium atom may react with P bond and forms additional InP which increases the QD size and its uniformity.

Conclusion

Dependence on growth parameters of structural properties of MBE grown InP quantum dots (QDs) has been studied by using atomic force microscopy. We have demonstrated the fabrication of InP quantum dots on $\text{In}_{0.48}\text{Ga}_{0.52}\text{P}$ layer with GaP insertion layers. The Insertion of GaP improve the uniformity when the GaP thickness is over 3 ML.

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