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Optoelectronic structures with InAlN layers grown by MOVPE

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Abstract. The results of the some practical applications of InAlN layers in a device hetrostructures grown by MOVPE is presented. It is shown that use of InAlN allows not only create high-quality DBRs and HEMT structures, but also effectively modify properties of InAlN/GaN/InGaN light-emitting devices.

Keywords: Nitrides, MOVPE, DBR, HEMT.

PACS: 81.07.Ta, 81.05.Ea, 85.60.Jb, 81.15.Gh

INTRODUCTION

In spite of the great progress in epitaxy of III-N compounds, most of devices developed during last 20 years were composed of GaN, AlGaIn and InGaIn layers, which are well technologically developed and investigated. Third ternary alloy in a GaN-AlN-InN system – an InAlN looks very promising but extremely complicated in point of view of synthesis. Use of InAlN in GaN-based optoelectronic structures gives additional degree of freedom, because InAlN depending on composition may be lattice-matched to GaN, tensile or compressively strained. This alloy can be useful for creation of different structures, including HEMT, RC LED and other optoelectronic devices.

EXPERIMENT

Epitaxial structures were grown on (0001) sapphire substrates using two MOVPE systems: standard AIX2000HT with Planetary Reactor and laboratory scale system with horizontal-flow inductively heated single-wafer reactor (strongly re-designed Epique VP-50RP). Details of growth can be found in [1].

InAlN/GaN DBRs

Growth of InAlN is a complicated task itself, as growth conditions is a compromise of typical regimes

for InGaIn and AlGaIn growth. Details of InAlN growth optimisation can be found in [1], below presented some results of InAlN device application. Fine adjustment of growth parameters allows to growth thick enough $\text{In}_{0.18}\text{Al}_{0.82}\text{N}$ layers lattice matched to GaN without phase separation and makes possible formation of high-quality DBRs with reflectivity exceeding 99%; Si doping of such structures results in conductive DBR making possible their use as n-type emitters in a RC LEDs with top metallic mirror.

FIGURE 1. Optical reflectance spectra of InAlN/GaN 57-pair DBRs with different stop-band positions.

InAlN/AlN/GaN HEMTs

Use of InAlN in a 2D electron gas structures shifts the limits for carrier concentration that arise from lattice mismatch in AlGaIn/GaN system [3]. For example, concentration can be easily increased from $1.1 \cdot 10^{13} \text{ cm}^{-2}$ for GaN/AlN/Al_{0.3}Ga_{0.7}N to $3.1 \cdot 10^{13} \text{ cm}^{-2}$ for lattice-matched structure GaN/AlN/In_{0.18}Al_{0.82}N. Moreover, use of InAlN allows compensating spontaneous polarization by piezoelectric field from *compressively* strained InAlN. Unfortunately, increase in In composition results in increased alloy scattering and decrease in mobility in spite of decreasing carrier concentration (Table 1).

TABLE 1. Parameters of GaN/AlN/InAlN HEMTs at RT.

In Content	n, $\text{cm}^{-2} \cdot 10^{13}$	μ , cm^2/Vs
18-19	3.1	667
19-20	2.9	555
20-21	2.8	580
21-22	2.7	520

InAlN/InGaIn/GaN LEDs

Some specific results were obtained for GaN/InAlN/GaN/InGaIn optical structures, where thin (1-18 nm) InAlN layer was grown in regimes close to phase separation. It was observed that growth of GaN/InAlN structure can results in formation of quantum dots with very high density ($>2 \cdot 10^{11} \text{ cm}^{-2}$ by AFM data). High-resolution transmission electron microscopy (HRTEM) studies of 3 nm-thick InGaIn quantum well grown over such bi-layer shows that InGaIn grow predominantly over such tenth-nm islands (fig 2) in a strain-control mode.

FIGURE 2. HRTEM image of InGaIn QW grown on InAlN/GaN bi-layer structure.

What is more interesting, these structures exhibit narrow luminescence in a blue spectral region in comparison with 3 nm-thick InGaIn QW grown just on GaN layer (see fig.3), indicating strong suppression of phase separation of InGaIn inside these 20-30 nm islands. Such structures, combining carrier localization on rather big islands preventing them from nonradiative recombination with “uniform QW”-like spectrum, can be very interesting for applications where narrow gain spectra is necessary, e.g. lasers or electrooptical modulators.

FIGURE 3. PL spectra of InGaIn QW grown on GaN or on InAlN/GaN bi-layer structure.

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