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The Kinetics of the Low-Pressure Chemical Vapor Deposition of Polycrystalline Silicon from Silane

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ABSTRACT

The kinetics of the deposition of polycrystalline silicon from silane were studied at 25–125 Pa and 863–963 K using a continuous flow perfectly mixed reactor equipped with a microbalance and a quadrupole mass spectrometer for in situ deposition rate measurements and on-line gas-phase analysis. It was possible to obtain rate coefficients that are intrinsic, i.e., only determined by chemical phenomena. A four-step elementary gas-phase reaction network coupled to a ten-step elementary surface network was able to describe the experimental data. Pressure falloff behavior of gas-phase reactions was taken into account using the Rice—Ramsberger—Kassel—Marcus theory. In the surface reaction mechanism, adsorption of silane, hydrogen, and highly reactive gas-phase intermediates and first-order desorption of hydrogen are the only kinetically significant steps. Silylene and disilane are the most abundant gas-phase intermediates, causing typically one fifth of the overall silicon growth.

Introduction

The kinetics of the low-pressure chemical vapor deposition (LPCVD) of polycrystalline silicon from silane has been the subject of a number of experimental studies carried out in conventional hotwall multiwafer LPCVD reactors. Although the general trends observed in this type of reactors may be correlated with the chemistry and kinetics, the interpretation of these investigations is not straightforward, because the growth rate is determined both by transport phenomena and intrinsic kinetics. Another shortcoming is that the growth rates are only determined at the end of a run and are quantitatively linked with the process conditions such as inlet composition and flow rates without taking into account the actual gas-phase composition at the position where deposition occurs. The present study, however, reports on steady-state experiments on polycrystalline silicon deposition from silane in a microbalance reactor setup. This reactor allows a direct measurement of the growth rate combined with an on-line analysis of the corresponding gas-phase composition. In spite of irreducible transport limitations it is possible to obtain intrinsic kinetic data with this experimental setup. It requires the analysis of the obtained data with a reactor model that takes into account the transport limitations in an appropriate way. The latter features only binary diffusion coefficients, which can be calculated independently, as transport parameters.

Based on the experiments a kinetic model for polycrystalline silicon deposition is developed that is valid over a wide range of experimental conditions. This model consists of four elementary gas-phase reactions coupled to ten elementary reactions taking place on the growing silicon surface. The gas-phase reaction network is constructed as a closed subsystem among species that are thermodynamically favored and consists of reactions that are unimolecular in at least one direction. To describe the effects of pressure adequately, the falloff behavior of each of the unimolecular rate coefficients is quantified using the Rice—Ramsberger—Kassel—Marcus (RRKM) theory.8

Experimental

Equipment and procedures.—Silane (ultrapure quality) was used as the main reactant gas. Hydrogen (quality 6.0) was fed to study inhibition effects on the gas-phase and surface kinetics. Argon was used both as inert diluent gas and as internal standard for quantitative analysis of the gas-phase composition with a quadrupole mass spectrometer. The flow rates of these process gases were established with mass flow controllers and ranged typically between 3 and 30 sccm, corresponding to mean residence times between 0.1 and 1 s.

After premixing, the feed mixture was preheated to reduce intrareactor temperature gradients and injected through the four nozzles of a cross-shaped injector located in the middle of a quartz spherical reactor. Just above the injector, a 10 × 15 mm silicon sample was suspended from a double-sided polished (100) p-type wafer with a resistivity of ~0.035 Ω cm and an average thickness of 410 μm. The reactor was heated externally using an electrical resistance oven. Temperature regulation was performed on the basis of a Chromel-Alumel thermocouple located between the oven and the reactor wall. The reaction temperature was measured with a second Chromel-Alumel thermocouple inside a thermowell located near the silicon sample in the pump throat, thereby forcing the total pressure to the required value. Prior to each series of experiments the silicon sample and reactor wall were precoated with polycrystalline silicon at 50 Pa and 900 K for 30 min after pretreatment with hydrogen at 900 K for 10 min. Further details are given by Weerts et al.6,7

The weight increase due to silicon deposition on the 10 × 15 mm sample in the middle of the reactor was measured with a microbalance (Cahn D-200), which was operated in the weight range from 0 to 2 mg with a resolution of 0.1 μg under ideal circumstances. Calibration was performed prior to each series of experiments.

Quantitative analysis of silane and Si 2H 4 , the latter denoting the total of disilane (Si 2 H 6 ), silystylylene (H 2 Si 2 H 5 ), and disilene (H 2 Si 2 H 3 ), was performed by direct comparison of the reaction of the reactor effluent through an orifice inlet to a differentially pumped quadrupole mass spectrometer (Fisons SXP Elite 300H), which was operated at a constant ion-
ized estimation of a standard activation entropy and enthalpy or of a standard entropy and enthalpy difference, reparameterization was applied based on an average temperature of the experiments of 915.8 K. In total, the silicon growth rates from 150 experiments, covering the range of experimental conditions listed in the second column of Table 1, were used during the regression. SiH₄ responses from experiments at total pressures lower than 50 Pa were not considered, because gas-phase reactions were found to be insignificant at these pressures. Hence, the total number of experimental SiH₄ responses considered during the regression amounted to 60.

Model discrimination was based on statistical significance of the individual parameter estimates as well as of the global regression. The parameter estimates were tested for significance by means of their approximate individual t values. The approximate individual t values were used to determine the two-sided 95% confidence intervals. The significance of the global regression was expressed by means of the ratio of the mean regression sum of squares to the mean residual sum of squares, which is distributed according to F. Discrimination among rival models was based upon statistical testing, whenever it was impossible by direct process observation or physicochemical laws.

Effects of Process Conditions

Space time.—Figure 1 shows the silicon growth rate as a function of silane conversion at 50 Pa and different temperatures. The increase in silane conversion was brought about by an increase in silane space time, i.e., of the ratio of reactor volume to inlet molar flow rate of silane. The space-time concept here should not be confused with the residence time. Residence time in a continuously stirred tank reactor (CSTR) is the ratio of reactor volume and volumetric flow rate at the outlet of the reactor. Because of mole production and/or consumption in homogeneous and heterogeneous reactions in the SiH₄/H₂/Si system, the outlet volumetric flow rate is not equal to the inlet volumetric flow rate. Thus, the residence time in this case is rather ill-defined. Space time as used here is a time scale at inlet conditions equal to the ratio of the residence time, calculated from the inlet volumetric flow rate, and the inlet concentration of silane. Only under zero conversion conditions are residence time and space time proportional to each other. Independence of production rate on the silane conversion corresponds to a so-called differential reactor operation with respect to that reaction. At 50 Pa the laboratory reactor satisfies differential operation with respect to silicon deposition up to roughly 912 K in case pure silane is fed. Comparison of similar sets of growth rate vs. conversion data at different total pressures and temperatures while cofeeding hydrogen revealed that addition of hydrogen expands the differential regime toward higher pressures and temperatures.

The deviation from differential operation can be attributed to the occurrence of gas-phase reactions, as evidenced by Fig. 2 showing the effect of silane space time on the normalized SiH₄ concentration at 912 K and different total pressures. Except for 50 Pa, a maximum in the normalized SiH₄ concentration is observed at each pressure. The maxima are attained at short space times. With
Fig. 1. Silicon growth rate vs. silane conversion. Lines: calculated using the reactor model equations of Weerts et al. and the gas-phase and surface reactions listed in Tables II and III with corresponding parameter values given in Tables II and V. Points: experiments. Conditions: SiH₄/Ar₀ = 4.0, P₁ = 50 Pa; and T = (+) 863, (Δ) 888, (O) 912, (V) 938, and (O) 963 K.

Increasing total pressure the maximum Si₂H₅ concentration increases proportionally to the second power of the total pressure without a change in the corresponding space time. This dependence can be explained on the basis of a parallel, consecutive kinetic scheme accounting for silicon deposition from silane and from disilane (Si₂H₅), the latter produced through pyrolysis of silane, coupled to a perfectly stirred tank reactor model. The occurrence of gas-phase reactions above roughly 50 Pa at 912 K is in good agreement with the results of Holleman and Verweij, who studied the kinetics of silicon deposition in a conventional hotwall multiwafer LPCVD reactor. The measured silicon growth rates appeared to be independent of interwafer spacing, i.e., of the volume-to-surface ratio, up to total pressures of 60 Pa while feeding pure silane at 900 K, indicating the insignificance of gas-phase reactions at lower pressures. The amount of Si₂H₅ components measured in the gas phase varies between 0.1 and 1 mol %. van den Brekel and Bollen measured a typical ratio of 10⁻⁵:10⁻²:1 between monosilane, disilane, and trisilane at the outlet of a conventional LPCVD reactor. Although the observed Si₂H₅ molar fractions are in good agreement with the ratio found by these authors, Si₂H₅ components were not detected in the laboratory reactor. The amounts of these components obviously were too small to fall within the detection limit of the QMS, i.e., 1 ppm.

Pressure.—In the pressure range from 25 to 50 Pa gas-phase reactions are not important and silicon deposition is predominantly determined by heterogeneous decomposition of silane. The experimental data reveal an increasing silicon growth rate with increasing silane space time and feed composition. Partial reaction orders between 0.28 and 0.44 are obtained at 912 K.

At typical LPCVD conditions, Claassen et al. report growth rates that are linear in silane pressure, whereas the data of van den Brekel and Bollen reveal a less than linear dependence. Holleman and Aarnink report growth rates that are proportional to the square root of the silane partial pressure. Farrow observed a linear dependence of the silicon growth rate on silane partial pressure over a temperature range from 293 to 1473 K and silane pressures ranging from 1 x 10⁻⁵ to 133 Pa. This dependence is supported by later work of Henderson and Helm, Duchemin et al., and Van Daele and Olander.

Compared to the pressure effect on the silicon growth rate in the differential regime, i.e., at pressures up to 50 Pa, a more pronounced effect is observed in the regime where gas-phase reactions are important. This effect is strongest at the shorter space times where larger amounts of Si₂H₅ and other reactive intermediates are present in the gas phase (see Fig. 2). Figure 3 shows the silicon growth rate, the silane conversion, and the Si₂H₅ selectivity, defined as the ratio of the number of moles of silicon atoms in Si₂H₅ formed to the total number of moles of silicon atoms in silane converted, vs. the silane space time at 100 Pa and 963 K. The...
experimentally observed growth rate indeed exhibits a maximum value at short space time. The SiH₄ selectivity generally decreases with increasing silane conversion.

**Inlet hydrogen-to-silane ratio.**—Figure 4 shows the effect of the inlet hydrogen-to-silane ratio on the silicon growth rate at 912 K and total pressures of 25 and 50 Pa. The use of the inlet hydrogen-to-silane ratio instead of the actually prevailing one is justified, because the laboratory reactor is operated differentially at the conditions considered. Changing a 1:2 into a 5:4 H₂/SiH₄ feed ratio reduces the silicon growth rate by approximately 15%. Due to hydrogen adsorption the fraction of vacant surface sites is reduced and silane adsorption is hampered. As a result, the silicon growth rate drops. At 25 Pa hydrogen inhibition is slightly more pronounced than at 50 Pa.

Apparent conflicting reports concerning the existence of a hydrogen effect are found in the literature. Henderson and Helm,⁵⁹ van den Brekel and Bollen,¹ Buss et al.,²⁸ Robbins and Young,³⁵ and Foster et al.⁴⁰ report no evidence for hydrogen inhibition. Holleman⁵⁵ reports growth rates that are inversely proportional to the hydrogen partial pressure at 888 K. According to the same author the hydrogen inhibiting effect becomes weaker at higher temperatures and turns into an inverse square root dependence at 973 K. Hottier and Cadoret⁵⁶ observed an inverse proportional dependence, whereas experiments of Duchemin et al.⁴ with silane partial pressures up to 26 Pa and temperatures up to 1263 K again are in support of the inverse square root dependence on hydrogen pressure. It should be noted that in those cases where hydrogen inhibiting effects were reported to be absent, in general no large excesses of hydrogen were used.

Temperature.—Figure 5 shows the silane conversion as a function of space time over a broad range of temperatures at 50 Pa. With increasing temperature the silane conversion considerably increases, reaching values as high as 60% at 863 K. The experiments also show the existence of a differential operating regime with respect to silane conversion at the lower temperatures considered.

Figure 1 already showed that at a given silane conversion the silicon growth rate considerably increases with increasing temperature. The apparent activation energy obtained from the least square slopes of an Arrhenius plot in the temperature range from 863 to 963 K at 50 Pa amounts to 155.5 kJ mol⁻¹. Apparent activation energies for silicon deposition at LPCVD conditions range from 130 to 180 kJ mol⁻¹.¹²,²⁵-⁻³⁸

**Network Construction**

**Gas-phase reactions.**—In principle it is possible to construct a gas-phase reaction network that consists of a very large number of reactions (see, e.g., Becerra and Walsh⁷²; Ring and O’Neal³⁸), but in this study the network was purposely limited to a minimal set of reactions. In the range of experimental conditions covered during the kinetic experiments, i.e., temperatures between 863 and 963 K and total pressures between 25 and 100 Pa, seven gas-phase species have an equilibrium molar fraction larger than 1 x 10⁻³, i.e., SiH₄, SiH₂, H₂, Si₂H₅, Si₃H₃, Si₃H₇, and Si₂H₆. The lower limit of 1 x 10⁻³ reflects a minimum contribution to the silicon deposition rate of 1% compared to that of silane, assuming unit reaction probabilities for the homogeneously formed silicon-containing species and a value of 2 x 10⁻³ for silane.

Although Si₂ is an important species from a thermodynamic viewpoint, its formation rate is very slow and hence its kinetic significance can be neglected. In addition, the absence of trisilane and other Si₃H₅ species in the reaction mixture provides direct evidence for the insignificance of chemical routes toward these species at the experimental conditions applied. Although SiH₃ is not important in a thermodynamic sense, it plays a key role in the overall gas-phase chemistry. It is formed in the initial silane decomposition reaction⁶⁹,⁷⁰ and easily inserts into silane to form disilane.⁷¹-⁷⁵ Because H₂SiSiH₄ is formed by isomerization of H₂SiSiH₃,⁷⁰ one of the products of disilane decomposition, this species needs to be considered as well. Inclusion of Si₂H₆, which in turn is formed from H₂SiSiH₃,⁷⁰ does not basically change the growth rate contribution along the homogeneous path, as both species are assumed to have unit reaction probabilities.⁶⁵ Hence, Si₂H₆ is omitted from the gas-phase kinetic scheme.

Based on these considerations the following set of silicon-containing species was considered in the gas-phase reaction network: SiH₄, SiH₂, Si₂H₆, H₂SiSiH₄, and H₂SiSiH₅.
Table II. Elementary reactions considered in the gas-phase (Eq. 1-4), and corresponding values for the pressure fall-off correction constants (Eq. 12) based on RRKM calculations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reaction</th>
<th>$B_1$ (J mol$^{-1}$)</th>
<th>$B_2$ (J mol$^{-1}$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(r1) SiH$_4$ + $\cdot$ $\rightarrow$ SiH$_4$ + H*</td>
<td>0.0013</td>
<td>$-3.55 \times 10^4$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(r2) SiH$_4$ + SiH$_3$ + H$_2$</td>
<td>0.0953</td>
<td>$1.21 \times 10^4$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(r3) SiH$_4$ + H$_2$SiH$_3$ + H$_2$</td>
<td>1.1076</td>
<td>$1.97 \times 10^3$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(r4) H$_2$SiH$_3$ + H$_2$SiH$_3$</td>
<td>1.0001</td>
<td>$7.86 \times 10^2$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Pressure correction constants listed apply to the forward steps of reactions (r1), (r3), and (r4) and to the backward step of reaction (r2).

The corresponding elementary gas-phase reactions used to simulate the kinetic experiments are given in Table II. Note that only silicon hydride species containing an even number of hydrogen atoms are involved in the gas-phase kinetic scheme. The fact that the gas-phase chemistry of silane is determined merely by this kind of species is consistent with the gas-phase reaction networks recently published to describe the silicon deposition process at similar temperatures and total pressures ranging from 50 Pa to atmospheric pressure.3,5,12,13,38,41,48-50

Surface reactions.—The minimal set of elementary steps on the silicon surface considered in the kinetic model is shown in Table III. This way of presenting a complex reaction network was developed by Tanimoto11 and allows for a straightforward calculation of the net production rates of the components involved in the surface reactions. For a recent comprehensive treatise on the surface chemistry of Si, see the review of Walnutenh and Yates.56

It is known that hydrogen deposition, whether second order as on Si(111)−(7 × 7)57,58 or first order as on Si(100)−(2 × 1),14,15,59,60 is potentially slower than the chemisorption of SiH$_4$ and of homogeneously formed gas-phase intermeditates, and subsequent surface reactions of silicon hydride species. Consequently, hydrogen adatoms are the only kinetically significant surface species. In the present work hydrogen desorption is accounted for via first-order hydrogen desorption kinetics with an apparent activation energy of 188 ± 8 kJ mol$^{-1}$ and postulated the two-step mechanistic model illustrated by reactions (r13) and (r14) of Table III. The activated desorption proceeds via excitation of a covalently bound hydrogen adatom from a localized Si−H bond, followed by H$^*$ to a two-dimensional delocalized state H$^*$, reaction (r13). The symbol $\cdot$ denotes a dangling bond on a vacant silicon surface atom. The H$^*$ state is bound to the surface by 188 kJ mol$^{-1}$, i.e., 188 kJ mol$^{-1}$ higher in energy than the original Si−H bond possessing a bond strength of 376 kJ mol$^{-1}$. The final elementary step in the associative desorption is the reaction of the excited delocalized hydrogen atom with a localized hydrogen adatom, reaction (r14). This reaction is considered to proceed potentially fast compared to the excitation of a hydrogen adatom, reaction (r13), giving rise to the first-order desorption kinetics. Furthermore, the formation of a localized hydrogen adatom via interaction of a delocalized hydrogen atom with a vacant surface site is considered very slow. For any appreciable degree of localization the energy $\epsilon$ of the hydrogen adatom is considered by taking $\epsilon$-order hydrogen desorption reactions (r13) and (r14), much more likely to occur than interaction with a vacant surface site, the reverse of reaction (r13). In order to take into account the hydrogen inhibition effects shown previously, dissociative adsorption of hydrogen was considered by taking hydrogen adsorption reaction (r14) reversible.

The global reactions (α-ε), built up from elementary steps and symbolized by the columns with stoichiometric numbers $\sigma_\alpha$ to $\sigma_\epsilon$, describe the decomposition of silane, silylene, disilylene, and disilane into solid silicon and hydrogen adatoms. The decomposition reactions of surface trihydride, SiH$_3$, dihydride, SiH$_2$, and monohydride, SiH species are considered to be potentially fast compared to the adsorption reactions of the former gas-phase species. The rates of the global reactions (α-ε) are consequently given by the rates of the corresponding adsorption reactions (r5-r9), as follows from the stoichiometric numbers with respect to $\sigma$. Together with the elementary reactions (r13) and (r14), these global reactions take part in the global deposition paths (α-ε), symbolized by the columns with stoichiometric numbers $\sigma$ and $\sigma_\alpha$. In these sequences, the global reactions (α-ε) are now potentially fast compared to the desorption of hydrogen, or more specifically, the excitation of a covalently bound hydrogen adatom given by reaction (r13). Note that the latter is not a rate-determining step in the classical sense of the term, since the steps leading to hydrogen adatom formation are not equilibrium limited.

In the present model, the adsorption of hydrogen adatom is considered to proceed through reaction (r5) of Table III, which is in line with the work of Holleman and Verweij.14 In this reaction silane is assumed to adsorb dissociatively, forming a surface trihydride species, and a hydrogen adatom. The inclusion of the adsorption reaction given by Eq. 1

$$\text{SiH}_4 + \cdot \rightarrow \text{SiH}_3^* + \text{H}_2$$

as proposed by Farnaam and Olander14 and by Gates et al.14,15 did not further improve the modeling results.
Vibrational spectroscopy provided additional evidence for the occurrence of this reaction on Si(111)-(7 × 7).44,66 Kulinkarni et al.67,68 identified three distinct temperature regions for disilane adsorption on Si(111)-(7 × 7) using modulated molecular beam spectroscopy (MMBS). At temperatures below 675 K, a fully hydrogenated inert surface resulted from disilane adsorption, and silicon deposition could be neglected. Between 675 and 775 K slight silane evolution was observed. This was attributed to the decomposition of disilane emitting a silane molecule and chemisorbing a dihydride species, see reaction (r7) in Table III, followed by fast dissociation of the surface dihydride species. The apparent activation energy amounted to ~13 kJ mol⁻¹. At temperatures above 775 K, disilane desorption was believed to occur via two competing mechanisms, both producing silane. One mechanism again involved the decomposition into silane and chemisorbed dihydride, which was predicted to be the main channel of silicon growth from disilane at temperatures between 775 and 1173 K. The chemisorbed dihydride then rapidly reacts to two hydrogen adatoms, which in turn serve as active sites for the second chemisorption mechanism.

\[ \text{Si}_2\text{H}_6 + 2* \rightarrow 2\text{SiH}_4 + 2^* \]  

This process appeared to be more active at H removal from the surface than the usual way of associative hydrogen desorption.

In the present work disilane adsorption is considered to proceed through reaction (r7) of Table III. This reaction is treated as an elementary reaction but will undoubtedly comprise a number of elementary reactions in reality, as evidenced by the MMBS experiments of Kulinkarni et al.67,68 and the small, negative apparent activation energies generally observed.44,66

The adsorption of silylene, silylsilylene, and disilene is taken into account through reactions (r6), (r8), and (r9) of Table III, all of them producing one or more surface dihydride species. It is assumed that the adsorption of these reactive gas-phase intermediates takes place without simultaneous evolution of a silicon-containing gas-phase species or direct release of molecular hydrogen. Silylsilylene and disilene are considered to adsorb via dual-site mechanisms. Since the subsequent surface decomposition reactions are considered potentially fast, the type of surface species formed during each of these adsorption reactions becomes completely irrelevant.

Dihydride decomposition is assumed to occur through interaction with a vacant surface site without direct release of molecular hydrogen into the gas phase, reaction (r10) of Table III, which is completely in line with the results of Greenlief et al.11 and Gates et al.13 Dihydride decomposition is known to proceed via at least two mechanisms. Gates et al.13 postulated that a surface dihydride species decomposes via interaction with a vacant surface site [reaction (r11) of Table III]. An additional reaction observed for dihydride decomposition involves direct release of molecular hydrogen into the gas phase.10,12,18

\[ 2\text{SiH}_4^* \rightarrow 2\text{SiH}_2^* + \text{H}_2 \]  

As indicated before, silicon growth is controlled predominantly by the rate of hydrogen desorption in the complete range of process conditions investigated, whereas the surface concentrations of the silicon hydride species are negligible. Due to the abundance of vacant surface sites compared to sites occupied by dihydride species, reaction (r11) of Table III is more likely to occur than the reaction given in Eq. 4. However, the use of the second-order dihydride decomposition reaction does not lead to essentially different model equations than those used here, indicating the insensitivity of the overall deposition kinetics for the kinetics of dihydride decomposition.

In the present work monohydride species, SiH⁺, and hydrogen adatoms, H⁺, are treated as separate surface species, although they are experimentally indistinguishable. The basic difference between these species is that the hydrogen atom in SiH⁺ is bonded to a silicon adatom, whereas H⁺ denotes a hydrogen atom bonded to a silicon surface atom. Monohydride decomposition is considered to proceed via reaction (r12) of Table III.

### Kinetic Parameter Determination in the Absence of Gas-Phase Reactions

**Model equations.**—In the absence of gas-phase reactions, silicon deposition is completely accounted for by heterogeneous decomposition of silane. Silane, hydrogen, and argon form the only significant gas-phase components. Since silicon deposition from silane is not significantly accompanied with gas/solid mass-transfer resistances, the gas-phase composition governing the deposition rate in the center of the reactor is identical to that at the outlet of the reactor; being calculated from the outlet molar flow rates of silane and argon and the outlet molar flow rate of hydrogen obtained from a hydrogen mass balance over the reactor.

The mechanism of silicon deposition from silane is represented by the columns with stoichiometric numbers σ and τ in Table III. As noted earlier, hydrogen adatoms form the only kinetically significant surface species at the experimental conditions applied. Starting from this mechanism with global reaction (o) and elementary reactions (r13) and (r14) as kinetically significant reactions, the following steady-state mass balance for hydrogen adatoms can be written, provided the Langmuir assumptions hold.

\[ \frac{4k_o C_{\text{SiH}} L_0^2}{l} - k_{13} L_{\text{H}^+} = 0 \quad [5] \]

Here \( L_0 \) is the surface concentration of component \( i \) and \( L_i \) the total surface concentration of active sites available for adsorption or reaction. The first term on the left side represents the rate of hydrogen adatom production via global reaction (o), which is equal to four times the rate of silane adsorption via reaction (r5) Each silane molecule by Boudart and Djéga-Mariadassou.69 The four terms remaining on the left side of Eq. 5 represent the hydrogen adatom formation and disappearance rates corresponding to the elementary steps of reactions (r13) and (r14) and are written in a straightforward way following the law of mass action, i.e., assuming that the mean-field approximation holds.

It has been pointed out that desorption of molecular hydrogen via reaction of a delocalized hydrogen atom with a localized hydrogen adatom, reaction (r14), is potentially very fast compared to formation of a delocalized hydrogen atom, reaction (r13) of Table III. An expression for the concentration of delocalized hydrogen adatoms consequently is obtained by applying the steady-state approximation for this species.

\[ L_{\text{H}^+} = \frac{k_{13} C_{\text{H}_2} L_i + k_{14} C_{\text{H}_2} L_i}{k_{13} L_{\text{H}^+} + k_{14} L_{\text{H}^+}} \quad [6] \]
Substituting this expression into Eq. 5 and assuming that the recombination of a localized hydrogen adatom with a delocalized hydrogen atom is potentially very fast compared to the interaction of a delocalized hydrogen atom with a vacant surface site, i.e.,

$$k_{-13}L_5 << k_{13}L_1L_7$$

finally results in the following mass balance for hydrogen adatoms:

$$4k_rC_{SiH}_4L_4 - 2k_rL_5 + 2k_4K_pC_{SiH}_4L_1^2 - L_7 = 0$$

In this expression, $K_p$ is the equilibrium coefficient of molecular hydrogen adsorption, defined as

$$K_p = \frac{k_{12}P_{14}}{k_{13}K_{SiH}}$$

An additional expression relating the concentration of hydrogen adatoms with that of vacant surface sites is obtained by equating the summed concentrations with the total concentration of active surface sites

$$L_4 = L_5 + L_7$$

The concentration of excited hydrogen atoms, $L_{ex}$, has been omitted from this equation because of its small value as compared to $L_4$ and $L_5$. Moreover, these species are not bonded to the surface in the usual localized way. In the present work, $L_5$ is taken to be equal to $1.13 \times 10^{15}$ mol m$^{-2}$, corresponding to the number density of dangling bonds on Si(100), $6.8 \times 10^{14}$ m$^{-2}$. The reaction model makes no assumptions about the details of the surface structure.

The surface concentrations of hydrogen adatoms and vacant surface sites are now obtained by solving Eqs. 8 and 10. Assuming that each silane molecule reacting at the right side of Eq. 11 with extra terms accounting for the surface components follow from the straightforward application of the pseudo-steady-state approximation for the growing layer, the silicon growth rate in units m s$^{-1}$, $R_{51}$, is experimentally determined from the growth rate in units kg s$^{-1}$, $G_{Si}$, can be calculated according to

$$R_{51} = \frac{G_{Si}}{\rho_{Si}/\rho_{Si}} = k_rC_{SiH}_4 \frac{L_4^2}{L_3} \frac{M_{SiH}}{\tau_r \rho_{Si}}$$

**Regression analysis.**—The model equations given by Eqs. 8, 10, and 11 feature details of silane adsorption and hydrogen adsorption/desorption only. The rate coefficient of the dual-site dissociative adsorption of silane, $k_r$ (m$^{-1}$ s$^{-1}$), and of the formation of a hydrogen adatom into a delocalized state, $K_p$ (s$^{-2}$), were expressed according to transition state theory in terms of a standard activation entropy, $\Delta S^*$, and a standard activation enthalpy, $\Delta H^*$. The equilibrium coefficient corresponding to the dissociative adsorption of hydrogen, $K_p$ (m$^{-1}$ mol$^{-1}$), was expressed in Van’t Hoff form in terms of a standard adsorption entropy, $\Delta S^*$, and a standard adsorption enthalpy, $\Delta H^*$. The equilibrium coefficient is generally agreed that silane adsorption is not or is only slightly activated. Reported activation energies range between 0 and 17 kJ mol$^{-1}$. $^{22,23,71}$ Hence, the standard activation enthalpy of silane adsorption, $\Delta H^*$, was kept fixed at zero during the regression.

The obtained kinetic and thermodynamic parameter estimates with their corresponding 95% confidence intervals are shown in the second column of Table IV. The $F$ value of the regression was 3200. The largest value for the binary correlation coefficient between two parameter estimates occurred for the standard activation entropy of silane adsorption and the reparameterized standard entropy change of hydrogen adsorption and amounted to 0.90.

**Kinetic Parameter Determination in the Presence of Gas-Phase Reactions**

**Model equations.**—Due to the high surface reaction probability of the gas-phase intermediates formed during the pyrolysis of silane, it is necessary to account for the mass-transfer resistances of these species during the simulation of the kinetic experiments performed in the laboratory reactor. The shape of the concentration profiles was shown to be a complex function of the Damköhler-II number based on the surface kinetics and a modified Thiele modulus based on the gas-phase kinetics. $^{25}$ Weerts et al. developed a one-dimensional model for the laboratory reactor taking into account these so-called irreducible mass-transfer limitations in an appropriate way and providing both the silicon growth rate on the wafer and the outlet flow rates of the gas-phase components. The former is calculated according to the right side of Eq. 11 with extra terms accounting for silicon deposition from silane, disilane, sililsilylene, and disilylene. The mass transfer between gas-phase and deposition surfaces is accounted for by considering molecule diffusivity with simultaneous gas-phase reactions. The inlet and outlet molar flow rates of each gas-phase component are treated as source terms in the corresponding continuity equations. Multicomponent diffusion effects are accounted for by the Stefan–Maxwell equations. For both the wafer and the reactor wall surfaces the continuity equations for the surface components follow from the straightforward application of the pseudo-steady-state approximation for these species.

The kinetic model used consists of the elementary gas-phase reactions of Table II coupled to the global adsorption reactions ($\alpha$–$\epsilon$) and the elementary reactions (r13) and (r14) of the surface reaction network given in Table III. In total, six gas-phase species are involved, i.e., SiH$_4$, SiH$_3$, SiH$_2$, SiH, Si$_2$H, and H. Silane and disilane are not considered. The mass transfer between gas-phase and deposition surfaces is accounted for by considering molecule diffusivity with simultaneous gas-phase reactions. The inlet and outlet molar flow rates of each gas-phase component are treated as source terms in the corresponding continuity equations. Multicomponent diffusion effects are accounted for by the Stefan–Maxwell equations. For both the wafer and the reactor wall surfaces the continuity equations for the surface components follow from the straightforward application of the pseudo-steady-state approximation for these species.

**Table IV. Kinetic and thermodynamic parameter estimates with approximate individual 95% confidence intervals obtained in the absence and in the presence of gas-phase reactions.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Region without gas-phase reactions$^a$</th>
<th>Region including gas-phase reactions$^a$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta S^*$ (J mol$^{-1}$ K$^{-1}$)</td>
<td>$-172 \pm 3$</td>
<td>$-172^b$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta H^*$ (kJ mol$^{-1}$)</td>
<td>$0^c$</td>
<td>$0^c$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta S^*$ (J mol$^{-1}$ K$^{-1}$)</td>
<td>$-53 \pm 16$</td>
<td>$-40 \pm 11$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta H^*$ (kJ mol$^{-1}$)</td>
<td>$180 \pm 14$</td>
<td>$180 \pm 10$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta S^*$ (J mol$^{-1}$ K$^{-1}$)</td>
<td>$-369 \pm 55$</td>
<td>$-327 \pm 25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta H^*$ (kJ mol$^{-1}$)</td>
<td>$-369 \pm 50$</td>
<td>$-361 \pm 23$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$ Standard state 1 mol m$^{-3}$, $^b$ 8. $^c$ 150 experiments conducted in the range of experimental conditions listed in the second column of Table I. $^d$ 210 experiments conducted in the complementary ranges of experimental conditions listed in the second and third column of Table I.

Since the irreducible mass-transfer limitations are accounted for during the analysis of the laboratory reactor data in case gas-phase reactions are important, intrinsic values for the kinetic parameters are obtained. These kinetic parameters can therefore be applied in a straightforward
Regression analysis.—Since the total number of rate and equilibrium coefficients featured in the model equations is 15, a set of 30 kinetic and thermodynamic parameters would have to be estimated. This number could be reduced, however, by the use of thermodynamic and physicochemical relations and a formal sensitivity analysis.

The rate coefficients of the unimolecular gas-phase steps, \( k_1, k_2, k_3, \) and \( k_4(\text{s}^{-1}) \), were calculated using an empirical relation accounting for the pressure falloff behavior of these steps:

\[
k_i = A_i \left( \sum_{j=1}^{\text{NG}} \lambda_j p_j \right)^{b_{ij}} \exp \left( \frac{E_{a_i} + B_2 \ln \left( \sum_{j=1}^{\text{NG}} \lambda_j p_j \right)}{RT} \right)
\]

For each of the unimolecular gas-phase steps the values of the pressure correction constants \( B_{1i} \) to \( B_{3i} \) are listed in Table II. The values of the corresponding Arrhenius parameters are listed in Table V, with the exception of the pre-exponential factor for the silane dissociation, reaction (r1) in Table II, which amounted to \( 3.53 \times 10^8 \text{ s}^{-1} \). These values were obtained by regression of falloff data calculated on the basis of the RRKM theory in the pressure range 1–1000 Pa and in the temperature range 800–1000 K using transition state parameters given in the literature.

The collisional deactivation efficiencies, \( \lambda_i \), were set to 1.0, except those for the small molecules hydrogen and argon which were put equal to 0.3.

Through a sensitivity analysis small sensitivities for all gas-phase reaction rate coefficients were detected except for that corresponding to the initiation step, reaction (r1) in Table II. For this reason the pre-exponential factors \( A_{-2}, A_1, \) and \( A_3 \) as well as the activation energies \( E_{a_{-2}}, E_{a_3}, \) and \( E_{a_4} \) were kept fixed at the RRKM based values listed in Table V, whereas the pre-exponential factor of the initial step in silane pyrolysis, \( A_1 \), was adjusted during the regression of the laboratory data. Due to a strong correlation between the activation energy of the initial step in silane pyrolysis, \( E_{a_1} \), and the standard enthalpy change of hydrogen adsorption, \( \Delta H^\circ_{\text{ads}} \), the former was not adjusted either but kept fixed at the RRKM value listed in Table V.

The rate coefficients of the reverse gas-phase steps, \( k_{-1}, k_{-2}, k_{-3}, \) and \( k_{-4}(\text{s}^{-1}) \), were calculated from the forward rate coefficients, with the former calculated at the reaction temperature using the most recent thermodynamic data base of Coltrin et al.

The rate coefficients of the adsorption of the gaseous silicon hydrides, \( k_5 \) to \( k_8 \), were expressed in Arrhenius form.

The corresponding activation energies, \( E_{a_5} \) to \( E_{a_8} \), were kept fixed at zero during the regression. The pre-exponential factor \( A_5 \) was calculated from the estimated standard atomization enthalpy derived in the region where gas-phase reactions can be omitted. The pre-exponential factors \( A_6 \) to \( A_9 \) were kept fixed at the values calculated from kinetic gas theory for \( T = 900 \text{ K} \) and an initial sticking probability equal to 0.1 in case of disilane and 1.0 in case of silane, silasilylene, and silane.

By sensitivity analysis, large sensitivities for both the rate coefficient \( k_{13} \), corresponding to the excitation of a hydrogen adatom, and the equilibrium coefficient \( K_{13} \), reflecting molecular hydrogen adsorption, were detected. Therefore, expressing both coefficients in Arrhenius form, the pre-exponential factors \( A_{13} \) and \( A_{14} \) with the corresponding \( E_{a_{13}} \) and \( \Delta H^\circ \) were adjusted during the regression of the kinetic experiments. The number of kinetic and thermodynamic parameter estimates to be accounted for was thus reduced to five, i.e., \( A_5, A_{13}, A_{14}, \Delta H^\circ, \) and \( \Delta H^\circ \).

The final kinetic and thermodynamic parameter estimates with their corresponding 95% confidence intervals are shown in Table V. The F value of the regression amounted to 59,000. The largest value for the binary correlation coefficient between two parameter estimates occurred for the reparameterized pre-exponential factors corresponding to hydrogen adsorption and to hydrogen dissociation. The rate of a hydrogen adatom into a delocalized state and amounted to 0.83. Parity diagrams of the calculated vs. the observed silicon growth rates and SiH, outlet molar flow rates can be found in Weerts et al. The absence of systematic deviations reflects the adequacy of the model. This is also illustrated in Fig. 1, 3, 4, and 5.

**Simulation Results**

The silane conversion, the SiH, selectivity, and the silicon growth rate calculated using the complete kinetic network shown in Tables II and III and the reactor model accounting for the irreducible mass-transport limitations are drawn as full lines in Fig. 1, 3, 4, and 5.

Figure 5 demonstrates that the kinetic model adequately describes the dependence of silane conversion on silane space time over a broad range of temperatures at 50 Pa, even at silane conversions as high as 64%. The simulations confirm the existence of a differential operating regime with respect to silane conversion at the lower temperatures considered. Figure 1 shows the silicon growth rate as a function of silane conversion at 50 Pa. Obviously, at each of the considered temperatures the agreement between experimental and calculated growth rate is good. This implicitly means that the dependence between silicon growth rate and silane space time is simulated correctly as well over this range of temperatures.

Figure 4 shows the effect of inlet hydrogen-to-silane ratio on the silicon growth rate at 912 K and total pressures of 25 and 50 Pa. In this regime gas-phase reactions are not important and silicon deposition is predominantly determined by the heterogeneous decomposition of silane. Hence, the rate of silicon deposition equals the rate of silane adsorption [see reaction (r5) in Table III], and depends on the concentration of vacant surface sites squared. Due to the enhanced adsorption of molecular hydrogen with increasing inlet hydrogen-to-silane ratio, the fraction of vacant surface sites decreases, thereby slowing down the adsorption of silane and, hence, the deposition of silane. The adequate simulation of the observed hydrogen inhibiting effect on the sili-
con growth rate shows that reaction (r5) and the reverse of reaction (r14) in Table III provide a good way to account for the competitive adsorption of silane and hydrogen.

Also, the effect of total pressure is adequately described. Even at pressures as high as 100 Pa the kinetic model provides a good description of the experimental data as shown in Fig. 3, where the silicon growth rate, the silane conversion, and the SiH₂⁺ selectivity are plotted vs. the silane space time at 963 K. Clearly, silicon growth rates as high as 1.5 x 10⁻⁹ m s⁻¹ are simulated correctly by the model.

Assessment of Parameter Estimates

Examination of the individual kinetic and thermodynamic parameters can further validate the reaction model shown in Tables II and III.

The estimated value of the pre-exponential factor of the initial reaction in silane pyrolysis, A₁ in Table V, deviates by a factor of forty from the value obtained from the RRKM analysis, giving rise to a similar discrepancy in the corresponding unimolecular rate coefficient, k₁. Applying Eq. 12 with the pressure correction constants and the RRKM-based Arrhenius parameters results in a k₁ value of 1.5 x 10⁻⁶ m s⁻¹. It is important to realize that the same value applies to the reaction probability at zero coverage, y. The reaction probability at a given value of surface coverage is defined as the ratio of the net rate of silicon growth divided by the rate of collision with the surface.²⁻³² Because desorption of surface dihydride and monohydride species does not occur, the net rate of silicon growth is equal to the net rate of adsorption, see Eq. 11, and the values of reaction and sticking probability consequently coincide. Literature values for initial sticking and reaction probabilities are derived from means of RRKM analysis of experiments at much higher pressure and/or lower temperature than generally applied in LPCVD of polycrystalline silicon. The estimated value is in good agreement, however, with the value of 3.9 x 10⁻⁵ m³ mol⁻¹ s⁻¹ obtained by Holleman and Verweij³³ through fitting of the growth rate data in a conventional LPCVD reactor at 100 Pa total pressure and 990 K. In contrast, the estimated pre-exponential factor given in Table V gives rise to a k₁ value of 3.8 x 10⁻¹ s⁻¹. An explanation for this discrepancy is the former value is derived by means of RRKM analysis of experiments at much higher pressure and/or lower temperature than generally applied in LPCVD of polycrystalline silicon. The estimated value is in good agreement, however, with the value of 3.5 x 10⁻² s⁻¹ obtained by Holleman and Verweij³³ through fitting of the growth rate data in a conventional LPCVD reactor at 100 Pa total pressure and 990 K. Moreover, the parameter estimates of k₁ and k₂ derived from the parameter estimates of k₂ and k₃ using Jasinski and Chu's³² and Inoue and Suzuki's² values for the rate coefficients of the reverse step, k⁻₁, combined with the thermodynamic data of Klein.³¹ Yeckel et al.²⁷ fitted the rate coefficient for silane decomposition to growth rate data obtained by Meyerson and Olbricht³ for in situ doped polycrystalline silicon in an LPCVD reactor at 896 K, 13.3 Pa, and 100% silane. In case dilution was considered to contribute to the silicon deposition rate as well, a value of 3.9 x 10⁻⁵ m³ mol⁻¹ s⁻¹ was obtained, which can be transformed into a value of 5.2 x 10⁻⁴ s⁻¹ for 100 Pa total pressure and 100% silane at the same temperature. The small 95% confidence interval of the estimated standard activation entropy of silane adsorption, ΔS°ₐ in the second column of Table IV, arises from keeping the value of the standard activation entropy of silane adsorption fixed during the regression. An upper limit for the standard activation entropy loss can be calculated by assuming that the transition state possesses neither translational nor external rotational degrees of freedom. On the basis of statistical thermodynamics, a value of 239 J mol⁻¹ K⁻¹ can be calculated for the summed contributions of translational and rotational entropy of silane in the gas phase at 1 atm and 900 K. This value is calculated from the estimated value of Table IV from standard states of 1 mol m⁻² to standard states of 1 atm, yields a value of 163 J mol⁻¹ K⁻¹. The entropy loss indeed is smaller than 239 J mol⁻¹ K⁻¹. Another way to assess the physical meaning of the estimated standard activation entropy loss involves calculation of the initial sticking probability, s₀. The sticking probability at a given value of surface coverage, s, is defined as the rate of adsorption divided by the rate of collision with the surface.⁴⁸ Using the relation between the initial sticking probability and the sticking probability at a given surface coverage for dissociative adsorption involving pairs of adjacent vacant surface sites⁴⁸ finally leads to the following expression for the initial sticking probability

\[ s₀ = \frac{k₃L₁}{8RT\sqrt{\pi M_{SiH₂}}}, \]  

Substituting the appropriate equation for k₃ together with the estimates of Table IV into Eq. 13 yields an initial sticking probability equal to 2.3 x 10⁻³ at 900 K. It is important to realize that the same value applies to the reaction probability at zero coverage, y. The reaction probability at a given value of surface coverage is defined as the ratio of the net rate of silicon growth divided by the rate of collision with the surface.²⁻³² Because desorption of surface dihydride and monohydride species does not occur, the net rate of silicon growth is equal to the net rate of adsorption, see Eq. 11, and the values of reaction and sticking probability consequently coincide. Literature values for initial sticking and reaction probabilities are derived from means of RRKM analysis of experiments at much higher pressure and/or lower temperature than generally applied in LPCVD of polycrystalline silicon. The estimated value is in good agreement, however, with the value of 3.9 x 10⁻⁵ m³ mol⁻¹ s⁻¹ obtained by Buss et al.³² 1 x 10⁻², and Holleman and Verweij, 8 x 10⁻⁴. The estimates of the Arrhenius parameters associated with the excitation of a hydrogen adatom to a delocalized state, A₁ and B₁ in Table V, are in good agreement with the results of Sinniah et al.² who experimentally obtained a pre-exponential factor equal to 2.2 x 10¹² s⁻¹ and an apparent activation energy of 188 kJ mol⁻¹ for hydrogen desorption from Si(100).

Table IV lists the estimates obtained for k₃ and K₃ after regression of the data in the complete region, i.e., the region including gas-phase reactions and obtained from the estimates reported in Table V, as well as those estimated in the region where gas-phase reactions are not considered. Clearly, the deviations between both sets of parameter estimates is very small. Within their 95% confidence intervals the parameter estimates of the two regions coincide.

The estimated standard reaction enthalpy of dissociative hydrogen adsorption, shown in the third column of Table IV, is in good agreement with the standard enthalpy change estimated according to Dhillon and Meier.³⁻¹ 314 kJ mol⁻¹. Keep in mind that the latter value represents an upper limit as it is based on an upper limit for the Si-H bond strength equal to 376 kJ mol⁻¹.²⁻³² Vannice et al.²¹ showed that values obtained for ΔS° must conform to certain rules and guidelines in order to have any physical meaning and thereby support the proposed reaction model. These rules and guidelines, originally postulated by Boudart et al.,⁴ can be summarized as follows

\[ 0 < -ΔS° < S° \]  

\[ 42 < -ΔS° < 0.0014 ΔS° \]  

where S° is the entropy in the gas phase taken at 1 atm. The lower limit of Eq. 14 follows directly from the necessary loss of entropy when a molecule is transferred without dissociation from a three-dimensional to a two-dimensional phase. The upper limit expresses the fact that a molecule cannot lose more entropy than it possesses. The lower limit of Eq. 15 follows by calculating the entropy change which occurs when a gas condenses to a liquid at the critical state. The equality sign in this equation corresponds to the adsorption of a wide variety of compounds on charcoal in less than a monolayer at 298 K.²⁻³² Transformation of the estimated standard reaction entropy of dissociative hydrogen adsorption, ΔS°ₐ in the third column of Table IV, from standard states of 1 mol m⁻² to standard states of 1 atm, yields a value of 305 J mol⁻¹ K⁻¹. This value fulfills the strict rule reflected by the lower limit of Eq. 14 as well as the description of the universal guidelines represented by Eq. 15. However, the strict rule reflected by the upper limit of Eq. 14 is not satisfied. Using statistical thermodynamics, a value of 163 J mol⁻¹ K⁻¹ is calculated for the entropy of molecular hydrogen in the gas phase at 1 atm and 900 K, which is significantly below 305 J mol⁻¹ K⁻¹.

Deposition Path Analysis and Relative Importance of Gas-Phase Reactions

Effect of space time.— Figure 3 shows the silicon growth rate, the silane conversion, and the SiH₂⁺ selectivity vs. the silane space time at 100 Pa and 963 K. The SiH₂⁺ selectivity-
ity here is defined as the ratio of net number of moles of silicon atoms in $\text{Si}_x\text{H}_y (\text{Si}_x\text{H}_y + \text{H}_2\text{Si}_x\text{H}_y + \text{H}_2\text{Si}_x\text{H}_y)$ formed to the total number of moles of silicon atoms in $\text{Si}_x\text{H}_y$ converted. Under the conditions discussed in this paper it is a measure of the relative importance of gas-phase formation of $\text{Si}_x\text{H}_y$ vs. disappearance via heterogeneous reactions of the silicon-containing species. As such it gives an indication of the contribution of $\text{Si}_x\text{H}_y$ species to the overall deposition rate. The simulations have been extrapolated to zero space time. The silicon growth rate first increases from $12.7 \times 10^{-10}$ m s$^{-1}$ at zero space time to $17.1 \times 10^{-10}$ m s$^{-1}$ at 2.3 m s$^{-1}$ and then gradually decreases with increasing space time. The $\text{Si}_x\text{H}_y$ selectivity starts at zero because $\text{Si}_x\text{H}_y$ needs to be formed first. Silane instantaneously reaches a maximum value of 36%, and then strongly decreases with increasing space time.

At space times close to zero the silicon growth rate is determined by heterogeneous decomposition of silane and silylene only. The contribution from silylene to the silicon growth rate amounts to roughly 16%. With increasing space time the growth rate due to the gas-phase intermediates starts to increase as a result of the formation of disilane and disilene. The fraction of vacant surface sites is determined by the balance between consumption through adsorption of the various silicon-containing gas-phase species, reactions (r5–r9), and production through desorption of molecular hydrogen or more specifically through excitation of hydrogen adatoms, reaction (r13). With increasing space time the consumption of these species increases, and hence, the adsorption rates of disilane and disilene increase. The rate of hydrogen adatom excitation, however, is not directly affected by a change in space time, and the fraction of vacant surface sites consequently decreases, from 0.207 to 0.186. This decrease effects the growth rate contribution from silane, which decreases by approximately 24% in this stage of the deposition process. At the space time where the total growth rate due to the gas-phase intermediates has reached its maximum value, 2.8 m$^3$ s$^{-1}$, the contribution from silane to the total growth rate amounts to 55.8%, the remaining growth being built up of the contributions from silylene, 16.4%, disilane, 22.7%, and disilene, 5.0%. The contribution from silane is negligible. The growth rate contribution from the gas-phase intermediates starts to increase as a result of the formation of disilane and disilene. Upon further increasing the space time, the growth rate due to the gas-phase intermediates starts to decrease as a result of a decrease in the concentration of disilane in particular. The main cause for the decrease in the concentration of this species is two-fold. The most obvious reason is the decreasing silane concentration with increasing space time. A second, less obvious reason is the increasing hydrogen concentration with increasing silane conversion. This reduces the overall collision efficiency of the reaction mixture and hence the unimolecular reaction rate coefficients, thereby slowing the gas-phase reactions. Concurrently with the decrease in the concentrations of silane, disilane, and also disilene, an increase in the fraction of vacant surface sites takes place as a result of a decrease in the desorption rates of these species without a direct change in the rate of hydrogen adatom excitation.

A contribution analysis performed at the space time where the growth rate due to the gas-phase intermediates is maximal revealed that silane consumption occurs for 31% through homogeneous dissociation, see reaction (r1), for 31% through insertion of silylene, see reaction (r2), and for 4% via homogeneous decomposition according to global reaction (e). Table VI summarizes the results of the contribution analysis. Instead of contribution percentages of the individual reaction steps, the contribution percentages obtained after summation over all gas-phase steps and over all surface steps are given in the table. Production contribution percentages for the gas-phase intermediates are omitted, because formation of these species is a matter of gas-phase kinetics only.

Production of silane occurs for 34% via homogeneous decomposition of disilane, see reaction (r-2), and for 66% via heterogeneous decomposition of disilane according to global reaction (y). Formation of silylene is determined for 80% by homogeneous decomposition of silane and for 20% by homogeneous decomposition of disilane according to reaction (r-2). Silylene consumption takes place for 73% via insertion into silane, reaction (r2), and for 27% via heterogeneous decomposition according to global reaction (B). Insertion of silylene into molecular hydrogen, reaction (r-1), has no important contribution to the total disappearance of silylene at the conditions considered. This is consistent with the rather high value of 0.37 obtained for the dimensionless affinity of reaction (r1), indicating that the reverse step is not important. Dilution with large amounts of hydrogen obviously does not force the equilibrium of the initial silane pyrolysis reaction to the left. Except through reduction of the unimolecular gas-phase rate coefficients as a consequence of a lower collision efficiency, hydrogen has no further quenching effect on the gas-phase chemistry. Disilane consumption is for 31% accounted for by homogeneous decomposition into silane and silylene, for 8% by homogeneous decomposition into silylsilylene and hydrogen, and for 61% by heterogeneous decomposition. Insertion of silylene into silane accounts for 100% to the disilane production. Disilane formation via insertion of silylsilylene into hydrogen has no significant contribution, which also follows from the rather high value of 4.55 obtained for the dimensionless affinity of reaction (r3). The pathway to and from H$_2$SiSiH$_2$ is not discussed, because its contribution to the silicon growth rate is too low. Disilene disappearance occurs for 96% through isomerization toward silylsilylene, see reaction (r-4), and for 4% through heterogeneous decompositions. Production of disilene is fully accounted for by isomerization of silylsilylene. The dimensionless affinity of this isomerization reaction, reaction (r4), amounts to 0.04, indicating that its formation via the backward steps proceed at the same rate and hence are equilibrated.

Table VI also shows the results of a contribution analysis with respect to the consumption of the most important gas-phase species at a much higher space time. Comparison shows that the relative importance of the gas-phase reactions reduces with increasing silane conversion. Hence, an unambiguous determination of the effects of either pressure or temperature on the relative importance of gas-phase reactions needs to be performed at a similar silane conversion.

### Table VI. Contribution analysis with respect to the consumption of the most important gas-phase species at silane space times of 2.8 and 40.4 m$^3$ s$^{-1}$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Consumption</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>SiH$_4$ Consumption</th>
<th>X$_{SiH_4}$, (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>Gas-phase</td>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>Gas-phase</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SiH$_4$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumption</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SiH$_2$SiH$_2$</td>
<td>Consumption</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Conditions: SiH$_4$/Ar$_{tot}$ = 4.5, SiH$_4$/H$_2$O = 1.0, P = 100 Pa, T = 963 K. Surface-to-volume ratio A$_p$/V$_p$ = 128.3 m$^{-1}$. 

Effect of temperature.—The total contribution to the growth rate from gas-phase intermediates is independent of temperature. It can be shown that this independency of temperature can be attributed in first approximation to the roughly equal activation energies of the gas-phase decomposition of silane and the first-order desorption of hydrocarbon, viz. Table V. With varying temperature a change in the most contributing gas-phase intermediate takes place. At 888 K disilane contributes 78% and silylene 17%.
to the growth rate due to gas-phase intermediates, where-

as at 963 K these percentages amount to 42 and 51%, respectively. Since the adsorption reactions of silylene and disilane are kinetically equivalent in the sense that both are nonactivated and require the same number of vacant surface sites, this effect of temperature has to be explained by the ratio between the gas-phase concentrations of sily-

lene and disilane. An expression for this ratio can be de-

rived from a pseudo-steady-state mass balance for disilane

\[ k_2C_{SiH}C_{SiH} + k_3C_{SiH}C_{SiH} - k_{-2}C_{SiH} - k_{-3}C_{SiH} \]

\[ \frac{k_2C_{SiH}C_{SiH}}{k_{-2}C_{SiH}} = \frac{k_3C_{SiH}}{k_{-3}C_{SiH}} = 0 \]  

in which the last term on the left side denotes the molar flow rate of disilane at the reactor outlet in units mol m\(^{-3}\) s\(^{-1}\)', and \(A/V\) represents the surface-to-volume ratio of the laboratorv reactor. The contribution analysis discussed in the previous section showed that production of disilane is completely accounted for by silylene insertion into silane, reaction (r2). Disilane disappearance, on the other hand, takes place through homogeneous dissociation into silane and silylene, reaction (r-2), through heterogeneous decom-

position according to global reaction (y), and to a lesser extent via homogeneous decomposition into silylsilene and hydrogen, see reaction (r3). The contribution of the out-

let molar flow rate to the total disappearance of disilane is typically less than 2% and is therefore omitted in the mass balance given by Eq. 16 Rearrangement of the terms left at the left side results in the following expression for the ratio between the silylene and disilane concentration

\[ \frac{C_{SiH}}{C_{SiH}} = \frac{k_3 + k_2A_{Si}C_{SiH}V_{Si}}{k_{-3}C_{SiH}} \]  

The denominator is almost independent of temperature, since both the second-order rate coefficient \(k_2\) and the silane concentration \(C_{SiH}\) hardly change with temperature. On the other hand, all individual terms of the numerator increase with increasing temperature. The first-order rate coefficients \(k_{-2}\) and \(k_{-3}\) have activation energies of at least 163.3 and 180.8 kJ mol\(^{-1}\) (see Table V). The actual activation energies are even higher due to their dependence on effective pressure. The third term in the numerator increases due to the increase in the fraction of vacant surface sites with temperature. As mentioned earlier, the fraction of vacant surface sites is determined by the balance between consumption through adsorption of the various silicon-containing gas-phase species, reactions (r5-9), and production through desorption of molecular hydrogen or more specifically through excitation of hydrogen adatoms, reaction (r13). As hydrogen adatom excitation is activated, \(E_{ad} = 138.1\) kJ mol\(^{-1}\), and adsorption of the sili-

cone hydride species is nonactivated, higher temperatures lead to higher fractions of vacant surface sites. In this way it can be understood that with rising temperature the ratio of silylene concentration to disilane concentration in-

creases and hence the relative contribution of silylene to the silicon growth rate.

Since \(SiH_3\), \(HSiSiH\), and \(H_2SiH_2\) adsorb via dual-site adsorption mechanisms, the effect of increasing \(\theta_s\) is more pronounced for these species than for \(SiH_2\) and \(SiH_3\), occupying only one vacant site upon adsorption. The effects associated with the higher concentrations of the gas-phase intermediates at the higher temperatures are not consid-

ered in the previous discussion. Naturally, these effects posi-

tively influence the adsorption rates and hence the growth rates from the intermediates, thereby slightly decreasing the fraction of vacant surface sites.

**Effect of pressure**.—The total contribution to the growth rate from gas-phase intermediates rises with total pressure. As for the situation of varying temperature, a change in the most contributing gas-phase intermediate occurs with vary-

ing total pressure. At 50 Pa silylene contributes 83% and disilane 16% to the growth rate due to gas-phase interme-

diates, whereas at 100 Pa these percentages amount to 51 and 42%, respectively. This effect can again be explained by the ratio between the gas-phase concentrations of sily-

lene and disilane. This can be verified with the help of Eq.

17. \(C_{SiH}\) increases with increasing pressure. Also, the rate coefficients \(k_2\), \(k_{-2}\), and \(k_{-3}\) increase with increasing pressure because of their falloff behavior. However, higher pres-

sures lead to a decrease in the fraction of vacant surface sites, since the gas-phase concentrations and hence the adsorption rates of all silicon hydride species increase with increasing pressure, whereas the rate of hydrogen adatom excitation is not directly affected. Therefore, the heteroge-

neous term \(k_{-3}A_{Si}C_{SiH}V_{Si}\) decreases with increasing pressure. Because the heterogeneous term is significantly larger than the sum of the homogeneous terms in the numerator, the decrease in the former exceeds the increase in the latter, thereby effectively lowering the numerator with pressure. Thus, with rising pressure the ratio of silylene contribution to disilane concentration decreases and hence the relative contribu-
tion of silylene to the silicon growth rate.

**Conclusions**

The intrinsic kinetics of the deposition of polycrystalline silicon can conveniently be studied in a continuous flow perfectly mixed reactor in contrast to the more complex and bulky multiwafer LPCVD reactor generally used for kinetic investigations of this reaction, such a reactor pro-

vides local deposition rates combined with corresponding gas-phase compositions. The obtained data can readily be analyzed with a reactor model in which only binary diffusion coefficients figure as transport parameters. The latter can be calculated independently.

An adequate description of the polycrystalline silicon deposition process from silane over a broad range of condi-
tions is possible with a minimum set of kinetically signifi-

cant reactions in the gas-phase as well as at the surface. A four-step elementary gas-phase reaction network coupled to a ten-step elementary surface-reaction network provides such a description. The gas-phase reaction network consid-
ers dissociation of silane into silylene and hydrogen, decom-

position of disilane into silylsilylene and hydrogen, and subsequent decom-

position of disilane into silylsilene and hydrogen, and isomerization of silylsilene into disilane. Pressure falloff effects on these reactions are accounted for using RRKM theory. The surface reaction network considers dual-site adsorption of silane, silylsilene, and disilane, single-site ad-

sorption of silylene and disilane, subsequent decomposition of the surface hydride species, and adsorption/desorption of molecular hydrogen. The latter is assumed to take place in two steps according to the band model of Sinniah et al.14,15

As all decomposition reactions of surface hydride species are considered to be potentially much faster than the hydro-

drogen adsorption step, hydrogen adatoms are the only kineti-

cally significant adsorbed species on the silicon surface. The involved kinetic and thermodynamic parameter estimates exhibit good statistical significance and are physically rea-

sonable, except for the change in standard entropy for hydro-

gen adsorption.

In the range of silane conversions applied, the relative importance of gas-phase intermediates for silicon deposi-
tion decreases with increasing conversion and decreasing total pressure and is independent of temperature. Silylene and disilane are by far the most contributing gas-phase interme-

diates. The total contribution of these species to the silicon growth rate amounts to between 1 and 44%, depending on the operating conditions. Moreover, the ratio between the growth rates from silylene and disilane is affected by a change in either of the process variables con-

sidered, i.e., space time, total pressure, and temperature. It increases with increasing temperature and space time, or conversi-
on, and with decreasing total pressure.

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Temperature Dependence of the Electrical Properties of SrBi₂Ta₂O₉ Thin Films Deposited by Radio-Frequency Magnetron Sputtering

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ABSTRACT

Fatigue-free bilayered SrBi₂Ta₂O₉ (SBT) films were successfully prepared on Pt/Ti/SiO₂/Si substrates by radio-frequency magnetron sputtering. The applied voltage showing the maximum capacitance decreases with increasing temperature. The remanent polarization (P_r) and the coercive field (E_c) obtained for the SBT films were 13 μC/cm² and 128 kV/cm at an applied voltage of 5 V at 30°C. The films measured at room temperature and 100°C showed fatigue-free characteristics up to 10¹² cycles under 5 V bipolar square pulses. SBT films show the retention loss of only 6% after 10 years (i.e., over a wide range of temperatures (0 to 70°C) and good data retention (greater than 10¹² read/write cycles) and good data retention (greater than 10¹² years) over a wide range of temperatures (0 to 70°C) for consumer applications and -40 to 125°C for automotive applications. The capacitors formed by bilayered SrBi₂Ta₂O₉, show no significant fatigue after 10¹² switching cycles.

Introduction

Recently, there has been great interest in the application of ferroelectric thin films in nonvolatile memories.¹⁻⁴ Lead-zirconate-titanate (PZT) or La modified lead-zirconate-titanate (PLZT) was initially considered to be the most promising candidate for nonvolatile memory application.¹⁻⁴ However, PZT or PLZT grown on Pt/Ti electrodes has poor polarization fatigue properties which afford only a limited number of switching cycles to the ferroelectric memories.⁵⁻¹⁰ whereas strontium-bismuth-tantalate (SrBi₂Ta₂O₉) thin films have promising characteristics as a fatigue-free characteristic material for use in nonvolatile memory devices. Our group has been synthesizing mainly by metallorganic decomposition (MOD)¹¹⁻¹³ pulsed laser ablation (PLD)¹⁴ and metallorganic chemical vapor deposition (MOCVD).¹⁵ It is desirable to explore other techniques such as radio frequency (rf) magnetron sputtering.

In this work, the dependence of temperature on the electrical properties of sputtered SBT films was studied.

Experimental

Bilayered SrBi₂Ta₂O₉ (SBT) thin films were deposited on Pt(150 nm)/Ti(100 nm)/SiO₂(100 nm)/Si(100) substrates using a conventional rf magnetron sputtering technique. The targets were processed by mixing SrCO₃, Bi₂O₃, and Ta₂O₅ powders by ballmilling, calcinating the mixed powders at 1000°C, and then pressing the calcined powders into a 2 mm diameter circular disk. The composition of the targets was Sr₁₂Bi₂Ta₂O₉ (SBT) ceramic with 20 mol % excess Sr, SrCO₃, and Bi₂O₅ to compensate for the loss of Sr and Bi, respectively, in SBT films. The deposition of SBT films by rf magnetron sputtering was performed under a total pressure of 10⁻³ mTorr at 50°C. After pumping down the sputtering chamber to a base pressure of 5 x 10⁻⁷ Torr, argon and oxygen of 10 and 10 cm³/min, respectively, were introduced into the chamber using a mass flow controller. Oxygen was used to maintain the oxygen stoichiometry of the SBT films. The typical deposition conditions of SBT thin films are summarized in Table I.

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