Phase transformation behaviors of SiO$_2$ doped Ge$_2$Sb$_2$Te$_5$ films for application in phase change random access memory

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Phase change random access memory (PCRAM) has attracted a great deal of interest, not only because it satisfies the various demands for non-volatile memory devices, but also because its fabrication process is relatively simple.$^{1-3}$ PCRAM uses the reversible phase change between the crystalline and amorphous state of chalcogenide materials, such as Ge$_2$Sb$_2$Te$_5$ (GST), brought about by joule heating. Crystalline GST has a low resistivity while amorphous GST has a high resistivity, which correspond to the "0" and "1" states in the memory devices, respectively.

The improvement in the phase change characteristics of Ge$_2$Sb$_2$Te$_5$ (GST) films for phase change random access memory applications was investigated by doping the GST films with SiO$_2$ using co-sputtering at room temperature. As the sputtering power of SiO$_2$ increased from 0W to 150W, Crystallization temperature and the activation energy for crystallization increased from 2.1eV to 3.3eV. SiO$_2$ inhibited the crystallization of the amorphous GST films, which improved the stability of amorphous phase as meta-stable state. that contributed the long term stability of device. The melting point decreased with increasing concentration of SiO$_2$ which reduced the power consumption as well as the reset current.

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