

A Review on TiO₂ Nanotube Based Free Standing Membrane: Synthesis Mechanism and Structure Modification

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Abstract

The TiO₂ semiconductor material with nanotube morphology has a wide application due to its high effectiveness in responding to light on the surface as well as having a wide band gap energy. Related studies of TiO₂ nanotubes were developed based on previous studies that have examined and tested the effectiveness of photoelectrocatalytic TiO₂ nanotube films grown on titanium foil substrate for corrosion prevention applications (Misriyani et al., 2015). However, the presence of titanium substrate on TiO₂ nanotubes precludes light absorption because it is opaque. This affects the activity of TiO₂ in responding to light. The development of TiO₂ nanotube films through the manufacture of film based free standing membrane becomes very important to do. Transparent film coatings in addition to improving light absorption on the surface of TiO₂ also make it easy to integrate with other substrates. This paper reports the review of all the preparation technologies as well as the optimum conditions of synthesis of TiO₂ nanotube based free standing membrane.

Keywords: TiO₂ Nanotube, Free standing membrane, Synthesis, Characterization

1. INTRODUCTION

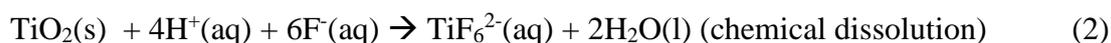
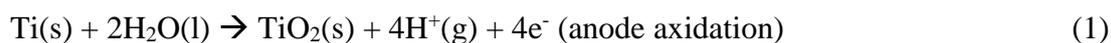
Study of TiO_2 attracted much attention of many researchers for several decades because it can increase the rate of oxidation or reduction induced by light, has optical and electronic properties, highly photoreactive, non-toxic, chemical stability in the long term and low cost (Xu et al., 2014); (Mun et al., 2010) and (Huichao He, 2012). The surface of TiO_2 plays an important role in responding the light. Therefore, the TiO_2 surface morphology becomes important to investigated by many research. In order to obtain wide applications, has a specific size and shape depending on the desired characteristics through the synthesis parameter control. TiO_2 nanotube morphology were introduced as a material that has many benefits in photoelectrochemical properties. TiO_2 nanotubes have a high surface area so that they can receive more light exposure in every pore tube wall (Nah et al., 2010) and (El Ruby Mohamed and Rohani, 2011). Design and synthesis of materials with the nanotubes morphology have attracted many attention of researchers. Several methods performed to establish the morphology of TiO_2 nanotubes, such as hydrothermal method (Ou and Lo, 2007); (Yang et al., 2008) and (Li et al., 2009), the synthesis by using template (Qiu et al., 2007) and anodizing with electrochemical techniques (Ye et al., 2014); (Tsui and Zangari, 2014); (Passalacqua et al., 2015) and (Xue et al., 2015). Electrochemical anodization chosen as the best method because TiO_2 nanotube films have a strong bond with titanium substrate, quite effective with low cost and easy to manufacture (Robin et al., 2014); (Li et al., 2012); (Zhou et al., 2015). Misriyani et al (2015) has successfully synthesize TiO_2 nanotubes grown on the surface of the titanium substrate. The most simple process in TiO_2 nanotubes formation by electrochemical anodization method is electrochemical anodizing of titanium metal in electrolyte solution containing fluoride followed by thermal treatment (Chen et al., 2012); (Li et al., 2013) and (Kapusta-Kołodziej et al., 2014).

TiO_2 nanotubes has been studied intensively as a good photocatalyst because it has a uniform tubular structure that gives advantages on photoelectrochemical properties. However, the the presence of a titanium substrate becomes a barrier to the light response. Morphology nanotubes on titanium substrate is opaque, thereby limiting the amount of light entering the surface of TiO_2 , and decrease the photocatalytic activity. This paper report reviews the synthesis and modification of TiO_2 nanotube films to a membrane form that stands alone without the presence of a titanium substrate as well as optimization of the synthesis conditions of TiO_2 nanotube based free standing membrane. The advantages of TiO_2 nanotubes with free standing membrane form (free standing TNT membrane) are the disappearance of the barrier layer on the bottom of the tube, can transfer electrons directly, stable against vibration and easy to integrate with other substrates. With the ideal structural shapes, causing the free standing TNT membrane has wider applications in the energy production and environment field (Perillo, 2016).

1.ELECTROCHEMICAL MECHANISM

The TiO₂ nanotube Material conducted by using two electrodes in an electrolyte solution system with electrochemical anodization method, wherein titanium foil acts as an anode and Pt metal as the counter electrode. Electrochemical anodization is a simple method, hence and involve lower costs to obtain TiO₂ nanotube array that easy to combined with another substrat because of flexible support as reported by (Perillo, 2016); (Lv et al., 2016) . Formation of TiO₂ nanotube membrane starts from oxidation of metal surface, release Ti⁴⁺ ions and electrons. While the oxide form on the metal surface obtained from chemical dissolution involving the release of Ti⁴⁺ ions and O²⁻ or OH⁻ ion from water molecules. Titanium oxide obtained from anodizing through a condensation reaction on the surface of Pt cathode indicated by the emergence of hydrogen gas (Roy et al., 2011).

The initial stage anodizing process is the electrochemical oxidation on the surface of titanium and establish uniform array TiO₂ nanotubes on the surface of titanium according to the equation (1) and (2) (Robin et al., 2014):



The growth of titania nanotube caused by competition of anode oxidation and chemical dissolution in the electrolyte solution containing fluoride (Sreekantan et al., 2011). Complex formation of titanium hexafluoride occurs in the presence of an electric field, which causes the fluoride ion (F⁻) moves toward the metal and TiF₆²⁻ move to the electrolyte according to the equation (3).



Barrier layer on the interface metal/oxide of nanotube films plays a role as a barrier of the flow of ions such as Ti⁴⁺ and O₂, which is required to move through the film to maintain the anodic oxidation process. Ti-O bonding polarized and weakened, causing the dissolution of metal cations. Ti⁴⁺ ions migrate from metal to the oxide/electrolyte interface and dissolved in the HF electrolyte solution. Free anion O²⁻ migrate toward the metal/oxide interface and further interact with metals. The larger barrier can be overcome by increasing the anodization voltage. The length of the nanotubes increases until oxidation rate at the interface metal/oxide reaches equilibrium with the chemical dissolution rate at the top of the tube (the oxide/electrolyte). After equilibrium, the length of the tube is no longer dependent on anodization time.

1.Fabrication of free standing TiO₂ nanotube membrane

The TiO₂ nanotube layer with membrane-shaped successfully built on the surface of the titanium foil substrate. The presence of titanium substrate becomes a barrier to

TiO₂ in response the light. Nanotubes morphology on titanium substrate is opaque, thereby limiting the amount of light entering the surface of TiO₂ photocatalytic reactions result in a decrease in many applications (Lin et al., 2010).

Physical properties and morphology of free standing TiO₂ nanotube membrane depends on several parameters specific processes. Detachment method of TiO₂ nanotube membrane becomes free standing membranes have been developed by methanol evaporation, ultrasonic agitation and voltage pulse method which discussed in following section:

1.1 Methanol evaporation

The liquid used for rinsing and solvent is methanol and water. Detachment mechanism is possible through solvent evaporation and induces the formation of free standing membranes. Nanotube membrane surface is rinsed and stored in organic bath after electrochemical anodization. Slowly etching occurs due to the presence of H⁺ and F⁻ ions cause structural defects. Further samples were rinsed with methanol which diffuses towards the pores in and wetting defect structure. Then evaporated slowly at structure defects area induce layer detachment controlled by surface tension.

After rinsing with solvents, ultrasonic treatment in methanol was agreed for cleaning nano fibers on the membrane surface. Clean membrane then dried in air with the surface facing up. Brownish membrane further detached from titanium foil during the methanol evaporation process. Perfect exfoliation can be assisted by slowly bending the membrane (Liu et al., 2014).

1.1 Ultrasonic agitation

The TiO₂ nanotube layer removed from the titanium foil by ultrasonication has reported as beneficial method to formation the ordered free standing TiO₂ nanotube membrane (Lv et al., 2016). Ultrasonic vibrations cause exfoliation the membrane by a high frequency in the liquid. During ultrasonic vibration, abrasion cavities occur or vibration with high pressure will accumulate thereby increasing tension on the surface of solids.

Additions H₂O increase the dissolution of TiO₂ on the interface metal/oxide leads to formation of defect area. Some parameters have been reported appear during the ultrasonic process such as frequency, temperature, static pressure, vapor pressure and surface tension. Surface tension and vapor pressures are the main factors that can be defined from the ratio of water and organic solvent in the ultrasonic bath.

Vibration treatment in water and ethanol solution with volume ratio of 1: 4 followed by drying in the atmosphere produces a thin free standing membrane TiO₂ nanotubes

detached from the Ti foil. Ultrasonic for several minutes in lower water concentration of 95% ethanol causes the membrane peeling thicker because of its low acidity.

1.1 Voltage pulse method

Preparation of free standing TiO₂ nanotube membrane with a larger voltage pulse has been reported. In this method, a higher voltage is applied at the end of the anodizing process in a short time (Liao et al., 2012). The elevating the anodizing voltage can damage the membrane layer of TiO₂ nanotubes adhesion out of the surface of the titanium substrate and simultaneously open the bottom layer of the membrane (Perillo, 2016); (Liao et al., 2012). TiO₂ nanotube based free standing membranes widely successfully performed using anodization technique. TiO₂ nanotube grown on the surface of titanium subsequently released from the substrate. Thermal treatment during process have also been reported as an important step in preparation of free standing TNT membrane (Lin et al., 2010). High pressure also introduced give an effect. High pressure on membrane surface causes the accumulation high amounts of energy voltage. When the rate of release energy stress exceeds the interfacial strength of membrane, the membrane layer peeling occurs on the surface of substrat.

1.MEMBRANE OPTIMIZATION

Optimization of membrane thickness of TiO₂ controlled by adjusting parameters such as composition of electrochemical solution (Albu and Schmuki, 2013); (Nischk et al., 2014); (Tsui and Zangari, 2014), optimization anodizing voltage in the range of 40-100 V (Liao et al., 2012b); (Ratnawati et al., 2015), time and temperature anodizing (Alsamuraee and Al-Ittahi, 2011)); (Nischk *et al.*, 2014); (Omidvar et al., 2011); (Regonini and Clemens, 2015); (Li *et al.*, 2011); (Acevedo-Peña and González, 2014); (Kim et al., 2013) and (Li *et al.* 2013).

Length of free standing membrane TiO₂ nanotubes have been reported between 20 nm – 1000 µm. The competition between the chemical dissolution of nanotube layers and barrier increasing the rate of length membrane formation. The tube length increased with longer initial stage while the thickness is no longer increase at steady state.

High voltage accelerating with migration of O²⁻ and contribute in the formation of a tube length. Increasing the tube length accordance with the increasing in voltage between 1 – 25V. But in certain conditions increasing the tube length is at voltage between 20 - 80 V. The HF strong acid solution (pH <3) produce a tube length less than 500 nm, and up to 6,4 µm in a fluoride solution with a pH of 3-6. The tube length in 1000 µm was achieved in the organic electrolyte solution. High thickness of nanotubes can prepared by adjusting the concentration of electrolytes F⁻. High concentrations accelerate the ion transport and push up the barrier layer, whereas at

low concentrations contribute to shortening the length of membrane tube.

1.NANOTUBE DIAMETER CONTROL

The TiO₂ nanotube diameter depends on several factors, are the F⁻ concentration, H₂O content and temperature of the electrolyte. Nanotube wall thickness increases equivalent with a decrease in the diameter of the nanotubes along the tube from top to bottom. The voltage is an important parameter to control the diameter of the tube. The higher applied voltage the stronger the electric field on the substrate. Diameter pores enlarged quickly before forming the hole. Generally TiO₂ nanotube diameter depending on the voltage worked during anodizing and the high voltage rate at the initial of electrochemical process led to diameter expanded (Yoriya, 2012)(Omidvar et al., 2011). The low pH value and high concentrations of F⁻ cause an increase in the intensity of chemical dissolution, which expands tube diameter. Water content in organic electrolytes are the parameters necessary since the the involvement O²⁻ and H⁺ for nanotube growth and dissolution of the water (Albu and Schmuki, 2013).

CONCLUSION

The development of synthesis and modification of TiO₂ nanotube material into free standing membrane form led to extensive study. The high-surface area of TiO₂ nanotube (TNT) supported by the design of the material with a free standing membrane form enhancing the response to light because the substrate as a barrier layer is removed from the bottom of the tube so it can transfer electrons directly, stable against vibration and easy to integrate with the other substrate. Currently, the synthesis of TiO₂ nanotube composites with metal doping inspires researchers to explored, not only to obtain good morphology, but also to provide high response properties in visible light and increase the separation of electrons and holes, thus increasing photocatalytic reactions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education of the Republic of Indonesia (Postdoctoral research grants program 2017 no. 1504/K9/KT.03/2017) for financial support.

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