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柔性还原氧化石墨烯多功能传感器制备及性能研究

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摘要:高灵敏和多功能的传感材料与器件是实现柔性传感器感受外部环境和监测人体生理特征信息的关键。采用简单的压印转移技术将还原氧化石墨烯(Reduced graphene oxide, RGO)转印至聚二甲基硅氧烷(PDMS)上,制备柔性RGO薄膜,再利用双层柔性RGO薄膜构建柔性力敏传感器。通过磁控溅射技术在柔性RGO薄膜表面沉积叉指电极,封装后得到柔性湿敏传感器,研究不同外压力及湿度条件下多功能柔性RGO薄膜的力敏和湿敏特性。研究结果表明:在负载状态下,RGO片层间距减小,片与片间的接触面积增加,从而增加了导电通路,引起传感器电阻减小。该柔性力敏传感器的响应时间为 540 ms,对 30 mg 的药丸有明显的压阻响应,且能检测人体脉搏信号和喉部声带振动信号,表现出很高的灵敏度。此外,该柔性湿敏传感器对呼气等行为引起的微小湿度变化有明显感应,湿度增加时 RGO 表面吸附更多的水分子,从而引起电阻增大,多次检测信号变化稳定。

关键词:柔性;力敏传感器;湿敏传感器;还原氧化石墨烯;多功能

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0 引言

近年来,随着可穿戴设备和人工电子皮肤的迅速发展,发明和制备可变形、高灵敏度、多功能的柔性传感器并代替现有的硬质传感器^[1-4]成为研究热点。柔性传感器包括力敏传感、湿敏传感、化学传感等,在智能假肢、仿生机器人和人机交互界面上有着广泛的应用前景,推动着柔性电子器件的发展。力敏传感器主要包括压阻式^[5-7]、电容式^[8-9]和压电式^[10-11]三种。其中,压阻式力敏传感器可将外部力信号的变化转化成电阻或电流信号变化^[12],其灵敏度取决于力敏传感材料之间的接触面积和导电弹性复合材料的导电路径的变化^[13-14]。湿敏传感器在医疗、生态、环境监测等方面发挥着至关重要的作用^[15],其传导技术包括电容式^[16]、电阻式^[17]、光纤及场效应晶体管等^[18]。其中,电阻式湿敏传感器具有体积小、成本低廉以及大的比表面积而被受关注。目前,单一功能的柔性传感器已经不能满足复杂的

使用环境。因此,制备能够同时感知多种外界刺激(力、温度、湿度等)的多功能柔性传感器是柔性电子器件最终应用的关键技术。

石墨烯或还原氧化石墨烯(Reduced graphene oxide, RGO)是一种由 sp² 杂化碳原子组成的二维单层片状结构材料^[19-20],具有许多优良的特性,如高强度、高导热系数^[21]、高导电、高比表面积等,已被广泛用于能量存储^[22]、催化^[23]以及传感领域^[24],是制备力敏传感器、湿敏传感器、化学传感器等的首选材料之一。但其弹性变形能力较差,需要与弹性良好的材料,如与聚二甲基硅氧烷(Polydimethylsiloxane, PDMS)复合。PDMS 具有高透光性、高灵敏度以及极短的弛豫时间等优点,通常被用作柔性电子器件的衬底材料^[25],构建柔性传感器。因此,将石墨烯与 PDMS 复合,可发挥二者的优势,感知拉伸、弯曲、扭曲等多形式的力^[26]。

本文将 RGO 与 PDMS 相结合,制成柔性力敏和湿敏传感器,施加不同外力及湿度刺激,考察该多

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功能传感器的力敏及湿敏行为。

1 实验

1.1 实验材料和仪器

实验材料:石墨粉(C,500目)和硝酸钠(NaNO₃)购自阿拉丁化学试剂公司,高锰酸钾(KMnO₄)和硫酸(H₂SO₄,98%)购自浙江三鹰化学试剂有限公司,氨水(NH₃·H₂O)和丙酮(CH₃COCH₃)购自杭州高品精细化工有限公司,过氧化氢(H₂O₂,30%)购自浙江汉诺化工科技有限公司,以上材料均为分析纯。柔性PDMS的预聚物和交联剂来自美国道康宁公司的184型硅胶,实验中所用的氩气为杭州今工特种气体有限公司生产的高纯氩气。

实验仪器:H-1850型高速离心机(湖南湘仪实验仪器开发有限公司),LGJ-10型冷冻干燥机(北京松原华兴科技发展有限公司),CB-1B型匀胶烘胶机(北京创维纳科技有限公司),VTC-600-3HD型磁控溅射仪(沈阳科晶自动化设备有限公司),D8 Discover型X射线衍射仪(XRD,Burker公司),S-4800型场发射扫描电子显微镜(SEM,Hitachi公司),DXR型拉曼光谱衍射仪(Thermo Scientific公司),吉时利2400表(中检科电仪器有限公司)。

1.2 氧化石墨烯(Graphene oxide, GO)的制备

采用改进的Hummer方法制备GO。称取1.0 g C,4.0 g KMnO₄(分成三份,1.3、1.3 g和1.4 g)和0.5 g NaNO₃,将NaNO₃和C混合粉末倒入500.0 mL烧杯中,冰水浴条件下缓慢滴加25.0 mL浓H₂SO₄,搅拌30 min,每隔10 min加入一份KMnO₄。之后在8℃以下水浴中反应1.5 h,再移至35~37℃水浴中反应1.5 h,得到褐色的悬浮液。然后向反应液中缓慢加入70.0 mL冰水,并移至90℃水浴中保持30 min。加入5.0 mL H₂O₂和30.0 mL水的混合溶液,终止氧化反应,得到亮黄色悬浮液,多次洗涤后得到氧化剥离的GO溶液,标定浓度为0.1 mg/mL。

1.3 RGO薄膜的制备

在GO水溶液中滴加氨水,调节溶液的pH值为10,移至水热反应釜中并在180℃鼓风干燥箱中反应12 h,溶液颜色由土黄色变成黑色,说明GO溶液被还原。取2.0 mL的RGO溶液,用砂芯过滤装置抽滤,在尼龙滤膜上得到多层RGO薄膜。

1.4 柔性RGO传感器的制备

按质量比为10:1,分别称取6.0 g PDMS预聚物和0.6 g交联剂,充分混合并真空除去气泡。然后将液态PDMS倒入培养皿中,旋涂均匀后放到80℃鼓风干燥箱中固化90 min。固化后将PDMS从培

养皿上剥离,并将含有RGO的尼龙滤膜平整均匀的贴附到PDMS上,按压以增强RGO与PDMS的结合力。最后在丙酮溶液中溶掉滤膜,得到柔性RGO薄膜。

在柔性RGO薄膜两端引出两根铜线,通过银胶粘连,从中部剪开薄膜,使得两片薄膜的RGO面对面接触,并用医用胶带封紧,制成柔性RGO力敏传感器。

以200 μm间距的叉指电极为掩膜版,采用磁控溅射技术在柔性RGO薄膜表面沉积金叉指电极,溅射气压为1.0 Pa,溅射功率为60 W,溅射时间为7.5 min,靶基距为50 mm,氩气流量为23 sccm。再用面包板包装,引出铂丝电极,得到柔性RGO湿敏传感器。

2 结果与讨论

2.1 柔性RGO/PDMS复合薄膜的微观结构

图1(a)为GO与RGO薄膜的XRD图谱。比对PDF卡片,图1(a)中12.5°的衍射峰对应着GO的(001)面,且峰型尖锐,说明GO的结晶性好;在23.5°处的衍射峰对应着RGO的(002)面,说明GO还原为RGO,含氧官能团减少,晶体完整性降低,缺陷增多^[27]。图1(b)为GO与RGO的拉曼光谱,在1344 cm⁻¹处的特征峰称为D峰,代表着石墨域的结构缺陷;在1580 cm⁻¹处的特征峰称为G峰,代表着sp²杂化域的平面晶格^[28]。经水热反应后GO的D峰和G峰的强度比值发生了变化,表明在还原的过程中共轭结构部分恢复,变成RGO。

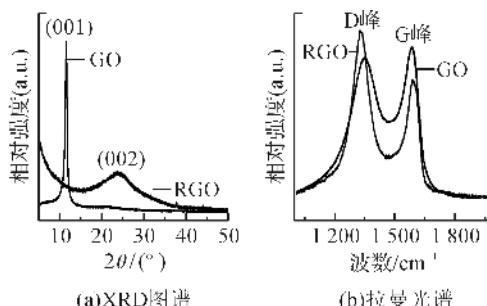
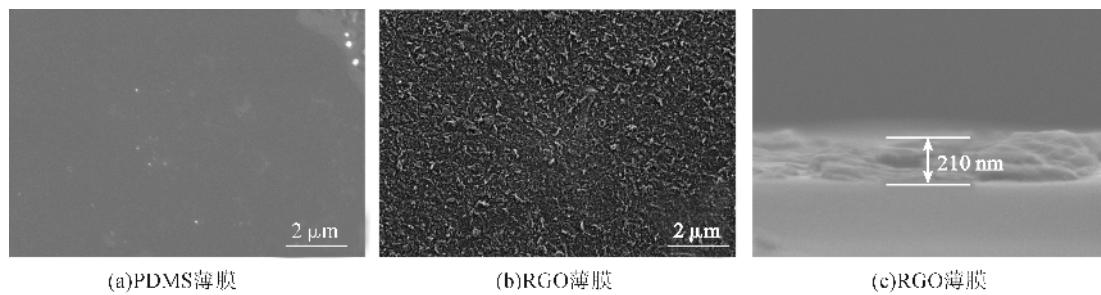


图1 GO与RGO的XRD图谱和拉曼光谱图

图2为PDMS与RGO的SEM图像。从图2(a)可以看出,PDMS表面十分光滑,没有裂纹与杂质,为后面RGO均匀转印提供了可能。图2(b)为附着于PDMS表面的RGO的表观形貌,可以看出RGO是具有褶皱的片层结构,且没有出现裂纹和损伤,说明采用该转印法制备柔性RGO薄膜是可行的。图2(c)为柔性RGO薄膜的截面图,测量出RGO的厚度约为210 nm。



2.2 柔性RGO/PDMS复合薄膜的导电性分析

将柔性RGO/PDMS复合薄膜的RGO两端点银胶,引出铜导线并与吉时利2400表的探针相接触,测定柔性薄膜的电流-电压曲线,如图3所示。利用图3数据,计算得出该薄膜的电导为 $1.2 \times 10^{-5} \text{ S}$ 。

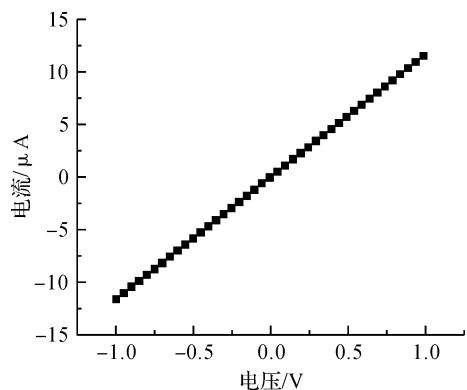
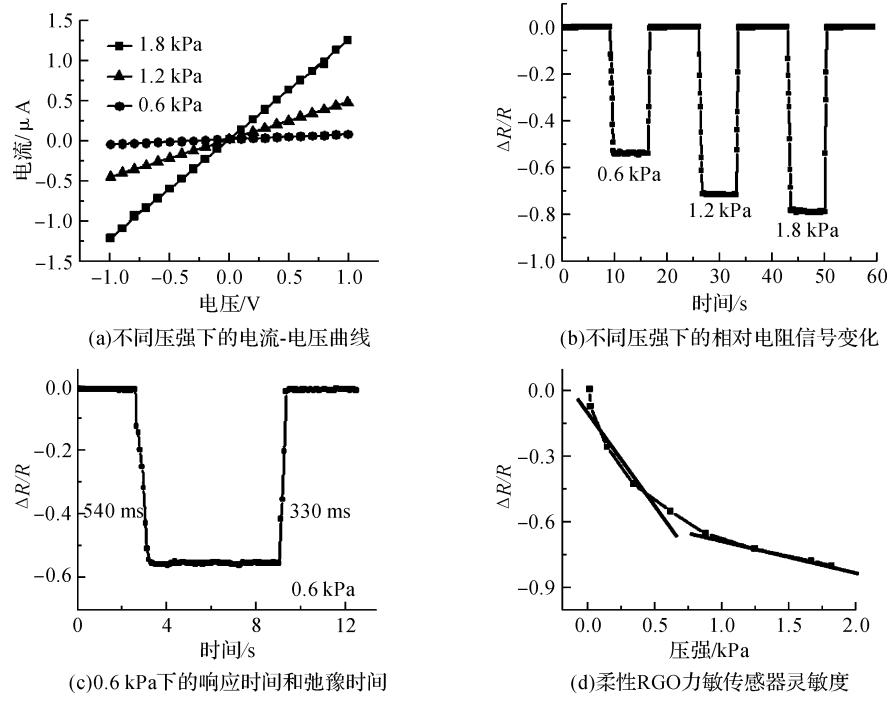


图3 RGO/PDMS复合薄膜的电流-电压曲线

2.3 柔性RGO/PDMS复合薄膜的力敏传感性能测试

将柔性RGO薄膜两端的引线与吉时利2400表

的探针相连,测得不同压强下的电流-电压曲线(图4(a))。从图4(a)中可以看出,施加载荷时电流-电压曲线呈线性变化,说明柔性RGO薄膜与金属间为欧姆接触。图4(b)为相应压强下的相对电阻信号变化,在负载下,带有褶皱的RGO片间的间距减小,增加了RGO片与片之间的接触面积,因而增多RGO片与片之间的导通路径,引起传感器电阻减小,导电性增强。但是在不同负载下,电阻的变化趋势是不同的。这是因为褶皱的石墨烯具有大的比表面积,在较小压强下,石墨烯接触面积的变化大,而随着压强的增大,石墨烯的接触面积变化逐渐趋于饱和,引起相对电阻变化放缓。图4(c)测出该薄膜传感器的响应时间为540 ms,弛豫时间为330 ms。此外还测试了该柔性传感器的灵敏度,灵敏度可分为两个阶段(图4(d)):压强在0.5 kPa以下,该柔性传感器的灵敏度为 0.88 kPa^{-1} ;而压强大于0.7 kPa时,该传感器的灵敏度降为 0.15 kPa^{-1} 。这也体现出高负载下传感器的响应趋于稳定。



进一步利用该柔性力敏传感器检测不同的压力信号。首先,把一颗30 mg的药丸放置到柔性力敏传感器上(图5(a)),放置药丸后,传感器的相对电阻信号变为负值,说明RGO片间接触面积增大,导电性增强,电阻减小。移除药丸后,电阻值又恢复到初始值。几次加载-卸载测试得到的电信号变化基本相同,表明柔性力敏传感器具有良好的稳定性和重现性。图5(b)是将柔性力敏传感器粘贴于手腕部位采集脉搏信号,脉搏振动频率为72次/min,且每次的脉搏振动信号都能被采集到。由图5(b)表明一次脉搏振动有三个阶段,分别为冲击波(P1),潮波(P2)和重搏波(P3),与心血管疾病尤其是动脉粥样硬化相关^[29]。早期研究发现,桡动脉增强指数(AIr)与早期动脉粥样硬化相关,可以通过脉搏波第一和第二阶段的峰值强度的比值($AIR = I_{P1}/I_{P2}$)计算推测是否患有早期动脉硬化^[30-31]。因此,柔性力敏传感器在非侵入式医疗诊断中有潜在的应用前景。图5(c)和(d)是将柔性力敏传感器贴在喉部声带发声处,检测不同发音时声带振动变化引起的电信号变化。当志愿者读“Nanomaterials”和“Science and technology”时,声带振动及表皮肌肉运动呈现出不同的电信号波形。由于RGO表面的褶皱结构增大了比表面积和接触面积,提高了传感器的灵敏度,可有效的检测不同单词和短语的电信号,有望用于语音识别领域。并且不同的志愿者读相同的单词或短语时,相对电信号变化的特征峰有微小的差异,因此可以通过波形差异来辨别发音者。

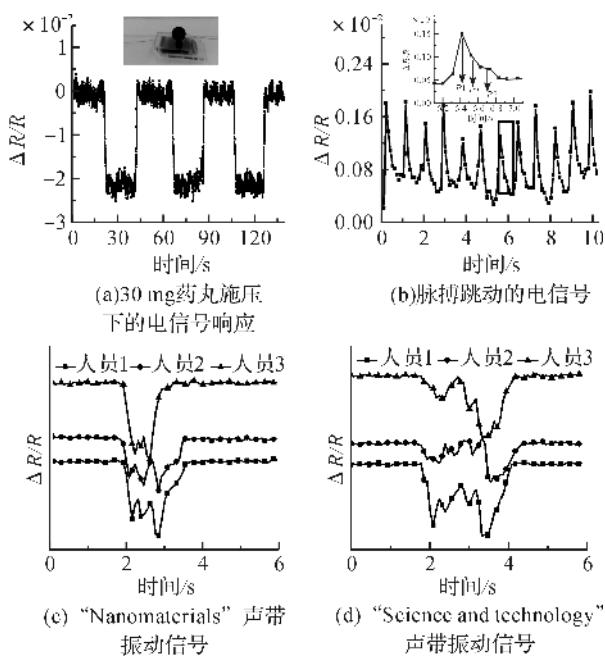


图5 柔性RGO薄膜的力敏传感行为

2.4 柔性RGO/PDMS复合薄膜湿敏传感性能分析

图6为柔性RGO/PDMS复合薄膜制成的湿敏传感器的传感行为。图6(a)是酒精棉靠近及远离柔性RGO/PDMS湿敏传感器时电信号的变化,当酒精棉靠近RGO/PDMS薄膜时,相对电阻信号增强,当酒精棉远离RGO/PDMS薄膜时,相对电阻信号减弱。这是因为酒精棉靠近湿度传感器时,传感器周围的湿度增加,更多的水分子吸附在RGO表面上,吸收的水分子有利于极化效应的增强,表现为相对电信号变化增强;同样,酒精棉远离湿度传感器时,传感器周围的湿度减小,水分子从RGO表面挥发,水分子的极化效应减弱,表现为相对电信号变化减弱。图6(b)为该柔性湿敏传感器检测哈气时的电信号变化,对着RGO/PDMS薄膜哈气,电信号先增强后减弱,多次检测时相对电信号变化比较稳定,说明该柔性RGO/PDMS湿敏传感器具有较高的稳定性。

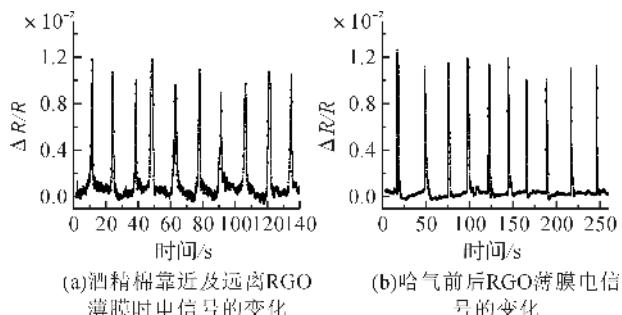


图6 柔性RGO薄膜的湿敏传感行为

3 结论

本文采用压印转印法在PDMS基底上制备柔性RGO薄膜,并构建力敏和湿敏多功能传感器,制备所得柔性RGO/PDMS力敏传感器的响应时间为540 ms,弛豫时间为330 ms;灵敏度高达 0.88 kPa^{-1} (压强小于0.5 kPa);可以检测低至30 mg的压力变化,并能检测人体脉搏波的信号和喉部声带振动信号,具有良好的稳定性和重现性。所得RGO/PDMS力敏传感器还能有效检测由酒精棉和哈气等引起的周围湿度变化,传感器表现出较高的灵敏度和良好的稳定性。

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Preparation and sensing properties of flexible reduced graphene oxide multifunctionalsensor

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Abstract: Highly-sensitive and versatile sensing materials and devices are the key to realize the perception of external environments and the monitoring of human physiological characteristics. In this study, a flexible reduced oxide graphene (RGO) film was prepared by transferring the RGO film to the flexible polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS) substrate via the simple imprinting method. The flexible pressure sensor was constructed by using two pieces of RGO/PDMS films. The flexible humidity sensor was obtained by depositing interdigital electrodes on RGO surface via magnetron sputtering technique. The pressure-sensitive and humidity-sensitive characteristics were investigated under alterable pressure and humidity. Our results indicated that the interlamellar spacing of RGO layers reduced and the contact area between RGO pieces increased under loadings, leading to the increase of conductive paths and the decrease of sensor resistance. This flexible pressure sensor had a response time of 540 ms and presented an obvious piezoresistive response to a pill about 30 mg. What's more, the sensor could detect signal changes of human pulse and vocal cord vibration, demonstrating a high sensitivity. In addition, the flexible humidity sensor could be sensitive to small change in humidity caused by expiration because of more water molecules absorbance onto the RGO surface, resulting in the increase in resistance. The sensor had an excellent stability after repeated measurement.

Key words: flexibility; pressure sensor; humidity sensor; reduced graphene oxide; multifunction

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