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Laldja Taïbi-Benziadaa, Annie Simon. Sintering, microstructures and dielectric properties of Ba1-x Pbx(Ti1-xLix)O3-3x F3x ferroelectric ceramics. Central European Journal of Chemistry, 2009, 7 (2), pp.159-163. 10.2478/s11532-008-0063-y . hal-00382794

## HAL Id: hal-00382794 https://hal.science/hal-00382794

Submitted on 5 Mar 2024

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Central European Journal of Chemistry

## Sintering, Microstructures and Dielectric Properties of $Ba_{1-x}Pb_x(Ti_{1-x}Li_x)O_{3-3x}F_{3x}$ Ferroelectric Ceramics

SSC-2008

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#### Received 17 June 2008; Accepted 18 August 2008

**Abstract:** Various compositions  $(1-x)BaTiO_3 + xPbF_2 + xLiF$  were prepared, shaped to pellets then sintered at 900°C for 2 h in gold sealed tubes. The purity and the symmetry of the obtained samples were checked by X-ray diffraction. A new solid solution with  $Ba_{1,x}Pb_x(Ti_{1-x}Li_x) = O_{3:x}F_{3:x}$  formula occurs in the composition range  $0 \le x \le 0.20$ . SEM observations were performed on polished and fractured ceramics. The complex permittivity was measured as a function of temperature  $(-120^{\circ}C \le T \le 250^{\circ}C)$  and frequency (50 Hz  $\le f \le 4 \times 10^7$  Hz). The dielectric performances are the best for ceramic  $Ba_{0:gr}Pb_{0:0:3}(Ti_{0:gr}Li_{0:0:3})O_{2:g1}F_{0:0:9}$ . The real component  $\varepsilon'_r$  exhibits a maximum of approximately 7500 at the ferroelectric Curie temperature  $T_c \approx -18^{\circ}C$ , the dielectric losses tan  $\delta$  value being 0.012. At room temperature, the relaxation frequency  $f_r$  is around 40 MHz for this ceramic. This novel ferroelectric oxifluoride is a promising material for applications, in particular in the field of Z5U multilayer capacitors.

Keywords: BaTiO<sub>3</sub> • Oxifluoride • Sintering • Dielectric properties

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## 1. Introduction

The progress and success in new technologies are closely linked to the development of advanced ceramics with continuously improving performance. To fulfil severe requirements demanded by the systems miniaturization, the perovskites family ABO, is of great interest for manufacturing smaller and smaller electronic components [1-3]. Among these materials, BaTiO, related ceramics were intensively studied worldwide thanks to their various applications: capacitors, sensors, piezoelectric actuators. resonators. pyroelectric detectors, modulators, and computer memories. As example, the solid solution Ba<sub>1,v</sub>Sr<sub>v</sub>TiO<sub>3</sub> is of particular interest for the development of small size integrated circuit memories [4]. Pure barium titanate undergoes three phase transitions [5,6]:



The first order ferroelectric-paraelectric phase transition from tetragonal to cubic structure is very sharp and occurs around 120°C, which temperature is too high for applications. On the other hand, BaTiO<sub>3</sub> exhibits a dielectric relaxation at high frequencies. Kersten *et al.* [7] reported the relaxation frequency  $f_r$  to be about 350 MHz in the temperature range -75°C  $\leq T \leq -5$ °C (orthorhombic phase). At lower temperatures,  $f_r$  decreases and a value of 250 MHz was observed at -103°C (rhombohedral phase). In the tetragonal phase,  $f_r$  was found to be higher: 500 MHz at +50°C. Similar results were obtained by Maglione *et al.* on BaTiO<sub>3</sub> crystals and ceramics [8,9].

The present work reports the structural and dielectric properties of  $BaTiO_3$  based ceramics sintered at low temperature using the fluoride mixture  $PbF_2$  + LiF. The main objectives are to lower simultaneously the

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Composition	a (Å)	<i>c</i> (Å)	V (Å ³)	c/a
BaTiO <sub>3</sub>	3.998 ± 0.002	$4.018\pm0.008$	$64.223 \pm 0.003$	1.005
Ba <sub>0.97</sub> Pb <sub>0.03</sub> (Ti <sub>0.97</sub> Li <sub>0.03</sub> )O <sub>2.91</sub> F <sub>0.09</sub>	$4.008 \pm 0.001$	-	$64.384 \pm 0.001$	1
$Ba_{_{0.95}}Pb_{_{0.05}}(Ti_{_{0.95}}Li_{_{0.05}})O_{_{2.85}}F_{_{0.15}}$	$4.008 \pm 0.001$	-	$64.384 \pm 0.001$	1
$Ba_{0.90}Pb_{0.10}(Ti_{0.90}Li_{0.10})O_{2.70}F_{0.30}$	$4.007 \pm 0.001$	-	$64.336 \pm 0.001$	1
Ba <sub>0.85</sub> Pb <sub>0.15</sub> (Ti <sub>0.85</sub> Li <sub>0.15</sub> )O <sub>2.55</sub> F <sub>0.45</sub>	$3.997 \pm 0.002$	$4.014\pm0.003$	$64.127 \pm 0.002$	1.004
Ba <sub>0.80</sub> Pb <sub>0.20</sub> (Ti <sub>0.80</sub> Li <sub>0.20</sub> )O <sub>2.40</sub> F <sub>0.60</sub>	$3.986 \pm 0.001$	$4.035\pm0.001$	$64.108 \pm 0.001$	1.012

Table 1. Unit cell parameters (a, c), volume (V) and c/a ratio of Ba<sub>1-x</sub>Pb<sub>x</sub>(Ti<sub>1-x</sub>Li<sub>x</sub>)O<sub>3-x</sub>F<sub>3x</sub> phases at room temperature.

Table 2	Shrinkage $(\Delta \Phi / \Phi)$	and dielectric characteristics	of Ba <sub>1-x</sub> Pb <sub>x</sub> (Ti <sub>1-x</sub> L	.i <sub>x</sub> )O <sub>3-3x</sub> F <sub>3x</sub>	ceramics sintered at 900°C for 2 h (*	1 kHz).
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x	ΔΦ/Φ (%)	<i>Τ<sub>c</sub></i> (°C)	ε', (T <sub>c</sub> )	tanδ (T <sub>c</sub> ) (%)	ε', (20°C)	<i>tan</i> δ (20°C) (%)
0	5.8	130	1000	1.5	400	2.5
0.03	16.3	-18	7500	1.2	6300	0.3
0.05	17.1	-60	4000	1	3200	0.3
0.10	14.5	-55	3250	1	2500	0.3
0.15	13.1	75	1800	0.5	1300	1.8
0.20	11.8	145	1350	1.6	300	2.2

ferroelectric and the sintering temperatures of pure barium titanate and to prepare oxifluoride ceramics  $Ba_{1-x}Pb_x(Ti_{1-x}Li_x)O_{3-3x}F_{3x}$  with high permittivity, useful for manufacturing inexpensive multilayer capacitors.

## **2. Experimental Procedures**

Powders of BaCO<sub>3</sub>, TiO<sub>2</sub> (rutile), PbF<sub>2</sub> and LiF with 99.99% in purity supplied by MERCK were used for the preparations. The carbonate, BaCO<sub>3</sub>, and the oxide, TiO<sub>2</sub>, were pre-heated at 300°C for 72 h in an oven to eliminate moisture. The fluorides PbF<sub>2</sub> and LiF were desiccated at 150°C for 2 h under vacuum to prevent their hydrolysis during sintering.

Stoichiometric  $BaTiO_3$  was firstly synthesized by heating an equimolar mixture of  $BaCO_3$  and  $TiO_2$ at 1100°C for 15 hours in air atmosphere. Various compositions (1-*x*)BaTiO\_3 + *x*PbF\_2 + *x*LiF were weighed, homogenized and dry-ground in a glove box. The powders thus obtained were shaped to pellets of 9 mm diameter and about 1 mm thickness by cold-pressing under a pressure of 10<sup>8</sup> Pa. The disks were sintered in gold sealed tubes under dry-argon in an electrical furnace outside the box.

The symmetry and the purity were investigated by X-ray diffraction (XRD) on crushed ceramics using a PHILIPS powder diffractometer with monochromatic Cu K<sub>a1</sub> radiation ( $\lambda = 1.54051$  Å) at 40 kV and 30 mA. The data were recorded by step scanning of 0.02° in the 20 range 5 – 120° and a counting time of 0.5 s per step using silicon as an internal standard. The unit cell parameters were determined then refined by the least squares method.

The microstructure was systematically observed on polished surfaces and fractures of ceramics by scanning electron microscopy (SEM) with the aid of a PHILIPS apparatus type LX30. The operating voltage was 20 kV. The sintered samples were electroded with a silver paste to make capacitors. Dielectric measurements were then performed, first, versus temperature from -120°C to 250°C at 100 Hz, 1 kHz and 10 kHz, respectively, using a Wayne Kerr capacitance bridge B 905. In a second step, the complex permittivity was measured, at room temperature, in the frequency range 50 Hz – 40 MHz with the aid of a Hewlett Packard impedance analyser HP 4194 A. All experiments were carried out under vacuum.

## 3. Results and Discussion

The X-ray diffraction analysis revealed that  $(1-x)BaTiO_3$ +  $xPbF_2$  + xLiF samples sintered at 900°C for 2 h in gold sealed tubes are homogeneous and monophasic up to x = 0.20. When more than 20 mol% of  $(PbF_2 + LiF)$  is added to BaTiO<sub>3</sub>, second phases are observed on the XRD patterns. Table 1 reports the variation of the unit cell parameters (*a*, *c*), the volume (*V*) and the ratio (*c*/*a*) with the chemical composition.

As seen in Table 1, the slight tetragonal distortion of  $BaTiO_3$  disappears in a first time, the ratio *c/a* steps down to 1 and the lattice symmetry becomes cubic. In a second time, *c/a* steps up with increasing *x* and the distortion of the unit cell reappears ( $x \ge 0.15$ ), nevertheless the volume change is not significant and the perovskite structure of pure barium titanate is maintained.



Figure 1. SEM micrographs of Ba<sub>0.97</sub>Pb<sub>0.03</sub>(Ti<sub>0.97</sub>Li<sub>0.03</sub>)O<sub>2.91</sub>F<sub>0.09</sub> ceramic: (a) surface (b) fracture.



Figure 2. Temperature dependence of  $\epsilon_r'$  (a) and tan  $\delta$  (b) for ceramics  $Ba_{1,x}Pb_x(Ti_{1,x}Li_x)O_{3:3x}F_{3x}$  at 1 kHz.

The SEM observations show no secondary phases, neither at the grain boundaries nor at the grain surface of the ceramics. This result is in agreement with the XRD analyses. The surface and fracture micrographs of  $Ba_{0.97}Pb_{0.03}(Ti_{0.97}Li_{0.03})O_{2.91}F_{0.09}$  ceramic are illustrated in Fig. 1. The grain size is not regular and homogeneous. Coarse (~6 µm) and fine (~ 1 µm) grains are detected on the fracture (Fig. 1b) and the porosity is inter-granular.

The results of the dielectric measurements performed as a function of temperature at 1 kHz on ceramics with various compositions are shown in Fig. 2 and summarized in Table 2. The permittivity exhibits a very broad maximum whose height decreases with the increase of PbF<sub>2</sub>+LiF content (Fig. 2a). The broadness of the  $\varepsilon_r$ ' peak is characteristic of a diffuse phase transition with local variation of the composition either in the grain or from grain to grain. The dielectric losses *tan*  $\delta$  do not exceed 5% in the entire temperature range investigated (Fig. 2b).

The ferroelectric Curie temperature  $T_c$  decreases, then increases with increasing x (Table 2). These variations are ascribed to the effects of fluorine (F<sup>-</sup>) and lead (Pb<sup>2+</sup>) ions on the chemical bondings. The shift of  $T_c$  toward lower temperatures is attributed to diminishing covalence with F–O substitution (polarization coefficient: F<sup>-</sup> = 0.81 × 10<sup>-24</sup> cm<sup>3</sup>, O<sup>2-</sup> = 3.88 × 10<sup>-24</sup> cm<sup>3</sup>) whereas the



Figure 3. Variation with temperature of  $\epsilon_i^{\prime}$  for ceramic  $Ba_{0.97}Pb_{0.03}(Ti_{0.97}Li_{0.03})O_{2.91}F_{0.09}$  at various frequencies.

increase of  $T_c$  value is due to the influence of the 6s<sup>2</sup> electron pair of Pb<sup>2+</sup> which induces a strong polarization in the bonds and therefore more covalence when Ba is substituted by Pb (polarization coefficient: Ba<sup>2+</sup> = 1.69 × 10<sup>-24</sup> cm<sup>3</sup>, Pb<sup>2+</sup> = 3.60 × 10<sup>-24</sup> cm<sup>3</sup>). All these results are in good agreement with our previous works on oxifluorides deriving from BaTiO<sub>3</sub> [10-13].

The shrinkage coefficient  $\Delta \Phi / \Phi$  (Table 2) increases then decreases with increasing the fraction of PbF<sub>2</sub> + LiF. The shrinkage of BaTiO<sub>3</sub> ceramic sintered at 900°C without additive is around 6% and jumps to more than 16% with the addition of 3 mol% of  $PbF_2 + LiF$ . The density reaches 96% for this sample. To get such shrinkage and density for pure barium titanate, the ceramic must be sintered at 1400°C or higher. Therefore, the fluoride mixture  $PbF_2 + LiF$  is a consequent improver in the sintering process of the perovskite  $BaTiO_3$  at low temperature.

The best dielectric characteristics are obtained for Ba<sub>0.97</sub>Pb<sub>0.03</sub>(Ti<sub>0.97</sub>Li<sub>0.03</sub>)O<sub>2.91</sub>F<sub>0.09</sub> ceramic:  $\varepsilon_r' \sim 7500$ , tan  $\overline{o} \sim 1.2\%$  at  $T_c$  which is around -20°C (Table 2). The temperature dependence of  $\varepsilon_r$  at 100 Hz, 1 kHz and 10 kHz for this sample is depicted in Fig. 3. The values of  $\varepsilon_{r,max}$  and  $T_c$  are practically independent of the frequency. This behavior is typical of a ferroelectricparaelectric phase transition without any relaxation. Moreover, the  $\varepsilon_r' - T$  curves fulfil the requirements of Z5U class of capacitors ( $\Delta \varepsilon_r' / \varepsilon_r'$  (20°C)  $\leq$  +22% at 10°C;  $\Delta \varepsilon_r'$ /  $\varepsilon_r'$ (20°C)  $\geq$  -56% at 85°C).

Fig. 4 reports the variation of the complex permittivity with the frequency using a logarithmic scale for the ceramic corresponding to x = 0.03, sintered either in a gold sealed tube (a) or in free air (b). The curves  $\varepsilon_r' - \log f$  and  $\varepsilon_r'' - \log f$  display the same profile for the two ceramics but the values are much higher for the sample sintered in a gold sealed tube. The decrease of  $\varepsilon_r'$  and the increase of  $\varepsilon_r''$  at high frequencies are ascribed to the beginning of a dielectric relaxation which occurs not very far from 40 MHz, the limit of the setup used. This result agrees quite well with previous works on fluorinated barium titanate and can be mainly related to the simultaneous substitution Li – Ti and F – O [9,11,12].



Figure 4. Frequency dependence of  $\varepsilon_{r}$ ' and  $\varepsilon_{r}$ '' for ceramic Ba<sub>0.97</sub>Pb<sub>0.03</sub>(Ti<sub>0.97</sub>Li<sub>0.03</sub>)O<sub>2.91</sub>F<sub>0.09</sub> sintered at 900°C for 2 h: (a) in a gold sealed tube (b) in air atmosphere.

## 4. Conclusion

Barium titanate ceramics have been sintered with the aid of PbF<sub>2</sub> and LiF in gold sealed tubes at 900°C for 2 h. An oxifluoride solid solution  $Ba_{1,x}Pb_x(Ti_{1,x}Li_x)O_{3,x}F_{3x}$  is obtained in the composition range  $0 \le x \le 0.20$ . The additive PbF<sub>2</sub>+LiF is a consequent improver in

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the sintering process of BaTiO<sub>3</sub> at low temperature. Each ceramic exhibits a diffuse ferroelectric phase transition which is frequency independent. The ceramic Ba<sub>0.97</sub>Pb<sub>0.03</sub>(Ti<sub>0.97</sub>Li<sub>0.03</sub>)O<sub>2.91</sub>F<sub>0.09</sub> shows the best performance and is very promising for the manufacture of Z5U multilayer capacitors with a low factory cost.

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