Real-time multifunctional optical analyzer based on polarization-analyzing CMOS image sensor for microchemical systems

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1. Introduction
We have proposed to implement a multifunctional CMOS sensor onto microchemical systems, and developed a polarization-analyzing CMOS image sensor to realize chiral measurements in microchemical systems [1], [2]. In this paper, on-pixel polarizers are configured using metal wiring layers in a standard CMOS technology. Polarizers with different angles are implemented on pixels and we can measure polarization angle of incident light. In this paper, we designed a polarization-analyzing CMOS image sensor with 9 polarizer sets. We also developed an in-line optical analyzer which is capable of measuring optical rotation and absorbance simultaneously.

2. Design of polarization-analyzing CMOS image sensor
We have designed a polarization analyzing CMOS image sensor using a 0.35 µm standard CMOS technology. Fig. 1 shows a layout of the sensor. Table I shows specifications. Pixel circuitry is 3-transistor active pixel sensor (APS). Fig. 2 shows the cross sectional structure of the on-chip polarizer. On-chip polarizer was designed with the bottom metal wiring layer above a photodiode of the pixel. Line / space widths of the on-chip polarizers are 600 nm / 600 nm. The sensor is equipped with 9 sets of polarizer arrays that covers all the angles from 0 deg. to 179 deg. The step for the polarizer angle was 1 deg. We took intraframe averaging using 9 estimated angles obtained with each partial pixel array and inter-frame averaging of the pixel value. The typical noise level for the polarization analyzing function was as large as σ=0.0061 degrees [1].

3. Real-time chiral analysis system
Fig. 3 shows configuration of the chiral analysis system. A light emitting diode (LED) (peak: 650 nm, filtered to 633 nm) was used as light source for optical rotation measurement. Linearly-polarized and collimated light beam was formed. We have also implemented a function of single-wavelength optical absorption measurement. An ultraviolet LED with peak wavelength of 405 nm was used as a light source for absorption measurement. Collimator lenses, band-pass filters, and a polarization beam splitter were used to form coaxial light beams for polarization-analyzing and absorption measurement function. A Z-shaped flow-cell was placed between the beam splitter and the image sensor. Evaluation of the proposed system was performed with a model photochemical reaction of diastereoselective [2+2] photocycloadditions [3]. First of all, the flow-cell was filled with toluene (blank solution). After the sensor output got stable, we injected substrate solution. After the transition of the estimated polarization angle was stabilized, we turned on a mercury lamp to start the model photoreaction. Fig. 4 shows the results of the optical rotation and the single-wavelength absorbance measurement function. Clear
transitions of the measured optical characteristics were observed in the traces. We have also confirmed the changes observed in the traces are consistent with reported values. Typical transition time was approximately five minutes that is consistent with the time estimated with the ratio of cell volume and flow rate.

4. Simultaneously real-time chiral analysis

Optical rotation and absorbance were simultaneously measured by altering two LEDs at an interval of 90 seconds. We used product solution prepared in advance and replaced the plunger pump in Fig. 3 with a syringe pump. We sequentially injected the blank, the substrate, and the product with the syringe pump. Fig. 5 shows the results of the optical rotation and absorbance measurements. We successfully obtained both results in the same time course.

5. Design of the polarization-analyzing CMOS image sensor with 65nm standard CMOS technology

The performance of the on-chip polarizer depends on the pitch of the wire grid structure. An advanced CMOS technology is advantageous to configure on-chip polarizers with smaller grid pitch. We have demonstrated an extinction ratio of more than 40 with single-pixel test device fabricated with 65 nm standard CMOS process [4]. We have designed a polarization analyzing CMOS image sensor with 65 nm standard CMOS technology. Fig. 6 shows layout of the image sensor. The sensor is equipped with 512 sets of 0 deg. and 90 deg. polarizers.

6. Conclusions

A novel in-line multifunctional optical analyzer was proposed and demonstrated. The device was capable of measuring optical rotation and single-wavelength absorbance. A polarization analyzing CMOS image sensor, the core device of the in-line optical analyzer was designed with 0.35 \( \mu m \) standard CMOS technology. We characterized the optical analyzer and successfully demonstrated the dual functionality. In order to further improve the performance, we also developed a polarization-analyzing CMOS image sensor with 65 nm standard CMOS technology.

Acknowledgements

The research in Section 5 was supported by STARC as part of the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry sponsored “Silicon Implementation Support Program for Next Generation Semiconductor Circuit Architectures”. This work was also supported by Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research on Innovative Areas \#24106729 from the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture, Japan, and by the VLSI Design and Education Center (VDEC), University of Tokyo, in collaboration with Cadence Design Systems, Inc.

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