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Wide range highly sensitive relative humidity sensor based on series combination of MoS₂ and PEDOT:PSS sensors array

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Highlights

- Dual-element transducer design for single target analyte
- Transition metal carbide and polymer combination to enhance performance
- Liquid mechanical exfoliation of MoS₂ to achieve 2D flakes and particles
- Detailed investigation of working principle and sensing mechanism
- Fast sensor response and recovery times

ABSTRACT

In this work, a polymeric material poly(3,4-ethylenedioxythiophene) polystyrene sulfonate (PEDOT:PSS) and a two dimensional material molybdenum disulfide (MoS₂) 2D nanoflakes have been employed as the active layers of two separate transducers on a single substrate for the detection of relative humidity. The portion with MoS₂ based active region showed high responsivity towards low humidity levels while PEDOT:PSS based portion responded well to high humidity levels. These two sensing portions were connected in a series combination to fabricate a single humidity sensing device capable to respond to a wide range of relative humidity with very high sensitivity. 2D MoS₂ nanoflakes were obtained by aqueous exfoliation of pristine MoS₂. The transducer electrode pairs were fabricated using reverse offset printing technique on a piezoelectric LiNbO₃ substrate. The active thin film of MoS₂ flakes was deposited by Electrohydrodynamic atomization (EHDA) while the thin film of PEDOT:PSS was deposited by SAW-EHDA hybrid system. The fabricated sensor is capable of sensing relative humidity with high sensitivity (50 kΩ/%RH or 800 Hz/%RH) in a wide range of 0% RH to 80% RH. The response and recovery times are also excellent with values of 0.5 s and 0.8 s respectively. This unique approach of combining multiple transducers in a single sensing device can lead to the development of high performance sensors and can solve the current limitations of single transducer based sensing devices.

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