Accepted Manuscript

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PII:	S0955-2219(17)30758-6
DOI:	https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeurceramsoc.2017.11.019
Reference:	JECS 11565
To appear in:	Journal of the European Ceramic Society
Received date:	14-6-2017
Revised date:	5-11-2017
Accepted date:	7-11-2017

Please cite this article as: Liu Yi-Xin, Wang Sea-Fue, Hsu Yung-Fu, Kai Hung-Wei, Jasinski Piotr.Characteristics of LaCo0.4Ni0.6-xCuxO3-δ ceramics as a cathode material for intermediate-temperature solid oxide fuel cells.*Journal of The European Ceramic Society* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeurceramsoc.2017.11.019

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 $Characteristics \ of \ LaCo_{0.4}Ni_{0.6-x}Cu_xO_{3-\delta} \ ceramics \ as \ a \ cathode \ material \ for \ intermediate-temperature \ solid \ oxide \ fuel \ cells$

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Abstract

In this study, the effects of Cu-ion substitution on the densification, microstructure, and physical properties of LaCo_{0.4}Ni_{0.6-x}Cu_xO_{3-δ} ceramics were investigated. The results indicate that doping with Cu ions not only enhances the densification but also promotes the grain growth of LaCo_{0.4}Ni_{0.6-x}Cu_xO₃₋₈ ceramics. The Cu substitution at $x \le 0.2$ can suppress the formation of La₄Ni₃O₁₀, while the excess Cu triggers the formation of La₂CuO_{4.032} phase. The p-type conduction of LaCo_{0.4}Ni_{0.6}O_{3-δ} ceramic was significantly raised by Cu substitution because the acceptor doping (Cu'_{Ni}) triggered the formation of hole carriers; this effect was maximized in the case of LaCo_{0.4}Ni_{0.4}Cu_{0.2}O_{3-δ} composition (1480 S cm⁻¹ at 500°C). Thermogravimetric data revealed a slight weight increase of 0.29% for LaCo_{0.4}Ni_{0.4}Cu_{0.2}O₃₋₈ compact up to 871°C; this is due to the incorporation of oxygen that creates metal vacancies and additional h^{\bullet} carriers, partially compensating the conductivity loss due to the spin-disorder scattering. As the temperature of the LaCo_{0.4}Ni_{0.4}Cu_{0.2}O_{3-δ} compacts rose above 871°C, significant weight loss with temperature was observed because of the release of lattice oxygen to the ambient air as a result of Co (IV) thermal reduction accompanied by the formation of oxygen vacancies. A solid oxide fuel cell (SOFC) single cell with Sm0.2Ce0.8O2-8 (electrolyte) and LaCo_{0.4}Ni_{0.4}Cu_{0.2}O_{3- δ} (cathode) was built and characterized. The Ohmic (0.256 Ω cm²)

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