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*Publication date:*  
2015

*Document Version*  
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link back to DTU Orbit](#)

*Citation (APA):*  
Kjartansdóttir, C. K., Caspersen, M., Egelund, S. D., & Møller, P. (2015). *Investigations on PVD Al/Ni electrocatalysts for alkaline water electrolysis*. Poster session presented at 20th World Hydrogen Energy Conference 2014, Gwangju Metropolitan City, Korea, Republic of.

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# Investigations on PVD Al/Ni electrocatalysts for alkaline water electrolysis

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Alternative electrodes for alkaline electrolysis

- Manufacturing of low-cost and efficient electrodes for alkaline electrolysis, plays a crucial role in promotion of this technique as a suitable route for renewable energy storage.

### 1.2 Characterization of HER and OER properties

- A new method for manufacturing of Raney type electrodes were investigated and the electrodes were characterized using conventional electrochemical techniques.

## 2. Experimental and procedures

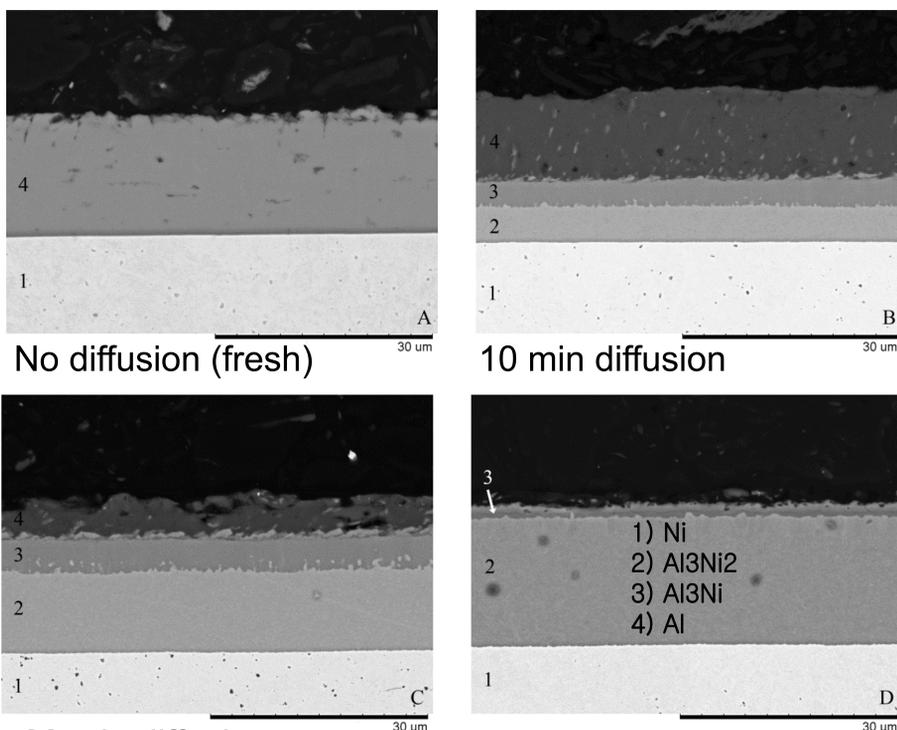
### 2.1 Manufacturing of electrodes

- Deposition of Al by physical vapour deposition onto Ni
- Diffusion of Al and Ni leaves a Raney alloy suitable as skeletal catalyst for increased gas evolution

## 3. Results and discussion

### 3.1 Diffusion

- Up to 30 minutes heat treatment of the Al/Ni couple at 600 °C leads to a fast formation of leachable intermetallic phases (Al<sub>3</sub>Ni<sub>2</sub>, Al<sub>3</sub>Ni) (Figure 1)



- Columnar structure of the PVD Al results in fast grain boundary diffusion (Figure 2)

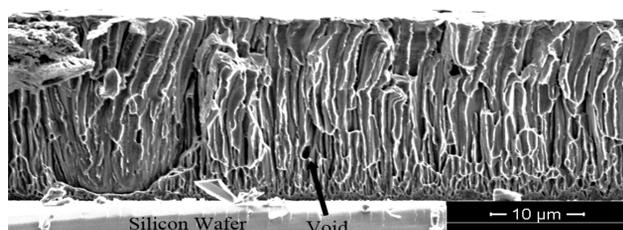


Figure 2: Columnar structure of PVD Al

### 3.2 Characterization of electrodes

- Hydrogen and oxygen evolution reactions were measured

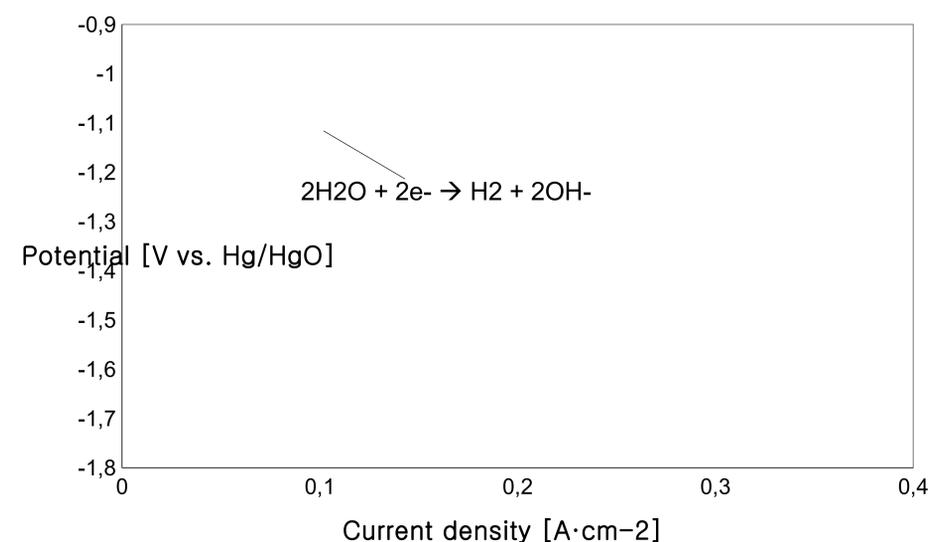


Figure 3: Overpotentials for hydrogen evolution

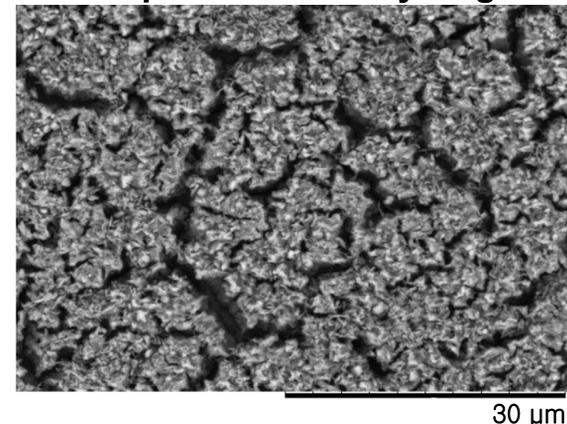


Figure 4: Top-view of activated NiAl surface

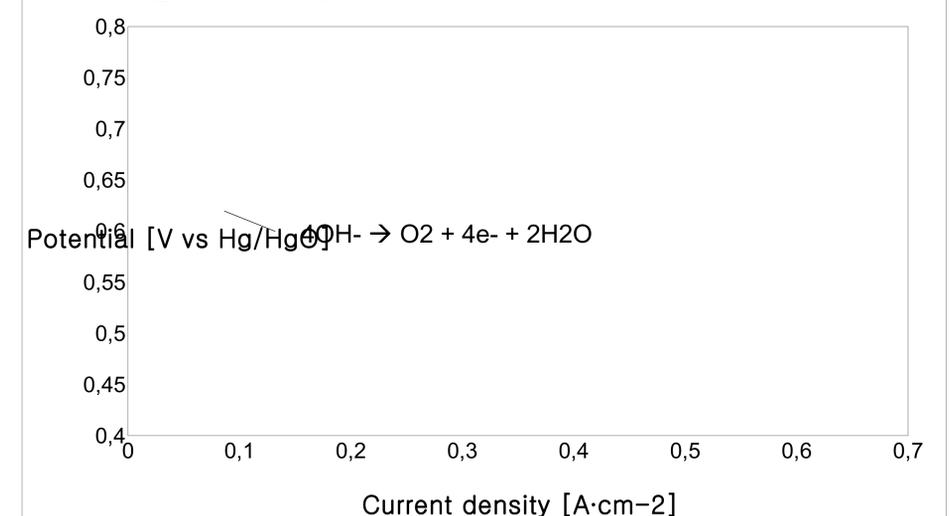


Figure 5: Overpotentials for oxygen evolution (OER)

## 4. Conclusion

- A porous and highly efficient electrode was created
- Fast diffusion of Nickel in columnar Aluminum occurred
- Longer diffusion times yielded higher HER activity.
- Only slight changes in activity for the OER with increased diffusion time
- HER overpotentials @100 mA/cm<sup>2</sup> as low as 123 mV (385 mV lower than polished Ni)
- OER overpotentials @100 mA/cm<sup>2</sup> as low as 338 mV (74 mV lower than polished Ni)