

## Research Article

# Study on the Effect of Different $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$ Ratio on the Properties of Silicate Glass Fibers

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A series of silicate glass fibers with different ratios of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  were prepared, and their corrosion resistance, mass loss, and strength loss were characterized. The crystallization and melting properties of the fibers were analyzed by differential scanning calorimetry (DSC), high temperature viscometer, and high temperature microscope. The results show that the deformation temperature, sphere temperature, hemisphere temperature, and crystallization temperature of the fiber initially decrease and then increase with the increase of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  ratio, while the molding temperature decreases with the increase of the ratio of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$ . When the ratio is close to 1:1, its alkali resistance is almost same as that of AR-glass fiber, and the drawing process performance is better. However, with the increase of the ratio, its alkali resistance continues to decline and the poor wire drawing performance is not conducive to the drawing operation.

## 1. Introduction

Basalt fiber is a new kind of inorganic nonmetallic silicate fiber prepared by melt drawing process with natural basalt ores as raw materials [1, 2]. Compared with ordinary glass fiber, basalt fiber has excellent high tensile strength, elastic modulus, creep resistance, fatigue resistance, high temperature resistance, and other properties [3, 4] and is generally considered as a material with excellent alkali resistance [5–8], which could be widely used in many fields such as civil engineering, transportation, and marine engineering [9, 10].

Most silicate glass fiber is easily eroded by alkali in alkaline environment, such as ordinary alkali-free glass fiber and high strength glass fiber. In the 1970s the British Pilkington company invented alkali resistant glass fiber and improved the alkali resistance of fiber [11], which solved the problems of strength reduction, cracking, and leakage of the ordinary glass fiber due to the alkaline reaction with cement. However, the raw materials for alkali resistant glass fiber are very expensive, which limits its wide application.

By comparison of the components of basalt fiber and alkali resistant glass fiber, it can be concluded that the

characteristic component of basalt fiber is  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  and the characteristic component of alkali resistant glass fiber is  $\text{ZrO}_2$ . Referring to the solubility product constant table, the solubility product constants of  $\text{Fe}(\text{OH})_3$  and  $\text{ZrO}(\text{OH})_2$  are  $4.0 \times 10^{-38}$  and  $6.3 \times 10^{-49}$ , respectively, which are both very small. Therefore, it can be also understood for the mechanism of alkali erosion that  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  on the fiber surface will be converted to  $\text{Fe}(\text{OH})_3$  jelly under the action of alkali solution and form a dense film on glass surface through dehydration polymerization, which can prevent the erosion to fiber from the alkali solution and hydrate. Similarly, when the alkali resistant glass fiber is in alkaline solution,  $\text{ZrO}_2$  on the fiber surface will be converted to  $\text{ZrO}(\text{OH})_2$  jelly and form a dense film on glass surface to prevent the erosion [12].

The alkali resistant glass fiber contains  $\text{ZrO}_2$  with absence of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$ , while basalt fiber contains  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  without  $\text{ZrO}_2$ . In recent years, Lipatov et al. studied the influence of  $\text{ZrO}_2$  on the alkali resistance, mechanical properties, and crystallization properties of basalt fiber [13, 14].

In this paper, based on the small solubility product constant of  $\text{Fe}(\text{OH})_3$  and  $\text{ZrO}(\text{OH})_2$  and the formation of a protective film on the glass fiber surface, silicate glass fibers

TABLE I: Chemical composition of samples (wt%).

Component	1#	2#	3#	4#	E-glass	AR-glass
SiO <sub>2</sub>	61.00	61.00	61.00	61.00	54.35	62
Al <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	14.90	1.0
CaO	5.80	5.80	5.80	5.80	16.60	4
MgO	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	4.6	/
K <sub>2</sub> O	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	0.15	3.0
Na <sub>2</sub> O	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	0.15	11
TiO <sub>2</sub>	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.49	5
ZrO <sub>2</sub>	16.00	12.00	8.00	4.00	/	14
Fe <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	0.20	4.20	8.20	12.20	0.21	/
B <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	/	/	/	/	8.7	/

with different ratios of Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>/ZrO<sub>2</sub> were prepared, and the effect of different Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>/ZrO<sub>2</sub> ratio on alkali resistance fiber and its drawing process performance was investigated.

## 2. Experimental

**2.1. Ingredient Formulae.** As showed in Table 1, a composition scheme with various proportions of Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>/ZrO<sub>2</sub> was designed in which the contents of SiO<sub>2</sub>, Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>, CaO, MgO, K<sub>2</sub>O, Na<sub>2</sub>O, and TiO<sub>2</sub> kept unchanged. Basalt ore was used as main raw material, and quartz sand, zircon, industrial grade iron oxide, alumina, magnesium oxide, calcium oxide, sodium carbonate, and potassium carbonate were used as auxiliary raw material, among which zircon was used to introduce ZrO<sub>2</sub> while basalt ore and industrial iron were used to introduce Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>.

**2.2. Preparation Process.** The raw materials were weighed according to Table 1, mixed uniformly, and melted in the home-made platinum crucible. Melting was kept at 1510 ± 10°C for 24 hours with continuous stirring to obtain a clarified and homogenized glass melt, which was then poured on to a heat resistant steel plate and cooled down to obtain a glass block as the samples. The samples were placed in a self-designed drawing crucible for wire drawing, and the sample fibers with required diameters were obtained by adjusting the temperature of the magma, the height of the liquid surface, and the speed of the wire drawing machine.

**2.3. The Testing Process.** The alkali resistance of glass samples was evaluated by two methods: mass loss and strength retention. The mass and strength of the samples before and after the alkali etching were measured by the electronic analytical balance (Shanghai JA1003) and the fiber tensile tester (Shanghai Institute of Applied Science and Technology, XQ-1A), respectively. And the mass loss rate was calculated according to (1) ( $M_1$ : mass of samples before etching with an alkaline solution;  $M_2$ : mass of samples after etching with an alkaline solution). The strength retention rate was calculated according to (2) ( $T_1$ : fiber strength before alkali solution

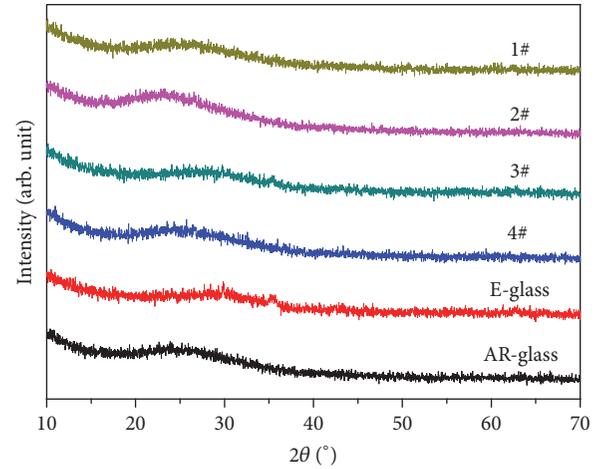


FIGURE 1: X-ray diffraction pattern of fiber samples.

erosion;  $T_2$ : fiber strength after alkali solution erosion).

$$\text{Mass loss rate (\%)} = \frac{M_1 - M_2}{M_1} \times 100 \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Strength retention rate (\%)} = 1 - \frac{T_1 - T_2}{T_1} \times 100. \quad (2)$$

The crystallization temperature of the glass samples was measured by a differential scanning calorimetry (DSC, DSC200F3Maia). The high temperature viscosity and melting properties of the glass samples were measured by high temperature rotational viscometer (Rheoteonic II) and high temperature microscope (OCA20LHT), respectively.

## 3. Results and Discussion

**3.1. Effect of Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>/ZrO<sub>2</sub> on Crystalline Phase of Samples.** Silicate glass fiber is a product of high temperature melting and drawing. In order to investigate whether the process contains undamaged mineral phase or crystalline phase, the fiber was analyzed by X-ray diffraction, as shown in Figure 1.

TABLE 2: Mass and mass loss rate of samples before and after corrosion in NaOH solution.

Sample	1#	2#	3#	4#	E-glass	AR-glass
$M_1/g$	10.5452	10.5235	10.5134	10.5012	10.5418	10.5057
$M_2/g$	10.4693	10.4382	10.4083	10.3752	10.2761	10.4090
Mass loss rate/%	0.72	0.81	1.00	1.20	2.52	0.92

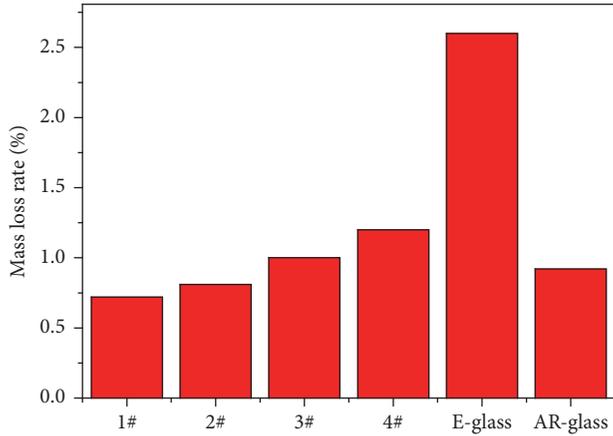


FIGURE 2: Mass loss rate of samples after corrosion in NaOH solution (unit: %).

Therefore, the fiber was analyzed by X-ray diffraction and was shown in Figure 1. It can be seen from Figure 1 that the X-ray diffraction pattern of the fiber has only steamed bread peaks similar to glass. This shows that silicate glass fibers do not have any mineral phases and crystalline phases and exist in the form of amorphous.

**3.2. Effect of  $Fe_2O_3/ZrO_2$  on Mass Loss Rate of Samples.** The melted glass pieces were crushed and the granules were sieved through a 20–40 mesh sieve to obtain powder samples. Samples with known mass ( $M_1$ ) were placed in a conical flask of 2 mol/L NaOH solution and then placed in a water bath at a constant temperature of  $99 \pm 0.5^\circ C$ . The conical flasks were connected to a reflux condenser and sealed with plastic wrap. After 24 h, the powder was weighed again to obtain its mass ( $M_2$ ), and the mass loss rate was calculated. The measured data were presented in Table 2, and the mass loss rate of each sample was shown in Figure 2.

The weight loss rate of 1# sample is the smallest, the weight loss rates of 1#~4# samples increase with the increase of  $Fe_2O_3/ZrO_2$  ratio, and the weight loss rate of 3# is close to that of AR-glass indicating that their alkali resistances are almost equal. The weight loss rate of the E-glass without  $ZrO_2$  and  $Fe_2O_3$  is the highest, which indicates that the E-glass is most resistant to alkali attack.

**3.3. Effect of  $Fe_2O_3/ZrO_2$  on Strength Retention of Samples.** Prepared fibers were immersed in  $Ca(OH)_2$  saturated solution and heated at  $99 \pm 0.2^\circ C$  for 4 h. The tensile strength of the fibers before and after etching was measured according to

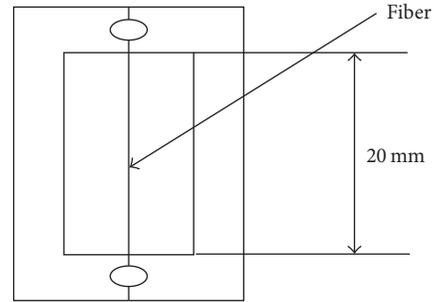
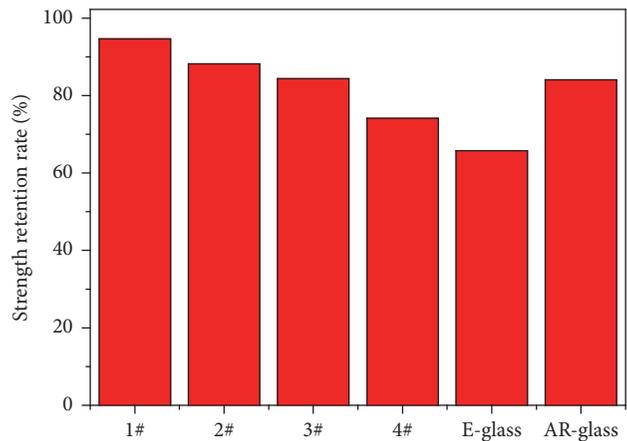


FIGURE 3: Tensile test specimen of fibers.

FIGURE 4: Strength retention rate of samples after corrosion in saturated  $Ca(OH)_2$  solution.

ASTMD3379-75. A single fiber was bonded to the board, as shown in Figure 3. The experiment was carried out by using the 100 cN sensor tensile tester and the testing speed was 2 mm/min. During the test, once the fiber was fixed by the instrument, both sides of the cardboard were cut off with the scissors. For each fiber sample, 25 effective strength values were recorded and then were averaged. The tensile strength retention rates are calculated and presented in Table 3. The trend of strength retention rate is shown in Figure 4.

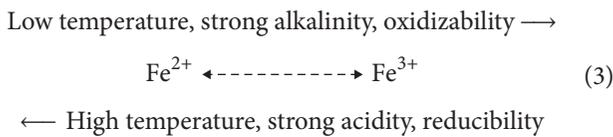
It can be seen that the tensile strength of the 1# sample is the highest before the alkali etching, and the retention rate of the strength after the alkali erosion is the largest. The strength retention rates of 1#~4# samples decrease with the increase of the ratio of  $Fe_2O_3/ZrO_2$ , and the strength retention rate of 3# is most close to that of AR-glass fibers, indicating that the alkali resistance of the two samples is the same. E-glass fibers

TABLE 3: Tensile strength and strength retention rate of samples before and after corrosion in saturated  $\text{Ca}(\text{OH})_2$  solution.

Sample	1#	2#	3#	4#	E-glass	AR-glass
$T_1/\text{MPa}$	2936.72	2798.74	2240.21	1804.86	2340.27	2417.90
$T_2/\text{MPa}$	2780.49	2468.69	1889.44	1338.11	1538.56	2032.74
Strength retention rate/%	94.68	88.21	84.34	74.14	65.74	84.07

do not contain  $\text{ZrO}_2$  and  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$ , so its strength retention rate is the lowest indicating the worst alkali resistance. Reference [13] mentions that the addition of less than 3.1 wt%  $\text{ZrO}_2$  increases the alkali resistance of the basalt fibers by 37%. The addition of more than 3.1 wt%  $\text{ZrO}_2$  to the glass batch reduces the alkali resistance and tensile strength of the basalt fibers. Compared with this paper, there are some differences in data. The reason may be that the chemical composition of the sample is different.

In summary, the addition of  $\text{ZrO}_2$  in the glass could significantly improve the alkali resistance of the glass system, because the  $\text{ZrO}_2$  on the glass surface will be converted into  $\text{ZrO}(\text{OH})_2$  jelly and form a layer of dense membrane on the glass surface by dehydration polymerization to make it more resistant to the corrosion of the alkali solution and other hydrides [12–17]. The mass loss rate and strength retention rate of the glass samples decrease with the increase of the ratio of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$ . It is worth noting that when the ratio of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  is close to 1:1 (3# sample), the mass loss rate and strength retention rate are almost the same as those of AR-glass. The results show that 3# and AR-glass have the similar ability to resist alkali corrosion. In glass system,  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  exists in two states:  $[\text{FeO}_4]$  and  $[\text{FeO}_6]$  [18, 19]; when a monovalent alkali metal ions or divalent alkali metal ions exist,  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  will form  $[\text{FeO}_4]$  tetrahedron and get into the -Si-O-Si- network as a network connector, so that the structure of the glass becomes tighter. On the contrary when there are no monovalent alkali metal ions and divalent alkali metal ions or the ion concentration is low,  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  would be in the glass network gap to form  $[\text{FeO}_6]$  octahedron. At the same time,  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  ions also have a certain accumulation effect on the oxygen ions in the  $[\text{SiO}_4]$  tetrahedron, which makes the structure denser [20]. Both of them could prevent further corrosion of the alkali solution on the fiber surface and the stability of the vitreous structure will not be broken. The relevant research has been carried out by Hwang and Lim [21], and it is considered that the oxidation state of iron has the following dynamic equilibrium relation.



Because the pure  $\text{FeO}$  does not exist in nature, when the temperature reaches  $1475^\circ\text{C}$ , part of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  would be broken down and release oxygen to form  $\text{Fe}^{2+}$ , so  $\text{Fe}^{2+}$  and  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  will always coexist in the silicate glass and the ratio varies with the melting conditions.

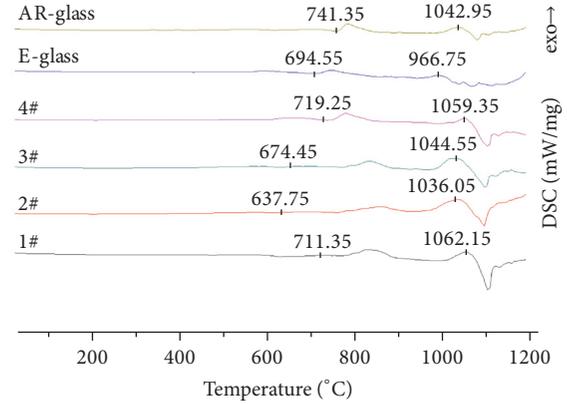


FIGURE 5: DSC curves of fibers.

An important structure of ferrous ferrite ( $\text{Fe}^{3+}\text{-O-Fe}^{2+}$ ) forms, when  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  and  $\text{Fe}^{2+}$  coexist in a silicate glass system. When  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  ions in  $\text{Fe}^{3+}\text{-O-Fe}^{2+}$  structure are in tetrahedral coordination, they act as the network formers, while when  $\text{Fe}^{2+}$  ions are in octahedral coordination they are the network modifiers. When there are excess  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  ions, the excess  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  could only be in octahedral coordination network modifier position, and the formation of  $\text{Si}^{4+}\text{-O-Fe}^{3+}$  structure could make the fiber has tighter structure, better chemical stability, and better mechanical performance. On the other hand, when there are excess  $\text{Fe}^{2+}$  ions, the excess  $\text{Fe}^{2+}$  are also in octahedral coordination network modifier position, and the formation of  $\text{Si}^{4+}\text{-O-Fe}^{2+}$  structure could also prevent further erosion of the alkali solution on the fiber surface.

**3.4. Effect of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  on Crystallization Behavior of Samples.** The glass transition temperature ( $T_g$ ) and the crystallization exothermic peak temperature ( $T_p$ ) [22] of the glass samples were measured at the heating rate of  $10^\circ\text{C}/\text{min}$  in the high purity nitrogen atmosphere, which are shown in Table 4 and in Figure 5.

It could be seen that the glass transition temperature initially decreases from  $711.35^\circ\text{C}$  to  $637.75^\circ\text{C}$  and then rises to  $719.25^\circ\text{C}$ , and the crystallization exothermic peak temperature also decreases from  $1062.15^\circ\text{C}$  to  $1036.05^\circ\text{C}$  and then rises to  $1059.35^\circ\text{C}$ . These results indicate that  $T_g$  and  $T_p$  have a parabola-like trend with the increase of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$ . When the ratio of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  is close to 1:3,  $T_g$  and  $T_p$  reach the minimum values of  $637.75^\circ\text{C}$  and  $1036.05^\circ\text{C}$  respectively, and then  $T_g$  and  $T_p$  begin to rise again. When the ratio of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  is less than 1:3, the crystallization temperature of the glass samples is reduced, and the crystallization ability

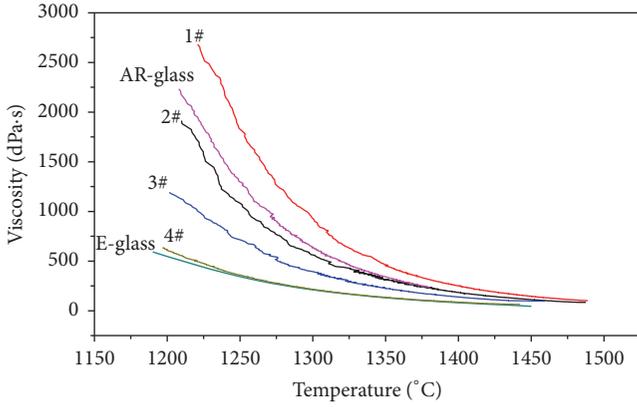


FIGURE 6: Viscosity-temperature curve of samples.

TABLE 4: Crystallization properties of samples.

Sample	$T_g/^\circ\text{C}$	$T_p/^\circ\text{C}$	$(T_p - T_g)/^\circ\text{C}$
1#	711.35	1062.15	350.8
2#	637.75	1036.05	398.3
3#	674.45	1044.55	370.1
4#	719.25	1059.35	340.1
E-glass	694.55	966.75	272.2
AR-glass	741.35	1042.95	301.6

is improved. Furthermore, when the ratio of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  is more than 1:3, the crystallization temperature of glass samples begins to increase, and the crystallization ability is reduced. This is because  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  is mainly present in the form of  $[\text{FeO}_4]$  when  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  is initially added.  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  has an internal polarization effect on the network frame of silicate glass, which makes the network connected tightly, the viscosity of silicate glass increased, and the crystallization ability enhanced. With the increase of the content of  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  would be mainly  $[\text{FeO}_6]$ , manifesting as the increase of the external polarization, which results in gradually loosed network structure of silicate glass, the reduced viscosity, and the reduced crystallization ability. At the same time,  $T_p$  of 3# and AR-glass are not significantly different, while  $T_g$  of 3# is significantly lower than that of the AR-glass. Therefore, liquid phase is easier to form in the 3# sample during the melting process which can reduce energy consumption. Reference [13] mentions that when the content of  $\text{ZrO}_2$  increases from 0 to 6.9 wt%,  $T_p$  increases from  $940^\circ\text{C}$  to  $1005^\circ\text{C}$ . The results show that  $T_p$  and  $T_g$  increase with the increase of  $\text{ZrO}_2$  content. The results of this study are consistent with our study.

**3.5. Effect of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  on High Temperature Viscosity of Samples.** The high temperature viscosity of glass samples was tested. The viscosity-temperature curve is shown in Figure 6, and the corresponding temperature for the samples at  $\log \eta = 2.5$  is shown in Table 5.

Considering the inclinations of the curves in Figure 4, the viscosity of 1# has the largest changing trend as the

TABLE 5: Molding temperature of the samples (unit: C).

Sample	$\log \eta = 2.5$
1#	1379.23
2#	1348.55
3#	1318.9
4#	1260.54
E-glass	1256.67
AR-glass	1356.71

temperature decreases, followed by 2#, 3#, and 4# successively. The viscosity-temperature curve of E-glass is smooth and the viscosity is small. The trends of viscosity curves of AR-glass and 1# samples are basically the same, which might be due to the similar  $\text{ZrO}_2$  content of 1# and AR-glass.  $\text{ZrO}_2$  is octahedral coordination ( $N = 8$ ), and the radius of  $\text{Zr}^{4+}$  is large. Under the same electric charge condition, with the increase of the coordination number ( $N$ ) of the cation in the glass melt, the accumulation of silicon oxygen groups is enhanced and then the viscosity increases. Therefore, the viscosity of 1# and AR-glass is relatively larger. The viscosity of 3# is significantly better than that of AR-glass, which could meet the test results of crystallization properties of glass samples.

As shown in Table 5, with the increase of the ratio of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  in the glass samples, the corresponding temperature of  $\log \eta = 2.5$  decreases, which is the drawing molding temperature. At this time, the drawing molding temperature of 3# is obviously lower than that of AR-glass, which could be beneficial to energy saving and production cost reduction.

**3.6. Effect of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  on High Temperature Melting of Samples.** The glass samples were placed in a furnace and heated up at a rate of  $10^\circ\text{C}/\text{min}$ . The deformation temperature (DT), sphere temperature (ST), and hemisphere temperature (HT) of the glass samples are plotted in Figure 7. The melting states of the glass samples at different temperatures are shown in Figure 8.

From Figure 8, it could be seen that the DT, ST, and HT of the glass samples initially decrease and then increase with the increase of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$ , and the change trend is presented in Figure 5. When the ratio of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  is close to 1:1, the DT, ST, and HT decline to the lowest temperature. Therefore, the melting temperature of 3# is the lowest. Compared with AR-glass, 3# has lower melting temperature, which is accordant with the results of high temperature viscosity test.

When the  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  content in the glass samples increases, the  $\text{ZrO}_2$  content will decrease, which results in the change trend of the melting temperature of 1#~4# samples.  $\text{Zr}^{4+}$  is present in the form of  $[\text{ZrO}_6]$  octahedral in the zirconium silicate melts. There are at least two silicon oxygen tetrahedrons between  $\text{Zr}^{4+}$  ions, and the bond strength of Zr-O-Si bond is high and is not readily destroyed at higher temperature. As a result, the melting temperatures of 1# and AR-glass are higher, while the melting temperatures of 2#, 3#, and 4# decrease with the decrease of  $\text{ZrO}_2$  content (increasing

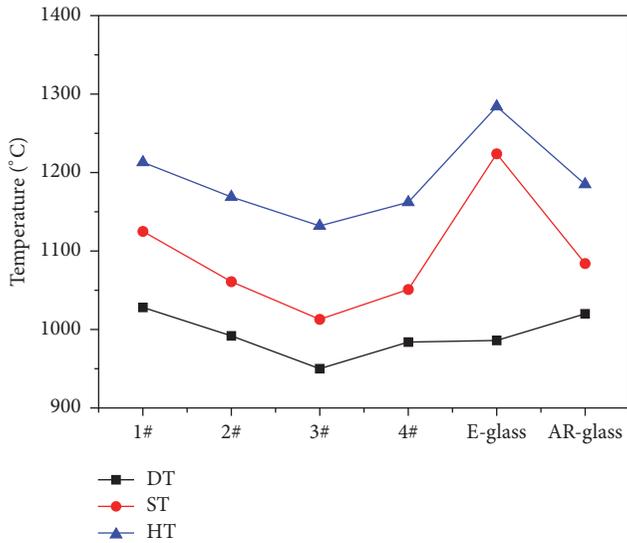


FIGURE 7: Melting temperature curve of samples.

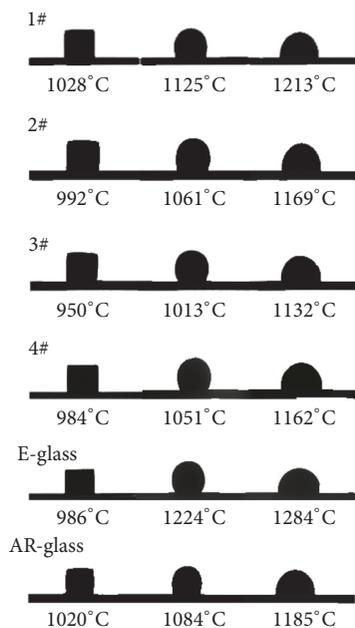


FIGURE 8: Melting state of samples.

ratio of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$ ). At the same time, with the decrease of  $\text{ZrO}_2$  content it is also accompanied by the increase of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  content.  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  is mainly present in the form of  $[\text{FeO}_4]$  when  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  is added initially.  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  has an internal polarization effect on the network frame of silicate glass, which makes the network connected tightly, so that the melting temperatures of 1# and AR-glass are higher. With the increasing content of  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  would be mainly in the form of  $[\text{FeO}_6]$ , which manifests as the increase of the external polarization, results in the gradually loosed network structure of silicate glass, and further causes the decrease of the melting temperature.

## 4. Conclusions

(1) With the increase of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  ratio, the alkali resistance of silicate glass fiber decreases. When the ratio of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  is close to 1:1, the alkali resistances of 3# and AR-glass are almost same and are much higher than that of E-glass.

(2) With the increase of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  ratio, the crystallization temperature of silicate glass shows a trend of decreasing first and then increasing. When the ratio of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  is close to 1:1,  $T_p$  of 3# and AR-glass are almost same, while  $T_g$  is significantly lower than that of AR-glass. Therefore, the 3# has better crystallization properties compared with AR-glass.

(3) With the increase of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  ratio, the viscosities of 1# and AR-glass are the highest, and the viscosities of 2#, 3#, 4#, and E-glass decrease in sequence. When the ratio of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  is close to 1:1, 3# has lower viscosity and drawing molding temperature compared with AR-glass, and the wire drawing is easier in the process of fiber preparation.

(4) With the increase of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  ratio, the DT, ST, and HT of silicate glass initially decrease and then increase. When the ratio of  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3/\text{ZrO}_2$  is close to 1:1, the DT, ST, and HT of 3# have the lowest values, and 3# sample has a lower melting temperature compared with AR-glass, which could save energy consumption and reduce the production cost.

(5) If  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  is used to replace a part of  $\text{ZrO}_2$ , the AR-glass fiber still has good melting characteristics, chemical corrosion resistance, and mechanical properties, which could greatly reduce the production cost of AR-glass fiber.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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