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The zero temperature coefficient in junctionless nanowire transistors

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This Letter presents an analysis of the zero temperature coefficient (ZTC) bias in junctionless nanowire transistors (JNTs). Unlike in previous works, which had shown that JNT did not present a ZTC point, this work shows that ZTC may occur in JNTs depending mainly on the series resistance of the devices and its dependence on the temperature. Experimental results of drain current, threshold voltage, and series resistance are presented for both long and short channel n and p-type devices. © *2012 American Institute of Physics*. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1063/1.4744965]

The junctionless nanowire transistor (JNT) is a heavily doped device that presents a constant doping profile from source to drain.[1–3] This device has been recently proposed as a promising alternative to the miniaturization of advanced metal-oxide-silicon (MOS) technologies without the need of ultrasharp doping concentration gradients to form junctions.[1] JNTs have already exhibited advantages in relation to their inversion-mode (IM) counterparts, such as reduced drain induced barrier lowering (DIBL), reduced electric field in the conduction path, and improved short-channel effects.[4–6] The characterization of JNTs at high and low temperatures (T) has been reported in Refs. 7 and 8, respectively. In both works, the JNT did not present a zero temperature coefficient (ZTC) point, i.e., a gate voltage bias in which the drain current remains the same independently of the temperature. This point in conventional MOS devices is related to the increase of both threshold voltage (V_{TH}) and carriers mobility (μ) with the temperature reduction[9] and is of importance for analog circuit design, e.g., an operational transconductance amplifier biased in this point maintains a constant operating point over a wide range of temperature such that no transistor operates out of saturation, ensuring stability and allowing for a reliable circuit operation.[10] In JNTs, the absence of ZTC point had been attributed to the higher dependence of the V_{TH} on the T and with the almost invariant mobility with respect to the temperature.[7,8] In this Letter, the occurrence of the ZTC point in junctionless devices is addressed, contrarily to previously reported works. Measurements of the drain current, series resistance, and threshold voltage are reported for fabricated devices.

The junctionless nanowire transistors under analysis were fabricated in CEA-LETI on (100) silicon-on-insulator (SOI) wafers, featuring 145 nm buried oxide. The silicon layer (H) was thinned down to 10 nm. The gate stack is composed by a high-κ metal gate structure HfSiON/TiN/Polysilicon with an effective oxide thickness (EOT) of 1.5 nm. Both n and p-type devices were fabricated with different channel lengths (L from 50 nm to 10 μm) and two doping concentrations: $5 \times 10^{18}\,\mathrm{cm}^{-3}$ and $1 \times 10^{19}\,\mathrm{cm}^{-3}$.[11] The measured transistors present mask width of 80 nm. The effective width (W) is expected to be reduced due to processing steps by ~60 nm, resulting in the effective width of about 20 nm. The measured devices present 10 nm nitride spacers at each side of the gate between the end of the channel and the source/drain regions.

The drain current (I_{DS}) was obtained as a function of the gate voltage (V_G) for n and p-type devices at low drain bias ($V_D = 40$ mV) over a wide temperature range. Figure 1 presents the measured I_{DS} vs. V_G curves for both nMOS (A) and pMOS (B) devices with channel length of 50 nm. One can note that the nMOS transistors present a ZTC point whereas the pMOS ones do not. In Figures 1(c) and 1(d), the I_{DS} vs. V_G characteristics are exhibited for n and p-type devices with $L = 10\,\mu$m, respectively. Differently to observed for short devices, in this case, both nMOS and pMOS transistors exhibit the ZTC point, contrarily to the previously published data.[7,8] As mentioned, the occurrence of the ZTC point in conventional MOS devices is related with both the mobility and threshold voltage. In JNTs, the absence of ZTC has been related to V_{TH}, since previous works reported a much higher dependence on T (dV_{TH}/dT) in relation to similar inversion-mode devices.[7,8] The threshold voltages were extracted for the short devices ($L = 50$ nm) of Figs. 1(a) and 1(b) using the charge-based method described in Ref. 12. The V_{TH} values are presented in Fig. 2 as a function of the temperature. In previous works, the absolute dV_{TH}/dT variation obtained in JNTs varied between 0.6 and 1.7 mV/K.[7,8] Therefore, one can note that the devices measured in this work exhibit a lower dependence on T in relation to the previous ones.

According to Ref. 13, the dependence of the threshold voltage on the temperature for nMOS JNTs is described by

$$\frac{\partial V_{TH}}{\partial T} = \frac{\partial V_{FB}}{\partial T} - \left(\frac{q}{\varepsilon_{Si}} \left(\frac{W H}{2H + W} \right)^2 + \frac{q W H}{C_{ox}} \right) \frac{\partial N_D}{\partial T}, \quad (1)$$

where V_{FB} is the flatband voltage, C_{ox} is the gate capacitance per unit of length, and q and ε_{Si} have their usual meaning. The devices measured in Refs. 7 and 8 have a gate oxide (SiO_2) thickness around 10 nm and P^+ polysilicon gate. The first

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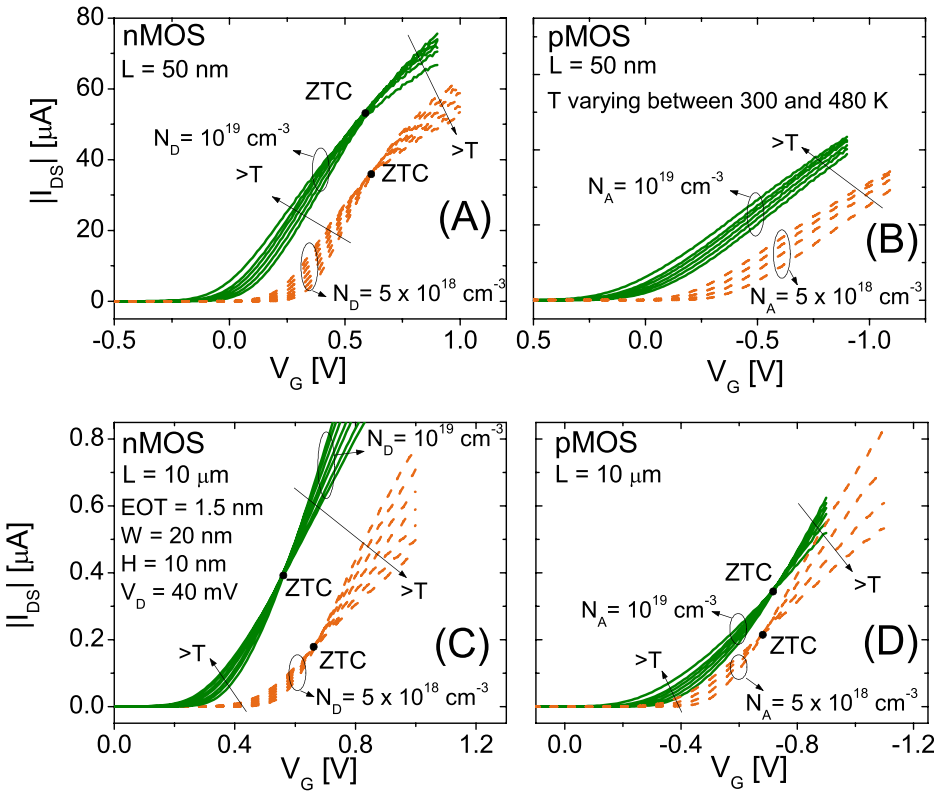


FIG. 1. Experimental drain current curves as a function of the gate voltage for short nMOS (a) and pMOS (b) devices with $L = 50$ nm and long n-type (c) and p-type (d) devices with $L = 10\,\mu$m, measured at $V_{DS} = 40$ mV for several temperatures and different doping concentrations.

term in the right side of Eq. (1) is related to the dependence of the flatband voltage on T. As a metal gate is used in the measured JNTs, the V_{FB} variation is only related to the Fermi level dependence on T. The second term depends on the doping concentration variation with T (dN_D/dT), multiplied by a dimensions-dependent factor. Considering that the devices in the present work and in the previous ones[7,8] present similar doping concentration, the dN_D/dT term is also similar. However, as the devices studied in this work present a much lower EOT (with respect to the works of Refs. 7 and 8), C_{ox} increases, diminishing the dimensions-dependent factor and, consequently, the second term. Therefore, dV_{TH}/dT variation obtained for the JNTs evaluated in this work are similar to the ones obtained for triple-gate inversion mode devices.[7,14]

The second parameter to which the ZTC point is generally related in inversion-mode devices is the carrier mobility. According to Ref. 7, μ presents a weak dependence on the temperature in JNTs. Fig. 3 presents the maximum transconductance ($g_{m,max}$) extracted for the long devices ($L = 10\,\mu$m) of Figs. 1(c) and 1(d). It is worth mentioning that $g_{m,max}$ is directly proportional to the low field mobility. The $g_{m,max}$ has been extracted for the longer devices such that the effect of the series resistance is negligible. The maximum transconductance of the long measured transistors presents a significant dependence on the temperature. It can be noted that $g_{m,max}$ almost doubles its value when the temperature is reduced from 480 K to room temperature for both n and p-type devices with concentration around $5 \times 10^{18}\,\text{cm}^{-3}$. For the devices with doping concentration of $10^{19}\,\text{cm}^{-3}$, the $g_{m,max}$ increase is about 60% and 75% for the p and n-type JNTs, respectively. Therefore, it is clear that the long-channel devices present a considerable mobility dependence on the T, despite the previous results.[7] The rise in the threshold voltage and in the mobility when T is reduced explains the ZTC bias in long devices, just like for conventional MOS inversion-mode devices. However, this cannot explain the ZTC point absence for the shorter pMOS JNTs and also for the previous works.

The regions under the nitride spacers at source/drain create a parasitic resistance, which can affect the JNTs behavior. The series resistances (R_S) were extracted for both n and p-type transistors using the method proposed by Dixit *et al.*[15] and are exhibited in Fig. 4 as a function of the temperature. One can see that R_S follows different trends for nMOS and pMOS devices: in the former, R_S diminishes with T reduction whereas for the latter the opposite behavior is obtained. The series resistance diminution with T has also been observed for triple-gate inversion-mode devices[14] and is attributed to the increase of the mobility, which reduces the resistivity. The R_S in a doped silicon layer is inversely proportional to both mobility and doping concentration.

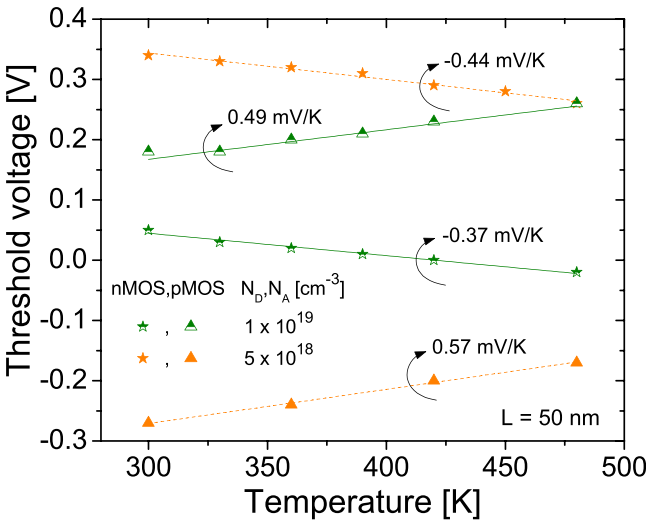


FIG. 2. Threshold voltage as a function of temperature for the short pMOS and nMOS devices ($L = 50$ nm) of Figs. 1(a) and 1(b).

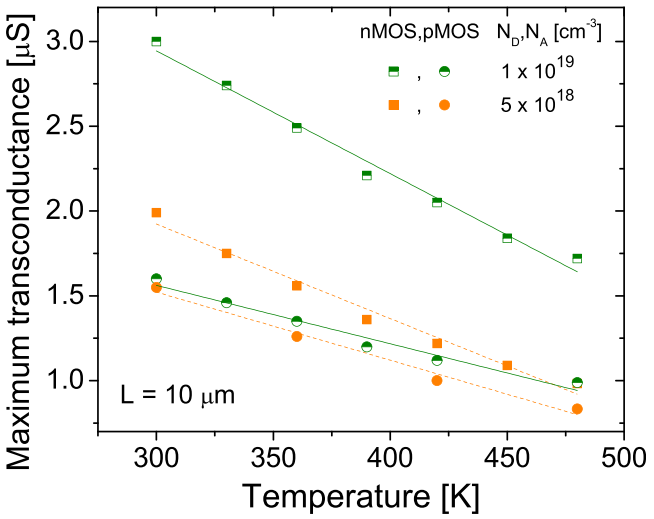


FIG. 3. Maximum transconductance as a function of the temperature for the long devices ($L = 10\,\mu$m) of Figs. 1(c) and 1(d).

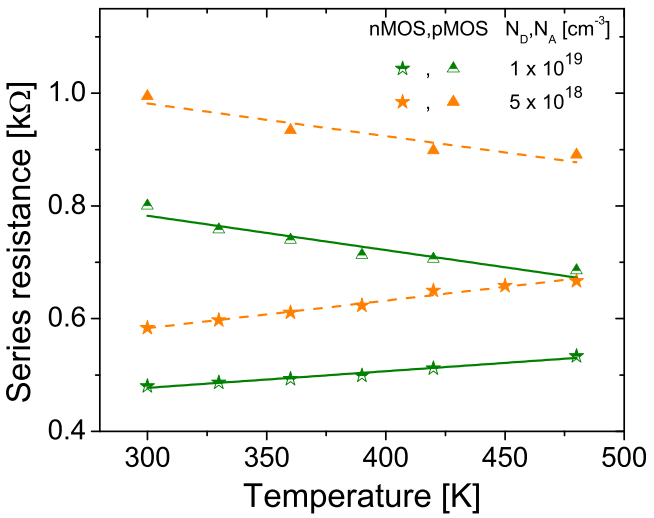


FIG. 4. Series resistance as a function of the temperature extracted for the n and p-type devices.

Although the doping concentrations are close to the Mott transition ($\sim 10^{18}$–$10^{19}\,\mathrm{cm}^{-3}$),[16] which means that the semiconductor behaves like a metal, N_A and N_D suffer a reduction due to the incomplete carrier ionization.[17] As already mentioned in Ref. 13, this partial carrier ionization can affect, for instance, V_{TH} since it is directly proportional to the concentration. When the temperature is reduced, the effects of the incomplete ionization increase, therefore diminishing N_D and N_A, which rises R_S. So, there are two effects with different trends: the mobility, which tends to reduce R_S for lower T, and the incomplete carrier ionization that presents the opposite behavior. From Fig. 4, one can note that for the measured nMOS devices R_S is mainly related to the mobility whereas for the p-type ones the doping concentration is dominant.

Using Altermatt *et al.* model,[18,19] the ionization rate can be calculated for the doping elements used in n and p-type devices for different concentrations. This model considers that the activation energy drops as a function of the doping concentration.[17] It also considers that the incomplete ionization is partially compensated by the fraction of carriers that remains bound to dopant clusters above the Mott transition.[18] This leads to a full ionization at high dopant densities. The ionization rate obtained for phosphorous doped silicon with $N_D = 1 \times 10^{19}\,\mathrm{cm}^{-3}$ varies between 0.94 and 0.97 for the T range between 300 and 500 K, whereas for $N_D = 5 \times 10^{18}\,\mathrm{cm}^{-3}$ the ionization rate varies between 0.88 and 0.95. For boron doped silicon with $N_A = 1 \times 10^{19}\,\mathrm{cm}^{-3}$ and $5 \times 10^{18}\,\mathrm{cm}^{-3}$, the ionization rate varies in the ranges 0.90–0.95 and 0.82–0.92, respectively, for the same T range. For lower concentrations, there is a higher dependence of the ionization ratio on the temperature. Also, it can be noted that for boron, the ionization rate is lower than for phosphorous and presents a higher dependence on the temperature. Therefore, it is expected a higher effect of the incomplete ionization on p-type devices than on n-type ones, which agrees with Fig. 4.

As a conclusion, for the shorter measured p-type devices, no ZTC point has been observed due to the series resistance and its higher dependence on the temperature, which is related to the incomplete ionization. All the n-type devices presented a ZTC point. However, it can be noted that this point is closer to the threshold voltage for the longer devices, since the effect of the series resistance is less pronounced. For the previous works,[7,8] where the devices presented no ZTC bias, this is related to the much higher series resistance.

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