

國立交通大學

電機學院光電顯示科技產業研發碩士班

碩 士 論 文

低溫複晶矽薄膜電晶體在閘極交流電壓下的劣化研究

Study of LTPS TFTs Degradation Under Gate Pulse Stress



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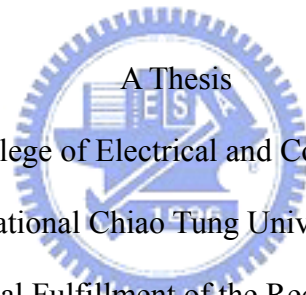
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摘 要



在這篇論文中，我們研究了低溫複晶矽薄膜電晶體在交流訊號下的劣化。對 N-type 而言，當閘極電壓是從-15V 掃到 15V 時，我們觀察到元件的劣化只會和閘極脈波下降的時間有相關，和上升的時間不相關。然而，我們觀察到如果閘極電壓範圍都是小於臨限電壓的話，元件的劣化會同時和閘極脈波上升的時間以及下降的時間有相關。對 P-type 而言，當閘極電壓是從-15V 掃到 15V 時，我們觀察到元件的劣化只會和閘極脈波上升的時間相關，和上升的時間不相關。當閘極電壓是從 0V 掃到 15V 時亦是如此。另外，由 I-V 量測我們可以得知元件在 AC stress 後 channel 的情形，但針對劣化的位置及機制等資訊卻不能觀察到，因此我們經由 C-V 特性做進一步的研究，這能以 I-V 的變化為基準而得到更多的證明。對 N-type 而言，stress 後 C-V 曲線有微微延伸的情形，對 P-type 而言則是在 Cmin 有微微上升的情形，我們知道 N-type 和 P-type 的劣化機制是不同的。

元件的劣化程度會和靠近源極和汲極的橫向電場的大小以及通道載子數目變化有關。我們提出了薄膜電晶體的 Slicing Model，它是考慮了電晶體通道的電阻以及閘極氧化層的電容，來解釋複晶矽電晶體在交流訊號下的劣化。在實驗的數據以及模擬的結果

合理的對照之下，劣化的程度真的是會和靠近源極和汲極的橫向電場的大小以及載子數目變化有關。此外，對 N-type 和 P-type 而言，利用模擬的結果引入一個新的指標，它和劣化的程度幾乎是呈正比，因此將這個 model 應用在 LTPS TFTs 上可以幫助我們可靠度和 lifetime 的相關評估。



Study of LTPS TFTs Degradation Under Gate Pulse Stress

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In this thesis, the device degradation of LTPS TFT under AC (alternating current) stress has been investigated. It was discovered that for the N-type TFTs, as the gate voltage toggling between -15 V and 15 V, the degradation depends on the falling time (T_f) of the gate pulse but not on the rise time (T_r). However, for the gate voltage swinging from -15 V to 0 V, it is observed that the degradation is both influenced by T_r and T_f . As for the P-type ones, for the gate voltage swinging both from -15 V to 15 V and from 0V to 15V, it is observed that the degradation depends on the T_r of the gate pulse but not on T_f . In addition, the degradation mechanisms of AC stress are further studied by the C-V characteristics, which can give more evidences to explanations based on the I-V behaviors. It was found that the C-V curves for N-type devices show stretch out slightly after AC stress, while those for P-type devices somewhat increase in the depletion region.

The degree of degradation is concerned with the magnitude of the lateral transient

electrical field near the source/drain and the flow of channel carriers. A slicing model is proposed to explain the degradation of poly-Si TFTs under gate pulse stress via circuit simulator, the voltage inside the channel can be calculated and the coupling effect is investigated. A reasonable agreement between the experiment data and the simulation results reveals that the degradation is related to the transient electrical field and the change of the charge number near the edges of the channel. In addition, for both N-type and P-type devices, an index which can be calculated using a slicing model is proposed. The index is almost proportional to the degree of degradation. The results are very helpful to the development of reliability model for LTPS TFTs.



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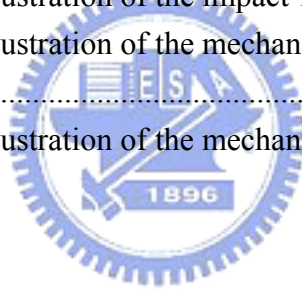
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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of Low-Temperature Polycrystalline Silicon Thin Film Transistors

In recent years, low-temperature polycrystalline silicon (LTPS) thin film transistors (TFTs) have attracted much attention because they have been used very successfully for active matrix displays, such as active matrix liquid crystal displays (AMLCDs) [1.1]-[1.7] and active matrix organic light emitting displays (AMOLEDs) [1.8]-[1.14]. Except large area displays, poly-Si TFTs have been applied into some memory device such dynamics random access memories (DRAMs) [1.15], static random access memories (SRAMs) [1.16], and have great potential for 3-dimension IC applications [1.17],[1.18].

Compared with conventional a-Si TFTs, the field effect mobility of poly-Si TFTs is much higher. Higher field effect mobility means transistors can provide higher driving current. The higher driving currents can allow the pixel-switching element TFT's dimension shrinkage, resulting in higher aperture ratio and lower parasitic gate-line capacitance for improved display performance. Besides, the superior mobility performance allows the integration of both the active matrix pixel switching elements and the peripheral driving circuitry on the same glass substrate, which brings the era of system-on-glass (SOG) that will include a memory, central processing unit (CPU), and display on the same glass. In this way, the process complexity can be greatly simplified and manufacturing cost can be substantially reduced. The ability of fabricating high-performance LTPS TFTs enables their use in a wide range of new applications. Therefore, there is a great interest in improving the performance of LTPS TFTs.

In comparison with signal-crystalline silicon, poly-Si film contains many grain boundary defects and intra-grain defects. The order of poly-Si grain size is about 0.3 μ m. At present,

when poly-Si TFTs are used in LCD applications, the minimum channel length is typically much larger than $3\mu\text{m}$, and therefore a large number of grain boundaries are present in the channel. Electrons are scattered at the grain boundaries or trapped by the interface states, leading to lower mobility than in single crystal silicon. Much effort has been made to increase the performance of LTPS TFTs [1.19]-[1.21]. Crystallization of a-Si thin films has been considered the most critical process for fabricating high-performance LTPS TFTs. Among various crystallization technologies, excimer laser crystallization has become the mainstream technology for mass production of flat panel displays (FPDs) because of high throughput, low temperature process compatible with glass substrate, and formation of high-quality poly-Si.

In summary, it is expected that the poly-Si TFTs will become increasingly important in future technology, especially when the 3-D circuit integration and SOG era is coming. There are lots of interesting and important topics that are worthy to be researched.

1.2 Review of Degradation Model for TFT under AC Stress

In previous reports, Uraoka *et al.* attributed the dominant AC degradation mechanism to hot electrons generated by trapped electrons exposed to the high electric field and gain energy from the electric field during AC stress. The mechanism was analyzed by using a pico-second emission microscope and device simulation to examine the transient current experimentally and theoretically, respectively.

The degradation model under AC stress by Uraoka is described as follow. When the gate voltage is high (ON state and $V_g=15\text{V}$), the electrons gather to form a channel, as shown in Fig. 1-1 (a). When the gate voltage drops (ON→OFF and $V_g=15\text{V}\rightarrow-15\text{V}$), the electrons in the channel move rapidly to the source and drain shown in Fig. 1-1 (b). Some of the trapped electrons are exposed to the high electric field and gain energy from the field. Hot electrons

are generated at this moment and form electron traps shown in Fig. 1-1 (c), result in the increase of density of state (DOS) in tail edge of poly-Si.

As for the P-type TFTs, when the gate voltage is low (ON state and $V_g = -15V$), the holes gather to form a channel shown in Fig. 1-2 (c). When the voltage transition from low to high (ON \rightarrow OFF and $V_g = -15V \rightarrow 15V$), the holes in the channel move rapidly to the source and drain shown in Fig. 1-2 (b). Carriers gain energy from this electric field and become hot carriers. Therefore, more hot electrons are generated which causes trap formation at the grain boundaries around the drain edge shown in Fig. 1-2 (a).



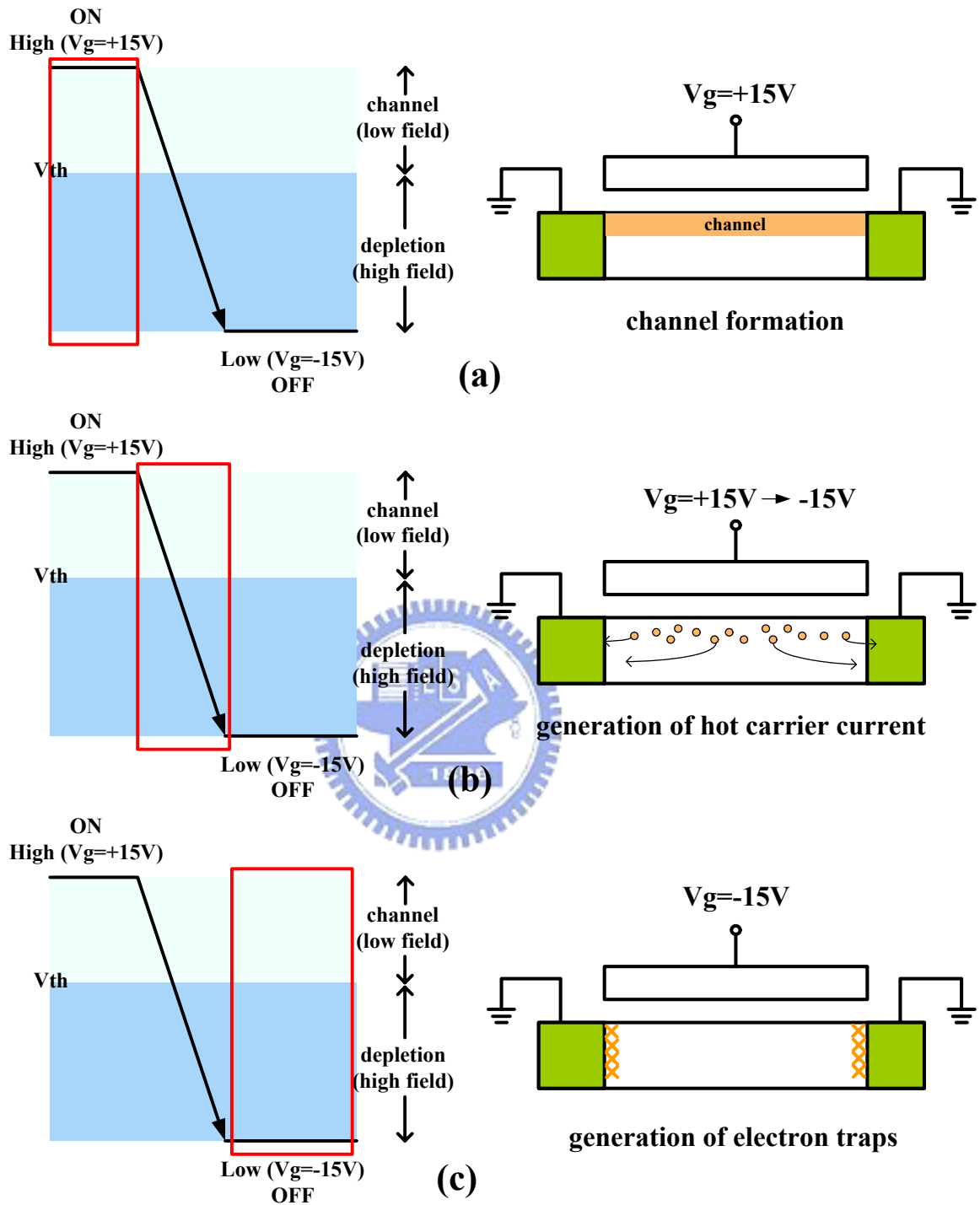


Fig. 1-1 A schematic diagram for degradation model of the N-type TFT

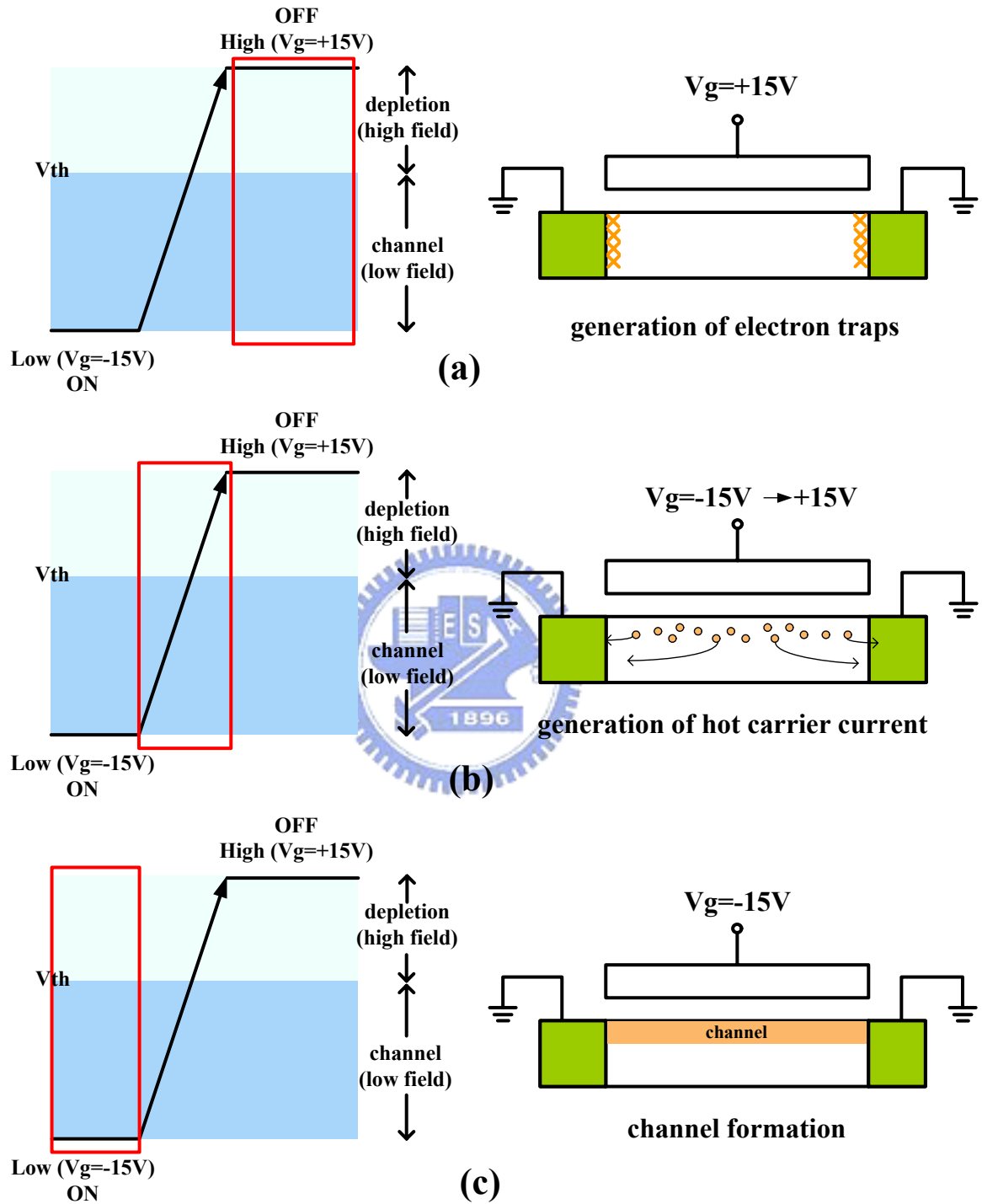


Fig. 1-2 A schematic diagram for degradation model of the P-type TFT

1.3 Motivation

In order to make LTPS TFTs suitable for advanced circuits, besides the improvement of performance of LTPS TFTs, the improvement of reliability is also significant. Therefore, reliability testing and understanding of reliability mechanisms become more and more necessary.

The reliability mechanisms of LTPS TFTs under DC (direct current) bias stress have been widely discussed. However, up to now, the reliability of LTPS TFTs under AC stress has been paid much less attention. The summary of previous researches are shown in Fig. 1-3. In the initial stage of practical applications, the LTPS TFTs used as switching elements for AMLCDs are operated in an AC mode, thus AC stress is much closer to real operational condition than conventional DC stress. In addition, unlike pixel TFTs, the TFTs in driver circuits are subjected to high-frequency voltage pulses. Finally, CMOS technology is necessary for driver circuits, which means that both the understanding of the reliability of N-type and P-type LTPS TFTs are important and necessary. Therefore, it is extremely important to understand the degradation mechanisms of N-channel and P-channel LTPS TFTs under AC stress.

In this study, the stressed mobility ratio to the initial value of N-channel and P-channel LTPS TFTs under various AC stress conditions. The stress conditions including swing range, and falling/rising times of the gate pulse, was discussed to verify the degradation mechanism under AC stress.

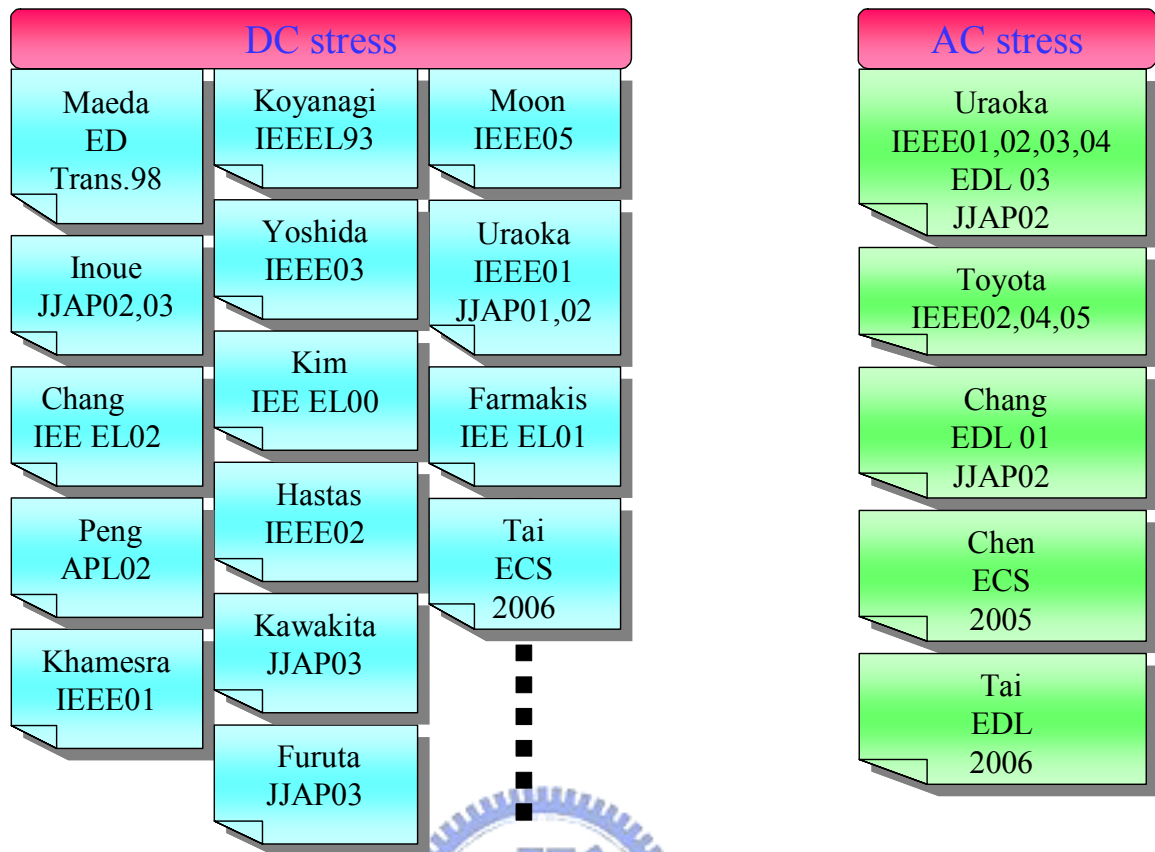


Fig. 1-3 Previous researches of LTPS TFT reliability

Chapter 2 Experimental Procedures

2.1 Procedures of Fabrication of LTPS TFTs

LTPS TFTs used in the experiment were the conventional top-gate structure and fabricated on glass substrates. The cross-section views of N-channel and P-channel LTPS TFTs are shown in Fig 2-1 and Fig. 2-2 respectively. The basic process flow is described as follows. Firstly, the buffer oxide and a-Si:H films were deposited on glass substrates by the PECVD system. Then, XeCl excimer laser was used to crystallize a-Si:H film followed with poly-Si active area definition. Subsequently, gate insulator was deposited by PECVD. The thickness of gate oxide is 650Å. Next, the metal gate formation and source/drain doping were performed. Dopant activation and hydrogenation was carried out after interlayer dielectric deposition. Finally, contact holes formation and metallization were performed to complete fabrication work. The lightly doped drain (LDD) structure was used in the N-channel TFTs to enhance hot carrier endurance while not used in P-type devices. The width/length of the TFT was $20\text{ }\mu\text{m}/5\text{ }\mu\text{m}$. The TFTs of the same dimension will be used for reliability testing in the chapter 3 and chapter 4.

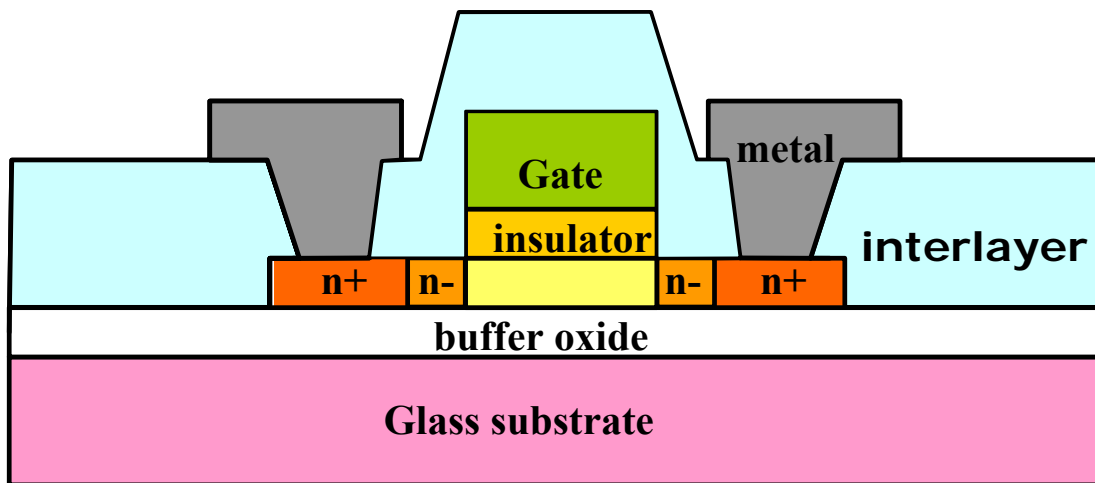


Fig. 2-1 The cross-section views of N-channel LTPS TFTs with LDD structure

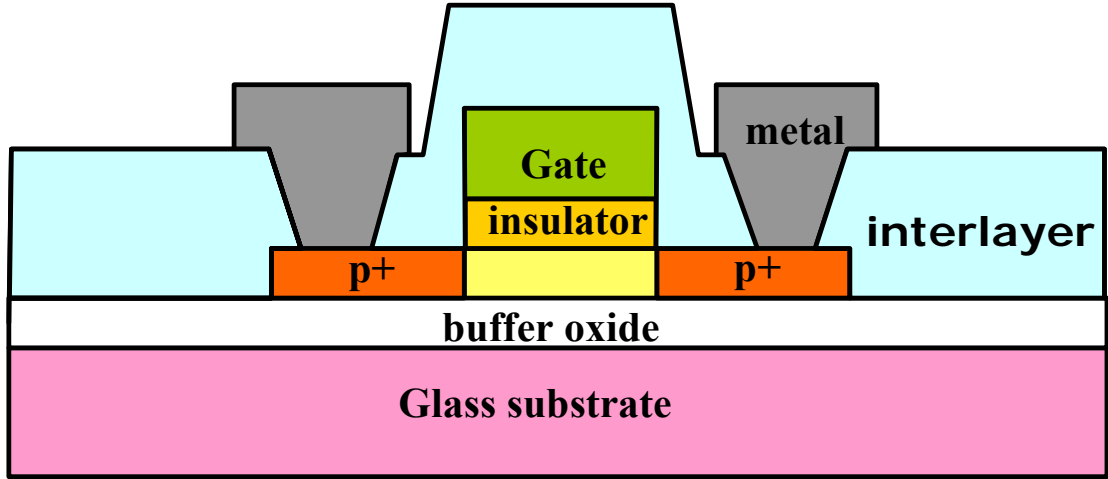


Fig. 2-2 The cross-section views of P-channel LTPS TFTs

2.2 AC Stress Conditions

The Agilent 4156A semiconductor parameter analyzer with pulse generator was used to measure the I-V curve and stress the device with different conditions. The basic parameters of AC signal consists of frequency (F), signal high level (Vgh), signal low level (Vgl), high-level time (Vgh), low-level time (Vgl), rising time (Tr), and falling time (Tf). Fig. 2-3 shows the waveform of the AC signal. In AC signal, the definition of individual parameter is given as follow:

$$T = T_r + T_{vgh} + T_f + T_{vgl} \quad (2.1)$$

$$F = 1/T \quad (2.2)$$

$$\text{Duty ratio} = (T_{vgh} + 1/2 T_r + 1/2 T_f) / T \quad (2.3)$$

where T is the signal period.

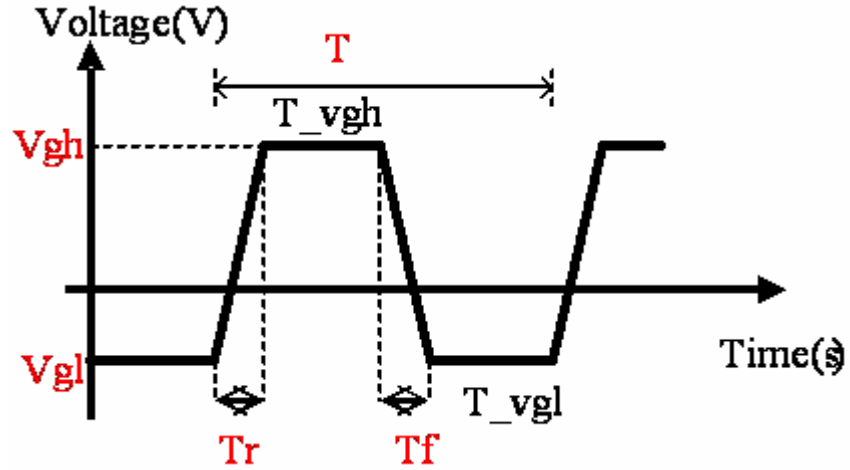


Fig. 2-3 Waveform and definition of the AC signal

Under AC stress, pulse voltage was applied to the gate electrode and source and drain were grounded, which is shown in Fig. 2-4. The standard stress condition in the experiment is the gate voltage swing of -15 V to 15 V, $F = 500$ kHz, T_r and T_f are both 100ns, and duty ratio is 50%. These parameters can be adjusted and then various stress conditions on the gate electrode are performed to examine the reliability of LTPS TFTs. To investigate which parameter of the stress parameters dominates the degradation of the N-channel and P-channel TFTs transfer characteristics, T_r and T_f from 100ns to 700ns are changed for gate swing range of -15 V to 15 V. Secondly, the effects at T_r and T_f for the gate swing in the depletion region are studied. The experimental conditions is shown in table 2-1.

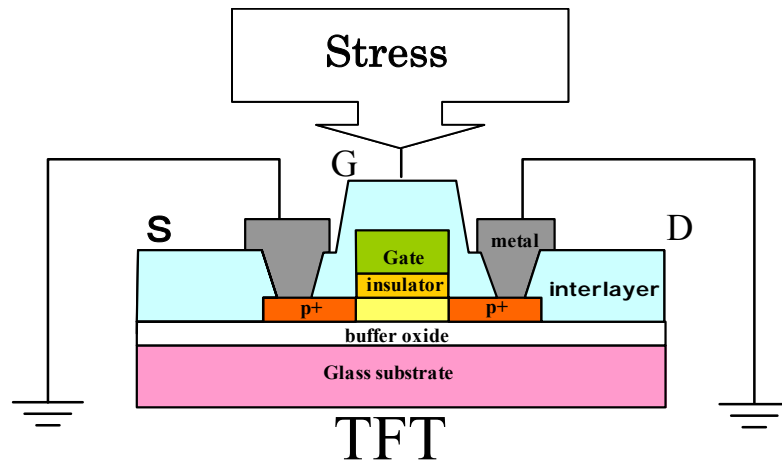
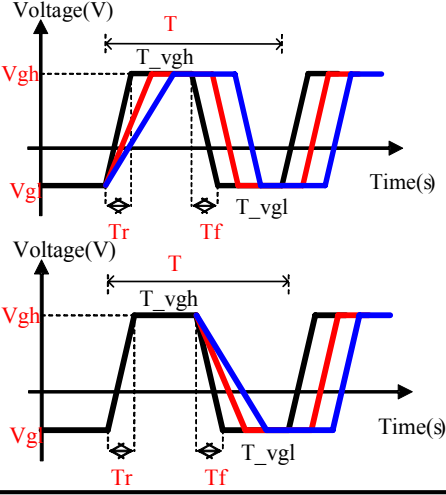


Fig. 2-4 TFT under AC stress with source and drain grounded

Table 2-1 The experiment condition forms of the N-type and P-type.

	Experiments	Time	measurement	
1.	N-type TFT for $V_g = -15V \sim 15V$	$T_r \sim T_f = 100ns \sim 300ns \sim 700ns$ 	IV	CV
2.	N-type TFT for $V_g = -15V \sim 0V$		IV	CV
3.	P-type TFT for $V_g = -15V \sim 15V$		IV	CV
4.	P-type TFT for $V_g = 0V \sim 15V$		IV	CV

■ Number of Repetition is the same.

In order to compare the different stress conditions and attain the faithful stressed behavior, a large amount of devices should be stressed and compared. However, the existence of grain boundaries in the channel might make the degradation behavior more complicated, and it may be therefore be more difficult to find the dominant parameters of AC stress. In prior study [22], the diverse degradation behaviors occur due to different sources of LTPS TFTs and variation of the initial value of extracted parameter. In this work, crosstie devices were adopted for the consistency of the initial device behaviors.

2.3 Parameter Extraction Method

For most of the researches on TFT, the constant current method is widely-used to determine the threshold voltage (V_{th}). The threshold voltage in the thesis is determined from this method, which extracts V_{th} from the gate voltage at the normalized drain current

$$I_N = I_D / (W_{eff} \cdot L_{eff}) = 10nA \quad \text{for } V_D = 0.1V.$$

The transfer characteristics of poly-Si TFTs are similar to those of conventional MOSFETs. The MOSFETs can be applied to the poly-Si TFTs, so the first order I-V relation in the bulk Si. The field effect mobility (μ , μ_{FE}) is derived from the maximum value of the transconductance g_m , which can be expressed as:

$$I_D = \mu_{FE} C_{ox} \frac{W}{L} [(V_G - V_{th})V_D - \frac{1}{2}V_D^2] \quad (2-4)$$

Where

C_{ox} is the gate capacitance per unit area,

W is channel width,

L is channel length,

V_{th} is the threshold voltage.

If the drain voltage V_D is much smaller as compared with $(V_G - V_{th})$ (i.e. $V_D \ll V_G - V_{th}$), then the drain current can be approximated as:

$$I_D = \mu_{FE} C_{ox} \frac{W}{L} (V_G - V_{TH}) V_D \quad (2-5)$$

And the transconductance is defined as:

$$g_m = \left. \frac{\partial I_D}{\partial V_G} \right|_{V_D = \text{const.}} = \frac{WC_{ox}\mu_{FE}}{L} V_D$$

Therefore, the field effect mobility can be expressed as:

$$\mu_{FE} = \frac{L}{C_{ox} W V_D} g_m \quad (2-6)$$

In other words, the field-effect mobility can be extracted by taking the maximum value of the g_m into (2-6) when $V_D = 0.1V$

2.4 C-V Measurements

The C-V curves of the gate-to-drain capacitance (C_{GD}) before and after stress at different frequencies were measured with the Agilent 4284A precision LCR meter.

Since it is difficult to observe the defect position in TFTs with the I-V characteristic, the C-V measurement is used to examine the information about position and type of degradation in the device after stress [23]. For instance, if carriers are trapped by defects, C-V curve stretch out slightly, or if states are generated additionally, C-V curve increase somewhat in the depletion region. Besides, the C-V curves are helpful to identify whether the dominant mechanism of degradation is the increase of fixed charges or trap states. In this work, since the degradation should be symmetric for the gate-to-source and gate-to-drain case, the C-V curves are obtained only for the Cgd curves measured between the drain and the gate.



Chapter 3 N-type Poly-Si TFT under Gate Pulse Stress

3.1 Behavior of I-V curve after stressing

3.1.1 Rising Time and Falling Time for V_g of ON and OFF Region

The transient time dependence for the degradation was examined as shown in Fig. 3-1. During the variation of rising time T_r from 100 ns to 700 ns with a fixed T_f of 100 ns, no significant change in μ/μ_0 was observed as shown in Fig. 3-1 (a). On the contrary, the degradation depended strongly on the falling time T_f as shown in Fig. 3-1 (b). The degradation is remarkably accelerated with the decrease of the falling time from 700 ns for 100 ns for a fixed T_r of 100 ns. In the case of changing rising time, the gate voltage varies from OFF region to ON region, and the mobile carriers are sited at so low electrical field that no device degradation is formed. But in the case of changing falling time, the gate voltage varies from ON region to OFF region, some carries remain in the channel and are sited at high electrical field to be hot carries.

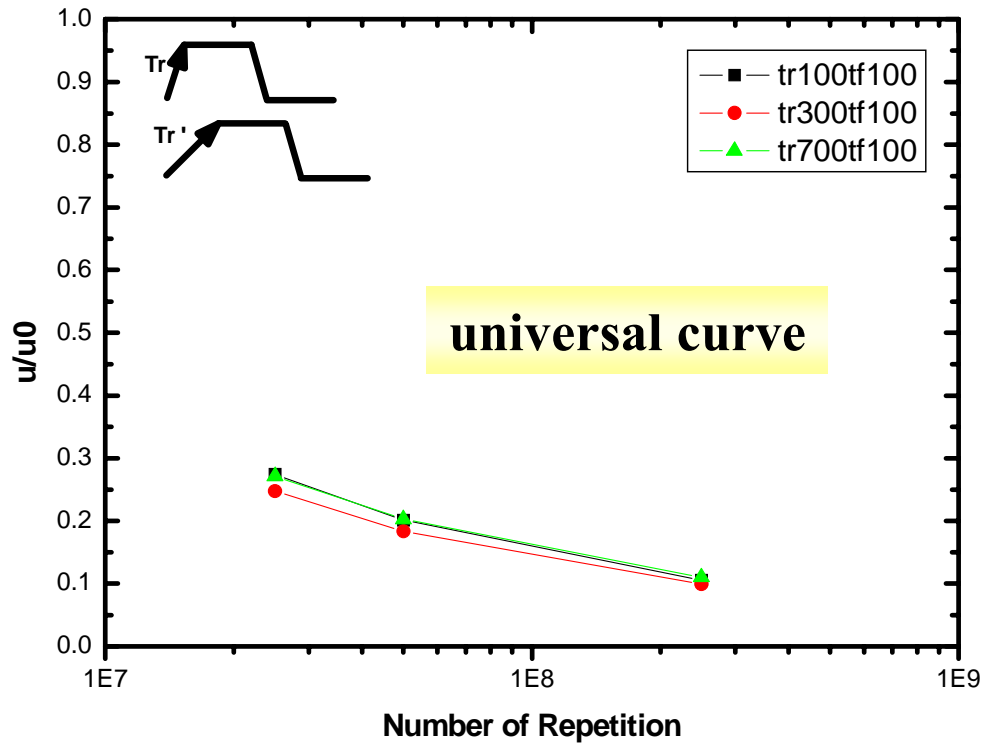


Fig. 3-1 (a) Degradation of μ/μ_0 in N-channel TFT under AC stress with $V_g = -15$ V to 15 V measured for various rising times T_r and for $T_f = 100$ ns.

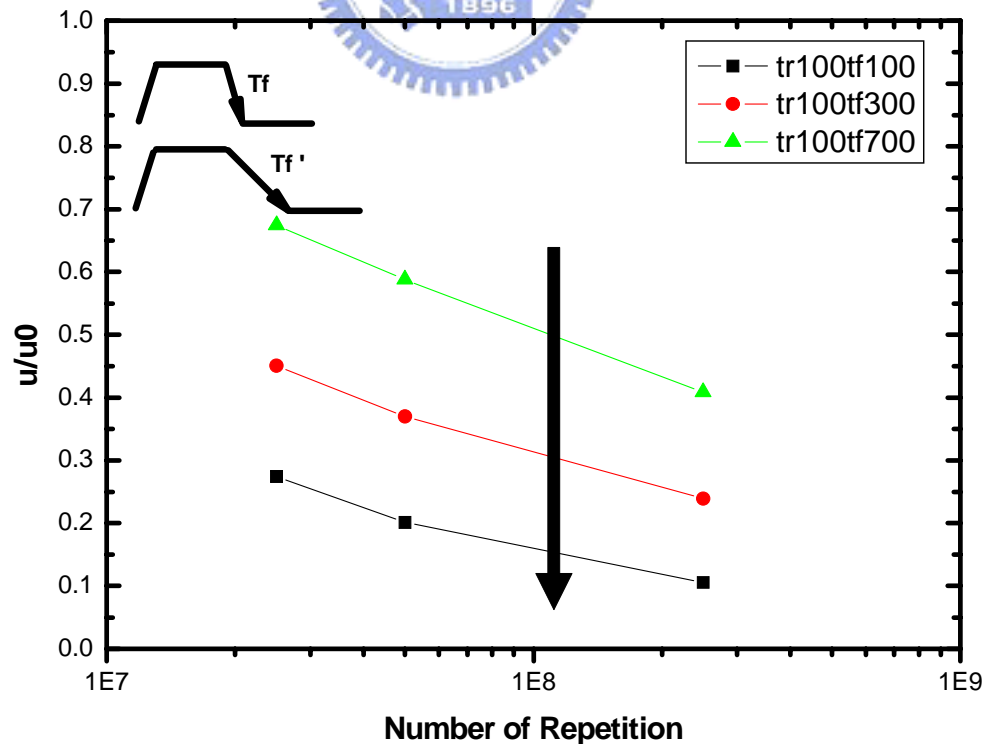


Fig. 3-1 (b) Degradation of μ/μ_0 in N-channel TFT under AC stress with $V_g = -15$ V to 15 V measured for various rising times T_f and for $T_r = 100$ ns.

3.1.2 Rising Time and Falling Time for V_g in the OFF Region

In prior study, we have known that degradation by pulse swing for the ON region was very small, however, that by pulse swing for the OFF region was large. We have already observed the transient time dependence for the degradations of N-channel TFTs under AC stress with $V_g = -15\text{ V}$ to 15 V . For the gate swing of -15 V to 15 V , it consists of $V_g = -15\text{ V}$ to 0 V and $V_g = 0\text{ V}$ to 15 V . For N-channel TFT, $V_g = -15\text{ V}$ to 0 V is OFF region, and $V_g = 0\text{ V}$ to 15 V is ON region. Because no device degradation is formed for N-channel TFT under AC stress with $V_g = 0\text{ V}$ to 15 V , we are only interested in the transient time dependence for the degradation of N-channel TFT at $V_g = -15\text{ V}$ to 0 V . For the gate voltage swings from -15 V to 0 V , it is firstly observed that the degradation is obviously dependent on both the rising time and falling time, as shown in Fig. 3-2 (a) and Fig. 3-2 (b). Since there are no induced electrons for these applied gate voltages, it reveals that the previously proposed model may be incomplete.

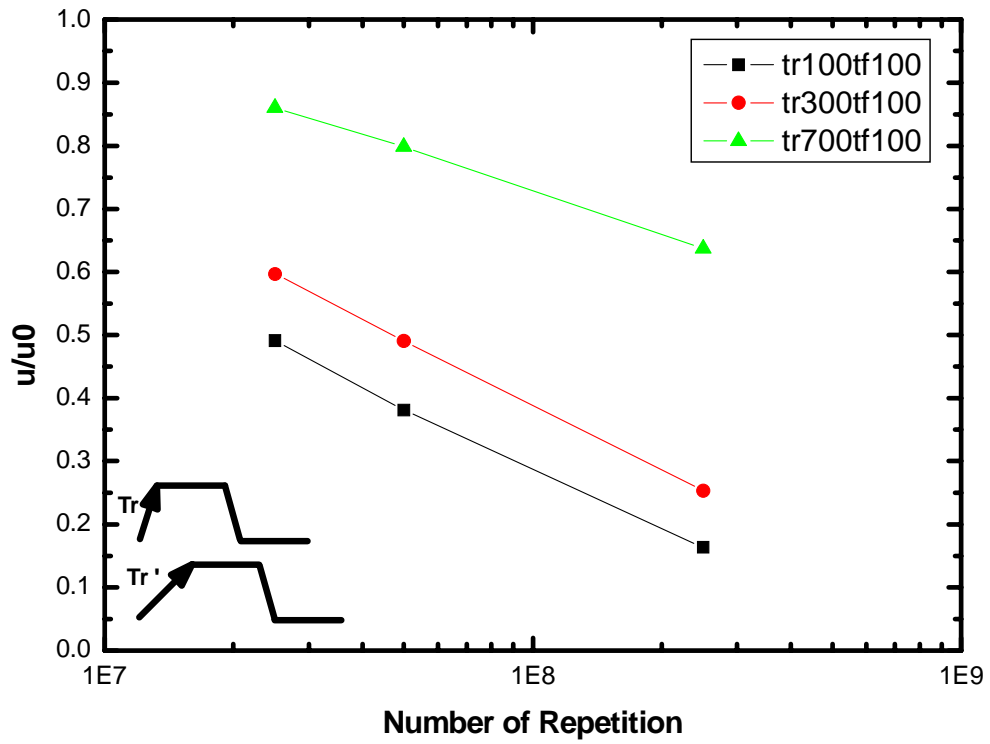


Fig. 3-2 (a) Rising time dependence of the degradation.

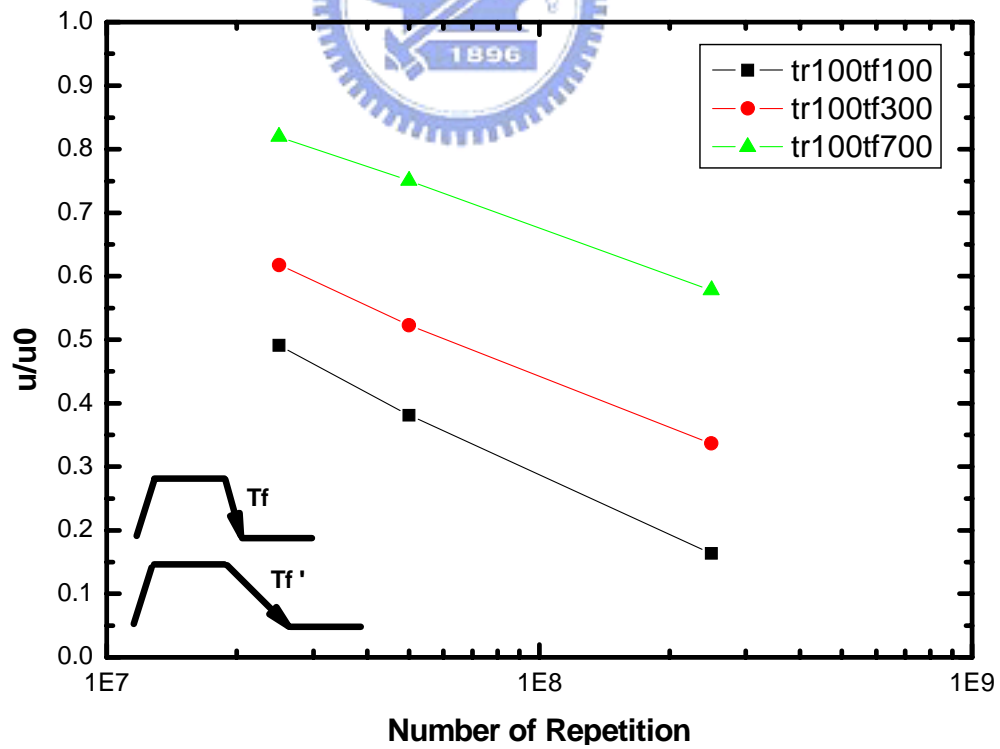


Fig. 3-2 (b) Falling time dependence of the degradation.

3.2 Behavior of C-V curve after stressing

It is entirely fair to say that I-V measurements could reveal the whole channel's characteristics which would not afford to provide detailed information about the mechanism of devices. Therefore, C-V measurement would become essential for delicate analysis [24-26]. Generally speaking, the C-V measurement is characterized by its ability of revealing characteristics of gate-to-source and gate-to-drain instead of the whole channel.

In this section, the gate-to-drain capacitance C_{GD} of N-type and P-type devices are measured with frequencies of 1MHz. The C_{GD} curve is measured with a floating source. Besides, the curves are plotted with normalized value of capacitances, which means the ratio of the measured value to the maximum value of the capacitance.

3.2.1 Rising Time and Falling Time for V_g of ON and OFF Region



The transient time dependence for the degradation was examined as shown in Fig. 3-3. During the variation of rising time T_r from 100 ns to 700 ns with a fixed T_f of 100 ns, no significant change in C/C_{ox} was observed as shown in Fig. 3-3 (a). On the contrary, the degradation depended strongly on the falling time T_f as shown in Fig. 3-3 (b). The degradation is remarkably accelerated with the decrease of the falling time from 700 ns for 100 ns for a fixed T_r of 100 ns.

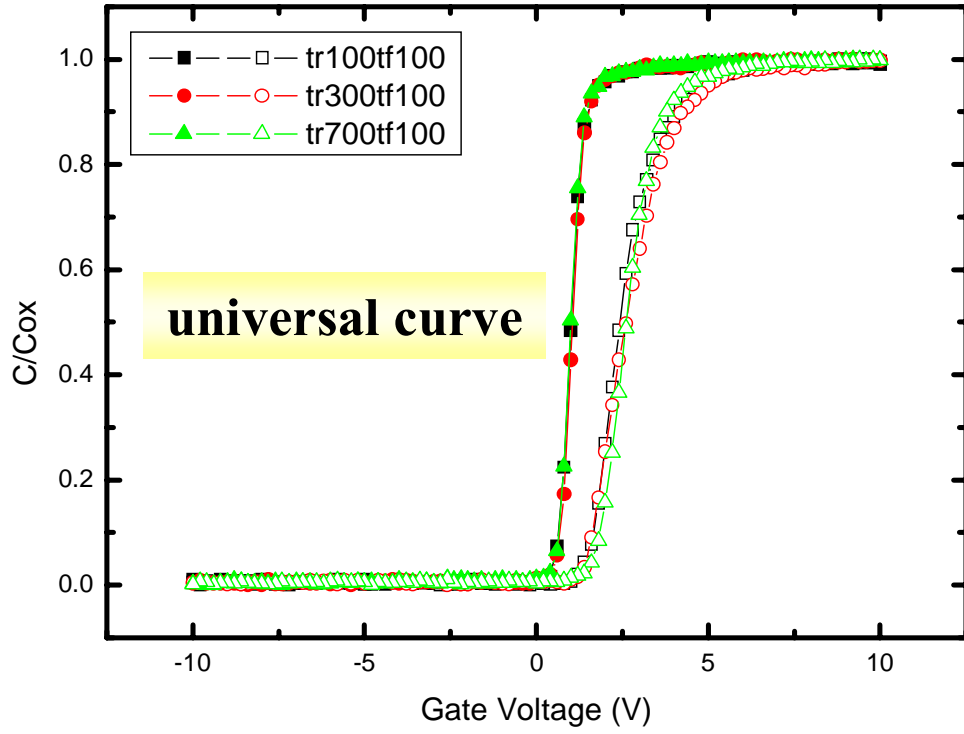


Fig. 3-3 (a) Degradation of C/C_{ox} in N-channel TFT after AC stress with $V_g = -15$ V to 15 V with various rising times T_r and for $T_f = 100$ ns measured at 1MHz.

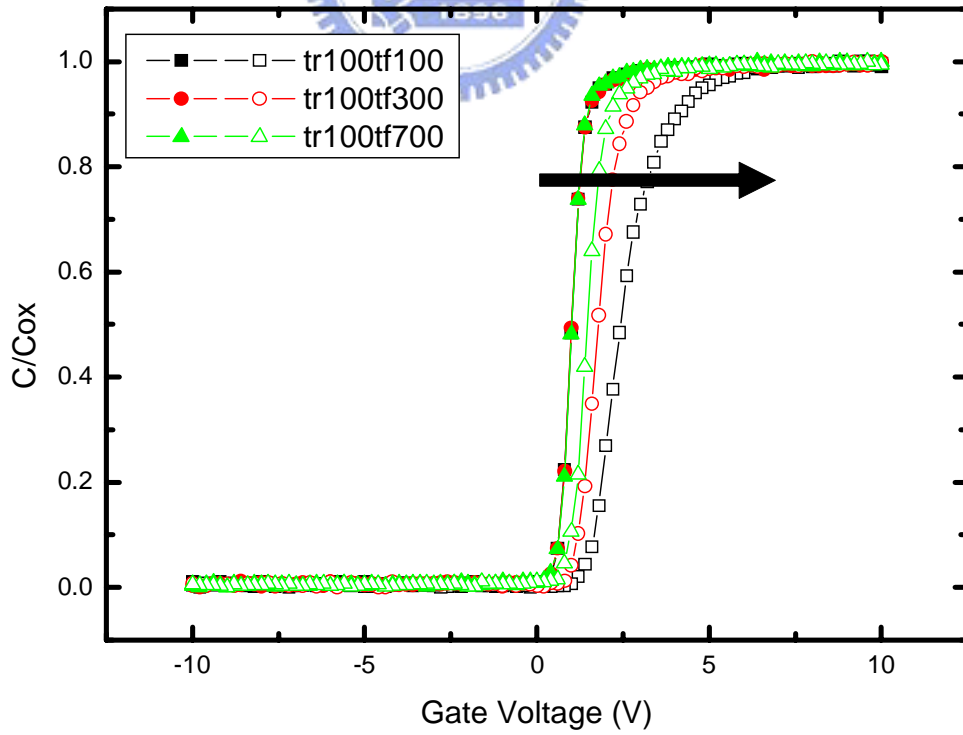


Fig. 3-3 (b) Degradation of C/C_{ox} in N-channel TFT after AC stress with $V_g = -15$ V to 15 V with various rising times T_f and for $T_r = 100$ ns measured at 1MHz.

3.2.2 Rising Time and Falling Time for V_g in the OFF Region

The transient time dependence for the degradation was examined as shown in Fig. 3-4. The degradation is obviously dependent on both the rising time and falling time, as shown in Fig. 3-4 (a) and Fig. 3-4 (b).

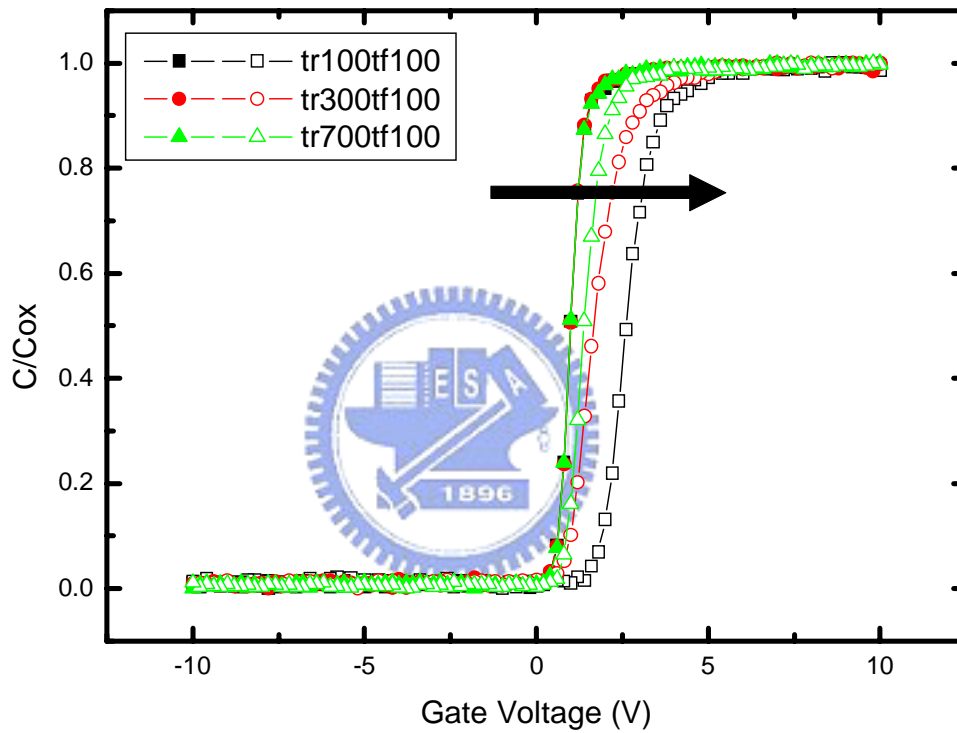


Fig. 3-4 (a) Degradation of C/C_{ox} in N-channel TFT after AC stress with $V_g = -15$ V to 0 V with various rising times T_r and for $T_f = 100$ ns measured at 1MHz.

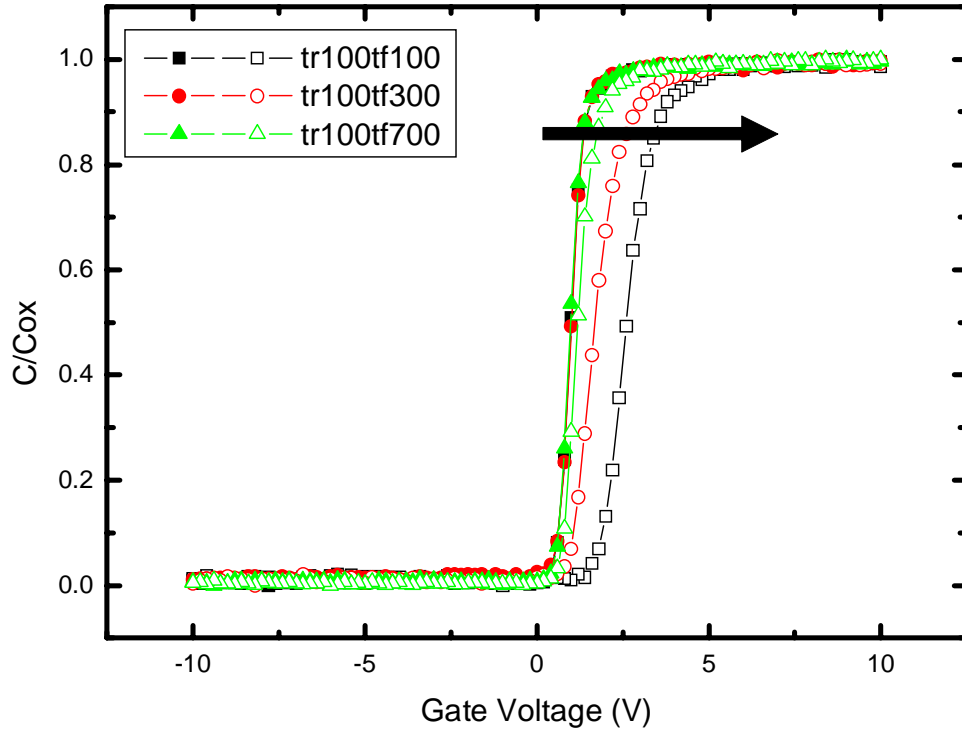


Fig. 3-4 (b) Degradation of C/C_{ox} in N-channel TFT after AC stress with $V_g = -15\text{ V}$ to 0 V with various rising times T_f and for $T_r = 100\text{ ns}$ measured at 1 MHz .

3.3 Experimental Results and Discussion

3.3.1 Simulation result of Using TFT's Slicing Model

3.3.1.1 Factors of Degradation Mechanism

In order to analyze the degraded phenomena, two factors are taken into consideration, that is, the transient electric field in the lateral direction and the changes in the number the channel electrons under the lateral voltage difference. To understand the transient fields and charge distributions in the channel, a slicing method is used on the device for simulation. A whole TFT is sliced into many shorter ones in series, and a short TFT consists of segment of channel resistance and gate oxide, as shown in inset of Fig. 3-5.

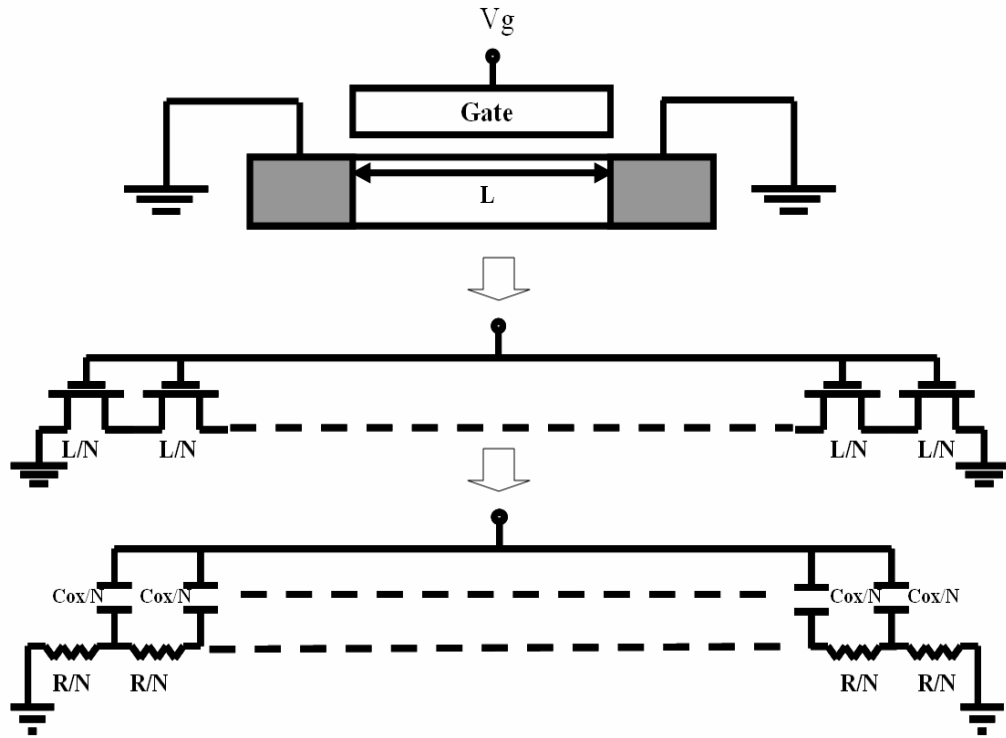


Fig. 3-5 TFT's slicing model

3.3.1.2 The Transient Voltage Distribution in the TFT Channel

For simplicity, ten short TFTs are used in the slicing model. Because source and drain are grounded, the channel voltage is symmetric in the middle of the channel. The voltage of the edge TFT is called V_e , and the other voltages are V_{21} , V_{32} , V_{43} , V_{54} , respectively, as shown in Fig 3-6 (a).

Using a commercially available circuit simulator SPECTRE, the transient voltage distribution in the TFT channel under AC stress can be qualitatively expressed. Firstly, we observe the transient voltage distribution in the channel of TFT under AC stress with $V_g = -15$ V to 15 V, V_e is the largest voltage among the sliced node voltages, shown in Fig. 3-6 (b). Referring to the previous report, the emission image of the N-channel TFT under dynamic stress indicates that the degradation is the worst at the edges of the channel, shown in Fig.

3-6(c). It also accords with the simulation results that V_e is the largest voltage in the channel. In this section, we call ON region as channel region, and OFF region as depletion region. In the channel region, the channel voltages are almost zero. On the contrary, in the depletion region, the channel voltages are very large. Therefore, device degradation mainly occurs in the depletion region, and not in the channel region.

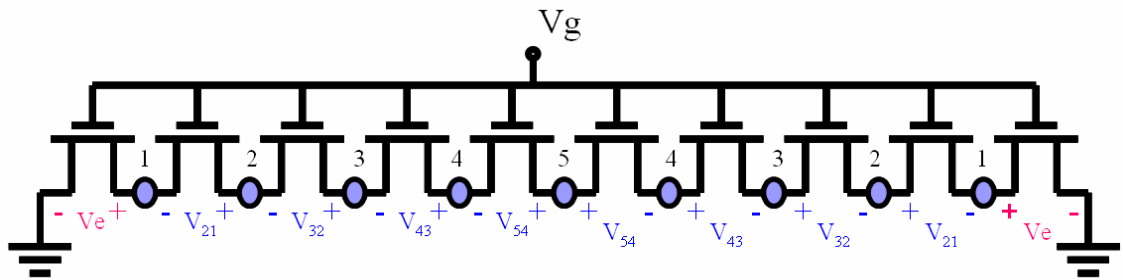


Fig. 3-6 (a) 10 TFT's slicing model

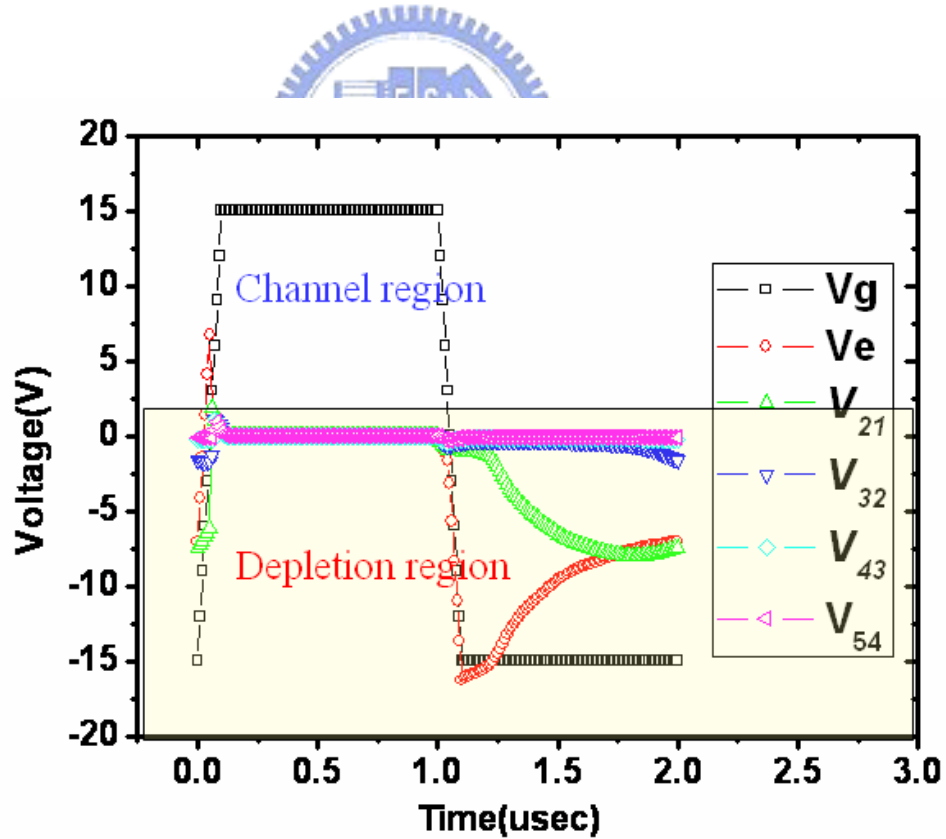


Fig. 3-6 (b) The transient voltage distribution of N-channel TFT

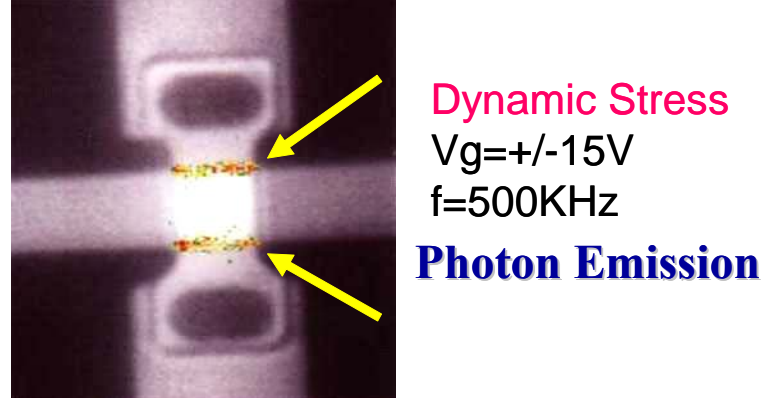


Fig. 3-6 (c) Photon emission

3.3.1.3 An index Π to estimate the degraded degree

In order to describe the degree of the degradation, the index Π calculated from simulation result is further introduced, which is given as

$$\Pi = \sum \frac{1}{T_i} \int_{T_i} V_e \bullet [Cox \bullet d(V_g - V_e) / dt] \bullet dt \quad (2-7)$$

where T_i corresponds to T_r , T_f , T_{vgh} , and T_{vgl} , and Cox is the gate capacitance per unit area. This index accounts for two factors. The first one is V_e , corresponding to the transient lateral electrical field at the edge of the sliced TFT. And the second term is $Cox \bullet d(V_g - V_e) / dt$, representing the charges flow outward through the edge of the sliced TFT. For simplicity, we assume that V_e follows the change of V_g at T_r and T_f , thus $V_g - V_e$ is kept constant and its time differentiation is zero. Therefore, the coupling magnitude of V_e and its duration dominate the value of Π . The mobility degradation ($1-\mu/\mu_0$) versus the index Π under different AC stress conditions are plotted in Fig. 3-7. The fair linearity exhibits the validity of the proposed mechanism.

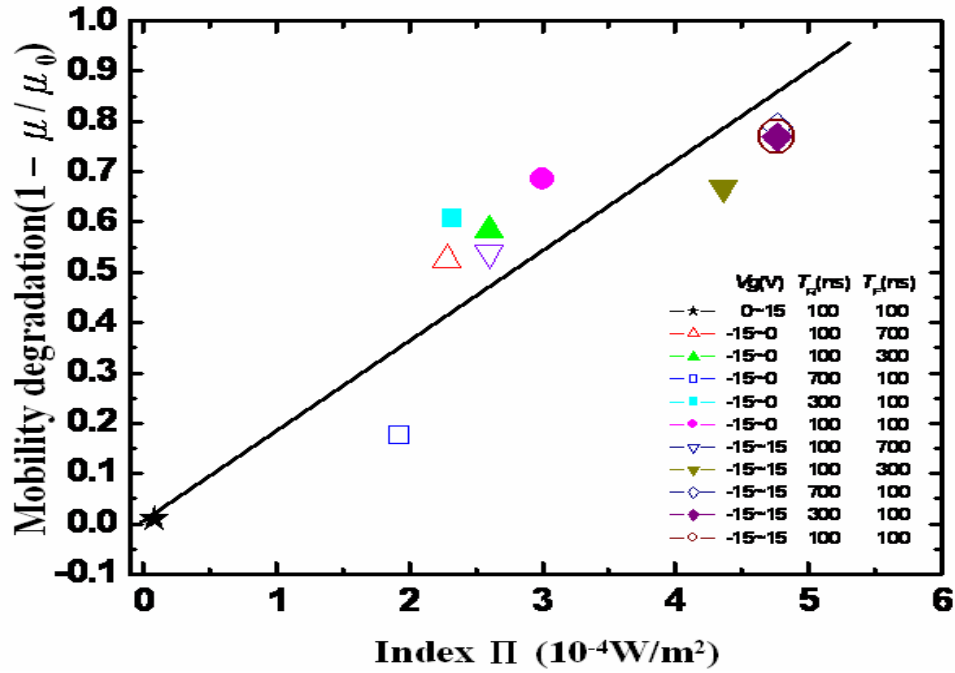


Fig. 3-7 Mobility degradation ($1 - \mu/\mu_0$) versus Index Π for N-channel TFT

3.3.2 Slight Stretch out phenomenon of C-V curve

In prior study, we have known that the mechanism of degradation under AC stress for the LTPS TFTs is similar hot carrier. Hot carrier which will be introduced in detail as follows.

Hot-carrier effects are the sources of serious device degradation because of the charging of the gate oxide in the N-channel TFT. The basic mechanism of hot-carrier aging is shown in Fig. 3-8. Channel electrons gain energy in the high-field region of the drain and are accelerated towards the gate oxide. This causes the charge to be injected into the gate oxide and creates a fixed charge in the oxide.

Charge damage occurs at these voltages through a three-step mechanism that causes an energy enhancement resulting from a feedback mechanism, namely impact-ionization feedback through the drain-bulk junction.

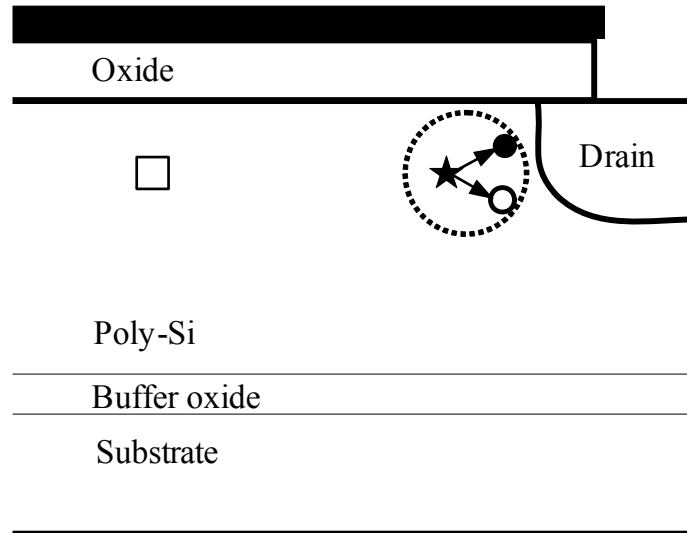


Fig. 3-8 Hot-electron generation at the drain of the MOSFET, resulting from impact ionization at high fields. [27.]

DC hot carrier stressing condition which the gate to source voltage $V_{GS} = 2V \sim$ threshold voltage and the drain to source voltage V_{GD} is 20V. Previous study's hypothesis can explain the I-V curve's degradation after hot carrier stress but they don't examine their suggestion by C-V measurement or simulation. As shown in Fig. 3-9, the normalized C_{GD} curves have a slight stretch out after stressing 500sec with measurement frequency of 1MHz. This phenomenon indicates that only degradation around the drain region does occur. The simulated Capacitance-Voltage curve has stretch out slightly as shown in Fig. 3-10. The simulation result and model structure shown in Fig. 3-11 is quite consistent with our experiment result and have a fair response to the previous study. In crystal silicon, hot carriers increase the interface states density or generate traps in the oxide. However, in the case of poly-Si TFT, hot carriers increase the DOS of poly-Si near drain, causing the decrease of mobility.

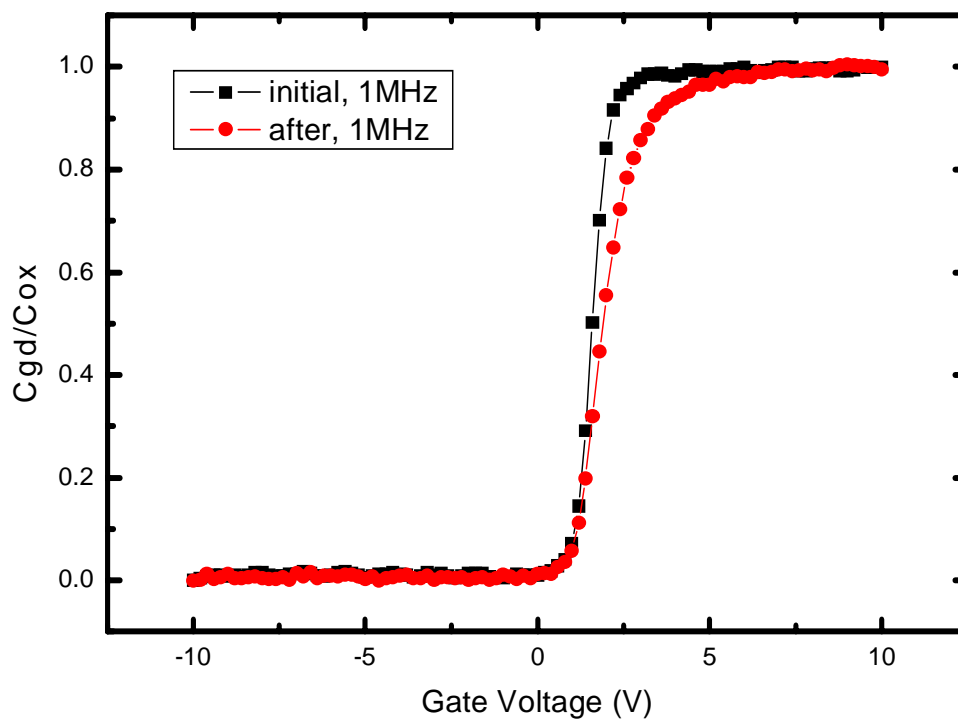


Fig. 3-9 Normalized C_{GD} curve stretches out before and after hot carrier stress 500sec at measurement frequency 1MHz

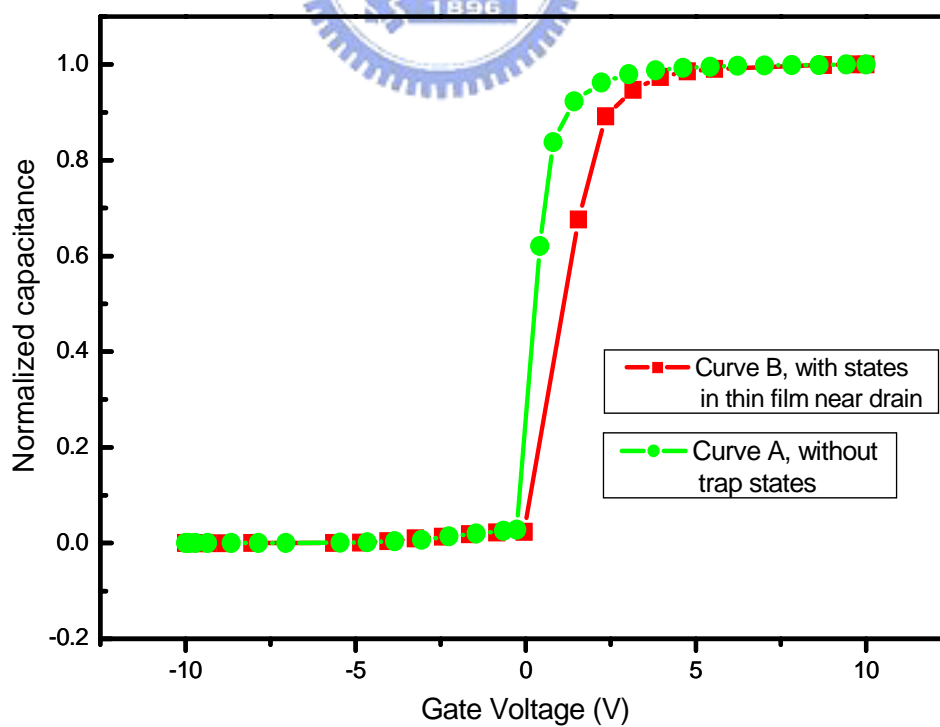


Fig. 3-10 The simulation result of C-V curve before and after hot carrier stress

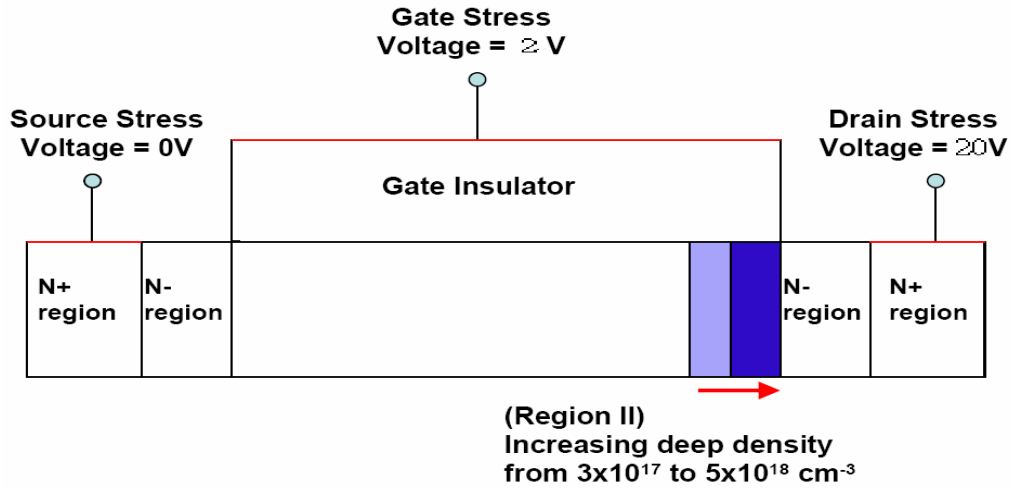


Fig. 3-11 The model of the cross section of the device after hot carrier stress

As shown in Fig. 3-12, the normalized C_{GD} curves have a slight stretch out after stressing. In order to describe the degree of the stretch, when the $C/C_{ox}=0.9$, the difference of gate voltage between the initial and the after stress is $V_{stretch}$.

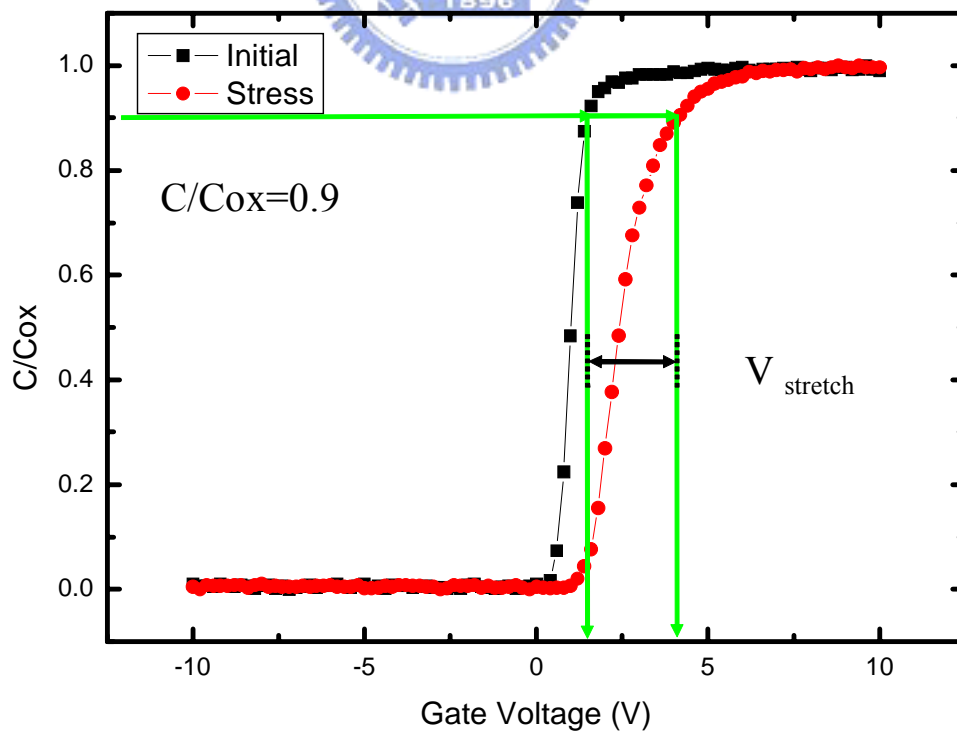


Fig. 3-12 The voltage of stretch out of C-V measurement after stress

The mobility decrease ratio versus the voltage stretch of C-V measurement under different AC stress conditions are plotted in Fig.3-13. For the gate voltage swings from -15 V to 15 V, the variation of mobility decrease ratio, no significant change in both mobility decrease ratio and the voltage stretch as shown by the circled in Fig. 3-13 (a). On the contrary, their degradation are positively correlated for the data of changing the falling time T_f .

For the gate voltage swings from -15V to 0V, the variation of mobility decrease ratio and voltage stretch are both influenced by T_r and T_f , as shown in Fig. 3-13 (b).

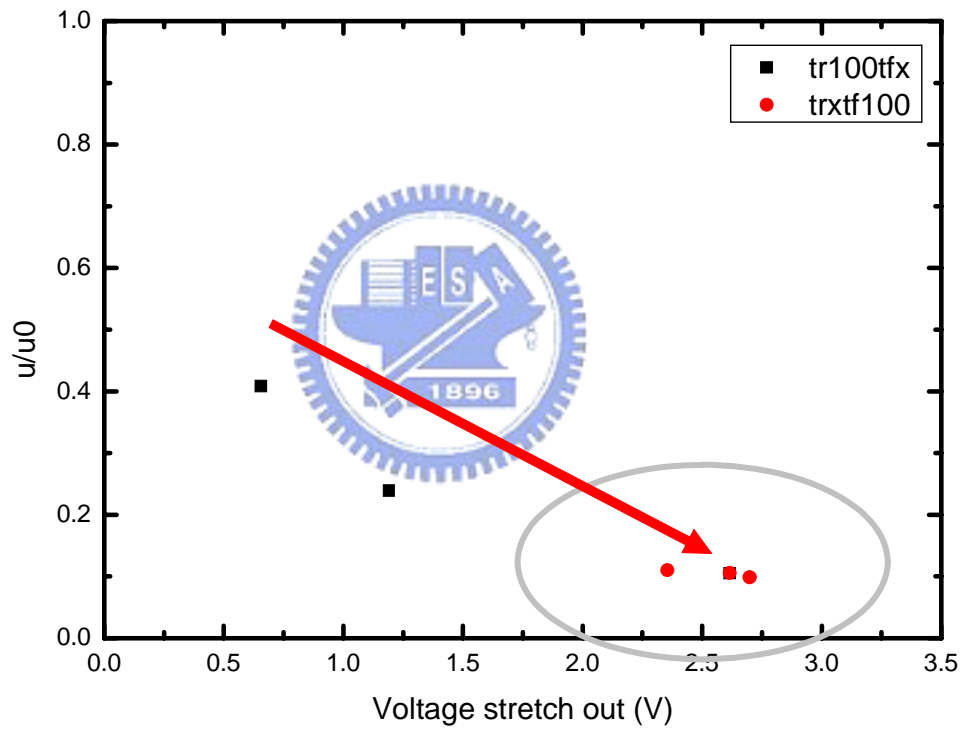


Fig. 3-13 (a) mobility decrease ratio versus voltage shift of C-V measurement for pulse stress of $V_g = -15V \sim 15V$.

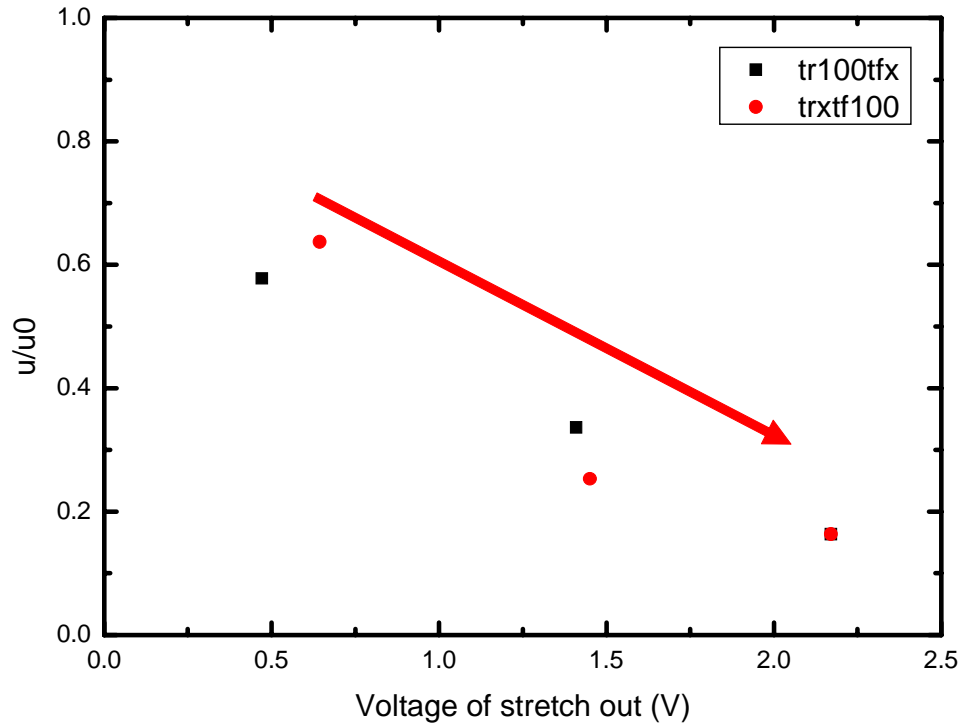






Fig. 3-13 (b) mobility decrease ratio versus voltage shift of C-V measurement for pulse stress of $V_g = -15V \sim 0V$.

3.4 Summary

Table 3-1 Summary statement of experimental result for N-type.

	Experiments	Phenomena
1	Gate voltage leveling for V_g ON/OFF	$V_g = -15V \sim 15V$: Mobility decrease  $\begin{matrix} Tr \\ Tf \end{matrix}$
2	Gate voltage leveling for V_g in the depletion Region	$V_g = -15V \sim 0V$ Mobility decrease  $\begin{matrix} Tr \\ Tf \end{matrix}$
3	Behavior of C-V curve for V_g ON/OFF	$V_g = -15V \sim 15V$ Curve stretch  $\begin{matrix} Tr \\ Tf \end{matrix}$
4	Behavior of C-V curve for V_g in the depletion Region	$V_g = -15V \sim 0V$ Curve stretch  $\begin{matrix} Tr \\ Tf \end{matrix}$

For AC stress with the gate voltage toggling between -15 V and 15 V, it is observed that the degradation depends on the falling time T_f of the gate pulse but does not depend on the rise time T_r . However, for the gate voltage swinging from -15 V to 0 V, it is observed that the degradation is both influenced by T_r and T_f .

The I-V measurement of N-type is mobility decrease. The C-V curve degradation phenomenon is slight stretch out, which is positively correlated to the confirmed to be the I-V degradation. The mechanism of degradation under AC stress for N-type poly-Si TFT is hot carrier effect according to both I-V and C-V measurements.

A slicing method is used for the simulation of channel voltage distribution and the change in the number of the carriers at the edge to explain the degradation behaviors. The index Π considering the two factors is introduced and it shows good linearity with the mobility degradation for various gate pulse stress conditions.



Chapter 4 P-type Poly-Si TFT under Gate Pulse Stress

4.1 Behavior of I-V curve after stressing

4.1.1 Rising Time and Falling Time for V_g of ON and OFF Region

The transient time dependence for the degradation of P-channel TFT was also studied. The dependence of the mobility change on rising time and falling time is shown in Fig. 4-1(a) and 4-1(b), respectively. For P-channel TFT, the change was accelerated for a variation in rising time, however, the change was not affected by the falling time. In the case of changing rising time, the gate voltage varies from ON region to OFF region, and some carriers are sited at so high electrical field that device degradation is formed. But in the case of changing falling time, the gate voltage varies from OFF region to ON region, carriers are sited at low electrical field not becoming hot carries.



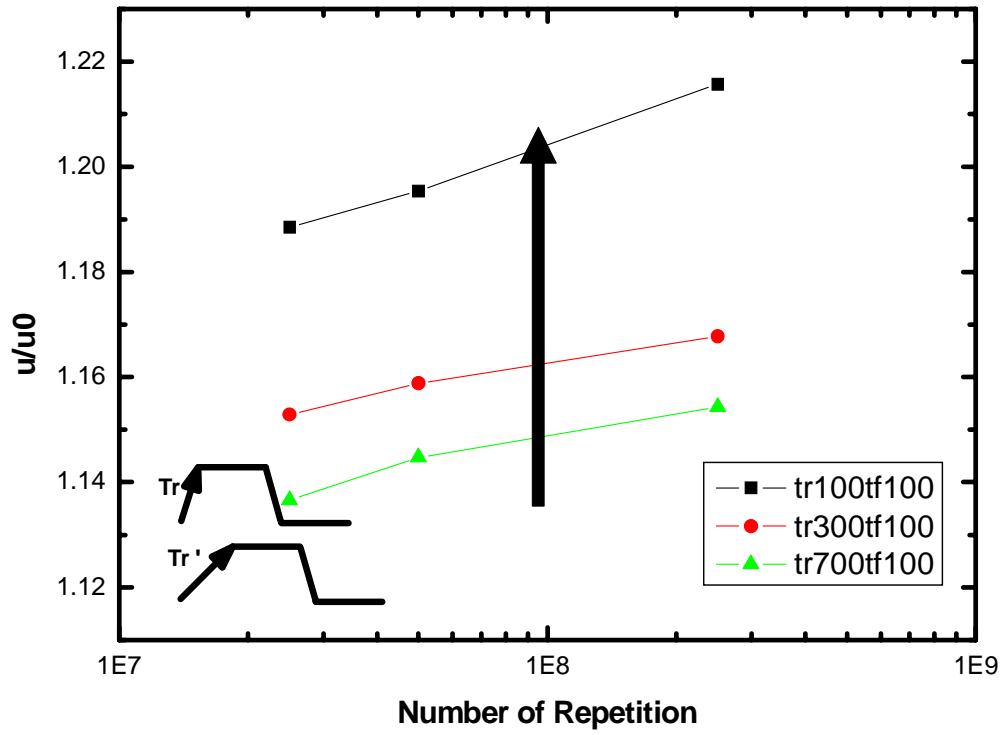


Fig. 4-1 (a) Degradation of μ/μ_0 in P-channel TFT stressed by gate pulses with various rising times T_r and keeping T_f at 100 ns.

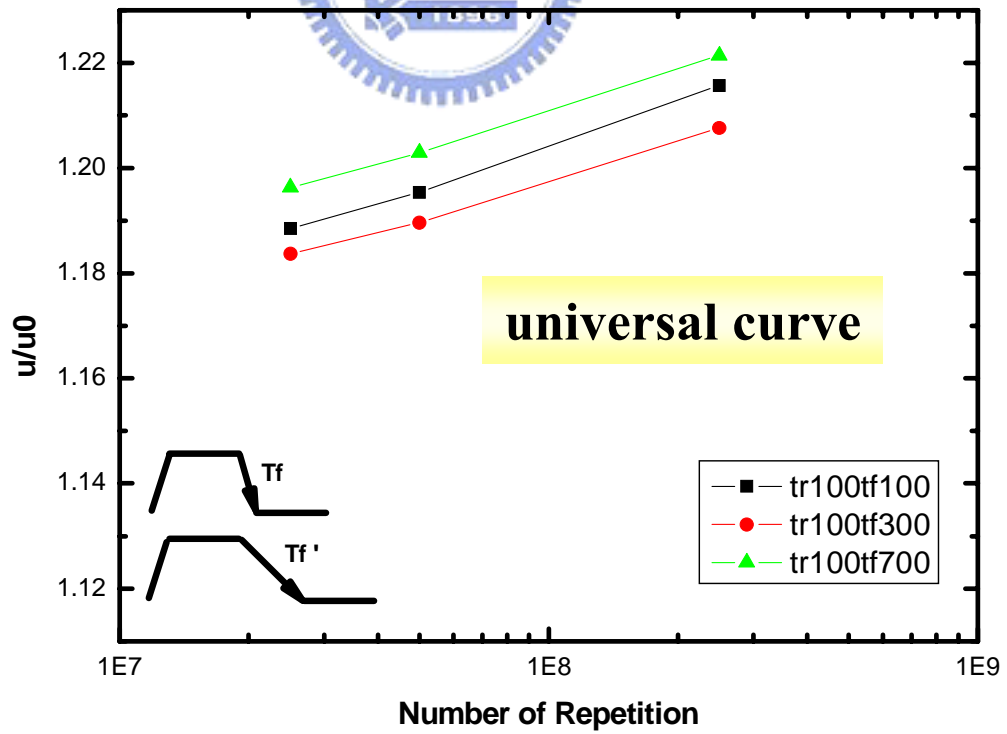


Fig. 4-1 (b) Degradation of μ/μ_0 in P-channel TFT measured for various falling times T_f and for $T_r = 100$ ns.

4.1.2 Rising Time and Falling Time for V_g in the OFF Region

For P-channel TFT, $V_g = 0V$ to $15V$ is OFF region, and $V_g = -15V$ to $0V$ is ON region. Because no device degradation is formed for P-channel TFT under AC stress with $V_g = -15V$ to $0V$, we are also only interested in the transient time dependence for the degradation of P-channel TFT at $V_g = 0V$ to $15V$. For the gate voltage swings from $0V$ to $15V$, it is observed that the degradation is dependent on the rising time but independent of falling time, which is the same as P-channel TFT under AC stress with $V_g = -15V$ to $15V$, as shown in Fig. 4-2 (a) and Fig. 4-2 (b).

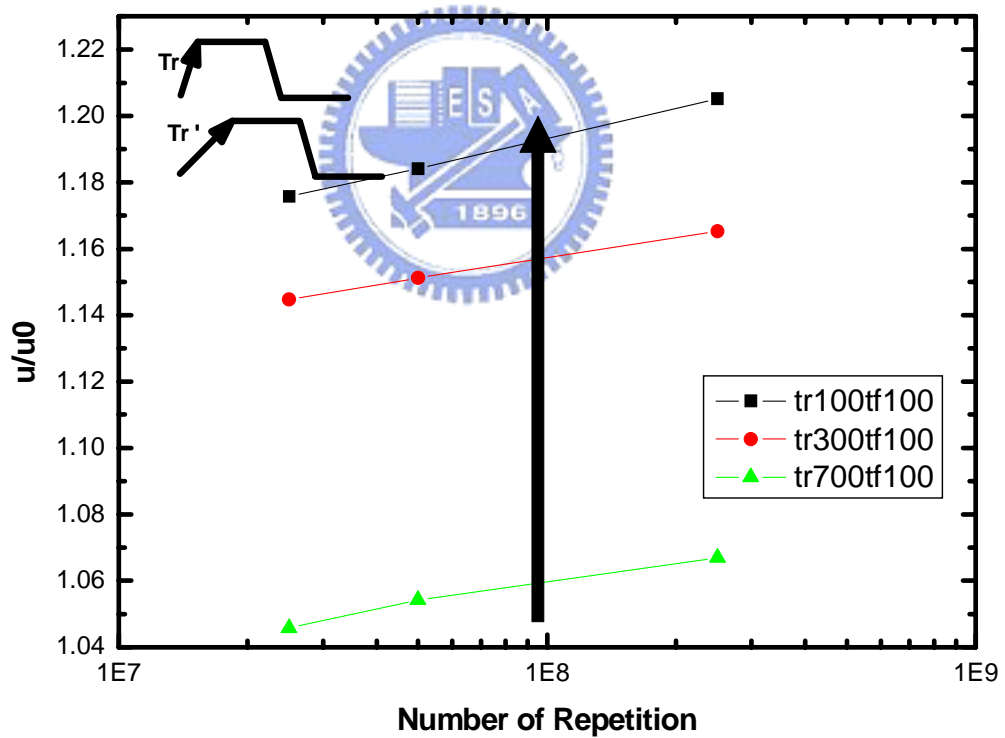


Fig. 4-2 (a) Degradation of μ/μ_0 in P-channel TFT under AC stress with $V_g = 0V$ to $15V$ measured for various rising times T_r and for $T_f = 100$ ns.

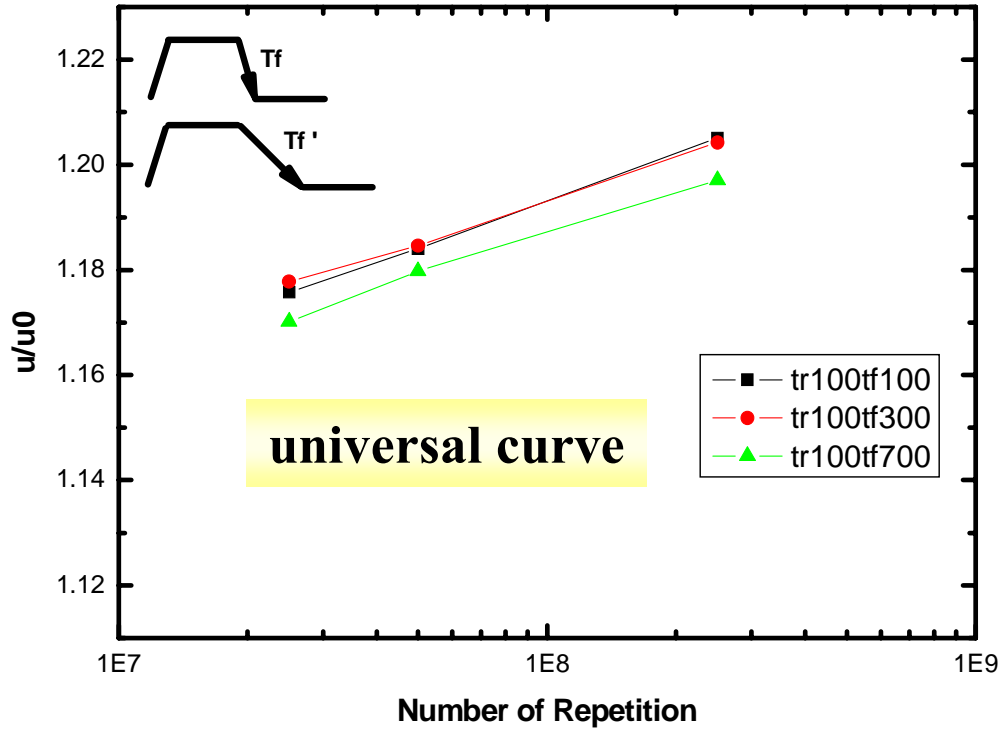


Fig. 4-2 (b) Degradation of μ/μ_0 in P-channel TFT under AC stress with $V_g = 0$ V to 15 V measured for various rising times T_f and for $T_r = 100$ ns.

4.2 Behavior of C-V curve after stressing

4.2.1 Rising Time and Falling Time for V_g of ON and OFF Region

The transient time dependence for the degradation was examined as shown in Fig. 4-3. During the variation of rising time T_r from 100 ns to 700 ns with a fixed T_f of 100 ns, the degradation depended strongly on the rising time T_r as shown in Fig. 4-3 (a). On the contrary, no significant change in C/C_{ox} was observed as shown in Fig. 4-3 (b). The degradation is remarkably accelerated with the decrease of the rising time from 700 ns for 100 ns for a fixed T_f of 100 ns.

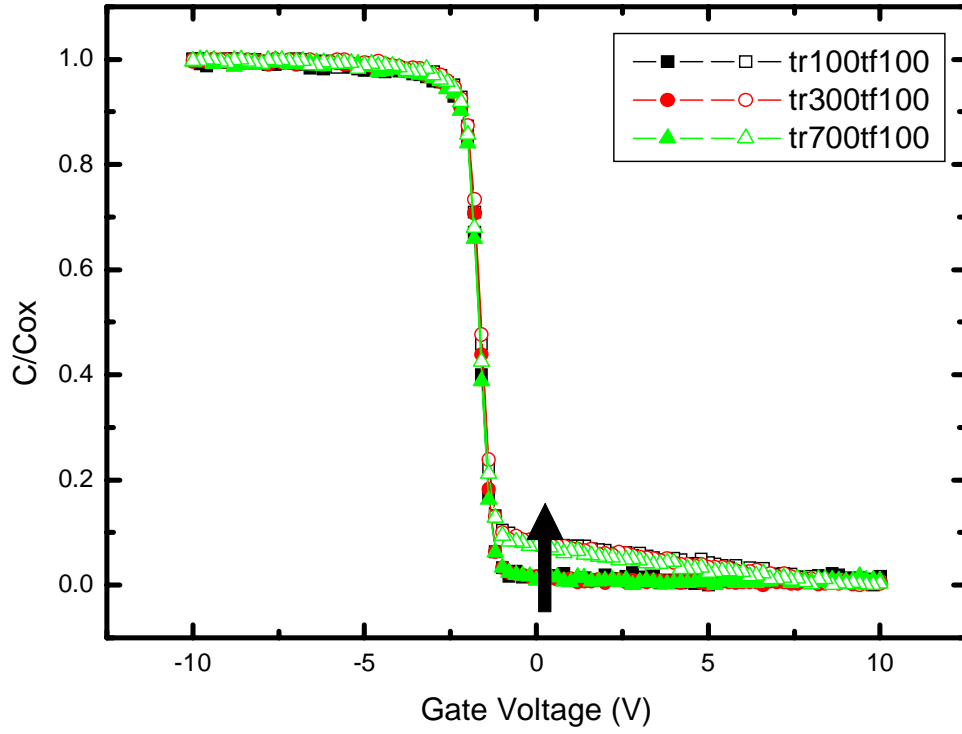


Fig. 4-3 (a) Degradation of C/C_{ox} in P-channel TFT under AC stress with $V_g = -15$ V to 15 V measured for various rising times T_r and for $T_f = 100$ ns.

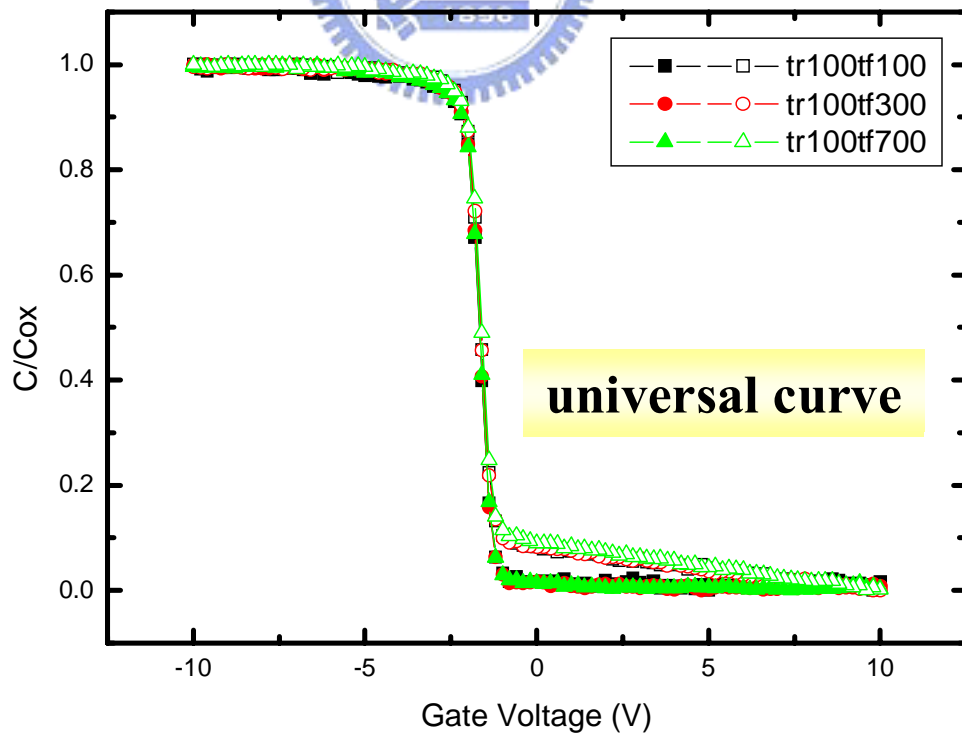


Fig. 4-3 (b) Degradation of C/C_{ox} in P-channel TFT under AC stress with $V_g = -15$ V to 15 V measured for various rising times T_f and for $T_r = 100$ ns.

4.2.2 Rising Time and Falling Time for V_g in the OFF Region

The transient time dependence for the degradation was examined as shown in Fig. 4-4. During the variation of rising time T_r from 100 ns to 700 ns with a fixed T_f of 100 ns, the degradation depended strongly on the rising time T_r as shown in Fig. 4-4 (a). On the contrary, no significant change in C/C_{ox} was observed as shown in Fig. 4-4 (b). The degradation is remarkably accelerated with the decrease of the rising time from 700 ns for 100 ns for a fixed T_f of 100 ns.

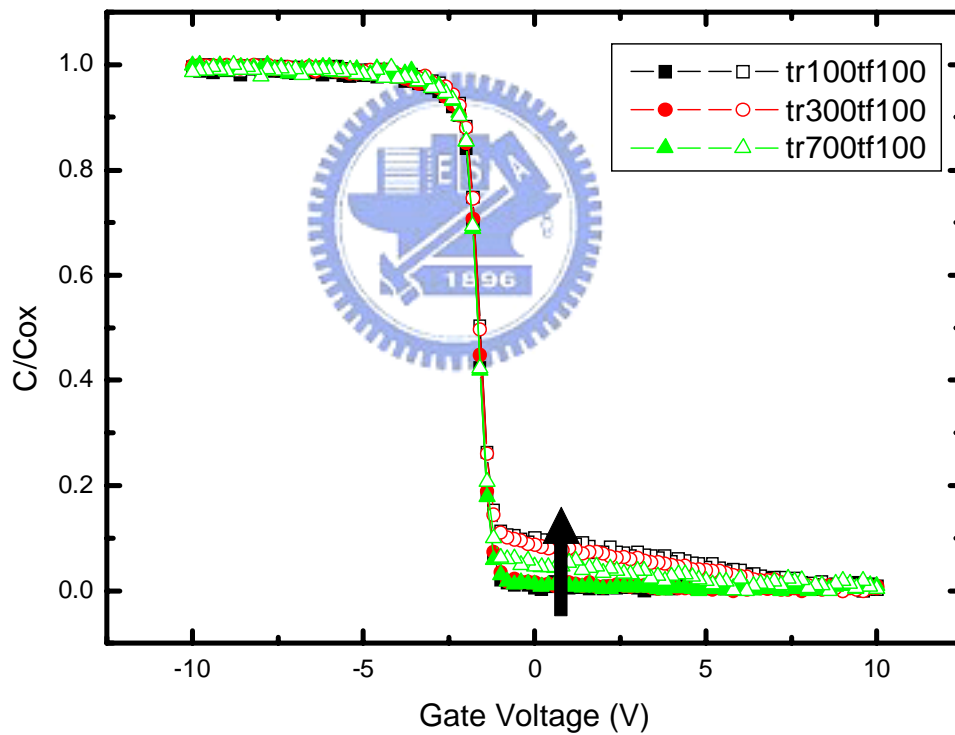


Fig. 4-4 (a) Degradation of C/C_{ox} in P-channel TFT under AC stress with $V_g = 0$ V to 15 V measured for various rising times T_r and for $T_f = 100$ ns.

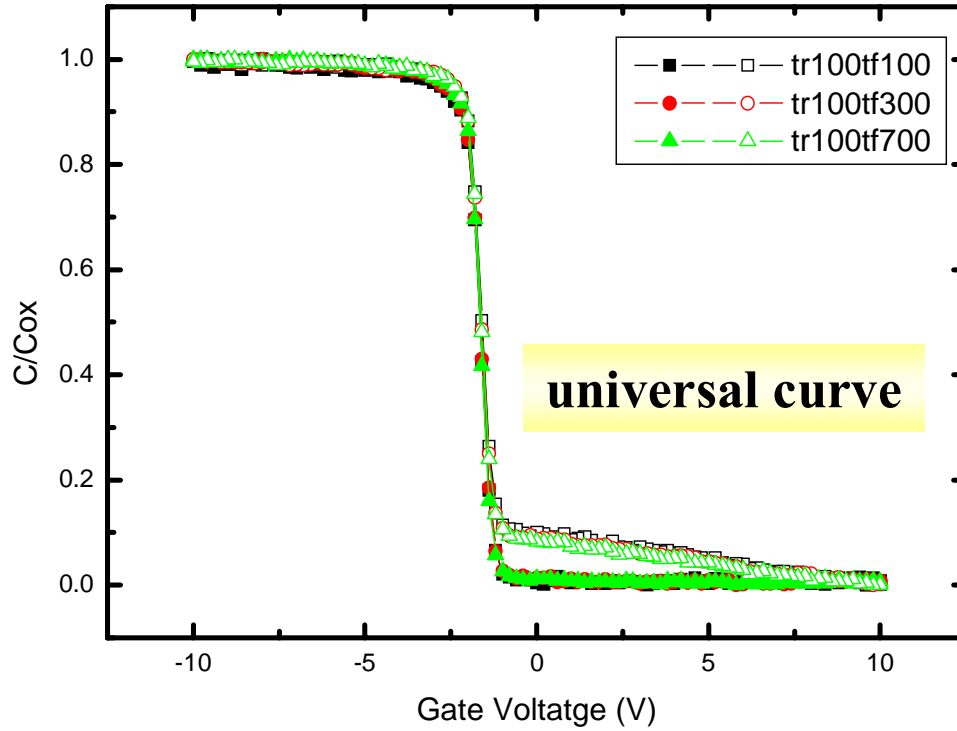


Fig. 4-4 (b) Degradation of C/C_{ox} in P-channel TFT under AC stress with $V_g = 0$ V to 15 V measured for various rising times T_f and for $T_r = 100$ ns.

4.3 Experimental Results and Discussion

4.3.1 Simulation Result Using TFT's Slicing Model

Using a commercially available circuit simulator SPECTRE, the transient voltage distribution in the TFT channel under AC stress can be qualitatively expressed. Firstly, we observe the transient voltage distribution in the channel of TFT under AC stress with $V_g = -15$ V to 15 V, V_e is the largest voltage among the sliced node voltages, shown in Fig. 4-5. It also accords with the simulation results that V_e is the largest voltage in the channel. In the channel region, the channel voltages are almost zero. On the contrary, in the depletion region, the channel voltages are very large. Therefore, device degradation mainly occurs in the depletion region, and not in the channel region.

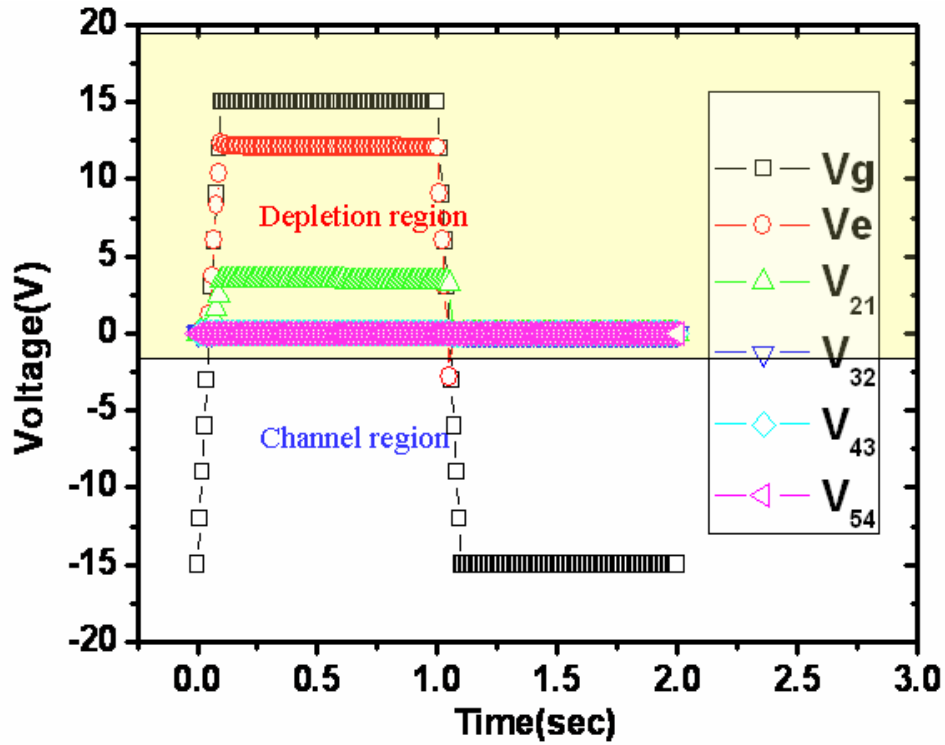


Fig. 4-5 The transient voltage distribution of P-channel TFT.

For the simulation with the transient time of P-channel TFT under AC stress at $V_g = -15\text{ V}$ to 15 V , V_e is shown in Fig. 4-6. Like the simulation result of N-channel TFT, when V_g rises in the depletion region, V_e follows the change of V_g owing to coupling effect, and then V_e slightly discharging shows some mobile charges will be speed up in the high electrical field to become hot carriers. The coupling magnitude of this transient electrical field becomes larger with shorter T_r , resulting in the T_r dependence of the mobility degradation. As the gate voltage falls to the channel region, V_e is quickly discharged to zero, such that the lateral field is too low to speed up the carriers. Therefore, the mobility degradation is independent of T_f .

Next, we observe V_e for the gate voltage swing of 0 V to 15 V , shown in Fig. 4-7. Since the gate voltage is all below V_{TH} , TFT is kept in the depletion region. But from the simulation result, V_e goes high at T_r to T_{vgh} , but goes low at T_f to T_{vgl} . So the degradation is only dependent on T_r , not dependent on T_f . The simulation result accords with the measurement data.

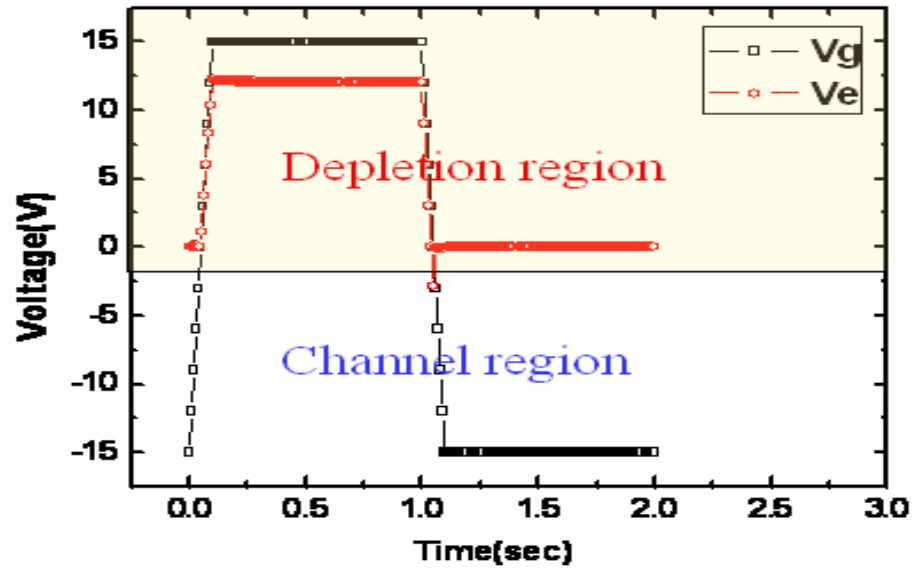


Fig. 4-6 (a) V_e for $V_g = -15 \text{ V} \sim 15 \text{ V}$ of $T_r = T_f = 100 \text{ ns}$

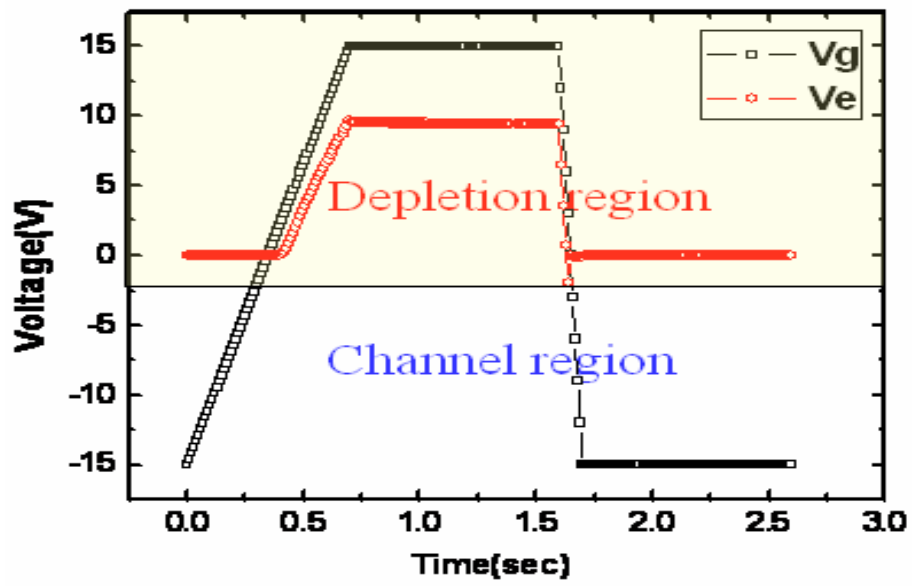


Fig. 4-6 (b) V_e for $V_g = -15 \text{ V} \sim 15 \text{ V}$ of $T_r = 700 \text{ ns}$, $T_f = 100 \text{ ns}$

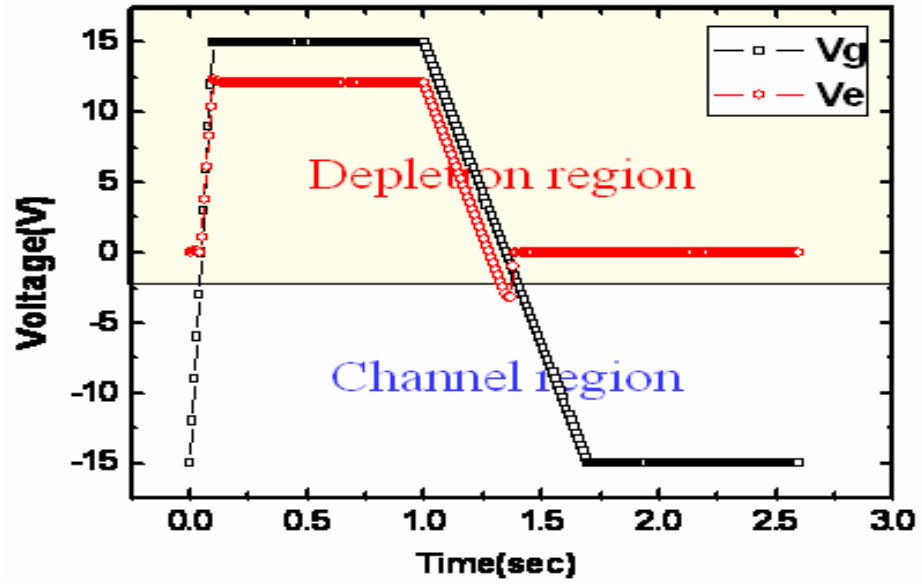


Fig. 4-6 (c) V_e for $V_g = -15\text{ V} \sim 15\text{ V}$ of $T_r = 100\text{ ns}$, $T_f = 700\text{ ns}$

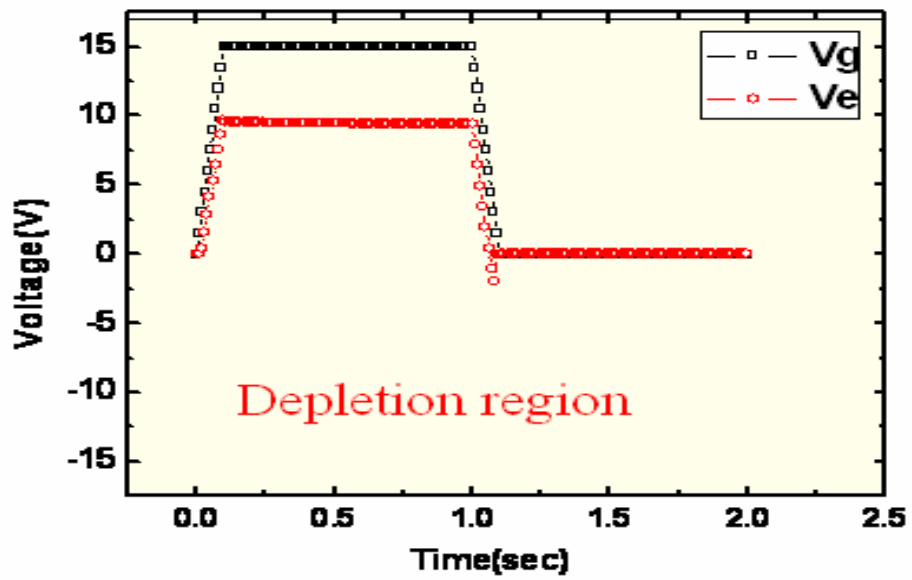


Fig. 4-7 (a) V_e for $V_g = 0\text{ V} \sim 15\text{ V}$ of $T_r = T_f = 100\text{ ns}$

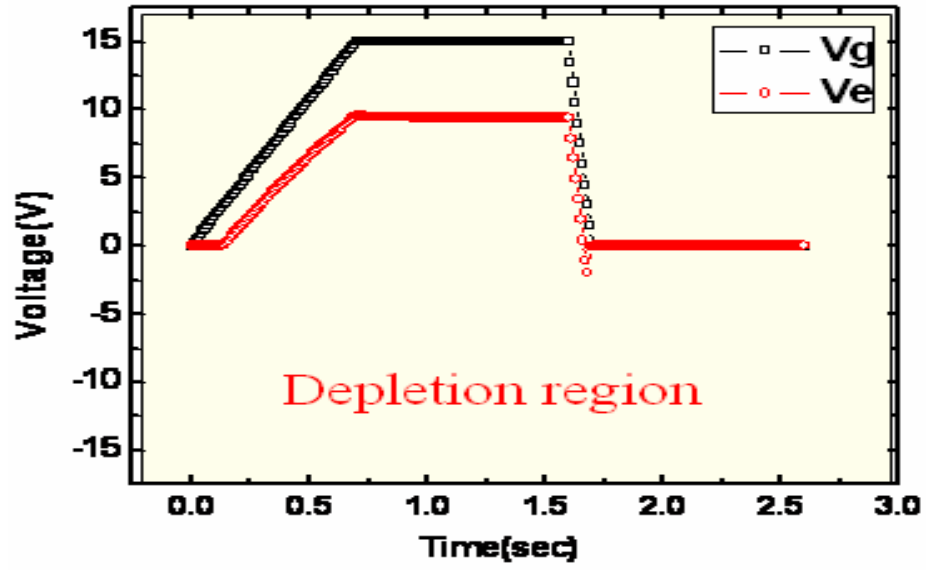


Fig. 4-7 (b) V_e for $V_g = 0 \text{ V} \sim 15 \text{ V}$ of $T_r = 700 \text{ ns}$, $T_f = 100 \text{ ns}$

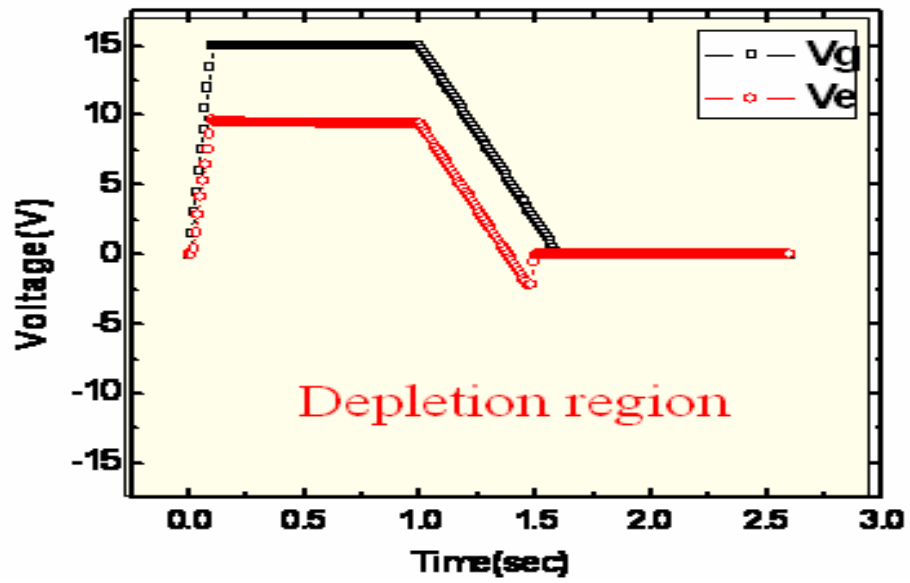


Fig. 4-7 (c) V_e for $V_g = 0 \text{ V} \sim 15 \text{ V}$ of $T_r = 100 \text{ ns}$, $T_f = 700 \text{ ns}$

The mobility degradation ($\mu/\mu_0 - 1$) versus the index Π under different AC stress conditions are plotted in Fig. 4-8. The fair linearity exhibits the validity of the proposed mechanism.

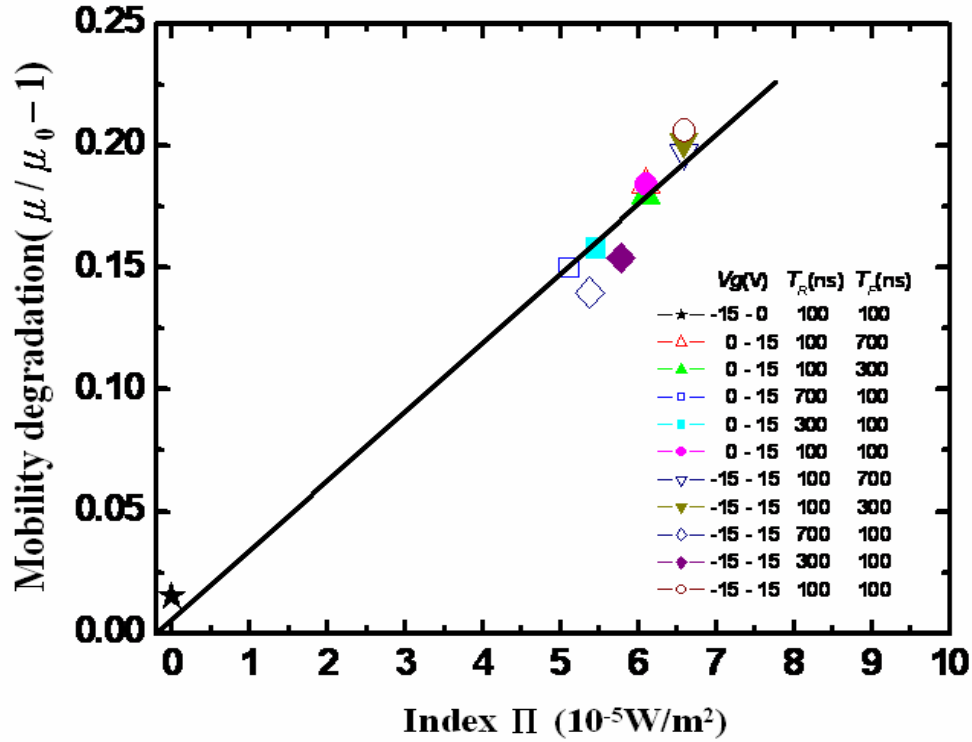


Fig. 4-8 Mobility degradation (μ/μ_0-1) versus Index Π for P-channel TFT

4.3.2 C-V increase in the depletion region

4.3.2.1 DC hot carrier stress

Previous study of P-type TFT's degradation behavior under hot carrier stress is that the increase of mobility, the increase of on current and no obvious degradation on subthreshold swing [28]. The DC hot carrier stressing condition of is the gate voltage $V_G=-2V$ and the drain voltage $V_D=-20V$ is conducted on our P-type TFT and the same degradation behavior as aforementioned is observed and shown in Fig 4-9. The degradation mechanism of P-type TFT is commonly considered as: the increase of on current and the increase of transconductance without any variation of subthreshold slope and threshold voltage maybe attributed to facts that the interface characteristics of the channel was not affected and the effective channel length was reduced during hot carrier stress. It has been reported that these phenomenon are caused with the electron trapping into gate insulator near the drain. When the electrons are

trapping into gate insulator near the drain, the holes are accumulated in the channel edge near the drain due to local electrical field so that the effective drain region is extended to the active channel.

The C-V measurements are further employed to investigate the degradation mechanism. As shown in Fig 4-10, gate-to-drain capacitance C_{GD} curves after stress with different frequencies have the extra increase for the positive gate voltage. The C_{GD} curve increases slightly when the gate voltage is smaller than the V_{th} . The extra increase for the lower gate voltage of C_{GD} curve may be attributed to the interface trapped charges, which may be caused by the high voltage difference between the gate and the drain during the stress. The C—V measurement results further support the creation of the trap charges on the surface near drain. The increase of C_{GD} for the gate voltage below V_{th} indicates the increase of carriers which is induced by the trapped electrons near drain.

The model of the cross section of the device after DC stress is shown in Fig. 4-11. As shown in Fig. 4-12, the simulation results with and without degraded regions in the device. Curve A is the C-V curve with no degraded region, while curve B is the one with interface charges near the drain region. Comparing to curve A, curve B increases slightly for the gate voltage below V_{th} . It reveals that the interface charges between the drain and the gate influence the number of induced carriers in channel depletion and weak inversion conditions. According this prior study, we have known that capacitance increases slightly and mobility increases might be dependent on the same degradation mechanism.

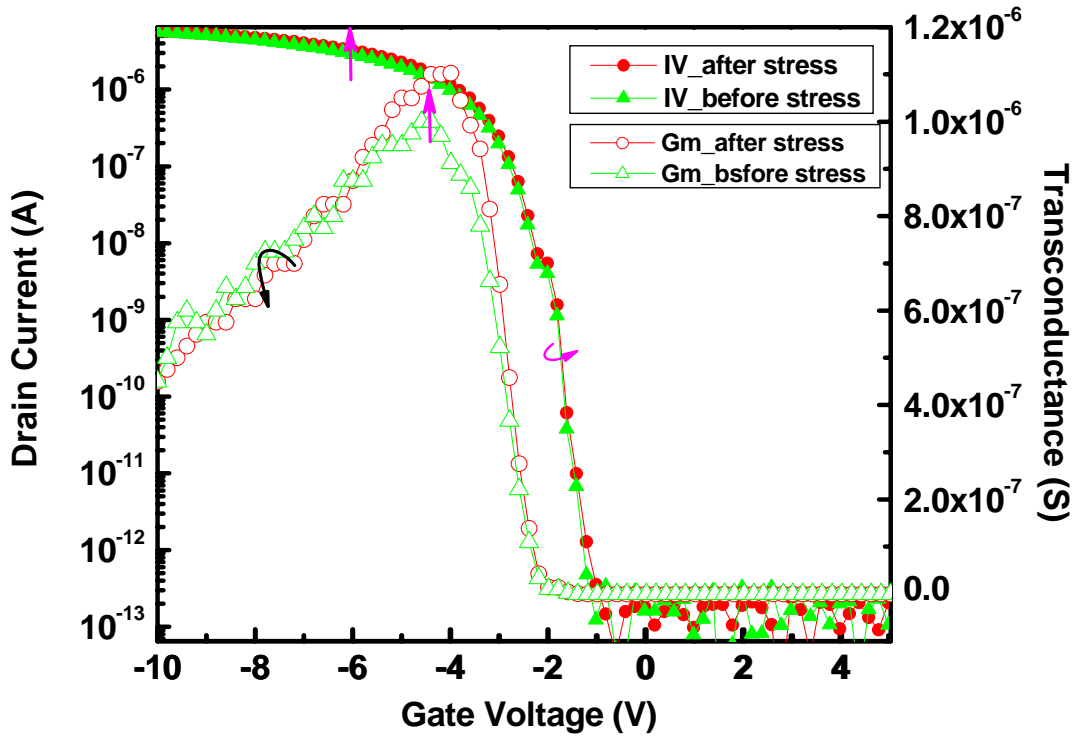


Fig. 4-9 The degradation of I-V transfer characteristic of P-type TFT after hot carrier stressing ($V_{GS} = -2V \sim \text{threshold voltage}$ and $V_{GD} = -20V$) 1000sec

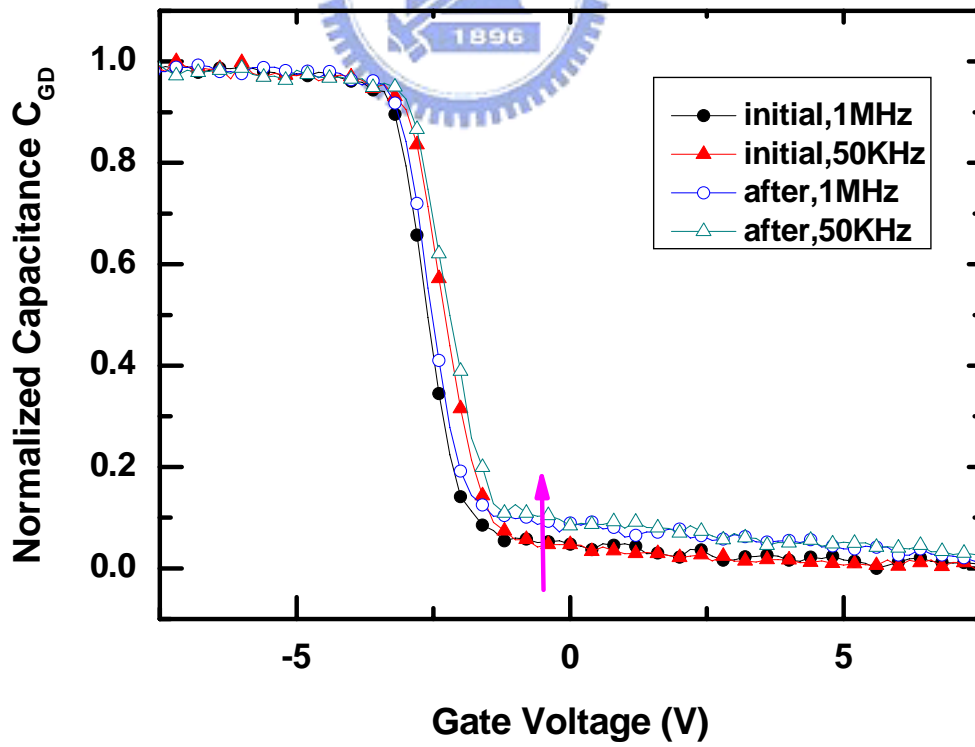


Fig. 4-10 The gate-to-drain capacitance C_{GD} curves of P-type cross-tie TFT before and after stress ($V_G = -2V$ and $V_D = -20V$) with different frequencies

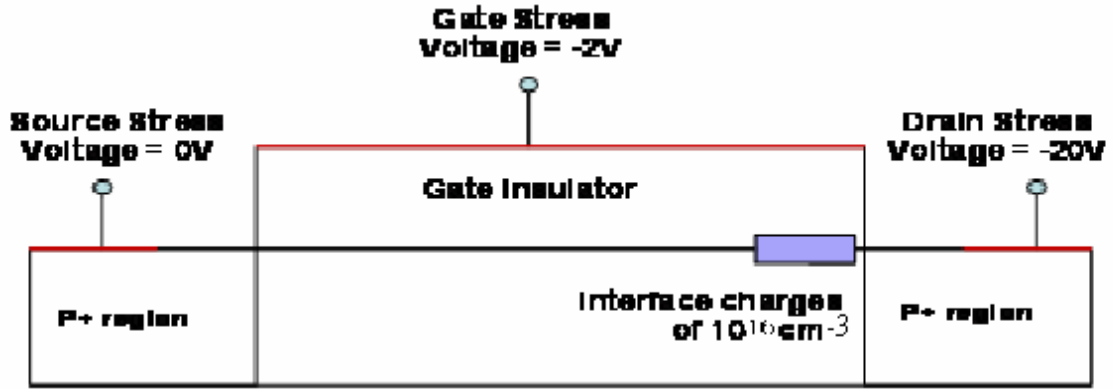


Fig. 4-11 The model of the cross section of the device after stress ($V_G = -2\text{V}$ and $V_D = -20\text{V}$) 1000sec.

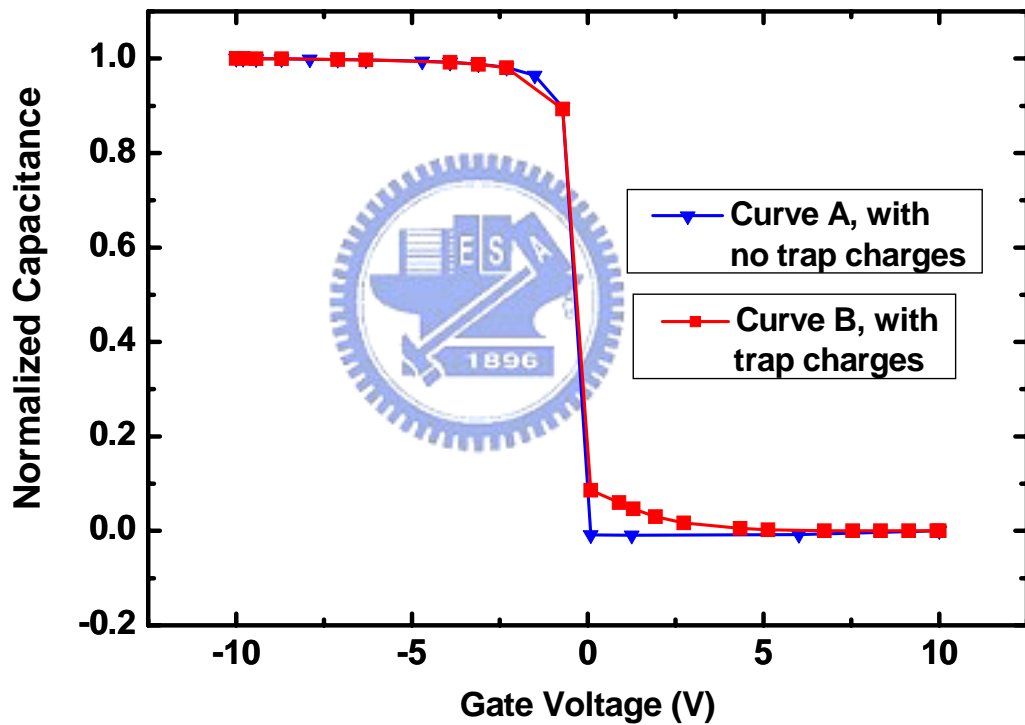


Fig. 4-12 The simulation result of C-V curve before and after stress

4.3.2.2 AC stress

As shown in Fig. 4-13, the normalized C_{GD} curves have a C_{min} increase after stressing. In order to describe the degree of the C_{min} increase, when the $V_g = -0.8$, the difference of normalized C_{GD} between the initial and the after stress is ΔC .

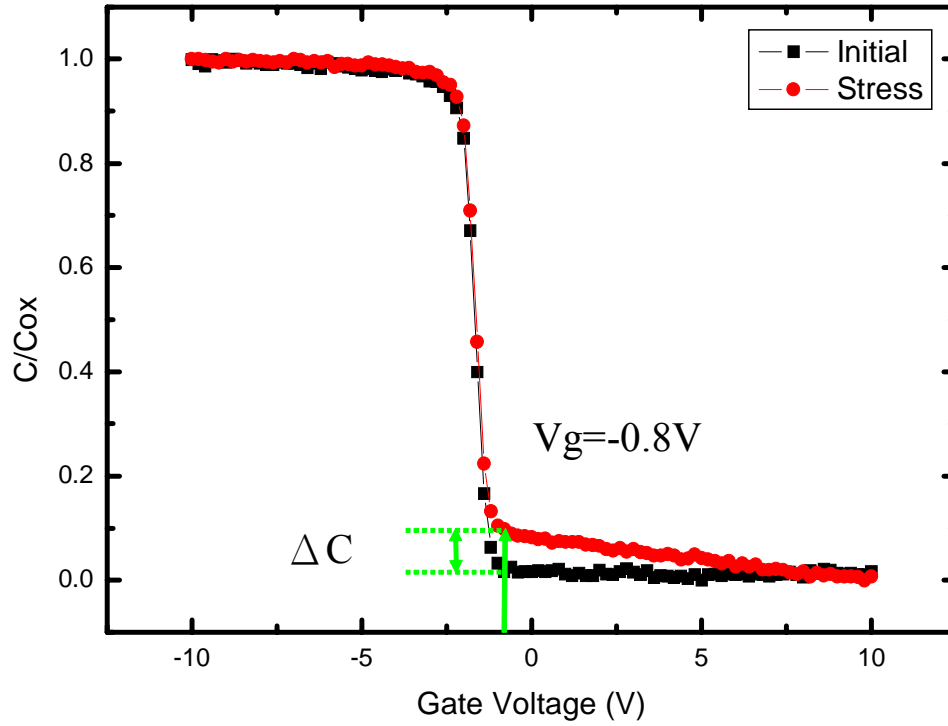


Fig. 4-13 The ΔC of C-V curve before and after stress

The mobility increases ratio versus the capacitance increases ratio was examined as shown in Fig.4-14. During the variation of rising time T_r from 100 ns to 700 ns with a fixed T_f of 100 ns, the mobility increases ratio depended strongly on the capacitance increases ratio. On the contrary, no significant change in falling time from 100ns to 700ns with a fixed T_r of 100ns.

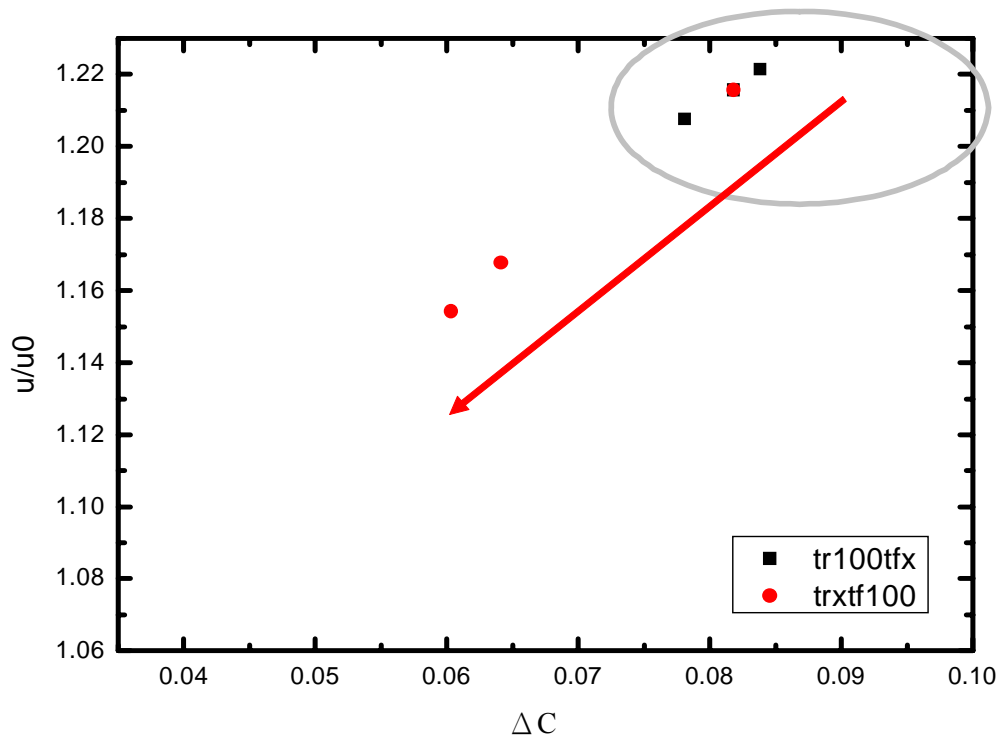


Fig. 4-14 (a) Degradation ratio ($u\%$) versus the capacitance increases ratio of $V_g = -15V \sim 15V$

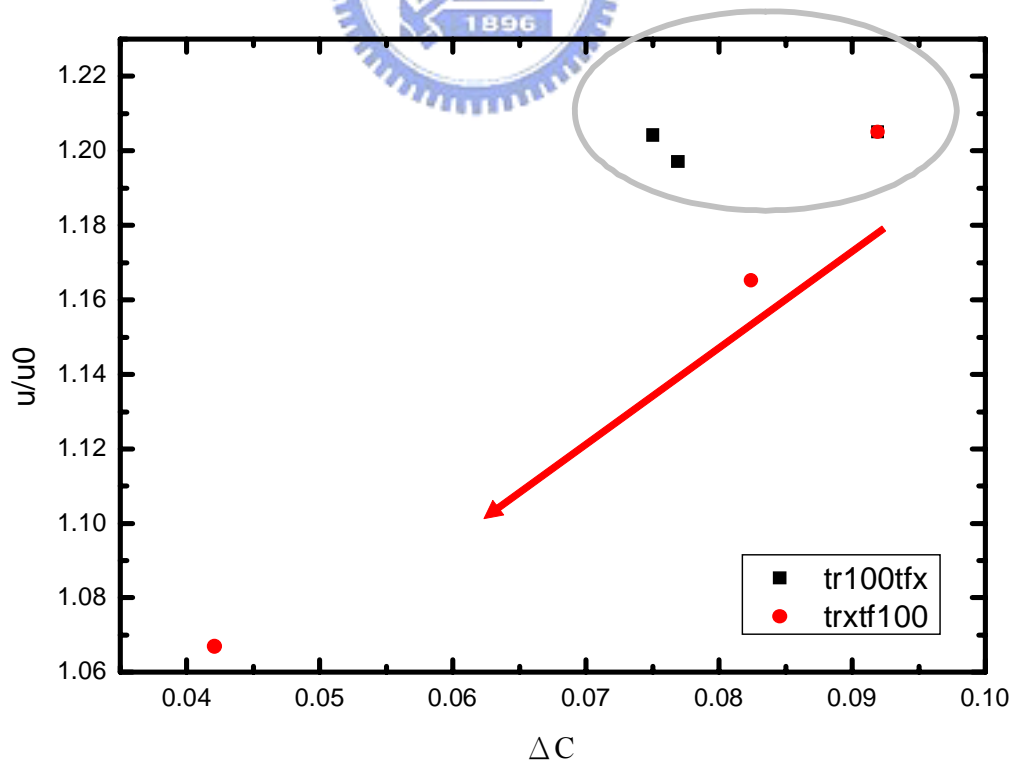


Fig. 4-14 (b) Degradation ratio ($u\%$) versus the capacitance increases ratio of $V_g = 0V \sim 15V$

The degradation of P-channel TFT devices is due to a different mechanism rather than that of the N-channel TFT devices. The mechanism is triggered by the electrons in the inversion region of the channel that are injected into the gate oxide. The trapped electrons cause the surface of the channel to invert, which effectively extends the p^+ region of the drain into the channel. Fig. 4-15 shows this mechanism and indicates the charged area effectively extending the drain. Extending the drain reduces the effective channel length of the transistor and actually increases the transconductance as a function of the time the device is operated at a high voltage. The mechanism is called hot-electron-induced punchthrough (HEIP). This is the dominant cause of P-channel TFT device degradation.

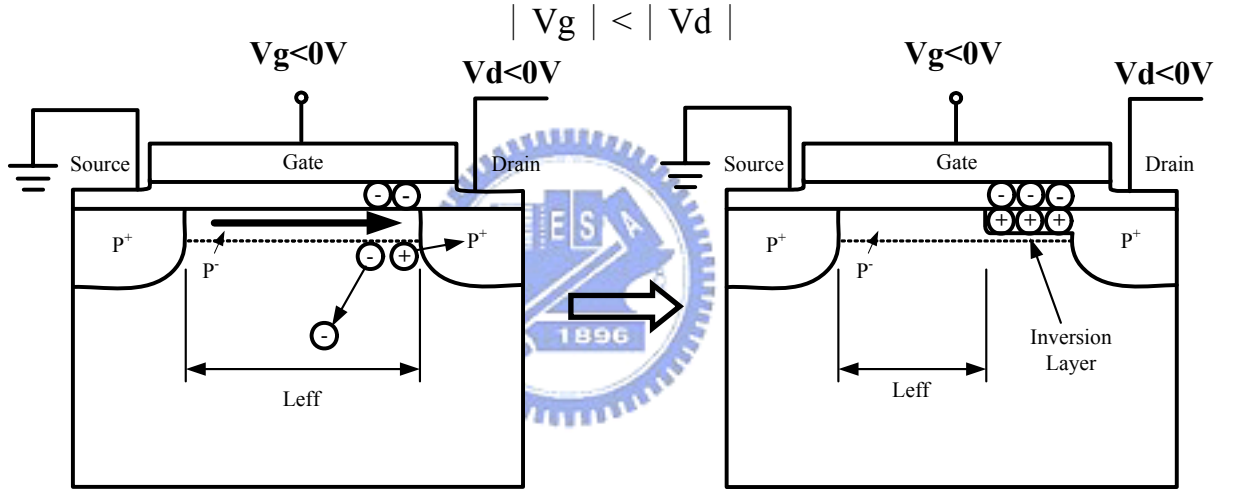


Fig. 4-15 Schematic illustration of the mechanism causing the HEIP effect

We consider the relationship between ΔL and capacitance increase slightly.

$$\Delta C = \epsilon \times \frac{\Delta A}{d} = \frac{\epsilon}{d} \times W(\Delta L_c)$$

where C is the increase slightly of C_{GD} for the gate voltage below V_{th} .

In prior study, we have known that the C_{GD} curve is measured with a floating source. Therefore, ΔL_c is equal to $1/2$ of ΔL as shown in Fig.4-16.

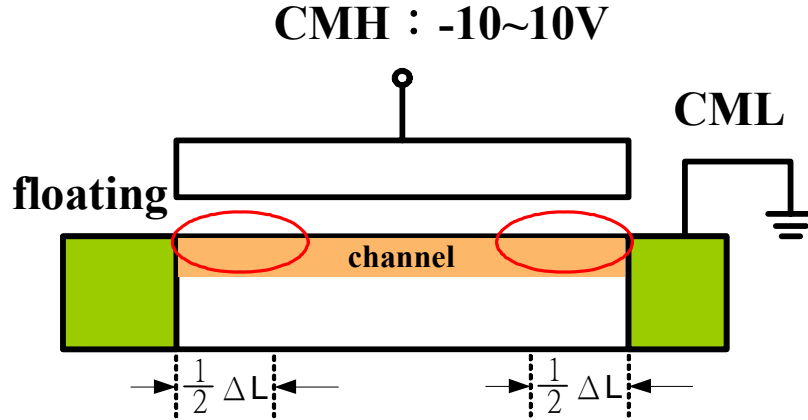


Fig. 4-16 The relationship between ΔL and ΔL_c in C-V measurement.

We further deduct the relationship between ΔL and mobility increase.

$$\frac{(\mu + \Delta\mu)}{\mu} = \frac{L}{L - \Delta L_\mu},$$

where $\Delta\mu$ is the mobility increase after a stress. The ΔL_μ is identical to ΔL as shown in Fig. 4-17.

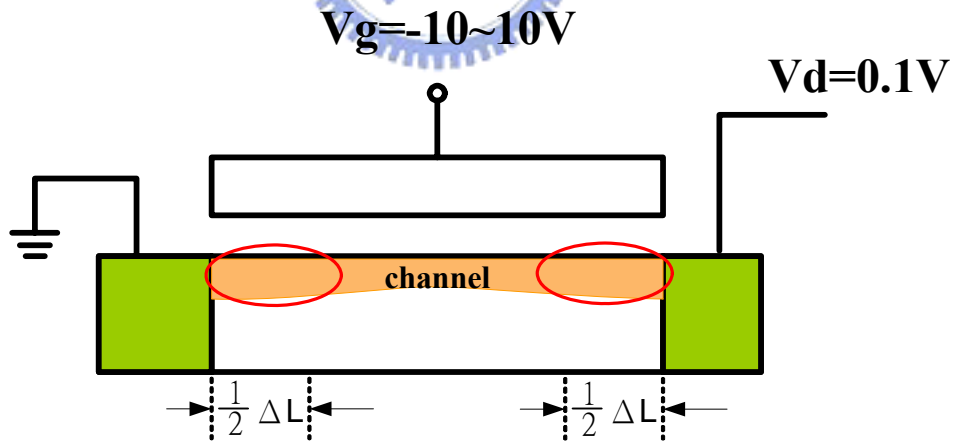


Fig. 4-17 The relationship between ΔL_μ and ΔL in C-V measurement.

And then, we observe the relation of mobility increase and capacitance increase with ΔL . The ΔL_μ versus ΔL_c under different AC stress conditions are plotted in Fig. 4-18 (a) and Fig. 4-18 (b). It can be seen that the relationship of the ΔL_μ and ΔL_c is almost linear with a

slope of 2. In addition, we find that ΔL_μ are two times of the ΔL_c . So, our assumption is established.

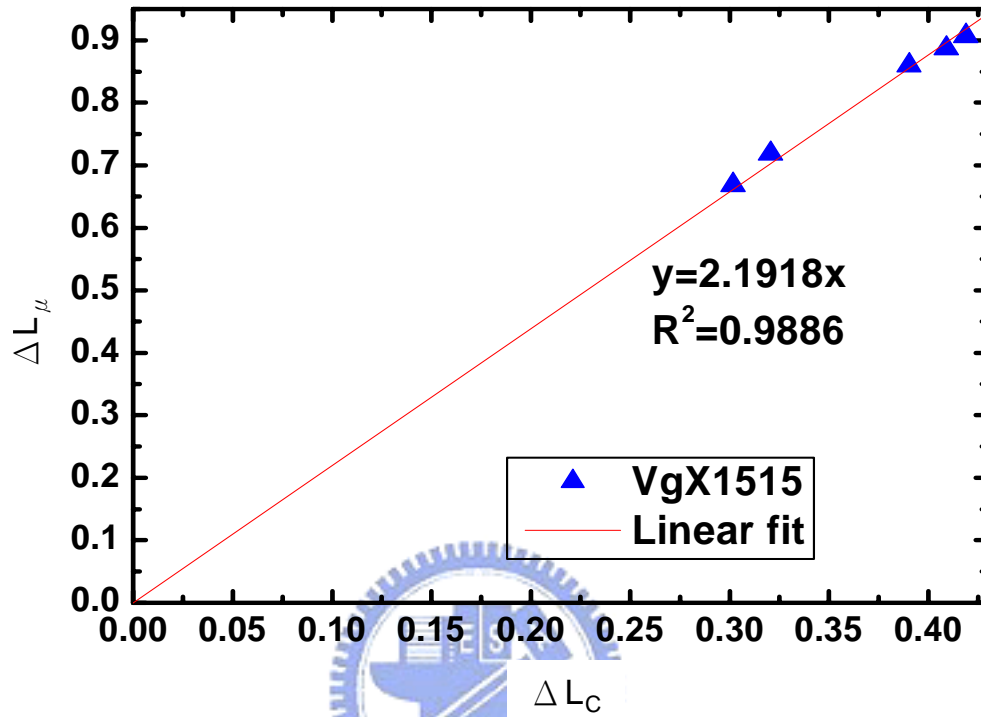


Fig. 4-18 (a) ΔL_μ versus ΔL_c for pulse stress of $V_g=-15V\sim 15V$.

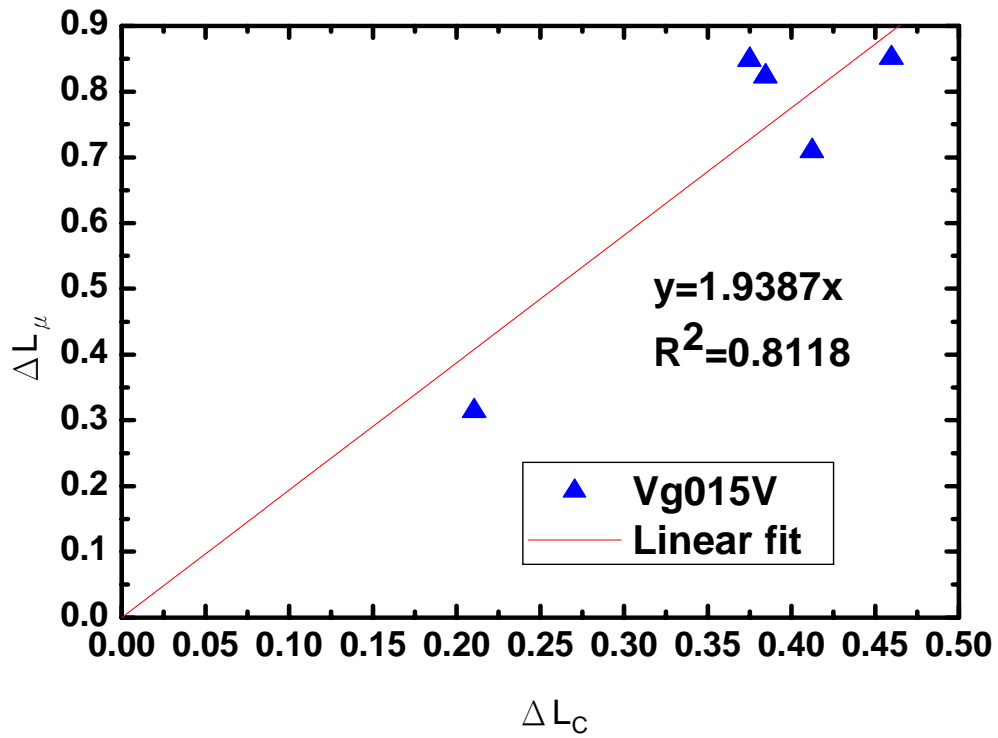










Fig. 4-18 (b) ΔL_{μ} versus ΔL_c for pulse stress of $V_g=0V \sim 15V$.

4.4 Summary

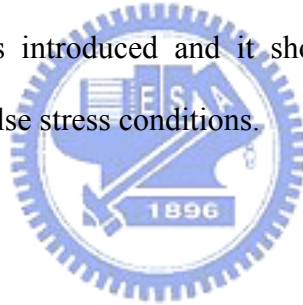
Table 4-1 Summary statement of experimental result for N-type.

	Experiments	Phenomena
1	Gate voltage leveling for V_g ON/OFF	$V_g=-15V \sim 15V$: Mobility increase  T_r  T_f
2	Gate voltage leveling for V_g in the depletion Region	$V_g = 0V \sim 15V$ Mobility increase  T_r  T_f
3	Behavior of C-V curve for V_g ON/OFF	$V_g=-15V \sim 15V$ Curve of increases slightly  T_r  T_f
4	Behavior of C-V curve for V_g in the depletion Region	$V_g = 0V \sim 15V$ Curve of increases slightly  T_r  T_f

For AC stress with the gate voltage toggling between -15 V and 15 V, it is observed that the degradation depends on the rising time T_r of the gate pulse but does not depend on the falling time T_f , which is similar to the result for the pulse stress with the gate voltage toggling between 0 V and 15 V.

The I-V measurement of P-type is mobility increase. The C-V curve degradation phenomenon is capacitance increase in the depletion region, which is positively correlated to the confirmed to be the I-V degradation. The mechanism of degradation under AC stress for P-type poly-Si TFT is channel length shortening effect according to both I-V and C-V measurements. Beside ΔL is almost to the degradation degree.

A slicing method is used for the simulation of channel voltage distribution and the change in the number of the carriers at the edge to explain the degradation behaviors. The index Π considering the two factors is introduced and it shows good linearity with the mobility degradation for various gate pulse stress conditions.



Chapter 5 Conclusion

In this thesis, we already quantity has examined varied stress condition. We clearly know, the T_r / T_f dependence is well explained.

From C-V measurement, we can get the same degradation relation of t_r and t_f as I-V measurement. The C-V measurement of N-type is C-V curve slight out and P-type is capacitance increase in the depletion region. For P-type we find the linearity relationship between ΔL_μ and ΔL_c , therefore, the results of C-V measurement and I-V are constant. In addition, the degradation mechanism of N-type is similar hot carrier and P-type is channel length shortening.

The degradation of P-channel TFT devices is due to a different mechanism than that of the N-channel TFT devices. For N-channel, charge damage occurs at these voltages through a three-step mechanism that causes an energy enhancement resulting from a feedback mechanism, namely impact-ionization feedback through the drain-bulk junction. The explanation of the impact-ionization feedback effect is as follow:

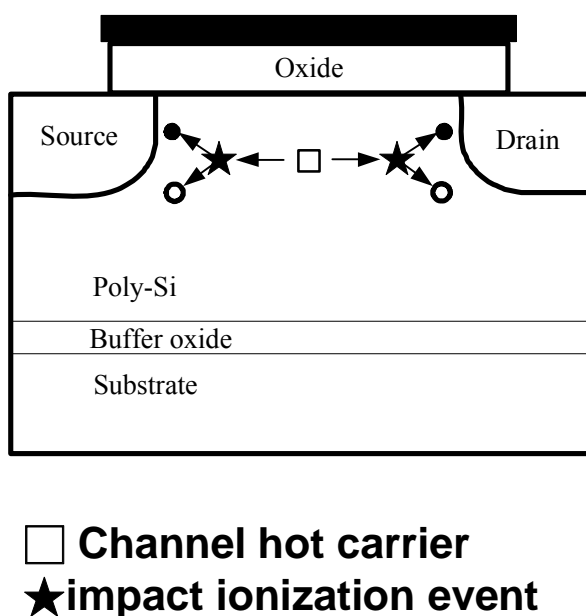


Fig. 5-1 Schematic illustration of the impact-ionization.

Channel electrons are injected into the drain where they gain enough energy to impact ionize, forming low-energy electron-hole pairs. The secondary electrons formed in this region leave through the drain, but the holes are then accelerated back into region C where they can once more gain enough energy to impact ionize forming more electron-hole pairs. Such circulation results in producing a lot of defect states and oxide charges, shown in Fig. 5-2.

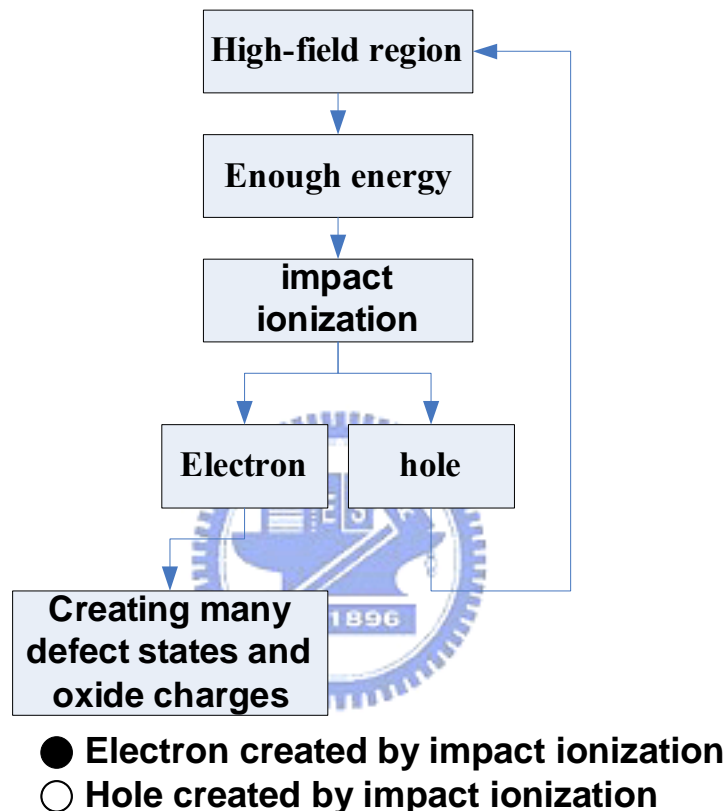


Fig. 5-2 Schematic illustration of the mechanism causing the impact-ionization feedback effect.

For P-type devices, channel electrons are injected into the drain where they gain enough energy to impact ionize, forming low-energy electron-hole pairs. The secondary electrons trapped at interface between poly-Si and oxide. Besides, the extra hole current flows to drain, shown in Fig. 5-3.

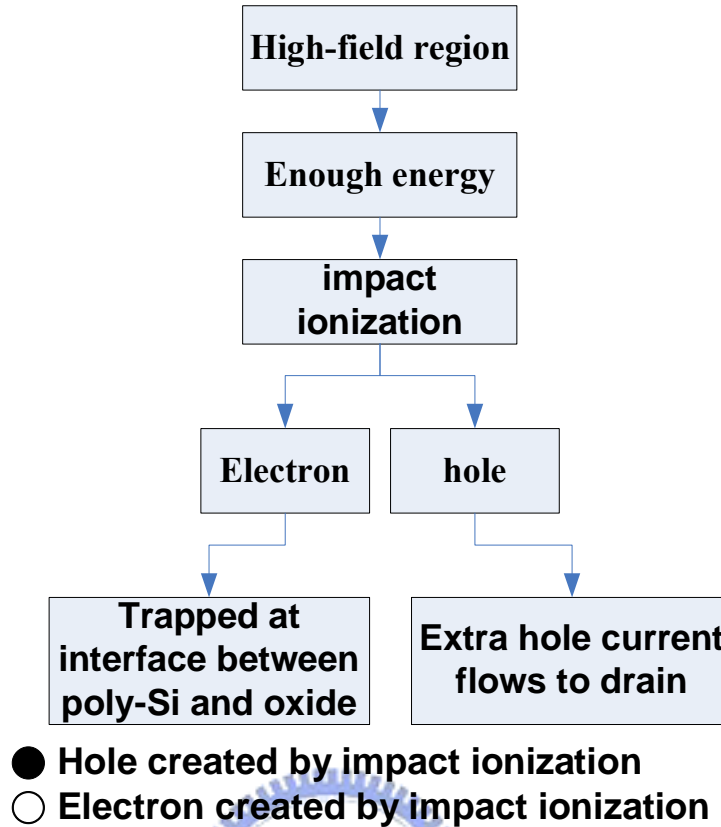


Fig. 5-3 Schematic illustration of the mechanism causing the HEIP.

It was reported that the activation energy of electron to inject into the gate oxide is about 3.2 eV and that of hole is about 4.3 eV [29], which means that the probability of electron trapping is larger than hole trapping. But the trapped holes in gate oxide lead to the degradation of P-type TFT can be observed from our measurement of C-V curve's shifting after stress. On the other hand, the hot holes are so few that the states creation in the P-type TFT is much less than that in the N-type TFT. Therefore, the electrical degradation of the P-type TFTs is very different from that of N-type TFTs.

The mobility degradation versus the index Π under different AC stress conditions for N-type and P-type are linearity. So, our measurement results are strongly supported by simulation.

The improvement of the reliability of poly-Si TFTs are the most important requirements in the realization of high-performance displays. Therefore, reliability testing is increasingly required. Besides the degradation mechanism under AC stress operation should be understood

in detail. In this thesis, the mobility degradation and the degradation behaviors of LTPS TFT's C-V characteristics are investigated. In addition, most degradation mechanisms are discussed by I-V transfer characteristics rather than C-V transfer characteristics. Two kinds of degradation behaviors' mechanism are discussed by I-V transfer characteristics and C-V transfer characteristics means of not only measurement result but also the simulation tool. We have successfully detected the universal linearity gives the index a potential modeling for reliability simulation and lifetime prediction of N-type and P-type poly-Si TFT circuitry.



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