Effect of Mobility on (I-V) Characteristics of Gaas MESFET

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Article Info

Article history:
Received Jul 9, 2016
Revised Oct 28, 2016
Accepted Sep 11, 2017

Keyword:
GaAs
MESFET
Mobility
Modeling

ABSTRACT

We present in this paper an analytical model of the current–voltage (I-V) characteristics for submicron GaAs MESFET transistors. This model takes into account the analysis of the charge distribution in the active region and incorporate a field depended electron mobility, velocity saturation and charge build-up in the channel. We propose in this frame work an algorithm of simulation based on mathematical expressions obtained previously. We propose a new mobility model describing the electric field-dependent. The predictions of the simulator are compared with the experimental data [1] and have been shown to be good.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The GaAs MESFET are attractive devices for the use in microwave applications because of their relatively simple processing and their high-speed and low noise performance [2]. The current-voltage depends on the law of carrier mobility as a function of electric field. The choice of a mobility law is very important for a proper description of physical phenomena in submicron-gate MESFET. The principal object in this paper is to propose a physical and analytical model of the characteristics current voltage of these devices with a new electron mobility law.

First, we calculate the potential field in the depletion layer S.C.Z due to the electrical charge formed under the gate which can be obtained by resolving the Poisson’s equation by the conventional approximation. Then we determine the drain current $I_d$, the characteristic I-V obtained by this model, using anew expression of the electrons velocity $v(E)$ for different dimensions of channel. This model takes into account in the hand the specifics physical phenomena in devices and on the other hand simplicity of mathematical expressions. We have elaborated software of simulation that will enable us to solve the system of differential equations and to trace the various series of curves.

2. CALCULATION OF THE POTENTIAL AND THE DRAIN CURRENT IN THE CHANNEL AND THE ELECTRICAL FIELD

To calculate the potential and the electric field under the gate, the channel is divided into two principal regions Figure 1.

a. The first region (1) the gate directly is controlled by the gate.

b. The second region (2) outwards of the first region known as region not controlled by the gate.
The electric potential due to the electrical charge formed under the gate can be given by [2]:

$$V_d(x, y) = \int_{a}^{y} \frac{eN_d(x,y)}{\varepsilon} y dy + \int_{y}^{h(x)} \frac{eN_d(x,y)}{\varepsilon} dy + V_{bi} - V_g$$  \hspace{1cm} (1)

Where $N_d(x,y) = N_d(y) - n(x,y)$, with $N_d(y)$ the density of the donors which can be varied with $y$, and $n(x,y)$ the density of the free electrons in the depletion layer. $V_{bi}$ is the built-in potential of the Schottky barrier, and $\varepsilon$ is the permittivity.

It should be noted that the approximations in (1) is based on the fact that the depletion layer thickness under the gate $h(x)$ is a slowly varying function in the channel and is given by:

$$h(x) = \left[ \frac{2\varepsilon(V_{bi} - V)}{qN_d} \right]^{1/2}$$  \hspace{1cm} (2)

The channel potential is obtained by integration limits with $y=h(x)$

$$V(y) = \frac{qN_d}{\varepsilon} \left[ hy - \frac{y^2}{2} \right]$$  \hspace{1cm} (3)

The equation of the potential takes a maximum of values in diffusion potential $V_{bi}$ ($y=h$).

$$V_h = V(y = h) - V(y = 0)$$  \hspace{1cm} (4)

The dimensional potential of the channel under the gate is given as follows:

$$V(x) = \frac{qN_d h^2(x)}{2\varepsilon} + V_g - V_{bi}$$  \hspace{1cm} (5)

Calculation of drain current in the channel:

To calculate the drain current expression as a function of the drain voltage, we must make some approximations [3]:

a. One neglects the current flow in the y-direction. This approximation is valid for the components with the short length gate.

b. An abrupt junction Schottky barrier.

c. A channel of uniform doping $N_d(x, y) = N_d$, $N_d$ is constant.

d. Neglecting edge effects, the overflow area depopulated on the sides of the gate.

The density of the current is given by:

$$J_x = \sigma(x, y, z). E_x$$  \hspace{1cm} (6)

With $\sigma(x, y) = \rho(y)\mu_n(E_x)$

$$J_x = qN_d\mu_n E_x = -q\mu_n N_d \frac{d\psi(x)}{dx}$$  \hspace{1cm} (7)

$\mu_n(E_x)$ is the electron mobility which depends on the electric field.
The drain current $I_d$ counted positively in the sense drain source is obtained by integrating across the $J_x$-conductor section of the channel:

$$I_d = - \int_0^Z \int_{h(x)}^{a} J_x dy \, dz = -Z \int_{h(x)}^{a} J_x dy$$  \hspace{1cm} (8)

$$v_x(E_x) = \mu_n E_x(x)$$

The calculations made above, unaware of the contribution depletion layer located below the free surface in the potential, we put:

$$I_p = \frac{(qN_d)^2 \mu_n Z a^2}{2L_x}$$

$q$: electron charge.

$N_d$: carrier density in the channel.

$a$: channel thickness.

$L_x$: intrinsic channel length (controlled by the gate).

$$V_p = q \frac{N_d a^2}{2e} = V_{bi} - V_g$$

$$a = \left[ \frac{2e}{qN_d} (V_{bi} - V_p) \right]^{1/2}$$

$$\frac{h(x)}{a} = \left[ \frac{V_{bi} + V(x) - V_g}{V_{bi} - V_g} \right]$$

Then the final expression of the current $I_d$ [4] is given by:

$$I_d(V_d, V_g) = I_p \left[ \frac{V_d}{V_p} - \frac{2}{3} \left( \frac{V_d + V_{bi} - V_g}{V_p} \right)^{3/2} - \left( \frac{V_{bi} - V_g}{V_p} \right)^{3/2} \right]$$  \hspace{1cm} (9)

### 3. EFFECT OF VARIABLE MOBILITY

The dependence of the electron drift velocity on the applied field remains one of the most important relations required in the numerical simulations of GaAs devices.

For low electric field the carrier mobility remains constant and varies from one material to another, and the carrier velocity is directly proportional to the electric field. It is defined by the equation [5].

$$V(E) = \mu_0 E$$

$\mu_0$: the mobility of electrons at low electric field.

However, when the applied electric field becomes important, the electron transfer intervals induced in the GaAs a decrease of the carrier velocity and leads to strong negative differential mobility [6]. This decrease results in a non-linear variation of the drift velocity of the carriers. Therefore, several approximate analytical expressions have been proposed for this function [7].

For our study, we have tested two mobility laws for the reason that they have good approximations comparing to the experimental data. When $E < E_0$ which corresponds to the critical field, the two expressions are given by:

First expression [8, [9]:

$$\mu_2(E) = \frac{\mu_0 + \nu_s \left( \frac{E_0}{E} \right)^2}{1 + \left( \frac{E_0}{E} \right)^2}$$  \hspace{1cm} (10)

First expression [10]:
In this section, we describe the introduction of a new empirical apparent velocity field relationship suitable for GaAs MESFET’s with different gate length. We propose a new model which is a very simple expression and easy to use in the different current-voltage analytical models.

The proposed expression of the velocity is given by:

\[
\nu_a(E) = \mu_n(E)E = \frac{\mu_0 E}{(1 + \frac{E}{E_s})^{\frac{1}{n}}}
\]  

(12)

So, the expression of the mobility is as follows:

\[
\mu_n = \frac{\mu_0}{(1 + \frac{E}{E_s})^{\frac{1}{n}}}
\]  

(13)

\(n\) may be taken equal to 1 or 2 for a best fitting of the Current -Voltage characteristics and to be as close as possible to the two segments approach.

The general equation of the current using \(\mu_n\) becomes:

\[
I_d = I_p A \left[ \frac{V_{ds} - (R_s + R_d)I_d}{V_p} - \frac{2}{3} \left( \frac{V_{ds} + V_{bi} - V_{gs} + R_d I_d}{V_p} \right)^{3/2} + \frac{2}{3} \left( \frac{V_{bi} - V_{gs} + R_d I_d}{V_p} \right)^{3/2} \right]
\]  

(14)

with

\[
A = \frac{1}{\{1 + [(V_{ds} - (R_s + R_d)/L_ec)^{n+1}]^{1/n}\}}
\]

\(R_s\) is the Source series resistance and \(R_d\) is the drain series resistance.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The numerical calculation of the current of drain according to the biasing calls upon the expressions (8), (9), (10) established previously. The study was carried out on a submicron gate GaAs MESFET’s which the physical and geometrical parameters are gathered in the Table 1.

| Table 1. Parameter of the GAT1 |
|-----------------------------|
| Transistor \(L\) (\(\mu\)m) \(A\) (nm) \(Z\) (\(\mu\)m) \(V_{bi}\) (V) \(N_{d}\) (\(cm^{-3}\)) \(\square_{o}\) (\(m^2 V^{-1} s^{-1}\)) \(\nu_s\) (\(ms^{-1}\)) |
| GAT1 | 0.28 | 90 | 100 | 0.8 | \(5 \times 10^{17}\) | 0.374 | 0.971 |
Figure 2 represents the dependence of mobility as a function of electric field using the three expressions.

![Figure 2. Comparison of the Experimental Results and Theoretical Modeling of Carrier Mobility for Submicron GaAs MESFET’s as a Function of the Applied Electric Field](image1)

![Figure 3. Comparison of the Experimental Results and Theoretical Modeling of Carrier Velocity for Submicron GaAs MESFET’s as a Function of the Applied Electric Field](image2)

Figure 4 shows that the simulated drain current using the new model and measured $I-V$ characteristics are in good agreement in different device operation regions, especially the linear and knee regions that are difficult to model. The modeled drain current goes smoothly to zero when $V_{gs}$ approaches pinch-off. The new model also gives an accurate pinch off modeling, as indicated in Figure 5 which shows the comparison of measured and modeled drain current characteristics in pinch off region.

![Figure 4. Measured Drain Current Characteristics $I_d$-$V_{ds}$ of GaAs [dot] and Comparison to Improved Model with a New Mobility Profile as a Fitting Parameter [Solid Line]](image3)

![Figure 5. Comparison of measured [dot] and Modeled [Solid Line] Drain Current Characteristics near pinch off Region](image4)

The RMS errors of the model are calculated and listed in Table 2. The calculation is made at four bias levels for $V_{gs}$, while $V_{ds}$ changes from 0.5V to 3.0V. Table 2 shows the RMS error is insignificant and greatly reduced near pinchoff condition, the new model produces very accurate fitting result.

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Table 2. RMS Errors of the New Model at different $V_{gs}$ Values

| $V_{gs}(V)$ |      | -1.1 | -2.2 | -3.3 |
|------------|------|------|------|------|
| RMS Error (%) |      | 0.977| 1.658| 0.337| 0.196|

5. CONCLUSION

The GaAs MESFET transistors are attractive devices for the use in microwave applications because of their relatively simple processing and their high-speed and low noise performances [13],[14]. The development and the improvement of new dies of components require new results from modelling, new realisations and new characterisations [15]. In our study we have developed an analytical model to calculate the I-V characteristics of short gate length GaAs MESFET which takes into account the one-dimensional analysis of the charge distribution in the active region and incorporates a field depended electron mobility, velocity saturation and effect of these parameter to the current voltage expressions. The model compares favorably from a submicron GaAs MESFET. More ever, comparisons between the analytical models with different values of mobility proposed shown the effect of mobility it affects directly the output characteristics (I-V) of GaAs MESFET.

The carrier mobility acquires major importance in determining the output characteristics of a GaAs MESFET’s. A good fitting of mobility has a great influence on the accuracy of the electrical conductivity and many other physical parameters.

Therefore, we propose a new expression for the mobility-field dependence in GaAs. We show that the results calculated using this model agree well with experimental data. This expression can explain very well the carrier behavior at a wide range of electric field. It can also be implemented easily into computer models describing GaAs devices; in particular, GaAs ion implanted FET’s with non-uniform mobility profiles. They also may be used in analytical calculations of the device performance (for example, when an analytical expression for the differential mobility as a function of the field is needed).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors gratefully acknowledge the supports from the University of Larbi Ben Mhidi, Oum El Bouaghi.

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