Abstract

Statement of the Problem:
Solid-state micropores have emerged as promising platforms for label-free detection and characterization of single particles and microorganisms. However, the weak ionic current blockade signals generated during particle translocation are often obscured by electronic noise, limiting detection sensitivity and species discrimination. Although increasing the micropore bias voltage enhances the translocation signal amplitude, the resulting increase in baseline ionic current causes saturation of high gain transimpedance amplifiers, preventing operation at the optimal sensing conditions. Therefore, there is a need for a readout architecture that enables high-bias operation while preserving low-noise performance and high transimpedance gain.

Methodology:
A DC feedback compensation-based readout architecture incorporating a low-noise baseline current cancellation path was developed to suppress the large steady-state ionic current while preserving transient translocation events. The proposed compensation technique enables operation at elevated micropore bias voltages without saturating the front-end amplifier. The readout circuit was designed to achieve a transimpedance gain of 160 dBΩ, a bandwidth of 30 kHz, and an input-referred RMS noise of 6.3 pA. Experimental validation was performed using solid-state micropores with polystyrene beads and *Escherichia coli* bacteria to evaluate sensing performance under compensated and uncompensated operating conditions.

Findings:
The proposed compensation architecture effectively suppresses the baseline ionic current, allowing stable operation at higher micropore bias voltages while maintaining low electronic noise. Experimental results demonstrate increased translocation event rates, larger ionic current blockade amplitudes, and an approximately 15.9 dB improvement in signal-to-noise ratio at a 200 mV bias compared with conventional uncompensated readout circuits. Furthermore, measurements obtained using polystyrene beads and *E. coli* bacteria exhibit distinct translocation signatures, enabling reliable discrimination of mixed particle populations.

Conclusion & Significance:
The proposed DC-compensated readout architecture significantly improves the sensitivity and throughput of solid-state micropore sensing by enabling high-bias operation without amplifier saturation. The enhanced signal-to-noise ratio and reliable differentiation of biological and synthetic particles demonstrate its potential for label-free biosensing, microorganism detection, and future nanopore-based diagnostic and analytical applications.

References

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