

D E S C R I P T I O N



PHOTOSENSOR AND PHOTOSENSOR SYSTEM

This invention relates to a photosensor for sensing light or an image, according to the sensed light and a photosensor system.

10 One known two-dimensional image reading device for reading printed matter, photographs, or fingerprints by very small irregularities in the finger has a photosensor array composed of photoelectric conversion elements (photosensors) arranged in a matrix.

15 Generally, a solid-state imaging device, such as CCD (Charge-Coupled Device), made of single crystal silicon has been used as a photosensor array. Use of single crystal silicon causes the problem of increasing the manufacturing cost seriously.

20 It is well known that the CCD has a structure
where photodiodes or photosensors are arranged in
a matrix, causes a horizontal scanning circuit and
a vertical scanning circuit to detect the charges
generated according to the amount of light projected
25 on the light-receiving section of each photosensor,
and senses the luminance of the projected light. In a
photosensor system using such a CCD, because select

transistors for respectively bringing the scanned
photosensors into the selected state have to be
provided independently, an increase in the number of
pixels causes the problem of making the overall system
5 larger.

To overcome this problem, an attempt has been
recently made to make the system smaller and reduce the
manufacturing cost by applying a thin-film transistor
with a so-called double-gate structure (hereinafter,
10 referred to as a double-gate photosensor) to an image
reading device. The double-gate photosensor is such
that a photosensor has a photo sense function and
a select transistor function.

The plane structure of a photosensor array
15 composed of such double-gate photosensors PS is so
designed, for example, as shown in FIG. 30 that
double-gate photosensors PS are arranged with a
specific pitch of Psp in a lattice-like form (or in a
matrix) in the directions of x and y crossing at right
20 angles and that light from the insulating substrate (or
glass substrate) side is projected through the element-
to-element region Rp in the lattice onto the subject.
Therefore, to project sufficient light on the subject
to improve the light-receiving sensitivity, it is
25 necessary to make the element-to-element region Rp as
large as possible.

FIG. 31 is a sectional view showing the structure

of a double-gate photosensor PS taken along line XXXI-XXXI in FIG. 30. The double-gate photosensor PS comprises a semiconductor layer 1 where electron-hole pairs are generated by incident light, n^+ silicon layers 7 provided at both ends of the semiconductor layer 1, a source electrode 2 and a drain electrode 3 which are formed on the n^+ silicon layers 7 and shut off light exciting the semiconductor layer 1, a block insulating film 4 provided on the semiconductor layer 1, an upper gate insulating film 5 covering the source electrode 2 and drain electrode 3, a top gate electrode TG formed on the upper gate insulating film 5, a lower gate insulating film 6 below the semiconductor layer 1, a bottom gate electrode BG which is formed below the lower gate insulating film 6 and shuts off light exciting the semiconductor layer, and a transparent substrate 9.

Specifically, the double-gate photosensor PS is such that a combination of two MOS transistors, of an upper MOS transistor composed of the semiconductor layer 1, source electrode 2, drain electrode 3, and top gate electrode TG; and a lower MOS transistor composed of the semiconductor layer 1, source electrode 3, and drain electrode 3, and bottom gate electrode BG, is formed on the transparent insulating substrate 9, such as a glass substrate using the semiconductor layer as a common channel region.

Then, light $h\nu$ emitted from above the double-gate
photosensor PS advances in the direction of the arrow,
passes through the top gate electrode TG and
transparent insulating films 4, 5, and enters the
5 semiconductor layer 1. In the semiconductor layer 1,
electron-hole pairs are generated according to the
amount of incident light. By sensing the voltage
signal corresponding to the charges, the light-and-
shade information on the subject is read.

10 A photosensor system applied to the aforementioned
two-dimensional image reading device has the following
problems.

(a) The semiconductor layer 1 in a double-gate
photosensor PS is set on the basis of various
15 dimensions determining the channel region, that is,
of the ratio of the channel length L_0 to channel width
 W_0 in the semiconductor layer 1. The channel length L_0
coincides with the length of the block insulating film
4 in the direction of channel length.

20 The transistor characteristic of the double-gate
photosensor PS is generally expressed by the following
expression (1):

$$I_{ds} \propto W_0/L_0 \quad (1)$$

where I_{ds} is a source-drain current value.

25 The double-gate photosensor system recognizes
an image by reading the voltage at the drain electrode
3 that varies with the drain current I_{ds} flowing on

the basis of the charges generated in the semiconductor layer 1 according to the amount of incident light. Therefore, to clearly recognize the image of the subject in a high contrast ratio, the difference between the drain current I_{ds} of a double-gate photosensor PS positioned in a dark portion of the subject and the drain current I_{ds} of a double-gate photosensor PS positioned in a bright portion of the subject has to be made larger. Since the source-drain current value I_{ds} that determines the transistor sensitivity of the double-gate photosensor PS is determined on the basis of the ratio of the channel width W_0 to channel length L_0 in the semiconductor layer 1, it is desirable from the viewpoint of improvement in the transistor sensitivity of the double-gate photosensor PS that the design value of the ratio W_0/L_0 should be made as large as possible.

On the other hand, if the ratio W_0/L_0 is set to be so that the double-gate photosensor PS is set to a high transistor sensitivity, the plane structure of the semiconductor layer 1 inevitably takes the form of a rectangular shape with a relatively large channel width W_0 and a relatively small channel length L_0 . Because the double-gate photosensor PS senses only the light caused to enter the semiconductor layer 1, only the part not covered by the shade source electrode 2 and drain electrode 3 senses the light entering from above.

As shown in FIG. 30, the area in which the light from the semiconductor layer 1 is allowed to enter takes a form of a near rectangle Ip_0 with the length of the shorter side being K_0 and the length of the longer side being about W_0 . Since the short-side length K_0 basically depends largely on the channel length L_0 , when the light entering the semiconductor layer 1 is perfect diffuse light or almost perfect diffuse light, the amount of light entering the semiconductor layer 1 in the direction of x is smaller than the amount of light entering the semiconductor layer 1 in the direction of y , resulting in a noticeable deviation of the incident light in the direction in which it travels.

Specifically, in such a double-gate photosensor PS, because the area of the semiconductor layer 1 constituting the channel region which light is allowed to enter is designed to take the form of a single rectangle Ip_0 , the light transmitting area at the surface of a protective insulating film that a single double-gate photosensor PS can basically sense is a lengthwise area Ep_0 (the area shaded with slanted lines in FIG. 30) substantially similar in shape to a near rectangle Ip_0 , which narrows, in the sidewise direction (or the direction of x), the area assuring the desired light-receiving sensitivity. Thus, the deviation of the expanse of the light sensing area in the directions

of x and y causes distortions in the image read, which prevents the light-and-shade information on the subject from being read accurately. This causes the problem of being unable to simultaneously realize both a high transistor sensitivity and the reading of image information with suppressed distortion. The area E_{p0} does not represent the distribution range of the light-receiving sensitivity of the double-gate photosensor PS accurately.

10 (b) When double-gate photosensors PS are arranged in a matrix, the distances between the light-receiving sections are non-uniform in an oblique direction (0 to 90°) other than the two perpendicular directions (or the directions of x and y) corresponding to the matrix, leading to the deterioration of the reading accuracy. Specifically, the arrangement of double-gate photosensors PS in a photosensor array has the following problem: because double-gate photosensors PS are arranged in only two directions of x and y perpendicular to each other in such a manner that they are spaced at regular intervals of dimension P_{sp} , the pitch between the double-gate photosensors PS increases in the directions of x and y non-uniformly (for example, $\sqrt{2}$ times for 45°) in an oblique direction (at a suitable angle other than 0°, 90°, 180°, and 270°, for example, in the direction of 45° or 60°) with respect to the directions of x and y corresponding to

the matrix, which prevents the object put obliquely from being read uniformly with high accuracy.

(c) The difference in the reflection of the projected light due to regularities in the finger is sensed using carriers generated in the semiconductor layer 1 composed of a-Si excited when light of visual light region is incident. Since the top gate electrode TG for accumulating carriers intervenes between such a subject as a finger and the semiconductor layer 1, it has the property of reflecting the light from the subject and allowing light in the wavelength region exciting the semiconductor layer 1 to pass through. For this reason, such a transparent electrode as ITO (Indium-Tin-Oxide) has to be used. The top gate electrodes TG of the double-gate photosensors PS adjacent to each other in the direction of row (or the direction of x) are connected to each other via top gate lines TGL. The top gate lines TGL themselves are made of ITO in such a manner that they are formed integrally with the top gate electrodes TG. ITO has a higher resistivity than such metallic material as chromium widely used as a wiring layer, which causes the problem of tending to cause a delay in the propagation of signals.

To solve the high-resistance ITO problem, the wiring resistance is reduced by forming a top gate line TGL composed of a wider wiring layer and making the

wiring cross-sectional area larger. Even a transparent electrode like ITO attenuates the amount of transmitting light, which causes a problem: when the electrode is made thicker carelessly, the light-receiving
5 sensitivity decreases.

In the manufacturing processes of the individual component parts of double-gate photosensors, top gate lines TGL are formed at a relatively upper layer, after various wiring layers, including drain lines DL
10 connecting the drain electrodes 3 of the double-gate photosensors PS arranged adjacent to each other in the direction of column (or the direction of y), source lines SL (or ground lines) connecting the source electrodes 2 of the double-gate photosensors PS
15 arranged adjacent to each other in the direction of column, and bottom gate lines BGL connecting the bottom gate electrodes BG of the double-gate photosensors PS arranged adjacent to each other in the direction of row, have been formed in a stacked manner. Therefore,
20 the top gate lines TGL are liable to be influenced by steps in the stacked structure, which causes a problem: there is a strong possibility that the wires will break.

Furthermore, since the top gate lines TGL overlap
25 with the bottom gate lines BGL between the double-gate photosensors PS adjacent to each other in the direction of row, the overlap capacitance between the top gate

lines TGL and the bottom gate lines BGL introduces the problem of being more liable to cause a delay.

It is, accordingly, an object of the present invention to provide a photosensor system which
5 improves the deviation of the light sensing area and has high-transistor-sensitivity photosensors and photosensors arranged therein to achieve a well-balanced light-receiving range.

Disclosure of Invention

10 To achieve the foregoing object, a photosensor according to the present invention includes one or more semiconductor layers having channel regions in which drain current flows. Providing the channel regions makes it possible not only to set high W/L but also to
15 set the positions of the carrier generating regions to the channel regions in such a manner that the balance of incident light in the direction of two-dimensional travel is equalized. This enables sensing with less distortion and provides a large drain current,
20 achieving a good transistor sensitivity. When carrier generating regions are provided in the direction of the channel length of the drain region, this brings particularly good results.

A delta arrangement of such photosensors equalizes
25 further the distance between photosensors adjacent to each other two-dimensionally. This suppresses a shift in the optical information due to non-uniformity of

the light-receiving sensitivity differing with the direction, when the same subject is placed on the photosensor array at a different angle in a plane. As a result, there are fewer limits to the angle at which the subject is placed, which helps realize a photosensor system with a far better image reading characteristic.

Brief description of Drawings

FIG. 1 is a plan view showing the structure of a double-gate photosensor applied to the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a sectional view taken along line II-II of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a plan view showing the position of a semiconductor layer;

FIG. 4 is a plan view showing the relative positions of the semiconductor layer and a block insulating film;

FIG. 5 is a plan view showing the relative positions of the block insulating film and an impurity doped layer;

FIG. 6 is a plan view of a photosensor array composed of a two-dimensional arrangement of double-gate photosensors applied to the present invention;

FIG. 7 is a schematic circuit diagram of a double-gate photosensor system applied to the present invention;

FIG. 8 is a sectional view showing a state where a finger is put on the photosensor system;

FIG. 9 is a timing chart showing an example of a method of controlling the driving of the photosensor system;

FIG. 10 is a schematic circuit diagram showing the resetting operation of the double-gate photosensor;

FIG. 11 is a schematic circuit diagram showing the light-sensing operation of the double-gate photosensor;

FIG. 12 is a schematic circuit diagram showing the precharging operation of the double-gate photosensor;

FIG. 13 is a schematic circuit diagram showing the operation of the double-gate photosensor in a selection mode in the bright state;

FIG. 14 is a schematic circuit diagram showing the operation of the double-gate photosensor in the selection mode in the dark state;

FIG. 15 is a schematic circuit diagram showing the operation of the double-gate photosensor in a non-selection mode in the bright state;

FIG. 16 is a schematic circuit diagram showing the operation of the double-gate photosensor in the non-selection mode in the dark state;

FIG. 17 is a graph showing a drain voltage characteristic of the double-gate photosensor in the selection mode;

FIG. 18 is a graph showing a drain voltage

characteristic of the double-gate photosensor in the non-selection mode;

FIG. 19 is a plan view showing the structure that suppresses the parasitic capacitance between the top
5 gate lines and bottom gate lines;

FIG. 20 is a plan view showing the structure of a double-gate photosensor provided with two semiconductor layers;

FIG. 21 is a sectional view taken along line
10 XXI-XXI of FIG. 20;

FIG. 22 is a plan view showing the structure of a double-gate photosensor which is provided with two semiconductor layers and has four channel regions and four carrier generating regions;

15 FIG. 23 is a plan view showing the structure of a double-gate photosensor which is provided with four semiconductor layers and has four channel regions and four carrier generating regions;

FIG. 24 is a plan view showing the structure of a
20 double-gate photosensor which is provided with a single semiconductor layer and has three channel regions and three carrier generating regions;

FIG. 25 is a sectional view taken along line XXV-XXV of FIG. 24;

25 FIG. 26 is a plan view of a photosensor array where double-gate photosensors are arranged in a matrix, each double-gate photosensor being provided

with a single semiconductor layer and having three channel regions and three carrier generating regions;

FIG. 27 is a plan view showing the structure of a double-gate photosensor which is provided with three semiconductor layers and has three channel regions and
5 three carrier generating regions;

FIG. 28 is a sectional view taken along line XXVIII-XXVIII of FIG. 27;

FIG. 29 is a plan view of a photosensor array composed of a delta arrangement of double-gate
10 photosensors applied to the present invention;

FIG. 30 is a plan view of an array where conventional double-gate photosensors are arranged; and

FIG. 31 is a sectional view taken along line XXXI-XXXI of FIG. 30, showing the structure of
15 a double-gate photosensor.

Best Mode for Carrying Out the Invention

Hereinafter, embodiments of a photosensor, a photosensor array, and a photosensor system related
20 to the present invention will be explained in detail.

Referring to the accompanying drawings, a double-gate photosensor applied to an image reading device according to the present invention will be explained.

FIG. 1 is a schematic plan view showing a double-gate photosensor 10 applied to a photosensor array
25 according to the present invention. FIG. 2 is a sectional view taken along line II-II of FIG. 1.

A concrete explanation will be given using a schematic configuration of a double-gate photosensor 10 which has a semiconductor layer acting as a photosensor section for each element and two divided channel regions of the semiconductor layer.

The double-gate photosensor 10 according to the present embodiment comprises a single opaque bottom gate electrode 22 formed on an insulating substrate 19 that allows visible light to pass through, a bottom gate insulating film 16 provided on the bottom gate electrode 22 and insulating substrate 19, a semiconductor layer 11 made of amorphous silicon or the like that is provided on the insulating film 16 so as to face the bottom gate electrode 22 and generates electron-hole pairs when being struck by visible light, block insulating films 14a, 14b arranged apart in parallel on the semiconductor layer, impurity doped layers 17a, 17b provided on both ends of the semiconductor layer 11 in the direction of channel length, an impurity doped layer 18 provided on the central part of the semiconductor layer 11 apart from the impurity doped layers 17a, 17b, source electrodes 12a, 12b provided on the impurity doped layers 17a, 17b, respectively, a drain electrode 13 provided on the impurity doped layer 18, a top gate insulating film 15 formed so as to cover the bottom gate insulating film 16, block insulating films 14a, 14b, source electrodes

12a, 12b, and drain electrode 13, a single top gate
electrode 21 provided on the top gate insulating film
15 facing the semiconductor layer 11, and a protective
insulating film 20 provided on the top gate insulating
5 film 15 and top gate electrode 21.

As shown in FIG. 3, the semiconductor layer 11 is
formed in the hatched area and includes a portion
overlapping with the source electrodes 12a, 12b and
drain electrode 13 in a plane and channel regions 11a,
10 11b overlapping with the block insulating films 14a,
14b in a plane. The channel regions 11a, 11b are
arranged in parallel in the direction of channel length
(in the direction of y).

As shown in FIG. 4, one block insulating film 14a
15 is so located that the source electrode 12a and drain
electrode 13 overlap both ends of the film 14a in
a plane. The other block insulating film 14b is so
located that the source electrode 12b and drain
electrode 13 overlap both ends of the film 14b in
20 a plane.

As shown in FIG. 5, the impurity doped layers 17a,
17b, 18 are made of amorphous silicon (n^+ silicon)
doped with n-type impurity ions. The impurity doped
layer 17a intervenes between one end of the semicon-
ductor layer 11 and the source electrode 12a. Part of
25 the impurity doped layer 17a is located on the block
insulating film 14a. The impurity doped layer 17b

intervenes between the other end of the semiconductor layer 11 and the source electrode 12b. Part of the impurity doped layer 17b is located on the block insulating film 14b. The impurity doped layer 18
5 intervenes between the semiconductor layer 11 and the drain electrode 13. Both ends of the impurity doped layer 18 are located on the block insulating films 14a, 14b, respectively.

FIG. 6 is a plan view showing the configuration of
10 a photosensor array where a plurality of double-gate photosensors 10 are arranged in a matrix, each double-gate photosensor including two semiconductor layer regions per element serving as photosensors. The two semiconductor layer regions in the signal semiconductor
15 layer 11 expose between the source electrode 12a, 12b and the drain electrodes 13. In the figure, the top gate electrodes 21 of the double-gate photosensors 10 arranged adjacent to each other in the direction of row are connected to two branched top gate lines 101a,
20 101b. The bottom gate electrodes 22 of the double-gate photosensors 10 arranged adjacent to each other in the direction of row are connected to a bottom gate line 102. The top gate lines 101a, 101b are placed between the double-gate photosensors 10 in such a manner that
25 they do not overlap with the bottom gate line 102. The drain electrodes 13 of the double-gate photosensors 10 arranged adjacent to each other in the direction of

column are connected to drain lines 103. The source electrodes 12 of the double-gate photosensors 10 arranged adjacent to each other in the direction of column are connected to source lines 104. A voltage Vss is supplied to the source lines 104.

The source electrodes 12a, 12b are so formed that they project in a comb-tooth like manner in the direction of x from the common source line 104 toward the drain line 103. The drain electrode 13 is so formed that it projects in the direction of x from the drain line 103 facing the source line 104 toward the source line 104. Specifically, the source electrode 12a and drain electrode 13 are so positioned that they face each other with the region 11a of the semiconductor layer 11 between them. The source electrode 12b and drain electrode 13 are so positioned that they face each other with the region 11b of the semiconductor layer 11 between them.

In FIG. 2, the protective insulating film 20 provided on the block insulating films 14a, 14b, top gate insulating film 15, bottom gate insulating film 16, and top gate electrode 21 is made of an insulating film transparent for visible light, such as silicon nitride. The top gate electrode 21 and top gate lines 101a, 101b are made of light-transmitting conductive material, such as the aforementioned ITO, and present a high transmittance to visible light. On the other

hand, the source electrodes 12a, 12b, drain electrode 13, bottom gate electrode 22, and bottom gate line 102 are made of material that prevents visible light from passing through and is selected from chromium, chrome alloy, aluminum, aluminum alloy, and the like.

Specifically, the double-gate photosensor 10 comprises a first double-gate photosensor composed of a first upper MOS transistor made up of the channel region 11a in the semiconductor layer 11, source electrode 12a, drain electrode 13, top gate insulating film 15, and top gate electrode 21, and a first lower MOS transistor made up of the channel region 11a, source electrode 12a, drain electrode 13, bottom gate insulating film 16, and bottom gate electrode 22 and a second double-gate photosensor composed of a second upper MOS transistor made up of the channel region 11b in the semiconductor layer 11, source electrode 12b, drain electrode 13, top gate insulating film 15, and top gate electrode 21 and a second lower MOS transistor made up of the channel region 11b, source electrode 12b, drain electrode 13, bottom gate insulating film 16, and bottom gate electrode 22, with the first and second double-gate photosensors arranged in parallel on the insulating substrate 19.

In the double-gate photosensor 10, the channel region 11a in which the drain current of the first double-gate photosensor flows is set as a rectangular

shape whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_1 and a channel width of W_1 . The channel region 11b in which the drain current of the second double-gate photosensor flows is set as a rectangular shape whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_2 and a channel width of W_1 .

The carrier generating region on which light coming from above the double-gate photosensor 10 is incident and which has an effect on the drain current I_{ds} of the first double-gate photosensor takes the form of a near rectangle with a length of about K_1 and a width of W_1 and closely resembles the shape of the channel region 11a. The carrier generating region on which the light coming from above the double-gate photosensor 10 is incident and which has an effect on the drain current I_{ds} of the second double-gate photosensor takes the form of a near rectangle with a length of about K_2 and a width of W_1 and closely resembles the shape of the channel region 11b.

The photosensor system composed of a two-dimensional arrangement of double-gate photosensors will be explained briefly by reference to the circuit diagram.

FIG. 7 schematically shows the configuration of the photosensor system composed of a two-dimensional arrangement of double-gate photosensors.

The photosensor sensor system roughly comprises a

photosensor array 100 of many double-gate photosensors arranged in, for example, a matrix of n rows $\times$ m columns, top gate lines 101 (101a, 101b) and bottom gate lines 102 which connect the top gate terminals TG (top gate electrodes 21) and bottom gate terminals BG (bottom gate electrodes 22) of the double-gate photosensors 10 adjacent to each other in the direction of row, respectively, a top gate driver 111 and a bottom gate driver 112 connected to the top gate lines 101 and bottom gate line 102, respectively, drain lines 103 which connect the drain terminals D (drain electrodes 13) of the individual double-gate photosensors in the direction of column, a detection driver 113 connected to the drain lines 103, a switch 114, an amplifier circuit 115, source lines 104 which connect the source terminals S (source electrodes 12a, 12b) in the direction of column and to which a voltage of V_{ss} is supplied, and a plane light source 30 below the photosensors 10. Although the voltage V_{ss} has only to differ from the voltage precharged on the drain lines, it is desirable that the voltage V_{ss} should be the ground potential.

The top gate lines 101, together with the top gate electrodes 21, are made of ITO. The bottom gate lines 102, drain lines 103, and source lines 104 are made of the same material of the bottom gate electrodes 22, drain electrodes 13, and source electrodes 12a, 12b in

such a manner that they are integrally formed with the latter. Here, ϕ_{tg} is the control signals for generating reset pulses and accumulation pulses ϕ_{T1} , ϕ_{T2} , ..., ϕ_{Ti} , ..., ϕ_{Tn} . Mark ϕ_{bg} is the control signals for generating read pulses and non-read pulses ϕ_{B1} , ϕ_{B2} , ..., ϕ_{Bi} , ..., ϕ_{Bn} . And ϕ_{pg} is the precharging signal for controlling the timing of applying a precharge voltage V_{pg} .

With this configuration, the top gate driver 111 applies a voltage to the top gate terminal TG, thereby realizing a photosensing function. The bottom gate driver 112 applies a voltage to the bottom gate terminal BG, causing the detection driver 113 to take in the sense signal via the drain line 103 and output serial data or parallel data V_{out} , which realizes a selective reading function.

Next, a method of controlling the driving of the photosensor system will be described by reference to the accompanying drawings.

FIG. 8 is a sectional view showing a state where a finger is put on the photosensor system 100. FIG. 9 is a timing chart to help explain an example of a method of controlling the driving of the photosensor system 100. FIGS. 10 to 16 show conceptual diagrams of the operation of the double-gate photosensor 10. FIGS. 17 and 18 show optical response characteristics of the output voltage of the photosensor system.

First, as shown in FIG. 8, a finger FN is put on the protective insulating film 20 of the photosensor system 100. At this time, while the projecting parts defining the fingerprint of the finger FN directly touch the protective insulating film 20, the grooves between the projecting parts do not touch the protective insulating film 20, with air intervening between the finger and the film 20. When the finger FN is placed on the insulating film 20, the photosensor system 100 applies signal (reset pulse as high as, for example, $V_{tg} = +15V$) ϕ_{Ti} to the top gate line 101 at the i -th row and the non-read signal ϕ_{Bi} of 0V to the bottom gate line 102 at the i -th row, thereby performing the reset operation of discharging (in a reset period of T_{reset}) the carriers (here, holes) accumulated in the semiconductor layer 11 and the block insulating film 14.

The light in the wavelength range including visible light from the plane light source 30 provided below the glass substrate 19 of the double-gate photosensors 10 is emitted toward the double-gate photosensors 10 side.

At this time, since the opaque bottom gate electrode 22 intervenes between the plane light source 30 and semiconductor layer 11, the emitted light hardly enters the semiconductor layer 11 directly, but the light passed through the transparent insulating

substrate 19 and insulating films 15, 16, 20 in the element-to-element region R_p is projected on the finger FN on the protective insulating film 20. Of the light projected on the finger FN, light Q1 projected at
5 an angle smaller than the critical angle of total reflection is reflected irregularly at the interface between the projecting parts of the finger FN and the protective insulating film 20 or at the inside of the epidermis of the finger FN. The reflected light is
10 caused to enter the semiconductor layer 11 of the closest double-gate photosensor 10 via the insulating films 15, 16 and top gate electrode 21. The refractive indices of the insulating films 15, 16, 20 are set to about 1.8 to 2.0 and the refractive index of the
15 top gate electrode 21 is set to about 2.0 to 2.2. In contrast, in the grooves of the finger FN, while light Q2 is being reflected irregularly in the grooves, it attenuates in the air, preventing a sufficient amount of light from entering the semiconductor layer
20 11 of the closest double-gate photosensor 10.

Specifically, the amount of carriers that can be generated and accumulated in the semiconductor layer 11 varies according to the amount of reflected light entering the semiconductor layer 11 according to the
25 fingerprint pattern of the finger FN.

Next, shown in FIGS. 9 and 11, the photosensor system 100 applies a bias voltage of ϕ_{Ti} of low level

(e.g., $V_{tg} = -15V$) to the top gate line 101, after the reset operation, and performs a carrier accumulating operation, starting a carrier accumulating period T_a in the carrier accumulating operation.

5 In the carrier accumulating period T_a , electron-hole pairs are generated in the semiconductor layer 11 according to the amount of light entering from the top gate electrode 21 side. The holes are accumulated in the semiconductor layer 11 and the vicinity of the
10 interface between the semiconductor layer 11 and the block insulating film 14, that is, in the channel region and the vicinity of the channel region.

 In the precharging operation, as shown in FIGS. 9 and 12, the switch 114 is turned on the basis of
15 the precharging signal ϕ_{pg} in parallel with the carrier accumulating period T_a and a specific voltage (precharge voltage) of V_{pg} is applied to the drain lines 103, thereby causing the drain electrodes 13 to retain charges (precharging period T_{prch}).

20 Then, in a read operation, as shown in FIGS. 9 and 13, after the precharging period T_{prch} has elapsed, a bias voltage (read select signal, hereinafter, referred to as read pulse) of ϕ_{Bi} of a high-level (e.g., $V_{bg} = +10V$) is applied to the bottom gate line or the bottom
25 gate lines 102 in the row in the selection mode, thereby bringing the double-gate photosensors in the row in the selection mode into the ON state (read

period Tread).

In the read period Tread, since the carriers (holes) accumulated in the channel region serve to alleviate V_{tg} ($-15V$) of the opposite polarity applied to the top gate terminal TG, V_{bg} at the bottom gate terminal BG forms an n^- channel and the drain line voltage V_D on the drain line 103 tends to decrease from the precharge voltage V_{pg} gradually according to the drain current as time passes as shown in FIG. 17.

Specifically, when the carrier accumulated state in the carrier accumulating period T_a is in the dark state and no carrier (hole) has been accumulated in the channel region, applying a negative bias to the top gate TG cancels the positive bias at the bottom gate BG for forming the n^- channel as shown in FIGS. 14 and 17, bringing the double-gate photosensor 10 into the OFF state, which causes the drain voltage, or the voltage V_D on the drain line 103, to remain unchanged.

On the other hand, when the carrier accumulated state is in the bright state, since carriers (holes) have been captured in the channel region according to the amount of incident light as shown in FIGS. 13 and 17, the carriers serve to cancel the negative bias at the top gate TG. The positive bias at the bottom gate BG corresponding to the amount of the negative bias canceled forms an n^- channel, bringing the double-gate photosensor 10 into the ON state, which causes the

drain current to flow. Then, on the basis of the drain current flowing according to the amount of incident light, the voltage VD on the drain line 103 drops.

Therefore, as shown in FIG. 17, the tendency of the voltage VD on the drain line 103 to vary is closely related to the amount of light received during the time (carrier accumulating time Ta) from when the reset operation has ended as a result of the application of the reset pulse ϕ_{Ti} to the top gate TG until read pulse ϕ_{Bi} has been applied to the bottom gate BG. When the number of accumulated carriers is small, the voltage VD tends to decrease gently. When the number of accumulated carriers is large, the voltage VD tends to drop sharply. Therefore, when the read period Tread starts, the amount of projected light is calculated by sensing the voltage VD on the drain line 103 after a specific time has elapsed, or by sensing the time required to reach the voltage using a specific threshold voltage as a reference.

On the assumption that the aforementioned series of image reading operations is one cycle, applying equivalent processing procedures repeatedly to the double-gate photosensors 10 in the (i + 1)th row enables the double-gate photosensors 10 to operate as a two-dimensional sensor system.

In the timing chart shown in FIG. 9, when the low level (e.g., $V_{bg} = 0V$) is kept applied to the bottom

gate line 102 in the non-selection mode after the precharge period T_{prch} has elapsed as shown in FIGS. 15 and 16, the double-gate photosensor 10 remains in the OFF state and the voltage V_D on the drain line 103 keeps the precharge voltage V_{pg} as shown in FIG. 18 even if the photosensor 11 in the bright state. In this way, the state where the voltage is applied to the bottom gate line 102 realizes the function of selecting the reading state of the double-gate photosensor 10. The precharge voltage V_D on the drain line 103 attenuated according to the amount of light is read again into the detection driver 113, passes through the amplifier circuit 115, and is supplied as a signal of voltage V_{out} in the form of a serial or parallel output to a pattern authentication circuit.

Here, how the shape of the virtual incident region (effective incident region) of the exciting light on the channel regions 11a, 11b of a photosensor of the invention composed of a double-gate photosensor 10 including the aforementioned two channel regions 11a and 11b is related to the transistor sensitivity of the double-gate photosensor will be explained in detail.

In the double-gate photosensor, the drain current I_{ds} flowing according to the amount of light is proportional to $(\text{channel width } W)/(\text{channel length } L)$.

Since in the double-gate photosensor 10, the channel length of the first double-gate photosensor is

set to L_1 and its channel width is set to W_1 and the channel length of the second double-gate photosensor is set to L_2 and its channel width is set to W_1 , the drain current I_{ds} flowing through a single double-gate
5 photosensor 10 is expressed by the following expression (2):

$$I_{ds} \propto (W_1/L_1 + W_1/L_2) \quad (2)$$

Here, if $L_2 = L_1$, then expression (2) becomes the following expression (3):

10
$$I_{ds} \propto 2W_1/L_1 \quad (3)$$

Then, if the ratio (W_1/L_1) is made equal to the ratio (W_0/L_0) of a double-gate photosensor PS with the conventional structure shown in FIG. 30, the drain current I_{ds} of a double-gate photosensor 10 of the
15 invention is twice as large as the drain current I_{ds} of the double-gate photosensor PS, lowering the precharge voltage in the bright state sufficiently, which enables even a subject in a low contrast ratio between the bright state and the dark state to be
20 sensed sufficiently.

As described above, since the source-drain current value I_{ds} in the double-gate photosensor 10 depends on the sum of a ratio of (channel width W_1)/(channel length L_1) of the channel region 11a and a ratio of
25 (channel width W_1)/(channel length L_2) of the channel region 11b, an improvement in the drain current of the double-gate photosensor 10 requires the value

$(W_1/L_1 + W_1/L_2)$ to be made as large as possible.

For the double-gate photosensor 10 to read a sufficient difference between the incident light in the bright state and that in the dark state (or a difference in the precharged drain voltage), it is desirable that both the ratio W_1/L_1 and W_1/L_2 should be 1.5 or more. It is more desirable that they should be 3.5 or more.

In the double-gate photosensor 10, since the source electrodes 12a, 12b and drain electrode 13 are opaque to visible light, the carrier generating region Ip_1 where such holes are generated as have an effect on the drain current I_{ds} in the channel region 11a of the first double-gate photosensor of the double-gate photosensor 10 closely resembles a near rectangle with a longitudinal length of about K_1 and a lateral length equal to the channel width W_1 , and the carrier generating region Ip_2 where such holes are generated as have an effect on the drain current I_{ds} in the channel region 11b of the second double-gate photosensor of the double-gate photosensor 10 closely resembles a near rectangle with a longitudinal length of about K_2 and a lateral length equal to the channel width W_1 .

Since the carrier generating region Ip_1 and carrier generating region Ip_2 are arranged in parallel in the direction of channel length, as shown in FIG. 6, on the protective insulating film 20, at least either the light sensible region Ep_1 (the region shaded with

slated lines in the figure) through which the light caused to enter the carrier generating region Ip_1 as a result of reflection from the finger at the surface of the protective insulating film 20 passes or the light
5 sensible region Ep_2 (the region shaded with slated lines in the figure) through which the light caused to enter the carrier generating region Ip_2 as a result of reflection from the finger at the surface of the protective insulating film 20 passes, that is, the
10 region Ep_{T1} a single double-gate photosensor can sense, is shaped more like a regular square. The sensible regions schematically illustrate the regions assuring a specific light-receiving sensitivity, centered on the channel regions 11a, 11b, but not represent the
15 distribution range of light-receiving sensitivity accurately.

As a result, the sensible region Ep_1 and sensible region Ep_2 of the double-gate photosensor 10 of the invention are such that the balance between the
20 sensible region for light traveling in the direction of x and the sensible region for light traveling in the direction of y is equalized more than the sensible region Ep_0 of a conventional double-gate photosensor PS, which suppresses distortions in reading two-
25 dimensional images.

As described above, because the ratio $(W_1/L_1 + W_1/L_2)$ can be set higher and the double-gate

photosensor 10 has a good sensitivity, even if the contrast ratio between the bright state and the dark state is low, clearly distinguishable data V_{out} can be outputted. At the same time, because the carrier generating region Ip_1 and carrier generating region Ip_2 are arranged in parallel in the direction in which the distance of light sensitivity is shorter (the direction of y), this improves the plane balance of the sensing range of the light caused to enter the semiconductor layer 11 at an angle of 45° from right to left with the direction of y in the middle, enabling the fingerprint of the finger FN to be authenticated with high accuracy.

The plane structure of the photosensor array composed of such double-gate photosensors is so designed that double-gate photosensors 10 are arranged in a lattice (or matrix) with a specific pitch of P_{sp} in the two directions of x and y (the directions of row and column) perpendicular to each other and that the light from the plane light source 30 is projected on the subject through the element-to-element region R_p in the lattice. For this reason, to project a sufficient amount of light on the subject, it is desirable that the element-to-element region R_p should be made as large as possible.

The more the sensible region E_{pT1} resembles a regular square, the more the variation in the

light-receiving sensitivity caused by the incident angle of exciting light entering the channel regions 11a, 11b is corrected. Specifically, the sensitivity of light entering the channel regions 11a, 11b from the region with an angle of 45° above and 45° below the center line extending in the direction of x is made more equal to the sensitivity of light entering the channel regions 11a, 11b from the region with an angle of 45° to the right and to the left of the center line extending in the direction of x. This corrects the variation (directivity) in the light-receiving sensitivity, which provides a sensible region E_{PT1} whose light-sensing region expand almost uniformly in the directions of x and y (to take the form of a rectangle closer to an almost regular square).

Therefore, such double-gate photosensors 10 are arranged in a matrix to construct a photosensor array 100 as shown in FIG. 6, thereby equalizing the expanse in the direction of the sensible region E_{PT1} , which realizes a photosensor array with a high light-receiving sensitivity light-receiving section and a photosensor system, while suppressing distortion in reading two-dimensional images. At this time, because the top gate lines 101a, 101b connecting the top gate electrodes 21 of the double-gate photosensors 10 are arranged and formed in such a manner that they are branched in a plane and positioned uniformly

(symmetrically) in the direction of y, the exciting light reflected by the subject, passing through the top gate lines 101a, 101b, and entering the channel regions 11a, 11b attenuates uniformly, which prevents the incident light from having an effect on the variation in the light-receiving sensitivity as compared with a case where wider top gate lines are arranged and formed in offset positions. This assures the uniform expanse of the light sensing region accurately and prevents distortion in reading two-dimensional images.

Furthermore, with the double-gate photosensor 10, because the light-receiving sensitivity is increased remarkably, even if the amount of incident light is small, the light-and-shade information can be read properly, as compared with a conventional double-gate photosensor PS. This helps reduce the illuminance of the plane light source provided for the reading device, decreasing the power consumption of the two-dimensional image reading device. When the illuminance of the plane light source is made constant, an improvement in the light-receiving sensitivity shortens the carrier accumulating time remarkably, which provides a reading device excellent in the two-dimensional image reading performance.

Furthermore, the remarkably improved light-receiving sensitivity permits excessive light-on current to be generated for the same amount of incident

light as in a double-gate photosensor 10. To suppress such an on current, the operation is controlled by lowering the driving voltage applied to both electrodes of the top and bottom gates. Thus, the decrease of the driving voltage suppresses the deterioration of the characteristic of the double-gate photosensor with time, which enables the reliability of the photosensor array to last long.

In the photosensor array 100 of FIG. 6, the two top gate lines 101a, 101b connect the top gate electrodes 21 of the double-gate photosensors arranged in each row. The bottom gate line 102 connects the bottom gate electrodes 22 of the double-gate photosensors 10 arranged in each row. The top gate lines 101a, 101b in the same row are so formed that they are branched in a plane between the adjacent double-gate photosensors 10 and extend in parallel, while keeping the uniform positional relationship and an equal wire width and thickness. Specifically, the top gate lines 101a, 101b are arranged and formed almost symmetrically in the direction of column above and below the bottom gate line 102 extending in such a manner that it connects almost the middle of the double-gate photosensor 10. That is, the top gate line 101a and top gate line 101b basically form an axial-symmetric structure with the bottom gate line 102 in the direction of x as an axis. This equalizes the

balance between the amount of the light attenuated by passing through the top gate line 101a and top gate line 101b and caused to enter at the top gate line 101a side (top side) and the amount of the light caused to enter at the top gate line 101b side (lower side). In contrast, the source line 104 side and drain line 103 side basically form an axial-symmetric structure with the line extending from the center of the semiconductor layer 11 in the direction of y as an axis. When the light attenuated by passing through the top gate line 101a and top gate line 101b is caused to enter the semiconductor layer 11, the balance between incidence on the right side and left side of the photosensor 10 can be equalized. Since the top gate lines are so branched that the incidence balance of light become equal vertically and horizontally, the balance of the directivity of light sensed can be improved. In addition, because the top gate lines 101a, 101b arranged between the adjacent photosensors 10 hardly overlap with the bottom gate line 102 vertically, there is almost no parasitic capacitance between the top gate lines 101a, 101b and the bottom gate line 102, suppressing a delay in the signal or a drop in the voltage.

With such a configuration, since the top gate electrodes 21 are basically connected by two wiring layers, when the cross-sectional area per wiring layer

is the same, the cross-sectional area of the wiring is almost doubled as compared with use of a single wiring layer. This halves the wiring resistance of the top gate lines 101a, 101b made of ITO of high resistivity, suppressing a delay in the read operation signal, which realizes the operation of reading far better images.

In the stacked structure of a double-gate photosensor as shown in FIG. 2, since the top gate lines at a relatively upper layer are made of two wiring layers (101a, 101b), even if one top gate line (for example, 101a) has broken due to steps more prominent at a higher layer in the stacked structure or due to particles, such as dust, acting as obstacles in the photolithographic processing, the other top gate line (for example, 101b) enables the top gate electrodes 21 to be connected to each other electrically, compensating for the propagation of the read operation signal, which provides a highly reliable photosensor array.

While in the present embodiment, the top gate line has been branched in two lines, the present invention is not limited this. The top gate line may be branched into more than two lines. The wiring layer to be branched is not restricted to the top gate line. In short, it goes without saying that the present invention is applicable to a wiring layer of higher wiring resistance than that of another wiring layer

(for example, metal wires) applied to the photosensor array and photosensor system.

Even in the case of conventional double-gate photosensors, when a photosensor array 200 is such
5 that the top gate lines 101a, 101b between double-gate photosensors PS are so arranged that they do not overlap with the bottom gate line 102 as shown in FIG. 19, it produces such effects as suppressing parasitic capacitance and preventing the breaking
10 of wires. A photosensor system provided with the photosensor 200 is such that the photosensor array 100 is replaced with the photosensor array 200.

In the double-gate photosensor 10, one element is composed of one semiconductor layer. A photosensor
15 array composed of a single double-gate photosensor 50 with plural semiconductor layers and a photosensor system will be explained by reference to the accompanying drawings. The double-gate photosensor 50 in the embodiment explained below realizes a photosensing
20 function by the same driving and produces the same effect.

FIG. 20 schematically shows the configuration of a double-gate photosensor 50 applied to a photosensor array according to the present invention. A concrete
25 explanation will be given using a schematic configuration of a double-gate photosensor provided with two semiconductor layers per element serving as a

photosensor section.

FIG. 21 is a sectional view taken along line XXI-XXI of FIG. 20. The double-gate photosensor 50 according to the present embodiment comprises an opaque
5 bottom gate electrode 22 formed on an insulating substrate 19 that allows visible light to pass through, a bottom gate insulating film 16 provided on the bottom gate electrode 22 and insulating substrate 19, two
10 semiconductor layers 51a, 51b that are made of amorphous silicon or the like and generate electron-hole pairs by incident visible light and that are provided in such a manner that they are provided on the insulating film 16 to face the bottom gate electrode 22 and are separated from each other, block insulating
15 films 14a, 14b arranged apart in parallel on the semiconductor layers 51a, 51b, impurity doped layers 57a and 58a provided at both ends of one semiconductor layer 51a, impurity doped layers 57b and 58b provided at both ends of the other semiconductor layer 51b,
20 source electrodes 52a, 52b provided on the impurity doped layers 57a, 57b, respectively, a single drain electrode 53 formed so as to extend over the impurity doped layers 58a, 58b between the semiconductor layers 51a, 51b, a top gate insulating film 15 formed so as to
25 cover the bottom gate electrode 16, block insulating films 14a, 14b, source electrodes 52a, 52b, and drain electrode 53, a single top gate electrode 21 provided

on the top gate insulating film 15 facing the semiconductor layers 51a, 51b, and a protective insulating film 20 provided on the top gate insulating film 15 and top gate electrode 21.

5 The source electrodes 52a, 52b and drain electrode 53 overlapping both of ends of the semiconductor layers 51a, 51b, both of ends of the block insulating films 14a, 14b, and the impurity doped layers 57a, 57b, 58a, 58b in a plane. The impurity doped layers 57a, 57b,
10 58a, 58b overlapping with both of the ends of the block insulating films 14a, 14b in a plane. The impurity doped layers 57a, 57b, 58a, 58b are made of amorphous silicon (n^+ silicon) doped with n-type impurity ions.

 As shown in FIG. 20, the source electrodes 52a,
15 52b are so formed that they project in a comb-tooth like manner in the longitudinal direction (from right to left in the figure) from the common source line 104 toward the semiconductor layers 51a, 51b. The drain electrode 53 is so formed that it projects in the
20 direction of the channel width from the drain line 103 facing the source line 104 toward the semiconductor layers 51a, 51b. Specifically, these source electrodes 52a, 52b and drain electrode 53 are so formed in an incorporating manner that they face each other with the
25 respective semiconductor layers 51a, 51b between them.

 The protective insulating film 20 provided on the block insulating films 14a, 14b, top gate insulating

film 15, bottom gate insulating film 16, and top gate electrode 21 is made of a light-transmitting insulating film, such as silicon nitride. The top gate electrode 21 and top gate lines 101a, 101b are made of light-transmitting conductive material, such as the aforementioned ITO, and present a high transmittance to visible light. On the other hand, at least the bottom gate electrode 22 and bottom gate line 102 are made of material that prevents light from passing through, such as chromium (Cr) or the like.

Specifically, the double-gate photosensor 10 comprises a first double-gate photosensor composed of a first upper MOS transistor made up of the semiconductor layer 51a, source electrode 52a, drain electrode 53, top gate insulating film 15, and top gate electrode 21 and a first lower MOS transistor made up of the semiconductor layer 51a, source 52a, drain electrode 53, bottom gate insulating film 16, and bottom gate electrode 22, and a second double-gate photosensor composed of a second upper MOS transistor made up of the semiconductor layer 51b, source electrode 52b, drain electrode 53, top gate insulating film 15, and top gate electrode 21 and a second lower MOS transistor made up of the semiconductor layer 51b, source electrode 52b, drain electrode 53, bottom gate insulating film 16, and bottom gate electrode 22, with the first and second double-gate photosensors arranged

in parallel on the insulating substrate 19.

Because the double-gate photosensor 50 is so constructed that the top gate electrode 21 and bottom gate electrode 22 constituting the first and second double-gate photosensors are each made up of common electrodes and the source electrodes 52a, 52b are formed by the projections from the common source line 104, the double-gate photosensor 50 provided with two semiconductor layers per element serving as photosensor sections can be operated by the above-described driving control method.

In the semiconductor layer 51a, the channel region in which the drain current of the first double-gate photosensor in the double-gate photosensor 50 flows is set as a rectangular shape whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_1 and a channel width of W_1 . In the semiconductor layer 51b, the channel region in which the drain current of the second double-gate photosensor flows is set as a rectangular shape whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_2 and a channel width of W_1 .

The drain current I_{ds} flowing in the double-gate photosensor 50 is represented by the following expression (4):

$$I_{ds} \propto (W_1/L_1 + W_1/L_2) \quad (4)$$

While in the double-gate photosensor 50, one carrier generating region and a channel region in which

the drain current flows are provided in one semiconductor layer 51a (51b), a double-gate photosensor 80 including semiconductor layers 81a, 81b may be used as shown in FIG. 22. The double-gate photosensor 80 has substantially the same configuration as that of the double-gate photosensor 10 except for the semiconductor layers 81a, 81b and produces a similar effect.

In the double-gate photosensor 80, the channel region of the semiconductor layer 81a is set as a rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_1 and a channel width of W_2 and as a rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_2 and a channel width of W_2 . The channel region of the semiconductor layer 81b is set as a rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_1 and a channel width of W_3 and as a rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_2 and a channel width of W_3 .

The carrier generating region which causes such holes as have an effect on the drain current I_{ds} in the channel region of the double-gate photosensor 80 is set as a rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are defined by the distance K_1 between the source and drain electrodes and the channel width W_2 , as a rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are defined by the distance K_2 between the source and drain electrodes and

the channel width W_2 , as a rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are defined by the distance K_1 between the source and drain electrodes and the channel width W_3 , and as a rectangular region whose two adjacent
5 sides are defined by the distance K_2 between the source and drain electrodes and the channel width W_3 .

The drain current I_{ds} flowing in the double-gate photosensor 80 is represented by the following expression (5):

10
$$I_{ds} \propto (W_2/L_1 + W_3/L_1 + W_2/L_2 + W_3/L_2) \quad (5)$$

As shown in FIG. 23, a double-gate photosensor 90 including semiconductor layers 91a, 91b, 92a, 92b may be used. The double-gate photosensor 90 has substantially the same configuration as that of the
15 double-gate photosensor 10 except for the semiconductor layers 91a, 91b, 92a, 92b and produces a similar effect.

In the double-gate photosensor 90, the channel region of the semiconductor layer 91a is set as a
20 rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_1 and a channel width of W_2 . The channel region of the semiconductor layer 91b is set as a rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_1 and a channel
25 width of W_3 . The channel region of the semiconductor layer 92a is set as a rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_2

and a channel width of W_2 . The channel region of the semiconductor layer 92b is set as a rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_2 and a channel width of W_3 .

5 The carrier generating region which causes such holes as have an effect on the drain current I_{ds} in the channel regions of the semiconductor layers 91a, 91b, 92a, 92b in the double-gate photosensor 90 is set as a rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are
10 defined by the distance K_1 between the source and drain electrodes and the channel width W_2 , as a rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are defined by the distance K_1 between the source and drain electrodes and the channel width W_3 , as a rectangular region whose two
15 adjacent sides are defined by the distance K_2 between the source and drain electrodes and the channel width W_2 , and as a rectangular region whose two adjacent sides are defined by the distance K_2 between the source and drain electrodes and the channel width W_3 .

20 The drain current I_{ds} flowing in the double-gate photosensor 90 is represented by the following expression (6):

$$I_{ds} \propto (W_2/L_1 + W_3/L_1 + W_2/L_2 + W_3/L_2) \quad (6)$$

FIG. 24 schematically shows the configuration of
25 another double-gate photosensor 60 applied to the photosensor array according to the present invention. FIG. 25 is a sectional view taken along line XXV-XXV of

FIG. 24. FIG. 26 is a plan view of a photosensor array where the double-gate photosensors 60 are arranged in a matrix. The same component parts as those of the above embodiment are indicated by the same reference symbols and explanation of them will be omitted.

The double-gate photosensor 60 comprises a single bottom gate electrode 22 formed on an insulating substrate 19 that allows visible light to pass through, a bottom gate insulating film 16 provided on the bottom gate electrode 22 and insulating substrate 19, a single semiconductor layer 61 made of amorphous silicon or the like that is provided so as to face the bottom gate electrode 22 and generates electron-hole pairs when being struck by visible light, block insulating films 64a, 64b, 64c arranged apart in parallel on the semiconductor layer 61, an impurity doped layer 69a that extends over one end of the block insulating film 64a in the direction of channel length and is provided on the semiconductor layer 61, an impurity doped layer 69b that extends over the other end of the block insulating film 64a in the direction of channel length and one end of the block insulating film 64b in the direction of channel length and is provided on the semiconductor layer 61, an impurity doped layer 69c that extends over the other end of the block insulating film 64b in the direction of channel length and one end of the block insulating film 64c in the direction of

channel length and is provided on the semiconductor layer 61, an impurity doped layer 69d that extends over the other end of the block insulating film 64c in the direction of channel length and is provided on the semiconductor layer 61, and a source electrode 65, a drain electrode 66, a source electrode 67, and a drain electrode 68 which are provided on the impurity doped layer 69a, impurity doped layer 69b, impurity doped layer 69c, and impurity doped layer 69d, respectively, a top gate insulating film 15 formed so as to cover the bottom gate insulating film 16, block insulating films 64a, 64b, 64c, source electrodes 65, 67, and drain electrodes 66, 68, a single top gate electrode 21 provided on the top gate insulating film 15 facing the semiconductor layer 61, and a protective insulating film 20 provided on the top gate insulating film 15 and top gate electrode 21.

Because the materials of the individual insulating films and electrodes and the remaining configurations are the same as the materials of the corresponding members and configuration in the embodiment of FIGS. 2 and 6, explanation of them will be omitted. The impurity doped layers 69a, 69b, 69c, 69d are made of amorphous silicon (n^+ -silicon) doped with n-type impurities.

The double-gate photosensor 60 is such that a first double-gate photosensor made up of the

semiconductor layer 61, source electrode 65, drain
electrode 66, top gate insulating film 15, bottom gate
insulating film 16, top gate electrode 21, and bottom
gate electrode 22, a second double-gate photosensor
5 made up of the semiconductor layer 61, source electrode
67, drain electrode 66, top gate insulating film 15,
bottom gate insulating film 16, top gate electrode 21,
and bottom gate electrode 22, and a third double-gate
photosensor made up of the semiconductor layer 61,
10 source electrode 65, drain electrode 68, top gate
insulating film 15, bottom gate insulating film 16,
top gate electrode 21, and bottom gate electrode 22 are
connected in parallel.

In the semiconductor layer 61, the channel region
15 in which the drain current of the first double-gate
photosensor in the double-gate photosensor 60 flows is
set as a rectangular shape whose two adjacent sides are
defined by a channel length of L_3 and a channel width
of W_1 . The channel region in which the drain current
20 of the second double-gate photosensor flows is set as a
rectangular shape whose two adjacent sides are defined
by a channel length of L_4 and a channel width of W_1 .
The channel region in which the drain current of
the third double-gate photosensor flows is set as a
25 rectangular shape whose two adjacent sides are defined
by a channel length of L_5 and a channel width of W_1 .

Because the double-gate photosensor 60 is so

constructed that the top gate electrode 21 and bottom gate electrode 22 constituting each of the first to third double-gate photosensors are each made up of common electrodes, the source electrodes 65, 67 are
5 formed by the projections from the common source line 104, and the drain electrodes 66, 68 are formed by the projections from the common drain line 103, the three double-gate photosensors can be operated as a single double-gate photosensor by the above-described driving
10 control method.

The drain current I_{ds} flowing in the double-gate photosensor 60 is represented by the following expression (7):

$$I_{ds} \propto (W_1/L_3 + W_1/L_4 + W_1/L_5) \quad (7)$$

15 With the double-gate photosensor 60 constructed as described above, the value $(W_1/L_3 + W_1/L_4 + W_1/L_5)$ of the semiconductor layer 61 constituting the channel region can be increased, enabling an increase in the drain current, which improves the transistor sensitiv-
20 ity of each double-gate photosensor 60 remarkably.

In the semiconductor layer 61, the carrier generating regions Ip_3 , Ip_4 , Ip_5 so exposed from the source and drain electrodes 65, 66, 67, 68 that light coming from above is allowed to enter the regions
25 take the forms of a rectangle with a width of W_1 and a length of K_3 , a rectangle with a width of W_1 and a length of K_4 , and a rectangle with a width of W_1 and

a length of K_5 , respectively. This brings a synthetic shape of the light sensible regions Ep_3 , Ep_4 , Ep_5 closer to a regular square. The light caused by reflection from the finger FN at the surface of the protective insulating film 20 to enter each carrier generating region passes through the light sensible regions Ep_3 , Ep_4 , Ep_5 .

In such a double-gate photosensor 60, the top gate line 101a side and top gate line 101b side basically form an axial-symmetric structure with the bottom gate line 102 in the direction of x as an axis. The source line 104 side and drain line 103 side basically form an axial-symmetric structure with the line extending from the center of the semiconductor layer 61 in the direction of y as an axis. Furthermore, the semiconductor layer 61 basically forms a symmetric structure vertically and horizontally with respect to the center of the photosensor 60 and constitute a matrix-like photosensor array 300 where the distance from the center (the center of the semiconductor layer 61) to the end in the direction of x is made approximate to the distance from the center to the end in the direction of y. This equalizes the expanse of the light-sensing region more, suppressing distortions in reading two-dimensional images, which realizes a photosensor array and photosensor system provided with a light-receiving section with a higher light-receiving

sensitivity. In addition, because the top gate lines 101a, 101b arranged between the adjacent photosensors 60 hardly overlap with the bottom gate line 102 vertically, there is almost no parasitic capacitance between the top gate lines 101a, 101b and the bottom gate line 102, suppressing a delay in the signal or a drop in the voltage. The photosensor system provided with the photosensor 300 is such that the photosensor array 100 of FIG. 7 is replaced with the photosensor 300.

FIG. 27 schematically shows the configuration of another double-gate photosensor applied to a photosensor array according to the present invention. The same parts of the configuration as those of the double-gate photosensor 60 are indicated by the same reference numerals and explanation of them will be simplified.

As shown in FIG. 28, the double-gate photosensor 70 according to the present embodiment comprises a single bottom gate electrode 22 formed on an insulating substrate 19 that allows visible light to pass through, a bottom gate insulating film 16 provided on the bottom gate electrode 22 and insulating substrate 19, semiconductor layers 71a, 71b, 71c made of amorphous silicon or the like that are provided so as to face the bottom gate electrode 22 and generate electron-hole pairs by incident visible light, block insulating films 64a, 64b, 64c arranged apart in parallel on the

semiconductor layers 71a, 71b, 71c, respectively,
impurity doped layers 77a, 77b provided at both ends of
the semiconductor layer 71a in the direction of channel
length, respectively, impurity doped layers 77c, 77d
5 provided at both ends of the semiconductor layer 71b in
the direction of channel length, respectively, impurity
doped layers 77e, 77f provided on both ends of the
semiconductor layer 71c in the direction of channel
length, respectively, a source electrode 65 provided
10 on the impurity doped layer 77a, a drain electrode 66
provided so as to extend over the impurity doped layer
77b and impurity doped layer 77c, a source electrode 67
provided so as to expand over the impurity doped layer
77d and impurity doped layer 77e, a drain electrode 68
15 provided on the impurity doped layer 77f, a top gate
insulating film 15 formed so as to cover the bottom
gate electrode 16, block insulating films 64a, 64b,
64c, source electrodes 65, 67, and drain electrodes 66,
68, a single top gate electrode 21 provided on the top
20 gate insulating film 15 facing the semiconductor layer
11, and a protective insulating film 20 provided on the
top gate insulating film 15 and top gate electrode 21.
The impurity doped layers 77a, 77b, 77c, 77d, 77e, 77f
are made of amorphous silicon (n^+ silicon) doped with
25 n-type impurities.

The double-gate photosensor 70 is such that
a first double-gate photosensor made up of the

semiconductor layer 71a, source electrode 65, drain electrode 66, top gate insulating film 15, bottom gate insulating film 16, top gate electrode 21, and bottom gate electrode 22, a second double-gate photosensor
5 made up of the semiconductor layer 71b, source electrode 67, drain electrode 66, top gate insulating film 15, bottom gate insulating film 16, top gate electrode 21, and bottom gate electrode 22, and a third double-gate photosensor made up of the semiconductor
10 layer 71c, source electrode 67, drain electrode 68, top gate insulating film 15, bottom gate insulating film 16, top gate electrode 21, and bottom gate electrode 22 are connected in parallel.

In the semiconductor layer 71a, the channel region
15 in which the drain current of the first double-gate photosensor in the double-gate photosensor 60 flows is set as a rectangular shape whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_3 and a channel width of W_1 . In the semiconductor layer 71b, the channel
20 region in which the drain current of the second double-gate photosensor flows is set as a rectangular shape whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_4 and a channel width of W_1 . In the semiconductor layer 71c, the channel region in which
25 the drain current of the third double-gate photosensor flows is set as a rectangular shape whose two adjacent sides are defined by a channel length of L_5 and a

channel width of W_1 .

The drain current I_{ds} flowing in the double-gate photosensor 70 is represented by the following expression (8):

5
$$I_{ds} \propto (W_1/L_3 + W_1/L_4 + W_1/L_5) \quad (8)$$

The double-gate photosensor 70 is so constructed that the top gate electrode 21 and bottom gate electrode 22 constituting each of the first to third double-gate photosensors are made up of common electrodes, the source electrodes 65, 67 are formed by the projections from the common source line 104, and the drain electrodes 66, 68 are formed by the projections from the common drain line 103. Because the double-gate photosensors 70 are arranged in a matrix, thereby forming a photosensor array 300, the three double-gate photosensors 70 can be operated as a single double-gate photosensor by the above-described driving control method, which produces a similar effect as the double-gate photosensor 60.

20 While in each of the embodiments, each of the double-gate photosensors 10, 50, 60, 70 is such that one to three semiconductor layers (or double-gate photosensors) are arranged, two to three channel regions in which the drain current flows are provided, and two to three carrier generating regions are provided, these elements being arranged in parallel in the direction of channel length, the present invention

is not limited to this. The light-receiving sensitivity can be set arbitrarily according to the number of semiconductor layers arranged consecutively.

When the double-gate photosensors 10, 50, 60, 70
5 are arranged in a matrix to construct the photosensor arrays 100, 200, 300 and these arrays are applied to a two-dimensional reading device, because light from the insulating substrate (or glass substrate) 19 side is projected through the element-to-element region Rp in
10 the lattice of the matrix onto the subject, it is necessary to set the element-to-element region Rp so as to secure a sufficient amount of light projected on the subject and then set arbitrarily the number of semiconductor layers (double-gate photosensors)
15 arranged consecutively in the region where a light-receiving section is to be formed.

FIG. 29 schematically shows still another embodiment of the photosensor array according to the present invention.

20 A photosensor array 400 according to the present embodiment includes double-gate photosensors 10 and has a so-called delta arrangement structure where the double-gate photosensors 10 are placed at the respective apexes of an equilateral triangle
25 continuously set in a two-dimensional plane whose one side is Psa. A photosensor system provided with the photosensor array 400 is such that the photosensor

array 100 of FIG. 6 is replaced with the photosensor array 400.

The photosensor array 100 of FIG. 6 encounters a problem in arranging double-gate photosensors 10: since
5 the double-gate photosensors 10 are arranged in such a manner that they are spaced at equal intervals of dimension P_{sp} only in the two directions of x and y perpendicular to each other, the pitch between the double-gate photosensors 10 increases in the directions
10 of x and y non-uniformly (for example, the distance of the double-gate photosensors 10 arranged obliquely at an angle of 45° to the direction of x or y is $\sqrt{2}$ times the pitch P_{sp}) in an oblique direction at an angle of θ (a suitable angle other than 0° , 90° , 180° , and 270° ,
15 for example, in the direction of 45° or 60°) to the directions of x and y , and therefore, the accuracy with which a subject placed obliquely is read cannot be realized as uniformly as and as highly as the accuracy with which a subject not shifted is read.

20 In contrast, in the photosensor array 400 according to the present embodiment, since the double-gate photosensors 10 acting as light-receiving sections are placed at the respective apexes of each equilateral triangle continuously set in a two-dimensional plane,
25 the double-gate photosensors 10C are arranged uniformly in the direction of x . At the same time, even when the angle is 60° , 120° , 240° , or 300° , the double-gate

photosensors 10C are arranged uniformly, equalizing the pitch between the light-receiving sections. This assures operation with the same accuracy, even when the subject is shifted through an angle of 60°, 120°, 240°, or 300°.

Since all the double-gate photosensors arranged on a two-dimensional surface are positioned with an equal pitch of P_{sa} for the adjacent double-gate photosensors in almost all the directions, even when a two-dimensional image to be read is placed obliquely to the directions of x and y , the image can be read correctly with a high reading accuracy, while distortions in reading the image is being suppressed.

Since the double-gate photosensors are arranged in delta, when the pitch P_{sa} in the direction of x is set equal to the pitch P_{sp} of the photosensor of FIG. 6, the pitch P_{sb} in the direction of y is represented by expression (9):

$$P_{sb} = P_{sa} \times \sin 60^\circ \quad (9)$$

As described above, because the pitch P_{sb} in the direction of y is shorter than the pitch P_{sa} ($= P_{sp}$) in the direction of x , the photosensor array 400 enables the same number of double-gate photosensors 10c to be arranged in the plane region M_c reduced in the direction of y in the plane region M_p equivalent to the photosensor array 100, which makes the two-dimensional image reading device smaller. In other words, the

photosensor array 400 enables $1/\sin 60^\circ$ times (1.15 times) as many double-gate photosensors 10c to be placed in the plane region M_p equivalent to the photosensor 100, which enables a high packing density of sensor elements to be obtained.

While in the delta arrangement, the double-gate photosensors 10 of the embodiment of FIG. 1 have been used as the double-gate photosensors constituting the light-receiving sections, any of the double-gate photosensors PS, 50, 60, and 70 in the other embodiments may be used. It goes without saying that double-gate photosensors of still another structure may be used.

In the double-gate photosensor arrays 100, 200, 300, 400 described above, the top gate lines 101a, 101b in the same row are so formed that they are branched in two in a plane between the adjacent double-gate photosensors 19 (or any of PS, 50, 60, and 70), and extend in parallel while keeping the uniform positional relationship and an almost equal wiring width. Specifically, the two top gate lines 101a, 101b are arranged and formed so as to have an almost symmetric positional relationship in the direction of column above and below the bottom gate line 102 that connects a near center of the double-gate photosensor 10 (or any of PS, 50, 60, and 70) and extends.

With such a configuration, since the top gate

electrodes 21 are basically connected by two (or plural) wiring layers, the cross-sectional area of the wiring is increased to an integral multiple of the original. This reduces the wiring resistance of the top gate lines 101a, 101b made of ITO of high resistivity, suppressing a delay in the read operation signal, which realizes the operation of reading far better images. Moreover, since the top gate lines at a relatively upper layer in the double-gate photosensor of the stacked structure are made of plural wiring layers (101a, 101b), even if a specific wiring layer constituting the top gate line has broken due to steps resulting from the stacked structure, the top gate electrodes 21 can be connected to each other electrically by the remaining wiring layers with no break, compensating for the propagation of the read operation signal, which provides a highly reliable photosensor array.

Furthermore, because the light-receiving sensitivity of the photosensor array is increased remarkably, the illuminance of the plane light source 30 is decreased relatively, which reduces the power consumption of the image reading device.

CLAIMS

1. A photosensor comprising:
 - a first gate electrode;
 - 5 a first gate insulating film provided above said first gate electrode;
 - at least one semiconductor layer provided above said first gate insulating film;
 - source and drain electrodes for causing drain current to flow in said semiconductor layer;
 - 10 a second gate insulating film provided above said semiconductor layer;
 - and
 - a second gate electrode provided above said second gate insulating film,
 - characterized in that said semiconductor layer includes a plurality of channel regions in which drain current flows and said semiconductor layer is divided into
 - 15 plural semiconductor layer sections and each of said plural semiconductor layer sections has one of said channel regions.
2. The photosensor according to claim 1, characterized in that said channel regions are arranged side by side in the direction of a channel length of said
- 20 semiconductor layer.
3. The photosensor according to claim 1, characterized in that one of said source and drain electrodes is formed so as to extend over said channel regions.

4. The photosensor according to claim 1, characterized in that said semiconductor layer has a plurality of carrier generating regions.
- 5 5. The photosensor according to claim 1, characterized in that said semiconductor layer is divided into plural semiconductor layer sections and each of said plural semiconductor layer sections has one of carrier generating regions.
- 10 6. The photosensor according to claim 7, characterized in that said carrier generating regions are arranged side by side in the direction of the channel length of said semiconductor layer.
7. The photosensor according to claim 1, characterized in that said
15 semiconductor layer is divided into plural semiconductor layer sections and each of said plural semiconductor layer sections has two or more carrier generating regions.
8. The photosensor according to claim 9, characterized in that said carrier
20 generating regions are arranged side by side in the direction of the channel length of said semiconductor layer.
9. The photosensor according to claim 1, characterized in that at least either said source or drain electrodes are plural.

10. The photosensor according to claim 1, characterized in that semiconductor layer is divided into plural semiconductor layer sections and one of said source and drain electrodes are formed so as to extend over said plural semiconductor layer sections.
11. The photosensor according to claim 1, characterized in that said source and drain electrodes are made of material that shuts off exciting light.
12. The photosensor according to claim 1, characterized by further comprising impurity doped layers each intervening between said semiconductor layer and said source and drain electrodes.
13. The photosensor according to claim 1, characterized by further comprising a block insulating layer intervening between said semiconductor layer and said second gate insulating film.
14. The photosensor according to claim 1, characterized in that said second gate electrode is made of material that allows said exciting light to pass through.
15. A photosensor comprising:
a first gate electrode;
a first gate insulating film provided above said first gate electrode;

at least one semiconductor layer provided above said first gate insulating film;

source and drain electrodes for causing drain current to flow in said semiconductor layer;

5 a second gate insulating film provided above said semiconductor layer; and

a second gate electrode provided above said second gate insulating film, characterized in that said semiconductor layer includes a plurality of channel regions in which drain current flows and said semiconductor layer is divided into plural semiconductor layer sections and each of said plural semiconductor layer sections has two or more of said channel regions.

10

16. A photosensor comprising:

a first gate electrode;

15 a first gate insulating film provided above said first gate electrode;

at least one semiconductor layer provided above said first gate insulating film;

source and drain electrodes for causing drain current to flow in said semiconductor layer;

20 a second gate insulating film provided above said semiconductor layer; and

a second gate electrode provided above said second gate insulating film, characterized in that said semiconductor layer includes a plurality of channel regions in which drain current flows and said semiconductor layer is divided into

plural semiconductor layer sections and each of said plural semiconductor layer sections has one of carrier generating regions.

17. A photosensor comprising:
- 5 a first gate electrode;
- a first gate insulating film provided above said first gate electrode;
- at least one semiconductor layer provided above said first gate insulating film;
- source and drain electrodes for causing drain current to flow in said
- 10 semiconductor layer;
- a second gate insulating film provided above said semiconductor layer;
- and
- a second gate electrode provided above said second gate insulating film,
- characterized in that said semiconductor layer includes a plurality of channel
- 15 regions in which drain current flows and said semiconductor layer is divided into plural semiconductor layer sections and each of said plural semiconductor layer sections has two or more carrier generating regions.

18. A photosensor system characterized by comprising:
- photosensors arranged in a matrix with an interval between adjacent photosensors in a row direction being equal in length to an interval between adjacent photosensors in a column direction , each photosensor including
- 5 a first gate electrode,
- a first gate insulating film provided above said first gate electrode,
- at least one semiconductor layer provided above said first gate insulating film and having carrier generating regions for generating carriers when being struck by exciting light, said semiconductor layer being divided into
- 10 plural semiconductor layer sections and each of said plural semiconductor layer sections having a channel region,
- source and drain electrodes for causing drain current to flow in said semiconductor layer,
- a second gate insulating film provided above said semiconductor layer,
- 15 a second gate electrode provided above said second gate insulating film;
- source lines connected to the source electrodes of said photosensors arranged in a first direction;
- drain lines connected to the drain electrodes of said photosensors arranged in said first direction;
- 20 first gate lines connected to the first gate electrodes of said photosensors arranged in a second direction;
- second gate lines connected to the second gate electrodes of said photosensors arranged in said second direction;
- precharging means for outputting a precharge voltage to said drain lines;

reading means to which a precharge voltage varied according to the incident light on said photosensors is inputted;

a first gate driver for supplying a signal to said first gate lines; and

a second gate driver for supplying a signal to said second gate lines.

5

19. The photosensor system according to claim 18, characterized in that said first gate driver outputs a signal for selectively bringing said photosensors into one of a selection state and a non-selection state.

10 20. The photosensor system according to claim 18, characterized in that said second gate driver outputs a signal for selectively bringing said photosensors into one of a reset state and a carrier accumulated state.

21. The photosensor system according to claim 18, characterized by further
15 comprising a light source for emitting light including said exciting light.