Lab 9: Silicon Neuron Circuits

Team member 1: Jan Hohenheim

Team member 2: Maxim Gärtner

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In this lab, we will test a circuit that generates action potentials (spikes) based on an integrate-and-fire model of a neuron spike initiation zone.

The objectives of this lab are:

- 1. to understand the spiking properties of I&F circuits.
- 2. to evaluate the effect of the I&F circuit's different bias parameters on its spiking behaviour.

1 Setup

2.1 Connect the device

```
In [1]:
         # import the necessary libraries
         import pyplane
         import time
         import numpy as np
         import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
         from scipy import interpolate
In [2]:
         # create a Plane object and open the communication
         if 'p' not in locals():
             p = pyplane.Plane()
                 p.open('/dev/ttyACM0')
             except RuntimeError as e:
                 del p
                 print(e)
In [3]:
         p.get firmware version()
        (1, 8, 4)
Out[3]:
In [4]:
         # Send a reset signal to the board, check if the LED blinks
         p.reset(pyplane.ResetType.Soft)
         time.sleep(0.5)
         # NOTE: You must send this request events every time you do a reset operation, otherwise
         # Because the class chip need to do handshake to get the communication correct.
         p.request events(1)
In [5]:
         # Try to read something, make sure the chip responses
         p.read current(pyplane.AdcChannel.GO0 N)
```

```
Out[5]: 1.7724609335800778e-07
 In [6]:
           # If any of the above steps fail, delete the object, close and halt, stop the server and
          # please also say your board number: ttyACMx
          # del p
        2.2 Disable unused circuits
 In [7]:
          # disable synapses
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.LDS VTAU P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.DPI VTAU P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.DDI VTAU P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
 In [8]:
          # disable axon-hillock neuron
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\)
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.AHN VPW N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
 In [9]:
          # disable thresholded neuron
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ATN VLEAK N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ATN VDC P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\)
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ATN VGAIN N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ATN VSPKTHR P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
In [10]:
          # disable sigma-delta neuron
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ASN VLEAK N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
```

pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])

```
p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ASN VDC P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ASN VGAIN N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
In [11]:
          # disable exp neuron
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VLEAK N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0) ])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VGAIN N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VDC P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VREFR N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I240nA, 255)])
In [12]:
          # disable hodgekin-huxley neuron
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.HHN VBUF N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.HHN VCABUF N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.HHN VDC P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.HHN VELEAK N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
In [13]:
          # disable DVS pixels
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\)
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.DVS DIFF N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
```

pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.DVS CAS N, \

pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \

```
pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
    pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.DVS ON N, \
    pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
    pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
    pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.DVS OFF N, \
    pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
    pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
    pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.DVS SF P, \
    pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
    pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
p.send_coach_events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
    pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.DVS PR P, \
    pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
    pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
    pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.DVS REFR P, \
    pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
    pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 0)])
```

2.3 Chip configurations

```
In [14]:
          # select lines and neuron latches
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate aerc event(
              pyplane.pyplane.Coach.CurrentOutputSelect.SelectLine6,
              pyplane.Coach.VoltageOutputSelect.SelectLine2,
              pyplane.Coach.VoltageInputSelect.NoneSelected,
              pyplane.Coach.SynapseSelect.NoneSelected, 320)])
In [15]:
          # setup output rail-to-rail buffer
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.RR BIAS P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I240nA, 255)])
In [16]:
          # set up sampling mode
          # p.set sampling mode(pyplane.SamplingMode.Fast)
          # p.set fast sampling adcs([10])
```

2.4 BiasGen

In a simplified form, the output of a branch of the BiasGen will be the gate voltage V_b for the bias current I_b , and if the current mirror has a ratio of w and the bias transistor operates in subthreshold-saturation:

$$I_b = w \frac{BG_{fine}}{256} I_{BG_{master}} \tag{1}$$

Where $I_{BG_{master}}$ is the BiasGenMasterCurrent $\in \{60~\mathrm{pA}, 460~\mathrm{pA}, 3.8~\mathrm{nA}, 30~\mathrm{nA}, 240~\mathrm{nA}\}$, BG_{fine} is the integer fine value $\in [0, 256)$

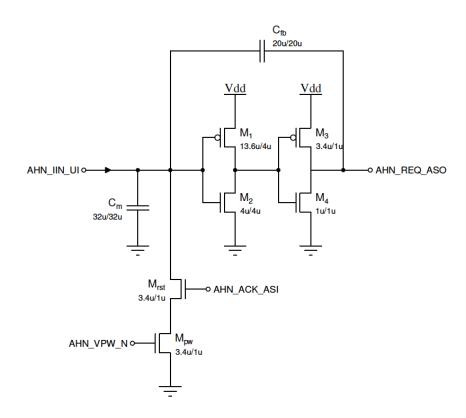
To set a bias, use the function similar to the following:

```
p.send_coach_event(pyplane.Coach.generate_biasgen_event(\
    pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.BIAS_NAME, \
    pyplane.Coach.BiasType.BIAS_TYPE, \
    pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.MASTER_CURRENT, FINE_VALUE))
```

You may have noticed that there are some biases that are not used to directly generate a current, but rather what matters is the voltage, e.g. V_{gain} , V_{ex} and V_{inh} in our HWTA circuit. Even though they may have a BIAS_NAME ending with _N or _P it only indicates that they are connected to the gate of an N- or a P-FET, but the BIAS_TYPE parameter can be both _N or _P . For example, setting a _N bias to BIAS_TYPE = P will only make this voltage very close to GND, which is sometimes the designed use case.

2 Axon-Hillock neuron

The axon-hillock neuron has a constant current input AHN_IIN_UI which is about pA (exact value not known), and the voltage on capacitor C_m is output to **ADC[11]**.



2.1 Basic measurement

• Tune AHN VPW N bias so that the output waveform is more or less symmetric.

Data aquisition

```
In [19]: N_samples = 50
```

```
dT = 0.05

t = np.arange(N_samples) *dT
v = np.zeros(N_samples) # v_Cm

for i in range(N_samples):
    v[i] = p.read_voltage(pyplane.AdcChannel.AOUT11)
    time.sleep(dT)
```

Plot data

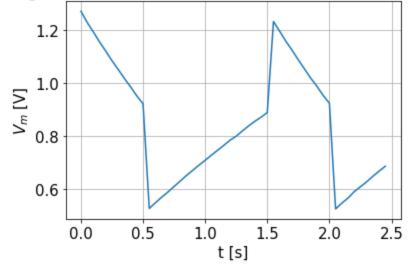
```
In [24]:
    import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
    import numpy as np
    plt.rcParams.update({'font.size': 15})

    t,v = np.loadtxt('data/data_ex_2_1.csv',delimiter=',')
    plt.plot(t,v)

    plt.xlabel('t [s]')
    plt.ylabel('$V_{m}$ [V]')
    plt.title('Fig. 1: Measured values of $V_{m}$ as function of time')

plt.grid()
    plt.show()
```





Save data

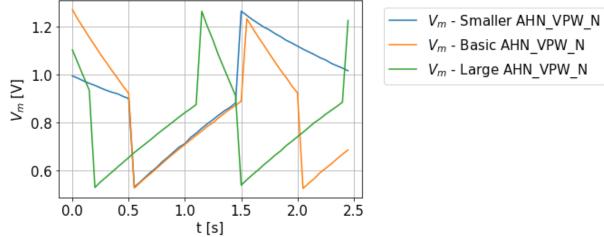
```
In [22]: np.savetxt('data/data_ex_2_1.csv',[t,v] , delimiter=',')
```

2.2 Different pulse widths

Now try two more AHN_VPW_N values and compare the three curves in the same plot.

```
N samples = 50
In [26]:
          dT = 0.05
          t = np.arange(N samples)*dT
          v = np.zeros(N samples) # v Cm
          for i in range(N samples):
              v[i] = p.read voltage(pyplane.AdcChannel.AOUT11)
              time.sleep(dT)
In [27]:
          np.savetxt('data/data ex 2 2 smaller.csv',[t,v] , delimiter=',')
In [32]:
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.AHN VPW N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 3)])
In [33]:
          N \text{ samples} = 50
          dT = 0.05
          t = np.arange(N samples)*dT
          v = np.zeros(N samples) # v Cm
          for i in range(N samples):
              v[i] = p.read voltage(pyplane.AdcChannel.AOUT11)
              time.sleep(dT)
In [34]:
          np.savetxt('data/data ex 2 2 bigger.csv',[t,v] , delimiter=',')
In [35]:
          import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
          import numpy as np
          plt.rcParams.update({'font.size': 15})
          t,v = np.loadtxt('data/data ex 2 1.csv',delimiter=',')
          ,v smaller = np.loadtxt('data/data ex 2 2 smaller.csv',delimiter=',')
          _,v_bigger = np.loadtxt('data/data_ex_2_2_bigger.csv',delimiter=',')
          plt.plot(t,v smaller,t,v,t,v bigger)
          plt.legend(['$V {m}$ - Smaller AHN VPW N', '$V {m}$ - Basic AHN VPW N', '$V {m}$ - Large AHN
          plt.xlabel('t [s]')
          plt.ylabel('$V {m}$ [V]')
          plt.title('Fig. 2: Measured values of $V {m}$ as function of time for varying pulse widths
          plt.grid()
          plt.show()
```

Fig. 2: Measured values of V_m as function of time for varying pulse widths



2.3 Switch off the circuit

• To avoid the output events interfering with other circuits, we set AHN_VPW_N to maximum again.

3 Basic behavoir of classic I&F neuron

The **ADEXIF** (Adaptive Exponential Integrate & Fire) **classic neuron** comprises four major functional blocks: a leaky DPI (=integrate), starved-inverter (=fire), refractory period (=reset) and adaptation block. The adaptation block receives the the spike pulse of the neuron itself through a pulse extender circuit.

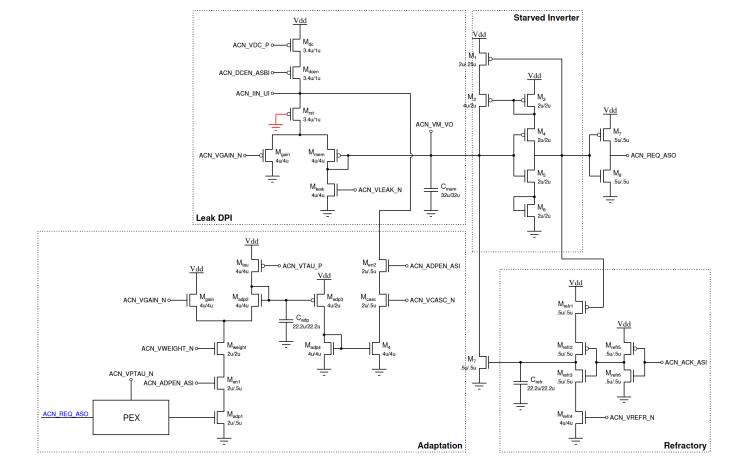
The circuit receives an input current I_{in} (typically the output of a synapse, I_{syn}) and outputs an AER event.

The membrane voltage V_{mem} is provided to observe the internal neuron state at ADC[10].

The neuron circuit has 4 basic biases: V_{dc} , V_{gain} , V_{leak} and V_{refr} . The adaptation block has 5 more biases: $V_{adpgain}$, $V_{adpweight}$, V_{adptau} , $V_{adpcasc}$ & $V_{adpptau}$ (for the pulse extender).

There are two digital control bits: V_{adpen} to enable/disable adaptation, and V_{dcen} to disable/enable the V_{dc} bias input.

 C_m sizing was chosen for a capacitance value of 2 pF, while C_{refr} and C_{adp} were chosen for a value of 1 pF.



3.1 Basic measurement

Tune the biases such that the neuron fires at about 20 Hz.

```
In [53]:
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VLEAK N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 2)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VGAIN N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 6)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VDC P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I30nA, 10)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VREFR N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I30nA, 10)]) #change refractory period
```

read data

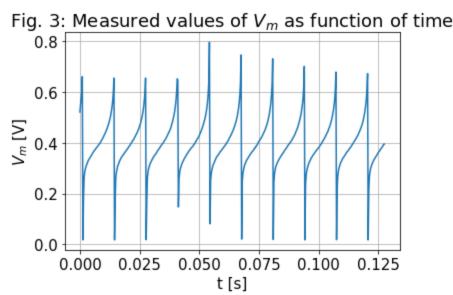
```
In [65]:
    timestep = 0.00025
    vm1 = p.acquire_transient_response(pyplane.DacChannel.DAC1, pyplane.AdcChannel.AOUT10, 0.0
    t = np.arange(len(vm1))*timestep
```

```
In [66]: np.savetxt('data/data_ex_3_1.csv', [t, vm1], delimiter=',')
```

Plot data

```
In [68]:
    t, vm1 = np.loadtxt('data/data_ex_3_1.csv',delimiter=',')
    plt.plot(t, vm1)
    plt.xlabel('t [s]')
    plt.ylabel('$V_{m}$ [V]')
    plt.title('Fig. 3: Measured values of $V_{m}$ as function of time')

    plt.grid()
    plt.show()
```



We didn't set the frequency to 20 Hz because the unit of the function has some problems, according to the TA.

3.2 Refractory period

Repeat 3.1 with two other refractory period biases and compare.

```
In [17]:
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VLEAK N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 2)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\)
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VGAIN N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 6)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\)
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VDC P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I30nA, 32)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VREFR N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I30nA, 10)]) #change refractory period
```

read data

```
In [18]:
          vm1 = p.acquire transient response(pyplane.DacChannel.DAC1, pyplane.AdcChannel.AOUT10, 0.0
          np.savetxt('data/data ex 3 2 base.csv', vm1, delimiter=',')
In [44]:
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VLEAK N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 2)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VGAIN N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 6)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VDC P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I30nA, 32)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\)
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VREFR N,\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I3 8nA, 1)]) #change refractory period

    read data

In [45]:
          np.savetxt('data/data ex 3 2 smaller.csv', vm2, delimiter=',')
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
```

```
vm2 = p.acquire transient response(pyplane.DacChannel.DAC1, pyplane.AdcChannel.AOUT10, 0.0
In [46]:
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VLEAK N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 2)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VGAIN N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I60pA, 6)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VDC P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.P, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I30nA, 32)])
          p.send coach events([pyplane.Coach.generate biasgen event(\
              pyplane.Coach.BiasAddress.ACN VREFR N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasType.N, \
              pyplane.Coach.BiasGenMasterCurrent.I460pA, 20)]) #change refractory period
```

read data

In [70]: import matplotlib.pyplot as plt

```
import numpy as np
plt.rcParams.update({'font.size': 15})
   = np.loadtxt('data/data ex 3 1.csv', delimiter=',')
vm1 = np.loadtxt('data/data_ex_3_2_base.csv',delimiter=',')
vm2 = np.loadtxt('data/data ex 3 2 smaller.csv',delimiter=',')
vm3 = np.loadtxt('data/data ex 3 2 bigger.csv',delimiter=',')
plt.plot(t, vm1)
plt.title('Fig. 4: Measured values of $V {m}$ as function of time for basic ACN VREFR N')
plt.xlabel('t [s]')
plt.ylabel('$V {m}$ [V]')
plt.show()
plt.plot(t, vm2)
plt.title('Fig. 5: Measured values of $V {m}$ as function of time for smaller ACN VREFR N
plt.xlabel('t [s]')
plt.ylabel('$V {m}$ [V]')
plt.grid()
plt.show()
plt.plot(t, vm3)
plt.title('Fig. 6: Measured values of $V {m}$ as function of time for bigger ACN VREFR N')
plt.xlabel('t [s]')
plt.ylabel('$V {m}$ [V]')
plt.grid()
plt.show()
```

Fig. 4: Measured values of V_m as function of time for basic ACN_VREFR_N

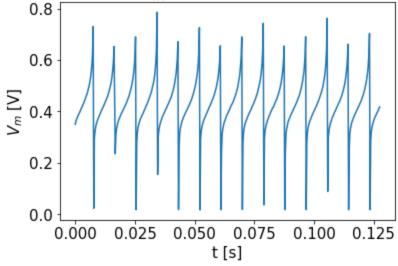


Fig. 5: Measured values of V_m as function of time for smaller ACN_VREFR_N

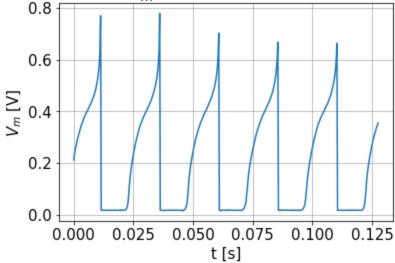


Fig. 6: Measured values of V_m as function of time for bigger ACN_VREFR_N 0.8

