

ACCURACY IMPROVEMENT OF RUBBER-
BASED DIAPHRAGM FIBRE BRAGG
GRATING PRESSURE SENSORS

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SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I have checked this thesis and in my opinion, this thesis is adequate in terms of scope and quality for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at Universiti Malaysia Pahang or any other institutions.

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ABSTRAK

Penderia paras air telah menjadi satu kepentingan dalam pelbagai bidang industri. Oleh kerana kelebihannya, penderia tekanan gentian parutan Bragg (FBG) telah diperkenalkan untuk mengatasi kelemahan penderia tekanan elektrik sebagai pengukur paras air berdasarkan tekanan hidrostatik. Selama ini, pelbagai kajian telah dilaporkan mengenai penggunaan diafragma berasaskan getah untuk meningkatkan kepekaan tekanan penderia tekanan FBG mentah. Walau bagaimanapun, pengembangan terma yang tinggi daripada getah telah menjadikan penderia tekanan FBG lebih peka terhadap kesan suhu hasil daripada peningkatan kepekaan suhu. Kelemahan ini boleh mengakibatkan ketidaktepatan penderia tekanan. Oleh itu, objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk menghilangkan kepekaan suhu agar ketepatan penderia tekanan FBG berasaskan diafragma getah dapat dipertingkatkan. Di sini, empat jenis penderia tekanan telah dihasilkan untuk mengkaji kesan suhu. Penderia tekanan jenis I adalah dengan menampal FBG mentah pada diafragma getah tanpa pampasan suhu. Penderia tekanan jenis II adalah sama dengan jenis I tetapi dengan teknik pampasan suhu rujukan FBG. Penderia tekanan jenis III dan jenis IV adalah berdasarkan teknik perbezaan FBG dan pemodulatan lebar jalur. Kesemua penderia tekanan mengalami perubahan tekanan dan suhu. Di bawah perubahan tekanan melintasi 20 kPa, kesemua penderia tekanan memperoleh kepekaan tekanan yang tinggi pada 274.8 pm/kPa, 275.0 pm/kPa, 641.9 pm/kPa dan -275.1 pm/kPa. Selain itu, penderia tekanan jenis IV juga mampu dipantau dengan menggunakan *photodetector* (PD) dengan kepekaan tekanan -12.1 mV / kPa. Di bawah perubahan suhu melintasi 50 °C, kesemua penderia tekanan memperoleh kepekaan suhu yang tinggi melebihi 44.0 pm/°C ketika dipantau berdasarkan panjang gelombang tunggal. Walau bagaimanapun, teknik perbezaan FBG dan pemodulatan lebar jalur memperoleh purata kepekaan suhu yang rendah pada 0.5 pm/°C dan -0.3 pm/°C. Oleh kerana itu, tekanan dan paras air yang diukur dengan menggunakan penderia tekanan jenis I dan jenis II jauh dari bacaan sebenar dengan ralat peratusan pada 35% dan 16.55%. Penderia tekanan jenis III dan jenis IV memperoleh purata paling tinggi ralat ketepatan pada 3.24% and 5.51%. Ini adalah kerana penderia tekanan yang tidak peka terhadap suhu tidak dipengaruhi oleh kesan suhu. Sebagai kesimpulan, dapatan kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa penggunaan diafragma getah dengan teknik perbezaan FBG dan pemodulatan lebar jalur mampu menghapuskan kepekaan suhu dan mengekalkan kepekaan tekanan yang tinggi pada penderia tekanan. Ciri-ciri kepekaan tekanan yang tinggi dan bebas suhu membolehkan penderia tekanan digunakan untuk menderia tekanan rendah dalam bidang hidrologi, pertanian, pemprosesan makanan dan sistem bekalan air dengan ketepatan yang lebih baik dan mengurangkan bacaan yang salah.

ABSTRACT

Water level sensing has become a great importance in various industrial applications. Due to its advantages, fibre Bragg grating (FBG) pressure sensor has been introduced to overcome the drawbacks of electrical pressure sensor for hydrostatic pressure based water level sensing. Over the years, various studies have been reported on the use of rubber-based diaphragms to increase the pressure sensitivity of the bare FBG pressure sensors. However, high thermal expansion of the rubber material is making the FBG pressure sensors more sensitive to the temperature effects due to the increased temperature sensitivity. This drawback can result in inaccuracy of the pressure sensors. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to eliminate the temperature sensitivity in order to improve the accuracy of the rubber-based diaphragm FBG pressure sensors. Here, four types of pressure sensors were developed to investigate the temperature effects. Type I pressure sensor was simply by bonding the bare FBG on rubber diaphragm without temperature compensation. Type II pressure sensor was similar to type I but with reference FBG temperature compensation technique. Type III and type IV pressure sensors were based on differential FBG and bandwidth modulation technique. All pressure sensors underwent pressure and temperature variations. Under pressure variation across 20 kPa, all the pressure sensors obtained high pressure sensitivity at 274.8 pm/kPa, 275.0 pm/kPa, 641.9 pm/kPa and -275.1 pm/kPa. Besides, type IV pressure sensor is also capable to be monitored using photodetector (PD) with the pressure sensitivity of -12.1 mV/kPa. Under temperature variation across 50 °C, all pressure sensors obtained high temperature sensitivity of more than 44.0 pm/°C when monitored based on single wavelength. However, the differential FBG and bandwidth modulation techniques obtained negligible average temperature sensitivity at only 0.5 pm/°C and -0.3 pm/°C. Due to this, the measured pressure and water level using type I and type II pressure sensors was far off from the actual readings with the percentage of error at 35% and 16.55%. Type III and type IV pressure sensors obtained an average highest percentage of accuracy error at only 3.24% and 5.51%. This is because the temperature effects have no influence on temperature insensitive pressure sensors. As a conclusion, the findings of this study shows that the use of rubber diaphragm with differential FBG and bandwidth modulation techniques capable to eliminate away the temperature sensitivity and retain the high pressure sensitivity of the pressure sensors. The temperature-independent high pressure sensitivity characteristics enabled the pressure sensors to be used for low pressure sensing in the fields of hydrology, agriculture, food processing and water supply system with better accuracy and reducing false information.

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