

DETECTION OF WATER FLOW MOVEMENT IN OIL FIELD BY
NANOCOATED POLYCARBONATE OPTICAL FIBRE SENSOR

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ABSTRACT

The use of chemical tracers for oil reservoir monitoring is important to provide assurance and maximise production from mature fields. Nonetheless, this practice requires a huge amount of chemical, thus special consideration in regards of the technical, cost, and environmental aspects is necessary. Henceforth, a more efficient, real-time data acquisition technique to monitor the reservoir must be established. In recent times, fibre optic sensing technology has been touted as a reliable option to improve conventional method for reservoir monitoring. However, the use of conventional glass optical fibre is not favourable as it is fragile, hard to handle and vulnerable to hydrogen attack. Hence in this scenario, the use of polymer optical fibre is beneficial. Nonetheless, the polymer selection is crucial as it must withstand high operating temperature conditions. Therefore, this study focuses on the development of a robust polycarbonate-based polymer optical fibre (PCPOF) sensor to detect oil movement in porous media. Polycarbonate (PC) was chosen as the core as it possesses excellent thermal and optical properties and they are important criteria in fabrication of POF for high temperature condition. In the first stage of the study, the extrusion temperatures were varied from 250 to 310 °C and drawing speeds was manipulated from 5 to 20 rpm during the PC core fibre fabrication in order to obtain the most desired properties in terms of its diameter, pore-free structure and sufficient mechanical strength. It was discovered that the best extrusion temperature was at 290 °C in which at this temperature, the polymer was in a completely molten and exhibited excellent light propagation properties. Meanwhile, a drawing speed of 15 rpm produced a comparable fibre diameter of $\sim 569 \mu\text{m}$ with a mechanical strength of 76.68 MPa. Subsequently, in the second stage, two sets of PC core fibres were fabricated with individual cladding materials based on polycarbonate/polymethyl methacrylate (PC/PMMA) blend and polymethyl pentane (PMP). Prior to the cladding layer fabrication, it was initially casted into thin films for its optical and thermal characterisation, and it was found that the ideal PC/PMMA ratio for cladding application was 80/20. At this composition, the PC/PMMA cladding exhibited a transparency of $\sim 99\%$ and a glass transition temperature of 124.91 °C. On the other hand, the transparency of PMP was $\sim 95\%$ and its transition temperature was 228.45 °C. Next, the cladding layer on the PC core was then fabricated via dip-coating technique. The prepared PC core with different claddings were evaluated to determine their power output. It was found that PMP cladding layer enhanced the performance of the PC core with an increment in power output by 60 % as compared to PC/PMMA cladded PC core which exhibited an increase of only 28.8 %. Due to excellent light propagation properties, the PMP cladded PCPOF was utilised to fabricate the sensor in the last phase. In the third stage, the sensor was fabricated via a multistage method involving plane-by-plane inscription, partial removal of cladding and TiO_2 deposition to enhance its sensing ability. The complete PCPOF sensor was tested at temperatures of 60 °C, 90 °C and 120 °C and its sensitivity was evaluated. Three central Bragg wavelengths of 750 nm, 800 nm and 850 nm were successfully inscribed on the PCPOF. Moving forward, the best etching time was found to be at 9 min by remaining $\sim 1.47 \mu\text{m}$ of cladding thickness. Further increment of etching time may result in damage towards the fibre core. Then, TiO_2 was uniformly distributed on the sensing region via a double dip coating technique to ensure all sensing regions were covered with nanoparticles. On average, it was discovered that the sensitivity of sensor was more than $\sim 100 \text{ nm/RIU}$ in different test surrounding temperatures. The sensor also was able to operate at a surrounding temperature of 120 °C. In the oil displacement test, the sensor managed to detect oil/water flow inside the porous media by shifting its central wavelength when in contact with different liquid. These results show that utilising fibre optic sensor to detect oil movement within a porous media is feasible and can be further developed to create a functional alternative technology to continuously monitor reservoir to better understand reservoir fluid flow pathways.

ABSTRAK

Penggunaan penyurih kimia untuk pengawasan reservoir adalah penting bagi menjamin dan memaksimumkan pengeluaran dari medan matang. Walau bagaimanapun, amalan ini memerlukan jumlah bahan kimia yang banyak. Oleh itu, pertimbangan khas diperlukan dari segi teknikal, kos, dan persekitaran. Sehubungan itu, teknik perolehan data masa nyata yang lebih berkesan untuk memantau reservoir mesti diperkenal. Sejak kebelakangan ini, teknologi penderiaan gentian optik disebut sebagai pilihan yang boleh dipercayai untuk menambah baik kaedah konvensional bagi pemantauan reservoir. Walau bagaimanapun, penggunaan gentian optik kaca konvensional adalah tidak sesuai berikutan sifatnya yang rapuh, sukar dikendali dan rentan terhadap serangan hidrogen. Oleh itu, dalam senario ini, penggunaan gentian optik polimer bermanfaat. Walau bagaimanapun, pemilihan polimer adalah penting berikutan kemampuannya berfungsi pada suhu operasi yang tinggi. Oleh itu, kajian ini memberikan tumpuan terhadap pembangunan sensor gentian optik polimer berasaskan polikarbonat (PCPOF) untuk mengesan pergerakan minyak didalam media berliang. Polikarbonat (PC) dipilih sebagai teras kerana mempunyai sifat terma dan optik yang sangat baik, dan semuanya ialah kriteria penting dalam pembuatan POF untuk keadaan suhu tinggi. Pada peringkat pertama kajian, suhu penyemperitan diubah dari 250 °C hingga ke 310 °C dan halaju penggulungan ditingkatkan dari 5 rpm hingga ke 20 rpm semasa pembuatan gentian teras PC bagi memperoleh sifat yang paling dikehendaki dari segi diameter, struktur bebas berliang dan kekuatan mekanikal yang mencukupi. Suhu penyemperitan terbaik ialah 290 °C dengan pada suhu ini, polimer berada dalam keadaan lebur sepenuhnya dan menunjukkan sifat perambatan cahaya yang sangat baik. Sementara itu, halaju penggulungan 15 rpm menghasilkan diameter serat yang setanding ~ 569 μm dengan kekuatan mekanikal 76.68 MPa. Selepas itu, pada peringkat kedua, dua set gentian teras PC dibuat dengan bahan penyalut individu berdasarkan campuran polikarbonat/polimetil metakrilat (PC/PMMA) dan polimetil pentana (PMP). Sebelum bermulanya penyalutan, penyalut dihasilkan dalam bentuk selaput tipis untuk pencirian optik dan termalnya dengan nisbah unggul untuk PC/PMMA bagi pengaplikasian penyalutan ialah 80/20. Pada komposisi ini, penyalut PC/PMMA memperlihatkan sifat lut sinar ~ 99% dengan suhu peralihan kaca 124.91 °C. Sebaliknya, lut sinar bagi PMP ialah ~ 95% dengan suhu peralihannya ialah 228.45 °C. Seterusnya, penyalutan pada teras PC dihasilkan menerusi kaedah penyalutan celup. Teras PC dengan salutan yang berlainan dinilai bagi menentukan output kuasa masing-masing. Penyalut PMP didapati berjaya meningkatkan prestasi teras PC dengan peningkatan output kuasa sebanyak 60 % berbanding teras PC bersalut PC/PMMA yang hanya meningkatkan 28.8 %. Berikutan sifat perambatan cahayanya yang sangat baik, PCPOF bersalut PMP telah diguna untuk menghasilkan sensor pada fasa terakhir. Pada peringkat ketiga, sensor dihasilkan menerusi beberapa tahap yang melibatkan penggores ukiran satah-demi-satah, penyingkiran separuh penyalut, dan pengendapan TiO_2 bagi meningkatkan kemampuan penderiaan. Sensor PCPOF lengkap diuji pada suhu 60 °C, 90 °C, dan 120 °C dengan kepekaannya dinilai. Tiga panjang gelombang Bragg pusat 750 nm, 800 nm, dan 850 nm berjaya digores ukir pada PCPOF. Melangkah ke hadapan, masa punaran terbaik ialah 9 min dengan meninggalkan ~1.47 μm ketebalan penyalut. Peningkatan masa punaran selanjutnya boleh mengakibatkan berlakunya kerosakan pada teras gentian. Kemudian, TiO_2 disebarkan secara seragam pada kawasan penderiaan menerusi teknik penyalutan celup berganda bagi memastikan semua kawasan penderia disaluti partikel nano. Secara purata, kepekaan sensor didapati melebihi ~ 100 nm/RIU pada suhu ujian yang berlainan. Sensor turut mampu beroperasi pada suhu sekitar 120 °C. Dalam ujian penyesanan minyak, sensor berjaya mengesan aliran minyak/air di dalam media berliang dengan menganjakkannya panjang gelombang pusatnya ketika bersentuhan dengan cecair berlainan. Hasil ini menunjukkan bahawa penggunaan sensor gentian optik untuk mengesan pergerakan minyak didalam media berliang boleh dilaksanakan dan seterusnya mampu dikembangkan bagi menghasilkan teknologi alternatif berfungsi untuk memantau reservoir secara berterusan supaya lebih memahami laluan aliran bendalir.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFM	-	Atomic Force Microscopy
APTES	-	3-Aminopropyl-Triethoxysilane
ATR-IR	-	Attenuated Total Reflection-Infrared
AVO	-	Amplitude Variation with Offset
AZO	-	Aluminium doped Zinc Oxide
CaCl ₂	-	Calcium Chloride
CYTOP	-	Cyclic Transparent Olefins Polymer
COC	-	Cyclic Olefin Copolymers
COPE	-	Copoly(ether-ester)
DEGDAC	-	Diethylene Glycol Di(Allyl Carbonate)
DTS	-	Distributed Temperature Sensing
DAS	-	Distributed Acoustic Sensing
DCM	-	Dichloromethane
DSC	-	Differential Scanning Calorimetry
EDX	-	Energy Dispersive X-Ray
EOR	-	Enhanced Oil Recovery
ESD	-	Electronic Sensor Device
EVA	-	Ethylene Vinyl Acetate
FA	-	Fluoroacrylate
FAWAG	-	Foam Assisted Water Alternate Gas
FBG	-	Fibre Bragg Grating
FESEM	-	Field Emission Scanning Electron Microscope
FTIR	-	Fourier Transform Infrared
GOF	-	Glass Optical Fibre
HFP	-	Hexafluoro Propene
HSE	-	Health, Safety and Environment
IOR	-	Improved Oil Recovery
ITO	-	Indium Tin Oxide
LAN	-	Local Area Network
LED	-	Light-emitting Diode

MMF	-	Multimode Fibre
MOST	-	Media Oriented Systems Transport
NA	-	Numerical Aperture
NaCl	-	Sodium Chloride
OSA	-	Optical Spectrum Analyser
PC	-	Polycarbonate
PMMA	-	Polymethyl Methacrylate
POF	-	Polymer Optical Fibre
PMP	-	Polymethyl Pentene
RIU	-	Refractive Index Unit
RPM	-	Revolution Per Minute
SMF	-	Single Mode Fibre
TiO ₂	-	Titanium Dioxide
TGA	-	Thermogravimetric Analysis
TFBG	-	Tilted Fibre Bragg Grating
UV	-	Ultraviolet
VDF	-	Vinylidene Fluoride
VSP	-	Vertical Seismic Profiling
VSEP	-	Vertical Seismoelectric Profiling
WAG	-	Water Alternating Gas
XRD	-	X-Ray Diffraction

LIST OF SYMBOLS

n_1	-	Refractive Index of The Core
n_2	-	Refractive Index of The Cladding
P_{out}	-	Power Output
P_{in}	-	Power Input
\emptyset	-	Porosity
PV	-	Pore Volume
BV	-	Bulk Volume
k	-	Permeability
Q	-	Injection Flowrate
μ	-	Viscosity of Injected Fluid
L	-	Length of Linear Model
A	-	Cross Section Area of Linear Model
ΔP	-	Pressure Difference
MPa	-	Mega Pascal
GPa	-	Giga Pascal
cm	-	Centimetre
$^{\circ}C$	-	Degree Celsius
ppm	-	Part Per Million
%	-	Percentage
T_{onset}	-	Onset Degradation Temperature
μm	-	Micrometre
E	-	Young's modulus
T_g	-	Glass Transition Temperature

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

World's energy demand continues to increase due to industrial activities in both developed and developing countries. For majority of the globe, fossil fuel energy sources such as natural gas, and oil are the commodity in producing energy (Zhang and Yang, 2018). Though coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has been punching the world and causes the demand for energy decline by 6 % in 2020 (Jiang *et al.*, 2021), oil still shared the biggest energy matrix with 33.1 % from the total energy consumption in 2020 (British Petroleum, 2020). In spite of the slower production pace, hydrocarbon especially oil and gas demand is still high in most of the continents in the world and remain as the major source of energy fuelling the world economy by 2035 (British Petroleum, 2017). Current world oil production mostly comes from mature field and over the past decade oil producing companies are maximizing the oil production from these fields as the exploration and development of new field requires millions of dollars and is very challenging. However, stagnant oil production and unimpressive recovery by primary and secondary recovery have made the situation more precarious. Therefore, advanced technologies are necessary in order to meet the energy demand in many more years to come. Ordinarily, maximum total oil recovery by primary and secondary recovery stage is roughly around 20 % to 40 % (Muggeridge *et al.*, 2013). The remaining oil trapped in the reservoir is the aim of the advanced method which have become known as Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) and Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR). Optimization of oil production by scrutinizing the third oil recovery or EOR is necessary because the remaining oil trapped in the reservoir is due to the higher oil viscosity, high capillary forces, high interfacial tension and thus it requires more advanced approaches to migrate the oil to the production well.

Various techniques have been investigated for EOR and IOR such as miscible gas injection, water alternating gas (WAG) injection, polymer flooding, steam injection, hydraulic fracturing, scale inhibition treatment and acid stimulation treatment. IOR and EOR term may be used synonymously which the ultimate goal is to produce more oil via better engineering and project management approach such as identifying the volume of oil remain in the reservoir (Muggeridge *et al.*, 2013). Reservoir monitoring study during the EOR processes is crucial in oil industry as it provides important data to the experts to maximize oil recovery and also to improve the planning for future continuation of production cycles (Djuraev *et al.*, 2017). An excellent monitoring study during the oil production is capable to record the saturation changes in the reservoir, measuring the fluid location and can predict the distribution of the fluids in the reservoir, subsequently this can dictate the success of enhanced oil recovery processes (Djuraev *et al.*, 2017).

There are quite a number of reservoir monitoring techniques such as tracer injection (Dezabala *et al.*, 2011; Cubillos *et al.*, 2007; Cubillos *et al.*, 2006), multifunctional downhole sensor (Saunders *et al.*, 2008) and well fall-off test (Orangi and Ershaghi, 2008). Each choice of monitoring techniques is designed for specific applications and it depends on various factors such as accuracy, consistency, cost effectiveness, and installation procedures. Application of tracer in the reservoir system has been applied in many part of the world for reservoir monitoring to monitor and retrieve flow parameters (Jaafar *et al.*, 2014). However, the usage of tracer requires a huge amount of chemical that need to be injected into the reservoir formation and it also requires much testing. A high amount of tracer implies special consideration of technical, cost and environmental aspect are needed (Cubillos *et al.*, 2006). Furthermore, the analytical technique used to analyse the tracer require a more advanced technology as well as increased the need for more skilled personnel to perform the analysis (Dyrli and Leung, 2017). Furthermore, since the tracer is injected into the reservoir, engineers need to wait for the tracer to come out at the producing well and this process takes a long time. An improved and more promising approach is by using fibre optic sensor as an alternative technology for reservoir monitoring provides the option of real time data acquisition besides can save time and cost (Chen *et al.*, 2018).

A good monitoring technique is crucial in developing a coherent reservoir management strategy to minimize all the reservoir uncertainties during oil production. One of the technologies that can be utilized in reservoir monitoring is fibre optic sensor. This sensor can detect the presence and absence of an analyte and the research on fibre optic sensor has been increasing for the past 10 years as shown in Figure 1.1.

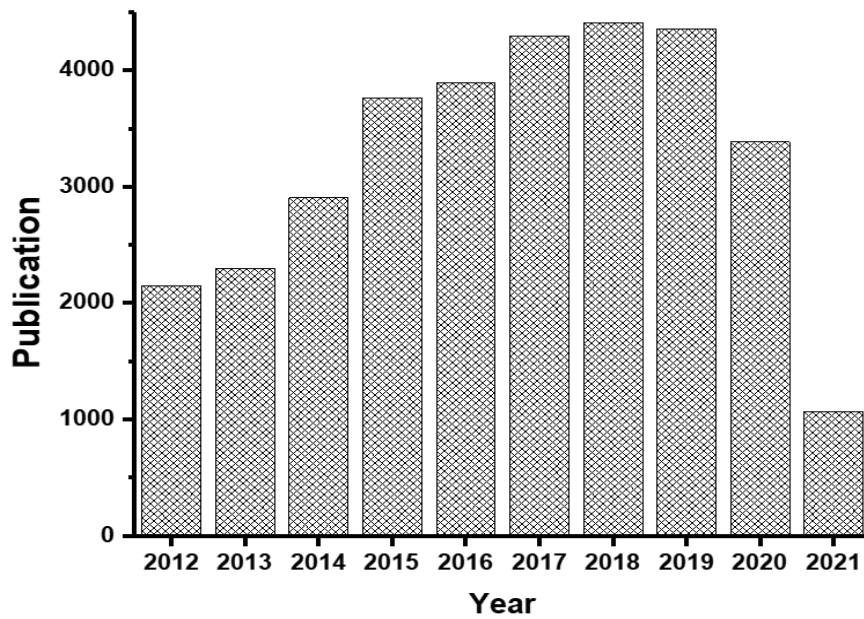


Figure 1.1 Publication on optical fibre-based sensor (source from Scopus analysis as of April 2021)

In petroleum engineering particularly, the use of fibre optic sensor is very interesting. The fibre optic sensor principle is simple in which a light is sent through a fibre optic from the surface to a sensor downhole. When the sensor detects any external quantity, it will modulate the light beam and the measurand is detected by comparing the reflected light beam with the original light beam at the surface. The industry as a whole recognizes the need for the improved monitoring system and optical fibre-based sensor is seen to be the key component of the expansion which allowing the company to leverage the advantages offered by optical fibre while improving operational performance and accuracy.

Polymer optical fibre (POF) have been around for many years and it shares most of the benefits of conventional glass optical fibre such as sensitive to electromagnetic waves, low weight, small dimension and low intrusiveness (Muto *et al.*, 2003). In addition to that, optical fibre sensor offers additional important characteristic that it does not produce any fire spark during operation. As the environment in the reservoir is very flammable and the space is relatively small, fibre optic sensors can be utilised in this environment and makes it a very good candidate to be used in reservoir monitoring operation. A schematic diagram for an optical fibre sensor is shown in Figure 1.2. As shown in below, a fibre optic sensor mainly consists of 3 major component which are the core, cladding and sensing region. Hence, this study will be focusing on the fabrication and development of these major components. Fibre optic sensor works based on the principle that light from the light source is transmitted via an optical fibre which experiences change in its parameter in the optical fibre and reaches a detector which measures this change. An optical fibre consists of the core which has a higher refractive index than the cladding layer and acts based on the total internal reflection principle. The reflected light is transmitted to a sensor that convert the light energy into an electrical signal.

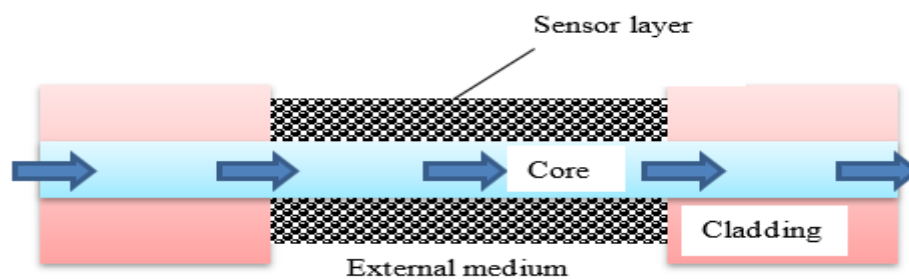


Figure 1.2 Schematic diagram of a polymer optical fibre sensor

Application of glass optical fibre (GOF) in downhole technology application is not favourable due to several factor. This is because just as its name, glass optical fibre is very subtle type of fibre as it has less resistant to flexibility and it has more chances of breakage if it is put at the insecure place. Due to that, glass optical fibres are always used in close environment. Besides that, the usage of glass optical fibre also is very expensive because of its fragility, it is hard to deploy and installation as well as termination of the glass optical fibre sensor need to be done by the specialist

(Berghmans and Thienpont, 2014). The application of glass optical fiber sensor in oil and gas also has its limitation which is the presence of hydrogen which come from free hydrogen gas (H_2) or hydroxyl compound in the reservoir may affect the silica based fiber which causing distortion or darkening of the fibre and reduce the accuracy of the measurement (Baldwin, 2014; Jacobs, 2014). During the fabrication of glass optical fiber, silica can form open structure as a results of ring orientation. This open structure may react with hydrogen and can cause finite attenuation to increase over the remaining service life of the fiber. The reaction of hydrogen with silica fiber also increased at elevated temperature. Therefore, due to these drawbacks, plastic optical fiber sensor is seen to be the best option to overcome these problems.

Poly (methyl methacrylate) (PMMA) is by far the most commonly used polymer for fabrication of the polymer optical fibre and one of the promising polymers to be used for the application in optical, pneumatic actuation, sensor and biomedical application (Ali *et al.*, 2015). However, there is a drawback of PMMA which is the glass transition of PMMA is relatively lower in which it cannot be used in high temperature condition. It is reported that the glass transition temperature (T_g) of PMMA is between 100 °C to 115 °C and the operating temperature of PMMA optical fibre is between -50 °C to 85 °C (Zhong *et al.*, 2016; Beckers *et al.*, 2015; Poomalai *et al.*, 2007). Beyond this temperature, some of the PMMA optical fibre's physical properties will change in which the optical fibre will lose its rigidity as well as its transparency. In addition to that the service span of the polymer optical fibre will reduce especially in humid conditions which accelerate the degradation of the polymer.

1.2 Problem Statement

Application of polymer optical fibre sensor in oil and gas industry requires a high resistant temperature material. This is because, generally hydrocarbon can be found at interval of above 6200 ft, and the reservoir temperature is around 190 °F or 90 °C. In Malaysia, taking an example of Dulang field which located in Kuala Terengganu offshore is having reservoir temperature of 96 °C (Hussain *et al.*, 1992). The use of PMMA is not favourable as it possesses a low thermal resistance and exhibit

a poor performance in higher operating temperature. Thus, PC is seen as one of the best and cheap alternatives to PMMA to be used as the core material for high temperature condition due to its higher glass transition of 150 °C and high thermal stability. However, the fabrication of PC optical fibre parameter and material for the cladding material has not been well explored. Besides that, the sensitivity of the PC optical fibre sensor is relatively low. Thus this, study is focusing on the development of high thermal resistant PC optical fibre sensor with high sensitivity for the application in oil field.

A widely used technique to fabricate the PC POF is drill-and-draw technique. However, this technique is very difficult and consume a lot of time. Hence, a simpler technique is used in this study which is melt extrusion technique to fabricate the solid core. Nonetheless, serious attention has to be paid in order to obtain a high quality of PC POF. In this technique, temperature control during the fabrications is very crucial as a non-suitable temperature may lead to a poor performance of POF. The processing temperature for fabrication of PC fibre optic is not well documented. The extrusion of POF require a precise extrusion temperature to avoid degradation of the polymer and unfavourable morphology. Therefore, the extrusion temperature for PC fibre optic in the range of 250 °C to 310 °C is studied. In this work, it is important to investigate the optimum temperature for the fabrication of the PC based POF. In addition to that, the diameter of the fibre also plays an important role. The measurement of using POF sensor yield a lower resolution due to its bigger diameter. Thus, the take up speed during the fabrication of POF will be studied to obtain the correct POF diameter to increase the accuracy during the measurement using POF sensor.

Cladding layer of PC POF also plays a crucial role. Application of PMMA as the cladding material for PC fibre is not sufficient due to its low thermal resistant, therefore blending of PMMA with a higher thermal resistant material is seen as one of the best options to increase its thermal properties. However, one of the main issues in PMMA and PC blending is its miscibility in which some study has been reported that blending of PMMA and PC would produce an opaque composite which is not favourable in fabrication of cladding layer (Yan *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, in this study the miscibility of those two polymers is investigated and the optimum ratio which give

excellent optical and high thermal properties is determined. Other than that, polymethyl pentene (PMP) is also another potential candidate for fabrication of cladding layer. This polymer has high thermal resistant, but it has a slightly lower transparency than PMMA. Due to this, two types of cladding layer is prepared made from PC/PMMA blend and PMP polymer and the effect of different cladding layer on the light propagation on PC fibre core is investigated and the best cladding material is chosen.

Fibre Bragg grating (FBG) sensor has so much potential for commercialization in oil and gas industry due to its unique properties controllable sensitivities, compact size, non-destructive and make it very much suitable for in-situ measurement device. The deposition of metal oxide material on etched fibre may enhanced the sensitivity of the sensor. The removal of the cladding layer was very much depending on the immersion of the fibre in the solvent. Therefore, in this study the etching time is studied to obtain the optimum immersion time to remove as much as cladding possible followed by the deposition of the TiO₂ nanoparticles. In this study, TiO₂ was chosen due to its high refractive index properties as well as non-toxic, environmentally friendly and low cost. Although the use of PC POF Bragg grating sensor in oil flow detection for reservoir monitoring is relatively new, its potential is still alluring. Therefore, in this study the sensitivity of the sensor to perform in elevated temperature is determined by static test and the capability of the sensor to detect oil flow movement in high operating condition is conducted in dynamic test.

1.3 Objectives of Study

The main objective of this work is to produce a polymer optical fibre with an excellent quality to be used in harsh condition such as high pressure and high temperature condition. Then, this fibre is going to be incorporated with a sensor layer to study the oil propagation inside the porous media for reservoir monitoring. These aims are achieved through detailed fabrication process and measurement of wavelength shift due to oil movement in the porous media which conducted in the laboratory. The specific research objectives are as follows:

- i. To examine the effect of temperature and collector speed on the optical, thermal, and mechanical properties of the PC core fibre.
- ii. To investigate the optical and thermal properties of different cladding composition and its effect on the mechanical, morphology and optical performance of the PC fibre.
- iii. To evaluate the sensitivity of the POF sensor to monitor water movement in the porous media at elevated temperature for reservoir monitoring.

1.4 Scope of Study

The following research activities are conducted in order to monitor the oil flow movement in the porous media. The scopes of study are outlined as follows:

For Objective 1:

- a. The extrusion of the PC core fibre was conducted using single screw extruder and the temperature of the nozzle was set at 250 °C, 270 °C, 290 °C, and 310 °C.
- b. The extrusion of PC POF core was performed at collector speed of 5 rpm, 10 rpm, 15 rpm and 20 rpm.
- c. Characterizing the optical, mechanical, and thermal properties of the fabricated PC POF and the best extrusion temperature and collector speed was determined.

For Objective 2:

- a. The PC/PMMA and PMP cladding were first casted into a flat sheet for characterisation of their optical and thermal properties.
- b. The PC/PMMA flat sheet polymer ratio was varied from 100/0, 95/0, 85/0, 80/0, 75/0 and 70/0, subsequently the optimum ratio was determined.
- c. The optimum ratio of PC/PMMA and PMP were used to fabricate the cladding layer on the PC core fibre via dip-coating method.
- d. Characterizing the morphological, mechanical and optical properties of the prepared PC core with different cladding materials and the fibre was evaluated, subsequently the best combination was selected.

For Objective 3:

- a. Prior to the deposition of TiO_2 , the cladding layer was partially removed by chemical etching method and the etching time was varied from 5 min, 7 min, 9 min and 11 min, subsequently the optimum etching time was determined.
- b. The sensitive sensor part was fabricated by deposition of metal oxide i.e titanium dioxide (TiO_2) onto the POF using the dip-coating technique and the surface roughness was evaluated.
- c. Different refractive index fluid was prepared by mixing 20,000 ppm of saline water with different paraffin oil concentrations i.e 100/0, 25/75, 50/50, 75/25, 100/0.
- d. The sensitivity of the sensor at elevated temperature of 60 °C, 90 °C and 120 °C was evaluated.
- e. The ability of PC POF sensor to detect the oil movement inside the porous media was investigated and the experiment was conducted at operation temperature of 120 °C.

1.5 Significance of Study

Oil and gas industry has been facing a very tough and challenging situation for the past few years in which the oil prices have plunged from over \$ 100 USD per barrel to under \$ 35 USD per barrel in March 2020. Though currently the oil prices are getting better, yet still relatively low. Current announcements of discoveries are mostly marginal fields; therefore, oil companies are focusing on adding value and optimisation the existing assets. Thus, many companies are turning into big data and analytics to help weather the storm. Therefore, there is a need for more advanced monitoring device that can provide actionable data to increase production efficiency. The increased interest to use optical fibre sensor for data acquisition in such condition has become one of the drivers for many researchers to utilize this technology as it offers so many advantages over the other sensing technologies.

In this study, new and promising findings on the capability of the polymeric optical fibre sensor to detect oil movement inside the porous media are presented. A thorough analysis from this study has demonstrated an encouraging proof of concept, nonetheless more studies are needed before this technology can be used in real application. Combination of fibre Bragg grating sensor with evanescent field theories in PC optical fibre to detect the oil detection movement in porous media at high operating condition is very promising. Therefore, the outcomes of this study may be the basis of an extended study to be undertaken by other researchers in exploring the alternative to the outcomes for this study which may result in a better enhancement of technology. Besides that, the results gained in this work would also be very beneficial for oil companies to help in their efforts to optimise hydrocarbon production throughout the life of a field. Furthermore, this real time data acquisition technology has the potential to revolutionise the oil industries particularly in reservoir monitoring technique as this information obtained from this technology could contribute in terms of its efficiency, safety and ultimate recovery.

1.6 Thesis Organisation

This thesis begins with **Chapter 1** which discusses on the research background and limitations that has led to this research. To complete this study, three objectives are registered and the scopes for this study are identified to complete all the objectives. The last section of this chapter is explaining about the implication of this work followed by summary of each chapter.

A comprehensive literature review is discussed in **Chapter 2**. It begins by describing few downhole monitoring techniques including the fibre optic sensor. Then, a more detailed discussion on fibre optic including its application, the core and cladding materials, fabrication technique and its properties. The last part of this chapter is focusing on reviewing the fibre optic sensor comprising the basic principle of fibre optic sensor, application of fibre optic sensors, Bragg grating sensor in polymer fibre, fabrication of Bragg grating and nanoparticles for coating on the sensing region to enhance its sensitivity.

In **Chapter 3**, the materials, methodologies, and the instruments used to complete this work are described attentively. In this chapter, a complete research framework is outlined. All the methods and parameters used to fabricate the PC fibre core, cladding and sensor region is mentioned in detail. This includes the description on the characterisation methods for the resultant fibre and fibre sensors. An experimental setup to evaluate the sensitivity of the PC fibre sensors and its ability to detect the oil movement in porous media at high temperature is also explained.

Chapter 4 presents the results of extrusion temperature and its effect on the optical and thermal properties of the PC core fibre. The effect of collector speed during the extrusion process on the structural and mechanical properties are also determined. In this chapter, the optimum extrusion temperature and collector speed for fabrication of PC core fibre is identified.

The best cladding materials for the PC core fibre is revealed in **Chapter 5**. In the first part of this chapter, the optical and thermal properties of PC/PMMA and PMP cladding layer are discussed and the optimum ratio for PC/PMMA is determined. In the second part, the optimum ratio of PC/PMMA and PMP cladded PC core fibre is compared in term of its mechanical, morphology and optical performance. The best cladding material for PC core is determined in the last part of this chapter.

Chapter 6 is focusing on the results of the sensing layer. In this chapter, the best etching time is determined. The properties and mechanism of deposited nanoparticles is also explained in this chapter. This chapter also reveals the sensitivity of the sensor at high operating conditions and its ability to perform as a sensor to detect the oil flow movement in porous media at high operating condition is presented.

Finally, few conclusions from this work are drawn and recommendation for future work are outlined in **Chapter 7**.

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APPENDIX E

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Journal with Impact Factor

1. M.S. Moslan, M.H.D. Othman, A. Samavati, M.A.M. Salim, M.A. Rahman, A.F. Ismail, H. Bakhtiar, M. N. M. Sokri. A new potential polymeric cladding material for polycarbonate fibre optic core for high temperature use, *Optical Fiber Technology*, (Q2, IF 2.530)
2. M.S. Moslan, M.H.D. Othman, A. Samavati, M.A.M. Salim, M.A. Rahman, A.F. Ismail, H. Bakhtiar, Fabrication of polycarbonate polymer optical fibre core via extrusion method: The role of temperature gradient and collector speed on its characteristics, *Optical Fiber Technology*. 55 (2020) 102162. (Q2, IF: 2.530)

Indexed Journal

1. M.S. Moslan, M.H.D. Othman, A. Samavati, M.A.M. Salim, M.A. Rahman, A.F. Ismail, H. Bakhtiar, Fabrication of polycarbonate-based polymer optical fibre cladding: Effect of different solvents, *Malaysian Journal of Fundamental and Applied Sciences*, 15 (2019), 795-798. (Indexed by Scopus)