

**EFFECT OF LINE THICKNESS CROSS-SECTIONAL GEOMETRY TO  
STRETCHABLE PRINTED CIRCUIT UNDER THERMAL PERFORMANCE**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that this project report entitled “Effect of line thickness cross-sectional geometry of Stretchable Printed Circuit under thermal performance” is the result of my own work except as cited in the references.

Signature : .....

Name : .....

Date : .....

## APPROVAL

I hereby declare that I have read this project report and in my opinion this report is sufficient in term of scope and quality for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering with Honours.

Signature : .....

Name : .....

Date : .....

## **DEDICATION**

This report is dedicated to my beloved late father and my beloved mother,  
Suhaimi Sulaiman and Fatimah Ismail.

## ABSTRACT

The stretchable printed circuit are widely used days by days due to the physical characteristic that able to be bend and stretch. The stretchable printed circuit have been used in various field such as health, sport, industry and fashion. The research were done to find out the effect of ink thickness against the resistivity. Next, to find out the effect of temperature against the resistivity and the last one to find out the effect of strain applied against the resistivity. The samples were prepared with four different thicknesses (2, 4, 6 and 8 layers) where the layers was made using cellophane tape to create different thickness. The printing method used was screen printing method and the samples was measured using four point probe in the unit of  $\Omega/\text{sq}$ . The samples were tested under three different condition where the first condition the sample will be measure under normal condition (room temperature – 32 °C). The second condition, the sample were tested under various temperature (40, 60 and 100 °C). The last condition the sample were tested in the room temperature under various strain applied (20, 40, 60 and 80 %), the Vernier caliper was used to apply the strain on the samples. Carbon was used as the conductive ink and thermal-polyurethane (TPU) was used as the substrate in this studies. The result of the study shows that when the ink thickness increase, the resistivity will decreased. As for the mechanical or strain test when the higher strain applied to the sample, the higher resistivity obtain by the sample.

## ABSTRAK

*Litar bercetak boleh regang digunakan dengan cara meluas hari demi hari kerana karakter fizikalnya yang mampu lentur dan regang. Litar bercerak boleh regang digunakan dalam pelbagai bidang seperti kesihatan, sukan, industri dan fesyen. Kajian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui kesan ketebalan dakwat terhadap rintangan. Seterusnya, untuk mengetahui kesan suhu terhadap rintangan dan akhir sekali untuk mengetahui kesan ketegangan yang diberikan terhadap rintangan. Sampel disediakan dengan empat jenis ketebalan berbeza (2, 4, 6 dan 8 lapisan) dimana setiap lapisan dihasilkan dengan menggunakan pita selofan untuk menghasilkan ketebalan berbeza. Kaedah cetakan digunakan adalah kaedah cetakan skrin dan sampel diukur menggunakan prob empat mata didalam unit  $\Omega/sq$ . Sampel akan diuji dibawah tiga kondisi berbeza dimana kondisi pertama sampel akan diukur didalam suhu bilik (32 °C). Kondisi kedua, sampel akan diuji didalam pelbagai suhu (40, 60, 100 °C). Kondisi terakhir, sampel akan diuji didalam suhu bilik dibawah pelbagai tegangan (20, 40, 60, 80 %) yang dikenakan padanya, dimana angkup vernier digunakan untuk meregangkan sampel. Karbon digunakan sebagai dakwat konduktif dan poliuretana termal digunakan sebagai substrat didalam kajian ini. Hasil kajian menunjukkan apabila semakin tebal dakwat, rintangan akan berkurangan Bagi ujian mekanikal atau ketegangan pula apabila semakin tinggi tegangan dikenakan pada sampel, semakin tinggi rintangan dihasilkan oleh sampel.*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION</b>	
<b>APPROVAL</b>	
<b>DEDICATION</b>	
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>ABSTRAK</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATION</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>LIST OF SYMBOL</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>LIST OF APPENDICES</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>CHAPTER</b>	
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.1 Background of Research	1
1.2 Problem Statement	3
1.3 Objective	4
1.4 Scope of Study	4
1.5 Planning and Execution	5
<b>2. LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	
2.1 Introduction	8
2.2 Printed Circuit Board (PCB)	8
2.2.1 History and Evolution of PCB	8
2.3 Stretchable Printed Circuit (SPC)	11
2.3.1 Conductive Ink	12
2.3.1.1 Filler	17



2.3.1.2	Binder	18
2.3.1.3	Solvent	18
2.3.1.4	Additive	19
2.3.2	Substrate	19
2.3.2.1	Thermal Polyurethane (TPU)	20
2.3.2.2	Poly-Dimethyl-Siloxane (PDMS)	23
2.4	Printing Method	25
2.4.1	Screen Printing	25
2.4.2	Inkjet Printing	27
2.4.3	Gravure Printing	30
2.5	4 Point Probe	33
<b>3.</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	
3.1	Overview of Research	36
3.2	Sample Preparation	38
3.2.1	Screen Printing Process	38
3.3	Experimental Setup	51
3.3.1	CASE 1 : Room Temperature Against Resistance Test	56
3.3.2	CASE 2 : Designed Temperature Against Resistance Test (Thermal Test)	57
3.3.3	CASE 3 : Strain Against Resistance (Mechanical Test)	58
3.4	Safety and Precaution	59
<b>4.</b>	<b>RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b>	
4.1	Introduction	61
4.2	CASE 1 : Room Temperature Against Resistance Test	62
4.2.1	Glass Slide	63
4.2.2	Thermal Polyurethane (TPU)	65
4.3	CASE 2 : Designed Temperature Against Resistance Test (Thermal Test)	68
4.4	CASE 3 : Strain Against Resistance Test (Mechanical Test)	72
<b>5.</b>	<b>CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION</b>	
5.1	Conclusion	78
5.2	Recommendation for Future Works	70

**REFERENCES**

**71**

**APPENDICES**

**86**

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	PCB Layers	9
2.2	Point-to-Point Wiring	10
2.3	DuPont stretchable printed ink	11
2.4	The conductive traces on PCB	13
2.5	The Conductive ink traces on TPU	13
2.6	Filler, binder and solvent basic concept	17
2.7	Example of Product using TPUs	21
2.8	TPUs microstructure (Soft and hard segment/block)	23
2.9	PDMS chemical structure	24
2.10	The principle of the screen printing process	26
2.11	Screen printing working principle	27
2.12 (A)	Working principle of Drop on Demand	30
2.12 (B)	Working principle of Continuous Inkjet printer	30

2.13	Example of Egyptian stamp by Harrison in 1923	31
2.14	The component for gravure printing and its basic working principle	32
2.15 (A)	Working principle of Direct gravure printing	33
2.15 (B)	Working principle of Off-set gravure printing	33
2.16	Arrangement of four point probe	34
3.1	Flow Chart of research project	37
3.2	Bare Carbon conductive ink	39
3.3	Roll of TPU substrate	39
3.4	Wiping the surface of the glass slide with IPA (Step 1)	40
3.5	Example of the tape used (Step 2)	41
3.6	Tape layer by layer on the glass slide (Step 3)	41
3.7 (A)	Mark the distance for the width of the ink (Step 4)	42
3.7 (B)	Tape another cellophane tape on the other side with the 0.1 cm gap (Step 4)	42
3.8 (A)	Placing the ink on the glass slide (Step 5)	43
3.8 (B)	Spread the ink using razor blade (Step 5)	43
3.9	Cure the ink for 30 minutes in room temperature (Step 6)	44
3.10	Remove the tape (Step 7)	44
3.11	Marking point for each 5cm on the substrate (Glass slide) (Step 8)	45

3.12	Complete labelling all the thickness and marking process (Step 8)	45
3.13	The dimension of the TPU (Step 1)	46
3.14	Preparing few samples (Step 1)	46
3.15	Bottom is TPU (transparent) and top is sheet cover (pinkish-colour) (Step 2)	47
3.16	Label and tape the samples on zinc plate (Step 2)	47
3.17	Preparing the different layers of tape on the substrate (Step 4)	48
3.18	Spreading the ink using Razor blade (Step 5)	49
3.19	Curing process (Step 6)	49
3.20	Remove the tape (Step 7)	50
3.21	Sample points measurement gap	50
3.22	Dimension of the sample	51
3.23	4 point probe setup	52
3.24	The buttons on the 4 point probe	53
3.25	Resistance tester glass (Step 6)	54
3.26	Calibrating the 4 point probe using resistance tester glass (Step 6 & 7)	54
3.27	Placing the sample on the 4 point probe (Step 9)	55
3.28	Applying heat to the sample for thermal test	58
3.29	Stretching sample for strain test	59

4.1	Effect of sheet resistance with different layers on glass slide	64
4.2	Effect of sheet resistance with different layers on TPU	66
4.3	Resistance versus Line width versus thickness by layer	67
4.4	Temperature measured using Thermal Imaging Camera	68
4.5	CASE 2 : Effect of sheet resistance with different temperature and ink thickness	70
4.6	CASE 3 : Effect of strain on sheet resistance with different layers of ink	73
4.7	80 % strain applied on 2 layers sample	75
4.8(A)	60 % strain applied on 6 layers sample	76
4.8(B)	60 % strain applied on 8 layers sample	76
4.9	Resistance Vs Strain graph	77

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	TITLE	PAGE
1.1	Gantt Chart for PSM 1	6
1.2	Gantt Chart for PSM 2	7
2.1	Different between CIJ and DoD working principle	29
4.1	Glass slide data	63
4.2	TPUs data	65
4.3	CASE 2 : Thermal test data	69
4.4	The length of the conductive ink based on the % strain applied	72
4.5	CASE 3 : Mechanical test data	73

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PCB	Printed Circuit Board
SPC	Stretchable Printed Circuit
FR4	Fiber Glass
TPU	Thermoplastic polyurethanes / Thermal polyurethane
PWB	Printed Wiring Board
PDMS	Poly Dimethyl-Siloxane
PET	Polyethylene terephthalate
HTV	High Temperature Vulcanizing
LTV	Low Temperature vulcanizing
LSR	Liquid Silicone Rubber
CIJ	Continuous Inkjet
DoD	Drop on Demand
ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
MSDS	Material Safety Data Sheet



## LIST OF SYMBOLS

s	=	spacing
mm	=	millimeter
cm	=	centimeter
m	=	meter
$R_s$	=	Sheet resistance
V	=	Voltage
I	=	Current
R	=	Resistance
$\Omega$	=	Resistance
$\Omega/\text{sq}$	=	Resistance per square

## LIST OF APPENDICES

<b>APPENDIX</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
A	Four Point Probe Standard	86
B	Razor Straight Line Printing Method Standard	90
C	Bare Carbon Conductive Ink Datasheet	93

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of Research

The printed circuit board or PCB is a board that connecting electrical component together and actually make the device working and functioning correctly. The part of the PCB is consist of substrate, copper layer, soldermask and silk screen. The existence of the PCB really improve our technologies to another level.

But due to the restriction of the PCB which cannot be bend or stretch it make the PCB less favorable in small devices so there come the new technology which is stretchable printed circuit (SPC) or also known as stretchable printed ink. SPC is a circuit board that are made from combination of substrate but not same as the substrate used on PCB which is FR4 or also known as fiberglass or any solid component that are unbendable or stretchable and conductive ink

The substrate used is something flexible such as fabric, plastic and any flexible material that are suitable to be used, in this research the substrate used is thermoplastic polyurethanes or TPU which is bendable and stretchable. The conductive ink used is carbon and the ink will be printed above the substrate using screen printing method and the purpose of the ink is to conduct electricity through the stretchable printed circuit, this ink work as replacement of the copper layer in PCB.

After completing printing the conductive ink to the substrate, the substrate will be placed inside an oven for curing process. The last step after curing process is the testing process which is a 4-point probe used to measure the resistivity of the stretchable printed circuit board in units of ohm/sq. The function of the SPC is the same as a normal printed circuit board but it is bendable and stretchable, which makes the SPC more versatile and can be used inside small devices or even in complicated shaped devices.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

The technology nowadays keep improving and more complex. In order to make something powerful yet small in size is becoming more and more difficult due to the restriction on printed circuit board (PCB) that not bendable and stretchable. But the PCB has evolved day by day and now the latest technology is stretchable printed circuit (SPC) which are bendable and stretchable. The substrate was made up using stretchable material such as fabric and plastic which allow the printed circuit board to become flexible and stretchable. With this two new features the use of the SPC made something impossible before to something possible, as can be seen the design of the television, phone and other gadget becoming more smaller and unique but the function of the device much better than before. This is due to the flexible and the stretchable properties of the SPC.

There are several problems that causing the limitation of SPC in the industries, such as the thermal properties, physical properties and electrical resistivity of the SPC. These problems will be study based on the parameter related, for example the effect of the temperature and strain to the conductive ink and substrate.

The effect of the line thickness cross-sectional to stretchable printed circuit under thermal performance will be covered in this research. There are different thickness of conductive ink was used to study the effect on resistivity and how to improve the quality of the SPC. The conductive ink and the substrate used in this study are carbon ink and thermal polyurethane (TPU) respectively.

### **1.3 Objective**

The objective for this research are :

1. To study the effect of thickness of the ink to the resistance.
2. To study the effect of the temperature to the resistance.
3. To study the effect of the strain applied to the stretchable printed circuit to the resistance.

### **1.4 Scope of Study**

The scope of study is listed as below :

1. Screen printing process to print the ink on the substrate.
2. Curing process to cured the samples.
3. 4 Point probe resistance test to measure the resistivity of the samples.
4. Mechanical and thermal testing of the specimens based on various temperature and strain.
5. Variable ink thickness (2 layers, 4 layers, 6 layers and 8 layers).

## **1.5 Planning and Execution**

The research activities and progress for PSM 1 is been illustrates as Figure 1.1. The figure includes the flow and process of the research such as title selection, literature review, designing the experiment, formulation of samples, material characterization testing that consist of mechanical and thermal testing, data analysis, report writing then followed by report writing and report submission and the last one is PSM 1 seminar. In PSM 2 the research activities was continued. The new sample was prepared and used for the mechanical and thermal characterization test, followed by the data analysis process before compiling the final result in the report. The research activities present in PSM 2 was illustrated in the Figure 1.2.

WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	ACTIVITIES													
Research Title Selection														
Literature review														
Design of experiment														
Formulation of sample														
Characterization testing • Mechanical • Thermal														
Data analysis														
Report writing														
Report submission														
PSM 1 Seminar														

Table 1.1 : Gantt Chart for PSM 1