

THERMAL PROPERTIES OF SELECTED DENTAL MATERIALS

Borut Kosec¹, Mateja Vodlan¹, Blaž Karpe¹, Aleš Nagode¹, Milan Bizjak¹, Igor Kopač²,
Alenka Pavlič², Igor Budak³, Tatjana Puškar⁴, Henry Taubmann⁵, Mirko Gojić⁶

¹University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering
Ljubljana
Slovenia

²University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Medicine
Ljubljana
Slovenia

³University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Technical Sciences
Novi Sad
Serbia

⁴University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Medicine
Novi Sad
Serbia

⁵C3 Prozess und Analysentechnik GmbH
Munich
Germany

⁶University of Zagreb, Faculty of Metallurgy
Sisak
Croatia

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ABSTRACT

Today almost all manufacturers of dental materials in their certificates of quality of material give its chemical composition, mechanical properties, process ability in aesthetic characteristics while informations about thermal properties are not available.

Within the work measurements of the thermal properties of five selected, in daily dental practice used, dental materials which were produced in the laboratories of Slovenian firms and high education institutions have been carried out. Measurements were carried out at room temperature, and in a temperature range between 0 °C and 50 °C in accordance with standard ISO 22007-2.

The specific engineering methods for determination of the thermal properties of materials and standards from group ISO 22007 will be presented. A complex study was preformed and evaluation of functioning of the Hot Disk TPS 2200 device, modern and high-quality instrument for the thermal properties determination, was carried out.

1. INTRODUCTION

The thermal properties of dentine and tooth enamel affects the rate of response of the tooth nervous system to the temperature changes to which the tooth is exposed on a daily basis. In addition to strength and aesthetic requirements, artificial dental materials must also provide a similar thermal protection for the tooth pulp. Likewise, implants and artificial tooth crowns must transfer similar heat flow to the bone as is transferred by a natural tooth, which has a strong influence on the patient's general acceptance of the foreign body (Figure 1).



Figure 1. An example of insertion of the dental implant into the jawbone [2].

Manufacturers of dental materials in their certificates of material quality describe chemical composition, mechanical properties, machinability and aesthetic characteristics, while thermal properties of the material are rarely given.

The reported values of human teeth thermal properties show significant discrepancies, with data for thermal conductivity of dentine between 0.11 to $0.98 \text{ Wm}^{-1} \text{ K}^{-1}$, and 0.7 to $0.8 \text{ Wm}^{-1} \text{ K}^{-1}$ for tooth enamel, while thermal diffusivity varies between 0.058 to $0.269 \text{ mm}^2/\text{s}$ and 0.092 to $0.42 \text{ mm}^2/\text{s}$ for dentin and enamel respectively. The significant discrepancy between the reported results may be attributed to several challenges associated with the measurements, like tooth heterogeneous microstructure and associative anisotropic thermal properties, difficulties at establishing perfect thermal contact or lack of precise emissivity data when axial heat flow or laser flash measuring methods are applied. Thermal conductivity, specific heat and thermal diffusivity are basic thermal properties of material that determine the heat transfer in the system under consideration. Despite the remarkable progress of measuring methods and techniques, it is still difficult to determine them with an error of less than $\pm 2 \%$, even for bulk materials.

In our research, we used one of the most advanced instruments for determining the thermal properties, Hot Disk TPS 2200, a product of Hot Disk AB company, Gothenburg, Sweden. The instrument can be used for determining thermal properties of various materials including pure metals, alloys, minerals, ceramics, plastics, glasses, powders and viscous liquids with thermal conductivity in the range from 0.01 to 500 W/mK , thermal diffusivity from 0.01 to $300 \text{ mm}^2/\text{s}$ and heat capacity up to $5 \text{ MJ/m}^3\text{K}$. Measurements can be performed in a temperature interval between -50 up to $750 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$.



Figure 2. Sensor (Kapton) sandwiched between two halves of a sample during measurement

Hot disk measuring method is a transient plane source technique (TPS). Based on the theory of TPS, instrument utilizes a sensor element in the shape of $10\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ thick double spiral (Figure 2), made by etching from pure nickel foil. Spiral is mechanically strengthened and electrically insulated on both sides by thin polyimide foil (Kapton ®Du Pont) for measurements up to $300\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ or mica foil for measurements up to $750\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$. Sensor acts both as a precise heat source and resistance thermometer for recording the time dependent temperature increase. During measurement of solids, encapsulated Ni-sensor is sandwiched between two halves of the sample and constant precise pre-set heating power is released by the sensor, followed by 200 resistance recording in a pre-set measuring time, from which the relation between time and temperature change is established. Based on time dependent temperature increase of the sensor, thermal properties of the tested material are calculated.

In our study, we measured thermal properties of five important dental materials, used at the Department of Dental Prosthesis of the Medical Faculty, University of Ljubljana. Tested materials were Yttrium stabilized Zirconium ceramics (3Y-TZP), polymer material PMMA, 99 % pure titanium, titanium alloy TiAl6V4, and CoCr alloy. Thermal properties were measured in the temperature interval that teeth are most frequently exposed, $7\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$, $22\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$, and $45\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$.

2. EXPERIMENTAL WORK

Measurements and analysis of thermal properties of selected dental materials were performed in accordance with ISO 22007-2 standard in the Laboratory for measurements, Chair of Thermal Engineering, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering, University of Ljubljana (Figure 3).

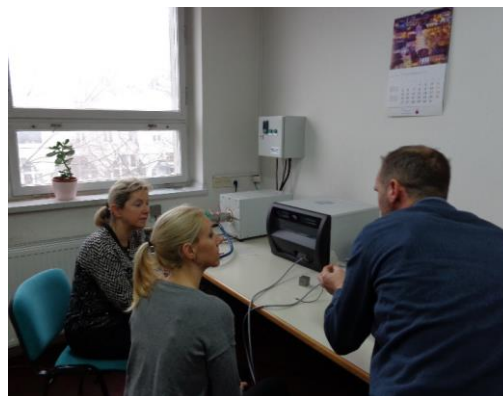


Figure 3. Measurements in the Laboratory for measurements, Chair of Thermal Engineering, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering, University of Ljubljana.

A few decades ago, yttria (Y_2O_3) stabilized zirconium oxide ceramics (3Y-TZP [3mol.% yttrium tetragonal zirconia polycrystals]), with significantly improved mechanical properties compared to silicate ceramics and glass ceramics was introduced into dental medicine. 3Y-TZP is available in dentistry for the fabrication of dental crowns and fixed partial dentures. Its flexural strength reaches 900 – 1200 MPa and fracture strength about 9 – 10 $\text{MPa(m)}^{1/2}$.

Dental crowns are processed either by soft machining of pre-sintered blocks followed by subsequent sintering, or by hard machining of fully sintered blocks. Thermal properties were measured on pre-sintered blocks, so an approximately 10 % higher values can be expected when fully sintered, due to density increase. Differences of thermal properties at various temperatures were below normal error ($\pm 2 \%$) of the measuring method.

Table 1. Thermal properties of 3Y-TZP pre-sintered blocks (temperature interval from 7 to 45 °C)

Measurement	Thermal conductivity [$\text{Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$]	Thermal diffusivity [mm^2s^{-1}]	Thermal capacity [$\text{MJm}^{-3}\text{K}^{-1}$]
Average	0.502207	0.345667	1.4532
SD	0.003668	0.005445	0.023825

The first use of polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA) as a dental material was for the fabrication of complete denture bases. Today's practise use multilayered CAD/CAM milling disks for long-term temporary restorations, short-term provisionals and as a prototype for implant restorations. Our tested PMMA material is intend for the production of temporary crowns and bridges or provisional units. Compared to 3Y-TZP ceramics, it is better insulating material. Measurements show no significant change of thermal properties in the temperature interval from 7 °C to 45 °C.

Table 2. Thermal properties of PMMA blocks (temperature interval from 7 to 45 °C)

Measurement	Thermal conductivity [$\text{Wm}^{-1}\text{K}^{-1}$]	Thermal diffusivity [mm^2s^{-1}]	Thermal capacity [$\text{MJm}^{-3}\text{K}^{-1}$]
Average	0.198583	0.111883	1.783583
SD	0.002878	0.008506	0.113532

Titanium and its alloys are used in dentistry because of their resistance to electrochemical decomposition, excellent compatibility with live tissues, easily combine with bone (osseointegration), are relatively light (4.61g/cm^3) and have high tensile (450 MPa) and yield (275 MPa) strength. Titanium forms a very persistent oxide layer on the surface, formed in a few nanoseconds. Because of this oxide layer, it is corrosion-resistant and biocompatible. It is used for manufacturing of dental implants, crowns, braces, bridges, partial prostheses and orthodontic wires. Commercially pure titanium (impurities < 1%) disks were measured in the temperature interval between 7 °C and 45 °C, and as expected, changes of thermal properties were negligible.

Table 3. Thermal properties of pure Ti disks (impurities < 1%, temperature interval form 7 °C to 45 °C)

Measurement	Thermal conductivity [Wm ⁻¹ K ⁻¹]	Thermal diffusivity [mm ² s ⁻¹]	Thermal capacity [MJm ⁻³ K ⁻¹]
Average	22.546	6.7196	3.36
SD	0.356573	0.265174	0.123366

TiAl6V4 (Grade 5: 6% Al, 4% V, 0.25% > Fe and 0.2% > O (bal. Titanium)) is the most commonly used titanium alloy in dentistry. It is significantly stronger ($R_m > 895$ MPa, $R_{p0.2} > 828$ MPa) than commercially pure titanium while having the same stiffness. This grade is an excellent combination of strength, corrosion resistance, weldability and machinability, and has good osseointegration properties. Alloying elements reduce thermal conductivity and diffusivity considerably compared to commercially pure titanium. In the temperature interval between 7 and 45 °C thermal properties can be considered as constant.

Table 4. Thermal properties of TiAl6V4 disks (temperature interval form 7 °C to 45 °C)

Measurement	Thermal conductivity [Wm ⁻¹ K ⁻¹]	Thermal diffusivity [mm ² s ⁻¹]	Thermal capacity [MJm ⁻³ K ⁻¹]
Average	6.668286	2.809286	2.375857
SD	0.051146	0.083763	0.073172

Co-Cr alloys exhibit material properties considered suitable for dental reconstructions, such as high tensile (900 - 1000 MPa) and yield (640 – 700 MPa) strength, high modulus of elasticity (> 200 GPa), and high corrosion resistance, and are the most common base-metal alternative for patients known to be allergic to nickel. They are relatively inexpensive compared to noble alloys and somewhat easier to manipulate than titanium alloys.

In dentistry, Co-Cr alloys are commonly used for the fabrication of metallic frameworks of removable partial dentures, as metallic substructures for the fabrication of porcelain-fused-to-metal restorations and implant frameworks. The increased worldwide interest in utilizing Co-Cr alloys for dental applications is related to their low cost, excellent biocompatibility and adequate mechanical properties. Chemical composition of tested sample is complex including 63% Co, 24% Cr, 8% W, 3% Mo, 1% Si, ≈1% Nb and trace elements < 0.1%. As with other samples, thermal properties can be considered as constant in measuring temperature interval.

Table 5. Thermal properties of CoCr dental alloy (temperature interval form 7 °C to 45 °C)

Measurement	Thermal conductivity [Wm ⁻¹ K ⁻¹]	Thermal diffusivity [mm ² s ⁻¹]	Thermal capacity [MJm ⁻³ K ⁻¹]
Average	10.735	2.82825	3.79775
SD	0.01118	0.063637	0.083431

3. CONCLUSIONS

Measurements and analysis of the thermal properties of selected characteristic dental materials were performed using the Hot Disk method on the Hot Disk TPS 2200 in accordance with ISO 22007-2 in the Laboratory for measurement of the Chair of Thermal Engineering, Department of Materials and Metallurgy, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering, University of Ljubljana.

The teeth and dental supplements are most often exposed to temperatures at an interval between 0 °C and 50 °C, which was the reason why we selected this temperature interval to perform our measurements. We found that for all dental materials there is no significant difference in thermal properties in this temperature interval and can be considered as constant. As expected, metallic materials transmit heat much faster than tooth structure, while ceramics have thermal properties similar to teeth.

With the performed measurements, we have completed the existing material quality certificates of dental materials with their thermal properties.

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