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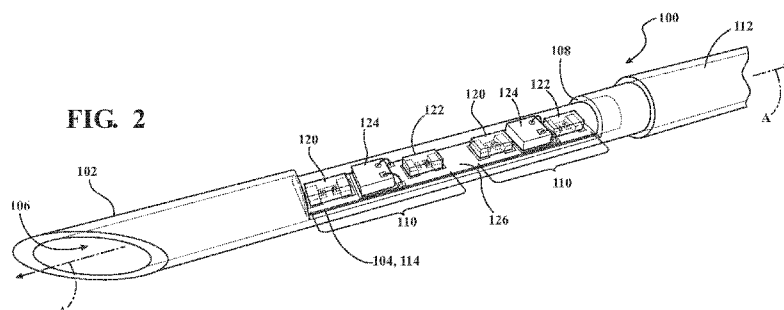
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(54) Title: SYSTEM FOR ANALYZING TISSUE



(57) Abstract: A system for analyzing tissue includes a platform and an optical sensing unit coupled to the platform. The optical sensing unit has a detector and a plurality of light sources surrounding and electrically isolated from the detector. The optical sensing units obtain optical data for tissue analysis.

SYSTEM FOR ANALYZING TISSUE**CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS**

[0001] The subject patent application claims priority to and all the advantages of U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 62/177,603, filed on March 19, 2015, the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety.

GOVERNMENT LICENSE RIGHTS

[0002] This invention was made with government support under R21EB018537 awarded by the National Institutes of Health. The government has certain rights in the invention.

FIELD OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0003] The present disclosure relates generally to tissue diagnostic tools, and more particularly, to a system for analyzing tissue.

BACKGROUND

[0004] Considerable advancements in optical diagnostics have been made in recent years for non-invasive, quantitative, and rapid analysis of tissue in a clinical setting. Numerous advancements have also been made in cell biology through the development of fluorescence-based analysis methods. Furthermore, biomedical studies (including studies involving cancer and other diseases) have been transformed through commercial technology for whole body animal imaging, such as, e.g. the Caliper Life Sciences IVIS imaging system. In clinical settings, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved optical technologies are typically employed, such as a pulse oximeter, a Philips BiliChek bilirubinometer, a DentalEZ Identafi oral cancer screening system, and a MELA Sciences MelaFind system for each melanoma detection.

[0005] For many clinical applications, optical technologies are not subject to a confined space, as the tissue being studied is readily accessible from outside of the body, such as in the oral cavity or the skin. Therefore, presently-developed technologies are typically large footprint instruments, such as robust and expansive spectroscopy/imaging systems that access tissue with remote fiber-optic probes. Remote fiber-optic probes are often employed in these techniques, because the probes are easy to use, are typically reliable, and enable remote sample sensing (i.e., sample sensing away from the equipment).

[0006] Needle-based clinical methodologies have also been used for tissue diagnostics, such as fine-needle aspiration for cancer detection (including breast, lung, prostate, and pancreatic cancer detection), as well as for pain management (including nerve block treatments). Two common approaches for needle-based tissue analysis include imaging and spectroscopy. Imaging through a hollow needle has also been used with the needle-based confocal imaging system, such as the Cellvizio available from Mauna Kea. However, there are limitations to needle-based imaging systems, such as a small field-of-view and the system is often complicated and time consuming for real-time quantitative image analysis. Spectroscopy may be employed for remote tissue sensing through hollow needles. However, spectroscopy systems utilizing fiber-optic probes are typically limited, e.g., in terms of their rigidity, lack of volumetric mapping, and/or constrained center-to-center spacing between the optic source and detector(s). Furthermore, given the small inner diameter of the hollow needles, current needle-based optical sensing techniques often employ fiber-optic probes for light delivery and detection. Critical limitations to such approaches

include the relative rigidity of the fiber-optic probes, such as the inability to undergo tight bends, and the inability of the fiber-optic probes to enable volumetric mapping.

[0007] Pancreatic adenocarcinoma (i.e., pancreatic cancer) is one of the leading causes of cancer death in the United States. Among the estimated 42,000 patients diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in the United States in 2014, about 7% of these patients were diagnosed at an early stage. Pancreatic cancer also has the highest mortality rate of any solid tumor, with a five-year survival rate of just 5%. Among the estimated 42,000 patients diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in the United States in 2014, those with advanced stage metastatic disease have a five-year survival rate of about 1.8%, while those with advanced stage localized regional disease (i.e., where the tumor is not amenable to surgical removal, typically due to involvement of critical blood vessels) have a five-year survival rate of about 8%. Further, the five-year survival rate of patients with surgically resectable (or potentially resectable after neoadjuvant therapy) disease is about 20%.

[0008] Current diagnostic methods, including computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and endoscopic ultrasound (EUS), have not yet provided accurate diagnosis during the early stage of pancreatic cancer, such as by failing to identify small lesions or accurately differentiating masses as either adenocarcinoma or pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas). Further, identifying and utilizing molecular markers has not been helpful with solving the foregoing problem(s).

[0009] A key challenge for pancreatic cancer detection is to provide an accurate tissue diagnosis that allows for rapid institution of therapy, such as surgery for resectable tumors, neoadjuvant for borderline resectable disease, or definitive chemoradiotherapy with localized unresectable disease. Pretreatment tissue diagnosis

is typically mandatory for patients considered for therapy, and the currently preferred modality for obtaining a tissue diagnosis is endoscopic ultrasound-guided fine-needle aspiration (EUS-FNA). However, EUS-FNA has limitations. For example, challenges of obtaining accurate characterization of suspect pancreatic neoplasia may occur due to the relative inaccessibility of the pancreas given its anatomical location, the non-specific nature of symptoms, and/or the characteristic stromal reaction with intense fibrosis associated with adenocarcinoma and chronic pancreatitis. These factors significantly complicate attempts to differentiate the similar appearing lesions by imaging, even with cytological evaluation of fine-needle aspirates. Finding small nests of tumor cells in an area of fibrosis is one challenge, and differentiating well-differentiated cancers from normal is another challenge.

[0010] Endoscopic ultrasound (EUS) is an imaging modality that provides access to the pancreas for tissue evaluation, and is a current diagnostic procedure for tissue acquisition in suspect pancreatic cancer. Figure 1 is a clinical image from a pancreatic EUS-FNA. The image shown in Figure 1 lacks specific contrast afforded by ultrasound sensing alone, and the pancreatic mass is difficult to distinguish. Further, classification of the mass often relies on cytology, which is typically non-diagnostic. While EUS imaging remains the most sensitive test to identify a pancreatic mass, determining that the mass is benign or malignant remains problematic due to reliance on EUS-guided fine needle aspiration sampling. As mentioned above, however, FNA cytology samples are typically non-diagnostic leading to a negative predictive value of 50 to 70%, given the high pre-test likelihood for cancer among the patients referred for the procedure. For such patients with a strong clinical suspicion of pancreatic cancer, laparotomy to obtain tissue for those

with unresectable disease or an unnecessary resection for those with a resectable tumor may be performed.

[0011] The failure of accurate tissue characterization often causes patients to undergo major surgery to reveal only a benign or inflammatory disease on pathologic examination. The mortality of pancreatic surgery is from 2 to 5% in experienced centers, with major morbidity of 20 to 25%. In addition, when chronic pancreatitis was found to be present, EUS-FNA detected pancreatic adenocarcinoma with a sensitivity of just 54% and many studies have concluded that EUS-FNA was insufficient to rule out malignancy.

[0012] Additionally, studies have shown that endoscopic ultrasound compatible optoelectronic sensing technology provides diagnostic information to supplement cytology-based diagnosis and overcomes the limitations of cytology-based diagnosis, such as by providing independent diagnosis of a pancreatic abnormality or by guiding an endoscopist performing the EUS to select the most likely areas to obtain diagnostically relevant cytological material. Studies have also shown that optical sensing can provide a new source of contrast for the detection of pancreatic cancer.

[0013] Due, at least in part, to the challenges associated with accessing the pancreas, relatively little research in biomedical optics has been conducted in the human pancreas. Field effect analysis of duodenal tissues adjacent the pancreas and limited optical coherence tomography studies in the pancreas also do not address the targeted clinical problem. Further, recent studies have established feasibility for needle-based confocal laser endomicroscopy, as diagnostic utility has been considered elusive even in large clinical studies.

[0014] For at least the reasons set forth above, there is an opportunity to develop an improved tool and technique for tissue diagnostics, particularly for diagnosing pancreatic cancer.

SUMMARY

[0015] One embodiment of the present disclosure includes a system for analyzing tissue includes a platform and an optical sensing unit coupled to the platform. The optical sensing unit has a detector and a plurality of light sources surrounding and electrically isolated from the detector. The optical sensing units obtain optical data for tissue analysis.

[0016] Another embodiment of the present disclosure includes a system for analyzing tissue comprising a tissue aspiration needle defining a cavity having an opening and a microprobe disposed within the cavity and carried by the tissue aspiration needle. The microprobe defines a longitudinal axis and has a platform and a plurality of optical sensing units coupled to the platform and linearly arranged along the longitudinal axis. The optical sensing units are exposed through the opening of the cavity. Each of the sensing units has first and second light sources and a detector arranged between and electrically isolated from the first and second light sources. The plurality of sensing units obtains optical data substantially simultaneously for analyzing the tissue.

[0017] Another embodiment of the present disclosure includes a method of analyzing tissue utilizing a system comprising a platform and an optical sensing unit coupled to the platform. The optical sensing unit has a detector and a plurality of light sources surrounding and electrically isolated from the detector. The method comprises the steps of directing a light from the light sources toward the tissue, obtaining optical

data while the light is being directed toward the tissue, and utilizing the optical data to analyze the tissue.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0018] Advantages of the present disclosure will be readily appreciated as the same becomes better understood by reference to the following detailed description when considered in connection with the accompanying drawings. It is to be understood that the drawings are purely illustrative and the drawings are not necessarily drawn to scale.

[0019] Figure 1 is a clinical image from a pancreatic endoscopic ultrasound-guided fine-needle aspiration showing a pancreatic mass.

[0020] Figure 2 is a semi-schematic perspective view of an embodiment of a system for analyzing tissue including a microprobe carried by a tissue aspiration needle.

[0021] Figure 3 is an enlarged semi-schematic perspective view of an embodiment of a sensing unit of the microprobe of the system shown in Figure 2.

[0022] Figure 4 is a semi-schematic perspective view of another embodiment of a sensing unit.

[0023] Figure 5A is a graph showing the average reflectance spectra showing the differences between normal tissues, tissues with chronic pancreatitis, and tissues with pancreatic adenocarcinoma.

[0024] Figure 5B is a graph showing previously reported analysis metrics utilizing mathematical algorithms for inpatient correlation classified cancerous from benign pancreatic tissues with a sensitivity of about 90.6% and specificity of about 84.9%.

[0025] Figure 5C is a graph showing the ratio of summed intensities within each wavelength band distinguished among normal tissues, tissues with chronic pancreatitis, and tissues with pancreatic adenocarcinoma.

[0026] Figure 5D is a graph showing the averaged fluorescence spectra for normal tissues, tissues with chronic pancreatitis, and tissues with pancreatic adenocarcinoma.

[0027] Figure 5E is a graph showing analysis metrics utilizing steady state fluorescence for intrapatient correlation classified cancerous from benign pancreatic tissues with a sensitivity of about 90.6% and specificity of about 78.1%.

[0028] Figure 5F is a graph showing the time-resolved fluorescence for normal tissues, tissues with chronic pancreatitis, and tissues with pancreatic adenocarcinoma.

[0029] Figure 6 is a semi-schematic perspective view of another embodiment of the system for analyzing tissue, where the aspiration needle has a plurality of openings.

[0030] Figure 7 is a semi-schematic side view of another embodiment of the system for analyzing tissue, where the microprobe has a plurality of optical sensing units coupled to one of the surfaces of the microprobe.

[0031] Figure 8 is a semi-schematic side view of another embodiment of the system for analyzing tissue, where the microprobe has a plurality of optical sensing units coupled to both of the opposing surfaces of the microprobe.

[0032] Figure 9 illustrates an example of a packaged μ LED for the first and second light sources of the optical sensing unit.

[0033] Figure 10 illustrates an example of a phototransistor for the detector of the optical sensing unit.

[0034] Figure 11 illustrates an embodiment of the system for analyzing tissue including a needle microprobe connected to a printed circuit board, a control electronics box, and a computer including graphic user interface (GUI) software.

[0035] Figure 12 illustrates an example of a fabrication process for a first prototype board for the microprobe.

[0036] Figure 13 illustrates an example of a process for assembling the first prototype board of the optoelectronic microprobe.

[0037] Figure 14 illustrates an assembled prototype board for the optoelectronic microprobe.

[0038] Figure 15A is an enlarged view of the bonded light sources (μ LED's) and detector of the assembled prototype board for the optoelectronic microprobe.

[0039] Figure 15B is an enlarged view of the epoxy encapsulation of the components of the assembled prototype board for the optoelectronic microprobe.

[0040] Figure 16 illustrates another example of a fabrication process for a second prototype board for the microprobe.

[0041] Figure 17 is a semi-schematic plan view of another embodiment of a system for analyzing tissue.

[0042] Figure 18 is a graph showing a photon tissue interaction (PTI) model fit with 176 and 4 wavelengths, respectively, for the same measured spectrum.

[0043] Figure 19 is a table (Table 1) of the comparison of extracted parameters by the PTI model using 176 wavelengths and 4 wavelengths.

[0044] Figure 20 is a flow diagram illustrating an optical data analysis algorithm.

[0045] Figure 21A is a photograph showing reflectance sensing on tissue simulating phantoms at 460 nm.

[0046] Figure 21B is a photograph showing reflectance sensing on tissue simulating phantoms at and (b) 650 nm.

[0047] Figure 22 is a photograph showing an Erlanger Active Simulator for Interventional Endoscopy (EASIE™) for use in testing the mechanical performance of the optical microprobe.

[0048] Figure 23 is a graph illustrating a time-domain fluorescence sensing method without a short-period gating.

[0049] Figure 24A is a schematic illustration of a fluorescence measurements setup with a long pass filter with 488 nm cutting wavelength set up closely to the detector so that just light passed the long pass filter can be detected by the detector.

[0050] Figure 24B is a photograph illustrating a fluorescence measurements setup with a long pass filter.

[0051] Figures 25A-25D are graphs showing V_f - I_f curves of a bonded blue LED depending on different bonding temperatures (Figure 25A), measured optical power versus the forward current on three different samples (Figure 25B), emission spectrum depending on V_f (Figure 25C), and zoomed-in spectrum at the peak emission wavelength (Figure 25D).

[0052] Figures 26A-26D are graphs showing V_f - I_f curves of a bonded red LED before and after second eutectic bonding (Figure 26A), measured optical power versus the forward current on three different samples (Figure 26B), emission spectrum depending on V_f (Figure 26C), and zoomed-in spectrum at the peak emission wavelength (Figure 26D).

[0053] Figures 27A-27B are graphs of the voltages at a trans-impedance amplifier output according to different forward currents on blue LEDs (Figure 27A) and red LEDs (Figure 27B).

[0054] Figure 28A is a photograph showing a rhodamine B fluorescence emission excited by a blue LED.

[0055] Figure 28B is an oscilloscope screenshot showing the voltage at the trans-impedance amplifier output increasing when a cuvette containing 10 μM of rhodamine B solution is placed between the blue LED and the photodiode.

[0056] Figure 28C is a graph showing detection voltages corresponding to different forward currents on the blue LED, and that fluorescence emission increases linearly to the excitation intensity.

[0057] Figures 29A-29C are photographs showing a submerged microprobe in deionized (DI) water emitting blue light (Figure 29A) and scattered LED light distribution in turbid media (Figures 29B and 29C).

[0058] Figure 30 is a photograph showing solid tissue phantoms made with a base of agarose gel in deionized water, a 1 μm diameter polystyrene microsphere is added with a ratio of 1:5 (microsphere : deionized water), and 0.465 mg/mL of hemoglobin is added to make 5 μM to 30 μM (left to right) by a step size of 5 μM .

[0059] Figure 31A is a graph showing a measured relative reflectance using a prototyped optoelectronic microprobe and the Reflectance and Fluorescence Lifetime Spectrometer (RFLS), where the solid lines represent wavelength-resolved reflectance spectra measured by the RFLS on six phantoms. From qualitative comparison with reflectance spectra obtained from excised human pancreatic tissues, the manufactured tissue phantoms shown are properly designed to mimic optical properties of human

pancreatic tissue. Dots at wavelength of 460 nm and 650 nm indicate the microprobe readings of six phantoms. The microprobe readings are matched with the RFLS spectrum at those wavelengths for all six phantoms.

[0060] Figures 31B and 31C are graphs showing that the proposed ratio metric from both devices has a consistently decreasing trend as the hemoglobin concentration increases (Figure 31B), where the ratios from the microprobe are lower than the one from the RFLS for all six phantoms, which could be attributed to different source-detection geometry (including angular sensitivity of PD and emission pattern of LED) even with the same separation (Figure 31C).

[0061] Figure 32 illustrates an assembled microprobe containing a dual sensing unit for simultaneous multi-site sensing, with a center-to-center spacing between each sensing unit of about 1 mm, ensuring no cross-talk during the sensing.

[0062] Figure 33 illustrates a side view propagation of two wavelengths in a pancreatic tissue model.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0063] Referring to the figures, wherein like numerals indicate corresponding parts throughout the several views, embodiments of a system 100, 200 for analyzing tissue are shown in the figures and described in detail below.

[0064] In one embodiment shown, for example, in Figures 2-4 and 6-8, the system 100 includes a tissue aspiration needle 102 and a microprobe 104 carried by the needle 102. The microprobe 104 utilizes EUS-compatible optoelectronic sensing technology for obtaining diagnostic information of tissue, such as pancreatic tissue. For instance, the microprobe 104 utilizes the optoelectronic sensing technology to obtain optical spectroscopy data of fresh pancreatic tissue. Typically, the optical

spectroscopy data is obtained utilizing the microprobe 104 during a pancreatic EUS-FNA procedure. The optical spectroscopy data may be used in a corresponding pancreatic tissue classification algorithm to differentiate between malignant and non-malignant pancreatic tissues. Utilizing the EUS-compatible optoelectronic sensing technology, the optical data obtained by the system 100 can also be used to provide additional diagnostic information to supplement cytology-based diagnosis. In some instances, the EUS-compatible optoelectronic sensing technology can be used to overcome certain limitations of cytology-based diagnosis, such as by providing independent diagnosis of the pancreatic abnormality or by guiding the endoscopist performing the procedure to select the most likely areas to obtain diagnostically relevant cytological material.

[0065] Furthermore, the microprobe 104 is robust, compact, and enables volumetric mapping of the tissue. Accordingly, the microprobe 104 can be used to interrogate a larger volume of tissue compared to current fine-needle aspiration procedures, which can measure just a single tissue site. The microprobe 104 of the system 100, again which utilizes optoelectronic sensing technology, can also advantageously provide volumetric mapping of multiple tissue sites and enhance accuracy of the diagnosis. For example, Figures 4A through 4F illustrate results from a clinical pilot study from freshly-excised pancreatic tissue from eighteen patients. Figure 5A shows that the averaged reflectance spectra revealed significant differences between normal, chronic pancreatitis, and pancreatic adenocarcinoma. Figure 5B shows that the classification algorithm accounting for inpatient correlation distinguished cancerous from benign pancreatic tissues with a sensitivity of 90.6% and a specificity of 84.9%. Figure 5C shows the ratio of summed intensities within each wavelength band accurately

distinguished among the three most prevalent pancreatic tissues. Figure 5D shows an averaged fluorescence spectrum, which also reveals significant differences between normal, chronic pancreatitis, and pancreatic adenocarcinoma. Figure 5E shows analysis metrics using steady-state fluorescence also classified cancerous from benign pancreatic adenocarcinoma. Figure 5F shows that time-resolved fluorescence reveals significant differences between normal chronic pancreatitis and pancreatic adenocarcinoma. Adding parameters related fluorescence lifetime classification algorithm classified adenocarcinoma from benign tissues with sensitivity of 92.3% and specificity of 82.9%, which shows that time-resolved fluorescence sensing has the potential to accurately distinguish pancreatic cancer from benign tissues.

[0066] In addition to the above, the microprobe 104 can be used to accurately diagnose three common types of pancreatic tissues – normal tissue, chronic pancreatitis, and adenocarcinoma. Further, the system 100 is significantly smaller than other optical-fiber-based systems, and the system 100 can have comparable or even superior optical performance than other optical-fiber-based systems. The system 100 is also usable for non-invasive diagnostics (e.g., the microprobe can be used to view the tissue, rather than take the tissue) and is suitable and/or compatible with EUS-FNA procedures. These features render the system 100 as being compatible with current clinical standard-of-care procedures in pancreatic cancer staging, as well as in other current clinical standard-of-care procedures of lung, prostate, and breast cancer staging.

The System 100

[0067] Embodiments of the system 100 are described below with reference to Figures 2-4 and 6-8. As shown, the system 100 includes a platform 114 and an optical

sensing unit 110 coupled to the platform 114. In this embodiment, the platform 114 may be coupled to or be part of a stylet. As shown, the platform 114 is a groove defined within the stylet. The combination of the platform 114 (and stylet) and optical sensing unit 100 in this embodiment is referred to as a microprobe 104. In an example, the microprobe 104 has a length and defines a longitudinal axis A.

[0068] As mentioned above, the system 100 for analyzing tissue comprises a tissue aspiration needle 102 and a microprobe 104 carried by the tissue aspiration needle 102. In an embodiment, the tissue aspiration needle 102 may be a hollow needle. For example, the tissue aspiration needle 102 defines a cavity 106 having an opening 108. As shown, the microprobe 104 may be inserted within the cavity 106 of the hollow tissue aspiration needle 102. As a non-limiting example, the needle 102 may be a EUS-FNA aspiration needle. Non-limiting examples of suitable aspiration needles include 19 gauge hollow needles, 22 gauge hollow needles, and 25 gauge hollow needles. A non-limiting example of suitable a needle is a hollow needle with an inner diameter of from 0.50 to 1.00 mm. In another non-limiting example, the needle 102 is a 19 gauge hollow needle with an inner diameter of from 0.65 to 0.85 mm. In one particular non-limiting example, the needle 102 is a 19 gauge hollow needle having a 0.68 mm (i.e., 680 μ m) inner diameter. In yet another particular non-limiting example, the needle 102 is a 19 gauge hollow needle having a 0.85 mm (i.e., 850 μ m) inner diameter. Another non-limiting example of a suitable needle is a 22 gauge hollow needle having a 0.45 to 0.65 mm inner diameter. It is to be understood that any EUS-FNA suitable hollow aspiration needle may be used having any suitable gauge and/or inner diameter. In addition, the hollow aspiration needle may have any suitable length. In an example, the needle 102 is about 5 to 8 cm in length. One non-

limiting example of a EUS-FNA suitable hollow aspiration needle is a Cook Medical EchoTip® ProCore™ biopsy needle, available from Cook Medical Inc. (Bloomington, IN).

[0069] As mentioned above, the aspiration needle 102 also includes an opening or window 108. The opening 108 is formed in the body of the needle 102 and extends partially along the length of the needle 102. The opening 108 typically aligns with the optical sensing unit(s) 110 disposed on the microprobe 104 to enable quasi-spectral sensing. In an embodiment shown in Figure 2, the needle 102 includes a single opening 108 aligned with the optical sensing unit(s) 110 of the microprobe 104. In instances where the microprobe has a plurality of optical sensing units 110, the needle 102 may have multiple openings 108, with each opening 108 being aligned with a respective one of the optical sensing units 110. This is shown, for example, in Figure 6.

[0070] The opening 108 may have any suitable length and width. In instances where the needle 102 has a single opening 108, the opening 108 is typically large enough to expose the entire optical sensing unit 110 (such as where the microprobe 104 has a single optical sensing unit 110). For instance, for an optical sensing unit 110 having a length of about 2 mm, the opening 108 may have a length of at least 2 mm. Alternatively, when the needle 102 may have a single opening 108, the opening 108 may be large enough to expose all of the optical sensing units 110 (such as where the microprobe 104 has multiple optical sensing units 110). In instances where the needle 102 has multiple openings 108, each opening 108 is typically large enough to expose the respective optical sensing unit 110 of the microprobe 104. In yet another embodiment, the needle 102 may have multiple openings 108, where each opening

108 is large enough to expose two or more optical sensing units 110. For example, the needle 102 may have two openings 108 and the microprobe 104 may have four optical sensing units 110, and each opening 108 defined in the needle 102 may be large enough to expose two of the optical sensing units 110.

[0071] In an embodiment, the opening 108 has a length of from about 0.5 to 20 mm. In another embodiment, the opening 108 has a length of from about 1 to 10 mm. In yet another embodiment, the opening 108 has a length of from about 3.5 to 6.5 mm. Further, the width of the opening 108 may be defined by the curve of the round or circular needle 102. In one embodiment, the width of the opening 108 may be half of the circumference of body of the needle 102. In yet another embodiment, the width of the opening may be less than half of the circumference of the body of the needle 102.

[0072] In an embodiment, the system 100 further includes a protective sheath 112 that is movable or slidable along the length of the needle 102. The sheath 112 covers the surface of the needle 102, including the opening(s) 108. In use, the protective sheath 112 may be removed (such as by moving or sliding the sheath 112 along the length of the needle 102) to expose the optoelectronics (i.e., the optical sensing unit(s) 110) of the microprobe 104. The microprobe 104 can then be used for optical sensing and needle aspiration.

[0073] As previously mentioned, the microprobe 104 may have a single optical sensing unit 110 or a plurality of optical sensing units 110. In an embodiment, the plurality of optical sensing units 110 includes at least two optical sensing units 110. In another embodiment, the plurality of optical sensing units 110 includes from two to twenty optical sensing units 110.

[0074] In an embodiment, the microprobe 104 has first 116 and second 118 opposing surfaces, and the single optical sensing unit 110 may be coupled to one of the first 116 or second 118 opposing surfaces. In instances where the microprobe 104 has multiple optical sensing units 110, all of the optical sensing units 110 may be arranged on the first 116 or second 118 opposing surfaces of the microprobe 104. As shown in Figure 7, for example, the microprobe 104 has three optical sensing units 110, all of which are coupled to the first surface 116 of the microprobe 104. As also shown in Figure 7, the plurality of optical sensing units 110 are linearly arranged on the first surface 116 and along the longitudinal axis A of the microprobe 104.

[0075] In another embodiment, the microprobe 104 includes at least one optical sensing unit 110 coupled to each of the first 116 and second 118 opposing surfaces. As shown in Figure 8, for example, the microprobe 104 has six optical sensing units 110, with three of the optical sensing units 110 coupled to the first surface 116 of the microprobe 104 and the remaining three optical sensing units 110 coupled to the second surface 118 of the microprobe 104. As also shown in Figure 8, the three optical sensing units 110 are linearly arranged on the first surface 116 of the microprobe 104, and the remaining three optical sensing units 110 are linearly arranged on the second surface 116 of the microprobe 104. It is to be understood that the microprobe 104 may have any number of optical sensing units 110 on one or more surfaces 116, 118 of the microprobe 104. It is further to be understood that the number of optical sensing units 110 coupled to the first surface 116 of the microprobe 104 can be the same or different than the number of optical sensing units 110 coupled to the second surface 118 of the microprobe 104. With multiple optical sensing units 110 linearly arranged along the longitudinal axis A, the microprobe 104 has

volumetric mapping capabilities with linear translation. Further, with multiple sensing units 110, the microprobe 104 can assess or interrogate tissue over an extending tissue volume.

[0076] Details of the optical sensing unit 110 will now be described at least with reference to Figures 2-4. In an embodiment, the optical sensing unit 110 includes at least one first light source 120 and at least one second light source 122, and the detector 124 is disposed between the first 120 and second 122 light sources. In a non-limiting example shown in Figures 2 and 3, the optical sensing unit 110 has a detector 124 arranged between and electrically isolated from a first light source 120 and a second light source 122. In another non-limiting example as shown in Figure 4, the optical sensing unit 110 has a detector 124 arranged between and electrically isolated from a plurality of first light sources 120 and a plurality of second light sources 122. In the example shown in Figure 4, the first light sources 120 are arranged in parallel at one side of the detector 124, and the second light sources 122 are arranged in parallel at the opposing side of the detector 124. It is to be understood that the optical sensing unit 110 can have any number of first 120 and second 122 light sources, and the light sources 120 and 122 can be arranged in any desirable manner (such as in parallel, aligned along the longitudinal axis A, scattered, etc.) at their respective sides of the detector 124.

[0077] The first 120 and second 122 light sources are chosen from any suitable optical/light source having sufficient power (e.g., up to about 0.05W) at diagnostically-relevant wavelengths and relatively low power consumption. Non-limiting examples of diagnostically-relevant wavelengths include wavelength range for ultraviolet light, wavelength range for visible light, wavelength range for near-

infrared light, and wavelength range for infrared light. For sensing, the optical/light sources 120, 122 can each operate up to about 0.05W without damaging the tissue. In a non-limiting example, the optical power range of the optical/light sources 120, 122 is from about 1 to 50 mW. One non-limiting example of a suitable light source for the first 120 and second 122 light sources is a packaged μ LED or surface mounted LED, such as a Rohm PicoLED as illustrated in Figure 9. Another non-limiting example of a suitable light source for the first 120 and second 122 light sources is a die-level chip LED, either packaged or non-packaged. Yet another non-limiting example of a suitable light source for the first 120 and second 122 light sources is a small-sized laser diode. In an embodiment, each of the first 120 and second 122 light sources may be a μ LED emitting light within the visible spectrum. In another embodiment, the first light source 120 may be a μ LED emitting a red light and the second light source 122 may be a μ LED emitting a blue light. In yet another embodiment, the first light source 120 may be a μ LED emitting light at a wavelength of from 600 to 700 nm, and the second light source 122 may be a μ LED emitting light at a wavelength of from 400 to 500 nm. While the present embodiment has been described as the first light source 120 emitting a red light and the second light source 122 emitting a blue light, it is to be understood that the light sources 120, 122 can be reversed. Said differently, in another embodiment, the first light source 120 can emit a blue light while the second light source 122 can emit a red light.

[0078] Additionally, with multiple optical sensing units 110, the arrangement of the first and second light sources 120, 122 can be consistent with each sensing unit 110 (e.g., the first light source 120 emits a red light while the second light source 122 emits a blue light) or can be random (e.g. the first light source 120 emits a red light in

one or more of the optical sensing units 110, while the first light source 120 emits a blue light in the remaining optical sensing unit(s) 110). Typically, the first 120 and second 122 light sources have wavelengths centered on 630 nm and 470 nm, respectively, which provides optical data in two diagnostic regimes to successfully differentiate normal from adenocarcinoma tissues. For instance, the optical data includes a reflectance intensity, and an increase in the reflectance intensity at about 470 nm is typically attributed to an increase in cell nuclei diameter which typically increases during cancer formation. Further, a reflectance intensity at about 630 nm typically serves as a reference intensity that is independent of local tissue absorption and scattering properties.

[0079] The detector 124 is chosen from any suitable detector, such as a photodiode (such as an Avalanche photodiode (APD)), a photodetector, a phototransistor, and a silicon photomultiplier (SIPM). The detector 124 has a high radiant detection efficiency (such as about 0.77 mA/mW/cm²) and adequate sensitivity for wavelengths of light within the visible spectrum. In an embodiment, the detector 124 is a phototransistor, such as a Vishay T1090P available from Vishay Intertechnology (Malvern, PA), as illustrated in Figure 10. In an embodiment, the detector 124 has a peak spectroscopic sensitivity of from about 850 to 900 nm.

[0080] As shown at least in Figures 2-4 and 6-8, each optical sensing unit 110 includes the detector 124 arranged between from the first 120 and second 122 light sources. Further, the detector 124 is electrically isolated from (i.e., is spaced from or does not touch) the first 120 and second 122 light sources. Further, the first 120 and second 122 light sources are arranged on opposing sides of the detector 124. The first 120 and second 122 light sources (with the detector 124 arranged between them) are

separated by a distance of from about 0.4 to 5 mm, measured from the center of the first light source 120 to the center of the second light source 122 (i.e., $D_1 + D_2$ shown in Figure 3, for example). This distance is also referred to as a center-to-center spacing or source-detector separation (SDS). By controlling the center-to-center spacing or source-detector separation, one can also control a penetration depth of light. In another embodiment, the center-to-center spacing between the first 120 and second 122 light sources is from about 1 to 3 mm. In yet another embodiment, the center-to-center spacing between the first 120 and second 122 light sources is about 2 mm.

[0081] In an embodiment, the separation between the detector 124 and the first light source 120 may be substantially the same as the separation between the detector 124 and the second light source 122. With a substantially same separation between the detector 124 and each of the first 120 and second 122 light sources, optical measurements can be obtained at substantially the same penetration depths for different wavelengths. It is to be understood, however, that the separation between the detector 124 and each of the first 120 and second 122 light sources can be different depending, at least in part, on how optical measurements are chosen to be made.

[0082] In a non-limiting example, the size of each of the light sources 120, 122 and the detector 124 can be up to about 700 μ m. In another non-limiting example, the size of each of the light sources 120, 122 and the detector 124 can be from about 100 to 700 μ m.

[0083] In an embodiment, and as shown, e.g., in Figure 24A, the system 100 further includes at least one filter 140 adjacent to the detector 124. In a non-limiting

example, the filter 140 is a long pass filter. The filter 140 is designed to cut the wavelength of light, and is usable for measuring fluorescence of the interrogated tissue.

[0084] In an embodiment, and as shown at least in Figures 2 and 3, the system 100 further includes a microfabricated printed circuit board 126 disposed on the platform 114, and the sensing unit(s) 110 is/are directly coupled to the printed circuit board 126. In instances where the system 100 includes optical sensing unit(s) 110 coupled to the first surface 116, the system 100 would further include a printed circuit board 126 coupled to the platform 114 and the optical sensing unit(s) 110 would be coupled to the printed circuit board 126. In instances where the system 100 also includes optical sensing unit(s) 110 coupled to the second surface 118, then the system 100 would further include another printed circuit board 126 coupled to the second surface 118 and the optical sensing unit(s) 110 would be coupled to the printed circuit board 126. The system 100 may also include wires and/or connections to connect the microprobe 104 to external device(s), such as a controller, an optical data reader, a power supply, and/or the like. Alternatively, and in an embodiment, the microprobe 104 can operate on battery power and transmit data via a wireless connection. Without physical wiring, there is typically easier access to the target tissue and more freedom to move around the subject during a procedure.

[0085] Wireless transmission of power and data can address potential problems of long wire connection in the system 100 (such as, e.g., resistance increase, failure, infection and manufacturing cost). A radio frequency (RF) telemetry circuit can be integrated in a CMOS process on a chip that fits into the hollow needle 102. For instance, for a 19 gauge needle, the chip size can be 0.8 mm × up to few millimeters

(w × l). The telemetry circuit may include a voltage regulator for power conversion, clock generator, demodulator, pre-amplifier, analog-digital converter and transmitter. An antenna in the telemetry chip integrated with the system 100 may receive both power and data via an inductive link from an external transmitter unit. The circuit generates power from radio frequency (RF) carrier signals, demodulates the control data and produces a clock signal to operate the electronics. The control circuit drives the light sources 120, 122 (LED's) and the signal measured by the detector 124 in the optical sensing unit 110 is pre-amplified, digitized and transmitted back to the outside through a wireless link. Besides the electromagnetic RF, infrared or acoustic energy can be used to implement wireless communication.

[0086] The system 100 may also be coupled to a computer 128 as shown in Figure 11, which has a memory for storing an application including computer-readable instructions for utilizing the optical data obtained by the system 100 to obtain factors of the interrogated tissue. As also shown in Figure 11, the system 100 includes a control electronics box 130 and the computer 128 with a graphic user interface (GUI). Figure 11 also shows the circuit board 126, which is external to the microprobe 104. This setup was used to test the microprobe 104 and circuit board 126 *ex vivo*. Further, wires 132 commercialized for neural recording may be used to connect the microprobe 104 to the electronics box 130. A single USB cable can be used to supply DC power and transmit commands to the electronic box 130, and can be used to transmit data from the microprobe 104 to the electronic box 130 and to the computer 128. Upon receiving the optical data from the microprobe 104, the application resident on the computer 128 may be used to generate factors for clinical evaluation

of the interrogated tissue. Further details of the application and how utilizing the optical data obtained from the system 100 is described below.

Fabrication of a First Prototype Board for the System 100

[0087] Referring now to Figure 12, a prototype board for the system 100 may be fabricated with known microfabrication techniques to form silicon-based neural probes. Further, the system 100, particularly the microprobe 104 may be fabricated on a silicon-on-insulator (SOI) wafer with electrical isolation. For example, the microprobe 104 may be fabricated on a silicon wafer with 500 μm thickness with a 2 μm thick oxide layer on top for insulation. As shown in Figure 12, in step a), Cr/Au may be patterned by a lift-off process for pad contacts for the light sources 120, 122 and the detector 124, and interconnections to external electrodes. During the lift-off process, a photoresist may be spin-coated and patterned by photolithography, as shown in step b). In step c), Cr/Au (30/200 nm) may be deposited onto the patterned photoresist by an electron beam evaporator. Then during step d), the photoresist with undesired Au/Cr layer may be lifted away to leave the Cr/Au pattern.

[0088] As shown in step e) of Figure 12, indium (In)-Au eutectic bonding may be used to bond the bottom side (i.e., the Au side) of the first light source 120 and the detector 124. Accordingly, indium pads may be defined within the Cr/Au pattern by a second lift-off process. In step e), to pattern thick (e.g., 6 μm) indium pads, a lift-off resist may be coated as an under-cut layer in a bi-layer lift-off process. In step f), the photoresist may be coated onto the lift-off resist and the photoresist and lift-off resist may be developed by photolithography. In steps g) and h), a lift-off process following by soaking the device in a positive red stripper at about 85°C for about 20 minutes and sonication until the pattern was completely defined.

Assembly of the System 100 from the First Prototype

[0089] A non-limiting example of a method for assembling the system 100 is described below with reference to Figure 13 (i.e., Figures 12a-c). As shown in Figure 13, prior to assembly, and as shown in step a), the method includes rinsing the fabricated bare board by immersing the board into acetone for about 10 minutes and then immersing the board in isopropyl alcohol for about 5 minutes. As shown in step b) in Figure 13, the method further includes In-Au eutectic bonding by employing customized recipes to bond the bottom side of the detector 124 (PD) and the first light source 120 (Red LED) onto the defined indium pads. A temperature profile may be programmed to provide the optimal temperature in a rapid thermal process tool (e.g., Jetfirst-100, Jipelec, Montpellier, France). Au-In bonding may be provoked by maintaining a temperature of about 250°C for about 5 minutes. Further, since the bottom side metal of the second light source 122 (blue LED) die (e.g., 460DA3547, Cree, Durham NC) is an Au-Sn alloy (solder), which is a eutectic alloy, the temperature may be raised up to about 280°C in 5 seconds based on a recommended flux eutectic reflow process. Higher temperatures (e.g., 290°C and 300°C) may be utilized to find an optimal condition. It is to be understood that once eutectic bonding is formed between the Au and In, higher temperature for Au-Sn eutectic bonding (e.g., about 280°C) than the eutectic temperature of In-Au (e.g., 250°C) does not affect the bonding status.

[0090] The method further includes wire-bonding the cathode pad on the top of the detector 124 (photodiode) and the first light source 120 (Red LED) to the interconnections at the bottom of the board via, e.g., 0.007 inch Au wire. Optically transparent epoxy (e.g., NOR-61, Norland, Cranbury, NJ) may be used to encapsulate

the bonded components. In an example, a drop of the epoxy may be delivered using a 30G-needle (available from Becton Dickinson, Franklin Lakes, NJ) to confine the volume covering the three components. In an example, the epoxy may be cured using a 365 nm ultraviolet with exposure for about 10 seconds. An example of an assembled prototype board for the system 100 is shown in Figure 14. Further, Figure 15A is an enlarged view of eutectic bonded LED's and photodiode of the assembled prototype, and Figure 15B is an enlarged view of a portion of the prototype showing an epoxy encapsulation to protect the wire bonding and components of the system 100.

Fabrication of a Second Prototype Board of the Microprobe

[0091] An embodiment of another prototype fabrication process is described below. The prototype board for the system 100 may be fabricated on a silicon wafer with 500 μm thickness (2 μm -thick oxide layer on the top for insulation) based on the microfabrication procedure illustrated in Figure 16. This fabrication process may be used to produce a prototype having a 25 mm length, a 0.75 mm width, and a 0.15 mm thickness, which fits an inner diameter of 0.85 mm of a 19 gauge aspiration needle, as shown in Figure 16. An additional thinning step is added to the fabrication method described above to reduce the thickness of a conventional 10-inch silicon wafer. Further, this fabrication process includes a step for adding a top insulation layer for interconnection protection. The second prototype may be used to verify the technical feasibility of a FNA needle-compatible microprobe for tissue phantoms and *ex vivo* tissue assessment.

[0092] As shown in Figure 16, the prototype may be fabricated as follows. In step a), Ti/Pt/Au and Au/In layers are patterned by a lift-off process for pad contacts of the

light sources 120, 122 (light emitting diode (LED)) and the detector 124 (photodiode (PD)), and interconnections for external electrodes. Then, a liftoff resist (LOR) and photoresist (PR) is coated and baked. In step b), the photoresist is exposed, and the liftoff resist and photoresist are developed. In step c), Ti/Pt/Au (200/300/4500Å) is/are deposited on the patterned photoresist by an electron beam (E-beam) evaporator (such as an Enerjet Evaporator). In step d), the photoresist with the undesired layer is lifted away to leave a Ti/Pt/Au pattern. In step e), to provide electrical insulation over patterned interconnections, atomic layer deposition (ALD) may be used to deposit a 300Å-thick Al_2O_3 layer for enhanced adhesion and insulation before SiO_2 (1 μm) deposition by plasma-enhanced chemical vapor deposition (PECVD). In step f), the photoresist is coated, baked, exposed, and developed for patterning. In step g), the oxide layer is etched for bonding pads contact, while the oxide layer on the interconnections remains for insulation. In step h), to bond the bottom side (Au) of the first light source 120 (red LED) and the detector 124 (photodiode), an indium (In)-Au eutectic bonding process was chosen. Thus, In-pads are defined within bonding pads by the second lift-off process. To pattern thick (6 μm) In-pads, the liftoff resist (LOR, LOR 30B, Microchem) is coated as an under-cut layer in a bi-layer lift-off process. The photoresist is coated onto the liftoff resist, and the photoresist and liftoff resist are developed. In step i) an electron-beam evaporator (Cooke Vacuum Products) is used to deposit Au/In (1 nm/6 μm). In step j), a lift-off process is used followed by soaking in a positive resist stripper (PRS) in about 85°C for about 20 minutes and sonication until the pattern is completely defined. In step k), the wafer is thinned down to about 150 μm by removing the backside of the wafer and releasing each probe unit.

[0093] Accordingly, utilizing the fabrication method described above, the assembled prototype includes eutectic bonding of the first light sourced 120 (red LED) and detector 124 on the fabricated board, eutectic bonding of the second light source (blue LED) on the fabricated board, and wire-bonding of the red LED, the blue LED, and the detector in the fabricated board. The resultant board may be connected to a printed circuit board, and the electrodes may be wire-bonded in the board and the printed circuit board. Epoxy may be used on the wire-bondings for protection. The board may then be inserted into a needle 102 (such as a 19 gauge aspiration needle), and epoxy may be used in the area where the needle contacts the printed circuit board. Epoxy may also be used on the sensing area through the opening (or viewing window) of the needle.

Assembly of the System 100 from the Second Prototype

[0094] The assembly of the system 100 from the second prototype board may be accomplished utilizing the same process described above for the assembly of the system 100 from the first prototype board.

System Controller Design and Development

[0095] In an embodiment, the system 100 further includes the computer 128, which can operate as a controller that sequences excitation and detection for each sensing unit 110. Combined with on-board signal processing electronics, the computer 128 enables real-time monitoring of the diffuse reflectance intensity and calculation of diagnostic parameters (such as R_{470nm}/R_{630nm}) at tissue interrogation sites. Accordingly, the microprobe 104 may be connected (such as with a wire) to an external circuit. The external circuit may include a multi-channel μ LED current driver and trans-impedance amplifiers. A single supply low noise LED current driver

may be implemented by employing a current output digital-analog converter. Emitted μ LED light intensity may be adjusted with current level controlled digitally by a controller (such as a microcontroller). The trans-impedance amplifier generally converts the detector 124 current to a voltage signal with an amplification of about 10^5 . A programmable gain amplifier may be used to enable an additional gain setting, which provides a high dynamic range. The amplified voltage may be filtered by a second order, low-pass filter (e.g., with a cut-off frequency of about 1 kHz) to yield a high SNR signal. A 16-bit analog-digital converter may be used to read the resulting voltage at a range of about 50 kHz. Further, a microcontroller may be employed to control all the excitation and detection procedures, including switching the excitation sequence of the light sources 120, 122, adjusting the light source (μ LED) intensity and trans-impedance amplifier gain, and reading ADC values.

[0096] Hardware for the computer 128 may be controlled with GUI software. For example, the GUI software may enable users to adjust the light intensity of the light sources 120, 122, as well as their frequency and duration. For detection, the GUI software may also allow users to set an appropriate gain for amplification, and displays and records the absolute intensity of detected light for the different wavelengths along with the ratio metric value.

[0097] A specific example of the controller design and development is described in detail below. A custom electronic control module may be designed and developed to drive the light sources 120, 122, read the detected photons on the detector 124, and control the overall sensing process. A microcontroller unit based on a 32-bit ARM core (e.g., ST32F405OE, STMicroelectronics, Geneva, Switzerland) may be employed to sequence the two light sources 120, 122, set the gain on the PGA, read

the ADC values, and send the data to the computer 128 via, e.g., universal asynchronous receiver/transmitter (UART) communication.

[0098] A single supply low noise LED current driver may be implemented by employing a current output digital-analog converter (such as a DAC AD5452 Analog Device). A trans-impedance amplifier converts the phototransistor current to a voltage signal with an amplification of about 10^5 . A programmable gain amplifier (e.g., a LTC6910 available from Linear Technology (Milpitas, CA)) may enable an additional gain setting, which provides a high dynamic range. Further, the amplified voltage may be subsequently filtered by a second order low-pass filter (e.g., having a cut-off frequency of about 1 kHz) to yield a high SNR signal. A 16-bit analog-digital converter (such as an ADS1115 available from Texas Instruments (Dallas, TX)) may be used to read the resulting voltage at a rate of about 50 kHz.

System Integration

[0099] Custom-designed electronics has been developed to control the microprobe. The electronics has four-channel LED drivers and two-channel trans-impedance amplifiers, followed by a programmable gain amplifier and low-pass filtering for phototransistor signal conditioning. The microcontroller executes A/D conversion and transmits the data to the computer 128 via, e.g., a USB connection. The application is written in C# language, sends commands to control the LED driver and TIA, and receives and displays the data from the electronics.

Method of Analyzing Tissue Utilizing the System 100

[00100] A method of analyzing tissue (such as pancreatic tissue) utilizing the system 100 will now be described. The method includes the steps of directing a light from the light sources 120, 122 toward the tissue, obtaining optical data while the

light is being directed toward the tissue, and utilizing the optical data to analyze the tissue. In an embodiment, the method further includes the steps of introducing the needle 102 (with the microprobe 104 carried by the needle 102) into a body (such as a human body during a EUS-FNA procedure). Upon identifying the tissue, the method includes retracting the sheath 112 from the needle 102 to expose the optical sensing units 110. Utilizing control electronics external to the needle 102, the method includes sending a signal from the electronics to the light sources 120, 122 (such as through a long wire through a EUS-FNA channel) to switch on the first light source 120. In response, the first light source 120 emits a red light. The step of obtaining the optical data is further includes the following steps. Once the red light is emitted from the first light source 120, the detector 124 detects reflected light and sends a detection signal to the electronics. In instances where the system 100 includes a filter 140 adjacent the detector 124, the detector 124 alternatively detects fluorescence light and sends a detection signal to the computer 128.

[00101] In an embodiment, the method further comprises sending another signal from the electronics to the light sources 120, 122 (such as through a long wire through a EUS-FNA channel) to switch on the second light source 122. In response, the second light source 122 emits a blue light. The step of obtaining the optical data further includes the following steps. Once the blue light is emitted from the second light source 122, the detector 124 detects reflected light and sends a detection signal to the electronics. In instances where the system 100 includes a filter 140 adjacent the detector 124, the detector 124 alternatively detects fluorescence light and sends a detection signal to the computer 128.

[00102] Utilizing the detected optical data (e.g., the two reflectance intensities), the step of analyzing the data includes calculating a reflectance ratio (described in detail below) and displays the ratio in the GUI monitor of the computer 128.

[00103] The method described above may be accomplished in real-time, or close to real-time (e.g., within 1 second). The physicians may then be able to see the ratio values on the screen, and utilizes the ratio values to characterize the interrogated tissue and/or to obtain additional information on the interrogated tissue that may assist with other diagnostic procedures.

The System 200

[00104] Another embodiment of the system 200 is shown in Figure 17. In this embodiment, the system 200 includes a platform 214 such as a flexible board or sheet and at least one optical sensing unit 210 is coupled to the platform 214. As shown, the system 200 further includes a printed circuit board 226 coupled to the platform 214, and the optical sensing unit(s) 210 is/are directly coupled to the printed circuit board 226. Further, the platform 214 has first 216 and second 218 opposed surfaces, and the optical sensing unit(s) 210 is/are coupled to at least one of the first 216 and second 218 opposed surfaces. In an embodiment, the system 200 includes a plurality of optical sensing units 210 arranged on at least one of the opposed first 216 and second 218 opposed surfaces of the flexible sheet/platform 214. The optical sensing units 210 may be arranged on the first 216 and/or second 218 opposed surfaces according to a predefined pattern. Alternatively, the optical sensing units 210 may be randomly arranged on the first 216 and/or second 218 opposed surfaces. In instances where the system 200 includes optical sensing unit(s) 210 coupled to the second surface 218, then the system 200 would further include another printed circuit board

(not shown) coupled to the second surface 218 and the optical sensing unit(s) 210 would be coupled to the printed circuit board. In a non-limiting example, the size of each of the light sources and the detector of each of the optical sensing units 210 of the system 200 can be up to about 2 mm. In another non-limiting example, the size of each of the light sources and the detector of each of the optical sensing units 210 can be from about 1 to 2 mm.

[00105] The system 200 may be used, for example, for external tissue diagnostics, such as for detecting skin cancers. For instance, the flexible sheet/platform 214 may be wrapped around or otherwise applied to the suspect skin tissue, and the system 200 can obtain optical data for subsequent tissue analysis and diagnostics.

[00106] In addition, the system 200 may include all of the features described above with reference to the system 100, including a computer, wires, connections, etc. However, since the system 200 is designed for external tissue diagnostics, the system 200 is not designed for nor does it include an aspiration needle.

Optical Data Processing

[00107] The systems 100, 200 described above may be used in an appropriate diagnostic procedure to obtain optical data which may be utilized, by the computer application, to provide factors of the tissue that can be used to render an accurate tissue diagnosis. This tissue diagnosis can lead to rapid institution of an appropriate therapy, such as surgery for resectable tumors, neoadjuvant therapy for borderline resectable disease, and definitive chemotherapy for located unresectable disease. In use, the system 100, 200 is positioned adjacent the live tissue and the sensing unit(s) 110, 210 generates pulses of light to interrogate the live tissue and obtain data pertaining to a reflectance intensity and direction of the interrogated tissue.

[00108] The presence of cancer may be determined in instances where the reflectance intensity or direction changes. Accordingly, with observing reflectance data, one can distinguish between cancerous tissue and healthy tissue.

[00109] The optical data processing application includes a ratiometric analysis algorithm and a quasi-spectral analysis algorithm to obtain useful factors for tissue diagnostics utilizing the optical data obtained from the microprobe 104. The ratiometric analysis algorithm uses a simple reflectance ratio between two discrete wavelengths. For human pancreatic tissue assessment, the reflectance ratio, $R_{470\text{nm}}/R_{650\text{nm}}$, is a suitable candidate to distinguish malignant tissues (adenocarcinoma) from non-malignant tissues including normal tissues and chronic pancreatitis. Typically, the reflectance intensities at 450 to 470 nm are significantly different among the foregoing types of tissues. This may be attributed to different scattering properties depending on nuclei size, refractive index, and collagen contents. However, the reflectance intensities at 630 to 650 nm in three tissue types are very close, which serves as a reference reading.

[00110] Employing different wavelengths related to hemoglobin absorption has a potential to assess total hemoglobin (Hb) concentration and tissue oxygenation. Ratiometric analysis based on isosbestic and non-isosbestic points has the capability to estimate tissue hemoglobin concentration and oxygenation. Isosbestic points are the wavelengths in which oxyhemoglobin and deoxyhemoglobin have substantially the same absorbance, for example, 500, 529, 545, 570 and 584 nm. Non-isosbestic points are the wavelengths showing the biggest difference in absorbance between oxy- and deoxy- hemoglobin, for example, 516, 539, 560, 577 and 593 nm. However, ratiometric analysis based on isosbestic and non-isosbestic points utilizes a full

reflectance spectrum acquired by a fiber-based diffuse reflectance spectroscopy. For the optoelectronic microprobe 104, however, two light sources 120, 122 (such as two LED's) with wavelengths as close to isosbestic and non-isosbestic wavelengths as possible can be selected to enable rapid estimation of blood parameters. Rapid and non-invasive assessment of Hb concentration and oxygenation has many clinical applications, including cancer detection, anemia detection, perfusion monitoring, etc. An advantage of the ratiometric analysis includes rapid processing time enabling real-time monitoring.

[00111] The quasi-spectral analysis can be used to analyze the full reflectance spectrum to extract biophysically relevant parameters or optical properties of the tissue directly from the microprobe 104 measurements. A photon-tissue interaction (PTI) model is used to analyze diffuse reflectance spectrum obtained from human pancreatic tissues. The PTI model is a mathematical equation based on fundamental principles for light scattering and absorption at a given fiber optic probe geometry. The PTI model calculates a reflectance spectrum from input variables including nuclei size and the refractive index of the nuclei. By fitting the PTI model to the obtained reflectance spectrum, parameters generating the least error between the model and the experiment are extracted. The original model uses a full wavelength reflectance spectrum from 400 to 700 nm with a 2 nm step for a total of 176 wavelengths.

[00112] To employ the PTI model for the optoelectronic microprobes that include LEDs with a narrow band, the PTI model is used with fewer wavelengths. Accordingly, to assess the feasibility of wavelength reduction to accurately extract parameters, the PTI model is performed on existing tissue reflectance dataset obtained from freshly-excised human pancreas using four wavelengths. The results are

compared with the parameters extracted by a full wavelength PTI model. The four selected wavelengths are 460, 520, 560 and 630 nm. The four wavelengths represent the full spectral diagnostic information in pancreatic tissues. For example, the relative reflectance at 470 nm is associated with an increase in cell nuclei diameter, which typically increases during cancer formation. The reflectance at 520 nm and 560 nm are selected due to relatively less hemoglobin absorption, avoiding α and β bands of the hemoglobin. The reflectance at about 630 nm serves as a reference intensity that is relatively independent of local tissue absorption and scattering properties. Utilizing the four wavelengths, the mathematical model is capable of extracting diagnostically-relevant parameters consistent with those extracted from the full-wavelength reflectance spectra. Figure 18 shows a representative PTI model that fits with full wavelength and the four wavelengths compared to measured reflectance spectrum.

[00113] Table 1 (shown in Figure 19) provides two extracted parameters from three different tissue types. The results in Table 1 do not show that there is a significant difference between the PTI results using 176 and 4 wavelengths. The average difference between the two model results at the same measurement is 0.8 for nuclear size and 0.006 for refractive index, respectively. Additionally, two extracted parameters from the PTI model with 4 wavelengths can distinguish adenocarcinoma from a normal pancreas (p is greater than 0.05, Wilcoxon rank sum test). Accordingly, the results show that PTI model with a reduced number of wavelengths can produce comparable outcomes to the PTI model results with a full reflectance spectrum.

[00114] Through the results set forth above, the PTI model is capable of using reduced wavelengths, four LEDs with four different wavelengths can be allocated

around the detector on the microprobe to obtain diffused reflectance intensity at each wavelength. The optoelectronic microprobe coupled with the PTI model has the potential to enable real-time monitoring of biophysically relevant parameters and performing optical biopsy during EUS procedure in clinics.

[00115] The preliminary comparison described above demonstrates the possibility of quasi-spectral sensing using the optoelectronic microprobe 104 for non-invasive assessment of biophysically-relevant parameters.

[00116] In addition to the mathematical model described above, a computational model can also be used to generate a reflectance spectrum. Monte Carlo (MC) simulation is a computational tool for modeling photon propagations inside biological tissues. Computing all travel paths of a vast amount of individual photons gives information on the overall reflectance intensity. The parameters related to photon travel such as direction, angle, and path length of each photon step are calculated based on a probability of governing physical equations rather than one deterministic equation such as the PTI model. Typically, inputs for the MC model are absorption and scattering coefficients. Multiple MC runs with a different range of absorption and scattering coefficients relevant to biological tissues can be used to create a look-up table.

[00117] The created MC look-up-table (MCLUT) is employed to produce a modeled spectrum, which compares with the measured spectrum in the fitting algorithm for inversion process to extract biophysically-relevant parameters. As fewer wavelengths work for the PTI model, the four-wavelength approach of the optoelectronic microprobe also utilizes this MCLUT-based inverse model to assess tissue scattering and absorption parameters.

[00118] Customized data analysis is based on an MCLUT inverse model approach. Monte Carlo simulations incorporating the optoelectronic microprobe geometry produces diffuse reflectance intensities for all combinations of physically realistic absorption ($0\text{--}50\text{ cm}^{-1}$) and scattering coefficients ($0\text{--}50\text{ cm}^{-1}$). Monte Carlo in a parallel implementation working on a general-purpose graphic processing unit may be used to decrease time to create the look-up-table. The process to estimate the biophysical parameters including the parameter related to scatter density A and a scattering power parameter related to the scatter size B, the total hemoglobin concentration and oxygen saturation is shown in Figure 20. In this process, the input parameters A, B, hemoglobin concentration, and oxygen saturation are used to calculate wavelength-dependent scattering and absorption coefficients. These coefficients are inputs to a MCLUT producing a modeled diffuse reflectance spectrum. The modeled spectrum then fits the measured corrected spectrum. Iterations with non-linear fitting algorithms are used to find optimal parameters yielding the best fit.

EXAMPLES

LED Characterization

[00119] $I_F\text{--}V_F$ curves for both LEDs may be obtained by adjusting the forward voltage by 0.1 V in a digital power supply (e.g., E3631A, Keysight Technology, Santa Clara, CA) and recording the corresponding forward current flowing through the LED. For the blue LEDs, three different sets of LEDs according to the eutectic bonding temperatures (e.g., 280, 290 and 300°C) may be measured. For the red LEDs, to investigate the effect of the second eutectic bonding of the blue LEDs, two sets of the red LEDs may be measured before and after the eutectic bonding of the blue LEDs.

Optical power of the emitted LED light was measured using an integrating sphere coupled with a photodetector (e.g., 3A-IS-V1, Ophir-Spiricon, North Logan, UT) to account for diverging beam of the both LEDs. The emission wavelength may be recorded by an optical spectrometer (such as a HR2000, Ocean Optics). To check the wavelength shift by different forward voltage, forward voltage may be varied for each LED.

Photodiode Characterization

[00120] The linearity between the detected optical power and PD output may be assessed by emitting blue and red LEDs, which may be characterized with I_f -optical power curves, towards the photodiode at a specific distance. The blue LED located 45 mm away from the photodiode and drove with the forward voltage varying from 2.9 V to 3.5 in 0.1 V step. The output voltage at the trans-impedance amplifier coupled with PGA may be read by an oscilloscope (such as a TDS220, Tektronics, Beaverton, OR). The resistance determining the gain in the trans-impedance amplifier may be about 100 K to provide the gain of 10^5 and the gain of the PGA may be set to 100 for a total gain of 10^7 . The distances between photodiode and LEDs may be determined to make the output voltage swing from 0 to 5V, which is a supply voltage of the trans-impedance amplifier and PGA. The red LED may be located 60 mm away from the photodiode because the relative sensitivity of the photodiode in 630 nm is higher than 460 nm. The same measurement may be performed with the red LEDs.

Reflectance Sensing of the Microprobe on Tissue Simulating Phantoms

[00121] With reference to Figures 21A-21B, reflectance sensing capability of the developed microprobe is evaluated on optical phantoms simulating human tissue

scattering. Solid phantoms are typically manufactured using Intralipid (IL, I141, Sigma Aldrich, St. Louis, MO) as a scatterer in an agar-based matrix. Phantoms are prepared in the petri dish with a diameter of 60 mm and a height of 15 mm. In the sensing procedure at each wavelength, the forward voltage of the LED and the gain of the PGA are adjusted to get a proper voltage variation without saturation. Prior to phantom reflectance sensing, TIA voltage is measured 1) without LED output for dark measurement and 2) at the open space with LED emission to check how much LED emission directly entered the photodiode. In phantom sensing, the prototype probe is contacted with a surface of the phantom and slightly pushed to ensure the contact of the LED and PD.

[00122] A set of optical phantoms with three different IL concentrations (0.4, 0.8 and 1.2 mL of IL in 20 mL of de-ionized water) are manufactured to investigate the relationship between scattering coefficient and detected reflectance at the given geometry and angular sensitivity of source and detector. The probe interrogated three spots on the phantoms and the measured voltages are subtracted by the direct detection voltages to account for scattered reflectance sensing.

Testing and Validation

Electrical Testing

[00123] Electrical testing of fabricated microprobes typically focuses on ensuring (a) moisture proofing and (b) working performance of the phototransistor and microcontroller. The microprobe is immersed in a liquid tissue simulating phantom phosphate buffer saline for fifteen minutes. Electrical performance and consistent output, as well as temperature, is monitored for the experiment duration. A NIST standard lamp is aligned with the phototransistor. The measured signal on the

microcontroller is analyzed as a baseline measurement, and measurement drift and any signal saturation is monitored.

Optical Testing

[00124] The optical performance of fabricated microprobes can be tested by creating liquid phantoms with realistic tissue scattering and absorption properties. The first phantom includes optical scattering from a homogeneous solution of polystyrene microspheres in de-ionized water (9 or 12 μm diameter to approximate the diameter of normal and cancerous pancreatic cell nuclei, respectively). The second phantom introduces varying levels of hemoglobin (primary absorber in human tissues) to make the liquid scattering phantom a better approximate to human tissue. Signal to noise ratio (SNR) is calculated as the average current intensity of ten sequential collections from the working performance of the phototransistor and microcontroller divided by ten sequential collections of the dark current from a phantom containing de-ionized water.

[00125] A two-layered solid phantom is also created to verify the spatially-resolved optical mapping of the microprobe. The bottom layer is a solid agar mixture of 9 μm diameter polystyrene microspheres with hemoglobin and the top layer is a liquid mixture of 12 μm diameter microspheres with a different hemoglobin concentration than the top layer. Then, the optoelectronic microprobe is inserted such that one optical module is contained within the top and bottom layers. Two-layered phantom measurements are compared to measurements from homogeneous phantoms created from the optical properties of each layer.

Temperature Measurements

[00126] To assess heat generation by optoelectronic microprobe operation, temperature is typically measured in de-ionized water while the microprobe is emerged in de-ionized water. The μ LED and phototransistor are powered on continuously and temperature around the microprobe is measured every one minute up to fifteen minutes. Then, the μ LED and phototransistor are switched on and off with certain frequency, and temperature is monitored every one minute. With different operating options, the μ LED pulse width and frequency is optimized to minimize the heat generation.

Sterilization, Mechanical Testing, and Clinical Simulation

[00127] Each fabricated microprobe can be validated with a standardized procedure. Microprobes are sterilized with a standardized ethylene oxide protocol, which is typically employed in the hospital Central Sterile Supply unit for medical instrumentation. This test employs an Erlangen Active Simulator for Interventional Endoscopy (EASIE™) (see Figure 22), a clinical endoscopic training simulator, to validate the mechanical integrity and optical performance of each microprobe. The FNA hollow needle, containing the microprobe, is inserted through the instrument channel of the endoscope, protruded through the swine stomach, and into the pancreas-simulating phantom. The microprobe is removed from the endoscope and reinserted. Mechanical integrity of each microprobe is verified via microscopic visual examination and electronic testing.

Measurements on Freshly Excised Human Pancreatic Tissues

[00128] Using the IRB approved human studies protocols and experimental methods developed previously, freshly excised human pancreatic tissues can be measured with the optoelectronic microprobe to compare the performance of the microprobe with

that of an optical-fiber-based system. Using a hollow needle, the microprobe is inserted into the tissue site of interest and optical measurements are made. Up to ten tissue sites are measured from each specimen. Needle insertion and number of sites measured are consistent with envisioned use during EUS procedures. In total, 5 patients are enrolled in this study during one year. Estimating 5-10 measured tissue sites per patient, 50-100 optical measurement sites are to be collected from the two optical sub-units. Each measurement has spatially co-localized histology samples.

Histology and Data Analysis

[00129] Optical measurements are compared to histopathologic analyses of a co-localized tissue biopsy obtained by a trained pathologist. Tissue biopsies are embedded in paraffin, cut into 5 μm thick slices, stained by H&E staining, and analyzed. For each pancreatic tissue type, data collected with the microprobe and with the optical-fiber-based system (existing data set) are compared at the two target wavelengths by forming the ratio $R_{470\text{nm}}/R_{630\text{nm}}$. A classification algorithm, based on multinomial logistic regression using Generalized Estimating Equations with one parameter (here, $R_{470\text{nm}}/R_{630\text{nm}}$) requires approximately 10 to 20 measured sites. The estimated 50-100 sites measured from 5 patients is typically sufficient to demonstrate feasibility of the microprobe for distinguishing normal tissues from adenocarcinoma tissues.

Fluorescence Sensing

[00130] By limiting the wavelength of detected light on the photodetectors, the optoelectronic microprobe can also enable fluorescence intensity sensing as well as reflectance measurements. An optical filter is used to cut off the excitation

wavelength and to maintain a high transmission at the emission wavelength of the targeted fluorophore.

Fluorescence Lifetime Sensing

[00131] In an example, fluorescence lifetime sensing is also possible for the optoelectronic microprobe by incorporating signal processing and control electronics. Fluorescence lifetime sensing can be implemented in two configurations – frequency and time-domain. Further, small sized LEDs can be employed for pulsed and modulated excitation sources. Detection by photodetectors can also be modulated or gated with an external signal processing device. Specific embodiments for each technique are set forth below.

Frequency-Domain Lifetime Sensing

[00132] LED excitation may be modulated with 50 to 80 MHz and the fluorescence may be measured using a photodetector modulated at the same frequency. Phase shift between the excitation and the fluorescence may be used to calculate the fluorescence lifetime. Further, a lock-in-amplifier can be used to modulate the source and detector, and to detect the phase shift.

Time-Domain Lifetime Sensing

[00133] During a gated detection method, LEDs are excited by a pulse driver with the duration of a few nanoseconds. The exponential decay of fluorescence can be reconstructed using the number of gated detections with precisely controlled delay from the LED pulse initiation. Rapid lifetime determination algorithm can be employed for fast lifetime calculation.

[00134] Figure 23 is a graph illustrating a time-domain fluorescence sensing method without a short-period gating. An external delay generator determines starting of the

detection window. For the first pulse excitation, there is no delay so the detector can measure all of the fluorescence. For the second pulse, fluorescence detection starts with delay and loses some fluorescence. The degree of reduced fluorescence intensity according to increasing delay is related to the fluorescence lifetime. As shown in Figure 23, if a short period gating (less than 1 ns) is not technically feasible for the photodetectors used for the microprobe, as an alternative, multiple measurements within the delayed detection time window can be employed to reconstruct the fluorescence decay. Here, the time width is shorter than the laser pulse interval, which is possibly a few ms, instead of being less than 1 ns for gating methods. Direct recording of fluorescence decay may be accomplished using the photodetectors with a fast response synchronized by a short-pulsed LED excitation for samples having a strong fluorescence emission (e.g., exogenous fluorescence agents).

Feasibility Test for Fluorescence Sensing

[00135] The feasibility of fluorescence sensing of the developed microprobe is assessed on a standard fluorescence solution. Since a small and thin long pass filter passing just fluorescence to the detector is not available, two microprobe modules are employed for 460 nm blue LED emission and photodiode detection, respectively (see Figure 24A). The blue LED in one device excited 10 μ M Rhodamine B in a cuvette with a 1cm-pathlength, and an off-the-shelf long pass filter with 488 nm cutting wavelength (FF01-488/LP, Semrock, Rochester, NY) (Figure 24B) blocked 460 nm excitation light and passing just fluorescence emission (peak emission was around 580 nm) towards the PD in another device. The forward voltage of the LED increased and the corresponding voltages on the TIA are obtained.

Results

Blue LED

[00136] In Figure 25A shows I_f - V_f characteristics of assembled blue LEDs depending on different temperature applied for the eutectic bonding. At the temperature higher than 280 °C, I_f - V_f performance is deteriorated and inconsistent. Measured I_f -Optical power curves show a good linear relationship and consistency between three samples (see Figure 25B). Peak emission wavelength is 457 nm with a full-width-half-maximum of around 30 nm (see Figure 25C). No prominent wavelength shift depending on the forward voltage is observed (see Figure 25D).

Red LED

[00137] The bonded red LEDs after the eutectic bonding of blue LEDs shows the same performance as the LEDs before the bonding (see Figures 26A-26D). This indicates the second eutectic bonding does not affect the results of the first eutectic bonding. Measured optical power is proportional to the applied forward voltage with the consistency between three samples. At the regular forward current of 50 mA, optical power is 22.5mW. Measured peak emission wavelength is around 650 nm with a FWHM of 20 nm. Wavelength is shifted at 1/15 nm/mA rate.

Photodiode

[00138] Figure 27A-27B displays a linear relationship between the forward current of the source (optical power detected on the PD) and detection voltage (current flowing in the PD) at the TIA output in two PDs at both wavelengths. Given the total gain is 107, the dark current of the PD can be calculated as $\sim 1V/10^7 (A/V) = 0.1 \mu A$. While two PDs show the consistent performance, as indicated by the same slope with different dark voltages, the PD sample #2 shows a higher slope in a different wavelength.

Characterization of Reflectance Sensing on Tissue Simulating Phantoms

[00139] For reflectance sensing, the total gain of the trans-impedance amplifier is set to 10^5 and the forward currents are 2 mA and 6 mA for red and blue LED, respectively in order to avoid the saturation in trans-impedance amplifier output voltage by the direct detection of the emission light. With gain of 10^5 , the dark voltage was 0.1 mV. The voltages measured by the direct detection were 0.23 mV in 460 nm and 0.39 mV in 650 nm, respectively. Detection voltage increased on higher concentrations of Intralipid, indicating the reflectance sensing is feasible. Larger error bar in 460 nm sensing probably indicates that 460 nm sensing could be more sensitive than 650 nm sensing setup.

Fluorescence Feasibility Test

[00140] With a total gain of 5×10^6 and a forward current of 40 mA on blue LED, the photodiode detection voltage was 0.10 V without a fluorescence sample, close to the dark voltage of 0.09 V ensuring the block of 460 nm emission light by the 488 nm LP filter. When the sample is placed in the excitation and detection path, the fluorescence detection voltage is up to 1.31 V (as shown in Figure 28A-28B). Fluorescence detection voltage increases as the excitation power increases (shown in Figure 28C).

Signal-to-noise ratio calculation

[00141] Signal-to-noise (SNR) ratio has been assessed by acquiring 20 reflectance measurements on a 99 % reflectance standard for both wavelengths. SNR was calculated by: $SNR = 20 \log (\text{average of 20 measurement} / \text{standard deviation of 20 measurements})$. The resulting SNR for both wavelengths ranged 50 ~ 60 dB.

Waterproofness test

[00142] To demonstrate waterproofness of epoxy encapsulation, the microprobe is submerged into a deionized water for about 15 minutes (shown in Figures 29A-29C), an estimated time required for *in vivo* evaluation in a clinic. No degradation in optical performance, including the LED emission power and detected reflectance intensity, was found. The result reveals the developed microprobe would not be affected by watery environment of *in vivo* tissue sensing.

[00143] The optical sensing performance of the entire system was verified on tissue-simulating phantoms in comparison with the optical spectroscopy system (RFLS, Reflectance and Fluorescence Lifetime Spectrometer).

[00144] A set of solid tissue phantoms is created based on an agarose powder in deionized water with a polystyrene microsphere (scatterer) and a different concentration of hemoglobin (absorber) dissolved. This is shown Figure 30. The determined concentration of the microsphere mimics the scattering coefficient of human pancreatic tissues. The variation of hemoglobin concentrations is in a range of the absorption coefficients of human pancreatic tissues, and simulates the different reflectance ratio R_{460nm}/R_{650nm} .

[00145] As shown in Figure 30, solid tissue phantoms were made with a base of agarose gel in deionized water. 1 μ m-diameter polystyrene microsphere has been added with a ratio of 1:5 (microsphere: DI water). 0.645 mg/ml of hemoglobin has also been added to make 5 μ M to 30 μ M (left to right) by a step size of 5 μ M.

[00146] Prior to phantom measurements, the microprobe is calibrated on a 50% reflectance standard and initial measurements in open air is acquired to account for direct entrance of emission light to detector. This process is repeated for each LED emission wavelength. Relative reflectance is calculated by Equation 1:

$$R = \frac{R_{meas}(Phantom) - R_{meas}(Open)}{R_{meas}(50\% Ref) - R_{meas}(Open)} \times 0.5$$

(Equation 1)

For each phantom, three sites are measured and averaged.

[00147] RFLS is also calibrated with the 50% reflectance standard before measurements. The fiber optic probe (a core diameter of 600 μm with 0.22 NA, 660 μm distance between a source and a detection fiber) is placed on the phantoms.

[00148] Figures 31A-31C show the measurement results using the microprobe and the RFLS on 6 different phantoms. From different reflectance spectral shapes obtained by the RFLS, more hemoglobin concentration produced lower R_{460nm}/R_{650nm} . At both wavelength of 460 nm and 650 nm, the relative reflectance intensities measured with the microprobe show a good agreement with reflectance spectra acquired by the RFLS (Figure 31A). The absolute ratios by the microprobe are consistently lower for all phantoms than the ratios by the RFLS (Figure 31B). This difference would be attributed to different source-detector geometry. However, there is a linear correlation between two ratios (Figure 31C), which demonstrates that the optical performance of the microprobe is comparable to the RLFS in term of obtaining the reflectance ratio.

Dual unit fabrication

[00149] To demonstrate the multiple-sites sensing capability, the microprobe with a dual sensing unit has been designed, fabricated and assembled as shown in Figure 32. This shows the potential of volumetric sensing to address the lack of spatial information in conventional point spectroscopy. With a traditional fiber-based approach, it may be challenging to achieve multiple-sites sensing.

Simulation of Optical Sensing Volume

[00150] Computational model is employed to visualize the detected photon paths for each wavelength given the designed source-detector geometry (Figure 33). The embedded Monte Carlo algorithm in the commercialized software (ZEMAX[®]) is used to simulate light propagation from the LED to the photodetector in pancreatic tissue model. The model reflects a realistic technical specification of each of the optoelectronic components that can affect simulation results, including dimension, angular emission distribution of each LED, and active area and angular sensitivity of photodiode. Optical interrogation volume by the designed microprobe can be qualitatively estimated using the simulation results. The light with a longer wavelength (650 nm) travels into a deeper tissue area due to a longer mean path length determined by a lower absorption and scattering coefficient.

[0001] It is believed that the optoelectronic microprobe of the present disclosure has the potential to revolutionize minimally-invasive tissue optical spectroscopy. The microprobe is an integrated optoelectronic system for EUS-FNA compatible tissue diagnosis. Further, quantitative analysis metrics have been developed from data collected during the clinical pilot study of freshly-excised pancreatic tissues. Ratiometric analysis determined that the three most common tissue types (normal, chronic pancreatitis, and adenocarcinoma) can each be distinguished from one another. The microprobe can also provide enhanced accuracy of diagnosis and volumetrically mapped tissue assessment by rapidly measuring multiple tissue sites, which is unlike current EUS-FNA which requires multiple needle passes into the tissue for a single aspirate collection. At each tissue side measured, two optical measurements can be simultaneously collected in less than 1 second, and these optical

measurements are independent of motion artifacts and are suitable for clinical endoscopic use. Yet further, the microprobe reduces cost and instrumentation footprint with comparable (or even superior) optical performance and durability compared to standard optical-fiber-based systems. Each fabricated microprobe undergoes standardized validation testing with Erlangen™ Endo-Trainer to verify mechanical stability and optical performance with pancreas-simulating phantoms prior to human endoscope use. Furthermore, while the microprobe has been described above for diagnostics of pancreatic cancer, it is believed that the microprobe may also be used for other FNA procedures, including those performed during lung and breast cancer staging.

[0002] Furthermore, optical diagnostics may enhance the technical capability of the endoscopist to provide a more accurate diagnosis and may dramatically alter clinical practice by improved triage of patients to an appropriate therapy with or without surgery. In addition to enhanced accuracy of diagnosis, the microprobe technology compatible with commercially-available FNA needles of the present disclosure provides volumetrically mapped tissue assessment by rapidly measuring multiple tissue sites. This is unlike EUS-FNA, which requires multiple needle passes into the tissue for a single aspirate collection. Accordingly, the microprobe technology of the present disclosure typically has the potential to address an important unmet need of pancreatic neoplasia diagnosis (with a low negative predictive value of cytology) by improving the diagnostic capability of EUS, thereby leading to improved triage of patients to appropriate therapy.

[0003] The aforementioned embodiments and description are non-limiting and merely represent various embodiments of this disclosure. Further, the present disclosure has

been described in an illustrative manner, and it is to be understood that the terminology which has been used is intended to be in the nature of words of description rather than of limitation. It is now apparent to those skilled in the art that many modifications and variations of the present disclosure are possible in light of the above teachings. It is, therefore, to be understood that the invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically described.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A system for analyzing tissue, said system comprising:
a platform; and
an optical sensing unit coupled to said platform with said optical sensing unit having a detector and a plurality of light sources surrounding and electrically isolated from said detector, said optical sensing unit obtaining optical data for tissue analysis.
2. The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein said plurality of light sources includes at least one first light source and at least one second light source, and said detector being disposed between said first and second light sources.
3. The system as set forth in claim 1 or 2 wherein said platform is a microprobe and said system further comprises a tissue aspiration needle with said microprobe being carried by said tissue aspiration needle.
4. The system as set forth in claim 3 wherein said microprobe defines a longitudinal axis and said optical sensing unit is one of a plurality of optical sensing units coupled to said microprobe with said plurality of optical sensing units being linearly arranged along said longitudinal axis.
5. The system as set forth in claim 4 wherein said plurality of optical sensing units includes at least two optical sensing units.
6. The system as set forth in claim 4 wherein said plurality of optical sensing units includes from two to twenty optical sensing units.
7. The system as set forth in any one of claims 4-6 wherein said microprobe has first and second opposing surfaces and said plurality of optical sensing units

includes at least one optical sensing unit coupled to each of said first and second opposing surfaces of said microprobe.

8. The system as set forth in claim 1 or 2 wherein said platform is a flexible sheet having first and second opposed surfaces and said optical sensing unit is one of a plurality of optical sensing units coupled to at least one of said first and second opposed surfaces of said flexible sheet.

9. The system as set forth in claim 8 wherein said plurality of optical sensing units is arranged on at least one of said first and second opposed surfaces of said flexible sheet according to a predefined pattern.

10. The system as set forth in claim 8 wherein said plurality of optical sensing units is randomly arranged on at least one of said first and second opposed surfaces of said flexible sheet.

11. The system as set forth in any of the preceding claims wherein each of said first and second light sources is a μ LED emitting light within the visible spectrum.

12. The system as set forth in claim 11 wherein said first light source is a μ LED emitting a red light and said second light source is a μ LED emitting a blue light.

13. The system as set forth in any of the preceding claims wherein said detector is chosen from a photodiode, a photodetector, and a phototransistor and said detector has a peak spectroscopic sensitivity of from about 850 to 900 nm.

14. The system as set forth in any of the preceding claims wherein said first and second light sources are separated by a distance from about 0.4 to 5 mm,

measured from the center of said first light source to the center of said second light source.

15. The system as set forth in any of the preceding claims wherein said optical data is reflectance data.

16. The system as set forth in claim 15 further comprising a computer including an application containing computer-readable instructions causing the computer to utilize said reflectance data to analyze the tissue.

17. The system as set forth in any one of claims 1-14 wherein said optical data is fluorescence data and said system further comprises a filter adjacent said detector for cutting a wavelength of light for measuring said fluorescence data.

18. A system for analyzing tissue, said system comprising:

a tissue aspiration needle defining a cavity having an opening; and

a microprobe disposed within said cavity and carried by said tissue aspiration needle with said microprobe defining a longitudinal axis and having a platform and a plurality of optical sensing units coupled to said platform and linearly arranged along said longitudinal axis, said optical sensing units being exposed through said opening of said cavity, with each of said sensing units having first and second light sources and a detector arranged between and electrically isolated from said first and second light sources;

wherein said plurality of sensing units obtain optical data substantially simultaneously for analyzing the tissue.

19. The system as set forth in claim 18 wherein said first light source is a μ LED emitting a red light and said second light source is a μ LED emitting a blue light.

20. The system as set forth in claim 18 or 19 wherein said microprobe further includes a printed circuit board coupled to said platform, and said plurality of optical sensing units coupled to said printed circuit board.

21. A method of analyzing tissue utilizing a system comprising a platform and an optical sensing unit coupled to said platform with the optical sensing unit having a detector and a plurality of light sources surrounding and electrically isolated from the detector, said method comprising the steps of:

directing a light from the light sources toward the tissue;

obtaining optical data while the light is being directed toward the tissue;

utilizing the optical data to analyze the tissue.

22. The method as set forth in claim 21 wherein the plurality of light sources includes a first light source and a second light source, and wherein the step of directing the light is further defined as directing a red light from the first light source and a blue light from the second light source.

23. The method as set forth in claim 21 or 22 wherein the step of obtaining the optical data is further defined as obtaining optical reflectance data.

24. The method as set forth in claim 21 or 22 wherein the system further includes a filter adjacent the detector and the step of obtaining the optical data is further defined as obtaining fluorescence data.



FIG. 1

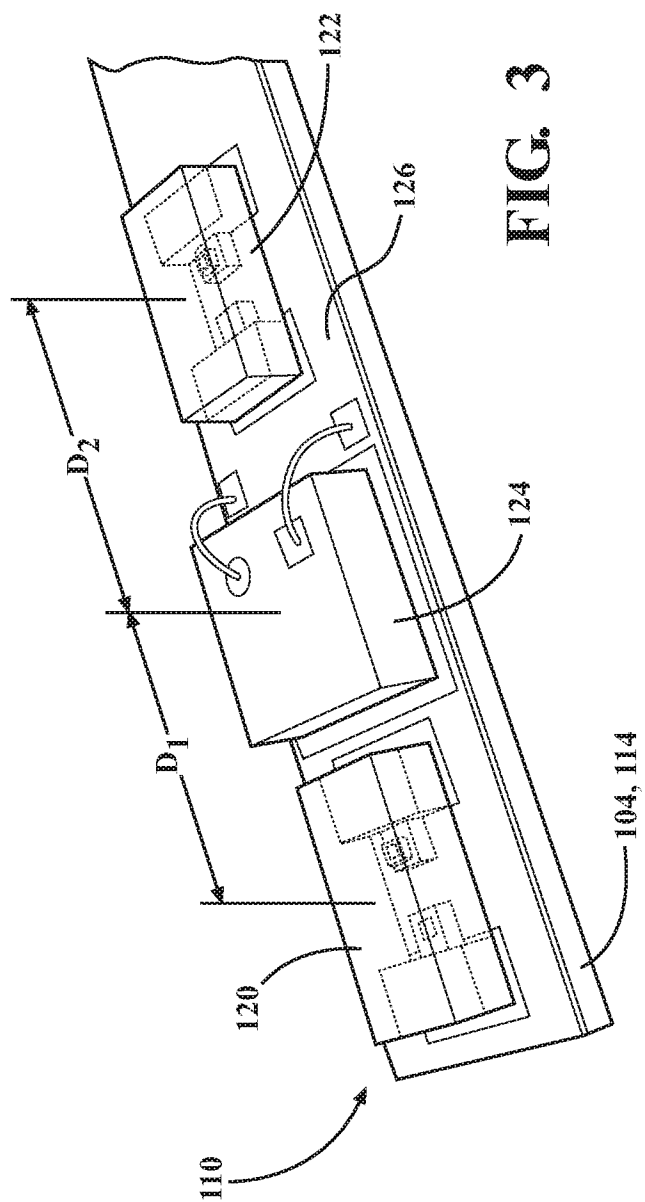
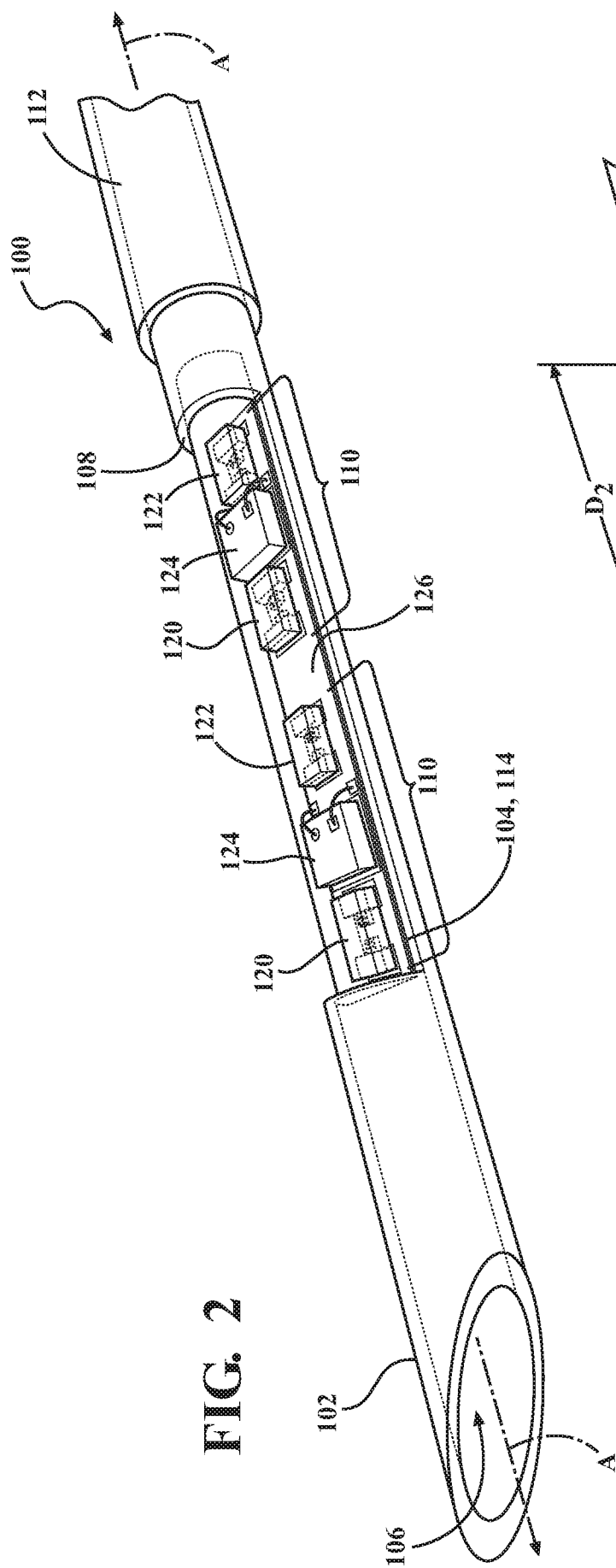
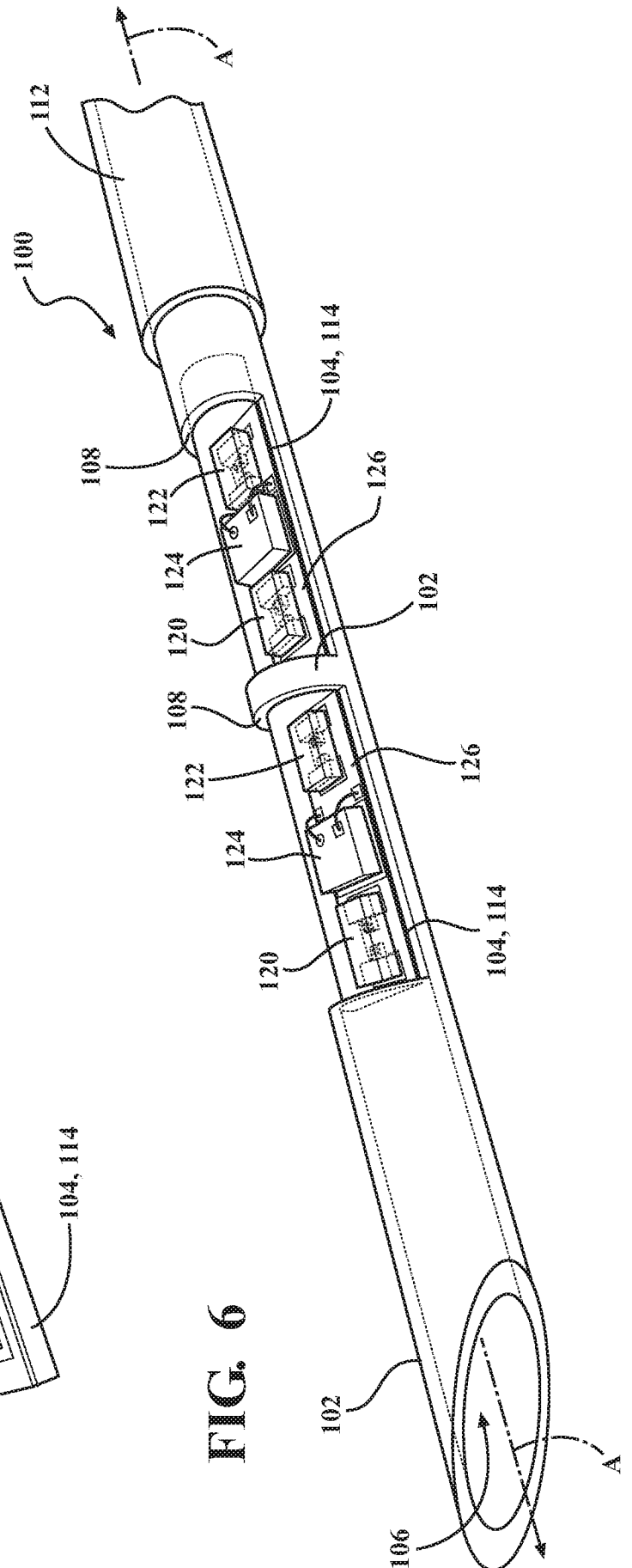
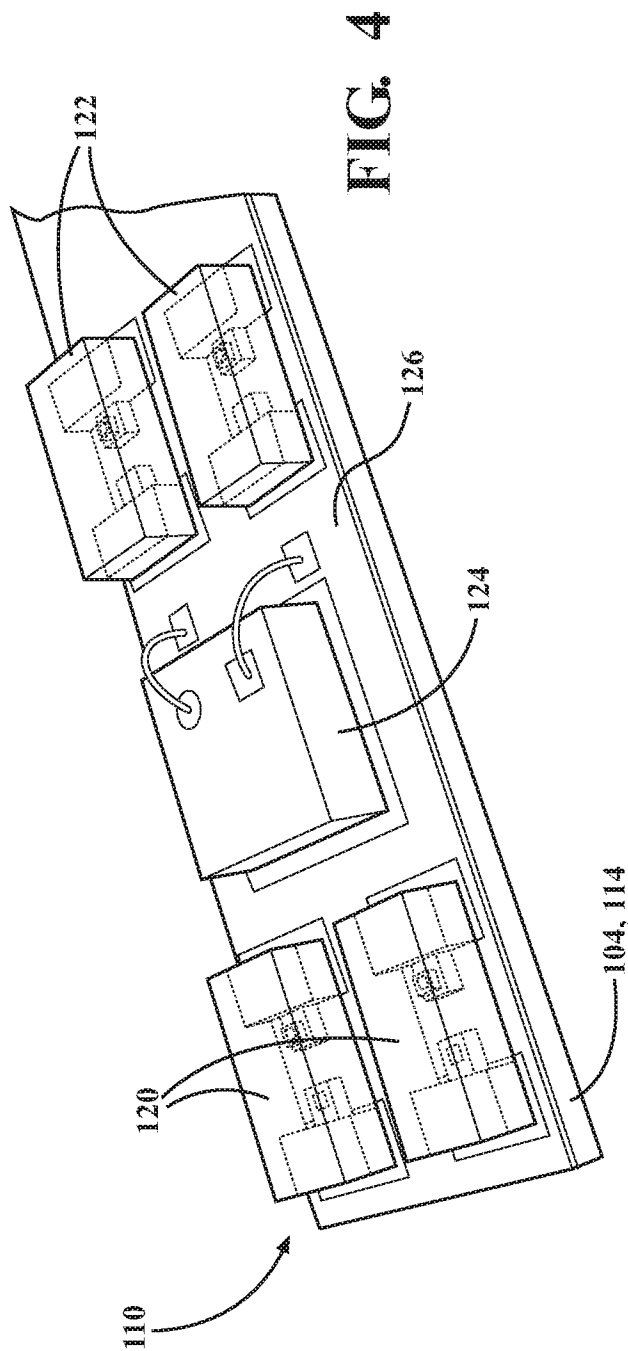


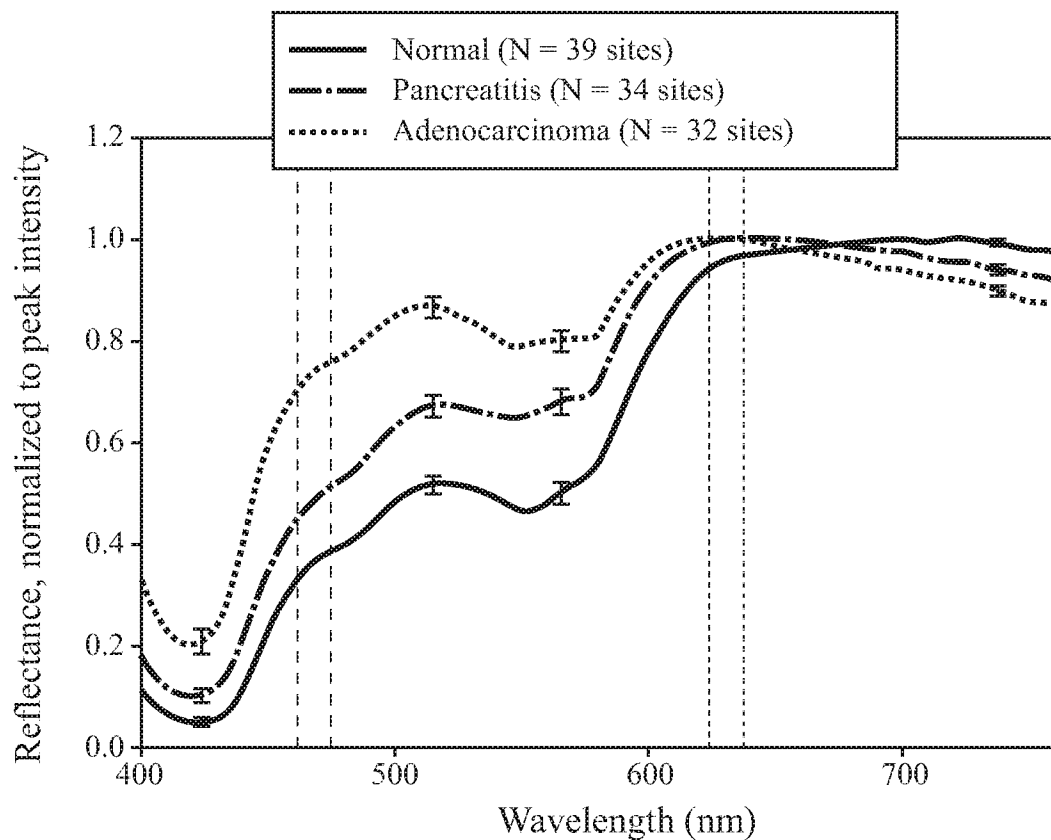
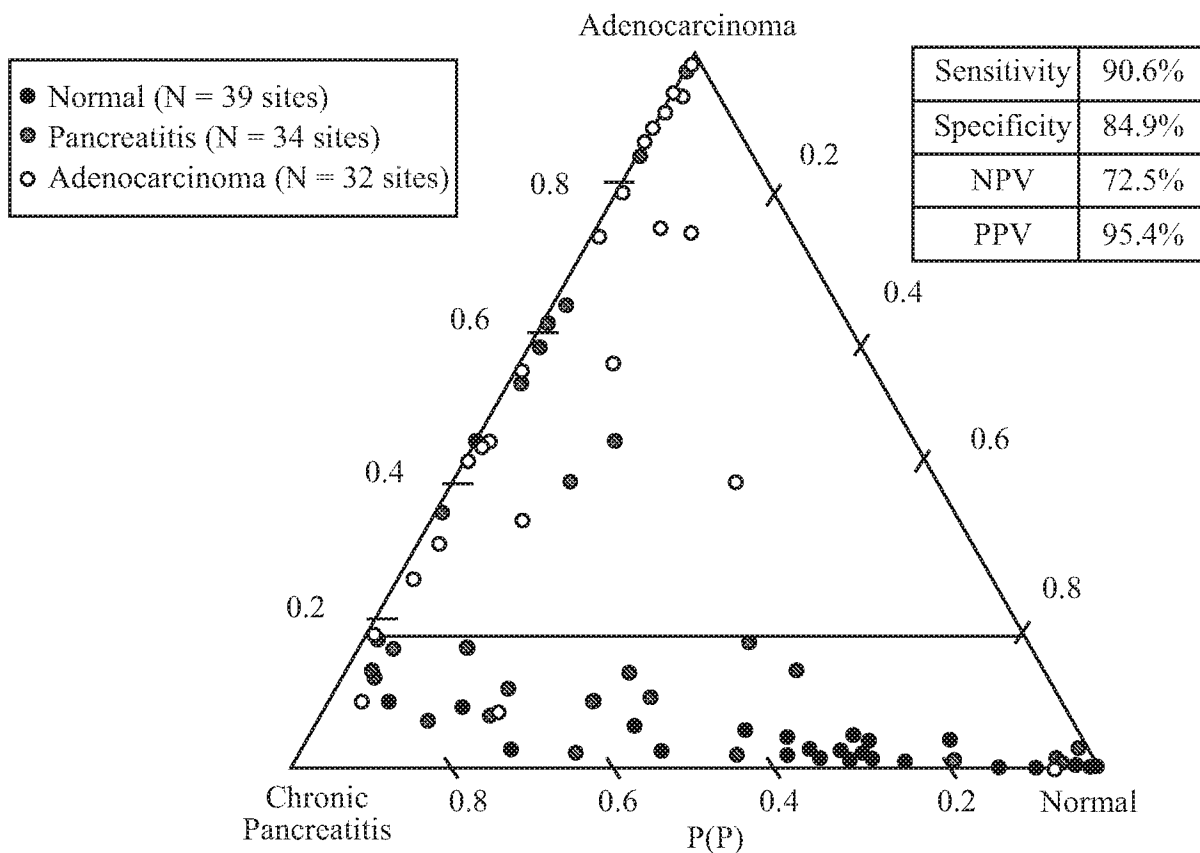
FIG. 2

FIG. 3

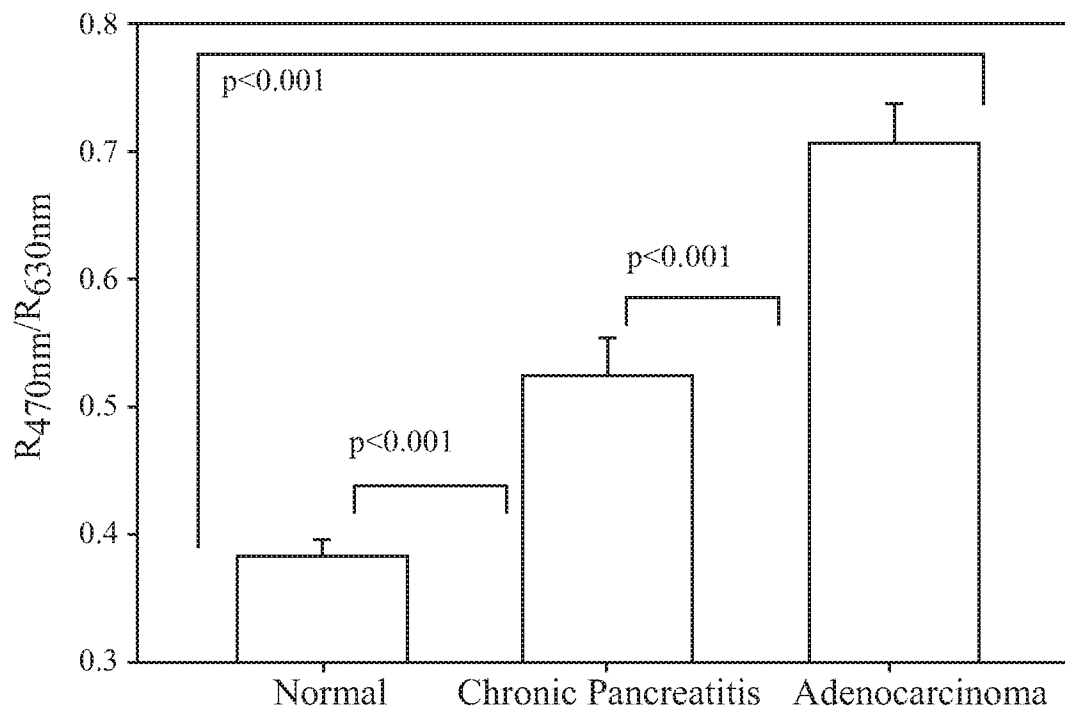
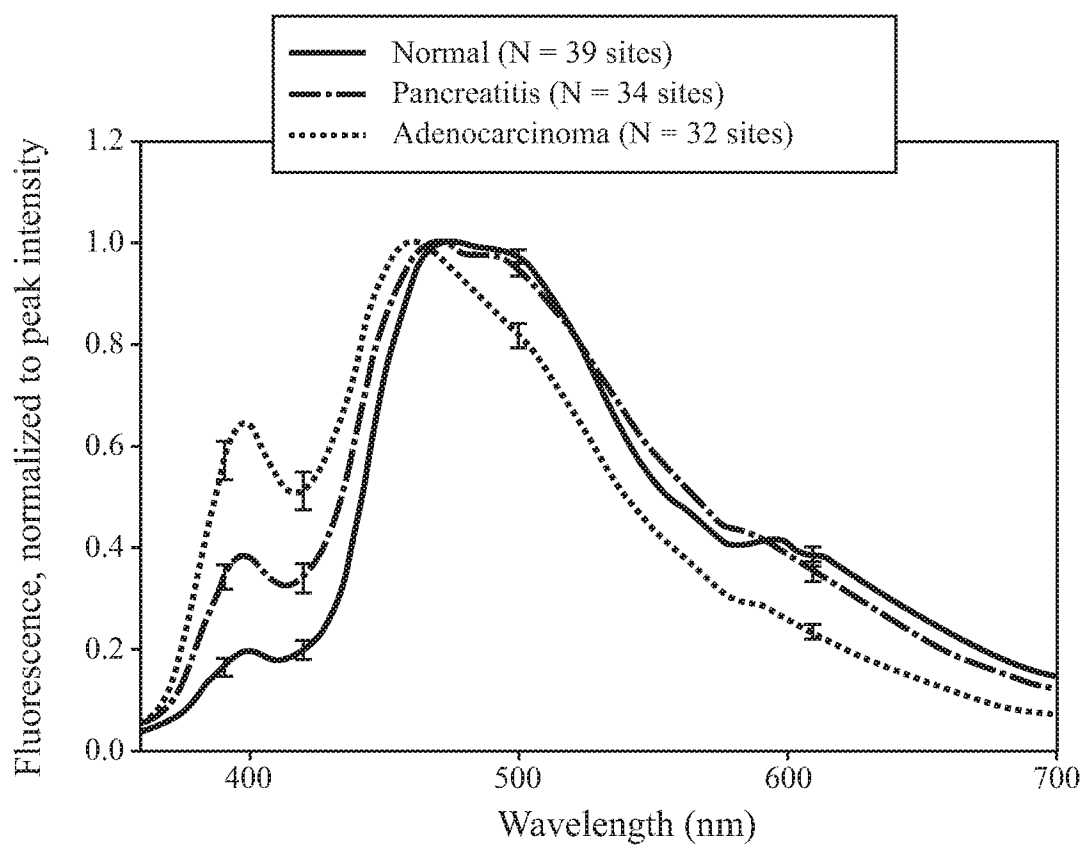
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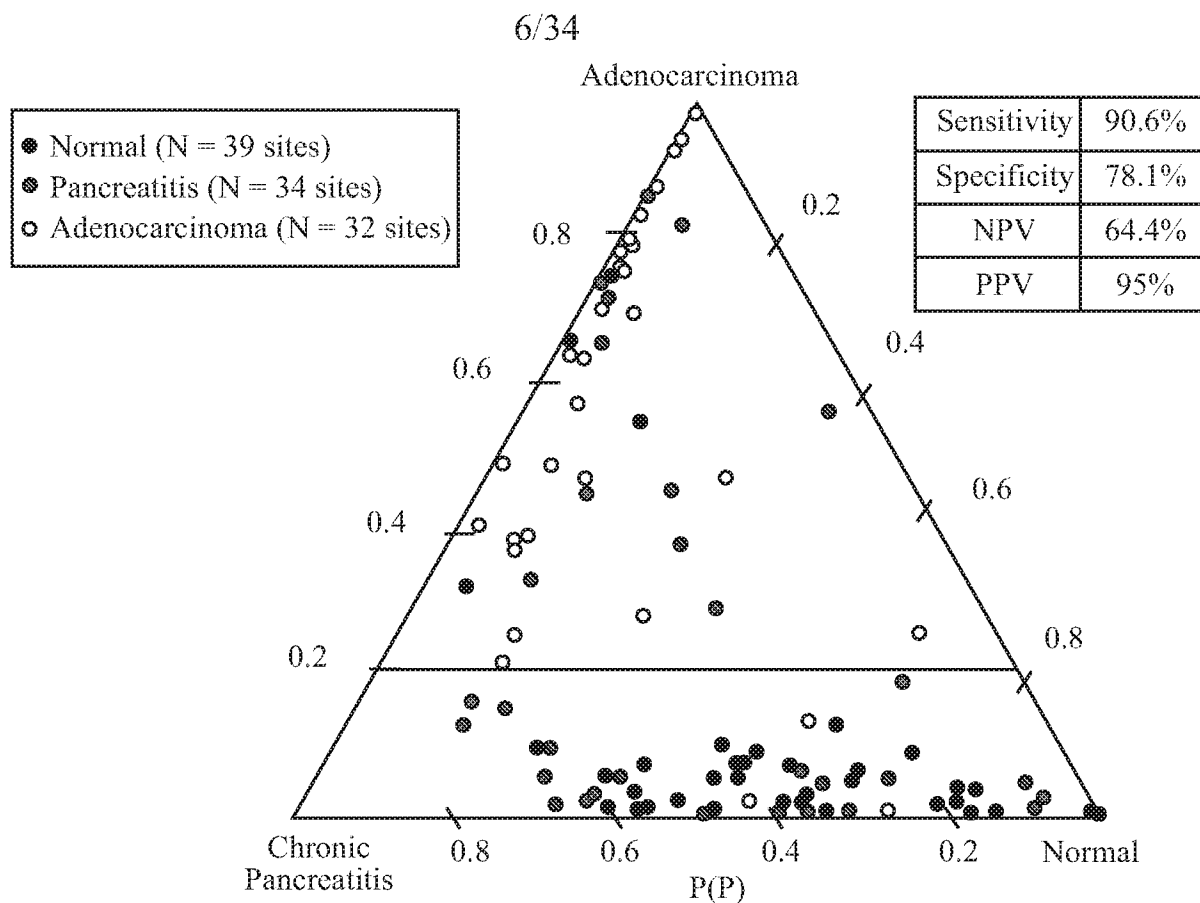
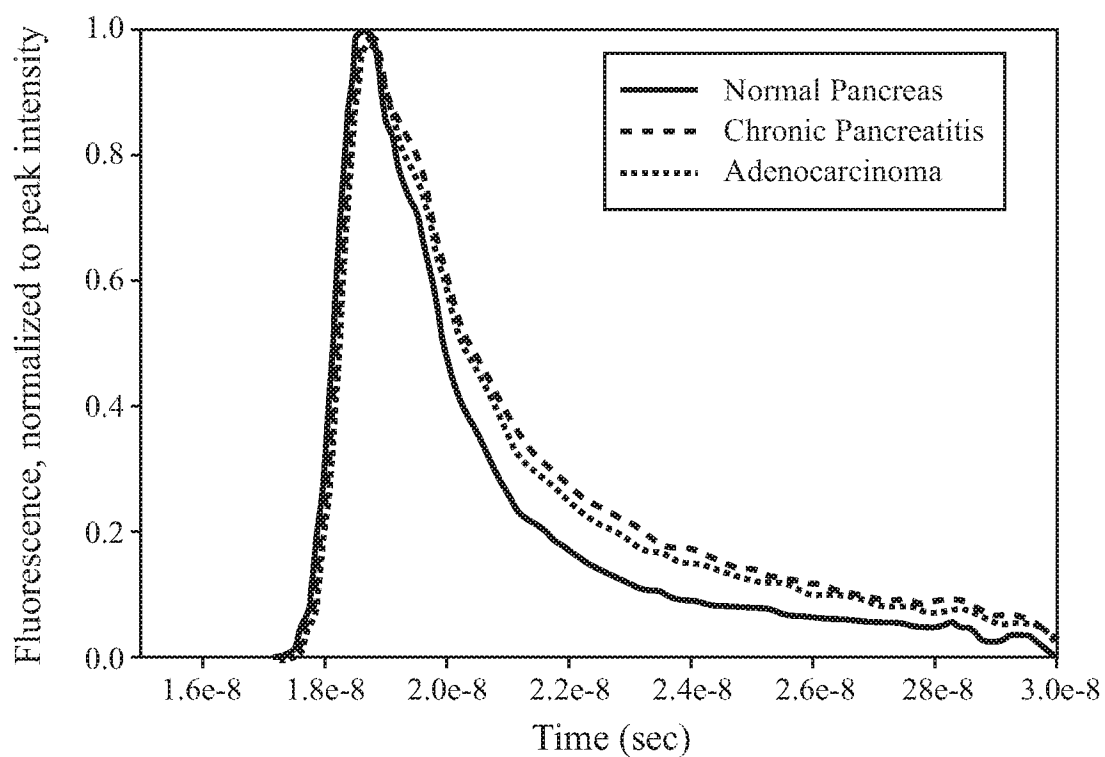


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**FIG. 5A****FIG. 5B**

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**FIG. 5C****FIG. 5D**

**FIG. 5E****FIG. 5F**

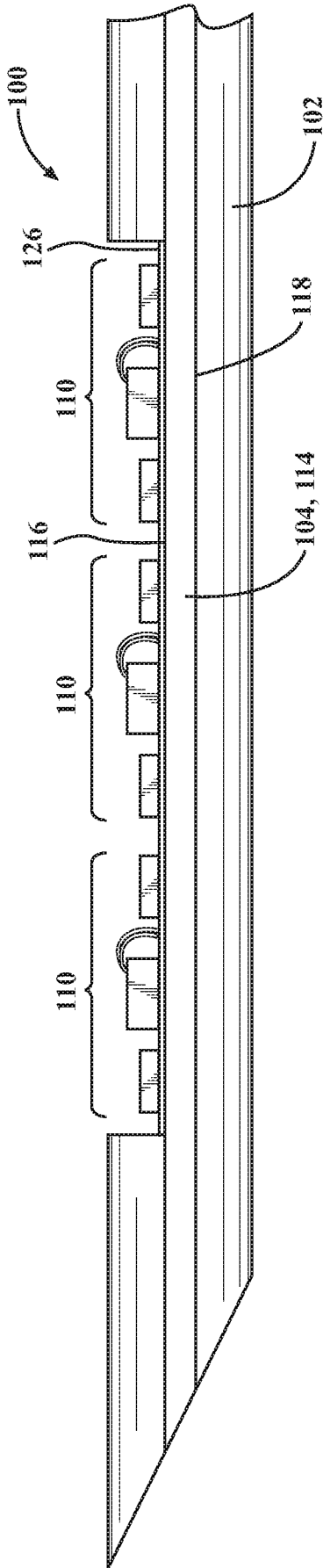


FIG. 7

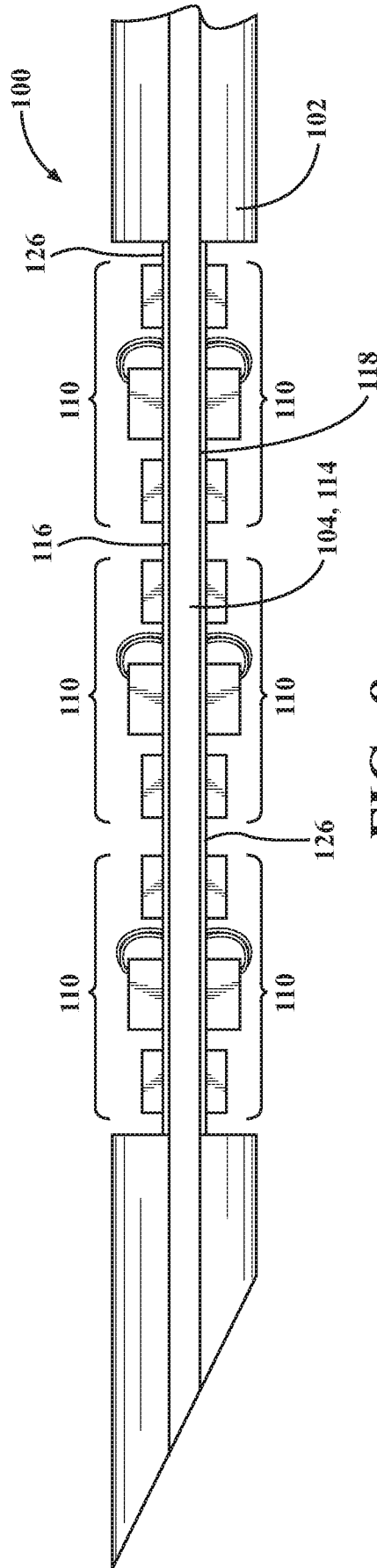
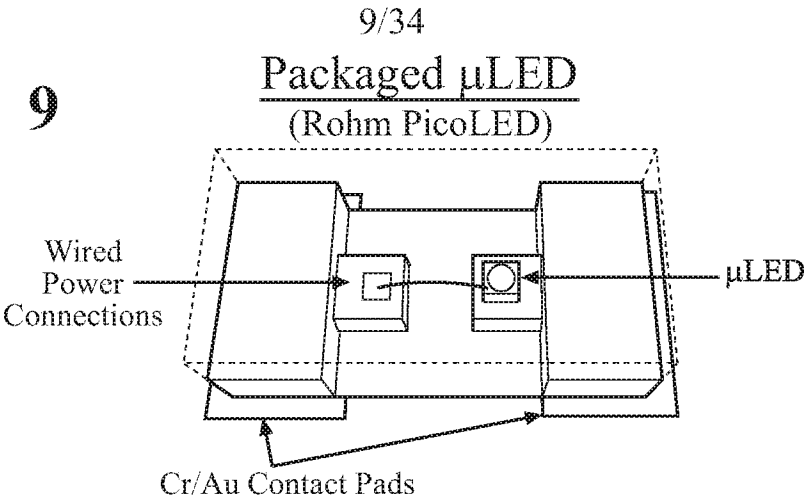


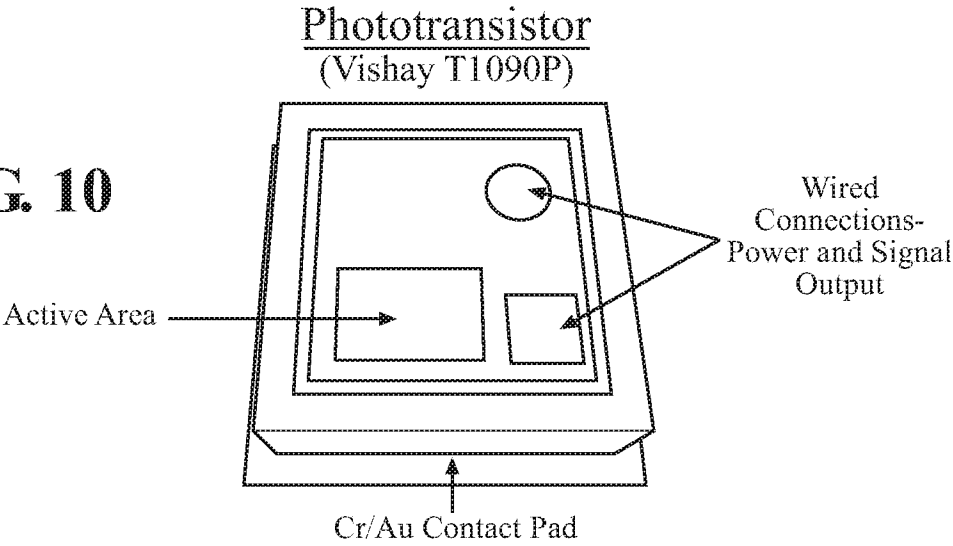
FIG. 8

FIG. 9



Component	Specification
Dimensions	0.300x0.600x0.200 mm
Brightness	17 mcd @ 470 nm, 60 mcd @ 630 nm
Forward Voltage	2.9V @ 470 nm, 2V @ 630 nm
Forward Current	5mA @ 470 nm, 20mA @ 630 nm

FIG. 10



Component	Specification
Dimensions	0.530x0.530x0.185 mm
Current Input	50 mA
Collector (Current) Output	0.43-0.77 mA @ 905 nm, E=1mW/cm ²
Sensitivity	-0.1@470 nm, -0.5@630 nm (Relative to maximum sensitivity)

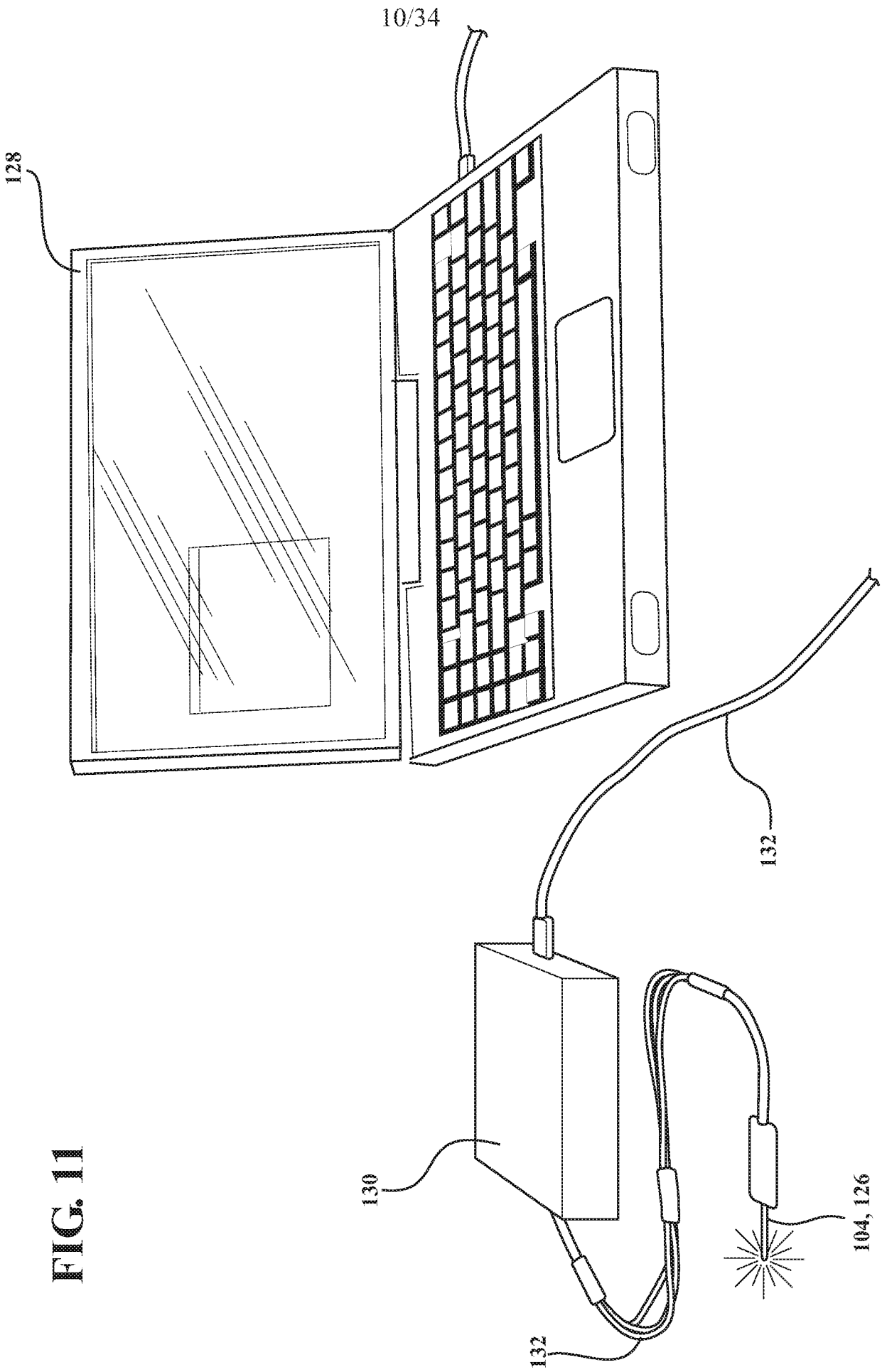


FIG. 11

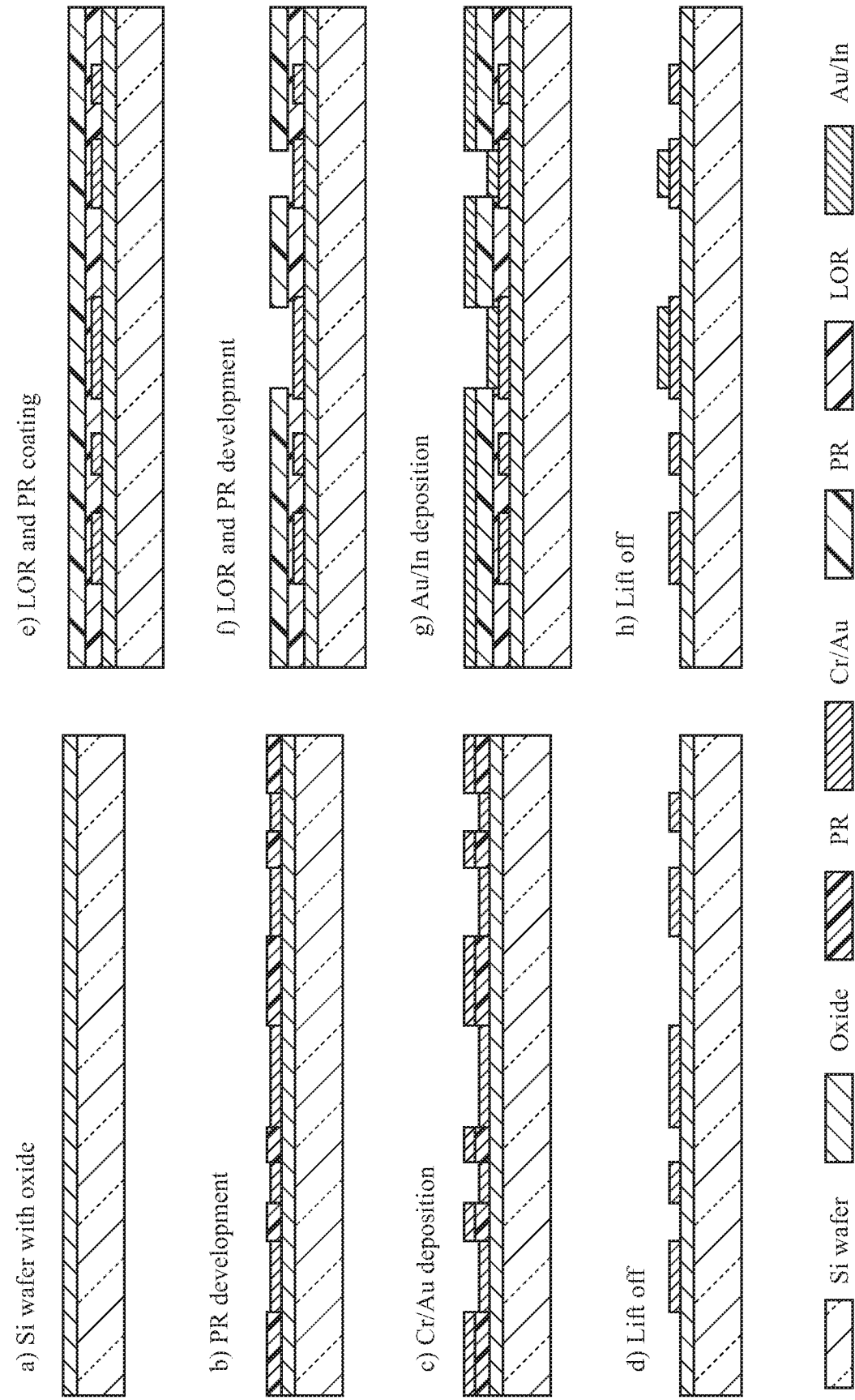
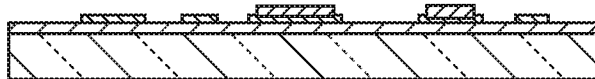


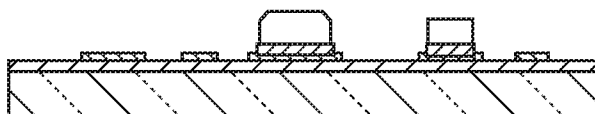
FIG. 12

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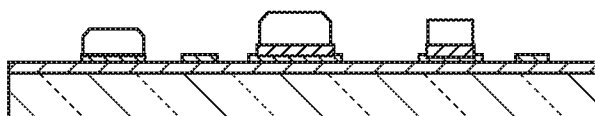
a) Rinse with acetone and IPA



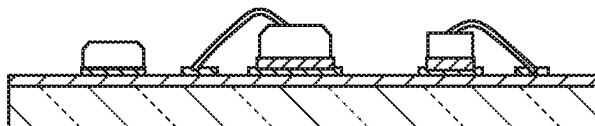
b) Eutectic bonding of PD and Red LED



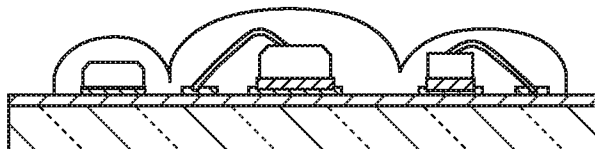
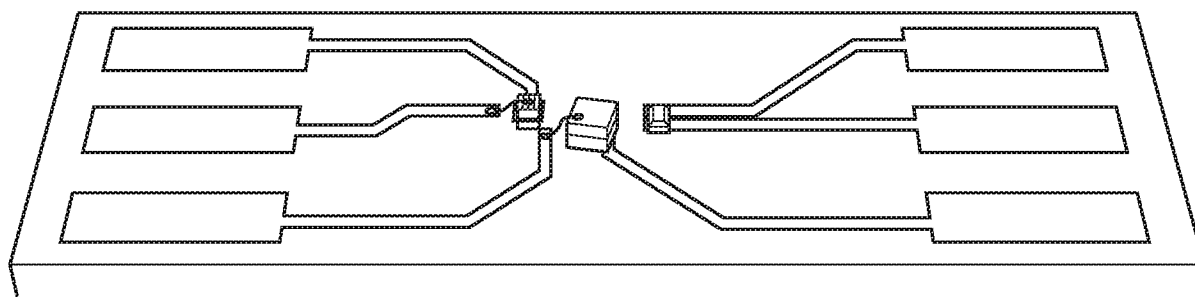
c) Eutectic bonding of Blue LED



d) Wire bonding on PD and Red LED



e) Epoxy Encapsulation

**FIG. 13****FIG. 14**

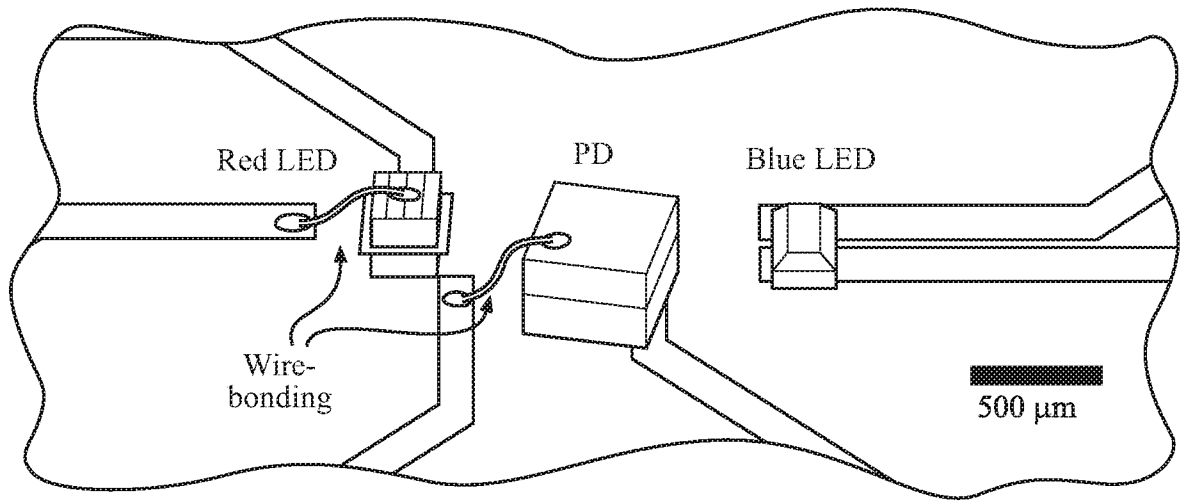


FIG. 15A

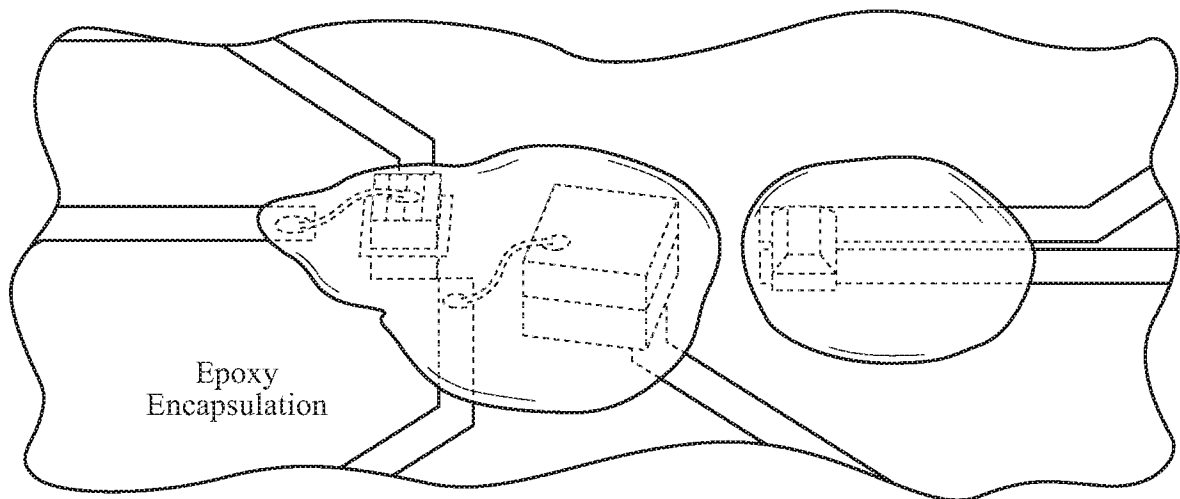


FIG. 15B

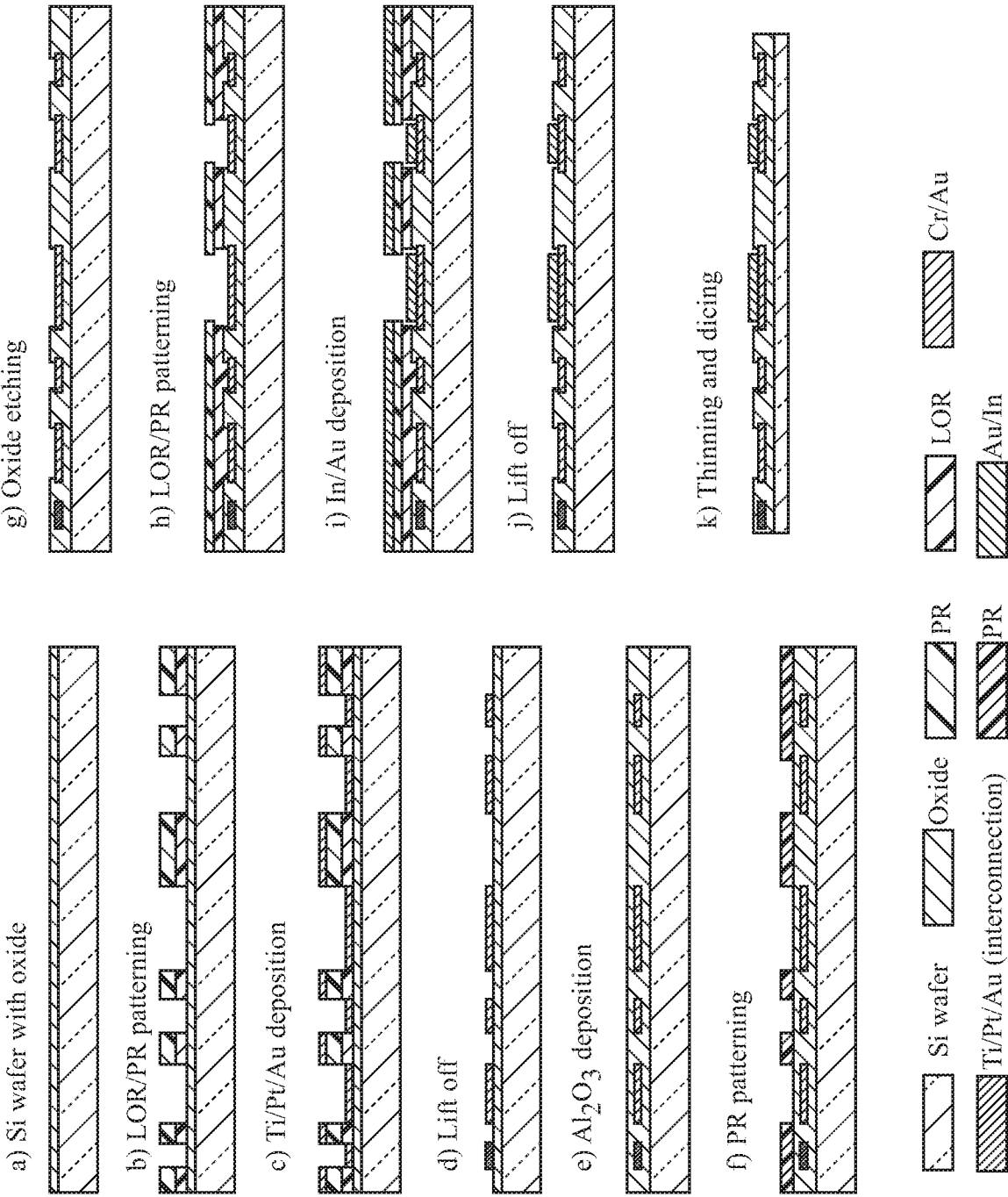


FIG. 16

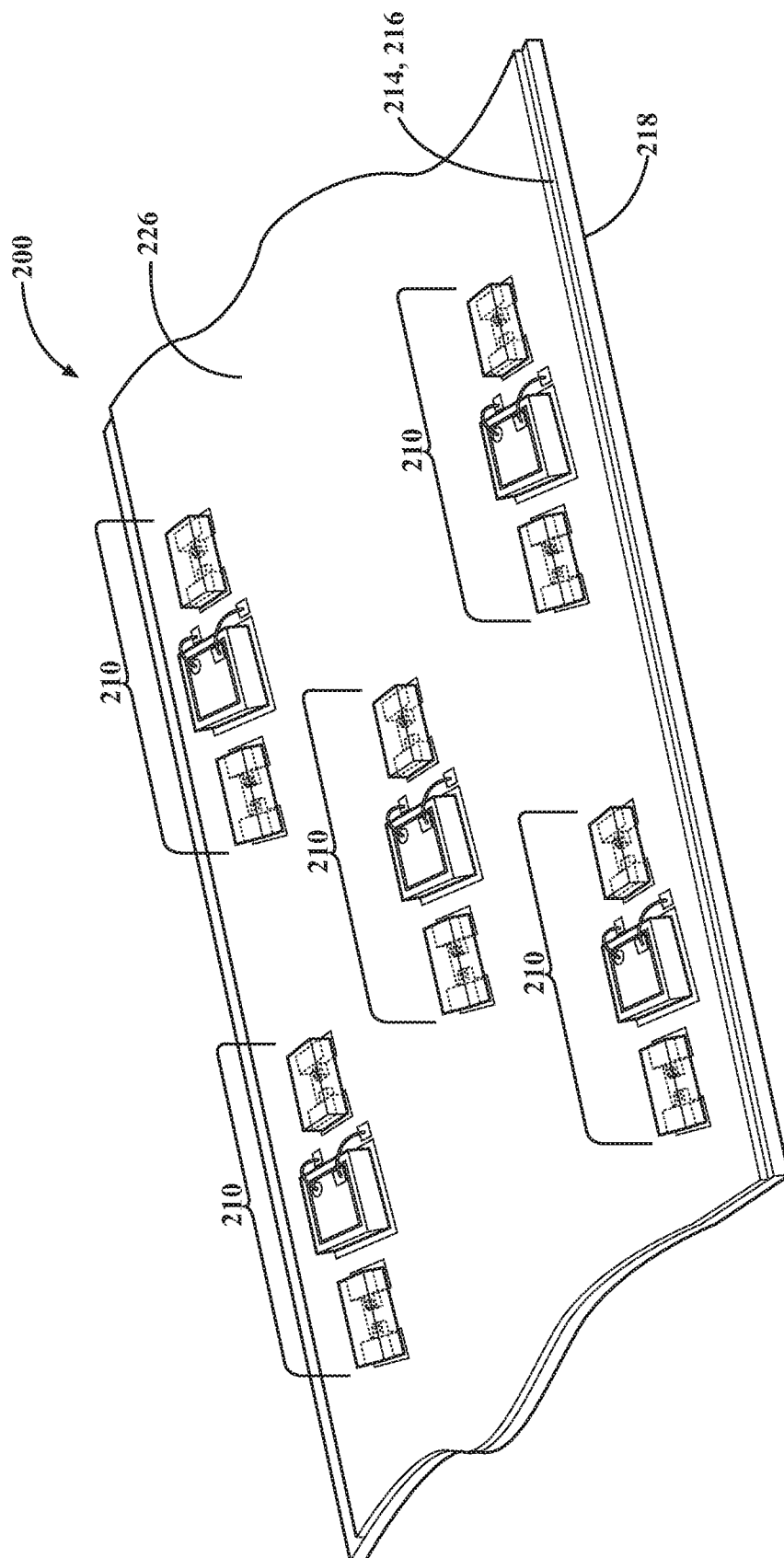


FIG. 17

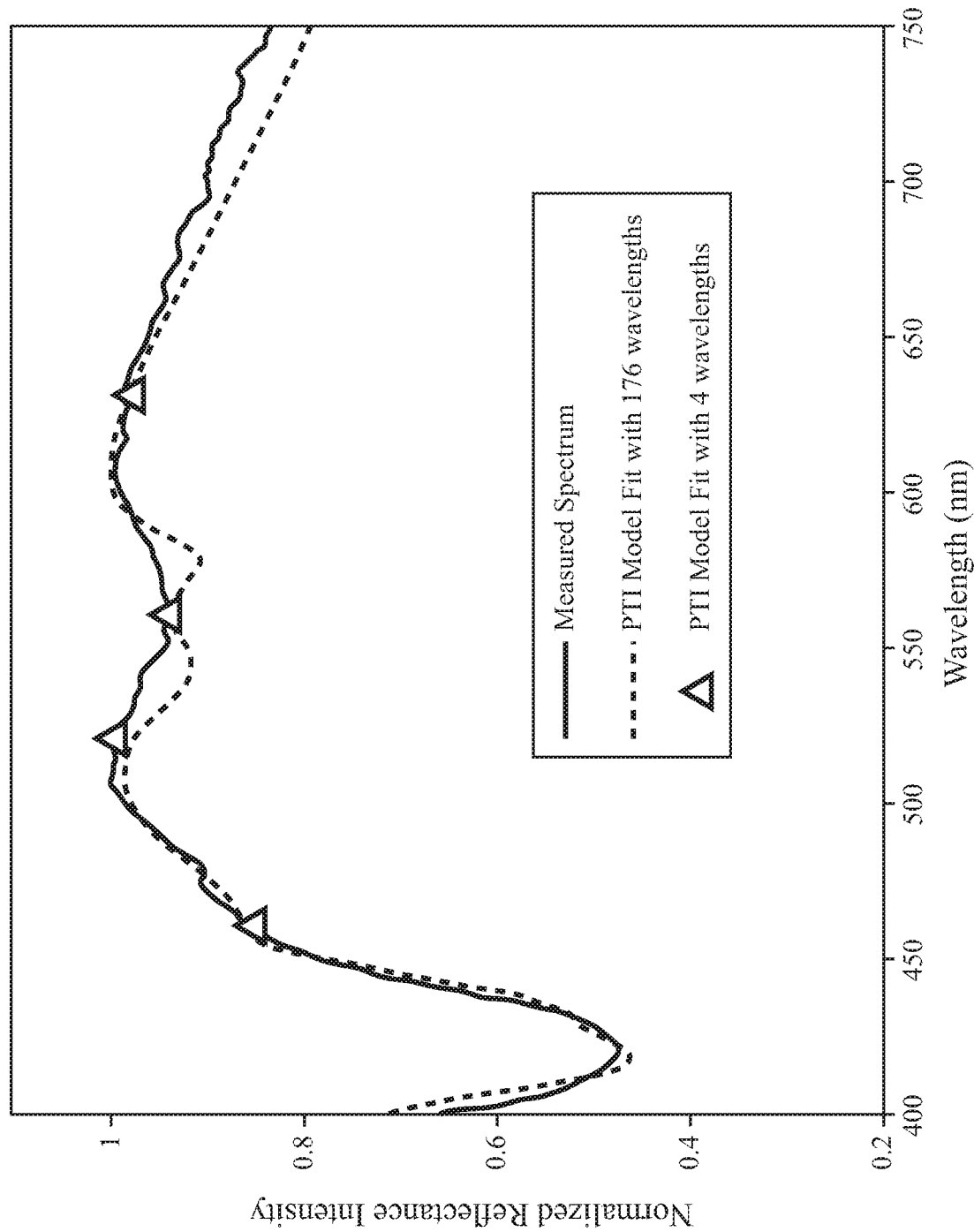
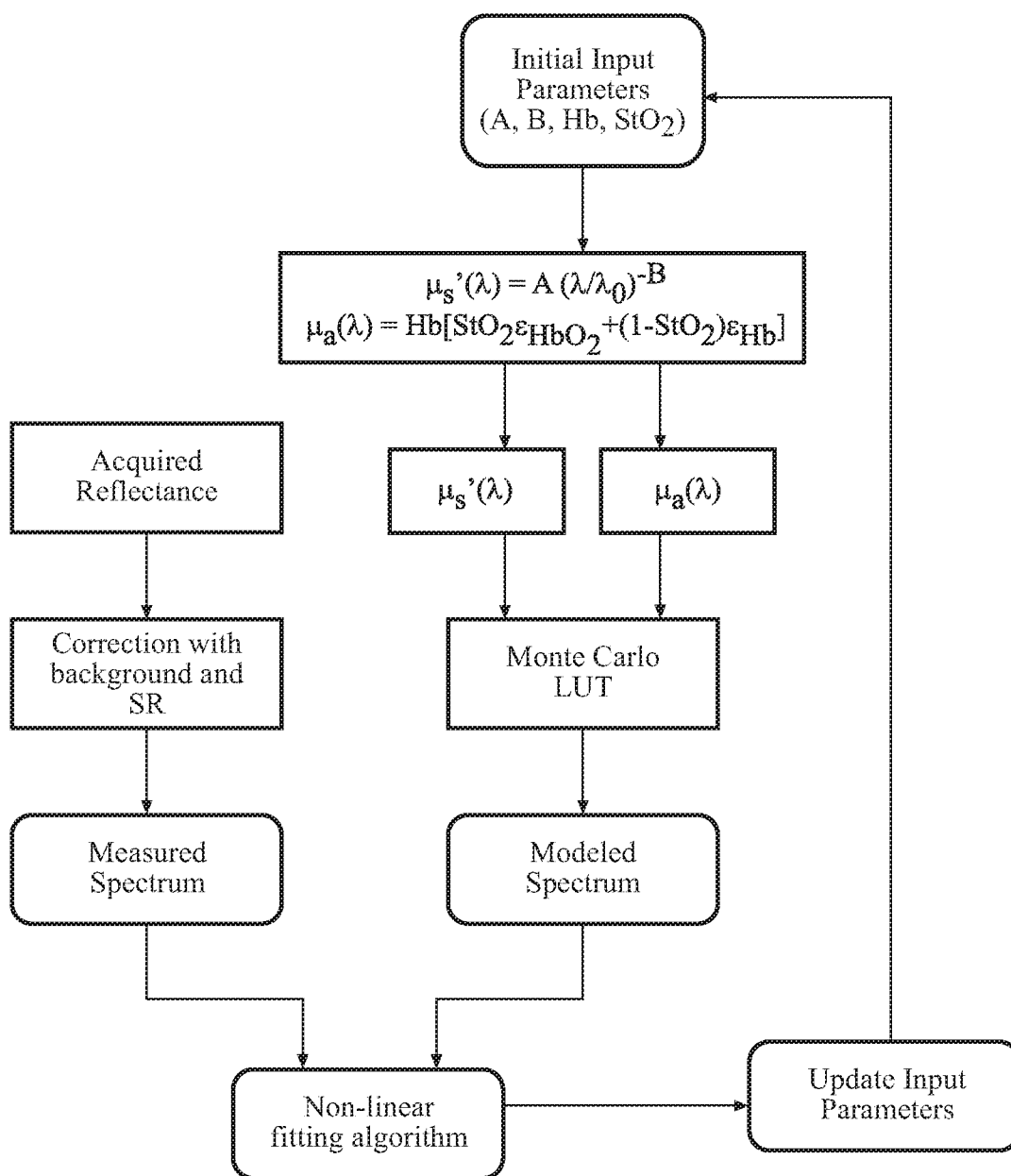


FIG. 18

Table 1. Comparison of extracted parameters by PTI model using 176 wavelengths and 4 wavelengths.

	Tissue Type (Number of measurements)	176 wavelengths	4 wavelengths
Nuclear Size ($\mu\text{m} \pm \text{Std. Error}$)	Normal (39)	8.96 ± 0.10	8.78 ± 0.10
	Chronic Pancreatitis (34)	9.20 ± 0.22	9.14 ± 0.16
	Adenocarcinoma (32)	10.70 ± 0.30	10.06 ± 0.25
Nuclear Refractive Index ($\pm \text{Std. Error}$)	Normal (39)	1.372 ± 0.001	1.373 ± 0.001
	Chronic Pancreatitis (34)	1.375 ± 0.002	1.374 ± 0.001
	Adenocarcinoma (32)	1.391 ± 0.002	1.383 ± 0.001

FIG. 19

**FIG. 20**

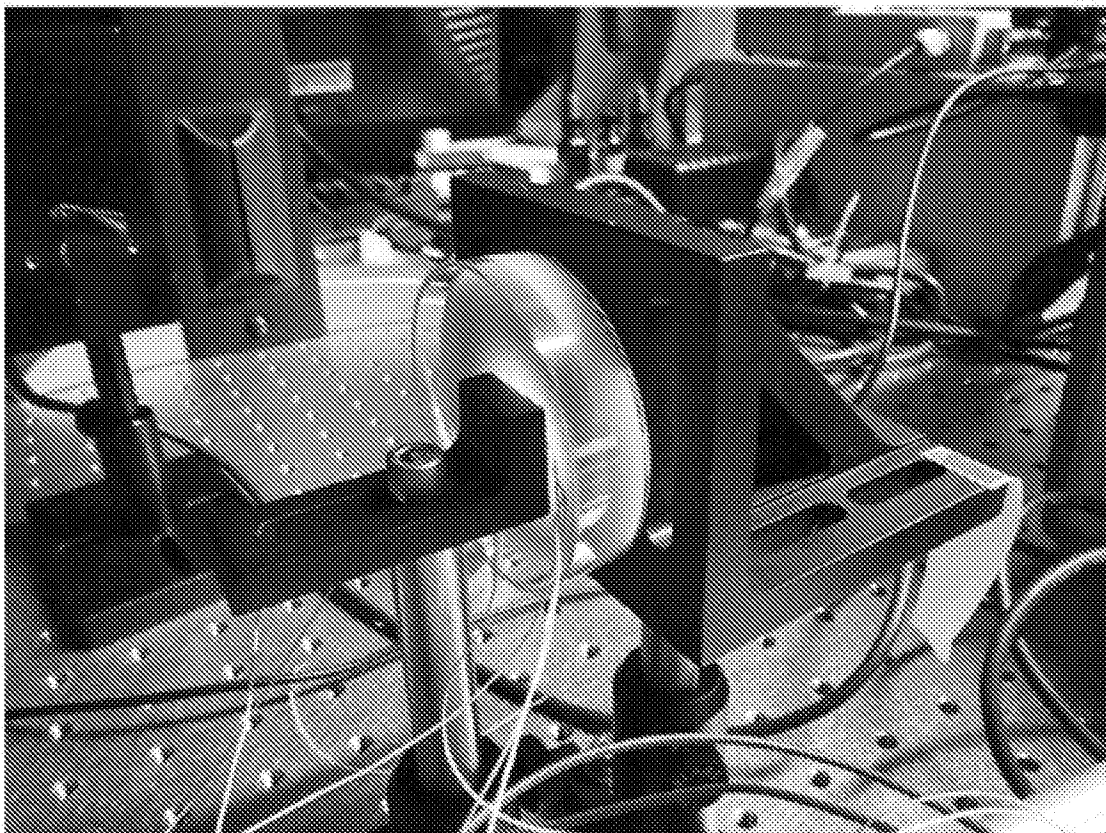


FIG. 21A

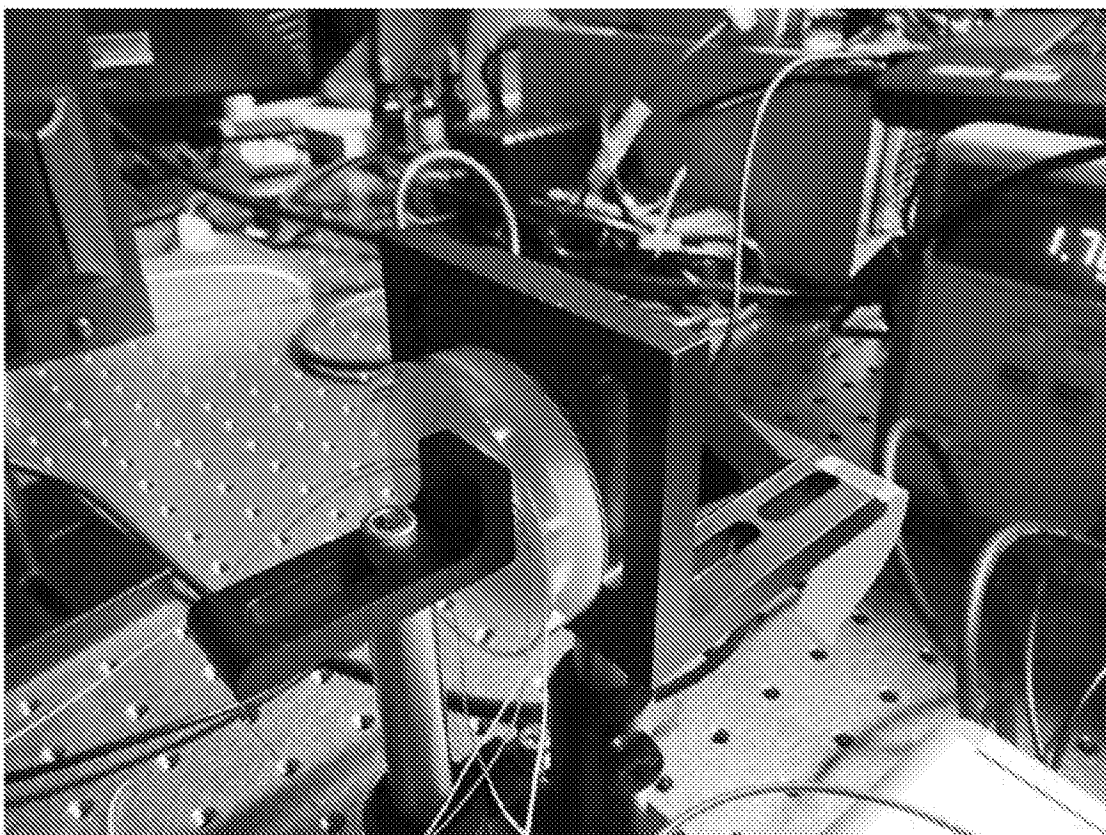
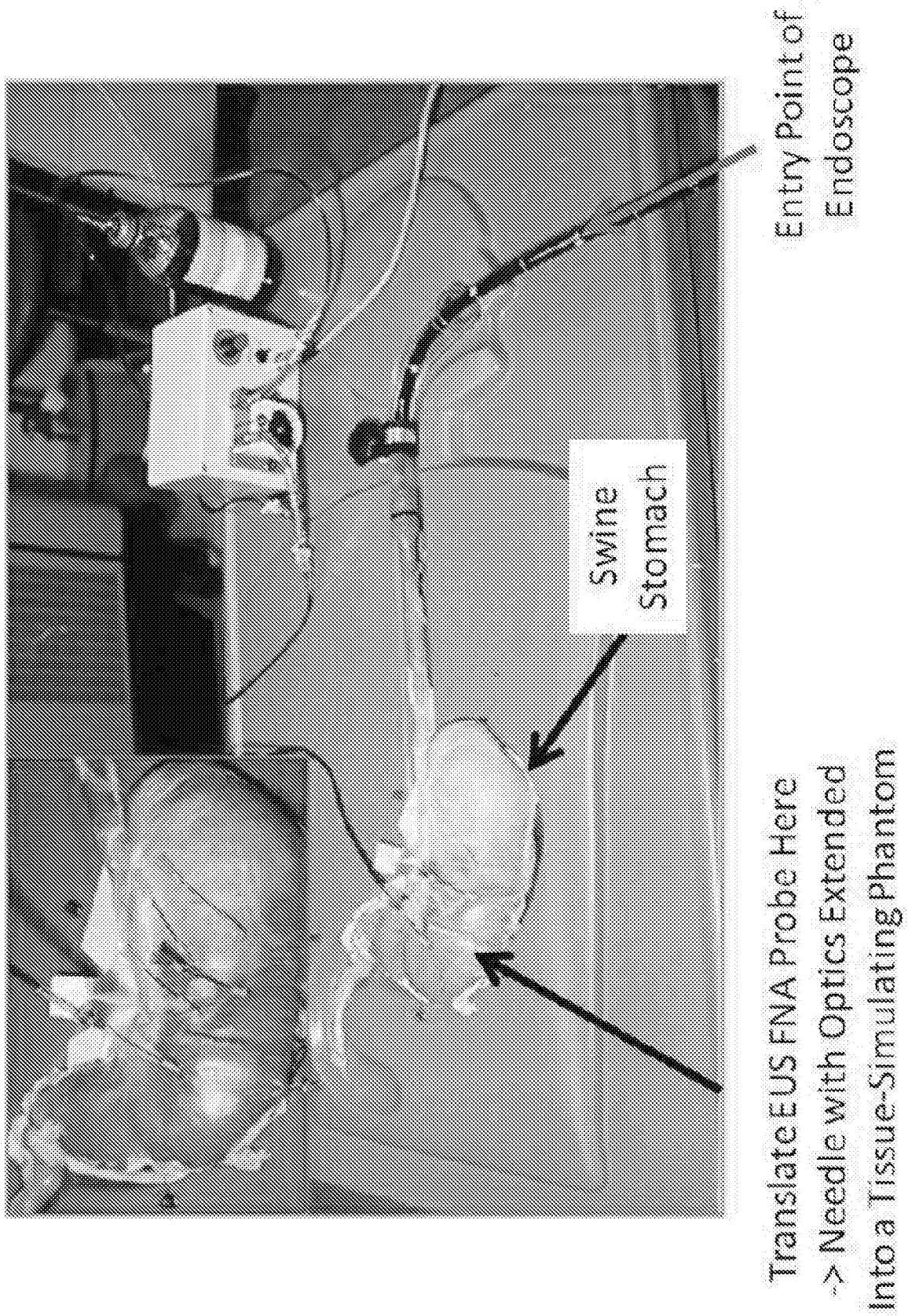


FIG. 21B

**FIG. 22**

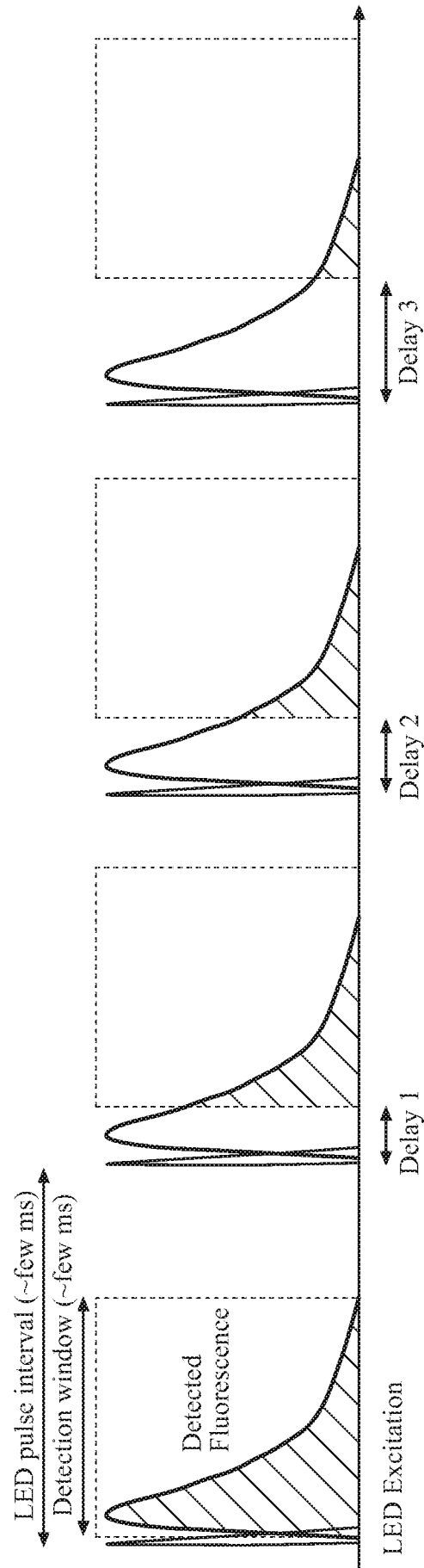
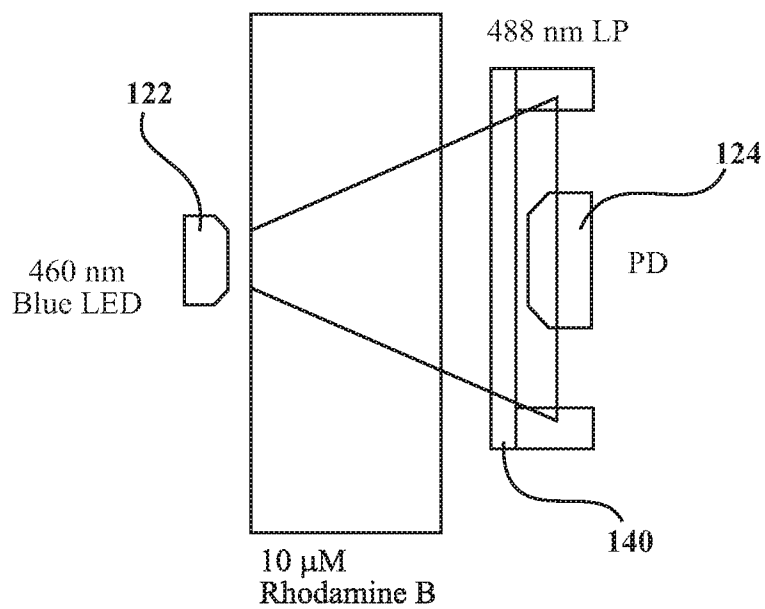
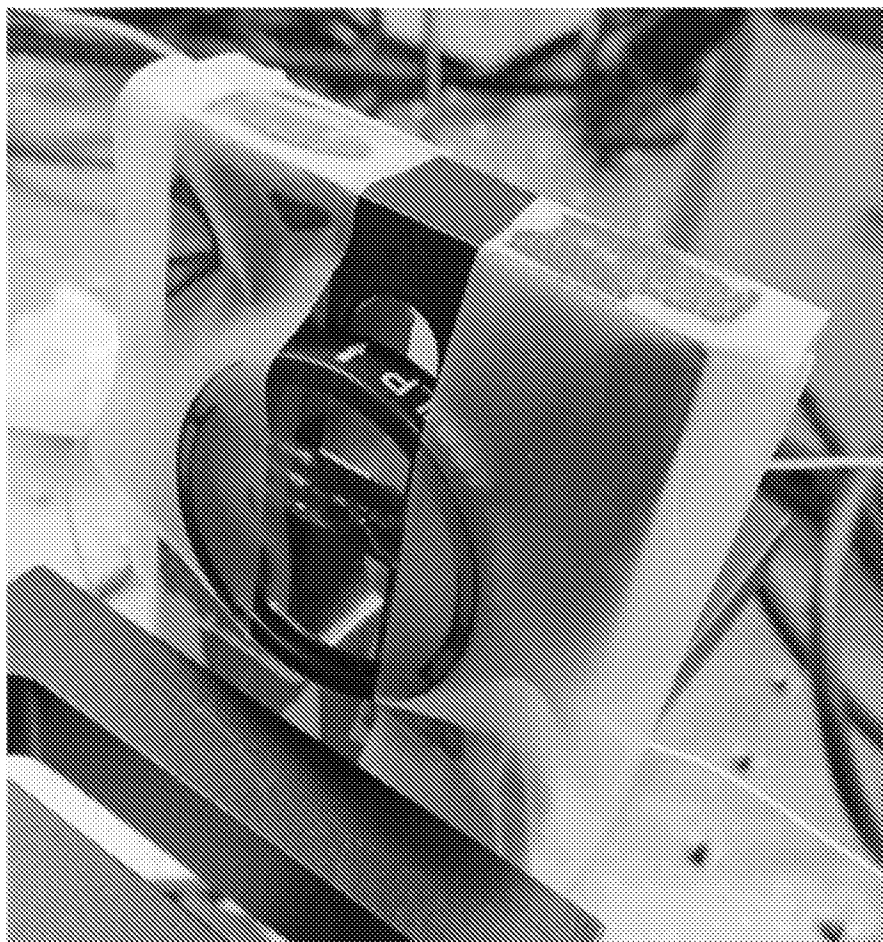
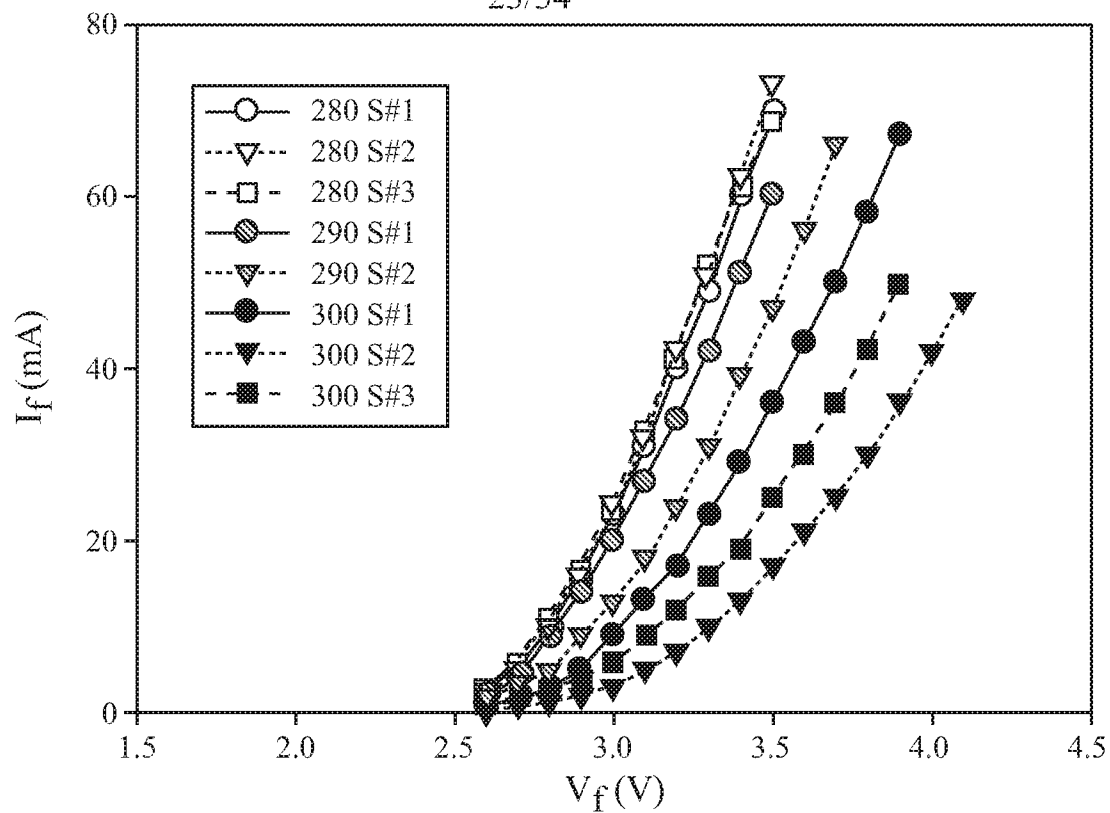
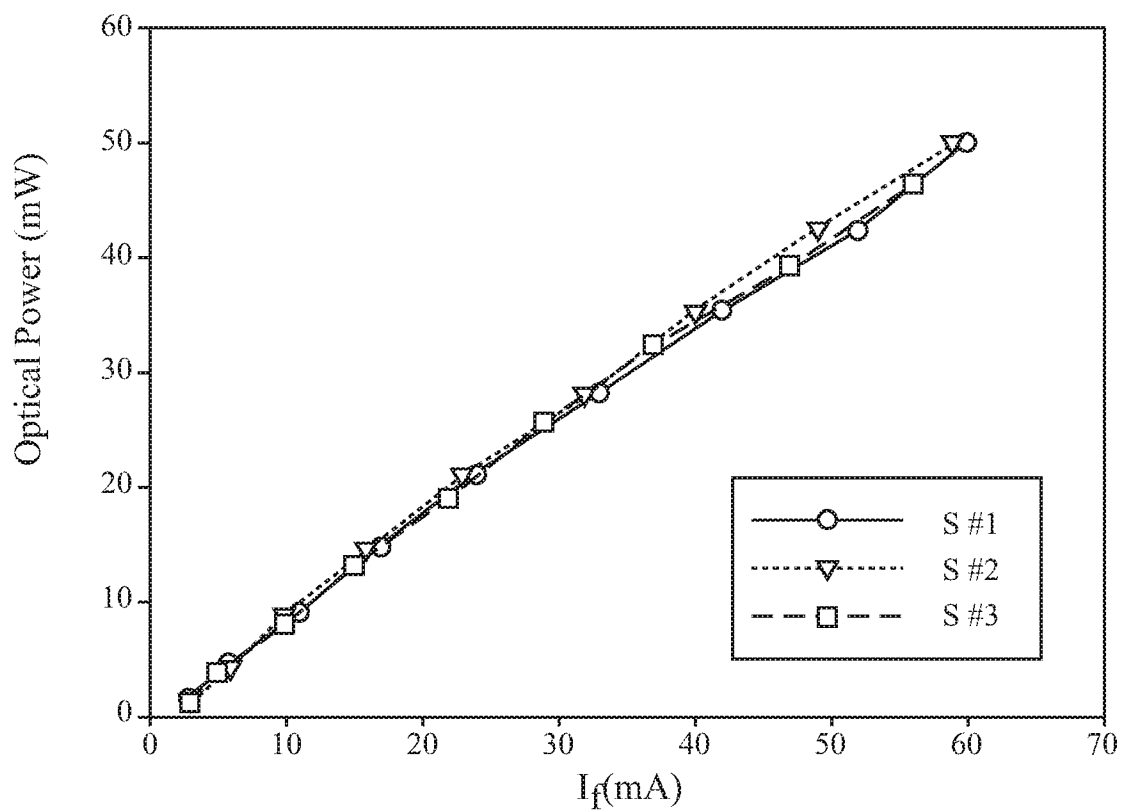


FIG. 23

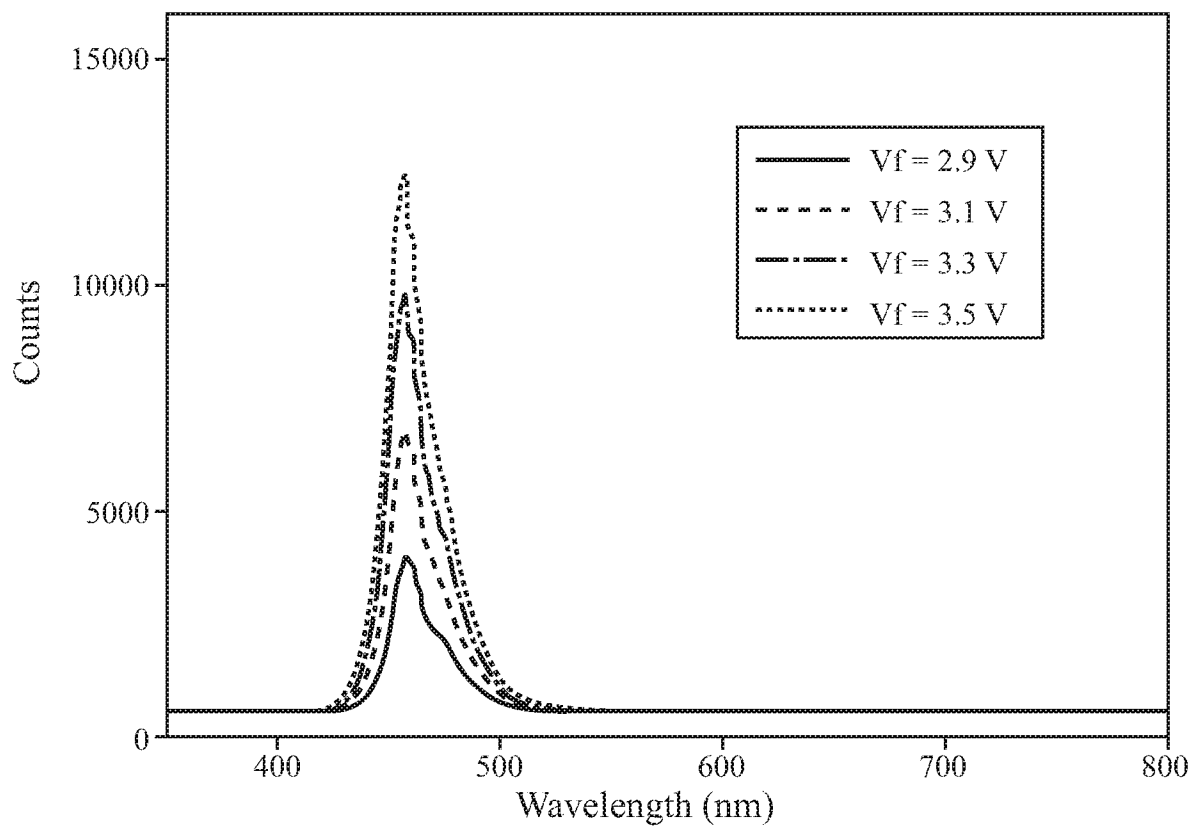
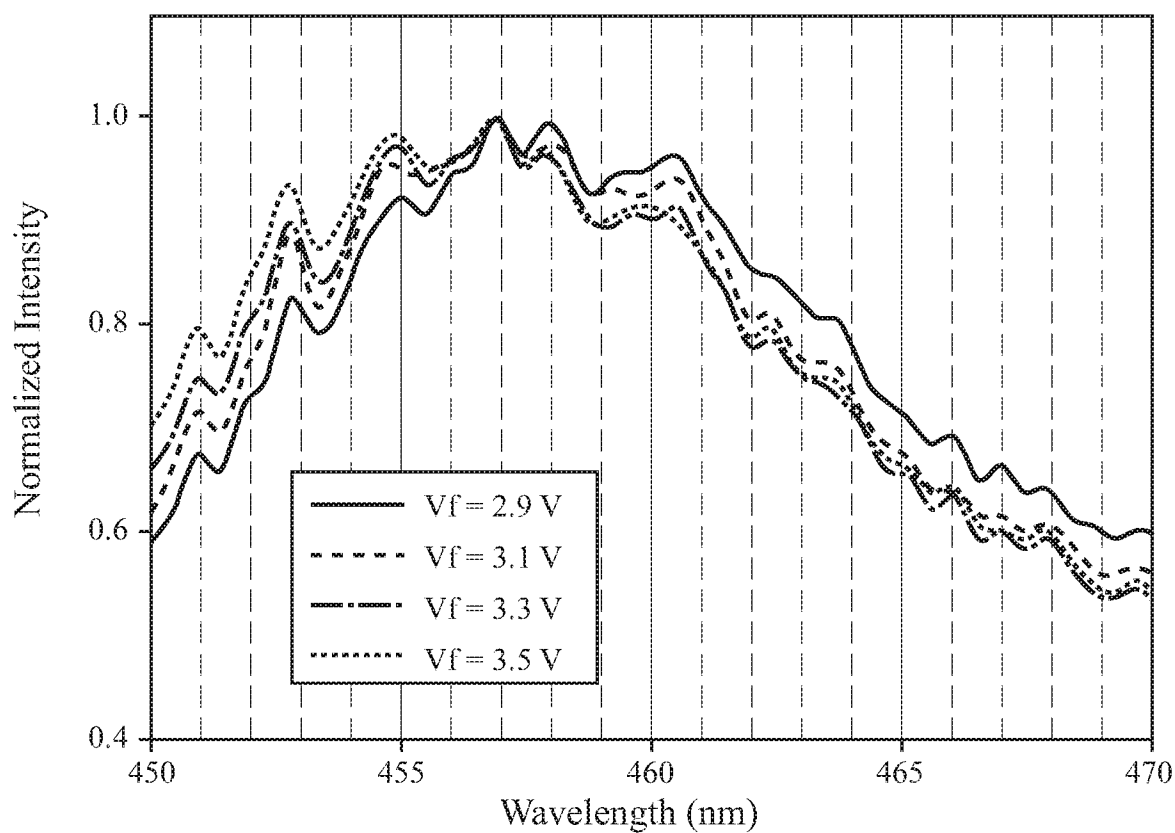
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**FIG. 24A****FIG. 24B**

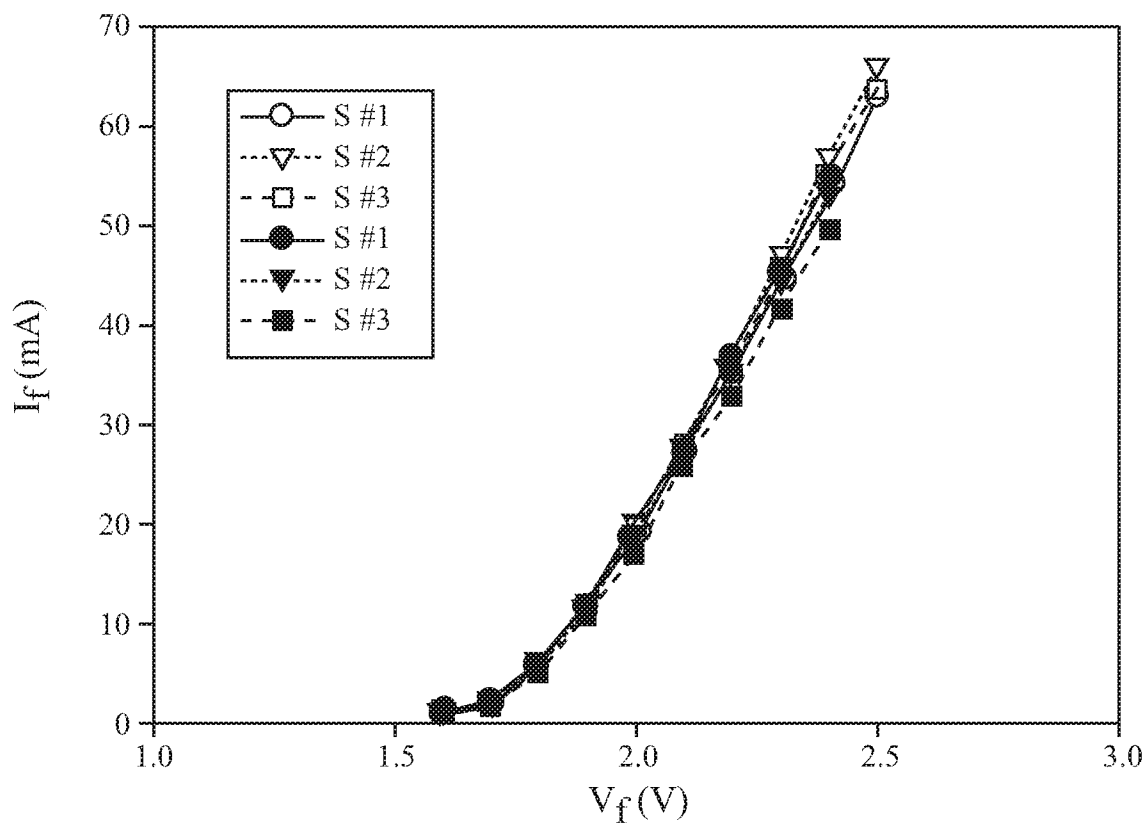
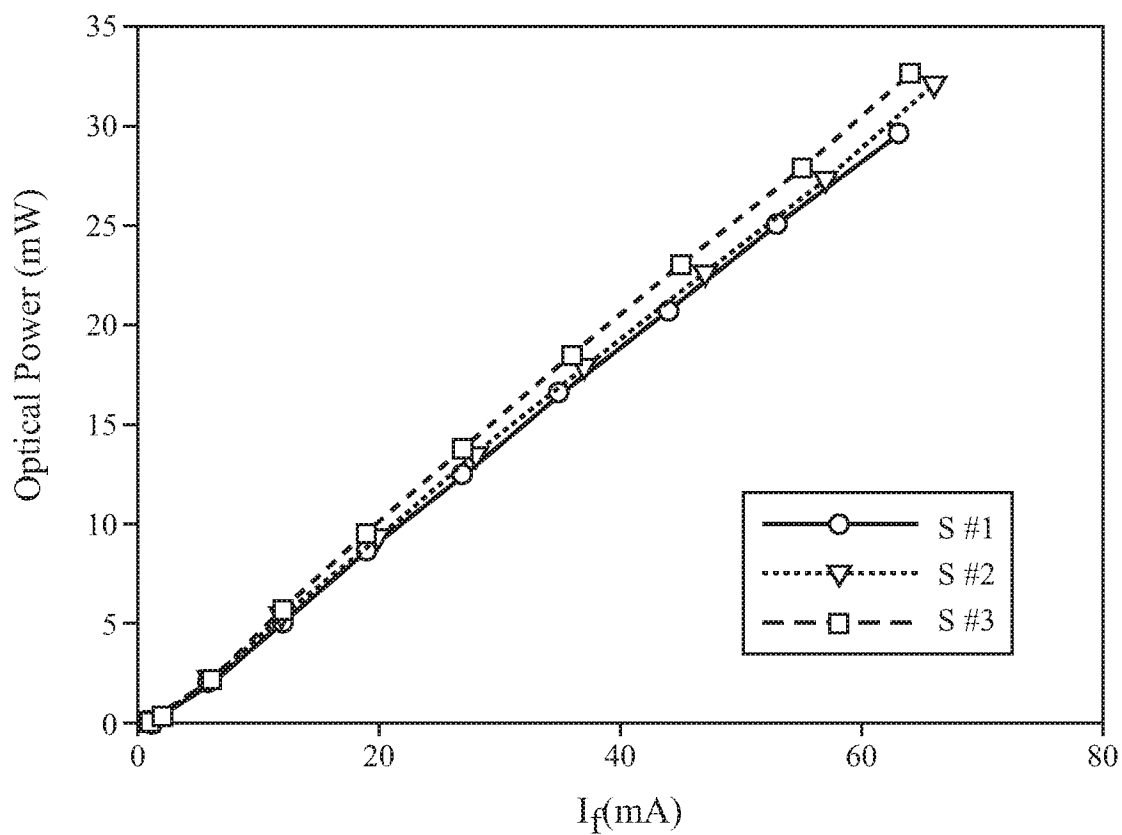
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**FIG. 25A****FIG. 25B**

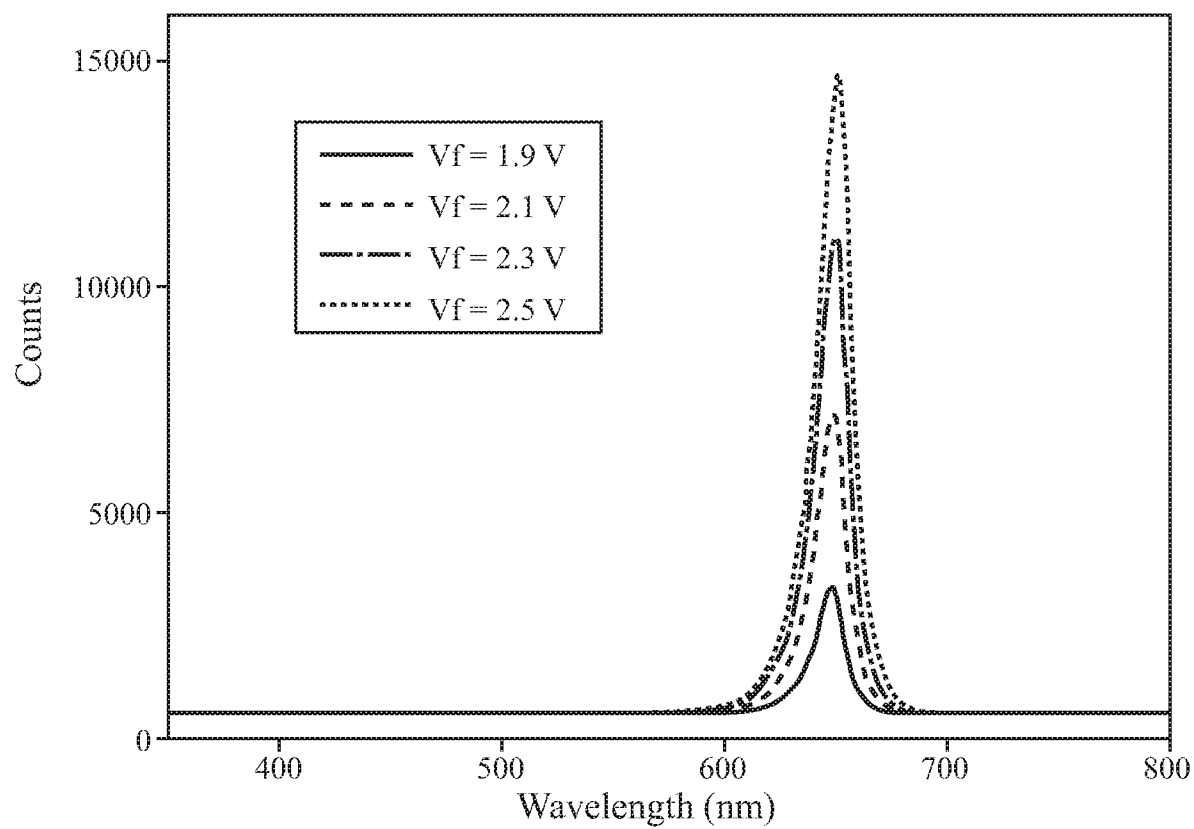
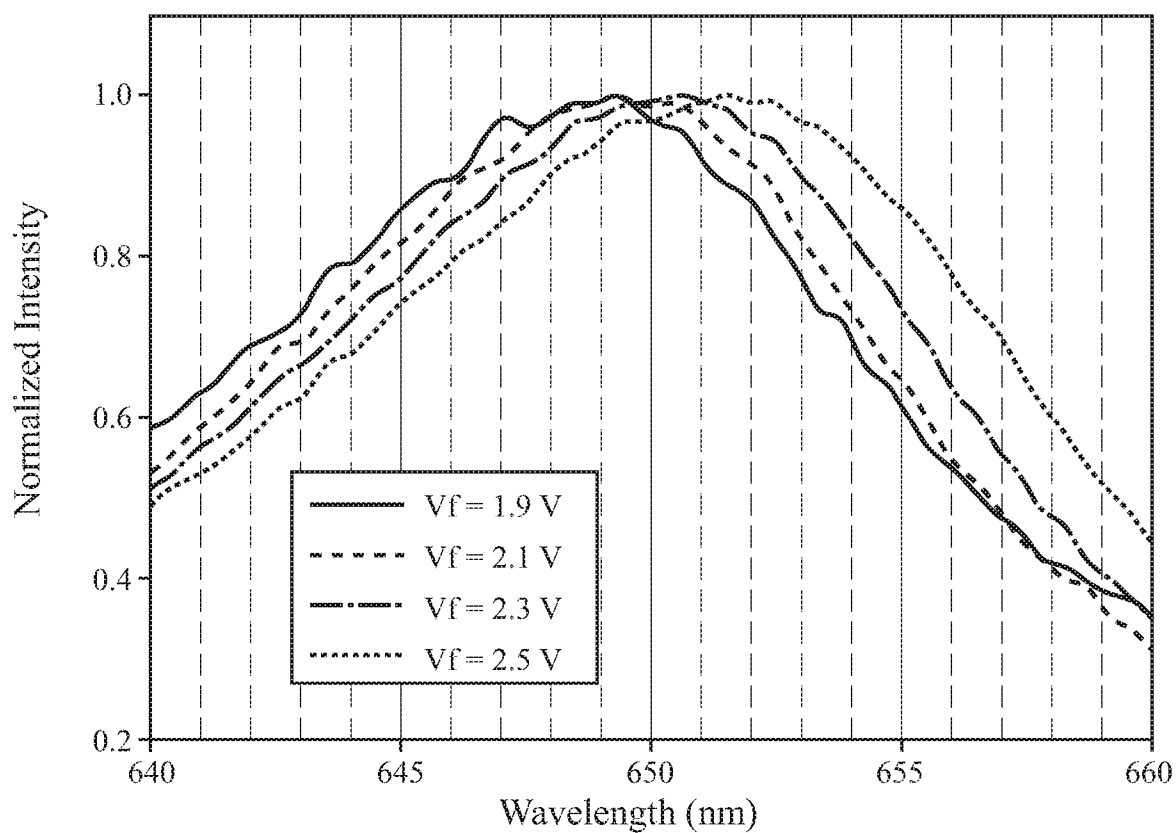
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**FIG. 25C****FIG. 25D**

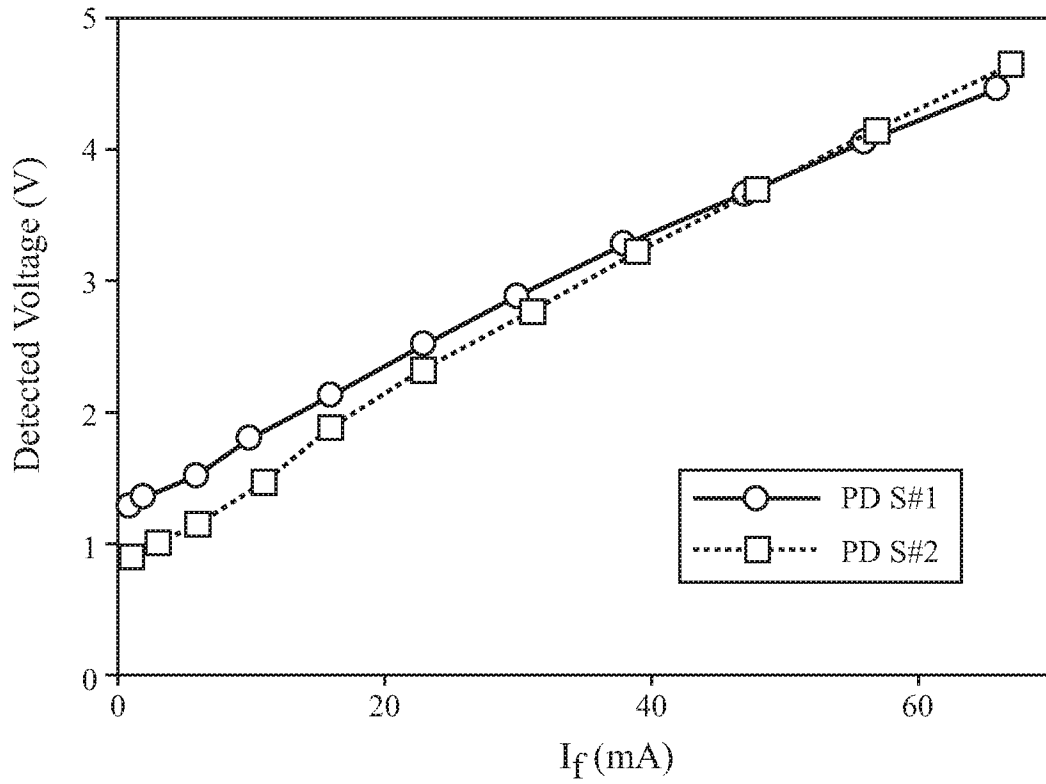
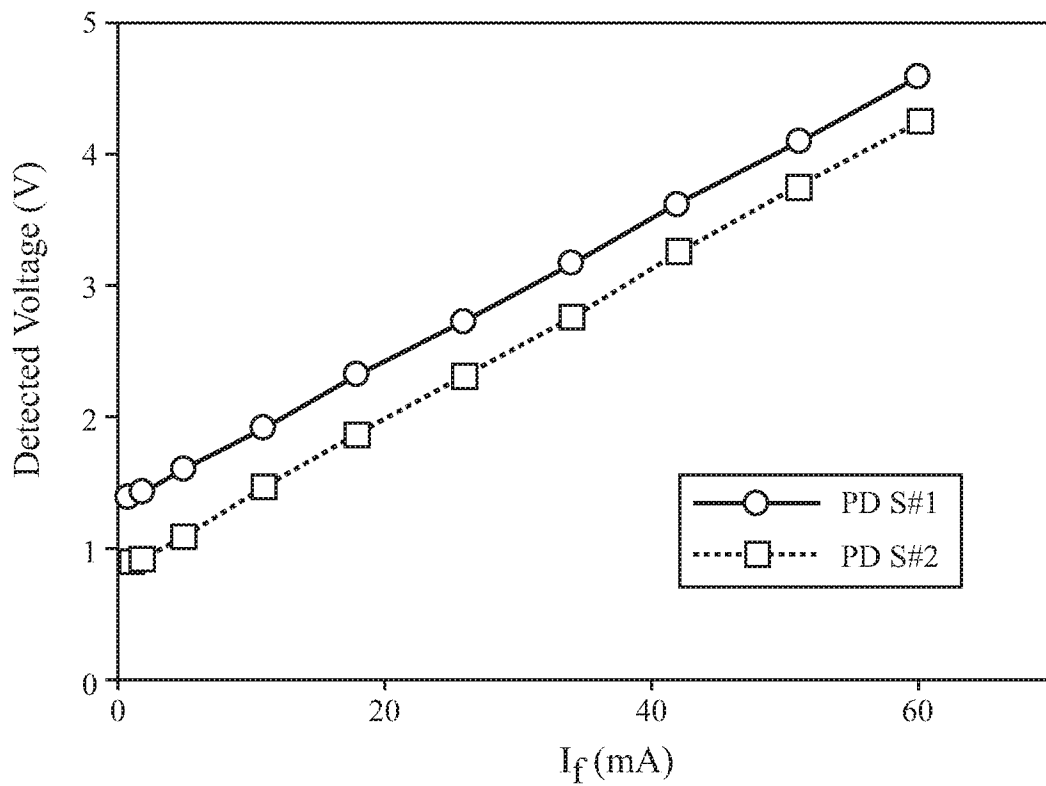
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**FIG. 26A****FIG. 26B**

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**FIG. 26C****FIG. 26D**

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**FIG. 27A****FIG. 27B**

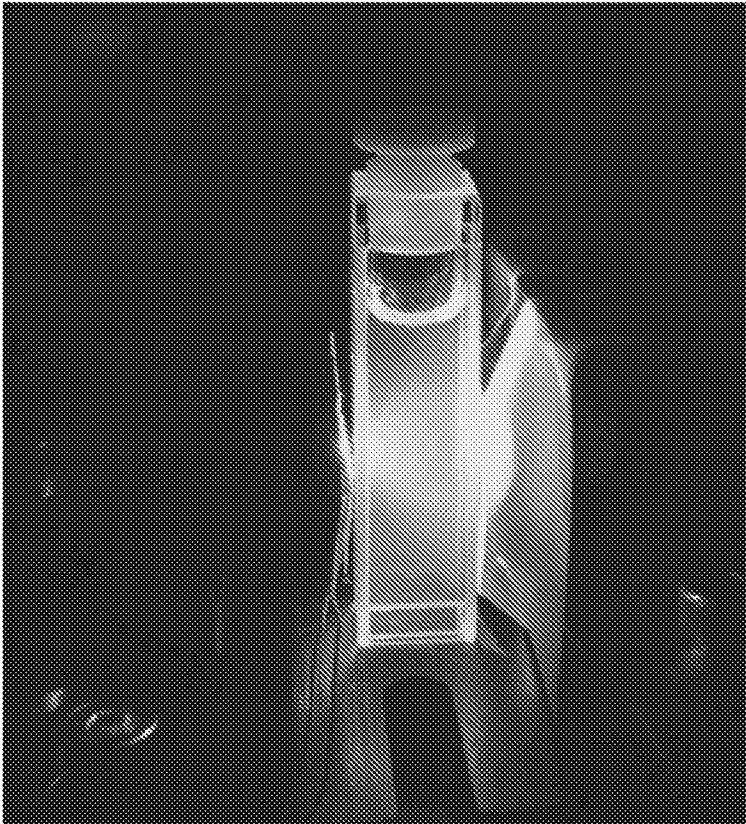


FIG. 28A

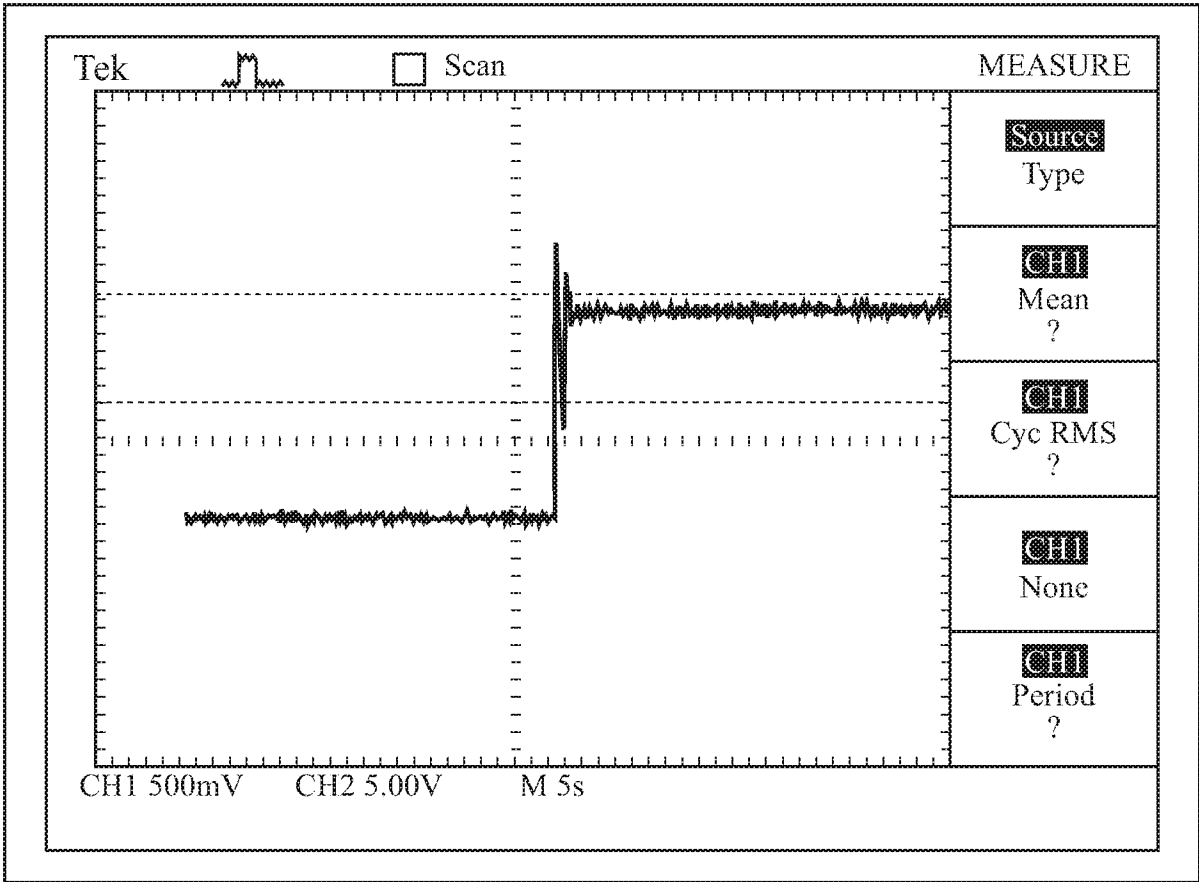
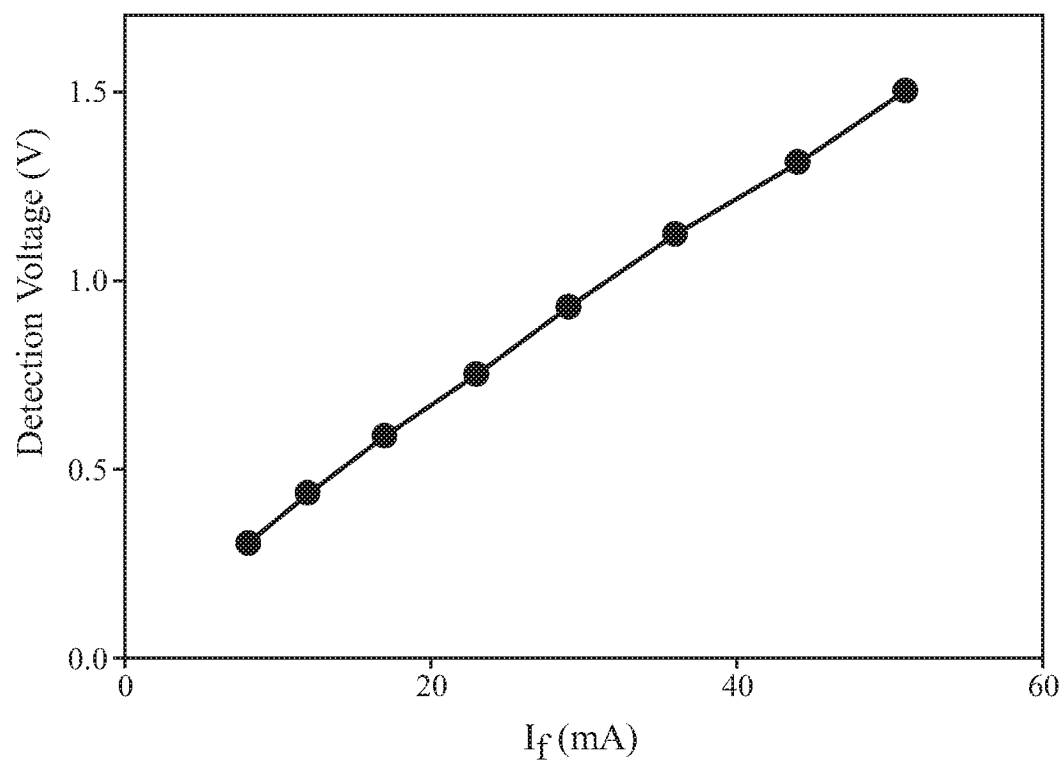


FIG. 28B

**FIG. 28C**

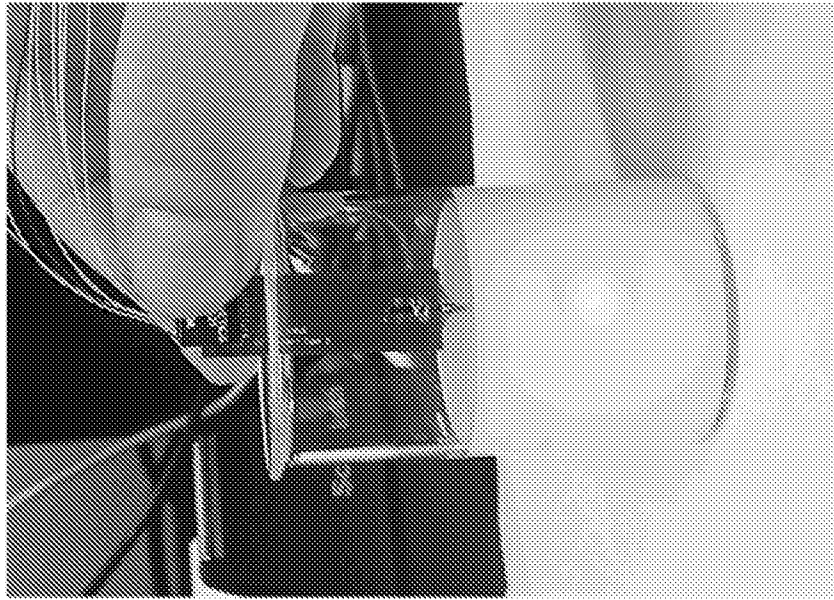


FIG. 29C

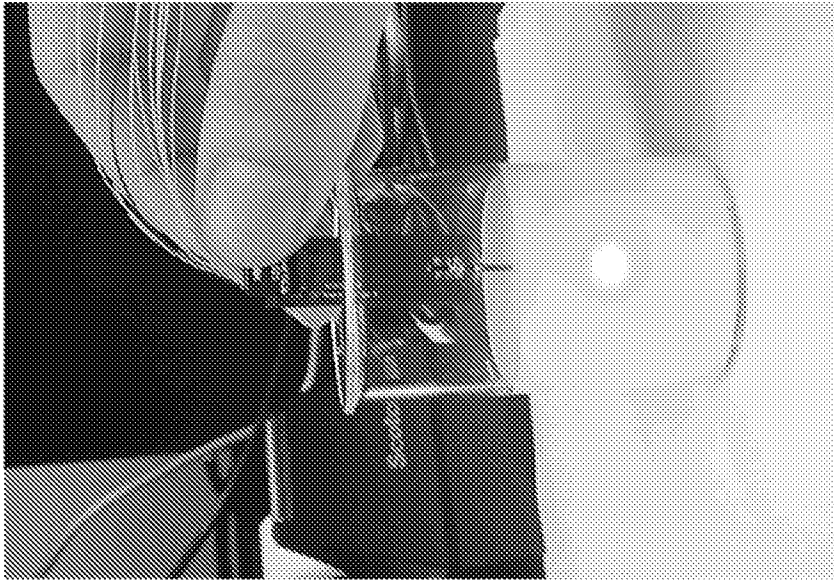


FIG. 29B



FIG. 29A

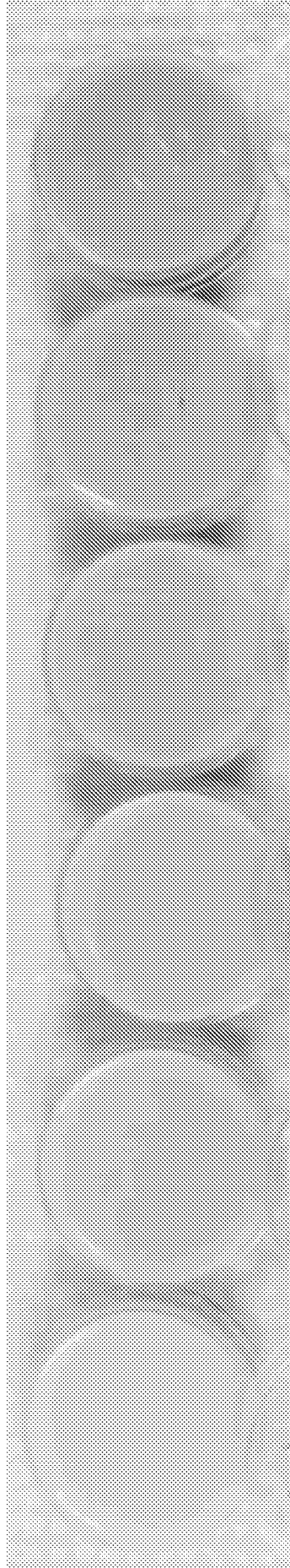


FIG. 30

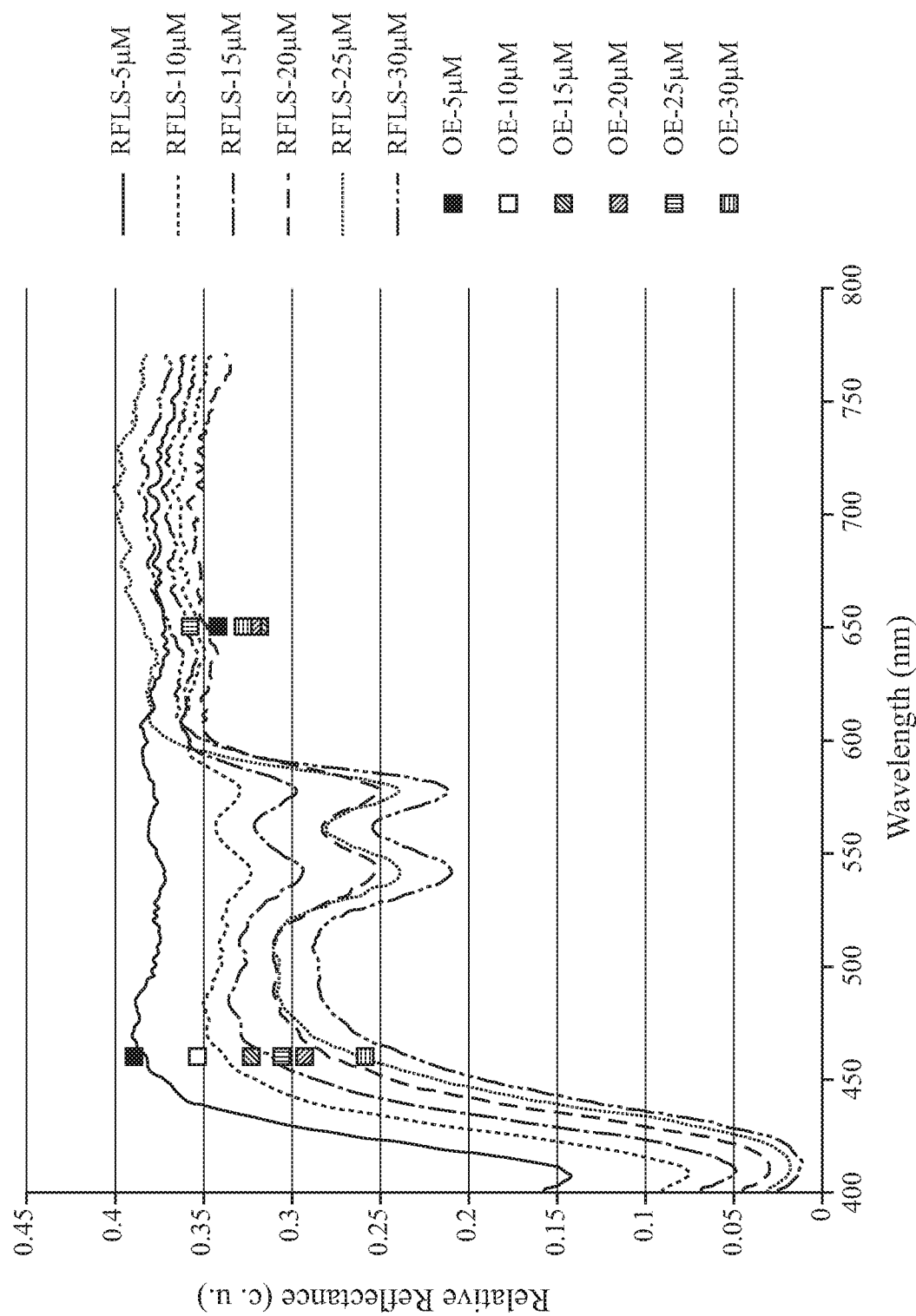
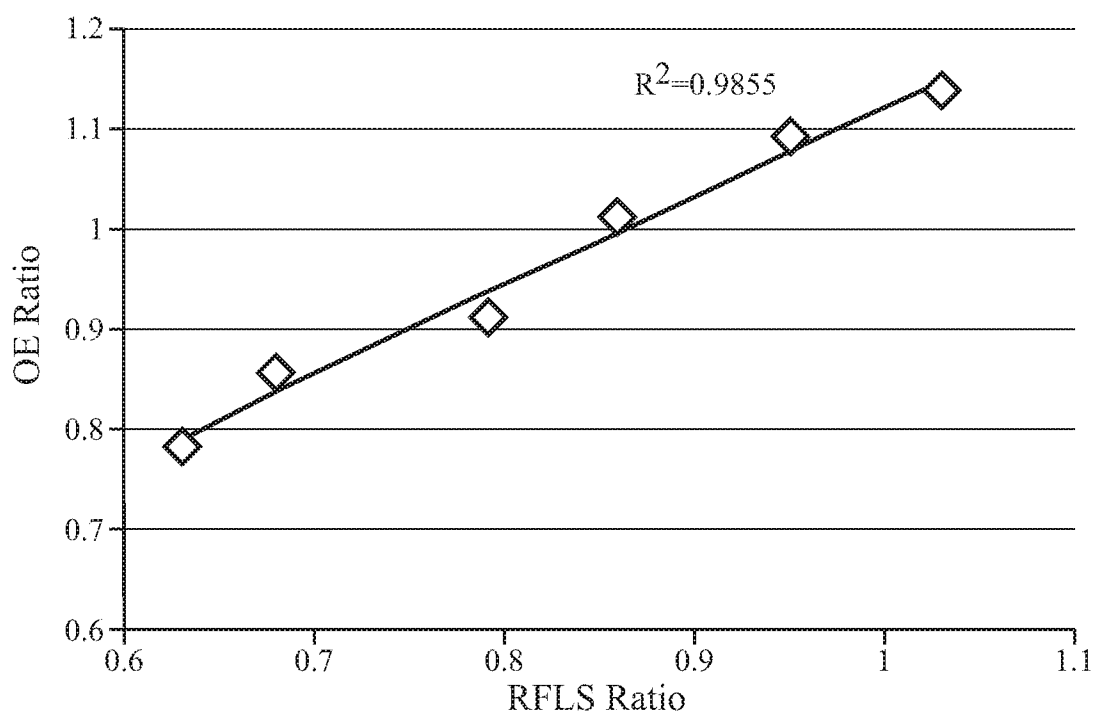
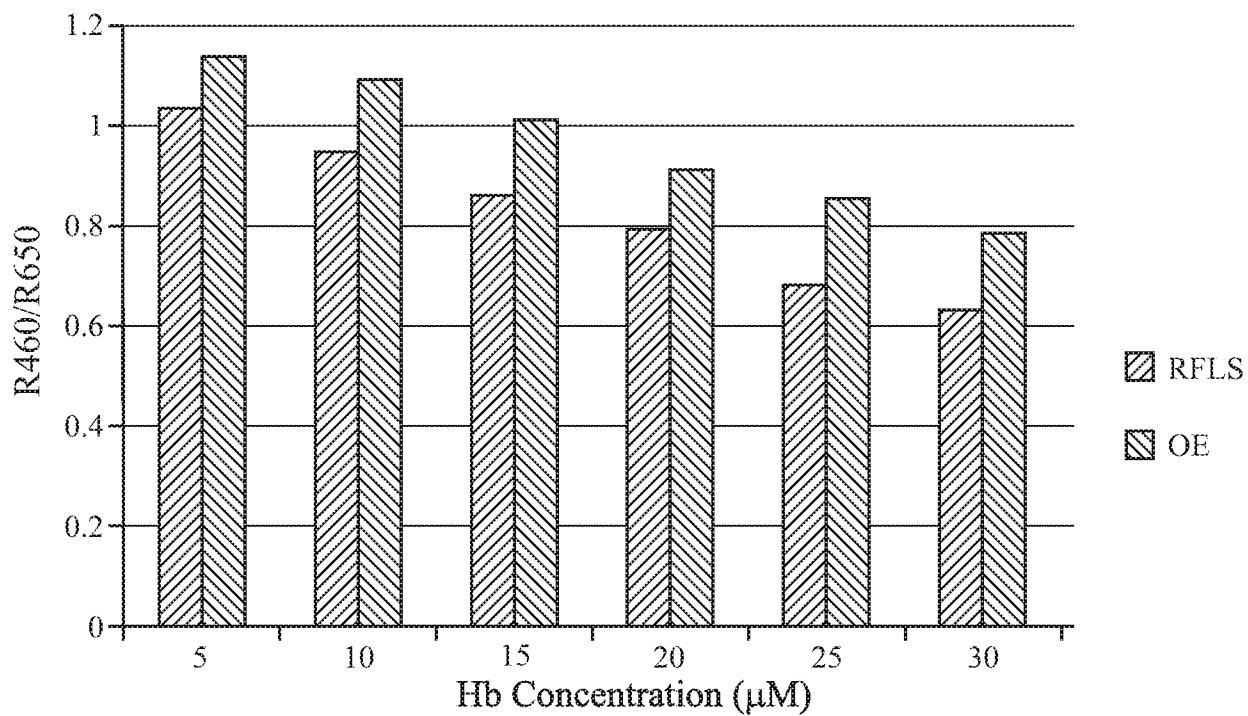
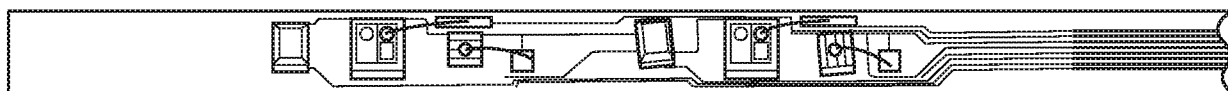
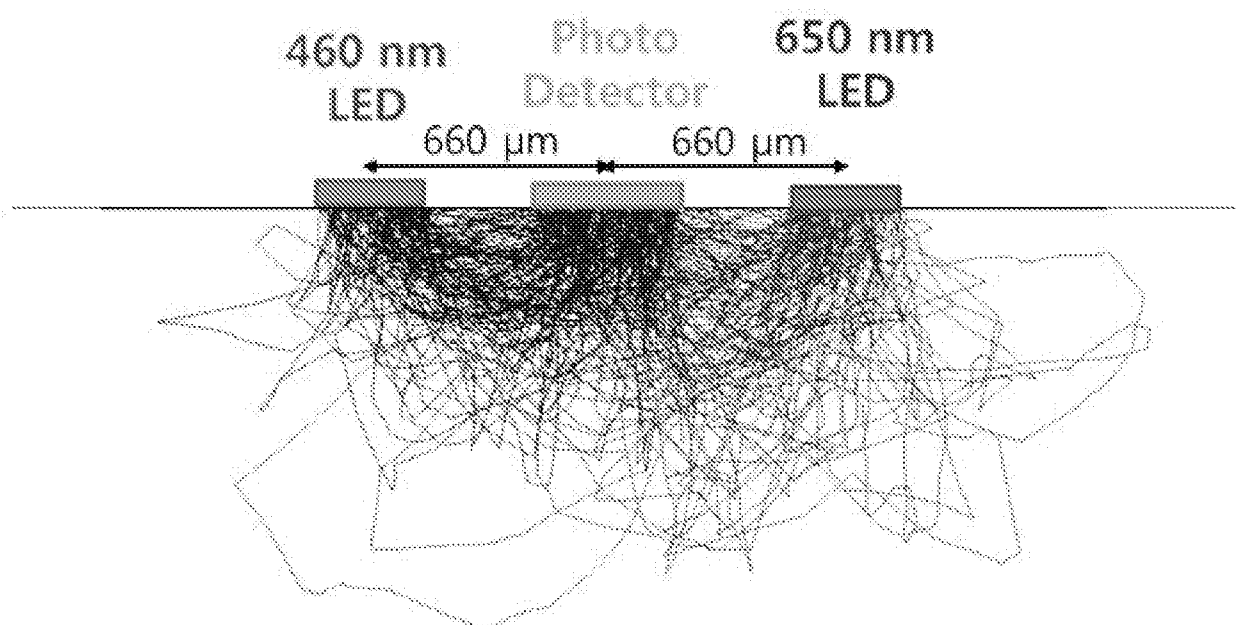


FIG. 31A

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**FIG. 31B****FIG. 31C**

**FIG. 32****FIG. 33**

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US2016/023437**A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER****G01N 21/17(2006.01)i, G01N 21/63(2006.01)i, G02B 21/00(2006.01)i**

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

G01N 21/17; A61B 5/1459; A61B 5/145; A61B 10/00; A61B 8/08; G01N 33/53; A61B 10/02; C12M 1/34; G01N 21/63; G02B 21/00

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Korean utility models and applications for utility models

Japanese utility models and applications for utility models

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

eKOMPASS(KIPO internal) & keywords: tissue, platform, probe, sensor, detector, light source and needle

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 2009-0180962 A1 (BLACK et al.) 16 July 2009 See abstract, paragraphs [0099]-[0101], [0109]-[0112], [0120]-[0122], [0128]-[0146], [0167]-[0174], claim 1 and figures 1A, 9A-12, 14, 15.	1, 2, 8-17, 21-24
Y		3-7, 18-20
Y	US 2014-0171788 A1 (VOLCANO CORPORATION) 19 June 2014 See abstract, paragraphs [0032]-[0039] and figure 1.	3-7, 18-20
A	US 2010-0081964 A1 (MARK et al.) 01 April 2010 See abstract, paragraphs [0059]-[0078] and figures 3A-5C.	1-24
A	US 2011-0136132 A1 (TSENG et al.) 09 June 2011 See abstract, paragraphs [0017]-[0020] and figure 1.	1-24
A	US 2013-0149714 A1 (CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY et al.) 13 June 2013 See abstract, paragraphs [0020]-[0042] and figures 1, 2.	1-24



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

24 June 2016 (24.06.2016)

Date of mailing of the international search report

27 June 2016 (27.06.2016)

Name and mailing address of the ISA/KR

International Application Division

Korean Intellectual Property Office

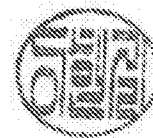
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Authorized officer

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No.

PCT/US2016/023437

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
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