Development Of Special Purpose UTM Jaw for Industrial Application

Mr. A. I. Mulla[1], Mr. Soham Shinde[2], Mr. Sahil Magdum[3], Mr. Vaishnav Chougule[4], Mr. Pratik Savvashe[5], Mr. S.A. Havale[6]

[1,6]*Lecturer, Sant Gajanan Maharaj Rural Polytechnic, Mahagaon*

[2,3,4,5]*Student, Sant Gajanan Maharaj Rural Polytechnic, Mahagaon*

***Abstract*—This project, executed by Shri Ram Engineering, focuses on the design, fabrication, and implementation of a Special Purpose Universal Testing Machine (SPM-UTM) tailored for specific industrial applications, overcoming the limitations of standard testing equipment. Standard Universal Testing Machines (UTMs) often lack the versatility to handle unique specimen shapes, precise load-rate profiles, or specialized environmental conditions required in specialized manufacturing sectors. The project emphasizes modularity, allowing for easy adaptation of interchangeable grips and fixtures to cater to diverse industrial requirements, such as those in the automotive, aerospace, or advanced materials sectors. The developed machine enhances productivity and testing reliability, empowering industries with actionable data to optimize material usage and ensure structural integrity.**

***Index Terms*—Shri Ram Engineering, Special Purpose Universal Testing Machine (SPM-UTM), reliability, structural integrity.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of a special-purpose Universal Testing Machine (UTM) jaw for industrial testing applications represents a critical advancement in material testing technology. Conventional UTM jaws are designed for general-purpose use; however, many industries require customized gripping solutions to accommodate unique specimen geometries, surface conditions, and load requirements. This has led to the need for specialized jaws that ensure precision, repeatability, and safety during testing procedures. The primary objective in developing a special-purpose UTM jaw is to enhance gripping efficiency while minimizing specimen slippage or damage. In industrial environments, materials such as composites, polymers, thin sheets, and high-strength alloys often pose challenges for standard jaws. A customized jaw design addresses these issues by incorporating tailored surface textures, optimized clamping mechanisms, and material-specific contact profiles. These features ensure uniform stress distribution across the specimen, which is essential for obtaining accurate and reliable test results.

Another important consideration is adaptability. Special-purpose jaws are often designed to be modular, allowing them to be easily installed or replaced on existing UTM systems. This flexibility reduces downtime and improves productivity in testing laboratories. Additionally, advanced design techniques. This reduces the risk of failure and enhances the durability of the component. Material selection also plays a significant role in jaw development. High-strength, wear-resistant materials are typically chosen to withstand repeated loading cycles and harsh testing conditions. Surface treatments or coatings may be applied to improve grip and extend service life.

In conclusion, the development of a special-purpose UTM jaw is driven by the need for higher accuracy, improved safety, and greater versatility in industrial testing applications. By addressing the limitations of standard jaws, these customized solutions contribute significantly to the efficiency and reliability of material testing processes across various industries.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Universal Testing Machine (UTM) is widely recognized as a fundamental tool for evaluating mechanical properties such as tensile, compressive, and flexural strength across a wide range of materials.

A critical component influencing test accuracy is the grip or jaw system, which serves as the interface between the specimen and the machine. Literature emphasizes that improper gripping can lead to slippage, stress concentration, and misalignment, thereby affecting test validity.In summary, the literature reveals a clear evolution from simple mechanical grips to highly specialized, application-oriented UTM jaws. Current research trends focus on precision, adaptability, and automation, ensuring accurate testing of advanced materials used in modern industries.

AZoM - "Tensile Testing Grips – A Guide to Buying the Correct Fixtures":
A detailed guide covering different types of jaws, including pyramid, rubber, wave, V-jaws, and line-contact, and their applications.[01]

ADMET - "Jaw Selection for Tensile Grips" (Aug 2019):
A guide focusing on selecting the appropriate jaw surface for specific material properties and geometries, including recommendations for ASTM/ISO standards.[02]

Test Resources - "How to Select the Best Jaw for Your Application" (June 2025):
A technical guide explaining the different types of jaw surfaces (Serrated, Rubber Coated, Diamond, V-Jaws, Wave Cut) and when to use them.[03]

Maxwell India - "Sample Holding Grips: Tensile Testing Machine" (Dec 2025):
Provides a comprehensive guide on grip mechanisms (wedge, pneumatic, mechanical, hydraulic) and their specific applications.[04]

ijariie - "DESIGN OF GRIPPER IN UNIVERSAL TESTING MACHINE":
A research paper providing a mathematical analysis of the gripper mechanism and its impact on the gripping force in a UTM.[05]

NextGen Material Testing - "Grips and Fixtures for NextGen Universal Testing Machines":
A guide to choosing between side-action, pneumatic, hydraulic, and special-purpose grips based on material types.[06]

III. SCOPE OF PROJECT

The development of special purpose Universal Testing Machine (UTM) jaws and fixtures is a rapidly expanding field driven by the need for high-precision, repeatable, and application-specific testing across various industries. While standard jaws cover routine tests, special purpose jaws are necessary for securing non-standard geometries, delicate materials, or conducting tests under extreme conditions, with the global UTM market growing at a robust CAGR to over USD 2 billion by 2034.

Application-Specific Customization

- Advanced Materials & Lightweighting: Development of jaws for carbon fiber composites, biodegradable polymers, and thin films, particularly for aerospace and electric vehicle (EV) components.
- Medical and Biological Testing: Creation of specialized, biocompatible grips for testing medical implants, surgical tools, and synthetic tissues, often requiring sensitive pressure control to avoid damaging the specimen.
- Complex Geometries & Assembly Testing: Jaws designed for non-standard, 3D-printed components, automotive fasteners, and finished products, moving beyond simple tensile bar testing.
- Specialized Test Modes: Custom fixtures for 90-degree peel tests (adhesives), puncture tests (geomembranes), and shear tests (laminates), which are difficult to perform with standard wedge grips.

High-Performance Clamping Technologies

- Self-Tightening and Eccentric Grips: These grips automatically increase clamping pressure as the tensile load rises, making them ideal for materials that thin or elongate during testing (e.g., rubbers, soft plastics, textiles), thus preventing slippage.
- Hydraulic and Pneumatic Customization: Developing fast-acting pneumatic grips for high-throughput QC environments where quick, uniform, and repeatable pressure is necessary. Dual-action hydraulic grips are being developed for high-capacity testing of structural steel and fasteners.
- Environmental Chamber Compatibility: Designing specialized jaws that can function within thermal, humidity, or corrosive environments to simulate real-world conditions (creep and fatigue testing).

IV. METHODOLOGY

The development of a special-purpose Universal Testing Machine (UTM) jaw follows a systematic engineering approach to ensure accuracy, reliability, and suitability for specific industrial testing requirements. The methodology typically involves the following stages:

1. Problem Identification and Requirement Analysis
The process begins with identifying limitations of existing UTM jaws, such as slippage, specimen damage, or misalignment. Requirements are defined based on the type of material (e.g., polymer, composite, metal), specimen geometry, load capacity, gripping force, and applicable testing standards. Environmental conditions like temperature or corrosion exposure may also be considered.

2. Conceptual Design
Multiple design concepts are generated based on functional requirements. This includes selecting the gripping mechanism (mechanical, hydraulic, or pneumatic), jaw profile (flat, serrated, V-groove, or custom), and clamping method. Emphasis is placed on achieving uniform stress distribution and preventing premature specimen failure.

3. Material Selection
Appropriate materials are selected for the jaw components to ensure strength, wear resistance, and durability. Common choices include hardened tool steels, alloy steels, or surface-treated materials. For delicate specimens, softer or coated gripping surfaces may be used to avoid damage.

4. Detailed Design Using CAD
The selected concept is modelled using computer-aided design (CAD) software. Detailed dimensions, tolerances, and assembly features are defined. Design considerations include ease of installation, compatibility with existing UTM systems, and provision for interchangeable jaw faces if required.

5. Prototype Development
A prototype jaw is manufactured using suitable machining processes such as CNC milling, grinding, and heat treatment. Surface finishing is carefully controlled to achieve the desired friction characteristics and dimensional accuracy.

6. Experimental Testing and Validation
The prototype is tested on a UTM under real or simulated conditions. Performance parameters such as gripping efficiency, slippage, alignment, repeatability, and specimen integrity are evaluated. Results are compared with standard requirements.

7. Design Optimization
Based on test results, necessary modifications are made to improve performance. This may include changes in jaw geometry, surface texture, or material properties. Iterative testing ensures the final design meets all performance criteria.

8. Final Fabrication and Implementation
The optimized design is finalized for production. Standard operating procedures (SOPs) are developed for installation and usage. Documentation, including design drawings and testing reports, is prepared for industrial application.

9. Performance Monitoring and Maintenance
After deployment, the jaw's performance is monitored over time. Regular inspection and maintenance are conducted to ensure consistent operation and long service life.
This structured methodology ensures the development of efficient, reliable, and application-specific UTM jaws tailored to modern industrial testing needs.

V. PROCESS

Problem Identification
Start by understanding why a special-purpose UTM is needed instead of a standard one.
Limitations of Existing UTMs
- Cannot handle specific material types (e.g., composites, polymers, micro-components)
- Insufficient load capacity (too low or excessively high)
- Lack of custom fixtures/grips for unique specimens
- Limited environmental simulation (temperature, humidity, corrosion)
- Inadequate precision or repeatability
- Slow testing cycles affecting production

Industry-Specific Challenges
- Automotive: high-speed fatigue testing required
- Aerospace: extreme condition simulation (temperature, stress)
- Manufacturing: need for inline or automated testing
- Medical devices: micro-force and high accuracy testing

Stakeholder Analysis
- Identify who will use or be impacted:
- Operators → need ease of use and safety
- Quality engineers → need accuracy & repeatability
- R&D teams → need flexibility for varied tests
- Management → cost, ROI, productivity
- Maintenance team → reliability and serviceability

Environmental Requirements
- High/low temperatures
- Humidity
- Corrosive environments
- Integration with environmental chambers

Performance Constraints
- Space limitations in factory
- Power consumption limits
- Budget constraints
- Production cycle time requirements

Material Selection
1. EN8

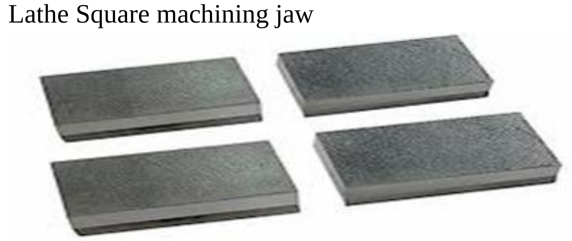
Key Properties and Specifications:
- Tensile Strength: Typically, 500-800 N/mm², or 700-850 MPa when quenched and tempered.
- Hardness: Generally, 170-200 BHN or 201-255 HB in R treated state.
- Composition: 0.36-0.44% Carbon, 0.60-1.00% Manganese, 0.10-0.35% Silicon.
- Surface Hardening: Can be induction or flame hardened to improve wear resistance.
- Machinability: Good in normalized or cold-drawn condition.

2. EN21
- Casting/Processing: EN21 is suitable for high-tensile casting or forging. It is frequently used for high-tensile shafts and spindles, which share similar loading profiles with UTM grips.
- Performance: It offers good wear resistance, necessary to maintain the serrations or gripping surface of the jaw over multiple tests.
- Hardening: It can be hardened to improve its resistance to deformation, crucial for maintaining clamping accuracy.

Cutting Hacksaw Machine

Cutting UTM (Universal Testing Machine) jaw raw material, typically high-strength steel or alloy steel, requires a rigid setup on a power hacksaw machine (Hexaw machine) to ensure precision and prevent blade damage. A power hacksaw is ideal for cutting large metal stock used for jaw blanks.

Lathe Square machining jaw



Lathe square turning of UTM (Universal Testing Machine) jaws involves machining specialized, high-strength jaws—often referred to as wedge grips or inserts—that feature a square or rectangular internal profile to hold flat tensile specimens. This process requires precise machining to ensure the jaws align perfectly under tension and securely grip the material.

Milling Operation

A vertical milling machine is a versatile, essential machine tool featuring a vertical spindle that rotates cutting tools (like end mills) to remove material from a workpiece, ideal for precision tasks, die sinking, and hole making. Common in manufacturing, these machines are available as manual, user-friendly knee mills or high-throughput, automated CNC Vertical Machining Centers (VMCs)

Serration

Serration operations on milling machines are specialized processes used to create small, parallel grooves or a crisscross (diamond) pattern on surfaces, commonly designed to enhance the grip of vise jaws. This operation is crucial for producing hardened steel jaws used in work holding, which prevent slippage of round or irregular workpieces during machining.

Grinding Machine

A horizontal grinding machine, or horizontal surface grinder, is a precision machine tool used to create smooth, accurate flat surfaces on materials like metal and ceramics. It features a horizontal spindle that rotates a grinding wheel, which acts on the work piece, typically held on a linear or rotary magnetic table.

VI. RESULT & CONCLUSION

The development of special purpose teams (SPTs) in industrial applications serves as a vital strategic tool for addressing complex, non-routine, and time-critical challenges, such as implementing Industry 4.0, rapid automation, or crisis management. By leveraging cross-functional expertise, these task-force teams break down functional silos, driving innovation and improving operational agility. They allow organizations to experiment on a smaller scale, enhancing productivity and creating a startup-like culture within established manufacturing environments. When diligently trained and properly resourced, SPTs directly contribute to higher quality outputs, reduced waste, and increased industrial harmony.

REFRENCES

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