
**Microbeam analysis — Analytical
electron microscopy — Method for the
determination of interface position
in the cross-sectional image of the
layered materials**

*Analyse par microfaisceaux — Microscopie électronique analytique
— Méthode de détermination de la position d'interface dans l'image
de coupe transversale des matériaux en couches*

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Contents

Page

Foreword	iv
Introduction	v
1 Scope	1
2 Normative references	1
3 Terms, definitions and abbreviated terms	1
3.1 Terms and definitions	1
3.2 Abbreviated terms	4
4 Specimen preparation for cross-sectional imaging	4
4.1 General	4
4.2 Requirements for the cross-sectional specimen	5
5 Determination of an interface position	6
5.1 General	6
5.2 Preliminary considerations	6
5.2.1 Ideal model of an interface	6
5.2.2 More realistic model of an interface	6
5.2.3 Dealing with intensity fluctuations in the image	8
6 Detailed procedure for determining the position of the interface	8
6.1 General	8
6.2 Preparing cross-sectional TEM/STEM image	10
6.2.1 Preparing digitized Image	10
6.2.2 Displaying the digitized image	11
6.3 Setting the ROI	11
6.3.1 General	11
6.3.2 Classification of image	11
6.3.3 Procedure of setting the ROI	12
6.4 Acquisition of the averaged intensity profile	17
6.5 Moving-averaged processing	19
6.6 Differential processing	20
6.7 Final location of the interface	21
7 Uncertainty	22
7.1 Uncertainty accumulating from each step of the procedure	22
7.2 Uncertainty of measurement result on image analysis	22
Annex A (informative) Examples of processing the real TEM/STEM images for three image types	24
Annex B (informative) Two main applications for this method	36
Annex C (informative) Calibration of scale unit: Pixel size calibration	43
Bibliography	45

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 202, *Microbeam analysis*, Subcommittee SC 3, *Analytical electron microscopy*.

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Introduction

Multi-layered materials are widely used in the production of semiconductor devices, various kinds of sensors, coating films for optical element, new functional materials, etc. One of the factors used to determine the characteristics of multi-layered materials is the layer thickness, for evaluation of products and verification of the production process. In practice, measuring the total thickness and/or the thickness of each layer and checking the uniformity of thickness and/or flatness of the interface are often done using recorded images of the materials. Evaluations can be made from the cross-sectional TEM/STEM images by accurately determining the averaged interface position between two different layered materials.

In relation to the determination of the interface position in the HR atomic imaging, analysis by the multi-slice simulation (MSS) method can be applied for the target measurement, if the atomic structural models can be constructed. However, in real materials, there are a lot of cases when they cannot, as follows:

- the interface between amorphous layers, or layers of amorphous substance and crystal;
- the interface recorded in low-resolution image in which the atomic columns cannot be identified: 1) very thick single-layered material, 2) thick multi-layered material.

This document relates the method to determine the averaged interface position, using a differential processing of the accumulated intensity profile getting from the ROI set in the cross-sectional TEM/STEM image of the multi-layered materials. The thickness of the layer that can be applied ranges from a few nanometers to a few micrometers. Thus, this document is not intended for the determination of the simulated position of the layer interface analysed by the MSS method.

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Microbeam analysis — Analytical electron microscopy — Method for the determination of interface position in the cross-sectional image of the layered materials

1 Scope

This document specifies a procedure for the determination of averaged interface position between two different layered materials recorded in the cross-sectional image of the multi-layered materials. It is not intended to determine the simulated interface of the multi-layered materials expected through the multi-slice simulation (MSS) method. This document is applicable to the cross-sectional images of the multi-layered materials recorded by using a transmission electron microscope (TEM) or a scanning transmission electron microscope (STEM) and the cross-sectional elemental mapping images by using an energy dispersive X-ray spectrometer (EDS) or an electron energy loss spectrometer (EELS). This document is also applicable to the digitized image recorded on an image sensor built into a digital camera, a digital memory set in the PC or an imaging plate and the digitalized image converted from an analogue image recorded on the photographic film by an image scanner.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms, definitions and abbreviated terms

3.1 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1.1

atomic column image

TEM/STEM image recorded at atomic-resolution from a specimen along a high-symmetry crystalline orientation

Note 1 to entry: Crystalline orientation is the direction of crystal which is represented by Miller indices. During TEM imaging, it is often useful to have a crystalline specimen aligned so that a specific (low index) *zone axis* (3.1.26) is parallel, or near parallel, to the beam direction (optical axis).

3.1.2

cross-sectional image

TEM/STEM image of the multi-layered materials along a plane perpendicular to the stacking direction

3.1.3

differential processing

calculation of the difference between the values of adjacent pixel data in the intensity profile