



You have downloaded a document from  
**RE-BUŚ**  
repository of the University of Silesia in Katowice

**Title:** Structural analysis of austempered ductile iron obtained by Mossbauer spectroscopy

**Author:** Aneta Hanc, F. Bińczyk

**Citation style:** Hanc Aneta, Bińczyk F. (2008). Structural analysis of austempered ductile iron obtained by Mossbauer spectroscopy. "Archives of Materials Science and Engineering" (Vol. 31, iss. 2 (2008), s. 101-104).



Uznanie autorstwa - Użycie niekomercyjne - Bez utworów zależnych Polska - Licencja ta zezwala na rozpowszechnianie, przedstawianie i wykonywanie utworu jedynie w celach niekomercyjnych oraz pod warunkiem zachowania go w oryginalnej postaci (nie tworzenia utworów zależnych).



UNIwersytet ŚLĄSKI  
W KATOWICACH



Biblioteka  
Uniwersytetu Śląskiego



Ministerstwo Nauki  
i Szkolnictwa Wyższego



# Structural analysis of austempered ductile iron obtained by Mössbauer spectroscopy

A. Hanc <sup>a,\*</sup>, F. Binczyk <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Institute of Materials Science, University of Silesia,  
ul. Bankowa 12, 40-007 Katowice, Poland

<sup>b</sup> Chair of Metal Alloys and Composites Engineering, Silesian University of Technology,  
ul. Krasińskiego 8, 40-019 Katowice, Poland

\* Corresponding author: E-mail address: ahanc@us.edu.pl

Received 13.04.2008; published in revised form 01.06.2008

## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** The composition of metallic matrix in ductile iron as-cast and after austempering at temperatures of 280, 330 and 380°C (ADI) was examined.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The study presents the results of these examinations obtained by Mössbauer spectroscopy.

**Findings:** Using calculated values of the parameters of hyperfine interactions (isomeric shift IS, quadrupole splitting QS and hyperfine effective magnetic field H), isolated by deconvolution of the experimental spectrum, the constituents of the metallic matrix were identified in terms of both quantity and quality.

**Research limitations/implications:** The measured values as well as the data compiled in literature indicate that component Z1 (the, so called, Zeeman spectrum sextet) is related with <sup>57</sup>Fe atoms present in the structure of ferrite  $\alpha_1$  (I stage of  $\gamma_0 \rightarrow \alpha_1 + \gamma_{st}$  transformation), component Z2 is typical of ferrite  $\alpha_2$  (II stage of  $\gamma_{st} \rightarrow \alpha_2 +$  carbides transformation), while component Z3 has its origin in <sup>57</sup>Fe atoms seated in the structure of carbides ( $Fe_3C$ ,  $Fe_2C$  or  $Fe_{2,4}C$ ).

**Practical implications:** analysis of the parameters of hyperfine interactions describing the non-magnetic components (L and Q) it has been proved that they are typical of austenite.

**Originality/value:** In the case of ADI, the determination of the composition of metallic matrix by Mössbauer spectroscopy is much more precise (the limit is the resolution power), because the experimental spectrum describes an overall volume of the examined specimen, and not only its surfaces, as does the traditional quantitative metallography.

**Keywords:** Austempered ductile iron; Mössbauer effect; Microstructure; Austenite; Ferrite

## METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH, ANALYSIS AND MODELLING

### 1. Introduction

The mechanical properties of ADI (Austempered Ductile Iron) depend on microstructure shaped in a two-stage heat treatment process, which consists of austenitising and austempering [1-3]. Depending on the parameters of this treatment, the metallic matrix may contain different amounts of austenite, ferrite, pearlite and martensite, the latter two

constituents having an adverse effect on the plastic properties of ADI. Therefore it is expected that the results of qualitative and quantitative examinations of the phase composition may help in determination of the heat treatment parameters optimum for the ductile iron of a given chemical composition and primary microstructure. Such possibilities are offered by the Mössbauer Effect spectroscopy, which uses the changing capacity to transmit  $\gamma$  rays and energy emitted during nuclear transitions of absorbent, depending on the type of chemical bonds and crystal structure [4,5].

The extremely high energy resolution of the Mössbauer effect enables detecting a relatively weak effect of the crystallochemical environment on the energy levels of atomic nuclei. Mössbauer spectroscopy is a powerful tool in crystallochemical and structural examinations. It helps understand atomic movements in the crystal lattice, the behaviour of dopant atoms, the nature of chemical bonds, valency and ionic coordination; it also creates an opportunity for investigation of the internal magnetic field and electric field gradients acting on the atomic nuclei in a crystal [6, 7].

Mössbauer spectroscopy was used to determine the effect of heat treatment on phase composition of an Fe-Al-C alloy [8] and on the thermal stability of metastable austenite present in the rapidly solidified tool steel [9]. The same method also served for determination of structural constituents present in HAZ of the welded, low-carbon, manganese-nickel-molybdenum steel and for analysis of the precipitates of carbide  $\epsilon$  during the plastic deformation-induced phase transitions in high-carbon steel [11-16]. Applying Mössbauer spectroscopy it has been noticed that manganese in compacted graphite cast iron reduces the kinetics of isothermal transformation taking place within the temperature range of 200 to 400°C [17].

## 2. Test material and method

Tests were made on ductile iron containing: 3,75 % C, 2,55% Si, 0,19% Mn, 0,08% Mg, 0,62 % Cu, 1,42% Ni as well as 0,08% S and 0,03% P. The specimens cut out from a 10 mm casting were subjected to heat treatment to obtain ADI. The process of austenitising was carried out for 2h at a temperature of 900°C. Austempering was made in a salt bath (50% KNO<sub>3</sub> and 50%NaNO<sub>3</sub>) at temperatures of 280, 330 and 380°C, applying next CEMS (Conversion Electron Mössbauer Spectroscopy), which enabled examinations of a surface layer about 100 nm thick. Gas-filled detector (0,98% He +0,02% Ar) at a pressure of 0.9 At was applied. The source of Mössbauer radiation was Co<sup>57</sup>/Rh of about 10 mCi activity. The measurements were carried out at room temperature. The spectrometer was systematically calibrated measuring the Mössbauer spectra in a specimen of  $\alpha$ -Fe. The parameters of component spectra were determined by an MOSDS program, which was used in discrete analysis of the experimental Mössbauer spectra.

## 3. The results of investigations

The metallic matrix phase composition examined by Mössbauer spectroscopy was determined from a discrete analysis of the experimental Mössbauer spectra using an MOSDS program.

In this program, the shape of the Mössbauer spectra is described by a transmission integer computed according to Gauss-Legendre's numerical procedure. The program enables very accurate determination of the following parameters:

- isomer shift - (IS),
- quadrupole splitting - (QS),
- hyperfine effective magnetic field - (H),
- intensity of fitted components - (S).

Using this program and a numerical analysis, the deconvolution of the experimental spectrum into its components (sub-spectra) related with the local environment of Mössbauer <sup>57</sup>Fe nuclide was carried out. Due to this, it was possible to analyse the phase composition of the examined material. Using a set of parameters (IS, QS, H) describing the individual components (sub-spectra), it was possible to identify the magnetic and non-magnetic phases, i.e. the IS and QS parameters, or IS only in the case of single lines.

The procedure used for computation of the phase composition from an experimental Mössbauer spectrum covers the following stages:

Initial analysis of the experimental spectrum (carried out by the method of distribution of magnetic fields and isomeric shifts) - it enables qualitative identification of phase composition in the examined material, including the presence of phases of magnetic and non-magnetic properties.

Describing each phase with hyperfine parameters - the preliminary characteristic uses parameters ascribed by literature to each of the phases, while computations are made for the percent fraction of each phase in the examined specimen obtained by integration of the surface area covered by component spectrum corresponding to a given phase.

Having calculated the percent fraction of a given phase, parameters H, IS, and QS are fitted in a way such as to reproduce exactly the shape of the experimental spectrum, which is the sum of all sub-spectra describing the individual phases.

The last stage consists in determination of parameter S (the intensity of component spectrum), which directly determines the content of a given phase in specimen.

The analysis is carried out until a most adequate mode of describing the shape of an experimental spectrum with a curve, which is the sum of all the applied components, is found. The measure of correctness of the conducted analysis is parameter  $\chi^2$  with a minimum value of 1. As regards the spectra of the examined material, the value of the parameter describing the quality of fit is  $\chi^2 < 2$ .

On the other hand, Figure 1 shows the same solution applied to a specimen after austempering at a temperature of 330°C. The solution so called, Zeeman components Z1, Z2 and Z3 and Z3 and two non-magnetic components, i.e. a single line L and the, so called, quadrupole doublet Q.

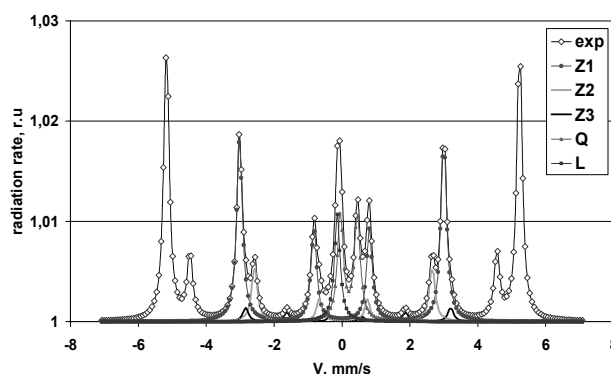


Fig. 1. Solution of spectrum with breakdown into individual magnetic components Z1, Z2 and Z3 and non-magnetic components L and Q for specimen after austempering at 330°C

Table 1.

The computed phase compositions of the metallic matrix in the examined specimens ( $\varnothing$  20 mm)

State	Spectrum component	H kGs	IS mm/s	QS mm/s	S -	Structural constituent	Fraction %
After casting	Z1	320.6	0.01	0.02	0.11	Ferrite $\alpha_1$	11
	Z3	233.6	0.16	0.11	0.89	Carbides(Pearlite)	89
Austempering temperature 280°C	Z1	317.5	0.01	0.017	0.76	Ferrite $\alpha_1$	76
	Z2	289.0	0.04	0.003	0.12	Ferrite $\alpha_2$	12
	Q	-	0.21	0.48	0.07	Austenite	12
	L	-	-0.15	-	0.05		
Austempering temperature 330°C	Z1	322.8	0.01	0.02	0.62	Ferrite $\alpha_1$	62
	Z2	279.4	0.04	0.001	0.17	Ferrite $\alpha_2$	17
	Z3	189.7	0.14	0.03	0.03	Carbides(Pearlite)	3
	Q	-	0.19	0.48	0.12	Austenite	18
	L	-	-0.14	-	0.06		
Austempering temperature 380°C	Z1	326.4	0.016	0.032	0.44	Ferrite $\alpha_1$	44
	Z2	279.3	0.04	0.001	0.17	Ferrite $\alpha_2$	17
	Z3	249.3	0.11	0.033	0.05	Carbides(Pearlite)	5
	Q	-	0.19	0.248	0.28	Austenite	34
	L	-	-0.14	-	0.06		

Error estimated from the fitting procedure is equal :

$$\Delta H = \pm 0.2 \text{ kGs}, \Delta IS = \Delta QS = \pm 0.002 \text{ mm/s and } \Delta S = \pm 0.2$$

#### 4. Discussion of results

The phase compositions of the specimens computed from the intensities of the spectra of individual constituents were designated as S and compiled in Table 1. According to the data given in literature, the magnetic components (Zeeman components) characteristic of the phases which should be expected in the examined material are described by the following values of hyperfine parameters [18]:

- for ferrite: field intensity H is from 300 to 330 kGs, isomeric shift IS is up to 0.02 mm/s,
- for martensite: field intensity H is from 240 to 270 kGs, isomeric shift IS is from -0.01 to + 0.04 mm/s, QS is up to 0.02 mm/s,
- for Fe<sub>3</sub>C cementite: field intensity H is 200 kGs .
- for Fe<sub>2</sub>C carbide: field intensity H is from 230 to 240 kGs,

The non-magnetic components for austenite are: IS from -0.1 to -0.2 mm/s and QS from 0.2 to 0.4 mm/s.

The above comparison gives average values typically describing the individual phases. It is worth mentioning that the value of the hyperfine magnetic field H depends on the number of Fe atoms present in the local environment of a Mössbauer nuclide and is the higher, the more of these atoms are present in a given structure. Due to this fact it is possible to distinguish between the phases of the same crystal structure but different magneto-electronic structure, as it is the case of ferrite  $\alpha_1$  and  $\alpha_2$ .

Basing on the data given in literature and on the analysis of the calculated values of the parameters of hyperfine interactions, i.e. isomeric shift, quadrupole splitting and hyperfine magnetic field, it has been concluded that the Zeeman component of spectrum Z1 has its source in <sup>57</sup>Fe atoms present in the structure of ferrite  $\alpha_1$ . In the as-cast specimens, this is the ferrite formed during austenite transformation under stable conditions. In specimens after austempering this is the ferrite formed during stage I of the isothermal transformation ( $\gamma_0 \rightarrow \alpha_1 + \gamma_{st}$ ).

The Zeeman component Z2 originates from ferrite  $\alpha_2$  (the product of  $\gamma_{st} \rightarrow \alpha_2$  + carbides transformation), while component Z3 originates from <sup>57</sup>Fe atoms present in the structure of carbides (Fe<sub>3</sub>C, Fe<sub>2</sub>C or Fe<sub>2,4</sub>C). On the other hand, from analysis of the parameters of hyperfine interactions describing the non-magnetic components (L and Q) it follows that they are typical of the stable austenite  $\gamma_{st}$ , saturated with carbon, formed during the first stage of isothermal transformation ( $\gamma_0 \rightarrow \alpha_1 + \gamma_{st}$ ). The different values of the parameters H, IS and QS observed in different phase constituents (e.g. Fe<sub>3</sub>C, Fe<sub>2</sub>C or Fe<sub>2,4</sub>C carbides as constituents of pearlite) may be due to differences in their morphology, to interactions between the field intensities H originating from ferrite  $\alpha_1$  and  $\alpha_2$ , and to the presence or absence of austenite in matrix, e.g. in base cast iron.

The compositions of the metallic matrix in as-cast state and after austempering, as determined by Mössbauer spectroscopy, are compared in Figure 2.

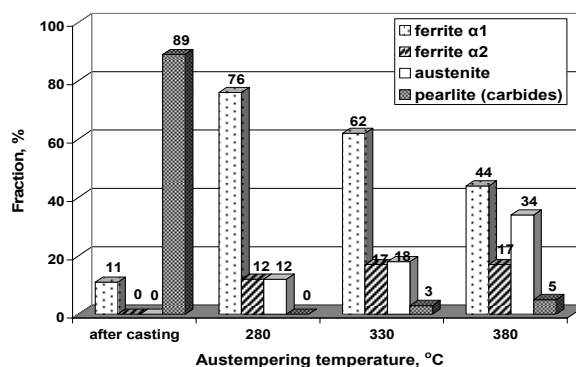


Fig. 2. Effect of austempering temperature on metal matrix composition by Mössbauer spectroscopy

As follows from the diagram, an increase in austempering temperature changes the composition of the metallic matrix. The fraction of austenite is growing and the content of ferrite  $\alpha_1$  is decreasing. After austempering at a temperature of 380°C, the specimen was observed to contain some pearlite. It is also interesting to note that the content of ferrite  $\alpha_2$  is growing slightly with the increasing temperature of austempering.

As already mentioned, ferrite  $\alpha_2$  is formed during the second (undesired) stage of transformation and is the result of decomposition of stable austenite following the  $\gamma_{st} \rightarrow \alpha_2 + \text{carbides}$  reaction.

The practically stable content of ferrite  $\alpha_2$  in the examined specimens is confirmed not only by the similar values of parameter S (Table 1), but also by the similar values of the effective magnetic field H and isomeric shift IS. Attention deserves anomalous behavior of the value of quadrupole splitting QS in this phase, reaching its maximum (0.021) in the specimen at a temperature of 380°C. This may be a symptom of serious changes in the symmetry of local environment of the Mössbauer nuclide resulting from, e.g. heavy texturing of ferrite  $\alpha_2$ , following transformation proceeding at the second stage, since the value of QS is a measure of the specimen texture. This may prove that the adopted time of austempering has been too long.

## 5. Conclusions

Mössbauer spectroscopy is a powerful tool in crystallochemical and structural examinations. It allows us to understand atomic movements in the crystal lattice and the behavior of doped atoms, opening the way to investigations of internal magnetic fields. This, in turn, should enable determination of the composition of microstructure in alloys containing phases of magnetic and paramagnetic properties.

An undeniable advantage of Mössbauer spectroscopy is the possibility of quantitative identification of the constituents of similar morphologies but different parameters of hyperfine interactions, e.g. different values of magnetic field, as it happens in the case of ferrite  $\alpha_1$  and  $\alpha_2$ . This is of particular importance when optimum parameters of the technological process of ADI fabrication, austempering temperature and time - in particular, are to be determined. The calculated composition of microstructure as well as the determined values of hyperfine parameters indicate that the critical time has been exceeded during austempering, resulting in partial transition of the carbon-saturated austenite into pearlite.

In the case of ADI, the determination of the composition of metallic matrix by Mössbauer spectroscopy is much more precise (the limit is the resolution power), because the experimental spectrum describes an overall volume of the examined specimen, and not only its surfaces, as does the traditional quantitative metallography.

## References

- [1] E. Guzik, Some selected problems concerning the processes of cast iron improvement, Archives of Foundry 1M (2001), (in Polish).
- [2] F. Binczyk, Constructional casting alloys. Silesian Technical University, Gliwice, 2003, (in Polish).
- [3] D. Myszka, Structural research of direct austempered ductile irons obtained in sand mould, Archives of Foundry1/1 (2001) 263-270 (in Polish).
- [4] A. K. Sinha, Physical metallurgy handbook. The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. 2003.
- [5] Z. Nishiyama: Martensitic transformation. Academic Press, edited by M.E. Fine, M. Meshii, C.E. Wayman, 1978.
- [6] A. Oleś, experimentak methods of solid state physics WNT, Warsaw, 1998 (in Polish).
- [7] A. Hryniewicz, D. Kuglawczuk: Mössbauer Spectroscopy, Geologii Publ., Warsaw, 1988 (in Polish).
- [8] J.J. Wysłocki, J. Olszewski, S. Szymura, Phase studies anisotropic Fe-Al-C permanent alloy by Mössbauer spectroscopy. Materials Chemistry and Physics 45 (1996) 193-196.
- [9] P. Grgac, R. Moravick, M. Kusy, I. Toth, M. Miglierini, E. Illekova, Thermal stability of metastable austenite in rapidly solidified chromium-molybdenum-vanadium tool steel powder. Materials Science and Engineering A 375-377 (2004) 581-584.
- [10] J. Soon-Ju Kwon, K. Joo Hag, K. Sangho, L. Sunghak: Mössbauer analysis of heat affected zones of an SA 508 steel weld. Scripta Materialia 40/2 (1999) 131-137.
- [11] V.A. Shabashov, L.G. Korshunov, A.G. Mukoseev, V.V. Sagaradze, A.V. Makarov, V.P. Pilyugin, S.I. Novikov, N.F. Vildanova, Deformation-induced phase transitions in a high-carbon steel. Materials Science and Engineering A346 (2003) 196-207.
- [12] J. Pacyna, P. Bała, T. Skrzypek, The kinetic of phase transformation during continuous heating from quenched state of new high-carbon alloy steel. Proceedings of the 14<sup>th</sup> International Scientific Conference „Achievements in Mechanical and Materials Engineering” AMME’2005, Gliwice – Wisła 2005, 512-519.
- [13] E. Roźniata, J. Pacyna, Effect of annealing on mechanical properties of ledeburitic cast steel, Journal of Achievements in Materials and Manufacturing Engineering 20 (2007) 187-190.
- [14] D. Kuc, G. Niewielski, M. Jabłonska, I. Bednarczyk, Deformability and recrystallisation of Fe-Al intermetallic phase - base alloy, Journal of Achievements in Materials and Manufacturing Engineering, 20 (2006) 143-146.
- [15] D. Kuc, I. Bednarczyk, G. Niewielski, The influence of deformation on the plasticity and structure of Fe<sub>3</sub>Al - 5Cr alloy, Journal of Achievements in Materials and Manufacturing Engineering 22 (2007) 27-30.
- [16] M. Jabłonska, K. Rodak, G. Niewielski, Characterization of the structure of FeAl alloy after hot deformation, Journal of Achievements in Materials and Manufacturing Engineering, 18 (2006) 107-110.
- [17] J. Desimoni: Austempering transformation kinetics of compacted graphite cast iron obtained by Mossbauer Spectroscopy, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Hyperfine Interaction 134 (2001) 93-102 (in Netherlands).
- [18] R. Mosce, Iron-Carbon and Iron-Nitrogen Systems, in Applications of Mossbauer Spectroscopy, Edited by Richard L. Cohen, Academic Press, 1980.