INSPECTION OF WELDS WITH IMPULSE ACOUSTIC MICROSCOPY

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Abstract

High-frequency ultrasound is an effective instrument for studying fine microstructure in the bulk of non-transparent object. One of its prospective applications is NDE of weld zones that join metallic sheets or layers by diverse kind of welding. Non-destructive inspections performed with impulse acoustic microscopes. Reflection of short probe pulses of focused ultrasound makes it possible to recover structure of welding with micron lateral and depth resolution (60-120 µm). Impulse acoustic microscopy provides detection and visualization of adhesion loss areas, both extensive and diffusive ones, in the welding zone. It has been shown the method is capable to find closed cracks and detachments areas of partial (kissing) contact, failure in contact welding.
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Scanning Impulse Acoustic Microscope (SIAM-1)

The microscope provides recovery of 3D microstructure inside the object bulk with resolution 10-75 µm at depth up to 10-12 mm over the area up to 250x360 mm.

DIFFUSION WELDING

Detailed acoustic image of the partial contact

B-scans for areas with diverse quality of welding: a) good welding; b) kissing contact; c) zone of single plate or spill

C-scans of welding contact zone: a) welding area in total; b) area of kissing contact.

CONCLUSIONS
Our experimental results demonstrate that the impulse acoustic microscopy is a powerful nondestructive method of monitoring and quality assessment of turbine blades and other types of mechanical engineering products. The method makes it possible to reveal and display defects of weld joints at the contact interface. The lateral and depth resolution of the method is about 50 µm at different depth position of the welding interface. It has been shown the method enables to reveal standard defects – voids, open cracks and defoliations etc.; as well as failures unavailable for revealing by conventional NDT techniques – close cracks and detachments, areas of partial (kissing) contacts.