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Fabrication, Microstructure, Hardness and Magnetic Properties of (W:Ti)C-Ni Cemented Carbides using Atomized Ni Powder

Walid M. Daoush[1], Amal. A. Abd-Elghany[2], Mohamed A. Ghanem[3] and Ahmed E. El-Nikhaily[4]

[1] Helwan University, Cairo, Egypt

Received: 16 December 2017 Accepted: 3 January 2018 Published: 15 January 2018

Abstract

(W:Ti)C cemented carbides with different Ni content fabricated by powder metallurgy technique were investigated. The Ni powder which used as a metal binder of the (W:Ti)C-Ni abrasive particles was fabricated by water atomization technique by means of induction furnace. A Ni powder of a cubical particle shape with average particle size of 2-20 ?m was obtained. Six (W:Ti)C-Ni compositions with Ni contents of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 wt.

Index terms— Fabrication, Microstructure, Hardness and Magnetic Properties of (W:Ti)C-Ni Cemented Carbides using Atomized Ni Powder

1 I. Introduction

emented carbides are used as oxygen-free ceramics in high temperature engineering applications due to its properties like, high melting temperature, hardness, elastic moduli, wear resistance, electric conductivity and high-temperature strength. Cemented carbides are also widely applied as a base of hard metals. Applications of cemented carbides include structural, heating and reflecting functions as well as tool materials in composition with other refractory compounds [1]. The compacted products of these compounds are made by powder metallurgy technology where sintering methods are of decisive importance.

In General; cemented carbides are composite materials, which consist of hard refractory carbides containing metals of the transition groups IV, V and VI (such as WC, TiC, TaC, NbC) embedded in a tough metal binder phase like nickel or cobalt which are by far the dominating binder metals employed due to its excellent wetting to WC and its good thermo-mechanical properties [2][3][4].

(W,Ti)C has a high melting point and high hardness than the commercial WC. In this regard, the transition metal carbide is primarily used in cutting tools and as an abrasive material as a single phase or in composite structures. In the case of cemented (W,Ti)C, Co or Ni is added as a binder for the formation of composite structures [5][6][7][8][9].

There are two basic ways of obtaining cemented carbide: through melt-solidification processing at about 2000-2500 o C or by powder metallurgy processing at a temperature range of 1350-1500 o C. Fabrications of WC as well as TiC in metalbase alloys have been studied from both theoretical and practical points of view. However, the production of (W:Ti)C in metal matrices has received little attention. The comparatively light TiC particles may float during the preparation by conventional melting and casting route. A large difference in density between TiC and the metal matrix melt-results segregation in metal ingot. The (W:Ti)C as reinforcements innickel, cobalt and iron alloy melts may be more appropriate because its density(6.66 g/cm 3 for (Ti 0.75 :W 0.25)C [10] and 9.1 g/cm 3 for (Ti 0.5 :W 0.5)C [11]) is higher than that of TiC (4.25 g/cm 3) and close to that of iron melt(7.8 g/cm 3). The hardness of (Ti 1 -x :W x)C (19-21 GPa) [12] is more or less the same as that of TiC (18-23 GPa) [13]. However, the fracture toughness of (Ti 1 -x :W x)C (6.4-7.7 MPa m 1/2) [14] is higher than that of TiC (3.5-4.3 MPa m 1/2) [15,16] and this may result better mechanical properties of the (Ti 1?

x : W x)C-reinforced composite compared to those of the TiC-reinforced composite.

The sintering step in the powder metallurgy process is the main determine step among the forming processes. It can be evaluated by measuring the mechanical properties like hardness and physical properties like density and

magnetic properties of the sintered product. Magnetic data shows some interesting relations between the physical properties, such as C relations between the physical properties, such as density, and the mechanical properties such as hardness. There is interdependence between the mass saturation magnetization, M s , and the coercive force, H c , both of which frequently occur in an inverse relation. M s is mostly related to the amount of magnetic material present, whereas H c appears to be strongly influenced by the interaction between the particles and the density or between the porosity and the grain size of the carbide phase [17,18].

In this work, cold compaction and vacuum sintering of (W:Ti)C cemented carbides samples with different binder content of a homemade water atomized Ni powder were occurred. The densification and properties of the prepared cemented carbide samples were characterized by microstructure investigations based on measurements of magnetic and mechanical properties.

2 II. Experimental

Elemental powder of Ni was prepared by atomization technique. Nickel powder was prepared by induction melting in graphite crucibles in air by superheated up to 1700°C and bottom pouring through a ceramic melt delivery nozzle of 6 mm diameter into a confined water atomizer operating at a pressure of 20 MPa. The high-pressure water jets were directed against the molten stream. The melt flow rate, estimated from the operating time and weight of the atomized melt, was about 4 kg/min. The water flow rate, calculated from the water consumption rate, was about 200 l/min. Table 1list the atomization conditions adapted for Ni powder fabrication process. The size distribution of the Ni powder particles was measured by conventional mechanical sieving, and sieved powders with a specific size range of 20 µm and 1 µm were chosen for this investigation. The produced atomized Ni and (W:Ti)C powders were used to prepare six samples with compositions of 5 wt.%, 10 wt.%, 15 wt.%, 20 wt.%, 25 wt.%, and 30 wt.% of a Ni binder mixed with (W:Ti)C by means of Agate mortar for 30 min. After the different compositions were prepared, they under went cold compaction at 600 MPa in a uniaxial hydraulic pressing machine, where they were compressed into a cylindrical shape.

The cold compacts were sintered in a vacuum furnace at 10 -3 torr with graphite heating elements and at a heating rate of 5 o C/min in accordance with the sintering cycle shown in Fig1. The samples were heated at 120 o C for 2 h to dry any moister content, and the temperature was then raised to 750 o C for one hour to expel any gases embedded in the pores. The temperature was raised again to 1450 o C for one hour to start the sintering process. Finally, the furnace was turned off and the sintered compacts were cooled for 8 h by means of a water cooling system.

The dimensions of the cold compacts were measured before and after sintering to calculate the green, the sintered and the relative densities. The sintered samples were mounted and ground with 800, 1000, and 1200 grit SiC paper, respectively, and then polished with 3 ?m diamond paste. To investigate the microstructure of each phase as well as the compositional analysis of the carbide and liquid phase binder, scanning electron microscope (SEM, model: JEOL, JSM-5410) is used to take SEM micrographs and EDAX-SEM were used. The phases in the specimens were analyzed by means of X-ray diffraction (XRD), for which purpose we used a Cu Ka source and a x-ray diffract meter of the model x , pert PRO PAN analytical with Cu k ? radiation (?=0.15406nm) diffract meter. The magnetic properties of samples were measured using vibrating sample magnetometer (model DEAS/FDD-2) in which the samples were vibrated at a constant frequency between a set of sense coils. As the magnetic field is varied through a specified range up to 2 Tesla, the magnetic moment of the sample is measured by the sense coils with a lock-in amplifier. The dependency between the magnetization and magnetic field (hysteresis loop) for the prepared samples was measured. Because the saturation magnetization changes with weight of the sample, the results were Global Journal of Researches in Engineering ( ) Volume XVIII Issue I Version I divided by sample's weight. The magnetization values were expressed using the magnetic moment per gram (emu/g). The measured properties included saturation magnetization (Ms), coercivity (H c) and remnant magnetization (M r).The hardness was measured with a Vickers hardness tester of the modelIndentec 5030 SKG. The load was selected at 30 kgf. The test was repeated five times at different points in each sample, the average being reported. The maximum attainable densification of the obtained (W:Ti)C-Ni cemented carbides are due to the particles rearrangement is influenced by different parameters, such as the amount of liquid present, the particle size, the contact angle, and the solubility of the solid in the liquid.Fig. 5 shows the results of the micro structural investigation with respect to the different metal binder content for (W:Ti)C-Ni. We can see, firstly, that the porosity of the materials decreases as the Ni content increases. However, when the Ni content is high, the Ni metal binder prevents the coalescence of the carbide particles, producing a more uniform and finer grain structure. In other words, all the carbidegrains are separated by a layer of the nickel metal binder and consequently producea normal grain growth [20][21][22][23].

3 III. Results and Discussion

The results of the high resolution SEM and the composition alanalysis (EDAX), as shown in Fig. 6, clearly reveal that the (W:Ti)C particles have a rounded morphology with a carbide core/rim structure. This morphology is formed when the carbide particles are dissolved in the Ni liquid and re-precipitated on the large carbide grains, where they cause grain coarsening, called Ostwald ripening [24,25].

4 Intensity

(a.u.) Fig. 8 shows the results of the measured hardness of the obtained (W:Ti)C-Ni cemented carbides indicated that the exact character of the microstructure has a critical influence on the resultant hardness. The insitu hardness of nickel, namely 440, is much higher than the typical valuesof240 for bulk nickel. This difference is explained by the solid solution of W, Ti and C in the liquid phase binder and by the complex stress state resulting from the different thermal expansion coefficients of nickel and W, Ti and. The compositional analysis confirms that the hardening effect of nickel is due to the solid solution of Ti in the Ni binder. Moreover, due to the solubility of WC in the TiC forming (W:Ti)C phase, the hardness value of the (W:Ti) Cphase is 2530, which is higher than the micro-hardness value of the WC (1300) and lower than that of the TiC (3200).Fig. 9also shows increasing in the hardness by increase the metal binder content. This result can be discussed due to the densification effect. By increasing the metal binder content the porosity was decreased, the densification was increased and as a result the hardness increased and by increasing the Ni binder content which has lower hardness than the carbide phase [26]. that are separated or combined in a solution; and, third, the presence of carbide grains, which act as magnetic voids where opposing magnetic fields can occur and in turn reduce the saturation magnetization values **??**28:29].Fig. 12 illustrates the influence of the Ni binder on the coercively (H c). First, the coercively decreases with increasing the metal binder content. Second, the sinter ability increases and the porosity decreases, thereby decreases the particle-particle interactions and decreasing the coercivity of the materials because of the porosity values of the (W:Ti)C-Ni, and by decreasing the porosity the particle-particle interaction was decreased and the coercively decreased [30][31][32][33].

5 2? (degree) (W, Ti) C Ni

6 IV. Conclusion

The microstructure, hardness and magnetic properties of (W,Ti)C-Ni cemented carbides were investigated. The (W:Ti)C cemented carbides were consolidated with a water atomized Ni as the liquid phase binder by using the vacuum liquid phase sintering at 1450 o C. The major results are summarized as follows: [1] [2]

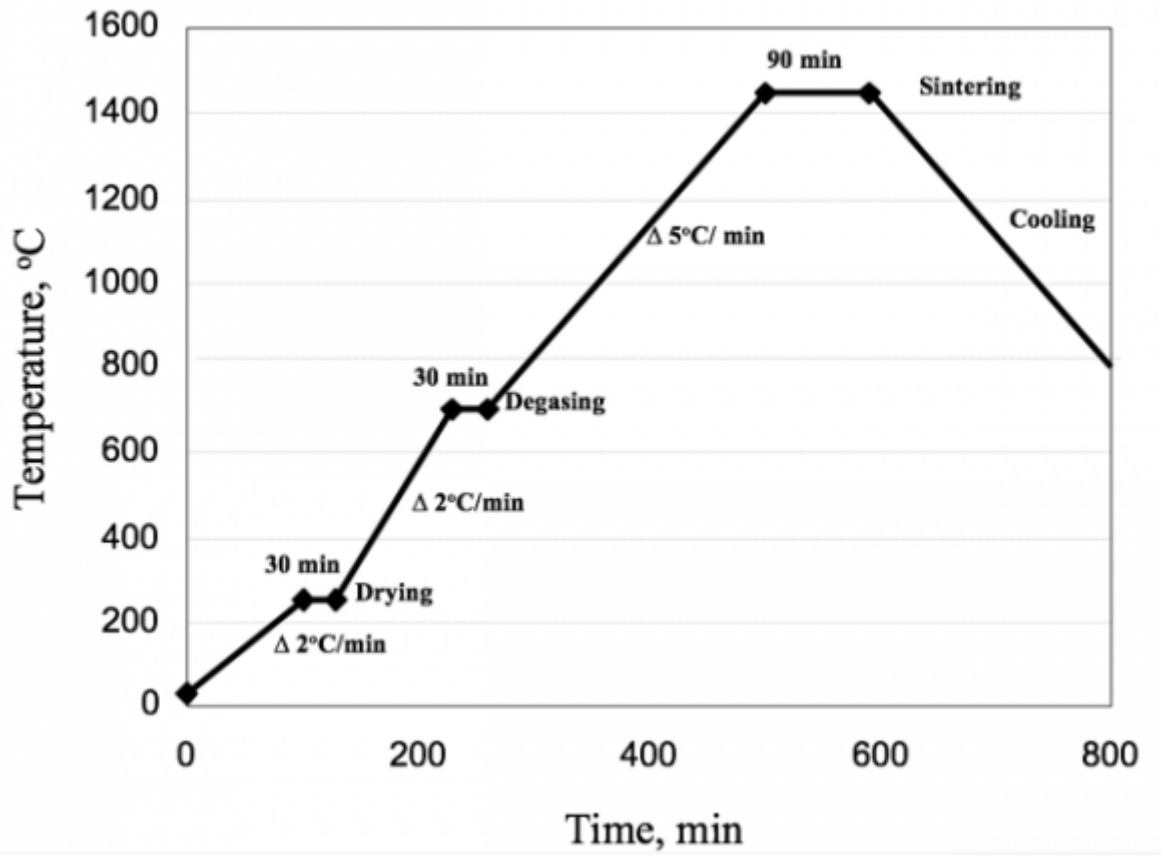

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Figure 1: Figure 2 :

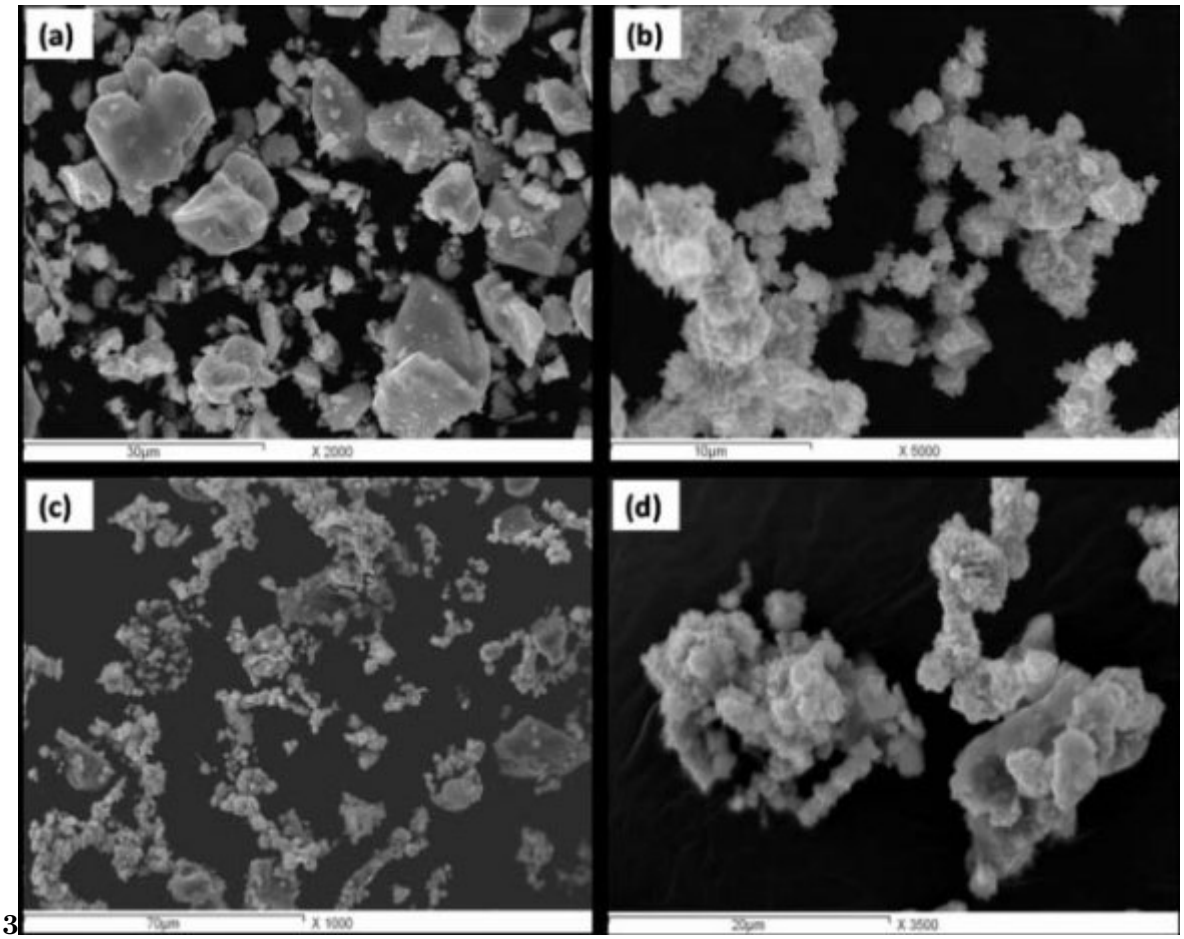

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Figure 2: Figure 3 :

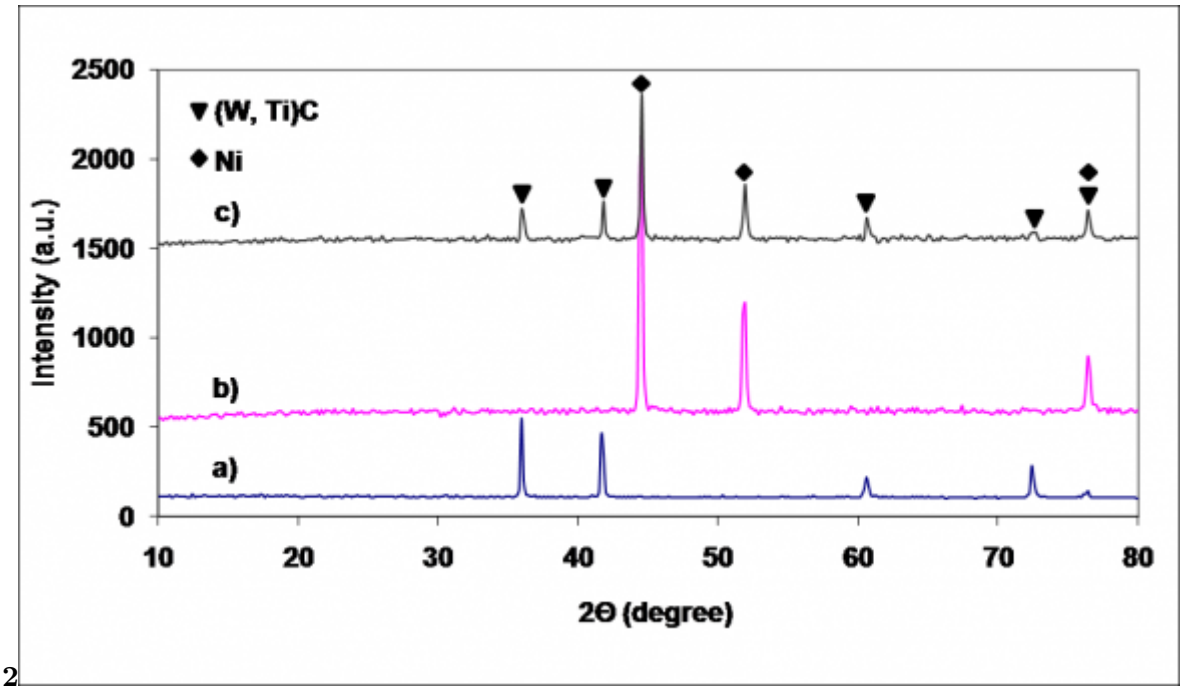

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Figure 3: Fig. 2 (

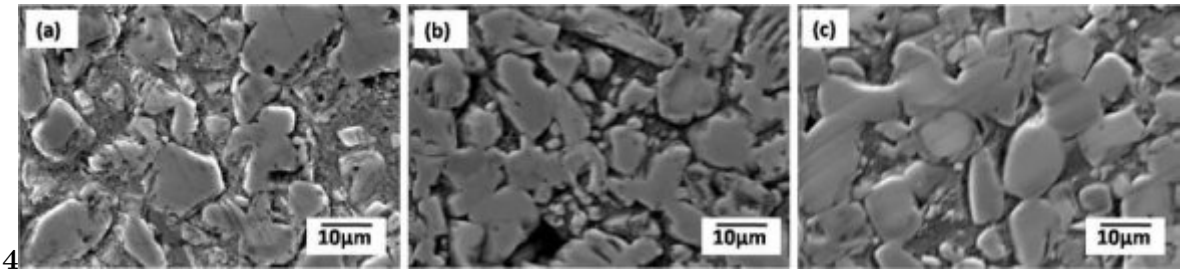

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Figure 4: Figure 4 :

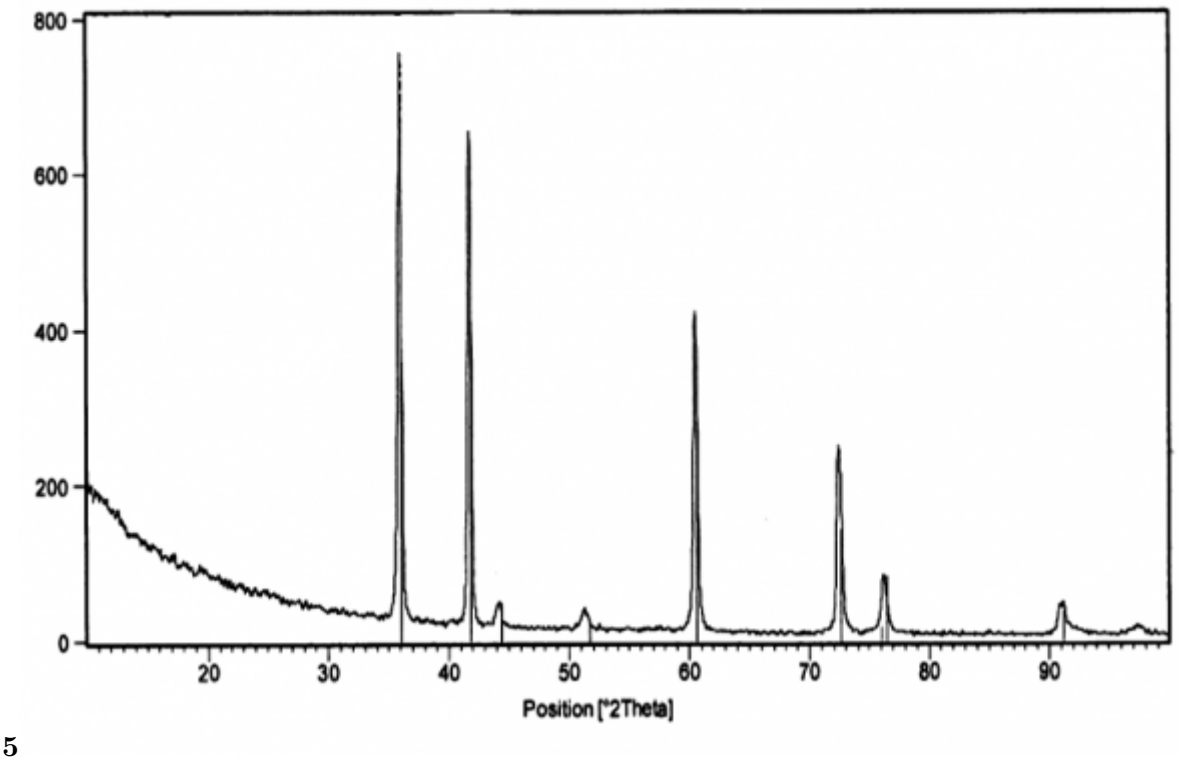

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Figure 5: Figure 5 :

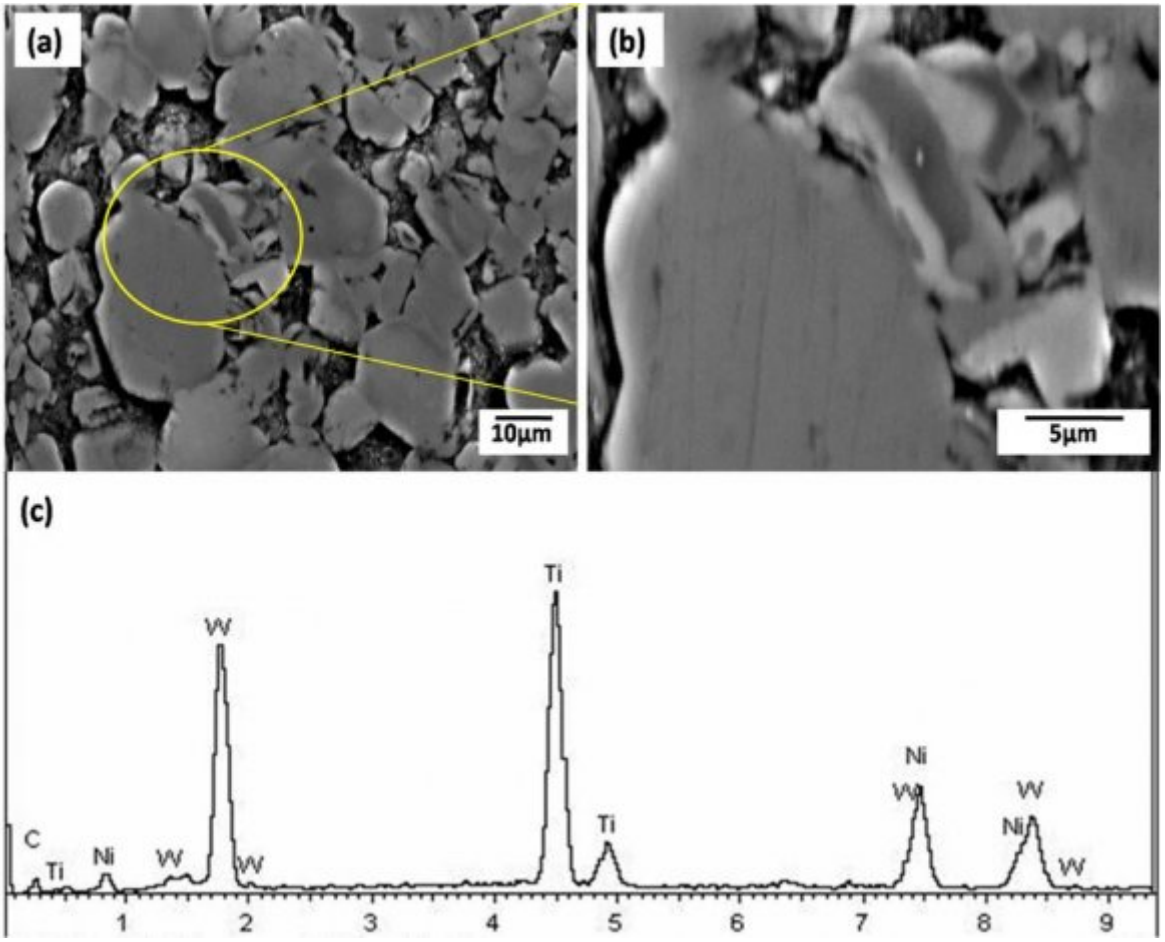

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Figure 6: Figure 6 :

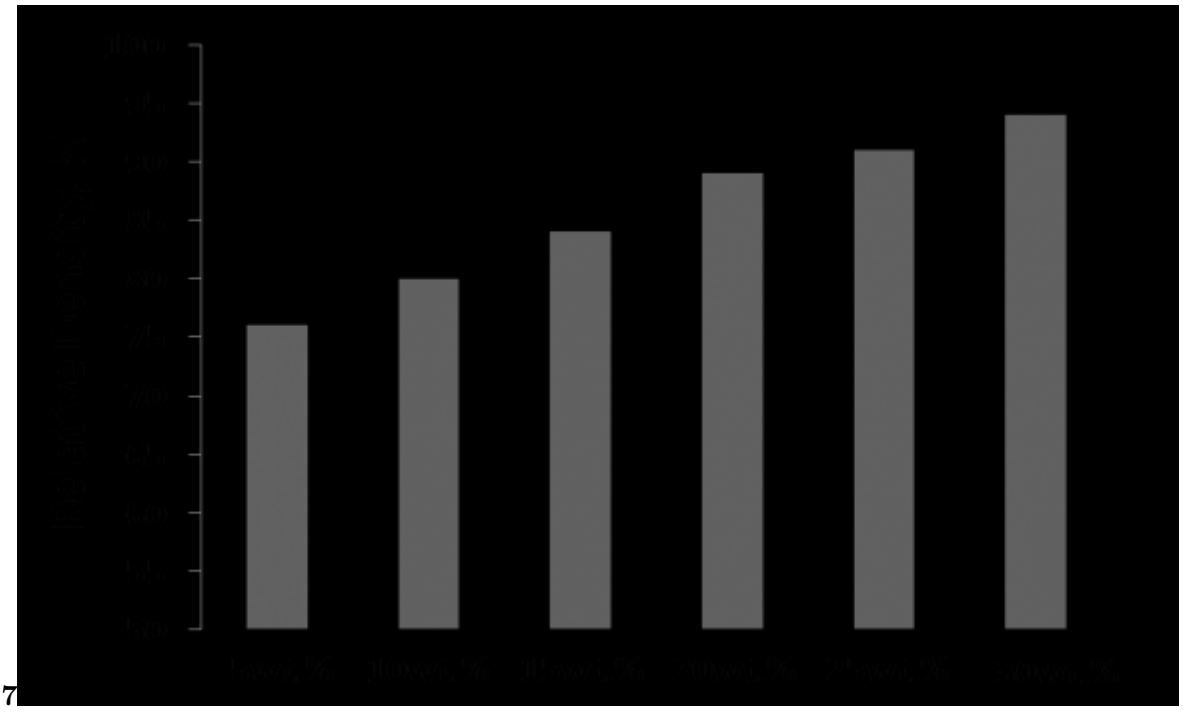

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Figure 7: Figure 7 :

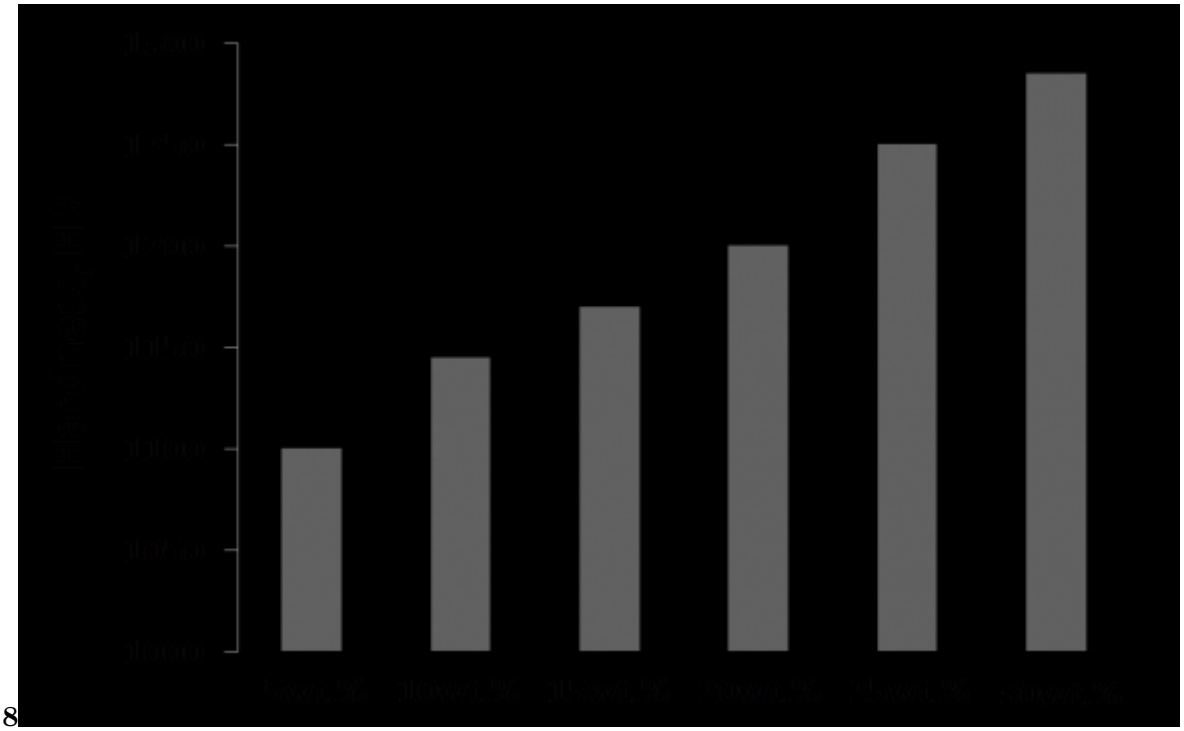

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Figure 8: Figure 8 :

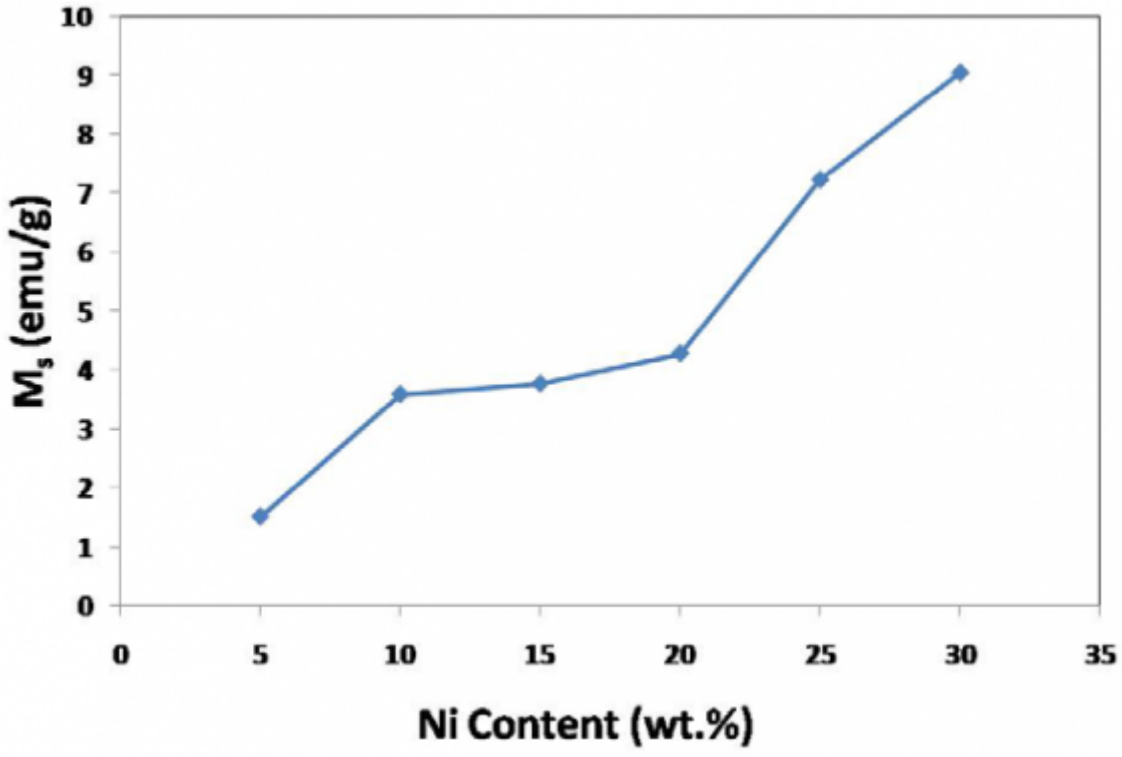

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Figure 9: Figure 9 :

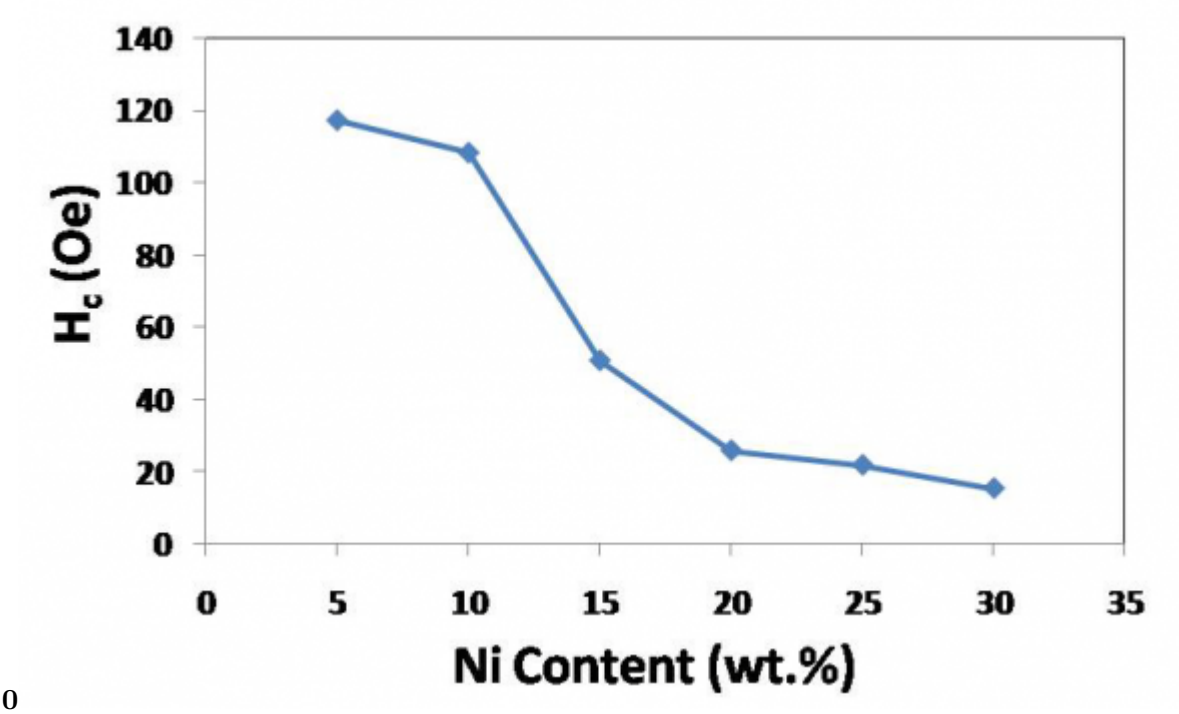

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Figure 10: Figure 10 :

1

Parameter	Condition
Pouring temperature, o C	1700
Nozzle angle	35 o
Nozzle diameter, mm	6
Number of water jets	4
Molten stream flow rate, kg/min.	4
Water pressure, MPa	20
Water flow rate, l/min.	200
Water velocity, m/s	90

Figure 11: Table 1 :

[2]Fabrication, Microstructure, Hardness and Magnetic Properties of (W: Ti) C-Ni Cemented Carbides using Atomized Ni Powder

.1 Acknowledgment

The authors wish to thank the researchers and the technicians of the Central Metallurgical R&D Institute (CMRDI) in Cairo, Egypt for their cooperation.

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