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Investigation of Initiation of Electroless Ni-P and Ni-Cu-P deposition on pure iron

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In this paper, initial depositing process of electroless Ni-Cu-P alloy was investigated by means of SEM, TEM and AES. The results show that the initial deposition is inhomogeneous and there exist different transition layers between different coatings and substrates, which are decided by the structures and compositions of the bath. For Ni-P binary alloy, its deposition takes place superiorly at grain boundary and on some grains with beneficial texture, the thickness of transition layer composed of Ni-Fe-P reaches 2000 angstrom.

But during initiation of Ni-Cu-P trinary alloy, only at grain boundary is prior to be deposited electrolessly, transited layer contains Ni-Fe-Cu-P and is decreased to about 500 angstrom. The structures of the films of Ni-P and Ni-Cu-P are crystalline at the initial depositing stage. The mechanisms of the process are put forward in this paper.