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Thermal stability of nanostructured TiAlN-based coatings deposited by HiPIMS with positive pulses

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In recent years, due to the advancement of high-speed machining (HSM), more demanding specifications on cutting tool coatings' hardness, chemical inertness materials, wear resistance, anti-abrasion, and also thermal and oxidation resistance are required. In order to overcome the detrimental effects associated with high temperatures during HSM on tool life and workpiece surface finishing, nanostructured coatings based on multilayers or nanocomposites have been proposed [1, 2]. In this work, we present nanostructured TiAlN and TiAlBN coatings deposited by HiPIMS with positive pulses. The optimization of the coatings was carried out by tailoring metal ion fluxes and energies. More energetic process conditions have been provided by adjusting height and width of positive pulses. Coatings' microstructure has been studied and related to HiPIMS parameters. The influence of the multilayer structure on the films was also tested by varying thicknesses to further improve the mechanical properties at high temperature. The formation of nanocrystalline grains (TiAlN) embedded in an amorphous phase provides enhanced toughness and wear resistance. Hardness up to 40 GPa were measured by nanoindentation techniques and high adhesion critical load values were obtained in nanoscratch testing. High temperature nanoindentation and micropillar splitting were used to evaluate toughness and thermal resistance of the coatings.

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Keywords
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