

Contents

1. Introduction	1
1.1 An Overview of Fusion Splicing and Its Applications	1
1.2 The Fusion Splicing Process	3
1.3 Essential Optical Fiber Concepts	8
1.3.1 Optical Characteristics	8
1.3.2 Material and Mechanical Characteristics of Silica Fibers	13
1.4 Alternatives to Fusion Splicing	15
1.5 Fusion Splices in the Optical Network	17
1.6 A Brief History of Fusion Splicing	21
1.7 The Frontiers of Fusion Splicing	23
1.8 Summary	25
2. Fiber Preparation and Alignment.....	27
2.1 Stripping	27
2.1.1 Fiber Coatings	28
2.1.2 Mechanical and Thermo-Mechanical Stripping Techniques	31
2.1.3 Chemical Stripping Techniques	33
2.1.4 Vaporization Stripping Techniques	34
2.2 Cleaving	35
2.2.1 Cleaving Techniques and Hardware	36
2.2.2 Basic Cleaving Principles	36
2.2.3 Cleave Defects	39
2.2.4 The Importance of Cleave Quality	40
2.3 Alignment	42
2.3.1 Passive Alignment	43
2.3.2 Image-Based Active Fiber Alignment	43
2.3.3 Transmitted-Power Based Active Fiber Alignment	44
2.3.4 Light-Injection and Detection (LID) Technology	46
2.4 Summary	47

3. Mechanics of Fusion Splicing	49
3.1 Heat Transfer During Fusion Splicing	49
3.1.1 Arc-Discharge Heating	50
3.1.2 Heat Flow	52
3.2 Mechanical Forces During Fusion Splicing	57
3.2.1 Compressive, Tensile, and Bending Forces	58
3.2.2 Surface Tension and Viscosity	62
3.2.3 Implications for Core Alignment	65
3.2.4 Fusion Splice Duration	67
3.2.5 Neckdown, Dissimilar Fiber Diameters, and Dissimilar Fiber Viscosities	68
3.2.6 Bubbles, Airlines, and Air Holes	70
3.3 Dopant Diffusion	73
3.3.1 Theory of Dopant Diffusion	74
3.3.2 Dopant Diffusion Coefficients	79
3.3.3 Diffusion Examples	80
3.4 Stress and Strain	82
3.4.1 Source of Stress and Strain in Optical Fibers	83
3.4.2 Fusion Splicing and Its Relationship to Residual Stress and Strain	86
3.5 Summary	88
4. Optics of Fusion Splicing	91
4.1 Modal Description of Fusion Splices	93
4.1.1 The Scalar Wave Equation	93
4.1.2 Modes	96
4.1.3 The Scattering Matrix	99
4.1.4 The Overlap Integral	104
4.1.5 The Reflectance of Fusion Splices	106
4.2 The Optics of Single-Mode Fiber Fusion Splices	108
4.2.1 The Mode Field Diameter	110
4.2.2 The Gaussian Approximation	111
4.2.3 Reflectance of Single-Mode Fusion Splices	116
4.2.4 Modal Noise and Single-Mode Fiber Splices	116
4.3 The Optics of Multimode Fusion Splices	119
4.3.1 Propagation Characteristics	119
4.3.2 Splice Loss Approximation Formulae	121
4.3.3 Reflections from Multi-Mode Fusion Splices	123
4.3.4 Fusion Splices Between Single- and Multimode Fibers	123
4.4 The Beam Propagation Method (BPM)	124
4.4.1 Introduction to BPM	124
4.4.2 The Transparent Boundary Condition	128
4.4.3 Mode Solving with BPM	129

4.4.4	Computing Splice Loss with BPM	130
4.4.5	A Practical BPM Example	131
4.5	Summary	134
5.	Splice Loss Estimation and Fiber Imaging	137
5.1	Fusion Splice Imaging and Image Processing	139
5.1.1	The Imaging System	139
5.1.2	Introduction to Fiber Imaging	141
5.1.3	Characteristics of Fiber Images	141
5.1.4	Basic Image Processing	146
5.2	Loss Computation	147
5.2.1	Introduction to Coupled-Mode Theory	148
5.2.2	Coupled-Mode Theory in a Single-Mode Fiber: Microbend Theory	151
5.2.3	Coupled-Mode Theory for Loss Computation	154
5.3	Summary	160
6.	Splice Strength, Reliability, and Packaging	161
6.1	Introduction to Splice Strength and Reliability	162
6.2	Crack Growth Theory	165
6.3	Characterizing Splice Failure Strength: Weibull Statistics	168
6.4	Theory of Proof Testing for Long-Term Reliability	172
6.5	Proof Testing Methods and Hardware	176
6.6	Splice Packaging	177
6.6.1	Splice Recoating Technology	178
6.6.2	Rigid Splice Protectors and Splints	180
6.7	Summary	181
7.	Splice Measurement and Characterization	183
7.1	Transmission Measurements	184
7.1.1	Insertion Loss and Cutback Measurements	184
7.1.2	The “Pre-Splice” Technique	187
7.1.3	The Two-Splice Technique	187
7.1.4	Spectral Splice Loss Measurements	189
7.2	Reflection Measurements	189
7.2.1	Optical Continuous Wave Reflectometers (OCWRs)	190
7.2.2	Optical Time-Domain Reflectometer (OTDR) Measurements	191
7.2.3	High Resolution Reflection Measurements	197
7.3	Refractive Index Profiling of Fibers and Fusion Splices	199
7.4	Summary	202

8. Splice Process Optimization and Special Splicing Strategies	203
8.1 Design of Experiments for Splice Optimization	204
8.1.1 The Splice Parameter Space	205
8.1.2 Orthogonal Arrays	206
8.1.3 Example Splice Optimization	210
8.2 Special Splicing Strategies	214
8.2.1 Fire Polishing and Arc Scanning	214
8.2.2 Bridge Fibers	215
8.2.3 Dopant Diffusion and TEC Splices	217
8.2.4 Low-Temperature Splices	220
8.2.5 Offset Heating	221
8.2.6 Tapered Splices	222
8.2.7 Fattened Splices	226
8.3 Summary	226
9. Fusion Splicing of Specialty Fiber	229
9.1 Non-Zero Dispersion Shifted Fibers	229
9.1.1 Introduction to NZ-DSF	230
9.1.2 Special Splicing Considerations for NZ-DSF	230
9.2 Polarization-Maintaining Fibers	231
9.2.1 Introduction to PM Fibers	232
9.2.2 Cleaving Considerations for PM Fibers	233
9.2.3 Polarization Crosstalk and Polarization Extinction Ratio	234
9.2.4 PM Fiber Alignment	237
9.3 Erbium-Doped Fibers	240
9.3.1 Introduction to Erbium-Doped Gain Fibers	241
9.3.2 Strategies For Low-Loss EDF Fusion Splicing	242
9.3.3 Loss Measurement of Erbium-Doped Fiber Splices	244
9.4 Dispersion-Compensating Fibers	244
9.4.1 Introduction to Dispersion-Compensating Fibers	245
9.4.2 Splicing Strategies for Dispersion-Compensating Fibers	246
9.5 Microstructured Fibers	248
9.5.1 Types of Microstructured Fibers	248
9.5.2 Fusion Splicing Microstructured Fibers	249
9.6 Summary	253
10. Splicer Hardware: State of the Art	255
10.1 Introduction to Splicer Hardware	256
10.2 Field Splicers	256
10.3 Factory Splicers	259
10.4 Research and Laboratory Splicers	264
10.5 Summary	266

Appendix A: List of Mathematical Symbols.....	267
Appendix B: List of Abbreviations.....	275
Appendix C: List of Relevant Published Standards and Requirements	277
References	279
Index	301