the cumulative amount dissolved at each time point divided by the surface area exposed. Linear regression is then performed on the normalised experimental data relevant to an appropriate time interval preceding the possible disintegration of the compact. The intrinsic dissolution rate of the substance tested, expressed in milligrams per minute per square centimetre, is determined from the slope of the regression line. The result for intrinsic dissolution rate must be accompanied by a statement of the precise conditions of compact preparation and test method (dissolution medium, volume of medium used, stirring rate, temperature etc.).

NOTE: when necessary and justified, an apparatus with a different configuration may be used, such as a die holder that holds the compact in a fixed vertical position, with agitation provided by a paddle positioned at a defined distance from the surface of the compact.

01/2008:20931

2.9.31. PARTICLE SIZE ANALYSIS BY LASER LIGHT DIFFRACTION

The method is based on the ISO standards 13320-1(1999) and 9276-1(1998).

INTRODUCTION

The laser light diffraction technique used for the determination of particle-size distribution is based on the analysis of the diffraction pattern produced when particles are exposed to a beam of monochromatic light. Historically, the early laser diffraction instruments only used scattering at small angles. However, the technique has since been broadened to include laser light scattering in a wider angular range and application of the Mie theory, in addition to the Fraunhofer approximation and anomalous diffraction.

The technique cannot distinguish between scattering by single particles and scattering by clusters of primary particles, i.e. by agglomerates or aggregates. As most particulate samples contain agglomerates or aggregates and as the focus of interest is generally on the size distribution of primary particles, the clusters are usually dispersed into primary particles before measurement.

For non-spherical particles, an equivalent sphere-size distribution is obtained because the technique assumes spherical particles in its optical model. The resulting particle-size distribution may differ from those obtained by methods based on other physical principles (e.g. sedimentation, sieving).

This chapter provides guidance for the measurement of size distributions of particles in different dispersed systems, for example, powders, sprays, aerosols, suspensions, emulsions, and gas bubbles in liquids, through analysis of their angular light-scattering patterns. It does not address specific requirements of particle size measurement of specific products.

PRINCIPLE

A representative sample, dispersed at an adequate concentration in a suitable liquid or gas, is passed through a beam of monochromatic light, usually a laser. The light scattered by the particles at various angles is measured by a multi-element detector. Numerical values representing the scattering pattern are then recorded for subsequent analysis. These scattering pattern values are then transformed, using an appropriate optical model and mathematical procedure, to yield the proportion of total volume to a discrete number of size classes, forming a volumetric particle-size distribution.

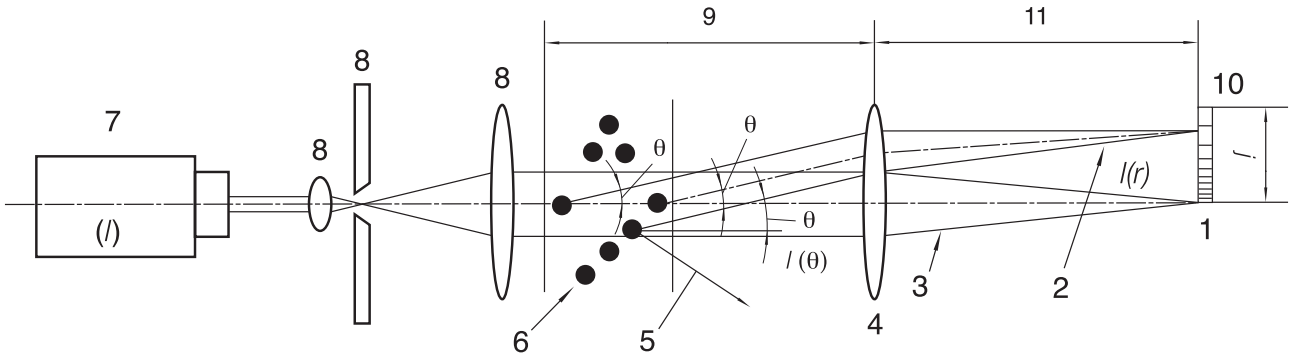
APPARATUS

An example of a set-up of a laser light diffraction instrument is given in Figure 2.9.31.-1. Other equipment may be used.

The instrument comprises a laser light source, beam processing optics, a sample measurement region (or cell), a Fourier lens, and a multi-element detector for measuring the scattered light pattern. A data system is also required for deconvolution of the scattering data into a volumetric size distribution and associated data analysis and reporting.

The particles can enter the laser beam in 2 positions. In the conventional case the particles enter the parallel beam before the collecting lens and within its working distance. In so-called reversed Fourier optics the particles enter behind the collecting lens and thus, in a converging beam. The advantage of the conventional set-up is that a reasonable path length for the sample is allowed within the working distance of the lens. The second set-up allows only small path lengths but enables measurement of scattered light at larger angles, which is useful when submicron particles are present.

The interaction of the incident light beam and the ensemble of dispersed particles results in a scattering pattern with different light intensities at various angles. The total angular intensity distribution, consisting of both direct and scattered light, is then focused onto a multi-element detector by a lens or a series of lenses. These lenses create a scattering pattern that, within limits, does not depend on the location of the



1. Obscuration detector
2. Scattered beam
3. Direct beam
4. Fourier lens
5. Scattered light not collected by lens (4)
6. Particle ensemble
7. Light source laser
8. Beam processing unit
9. Working distance of lens (4)
10. Multi-element detector
11. Focal distance of lens (4)

Figure 2.9.31.-1. - *Example of a set-up of a laser light diffraction instrument*

particles in the light beam. Hence, the continuous angular intensity distribution is converted into a discrete spatial intensity distribution on a set of detector elements.

It is assumed that the measured scattering pattern of the particle ensemble is identical to the sum of the patterns from all individual single scattering particles presented in random relative positions. Note that only a limited angular range of scattered light is collected by the lens(es) and, therefore, by the detector.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE METHOD

Traditionally, the measurement of particle size using laser diffraction has been limited to particles in the range of approximately 0.1 μm to 3 mm. Because of recent advances in lens and equipment design, newer instruments are capable of exceeding this range routinely. With the validation report the user demonstrates the applicability of the method for its intended use.

Sampling. The sampling technique must be adequate to obtain a representative sample of a suitable volume for the particle-size measurement.

Evaluation of the dispersion procedure. The dispersion procedure must be adjusted to the purpose of the measurement. The purpose may be such that it is preferable to deagglomerate clusters into primary particles as far as possible, or it may be desirable to retain clusters as intact as possible. In this sense, the particles of interest may be either primary particles or clusters.

For the development of a method it is highly advisable to check that comminution of the particles does not occur, and conversely, that dispersion of particles or clusters is satisfactory. This can usually be done by changing the dispersing energy and monitoring the change of the particle-size distribution. The measured size distribution must not change significantly when the sample is well dispersed and the particles are neither fragile nor soluble. In addition, the particles of interest can be inspected visually or with the aid of a microscope. Moreover, if the manufacturing process (e.g. crystallisation, milling) of the material has changed, the applicability of the method must be verified (e.g. by microscopic comparison).

Sprays, aerosols and gas bubbles in a liquid should be measured directly, provided that their concentration is adequate, because sampling or dilution generally alters the particle-size distribution.

In other cases (such as emulsions, pastes and powders), representative samples may be dispersed in suitable liquids. Dispersing aids (wetting agents, stabilisers) and/or mechanical forces (e.g. agitation, sonication) are often applied for deagglomeration or deaggregation of clusters and stabilisation of the dispersion. For these liquid dispersions, a recirculating system is most commonly used, consisting of an optical measuring cell, a dispersion bath usually equipped with stirrer and ultrasonic elements, a pump, and tubing. Non-recirculating, stirred cells are useful when only small amounts of a sample are available or when special dispersion liquids are used.

Dry powders can also be converted into aerosols through the use of suitable dry powder dispersers, which apply mechanical force for deagglomeration or deaggregation. Generally, the dispersers use the energy of compressed gas or the differential pressure of a vacuum to disperse the particles to an aerosol, which is blown through the measuring zone, usually into the inlet of a vacuum unit that collects the particles. However, for free flowing, coarser particles or granules the effect of gravity may be sufficient to disperse the particles adequately.

Optimisation of the liquid dispersion. Liquids, surfactants, and dispersing aids used to disperse powders must:

- be transparent at the laser wavelength and practically free from air bubbles or particles;
- have a refractive index that differs from that of the test material;
- be non-solvent of the test material (pure liquid or pre-filtered, saturated solution);
- not alter the size of the test materials (e.g. by solubility, solubility enhancement, or recrystallisation effects);
- favour easy formation and stability of the dispersion;
- be compatible with the materials used in the instrument (such as O-rings, gaskets, tubing, etc.);
- possess a suitable viscosity to facilitate recirculation, stirring and filtration.

Surfactants and/or dispersing aids are often used to wet the particles and to stabilise the dispersion. For weak acids and weak bases, buffering of the dispersing medium at low or high pH respectively can assist in identifying a suitable dispersant.

A preliminary check of the dispersion quality can be performed by visual or microscopic inspection. It is also possible to take fractional samples out of a well-mixed stock dispersion. Such stock dispersions are formed by adding a liquid to the sample while mixing it with, for example, a glass rod, a spatula or a vortex mixer. Care must be taken to ensure a representative transfer of the sample and that settling of larger particles does not occur.

Optimisation of the gas dispersion. For sprays and dry powder dispersions, a compressed gas free from oil, water and particles may be used. To remove such materials from the compressed gas, a dryer with a filter can be used. Any vacuum unit should be located away from the measurement zone, so that its output does not disturb the measurement.

Determination of the concentration range. In order to produce an acceptable signal-to-noise ratio in the detector, the particle concentration in the dispersion must exceed a minimum level. Likewise, it must be below a maximum level in order to avoid multiple scattering. The concentration range is influenced by the width of the laser beam, the path length of the measurement zone, the optical properties of the particles, and the sensitivity of the detector elements.

In view of the above, measurements must be performed at different particle concentrations to determine the appropriate concentration range for any typical sample of material. (Note: in different instruments, particle concentrations are usually represented by differently scaled and differently named numbers, e.g. obscuration, optical concentration, proportional number of total mass).

Selection of an appropriate optical model. Most instruments use either the Fraunhofer or the Mie theory, though other approximation theories are sometimes applied for calculation of the scattering matrix. The choice of the theoretical model depends on the intended application and the different assumptions (size, absorbance, refractive index, roughness, crystal orientation, mixture, etc.) made for the test material. If the refractive index values (real and imaginary parts for the used wavelength) are not exactly known, then the Fraunhofer approximation or the Mie theory with a realistic estimate of the refractive index can be used. The former has the advantages that it is simple, it does not need refractive index values and it is extremely useful for analysis of powders coarser than about 1-2 μm; the latter usually provides less-biased particle-size distributions for small particles. In order to obtain traceable results, it is essential to document the refractive index values used, since small differences in

the values assumed for the real and imaginary part of the complex refractive index may cause significant differences in the measured particle-size distributions. Small values of the imaginary part of the refractive index (about 0.01 - 0.1 i) are often applied to allow the correction of the absorbance for the surface roughness of the particles.

Repeatability. The attainable repeatability of the method mainly depends on the characteristics of the material (milled/not milled, robust/fragile, width of its size distribution, etc.), whereas the required repeatability depends on the purpose of the measurement. Mandatory limits cannot be specified in this monograph, as repeatabilities (different sample preparations) may vary appreciably from one substance to another. However, it is good practice to aim at acceptance criteria for repeatability such as $s_{rel} \leq 10$ per cent [$n = 6$] for any central value of the distribution (e.g. for x_{50}). Values at the sides of the distribution (e.g. x_{10} and x_{90}) are oriented towards less stringent acceptance criteria such as $s_{rel} \leq 15$ per cent [$n = 6$]. Below 10 µm, these values must be doubled.

MEASUREMENT

Precautions. The instructions given in the apparatus manual are followed:

- never look into the direct path of the laser beam or its reflections;
- earth all apparatus components to prevent ignition of solvents or dust explosions;
- check the apparatus set-up (e.g. warm-up, required measuring range and lens, appropriate working distance, position of the detector, no direct bright daylight);
- in the case of wet dispersions, avoid air bubbles, evaporation of liquid, schlieren or other inhomogeneities in the dispersion; similarly, avoid improper mass-flow from the disperser or turbulent air-flow in the case of dry dispersions; such effects can cause erroneous particle-size distributions.

Measurement of the light scattering of dispersed sample(s). After proper alignment of the optical part of the instrument, a blank measurement of the particle-free dispersion medium must be performed. The background signal must be below an appropriate threshold.

Generally, the time for measurement permits a large number of detector scans or sweeps at short time intervals. For each detector element, an average signal is calculated, sometimes together with its standard deviation. The magnitude of the signal from each detector element depends upon the detection area, the light intensity and the quantum efficiency. The co-ordinates (size and position) of the detector elements together with the focal distance of the lens determine the range of scattering angles for each element. Most instruments also measure the intensity of the central (unscattered) laser beam. The ratio of the intensity of a dispersed sample to that in its absence (a blank measurement) indicates the proportion of scattered light and hence the particle concentration.

Conversion of scattering pattern into particle-size distribution. This deconvolution step is the inverse of the calculation of a scattering pattern for a given particle-size distribution. The assumption of spherical particle shape is particularly important as most algorithms use the mathematical solution for scattering from spherical particles. Furthermore, the measured data always contain some random and systematic errors, which may vitiate the size distributions. Several mathematical procedures have been developed for use in the available instruments. They contain some weighting of deviations between measured and calculated scattering patterns (e.g. least squares), some constraints (e.g. non-negativity for amounts of particles), and/or some smoothing of the size distribution curve. The algorithms used are specific to each make and model of equipment, and are proprietary. The differences in the algorithms between different instruments may give rise to differences in the calculated particle size statistics.

Replicates. It is recommended that the number of replicate measurements (with individual sample preparations) to be performed per sample is defined, in a substance-specific method.

REPORTING OF RESULTS

The particle size analysis data are usually reported as cumulative undersize distribution and/or as density distribution by volume. The symbol x is used to denote the particle size, which in turn is defined as the diameter of a volume-equivalent sphere. Q3(x) denotes the volume fraction undersize at the particle size x. In a graphical representation, x is plotted on the abscissa and the dependent variable Q3 on the ordinate. Most common characteristic values are calculated from the particle size distribution by interpolation. The particle sizes at the undersize values of 10 per cent, 50 per cent, and 90 per cent (denoted as x_{10}, x_{50}, and x_{90} respectively) are frequently used. x_{50} is also known as the median particle size. It is recognised that the symbol d is also widely used to designate the particle size, thus the symbol x may be replaced by d.

Moreover, sufficient information must be documented about the sample, the sample preparation, the dispersion conditions, and the cell type. As the results depend on the particular instrument, data analysis program, and optical model used, these details must also be documented.

CONTROL OF THE APPARATUS PERFORMANCE

Use the apparatus according to the manufacturer's instructions and carry out the prescribed verifications at an appropriate frequency, according to the use of the apparatus and substances to be tested.

Calibration. Laser diffraction systems, although assuming idealised properties of the particles, are based on first principles of laser light scattering. Thus, calibration in the strict sense is not required. However, it is still necessary to confirm that the instrument is operating correctly. This can be undertaken using any certified or standard reference material that is acceptable in industrial practice. The entire measurement procedure is examined, including sample collection, sample dispersion, sample transport through the measuring zone, measurement, and the deconvolution procedure. It is essential that the total operational procedure is fully described.

The preferred certified or standard reference materials consist of spherical particles of a known distribution ranging over one decade of size. They must be certified as to the mass-percentage size distribution by an absolute technique, if available, and used in conjunction with an agreed, detailed operation procedure. It is essential that the real and imaginary parts of the complex refractive index of the material are indicated if the Mie theory is applied in data analysis. The representation of the particle-size distribution by volume will equal that of the distribution by mass, provided that the density of the particles is the same for all size fractions.

The response of a laser diffraction instrument is considered to meet the requirements if the mean value of x_{50} from at least 3 independent measurements does not deviate by more than 3 per cent from the certified range of values of the certified or standard reference material, i.e. the mean value together

with its standard deviation. The mean values for x_{10} and x_{90} must not deviate by more than 5 per cent from the certified range of values. Below 10 µm, these values must be doubled.

Although the use of materials consisting of spherical particles is preferable, non-spherical particles may also be employed. Preferably, these particles have certified or typical values from laser diffraction analyses performed according to an agreed, detailed operating procedure. The use of reference values from methods other than laser diffraction may cause a significant bias. The reason for this bias is that the different principles inherent in the various methods may lead to different sphere-equivalent diameters for the same non-spherical particle.

In addition to the certified reference materials mentioned above, product samples of typical composition and particle-size distribution for a specified class of products can also be used, provided their particle-size distribution has proven to be stable over time. The results must comply with previously determined data, with the same precision and bias as for the certified reference material.

Verification of the system. In addition to the calibration, the performance of the apparatus must be verified at regular time intervals or as frequently as appropriate. This can be undertaken using any suitable material as mentioned in the previous paragraph.

The verification of the system is based on the concept that the equipment, electronics, software and analytical operations constitute an integral system, which can be evaluated as an entity. Thus the entire measurement procedure is examined, including sample collection, sample dispersion, sample transport through the measuring zone, and the measurement and deconvolution procedure. It is essential that the total operational procedure is fully described.

In general, unless otherwise specified in the individual monograph, the response of a laser diffraction instrument is considered to meet the requirements if the x_{50} value does not deviate by more than 10 per cent from the range of values of the reference material, i.e. the mean value together with its standard deviation. If optionally the values at the sides of the distribution are evaluated (e.g. x_{10} and x_{90}), then these values must not deviate by more than 15 per cent from the certified range of values. Below 10 µm, these values must be doubled.

01/2008:20933

2.9.33. CHARACTERISATION OF CRYSTALLINE AND PARTIALLY CRYSTALLINE SOLIDS BY X-RAY POWDER DIFFRACTION (XRPD)

Every crystalline phase of a given substance produces a characteristic X-ray diffraction pattern.

Diffraction patterns can be obtained from a randomly oriented crystalline powder composed of crystallites or crystal fragments of finite size. Essentially 3 types of information can be derived from a powder diffraction pattern: angular position of diffraction lines (depending on geometry and size of the unit cell); intensities of diffraction lines (depending mainly on atom type and arrangement, and particle orientation within the sample); and diffraction line profiles (depending on instrumental resolution, crystallite size, strain and specimen thickness).

Experiments giving angular positions and intensities of lines can be used for applications such as qualitative phase analysis (for example, identification of crystalline phases) and quantitative phase analysis of crystalline materials. An estimate of the amorphous and crystalline fractions[6] can also be made.

In addition, analysis of line-profile broadening can also allow the determination of crystallite size (size of coherently scattering domains) and micro-strain.

The X-ray powder diffraction (XRPD) method provides an advantage over other means of analysis in that it is usually non-destructive in nature (specimen preparation is usually limited to grinding to ensure a randomly oriented sample). XRPD investigations can also be carried out under *in situ* conditions on specimens exposed to non-ambient conditions, such as low or high temperature and humidity.

PRINCIPLE

X-ray diffraction results from the interaction between X-rays and electron clouds of atoms. Depending on the atomic arrangement, interferences arise from the scattered X-rays. These interferences are constructive when the path difference between 2 diffracted X-ray waves differs by an integral number of wavelengths. This selective condition is described by the Bragg equation, also called Bragg's law (see Figure 2.9.33.-1):

$$2d_{\mathrm{hkl}}\sin\theta_{\mathrm{hkl}} = \mathrm{n}\lambda$$

The wavelength λ of the X-rays is of the same order of magnitude as the distance between successive crystal lattice planes, or d_{hkl} (also called 'd-spacings'). θ_{hkl} is the angle between the incident ray and the family of lattice planes, and $\sin\theta_{hkl}$ is inversely proportional to the distance between successive crystal planes or d-spacings.

The direction and spacing of the planes with reference to the unit cell axes are defined by the Miller indices {*hkl*}. These indices are the reciprocals, reduced to the next-lower integer, of the intercepts that a plane makes with the unit cell axes. The unit cell dimensions are given by the spacings *a*, *b* and *c* and the angles between them, α, β, and γ.

The interplanar spacing for a specified set of parallel *hkl* planes is denoted by d_{hkl}. Each such family of planes may show higher orders of diffraction where the *d* values for the related families of planes n*h*, n*k*, n*l* are diminished by the factor 1/n (n being an integer: 2,3,4, etc.).

Every set of planes throughout a crystal has a corresponding Bragg diffraction angle, θ_{hkl}, associated with it (for a specific wavelength λ).

A powder specimen is assumed to be polycrystalline so that at any angle θ_{hkl} there are always crystallites in an orientation allowing diffraction according to Bragg's law[7]. For a given X-ray wavelength, the positions of the diffraction peaks (also referred to as 'lines', 'reflections' or 'Bragg reflections') are characteristic of the crystal lattice (d-spacings), their theoretical intensities depend on the crystallographic unit cell content (nature and positions of atoms), and the line profiles on the perfection and extent of the crystal lattice. Under these conditions the diffraction peak has a finite

(6) There are many other applications of the X-ray powder diffraction technique that can be applied to crystalline pharmaceutical substances such as: determination of crystal structures, refinement of crystal structures, determination of crystallographic purity of crystalline phases, characterisation of crystallographic texture, etc. These applications are not described in this chapter.
(7) An 'ideal' powder for diffraction experiments consists of a large number of small, randomly oriented spherical crystallites (coherently diffracting crystalline domains). If this number is sufficiently large, there are always enough crystallites in any diffracting orientation to give reproducible diffraction patterns. To obtain a precise measurement of the intensity of diffracted X-rays, it is recommended that the crystallite size be small, i.e. typically 10 µm or less, depending on the characteristics of the specimen (X-ray absorption, shape, etc.) and the diffraction geometry.