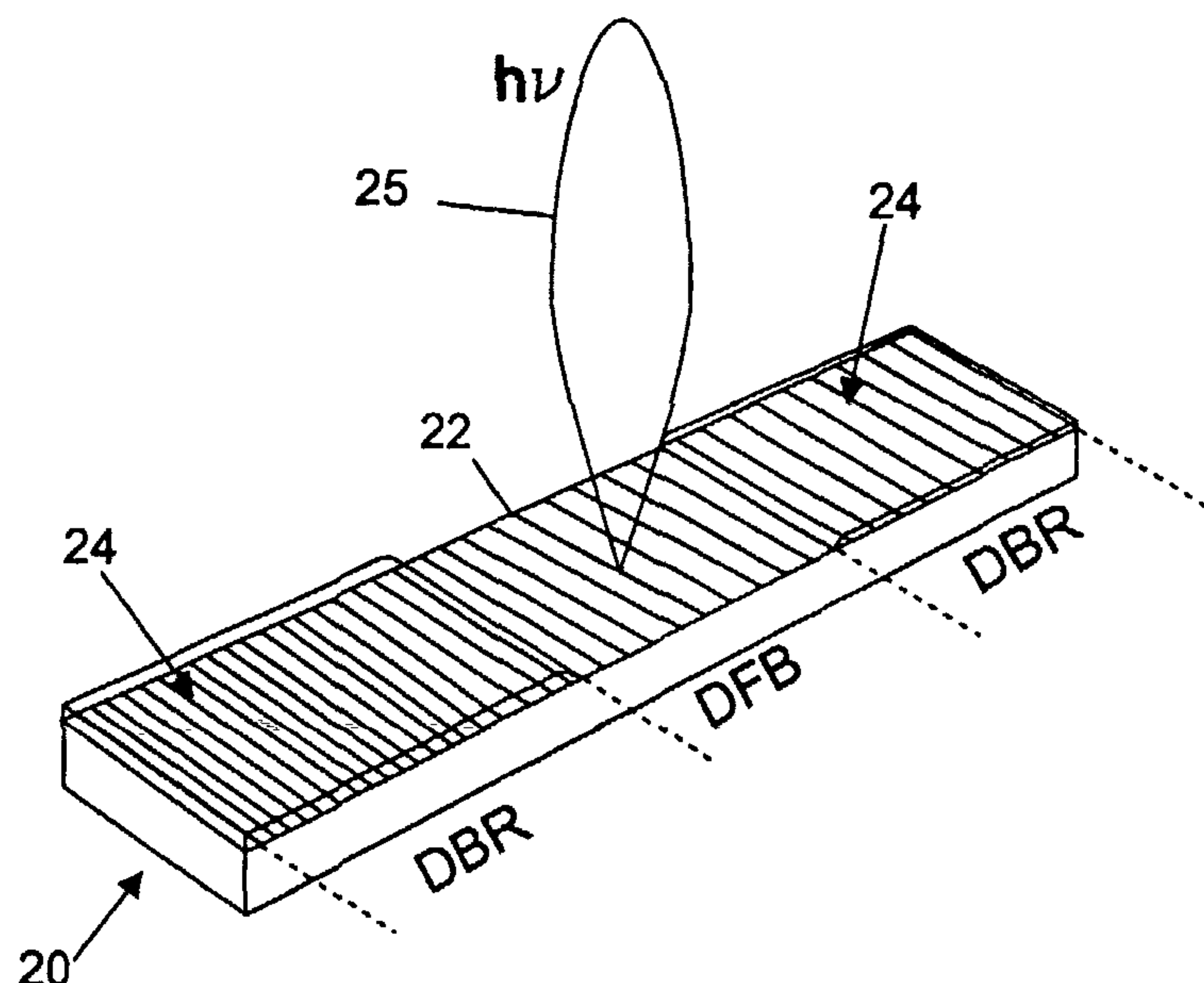




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(54) Title: HIGH COHERENT POWER, TWO-DIMENSIONAL SURFACE-EMITTING SEMICONDUCTOR DIODE ARRAY LASER



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

A semiconductor laser is formed on a semiconductor substrate (34) with an array of laterally spaced laser device elements each including a second order distributed feedback grating (22) bounded by distributed Bragg reflector gratings (24) and a central phase shift in the distributed feedback grating (22). The device elements in which the distributed feedback grating (22) and the distributed Bragg reflector gratings (24) are formed have a lower effective index than the index of the interelement regions (51) and are spaced so as to form an antiguided array. A two-dimensional semiconductor array laser may be formed of four or more of the semiconductor array devices arranged on the substrate (34) to provide long range coherent coupling via traveling waves of light between the device elements.



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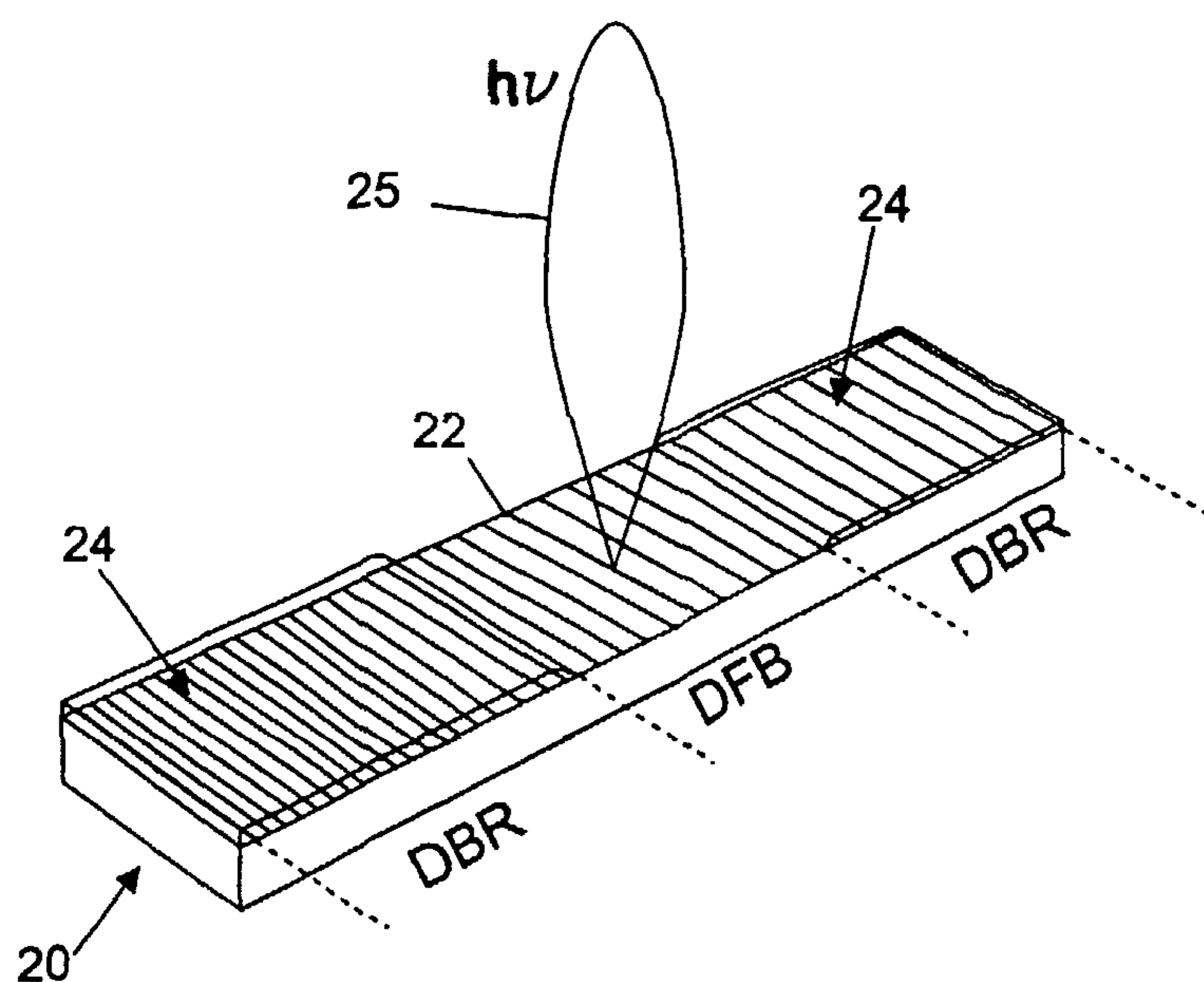
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(54) Title: HIGH COHERENT POWER, TWO-DIMENSIONAL SURFACE-EMITTING SEMICONDUCTOR DIODE ARRAY LASER



(57) Abstract: A semiconductor laser is formed on a semiconductor substrate (34) with an array of laterally spaced laser device elements each including a second order distributed feedback grating (22) bounded by distributed Bragg reflector gratings (24) and a central phase shift in the distributed feedback grating (22). The device elements in which the distributed feedback grating (22) and the distributed Bragg reflector gratings (24) are formed have a lower effective index than the index of the interelement regions (51) and are spaced so as to form an antiguided array. A two-dimensional semiconductor array laser may be formed of four or more of the semiconductor array devices arranged on the substrate (34) to provide long range coherent coupling via traveling waves of light between the device elements.



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HIGH COHERENT POWER, TWO-DIMENSIONAL SURFACE-EMITTING SEMICONDUCTOR DIODE ARRAY LASER

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] This invention pertains generally to the field of semiconductor diode lasers and diode laser arrays.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Phase locked arrays of antiguide laser structures were demonstrated over a decade ago. See, D. Botez, et al. "High-Power Diffraction Limited Beam Operation from Phase Locked Diode Laser Arrays of Closely Spaced 'Leaky' Wave Guides (Antiguides)," Appl. Phys. Lett., Vol. 53, 1988, pp. 464 et seq. In an antiguide laser, the antiguide core has an index n_0 lower than the cladding index, n_1 . Whereas in a positive index guide, light is trapped in the guide core via total internal reflection, in an antiguide light is only partially reflected at the antiguide-core boundaries. Light refracted into the cladding layers is radiation leaking outwardly with lateral (projected) wavelength λ_1 , and can be thought of as a radiation loss, α_r . See, D. Botez, "Monolithic Phase-Locked Semiconductor Laser Arrays," Chapter 1 in Diode Laser Arrays, D. Botez and D.R. Scifres, Eds. Cambridge, U.K., Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994, pp. 1-72. For a proper mode to exist, α_r has to be compensated for by gain in the antiguide core. The effective indices of the supported leaky modes have values below the core index, the quantum-mechanical equivalent being quasi-bound states above a potential barrier. Although in a single antiguide the radiation losses can be quite high, closely spacing antiguides in linear arrays significantly reduces the device losses, since

radiation leakage from individual elements mainly serves the purpose of coupling the array elements.

[0003] Due to lateral radiation, a single antiguide, for which the index of refraction varies in only one dimension, can be thought of as a generator of laterally propagating traveling waves of wavelength λ_1 . In an array of antiguides, elements will resonantly couple in-phase or out-of-phase when the interelement spacings correspond to an odd or even number of (lateral) half-wavelengths $\lambda_1/2$, respectively. When the resonance condition is met, the interelement spacings become Fabry-Perot resonators in the resonance condition, and thus full transmission occurs through the array structure allowing each element to equally couple to all others (i.e., global coupling is achieved). Resonant leaky-wave coupling allows the realization of global coupling for any type of phase locked laser array. See, D. Botez, et al. "Resonant Leaky-Wave Coupling in Linear Arrays of Antiguides," Electron. Lett., Vol. 24, August 1988, pp. 1328-1330; D. Botez, et al. "Resonant Optical Transmission and Coupling in Phase-Locked Diode Laser Arrays of Antiguides: The Resonant Optical Waveguide Array," Appl. Phys. Lett., Vol. 54, May 1989, pp. 2183-2185. At its resonance, the in-phase mode intensity profile becomes uniform. The unwanted out-of-phase mode(s) are non-resonant, which causes their fields to be significantly trapped between elements, and these modes can thus be effectively suppressed using interelement loss. Another way of suppressing out-of-phase modes is by the use of intracavity Talbot-type spatial filters. See, D. Botez, et al., "Phase-Locked Arrays of Antiguides: Modal Content and Discrimination," IEEE J. Quantum Electron., Vol. 26, March 1990, pp. 482-485. However, the above description for resonant leaky-wave coupling holds only for

structures in which the index of refraction varies periodically in only one dimension, the lateral one. For real antiguided devices, the index of refraction varies periodically in two dimensions, such that resonant coupling of the elements does not necessarily occur when the interelement spacings correspond to an odd or even number of (lateral) half-wavelengths $\lambda_1/2$, respectively, but rather when the interelement spacings correspond to an odd or even number of (lateral) half-wavelengths $\lambda_1/2$ plus a length which is a function of the two-dimensional details of the structure. See, D. Botez, "Monolithic phase-locked semiconductor laser arrays," pp. 1-71 in "Diode Laser Arrays," D. Botez and D.R. Scifres eds., Cambridge Univ. Press, UK, 1994.

[0004] Edge emitting devices, called ROW arrays, have exceeded the one watt coherent-power barrier (D. Botez, et al., "Watt-Range, Coherent Uniphase Power from Phase-Locked Arrays of Antiguided Diode Lasers," Appl. Phys. Lett., Vol. 58, May 1991, pp. 2070-2072), demonstrated 10W of peak pulse power in a beam twice the diffraction limit (H. Yang, et al., "10W Near-Diffraction-Limited Pulsed Power From 0.98 μm -Emitting, Al-Free Phase Locked Antiguided Arrays," Electron. Lett., Vol. 33, 1997, pp. 136-138), and 1.6W continuous wave (CW) power in a twice diffraction limited beam (H. Yang, et al., "1.6W Continuous-Wave Coherent Power From Large-Index-Step [$\Delta n = 0.1$] Near-Resonant Antiguided Diode Laser Arrays" Appl. Phys. Lett., Vol. 76, 2000, pp. 1219-1221). These milestones in stable, coherent power were due both to global coupling as well as to high built-in index steps ($\Delta n = 0.05-0.10$) structures, which makes the desired in-phase mode relatively insensitive to gain spatial hole burning (GSHB) and thermal lensing. Comprehensive above-threshold analyses have confirmed the

basic immunity of ROW arrays to GSHB. Furthermore, unlike evanescent-wave-coupled arrays, ROW arrays do not display coupling-induced instabilities, as expected for globally-coupled arrays. ROW arrays, due to large index steps as well as reliance on periodic gain modulation for selecting lasing of specific traveling-wave modes, were effectively the first active photonic lattices (APLs) employed for the generation of high coherent power. Bloch-function analysis showed them to be equivalent to 2nd order complex-coupled lateral distributed feedback (DFB) structures of zero stopgap, and further Bloch-function analyses of finite structures have allowed the derivation of analytical formulae for all relevant design parameters.

[0005] Antiguided-array structures have also been used for creating other APL-type devices. These include flat phasefront, stable beam fanout MOPA devices (See, Zmudzinski, et al., "3-Core ARROW-Type Diode Laser: Novel High-Power Single-Mode Device, and Effective Master Oscillator for Flared Antiguided MOPAs," IEEE J. Select. Topics Quantum Electron., Vol. 1, No. 2, June 1995, pp. 129-137; D. Botez, et al., "Flat Phasefront Fanout-Type Power Amplifier Employing Resonant-Optical Waveguide Structures," Appl. Phys. Lett., Vol. 63, December 1993, pp. 3113-3115), ARROW devices (L.J. Mawst, et al., "Design Optimization of ARROW-Type Diode Lasers," IEEE Photonics Tech. Lett., Vol. 4, Nov. 1992, pp. 1204-1206; L.J. Mawst, et al., "High-Powered, Single Mode, Al Free InGaAs, [P]/InGaP/GaAs Distributed Feedback Diode Lasers," Journal of Crystal Growth, Vol. 195, 1998, pp. 609 et seq.; D. Zhou, et al., "Simplified Antiresonant Reflecting Optical Wave Guide-Type Vertical-Cavity Surface-Emitting Lasers," Appl. Phys. Lett., Vol. 76, 2000, pp. 1659 et seq.); and Triple-Core ARROW Devices (A.

Bhattacharya, et al., "0.4W CW Diffraction-Limited-Beam Al-Free, 0.98 μm Three Core ARROW-Type Diode Lasers," Electron. Lett., Vol. 32, 1996, pp. 657-658) which have demonstrated high CW ($\geq 0.4\text{W}$) coherent powers, as well as one-dimensional and two-dimensional ROW arrays of vertical cavity surface emitting lasers (VCSELs) (S.K. Serkland, et al., "Two-Element Phased Array of Antiguided Vertical-Cavity Lasers," Appl. Phys. Lett., Vol. 75, 1999, pp. 3754 et seq.; D. Zhou, et al., "Two-Dimensional Phase-Locked Antiguided Vertical Cavity Surface-Emitting Laser Arrays," Appl. Phys. Lett., Vol. 77, 2000, pp. 2307 et seq.). However, ROW arrays can be prone to self-pulsations either if saturable absorption occurs in lossy interelement regions or when imaging, in intracavity Talbot-type spatial filters, is disturbed by GSHB. Single-frequency pulsed operation can be achieved for edge-emitting devices by using DFB gratings, but the yield of in-phase-mode operating devices has been quite low, since the effective yield is a strong function of the grating phase(s) with respect to the cleaved mirror facet(s). M.P. Nesnidal, et al., "Distributed Feedback Grating Used as an Array-Mode Selector in Resonant Antiguided Diode Laser Arrays: Effects of the Mirror Facet Position With Respect to the Grating," IEEE Photon. Tech. Lett., Vol. 10, 1998, pp. 507 et seq.; and N. Nesnidal, et al., "0.45 W Diffraction-Limited-Beam and Single-Frequency Operation from Resonant Antiguided Phase-Locked Laser Array With Distributed Feedback Gratings," Appl. Phys. Lett., Vol. 73, 1998, pp. 587 et seq.

[0006] Second-order DFB laser structures for use as surface emitters, based on outcoupling perpendicular to the chip surface, have been studied for nearly three decades. However, it has been found both theoretically as well as experimentally that the favored mode to lase is an

antisymmetric one (that is, a two-lobed pattern), since it has the least radiation loss. Furthermore, the guided-field pattern is highly nonuniform, making the device vulnerable to multimoding via longitudinal GSHB. C.H. Henry, et al., "Observation of Destructive Interference in the Radiation Loss of Second-Order Distributed Feedback Lasers," IEEE J. QE, Vol. 21, 1985, pp. 151-153.

[0007] Several approaches have been tried to obtain symmetric-like mode operation or actual symmetric mode operation. The first approach involves using a π phase-shifting film deposited on half the device aperture (S.H. Macomber, et al., "Recent Developments in Surface Emitting Distributed Feedback Arrays," Proc. SPIE, Vol. 1219, 1990, pp. 228 et seq.), an impractical method, which does not solve the guided-field nonuniformity issue, or a long (about 2 mm) chirped grating (S.H. Macomber, "Nonlinear Analysis of Surface-Emitting Distributed Feedback Lasers," IEEE J. QE, Vol. 26, 1990, pp. 2065-2074), which phase shifts the antisymmetric mode such that the devices operate in an off-normal single lobe pattern. The second of the approaches causes pure symmetric-mode operation either by preferential carrier injection in a weak-coupling grating region (N.W. Carlson, "Mode Discrimination in Distributed Feedback Grating Surface Emitting Lasers Containing a Buried Second Order Grating," IEEE J. QE, Vol. 27, 1991, pp. 1746-1752), or by introducing a metal grating which suppresses antisymmetric-mode lasing (M. Kasraian, et al., "Metal Grating Outcoupled, Surface-Emitting Distributed Feedback Diode Lasers," Appl. Phys. Lett., Vol. 69, 1996, pp. 2795-2797). However, preferential carrier injection is not a long-term reliable approach, and the scheme, due to the necessity for weak coupling grating, inherently leads to inefficient devices (about 10% efficiency).

The metal grating approach is feasible but introduces too much of a penalty loss for the symmetric mode, such that efficiencies are at best 25-30%, and the gain thresholds are quite high (about 70 cm^{-1}).

[0008] More recently, a solution to obtaining a symmetric-mode beam pattern with no penalty in device efficiency has been found in the use of central grating phase shifts of around π in distributed feedback/distributed Bragg reflector (DFB/DBR) devices. G. Witjaksono, et al., "Surface-Emitting Single Lobe Operation from 2nd-Order Distributed-Reflector Lasers With Central Grating Phase Shift," Appl. Phys. Lett., Vol. 78, 2001, pp. 4088-4090; Dan Botez, et al., "Single Mode, Single Lobe Surface Emitting Distributed Feedback Semiconductor Laser," Published International Application No. WO 01/13480 A1, 22 February 2001. An example is a structure having a double-quantum-well (DQW) InGaAs/InGaAsP active region with InGaP cladding layers, and a grating formed in a P⁺-GaAs cap layer. The DQW active region is designed to be 0.4-0.5 μm away from the metal contact such that the device efficiency and reliability are unaffected. A symmetric-like mode is favored to lase over the antisymmetric-like mode when the grating phase shift, $\Delta\phi$, ranges from 100° to 280° , with maximum discrimination occurring when $\Delta\phi = 180^\circ$, i.e., a half wave ($\lambda/2$) central phase shift. The 180° phase shift does not affect the in-plane propagating (guided) light, as the field round trip through the phase shifter is 360° (i.e., the guided field remains antisymmetric). For the same reason, the 180° phase shift region does not affect the DFB/DBR grating, since the lasing occurs at the same wavelength, close to the Bragg wavelength, with or without a 180° phase shift. That is, the 180° phase shift creates no defect in the active photonic lattice. However, for the grating-outcoupled light, the 180°

central phase shift region defines two surface emitting regions whose outcoupled fields are out-of-phase with each other, and thus the outcoupling of the guided antisymmetric field provides in-phase (i.e., symmetric) radiated near-field and far-field patterns. These types of devices also allow for relatively large tolerances in device fabrication, providing a practical solution for single (orthonormal)-lobe efficient surface emission from 2nd-order DFB lasers.

[0009] For devices optimized for maximum external differential quantum efficiency, η_d , the variation of the threshold gain and η_d have been studied as a function of the grating duty cycle, σ , defined as the ratio of Au as part of the grating period. G. Witjaksono, et al., "High-Efficiency, Single-Lobe Surface Emitting DFB/DBR Lasers," Paper TuA3, 14th IEEE LEOS. Annual Meeting, 12-15 Nov. 2001, San Diego, CA. The intermodal discrimination, $\Delta\alpha$, reaches a maximum 113 cm⁻¹ for $\sigma=0.5$, while the symmetric mode (S-mode) threshold gain is only 22 cm⁻¹ for $\sigma=0.4$, with a respectable $\Delta\alpha$ value of 52 cm⁻¹. In general, it is found that such devices can tolerate some variation in grating duty cycle at a relatively small penalty in slope efficiency.

[0010] Gratings with phase shifts can be patterned by e-beam lithography or by holographic exposure of side-by-side negative and positive resists. However, current e-beam lithography allows writing of gratings only 400-600 μm long, and for devices requiring relatively long gratings (e.g., about 1,500 μm), fabrication by e-beam lithography is not advisable. The holographic method has been used to fabricate 1st-order gratings with quarter-wave (i.e., $\pi/2$) phase shifts, with the transition from negative to positive resists creating a grating phase shift of half the grating period. Using the same method for 2nd-order gratings naturally

provides half-wave (i.e., π) phase shifts. Semiconductor (GaAs) gratings with π phase shifts have been developed using negative and positive resists (G. Witjaksono, et al. paper, TuA3, supra). A transition region is observed, but its width is not that relevant as long as the two grating regions are out of phase with each other. That is, the grating phase shift does not necessarily have to be π ; it can be an odd number of π , since the in-plane propagating (guided) light is unaffected by it.

[0011] Two-dimensional (2-D) single-mode, single-lobe surface emitters (horizontal resonant cavity) are ideal high-power (≥ 1 W) coherent sources due both to low aspect ratio beams as well as the potential for scaling up the power by the use of coherent coupling of the sources at the wafer level (i.e., monolithically). L.J. Mawst, et al., "2-D Coherent Surface-Emitting Leaky Wave Coupled Laser Arrays," IEEE J. Quantum Electron, Vol. 29, 1993, pp. 1906-1917. Three such types of devices have been reported. One involves angled gratings, K.N. Dzurko, et al., "Distributed Bragg Reflector Ring Oscillators: Large Aperture Source of High Single Mode Optical Power," IEEE J. Quantum Electron., Vol. 29, 1993, pp. 1895-1899; M. Fallahi, et al., "Low Threshold CW Operation of Circular-Grating Surface-Emitting DBR Lasers Using MQW and a Self-Aligned Process," IEEE Photon. Tech. Lett., Vol. 6, 1994, pp. 1280-1282. The third approach uses a curved-grating unstable resonator, S.H. Macomber, et al., "Curved-Grating Surface-Emitting DFB Lasers and Arrays," Proceedings Society of Photo-Optical Instrumentation Engineers," Vol. 3001, 1997, pp. 42-54. However, none of these devices have a built-in dielectric structure for lateral-optical-mode control and stability, and as a result are vulnerable to temperature and carrier induced dielectric-constant variations. An example of such behavior is the

unstable resonator device which, while operating single-mode to high peak pulsed power in a single off-normal beam, readily becomes multimode in CW operation due to thermal lensing.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0012] The semiconductor diode array lasers of the present invention utilize periodic dielectric structures with modulated optical gain, so-called active photonic lattices (APLs), to realize watt-range coherent, surface-emitted powers from 2-dimensional (2-D) horizontal cavity devices with 2nd order gratings of novel design. In contrast to conventional APLs, the devices in accordance with the invention have gain in the low-index lattice sites, enabling long range (coherent) coupling by traveling waves utilizing resonant leaky-wave coupling between the low-index lattice sites, which had previously only been possible for 1-dimensional edge-emitting structures (so-called antiguided array structures).

[0013] The antiguided array structures of the present invention for the lateral dimension preferably have large index steps (e.g., $\Delta n \approx 0.10$), which ensure optical-mode stability against carrier and thermal induced dielectric-constant variations. The 2-D devices of the present invention combine antiguided phase locked arrays with surface emission from 2nd-order DFB/DBR grating structures. Unlike prior 2-D order grating DFB surface emitters, the present invention utilizes central grating phase shifts of around 180°, which provides emission in an orthonormal, single lobe beam at no penalty in device efficiency. The grating structure, as well as ensuring single longitudinal-mode operation, acts as a highly efficient selector of a single lateral mode, the in phase array mode. As a consequence, large aperture (e.g., 200 μm x 1200 μm) coherent laser

diode sources in accordance with the invention have nearly uniform 2-D guided-field profiles and thus are able to operate in a stable, single diffraction-limited beam to watt-range CW output powers. Beam circularization can then be readily obtained utilizing commercially available optical components.

[0014] The present invention enables CW watt-range, stable, single mode laser light sources that may be utilized for applications such as room-temperature CW mid-IR ($\lambda = 3\text{-}5\ \mu\text{m}$) coherent light generation (via frequency up-conversion) that can provide several orders of magnitude increases in the sensitivity of laser-absorption spectroscopy for a wide array of non-invasive medical diagnostics (e.g., breath analysis), and for IR countermeasures; for the generation of hundreds of mWs of blue light via harmonic conversion for applications such as in biotechnology (e.g., flow cytometry) and for laser projection systems; for high-power low-noise, high-fidelity RF optical links; and for coherent free-space optical communications. The devices of the present invention are single frequency and thus ideally suited for scalability at the wafer level (via resonant leaky-wave coupling) to 20 units or more. This enables all-monolithic laser light sources capable of providing tens of watts of coherent, uniphase power for various applications, such as high-efficiency, high resolution magnetic resonance imaging with noble gases.

[0015] The surface-emitting devices of the present invention have the advantages over edge-emitting devices for the generation of high (greater than 1W) CW coherent powers that: complete passivation of the emitting area is not needed for reliable operation, scalability at the wafer level becomes possible, and packaging is significantly simplified.

[0016] The semiconductor diodes of the present invention preferably utilize gain in the low-index lattice sites, which in turn allows long range coherent coupling via traveling waves. The use of a π phase shifter centrally located in a second order grating serves to provide single-lobe, orthonormal beam emission with high efficiency (greater than 60%), and the use of gratings with dual spatial-mode selectivity provides both conventional longitudinal-mode selection and strong lateral-mode selection for phase-locked antiguided arrays. In the lateral direction, spatial coherence is obtained by using a phase-locked antiguided array, which corresponds to a 1-dimensional edge emitting active photonic lattice, and using traveling waves for element coupling. The coupling is resonant and long-range by having the high-index regions correspond to an integral number of lateral half waves, thus making the structure fully transmissive. Although the index step may be relatively small compared to those commonly used in photonic lattices, photonic bands and band gaps are formed. Such devices are in effect lateral 2nd-order complex coupled DFB structures whose 2nd diffraction order provides lateral coupling while the 1st diffraction order provides propagation in a direction parallel to the array elements and edge emission for edge emitting devices. At lateral resonances, the second order Bragg condition is exactly satisfied, and the stopgaps disappear, i.e., at resonance, full transmission across the photonic lattice is allowed, effectively making such devices photonic band pass devices. At resonance, antiguided arrays become pure gain-coupled DFBs, which are well known to have no stopgaps and thus will lase at the Bragg frequency.

[0017] In the longitudinal direction, coherence is obtained by using a 2nd-order grating with a DFB region for gain, partial feedback and

outcoupling, and DBR regions for strong frequency-selective feedback, effectively providing a second order photonic band gap structure with a DFB light out-coupling region. Unlike microcavity PBG structures with built-in lattice defect (defect lasers), the photonic band gap structure in the present invention does not have lattice defects, thus allowing for full transmission of light over large distances and thus permitting the generation and surface emission of high coherent power from large apertures. Thus, the present invention combines 2nd-order photonic lattices in both the lateral (PBP structure) and the longitudinal (PBG structure) directions. The two lattices are interconnected in that the longitudinally-placed grating acts as a highly effective selector of the desired traveling-wave mode in the lateral direction -- the in-phase array mode, i.e., mode (0,1).

[0018] Further objects, features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following detailed description when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0019] In the drawings:

[0020] Fig. 1 is a simplified perspective view of a surface-emitting DFB/DBR device operating in a single, orthonormal beam that may be utilized as an array element in the semiconductor diode laser of the present invention.

[0021] Fig. 2 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an exemplary semiconductor laser element of the type shown in Fig. 1 that has a sinusoidal-shaped grating.

[0022] Fig. 3 is a computed graph of the mode discrimination for the device of Fig. 2 as a function of the central phase shift value, $\Delta\phi$.

[0023] Fig. 4 is a computed graph for the device of Fig. 2 with $\Delta\phi = 180^\circ$ showing the near-field profile in the solid curve and the guided-field profile in the dashed curve.

[0024] Fig. 5 is a computed graph illustrating the far-field pattern for the device of Figs. 2 and 4.

[0025] Fig. 6 are computed graphs for the device of Figs. 2 and 4 showing the differential quantum efficiency, η_d , and the effective η_d .

[0026] Fig. 7 is a computed graph for the device of Figs. 2 and 4 illustrating the guided-field peak-to-valley ratio R' in the active (i.e., DFB) region as a function of the phase shift $\Delta\phi$.

[0027] Fig. 8 is a simplified perspective view of an antiguided diode array laser in accordance with the invention having a central phase shift DFB/DBR grating structure.

[0028] Fig. 9 is a perspective view of the device of Fig. 8 illustrating emission from the surface of the substrate of the device.

[0029] Fig. 10 is an illustrative cross-sectional view of the device of Fig. 9 taken generally along the lines 10-10 in Fig. 9.

[0030] Fig. 11 is a graph illustrating the transverse field-intensity profile in the array element regions ($n_{\text{err}} = 3.28$) of the device of Figs. 8 and 9.

[0031] Fig. 12 is a graph illustrating the transverse field-intensity profile in the interelement regions ($n_{\text{eff}} = 3.34$) in the device of Figs. 8 and 9.

[0032] Fig. 13 is a graph illustrating the near-field intensity profile of the upper adjacent array mode of a 10-element ROW array.

[0033] Fig. 14 is a plan view of a laser diode array structure in accordance with the invention that is arranged for suppressing oscillation of the upper-adjacent mode of 40-element ROW arrays.

[0034] Fig. 15 is a simplified plan view of a scaled array device in accordance with the invention in which individual devices are coupled in the array.

[0035] Fig. 16 is an array as in Fig. 15 having 16 laser diode array units.

[0036] Fig. 17 is a simplified cross-sectional view through the interdevice regions of the array of Fig. 16.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0037] For purposes of illustrating the invention, a single surface-emitting DFB/DBR device element that may be utilized in the laser diode array of the invention is shown generally at 20 in Fig. 1. This type of device includes a distributed feedback (DFB) grating structure 22 bounded longitudinally by two distributed Bragg reflectors (DBRs) 24. Operation in a single orthonormal beam (illustrated at 25) can be attained utilizing at or near a half-wave (π) central grating phase shift in the DFB grating 22. A particular embodiment of a semiconductor laser structure of this type is

shown for exemplification in Fig. 2, although it is understood that other devices of this type may also be utilized, as described, for example, in published International Application WO 01/13480.

[0038] The illustrative structure shown in Fig. 2 has a double-quantum-well InGaAs/InGaAsP active region 31 with InGaP cladding layers 32 and 33, a GaAs substrate 34, a GaAs cap layer 36, and a grating 37 formed of GaAs/Au by etching in the p⁺-GaAs cap layer 36 followed by a deposition of gold shown as a layer 40, which provides both high coupling coefficient (κ) as well as ensuring that all first-order diffracted light is collected. The layer 40 also serves as the metal contact electrode on the device p side. Light exits from an antireflective-coated surface 41 of the substrate 34 which is exposed by an opening 42 in a bottom electrode 43. Modeling was carried out with the grating 37 assumed to have a sinusoidal shape as illustrated in Fig 2. The modeled device included silicon dioxide insulating layers 44 in the DBR regions 24 that serve to direct current to the region of the distributed feedback grating 22 to provide optical gain in this region. The edge terminations were assumed to be totally antireflective (zero reflectivity). As shown in Fig. 3, the modeling found that as the central phase shift, $\Delta\phi$, varies between 100° and 280°, the symmetric mode (S) is favored over the antisymmetric mode (A), with maximum discrimination occurring at $\Delta\phi = 180^\circ$. For analysis, the model used both the coupled-mode theory as well as the transfer-matrix method. The carrier-induced depression is taken into account, and the coupling coefficients are $\kappa_{\text{DFB}} = -5.46 + i49.42$ and $\kappa_{\text{DBR}} = 2.75 + i30.46$ for devices with 0.3 μm -thick p-InGaP cladding and a 0.1 μm -thick InGaAsP upper confinement layer. The background absorption coefficient in the DBR regions is taken to be 15 cm⁻¹, in

agreement with prior experimental results from InGaAs/GaAs DBR devices. An inspection of the differential equations for the right-going, R, and left-going, S, fields as well as of the expression for the (surface-emitted) near-field reveals that a phase shift value of 180° is equivalent to placing a π phase-shift film on half of the emitting area; that is, a 180° central phase shift affects only the grating-outcoupled radiation.

[0039] For devices with 500 μm -long DFB and DBR regions, Fig. 4 shows the results of the modeling with $\Delta\phi = 180^\circ$, showing the near-field (solid curve) and guided-field (dashed curve) profiles. Fig. 5 shows the far-field profile for $\Delta\phi = 180^\circ$. The guided-field peak-to-valley ratio, R' , in the active (i.e., DFB) region is only 2, which should insure single-mode operation to high power since the mode discrimination is high ($\geq 100 \text{ cm}^{-1}$) as shown in Fig. 3). The far-field consists of an orthonormal beam with 88% of the light in the central lobe.

[0040] At $\Delta\phi = 180^\circ$, the differential quantum efficiency, η_D , is 51%, which reduces to 45% (i.e., effective η_D) when taking into account the central-lobe energy content. Both η_D and the effective η_D are plotted as a function of phase shift $\Delta\phi$ in Fig. 6. As for the guided-field, the peak-to-valley ratio, R' , while reaching a maximum of 2 at $\Delta\phi = 180^\circ$, is seen to decrease to values as small as 1.3 at $\Delta\phi = 120^\circ$ and 270° , as shown in Fig. 7. As seen from Figs. 6 and 7, over a wide range in $\Delta\phi$ -- in the range of 60° , or within 30° of 180° -- the effective η_D is relatively high ($\geq 42\%$) and the degree of guided-field uniformity is low ($R' < 2$). These devices are thus capable of providing high single-mode surface emitted power, e.g., $> 100 \text{ mW}$ CW from single-element (e.g., ridge-guide) devices, and $> 1 \text{ W}$ CW from 2-D surface-emitting devices with parallel-coupled phased arrays in the lateral dimension.

[0041] With reference to Fig. 8, a semiconductor array laser device in accordance with the invention is shown generally at 50 and employs a DFB/DBR structure (in the longitudinal direction) for providing feedback and efficient coupling. Each element of the array in the lateral direction may comprise, for example, the DFB/DBR structure 20 of Figs. 1 and 2 laterally spaced and separated by interelement regions 51. An etch stop layer 53 of GaAs is provided to divide the p-InGaP layer 32 to allow etching down to the stop layer 53 in the interelement regions 51 and regrowth with p-GaAs to form interelement regions 55 separating the gratings in adjacent elements 20. Using SiO₂ as a mask for etch and regrowth, the 1 μm-wide GaAs regions 55 are periodically introduced in the lateral direction to form high (effective) index interelement regions 51 for an antiguided array. The thin GaAs stop-etch layer 53 is used for controlling the depth of the periodic etching. The GaAs regions 55 preferably have a varying p-type doping concentration: a medium doping concentration (10^{17} to 10^{18} cm⁻³) from the stop-etch layer to within 0.05-0.10 μm from the region's top surface. The rest, a 0.05-0.10 μm-thick layer, is heavily doped (10^{19} to 10^{20} cm⁻³) with Zn or C to form a cap layer for good electrical contact to the metal electrode. After regrowth of the GaAs regions 55, made easy by the use of Al-free (i.e., InGaP) cladding-layer material 32, the SiO₂ stripes are removed, and the n-side of the 2-D source is metallized as shown in Fig. 9 to provide a metal electrode 56 so that current may be applied across the device between the electrode 56 and the gold electrode layer 40. The gold electrode layer 40 makes electrical contact with the semiconductor only over a longitudinally restricted region, which constitutes the DFB region of the laser (as shown in Figs. 2 and 9). Outside of that region the gold layer covers insulating SiO₂ layers, which are above the DBR regions of the laser, as seen in Fig.

9, to direct current to the regions of the distributed feedback grating. Any other suitable structures for directing current to the DFB grating regions (e.g., back-biased junctions, etc.) may be used. To insure good adhesion of the metal electrode to the SiO₂ layers, about 20 Å of Ti and about 20 Å of Pt may be placed by evaporation and liftoff, prior to the Au deposition, on the SiO₂ layers. The output light is emitted through an AR-coated contact-stripe surface of the surface of the substrate defined by a window opening 57 in the electrode 56 on the substrate n-side as shown in Fig. 9. The positions of the optical modes are illustrated in the cross-sectional view of Fig. 10.

[0042] To completely suppress reflections from the cleaved chip ends, absorbing material (InGaAs) can be introduced (via etch and regrowth) at the DBR-reflector ends. This prevents disturbance of lasing in the DFB (active) region due to back reflections with random phase from the DBR-reflector ends. Even though the guided field is relatively small at the DBR ends, random-phase reflections can propagate through the mostly bleached DBR reflectors (the mode absorption coefficient is only $\approx 15 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ when considering a bulk absorption coefficient of 200 cm^{-1}) and affect lasing in the DFB region.

[0043] Calculations were performed for a structure incorporating the grating and GaAs regrowths of various thicknesses. Figs. 11 and 12 show results for a device with 0.28 μm -thick GaAs regrowths 55. The transverse field intensity profiles in the array element regions 20 [low effective index (3.28)] and interelement regions 51 [high effective index (3.34)] are shown in Figs. 11 and 12. The index step is high (i.e. 0.06), thus insuring stability against thermal-and carrier induced dielectric-constant variations; and corresponds to the resonance condition for a

structure of 1 μm -wide interelement spacings (width of the interelement regions 51).

[0044] An important feature of the array device of the invention is that the gratings provide feedback only in the array element regions 20. That happens because, after the creation of the high-index (GaAs) regions 55, the gratings remain only in the low-index element regions 20. Then the in-phase resonant mode, which has most of its field ($\approx 95\%$) in the element regions 20, is favored to lase over the out-of-phase mode, which has significant interelement field. That is, the grating has a triple role: a) feedback; b) outcoupling, and c) selecting operation in the in-phase (lateral) array mode. This array-mode selection mechanism substantially eliminates the need for interelement loss and/or Talbot-type spatial filters to suppress out-of-phase mode operation, thus avoiding self-pulsations due to saturable absorption and GSHB, respectively. The use of preferential feedback as the array-mode selector for 20-element edge-emitting devices has previously been demonstrated by using a continuing grating placed below the active region. See M.P. Nesnidal, et al., IEEE Photon. Tech. Lett., supra. The yield for such devices was low because, in edge emitting devices, the intermodal discrimination is a strong function of the grating phase(s) with respect to the cleaved mirror facet(s).

[0045] In the present invention, the mode selection is strong (the grating exists only in the element regions) and there are no grating phase effects, since the reflectors are of the DBR type. Therefore, the yield of in-phase-mode array operation for the devices of the present invention can be quite high.

[0046] Further discrimination against oscillation of modes with significant interelement field, such as the out-of-phase mode, is achieved via a strong light absorption in the heavily doped (10^{19} to 10^{20} cm⁻³) top parts of the p-GaAs regions 55. Unlike conventional antiguided arrays, such absorption cannot be saturated since carriers created due to absorption quickly transfer to the metal electrode.

[0047] 20-element ROW arrays (≈ 100 μ m aperture) easily operate in a single array mode, since there is effective discrimination against the out-of-phase mode as well as against the closest array mode to the in-phase mode: the so-called upper-adjacent mode. For the latter, one relies on higher edge radiation losses for the upper-adjacent mode than for the in-phase mode. In order to obtain more coherent power as well as a relatively low beam aspect ratio (for 2-D devices) amenable to easy beam circularization with off-the-shelf optical components, a 200 μ m aperture (i.e., 40-element arrays) is desirable. However, the array edge radiation losses scale inversely proportional with the number of elements, with the result that 40-element devices usually operate simultaneously in two modes: the in-phase and upper-adjacent ones, thus providing beams with lobewidths twice the diffraction limit.

[0048] The grating of the present device suppresses the upper-adjacent mode only at or very close to perfect resonance, where the mode has significant interelement field. However, at the point of maximum discrimination via edge losses (still quite close to the in-phase mode resonance) the upper-adjacent mode has negligible interelement field and it is peaked at the array edges as shown in Fig. 13. To insure its suppression, it is possible, for devices with a large number of elements such as 40-element devices, to taper the DBR-grating regions 24 in the

longitudinal direction as shown in Fig. 14, such that the upper-adjacent mode "sees" much less reflection from the DBR sections than the in-phase mode. To insure no back reflections from InGaAs absorbing regions 60 introduced at the DBR-region ends, the edges 62 of the absorbing regions 60 may be angled, e.g., at 45° in the tapered-grating regions, as shown in Fig. 14. Thus, light transmitted through the DBR at various points along the taper will be deflected, insuring that no back reflections can upset the device operation. Thus, because the gratings are formed only in the element regions 20, and with the DBR-reflector tapering suppressing the upper-adjacent mode pure diffraction-limited-beam operation from many element (e.g., 40-element) devices is obtained.

[0049] Another feature of the invention, due to the surface-emitting nature of the device, is that only the fields in the array element regions 20 are outcoupled. Thus, for the in-phase resonant mode, only in-phase fields are outcoupled, which in turn provides higher central-lobe energy content (78%) in the far-field pattern than in the case of an edge-emitting array of similar geometry (63%). Thus, the overall 2-D effective quantum efficiency (i.e., η_D multiplied by the percentage of energy radiated in the single orthonormal lobe) can reach values as high as 42%.

[0050] Exemplary devices may utilize 20-element arrays with $4\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ -wide elements 20 and $1\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ wide interelements 51, thus providing a $100\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ -wide lateral dimension for the 2-D source. Longitudinally, the structure shown in Fig. 2 (e.g., with $\approx 1300\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ equivalent aperture) can be used to outcouple the light. For more power and better beam aspect ratio, 40-element devices (i.e., $200\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ -wide array) may be used, together with $1200\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ -long DFB/DBR gratings. Then the beam aspect ratio is only

6, which allows for easy beam circularization with commercially available anamorphic prism pairs.

[0051] For an antiguided array, radiation leaks at its edges by refraction. In turn, 2-D surface emitters can be coupled via leaky waves in diamond-shaped 2-D configurations across the wafer surface. Since ROW arrays leak radiation laterally at predetermined angles ($8-10^\circ$ for an index step of $(3-5) \times 10^{-2}$), a diamond-shaped configuration for which four ROW arrays 50 are mutually coupled can be formed as shown in Fig. 15. The laser devices may have tapered DBR-grating regions and light absorbing layers outside the DBRs as shown in Fig. 14. Each of the four ROW arrays has its own electrode, like the one shown in Fig. 8, making electrical contact to their respective DFB regions. Radiation is outcoupled through the substrate via the DFB/DBR gratings. Interdevice electrodes 70 can be provided, as shown in Fig. 16, that ensure, via carrier-induced changes in the dielectric constant, that adjacent units are resonantly coupled. In the interdevice regions, the grown structure has the same structural composition as that for the interelement regions of ROW arrays (see cross-section in Fig. 12) as shown in Fig. 17. In order to provide independent current injection of the ROW arrays and the interdevice electrodes 70, narrow ($\sim 3\mu\text{m}$ wide) electrical-isolation trenches may be etched through the upper p-cladding layers. In the case of array devices with tapered DBR regions, as shown in Fig. 14, the same steps are taken except that the DFB regions extend laterally only to the array edges. Leaky-wave coupling of ROW arrays over large distances ($90-176\mu\text{m}$) has previously been demonstrated in both linear configurations as well as 2-D configurations. The 2-D configurations involved Fabry-Perot lasing cavities (defined by micromachined mirror facets) and light-deflection in a

direction normal to the chip surface via 45° micromachined turning mirrors. Micromachined diode-laser mirror facets were used only for concept-proving purposes. Otherwise, using 45° micromachined turning mirrors is a surface emitting method which does not provide any phase control, since micromachining cannot provide beam deflectors equally spaced, within a fraction of a wavelength, from the laser's emitting facets. Furthermore, because the ROW arrays had lasing cavities of the Fabry-Perot type, the devices' individual frequency spectra were multimode, which in turn led to a rather poor degree of overall coherence, 35% fringe visibility, for the 2-D configuration.

[0052] Using the 4-unit diamond-shaped configuration of Fig. 15 as a building block it is possible to build larger 2-D arrays (e.g., 16 units as shown in Fig. 16) all phase-locked via resonant leaky-wave coupling, and mutually frequency-locked sources operating at the same frequency. Thus, full coherence, 100% fringe visibility, can be achieved, in contrast to the previously demonstrated 2-D configurations involving phase-locking of array units having Fabry-Perot cavities. For 16-unit devices, the fact that most array units resonantly couple to three or four nearest neighbors is very much like the global-coupling mechanism of individual antiguided elements in ROW arrays. As opposed to previous 2-D array schemes, which could at best achieve 150 mW of diffraction-limited uniphase power, the 2-D ROW-DFB array of the invention has three significant advantages: (1) it provides phase locking in addition to frequency locking, (2) it represents a global-coupled 2-D monolithic array; and (3) the interunit coupling is independent of the feedback and/or beam-outcoupling mechanisms.

[0053] Scaling at the wafer level can be extended to at least a 25-unit 2-D array. However, due to unavoidable layer thickness and/or composition nonuniformities across the array, full coherence may be difficult to maintain when the 2-D array has more than approximately 25 units. To provide full coherence in arrays with large numbers of elements, a single frequency master oscillator (MO) may be utilized. The MO can be a single-frequency laser monolithically integrated on the wafer or an external single-frequency laser. In either case, an optical isolator should be provided between the MO and the 2-D array to insure that no back reflections affect the MO operation as a single-frequency laser.

[0054] The ability to reliably provide watts of surface-emitted, CW single-frequency, diffraction-limited power allows a wide variety of applications. Particularly attractive is the fact that, compared to edge-emitters, surface-emitting (SE) sources can be tested at the wafer level, are relatively easy to package, and are not subject to facet degradation (i.e., are more reliable). A major application involves using parametric frequency conversion to the mid-IR spectral range ($\lambda = 3\text{-}5\ \mu\text{m}$). Room-temperature CW mid-IR coherent light is valuable for noninvasive medical-diagnostics techniques based on laser-absorption spectroscopy such as breath analysis and body-fluid analysis. For breath analysis the sensitivity may be increased by 3 orders of magnitude to detect most vital-organ malfunctions, metabolic disorders, and (invisible) traumas. In turn, doctors can use small, portable units for immediate diagnostics in their offices or during critical times such as surgery. For body-fluid analysis such lasers may be utilized for quick and highly sensitive detection of organic-analyte (glucose, cholesterol) levels. Another application of CW

room temperature mid-IR lasers is for IR countermeasures, for which the use of lightweight, high-efficiency, small sources is crucial.

[0055] The invention may also be utilized in the generation of blue light via second harmonic generation. The bandwidth needed varies from $\approx 13\text{\AA}$ for inefficient ($\approx 10\%$) doubling crystals to $\approx 1\text{\AA}$ for highly efficient ($\approx 50\%$) resonant doubling crystals. By using ROW-SE-DFB devices, hundred of milliwatts of blue light may be generated for use in such applications as laser-beam projection; high-speed, high-density optical recording; and especially biotechnology (flow cytometry, capillary electrophoresis, etc.).

[0056] For free-space optical communications to supplant RF-based technology, coherent optical communications schemes need to be implemented. ROW-SE-DFB arrays can provide the power ($\sim 1\text{ W}$), narrow-linewidth ($\approx 1\text{ MHz}$), and modulation bandwidth (1-2 GHz) needed for such systems. There would be no need for the external phase-corrective feedback mechanisms that are necessary if MOPA-type sources are to be used, and reliability will be assured by the ROW-array intrinsic stability. Other applications are as sources for high-power low-noise, high-fidelity RF links, differential-absorption LIDAR, and coherent ranging over long distances.

[0057] Scaling at the wafer level can provide tens of watts of coherent power. Many uses are possible. These include significant increases in the efficiency as well as the resolution of MRI with noble gases, a novel medical-diagnostics technique that allows high-resolution imaging of the lungs and the brain. The technique has $\approx 10^6$ higher resolution than convention MRI.

[0058] It is understood that the invention is not limited to the embodiments set forth herein as illustrative, but embraces all such forms thereof as come within the scope of the following claims.

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A surface emitting semiconductor laser comprising:
2 (a) a semiconductor substrate;
3 (b) an array of laterally-spaced laser device elements
4 formed on the substrate, each of the laser device elements extending in a
5 longitudinal direction on the substrate, each laser device element including
6 a second order distributed feedback grating having optical gain, with a
7 selected central phase shift in the grating within 30° of 180° , and
8 distributed Bragg reflector gratings bounding the distributed feedback
9 grating in the longitudinal direction to reflect light back to the distributed
10 feedback grating, electrodes by which voltage can be applied across the
11 array and the substrate, and means for directing current to the array
12 region containing the distributed feedback gratings ; and
13 (c) laser device interelement regions on the substrate
14 between the device elements, the device elements in which the
15 distributed feedback grating and the distributed Bragg reflector gratings
16 are formed having a lower effective refractive index than the index of the
17 interelement regions, the interelement regions spacing the device
18 elements by a width such that light propagating laterally from the device
19 elements is fully transmitted between adjacent device elements to form a
20 laterally resonant antiguided array for which the device elements are
21 substantially equally coupled to each other.
- 1 2. The semiconductor laser of Claim 1 wherein the laser
2 device elements and the laser device interelement regions are formed in
3 an epitaxial structure on the substrate including a layer with an active
4 region at which light emission occurs, upper and lower cladding layers

5 surrounding the active region layer, each distributed feedback grating in
6 the device elements incorporated with the epitaxial structure comprising
7 periodically alternating grating elements to provide optical feedback as a
8 second order grating for a selected effective wavelength of light
9 generation from the active region, the grating having a spacing between
10 adjacent grating elements at a selected position intermediate that
11 corresponds to the selected phase shift in the grating, the grating formed
12 and positioned to act upon the light generated in the active region to
13 produce a lasing action and an emission of light from a lower face of the
14 substrate of the semiconductor laser, and wherein the distributed Bragg
15 reflector gratings for each laser device element are incorporated with the
16 epitaxial structure adjacent the distributed feedback grating in each laser
17 device element to reflect light back to the distributed feedback grating.

1 3. The semiconductor laser of Claim 2 wherein the
2 electrodes are formed on an upper face and a lower face of the
3 semiconductor laser and for the upper electrode current flows through the
4 region that contains the distributed feedback gratings.

1 4. The semiconductor laser of Claim 2 wherein the active
2 region layer is formed of InGaAsP confinement layers and at least one
3 InGaAs quantum well layer between the InGaAsP confinement layers, and
4 the lower and upper cladding layers are formed of n-type InGaP and p-
5 type InGaP, respectively, and the substrate is formed of GaAs.

1 5. The semiconductor laser of Claim 2 wherein the
2 distributed Bragg reflector gratings of each laser device element and the
3 laser device interelement regions have longitudinal ends and including light
4 absorbing material formed on the substrate at the longitudinal ends of the
5 distributed Bragg reflector gratings and interelement regions to absorb

6 light that passes out from the distributed Bragg reflector gratings and the
7 interelement regions to prevent reflections of light back into the laser
8 device.

1 6. The semiconductor laser of Claim 1 wherein the
2 means for directing current flow to the distributed feedback gratings
3 include an insulating layer on the distributed Bragg reflector gratings to
4 inhibit current flow through these gratings.

1 7. The semiconductor laser of Claim 1 wherein one of the
2 electrodes is formed on a lower face of the substrate and has a window
3 opening formed therein to permit light emission therethrough.

1 8. The semiconductor laser of Claim 1 wherein the
2 distributed Bragg reflector gratings longitudinally bounding the distributed
3 feedback grating in each laser device element vary in length as to cause
4 the portions of the laser device containing distributed Bragg reflectors to
5 taper longitudinally as to be narrower in width at outer ends of the laser
6 than at the position where the distributed Bragg reflectors meet the
7 distributed feedback gratings.

1 9. The semiconductor laser of Claim 8 wherein the
2 distributed Bragg reflector gratings of laser device elements and laser
3 device interelement regions have longitudinal ends at the laser outer ends
4 and including light absorbing material formed on the substrate at the
5 longitudinal ends of the distributed Bragg reflector gratings and
6 interelement regions to absorb light that passes out from the distributed
7 Bragg reflector gratings and the interelement regions to prevent
8 reflections of light back into the laser device.

1 10. The semiconductor laser of Claim 8 wherein light
2 absorbing material formed on the substrate has angled edges in the
3 regions where the distributed Bragg reflector gratings do not reach the
4 laser outer ends to prevent reflections of light back into the laser device.

1 11. A surface emitting semiconductor array laser
2 comprising:

3 (a) a semiconductor substrate;

4 (b) a two-dimensional array of at least four laser array
5 devices formed on and arranged adjacent to one another on the substrate,
6 the laser array devices spaced from one another by interdevice regions so
7 that each laser array device is coupled to at least two other laser array
8 devices which are displaced therefrom both laterally and longitudinally,
9 wherein the laser array devices are spaced from one another laterally by
10 the interdevice regions by a spacing width and index of refraction that
11 allows full transmission of light generated in each of the laser array
12 devices to adjacent laser array devices as coupled through the interdevice
13 regions on the substrate, each laser array device comprising:

14 (1) an array of laterally-spaced laser device
15 elements formed on the substrate, each of the laser device elements
16 extending in a longitudinal direction on the substrate, each laser device
17 element including a second order distributed feedback grating having
18 optical gain, with a selected central phase shift in the grating within 30°
19 of 180°, and distributed Bragg reflector gratings bounding the distributed
20 feedback grating in the longitudinal direction to reflect light back to the
21 distributed feedback grating, electrodes by which voltage can be applied
22 across the array and the substrate, and means for directing current to the
23 array region containing the distributed feedback gratings; and

24 (2) laser device interelement regions on the
25 substrate between the device elements, the device elements in which the

26 distributed feedback grating and the distributed Bragg reflector gratings
27 are formed having a lower effective refractive index than the index of the
28 interelement regions, the interelement regions spacing the device
29 elements by a width such that light propagating laterally from the device
30 elements is fully transmitted between adjacent device elements to form a
31 laterally resonant antiguided array for which the device elements are
32 substantially equally coupled to each other.

1 12. The semiconductor array laser of Claim 11 wherein the
2 laser device elements and the laser device interelement regions are formed
3 in an epitaxial structure on the substrate including a layer with an active
4 region at which light emission occurs, upper and lower cladding layers
5 surrounding the active region layer, each distributed feedback grating in
6 the device elements incorporated with the epitaxial structure comprising
7 periodically alternating grating elements to provide optical feedback as a
8 second order grating for a selected effective wavelength of light
9 generation from the active region, the grating having a spacing between
10 adjacent grating elements at a selected position intermediate that
11 corresponds to the selected phase shift in the grating, the grating formed
12 and positioned to act upon the light generated in the active region to
13 produce a lasing action and an emission of light from a lower face of the
14 substrate of the semiconductor laser, and wherein the distributed Bragg
15 reflector gratings for each laser device element are incorporated with the
16 epitaxial structure adjacent the distributed feedback grating in each laser
17 device element to reflect light back to the distributed feedback grating.

1 13. The semiconductor array laser of Claim 12 wherein the
2 electrodes are formed on an upper face and a lower face of the
3 semiconductor array laser and from the upper electrodes contacting the

4 laser array devices current flows through the regions that contain the
5 distributed feedback gratings.

1 14. The semiconductor array laser of Claim 12 wherein the
2 active region layer is formed of InGaAsP confinement layers and at least
3 one InGaAs quantum well layer between the InGaAsP confinement layers,
4 and the lower and upper cladding layers are formed of n-type InGaP and
5 p-type InGaP, respectively, and the substrate is formed of GaAs.

1 15. The semiconductor array laser of Claim 11 wherein the
2 distributed Bragg reflector gratings of each laser device element and the
3 laser device interelement regions have longitudinal ends and including light
4 absorbing material formed on the substrate at the longitudinal ends of the
5 distributed Bragg reflector gratings and interelement regions to absorb
6 light that passes out from the distributed Bragg reflector gratings and the
7 interelement regions to prevent reflections of light back into the laser
8 device.

1 16. The semiconductor array laser of Claim 11 wherein the
2 means for directing current flow to the distributed feedback gratings
3 include an insulating layer on the distributed Bragg reflector gratings to
4 inhibit current flow through these gratings.

1 17. The semiconductor array laser of Claim 11 wherein
2 one of the electrodes is formed on a lower face of the substrate and has a
3 window opening formed therein to permit light emission therethrough.

1 18. The semiconductor array laser of Claim 11 wherein the
2 distributed Bragg reflector gratings longitudinally bounding the distributed
3 feedback grating in each laser device element vary in length as to cause
4 the portions of the laser device containing distributed Bragg reflectors to

5 taper longitudinally as to be narrower in width at outer ends of the laser
6 than at the position where the distributed Bragg reflectors meet the
7 distributed feedback grating.

1 19. The semiconductor laser of Claim 18 wherein the
2 distributed Bragg reflector gratings of laser device elements and laser
3 device interelement regions have longitudinal ends at the laser outer ends
4 and including light absorbing material formed on the substrate at the
5 longitudinal ends of the distributed Bragg reflector gratings and
6 interelement regions to absorb light that passes out from the distributed
7 Bragg reflector gratings and the interelement regions to prevent
8 reflections of light back into the laser device.

1 20. The semiconductor laser of Claim 18 wherein light
2 absorbing material formed on the substrate has angled edges in the
3 regions where the distributed Bragg reflector gratings do not reach the
4 laser outer ends to prevent reflections of light back into the laser
5 device.

1 21. The semiconductor array laser of Claim 11 wherein
2 each laser array device has its own top electrode, and including
3 resonance-tuning electrodes extending over the interdevice regions.

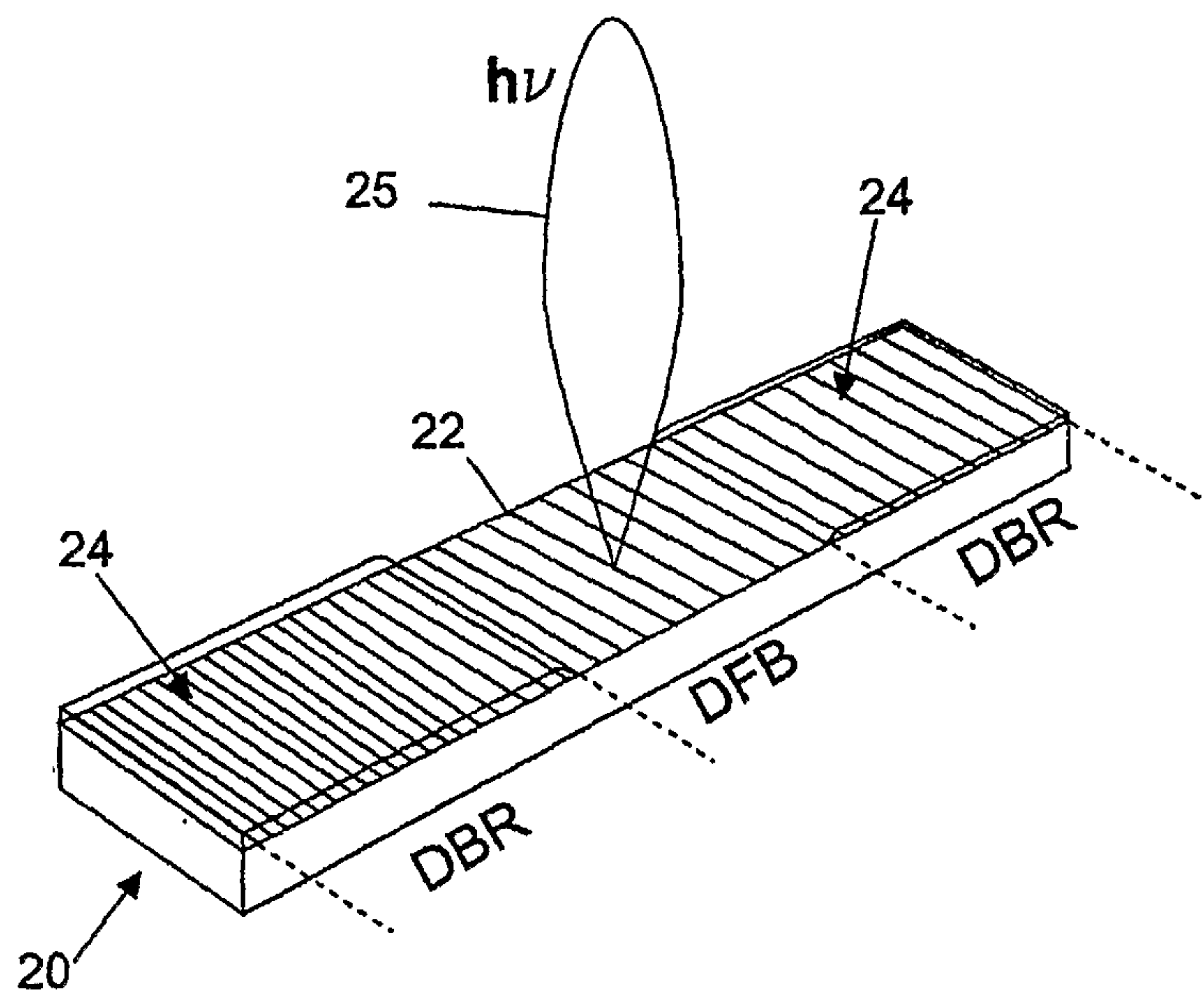


Fig. 1

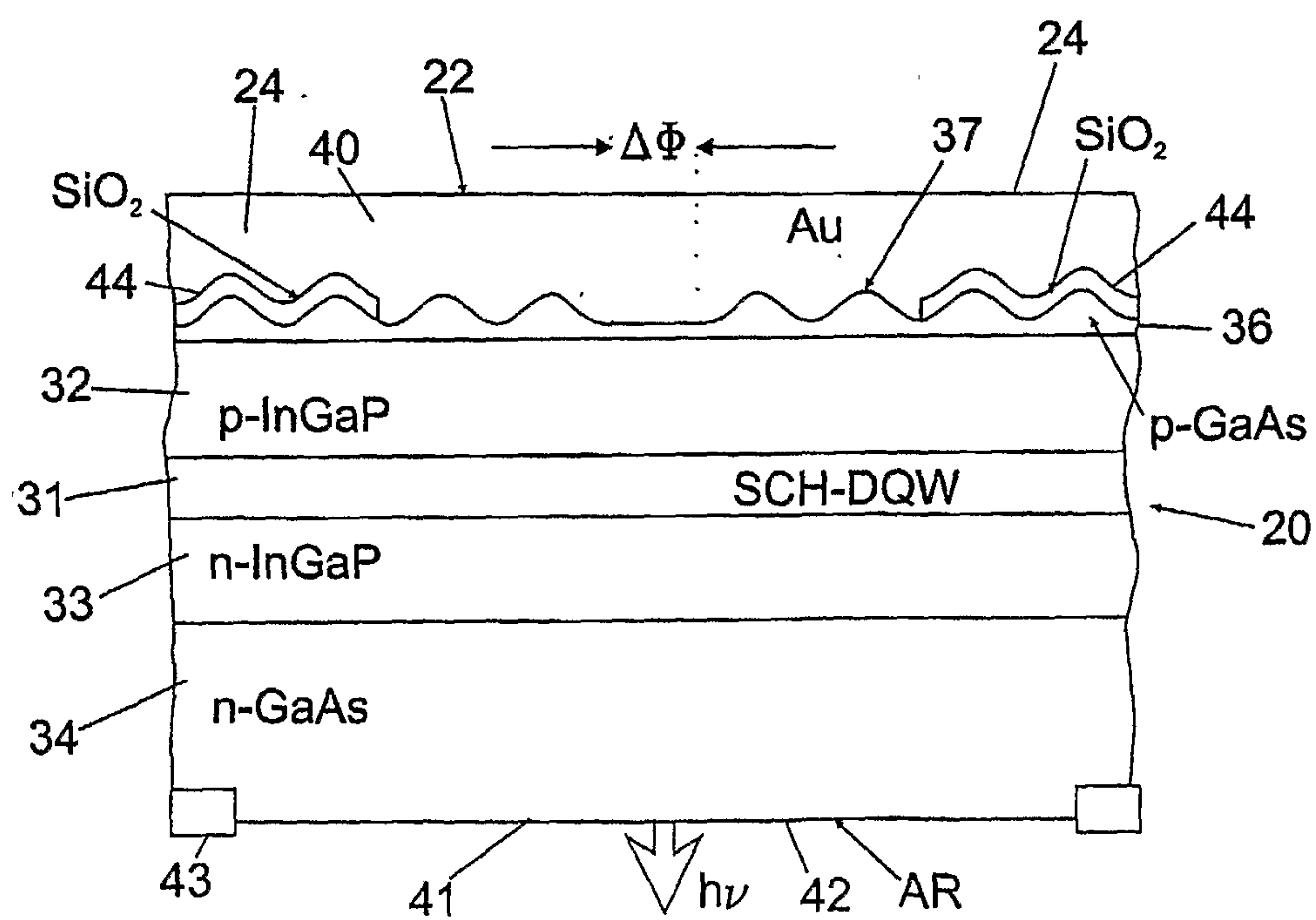


Fig. 2

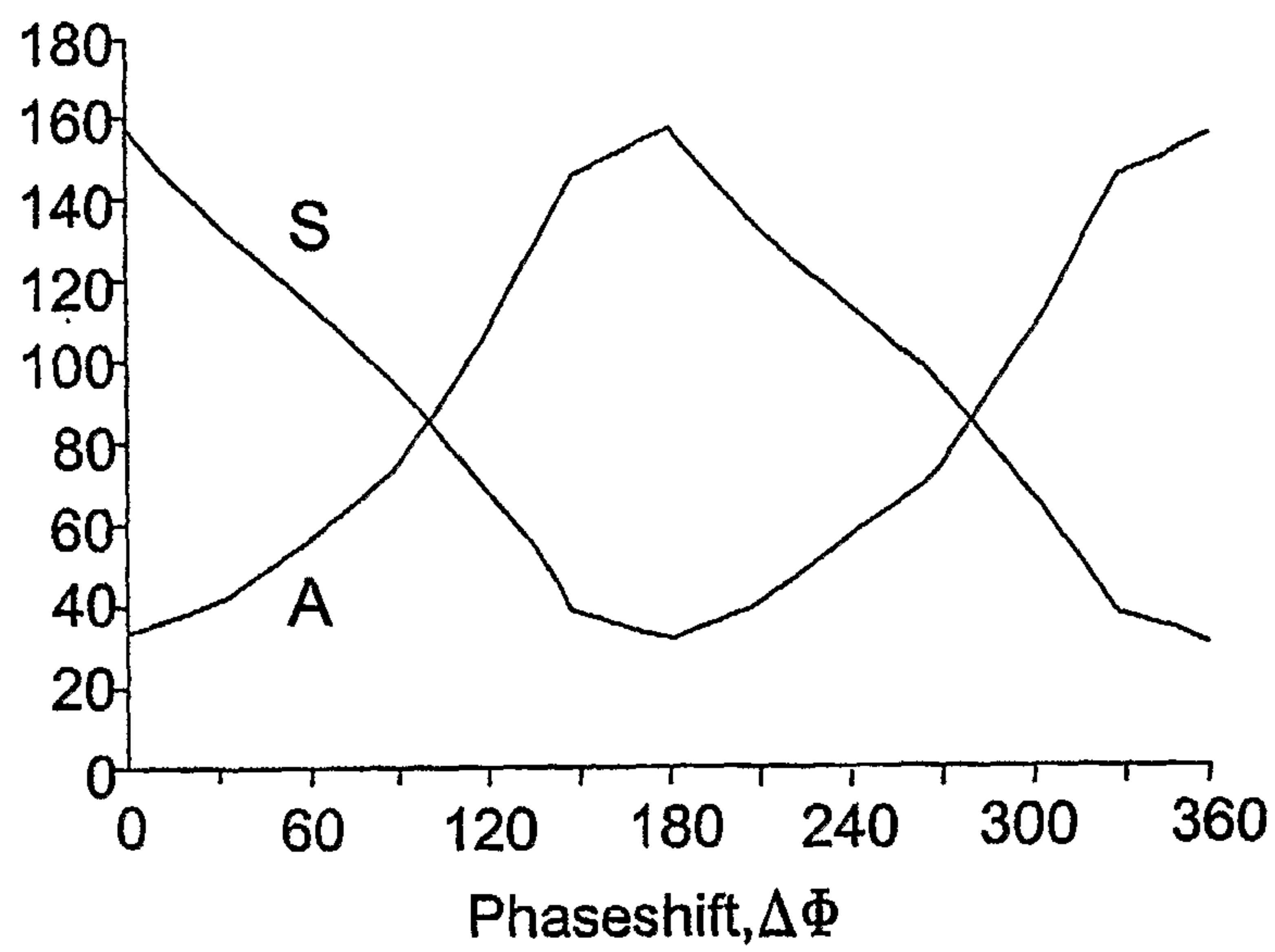


Fig. 3

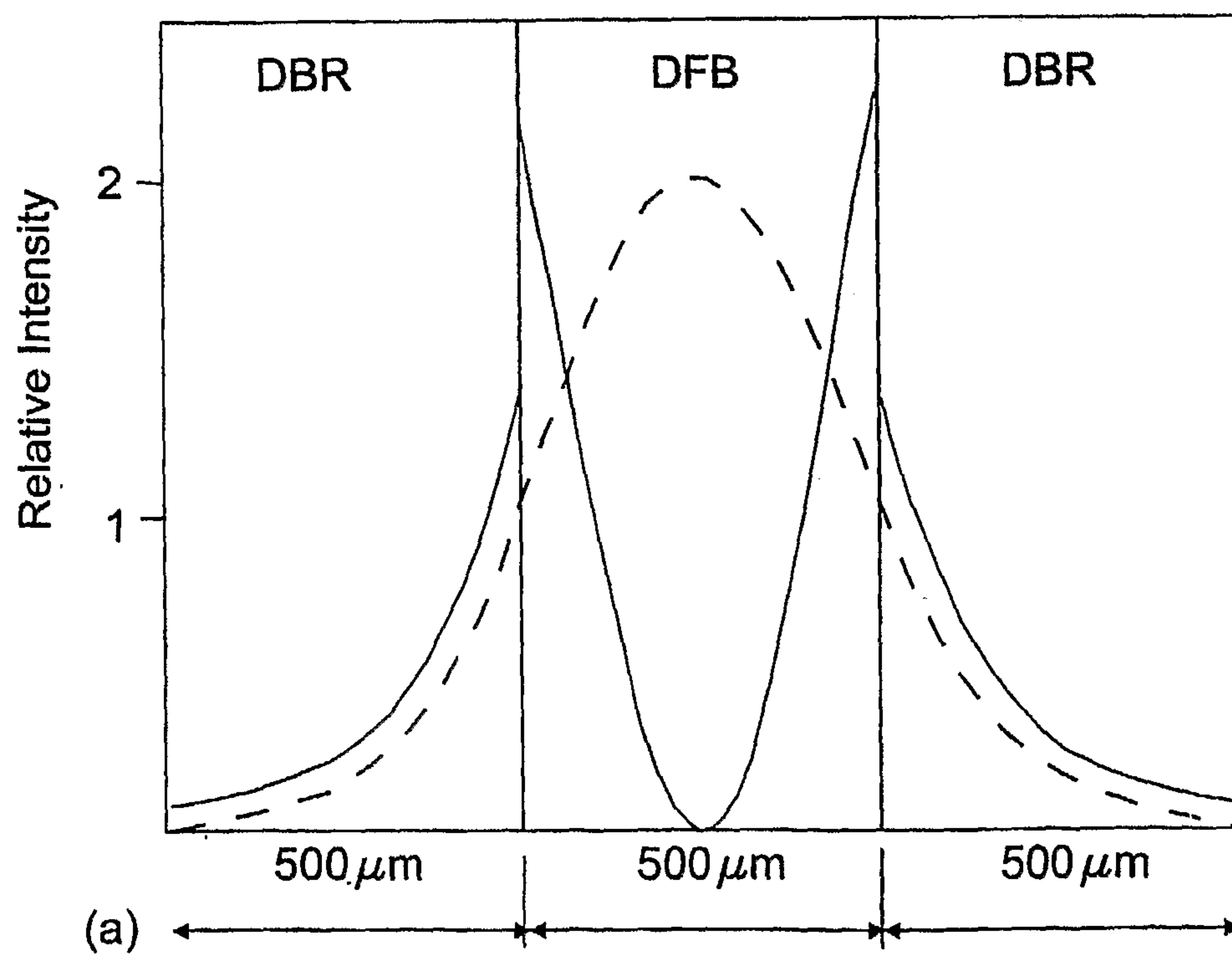


Fig. 4

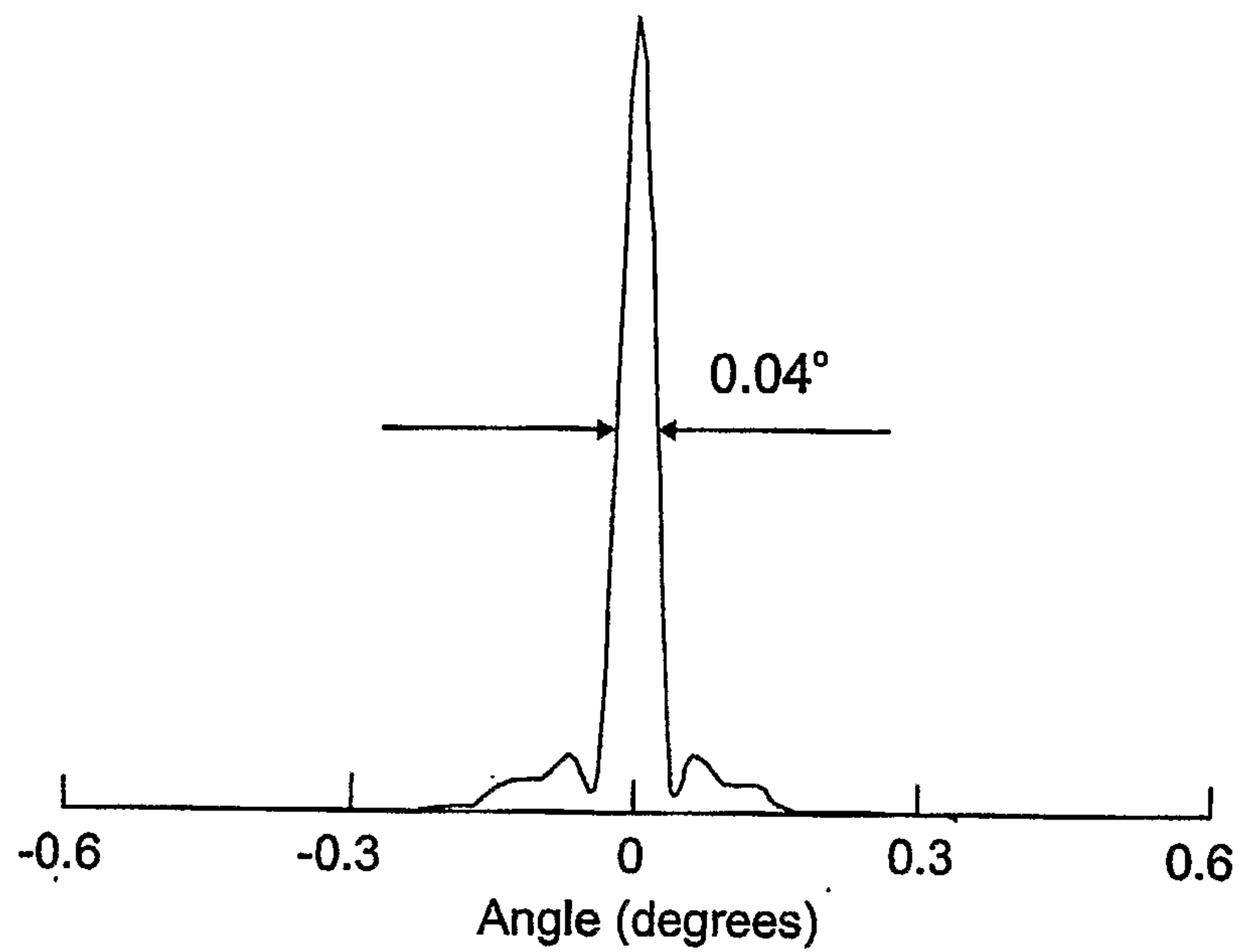


Fig. 5

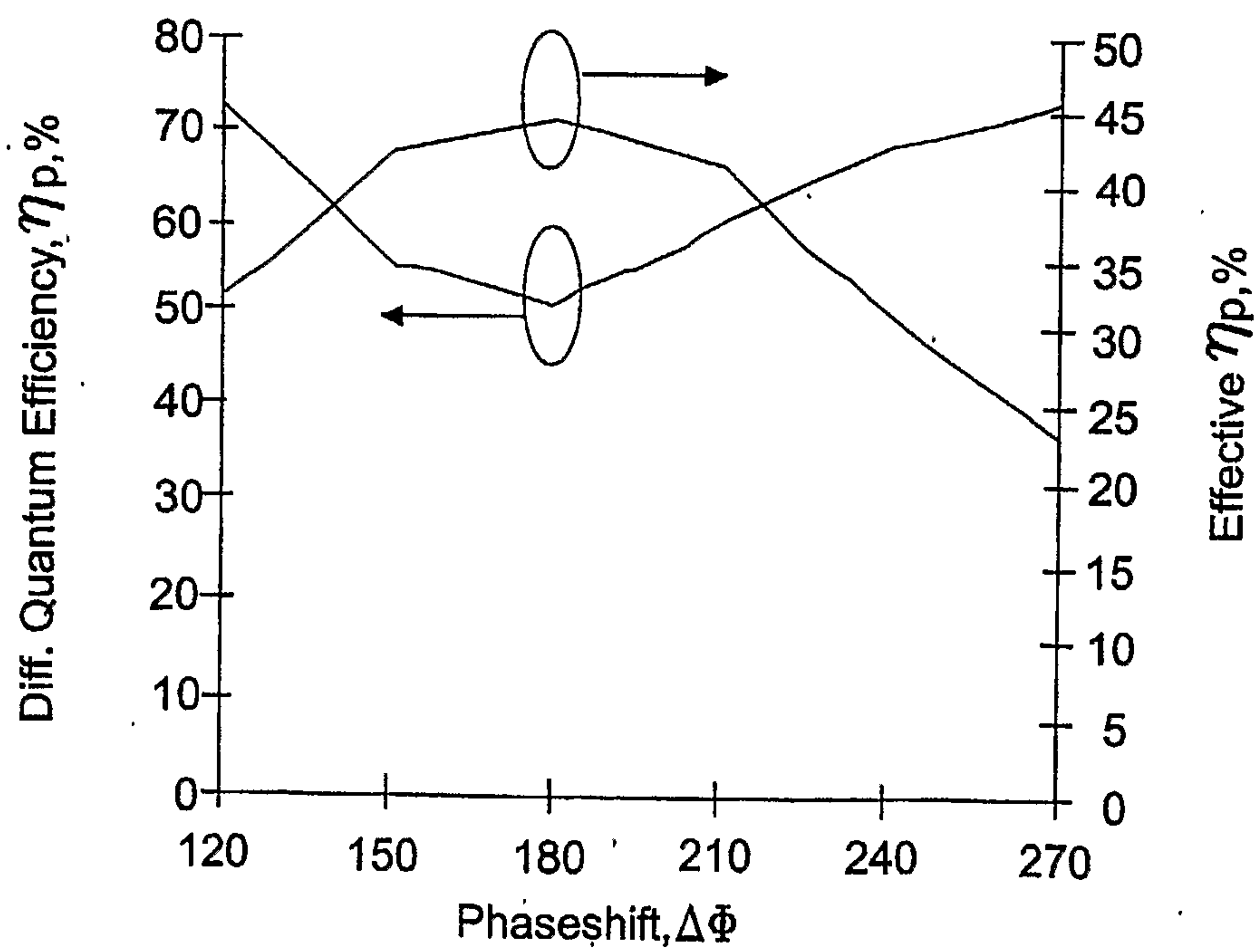


Fig. 6

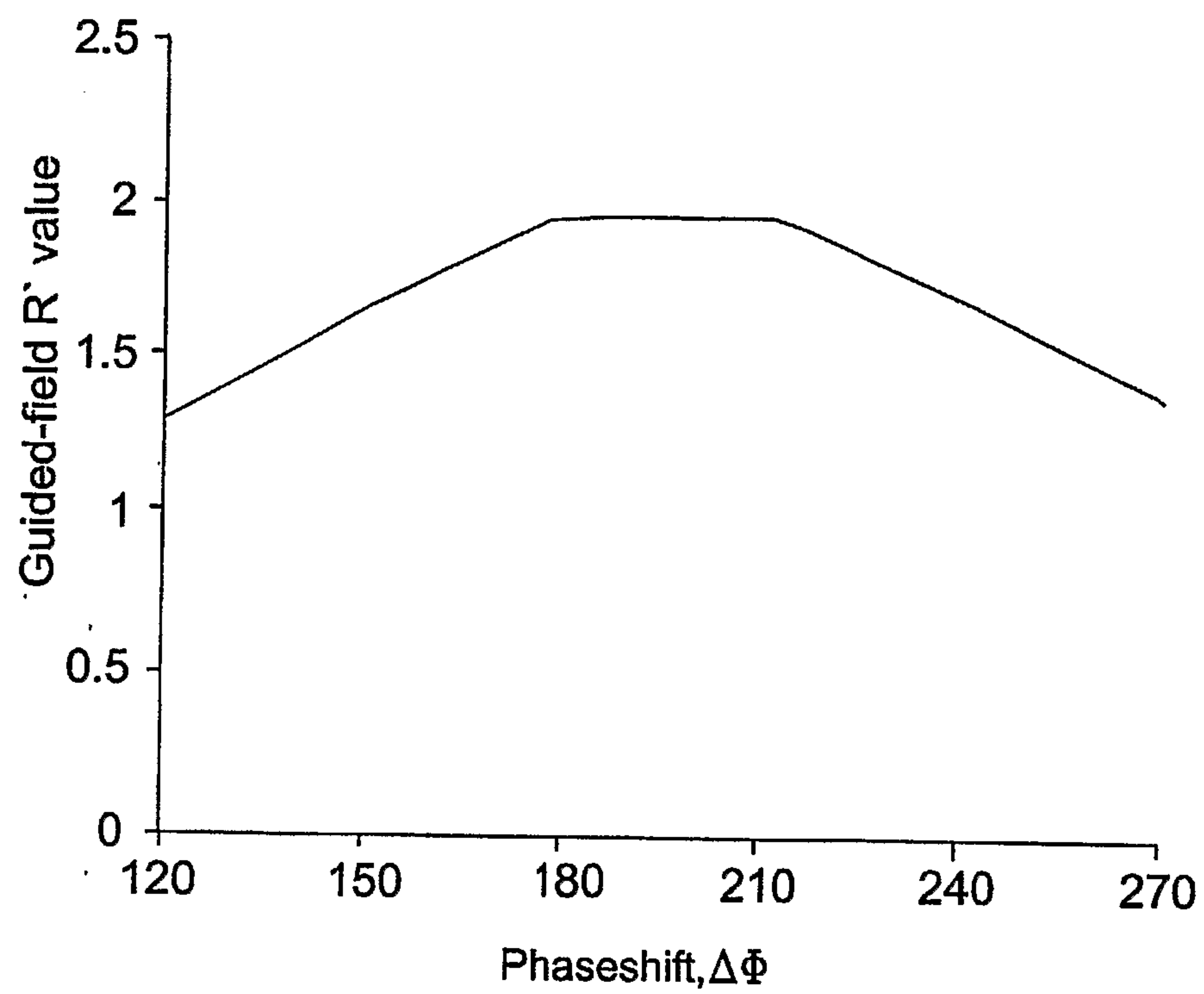


Fig. 7

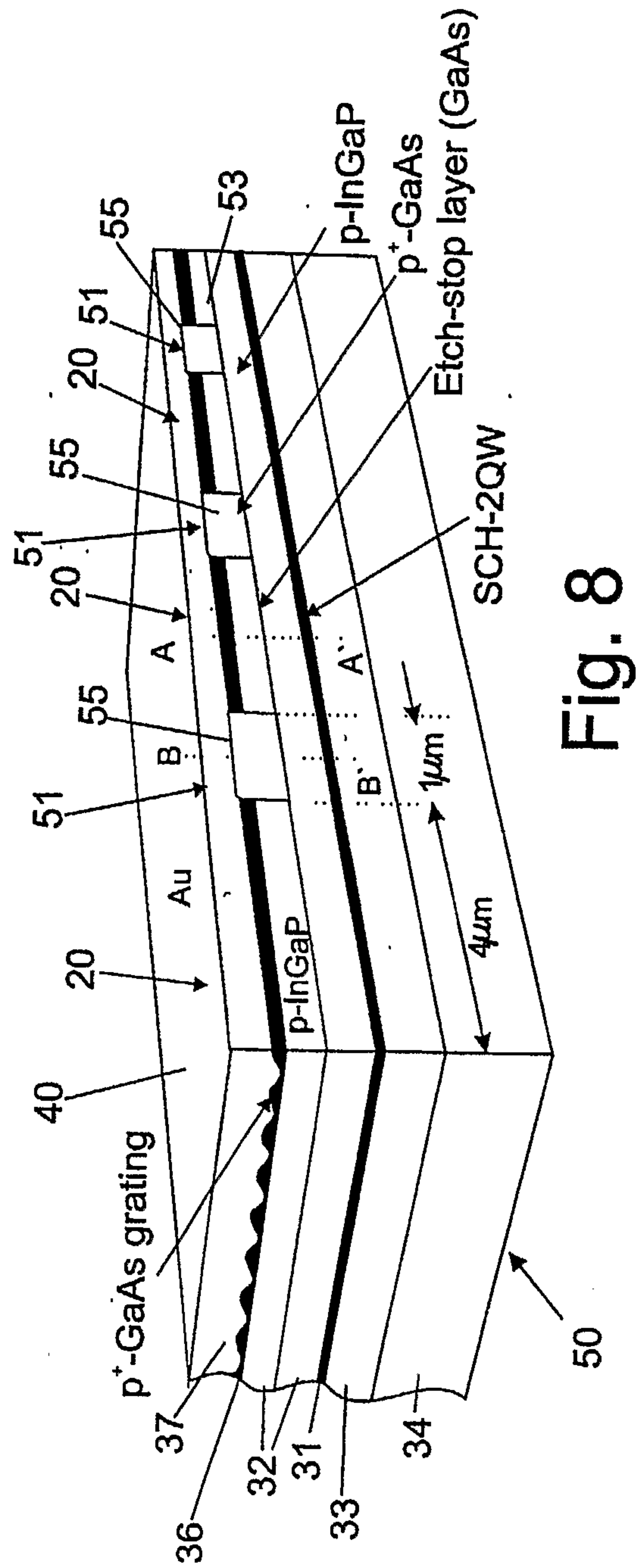


Fig. 8

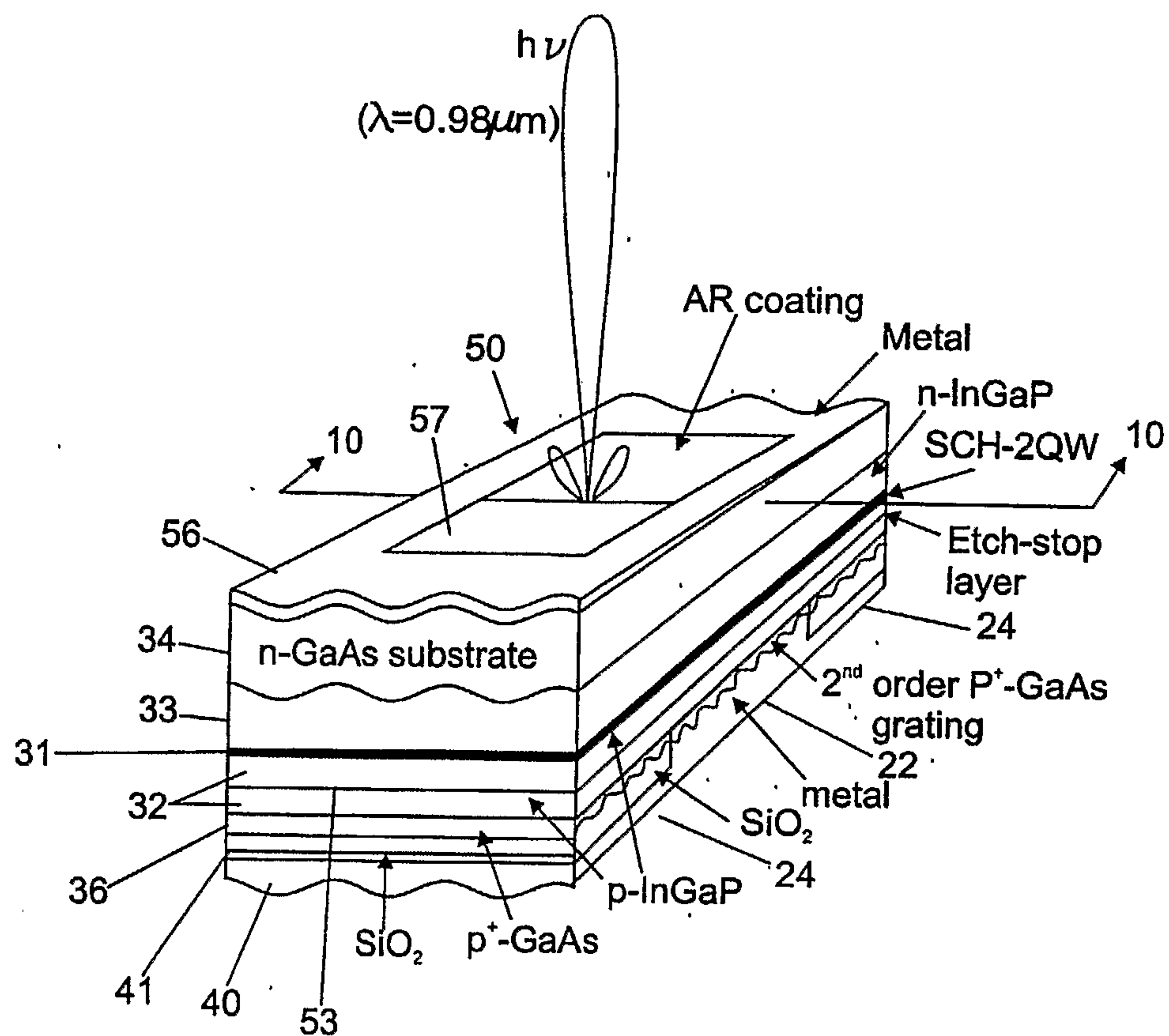


Fig. 9

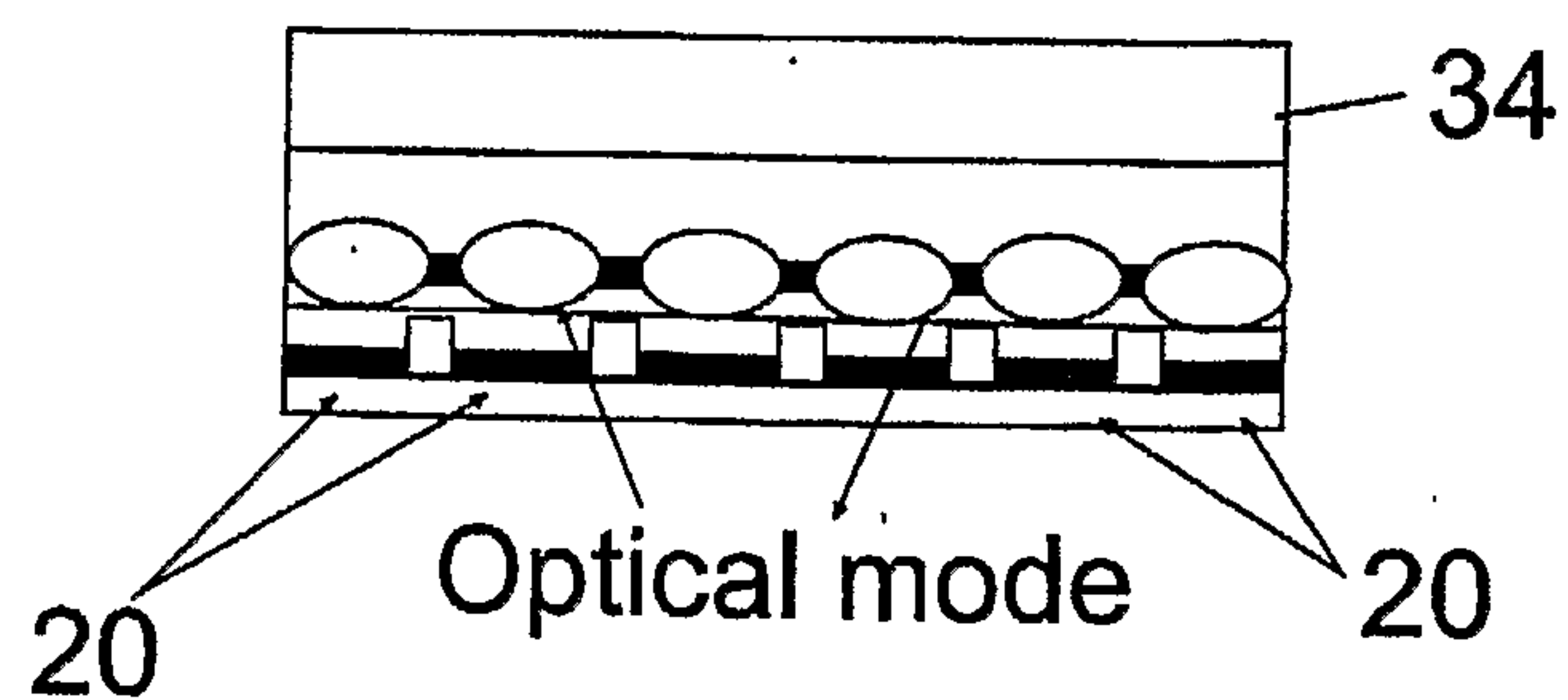


Fig. 10

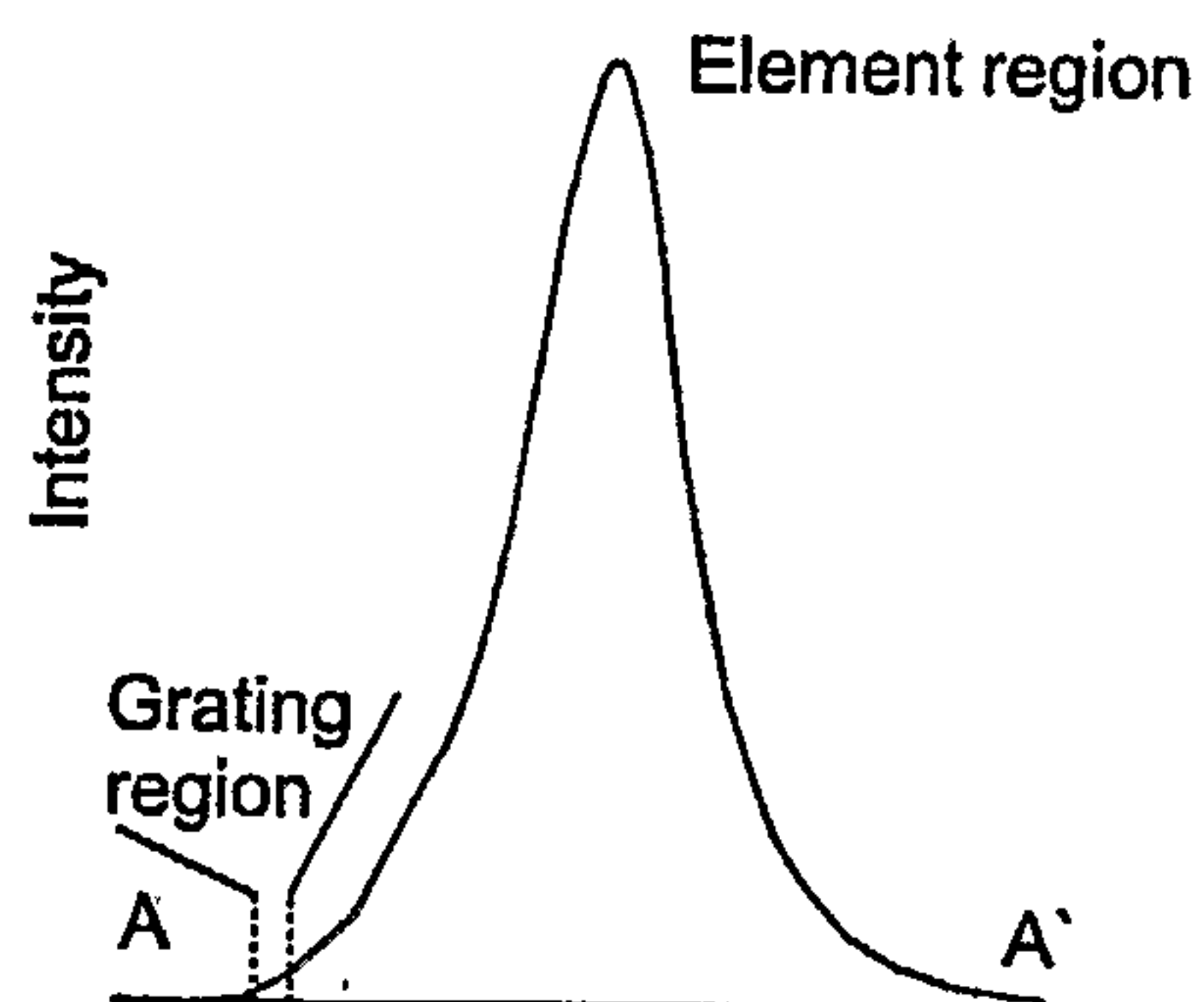


Fig. 11

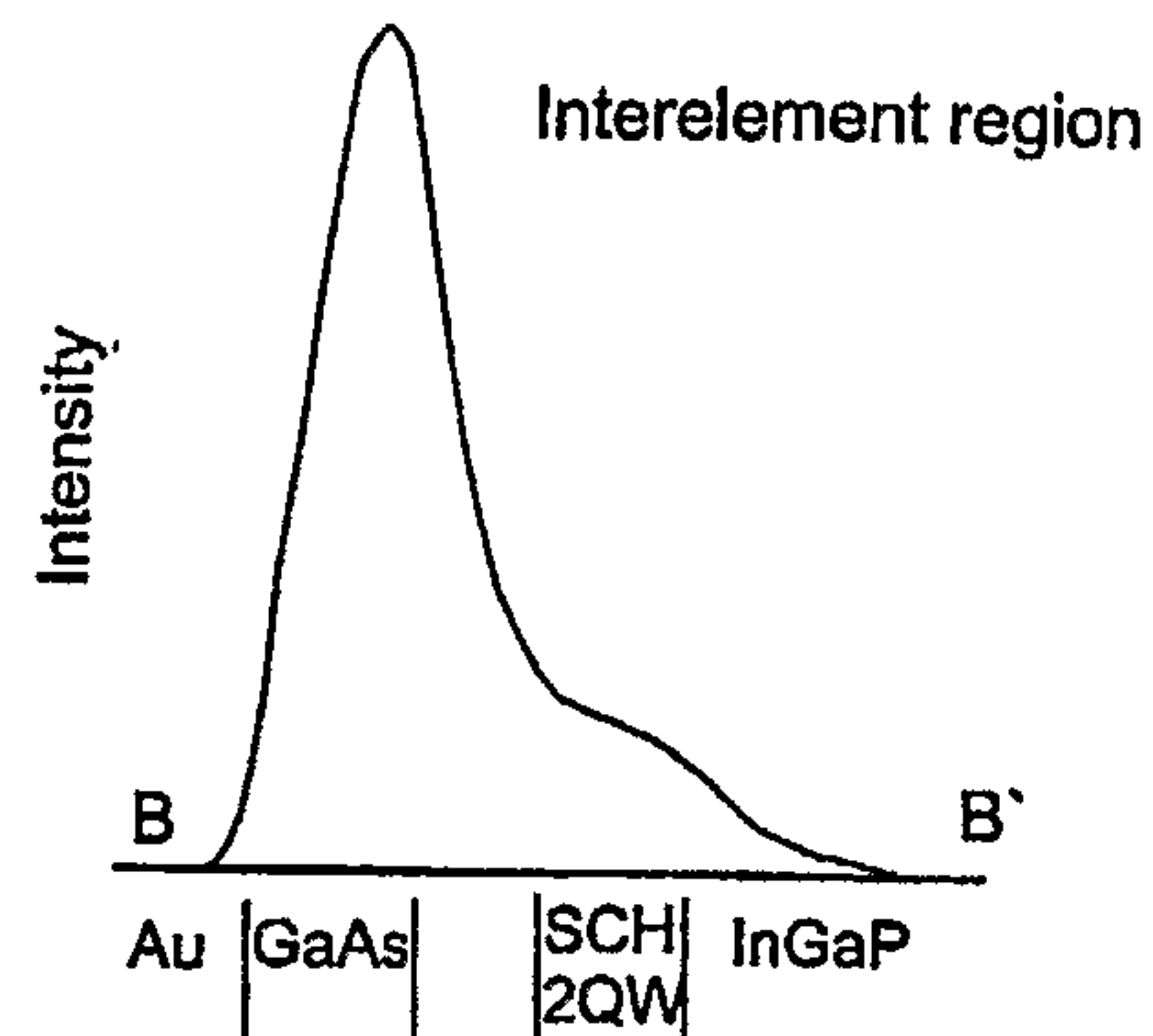


Fig. 12

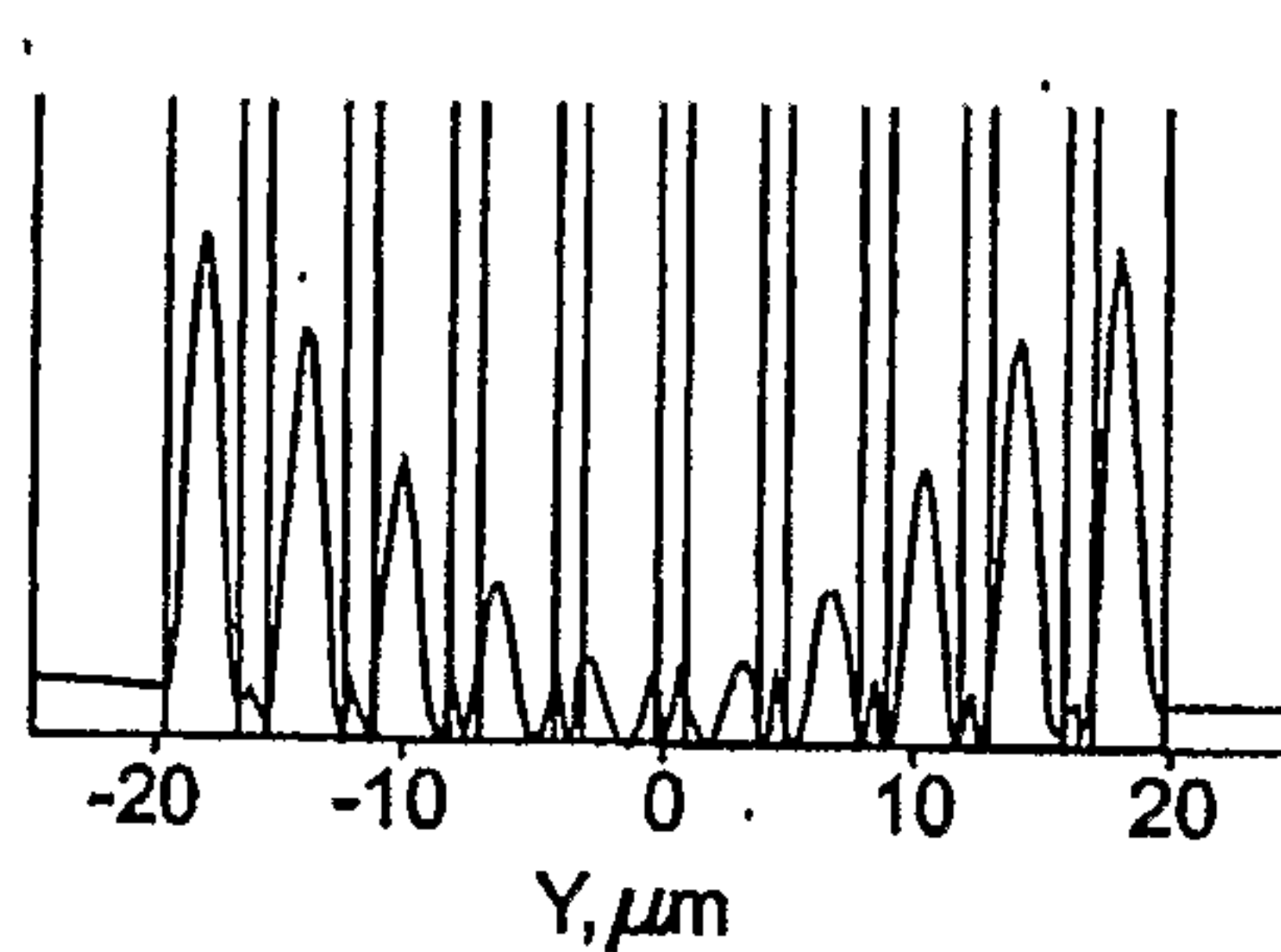


Fig. 13

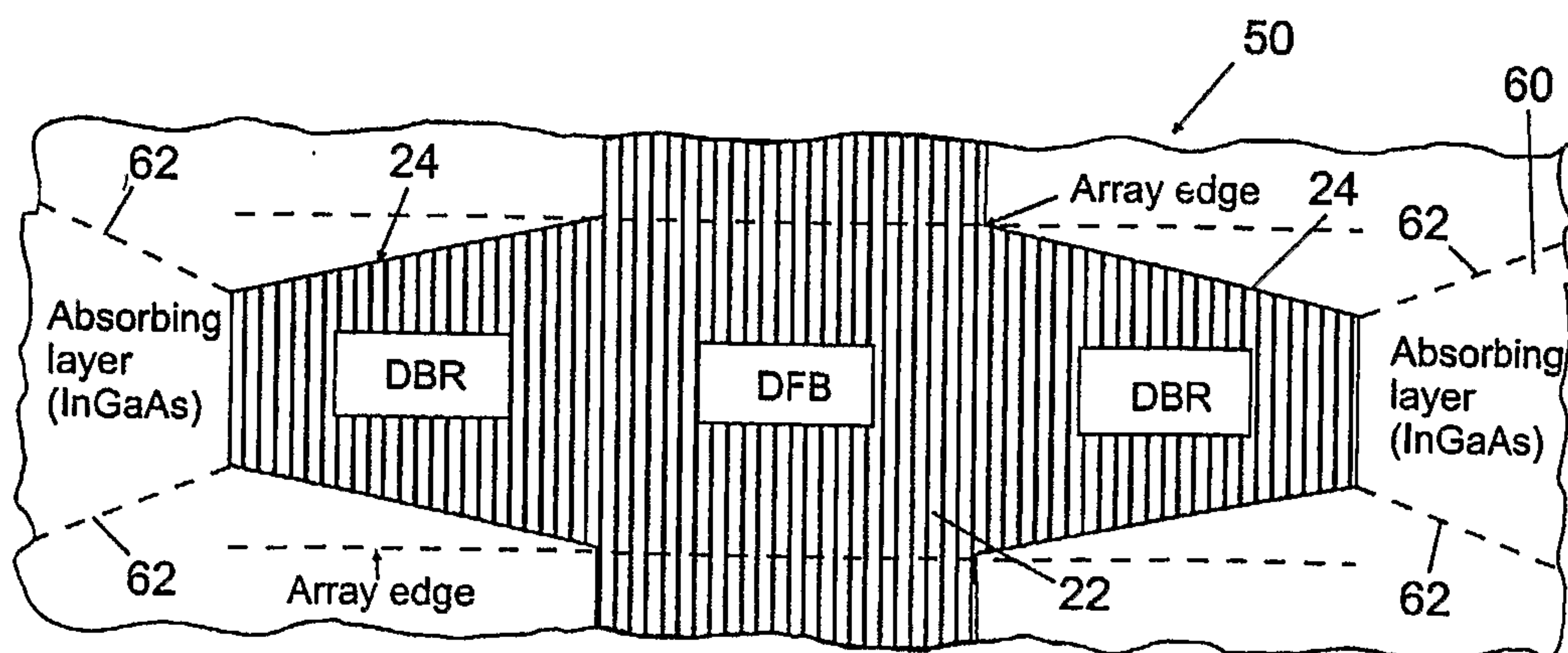


Fig. 14

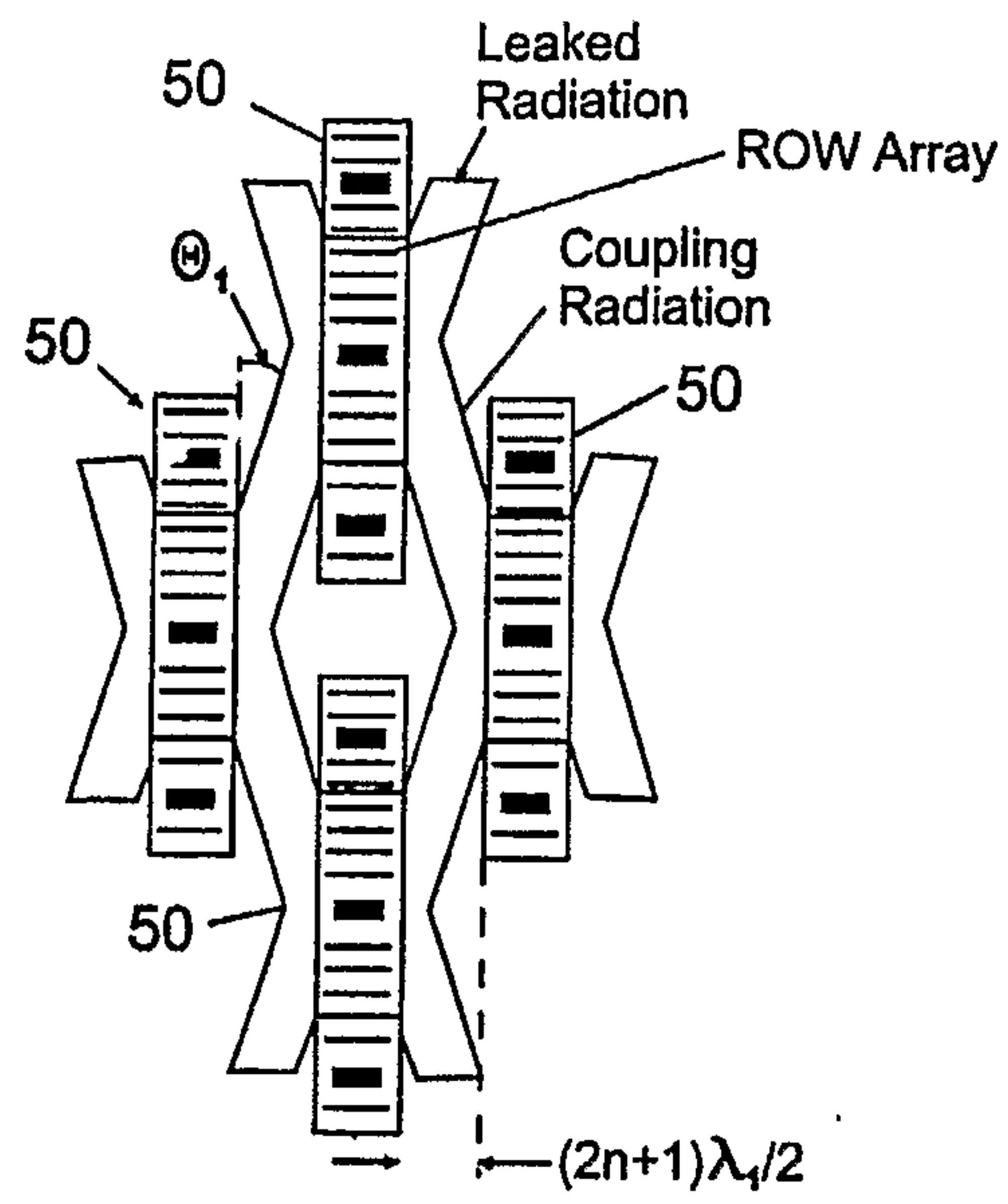


Fig. 15

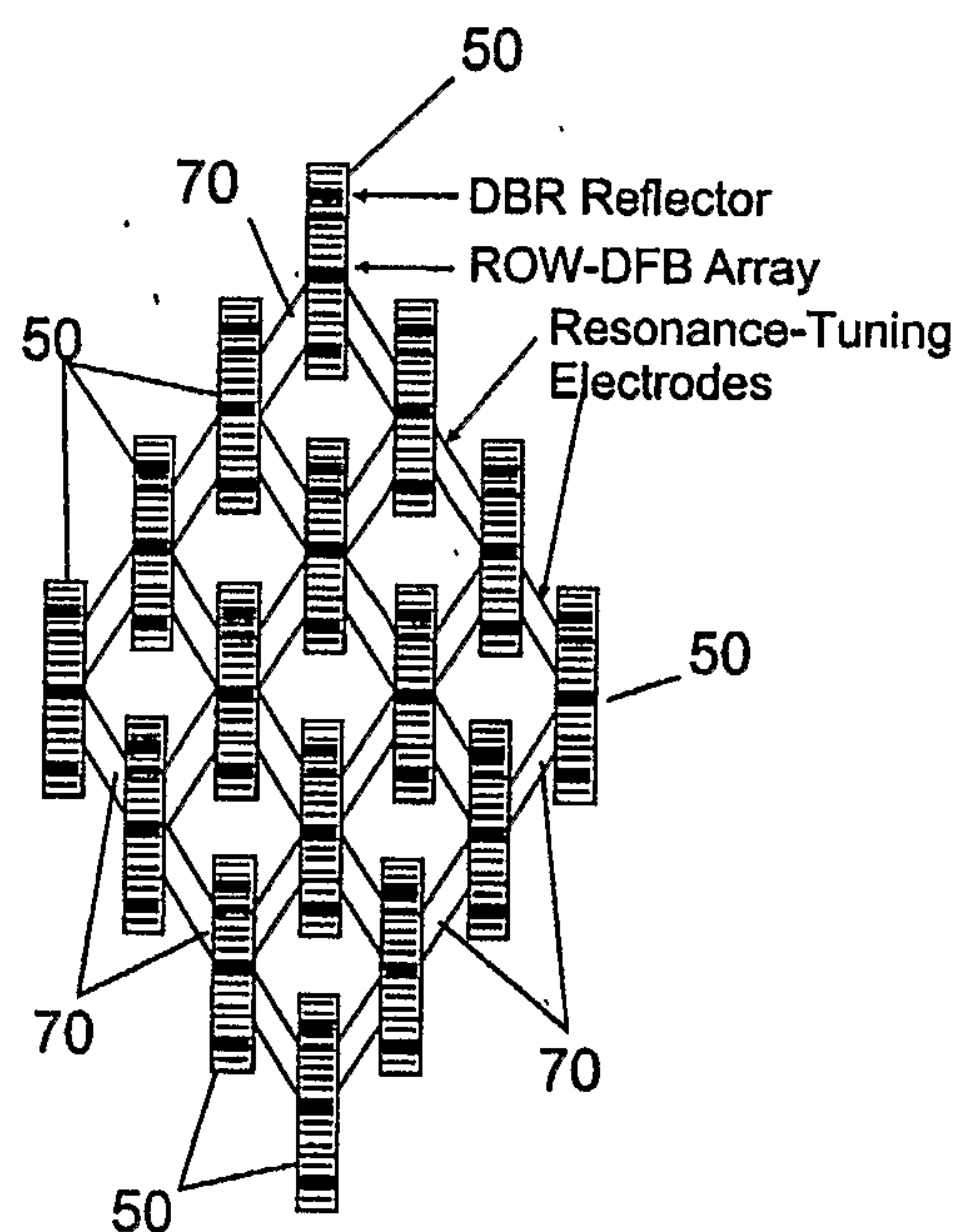


Fig. 16

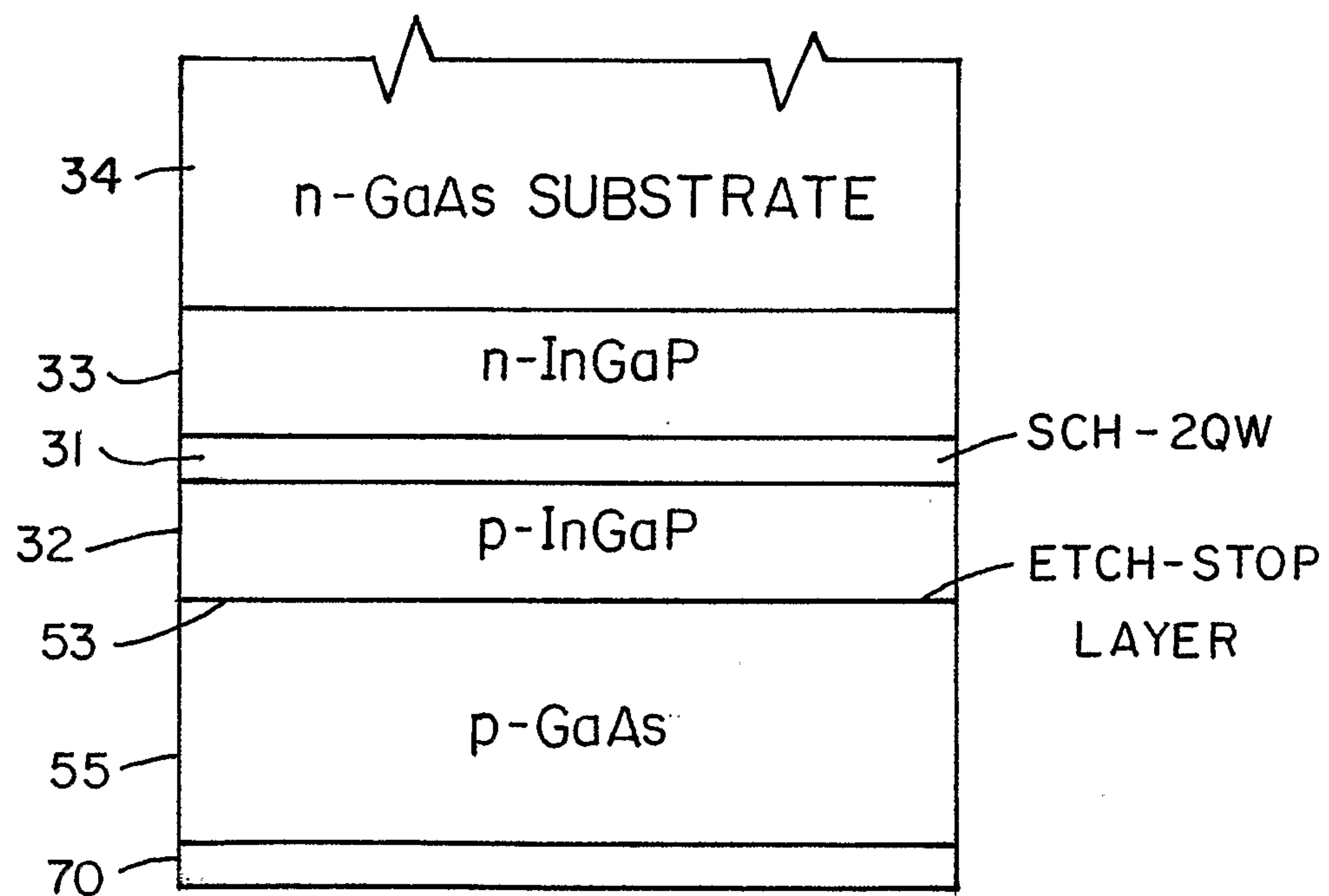


FIG. 17

