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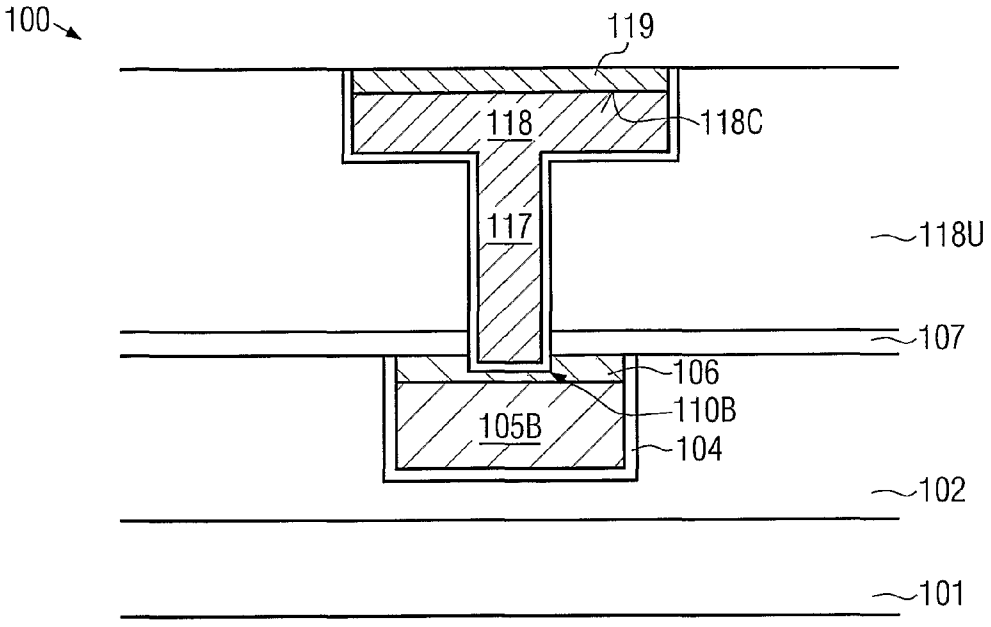
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(54) **Title:** TECHNIQUE FOR FORMING A COPPER-BASED METALLIZATION LAYER INCLUDING A CONDUCTIVE CAPPING LAYER



(57) **Abstract:** By providing a conductive capping layer (106) for metal-based interconnect lines, an enhanced performance with respect to electromigration may be achieved. Moreover, a corresponding manufacturing technique is provided in which via openings (110) may be reliably etched into the capping layer (106) without exposing the underlying metal (105b), such as copper-based material, thereby also providing enhanced electromigration performance, especially at the transitions between copper lines and vias.

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