MODELING VOID DRAINAGE WITH THIN FILM DYNAMICS

J. J. Gangloff Jr.\textsuperscript{1}, W. R. Hwang\textsuperscript{2}, and S. G. Advani\textsuperscript{1}

\textsuperscript{1}Center for Composite Materials, Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Delaware, Newark, DE, USA

\textsuperscript{2}School of Mechanical Engineering, Gyeongsang National University, Jinju, Gyeongsangnam-do, Korea

Boston Marriot Newton – Newton, MA • October 3-5, 2012
INTRODUCTION

♦ What is a composite material?
  ✷ i.e. Carbon/Glass/Aramid Reinforced Polymer

♦ Composite structure examples:

[Images of composite material examples]
INTRODUCTION

- A prepreg is like a tape with unidirectional continuous fibers partially covered with a polymeric resin
- Pregregs are cut, stacked, and consolidated on a tool to form the shape of the desired structure

Partially impregnated composite prepreg tape sample with resin rich top and bottom surfaces (e.g. shiny surfaces of the tape within the figure) versus the fibrous dry center
INTRODUCTION

- Voids create stress concentrations within the cured composite
- Voids can compromise structural performance and reliability

Example of cured Out-of-Autoclave (OOA) prepreg composite with high void content*

INTRODUCTION

♦ Goal: Study voids in uncured polymer resin during prepreg processing
♦ Determine if voids can:
  1. Migrate to vacuum pathways
  2. Coalesce with pathways
  3. Escape in vacuum
♦ Focus on the *drainage* and *rupture* of formed resin films
  ◇ Resin films around and inside fiber bundles
  ◇ Focus on voids and resin free surfaces
  ◇ Neglect fiber effects in this study
Coalescence of a single bubble with a free surface:

(1) Approach

(2) Drainage

(3) Rupture

Goal: To establish the general trends of void approach and drainage for understanding void rupture
(1) Approach

- Incompressible Navier-Stokes:
  \[ \rho \left( \frac{\partial u}{\partial t} + u \cdot \nabla u \right) = -\nabla p + \mu \nabla^2 u + f \]

- Incompressible Continuity:
  \[ \nabla \cdot u = 0 \]

(2) Drainage

- Exponential decay model*:
  \[ h(t) = h_0 \exp \left( -\frac{t}{\tau} \right) \]
  \[ \frac{1}{\tau} = \frac{\rho g \alpha}{\mu} \]

(3) Rupture

- Bubble rupture velocity scale*:
  \[ V_{br} \sim C \gamma / \eta \]

METHODS

♦ **Use Level Set Method (LSM) to calculate the void-resin interface with time**

♦ **Represent the interface with the a signed distance function**
  ✷ i.e. Level set function, $\phi$
  ✷ $|\phi(x)| = d(x) = \min_{x_i \in I} (|x - x_i|)$

♦ **Find interface by advecting level set function with time**
  ✷ Translates to a moving interface in Cartesian space
  ✷ Level set reinitialization is performed for interface stabilization

♦ **Easier computation than direct parameterization of the interface**

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GOVERNING EQUATIONS

Incompressible Navier-Stokes

\[ \rho \left( \frac{\partial u}{\partial t} + u \cdot \nabla u \right) = -\nabla p + \mu \nabla^2 u + \rho g + F_{sv} \]

Incompressible Continuity

\[ \nabla \cdot u = 0 \]

Level Set Equation

\[ \frac{\partial \phi}{\partial t} + u \cdot \nabla \phi = 0 \]

Material property smoothing over the interface for fluids 1 and 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Formula</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>( \rho = \rho_1 + (\rho_2 - \rho_1) \cdot \phi )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viscosity</td>
<td>( \mu = \mu_1 + (\mu_2 - \mu_1) \cdot \phi )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NUMERICAL MODEL

♦ COMSOL Multiphysics 4.2 + Microfluidics module is used for numerical solution
♦ Model a single spherical void in a cylindrical axisymmetric two-phase domain of resin and air
♦ The air domain is modeled as a fictitious fluid
  ✦ The viscosity and density are 100 times smaller than resin
  ✦ Avoids large magnitude differences in the stiffness matrix properties
  ✦ Addresses the physical behavioral differences between air and resin
♦ Of interest is:
  ✦ The interface evolution in time between resin and air
  ✦ Influence of surface tension and body force between resin and void
  · Dimensionless Bond number: \( B_o = \frac{b_{uyoncy}}{s_{urface\ tension}} = \frac{\rho g a^3}{3\gamma a} \)
NUMERICAL MODEL

### Parameters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domain width</td>
<td>1.00 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domain height</td>
<td>1.25 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air domain thickness</td>
<td>0.25 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Void radius, $R_b$</td>
<td>0.20 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thin film thickness, $h_g$</td>
<td>0.05 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interfacial tension, $\sigma$</td>
<td>0.03 N/m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level set reinitialization, $\gamma$</td>
<td>0.001 m/s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Density, $\rho$ [kg/m$^3$]</th>
<th>Viscosity, $\eta$ [Pa·s]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resin</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Edge ID

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Edge ID</th>
<th>Boundary Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)–(6)</td>
<td>No slip wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>Initial air-resin interface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>Pressure point constraint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>Axis of Symmetry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESULTS

Example: $Bo = 1.0; t = 22.0 \, s$
Example: $Bo = 1.0; t = 22.0 \text{ s}$

Time=0 Contour: Volume fraction of fluid 1 (1)
Arrow: Velocity field
RESULTS

- Results agree with general trends found in Pigeonneau and Sellier (2011)*
- Non-dimensionalization: $h^* = h/2a, t^* = \rho g a t/6\mu$

* F. Pigeonneau, A. Sellier, Low-Reynolds-number gravity-driven migration and deformation of bubbles near a free surface, Physics of Fluids. 23 (2011).
RESULTS

Here the results are generated with two different mesh refinements

- Labeled M1 and M2

Drainage time is mesh dependent, but NOT drainage trend

\[ h_{avg} = 6.25 \times 10^{-6} \text{ m} \]

\[ h_{avg} = 3.33 \times 10^{-6} \text{ m} \]
DISCUSSIONS

- LSM breaks down in accuracy as the film drainage progresses close to rupture
  - Film becomes thinner than the film element size
  - Leads to instability and artificial rupture during drainage process
- Can infer rupture time from drainage process time scale
- Exponential drainage trends from COMSOL were observed experimentally*

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CONCLUSIONS

♦ Void dynamics were found to be strongly dependent on void body force and surface tension effects as characterized by $Bo$

♦ Results suggest that resin film drainage at the interface with the bubble can be successfully modeled as an exponential decay

♦ Results are suspect once the film becomes thinner than the film element size

♦ Knowledge of film drainage information can provide insight into void removal efficiency during composite prepreg processing
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

♦ Dr. Pavel Simacek (UD-CCM)
♦ Dr. Arthur Levy (McGill University)

Research was sponsored by the Office of Naval Research (ONR) under Grant Number N00014-09-1-1011 and N00014-10-1-0971. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of ONR.