

Material Modelling methodology for Automotive Plastic parts for dynamic simulation

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ABSTRACT

Key to any successful part developments is proper choice of material, process, and design meeting part performance requirements. Plastic (Polymer) contains much diverse materials and differs highly in physical behavior than that of metals. Considering dynamic analysis in crash event and more predominantly considering occupant safety, the occupant comes under contact of plastic parts. During accidental impact many modern grades of plastic used in commercial and industrial applications are required to sustain large strains before failure occurs.

The aim of the paper is to contribute to refining material models and test methods, thereby improving the numerical prediction of the response to impact loading. The correct description of plastics during simulation is very important for the injury criteria calculated with impactor model in case of contact between impactor and plastic interior parts. This was the motivation for the development of an appropriate material model. This paper gives an introduction for typical behavior of plastics. Modeling the mechanical behavior of plastics for Crash simulation, which is a complex task due to the highly non-linear characteristics, also involve large strains and large displacements.

Keywords— Crash simulation, material-model, numerical prediction, plastic.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Automotive interior is built with plastic and foam materials, because of its lightweight structure, ease of form structure with complex design, and cost effectiveness. However, these materials make it progressively difficult to fulfil the crash performance and strength standards required by the enhanced safety regulations. The deformation and failure of these materials largely affect the kinematics and injury risks of the occupant. Plastics are classified as crystalline or amorphous structures, according to the arrangement of cross-links that connect their molecular structure. Most vehicle interior parts consist of a combination of these two types of plastics, referred to as semicrystalline plastics. The objective of this study is to

advance the numerical modelling scheme of vehicle interior polymer materials for their mechanical behaviours to simulate more realistic response.

II. BASICS OF PLASTIC BEHAVIOUR

The deformation behaviour of plastics can be explained by the molecular chain state. Yield appears after undergoing nonlinear elastic behaviour, in which the molecular chains become unbound by application of an external force. When material is subjected to high-strain deformation, it deforms permanently (plastic deformation) and eventually fails. In the Fig.1 the graph of stress-strain behaviour over the entire strain

range and the ultimate failure (rupture) for a typical polymeric material subjected to a tensile test. For sufficiently low stresses and strains, the polymeric material behaves as a linear elastic solid. The point where the behaviour starts to be non-linear is called the proportional limit. The local maximum in the stress-strain curve is called the yield point and indicates the onset of plastic (i.e. permanent) deformation. The corresponding stress and elongation are called yield strength and elongation at yield. Beyond the yield point the material stretches out considerably and a "neck" is formed; this region is called the plastic region. Further elongation leads to an abrupt increase in stress (strain hardening) and the ultimate rupture of the material. At the rupture point the corresponding stress and strain are called the ultimate strength and the elongation at break, respectively. The stress-strain behaviour of a polymeric material depends on various parameters such as molecular characteristics, microstructure, strain-rate and temperature. [1]

Constructing a material model for plastics, in terms of their structural analysis, is difficult due to their pressure dependency, dilation, softening, and anisotropic properties. A von-mises yield function and an isotropic hardening model have been used most often to represent the behaviour of plastic. The selection of plastic material is depends on the functionality of the component for the purpose that part will going to serve, accordingly the plastic.

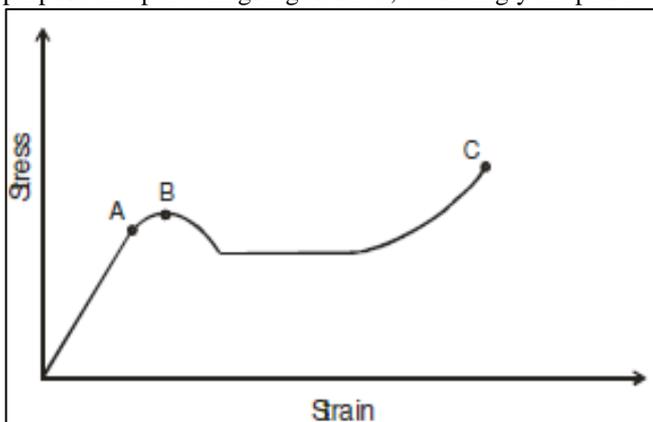


Fig.1 Typical stress-strain curve of polymeric material. A is the proportional point; B the yield point and C the rupture (break) point. [1]

III. STEPS INVOLVED IN MATERIAL MODEL

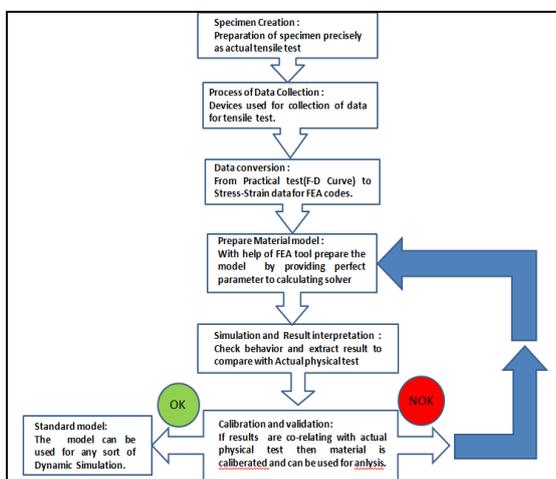


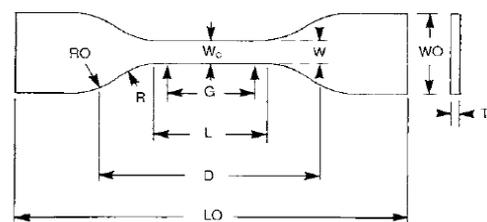
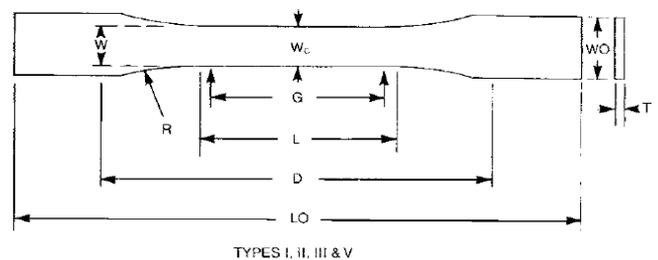
Fig.2 The Flow chart for creation for material model.

The material model creation is incorporated with few steps with is shown in Fig.2 through which we can reach to our ultimate aim of preparation of well-defined material model. The model created must exhibit very close behaviour to that of actual specimen and must have close relationship of output F-D curve. High strain rate material modeling of polymers for use in crash has been stressed by a number of problems. These include poor quality and noisy data, material models inappropriate to polymer behavior and unclear material model calibration guidelines. The modeling of polymers is thus a difficult preparation with a highly variable success rate. In this paper we present a material modeling approach that can be applied for a wide variety of polymers.

There must be proper, neat and well-arranged tensile data by eliminating unwanted noise for polymers at high strain rates. Considering limitation of crash material model we must follow present guidelines for the selection of the right material model that best describes the various kinds of behaviour exhibited by different classes of polymers. The calibration depends on some of realistic choices in order to best fit the complex observed behaviour to simplified material models available. Concurrence of our choice of material model and the calibration, we then need to validate the material model using computer simulation. The material modelling concepts presented here use the LS-DYNA software terminology; it is possible to translate these comments to other software codes that use analogous material models. [2]

IV. SPECIMEN CREATION

The geometries of the test samples, and the angle that the samples were cut from the plate with respect to the extrusion direction, are shown in Fig. In reality there were two PP plates, one of thickness 5 mm and one of thickness 10 mm and the figure is a simplified model showing all the test specimens in the same plate. Uniaxial tension tests were carried out the two-four test samples with different thickness ASTM 638 type specimen shown in Fig.3



Dimensions (see drawings)	7 (0.28) or under		Over 7 to 14 (0.28 to 0.55), incl		4 (0.16) or under		Tolerances
	Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV ^B	Type V ^{C,D}		
W—Width of narrow section ^{E,F}	13 (0.50)	6 (0.25)	19 (0.75)	6 (0.25)	3.18 (0.125)		±0.5 (±0.02) ^{B,C}
L—Length of narrow section	57 (2.25)	57 (2.25)	57 (2.25)	33 (1.30)	9.53 (0.375)		±0.5 (±0.02) ^C
WO—Width overall, min ^G	19 (0.75)	19 (0.75)	29 (1.13)	19 (0.75)	...		+6.4 (+0.25)
WO—Width overall, min ^G	...	...	...	...	9.53 (0.375)		+3.18 (+0.125)
LO—Length overall, min ^H	165 (6.5)	183 (7.2)	246 (9.7)	115 (4.5)	63.5 (2.5)		no max (no max)
G—Gage length ^I	50 (2.00)	50 (2.00)	50 (2.00)	...	7.62 (0.300)		±0.25 (±0.010) ^C
G—Gage length ^I	...	...	...	25 (1.00)	...		±0.13 (±0.005)
D—Distance between grips	115 (4.5)	135 (5.3)	115 (4.5)	65 (2.5) ^J	25.4 (1.0)		±5 (±0.2)
R—Radius of fillet	76 (3.00)	76 (3.00)	76 (3.00)	14 (0.56)	12.7 (0.5)		±1 (±0.04) ^C
RO—Outer radius (Type IV)	...	...	...	25 (1.00)	...		±1 (±0.04)

Fig.3 ASTM 638-10 Sample specimens [4]

The standard specimen used for the tensile test and predominant proposed are ASTM 638-10 or ISO 527, which are technically equivalent method of specimen development.

Tensile tests were carried out in a Zwick Z250 universal test machine at 23 °C using constant cross-head speeds of 10 and 100 mm/min. The length of the narrow portion of the specimen was 80 mm, resulting in nominal strain rates of 0.0021 and 0.021 s⁻¹, respectively. The load was measured with a 2.5 kN load cell and the signal was logged using a 12 bit National Instruments DAQCard 6062E. A commercial Vic3D digital image correlation (DIC) system from Limes and Correlated Solutions was used to measure the displacement field during loading. Two high resolution cameras (2452 × 2052 pixels) with Pentax 75 mm/f2.8 lenses were used. The cameras were mounted on a tripod and arranged so that two adjacent faces of the specimen were visible to both cameras simultaneously, as illustrated in Fig. 1. This arrangement of the cameras allows measurement of out-of-plane displacement in addition to in-plane strains on the specimen surface. However, it results in a slightly lower spatial resolution in the transverse directions than in the longitudinal direction due to the acute angle between the optical axis and the surfaces. Further, cross sections in the specimen will in general not be aligned with rows of pixels in the captured images. Thus, points in a certain cross section have to be identified based on their 3D coordinate in the object coordinate system and not based on the pixel coordinates in the image coordinate system. These points are required to calculate the current cross sectional area and the true stress. [6]

V. LOAD AND STRAIN MEASUREMENTS

The load washer used in some work was a Kistler 9071A piezoelectric load washer. The response frequency of the load washer was 30 kHz. The response frequency together with the upper grip was estimated to be 20 kHz. The load signal was amplified through a Kistler 5011 charge amplifier. The response frequency of the amplifier was 200 kHz. To reduce the inertia effect, non-contact strain measurement devices are preferred for high rate testing. The strain was measured using a Zimmer 200XHElectro-optical extensometer. The unit traces the movements of two markers adhered on the gage section of the specimen via two lenses. The lens forms an image of the illuminated black and white target on the photo cathode of the image converter that converts the optical image into an electron image to produce a voltage signal. The voltage output was converted to the extension with a linear relation established by calibration.

The strain was calculated based on the relative displacement between the two markers. The nominal strain rate was estimated as the crosshead speed V divided by the gage length of the specimen l : $\dot{\epsilon} = V/l$. The actual strain rate experienced by the specimen in the gage section varies depending on the material. The calculated strain rates based on the strain measurement from the optical extensometer for specimens tested at a nominal strain rate 40/s. There is a starting region during which strain rate increases rapidly with strain. Until the specimens reach strains of approximately 10%, the curves level off and remain nearly constant until failure. The tested specimens showed relatively uniform deformation throughout the gage length. The tested specimens, on the other hand, exhibited localized deformation. For brittle materials such as PA/glass, the specimen may fail before reaching the targeted strain rate. This example demonstrates another complexity in dynamic material testing. The strain rate varies in the elastic deformation region. A relatively constant strain rate may be obtained only in the plastic deformation region at strain levels greater than 0.1. In addition, the actual strain rate achieved in a specimen depends on the material. To get the targeted strain rate accurately, one has to rely on trial and error and test a few extra specimens. [7] Tensile data are required for all four elastic-plastic materials models considered here. The data obtained from tensile test measurements of bulk adhesive are nominal (or engineering) values, where stresses and strains have been calculated using the initial specimen dimensions. Tensile tests for the determination of Young's modulus (E') and Poisson's ratio (ν) are carried out on standard specimens under constant deformation rate in a tensile test machine at relatively low strain rates e.g. 10 mm/min. For best accuracy, contacting extensometers should be used for the measurement of axial and transverse strain, ϵ_T and ϵ_t . Two extensometers mounted on opposite faces of the specimen should preferably be used for the axial strain measurement to eliminate small non-uniformity in the strain through the thickness of the specimen caused by bending. The transverse strain measurement should be made close to the axial gauge section and, if possible, between the contact points of the extensometers. The contact pressure used to attach the extensometers to the specimen should be large enough to prevent slippage but insufficient to indent the specimen surface. Strain gauges are not recommended as they locally stiffen the specimen.

Values for Young's modulus and Poisson's ratio are calculated from the regression slopes in the linear region of the σ_T - ϵ_T and ϵ_t - ϵ_T curves. Use of regression slopes is preferable to single point values owing to the potential scatter in the data points (particularly the ϵ_t - ϵ_T data) that is mainly due to uncertainties in the small extensions measured. Whilst elastic values can be determined over any strain range where the data appear linear, the slight curvature due to visco-elastic effects will tend to reduce the value of E as the strain range widens. The measurement of tensile hardening curves involves use of the same tests out to larger strains. Contacting extensometers, unless they have been modified, typically have an upper strain limit of around 0.05. They may also initiate premature failure in the specimen at a point of contact. For these tests, the use of a video extensometer is therefore preferable for the measurement of axial strain. The video extensometer gauge

markings are visible on the tensile test specimen. These instruments are generally unsatisfactory for the measurement of small displacements and so a contacting device is best used to measure the lateral strain for the determination of true stresses and the plastic component of Poisson's ratio.[8].Here are typical tensile data for a rubber-toughened epoxy. The data are shown in tabular and graphical form. In tensile the data collected in form of force and displacement is converted to true Stress and Effective Plastic Strain.

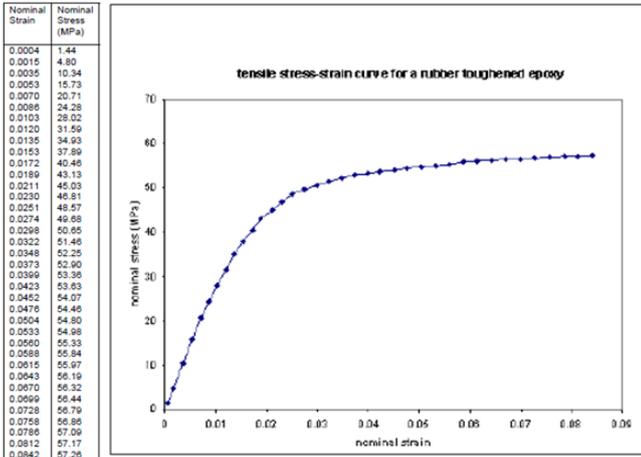


Fig.4 The typical Stress-Strain curve [8]

VI. TENSILE DATA CALCULATION

Below Tab.1 shows the calculation to obtain the True stress-True Strain values. With help of these equations we can arrive to the input for material model to incorporate its material non-linearity.

Tab.1 Tensile Data Calculation [8]

True Stress	$\sigma_T = \frac{\sigma_T}{(1 - \nu \epsilon_T)^2}$
True Strain	$\epsilon_T = \ln(1 + \epsilon_T)$
True Transverse Strain	$\epsilon_t = -\ln(1 + \epsilon_T)$
Nominal Poisson's Ratio	$\nu' = -\frac{\epsilon_t}{\epsilon_T}$
Young's Modulus	$E = \frac{\sigma_T}{\epsilon_T}$
True Poisson's Ratio	$\nu = -\frac{\epsilon_t}{\epsilon_T}$
True Plastic Strain	$\epsilon_T^p = \epsilon_T - \ln\left(1 + \frac{\sigma_T}{E}\right)$
True Transverse Plastic Strain	$\epsilon_t^p = \epsilon_t - \ln\left(1 - \nu' \frac{\sigma_T}{E}\right)$
True Plastic Poisson's Ratio	$\nu^p = -\frac{\epsilon_t^p}{\epsilon_T^p}$

Force is converted to true stress, since true stress is ratio of load to cross-sectional area during its time frame of tensile test event when there is continuous elongation of specimen. The cross-section goes on decreasing till the necking of specimen occurs and ultimate results in breaking. Strain values are extracted from displacement from tensile test which varies with respect to initial length to change in length.

VII. NUMERICAL MODEL PREPARATION

Constructing a material model for plastics, in terms of their structural analysis, is difficult due to their pressure dependency, dilatation, softening, and anisotropic properties.

- i. Test data has to be available as engineering stress vs. engineering strain(Excel / ASCII).
- ii. Visual inspection of the data is necessary first. The goal is to obtain a single sufficiently smooth i.e. non oscillatory curve for each strain rate:
 - a) Eliminate strong oscillating curves
 - b) Scattering at the same strain rate?
 - c) If yes: take the average of selected curves at the same strain rate i.e. eliminate outer layers
 - d) If no: take the average of all tests at the same strain rate
- iii. Determine average Young's modulus, True Strain $\epsilon = \ln(1 + \epsilon_0)$, True Stress $\sigma = \sigma_0(1 + \epsilon_0)$
- iv. Compute yield curve for each strain rate.
- v. Derive the smoothed curve (that is obtained in step 2) numerically by central difference scheme

$$\frac{d\sigma}{d\epsilon} = \frac{\sigma_{n+1} - \sigma_{n-1}}{\epsilon_{n+1} - \epsilon_{n-1}}$$

- vi. Identify the onset of the material instability (necking), i.e. find

$$\sigma - \frac{d\sigma}{d\epsilon} = 0 \Rightarrow \epsilon^*$$

Where ϵ^* is the strain where necking occurs. If there is an intersection, compute for each strain $\epsilon > \epsilon^*$:

$$\sigma = \sigma^* e^{(\epsilon - \epsilon^*)}$$

else, compute the hardening curve:

$$\sigma_y = \sigma, \quad \epsilon^p = \epsilon - \frac{\sigma}{E}$$

In describing the rate-dependent behavior of a polymer, additional complications occur. Up to the vicinity of yield, certain polymers exhibit significant rate-dependency of modulus while others do not. This is in distinct contrast to metal behavior where the expected behavioral trend is toward no dependency of modulus with strain rate, as exemplified by the LSDYMAT-24 type material model. A consequence of this finding is that polymers exhibiting rate dependency of modulus cannot be described by a MAT24 type model. The use of a MAT24 type model for such materials will result in significant error in stiffness predictions. These and other limitations must be considered carefully in selection of a material model for describing rate dependency of polymers. The combination of the effect of stress as well as strain-rate on the rate dependent stress-strain relationship of polymers, as explained above creates a complex situation that is only crudely approximated with currently available material models. By proper selection, it is possible to conduct meaningful simulation by selecting existing material models that most closely match the behavior shown by the material data. With respect to the rate-dependency of the plasticity behavior, a remarkable consistency is observed for a large variety of polymers. A predominant trend exists toward agreement with the Eyring equation, which is characterized as a linearly increasing relationship between yield stress s . \log strain rates. Obvious exception is the case of polymers exhibiting brittle failure where the result is noisier. In contrast, the Cowper-Symonds model which is used extensively for metals and is implemented in MAT24 fails to

capture the correct trend leading to modeling inaccuracy in modeling rate dependency of polymers[2]

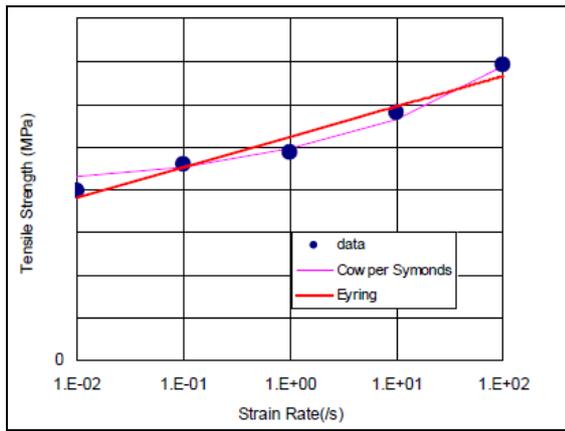


Fig.5 The Eyring vs. Cowper Symonds equations for rate dependency of yield stress. [2]

Its simple and most commonly used nuance couples Cowper-Symonds model with an elastic-plastic curve as follows. The elastic region is modelled as rate independent up to an arbitrarily or otherwise determined yield point, beyond which the stress-strain curve at the lowest strain rate of interest is decomposed into an elastic-plastic model. This produces a curve of stress v. plastic strain (ES v. EPS). Since polymers are non-linear elastic followed by elastic-plastic, an arbitrary choice is usually made somewhere along the increasing part of the stress-strain curve denoting the onset of plastic strain limitation of linear elasticity. Applying the Cowper-Symonds equation, it is now possible to scale this curve to other strain rates. The equation has the advantage of smooth extrapolation without limits. However, since the equation is incapable of truly describing the rate dependency of the yield phenomenon (Figure 3), it cannot accurately scale the plasticity curve to high strain rates. A possible solution is to use the LCSR option, which permits the submission of a table of scale factors for each strain rate. LCSR is an interesting option which allows fidelity to the test data. However, it must be used with caution. High strain rate data is experimentally difficult to obtain so that there is often scatter in the data. This scatter must be smoothed in some way so that the resultant model contains no spurious behaviour. Since we know that the Eyring Equation appears to accurately describe the rate dependency of most ductile polymers, the LCSR table can be derived from a best fit of the yield stress v. log strain rate data. This approach carries two advantages: first, the elimination of noise and second, the ability to extrapolate the model to 'higher than tested' strain rates, since LCSR based MAT24 terminates rate dependency computation when the highest strain rate in the table is exceeded.

Cowper Symonds

$$\sigma_y(\dot{\epsilon}, \epsilon_p) = \sigma_y(0, \epsilon_p) \left[1 + \left(\frac{\dot{\epsilon}}{C} \right)^{\frac{1}{p}} \right]$$

Parameters C, p can be used directly in the MAT_24 card

Fig.6 Cowper-Symonds equation for extrapolating higher strain rate. [11]

Using MAT24 with LCSR as described above, we can successfully overcome the limitation of the Cowper-Symonds model in the simulation of polymer rate-dependency. A serious limitation of MAT24 arises from the fact that the actual failure strain typically decrease with increasing strain rate. This variation is not accommodated by the model, which assumes that failure strain is constant and independent of strain rate, as would be typical for metals. Failure in MAT_24 occurs when the accumulated plastic strain in an element reaches the failure stress value specified in the FAIL term. At each time step, after the trial stress is computed, if the trial stress is found to be outside the yield surface (Von-Mises), LS-DYNA scales the stress back to the yield surface and then obtains the accumulated plastic strain by using the material model to calculate the corresponding effective plastic strain (EPS) at the strain rate seen by the element. If this accumulated plastic strain equals FAIL, the element is removed. FAIL is usually chosen by the analyst as the largest failure strain in the material data. This is the conservative approach. If the data shows a variation in failure strains with strain rates, a check must be made by the analyst to review the strain-rate experienced by the part, to pick a value of FAIL at that corresponding strain rate. This is described later. It is clear that with polymers with ductile-brittle transitions or where the failure strain is highly rate dependent that this limitation can have a significant impact on the simulation. The LCSS option of MAT24 is very useful when the shape of the plasticity curve changes with strain rate. This phenomenon is often observed in polymers. In this case, by submitting a plasticity curve for each strain-rate, we are able to independently describe the stress-strain behaviour as a function of strain rate allowing us the ultimate in flexibility offered by the model. It may still be a useful exercise to smooth the rate-dependency using the approach outlined earlier. LCSS however does not offer relief in the modelling of ductile-brittle transitions, because of the limitation of FAIL. Proper implementation of LCSS requires that we extrapolate all the plasticity curves to the largest failure strain (FAIL) that we intend to use in the model. Consequently information regarding the change in failure strain with strain rate is lost. When handling post-yield behavior, a number of complications arise. Most post yield behavior is accompanied by necking, localized non-uniform deformation, which leads to a condition where the cross-sectional area of the deformation zone is unknown. Consequently, the stress is also unknown and can only be crudely estimated by making some assumptions about the cross-sectional area. The most common procedure is to assume that the true stress calculation applies in this region as well. A consequence of this assumption is that the slope of the stress-strain curve is seen to gradually increase with increasing strain. In the case of olefine materials such as polypropylene and polyethylene whose necking phenomenon is more closely equated with unravelling or unzipping of the dendrite structure, it is more likely that the stress remains constant during necking. In any case, to model these regions using MAT24, it is only essential to eliminate negative slopes in the model [2].

VIII. CALIBRATION AND VALIDATION MODEL PREPARATION

The Tensile test data used for deriving material data is simulated through finite element analysis using as input data

the material card elaborated according to procedure mentioned before. Re-obtaining from the finite element analysis same values of curve Force Vs Displacement as the one measured experimentally is validation criteria treated as "Reverse problem". Any deviation from desired are used to correct the input data. Material model in FE preprocessor follow mesh building parameters highlight in below Fig.7

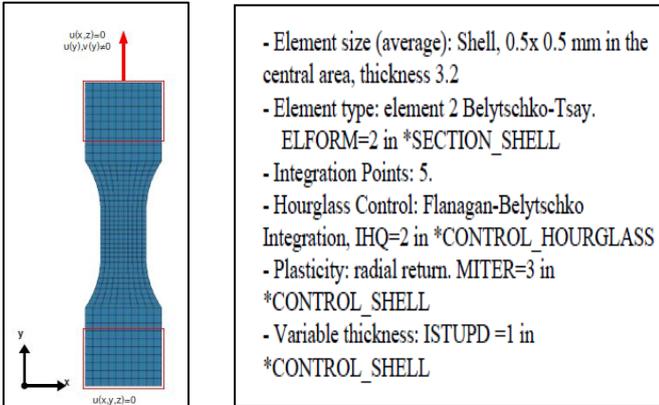


Fig.7 FEA Setup and LS-Dyna cards to integrate the MAT-24 model[11]

The MAT-24 material model has simplistic structure to define material nonlinearity. LS-DYNA internally checks the slope of the curve. When this slope falls below the modulus E specified in the material card, the material is assumed to have yielded. The treatment of plasticity then follows MAT24, as described earlier. The LCSR scaling of the stress-strain curve allows this model to be scaled to high strain rates in a manner similar to MAT24. The LCSR table of yield stress v. strain rate is a better choice for modeling rate-dependency than the Cowper-Symonds equation for the same reasons described earlier. Below is the structure of material card MAT-24.

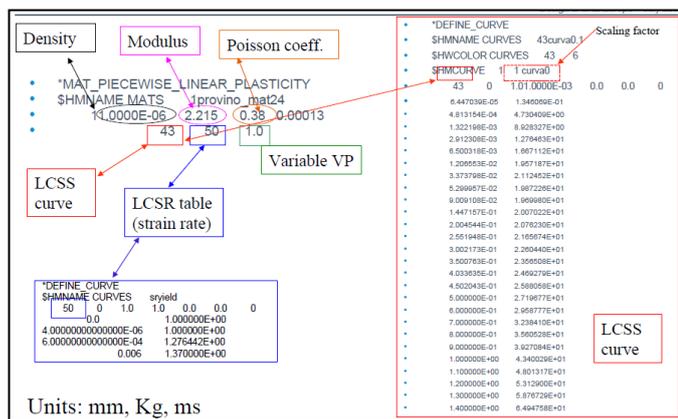


Fig.8 MAT-24 model structure [11]

The inverse modelling strategy used to identify the behaviour of material regarding their stress-strain nature, strain-rate parameter, yielding behaviour of material to predict experimental tensile response for this purpose we perform numerical analysis of tensile specimen. Comparison between experimental test response and numerical simulation of material model is reflected in F-D curve.

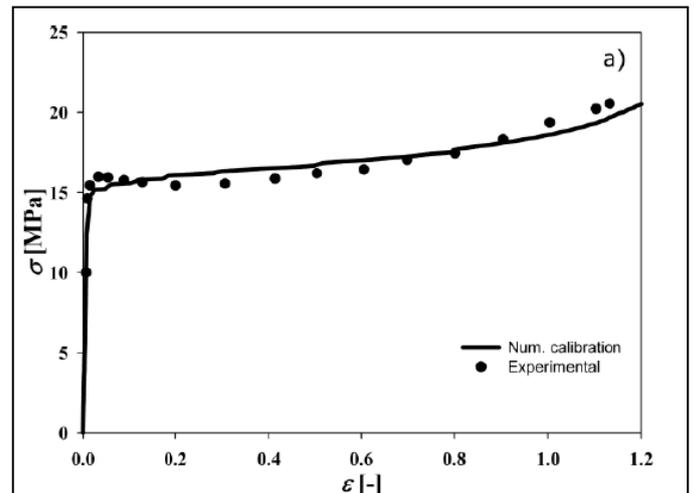


Fig.9 Tensile True Stress-True strain response comparison of experimental data and numerical experimentation[6]

Finally, the inverse modeling approach is based on a local strategy where the correct data transfer between experiments and finite element loading conditions is guaranteed. Accordingly, local strain rate values, measured from DIC, are directly applied as the loading condition to the finite element used to represent the material point. A material model was calibrated based on the experimental data from the tension tests. It was observed that the material experienced hardening in the tension tests, as well as strain rate dependency. The tension tests were numerically simulated in order to validate the parameters in the material model. The calibrated material model was able to capture the main characteristics of the material polypropylene.

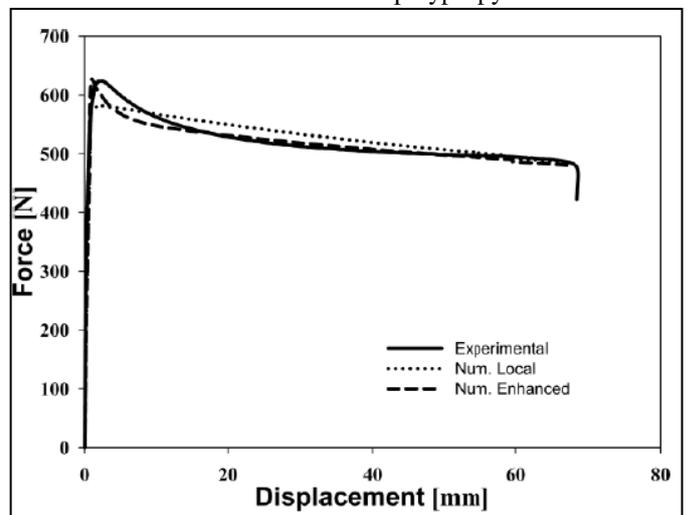


Fig.10 Force-Displacement response comparison of experimental data and numerical experimentation[6]

However, the model had limitations, as it was not able to correctly predict the behavior of the material at high strain rates. The numerical simulation experiences hardening although the experimental curve flattens out. The hardening in the simulation curve is likely to be caused by the difference between the calibrated material model and the experimental test. The force-displacement curves from the experimental data and the numerical simulation are seen.

IX. CONCLUSION.

A number of material models exist that could be used for the modeling of polymeric behavior. Recently lot of work is going on in calibration of material model to capture the behavior of plastic by different methodology and process. The quality of simulation result depends strongly on quality of experimental work and optimization of input parameters.

Simple validations allow the analyst to evaluate the reliability of the material calibration. Such a validated material model can form a basis for material model tuning based on more complex experiments. The Tensile test data used for deriving material data is simulated through finite element analysis using material models as elaborated. Since the input parameters are calibrated from tensile tests itself, material model can be considerably accurate.

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