STM JOURNALS

Journal of
Catalyst & Catalysis

ISSN: 2349-4344
Volume 11, Issue 2, 2024
May—August
DOI (Journal): 10.37591/JoCC

https://journals.stmjournals.com/jocc

Review JoCC

Novel Catalytic Strategies for Reducing Residual Stresses and Improving Surface Quality in Machined Ceramic Materials

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Abstract

To prepare for material cutting and utilize utility-specific edges, it's crucial to understand the inherent brittleness of ceramics. This brittleness limits the forming methods available and hinders achieving dimensional accuracy and precision through conventional machining techniques. The fabrication of composite materials is becoming increasingly significant, particularly in technical fields like the automotive industry, where they are used to manufacture engine connecting rods, propeller shafts, brake discs, and more. The machining techniques for composites have evolved depending on the type of composite material; for instance, Long Fiber Reinforced Polymer Matrix Composites (LFRC) and Ceramic Particle/Fiber Reinforced Metal Matrix Composites (MMC) are commonly used forms. Composites are typically made from robust, highly hardened reinforcements. When such reinforcements are absent, machining methods are optimized based on the characteristics of high-strength reinforcements, and the tooling state is critically assessed during the machining process. Metal Matrix Composites (MMCs) are favored over traditional metals and alloys due to their superior properties, including a higher strength-to-weight ratio, hardness, stiffness, and wear resistance. This has made their machining more challenging, with issues such as surface roughness, residual stresses, and subsurface damage becoming significant factors both before and after machining operations. To efficiently access utility-specific edges and prepare for material cutting, it is essential to understand the inherent brittleness of ceramics, which imposes significant constraints on forming techniques and limits the ability to achieve precise dimensional accuracy through conventional machining. Ceramics, while offering high hardness and wear resistance, are typically characterized by their brittle nature, which makes them challenging to shape accurately and effectively. In response to these challenges, the fabrication of composite materials has gained increasing importance. Composites are particularly valued in technical applications such as the automotive industry.

Keywords: Ceramics, Composite Materials, Metal Matrix Composites (MMCs), Machining Techniques, Brittleness

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Received Date: August 27, 2024
Accepted Date: August 30, 2024
Published Date: September 20, 2024

Citation: Sunidhi Rajput, Bangshidhar Goswami. Novel Catalytic Strategies for Reducing Residual Stresses and Improving Surface Quality in Machined Ceramic Materials. Journal of Catalyst & Catalysis. 2024; 11(2): 1–7p.

INTRODUCTION

To overcome technological limitations, ceramics have been adapted as a crucial industrial material with substantial support. Ceramics, which are inorganic crystalline materials held together by ionic or covalent bonds, include a variety of types such as oxides, carbides, nitrides, borides, silicates, and glass ceramics, each defined by its unique chemical composition. While ceramics share similarities with metals in terms of stiffness and strength, they also offer exceptional high-temperature resistance and chemical stability. As cut composites become increasingly vital in manufacturing, research has focused on optimizing production costs and machining techniques to provide effective support. Key areas of investigation include controlling surface finish, selecting appropriate machining parameters, and addressing tool wear. Studies into the machinability of long fiber reinforced composites reveal that surface integrity is primarily influenced by fiber orientation rather than cutting direction. This highlights the importance of understanding tool geometry in relation to fiber orientation to ensure optimal machining outcomes. To address technological constraints and enhance industrial applications, ceramics are increasingly being adapted and refined as a vital material. Ceramics are inorganic crystalline substances bonded by ionic or covalent forces, encompassing a diverse range of types including oxides, carbides, nitrides, borides, silicates, and glass ceramics. Each type is characterized by its distinct chemical composition and structural properties. These materials are renowned not only for their comparable stiffness and strength to metals but also for their remarkable ability to endure high temperatures and resist chemical reactions, making them invaluable in demanding environments.

As the role of composite materials in manufacturing continues to expand, the challenge of balancing production costs with effective machining processes has become more prominent. Research efforts are increasingly focused on refining these processes to optimize performance and cost-efficiency. Critical aspects under investigation include the control of surface finish, precise selection of machining parameters, and the management of tool wear. Advances in understanding the machinability of long fiber reinforced composites have revealed that the orientation of fibers significantly impacts surface integrity, overshadowing the effects of cutting direction. This finding underscores the importance of considering fiber orientation in conjunction with tool geometry to achieve optimal results.

Ceramic Restructure of Edge

Alok Kumar Das and Rahul Rakshit [1] clarified a review on cutting industrial ceramic materials. Ceramics have been widely utilized in appliances across a wide range of manufacturing sectors, thanks to their superior mechanical qualities at high temperatures, good oxidation stability, and high hardness. The knowledge of ceramic materials' machinability and surface integrity has withstood hybrid and non-conventional machining/cutting methods. Cutting tools and dies, fuel systems and valves in spacecraft, automotive engines, military weapon systems, nuclear and biological industries, heat exchangers, and electronic substrates for microwave devices are among the applications where ceramics have gained traction.

Turning of Composite by Ceramic Edged Tool

A context of the mechanisms involved in the turning of metal matrix composites was conducted by Ravi Sekhara and T.P. Singh [2]. The use of metal matrix composites with superior performance has improved mechanical properties and applications in the automotive and aerospace industries. The usual fabrication process for metal matrix composites involved studying a variety of mechanisms, such as surface generation, cut forces, chip formation, strains and stresses, thermal softening, dislocation phenomena, particle fracture, particle pull-out, debond, and wear modes. The exploration of turning mechanisms can be grounded in scriptural issues related to chip formation, surface morphology, and cut forces. From this point on, more complex features have descriptive properties such as particle pull-out, debonding, particle fracture, and complex micromechanics.

Mechanics of Composite Cut by Restructured Edge

Cutting composites: a discussion on mechanics modelling was clarified by L.C. Zhang [3]. Aluminum reinforced with ceramic particles and a cut of long fiber reinforced polymer have been used in features in the mechanics of machining composites. Characterization of matrix deformation, matrix to reinforcement interaction, and reinforcement deformation have shown the main material removal mechanisms. These factors have now been attained by a methodical procedure that involves model derivation, mechanism exploration, and verification. Composites are widely used in technical fields, such as the automotive industry, where they are used to make brake discs, propeller shafts, and connecting rods for engines. Long fiber reinforced polymer matrix composites (LFRCs) and ceramic particle/fiber reinforced metal matrix composites (MMCs) are two types of composites that are frequently used for specific applications. For example, when drilling LFRCs that are evaluated based on empirical formulas for drilling spall size prediction. The use of a homogenized material model and micro details of individual fiber tool interactions has been recommended by the finite element method to study cutting of LFRCs, thereby simulating the breaking process of a single fiber during cutting. The tool and as-cut chip formation empiricism adoptive fame are depicted in Figure 1.

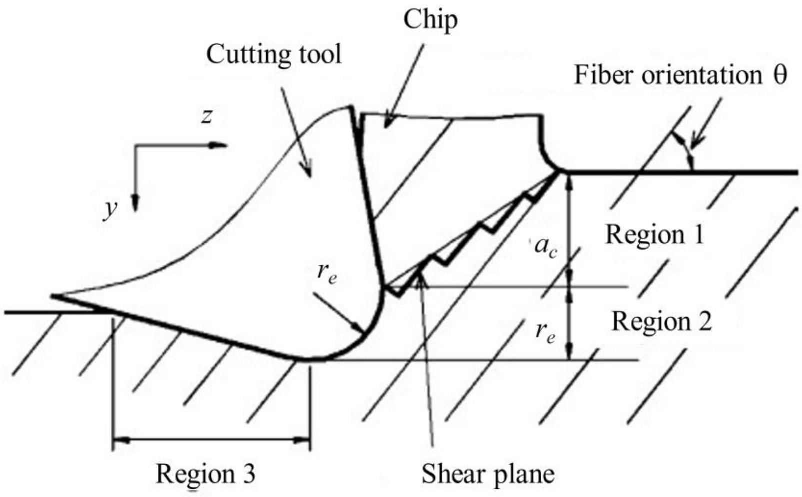

Figure 1. Cut merged scheme from LFRC [3].

Cut by Diamond Restructured Edge

Workpiece surface quality during ultra-precision turning of SiCp/Al composites was clarified by Y.F. Ge et al. [4]. Following ultra-precision turning tests, the surface quality of SiCp/2024Al and SiCp/ZL101A composites was examined using Polycrystalline Diamond (PCD) cutters and Single Point Diamond Tool (SPDT). The development of cutting parameters, tool material and geometry, constitutive reinforcement particulates—thus their size and distribution—volume fraction, and cooling conditions have all contributed to the establishment of subjective edge constitutive. Surface integrity is affected by all variables when precision turning is used on a variety of materials. After machined surfaces were examined using an Atomic Force Microscope (AFM) and a Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM), the descriptive score was reallocated. Defects that have been assessed include pits, voids, microcracks, grooves, protuberances, tearing in the matrix, etc. The removal of SiC particles has contributed to the formation of these defects, but surface quality has been associated with either matrix anomaly, an increase in feed rate, or the use of a higher volume fraction in the composed admix. The surface finish would deteriorate with dry cutting. It was also mentioned that, despite producing the same surface roughness Ra, SPDT tools performed better than PCD tools. However, ten micrometers below the machined surface, no cracks were seen. The state of the workpiece surface has a big impact on its mechanical and physical characteristics [5]

Cutting Force and Roughness of Job

Metal matrix composites, or MMCs, are becoming more and more popular among advanced materials. Particulate reinforced aluminum MMCs, in particular, have drawn a lot of attention because of their superior qualities, which include a high strength to weight ratio, excellent low-temperature performance, high wear resistance, and high thermal conductivity. The current work intends to investigate and contrast the machinability characteristics of metal matrix composites reinforced with B4Cp and 6061Al alloy, and reinforced with 37 and 88 micrometer particulates, which are produced through the stir casting process. Using scanning electron microscopy equipped with EDX analysis

(Hitachi Su-1500 model), the prepared composites are microstructurally characterized to determine the morphology and distribution of B4C particles in the 6061Al matrix. To investigate the impact of particle size on cutting forces and surface roughness under varying machinability parameters, such as cutting speed (29-45 m/min), feed rate (0.11-0.33 mm/rev.), and depth of cut (0.5-1 mm), the specimens are turned on a conventional lathe machine using a Polly crystalline Diamond (PCD) tool. The micro structural characterization results showed that the B4C particles (in both cases, measuring 37μm and 88μm) were distributed fairly uniformly within the 6061Al matrix. Cutting speed has an impact on the composite's surface roughness. Surface roughness is negatively influenced by feed rate and depth of cut. hardness, resistance to corrosion, high wear resistance, and low thermal coefficient of expansion are the qualities that set them apart from the competition. These characteristics help achieve the greater weight reduction that is required in aerospace and automotive applications. As a result, in many fields, these materials tend to replace conventional materials. The matrix, the reinforcement, and the interface govern a composite material's characteristics. As matrix materials, lightweight materials are typically chosen; to achieve high specific strength, ceramic reinforcements like Al_2O_3, SiC, TiB, TiC, and B_4C are particularly useful. In the form of whiskers, particulates, short fibers, continuous fiber, and monofilament, ceramic reinforcements are added. The fabrication process and composite system will alter the properties of the composites that are created. Three categories of fabrication techniques exist. These three processes are semi-solid, liquid, and solid phases. The primary production processes of stir casting and infiltration account for the largest volume (67%) but only about 25% of the MMC market by value because of their low cost [6–12]

Importance of Catalysis in Material Processing

Catalysis traditionally enhances chemical reaction rates, leading to more efficient processes in various industries. In material processing, catalytic methods are emerging as potential solutions to overcome challenges in machining advanced materials. By modifying surface interactions and introducing catalytic agents, it's possible to improve tool performance, reduce wear, and enhance surface quality. This innovative approach not only aligns with sustainable manufacturing practices but also offers a new avenue for optimizing machining processes. The integration of catalytic principles into machining could revolutionize how we process MMCs and ceramics, offering benefits such as reduced operational costs and improved material properties [13]

Catalytic Mechanisms in Machining

Overview of Catalytic Processes in Material Science

Catalysis involves the acceleration of chemical reactions by catalysts, which are substances that remain unchanged after the reaction. In material science, this concept can be extended to machining by utilizing catalysts to alter the interactions between cutting tools and workpieces. For instance, catalytic coatings can be applied to cutting tools to facilitate smoother cutting operations, reduce friction, and enhance heat dissipation. Additionally, catalytic processes can be used to modify the chemical composition of the workpiece surface, making it more amenable to machining. Understanding these mechanisms requires a deep dive into how catalysts interact with both the material and the environment during machining operations, potentially leading to groundbreaking advancements in material processing.

Catalytic Effects on Tool Wear and Longevity

Tool wear is a significant issue in machining MMCs and ceramics due to their abrasive nature. Catalytic treatments offer a promising solution to this problem by enhancing the hardness and wear resistance of cutting tools. For example, applying a catalytic coating that forms a protective layer on the tool surface can reduce abrasive wear and extend tool life. These coatings may include catalytic metals or compounds that react with the workpiece material to form a more stable and wear-resistant surface. Experimental studies have shown that such catalytic coatings can significantly lower tool wear rates and improve overall machining efficiency. By reducing the frequency of tool replacements and maintenance, these catalytic approaches can lead to cost savings and increased productivity [14].

Enhancing Surface Quality Through Catalytic Methods

Catalytic Approaches to Surface Finish Improvement

Achieving a high-quality surface finish is a critical goal in machining, particularly for components used in precision applications. Catalytic methods can be employed to improve surface finish by facilitating smoother cutting operations and minimizing defects. Techniques such as catalytic-assisted polishing involve applying a catalytic agent during the polishing process to enhance the removal of surface irregularities and achieve a finer finish. Additionally, catalytic reactions can be used to modify the surface chemistry of the workpiece, making it more receptive to polishing and reducing the formation of defects such as pits and scratches. Research into these techniques is ongoing, with promising results indicating that catalytic methods could become a standard practice for achieving superior surface quality in advanced materials.

Reducing Residual Stresses and Subsurface Defects

Residual stresses and subsurface defects often result from the machining of MMCs and ceramics, impacting the performance and reliability of the final product. Catalytic methods offer a novel approach to mitigating these issues by modifying the thermal and mechanical interactions during machining. For example, catalytic additives can be used in the cutting fluid to enhance its cooling properties, thereby reducing thermal stresses and minimizing subsurface damage. Additionally, catalytic processes can alter the material's response to machining forces, reducing the likelihood of crack formation and other subsurface defects. By addressing these challenges, catalytic methods can improve the overall quality and durability of machined components, making them more suitable for high-performance applications [15].

EXPERIMENTAL TECHNIQUES AND RESULTS

Design of Experiments for Catalytic Machining Processes

To explore the potential of catalytic approaches in machining, a systematic experimental design is essential. This involves selecting appropriate catalytic agents, machining parameters, and measurement techniques. For example, experiments might involve applying various catalytic coatings to cutting tools and evaluating their performance under different machining conditions. Parameters such as cutting speed, feed rate, and depth of cut must be optimized to assess the catalytic effects on tool wear, surface finish, and material removal rates. Measurement techniques, including scanning electron microscopy (SEM) and atomic force microscopy (AFM), are employed to analyze surface quality and tool wear patterns. A well-designed experimental approach ensures that the results are robust and provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of catalytic methods [16].

Analysis of Machining Performance and Surface Quality

The analysis of machining performance with catalytic methods involves evaluating several key metrics, including tool life, cutting forces, and surface finish. Data collected from experiments are compared with conventional machining methods to assess improvements. For instance, reductions in tool wear and enhancements in surface quality can be quantified using statistical methods and visual inspection techniques. Results may reveal significant improvements in machining efficiency and surface integrity due to the catalytic treatments. Additionally, the analysis helps identify the most effective catalytic agents and conditions for various materials, guiding future research and application in industry.

CASE STUDIES AND APPLICATIONS

Application of Catalytic Techniques in Aerospace Components

In the aerospace industry, where precision and reliability are paramount, catalytic techniques have shown promise in improving the machinability of advanced materials. Case studies involving catalytic-assisted machining of aerospace components, such as turbine blades and structural elements, highlight the benefits of enhanced surface finish and reduced tool wear. For instance, the use of catalytic coatings has led to longer tool life and better dimensional accuracy in machining high-performance alloys and composites. These advancements contribute to the development of more efficient and reliable aerospace components, underscoring the potential of catalytic methods to address industry-specific challenges [17].

Catalytic Innovations for Automotive Parts Manufacturing

The automotive industry, characterized by high-volume production and stringent performance requirements, has also benefited from catalytic innovations in machining. Case studies on catalytic-assisted turning of brake discs and engine components demonstrate improvements in machining efficiency and surface quality. Catalytic treatments have enabled better control over surface roughness and defect formation, resulting in higher-quality components with enhanced durability. The adoption of these techniques not only improves manufacturing processes but also supports the development of advanced automotive parts that meet the demands of modern vehicle systems [18].

Future Directions and Challenges

Emerging Catalytic Technologies and Their Potential

The field of catalytic machining is evolving, with new technologies and approaches continually emerging. Future research may focus on developing advanced catalytic materials, such as nano-catalysts or hybrid catalytic systems, that offer even greater improvements in machining performance. Additionally, exploring the integration of catalytic methods with other advanced machining technologies, such as laser or ultrasonic machining, could further enhance their effectiveness. The potential of these emerging technologies to revolutionize material processing and manufacturing practices is significant, offering opportunities for innovation and growth in the industry [19].

Addressing Limitations and Practical Considerations

Despite the promising potential of catalytic methods, several limitations and practical considerations must be addressed. These include the cost of catalytic materials, scalability of catalytic processes, and compatibility with existing machining systems. Overcoming these challenges requires a multidisciplinary approach, involving collaboration between material scientists, engineers, and manufacturers. Strategies for improving the cost-effectiveness and scalability of catalytic techniques will be crucial for their widespread adoption. Additionally, ongoing research and development efforts are needed to refine catalytic methods and ensure their practical applicability in diverse industrial settings [20].

CONCLUSION

The integration of catalytic approaches into machining processes offers significant advantages for enhancing the machinability and surface quality of metal matrix composites and ceramics. Key findings from the research indicate that catalytic treatments can reduce tool wear, improve surface finish, and mitigate residual stresses and subsurface defects. The experimental results highlight the effectiveness of various catalytic methods in addressing specific challenges associated with machining advanced materials.The implications of these findings for industry are profound, with potential benefits including cost savings, improved productivity, and enhanced component performance. For researchers, the study opens up new avenues for exploration in catalytic machining techniques and their applications. Future research should focus on further optimizing catalytic methods, exploring new catalytic materials, and addressing practical challenges to fully realize the potential of these innovative approaches. The continued development of catalytic technologies will contribute to advancements in material processing and manufacturing, supporting the growth of high-performance industries.

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