Material Wear Simulation in Tribological Systems

Pedro Henrique, Tiago André, José António, Miguel Ângelo
CEMAT, Center for Computational and Stochastic Mathematics, Instituto Superior Técnico, Lisbon University, 1300-663 Lisbon, Portugal
angemig@uatlantica.pt

Abstract:

Mechanical and industrial applications of interacting surfaces in relative motion are exemplified by tribological systems. The gaining understanding and prediction of wear in these systems is critical in extending the life and efficiency of the components. In this article, we provide insights on the cutting edge of mathematical modeling and simulation of wear of material shed on today's complex wear mechanisms and its impacts on the engineering design and material science. Over the past few years, the field of tribology has prospered, and researchers have managed to come up with sophisticated models to simulate wear processes, taking place at different scales. These mathematical approaches are revolutionizing our ability to predict wear in industrial machinery and to simulate atomistic interactions at surfaces.

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1. The Significance of Wear Modeling

Finally, mechanical wear is a huge economic impact, with some estimates that mechanical wear comprises a substantial share of annual GDP losses in industrialized nations. It highlights the need for developing strong wearable models to predict wear behavior. Understanding and predicting the performance of materials in tribological systems; that having two or more surfaces that interact forcing them to move relative to each other under load; is critical to the wear modeling. Engineering applications are such that many of them are in contact, from automotive components and manufacturing machineries to biomedical implants where friction, science of friction, lubrication and wear (tribology) play highly important role in these systems. Thus critical for material design, improvements in efficiency and extending mechanical system life is its ability to accurately model, predict wear [1]-[5].

The main advantage of wear modeling is that it potentially imitates the means in which the material is degraded by the frictional force exerted among resonant surfaces. Here, changes in the geometry, due to wear, can decrease performance, increase friction and could eventually lead to component failure with the system. Wear modeling is used to predict wear rates as well as the wear mechanism that will lead to failure before unacceptable damage occurs. The wear modeling yields a very valuable insight in the different wear mechanisms such as abrasive wear, adhesive wear and tribochemical. It is the wear induced by the particles or asperities on one surface against the other, which is abrasion wear. Nevertheless, a type of wear takes place due to transfer of material from one surface to another by local welding or adhesion. The material degradation because of the reaction between the material and the environment is also caused by tribo-chemical wear. Then, this wear modeling allows the engineers to determine which wear dominates in specific conditions so they can choose the most favorable material or design strategy to reduce wear [6]-[9].

Wear modéling may be able to provide wear life predictions for materials operated under different conditions. The wearing rates are sensitive to load, speed, temperature, lubrication and surface roughness. Mathematically these conditions may be simulated and the interaction of these variables will be understood which they and how they affect wear. Such industries as automotive engineering, aerospace and manufacturing design require components to withstand harren conditions for long time, so such a set of parameters is extremely important. Wear modeling also helps in designing of an optimized tribological system. Knowing wear patterns and behaviour of several materials (eutectics, carbides, etc.) enables engineers to make more wear resistant materials and coatings. For example, the wear models can be used to create new surface treatment or lubrication strategies to reduce wear and thereby increase the system longevity and efficiency. Donor wear modeling is critical to the design of implants and prosthetics in biomedical applications as these components must be durable and biocompatible [10]-[13].

Table 1. Wear Mechanisms in Tribological Systems and Their Modeling Approaches

Wear Mechanism	Physical Description	Common Mathematical / Simulation Models	Typical Engineering Applications
Adhesive Wear	Material transfer due to surface adhesion	Archard wear model, contact mechanics	Bearings, sliding joints
Abrasive Wear	Hard asperities remove material	Finite element–based wear models	Cutting tools, gears
Fatigue Wear	Repeated cyclic loading causes cracks	Multiscale fatigue models	Rolling element bearings
Corrosive Wear	Chemical reactions accelerate wear	Electrochemical–mechanical coupling models	Marine components
Erosive Wear	Impact of particles removes material	CFD–DEM coupled simulations	Turbines, pipelines

The last important point for wear modeling is related to its influence on the lower cost factor and sustainability. Predicting wear behavior and wear modeling so as to reduce part replacement, off time and maintenance cost, thereby reduces wearok frequency, which leads to wear reduction of wearable components. In addition, it enables designing more energy efficient system since the adhesion between the components can be minimized, reducing the energy loss due to the wear induced loss. First, the importance of wear modelling is indeed in the tribological systems. It provides key understanding of the material degradation, and predicts the wear rate and moreover supplies momentum for creation of more affordable and durable frameworks. Mathematical simulation allows engineers to pick the best set of materials to optimize performance and prolong mechanical component's life boosting sustainability and reliability in various different sector of industries [14]-[17].

2. Historical Context

Tribological behavior, material degradation and its mutual destructive effects on materials is a subject of many hundreds of years experience where serious advances have been made to understand the material degradation and study of tribological behavior only in and around last few centuries. As a word, tribology, and engineers and researchers searching continuously to predict, understand and remedy wear in mechanical systems, wear modeling is an evolving concept that has expanded and developed hand in hand with the expanding boundaries of tribology as a field. The wear modeling history can be estimated from early observations of a friction and a wear in the ancient times, and industrialization to today's computational method.

The wears originated from early civilizations such as the early engineer and craftsmen who noticed the wears due to friction which had a trace of the study of wears to the present days. In fact, however, it wasn't until the 18th and 19th centuries, during the Industrial Revolution, that the study of wear began to be applied. Yet with the evolution of the more advanced and complex machinery and mechanical systems, it became discernible that the effect of the friction and wear on the efficiency and the longevity of such systems was growing. Period during which one of the concepts of friction and wear was most of all understood empirically and by experiment and new theoretical interpretations were just a few, as reasons of how such phenomena occur [18]-[24].

Researchers began to develop more systematic works of wear and friction in material science and engineering fields (e.g. materials engineering, tribology) which developed in early 20th century. By doing this, potential tribometers and other testing devices to accurately and precisely measure wear rate data could be invented in order to more accurately relate friction behavior to different materials and lubricants. During this time, a proposal of basic Archard Wear Model was made. The 1950s model of John Archard interpreted wear volume in terms of load and sliding distance, and it was this basis of the model that has been referred to in most subsequent wear models.
During the 1960s and 1970s underwent development in the field of material science and engineering, analytical techniques to the point where we were able to better understand wear mechanisms. Once a certain scope in the development of understanding the relationship of wear and microstructural properties material such as hardness, surface roughness, and so on with material compositions is reached, researchers began to develop their understanding regarding the relationship of wear and the material properties and composition. Wear theories: adhesive wear and abrasive wear, with the theory of development, engineers were able to better predict and analysis of wear in a particular use. Now, the progress in computational techniques, such as finite element analysis (FEA), provides a method to model wear processes and predict performance of the materials under different loading and environment conditions. In the late 20th and early 21st century numerical simulation techniques were developed which made a predictor computational models of wear more refined. With the increasing computing power, wear processes could be simulated in more and more complex ways, e.g. considering temperature variations, lubrication effects, or multi body interactions. Researchers began to consider the influence of dynamic loading and the complex nature of wear in real part systems where sometimes wear can not be linear, nor is influenced by factors such as vibration and cyclic loading [25]-[28].

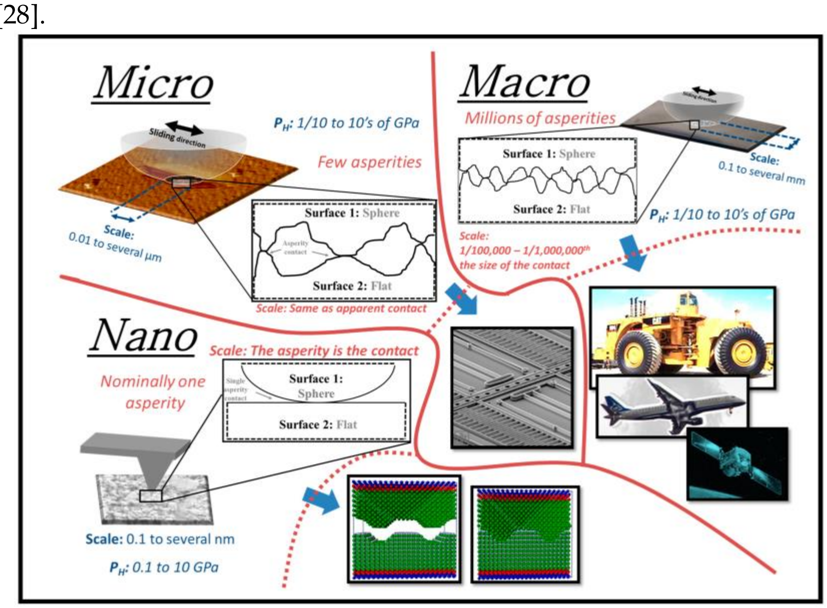

Figure 1. Historical Context

In an era where advanced wear models are being developed during the present time also, still, there is development in dominant wear models that will incorporate extra variables for example,

surface chemical, material properties, and environmental conditions. These large datasets are now analyzed and patterns are discovered that were never before detectable, and machine learning and AI are being used in order to strengthen the accuracy of the wear prediction. In addition, because of nanotechnology, new approaches for wear modeling, including nanoscale worn interaction, which was not considered before, have also been developed. After the historical context of wear modeling in tribological systems a description concludes of the evolution from initial observations and simple empirical models to the present sophisticated computer aided simulations. However wear modeling now plays an important role in materials science, mechanical engineering and several industrial applications in order to develop or enhance durable and efficient systems. As the world of technology continues to advance, wear modeling will increasingly continue to be a major role in designing systems that have the capabilities of withstanding the troubles of our real world environment to increase the performance of systems, reduce costs incurred from maintenance and prolong the life span of mechanical components.
The history of the study of wear goes back to the mid 20th century. Archard's wear equation and early models in general formed the basis for understanding wear mechanisms. Nevertheless, much of these models drew upon simplified concepts and were incapable of fully embracing the entire complexity of real tribological systems [29]-[31].

3. Modern Advancements

However, the modeling techniques and calculation power has increased significantly in the recent years, which led to the more sophisticated modeling and more accuracy in the wear simulation. These advancements include:
Recently, with the advancements in wear modeling, the applicability and the accuracy of the material degradation prediction in tribological systems have improved markedly. As the technology advances, growing complexity of modeling in aerospace, automotive, electronics industries, etc., has increased the bar for modeling wear. New material technologies and experimental techniques have been integrated with the advanced computational methods and wear processes have been better understood, followed by the development of better and effective solutions for dealing with and the eliminating wear.
Finite element analysis (FEA), molecular dynamics (MD) simulations, and discrete element modeling (DEM) are considered as a one of the most important advancements in modern wear modelling computational methods. This has enabled material engineers to take the simulation further into the realm of dynamic and transient stresses. With the advent of FEA, wear models can now have a number of very complex factors, like varying surface roughness, material heterogeneity and temperature fluctuations, in endowing us with more capability of predicting wear, and attendant material degradation. Second, these simulations can be used to aid in material design and the development of understanding how different geometries and loading conditions affect the wear rates [32]-[26].

Molecular dynamics simulations provide new perspective to wear modeling by which the atomic and molecular behavior at nanoscale is modeled. The teachings of the MD simulations provide insights into the material removal and friction processes on the interface. The detailed images are useful for researchers to explore their microscopic phenomena like adhesive wear, tribochemical process which they could not explore with traditional methods. Atomic scale interaction can be observed and materials having high wear resistance, such as an advanced coating or composite material, with high frictional property, can be designed.

Another modern advance that ' machines learning (ML) and ' artificial intelligence (AI) have so far integrated is wear modeling. For this reason, ML algorithms are increasingly being applied to interpret large datasets coming from experimental wear tests in order to extract patterns and correlations that would be quite hard to deduce by ordinary means. Machine learning models are used to predict a wide range of conditions for the wear behavior without running complicated physical experiments. They can also learn over time, so that the models become more and more predictive over time, so have a capability to watch the wear of such system in operation. In the aerospace or automotive engineering design where wear can have a major impact on performance or safety, a wear prediction is invaluable in protecting costs and maintenance planning and minimizing downtime [37]-[38].

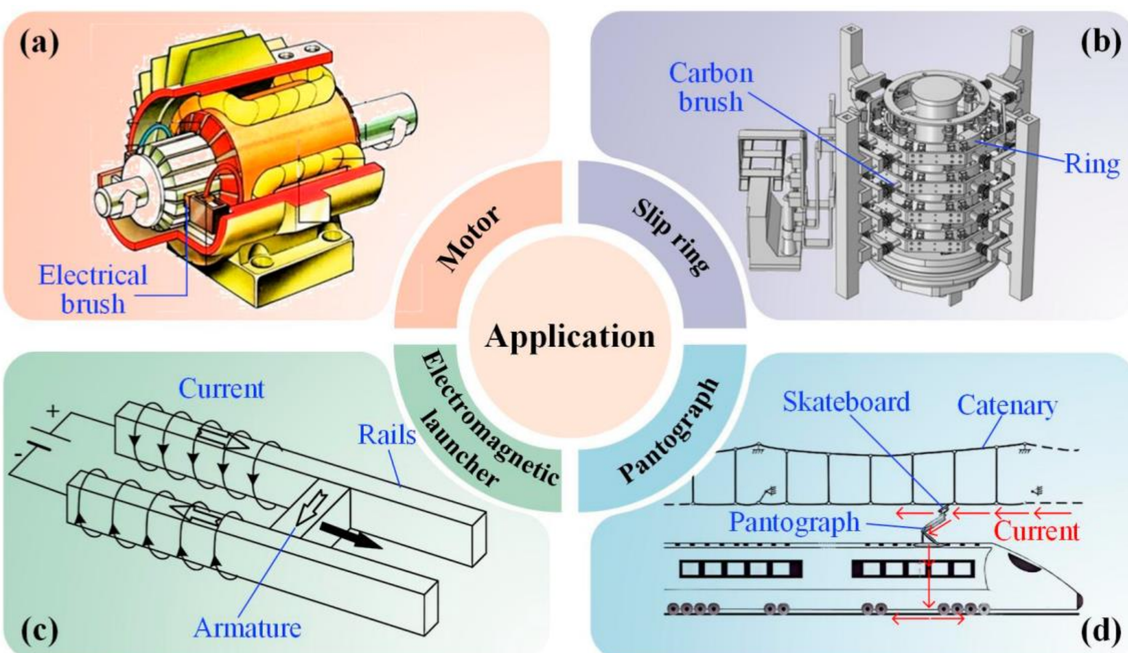

Figure 2. Modern Advancements

The revolution of wear in tribological systems has been centered on the study of wear in tribological systems first to multi-scale modeling of wear phenomena on the one hand, and to the advancement of the study of wear phenomena across tribological systems on the other. Multiple information of different scale (atomic, micro, macroscopic) is used to create a multi scale model, which is more close to the real world system. One such example would be a model of multi scales combining the molecular dynamics to the deepest scale of the atom, and integrating with the finite element analysis for large scales to model wear as these microstructural changes through the materials with time. The advantages of this method are that it enables more accurate wear prediction and a better understanding of the combined effect of material composition, surface roughness, and loading conditions on the overall system degradation.

New materials and surface treatments have, in turn, been used, along with modern improvements in wear modeling. Amongst promising materials in improving wear resistance are carbon nanotubes, carbon nanotubes and graphene. However these materials have properties unique to them such as high strength and low friction which make them valuable hoseing replacement materials with consideration of their harsh environment application. Wear models are used to model effects of the mechanical properties of the new material at the nanoscale and predict the behavior of new material in tribological systems. Furthermore, thin film coatings and solid lubricants have emerged as surface coating and lubrication technologies that improve wear resistance. These treatment effects are part of modern wear models and consequently improve the prediction of the wear in advanced coatings and lubrication systems [39]-[41].

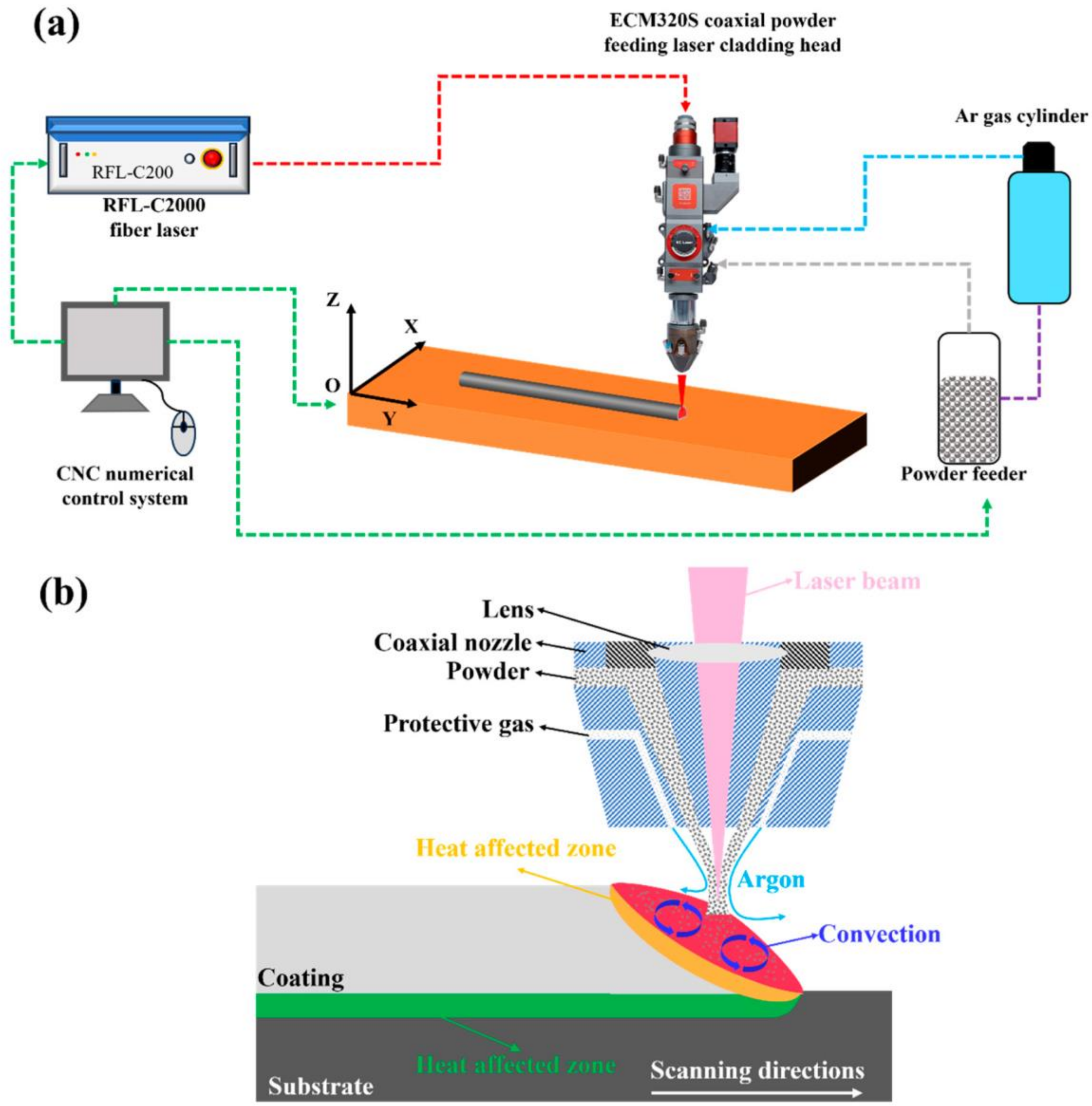

Figure 3. Fundamental Principles of Wear Modeling

A brief conclusion is given finally with honoring modern advancements in wear modeling that have significantly improved the capability to predict and control material degradation in tribological systems. The advanced computational techniques, machine learning, multi-scale material modeling and development of new materials has allowed us to make more accurate predictions regarding wear behavior. However, these also aid in designing more durable and efficient mechanical system, but this major advantage of these advancements lies in reduction of maintenance costs as well as extension in life of mechanical components. As the technological abilities are developed, the wear modelling will play an important role in estimating the reliability and life cycle of engineering systems in many industrial sectors.

4. Fundamental Principles of Wear Modeling

For wear modelling, it is important to understand how material is degraded due to the friction and contact with other surface surfaces. Tribology is the science of friction, wear and lubrication and the principles of wear modeling are based upon this science. When acted at load, two surfaces worn against one another and material of one or both surfaces lost by mechanical or chemical forces. Researchers and engineers resort to relying on many wear governing factors, including surface roughness, loading conditions, material properties and environmental factors, but proving many wear governing factors in a theoretical approach that serves the purpose of predicting wear and analyzing it. Key principles in the modeling of wear is material removal. They are the result of the mechanical interactions which come to remove material from one or more of the surfaces on a gradually basis. The surviving natural types of wear are now Abrasive wear, adhesive wear, tribo chemical wear & fatigue wear and the most studied types of wear. It is a result abrasion due to hard particle or asperity on one surface scratching another and taking away material from it. Adhesive wear leads to transfer of the material from one material to another due to adhesive bonding and tribo chemical wear caused by chemical reactions of the material with the surrounding environment. In contrast, fatigue wear occurs from cycling that promotes growth of microscopic cracks on the surface until the material is removed. Therefore it is important to grasp these mechanism and the degree of contribution to total wear to get the wear behaviour model right in tribological systems.

Tribological contact of two surfaces is just one of the basic principles of wear modelling. Contact is of nature, either point, line or surface, with the wear process different in this case. 'In the microscopic level, originally asperities on surface interact and the contact surface of surfaces varies with the change in deformation from microscopic to macroscopic level,' resulting into different types of wear. Surface roughness is another important factor as the surface gets rough, the wear rate is always lower, whilst a more rough surface indicates that there is wider contact with the abrasives. One of the other principle that we may also discuss is Stress and Strain. The wear process is directly affected by loading stresses and strains induced at the contact between the materials as a result of the mechanical behaviour of the materials. Localized stress can cause plastic deformation, and hence material loss, when stresses are applied to the surfaces in contact. According to a case, in some cases may undergo elastic deformation but when forces overcome material's yield strength of it, inside permanent deformation or wear. The Hertzian contact theory is usually used in the modeling of the stress distribution in contact areas; in turn, this facilitates the prediction of the wear rate resulting from the pressure and load conditions.

Table 2. Numerical Simulation Techniques Used in Wear Prediction

Simulation Technique	Scale of Analysis	Strengths	Limitations
Finite Element Method (FEM)	Macro / meso-scale	Accurate stress and deformation analysis	High computational cost
Boundary Element Method (BEM)	Contact interfaces	Efficient for contact problems	Limited to linear materials
Discrete Element Method (DEM)	Particle interactions	Captures debris formation	Computationally intensive
Molecular Dynamics (MD)	Nano / atomic scale	Models atomistic wear mechanisms	Limited time and length scales
Multiscale Modeling	Micro-to-macro	Bridges atomistic and continuum behavior	Complex coupling requirements

The most important principles deal with using material properties in the wear modeling. These things depend on material which is in contact, as well as their hardness, elasticity and toughness. In general, hard materials are harder to wear than soft materials since they are capable of withstanding higher contact pressure with material loss. On the other hand, the tribological properties and the abrasion resistance are of major importance in order to determine the wear behaviour of the materials. Variations in a material affected by grain size, phase composition, surface treatments or surface treatments which affect wear resistance needs to be considered in wear models as well.

In addition, wear modeling also depends on environment factors namely temperature, humidity and lubrication. In particular, lubrication can lead to big reductions in wear or even be responsible entirely for eliminating it by providing a film between the contact surfaces and to reduce direct contact and friction. Wear rates are too high in the case where the lubrication has been performed improperly, with excessive friction and heat generation. Lubricant viscosity can be changed for temperature and material propertie like hardness so that elevated temperature can affect increased wear rates. Therefore, in order to be able to predict correctly the wear behavior on real systems, these environmental conditions must be incorporated into the wear models.

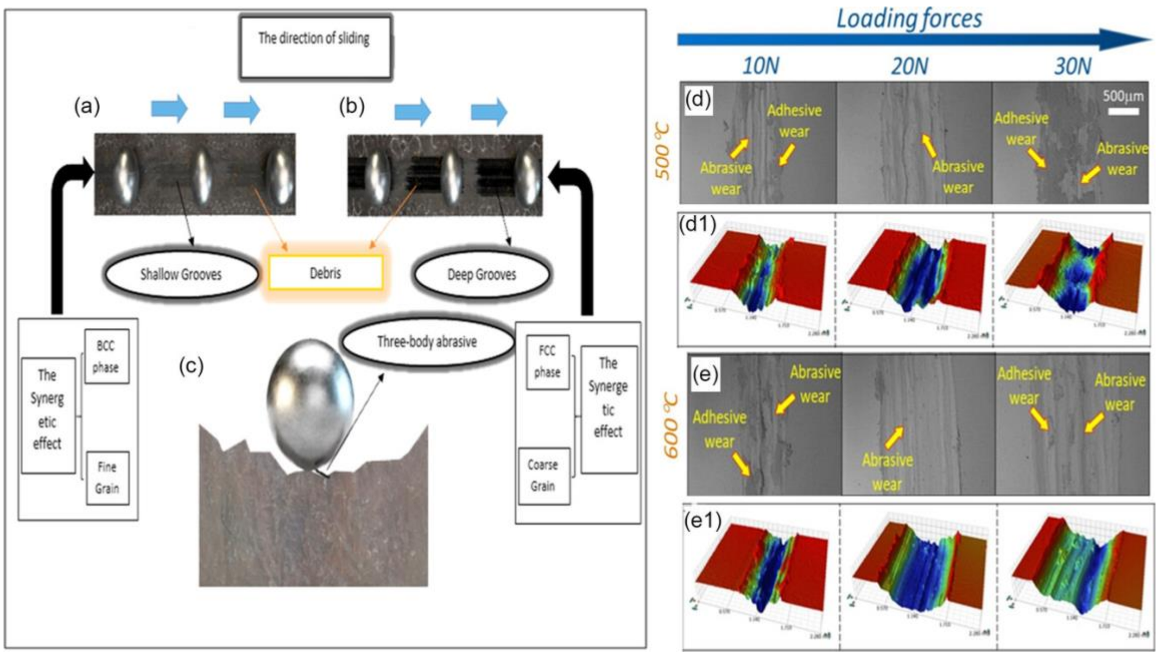

Figure 4. Fundamental Principles of Wear Modeling

Secondly, wear equations provide a mathematically based way to predict wear rates and to understand how the influencing variables affect the wear rates. Some of the most commonly used equations in wear model are derived based on some empirical observations described by the Archard wear equation equating the wear volume to sliding distance, applied load and materials hardness. This equation has been many times used in wear models and was also adjusted to other mechanisms of wear, such as the abrasive and adhesive wear. Finally, wear modelling is founded on a complete knowledge of such material degradation from contact under friction, and so finally it is concluded. These principles contain material removal processes, contact behavior, stress and strain analysis, material properties, environmental aspect, and mathematical models. These principles can be combined to form predictive wear models which enable the incorporation of these sorts of models into the mechanical system design, material selection, and to a degree in specific cases, of the overall performance and firmness of components subjected to wear.

5. Conclusion

Recently, there has been great progress in the simulation of wear in tribological systems due to improvements in computational power, modeling techniques, and understanding of the key wear mechanisms. These mathematical approaches—species balances on the nanoscale that can reveal nanoscale adhesion processes, and continuum models predicting lifespans of individual components—understand both how these mechanical systems fail and design them to be more robust, more easily maintained, and more optimally designed. When considering the next generation, the integration of multi-physics phenomena from theory that could help to predict and mitigate; improved scale bridging techniques to provide more data guided development; and the advent of real time simulation capabilities to consider all of these issues. These advancements will enable further developments in platforms across materials science and engineering, as well as to more sustainable and efficient industrial practices. Mathematical approaches are indeed powerful tools for solving complex real world problems and the ongoing research of wear modeling provides an example. With improvements in the simulation techniques and extending them further, researchers and engineers are opening up a new tribology frontiers.

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