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Pierre LEQUIEN, Gerard POULACHON, Jose Carlos MARTINS DO OUTEIRO -
Thermomechanical analysis induced by interrupted cutting of Ti6Al4V under several cooling
strategies - CIRP Annals - Manufacturing Technology - Vol. 67, n°1, p.91-94 - 2018

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Thermomechanical analysis induced by interrupted cutting of Ti6Al4V under several cooling strategies

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Available online 19 April 2018

Keywords:

Cryogenic machining
Thermal effects
Interrupted cutting

ABSTRACT

Cryogenic machining has mainly investigated in continuous cutting. Therefore, there is a lack of knowledge on the application of this technology to interrupted cutting, such as in milling. This study aims to investigate the thermomechanical phenomena in interrupted cutting of Ti6Al4V alloy under cryogenic, flood cooling and dry conditions. Due to the complexity of the thermomechanical analysis in milling, a special designed experimental setup has been developed through interrupted turning tests. This work highlights the influence of cryogenic flow rate and cutting time/non-cutting ratio on tool temperature. The obtained results can be extrapolated to milling operation.

1. Introduction

Machining refractory alloys generate high localized temperatures due to their poor thermal conductivity, high friction coefficient and high sensitivity to strain and strain-rate. As a consequence, rapid tool wear and poor surface integrity is observed when machining such alloys [1–3]. Several coolant strategies and/or machining assistances, including cryogenic assisted machining and tool vibration, can be applied to reduce these problems [4,5]. Indeed, cryogenic assisted machining, where liquid nitrogen (LN₂) is projected to the cutting zone, can be an effective solution to reduce the temperature in machining such alloys [6].

Challenges of cryogenic assisted machining are numerous and the cutting process of refractory alloys should be improved [7,8]. However, this poor controlled technology of liquid nitrogen deliverer to the cutting zone does not permit to compare all scientific works on cryogenic assisted machining, due to the scatter in the applied cooling conditions. In general, scientific publications agree on the benefit of LN₂ cooling in tool wear reduction, but show a scatter in terms of thermal phenomena and workpiece's surface integrity [9,10].

Several strategies to supply LN₂ to the cutting zone can be found in the literature. It seems that the most efficient way is to deliver LN₂ on the tool rake and flank faces, simultaneously [7]. Moreover, the efficiency of the cooling process depends on all LN₂ projection parameters, such as: flow rate, liquid/gas phase ratio, jet orientation and divergence, distance between the nozzle and the cutting zone. The convective heat transfer coefficient is a good

indicator of this efficiency. Different convective heat transfer coefficients can be found in the literature without specifying all the LN₂ projection parameters [11,12]. The understanding of the physical phenomena during LN₂ projection is important to improve the efficiency of cryogenic assisted machining. LN₂ routing from the ranger to the nozzle has to be improved as well, in order to maximize the liquid/gas phase ratio at nozzle exit and to minimize the LN₂ losses [13].

Most of works on cryogenic assisted machining found in the literature are related with continuous cutting and very few of them deal with interrupted cutting [14]. In this case, many unknowns exist, including: the proper LN₂ routing system, the optimal LN₂ projection strategy and parameters, and their consequences in the cutting forces, tool wear and surface integrity.

The objective of the present work is to analyse the influence of LN₂ cooling on the tool temperatures and cutting forces in interrupted cutting of Ti6Al4V alloy, and compare it with dry and flood coolant conditions. In the case of milling, it's difficult to deliver the LN₂ through spindles and rotating tools, which requires particular precautions. Therefore, it seems to be easier to propose a thermomechanical analysis of interrupted cutting under cryogenic cooling conditions, using a fixed cutting tool and a workpiece shape. For such reason, interrupted turning tests are used to reproduce the milling operation.

2. Experimental set-up and parameters

Fig. 1 shows the experimental setup used in turning tests of Ti6Al4V alloy, using CNMG 120408 type uncoated cemented carbide cutting inserts. In order to deliver LN₂ at the cutting zone, a phase separator was used between the ranger and the tool holder. This phase separator is controlled using information from delivering temperature (at the phase separator exit) and LN₂ level

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Table 1

Factors and levels used in the DoE of interrupted turning tests.

Cooling conditions	Cutting conditions	
Dry	v_c (m/min)	30 and 55
Flood (6% oil at 2 bars)	f (mm)	0.1 and 0.2
LN ₂ (rake and flank faces; nozzle \varnothing of 1 and 3 mm)	a_p (mm)	1
Number of workpiece grooves		2, 4 and 6

and a decrease of the tool temperatures as the LN₂ flow rate increases (Fig. 3b). It appears that F_p and T_{TC2} are the most sensitive parameters to the cooling conditions. Therefore, further analysis will be focused only on the influence of LN₂ cooling on F_p and T_{TC2} .

Fig. 4 aims to show the variation of F_p and T_{TC2} signals during an interrupted turning test. Fig. 4b shows the decrease of T_{TC2} signal during machining. Temperature T_{TC2} stabilization appears after 40 s of machining.

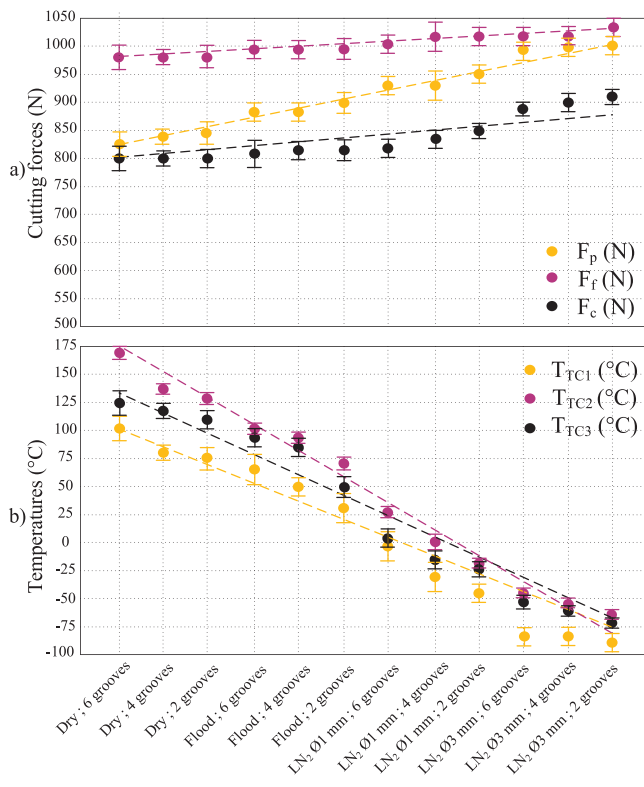


Fig. 3. Maximal forces (a) and temperatures (b) recorded during interrupted turning tests ($v_c = 55$ m/min, $f = 0.2$ mm/rev).

Fig. 4 zooms both F_p and T_{TC2} signals for one workpiece revolution. It is possible to point out a delay of 0.15 s between the sudden increase of F_p , when the tool become in contact with the workpiece, and the maximum generated T_{TC2} . The thermocouple response time is 0.05 s, which is negligible when compared to the observed delay between the force and temperature signals. So, this delay is probably due to the low thermal diffusivity of Ti6Al4V.

Fig. 5 represents the evolution of both F_p and T_{TC2} in function of the number of grooves. This figure shows that the number of grooves does not affect F_p , but it affects T_{TC2} . This temperature increases with the number of grooves. Increasing the number of grooves will increase the length of the tool cutting edge engaged in the workpiece and reduces the toolpath length between two consecutive workpiece tracks. Therefore, for the same cutting speed, increasing the number of grooves will increase the ratio between the cutting time and the non-cutting. Thus, more heat is generated by cutting and less time is available to cool down the tool before cutting the next track.

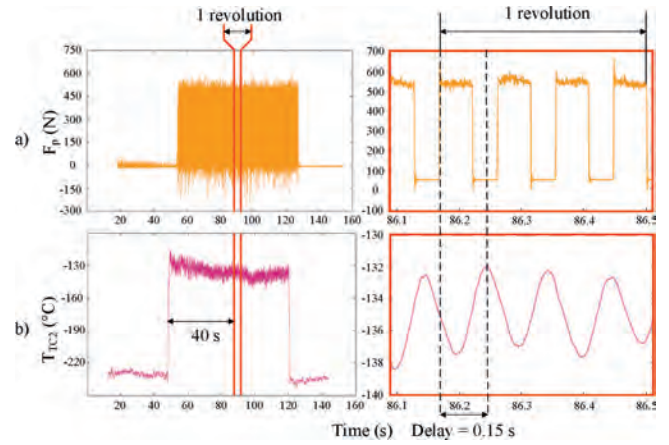


Fig. 4. Variation of F_p and T_{TC2} signals during an interrupted turning test (47 grooves workpiece, $v_c = 55$ m/min, $f = 0.2$ mm, LN₂ with $\varnothing 3$ mm nozzle).

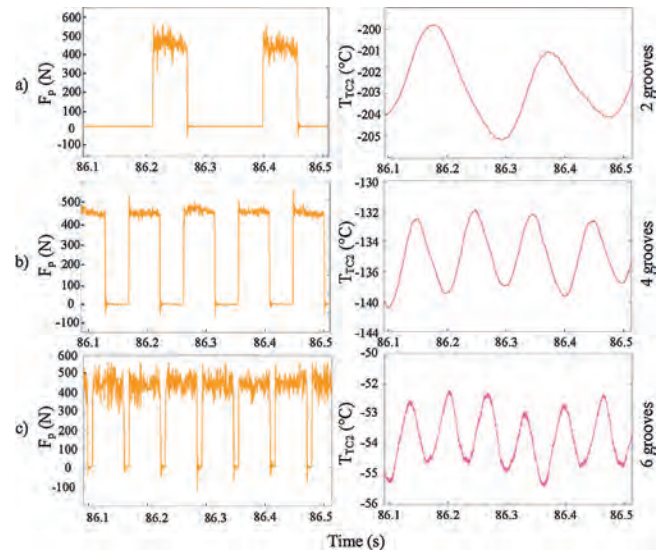


Fig. 5. Evolution of F_p and T_{TC2} as a function of workpiece grooves number ($v_c = 55$ m/min, $f = 0.2$ mm/rev, LN₂ with $\varnothing 3$ mm nozzle).

Fig. 6 shows the T_{TC2} peak temperature in function of the number of grooves, for several cooling strategies (Fig. 6a) and cutting conditions (Fig. 6b). Fig. 6 put in evidence that this temperature always increases with the number of grooves,

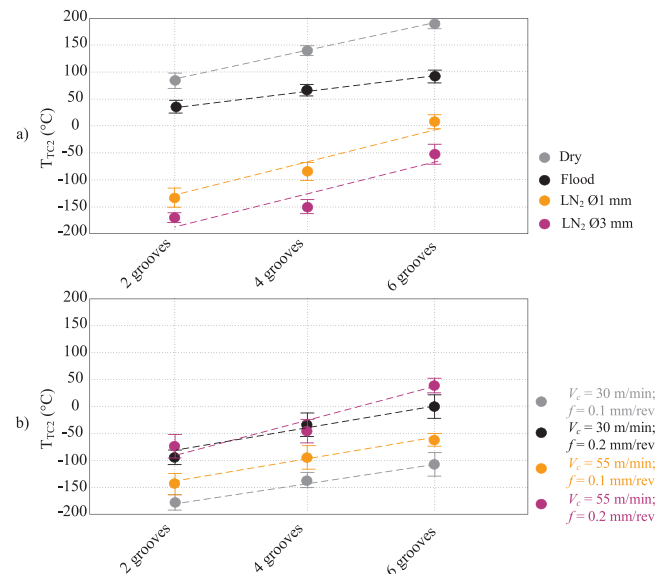


Fig. 6. T_{TC2} peak temperature in function of grooves number for several: (a) cooling strategies ($v_c = 55$ m/min, $f = 0.2$ mm); and (b) cutting conditions (LN₂ with $\varnothing 3$ mm nozzle).

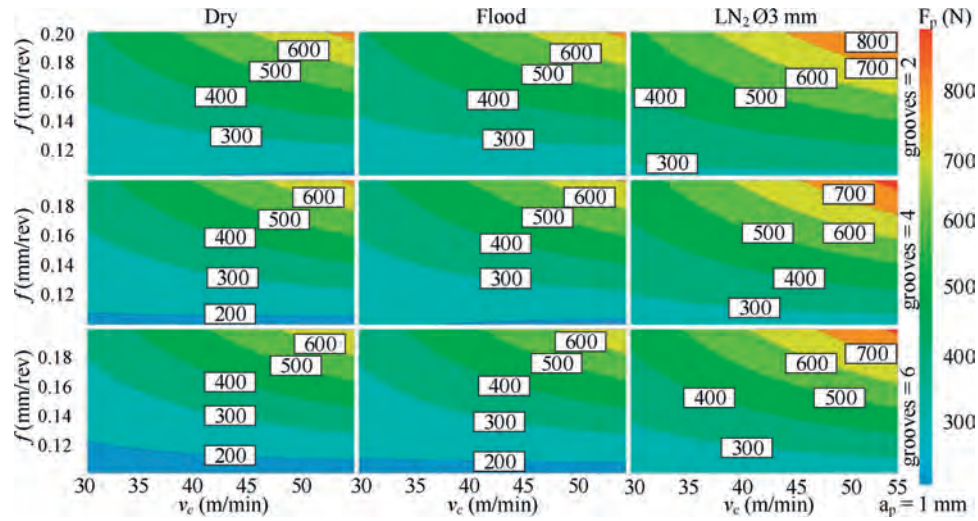


Fig. 7. 4D contour plot of F_p .

independently of the cooling strategy and cutting conditions. Moreover, lowest tool temperature is generated for LN₂ cooling at highest flow rate, and applying the lowest v_c and f values. This is due to smaller heat generated during cutting with the lowest v_c and f values, and the greater tool heat dissipation using the highest LN₂ flow rate.

In order to analyse all DoE results detailed in Table 1 and to present all the results in a single figure, a multilinear regression (MLR) analysis is applied as represented by the following general equation:

$$y_i = a_0 + a_1x_{i,1} + a_2x_{i,2} + \dots + a_px_{i,p} + \varepsilon_p; (i = 1, \dots, n) \quad (2)$$

where y_i is the total response, $x_{i,j}$ is the factor, a_0 the average value of the factor, $a_{i(i=1 \dots 4)}$ the polynomial coefficient, $a_{ij}, x_{i,j}$ are the interactions, and ε_p the residual. This equation can be expressed through a matrix of the DoE factors:

$$\begin{bmatrix} T_{TCi} \\ F_i \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} x_{11} & \dots & x_{1p} \\ x_{i1} & x_{ij} & x_{ip} \\ x_{n1} & \dots & x_{np} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} \text{No. grooves} \\ v_c \\ f \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} \varepsilon_1 \\ \varepsilon_i \\ \varepsilon_n \end{bmatrix} \quad (3)$$

Applying the ANOVA analysis, it is possible to evaluate the influence of each factor in F_p , for each cooling strategy. A 4D contour plot is used to represent the results of this statistical analysis, as shown in Fig. 7. This figure shows that the highest F_p values are observed for LN₂ cooling, at high feeds and cutting speeds. This is possible due to an increase of work material hardening while machining using high LN₂ flow rate [7]. As already mentioned, the number of grooves does not affect F_p .

4. Conclusions

This paper presents thermomechanical analysis induced by dry, flood and LN₂ cooling conditions during machining of Ti6Al4V, using a special designed experimental set-up, combined with a statistical analysis of the results. Longitudinal turning tests showed that the specific cutting force is higher when LN₂ at high flow rate is projected on the tool rake and flank faces, simultaneously. The hypothesis of an increased work material hardening while machining using high LN₂ flow rate can be considered. In order to understand the influence of the cooling strategy in the thermomechanical phenomena in milling, simple interrupted turning tests were performed. These tests showed that the penetration force F_p is the most affected parameter by the cooling strategy, when compared to the other components of the resultant force. A statistical analysis showed that the highest F_p values are observed for LN₂ cooling at high feeds and cutting speeds. Moreover, the number of workpiece grooves do not affect F_p , but it affects the tool temperature (T_{TC2}). This temperature always

increases with the number of workpiece grooves, independently of the cooling strategy and cutting conditions. This is explained by an increase of the heat generated by cutting and less time to cool down the tool between tracks. These results can be extrapolated to milling operation.

Acknowledgments

The authors are very grateful to Professor Joël Rech for his participation in this research work. The authors also would like to thank the French Funds for Industrial and Innovation (F2I) for their financial support.

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