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## Finite element analysis of micro scale laser bending of a steel sheet metal subjected to short pulse shock wave

R. Manouchehry nya<sup>a,\*</sup>, S. Peirovi<sup>b</sup>, R. Alipour<sup>c</sup>, A. Farokhi Nejad<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a,c,d</sup> Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Skudai, Johor Bahru, 81310, Malaysia

<sup>b</sup> Mechanical Engineering Department, Faculty of Engineering, University of Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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### Abstract

Short pulse laser micro-bending is intended as a non-thermal forming process utilizing the shock wave induced by laser irradiation to bend of micro scale components. In this paper, the bending behavior of a micro scale AISI 304 sheet was investigated during short pulse laser bending by the finite element method. A dynamic explicit analysis relied on incident wave for loading process was employed to obtain the effect of laser power and laser spot position on the stress and strain distribution and maximum bending displacement. Results show effect of laser power on bending process is more considerable in comparison with laser spot position.

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### 1. Introduction

Due to the dramatically increasing demand for micro products in the area such as medical, automotive, optical and chemical industry, appropriate processes for machining of related components have become very important issues [1]. Laser technology has been qualified for micro-technology because of its high lateral precision by minimized focusability to a few microns, low heat input and high flexibility [2]. One of the well-used applications of laser manufacturing process is micro scale laser forming such as bulging, bending and etc [3, 4].

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\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +60-174-268-328  
E-mail address: [r.manouchehria@gmail.com](mailto:r.manouchehria@gmail.com)

In general terms, micro scale laser bending is a high strain rate micro forming method which is implemented by a short or long laser pulse in the rate of nanoseconds. Short laser shock bending is a non-thermal process by utilizing the shock wave produced by laser irradiation [5]. It has the benefits of laser thermal forming such as non-contact, tool-free and high efficiency and accuracy. But its non-thermal operation makes it possible to maintain material properties or improve them by inducing compressive stress over the target surface, which is desirable since it is important in industry for shaped metal parts to resist cracks from corrosion and fatigue [6]. This transient forming operation is hard to record by in-situ measurements. In order to better understand the forming mechanism of micro scale laser bending and the effects of involved parameters on the trend of shock process, numerical study can be useful [7, 8]. Laser bending of square cross-section tubes was investigated by Krauss via finite element model [9]. Also, laser tube bending of circular cross section employing FEM and analytical techniques was studied by Hao and Li [10, 11]. A linear relationship between bending angle and laser power and a non-linear relationship between bending angle and number of laser passes were realized in their research. Finite element simulation of laser tube bending to investigate the effect of scanning schemes on bending angle, distortions and stress distribution was carried out by Safdar and et.al [12]. Based on the results presented in their paper, it was evident that scanning schemes significantly influence laser tube bending parameters. Jun Hu and et.al [13] presented a finite element model using multi-layered shell elements for laser bending. They generated a simple, robust and accurate modelling method of laser bending by comparing the efficiency and accuracy of solid, solid-shell, and multi-layered shell models.

This paper presents a finite element study of the effects of laser spot position on maximum bending displacement and stress distribution in laser sheet bending of AISI 304. A commercial finite element package, ABAQUS, has been employed to simulate the process, taking into account the short pulse laser and mechanical properties.

## 2. Principle of the numerical procedure

A high energy impact wave produces plastic deformation in metals. In this paper short pulse laser bending was studied as an application of high energy impact waves. A series of 3D numerical simulations were performed using the ABAQUS explicit commercial software. To simulation, a dynamic analysis based on incident wave was defined. The process of loading is specified via various distances between laser spot position and the top surface of specimens. The diameter of laser beam is adjusted to 0.1mm. Other details of simulation are as follows.

### 2.1. Assumptions, geometry and material

The workpiece materials are isotropic; the laser acts in a short pulse wave mode; no melting occurs in the laser bending process and no external forces are applied to sheet metal. Johnson-Cook constitutive equation [14] is used to predict the mechanical behavior of specimens. The sheet metal is considered flat and free of residual stress. The Johnson-Cook equation is as follows.

$$\sigma_{eq} = (A + B\varepsilon^n) \left( 1 + C \ln \left( \frac{\dot{\varepsilon}}{\dot{\varepsilon}_0} \right) \right) \left( 1 - \left( \frac{T - T_r}{T_m - T_r} \right)^m \right) \quad (1)$$

where  $\sigma_{eq}$  is the equivalent flow stress,  $\varepsilon$  is the equivalent plastic strain,  $\dot{\varepsilon}$  is the equivalent plastic strain rate normalized by a reference strain rate  $\dot{\varepsilon}_0$ ,  $T_m$  is the melting temperature of the material and  $T_r$  is the room temperature, while  $A$ ,  $B$ ,  $C$ ,  $m$  and  $n$  are material constants. The Johnson-Cook material constants and properties are listed in Table 1 [15]. The material for specimens is AISI 304 in the form of 1000 x 1000  $\mu\text{m}$  square cross-section sheet metal with the thickness of 50  $\mu\text{m}$ .

## 2.2. Boundary conditions

In mechanical analysis, indispensable constraints are surcharged to remove rigid body movement according to the fixture used in real conditions. The boundary conditions are zero displacement at one side and a roller support in another side of the sheet metal, which is fully constrained.

Table 1. Simulation parameters for AISI 304

Property	value
$A$ (MPa)	310
$B$ (MPa)	1000
$C$	0.07
$m$	1
$n$	0.65
$\dot{\epsilon}_0$ ( $S^{-1}$ )	1
Density ( $Kg/m^3$ )	7900
Young's modulus $E$ (GPa)	200
Poisson's ratio ( $\nu$ )	0.3

## 2.3. Element and mesh

Three dimensional hexahedral solid elements which are 8-node linear brick, reduced integration with hourglass controls are used for analysis. The optimum number of meshes to obtain good accuracy and reliable answer is near to 7400. In addition heat generated by plastic deformation was neglected. Fig. 1 shows the mesh, loading and boundary conditions for samples.

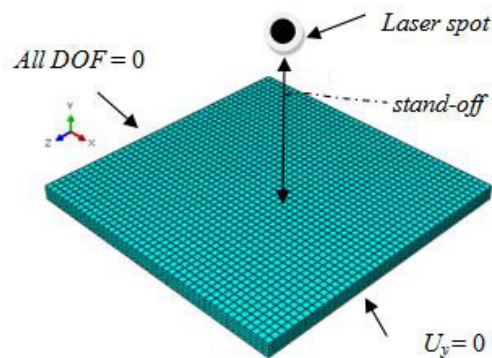


Fig. 1. Mesh for the 3D simulation of the laser bending

## 3. Results and discussion

Numerous simulations based on various stand-offs and laser powers were implemented and a sample of numerical results has been shown in Fig.2. The results of investigations have been shown in Fig. 3 and 4.

Max von misses stress and plastic strain versus the spot center distance from the specimen for laser power of 0.2 kW have been depicted in Fig. 3.a. Results show that increase the spot center distance from the specimen from 250 to 450 micron has a dramatic effect on stress distribution and plastic strain in specimen while, after 500 micron the tangibility of this effect decreases. Also the effect of increase the spot center distance from the specimen on maximum bending displacement has been investigated and results shown in Fig. 3.b. Results indicate that during decreasing the power source to the specimen the maximum bending displacement increases. Whereas, the short pulse laser used for forming process, increase the spot center distance from the specimen leads to damping the

energy of wave produced by laser source before reaching to the target. In better word, there is a maximum spot center distance from the specimen required to produce a permanent (plastic deformation) material bending.

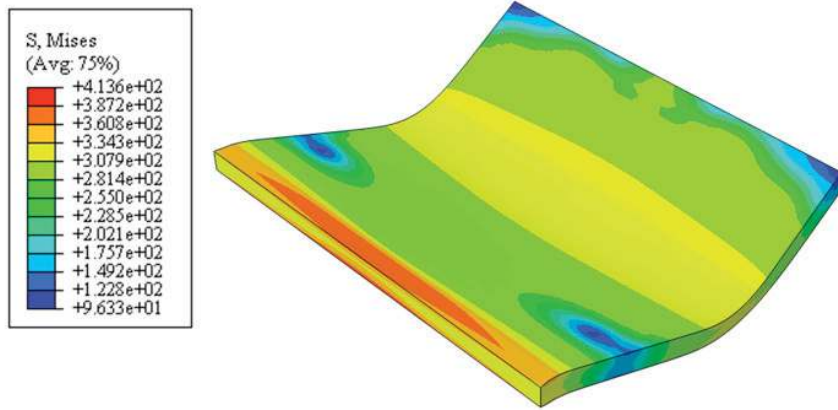


Fig. 2. Counters of von mises stress for 350 micron stand-off and 0.2kW laser power

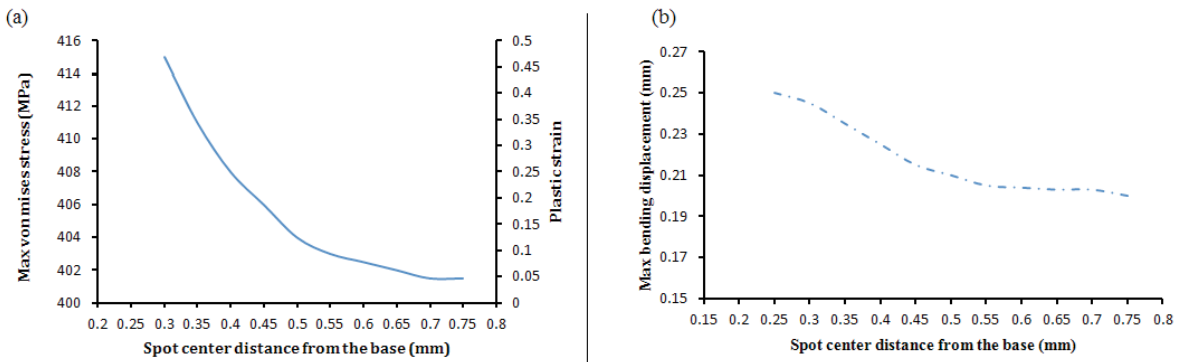


Fig. 3. (a) Maximum stress and plastic strain, (b) Maximum bending displacement; for different stand-offs with laser power 0.2kW

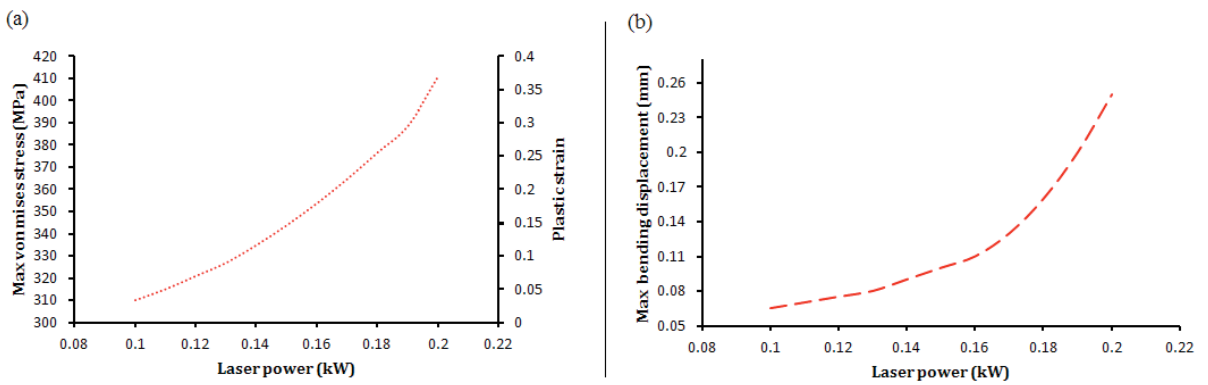


Fig. 4. (a) Maximum stress and plastic strain (b) Maximum bending displacement; for different laser power in stand-off 350 microns

Max von mises stress and plastic strain versus the various laser power in the spot center distance from the specimen of 350 micron have been depicted in Fig. 4.a. Results shows that increase the laser power increase the max stress and plastic strain exponentially. Considering the Fig. 4.b the effect of increase the laser power on bending displacement is similar to stress and strain distribution. It is obvious that laser power is a more effective parameter in bending process in comparison to the spot center distance from the specimen. As well, the Fig. 4a and b show that in the laser power less than 0.1 kW the von mises stress, plastic strain and bending displacement is too small. It means that there is a minimum (threshold) laser energy density required to produce a permanent (plastic deformation) material bending.

#### 4. Conclusion

The effect of laser micro bending of thin metal strips in various spot center distance from the specimen in the range of several Watt has been numerically demonstrated.

Results show in the case of laser power, there is a minimum (threshold) laser energy density required to produce a permanent (plastic deformation) material bending and, for pulse energies less than this threshold, the plastic deformation is too small and even disappearing. In contrast, in the case of laser spot center distance, there is a maximum stand-off required to produce a permanent (plastic deformation) material bending and, for stand-offs more than this distance, the plastic deformation is too small and negligible.

Also the effect of laser power on bending process is more considerable in comparison with laser spot center distance.

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