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PREDICTING THE EFFECTS OF MATERIAL AND PROCESS PARAMETERS ON SPRINGBACK BY FEM NUMERICAL SIMULATION IN SHEET METAL FORMING

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ABSTRACT: The progress on FEM numerical simulation tools can increase the level of predictability and precision, but these tools remain dependent on the quality of experimental data defining the model parameters of materials and the process. Unfortunately, these experimental data always has inherent variabilities regarding process parameters, material properties and the sheet's dimensional variations. As a consequence, there are always discrepancies between results from physical tests and numerical simulation trials. Moreover, the sensitivity of finite element models of sheet metal forming simulation is not always sufficient to take into account the very small variations of input parameters. To answer these challenges, in this paper a novel approach to determine the minimum sensitivity threshold in numerical simulation of the sheet metal forming process is proposed. This method contributes importantly to the computer experiments when using Design of Experiments in executing uncertainty propagation. Moreover, the influence of process parameters on springback in sheet metal forming is predicted by sensitivity analysis.

KEYWORDS: sensitivity threshold, sensitivity analysis, sheet metal forming, FEM numerical simulation, variation.

1 INTRODUCTION

The sheet metal stamping is a productive process which is mainly used in mass production, particularly to produce the components for "body in white" in the automotive industry. More specifically, there are around 100 to 150 stamped metal panels ranged from small to large and from simple to complex panels such as fenders, hoods and body sides, on vehicles produced nowadays such as automobiles, light trucks, and minivans [Majeske and Hammett, 2003]. Due to ever increasing competition, the cost reduction and productivity improvement are demands which the automotive manufacturers aim at. However, the sheet metal stamping design process is very expensive and time-consuming because of being heavily experience based and the costly trialand-error loops [Tekkaya, 2000]. Indeed, an automotive plant needs to produce about 40-50 critical panels per a car model that require 150-200 stamping dies [Drishtikona, 2009]. Hence, it is very necessary to shorten the process design time and eliminate costly physical trials which add to the manufacturing cost. As a solution for this issue, CAD software and FEM-based numerical simulation tools have been widely used to support in the design and product development process. A designer can use sheet metal stamping simulation to assess the posibility of successfully manufacturing a sheet metal stamping part without the expense of making a physical tool. Nevertheless, it still has the discrepancy between results from computer simulation and physical experiment. The discrepancy can be provoked by either inapproriate FEM models, incorrect input or a deviation of the input variables [Jansson et al., 2008].

Furthermore, searching a manufacturing process design producing the parts of which specifications are as close as possible to the nominal values is the goal in the design process [Ledoux et al., 2010]. Unfortunately, the automobile manufacturers often cope with several defects on the stamped parts in which shape defect due to springback, thinning, wrinkling and tearing are conspicuous defects in the sheet metal stamping process.

The variations in material properties, blank thickness, lubrication, tooling dimensions and process parameters can be causes of those variations in performance of the output. As a consequence, it leads to amplified variations and problems in the downstream assembly process, and in turn, results in quality issues. The sources of the inherent variations stems from the part-to-part, batch-to-batch, and within batch variation during production process [Majeske and Hammett, 2003]. Karthik et al investigated the coil-to-coil, laboratory-to-laboratory and test-to-test variability in the sheet material properties by measuring more than 45 coils of the same material independently at three labora-They found that the scatter laboratorytories. to-laboratory is approximately equal to test-to-test scatter at one laboratory. Coil-to-coil variations are typically greater than the observed test-totest scatter, particularly in the transverse direction [Karthik et al., 2002]. The uncertainty and variation sources in the sheet metal stamping process are synthesized in Figure 1 [Nguyen et al., 2013]. Thus, taking the uncertainty and irreducible inherent variability into account as well as optimizing the process based on FE numerical simulation are major issues should be tackled to obtain a robust process design in the sheet metal stamping process design.



Figure 1: Uncertainty and variation sources in the sheet metal forming process [Nguyen et al., 2013]

However, the sensitivity of finite element models in manufacturing process simulation is not always sufficient to take into consideration very small variations of the input parameters. Indeed, a FEM numerical model always has a threshold at which it is insensible to the very small variations, consequently the outputs are not confident. So the input parameters? minimum variation step used in the DOE has to be pointed out so as to get reliable reponses. Therefore, qualifying the high-fidelity of the FEM numerical model before executing the uncertainty propagation is required. In other words, identifying the minimum sensitivity threshold at which the FEM numerical model returns the reliable results should be done. As a result, the variation step in the DOE must be larger than this determined minimum sensitivity threshold of the FEM numerical model. The focus of this paper is to propose a method for determining the minimum sensitivity threshold to solve the mentioned problem. Furthermore, the influence of input parameters in sheet metal forming process on springback is also determined from these results of minimum sensitivity threshold identification.

2 NUMERICAL SIMULATION OF SHEET METAL FORMING PROCESS

As mentioned above, the FEM numerical simulation is the solution for shortening the lead-time and saving the cost for the physical experiments. Nevertheless, the FEM numerical simulation itself is a finite precision and depends on the quality of modeling. There is still difference between results from numerical simulations and results from physical experiments. The cause of the difference may be due to inconsistent FEM models or incorrect inputs parameters or deviation of the input variables [Jansson et al., 2008]. Even though the geometry and the material properties of the tools and the sheet blank are fixed, the variations in the method of FEM modeling by users may lead to various results [Lee and Yang, 1998]. Previously, there were several research works which investigated the effects of numerical factors such as the element size of sheet trip, the hardening law, the precision of modeling tool radii and the dynamic effect on the springback results of the U-draw bending benchmark problem. He and Wagoner investigated the impact of the finite element mesh system of the blank on springback results using the same benchmark problem [He and Wagoner, 1996]. The effect of the dynamic term on springback was evaluated by Chung et al. [Chung et al., 1998]. Numerical factors affecting springback including contact damping parameter, penalty parameter, blank element size, number of corner elements were investigated by Lee and Yang [Lee and Yang, 1998]. For the last few years, a couple of investigations in relation to the effectiveness of numerical models have been also taken into consideration making comparison between numerical predictions and experimental results. Particularly, the influence of numerical parameters comprising the type of the utilized element, the number of integration points, the hardening rule and so forth, with the aim to improve the effectiveness and reliability of the numerical results [Li et al., 2002]. Xu et al. analyzed the effect of sensitivity factors in a U-bending process of Numisheet'93 benchmark problem using a fully explicit solution scheme in which the impact of integration points number, blank element size and punch velocity is researched [Xu et al., 2004]. It can be seen that all mentioned literatures concentrate on considering the effects of numerical parameters on the virtually formed parts, there were hardly any studies concerning determination of sensitivity threshold of numerical simulation when having the very small variations of the input parameters of the real sheet metal forming process.

2.1 Case study

2.1.1 Problem description

A case study investigated in this paper is a benchmark problem of Numisheet 2011 International conference [Huh et al., 2011]. The main problem of this benchmark which needs to take into account is to evaluate the springback behavior of advanced high strength steels such as DP780 steel. A schematic view of die, punch, blank and their dimensions for the draw bending process is shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2: A schematic view of tools and dimensions for the open-channel.

The simulation work in this study is carried out based on the experimental data from the Numisheet 2011 benchmark study of the 8th International Conference and Workshop on Numerical Simulation of 3D Sheet Metal Forming Processes [Huh et al., 2011]. The blank is obtained from DP780 steel sheet of 1.4 mm thick, 360 mm long and 30 mm wide. Details on material properties are shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Direction	Rolling direction
E (GPa)	198.8
YS (MPa)	527
UTS (MPa)	831.5
Uni. elongation $(\%)$	13.1
Total elongation $(\%)$	19.8
R-value	0.781
Poisson's ratio	0.3
Friction coefficient	0.1

Table 1: Uniaxial tension test data

With respect to machine and tooling specifications, blank holding force of 2.94 KN is maintained by the blank holder. For lubrication, P-340N is applied on the tool surfaces and the blank. The punch speed is 1 mm/s and the punch stroke is 71.8 mm after initial contact between the punch and the blank.

Table 2: Material constant for yield function Hill 48.

Sample	DP780
F	0.4640
G	0.5615
Н	0.4385
L	1.5000
М	1.5000
N	1.5926

2.1.2 Springback and side wall curl determination

One of the dominant defects of stamped sheet metal parts in the sheet metal forming is shape defect due to the springback. The springback is the amount of the difference between the final shape at the end of the forming stage and the shape after removing the tools. The springback is a consequence of the elastic redistribution of the internal stresses during unloading [Samuel, 2000]. The springback is function of both material properties and die configuration; the higher the strength and the lower the elastic modulus, and the larger the bend radius and die gap, the greater will be the springback [Davies and Liu, 1984]. Whereas the side wall curl is caused by residual stresses through thickness of the blank as a result of non-uniform deformation due to sucessive bending and unbending over the die profile [Davies, 1984]. The side wall curl correlates better with tensile stress than with yield stress while the springback is proportional to the initial flow stress are results found by Umehara, Hayashi and Takagi [Y.Umehara, 1980], [Y.Hayashi and Takagi, 1984]. It can be seen that the springback and the side wall curl are significantly influenced by material properties, tooling geometry, and process parameters. Therefore, a comprehensive assessment of variations of these factors effecting on the springback is required.

In order to represent shape defect due to the springback, three measurements including the springback of wall opening angle β_1 , the springback of flange angle β_2 and sidewall curl radius ρ are shown in Figure 3. They describe the variation of the part' crosssectional shape obtained before and after removing the tools. The springback in the direction orthogonal to the cross-section is not considered in this case.

For calculating the springback parameters, it is necessary to determine the measurements before and after springback. To do so, the least square method is applied to identify the points of Ao, Bo, Co, Do and Eo on the formed part's profile according to given x and y coordinates. Based on the known point coordinates, the wall angle (θ_1^0) and the flange angle (θ_2^0) before springback are computed. Similarly, other points of A, B, C, D and E are defined on the part's profile



Figure 3: A schematic view of springback profile and parameters.

which the tools have been removed. They are then used to calculate the wall angle (θ_1) and the flange angle (θ_2) after springback. The side wall curl radius is estimated by a curve fitting technique through three points A, B and C to construct a circular arc.

The equations $(1 \rightarrow 13)$ presents the equations for calculating the springback angles and the side wall curl radius.

$$\theta_1^0 = \arccos\left(\frac{\vec{ox} \times A\vec{oBo}}{|ox| \times |AoBo|}\right) \tag{1}$$

$$\theta_2^0 = \arccos\left(\frac{\vec{ox} \times A\vec{oBo}}{|ox| \times |AoBo|}\right) \tag{2}$$

$$\theta_1 = \arccos\left(\frac{\vec{ox} \times \vec{AB}}{|ox| \times |AB|}\right) \tag{3}$$

$$\theta_2 = \arccos\left(\frac{\vec{AB} \times \vec{DE}}{|DE| \times |AB|}\right) \tag{4}$$

$$\beta_1 = \theta_1 - \theta_1^0 \tag{5}$$

$$\beta_2 = \theta_2^0 - \theta_2 \tag{6}$$

$$\rho = \sqrt{(x_A - x_I)^2 + (y_A - y_I)^2} \tag{7}$$

Where,

$$x_I = \frac{(b_2 - b_1)}{(\frac{1}{a_2} - \frac{1}{a_1})} \tag{8}$$

$$y_I = b_1 - (\frac{x_I}{a_1}) \tag{9}$$

$$a_1 = \frac{y_B - y_A}{x_B - x_A} \tag{10}$$

$$b_1 = \frac{y_B + y_A}{2} + \frac{x_B + x_A}{2a_1} \tag{11}$$

$$a_2 = \frac{y_C - y_A}{x_C - x_A} \tag{12}$$

$$b_2 = \frac{y_C + y_A}{2} + \frac{x_C + x_A}{2a_2} \tag{13}$$

2.2 Numerical modeling of draw bending process

2.2.1 FEM modeling

Observations from experimental measurements have shown that the part profiles remains symmetric during the manufacturing process [Huh et al., 2011], so only half of the draw bending model in 3D Finite element numerical model of draw bending of U-shaped part has been built to determine the springback responses with key charateristics shown as in Table 3. Illustration of springback response analyzed with the input parameters' nominal value is shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4: Illustration of springback response analyzed with the input parameters ' nominal value

3 IDENTIFICATION, QUANTIFICIA-TION AND UNCERTAINTY PROPA-GATION

3.1 Proposed methodology

To investigate the minimum sensitivity of the numerical simulation tools to the input's variations in predicting the variability of the formed sheet metal parts, in this section, an approach is suggested to determine the sensitivity threshold of the numerical model by using the finite difference method.

The finite difference method utilizes the Taylor series expansion to approximate the derivatives. We derive

Name of the	ABAQUS 6.12.2	
FEM code		
General as-	3-D draw bending: Dynamic ex-	
pect of the	plicit	
code		
	Spring-back: Static implicit	
Basic formu-	3-D draw bending: Updated La-	
lations	grangian formulation with asso-	
	ciated flow rule	
	Hill-1948 quadratic yield func-	
	tion	
	Isotropic hardening rule under	
	the plane stress condition	
Element	Blank: Shell S4R, 4-node dou-	
type	bly curved shell, reduced integra-	
	tion, hourglass control and finite	
	membrane strains,	
	7 integration points through	
	thickness with Simpson integra-	
	tion rule	
	Tools: analytical rigid surface	
Number of	Blank: 2709	
elements		
Contact	ABAQUS/Explicit: Penalty con-	
property	tact enforcement	
model		
	ABAQUS/Standard: No contact	
	occurs	
Friction for-	Basic Coulomb friction model	
mulation	(penalty method)	
Hardening	Isotropic, Swift model $\bar{\sigma} =$	
rule	$K\left(\varepsilon_{0}+\bar{\varepsilon_{p}}\right)^{n}$	
Yield func-	Hill48, anisotropic creep stress	
tion/Plastic	ratios: $R11=1$, $R22=1.05$,	
potential	R33=0.98, R12=0.97, R13=1,	
	R23=1	

Table 3: The key characteristics of FEM numerical simulation

an approximation for the first derivative of the function f by first truncating the Taylor polynomial:

$$f(x + \Delta x_i) = f(x) + \nabla_i f(x) \Delta x_i + R_1(x) \quad (14)$$

Where, $\nabla_i \mathbf{f}$ is the i-th component of the gradient $\Delta \mathbf{f}$ and Δx_i represents the design perturbation, and $R_1(\mathbf{x})$ is a remainder term. The above is solved for $\nabla_i \mathbf{f}(\mathbf{x})$:

$$\nabla_i f(x) = \frac{f(x + \Delta x_i) - f(x)}{\Delta x_i} - \frac{R_1(x)}{\Delta x_i}$$
(15)

Assuming that $R_1(\mathbf{x})$ is sufficiently small, the approximation of the first derivative of f or the forward difference approximation is:

$$\nabla_i f(x) = \frac{f(x + \Delta x_i) - f(x)}{\Delta x_i} \tag{16}$$

The backward difference approximation is similarly obtained as:

$$\nabla_i f(x) = \frac{f(x) - f(x - \Delta x_i)}{\Delta x_i} \tag{17}$$

The central difference approximation:

$$\nabla_i f(x) = \frac{f(x + \Delta x_i) - f(x - \Delta x_i)}{2\Delta x_i} \tag{18}$$

Where,

 $f(x + \Delta x_i)$: response function of forward bound f(x): response function of central value $f(x - \Delta x_i)$: response function of backward bound Δx_i : variation step of an input variable The illustration of the finite difference method is presented as in Figure 5.



Figure 5: Different geometric interpretations of the first-order finite difference approximation related to forward, backward and central difference approximation.

In mathematical aspect, the idea of the proposed method to identify the minimum sensitivity threshold in FEM numerical simulation of the sheet metal forming process is derived from the tangent line (derivative) as the limit of secants, in other words, when variation step Δx_i gradually decreases and approaches asymptotically zero, then the secant lines approach the tangent line.

The three secant lines are calculated according to the approximations of the first derivative of the finite difference method. In particular, the springback responses are considered as response functions, and the secant lines are the derivatives of the springback responses with respect to variation step of an input variable. In numerical aspect, FEM numerical simulation tools always exist a threshold at which they are not sensitive to the very small variations of the inputs. In other words, the secant lines diverge at the smaller values of the variation step. Due to the fact that for an analytical function the forward, central and backward difference approximation initially diverge at the greater step size and converge to the same limit as the step size Δx_i approaches asymptotically zero. However, this is no longer true for a FE numerical response function due to finite precision of numerical models. The technique for detecting the minimum sensitivity threshold:

The minimum sensitivity threshold of FE numerical model is identified at a value of variation step where the forward, backward and central difference approximation converge.

4 EXAMPLE OF APPLICATION

4.1 Identification of minimum sensitivity threshold

The springback responses including $\beta 1$, $\beta 2$ and ρ are considered as the response functions. They are respectively computed according to the finite difference method as shown in Section 3.1. The minimum sensitivity threshold results of FE numerical sheet metal draw bending when having variation step of sheet thickness from 20% to 0.01% around its nominal value of 1.4 mm determined from 25 computer runs are shown in Figure 6, 7, 8.



Figure 6: The minimum sensitivity threshold of FE numerical sheet metal draw bending regarding β_1 when having the blank thickness variations from 20% to 0.01%.

It can be seen from the Figure 6 that three forward, backward and central difference approximations regarding the springback angle of β_1 initially diverge from the point of 20%, subsequently are gradually close to together at the point of 1% and converge at the point of 0.2%. After this point, they diverge at the point of 0.1%, they continue diverging at the point of 0.05% and then changing according to arbitrary di-

rection. It is claimed that the minimum sensitivity threshold of FE numerical model regarding β_1 when having uncertainty of blank thickness is 0.2%. Similarly, the difference approximations of the angle β_2 in Figure 7 converge at the point of 0.8%, afterwards they diverge from this point till the point of 0.01%. It is said that the minimum sensitivity threhold regarding β_2 reaches to 0.8%. In the similar detecting technique, the sensitivity threshold of side wall curl radius ρ is at 0.1% as shown in Figure 8. The derivatives of springback reponses with respect to blank thickness variation steps initially diverge from the point of 20%and comes close to together at 1% as well as at 0.5%. They converge at the point of 0.1%. The sensitivity points which are closest to each other are considered as minimum sensitivity threshold. The sensitivity curves of springback responses are not smooth and sharp due to the behaviour of non-linear response functions of FE numerical models.



Figure 7: The minimum sensitivity threshold of FE numerical sheet metal draw bending regarding β_2 when having the blank thickness variations from 20% to 0.01%.

According to the proposed reasons, this shows that FEM numerical simulation is not sensible to very small variation step of blank thickness, in particular variation step of nominal values smaller than 0.2%, 0.8% and 0.1% respectively corresponding to the angles of β_1 , β_2 and side wall curl radius ρ . As a consequence, numerical responses of this FEM model are unreliable when the interval of blank thickness variation are smaller than 0.8% around its nominal value. Meaning that the FEM numerical simulation does not get confident responses with blank thickness of 1.4 ± 0.0112 mm in this case study. Furthermore, the local sensitivity of springback responses in terms of blank thickness variation is also inferred from these sensitivity results. As can be seen from Figure 6,7, 8, the local sensitivity of wall opening angle β_1 , the flange angle β_2 and the side wall curl radius ρ is 17.38479°/mm, 12.81495°/mm and 144.55225 mm/mm when blank thickness is 1.4 mm. It shows that the blank thickness influence significantly on the springback responses. With similar reasonings, the



Figure 8: The minimum sensitivity threshold of FE numerical sheet metal draw bending regarding ρ when having the blank thickness variations from 20% to 0.01%.

minimum sensitivity threshold of seven parameters including blank thickness, yield strength, ultimate tensile strength (UTS), blank holder force (BHF), friction coefficient, die radius and punch radius is synthesized in Table 4. The synthesis of the seven in-

	Sensitivity	Sensitivity	Sensitivity
Daramator	threshold	threshold	threshold
1 aranneter	regarding	regarding	regarding
	$\beta 1(\%)$	$\beta 2(\%)$	ho(%)
Blank thick-	0.2	0.8	0.1
ness			
Yield	1	5	5
strength			
BHF	1.5	5	1.5
Friction co-	1.5	5	5
eff.			
Die radius	0.2	5	1
Punch radius	1	5	10
UTS	2	5	2

Table 4: The synthesis of the seven input parameters' minimum sensitivity threshold

put parameters' general minimum sensitivity threshold and corresponding variation range are shown in Table 5.

4.2 Sensitivity analysis

In order to identify the influence of input parameters on springback, sensitivity analysis is carried out. Sensitivity functions for the input parameters are calculated as follows:

Parameter	General	Corresponding
	sensi-	variation range
	tivity	
	threshold	
	(%)	
Blank thick-	0.8	$1.4 \pm 0.0112(mm)$
ness		
Yield	5	$550 \pm 27.5 (MPa)$
strength		
BHF	5	$2940 \pm 147(N)$
Friction co-	5	0.1 ± 0.005
eff.		
Die radius	5	$7 \pm 0.35(mm)$
Punch radius	10	$5 \pm 0.5(mm)$
UTS	5	$840 \pm 42(MPa)$

Table 5: The synthesis of the seven input parameters' general minimum sensitivity threshold and corresponding variation range

- For the wall opening angle β_1 :

$$S_i = \frac{\partial \beta_1}{\partial x_i} \xi x_i^{nom} \tag{19}$$

- For the flange angle β_2 :

$$S_i = \frac{\partial \beta_2}{\partial x_i} \xi x_i^{nom} \tag{20}$$

- For the side wall curl radius ρ :

$$S_i = \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial x_i} \xi x_i^{nom} \tag{21}$$

where x_i is the ith input parameter; ξ is variation percent and x_i^{nom} is the ith input parameter at nominal value. Sensitivity analysis results of the input variables contributing to the springback responses of β_1 , β_2 , and ρ are presented in Figure (9, 10, 11). As can be clearly seen from Figure 9 blank thickness and ultimate tensile strength are pointed out as two parameters having the greatest influence on the wall opening angle β_1 , followed by yield strength, punch radius, friction coefficient, blank holder force and die radius in which the effect of die radius is quasi-null. Also, the influence of blank thickness accounts for 52% of the overall variation of the flange angle β_2 , followed by UTS with 34%, BHF and die radius with 5%. Whereas the effect of friction, punch radius and YS is trivial. The variation of the side wall curl ρ is significantly contributed by blank thickness, UTS and die radius with 47%, 31% and 10% respectively. While the influence of YS, BHF, friction and punch radius is quite low in this case. Overall, it is found that taking the uncertainty of blank thickness and material properties scatter (YS and UTS) into account in the early process design for controlling their infulences on stamped part performance contributes significantly to reduction of scrap rate. In order to reduce the effects of inherent variability of the sheet, material properties and tooling geometry, searching optimal configurations of controllable variables consisting of BHF and friction condition should be done.



Figure 9: Sensitivity analysis result of the input variables contributing to β_1 at their nominal value



Figure 10: Sensitivity analysis result of the input variables contributing to β_2 at their nominal value

5 CONCLUSION AND PERSPECTIVES

In this paper, a finite difference-based method for identifying the minimum sensitivity threshold of FEM numerical sheet metal forming simulation is proposed. This method has been successfully applied for finding the minimum sensitivity threshold of FEM numerical sheet metal draw bending, a benchmark problem of Numisheet 2011, when having small variations of the blank thickness, material properties, blank holder force, friction coefficient and tooling geometry. Observation from the sensitivity analysis has shown that the main factors influencing substantially on the springback responses are blank thickness and material properties, followed by blank holder force, friction condition and tooling geometry. From the minimum sensitivity threshold results, the minimum variation Sensitivity result of input variables contributing to ρ at their nominal value



Figure 11: Sensitivity analysis result of the input variables contributing to ρ at their nominal value

step of the input parameters can be used in the DOE when carrying out uncertainty propagation to achieve reliable results from FE numerical simulation as follows:

- Blank thickness: $1.4 \pm 0.0112(mm)$
- Yield strength: $550 \pm 27.5(MPa)$
- Blank holder force: $2940 \pm 147(N)$
- Friction coefficient: 0.1 ± 0.005
- Die radius: $7 \pm 0.35(mm)$
- Punch radius: $5 \pm 0.5(mm)$
- Ultimate tensile strength: $840 \pm 42(MPa)$

One of the significant effects on the quality of the springback prediction is constitutive model of the material. It is an important factor which influences on the minimum sensitivity threshold of FEM numerical simulation. Therefore, in the future work advanced constitutive models need to be adopted in the springback prediction such as the Geng-Wagoner hardening law and the Yoshida-Uemori hardening law which have been proven to describe the springback behavior best [Geng and Wagoner, 2000], [Yoshida and Uemori, 2003].

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