

# ALUMINUM EXTRUSION TECHNOLOGY

**Pradip K. Saha**



# Aluminum Extrusion Technology

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**Pradip K. Saha**



**The Materials  
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This book is dedicated to the memory of my parents, Sushil K. Saha and Debrani Saha, and my mother-in-law, Hemnalini Saha.

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# Preface

Aluminum extrusion technology in modern industries, both in the United States and elsewhere, continues to be a subject of discussion and evaluation concerning its application to the working environment. The demand for and application of aluminum extrusion in architecture and in the manufacture of automobiles, small machine components, structural components and especially aircraft, have increased tremendously, and competition in this industry is intense. The extrusion industry is now more than 100 years old. Continuing education is needed to upgrade knowledge about aluminum extrusion technology, both in the academic and industrial communities. Therefore, this book was written to provide many developed ideas, more practical and useful theoretical concepts based on knowledge acquired from research and academic work, industrial working experience, and the review of research and technical papers related to aluminum extrusion technology.

This book provides a comprehensive introduction to the explosion of information that has become available in the field of aluminum extrusion technology during the last fifteen or twenty years. The topics are designed in such a way that this book provides adequate information for the newcomer without boring the expert. Topics are presented with a balanced coverage of the relevant fundamentals and real-world practices so that the relevant person in the aluminum extrusion industry develops a good understanding of the important interrelationships among the many technical and physical factors involved and how engineering science impacts on practical considerations. The ten chapters cover almost all the branches of aluminum extrusion technology:

1. Fundamentals of Extrusion
2. Thermodynamics in Extrusion
3. Extrusion Presses and Auxiliary Equipment
4. Extrusion Die and Tooling
5. Billet Casting Principles and Practice
6. Extrusion of Soft- and Medium-Grade Alloys
7. Extrusion of Hard Alloys
8. Process Control in the Aluminum Extrusion Plant
9. Statistical Process and Quality Control
10. Research and Development

The book *Extrusion*, by Laue and Stenger in German, was revised and translated to English by Castle and Lang and published by ASM International in 1981. In this book, the authors concentrated on process, machinery, and tooling, based on general extrusion technology. *Extrusion* provides a comprehensive and detailed survey of extrusion data, including general principles, extrusion processes, special technology for extruding various materials, design and construction of extrusion presses, extrusion tooling, economics of extrusion, and future developments. In general, there has been no updated information published since 1981.

In the past 18 years, a tremendous amount of technological advancement in aluminum extrusion technology has taken place worldwide, and this information is included in this book, *Aluminum Extrusion Technology*. Furthermore, certain new topics with updated information have been added and described in some detail. This book also provides the key to further information and emphasizes important research and technical papers that are worthy of further study.

*Aluminum Extrusion Technology* is primarily designed to be used by technical and engineering personnel such as plant managers, process and quality control managers, corporate managers, cast house managers, die shop managers, and research and development managers. The text was written for research students in manufacturing who are working on extrusion technology. It is hoped that by studying this book, the engineering personnel in the aluminum extrusion industry and research students in extrusion will appreciate the current and more detailed information and references.

I would like to express thanks to my wife for her assistance with computer work and to my two lovely daughters for their constant encouragement to accomplish this big effort. I would also like to thank friends and family, especially my father-in-law, Dr. Durgadas Saha.

I am greatly thankful to Dr. Steven R. Schmid (University of Notre Dame), Bill Dixon (QED Extrusion Developments Inc.), Paul Robbins (Castool Precision Tooling), Richard E. Hughes (Physical Metallurgy Consultation and former research scientist of Reynolds Metal Company), and Jeffery D. Morgan (Boeing) for their careful review of the manuscript and valuable suggestions. Special thanks are also due to J.A. Kurtak (SMS, Sutton Division) and Bill Barron, Sr. (Williamson) for providing technical information and photographs. In particular, thanks are due to Tapash Das for his valuable input and suggestions in completing Chapters 8 and 9. I wish to thank Joel Lehman (Florida Extruders International, Inc.) for the opportunity to conduct many experiments and take photographs of many extrusion dies during my stay in this company.

P.K. Saha  
Seattle, Washington

# CHAPTER 1

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## Fundamentals of Extrusion

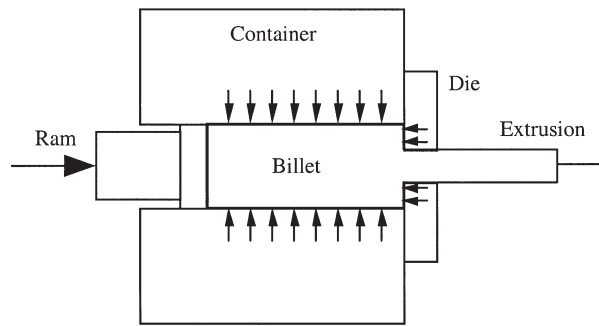
The first chapter of this book discusses the fundamentals of extrusion technology, including extrusion principles, processes, mechanics, and variables and their effects on extrusion. The extrusion industry is now over 100 years old. A concern within the industry is the continuing education necessary to upgrade knowledge about aluminum extrusion technology, both in the academic and industrial communities.

In a typical university manufacturing engineering and technology course, textbooks, such as Ref 1, normally used in engineering schools across the world cover the principles and very fundamental aspects of manufacturing processes, including metal cutting, rolling, forging, drawing, and extrusion. Engineers and product designers are not specifically taught about the extrusion process in detail in either their university or job training. Surely, proper education is essential for success in the field of aluminum extrusion technology. It is necessary for technical and engineering personnel to be familiar with the fundamental concepts. Once the basics are understood, additional levels of sophistication can be gradually added.

### Definition of Extrusion

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Extrusion is a plastic deformation process in which a block of metal (billet) is forced to flow by compression through the die opening of a smaller cross-sectional area than that of the original billet as shown in Fig. 1. Extrusion is an indirect-compression process. Indirect-compressive



**Fig. 1** Definition and principle of extrusion

forces are developed by the reaction of the workpiece (billet) with the container and die; these forces reach high values. The reaction of the billet with the container and die results in high compressive stresses that are effective in reducing the cracking of the billet material during primary breakdown from the billet (Ref 2). Extrusion is the best method for breaking down the cast structure of the billet because the billet is subjected to compressive forces only.

Extrusion can be cold or hot, depending on the alloy and the method used. In hot extrusion, the billet is preheated to facilitate plastic deformation.

## Classification of Extrusion Processes

The two basic types of extrusion are direct and indirect, which are commonly used in aluminum industries as shown in Fig. 1 and 6. Solid and hollow shapes are designed and extruded for a wide range of programs:

- Solid sections, bars, and rods extruded from solid billets by direct extrusion (discussed in Chapter 3)
- Tubes and hollow sections extruded from solid billets through port-hole or bridge-type dies (for certain alloys) by direct extrusion (discussed in Chapter 6)
- Tubes and hollow sections extruded from hollow or solid billets (latter pierced in the press via floating mandrel) by direct extrusion (discussed in Chapter 3)
- Tubes and hollow sections extruded from hollow or solid billets (latter pierced in the press via stationary mandrel) by direct extrusion
- Critical solid sections, bars, and rods extruded from solid billets with sealed container through the die mounted on the stem by indirect extrusion (discussed in Chapter 3)

- Tubes and hollow sections extruded from hollow or solid billets (latter pierced in press) via stationary mandrel through the die mounted on the stem by the indirect extrusion process

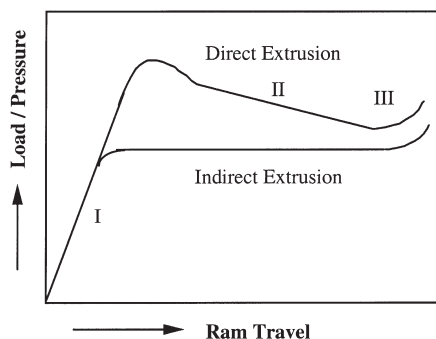
### **Conventional Direct Extrusion**

The most important and common method used in aluminum extrusion is the direct process. Figure 1 shows the principle of direct extrusion where the billet is placed in the container and pushed through the die by the ram pressure. Direct extrusion finds application in the manufacture of solid rods, bars, hollow tubes, and hollow and solid sections according to the design and shape of the die. In direct extrusion, the direction of metal flow will be in the same direction as ram travel. During this process, the billet slides relative to the walls of the container. The resulting frictional force increases the ram pressure considerably. During direct extrusion, the load or pressure-displacement curve most commonly has the form shown in Fig. 2. Traditionally, the process has been described as having three distinct regions:

1. The billet is upset, and pressure rises rapidly to its peak value.
2. The pressure decreases, and what is termed “steady state” extrusion proceeds.
3. The pressure reaches its minimum value followed by a sharp rise as the “discard” is compacted.

### **Billet-on-Billet Extrusion**

Billet-on-billet extrusion is a special method for aluminum alloys that are easily welded together at the extrusion temperature and pressure. Using this process, continuous lengths of a given geometry (shape) can be produced by different methods. Billet-on-billet extrusion is also a viable process in the production of coiled semifinished products for further

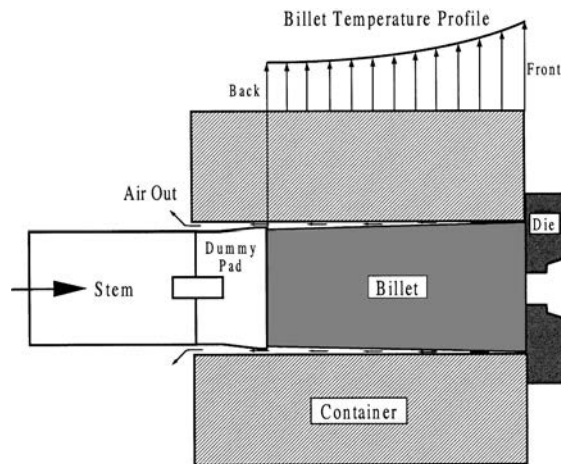


**Fig. 2** Variation of load or pressure with ram travel for both direct and indirect extrusion process

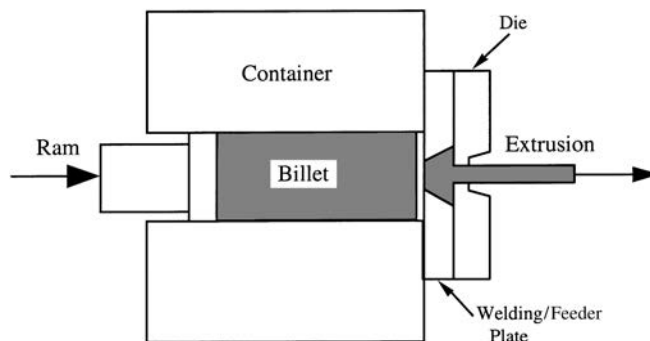
processing, such as rod and tube drawing production. Perfect welding of the billet in the container with the following billet must take place as the joint passes through the deformation zone. The following requirements have to be fulfilled (Ref 3):

- Good weldability at the temperature of deformation
- Accurate temperature control
- Cleaned billet surface
- Sawn, clean billet ends free from grease
- Bleeding of air from the container at the start of the extrusion using taper-heated billet as shown in Fig. 3 to avoid blisters and other defects

Two methods of billet-on-billet extrusion have been developed. In the first method, the discard is removed, and the following billet is welded to the one remaining in the welding or feeder plate (Fig. 4).



**Fig. 3** Bleeding out air during upsetting

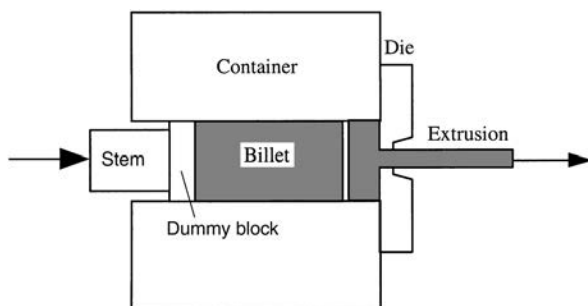


**Fig. 4** Continuous-type extrusion using welding plate in front of the die (method 1)

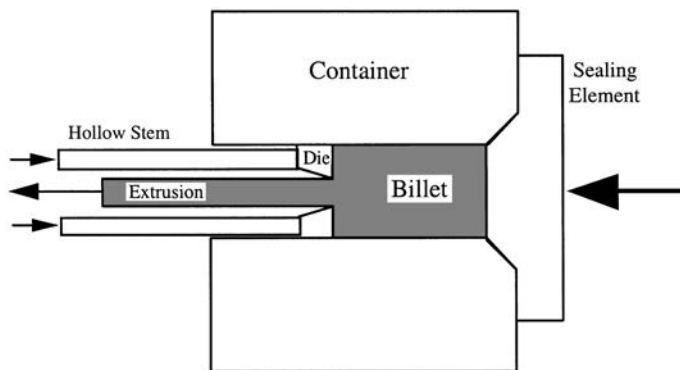
The second method does not need a discard; the subsequent billet is pressed directly onto the billet still in the container as shown in Fig. 5. The dummy block attached with the stem shears an aluminum ring from the container during each return stroke, and this has to be removed from the stem (Ref 3).

### ***Indirect Extrusion***

In indirect extrusion, the die at the front end of the hollow stem moves relative to the container, but there is no relative displacement between the billet and the container as shown in Fig. 6. Therefore, this process is characterized by the absence of friction between the billet surface and the container, and there is no displacement of the billet center relative to the peripheral regions. The variation of load or pressure with the ram travel during both direct and indirect extrusion processes is shown in Fig. 2.



**Fig. 5** Billet-on-billet extrusion (method 2)



**Fig. 6** Indirect extrusion process

## Mechanics of Extrusion

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### *Plastic Deformation and Metal Flow*

In metal forming, plasticity theory is applied to investigate the mechanics of plastic deformation. The investigation allows the analysis and prediction of the following:

- Metal flow, including velocities, strain rates, and strain
- Temperature and heat transfer
- Variation of local material strength or flow stress of material
- Stresses, forming load, pressure, and energy

The mechanics of plastic deformation provide the means for determining how the metal flows in different forming operations, the means of obtaining desired geometry through plastic deformation, and the means for determining the expected mechanical and physical properties of the metal produced. Different mathematical equations can be obtained through a different approach (Ref 4 to 7) for different forming operations, including extrusion.

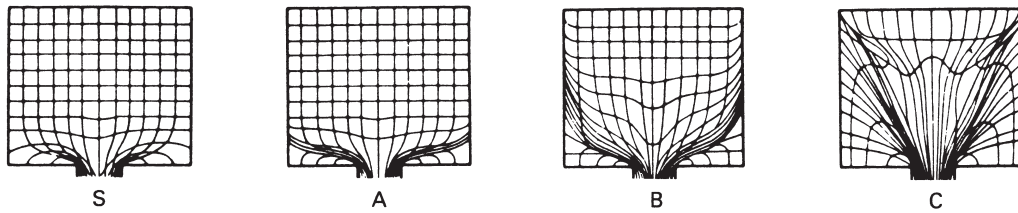
In simple homogeneous (uniaxial) compression or in tension, the metal flows plastically when the stress,  $\sigma$ , reaches the value of flow stress,  $\bar{\sigma}$ . The flow of aluminum during extrusion is intermetallic shear flow. The significant difference in the shear flow of aluminum compared with other metals being extruded is that the center of the aluminum billet is extruded first, and the peripheral part of the billet flows later, causing more severe shear deformation. As soon as the force required to push the billet into the container surface exceeds that of the shear strength of the billet material, sticking friction predominates, and deformation proceeds by shear in the bulk of the billet. Metal flow during extrusion depends on many factors, such as the following:

- Billet material property at billet temperature
- Billet-container interface and metal-die interface friction
- Extrusion ratio

A fairly large number of investigations of the flow characteristics of metal, such as lead, tin, and aluminum, have been made by using a split-billet technique (Ref 3 and 7 to 9). Typical flow patterns observed in extrusion are shown in Fig. 7 (Ref 3).

In extrusion of homogeneous materials, flow pattern S is found in the absence of friction at the container and die interfaces. The extrusion properties should be uniform in both longitudinal and transverse directions, respectively. This flow pattern is usually obtained in fully lubricated conditions in both container and dies.





**Fig. 7** Schematic of the four different types of flow in extrusion. Source: Ref 3

Flow pattern A is obtained in extrusion of homogeneous materials in the presence of friction at the die interface, not at the container-billet interface. This flow pattern is good for indirect extrusion. The metal at the center of the billet moves faster than the metal at the periphery. In the corner of the leading end of the billet, a separate metal zone is formed between the die face and the container wall, known as a dead-metal zone. The material near the surface undergoes shear deformation compared with the pure deformation at the center, and it flows diagonally into the die opening to form the outer shell of extrusion.

Flow pattern B is obtained in homogeneous materials when there is friction in both container and die interfaces. This flow pattern is good for direct extrusion processes. An extended dead-metal zone is formed. In this case, there is more shear deformation compared with that in flow pattern A. The extrusion has nonuniform properties compared with that in flow pattern A.

Flow pattern C is obtained with billets having inhomogeneous material properties or with a nonuniform temperature distribution in the billet. Materials undergo more severe shear deformation at the container wall and also form a more extended dead-metal zone.

The properties of the extruded aluminum shapes are affected greatly by the way in which the metal flows during extrusion. The metal flow is influenced by many factors:

- Type of extrusion, direct or indirect
- Press capacity and size and shape of container
- Frictional effects at the die or both container and die
- Type, layout, and design of die
- The length of billet and type of alloy
- The temperature of the billet and container
- The extrusion ratio
- Die and tooling temperature
- Speed of extrusion

Type, layout, and design of the die might change the mechanical working of the billet material during extrusion. Hollow dies perform

much more mechanical work on the material than simple-shape solid dies do.

A dead-metal zone builds up in the corners of the die, and the material shears along this face. The material may continue to extrude over this generated zone, which acts like a conical die surface. The surface and subsurface defects are likely to occur on the extruded product if the sufficient amount of butt is not kept. Typical etched cross section of a 7075 alloy butt remaining after extrusion is shown in Fig. 8(a). Figure 8(b) shows schematically two clear zones. Zone 1 shows the flowing metal through the rigid conical zone 2, which is defined to be a dead-metal zone. The darker patches carry oxides and other inclusions into the extruded section, leading to extrusion defects.

The dead-metal zone semiangle may be represented in the functional form:

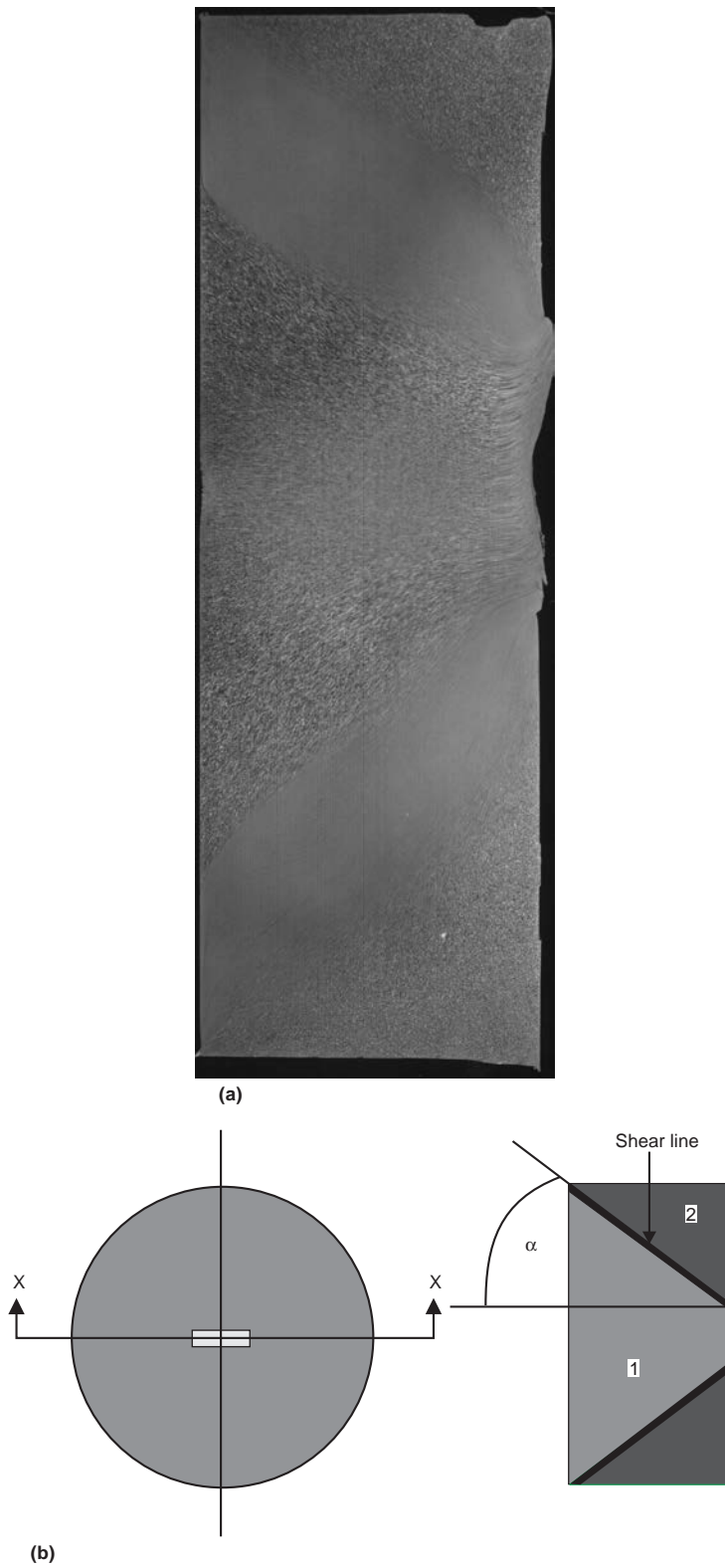
$$\alpha = f(ER, \bar{\sigma}, m, m') \quad (\text{Eq 1})$$

where ER is the extrusion ratio, which is defined by the ratio of container bore area and the total cross-sectional area of extrusion,  $\bar{\sigma}$  is the flow stress,  $m$  is the friction factor between billet and container interface, and  $m'$  is the friction factor between flowing metal and die-bearing interface.

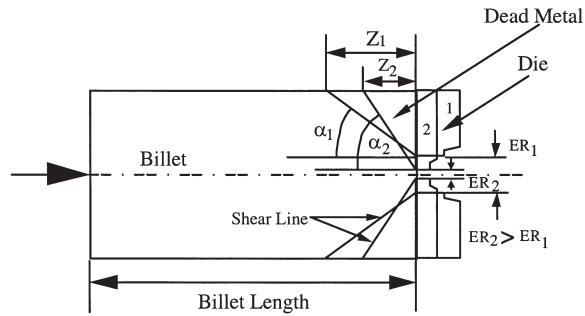
Under the same friction condition at the billet-container interface for the same alloy billet, the dead-metal zone semiangle ( $\alpha$ ) varies with the extrusion ratio, ER, as shown in Fig. 9. As the extrusion ratio increases,  $\alpha$  increases, and as  $\alpha$  increases, the length of shear line decreases. In Fig. 9,  $ER_1$  is the extrusion ratio for the bigger opening die, whereas  $ER_2$  is the extrusion ratio of the smaller opening die, and  $\alpha_2$  is the semidead-metal zone angle corresponding to  $ER_2$ .

**Butt Thickness.** According to industry practice, standard butt thickness for direct extrusion is kept to 10 to 15% of the billet length. Butt thickness may be a function of the dead-metal zone, which is also a function of the extrusion ratio, type of die, billet temperature, billet-container friction condition, and flow stress of the billet material. Figure 10 shows the relationship between butt thickness and the dead-metal zone conical surface. Stopping extrusion at the safe margin zone prevents oxide and other metallic or nonmetallic inclusions from flowing into the extrusion. It is always recommended to continue research on macroetching of the longitudinal section of the butt to gain a better understanding of the following aspects:

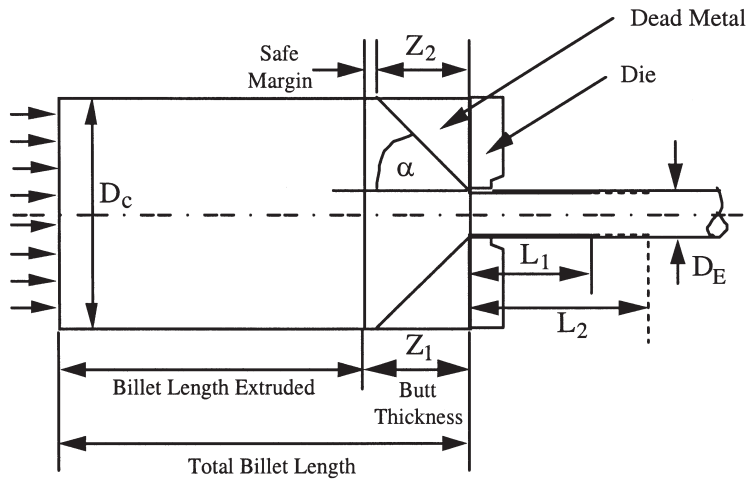
- Change of the dead-metal zone conical angle with the change of extrusion variables
- Change of the dead-metal zone with the change of die opening (number of holes) and types of dies (solid and hollow)



**Fig. 8** Longitudinal cross section of butt after extrusion. (a) Typical etched cross section of a 7075 butt. (b) Schematic diagram of butt cross section showing dead zone



**Fig. 9** Relationship between extrusion ratio and semidead-metal zone angle



**Fig. 10** Relationship between dead zone and butt thickness

- Determination of the optimum butt thickness for a set of extrusion and die variables
- Metal flow and formation of the dead-metal zone in case of indirect extrusion

This is more important for harder alloy extrusion, especially in the aircraft industry. The press should be stopped within the safe margin zone as shown in Fig. 10.

### ***Plastic Strain and Strain Rate***

In order to investigate metal flow quantitatively, it is necessary to define the strain (deformation) and strain rate (deformation rate). In the theory of metal forming plasticity, the initial condition cannot be used

as a frame of reference; therefore, the change in length must be related to instantaneous length. The natural or effective strain is defined by:

$$d\bar{\epsilon} = \frac{dl}{l} \quad \bar{\epsilon} = \int_{l_0}^l \frac{dl}{l} = \ln \frac{l}{l_0} \quad (\text{Eq 2})$$

where,  $l_0$  is the initial length, and  $l$  is the final length.

The natural strain,  $\bar{\epsilon}$ , obtained by integration is thus a logarithmic function and is often referred to as the logarithmic strain. The strain in metal working is given as the fractional cross-sectional area. The volume constancy relation is given by:

$$Al = A_0l_0 \quad (\text{Eq 3})$$

Now, the natural strain is given by:

$$\bar{\epsilon} = \ln \frac{l}{l_0} = \ln \frac{A_0}{A} \quad (\text{Eq 4})$$

where  $A_0$  is the original area, and  $A$  is the final area.

Therefore, the effective strain is defined in the case of extrusion as:

$$\bar{\epsilon} = 2 \ln \frac{D_C}{D_E} = 2 \ln \sqrt{\text{ER}} \quad (\text{Eq 5})$$

where  $D_C$  is the inside diameter of the container and  $D_E$  is the equivalent diameter of the extruded rod, and ER is the extrusion ratio.

In determining the strain rate, the complex flow pattern in the deformation zone creates a problem. The material undergoes a rapid acceleration as it passes through the deformation zone, and therefore, a mean strain rate has to be estimated for determining the flow stress. The deformation zone is assumed to be conical for simplicity as shown in Fig. 11.

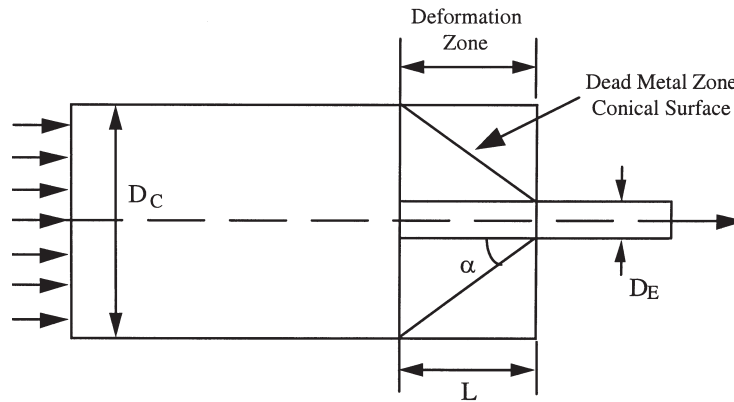
From the geometry, the length of deformation zone is given by:

$$L = \frac{(D_C - D_E)}{2 \tan \alpha} \quad (\text{Eq 6})$$

where  $D_C$  is the bore of the container,  $D_E$  is the diameter of the extruded rod, and  $\alpha$  is the dead-metal zone semiangle.

Equivalent rod diameter for the same extrusion ratio can also be determined. The extrusion ratio of a single-hole die is defined by:

$$\text{ER} = \frac{A_C}{A_E} \quad (\text{Eq 7})$$



**Fig. 11** Billet geometry inside the container

where  $A_C$  is the area of the container bore, and  $A_E$  is the final area of the extruded rod. Therefore, the equivalent diameter of the extruded rod is given by:

$$D_E = \frac{D_C}{\sqrt{ER}} \quad (\text{Eq 8})$$

The mean effective strain rate is given by (Ref 10 and 11):

$$\dot{\epsilon} = \frac{6VD_C^2 \tan \alpha}{(D_C^3 - D_E^3)} 2 \ln \frac{D_C}{D_E} \quad (\text{Eq 9})$$

where  $V$  is the average ram speed,  $D_C$  is the container bore,  $D_E$  is the diameter of the extruded rod, and  $\alpha$  is the dead-metal zone semiangle.

### Friction Models

Fundamentals of tribology (friction, lubrication, and wear) are essential in dealing with the field of metal-working processes. During the extrusion of aluminum, the tribology of the die/material interface has a considerable influence on the accuracy of the shape and surface quality of the extrusion. In this section, friction modeling of the extrusion process is discussed.

**Friction components** are totally dependent on the type of extrusions used, such as direct or indirect. Figure 12 shows the friction-force components in direct extrusion, and similarly, Fig. 13 shows the friction components in the indirect process using the most common flat-face dies.

From the flow pattern in indirect extrusion using a flat-face die, it is revealed that a dead-metal zone exists with a much higher angle compared with that in direct extrusion. For the same size extrusion,  $\alpha_i > \alpha_d$ . Thin butt may be allowed in indirect process. The metal flow in the indirect

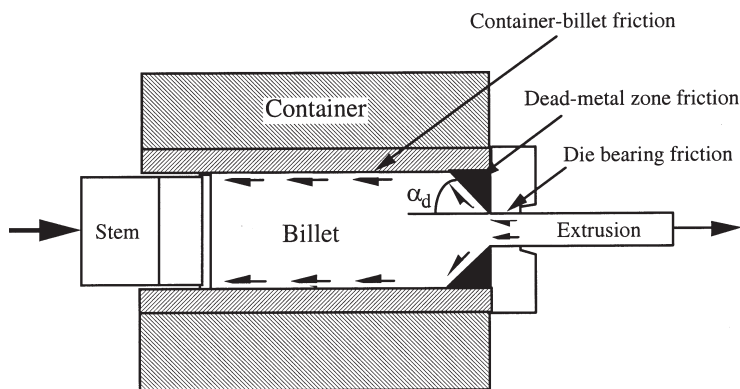
process using a flat-face die may be very similar to the flow with lubricated direct extrusion process.

Friction is the resistance to relative motion that is experienced whenever two solids are in contact with each other. The force necessary to overcome the resistance, which is directed in the direction opposite to the relative motion, is the friction force. The Amontons-Coulomb model (Ref 12) gives the friction force as:

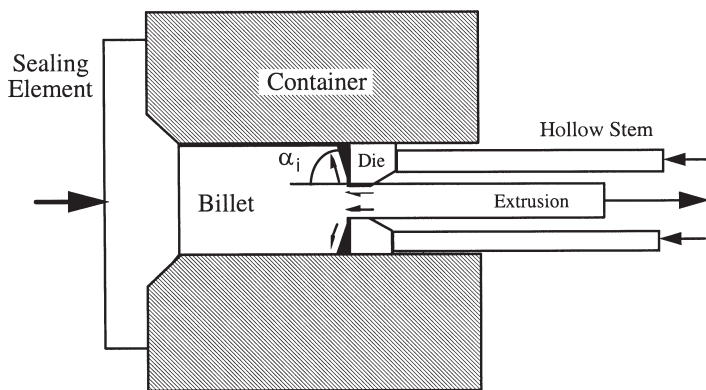
$$F_f = \mu N \quad (\text{Eq 10})$$

where  $\mu$  is the coefficient of friction,  $N$  is the normal force, and  $F_f$  is the friction force. The model holds fairly well where contacts are relatively lightly loaded, and the surfaces contact only at occasional asperity peaks. This model is of questionable value in bulk deformation processes, such as extrusion, where the contact is more intimate and the pressures are significantly higher.

**Billet-Container Interface.** The real area of contact increases with contact pressure as shown in Fig. 14. According to Bowden and Tabor



**Fig. 12** Friction components in direct extrusion



**Fig. 13** Friction components in indirect extrusion

(Ref 13), the friction force using adhesion theory is directly proportional to the real area of contact. In the case of direct extrusion (where contact pressures are very high), the real area of contact,  $A_R$ , gradually becomes equal to the apparent area of contact,  $A_A$ , as the billet upsets in the container.

Important considerations in the direct extrusion process are the friction forces developed between the billet and the container and interface friction between the flowing metal and the dead-metal zone conical interface. In the direct extrusion process, the large pressure developed demands that the billet be supported by the container wall. From a practical point of view, there are two types of friction conditions:

- Billet-container friction is arrested (sticking friction)
- Lubricated interface flow is ensured (sliding friction)

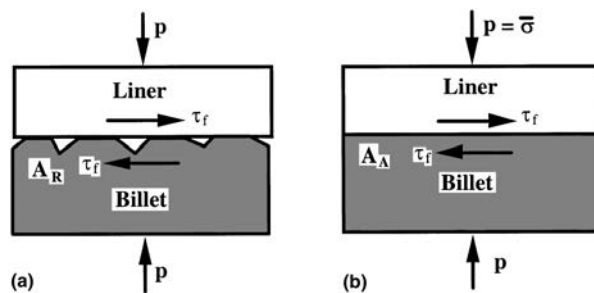
In aluminum extrusion, the friction condition at the billet-container interface is considered to be sticking friction as the skin of the billet is being separated in the container wall. Schey (Ref 14) provides a useful review of using the friction factor,  $m$ , in metal-forming operations where the contact pressure is very high. The friction factor model, sometimes referred to as a stiction model, is:

$$F_f = mkA_R \quad (\text{Eq 11})$$

where  $m$  is the friction factor,  $k$  is the material shear strength,  $A_R$  is the real area of contact (which, for this model, equals the total area of contact), and  $F_f$  is the friction force. In the case of sticking friction,  $m = 1$ , while for thick film lubrication conditions,  $m$  approaches zero. Therefore, the frictional stress,  $\tau_f$ , is given by:

$$\tau_f = k = \frac{\bar{\sigma}}{\sqrt{3}} \quad (\text{Eq 12})$$

where  $k$  is equal to  $\bar{\sigma}/\sqrt{3}$  according to Von Mises yield criteria, and  $\bar{\sigma}$  is the flow stress of the material.



**Fig. 14** Friction model in direct extrusion process. (a)  $A_R < A_A$ . (b)  $A_R = A_A$ ,  $p = \bar{\sigma}$



**Dead-Metal Zone-Flowing Metal Interface.** The dead-metal zone shown in Fig. 12 occurs when a material is extruded through square dies (i.e., the bearing surface is perpendicular to the face of the die). In such geometry, the material in the corners no longer takes part in the flow but adheres to the die face, forming a conical die-like channel through which the billet passes in a still-converging kind of flow. Friction between the dead-metal zone and the flowing material is no more than the shear stress of the material. The friction stress is also given by Eq 12 with friction factor equal to unity.

**Die-Material Interface.** Based on the observation of the die surface after several extrusion cycles, it is understood that friction in the die can vary in a complicated way when metal is flowing through the die opening. It has been observed that an adhesive layer on the die develops due to the strong adhesion of materials such as aluminum with the dies, typically constructed from tool steels. It is also understood that surface treatments (such as nitriding or thin hard coatings) that result in harder die bearing can reduce the amount of adhered aluminum on the die bearing. Research is continuing on die bearing treatments for wear resistance.

A friction model developed by Abtahi (Ref 15) is based on measured slipping and sticking lengths using a split die. This model shows almost constant friction in the sticking region, whereas in the slipping region, friction is changing with the die angle.

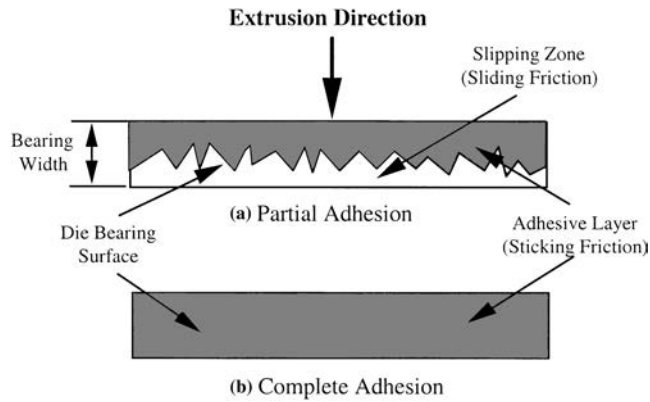
**Proposed Model.** In a recent study, Saha (Ref 16) suggested a friction model at the die-material interface. Figure 15 is a schematic of the bearing surface based on the morphology of aluminum buildup on the die bearing, which is normal to the extrusion direction. Figure 15 also shows the sticking and slipping zones of the die that are used to develop a friction model at the die-material interface. Figure 15(a) shows partial sticking and slipping zones, and Fig. 15(b) shows a completely adhered surface. After several press cycles, a completely adhered surface is developed on the die face.

During extrusion, the normal pressure on the bearing surface of the die is very high. This pressure is assumed to be equal to the extrusion pressure, which is equal to or higher than the flow stress of the material. Based on the definition of the friction factor, the friction force  $F_f$  on the die is given by:

$$F_f = m_1 k A_{R1} + m_2 k A_{R2} \quad (\text{Eq 13})$$

where a 1 subscript denotes a sticking zone, a 2 subscript denotes a sliding zone,  $m$  is the friction factor,  $A_R$  is the real area of contact, and  $k$  is the material shear strength. The friction stress is given by:

$$\tau_f = k \frac{A_{R1}}{A_A} + m_2 k \frac{A_{R2}}{A_A} \quad (\text{Eq 14})$$



**Fig. 15** Schematic of the morphology of the die bearing surface

where  $A_A$  is the apparent area of contact for the entire bearing surface, and  $m_1$  has been set equal to unity to reflect sticking friction.

In the case of complete adhesion (sticking friction) on the die bearing,  $m_2 = 1$ ; accordingly, the frictional stress will be changed to:

$$\tau_f = k \frac{A_{R1} + A_{R2}}{A_A} = k = \frac{\bar{\sigma}}{\sqrt{3}} \quad (\text{Eq 15})$$

### **Extrusion Pressure**

The parameter that determines whether extrusion will proceed or whether a sticker will result is the magnitude of the maximum pressure that must be within the extrusion press capacity. The factors that influence successful extrusion are as follows:

- Extrusion temperature
- Temperature of container, die, and associated tooling
- Extrusion pressure
- Extrusion ratio
- Extrusion speed
- Billet length
- Chemistry of the alloy

In the direct extrusion process, pressure reaches a maximum at the point of breakout at the die. A typical pressure curve is shown in Fig. 2. The difference between the maximum and minimum pressures can be attributed to the force required in moving the billet through the container against the frictional force. The actual pressure exerted on the

ram is the total pressure. The total extrusion pressure required for a particular extrusion ratio is given by:

$$P_T = P_D + P_F + P_R \quad (\text{Eq 16})$$

where  $P_D$  is the pressure required for the plastic deformation of the material, which is given in the functional form as:

$$P_D = f(\bar{\sigma}, \bar{\epsilon}) \quad (\text{Eq 17})$$

where the flow stress,  $\bar{\sigma}$ , is defined by:

$$\bar{\sigma} = f(\bar{\epsilon}, \dot{\bar{\epsilon}}, T) \quad (\text{Eq 18})$$

strain and strain rate are defined by:

$$\bar{\epsilon} = \ln \frac{A_C}{A_E} \quad (\text{Eq 19})$$

$$\dot{\bar{\epsilon}} = \frac{d\bar{\epsilon}}{dt} \quad (\text{Eq 20})$$

and  $T$  is the temperature of the material.

$P_F$  is the pressure required to overcome the surface friction at the container wall friction, dead-metal zone friction, and die bearing friction, which is given in the functional form

$$P_F = f(p_r, m, m', m'', D, L, L') \quad (\text{Eq 21})$$

where  $p_r$  is the radial pressure,  $m$  is the friction factor between the billet and container wall,  $m'$  is the friction factor at the dead-metal zone/flowing metal interface,  $m''$  is the friction factor between extruded material and die bearing,  $D$  is the billet diameter,  $L$  is the length of the billet, and  $L'$  is the die bearing length of a solid die.

$P_R$  is the pressure to overcome redundant or internal deformation work, which is given in the functional form

$$P_R = f(\bar{\sigma}, \alpha) \quad (\text{Eq 22})$$

where  $\alpha$  is the semidead-metal zone angle as a function of the extrusion ratio.

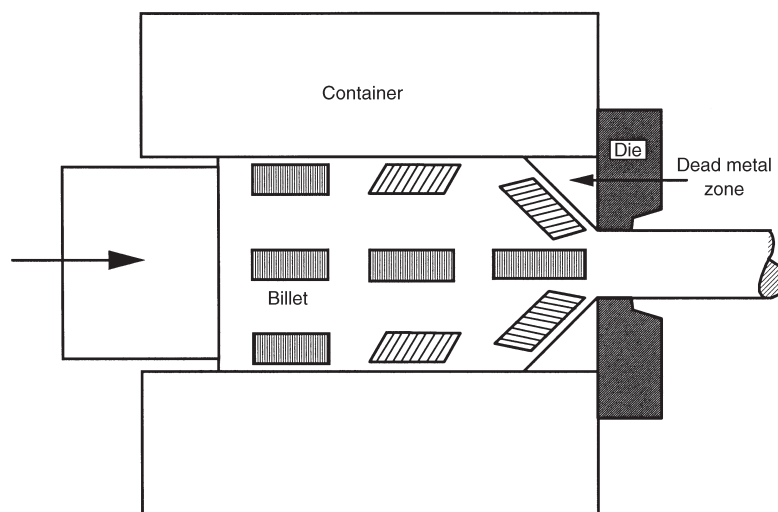
Dieter (Ref 2) has given a nice explanation of the redundant work. Elements at the center of the billet undergo essentially pure elongation in the extruded rod, which corresponds to the change in cross section from billet to extrusion. The elements shown in Fig. 16, near the container wall, undergo extensive shear deformation due to billet-container interface

friction. The elements at the dead-metal zone interface also undergo extensive shear deformation. The shear deformation, which occurs over much of the cross section of the extruded rod, requires an expenditure of energy. This energy expenditure, which is not related to the change in dimensions from the billet to the extrusion, is called redundant work, as shown in Fig. 16. The redundant work is mainly responsible for the large difference between the actual extrusion pressure and the calculated pressure on the basis of uniform plastic deformation.

For a given size of billet extruded under a particular set of conditions, there will be an upper limit to the extrusion ratio that can be obtained with a press of a given capacity. The temperature of extrusion plays the most important role in getting a properly extruded product, and extrusion speed are also important factors. An increase in the length of the billet, however, results in raising the pressure required for extrusion. This increase in pressure is due to the frictional resistance between the billet and the container wall, which is greater for the longer billet. Normally, the maximum length of the billet is four times its diameter.

In extrusion of metals, there are certain interrelations between extrusion pressures, extrusion temperatures, extrusion ratios, and extrusion speeds:

- Increase in the temperature of the billet reduces the pressure required for extrusion.
- The higher the extrusion ratio, the higher the extrusion pressure.
- The greater the billet length, the higher the extrusion pressure.



**Fig. 16** Redundant work

- Billet temperature remains within extrusion range; extrusion pressure remains fairly unaffected when extrusion speed is increased within normal limits.

### ***Analysis of Extrusion Pressure***

**Slab Method.** In this section, the average extrusion pressure during direct extrusion of aluminum is calculated by using the slab method. Thomsen et al. (Ref 7) have shown an analysis by using a uniform energy method, slab analysis, and slip-line field theory. Altan et al. (Ref 17) have performed a slab method analysis to determine the extrusion pressure. The following considerations were used in making the analysis:

- Extrusion using a cylindrical billet through a flat die
- Extrusion shape equivalent to a rod of diameter  $D_E$
- Frictional shear stress at the dead-metal/flowing metal interface
- Frictional shear stress at the billet-container interface

Consider the static equilibrium of the forces acting on the shaded element within the dead-metal zone area as shown in Fig. 17. The stresses acting on this slab are shown in Fig. 18(b). The equilibrium equation is given by:

$$-(p_z + dp_z) \frac{\pi(D + dD)^2}{4} + p_z \frac{\pi D^2}{4} + p_r \pi D ds \sin \alpha + \tau_f \pi D ds \cos \alpha = 0 \quad (\text{Eq 23})$$

where  $\tau_f$  is the frictional stress at the dead-metal zone/flowing material interface,  $p_r$  is the radial pressure and  $\alpha$  is the semidead-metal zone angle.

This equation can be simplified by using the following geometric relationship among  $dz$ ,  $dD$ , and  $ds$ :

$$ds \sin \alpha = dz \tan \alpha = \frac{dD}{2} \quad (\text{Eq 24})$$

$$ds \cos \alpha = dz = \frac{dD}{2 \tan \alpha} \quad (\text{Eq 25})$$

From the yield criterion,

$$p_r = p_z + \bar{\sigma} \quad (\text{Eq 26})$$

where  $p_r$  is the radial pressure,  $p_z$  is the pressure in the  $Z$  direction and  $\bar{\sigma}$  is the flow stress of the material.

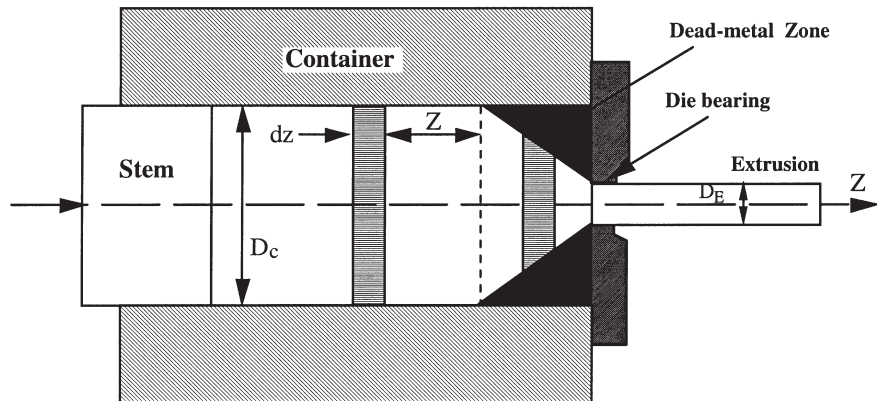
Combining Eq 23, 24, 25, and 26, substituting  $\tau_f$  from Eq 12, and neglecting the higher order differentials, the equilibrium equation is obtained in the integral form:

$$\frac{dp_z}{\bar{\sigma} \left(1 + \frac{\cot \alpha}{\sqrt{3}}\right)} = \frac{2dD}{D} \quad (\text{Eq 27})$$

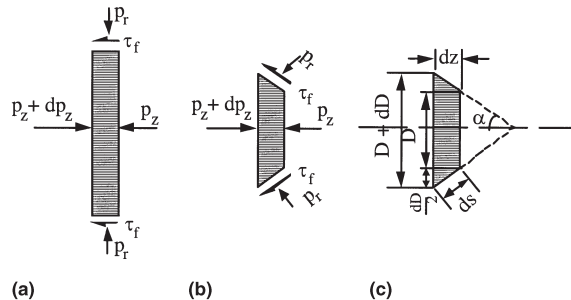
Assuming the flow stress remains constant, the integration of the equation yields:

$$\frac{p_z}{\bar{\sigma} \left(1 + \frac{\cot \alpha}{\sqrt{3}}\right)} = \ln D^2 C \quad (\text{Eq 28})$$

where  $C$  is the integration constant.



**Fig. 17** Extrusion through a square die with dead-metal zone and equivalent rod diameter



**Fig. 18** State of stress for the extrusion shown in Fig. 17. (a) Freebody diagram of element inside the container wall. (b) Freebody diagram of element under the dead-metal zone. (c) Geometric relationship among  $dz$ ,  $dD$ , and  $ds$

Substituting the boundary conditions at  $D = D_E$ ,  $p_z = 0$ ,  $C$  will be determined by:

$$C = \frac{1}{D_E^2} \quad (\text{Eq 29})$$

where  $D_E$ , the equivalent diameter of extruded rod, could be calculated by using Eq 8.

Substituting the value of constant,  $C$ , in Eq 28 and simplifying, the average extrusion pressure is given by:

$$p_{\text{ave}, z=0} = 2\bar{\sigma} \left(1 + \frac{\cot \alpha}{\sqrt{3}}\right) \ln \frac{D_C}{D_E} \quad (\text{Eq 30})$$

where  $D_C$  is the equivalent diameter of the billet (container bore diameter) filled in the container after upsetting.

**Billet-Container Interface Friction.** Billet-container interface friction must be included to determine the total pressure required for extrusion from a round-shaped billet to an equivalent rod. Considering the shaded element in the cylindrical portion (Fig. 17), the equation expressing static equilibrium in the  $Z$  direction is given by:

$$\left[ (p_z + dp_z) - p_z \right] \frac{\pi D_C^2}{4} = \pi D_C \tau_f dz \quad (\text{Eq 31})$$

where,  $\tau_f$  is the friction force at the billet-container interface,  $D_C$  is the diameter of the container bore. Equation 31 may be written in the integral form:

$$\frac{dp_z}{\tau_f} = \frac{4}{D_C} dz \quad (\text{Eq 32})$$

Integrating Eq 32 and putting the boundary condition: at  $Z = 0$ ,  $p_z = p_{\text{ave}, z=0}$ , the average extrusion pressure may be written as:

$$p_z = \frac{4\tau_f Z}{D_C} + p_{\text{ave}, z=0} \quad (\text{Eq 33})$$

Now substituting  $p_{\text{ave}, z=0}$  from Eq 30 and  $\tau_f$  from Eq 12, the average extrusion pressure may be written as:

$$p_{\text{ave}} = 2\bar{\sigma} \left(1 + \frac{\cot \alpha}{\sqrt{3}}\right) \ln \frac{D_C}{D_E} + \frac{4\bar{\sigma} Z}{\sqrt{3} D_C} \quad (\text{Eq 34})$$

Avitzur (Ref 18) used an upper-bound method to derive an equation to predict extrusion load.

### **Extrusion Force**

The force required for extrusion depends on the flow stress of the billet material, the extrusion ratio, the friction condition at the billet container interface, the friction condition at the die material interface, and the other process variables, such as initial billet temperature and the speed of extrusion. The required extrusion force,  $F_r$ , is given by:

$$F_r = P_T A_C \quad (\text{Eq 35})$$

where  $P_T$  is the extrusion pressure, and  $A_C$  is the area of the container bore.

The force term is essential in determining the capacity of the extrusion press. The external force given by the extrusion press will determine the press capacity. For successful extrusion, the force balance has to be satisfied as follows:

$$F_p > F_r$$

where  $F_p$  is the force applied by the press, and  $F_r$  is the force required for extrusion. Force (compression power) applied by the press is given by:

$$F_p = pA_1 + p(2A_2) \quad (\text{Eq 36})$$

where  $A_1$  is the area of the main cylinder,  $A_2$  is the area of each side cylinder, and  $p$  is the applied hydraulic pressure to the cylinders as shown in Fig. 19.

Specific pressure (inner pressure in the container liner) as shown in Fig. 20 is given by:

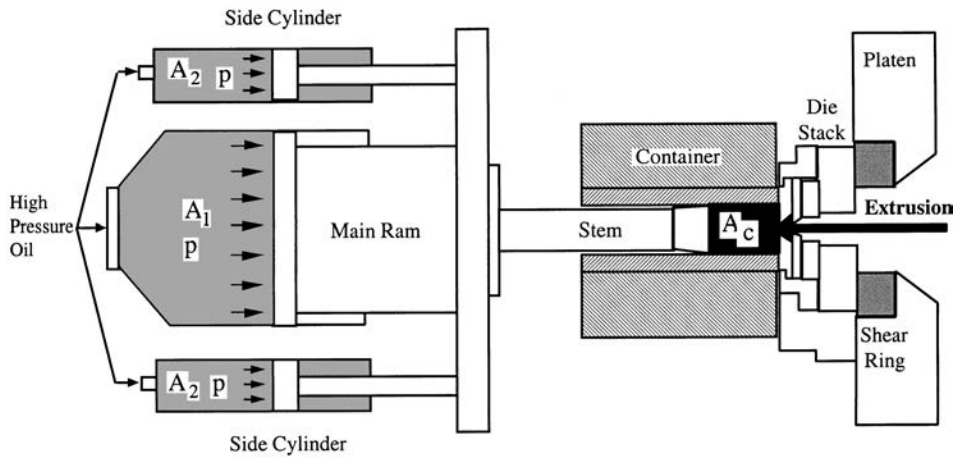
$$P_s = \frac{F_p}{A_C} \quad (\text{Eq 37})$$

## **Effect of Principal Variables on Extrusion**

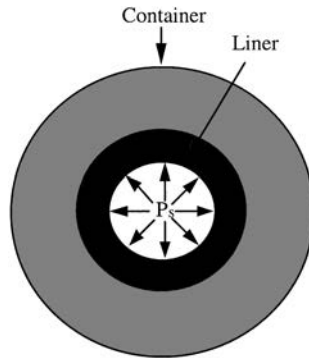
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Extrusion can become impossible or can yield an unsatisfactory product when the load required exceeds the capacity of the press available or when the temperature of the extrusion exceeds the solidus temperature of the alloy. Knowledge of the initial billet temperature, the strain-rate, flow stress of the working material, and the extrusion ratio are required if correct and economical use is to be made of expensive extrusion facilities.





**Fig. 19** Schematic of direct extrusion press



**Fig. 20** Specific applied pressure

### ***Principal Variables***

The principal variables (Fig. 21) that influence the force required to cause extrusion and the quality of material exiting from the die are as follows:

- Extrusion ratio
- Working temperature
- Speed of deformation
- Alloy flow stress

**Extrusion Ratio.** The extrusion ratio (ER) of a multihole die is defined by:

$$ER = \frac{A_c}{n(A_E)} \quad (\text{Eq 38})$$

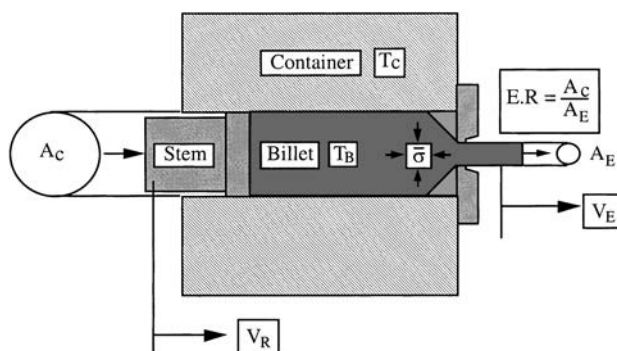
where  $n$  is the number of symmetrical holes,  $A_C$  is the area of container, and  $A_E$  is the area of extrusion. The extrusion ratio of a shape is a clear indication of the amount of mechanical working that will occur as the shape is extruded.

The effective strain is a function of the extrusion ratio, and finally, extrusion pressure required to extrude is a function of strain. When the extrusion ratio of a profile is low, the amount of plastic strain is also low. As a result, the amount of work done during extrusion will be less. In aluminum extruded with a low extrusion ratio, the structure will be similar to that of as-cast (coarse grain) aluminum. This structure will be mechanically weak, and as a result, shapes with an extrusion ratio of less than 10 to 1 may not be guaranteed to meet the mechanical and physical properties specifications of the material.

When the extrusion ratio is high, the situation is just the opposite as expected. The extrusion pressure required to push the metal through the die will be higher due to a higher amount of plastic strain. The normal extrusion ratio range in industry practice for hard alloys is from 10 to 1 to 35 to 1, and for soft alloys, 10 to 1 to 100 to 1. However, these normal limits should not be considered absolute because the actual shape of the extrusion affects the results.

**Extrusion Temperature.** Extrusion is commonly classified as a hot-working process. Hot working is defined as deformation under conditions of temperature and strain-rate such that recovery processes take place simultaneously with deformation. Extrusion is carried out at elevated temperatures for metals and alloys that do not have sufficient plasticity range at room temperature and also to reduce the forces required for extrusion.

Temperature is one of the most important parameters in extrusion. The flow stress is reduced if the temperature is increased and deformation is, therefore, easier, but at the same time, the maximum extrusion speed is reduced because localized temperature can lead to the incipient melting temperature. The changes during extrusion depend on the billet



**Fig. 21** Principal extrusion variables

temperature, the heat transfer from the billet to the container, and the heat developed by deformation and friction. In actual aluminum extrusion practice, very complex thermal changes commence as soon as the hot billet is loaded into the usually preheated container, and extrusion is started.

Temperature rise and temperature distribution during extrusion have been investigated by many researchers (Ref 10, 11, 16, and 19–23). In the next chapter, thermal considerations in aluminum extrusion, including isothermal extrusion, will be discussed in more detail.

**Extrusion Speed.** The response of a metal to extrusion processes can be influenced by the speed of deformation. Increasing the ram speed produces an increase in the extrusion pressure. The temperature developed in extrusion increases with increasing ram speed. This increase is due to the fact that the strain rate is directly proportional to the ram speed, and the magnitude of the generated heat is proportional to the strain rate. The slower the ram speed is, the more time will be available for the generated heat to flow. The heat conduction is more pronounced with aluminum because of its higher conductivity.

*Relationship Between Ram Speed and Extrusion Speed (Ref 24).* This section explains how to calculate the extrusion speed in terms of ram speed by using simple mathematical relations. The extrusion speed could be calculated for any extrusion die by using volume constancy relation, which means that the volume metal in the container becomes equal to the volume of extrusion coming out of the die because there is no loss of metal during extrusion.

From volume constancy as shown in Fig. 21, it is given by:

$$V_R A_C = V_E A_E \quad (\text{Eq 39})$$

where  $V_R$  is the ram speed,  $A_C$  is the area of the container bore,  $V_E$  is the extrusion speed, and  $A_E$  is the area of the extruded shape.

If it is a multi-hole die, the relationship will be changed according to the number of holes in the die, which is given by:

$$V_R A_C = V_E (n A_E) \quad (\text{Eq 40})$$

where  $n$  is the number of symmetrical holes.

The extrusion speed is given by:

$$V_E = V_R \frac{A_C}{n(A_E)} \quad (\text{Eq 41})$$

The extrusion speed could also be written as:

$$V_E = V_R ER \quad (\text{Eq 42})$$

where ER is defined by:

$$\frac{Ac}{n(A_E)}$$

**Material Flow Stress.** A true stress-strain curve is frequently called a flow curve because it gives the stress required to cause the metal to flow plastically to any given strain. The flow stress,  $\bar{\sigma}$ , is important because in plastic deformation process, the forming load or stress is a function of part geometry, friction, and the flow stress of the deforming material. The flow stress of the material is influenced by the following factors:

- Chemistry and the metallurgical structure of the material
- Temperature of deformation, the amount of deformation or strain,  $\bar{\epsilon}$ , and the rate of deformation or strain-rate,  $\dot{\bar{\epsilon}}$

Therefore, the flow stress can be written in a functional form:

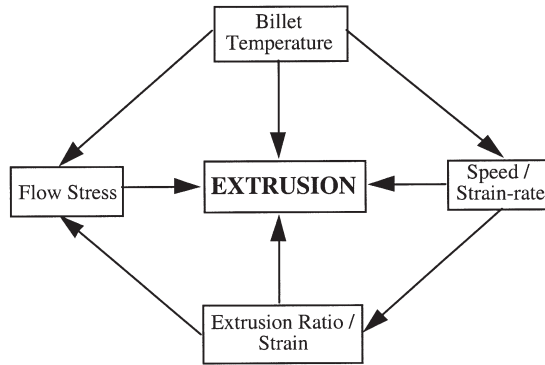
$$\bar{\sigma} = f(\bar{\epsilon}, \dot{\bar{\epsilon}}, T) \quad (\text{Eq 43})$$

Because the flow stress for hot-working metal is quite markedly affected by the speed of deformation, there are no specific methods for measuring the flow stress during the hot-working process. The flow stress of the billet material depends on both strain rate and temperature. The decrease in flow stress with increasing temperature and the increase at higher strain rate have been measured in several studies. The flow stress of metal for the actual working conditions is determined experimentally. The methods most commonly used for obtaining flow stress are tensile, uniform compression, and torsion tests.

The effect of temperature measured in the experiments to determine the flow stress can be directly applied to extrusion. Laue and Stenger (Ref 3) have given a complete review of experimental values of flow stress by many authors. The relationship between flow stress and strain rate has been used in numerical analysis to determine the influence of plastic strain and strain rate on temperature in aluminum 6063 extrusion (Ref 21). Because the accuracy of this type of analysis is very much dependent on the flow stress of material, this relationship fits very well for determining the flow stress of different aluminum alloys for the most common working temperature.

The relationship is given by (Ref 3):

$$\bar{\sigma} = \bar{\sigma}_0 \left( \frac{\dot{\bar{\epsilon}}}{\dot{\bar{\epsilon}}_0} \right)^{m^*} \quad (\text{Eq 44})$$



**Fig. 22** Effect of principal variables on extrusion

where,  $\bar{\sigma}_0$  is the known flow stress at a known strain-rate  $\dot{\epsilon}_0$ , and similarly,  $\bar{\sigma}$  is the flow stress at the strain rate  $\dot{\epsilon}$ . For example, a typical value of the exponent,  $m^*$ , at 932 °F (500 °C) for AlMgSi1 alloy is 0.125.

As a rule, for the flow stress of the alloy being extruded, the lower the extruded rate, the greater the friction between the billet and the container wall because of higher critical shear stress, and the longer the time required to overcome friction and start the extrusion. Primarily, this is the result of the increased flow stress of the material, and the hard alloy requires maximum pressure for extrusion. The extrusion of hard alloy is even more difficult because of poor surface characteristics, which demand the lowest possible billet temperatures.

A summary of the effects of different factors on extrusion and their interrelationship are shown in Fig. 22 as a closed-loop chain.

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