

1 **A review on biomass ignition: Fundamental characteristics,**
2 **measurements, and predictions**

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14

15 **Abstract**

16 Exploiting biomass energy is a promising option to reduce CO₂ emissions, owing to its
17 renewability and carbon neutrality. The knowledge of biomass ignition becomes critical
18 for processing fuels with regard to safety control and optimizing their combustion
19 processes. Although there are many papers published in the field that investigate
20 biomass combustion, less research effort was made to focus on the ignition behavior
21 of biomass during the combustion processes. Therefore, this review work aims to
22 investigate in detail the ignition characteristics of biomass dust fuels focusing on the

23 most critical fuel properties and operating reactor conditions that affect ignition delay
24 and ignition mode. The review also covers biomass combustion modeling methods
25 focusing on the capabilities, similarities, and major drawbacks of the models in terms
26 of ignition prediction.

27 **Highlights:**

- 28 • The state-of-the-art biomass ignition research is presented.
- 29 • Numerical methods for predictions of biomass ignition behavior are
30 summarized.
- 31 • Biomass ignition was found to be mainly measured by CH* chemiluminescence.
- 32 • CH and OH species used as ignition indicators yielded most exact numerical
33 results.
- 34 • Unification of experimental and numerical ignition onset criteria is proposed.

35 **Keywords:** Biomass, Ignition, Modeling, Combustion

36

37 **List of abbreviations**

3PM	Three-parallel reaction
C2SM	Competing two-step reaction mechanism
CBK	Carbon burnout kinetics
CBK/E	Carbon burnout kinetics for oxidation
CBK/G	Carbon burnout kinetics for gasification
CCD	Charged-coupled device

CFD	Computational fluid dynamics
CPD	Chemical percolation devolatilization
DAE	Distributed activation energy
DAF	Dry-ash-free
DNS	Direct numerical simulation
DTF	Drop tube furnace
EDC	Eddy dissipation concept
EDM	Eddy dissipation model
FG-DVC	Functional-group, depolymerization, vaporization, and cross-linking model
FPV	Flamelet/progress variable
LES	Large eddy simulation
PDF	Probability density function
PLIF	Planar laser-induced fluorescence
RANS	Reynolds averaged Navier-Stokes
SFOR	Single-step first-order
SLR	Steady laminar flamelet
TCI	Turbulence-chemistry interaction
TGA	Thermogravimetric analyzer
TGA-DSC	thermogravimetric differential scanning calorimetry

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69 1. Introduction

70 The recent 26th UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow (COP26) in 2021 has
71 emphasized the original expectations of the Paris Agreement and the global warming
72 limit to 1.5°C. The driving actions should consider reducing emissions, helping those
73 already impacted by climate change, and enabling countries to deliver on their climate
74 goals. Biomass combustion, in the context of the current world energy crisis and
75 constantly increasing CO₂ constraints, is considered a near-term and low-cost method
76 to reduce carbon emission and increase renewable energy capacity. Recent reports
77 [1] indicate an increasing trend in total bioenergy subsidies across most of the
78 European countries. However, due to specific fuel properties, biomass exhibits
79 different features in terms of fuel handling and processing, and combustion behavior
80 in comparison to coal [2]. For example, the high moisture content in biomass [3] and
81 its fibrous structure typically require more energy for drying and milling, resulting in a
82 decreased conversion efficiency. For instance, for biomass materials with a moisture
83 content of 5-7%, the grinding energy was reported as eight times lower than that with
84 a moisture content of 30% [4]. To address this, a promising solution may be thermal
85 pre-treatment, such as torrefaction, which not only improves biomass grindability [5],
86 but can positively affect the ignition characteristics [6].

87 From the environmental point of view, replacing coal with biomass as the fuel in
88 combustion furnaces allows for reducing emissions not only of CO₂, but also of SO_x
89 and NO_x, as reported by Demirbas [7], Zhang et al. [8], and Kuo and Wu [9]. Biomass
90 is also characterized by relatively high oxygen and volatile contents [3], resulting in its
91 combustion involving complicated cleavages of a large number of oxygen bonds that
92 could significantly destabilize char oxidation and thus lower the ignition temperature.
93 Another extremely important aspect is biomass fire safety at stages including transport,

94 storage, and operation which can be related to the risk of self-heating that can develop
95 further to ignition. Biomass fuels tend to exhibit a very high inclination toward self-
96 ignition [10–12].

97 Ignition, which is generally observed as the process that initiates combustion, has
98 a strong impact on the flame characteristics, such as the flame stability, flame
99 structure, and flame extinction, but also pollutant formation with the consequent impact
100 on the reactor operation, energy efficiency, and emissions. Ignition of biomass fuels is
101 also a result of complex interaction mechanisms which include particle heating, drying,
102 devolatilization, gas-phase oxidation, heterogeneous oxidation, and transport
103 phenomena [13]. Three general ignition modes can be attributed to fuels including
104 biomass: (a) homogeneous ignition, where volatile matters around the particle ignite
105 and a flame envelope is formed. The formed flame prevents oxygen from reaching the
106 particle surface. Therefore, char combustion takes place either at the later phase of
107 devolatilization or afterward; (b) heterogeneous ignition where the fuel particle ignites
108 and is directly exposed to oxygen. Such an ignition can occur under very high heating
109 rates and for small particle sizes, where particle temperature reaches the ignition
110 temperature in the very earliest stage of devolatilization where only a small amount of
111 volatile matter has devolatilized or even before devolatilization. In such a case, the
112 solid is the whole biomass, not just char, and the surface reaction removes the material
113 that would be otherwise devolatilized. One can also observe a transient heterogeneous
114 mechanism which can shift to homogeneous mode due to the increased
115 devolatilization rate, and (c) the ignition process takes place simultaneously at the
116 particle surface and in the surrounding gas. It is referred to as hetero-homogeneous
117 ignition. In particular, biomass, due to the high volatile content, is highly sensitive to
118 the devolatilization and subsequent volatiles combustion in the surrounding gas which

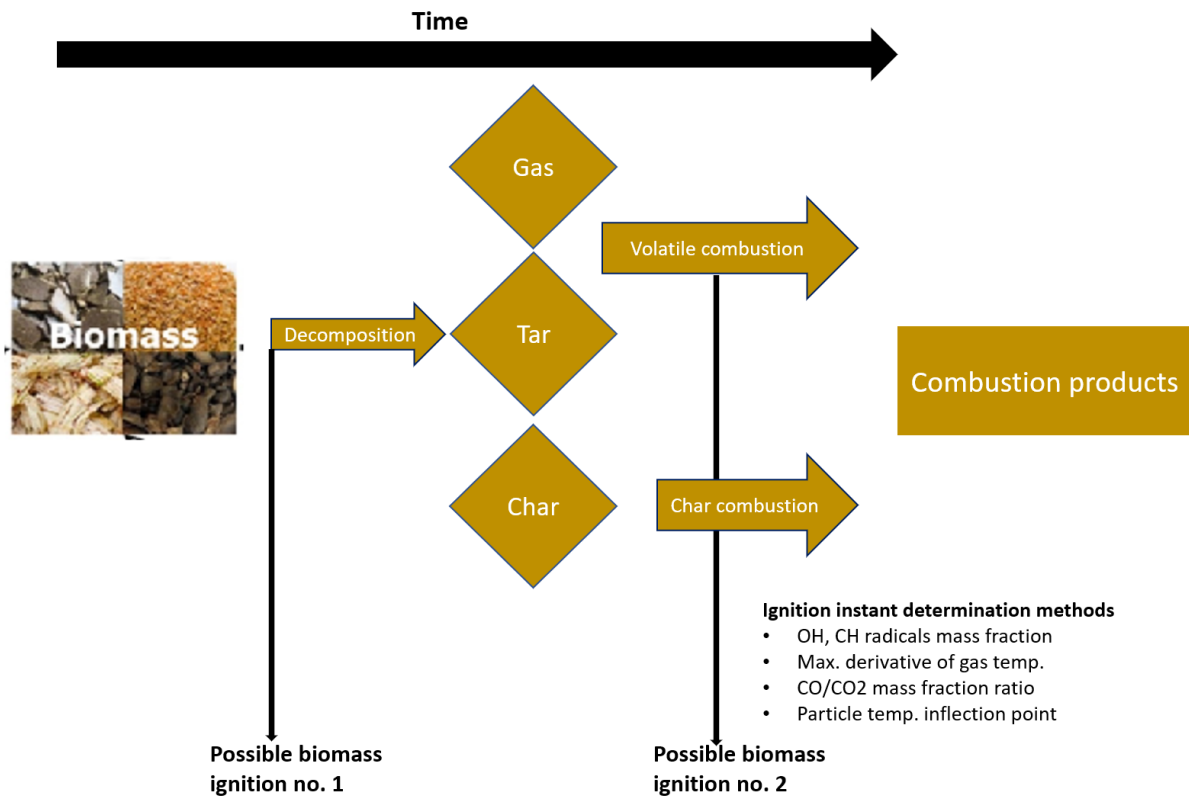
119 makes these sub-mechanisms much more dominant in the biomass
120 ignition/combustion behavior. The characterization of biomass ignition is complicated,
121 similar to coal ignition features, because the ignition parameters, such as the ignition
122 temperature or ignition delay, are not fundamental fuel parameters, but instead, they
123 are highly dependent on the fuel properties and operating conditions.

124 The knowledge of biomass ignition becomes critical in fuel processing with respect
125 to safety issues, potential co-firing, reactor operation, pollutant formation, and most
126 importantly, process efficiency. However, much less research effort was made to focus
127 on the biomass ignition behavior. There is still no common consensus regarding the
128 fundamental criteria on how to calculate the ignition onset and the published literature
129 is not definitive in this matter. Some research efforts have attempted to investigate
130 biomass ignition by determining the effect of specific biomass components, such as
131 cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin content [14]. For a realistic representation of
132 biomass in numerical models that can effectively predict ignition properties, it is also
133 important to consider the biomass fibrous structure as a fundamental step toward the
134 reliable classification of biomass fuels in terms of ignition characteristics.

135 The aim of this review is to summarize the latest developments in biomass dust
136 ignition behavior along with the subsequent combustion process. A particular
137 emphasis is laid on the commonly applied modeling techniques, and the feasibility of
138 the models in terms of ignition prediction will be subjected to critical analysis. As the
139 biomass dust ignition is not extensively reported in the literature and the research
140 related to biomass fuels of larger sizes is almost unavailable, it is thus important to
141 analyze the potential use of modelling approaches developed for coal ignitions for
142 studying biomass ignitions, especially defining the similarities and differences between
143 coal and biomass ignition modeling.

144 **2. Biomass ignition with combustion**

145 Ignition can be perceived as an offshoot of the combustion governing mechanisms
146 [15]. Fig. 1 illustrates the general relationship between biomass combustion steps and
147 ignition. An initial description of physical mechanisms that occur during biomass
148 combustion, such as drying, devolatilization or char combustion is essential from the
149 ignition perspective as the dynamics of these processes directly impact the biomass
150 ignition behavior. The distinctive biomass structure, particle morphology, different
151 physical and thermochemical properties, and reactor operating conditions have a direct
152 impact on the time scale and strength of the aforementioned combustion steps. The
153 ignition occurrence can be estimated by applying specific determination methods of
154 ignition onset which are also depicted in Fig. 1. The literature review has indicated that
155 these methods are widely used both in biomass and coal studies with satisfactory
156 results. Judging by Fig. 1 it is also evident that, apart from ignition criteria, a proper
157 description of the main combustion mechanisms will also be crucial in the accurate
158 estimation of ignition delay as these mechanisms provide the key information of both
159 the evolution of gas species with respect to time and space (e.g. CH, OH, CO/CO₂)
160 and the reaction rate of the given combustion step. Figure 1 clearly illustrates that the
161 ignition may occur during volatile matter combustion, or even before the start of
162 devolatilization.



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Fig. 1 Relationship between biomass conversion and ignition.

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The first important combustion stage when a biomass particle is subjected to high-temperature conditions is drying. Drying is a complex, multiphase process that combines three phases: gas (vapor), liquid (water), and solid through which water and gas migrate to the surface. The process is also strongly dependent on the operating reactor pressure. The amount of biomass moisture depends on the biomass source, storage conditions, and pretreatment. Because of the high biomass moisture content, it is an important step during solid fuel conversion which reduces the gas temperature, affecting the initial particle heating rate [16] and, eventually, ignition. For example, for particle sizes of 230 μm , the drying time was found to be the controlling parameter in the ignition delay time [17] indicating an overlap between drying and devolatilization.

Pyrolysis [18–25] is the next key stage in biomass combustion. It is a breakdown of the structure of main biomass components in the absence of oxygen. The main

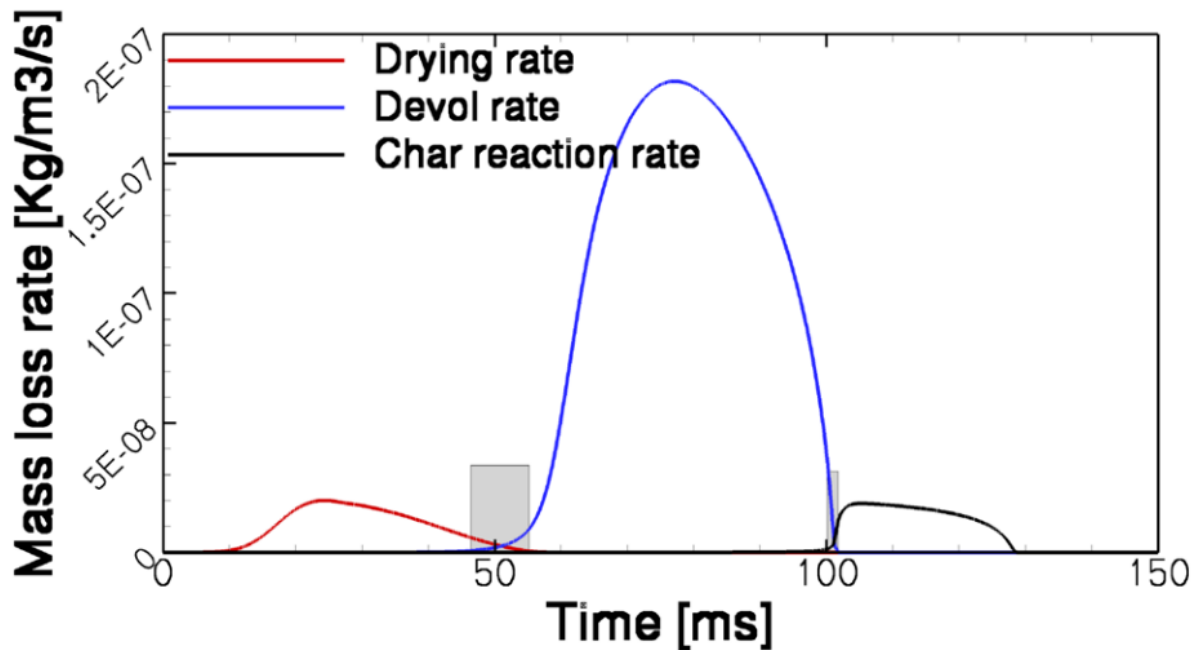
177 products are gas species, bio-oil or tar, and fixed carbon. Typically, raw biomass
178 consists of 40-50% cellulose, 25-35% hemicellulose, and 15-30% lignin with some
179 amount of extractives. Hemicellulose decomposes mainly between 220-315°C,
180 cellulose between 315-400°C, whereas lignin has rigid structures resistant to thermal
181 decomposition and it pyrolyzes over a wide range of temperatures (160-900°C) [26].
182 Moreover, strong interactions during decomposition between the components are
183 reported [26]. The process is also extremely sensitive to the particle size, heating rate,
184 and furnace temperature. While at low heating rates, more char is produced, at higher
185 heating rates, depolymerization of biomass compounds to permanent gases and tars
186 is enhanced [27]. The released volatile matter during pyrolysis subsequently reacts
187 with oxygen in the form of homogeneous combustion. The dynamics of the volatile
188 matter release and the instantaneous gas yield with its composition have an enormous
189 impact on the ignition characteristics. As a result of pyrolysis, a char layer is formed
190 that may further react with oxygen in the form of heterogeneous combustion. Char
191 conversion is the final stage of biomass thermochemical conversion. The overall
192 reaction rate depends on the following processes:

- 193 • Transport of reaction agents from the bulk phase to the particle surface through
194 the boundary layer (film diffusion). The structure of the boundary layer depends
195 on the flow conditions. In the study of Richter et al. [28], it was found that the
196 Stefan flow substantially affects the boundary layer thickness. Concentration
197 gradients of reactive gases can be mostly observed in the boundary layer.
- 198 • Ash layer diffusion
- 199 • Transport of reaction agents inside the char porous structure
- 200 • Intrinsic kinetics which is not influenced by transport processes

201 Based on which process controls the reaction rate, three regimes can be distinguished
202 for char combustion. Zone I where chemical reactions limit the particle mass loss, Zone
203 II where chemical reactions and pore diffusion effects are equally important, and Zone
204 III where mass loss is governed by oxygen diffusion to the particle surface.

205 During the combustion process, the biomass particle morphology undergoes
206 substantial changes. The release of moisture and volatiles cause the pores and voids
207 inside the particle to grow and the mass loss and structural reordering can result in the
208 particle swelling or shrinkage. The evolving volatile matter consisting of light
209 hydrocarbons, tars, and permanent gases surrounds the particle surface. Subsequent
210 char reacts differently depending on the temperature conditions. In Regime I, there is
211 an unlimited penetration of char inside by gaseous reagent as kinetics limit the reaction
212 rate and therefore it changes its density with a constant size. In Regime II, both
213 diameter and density decrease, whereas in regime III, the char particle shrinks at a
214 constant density. For example, in the study of Meesri and Moghtaderi [29] where pine
215 sawdust particles were burned in DTF at 1473K, char oxidation reactions occurred in
216 Regime II. Biomass particles may also undergo fragmentation due to collisions,
217 thermal stresses, particle shrinkage, local pressure changes, or loss of structural
218 integrity. This may also affect the combustion behavior as one obtains smaller particles
219 due to fracture. Fragmentation was also found to be important for the char oxidation
220 stage [30]. Figure 2 illustrates the mass loss which can represent the main stages of
221 biomass dust combustion. One can observe that there is a slight overlap between the
222 combustion steps indicating that the processes occur almost sequentially. Moreover,
223 based on the mass loss rate and the time scale of the illustrated stages, it is expected
224 that devolatilization dynamics will affect the biomass ignition characteristics most
225 significantly.

226 The above Section 2 makes one aware of the complexity and the existing
 227 interrelations between biomass properties and the reactor operating conditions that
 228 overall impact the occurrence of ignition, and these interrelations should be accurately
 229 accounted for in the state-of-the-art biomass models. In fact, a reliable classification of
 230 biomass fuels in terms of ignition characteristics requires the application of both
 231 experimental and numerical methods. Therefore, as part of this review, Section 3
 232 investigates the most recently used experimental techniques in biomass ignition
 233 studies, whereas Section 4 describes in detail the governing models for the main
 234 combustion stages along with their capabilities in ignition prediction.



235
 236 Fig. 2 Mass loss of 250 μm biomass particle in oxidizing environment. Reprinted with
 237 permission from [31].

238 3. Ignition

239 Ignition is a critical step of transition from a slow reaction to a high-temperature
 240 fast reaction. It is a process of interaction between heat release, heat loss, heat and
 241 mass transfer, and chemical kinetics. Fundamental ignition combustion theory [32] has

242 been mostly derived from experimentally measured ignition properties, which can be
 243 further applied to predict ignition characteristics through numerical modelling, where
 244 analytical solutions are available.

245 3.1 Experimental methods of ignition onset determination

246 From an experimental point of view, the ignition delay definition is ambiguous and
 247 strongly depends on the measurement techniques and experimental accuracy. An
 248 overview of biomass fuel particle ignition measurement techniques encountered in the
 249 literature is summarized in Table 1.

250 Table 1. Reported biomass particle ignition measurement techniques

Ignition onset indicator	Optical equipment	Operating conditions set for measurements				Ref.
		Fuel type	Particle feeding rate	Atmosphere	Flow conditions	
CH [*] emission	ICCD	Biomass, coal	Single particle scale	O ₂ /N ₂ and O ₂ /CO ₂	Laminar, Hencken burner	[33]
CH [*] emission	ICCD	Biomass	Single particle scale	CH ₄ /Air	Laminar, McKenna burner	[34,35]
Onset of luminous combustion	High-speed cinematography	Biomass with coal	Single particle scale	O ₂ /N ₂ and O ₂ /CO ₂	Laminar, Drop tube furnace	[36–38]
12% of max. luminosity	High-speed imaging	Biomass with coal	1.2g/min	Air	Laminar, Drop tube furnace	[39]
10% of max. luminosity	High-speed imaging	Biomass with coal	Single particle scale	CH ₄ /O ₂ /N ₂ , O ₂ – 3.5, 5.1, 6.5%	Laminar, McKenna burner	[40]

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252 As shown in Table 1, there are scarce publications that investigate experimentally
 253 biomass ignition. It is mainly measured through the chemiluminescence of excited CH^{*}
 254 radicals although high-speed imaging was also investigated in some publications,

255 where using the fraction of maximum visible light served as an ignition indicator.

256 Köser et al. [41,42] emphasized that the CH^* - chemiluminescence signal, which
257 can be utilized as an indicator of ignition, was found to be a better indicator than
258 blackbody emission from soot or hot char [43]. However, the CH^* signal is considered
259 weak and has a strong spectral overlap with broadband blackbody emission. For
260 example, it is possible that CO_2^* chemiluminescent emission, obtained from CO
261 oxidation may extend over a broad spectral range and overlap the CH^* emission line
262 [44]. To address this technical challenge, a multi-filter methodology, first suggested by
263 Karnani et al. [45], has been recently extended by Yuan et al. for the application of
264 obtaining pure CH^* signal in coal combustion [46]. However, although CH^* or OH^*
265 emission products may provide reliable and accurate ignition characteristics [34], they
266 are extremely difficult to be compared with numerical models where the excited species
267 are not available [47]. Lately, a high-speed OH planar laser-induced fluorescence
268 (PLIF) method was used, but in coal combustion research [41,42,48,49]. This
269 technique allows obtaining pure CH or OH radicals, also exempting the interference in
270 sooting flames [41]. Spatial distributions of relative OH-LIF signals can be more easily
271 compared with simulations by locating the zones of the reactions [42]. In the study of
272 Köser et al. [42], the goal was to record OH-fluorescence, while suppressing the impact
273 of flame luminosity and OH^* - chemiluminescence. This technique is recommended for
274 biomass ignition research as it would allow a direct confrontation of experimental data
275 with numerical results based on non-excited species, such as CH or OH radicals.

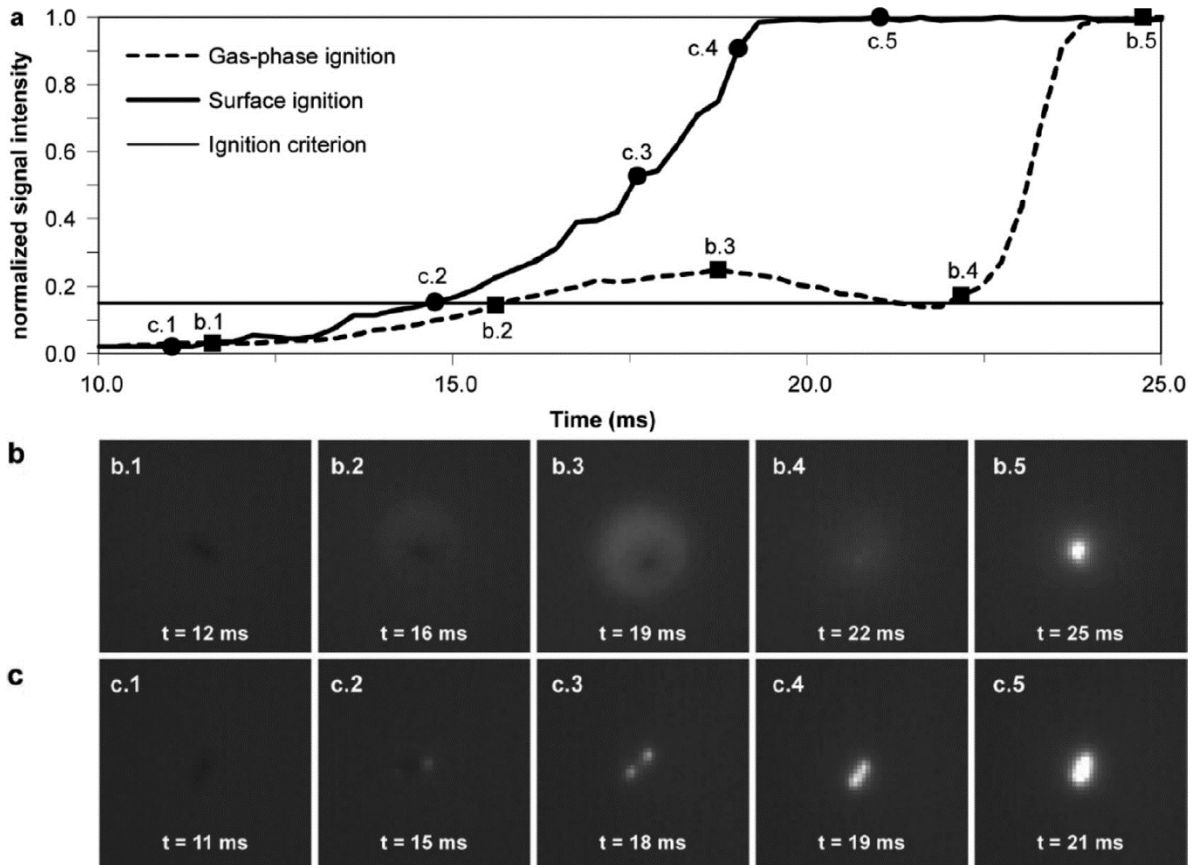
276 *3.2 Experimental determination of ignition mechanisms*

277 Because of the impact of ignition on the combustion efficiency and reactors
278 stability, it is critical to identify different ignition steps and the early stages of biomass
279 particle combustion and to distinguish the most important factors affecting the ignition

280 mechanism. So far, research attempts have been made to use high-speed imaging
281 techniques to capture either the visible light signal of single particle ignition
282 [21,38,40,50] or chemiluminescence emission [43,46] of diluted particle streams. In
283 high-speed imaging techniques where visible light is captured, a homogeneous ignition
284 is typically defined as the time at which the first flash of volatile is observed near the
285 particle boundary layer, whereas heterogeneous ignition considers the instant at which
286 bright flame and strong luminance are observed on the biomass particle. The
287 observation of spontaneous emission is an effective way to investigate the release of
288 different species which also can provide detailed information about the ignition
289 characteristics. For example, temporally resolved CH* chemiluminescence images
290 with corresponding signal intensity profiles, apart from being an accurate ignition
291 indicator, were also utilized in the determination of ignition mode where local signal
292 minima reasonably differentiated specific combustion stages [33–35].

293 Simões et al. [40] investigated the effect of temperature and oxygen concentration on
294 the ignition behavior of different pulverized biomass fuels. A high-speed imaging
295 system was applied to record the image of single particles in a laminar flame burner
296 where ignition delay was defined with a criterion of 15% of the maximum signal
297 intensity – Fig. 3a. Fig. 3b depicts the gas-phase ignition of kiwi branches particles with
298 the key combustion steps illustrated in the sub-figures, such as initial heating, ignition,
299 volatiles cloud burning and char oxidation indicating a dual ignition mode with
300 homogeneous ignition followed by the heterogeneous char oxidation. Fig. 3c illustrates
301 the surface ignition of elongated vine branch particles with no visible volatile cloud
302 indicating that burning occurred in one heterogeneous phase. The ignition mode was
303 identified to strongly correspond with biomass shape and size. The surface
304 temperature was found to be a more dominant parameter in the occurrence of a

305 heterogeneous ignition mode than the volatile matter content as the volatile matter
 306 content of kiwi branches and vine branches was almost the same. Very high surface
 307 temperatures result in very fast heating rates increasing the particle temperature that
 308 induce surface ignition before any substantial amount of volatile matter is released.



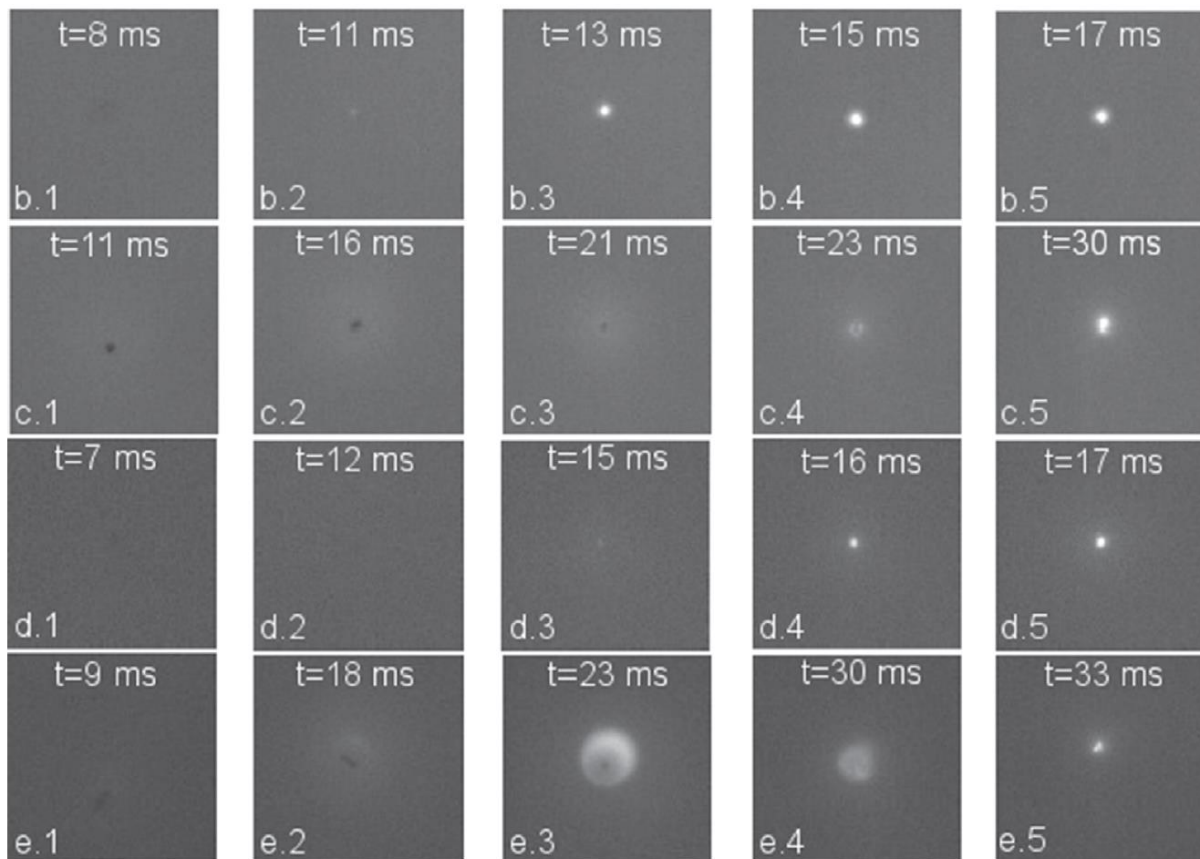
309
 310 Fig. 3 Signal intensity profiles and images of ignition process. (a) maximum visible
 311 light signal intensity , (b) gas-phase ignition of a particle kiwi branches, (c) surface
 312 ignition of a particle vine branches. Particle sizes: 212-224 μm . Reprinted with
 313 permission from [40].

314 Magalhães et al. [51] compared the ignition behaviors of different biomass fuels at
 315 low and high heating rates. Fig. 4 illustrates the frames of typical combustion events
 316 for the investigated fuels under high heating rate conditions. Fig. 4b and Fig. 4d show
 317 the surface ignition of small size almond shell and olive residue particles. Fig. 4c and

318 Fig. 4e illustrate the gas-phase ignition of larger size almond shell and olive residue
319 particles. In Fig. 4e, where the gas-phase ignition occurs, one can clearly observe that
320 sub-figure e.1 corresponds to the initial heat-up stage, sub-figure e.2 illustrates the
321 ignition onset, sub-figure e.3 depicts the maximum visible light during the combustion
322 of volatiles, sub-figure e.4 indicates the last phase of volatiles combustion and sub-
323 figure e.5 illustrates char oxidation. For Fig. 4b and Fig. 4d, it is not possible to clearly
324 differentiate between the combustion stages, and due to intense char oxidation
325 luminosity which worsens the visibility, it is hard to identify if it is a heterogeneous or
326 hetero-homogeneous ignition mode. It indicates that, in some situations, high-speed
327 imaging may be inconclusive in the determination of the ignition mechanism.

328 Under low heating rate conditions, the fuels were investigated in TGA. The ignition
329 mode was determined based on the procedure applied by Chen et al. [52]. Eventually,
330 both biomass fuels ignited homogeneously. Under high heating rate conditions, smaller
331 biomass particles (80-90 μm) tended to ignite heterogeneously, while larger particles
332 (224-250 μm) tended to ignite homogeneously.

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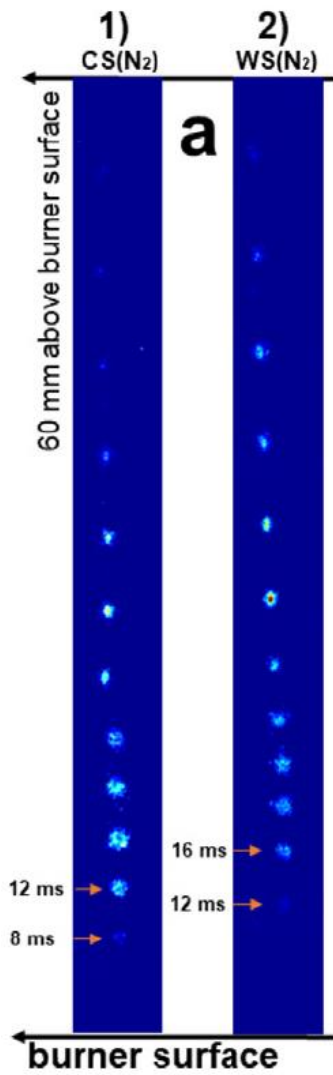
335 Fig. 4. Ignition events during entrained flow reactor experiments. (b) surface ignition of
 336 almond shell particle with size of 80-90 μm , (c) gas-phase ignition of almond shell
 337 particle with size of 224-250 μm , (d) surface ignition of olive residue with size of 80-90
 338 μm , (e) gas-phase ignition of olive residue particle with size of 224-250 μm . Reprinted
 339 with permission from [51].

340 Magalhães et al. [53] investigated combustion behaviors of single raw and
 341 torrefied biomass particles in a drop tube furnace (DTF) at 1400K using high-speed
 342 cinematography. The fuels were sieved to a size 212-300 μm . It was reported that all
 343 biomass fuels (raw and torrefied) ignited homogeneously forming large and circular
 344 volatile matter envelope flames, followed by a char combustion phase indicating a dual
 345 ignition mode. The released volatile matter ignited first, while the devolatilizing particle
 346 still remained dark at the envelope flame center. Non-overlapping effect of the volatile
 347 matter combustion and char combustion was observed. This effect could be attributed

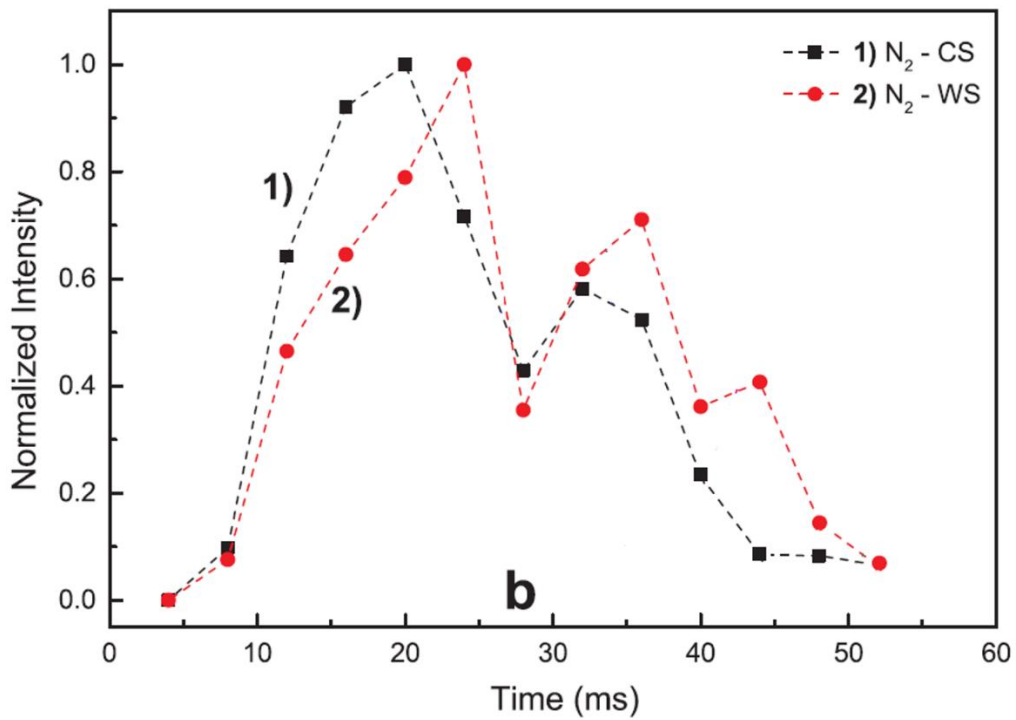
348 to the low aspect ratio of biomass particles.

349 Weng et al. [17,35] applied an ICCD camera with different band filters – 430, 515,
350 589, and 766 nm to capture the chemiluminescence from CH^* , C_2^* , Na^* , and K^* ,
351 respectively. The research was carried out for pulverized single biomass particles in a
352 flat flame McKenna burner. Eventually, the reported information was used to identify
353 the homogeneous ignition, volatile combustion, and alkali species release. The CH^*
354 and thermal radiation signals also indicated that all studied biomass char particles
355 underwent heterogeneous oxidation at or immediately after the extinction of volatile
356 matter combustion. For one fuel out of four, there was a slight overlap between the two
357 stages.

358 Qi et al. [33] studied the ignition and combustion of single pulverized biomass and
359 coal particles in N_2/O_2 and CO_2/O_2 atmospheres in a Hencken burner. Fig. 5 illustrates
360 CH^* chemiluminescence images and signal intensity profiles for wheat straw (WS) and
361 corn straw (CS). One can observe a spherical flame surrounding the CS particle
362 between 12 and 20 ms. The figure actually indicates that both biomass fuels (CS) and
363 (WS) undergo similar ignition and combustion processes. They ignite homogeneously
364 and devolatilize rapidly. The local minimum at 25-30ms in Fig. 5b and the less
365 pronounced intensity image from Fig. 5a suggest the end of intense volatile matter
366 combustion and the beginning of char heterogeneous oxidation.



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369 Fig. 5 (a) chemiluminescence images of single biomass particles in N₂/O₂
370 atmosphere, (b) normalized CH* signal intensity profile in N₂/O₂ atmosphere.

371 Adapted from [33].

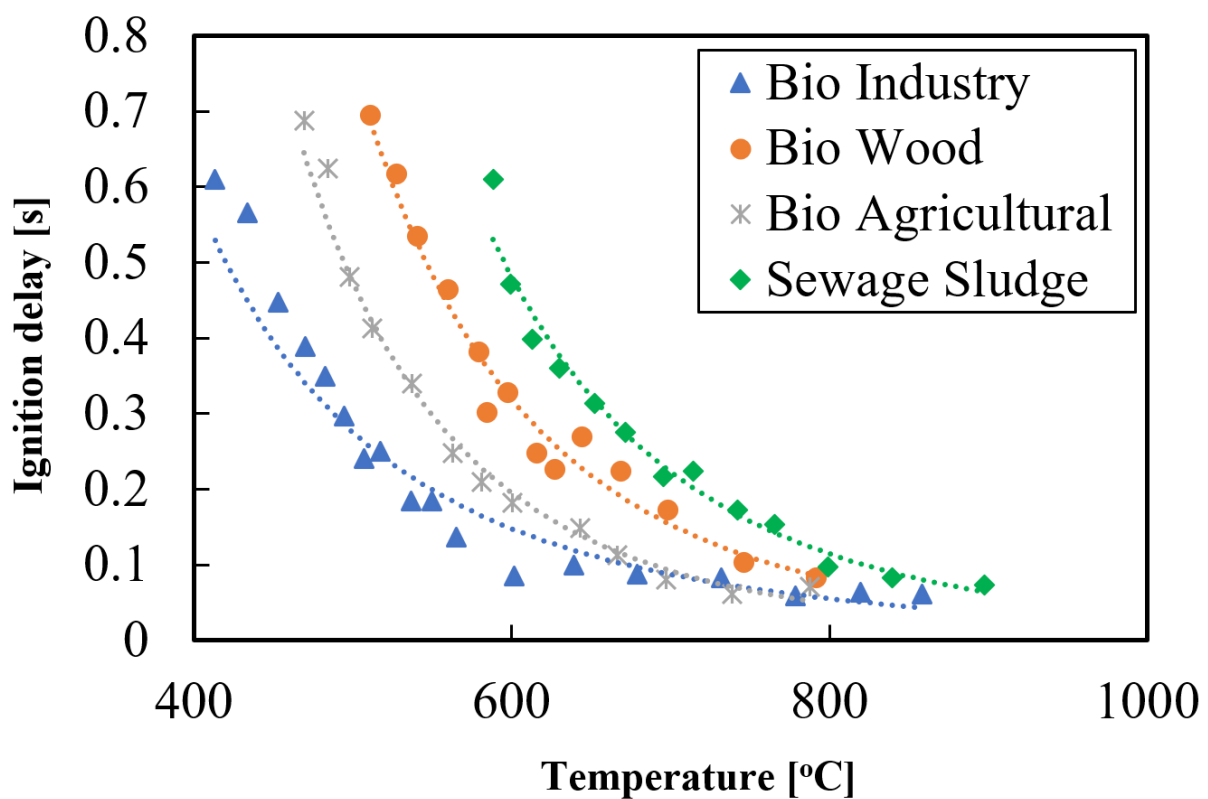
372 3.3 *Impact of fuel properties and operating conditions on ignition*

373 It must be emphasized that, as regards the ignition delay time (i.e. ignition onset),
374 there are different determination methods as aforementioned. The lack of a commonly
375 accepted method makes any direct comparisons of the results from works defining the
376 onset of ignition differently, unreasonable. Therefore, the discussion in this work will
377 not be focused on the absolute result values, but focusing on the general impact of
378 different processes and the parameters of interest on the ignition properties.

379 3.3.1 *Impact of temperature*

380 The most obvious observation considers the decrease of ignition delay with respect
381 to the increasing temperature [3,13,17,40,51,54,55]. Rybak et al. [3] studied the
382 ignition delay of different pulverized biomass fuels with respect to the furnace
383 temperature, by recording the moment of the ignition appearance indicated by the
384 change of illuminance that is detected using two photo elements. Their results,
385 summarized in Fig. 6, shows that in addition to the temperature impact, fuel type has
386 also a strong influence on the ignition onset. Among the illustrated fuels, it shows that
387 the highest ignition delay time is characterized by the smallest amount of volatile
388 matter. However, the ignition mode was not determined as this would require the use
389 of additional sophisticated tools, such as cameras with the high filming speed,
390 pyrometry etc. Therefore, the direct impact of temperature on ignition mode could not
391 be investigated. When temperatures are sufficiently high, e.g., over 800°C, the
392 absolute difference of ignition delays diminishes substantially, and thus the impact of

393 fuel composition becomes less dominant. The obvious relation of decreasing ignition
 394 delay with increasing temperature can also be directly linked to pyrolysis behavior, as
 395 higher temperatures result in higher heating rates which cause more dynamic
 396 devolatilization and higher instantaneous yield of permanent gases. Of course, the
 397 local gas temperature in the particle's vicinity which contributes to the governing
 398 particle heating rate is strongly affected by the gas composition and particle size and
 399 may differ from the global reactor temperature [49].

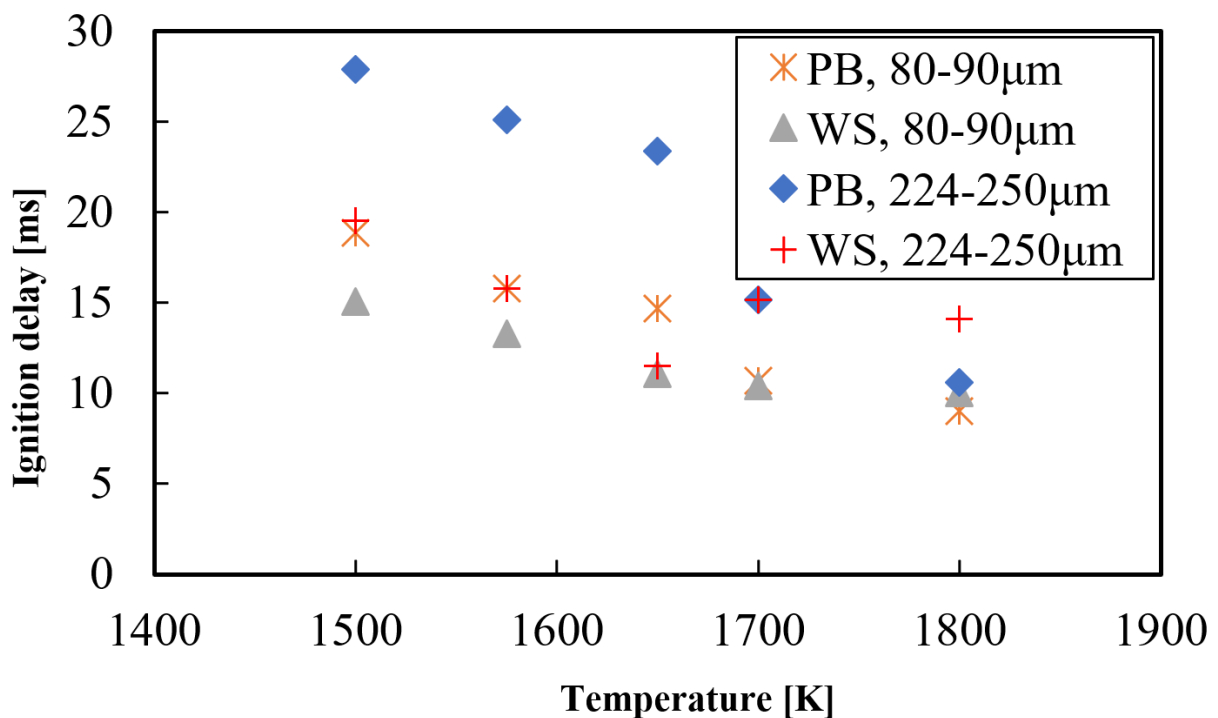


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401 Fig. 6 Ignition characteristics of different biomass fuels. Adapted from [3].

402 Simões et al. [40] suggested that the ignition of their investigated biomass fuels
 403 occurred mostly in the gas phase with few exceptions where surface ignition took
 404 place. As opposed to pine bark which ignited homogeneously, for wheat straw particles
 405 under low temperature conditions, in spite of high amount of volatiles, the surface
 406 ignition occurred. However, the investigated wheat straw was characterized with sharp

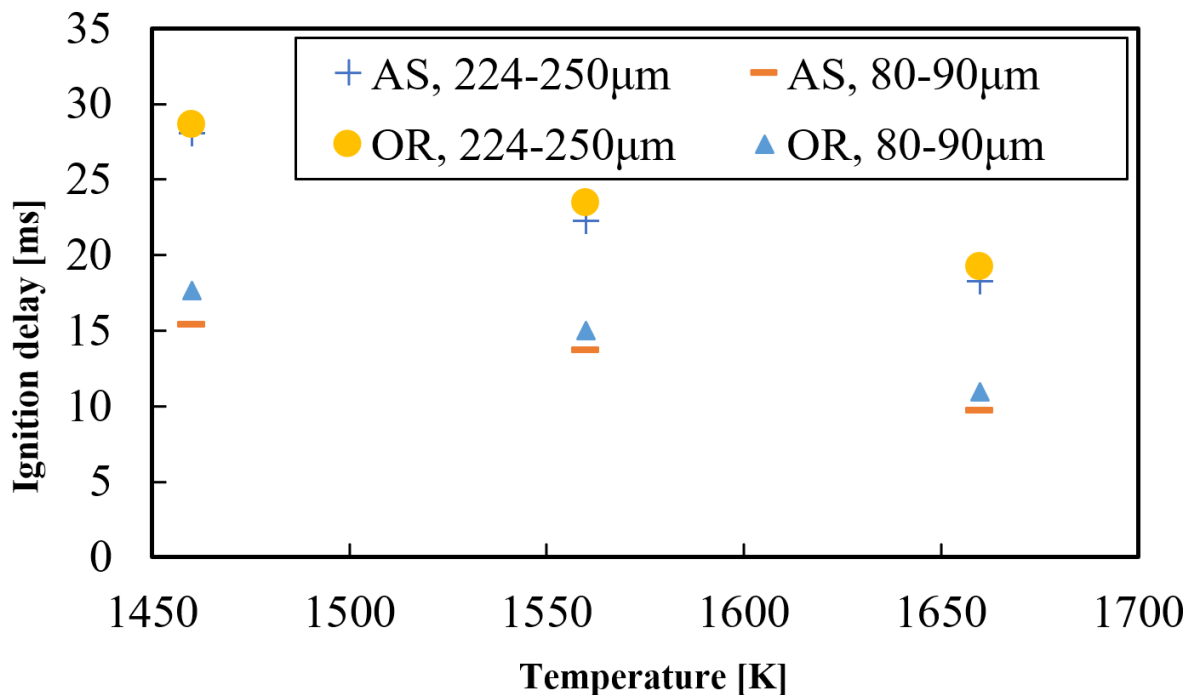
407 edges and hot spots with a non-spherical structure. This could explain the occurrence
 408 of the heterogeneous ignition mode. The critical diameters for the ignition mode
 409 mechanism transition was found to vary with the fuel type. Accounting for the fact that
 410 volatile matter is the main component in biomass fuels, it is expected that
 411 devolatilization and volatile combustion dominate in the form of homogeneous
 412 combustion although particle shape also plays an important role over the ignition
 413 mechanism. It was eventually observed that the ignition delay was found to be highly
 414 dependent on the biomass type and particle size in the temperature range between
 415 (1500 – 1650 K), whereas for the temperatures higher than 1650 K, it was governed
 416 mainly by the particle size. Fig. 7 depicts ignition delay times for different biomass fuels
 417 from the study of Simões et al. [40] and Magalhães et al. [51]. The results clearly
 418 indicate a strong effect of biomass composition and particle size for lower
 419 temperatures, whereas, for higher temperatures, the fuel composition does not play a
 420 dominant role.



421

422

a)



423

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b)

425 Fig. 7 Ignition delay times of single biomass particles for a) pine bark (PB), wheat
 426 straw (WS) b) almond shell (AS), olive residue (OR). Adapted from [40,51].

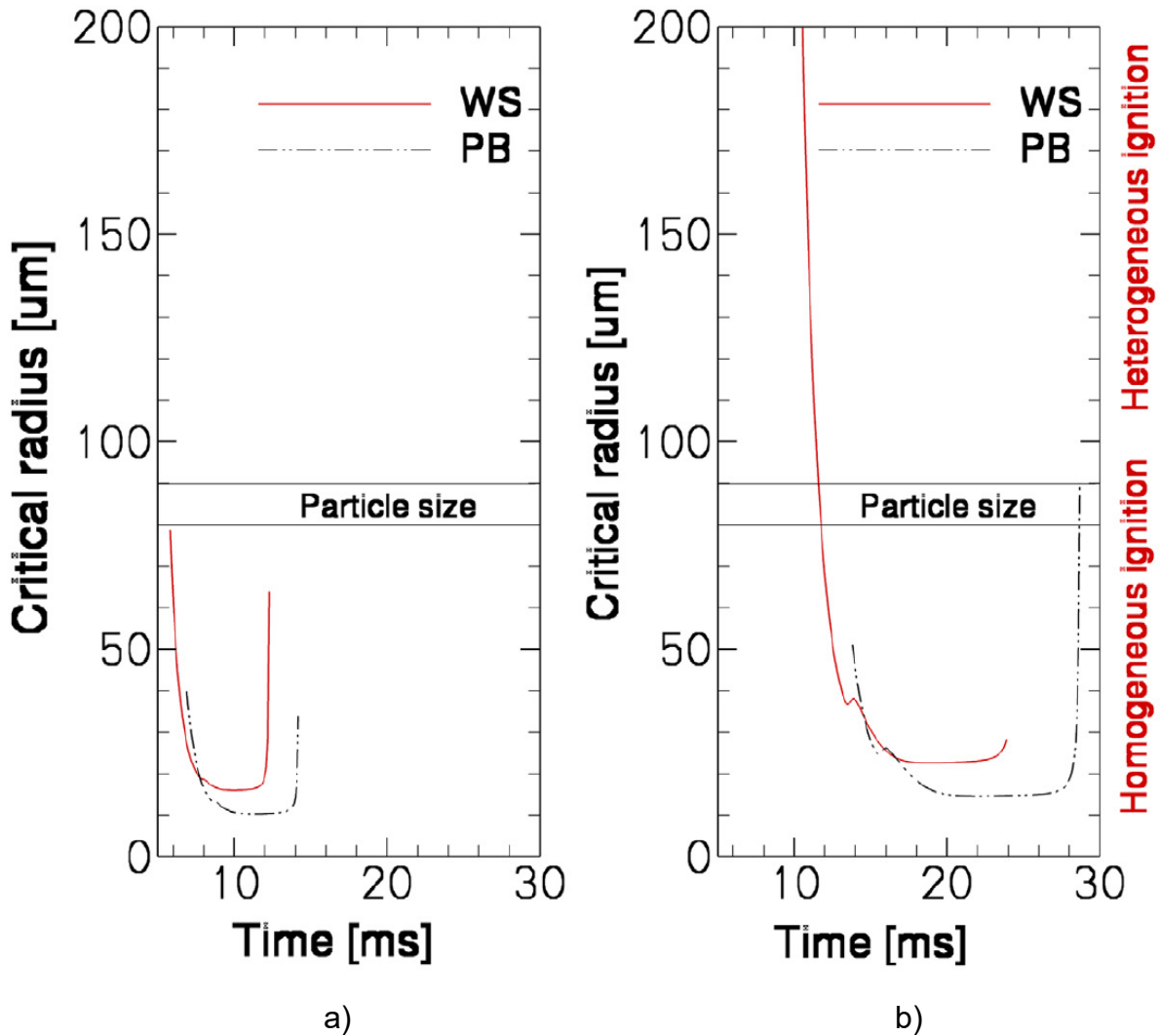
427 3.3.2 Impact of particle size and shape

428 Particle size has a substantial impact on the ignition delay and ignition mechanism
 429 [13,17,40,51]. It is obvious that ignition delay is greater for larger particles [13,40,51].
 430 Simões et al. [40] and Magalhães et al. [51] also observed that smaller biomass
 431 particles tended to ignite heterogeneously while larger particles ignited
 432 homogeneously. It is also reasonable since the heating rate is much greater for smaller
 433 particles. A recent study by Fatehi et al. [17] considered the analysis of critical radius
 434 with respect to the ignition mechanism for wheat straw and pine bark for particle size
 435 of 80 μm for different shapes, as shown in Fig. 8. The particle critical size is defined as
 436 the smallest size at which the volatile flux can prevent the oxidant from reaching the
 437 particle surface. Figure 8 depicts a strong dependence of the particle shape and type

438 on the ignition mode. Figure 8a clearly indicates that 80 μm spherical particles (aspect
439 ratio of 1) always undergo a homogeneous ignition mechanism. This considers the
440 case when the critical radius is below the actual particle size during the entire
441 devolatilization. For particles with an aspect ratio of 4 (cylindrical particles), particles
442 can undergo a heterogeneous ignition mechanism – wheat straw. One can observe
443 that in spite of the fact that ignition occurs at first in the heterogeneous mode, it can
444 shift to a homogeneous mode when the rate of devolatilization increases – Fig. 8b.
445 Since devolatilization is not uniform and the devolatilization intensity is not constant,
446 the ignition mechanism may change during the process. It especially considers non-
447 spherical particles, where the heating rate acting on a particle is highly non-uniform. As
448 for pine bark, in each investigated case, it ignited homogeneously. The results can be
449 justified by the fact that pine bark had a much higher volatile yield than wheat straw.
450 This directly affects devolatilization dynamics and ignition. In comparison with coal,
451 biomass has a higher moisture and content, larger particle sizes, and is composed of
452 cellulose, hemicellulose and lignin which have different pyrolysis characteristics. This
453 resulted in an uneven devolatilization throughout the particle and significant changes
454 of particle critical size. Moreover, the inherent differences between biomass and coal
455 as regards the volatile content and surface-to-volume ratio result in a considerably
456 smaller biomass critical size.

457 With respect to particle size impact, one also has to consider the possible effect of
458 particle shrinkage during devolatilization [56] as it is reported to have a strong effect
459 on the intraparticle heat and mass transfers and thus the rate of devolatilization [57].
460 The shrinking effect refers to both diameter and density changes that also affect the
461 heating rate acting on a particle. On the basis of the observations, one can conclude
462 that particle critical size is a key parameter when estimating ignition mechanism.

463



465

466 Fig. 8 Critical radius of different biomass particles during devolatilization. WS – wheat
 467 straw, PB – pine bark (a) radius = 40 µm, aspect ratio = 1, T = 1500 K, (b) radius =
 40 µm, aspect ratio = 4, T = 1500 K. Adapted from [17].

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Elfasakhany et al. [58] reported uneven wood ignition and conversion. Fig. 9 illustrates wood particle burning. The thin short bar illustrates the burning particle whereas the thick tail illustrates the flame. Devolatilized gases oxidize forming a diffusion flame attached to the particles. A long bright tail is a result of particle acceleration. In the left bottom corner, one can observe a nearly spherical flame indicating that the particle is not accelerated by the moisture/volatiles release. The

474 acceleration depends on the fiber orientation and the uneven volatiles/moisture release
475 generating a propulsion force.



476

477 Fig. 9 Experimental photo of impact of moisture and volatile release on particle motion
478 at approximate time 20 ms. Most of particles are in the range between 0.2 mm and 0.7
479 mm in diameter and 1 mm in length. Furnace diameter is equal to 0.25 m. Reprinted
480 with permission from [58].

481 In terms of particle size and shape, an important biomass feature is also biomass
482 morphology which dictates the macroscopic parameters such as density, porosity,
483 conductivity, and diffusivity which can eventually affect ignition. Fiber orientation is an
484 important parameter in biomass thermochemical conversion due to the anisotropic
485 structure. In Fig. 9, for example, fiber orientation was found to be an impactful
486 parameter in the occurrence of particle acceleration acting as a propulsion force during
487 moisture/volatile release. In [49], it has been shown that the higher slip velocity
488 accelerates the heat convection between the gas phase and the particle eventually
489 reducing ignition delay.

490 The situation becomes more complicated for thermally thick particles where
491 intraparticle heat transfer cannot be neglected [25] and where particle temperature
492 gradients play a key role in the ignition. Moreover, a strong overlap between the

493 governing combustion stages (drying, devolatilization, and char combustion) is
494 observed [17]. An important non-dimensional number representing the ratio of the
495 resistance to heat transfer from the body inside to the surface is the Biot number. Biot
496 number values (>0.1) indicate a thermally thick regime. Under such conditions,
497 biomass particle microstructure gains enormous significance as dynamic
498 morphological changes affect ignition characteristics. An extensive review considering
499 the advances of multiscale modelling of lignocellulosic biomass structure has been
500 reported by Ciesielski et al. [59] [60,61], from which the modeling approach concerning
501 the impact of biomass structure is believed to be useful in future ignition studies.
502 Unfortunately, the literature on biomass ignition that falls into the category of thermally
503 thick particles is extremely rare and it is mostly devoted to experimental investigation
504 [54,62–64]. For a representative review in this field, further research is required.

505 For example, Momeni et al. [54] studied experimentally the effects of particle shape
506 (employing the aspect ratios 1, 2, 4, 6, 8) on combustion characteristics of single
507 biomass particles. Two shapes were analyzed – a sphere (3mm) and a cylinder (length
508 from 4 to 18mm). It was concluded that particles with a larger aspect ratio will be heated
509 faster due to radiation and convection resulting in a shorter burnout time and
510 devolatilization time. It is because spherical particles have the smallest surface to
511 volume ratio, resulting in a slower rate of heat and mass transfer and higher conversion
512 time with respect to aspherical particles. For ignition, the trend is the same, however,
513 the differences with respect to the studied aspect ratios (from 1 to 8) are less
514 remarkable.

515 *3.3.3 Impact of volatile matter and devolatilization*

516 In the study of Rybak et al. [3], the minimum ignition temperature was investigated
517 based on the volatile content of the fuel. By way of exception, the authors have decided

518 to include also coal fuels in this analysis, as an interesting observation can be made
519 from Fig. 10. The content of volatile matter on a dry-ash-free basis was adopted as a
520 measure of coal rank. It is evident that for coals, the minimum ignition temperature
521 strongly depends on a coal rank. For biomass and waste, on the other hand, the
522 ignition temperature increases with the increase of volatile matter content. Large
523 differences in ignition temperature (150°C) can also be observed for biomass fuels with
524 very similar volatile matter content. At the same time, fuels with lower volatile content
525 (60-65 %) have the lowest ignition temperature (400-450°C) which:

- 526 • creates the highest possibility of fire explosions
- 527 • these fuels are also characterized by the best flame stability

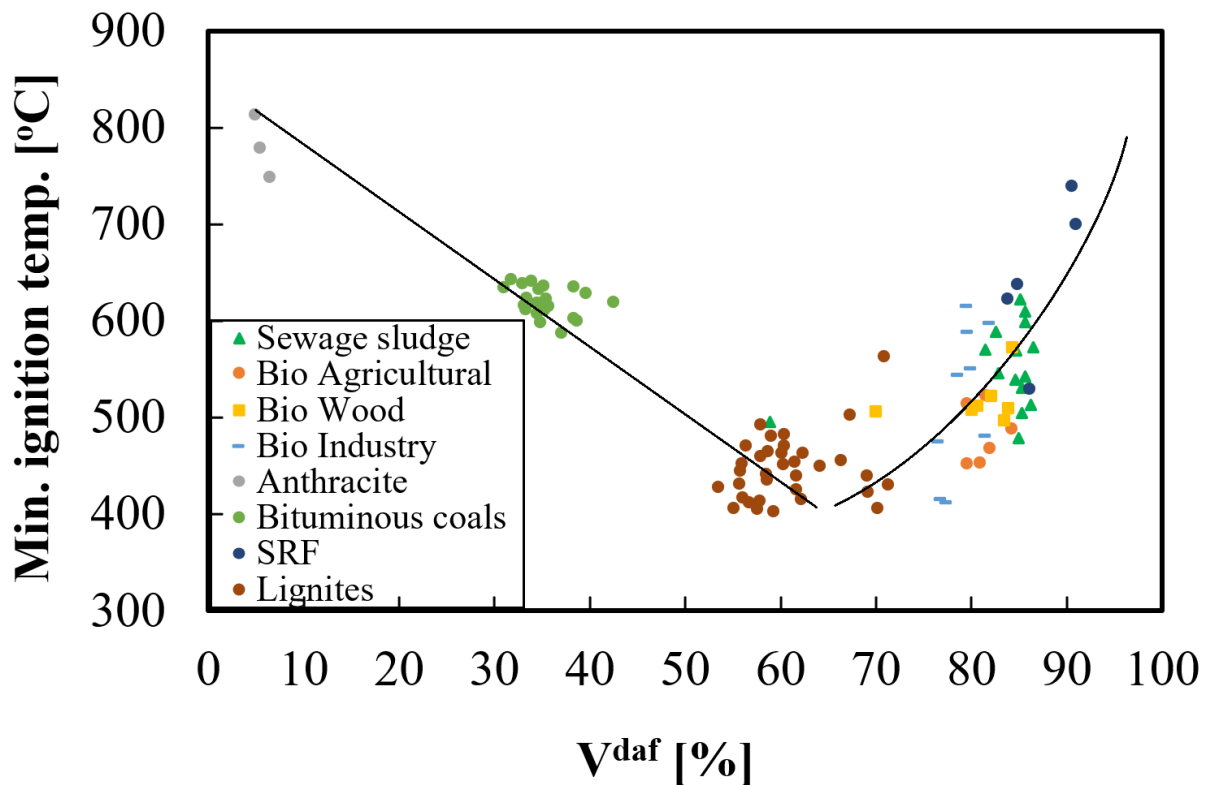
528 Takigawa and Yoshizaki [65] performed similar studies of six fuels (three coals and
529 three biomasses) and observed the lowest ignition temperature for rice husk containing
530 62% of volatile matter. No correlation was found between the ash fuel content and
531 ignition which could be linked to the above observation.

532 The reason for the non-instinctive relation of ignition temperature with respect to dry-
533 ash-free volatile content (V^{daf}) was attributed to the ignition mechanism. It was
534 concluded that under experimental conditions, volatiles were ignited in the gaseous
535 environment - a homogeneous ignition of a dilute cloud. The ignition of a dilute dust
536 cloud, which can be compared to the single particle combustion, was probably favored
537 by high volatile content, high devolatilization rates, Stefan flow, and low relative speeds
538 between the gas and particles. It resulted in a dust cloud dilution and insignificant
539 particle-to-particle interaction. Eq. (1) defines the critical value of volatile content in the
540 fuel above which a homogeneous ignition occurs: [3]

$$V_{cr}^{\infty} = \frac{RT_{i,\infty}^2}{E} \frac{3\lambda}{r_s^2 \rho_s \beta q_v k_{0,v} e^{-\frac{E_v}{RT_s}}} \quad (1)$$

541 Where R – universal gas constant, T_{∞} - ambient temperature, λ – thermal conductivity,
 542 E – activation energy, r_s – solid particle radius, ρ_s – solid particle density, q_v – heat of
 543 devolatilization reaction, $k_{0,v}$ – reaction rate constant of devolatilization. For the
 544 derivation of Eq. (1) refer to [3].

545 The above equation indicates that for fuel with the volatile matter content $V^{\infty} <$
 546 V_{cr}^{∞} , the flame associated with the volatile matter ignition will not detach from the
 547 particle surface, indicating either heterogeneous ignition, or hetero-homogeneous
 548 ignition. The Eq.(1) also indicates that the smaller the particle size or the smaller the
 549 devolatilization reaction rate, the higher the critical value of volatile content above
 550 which a homogeneous ignition mechanism occurs. It means that smaller particles with
 551 a lower devolatilization rate under higher temperatures will tend to ignite
 552 heterogeneously. Unfortunately, the ignition mechanisms were not investigated
 553 experimentally, therefore, it is impossible to verify the theoretical conclusions. Further
 554 research would be desirable in this field.



555

556 Fig. 10 Minimum ignition temperature with respect to volatile matter content (dry-ash-

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free). Adapted from [3].

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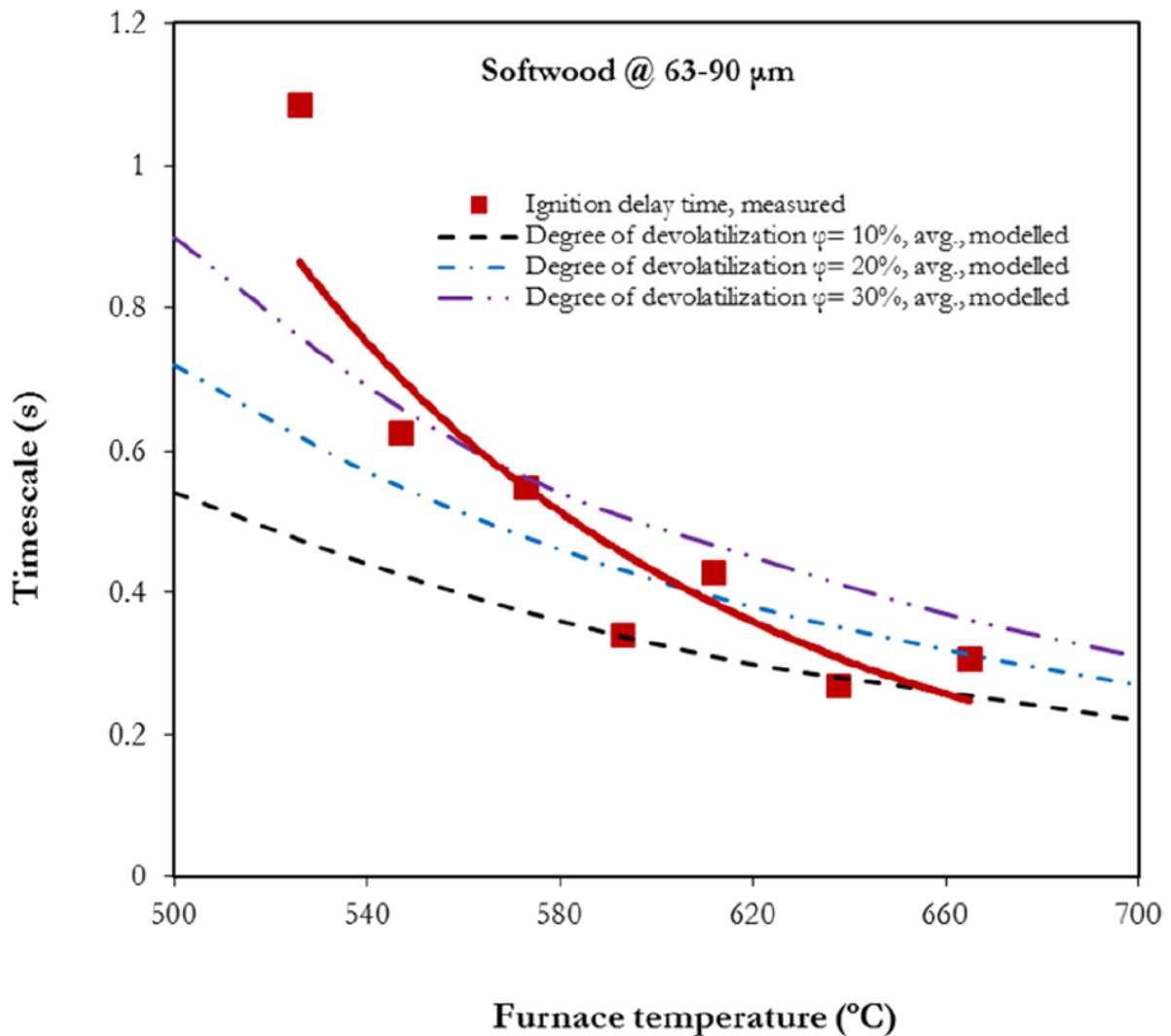
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Li et al. [13] studied the ignition behavior of wheat straw and softwood particles in a down-fire reactor and connected the ignition characteristics of biomass directly with an extent of devolatilization that are estimated using their dynamic-mesh single particle model, as shown in Fig. 11. One can observe that biomass at low furnace temperatures requires a higher degree of devolatilization for the ignition onset to occur. It confirms the sensitivity of ignition to devolatilization dynamics which is determined by the furnace temperature. A conclusion can be drawn that at certain temperatures, biomass can ignite before devolatilization, indicating a heterogeneous ignition mechanism [13]. Therefore, the degree of devolatilization with respect to the furnace temperature can be an important modeling criterion when defining the ignition mechanism.



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Fig. 11 Measured ignition delay times of softwood with respect to extent of devolatilization. Reprinted with permission from [13].

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3.3.4 Impact of cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin

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One of the important aspects of lignocellulosic biomass ignition regards the impact of specific biomass components, such as cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin. Despite biomass has composition similar to coal [66], it varies in the content of constituents such as holocellulose and lignin. Moreover, there are structure and density differences which, overall, substantially impact the pyrolysis mechanism. To date, the ignition and combustion behavior of cellulose, hemicellulose and lignin were widely studied mostly with TGA [67–73]. The main results indicate that the decomposition temperature of

579 lignin is lower than that of hemicellulose, whereas decomposition temperature of
580 hemicellulose is lower than the cellulose temperature. Moreover, lignin decomposes in
581 a wider range of temperatures (423 – 1173 K), while hemicellulose decomposes in the
582 range of (493 – 588 K), and cellulose (588 – 673 K). It means that even though lignin
583 starts to devolatilize before hemicellulose and cellulose, the complete devolatilization
584 is achieved by hemicellulose and cellulose first. Chen et al. [74] demonstrated that
585 cellulose had the highest yield of CO at high temperatures (above 550°C), whereas
586 below 550°C, similar share of CO and CO₂ was observed. Hemicellulose had the
587 highest CO₂ yield for all studied temperatures (400-800°C), whereas lignin had the
588 highest CH₄ yield, although CO and CO₂ yields were also comparable. High CH₄
589 content could be attributed to aromatic rings and methoxy groups in the structure of
590 lignin. As a result, different share of the biomass main components, results in a
591 different yield of pyrolysis permanent gases which has a direct effect on ignition. It must
592 be emphasized, however, that in TGA experiments, the mass of the fuel is typically
593 given in mg or grams. Moreover, the heating rate is limited to 5-100°C/min, whereas in
594 real-life reactors, the heating rate is as high as 10³-10⁵ C/s. High heating rates
595 conditions favor greater weight loss thereby yielding more volatile species and less
596 char. Therefore, the TGA experiment does not directly correspond to the real
597 combustion scenario in an industrial reactor, but it can be used as an indication for the
598 ignition performance. Burhenne et al. [75] reported that herbaceous biomass
599 containing higher cellulose and hemicellulose content decomposed faster and
600 produced larger amount of gas products than woody biomass containing larger lignin
601 content. Zhang et al. [76] found that melted lignin can delay the volatiles release during
602 devolatilization due to the created barrier. Pang et al. [77] reported that lignocellulosic
603 composition strongly correlate with char reactivity and char morphology. Ma et al. [78]

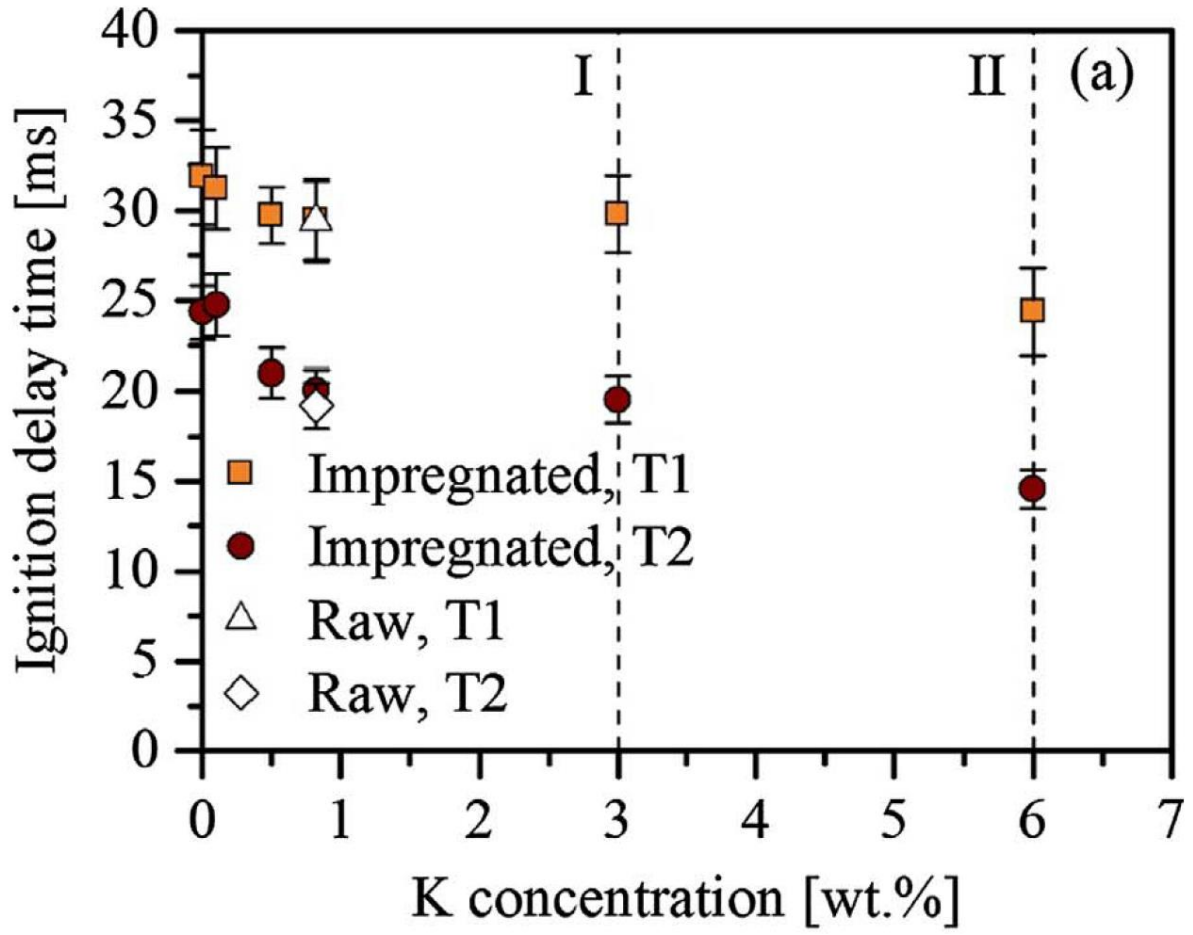
604 revealed that lignin char was characterized by higher energy and mass yield than
605 hemicellulose and cellulose chars due to enhanced thermal stability, and pore
606 structure. Yan et al. [64] studied the effect of the three main biomass components with
607 TGA and a fixed bed and reported that the higher lignin content, the higher ignition
608 delay. Lignin was also found to be the least reactive component which inhibited the
609 combustion different stages. It requires a longer time and broader temperature range
610 to decompose. The lignin's low reactivity could also be linked to a large amount of
611 benzene rings which are thermally stable.

612 In contrast to previous studies which considered mainly TGA, Wang et al. [14]
613 investigated the effect of these three components on the ignition behavior of biomass
614 in a drop tube furnace (DTF) at 1273K under fast heating rate conditions. The biomass
615 particle size was in the range of 500 μm , whereas the size of cellulose, hemicellulose,
616 and lignin representatives was between 70-150 μm . It was ultimately reported that the
617 lignin content strongly affected the biomass ignition characteristics. The ignition
618 mechanism was strongly correlated with the lignin content. Biomass particles with very
619 high lignin content exhibited hetero-homogeneous ignition, whereas particles with high
620 and moderate content showed a homogeneous type of ignition. After homogeneous
621 ignition, biomass char ignition with higher lignin content occurred earlier. Biomass with
622 a very low lignin content also exhibited a hetero-homogeneous type of ignition.
623 Cellulose was reported to ignite hetero-homogeneously. A similar ignition behavior was
624 observed for hemicellulose. A substantial difference could be observed for lignin
625 ignition behavior which ignited homogeneously. The homogeneous ignition of lignin
626 and hetero-homogeneous ignition of holocellulose is hard to explain and therefore
627 further research is recommended in this field, especially, as this is the only study found
628 under high-temperature conditions. As regards the ignition temperature, it was

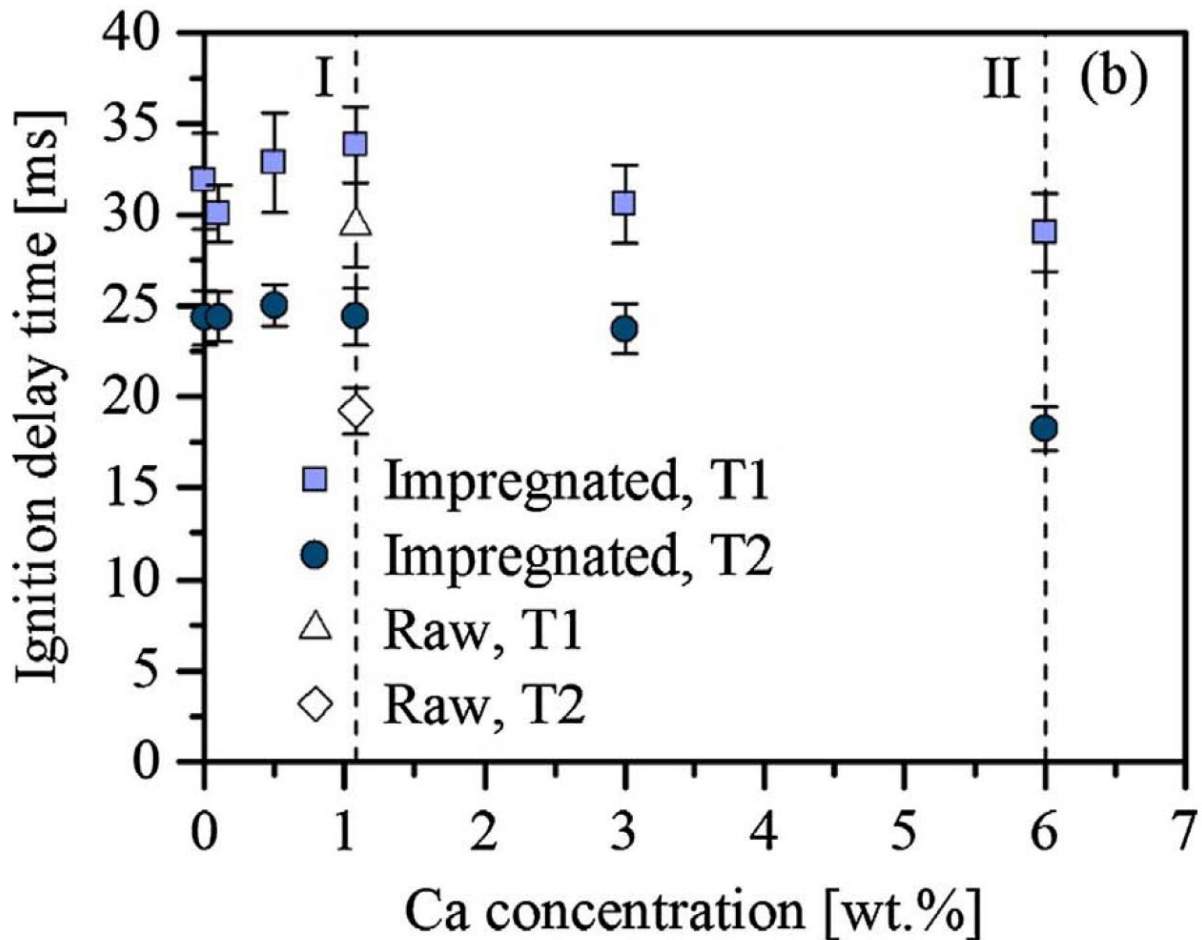
629 reported to depend strongly on the cellulose content regardless of whether the ignition
630 mode is hetero-homogeneous or homogeneous. Shan et al. [79] studied the
631 combustion behavior of three different fuel samples in DTF. It was reported that each
632 fuel had two combustion phases: volatile combustion in an envelope flame, and
633 subsequent char combustion with high luminance. Additionally, two peak values in the
634 flame size profile and the average luminous intensity during volatiles combustion were
635 observed which were corresponded to the cellulose and hemicellulose devolatilization.

636 *3.3.5 Impact of presence of alkali metals*

637 The alkali metals like sodium (Na) and potassium (K) along with chlorine (Cl) are
638 the most important elements inherent in biomass fuels that can generate operational
639 issues. The presence of these aggressive alkali species in ash [80] can lead to
640 problems of heat exchanging surfaces related to slagging and fouling [81], but also
641 affect biomass ignition characteristics. Fahmi et al. [82] report a strong catalytic effect
642 of alkali metals, especially, potassium in both devolatilization and combustion. The
643 same catalytic effect was demonstrated by Jones et al. [83] under high heating rate
644 and temperature conditions. Moreover, the proportion of potassium released to the gas
645 phase to that retained in the ash is correlated to the initial potassium content. However,
646 this relationship varied between wood and herbaceous materials. Carvalho et al. [84]
647 investigated the effects of potassium and calcium on single grape pomace biomass
648 particles. The ignitions were recorded with a CMOS high-speed camera, and ignition
649 delay was determined based on image post-processing. It was ultimately
650 demonstrated that the ignition delay time increased with the demineralization process
651 confirming a catalytic effect, as shown in Fig. 12.



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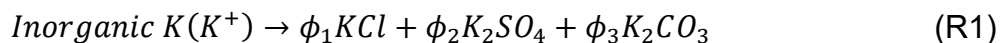
654 Fig. 12 Ignition delay time of grape pomace versus a) K concentration, b) Ca
 655 concentration. Hollow symbols represent raw biomass, whereas zero concentration
 656 represents demineralized samples. Reprinted with permission from [84].

657 The literature clearly indicates a noticeable dependence of the investigated
 658 elements on the ignition characteristics. It is, therefore, important to effectively predict
 659 the yield of these species, by means of, e.g., a reaction mechanism [85,86] but also
 660 experimental methods such as chemical fractionation [87–89]. The method is a
 661 stepwise leaching procedure. The fuels are leached in three steps, water, ammonium
 662 acetate and hydrochloric acid. Chemical fractionation has been used extensively for
 663 determination of ash forming matter distribution in coal and biomass fuels.

664 With respect to ignition, there can be many intricacies. For example, the release

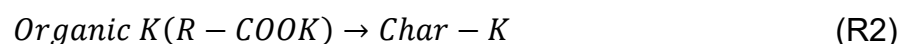
665 of K is highly dependent on other elements present in biomass. Sulfur and chlorine, for
 666 example, can facilitate K release, while the presence of aluminum and silicate promote
 667 formation of stable compounds that remain in the ash structure. As a result, accurate
 668 experimental measurements are required to better understand the chemistry involved
 669 [90,91] and the actual impact of trace elements on the ignition behavior.

670 Qu et al. [91] utilized a robust wavelength-multiplexed TDLAS spectrometer for
 671 simultaneous time-resolved potassium detection. The experimental method allowed
 672 obtaining precise measurements of K during devolatilization and char conversion of
 673 four different biomass fuels: softwood from spruce, wheat straw, and two energy crops
 674 – Salix and Miscanthus. The experimental results were compared with the proposed
 675 model yielding a good agreement. In the K release sub-model, which was developed
 676 over the years [92–94], the interaction between K/S/Cl is determined through a set of
 677 elementary reactions. Potassium was divided into an organic and inorganic part in the
 678 following way:

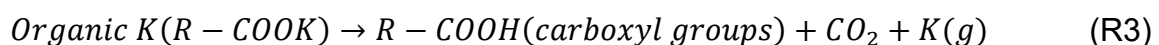


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680 Inorganic potassium forms crystallized salts during drying. The organic potassium is
 681 transformed to char-bonded K during temperature increase and to carboxyl groups,
 682 releasing K in the gas phase.



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684

685 The model is also coupled with a CFD solver, where the chemistry of the K/Cl/S system
686 can be investigated using different chemical mechanisms for these species. In spite of
687 some model limits and assumptions, it is a first attempt to model the release rate of
688 important trace element species from biomass fuels that can affect the ignition
689 characteristics. For further details regarding the model refer to [91–94].

690 3.3.6 *Impact of atmosphere composition*

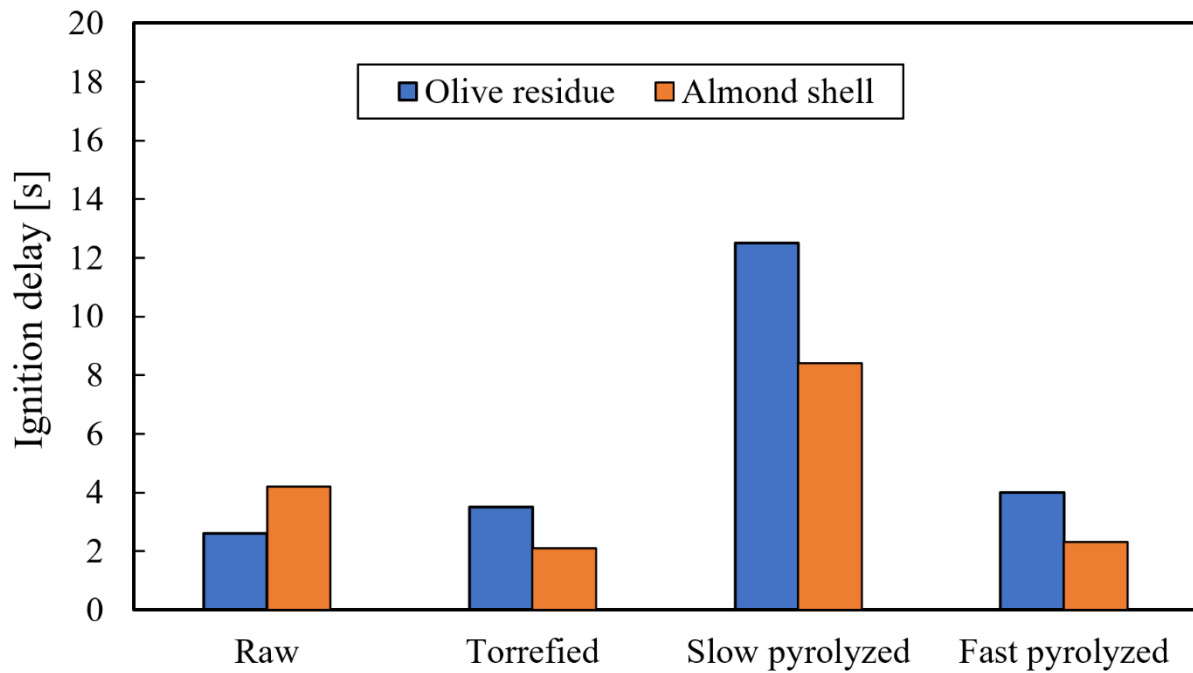
691 The literature regarding the effect of combustion atmosphere on ignition regards,
692 above all, O₂/N₂, O₂/CO₂, and O₂/H₂O concentrations, and oxygen concentration.
693 Riaza et al. [38] investigated the combustion of four pulverized biomasses at 1400K in
694 DTF in air and O₂/CO₂ atmosphere containing different O₂ mole fractions. It was
695 reported that under the same O₂ concentration, when N₂ was replaced by CO₂, the
696 ignition delay, ignition temperature and volatiles combustion time increased. Such an
697 outcome can be justified by the difference in specific molar heats of N₂ and CO₂. The
698 same result was obtained by [37,38,95–97]. Biomass also released large amount of
699 volatiles that burned in the form of spherical envelope flames. The subsequent car
700 combustion produced stronger pyrometric signals. The increase in O₂ also allowed
701 more stable combustion and shorter volatile flame. Both the volatile combustion time
702 and burnout time decreased [37,38,95]. It was also reported that, unlike coal, the
703 combustion behavior of biomass from four different sources appeared unified. Riaza
704 et al. [96] investigated oxy-fuel combustion of coal and biomass blends in DTF at
705 1273K. It was reported that the addition of biomass improved the ignition temperatures
706 and the burnout values in both air and oxy-fuel combustion atmospheres. The
707 application of biomass turned out to have more substantial effect on the ignition
708 temperature than on burnout. Zhou et al. [98] investigated experimentally the ignition
709 and combustion characteristics of single biomass corn stalk particles in O₂/N₂ and

710 O₂/H₂O atmospheres in an electrically heated single particle reactor at 1073K. The
711 ignition was recorded with a CCD camera, while two-color pyrometry was used to
712 estimate the volatile flame temperature. It was reported that the ignition delay time was
713 lower in O₂/H₂O atmosphere than in O₂/N₂. Moreover, for O₂/N₂ atmosphere, in higher
714 O₂ concentrations, a shift from homogeneous to heterogeneous ignition mode was
715 observed, whereas in O₂/H₂O atmosphere, a homogeneous ignition was observed for
716 the entire O₂ range. The reason for the obtained shift from homogeneous to
717 heterogeneous mode for O₂/N₂ atmosphere is sensible as this entails better access to
718 oxygen and more intensified oxidation reactions where particle temperature reaches
719 the ignition temperature faster even before devolatilization properly develops. An
720 interesting aspect may consider O₂/H₂O atmosphere where for the entire investigated
721 O₂ range 21-50%, a homogeneous ignition mode was observed. It should be noted that
722 replacing N₂ with H₂O enhances two reactions: ($C + H_2O \rightarrow CO + H_2$ and $CO + H_2 \rightarrow$
723 $CO_2 + H_2$). This supports CO and H₂ production which is beneficial to reducing ignition
724 delay as well as promoting homogeneous ignition mode. Borrego et al. [99] obtained
725 chars from different pulverized biomasses by pyrolysis in oxy-fuel and air conditions in
726 DTF at 1200K. They reported no substantial changes between char characteristics,
727 namely pore volume, morphology, reactivity.

728 3.3.7 Impact of biomass pretreatment – torrefaction, pyrolysis, and water leaching

729 Pretreatment technologies, such as torrefaction, pyrolysis and water leaching, are
730 commonly applied to improve the quality of biomass fuels, in terms of reactivity,
731 grindability, and uniformity, etc. Botelho et al. [100] compared the combustion
732 characteristics of raw and torrefied grape pomace and concluded that the burnout
733 values of torrefied biomass were lower than for the raw one, due to the lower volatile
734 content and higher fixed carbon content. Gürel et al. [6] investigated the effect of

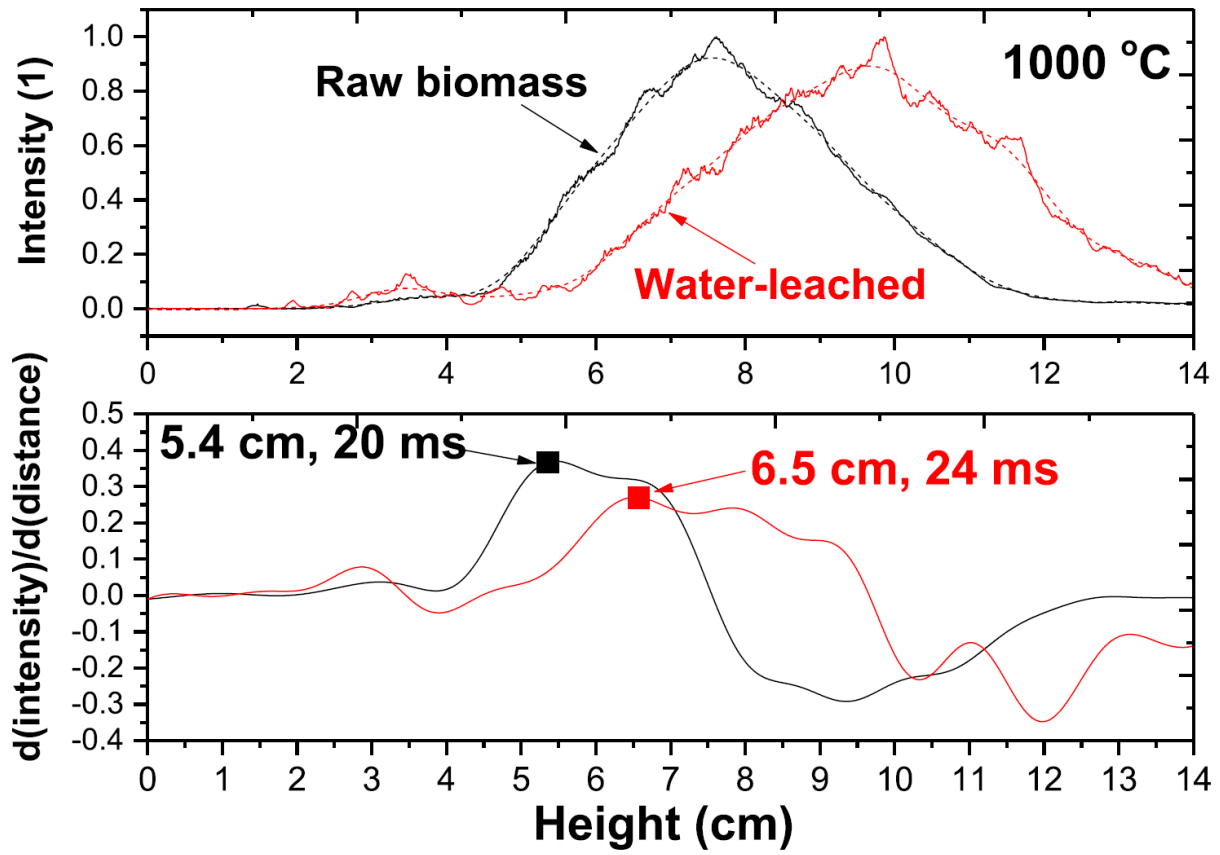
735 torrefaction, slow, and fast pyrolysis on the single particle combustion of agricultural
736 biomass at high heating rate conditions, and observed that all studied raw and torrefied
737 fuels were ignited in the gas phase, while chars produced from slow or fast pyrolysis
738 underwent a heterogeneous ignition which is reasonable as the lack of volatiles should
739 always result in a surface-type ignition. Fig. 13 illustrates the ignition delay time of olive
740 residue and almond shell before and after pretreatments. It can be observed that the
741 impact of torrefaction on ignition delay is different for olive residues and almond shells.
742 It also shows that slow pyrolysis increased the ignition delay time substantially among
743 all pretreatment methods. During slow pyrolysis, the volatiles escape slowly while the
744 particle withstands cooling and heating cycles which may result in cross-linking of the
745 char and a more stable carbon structure and higher carbon content. This may cause
746 an increase in ignition delay. As regards the fast pyrolysis, there is a rapid temperature
747 increase and there is an intense release of volatiles. This may result in macropores
748 creation. Owing to insufficient resident time, char cross-linking did not occur after
749 bridge breaking, as opposed to slow pyrolysis, which affects the particle reactivity. As
750 a result, one obtains a highly porous and reactive particle which has a much lower
751 ignition delay. The ignition delay of fast pyrolyzed olive residue and almond shell is
752 comparable to that of raw biomass fuels. Even though a heterogeneous ignition was
753 observed for fast pyrolysis chars, such a low ignition delay may result from the
754 presence of a volatile cloud attached to the surface as the volatile content was around
755 20 wt.% on a dry basis.



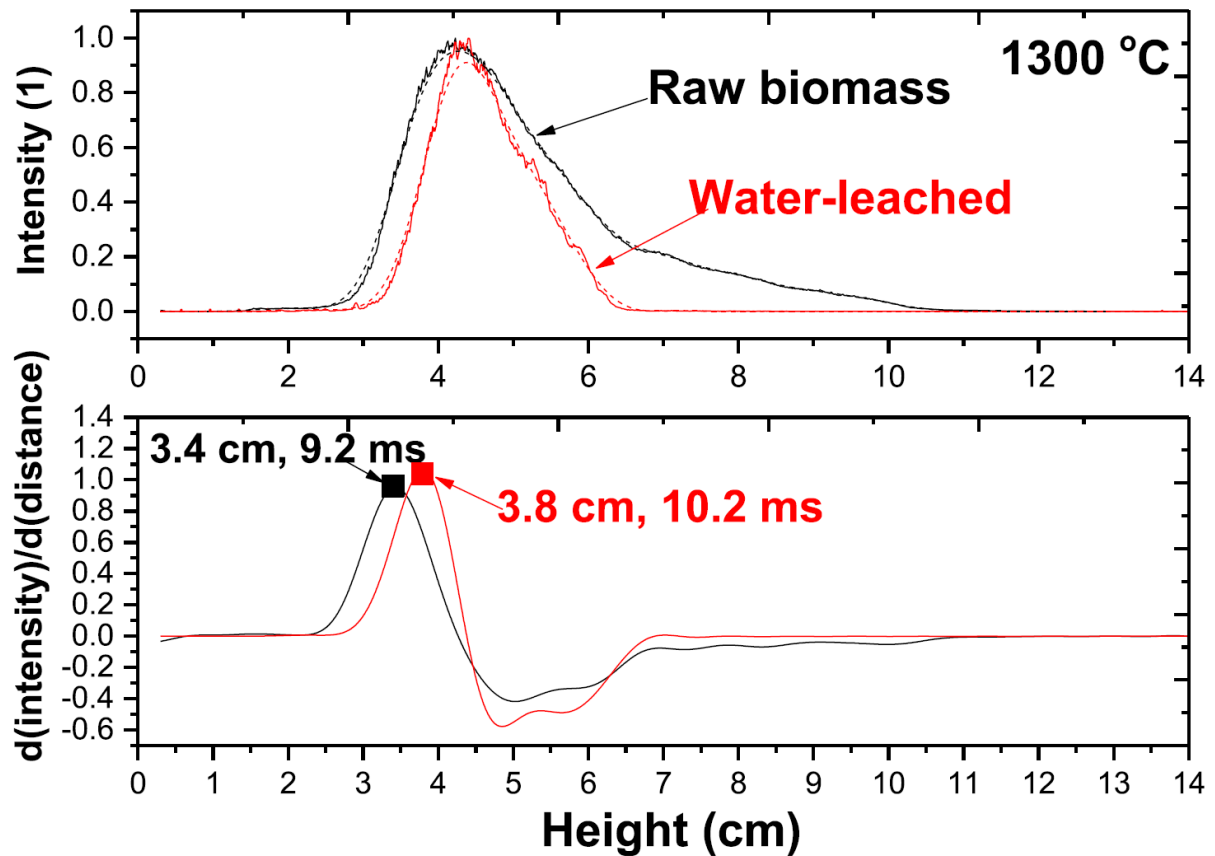
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757 Fig. 13 Ignition delay times for olive residue and almond shell. Adapted from [6].

758 Wang et al. [101] studied the effect of feedstock water leaching on ignition during
 759 wheat straw combustion in a flat-flame burner reactor. Water leaching removes 90%
 760 of the K and all the Cl, whereas the less soluble minerals like Si, Ca, Mg, P, and Fe
 761 minerals were found to be hard to remove by water leaching. As regards the biomass
 762 particles properties, it was observed that water leaching increases the surface area
 763 and pore volume. Fig. 14 indicates a lower ignition delay at 1300°C than at 1000°C.
 764 Moreover, after water leaching, the ignition at 1000°C is delayed (from 20 ms to 24
 765 ms), whereas for 1300°C it is delayed from 9.2 ms to 10.2 ms. It is evident that at higher
 766 temperatures, water leaching has a smaller impact on ignition. Additionally, as seen in
 767 Fig. 14b, burnout finishes sooner after water leaching.. Eventually, the results obtained
 768 from the flat-flame burner are in a good agreement with the results obtained generally
 769 from TGA. It is a noteworthy observation since in TGA studies, the heating rate is
 770 limited to 5-100°C/min, whereas in real-life reactors, the heating rate is as high as 10⁵
 771 °C/s.



(a)



(b)

773

774 Figure 14. Ignition time of biomass wheat straw particles a) at 1000°C, b) at 1300°C.

775

Reprinted with permission from [101].

776 *3.4 Applied reactors*

777 Reactors play a key role in combustion technology of biomass where the specific
 778 working conditions such as combustion atmosphere, pressure or heat transfer affect
 779 the biomass thermochemical conversion process. Currently, most of world-wide
 780 reactors fall into the category of entrained flow reactors, fluidized bed reactors and
 781 fixed-bed reactors. These reactors differ in terms of operating conditions and fuel
 782 requirements which will directly affect the ignition. However, most studies on biomass
 783 ignition have been performed in drop tube furnaces (DTFs) [3,13,14,29,36–
 784 39,53,58,77,79,101] and entrained flow reactors (EFRs) [17,33,35,40,51,84,96] with

785 feedstocks of dust biomass particles. DTFs and EFRs reactors have similar working
786 principle, although temperatures obtained in EFRs are slightly higher (1800K) than in
787 DTFs (1400-1500K) but the operating conditions for both reactors are close to the
788 conditions of large-scale boilers as cold particles are injected into the very hot
789 atmosphere. The typical residence times in DTFs, EFRs are in the order of
790 seconds/milliseconds. As a result, such facilities are considered appropriate to
791 investigate the early stages of particle combustion, especially the ignition behavior,
792 provided that experimental techniques allow for a sufficient time resolution. The recent
793 development in experimental research concerning ignition was achieved mainly thanks
794 to significant advances in nonintrusive optical diagnostics. However, most of the
795 current knowledge from ignition-related studies is based on laminar flow conditions and
796 single particle scale. Large-scale combustors operate under fully turbulent flow with
797 high mass flow rates of the fuel where the ignition characteristics can deviate from
798 those obtained under simplified reactor conditions. For example, in contrast to single
799 particle ignition, ignition in a stream or particle cluster is much more complex, and the
800 ignition mechanism would be additionally influenced by, for instance, the dust
801 concentration or the size of the dust cloud. Under such conditions, it would be important
802 to determine whether the ignition occurs around individual particles or in a gas mixture
803 away from particles. The turbulence effect should also not be neglected as in the study
804 carried out by Tufano et al. [102], the increased turbulent intensity was found to delay
805 the ignition.

806 Due to the complexity of the ignition process, there are still many uncertainties.
807 Future biomass ignition research should incorporate the strength and advantages of
808 both experimental and numerical methods to allow proper classification of biomass
809 fuels in terms of ignition delay and ignition mechanism. This would be a huge step

810 forward for the optimum selection of process conditions, fuel selection, designing or
811 retrofitting reactors.

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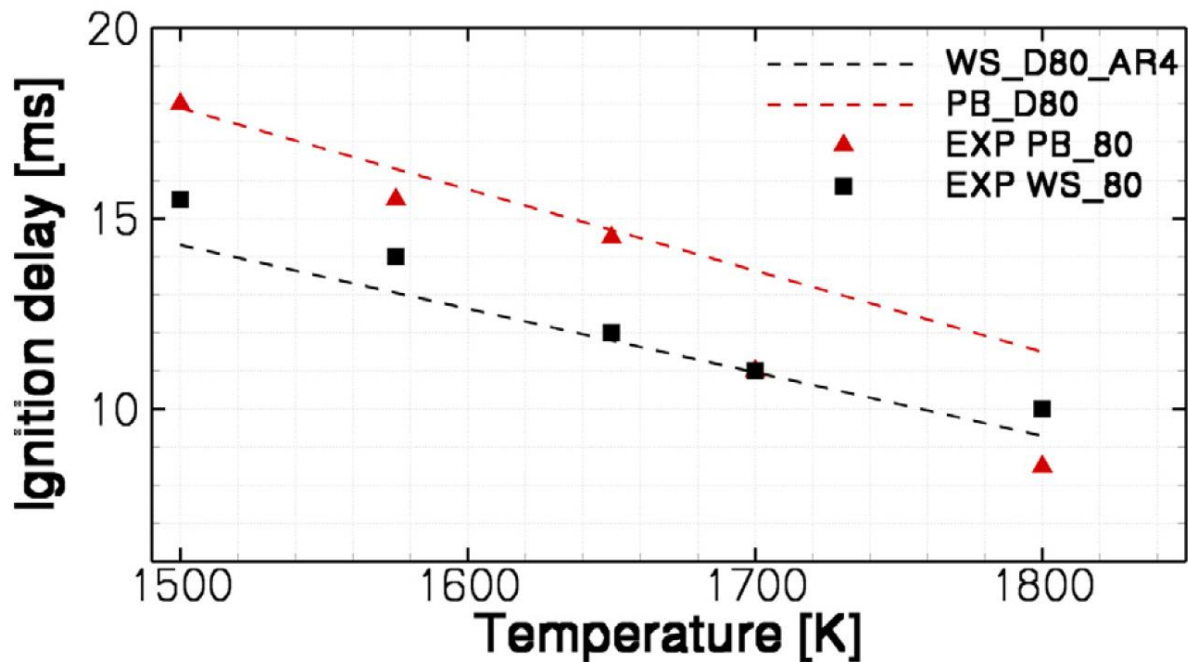
816 *3.5 Incorporated numerical definitions of biomass ignition onset*

817 The experimental measurement techniques of ignition onset have been discussed
818 in section 3.1. However, the determination of ignition onset by experiments is often
819 time consuming and restricted by the access to specific facilities and equipment.
820 Nowadays, numerical simulations are constantly utilized in the field of thermochemical
821 conversion of solid fuels [103–105]. They provide insight on design and process
822 optimization and can be a reliable and time saving alternative to experiments. A
823 complex simulation, by means of e.g. DNS or LES can provide fundamental information
824 related to ignition, such as local instabilities, unsteadiness, instantaneous species
825 concentration, temperature, and heat exchange which can help to further understand
826 the occurring phenomena before the actual ignition. The literature devoted to numerical
827 investigation of biomass ignition is, however, extremely limited [17,106–108].

828 *3.5.1 Biomass ignition*

829 Fatehi et al. [17] analyzed different criteria for ignition onset of pulverized wheat
830 straw and pine bark particles with respect to the ignition delay. The normalized CO and
831 CH mass fractions, the time derivative of the particle temperature at the surface, and
832 time derivate of the gas temperature at 3 particle locations were investigated. For
833 example, the application of the definition based on 10% of maximum CH results in the

834 ignition delay of 47.9 ms, while the calculation based on the CO mass fraction results
 835 in 55.3 ms. The 10% of maximum CH concentration yielded the most accurate ignition
 836 delay results against the experimental measurements. A comparison between
 837 numerical and experimental data is illustrated in Fig. 15.

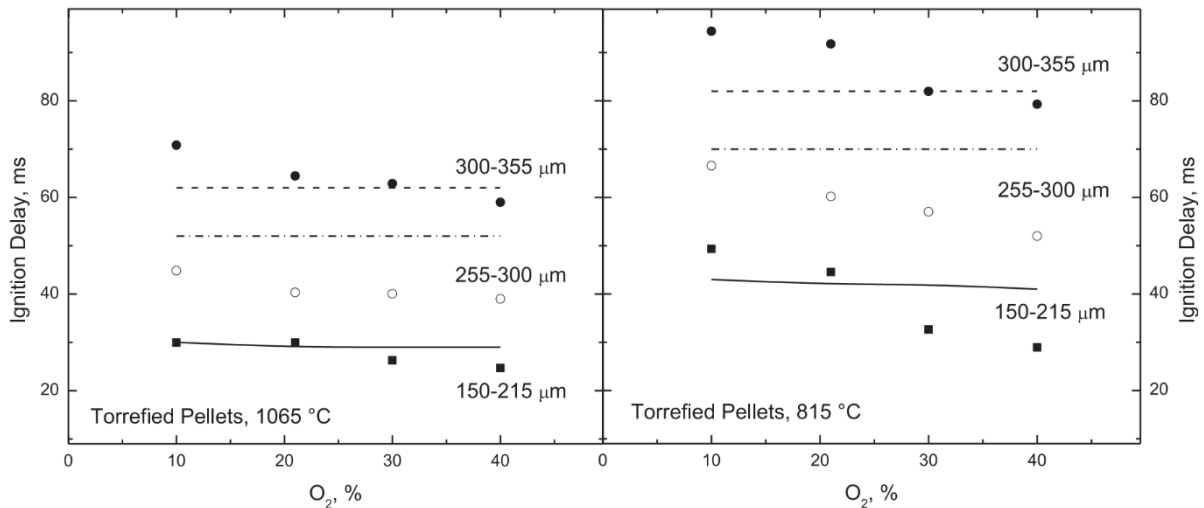


838

839 Fig. 15 Ignition delay of wheat straw (WS) and pine bark (PB) for 80 μm particles.

840 Reprinted with permission from [17].

841 Niksa [108] studied the macroscopic combustion characteristics of different
 842 biomass forms in pulverized fuel furnaces by means of bio-FLASHCHAIN
 843 devolatilization model in combination with the detailed carbon burnout kinetic model
 844 for oxidation - CBK/E given only proximate and ultimate analyses. This work defined
 845 ignition delay as the time to reach 5 daf wt.% of volatiles and the resulting data were
 846 in good agreement with experimental data – Fig. 16. The ignition delay definition was
 847 considered plausible as the temperatures at the end of the assigned ignition delay were
 848 beyond the temperature point for gas fuel mixtures combustion.



849

850 Fig. 16 Ignition delays for torrefied wood pellets, left: 1065°C, right: 815°C for different
 851 particle sizes. Reprinted with permission from [108].

852 Rieth et al. [107] performed a direct numerical (DNS) simulation of a 3-D
 853 turbulent mixing layer to study the volatile ignition and combustion behavior of biomass.
 854 The gas phase was described by a reduced mechanism of 59 species and 462
 855 reactions. The ignition delay was measured as the time from the calculation start until
 856 the maximum OH radical mass fraction was reached in Cantera batch reactor
 857 simulation. There was no reference to experimental data.

858 Table 2 summarizes the numerical ignition onset definitions that were
 859 incorporated in solid fuel combustion research under high heating rate conditions.

860 Table 2. Summary of numerical ignition determination methods.

Numerical ignition delay indicator	Fuel	Operating conditions	Modeling methods	Ref.

CO mass fraction, CH mass fraction, $\left(\frac{\partial T_p}{\partial t}\right)_{min}, \left(\frac{\partial T_g}{\partial t}\right)_{max}$	Biomass	Single pulverized particles, CH ₄ /air	CFD and 1-D model, Ranzi model [109–111], GRI3.0	[17]
OH mass fraction	Biomass	Pulverized fuel	In-house LES/DNS code, Reduced gas-phase mechanism	[112]
5 dry-ash-free wt.% of volatile matter	Biomass	Pulverized fuel, O ₂ /N ₂	CBK/E [113], bio-FC [114–117]	[108]

861

862 In summary, the definition of ignition delay time to reach 5% daf wt. of volatile
863 matter adopted by Niksa, and the CH mass species temporal evolutions adopted in
864 [17] were found to yield the most accurate biomass ignition characteristics with respect
865 to the experimental measurements. The objective of
866 section 4 is to discuss the most widely applied modeling approaches of the combustion
867 main sub-processes that have an impact on ignition and to assess their efficiency in
868 ignition prediction.

869 4. Ignition-related biomass conversion modeling

870 4.1 Biomass combustion process

871 The models will be described for the following combustion processes:

- 872 • Inert heating

- 873 • Drying
- 874 • Devolatilization
- 875 • Gas-phase reactions
- 876 • Char conversion

877 4.1.1 Inert heating

878 When it comes to inert heating, there are two general modeling approaches. The
 879 first approach considers the particle to be spherical and isothermal (the second
 880 assumption is valid for pulverized particles and it depends on the Biot number). A
 881 simple heat balance is generally applied to relate the change of particle temperature
 882 to the convective heat transfer and radiation at the particle surface [118] – Eq. (2). This
 883 law is valid when the particle temperature is smaller than the vaporization temperature
 884 during which drying begins.

$$m_p c_p \frac{dT_p}{dt} = Q_c + Q_r \quad (2)$$

885 Where m_p – particle mass, c_p – particle specific heat, Q_c – heat due to convection, Q_r
 886 – heat due to radiation

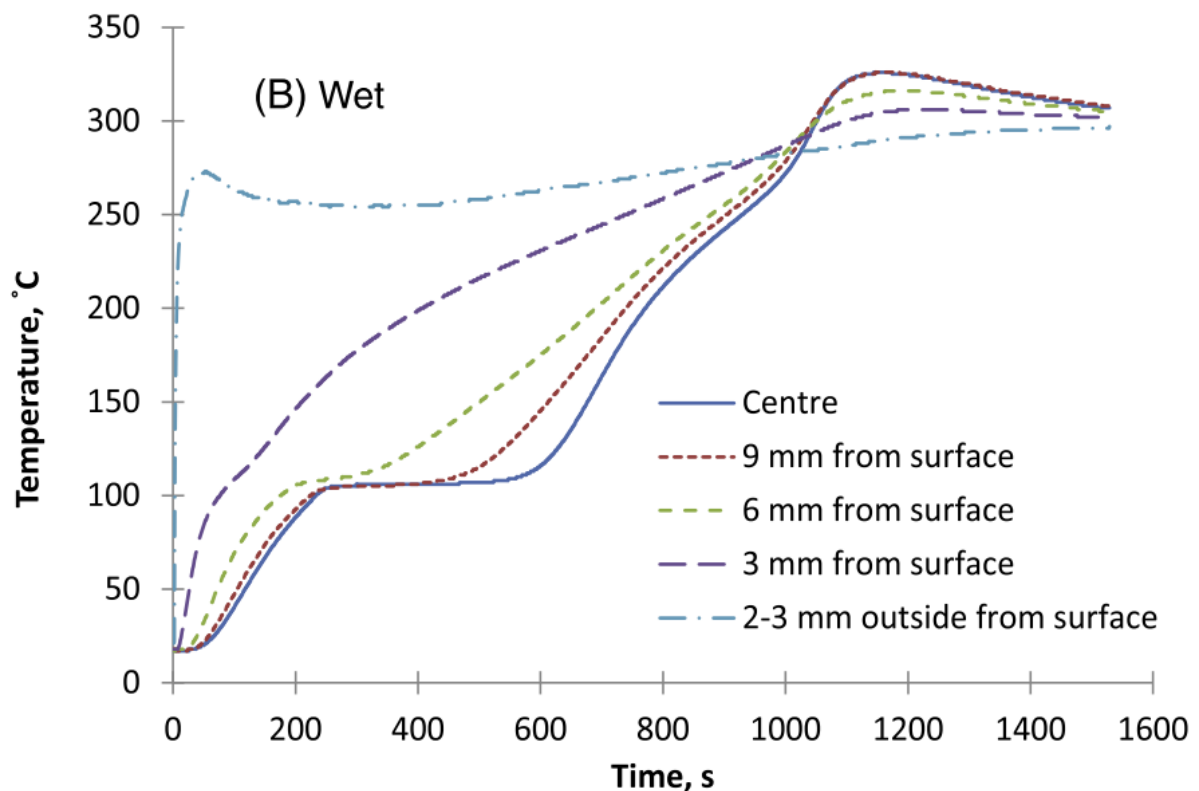
887 The second approach – Eq. (3) considers thermal gradients within particles [119].
 888 For example, Gubba et al. [118] developed the model that combined the effect of
 889 conductive heat transfer to and from the particle, where thermal gradients took place
 890 only in radial directions.

$$\frac{1}{\alpha} \frac{\partial T}{\partial t} + \frac{q}{k} \frac{\partial \rho_p}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial^2 T}{\partial r^2} + \frac{p}{r} \frac{\partial T}{\partial r} \quad (3)$$

891 Where: α – thermal emissivity, T – local temperature, t – time, q – heat generation/heat
 892 loss, k -thermal conductivity, r -radial coordinate, p – shape factor.

893 The second component of Eq. (3) can be considered during drying, devolatilization or
 894 char conversion as mass losses and heat generation/heat loss are expected.

895 The effect of particle temperature gradient can have a substantial effect on the
 896 ignition delay not only during inert heating, but during the entire combustion process
 897 that involves all stages. For instance, thermal behavior using spherical and isothermal
 898 particle approximations was found to be inaccurate for non-spherical particles larger
 899 than 200-300 μm [120]. Fig. 17 illustrates the temperature profile in a pyrolyzing wet
 900 wood cylinder of diameter 25.1 mm, in which a substantial temperature gradient away
 901 from the particle center could be observed. This potentially affects the moisture release
 902 and pyrolysis dynamics thus resulting in a much different ignition behavior.



903

904 Fig. 17 Temperature profile in a pyrolyzing wet wood cylinder with a diameter of 25.1
 905 mm and a moisture content of 20%. Reprinted with permission from [121].

906 4.1.2 *Particle drying*

907 There are several simple one-step models generally applied in the literature,
908 namely the heat flux model [120,122], the equilibrium model [123], and the chemical
909 reaction model [123]. In the heat flux model, heat transfer to the particle governs the
910 evaporation process. The main assumption of the model is based on the infinitely thin
911 region where evaporation takes place and at the normal water boiling point. Apart from
912 heat transfer to the particle, there is also a mass transfer inside the particle. As regards
913 the chemical reaction model, the drying rate is expressed by applying the temperature-
914 dependent Arrhenius relation. Even though the model is robust and numerically stable,
915 it cannot predict condensation. Moreover, all these models do not take into account
916 the free water movement. Such an assumption limits the validity of the models for initial
917 moisture contents below the free water continuity point [124]. The models prediction
918 capabilities of the evaporation rate have been investigated by Fatehi and Bai [125].
919 For biomass fuels with large moisture content, inaccurately predicted evaporation rate
920 can lead to a misprediction of the particle heating rate at the first stages of combustion.

921 4.1.3 *Devolatilization*

922 Currently, the biomass pyrolysis is generally modeled as the weighted sum of the
923 reference biomass components (cellulose, hemicellulose, lignin) [126] where a
924 hypothesis of noninteraction between the three main biomass components is generally
925 assumed. Recent publications indicate, however, that for low heating rates the
926 interaction did happen to occur [127,128]. For example, lignin reduces char formation
927 and encourages production of light compounds from the decomposition of cellulose.
928 The interaction between organic components and inorganic components is generally
929 neglected as well even in the most comprehensive models [129]. The presence of
930 extractives is very often neglected too. This can be a valid assumption for woody

931 residues. But for nonwoody residues, the extractives content can be higher than 10%
 932 [129] thus making it an impactful component on the final volatile yield. High amounts
 933 of inorganic compounds can have an inhibiting or catalytic effect on devolatilization. In
 934 general, similarly to coal, biomass devolatilization models can be divided into global
 935 and detailed approaches. The summary of the models is presented in Table 3.

936

937

938

939

940

941 Table 3. Summary of widely applied devolatilization models.

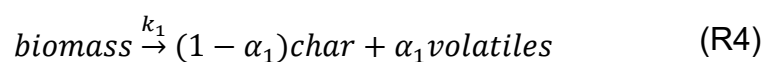
Model	Short description
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Global models

Single-step first-
 order (SFOR) [130–
 133]

$$\frac{dV}{dt} = A \cdot \exp\left(-\frac{E}{RT}\right) \cdot (V_{\infty} - V) \quad (4)$$

Volatiles V that evolve during the devolatilization process are related to the difference between the current V and the ultimate yield of V_{∞} .



Competing two-step $biomass \xrightarrow{k_2} (1 - \alpha_2)char + \alpha_2volatiles$ (R5)

(C2SM) -
Kobayashi [132]

$$\frac{dV}{dt} = \left(\alpha_1 A_1 \exp\left(-\frac{E_1}{RT_1}\right) + \alpha_2 A_2 \exp\left(-\frac{E_2}{RT_2}\right) \right) \cdot C \quad (5)$$

Mechanism is based on two competing reactions producing char and volatiles from the fuel. One of the reactions predominates at lower heating rates, whereas the other at higher rates.

Distributed
activation energy

$$\frac{dV}{dt} = A \cdot \exp\left(\frac{-E_a - \sigma_E Z}{RT}\right) \cdot (V_\infty - V) \quad (6)$$

(DAE) [134]

$$Z = \operatorname{erfinv}(1 - 2 \cdot (V_\infty - V)) \quad (7)$$

A variable parameter of activation energy is proposed as a function of extent of reaction. E_a - mean activation energy,

σE - standard deviation

A detailed description of the DAE model, including its history, can be found in the work by Cai et al [135].

Three parallel-
reaction (3PM)
model [136]

$$\frac{dm_i}{dt} = k_i(VM_i - V_{g,i}) \quad (8)$$

$$VM_i = VM(1 - C_i) \quad (9)$$

In the 3PM model, biomass is treated as a mixture of cellulose, hemicellulose and lignin. The total weight loss of each component is described by SFOR.

For the 3PM model, the volatile matter amount is corrected using the fraction of char produce

Phenomenological network models

FG-biomass [137] Modified FG-DVC [138] model making it suitable for pyrolysis modeling of agricultural and forestry feedstocks.

Bio-CPD [127,139] The biomass chemical percolation devolatilization model is based on the characteristics of a biomass obtained through a ¹³C NMR spectroscopy

Bio-FLASHCHAIN [114–117] Biomass is represented as chain polymers of cellulose and lignin-like polymers. The original chain statistics developed for FLASHCHAIN are also used in bio-FC.

Ranzi's mechanism [109–111] A mechanist approach based on conventional multistep devolatilization models of lignin, cellulose

and hemicellulose which predicts the yields and lumped composition of tar, gases and carbonized residue.

Anca-Couce's- Ranzi's mechanism [140] The model is based on the aforementioned Ranzi's mechanism. The improvement of this mechanism considers the presence of heterogeneous secondary charring reactions during pyrolysis. In these reactions, char is produced with other primary products from biomass pyrolysis. The adapted (RAC) scheme was applied to fixed-bed pyrolysis and torrefaction [141–143].

942

943 The global models are easy to implement and have an associated reduced
944 computational cost. The process is represented by an overall reaction rate that
945 determines the yield of lumped products. Kinetic parameters required can be obtained
946 experimentally, using such techniques as TGA, FTIR or MS. However, in order to have
947 specific and precise information regarding the volatiles release rate, volatile yield, and
948 ignition characteristics these models lack extreme accuracy. Classical lumped kinetic
949 models are not able to simulate the structural changes during pyrolysis. These
950 approaches were also found to be less accurate in predicting tar yields, volatile gases
951 and char. Due to specific kinetic parameters, these models are also applicable only to
952 specific data range. Therefore for higher accuracy, detailed mechanisms are required.
953 The global devolatilization model share some specific features that deteriorate the
954 predictive capabilities of ignition: a) final volatile yield and composition. For global
955 models, the yield and composition tend to be provided a priori. They are determined

956 either on the basis of proximate and ultimate analysis and elemental mass balance,
957 from other literature, from experimental results, or from detailed devolatilization
958 models, b) the global models usually consider only primary devolatilization reactions,
959 whereas secondary reactions are neglected, c) the release rate of volatiles. It is evident
960 that the more adjustable parameters the model has, the more accurate it can be. The
961 most important and the most basic adjustable parameters in global models are the pre-
962 exponential factor and activation energy (e.g. SFOR). In the Kobayashi model, there
963 are two sets of pre-exponential factors and activation energies, but also two
964 stoichiometric coefficients which correspond to the volatile yield at low and high heating
965 rates. Therefore, from the mathematical point of view, the Kobayashi model is expected
966 to be a much more accurate approach, d) with respect to the global models and the
967 release rate of volatiles, the gases are assumed to devolatilize with a constant ratio,
968 but this hypothesis is only reasonable for entrained flow reactors,

969 Chen et al. [137] developed the FG-biomass model applying the functional-group
970 (FG) model which describes the evolution of the gas species. In contrast with the FG-
971 DVC approach, FG-biomass applies FG sub-mode to describe tar evolution as well.
972 Therefore, the evolution of tars, CH₄, CO, CO₂, or H₂O is described either with one or
973 more FG models. FG model evolution is described with the distributed activation
974 energy (DAEM) approach. Sheng and Azevedo [144] introduced the first version of the
975 bio-CPD model. Chemical structure coefficients were developed for hemicellulose,
976 cellulose, and lignin. Rate coefficients were obtained for bridge breaking, cross-linking,
977 and side-chain release. A correlation was developed that predicted the mass fractions
978 of hemicellulose, cellulose, and lignin on the basis of oxygen to carbon ratio, the
979 hydrogen to carbon ratio, and the volatile matter. The content of hemicellulose is
980 calculated by the difference. This method is referred to as the correlation method.

981 Numerical results were in general agreement with experimental data. Fletcher et al.
 982 [127] introduced a different version of the bio-CPD model which is based on the
 983 concept of Sheng and Azevedo [144]. Separate devolatilization rates and chemical
 984 structures coefficients were obtained for hemicellulose, cellulose, and lignin. Even
 985 though percolation lattice structure was applied for each of the three components, a
 986 site for cellulose and hemicellulose was defined as anomeric carbon due to no
 987 presence of aromatic carbons. Hemicellulose was modeled as an average between
 988 glucomannan and xylan. Table 4 and Table 5 present chemical structure parameters
 989 and corresponding kinetic constants. Similar to coal, some biomass parameters are
 990 obtained directly from nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) experiments, while some
 991 other parameters are determined from the known structures of the main biomass
 992 components. During devolatilization, there is a competition between scission and char
 993 formation. These reactions are governed by the DAEM model.

994 Table 4. Chemical structure parameters for various biomass fuels [127].

Parameter	Molecular weight per cluster	Molecular weight per side chain	Percent intact bridges	Coordination number
	MW_{cl}	MW_{δ}	P_0	$\sigma + 1$
cellulose	81	22.7	1.0	3.0
Hardwood cellulose	77.5	21.5	1.0	3.0
Softwood cellulose	81	22.7	1.0	3.0
Hardwood lignin	208	39	0.71	3.5
Softwood lignin	186	34	0.71	3.5

Kraft lignin	195	22	0.71	3.5
xylan	85	24	1.0	3.0
glucomannan	96	28	1.0	3.0

995

996 Table 5. CPD kinetic parameters for cellulose, hemicellulose and lignin [127].

Kinetic parameter	Cellulose	Xylan	Glucomannan	lignin
E_b (kcal/mol)	55.4	51.5	51.5	51.5
A_b (s^{-1})	2.0×10^{16}	1.2×10^{20}	55.4	55.4
σ_b (kcal/mol)	4.1	0.1	5.0×10^{19}	5.0×10^{19}
E_g (kcal/mol)	61.2	38.2	7.0×10^{16}	7.0×10^{16}
A_g (s^{-1})	3.0×10^{15}	3.0×10^{15}	1.38	1.38
σ_g (kcal/mol)	8.1	5.0	0.5	0.5
ρ	100	1.08	38.2	38.2
E_{cross} (kcal/mol)	65	65	69	69
A_{cross} (s^{-1})	3.0×10^{15}	3.0×10^{15}	3.0×10^{13}	3.0×10^{13}

997

998 Niksa [117] developed a bio-FLASHCHAIN model which considers biomass to be
999 a mixture of cellulose and a component similar to lignin. The chain macromolecules in
1000 the structure of biomass is described by bridges. They can undergo decomposition by
1001 scission, thus producing a smaller component that can be later released as gas or tars.
1002 Bridges and bridge-scission products can also produce char links that reconnect later
1003 on with the char matrix. The formation of tar is described in analogy to a flash distillation
1004 process. Char devolatilization is accounted for as well. It releases mainly CO and H₂.

1005 The reaction rates for char devolatilization, scission, and condensation were described
1006 with distributed activation energy models. Recent publications by Niksa [114–116]
1007 utilized bio-FLASHCHAIN theory in validating a modeling framework to accurately
1008 predict the total and tar yields from any lignin, the total volatiles yields from any torrefied
1009 wood, and the total volatiles yields from torrefied grasses and agricultural residues.
1010 Char links replace bridges during torrefaction within macromolecules of both lignin and
1011 cellulose. The introduced char links are mainly responsible for volatile yield reduction
1012 due to torrefaction. They are estimated based on ultimate analysis. In [145], Niksa
1013 developed a phenomenological reaction mechanism for the devolatilization of pure
1014 cellulose. Eventually, the goal was to develop a devolatilization mechanism for any
1015 form of whole biomass.

1016 Ranzi et al. [109–111] developed the Bio-PoliMi mechanism which is based
1017 on conventional multistep pyrolysis models of cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin, and
1018 predicts the yield and lumped composition of the gas, tars, and carbonized residue. 46
1019 representative species are accounted for in the model. Simplified mechanisms are
1020 developed for each biomass component. The biomass reference components are
1021 evaluated on the basis of the triangulation method. Five different components are
1022 taken into account. Cellulose, hemicellulose, and three lignin species (lignin-H, lignin-
1023 O, lignin-C). A combination of three components as a representation of lignin is justified
1024 by the complexity of its composition. The hydrogen/carbon ratio and oxygen/carbon
1025 ratio of three reference fuels are defined as linear combinations of the five
1026 aforementioned components, defining a triangle. As a result, any biomass fuel located
1027 in the range of carbon and hydrogen encompassed by triangle vertices can be
1028 described as a linear combination of the reference fuels. Secondary or successive gas-
1029 phase reactions of the released species are also accounted for and are coupled to a

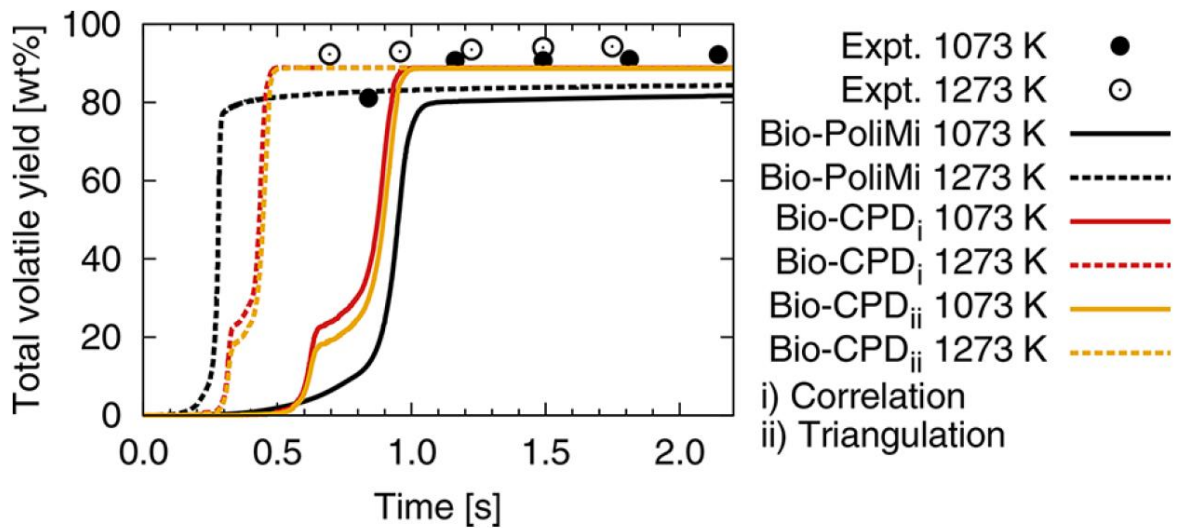
1030 more general pyrolysis kinetic scheme. Eventually, the proposed mechanism provided
1031 correct results in micro-TGA experiments and for product composition in fast pyrolysis
1032 experiments [146].

1033 The improved Ranzi's mechanism by Anca-Couce [140] accounts for the
1034 presence of heterogeneous secondary charring reactions where char is produced
1035 along with the gases. The implementation of secondary charring reactions can predict
1036 the evolution of the heat of pyrolysis for different conditions. The model was able to
1037 describe the heat evolution in micro-TGA-DSC experiments where pyrolysis was
1038 endothermic and exothermic.

1039 Most of the described biomass devolatilization models are derived from coal
1040 devolatilization models. The main limitation of coal devolatilization models in biomass
1041 modeling is the difference in structure between the two fuels. While coal consists
1042 mainly of polyaromatic compounds, which is to some extent true for lignin, two biomass
1043 other components, namely cellulose and hemicellulose resemble chains. The structure
1044 difference will therefore impose greater uncertainty of coal devolatilization models
1045 application in biomass modeling.

1046 Rabacal et al. [126] applied two detailed biomass pyrolysis mechanisms, namely
1047 the bio-CPD model and the bio-PoliMi model to predict pyrolysis yields of two biomass
1048 fuels in high heating rate conditions. On the basis of Figure 18, one can observe
1049 differences in terms of the volatiles release rate and the total volatile yield between the
1050 two models. The bio-PoliMi approach exhibits the impact of the operating temperature
1051 on the final yield. The bio-CPD model, with respect to bio-PoliMi, presents a change in
1052 slope of the volatiles release rate which corresponds to the release of hemicellulose.
1053 Both correlation and triangulation methods are insensitive to the volatile yield

1054 predictions. The bio-CPD model shows better agreement with experimental data
 1055 although both approaches underpredict the final yield.



1057 Fig. 18 Total volatile yield of sawdust at 1073 K and 1273 K. Reprinted with
 1058 permission from [126].

1059 Ferreiro et al. [136] examined the SFOR model and the 3PM model in slow
 1060 pyrolysis. It turned out that while SFOR captured the general pyrolysis behavior in a
 1061 reasonable way, the 3PM model was able to predict correctly the maximum
 1062 devolatilization rates for all of the examined biomass fuels. However, SFOR
 1063 considered only one biomass component which resulted in three fitting parameters
 1064 (pre-exponential factor, activation energy, and temperature exponent). In the 3PM
 1065 model, three biomass components were considered and this resulted in nine fitting
 1066 parameters. This explains the accuracy of the models.

1067 To sum up, there are not many publications in the field that would thoroughly
 1068 examine the capabilities and reliability of the models in terms of the biomass ignition.
 1069 Further research is required.

1070 *4.1.4 Gas-phase chemistry*

1071 In combustion modeling, as regards the ignition and flame properties, a wide range
1072 of coupled issues is involved:

- 1073 • Detailed chemistry schemes are necessary to assess the fuel
1074 consumption rate, combustion products formation, and pollutants.
1075 Detailed information about the chemistry is required to predict ignition or
1076 extinction, stabilization together with pollutions.
- 1077 • Fluid mechanical properties are necessary to be able to describe mixing
1078 between reactants and, more generally, all transfer phenomena (heat
1079 transfer, molecular diffusion, convection, etc.)
- 1080 • Radiative heat transfer is generated in the flame by carbon particles and
1081 some species.

1082 In this review, the main focus will be laid on the first issue. For details regarding
1083 fluid mechanical properties refer to [30], whereas for radiative heat transfer details refer
1084 to [103]. The most widely applied detailed chemistry schemes are as follows:

- 1085 • GRI-Mech [147] is an optimized detailed kinetic mechanism designed to
1086 model natural gas and air mixture combustion. All the reaction rate
1087 constants were obtained empirically. The mechanism consists of radical
1088 reactions. The conditions for which GRI-Mech was optimized are
1089 approximately 1000 to 2500 K, 10 Torr to 10 atm, and the equivalence
1090 ratio of 0.1-5 for premixed systems [47,147].
- 1091 • Reduced GRI-Mech [148] – two sets of elementary reactions (19-species
1092 reaction set and 22-reaction set) developed by truncation of the original
1093 GRI-Mech with the aim of developing a smallest reaction set to closely
1094 mimic combustion characteristics predicted by the full mechanism.

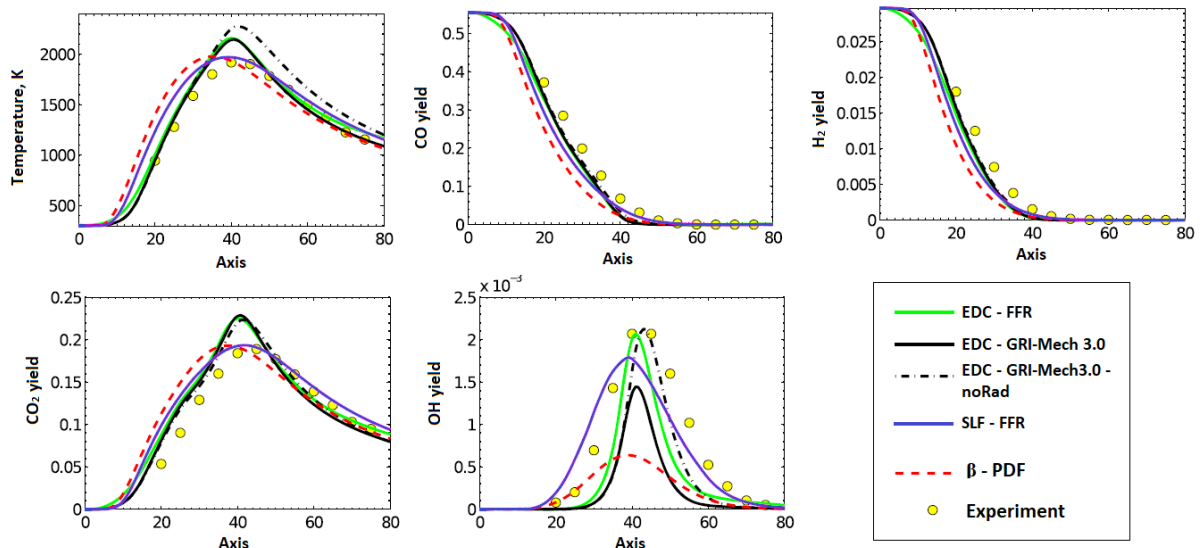
- 1095 • CRECK [149–152] – the detailed kinetic mechanism that is provided by
1096 the CRECK modeling group at Politecnico de Milano. For instance, there
1097 is a C1-C3 mechanism, where the fuel is CH₄. The mechanism is a
1098 radical reaction approach which consists of 114 species and 1999
1099 reactions.
- 1100 • Reduced CRECK mechanism [153,154] –reduced models have been
1101 developed in order to closely mimic the combustion behavior of detailed
1102 approaches.

1103 The second group of chemistry models constitute global reaction approaches where
1104 kinetic parameters are generally taken from other literature, namely from two global
1105 mechanisms: Westbrook and Dryer [155,156] mechanism and Jones and Lindstedt
1106 mechanism [157]. Although such an approach can provide a reasonable description of
1107 the process, one should not expect to obtain extreme accuracy. It was proven that
1108 detailed models were found to provide better agreement with respect to the
1109 experimental data. As regards the ignition, all the above gas chemistry models predict
1110 the gas species evolution with respect to time and space. For advanced approaches
1111 like GRI-Mech or CRECK, it is possible to obtain the yield of CH or OH radicals,
1112 whereas global models are only able to provide the yield of e.g. CO or CO₂. Moreover,
1113 the effect of neglecting complex chemistry is that the gas temperature tends to be over-
1114 predicted. It is because there are no radicals which would carry energy that could be
1115 converted to heat. Lysenko et al. [158] carried numerical simulations of the Sandia
1116 flame CHNa applying the eddy dissipation concept (EDC) with the detailed GRI-Mech
1117 chemistry, the steady laminar flamelet (SLF) model, and the probability density function
1118 (PDF). The P-1 radiation model [159] and, in one case, no radiation model was
1119 investigated. The Sandia flame CHNa has the advantage over simple geometries,

1120 which makes it possible to focus on the role of chemical kinetics and the role of
1121 turbulence in numerical simulations. Fig. 19 illustrates the mean temperature and
1122 composition profiles (H_2 and CO_2) along the axis. Several models were analyzed. The
1123 FFR model is the mechanism developed by Frassoldati, Faravelli, and Ranzi,
1124 specifically for the applications of syngas combustion [160]. The general match
1125 between numerical results and experimental data was reasonable and satisfactory.
1126 One may also observe that there is a strong interrelation between flame temperature
1127 and species prediction. An over-prediction of the flame temperature may be caused
1128 by:

- 1129 • Neglect of the radiative heat losses and under-prediction of the dissipation
1130 rate, according to Hewson and Kerstein [161] – possible temp. overprediction
1131 (60 – 240 K)
- 1132 • According to Cuoci et al. [162], the thermal radiation effect should only account
1133 for 30-40K of possible peak temperature over-prediction. In [158], the impact of
1134 thermal radiation on the peak temperature was more significant – 130K. This
1135 could be attributed to the simple P-1 [159] radiation model.

1136 As for the gas composition, even though a satisfactory agreement was obtained
1137 no model provided extreme accuracy.



1138

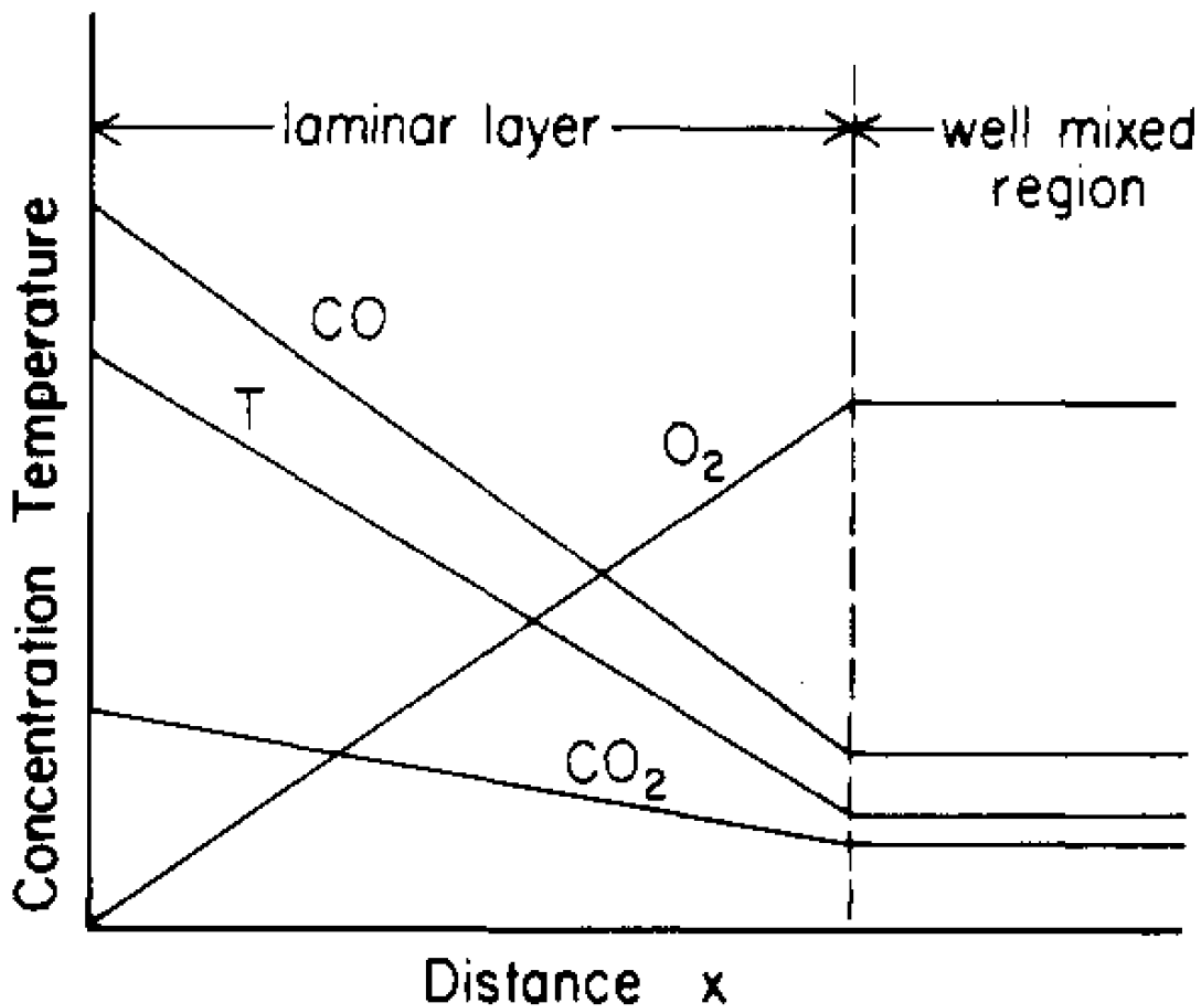
1139 Fig. 19 Exemplary results - mean temperature and composition profiles along the axis
 1140 for the Sandia flame CHNa. Adapted from [158].

1141 4.1.5 Film diffusion – external transport

1142 In char combustion, external transport processes play a notable role, especially, at
 1143 very high temperatures, where heterogeneous ignition tends to occur, and where film
 1144 diffusion limits the reaction rate (Regime III). Film diffusion takes into account the gas
 1145 transport from the bulk phase to the outer particle surface. The transport takes place
 1146 via convection and molecular diffusion. While the former dominates in turbulent flows,
 1147 the latter controls laminar flows. The outer particle surface and the bulk phase are
 1148 separated from each other by the boundary layer. Therefore, it is important to
 1149 accurately account for homogeneous reactions in the boundary layer which can have
 1150 a direct effect on the particle temperature and conversion rate. Generally, there are
 1151 three widely used modeling approaches of film diffusion:

- 1152 - Single-film model
- 1153 - Double-film model
- 1154 - Continuous-film model

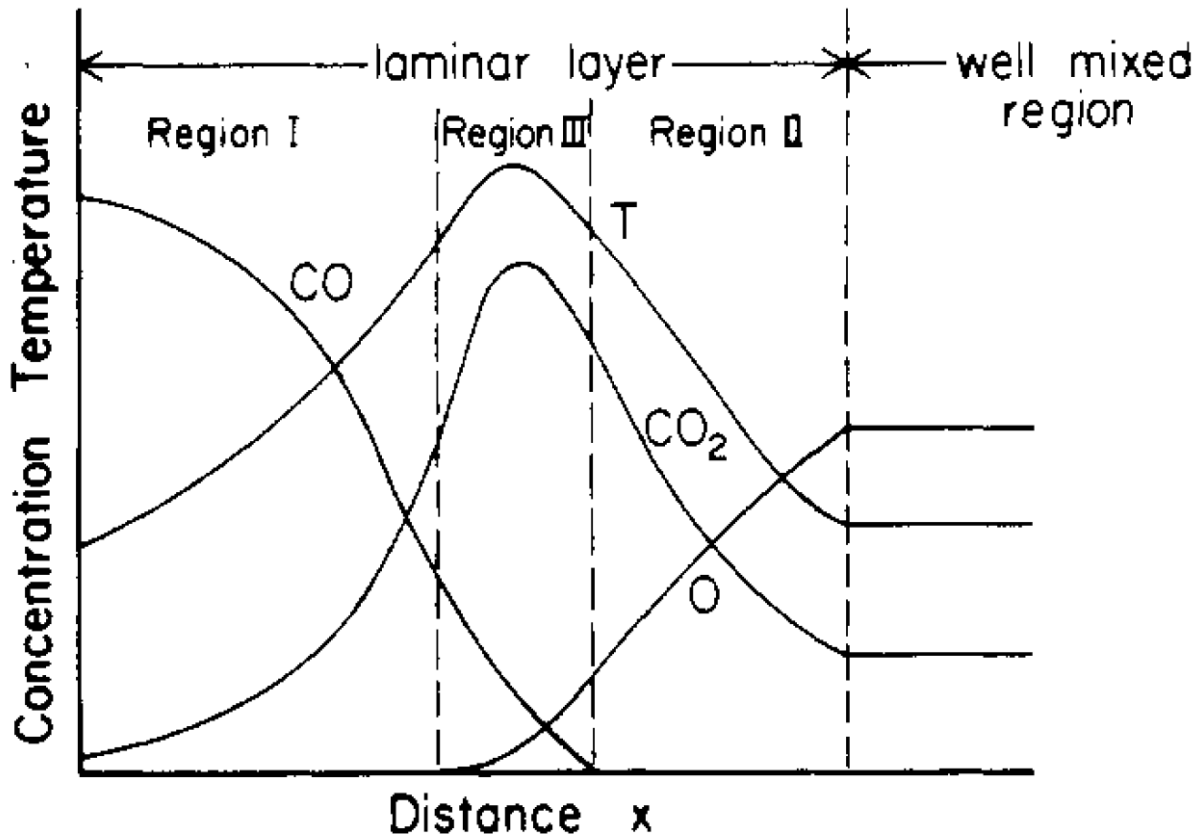
1155 Judging by Fig. 20, one can observe that the single-film model assumes that even
1156 though CO and O₂ are present in the boundary layer, there is no chemical interaction,
1157 whereas, in the double-film model, CO and O₂ react forming CO₂. This will lead to a
1158 different particle temperature prediction. In practice, however, the incorporation of
1159 double-film models or continuous-film models into CFD would substantially increase
1160 the computational effort as it would require the solution of a system of coupled partial
1161 differential equations. Therefore, only the single-film approach is generally applied. For
1162 more details regarding the models refer to [105].



1163

1164

a)



1165

1166

b)

1167

Fig. 20 Schematic concentration of CO, CO₂, O, and temperature profile in laminar

1168

layer for a) single-film model, b) double-film model. Reprinted with permission from

1169

[163]. Copyright (1977) American Chemical Society.

1170

4.1.6 Char conversion models

1171

Due to high biomass volatile content, a homogeneous ignition is a dominant

1172

biomass ignition mechanism [164,165]. However, for specific operating reactor

1173

conditions (pulverized biomass particles, high heating rates), biomass can ignite

1174

heterogeneously, even before the start of devolatilization. Therefore, even though char

1175

conversion does not play a dominant role in homogeneous ignition, it can become

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impactful during heterogeneous ignition as its reaction rate can directly determine the

1177

ignition mechanism. However, it must be emphasized that in the case of a

1178

heterogeneous ignition of biomass before devolatilization, instead of the devolatilized

1179 char, non-devolatilized biomass is being ignited and combusted. Therefore, with
 1180 respect to ignition, the combustion models should account for both devolatilized char
 1181 combustion and non-devolatilized biomass combustion, depending on the occurrence
 1182 of ignition. Char conversion of biomass is analogous to that of coal, although biomass
 1183 reactivity is several orders of magnitude higher, therefore amplifying the effect of
 1184 gasification reactions. Char combustion from coal has been a subject of research for
 1185 many years. A detailed review of coal char conversion models can be found in
 1186 [104,105]. It can be generally assumed that char combustion mechanisms of coal are
 1187 also applicable for chars originating from lignocellulosic biomass [166]. As for biomass,
 1188 Di Blasi published a review paper on combustion and gasification rates of
 1189 lignocellulosic biomass [166]. Among others, the effects of operating conditions
 1190 (heating rate, pressure, temperature, fuel properties, ash content) on the char reactivity
 1191 are discussed. The most important aspects influencing the char conversion rate are
 1192 the char surface area, carbon active sites, the surface accessibility, catalytic effects
 1193 due to inorganic matter, and the local concentration of the reactant gas species. These
 1194 char features are extremely difficult to measure via experimental techniques. As a
 1195 result, the most widely applied approach is based on the global apparent reactivity,
 1196 where particular char burning characteristics for the given operating conditions are
 1197 implicitly accounted for. The overall observed reaction rate is measured as:

$$R_{obs} = -\frac{1}{m_c} \frac{dm_c}{dt} = \frac{1}{1-X} \frac{dX}{dt} \quad (10)$$

1198 Where m_c is the current char mass, X is the conversion degree. R is the observed
 1199 reaction rate and expresses char consumption scaled by the current mass of the
 1200 remaining char (m). However, char reactivity does not only depend on the kinetics but
 1201 also on the mass transfer of gases in and out of the biomass particle. The mass transfer

1202 depends on the particle structure which is formed during devolatilization. In this sense,
 1203 apart from the prediction of gas yield, gas composition, and volatile release rate,
 1204 devolatilization models should also account for the char structure formation. However,
 1205 it has been common practice to relate experimental char burning rates to the external
 1206 char surface area. The model is referred to as the surface-based approach which is
 1207 based on apparent activation energy and it originates from the Field model [167] and
 1208 the Baum and Street model [168]. The second approach is a more fundamental one
 1209 because it utilizes the concept of intrinsic reactivity as set out by Smith [169]. The
 1210 mathematical formulation of the biomass char conversion models is provided in Table
 1211 6. Even though the models were developed in coal combustion studies, they are also
 1212 widely used for biomass.

1213 Table 6. Summary of biomass char conversion models.

Model	Short description
-------	-------------------

Global models

Kinetics/diffusion model	This approach can be represented as a resistance network consisting of kinetic and diffusion resistances.
-----------------------------	---

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{dm}{dt} &= - \frac{A_p p_{ox}}{\frac{1}{R_{diff}} + \frac{1}{R_{kin}}} \Phi_{en} \\ &= - \frac{A_p \rho R T Y_{ox}}{M_{w,ox}} \frac{1}{\frac{1}{R_{diff}} + \frac{1}{R_{kin}}} \Phi_{en} \end{aligned} \quad (11)$$

A_p – particle surface area, p_{ox} – partial pressure of oxidant, R_{diff} , R_{kin} – diffusion and kinetic component, respectively. ρ – density, R - universal gas constant, T - temperature, Y_{ox} – oxidant mass fraction, $M_{w,ox}$ – molecular weight of oxidant, Φ_{en} – enhancement factor due to non-sphericity.

Intrinsic model In the intrinsic model, the observed reaction rate from Eq. (10) can be related with the intrinsic rate in the following way:

$$R_{intr} = \frac{m_c}{\eta m_{c,0} A_s} R_{obs} \quad (12)$$

η – effectiveness factor, $m_{c,0}$ – initial char mass, A_s – specific surface area of char particle.

The intrinsic rate can be defined in the following way:

$$R_{intr} = k_s p^n \quad (13)$$

Where k_s is the intrinsic rate coefficient (defined by the Arrhenius expression by means of pre-exponential factor and activation energy), p – partial pressure, n – pressure exponent. Finally, the form for the char consumption rate is as follows:

$$\frac{dm}{dt} = -\eta A_s m_{c,0} k_s p^n \quad (14)$$

Although the oxidation reaction by the intrinsic model through the global nth-order Arrhenius approach, there are more complex methods like the Haynes turnover mechanism [170] where tracking of

free sites on carbon surface is required, or the semi-global Langmuir-Hinshelwood mechanism [171].

Phenomenological network models

Carbon burnout kinetics (CBK) [172–175] later modified to CBK/Oxidation (CBK/E) [113] and CBK/Gasification (CBK/G) [176].	The model incorporates the Langmuir-Hinshelwood kinetic approach with random pore model surface area evolution, single film and pore diffusion, thermal annealing, and ash inhibition. As a result, it accurately predicts the low reactivity of unburned carbon, the reactivity loss in the later stages of combustion, inhibition due to mineral matter, and the evolution of the intrinsic surface area. However, the model contains empirical terms for the description of structural development during char conversion of coal which may not be suitable for biomass. Some of the latest studies by Niksa [177,178] extend the application of CBK/G for bio-chars from diverse biomass forms.
Mitchell [179–183] and [184,185]	The char conversion model was developed at Stanford University in the Mitchell group [179–183]. Lately, Tilghman et al. [184,185] extended the model to the conversion of biomass chars in combustion and gasification environments and developed

reactant-specific effectiveness factor - Thiele modulus relations, along with CO and H₂ inhibition reactions.

CRECK [111,186–191] In contrast to the models discussed before, devolatilization and char conversion are described in a seamless approach. As regards the model complexity, it resides between the complex network models and the global one-step, two-step, three-step, and DAE models.

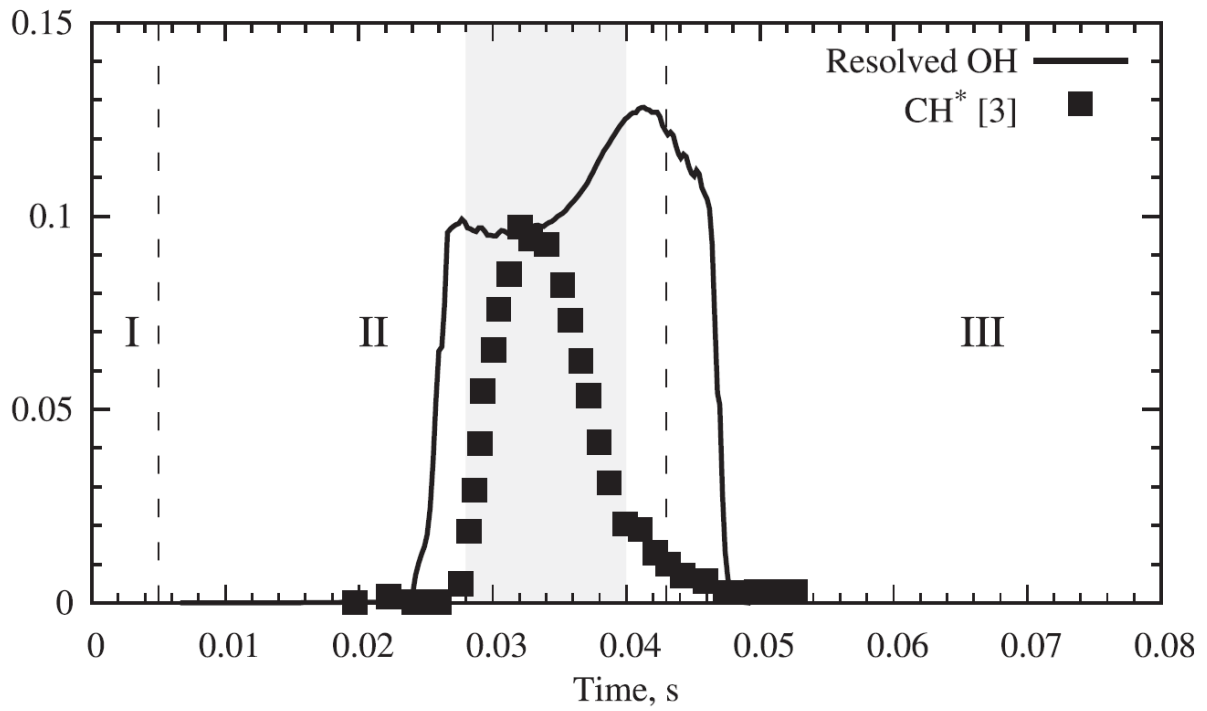
1214

1215 **5. What one can learn from coal ignition studies?**

1216 There are many numerical studies that investigated biomass combustion or biomass
1217 co-firing with coal by means of computational fluid dynamics (CFD) [17,125,192–200]
1218 or by incorporation of a single-particle approach [20,22,34,120,123,201–208].
1219 Combustion and ignition of particles were also investigated experimentally
1220 [38,49,58,164,165,209,210].

1221 Vascellari et al. [211] investigated the ignition of a single coal particle. A comparison
1222 was made of time-averaged numerical OH radicals and experimental CH* as a function
1223 of particle residence time. The reduced gas-phase mechanism did not include CH
1224 species, therefore, OH was applied instead. However, it was reported that additional
1225 flamelet simulations with GRI-Mech, which included CH species showed that OH and
1226 CH onsets occurred almost instantaneously, but for slightly different values of mixture
1227 fraction. As shown in Fig. 21a, in which the grey area stands for the experimentally
1228 observed ignition delay, one can conclude that OH concentration yields a reasonable

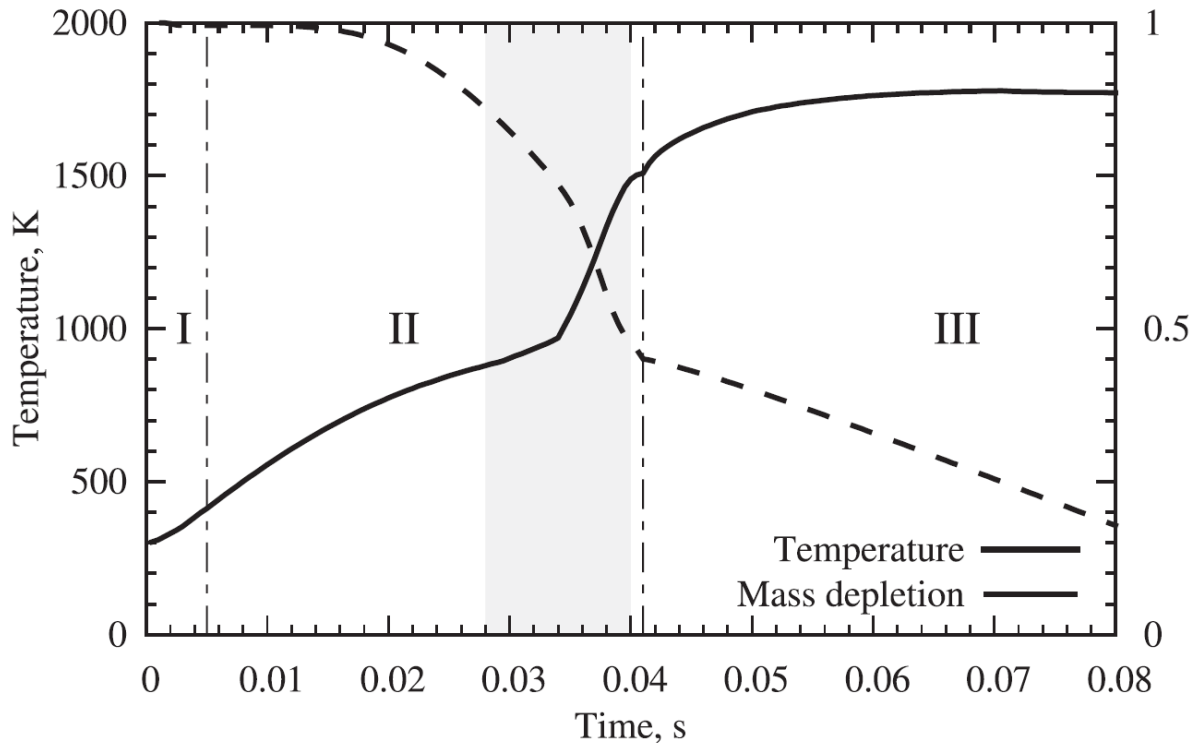
1229 agreement. Fig. 21b indicates that the temperature increase at 0.034s as the ignition
 1230 criterion yields poor agreement with respect to the experimentally determined ignition
 1231 and it should not be used in numerical simulations as the ignition onset indicator.



1232

a)

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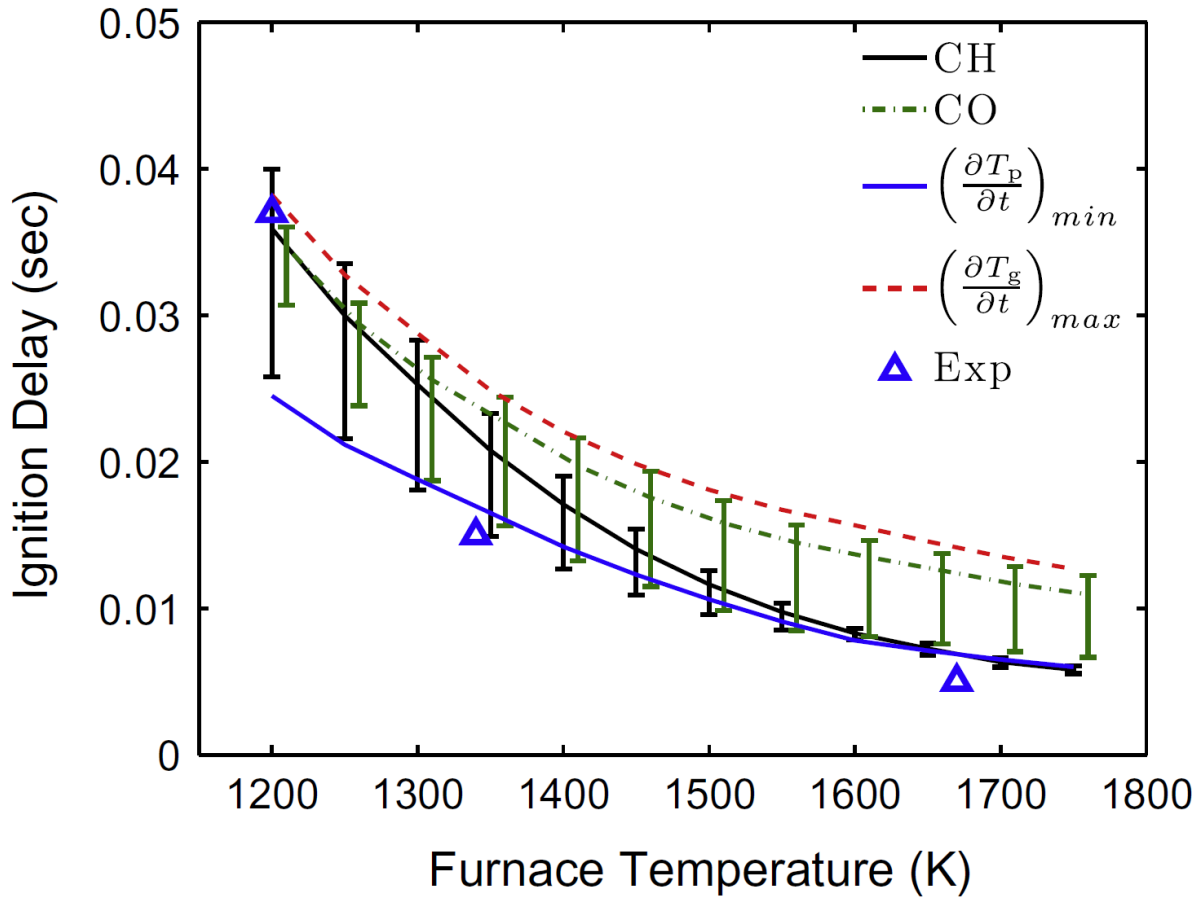


b)

1234

1235 Fig. 21 a) Time-averaged numerical OH radicals and experimental CH* as a function
 1236 of coal particle residence time I – drying, II – devolatilization, III – char combustion, b)
 1237 Particle temperature and non-dimensional mass depletion. Reprinted with permission
 1238 from [211].

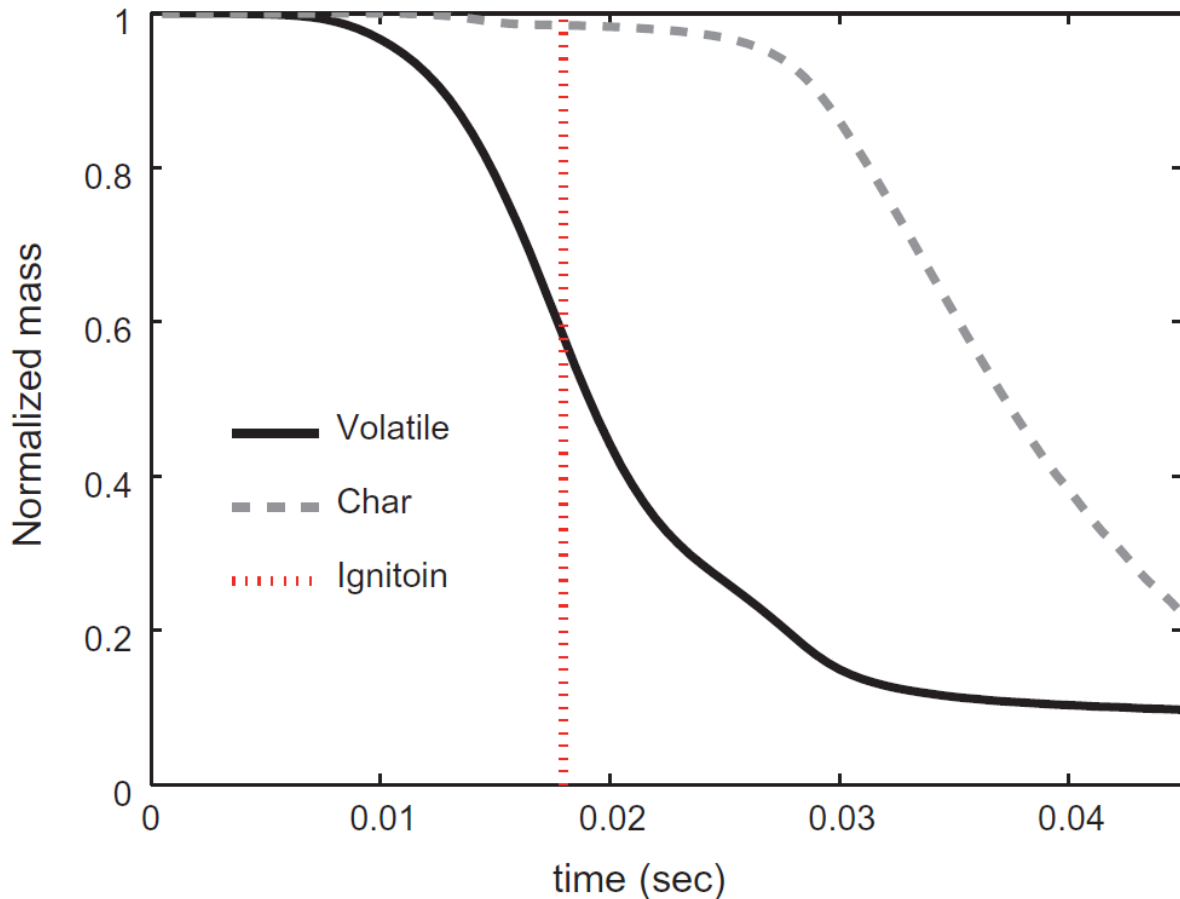
1239 Goshayeshi and Sutherland [47] investigated the ignition delay of coal for different
 1240 criteria of ignition onset definition. Based on the experimental results applied in their
 1241 work, the CH* emission is considered as an indicator of ignition, with the ignition point
 1242 defined as 50% of the maximum CH* signal. Judging their results presented in Fig. 22,
 1243 it can be observed there is a substantial impact of different criteria of ignition onset
 1244 definition on the ignition delay. The bars represent 25% - 75% of the maximum mass
 1245 fraction in species profiles. Numerical application of CH mass fraction at the value of
 1246 50% of its maximum as a criterion provides the best agreement with experimental data.



1247

1248 Fig. 22 Ignition delay of coal for different criteria. Species criteria relate to the time at
 1249 which species mass fractions reach 50% of their maximum. Reprinted with permission
 1250 from [47].

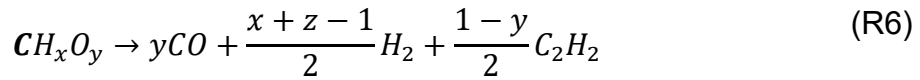
1251 Goshayeshi and Sutherland [47] studied the impact of both coal devolatilization
 1252 and gas-phase chemistry on the ignition delay, and indicated that ignition takes place
 1253 during the release of volatile matter where both devolatilization and gas-phase
 1254 reactions play a key role, while heterogeneous reactions are of minor importance –
 1255 Fig. 23.



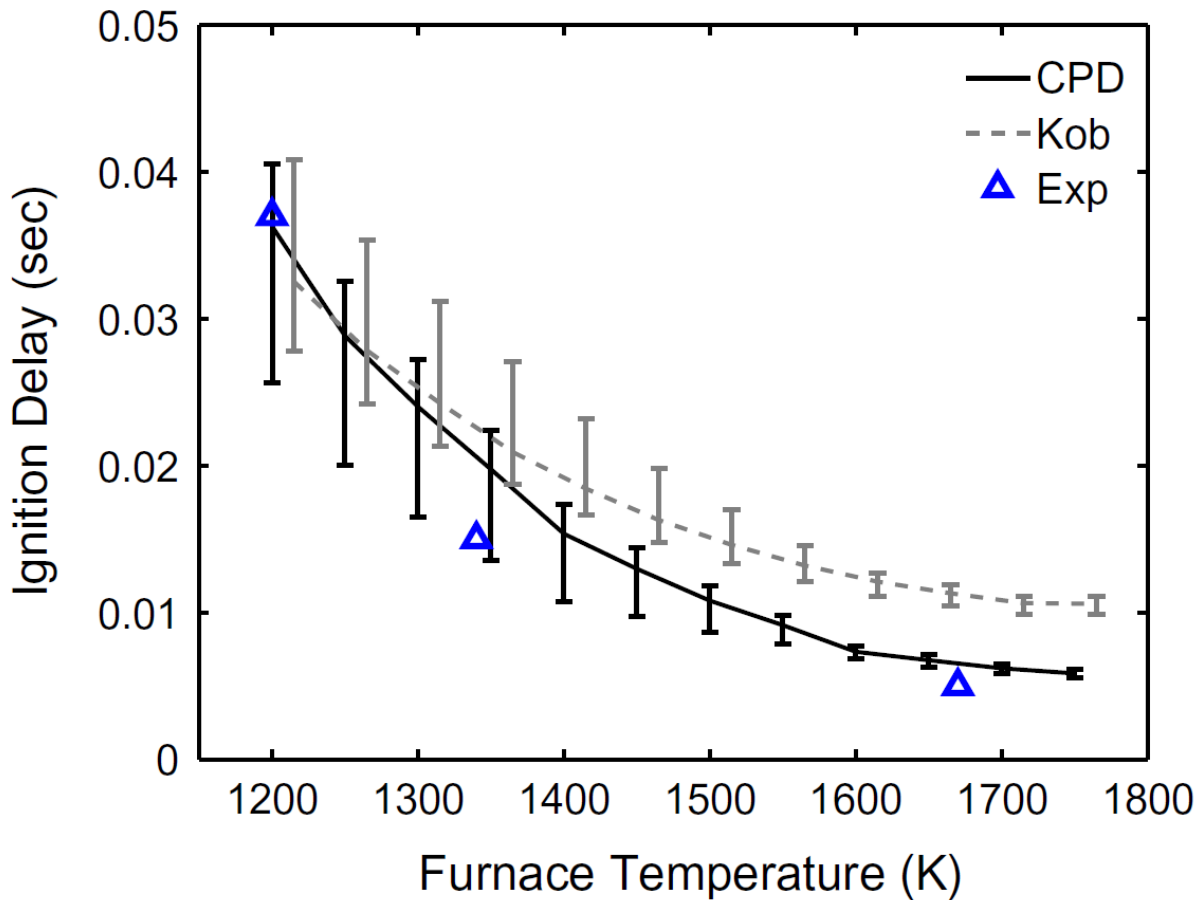
1256

1257 Fig. 23 Volatile and char content in coal particle with respect to time. Reprinted with
 1258 permission from [47].

1259 Goshayeshi and Sutherland [47] incorporated two widely applied devolatilization
 1260 models, namely the competing two-step mechanism (C2SM) [132], commonly referred
 1261 to as the Kobayashi model, and the complex chemical percolation devolatilization
 1262 (CPD) [139,212–214] model. While the former model is the global approach that
 1263 considers two parallel reactions governing devolatilization where one reaction
 1264 dominates at low heating rates, whereas the second reaction dominates at high
 1265 heating rates, the latter approach is a network model accounting for fuel structure
 1266 characterization. The gas phase was modeled by the detailed chemical kinetics based
 1267 on GRI-Mech 3.0 (GRI3.0) [147]. In the C2SM approach, the devolatilization
 1268 decomposition reaction took the following form:

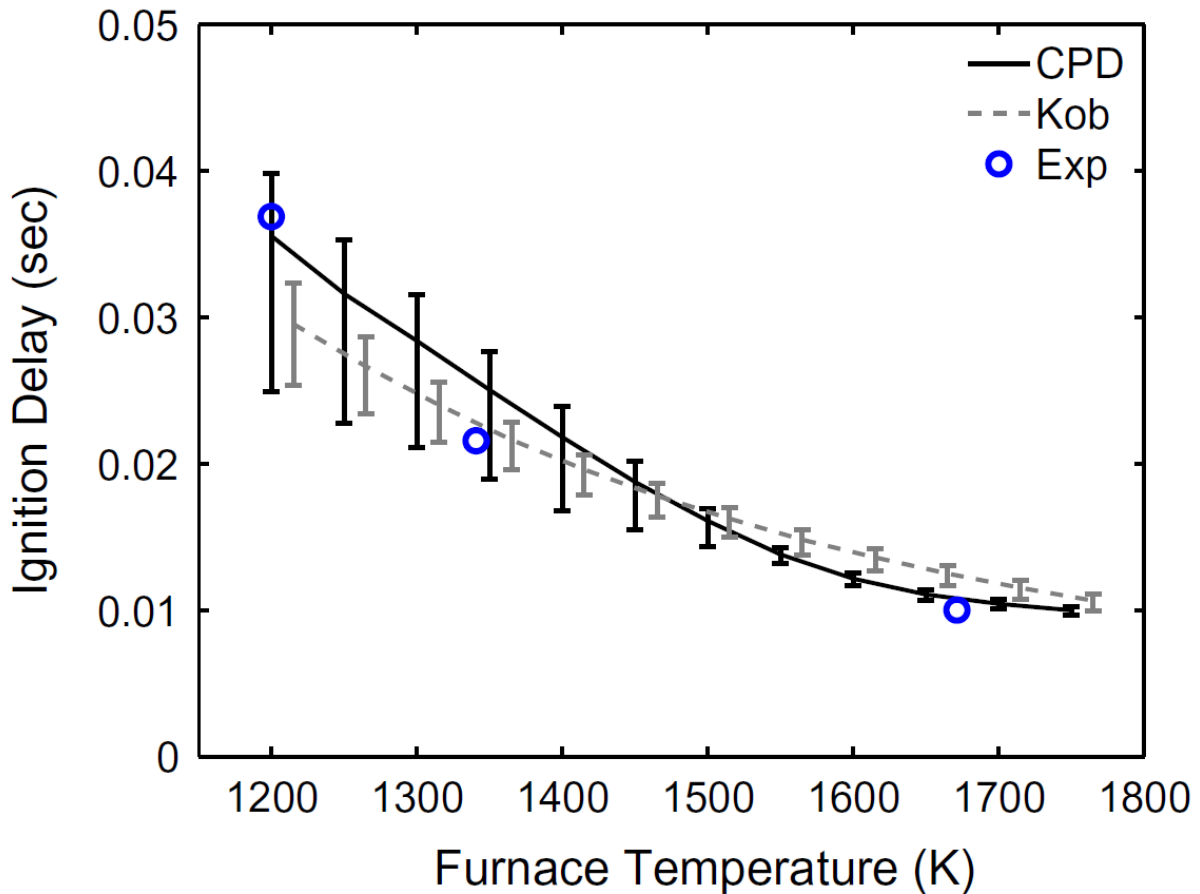


1269 where x and z coefficients were calculated on the basis of proximate and ultimate
 1270 analyses. Kinetic parameters were taken from [215]. In this study, C₂H₂ represents
 1271 heavy-tar species and its implementation was mainly motivated by its availability in
 1272 GRI3.0. It was also found that choosing CH₄ instead of C₂H₂ resulted in no change in
 1273 the ignition delay. Fig. 24 shows a substantial influence of devolatilization on the
 1274 ignition delay. Knowing that in CFD models, volatiles composition and the kinetic
 1275 parameters are the major input parameters defining devolatilization models, there are
 1276 considered to be extremely important factors in ignition characteristics. It is also evident
 1277 that the complex approach yields more accurate results than the global C2SM
 1278 mechanism.



(a) Pittsburgh

1279



(b) BlackThunder

1280

1281 Fig. 24 Effect of devolatilization models on ignition delay. a) Pittsburg coal, b)

1282 Blackthunder coal. In both models, detailed gas-phase chemistry was applied.

1283

Reprinted with permission from [47].

1284 Goshayeshi and Sutherland [47] studied also the impact of two gas-phase

1285 chemistry models in terms of the ignition onset – the GRI-Mech mechanism and the

1286 flame-sheet model which assumes infinitely fast chemistry. The results of the analysis

1287 are illustrated in Figure 25. One can observe that the impact of investigated gas-phase

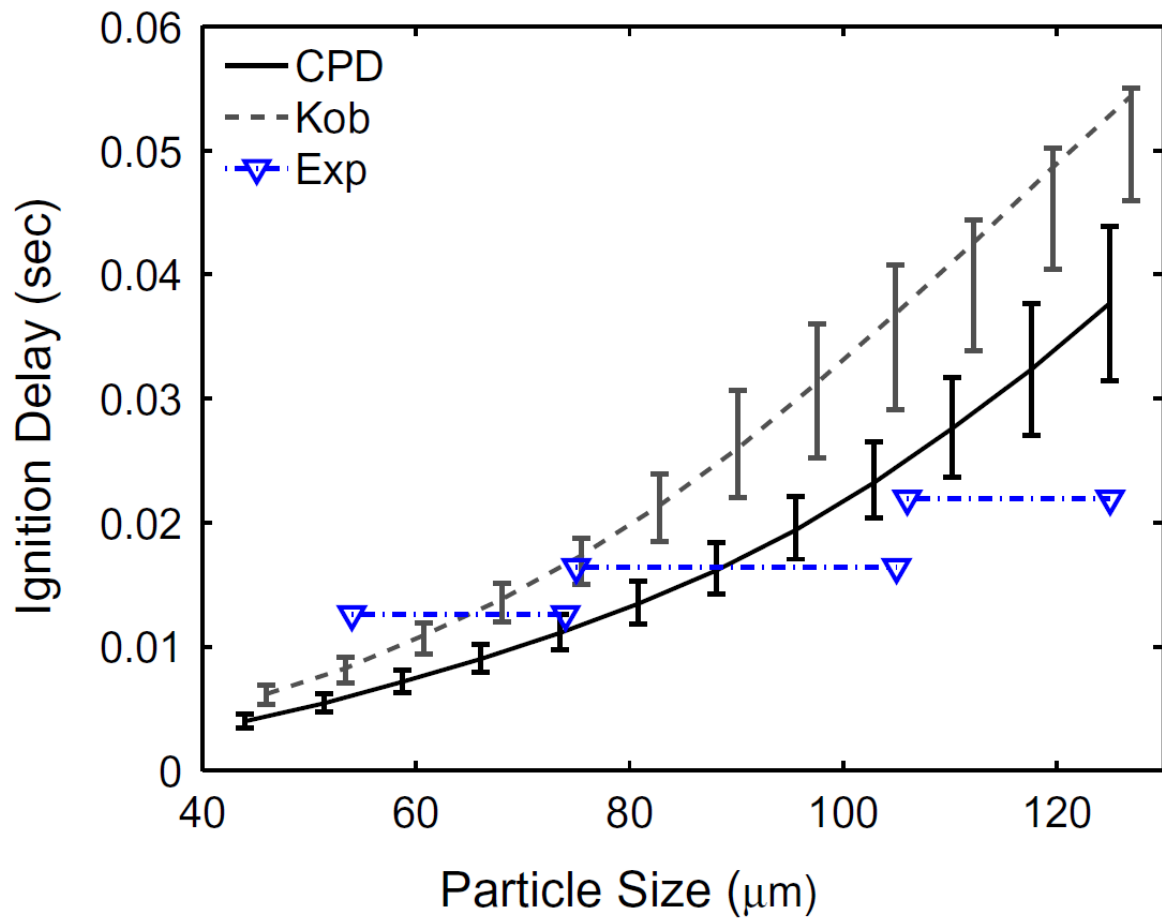
1288 modeling approaches is substantial. It must be underlined that Fig. 25a considers CH

1289 radical species as a measure of ignition onset, whereas in the flame-sheet model, the

1290 CO profile at particle position and inflection points are considered. Consequently, these

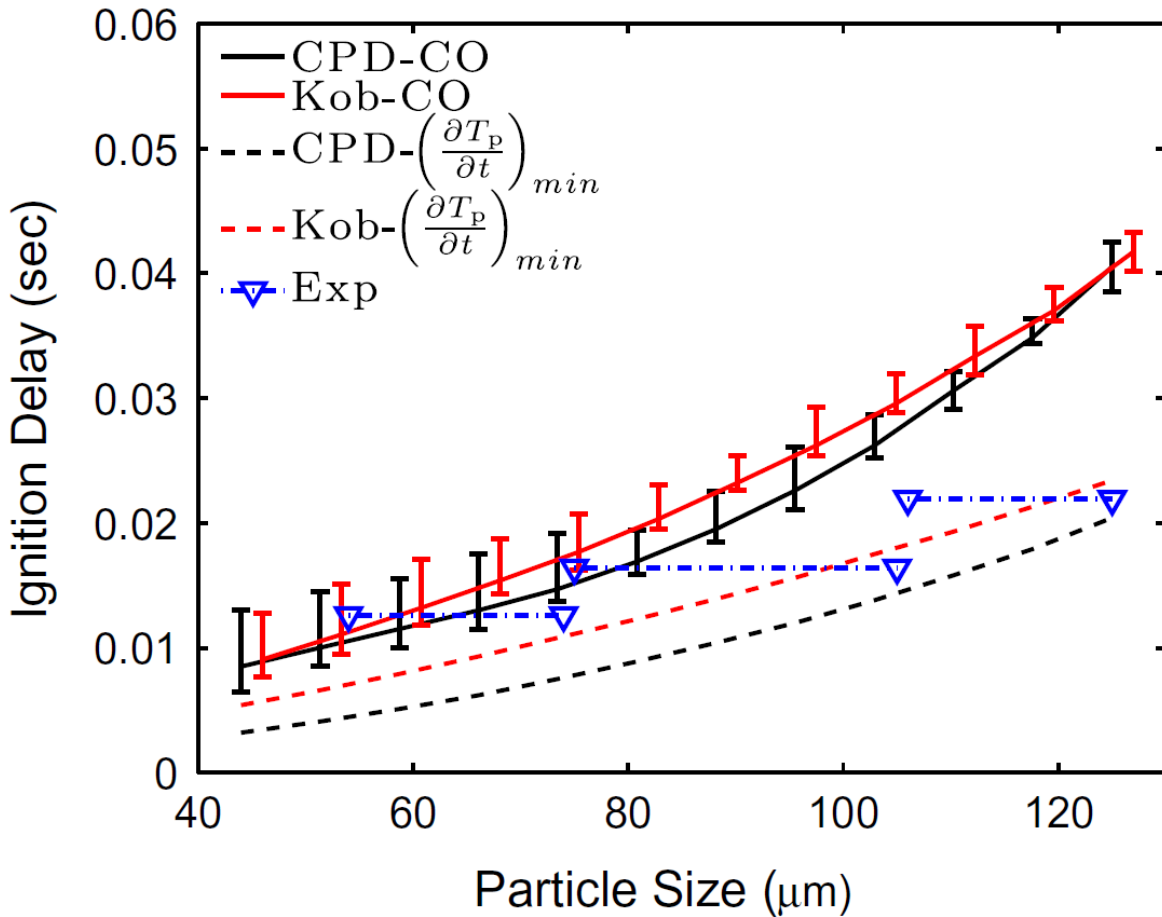
1291 two sub-figures should not be directly compared as they have different criteria for

1292 ignition onset. However, for the flame-sheet chemistry, the inflection points turned out
 1293 to be in better agreement with experiments than CO mass fractions.



(a) Detailed kinetics

1294



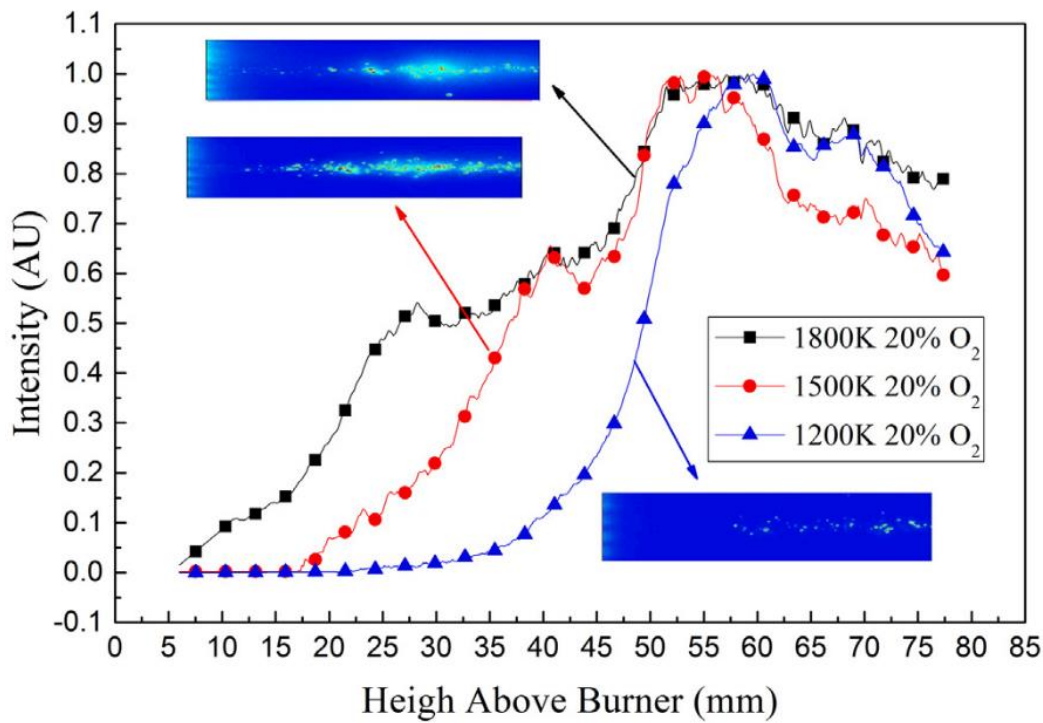
(b) Flame-sheet chemistry

1295

1296 Fig. 25 (a,b) Ignition delay with respect to particle size. 12vol% O₂ and N₂ at 1320K for
 1297 two gas-phase modelling approaches. Reprinted with permission from [47].

1298 Yuan et al. [216] investigated experimentally and numerically the transition of hetero-
 1299 homogeneous ignition of dispersed coal particle streams. The particles of 65-74 μm
 1300 are injected into a Hencken flat-flame burner. The authors have decided to include this
 1301 particular coal study as it reports a substantial impact of devolatilization on the ignition
 1302 mode and an analogous study could be carried out for biomass fuels. Fig. 26 depicts
 1303 the emission signal intensity along the height above burner for three temperatures –
 1304 1200 K, 1500 K, 1800 K. One can observe that for the temperature of 1200 K, a
 1305 monotonous increment before the peak is present, whereas for temperatures of 1500
 1306 K and 1800 K, there is a convexity before the peak. In the particle image, for

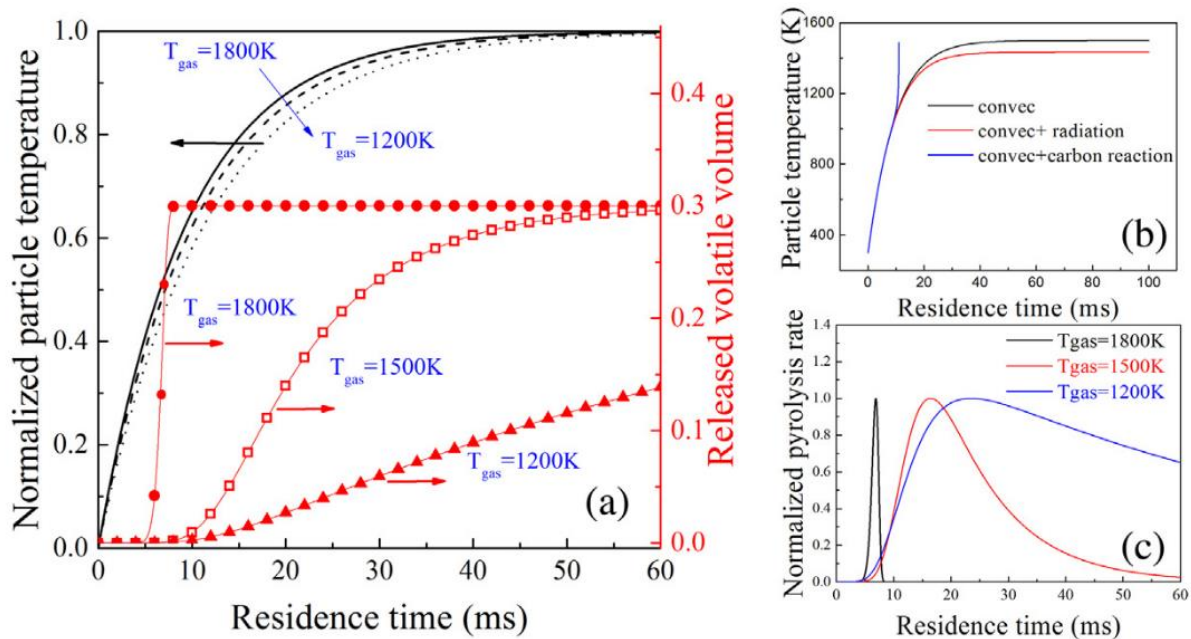
1307 temperature of 1200 K, flames are separately distributed around individual particles,
 1308 whereas for temperatures of 1500 K and 1800 K, a forming of coherent volatile flames
 1309 can be observed. One may attribute these two different signal profiles to the ignition
 1310 mechanism, either heterogeneous or hetero-homogeneous.



1311
 1312 Fig. 26. Signal intensity along the burner height for three temperatures: 1200K,
 1313 1500K, 1800K. Reprinted with permission from [216].

1314 Fig. 27a depicts the normalized particle temperature, and the released volatile volume
 1315 with respect to residence time. Fig. 27b illustrates particle temperature controlled by
 1316 different heat sources, whereas Fig. 27c shows the pyrolysis rate for three different
 1317 temperatures. The convection term dominates the heating stage, especially, before
 1318 ignition whereas the contribution of radiation and chemical reactions before the ignition
 1319 is insignificant. Based on this assumption and assuming pyrolysis decomposition to be
 1320 defined in an Arrhenius form [130], the characteristic heating time and pyrolysis times
 1321 were defined. It was reported that at lower temperatures, the degree of devolatilization

1322 was very low before the ignition indicating a heterogeneous mechanism. At higher
 1323 temperatures, the devolatilization rate increased resulting in a shift to hetero-
 1324 homogeneous ignition mode. The research further confirms a substantial impact of
 1325 pyrolysis dynamics on the ignition mode and the usefulness of incorporating pyrolysis-
 1326 related parameters in the determination of ignition mechanism.



1327
 1328 Fig. 27. (a) Normalized particle temperature and released volatile matter, (b) particle
 1329 temperature controlled by different heat sources, (c) pyrolysis rate. Reprinted with
 1330 permission from [216].

1331 Jovanovic et al. [217] investigated the influence of homogeneous/heterogeneous
 1332 ignition/combustion mechanisms on ignition point position during pulverized coal
 1333 combustion. The default CFD code, like FLUENT [218] assumes that devolatilization
 1334 and char combustion occur after one another. Thus, in the CFD code, char combustion
 1335 takes place only after devolatilization is over. In reality, char combustion can occur
 1336 simultaneously with devolatilization or even before. This combustion sequence
 1337 becomes very important in the numerical determination of ignition mechanism. In [217],

1338 the criteria for the mechanism during which a particle will ignite are identified by
 1339 comparing the reaction rates from Table 7.

1340 Table 7. Main criteria for ignition mechanisms

Conditions for each of three mechanisms		
Glowing surface char ignition	Homogeneous ignition	Sparking heterogeneous ignition
rate of devolatilization greater than the rate of heterogeneous oxidation of non-devolatilized coal $r_{devol} > r_{het,coal}$	rate of devolatilization greater than the rate of heterogeneous oxidation of non-devolatilized coal $r_{devol} > r_{het,coal}$	rate of heterogeneous oxidation of non-devolatilized coal greater than the rate of devolatilization $r_{het,coal} > r_{devol}$
rate of heterogeneous oxidation of char greater than the rate of homogeneous oxidation of volatiles $r_{het,char} > r_{hom,vol}$	rate of homogeneous oxidation of volatiles greater than the rate of heterogeneous oxidation of char $r_{hom,vol} > r_{het,char}$	

1341
 1342 Conditions were examined for each tracked particle. For instance, if the second
 1343 condition is satisfied, the char combustion reaction will be stopped, while
 1344 devolatilization and homogeneous volatiles combustion will take place for the tracked
 1345 particle. Inflection points of the particle temperature versus time and particle

1346 temperature versus time length were considered as initial ignition signs. As a result of
1347 the applied combustion model, the ignition point position was better predicted than with
1348 the standard sequential FLUENT routine.

1349 Xu et al. [219] focused on the competition between the homogeneous and
1350 heterogeneous ignition modes investigating the underlying mechanisms of ignition
1351 mode transition. They proposed a quantitative index $\Delta t = t_{homo} - t_{hetero}$ to reveal the
1352 contributions of these two ignition mechanisms to the whole ignition process. The
1353 inflection point criterion for heterogeneous ignition was used, whereas for
1354 homogeneous ignition, the assumption was made that the gas temperature of a shell
1355 is greater than the temperature of both its adjacent cells. The proposed quantitative
1356 index is a new criterion that allows identifying ignition mode by comparing characteristic
1357 heterogeneous/homogeneous ignition time.

1358 Zhang et al. [220] proposed a method of ignition mode determination with a transient
1359 coal ignition model. The new ignition criteria were developed by comparing the ignition
1360 time scales magnitude, including homogeneous and heterogenous delay times and
1361 devolatilization start time and end time. Eventually, five ignition regimes were
1362 proposed: homogeneous gas-phase, homo-heterogeneous, hetero-homogeneous,
1363 heterogeneous ignition of coal particle, and heterogeneous ignition of char particle.
1364 Farmand et al. [221] reported that detailed devolatilization models with finite-rate
1365 chemistry could correctly capture the homogeneous ignition mode and particles group
1366 combustion.

1367 A special attention should be paid to the synergistic effect of co-firing biomass with
1368 coal. In general, the synergistic effects on the ignition could be divided into two main
1369 categories: thermal characteristics and the released product characteristics. Abbas et
1370 al. [222] revealed that early ignition of sawdust volatiles resulted in a faster

1371 devolatilization rate of coal particles. The reason lied in the liberated heat from sawdust
1372 combustion that impacted the coal particles through the intensification of both heat
1373 transfer and the kinetics of homogeneous and heterogeneous processes. Riaza et al.
1374 [95] observed a reduction in the ignition temperatures of both examined coals in all the
1375 atmospheres studied when biomass was co-fired. Faúndez et al. [223] revealed that in
1376 the case of blending fuels with different content of volatile matter, the ignition of the
1377 higher volatile component improves the ignition characteristics of the lower volatile
1378 component. However, for blends with comparable volatile content, such fuels compete
1379 for the available oxygen and, therefore, the improvement of ignition characteristics
1380 would be less remarkable. In the meantime, some studies reported no synergistic
1381 effects [224].

1382 With respect to the single-particle modeling approach and CFD studies, it must be
1383 emphasized that the ignition behavior of single particles deviates from the stream or
1384 cloud ignition due to much more complex phenomena involved [225–227]. Heat and
1385 mass transfer exchange in the particle's surroundings become influenced by mutual
1386 interactions between particles. It will be therefore of key importance to determine
1387 whether the ignition will initiate around individual particles or in a gas mixture, away
1388 from particles.

1389 Cassel and Liebman [228] combusted single particles of magnesium and
1390 magnesium-aluminum alloys. Depending on the concentration, the ignition
1391 temperature of clouds was lower than for single particles. This was explained by the
1392 cooperative effect of heat transfer from neighboring reacting particles. For coal studies,
1393 experiments have shown that the ignition temperatures could be reduced even by
1394 300°C owing to the cooperative effect associated with particle clouds [228–231]. As a
1395 result, the single-particle approach cannot predict the ignition characteristics from real-

1396 life processes with extreme accuracy. For this purpose, a complex CFD numerical
1397 model that accounts for the interparticle phenomena would be much more desirable.

1398 In [49,232], it was reported that particle interaction could weaken the
1399 devolatilization and delay to volatiles release rate.

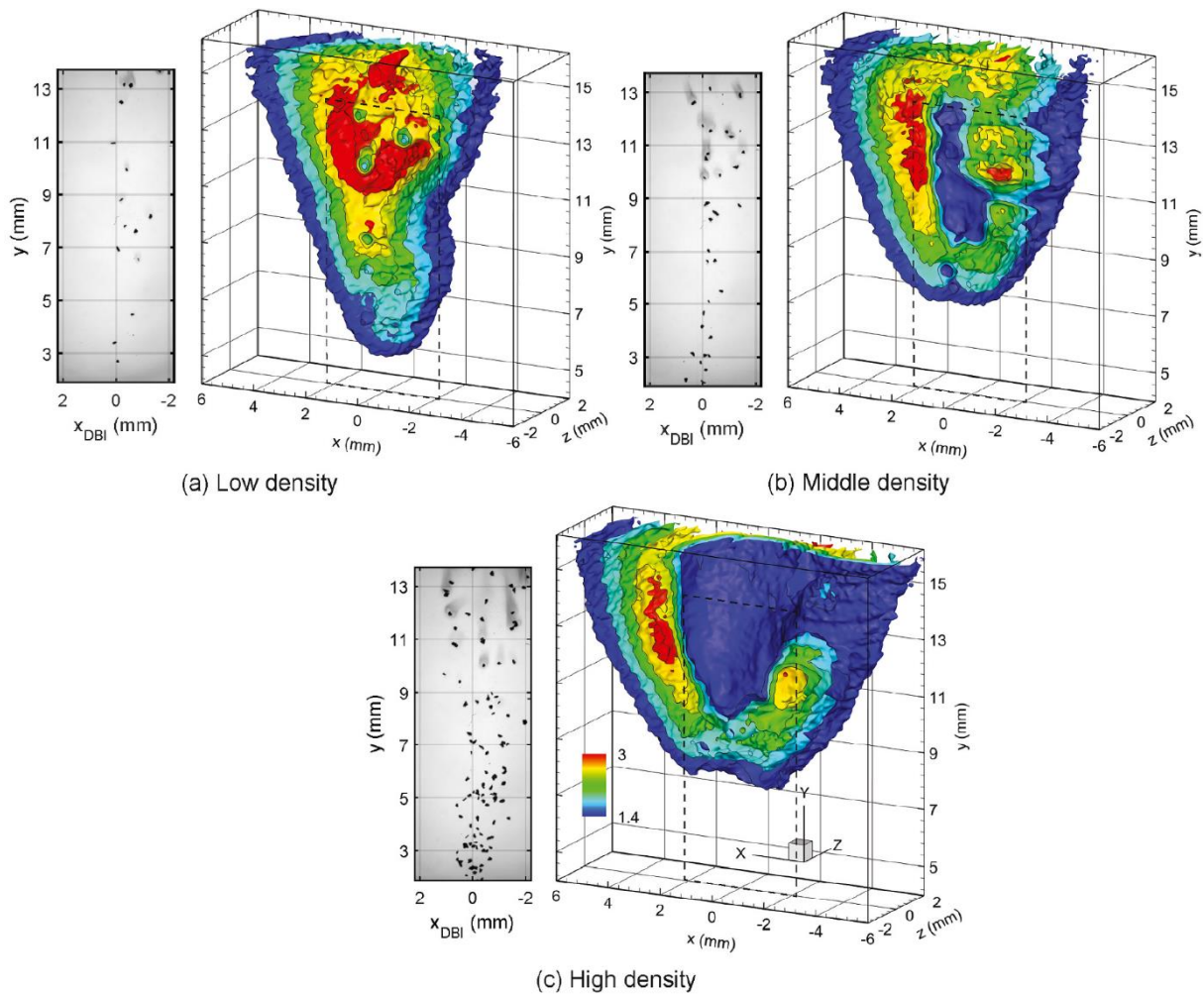
1400 The particle number density (PND) or particle concentration was considered a
1401 critical parameter to characterize particle group ignition modes. Liu et al. [44,233]
1402 studied a wide range of particle concentrations and observed faster ignition in the linear
1403 particle streak followed by increased ignition times for larger particle concentrations
1404 were higher feeding rates were set.

1405 Tufano et al. [102,112] investigated coal particle heating up, devolatilization,
1406 ignition, and volatiles combustion by applying DNS in laminar and turbulent flows. For
1407 both single particles and array combustion [112], ignition occurred in the particle wake
1408 at very lean conditions where scalar dissipation was low. In [102], it was observed that
1409 the increased turbulent intensity delayed the ignition with local extinctions.

1410 Muto et al. [234] simulated the ignition in pulverized coal combustion with a
1411 detailed chemical reaction mechanism. A 2-D DNS with a chemistry model consisting
1412 of 158 species and 1804 reactions were investigated in a mixing layer. The results
1413 indicated that the ignition occurred in the rich mixture fraction condition when the
1414 particle was preheated to 2000 K. It was also observed that the evolution of CH and
1415 OH radicals up to 10 ms was almost identical.

1416 Recently, Li et al. [235] investigated experimentally single-particle and particle
1417 group combustion of coal in a laminar flow reactor using simultaneous volumetric OH-
1418 LIF imaging. Fig. 28 illustrates individual snapshots for different particle densities. For
1419 the low density case in Fig. 28a, nearly spherical flames can be noticed near individual
1420 particles with burnt gas regions forming an apparent joint flame indicating that the

1421 ignition of single particles is not substantially affected at low particle densities. For
 1422 higher densities, no spherical flames could be noticed indicating that ignition and
 1423 volatile flame of individual particles interact substantially. The lack of OH signal in the
 1424 particle group center implies that the mixture is beyond the flammability limit which
 1425 result in a flame extinction. Judging by the three sub-figures, the increase in particle
 1426 concentration expands the volatile flame structure and delays the ignition. This can be
 1427 explained by the greater heat demand for particle groups in comparison with single
 1428 particles. This results in a lower gas temperature and lower heating rate which delay
 1429 the particle temperature rise, and consequently, devolatilization.



1430

1431 Fig. 28 Snapshots of volatile flame topology for three different particle concentrations.

1432 Grey figure from the left: diffuse backlight-illumination (DBI) images providing

1433 information about particle number and location, pictures from the right: 3D volatile
1434 flame structure. Reprinted with permission from [235].

1435 Section 5 summarized the state-of-art information from coal ignition-related research.

1436 The key findings that are recommendable for studies of biomass ignitions are
1437 highlighted below:

- 1438 • Using CH and OH radicals as ignition indicators for ignition modeling yielded
1439 the most accurate ignition delay results against reported experimental data, and
1440 the predicted ignition delay using the two indicators occurred almost
1441 simultaneously. However, it must be emphasized that the experimental
1442 investigation considered mainly CH* chemiluminescence and laser-induced
1443 fluorescence of OH radicals (OH-LIF). In contrast to tracked unexcited OH
1444 species with the OH-LIF technique, CH* species from chemiluminescence are
1445 excited and it poses some level of uncertainty between the numerically
1446 determined ignition delay by CH radicals and experimentally determined ignition
1447 delay by CH* radicals. So far, current combustion models do not consider
1448 excited species.
- 1449 • The commonly applied models like in CFD are based on the fundamental
1450 assumption that particle combustion is governed by the following sequence of
1451 processes: inert heating, drying, devolatilization, and char combustion. This
1452 implies that char oxidation always occurs after devolatilization which is untrue
1453 for the heterogeneous ignition mode where a non-devolatilized coal/biomass is
1454 being ignited. As a result, in the future, a modeling routine should be introduced
1455 to calculate the competitiveness of main combustion sub-mechanisms and to
1456 determine the potential sequence of these mechanisms based on the reactor
1457 operating conditions and fuel properties.

1458 • The pyrolysis rate was found to hugely affect ignition characteristics. Pyrolysis
1459 time and the degree of pyrolysis were found to be useful modelling parameters
1460 in assessing the ignition characteristics.

1461 • More ignition-related research should be carried out with particle
1462 streams/clusters as substantial differences could be observed in ignition
1463 characteristics between single particles and particle streams.

1464

1465 **6. Ignition-related CFD biomass combustion modeling**

1466

1467 Due to the same combustion steps for coal and biomass, the modeling framework
1468 for these combustion mechanisms remains generally the same for both fuels.
1469 However, in comparison with coal, biomass particles are bigger in size, lighter in
1470 density, and have a non-spherical shape. These properties will affect the particle
1471 motion and conversion in the reactor, which can have a direct impact on ignition. A
1472 common modeling practice was to consider biomass particles either as spherical or
1473 non-spherical. The non-spherical effects are accounted for by modifying the drag
1474 coefficient, or by consideration of rotation. The resultant motion will therefore consider
1475 both translation and rotation. For details please refer to [103]. The second issue is a
1476 direct consequence of non-sphericity. For instance, Lu et al. [20] observed that the
1477 thermal behavior for particle sizes above 200-300 μm of non-spherical shape was
1478 poorly predicted by the spherical-particle approximations. Therefore, the first
1479 combustion step – inert heating, should be modeled differently with respect to spherical
1480 coal particles.

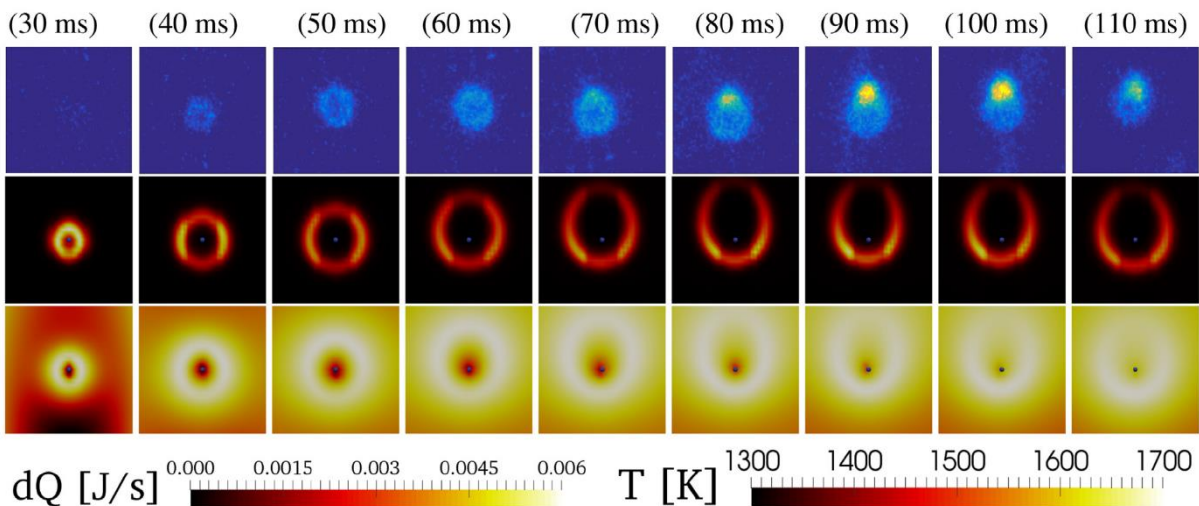
1481 The second combustion step – drying, gains significance for biomass fuels with

1482 relatively large moisture content as it is generally greater than for coals. For instance,
1483 a high initial biomass moisture content can reduce the particle heating rate by a factor
1484 of 3 to 5 [16]. Knowing that the heating rate strongly impacts the ignition behavior,
1485 misprediction of it can lead to an erroneous time frame of the drying process, and
1486 consequently, as the combustion steps are usually modeled sequentially, the onset of
1487 devolatilization and subsequent combustion steps will also be evaluated incorrectly.

1488 As regards char combustion, biomass char is generally more reactive than coal
1489 char. Coal chars also soften and tend to remain spherical, whereas biomass chars tend
1490 to keep their irregular shape. This can lead to a partially activated char with a high
1491 surface area which contributes to a higher oxygen flux into the particle and higher char
1492 consumption rate than spherical coal particles [103].

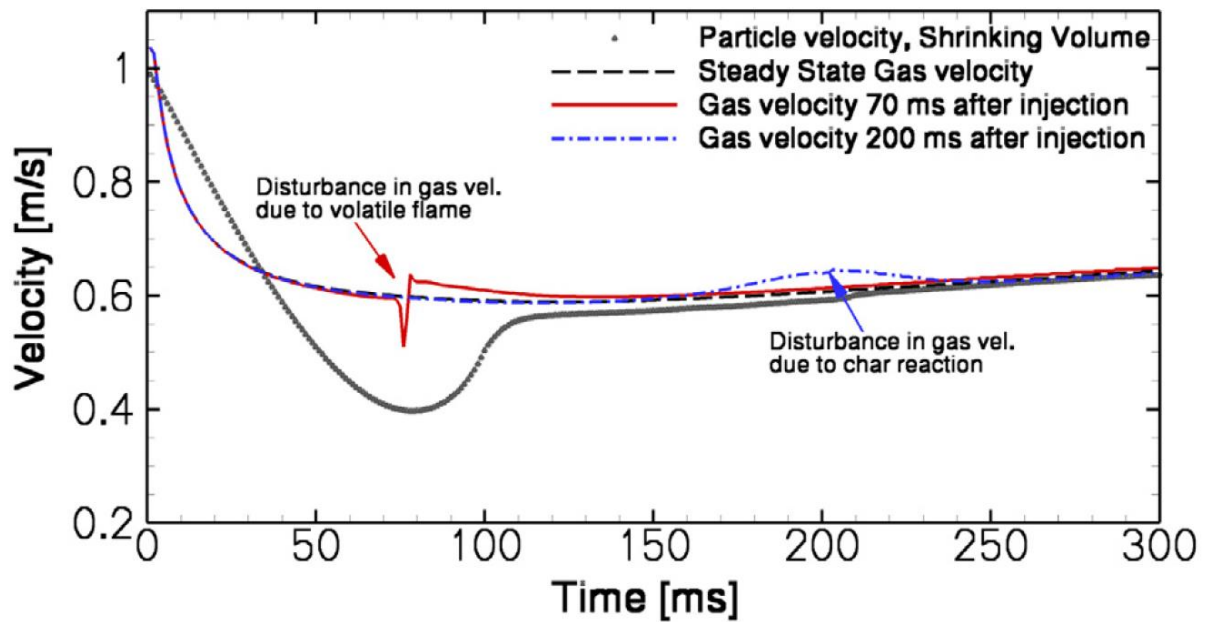
1493 Fatehi et al. [17], the detailed devolatilization Ranzi's model [109–111] and GRI3.0
1494 [147] mechanism were employed to study biomass ignition characteristics. The results
1495 concern the flame with respect to temperature and heat release, reference to gas and
1496 particle velocity, and fuel and oxidizer gradients - Figs 29, 30 and 31. Fig. 29 illustrates
1497 the experimental CH* emission intensity in the time ranges 30 ms – 110 ms, numerical
1498 results of heat release in the same time ranges, and numerical temperature results
1499 around the particle for the same time ranges. The investigation considers a pinewood
1500 particle with a diameter of 230 μm and an initial velocity of 1 m/s. One can observe
1501 that during 30-50 ms, the reaction takes place in a circular shape envelope. It coincides
1502 well with experimental images as a uniform CH* distribution can be noticed. The flame
1503 circular shape results from the low particle devolatilization rate at the time of 30-50ms,
1504 and the inconsiderable changes in velocity between the gas and particle. From 50 ms,
1505 the particle velocity starts to decrease due to the effect of gravity – Fig. 30. As a result,
1506 the heat release starts to play a dominant role beneath the particle – Fig. 29b where

1507 the circular shape becomes no longer visible. The same behavior can be noticed from
 1508 the experimental images. In Fig. 31, the β parameter is introduced as a product of CH_4
 1509 and O_2 mass fraction gradients ($\beta = \nabla\text{CH}_4 \cdot \nabla\text{O}_2$). The blue color signifies that both CH_4
 1510 and O_2 have steep gradients toward one another, whereas red color signifies the
 1511 alignment of gradients. Three key stages of time instances are illustrated. At 30 ms,
 1512 the gas velocity is lower than the particle velocity (Fig. 30) and the gradient steepness
 1513 is the biggest at the particle top (Fig. 31). The combustion products flow to the particle
 1514 bottom. After 42 ms, there is no relative velocity between particles and gas. Therefore,
 1515 there is a symmetric flame shape. After 70 ms, the particle velocity is lower than the
 1516 gas velocity (Fig. 30). The oxygen flows toward the particle bottom. The flame is diluted
 1517 at the particle top due to combustion products and the heat release is consequently
 1518 lower. In Fig 30, one can also notice a sudden peak in gas velocity which can be
 1519 attributed to the gas expansion. Such a peak can also be seen during char reaction
 1520 stage, although this peak is much smoother. The difference in the peaks are related to
 1521 the volatile flux which is much greater during devolatilization than during char
 1522 conversion/char combustion. Based on the outcome, one can clearly state that
 1523 numerical simulations can accurately and reliably reflect the process based on the
 1524 experimental results.

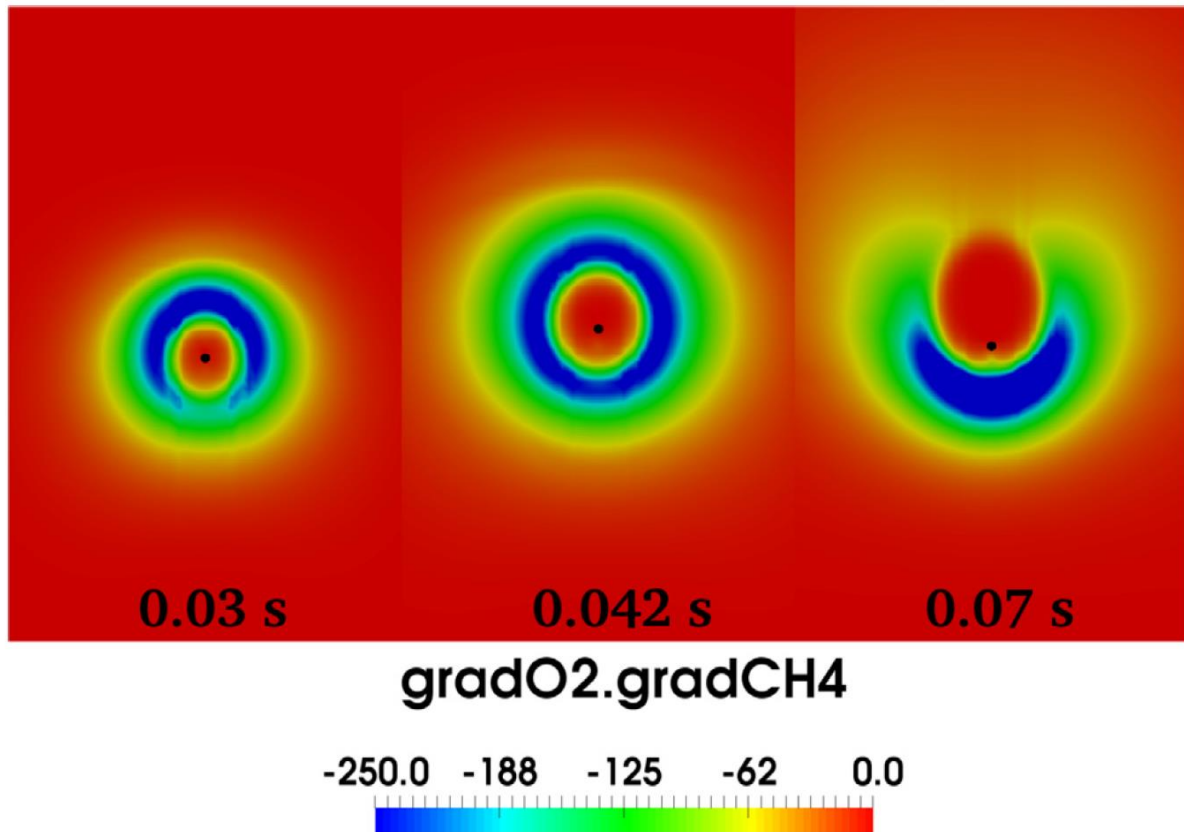


1525

1526 Fig. 29 Top first row: Experimental CH* emission intensity starting from 30 ms to 110
 1527 ms. Second row: CFD results of biomass heat release dQ (J/S) from volatiles
 1528 combustion at the same time of the experimental ranges. Bottom last row: Numerical
 1529 temperature results $T(K)$ around the particle at the same time of the experimental
 1530 ranges. Reprinted with permission from [17].



1531
 1532 Fig. 30 Pinewood particles velocity and gas velocity. Reprinted with permission from
 1533 [17].

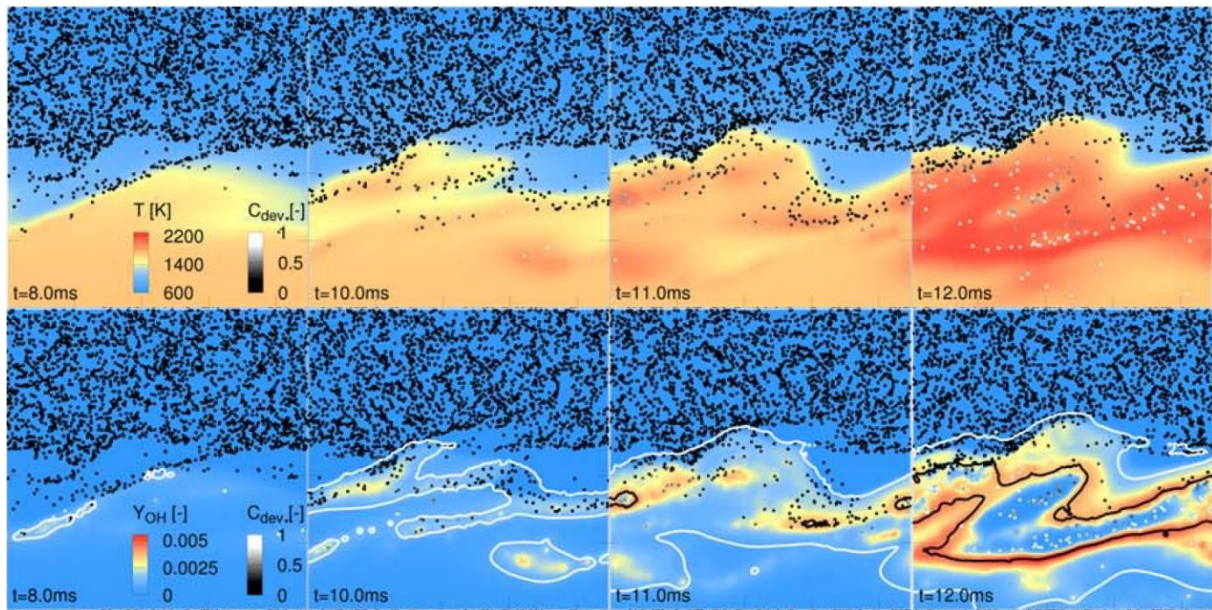


1534

1535 Fig. 31 Vector product of CH₄ and O₂ mass fraction gradients for three time
 1536 instances. Reprinted with permission from [17].

1537 Rieth et al. [106,107] presented first-of-its-kind carrier-phase DNS of biomass
 1538 combustion in a turbulent mixing layer, applying a detailed CRECK-reduced
 1539 mechanism and a pyrolysis Ranzi's mechanism [109–111] to calculate the pyrolysis
 1540 rate and final products of primary pyrolysis. The simulations were performed with the
 1541 in-house code. Fig. 32 depicts the temperature contours and OH mass fraction of
 1542 biomass. One may observe a strong relation of the temperature increase and OH
 1543 radical concentration increase with respect to time which is treated as the ignition
 1544 onset. It would be generally advisable to continue the research of biomass ignition with
 1545 complex DNS simulations, analyzing the evolution of different species such as CH, OH
 1546 or CO/CO₂ ratio, and temperature, comparing the data with complex experimental

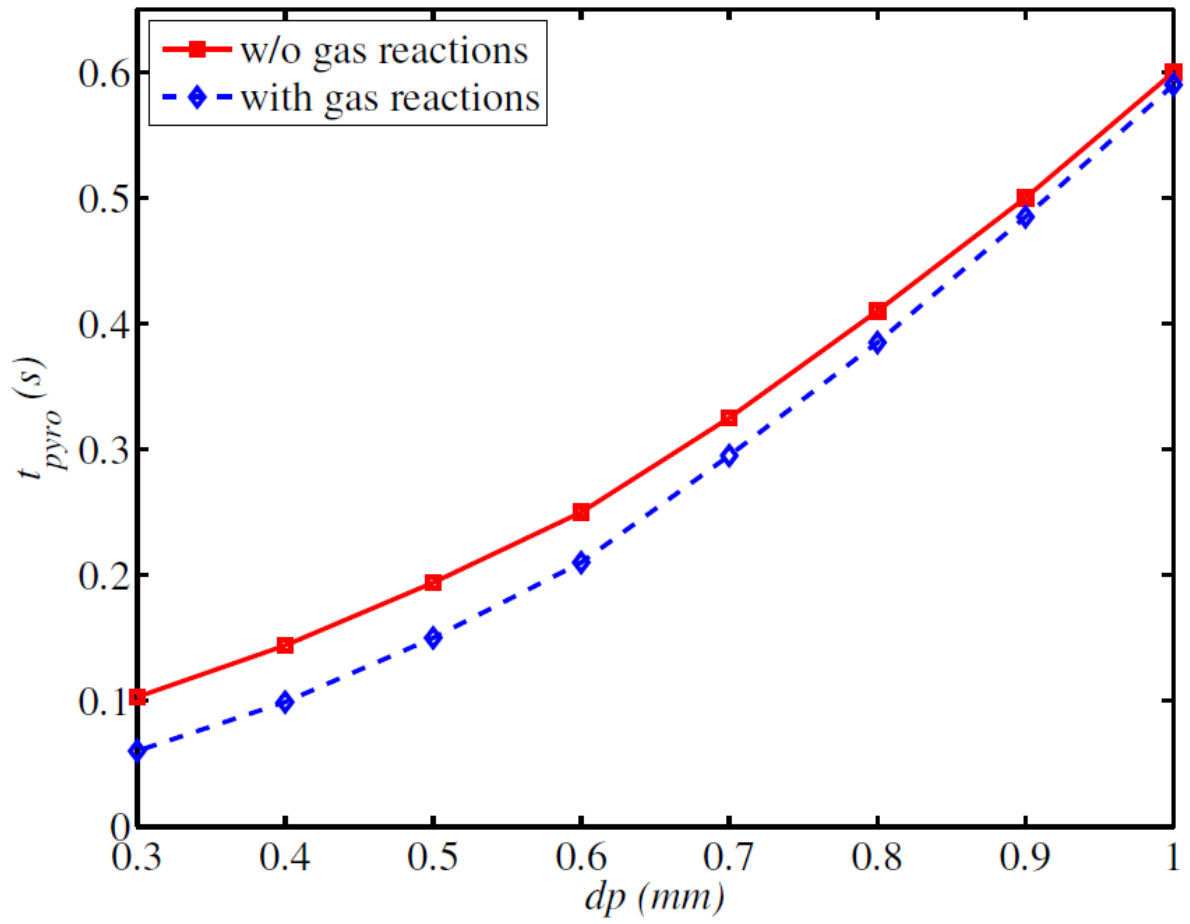
1547 measurements in order to evaluate the most effective method of ignition onset
 1548 determination.



1549

1550 Fig. 32 Temperature and OH mass fraction for biomass. Reprinted with permission
 1551 from [106,107].

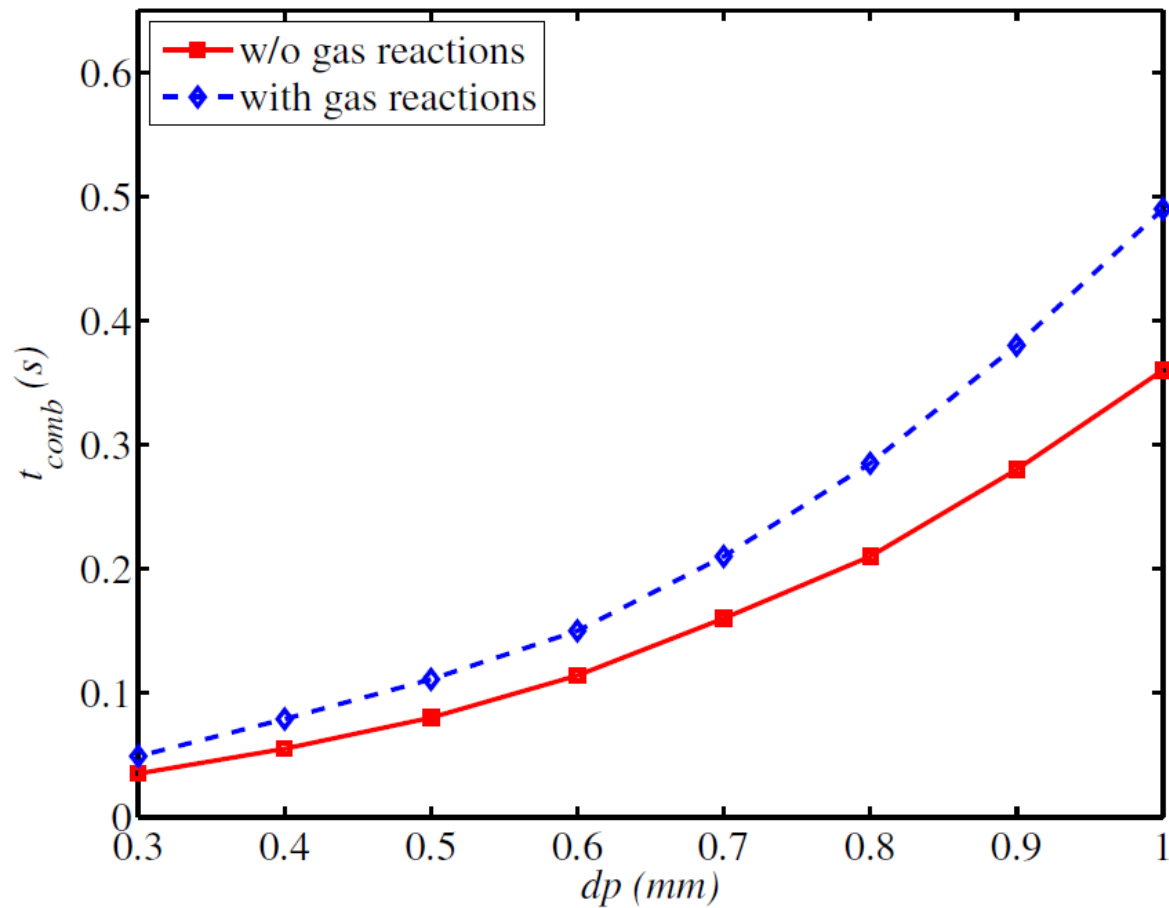
1552 Awasthi et al. [236] applied a DNS simulation and investigated, among others, the
 1553 effect of gas-phase reactions on the pyrolysis time and combustion time of biomass.
 1554 They investigated the combustion of CO, H₂, and the water-gas shift reaction. Judging
 1555 by Fig. 33 one can observe that the effect of gas-phase reactions in terms of the
 1556 pyrolysis time is greater for smaller particles. In contrast to pyrolysis, the effect of gas-
 1557 phase reactions on the combustion time is the opposite.



1558

1559

a)



1560

1561

b)

1562

Fig. 33 a) pyrolysis time vs particle diameter with and without gas reactions, b)

1563

combustion time vs particle diameter with and without gas reactions. Reprinted with

1564

permission from [236].

1565

In general, the effect of homogeneous reactions on the conversion of biomass

1566

particles during pyrolysis is not well investigated. Majority of publications incorporate

1567

global reaction models consisting of 4-5 gas-phase reactions with literature-taken

1568

kinetic parameters. Such an assumption can provide only a general trend and does

1569

not allow an in-depth investigation of radical evolution and their impact on ignition

1570

onset.

1571

1572 7. Conclusions and summary remarks

1573 This review has been focusing on the current state of knowledge on biomass
1574 ignition with respect to experimental techniques measuring the ignition onset, the effect
1575 of fuel properties and operating conditions on ignition characteristics, and the
1576 combustion models focusing on their capabilities of ignition prediction. The review
1577 considered several fields:

1578 **(1)** Impact of particle size and shape, presence of alkali metals, different pre-
1579 treatment methods, such as torrefaction, pyrolysis and water leaching,
1580 combustion atmosphere, volatile matter content in the fuel, devolatilization
1581 dynamics, cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin content in the fuel, temperature,
1582 different ignition onset definitions on ignition delay, and experimental
1583 determination of different ignition mechanism.

1584 **(2)** Similarities and differences between coal ignition modeling and biomass ignition
1585 modeling.

1586 **(3)** List of the most widely applied global and detailed models of the most important
1587 combustion steps that have an impact on ignition: inert heating, drying,
1588 devolatilization, gas-phase chemistry, char conversion, and capabilities of the
1589 models in terms of ignition prediction.

1590 The following conclusions can be drawn from the review:

1591 The quantities related to reactor operating conditions and fuel properties investigated
1592 in the first field **(1)** were found to exhibit a strong sensitivity to ignition mechanism and
1593 ignition delay prediction. With respect to the *reactor temperature*, ignition delay
1594 decreased with increasing reactor temperatures. For very high reactor temperatures,
1595 the heterogeneous ignition mechanism tended to occur more often. As for the

1596 *combustion atmosphere*, the replacement of N₂ with CO₂ resulted in an increase in the
1597 ignition delay, ignition temperature, and volatile matter combustion time. In higher O₂
1598 concentrations, a shift from homogeneous to heterogeneous ignition mode could be
1599 observed. In O₂/H₂O atmosphere, gasification reactions became more impactful which
1600 resulted in a reduction of the ignition delay as well as promotion of the homogeneous
1601 ignition mode.

1602 The literature review has indicated that the ignition was mainly studied under
1603 laminar flow conditions for single particles. Some research reported that the increase
1604 in particle concentration expanded the volatile flame structure and was found to delay
1605 the ignition. Unfortunately, the effect of turbulence was yet not well investigated. The
1606 problem becomes crucial in large-scale reactors where high mass flow rates and highly
1607 turbulent flows are present.

1608 As regards the *biomass fuel properties*, under very high temperatures, biomass
1609 size and shape affected the ignition delay more significantly than the biomass
1610 composition. The biomass particle shape and size also substantially affected the type
1611 of the ignition mechanism. Very small and elongated particles with hot spots tended to
1612 ignite heterogeneously, whereas larger and cylindrical particles ignited
1613 homogeneously. Particle's higher aspect ratio also resulted in a slightly shorter ignition
1614 delay but further research would be required in this respect. The biomass particle's
1615 critical size was found as an important parameter in determining the ignition
1616 mechanism. Pyrolysis non-uniformity and biomass shrinking can change the particle's
1617 critical size resulting in a shift from one ignition mechanism to the other. The ignition
1618 mechanism was also strongly correlated with the lignin content. Biomass particles with
1619 very high lignin content exhibited hetero-homogeneous ignition, whereas particles with
1620 high and moderate content showed a homogeneous type of ignition. The ignition

1621 temperature was reported to depend strongly on the cellulose content regardless of
1622 whether the ignition mode is hetero-homogeneous or homogeneous. High-volatile-
1623 matter-content biomass fuels generally promoted homogeneous ignition with a shorter
1624 ignition delay, but for some biomass fuels, an optimum volatile matter content of 60-
1625 65% was specified when the lowest ignition temperatures occurred. Further research
1626 would be recommended in this field. Fiber orientation was also found to be an important
1627 parameter affecting the particle's potential acceleration in the reactor acting as a
1628 propulsion force that could affect the ignition. As regards the *presence of alkali metals*,
1629 the ignition delay was found to increase with the biomass demineralization process
1630 confirming a catalytic effect of potassium (K) and calcium (Ca). As for the *biomass*
1631 *pretreatment methods*, among torrefaction, slow pyrolysis, and fast pyrolysis, slow
1632 pyrolysis increased the ignition delay time of biomass fuels most substantially. The
1633 impact of torrefaction and fast pyrolysis was not definitive and depended on fuel
1634 composition.

1635 As regards the second field **(2)** and the third field **(3)**, the reviewed 1-D models,
1636 CFD models and DNS simulations yielded very accurate ignition characteristics in
1637 biomass thermochemical conversion. However, it could be observed that most of the
1638 global drying, devolatilization, gas-phase and char conversion biomass models were
1639 the same as for coal modeling studies. The main difference regarded initial physico-
1640 chemical fuel properties, kinetic parameters, such as the pre-exponential factor and
1641 activation energy and the non-sphericity factor. These basic models, however, were
1642 found to yield worse ignition predictions than the detailed approaches which are
1643 devoted to specific fuels such as biomass or coal.

1644 The main future goals in terms of ignition studies should consider above all a
1645 unified definition of ignition onset based on experimental techniques and DNS/LES

1646 simulations. Moreover, there should be an integration of advanced devolatilization,
1647 gas-phase, and char conversion biomass models into CFD with LES-based or DNS-
1648 based simulations. Unfortunately, most of the reviewed studies analyzed simple
1649 RANS-based one-step or two-step models. Such an approach cannot provide highly
1650 accurate results. So far, only a few DNS studies are available, but these provide
1651 valuable information, such as unsteadiness, ignition, and instabilities. These
1652 information can be used, e.g., for the development of models in terms of the ignition
1653 prediction, turbulence-chemistry interaction or turbulence-radiation interaction.
1654 However, the DNS application is currently computationally expensive. Therefore, it
1655 would be advisable to develop a robust and fast ignition delay determination method
1656 for wider application. One also has to consider an accurate coupling of drying,
1657 devolatilization, turbulence-chemistry interaction, and char conversion models within
1658 CFD. So far, for the sake of simplification, the processes are assumed to occur
1659 sequentially. This assumption is no longer valid for thermally thick particles. Special
1660 attention should also be paid to the research considering biomass microstructure.
1661 Pore-scale simulations could provide key insights and better understanding of
1662 transport phenomena. It especially concerns larger biomass particles and higher
1663 heating rates where, because of an abrupt volatile matter release during pyrolysis, the
1664 dynamic morphological structure changes. The detailed knowledge of ignition behavior
1665 of different biomass fuels is important when one considers biomass combustion or co-
1666 firing biomass with coal. The key differences that may impact the reactor design and
1667 its performance have to be accurately established.

1668

1669

1670

1671 **Acknowledgements**

1672 This work was supported by the Erasmus+ program.

1673 **Declaration of competing interests**

1674 The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal
1675 relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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