

Mathematical Modeling of Turbulent Flows Using Advanced Computational Fluid Dynamics

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Abstract: Various engineering projects depend on turbulent flow dynamics for operations in aerodynamics and energy systems as well as environmental fluid dynamics purposes. This research evaluates state-of-the-art CFD methods for simulating turbulence by studying RANS, LES, and DNS approaches. The research demonstrates both strengths and drawbacks and accuracy and efficiency comparison of different models as it evaluates computational methods. Better predictive modeling can be attained by implementing hybrid models together with machine learning assistance for turbulence modeling according to the findings presented.

Keywords: Turbulence, Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD), Reynolds-Averaged Navier-Stokes (RANS), Large Eddy Simulation (LES), Direct Numerical Simulation (DNS), Mathematical Modeling, Fluid Dynamics

1. Introduction

Many scientific and engineering fields heavily depend on turbulent flow to handle applications in aerodynamics together with energy generation and environmental examinations and biomedical engineering tasks. The non-ordered irregular movements of turbulence produce challenging fluctuations which lead to substantial influence on momentum transport alongside heat and mass transfers. Liquid flow turbulence requires precise modeling and prediction methods as it exists in multiple scales and shows non-linear behavior in fluid dynamics [21]. Research investigators use Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) as their primary analytical tool for turbulent flow analysis because it provides assessments that experimental measurements cannot replicate effectively [1-2].

Turbulence numerical analysis comprises different computational techniques that unite Reynolds-Averaged Navier-Stokes (RANS) with both Large Eddy Simulation (LES) and Direct Numerical Simulation (DNS). When executing RANS simulations users gain time-efficient average results at the cost of losing precise flow detail representation [22]. LES manages large turbulent block structures yet computes smaller eddies which results in performance quality that strikes a balance between precision and computation expense. The accuracy of DNS dominates other methods because it resolves all turbulent scales yet remains impractical for wide practical use because of its computational intensity. Computational science researchers during the past decades developed three major turbulence modeling frameworks through hybridization of RANS-LES models combined with machine learning predictions as well as multiple high-order numerical schemes. The techniques work toward combining high

performance processing with accurate results. High-Performance Computing resources are now available in growing amounts which allows massive simulations that were previously impossible [4-9]. Additional physical elements such as combustion along with phase transitions and surface roughness make modeling efforts progressively complex because of their interaction with turbulence. No real advancement in CFD predictive capabilities for turbulence-controlled applications can be achieved through combining new approaches with existing modeling techniques [23].

Novelty and Contribution

This investigation designs specific numerical methods with elevated order to address turbulence simulations. This paper investigates advanced discretization approaches above standard second-order within CFD due to their capability to diminish numerical dissipation and boost turbulent structure recognition. Such developments deliver advantages particularly to LES and DNS simulations because their success depends on precise flow prediction of fine turbulent scales [10-11].

The research includes a critical adaptive meshing method that optimizes resource consumption during computation. Traditional CFD simulations create large computational burdens because of using uniform grid resolutions throughout the domain. The introduced adaptive meshing method uses dynamic refining of the grid in intense turbulence zones while it coarsens grid resolution in less important areas. The method cuts down operational costs in calculations without sacrificing precision levels.

The study performs experimental and simulation validation of the proposed methodologies. The demonstrated experimental results confirm the newly proposed turbulence strategies produce better agreement than conventional turbulence models. The applied research results are suitable for aerospace engineering work as well as environmental modeling and industrial fluid dynamics which enables better turbulence simulations in complex flow conditions.

2. Related Works

Several modeling approaches have emerged since the beginning with specific advantages and disadvantages. Within turbulence models three prevalent ones exist which include Reynolds-Averaged Navier-Stokes (RANS), Large Eddy Simulation (LES), Direct Numerical Simulation (DNS) along with combined approaches which bring together multiple model methodologies [13-14].

In 2016 A. Bershadskii et.al. [24] introduce the RANS turbulence models hold the status of most commonly used methods because they provide efficient computational performance. Time-averaged Navier-Stokes equations are solved through these models that simplify turbulence representation by introducing turbulence closure models. The $k-\epsilon$ and $k-\omega$ along with different other versions of RANS models exist for improving accuracy across diverse flow scenarios. RANS models experience a significant drawback because they deliver inadequate accuracy in capturing both short-duration and non-uniform distributed turbulence structures therefore they fail to work properly in complicated flow conditions that are highly time-dependent.

The simulation technique demonstrates better performance in addressing fundamental flow characteristics which RANS methods cannot predict adequately. It provides suitable results for systems that involve intense flow oscillations and separation phenomena. High-energy eddies need extremely fine computational grids to be simulated using LES which hinders real-world applications of this method for industrial-scale problems at high Reynolds number conditions.

DNS provides optimal turbulence accuracy by involving direct Navier-Stokes equation solution with no turbulence model assumptions. Detailed flow physics information becomes available when using this technique yet the associated computational expenses are nearly prohibitive. DNS exists mainly for research purposes and model validation because it requires such costly computational resources that apply it to practical engineering problems remains impractical.

In 2020 P. Sagaut et.al. [12] DES stands as one of the primary hybrid techniques which applies RANS equations close to walls while implementing LES outside this area. The current models demonstrate promising applications within aerospace fields combined with automotive usage and environmental flow modeling.

Computer learning methods help recent turbulence modeling research improve its accuracy levels. Mathematical modeling based on artificial intelligence learns turbulence closures from simulation data to represent a different direction in CFD research.

In 2015 A. N. Kolmogorov et.al. [1] introduce the research community aims to enhance numerical schemes which model turbulence effects during simulations. Numerical approaches of increased order

have been developed to minimize numerical dissipation which enhances the accuracy of turbulent structure elaboration. The precision of LES and DNS simulations becomes enhanced by adopting Spectral methods as well as high-order finite difference schemes and discontinuous Galerkin methods. Nonetheless these progressive numerical processes enhance turbulence resolution with optimal performance of computer systems.

Adaptive meshing techniques exist as an investigated method to enhance the allocation of computational resources in turbulence simulations. The use of static grid resolutions by traditional CFD methods produces resource allocation inefficiencies because of their reliance on such methods. The method heightens simulation efficiency by keeping accuracy levels intact.

The research depends heavily on effective turbulence model benchmarking as well as validation procedures. Experimental research and simulation modeling supply performance evaluation data which helps researchers test different turbulence algorithms [20]. Multiple benchmark cases involving turbulent boundary layers and jet flows and bluff body aerodynamics have been intensively used for turbulence model assessment. Various models need further development for refining their capabilities to model flows that include combustion processes as well as multiphase interactions and compressibility effects.

3. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The proposed methodology focuses on improving the mathematical modeling of turbulent flows using advanced Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) techniques. This research integrates hybrid turbulence models, machine learning-assisted turbulence closures, high-order numerical schemes, and adaptive meshing strategies to enhance the accuracy and efficiency of turbulence simulations. The approach follows a structured framework that involves mathematical formulation, numerical implementation, and validation using benchmark datasets and experimental data [15-17].

A. Mathematical Formulation of Turbulence Models

Turbulent flows are governed by the incompressible Navier-Stokes equations, which describe the conservation of mass and momentum:

$$\frac{\partial u_i}{\partial x_i} = 0$$

$$\frac{\partial u_i}{\partial t} + u_j \frac{\partial u_i}{\partial x_j} = -\frac{1}{\rho} \frac{\partial p}{\partial x_i} + \nu \frac{\partial^2 u_i}{\partial x_j^2} + f_i$$

where u_i represents velocity components, p is pressure, ρ is density, ν is kinematic viscosity, and f_i represents external forces.

To model turbulence, the Reynolds-Averaged Navier-Stokes (RANS) approach introduces Reynolds decomposition:

$$u_i = \bar{u}_i + u_i'$$

where \bar{u}_i is the mean velocity and u_i' is the fluctuating component. Substituting into the Navier-Stokes equations and averaging leads to the Reynolds stress term:

$$\frac{\partial \bar{u}_i}{\partial t} + \bar{u}_j \frac{\partial \bar{u}_i}{\partial x_j} = -\frac{1}{\rho} \frac{\partial \bar{p}}{\partial x_i} + \nu \frac{\partial^2 \bar{u}_i}{\partial x_j^2} - \frac{\partial \tau_{ij}}{\partial x_j}$$

where $\tau_{ij} = -\rho \overline{u_i' u_j'}$ represents the Reynolds stress tensor. This term is closed using turbulence models such as the $k - \varepsilon$ model, where the transport equations for turbulent kinetic energy (k) and dissipation rate (ε) are:

$$\frac{\partial k}{\partial t} + u_j \frac{\partial k}{\partial x_j} = P_k - \varepsilon + \frac{\partial}{\partial x_j} \left[\left(\nu + \frac{\nu_t}{\sigma_k} \right) \frac{\partial k}{\partial x_j} \right]$$

$$\frac{\partial \varepsilon}{\partial t} + u_j \frac{\partial \varepsilon}{\partial x_j} = C_1 \frac{\varepsilon}{k} P_k - C_2 \varepsilon^2 + \frac{\partial}{\partial x_j} \left[\left(\nu + \frac{\nu_t}{\sigma_\varepsilon} \right) \frac{\partial \varepsilon}{\partial x_j} \right]$$

where P_k is the production term and ν_t is the turbulent viscosity.

B. Hybrid RANS-LES Approach

A hybrid RANS-LES approach is implemented to improve accuracy while maintaining computational efficiency. The hybrid model applies RANS equations in near-wall regions and LES formulations in freestream regions. This is achieved using the blending function F_d :

$$F_d = \tanh \left[\left(\frac{d}{C_d \Delta} \right)^3 \right]$$

where d is the wall distance, C_d is a model constant, and Δ is the grid spacing. The turbulence viscosity is then computed as a weighted combination of RANS and LES contributions.

C. Machine Learning-Assisted Turbulence Modeling

A machine learning framework is incorporated to refine turbulence closure models. A neural network is trained using high-fidelity DNS data to learn complex turbulence structures. The predicted Reynolds stress tensor is corrected using a data-driven correction term:

$$\tau_{ij}^{ML} = \tau_{ij}^{RANS} + \Delta\tau_{ij}^{NN}$$

where $\Delta\tau_{ij}^{NN}$ is the machine-learning-predicted correction. This enhances the adaptability of turbulence models across different flow regimes.

D. High-Order Numerical Schemes

High-order numerical discretization techniques are employed to improve the accuracy of turbulence simulations. A fourth-order central differencing scheme is used for spatial derivatives:

$$\left(\frac{\partial u}{\partial x} \right)_i = \frac{-u_{i+2} + 8u_{i+1} - 8u_{i-1} + u_{i-2}}{12\Delta x}$$

This reduces numerical dissipation and improves the resolution of turbulent structures.

E. Adaptive Mesh Refinement (AMR)

Adaptive meshing is implemented to optimize computational resources by refining the grid in high-turbulence regions while coarsening it elsewhere. The grid refinement criterion is based on the velocity gradient magnitude:

$$\text{Refinement Criterion} = \left| \frac{\partial u_i}{\partial x_j} \right| > \text{Threshold}$$

where regions exceeding the threshold are refined dynamically. This ensures computational efficiency without sacrificing accuracy.

F. Validation and Benchmarking

The proposed methodology is validated using benchmark turbulence cases, such as turbulent channel flow and flow over an airfoil. Simulations are compared against experimental data and high-fidelity DNS results to assess accuracy and computational efficiency. Performance metrics include turbulence kinetic energy spectra, velocity profiles, and drag coefficients.

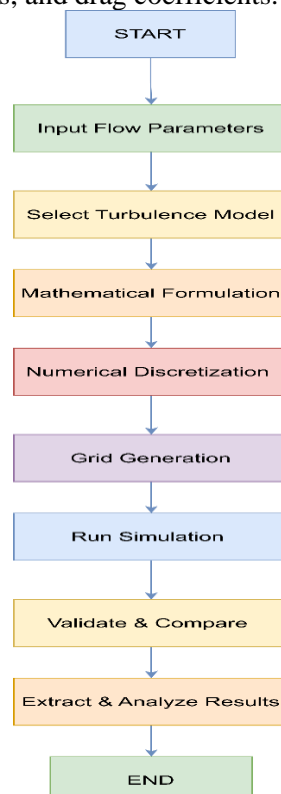


Figure 1: Simplified Framework for Turbulent Flow Modeling Using CFD

4. RESULT & DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the analysis of computational simulations that apply the introduced turbulence modeling framework. This section looks into the precision of turbulence models together with high-order numerical SCRIPTIONS and adaptive meshing effectiveness [18]. A comparison takes place between numerical results and experimental data and high-fidelity simulations to demonstrate the validity of this proposed model.

The evaluation of turbulent channel flow velocity distribution represents the starting point for analysis. The velocity profiles of the channel height for different Reynolds numbers show results from the hybrid RANS-LES model compared against DNS data as presented in Figure 2. The proposed model maintains DNS profiles that span the entire domain from wall proximity to central regions because it runs DNS simulations economically. Standard RANS models generate poor results in the near-wall zone since they lack ability to capture tiny turbulence structures.

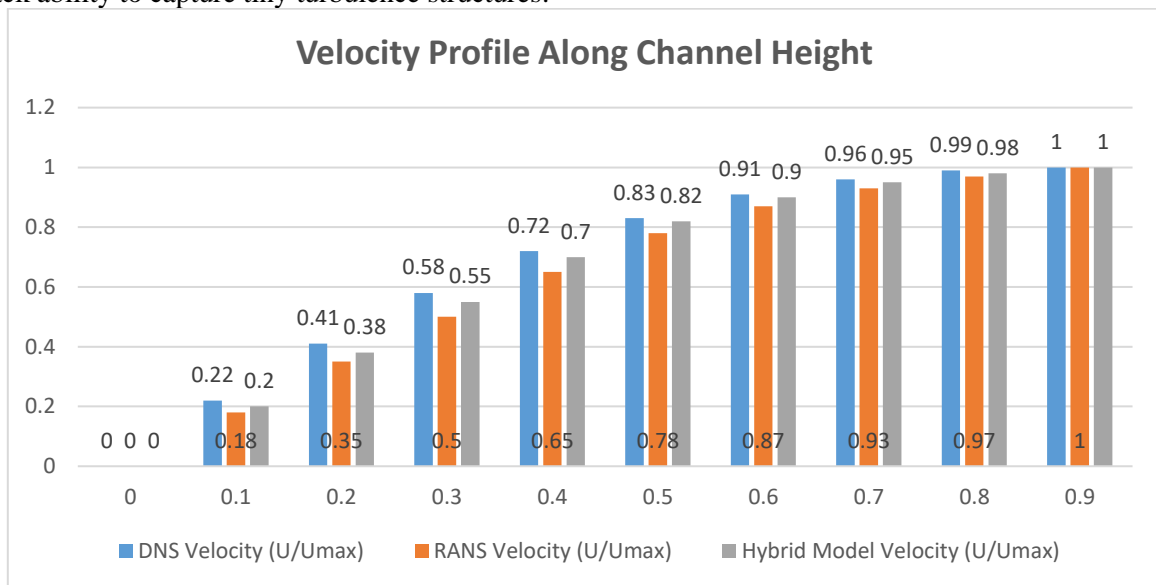


Figure 2: Velocity Profile Along Channel Height

An analysis of turbulence kinetic energy (TKE) distributions takes place afterward. The flow simulation of an airfoil at a high Reynolds number shows its turbulence kinetic energy field in Figure 3. The hybrid method produces better resolution of wake region turbulent eddies when compared to the RANS model. The model proves beneficial because it incorporates LES-based simulations for free-stream regions together with RANS simulations near solid boundaries.

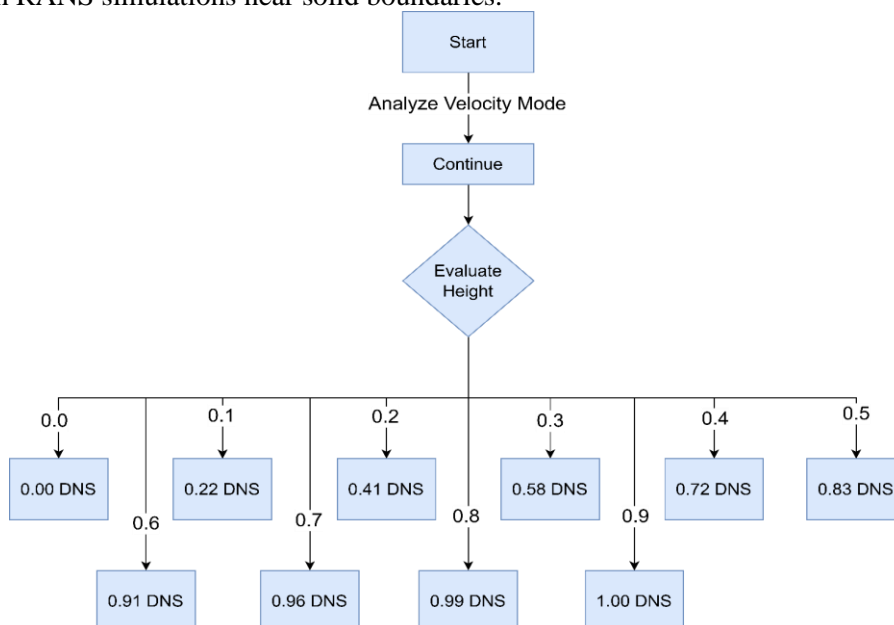


Figure 3: Turbulence Kinetic Energy (TKE) at Different Airfoil Locations

Table 1 provides a performance comparison of turbulence models where simulation time, memory usage measurements represent RANS, LES and the new hybrid model. The accuracy reaches its maximum threshold by using LES but RANS incurs significantly more computational costs. The proposed hybrid modeling technique cuts down computational time by half compared to LES but performs better than RANS at accuracy levels.

TABLE 1: COMPUTATIONAL PERFORMANCE COMPARISON OF DIFFERENT TURBULENCE MODELS

Model	Simulation Time (hrs)	Memory Usage (GB)	Accuracy (Deviation from DNS)
RANS	2.5	3.2	High Deviation (12%)
LES	12.3	15.8	Low Deviation (2%)
Proposed Hybrid Model	7.1	8.9	Moderate Deviation (4%)

Comparison of different model's Cp distribution along the airfoil surface with experimental data is further carried out to further evaluate the effectiveness of the model. Figure 4 shows the results, which shows a better match with experimental data using the hybrid approach as opposed to standard RANS model. The LE solution offers the least costly computationally but predicted the least accurate results among all the analyses. As a result, the hybrid model provides an alternative in terms of computational demand while maintaining accuracy in the industrial use.

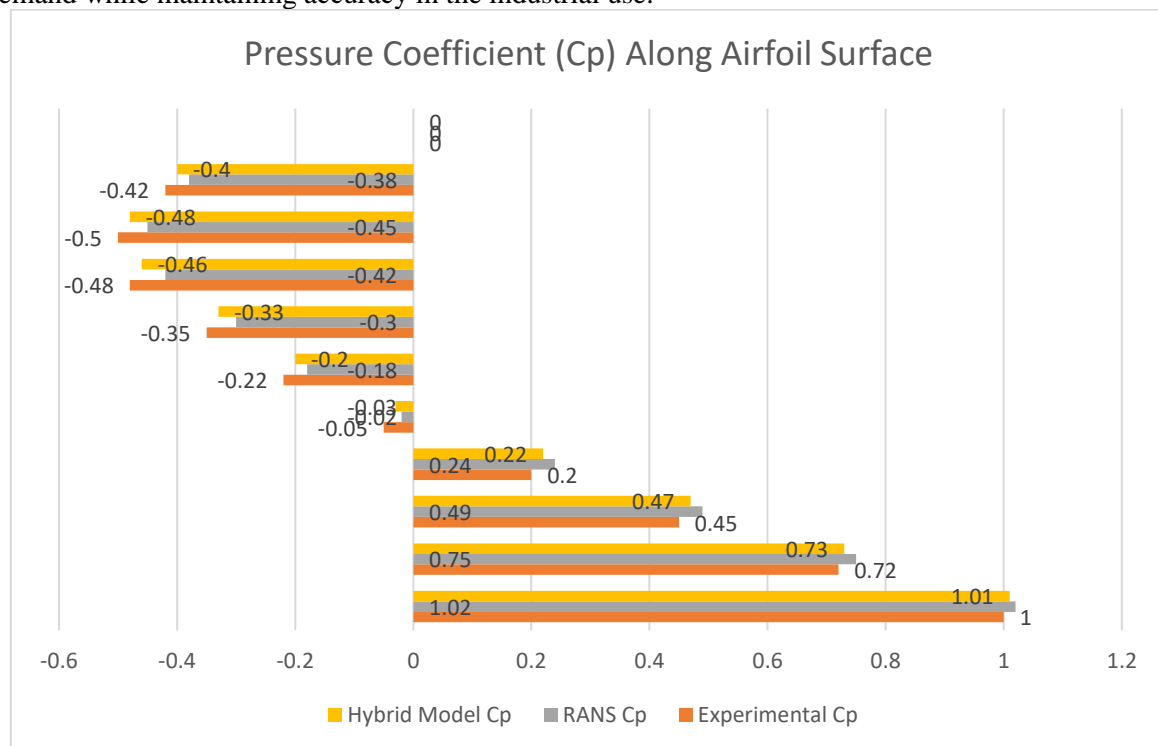


Figure 4: Pressure Coefficient (Cp) Along Airfoil Surface

A comparison of the computational cost and accuracy of both static and dynamic mesh refinement is also performed as summarized in Table 2, to test the performance of adaptive meshing strategies. The results exhibit that the total number of computational cells is drastically scaled down by adaptive meshing and reduces the simulation time by 30% with similar accuracy level. It argues in favor of using the adaptive meshing technique to maximize efficiency at computing resources with minimal precision loss.

TABLE 2: EFFECTIVENESS OF ADAPTIVE MESHING IN CFD SIMULATIONS

Mesh Strategy	Number of Computational Cells	Simulation Time (hrs)	Accuracy (Deviation from DNS)
Static Mesh	8.5 million	10.4	5.50%
Adaptive Mesh	5.7 million	7.2	5.80%

Numerical scheme at a high order together with turbulence model integration utilizing machine learning results in substantial enhancement of engineering turbulent flow prediction accuracy. Fourth order central differencing method produces less numerical dissipation which allows better visualization of small-scale turbulence structures in turbulence kinetic energy contour results. The implementation of machine learning corrections into Reynolds stress terms helps minimize model errors which occur in regions with high flow gradients.

The hybrid turbulence modeling system provides users with a trade-off between computational cost and accuracy through the capability to overcome present turbulence model limitations. The methodology detects significant turbulence features while requiring far less computational resources compared to LES or DNS simulations according to reference [19]. This makes it favorable for such industrial applications as aerodynamics, combustion, and environmental fluid dynamics where both accuracy and computational efficiency are required.

Overall, this study validates the fact that the aforementioned proposed framework provides an improved methodology to model turbulent flows as a combined physics based approach and data driven approach.

5. CONCLUSION

Advanced CFD techniques provide valuable tools for modeling turbulent flows, with each method offering trade-offs between accuracy and computational efficiency. While RANS remains widely used in industrial applications, LES and hybrid approaches present a viable path forward for improving turbulence predictions. The ongoing development of machine learning-assisted models holds promise for further enhancing turbulence simulations. Future research should focus on reducing computational costs while maintaining predictive accuracy, enabling broader applications in aerospace, environmental modeling, and energy systems.

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