# TEAR FILM DYNAMICS IN BREAKUP WITH A ROUGH OCULAR SURFACE

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Applied Mathematics

Summer 2016

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#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am deeply grateful for the immense support and encouragement I've received from my thesis advisor, Dr. Richard Braun. Thank you for always believing in me. I cherish all that I've learned from working with you.

Thank you to my other committee members, Drs. Tobin Driscoll and Pak-Wing Fok, for constructive edits and for teaching me much of the background of this thesis in classes I've taken from you. A special thanks to Drs. Nayantara Bhatnagar and Michelle Cirillo for being strong advocates for me, for women in mathematics, and for AWM. To everyone who makes this department a better place – Deborah See, David Caldwell, Dr. Cristina Bacuta, and too many graduate students to list – thank you for brightening many of my days.

I'm fortunate to have such loving and supportive family members, who always keep me optimistic during my biggest struggles. Thank you Mom, Dad, Mark, and Grandma for always being proud, even if you don't understand what I'm doing.

I owe endless gratitude to Madelyn Houser, my brilliant classmate, best friend, and biggest supporter throughout graduate school. Without you, none of this would be possible. Thank you for celebrating with me in good times, helping me through bad times, and always providing the perfect balance of goofing off and rigorously discussing mathematics together. On top of everything we learned in class, we started an AWM chapter from scratch and it grew into something bigger and better than we ever hoped. I love you.

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#### ABSTRACT

Experimental images of the tear film have been found to contain areas of rough texture. For long interblink times, the rough areas become more pronounced. We model tear film dynamics during the interblink. As the film thins to a critically low thickness, tear breakup (TBU) occurs. We hypothesize that the rough areas in experimental imaging are artifacts of the corneal surface, visible during TBU. To explore our hypothesis, we use one-dimensional thin film equations to model tear film fluid flow, and model the corneal surface as a sinusoidal function to account for its roughness. We use Fourier spectral methods to discretize in space and solve the resulting differential algebraic system using backward differentiation methods in Matlab. We parametrically study the effect of corneal surface features and of wetting forces on the tear film dynamics at TBU. Our results suggest that tear film rippling occurs at, but not before, TBU, and they support the interpretation of rough texture in experimental imaging as evidence of corneal surface roughness appearing during TBU.

# Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

The tear film is a multilayered thin fluid that covers and protects the surface of the eye. The anterior layer is a lipid layer which slows evaporation of the aqueous layer [3]. The aqueous layer constitutes the majority of the tear film and lies posterior to the lipid layer. Posterior to the aqueous layer is the glycocalyx, a forest of transmembrane mucins protruding from the ocular surface into the aqueous layer [4]. The ocular surface, specifically of the cornea, comprises multiple layers of epithelial cells. These cells vary in width and height, forming a rough surface [5, 6, 7]. Figure 1.1, from [8], contains a diagram of the tear film.



Figure 1.1: Diagram of the tear film. The region labeled "Mucin Layer" is what we refer to as the glycocalyx.

Maintaining a healthy tear film thickness is critical for proper vision. Early measurements of the aqueous layer estimated it to be 7 microns thick [9]. However, recent studies with more accurate measurements have estimated an average healthy aqueous layer to be between  $1.5 - 4.7 \mu m$  thick, with an average of  $3 \mu m$  [10]. When the tear film thins to a critically small thickness, tear break-up (TBU) occurs. [11]. TBU is a common phenomenon associated with dry eye, a condition that affects over three million Americans per year [12]. The causes of TBU are not very well-understood, and may be a result of a variety of mechanisms including increased evaporation and the Marangoni effect [13]. Initial studies investigating the effect of evaporation on tear film thinning determined that evaporation speed was not adequately fast to result in TBU [3]. However, such studies were based on the assumption that the aqueous layer is 7 microns thick, and were conducted using experimental goggles which may inadvertently slow evaporation. Given the newer and lower aqueous layer thickness estimate, along with proposed faster evaporation in outside air without experimental goggles, evaporation becomes a plausible candidate for the mechanism behind TBU [1, 2, 14, 15].

The role of evaporation in TBU is linked to the health and function of the lipid layer. During a blink, the upper eyelid drives fluid flow of the tear film and redistributes the lipid layer across the film [1]. In a healthy tear film, the lipid layer maintains a thickness of about 0.1 microns [9]. The lipid layer slows evaporation of the aqueous layer so that the tear film maintains a sufficient thickness between blinks [3]. When the lipid layer develops a thin region, which we call a hole, evaporation increases in the problematic region and drives local thinning of the film [16]. We explore herein the situation in which TBU occurs due to increased evaporation as a function of a hole in the lipid layer.

We are particularly interested in building on the work of Braun et al. in [1], in which tear film dynamics during the blink cycle are modeled using a rough corneal surface. The blink cycle consists of four parts: the downstroke during which the superior lid moves towards the inferior lid, the turning point where the superior lid stops, the upstroke during which the superior lid moves away from the inferior lid, and the interblink period in between the previous upstroke and next downstroke. Braun et al.'s research suggests that the ocular surface roughness is visible in the tear film during a blink based on the fluid motion over the ocular surface. Experimental images and model results show matching of peak to valley in the tear film and ocular surface based on the direction the fluid is moving over the surface [1]. Their work was motivated by images of the tear film taken during and between blinks, such as figure 1.2. These images were taken using interferometry, a technique which uses the phase difference between different reflections of light off the tear film surfaces to measure lipid layer thickness. The thickness is then represented with a color spectrum scale. Figure 1.2 is a grayscale of the original interferometric image.



Figure 1.2: Panel of images of the tear film before and after blinks. In panel A, before downstroke the authors use arrows to highlight abnormalities, which are likely bubbles, in the lipid layer. Panel B is taken during the downstroke and four dots appear in the rectangle. In panel C, another downstroke about one minute later, we observe the four dots again in the same position as in panel C, suggesting they are an artifact of the corneal surface. Panel D is taken during upstroke and the four dots are in the same position but with flow on the opposite side from panels B & C. From figure 4 of [1].

While [1] modeled the effect of corneal surface roughness on tear film dynamics during a blink, we aim to understand the effect of corneal surface roughness on tear film dynamics during interblink, and more specifically at TBU. Images such as figure 1.3 motivate our work; such images capture a rough texture on localized regions of the tear film. In figure 1.3, King-Smith et al. [2] took monochrome, narrow band laser interferometric images of the tear film during the interblink phase. Ripples in the tear film are also visible in images such as figure 1.4, which measure changes in tear film slope by a light that enters the eye [1]. The changes in slope are then integrated to obtain a thickness measurement. The rough texture observed in such images during interblink serves as a motivation for our model.



Figure 1.3: Rough texture visible in interferometric imaging of the lipid layer. We focus on the type of roughness visible in the streaks (arrowhead). Other types of roughness visible in this image are small spots (arrows) and larger patches (asterisk). From figure 3 of [2].

In order to effectively model the tear film, we introduce several simplifications to its physiology while capturing the key components of the system. We simplify the tear film to be a single aqueous layer and model it in one spatial dimension. As previously stated, a hole in the lipid layer corresponds to heightened evaporation at the location of the hole. Thus we account for the protective effect of a healthy lipid layer using an evaporation function with a small background evaporation rate and a localized increased evaporation rate. Many previous models assume the corneal surface to be flat [17], with the effect of curvature negligible because the thickness of the local segment of tear film is two orders of magnitude smaller than the tear film diameter [18]. This



**Figure 1.4:** Rough texture visible in retroillumination imaging of the lipid layer. The roughness becomes stronger as the interblink time increases. From figure 26 of [1].

modeling simplification is justified when exploring the tear film in general, as the effect of the corneal surface roughness is trumped by the free surface curvature in the case of a healthy film thickness. But when the tear film thins in the case of TBU, conjoining pressure pushes the fluid-solid interface away from the fluid-air interface, resulting in the spread of the film over the corneal surface. Moreover, as we will show in the results section, there is no substantial change in pre-TBU thinning rate between the case of a flat or rough corneal surface. However, given that we are investigating the roughness visible in TBU images, we choose to model the corneal surface as a sinusoidal function and parameters to account for the variation in epithelial cells and ocular surface roughness.

Our use of a sinusoidal function for surface roughness builds on previous work in flow over topography [19]. Kalliadasis et al. [20] develop a model for thin film flow over a step, demonstrating how the film forms a capillary ridge immediately before the step drops down in height. The stability of such results and the justification of using a lubrication approximation for the thin film equations in the case of a rough topography has been explored as well [21]. The work of [20, 21] has been extended to the case of a sinusoidal substrate in [22], which we also use.

We quantitatively investigate the presence or absence of roughness in the tear film before and during TBU. Parameters that we explore include corneal epithelial cell height, cell thickness, and wetting forces. We present the problem formulation in chapter 2, outlining the theoretical framework of our model. In chapter 3, we describe the process of numerical discretization and the numerical methods used to approximate model solutions. We present results in chapter 4, quantifying roughness of the tear film at TBU. Finally, we end with discussion and conclusions in chapter 5.

### Chapter 2

#### PROBLEM FORMULATION

#### 2.1 Modeling Assumptions

In order to obtain a simplified model, we must make some assumptions about the tear film. When functioning properly, the lipid layer retards evaporation of the aqueous layer. A common cause of tear film thinning is the presence of a relatively thin area of the lipid layer, which we call a hole [16]. Therefore, when modeling the tear film as a single aqueous layer, we account for the protective function of the lipid layer, along with holes in the lipid layer, by introducing a smooth evaporation function with peak evaporation in the center of the domain and a slower background evaporation rate elsewhere. Moreover, we assume that the aqueous layer of the tear film is Newtonian, in other words, that its viscous stresses are linearly proportional to the strain rate. We also assume that the aqueous layer is incompressible; that is, it has constant density  $\rho$ .

We begin by defining characteristic parameters relevant to our model, first with those that have been calculated or derived experimentally. Let  $d = 3.5\mu$ m be the characteristic thickness in the spatial variable z', based on the experimental average tear film thickness [10]. Furthermore, we assume that the tear-air interface has constant surface tension  $\sigma_0 = 0.045$ N/m,  $\mu = 1.3 \times 10^{-3}$ Pa·s is the constant viscosity of the tear film, and  $v_0 = 20\mu$ m/min is the characteristic peak thinning rate [23, 24, 25]. We define a dimensionless parameter

$$S = \frac{\sigma_0 \varepsilon^4}{\mu v_0} \tag{2.1}$$

which provides a ratio of surface tension to viscosity, so that choosing S = 1 balances surface tension and viscous effects. Finally, we define  $\varepsilon = d/L$  to be the ratio of characteristic height to length scale in the lateral direction. We solve for the characteristic length scale when S = 1 to obtain that

$$L = (\sigma_0 / \mu v_0)^{1/4} d. \tag{2.2}$$

The resulting value for  $L \approx 350 \mu m$  in the spatial variable x'. We then choose the dimensional length scale to be  $x_L L$ , where  $x_L = 8$ , chosen large enough to capture a centered region of increased evaporation with slower evaporation on the sides.

We provide an illustration of the model set-up and domain in figure 2.1.



Figure 2.1: A schematic of the problem set-up, with dimensional variables indicated by primes. The thickness of the aqueous layer is h', the corneal surface is modeled by  $z'_c$ , and evaporation is given by J'.

#### 2.2 Governing Equations Overview

We present a list of the governing equations which we will use to derive our model PDEs. Primes denote dimensional variables. In the sections that follow, we describe these equations in greater detail and nondimensionalize them. Let  $\mathbf{u}' = (u', w')$  denote velocity in the x' and z' direction, respectively, and p' be a scalar function representing pressure.

### 2.2.1 Equations for Interior

We conserve momentum and mass using the incompressible Navier-Stokes equations [26], namely

$$\rho \frac{\partial \mathbf{u}'}{\partial t'} + \mathbf{u}' \cdot \nabla \mathbf{u}' = -\nabla p' + \mu \nabla^2 \mathbf{u}', \qquad (2.3)$$

$$\nabla \cdot \mathbf{u}' = 0. \tag{2.4}$$

#### 2.2.2 Boundary Conditions at Corneal Surface

The no slip and impermeability conditions are

$$\mathbf{u}' \cdot \mathbf{t}'_{\mathbf{c}} = 0, \tag{2.5}$$

$$\mathbf{u}' \cdot \mathbf{n}_{\mathbf{c}}' = 0. \tag{2.6}$$

## 2.2.3 Boundary Conditions at Free Surface

Tangential immobility, the kinematic condition, and the normal stress condition are, respectively,

$$\mathbf{u}' \cdot \mathbf{t}' = 0, \tag{2.7}$$

$$\rho(\mathbf{u}' - \mathbf{u}'_{\mathbf{I}}) \cdot \mathbf{n}' = J', \tag{2.8}$$

$$-p'_{v} - \mathbf{n}' \cdot \mathbf{T}' \cdot \mathbf{n}' = \sigma_0 \nabla' \cdot \mathbf{n}' - \Pi'(h').$$
(2.9)

#### 2.3 Equations for Interior

We assume that the tear film is incompressible, which we express with the equation

$$\nabla \cdot \mathbf{u}' = 0. \tag{2.10}$$

In Cartesian coordinates, (2.10) is written as

$$\frac{\partial u'}{\partial x'} + \frac{\partial w'}{\partial z'} = 0. \tag{2.11}$$

We note that (2.11) conserves mass. Moreover, the tear film is viscous so we can apply the Navier-Stokes equations to describe the fluid motion and conserve momentum:

$$\rho \frac{\partial \mathbf{u}'}{\partial t'} + \mathbf{u}' \cdot \nabla \mathbf{u}' = -\nabla p' + \mu \nabla^2 \mathbf{u}'.$$
(2.12)

In Cartesian coordinates, the components of (2.12) become

$$\rho \frac{\partial u'}{\partial t'} + u' \frac{\partial u'}{\partial x'} + w' \frac{\partial u'}{\partial z'} = -\frac{\partial p'}{\partial x'} + \mu \frac{\partial^2 u'}{\partial x'^2} + \mu \frac{\partial^2 u'}{\partial z'^2}, \qquad (2.13)$$

$$\rho \frac{\partial w'}{\partial t'} + u' \frac{\partial w'}{\partial x'} + w' \frac{\partial w'}{\partial z'} = -\frac{\partial p'}{\partial z'} + \mu \frac{\partial^2 w'}{\partial x'^2} + \mu \frac{\partial^2 w'}{\partial z'^2}.$$
(2.14)

We nondimensionalize as follows:

$$u = u' \varepsilon / v_0, \quad w = w' / v_0, \quad p = (p' - p'_v) / p_0, \text{ where } p_0 = \frac{v_0 \mu}{\varepsilon^2 d},$$
 (2.15)  
 $t = t' v_0 / d, \quad x = x' / L, \quad \text{and} \quad z = z' / d.$ 

In 2.15,  $p'_v$  is the reference environmental vapor pressure. Values for the dimensional parameters in (2.15) can be found in table 2.1. Additionally, we introduce a dimensionless parameter  $\varepsilon := d/L$  This is the aspect ratio, which is small (see table 2.2).

We begin the process of nondimensionalization with (2.11):

$$\frac{v_0}{d}\frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + \frac{v_0}{d}\frac{\partial w}{\partial z} = 0.$$
(2.16)

Dividing by  $\frac{v_0}{d}$ , we obtain that

$$\frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial z} = 0. \tag{2.17}$$

	1		
Parameter	Definition	Value	Source
$\mu$	Viscosity	$1.3 \times 10^{-3} \text{Pa} \cdot \text{s}$	[24]
ρ	Density	$10^3$ kg·m <sup>-3</sup>	Water
$\sigma_0$	Surface Tension	$0.045 \mathrm{N/m}$	[23]
$v_0$	Peak Thinning Rate	$20 \ \mu m/min$	[25]
$v_1$	Background Thinning Rate	$1 \ \mu m/min$	[25]
d	Characteristic Thickness	$3.5 \times 10^{-6} \mathrm{m}$	[10]
L	$(\sigma_0/\mu/v_0)^{1/4}d$	$3.5 \times 10^{-4} \mathrm{m}$	Calculated
A*	Hamaker Constant	$6\pi \times 3.5 \times 10^{-19} \mathrm{m}^3 \mathrm{Pa}$	[27]
$z'_a$	Epithelial Cell Height	$0.25\times 10^{-6}\mathrm{m}$	[7]
$\lambda'$	Epithelial Cell Width	$35 \times 10^{-6} \mathrm{m}$	[6]

 Table 2.1:
 Dimensional Parameters

 Table 2.2:
 Dimensionless
 Parameters

Parameter	Definition	Value
ε	d/L	$9.9 \times 10^{-3}$
Re	$ ho v_0 d/(\varepsilon^2 \mu)$	$9.1 \times 10^{-3}$
k	$L/\lambda'$	10
A	$A^*/(6\pi\mu v_0 L^2)$	$9.9 \times 10^{-3}$
S	$\sigma_0 \varepsilon^4 / (\mu v_0)$	1

Next, we write (2.13) in terms of dimensionless variables, noting that

$$\frac{\partial p'}{\partial x'} = \frac{\partial}{\partial x'} \left( p' - p'_v \right) \tag{2.18}$$

since  $p'_v$  is a constant. This allows us to substitute the dimensionless pressure into the following momentum equation:

$$\rho\left(\frac{v_0^2}{\varepsilon d}\frac{\partial u}{\partial t} + \frac{v_0^2}{d\varepsilon}\frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + \frac{v_0^2}{d\varepsilon}\frac{\partial u}{\partial z}\right) = -\frac{p_0}{L}\frac{\partial p}{\partial x} + \frac{\mu v_0}{\varepsilon L^2}\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\mu v_0}{\varepsilon d^2}\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial z^2}.$$
 (2.19)

Multiplying by  $\frac{d^2}{v_0 \varepsilon \mu}$ , and using the fact that  $\operatorname{Re} = \frac{\rho v_0 d}{\varepsilon^2 \mu}$ , we have

$$\operatorname{Re}\left(\frac{\partial u}{\partial t} + u\frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + w\frac{\partial u}{\partial z}\right) = -\frac{1}{\varepsilon^2}\frac{\partial p}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2} + \frac{1}{\varepsilon^2}\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial z^2}.$$
(2.20)

Multiplying by  $\varepsilon^2$ , we obtain the following dimensionless PDE for u:

$$\varepsilon^{2} \operatorname{Re} \left( \frac{\partial u}{\partial t} + u \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + w \frac{\partial u}{\partial z} \right) = -\frac{\partial p}{\partial x} + \varepsilon^{2} \frac{\partial^{2} u}{\partial x^{2}} + \frac{\partial^{2} u}{\partial z^{2}}.$$
 (2.21)

We now write (2.14), the other component of the momentum equation, in terms of dimensionless variables:

$$\rho\left(\frac{v_0^2}{d}\frac{\partial w}{\partial t} + \frac{v_0^2}{\varepsilon L}u\frac{\partial w}{\partial x} + \frac{v_0^2}{d}w\frac{\partial w}{\partial z}\right) = -\frac{p_0}{d}\frac{\partial p}{\partial z} + \mu\left(\frac{v_0}{L^2}\frac{\partial^2 w}{\partial x^2} + \frac{v_0}{d^2}\frac{\partial^2 w}{\partial z^2}\right).$$
 (2.22)

We multiply by  $d^4/L^2 (= \varepsilon^2 d^2)$ :

$$\rho v_0^2 \varepsilon^2 d\left(\frac{\partial w}{\partial t} + u\frac{\partial w}{\partial x} + w\frac{\partial w}{\partial z}\right) = -p_0 \varepsilon^2 d\frac{\partial p}{\partial z} + \mu v_0 \left(\varepsilon^4 \frac{\partial^2 w}{\partial x^2} + \varepsilon^2 \frac{\partial^2 w}{\partial z^2}\right).$$
(2.23)

Next, we divide by  $\mu v_0$ :

$$\frac{\rho v_0 \varepsilon^2 d}{\mu} \left( \frac{\partial w}{\partial t} + u \frac{\partial w}{\partial x} + v \frac{\partial w}{\partial z} \right) = -\frac{p_0 \varepsilon^2 d}{v_0 \mu} \frac{\partial p}{\partial z} + \varepsilon^4 \frac{\partial^2 w}{\partial x^2} + \varepsilon^2 \frac{\partial^2 w}{\partial z^2}.$$
 (2.24)

Noting that  $p_0 = \frac{v_0 \mu}{\varepsilon^2 d}$ , the coefficient of  $\frac{\partial p}{\partial z}$  simplifies greatly. Moreover, with Re  $= \frac{\rho u_0 L}{\mu} = \frac{\rho v_0 d}{\varepsilon^2 \mu}$ , we obtain

$$\varepsilon^{4} \operatorname{Re} \left( \frac{\partial w}{\partial t} + u \frac{\partial w}{\partial x} + w \frac{\partial w}{\partial z} \right) = -\frac{\partial p}{\partial z} + \varepsilon^{4} \frac{\partial^{2} w}{\partial x^{2}} + \varepsilon^{2} \frac{\partial^{2} w}{\partial z^{2}}.$$
 (2.25)

We note that  $\varepsilon \ll 1$  from table 2.2. Thus we can apply lubrication theory, which provides a method for simplifying thin film flows in general and for free boundary thin film problems in particular [28]. The lubrication approximation is given by expanding about  $\varepsilon$  and discarding terms beyond leading order. Applying lubrication theory to (2.17), (2.21), and (2.25), we obtain the following system of equations:

$$\frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial z} = 0, \qquad (2.26)$$

$$-\frac{\partial p}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial z^2} = 0, \qquad (2.27)$$

$$-\frac{\partial p}{\partial z} = 0. \tag{2.28}$$

#### 2.4 Equation for Corneal Surface

We define the dimensional corneal surface to be

$$z'_c(x') = z'_a + z'_a \sin\left(\frac{2\pi x'}{\lambda'}\right), \qquad (2.29)$$

where  $z'_a$  is the epithelial cell height (default  $z'_a = 0.25 \mu m$ ) and  $\lambda'$  is the epithelial cell width (default  $\lambda' = 35 \mu m$ ). Since  $z'_c$  and  $z'_a$  measure heights, we introduce the following dimensionless variables and parameters:

$$z_c = z'_c/d$$
, and  $z_a = z'_a/d$ . (2.30)

Moreover, we define the wavenumber to be  $k = L/\lambda'$  and x = x'/L based on the characteristic length scale. Then

$$dz_c(x) = dz_a + dz_a \sin(2\pi kx). \tag{2.31}$$

Dividing by d, we have that

$$z_c(x) = z_a \left[ 1 + \sin(2\pi kx) \right].$$
(2.32)

#### 2.5 Boundary Conditions

#### 2.5.1 Corneal Surface

At  $z' = z'_c(x')$ , we have no slip boundary conditions; that is, the fluid has zero velocity relative to the boundary. Thus

$$\mathbf{u}' \cdot \mathbf{t}'_{\mathbf{c}} = 0, \tag{2.33}$$

where

$$\mathbf{t}_{\mathbf{c}}' = \frac{\left(1, \frac{\partial z_c'}{\partial x'}\right)}{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{dz_c'}{dx'}\right)^2}}$$
(2.34)

is the unit tangent vector to the corneal surface. Then expanding (2.33)

$$0 = \mathbf{u}' \cdot \mathbf{t}'_{\mathbf{c}} = \frac{u'}{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{dz'_c}{dx'}\right)^2}} + \frac{w'\frac{dz'_c}{dx'}}{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{dz'_c}{dx'}\right)^2}}$$
(2.35)

$$= \frac{\frac{v_0}{\varepsilon}u}{\sqrt{1+\varepsilon^2\left(\frac{dz_c}{dx}\right)^2}} + \frac{v_0w\varepsilon\frac{dz_c}{dx}}{\sqrt{1+\varepsilon\left(\frac{dz_c}{dx}\right)^2}}.$$
(2.36)

Multiplying by  $\varepsilon$ , we have that

$$\frac{v_0 u + v_0 w \varepsilon^2 \frac{dz_c}{dx}}{\sqrt{1 + \varepsilon^2 \left(\frac{dz_c}{dx}\right)^2}} = 0.$$
(2.37)

We note that

$$\left|\frac{dz_c}{dx}\right| \le 2\pi k z_a,\tag{2.38}$$

so  $\varepsilon^2 \left(\frac{dz_c}{dx}\right)^2 = O(\varepsilon^2)$ . Applying lubrication theory, we discard terms beyond leading order  $\varepsilon$  and are left with

$$v_0 u = 0 \quad \Rightarrow \quad u = 0. \tag{2.39}$$

We also have impermeability at the corneal surface. That is,

$$\mathbf{u}' \cdot \mathbf{n}_{\mathbf{c}}' = 0, \tag{2.40}$$

where

$$\mathbf{n}_{\mathbf{c}}' = \frac{\left(-\frac{dz_{c}'}{dx'}, 1\right)}{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{dz_{c}'}{dx'}\right)^{2}}}$$
(2.41)

is the unit normal vector to the corneal surface. Expanding, we have

$$0 = \mathbf{u}' \cdot \mathbf{n}'_{\mathbf{c}} = \frac{-u' \frac{dz'_{c}}{dx'}}{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{dz'_{c}}{dx'}\right)^{2}}} + \frac{w'}{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{dz'_{c}}{dx'}\right)^{2}}}$$
(2.42)

$$= \frac{-\frac{v_0}{\varepsilon} u \varepsilon \frac{dz_c}{dx}}{\sqrt{1 + \varepsilon^2 \left(\frac{dz'_c}{dx'}\right)^2}} + \frac{v_0 w}{\sqrt{1 + \varepsilon^2 \left(\frac{dz'_c}{dx'}\right)^2}}.$$
(2.43)

Dropping terms of order  $\varepsilon^2$  or higher, we are left with

$$v_0 \left( u \frac{\partial z_c}{\partial x} + w \right) = 0. \tag{2.44}$$

But we have already found that u = 0 at  $z = z_c(x)$  from (2.39). Then dividing by  $v_0$ , we obtain a dimensionless impermeability condition of

$$w = 0. \tag{2.45}$$

From 2.39 and 2.45 we have that there is no movement of the fluid at the corneal surface.

#### 2.5.2 Free Surface

Let h'(x', t') be the thickness of the aqueous layer at width x' and time t'. Then we define

$$H'(x',t') = h'(x',t') + z'_c(x')$$
(2.46)

to be the dimensional equation describing the position/height of the fluid-air interface, or free surface of the tear film. At z' = H'(x', t'), we must satisfy the following conditions: tangential immobility, kinematic condition, and normal stress balance. We introduce the dimensionless variables

$$h = h'/d, \quad H = H'/d, \quad J = J'/(\rho v_0), \text{ and } \Pi = \Pi'/p_0,$$
 (2.47)

where

$$\Pi' = \frac{A^*}{6\pi} {h'}^{-3} \tag{2.48}$$

represents the van der Waals' wetting forces [27]. In chapter 4 we vary  $\Pi$ , using (2.48) as the default. We derive dimensionless equations for each of the boundary conditions below. Typical parameter values can be found in table 2.1.

#### **Tangential Immobility**

First, we consider tangential immobility; that is,

$$\mathbf{u}' \cdot \mathbf{t}' = 0 \tag{2.49}$$

where

$$\mathbf{t}' = \frac{(1, \frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'})}{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^2}}$$
(2.50)

is the unit tangent vector of the free surface. We compute the dot product in (2.49) to obtain

$$\frac{u'}{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^2}} + \frac{w'\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}}{\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^2}} = 0.$$
(2.51)

Nondimensionalizing, we have that

$$\frac{\frac{v_0}{\varepsilon}u}{\sqrt{1+\varepsilon^2\left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^2}} + \frac{v_0w\varepsilon\frac{\partial H}{\partial x}}{\sqrt{1+\varepsilon^2\left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^2}} = 0.$$
 (2.52)

We multiply (2.52) by  $\varepsilon/v_0$ :

$$\frac{u}{\sqrt{1+\varepsilon^2 \left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^2}} + \frac{\varepsilon^2 w \frac{\partial H}{\partial x}}{\sqrt{1+\varepsilon^2 \left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^2}} = 0.$$
(2.53)

Discarding terms of order  $\varepsilon^2$  or greater (from lubrication theory), we obtain

$$u = 0. \tag{2.54}$$

### **Kinematic Condition**

The kinematic condition conserves mass at the free surface. We begin with the dimensional mass balance equation, as given in [27]:

$$\rho(\mathbf{u}' - \mathbf{u}'_{\mathbf{I}}) \cdot \mathbf{n}' = J' \tag{2.55}$$

where

$$\mathbf{u}_{\mathbf{I}}' = \left(0, \frac{\partial H'}{\partial t'}\right) \tag{2.56}$$

is the interface velocity at the free surface, J'(x') is the dimensional evaporation function given by

$$J'(x') = \rho v_1 + \rho \left( v_0 - v_1 \right) \exp\left[ \left( -\frac{x' - x_L/2}{x_w} \right)^2 \middle/ 2 \right], \qquad (2.57)$$

and

$$\mathbf{n}' = \frac{\left(-\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}, 1\right)}{\sqrt{1 + \frac{\partial H'^2}{\partial x'}}} \tag{2.58}$$

is the outward unit normal at the free surface. In (2.57),  $x_w = 1.2$  is the typical evaporation width that we use,  $x_L = 8$  is the domain length, and typical values for  $\rho$ ,  $v_0$ , and  $v_1$  are found in table 2.1. From (2.58), we have that (2.55) becomes

$$\rho\left(u',v'-\frac{\partial H'}{\partial t'}\right)\cdot\left(-\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'},1\right) = J'\sqrt{1+\left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^2}.$$
(2.59)

Expanding the dot product, we have

$$\rho \left( -\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}u' + v' - \frac{\partial H'}{\partial t'} \right) = J' \sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^2}.$$
(2.60)

Given that  $H' = h' + z'_c$ , we have that

$$\rho\left(-\frac{\partial h'}{\partial x'}u' - \frac{dz'_c}{dx'}u' + v' - \frac{\partial h'}{\partial t'}\right) = J'\sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{\partial h'}{\partial x'} + \frac{dz'_c}{dx'}\right)^2}.$$
(2.61)

We now nondimensionalize:

$$\rho\left(-\frac{d}{L}\frac{v_0}{\varepsilon}\frac{\partial h}{\partial x}u - \frac{d}{L}\frac{v_0}{\varepsilon}\frac{dz_c}{dx}u + v_0w - \frac{dv_0}{d}\frac{\partial h}{\partial t}\right) = \rho v_0 J \sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{d}{L}\frac{\partial h}{\partial x} + \frac{d}{L}\frac{dz_c}{dx}\right)^2}.$$
 (2.62)

Given that  $\varepsilon = d/L$ , we discard terms beyond leading order and obtain

$$\rho v_0 \left( -\frac{\partial h}{\partial x} u - \frac{dz_c}{dx} u + w - \frac{\partial h}{\partial t} \right) = \rho v_0 J.$$
(2.63)

Dividing by  $\rho v_0$  and using that  $H = h + z_c$ , we have that at z = H(x, t),

$$w = J + u\frac{\partial H}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial H}{\partial t}.$$
(2.64)

### Normal Stress Balance

We begin with the normal stress balance

$$-p'_{v} - \mathbf{n}' \cdot \mathbf{T}' \cdot \mathbf{n}' = \sigma_0 \nabla' \cdot \mathbf{n}' - \Pi'(h')$$
(2.65)

where

$$\mathbf{T}' = -p'\mathbf{I} + \mu \left[\nabla' \mathbf{u}' + (\nabla' \mathbf{u}')^T\right]$$
(2.66)

is the Newtonian stress tensor and  $\sigma_0$  is the surface tension constant. Enumerating the vectors and stress tensor, we obtain

$$-p'_{v} - \frac{\left(-\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'},1\right)}{1+\left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^{2}} \begin{pmatrix} -p'+2\mu\frac{\partial u'}{\partial x'} & \frac{\partial w'}{\partial x'}+\frac{\partial u'}{\partial z'} \\ \frac{\partial w'}{\partial x'}+\frac{\partial u'}{\partial z'} & -p'+2\mu\frac{\partial w'}{\partial z'} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} -\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'} \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$
(2.67)
$$= \sigma_{0} \left(\frac{\partial}{\partial x'},\frac{\partial}{\partial z'}\right) \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \frac{-\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}}{\sqrt{1+\left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^{2}}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{1+\left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^{2}}} \end{pmatrix} - \Pi'(h').$$

Now we perform the matrix and vector multiplications to obtain the following equation:

$$-p_{v}^{\prime} - \frac{1}{1 + \left(\frac{\partial H^{\prime}}{\partial x^{\prime}}\right)^{2}} \left[ \left( -1 - \left(\frac{\partial H^{\prime}}{\partial x^{\prime}}\right)^{2} \right) p^{\prime} - 2\mu \frac{\partial u^{\prime}}{\partial x^{\prime}} \left(\frac{\partial H^{\prime}}{\partial x^{\prime}}\right)^{2} - 2\frac{\partial w^{\prime}}{\partial x^{\prime}} \frac{\partial H^{\prime}}{\partial x^{\prime}} - 2\frac{\partial u^{\prime}}{\partial z^{\prime}} \frac{\partial H^{\prime}}{\partial x^{\prime}} + 2\mu \frac{\partial w^{\prime}}{\partial z^{\prime}} \right]$$
(2.68)

$$=\frac{\sigma_0}{1+\left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^2}\left(-\sqrt{1+\left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^2}\frac{\partial^2 H'}{\partial x'^2}+\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}^2\frac{\partial^2 H'}{\partial x'^2}\frac{1}{\sqrt{1+\left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^2}}\right)-\Pi'(h').$$

We expand the term involving p' to obtain

$$-p'_{v} + p' - \frac{2}{1 + \left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^{2}} \left(-\mu \frac{\partial u'}{\partial x'} \left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^{2} - \frac{\partial w'}{\partial x'} \frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'} - \frac{\partial u'}{\partial z'} \frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'} + \mu \frac{\partial w'}{\partial z'}\right) \qquad (2.69)$$
$$= \frac{-\sigma_{0} \frac{\partial^{2} H'}{\partial x'^{2}}}{\left(1 + \left(\frac{\partial H'}{\partial x'}\right)^{2}\right)^{3/2}} - \Pi'(h').$$

We now nondimensionalize:

$$\frac{-v_0\mu}{\varepsilon^2 d}p - \frac{2}{1 + \left(\varepsilon\frac{\partial H}{\partial x}\right)^2} \left(-\mu\varepsilon\left(\frac{\partial H}{\partial x}\right)^2\frac{v_0}{L}\frac{\partial u}{\partial x} - \frac{\varepsilon v_0}{L}\frac{\partial H}{\partial x}\frac{\partial w}{\partial x} - \frac{v_0}{d}\frac{\partial H}{\partial x}\frac{\partial u}{\partial z} + \frac{\mu v_0}{d}\frac{\partial w}{\partial z}\right)$$
(2.70)

$$= -\frac{\sigma_0\varepsilon}{L} \frac{\frac{\partial^2 H}{\partial x^2}}{\left(1 + \varepsilon^2 \left(\frac{\partial H}{\partial x}\right)^2\right)^{3/2}} - \frac{v_0\mu}{\varepsilon^2 d} \Pi(h).$$

We divide by  $\frac{v_0\mu}{\varepsilon^2 d}$ :

$$p - \frac{2}{1 + \left(\varepsilon\frac{\partial H}{\partial x}\right)^2} \left(-\varepsilon^4 \left(\frac{\partial H}{\partial x}\right)^2 \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} - \frac{1}{\mu} \varepsilon^4 \frac{\partial H}{\partial x} \frac{\partial w}{\partial x} - \frac{1}{\mu} \varepsilon^2 \frac{\partial H}{\partial x} \frac{\partial u}{\partial z}\right)$$
(2.71)

$$= -\frac{\sigma_0 \varepsilon^4}{v_0 \mu} \frac{\frac{\partial^2 H}{\partial x^2}}{\left(1 + \varepsilon^2 \left(\frac{\partial H}{\partial x}\right)^2\right)^{3/2}} - \Pi(h).$$
(2.72)

Since the domain length L is given by (2.2), then we obtain that

$$\varepsilon^4 = \frac{v_0 \mu}{\sigma_0}.\tag{2.73}$$

Substituting this expression for  $\varepsilon^4$ , we obtain

$$p - \frac{2}{1 + \left(\varepsilon \frac{\partial H}{\partial x}\right)^2} \left( -\varepsilon^4 \left(\frac{\partial H}{\partial x}\right)^2 \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} - \frac{1}{\mu} \varepsilon^4 \frac{\partial H}{\partial x} \frac{\partial w}{\partial x} - \frac{1}{\mu} \varepsilon^2 \frac{\partial H}{\partial x} \frac{\partial u}{\partial z} \right)$$

$$= \frac{-\frac{\partial^2 H}{\partial x^2}}{\left(1 + \varepsilon^2 \left(\frac{\partial H}{\partial x}\right)^2\right)^{3/2}} - \Pi(h).$$
(2.74)

Now applying lubrication theory, given  $\varepsilon \ll 1$ , we discard terms of order  $\varepsilon^2$  or higher. Then the equation simplifies to

$$p = -\frac{\partial^2 H}{\partial x^2} - \Pi(h). \tag{2.75}$$

## 2.6 Governing Equations in Thin Film Limit

We summarize the equations we have derived.

## Interior

In  $z_c(x) < z < h(x,t) + z_c(x)$ , we have

$$\frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial z} = 0, \qquad (2.76)$$

$$-\frac{\partial p}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial z^2} = 0, \qquad (2.77)$$

$$-\frac{\partial p}{\partial z} = 0. \tag{2.78}$$

## **Corneal Surface**

On  $z = z_c(x)$ , we obtained

$$u = 0, \tag{2.79}$$

$$w = 0. \tag{2.80}$$

## Free Surface

On  $z = h(x, t) + z_c(x)$ , we have

$$u = 0, \tag{2.81}$$

$$w = \frac{\partial h}{\partial t} + u \left( \frac{\partial h}{\partial x} + \frac{dz_c}{dx} \right) + J, \qquad (2.82)$$

$$p = -\frac{\partial^2 h}{\partial x^2} - \frac{d^2 z_c}{dx^2} - \Pi(h).$$
(2.83)

## 2.7 Reduction

With a lubrication approximation, we will reduce the above system of free boundary PDEs to a single PDE for the thickness of the aqueous layer. From (2.83), and (2.78), we obtain that

$$p = p(x). \tag{2.84}$$

Now we combine (2.84) with (2.77) and integrate twice, using dummy variables as placeholders for z:

$$0 = \int_{-\infty}^{z} \int_{-\infty}^{s} \left[ -\frac{\partial p}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial^{2} u}{\partial r^{2}} \right] dr ds$$
(2.85)

$$= \int^{z} \left[ -\frac{\partial p}{\partial x} s + \frac{\partial u}{\partial s} - c_1 \right] ds \qquad (2.86)$$

$$= -\frac{1}{2}\frac{\partial p}{\partial x}z^{2} + u - c_{1}z - c_{2}.$$
 (2.87)

Rearranging terms in (2.87), we obtain the following equation for u:

$$u = \frac{1}{2}\frac{\partial p}{\partial x}z^2 + c_1 z + c_2. \tag{2.88}$$

We now apply the boundary conditions to solve for  $c_1$  and  $c_2$ : At the corneal surface, we have

$$u(x, z_c, t) = \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial p}{\partial x} z_c(x)^2 + c_1 z_c(x) + c_2, \qquad (2.89)$$

and at the free surface,

$$u(x, h + z_c, t) = \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial p}{\partial x} \left[ h(x, t) + z_c(x) \right]^2 + c_1 \left[ h(x, t) + z_c(x) \right] + c_2.$$
(2.90)

We subtract (2.89) from (2.90) to obtain

$$u(x, h + z_c, t) - u(x, z_c, t) = \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial p}{\partial x} \left[ h^2(x, t) + 2h(x, t)z_c(x) \right] + c_1 h(x, t).$$
(2.91)

But we note from (2.79) and (2.81) that u = 0 on the corneal surface and the free surface, so the left-hand side is equal to zero and we obtain that

$$c_1 = -\frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial p}{\partial x} \left[ h(x, t) + 2z_c(x) \right].$$
 (2.92)

Now we substitute the given value of  $c_1$  into (2.89) in order to find  $c_2$ :

$$\frac{1}{2}\frac{\partial p}{\partial x}z_c(x)^2 - \frac{1}{2}\frac{\partial p}{\partial x}\left[h(x,t) + 2z_c(x)\right]z_c(x) + c_2 = 0,$$
(2.93)

so that

$$c_2 = \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial p}{\partial x} \left[ h(x,t) z_c(x) + z_c^2(x) \right].$$
(2.94)

Substituting  $c_1$  and  $c_2$  into (2.88), we have

$$u(x,z,t) = \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial p}{\partial x} \left\{ z^2 - \left[ h(x,t) + 2z_c(x) \right] z + h(x,t) z_c(x) + z_c(x)^2 \right\}.$$
 (2.95)

Next we integrate (2.76) along our domain with respect to z:

$$\int_{z_c}^{H} \left( \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial z} \right) dz = 0; \qquad (2.96)$$

$$w(H) - w(z_c) + \int_{z_c}^{H} \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} dz = 0; \qquad (2.97)$$

$$w(H) + \int_{z_c}^{H} \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} dz = 0.$$
(2.98)

From (2.82), we have that

$$w(H) = \frac{\partial H}{\partial t} + u(H)\frac{\partial H}{\partial x} + J.$$
(2.99)

Substituting this value for w(H), we obtain

$$\frac{\partial H}{\partial t} + u(H)\frac{\partial H}{\partial x} + \int_{z_c}^{H} \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} dz = -J.$$
(2.100)

Next we apply the Leibniz integral rule, which states that given a function f with continuous partial derivative with respect to t, then

$$\frac{d}{dt}\left(\int_{a(t)}^{b(t)} f(x,t)dx\right) = \int_{a(t)}^{b(t)} \frac{\partial f}{\partial t}dx + f(b(t),t)\frac{db}{dt} - f(a(t),t)\frac{da}{dt}.$$
(2.101)

Applying (2.101) to (2.100), we have

$$\frac{\partial H}{\partial t} + u(H)\frac{\partial H}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial}{\partial x}\int_{z_c}^{H} udz + u(z_c)\frac{\partial z_c}{\partial x} - u(H)\frac{\partial H}{\partial x} = -J.$$
(2.102)

Given the no slip boundary condition (2.79) on the corneal surface, we are left with

$$-J = \frac{\partial H}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial}{\partial x} \int_{z_c}^{H} u dz.$$
 (2.103)

Now we substitute for u and integrate with respect to z:

$$-J = \frac{\partial H}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial}{\partial x} \int_{z_c}^{H} \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial p}{\partial x} \left( z^2 - (h + 2z_c)z + hz_c + z_c^2 \right) dz$$
(2.104)

$$= \frac{\partial H}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial}{\partial x} \left\{ \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial p}{\partial x} \left[ \frac{1}{3} z^3 - \frac{1}{2} \left( h + 2z_c \right) z^2 + \left( hz_c + z_c^2 \right) z \right] \right\} \Big|_{z_c}^H$$
(2.105)

$$= \frac{\partial H}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial}{\partial x} \left\{ \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial p}{\partial x} \left[ \frac{1}{3} (H^3 - z_c^3) - \frac{1}{2} (h + 2z_c) (H^2 - z_c^2) + (hz_c + z_c^2) (H - z_c) \right] \right\}.$$
(2.106)

After expanding and canceling terms, we are left with

$$\frac{\partial H}{\partial t} + \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial}{\partial x} \left( -\frac{1}{6} \frac{\partial p}{\partial x} h^3 \right) = -J.$$
(2.107)

Since  $H = h + z_c$  and  $z_c = z_c(x)$ , then  $\frac{\partial H}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial h}{\partial t}$  and the PDEs we are left to solve are

$$\frac{\partial h}{\partial t} - \frac{1}{12} \frac{\partial}{\partial x} \left( h^3 \frac{\partial p}{\partial x} \right) = -J, \qquad (2.108)$$

$$p = -\frac{\partial^2 h}{\partial x^2} - \frac{d^2 z_c}{dx^2} - \Pi(h), \qquad (2.109)$$

where

$$J(x) = \frac{v_1}{v_0} + \left(1 - \frac{v_1}{v_0}\right) \cdot \exp\left(\frac{-\left(x - \frac{x_L}{2}\right)^2}{2x_w^2}\right),$$
(2.110)

$$z_c(x) = z_a \left[ 1 + \sin(2\pi kx) \right], \qquad (2.111)$$

$$\Pi(h) = Ah^{-3}, \tag{2.112}$$

$$0 \le x \le x_L, \quad t \ge 0. \tag{2.113}$$

We impose flat initial conditions:

$$h(x,0) = 1 - z_c(x) - z_a, \qquad (2.114)$$

$$p(x,0) = -\Pi(h(x,0)).$$
(2.115)

## Chapter 3 NUMERICAL DISCRETIZATION

The PDE we derived in the previous section is nonlinear first order in time and fourth order in space, which contributes to its lack of a closed form analytical solution. Therefore, we turn to numerical methods for approximating a solution. We first discretize spatially, to obtain a system of differential-algebraic equations (DAE). Then we solve the DAE system in Matlab [29]. In this chapter, we explain the process by which we discretize and approximate the PDE solution.

We recall that the problem is defined on a localized region of the eye, with characteristic length scale of about 350 microns. At such a length scale, we have the liberty of modeling a localized region of particular interest. We consider a section of the eye that does not share a boundary with the eyelid, perhaps the center of the eye. This allows us to enforce periodic boundary conditions at x = 0 and  $x = x_L$ . That is,  $h(0,t) = h(x_L,t)$  for all t. With periodic boundary conditions, we can apply Fourier spectral methods for spatial discretization. We apply Fourier spectral methods using differentiation matrices as derived by [30], and due to periodicity we do not impose a separate case for boundary conditions. We choose the number of gridpoints to be

$$N = 10x_L k \tag{3.1}$$

to ensure that the grid captures the intricacies of the ocular surface. The gridpoints  $x_i$  are evenly spaced and given as

$$x_i = \frac{x_L}{N}i = \frac{1}{10k}i, \quad \text{for } i = 1, \cdots, N.$$
 (3.2)
Numerical testing on the second derivative  $d^2 z_c/dx^2$  ensures that we obtain accurate derivatives with such grid spacing.

Applying Fourier spectral methods in space, we obtain discrete variables for p, h, and  $z_c$  as defined below:

$$h_i(t) = h(x_i, t), \quad p_i(t) = p(x_i, t), \text{ and } z_{ci} = z_c(x_i) \text{ for } i = 1, \cdots, N.$$
 (3.3)

Then the PDE reduces to a system of DAEs:

$$\frac{\partial h_i}{\partial t} = f(p_i(t), h_i(t)), \qquad (3.4)$$

$$0 = g(p_i(t), h_i(t), z_{ci}), (3.5)$$

with initial conditions

$$h_i(0) = 1 - z_a - z_{ci}, (3.6)$$

$$p_i(0) = -\Pi(h_i(0)). \tag{3.7}$$

Note that (3.6) ensures a flat initial condition, for a tear film of characteristic thickness. Given this DAE system, we use Matlab's built-in ode15s solver to find an approximate numerical solution [29]. This is a stiff solver which we choose due to the varying rates of decay from the fourth order spatial derivative and first order time derivative [31]. When running ode15s, we implement a stopping criterion based on a minimum thickness of h. In our results, we predominantly use two different stopping criteria. One case is when the tear film stops as it reaches the glycocalyx. In that case, we stop when  $\min_{x'} h'(x', t') = 0.25\mu$ m dimensionally, or  $\min_x h(x, t) = 1/14$ . We employ this case when studying the effect of ocular surface features on tear film dynamics. In other instances, when we explore the effect of conjoining pressures for the film at low thicknesses, we use the stopping criterion  $\min_{x'} h'(x', t') = 0.035\mu$ m dimensionally, or  $\min_x h(x, t) = 10^{-2}$ . Given the height of the glycocalyx of  $0.2-0.5\mu$ m [4], this stopping criterion implies that the aqueous layer can thin below the glycocalyx. Due to evidence that the glycocalyx helps maintain the aqueous layer covering of the corneal surface [32], thinning of the film in the model may be have implications of a dysfunctional glycocalyx or that there is some compliance of the glycocalyx.

## Chapter 4 RESULTS

In the first section, we study the tear film dynamics at TBU by varying the parameters of the corneal surface function and use a stopping criterion of  $\min_x h(x,t) = 1/14$ . In the second section, we explore the tear film dynamics at TBU with different functions for conjoining pressure and wetting forces, which create a repulsive force between the free surface and ocular surface, and use a stopping criterion of  $\min_x h(x,t) = 0.01$ .

## 4.1 Effect of Corneal Surface Features

By introducing a sinusoidal function at the boundary between the tear film and the ocular surface, we observe different tear film dynamics than in the case of a flat tear film/ocular surface boundary. Figure 4.1 compares and contrasts the model with a rough (sinusoidal) corneal surface on the left and flat corneal surface on the right. The initial conditions in each plot are  $h(x, 0) = 1 - z_c(x) - z_a$ . In the rough case,  $z_c(x)$ is given by (2.32) and  $z_a = 1/14$  (dimensionless amplitude). For the flat ocular surface,  $z_c(x) = 0$  and  $z_a = 0$ . We observe the same qualitative behavior in the plots of the first four displayed time values, while the tear film is thinning before it reaches TBU. However, at the final timestep, we observe different behavior in each model. In the model with the rough corneal surface, the tear film has ripples at the region of TBU. In the smooth corneal surface model, TBU occurs but with no wrinkling of the tear film. The contrasting plots of figure 4.1 illustrate the importance of the ocular surface in determining tear film dynamics at TBU. We now focus our attention on the case of a rough corneal surface, and study how variations in the surface influence tear film dynamics.



Figure 4.1: Time series plots of aqueous layer thickness with sinusoidal corneal surface (left) vs. flat corneal surface (right). The model exhibits the same behavior up until time  $t = t_{end}$  (dimensionless 1.07; dimensional 11.24s), at which time the film anterior to the rough surface develops ripples at TBU. The film anterior to the flat corneal surface also reaches TBU, but with no ripples.

## Effect of Wavenumber on Roughness

Our model uses a default wavenumber of 10 (i.e. 10 periods per unit length), based on the average experimental epithelial cell width [6]. This number is merely an average, and experimental studies have observed great variability in corneal surface features among human subjects [5, 7]. The corneal epithlium continuously undergoes changes, losing cells to cell death and gaining new cells through cell division [33]. We incorporate such biological processes into our model by varying the wavenumber. For example, a wavenumber less than 10 may represent clumping of cells due to epithelial erosion, and a wavenumber greater than 10 reflects smaller cells created during cell division, along with intracellular variation [33]. In model simulations with different wavenumbers, we observe fewer and deeper grooves with lower wavenumber, and a flatter tear film comprising shallower grooves with a higher wavenumber; see figure 4.2 for a comparison.



Figure 4.2: Comparison of tear film dynamics with varying corneal surface wavenumber. The first three subplots contain numerical results for k = 5, k = 10, and k = 20, respectively, with the corneal surface plotted at the bottom of each figure in blue. Solution curves represent the location of the free surface at each time step. Time starts at t = 0, increasing by 0.1 until final time t = 0.8821. As t increases,  $h + z_c$  decreases monotonically. The final figure compares the tear film at TBU with each wavenumber.

Figure 4.2 gives us a preliminary notion of the effect of wavenumber on tear film rippling. With such intuition, we aim to quantify the variation in the rippling by

computing an approximate amplitude of the tear film; refer to figure 4.3 for a sketch of the procedure.



Figure 4.3: Procedure for finding the approximate tear film amplitude.

We begin by numerically finding the absolute minimum of  $h + z_c$  where TBU occurs, and then finding the local maxima adjacent to this minimum. We choose the larger of the maxima, and then compute the difference from peak to valley, dividing by 2 for consistency with a sinusoidal amplitude. We call this quantity  $h_{amp}$ , the tear film amplitude. Next we compute the ratio of tear film amplitude to corneal surface amplitude  $z_a$ ,  $r = h_{amp}/z_a$  and plot this ratio r versus the wavenumber k. Note that we use integer wavenumbers to ensure periodicity for a given domain length, which is required for use of Fourier spectral methods. Figure 4.4 displays the ratio versus wavenumber.



Figure 4.4: Ratio of the tear film amplitude to the corneal surface amplitude as a function of corneal surface wavenumber. Tear film roughness decreases as the wavenumber increases. At the default wavenumber k = 10, the ratio is less than 0.06. At k = 5, the TBU tear film amplitude to corneal surface amplitude is its highest at almost 0.2.

## Quadratic Fit of Wavelength Variation

Based on the results of figure 4.4, we attempted to fit a polynomial to the data but that did not yield a strong fit. In attempt to find a better fit, we made a change of independent variable to model the ratios as a function of dimensionless wavelength  $\lambda = \frac{\lambda'}{L} = \frac{1}{k}$ . Making such change of variables gives the ratio as an increasing function of wavelength, rather than the decreasing behavior of figure 4.4. We use Matlab's polyfit function, which yields a best fit in terms of least squares, to fit the model values to a quadratic polynomial. We obtain the following polynomial to estimate r:

$$\hat{r} = 3.3122\lambda^2 + 0.3957\lambda - 0.0175, \tag{4.1}$$

where  $\hat{r}$  is the approximated ratio of tear film amplitude to ocular surface amplitude, and  $\lambda$  is the dimensionless wavelength. Figure 4.5 shows the values computed from the thin film model (circles) and the polynomial fit (curve).



Figure 4.5: Quadratic polynomial fit, given by (4.1) (red curve) plotted with simulation data for the wavelengths corresponding to integer wavenumbers (blue circles).

Using (4.1), we obtain a good fit for the dimensionless wavelength values of interest, which vary from  $\lambda = 0.05$  to  $\lambda = 0.2$ . The polynomial fit has residual sum of squares

$$RSS = \sum_{i=1}^{\text{length}(r)} (r_i - \hat{r}_i)^2 = 1.983 \times 10^{-5}.$$
 (4.2)

The smallest wavelength 0.05, at the left of the plot, corresponds to wavenumber k = 20, where the tear film only exhibits about 1% the amplitude of the corneal surface. The largest wavelength 0.2 corresponds to wavenumber k = 5, where the tear film exhibits almost 20% the roughness of the corneal surface.

### Effect of Amplitude on Roughness

Equation (2.32) for the corneal surface is governed by two parameters: wavenumber and amplitude. In the previous section, we established a quadratic dependence of tear film roughness on the wavelength of the corneal surface. The biological processes outlined in the previous section may also have an effect on ocular surface amplitude, e.g. an increased amplitude due to gaps formed by epithelial erosion. In this section, we explore the effect of the corneal surface amplitude on the tear film roughness, with several cases based on different fixed wavenumbers. We calculate the tear film roughness using the same procedure as before, this time normalizing with the appropriate ocular surface amplitude for each simulation. First, we consider the case when k = 10(default wavenumber). Using linear least squares, we find that the model values are nearly proportional to  $1/z_a$ , with log-log slope -.9912. We use a nonlinear curve fitting tool in Matlab to find the curve of best fit

$$\hat{r} = .0038 + \frac{.0034}{z_a}.\tag{4.3}$$

The error is given by

$$RSS = \sum_{i=1}^{\text{length}(r)} (r_i - \hat{r}_i)^2 = 7.3458 \times 10^{-5}.$$
 (4.4)

Figure 4.6 displays the curve along with the simulation values.



Figure 4.6: Nonlinear curve fit of the ratio values plotted as the red line, with the ratio values plotted as blue circles.

We observe from figure 4.6 that the relative roughness r decreases as we increase the ocular surface amplitude, with the highest value of r occurring when  $z_a = 0.025$ . Since  $r = h_{amp}/z_a$ , both numerator and denominator vary in the case of varying corneal surface amplitude. For lower values of  $z_a$ , we note that  $h_{amp}$  need not be as large as in the case of higher values of  $z_a$  to obtain a large value of r. We therefore explore whether the largest r and largest  $h_{amp}$  correspond to the same value of  $z_a$ . The results for  $h_{amp}$  with varying  $z_a$  are displayed in figure 4.7.



Figure 4.7: Amplitude of the tear film versus the amplitude of the corneal surface when k = 10. We obtain the largest amplitude for the default ocular surface amplitude  $z_a = 1/14$ , contrasting with the relative amplitude case in which the largest r value occured at  $z_a = 0.025$ .

When we varied wavenumber in the previous section, we found the largest tear film amplitude when k = 5. For this wavenumber, we vary the ocular surface amplitude and calculate the relative amplitude r and dimensionless amplitude  $h_{amp}$  of the tear film at TBU. Figures 4.8 and 4.9 display the results. In both the k = 10 and k = 5 cases, we find that r is a monotonically decreasing function of  $z_a$ , and can reasonably approximate the relationship with a function of the form  $r = c_1 + c_2/z_a$ . When calculating  $h_{amp}$ , however, we find that the largest value of  $h_{amp}$  shifts from occurring at  $z_a = 1/14$  for k = 10 to  $z_a = 3/20$  for k = 5. Commensurate with the results on varying wavenumber, we obtain higher values of roughness when k = 5 than when k = 10 for varying  $z_a$ . We use the same procedure to find the log-log slope of r versus  $z_a$  for k = 5 as in the case with k = 10, to find a log-log slope of -.8613. Although we do not expect as accurate a fit since this slope is further from -1, we fit to a function of the form  $c_1 + c_2/z_a$ . We find the curve of best fit

$$\hat{r} = .0404 + \frac{.0098}{z_a}.\tag{4.5}$$

The error is given by

$$RSS = \sum_{i=1}^{\text{length}(r)} (r_i - \hat{r}_i)^2 = 1.9 \times 10^{-3}.$$
 (4.6)

Figure 4.8 displays the curve along with the simulation values.



Figure 4.8: Nonlinear curve fit of the ratio values plotted as the red line, with the ratio values plotted as blue circles.

We observed the same behavior in figure 4.8 as in the k = 10 case, where that the relative roughness r decreases as we increase the ocular surface amplitude, with the highest value of r occurring when  $z_a = 0.025$ . We again explore whether the largest rand largest  $h_{amp}$  correspond to the same value of  $z_a$ . The results for  $h_{amp}$  with varying  $z_a$  are displayed in figure 4.9.



Figure 4.9: Amplitude of the tear film versus the amplitude of the corneal surface when k = 5. We obtain the largest amplitude for the ocular surface amplitude  $z_a = 0.15$ .

## Corneal Surface with both Long and Short Waves

In the previous sections, we considered separately cases of longer or shorter waves due to cell division and epithelial erosion. Such biological processes may occur continually and simultaneously [33]. Thus we introduce long and short waves together in order to more realistically mimic the features of the corneal surface. We use the following equation for the ocular surface:

$$z_c(x) = \frac{z_a}{2} \left[ 2 + \sin(2\pi k_1 x) + \sin(2\pi k_2 x) \right].$$
(4.7)

Here  $k_1 = 5$  and  $k_2 = 20$  represent the long and short waves, respectively. We compute a numerical solution to the model, with the corneal surface given by (4.7). Figure 4.10 displays the final four time steps of the numerical simulation as the tear film nears TBU.



Figure 4.10: Final four time steps (from t = 0.6, increasing by 0.1 until final time of t = 0.8791) of the tear film in a localized region where TBU occurs, with decreasing thickness throughout time. The tear film ripples in the final time step at TBU, with the wavelength appearing to echo the longer waves ( $k_1 = 5$ ) but not the shorter waves ( $k_2 = 20$ ).

We now solve the PDE for three cases: the two-wave corneal surface, the corneal surface with long wave wavenumber k = 5, and the corneal surface with short wave wavenumber k = 20. Additionally, we vary the amplitude ranging from  $z_a = .05$  to  $z_a = .2$ . Figure 4.10 suggests that the corneal surface acts as a low pass filter, with the waves in the tear film echoing only the long corneal surface waves but not the short waves. We quantify this effect by calculating representative amplitudes and

wavelengths of the tear film at TBU. The calculated amplitude indicates depth of the tear film ripples, while the calculated wavelength determines whether the long or short waves are reflected in the tear film. We compute the ratio of the tear film amplitude to the corneal surface amplitude, and obtain the results displayed in table 4.1.

$z_a$	k = 5	k = 20	two-wave
0.05	0.2582	0.0188	0.1588
0.0714	0.1925	0.0127	0.1033
0.1	0.1411	0.0085	0.0722
0.2	0.0698	0.0034	0.0311

**Table 4.1:** Ratio of tear film amplitude to corneal surface amplitude  $(r = h_{amp}/z_a)$  for various ocular surface functions. The amplitude of the tear film corresponding to the two wave corneal surface is larger than the k = 20 amplitude and smaller than the k = 5 amplitude. This further suggests that the inclusion of shorter waves has a flattening effect.

We also compute an approximate wavenumber of the tear film at TBU to compare it to the wavenumber of the ocular surface. We use the same procedure as previously outlined to find the absolute minimum of the free surface  $h + z_c$  and adjacent local maxima. We then find the x coordinates of the maxima, compute their difference d, and take the wavenumber to be 1/d. Table 4.2 contains wavenumbers of the tear film for varying ocular surface wavenumber and amplitude.

$z_a$	k=5	k = 20	two-wave
.05	4.5455	18.7500	4.0541
.0714	4.5455	18.7500	4.8387
.1	4.5455	18.7500	4.8387
.2	4.5455	18.7500	4.8387

Table 4.2: Wavenumber for various ocular surface functions. We note that these values are approximate due to the numerical discretization process and the fact that the tear film surface is not truly periodic. We observe a longer wave for the two-wave case, close to k = 5, and we do not see the k = 20 wave.

The wavenumber of the tear film at TBU is found to be almost identical to the wavenumber of the longer wave (k = 5). Therefore, the tear film acts as a low pass filter, with its ripples showing the longer waves of the corneal surface and filtering out the shorter waves.

### 4.2 Effect of Wetting Forces

The fluid pressure is governed largely by the curvature of the fluid surface, given by the  $(h + z_c)_{xx}$  term, before the film reaches TBU. This curvature-driven pressure causes the film to decay smoothly with no artifact of the corneal surface. However, as the film gets close to TBU, for example less than 100 nm in some cases, there is a repulsion between the fluid-air interface and the corneal substrate [34, 35]. We describe this repulsion with wetting forces, as experimental studies have shown that the tear film typically wets the corneal surface [36, 37], or in some cases is partially wetting [37]. We account for the wetting forces by including a conjoining pressure function  $\Pi(h)$ , dependent on the thickness of the film. We first consider a standard form used for van der Waals' forces; then, we consider two modifications that have been proposed for non-flat substrates [35, 38] such as for our case.

The default wetting forces we consider are the van der Waals' wetting forces, given by (2.48). These forces describe wetting of a thin film of uniform thickness. Nondimensionalizing (2.48), we obtain

$$\Pi(h) = Ah^{-3},\tag{4.8}$$

where

$$A = \frac{A^*}{6\pi\mu v_0 L^2}.$$
 (4.9)

Here  $A^*$  is the Hamaker constant, with value  $A^* = 6\pi \times 3.5 \times 10^{-19} \text{m}^3 \text{Pa}$  [27]. Typical values of  $A^*$  range from  $10^{-20}$  to  $10^{-19} \text{m}^3 \text{Pa}$  [34].

In the numerical simulations of this section, we use a stopping criterion of  $\min_x h(x,t) = 10^{-2}$ . We lower the stopping criterion to better observe the effects of wetting forces, which become a dominant force in the pressure function closer to TBU.

### Trivial Case: Absence of Wetting Forces

In the case where we do not include a disjoining pressure term, we witness no roughness in the tear film at any point of the simulation, including at TBU. Figure 4.11 shows the dynamics of the thin film without a disjoining pressure. We note that the results of this model are commensurate with previous work on flow over topography, such as [1] and [22], in which fluid flow is driven by external forces such as gravity or blinking and thus yields an artifact of the substrate topography.



Figure 4.11: Left plot: time series plot of film thickness with absence of wetting forces. Top blue curve is t = 0; bottom teal curve is t = .9291. The tear film thins until the solver stops it at  $h_{min} = 10^{-2}$ . In this case, there are no visible ripples in the tear film. Right plot: the same model simulation, zoomed into the localized region at which TBU occurs.

## Van der Waals' Forces

We run the model with the default van der Waals' forces given by (4.8). Figure 4.12 displays the progression of the tear film thickness, using an events function to stop the solver at dimensionless thickness of 0.01 (dimensional  $0.035\mu$ m).



Figure 4.12: Time series plot of film thickness with van der Waals' wetting forces. Top blue curve is t = 0; time increases by 0.1 until the bottom purple curve at t = 1.0015. The tear film thins until the solver stops it at thickness  $h = 10^{-2}$ . The wetting forces cause the tear film to spread across the corneal surface at TBU, echoing the shape of the surface.

The roughness of the tear film changed as we varied the wavenumber in the previous section, in the case where the stopping criterion was set  $\min_x h(x,t) = 1/14$ . We explore the effect of varying wavenumber in figure 4.13 when the stopping criterion is reduced to  $\min_x h(x,t) = 10^{-2}$ .



Figure 4.13: Ratio of the tear film amplitude to the corneal surface amplitude as a function of wavenumber when TBU is defined as  $\min_x h(x,t) = 10^{-2}$ .

Despite variations in the relative amplitude, we note that all plotted values are in the range of [0.945, 0.985] indicating that the tear film wets the corneal surface, closely following its shape at TBU. The results we obtain vary by  $\pm .05$  based on the chosen grid spacing, due to numerical error in calculation of local maxima. The number of gridpoints represented in figure 4.13 is  $N = 10x_Lk$ .

## **Disjoining Pressure for Nonuniform Thin Films**

Although van der Waals' wetting forces are commonly used in thin film modeling, they are derived for films with two parallel interfaces [39]. We now attempt to use two different disjoining pressure functions that incorporate effects of non-flat surfaces [35, 38]. Given that the model tear film at TBU has a thinner region in the center and thicker regions on the ends, we explore the effect of wetting forces for films of nonuniform thickness. One such disjoining pressure function for films of nonuniform thickness is derived by Dai, Leal, and Redondo [35]. Dimensionally, it is given by

$$\Pi'(h') = \frac{A^*}{24\pi} {h'}^{-3} \left[ 4 - 3\left(\frac{\partial h'}{\partial x'}\right)^2 + 3h' \frac{\partial^2 h'}{\partial x'^2} \right].$$
 (4.10)

We now nondimensionalize (4.10) according to the dimensionless variables established in chapter 2:

$$\frac{v_0\mu}{\varepsilon^2 d}\Pi(h) = \frac{A^*}{24\pi d^3} h^{-3} \left[ 4 - 3\varepsilon^2 \left(\frac{\partial h}{\partial x}\right)^2 + 3h\varepsilon^2 \frac{\partial^2 h}{\partial x^2} \right]$$
(4.11)

Multiplying both sides by  $\frac{\varepsilon^2 d}{v_0 \mu}$ , we have that

$$\Pi(h) = Ah^{-3} \left[ 1 - \frac{3}{4} \varepsilon^2 \left( \frac{\partial h}{\partial x} \right)^2 + \frac{3}{4} h \varepsilon^2 \frac{\partial^2 h}{\partial x^2} \right].$$
(4.12)

If we drop terms of order  $\varepsilon^2$  or greater, we are left with the same disjoining pressure function as that of the van der Waals' forces in (4.8). However, we include the terms involving  $\varepsilon$ : due to the effect of the pressure function at very small h values, other small terms may come into play.

Upon initial inspection, with the stopping criterion of  $10^{-2}$ , the model with (4.12) seems to behave the same as the model with equation (4.8). We therefore allow the solver to run longer, to check whether there are any qualitative changes at even smaller thicknesses. We reduce the stopping criterion further to  $\min_x h(x,t) = 10^{-4}$ . In figure 4.14, we display the numerical solutions using (4.12).



Figure 4.14: Time series plot of film thickness with wetting forces governed by (4.12). Starting with time t = 0, we increase by 0.1 until the final time of t = 1.0134. We obtain the same behavior with (4.12) as with (4.8).

The results of figure 4.14 do not differ qualitatively from the results with the van der Waals' disjoining pressure equation (4.8). Additionally, each model reaches TBU at the same time, in dimensionless terms, of t = 1.0134. To quantify the numerical difference near TBU, we compute the  $\ell^2$  norm and  $\ell^{\infty}$  norm of the difference between the values of h in each model at both the penultimate and ultimate time step. See table 4.3 for the values.

#### Disjoining Pressure with No Movement of Contact Line

An additional physical property to explore with the disjoining pressure is contact line, which is the line where the aqueous layer, outside air, and ocular surface meet. Studies have found a contact angle ranging from 0° (perfectly wetting) to 16° (partial

t	$\ell^2$	$\ell^\infty$
1	$1.5 \times 10^{-5}$	$3.3 \times 10^{-6}$
1.0134	$1.5 \times 10^{-5}$	$3.1 \times 10^{-6}$

 Table 4.3: Comparison of van der Waals' disjoining pressure, and Dai et al.'s disjoining pressure for films of nonuniform thickness.

wetting) [37]. Here we make an initial exploration into incorporating partial wetting. For the case of partial wetting, in many instances one wishes to prevent movement of the contact line due to no-slip conditions at the corneal surface. We incorporate into our model the following disjoining pressure function, as given dimesionally by Wu and Wong [38]:

$$\Pi'(h') = Bh'^{-3} \left( \alpha^4 - \frac{\partial h'^4}{\partial x'} + 2h' \frac{\partial h'^2}{\partial x'} \frac{\partial^2 h'}{\partial x'^2} \right).$$
(4.13)

We nondimensionalize according to the dimensionless variables given in chapter 2:

$$\frac{v_0\mu}{\varepsilon^2 d}\Pi(h) = Bd^{-3}h^{-3}\left(\alpha^4 - \varepsilon^4\frac{\partial h}{\partial x} + 2h\varepsilon^4\frac{\partial h^2}{\partial x}\frac{\partial^2 h}{\partial x^2}\right).$$
(4.14)

Multiplying both sides by  $\frac{\varepsilon^2 d}{v_0 \mu}$ , we obtain the following dimensionless equation corresponding to (4.13):

$$\Pi(h) = \frac{B}{L^2 v_0 \mu} h^{-3} \left( \alpha^4 - \varepsilon^4 \frac{\partial h}{\partial x} + 2h \varepsilon^4 \frac{\partial h^2}{\partial x^2} \frac{\partial^2 h}{\partial x^2} \right).$$
(4.15)

We note that for  $\alpha = 0^{\circ}$  which represents the perfectly wetting case, we trivially satisfy the condition of no moving contact line. In this case, the model is virtually absent of a disjoining pressure, with the exception of terms involving  $\varepsilon^4$ . This absence of a disjoining pressure is not consistent with the terms required in the model for the perfectly wetting case. Moreover, when attempting to solve the model numerically at  $\alpha = 0^{\circ}$ , the solver breaks before reaching a low enough thickness to observe the effects of disjoining pressure. When  $\alpha = 16^{\circ}$  in the partial wetting case, we face a similar issue, in which the solver returns erroneous plots once reaching a TBU-level thickness. Therefore, the effect of (4.15) on our model is inconclusive.

# Chapter 5

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

We recall experimental images such as figure 1.3 in which we observe areas of rough texture. Our work was motivated by the interpretation of such images, and we put our results in context based on such images. Our results support the interpretation of rough regions as TBU, given that the model tear film develops ripples at but not before TBU. These ripples vary in amplitude and wavenumber based on the features of the ocular surface and glycocalyx. In the case of a healthy glycocalyx, i.e. when the stopping criterion is set to  $0.25\mu$ m, the tear film roughness varies from about 1% to 20% of the amplitude of the corneal surface, with higher amplitude for lower wavenumber ocular surface. At 20% the amplitude of the corneal surface, the tear film amplitude is  $0.05\mu m$ , compared to the average epithelial cell height of  $0.25\mu m$  and average epithelial cell width of  $35\mu$ m. When the tear film thins below the glycocalyx to  $0.035\mu$ m, the tear film hugs the corneal surface, echoing its amplitude and wavenumber. We also find that in a corneal surface with long and short waves, the tear film ripples echo the wavelength of the long waves, with an amplitude between the long and short wave cases. This suggests that the tear film acts as a low pass filter, only reflecting the shape of the long waves.

Our results differ qualitatively from previous results involving a rough ocular surface, such as those of Braun et al. [1]. They modeled tear film dynamics during a blink with a rough ocular surface, in which case the dynamics were flow-driven by the moving eyelid boundary. Due to the lateral fluid flow in their model, the shape of the rough ocular surface was evident even at healthy film thickness. However, we model dynamics during interblink, when the eyelid does not move and flow is not driven by a blink. The curvature of the free surface, which is initialized to be smooth, dominates the pressure gradient for higher h, or thicker aqueous layer. Only at smaller h, as we reach TBU, do wetting forces appear strong enough to form ripples in the tear film.

The inclusion of wetting forces at lower aqueous layer thickness was crucial in the formation of tear film ripples at TBU. With van der Waals' wetting forces, we achieved the same behavior as with the wetting forces for films of nonuniform thickness found in [35]. Because of the aspect ratio of our problem, the additional terms involving the tear film curvature did not come into play in our model. When attempting to account for no movement of contact line with a conjoining pressure equation from [38], the solver broke before reaching TBU-level thicknesses. This equation also was greatly simplified because of the small height to length ratio in our model, which likely affected the results.

One of the many challenges of our model is the shortage of information about the corneal surface. While we model tear film roughness based on corneal surface properties, current imaging techniques do not provide simultaneous data on tear film thickness and corneal surface features. We therefore combined data such as average epithelial cell height and width, along with an experimentally-derived standard deviation of  $0.129\mu$ m for corneal surface roughness [7], to establish an appropriate range of parameter values in our simulations. If we center the amplitude around the average epithelial cell height of  $0.25\mu$ m, then using the standard deviation from [7], we have that 95% of corneal surface amplitudes will be in the range from  $0\mu$ m (flat) to  $0.508\mu$ m. Our chosen amplitude values vary from a flat corneal surface to  $0.7\mu$ m, therefore closely replicating the variance found by [7]. We similarly vary wavenumber centered around the average epithelial cell width, although we do not have data on the standard deviation of width.

There are several future directions we can take to improve our model. We

can incorporate properties of experimental imaging into our model, in order to form a more direct comparison between simulation and experiment. Current models such as [40] introduce fluorescein concentration as a variable; we can add fluorescein to our model although we do not expect to observe tear film rippling experimentally using fluorescein imaging. It would be more appropriate, albeit more challenging, to incorporate interferometry into our model. Other improvements could be to include more physical properties of the system, such as osmosis at the corneal surface boundary, and measuring osmolarity of the aqueous layer. Both osmosis and osmolarity drive fluid flow and thus may change the tear film dynamics. We can also incorporate the features of the glycocalyx into our model. The glycocalyx protrudes from the ocular surface into the aqueous layer; including it in the model will likely influence dynamics at TBU that are relevant to surface topography. Lastly, we can extend our one-dimensional model to a model with a two-dimensional ocular surface and two-dimensional tear film.

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