3D Simulations of Oxygen Shell Burning with and without Magnetic Fields

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ABSTRACT
We present a first 3D magnetohydrodynamic (MHD) simulation of convective oxygen and neon shell burning in a non-rotating 18 $M_{\odot}$ star shortly before core collapse to study the generation of magnetic fields in supernova progenitors. We also run a purely hydrodynamic control simulation to gauge the impact of the magnetic fields on the convective flow and on convective boundary mixing. After about 17 convective turnover times, the magnetic field is approaching saturation levels in the oxygen shell with an average field strength of $\sim 10^{10}$ G, and does not reach kinetic equipartition. The field remains dominated by small to medium scales, and the dipole field strength at the base of the oxygen shell is only $10^9$ G. The angle-averaged diagonal components of the Maxwell stress tensor mirror those of the Reynolds stress tensor, but are about one order of magnitude smaller. The shear flow at the oxygen-neon shell interface creates relatively strong fields parallel to the convective boundary, which noticeably inhibit the turbulent entrainment of neon into the oxygen shell. The reduced ingestion of neon lowers the nuclear energy generation rate in the oxygen shell and thereby slightly slows down the convective flow. Aside from this indirect effect, we find that magnetic fields do not appreciably alter the flow inside the oxygen shell. We discuss the implications of our results for the subsequent core-collapse supernova and stress the need for longer simulations, resolution studies, and an investigation of non-ideal effects for a better understanding of magnetic fields in supernova progenitors.

Key words: stars: massive – stars: magnetic fields – stars: interiors – MHD – convection – turbulence

1 INTRODUCTION
Rigorous three-dimensional (3D) simulations of neutrino-driven core-collapse supernovae have become highly successful in recent years (e.g., Melson et al. 2015; Lentz et al. 2015; Takiwaki et al. 2014; Burrows et al. 2019), and have made clear headway in explaining the properties of supernova explosions and the compact objects born in these events (Müller et al. 2017; Müller et al. 2019; Burrows et al. 2020; Powell & Müller 2020; Bollig et al. 2020; Müller 2020). The latest 3D models are able to reproduce a range of explosion energies up to $10^{51}$ erg (Bollig et al. 2020), and yield neutron star birth masses, kicks, and spins largely compatible with the population of observed young pulsars (Müller et al. 2019; Burrows et al. 2020).

A number of ingredients have contributed, or have the potential to contribute, to make modern neutrino-driven explosion models more robust. Various microphysical effects such as reduced neutrino scattering opacities due to nucleon strangeness (Melson et al. 2015) and nucleon correlations at high densities (Horowitz et al. 2017; Bollig et al. 2017; Burrows et al. 2018), muonisation (Bollig et al. 2017), and large effective nucleon masses (Yasin et al. 2020) can be conducive to neutrino-driven shock revival.

In addition, a particularly important turning point has been the advent of 3D progenitor models and the recognition that asphericities seeded prior to collapse can precipitate “perturbation-aided” neutrino-driven explosions (Couch & Ott 2013; Couch et al. 2015; Müller & Janka 2015; Müller 2016; Müller et al. 2017; Müller 2020; Bollig et al. 2020). In perturbation-aided explosions, the moderately subsonic solenoidal velocity perturbation in active convective shells at the pre-collapse stage with Mach numbers of order $\sim 0.1$ (Collins et al. 2018) are transformed into strong density and pressure perturbations at the shock (Müller & Janka 2015; Takahashi & Yamada 2014; Takahashi et al. 2016; Abdikamalov & Foglizzo 2020), and effectively strengthen the violent non-radial flow behind the shock that develops due to convective instability (Herant et al. 1994; Burrows et al. 1995; Janka & Müller 1995, 1996) and the standing accretion shock instability (Blondin et al. 2003; Foglizzo et al. 2007), thereby supporting neutrino-driven shock revival.

The discovery of perturbation-aided explosions has greatly enhanced interest in multi-dimensional models of late convective burning stages in massive stars. Several studies have by now followed the immediate pre-collapse phase of silicon and/or oxygen shell burning to collapse in 3D (Couch et al. 2015; Müller 2016; Müller et al. 2016; Müller et al. 2019; Yoshida et al. 2019; Yadav et al. 2020; McNeill & Müller 2020; Yoshida et al. 2020). In addition, there has been a long-standing strand of research since the 1990s (e.g., Bazan & Arnett 1994; Bazán & Arnett 1997; Meakin & Arnett 2006, 2007b,a; Müller et al. 2016; Jones et al. 2017; Cristini et al. 2017, 2019) into the detailed behaviour of stellar convection during advanced burning stages with a view to the secular impact of 3D effects not captured by spherically symmetric stellar evolution models based on mixing-length theory (Biermann 1932; Böhm-Vitense 1958). The details of convective boundary mixing by processes such as quasi-steady turbulent entrainment (Fernando 1991; Strang & Fernando 2001; Meakin 2002) and the impact of 3D effects that strengthen the violent non-radial flow behind the shock that develops due to convective instability (Herant et al. 1994; Burrows et al. 1995; Janka & Müller 1995, 1996) and the standing accretion shock instability (Blondin et al. 2003; Foglizzo et al. 2007)
& Arnett 2007b) or violent shell mergers (Mocák et al. 2018; Yadav et al. 2020) have received particular attention for their potential to alter the core structure of massive stars and hence affect the dynamics and final nucleosynthesis yields of the subsequent supernova explosion.

Three-dimensional simulations of convection during advanced burning stages have so far largely disregarded two important aspects of real stars – rotation and magnetic fields. The effects of rotation have been touched upon by the seminal work of Kühlen et al. (2003), but more recent studies (Arnett & Meakin 2010; Chatzopoulos et al. 2016) have been limited to axisymmetry (2D). Magnetohydrodynamic (MHD) simulations of convection, while common and mature in the context of the Sun (for a review see, e.g., Charbonneau 2014) have yet to be performed for advanced burning stages of massive stars.

Simulations of magnetoconvection during the pre-supernova stage, both in rotating and non-rotating stars, are a big desideratum for several reasons. Even in slowly rotating massive stars, magnetic fields may have a non-negligible impact on the dynamics of neutrino-driven explosions (Obergaulinger et al. 2014; Müller & Varma 2020), and although efficient field amplification processes operate in the supernova core (Endeve et al. 2012; Müller & Varma 2020), it stands to reason that memory of the initial fields may not be lost entirely, especially for strong fields in the progenitor and early explosions. A better understanding of the interplay between convection, rotation, and magnetic fields in supernova progenitors is even more critical for the magnetorotational explosion scenario (e.g., Burrows et al. 2007; Winteler et al. 2012; Mösta et al. 2014; Mösta et al. 2018; Obergaulinger & Aloy 2020), which probably explains rare, unusually energetic “hypernovae” with energies of up to $\sim 10^{52}$ erg. Again, even though the requisite strong magnetic fields may be generated after collapse by amplification processes like the magnetorotational instability (Balbus & Hawley 1991; Akaiyama et al. 2003) or an $\alpha$-$\Omega$ dynamo in the proto-neutron star (Duncan & Thompson 1992; Thompson & Duncan 1993; Raynaud et al. 2020), a robust understanding of magnetic fields during late burning is indispensable for reliable hypernova models on several heads. For sufficiently strong seed fields in the progenitor, the initial field strengths and geometry could have a significant impact on the development of magnetorotational explosions after collapse (Bugli et al. 2020). Furthermore, our understanding of evolutionary pathways towards hypernova explosions (Woosley & Heger 2006; Yoon & Langer 2005; Yoon et al. 2010; Cantiello et al. 2007; Aguilera-Dena et al. 2018, 2020) is intimately connected with the effects of magnetic fields on angular momentum transport in stellar interiors (Spruit 2002; Heger et al. 2005; Fuller et al. 2019; Takahashi & Langer 2020).

Beyond the impact of magnetic fields on the pre-supernova evolution and the supernova itself, the interplay of convection, rotation, and magnetic fields is obviously relevant to the origin of neutron star magnetic fields as well. It still remains to be explained what shapes the distribution of magnetic fields among young pulsars, and why some neutron stars are born as magnetars with extraordinarily strong dipole fields of up to $10^{15}$ G (Olausen & Kaspi 2014; Tauri et al. 2015; Kaspi & Beloborodov 2017; Enoto et al. 2019). Are these strong fields of fossil origin (Ferrario & Wickramasinghe 2005; Ferrario et al. 2009; Schneider et al. 2020) or generated by dynamo action during or after the supernova (Duncan & Thompson 1992; Thompson & Duncan 1993)? Naturally, 3D MHD simulations of the late burning stages cannot comprehensively answer all of these questions. In order to connect to observable magnetic fields of neutron stars, an integrated approach is required that combines stellar evolution over secular time scales, 3D stellar hydrodynamics, supernova modelling, and local simulations, and also addresses aspects like field burial (Viganò et al. 2013; Torres-Forné et al. 2016) and the long-time evolution of magnetic fields (Aguilera et al. 2008; De Grandis et al. 2020). However, 3D MHD simulations of convective burning can already address meaningful questions despite the complexity of the overall problem.

In this study, we present a first simulation of magnetoconvection during the final phase of oxygen shell burning using the ideal MHD approximation. This simulation constitutes a first step beyond effective 1D prescriptions in stellar evolution models to predict the magnetic field strength and geometry encountered in the inner shells of massive stars at the pre-supernova stage. We also compare to a corresponding non-magnetic model of oxygen shell convection to gauge the feedback of magnetic fields on the convective flow with a particular view to two important issues. First, the efficiency of the “perturbation-aided” neutrino-driven mechanism depends critically on the magnitude of the convective velocities during shell burning, and it is important to determine whether magnetic fields can significantly slow down convective motions as suggested by some recent simulations of solar convection (Hotta et al. 2015). Second, magnetic fields could quantitatively or qualitatively affect shell growth by turbulent entrainment, which has been consistently seen in all recent 3D hydrodynamics simulations of late-stage convection in massive stars.

Our paper is structured as follows. In Section 2, we describe the numerical methods, progenitor model, and initial conditions used in our study and discuss the potential role of non-ideal effects. The results of the simulations are presented in Section 3. We first focus on the strength and geometry of the emerging magnetic field and then analyse the impact of magnetic fields on the flow, and in particular on entrainment at shell boundaries. We summarize our results and discuss their implications in Section 4.

### 2 NUMERICAL METHODS AND SIMULATION SETUP

We simulate oxygen and neon shell burning with and without magnetic fields in a non-rotating $18M_\odot$ solar-metallicity star calculated using the stellar evolution code Kepler (Weaver et al. 1978; Woosley et al. 2002; Heger & Woosley 2010). The same progenitor model has previously been used in the shell convection simulation of Müller et al. (2016). The structure of the stellar evolution model at the time of mapping to 3D is illustrated in Figure 1. The model contains two active convective shells with sufficiently short turnover times to make time-explicit simulations feasible. The oxygen shell extends from 1.75 $M_\odot$ to 2.25 $M_\odot$ in enclosed mass and from 3,400 km to 7,900 km in radius, immediately followed further out by the neon shell out to 3.53 $M_\odot$ in mass and 27,000 km in radius.

For our 3D simulations we employ the Newtonian magnetohydrodynamic (MHD) version of the CoCoNuT code as described in Müller & Varma (2020). The MHD equations are solved in spherical polar coordinates using the HLLC (Harten-Lax-van Leer-Contact) Riemann solver (Gurski 2004; Miyoshi & Kusano 2005). The divergence-free condition $\nabla \cdot \mathbf{B} = 0$ is maintained using a variant of the original hyperbolic divergence cleaning scheme of Dedner et al. (2002) with modifications that allows for variable cleaning speeds following ideas of Tricco et al. (2016) to restore total energy conservation. Compared to the original cleaning method, we rescale the Lagrange multiplier $\psi$ to $\hat{\psi} = \psi / c_h$, where the cleaning speed $c_h$ is chosen to be the fast magnetosonic speed. The extended system of MHD equations for the density $\rho$, velocity $\mathbf{v}$, magnetic field $\mathbf{B}$, the total energy density $e$, mass fractions $X_i$, and the rescaled Lagrange
multiplier $\dot{\psi}$ reads,
\begin{align}
\partial_t \rho + \nabla \cdot (\rho \mathbf{v}) &= 0, \quad (1) \\
\partial_t (\rho \mathbf{v}) + \nabla \cdot \left[ (\rho \mathbf{v} - \frac{\mathbf{B} \cdot \mathbf{B}}{4\pi} + P_I \mathbf{i}) \right] &= \rho \mathbf{g} - (\nabla \cdot \mathbf{B}) \mathbf{B} \\
\partial_t e + \nabla \cdot \left[ (e + P_I) \mathbf{v} - \frac{\mathbf{B} \cdot \mathbf{B}}{4\pi} \right] &= \rho \mathbf{g} \cdot \mathbf{v} + \rho \epsilon_{\text{nuc}}, \quad (3) \\
\partial_t \mathbf{B} + \nabla \cdot (\mathbf{v} \mathbf{B} - \mathbf{B} \mathbf{v}) + \nabla \cdot (c_{\text{H}} \dot{\psi}) &= 0, \quad (4) \\
\partial_t \dot{\psi} + c_{\text{H}} \nabla \cdot \mathbf{B} &= -\dot{\psi} / \tau, \quad (5) \\
\partial_t (\rho X_i) + \nabla \cdot (\rho X_i \mathbf{v}) &= \rho X_i, \quad (6)
\end{align}

where $\mathbf{g}$ is the gravitational acceleration, $P_I$ is the total pressure, $I$ is the Kronecker tensor, $c_{\text{H}}$ is the hyperbolic cleaning speed, $\tau$ is the damping time scale for divergence cleaning, and $\epsilon_{\text{nuc}}$ and $X_i$ are energy and mass fraction source terms from nuclear reactions. This system conserves the volume integral of a modified total energy density $e$, which also contains the cleaning field $\dot{\psi}$,

$e = \rho \left( \epsilon + \frac{\mathbf{v}^2}{2} \right) + \frac{B^2 + \dot{\psi}^2}{8\tau}$, 

where $\epsilon$ is the mass-specific internal energy. Further details on the MHD implementation will be presented in a code comparison paper (Varma et al., in preparation).

Viscosity and resistivity are not included explicitly in the ideal MHD approximation, and only enter through the spatial reconstruction and the computation of the Riemann fluxes. While this “implicit large-eddy simulation” (ILES) approach is well-established for hydrodynamic turbulence (Grimm et al. 2007), the magnetohydrodynamic case is more complicated because the behaviour in the relevant astrophysical regime of low (kinematic) viscosity $\nu$ and resistivity $\eta$ may still depend on the magnetic Prandtl number $Pm = \nu / \eta$. Different from the regime later encountered in the supernova core where $Pm \gg 1$, oxygen shell burning is characterised by magnetic Prandtl numbers slightly below unity ($Pm \sim 0.2$). With an effective Prandtl number of $Pm \sim 1$ in the ILES approach (Federrath et al. 2011), there is a potential concern that spurious small-scale dynamo amplification might arise due to the overestimation of the magnetic Prandtl number, or that saturation field strengths might be too high. The debate about the magnetic Prandtl number dependence in MHD turbulence is ongoing with insights from theory and simulations (e.g., Schekochihin et al. 2004, 2007; Isakov et al. 2007; Brandenburg 2011; Pietarila Graham et al. 2010; Sahoo et al. 2011; Thaler & Spruit 2015; Seshasayanan et al. 2017), astrophysical observations (e.g., Christensen et al. 2009), and laboratory experiments (Pétrélis et al. 2007; Monchaux et al. 2007). There is, at the very least, the possibility of robust small-scale dynamo action and saturation governed by balance between the inertial terms Lorentz force terms down to the low values of $Pm \sim 5 \times 10^{-6}$ in liquid sodium experiments (Pétrélis et al. 2007; Monchaux et al. 2007), provided that both the hydrodynamic and magnetic Reynolds numbers are sufficiently high. An ILES approach that places the simulation into a “universal”, strongly magnetised regime (Berensnyak 2019) thus appears plausible. Moreover, even if the ILES approach were only to provide upper limits for magnetic fields and their effects on the flow, meaningful conclusions can still be drawn in the context of shell convection simulations.

The nuclear source terms are calculated with the 19-species nuclear reaction network of Weaver et al. (1978). Neutrino cooling is ignored, since it becomes subdominant in the late pre-collapse phase as the contraction of the shells speeds up nuclear burning.

The simulations are conducted on a grid with $400 \times 128 \times 256$ zones in radius $r$, colatitude $\theta$, and longitude $\varphi$ with an exponential grid in $r$ and uniform spacing in $\theta$ and $\varphi$. To reduce computational costs, we excise the non-convective inner core up to 3000 km and replace the excised core with a point mass. The grid extends to a radius of 50,000 km and includes a small part of the silicon shell, the entire convective oxygen and neon shells, the non-convective carbon shell and parts of the helium shell.

In order to investigate the impact of magnetic fields on late-stage oxygen shell convection, we run a purely hydrodynamic, non-magnetic simulation and an MHD simulation. In the MHD simulation, we impose a homogeneous magnetic field with $B_z = 10^8$ G parallel to the grid axis as initial conditions. We implement reflecting and periodic boundary conditions in $\theta$ and $\varphi$, respectively. For the hydrodynamic variables we use hydrostatic extrapolation at the inner and outer boundary, and impose strictly vanishing advective fluxes at the inner boundary. Different from Müller et al. (2016), we do not contract the inner boundary to follow the contraction and collapse of the core. The inner and outer boundary conditions for the magnetic fields are less trivial. In simulations of magnetohydroconvection in the Sun, various choices such as vertical boundary conditions ($B_x = B_y = 0$), radial boundary conditions ($B_y = B_z = 0$), vanishing tangential electric fields or currents, perfect-conductor boundary conditions, or extrapolation to a potential solution have been employed (e.g., Thelen & Cattaneo 2000; Rempel 2014; Käpylä et al. 2020). Since our domain boundaries are separated from the convective regions by shell interfaces with significant buoyancy jumps, we opt for the simplest choice of boundary conditions and merely fix the magnetic
fields in the ghost zones to their initial values for a homogeneous vertical magnetic field. We argue that due to the buffer regions at our radial boundaries, and the lack of rotational shear, our choice of magnetic boundary conditions should not have a significant impact on the dynamically relevant regions of the star.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Evolution of the Magnetic Field

Both the magnetised and non-magnetised model were run for over 12 minutes of physical time, which corresponds to about 17 convective turnover times. Very soon after convection develops in the oxygen shell, the turbulent convective flow start to rapidly amplify the magnetic fields in this region. To illustrate the growth of the magnetic field we show the root-mean-square (RMS) average and maximum value of the magnetic field in the oxygen shell in Figure 2. The magnetic field, which we initialised at $10^8$ G, is amplified by over two orders of magnitude to over $10^{10}$ G on average within the shell due to convective and turbulent motions. The average magnetic field strength in the shell is still increasing at the end of the simulation, but the growth rate has slowed down, likely indicating that the model is approaching some level of magnetic field saturation. While we cannot with certainty extrapolate the growth dynamics without simulating towards some level of magnetic field saturation. While we cannot

To characterise the geometric structure of the magnetic field, we show a radial profile of the dipole of the radial magnetic field component $B_r$ at the end of the simulation at $\approx 725$ s (Figure 4). The dipole magnetic field in the convective regions is approximately an order of magnitude smaller than the RMS average radial magnetic field, aside from the innermost boundary of our grid, where the dipole component is comparable to the total radial magnetic field. This behaviour at the boundary is likely an artefact of our choice of homogeneous magnetic fields at the inner boundary. In general, however, the magnetic fields in the convective zones appear dominated by higher-order multipoles. Disregarding the dipole fields at the inner boundary, the dipole magnetic field of $\approx 10^9$ G or below lies in the upper range of observed dipole magnetic fields of white dwarfs (Ferrario et al. 2015), which have often been taken as best estimates for the dipole fields in the cores of massive stars.

To further illustrate the small-scale nature of the magnetic field within the oxygen shell, we show angular power spectra, $\hat{M}_\ell$, of the radial field strength at different times as a function of a spherical harmonics degree $\ell$ inside the oxygen shell at a radius of $\approx 5000$ km (Figure 5). $\hat{M}_\ell$ is computed as:

$$
\hat{M}_\ell = \frac{1}{8\Pi} \sum_{m=-\ell}^{\ell} \left| \int Y_{\ell m}(\theta, \phi) B_r \, d\Omega \right|^2. 
$$

Very early in the simulation, the spectrum shows a significant $\ell = 1$ dipole contribution, caused by our choice of homogeneous magnetic fields as an initial condition. It takes several convective turnovers before this contribution is no longer dominant. Throughout the evolution, the spectrum contains a wide flat portion and a Kolmogorov-like slope at high $\ell$. The break in the spectrum moves towards smaller wave numbers, and the peak of the spectrum shifts to larger scales from $\ell \approx 12$ to $\ell \approx 7$. Simulations of field amplification by a small-scale dynamo in isotropic turbulence often exhibit a Kazantsev spectrum with power-law index $k^{-3/2}$ on large scales. Our spectra show a distinctly flatter slope below the spectral peak, indicating that field amplification is subtly different from the standard picture of turbulent dynamo amplification.

This is borne out by a closer look at the magnetic field distribution within the convective region. Somewhat similar to our recent simulation of field amplification by neutrino-driven convection in core-collapse supernovae (Müller & Varma 2020), field amplification does not happen homogeneously throughout the convective region and appears to be predominantly driven by shear flows at the convective boundaries. To illustrate this, we compare the spherically-averaged diagonal components of the kinetic (Reynolds) and magnetic (Maxwell) stress tensors $R_{ij}$ and $M_{ij}$ in the MHD model at the final time-step of the simulation at $\approx 725$ s (Figure 6). $R_{ij}$ and $M_{ij}$ are computed as:

$$
R_{ij} = \langle \rho v_i v_j \rangle, \\
M_{ij} = \frac{1}{8\Pi} \langle B_i B_j \rangle,
$$

where angled brackets denote volume-weighted averages. The magnetic fields clearly remain well below equipartition with the total energy.

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1. Strictly speaking, the most rigorous way to extract the dipole component of the magnetic field would use a poloidal-toroidal decomposition $B = \nabla \times (\nabla \times (\mathcal{P} \mathbf{r})) + \nabla \times (\mathcal{T} \mathbf{r})$ where the scalar functions $\mathcal{P}$ and $\mathcal{T}$ describe the poloidal and toroidal parts of the field, and consider all components $B_r$, $B_\theta$, and $B_\phi$ arising from the $\ell = 2$ component of the poloidal scalar $\mathcal{P}$. Since the poloidal-toroidal decomposition cannot be reduced to a straightforward projection onto vector spherical harmonics, this analysis is left to future papers.

2. Note that no explicit decomposition of the velocity field into fluctuating...
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Figure 3. Snapshots of the equatorial plane in the MHD simulation at a time of 500 s, showing the inner part of the domain from the inner boundary at a radius of 3000 km out to 12,000 km. The panels display a) the ratio of magnetic to thermal pressure (i.e., inverse plasma-$\beta$), b) the magnitude of the magnetic field strength, c) the radial velocity and d) the silicon mass fraction.

The non-radial diagonal components $R_{\theta\theta} + R_{\varphi\varphi}$ and $M_{\theta\theta} + M_{\varphi\varphi}$ are generally higher than the respective radial components $R_{rr}$ and $M_{rr}$. Throughout most of the domain, the Maxwell stresses are considerably smaller than the Reynolds stresses, but it is noteworthy that the profile of the non-radial components of $M_{ij}$ runs largely parallel to those of $R_{ij}$, just with a difference of slightly more than an order of magnitude. Peaks of the magnetic stresses at the shell interfaces suggest that field amplification is driven by shear flow at the convective boundaries. Convective motions then transport the magnetic field into the interior of the convective regions and also generate radial field components. There are no humps of $M_{rr}$ within the convective zones that corresponds to the humps in $R_{rr}$, which indicates that little amplification by convective updrafts and downdrafts takes place within the convection region.

At the outer boundaries of the oxygen and neon shell, we observe rough equipartition between $R_{rr}$ and $M_{\theta\theta} + M_{\varphi\varphi}$. The fact that the growth of the field slows down once the model approaches $M_{\theta\theta} + M_{\varphi\varphi} = R_{rr}$ suggests that this “partial equipartition” may determine the saturation field strength, but the very different behaviour at the inner boundary with $M_{\theta\theta} + M_{\varphi\varphi} \gg R_{rr}$ argues against this. It is plausible, though, that the saturation field strength is (or rather will be) determined at the boundary. Linear stability analysis of the magnetised Kelvin-Helmholtz instability (e.g. Chandrasekhar 1961; Sen 1963; Fejer 1964; Miura & Pritchett 1982; Liu et al. 2018) shows that shear instability, which is critical for efficiently generating small-scale fields, are suppressed by magnetic fields parallel to the direction.

components and a spherically averaged background state is required since the background state is hydrostatic.
Figure 4. The angle-averaged root-mean-square (RMS) value (black) and the dipole component (red) of the radial magnetic field component $B_r$ as a function of mass coordinate at a time of 725 s.

Figure 5. Power $M_\ell^2$ in different multipoles $\ell$ of the radial field component of the magnetic field in the oxygen shell at different times. Dotted lines show the slopes of Kolmogorov ($k^{-5/3}$) and Kazantsev ($k^{3/2}$) spectra. The low-wavenumber part of the spectrum is always distinctly flatter than a Kazantsev spectrum; at intermediate $\ell$, a Kolmogorov spectrum obtains with a break around $\ell = 30$ to a steeper slope in the dissipation range.

Figure 6. The radial (solid) and non-radial (dashed) diagonal components of the Reynolds stress tensor $R_{ij}$ (black) and Maxwell tensor $M_{ij}$ (red) for the MHD convection model at 725 s as a function of enclosed mass.

Figure 7. Evolution of the total radial (solid) and non-radial (dashed) convective kinetic energy within the oxygen shell for the purely hydrodynamic (purple) and MHD (black) model, respectively.

3.2 Impact of Magnetic Fields on Convective Boundary Mixing

The slowing growth of the magnetic field indicates that feedback effects on the flow should become important during the later phase of the simulation. It is particularly interesting to consider the effect of the strong fields tangential to the oxygen-neon shell interface on convective boundary mixing, though we also consider potential effects on the flow in the interior of the convective regions.

To this end, we compare the MHD model to a purely hydrodynamic simulation of oxygen and neon shell convection. Figure 7 compares the total kinetic energy in convective motions in the oxygen shell between the models. The radial and non-radial components $E_r$ and...
In the low-Mach number regime, the anelastic condition
larger extent in the horizontal than in the vertical direction.

For both models most of the turbulent kinetic energy is in the
non-radial direction. This is different from the rough equipartition
$E_r \approx E_{\theta,\varphi}$ seen in many simulations of buoyancy-driven convection
(Arnett et al. 2009). There is, however, no firm physical principle
that dictates such equipartition; indeed a shell burning simulation of
the same $18 M_\odot$ progenitor with the PROMETHEUS code also showed
significantly more kinetic energy in non-radial motions (Müller et al.
2016). Ultimately, the high ratio $E_{\theta,\varphi}/E_r$ merely indicates that the
fully developed flow happens to predominantly select eddies with
larger extent in the horizontal than in the vertical direction.\footnote{In the
low-Mach number regime, the anelastic condition $\nabla \cdot (\rho v) \approx 0$ implies
a relation between the aspect ratio of convective cells and the horizontal
and vertical kinetic energy of any mode.}

Discounting stochastic variations, the radial component $E_r$ of
the turbulent kinetic energy for both the hydrodynamic and MHD model
are similar until the final $\approx 300$ s, at which point they start to deviate
more significantly. Clearer differences appear in the non-radial
component $E_{\theta,\varphi}$, with the hydro model showing irregular episodic
bursts in kinetic energy which are not mirrored in the MHD model.
This points to feedback of the magnetic field on the flow, whose
nature will become more apparent as we analyse convective boundary
mixing in the models.

To this end, we first consider the evolution of the boundaries $r_-$
and $r_+$ of the oxygen shell and the total oxygen shell mass $M_O$. For
computing the oxygen shell mass, we take the (small) deviation of the
boundaries from spherical symmetry into account more accurately
than when computing $r_-$ and $r_+$, and integrate the mass contained
in cells within the entropy range $3.8-5.2 k_B$/nucleon. As shown by
Figure 8 (panels a and b), the oxygen shell in the non-magnetic model
grows slightly, but perceptibly faster without magnetic fields than in
the MHD model, starting at a simulation time of about $300$ s. The
presence of relatively strong magnetic fields in the boundary layer
apparently reduces entrainment in line with the inhibiting effect of
magnetic fields parallel to the flow on shear instabilities discussed in
Section 3.1.

The entrainment rate $\dot{M} = dM_O/dt$ (Figure 8c) is only slightly
higher in the purely hydrodynamic model most of the time, but the
entrainment rate exhibits occasional spikes, which do not occur in
the MHD model. We note that these spikes in $\dot{M}$ occur at around
the same times as the bursts in non-radial kinetic energy (Figure 7).
It appears that the stabilisation of the boundary by magnetic fields mostly suppresses rarer, but more powerful entrainment events that mix bigger lumps of material into the oxygen shell. A comparison with the shell burning simulations of Müller et al. (2016) provides confidence that this effect is robust. Because Müller et al. (2016) contract the inner boundary condition, convection grows more vigorous with time and their entrainment rates are higher, adding about 0.05 $M_\odot$ to the oxygen shell within 300 s. Their resolution test (Figure 20 in Müller et al. 2016) only showed variations of 0.004 $M_\odot$ in the entrained mass between different runs of the same progenitor model. In our simulations, the oxygen shell only grows by about 0.03 $M_\odot$ from 300 s to 700 s (i.e., when the magnetic field does not grow substantially any more), yet we find a difference in shell growth of about 0.01 $M_\odot$ between the magnetic and non-magnetic model. It therefore seems likely that there is indeed an appreciable systematic effect of magnetic fields on entrainment.

The different entrainment rate also explains long-term, time-averaged differences in convective kinetic energy between the two simulations. The convective kinetic energy is determined by the total nuclear energy generation rate, which is shown in Figure 8d. Both models show an overall trend downwards over time in nuclear energy generation, which can be ascribed to a slight thermal expansion of the shell and the depletion of fuel. After about 200 s, the purely hydrodynamic model exhibits a higher energy generation rate, which persists until the end of the simulations and becomes more pronounced. The higher energy generation rate in the non-magnetic model is indeed mirrored by a stronger decrease in the neon mass on the grid (Figure 9) of about the right amount to explain the average difference in energy generation rate at late times. We note, however, that the strong episodic entrainment events in the purely hydrodynamic model are not associated with an immediate increase in nuclear energy generation rate. This is mainly because the energy release from the dissociation of the entrained neon is delayed and spread out in time as the entrained material is diluted and eventually mixed down to regions of sufficiently high temperature.

The overall effect of magnetic fields on the bulk flow is rather modest, though. We do not see a similarly strong quenching of the convective flow by magnetic fields as in recent MHD simulations of the solar convection zone (Hotta et al. 2015), who reported a reduction of convective velocities by up to 50% at the base of the convection zone. Such an effect is not expected as long as the magnetic fields stay well below kinetic equipartition in the interior of the convective region slightly because they reduce the energy release from the dissociation of ingested neon, which results in slightly smaller convective velocities in the MHD model.

4 CONCLUSIONS

We investigated the amplification and saturation of magnetic fields during convective oxygen shell burning and the backreaction of the field on the convective flow by conducting a 3D MHD simulation and a purely hydrodynamic simulation of an 18 $M_\odot$ progenitor shortly before core collapse. The simulations were run for about 12 minutes of physical time (corresponding to about 17 convective turnover times), at which point field amplification has slowed down considerably, though a quasi-stationary state has not yet been fully established.

The magnetic field in the oxygen shell is amplified to ~$10^{10}$ G and dominated by small-to-medium-scale structures with angular wavenumber $\ell \sim 7$. The dipole component is considerably smaller with ~$10^9$ G near the inner boundary of the oxygen shell and less further outside. The profiles of the radial and non-radial diagonal components $M_{rr}$ and $M_{\theta\theta} + M_{\varphi\varphi}$ of the Maxwell stress tensor mirror the corresponding components $R_{rr}$ and $R_{\theta\theta} + R_{\varphi\varphi}$ of the Reynolds stress tensor, but remain about an order of magnitude smaller, i.e., kinetic equipartition is not reached. However, $M_{\theta\theta} + M_{\varphi\varphi}$ can approach or exceed the radial component $R_{rr}$ at the convective boundaries. The saturation mechanism for field amplification needs to be studied in more detail, but we speculate that saturation is mediated by the inhibiting effect of non-radial magnetic fields on shear instabilities at shell boundaries, which appear to be the primary driver of field amplification.

We find that magnetic fields do not have an appreciable effect on the interior flow inside the oxygen shell, but observe a moderate reduction of turbulent entrainment at the oxygen-neon shell boundary in the presence of magnetic fields. Magnetic fields appear to suppress stronger episodic entrainment events, although they do not quench entrainment completely. Through the reduced entrainment rate, magnetic fields also indirectly affect the dynamics inside the convective region slightly because they reduce the energy release through the dissociation of ingested neon, which results in smaller convective velocities in the MHD model.

Our findings have important implications for core-collapse supernova modelling. We predict initial fields in the oxygen shell of non-rotating progenitors that are significantly stronger than assumed in our recent simulation of a neutrino-driven explosion aided by dynamo-generated magnetic fields (Müller & Varma 2020). With relatively strong seed-fields, there is likely less of a delay until magnetic fields can contribute the additional ‘boost’ to neutrino heating and purely hydrodynamic instabilities seen in Müller & Varma (2020). This should further contribute to the robustness of the neutrino-driven mechanism for non-rotating and slowly-rotating massive stars. Our simulations also suggest that the perturbation-aided mechanism (Couch & Ott 2013; Müller & Janka 2015) will not be substantially affected by the inclusion of magnetic fields. Since magnetic fields do not become strong enough to substantially alter the bulk flow inside the convective region, the convective velocities and eddy scales as the key parameters for perturbation-aided explosions remain largely unchanged.

The implications of our results for neutron star magnetic fields are more difficult to evaluate since the observable fields will, to a
large degree, be set by processes during and after the supernova and cannot be simply extrapolated from the progenitor stage by magnetic flux conservation. That said, dipole fields of order $10^9$ G at the base of the oxygen shell – which is likely to end up as the neutron star surface region – are not in overt conflict with dipole fields of order $10^{13}$ G in many young pulsars inside supernova remnants (Enoto et al. 2019). However, considering the relatively strong small-scale fields of $\sim 10^{10}$ G with peak values over $10^{11}$ G, it may prove difficult to produce neutron stars without strong small-scale fields at the surface. There is a clear need for an integrated approach towards the evolution of magnetic fields from the progenitor phase through the supernova and into the compact remnant phase in order to fully grasp the implications of the current simulations.

Evidently, further follow-up studies are also needed on the final evolutionary phases of supernova progenitors. Longer simulations and resolution studies will be required to better address issues like the saturation field strength, the saturation mechanism, and the impact of magnetic fields on turbulent entrainment. The critical issue of non-ideal effects and the behaviour of turbulent magnetocconvective flow for magnetic Prandtl numbers slightly smaller than one at very high Reynolds numbers deserves particular consideration. Some findings of our "optimistic" approach based on the ideal MHD approximation should, however, prove robust, such as the modest effect of magnetic fields on the convective bulk flow and hence the reliability of purely hydrodynamic models (Couch et al. 2015; Müller et al. 2016; Yadav et al. 2020; Müller 2020; Fields & Couch 2020) and even 1D mixing-length theory (Collins et al. 2018) to predict pre-collapse perturbations in supernova progenitors. Future 3D simulations will also have to address rotation and its interplay with convection and magnetic fields.

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DATA AVAILABILITY

The data underlying this article will be shared on reasonable request to the authors, subject to considerations of intellectual property law.

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