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#### **ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT**

# Molecular weight/branching distribution modeling of low-densitypolyethylene accounting for topological scission and combination termination in continuous stirred tank reactor

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#### Abstract

We present a comprehensive model to predict the molecular weight distribution (*MWD*)<sup>1</sup>, and branching distribution of low-density polyethylene (*ldPE*)<sup>2</sup>, for free radical polymerization system in a continuous stirred tank reactor (*CSTR*)<sup>3</sup>. The model accounts for branching, by branching moment or *pseudo distributions*. The common free radical polymerization reactions including chain scission have been considered in the model. *Non-linear* or the socalled *topological* scission has been modeled using approximate *fragment length distributions* derived from scission, applied to branching topologies. To model the distributions, the Galerkin-FEM method based on the same principles as PREDICI® has been applied and implemented in MATLAB©. The fundamental numerical problem arising from topological scission has been solved. Thus, the model provides more accurate results, allowing a precise comparison to earlier results and to Monte Carlo simulations.

Keywords:

Free radical polymerization, Reaction engineering, Molecular architecture design, Product design, Galerkin FEM, Hypergeometric distribution

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Molecular Weight Distribution

<sup>2</sup> low density PolyEthylene

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Continuous Stirred Tank Reactor

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