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Shantanu R. Ranade, Youliang Guan, Robert B. Moore, John G. Dillard, Romesh C. Batra, David A. Dillard



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**Characterizing fracture performance and the interaction of propagating cracks
with locally weakened interfaces in adhesive joints**

Shantanu R. Ranade¹, Youliang Guan²,

Robert B. Moore³, John G. Dillard³, Romesh C. Batra², David A. Dillard^{2*}

¹Macromolecular Science and Engineering,

²Biomedical Engineering and Mechanics Department,

³Department of Chemistry,

Macromolecules and Interfaces Institute

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University,

Blacksburg, Virginia, 24061

Abstract

This paper experimentally investigates adhesive fracture resistance and crack path selection in adhesive joints containing well-defined localized interfacial defects. Several systematic patterns of localized interfacial defects were created on base-acid treated aluminum adherends by physical vapor deposition of copper through a mask. Adhesive joints were prepared using a commercially available structural epoxy adhesive and the effect of localized interface defects on the performance of adhesive joints was studied. Under mode-I loading conditions, the presence of localized weak interfaces influenced the fracture energy of a propagating debond over a considerable distance. For a crack tip approaching a given weak interface pattern, a falling or reverse R-curve type trend was observed. Within the same DCB specimen, as the crack tip advanced beyond the patterned region, a rising R-curve type trend was observed as fracture

* Corresponding author: dillard@vt.edu, BEAM Dept (0219), Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061
phone: 540-231-4714, FAX: 540-231-4574

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