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S.P. Bancora, C. Binetruy, S.G. Advani, E. Syerko, S. Comas-Cardona

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EFFECTIVE PERMEABILITY AVERAGING SCHEME TO ADDRESS IN-PLANE ANISOTROPY EFFECTS IN MULTI-LAYERED PREFORMS

S. P. Bancora^{a,*}, C. Binetruy^a, S. G. Advani^{b,a}, E. Syerko^a, S. Comas-Cardona^a

^a*Ecole Centrale de Nantes, Research Institute in Civil Engineering and Mechanics (GeM), UMR CNRS 6183, 44321 Nantes Cedex 3, France*

^b*Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware 19716, USA*

Abstract

In Liquid Composite Molding (LCM) processes, fabric layers are stacked in a mold which may be a few meters long and wide to build up a thickness of not more than a few millimeters. Resin is introduced to fill all the empty spaces between the fibers. As the in plane dimensions are a few orders of magnitude larger than through the thickness, flow of resin through the preform can be modeled using the two-dimensional Darcy's law, neglecting the through-thickness velocity and assigning the preform an arithmetic averaged permeability from the layers. However, there are situations in which the through-thickness flow is significant where this assumption is no longer valid or justified. To address such cases, a modified averaging scheme was proposed by Calado and Advani [1] to account for the transverse flow between adjacent layers of a preform and consequently derive an homogenized one-dimensional value of effective permeability. In the current work, such a model is extended to account for the effect of anisotropic off-axis layers in the stack. The result is a generalized scheme for effective permeability averaging layers of heterogeneous preforms, capturing both through-thickness and in-plane effects into a one-dimensional permeability value. This methodology was validated and a parametric study was conducted with different combinations of in-plane and through-thickness permeability values to identify the influence of preform in-plane dimensions and thickness and to define a criteria that relates the material and geometric parameters to the transverse flow.

Keywords: A.Layered structures, B.Permeability, C.Process modeling, E.Liquid composite moulding

*Corresponding author

Email address: `simone.bancora@ec-nantes.fr` (S. P. Bancora)

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