

## Modelling short fibre polymer reinforcements for composites

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**Abstract:** The chapter is focused on fibre-reinforced thermoplastics. The fibre reinforcement improves their mechanical properties but the fibre orientation which results from the injection moulding process has a major influence. The chapter contains results of experimental observations of fibre length distribution, concentration and orientation for complex enough situations in order to describe problems encountered in real industrial processes. Then, the models which allow describing the evolution of fibre orientation in a flow motion are exposed. Finally, computations are made with an injection moulding simulation tool (Rem3D) in which these models are available. The comparison with experimental data concerning fibre orientation prediction gives information on the validity and the influence of various parameters associated with these models.

**Key words:** thermoplastic composite, reinforced polymers, fibre orientation, finite element computation.

### 20.1 Introduction

The chapter is focused on fibre-reinforced thermoplastics. There are two types of materials. Short fibre-reinforced pellets are obtained by mixing glass fibres and a thermoplastic matrix, polypropylene or polyamide for instance. The fibre content is usually between 30 and 50 wt%. The fibre length is distributed around a mean value of 500  $\mu\text{m}$ . Long fibre-reinforced pellets are obtained by continuous impregnation of a fibre, by a pultrusion-like process. After solidification, the impregnated fibres are cut at a length around 10 mm. The fibre length is the same as the pellet length. Both materials are semi-product, adapted for fast production processes such as injection moulding or extrusion.

As with any composite, their properties are a function of the properties of the matrix, the fibres and the interface between matrix and fibres, but also of the fibre microstructure. This notion covers first the fibre orientation. Indeed, fibres get oriented by the flow, and their properties are anisotropic. It also covers the fibre length: it depends on the initial fibre length in the pellet, but also on the plasticising and injection steps of the process. Lastly, there is the fibre concentration, which is usually around 30–50 wt%, that is, about

half in volume for glass fibres, according to the glass and polymer densities. But the transport of the fibres by the polymer may be heterogeneous and fibre-rich or fibre-poor regions may be found.

The second section of this chapter reviews the experimental observations, and the variations of fibre length distribution, fibre concentration and orientation are discussed. The experimental procedures giving these data are also briefly described. The third section presents the models describing the evolution of fibre orientation in the flow motion. The most recent models which deal with concentrated suspensions are also discussed, as well as the coupling with the rheological behaviour. Finally, numerical computations are performed on three typical examples and the influence of various parameters encountered in the models is analysed. Then, the limitations of these models for real parts are discussed.

## 20.2 Observations

### 20.2.1 Fibre length distribution

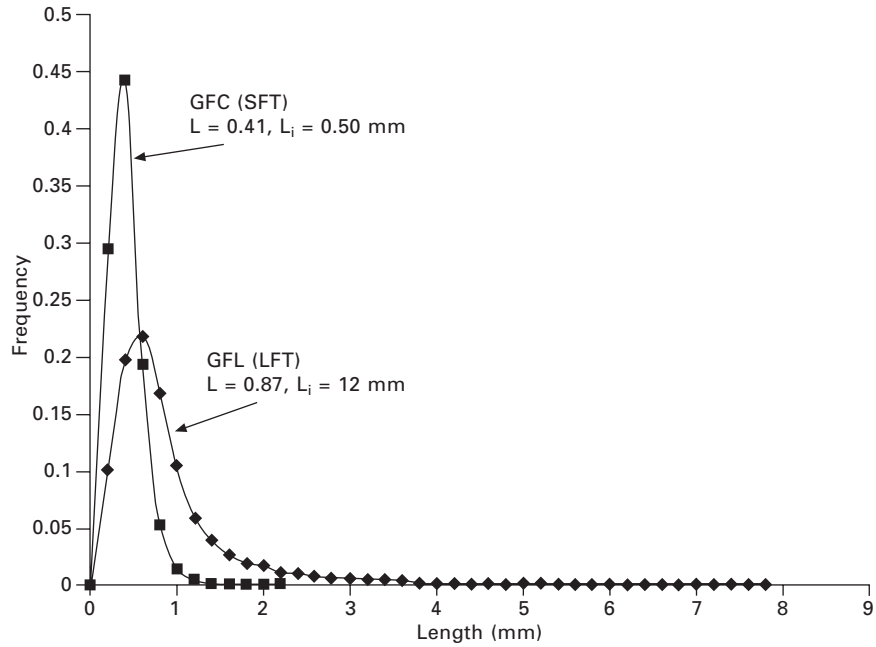
As mentioned before, fibre length in the moulding depends on the initial fibre length in the pellet, and on the fibre degradation in the screw-barrel system of the plasticising unit and in the mould cavity.

Most methods for measuring fibre length are destructive (Kamal *et al.*, 1986; Chin *et al.*, 1988; Franzen *et al.*, 1989; Gupta *et al.*, 1989; Denault *et al.*, 1989; Akay *et al.*, 1995; Avérous *et al.*, 1997; Davidson and Clarke, 1999). The composite matrix is dissolved or burnt out. The fibre lengths are measured by image analysis of microscope pictures. The number of fibres is large (nearly 3000 per mm<sup>3</sup> for 30 wt% and fibres 300 µm long and 15 µm in diameter!) and a careful representative selection must be made. The image analysis technique must be able to take into account a large length distribution.

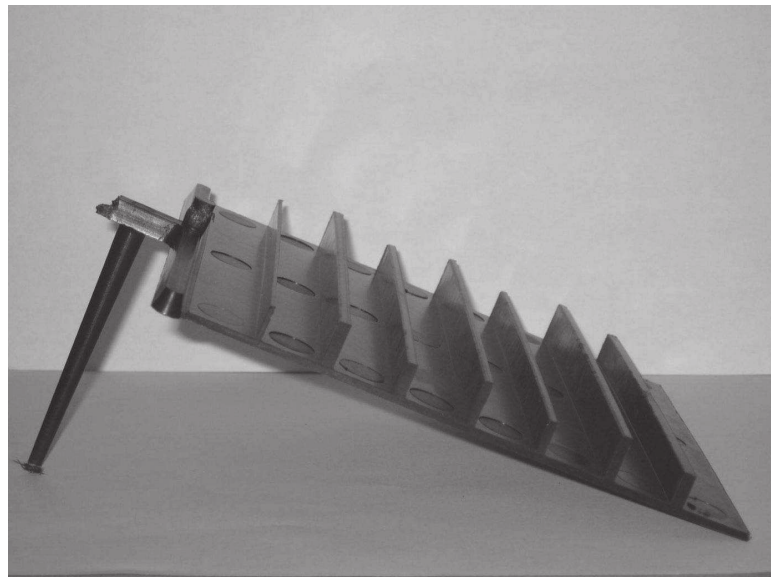
Glass fibre breakage is more important in the plasticising unit (Gupta *et al.*, 1989) than downstream in the runner and mould cavity. It is a function of fibre concentration (Denault *et al.*, 1989; Akay *et al.*, 1995; Tremblay *et al.*, 2000).

Vincent (2009) measured the fibre length distribution in a plaque mould for two reinforced polypropylenes, containing 30 wt% of short glass fibres and 30 wt% of long glass fibres (Fig. 20.1). The average length of the long fibres, initially 12 mm, reduces to 0.87 mm. The short fibre length, initially 0.56 mm, reduces to 0.41 mm. Fibre breakage for the long-fibre composite is important.

Figure 20.2 shows a plaque 150 × 150 × 3 mm, with seven ribs 25 mm apart from each other. The rib thicknesses from the entrance to the tip are 1, 3, 3, 2, 2, 3 and 3 mm. The rib heights are 9, 12, 9, 12, 9, 12 and 9 mm.



20.1 Fibre length repartition in a 30 wt% long and short glass fibre-reinforced polypropylene moulded plaque.



20.2 Geometry of the plaque with seven ribs: the size is 150 mm × 150 mm × 3 mm and the ribs are spaced at 25 mm.

The material is a 40 wt% long glass fibre reinforced polypropylene (pellet length 12 mm). Table 20.1 shows the average length at different positions for two mould filling flow rates. There is not a large difference between the rib and other regions in the part. The average length reduces by about 20% along the flow direction. The sensitivity to the flow rate is negligible.

### 20.2.2 Fibre concentration

Most authors have found small variations along the flow direction, around 1 to 2 wt% for a total amount of fibres of 30 wt% (Hegler and Menning, 1985; Kubat and Szalanczi, 1974). In the thickness directions, the fibre concentration is higher in the core than in the skin of the moulding, especially for a high fibre loading of 50 wt% (Kamal *et al.*, 1986; Akay and Barkley, 1991).

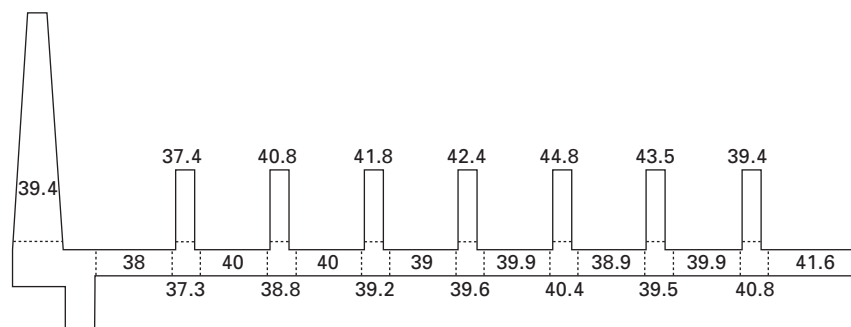
For the same part shown in Fig. 20.2, and with the same material, Fig. 20.3 shows the fibre concentration. The concentration is higher in the ribs, except in the first one, than in the plaque, but overall the deviation from the concentration of the semi-product, 40 wt%, is not very large.

### 20.2.3 Fibre orientation

Fibre orientation depends on the type of flow. In a shear flow, a single fibre rotates, but spends most of the time aligned with the flow direction. In a

Table 20.1 Average length in  $\mu\text{m}$  for different positions in the part shown in Fig. 20.2

Position	$Q = 9 \text{ cm}^3 \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$	$Q = 122 \text{ cm}^3 \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$
First rib	1200	1300
Plaque near first rib	1200	1300
Plaque between fourth and fifth ribs	1000	900
Plaque near fifth rib	900	1000
Fifth rib	1000	1000



20.3 Fibre weight concentration (wt%) in the part shown in Fig. 20.2.

highly concentrated suspension, when fibres are interacting, fibres are mostly oriented in the flow direction. In an elongational flow, fibres get oriented in a stable position either parallel to the flow with a positive elongation rate, or perpendicular with a negative elongation rate. Interactions with neighbouring particles may disturb this orientation. In a real cavity filling situation, the flow is a complex combination of shear and elongation. Shear reaches a maximum in the skin, and elongation in the core. Elongation always occurs at the junction between the sprue or runners and the cavity itself, because the cross-section of the flow increases. This is why a skin–core structure is often observed in this region. Downstream, if the flow is shear dominated, fibres in the centre are reoriented in the flow direction, but the core region may appear again in case of increase of cross-section.

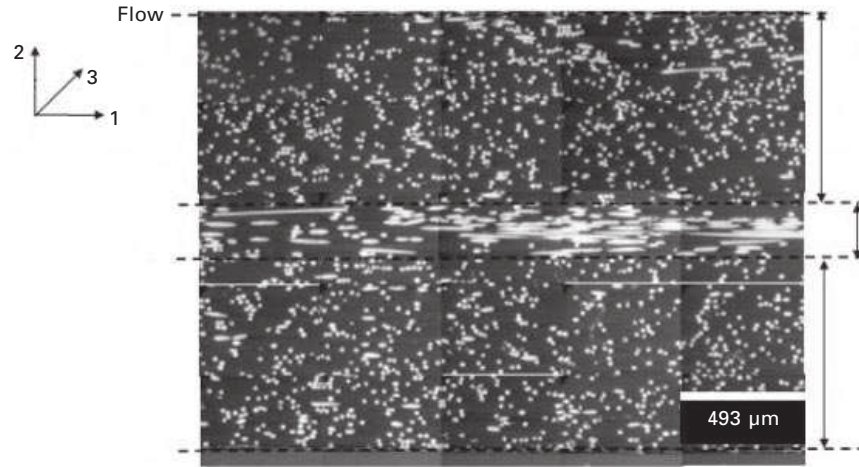
Figure 20.4 shows polished cross-sections of long glass fibre mouldings. In the surface, fibres appear mainly oriented in the flow direction, whereas in the centre, they are perpendicular to it. They are mostly parallel to the plan of the part. Short fibre composites show the same type of orientation. When the fibres are long enough, more than around 500  $\mu\text{m}$ , they can be slightly curved. Otherwise, they appear as straight rods.

In order to be precise about the orientation, it is necessary to quantify it. The fibre orientation distribution function  $\psi(\mathbf{p}, t)$  is defined by the probability  $\psi(\mathbf{p}, t) d\mathbf{p}$  of finding a fibre oriented between  $\mathbf{p}$  and  $\mathbf{p} + d\mathbf{p}$ , where  $\mathbf{p}$  is a unit vector aligned with a fibre (Prager, 1957). The second-order orientation tensor  $\mathbf{a}_2$  is easier to use in comparing two orientation patterns (Hand, 1961). It is defined as the spatial average of the double tensorial product of  $\mathbf{p}$ , and it is symmetrical and positive definite:

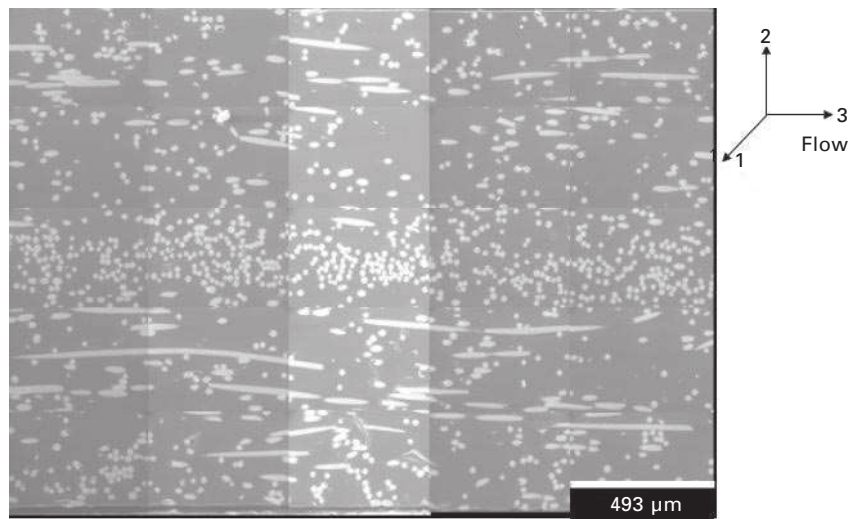
$$a_{ij} = \int_{\mathbf{p}} \psi(\mathbf{p}, t) p_i p_j d\mathbf{p} \quad 20.1$$

The trace of the tensor is equal to 1. For random orientation in space, the diagonal terms are equal to 1/3, and for random planar orientation, to 1/2. For perfect orientation in direction  $i$ ,  $a_{ii} = 1$ , and the other diagonal values are zero. A diagonal tensor means that the reference frame axes are the principal axes of the tensor.

In order to obtain the orientation distribution function  $\psi$  or the second-order orientation tensor components, each fibre orientation in a given volume must be determined. Several techniques can be used (see, for instance, Clarke and Eberhardt, 2002 for a review), but the most widely used is to observe carefully polished cross-sections, such as those shown in Fig. 20.4. Cylindrical fibres making a certain angle with respect to the cutting plane appear as ellipses. The measurement of the orientation and length of the semi-axes of the ellipse leads to the vector  $\mathbf{p}$  components in 3D. The image analysis technique must be accurate enough to separate touching fibres or to measure nearly circular fibre cross-sections, and corrections must be



(a)



(b)

20.4 Pictures of a short fibre-reinforced polymer moulded plaque. The thickness is in the vertical direction: (a) flow direction perpendicular to observation plane; (b) flow direction parallel to large side of picture.

applied for long fibres for which the probability of intersecting the edge of the observed field is higher. Another important correction is necessary because the probability of observing fibres perpendicular to the observation plane is higher than when they are parallel to it (Bay and Tucker, 1992).

Other techniques can be used, such as confocal laser scanning microscopy (Eberhardt and Clarke, 2001) and X-ray microtomography (Shen *et al.*, 2004).

This last technique allows the 3D reconstruction of the fibres in a given volume. It is very powerful, as not only fibre orientation but also length, local concentration and eventually curvature can be evaluated.

#### 20.2.4 Skin–core structure

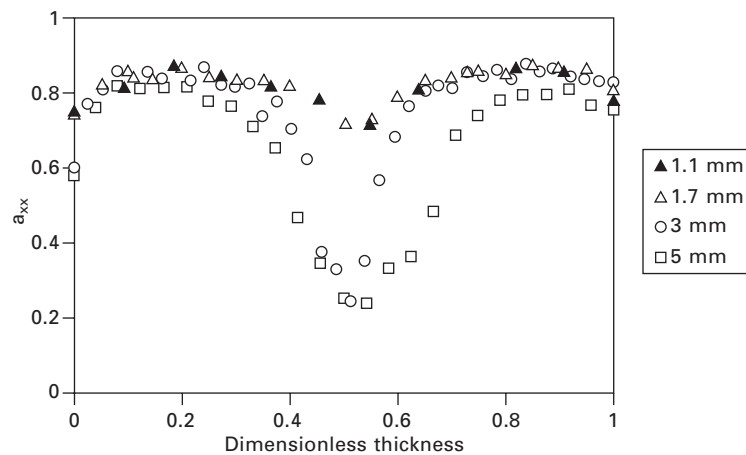
A review of observations in various part geometries, such as plaque or centre gated discs, with different composites can be found in Papathanasiou (1997). The skin–core structure is often observed, the relative thickness of the skin and core layers depending on the processing conditions. At the flow front, fibres are mostly tangential to the front. This is why weld line regions exhibit weaker mechanical properties.

Figure 20.5 shows the gapwise evolution of the orientation tensor component in the flow direction, in a 50 wt% glass fibre reinforced polyarylamide plaque, for four cavity thicknesses (Vincent *et al.*, 2005; Vincent, 2009). The skin–core structure exists for the two largest thicknesses, but vanishes for the smallest ones. The shape of the plaque entrance, where the core is created, and the high shear rate generated by a small flow gap are responsible for this difference.

### 20.3 Models

#### 20.3.1 Fibre orientation: Jeffery theory

Jeffery (1922) considered a single rigid ellipsoidal particle with very small dimensions. Thus, rate of deformation can be considered as homogeneous



20.5 Orientation tensor component in the flow direction for four plaque thicknesses from 1.1 to 5 mm (after Vincent, 2009).

around the particle, and he supposed that this particle was immersed in a Newtonian fluid. The following time evolution equation of the unit vector  $p$  aligned with the particle axis was thus obtained:

$$\frac{dp}{dt} = \Omega p + \lambda[\dot{\epsilon}p - (\dot{\epsilon}:p \otimes p)p] \quad 20.2$$

where  $\dot{\epsilon}$  is the rate of strain tensor and  $\Omega$  is the vorticity tensor, both defined as functions of  $v$ , the velocity field:

$$\dot{\epsilon}(v) = \frac{1}{2}(\nabla v + \nabla v^t) \quad 20.3$$

$$\Omega(v) = \frac{1}{2}(\nabla v - \nabla v^t) \quad 20.4$$

$\lambda$  is a function of the aspect ratio of the particle  $\beta = L/D$ , with  $L$  the length and  $D$  the diameter of the fibre:

$$\lambda = \frac{\beta^2 - 1}{\beta^2 + 1} \quad 20.5$$

Typically, short fibres have a diameter between 10 and 20  $\mu\text{m}$ , and a length between 100 and 500  $\mu\text{m}$ , so that  $\beta$  is of the order 5 to 50, and  $\lambda$  is larger than 0.92.

In this theory, a particle rotates periodically in a simple shear flow, with a period of rotation of

$$T_f = \frac{2\pi}{\dot{\epsilon}} \left( \beta + \frac{1}{\beta} \right) \quad 20.6$$

where  $\dot{\epsilon} = \sqrt{2 \sum_{i,j} \dot{\epsilon}_{ij}^2}$  is the magnitude of the strain rate tensor. This relation has been experimentally validated (Moses *et al.*, 2001). If the particle is infinitely long (slender body), the particle does not rotate any more but tends to orient in the flow direction. In elongation flows, equation 20.2 shows that a particle tends to a stable equilibrium position, parallel or perpendicular to the flow direction when the elongational rate is positive or negative, respectively. The kinetics of orientation are almost independent of the fibre aspect ratio when it is high. Later, Bretherton (1962) theoretically demonstrated that any rigid body of revolution has a motion in shear flow identical to an ellipsoid, meaning that the theory could be extended to fibre motion.

### 20.3.2 Fibre orientation: Folgar–Tucker model

Jeffery's equation is valid for dilute suspensions, when the fibre volume fraction  $\phi \ll 1/\beta^2$ . In the semi-concentrated regime,  $1/\beta^2 \ll \phi \ll 1/\beta$ ,



hydrodynamic fibre interactions occur, whereas in the concentrated regime ( $\phi \gg 1/\beta$ ), fibre–fibre contacts also appear. Fibre-reinforced thermoplastics are often in this latest regime.

Since in the concentrated regime one cannot follow each fibre, the orientation distribution function,  $\psi(\mathbf{p}, t)$ , defined in the previous section, is used. The equation of conservation of  $\psi$  is of the Fokker–Planck type and is written (by neglecting fibre Brownian motion, in the dilute case)

$$\frac{\partial \psi}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial}{\partial p} \left( \psi \frac{dp}{dt} \right) = 0 \quad 20.7$$

For concentrated regimes, one introduces a pseudo-Brownian diffusion, giving

$$\frac{\partial \psi}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial}{\partial p} \left( \psi \frac{dp}{dt} \right) = D_r \frac{\partial^2 \psi}{\partial p^2} = 0 \quad 20.8$$

The distribution function is a complete and accurate representation of the orientation state. However, solving this equation requires significant computational resources, and for industrial applications, it is better and easier to use the second-order orientation tensor,  $\mathbf{a}_2$ , defined in equation 20.1. Passing from an orientation distribution function  $\psi(\mathbf{p}, t)$  to  $\mathbf{a}_2$  implies a loss of information. Thus, one may use higher-order tensors, such as  $\mathbf{a}_4$ , the fourth-order orientation tensor:

$$\mathbf{a}_4 = \int_p p \otimes p \otimes p \otimes p \psi(p) dp \quad 20.9$$

and may reconstruct  $\psi(p, t)$ , as suggested by Advani and Tucker (1987), from both tensors.

To directly solve orientation motion based on the second-order orientation tensor, Lipscomb *et al.* (1984) provided the following equation, after volume averaging:

$$\frac{d\mathbf{a}_2}{dt} = \boldsymbol{\Omega} \mathbf{a}_2 - \mathbf{a}_2 \boldsymbol{\Omega} + \lambda (\dot{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}} \mathbf{a}_2 + \mathbf{a}_2 \dot{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}} - 2\dot{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}} : \mathbf{a}_4) \quad 20.10$$

For concentrated solutions, Folgar and Tucker (1984) chose a phenomenological approach. They added a term to Jeffery's equation using an analogy with rotary Brownian diffusion to account globally for these complex interactions. They obtained:

$$\frac{d\mathbf{a}_2}{dt} = \boldsymbol{\Omega} \mathbf{a}_2 - \mathbf{a}_2 \boldsymbol{\Omega} + \lambda (\dot{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}} \mathbf{a}_2 + \mathbf{a}_2 \dot{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}} - 2\dot{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}} : \mathbf{a}_4) + 2C_1 \dot{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}} (I - 3\mathbf{a}_2) \quad 20.11$$

where  $C_1$  is an empirical constant called the interaction coefficient.

This model has been extensively used, and is the standard model. Two

questions arise when treating this equation: how to compute  $\mathbf{a}_4$  from  $\mathbf{a}_2$ ? And what are the admissible values for  $C_1$ ?

#### *Closure approximations*

The fourth-order tensor  $\mathbf{a}_4$  appears in the time evolution equation for  $\mathbf{a}_2$ , thus a closure approximation is needed to approximate  $\mathbf{a}_4$  as a function of  $\mathbf{a}_2$  (since to compute  $\mathbf{a}_4$ , one needs also  $\mathbf{a}_6$ ). Tests carried out in simple flows (shear, elongation, or a simple combination of both) showed that the closure approximation has a large influence on the quality of the result. The simplest approximations are the quadratic closure (which gives exact results when fibres are perfectly aligned) and the linear closure (exact for random orientation). The hybrid approximation is a linear combination, depending on the orientation, of the two previous ones (Advani and Tucker, 1987).

One other class of closure approximations includes fitted parameters in simple flows, like the orthotropic (Cintra and Tucker, 1995; Wetzel and Tucker, 1999) or the natural closures (Dupret and Verleye, 1998). In these approaches, the fourth-order tensor is written as a linear function of the invariants of the second-order orientation tensor. Coefficients of the different functions corresponding to each approximation are obtained by fitting to the analytical solution of the steady-state orientation distribution function for several flow situations: shear, elongation and combinations of both. Performance studies of closure approximations in shear flows show that linear closures may provide non-physical oscillations, which does not happen with quadratic or hybrid closures. The transient state is generally overestimated (with longer times), whereas the stationary one is underestimated (with shorter times); fibre alignment prediction is very unidirectional. In elongation flows, linear closure may also give unrealistic values, whereas quadratic or hybrid approximations provide better results, even if they overestimate the transient region. Orthotropic closures always provide the best results and are the most commonly used.

#### *Interaction coefficient: theoretical, numerical and experimental determination*

For shear flows, the interaction coefficient value is very important in making good predictions of the steady-state solution of the orientation tensor: if  $C_1$  is high, the orientation becomes isotropic, whereas for a weak  $C_1$ , fibres tend to align in the flow direction. On the other hand, in elongation flows,  $C_1$  influences the orientation transient solution: if  $C_1$  is high, fibre orientation attains the steady state more rapidly than for lower values.

In a shear flow, when  $C_1$  is around  $10^{-4}$ ,  $a_{11}$  is close to 1, meaning that fibres are very well oriented in the flow direction. When  $C_1$  increases,  $a_{11}$

decreases, and for  $C_1 = 1$  the orientation becomes nearly isotropic ( $a_{11} = 1/3$ ). The fibre aspect ratio  $\beta$  has a negligible influence on the steady-state attained value, even though Hinch and Leal (1973) showed that for very weak diffusion (a very small interaction coefficient) it may become important.

The value of  $C_1$  can be determined through theoretical, numerical or experimental fitting. In this last case, it can be difficult to find only one  $C_1$  that fits in the whole flow range. Bay and Tucker (1992) used an empirical approach, based on experimental values for injected discs and plaques for different polymers and concentrations, to propose:

$$C_1 = 0.0814e^{-0.7148\phi\beta} \quad 20.12$$

On the theoretical side, Ranganathan and Advani (1991) proposed a relationship between the interaction coefficient and the distance between fibres,  $h$ :

$$C_1 = K \frac{L}{h} \quad 20.13$$

where  $K$  is a constant determined experimentally and  $L$  is the fibre length.

Direct numerical simulation has also been used to estimate  $C_1$  values. Yamane *et al.* (1994) modelled fibre–fibre interaction for a Newtonian fluid in shear flow using lubrication forces. The authors obtained very low interaction coefficients ( $10^{-7} < C_1 < 10^{-4}$ ). Fan *et al.* (1998) developed a numerical approach to take into account fibre–fibre interactions, leading to an interaction coefficient that has a tensorial form, which will be discussed in the next section. Phan-Thien *et al.* (2002) extended the previous approach by using the trace of the interaction coefficient tensor, and they proposed the following form for  $C_1$ :

$$C_1 = 0.03(1 - e^{-0.224\phi\beta}) \quad 20.14$$

The values obtained seem of a good order of magnitude ( $10^{-3} < C_1 < 10^{-2}$ ). Furthermore, one obtains the interesting result that the interaction coefficient increases with the fibre volume fraction and the fibre aspect ratio. This is a point of discussion, since high volume fractions do not often lead to isotropic orientations, which are the result of Folgar and Tucker's model when one considers a high  $C_1$ . The models discussed in the next section will enlighten this fact.

### 20.3.3 Fibre orientation: recent models with anisotropic fibre interaction

In the previous standard model, an isotropic rotary diffusion term was added by Folgar and Tucker. The diffusivity is proportional to the magnitude of the rate of deformation (scalar), through the constant  $C_1$ . Experimental data has shown that, for concentrated suspensions, the kinetics of orientation are

much slower than are predicted by Folgar and Tucker's standard model. To avoid this effect, Wang *et al.* (2008) introduced the reduced strain closure (RSC) model. The authors write  $\mathbf{a}_2$  as a function of its eigenvalues  $\Lambda_i$  and eigenvectors  $\mathbf{e}_i$ , and suppose that the eigenvalue kinetics are slowed by a factor of  $\kappa$  and that the eigenvector kinetics are unchanged. The tensorial material derivative of  $\mathbf{a}_2$  is then recalculated, resulting in the following variation of the Folgar and Tucker model:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{d\mathbf{a}_2}{dt} = & \Omega\mathbf{a}_2 - \mathbf{a}_2\Omega \\ & + \lambda(\dot{\mathbf{e}}\mathbf{a}_2 + \mathbf{a}_2\dot{\mathbf{e}} - 2\dot{\mathbf{e}}:[\mathbf{a}_4 + (1 + \kappa)(\mathbf{l}_4 - \mathbf{m}_4\mathbf{a}_4)]) + 2\kappa\mathbf{C}_1\dot{\mathbf{E}}(I - 3\mathbf{a}_2) \end{aligned} \quad 20.15$$

The fourth order tensors  $\mathbf{l}_4$  and  $\mathbf{m}_4$  are functions of the eigenvalues and eigenvectors of  $\mathbf{a}_2$ :

$$\mathbf{l}_4 = \sum_{i=1}^3 \Lambda_i (\mathbf{e}_i \mathbf{e}_i \mathbf{e}_i \mathbf{e}_i) \quad 20.16$$

$$\mathbf{m}_4 = \sum_{i=1}^3 (\mathbf{e}_i \mathbf{e}_i \mathbf{e}_i \mathbf{e}_i) \quad 20.17$$

Parameter  $\kappa$  is determined by fitting experimental data. For short fibre reinforced thermoplastics, it ranges from 0.05 to 0.2 (Wang *et al.*, 2008). To avoid the use of closure approximations, Wang *et al.* (2008) have also derived a Fokker–Planck equation including this slow kinetics phenomenon. Nevertheless, it remains computationally expensive when compared with the tensorial form.

Using a different approach, Férec *et al.* (2009) obtained a similar model. The authors have considered that orientation kinetics become slower with semi-concentrated suspensions because of hydrodynamic and fibre–fibre interactions. The force generated by fibre interactions was modelled using a linear hydrodynamic friction coefficient proportional to the relative velocity at the contact point and weighted by the probability for contacts to occur. Starting from this point, the authors obtained the following orientation evolution equation:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{d\mathbf{a}_2}{dt} = & \Omega\mathbf{a}_2 - \mathbf{a}_2\Omega + \lambda(\dot{\mathbf{e}}\mathbf{a}_2 + \mathbf{a}_2\dot{\mathbf{e}} - 2\dot{\mathbf{e}}:\mathbf{a}_4) \\ & + \phi\widetilde{M}(\dot{\mathbf{e}}\mathbf{b}_2 + \mathbf{b}_2\dot{\mathbf{e}} - 2\dot{\mathbf{e}}:\mathbf{b}_4) + 2f\phi\widetilde{M}q\dot{\mathbf{E}}(I - 3\mathbf{a}_2) \end{aligned} \quad 20.18$$

where  $f$  is the average number of contacts per fibre,  $\widetilde{M}$  is a parameter related to drag, and  $q$  is a dimensionless interaction coefficient.  $\mathbf{b}_2$  and  $\mathbf{b}_4$  are the second- and fourth-order interaction tensors.  $\mathbf{b}_2$  is given by

$$b_2 = \frac{3\pi}{8}(a_2 - a_4 : a_2) \quad 20.19$$

and the fourth-order interaction tensor,  $\mathbf{b}_4$ , is computed from the second-order one through a quadratic closure approximation. Férec *et al.* (2009) have demonstrated that their model can be rewritten as a RSC model type.

Globally, the RSC model behaves well for short fibre reinforced materials. For long fibre thermoplastics, it quantitatively generates higher flow aligned fibres which do not agree with the experimental values. Thus, rotary diffusion models have been lately developed (Ranganathan and Advani, 1991; Fan *et al.*, 1998; Phan-Thien *et al.*, 2002; Koch, 1995; Phelps and Tucker, 2009). Ranganathan and Advani (1991) proposed a model in which the interaction coefficient is inversely proportional to the average interfibre spacing. Diffusion is isotropic and not really applicable to long fibre reinforced materials. Fan *et al.* (1998) and Phan-Thien *et al.* (2002) developed a rotary diffusion anisotropic model by replacing the interaction coefficient  $C_1$  by a second-order tensor  $C$ , computed by performing direct numerical simulations of a REV of a concentrated suspension undergoing a simple shear flow (Beaume, 2009).  $C$  was then determined using the steady-state solution, not exploiting dynamic behaviour. Koch (1995) obtained also an expression for the tensor  $C$  using a mechanistic approach, by considering the influence of hydrodynamic fibre–fibre interactions on the orientation development in the semi-dilute regime. This tensor is of the form

$$C = \frac{nL^3}{\bar{\epsilon}^2 \ln^2 \beta} [b_1(\dot{\epsilon} : a_6 : \dot{\epsilon})I + b_2(\dot{\epsilon} : a_6 : \dot{\epsilon})] \quad 20.20$$

where  $n$  is the number of fibres per unit volume,  $b_1$  and  $b_2$  are parameters computed by fitting with analytical orientation values in elongation flows, and  $\mathbf{a}_6$  is the sixth-order orientation tensor. The author was then led to the following orientation equation:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{da_2}{dt} = & \Omega a_2 - a_2 \Omega + \lambda(\dot{\epsilon} a_2 + a_2 \dot{\epsilon} - 2\dot{\epsilon} : a_4) \\ & + \bar{\epsilon} [2C - 2(\text{tr } C)a_2 - 5(Ca_2 + a_2 C) + 10a_4 : C] \end{aligned} \quad 20.21$$

Since the sixth-order tensor needs to be computed, the Koch model is more computationally costly. It does not provide better results than Folgar and Tucker's model for long fibre reinforced thermoplastics, and the quality of results is also dependent on the ratio between  $b_1$  and  $b_2$  (if  $b_1$  is much larger than  $b_2$ , diffusion becomes mostly isotropic and the model close to Folgar and Tucker's one).

Recently, Phelps and Tucker (2009) developed a phenomenological anisotropic rotary diffusion model, using also a second-order tensor to describe

interaction, by allowing the diffusion term to depend on the orientation state and on the rate of deformation tensor, using the final expression

$$C = b_1 I + b_2 a_2 + b_3 a_2^2 + \frac{b_4}{\dot{\bar{\epsilon}}} \dot{\bar{\epsilon}} + \frac{b_5}{\dot{\bar{\epsilon}}^2} \dot{\bar{\epsilon}}^2 \quad 20.22$$

The five scalar parameters  $b_1, \dots, b_5$  are fitted in order to get steady-state orientation solutions in simple shear flow and various elongation flows, ensuring stable-steady state positive eigenvalues, as well as physical solutions. The so-called ARD-RSC (anisotropic rotary diffusion – reduced strain closure) model is thus written:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{da_2}{dt} = & \Omega a_2 - a_2 \Omega + \lambda (\dot{\epsilon} a_2 + a_2 \dot{\epsilon} - 2\dot{\epsilon} : [a_4 + (1 - \kappa)(l_4 - m_4 a_4)]) \\ & + \dot{\bar{\epsilon}} (2[C - (1 - \kappa)m_4 : C] - 2\kappa(\text{tr } C)a_2 - 5(Ca_2 + a_2 C) \\ & + 10[a_4 + (1 - \kappa)(l_4 - m_4 a_4)] : C) \end{aligned} \quad 20.23$$

This latest model has been shown to be predictive for long fibre thermoplastic composites, even though there are a large number of parameters to fit.

### 20.3.4 Rheological models

*Generic form with rheological coefficients  $N_p$  and  $N_s$*

In the most general case, we consider that the extra stress tensor is the sum of the contribution of the fluid and of the particles (Batchelor, 1971), and that a reinforced polymer is a suspension of rigid particles in a Newtonian fluid. In this case, most theories have derived the following expression for the stress tensor (Tucker, 1991):

$$\sigma = -pI + 2\eta_l [\dot{\epsilon} + N_p \dot{\epsilon} : a_4 + N_s (\dot{\epsilon} a_2 + a_2 \dot{\epsilon})] \quad 20.24$$

where  $\eta_l$ ,  $N_p$  and  $N_s$  are parameters depending on the fluid viscosity, fibre aspect ratio, fibre orientation and fibre concentration. They can be obtained from rheological experiments that are difficult to perform in the concentrated case. On the other hand, theoretical expressions obtained for each of these parameters depend on the concentration domain. It is most often the dilute and semi-concentrated regime which limits greatly their wide application. Three type of approaches are used in the literature to obtain  $N_p$  and  $N_s$ : the slender body theory, where a particle is considered as an infinitely thin fibre (of negligible thickness) (Batchelor, 1971; Dinh and Armstrong, 1984; Shaqfeh and Fredrickson, 1990); the derivation of known results for suspensions of ellipsoidal particles, valid for finite fibre aspect ratios (Hinch and Leal, 1973; Lipscomb *et al.*, 1988; Hand, 1961); and the approximation based on the theory of Doi and Edwards for concentrated suspensions, where the Brownian

motion of the suspension is not neglected and a diffusion coefficient appears in the stress tensor expression. In all the above theories,  $N_p$  is larger than  $N_s$  for high aspect ratios.

*Slender body approximation and ellipsoidal particle theories*

In the approximations based on the slender body theory,  $\eta_l$  is equal to the fluid viscosity and  $N_s = 0$ . They are valid for dilute (for  $\phi \ll 1/\beta^2$ ) (Batchelor, 1970) or for semi-concentrated suspensions (Batchelor, 1971; Dinh and Armstrong, 1984; Shaqfeh and Fredrickson, 1990). For dilute suspensions, Batchelor (1970) proposed the following expression:

$$N_p = \frac{\beta^2 \phi}{3 \ln(\beta)} \quad 20.25$$

To extend the approach to the semi-concentrated regime, authors have considered hydrodynamic and fibre–fibre interactions, as well as lubrication forces. Hence, Batchelor (1971) gave

$$N_p = \frac{\beta^2 \phi}{9 \left[ \ln(2\beta) - \ln \left( 1 + 2\beta \sqrt{\frac{\phi}{\pi}} \right) - 1.5 \right]} \quad 20.26$$

whereas Dinh and Armstrong (1984) considered the influence of orientation by providing  $N_p$  as

$$N_p = \frac{\beta^2 \phi}{3 \ln \left( \frac{2h}{D} \right)} \quad 20.27$$

where  $h$  represents the characteristic distance between two neighbouring fibres, a distance that depends on the particles' orientation. A similar expression has been obtained by Shaqfeh and Fredrickson (1990). Ranganathan and Advani (1991) proposed a modification to the Batchelor (1970) model using a corrective factor function of the fibre aspect ratio, providing better results but very sensitive to this correction. Other expressions are based on ellipsoidal particle theories (Lipscomb *et al.*, 1988; Hinch and Leal, 1973) where  $N_s$  is different from zero but much smaller than  $N_p$ , and  $\eta_l$  is different from the fluid viscosity. For dilute suspensions, they take the form:

$$N_p = \frac{\phi}{1 + 2\phi} \frac{\beta^2}{2[\ln(2\beta) - 1.5]}$$

$$N_s = \frac{\phi}{1 + 2\phi} \frac{6 \ln(2\beta) - 11}{\beta^2} \quad 20.28$$

$$\eta_1 = \eta(1 + 2\phi)$$

Extensions of this model have also been proposed, to improve the results when going towards the semi-concentrated regime.

#### *Model with interaction tensor for concentrated suspension*

Based on the work of Dinh and Armstrong (1984) for slender fibre suspensions, Férec *et al.* (2009) have derived the following expression for the total stress tensor, including a term that is a function of the interaction tensor:

$$\sigma = -pI + 2\eta_1[\dot{\epsilon} + N_p\dot{\epsilon}:a_4 + N_b\dot{\epsilon}:b_4] \quad 20.29$$

with

$$N_p = \frac{\phi D^2 X_A}{12\pi} \quad 20.30$$

$$N_b = \frac{2\phi^2 D^2 K}{3\pi}$$

where  $X_A$  is the parallel drag coefficient to the fibres, dependent on the nature of the fibre–matrix contact, and  $k$  is a dimensionless geometric factor. For very low fibre volume fractions,  $N_b$  becomes insignificant and the total stress reduces to the Dinh and Armstrong (1984) model.

## 20.4 Computation of fibre orientation in injection moulding

We present computational examples of fibre orientation in injection moulding for which experimental data exist. The various moulds are geometrically complex enough to describe problems encountered in real industrial processes. In the first example, we check whether the skin–core effect is accurately computed in a rectangular plaque. Moreover, the influence of the orientation–rheology coupling and of the interaction coefficient  $C_1$  is analysed by computing the orientation near the inlet gate. The second example is a U-shape with thin walls and ribs, which is used in the automotive industry. It shows the ability to compute the appearance and location of weld lines. The third example is the plaque with seven different ribs (see Fig. 20.2) which gives information on the orientation state in small parts.

First of all, the numerical methods are briefly described. The methodology is that used in Rem3D software and is based on an Eulerian approach (the whole injection cavity is meshed) and a stabilised Galerkin method, using a continuous approximation of the orientation tensor coupled to flow (generalised Stokes behaviour), the thermal equation, the flow front evolution (using a level set method) and fibre orientation equations.



## 20.4.1 Numerical methods

A weakly coupled approach is used, meaning that the problem is solved in two steps. The first step involves the solution of the mechanical problem, assuming that the polymer is incompressible and neglecting gravity and inertia:

$$\nabla \cdot \sigma = 0, \quad \nabla \cdot v = 0 \quad 20.31$$

with an isotropic orientation at the first step or an orientation tensor determined at the previous time step for the other instants. The orientation is taken into account through expression 20.24 or 20.29. A classical mixed finite element method (Pichelin and Coupez, 1998) is used, in which the orientation tensor is implicitly considered.

The fluid is assumed to follow an incompressible shear-thinning behaviour, represented by Carreau–Yasuda and Arrhenius laws for the viscosity  $\eta$ :

$$\eta = \eta_0(T) \left[ 1 + \left( \eta_0 \frac{\dot{\epsilon}}{\tau_c} \right)^\alpha \right]^{\frac{m-1}{\alpha}}, \quad \eta_0(T) = \eta_0(T_{\text{ref}}) \exp \left[ \beta_T \left( \frac{1}{T} - \frac{1}{T_{\text{ref}}} \right) \right] \quad 20.32$$

The parameters occurring in these laws are given in Table 20.2 for the fluid studied.

As viscosity depends on temperature, the energy equation resolution is coupled and solved:

$$\rho C_p \left( \frac{\partial T}{\partial t} + u \cdot \nabla T \right) = \nabla \cdot (k_T \nabla T) + \eta \dot{\epsilon}^2 \quad 20.33$$

where  $\rho$  is the volume density,  $C_p$  the specific heat,  $k_T$  the thermal conductivity, and the last term represents the viscous dissipation. These parameters are

Table 20.2 Parameters used in equations 20.32 and 20.33 for PAA50, Stamax P30YM240 and P40YM243:  $C_p$  is the specific heat,  $k$  is the thermal conductivity

	PAA50	P30YM240	P40YM243
$\tau_c$	0.154 MPa	0.0411 MPa	0.02626 MPa
$\eta_0(T_{\text{ref}})$	570 Pa.s	252 Pa.s	636.6 Pa.s
$\alpha$	0.55	1	1
$m$	0.3	0.22	0.271
$T_{\text{ref}}$	549 K	523 K	493 K
$\beta_T$	7764 mole.K	4450 mole.K	4450 mole.K
$k_T$	0.3 W/m.K	0.25 W/m.K	0.15 W/m.K
$C_p$	1766 J/kg.K	2180 J/kg.K	3100 J/kg.K
$\rho$	1522 kg/m <sup>3</sup>	1000 kg/m <sup>3</sup>	1000 kg/m <sup>3</sup>

considered to be constant. Finally, heat conduction towards the mould walls and viscous heating are also taken into account.

The second step involves the computation of fibre orientation with velocity field obtained in the previous step, through the resolution of the evolution equation 20.11. Numerical resolution of Folgar and Tucker's equation has been performed by Kabanémi and Hétu (1999) using the fourth-order Runge–Kutta method, by Martínéz *et al.* (2003) with the method of characteristics, and by Pichelin and Coupez (1999) and Redjeb *et al.* (2005) with a space–time discontinuous Galerkin scheme. Miled *et al.* (2008) have proposed a standard Galerkin method associated with a RFB or SUPG stabilisation, which prevents inaccurate oscillations due to the hyperbolic character of this equation. A moving interface (such as fluid/air) is also calculated at each time step by solving a convection equation (Ville *et al.*, 2010) associated with a signed distance function which defines the fluid domain (its value is positive in the fluid and negative in the empty region):

$$\frac{\partial \alpha}{\partial t} + v \cdot \nabla \alpha = 0 \quad 20.34$$

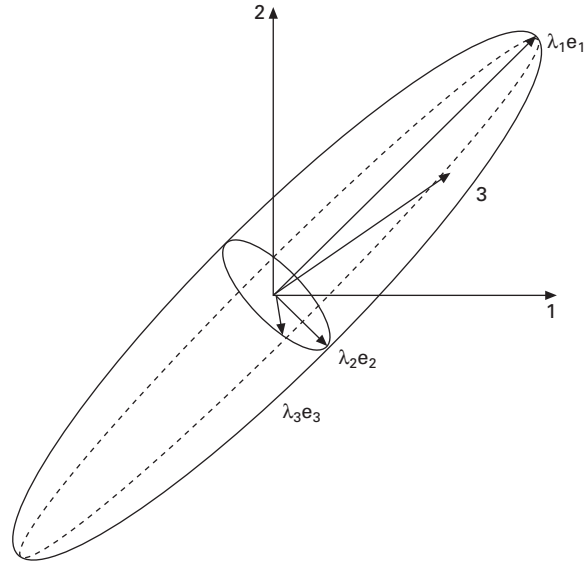
Finally, all parameters and equations are extended to the whole computational domain, as the weak formulation of the finite element method ensures the continuity of stress, velocity, orientation tensor and temperature (Batkam *et al.*, 2004).

#### 20.4.2 Representation of orientation

The problem is now to get practical information from the computed orientation tensor. In an orthonormal Cartesian basis, the diagonal term  $a_{ii}$  of the orientation tensor quantifies the fibre alignment along the main axis. As already mentioned in the first section,  $a_{11} = 1$  means that all the fibres are oriented along the direction  $\mathbf{i}_1$ . Moreover,  $a_{11} = 0$  indicates that all the fibres are perpendicular to the axis  $\mathbf{i}_1$ , that is, they belong to the plane. ( $\mathbf{i}_2, \mathbf{i}_3$ ). The components  $a_{ij}$  with  $i \neq j$  quantify the asymmetry of the distribution of orientation relative to the direction  $i_i$  or  $i_j$ . For isotropic orientation in 3D, the components are  $a_{ii} = \frac{1}{3}$  while  $a_{ij} = 0$  for  $i \neq j$ .

Another way to describe the computed orientation is to plot the ellipsoid associated with the eigenvalues,  $\Lambda_i$ , and eigenvectors,  $\mathbf{e}_i$ , of the orientation tensor  $\mathbf{a}_2$  (Advani and Tucker, 1987; Altan *et al.*, 1990). The eigenvectors and eigenvalues of the orientation tensor give, respectively, the direction and length axes of the ellipsoid as shown in Fig. 20.6.

In order to determine the degree of anisotropy, a von Mises effective orientation,  $a_v$ , can also be computed:

20.6 Ellipsoid representation of orientation tensor  $a_2$ .

$$a_v = \sqrt{\frac{(a_{11} - a_{22})^2 + (a_{22} - a_{33})^2 + (a_{11} - a_{33})^2 + 6(a_{12}^2 + a_{13}^2 + a_{23}^2)}{2}}$$

20.35

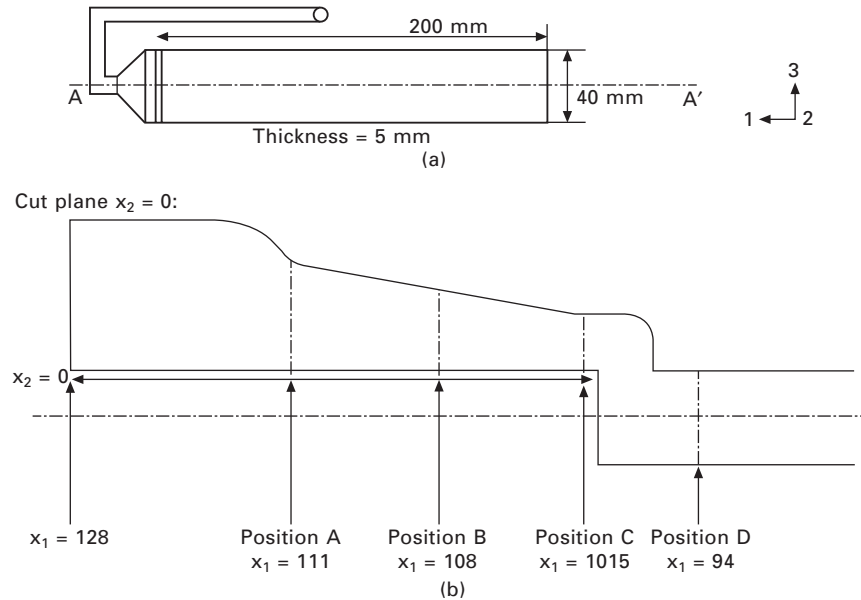
It is null for an isotropic orientation and 1 if all fibres are oriented along a principal direction.

### 20.4.3 Rectangular plaque with inlet gate

We consider the injection moulding of a three-dimensional plaque (Fig. 20.7(b)), and in particular we study the orientation development near the injection gate. Dimensions of the plaque are given in Fig. 20.7(a). Only half of the plaque will be considered in the simulation, since the geometry presents a symmetry plane.

The polymer is a polyarylamide (Solvay Ixef 1022) reinforced with 50% weight (31.6% volume) glass fibres. The fibre aspect ratio is considered constant and equal to 10. The injection is done at a flow rate of 20 cm<sup>3</sup>/s and the initial polymer temperature is 270°C. The mould temperature is kept constant at 130°C, and the mould is filled in 2.70 s. The computational time step is 0.002 s. The orientation distribution is analysed after 1300 time iterations, almost at the end of cavity filling.

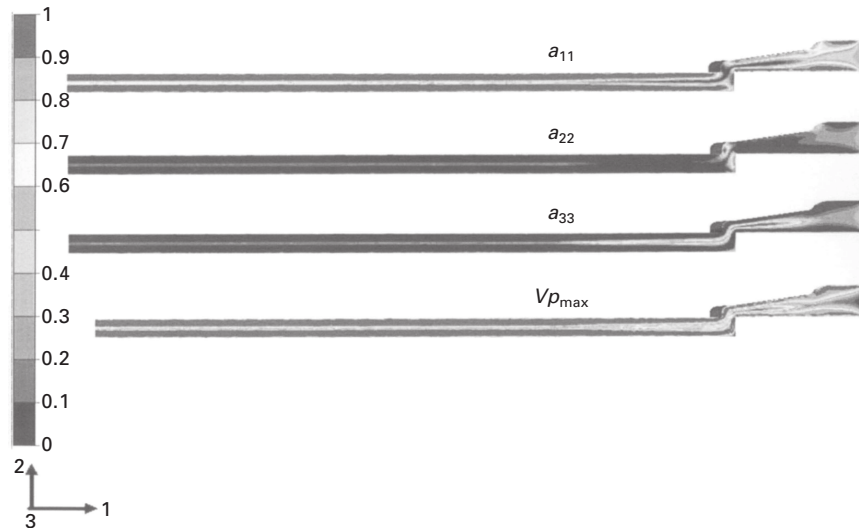
In order to reduce the computational time, the long circular channel has not been taken into account. The inlet of the cavity is just after the last curve



20.7 (a) Mould schematic view and (b) zoom on the inlet with positions of sensors.

of the feeding channel. The computations are made on a half-mould with symmetric boundary conditions on the plane  $(i_1, i_2)$ . The problem is now to impose an initial orientation at the cavity inlet as we do not take into account the cylindrical channel. Usually one considers an isotropic initial orientation. But the flow in the channel is dominated by shear deformations, which are known to orient fibres mainly in the flow direction (namely the  $i_1$  axis) at the entrance of the triangular gate. Nevertheless, the two curves in the cylindrical channel can disturb this orientation. So, computations are made for two different initial conditions (isotropic case,  $a_{ii} = \frac{1}{3}$ ; unidirectional case,  $a_{11} = 1$ ) and a hybrid closure approximation. Moreover, two values of the interaction coefficient ( $C_1 = 0.001$  and  $0.04$ ) and two values of the rheological coupling coefficients ( $N_p = 0, 100$  and  $N_s = 0$ ) will be tested.

Figure 20.8 shows cross-sections in the  $(i_1, i_2)$  plane at the end of filling and the distribution of the diagonal orientation tensor components. We notice that the tensor is almost diagonal, so the  $(i_1, i_2, i_3)$  axes are the principal axes of the orientation tensor. Also, the skin-core effect initiated at the end of the gate is preserved until the end of the plaque. Computed values of  $a_{22}$  are very small, except at the junction between the divergent region and the plaque. This means that fibres are parallel to the  $(i_1, i_3)$  plane in the areas where experimental observations are made. This is in agreement with the observations, and we will focus on the  $a_{11}$  component which quantifies the

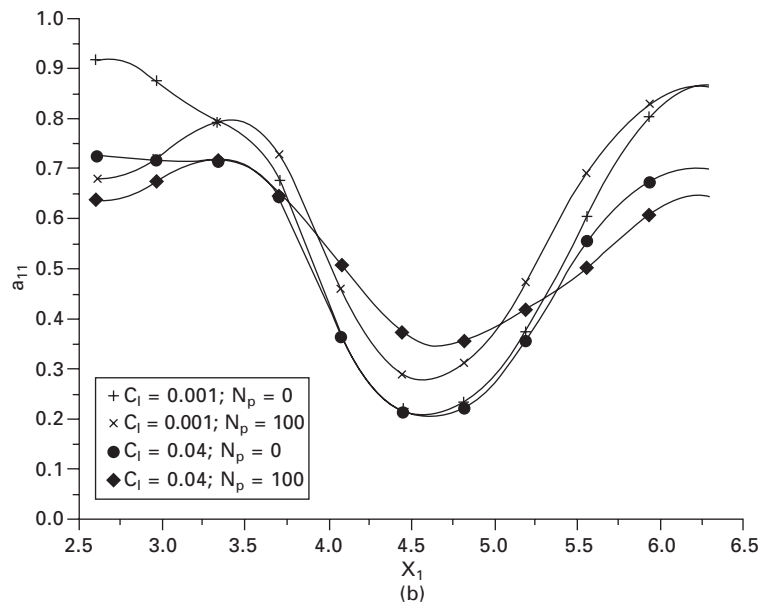
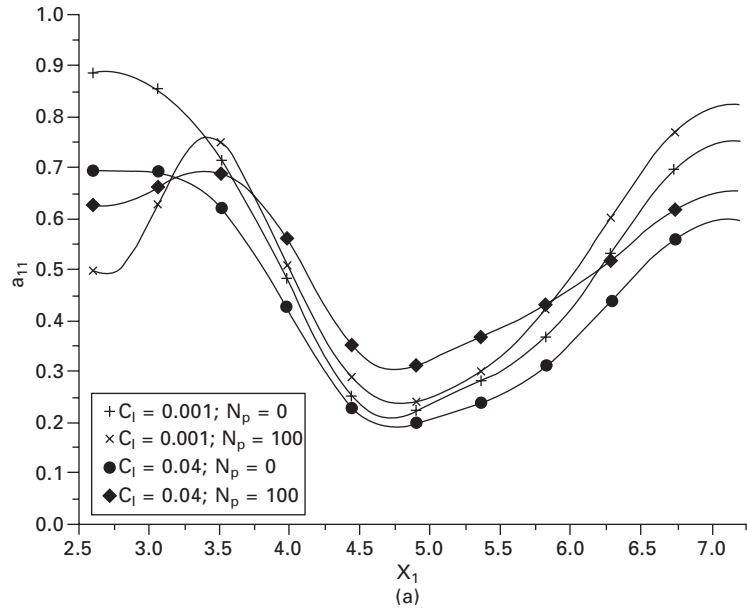


20.8 Isovalues of  $a_{11}$  at the end of filling in a cross-section ( $i_1, i_2, i_3 = 0$ ) for the PAA50 with isotropic initial orientation,  $N_p = 0$  and  $C_1 = 0.001$ .

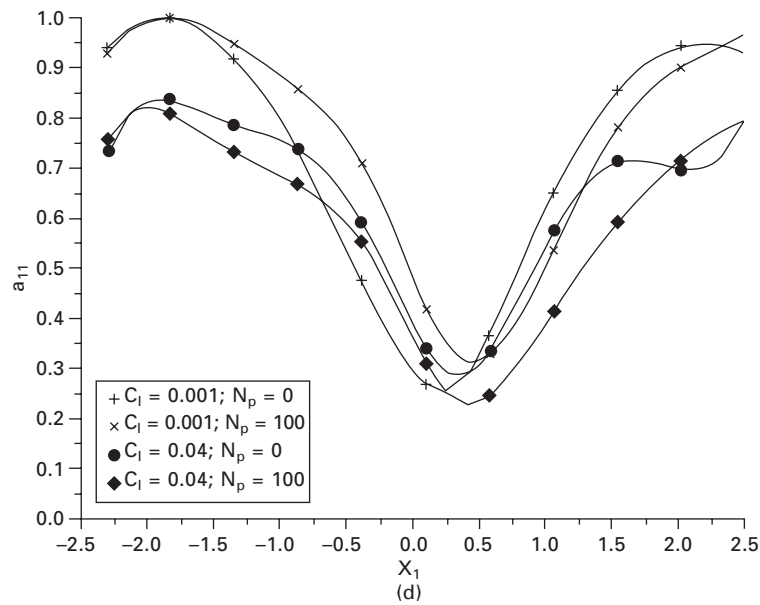
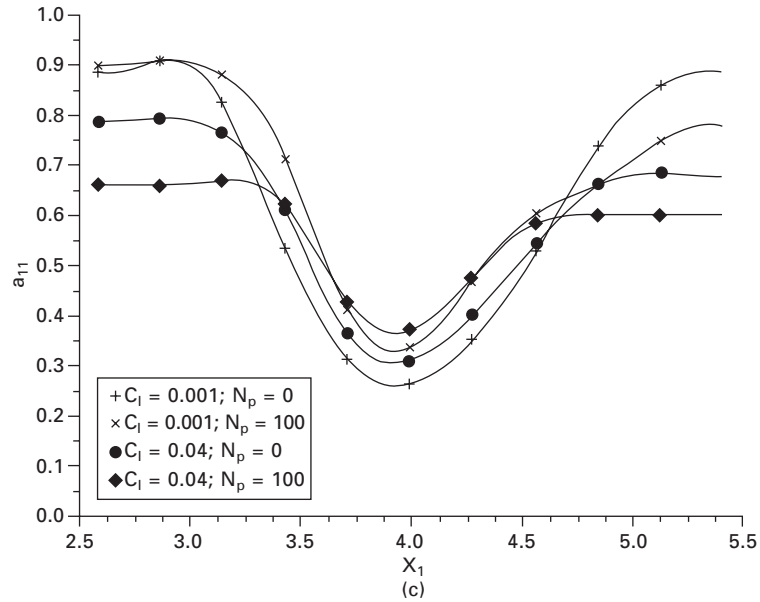
degree of alignment with the flow direction. The triangular gate region is divergent in the plane ( $i_1, i_3$ ) and convergent in the plane ( $i_1, i_2$ ) (see Fig. 20.7). The negative elongation rate along the  $i_3$  axis dominates over the positive one along the  $i_1$  axis and an orientation perpendicular to the  $i_1$  direction develops in the core. This orientation is transported at the junction between the gate and the plaque so that at the entrance of the plaque, we obtain a skin/core orientation, with a skin oriented in the flow direction, and a core perpendicular to it. These calculations show how a gate can lead to a skin/core structure in moulded parts. The computations are qualitatively in agreement with the observations.

In Fig. 20.9, the evolution of  $a_{11}$  with  $x_2$ , the plaque thickness, is shown at the four positions A, B, C and D where the experimental measurements were made (see Fig. 20.7(b)). Computations were performed with an isotropic initial orientation, showing the following:

1. A skin/core structure is rapidly formed in zone A, and it remains even in D after the junction gate-plaque. As shown in the experiments, the skin/core structure is less significant for position C than for position D.
2. For a partially coupled calculation ( $N_p = 0$ ), when the interaction coefficient  $C_1$  increases, near the surface fibres are less oriented in the flow direction. For example, in the first position A for the lower wall ( $x_2 = 2.5$  mm), one gets  $a_{11} \sim 0.7$  for  $C_1 = 0.04$  and  $a_{11} \sim 0.9$  for  $C_1 = 0.001$ .



20.9 Values of orientation tensor coefficient  $a_{11}$  for the four sensors A (a), B (b), C (c), D (d) for PAA50 and isotropic initial orientation:  $C_1 = 0.001, 0.04$ ;  $N_p = 0, 100$ .



20.9 Continued.

This can be explained by the fact that shear is dominant near the walls, and it tends to orient fibres in the flow direction. The interaction term tends to disorient fibres, and its effect increases with  $C_1$ . The orientation in the core does not really change when  $C_1$  varies.

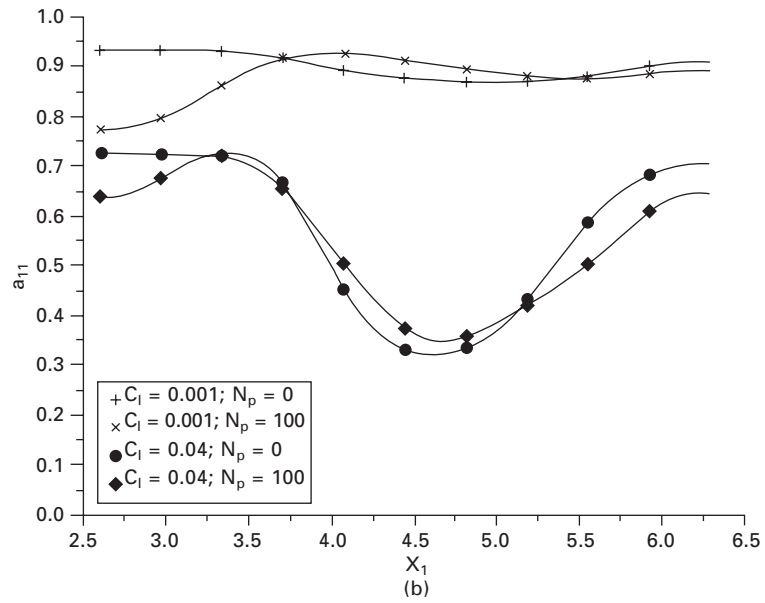
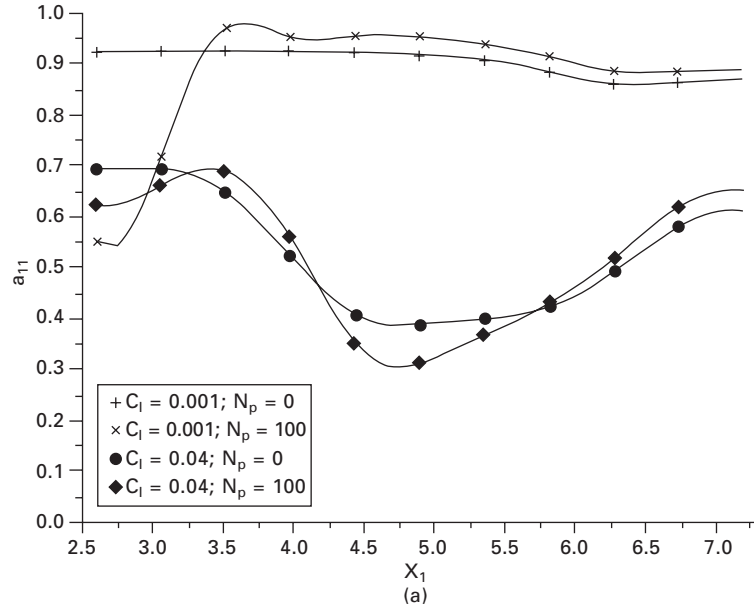
3. An increase of  $N_p$  from 0 to 100 (that is, comparison between coupled and partially coupled calculations) leads to complex tendencies in the skin regions. In the lower skin region, that is for  $x_2 = 2.5$  mm,  $a_{11}$  decreases in positions A and B, but the change is negligible in positions C and D. At the opposite skin, there is no noticeable effect for positions B and D. The trends are opposite in region A ( $a_{11}$  increases) and C ( $a_{11}$  decreases), which points out the complex coupling effect on the flow velocity.
4. In the core region, taking the rheological coupling into account leads to a small increase of  $a_{11}$ , except in position D for  $C_1 = 0.04$ . In position D, the lowest value of  $a_{11}$  is for  $N_p = 100$  and  $C_1 = 0.04$ .

Computations realised with unidirectional initial orientation (see Fig. 20.10) show that:

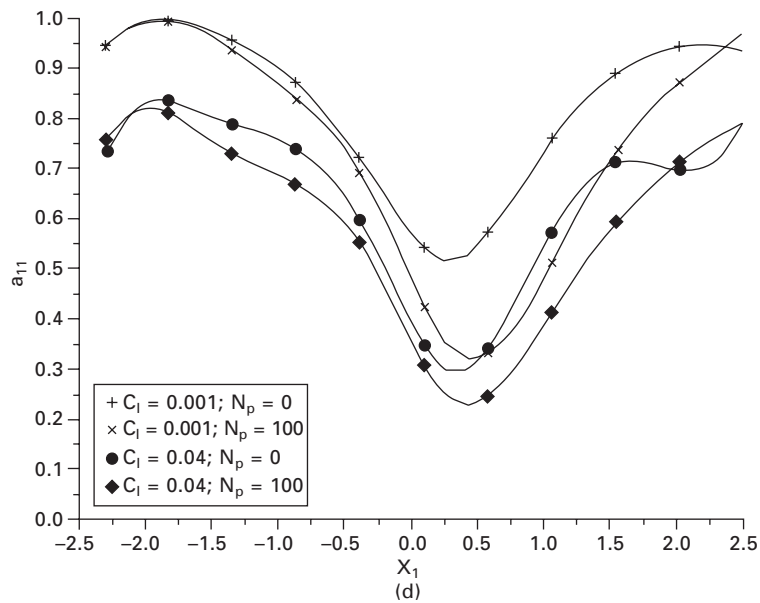
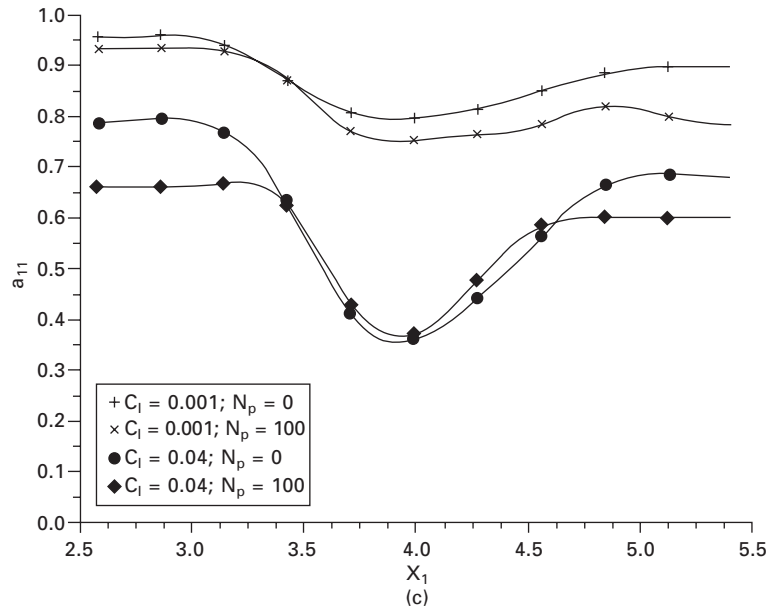
1. For the weakly coupled calculations ( $N_p = 0$ ) and  $C_1 = 0.04$ , a skin/core structure is formed as for the isotropic initial orientation. Nevertheless, the core is less oriented perpendicular to the flow direction: we get  $a_{11}$  around 0.3–0.4 for positions A, B and C, instead of 0.2–0.3. The behaviour is completely different for  $C_1 = 0.001$ : orientation is in the flow direction on the whole thickness at positions A and B.  $a_{11}$  begins to decrease a little in the core in position C, and in D the orientation is isotropic ( $a_{11} = 0.5$ ).
2. When  $N_p$  goes from 0 to 100, in the skin and core regions,  $a_{11}$  decreases a little, or remains nearly constant, depending on the position and the value of  $C_1$ .
3. The influence of the initial orientation is not very important in the last probe D, especially at the surfaces, except for  $C_1 = 0.001$  and  $N_p = 0$  in the core: orientation is 2D isotropic in plane ( $i_1, i_2$ ) for a unidirectional initial orientation ( $a_{11} = 0.5$ ), whereas a transverse orientation is formed with an isotropic initial orientation ( $a_{11} = 0.25$ ).

Numerical results have been compared to the experiments (Redjeb, 2007). The measured points are in between the results obtained with both initial orientation, but the agreement is better for the unidirectional initial orientation. This is not surprising, as a circular channel orients fibres mainly in the flow direction. In the skin regions, the agreement is quite good with  $C_1 = 0.04$  for the four locations A, B, C and D. The coupled calculation does not improve the quality of the agreement significantly. In the core region, agreement is better for  $C_1 = 0.001$ . These results show that the interaction coefficient may depend on the orientation. However, the computed skin/core orientation at the beginning of the plaque remains more important with respect to the measurements.





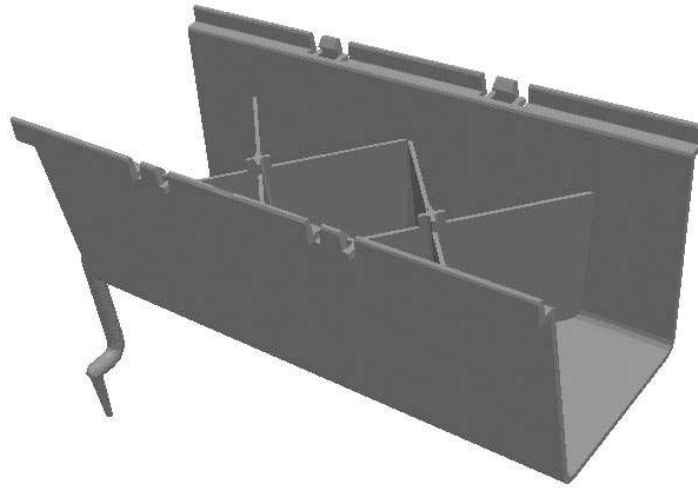
20.10 Values of orientation tensor coefficient  $a_{11}$  in the four areas A (a), B (b), C (c), D (d) for PAA50 and unidirectional initial orientation:  $C_1 = 0.001, 0.04; N_p = 0, 100$ .



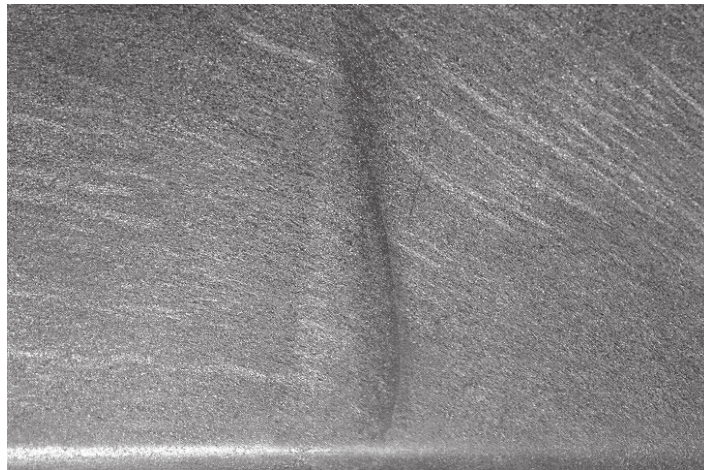
20.10 Continued.

#### 20.4.4 U-shaped part with thin walls and cross-ribs

The studied part is presented in Fig. 20.11(a). The computations have used a mesh generated by a topologic mesher (Gruau and Coupez, 2005, or Coupez, 2010) governed by a natural metric in order to capture the thin walls. This



(a)



(b)

20.11 (a) Geometry of a cross with thin walls; (b) focus on the weld line located on the wall.

metric takes into account, for each area of mould, a specified mesh size in each principal direction, ensuring an appropriate number of elements in the whole thickness of the part. The injected material is a polypropylene referenced as STAMAX P30YM240. This material is modelled by a Carreau–Yasuda law for the rheology and an Arrhenius law for thermo-dependency (the parameters are given in Table 20.2). The polymer is injected at 250°C and we assume that the mould is fully regulated at 40°C. Initially, the air inside the cavity is also considered to be at a temperature of 40°C.

To compute the fibre orientation, one takes a fibre aspect ratio  $\beta = 10$ , an interaction coefficient  $C_1 = 0.001$ , a hybrid closure approximation and a weakly coupling ( $N_s, N_p = 0$ ). The orientation is analysed after a total filling time of 3.7 s. The time step is  $3 \times 10^{-4}$ s. The dynamics of filling are important because it helps to understand the dynamics of fibre orientation. The flow is fully symmetrical and it starts from the inlet to fill the bottom, the walls and the crossing central ribs simultaneously. In the beginning, the wall filling is slightly delayed compared to central ribs. This delay disappears and is reversed as soon as the cavity is half-filled.

The cross-ribs have two weld lines as fronts from the flank and ribs intersect twice. The first weld line is located on the sidewall after crossing the first rib. The second weld line is located at the second row of crossing ribs, as the flow front from the sidewall is faster and has time to penetrate the rib.

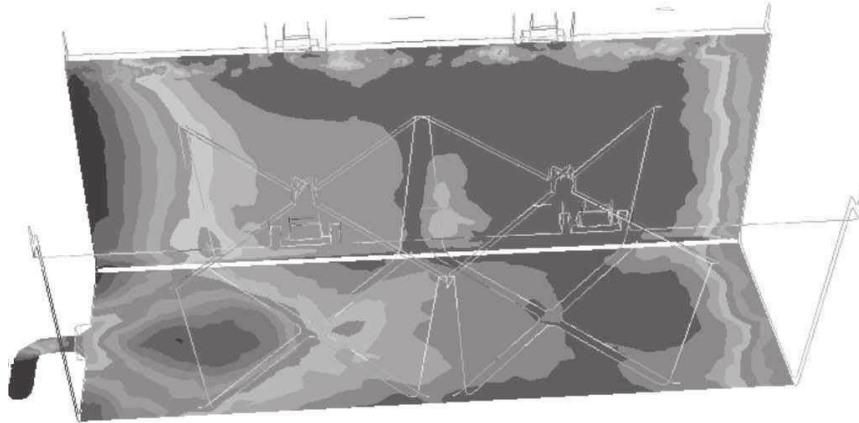
We focus now on the first weld line which is easily detected by the computation. Figure 20.11(b) is a photograph of the part showing the weld line. The injection gate is located at the bottom right and the presence of fibres at the surface allows seeing this line which is located in the middle of the wall. This line is slightly oriented in the direction of flow.

Tracing the isosurfaces of components of the orientation tensor (see Fig. 20.12), it is possible to find this weld line. The orientation on the side wall becomes unidirectional along the  $i_1$  direction:  $a_{11}$  increases while  $a_{22}$  remains relatively low. At the intersection of the two fronts in the region where the ribs are connected to the wall, we can observe a decrease of component  $a_{11}$  along the entire weld line and an increase of component  $a_{22}$ . Therefore, the weld line is well located and predicted where there is a disturbance of the orientation tensor.

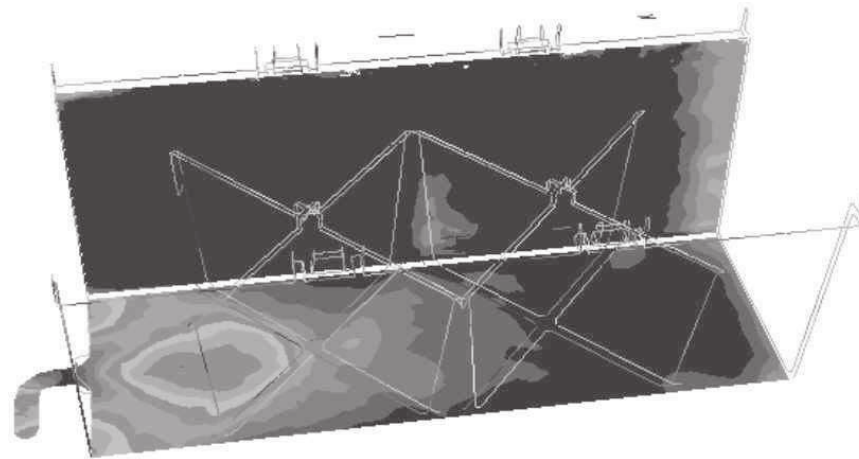
#### 20.4.5 Rib-shaped part with thin walls

The studied part is presented in Fig. 20.2. It is a plaque with seven ribs and it is filled from one side. The variation of fibre concentration inside the part described in the second section is not considered in our model although it is important in terms of mechanical properties. The part has a plane of symmetry and computations are made on only half of the cavity. These computations are made for aspect ratio  $\beta = 30$ ,  $C_1 = 0.023$  and  $N_s, N_p = 0$ . The fluid is a Stamax P40YM243 composed of a polypropylene matrix and 40% of glass fibres. The total filling time is around 1 s. Finally, computations are compared to experimental observations.

In Figs 20.13 and 20.14, the ellipsoids associated with the orientation tensor are plotted and are more or less elongated according to fibre orientation. They are also coloured by a von Mises scalar (equation 20.35) in order to give information on the anisotropy of fibre orientation. In Fig. 20.12, the skin/



(a)



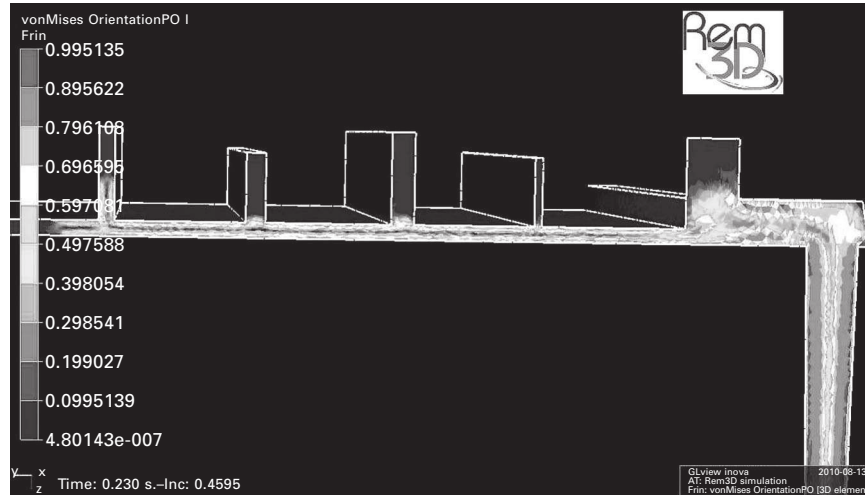
(b)

20.12 Isovalues of  $a_{11}$  and  $a_{22}$  on the wall where the weld line is located.

core phenomenon is observed in plaque as shown in experiments. However, with the Folgar and Tucker (1984) model, an isotropic orientation is obtained in the core instead of an orientation perpendicular to the flow motion in the experiment. In the skin region, the orientation along the flow motion is observed in both experiments and computations.

For the ribs, the orientation changes during filling: first during rib filling, a core/skin orientation is observed; secondly, there is a ‘disorientation’ of fibres once the rib is filled. Finally, only the base of the rib maintains a non-isotropic orientation.

In Fig. 20.13, we compare the simulation with the experimental observation when the mould is fully filled (the experimental picture is slightly larger than



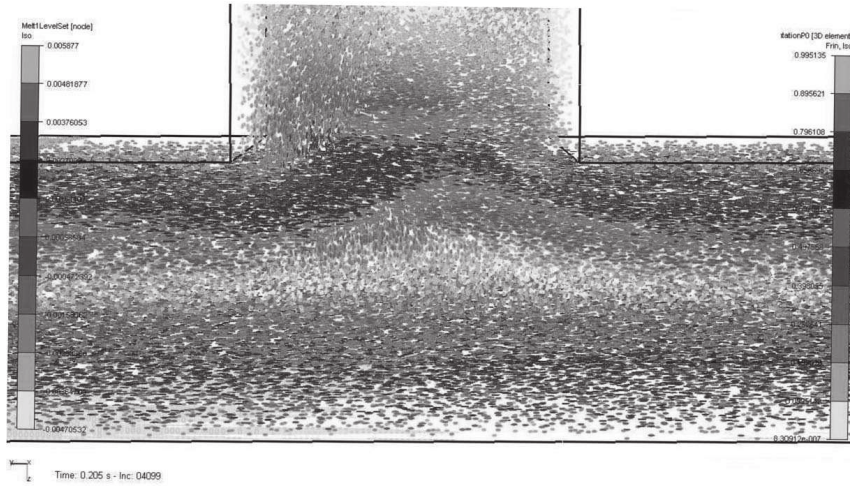
20.13 Ellipsoids representing orientation tensor coloured by von Mises scalar for the plaque with ribs: isotropic orientation (white), unidirectional orientation (black).

the image obtained by the simulation). We deduce that the simulation allows reproducing the increase of the thickness of the core area at the base of the ribs. Moreover, the numerical model reproduces the arch drawn orientation. As in experimental observations, a homogeneous orientation is recovered inside the rib. However, this orientation is isotropic in simulations, whereas the fibres are oriented in a direction parallel to the rib in experiments. Moreover, the arch orientation depends on the time of packing, which was not taken into account in our simulations.

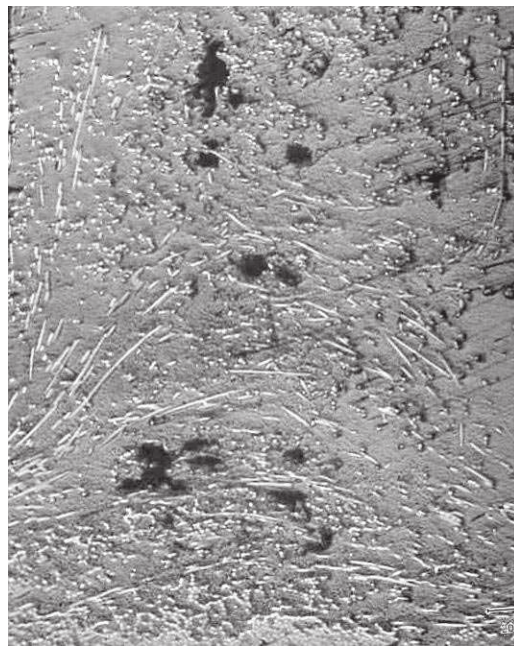
Finally, Rem3D software recovers reasonably faithfully the orientation encountered in the experiments. Only the areas having an isotropic orientation are not in agreement with the experiments. To overcome this discrepancy, a tensorial interaction coefficient  $C_1$  has to be introduced as prescribed by anisotropic rotary diffusive models. In this way, the anisotropy of the plaque will be taken into account (the vertical direction is smaller with respect to the two others).

## 20.5 Conclusions

Fibre structure in reinforced moulded components is directly related to the process. Fibre length degradation takes place mostly in the plasticising unit but the fibre length distribution is not yet considered in our modelling. Fibre concentration can be considered as constant to a first approximation even though, in the plaque with ribs, we measured some important fluctuations inside the part. Therefore the evolution of fibre concentration may have



(a)



(b)

20.14 (a) Final arch drawn orientation near the third rib; (b) comparison with the experiment.

an influence on the evolution of fibre orientation during the process. Fibre orientation varies a lot throughout the part, especially in the thickness. A core region with fibres transverse to the flow direction is almost always created

in the gate region, because of high elongation rates. Near the surfaces, fibres are predominantly oriented in the flow direction.

Quantification of fibre orientation is time consuming, with several causes of errors. Modelling of flow-induced fibre orientation is usually carried out supposing an equivalent viscous behaviour for the composite. This gives valuable information for mould design, and especially gate location. The closure approximation has a larger influence on the results than does the interaction coefficient. Full 3D computations give a precise kinematics description in the gate, at the flow front, which increases the precision of the orientation calculation. Coupling between rheology and orientation becomes important, raising the issue of the validity of constitutive equations based on dilute or semi-dilute Newtonian suspension, and of the determination of rheological parameters. The numerical computations describe reasonably well the orientation encountered in the experiments. The discrepancy could be overcome by making the model more complex, but the number of parameters increases and there is no simple way to get them. Then, both the experimental setup and numerical procedures (inverse analysis) have to be developed to identify these parameters for the polymers used in industrial processes.

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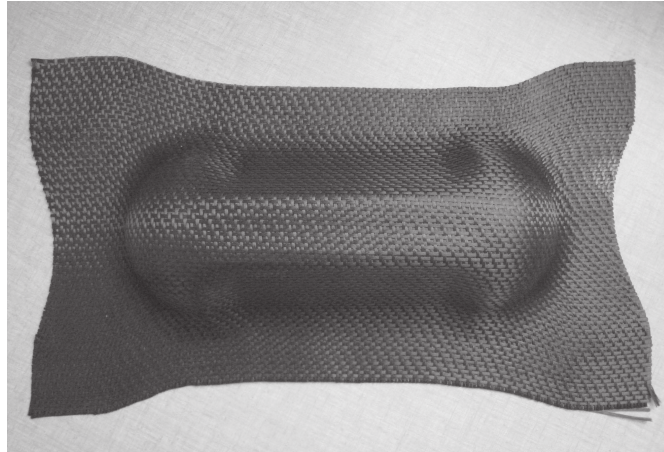
P. BOISSE and N. HAMILA, Université de Lyon, France

**Abstract:** In this chapter various finite element approaches for the simulation of woven reinforcement forming are presented. Some are based on continuous modelling, while others, known as discrete or mesoscopic approaches, model each yarn of the fabric. The intermediary semi-discrete approach is also examined. During this approach the shell finite element interpolation formula maintains the continuity of the displacement field, but the internal virtual work is obtained as the sum of tension, in-plane shear and bending cells, of all the woven unit cells within the element. When using continuous approaches, the necessity of taking the strong specificity of the fibrous material into account causes difficulties. The main goal of the hypoelastic and hyperelastic constitutive models presented in this chapter is to describe this specific mechanical behaviour. During discrete and semi-discrete approaches the directions of the yarns are ‘naturally’ followed because the yarns themselves are modelled. The advantages and drawbacks of the different approaches are also discussed.

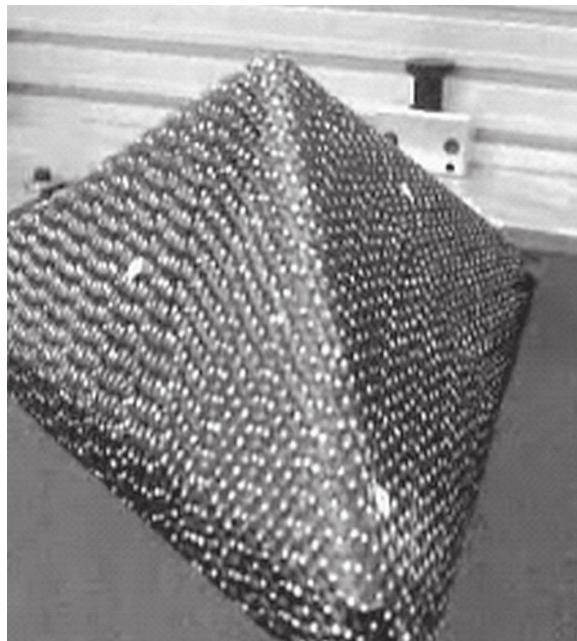
**Key words:** fabric, textiles, preforming, draping, meso/macroscopic approaches, hypoelasticity, hyperelasticity.

## 21.1 Introduction

Textile composites offer a number of attractive properties; they possess a high capacity to conform to complicated contours, they are suitable for manufacturing components with complex shapes, and they offer a greater flexibility in processing options compared to metals and even to their non-woven counterparts. A double curved composite preform shape can be accomplished through the forming of an initially flat fibrous reinforcement. This reinforcement can be dry (i.e. without resin) such as in the preforming stage of liquid composite moulding (LCM) processes (Advani, 1994; Parnas, 2000). These processes, especially the resin transfer moulding (RTM) process, can be used to manufacture highly loaded composite parts for aeronautical applications such as helicopter frames (Dumont *et al.*, 2008) and motor blades (de Luycker *et al.*, 2009). During these LCM processes the resin is injected into a preform which can be doubly curved such as those shown in Fig. 21.1 (Woven Composites Benchmark Forum, 2004) and Fig. 21.2 (European project ITOOL (ITool, Allaoui *et al.*, 2011)). In the case of thermoset or



21.1 Preform analysed in the double dome international benchmark.



21.2 Tetrahedral shape form.

thermoplastic prepregs, the resin is present within the reinforcement during the forming stage, but exists in a weak state. In thermoset prepregs this is because the resin it is not yet polymerized, and in thermoplastic prepregs it

is because the process is performed at a high temperature. The resin is not hardened and the forming is mainly led by the reinforcement. The in-plane shear strain of the woven reinforcements can be very high during the forming of double-curved parts. The orientation and density of fibres in the deformed shape directly influences the permeability of reinforcement and becomes crucial in predicting the mechanical behaviour of the final part (Hammami *et al.*, 1996; Loix *et al.*, 2008). The yarns are made up of several thousands of fibres and their mechanical behaviour is very singular and specific. In order to develop the composite forming simulation codes, therefore, large deformations of the textile reinforcements are subject to a sustained effort to simulate and model them.

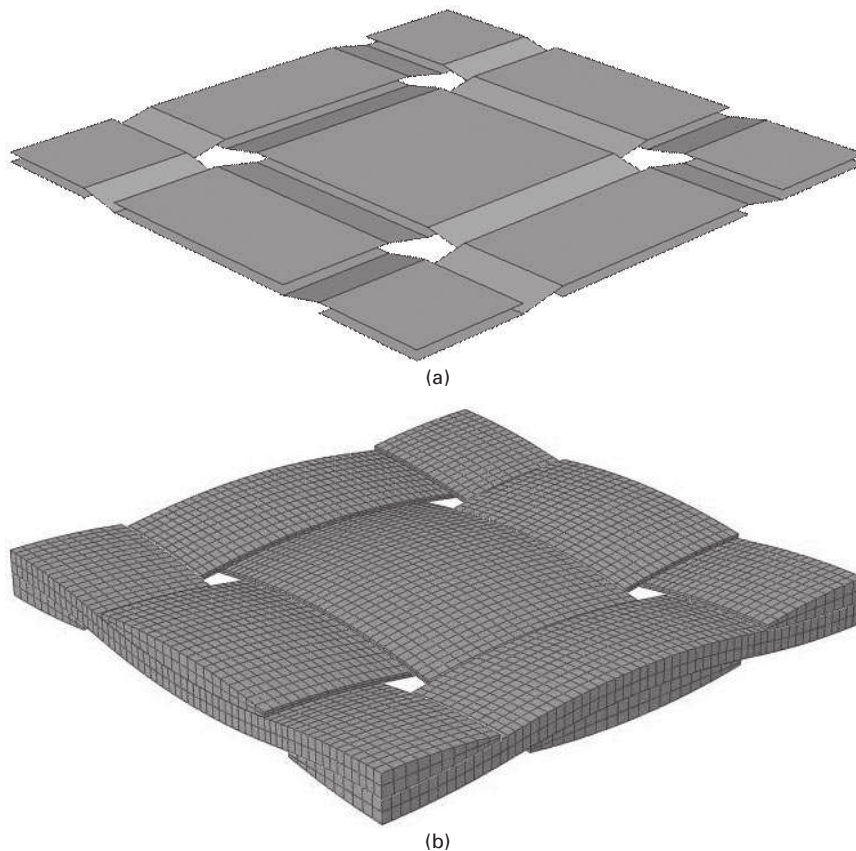
The approach chosen to model the forming of textile composite reinforcements depends on the scale at which the analysis is made. The analysis of the deformation can be made by considering and modelling each of its yarns (or fibres) and their interactions such as contact with friction. Approaches made using this level of analysis are called discrete or mesoscopic. The disadvantage of these approaches is that the number of yarns (and even more so the number of fibres) is high and the interactions are complex. The alternative continuous approaches consider a continuous medium juxtaposed with the fabric, the mechanical behaviour of which is equivalent to those of the textile reinforcement. The disadvantage of using continuous approaches is that this mechanical behaviour is complex. It concerns large strains and strong anisotropy and evolves a great deal during the forming. Throughout this chapter continuous and discrete approaches for composite reinforcements forming simulations will be introduced. First a mesoscopic approach during which each yarn of a woven cell is modelled with shell elements with contact and friction is presented, followed by two continuous approaches based respectively on a hyperelastic and a hypoelastic model. Finally a semi-discrete approach, which is an intermediate method between the continuous and discrete approaches, is presented. The advantages and drawbacks of the different approaches are also discussed.

## 21.2 A mesoscopic approach

In mesoscopic approaches, the modelling measures each fibre bundle (yarn). This approach can also be described as a discrete approach since there are a discrete number of yarns in the preform. The modelling of each yarn must be simple enough to render the simulation of the whole reinforcement forming possible. The interactions between warp and weft directions are precisely taken into account by considering the contact and friction caused by relative motions between the yarns (Pickett *et al.*, 2005; Duhovic and Bhattacharyya, 2006). This modelling could be performed at the microscopic level, i.e. by considering each fibre as a beam. Nevertheless, the massive number of fibres

per yarn (some thousands in the case of composite reinforcements), and therefore the huge amount of contacts with friction which have to be taken into account, lead to a very costly computation. For this reason, although this approach is promising, only very small elements of the fabric have been modelled to date (Durville, 2005; Miao *et al.*, 2008). The mesoscopic approach considers the continuous behaviour of each yarn. This continuous behaviour must take the fibrous nature of the yarn into account in order to ensure that rigidities in bending and transverse compression remain very small in comparison to the tensile stiffness. The modelling of the woven unit cell must be as accurate as possible but simple enough to allow the computation of the forming process of the entire reinforcement.

Figure 21.3(a) shows the finite element model used for discrete simulations of forming processes (216 degrees of freedom (DOF)). It is compared to another FE model of the unit cell used in Badel *et al.* (2008) (Fig. 21.3(b))



21.3 Modelling of a unit cell of a plain weave at the mesoscopic level: (a) 216 dof FE model; (b) 47214 dof FE model.

to analyse the local in-plane shear of a plain weave unit cell (47214 DOF). A simulation of the forming of a composite reinforcement can be based on the model of Fig. 21.3(a), but not on those of Fig. 21.3(b) because of the computational cost. In the simplified unit cell (Fig. 21.3(a)) each yarn is described by few shell elements and the contact friction and possible relative displacement of the yarns are considered. The bending stiffness of the yarns is independent of the tensile rigidity and very much reduced in comparison to the results given by plate theories. The membrane behaviour is based on a hypoelastic model. A stress rate  $\underline{\underline{\sigma}}^\nabla$  is related to the strain rate  $\underline{\underline{D}}$  by a constitutive tensor  $\underline{\underline{C}}$ . To avoid rigid body rotations which can affect the stress state, the derivative  $\underline{\underline{\sigma}}^\nabla$ , called the objective derivative, is the derivative for an observer who is fixed with respect to the material. Because this requirement is not uniquely defined there are several objective derivatives. This objective derivative is often based on a rotation  $\underline{\underline{Q}}$  characterizing the rotation of the material.

The rate constitutive equation (or hypoelastic law) has the form:

$$\underline{\underline{\sigma}}^\nabla = \underline{\underline{C}} : \underline{\underline{D}} \quad 21.1$$

with

$$\underline{\underline{\sigma}}^\nabla = \underline{\underline{Q}} \cdot \left( \frac{d}{dt} (\underline{\underline{Q}}^T \cdot \underline{\underline{\sigma}} \cdot \underline{\underline{Q}}) \right) \cdot \underline{\underline{Q}}^T = \dot{\underline{\underline{\sigma}}} + \underline{\underline{\sigma}} \cdot \underline{\underline{\Omega}} - \underline{\underline{\Omega}} \cdot \underline{\underline{\sigma}} \quad 21.2$$

and  $\underline{\underline{\Omega}}$  is the spin corresponding to  $\underline{\underline{Q}}$ , i.e.  $\underline{\underline{\Omega}} = \dot{\underline{\underline{Q}}} \cdot \underline{\underline{Q}}^T$ .

It has been shown (Badel *et al.*, 2008) that the rotation  $\underline{\underline{Q}}$  must be the rotation of the fibre  $\underline{\underline{\Phi}}$  in the case of fibrous materials. This is specific to fibrous materials and differs from common objective derivatives such as Green–Naghdi (Green and Naghdi, 1965) and Jaumann (Dafalias, 1983).

The current fibre direction can be determined from the gradient tensor  $\underline{\underline{F}}$ . Assuming that the initial position of the fibre is  $\underline{\underline{f}}_1^0 = \underline{\underline{e}}_1^0$ :

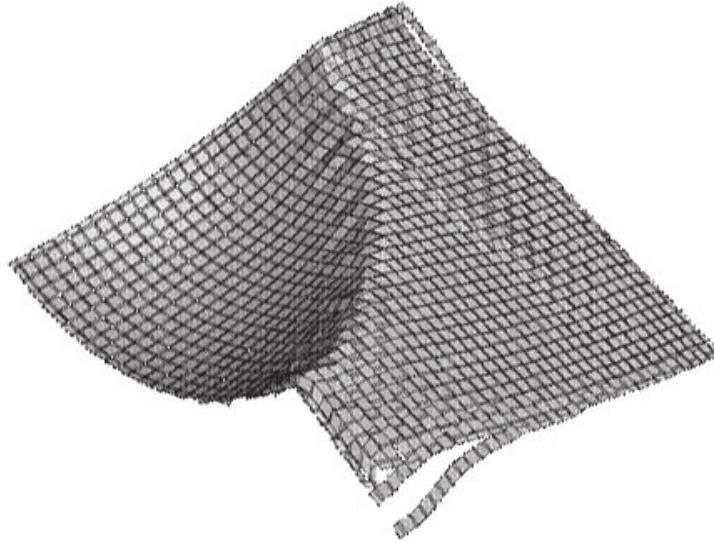
$$\underline{\underline{f}}_1 = \frac{\underline{\underline{F}} \cdot \underline{\underline{e}}_1^0}{\|\underline{\underline{F}} \cdot \underline{\underline{e}}_1^0\|} \quad 21.3$$

The other basis vectors  $\underline{\underline{f}}_2$  and  $\underline{\underline{f}}_3$  of the orthonormal frame  $\{\underline{\underline{f}}_i\}$  are obtained from the material transformation of  $\underline{\underline{e}}_2^0$ :

$$\underline{\underline{f}}_2 = \frac{\underline{\underline{F}} \cdot \underline{\underline{e}}_2^0 - (\underline{\underline{F}} \cdot \underline{\underline{e}}_2^0 \cdot \underline{\underline{f}}_1) \underline{\underline{f}}_1}{\|\underline{\underline{F}} \cdot \underline{\underline{e}}_2^0 - (\underline{\underline{F}} \cdot \underline{\underline{e}}_2^0 \cdot \underline{\underline{f}}_1) \underline{\underline{f}}_1\|}, \quad \underline{\underline{f}}_3 = \underline{\underline{f}}_1 \times \underline{\underline{f}}_2, \quad \underline{\underline{\Phi}} = \underline{\underline{f}}_i \otimes \underline{\underline{e}}_i^0 \quad 21.4$$

The transverse properties of the shell are identified through a picture frame test (Gatouillat, 2010). Figure 21.4 shows the results of a hemispherical





21.4 Simulation of a hemispherical forming using the unit cell model of Fig. 21.3(a).

forming simulation based on the modelling of the unit woven shell shown in Fig. 21.3(a). This meso modelling has been used in Gatouillat (2010) for the simulation of a ‘double dome’ benchmark (Woven Composites Benchmark Forum, 2004) and to form simulations where the continuity of the textile reinforcement is no longer ensured because of strong loads on the blank holders.

### 21.3 Continuous approaches

Continuous approaches consider the fibrous material as a continuum in average at the macroscopic scale. The purpose is to make use of the standard finite element codes for the analysis of fibrous media (Spencer, 2000; Peng and Cao, 2005; ten Thije *et al.*, 2007). The formulations employed within a commercial code, i.e. ABAQUS/Explicit, for stress calculations are presented comprehensively in the following. The algorithm adopted and the formulations used within a user material subroutine VUMAT are then shown.

#### 21.3.1 Hypoelastic model

The equations governing the mechanical behaviour are given in equations 21.1–21.4. They use the rotation  $\underline{\Phi}$  of the fibre. A membrane assumption is used. The Green–Naghdi’s frame (GN) is the default work basis of ABAQUS/

Explicit. Its unit vectors ( $\underline{\mathbf{e}}_1, \underline{\mathbf{e}}_2$ ) in the current configuration are updated from the initial orientation axes, ( $\underline{\mathbf{e}}_1^0, \underline{\mathbf{e}}_2^0$ ), using the proper rotation  $\underline{\mathbf{R}}$ :

$$\underline{\mathbf{e}}_1 = \underline{\mathbf{R}} \cdot \underline{\mathbf{e}}_1^0, \quad \underline{\mathbf{e}}_2 = \underline{\mathbf{R}} \cdot \underline{\mathbf{e}}_2^0 \tag{21.5}$$

In the current configuration, the unit vectors in the warp and weft fibre directions are respectively:

$$\underline{\mathbf{f}}_1 = \frac{\underline{\mathbf{F}} \cdot \underline{\mathbf{f}}_1^0}{\|\underline{\mathbf{F}} \cdot \underline{\mathbf{f}}_1^0\|}, \quad \underline{\mathbf{f}}_2 = \frac{\underline{\mathbf{F}} \cdot \underline{\mathbf{f}}_2^0}{\|\underline{\mathbf{F}} \cdot \underline{\mathbf{f}}_2^0\|} \tag{21.6}$$

( $\underline{\mathbf{e}}_1^0, \underline{\mathbf{e}}_2^0$ ) and ( $\underline{\mathbf{f}}_1^0, \underline{\mathbf{f}}_2^0$ ) are assumed to coincide initially (Fig. 21.5). Two orthonormal frames based on the two fibre directions are defined:  $\underline{\mathbf{g}}$  ( $\underline{\mathbf{g}}_1, \underline{\mathbf{g}}_2$ ) with  $\underline{\mathbf{g}}_1 = \underline{\mathbf{f}}_1$ , and  $\underline{\mathbf{h}}$  ( $\underline{\mathbf{h}}_1, \underline{\mathbf{h}}_2$ ) and with  $\underline{\mathbf{h}}_2, \underline{\mathbf{f}}_2$  (Fig. 21.5).

The strain increment  $\underline{\mathbf{d}}\underline{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}}$  from time  $t^n$  to time  $t^{n+1}$  is computed by the code in the GN frame. It is expressed in the two frames  $\underline{\mathbf{g}}$  and  $\underline{\mathbf{h}}$ :

$$\underline{\mathbf{d}}\underline{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}} = d\epsilon_{\alpha\beta}^{\underline{\mathbf{g}}} \underline{\mathbf{g}}_{\alpha} \otimes \underline{\mathbf{g}}_{\beta} = d\epsilon_{\alpha\beta}^{\underline{\mathbf{h}}} \underline{\mathbf{h}}_{\alpha} \otimes \underline{\mathbf{h}}_{\beta} \tag{21.7}$$

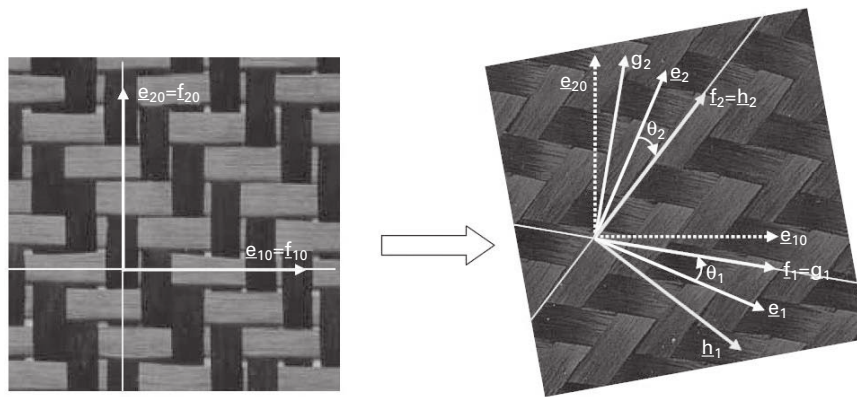
where  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  are indexes taking value 1 or 2. The fibre stretching strain and the shear strain in the two frames are calculated:

$$d\epsilon_{11}^{\underline{\mathbf{g}}} = \underline{\mathbf{g}}_1 \cdot \underline{\mathbf{d}}\underline{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}} \cdot \underline{\mathbf{g}}_1, \quad d\epsilon_{12}^{\underline{\mathbf{g}}} = \underline{\mathbf{g}}_1 \cdot \underline{\mathbf{d}}\underline{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}} \cdot \underline{\mathbf{g}}_2 \tag{21.8}$$

$$d\epsilon_{22}^{\underline{\mathbf{g}}} = \underline{\mathbf{h}}_2 \cdot \underline{\mathbf{d}}\underline{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}} \cdot \underline{\mathbf{h}}_2, \quad d\epsilon_{12}^{\underline{\mathbf{h}}} = \underline{\mathbf{h}}_1 \cdot \underline{\mathbf{d}}\underline{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}} \cdot \underline{\mathbf{h}}_2 \tag{21.9}$$

The axial stress component and shear stress components are then computed:

$$d\sigma_{11}^{\underline{\mathbf{g}}} = E^{\underline{\mathbf{g}}} d\epsilon_{11}^{\underline{\mathbf{g}}}, \quad d\sigma_{12}^{\underline{\mathbf{g}}} = G d\epsilon_{12}^{\underline{\mathbf{g}}} \tag{21.10}$$



21.5 Fibre axes and GN axes in initial state and after deformation.

$$d\sigma_{22}^h = E^h d\varepsilon_{22}^h \quad d\sigma_{12}^h = Gd\varepsilon_{12}^h \quad 21.11$$

where  $E^g$  and  $E^h$  represent the tensile stiffness in the warp and weft fibre directions and  $G$  is the in-plane shear stiffness of the fabric. (They are not constant;  $G$  especially depends strongly on the in-plane shear.) The stresses are then integrated on the time increment from time  $t^n$  to time  $t^{n+1}$ :

$$(\sigma_{11}^g)^{n+1} = (\sigma_{11}^g)^n + d\sigma_{11}^{g^{n+1/2}} \quad (\sigma_{12}^g)^{n+1} = (\sigma_{12}^g)^n + d\sigma_{12}^{g^{n+1/2}} \quad 21.12$$

$$(\sigma_{11}^h)^{n+1} = (\sigma_{11}^h)^n + d\sigma_{11}^{h^{n+1/2}} \quad (\sigma_{12}^h)^{n+1} = (\sigma_{12}^h)^n + d\sigma_{12}^{h^{n+1/2}} \quad 21.13$$

The addition of the stresses in the warp and weft frames gives the stress in the fabric at time  $t^{n+1}$ :

$$\underline{\underline{\sigma}}^{n+1} = (\underline{\underline{\sigma}}^g)^{n+1} + (\underline{\underline{\sigma}}^h)^{n+1} \quad 21.14$$

More detail on this approach can be found in Khan *et al.* (2010). This approach is used to simulate the forming of a double dome shape corresponding to an international benchmark (Woven Composites Benchmark Forum, 2004). An experimental device has been constructed in INSA Lyon in order to perform this forming (Fig. 21.6). The woven fabric is a commingled glass/polypropylene plain weave which was tested in the material benchmark study conducted recently (Cao *et al.*, 2008). The computed and experimental geometries after forming are compared in Fig. 21.6. The measured and numerical draw-in and shear angles agree (Figs 21.7 and 21.8) (Khan *et al.*, 2010).

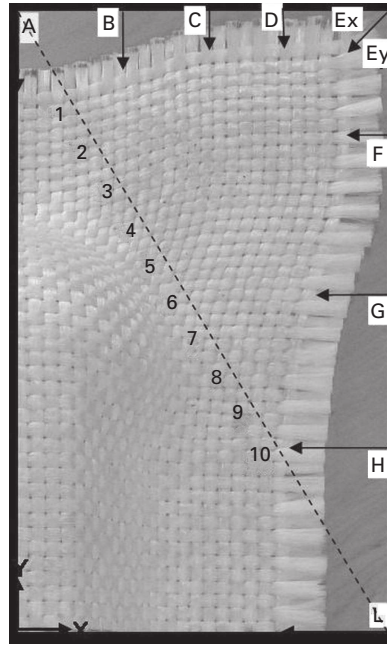
### 21.3.2 Hyperelastic model

For this approach (Aimène *et al.*, 2010) a potential is defined which aims to reproduce the non-linear mechanical behaviour of textile composite reinforcements. The proposed potential is a function of the right Cauchy Green deformation tensor and structural tensor invariants defined from the fibre directions. This potential is based on the assumption that tensile and shear strain energies are uncoupled, and is the sum of three terms:

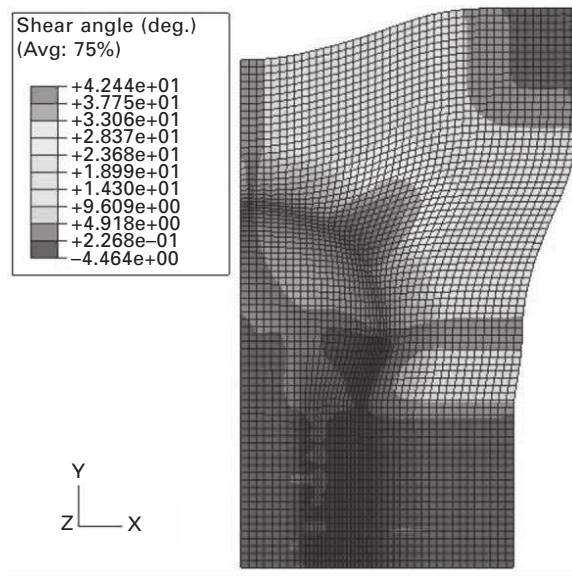
$$W = \overline{W}_1(I_1) + \overline{W}_2(I_2) + \overline{W}_s(I_{12}) \quad 21.15$$

This assumption (that tensile and shear strain energies are uncoupled) is made for the sake of simplicity. The independence of tensile behaviour relative to in-plane shear has been shown experimentally (Buet-Gautier and Boisse, 2001). The other hypotheses are probably less true, but there is very little data available on the couplings.

The structural tensors  $\underline{\underline{f}}_{\alpha\beta}$  are defined from the two unit vectors in the warp and weft directions  $\underline{f}_{10}$  and  $\underline{f}_{20}$  in the reference configuration:

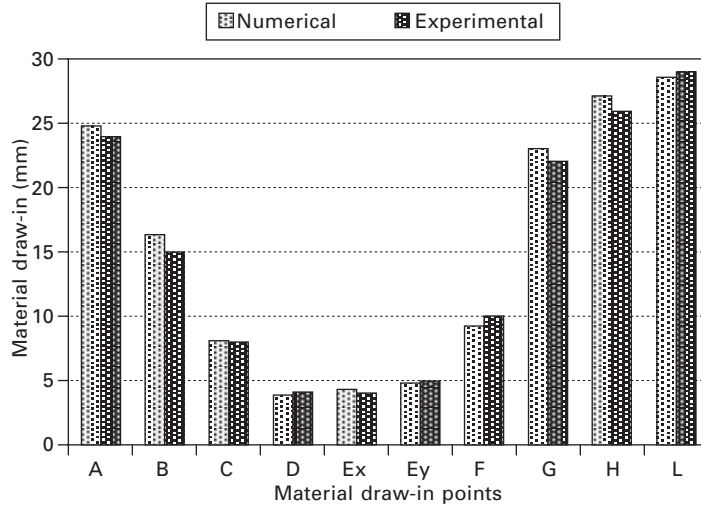


(a)

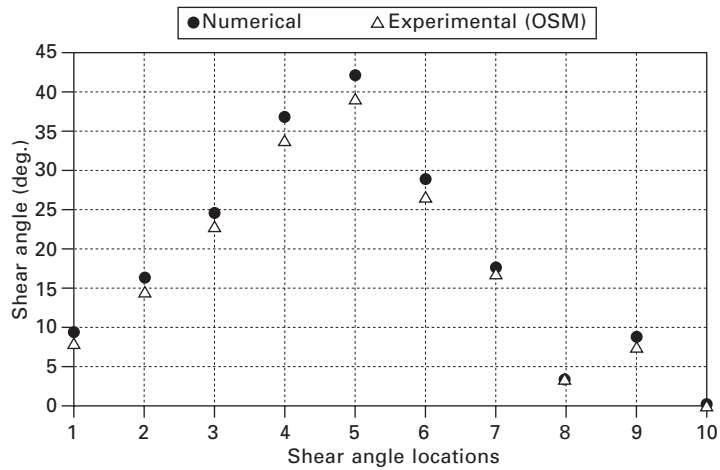


(b)

21.6 Location of points for material draw-in and shear angle measurement.



21.7 Comparison of material draw-in for the draped double dome.



21.8 Comparison of shear angle of numerical and experimental outputs.

$$\underline{\underline{L}}_{\alpha\beta} = \underline{\underline{f}}_{\alpha 0} \otimes \underline{\underline{f}}_{\beta 0} \tag{21.16}$$

The two first terms  $\overline{W}_1$  and  $\overline{W}_2$  are the energies created by the tensions in the yarns. They are also functions of invariants  $I_1$  and  $I_2$  respectively themselves, depending on the right Cauchy–Green strain tensor  $\underline{\underline{C}} = \underline{\underline{F}}^T \cdot \underline{\underline{F}}$  and the structural tensors  $\underline{\underline{L}}_{\alpha\alpha}$ :

$$I_1 = \text{tr}(\underline{\underline{C}} \cdot \underline{\underline{L}}_{11}) = \lambda_1^2 \quad I_2 = \text{tr}(\underline{\underline{C}} \cdot \underline{\underline{L}}_{22}) = \lambda_2^2 \quad 21.17$$

where  $\lambda_\alpha$  is the deformed length of a fibre with a unit initial length in the direction  $\alpha$ .

The third term  $\overline{W}_S$  is a function of the second mixed invariants of  $\underline{\underline{C}}$ .

$$I_{12} = \frac{1}{I_1 I_2} \text{tr}(\underline{\underline{C}} \cdot \underline{\underline{L}}_{11} \cdot \underline{\underline{C}} \cdot \underline{\underline{L}}_{22}) = \cos^2 \theta \quad 21.18$$

The second Piola–Kirchhoff stress tensor is derived using this equation for the potential:

$$\begin{aligned} \underline{\underline{S}} = & 2 \left[ \frac{\partial \overline{W}}{\partial I_1} - \frac{I_{12}}{I_1} \frac{\partial \overline{W}}{\partial I_{12}} \right] \underline{\underline{L}}_{11} + 2 \left[ \frac{\partial \overline{W}}{\partial I_2} - \frac{I_{12}}{I_2} \frac{\partial \overline{W}}{\partial I_{12}} \right] \underline{\underline{L}}_{22} \\ & + 2 \left[ \sqrt{\frac{I_{12}}{I_1 I_2}} \frac{\partial \overline{W}}{\partial I_{12}} \right] (\underline{\underline{L}}_{12} + \underline{\underline{L}}_{21}) \end{aligned} \quad 21.19$$

The potential has to vanish in a stress-free configuration. Polynomial functions of the invariants are discussed in this chapter. The global form of the proposed potential energy is given by:

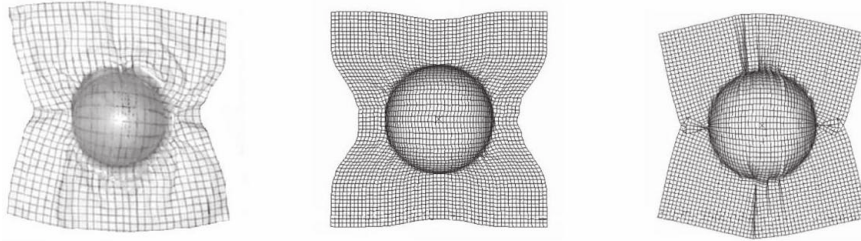
$$W(\underline{\underline{C}}) = \sum_{i=0}^r \frac{1}{i+1} A_i (I_1^{i+1} - 1) + \sum_{j=0}^s \frac{1}{j+1} B_j (I_2^{j+1} - 1) + \sum_{k=1}^t \frac{1}{k} C_k I_{12}^k \quad 21.20$$

To determine the constants  $A_i$ ,  $B_j$  and  $C_k$ , three experimental tests are necessary: two tensile tests in the warp and weft directions and one in-plane pure shear test.

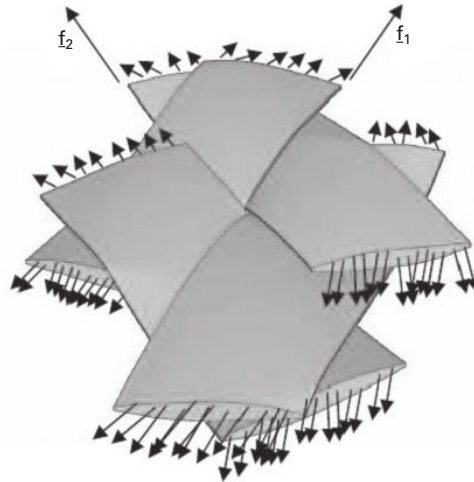
The proposed hyperelastic model is implemented in a user routine VUMAT of Abaqus/Explicit and it is then applied to membrane elements. The simulation of a hemispherical punch forming process is performed in the case of strongly unbalanced twill. The warp rigidity is 50 N/yarn and the weft rigidity is 0.2 N/yarn. The experimental results in terms of a deformed shape are shown in Fig. 21.9(a) together with the results of the simulation in Fig. 21.9(b) and (c). The hyperelastic model is described in detail in Aimène *et al.* (2010).

## 21.4 The semi-discrete approach

This approach (Boisse *et al.*, 1997; Hamila *et al.*, 2009), which is relatively intermediate between the continuous and discrete approaches, obtains the textile composite reinforcement from a set of unit woven cells which bear the loads of their neighbouring cells (Fig. 21.10).



21.9 Deformed shape of an unbalanced fabric with an initial orientation of fibres  $0^\circ/90^\circ$ : (a) experimental shape; (b) Simulation without shear rigidity; (c) Simulation with shear rigidity.

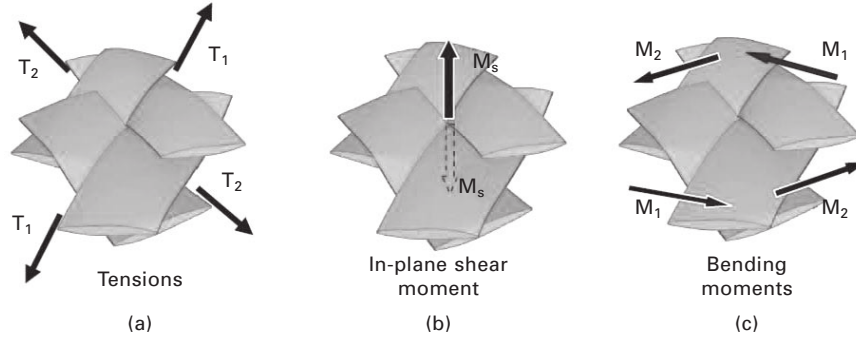


21.10 Loads on a unit woven cell.

- The tensions  $T_1$  and  $T_2$  are the resultants of the respective loads on warp and weft yarns in the directions  $\underline{f}_1$  and  $\underline{f}_2$  of these yarns (Fig. 21.11(a)).
- The in-plane shear moment  $M_s$  is the moment resulting from the loads on the unit woven cell at its centre, in the direction normal to the fabric (Fig. 21.11(b)).
- The bending moments  $M_1$  and  $M_2$  are the moments resulting from the loads on the warp and weft yarns respectively (Fig. 21.11(c)).

Figures 21.10 and 21.11 have been drawn to represent a plain weave for simplicity, but the type of weaving can vary.

In any virtual displacement field  $\underline{\eta}$  such as  $\underline{\eta} = 0$  on the boundary with prescribed displacements, the principle of virtual work compels the virtual



21.11 Load resultants on a unit woven cell.

inertial work to be equal to the difference between virtual internal and external works:

$$W_{\text{ext}}(\underline{\eta}) - W_{\text{int}}(\underline{\eta}) = W_{\text{acc}}(\underline{\eta}) \quad 21.21$$

with

$$W_{\text{int}}(\underline{\eta}) = W_{\text{int}}^{\text{t}}(\underline{\eta}) + W_{\text{int}}^{\text{s}}(\underline{\eta}) + W_{\text{int}}^{\text{b}}(\underline{\eta}) \quad 21.22$$

where  $W_{\text{int}}^{\text{t}}(\underline{\eta})$ ,  $W_{\text{int}}^{\text{s}}(\underline{\eta})$  and  $W_{\text{int}}^{\text{b}}(\underline{\eta})$  are the virtual internal works of tension, in-plane shear and bending respectively:

$$W_{\text{int}}^{\text{t}}(\underline{\eta}) = \sum_{p=0}^{ncell} {}^p \varepsilon_{11}(\underline{\eta}) {}^p T_1 {}^p L_1 + {}^p \varepsilon_{22}(\underline{\eta}) {}^p T_2 {}^p L_2 \quad 21.23$$

$$W_{\text{int}}^{\text{s}}(\underline{\eta}) = \sum_{p=1}^{ncell} {}^p \gamma(\underline{\eta}) {}^p M_s \quad 21.24$$

$$W_{\text{int}}^{\text{b}}(\underline{\eta}) = \sum_{p=1}^{ncell} {}^p \chi_{11}(\underline{\eta}) {}^p M_1 {}^p L_1 + {}^p \chi_{22}(\underline{\eta}) {}^p M_2 {}^p L_2 \quad 21.25$$

where  $ncell$  denotes the number of woven cells,  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  the lengths of unit woven cells in the warp and weft directions,  $\varepsilon_{11}(\underline{\eta})$  and  $\varepsilon_{22}(\underline{\eta})$  the virtual axial strain in the warp and weft directions,  $\gamma(\underline{\eta})$  the virtual in-plane shear angle, i.e. the virtual angle variation between warp and weft directions, and  $\chi_{11}(\underline{\eta})$  and  $\chi_{22}(\underline{\eta})$  represent the virtual curvatures of the warp and weft directions. The quantity  $A$  is denoted  ${}^p A$  when it concerns the unit woven cell number  $p$ .  $\varepsilon_{11}(\underline{\eta})$ ,  $\varepsilon_{22}(\underline{\eta})$ ,  $\gamma(\underline{\eta})$ ,  $\chi_{11}(\underline{\eta})$  and  $\chi_{22}(\underline{\eta})$  are functions of the gradient of the virtual displacement field.  $T_1$ ,  $T_2$ ,  $M_s$ ,  $M_1$  and  $M_2$  are the load results on the woven cell as presented above and in Fig. 21.11.

Experimental tests specific to textile composite reinforcements are used to obtain these mechanical properties. The biaxial tensile test gives the tensions



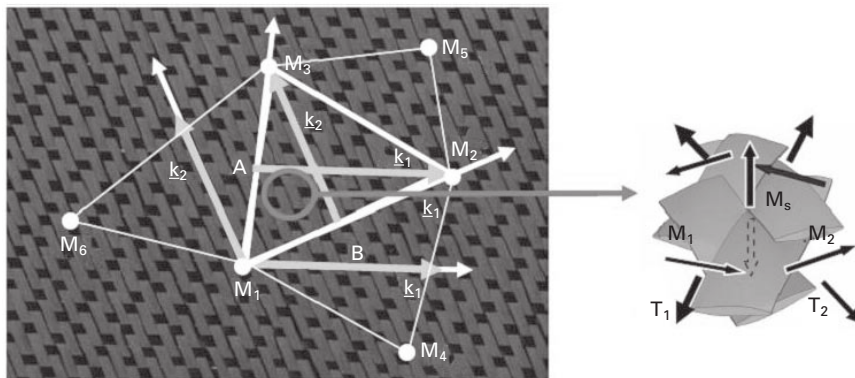
$T_1$  and  $T_2$  as functions of the axial strains  $\epsilon_{11}$  and  $\epsilon_{22}$  (Kawabata *et al.*, 1973; Buet-Gautier and Boisse, 2001); the picture frame or the bias extension test gives the shear moment  $M_s$  as a function of the angle variation  $\gamma$  between warp and weft yarns (Wang *et al.*, 1998; Potter, 2002; Potluri *et al.*, 2006; Lomov *et al.*, 2006; Launay *et al.*, 2008; Cao *et al.*, 2008); and the bending test gives the bending moments  $M_1$  and  $M_2$  as respective functions of  $\chi_{11}$  and  $\chi_{22}$  (Kawabata, 1986; de Bilbao *et al.*, 2010). Virtual tests, for example 3D simulations of the deformation of a unit woven cell submitted to elementary loadings such as biaxial tensions or in-plane shear (Badel *et al.*, 2008, 2009) are an alternative to these experimental tests.

The approach presented in equations 21.1–21.5 assumes that the internal load state in the material is given by the membrane and bending resultant loads. It is restricted to thin reinforcements. This is true for a large section of composite reinforcements.

The five load resultants  $T_1$ ,  $T_2$ ,  $M_s$ ,  $M_1$  and  $M_2$  can depend on the five kinematic quantities  $\epsilon_{11}$ ,  $\epsilon_{22}$ ,  $\gamma$ ,  $\chi_{11}$  and  $\chi_{22}$ . Such knowledge is generally not available (and probably not often necessary). When considering in-plane shear, some studies have shown that the shear force can depend on the tension state (Lomov and Verpoest, 2006; Launay *et al.*, 2008). Such data is not usually available, however, and it is assumed that the picture-frame (or the bias-extension test) gives  $M_s$  only depending on  $\gamma$ .

A three-node shell finite element  $M_1M_2M_3$  made up of  $ncell$  woven cells is shown in Fig. 21.12. The vectors  $\mathbf{k}_1 = \underline{AM}_2$  and  $\mathbf{k}_2 = \underline{BM}_3$  in the warp and weft directions respectively are defined. The internal virtual work of tension on the element (equation 21.23) defines the element nodal tensile internal forces  $\mathbf{F}_{int}^{te}$ :

$$\sum_{p=1}^{ncell} {}^p \epsilon_{11}(\underline{\eta}) {}^p T_1 {}^p L_1 + {}^p \epsilon_{22}(\underline{\eta}) {}^p T_2 {}^p L_2 = \underline{\boldsymbol{\eta}}^{eT} \mathbf{F}_{int}^{te} \tag{21.26}$$



21.12 Three-node finite element made of unit woven cells.

The internal tensile force components are calculated from the tensions of  $T_1$  and  $T_2$ :

$$(\mathbf{F}_{\text{int}}^{\text{te}})_{ij} = ncell \left( B_{1ij} T_1 \frac{L_1}{\|k_1\|^2} + B_{2ij} T_2 \frac{L_2}{\|k_2\|^2} \right) \quad 21.27$$

where  $i$  represents the index of the direction ( $i = 1$  to 3) and  $j$  is the index of the node ( $j = 1$  to 3).  $B_{1ij}$  and  $B_{2ij}$  are strain interpolation components. They are constant over the element because the interpolation functions are linear in the case of the three-node triangle.

The internal virtual work of in-plane shear on the element (equation 21.24) defines the element nodal tensile internal forces  $\mathbf{F}_{\text{int}}^{\text{se}}$ :

$$\sum_{p=1}^{ncell} {}^p \gamma(\underline{\eta}) {}^p M_s = \boldsymbol{\eta}^{\text{eT}} \mathbf{F}_{\text{int}}^{\text{se}} \quad 21.28$$

The internal in-plane shear force components are calculated from the in-plane shear moment:

$$(\mathbf{F}_{\text{int}}^{\text{se}})_{ij} = ncell B_{\gamma ij} M_s(\gamma) \quad 21.29$$

In order to avoid supplementary degrees of freedom and consequently to improve numerical efficiency, the bending stiffness is taken into account within an approach without a rotational degree of freedom (Onate and Zarate, 2000; Sabourin and Brunet, 2006). In these approaches the curvatures of the element are computed from the positions and displacements of the nodes of the neighbouring elements (Fig. 21.12). The internal virtual work of bending on the element (equation 21.25) defines the element nodal bending internal forces  $\mathbf{F}_{\text{int}}^{\text{be}}$ :

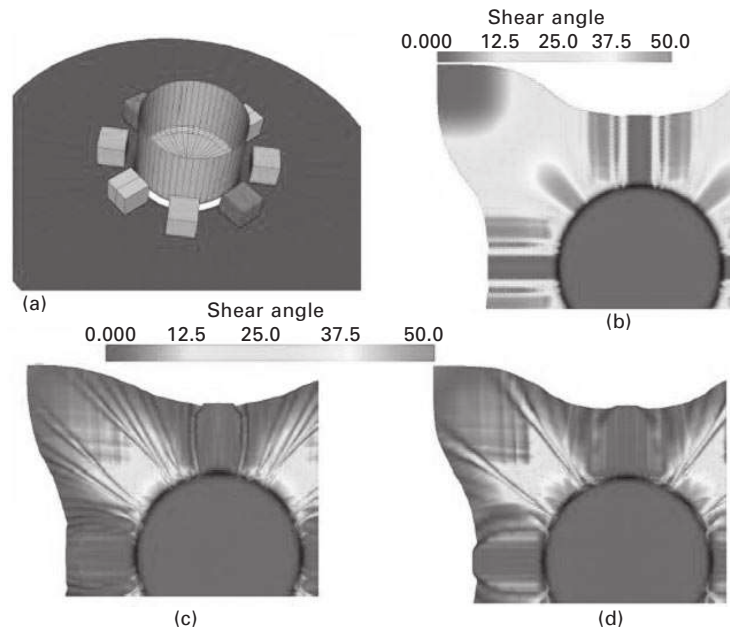
$$\sum_{p=1}^{ncell} {}^p \chi_{11}(\underline{\eta}) {}^p M_1 {}^p L_1 + {}^p \chi_{22}(\underline{\eta}) {}^p M_2 {}^p L_2 = \boldsymbol{\eta}^{\text{eT}} \mathbf{F}_{\text{int}}^{\text{be}} \quad 21.30$$

The internal bending force components are calculated from the bending moments  $M_1$  and  $M_2$ :

$$(\mathbf{F}_{\text{int}}^{\text{be}})_{km} = ncell \left( Bb_{1km} M_1 \frac{L_1}{\|k_1\|^2} + Bb_{2km} M_2 \frac{L_2}{\|k_2\|^2} \right) \quad 21.31$$

The details of the calculations of the internal loads can be found in Hamila *et al.* (2009).

Figure 21.13 shows the simulation of the deep drawing of a woven reinforcement with a cylindrical punch (Boisse *et al.*, 2011). It uses the semi-discrete approach presented above. Height-independent blank holders

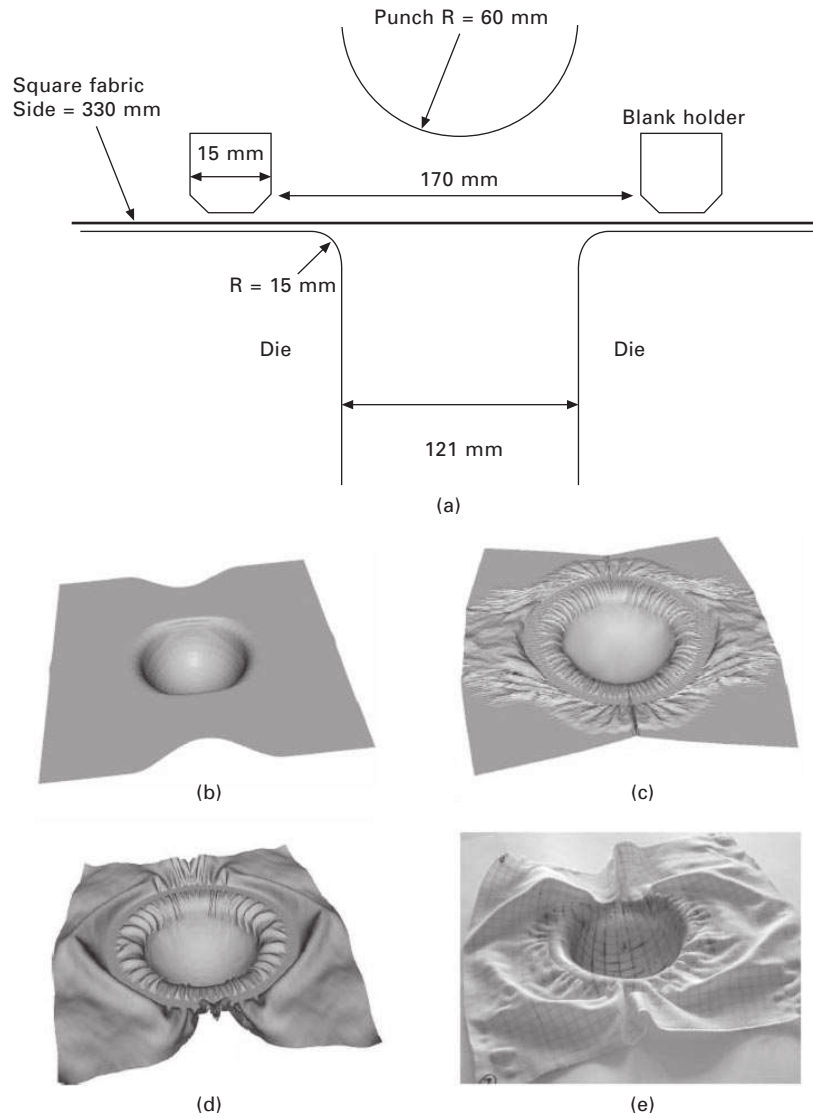


21.13 Forming with a cylindrical punch: (a) geometry of the tools; (b) tensile stiffness only; (c) small bending stiffness; (d) higher bending stiffness.

are shown in Fig. 21.13(a), and Fig. 21.13(b) shows the computed deformed shape of the reinforcement when only the tensile stiffness is taken into account. There is no wrinkle and the computed shear angles are very large. They reach  $70^\circ$ . Figures 21.13(c) and 21.13(d) show the computed deformed shape when all the rigidities (tensile, in-plane shear and bending) have been considered. The bending stiffness is 10 times larger in Fig. 21.13(d) than in Fig. 21.13(c). There are many wrinkles in both cases, especially between the blank-holders. These wrinkles are less numerous and their size is moderately larger when the bending stiffness increases.

The simulation of the hemispherical forming of a very unbalanced fabric is shown in Fig. 21.14 (Boisse *et al.*, 2011). There is a  $250^\circ$  ratio between the tensile stiffness in the warp and weft directions. A 6 kg ring was used as blank-holder to avoid reinforcement wrinkling in the curved zone (Fig. 21.4(a)). The experimental shape obtained after forming is shown in Fig. 21.14(e) (Daniel *et al.*, 2003). In the warp-direction image, large fabric sliding is observed relative to the die, whereas, contrastingly, in the weft direction (the weaker direction) no edge movement is depicted and the yarns were subjected to large stretch deformations. A 6 kg ring was used as blank-holder to avoid reinforcement wrinkling in the curved zone (Fig. 21.14(a)).

The shapes after forming are shown in Figs 21.14(b), (c) and (d) for



21.14 Forming of an unbalanced textile reinforcement: (a) geometry of the tools; (b) tensile stiffness only; (c) tensile and in-plane shear rigidities; (d) tensile + in-plane shear + bending rigidities; (e) experimental forming.

different types of simulations. The tensile stiffness is taken into account only in Fig. 21.14(b). There is no wrinkle, but the asymmetry of the shape in the warp and weft directions is correctly obtained. In Fig. 21.14(c) tension and in-plane shear strain energies, but not bending stiffness, are taken into

account. A great number of small wrinkles are depicted. The wrinkles are much bigger in Fig. 21.14(d) where the bending stiffness is added. The shapes of these wrinkles conform fairly well with the expectations of the experiment. Near the central point of the preform, squares drawn on the fabric prior to forming become rectangles with a length:width ratio of 1:8 (Fig. 21.14(e)). This extension ratio is correctly computed in the three cases shown in (Fig. 21.14(b), (c) and (d)). It depends on the tensile rigidities which are taken into account in all three cases. Interestingly, a fishnet algorithm which ignored the mechanical properties would lead to the same deformation in both warp and weft directions and the ratio in the central part would remain equal to 1.

## 21.5 Discussion and conclusion

The discrete (or mesoscopic) approach is both attractive and promising. The very specific mechanical behaviour of the textile material due to the contacts and friction between the yarns and to the change of direction is implicitly taken into account. If some sliding occurs between warp and weft yarns, they can be simulated. This is not possible when using the continuous approaches, which consider the textile material as a continuum. This is an important point because it can be necessary to prevent such a sliding in a process. Nevertheless, the main drawback of the discrete approach is the necessary compromise that must be made between the accuracy of the model of the unit woven cell and the total number of degrees of freedom. The modelling of the unit cell must be accurate enough to obtain a correct macroscopic mechanical behaviour, but the number of degrees of freedom of each cell must remain small in order to compute a forming process for which there will be thousands of woven cells. The continuous approach is the most commonly used method in composite reinforcement forming today. Its main advantage is that standard shell or membrane finite elements can be used. It is only the mechanical behaviour which has to be specified in order to take the very particular behaviour of textile materials into account. Many models exist, but none of them are clearly defined yet. The semi-discrete approach aims to avoid the use of stress tensors and directly define the loading onto a woven unit cell using the warp and weft tensions and by in-plane shear and bending moments. These quantities are simply defined on a woven unit cell and above all they are directly measured by standard tests on composite reinforcements.

## 21.6 Acknowledgements

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- 
- ABAQUS/Explicit, 400, 422, 425, 513, 656, 661
  - ABAQUS Finite Element Analysis, 258
  - ABAQUS/Standard, 400, 513, 532
  - acid digestion, 35
  - adaptive mesh refinement, 260
  - AEROTISS, 134
  - Aggregation/Orientation (AO) model, 42
  - air jets, 98
  - AMIRA, 520
  - angle interlock patterns, 106–7
    - 2.5D pattern, 108
    - ply-to-ply interlock pattern, 107
    - sample, 107
  - anisotropic rotary diffusion – reduced strain closure model, 629
  - Ansys CFX CFD software, 261–2
  - Antman’s theory, 465
  - API, 249
  - Aquacore, 148
  - aramid fibres, 9–15
  - Aramis software, 275
  - areal weight, 135–6
  - ASTM Standard D1894, 401, 411–12
  - AutoCAD, 275
  - auxilliary technologies, 141–4
    - displacers, 144
    - feeding devices, 143
      - tape feeder, 143
    - pick and place units for local reinforcements, 143
      - local fibre patch on a beam preform, 144
    - winding devices, 141–2
      - problem of slopes with wound 90° layers, 142
      - sample, 142
  - ‘back-projection method,’ 568
  - ballistic conductors, 33
  - Beer–Lambert, 567
  - bending behaviour
    - composite reinforcements, 367–93
    - fabric bending response, 369
    - during shaping, 367–8
    - improved cantilever test, 375–82
      - device description, 375–6
      - inverse identification, 381–2
      - post-processing of the mean lines, 376–9
      - test interpretation, 379–81
    - macroscopic bending models and bending tests, 370–4
      - Cantilever test, 371
      - Grosberg’s parameters computed from the KES-FB2 test, 374
      - Kawabata Evaluation System – Fabric Bending test, 372
      - KES-FB2 test result, 373
    - bending length, 371
    - bending moment, 369, 371
    - bending test, 377
      - interlock carbon fabric, 383–7
        - average bending response under gravity, 387
        - curvature vs bending length, 385
        - mean lines for bending lengths, 384
        - moment vs bending length, 386
        - moment vs curvature, 386
        - Peirce’s modulus  $G$  vs bending length, 385
        - relative standard deviation of maximal deflection vs bending length, 384
        - sample, 383
      - non-crimp fabric, 388–91
        - carbon non-crimp fabric, 388
        - experimental vs simulated profiles, 391
        - inverse optimisation, 390
        - loading curve – experimental result and Dahl’s model fitting, 389
  - bias extension test, 552
    - experimental results, 294–8
      - balanced twill-weave fabric behaviour, 295–6
      - load vs plain weave displacement curves, high–low temperature and high–low loading speed, 296
      - normalised shear force from bias extension tests for balanced twill weave, 297
      - normalised shear force from bias extension tests for plain weave, 295

- normalised shear force from bias
  - extension tests for unbalanced twill weave, 298
- plain-weave fabric behaviour, 294–5
- tensile force vs balanced twill weave
  - cross-head displacement, 296
- tensile force vs plain weave crosshead displacement, 294
- tensile force vs unbalanced twill weave
  - cross-head displacement, 297
- unbalanced twill-weave fabric
  - behaviour, 296–8
- experimental setups, 286–94
  - 16-yarn sample, 290
  - bias extension sample in oven, 287
  - fabric specimen illustration under bias-extension test, 288
  - grips used at NU's bias extension tests, 289
  - sample preparation, 288–90
  - sample size and process condition, bias extension tests, 290
  - shear angle contour, 292
  - shear angle determination, 290–2
  - shear angle plot, zone C vs plain weave fabric displacement, 291
  - shear force determination, 292–4
  - tested fabrics, bias-extension test, 288
  - unbalanced twill weave fabric, bias extension tests, 289
- load displacement curve, 553
- bias extension tests, 286–98
- biaxial braid, 136–7
  - different weave types, 137
  - surface quality, 137
- biaxial tensile behaviour, 488–91
- biaxial tensile properties
  - composite reinforcements, 306–29
    - analytical model, 318–24
    - experimental analysis, 308–18
    - numerical modelling, 324–8
- biaxial tensile test, 518–19
- biaxial tension, 226
- Bingham Power Law model, 402
- Boolean values, 207
- boron, 19–20
- 'bottleneck effect,' 440
- boundary conditions, 474–6, 517–18
  - hierarchical organisation of composite, 474
  - induction of rigid bodies at ends of components, 474–6
  - rigid bodies for boundary condition definition, 475
  - problems, 474
- boundary element method, 595
- braided fabrics, 213–19
  - biaxial braid geometry, 215–17
    - two-axial braid geometry, 216
  - braided structure coding, 213–15
  - examples, 218–19
  - triaxial braid geometry, 218
- braiding, 165
  - braided fibre structure, 166
- braiding technologies
  - characteristics and properties of braided textiles, 136–44
    - auxilliary technologies, 141–4
    - hybrid braids, 144
    - textile variations on circular braiders, 136–40
    - textile variations on 3D braiders, 141
  - composite reinforcements, 116–55
  - fundamentals, 116–20
    - braiding machine principle and machine elements, 118
    - open and closed braid, 117
    - sample of braiding machine, 119
    - weave, flat braid and tubular braid, 117
  - further processing, 149–51
    - braided profiles, 151
    - cutting, folding and preform mounting, 150–1
    - manufacturing steps for JF profile, 150
    - stabilisation of the preform, 149–50
    - stacked curing, 151
  - key parameters for using braiding machines, 134–6
    - areal weight and layer thickness, 135–6
    - braiding angle and coverage rate, 135
  - limitations and drawbacks, 154–5
  - Mandrel technologies, 144, 146–9
  - technologies for preforming, 120–34
    - circular braiding, 120–5
    - other braiding technologies, 128–33
    - overbraiding of mandrels, 125–8
    - three-dimensional braiding, 128–33
  - typical applications, 151–4
    - contoured hollow bodies, 152
    - crash structures, 152, 153
    - 3D braided filler noodles, 154
    - 3D braided stator blade axle, 153
    - 3D braids, 152–4
      - multi-spar flap, 152
      - profiles, 151–2
- Brinkman equation, 227, 442
- Brownian diffusion, 624
- Brownian motion, 40
- Brunauer, Emmet and Teller (BET) technique, 433–4
- bundle model, 59–63
- C-glass, 17
- cantilever test, 371, 375–82, 493
  - device description, 375–6
    - bending test, 377
    - mean lines from bent shapes, 378
    - new flexometer, 376
  - inverse identification, 381–2
    - residual vector, 382
  - post-processing of the mean lines, 376–9
    - bending moment, 378
  - test interpretation, 379–81

- bending response from curvature and moment computing, 381
- bending test with flexometer on non-elastic fabric, 380
- capillary tube models, 437–8
- carbon nanotube reinforcements, 32–5
  - composites, 32–47
    - performance and applications, 46–7
  - current costs, 35
  - physical properties, 34
  - polymer composites, 35–45
    - aggregating CNTs flow modelling, 42–4
    - Aggregation/Orientation (AO) model, 45
    - CNT composite systems modelling, challenges and trends, 44–5
    - early development, 35–6
    - functionalised and non-aggregating CNTs flow modelling, 36–41
    - number of journal article publications per year, 36
    - orientation model fitting, 0.05%, 0.2%, 0.33% functionalised non-aggregating CNTs, 41
    - processing techniques, 36–8
    - production steps, 37
  - single-walled CNTs (SWNTs) different types (zig-zag, chiral, and armchair), 33
  - structure and properties, 32–4
  - synthesis and costs, 34–5
  - TEM of bundle SWNT, 34
- Carreau–Yasuda law, 642
- Cartesian coordinate system, 217, 533
- Catia V5, 508
- Cauchy Green deformation tensor, 556–7, 658, 660
- Cayley–Hamilton theorem, 557
- CELPER, 520
- centrifugation, 35
- ceramic composites
  - general features, 53–6
    - carbon fibres, 55–6
    - fiber properties, 54
    - non-oxide fibres, 53–5
    - oxide fibres, 53
- ceramic reinforcements
  - composites, 51–82
    - general features, 53–6
  - fibres/matrix interfaces, 73–4
    - crack deflection diagrams, 75
    - fibres-matrix bonding and composite strength and toughness relationships, 73
    - tensile stress-strain curves, 76
- mechanical behaviour, fibres and interfaces
  - composite influence, 74–81
  - damage tolerance and fracture toughness, 78
  - fatigue behaviour, 78–9
  - multiple length scales structure micrograph, 78
  - reliability, 79–81
  - strength data statistical distribution, 2D woven SiC/SiC composite, 81
  - strength density functions, 80
  - strength distribution, 2D woven SiC/SiC composite, 81
  - tensile stress-strain behaviour, 76–8
  - ultimate failure, 79
- mechanical behaviour at high temperatures, 64–73
  - creep at high temperatures, 70–3
  - creep curves obtained on Hi-Nicalon and Hi-Nicalon S SiC-based fibres, 71
  - Nextel fibres comparative creep rate, 70
  - Nextel multifilament strands tensile strength retention, 66
  - SEM micrograph, 65
  - SiC-based SA3 fibres creep, 72
  - strength degradation and oxidation at high temperature, 64–6
  - strength retention, SiC-based Hi-Nicalon single filaments and multifilament tows, 65
  - stress-rupture time data, single SiC-based filaments, 67
  - stress-rupture time diagrams, Hi-Nicalon single fibre and multifilament tows, 67
  - subcritical crack growth, 66–70
  - subcritical crack growth constants, 68
- statistical features, 57–64
  - fibres interactions influence by random load sharing, 62
  - filament-tow relations, 63–4
  - multifilament tows, 58–63
  - single fibres, 57–8
  - statistical distributions of strains-to-failure, 62
  - tensile load-strain curves, SiCbased multifilament tows, 59
  - tensile properties at room temperature, 58
- chemical vapour deposition, 19–22
- circular braiding, 120–5
  - conventional braiders, 120–1
    - advanced bobbin carrier, 122
    - bobbin carrier, 121
    - typical machine configuration, 122
  - radial braiders, 121, 123–5
    - bobbin carrier, 124
    - braider at the University of Dresden, 126
    - effect of baffle, 125
    - Herzog radial braider, 123
- circular weaving, 99
- CLogger* class, 241
- closure approximations, 625
- compaction, 496
- compaction curve, 338–44
  - compaction stress vs volume fraction, 339
  - empirical models, 342–4
  - micro-mechanics model, 341–2

- complex shapes, 112
  - sample, 112
  - Snecma composite fan blade, 113
- composite reinforcement
  - analytical model, 318–24
    - balanced plain weave glass fabric
      - biaxial behaviour: experimental vs analytical, 323
    - global and local reference systems, 320
    - predictions and comparison, 322–4
    - theoretical background, 319–22
    - unbalanced plain weave glass fabric
      - biaxial behaviour: weft tension-strain, experimental vs analytical, 323
    - unit cell geometry, 319
  - bending properties, 367–93
    - bending behaviour during shaping, 367–8
    - bending behaviour of composite reinforcements, 368–70
    - improved cantilever test, 375–82
    - macroscopic bending models and bending tests, 370–4
    - test results, 383–91
  - biaxial tensile properties, 306–29
    - analytical model, 318–24
    - experimental analysis, 308–18
    - numerical modelling, 324–8
  - braiding technologies, 116–55
    - characteristics and properties of braided textiles, 136–44
    - fundamentals of braiding, 116–20
    - further processing, 149–51
    - future trends, 155
    - key parameters for braiding machine use, 134–6
    - limitations and drawbacks, 154–5
    - Mandrel technologies, 144, 146–9
    - technologies for preforming, 120–34
    - typical applications, 151–4
  - carbon fibres, 22–7
    - carbon fibres from cellulose, 22
    - carbon fibres from PAN, 23
    - carbon fibres from pitch, 26–7
    - carbon fibres from polyacrylonitrile (PAN), 22–6
    - commercially available PAN-based carbon fibres properties range, 25
    - first-generation PAN-based carbon fibre and recent generation comparison, 25
    - typical properties, PAN and pitch-based carbon fibres, 24
  - ceramics, 51–82
    - ceramic fibres: general features, 53–6
    - fibre/matrix interfaces: mechanical behaviour influence, 73–4
    - fracture strengths: statistical features, 57–64
    - mechanical behaviour, fibres and
      - interfaces composite influence, 74–81
      - mechanical behaviour at high temperatures, 64–73
  - chemical vapour deposition (CVD)
    - monofilaments, 19–22
    - reactors schematic views, boron and silicon carbide fibres, 20
    - SiC fibre cross section made by CVD, used to reinforce metal matrix, 21
  - continuous models for mechanical behaviour analysis, 529–63
    - continuum mechanics-based non-orthogonal model, 533–5
    - fibre-reinforced hyperplastic model for woven composite fabrics, 558–62
    - general fibre-reinforced hyperelastic model, 556–7
    - non-orthogonal constitutive model, 535–7
    - specific application for plain weave composite fabric, 537–52
    - validation of non-orthogonal model, 552–6
  - experimental analysis, 308–18
    - biaxial tensile device, Buet and Gautier and Boisse and Boisse *et al.*, 308
    - biaxial tensile device, Carvelli *et al.* and Quaglini *et al.*, 310
    - biaxial tensile device, Luo and Verpoest and Lomov *et al.*, 309
    - biaxial tensile devices, 308–12
    - biaxial tensile test, cruciform specimen with free ends and tow fixed ends, 310
    - biaxial tensile tests of twill 2 x 2 carbon textile reinforcement, 316
    - biaxial tensile tests of twill 2 x 2 glass-PP textile reinforcement, 318
    - clamping systems, 312–13, 314
    - composite reinforcement specimen, biaxial tensile tests, 313
    - experimental results, 315–18
    - multiaxial multiply carbon stitched preforms, 317
    - strain components maps during biaxial tensile test, plain weave technical textile, 311–12
    - strain field measurement, 313–15
  - fibres, properties and microstructures, 3–30
    - fineness, units, flexibility and strength, 4–6
  - flow modeling, 588–613
    - analytical solution, 591–4
    - application examples, 603–13
    - governing flow equations, 589–91
    - numerical solution, 594–603
  - friction properties, 397–428
    - experimental data, 418–21
    - modeling of themostamping, 422–8
    - testing methodologies, 411–18

- theory, 401–11
- glass fibres, 17–19
  - compositions, densities and mechanical properties, 18
  - glass fibres are coated with a size, silane, 18
- materials comparison, 6–8
  - bulk materials properties, compared to fibres and fibre-reinforced composites, 7
- mechanical behaviour, 488–98
  - bending, 493–5
  - biaxial tensile behaviour, 488–91
  - compaction, 496
  - coupling, 497
  - friction identification, 497–8
  - in-plane shear, 491–3
- mesoscopic approach for study of
  - mechanical behaviour, 486–522
  - finite element modelling, 511–19
  - future trends, 522
  - geometric modelling, 503–11
  - simulations, use and results of finite element, 519–22
  - three scales of composite reinforcements, 487
  - yarn mechanical behaviour, 498–503
- microscopic approaches for study of
  - mechanical behaviour, 461–85
  - application examples, 477–82
  - goals, 463–5
  - modelling approach, 465–77
- numerical modelling, 324–8
  - biaxial tension vs strain curves, three different woven reinforcements, 329
  - biaxial tension vs strain curves, three plain weave reinforcements with different crimp, 328
  - glass twill 3 x 1 reinforcement: biaxial tension vs strain curves, 327
  - glass twill 3 x 1 reinforcement: transverse strain map, biaxial loading with  $k = 1$ , 327
  - glass twill 3 x 1 reinforcement: unit cell FE mesh, 327
- organic fibres, 8–17
  - aramid fibres, 9–15
  - broken Zylon fibre, 14
  - compression kink band in Dyneema fibre, 16
  - Dyneema high modulus polyethylene fibres, 16
  - high-modulus polyethylene fibres, 15–17
  - Kevlar fibre bent around another fibre, 13
  - molecules used to produce organic fibres, 10
  - schematic representation of liquid crystal solution, 12
  - thermoplastic fibres, 8–9
  - typical properties, most commonly commercially available organic fibres, 11
- permeability properties, 431–51
  - future trends, 451
  - permeability measurement methods, 445–50
  - permeability tensor, 432–6
  - saturated permeability modelling for fibre preforms, 436–44
  - unsaturated permeability modelling, 444–5
- small-diameter ceramic fibres, 27–9
  - oxide-based fibres examples, 28
  - oxide fibres, 27
  - silicon carbide fibres, 27–9
  - three generations SiC-based fibres examples, 29
- transverse compression properties, 333–60
  - future trends, 359–60
  - inelastic models, 351–9
  - inelastic response of fibrous materials, 344–51
- woven fabrics, 89–115
  - applications, 113–14
  - future trends, 114–15
  - overview, 89–90
  - technology description, 90–9
  - woven fabric definition, 100–13
- X-ray tomography analysis of mechanical behaviour, 565–85
  - analysis of structure, 571–7
  - finite element simulations, 578–85
- composites
  - carbon nanotube reinforcements, 32–47
  - carbon nanotubes (CNTs), 32–5
  - performance and applications, 46–7
  - polymer composites, 35–45
  - textile reinforcement, geometry modelling, TexGen, 239–63
    - applications, 257–62
    - future trends, 262–3
    - implementation, 240–6
    - modelling theory, 246–54
    - rendering and model export, 254–7
  - WiseTex, textile reinforcement geometry modelling, 200–35
    - generic data structure, internal geometry description, 202–4
    - geometrical description, 204–25
    - pre-processor for mechanical properties prediction, 225–32
- compression, 226
- compression resin transfer moulding, 335
- Computational Fluid Dynamics, 253
- confocal laser scanning microscopy, 621
- constant friction, 423–5
- constitutive modelling, 578–82
- contact element, 468–9
- contact-friction interactions, 467–72
  - algorithmic aspect, 471–2

- contact detection within fibre assembly, 467–70
  - determination of material particles constituting a contact element, 469
  - generation process of contact elements, 468–70
  - linearized contact conditions, 470
  - proximity zone between 2 fibres, 469
  - mechanical model for contact and friction, 470–1
    - friction mechanical model, 471
    - normal contact mechanical model, 470–1
- continuous approach, 656–61
  - hyperelastic model, 658–61
  - hyperelastic model, 656–8
- contour woven fabrics, 110
  - sample, 111
- Coulomb friction coefficient, 401, 403
- Coulomb friction model, 374
- coupling, 497
- coverage rate, 165
- creep curves, 72
- creep test, 337
- crimp height, 207
- critical fibre, 59
- CTexGen* class, 241
- CTextile* class, 241
- CTextileWeave* class, 241
- CTextileWeave2D* class, 241
- CTextileWeave3D* class, 241
- CYarn* class, 241
- cyclic test, 337
- Dahl's model, 374
- damage-insensitive behaviour, 77
- damage-sensitive stress-strain behaviour, 76
- Darcy flow theory, 336
- Darcy's law, 435, 446, 590, 594
- Darcy's velocity, 590
- delamination fracture, 175–83
  - calculated vs measured delamination fracture toughness values, 182
  - crack bridging and failure of  $z$ -binders under mode I load, 179
  - crack bridging and failure of  $z$ -binders under mode II load, 180
  - crack bridging toughening process, 178
  - effect of  $z$ -binder content, 176
  - factors controlling modes I & II delamination toughness of 3D composites, 177
  - modes I and II R-curves, 181
- digital elements, 464
- digital image correlation (DIC) methods, 313–15
- displacement control, 412
- div-conform, 599, 601
- div-non conform, 601
- double-wall fabric, 111–12
- drag force, 438
- drapability, 109–10
- dry fibre volume mesh, 255–6
  - cross-section meshed with rectangular/triangular mesh generating technique, 255
- Dyneema fibre, 15
- E-glass, 17
- elastic modulus, 187–90
  - effect of increasing  $z$ -pin content on the tensile modulus of carbon/epoxy composites, 190
  - effect of  $z$ -binder content on the normalised tensile modulus, 188
- electric arc discharge method, 34–5
- electromagnetic interference (EMI) shielding, 46
- electron microscopy, 38
  - techniques, 55
- elementary beam theory, 341
- elementary representative cell, 573
- empirical models, 342–4
- equibiaxial extension, 480
- Eshelby's equivalent inclusion principle, 229
- extensometers, 313
- fabric mechanical properties, 110
- failure strength, 190–3
  - normalised tensile strength, 192
- fatigue properties, 193–5
  - tensile fatigue life curves for stitched and unstitched carbon/ epoxy composite, 194
- FE software, 324
- fibre concentration, 619
  - fibre weight concentration, 619
- fibre distortion, 223
- fibre length, 617–19
  - 30 wt% of short and long glass fibres, 618
  - average length in  $\mu\text{m}$ , 619
  - geometry of plaque with seven ribs, 618
- fibre orientation, 551–2, 619–22
  - models with anisotropic fibre interaction, 626–9
  - schematic illustration, 551
  - short fibre-reinforced polymer moulded plaque, 621
- fibre-reinforced thermoplastics, 616–47
  - computation in injection moulding, 631–45
  - ellipsoidal representation, 634
  - ellipsoids representing orientation tensor, 645
  - geometry of cross with thin walls, 642
  - isovalues of  $a_{11}$ , 636
  - isovalues of  $a_{11}$  and  $a_{22}$ , 644
  - mould schematic representation, 635
  - numerical methods, 632–3
  - parameters, 632
  - rectangular plaque with inlet gate, 634–41
  - representation of orientation, 633–4
  - rib-shaped part with thin walls, 643–5

- U-shaped part with thin walls and cross-ribs, 641–3
- values of orientation tensor coefficient  $a_{11}$  for four areas, 640–1
- values of orientation tensor coefficient  $a_{11}$  for four sensors, 637–8
- models, 622–31
  - anisotropic fibre interaction, 626–9
  - Folgar–Tucker model, 623–6
  - Jeffery theory, 622–3
  - rheological models, 629–31
- observations, 617–22
  - fibre concentration, 619
  - fibre length distribution, 617–19
  - fibre orientation, 619–22
  - skin-core structure, 622
  - tensor component orientation, 622
- fibres
  - composite reinforcement, properties and microstructures, 3–30
  - carbon fibres, 22–7
  - chemical vapour deposition (CVD) monofilaments, 19–22
  - fineness, units, flexibility and strength, 4–6
  - glass fibres, 17–19
  - materials comparison, 6–8
  - organic fibres, 8–17
  - small-diameter ceramic fibres, 27–9
- filtration, 35
- filtration velocity, 435
- finite element method, 324, 595–6
  - discretisation, 597–8
- finite element modelling, 511–19
  - hyper-elastic models, 515–16
  - hypo-elastic models, 512–15
    - local frame of fibre bundle, 514
  - parameter identification for hypoelastic model, 516–19
    - boundary conditions, 517–18
    - inverse method and optimisation procedure, 518–19
    - local validation, 519
    - longitudinal Young modulus, 516–17
    - Young modulus determination from tensile testing, 517
- simulations, use and results, 519–22
  - ballistic impact, 522
  - constitutive behaviour, 520
  - forming defects, 520–1
  - permeability computations, 520
  - permeability tensor, 521
  - shear angle during bias extension test, 521
- finite element simulations, 578–85
  - constitutive modelling, 578–82
  - validation of FE simulations, 582–5
    - equi-biaxial tension and pure in-plane shear, 584
    - in-plane shear of the glass plain weave fabric, 583
- finite elements, 597
  - LCM flow simulation, 599–601
    - triangular non-conforming finite element, 600
- finite strain beam model, 465–7
  - adaptation of stiffness to model macro-fibres, 466–7
  - illustration, 466
- fire retardation, 46
- firmness, 109
- flexometer, 375
  - mechanical module with a sample of non-crimp fabric, 376
- floating catalyst method, 35
- flow modeling
  - analytical solution, 591–4
    - comparison of injections at constant inlet pressure, 595
    - resin flow, 592
    - resin flow in RTM, 594
    - resin flow with resin injected at constant flow rate, 593
    - resin flow with resin injected at constant pressure, 592
    - schematic of rectangular mould, 591
  - application examples, 603–13
    - complex parts, 610–13
    - convergence of mesh refinement for elliptic flow through isotropic material, 610
    - convergent analysis on radial divergent flow, 604
    - 3D flows, 604–10
    - flow front positions calculated for different mesh sizes, 609
    - flow front progression, 607
    - numerical RTM flow simulation, 612
    - predicted vs measured flow fronts, 608
    - schematic diagram of through-thickness flow front, 605
    - schematic drawing of spherical central injection, 607
    - three dimensional model for simulation of experimental flow, 606
    - trunk fender for finite element process simulation software, 611
- composite reinforcements, 588–613
- flow equations, 589–91
  - mould filling process, 589
  - schematic representation of a rectangular mould with fibrous reinforcement, 591
- numerical solution, 594–603
  - example of mould filling simulation, 603
  - fill factor associated with finite element in the mesh, 602
  - finite element discretisation, 597–8
  - finite elements for LCM flow simulation, 599–601
  - flow front advancement, 601–3

- mass conservation and div-conform approximation, 598–9
  - potential formulation, 596–7
- FlowTex software, 227–9
- Fokker-Planck equation, 40, 624, 627
- Folgar-Tucker model, 623–6
  - closure approximations, 625
  - interaction coefficient, 625–6
- four-directional fabrics, 99
- friction, 497–8
  - composite reinforcement, 397–428
    - process parameters of tool-fabric friction, 399
    - sample of thermostamping process, 398
  - experimental data, 418–21
    - dynamic coefficient of friction, 420, 421
    - fabric/fabric friction, 421
    - predicted fluid-film thickness, 421
    - test conditions for Hersey investigation, 419
  - tool/fabric friction - plain weave, 419–21
  - modeling of thermostamping, 422–8
  - testing methodologies, 411–18
    - displacement control, 412
    - displacement-control friction testing apparatus, 412
    - load control, 412–18
- theory, 401–11
  - effect of tool-temperature shift term on coefficient of friction, 409
  - Hersey numbers for Twintex, 407
  - Hersey numbers vs experimental friction coefficient, 407
  - Power-law parameters for polypropylene, 405
  - Stribeck curve for a commingled glass-polypropylene four-harness satin-weave fabric, 405
  - theoretical Stribeck curve, 404, 408
- gas permeability measurement, 450
- Gebart and Berdichevsky formula, 227
- geometry modelling, 503–11
  - beam and shell or membrane modelling for 2D fabrics, 503–5
    - deep drawing modelling, 505
    - solid shell modelling, 504
  - consistent mesoscopic models, 508–9
    - zones for consideration in mesoscopic 3D geometry, 509
  - description of reinforcement types, 204–25
    - braided fabrics, 213–19
    - measured and simulated geometry comparison, biaxial braid, 220
    - NCF quadriaxial WiseTex model, 225
    - non-crimp fabrics, 219–25
    - surface image comparison, triaxial braid with WiseTex model, 221
    - woven fabrics (2D and 3D), 204–13
  - generic data structure, internal geometry description, 202–4
    - cross-sections defining a yarn shape in a unit cell, 203
    - textile micro-VR worlds, 205
  - hexahedral mesh, 510–11
    - permeability calculations, 511
  - identification of consistent 3D model, 509–10
    - 3D consistent geometrical model of twill, 510
  - pre-processor for mechanical properties prediction, 225–32
    - analytical models and structural analysis, 229–30
    - FlowTex software, 227–9
    - meso-FE models gallery, 233
    - ply-to-ply interlock reinforced composite, 231
    - reinforcement deformability, 225–7
    - reinforcement permeability calculation, 228
    - transformation into meso-FE, 230–2
  - structure of 3D mesoscopic models, 507
    - interpenetration in the 3D articulated segment model, 507
- TexGen, textile reinforcement for composites, 239–63
  - applications, 257–62
  - future trends, 262–3
  - implementation, 240–6
  - modelling theory, 246–54
  - rendering and model export, 254–7
- unit cell for 2D fabrics, 505–6
  - RUCs for plain weave, 506
- WiseTex, 200–35
  - generic data structure, internal geometry description, 202–4
  - WiseTex software family, 234
- glass fibres, 17–19
  - compositions, densities and mechanical properties, 18
  - glass fibres are coated with a size, silane, 18
- global shear angle, 275
- Graphical User Interface, 240, 243–4
  - TexGen windows user interface screenshot, 243
  - weave wizard weave pattern dialogue, 244
- Green-Lagrange strains, 466, 538–9
- Green-Naghdi's frame, 656–7
- Green's theorem, 596
- Grosberg's bending model, 372–4
- Hagen-Poiseuille solution, 437
- Hersey number, 403, 411
- Hi-Nicalon, 29
- Hi-Nicalon type S, 55
- high-heat treatment carbon fibres, 56
- hourglass control method, 325
- HXA7241 Octree Component C++, 241
- hybrid braids, 144
- hyperelastic model, 515–16, 658–61
  - deformed shape of an unbalanced fabric, 662



- hypoelastic model, 512–15, 656–8
    - draw-in and shear angle measurement, 659
    - fibre and GN axes in initial and after deformation states, 657
    - material draw-in for draped double dome, 660
    - numerical vs experimental shear angle, 660
- Icasoft, 292
- image analysis software, 315
- immediate elastic recovery, 345
- impact damage resistance, 183–4
  - example of damage tolerance, 185
  - reduction in delamination damage to a 3D fibre composite, 183
- in-plane fibres
  - waviness, crimp and damage, 168–71
    - broken fibres caused by stitching, 173
    - crimping schema, 172
    - fibre waviness around a  $z$ -binder, 169
    - stochastic behaviour of defects and damage, 170–1
- in-plane permeability measurement, 447–50
  - schematic, 448
- in-plane shear, 491–3
  - woven fabric reinforced composites, 267–301
    - bias extension test experimental results, 294–8
    - bias extension test experimental setups, 286–94
    - fabric properties, 270
    - trellis-frame test experimental results, 280–6
    - trellis-frame test experimental setups, 270–80
- inclusion theory, 229
- Initial Graphics Exchange Format, 245
- interaction coefficient, 625–6
- intermediate-heat treatment carbon fibres, 56
- I TOOL, 651
- Jacquard technology, 94–5
  - illustration of process, 95
- Jefferey equation, 38
- Jeffery theory, 622–3
- JF-profile, 150
- Kawabata bending test, 370, 374, 493
- Kawabata model, 507
- KES-FB2 test, 372–3
  - fabric bending test, 372
- Kevlar fibre, 11, 15, 37
  - deformation, 13
- Kevlar yarns, 503
- Knudsen effects, 450
- Kozeny–Carman constant, 438
- LabVIEW, 413
- lapping diagram, 219
- laser ablation method, 35
- lattice Boltzmann, 227
- Leicester notation, 219
- Levenberg–Marquardt algorithm, 519
- light microscopy, 38
- liquid composite moulding, 333–4, 651
- liquid crystal technology, 14
- load control, 412–18
- low-heat treatment carbon fibres, 56
- LS-DYNA, 400
- Mandrel technologies, 144–9
  - materials, 146
  - persistent mandrels, 146
  - removable mandrels, 146–9
    - Aquacore, 148
    - blinded sand, 148
    - evacuated sand-filled tubes, 148–9
    - example, 147
    - low melting alloys, 147–8
    - pressed salt, 148
    - wax with high melting point, 147–8
- mass conservation, 598–9
  - triangular finite element, 598
- matrix cracking, 78
- matrix modelling, 472–4
  - connection elements between fibres and matrix, 473–4
  - meshing of the matrix, 472–3
  - mesh of volume occupied by matrix, 473
- MeshTex software, 232
- meso-scale model, 324, 342
- mesophase pitch, 26
- mesoscopic approach, 653–6
  - modelling of a unit cell, 654
  - simulation of a hemispherical forming using unit cell model, 656
- mesoscopic-scale analysis, 572–4
  - average cross-section determination, 575
  - example of geometric configurations, 574
  - glass plain weave cross-sectional shape, 575
- micro-mechanics model, 341–2
- microcracks, 171–2
  - microcracking around a  $z$ -binder, 174
- microscopic-scale analysis, 574–7
  - covariance analysis on sheared glass plain weave, 577
  - glass plain weave, 576
- modelling theory, 246–54
  - cross-sections, 248–50
    - hybrid cross-section example, 250
    - lenticular cross-sections, 249
    - power elliptical cross-sections, 249
    - section selection for hybrid cross-sections, 250
  - fabric geometries variety generated by TexGen, 247
  - interpolation between yarn sections, 250–1
  - yarn formed with varying cross-section, 251
- intersections, 252–3

- actual textile vs model corrected using
  - refine model option, 252
  - surface mesh showing intersection depths, 254
  - textile section with intersections, 253
  - volume mesh adjusted for small intersections, 254
- yarn path, 246–8
- yarn properties, 253
- yarn repeats and domains, 251
  - two repeat vectors, 251
- Monte Carlo approach, 261
- Mori–Tanaka scheme, 229
- multi-axial multi-ply warp knitted fabrics *see*
  - non-crimp fabric
- Multifil method, 232
- multilayer patterns, 107–8
  - 4HS pattern, 109
  - sample, 108
- Navier–Stokes equation, 227, 589
- near-stoichiometric SiC-based fibres, 70
- needles, 98–9
- Newtonian matrix, 38
- Newton–Raphson algorithm, 472
- Nextel, 27
- Nextel oxide fibres, 53
- Nicalon, 29
- Nomex, 11
- non-crimp fabric, 219–25
  - bending test, 388–91
    - carbon non-crimp fabric, 388
    - experimental vs simulated profiles, 391
    - inverse optimisation, 390
    - loading curve – experimental result and Dahl’s model fitting, 389
  - example, 225
  - fibrous plies and fibre distortions by stitching, 223–5
    - NCF fibrous plies geometry, 224
  - knitting pattern coding, 219–21
    - NCF knitting pattern, 221
  - stitching yarn model, 222–3
    - NCF stitching yarn geometry, 222
- non-orthogonal model
  - continuum mechanics, 533–5
    - coordinate systems, 533
  - validation, 552–6
    - trellising test data, 552–6
    - 24-yarn bias extension test data, 552
  - woven fabrics, 535–7
    - deformed plain weave structure with shear deformation, 535
- non-oxide fibres, 64
- objective derivative, 579, 655
- OpenCascade, 245
- optical full-field strain techniques, 315
- organic fibres, 8–17
  - aramid fibres, 9–15
    - high-modulus polyethylene fibres, 15–17
    - thermoplastic fibres, 8–9
- orthogonal 3D patterns, 106
  - illustration, 106
- overbraiding, 125–8
  - curing tools and auxiliary braiding mandrel, 130
  - examples of overbraiding of extreme mandrel shapes, 129
  - mandrel manipulation on different braider configurations, 128
  - wall thickness transitions, 127
- oxide Nextel fibres, 66
- p*-phenylene terephthalamides, 33–4
- Patran, 510
- permeability
  - composite reinforcement, 431–51
    - future trends, 451
  - measurement methods, 445–50
    - gas permeability measurement, 450
    - in-plane permeability measurement, 447–50
      - through-thickness permeability measurement, 446–7
  - permeability tensor, 432–6
    - fundamentals of flow in porous media, 434–6
      - porous medium description, 432–4
    - saturated permeability modelling for fibre preforms, 436–44
      - continuum mechanics model, 437–41
      - historical perspective, 436–7
      - numerical models for permeability prediction, 441–4
- photo curing, 38
- photo-degradation protection, 46
- Piola–Kirchoff stress tensor, 515, 557, 661
- plain weave, 100–1
  - basket pattern, 101
  - fabric surface, 101
  - pattern, 100
- plain weave composite fabric
  - shear modulus, 544–51
    - bias experimental load-displacement curves of 16-yarn fabrics, 546
    - bias experimental load-displacement curves of 24-yarn fabrics, 547
    - bias extension sample, 545
    - contour of Green–Lagrange direct strains, 549
    - contravariant shear modulus, 550
    - deformed bias extension sample, 545
    - deformed mesh with contour of Green–Lagrange shear strain, 549
    - equivalent shear modulus, 550
    - experimental setup, 544
    - FE mesh for bias extension simulation, 548
    - specific application, 537–52
      - direct strains in trellising test, 539

- shear angle in trellising test, 538
- shear strains in trellising test, 540
- tensile moduli, 539–43
  - equivalent tensile modulus, 543
  - results of uniaxial tensile tests, 542
  - uniaxial tensile tests, 541
- plastic, 347
- plasticity model, 355–6
- plasticity theory, 347
- Poisson's effect, 466
- Poisson's ratio, 253, 325
- poly-*p*-phenylenebenzobisoxazole, 14–15
- polyacrylonitrile, 22–6
- polyamide 6, 8–9
- polyamide 6.6, 8–9
- polyarylamide, 634
- poly(ester terephthalate), 9
- poly(*meta*-phenylene isophthalamide), 11
- poly(*p*-phenylene-2,6-benzobisoxazole), 33–4
- poly(*para*-phenylene terephthalamide), 11
- polypyridobisimidazole, 14
- porous medium, 432–4
  - fundamentals of flow, 434–6
  - REV example, non-crimp fabric composite and pore size distribution, 433
- Power Law of Ostwald and de Waele, 404
- preform, 431
- PROEngineer, 508
- projectile process, 98
  
- Rachinger mechanism, 72
- Raman spectroscopy, 35
- rapier process, 96–8
  - fill insertion technologies, 98
- reduced strain closure model, 627–8
- regression technique, 68
- representative unit cell, 503, 506, 518
- representative volume element, 261, 432
- reptation theory, 33–4
- resin transfer moulding, 334, 651
- Reynolds number, 435
- rheological model, 42, 629–31
  - generic form, 629–30
  - model with interaction tensor for concentrated suspension, 631
  - slender body approximation and ellipsoidal particle theories, 630–1
- rheology, 38
  
- S-glass, 17
- sapphire fibres, 53
- satin, 102–4
  - 5HS and 8HS patterns, 103
  - 4HS patterns, 103
- saturated permeability modelling, 436–44
  - continuum mechanics model, 437–41
    - capillary tube models, 437–8
    - reduced permeability as a function of fibre volume fraction for flow along fibre axis, 439
  - reduced permeability as a function of fibre volume fraction for flow orthogonal to fibre axis, 440
  - resistance to flow models, 438–41
  - historical perspective, 436–7
  - reinforcement preform and principal axes, 437
  - permeability prediction of multiscale porous media, 441–4
    - schematic of a unit cell for numerical modelling, 442
- saturation coefficient, 601
- semi-discrete approach, 661–8
  - forming of an unbalanced textile reinforcement, 667
  - forming with a cylindrical punch, 666
  - loads on a unit woven cell, 662
  - loads resultant on a unit woven cell, 663
  - three-node finite element made of unit woven cell, 664
- sensing, 46
- shear, 226–7
- shear test, 480–1
  - plain weave sample, 482
- shuttle process, 96
  - flying shuttle loom, 97
  - hand loom, 97
- Sic-based fibres, 67–8
- silicon carbide, 19–20
- Simplified Wrapper and Interface Generator, 240, 245
- single-walled CNTs, 32–3
- skin-core structure, 622
- slender body theory, 630
- smooth particle hydrodynamics, 595
- solar cell applications, 46
- Sourceforge, 245
- spiral fabrics, 110
  - sample, 111
- stacked preforming, 151
- Standard for the Exchange of Product model data, 245
- stitching, 160–2
  - illustration of stitching process, 162
- stress relaxation test, 337
- Stribeck number *see* Hersey number
- Stribeck's theory, 404, 409
- structural non-crimp knitting, 163
  - non-crimp fabric, 165
- structural tensor, 658, 660
- surface mesh, 255
  - single yarn surface mesh, 255
- Sylramic fibres, 55
  
- Teflon, 417
- tension, 499
  - non-linear tensile curve for twisted fibre bundle, 499
- Terzaghi's law, 335
- test loading cases
  - composite sample, 481–2
  - deformed mesh of plain weave, 483

- deformed mesh of plain weave after
  - global twisting, 484
  - slice of deformed mesh of plain weave, 484
- dry fabric, 479–81
  - equibiaxial extension, 480
  - mesh of modelled plain weave sample, 482
  - plain weave sample before and after shear deformation, 483
  - shear test, 480–1
  - shear test for plain weave sample, 482
- testing methodologies, 411–18
  - displacement control, 412
    - displacement-control friction testing apparatus, 412
    - normal load drops as fabric is pulled through pressure plates, 413
  - load control, 412–18
    - close-up of the components of the load-control friction tester, 414
    - configuration of friction test, 418
    - experimental pull-out setup, 419
    - fabric holder modification, 416
    - original and modified test conditions, 416
    - pull-out force vs displacement curves, 414
    - schematic of fabric/fabric setup, 417
    - tow deformation and excess resin, 415
- TexComp software, 229
- TexGen, 324, 342
  - applications, 257–62
    - Chomarat150TB, 259
    - computational fluid dynamics predictions, 262
    - finite element analysis with continuum damage model, 260
    - textile composite mechanics, 260–1
    - textile mechanics, 258–9
    - textile permeability, 261–2
  - geometry modelling, textile reinforcement for composites, 239–63
    - future trends, 262–3
  - implementation, 240–6
    - core, 241–2
    - core module UML class diagram, 242
    - export, 245
    - Graphical User Interface, 243–4
    - python interface, 245
    - renderer, 243
    - TexGen module diagram, 241
    - TexGen usage, 245–6
    - twill weave from python script, 246
  - modelling theory, 246–54
    - cross-sections, 248–50
    - interpolation between yarn sections, 250–1
    - intersections, 252–3
    - yarn path, 246–8
    - yarn properties, 253
    - yarn repeats and domains, 251
  - rendering and model export, 254–7
    - dry fibre volume mesh, 255–6
    - plain weave tetrahedral yarn/matrix mesh, 258
    - plain weave tetrahedral yarn mesh, 257
    - plain weave triangular yarn areas, 257
    - single yarn volume mesh, 256
    - surface mesh, 255
    - voxel mesh, 256–7
    - yarns and matrix volume mesh, 256
- TexGen ver. 3.3.2, 240
- textile composite reinforcements
  - modelling of forming processes, 651–68
    - continuous approach, 656–61
    - mesoscopic approach, 653–6
    - plane motor blade, 652
    - preform/RTM parts in NH90, 652
    - semi-discrete approach, 661–8
- textile composites
  - application examples, 477–82
    - application of loading cases to composite sample, 481–2
    - characteristics of model, 477
    - geometrical characteristics, 477
    - initial configuration of woven structures, 478–9
    - mechanical characteristics, 478
    - test loading cases on dry fabric, 479–81
  - interests and goals, 463–5
    - approach to mechanical behaviour, 464–5
    - complexity, 463
    - initial geometry, 463–4
  - microscopic approaches for study of mechanical behaviour, 461–85
    - application examples, 477–82
  - modelling approach, 465–77
    - boundary conditions, 474–6
    - contact-friction interactions, 467–72
    - finite strain beam model, 465–7
    - initial configuration of woven fabric, 476–7
    - modelling of the matrix and its interactions with textile reinforcements, 472–4
    - starting configuration, 476
- thermal curing, 38
- thermal oxidation, 35
- thermomechanics, 356–9
  - equilibrium hysteresis loops, 358–9
- thermoplastic fibres, 8–9
- thermostamping, 270, 397
  - constant friction, 423–5
    - constant friction vs no friction effect on punch force, 424
    - punch force for different stamping rates, 424
- modeling, 422–8
  - illustration of tools, 422
  - no friction, 423

- effect on punch force for balanced plain-weave fabric, 423
- variable friction, 425–8
  - comparison of punch forces, 426
  - effect of variable friction on punch force, 427
  - example of linear fit, 425
  - tensile stresses in fabric yarns, 427
- three-dimensional braiding, 128–33
  - design principle, 130
  - example of 3D braid, 131
  - first generation 3D braider, 131
  - machine setup for the T-profile, 132
  - second generation 3D braider, 133
  - tangled fibres on a 3D braider, 133
  - textile variants, 141
    - simulation of a 3D braided H-profile, 141
- three-dimensional digital image correlation, 315
- three-dimensional fibre composites, 157–97
  - basic fibre architecture, 158
  - current and potential applications, 159
  - delamination fracture, 175–83
  - impact damage resistance and tolerance, 183–4
  - in-plane mechanical properties, 187–95
    - elastic modulus, 187–90
    - failure strength, 190–3
    - fatigue properties, 193–5
  - joint properties, 195–6
    - effect of volume content of  $z$ -pins, 196
    - fatigue life improvement, 196
  - manufacture of 3D fibre composites, 160–7
    - braiding, 165
    - 3D weaving, 160
    - stitching, 160–2
    - structural non-crimp knitting, 163, 165
    - tufting, 165–7
    - $z$ -anchoring, 167
    - $z$ -pinning, 163
  - microstructure of 3D fibre composites, 168–75
    - damage to  $z$ -binders, 172–4
    - modelling, 175
    - overview, 168
    - resin-rich regions, voids and microcracks, 171–2
    - swelling and compaction, 174–5
    - waviness, crimp and damage to in-plane fibres, 168–71
  - through-thickness stiffness and strength, 184, 186
  - through-thickness thermal properties, 186–7
- through-thickness permeability measurement, 446–7
  - illustration, 447
- through-thickness stiffness, 184, 186
- through-thickness thermal conductivity, 186–7
  - effect of type and volume fraction of  $z$ -binder, 187
- TinyXML, 241
- tow testing technique, 63
- transmission function, 321
- transverse compression
  - composite reinforcements, 333–60
    - compaction curve, 338–44
    - cyclic compaction of a plain weave fabric, 337
    - experimental procedure for material characterisation, 336–8
    - stress relaxation experiments, 338
  - inelastic models, 351–9
    - plasticity model, 355–6
    - thermomechanics, 356–9
    - viscoelastic model, 351–5
    - viscoplasticity, 356
  - inelastic response of fibrous materials, 344–51
    - cyclic loading of a continuous filament, 349
    - locked energy, 349–51
    - percentage work difference, 350
    - schematic of stress-volume fraction response, 348
- trellis-frame test
  - experimental result, 280–6
    - balanced twill-weave fabric behaviour, 285–6
    - normalised shear force vs global shear angle of balanced twill weave fabric, 286
    - normalised shear force vs global shear angle of unbalanced twill weave fabric, 287
    - plain-weave fabric behaviour, 281–5
    - shear force normalised by frame length vs shear angle, 283
    - shear force normalised by inner fabric area vs shear angle, 284
    - shear force normalised using energy method vs shear angle, 285
    - shear force vs shear angle, 282
    - shear force vs shear angle comparison for plain weave fabric, 283
    - shear force vs shear angle with linkage amplification, 281
    - unbalanced twill-weave fabric behaviour, 286
  - experimental set-up, 270–80
    - experimental displacement weave, 277
    - frame design and clamping mechanism, 271–3
    - frame size and test parameters, 273
    - free body diagrams, link BC and link BAF, 279
    - global vs theoretical strain, 278
    - picture frame at UML schematic diagram, 279
    - picture frame geometry, 280
    - picture-frame tests tested fabrics, 271
    - picture frames, 272

- relationship between optically measured shear angle and shear angle of frame, unbalanced twill weave, 276
- sample preparation, 273–4
- shear angle determination, 274–7
- shear angle measurement, 275
- shear force determination, 277–80
- von Mises strain field, 276
- yarn specimens removed from arm region, 274
- trellising test, 552–6
  - FEM model, 554
  - numerical vs experimental data for 30 in<sup>2</sup> samples, 556
  - results of 30 in<sup>2</sup> samples, 554
  - schematic, 560
  - trellising shear frame with a testing sample, 553
- tri-axial fabrics, 99
- Triangle, 241
- triaxial braids, 138
  - typical surface quality, 138
- tubular fabrics, 110–11
- tufting, 165–7
  - through-thickness reinforcement of a T-shaped fabric, 166
- Twaron fibre, 11, 37
- twill weave, 101–2
  - examples, 102
  - 2X1 pattern, 102
- Twintex, 213, 398, 414, 418, 422, 488
- two-dimensional digital image correlation, 315
- Tyranno fibres, 29
- Tyranno SA3, 55
- UAZ, 163
- UD-braids, 134–5, 139–40
  - braiding principle, 139
  - compression properties, 140
  - effect of braiding, 140
- Unified Modelling Language, 241
- unsaturated permeability modelling, 444–5
  - alternative methods, 445
  - relative permeability, 444–5
- vacuum assisted resin transfer moulding, 335
- van der Waals forces, 32
- viscoelastic model, 351–5
  - compaction stress for continuous filament mat, 354
  - stress during compaction and relaxation, 355
  - stress relaxation for dry and lubricated continuous filament mats, 353
- viscoplasticity, 356
- Visualisation Toolkit, 243
- voids, 171–2
  - resin-rich regions and voids within a z-pinner composite, 173
- volumetric swelling, 174–5
- voxel, 567
- voxel mesh, 256–7
  - plain weave voxel mesh example, 258
- warp, 89
  - beam technology, 92–3
    - sample, 93
  - creel technology, 91–2
    - sample, 92
- warp head, 93–5
  - harness frame technology, 93–4
  - harness heddles, 94
  - Jacquard technology, 94–5
  - illustration of process, 95
- warp zones, 205
- water jets, 98
- Weave Wizard, 243
- weaving, 160
  - schematic representation, 161
  - ±45° weaving technology, 99
- weft, 89
- Weibull modulus, 6, 57
- 'wet compression,' 335
- WiseTex, 324, 342
  - textile reinforcement geometry modelling for composites, 200–35
    - generic data structure, internal geometry description, 202–4
    - geometrical description, reinforcement types, 204–25
    - geometrical model, mechanical properties prediction pre-processor, 225–32
- woven fabric, 204–13
  - composite reinforcement, 89–115
    - applications, 114–15
    - future trends, 115
  - 2D/3D weave structure coding, 204–7
  - multilayered weave matrix coding, 206
- definition, 100–13
  - carpet fabric pattern, 107
  - 2D patterns, 100–4
  - 3D patterns, 104–10
  - properties of 3 basic 2D pattern, 104
  - properties of 3D patterns, 108–10
  - specific shapes, 110–13
  - woven fabric characterisation, 113
- examples, 213
  - 2D woven fabrics geometrical models
    - examples, 214
  - ply-to-ply interlock reinforcement cross-sections, 215
  - triaxial braids coding example, 215
- geometric model, 204–13
  - crimp interval for internal geometry calculation, 210
  - elementary crimp interval, 208
  - mathematical description of internal structure, 213
  - technology description, 90–9
    - basic weaving loom, 91
    - crossing warp head, 93–5
    - fabric width, 99

- fill insertion, 96–9
- other processes, 98–9
- other weaving technologies, 99
- take-up systems, 95–6
- warp presentation, 90–3
- weaving loom schema, 91
- woven fabric composites
  - bias extension test experimental results, 294–8
  - balanced twill-weave fabric behaviour, 295–6
  - plain-weave fabric behaviour, 294–5
  - unbalanced twill-weave fabric behaviour, 296–8
- bias extension test experimental setups, 286–94
  - sample preparation, 288–90
  - shear angle determination, 290–2
  - shear force determination, 292–4
- fabric properties, 270
  - fabric parameters, 271
  - woven fabrics used in study, 270
- in-plane shear properties, 267–301
  - bias-extension test apparatus, 269
  - fabric properties, 270
  - normalised shear force vs shear angle of balanced twill weave, 300
  - normalised shear force vs shear angle of plain weave, 299
  - normalised shear force vs shear angle of unbalanced twill weave, 300
  - trellising-shear test apparatus, 269
- specific fibre-reinforced hyperelastic model, 558–62
  - geometric structure and deformation modes, 558
  - shear strain energy density vs  $I_8$  in trellising test, 562
  - strain energy density vs  $(I_4 - 1)$  in uniaxial tensile test, 560
  - trellising load curve, 561
  - uniaxial tensile stress-strain curve, 560
- trellis-frame test experimental results, 280–6
  - balanced twill-weave fabric behaviour, 285–6
  - plain-weave fabric behaviour, 281–5
  - unbalanced twill-weave fabric behaviour, 286
- trellis-frame test experimental setups, 270–80
  - frame design and clamping mechanism, 271–3
  - sample preparation, 273–4
  - shear angle determination, 274–7
  - shear force determination, 277–80
- woven structures
  - initial configuration, 478–9
  - computed configuration, 478
  - plain weave and twill weave, 479, 480
  - twill weave, 479
- wx Widgets, 243
- X-ray microtomography, 621
- X-ray scattering, 55
- X-ray tomography
  - analyses of textile reinforcement structure, 571–7
    - mesoscopic-scale analysis, 572–4
    - microscopic-scale analysis, 574–7
  - analysis of mechanical behaviour of composite reinforcement, 565–85
    - analysis of structure, 571–7
    - finite element simulations, 578–85
  - finite element simulations, 578–85
    - constitutive modelling, 578–82
    - validation of FE simulations, 582–5
  - principle, 566–8
    - schematic of tomography equipment, 567
  - woven textile composite reinforcements, 568–71
    - device for *in situ* mechanical loading, 571
    - imaging of woven reinforcements in unloaded state, 569
    - in situ* mechanical loading, 570–1
    - tomography scans, 569–70
- yarn
  - mechanical behaviour, 498–503
    - bending, 502
    - 3D reconstruction of X-ray tomography imaging of carbon twill, 498
    - friction identification, 502–3
    - in plane shear, 503
    - tension, 499
    - transverse behaviour, 500–2
  - yarn dimensions, 211
  - Young modulus, 6, 35, 53, 253, 321, 326, 516–17
- z-anchoring, 167
  - illustration, 167
- z-binders, 172–4
  - microcracking, 174
- z-pinning, 163
  - prepreg composite, 164
- Zylon fibre, 14