

Large Deformation Analysis of Composite & Functionally Graded Shells: Recent Developments



In this lecture a high-order spectral/hp continuum shell finite element for the numerical simulation of the finite deformation mechanical response of elastic shell structures is discussed. The shell element is based on a modified first-order shell theory using a 7-parameter expansion of the displacement field. The seventh parameter is included to allow for the thickness stretch, and fully three-dimensional constitutive equations are used. The finite element coefficient matrices and force vectors are evaluated numerically using appropriate high-order Gauss-Legendre quadrature rules and the virtual work statement is further integrated numerically through the shell thickness at each quadrature point of the mid-surface; hence no thin-shell approximations are imposed in the numerical implementation. For laminated composite shells, we introduce a user prescribed vector field (defined at the nodes) tangent to the shell mid-surface. This discrete tangent vector allows for simple construction of the local bases associated with the principal orthotropic material directions of each lamina. As a result, we were free to employ skewed and/or arbitrarily curved elements in actual finite element simulations. Through the numerical simulation of carefully chosen benchmark problems, it is shown that the developed shell element is insensitive to all forms of numerical locking and severe geometric distortions.

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