The influence of parameters and strategies on parts manufactured by FDM process

Damião de Oliveira Fiuza  
Department of Mechanics  
São Paulo Faculty of Technology  
São Paulo, SP, Brazil  
damiao.fiuza@fatecsp.br

Jesiel Ribeiro da Rocha  
Department of Mechanical Engineering  
Insper  
São Paulo, SP, Brazil  
jesielrr@insper.edu.br

Vinícius Torres dos Santos and Márcio Rodrigues da Silva  
Salvador Arena Foundation Educational Center  
Termomecanica São Paulo S.A.  
São Bernardo do Campo, Brazil  
vini.santos@termomecanica.com.br, marcio.rdrgs.slv@gmail.com

Antonio Augusto Couto  
Materials Engineering Department  
Mackenzie Presbyterian University, UPM  
São Paulo, Brazil  
antonioaugusto.couto@mackenzie.br

Alex Camilli Bottene  
Teaching and Research Institute, Insper  
São Paulo, Brazil  
avlcbr@insper.edu.br

Givanildo Alves dos Santos  
Department of Mechanical Engineering  
Federal Institute of São Paulo  
São Paulo, SP, Brazil  
givanildo@ifsp.edu.br

Abstract

Additive manufacturing has gained an important role in manufacturing parts and prototypes. This article discusses on the influence of additive manufacturing parameters and strategies on the quality of the product obtained by FDM (Fused-deposition modeling) process. This technology assists the productive sectors for the creation of prototypes and customized final products, which can be manufactured inside the offices, being one of the pillars of industry 4.0, it favors mass customization, fast product delivery, and high added value. In FDM process, the main variable for the quality of the parts is the temperature. If it is elevated it will cause deformations in the parts, otherwise it will not
allow adhesion between the layers. The deposition speed is related to the process temperature, causing a decrease in
the viscosity of the polymer that should be adjusted so as not to cause failures in the part. The production time of
the piece is directly linked to the deposition speed and the filling method available. The filling method is defined according
to the necessary mechanical resistance of the part for its operation. It is possible to use the manufacturing method with
low filling and subsequently add resin in cavities, significantly increasing the strength of the manufactured component.

Keywords
Additive Manufacturing, Industry 4.0, Product Design, FDM

1. Additive Manufacturing

Additive Manufacturing (AM) can be used to obtain high strength metal alloys, using laser or electron beams (Martin
et al., 2017), custom drugs by FDM (Fused-deposition modeling) process (Gayathri et al., 2018), food customization,
providing new textures, complex shapes and nutritional content (Iman et al., 2018), the manufacture of structural
elements printed on concrete (Buswell et al., 2018), even the production of a full boat (UMaine, 2020).

AM is a group of processes based in addiction of material to build layers making a part or component. Studies related
to manufacturing show the influence of processes on the properties of components (dos Santos et al., 2020; Miranda
et al., 2016; Miranda et al., 2017; Nascimento et al., 2017; Nascimento et al., 2018; Nascimento et al., 2019; Santos
et al., 2017; Da Cruz et al., 2020; Dos Santos et al., 2020). This work is focused on the area of manufacturing
technology, a greater emphasis is given to the influence of parameters and strategies of the FDM (Fused-deposition
modeling) process on the quality of the manufactured components, as it involves important technological concepts of
materials and manufacturing processes.

FDM consists of forcing a polymeric filament Figure 1, such as ABS (Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene) or PLA
(polylactic acid) through the nozzle which is heated, melting the filament, forming thin threads, determined by
calibrated diameter of the nozzle output, which will be deposited in layers according to the part format and the filling
parameters established via software (Vosynek et al., 2018). The nozzle is typically mounted on an XYZ drive system,
which XY axes are used to generate the part profile layer and the Z axis after finishing this step increases in height
until the part is completed.

Before performing the printing of the part it is necessary to ensure that the CAD model file (computer aided design)
has the desired characteristics. Often, customized projects are used and it is necessary to perform the file conference
or in case of a new project, model the part fully. There are several software that can be used to model the part, some
free such as FreeCAD, OpenSCAD, Google SketchUp and 123D Design or paid such as AutoCAD, SolidWorks, Solid
Edge, CATIA, 3DMAX, among others. The choice between each software will depend on the type of part to model,
parts for engineering, architecture or design, as the software offers specific features to streamline modeling. The
resource available for the acquisition of the software will be a major factor, in the case of paid software, the investment
for the acquisition will be a few thousand dollars. Regardless of the modeling software used, the generated file should
be STL (Stereolithography), in the process of converting the file, problems can occur in the surfaces such as missing
faces that generate holes in printing. There are some software used to check and fix these issues, such as Netfabb,
MeshFix, ReMESH and MeshLab.
2. Parameters

2.1 Temperature

The filament melting temperature is very important for the quality assurance of printing, so it should be adjusted according to the acquired filament. For ABS the nozzle temperature is 220° to 240°C and the heating table 110°C, for the PLA from 195° to 220°C and the room temperature table up to 70°C. It should be noted that some printers do not have table heating, a fact that can change the printing temperature. Changing the batch or manufacturer of the printing material can also generate temperature variations. A practical way to know the ideal working temperature is using the temperature tower, which consists of one or two towers, with graduation of the printing temperature, which will be possible to see the best range of printing temperature, as shown in Figure 2 (a) In the print program, you change the temperature ranges for each layer interval (3DALB, 2020).

![Figure 2. (a) Temperature tower (Thingiverse, 2020) and (b) Temperature Tower (3dprinting, 2020).](image)

It will be possible to easily perceive if problems arising from excess temperature, such as the oozing defect. This defect is characterized by small wires that are in the path of printhead, as shown in Figure 2 (b). This problem is caused by the temperature in a PLA piece (3DALB, 2020). The increase in temperature causes the circular profile of the
filament to deform due to decreased viscosity, this effect causes deformation in the product and influences its finish, however increases adhesion between the layers (Sood et al., 2012).

The deposition flow is directly tied to the temperature and speed of movement axes. In case of high temperature, which resulted in greater fluidity of the polymer, working with low deposition speed will result in material accumulation (Figure 3). However, if the speed is too high, spaces may occur between layers or the interruption of the filament.

![Figure 2. Influence of deposition flow (Gtmax3d, 2019).](image)

### 2.1.1 Cooling

Print quality is determined primarily by temperature. Too high temperature will deform, too low there may be no adhesion between the layers. One way to adjust the temperature is by cooling the newly deposited material, solidifying and serving as a base for the next layer. We can mention two usual techniques for this purpose, start a fan or slow down the printing speed if the layer time is too fast. These techniques can be triggered via software and will depend on the material in use and part geometry. The relationship between temperature and speed can be seen in Figure 4.

![Figure 3. Relationship between print speed and temperature for ABS and PLA (3DALB, 2020).](image)

### 3 Printing strategies

#### 3.1 Layer height and Infill patterns
It is the height of the layer of cross-sections that composes the part, the smaller the piece, the more accurate and better the finish, but there is a significant increase in printing time. Values may vary depending on the diameter of the extrusion nozzle and printer resolution (GTMAX3D, 2019). The height of the layer is defined via software that will generate the program that will be sent to printer for part manufacturing. This software has free versions such as Cura, Repetier, Slic3r, Tinkerine Suite, CraftWare, SliceCrafter, IceSL, Z-Suite, ideaMaker, MakerBot Print, MatterControl, OctoPrint, PrusaSlicer and paid versions such as Netfabb Standard, Simplify3D, SelfCAD, and KISSlicer. The slicing program assists in the orientation and positioning of the model on the printing table, arranging the pieces in the best way possible, in the creation of filling structure, in the definition of the support structures and in the choice of printing parameters.

The orientation of the part on the table will define the printing direction of the layers, which will influence in mechanical resistance; according to Figure 5 we can identify the part on the left being positioned so that the layers are horizontal and the part on the right side has been tilted relative to the print table plane so that the layers would be at a certain angle but with the use of support material. This printing strategy aims to increase the tensile strength of the part, making the layers not perpendicular to the pull direction, considering the Z axis of the workpiece (3DLAB, 2020).

![Figure 5. Workpiece on left printed in horizontal plane, workpiece on right using support material and tilted print plane (Adapted from 3DLAB, 2020).](image)

In the slicing process the workpiece can be set to be printed with solid filling or with infill patterns and percentage of filling. There are several types of fill that can be used, being Honeycomb, Concentric, Line, Rectilinear, Hilbert Curve, Archimedean Chords, Octagram Spiral. The infill patterns and their percentage serve to shorten the printing time, without drastically reducing the resistance of the part, a fact that would occur if printed the piece in shell. Figure 6 shows the models and their infill percentage.
Figure 6. Infill patterns at varying densities. Top to down: 20%, 40%, 60%, 80%. Left to right: Honeycomb, Concentric, Line, Rectilinear, Hilbert Curve, Archimedean Chords, Octagram Spiral (Hodgson, 2013).

Another technique used to increase mechanical resistance and decrease printing time is by combining patterns as mentioned earlier and filling them with epoxy resin (Belter and Dollar, 2015). In this process, according to the researcher, there was a significant increase in mechanical resistance, bending and weight reduction compared to solid printing. Figure 7 shows the specimens used with epoxy filling.

Figure 7. Cross sections filled with epoxy and solid samples printed of ABS (Belter and Dollar, 2015).

3.2 Skirt

It is the external contour that is generated around the part before printing the first layer, which has the function of cleaning the print nozzle and improving the extrusion flow to start printing.

3.3 Raft 3D

It is a disposable horizontal layer that will be used as a basis for part printing. It consists of a predetermined number of layers, with a specific fill percentage, which will make it easier to remove the print later. This technique is mainly used with ABS filament to help control possible warping and favor the adherence of the part to the printing table (3DLAB, 2020).
4 Conclusions

In the process of manufacturing by FDM, the temperature is a major factor in the quality of the piece and the infill patterns and percentages filling for their mechanical resistance. The temperature will influence the quality of the part in two occasions, when there is excess or when it is insufficient temperature. Excess temperature will increase the fluidity of the material, which may generate excess deposited material that can be minimized by increasing the nozzle drive speed, however, the increase in speed may cause discontinuity of the filling. Excessive temperature also causes deformation of the part, as the previously deposited layer will not be solid enough to hold the new layer, which will cause deformities. Insufficient temperature not adequately melt the material to be extruded by the nozzle, which have a lower flowability leading to interruption in the filling, which can be solved by decreasing the movement speed of the nozzle. However, another problem resulting from the low temperature is the lack of adhesion between layers, as the material solidifies before there is contact with the layer previously deposited, causing detachment between layers.

To reduce the manufacturing time, we can manufacture the part in shell or apply infill patterns and the percentage filling, the lower the percentage of filling, the less material will be deposited in the interior size of the part, reducing the manufacturing time. However, this method reduces the part strength, but can be offset using the liquid resin for filling the voids of the workpiece, which will increase the resistance of the part without significantly altering its production time.

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Biographies

Damião de Oliveira Fiuza is specialist in Control and Automation at the University Center of FEI (2015), undergraduated in Technology in Precision Mechanics at the São Paulo Faculty of Technology (FATEC-SP) (2008), Technician in Industrial Mechanics at the Technical School Martin Luther King (2014) . Professor at the Faculty of Technology of São Paulo in the courses of Mechanical Projects, Production Processes, Precision Mechanics and Welding, working in the areas of metrology, machining, automation, CAD and Additive Manufacturing, at the Faculty of Informatics and Administration Paulista- FIAP, undergraduate in Engineering Mechatronics in the area of Digital Automation and in the Faculty Impacta in the technical course of Mechatronics, in areas as pneumatics/hydraulics, , CNC programming, PLC and CAM. It operates in the development of solutions for Advanced Manufacturing (Industry 4.0) in partnership with several companies and associations in the industrial sector. Participated in the International Machine Tool and Industrial Automation Fair - EXPOMAFE 2019, as Development and try-out coordinator of the advanced manufacturing cell of Cluster 4 - QUALITY 4.0: Autonomy, AI and Cobots. Provides consultancy services to companies such as Festo, Foroni, Hexagon M.I, CNZ Engenharia and ABIMAQ, in advanced manufacturing projects, quality and employee training.

Jesiel Ribeiro da Rocha has an Industrial Learning Course (CAI) Mechanics at Escola Senai Roberto Simonsen (1996), Mechanics of Precision technical course at Escola Senai Suiço Brasileira (2006) and concluded the Graduated Mechanics in the Production Processes modality at São Paulo Faculty of Technology - FATEC-SP (2015). Completed the Mechanical Projects Specialization courseby the Faculty of Technology SENAI Roberto Simonsen (LatoSensu), with the theme of Sustainable Polymers Fragmentation project (2019) and currently participates in the Stricto Sensu Academic Engineering Graduate Program Mechanics at the Federal Institute of São Paulo in the field of concentration Materials and Law Suit. Worked in the industrial sector from operations to process engineering by nineteen years (19) in renowned companies such as Sandvik, Procter &amp; Gamble, FreiosKnorr Bremse and others, and six years (6) in the academic field as a Technical Engineering laboratory, in educational institutions such as Universidade Anhembi Morumbi and Institute of Education and Research - INSPER (current). Has experience in the áreas Manufacturing, Economic Selection; Process optimization; Additive Manufacturing;Mechanical Behavior of Materials; Machining and Projects. Quick trainings for technological updates such as: Machining for Educators; SolidWorks; Lathe Programming and Operation C.N.C; Program and Operation Center Machining, Technology of Composite Materials.

Vinicius Torres dos Santos received the M.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the Federal Institute of São Paulo, Brazil. He is a research and development engineer at Termomecanica Industry and a professor at the Salvador Arena Educational Center.

Márcio Rodrigues da Silva received the M.S. in Mechanical Design and Manufacturing Engineering from the Polytechnic School of the University of São Paulo, Brazil. He is Coordinator of Research and Development, Laboratories and Product Inspection in the Termomecanica Industry and a professor at the Salvador Arena Educational Center.
Antonio Augusto Couto received the Ph.D. in Nuclear Technology from the University of São Paulo, Brazil. He is a professor at Mackenzie Presbyterian University and a principal researcher at the Nuclear and Energy Research Institute. His research subjects are: materials used in high temperatures; aluminum alloys; biomaterials; creep, fracture and fatigue behavior.

Alex Camilli Bottene received the Ph.D. in Production Engineering from the University of São Paulo, Brazil. He is a professor and researcher at the Teaching and Research Institute from INSPER. His research subjects are: systems of manufacturing and modern manufacturing processes.

Givanildo Alves dos Santos received a Ph.D. in Aerospace Engineering from the Technological Institute of Aeronautics in 2010. He is Professor and Coordinator of Research at the Federal Institute of São Paulo, Brazil. His objectives are materials research, product development and mechanical manufacturing processes.