



Señora

Sandra Isabel Calderón Rodríguez

Directora de Nuevas Creaciones

Superintendencia de Industria y Comercio

E. S. D.

Referencia: Solicitud de Patente de Invención PCT denominada **“MANGUERA PARA DISPENSACIÓN DE UNA LECHADA Y MÉTODO PARA FABRICACIÓN DE PRODUCTOS DE YESO CON DICHA MANGUERA”**.

Asunto: Respuesta al oficio No. 15460 de 2 de septiembre de 2024

Expediente No. NC2022/0007784

Juan Carlos Cuesta Quintero, mayor de edad, identificado como aparece al pie de mi firma, obrando en mi calidad de apoderado de **SAINT-GOBAIN PLACO** doy respuesta al Oficio No. 3444 de 26 de febrero de 2024, bajo los siguientes términos:

I. Modificaciones

- Se ha eliminado el término “generalmente” en la reivindicación 1.
- Se ha modificado la reivindicación 9 para incluir la característica según la cual «dicho método es un método de dispensación de una lechada de yeso para producir un



producto a base de yeso». La base de esta modificación se encuentra al menos en la reivindicación 10 de la solicitud presentada.

- Se ha suprimido la reivindicación 10 y se ha reenumerado la reivindicación 11 y su dependencia en consecuencia.
- La reivindicación 1 se ha modificado para corresponder con la de la patente europea, EP3835020B1, que se ha concedido recientemente.

II. Novedad y actividad inventiva

El Examinador reconoce la novedad de las reivindicaciones, pero indica que estas no cumplen con el requisito de actividad inventiva. El solicitante respetuosamente discrepa.

Como señala el Examinador, la reivindicación 1 difiere de D1 (CA 3074828) al menos en que D1 no divulga la característica de que las secciones segunda y tercera son perpendiculares a la primera sección.

Si a la persona medianamente versada en la materia se le presentara el problema técnico objetivo de una manguera que aumente la homogeneidad con la que se esparce una lechada de yeso por una superficie, y teniendo D1 como punto de partida, no proporcionaría segundas y terceras secciones perpendiculares a la primera sección.

El párrafo [0049] de D1 divulga:

“El tubo en Y 13 está inclinado hacia abajo en un ángulo 1 en su conjunto, en el que el ángulo 1 se establece para ser, por ejemplo, un ángulo que oscila entre 10 grados y 30 grados”.

En el “*conducto de suministro de lodo convencional*” de la figura 10, el párrafo [0009] de D1 divulga que los conductos 103 (tercera sección) “*se extienden recta y oblicuamente hacia*



abajo desde la porción inferior 102 [primera sección] como se ve en la vista en alzado lateral [FIG. 10 (B)]” y “un ángulo de inclinación b de los conductos 103 se establece para ser, por ejemplo, un ángulo que oscila aproximadamente entre 20 grados y 25 grados”.

Así, en D1 se enseña a la persona medianamente versada en la materia técnica a utilizar un ángulo entre la primera sección y las secciones segunda y tercera de 10-30 grados. D1 hace referencia al efecto de la gravedad sobre el caudal en todo momento, por lo que el experto no consideraría cambiar el ángulo de las secciones segunda y tercera. La persona medianamente versada en la materia no tiene la motivación necesaria para modificar la divulgación de D1 para proporcionar una manguera como la de la presente invención y el solicitante respetuosamente sostiene que cualquier sugerencia de que la invención es una modificación obvia del estado de la técnica se basa en un análisis retrospectivo post ex facto.

En consecuencia, el solicitante respetuosamente considera que la reivindicación 1 es inventiva con respecto a D1.

Incluso si la persona medianamente versada en la materia técnica tuviera en cuenta las enseñanzas de D2, no llegaría a una manguera para su uso en la producción de un producto de construcción a partir de una lechada de yeso con todas las características de la presente invención.

D1 enseña directamente en contra de las desventajas de D2 (US2013/0100759). D1 explica en el párrafo [0015] que la manguera de la figura 11, tomada de D2, provoca el estancamiento de la lechada y *“no es deseable para mejorar la productividad y la calidad del producto de placa de yeso”*.

Además, D1 se opone específicamente a la característica perpendicular de D2. D1 describe



en el párrafo [0015] que la orientación del conducto de distribución de la pasta paralela al eje central de la línea de producción significa que “*resulta difícil verter y distribuir la pasta uniformemente por toda la anchura de la hoja*” y “*esto menoscaba las ventajas del conducto de distribución de la pasta de tipo bifurcación o distribución*”. Por consiguiente, el experto entenderá que no es deseable orientar las secciones segunda y tercera perpendicularmente a la primera.

Por lo tanto, si a una persona medianamente versada en la materia técnica se le diera el problema técnico objetivo de proporcionar una manguera alternativa para su uso en la producción de un producto de construcción a partir de una lechada de yeso y D1 como punto de partida, no acudiría a D2, ya que D1 enseña explícitamente en contra de las divulgaciones de D2. Más específicamente, D1 enseña explícitamente en contra de la realización específica y las figuras de D2 que tienen la característica distintiva. En consecuencia, incluso si el experto combinara las enseñanzas de D1 y D2, no buscaría incluir la característica perpendicular de la presente invención.

En consecuencia, el solicitante mantiene que la reivindicación 1 es inventiva respecto a D1 en combinación con D2.

Como tal, el solicitante sostiene que la reivindicación 1 es inventiva respecto a los documentos citados del estado de la técnica. Todas las demás reivindicaciones dependen de la reivindicación 1 o incluyen las características inventivas de la reivindicación 1, por lo que la solicitud en su conjunto es inventiva con respecto al estado de la técnica citado.

Por lo tanto, el solicitante considera respetuosamente que los comentarios y considera que las modificaciones anteriores harán que las objeciones del Examinador sean subsanadas y retiradas para obtener una aprobación.



III. CONCESIONES EN OTRAS JURISDICCIONES

Sin desconocer el principio de territorialidad, el Solicitante le indica al Examinador que las modificaciones realizadas al capítulo reivindicatorio en respuesta al oficio No. 15460 de 2 de septiembre de 2024 son las mismas que se presentaron en otras Jurisdicciones, las cuales dieron lugar a su concesión en la Oficina Europea de Patentes con número EP3835020B1.

IV. Conclusiones

Con las enmiendas realizadas a las reivindicaciones y los argumentos proporcionados anteriormente, el solicitante considera subsanadas las objeciones del examinador.

En consecuencia y luego de haber presentado los argumentos necesarios y haber realizado las modificaciones pertinentes en el capítulo reivindicatorio de la presente invención, queda evidenciado que la invención cumple con los requisitos de patentabilidad definidos en la Decisión 486 de 2000.

Cordialmente,

Juan Carlos Cuesta Quintero

C.C. 79.339.809 de Bogotá

T.P. 43.273 del C.S. de la J.



Anexos: Comprobante de pago por modificación de la solicitud.
Capitulo reivindicatorio modificado con control de cambios.
Capitulo reivindicatorio modificado en limpio.
Patente EP3835020B1.

REIVINDICACIONES

1. Una manguera (200) para uso en la producción de un producto de construcción a partir de una lechada de yeso, comprendiendo la manguera (200): una primera sección (210) que comprende un área de sección transversal A_1 , y una segunda sección (220) que comprende un área de sección transversal A_2 , dicha primera sección (210) en comunicación fluida con dicha segunda sección (220), en donde, en uso, dicha primera sección (210) está situada aguas arriba de dicha segunda sección (220), en donde A_1 es al menos dos veces el tamaño de A_2 , en donde dicha manguera (200) comprende una tercera sección (230) que comprende un área de sección transversal A_3 situada intermedia en dicha primera sección (210) y dicha segunda sección (220), en donde dicha primera sección (210) está conectada a dicha tercera sección (230) por un codo, en donde dicha primera sección (210) comprende una dimensión más larga d_1 en un plano perpendicular a su eje longitudinal y en donde dicho codo comprende un radio de curvatura externo de al menos la mitad de d_1 , en donde el eje longitudinal de dicha primera sección (210) se encuentra perpendicular al eje longitudinal de dicha tercera sección (230) y al eje longitudinal de dicha segunda sección (220), y el eje longitudinal de dicha segunda sección (220) se encuentra paralelo al eje longitudinal de dicha tercera sección (230).
2. La manguera (200) de la reivindicación 1, en donde A_1 es a lo sumo cuatro veces el tamaño de A_2 .
3. La manguera (200) de la reivindicación 1 o la reivindicación 2, en donde A_1 es del mismo tamaño o más grande que A_3 .

4. La manguera (200) de una cualquiera de las reivindicaciones anteriores, en donde A_1 es a lo sumo cuatro veces el tamaño de A_3 .
5. La manguera (200) de una cualquiera de las reivindicaciones anteriores, en donde dicho codo comprende un radio de curvatura externo de a lo sumo dos veces d_1 .
6. La manguera (200) de una cualquiera de las reivindicaciones anteriores, en donde dicha segunda sección (220) comprende al menos dos subsecciones (221), siendo el área de sección transversal total de dichas subsecciones (221) igual a A_2 .
7. La manguera (200) de la reivindicación 6, en donde el área de sección transversal de cada subsección dentro de la pluralidad de subsecciones (221) es sustancialmente igual.
8. Un método de fabricación de un producto de yeso que comprende las etapas de,
mezclar una lechada de yeso (260) en una mezcladora,
sacar dicha lechada de yeso (260) a partir de dicha mezcladora a través de la manguera (200) de una cualquiera de las reivindicaciones 1 a 7 sobre una mesa de conformación (270),
fraguar dicha lechada de yeso (260).
9. Un método de dispensación de una lechada de yeso (260) que incluye proporcionar una manguera (200) de acuerdo con cualquiera de las reivindicaciones 1 a 7, y en donde dicho método es un método de dispensación

de una lechada de yeso para producir un producto a base de yeso.

10. El método de la reivindicación 9 en donde dicho método comprende:
proporcionar una mezcladora,
proporcionar una mesa de conformación (270) y
dispensar dicha lechada de yeso (260) a partir de dicha mezcladora a través de
dicha manguera (200) sobre dicha mesa de conformación (270).

REIVINDICACIONES

1. Una manguera (200) para uso en la producción de un producto de construcción a partir de una lechada de yeso, comprendiendo la manguera (200): una primera sección (210) que comprende un área de sección transversal A_1 , y una segunda sección (220) que comprende un área de sección transversal A_2 , dicha primera sección (210) en comunicación fluida con dicha segunda sección (220), en donde, en uso, dicha primera sección (210) está situada aguas arriba de dicha segunda sección (220), en donde A_1 es al menos dos veces el tamaño de A_2 , en donde dicha manguera (200) comprende una tercera sección (230) que comprende un área de sección transversal A_3 situada intermedia en dicha primera sección (210) y dicha segunda sección (220), en donde dicha primera sección (210) está conectada a dicha tercera sección (230) por un codo, en donde dicha primera sección (210) comprende una dimensión más larga d_1 en un plano perpendicular a su eje longitudinal y en donde dicho codo comprende un radio de curvatura externo de al menos la mitad de d_1 , en donde el eje longitudinal de dicha primera sección (210) se encuentra **generalmente** perpendicular al eje longitudinal de dicha tercera sección (230) y al eje longitudinal de dicha segunda sección (220), y el eje longitudinal de dicha segunda sección (220) se encuentra **generalmente** paralelo al eje longitudinal de dicha tercera sección (230).

2. La manguera (200) de la reivindicación 1, en donde A_1 es a lo sumo cuatro veces el tamaño de A_2 .

3. La manguera (200) de la reivindicación 1 o la reivindicación 2, en donde

A_1 es del mismo tamaño o más grande que A_3 .

4. La manguera (200) de una cualquiera de las reivindicaciones anteriores, en donde A_1 es a lo sumo cuatro veces el tamaño de A_3 .

5. La manguera (200) de una cualquiera de las reivindicaciones anteriores, en donde dicho codo comprende un radio de curvatura externo de a lo sumo dos veces d_1 .

6. La manguera (200) de una cualquiera de las reivindicaciones anteriores, en donde dicha segunda sección (220) comprende al menos dos subsecciones (221), siendo el área de sección transversal total de dichas subsecciones (221) igual a A_2 .

7. La manguera (200) de la reivindicación 6, en donde el área de sección transversal de cada subsección dentro de la pluralidad de subsecciones (221) es sustancialmente igual.

8. Un método de fabricación de un producto de yeso que comprende las etapas de,
mezclar una lechada de yeso (260) en una mezcladora,
sacar dicha lechada de yeso (260) a partir de dicha mezcladora a través de la manguera (200) de una cualquiera de las reivindicaciones 1 a 7 sobre una mesa de conformación (270),
fraguar dicha lechada de yeso (260).

9. Un método de dispensación de una lechada de yeso (260) que incluye proporcionar una manguera (200) de acuerdo con cualquiera de las

reivindicaciones 1 a 7, y.

~~10. El método de la reivindicación 9,~~ en donde dicho método es un método de dispensación de una lechada de yeso para producir un producto a base de yeso.

~~11~~10. El método de la reivindicación ~~10~~9 en donde dicho método comprende:
proporcionar una mezcladora,
proporcionar una mesa de conformación (270) y
dispensar dicha lechada de yeso (260) a partir de dicha mezcladora a través de dicha manguera (200) sobre dicha mesa de conformación (270).



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(54) **HOSE**

SCHLAUCH

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• **RANZANI DA COSTA, Andrea**
93410 VAUJOURS (FR)

• **KAMLER, Radomir**
180 00 Praha 8 (CZ)

• **SAINGIER, Guillaume**
93300 Aubervilliers (FR)

(43) Date of publication of application:

16.06.2021 Bulletin 2021/24

(74) Representative: **Murgitroyd & Company**

165-169 Scotland Street
Glasgow G5 8PL (GB)

(73) Proprietor: **SAINT-GOBAIN PLACO**
92400 Courbevoie (FR)

(72) Inventors:

• **JAFFEL, Hamouda**
93410 VAUJOURS (FR)

(56) References cited:

CA-A1- 3 074 828 JP-U- S56 171 493

US-A1- 2004 079 428 US-A1- 2019 154 181

Note: Within nine months of the publication of the mention of the grant of the European patent in the European Patent Bulletin, any person may give notice to the European Patent Office of opposition to that patent, in accordance with the Implementing Regulations. Notice of opposition shall not be deemed to have been filed until the opposition fee has been paid. (Art. 99(1) European Patent Convention).

Description

Field of the Invention

[0001] The present invention relates to a hose, and more specifically to a hose for use in the production of a building product from a gypsum slurry.

Background to the Invention

[0002] The production of building products such as plasterboards includes the mixing of a gypsum slurry within a mixer. Various types of mixer are well known in the art, with the most common types being tangential outlet mixers and bottom outlet mixers. Where a bottom outlet mixer is used, a hose is connected to the bottom of the mixer to channel the gypsum slurry from the mixer to a forming table. Alternatively, a tangential outlet mixer can be used. Gypsum slurry exits from the side of a tangential outlet mixer, before moving into a hose via a canister.

[0003] CA 3,074,828 discloses a slurry delivery conduit of a mixer and a slurry delivery method.

[0004] US 2019/154181 discloses a gooseneck pipe for use with centre pivot irrigation.

[0005] US 2004/079428 discloses blood flow tubing and other tubing carrying fluids essential to life.

[0006] JP S56/171,493 discloses a vinyl pipe used as a water supply or drainage pipe.

Summary of the Invention

[0007] The Applicant has found that where a bottom outlet mixer is used, the rotational motion of the gypsum slurry in the mixer propagates through the hose, resulting in a significant rotational component in the flow of the gypsum slurry within the hose.

[0008] The Applicant has also discovered that a rotational component exists within a hose connected to a tangential outlet mixer. Here, the canister introduces a rotational component into the flow of the gypsum slurry. As such, whether a bottom outlet or tangential outlet mixer is used, the gypsum slurry entering the hose has a rotational component to its flow.

[0009] The rotational component associated with the gypsum flow can prove problematic when producing building products. Where the gypsum slurry exits the hose on to a forming table via a single outlet, the rotational component of the fluid flow can result in an uneven spread of the gypsum slurry across the forming table. In cases where the gypsum slurry exits the hose on to the forming table via multiple outlets, the rotational component present in the flow of the gypsum slurry can result in even greater problems. Here, different volumes of gypsum slurry can exit each individual outlet, challenging when an even spread of gypsum slurry across the forming table is required.

[0010] In view of the above, reducing the rotational

component in the flow of a gypsum slurry within a hose is desirable. The Applicant has come to understand that a reduction in the rotational component of the gypsum slurry within the hose can result in a more uniform spread of gypsum slurry across a forming table. The present invention seeks to address at least this problem.

[0011] According to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a hose for use in the production of a building product from a gypsum slurry, the hose comprising a first section comprising a cross sectional area A_1 and a second section comprising a cross section area A_2 , the first section in fluid communication with the second section, wherein, in use, the first section is located upstream of the second section, wherein A_1 is at least twice the size of A_2 wherein the hose comprises a third section comprising a cross sectional area A_3 located intermediate the first section and the second section, wherein the first section is connected to the third section by an elbow, wherein the first section comprises a longest dimension d_1 in a plane perpendicular to its longitudinal axis, and wherein the elbow comprises an external radius of curvature R_{EX} at least half d_1 characterised in that the longitudinal axis of the first section lies generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the third section and the longitudinal axis of the second section, and the longitudinal axis of the second section lies generally parallel to the longitudinal axis of the third section.

[0012] In this way, there is provided a hose which increases the homogeneity with which a fluid, most commonly a gypsum slurry, is spread across a surface. The Applicant has conducted numerical modelling and physical experimentation that indicates the provision of hose with the above features has improved flow characteristics. The Applicant considers these improved flow characteristics are due to a number of phenomena within the claimed hose, with the most important of these features being the creation of a recirculation zone within the body of the hose which acts to break the rotational component of the fluid flow as it enters the hose. Typically, in the production of a building product from a gypsum slurry, this rotational component is introduced into the gypsum flow via a bottom outlet mixer or the canister of a tangential outlet mixer.

[0013] Preferably A_1 is the maximum cross sectional area of the first section. Preferably, A_2 is the minimal cross sectional area of the second section.

[0014] A_1 is at least twice the size of A_2 . More preferably, A_1 is at least three times the size of A_2 . Where the dimensions of the hose satisfy these limits, the recirculation zone within the hose is larger and more significant, ensuring the rotational component of the gypsum flow is broken more effectively, increasing the homogeneity of any flow exiting the hose.

[0015] Preferably, A_1 is at most four times the size of A_2 . Whilst the Applicant's modelling work indicates that the beneficial effect of increasing the ratio of A_1 to A_2 continues above this value, this upper limit is often preferred as it ensures the hose can be fitted to existing

plasterboard production systems, and does not become unnecessarily bulky.

[0016] The hose comprises a third section comprising a cross sectional area A_3 located intermediate the first section and the second section. Preferably, A_1 is the same size or larger than A_3 . Preferably, A_1 is at most four times the size of A_3 . Where $A_3 \leq A_1 \leq 4A_3$, the fluid flow in the hose generates vorticity when it encounters the restriction of the third section. This vorticity effectively counteracts the rotational component of a fluid as it enters the restriction, resulting in a well-balanced flow exiting the hose. Preferably, A_3 is the minimum cross sectional area of the third section.

[0017] The longitudinal axis of the first section lies generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the third section. The longitudinal axis of the first section lies generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the second section. The longitudinal axis of the second section lies generally parallel to the longitudinal axis of the third section.

[0018] The first section is connected by an elbow to the third section. Preferably, the first section comprises a longest dimension d_1 in a plane perpendicular to its longitudinal axis. d_1 is the longest dimension of the first section in a plane perpendicular to its longitudinal axis, where said plane is that plane of the first section closest to the elbow. The elbow comprises an external radius of curvature at least half d_1 . Preferably, the elbow comprises an external radius of curvature at most twice d_1 . Advantageously, a radius of curvature within this range increases the size of the recirculation zone within the hose.

[0019] Preferably, the elbow comprises a continuous external radius of curvature. Alternatively, the elbow comprises a variable external radius of curvature.

[0020] Preferably, the elbow comprises an internal radius of curvature (R_{in}), wherein the internal radius of curvature is equal to the external radius of curvature minus d_1 . When the external of curvature radius is smaller or equal to d_1 , the internal radius of curvature is equal to zero. Preferably, the internal radius of curvature lies in the range $0 \leq R_{in} \leq d_1$. More preferably, the internal radius of curvature is equal to zero.

[0021] Preferably, the second section comprises at least two subsections, with the total cross sectional area of the subsections being equal to A_2 . Where the second section comprises a plurality of subsections, A_2 is taken to be the cumulative, total cross section area of all subsections. Where the second section contains a plurality of subsections, an uneven spread of fluid exiting the hose can often be visualised as different volumes of fluid exiting each individual outlet. Where the second section comprises a single outlet, without subsections, the uneven spread of fluid exiting the second section can often be observed via the preferential spread of the fluid over a forming table or similar.

[0022] Preferably, the subsections diverge as they extend away from the first section. Preferably, the cross sectional area of each subsection within the plurality of

subsections is substantially equal.

[0023] Preferably, the first section comprises a substantially circular cross section. Preferably, the second section comprises a substantially circular cross section. Preferably the third section comprises a substantially circular cross-section. Preferably, the subsections within the plurality of subsections comprise a substantially circular cross section. Any combination of the described cross sections is envisaged.

[0024] Preferably the first section has substantially the same cross sectional area along the majority of its length. More preferably, the first section has substantially the same cross sectional area along at least 75% of its length. Still more preferably, the first section has substantially the same cross sectional area along at least 90% of its length. Most preferably, the first section has substantially the same cross sectional area along its entire length.

[0025] Preferably the second section has substantially the same cross sectional area along the majority of its length. More preferably, the second section has substantially the same cross sectional area along at least 75% of its length. Still more preferably, the second section has substantially the same cross sectional area along at least 90% of its length. Most preferably, the second section has substantially the same cross sectional area along its entire length.

[0026] Preferably, where the second section comprises a plurality of subsections, each subsection has substantially the same cross sectional area along the majority of its length. More preferably, each subsection has substantially the same cross sectional area along at least 75% of its length. Still more preferably, each subsection has substantially the same cross sectional area along at least 90% of its length. Most preferably, each subsection has substantially the same cross sectional area along its entire length.

[0027] Preferably the third section has substantially the same cross sectional area along the majority of its length. More preferably, the third section has substantially the same cross sectional area along at least 75% of its length. Still more preferably, the third section has substantially the same cross sectional area along at least 90% of its length. Most preferably, the third section has substantially the same cross sectional area along its entire length.

[0028] Preferably, the second section extends below the plane which contains the longitudinal axis of the third section. Preferably, the second section is longer than the first section. Preferably, the hose comprises plastic. More preferably, the hose consists essentially of plastic.

[0029] Preferably, the hose comprises a plane of mirror symmetry. More preferably, the longitudinal axis of the first section, the second section or the third section lies in the plane of mirror symmetry.

[0030] A second aspect of the present invention is found in the use of the hose as previously described in the manufacture of a building product.

[0031] According to a third aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of dispensing a gypsum slurry

including providing a hose according to the first aspect of the invention.

[0032] The method is a method of dispensing a gypsum slurry to produce a gypsum based product.

[0033] According to a fourth aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of manufacturing a gypsum product comprising the steps of mixing a gypsum slurry in a mixer, exiting the gypsum slurry from the mixer through a hose as previously described on to a forming table and setting the gypsum slurry.

[0034] Preferably, the step of setting the gypsum slurry comprises heating the slurry.

[0035] Preferably, the step of mixing the slurry comprises mixing the slurry in a tangential outlet mixer or a bottom outlet mixer.

[0036] Preferably, the gypsum slurry comprises foam. More preferably, the method comprises adding foam to the gypsum slurry in the canister of a tangential outlet mixer. Foam is used to reduce the density of gypsum products. Lightweight gypsum products are made by including increased amounts of foam.

Detailed Description

[0037] Embodiments of the present invention will now be described by way of example only and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is an image of a prior art hose in use in the manufacture of a building product;

Figure 2 is an image of a hose according to the present invention in use in the manufacture of a building product;

Figure 3 is a graph illustrating the right/left flow heterogeneity of numerically modelled hose systems;

Figure 4 is a graph illustrating the effect of varying the ratio of A_1 to A_2 on the modelled flow rate deviation;

Figure 5 is a graph illustrating the effect of varying the ratio of A_1 to A_3 on the modelled flow rate deviation; and

Figure 6 is a graph illustrating the effect of varying the external radius of curvature of the elbow section on the modelled flow rate deviation.

[0038] Turning first to Figure 1, there is depicted a boot or hose 100 as is known in the prior art. As can be seen from the inset of Figure 1, the hose comprises a first section 110 and a second section 120 comprising two subsections 121. The first section 110 and the second section 120 are in fluid communication, and the first section 110 is connected to the canister (not shown) of a tangential outlet mixer (not shown).

[0039] As can be seen from Figure 1, the hose 100 is in use dispensing a gypsum slurry 160 on to a forming table 170 as part of a building product manufacturing process. Here the building product being formed is a lightweight plasterboard.

[0040] Figure 1 further illustrates the uneven nature with which this prior art hose 100 dispenses the gypsum slurry 160 on to the forming table 170. The flow of gypsum slurry 160 from the right subsection 121 of the second section 120 is far greater than the flow of gypsum slurry 160 exiting the left subsection 121 of the second section 120, as can be seen by the distance the gypsum slurry 160 from each subsection 121 extends along the length of the forming table 170. The distance between the ends of the gypsum slurries extending from each subsection is marked as X_1 on Figure 1.

[0041] Turning now to Figure 2, there is depicted a hose 200 according to the present invention. As can be seen from the inset of Figure 2, the hose comprises a first section 210, a second section 220 comprising two subsections 221 and a third section 230 located between the first section 210 and the second section 220. Each of the first section 210, the second section 220 and the third section 230 are in fluid communication with one another, and the first section 210 is connected to the canister (not shown) of a tangential outlet mixer (not shown). The hose further comprises an elbow which connects the first section 210 to the third section 230.

[0042] As can be seen from Figure 2, the boot or hose 200 is in use dispensing a gypsum slurry 260 on to a forming table 270 as part of a building product manufacturing process. Here the building product being formed is again a lightweight plasterboard with the same formulation as was used to produce Figure 1.

[0043] As opposed to Figure 1, Figure 2 illustrates that the hose 200 dispenses the gypsum slurry 260 far more evenly across the forming table than the prior art hose 100 of Figure 1. Whilst the flow of gypsum slurry 260 from the right subsection 221 of the second section 220 is still greater than the flow of gypsum slurry 260 exiting the left subsection 221 of the second section 220, the difference between the two subsections 221 is greatly reduced. Length X_2 is far less than length X_1 , indicating hose 200 greatly increases the uniformity of flow through the two subsections 221.

[0044] Whilst hose 200 has a clear advantage over prior art hose 100, the two hoses differ from one another in a number of design features. As such, to isolate the design features that contribute the improved flow characteristics of the hose 200, numerical modelling was undertaken.

Numerical Modelling

A Base Model

[0045] To ensure a reliable data, as a first stage numerical models were developed to replicate the physical

results observed in Figures 1 and 2. With this aim, numerical modelling was undertaken using a continuous one-phase model using the ANSYS Fluent computational dynamics software package. Within the framework of the model, the foamed gypsum slurry used in the trials depicted in Figures 1 and 2 was modelled as an effective incompressible fluid with a non-Newtonian rheology. Additionally, the rheological law used in the model was Herschel-Bulkley rheology, with the coefficients used in the model based upon experimental measurements performed with a lab rheometer

[0046] Additionally, to replicate the trial conditions used to produce the images of Figure 1 and Figure 2, the numerical model focuses on a system using a tangential outlet mixer and a canister. In such a system, a rotational flow component is introduced to the gypsum slurry by the canister. In alternative systems where a bottom outlet mixer is used, the mixer itself is responsible for a rotational flow component in the gypsum slurry as it enters a hose. As such, whilst the numerical models discussed herein focus on the use of a tangential outlet mixer, the results also hold for bottom outlet mixers as both mixer variations introduce equivalent rotational components into the flow of a gypsum slurry within a hose.

[0047] To compare the effect of the prior art hose 100 of Figure 1 with the hose 200 depicted in Figure 2, both were modelled and simulations completed. The results of these simulations are depicted in Figure 3.

[0048] Figure 3 depicts the heterogeneity of the flow exiting the right and left subsections in both the prior art hose 100 and the hose 200 of Figure 2. When calculating the heterogeneity of the flow rate, the flow rate through each subsection was calculated using the equation below:

$$Q_{slurry} = \int_{\Omega} u_t d\Omega$$

where u_t is the local velocity transverse to the cross-sectional area and Ω is the integration area of the cross-section. The right/left heterogeneity was then determined as a percentage difference between the left and right subsection flow rates.

[0049] As can be seen from Figure 3, the numerical model was successful in replicating the results seen during use of the prior art hose 100 and the hose 200 of Figure 2. As a baseline model had been successfully established, a parametric study was conducted to isolate the features of the hose 200 which produced the observed reduction in flow rate heterogeneity.

Parametric Study

[0050] Within the parametric analysis, the prior art hose 100 seen in Figure 1 was taken as a baseline. Various dimensions and features of the prior art hose 100 were varied individually and in turn to isolate those which

affected the right/left heterogeneity of the hose.

[0051] During the course of the parametric study, the following features were determined to affect the right/left heterogeneity of the hose.

First Section and Second Section - Ratio of Cross Sectional Areas

[0052] The parametric study revealed that the ratio of the cross sectional area of the first section (A_1) to the size of the cross sectional area of the second section (A_2) had the greatest influence on the right/left homogeneity of the hose. In these calculations, A_1 was taken to be the total cross sectional area of the first section. A_2 was taken as the total cross sectional area of the second section, in this case the sum of the cross sectional areas of both subsections of the hose.

[0053] As can be seen in Figure 4, improvements in the right/left heterogeneity can be seen when the ratio of A_1 to A_2 reaches one. However, the greatest improvement in right/left heterogeneity can be seen when the ratio of A_1 to A_2 is two or above.

[0054] The ratio of A_1 to A_2 has a very strong effect on the right/left heterogeneity of the hose, and controlling this ratio alone is sufficient to reduce the right/left heterogeneity of a hose to an acceptable level. From an analysis of the numerical data, the Applicant hypothesises that the reduced heterogeneity seen when the A_1 to A_2 ratio is increased is due to the creation of a recirculation zone within the hose. The Applicant believes this recirculation zone disrupts the rotational component of the flow of the gypsum slurry as it enters the hose. This disruption of the rotational component of the fluid flow is effective in reducing the vorticity of the gypsum slurry, whatever its source: either directly from the mixer (as in a bottom outlet mixer) or as a result of the canister (as in a tangential outlet mixer). As such, increasing the ratio of A_1 to A_2 improves the homogeneity of flow exiting the hose for both tangential outlet and bottom outlet mixers.

First Section and Third Section - Ratio of Cross Sectional Areas

[0055] The parametric study further revealed that the ratio of the cross sectional area of the first section (A_1) to the size of the cross sectional area of the third section (A_3) also influenced the right/left homogeneity of the modelled hose. In these calculations, A_1 was again taken to be the total cross sectional area of the first section. Additionally, A_3 was taken to be the total cross section area of the third section.

[0056] The parametric study revealed, as illustrated in Figure 5, that improvements in the right/left homogeneity of the modelled hose are seen when the ratio of A_1 to A_3 reaches one. A more dramatic improvement in the right/left homogeneity of the modelled hose can be seen when the ratio of A_1 to A_3 lies in the range two to three. Finally, the numerical modelling undertaken indicated

that the right/left homogeneity of the modelled hose decreased again once the ratio of A_1 to A_3 exceeded four.

[0057] Whilst the controlling the A_1 to A_3 ratio has a strong effect on the right/left homogeneity of the hose, controlling this ratio is not as powerful as controlling the A_1 to A_2 ratio. From an analysis of the numerical data, the Applicant hypothesises that the changes in the right/left heterogeneity observed when varying the A_1 to A_3 ratio are the result of variations in the recirculation seen in the elbow of the hose. As previously discussed, the gypsum slurry entering the hose from the canister of a tangential mixer has a rotational component to its flow. The same is also true if the gypsum slurry enters the hose directly from a bottom outlet mixer.

[0058] Where A_3 is smaller than A_1 , or the same size as A_1 , the gypsum slurry flow generates vorticity when it encounters the restriction of the third section. Within the range highlighted in Figure 5, the Applicant believes this vorticity effectively counteracts the rotational component of the gypsum slurry as it enters the restriction, resulting in a well-balanced flow. Where the ratio of A_1 to A_3 increases beyond that highlighted in Figure 5, the right/left heterogeneity increase again, apparently due to the large change in cross sectional area upon entry into the third section introducing its own rotational component to the flow.

The Elbow - External Radius of Curvature

[0059] Certain embodiments of the present invention include an elbow or transition which either (1) connects the first section to the second section, where there are only two sections, or (2) connects the first section to the third section, where there are three sections. In these embodiments, the elbow has a direct influence on the right/left heterogeneity of the hose.

[0060] The shape of the elbow, and the transition between the first section and the third section, can be described by the elbow's external radius of curvature R_{Ex} . The external radius of curvature of the elbow is measured as the maximum radius of curvature of the elbow, as illustrated in Figure 6.

[0061] Where the elbow was present, the parametric study revealed that modifying R_{Ex} could improve the right/left homogeneity of the flow. These effects are also illustrated in Figure 6. Where the first section was taken to have a longest internal dimension in a plane perpendicular to its longitudinal axis of d_1 , the numerical modelling undertaken illustrated that improvements in the right/left heterogeneity were seen when R_{Ex} was equal to half d_1 . The numerical modelling undertaken indicates these improvements remained present where R_{Ex} was equal to twice d_1 , before decreasing. These findings are illustrated in Figure 6.

[0062] Again, the numerical model illustrates that controlling R_{Ex} in relation to d_1 has an effect on the right/left homogeneity of the hose. However, this effect is less pronounced than both varying the A_1 to A_2 ratio and var-

ying the A_1 to A_3 ratio. Furthermore, the analysis conducted by the Applicant further suggests that controlling R_{Ex} in relation to d_1 has no effect on the right/left heterogeneity of a hose unless control of the A_1 to A_2 ratio has already introduced a recirculation zone into the hose.

[0063] The numerical modelling conducted by the Applicant suggests that the improvement in right/left heterogeneity seen in the range

$$\frac{d_1}{2} \leq R_{Ex} \leq 2d_1$$

is due to the extension of the recirculation zone within the hose. This extension of the recirculation zone ensures the rotational component of the gypsum slurry flow entering the hose is broken before the gypsum slurry reaches the second section, increasing flow homogeneity.

Claims

1. A hose (200) for use in the production of a building product from a gypsum slurry, the hose (200) comprising:

a first section (210) comprising a cross sectional area A_1 ,

and a second section (220) comprising a cross section area A_2 ,

said first section (210) in fluid communication with said second section (220), wherein, in use, said first section (210) is located upstream of said second section (220),

wherein A_1 is at least twice the size of A_2

wherein said hose (200) comprises a third section (230) comprising a cross sectional area A_3 located intermediate said first section (210) and said second section (220),

wherein said first section (210) is connected to said third section (230) by an elbow,

wherein said first section (210) comprises a longest dimension d_1 in a plane perpendicular to its longitudinal axis, and wherein said elbow comprises an external radius of curvature R_{Ex} at least half d_1 ;

characterised in that

the longitudinal axis of said first section (210) lies generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of said third section (230) and the longitudinal axis of said second section (220), and the longitudinal axis of said second section (220) lies generally parallel to the longitudinal axis of said third section (230).

2. The hose (200) of claim 1, wherein A_1 is at most four times the size of A_2 .

3. The hose (200) of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein A_1 is the same size or larger than A_3 .
4. The hose of any one preceding claim, wherein A_1 is at most four times the size of A_3 . 5
5. The hose (200) of any one preceding claim, wherein said elbow comprises an external radius of curvature R_{Ex} at most twice d_1 . 10
6. The hose of any one preceding claim, wherein said second section (220) comprises at least two subsections (221), with the total cross sectional area of said subsections (221) being equal to A_2 . 15
7. The hose (200) of claim 6, wherein the cross sectional area of each subsection within the plurality of subsections (221) is substantially equal.
8. A method of dispensing a gypsum slurry including providing a hose with a plurality of distribution portions, wherein the hose is the hose (200) of any one preceding claim, wherein the ratio of A_1 to A_2 is such that flow asymmetry in said distribution portions is below 1%. 20
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9. A method of manufacturing a gypsum product, the method comprising the steps of,
 - mixing a gypsum slurry (260) in a mixer, 30
 - exiting said gypsum slurry (260) from said mixer through the hose (200) of any one of claims 1 to 7 on to a forming table (270),
 - setting said gypsum slurry (260). 35
10. The method of claim 8, wherein said method is a method of dispensing a gypsum slurry (260) to produce a gypsum based product.
11. The method of claim 10 wherein said method comprises: 40
 - providing a mixer,
 - Providing a forming table (270), and
 - dispensing said gypsum slurry (260) from said mixer through said hose on to said forming table (270). 45

Patentansprüche

1. Ein Schlauch (200) zur Verwendung bei der Produktion eines Bauprodukts aus einem Gipsschlamm, wobei der Schlauch (200) Folgendes beinhaltet: 50
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 - einen ersten Abschnitt (210), der eine Querschnittsfläche A_1 beinhaltet,
 - und einen zweiten Abschnitt (220), der eine

Querschnittsfläche A_2 beinhaltet, wobei der erste Abschnitt (210) in Fluidverbindung mit dem zweiten Abschnitt (220) steht, wobei sich der erste Abschnitt (210) im Einsatz stromaufwärts von dem zweiten Abschnitt (220) befindet, wobei A_1 mindestens doppelt so groß wie A_2 ist, wobei der Schlauch (200) einen dritten Abschnitt (230) beinhaltet, der eine Querschnittsfläche A_3 beinhaltet, der sich zwischen dem ersten Abschnitt (210) und dem zweiten Abschnitt (220) befindet, wobei der erste Abschnitt (210) mittels eines Krümmers mit dem dritten Abschnitt (230) verbunden ist, wobei der erste Abschnitt (210) eine längste Abmessung d_1 in einer senkrecht zu seiner Längsachse liegenden Ebene beinhaltet, und wobei der Krümmer einen äußeren Krümmungsradius R_{Ex} beinhaltet, der mindestens die Hälfte von d_1 beträgt;

dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass

die Längsachse des ersten Abschnitts (210) im Allgemeinen senkrecht zur Längsachse des dritten Abschnitts (230) und zur Längsachse des zweiten Abschnitts (220) liegt und die Längsachse des zweiten Abschnitts (220) im Allgemeinen parallel zur Längsachse des dritten Abschnitts (230) liegt.

2. Schlauch (200) gemäß Anspruch 1, wobei A_1 höchstens viermal so groß wie A_2 ist.
3. Schlauch (200) gemäß Anspruch 1 oder Anspruch 2, wobei A_1 gleich groß oder größer als A_3 ist.
4. Schlauch gemäß einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, wobei A_1 höchstens viermal so groß wie A_3 ist.
5. Schlauch (200) gemäß einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, wobei der Krümmer einen äußeren Krümmungsradius R_{Ex} beinhaltet, der höchstens das Doppelte von d_1 beträgt.
6. Schlauch gemäß einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, wobei der zweite Abschnitt (220) mindestens zwei Unterabschnitte (221) beinhaltet, wobei die gesamte Querschnittsfläche der Unterabschnitte (221) gleich A_2 ist.
7. Schlauch (200) gemäß Anspruch 6, wobei die Querschnittsfläche von jedem Unterabschnitt in der Vielzahl von Unterabschnitten (221) im Wesentlichen gleich ist.
8. Verfahren zum Ausgeben eines Gipsschlammes, das das Bereitstellen eines Schlauchs mit einer Vielzahl von Verteilungsteilabschnitten umfasst, wobei der

Schlauch der Schlauch (200) gemäß einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche ist, wobei das Verhältnis von A_1 zu A_2 so ist, dass die Strömungsasymmetrie in den Verteilungsteilabschnitten unter 1 % liegt.

9. Ein Verfahren zur Herstellung eines Gipsprodukts, wobei das Verfahren die folgenden Schritte beinhaltet:

Mischen eines Gipsschlamms (260) in einem Mischer,
Austretenlassen des Gipsschlamms (260) aus dem Mischer durch den Schlauch (200) gemäß einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 7 auf einen Formtisch (270),
Erstarrenlassen des Gipsschlamms (260).

10. Verfahren gemäß Anspruch 8, wobei das Verfahren ein Verfahren des Ausgebens eines Gipsschlamms (260) zum Produzieren eines Produkts auf Gipsbasis ist.

11. Verfahren gemäß Anspruch 10, wobei das Verfahren Folgendes beinhaltet:

Bereitstellen eines Mischers;
Bereitstellen eines Formtisches (270) und Ausgeben des Gipsschlamms (260) aus dem Mischer durch den Schlauch auf den Formtisch (270).

Revendications

1. Un tuyau (200) pour son utilisation dans la production d'un produit de bâtiment à partir d'une pâte de gypse, le tuyau (200) comprenant :

une première section (210) comprenant une aire de section transversale A_1 ,
et une deuxième section (220) comprenant une aire de section transversale A_2 ,
ladite première section (210) étant en communication fluide avec ladite deuxième section (220), dans lequel,
lors de l'utilisation, ladite première section (210) est située en amont de ladite deuxième section (220),
dans lequel A_1 fait au moins deux fois la taille de A_2
ledit tuyau (200) comprenant une troisième section (230) comprenant une aire de section transversale A_3 située entre ladite première section (210) et ladite deuxième section (220), ladite première section (210) étant raccordée à ladite troisième section (230) par un coude, ladite première section (210) comprenant une dimension la plus longue d_1 dans un plan perpendiculaire

à son axe longitudinal, et ledit coude comprenant un rayon de courbure extérieur R_{Ex} d'au moins la moitié de d_1 ;

caractérisé en ce que

l'axe longitudinal de ladite première section (210) se trouve généralement perpendiculaire à l'axe longitudinal de ladite troisième section (230) et l'axe longitudinal de ladite deuxième section (220), et

l'axe longitudinal de ladite deuxième section (220) se trouve généralement parallèle à l'axe longitudinal de ladite troisième section (230).

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2. Le tuyau (200) de la revendication 1, dans lequel A_1 fait au plus quatre fois la taille de A_2 .

3. Le tuyau (200) de la revendication 1 ou de la revendication 2, dans lequel A_1 fait la même taille ou est plus grande que A_3 .

4. Le tuyau d'une quelconque revendication précédente, dans lequel A_1 fait au plus quatre fois la taille de A_3 .

5. Le tuyau (200) d'une quelconque revendication précédente, dans lequel ledit coude comprend un rayon de courbure extérieur R_{Ex} , d'au moins deux fois d_1 .

6. Le tuyau d'une quelconque revendication précédente, dans lequel ladite deuxième section (220) comprend au moins deux sous-sections (221), l'aire de section transversale totale desdites sous-sections (221) étant égale à A_2 .

7. Le tuyau (200) de la revendication 6, dans lequel l'aire de section transversale de chaque sous-section au sein de la pluralité de sous-sections (221) est sensiblement égale.

8. Un procédé de distribution d'une pâte de gypse incluant la fourniture d'un tuyau avec une pluralité de portions de répartition, le tuyau étant le tuyau (200) d'une quelconque revendication précédente, le rapport de A_1 à A_2 étant tel que l'asymétrie d'écoulement dans lesdites portions de répartition soit au-dessous de 1 %.

9. Un procédé de fabrication d'un produit de gypse, le procédé comprenant les étapes de mélangeage d'une pâte de gypse (260) dans un mélangeur,

d'évacuation de ladite pâte de gypse (260) dudit mélangeur à travers le tuyau (200) de l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 7 sur une table de formage (270),
de prise de ladite pâte de gypse (260).

10. Le procédé de la revendication 8, ledit procédé étant

un procédé de distribution d'une pâte de gypse (260)
afin de produire un produit à base de gypse.

11. Le procédé de la revendication 10, ledit procédé
comprenant :

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la fourniture d'un mélangeur,
la fourniture d'une table de formage (270), et
la distribution de ladite pâte de gypse (260) à
partir dudit mélangeur à travers ledit tuyau sur
ladite table de formage (270).

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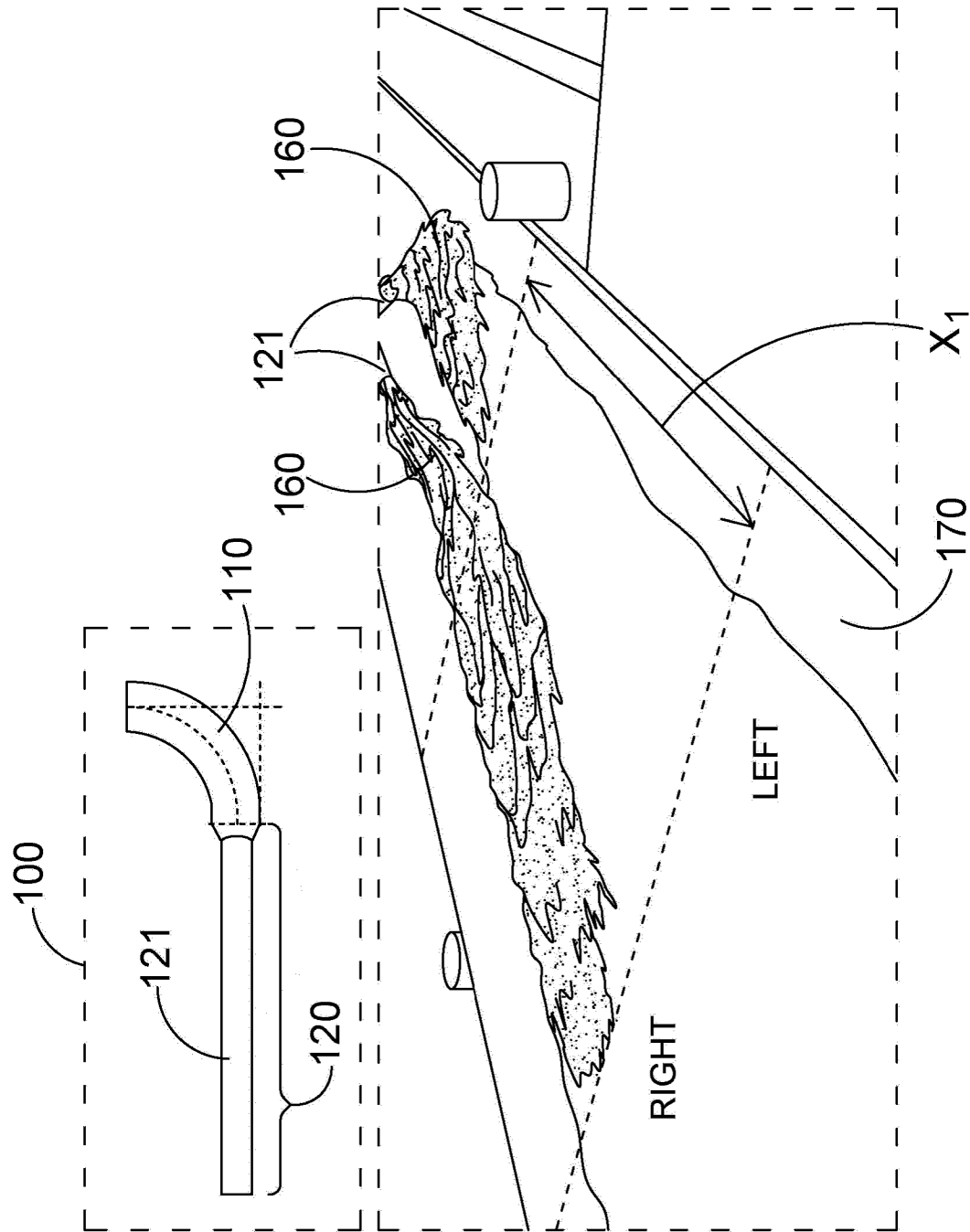


FIG. 1

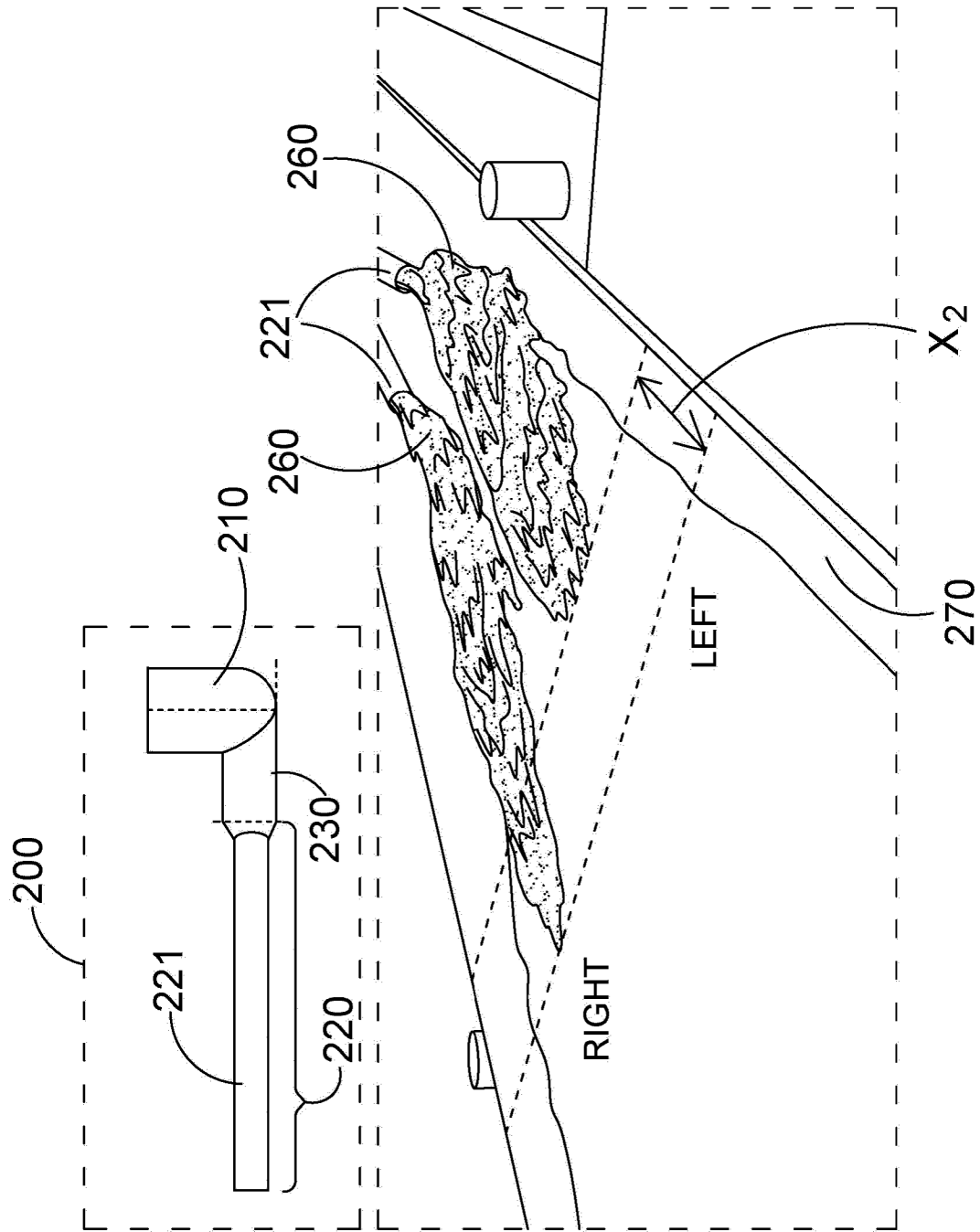


FIG. 2

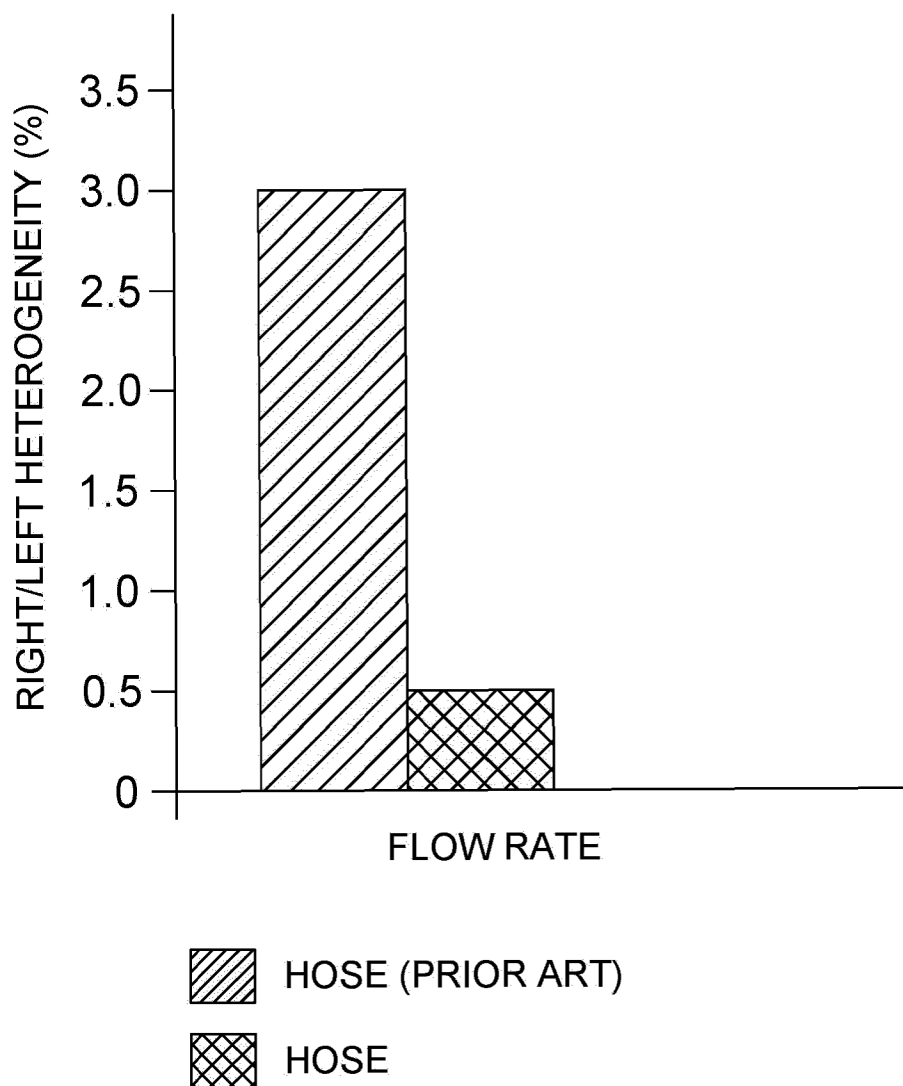


FIG. 3

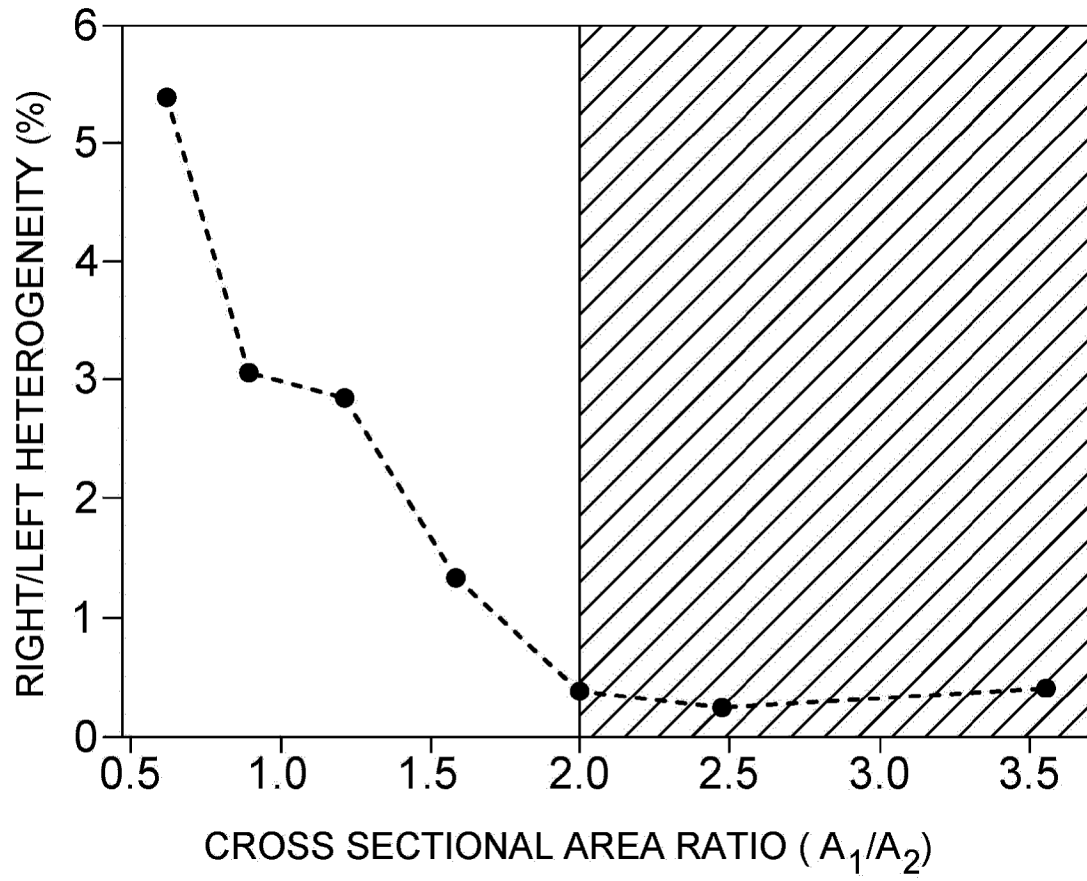


FIG. 4

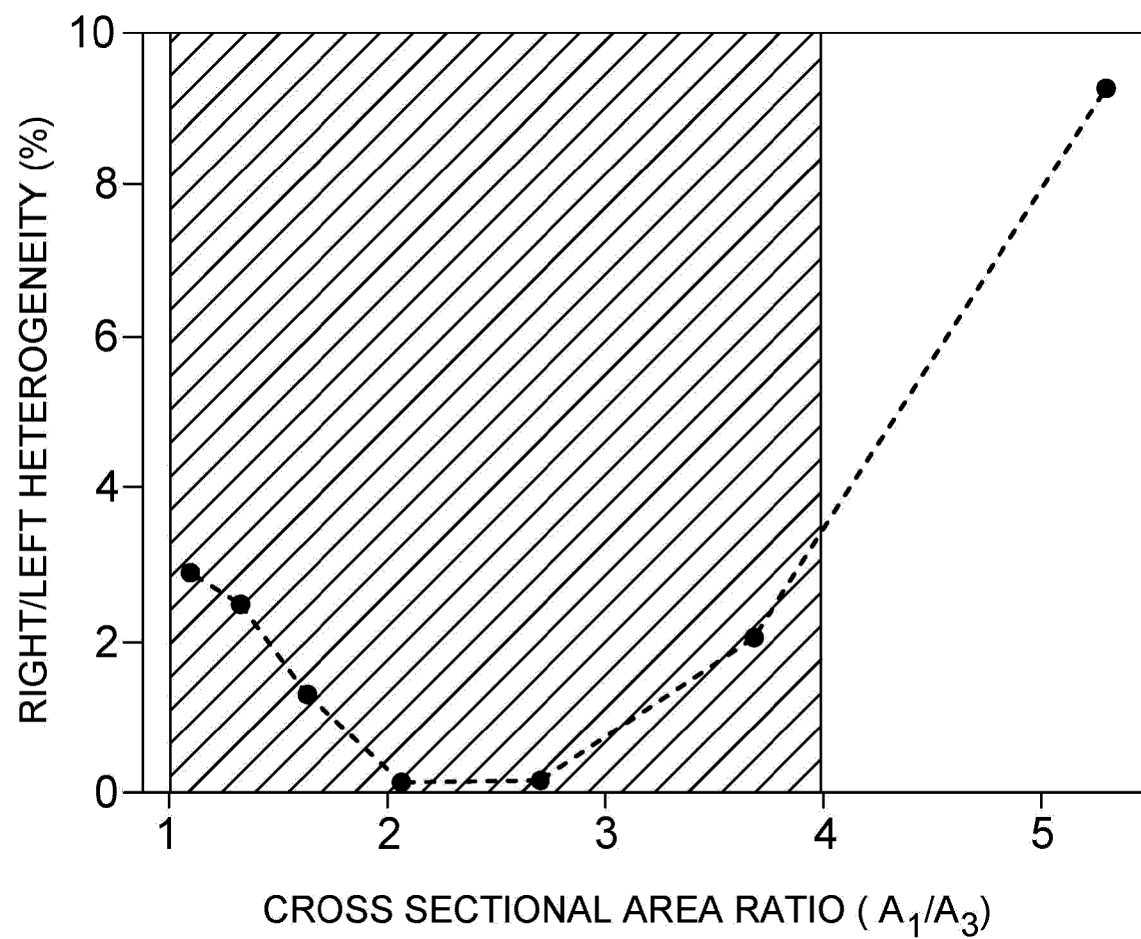


FIG. 5

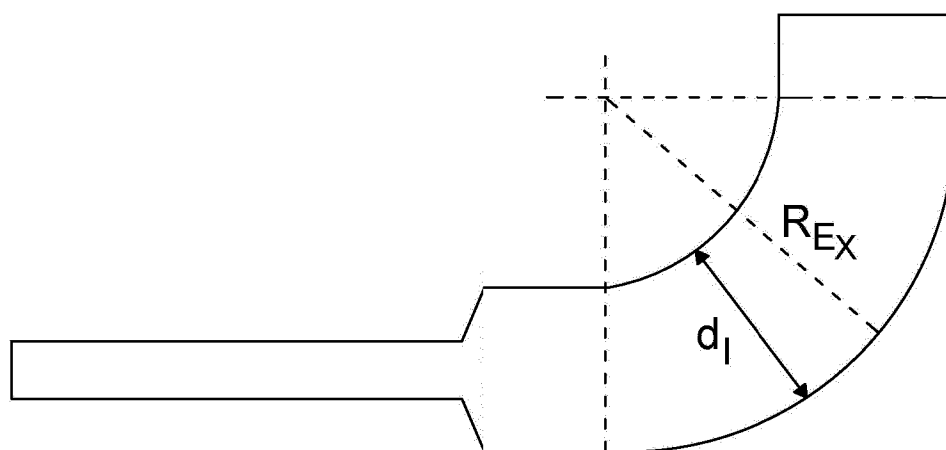
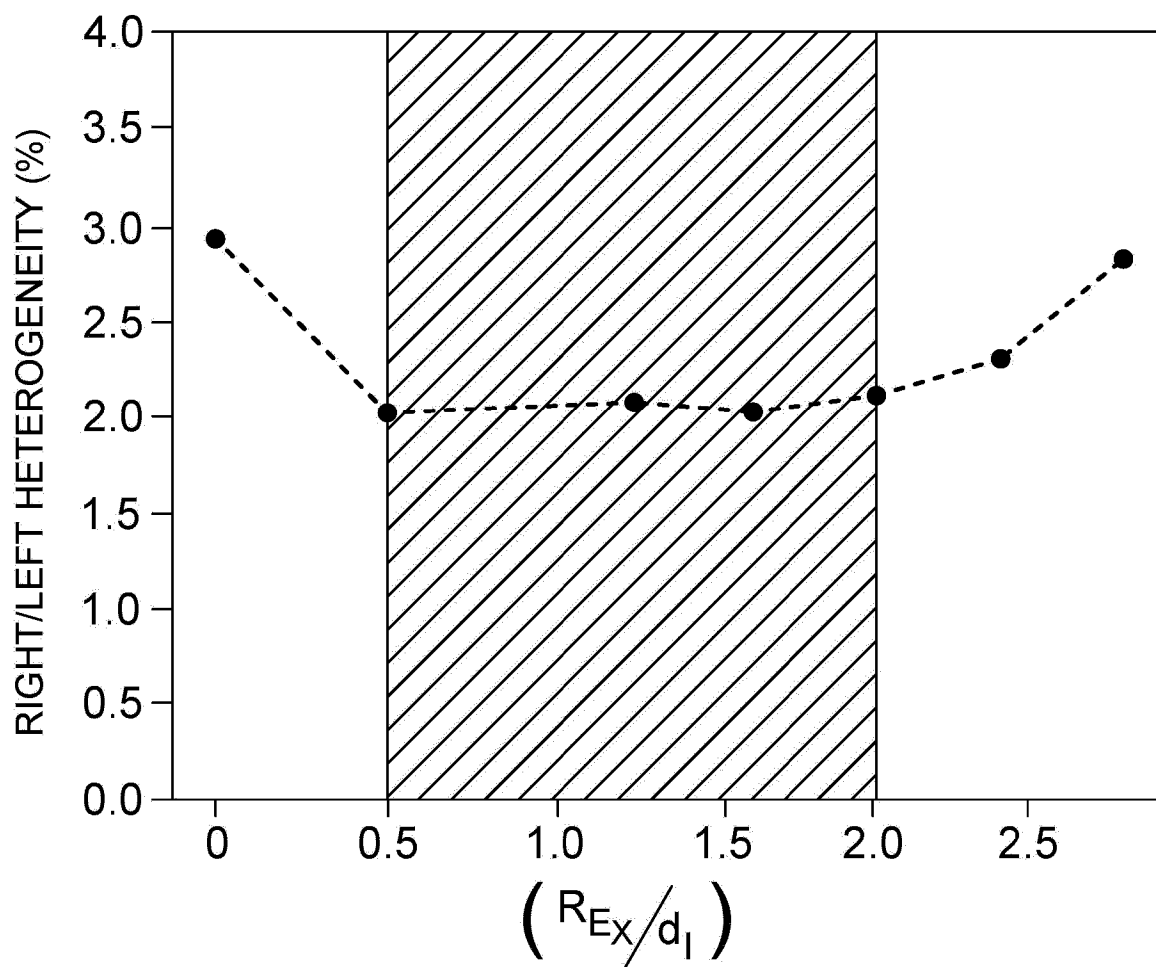


FIG. 6

REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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Id.	Rentístico	Concepto y Servicio	Cant.	Val. Unit.	Subtotal
1	50005-01-03	Modificaciones / Correcciones al registro Patente PCT (DESCUENTO INTERNET)	1	\$ 214,000	\$ 214,000
TOTAL					\$ 214,000