# **IV. REACTOR MODEL**

# 1. Reactors

- Reactors : Batch reactors vs. Continuous-flow reactors
- Completely stirred tank reactor (CSTR or CMF, Completely mixed flow reactor, CFSTR, Continuous flow stirred tank reactor) and Plug-flow reactor





# **1.1 Introduction on Reactor Models**

#### Batch reactor

- no flow in or out (no transport across the boundary of the reactor)
- Contents are mixed.
- may contain a single or multiple fluids (e.g., air and water)
- Species concentrations within the reactor change with time because of (1) transformation or (2) phase changes across a fluid interface.

## Completely stirred tank reactor

- Generally constant flow in and out
- Contents are thoroughly mixed (Perfect mixing assumption).
- Concentration of a species in the effluent is equal to its concentration throughout the reactor.
- The analysis of a CSTR is based on (1) a mass balance on species within the fluid in the reactor accounting for processes, as well as (2) mass transport into and (3) out of the reactor.

## Plug-flow reactor

- A tube through which fluid flows
- Assumptions: (1) ,
  (2) , and
  - (3)
- The analysis of PFR involves (1) considering processes, and (2) advection along the axis of the tube.
- (1) and (2) (or ) are the most important key concepts for the reactor modeling.



## **1.2 Reactor Material Balances**

Material balance equation follows this general form

Accumulation rate = Inflow rate – Outflow rate  $\pm$  Net transformation rate Net transformation rate : gain "+" and loss "-"

> Inflow rate =  $Q_{in} \cdot C_{in}$ Outflow rate =  $Q_{out} \cdot C_{out}$ Accumulation rate =  $\frac{d(C \cdot V)}{dt}$

dt

where  $Q_{in}$  = flow rates of fluid in [L<sup>3</sup>/T];

 $Q_{out}$  = flow rate of fluid out [L<sup>3</sup>/T];

 $C_{in}$  = concentration of species in the inflow [M/L<sup>3</sup>] or [moles/L<sup>3</sup>];

 $C_{out}$  = concentration of the species in the outflow [M/L<sup>3</sup>] or [moles/L<sup>3</sup>];

C = concentration of the species  $[M/L^3]$  or  $[moles/L^3]$ ;

V = fluid volume  $[L^3]$ ; and

T = elapsed time [T].

For general chemical reactions,

Net transformation rate =  $r \cdot V$ 

where r = net rate of production of species concentration due to the reaction  $[M/T,L^3]$  or  $[moles/T,L^3]$ .

For examples,  $r = -k_0$  (for zero order reaction);

 $r = -k_1 \cdot C$  (first order reaction); and

 $r = -k_2 \cdot C^2$  (second order reaction).

For flux across fluid interface,

Net transformation rate =  $J_{gl} \cdot A$ 

where  $J_{gl}$  = the species flux across the interface area [M/L<sup>2</sup>] or [moles/L<sup>2</sup>]; and A = interface area [L<sup>2</sup>].



# Residence time, $\boldsymbol{\theta}$

Mean residence time of fluid molecule (hydraulic retention time in the water-based system)

$$\theta = \frac{V}{Q}$$

### **1.3 Reactor Models**

Batch Reactor

$$\frac{d(C \cdot V)}{dt} = \text{net transformation rate} = r \cdot V$$
$$\frac{dC}{dt} = r \text{ or } \frac{d(C \cdot V)}{dt} = J \cdot A$$



**EXAMPLE 5.A.2** Species Decay in a Batch Reactor as a Function of Reaction Order

A species is placed in a batch reactor, where it decays by either a zeroth-, first-, or second-order reaction. Derive equations to describe the change in species concentration and characteristic times in each case. Plot the results.



Zeroth order:	$C(t) = C(0) - k_0 t$	$t \le C(0)/k_0$
	C(t) = 0	$t > C(0)/k_0$
First order:	$C(t) = C(0) \exp(-kt)$	$z_1 t)$
Second order:	$C(t) = \frac{C(0)}{1 + 2k_2 t C(0)}$	<u>,</u>

Characteristic times for each case can be calculated by dividing the initial stock by the initial rate of decay as follows:





Figure 5.A.5 Change in species concentration as a function of time in a batch reactor in response to (a) zeroth-, (b) first-, and (c) second-order decay. In each case, a characteristic time for the reaction to proceed to completion is indicated on the x-axis.

CSTR

$$\frac{d(C \cdot V)}{dt} = Q \cdot C_{in} - Q \cdot C + r \cdot V$$

Since V = constant

$$\frac{\mathrm{dC}}{\mathrm{dt}} = \frac{1}{\theta} \cdot \left( \mathbf{C}_{\mathrm{in}} - \mathbf{C} \right) + \mathbf{r}$$

where  $\theta$  = V/Q

If there is no reaction occurred in the reactor (just



$$\frac{dC}{dt} = \frac{1}{\theta} \cdot (C_{in} - C)$$
$$\int_0^C \frac{dC}{C_{in} - C} = \frac{1}{\theta} \cdot \int_0^t dt$$
$$C = C_{in} \cdot (1 - e^{-t/\theta})$$

Under steady state conditions (dC/ct = 0), a time dependent solution, C(t) is not required. For example, a zero order reaction

$$\frac{dC}{dt} = 0 = \frac{1}{\theta} \cdot (C_{in} - C) + r$$
$$\frac{1}{\theta} \cdot (C_{in} - C) = k_0$$
$$C = C_{in} - k_0 \cdot \theta$$

# <u> PFR</u>

$$\frac{\partial \left( \mathbf{C} \cdot \Delta \mathbf{V} \right)}{\partial t} = \mathbf{U} \cdot \mathbf{A} \cdot \mathbf{C}(\mathbf{x}, t) - \mathbf{U} \cdot \mathbf{A} \cdot \mathbf{C}(\mathbf{x} + \Delta \mathbf{x}, t) + \mathbf{r} \cdot \Delta \mathbf{V}$$

Since  $\Delta V = A \cdot \Delta x$ 

$$\frac{\partial C(x,t)}{\partial C} = \frac{U \cdot C(x,t) - U \cdot C(x + \Delta x, t)}{\Delta x} + r$$
$$\frac{\partial C(x,t)}{\partial t} = -U \cdot \frac{\partial C(x,t)}{\partial x} + r$$

Under a steady state condition, the concentration is solely a function of position, x.

$$\frac{\partial C(x,t)}{\partial t} = 0 \quad \text{and} \quad U \cdot \frac{dC(x)}{dx} = r$$





**Figure 5.A.12** Schematic of an idealized plug-flow reactor and the control volume used for writing a material balance.

#### Comparison between CSTR and PFR



How will the total number of gray and spotted marbles in the two reactors change over time?



#### EXAMPLE 5.A.10 Comparing CMFR and PFR Performance

Reactor performance is often characterized by calculating the ratio of the outlet concentration to the inlet concentration under steady-state conditions. Given fixed mean residence times,  $\Theta$ , compare reactor performance for a CMFR and a PFR for contaminants that undergo zeroth-order, first-order, and second-order decay reactions.

**SOLUTION** Each of the required results has been calculated in Examples 5.A.5 and 5.A.9. The results are summarized in Table 5.A.1 and Figure 5.A.16.

For the case of a zeroth-order reaction, the reactor configuration does not affect performance: The CMFR and the PFR yield the same results. For all positive reaction orders, though, greater conversion is obtained in a PFR than in a CMFR. The difference in performance is negligible if the overall conversion is small ( $C_{out}/C_{in} \sim 1$ ), but the difference becomes progressively greater as conversion increases ( $C_{out}/C_{in} \rightarrow 0$ ).

Table 5.A.1	Comparison of	of the	Steady-State	Performance
of CMFRs and	d PFRs			

	$C_{\rm out}/C_{\rm in}$				
Reaction order	r	CMFR	PFR		
Zeroth <sup>a</sup>	$-k_0$	$1-rac{k_0\Theta}{C_{ ext{in}}}$	$1 - rac{k_0 \Theta}{C_{ m in}}$		
First	$-k_1C$	$\frac{1}{1+k_1\Theta}$	$\exp(-k_1\Theta)$		
Second	$-2k_2C^2$	$\frac{(8k_2\Theta C_{\rm in}+1)^{1/2}-1}{4k_2\Theta C_{\rm in}}$	$\frac{1}{1+2k_2\Theta C_{\rm in}}$		

<sup>a</sup>Expressions are valid provided that  $k_0 \Theta \leq C_{in}$ ; otherwise,  $C_{out} = 0$ .



**Figure 5.A.16** Steady-state reactor performance, comparing the outlet to inlet concentration ratio for a CMFR and a PFR for a species decaying by a homogeneous reaction of (a) first order or (b) second order.

