# NATURAL CONVECTION

- Laminar Free Convection on a Vertical Surface
- Empirical Correlations: External Free Convection Flows
- Free Convection within Parallel Plate Channels
- Empirical Correlations: Enclosures



**FIGURE 9.1** Conditions in a fluid between large horizontal plates at different temperatures. (*a*) Unstable temperature gradient. (*b*) Stable temperature gradient.



**FIGURE 9.2** Buoyancy-driven free boundary layer flows in an extensive, quiescent medium. (*a*) Plume formation above a heated wire. (*b*) Buoyant jet associated with a heated discharge.

## Laminar Free Convection on a Vertical Plate

**Boussinesq approximation** Basic idea : In many problems,  $\delta \rho / \rho_{\infty} \ll 1$ . This makes the velocity field effectively solenoidal  $(\nabla \cdot \vec{u} = 0)$  and also means that wherever the density appears in the momentum equation, it can be replaced by  $\rho_{\infty}$  except where it multiplies the body force



### Free-convection boundary layers

$$\rho(T,p) = \rho_{\infty} + \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial T} \bigg|_{\infty} \left( T - T_{\infty} \right) + \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial p} \bigg|_{\infty} \left( p - p_{\infty} \right) + \cdots$$
$$\frac{\rho - \rho_{\infty}}{\rho_{\infty}} = \frac{1}{\rho_{\infty}} \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial T} \bigg|_{\infty} \left( T - T_{\infty} \right) + \frac{1}{\rho_{\infty}} \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial p} \bigg|_{\infty} \left( p - p_{\infty} \right) + \cdots$$

Ex) water at 15°C and 1 atm thermal expansion coefficient :  $\beta = -\frac{1}{\rho_{\infty}} \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial T}\Big|_{\infty} = 1.5 \times 10^{-4} \text{ K}^{-1}$ isothermal compressibility :  $\kappa = \frac{1}{\rho_{\infty}} \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial p}\Big|_{\infty} = 5 \times 10^{-5} \text{ bar}^{-1}$ When  $T - T_{\infty} = 10 \text{ K}$ ,  $p - p_{\infty} = 1 \text{ bar}$ , the contribution of  $T - T_{\infty}$  to  $\delta \rho / \rho_{\infty}$  is  $1.5 \times 10^{-3}$ ,

whilst the contribution of  $p - p_{\infty}$  to  $\delta \rho / \rho_{\infty}$  is only  $5 \times 10^{-5}$ .

$$\frac{\rho - \rho_{\infty}}{\rho_{\infty}} = \frac{1}{\rho_{\infty}} \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial T} \bigg|_{\infty} \left( T - T_{\infty} \right) + \frac{1}{\rho_{\infty}} \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial p} \bigg|_{\infty} \left( p - p_{\infty} \right) + \cdots$$

$$\approx -\beta (T - T_{\infty})$$
  
Thus,  $\rho = \rho_{\infty} \left[ 1 - \beta (T - T_{\infty}) \right]$ 

$$p = -\rho_{\infty}gx + p_d$$

When the dynamic pressure is negligible,

$$\frac{dp}{dx} = -\rho_{\infty}g$$





$$\rho u \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + \rho v \frac{\partial u}{\partial y} = \rho_{\infty} g + \mu \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial y^2} - \rho_{\infty} \Big[ 1 - \beta \big( T - T_{\infty} \big) \Big] g$$

$$\rho_{\infty} \Big[ 1 - \beta \big( T - T_{\infty} \big) \Big] u \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + \rho_{\infty} \Big[ 1 - \beta \big( T - T_{\infty} \big) \Big] v \frac{\partial u}{\partial y}$$
$$= \mu \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial y^2} + \rho_{\infty} g \beta \big( T - T_{\infty} \big)$$

When  $\beta(T-T_{\infty}) \ll 1$ ,

$$u\frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + v\frac{\partial u}{\partial y} = v\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial y^2} + g\beta(T - T_{\infty})$$

### Similarity Solution to 2-D Boundary Layer Equations with Boussinesq Approximation







$$\delta^4 \sim \frac{v^2 x}{g\beta(T_s - T_{\infty})} \quad \text{or} \quad \delta = \left(\frac{v^2 x}{g\beta(T_s - T_{\infty})}\right)^{1/4}$$

similarity variable :

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$$\eta = \frac{y}{\delta} \sim y \left( \frac{g\beta(T_s - T_{\infty})}{v^2 x} \right)^{1/4}$$
$$= \frac{y}{x} \left( \frac{g\beta(T_s - T_{\infty})x^3}{v^2} \right)^{1/4} \equiv \frac{y}{x} \operatorname{Gr}_x^{1/4}$$
Grashof number :  $\operatorname{Gr}_x = \frac{g\beta(T_s - T_{\infty})x^3}{v^2}$ Let  $\eta = \frac{y}{x} \left( \frac{\operatorname{Gr}_x}{4} \right)^{1/4} = y \left( \frac{g\beta(T_s - T_{\infty})}{4v^2 x} \right)^{1/4}$ 

$$u = \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial y} \rightarrow \psi \sim u_0 \delta \qquad \left( u_0 \sim \frac{vx}{\delta^2} \right)$$
$$\sim \frac{vx}{\delta^2} \delta \sim \frac{vx}{\delta} \sim vx \left( \frac{g\beta \left( T_s - T_\infty \right)}{v^2 x} \right)^{1/4}$$
$$= v \left( \frac{g\beta \left( T_s - T_\infty \right) x^3}{v^2} \right)^{1/4} = v \operatorname{Gr}_x^{1/4}$$
Let  $\frac{\psi}{4v \left( \operatorname{Gr}_x / 4 \right)^{1/4}} \equiv f(\eta)$   
or  $\psi = 4v \left( \frac{\operatorname{Gr}_x}{4} \right)^{1/4} f(\eta)$ 

$$u = \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial y} = 4v \left(\frac{\mathrm{Gr}_x}{4}\right)^{1/4} \frac{df}{d\eta} \frac{\partial \eta}{\partial y}$$
$$= 4v \left(\frac{\mathrm{Gr}_x}{4}\right)^{1/4} \frac{1}{x} \left(\frac{\mathrm{Gr}_x}{4}\right)^{1/4} f' = \frac{2v}{x} \mathrm{Gr}_x^{1/2} f'$$

similarly for other terms

$$v, \frac{\partial u}{\partial x}, \frac{\partial u}{\partial y}, \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial y^2}, \theta, \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial x}, \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial y}, \frac{\partial^2 \theta}{\partial y^2}$$

similarity equations:

$$f''' + 3ff'' - 2f'^2 + \theta = 0, \ \theta'' + 3\Pr f\theta' = 0$$

boundary conditions:

 $f'(0) = 0, f(0) = 0, f'(\infty) = 0, \theta(0) = 1, \theta(\infty) = 0$ 



**FIGURE 9.4** Laminar, free convection boundary layer conditions on an isothermal, vertical surface. (a) Velocity profiles. (b) Temperature profiles [3].

### **Nusselt number**

$$\theta = \frac{T - T_{\infty}}{T_s - T_{\infty}}, \ \eta = \frac{y}{x} \left(\frac{\mathrm{Gr}_x}{4}\right)^{1/4}$$



$$=-k\frac{v^2x}{g\beta(T_s-T_{\infty})}\theta'(0)\frac{1}{x}\left(\frac{1}{4}\mathrm{Gr}_x\right)^{1/4}$$

$$=h\left(T_{s}-T_{\infty}\right)$$
$$h=-\frac{k}{x}\left(\frac{\mathrm{Gr}_{x}}{4}\right)^{1/4}\theta'(0)=-\frac{k}{x}\left(\frac{\mathrm{Gr}_{x}}{4}\right)^{1/4}g(\mathrm{Pr})$$

$$h = -\frac{k}{x} \left(\frac{\mathrm{Gr}_x}{4}\right)^{1/4} \theta'(0) = -\frac{k}{x} \left(\frac{\mathrm{Gr}_x}{4}\right)^{1/4} g(\mathrm{Pr})$$

$$\mathbf{N}\mathbf{u}_x = \frac{hx}{k} = -\frac{\theta'(0)}{\sqrt{2}}\mathbf{G}\mathbf{r}_x^{1/4}$$

$$\mathbf{N}\mathbf{u}_x = \frac{\mathbf{G}\mathbf{r}_x^{1/4}}{\sqrt{2}}g(\mathbf{P}\mathbf{r})$$

 $g(Pr) = \frac{0.75 Pr^{1/2}}{\left(0.609 + 1.221 Pr^{1/2} + 1.238 Pr\right)^{1/4}}$ 

Average Nusselt number

$$\overline{h} = \frac{1}{L} \int_0^L h dx = \frac{1}{L} \int_0^L \frac{k}{x} \left(\frac{\mathrm{Gr}_x}{4}\right)^{1/4} g(\mathrm{Pr}) dx$$
$$= \frac{k}{L} \left(\frac{g\beta\left(T_s - T_\infty\right)}{4v^2}\right)^{1/4} g(\mathrm{Pr}) \int_0^L \frac{dx}{x^{1/4}}$$
$$= \frac{4}{3} \frac{k}{L} \left(\frac{g\beta\left(T_s - T_\infty\right)L^3}{4v^2}\right)^{1/4} g(\mathrm{Pr})$$
$$= \frac{4}{3} \frac{k}{L} g(\mathrm{Pr}) \left(\frac{\mathrm{Gr}_L}{4}\right)^{1/4}$$
$$\overline{\mathrm{Nu}}_L = \frac{\overline{h}L}{k} = \frac{4}{3} g(\mathrm{Pr}) \left(\frac{\mathrm{Gr}_L}{4}\right)^{1/4} = \frac{4}{3} \mathrm{Nu}_L$$

limiting cases:

$$Nu_{x} = \begin{cases} 0.600 (Gr_{x} Pr)^{1/4} Pr^{1/4} \text{ as } Pr \to 0\\ 0.503 (Gr_{x} Pr)^{1/4} \text{ as } Pr \to \infty \end{cases}$$

Rayleigh number :

$$\mathbf{Ra}_{x} = \mathbf{Gr}_{x} \mathbf{Pr}$$

$$= \frac{g\beta(T_{s} - T_{\infty})x^{3}}{v^{2}} \frac{v}{\alpha} = \frac{g\beta(T_{s} - T_{\infty})x^{3}}{v\alpha}$$

### **Critical Rayleigh number**



## **Empirical Correlations: External Flows**

# **Vertical Plate** isothermal plates $\overline{\mathbf{N}\mathbf{u}_L} = \frac{\overline{h}L}{k} = C\mathbf{R}\mathbf{a}_L^n$ laminar: $C = 0.59, n = \frac{1}{2}$ turbulent: $C = 0.10, n = \frac{1}{3}$



Nusselt number

Churchill and Chu (1975)

$$\overline{\mathbf{N}\mathbf{u}_{L}} = \left\{ \mathbf{0.825} + \frac{\mathbf{0.387Ra}_{L}^{1/6}}{\left[ 1 + \left( \mathbf{0.429} / \mathbf{Pr} \right)^{9/16} \right]^{8/27}} \right\}^{2}$$

## for all $\mathbf{R}\mathbf{a}_L$

$$\overline{Nu_L} = 0.68 + \frac{0.670 \text{Ra}_L^{1/4}}{\left[1 + (0.429/\text{Pr})^{9/16}\right]^{4/9}}$$
$$\left(\text{Ra}_L \le 10^9\right)$$

# **Inclined and Horizontal Plates**

**Inclined** plates

Use correlations for the vertical plates by replacing g by  $g\cos\theta$  for  $0 \le \theta \le 60^{\circ}$ 



### **Horizontal plates**

 $L \equiv \frac{A_s}{P}$  ( $A_s$ : plate surface area, P: perimeter) upper surface of heated plate or lower surface of cooled plate



# lower surface of heated plate or upper surface of cooled plate



 $\overline{\mathrm{Nu}_{L}} = 0.27 \mathrm{Ra}_{L}^{1/4} \qquad \left(10^{5} \leq \mathrm{Ra}_{L} \leq 10^{10}\right)$ 



# **Spheres**

### • Churchil (1983)

$$\overline{\mathrm{Nu}_{D}} = 2 + \frac{0.589 \mathrm{Ra}_{D}^{1/4}}{\left[1 + \left(0.469 / \mathrm{Pr}\right)^{9/16}\right]^{4/9}}$$

 $Pr \ge 0.7, Ra_D \le 10^{11}$ 





Find:

Heat loss from duct per meter of length

Assumption:

Radiative effects are negligible.



heat loss from two side walls, top wall and bottom wall side wall: vertical plate top wall: upper surface of heated plate

bottom wall: lower surface of heated plate

 $q' = 2q'_s + q'_t + q'_b$ 

$$=2\overline{h}_{s}H\left(T_{s}-T_{\infty}\right)+\overline{h}_{t}w\left(T_{s}-T_{\infty}\right)+\overline{h}_{b}w\left(T_{s}-T_{\infty}\right)$$

side wall: vertical plate

Churchill and Chu (1975)  

$$\overline{Nu_{L}} = \left\{ 0.825 + \frac{0.387 Ra_{L}^{1/6}}{\left[ 1 + (0.429/Pr)^{9/16} \right]^{8/27}} \right\}^{2} \text{ for all } Ra_{L}$$

$$\overline{Nu_{L}} = 0.68 + \frac{0.670 Ra_{L}^{1/4}}{\left[ 1 + (0.429/Pr)^{9/16} \right]^{4/9}} \quad \left( Ra_{L} \le 10^{9} \right)$$
air:  $v = 16.2 \times 10^{-6} \text{ m}^{2}/\text{s}$ ,  $\alpha = 22.9 \times 10^{-6} \text{ m}^{2}/\text{s}$   
 $k = 0.0265 \text{ W/m} \cdot \text{K}$ ,  $\beta = 0.0033 \text{ K}^{-1}$ ,  $Pr = 0.71$ 

$$\operatorname{Ra}_{L} = \frac{g\beta(T_{s} - T_{\infty})H^{3}}{v\alpha} = 7.07 \times 10^{7}$$

$$\overline{h}_{s} = \frac{k}{H} \overline{Nu_{L}} = 4.23 \text{ W/m}^{2} \cdot \text{K}$$

### top wall: upper surface of heated plate



$$\overline{Nu_L} = 0.54 Ra_L^{1/4} \quad (10^4 \le Ra_L \le 10^7),$$
$$\overline{Nu_L} = 0.15 Ra_L^{1/3} \quad (10^7 \le Ra_L \le 10^{11})$$

$$L = \frac{A_s}{P} \quad (A_s: \text{ plate surface area}, P: \text{ perimeter})$$

$$L = \frac{wL}{2(w+L)} \approx \frac{wL}{2L} = \frac{w}{2} = 0.375 \text{ m}$$

$$\text{Ra}_L = \frac{g\beta(T_s - T_\infty)(w/2)^3}{v\alpha} = 1.38 \times 10^8$$

$$\frac{\overline{h}_i(w/2)}{k} = 0.15 \text{Ra}_L^{1/3}$$

$$\overline{h}_i = \left[ k/(w/2) \right] \times 0.15 \text{Ra}_L^{1/3} = 5.47 \text{ W/m}^2 \cdot \text{K}$$

bottom wall: lower surface of heated plate







#### Find:

Heat loss from the pipe per unit length q'[W/m] total heat loss per unit length of pipe

$$\boldsymbol{q'} = \boldsymbol{q'_{\text{conv}}} + \boldsymbol{q'_{\text{rad}}} = \overline{\boldsymbol{h}} \pi D \left( T_s - T_{\infty} \right) + \varepsilon \pi D \sigma \left( T_s^4 - T_{\text{sur}}^4 \right)$$

long horizontal cylinder

air : 
$$v = 22.8 \times 10^{-6} \text{ m}^2/\text{s}$$
,  $\alpha = 32.8 \times 10^{-6} \text{ m}^2/\text{s}$ ,  $\text{Pr} = 0.697$   
 $k = 0.0313 \text{ W/m} \cdot \text{K}$ ,  $\beta = 2.725 \times 10^{-3} \text{ K}^{-1}$   
 $\text{Ra}_D = \frac{g\beta(T_s - T_\infty)D^3}{v\alpha} = 5.073 \times 10^6$ 

Churchil and Chu (1975)  $\overline{Nu_{D}} = \left\{ 0.60 + \frac{0.387 \text{Ra}_{D}^{1/6}}{\left[ 1 + (0.559 / \text{Pr})^{9/16} \right]^{8/27}} \right\}^{2} \text{Ra}_{D} \leq 10^{12}$   $\overline{Nu_{D}} = 23.3$   $\overline{h} = \frac{k}{D} \overline{Nu_{D}} = 7.29 \text{ W/m}^{2} \cdot \text{K}$   $q' = \overline{h} \pi D \left( T_{s} - T_{\infty} \right) + \varepsilon \pi D \sigma \left( T_{s}^{4} - T_{\text{sur}}^{4} \right) = 325 + 441 = 766 \text{ W/m}$ 

### Free Convection in Parallel Plate Channels

# **Vertical Channels**

 Elenbaas (1942) symmetrically heated isothermal plates  $\overline{\mathrm{Nu}_{S}} = \frac{1}{24} \mathrm{Ra}_{S} \left( \frac{S}{L} \right) \left\{ 1 - \exp \left[ -\frac{35}{\mathrm{Ra}_{S} \left( S/L \right)} \right] \right\}^{3}$  $\overline{\mathrm{Nu}_{S}} = \left(\frac{q/A}{T_{s} - T_{\infty}}\right) \frac{S}{k}, \quad \mathrm{Ra}_{S} = \frac{g\beta(T_{s} - T_{\infty})S^{3}}{\alpha \nu}$ fully developed limit  $(S/L \rightarrow 0)$  $\overline{Nu}_{s\,(fd)} = \frac{Ra_{s}(S/L)}{24}$ S: channel width L: channel length



## **Empirical Correlations: Enclosures**

# **Rectangular Cavities**



 $q''=h(T_1-T_2)$ 

Horizontal cavity heated from below



Globe and Dropkin (1959)

$$\overline{\mathrm{Nu}}_{L} = \frac{\overline{h}L}{k} = 0.069 \mathrm{Ra}_{L}^{1/3} \mathrm{Pr}^{0.074}$$
$$3 \times 10^{5} < \mathrm{Ra}_{L} < 7 \times 10^{9}$$



for large aspect ratio  
• MacGregor and Emery (1969)  

$$\overline{Nu_{L}} = 0.42 Ra_{L}^{1/4} Pr^{0.012} \left(\frac{H}{L}\right)^{-0.3} \begin{bmatrix} 10 < \frac{H}{L} < 40 \\ 1 < Pr < 2 \times 10^{4} \\ 10^{4} < Ra_{L} < 10^{7} \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\overline{Nu_{L}} = 0.046 Ra_{L}^{1/3} \begin{bmatrix} 1 < \frac{H}{L} < 40 \\ 1 < Pr < 20 \\ 10^{6} < Ra_{L} < 10^{9} \end{bmatrix}$$



# **Concentric Spheres**

• Raithby and Hollands (1975)

$$q = k_{\rm eff} \pi \left(\frac{D_i D_o}{L}\right) \left(T_i - T_o\right)$$

for  $10^2 \le \text{Ra}_c^* \le 10^4$ 

$$\frac{k_{\text{eff}}}{k} = 0.74 \left(\frac{Pr}{0.861 + Pr}\right)^{1/4} \left(Ra_{c}^{*}\right)^{1/4}$$
$$Ra_{s}^{*} = \frac{L}{\left(D_{o}/D_{i}\right)^{4}} \frac{Ra_{L}}{\left(D_{i}^{-7/5} + D_{o}^{-7/5}\right)^{5}}$$