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Abstract

In this work, the effect of input variability and model uncertainty on the distillate composition of a continuous distillation tower is studied. To do this, we developed a distillation model by combining mass and energy balance equations with a lumped vapor equilibrium model and tray efficiency correlations. Feed and model uncertainties were modeled by uniform and uniform distributions respectively. A Monte Carlo propagation method was used to determine the upper and lower uncertainty margins of the distillate composition. The results of the application to a methanol-water distillation showed that the model uncertainty is as high as that of the feed variability. The information can be useful for the robust design of distillation towers.

Keywords: Uncertainty analysis; Monte Carlo method; Continuous distillation

1. Main text

The configuration and operation parameters of continuous distillation units are usually optimized for a specified feed and a required distillation composition. However, the control of the operation parameters is always necessary to counteract the effects of feed variability and other factors such as those like external temperature. Current designs are made of models and correlations whose values are based on theoretical assumptions and correlations. The results predicted from these models and correlations can be inaccurate when the conditions differ from those that were used to fit the model parameters. A robust design of a distillation tower considering these two sources of uncertainty could reduce the number of control actions leading to a higher energetic efficiency.

In the paper, we study the effect of input variability and model uncertainty on the uncertain margins of the distillation tower. The case study is the distillation of a methanol-water mixture with a methanol fraction of $x = 0.36$ in a distillation tower of 10 trays.

Due to the impracticality of modifying the parameters of a commercial code, we developed a multi-compartment model of a distillation tower. In the model, the mass and energy balance equations for the lumped

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Experiment 3:
Simple Distillation of Ethanol-Water Mixture

Conclusion

As an overall conclusion I would say that I am very surprised that such books can be published and received at the same time so many positive feedbacks. For me there are here two critical missing parts which can really reversed the context of this book. One thing is sure giving right to Microsoft and monopole to this company is a serious problem and diversity has to raise up. This is not by writing such favorable books which will help. The earlier change will be made the better it will be. The recent news published those weeks <http://www.zdnet.fr/actualites/informatique/0,39040745,39387636,00.html> showed clearly that things are moving in this field (the deactivation of Internet Explorer will be possible on new computers) but I guess it is one more time a bit too much in favor of Microsoft. When will it be the time when going to your vendor you could choose "à la carte" what you want in your computer and that you do not want.

Reactive distillation with side draw

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ABSTRACT

We demonstrate the applicability of a new reactive distillation configuration, i.e. reactive distillation with side draw, for certain industrially important reactions. For the reacting systems which involve products with intermediate volatility, a side draw facilitates its *in situ* removal and enhances either conversion or selectivity. It further reduces the downstream processing in some cases. The concept is proved for three representative systems, viz. esterification of lactic acid, aldol condensation of acetone and for esterification of fatty acid by methanol. Experimental proof is also provided in some cases.

Bioactive substances
Lactic acid
Esterification
Acetone
Alcohol condensation
Fatty acid
Biodiesel
Methyl ester
Diacetone alcohol

— 10 —

The applicability of reactive distillation (RD) for many industrially important processes is well known [1]. In the case of equilibrium controlled reactions such as esterification and etherification, the objective is to surpass equilibrium conversion whereas in the case of multiple reaction systems, RD can be used to improve selectivity. In most of the studies reported in the past, a conventional reactive distillation configuration involves a reactive zone placed in the distillation column at an appropriate location. In addition to this section, two non-reactive zones viz. rectifying and stripping sections may also be employed. The products are withdrawn through distillate and/or the bottom streams depending on the volatilities. Thus, reactive distillation has been successfully applied for the mixtures wherein, at least one product is either the most volatile or the least volatile component. Sometimes minimum/maximum boiling azeotropes in the system can be exploited advantageously to achieve *in situ* removal. If the pure products can be separated efficiently then one can use close to stoichiometric feed mole ratio of the reactants. Some relevant examples are esterification of acetic acid by methanol or butanol, MTBE synthesis from methanol and isobutene, etc. However, in some cases, the volatilities are such that the separation of the product as either top

e.g. a case in which the product is intermediate boiling and product does not form an azeotrope with other component(s). In a conventional reactive distillation configuration the reactant being more volatile, tends to move away from the reactive zone, leaving behind the intermediate boiling product, thereby creating unfavorable conditions for the reaction. In such cases one may need to use one of the reactants in excess to expedite the reaction and facilitate separation. The excess reactant thus may not serve the purpose of reactive distillation and RD option may be unattractive compared to the conventional approach of reaction followed by separation performed in a sequential manner. In this paper, we present an alternative to the conventional notion of removing products only through top or bottom streams. A configuration that involves removal of product(s) as side stream(s) has been suggested, which may provide more flexibility in design and as a result, improve the performance of the existing RD applications and encompass under its umbrella many more reactions which are otherwise written off as potential candidates. A list of some potentially important applications is given in Table 1. In most of the cases, water is the component with intermediate volatility, to be removed through the side draw.

side draw to facilitate much lower mole ratio of methanol to lactic acid and yet yield relatively pure methyl lactate in the bottom stream with enhanced conversion level. This also helps avoid unfa-

ol from a fermentation product (burgundy wine) via a simple distillation (brandy) in order to then characterize the brandy by density, combustion, and a series of colorimetric tests was able to determine the percent of ethanol.

portion. By extracting a series of samples we were able to determine the proof of our initial extraction and determine by comparison the quality of each successive sample. Our initial extraction sample proved to be 134 proof (67%) alcohol. Our first and second samples were flammable, third and fourth samples would not combust and were apparently had very low if any alcohol percentage.

The sample is
very large but
consists of

separately, as their boiling points are 78.5°C and 100°C respectively. This is an effective method of increasing alcohol by volume in a beverage, as fermentation of sugars alone will not produce greater than 12 to 15%. We distill a wine (12% alcohol by volume) sample and collect a series of samples, recording boiling points and determining density of our primary fraction in order to determine the highest successful proof liquid distilled by comparing results to known density charts for alcohol.

- Collected initial fraction (minimum volume of 15 mL), recorded gram weight (mass) of 5 mL sample and combustibility of sample. Recorded start and finish collection temperatures to ascertain boiling point.

