

MODELING, SIMULATION AND CONTROL OF RUNAWAY REACTION IN A BATCH REACTOR

KARRI RAMA RAO



**DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICAL ENGINEERING
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI
NEW DELHI, INDIA**

MODELING, SIMULATION AND CONTROL OF RUNAWAY REACTION IN A BATCH REACTOR

by

KARRI RAMA RAO

Department of Chemical Engineering

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled “**MODELING, SIMULATION AND CONTROL OF RUNAWAY REACTION IN A BATCH REACTOR**”, being submitted by **KARRI RAMA RAO** to Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi for the award of Degree of Doctor of Philosophy is a record of a bonafide research work carried out by him. Mr. Karri Rama Rao worked under our guidance and supervision for his doctoral work and to our knowledge, the thesis submitted by him has reached the requisite standard.

The thesis or any part thereof has not been submitted to any other university or institute for the award of any degree or diploma

Dr. Ch. Venkateswarlu,
Scientist – F,
Division of Chemical Sciences
Indian Institute of Chemical Technology,
Hyderabad – 500 007,
Andhra Pradesh, INDIA

Dr. D. Phaneswara Rao,
Professor,
Department of Chemical Engineering
Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
New Delhi – 110016
INDIA

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Abstract

Batch reactors are widely used to manufacture specialty chemicals, polymers, food and agricultural materials, biochemical and pharmaceuticals, coatings and composites etc. Set-point tracking of batch reactor systems is challenging because these are highly nonlinear and dynamic in nature in contrast to continuous reactors, which operate at steady state conditions when there is no disturbance.

As the system variables like temperature and reactant concentration in the reactor vary with time, the batch operation can pose safety problems if the reactions are exothermic in nature. The trajectory of the system depends on initial operating conditions or system parameters. For an exothermic reaction, if the initial reactant or coolant temperature is increased above a threshold value while keeping all other variables constant, the exothermic reaction can proceed at a very rapid pace and the temperature may attain a very high peak value before dropping down to the coolant temperature and at the peak temperature, the limiting reactant may get exhausted. This drastic change in system behavior with respect to small changes in a critical parameter beyond a threshold value which is called as runaway and such a system is said to be parametrically sensitive.

The aim of this work is to avert the runaway behavior and to design an effective control strategy to a batch reactor where a highly parametric sensitive exothermic reaction involving hydrolysis of acetic anhydride in the presence of sulfuric acid as catalyst and acetic acid as solvent is carried out. For this a mathematical model is developed and is verified with the experimental runaway behavior. To control the runaway behavior at the desired isothermal temperature, various advanced controllers are

implemented and bench mark is made by comparing with conventional controller. The effectiveness of the advance controller with various orders is evaluated by applying the controller to control the temperature of runaway batch reactor. The result of these controllers hence dictates the use of advanced controllers in chemical industry to avert major disasters. These results also indicate that by knowing the region of operating conditions that lead to runaway for a particular reaction system, appropriate controller system and safety measures can be designed to avert runaway and prevent losses.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Title	Page
	Certificate	i
	Acknowledgements	ii
	Abstract	v
	Table of Contents	vii
	List of Figures	x
	List of Tables	xiv
1.	Introduction	
	1.1 Background and Motivation	1
	1.2 Research Approach	2
	1.3 Outline of the thesis	3
2.	Literature Survey	
	2.1 Introduction	4
	2.2 Runaway reactions in hindsight	5
	2.3 Batch and semi-batch reactors	10
	2.4 Control of batch reactors	15
	2.5 Optimization strategy for improving the performance of batch reactors	18
	2.6 Previous work on Theoretical and Experimental studies on batch reactor runaway behavior and control done at IIT, Delhi	20
3.	Design of the automated control system	
	3.1 Description of the experimental Setup	29
	3.2 Automation and Interface development	44
	3.3 online plot visualization using user control XY plot	52
	3.4 Initialization of the utility streams	55
	3.5 Procedure to conduct the experiment	62
4.	Mathematical Model development	
	4.1 Reaction mechanism	66
	4.2 Mathematical model for the reactor	70

4.3	Energy balances	72
4.4	studies on valve dynamics	75
4.5	Solution of the system of partial differential equations	78
4.6	Studies on reactor dynamics	78
5.	PID control of runaway chemical reactor	
5.1	Introduction	82
5.2	Implementation of the split range control scheme	83
5.3	PID based control algorithm	86
5.4	Integral Reset windup	87
5.5	PID controller with integral reset windup algorithm	88
5.6	Insight into the desired reactor set point trajectory	93
5.7	Analysis of results	97
5.8	Conclusion	102
6.	Fuzzy logic control of runaway chemical reactor	
6.1	Introduction	103
6.2	Basic concept and design paradigm	104
6.3	Fuzzy linguistic controller and its components	107
6.4	Design and implementation to runaway chemical reactor	116
6.5	Analysis of results	117
6.6	Conclusion	123
7.	Model predictive control of runaway chemical reactor	
7.1	Introduction	124
7.2	Model predictive control scheme	126
7.3	MPC design	128
7.4	Analysis of results	135
7.5	Effect of order of the system on performance of the controller	152
7.6	Effect of prediction and control horizons on the performance of MPC	156
7.7	Robustness of the first order MPC	158
7.8	Conclusion	160
8.	Nonlinear Model predictive control of runaway chemical reactor	
8.1	Introduction	161

8.2 Simulated Annealing algorithm	163
8.3 Design and Implementation of NMPC	165
8.4 Analysis of results	174
8.5 Effect of Prediction and control horizons on the performance of SANMPC	186
8.6 Conclusion	187
9. Conclusions and recommendations for future work	188
List of Nomenclature	191
References	194
Appendices	205
Program Listing	218