

The Continuity Equation and Differential Mass and Energy Balances
Entered by C. S. Tritt, January 2004

The differential total mass balance or continuity equation is:

$$\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\mathbf{u}\rho) = 0 \quad (1)$$

For incompressible fluid in Cartesian, cylindrical and spherical coordinates, respectively, this becomes:

$$\frac{\partial u_x}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial u_y}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial u_z}{\partial z} = 0 \quad (2)$$

$$\frac{1}{r} \frac{\partial(ru_r)}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \frac{\partial u_\theta}{\partial \theta} + \frac{\partial u_z}{\partial z} = 0 \quad (3)$$

$$\frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\partial(r^2 u_r)}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r \sin \theta} \frac{\partial(u_\theta \sin \theta)}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r \sin \theta} \frac{\partial u_\phi}{\partial \phi} = 0 \quad (4)$$

The general differential component mass and energy balances are:

$$\frac{\partial C_A}{\partial t} + \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla C_A = \nabla \cdot (D_{AB} \nabla C_A) + r_A \quad (5)$$

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial t} + \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla T = \frac{\nabla \cdot (k \nabla T)}{\rho C_p} + \frac{\Phi}{\rho C_p} + \frac{\dot{q}}{\rho C_p} \quad (6)$$

where t is time, C_A is the concentration of the component of interest (A), \mathbf{u} is the velocity vector, D_{AB} is the diffusivity of solute A in solvent B , r_A is the volumetric rate of generation of A by chemical reaction, T is temperature, k is the thermal conductivity, ρ is the density, C_p is the heat capacity, Φ is viscous heat generation and \dot{q} is the volumetric rate of heat generation by absorption of radiation and chemical reaction.

For constant D_{AB} and k these equations reduce to the following in Cartesian coordinates:

$$\frac{\partial C_A}{\partial t} + u_x \frac{\partial C_A}{\partial x} + u_y \frac{\partial C_A}{\partial y} + u_z \frac{\partial C_A}{\partial z} = D_{AB} \left(\frac{\partial^2 C_A}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\partial^2 C_A}{\partial y^2} + \frac{\partial^2 C_A}{\partial z^2} \right) + r_A \quad (7)$$

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial t} + u_x \frac{\partial T}{\partial x} + u_y \frac{\partial T}{\partial y} + u_z \frac{\partial T}{\partial z} = \alpha \left(\frac{\partial^2 T}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\partial^2 T}{\partial y^2} + \frac{\partial^2 T}{\partial z^2} \right) + \frac{\Phi}{\rho C_p} + \frac{\dot{q}}{\rho C_p} \quad (8)$$

and in cylindrical coordinates:

$$\frac{\partial C_A}{\partial t} + u_r \frac{\partial C_A}{\partial r} + \frac{u_\theta}{r} \frac{\partial C_A}{\partial \theta} + u_z \frac{\partial C_A}{\partial z} = D_{AB} \left(\frac{1}{r} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left(r \frac{\partial C_A}{\partial r} \right) + \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\partial^2 C_A}{\partial \theta^2} + \frac{\partial^2 C_A}{\partial z^2} \right) + r_A \quad (9)$$

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial t} + u_r \frac{\partial T}{\partial r} + \frac{u_\theta}{r} \frac{\partial T}{\partial \theta} + u_z \frac{\partial T}{\partial z} = \alpha \left(\frac{1}{r} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left(r \frac{\partial T}{\partial r} \right) + \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\partial^2 T}{\partial \theta^2} + \frac{\partial^2 T}{\partial z^2} \right) + \frac{\Phi}{\rho C_p} + \frac{\dot{q}}{\rho C_p} \quad (10)$$

and in spherical coordinates:

$$\frac{\partial C_A}{\partial t} + u_r \frac{\partial C_A}{\partial r} + \frac{u_\theta}{r} \frac{\partial C_A}{\partial \theta} + \frac{u_\phi}{r \sin \theta} \frac{\partial C_A}{\partial \phi} = D_{AB} \left(\frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left(r^2 \frac{\partial C_A}{\partial r} \right) + \frac{1}{r^2 \sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \left(\sin \theta \frac{\partial C_A}{\partial \theta} \right) + \frac{1}{r^2 \sin^2 \theta} \frac{\partial^2 C_A}{\partial \phi^2} \right) + r_A \quad (11)$$

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial t} + u_r \frac{\partial T}{\partial r} + \frac{u_\theta}{r} \frac{\partial T}{\partial \theta} + \frac{u_\phi}{r \sin \theta} \frac{\partial T}{\partial \phi} = \alpha \left(\frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left(r^2 \frac{\partial T}{\partial r} \right) + \frac{1}{r^2 \sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \left(\sin \theta \frac{\partial T}{\partial \theta} \right) + \frac{1}{r^2 \sin^2 \theta} \frac{\partial^2 T}{\partial \phi^2} \right) + \frac{\Phi}{\rho C_p} + \frac{\dot{q}}{\rho C_p} \quad (12)$$

where the quantity $k/\rho C_p$ is the thermal diffusivity and is given the symbol α .