

Chemical Reaction Engineering ①
Chapter 15 : Diffusion and reaction

When reactants must diffuse inside catalyst pellet in order to react

- Conc. at the pore mouth must be higher than that inside the pore
- Entire catalyst surface is not accessible to the same concentration
- Rate of reaction will vary throughout the pellet.

This chapter

- Diffusion and rxn in homogeneous systems
- diffusion and rxn in spherical catalyst pellets
- Internal effectiveness factor
- Falsified kinetics
- Estimation of diffusion- and rxn-limited regimes
- Mass transfer and rxn in packed bed
- determination of limiting situations from reaction rate data.

Notes on
Elements of chemical reaction
engineering, H. Scott Fogler
- Ranjeet Utikar

Diffusion and reaction in homogeneous systems

→ Mole balance on species A for 1D diffusion at steady state

$$- \frac{dW_{Az}}{dz} + r_A = 0$$

$$W_{Az} = - D_{AB} \frac{dC_A}{dz}$$

$$D_{AB} \frac{d^2 C_A}{dz^2} + r_A = 0$$

diffusion with chemical reaction

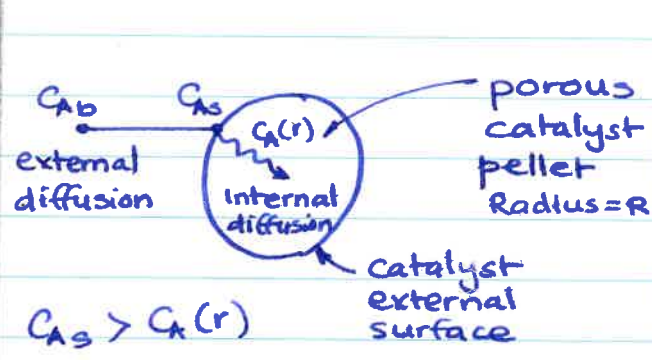
→ Applications

→ medicine

→ cancer treatment using drug laced particulates

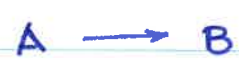
→ tissue engineering

Diffusion and reaction in spherical catalyst pellets

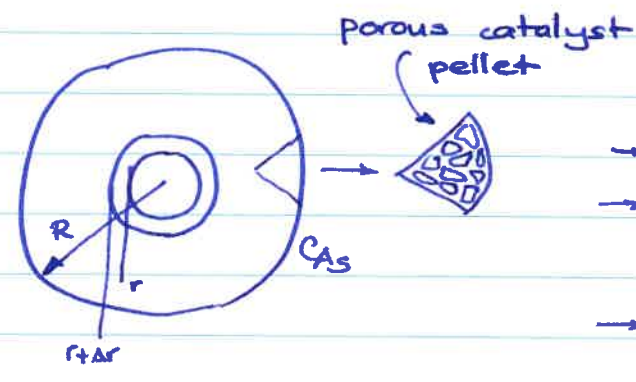


- heterogeneous system
- Reaction seq.
 - external diffusion
 - internal diffusion
 - surface reaction

consider irreversible isomerization reaction



→ reaction occurs on the surface of pore walls within the spherical pellet of radius R



- Steady state
- spherical coordinates
- constant $P \ \& \ T$

steady state mole balance on a spherical shell ($r \rightarrow r + \Delta r$)

$$\left[\begin{array}{c} \text{molar flow} \\ \text{in} \end{array} \right] - \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{molar flow} \\ \text{out} \end{array} \right] + \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{rate of} \\ \text{reaction} \end{array} \right] = \left[\begin{array}{c} \text{rate of} \\ \text{accumulation} \end{array} \right]$$

area: total area normal to direction of flux
rate of A in at $r = W_{Ar} \cdot 4\pi r^2 \Big|_r$

$$\text{rate of A out at } r + \Delta r = W_{Ar} 4\pi r^2 \Big|_{r + \Delta r}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{rate of generation} &= \left[\frac{\text{reaction rate}}{\text{mass of cat.}} \right] \times \\ \text{of A within a shell} &= \left[\frac{\text{mass of cat.}}{\text{vol. of}} \right] \cdot \text{volume} \\ \text{thickness of } \Delta r & \quad \quad \quad \text{of shell} \end{aligned}$$

$$= r'_A \cdot \rho_c \cdot 4\pi r_m^2 \Delta r$$

r_m : mean radius between r and $r + \Delta r$
used to approximate Δv

$$\therefore (W_{Ar} \cdot 4\pi r^2 \Big|_r) - (W_{Ar} \cdot 4\pi r^2 \Big|_{r + \Delta r}) + r'_A \rho_c 4\pi r_m^2 \Delta r = 0$$

dividing by $-4\pi \Delta r$ and taking limit
as $\Delta r \rightarrow 0$

$$\boxed{\frac{dW_A r^2}{dr} - r^2 \rho_c r^2 = 0} \quad \text{--- (1)}$$

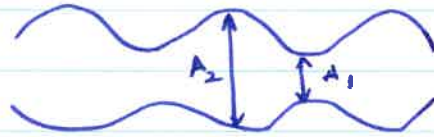
$$\text{EMCD : } W_A r = -D_e \frac{dC_A}{dr}$$

Effective diffusivity D_e

- To reach the inner surface, the reactant A must diffuse from a higher reactant conc. at the pellet external surface into and through the pores of pellet which are at lower concentration.
- The pores are not straight and cylindrical
- Effective diffusion coefficient → average diffusion taking place at any interior position in the pellet.

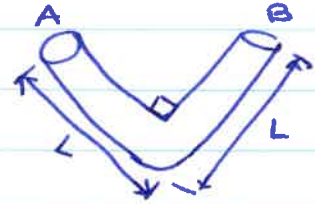
$$D_e = \frac{D_{AB} \Phi_p \sigma_c}{\bar{\tau}}$$

$\bar{\tau}$ = tortuosity ; σ_c : constriction factor
 Φ_p = porosity



$$\beta = \frac{\text{area } A_2}{\text{area } A_1} ; \sigma_c = f(\beta)$$

constriction



tortuosity

\bar{z} = actual dist. a molecule travels between 2 pt
Shortest distance betⁿ the two pts.

$$\Phi_p = \frac{\text{vol. of void space}}{\text{volume of pellet}}$$

σ_c = accounts for variation in the cross-sectional area
at $\beta=10$ $\sigma_c=0.5$
at $\beta=1$ $\sigma_c=1$.

D_e accounts for:

1. Not all the area normal to the direction of flux is available for diffusion
2. The paths are tortuous
3. The pores are of varying cross section

Eq. ① can be written as

$$\frac{d \left[-D_e \left(\frac{dC_A}{dr} \right) r^2 \right]}{dr} - r^2 \rho_c r'_A = 0 \quad \text{--- ②}$$

Rate of reaction

- $-r_A$: mol/dm³s ... per unit volume
- $-r'_A$: mol/g-cat s ... per unit mass of cat
- $-r''_A$: mol/m²s ... per unit surface area

S_a : m²/g-cat ... surface area of catalyst
 unit mass of catalyst.
 ~ 150 m²/g

$$-r'_A = S_a (-r''_A)$$

$$-r_A = \rho_c (-r'_A) = \rho_c S_a (-r''_A)$$

at high temperatures :

$$-r''_A = k''_n C_A^n$$

For first order catalytic reaction

- k_1 : 1/s : $k''_1 S_a \rho_c$: per unit pellet vol.
- k'_1 : m³/kg s : $k''_1 S_a$: per unit mass
- k''_1 : m/s : per unit surface area

substituting the rate law in (2)

$$\frac{d \left[r^2 (-D_e \frac{dC_A}{dr}) \right]}{dr} + r^2 \overbrace{k''_n S_a \rho_c}^{k_n} C_A^n = 0$$

dividing by $-r^2 D_e$

$$\boxed{\frac{d^2 C_A}{dr^2} + \frac{2}{r} \left(\frac{dC_A}{dr} \right) - \frac{k_n}{D_e} C_A^n = 0} \quad (3)$$

Boundary conditions

1. conc. is finite at the centre

$$C_A \text{ is finite at } r=0$$

2. $C_A = C_{As}$ at $r = R$

Dimensionless form of reaction-diffusion equation

$$\text{Let } \psi = \frac{C_A}{C_{As}} \text{ and } \lambda = \frac{r}{R}$$

$$\text{BCs: at } \lambda = 0 \text{ } \psi \text{ is finite}$$

$$\text{at } \lambda = 1 \text{ } \psi = 1$$

$$W_{Ar} = -D_e \frac{dC_A}{dr}$$

$$\frac{dC_A}{dr} = \frac{dC_A}{d\lambda} \cdot \frac{d\lambda}{dr} = \frac{d\psi}{d\lambda} \cdot \frac{dC_A}{d\psi} \cdot \frac{d\lambda}{dr}$$

$$\frac{dC_A}{d\psi} = C_{As} ; \frac{d\lambda}{dr} = \frac{1}{R}$$

$$\therefore \frac{dC_A}{dr} = \frac{d\psi}{d\lambda} \frac{C_{As}}{R} \quad \text{--- (4)}$$

and

$$W_{Ar} = -D_e \frac{dC_A}{dr} = -\frac{D_e C_{As}}{R} \left(\frac{d\psi}{d\lambda} \right)$$

differentiating (4)

$$\frac{d^2 C_A}{dr^2} = \frac{d}{dr} \left(\frac{dC_A}{dr} \right) = \frac{d}{d\lambda} \left(\frac{d\psi}{d\lambda} \frac{C_{As}}{R} \right) \frac{d\lambda}{dr}$$

$$\frac{d^2 C_A}{dr^2} = \frac{d^2 \psi}{d\lambda^2} \left(\frac{C_{As}}{R^2} \right) \quad \text{--- (5)}$$

\(\therefore\) Eq. (3) in dimensionless form

$$\frac{d^2 \psi}{d\lambda^2} + \frac{2}{\lambda} \frac{d\psi}{d\lambda} - \frac{k_n R^2 C_{As}^{n-1}}{D_e} \psi^n = 0$$

$$\boxed{\frac{d^2 \psi}{d\lambda^2} + \frac{2}{\lambda} \frac{d\psi}{d\lambda} - \Phi_n^2 \psi^n = 0} \quad \text{--- (6)}$$

$$\boxed{\Phi_n^2 = \frac{k_n R^2 C_{As}^{n-1}}{D_e}} \quad \dots \text{ Thiele modulus}$$

$$= \frac{\text{'a' surface reaction rate}}{\text{'a' diffusion rate}}$$

When Thiele modulus is large
 → Internal diffusion limits overall reaction

When Thiele modulus is small
 → Surface reaction is rate limiting.

For first order reaction equation (6) becomes

$$\boxed{\frac{d^2\psi}{d\lambda^2} + \frac{2}{\lambda} \frac{d\psi}{d\lambda} - \phi_1^2 \psi = 0} \quad - (7)$$

$$\boxed{\phi_1 = R \sqrt{\frac{k_1}{D_e}}} \quad - (8)$$

BCs : $\psi = 1$ at $\lambda = 1$
 ψ is finite at $\lambda = 0$

Let $y = \psi\lambda$

$$\therefore \frac{d\psi}{d\lambda} = \frac{1}{\lambda} \left(\frac{dy}{d\lambda} \right) - \frac{y}{\lambda^2}$$

$$\frac{d^2\psi}{d\lambda^2} = \frac{1}{\lambda} \left(\frac{d^2y}{d\lambda^2} \right) - \frac{2}{\lambda^2} \left(\frac{dy}{d\lambda} \right) + \frac{2y}{\lambda^3}$$

with these transformations eq. (7) becomes

$$\frac{d^2 y}{d\lambda^2} - \phi_1^2 y = 0$$

This differential equation has following solution

$$y = A_1 \cosh \phi_1 \lambda + B_1 \sinh \phi_1 \lambda$$

In terms of ψ

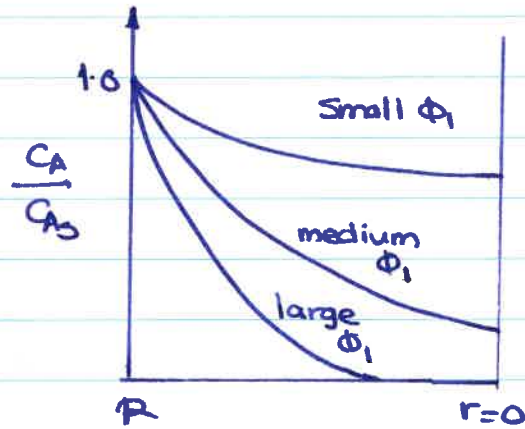
$$\psi = \frac{A_1}{\lambda} \cosh \phi_1 \lambda + \frac{B_1}{\lambda} \sinh \phi_1 \lambda$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{at } \lambda = 0 \quad \cosh \phi_1 \lambda &\rightarrow 1 \\ \sinh \phi_1 \lambda &\rightarrow 0 \\ 1/\lambda &\rightarrow \infty \end{aligned}$$

at $\lambda = 0$ ψ is finite $\therefore A_1$ must be zero

$$\text{at } \lambda = 1 \quad \psi = 1 \quad \therefore B_1 = \frac{1}{\sinh \phi_1}$$

$$\therefore \boxed{\psi = \frac{C_A}{C_{As}} = \frac{1}{\lambda} \frac{\sinh \phi_1 \lambda}{\sinh \phi_1}} \quad \text{--- (9)}$$



Small Φ_1 : surface rxn controls.

- significant amount of reactant diffuses well into pellet interior
- conc profile is shallow
- virtually entire internal surface is accessible to C_{A_s}

Large Φ_1 : reaction is rapid

- reactant is consumed very close to the catalyst external surface
- very little penetrates into the pellet
- If a porous pellet is to be plated with a precious metal catalyst (e.g. Pt) it should only be plated in the immediate vicinity of external surface.

Internal effectiveness factor (η)

η is a measure of how far the reactant diffuses into the pellet before reacting.

$\eta = \frac{\text{actual overall rate of reaction}}{\text{rate of reaction if entire interior surface was at } C_{As}}$

$$\eta = \frac{-r_A}{-r_{As}} = \frac{-r'_A}{-r'_{As}} = \frac{-r''_A}{-r''_{As}}$$

Effectiveness factor for 1st order reaction

$$\eta = \frac{-r_A}{-r_{As}} = \frac{-r'_A \cdot \text{vol of particle}}{-r'_{As} \cdot \text{vol. of particle}} = \frac{M_A}{M_{As}}$$

$$M_{As} = \frac{\text{rate at external surface}}{\text{volume}} \times \text{vol. of catalyst pellet}$$

$$= -r_{As} \left(\frac{4}{3} \pi R^3 \right) = k_1 C_{As} \left(\frac{4}{3} \pi R^3 \right)$$

↙ at external surface $\lambda = 1$

Actual rate of reaction

$$M_A = 4\pi R D_e C_{As} \left. \frac{d\psi}{d\lambda} \right|_{\lambda=1}$$

At steady state

Net flow of species A that enters into the pellet at the external pellet surface = reaction within the pellet

∴ overall rate of reaction = total molar flow into the catalyst pellet

$$\begin{aligned}
 M_A &= -4\pi R^2 W_{Ar} \Big|_{r=R} \\
 &= +4\pi R^2 \frac{dC_A}{dr} \Big|_{r=R} \\
 M_A &= 4\pi R D_e C_{As} \frac{d\psi}{d\lambda} \Big|_{\lambda=1}
 \end{aligned}$$

Differentiating (9)

$$\begin{aligned}
 \frac{d\psi}{d\lambda} \Big|_{\lambda=1} &= \left(\frac{\phi_1 \cosh \lambda \phi_1}{\lambda \sinh \phi_1} - \frac{1}{\lambda^2} \frac{\sinh \lambda \phi_1}{\sinh \phi_1} \right) \Big|_{\lambda=1} \\
 &= \phi_1 \coth \phi_1 - 1
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\eta = \frac{M_A}{M_{AS}} = \frac{4\pi R D_e C_{AS} (\phi_1 \coth \phi_1 - 1)}{k_1 C_{AS} \frac{4}{3} \pi R^3}$$

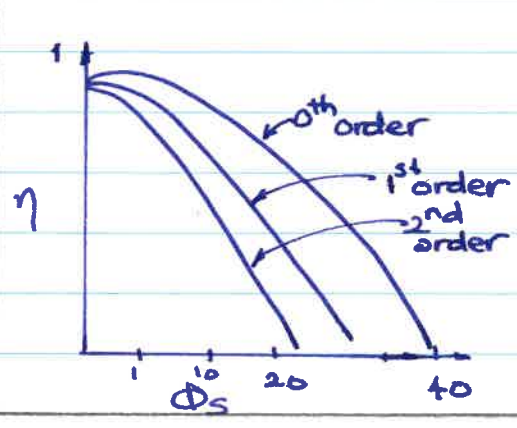
$$= \frac{3}{(k_1 R^2 / D_e)} (\phi_1 \coth \phi_1 - 1)$$

$$\therefore \boxed{\eta = \frac{3}{\phi_1^2} (\phi_1 \coth \phi_1 - 1)}$$

$$\phi_1 = R \sqrt{\frac{k_1}{D_e}}$$

IF $\phi_1 > 2$ $\eta \approx \frac{3}{\phi_1^2} [\phi_1 - 1]$

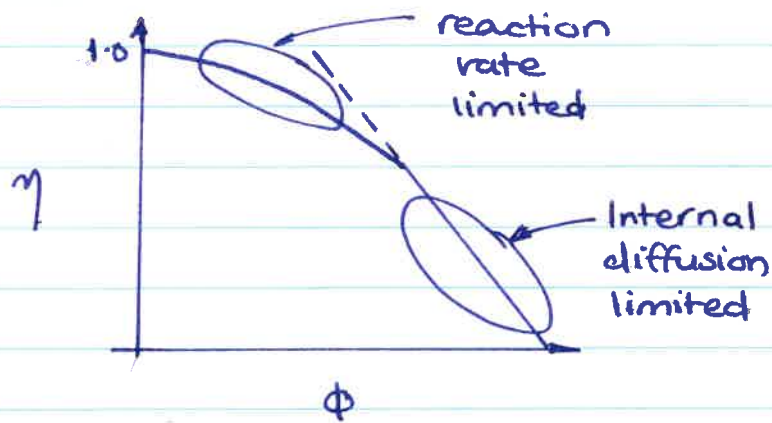
IF $\phi_1 > 20$ $\eta \approx \frac{3}{\phi_1}$



$$0^{th} \text{ order } \phi_{s0} = R \sqrt{\frac{k_0}{D_e C_{A0}}}$$

$$\phi_{s1} = R \sqrt{k_1 / D_e}$$

$$\phi_{s2} = R \sqrt{k_2 C_{A0} / D_e}$$



Weisz-Prater criteria for internal diffusion limitation

$$C_{WP} = \eta \phi_1^2 = 3(\phi \coth \phi_1 - 1)$$

$$= \frac{\text{actual reaction rate}}{\text{rate evaluated at } C_{As}} \cdot \frac{\text{rate at } C_{As}}{\text{A diffusion rate}}$$

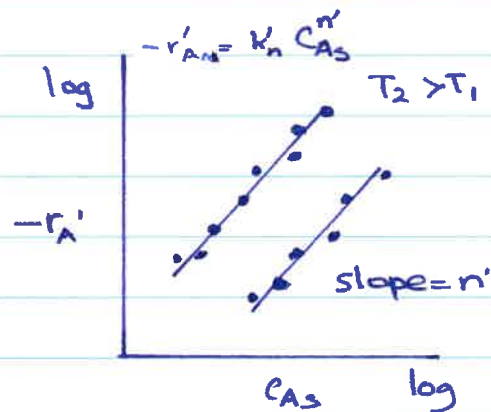
$$C_{WP} = \frac{\text{actual reaction rate}}{\text{A diffusion rate}}$$

$C_{WP} \ll 1$: No diffusion limitations

$C_{WP} \gg 1$: severe diffusion limitation

Falsified kinetics

→ Measured reaction order and activation energy are not the true values.



→ reaction rate data at two different temp. T_1 & T_2

→ differential reactor

→ no external mass transfer resistance

→ observed order n'

→ Relation between the true reaction order n and measured order n'

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Actual rate } -r'_A &= \eta (-r'_{A_s}) \\ &= \eta (k_n c_{A_s}^n) \end{aligned}$$

For large values of thiele modulus $\Phi_n \rightarrow$ internal mass transfer is limiting $\eta = 3/\Phi_n$

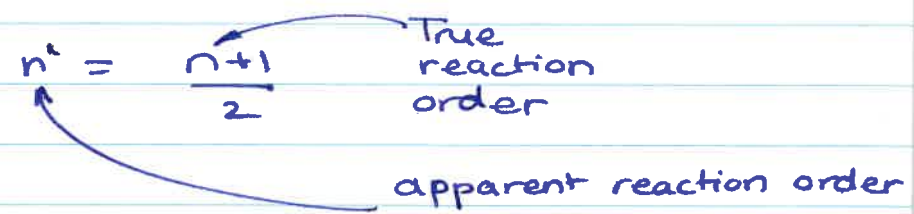
$$-r'_A = \frac{3}{\Phi_n} \sqrt{\frac{2}{n+1}} k_n c_{A_s}^n$$

$$-r_A' = \frac{3}{R} \sqrt{\frac{D_e}{k_n}} C_{AS}^{1-n} \sqrt{\frac{2}{n+1}} k_n C_{AS}^n$$

$$\therefore -r_A' = \frac{3}{R} \sqrt{\frac{2D_e}{n+1}} k_n^{1/2} C_{AS}^{(n+1)/2}$$

$$-r_A' = \underbrace{\sqrt{\frac{2}{n+1}} \left(\frac{3}{R} \sqrt{D_e} k_n^{1/2} C_{AS}^{(n+1)/2} \right)}_{\text{actual}} = \underbrace{k_n'}_{\text{measured}} C_{AS}^{n'}$$

$$C_{AS}^{\frac{n+1}{2}} = C_{AS}^{n'} \Rightarrow \boxed{n_{\text{True}} = 2n_{\text{app}} - 1}$$



$$k_n' = A_{\text{app}} e^{-E_{\text{app}}/RT} \qquad k_n = A_T e^{-E_T/RT}$$

$$-r_A = \left(\frac{3}{R} \sqrt{\frac{2D_e}{n+1}} \right) A_T \left[\exp\left(\frac{+E_T}{RT}\right) \right]^{1/2} C_{AS}^{(n+1)/2} = A_{\text{app}} e^{-E_{\text{app}}/RT} C_{AS}^{n'}$$

taking log

$$\ln \left[\frac{3}{R} \sqrt{\frac{2De}{n+1}} A_T C_{As}^{1/2} (n+1)^{1/2} \right] - \frac{E_T}{2RT} = \ln \left[A_{app} C_{As}^{n'} \right] - \frac{E_{app}}{RT}$$

$$\Rightarrow \frac{E_{app}}{RT} = \frac{E_T}{2RT}$$

$$\boxed{E_T = 2 E_{app}}$$

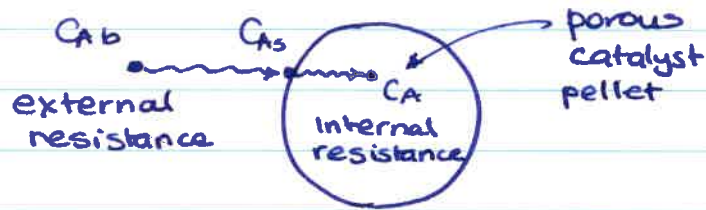
⇒ The measurement of the apparent reaction order and activation energy results in presence of internal diffusion limitations and is referred to as falsified or disguised kinetics.

Higher activation energy

- ⇒ Reaction becomes more sensitive to temperature
- ⇒ Possibility of runaway conditions
- ⇒ explosion

Overall effectiveness factor (Ω)

→ Both internal and external mass transfer limitations are considered.



Molar rate of mass transfer from bulk fluid to the external surface

$$= [\text{molar flux}] \times [\text{surface area}]$$

$$M_A = W_{Ar} \cdot a_c \Delta V$$

= net rate of reaction on and within the pellet

$$= -r_A'' (\text{External area} + \text{internal area})$$

$$\text{External area} = a_c \Delta V$$

$$\text{Internal area} = S_a \underbrace{f_c (1 - \phi)}_{P_b} \Delta V$$

$$= S_a P_b \Delta V$$

$$\therefore M_A = -r_A'' [a_c \Delta V + S_a P_b \Delta V]$$

$$\therefore W_A r_{A,c} = -r_A'' (a_c + S_a P_b)$$

For most catalyst $a_c \ll S_a P_b$

$$\therefore W_A r_{A,c} = -r_A'' S_a P_b$$

$$-r_A' = -r_A'' S_a$$

$$-r_A = -r_A'' P_b$$

$$\therefore W_A r_{A,c} = -r_A = -r_A'' S_a P_b$$

Rate of mass transport to external surface

$$M_A = W_A r_{A,c} \Delta V = k_c (C_{A,b} - C_{A,s}) a_c \Delta V$$

$$-r_A = \eta r_{A,s}$$

$$= \eta k_f C_{A,s}$$

$$k_i = k_i'' S_a P_b$$

Need to eliminate $C_{A,s}$

$$\therefore k_c (C_{A,b} - C_{A,s}) a_c = \eta k_i C_{A,s}$$

$$\rightarrow -r_A = \frac{\eta k_i k_c a_c C_{A,b}}{k_c a_c + \eta k_i}$$

$$\eta = \frac{\text{actual reaction rate}}{\text{rate at } C_{As}, T_s}$$

$$\Omega = \frac{\text{actual reaction rate}}{\text{rate at } C_{Ab}, T_b}$$

$$\begin{aligned} -r_A &= \frac{\eta}{1 + \frac{\eta k_i}{k_c a_c}} k_i C_{Ab} \\ &= \Omega k_i C_{Ab} \end{aligned}$$

$$\Omega = \frac{\eta}{1 + \frac{\eta k_i}{k_c a_c}}$$

For high flowrate of fluid
 k_c is large $\Rightarrow 1 \gg \frac{\eta k_i}{k_c a_c}$

$$\Omega \equiv \eta$$

Determination of limiting situations from reaction rate data

type of limitation	variation of reaction rate with		
	velocity	particle size	temperature
External diffusion	$U^{1/2}$	$d_p^{-3/2}$	\propto linear
Internal diffusion	Independent	d_p^{-1}	exponential
Surface reaction	independent	Independent	exponential

External mass transfer

$$k_c \propto \frac{U^{1/2}}{d_p^{1/2}}$$

$$-r'_A = k_c a_c C_A$$

$$a \propto \frac{1}{d_p}$$

$$\left(a_c = \frac{6(1-\Phi)}{d_p} \right)$$

$$\therefore -r'_A \propto \frac{U^{1/2}}{d_p^{3/2}}$$

For gas phase reaction in packed bed

$$k_c \propto U^{1/2} T^{1/2} \Rightarrow -r'_A \propto T$$

Internal diffusion

$$-r'_A = \frac{3}{R} \sqrt{\frac{2De}{(n+1)}} k_n^{1/2} C_{As}^{(n+1)/2}$$

$$-r'_A \propto \frac{1}{dp}$$

$-r'_A$ exhibits an exponential temperature dependence

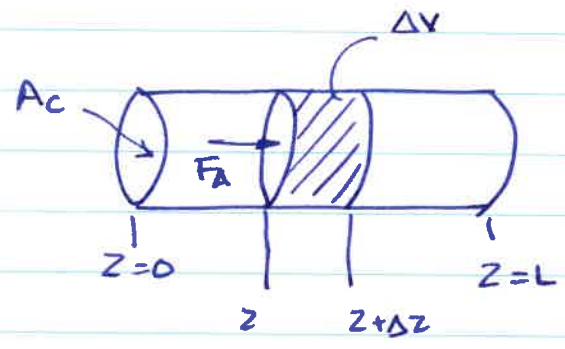
→ Not as strong as that for surface reaction

Activation energy

→ 8 - 24 kJ/mol ⇒ most likely strongly diffusion limited

→ > 200 kJ/mol ⇒ reaction rate limited.

Mass transfer and reaction in packed bed



shell balance at steady state

$$[\text{rate}]_{\text{in}} - [\text{rate}]_{\text{out}} + [\text{rate of formation of A}] = 0$$

$$AcW_{A2}|_z - AcW_{A2}|_{z+\Delta z} + r'_A P_b Ac \Delta z = 0$$

dividing by $Ac \Delta z$ and taking limit as $\Delta z \rightarrow 0$

$$- \frac{dW_{A2}}{dz} + \overset{r'_A}{r'_A P_b} = 0 \quad \text{--- (1)}$$

$$W_{A2} = - D_{AB} \frac{dC_{AB}}{dz} + y_{AB} (W_{A2} + W_{B2})$$


$J_A + B_A$

$$B_{Az} = y_{Ab} (w_{Az} + w_{Bz}) = y_{Ab} cU$$

$$= U C_{Ab}$$

∴ equation (1) becomes

$$D_{AB} \frac{d^2 C_A}{dz^2} - U \frac{dC_A}{dz} + r_A = 0 \quad \text{--- (2)}$$

 diffusion / dispersion in axial direction

$$D_{AB} \rightarrow D_a$$

$$-r_A = -\Omega(r_{Ab})$$

For 1st order kinetics

$$-r_A = -\Omega k_1 C_{Ab}$$

∴ (2) becomes

$$\boxed{D_a \frac{d^2 C_{Ab}}{dz^2} - U \frac{dC_{Ab}}{dz} - \Omega k_1 C_{Ab} = 0} \quad \text{--- (3)}$$

Neglecting axial dispersion

$$\left| U \frac{dC_{Ab}}{dz} \right| \gg \left| D_{ax} \frac{d^2C_{Ab}}{dz^2} \right|$$

$$\frac{dC_{Ab}}{dz} = \frac{-\Omega k_1 C_{Ab}}{U}$$

$$C_{Ab} = C_{Ab0} \text{ at } z = 0$$

$$\Rightarrow C_{Ab} = C_{Ab0} \exp\left[\frac{-\Omega k_1 z}{U}\right]$$

$$\boxed{X = 1 - \frac{C_{Ab}}{C_{Ab0}} = 1 - \exp\left[\frac{-k_1 \Omega L}{U}\right]}$$