

SIMULATION STUDY ON THE EFFECT OF FUEL-INLET ANGLE ON THE  
SWIRLING COMBUSTION

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## ABSTRACT

Swirling flameless combustion has been highly concerned nowadays due to ultra-low  $\text{NO}_x$  and pollutant emission while delivering low temperature differential and stable combustion. Thanks to the rapid developed computational ability, simulation study has solved higher complexity of computational fluid dynamics problems for commercial and research aspect. In this project, the effect of swirling flameless combustion has been investigated by using computational method. In this study, a new setup has been modelled by varying fuel-inlet angle and to investigate the effect of swirling flameless combustion based on non-premixed swirling combustion furnace SFR 42 configuration. Non-premixed swirling combustion furnace SFR 42 is an asymmetric swirling combustion furnace that allows rapid mixing between air and fuel upstream of the reaction zone. The design of non-premixed swirling combustion furnace introduces visual characteristics of a premixed flame. This study shows that by changing the fuel-inlet angle to 45 degree tangentially, it will produce nine times lower  $\text{NO}_x$  emission compared to fuel-inlet angle 5 degree tangentially. Fuel-inlet angle sloped 45 degree tangentially swirling combustion also produced peak temperature approximate 1400 K which has similar result compared to other cases. This condition helps to improve combustion efficiency and less pollutant emission. Temperature result of SFR 42 was taken as data validation of this project.

## ABSTRAK

Baru-baru ini, pembakaran tanpa api telah menarik perhatian ramai kerana dapat menghasil kandungan  $\text{NO}_x$  dan pencemar yang rendah serta masih dapat menyampaikan pembezaan suhu yang rendah atas dengan pembakaran yang stabil. Dengan keupayaan computasi yang cekap pada zaman ini, kajian simulasi dapat menyelesaikan masalah dalam bidang computasi dinamik bendalir dengan cekap untuk kegunaan komersial dan penyelidikan. Dalam projek ini, kesan pembakaran tanpa api akan dikaji dengan prosedur baru. Kajian ini menggunakan sudut salur masuk bahan api yang berlainan berdasarkan non-premixed pembakaran tanpa api SFR 42 konfigurasi. Non-premixed pembakaran tanpa api SFR 42 konfigurasi adalah pembakaran simetri untuk membenarkan kecampuran udara segar dengan bahan api. Rekabentuk pembakar non-premixed SFR42 konfigurasi akan menghasil ciri-ciri bersama dengan pembakar premixed. Kajian ini menunjukkan penghasilan  $\text{NO}_x$  dapat dikurangkan sebanyak sembilan kali dalam kes 45 darjah sudut salur bahan api berbanding dengan kes 5 darjah. Pertukaran sudut salur masuk bahan api ke 45 darjah dapat menghasilkan suhu puncak pembakaran sebanyak 1400 K bersama dengan kas kajian lain. Keadaan ini akan meningkatkan kecekapan pembakaran dan menurangkan perlepasan pencemaran. Keputusan kajian suhu kes SFR 42 akan diambil sebagai pengesahan data dalam projek ini.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE
	<b>DECLARATION</b>	ii
	<b>ABSTRACT</b>	iii
	<b>ABSTRAK</b>	iv
	<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	v
	<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	vii
	<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	viii
<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
	1.1 Studies of Swirling Combustion	1
	1.1.1 Study of Swirling Jet	1
	1.1.2 Computational Fluid Dynamics Development	3
	1.2 Non-premixed Asymmetric Swirling Flameless Combustion Case SRF 42	4
<b>2</b>	<b>Analysis and Description Swirl Flame</b>	<b>5</b>
	2.1 Flame Identification	5
	2.1.1 Nozzle Stabilization Flame	5
	2.1.2 Swirl Stabilization Flame	7

<b>3</b>	<b>LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>9</b>
	3.1 Swirling Combustion	9
	3.2 Computational Study for Swirl Motion	11
	3.3 Turbulence Model	13
	3.4 Computational Fluid Dynamics for Swirling Combustion	18
<b>4</b>	<b>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>20</b>
	4.1 Research Methodology Flowchart	20
	4.2 Geometry of Swirling Combustion Furnace	23
	4.3 Grid Independent Test	24
	4.4 Boundary Conditions	27
	4.5 Species Transport Equation	27
	4.6 Combustion Model	28
	4.7 NO <sub>x</sub> Calculations	19
	4.8 Case Investigation	30
<b>5</b>	<b>RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b>	<b>33</b>
	5.1 Introduction	33
	5.2 Data Validation	33
	5.3 Geometry Description	35
	5.4 Effect of tilting fuel-inlet angle of swirling combustion	37
	5.4.1 Temperature	37
	5.4.2 Velocity	46
	5.5 Exhaust Emissions	58
	5.5.1 O <sub>2</sub> Mass Fraction	58
	5.5.2 Mass Fraction of CH <sub>4</sub>	60

5.5.3 Mass Fraction of CO <sub>2</sub>	63
5.5.4 NO <sub>x</sub>	64
<b>6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>66</b>
6.1 Conclusion	66
6.2 Recommendation for further study	67
<b>References</b>	<b>68</b>

**LIST OF TABLES**

<b>TABLE NO.</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
4.1	Variant parameters used to investigate swirling combustion	34

**LIST OF FIGURES**

<b>FIGURE NO.</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1.1	Flow pattern developed by a swirl burner	2
1.1	Asymmetric swirling flameless combustion case SFR42	5
2.1	High-swirl flame generated by a vane swirler	7
2.2	Low-swirl flame	7
2.3	A cross section view of low swirl flame	8
2.4	Side view of swirl stabilization flame	9
3.1	Dimensional details of flameless combustion burner	11
3.2	Asymmetric vortex combustor	12
3.3	Turbulence intensity distributions with clockwise swirl flow	13
3.4	Turbulence intensity distributions with counter clockwise swirl flow	14
3.5	Isometric and top view of the asymmetric vortex combustion	16
3.6	3D swirl flow inside a straight pipe for numerical study	18



3.7	Tangential velocity at downstream location for $R_o = 1.00$ using (a) RSM and (b) $k - \varepsilon$ model	18
3.8	Tangential velocity at downstream location for $R_o = 2.00$ using (a) RSM and (b) $k - \varepsilon$ model	19
3.9	Axial velocity at downstream location for $R_o = 1.00$ using (a) RSM and (b) $k - \varepsilon$ model	19
3.10	Axial velocity at downstream location for $R_o = 2.00$ using (a) RSM and (b) $k - \varepsilon$ model	19
3.11	3D modelling of biogas flames combustion Furnace	21
4.1	Research methodology flowchart	24
4.2	Isometric view of swirling combustion furnace	26
4.3	Schematic diagram of swirling combustion furnace	26
4.4	View of mesh in swirling combustion furnace contains 1,020,922 cells	27
4.5	Chart of grid independent test	35
4.6	Cross section view of fuel-inlet angle tilted 40 degree	35
4.7	Isometric view of fuel-inlet angle tangentially 40 degree	32
5.1	Temperature profile at central axis of swirling combustion furnace	37
5.2	Wireframe diagram of swirling combustion furnace in isometric view	38
5.3	Isometric view of plane A, B and C	39
5.4	Temperature distribution along the centreline at different fuel-inlet angle axially	41

5.5	Temperature distribution along the centreline at different fuel-inlet angle tangentially	41
5.6	Temperature distribution along partial of centreline at different fuel-inlet angle tangentially	42
5.7	Difference cases temperature profile on plane A	43
5.8	Difference cases temperature profile on plane B	45
5.9	Difference cases temperature profile on plane C	47
5.10	Velocity magnitudes along the swirling combustion furnace centreline	50
5.11	Velocity magnitudes taken from 0mm to 100mm of centreline	50
5.12	Velocity magnitudes along the swirling combustion furnace centreline	51
5.13	Velocity magnitudes taken from 0mm to 100mm of centreline	51
5.14	Difference cases of contours of velocity magnitude on plane A	53
5.15	Difference cases of contours of velocity magnitude on plane B	55
5.16	Difference cases of contours of velocity magnitude on plane C	57
5.17	Compilation of air and fuel streamline for case A5, A45, T5 and T45	60
5.18	Mass fraction of O <sub>2</sub> against z-coordinate along centreline	62

5.19	Mass fraction of O <sub>2</sub> against z-coordinate along centreline	62
5.20	Mass fraction of CH <sub>4</sub> against z-coordinate along centreline	64
5.21	Mass fraction of CH <sub>4</sub> against z-coordinate along centreline	64
5.22	Mass fraction of CH <sub>4</sub> against z-coordinate along partial of the centreline	65
5.23	Mass fraction of CH <sub>4</sub> against z-coordinate along partial of the centreline	65
5.24	Mass fraction of CO <sub>2</sub> against z-coordinate along centreline	66
5.25	Mass fraction of CO <sub>2</sub> against z-coordinate along centreline	67
5.26	NO <sub>x</sub> against z-coordinate along centreline	68
5.27	NO <sub>x</sub> against z-coordinate along centreline	69

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

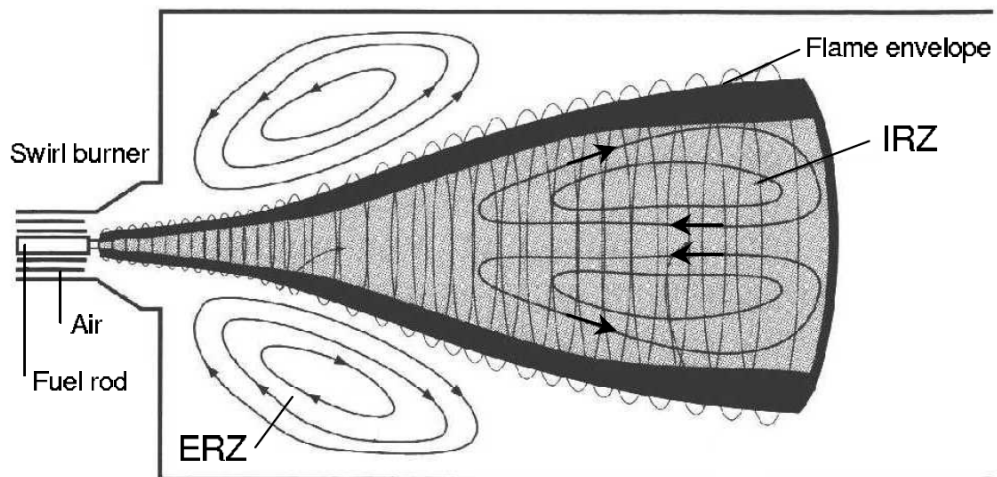
#### **1.1 Studies of Swirling Combustion**

##### **1.1.1 Study of Swirling Jet**

A lot of aerodynamics studies of swirling flow has been carried and published nowadays and accounted as references. An orifice upstream flow imparted from rotating motion creates swirling effect. A strong swirling jet will create the effect of destructive axial pressure gradient. These effects will result in reverse flow along the axial axis and creates internal recirculation zone (IRZ) which is also known as vortex breakdown. Many types of burners and combustion engines used swirling jet effect to control the flames in combustion chamber in order to promote better combustion efficiency. For instance, a lower  $\text{NO}_x$  emission can be yielded by independently adjusting the amount of swirl and flow for a low  $\text{NO}_x$  burner. The final induced

swirling flow pattern is shown in figure 1.1. External recirculation zone (ERZ) is observed between the flame brush and swirl can. ERZ will cause outflowing jet are recycling cold products and inducing swirl can wall are much cooler. System stability may be increased based on recirculation of products within the flame.

The study from Tangirala et al. was found that by increasing the heat release accelerates the gas which helps to adjust the recirculation of products. By increasing heat release, it increases the flame stability, turbulence kinetic energy levels and the products recirculation. The recirculation process was driven by heat release which includes accelerations of gas and gas expansion.



**Figure 1.1** Flow pattern developed by a swirl burner (Vanoverberghe 2004)

Some swirl effect studies and experiments were conducted by Chen and Driscoll (1988), Chen et al. (1990). The main purpose of the study was to improve flame stability and mixing for swirl numbers up to one. The recirculation zone has been established at swirl number ( $S > 0.6$ ). Further increasing the swirl number, it

will reduce the flame stability as the flame in zero-axial-velocity line failed to overlap lower-speed flow at the recirculation zone. One of the disadvantages of excessive swirl in burner is that the flame will move upstream due to increased adverse pressure gradients.

Maximum possible turbulence levels can be obtained by improving mixing and shortening flame length in order to reduce  $\text{NO}_x$  emissions. It does improve the flame stability too. There are two locations where maximum levels of turbulence kinetic energy that often occurred, which are eye of vortex of the internal recirculation zone and forward stagnation zone of the internal recirculation.

In general the ideas of swirling jet flames study includes the issues of flame stabilization,  $\text{NO}_x$  emission, combustion chamber effects, flow field and technology and technique for measurement.

### **1.1.2 Computational Fluid Dynamics Development**

A lot of new numeric methods are developing and evolving to solve problems and optimize designs. The aim of numeric methods nowadays is moving towards to more realistic modelling, increasing result accuracy and increasing the calculation performance. However, no matter how advance the computational numeric methods have been taken for calculation, experimental result still needs to be compared with simulation result. An important topic to be discussed for

computational fluid dynamics simulation is to perform grid sensitivity of studies to make sure the result is independent.

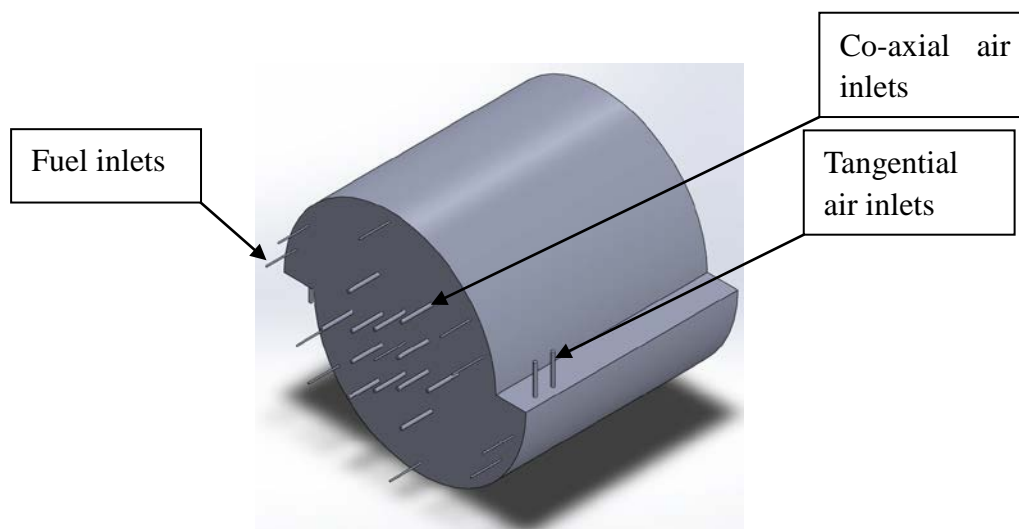
In this study, the simulation model will be carried out by using ANSYS FLUENT 16 commercial software. The scope of simulation is to evaluate the effect of inlet-fuel angle of swirl combustion.

## **1.2 Non-premixed Asymmetric Swirling Flameless Combustion Case SRF 42**

This swirling combustion furnace case SFR 42 design adopts the previous study proposed by Raid A. Alwan (2016). The concept of vortex flame provides stable flame by stabilizing the reaction zone on the boundary of a forced vortex field, which allows mixing between air and fuel upstream of the reaction zone. Interaction of axial and tangential air velocity components will generate swirl motion and axial thrust of the reacting flow within the combustion furnace.

The air flow is divided by two streams. One stream passes axially. The second stream passes tangentially. Swirl vortex flow is induced by the interaction between tangential air and circumferentially fuel. Central recirculation zone is also created by strong swirling effect in the core of the combustion furnace. The fuel is injected by 10 ports of fuel-inlet which are distributed circumferentially along the combustion furnace basement and an extra concentric axial port as shown in Figure 1.2. On the other hand, air is injected by four tangential ports and twelve co-axial ports. The configuration above successfully introduced a swirl component in the

central region of the combustion furnace, along with a secondary co-axial fuel stream.



**Figure 1.2** Asymmetric swirling flameless combustion case SFR42



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