Flow split phenomena of two-phase flow in a large-scale horizontal upward T -junction

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"Thesis - A postgraduate work which could earn you a doctorate, generally as long as the London Telephone Directory, and almost as exciting to read"

Robert Ainsley, Bluff your way at University (1988)

"Motionless they hung, huge, heavy, steady in the sky, a blasphemy against nature. Many people went straight into shock as their minds tried to encompass what they were looking at. The ships hung in the sky much in the same way that bricks don't. And still nothing happened"

Douglas Adams, The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy (1979)

"Tell me why is it hard to make arrangements with yourself when you 're old enough to repay but young enough to sell"

Neil Young, After the Goldrush (1970)

SUMMARY

Phase separation and pressure drop phenomena of two-phase flow splitting in a horizontal upward reduced T-junction were measured in a rig of industrial scale (inlet and run diameter 23 cm, branch diameter 10 cm). Measurements were performed in the stratified smooth, stratified wavy, and bubbly flow regimes, at low inlet qualities (less than 0.3 %). The inlet liquid mass flow was varied between 90 and 220 m³/h.

In general, the phenomena are qualitatively the same as in smaller-scale equipment.

It appeared that the fraction plot started deviating considerably from the total separation line at the moment the transition from churn to slug flow occurred in die branch pipeline. It could be concluded that not only the flow regime in the inlet, but also that in the branch, does influence the phase redistribution.

The Seeger 'engineering model' could be used to describe these large-scale experiments. For the inlet-to-branch pressure drop, the homogeneous model and the Chisholm model gave better predictions than the Reimann and Seeger model. The inlet-to-run pressure model was found not to apply for large-scale equipment.

CONTENTS

SYMBOLS USED

Greek symbols

 \bar{t}

 $\hat{\mathbf{r}}$

Subscripts

Dimensionless numbers

Graphical symbol

 $\overline{}$

 α

symbol description

(overline): average

1. INTRODUCTION

Someone who visits a chemical plant for the first time is mostly struck by the very large number of pipelines in between and surrounding the equipment. Not only the various apparatus have to be interconnected in die correct way, but also the right amounts of process water, steam, natural gas or pressured air have to be directed to the right position, or removed from an apparatus (condensate, waste gases, etc.). This results in an enormous amount of pipelines, junctions, valves, pumps, and so on.

For optimal operation of the plant, it is of great use to be able to predict the flows in the pipes. Especially for dividing equipment like T- and Y-junctions, it is valuable to know which part is going which way. For one-phase flow, these things are quite well known nowadays. For twophase flow, however, things are a lot more complicated, a reason why two-phase pipelines are **avoided where possible. Two-phase flow behaviour in a complicated pipeline system is still far from being fully understood, let alone being predictable.**

Two-phase flows appear in many different areas of interest, sometimes even on purpose. Examples are: injection of steam into oil wells for enhanced oil recovery, vapour-condensate flow in pipelines of industrial heat exchangers (coolers, evaporators, etc.), condensation of higher hydrocarbons in natural gas pipelines due to low temperatures of surrounding air or soil, and, where safety comes in, two-phase flow caused by a so-called Loss Of Coolant Accident (LOCA) in a light water nuclear reactor (not on purpose).

Two-phase flow passing a dividing junction is one of the most complicated aspects of the area. **When a two-phase flow is split in for instance a T-junction, die phases usually do not split evenly** over the two branches of the junction. In fact, this is hardly ever the case. It has been found quite **difficult to predict the flow split of the two phases in a T-junction over a large area of parameters.** Up till now only a few models exist, all applicable within a very small region.

Experiments that have been performed were done in small diameter (1 or 2, sometimes 4 inch) pipes. Industrial pipelines can be a lot bigger, diameters of about 10 inch are quite usual. Values

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calculated in small-scale experiments may, however, not be translated directly to larger scales. So, for upscaling purposes it is of interest to compare large-scale results with known smaller-scale values. This project deals with an industrial scale T-junction.

The objectives of this project were the following: first, to extend the existing data on phase **separation and pressure drop with these large-scale data. Second, to determine if, within the region of these measurements, a velocity effect on the phase separation or pressure drop could be observed. Third, existing -smaller scale- models should be compared to the measurements, to see if die large scale experiments differ fundamentally from die small scale measurements.**

The project was carried out for Exxon Chemical International, in this represented by R.D. Garton **and Ir. J.M. de Rijke. The measurements were performed at the Kramers Laboratorium voor** Fysische Technologie, at the faculty of Applied Physics of the Delft University of Technology, **under the direction of Prof.Dr.Ir. H.E.A. van den Akker. The superviser of the project was Dr. R.F. Mudde.**

 λ

 λ

 $\bar{\mathbf{x}}$

2. THEOR Y AND BACKGROUNDS

This chapter can be divided into roughly two parts. First, a general introduction in two-phase flow and the definitions of a T-junction is given. The second part comprises theoretical backgrounds on phase separation and pressure drop phenomena due to a two-phase flow splitting in an upward Tjunction.

In the second part of this chapter a short review on modeling phenomena is given. It contains by **far not all the models published so far, only the models that are compared with the measured values are treated. For a more extensive review on models and qualitative considerations published die reader is referred to my literature review essay written for diis project, in which most of die information in this chapter is mentioned as well [1].**

2.1. General definitions and terminology

The definitions and terms used in this project are the ones that are more ar less standardized world-wide. However, some publications, mainly older ones, do differ in this, and can cause trouble. To avoid ambiguities a short reference on the terms and definitions used in this report is given in this section. For most quantities see figure 2.1.

2.1.1. Description of a T-junction

A junction consists of a main pipe with another pipe attached to it, so three 'legs' can be **distinguished. The leg through which the flow enters the junction, is termed die** *inlet.* **The leg which can be considered as the prolongation of the inlet, is named die** *run.* **The side arm is** usually referred to as the *takeoff* or *branch*. A quantity specified for one of these (for instance **pressure, flows, etc.) is indexed 1, 2 or 3 (or i, meaning either of these) respectively.**

The orientation of an arbitrary junction can be specified using three angles, named θ , ϕ and ψ . θ denotes the deviation of the axis of the main pipe from the vertical, ϕ is the angle between the

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 $\mathcal{L}^{\text{max}}_{\text{max}}$ and $\mathcal{L}^{\text{max}}_{\text{max}}$ $\label{eq:1} \mathbf{R} = \mathbf{R} \mathbf{R} + \mathbf{R} \mathbf{R}$

axes of the main pipe and the takeoff, and ψ refers to the orientation of the takeoff with respect to **the vertical.**

A junction can be said to be either horizontal or vertical. This term refers to the orientation of the main pipe. A horizontal T-junction can be either upward, downward or horizontal dividing, this **term refers to the orientation of the branch.**

This project deals with a horizontal upward T-junction, so θ and ϕ are 90° and ψ equals 0°.

Each of the 'legs' of the T-junction has a diameter D_i, and thus a cross-sectional area A_i. When all diameters are equal the T-junction is called straight. When the takeoff diameter is smaller than **that of the inlet-and-run the term reduced T-junction is used.**

2.1.2. Definition of two-phase flow quantities

The liquid or gas mass flow in one of the pipes is referred to as L₁ or G_i, respectively. The total amount of mass flowing through one of the pipes is denoted by w_i, sometimes the mass flux, g_i is **used. So:**

$$
g_i = \frac{w_i}{A_i} \tag{2.1}
$$

Quantities referrmg to the liquid or gas are indexed L or G, respectively. Velocities U; can be additionally indexed S, denoting that the superficial velocity is meant. The gas and liquid phases have densities ρ_q and ρ_L , of which, of course, the gas density is depending on the local pressure.

The quality of a flow in one of the pipes, called x_i , is defined as the gas mass flow divided by the **total mass flow:**

$$
x_i = \frac{G_i}{L_i + G_i} \tag{2.2}
$$

Figure 2.2. Flow regimes in vertical flow

Figure 2.3. Flow regimes in horizontal flow

The density of the two-phase flow, $\overline{\rho_i}$, is defined as the harmonic mean of the phase densities:

$$
\overline{\rho_i} = \left[\frac{x_i}{\rho_{Gi}} + \frac{(1 - x_i)}{\rho_{Li}} \right]^{-1} \tag{2.3}
$$

The mean velocity of the two-phase flow, $\overline{u_i}$, is defined using a mass balance:

$$
\overline{\rho_i} \overline{u_i} = (\rho_G u_{GS})_i + (\rho_L u_{LS})_i
$$
 (2.4)

The gas volume fraction (gas volume divided by total volume) is referred to as α_i . This volume **fraction is related to the quality as follows:**

$$
x_i = \left(\frac{\alpha \rho_G u_G}{\alpha \rho_G u_G + (1 - \alpha) \rho_L u_L}\right)_i
$$
 (2.5)

Pressure drops the flow experiences passing the T-junction, are named Δp_{12} and Δp_{13} , for inlet-torun and inlet-to-branch pressure drop, respectively. The pressure drop Δp_{1i} is defined as $p_1 - p_i$. *Note* that this way of definition implies that a pressure *drop* is *positive* and vice versa. This should **be kept in mind using the other pressure drop definitions and the models.** When a pressure drop is caused by the junction itself, the index J is added: $(\Delta p_{1i})_j$.

A fluid entering the branch ('turning the corner'), is said to be *extracted* **from the two-phase flow.** The fraction of the mass flow that enters the branch (i.e. w_3/w_1) is called the *mass extraction ratio,* **or** *mass extraction fraction.*

2.2. Flow regimes in two-phase flow

The distribution of a two-phase flow over the area of the pipe it is flowing through can take place in various ways. The way in which the two-phase flow flows through die pipe depends on die superficial velocities of both phases, the geometry and orientation of die pipe and of course the physical properties of the two phases involved.

Figure 2.4. Different kinds of flow maps: (a) horizontal flow, (b) vertical flow, (c) a more 'complex' flow map for horizontal flow

In a *vertical* **pipe, usually a classification into four flow regimes is made, as depicted in figure**

- **2.2. The different regimes appearing are (in order of increasing gas fraction):**
- **Bubbly flow: the gas phase is distributed in the form of bubbles, more or less uniformly over the area of the tube.**
- **Slug flow: due to bubble coalescence larger 'bubbles', called slugs, comprehense the major part of the gas phase. These slugs have a diameter almost equal to that of die pipe. A minor part of the gase phase still travels in the form of bubbles.**
- **Churn flow: quite similar to slug flow, but more chaotic. No distinct slugs or bubbles can be observed anymore.**
- **Annular flow: die gas travels as the continuous phase, in the centre of the pipe. The liquid travels as a film attached to the pipe wall, and partly as drops, in the gas phase.**

In *horizontal* **flow, equivalent regimes can be observed, but one extra flow regime can be distinguished (see figure 2.3):**

Stratified flow: the gas and liquid phase are separated, possibly having quite a different velocity. Stratified flow can be classified furdier into strafified smoodi and stratified wavy flows.

Each flow regime differs from all die odiers in hydrodynamics, transport quantities, momentum exchange mechanisms, and so on. So, for designing purposes, it is quite useful to know or to be able to predict the flow regime in a pipeline. The transitions between the different flow regimes are however not very well known or predictable. Several models do exist (see [2] for a review on these), but none of them is generally applicable over a wide range of parameters.

Another way of predicting the flow regime is to make use of co-called flow maps. These indicate **in which a given two-phase flow can be expected to be, as a function of two or more parameters. These parameters can be quite simple, like liquid and gas superficial velocity, but difficult combinations of quantifies do occur as well, in an attempt to generalize die map. Some examples are given in figures 2.4 a to c.**

However, all known flow maps can only be used within certain limits. None of these has been **proved to be generally applicable yet.**

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Figure 2.5. Overview of earlier research: experimentors and their areas of interest

Figure 2.6. (a) a 'fraction plot', (b) a 'phase separation plot'

2.3. Phase separation phenomena

Phenomena surrounding flow split in a dividing junction have already been investigated quite widely, by a lot of authors. Figure 2.5 (taken from [3]) shows an overview of the different audiors and dieir areas of interest, given in the form of a flow map. Their findings are summarized in this section.

2.3.1. Qualitative description and explanation of phenomena

As mentioned in die introduction, die flows entering die branch and the run hardly ever have the same composition as the inlet flow, i.e. a phase redistribution takes place.

The most common ways to describe the flow split graphically are shown in figures 2.6 a and b. Figure 2.6 a represents a so-called fraction plot, in which the fraction of gas extracted into the branch is given vs. the fraction of liquid extracted. Phase redistribution can be seen in diis plot by comparing the curve with the line of equal flow split, i.e. the ' $y = x'$ -line, where the fraction of **gas extracted equals the fraction of liquid extracted.**

Another, probably the most widely used type of graph is given in figure 2.6 b, this one is called **the phase separation curve. It represents the ratio of qualities of the branch and the inlet, vs the** mass extraction rate. The advantage of this graph is that very easily can be seen to what extent the phase separation takes place. To see if the phase separation is total, one draws the so-called total **phase separation curve. By using a gas phase mass balance, this curve is easily derived as:**

$$
\frac{x_3}{x_1} = \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1}\right)^{-1} \tag{2.6}
$$

One warning should be given: in this area the term 'total phase separation' does *not* mean that the **phases do get totally separated. The only condition for using the term 'total' phase separation is** that all the gas enters the branch. The amount of liquid entering the branch as well, is of no **importance for this term.**

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Figure 2.7. Effect of tfie inlet flow regime on the flow split

 $\bar{\omega}$

Figure 2.8. Impression of a 'zone of influence'

Phase redistribution phenomena surrounding the flow split are described by many authors, and can be summarized as follows:

At bubbly and churn flow regimes, the gas is preferentially removed into the branch, except at low mass extraction rates, where the liquid is preferentially removed. At annular and slug flow **regimes, die liquid is preferentially extracted over a considerable range of the mass extraction rate, but at high mass takeoff rates more gas is removed.**

In the case of stratified flow, initially only gas or liquid (depending on the branch orientation **being upward or downward, respectively), enters the branch. With increasing superficial velocities, a point is reached where the other phase is pulled through into the branch. This point is referred to as 'point of liquid/gas carryover', 'point of pull through' or 'gas/liquid fraction threshold', the latter meaning the fraction of the not-pulled-through fluid that is extracted as entrainment begins.**

The degree of phase separation is mainly influenced by three effects (as mentioned by for instance Seeger, Reimann and Miiller [4]):

- **mertia differences of the phases,**
- **gravity effects,**
- **the distribution of the phases over the area of the inlet, mainly caused by the flow regime present.**

Taking these three effects into account, several flow split phenomena can be explained.

The fact that the phase split is dependent on the flow regime is hardly surprising, as the regime determines the distribution of the phases over the area of the pipe. Azzopardi and Whalley [5] **investigated the influence of the flow regime on the split for different orientations and a couple of flow regimes. The results of this investigation are given in figure 2.7.**

As to the dependence on the flow regime, several phase redistribution phenomena can be described by defining a so-called 'zone of influence' of the branch. Such a zone of influence is sketched in figure 2.8. The two-phase flow that enters the T-junction through this zone is expected to enter the branch. The distance this zone reaches into the inlet is mainly determined by the

pressure drop between the branch and the inlet and so depends on the mass extraction rate. This idea was originally developed by Azzopardi for annular flow, but, by defining an equivalent zone **of influence for other flow regimes at least phase separation phenomena in die lower mass extraction region can be predicted for churn and bubbly flow.**

The influence of gravity is quite comprehensible as well, the liquid generally having a much higher density than the gas. Gravity 'wants' the liquid and gas to separate.

At bubbly and churn flow conditions, the velocities of the gas and the liquid are more or les equal. Generally, this means that the gas has far less momentum than the liquid, and thus is **converted into the branch more easily. The fact that initially more liquid is removed is explained using the knowledge that the gas preferentially resides in die centre of die tube, in the so-called 'bubble street'. At low mass extraction rates, the zone of influence of die branch does not reach as far as this bubble street. Of course, this bubble street is much more pronounced in a vertical flow then in a horizontal flow.**

At annular and slug flow conditions, die velocity differences are much larger, the momentum of die gas and die liquid being about die same order of magnitude. The phase separation phenomena can then be understood by the distribution of the phases over the pipe area and by using an equivalent zone of influence.

In the case of stratified flow, initially only the phase adjacent to the branch is extracted. The pressure drop over the inlet-to-branch requires a certain minimum to start entrainment of die odier phase. This explains the occurence of the 'point of pull through'.

2.3.2. Parametric dependence

Several authors have investigated die parametric dependence of the flow split in the T-junction. In his Ph.D. thesis, Zetzmann [6] summarizes these findings and concludes that the parameters that most strongly influence the flow splits are the mass extraction rate, w₃/w₁, the ratio of the branch and inlet diameter, D_3/D_1 and the inlet flow regime. For low extraction rates, the angle ϕ between **the inlet and branch has some influence, too. Honan and Lahey [7] reported that, within the same** flow regime, the flow split is hardly depending on the inlet mass flow, but the pressure drop is.

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Figure 2.9. Proportionality of x, and x, to x, a, reported by Zetzmann

As has already been mentioned, the dependence of the phase redistribution on the mass extraction rate can be explained in terms of a 'zone of influence'. The fact that the phase separation is better at higher extraction ratios seems somewhat trivial, because it is more or less incorporated in the term 'total phase separation' (see the warning several paragraphs above). At high mass extraction ratios, most likely all the gas is extracted into the branch. This especially holds for a horizontal upward T-junction.

The dependence of the phase redistribution on die ratio of diameters of branch and inlet has been reported quite often. The diameter ratio was one of the main parameters in Zetzmann's Ph.D. research project. Other authors have published papers on this subject as well, mostly differing in the flow regime investigated [8, 9, 10]. All conclude that die phase separation is much more pronounced when a reduced T-junction is involved. This effect is however much smaller at stratified and annular flow conditions [11].

Lahey [12] gives the following explanation for this effect: when the cross sectional area of the branch is reduced, a larger pressure drop is required to reach the same mass extraction rate. This larger pressure drop results in a larger zone of influence of the branch, into which generally more gas, having less momentum, will be extracted.

It seems, however, that the important parameter in this is the *ratio* of the diameters, and not the absolute values. So a T-junction with $D_1 = 100$ mm and $D_3 = 50$ mm should render the same separation results as a T-junction with $D_1 = 50$ mm and $D_3 = 25$ mm. This example is explicitly **reported by Zetzmann.**

The dependence on the angle ϕ can be explained by taking inertia effects into account, the gas **turning die comer more easily. The higher the angle, the better the phase separation is. Zetzmann investigated die dependence on the inlet quality. He concluded diat, for qualities** beneath 5 %, the run and branch quality are directly proportional to the inlet quality, as is **illustrated m figure 2.9.**

Several audiors noticed that die orientation of the T-junction does not show a strong influence on the separation process. Seeger, Reimann and Miiller [4] as well as Hwang, Soliman and Lahey [13] mention diat measurements made by Saba and Lahey [14] in a horizontal T-junction, quite

Figure 2.10. Typical pressure profile over a T-junction

closely resemble those made by Honan and Lahey in a vertical T-junction, under essentially the same circumstances [7]. Apparently the inertia effect is stronger than the gravity effect.

2.4. Pressure drop phenomena

Pressure drops induced by a flow splitting in a T-junction are induced by several different effects. These can be divided into gravitational effects, effects because of velocity changes and effects due to the flow turning die corner or the like. Because the first two effects mentioned can be reversed, these are referred to as *reversible* **pressure changes (sometimes called Bernoulli effects), the last ones are called** *irreversible.* **Apart from these changes, in all diree legs of die T-junction pressure decreases slowly because of wall friction effects.**

When a flow is split in a T-junction, the part of the flow that enters the run mainly experiences a **pressure rise because of the decrease in velocity. The fraction diverting into the branch undergoes a pressure change as well (die pressure falling or rising depending on the flow accelerating or slowing down, respectively). Both split flows can undergo pressure drops due to hydrostatic effects. This of course depends on die orientation of the T-junction and die branch. The inlet-tobranch flow undergoes an extra pressure drop because it costs energy to force die fluid to turn the corner. The irreversible pressure drops the inlet-to-run flow experiences are mostiy quite low, if not neglegible. These phenomena cause the pressure drop to look as given in figure 2.10.** The pressure drops due to the T-junction, $(\Delta p_{12})_J$ and $(\Delta p_{13})_J$, can be obtained graphically by **extrapolating the wall friction dominated pressure loss curves in the arms of the junction, as is shown in this figure.**

2.5. Modeling flow split and pressure drop

To mention al models published on this subject would go too far. In this section the models used in this project to compare the measurements with are treated rather concisely. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, a more comprehensive and deeper treatment of the different models can **be found in my literature review essay [1].**
2.5.1. General remarks on modeling

Several models to predict the flow split and the pressure drop over the T-junction have been derived, developed and proposed. These models differ in many ways, but have one thing in **common: they are -again- only applicable within a small range of parameters. All models have been derived and tested using small diameter T-junctions, and it is not known if they are applicable as well for larger scales, because of the simple fact diat no large-scale measurements have been performed so far.**

Models that have been derived so far, can be distinguished mto three categories (see Lahey [12]): theoretical, empirical and phenomenological, flow regime based models. Theoretical models are based upon physics as much as possible and use empirical correlations only when physical knowledge is missing. Phenomenological models start from merely describing what happens. Empirical models are essentially fits that are laid through measurements.

2.5.2. Description of the problem

The problem on flow split and pressure drop in a T-junction is governed by eight parameters: three mass flows w_i , three qualities x_i and the inlet-to-run and inlet-to-branch pressure drops Δp_{12} and Δp_{13} . Generally, three of them can be specified, w_1 , x_1 and for instance Δp_{13} (the latter by **changing the friction coefficient of the branch valve). This leaves five unknown variables, requiring five independent equations. Four of these are quite easily obtained by the total mass and momentum balance and the mass and momentum balance for one of the phases. Some of the** models published are essentially a way to obtain the fifth equation.

The model presented by Saba and Lahey [14] is the only one up till now that eventually comes up with a fully defined set of five independent equations. Two models invoking geometry and flow regimes are the one developed by Hwang, Soliman and Lahey and die one of Shoham, Brill and Taitel [13, 15].

These models are not used however in this project to compare the results with, for the following **reasons: first, the models are both developed for small scale apparatus and they are quite complicated, comprising a lot of equations. In this stage of research into scaling up rules it seems**

Table 2.1. Limits in using Zetzmann's model

 $\theta = 0$ $\phi = 45, 90$ **24 < d, < 100 mm** $500 \leq g_1 \leq 3.000 \text{ kg/m}^2 \text{ s}$ $0.005 \leq x \leq 0.035$ $0.1 < w_3/w_1 < 0.8$

to be rather overdone to immediately compare the measurements with these complicated models, **while more simple models are available as well. Second, die modeling of an** *upward* **T-junction has been found most difficult of all. No model has been found capable of producing adequate predictions concerning an upward T-junction, as is reported by several authors. Expressions like 'for the upward branch all models fail', are no exception.**

2.5.3. Models used to describe die flow split

The models used in this project are the following:

Zetzmann

In his Ph.D. thesis, Zetzmann [6] varied some parameters over quite a range of variables (see table 2.1). As for the inlet quality, the zone of interest of this project is not covered within this range, but Zetzmann comes closer than others.

He presented a completely empirical model using the following equations:

for
$$
0 \leq w_3/w_1 \leq 0.12
$$
:

$$
\frac{x_2}{x_1} = b \left[exp \left[-4 \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1} \right)^{1.75} \right] - 0.147 \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1} \right) \left(1 - \frac{w_3}{w_1} \right) \right]
$$
\n(2.7)

$$
\frac{x_3}{x_1} = a \frac{\left[1 - \left(\frac{x_2}{x_1}\right)\left(1 - \frac{w_3}{w_1}\right)\right]}{w_3/w_1} \tag{2.8}
$$

for $0.12 \leq w_3/w_1 \leq 0.5$:

$$
\frac{x_2}{x_1} = b \left[exp \left[-4 \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1} \right)^{1.75} \right] - 0.147 \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1} \right) \left(1 - \frac{w_3}{w_1} \right) \right]
$$
(2.9)

	d_3/d_1		a	b
	50/100	90°	0.8	1.00
	24/50	90°	1.35	0.75
	24,50	45°	1.4	0.80
	50/50	90 ⁵	1.05	0.90
	24/24	90°	1.05	0.90
	24/24	45°	0.9	0.98
	50/50	45°	0.9	0.98

Table 2.2. Values for a and b in Zetzmann's model, depending on diameter ratio and inlet-to-branch angle

 \sim

$$
\frac{x_3}{x_1} = a \left[15.64 \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1} \right)^{0.75} \exp\left[-2.75 \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1} \right) \right] - 2.0 \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1} \right) \left(1 - \frac{w_3}{w_1} \right) \right]
$$
(2.10)

and, for $0.5 \leq w_3/w_1 \leq 1.0$:

$$
\frac{x_2}{x_1} = \frac{1}{1 - w_2/w_1} \left[1 - \left(\frac{x_3}{x_1} \right) \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1} \right) \right] \tag{2.11}
$$

$$
\frac{x_3}{x_1} = a \left[15.64 \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1} \right)^{0.75} \exp\left[-2.75 \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1} \right) \right] - 2.0 \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1} \right) \left(1 - \frac{w_3}{w_1} \right) \right]
$$
(2.12)

The parameters a and b are dependent on the diameters of inlet and branch and on the angle ϕ **between the branch and the inlet. In his thesis, Zetzmann only gives values for b. Table 2.2, taken from the Encyclopedia of fluid mechanics [2], gives values for a as well. For a further treatise on diis model see section 2.6.**

Seeger, Reimann and Miiller

In two publications, essentially comprising his Ph.D. thesis [16], Wolfgang Seeger, together with several co-authors, presents some models to predict the flow split and pressure drop. The model on pressure drop is given in die next section, die (empirical) model on the flow split is treated here [4].

For a horizontal T-junction with an upward branch, Seeger reported that he could not find any **real parametric dependence. For engineering purposes, he recommends the following expression:**

$$
\frac{x_3}{x_1} = \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1}\right)^{-0.8} \tag{2.13}
$$

This expression may not be used at low values of w₃/w₁. In the publication Seeger uses the mass **flux G; instead of W;, but as he was working with a** *straight* **T-junction and this project deals with a reduced one, things have to be transposed.**

Inlet-to-branch friction coefficient as a function of the mass extraction ratio and the Figure 2.11. branch-to-inlet diameter ratio, for single-phase flow

Determination of friction coefficients as a function of the mass extraction ratio, for $D_3/D_1 = 0.52$, (a) inlet-to-run, (b) inlet-to-branch

Seeger states that in the very low extraction region, the branch quality x₃ equals 1, even for **bubbly flow, this is supported by Reimann, Brinkmann and Domanski [3]. The following equation** is proposed to estimate the maximum value of g_3 where x_3 is still 1:

$$
g_{3,\text{max.}where x=1} = A_G * 0.23 (gD_3(\rho_L - \rho_G) \rho_G)^{0.5}
$$
 (2.14)

In this equation, $A_{\sigma} = 0.5$ for bubbly flow in the inlet, and $A_{\sigma} = 1$ for other inlet flow regimes.

2.5.4. Modeling die pressure drop

Pressure loss phenomena are quite hard to describe because theoretical models require *local* **void fractions and velocities, which are very difficult to measure. Thereby, die flow mechanisms in die T-junction are very complex and poorly understood.**

In modeling the pressure drop caused by a T-junction, diis drop is usually split into a reversible and an irreversible part (as described in section 2.4):

$$
\left(\Delta p_{1i}\right)_J = \left(\Delta p_{1i}\right)_{J,REV} + \left(\Delta p_{1i}\right)_{J,IREV} \tag{2.15}
$$

For single-phase flow, these two pressure drops are calculated as follows:

$$
(\Delta p_{1i})_{J,~REV} = \frac{1}{2} (\rho_i u_i^2 - \rho_1 u_1^2) \tag{2.16}
$$

and

$$
\left(\Delta p_{1i}\right)_{J,\,IRR} = K_{1i} \, \frac{1}{2} \rho_i \, u_i^2 \tag{2.17}
$$

In one phase flow, generally $\rho_1 = \rho_i$. The loss coefficients K_{12} and K_{13} depend on D_3/D_1 and w_3/w_1 . In figure 2.11 K₁₃ is given as a function of these parameters [17]. In figures 2.12 a and b both friction coefficients are given as a function of w_3/w_1 , for $D_3 = 0.52 * D_1$, which comes closest to the ratio involved in this project [3].

For two-phase flow, diings are not so well known. Generally, a two-phase pressure drop is calculated as a derivation from the single-phase pressure drop, according to:

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$$
\left(\Delta p_{1i}\right)_J = \left(\Delta p_{1i}\right)_{J,REV} + K_{1i} \frac{1}{2} \rho_{L_1} \overline{u_1}^2 \cdot \varphi
$$
\n(2.18)

Note **that in the irreversible term, the mean** *upstream* **velocity is used instead of the** *downstream* velocity which was used in the single-phase equation. The parameter φ is the so-called two-phase **loss multiplier. For this multiplier several models exist.**

Modeling the *inlet-to-branch* **pressure drop the most simple model is acquired by assuming** homogeneity in the inlet and branch. This model is termed the homogeneous model (hm):

$$
(\Delta p_{13})_{J,~REV} = \frac{1}{2} \overline{\rho}_3 (\overline{u_3}^2 - \overline{u_1}^2) \tag{2.19}
$$

and the homogeneous two-phase loss multiplier:

$$
\varphi_{hm} = \frac{\rho_{L_1}}{\rho_1} \tag{2.20}
$$

The friction coefficient K_{13} is taken from single-phase flow measurements.

The Chisholm model (cm) is used quite often, for example in the model of Saba and Lahey. Chisholm uses the same expression for the reversible pressure drop as given above, but the following model for the two-phase loss multiplier:

$$
\varphi_{cm} = (1 - x_1)^2 \left(1 + \frac{C_{13}^2}{X_n} + \frac{1}{X_n^2} \right) \tag{2.21}
$$

in which X_{α} is the so-called Lockhart-Martinelli parameter:

$$
\frac{1}{X_n} = \left(\frac{x_1}{1 - x_1}\right) \left(\frac{\rho_L}{\rho_G}\right)^{0.5} \tag{2.22}
$$

and

$$
C_{13}^* = \left[1 + (C_3 - 1)\left(\frac{\rho_L - \rho_G}{\rho_L}\right)^{0.5}\right] \left[\left(\frac{\rho_L}{\rho_G}\right)^{0.5} + \left(\frac{\rho_G}{\rho_L}\right)^{0.5}\right] \tag{2.23}
$$

Figure 2.13. Illustration of the 'vena contracta' $(c_2$ and c_3) in Reimann's model

Figure 2.14. Polynomial determination of friction coefficients K_{12} and K_{13} as a function of the mass extraction ratio

^C ^J has a value of 1.75 for stratified flow, and a value of 1 for homogeneous flow. Lahey uses these equations with the following polynomial expression of K_{13} :

$$
K_{13} = \left[1.18 - 0.8\left(\frac{w_3}{w_1}\right) + \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1}\right)^2\right] \left(\frac{A_1}{A_3}\right) \tag{2.24}
$$

Reimann and Seeger developed quite a complex model (die rsm) , assuming die inlet-to-branch flow passes a so-called 'vena contracta' first, before occupying the entire branch area [18]. This assumption is depicted in figure 2.13. The Reimann and Seeger model involves local slip (defined as gas velocity divided by liquid velocity) and local gas volume fractions. As these usually are quite hard to determine, finally quite rigid assumptions were made like homogeneity for all legs (so all slips equalled unity), resulting in an alternative expression for the two-phase loss multiplier:

$$
\varphi_{rsm} = \frac{\rho_{L_1} \rho_3}{\overline{\rho_1}^2} \tag{2.25}
$$

Ki3 is determined using the following polynomial:

$$
K_{13} = 1.0369 - 0.9546 \frac{w_3}{w_1} + 1.2123 \left(\frac{w_3}{w_1}\right)^2 \tag{2.26}
$$

This polynomial is depicted in figure 2.14, together with a model for K_{12} , which Reimann and Seeger developed using quite a complex model they did not simplify.

For all the models mentioned, a correction factor K was proposed, determined from measurements **at total takeoff. This resulted in an empirical model:**

$$
(\Delta p_{13})_J = (\Delta p_{13})_{J, REV} + K(\Delta p_{13})_{J, IRREV}
$$
 (2.27)

K equals 1.34 for the homogeneous model and 0.85 for the other models.

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For the *inlet-to-run* **flow one mostiy assumes that the irreversible pressure drop is neglegible, so the pressure drop is mainly due to velocity changes. However, some pressure loss occurs, resulting from effects around the T-junction itself. This is accounted for in the so-called empirical** pressure recovery coefficient K₁₂ (determined from single-phase flow measurements), which is less then unity (in this case, the term *reversible* pressure drop is of course somewhat inaccurate):

$$
(\Delta p_{12})_J = (\Delta p_{12})_{J,~REV} = \frac{1}{2} K_{12} (\overline{\rho_2} \overline{u_2}^2 - \overline{\rho_1} \overline{u_1}^2)
$$
 (2.28)

is determined empirically by:

$$
K_{12} = 0.11 + \frac{5.0}{\left[\frac{g_1 D_1}{\mu_{L_1}}\right]^{0.17}}
$$
(2.29)

For the upward branch horizontal T-junction, the Reimann and Seeger model gives better predictions for $w_3/w_1 < 0.15$ then the homogeneous model and the Chisholm model. Above this **value, all models give comparable results. The Reimann and Seeger model deviates from measurements at higher takeoff rates.**

2.6. Expectations for this project

This graduation project deals with a horizontal upward reduced T-junction. In a horizontal Tjunction, the orientation of the branch is of major miportance. The phase separation is most pronounced when the branch is oriented upward, because the gravity effect and the inertia effect reinforce each other.

In horizontal flow, the majority of the gas resides in the upper part of the pipe, independent of the flow regime (this phenomenon is roughly sketched in figure 2.3). Thus it may be expected, that with an upward oriented branch, at very low takeoff rates, only gas is extracted $(x_3 = 1)$. In the phase separation plot, this is shown by a horizontal line at $(x_3/x_1) = (1/x_1)$ -of course, the ratio of **branch-to-inlet qualities can never exceed this value. At a certain takeoff rate, liquid will be extracted into the branch, and the curve will start to deviate from this horizontal line. This**

Figure 2.15. Different appearances of the phase separation plot due to different flow regimes

Figure 2.16. Graphical representation of Zetzmann's model

tendency is shown in figure 2.15. Of course, this effect is most pronounced at stratified flow **conditions. At other flow patterns, several authors expect that the phase separation curve may** yield another 'maximum' at $w_3/w_1 > 0$, as is measured many times in a horizontal *dividing* Tjunction [e.g. 4]. This has not been proved yet, one can however expect that this maximum is that close to $w_3/w_1 = 0$, that it cannot be measured adequately enough, because of the slope of the **curve being very steep in that region.**

Mainly because in the upward oriented branch the liquid 'tries' to flow back into the run, due to the gravity effect, secondary flows can occur quite easily. This makes the flow split in a **horizontal upward T-junction even more difficult to describe.**

When invoking the model of Zetzmann, using the table presented in the Encycopaedia of Fluid Mechanics (table 2.2), one would take $a = 0.8$ and $b = 1$. However, this leads to strange results which do not satisfy boundary conditions. For instance, x_3/x_1 is less then 1 for higher extraction **rates. As already mentioned, Zetzmann himself only mentions recommandation values of b. To** me, it seems most reasonable to use $a = b = 1$, because in that case, boundary conditions at high **and low mass extraction rates are satisfied. The Zetzmann model then looks as given in figure** 2.16. However, in that case, the predictions for x_2/x_1 are rather bad.

As to phase separation, combining Seeger's empirical 'engineering' model with the fact that a **reduced T-junction usually renders better phase separation than a straight one, leads to die expectation that the 'phase separation line', will lay between the total separation line and Seeger's model. Using Seeger's equation for the maximum branch mass flux without liquid entering the branch (equation), and estimating that the maximum density die air will obtain is 1.8 kg/m' (about 0.5 bar overpressure), die corresponding mass** *flow* **would be between about 30 and 80 g/s. This, taken into account that this mass flow should entirely exist of air, can be expected to be quite too** much for this area of interest. Thus it might be expected that Seeger's equation does not apply to **this field of interest.**

A maximum in the phase separation curve (at $w_3/w_1 > 0$) might be present at higher superficial **liquid velocity (i.e. bubbly flow), but this might fall outside the measurement range.**

Figure 2.17. Prediction of K_{13} from Miller's graph, at present diameter ratio

The pressure drop of the inlet-to-run flow will be mainly reversible, caused by velocity changes. **The pressure drop the inlet-to-branch flow experiences, will be caused by the flow 'turning die corner', by velocity changes and by height differences. So the reversible as well as the irreversible** part will play a role. Using the picture of Miller (figure 2.11) for K₁₃, and combining this for the D_3/D_1 ratio for this project $({D_3}/{D_1})^2 = 0.19$ the dependence of K_{13} on W_3/w_1 is as shown in **figure 2.17.**

Pressure drop in the T-junction due to friction will be quite neglegible, as can be understood using the Blasius equation [19], which gives the friction factor 4f for high Reynolds numbers Re (with μ **= viscosity) for a single-phase flow:**

$$
4f = 0.316 \, \text{Re}^{-0.25} \, , \quad \text{Re} = \frac{\overline{\rho_1} \, \overline{u_1} \, D_s}{\mu_L} \tag{2.30}
$$

which results in a pressure drop due to friction, calculated according to:

$$
\Delta p = 4f \cdot \frac{1}{2} \overline{\rho_1} \overline{u_1}^2 \frac{L}{D_1}
$$
 (2.31)

In these expressions D_{ϵ} is a specific length scale of the system and L is the length of the T**junction. Thus, the pressure drop over the 2 meters of the T-junction is never above about 50 Pa,** which is even less then the inaccuracy of the pressure transducers. This is mainly due to the **relatively small L/D-ratio.**

3. EXPERIMENTA L

3.1. Equipment

3.1.1 Flow rig

The equipment that was constructed for the project is shown schematically in figure 3.1. The water was pumped out of the large buffer tank (see section 3.1.5) by means of a centrifugal pump. After having passed a liquid flow meter (sec. 3.2.1) the water entered a vertical section, in which the air was injected using a special sparger (sec. 3.1.3). The two-phase flow thus generated passed another bend, and immediately entered the T-junction (see next section). The purpose of the vertical section of the pipeline system is discussed in section 3.3.2.

After having split in the T-junction both the branch and the run flow passed a valve which were used to obtain a certain desired mass extraction rate. After this, each flow was brought into a separation tank (residence tanks, sec. 3.1.4), in which they were splitted in their respective liquid and gas flows. The branch liquid flow was measured after its separation tank. Using a steady state liquid mass balance, the run liquid flow equalled the difference between the total liquid flow and the branch liquid flow measured.

Both the branch and the run liquid flow back into the buffer tank again. In this section, no pump was used, die 'backstreaming' was only induced by the height difference between the water-air interface in the buffer tank and the separation tanks.

The inlet gas flow was measured before the air entered die equipment. On top of die two residence tanks a second gas flow meter was installed, to measure the branch or the run gas flow. By using two three-way valves it was possible to measure either of these using only one gas flow **meter.**

Several interesting sections of the pipeline system were made of perspex, to be able to watch things happen. Apart from the T-junction itself, the pipe immediately following the sparger and **a -vertical- part of the run were made of perspex. Thus we could check if die mixing of the two**

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Figure 3.2. The T-junction

phases was well enough, and we could have a look at die flow regimes in the vertical section of die run. A major advantage of the perspex sections turned out to be diat we could see pulses, induced by slugging in die branch, propagating through and appearing everywhere in die equipment. That this was quite an important aspect of this project will be become clear in **chapter 4.**

As this project dealt with industrial scale sizes and flows, the apparatus and other devices were rather big. The equipment was therefore built within a construction framework, the top of the equipment thus reaching two 'stocks' high (see sizes in figure 3.1). At the 'ground level', the **pump, the inlet liquid flow meter and the air sparger were placed. The T-junction was built at the 'first floor', because of the vertical pipe having to precede it. At this same level, a 'control room' was arranged, in such a way that all important switches and valves, as well as the data acquisition computer (sec. 3.2.4), were all at that same level. The liquid pump was steered by a remote control unit. The 'second floor' contained die separation tanks and die two oudet flow meters. The large buffer tank comprised two stocks.**

3.1.2. The T-junction

The T-junction is shown in figure 3.2. The junction was made out of perspex, in order to enable visualisation studies like photography and videorecording. The inlet-and-run consisted of a 2 meters long, 23.0 cm inner diameter pipe, the branch (10.0 cm inner diameter) was 1 meter long. **The distance between the front end of the junction and the splitting point was 50 cm.** The junction was connected to the equipment with three flanges, also machined out of perspex, the **branch was connected to the inlet-and-run using flanges as well. This was done to, in future projects, be able to disconnect and change the T-junction itself easily (e.g. turn it around or change its orientation), or to test various mechanical modifications inside the T-junction which might have serious impact on the phase separation.**

To reduce distortion problems in observing the T-junction, the junction was put into a squareshaped box. The space between this box and the tubes of the junction was filled with water. **Because perspex and water have approximately die same refractive index, distortion was**

Figure 3.3. The air inlet sparger, general and technical view

diminished to an acceptable level. To minimize algae growth in diis box, demineralized water was used. An anti-algae medicin could not be used, because of the danger it would dissolve the chloroform used to glue the perspex, and dius cause leakages.

To measure die pressure at various places over die T-junction, several holes were made at several places in the inlet, branch and run. Into each of these either a pressure transducer could be fixed, or it could be closed off by means of a screw-like cap. The holes were dimensioned in such a way, that the front end of the pressure transducers would be flush with the inner surface of the **tube.**

3.1.3. Air inlet

Special attention had to be given to the way in which the air could be brought into the water-flow. **It had to be taken into account that, on the one hand, a large amount of air had to be injected (up to 60 Nm^/h) and, on the odier, die bubbles should not be too large, in order to prevent coalescence at large scale. Conventional ring spargers that could cope with both these requirements, however, appeared to be too large to fit in the piping network without demanding special modifications.**

The sparger that was designed and built for this project is shown in figure 3.3. It was machined out of PVC, and, to promote die mixing of die air and water, it was made in a conical shape, like a venturi-tube. The diameter of the pipe decreased gradually until die point of air injection, where it would reach a minimum. By increasing the diameter slowly again, die air would not remain at the outer part of the tube, but spread over the tube area more or less homogeneously.

At die position of the diameter minimum, an 'air chamber' was made. This air chamber was closed off by an aluminium ring, containing four holes through which the air was blown in. The air used was taken from the laboratory network and was brought into die sparger by means of four equivalent PVC tubes, after having passed a reduction valve (which reduced the overpressure to approximately 1.5 bar) and a control valve. To prevent water entering the air pipeline system in

Figure 3.4. The separation tanks: (a), inlet-to-run tank, (b), inlet-to-branch tank

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case of an accident, the air pipeline was first led above die highest possible water-air interface level, before actually entering the sparger (see also figure 3.1).

The air injection itself took place through 50 small holes (3 mm diameter), which were drilled around die tube periphery at the position of smallest diameter. In this way, the air was injected homogeneously across die periphery of die sparger, as could easily be observed in die perspex pipe immediately following die sparger.

3.1.4. Separation tanks

Figure 3.4 shows a sketch of the separation tanks.

Both the run and branch flow had to be separated into their gas and liquid phases, to determine the phase separation. This is done by using two 'knock-out' tanks, in which a two-phase flow is split by gravity. The volume needed in both tanks was estimated taking into account the magnitude and composition that die different flows were expected to have, and using simple stokes-like bubble rising and drop falling calculations as well as several corrections for this model (see e.g. [20]). Both tanks were overdesigned by approximately a factor two.

In both tanks, a baffle was fixed, to prevent air shortcut, i.e. air that would leave the tank through **the wrong (liquid-) oudet, immediately after having entered the tank. In this way, the flow was forced to rise a small distance, hence a better phase separation could be expected.**

The tank connected to the run (figure 3.4 a), had a volume of 5 m^3 (1.20 m diameter and 4 m **long). It was made of 3 mm steel, and powder-coated against oxidation. As it was completely unprocessed when it arrived at the laboratory, it was easily modified to our wishes, the entrance and liquid exit being fixed as much to the bottom of the tank as possible.**

The branch tank (figure 3.4 b), which had a volume of nearly 3 m^ (1.15 m diameter and 2.75 m long), was made of stainless steel. It had already been used in another process, and thus had flanges and cormecting points already attached to it. These were in the centre of both sides of the tank, so the inlet and oudet pipes had to be curved widiin die tank. This arose anodier problem: at slugging flow conditions in the branch, the slugwise entering of the water resulted in a trembling

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Figure 3.5. The buffer tank

and shaking of die tank, that could be felt diroughout the entire equipment and construction framework. This appeared to be rather dangerous. By turning the entering pipe up, diis problem was solved, although now the baffle, of course, was of litde use.

This tank had two small windows in it, which enabled us to observe die process of flow separation in the tank.

3.1.5. Buffer tank

The buffer and storage tank that was used (figure 3.5) contained 12 m' of water (2.23 m diameter and 3 m high). This tank was already present at die laboratory and could be used widiout large modifications.

About half-way the project, one modification was made: at high liquid flows the height of the **water in the tank would get below the pipe inlets coming from the separation tanks. This resulted in air entering the pipe between the branch tank and the buffer tank, making accurate measurements of the branch liquid flow quite impossible.**

By attaching a curved pipe to this inlet, which reached to the bottom of the buffer tank, the liquid **level of the tank could get lower, without endangering the measurements. This resulted in a significant increase of the amount of water that could be pumped around without problems, and thus in a larger parameter area that could be investigated.**

3.1.6. Process safety

The equipment is 1 to 1 to indusfrial scale. This results (apart from large diameters and tanks) in a very large amount of water present in die system (about 20 m^). Hence we were obliged to take several precautions against possible accidents widi large amounts of water coming down. One of the safety precautions has already been mentioned in section 3.1.3, preventing die water in die system entering die air inlet pipelines.

The pump that was used was a centrifugal pump. When one of the valves would accidentally be closed while the pump was switched on, this kind of pump (being a non-displacement type pump)

Figure 3.6. Level switch

Figure 3.7. Picture and principle of operation ofa liquid flow meter: B = magnetic field strength, U = induced voltage

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could end up rotating in die same small amount of liquid, and damaging itself quite severely. To prevent this, a simple measure was taken using the liquid flow meter direcdy following the pump: when this flow meter measured a flow below a certain critical setpoint for more then 30 seconds, **die pump was switched off automatically.**

Another safety measure that had to be taken was due to underestimation of die height differences between the water-air interface levels that were needed to let the water flow back to the buffer **tank, in order to reach a steady state. At high volume flow, these differences could become that large, that one of the separation tanks could overflow. At one of the first test-runs, this had appeared to be quite possible.**

To prevent such thing to happen again, which would cause severe damage to eidier the measuring equipment or the data acquisition unit, level switches were placed in bodi tanks. Such a level switch is shown in figure 3.6. When the water level would reach the longer contact pins, a warning signal was given. When the shorter pins contacted the water, indicating things were really getting critical, an alarm sound was heard, and die pump was shut off immediately. This system was directed within a small box, containing a green, an orange and a red LED, these of course **representing die safe, warning and critical situation.**

3.2. Measuring equipment and techniques

3.2.1. Liquid flow meters

The inlet and branch liquid flow were measured using magnetically inductive flow meters. The measurement is based on Faraday's law of induction, which states that when a conducting medium flows through a magnetic field, an electrical potential difference is generated over this medium, which is strictly porportional to the *average* **velocity of the medium (see figure 3.7). By measuring the voltage induced at known magnetic field strength, this velocity can be calculated. By simply multiplying by the area of the pipe, the flow is known. The only condition to use this technique is that the medium should be conductive, other properties of the fluid like density or**

Figure 3.8. Picture and principle of operation of a gas flow meter

viscosity or even the flow profile across the area do not influence the measurement. This makes diis technique quite generally applicable.

The flow meters used in this project generate an alternating magnetic field, thus inducing an **alternating voltage across the area of the pipe, which gives a more accurate measurement. The potential is measured by two platinum electrodes.**

Both liquid flow meters were designed to accurately measure velocities up to 2.00 m/s. As the diameter of the inlet liquid flow meter was 20 cm, this meant volume flows up to 226 m³/h. The branch liquid flow meter was 15 cm diameter, so this one could cope with 127 m³/h. **According to the calibration certificates accompanying the liquid flow meters, the measurement inaccuracy of both was beneath 0.4 % of the measured value, for measurements between 20 and 100 % of the full scale value. For measurements under 20 %, the inaccuracy could get as much as** 0.2 % of the maximum value (that is, 0.45 and 0.25 m³/h, respectively).

3.2.2. Gas flow meters

The inlet and oudet (branch *or* **run) gas flows were measured using gas mass flow meters (figure 3.8). These flow meters separate a well defined portion ftom the gas flow that enters the meter, and put a well known amount of energy into this side-flow. By measuring the temperature rise and using the specific heat of (in this case) air, the part separated, and thus the total amount of gas flowing through, is known. This value is processed to a signal, indicating the amount of** *normal* **cubic meters per hour (Nm'/h). This value can, of course, be corrected for the local pressure in order to obtain the local gas volume flow.**

The advantage of this method is that it is independent of the pressure and temperature of the gas flowing through, as *mass* flow is measured. The specific heat (per unit mass) of a gas is, within **limits, independent of pressure and temperature.**

Both gas flow meters were arranged to measure flows of up to 60 Nm'/h accurately. The calibration certificate said that, over the total range of calibration, the measurement inaccuracy was never over 0.75 % of the maximum value.

Figure 3.9. Picture and schematic view of a pressure transducer

Figure 3.10. The monitoring screen as presented by the data acquisition program

3.2.3. Pressure transducers

The pressure transducers used are shown in figure 3.9. The method is based on change of resistance of a compound caused by deformation. Because of the pressure difference (with respect to the pressure outside the equipment) the silicon 'window' is deformed, resulting in a change of resistance of this window. So from the measured value of the resistance, and processing this to a voltage the pressure difference can be calculated.

Eight pressure transducers were available, of which seven were positioned in die T-junction: one in the inlet and diree in the run as well as in the branch. The eighth pressure transducer was placed in the sparger. This one was used for monitoring whether die pressure of die water in die sparger wouldn't get too high. If that would happen, the pressure drop between the air inlet and the water flow could get that low, that the reduction valve had to be adjusted in order to maintain a desired inlet air flow.

The transducers were able to measure pressure differences between -1.5 and $+1.5$ bar. The **measurement inaccuracy was claimed to be lower than 0.5 % of die maximum value, over the total range of calibration.**

3.2.4. Data acquisition, monitoring and processing

The eight pressure transducers, two gas flow meters and two liquid flow meters resulted in twelve signals to be measured, preferably simultaneously. This was accomplished using a Hewlett Packard HP 3 852A data acquisition and control unit, and a Hewlett Packard HP 340/9000 workstation. Simultaneous measuring was made possible using a HP 4471 lA high speed FET multiplexer, which can switch at a maximum frequency of 100 kHz. This provided a maximum sampling frequency of over 8000 Hz, which was quite sufficient.

Software for measuring the signals and showing the measured signals on screen was already present in the laboratory and had only to be modified slightly to be able to cope with twelve channels at a time. An example of the screen is given in figure 3.10. As this program did not

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Figure 3.11. Appearance of the result-window

provide continuous monitoring, the most important signals (i.e. die four flow meter signals) were monitored using a control unit containing four voltmeters. This enabled us to detect disturbances in the steady state (for instance when the liquid pump was developing its own will) and to nullify these more easily.

To process die measured data a procedure was incorporated in die data acquisition program. This procedure calculated the flows and pressure drops from the measured voltages as well as several quantities deduced from diese data, like mass flows, flow qualities, the mass extraction rate, etc. Thereby, it calculated the deviation in the measurements and the accuracy of the derived quantities. This was all brought on screen in a result-window, of which an example is given in figure 3.11.

The processing procedure contained several safety precautions, indicating when (unawarely) measurements were taken outside the calibration area of die different equipment. These 'questionable' measurements, as well as quantities that were calculated using diese, were indicated in the results window by an asterisk (see figure 3.11).

To determine the measuring frequency and time necessary to get representative signals, the various signals were first investigated using a transiscope which could calculate the fourier spectrum of a measured signal. The maximum frequency present in the pressure transducer signals appeared to be approximately 200 Hz. The signals of die gas and liquid flow meters did not contain any frequencies higher then this. As both the sampling frequency and the measuring time **should be powers of two, a sampling frequency of 512 Hz was used.**

To determine the time needed for a representative signal, measured values made at different measuring times were compared. It appeared that the measured values did not change significantly **at measuring periods of four seconds or larger. Thus a measuring time of four seconds was used in the project. Every measurement was done five times and the results were averaged.**

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3.3. Area of interest

3.3.1. Parameter space

The indications for the area of interest of this project were given by Exxon Chemical. The focus **was put to a liquid superficial velocity of about 0.5 to 1.0 m/s, whereas the gas superficial velocity should be covering the area between 0.05 and 0.15 m/s.**

The phase separation behaviour should be investigated within the region of 'interesting' takeoffrates, which in practice meant at mass extraction rates up to about 50 %.

All experiments were performed at room temperature and no special higher-pressure conditions were required. Thus, the slight overpressure in the system was due to the flow being pumped **around.**

3.3.2. Flow regime requirements and consequences

Using the flow map given in figure 2.4 a, it could be expected that the inlet flow regime would be stratified (either smooth or wavy) in the lower liquid velocity region, and bubbly in the higher **liquid velocity region. However, Exxon Chemical wanted bubbly flow to be investigated as much as possible. To cope with this requirement, a vertical pipe (see sec. 3.1.1) was built in the setup, just preceding die T-junction.**

As can be seen from die flow map of figure 2.4 b, when the 'flows of interest' would be sent dirough a vertical pipe, almost certainly bubbly flow would occur. Because it takes a two-phase flow about ten pipe diameters to establish a new flow regime, it could be expected that when the vertical bubbly flow suddenly turned the bend and immediately entered the horizontal T-junction, at least at the junction itself the flow regime would *still* **be bubbly.**

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3.4. Measuring program setup

3.4.1. Measurement series

A measurement series was executed at constant inlet liquid and gas flows. This because changes in these caused a long period of waiting until the rig was in steady state again. A certain mass extraction rate could be established by varying the position of the two valves in the run and the branch. The value of the mass extraction rate due to the position of the valves turned out to be **quite independent of the inlet liquid or gas flow. Thus a desired mass extraction rate could be quite easily accomplished.**

A measurements series started with establishing the desired liquid flow by means of the liquid pump. When the flow rig was in steady state (which could take over two or three hours), the desired amount of gas was injected using the inlet gas control valve. This was done with the run **and inlet valves completely opened, inducing a mass extraction rate of about 28 %.**

When the equipment had reached steady state again, measurements were started. First, a series was made while gradually closing the branch valve, thus gaining a series covering the mass extraction area between 0 % and 28 %. After diis, die branch valve was opened again and a second series was started while gradually closing the run valve. This last series was continued until a measurement in the mass extraction region between 40 % and 50 % was made. Between two measurements mosdy only about a quarter of an hour had to be waited, as the changes in the flows induced by changing die position of the valves were relatively small and thus a new steady state was reached quite quickly.

In this way series of about ten measurements were made. As the most interesting extraction area is that beneath 25 % takeoff, most of the measurements were performed in that area, and only two or three were made in die 30 to 50 % takeoff area, to make the picture complete.

3.4.2. Program setup

To be sure the area of interest was investigated representatively enough, the first thing to do was to make a flow map covering the parameter space. This was done by varying the gas and liquid flows within the area of interest, with the branch valve closed, so that the two-phase flow was enabled to fully develop, with as little influence of the T-junction s possible.

After the flow map had been made, measurement points were set out in such a way, that every occuring flow regime would be investigated and that the influence of the various variables, as well as those of possibly occuring flow regime transitions would be investigated.

The results calculated by the data acquisition unit were written down in an observation journal. The phase separation was represented by making separation plots and fraction plots (see sec. 2.3.1). The pressure drop over the junction was merely recorded and used to calculate the resistance coefficients K_{12} and K_{13} (see chapter 2).

During the project photographs were taken of interesting occurrences in the behaviour of the twophase flow. These were meant merely to illustrate what was happening.

J.J . *Error consideration*

The accuracy of the quantities calculated is determined by several different sources. The measurement accuracy has already been mentioned in section 3.2. Reading errors or adjustment errors in the measured quantities do not occur mentionably, because the accuracy of the computer is quite high. Errors due to small variations in the measured signals during one measurement are taken into account by the processing program.

 $\mathcal{L}^{\text{max}}_{\text{max}}$ and $\mathcal{L}^{\text{max}}_{\text{max}}$

The main source of errors, is the fact that it is only possible within limits to check if the equipment is really in steady state. As mentioned, the steady state is believed to have appeared when the four volt meters indicating the four flow signals do not change significantly anymore. **Thus the 'steady state error'** *is* **due to a reading error. This error is estimated to be two times the 'least digit' of the voltmeter. Within the region of interest this results in a maximum relative error of about 3 %.**

In chapter 4 die errors will be treated further.

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4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Note: all the lines drawn between the measurements in the graphs in this chapter are strictly meant **for** *'guiding the eye'.* **No prediction or interpolation properties whatsoever should be attributed to or gained from these.**

4.1. Observations, trouble shooting

4.1.1. Problems in operation, trouble shooting

As already mentioned in chapter 3, the most important problem of operating the equipment was **getting die rig in steady state and keeping it diere. After die desired liquid and gas flow were set** in, it could take over three hours to reach a steady state, especially when dealing with low inlet **flows. During this period, both inlet flows had to be adjusted several times, so that eventually the desired steady state was reached. That this took so long was mainly caused by the fact that the liquid flows from the separation tanks to the buffer tank were entirely induced by gravity. Thus,** the two height differences between the air-water interface levels should match these flows. **When this had been established, measurements were started. The relatively small changes in the flows between consecutive measurements resulted in intervals of 15 to 30 minutes between these measurements.**

Problems in maintaining the steady state were reinforced by two reasons. First, because of other researchers extracting large amounts of air out of the same pressured air network sometimes a very sudden collapse of air inlet flow occured and second, because the liquid pump sometimes was developing a will of its own. By constant monitoring of the inlet flow signals, these unwanted changes could be nullified quite quickly, dius reducing die time needed to establish steady state again as much as possible. Still, something like this could easily cost another hour.

The gas flows were subject of trouble shooting more than once. The capillary tube of the outlet **gas flow meter got choked several times, because of small rust-parts entering the meter together** \sim $\overline{}$

with the air stream. This was repaired quite easily by using pressurized air to blow the capillary **dirough. After several of these operations, it appeared that this flow meter had to be re-calibrated. A major question mark during the first half of the project was the fact that, at complete takeoff, always more air seemed to come out of the equipment than was put in. This turned out to be due to die fact that the air entering die sparger was practically dry, and the air leaving the separation tanks could be assumed to be saturated widi water vapour, because of severe mixing of the two phases in the equipment. This phenomenon was then accounted for in the data processing program. It appeared that the oudet gas mass flow had to be divided by a factor of 1.02 to correct for water vapour. The calculation used to obtain this factor is given in appendix I.**

Because die liquid flow meters operate by measuring a velocity, care should be taken not to let any air get caught in die pipe leading from the branch separation tanks to the buffer tank. As mentioned in section 3.1.4, the liquid outlet pipe did not enter this separation tank at the bottom, but in the centre, and it curved towards the bottom inside the separation tank (see figure 3.4.b). **At very low extraction rates, it could happen diat die air-water interface level in this tank could get diat low, that air entered this pipe, thus spoiling the experiments. This problem was solved by, at lowering takeoff rates, gradually closing the valve in this pipeline. This increased die flow** resistance of this pipe, requiring a larger height difference to maintain steady state. In this way the **air-water interface level could be maintained above die entrance of the liquid exit pipe. As the branch separation tank contained two windows, this requirement was easily monitored, using a lamp shining through one window, and watching through the other. In the pipeline two small valves were made, to let entrapped air out of the equipment.**

Anodier measure to prevent air entrapment in diis pipeline has already been mentioned in section 3.1.5: the extension of the inlet pipe in die large buffer tank.

In section 3.1.6 already has been mentioned that, at higher flow rates, the run separation tank could overflow. This could lead to incomplete measurement series, or to the fact that no measurements could be taken at very high superficial velocities. This was remedied by simply attaching a PVC tube to the gas outlet of this tank, so diat any overflowing water would be led to the buffer tank. This was referred to as 'controlled overflow'.

Figure 4.1. Gas intake into the branch: (a), at low takeoff, (b) at high takeoff

Figure 4.2. Impression of the observed 'zone of influence' (top view)

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4.1.2. Observations of phenomena

As expected, the flow regime in die inlet was stratified or bubbly. The transition between these took place rather gradually, more and more gas entering the T-junction in the form of bubbles at increasing superficial velocity. This process continued until finally a stratification layer was hardly visible. The flow regime in the vertical section preceding die T-junction was bubbly over the entire range of measurement.

The regime in the branch was chum flow at higher takeoff rates, and slowly became slug flow at decreasing takeoffs. At low mass extraction ratios, die gas takeoff mainly took place at the 'beginning' of the branch. When the takeoff was large, the gas intake took place over the whole area of die branch. This phenomenon is sketched in figures 4.1 a and b.

In the stratified flow regime (especially at stratified smooth conditions), the T-junction almost acted as a perfect separator, only very small amounts of gas entering the run. At increasing 'bubbly character' of the inlet flow, more and more bubbles passed the branch undisturbed and entered the run.

At several different moments, a 'zone of influence' could be observed, as in the zone of the run that direcdy followed the branch no gas was present, as sketched in figure 4.2. Apparently all the gas in the corresponding section in die inlet was extracted into the branch.

The transition from chum to slug flow appeared to be quite interesting. Slug flow present in the branch resulted in a phenomenon in which bubbles, that had already entered die branch, were 'pumped' back into the main pipe because of the up-and-down movement of the slugs and were finaly entrapped in the inlet-to-run flow. Thus this resulted in a higher flow of gas into the run. **This phenomenon, that was named the** *'slug-pump effect',* **could be observed very clearly by, at branch slug flow conditions, suddenly switching off the pump. At these circumstances quite a large amount of bubbles were pumped back into the main pipe.**

This effect might contribute considerably to the decrease of gas intake into the branch. It is treated **further in section 4.3.**

Figure 4.3. (a) and (b), Impression of two frequently occurring secondary flows ('fat' arrows)

Figure 4.4. Typical time signal and fast fourier transform of churn flow, as measured in the branch

A quite interesting remark can be made already right now: it could happen diat in die inlet, run and branch diree *different* **flow regimes were present. For instance, bubbly flow in die inlet, churn or slug flow in the branch, and stratified flow in the run.**

Around the T-junction itself several secondary flows were observed, mostiy because the bubbles made some additional movements. Two of these flows were present quite pronouncedly. They are depicted in figures 4.3 a and b. A 'vena contracta' in the branch was not detected distinctiy, but neither can be claimed explicidy diat it wasn't diere.

4.1.3. Description of the signals

The twelve signals were, as mentioned, monitored using the HP workstation. By merely watching these signals, some valuable things could be remarked.

The signals of the pressure transducers were the most interesting ones, because they contain quite a lot of information, especially when comparing signals of different transducers present in die equipment.

Again, one of die most striking features was die transition from churn to slug flow in the upward branch. This transition could be monitored very well using the pressure signals. First, because when slugging started, the standard deviation of the pressure signal would increase by a factor up to about three. And second, because the signal itself changed quite specifically. At chum flow conditions, the signal was rather chaotic, and frequencies all over the sampling frequency interval (diis was not te 512 Hz as used in the project, but 16 Hz for slug flow and 64 Hz in die churn flow case) were present, as was easily seen by calculating the fast-fourier transform (fft) of the signal. The time signal of a representative chum flow and its fft signal are given in figure 4.4. The slugging of a two-phase flow causes pressure pulses, which are registrated by the pressure **transducers. A typical slug time signal and its fft are given in figure 4.5. The periodicity of die signal, coming from the slugging up and down, is quite striking. This 'heartbeat' signal results in two very pronounced frequency peaks in the fft signal. This 'slugging frequency' roughly coincides with that of the visually observed slugging. This slugging frequencies can be considered as eigenfrequencies of die system, and these dius depend on die physical properties of die fluids,**

on the geometry of the T-junction and die surrounding equipment (e.g. the bend direcdy following the branch). The 'heartbeat' signal could be heard as well, mainly at the branch valve, as die flow pulsated its way through.

The pulses induced by die slugging in the branch propagate throughout the equipment (in the same as well as in opposite direction of die flows) and can dius be registrated widi a pressure transducer anywhere in the system. That this is true is illustrated most clearly with die signal of the pressure transducer in the sparger, so several meters *upstream* **of the T-junction. In the monitoring screen given in figure 3.10 this can be observed (the signal of this pressure transducer is marked** *8* **in this figure). If these registrations were done accurately, by using the offset between two signals (or correlating them), an estimation of the speed of sound in the two-phase flow could be made. A first estimate for this velocity, as determined from these graphs is about 30 m/s, which does match literature values (see e.g. [22]).**

The influence of the slugging could be observed not only by pressure signals, but also by merely watching the perspex parts of the equipment. At slug flow conditions in the branch, bubbles would enter the T-junction and flow through the run in a pulsating way (widi the slugging frequency, of course). A very clear illustration of the pulses propagating in the upstream direction was the fact that, at slug flow conditions, the air brought into the flow in the sparger entered the water flow in quite a pronounced pulsating way as well.

Compared to all this, the gas and liquid flow signals could hardly be called interesting. They were **relatively stable and no high frequencies were present in the signals. No striking effects of the** slugging on these signals were observed, this is most likely due to the fact that the separation and **buffer tanks have a smoothing effect.**

4.2. Construction of a flow map for the horizontal tube

By keeping the branch valve closed and varying the inlet superficial gas and liquid velocity over **the range of interest, a flow map for the horizontal inlet-and-run was constructed. For this construction, about 50 measurements were made, and the flow regime at the end of the run was**

Figure 4.6. Flow map for the inlet-and-run, as obtained from observations

considered to be fully established. This might have been slightly on the optimistic side, since a two-phase flow requires at least about ten pipe diameters (2.3 meters in this case, whereas die Tjunction is 2 meters long) to fully establish die regime. However, die measurements performed can be taken as good estimations.

The flow map that followed from the measurements is given in figure 4.6. Three regimes are present: stratified smoodi, stratified wavy and bubbly flow. As mentioned in die last section, especially the transition from stratified wavy to bubbly flow is not a very sharp one.

When comparing this flow map with the ones given in figures 2.4 a and c, one sees that the form **of die stratified-to-bubbly transition is the same, but that the transition in diis project takes place at a much higher liquid velocity. Apart from die fact diat die literature flow map might not be valid** for the pipes used in this project, the following explanation might account for this difference: When the two-phase flow passes the bend just before the T-junction, the 'centrifugal' force wants **die liquid to move to die outside of die bend, but gravity wants the opposite. In the area of velocities used in this project, gravity has more influence dian the centrifugal forces. This can be** explained with the Froude number (Fr):

$$
Fr = \frac{\overline{u}^2/R}{g} \tag{4.1}
$$

In the case of the project, R, the radius of the bend, equals 0.625 m, and the maximum velocity is in the order of magnitude of 1 to 1.5 m/s. This means that the Froude number will be much less **then unity throughout the project.**

So, whereas the bend was meant to 'extend' the bubbly flow regime area (see section 3.3.2), it **might have turned out to work as a stabilization factor for stradfied flow.**

By monitoring the transition from churn to slug flow in the branch, it might be possible to acquire a flow map for the vertical section as well. This is treated in section 4.3.

To cover the area of interest as representative as possible, measurements were taken in all three different flow regimes, and several pairs of measurements were performed near to each other, at 'opposite sides' of flow regime transitions. The measuring points are indicated in the flow map.

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The numbers attached to diese in the figure correspond to die numbers given in the graphs and tables in die rest of diis report.

4.3. Phase redistribution experiments

Fourteen measurements scries were performed, each existing of about ten measurements. Three measurement series took place in die stratified smoodi regime, four in die bubbly regime and seven under stratified wavy circumstances. The series were continued widi decreasing takeoff rate, until adequate measurements were impossible because of disturbances of die steady state or air entrapping complications. This point mostly laid between 2 % and 5 % takeoff. The inlet and branch quality, die mass extraction ratio, die quality ratio and several odier quantities were determined from die flow measurements. The measured and calculated quantities are given in appendix II.

At various different moments, the *run* **gas mass flow was measured, to verify the gas mass** balance. Within a range of about 1 % to 2 %, the mass balance was satisfied.

The measurements were converted to phase separation curves and fraction plots. The phase separation plots are given in figures 4.7 a to n, togedier with the total separation curves and the curve given by die Seeger model. The explanations of die arrows present in die pictures will follow in due course.

Figure 4.7. (a) to (n), Phase separation plots, as followed from the measurements legend: - \Box measurements, - \Box total phase separation, -----: Seeger model

Figure 4.7. -continued- (a) to (n). Phase separation plots, as followed from the measurements legend: \longrightarrow \Box measurements, \longrightarrow total phase separation, -----: Seeger model

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Figure 4.7. -continued- (a) to (n), Phase separation plots, as followed from the measurements legend: \longrightarrow \Box *measurements,* \longrightarrow *total phase separation,* \longrightarrow *Seeger model*

Figure 4.7. -continued- (a) to (n), Phase separation plots, as followed from the measurements legend: —— \Box measurements, ———; total phase separation, -----; Seeger model

It is easily seen that, in the stratified flow regime (i.e. at low inlet superficial velocities), the **measurements quite closely follow die total separation line. At stratified wavy flow conditions, at** increasing inlet velocities, the measurement curve 'creeps away' from the total separation line. In **the bubbly flow region, this 'creeping' goes on, and at the measurement at highest velocity, the measurement curve is almost exactiy described by die Seeger equation. This 'creeping' phenomenon seems to be mainly dependent on the superficial liquid velocity, and not on the flow regime present. So die expectation that die T-junction will act better dian Seegers 'engineering model' is confirmed.**

A maximum in the phase separation curves was not detected, neither at $w_1/w_1 \approx 0$, nor at $w_3/w_1 > 0$. The occurence of the first mentioned maximum is no wonder, since the value of that maximum (at $x_3/x_1 = 1/x_1$), would be at least 3000. This was of course far beyond our **possibilities. A maximum at takeoff rates above zero might appear at higher liquid velocities dien reached in this project.**

Without trouble it can be seen that the model of Zetzmann (see figure 2.16) with the parameters a **and b both equalling one, does not apply to the measurements performed in this project.** Apparently, the model is too empirical to have validity within the range of this project.

One should be careful using phase separation curves, because die deviation from the total separation line is of course in vertical direction. So, a curve might look as 'quite closely following the total phase separation line', but the deviation from it can still be considerable. Anodier way of representing die phase redistribution, which does not have diis problem, is die construction of the fraction plots. These are given for the experiments in figures 4.8 a to n, togedier widi die line of equal separation, i.e. die curve given by die fraction of gas removed equalling the fraction of liquid removed. In these plots, die deviation from die total separation line (in this case the 'gas extraction fraction $= 1$ ' line) is much easier observed.

Figure 4.8. (a) lo (n), Fraction plots, as followed from the measurements legend: \Box *measurements, -----: equal phase separation*

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Figure 4.8. -continued- (a) to (n). Fraction plots, as followed from the measurements legend: — \Box measurements, -----: equal phase separation

Figure 4.8. -continued- (a) to (n), Fraction plots, as followed from the measurements legend: - \Box measurements, -----: equal phase separation

Figure 4.8. -continued- (a) to (n). Fraction plots, as followed from the measurements legend: — \Box *measurements, -----: equal phase separation*

In the fraction plots it can be observed that, while lowering the takeoff rate (\approx the liquid **extraction fraction), at a certain takeoff rate, die deviation from die total separation line starts** increasing quicker then before. In some cases, this happens rather gradually, but in some series, **diis 'bend' occurs quite suddenly. The latter case, however, coincides quite neatly widi the transition of churn flow to slug flow in die branch. The 'slug pump effect', as introduced in section 4.1.2 might be a considerable contribuant to diis. In the phase separation plots and the** fraction plots, the first measurement at which slugging occured, is indicated with an arrow. The **criterion used for die occurence of die transition was die earlier described increase in inaccuracy of the pressure signals. In this case, the inaccuracy of pressure transducer number 7 was used, because it could be expected diat die slugging was most 'severe' at diat transducer.**

In most cases, the measurement where slugging begins coincides more or less with the beginning of the kink in the fraction curve. That the determination of this transition cannot be done very **accurately can be seen in figure 4.9, where a flow map for the branch is presented, over the area of superficial phase velocities occuring in the branch during die project. The measurements that**

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Figure 4.9. Flow map for the branch, as obtained from pressure measurements

Superficial liquid velocity (m/s)

 ϵ

first showed the occurence of slugging (in a measurement series at decreasing mass extraction ratio) are given in this graph, together with their best linear fit.

With some care can however be concluded that not only the flow regime present in the inlet of the **T-junction does influence die flow split (as stated before by odier audiors), but diat die influence of the regime in die other legs (presumably mainly die branch) may not be neglected either.**

The claim of Zetzmann, that the run and branch quality are direct proportional to die inlet quality, could be verified because several series had been made at fixed liquid inlet velocity and increasing inlet quality. This was the fact for $L_1 = 90$ (two series), 150 (three) and 180 (three series) m³/h. For each of this liquid inlet velocities these 'Zetzmann plots' were constructed for three different values of the takeoff rate. These are given in figures 4.10 a to i, together with the line of equal **phase separation. The run quality curve lays of course undier diis line, die branch quality curve above it.**

Clearly is seen diat die claim of Zetzmann holds for diis T-junction at diese low inlet qualities as well.

Figure 4.10. (a) to (i), 'Zetvnann plots', as followed from the measurements legend: — \Box : measurements, -----: equal phase separation

Figure 4.10. -continued- (a) to (i), 'Zetzmann plots', as followed from the measurements -------: measurements, -----: equal phase separation $legend:$ —

Figure 4.11. General appearance of the pressure profile accross the T-junction

4.4. Pressure drop experiments

At the same fourteen points in the flow map, the pressure drops of the inlet-to-run and inlet-tobranch flow were measured. Over the measured mass extraction range the pressures of the seven pressure transducers were monitored. The inlet-to run and inlet-to branch pressure drops due to the junction, so (Δp_{12}) , and (Δp_{13}) ,, were calculated and compared to several models. The inlet-to**branch pressure drop was compared to values that were predicted by the homogeneous, the Chisholm and the Reimann and Seeger models, all three with or without involving die correction** factor K. The inlet-to-run pressure drop was compared to the nameless model that is mentioned in **chapter 2 as well.**

Because in several early measurement series, not the total pressure profile was recorded, these **measurements cannot be compared to the models.**

About half-way the project, it was found out that the run and branch were by far not long enough to assume wall friction dominated flow at the end of them. This means that the run and branch flows were not fully developed at die position of the 'last pressure transducers'. So the question is if the values of the 'last pressure fransducers' are correct. Seeger states a pipe length of up to fifty diameters might be needed for fully developed branch and run flow. To illustrate what the pressure profile accross the T-junction looked like, an example is given in figure 4.11. As expected, the flow flowing into the run experiences a (small) pressure rise due to the decrease of the velocity. The inlet-to-branch flow undergoes a pressure drop because of the height difference and because of 'turning the corner', together with a pressure drop or rise due to velocity changes. **An explanation of the 'wobble' in the branch pressure profile might be a decrease in flow velocity. This decrease could be caused by the flow occupying die total area of die branch, after having passed a 'vena contracta'.**

As a best estimate, the following procedure was followed: The value of pressure transducer 4 (see figure 2.2) was taken as the final value of the run pressure drop, and compared to the value of the first transducer (the one in the inlet). As stated in section 2.6, the friction pressure loss in the T**junction may be neglected, so no correction was needed for these values. The value of pressure transducer 7 was taken as best estimate for the eventual branch pressure. This value was corrected for the hydrostatic pressure drop.**

As some of the pressure profiles looked rather similar, only six of the fourteen measured **comparisons, chosen representatively over die area of interest, are represented graphically in this chapter. In appendix III all the measurements are given in tables.**

In figure 4.12 al to f2, the predictions of the three models for the inlet-to-branch pressure drop is **compared to the measurements. The y-axis comprises the ratio of predicted pressure drop over the** measured pressure drop, as a function of the mass extraction ratio. The '1' graphs are the **uncorrected values, in the '2' graphs the correction factor K is used.**

Some of the 'peaks' diat are present in all diree plots widiin one graph, are most probably due to too low (peaks) or too high (dips) measurements. This indicates that the pressure drop measurements are not too accurate.

As can be seen, no model really 'outclasses' the odier two over the entire area of interest. The Reimann and Seeger model gives too low predictions for all the flow regimes. This might be **explained by the fact that the version of the rsm that was used was quite a simplified one. In calculating the two-phase loss multiplier for this model, the assumption of homogeneity is quite important, as it is present in bodi die numerator and die denominator (to die power two) of die equation. As diis assumption might be somewhat optimistic, diis model can produce larger deviations than the homogeneous model, which invokes the question of homogeneity only once.** In the stratified smooth regime all models give too low predictions. In the wavy and bubbly flow regime the results of the Chisholm and the homogeneous model are comparable. Generally, with some caution can be said that the homogeneous model is slightly better then the Chisholm model. There is no real indication that the K-corrected models are better then their uncorrected equivalents. In some cases, the corrected predictions are better, but sometimes they are worse. **This does not seem to be flow regime dependent.**

At lower takeoff rates all three models tend to give too low results. At increasing takeoff rates, all models, die uncorrected as well as the corrected ones, seem to head for unity, indicating that they will render better results in that region.

Figure 4.12. -continued- (al) to (f2), Comparison of measured and predicted pressure drops (inlet-to-branch) *legend:* --------------- homogeneous model, ------------------------- Chisholm model, **0 .-** *Reimann and Seeger model*
results arul discussion

legend: • .• homogeneous model, V .• *Chisholm model. •0- Reimann and Seeger model*

Figure 4.13. (a) and (b), Comparison of measured and predicted pressure drops (inlet-to-run) legend (a): a .• *7,* V .• *9,* **0 .•** *6 legend (b):* —— \Box *3,* —— ∇ *12,* —— \Diamond —— \Box *14*

From the fact that the predictions are rather adequate, one can conclude that the branch at least is not *far* **too short for the pressure drop measurements. This was rather surprising. However, the most important conclusion of this section has to be that, generally, at larger scale the same pressure drop models may be used (with the same predictive qualities) as the ones used for the small-scale experiments.**

The inlet-to-run flow was compared to the model involving the pressure recovery coefficient, for the same six measurement series as above. These results are given in the same predicted/measured way as the inlet-to-branch measurements. In appendix III, the results of these comparisons are given as well. The results are represented graphically in figures 4.13 a and b.

The pressure recovery coefficients K_{12} calculated are less than unity, as was expected. But, as can **be seen quite clearly, the model gives too low results. This does not depend on the flow regime or any other parameter. It can be expected that this deviation is due to the fact that the run pipe is too short for the flow to have fully developed. The order of magnitude of the predictions is the same as that of the measurements, but it seems rather premature to connect any conclusions about the applicability of the inlet-to-run model for larger scale to this measurements.**

4.5. Error consideration

The inaccuracy of the pressure signals in chum flow conditions did hardly ever exceed 1 %. When slug flow occured, as mentioned this inaccuracy could be about three times higher, so up to **about 3 %. The inaccuracy of the flow measurements were under 1 % (with a small number of exceptions).**

It is quite hard to determine the error in the measurements, as the expected largest source of error, the flow rig not-being-in-steady-state, is quite hard to determine, as was already argumented in section 3.5, where an error of up to about 3 % was assumed. Thus the majority of the measurements will have an error of between 2.5 % and 5 %.

However, some errors can have considerable consequences. When a small error is made in determining for instance the mass extraction rate, in the low extraction region the error in for instance the quality ratio can be quite large. This is due to the fact that in the low extraction area, the phase separation curve and the fraction curve have a rather steep slope. So a small error in the 'x-coordinate' can have severe impact on the 'y-coordinate'. The magnitude of such an error is very hard to tell. But one should keep this in mind while considering the errors made in the measurements.

The errors in the pressure measurements are somewhat larger. From the peaks and dips in the pressure drop prediction curves, one can determine a relative error of up to about 10 *%.* **This error can most likely be mainly attributed to casual errors.**

5. CONCLUSIONS

Generally can be said that the phase separation and pressure drop at large scale qualitatively act in die same way as those at smaller scale.

At low inlet liquid velocity, the T-junction acts as an almost perfect phase separator, in the sense that hardly any gas enters the run. With increasing inlet velocities this effect decreases. A maximum in the phase separation curves has not been found.

Graphically, the phase separation takes place between the total separation line and the empirical 'engineering model', proposed by Seeger. His estimation of the maximum branch mass flux at which no liquid entrainment occurs however does not fit.

Zetzmann's empirical model does not hold for the T-junction and area of interest. The claim of Zetzmann, of proportionality of branch and run quality to the inlet quality is true for this project as well.

A new aspect in the separation theory might be the fact that it appears that not only the inlet flow regime, but the branch flow regime as well, does influence the phase separation. This has been shown by means of the *'slug-pump ejfect'* **in die branch, which seems to increase the amount of air entering die run. It has not been proved definitely, but at least strong indications exist into diat direction.**

The three inlet-to-branch pressure drop predicting models that have been investigated render predictions as good as in the case of smaller scale junctions, for which diey were developed. The homogeneous and Chisholm model give slightly better predictions than the simplified Reimann and Seeger model. The most commonly used inlet-to-run model does not apply, but this might mainly be due to the run being not long enough to reach stabilized, friction dominated flow.

6. RECOMME^^DATIONS

In order to get better insight in the flow split phenomena occurring at this larger scale, it is inevitable that many more measurements are performed.

These new measurements should focus on higher liquid superficial velocities, to determine if the inlet flow will behave even more 'bubbly', which eventually could result in a maximum in die phase separation curve at non-zero mass extraction rates.

Special attention should be attributed to the transition of churn to slug flow, as occuring in the branch. In this way the influence of the flow regime of die branch on the phase separation behaviour can be more accurately investigated. If this statement is true, it might be of interest to **investigate other flow regime transitions in the branch as well.**

Several modifications of the existing flow rig could increase the area of variables that can be **covered with the equipment. One could think of several possibilities:**

The area of superficial liquid velocities could be increased considerably by skipping the branch separation tank and putting the run separation tank in its place. In this case, the run two-phase **flow would not pass a separation tank, but would be directly brought into die buffer tank again. Of course, one would have to assume that the mass balance is always safisfied, i.e. what flows dirough die run equals the inlet minus the branch mass flows.**

By 'turning the T-junction around', i.e. swapping the inlet and the run, the new inlet would be longer and so the flow regime in this inlet would get more opportunity to fully develop. In this way die supposed stratification-stabilizing effect of the bend will be annihilated, which might lead to a better insight in the dependence on die flow regime.

Now several models have proved to be applicable to this scale as well, one could consider trying other, more difficult models. Especially the Saba and Lahey model, which is most of all based on physics, could be used to compare die measurements widi. The total Reimann and Seeger model might render better results than its simplified equivalent.

One could diink of adding a diird, bubble promoting, agent like a detergent, to the system. This would lead to an increase of the bubbly flow area, which, for die chemical industry, is most likely die most interesting regime. Another possibility for achieving this might be to promote bubbly flow in a mechanical way, for instance by using an impeller upstream of the junction.

The separation itself might be influenced by several modifications *inside* **the T-junction. Trying some existing ones like screens and small pipes, and maybe designing some ourselves might be an interesting project in order to reach a phase separation as complete and efficient as possible.**

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I. CALCULATION OF THE CORRECTION FACTOR FOR WATER VAPOUR PRESENT IN THE OUTLET AIR FLOW

All values and formulas used in diis appendix are gained from die Transport Phenomena Data Companion [21].

The way of operation of the gas mass flow meters has been described in section 3.2.2. The 'input **variable' of die meter is the specific heat per unit mass of the gas passing (in diis case air). So** this is the variable that has to be modified.

The saturated pressure of water vapour in air at 25[°]C is about 2500 Pa. That means that the water **vapour mass fraction in saturated air is slighdy less than 1 %.** The specific heat per unit mass (C_p) of humid air is given by

$$
C_p^{\text{human air}} = C_p^{\text{dry air}} + H_{\text{abs}} C_p^{\text{water vapour}} \tag{1.1}
$$

in which H_{abs} is the absolute humidity of the air at pressure p, given by

$$
H_{\text{abs}} = 0.622 \frac{p_{\nu}}{p - p_{\nu}} \tag{1.2}
$$

In this, p_v is the partial pressure of the water vapour. At $p = 1$ bar, H_{abs} is about

0.016 kg water/kg dry air. The specific heat of dry air is 1.00 kJ/kg K, teh specific heat of water vapour equals 1.87 kJ/kg K. So the specific heat of water saturated air equals 1.03 kJ/kg K. This value indicates that the mass flow meter, using the specific heat of dry air, calculates a mass flow that is a factor 1.03 too high. So, dividing the flow calculated by the flow meter by 1.03, **one obtains the mass flow of humid air. The mass fraction of dry air in this mixture is, as argued, 99 %. So to obtain the actual mass flow of dry air, one has to divide the value calculated by die mass flow meter by a factor 0.99 * 1.03, which is 1.02.**

APPENDIX II. TABLES CONTAINING THE FLOW SPLIT DATA

The numbers given at the top left hand corner of the tables correspond to the numbers in the flow map (figure 4.6).

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APPENDIX III. TABLES CONTAINING THE PRESSURE DROP DATA

The numbers given at the top left hand corner of the tables correspond to die numbers in die flow map (figure 4.6).

In the tables in this appendix, some indexes are used, that do not occur in the thesis. These are:

The symbol $d\Delta p_j$ denoted the inaccuracy in the pressure drop of pressure transducer j. These **values are used in determining the churn-slug-transition in the branch.**

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