

Energy efficient cooking pot- Ecopot

add all team members

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1 Introduction

Ecopot is an attempt to make a more fuel-efficient cooking pot for the one billion people who cook on wood gathered by hand from the ground. Making a pot which requires less firewood would decrease the world carbon footprint, but more importantly would save many people, often women, hours of tedious labor and may help reduce gender inequity.

ADD A LITTLE MORE INFO

2 Choosing the right fin shape

Convective heat transfer between a surface and the surrounding has been a major issue and a topic of study for a long time. In this project, the heat transfer performance of fin is analyzed using ANSYS workbench for the design of fin with various design configuration such as cylindrical configuration, square configuration and rectangular configuration. The heat transfer performance of fin with same base temperature having various geometries is compared. In this thermal analysis, Aluminum was used as the base metal for the fin material and for various configurations. Fin of various configuration are designed with the help of Solidworks and analysis of fin performance is done through ANSYS Fluent.

The Fin is a major component used in many systems for increasing the rate of heat transfer. By doing thermal analysis on the fins, it is helpful to know the heat dissipation and rate of heat transfer in different types of fins. Increasing the temperature difference between the fin configuration, slightly increasing the convection heat transfer coefficient or slightly increasing the surface area of the fin increases the heat transfer. Sometimes it is not economical or it is not feasible to change the first two options. Therefore we try to compare the performance of fins by changing the surface area i.e the shape of the fins.

2.1 Simulation parameters

1. Rectangular fin: Volume = $4 \times 10^{-5} m^3$, Area = $4 \times 10^{-4} m^2$, Mesh - Fine mesh, Model - Energy (ON), Viscous k-epsilon (Realizable), Boundary conditions - Inlet velocity of 5 m/s, heat transfer coefficient = 210 W/m-K (Aluminum), Solution method - SIMPLE algorithm, Initialisation - Standard, Number of iterations - 500
2. Circular fin: Volume = $4.15 \times 10^{-5} m^3$, Area = $4.15 \times 10^{-4} m^2$, Mesh - Fine mesh, Model - Energy (ON), Viscous k-epsilon (Realizable), Boundary conditions - Inlet velocity of 5 m/s, heat transfer coefficient = 210 W/m-K (Aluminum), Solution method - SIMPLE algorithm, Initialisation - Standard, Number of iterations - 500
3. Triangular fin: Volume = $2 \times 10^{-5} m^3$, Area = $2 \times 10^{-4} m^2$, Mesh - Fine mesh, Model - Energy (ON), Viscous k-epsilon (Realizable), Boundary conditions - Inlet velocity of 5 m/s, heat transfer coefficient = 210 W/m-K (Aluminum), Solution method - SIMPLE algorithm, Initialisation - Standard, Number of iterations - 500

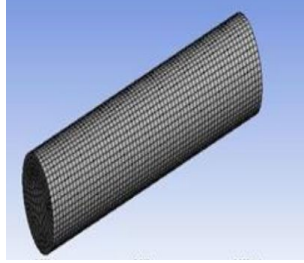


Figure 1: Meshed circular fine

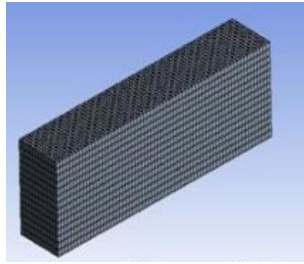


Figure 2: Meshed rectangular fine

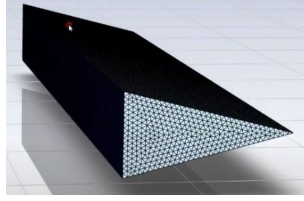


Figure 3: Meshed triangular fin

Simulations were performed for 500 iterations and convergence was observed around 400 iterations.

2.2 Simulation results

The results of the simulation along with the colorscale is shown below. The base temperature of the fin was initialised to 380 K (100 °C). The following assumptions were used for the simulation:

- Steady state
- Constant material properties (independent of temperature)
- No internal heat generation
- One-dimensional conduction
- Uniform cross-sectional area
- Uniform convection across the surface area

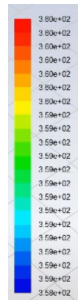


Figure 4: Heat transfer colorscale

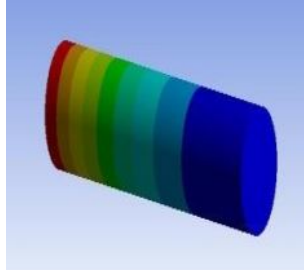


Figure 5: Heat transfer across circular fin

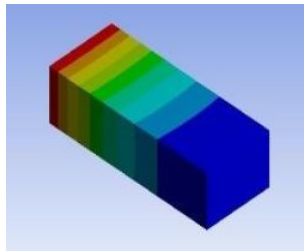


Figure 6: Heat transfer across rectangular fin

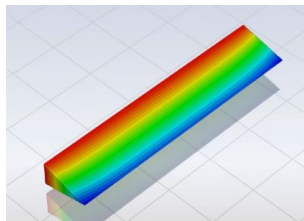


Figure 7: Heat transfer across triangular fin

2.3 Conclusion

The use of fins (extended surface), provide efficient heat transfer. Heat transfer through fin of triangular configuration is higher than that of other fin configurations. Temperature at the end of fin with triangular configuration is minimum, as compare to fins with other types of configurations. The effectiveness (defined as the ratio of the actual heat transfer that takes place from the fin to the heat that would be dissipated from the same surface area without fin) of fin with triangular configuration is also greater than other configurations. Choosing the optimum sized fin of triangular configuration will reduce the cost for heat transfer process and also increase the rate of heat transfer.

3 Designing the top of the pot

As per multiple field surveys, people prefer pots having a rounded top to latch onto rather than having separate handles attached to the top. This requires changing the design of the pot at the top and studying the heat transfer around that region.

3.1 Simulation parameters

Mesh - Fine mesh, Model - Energy (ON), Viscous k-epsilon (Realizable) with Enhanced wall treatment, Boundary conditions- Pressure based, Absolute, Time-Steady, 2D Planar, Wall - No slip, Solution method - SIMPLE algorithm, Initialisation - Standard, Number of iterations - 500

3.2 Simulation results

3.2.1 Simple extended top



Figure 8: Temperature contour at the top of the pot, iteration number 100



Figure 9: Temperature contour at the top of the pot, iteration number 300

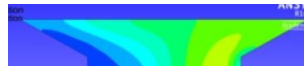


Figure 10: Temperature contour at the top of the pot, iteration number 500

3.2.2 Extended top with a rounded edge



Figure 11: Temperature contour at the top of the pot, iteration number 100

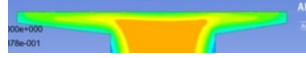


Figure 12: Temperature contour at the top of the pot, iteration number 300



Figure 13: Temperature contour at the top of the pot, iteration number 500

The colorscale is same as the scale used in section 2.2.

3.3 Conclusion

By comparing the temperature contours, we find that the top with rounded edges has a more uniform heat transfer rate across the profile and hence would lead to faster heating time. Also, since more heat is lost along the sides of the top, covering it using a suitable cover would improve the efficiency further.

However, making a rounded edge would increase the production time as it would be a two step process - making a simple extended top and then flattening the sides. However, this is a trade off that's worth making since it would lead to a more efficient pot.

4 Effect of fin configuration on turbulent natural convective heat transfer

We wish to study the difference in heat transferred due to different arrangement of fins radially. Effect of fin height on flow and temperature fields has been studied for different fin arrangements. Rahnama and Farhadi [5] reported this effect on turbulent natural convection for the case of horizontal fin arrangements. The streamline pattern obtained showed that increasing fin height to radius difference ratio more than 0.4 results in two recirculation zones.

The arrangements tested includes two fins in horizontal and two fins in vertical direction and also the same fins rotate 45 degrees relative to horizontal and vertical arrangement. Flow and temperature fields in the form of streamline and isotherm are shown superimposed. There are differences between the streamline and temperature contours for different configurations.

Buoyancy-induced motion in the lower part of the annulus is very weak due to the fact that high temperature surface (inner cylinder surface) is over the low temperature one (outer cylinder surface). So there is a stable density stratification which resists to fluid flow. In fact, there is a very weak fluid motion in the lower part of the annulus.

The fluid flow being started to circulate in the upper part of annulus, may have enough momentum to continue its motion to the lower part. The fluid along the inner cylinder tends to move away from the symmetry line and tries to bend downward upon meeting the first fin. However, the buoyancy force created by heating of air prevents air from moving downward and thus creates a region of almost stagnant flow in the bottom of the annulus. It should be mentioned that increasing the number of fins makes the number of recirculation regions to increase.

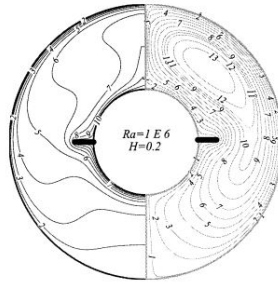


Figure 14: Isotherms for 2 fin arrangement

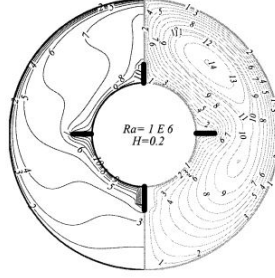


Figure 15: Isotherms for 4 fin arrangement, $\theta = 90^\circ$

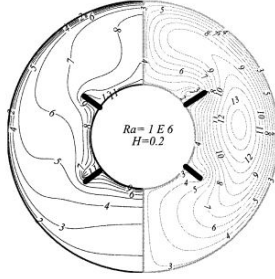


Figure 16: Isotherms for 4 fin arrangement, $\theta = 45^\circ$

4.1 Nusselt Number

The Nusselt number (Nu) is the ratio of convective to conductive heat transfer at a boundary in a fluid. Convection includes both advection (fluid motion) and diffusion (conduction). The conductive component is measured under the same conditions as the convective but for a hypothetically motionless fluid.

$$Nu = R_i \ln(R) \cdot \frac{\partial T}{\partial r}$$

where the last term represents the temperature gradient in radial direction. The mean Nusselt number is obtained by integrating the local Nusselt number over the inner cylinder and fin surfaces.

Figure shows variation of mean Nusselt number ratio for the case of two fin arrangements with ratio of fin height to radius difference.

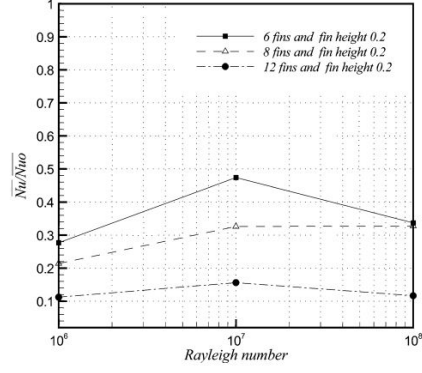


Figure 17: Variation of Nusselt number for different fin arrangements

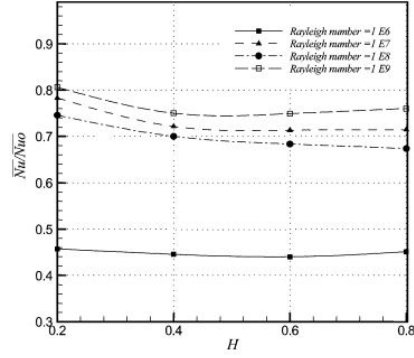


Figure 18: Variation of Nusselt number with Rayleigh number

4.2 Conclusion

The following conclusions can be drawn from the fin arrangement study:

1) For all configurations, results indicate that local Nusselt number increases with an increase in Rayleigh number. Increasing the number of fins increases mean Nusselt number ratio, with in turn increases heat transfer rate.

3) Higher fin height has some effect on fluid motion. If there is a tendency toward reducing heat transfer rate between two concentric horizontal cylinders, it is better to use higher fin height.

- 4) Fin arrangement has no significant effect on mean Nusselt number prediction although its effect on flow and temperature fields is remarkable for the case of four fin arrangement.
- 5) There is a possibility that alternating shorter and longer fins (of different heights) may increase the heat transfer rate due to an increase in the number of recirculation zones.

5 References

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