Designing Shell and Helical Coil Heat exchanger

Submitted by:

Shuvrojit Sarkar

1910072

Nafis Nahian

1910088

Imran Ahmed

1910089

Shuvro Chowdhury

1910090

Program: ME-310: Heat Transfer and Equipment Design

Supervised by:

Priom Das

Lecturer, ME Deptartment, BUET

Sakib Javed

Lecturer, ME Department, BUET

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Department of Mechanical Engineering

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Bangladesh.

To our mothers.

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Thank You!

Abstract

This study presents a comprehensive investigation into the design, fabrication, and performance evaluation of a Shell and Helical Coil Exchanger (SHCE) for diverse industrial applications. Heat exchangers are vital components in sectors such as petrochemical, pharmaceutical, food processing, and HVAC systems, facilitating efficient thermal energy transfer between fluids. The SHCE, recognized for its compact design and enhanced heat transfer capabilities, is explored for its practical advantages and applicability. A prototype SHCE system was constructed with careful attention to material selection, manufacturing techniques, and quality assurance. The construction process is documented to highlight practical challenges and corresponding solutions. Performance evaluation was carried out through experiments involving varying fluids, flow rates, and temperature differences. The resulting data were analyzed using established heat transfer models and computational tools, with outcomes presented through graphical and statistical means. The findings underscore the SHCE's potential as a highly efficient and sustainable solution, offering valuable insights for advancing thermal system design in modern engineering applications.

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Nomenclatures

A	Total surface area for heat transfer
A_c	Cross-sectional area of the tube
B	Outside diameter of inner cylinder
C	Inside diameter of outer cylinder
c_{p_c}	Specific heat capacity of cold fluid
c_{p_h}	Specific heat capacity of hot fluid
d_i	Inner diameter of coil tube
d_o	Outer diameter of coil tube
D_e	Shell-side equivalent diameter
D_{h_1}	Inner helix diameters
D_{h_2}	Outer helix diameters
D_h	Average helix diameter
G_s	Mass Velocity of cold fluid
h_i	Convection heat transfer coefficient on inner side of tube
h_o	Convection heat transfer coefficient on outer side of tube / annulus
j_H	Colburn factor
k_c	Thermal conductivity of cold fluid
k_h	Thermal conductivity of hot fluid
k_{cu}	Thermal conductivity of copper
L	Length of coil / Cu tube
$\dot{m}_c$	Mass flow rate of cold fluid
$\dot{m}_h$	Mass flow rate of hot fluid
N	Number of coils
Nu	Nusselt number
p	Coil pitch
Pr	Prandtl number
r	Average helix radius
R_{d_i}	Fouling factor on inner side of tube
R_{d_o}	Fouling factor on outer side of tube
Re	Reynolds number
T_{c_i}	Inlet temperature of cold fluid
T_{c_o}	Outlet temperature of cold fluid
T_{h_i}	Inlet temperature of hot fluid
T_{h_o}	Outlet temperature of hot fluid
U	Overall heat transfer coefficient
V_h	Velocity of hot fluid
V_f	Volume available for fluid flow in the annulus
x	Wall thickness of tube
μ_c	Dynamic viscosity of cold fluid
μ_h	Dynamic viscosity of hot fluid
ρ_c	Fluid density of cold fluid
ρ_h	Fluid density of hot fluid
ΔT_{lm}	Log Mean Temperature Difference
$\dot{Q}$	Heat transfer rate

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Heat exchangers are essential thermal devices widely employed across diverse industrial applications for the efficient transfer of thermal energy (enthalpy) between fluid streams or between a fluid and a solid boundary at varying temperatures. These applications span sectors such as petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, power generation, food processing, and HVAC systems. Over time, advancements in global industrialization have driven the need to enhance heat exchanger performance by increasing the heat transfer rate, reducing size and weight, improving thermal effectiveness, and lowering operational costs.

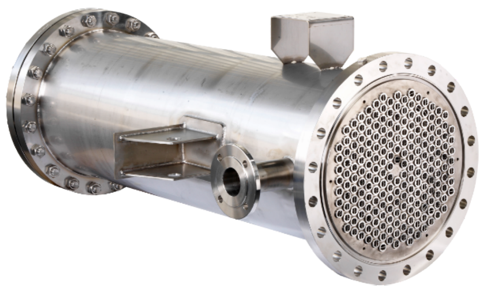

Figure 1.1: Shell and Tube Heat Exchanger Diagram.

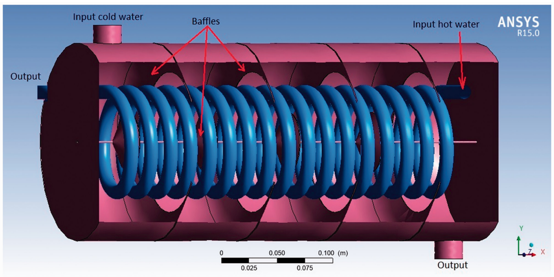

Figure 1.2: Shell and Helical Coil Heat Exchanger.

Among various heat exchanger configurations, the Helical Coil Heat Exchanger (HCHE) has garnered significant attention due to its compact design, enhanced thermal efficiency, ease of maintenance, and reduced material requirements. The helical geometry induces secondary flows—known as Dean vortices—as a result of centrifugal forces, which promote strong radial mixing of the fluid and improve heat transfer even under laminar flow conditions. These secondary flows reduce axial dispersion and ensure a narrow residence time distribution, leading to superior thermal and hydraulic performance compared to conventional straight-tube heat exchangers.

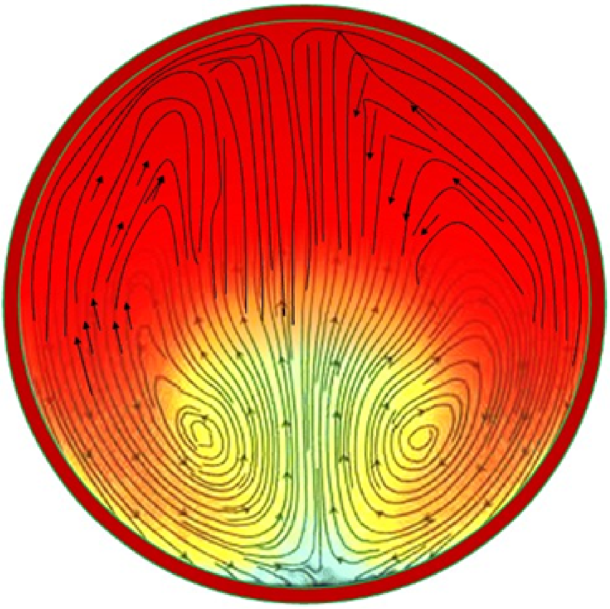

Figure 1.3: This is the image of "Dean vortices" in a cross-section of fluid flowing through a curved tube. The highest-velocity fluid is near the outer curvature, and the lowest-velocity fluid is near the inner curvature.

In this project, we investigate a hybrid configuration known as the Shell and Helical Coil Exchanger (SHCE). This design involves coiled tubes placed inside a shell, where one fluid flows through the helical coil while the other fluid flows over the coil within the shell. The helical arrangement not only allows for a greater heat transfer area within a limited volume but also facilitates efficient counterflow or cross-flow configurations, enhancing the overall heat transfer coefficient.

The current work entails the design, fabrication, and performance evaluation of a prototype SHCE. Emphasis is placed on the accurate selection of materials, geometric design (including coil diameter, pitch, and shell dimensions), and consideration of flow conditions (mass flow rate, temperature gradients). Experimental performance testing is conducted with water as both the hot and cold working fluids under controlled flow rates and inlet temperatures. Furthermore, theoretical models based on heat transfer and fluid flow correlations (e.g., Nusselt number, Reynolds number, LMTD) are used to validate experimental observations.

Ultimately, the project aims to assess the practicality and thermal effectiveness of SHCEs for real-world applications, contributing insights that can assist engineers and researchers in designing compact, cost-effective, and high-performance heat exchanger systems.

1.2 Objectives

The primary objective of this report is to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the design, fabrication, and performance evaluation of a Shell and Helical Coil Exchanger (SHCE). The specific goals are as follows:

1. **Design Evaluation:** To analyze the design principles and operational mechanisms of the SHCE, emphasizing its distinctive features and advantages

over conventional heat exchangers.

2. **Geometric Optimization:** To optimize the geometric parameters of the helical coil through computational simulations and analytical calculations, with the aim of maximizing thermal efficiency.

3. **Prototype Fabrication and Assembly:** To document the complete fabrication and assembly process of an SHCE prototype, including material selection, manufacturing techniques, and quality assurance protocols.

4. **Performance Analysis:** To experimentally assess the thermal performance of the SHCE under varying conditions involving different fluids, flow rates, and temperature differentials, supported by theoretical analysis and computational tools.

5. **Benchmarking and Comparison:** To compare the SHCE's performance with conventional heat exchanger designs in terms of heat transfer rate, compactness, and potential energy and cost savings, thereby demonstrating its practical applicability and efficiency.

By fulfilling these objectives, the study aims to establish the SHCE as a viable, efficient, and sustainable solution for a wide range of industrial heat transfer applications.

1.3 Components Used

The components utilized for the construction of the Shell and Helical Coil Exchanger (SHCE) are as follows:

- **Shell:** Fabricated using Mild Steel for structural rigidity and thermal containment.

- **Helical Coil:** Made from high thermal conductivity Copper tubing, consisting of 21 helical turns to ensure compactness and efficient heat exchange.

- **Ball Turbulators:** Inserted inside the helical coil to promote turbulence, enhance mixing, and improve heat transfer efficiency.

- **Copper Sheet:** Used for sealing, insulation supports, or flow-directing partitions within the heat exchanger assembly.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Heat exchangers are critical components in modern thermal systems, used extensively across chemical processing, power generation, refrigeration, and HVAC industries. Their performance directly impacts the energy efficiency and reliability of these systems. Among the various types, Shell and Helical Coil Heat Exchangers (SHCHE) have garnered significant attention for their enhanced thermal performance and compact design.

Shah and Sekulic provided a comprehensive classification of heat exchangers, emphasizing how different configurations can be optimized for specific heat transfer tasks [1]. Within this framework, the helical coil design has emerged as a viable solution for improving heat transfer rates, especially in compact systems.

Helically coiled tubes induce centrifugal forces that generate secondary flows (Dean vortices), which enhance radial mixing and increase heat transfer coefficients. Jayakumar et al. experimentally and numerically demonstrated the superior heat transfer capability of helically coiled exchangers compared to straight tube designs. Their computational fluid dynamics (CFD) simulations provided insights into flow distribution and heat transfer enhancement mechanisms [**jayakumarCFD**, 2]. These findings are foundational to the current project's adoption of a helical coil geometry.

Borse and Bute offered a review of helical coil heat exchangers, outlining key benefits such as compactness, higher heat transfer coefficients, and better temperature uniformity. Their work reinforces the suitability of helical coil exchangers for modern industrial systems requiring space efficiency and thermal performance [3].

Ismael et al. performed experimental analyses on plate-type heat exchangers, highlighting the trade-offs between thermal efficiency and pressure drop. Although their study focused on plate geometries, their methodology and findings are relevant for benchmarking SHCHEs and understanding practical system constraints [4].

Lines noted that helical coil heat exchangers are especially effective due to their geometry, which promotes both turbulent flow and uniform heat distribution. He also emphasized their ease of maintenance and lower manufacturing cost, making them attractive for large-scale industrial deployment [5].

David et al. investigated the effect of secondary flow motion on laminar flow heat transfer in helically coiled tubes, showing a significant increase in convective heat transfer compared to straight tubes. Their analysis of fluid dynamics remains relevant for optimizing SHCHEs in low Reynolds number regimes [6].

Lastly, Nawras and Qusay conducted structural and thermal analyses of exchangers using non-circular tubes and emphasized how tube geometry influences stress distribution and thermal gradients. Their findings suggest that careful consideration of fabrication-induced stresses is essential in ensuring the long-term reliability of coiled heat exchangers [7].

In summary, the literature validates the use of SHCHEs as a high-performance solution for various heat transfer applications. The current project builds upon these studies by implementing and evaluating a prototype SHCHE integrated with turbulence-inducing elements to further enhance thermal efficiency.

Chapter 3

Manufacturing Process

3.1 SolidWorks Model

3.2 Fabrication Process

The manufacturing process of a Shell and Helical Coil Heat Exchanger (SHCE) involves a series of meticulously planned steps to ensure structural integrity and thermal performance. The key stages are outlined below:

3.2.1 Design and Engineering

The initial phase entails designing the SHCE using CAD software (SolidWorks) based on operational requirements such as desired heat transfer rate, types of working fluids, and expected temperature and pressure ranges.

3.2.2 Material Selection

Material selection is critical to performance and durability. For this project, copper was chosen for the helical coil due to its excellent thermal conductivity, while mild steel was selected for the shell due to its mechanical strength and cost-effectiveness.

3.2.3 Coil Fabrication

The helical coil was manually formed by bending copper tubing into a spiral shape with a diameter of 4 inches. Two separate coils were fabricated and later joined using brazing techniques to ensure a continuous path for fluid flow.

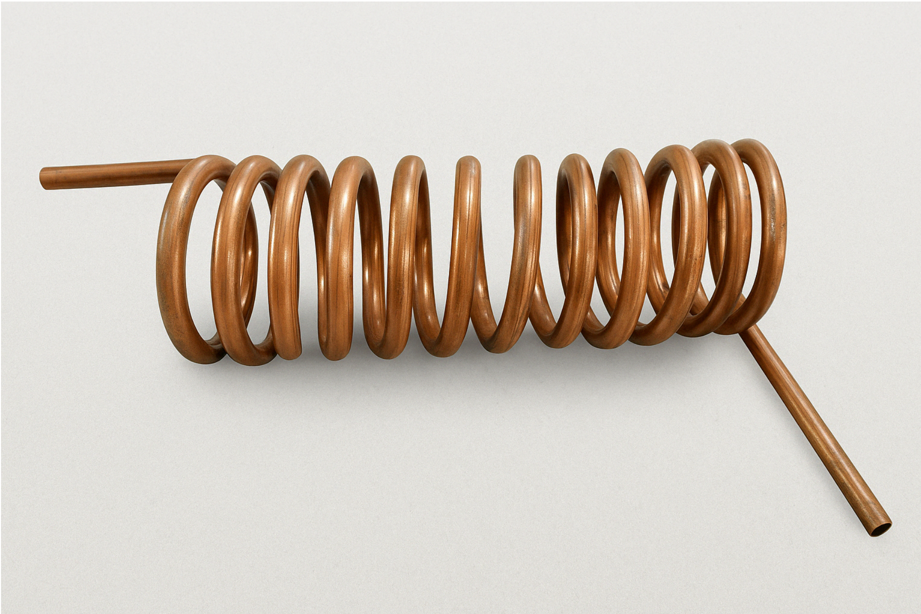

Figure 3.1: Fabricated helical coil of copper using manual bending by hand and 4 inch diameter pipe.

3.2.4 Turbulator Integration

To enhance heat transfer, stainless steel ball turbulators were brazed inside the copper tubing. These turbulators disrupt the laminar sublayer and induce turbulence, significantly increasing convective heat transfer within the coil.

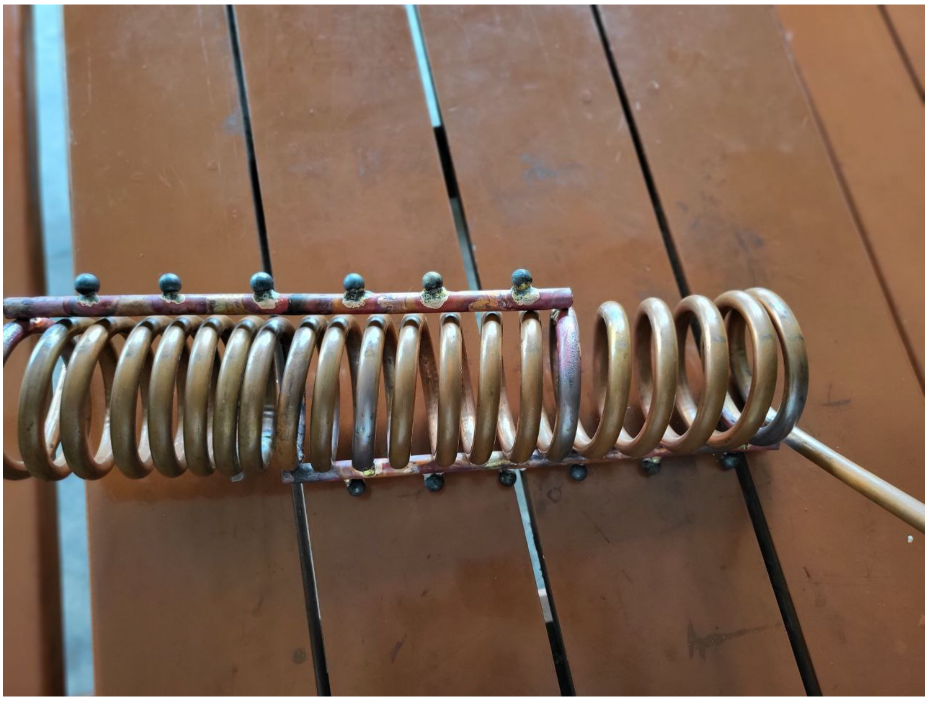

Figure 3.2: Fabricated helical coil with installed ball turbulator.

3.2.5 Shell Fabrication

A cylindrical mild steel shell with a 7-inch diameter was constructed to accommodate the helical coil. Multiple inlet and outlet ports were drilled—four in total—to allow controlled entry and exit of fluids through the shell and coil passages.

Figure 3.3: Fabricated mild steel shell before surface finish.

3.2.6 Assembly and Welding

The coil was securely placed inside the shell and welded in position to ensure a leak-proof joint. TIG welding techniques were employed to maintain clean and durable connections, minimizing any thermal resistance at joints.

Figure 3.4: Helical Coil inside mild steel shell before assembly.

Figure 3.5: Helical Coil inside mild steel shell before assembly.

3.2.7 Inlet and Outlet Configuration

Both the coil and shell were fitted with 1-inch diameter inlet and outlet nozzles. These ports ensure efficient fluid circulation while accommodating flow rate and pressure specifications.

3.2.8 Quality Testing

Rigorous quality checks, including leak testing and pressure integrity validation, were performed to ensure the system met safety and performance standards. Testing also validated uniformity of coil pitch and joint robustness.

3.2.9 Surface Finishing

Both the internal and external surfaces of the SHCE were polished to reduce fouling and enhance thermal performance. Polishing also contributes to improved aesthetics and corrosion resistance.

Figure 3.6: Manufactured Helical Coil Heat Exchanger after surface finish.

Figure 3.7: Manufactured Helical Coil Heat Exchanger after surface finish.

3.2.10 Final Inspection

Upon completion of fabrication and finishing, the entire assembly was inspected for alignment, dimensional precision, and overall system integrity.

Through careful adherence to the above procedures, the SHCE prototype was successfully manufactured, demonstrating practical applicability for industrial heat exchange scenarios. Attention to quality assurance and robust joining methods ensured the reliability and thermal efficiency of the exchanger.

3.3 Economic Analysis

The total cost to build the SHCE prototype was **9690 BDT**. A breakdown of the expenses is as follows.

- Copper Tube (30 ft): 3560 BDT
- Mild Steel Shell: 4500 BDT
- Ball Turbulators: 480 BDT
- Fittings: 550 BDT
- Transportation: 600 BDT

Chapter 4

Calculations

4.1 Probllem Statement

Design a shell and tube helical coil heat exchanger for the following conditions:

Parameter	Hot Fluid	Cold Fluid
Fluid	Water	Water
Flow Region	Tube	Shell
Inlet Temperature	70	22
Outlet Temperature	60	28
Mass Flow Rate, $\dot{m}$	0.5kg/s	0.25kg/s

4.2 Necessary Equations

Shell Side Equations

$$L = N\sqrt{(2\pi r)^2 + p^2} \tag{4.1}$$

$$V_f = \frac{\pi(C^2 - B^2)PN}{4} - \frac{\pi d_o^2 L}{4} \tag{4.2}$$

$$D_e = \frac{4V_f}{\pi d_o L} \tag{4.3}$$

$$G_s = \frac{\dot{m}}{\pi\left[(C^2 - B^2) - (D_{h2}^2 - D_{h1}^2)\right]/4} \tag{4.4}$$

$$Re = \frac{G_s D_e}{\mu_c} \tag{4.5}$$

$$Nu = \begin{cases} 0.6 \cdot Re^{0.5} \cdot Pr^{0.31} & \text{if } 50 < Re < 10000 \\ 0.36 \cdot Re^{0.55} \cdot Pr^{1/3} \cdot \left(\frac{\mu_b}{\mu}\right)^{0.14} & \text{if } Re > 10000 \\ \frac{h_o \cdot D_e}{k_c} \end{cases} \tag{4.6}$$

Coil Side Equations

$$A_c = \frac{\pi d_i^2}{4} \tag{4.7}$$

$$\dot{m} = \rho_h V_h A_c \tag{4.8}$$

$$Re = \frac{\rho_h V_h d_i}{\mu_h} = \frac{4m}{\pi d_i \mu_h} \tag{4.9}$$

$$h_{ib} = j_H \cdot \frac{k_h}{d_i} \cdot Pr_i^{1/3} \tag{4.10}$$

$$h_{ic} = h_{ib} \left[1 + 3.5 \frac{d_i}{D_h} \right] \tag{4.11}$$

$$h_i = h_{ic} \cdot \frac{d_i}{d_o} \tag{4.12}$$

$$Nu = \begin{cases} 0.023 \cdot Re^{0.8} \cdot Pr^{0.3} \\ \frac{h_i \cdot d_i}{k_h} \end{cases} \tag{4.13}$$

Performance Parameters

$$\frac{1}{U} = \frac{1}{h_o} + R_{do} + \frac{x}{k_{cu}} + \frac{1}{h_i} + R_{di} \tag{4.14}$$

$$\Delta T_{lm} = \frac{(T_{h_i} - T_{c_o}) - (T_{h_o} - T_{c_i})}{\ln\left(\frac{T_{h_i} - T_{c_o}}{T_{h_o} - T_{c_i}}\right)} \tag{4.15}$$

$$\Delta T_c = 0.99 \cdot \Delta T_{lm} \tag{4.16}$$

$$\dot{Q} = U \cdot A \cdot \Delta T_c = \dot{m}_c c_{p_c} (T_{c_o} - T_{c_i}) = \dot{m}_h c_{p_h} (T_{h_i} - T_{h_o}) \tag{4.17}$$

$$A = \pi d_o L \tag{4.18}$$

4.3 Solution

4.3.1 Assumptions

1. Heat transfer through conduction and radiation is negligible.
2. Thermophysical properties are constant at specific temperature
3. No fouling is considered.
4. Double pipe analogy is used.

4.3.2 Given Dimensions

- Inside diameter of outer cylinder, $C = 0.1651m$
- Outside diameter of inner cylinder, $B = 0m$
- Inner diameter of coil, $d_i = 0.0115m$
- Outer diameter of coil, $d_o = 0.0127m$

- Pitch, $p = 0.0127m$
- Inner diameter of helix, $D_{h_1} = 0.0762m$
- Inner diameter of helix, $D_{h_2} = 0.1016m$
- Average helix diameter, $D_h = \frac{D_{h_1}+D_{h_2}}{2} = 0.0889m$
- Average helix radius, $r = 0.0445m$

4.3.3 Shell Side Calculations

Length of coil, L

$$L = N \cdot \sqrt{(2\pi r)^2 + p^2} = N \cdot \sqrt{(2 \cdot \pi \cdot 0.0445)^2 + 0.0127^2} = 279.576 \cdot N$$

Volume for fluid flow, V_f

$$V_f = \frac{\pi}{4}(C^2 - B^2)PN - \frac{\pi}{4}d_o^2 L = 196.25 \times 10^3 \cdot N$$

Equivalent Diameter, D_e

$$D_e = \frac{4V_f}{\pi d_o L} = 0.07037m$$

Mass Velocity, G_s

$$G_s = \frac{0.5}{\frac{\pi}{4}[(0.1524)^2 - (0.1016^2 - 0.0762^2)]} = 34.026kg/(m^2 \cdot s)$$

Reynolds Number, Re

$$Re = \frac{G_s D_e}{\mu} = \frac{34.026 \cdot 0.07037}{0.000897} = 2687.33$$

Nusselt Number, Nu and Convective Heat Transfer Coefficient of Annulus, h_o

$$Nu = 0.6Re^{0.5}Pr^{0.31} \Rightarrow h_o = \frac{Nu \cdot k}{D_e} = \frac{0.6 \cdot (2687.33)^{0.5} \cdot (6.14)^{0.31} \cdot 0.607}{0.07037} = 400.92W/(m^2 \cdot K)$$

4.3.4 Coil Side Calculations

Reynolds Number

$$Re = \frac{4 \cdot 0.25}{\pi \cdot 0.433 \cdot 10^{-3} \cdot 0.0115} = 6.39 \times 10^4$$

Convection Coefficient, h_i

$$h_i = \frac{0.023 \cdot Re^{0.8} \cdot Pr^{0.3} \cdot k}{d_i} = \frac{0.023 \cdot (6.39 \times 10^4)^{0.8} \cdot (6.14)^{0.3} \cdot 0.659}{0.0115} = 12500W/(m^2 \cdot K)$$

4.3.5 Performance Parameters Calculaton

Overall Heat Transfer Coefficient, U

$$\frac{1}{U} = \frac{1}{h_i} + \frac{1}{h_o} = \frac{1}{12500} + \frac{1}{400.92} \Rightarrow U = 453W/(m^2 \cdot K)$$

LMTD

$$\Delta T_{lm} = \frac{(T_{hi} - T_{co}) - (T_{ho} - T_{ci})}{\ln\left(\frac{T_{hi}-T_{co}}{T_{ho}-T_{ci}}\right)} = \frac{(70-28)-(60-22)}{\ln(\frac{70-28}{60-22})} = 39.967K$$

Heat Transfer Rate

$$Q = \dot{m}_h c_{ph}(T_{hi} - T_{ho}) = 0.5 \cdot 4.18 \cdot (70-60) = 10.46kW$$

Area and Number of Coils

$$Q = UA\Delta T_{lm} \Rightarrow A = \frac{Q}{U\Delta T_{lm}} = \frac{10460}{453 \cdot 39.967} \Rightarrow \pi d_o L = A \Rightarrow N = \frac{A}{\pi d_o \cdot 279.576} \Rightarrow N = 51.74 \approx 52$$

Chapter 5

Results and Simulation

5.1 Statistical Analysis

- Heat Duty = 10.46kW
- Tube Outer Diameter = 12.7mm
- Tube Inner Diameter = 11.5mm
- Number of Coils = 52
- Shell Length = 2ft
- Shell Diameter = 7inch
- Pressure Test: 300 psi sustained, no leakage observed.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1 Applications

Shell and Helical Coil Heat Exchangers (SHCEs) are versatile thermal devices employed across various industries due to their compact design, efficient heat transfer capabilities, and adaptability to different operating conditions. Key application areas include:

Chemical Processing Industries

SHCEs are utilized for essential processes such as heating, cooling, condensation, and evaporation of fluids. Their ability to handle corrosive and high-viscosity liquids makes them suitable for reactors, absorbers, and distillation columns.

HVAC and Refrigeration Systems

In heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning applications, SHCEs facilitate effective heat exchange between air and refrigerants, enhancing system efficiency in residential, commercial, and industrial settings.

Power Generation

SHCEs are employed in power plants to recover heat from flue gases, converting it into steam to drive turbines. Their compact footprint and efficient heat recovery make them ideal for both conventional and renewable power systems.

Food and Beverage Industry

These heat exchangers are used in processes such as sterilization, pasteurization, and cooling. Their hygienic design and high heat transfer rates make them suitable for handling sensitive or perishable food products.

Oil and Gas Sector

SHCEs are implemented in crude oil pre-heating, natural gas cooling, and gas dehydration processes. Their ability to operate under high pressure and temperature conditions makes them reliable for upstream and downstream operations.

Pharmaceutical and Biotech Processes

Due to their efficient thermal control and compact structure, SHCEs are used in temperature-sensitive processes such as fermentation, crystallization, and purification in pharmaceutical production facilities.

Marine and Offshore Engineering

These exchangers serve critical functions in onboard cooling systems, desalination plants, and engine exhaust heat recovery in ships and offshore platforms, where space and efficiency are crucial.

Waste Heat Recovery Systems

SHCEs are suitable for recovering low-grade waste heat from industrial processes and flue gases, thereby improving overall system energy efficiency and contributing to sustainability.

Geothermal and Solar Thermal Systems

In renewable energy systems, SHCEs assist in transferring geothermal or solar-derived heat to working fluids for domestic heating or electricity generation, offering compact and durable solutions.

Automotive and Aerospace Applications

Their ability to provide efficient heat exchange in confined and dynamic environments makes SHCEs suitable for thermal management systems in vehicles, aircraft, and spacecraft.

6.2 Advantages

Helical Coil Heat Exchangers (HCHE) offer several advantages that make them suitable for a wide range of industrial applications:

1. **Compact Design:** The spiral configuration enables efficient use of space, making these exchangers ideal for installations with limited room.

2. **Enhanced Heat Transfer Efficiency:** The curved geometry promotes secondary flows (Dean vortices), which increase fluid mixing and thermal performance. The high surface area to volume ratio also contributes to a higher overall heat transfer coefficient.

3. **Low Pressure Drop:** The continuous, smooth coil path reduces flow resistance, resulting in lower pressure losses and improved pumping efficiency.

4. **Operational Flexibility:** These exchangers can operate efficiently under varying conditions of temperature, pressure, and flow rate, making them highly adaptable to diverse process requirements.

5. **Thermal Uniformity:** The design ensures even heat distribution across the coil, reducing the likelihood of hotspots and improving process control.

6. **Corrosion Resistance:** When fabricated from materials like copper or stainless steel, HCHEs offer good resistance to corrosive media, enhancing their longevity in harsh environments.

6.3 Disadvantages

Despite their benefits, Helical Coil Heat Exchangers also exhibit certain limitations that must be addressed during design and operation:

1. **Manufacturing Complexity:** Fabricating the coiled geometry with uniform pitch and curvature requires specialized tools and skilled labor, increasing the complexity and cost of production.

2. **Capacity Constraints:** While compactness is beneficial, it can restrict the scale and throughput of the exchanger. Large-capacity applications may necessitate multiple units in parallel.

3. **High Initial Cost:** The use of premium materials and custom fabrication methods leads to higher initial investment compared to traditional designs like shell-and-tube exchangers.

4. **Maintenance Difficulty:** Internal surfaces of the coil can be hard to access, making cleaning and inspection more challenging, particularly when fouling occurs.

5. **Increased Unit Weight:** In larger or high-pressure designs, the use of thicker materials may increase the overall weight, complicating transportation and installation.

6. **Limited Standardization:** Due to the custom nature of their designs, HCHEs often lack modularity or interchangeability with standard components.

7. **Flow Maldistribution Risk:** Improper design can lead to uneven fluid distribution in multi-coil arrangements, negatively impacting thermal performance and pressure stability.

6.4 Limitations

Despite the successful fabrication and testing of the Shell and Helical Coil Exchanger (SHCE), several limitations were identified in this project:

1. **Limited Coil Turns:** The number of helical coil turns was restricted due to the high cost of copper. This constrained the available surface area for heat transfer, potentially reducing the exchanger's overall thermal efficiency.

2. **Insufficient Turbulators:** Only a limited number of ball turbulators were inserted into the coil, primarily due to budget constraints. A greater number of turbulators would have enhanced turbulence, promoting better convective heat transfer within the coil.

3. **Manual Control and Monitoring:** The experimental setup lacked automated systems for flow rate and temperature regulation. Manual monitoring introduced potential inaccuracies and reduced the precision of parametric studies.

4. **Narrow Operating Range:** Testing was confined to a specific range of flow rates and inlet temperatures, which may not comprehensively represent the SHCE's performance across diverse industrial conditions.

5. **Suboptimal Shell-side Flow Distribution:** Geometric constraints and fabrication limitations led to unoptimized shell-side flow, potentially causing maldistribution and localized heat transfer inefficiencies.

6. **Inadequate Thermal Insulation:** The system insulation was not ideal, resulting in heat losses to the environment and affecting the accuracy of experimental data.

7. **Limited Computational Scope:** Due to hardware limitations, computational simulations were constrained in scope. This restricted the ability to model advanced turbulence dynamics and multiphase flow behavior.

8. **Mechanical Integrity Not Evaluated:** The prototype's compactness and mechanical stability were not analyzed under high-pressure or long-duration conditions, which are critical in industrial applications.

6.5 Future Scope

While the current study demonstrates the effectiveness of Shell and Helical Coil Exchangers (SHCEs), several enhancements could be pursued in future work to further improve performance, scalability, and applicability:

1. **Automated Coil Fabrication:** Employing automated bending machines or CNC-based tube benders can ensure consistent coil geometry, precise pitch control, and reduced material deformation during fabrication.

2. **Advanced Turbulator Designs:** Instead of discrete ball turbulators, continuous helical ribs or twisted tape inserts can be used to generate stronger turbulence and enhance convective heat transfer within the coil.

3. **Sensor Integration and Data Acquisition:** Incorporating real-time thermal monitoring systems and flow sensors can improve experimental accuracy and provide insights for predictive modeling in industrial settings.

4. **Wider Operational Testing:** Future experiments should be conducted across a broader range of operating conditions, including higher flow rates, varying fluid properties, and extended time durations to simulate real-world industrial scenarios.

5. **Multiphase and Nanofluid Studies:** Investigating the performance of SHCEs with nanofluids, gas-liquid mixtures, or non-Newtonian fluids could provide valuable insights for emerging applications in biotechnology and energy systems.

6. **Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) Enhancements:** More advanced CFD simulations using high-performance computing (HPC) can help model turbulence interactions, thermal gradients, and multiphase flow behavior in greater detail.

7. **Material and Cost Optimization:** Exploring alternative materials such as stainless steel, aluminum, or polymer composites may offer cost-effective solutions while maintaining thermal performance.

6.6 Conclusion

The primary goal of any heat exchanger is to maximize thermal performance while minimizing cost—an objective we have successfully achieved with our helical coil design. This compact, lightweight, and environmentally friendly system demonstrates exceptional efficiency.

While further enhancements, such as integrating ball turbulators directly into the helical coil, could potentially improve performance, practical constraints led us to adopt our current optimized design.

This project's success is a testament to the collaborative efforts of our course instructor, classmates, and seniors, as well as our dedicated work during this demanding academic term. We are proud to deliver a solution that balances performance, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability.

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