

# BPL\_IEC\_operation

Authors: Jan Peter Axelsson and Karl Johan Brink

In this notebook we show operation of a typical ion-exchange chromatography step. The impact of pH is also illustrated.

The model is based on the simplified model [1].

```
In [1]: run -i BPL_IEC_explore.py
```

Linux - run FMU pre-compiled OpenModelica

Model for the process has been setup. Key commands:

- par() - change of parameters and initial values
- init() - change initial values only
- simu() - simulate and plot
- newplot() - make a new plot
- show() - show plot from previous simulation
- disp() - display parameters and initial values from the last simulation
- describe() - describe culture, broth, parameters, variables with values/units

Note that both disp() and describe() takes values from the last simulation and the command process\_diagram() brings up the main configuration

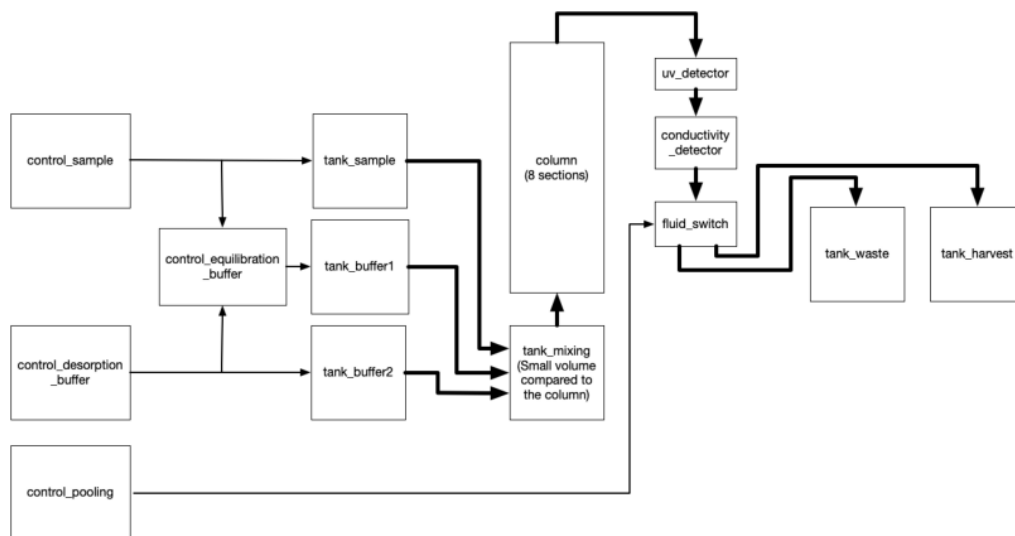
Brief information about a command by help(), eg help(simu)

Key system information is listed with the command system\_info()

```
In [2]: plt.rcParams['figure.figsize'] = [30/2.54, 24/2.54]
```

```
In [3]: # Diagram made outside Modelica for illustration
process_diagram()
```

No processDiagram.png file in the FMU, but try the file on disk.



## 1 Typical parameters an ion exchange

## chromatography column step

```
In [4]: # From given column height (h) diameter (d) and linear flow rate (lfr)
# actual column volume (V) and volume flow rate (VFR) are calculated below

from numpy import pi
h = 20.0
d = 1.261
a = pi*(d/2)**2
V = h*a
print('V =', np.round(V,1), '[mL]')

lfr = 48
VFR = a*lfr/60
print('VFR =', np.round(VFR,1), '[mL/min]')
```

```
V = 25.0 [mL]
VFR = 1.0 [mL/min]
```

```
In [5]: # Sample concentration product P_in and antagonist A_in
par(P_in = 1.0)
par(A_in = 1.0)
par(E_in = 0.0)

# Column properties are described by the size and binding capacity of the
par(height = h)
par(diameter = d)
par(Q_av = 6.0)

# Resin parameters - default values used

# Remaining salt concentration in the column from previous batch and elimi
init(E_start = 50)

# Salt concentration of the desorption buffer
par(E_in_desorption_buffer = 8.0)

# Flow rate rate through the
par(LFR=lfr)

# Switching points during operation are conveniently described in terms o
CV_ekv = 1.0
CV_ads = 0.5
CV_wash = 1.0
CV_desorb = 3.0
CV_start_pool = 1.2
CV_stop_pool = 4.5
CV_ekv2 = 2.5
par(scale_volume=True, start_adsorption=CV_ekv*V, stop_adsorption=(CV_ekv
par(start_desorption=(CV_ekv+CV_ads+CV_wash)*V, stationary_desorption=(CV
par(stop_desorption=7.5*V)
par(start_pooling=(CV_ekv+CV_ads+CV_wash+CV_start_pool)*V, stop_pooling=(

# Simulation and plot of results
newplot(title='Illustration of operation of the chromatgraphy step', plot
simu((CV_ekv+CV_ads+CV_wash+CV_desorb+CV_ekv2)*V/VFR)
```

Could not find cannot import name 'dopri5' from 'assimulo.lib' (/home/janpeter/miniconda3/envs/pyfmi/lib/python3.12/site-packages/assimulo/lib/\_\_init\_\_.py)

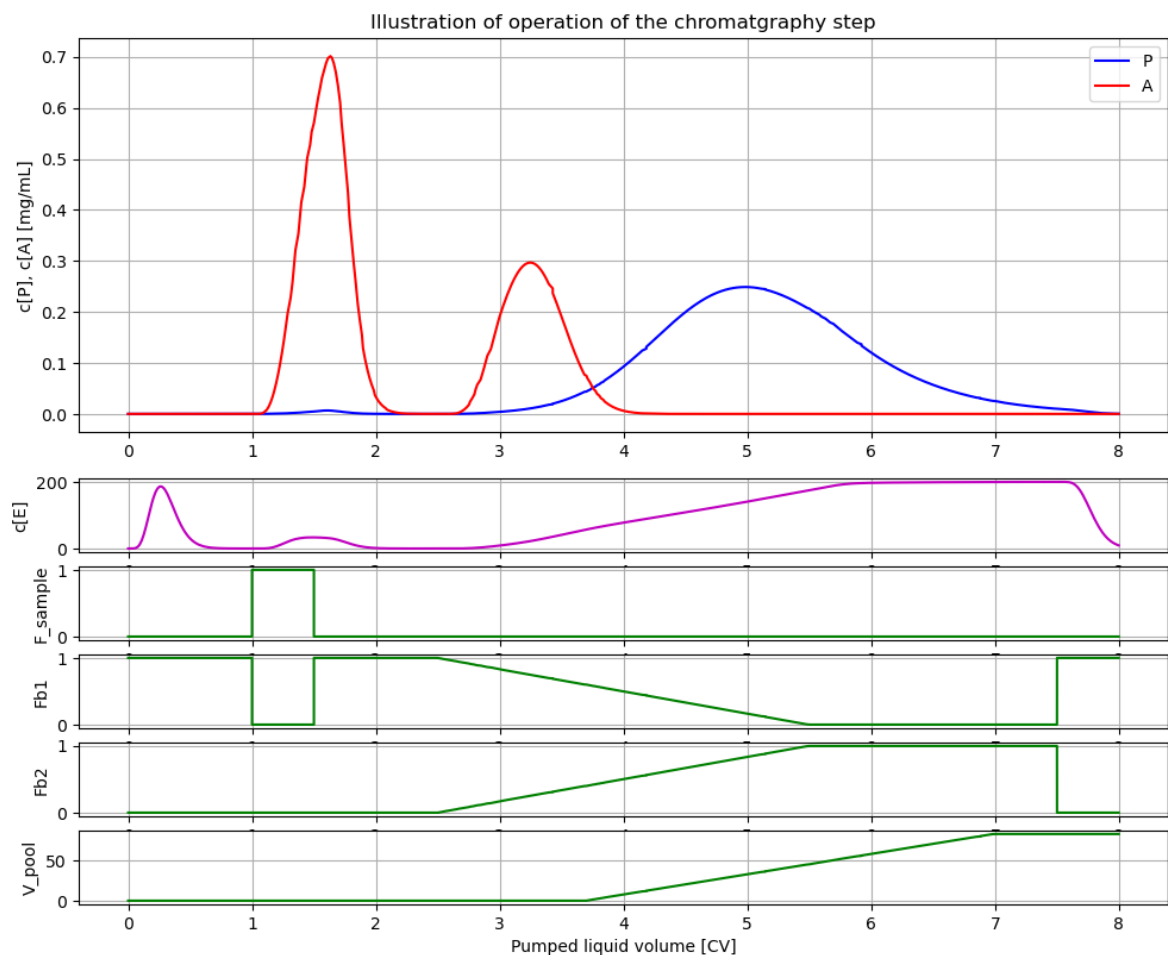
Could not find cannot import name 'rodas' from 'assimulo.lib' (/home/janpeter/miniconda3/envs/pyfmi/lib/python3.12/site-packages/assimulo/lib/\_\_init\_\_.py)

Could not find cannot import name 'odassl' from 'assimulo.lib' (/home/janpeter/miniconda3/envs/pyfmi/lib/python3.12/site-packages/assimulo/lib/\_\_init\_\_.py)

Could not find ODEPACK functions.

Could not find RADAR5

Could not find GLIMDA.



Comments of steps of operations:

1. Time: 0-1 hours - equilibration. Just to illustrate the equilibration process the first part of the column is given an initial value of salt concentration.
2. Time: 1-1.5 hours - sample is loaded on the column. The product P is adsorbed to the column and just a small amount passes through and goes to the waste. The antagonist A is much less adsorbed.
3. Time: 1.5-2.5 hours - washing 1. The column comes to equilibrium and both antagonist and product comes down to low levels.
4. Time: 2.5-5.5 hours - desorption. A linear gradient of increasing salt concentration is applied. First the antagonist and later the product comes out.
5. Time: 5.5-7.5 hours - washing 2. The column has constant salt concentration and stationary desorption.
6. Time: 3.7-7.0 hours - pooling of product. The start- and stop of pooling are chosen

with trade-off between maximizing the product pooled and minimize the amount of antagonist in the pooling.

7. Time: 7.5-8.0 hours - desorption stopped and salt is washed out and preparation of the next batch to come.

Note that step 4 and 5 is parallel to step 6.

```
In [6]: # Check mass-balance of P and A
P_mass = model.get('tank_harvest.m[1]') + model.get('tank_waste.m[1]')
A_mass = model.get('tank_harvest.m[2]') + model.get('tank_waste.m[2]')
print('P_mass [mg] =', P_mass)
print('A_mass [mg] =', A_mass)
```

```
P_mass [mg] = [12.42212163]
```

```
A_mass [mg] = [12.48878113]
```

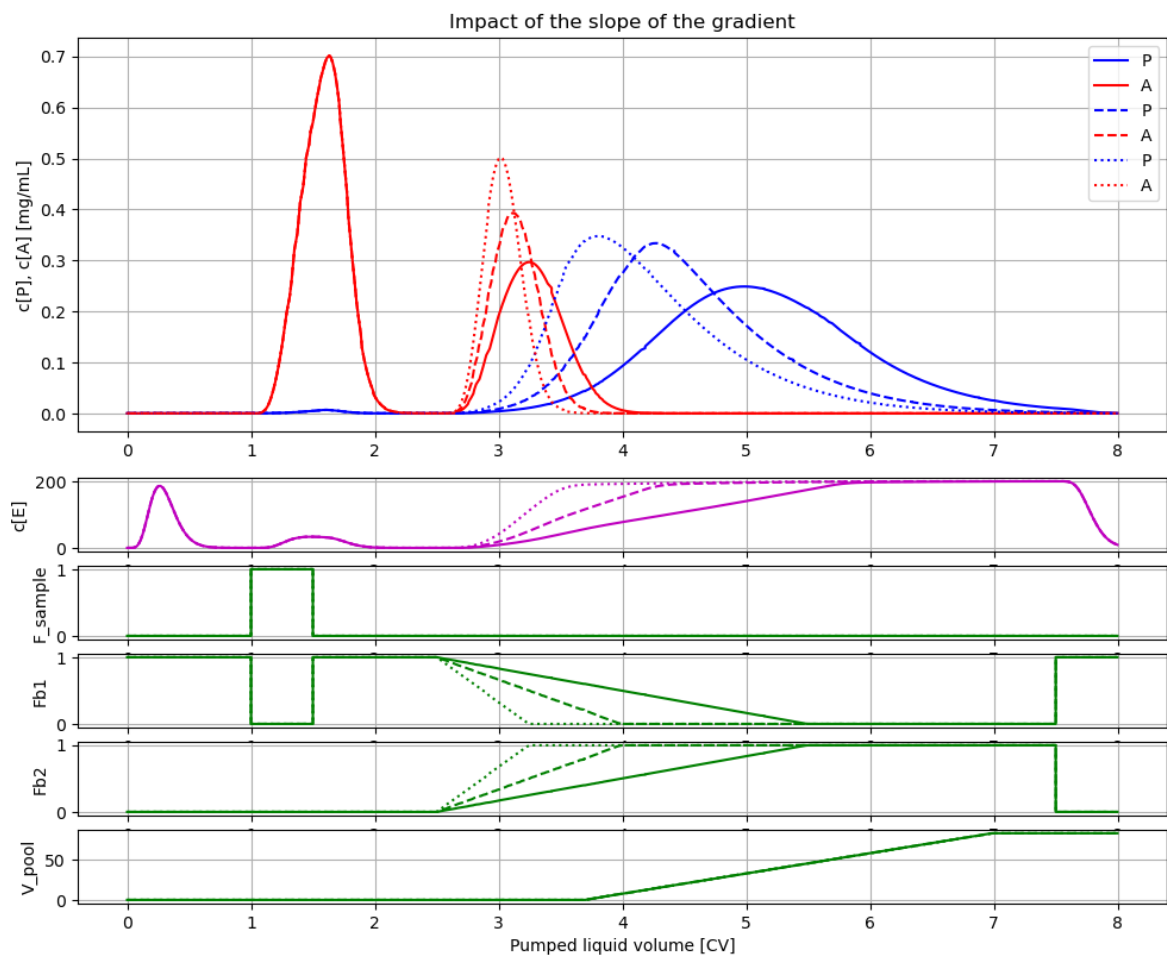
## 2 The impact of the slope of the desorption gradient

```
In [7]: # Simulations showing the impact of change of slope of the desorption gra
newplot(title='Impact of the slope of the gradient', plotType='Elution-co

# Same gradient as before
par(start_desorption=(CV_ekv+CV_ads+CV_wash)*V, stationary_desorption=(CV
par(stop_desorption=7.5*V)
simu((CV_ekv+CV_ads+CV_wash+CV_desorb+CV_ekv2)*V/VFR)

# Gradient finishes after 0.5 of the volume
par(stationary_desorption = (CV_ekv + CV_ads + CV_wash + 0.5*CV_desorb)*V
simu((CV_ekv+CV_ads+CV_wash+CV_desorb+CV_ekv2)*V/VFR)

# Gradient finishes after 0.25 of the volume
par(stationary_desorption = (CV_ekv + CV_ads + CV_wash + 0.25*CV_desorb)*
simu((CV_ekv+CV_ads+CV_wash+CV_desorb+CV_ekv2)*V/VFR)
```



Note the pens shift style for each simulation in the order: solid, dashed, dotted, dash-dotted. The actual simulations done you see in the preceeding cell.

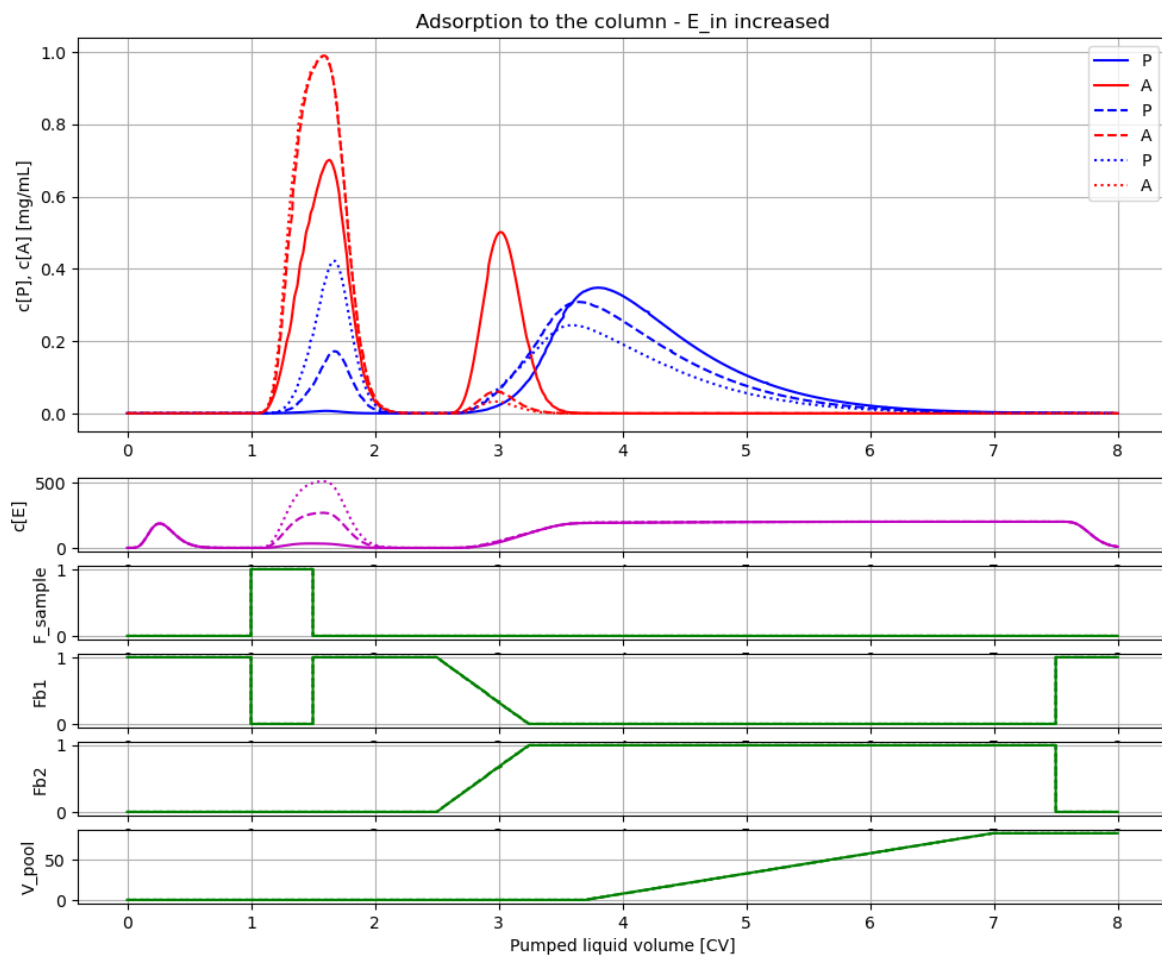
### 3 The impact of salt concentration in the sample

```
In [8]: # Let us investigate the impact of increasing salt concetration in the sa

# Simulate and plot the results
newplot(title='Adsorption to the column - E_in increased', plotType='Elut

for value in [0, 10, 20]:
    par(E_in=value)
    simu((CV_ekv+CV_ads+CV_wash+CV_desorb+CV_ekv2)*V/VFR)

# Restore default values
par(k2=0.05, k4=0.3, E_in=0)
```



Note, that increased salt concentration in the sample affect binding of both proteins. During adsorption less is bound. During desorption less product P can be harvested but the fraction of antagonist A may be lowered. Thus, some product is lost but the quality in terms of purity is improved.

## 4 The impact of change of binding strength due to pH

There are many factors that contribute to the binding strength. A most important factor is the pH-value of the resin and the characteristic iso-electric point of the protein. The binding strength can be seen as proportional to the difference.

The binding strength of the resin is described by the quotient  $K_P = k_1/k_2$  for the protein P and similarly  $K_A = k_3/k_4$  for the protein A.

Below a few help-functions that describe this idea of the pH difference and its impact on binding strength in terms of the parameters  $k_1$ ,  $k_2$ ,  $k_3$ , and  $k_4$  of the protein-resin interaction.

```
In [9]: # Define function that describe the proportionality of binding strength o
# the pH difference of the iso-electric point and the resin

def KP_pH_sensitivity(pI_P=8.0, pH_resin=7.0):
    coeff_pH = 6.0
    return coeff_pH*(pI_P-pH_resin)
```

```

def KA_pH_sensitivity(pI_A=7.1667, pH_resin=7.0):
    coeff_pH = 1.0
    return coeff_pH*(pI_A-pH_resin)

def par_pH(pI_P=8.0, pI_A=7.1667, pH_resin=7.0, TP=3.33, TA=20.0):
    if (pI_P > pH_resin) & (pI_A > pH_resin):
        par(k2 = 1/(TP*KP_pH_sensitivity(pI_P=pI_P, pH_resin=pH_resin)))
        par(k4 = 1/(TA*KA_pH_sensitivity(pI_A=pI_A, pH_resin=pH_resin)))
    else:
        print('Both pI_P > pH_resin and pI_A > pH_resin must hold - no pa

```

```

In [10]: # The default parameters of the column
disp('column')

```

```

diameter : 1.261
height : 20.0
x_m : 0.3
k1 : 0.3
k2 : 0.05
k3 : 0.05
k4 : 0.3
Q_av : 6.0
E_start : 50.0

```

```

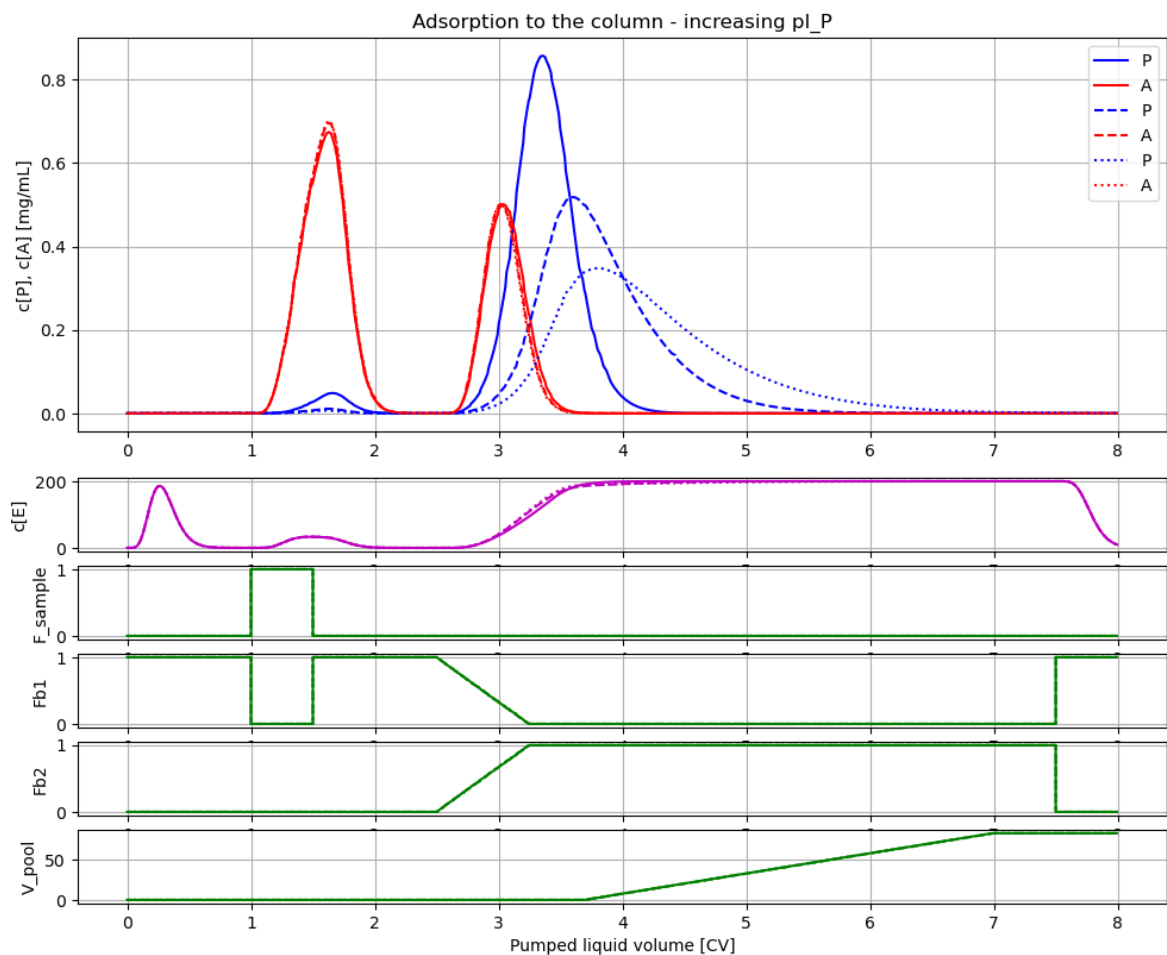
In [11]: # Let us investigate the impact of change of the iso-electric pH for prot

# Simulate and plot the results
newplot(title='Adsorption to the column - increasing pI_P', plotType='Elu

for value in [7.2, 7.6, 8.0]:
    par_pH(pI_P=value, pI_A=7.1667, pH_resin=7.0)
    simu((CV_ekv+CV_ads+CV_wash+CV_desorb+CV_ekv2)*V/VFR)

# Restore default values
par(k2 = 0.05, k4 = 0.3)

```



Note, with increasing  $pI_P$  the binding of P increase which leads less loss of product during adsorption. During desorption the peak height is lower with increasing binding strenght, but the total amoiunt of product P that can be harvested is higher, due to the smaller loss during adsorption.

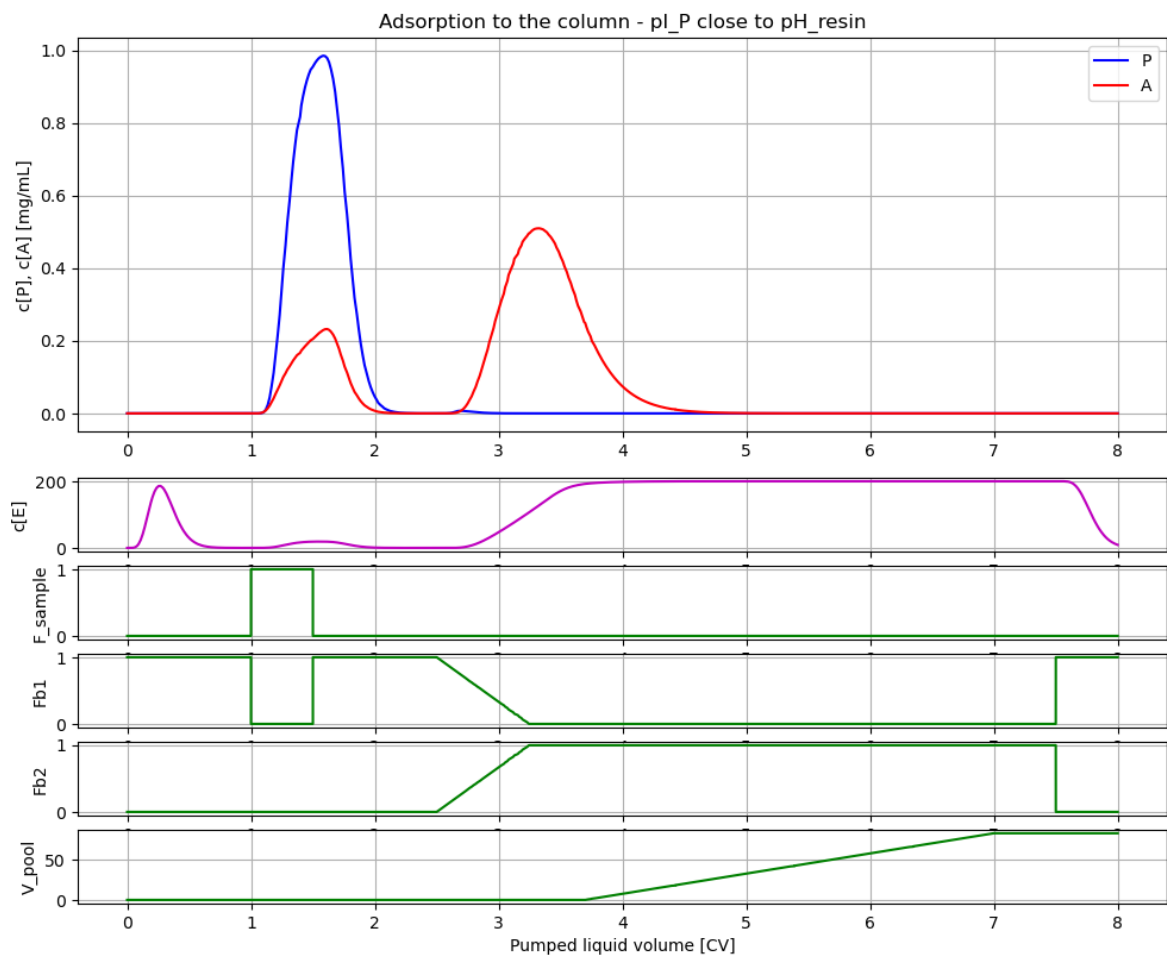
```
In [12]: # Let us investigate the impact of pI_P close to pH_resin

# Simulate and plot the results
newplot(title='Adsorption to the column - pI_P close to pH_resin', plotTy

for value in [7.0001]:
    par_pH(pI_P=value, pI_A=8)
    simu((CV_ekv+CV_ads+CV_wash+CV_desorb+CV_ekv2)*V/VFR)

# Restore default values
par(k2=0.05, k4=0.3)
```



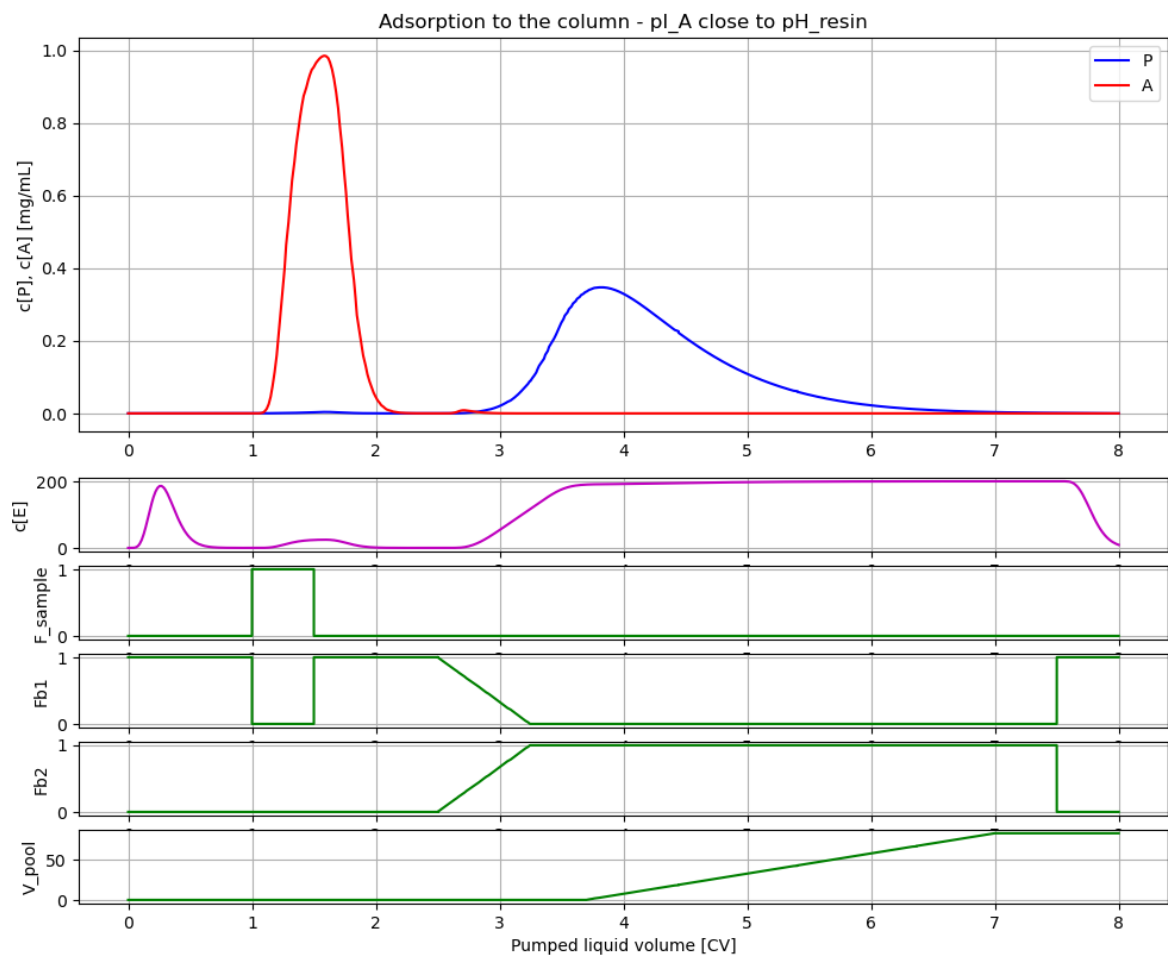


```
In [13]: # Let us investigate the impact of pI_A close to pH_resin

# Simulate and plot the results
newplot(title='Adsorption to the column - pI_A close to pH_resin', plotTy

for value in [7.001]:
    par_pH(pI_P=8.0, pI_A=value)
    simu((CV_ekv+CV_ads+CV_wash+CV_desorb+CV_ekv2)*V/VFR)

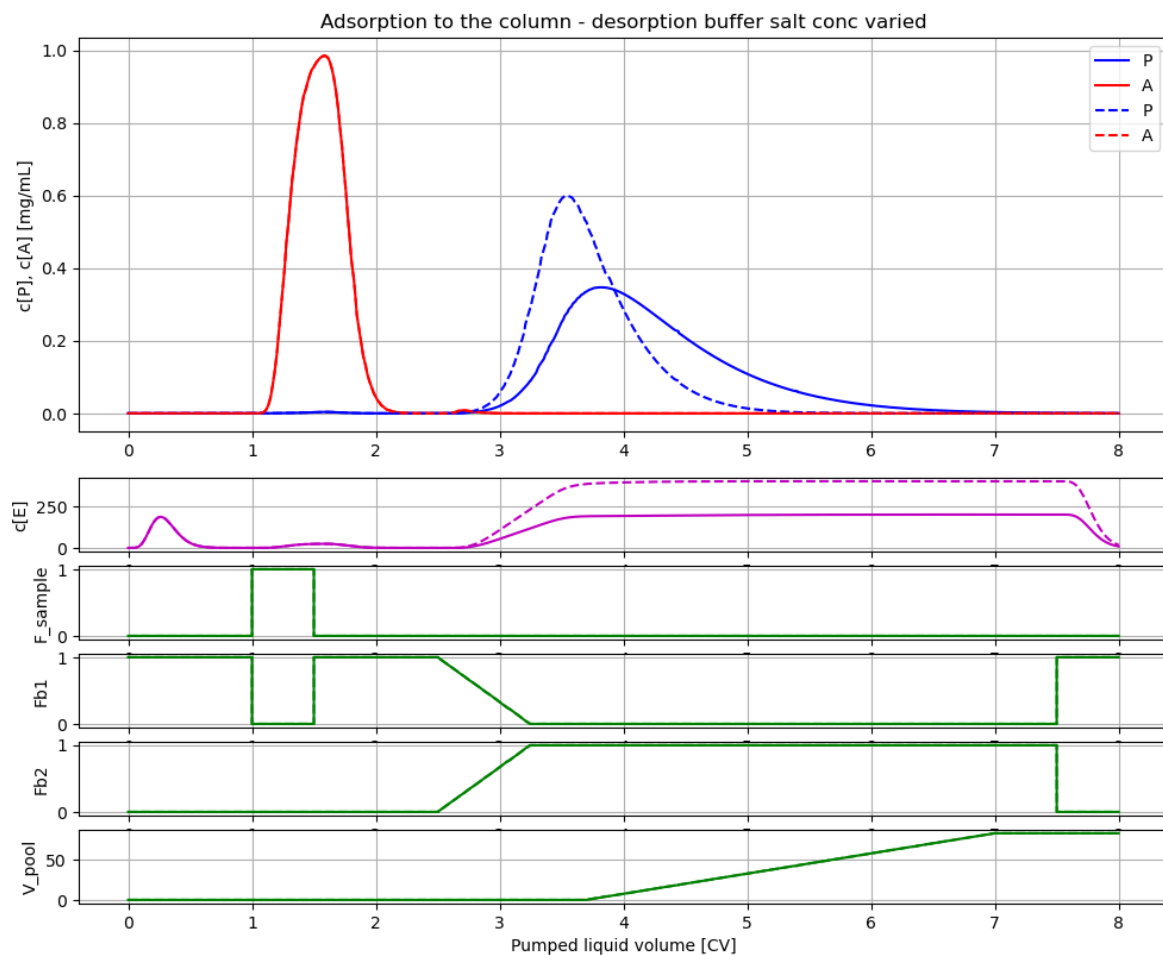
# Restore default values
par(k2=0.05, k4=0.3)
```



```
In [14]: # Let us also investigate the impact of salt concentration of the desorpt
# Simulate and plot the results
newplot(title='Adsorption to the column - desorption buffer salt conc var

for value in [8.0, 16.0]:
    par(E_in_desorption_buffer=value)
    par_pH(pI_P=8.0, pI_A=7.001, pH_resin=7.0)
    simu((CV_ekv+CV_ads+CV_wash+CV_desorb+CV_ekv2)*V/VFR)

# Restore default values
par(E_in_desorption_buffer=8.0)
par(k2=0.05, k4=0.3)
```



## 5 Breakthrough curve often used during process development

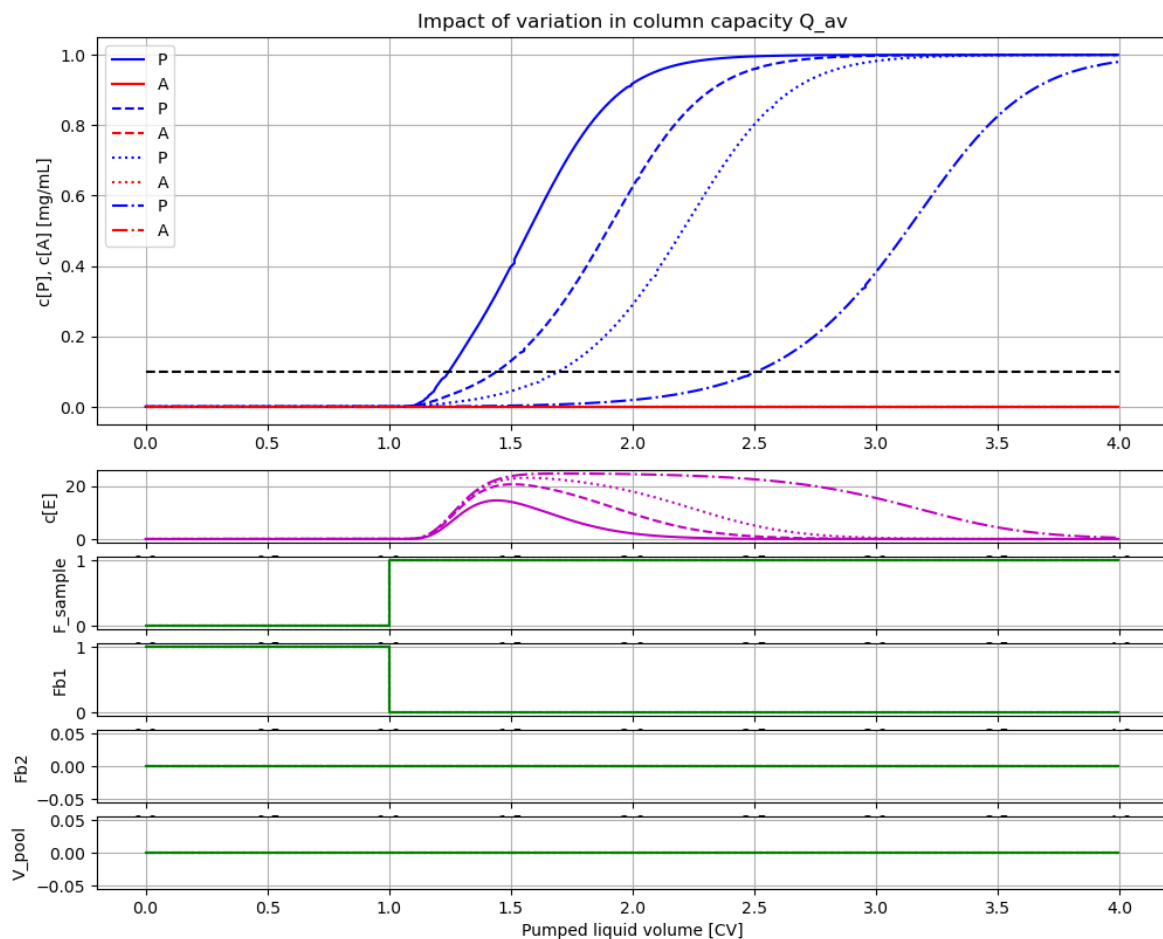
```
In [15]: # Experiment to check column capacity Q_av often called breakthrough curve
par(P_in=1, A_in=0, E_in=0)
init(E_start = 0)
par(Q_av=6.0)

par(scale_volume=True, start_adsorption=1*V, stop_adsorption=4.01*V)
par(start_desorption=10*V, stationary_desorption=10.5*V, stop_desorption=
par(start_pooling=11*V, stop_pooling=12*V)

newplot(title='Impact of variation in column capacity Q_av', plotType='El
for value in [1, 2, 3, 6]: par(Q_av=value); simu(4.0*V/VFR)

# Linje för 10% UV
ax1.plot([0,4], [0.1,0.1], 'k--')

# Restore default parameters
par(Q_av=6.0, A_in=1.0)
```



With greater column capacity  $Q_{av}$  the longer it takes before the concentration of protein start to increase. Note, that the salt concentration increase initially during adsorption but then go back to low levels. This phenomenon is also seen experimentally.

## 6 Summary

The simplified simulation model was found useful to describe operational aspects of ion exchange chromatography.

- The model describe qualitatively well the impact of typical operational changes in the flow rate.
- The model also describe qualitatively well the impact of changes in iso-electric point of the proteins relative the pH of the resin.
- The small deviations in salt concentration from linear increase during the gradient in the salt buffer is also what you see in reality.

## References

1. Månsson, Jonas, "Control of chromatography column in production scale", Master thesis TFRT-5599, Department of Automatic Control, LTH, Lund Sweden, 1998.
2. Pharmacia LKB Biotechnology. "Ion Exchange chromatography. Principles and Methods.", 3rd edition, 1991.

3. Jungbauer, Alois and Giorgio Carta, "Protein Chromatography: Process Development and Scale-Up", Wiley 2nd edition, 2020.

## Appendix

```
In [16]: describe('MSL')
```

```
MSL: 4.1.0 - used components: RealInput, RealOutput, CombiTimeTable, Types
```

```
In [17]: system_info()
```

```
System information
```

```
-OS: Linux  
-Python: 3.12.9  
-Scipy: not installed in the notebook  
-PyFMI: 2.18.0  
-FMU by: OpenModelica Compiler OpenModelica 1.26.0~dev-200-gcb3254b  
-FMI: 2.0  
-Type: FMUModelME2  
-Name: BPL_IEC.Column_system  
-Generated: 2025-07-25T20:05:46Z  
-MSL: 4.1.0  
-Description: Bioprocess Library version 2.3.1  
-Interaction: FMU-explore version 1.0.0
```

```
In [18]: !lsb_release -a
```

```
No LSB modules are available.  
Distributor ID: Ubuntu  
Description:    Ubuntu 24.04.3 LTS  
Release:        24.04  
Codename:       noble
```