Accepted Manuscript

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PII: S1004-9541(16)31007-2

DOI: doi:10.1016/j.cjche.2017.03.035

Reference: CJCHE 802

To appear in:

Received date: 29 September 2016 Revised date: 26 December 2016 Accepted date: 21 March 2017



Please cite this article as: Bin Shi, Xu Yang, Liexiang Yan, Optimization of a crude distillation unit using a combination of wavelet neural network and line-up competition algorithm, (2017), doi:10.1016/j.cjche.2017.03.035

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Optimization of a crude distillation unit using a combination of wavelet neural

network and line-up competition algorithm

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Abstract: the modeling and optimization of an industrial-scale crude distillation unit (CDU) is addressed. The main specifications

and base conditions of CDU are taken from a crude oil refinery in Wuhan, China. For modeling of a complicated CDU, an improved

wavelet neural network (WNN) is presented to model the complicated CDU, in which novel parametric updating laws is developed to

precisely capture the characteristics of CDU. To address CDU in an economically optimal manner, an economic optimization

algorithm under prescribed constraints is presented. By using a combination of WNN-based optimization model and line-up

competition algorithm (LCA), the superior performance of the proposed approach is verified. Compared with the base operating

condition, it is validated that the increments of products including kerosene and diesel are up to 20% at least by increasing less than

5% duties of intermediate coolers such as second pump-around (PA2) and third pump-around (PA3).

Keywords: crude oil distillation; wavelet neural network; line-up competition algorithm; optimization

1 INTRODUCTION

Distillation of crude oil is regarded to be one of the most fundamental process in petroleum refining and

petrochemical industries, where the crude oil is separated into different products each with specific boiling range.

In response to the highly competitive market and stringent environmental laws, improving the operation level of

crude oil distillation unit (CDU) is essential. In fact, the optimization of CDU system is beneficial to

simultaneously achieve well-controlled and stable system, high production rate and product quality as well as low

operation cost for the economic consideration. Therefore, the engineering design, control strategy and process

optimization of a CDU has been paid attention to improve product efficiency and quality assurance in petroleum

industry in recent years [1].

As one of the most complicated operations in the field of chemical separation processes, the operation input

and output variables amongst the CDU are highly interacted, which undoubtedly increase the difficulty in

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Supported by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (No.21376185)

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