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Sajal Kanti Dutta, Saikat Chakraborty

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Mixing effects on the kinetics and the dynamics of two-phase enzymatic hydrolysis of hemicellulose for biofuel production

Sajal Kanti Dutta¹, Saikat Chakraborty^{1,2,*}

¹Department of Chemical Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur 721302, India.

²School of Energy Science and Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur 721302, India.

ABSTRACT

This work uses a coupled experimental and modeling approach to explore the effects of macro- and micro-mixing on the kinetics and the dynamics of two-phase enzymatic hydrolysis of hemicellulose. Reactor mixing does not alter the non-competitive nature of product inhibition in hemicellulose hydrolysis by endoxylanase, but produces stronger inhibition that reduces the soluble sugar yield by 8-14.5%, as the mixing speed increases from 0 to 200 rpm. The kinetic constants (K_m , V_{max} , K_x) assume mass-transfer disguised values at 0-200 rpm. An optimal mixing strategy, comprising of 55-70 min of initial rapid convective macromixing followed by diffusive micromixing (without any macromixing) for the rest of the hydrolysis, increases xylose and reducing sugar yields by 6.3-8% and 13-20%, respectively, over continuous mixing at 200 rpm, for 1-5 mg/ml substrate loading at an optimum enzyme to substrate ratio of 1:20, with an energy saving of 94-96% over 24 h.

* Corresponding author. Tel.: + 91 32222 83930; fax: + 91 32222 82250

E-mail address: saikat@che.iitkgp.ernet.in (S. Chakraborty)

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