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MEASUREMENTS OF THE TEMPERATURE GRADIENT DRIVEN FLOW FOR VARIOUS GASES

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Micro-/nano-fluid dynamics, non-continuum effects, rarefied gas flow

ABSTRACT

The gas movement from the cold reservoir to the hot one through a porous media and small capillaries, called thermal transpiration phenomena, was observed many years ago by Reynolds, Maxwell and then by Knudsen [1-3]. Some experimental data were collected from these time, especially on the final pressure difference achieved by the Knudsen compressor effect [4-10].

The measurements of the temperature gradient driven mass flow rate through a rectangular channel made of PEEK with a height of $H = 0.22 \pm 0.01$ mm, width of $W = 6$ mm and length of $L = 73$ mm are carried out. The temperature gradient along the microchannel was created by two blocks with gas reservoirs inside placed at each end of the microchannel, whose temperatures were controlled by an electrical heater for the hot side and a circulating water for the cold side, respectively. The temperatures of the blocks were monitored by K-type thermocouples (TC) placed on the outside of the blocks.

Temperature for the hot reservoir T_H and that for the cold reservoir T_C were maintained to realize two cases of the temperature difference ΔT : 1) $T_H = 347.1 \pm 0.5$ K, $T_C = 289.2 \pm 0.2$ K, where $\Delta T = 57.9$ K and 2) $T_H = 337.0 \pm 0.6$ K, $T_C = 299.6 \pm 0.4$ K, where $\Delta T = 37.4$ K. These temperature conditions were chosen to have the same mean temperature for two cases as $T_m = 318$ K. Here, twice of the standard deviation was used as an uncertainty of the temperature conditions.

The hot and cold reservoirs were connected directly by a tube with a large diameter forming a circuit with insertion of a micro valve (Parker Hannifin). When the micro valve is open, there is the stationary thermal creep flow through the microchannel from the cold to hot sides; while the flow through the large diameter tube maintains pressures equally at both reservoirs by compensating the



thermal creep. By closing the micro valve, the flow in the large diameter tube is blocked, and there is only the thermal creep flow inside the microchannel. With time evolution, the pressure difference occurs between the cold and hot reservoirs as a result of the thermal creep flow, inducing a pressure driven flow in the opposite direction to the thermal creep flow.

Results

The thermal slip coefficient in the slip flow regime and the reduced flow rate in the transitional flow regime were obtained for five noble gases in the rectangular cross section geometry from the experimental measurement of a pure thermal creep flow. The mass flow rate was compared with the numerical result by solving the S-model kinetic equations, showing good agreement for all cases in all flow conditions. Then, the numerical simulation was employed to validate the assumptions for involved methodology. The thermal slip coefficient, very useful when the continuum simulation in the frame of the Navier-Stokes equations is used, is derived from the mass flow rate measurements.

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