

ENCYCLOPEDIA of EMULSION TECHNOLOGY

Volume 3

BASIC THEORY • MEASUREMENT • APPLICATIONS

edited by
Paul Becher

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF EMULSION TECHNOLOGY

VOLUME 3

Basic Theory
Measurement
Applications

Edited by PAUL BECHER

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VOLUME 3

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Preface

This is the third volume of the *Encyclopedia of Emulsion Technology*. In previous volumes we have reviewed the pertinent basic theory (Volume 1) and applications of emulsion systems (Volume 2). Although in the present volume we introduce a new topic—measurements on emulsions—we are also doing a little housekeeping by including two additional chapters on basic theory and another two on applications.

The first chapter in the basic theory section, by David H. Melik and H. Scott Fogler, deals with the important problem of sedimentation in disperse systems (which exhibits itself as "creaming" in emulsions), and the use of this phenomenon to establish the stability of the system. From this point of view, this chapter might equally well have been included in the section on measurements.

The second chapter in the basic theory section, by Jean-Louis Salager, is an important contribution to our understanding of the phenomenon of emulsion inversion. When, some ten years ago, I first came upon catastrophe theory it immediately occurred to me that this could be an elegant way of treating inversion. It has remained, however, for Prof. Salager to demonstrate this.

Turning to the field of measurements, in the first chapter in this section, Clyde Orr treats what may be possibly the most important measurement one can make on an emulsion, namely, the particle size distribution. Following this, Heinz Hoffmann and Herbert Thurn describe the difficult technique of neutron scattering, which gives much useful information about the structure of emulsions, in particular, microemulsions. Unfortunately, the experimental technique is such that the method is not widely available; on the other hand, knowledge of the technique is important, and that is what the authors wish to convey.

The two remaining chapters in this section deal with methods of representing emulsion data. Although triangular diagrams are widely used, especially for microemulsions, a surprising number of chemists and

engineers aren't really clear as to how they work. Indeed, there are not a few diagrams in the literature which are thermodynamically impossible—but that's another matter! Raymond Mackay has contributed a chapter on triangular diagrams which develops the theory of such figures, and gives useful examples of their application. Finally, Kenneth J. Lissant describes the technique of using glyphs to represent a large amount of data in an extremely compact way.

Turning to the final section, "Applications," Howard Bampffield and John Cooper describe an extremely important, and, in my opinion, too little known, application of emulsion systems. Emulsion explosives are convenient to use and remarkably safe. However, the formulation of such an emulsion, combining explosive power with stability, is a theoretical and practical problem of considerable difficulty.

Finally, Bruce Davis discusses the use of emulsion systems in the petroleum industry. In the winning of petroleum, numerous emulsion types arise naturally, or are produced deliberately. Davis reviews the theoretical basis for these emulsions and, in addition, enhances our knowledge of the theoretical basis of HLB.

We regret that the chapter on surfactant properties previously announced for this volume could not be undertaken. Prof. Salager's chapter, written on extremely short notice, was happily available to fill the gap.

I cannot conclude without noting that my dear wife, Jane, has continued to be my support and consistent help in producing these volumes. The first volume was formally dedicated to her, but, by extension, so are all the volumes in this work.

Paul Becher

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I

BASIC THEORY

1

Fundamentals of Colloidal Stability in Quiescent Media

DAVID H. MELIK* and H. SCOTT FOGLER / Department of Chemical Engineering, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan

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I. Introduction

Colloidal dispersions (including emulsions and suspensions) are frequently encountered in industry and the environment. Common examples include milk, paint, blood, and atmospheric smog. Even though these dispersions are chemically different, they exhibit similar properties owing to the very small size of the suspended particles. Sizes generally range between 0.1

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Table 1. Components Necessary for Predicting Colloidal Stability

Forces

1. Interparticle:
 - a. London-van der Waals attractive
 - b. Electric double layer repulsive
2. Gravitational
3. Hydrodynamic
4. Brownian motion

Kinetics

1. Creaming
2. Brownian flocculation
3. Gravity-induced flocculation

Population balances

1. Predict changes in the particle size distribution and particle concentration
 2. Test changes in system parameters
-

and 10.0 μm in diameter. As a result, colloidal particles do not rapidly settle out of the continuous phase and are not readily filtered.

Although colloidal particles are capable of remaining suspended indefinitely, emulsions and suspensions are thermodynamically unstable. This instability arises from the large interfacial area, and therefore large surface energy, associated with finely dispersed systems. Consequently, in order to reduce the total interfacial area, colloidal particles tend to either flocculate irreversibly or to accumulate at an interface. These phenomena distinguish colloids from micellar and polymer solutions, which are in many ways similar but are thermodynamically stable and reversibly flocculated.

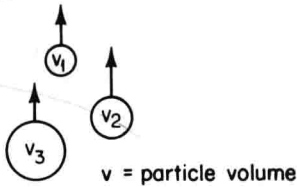
Because of this inherent instability, an underlying goal of colloidal studies is to predict a priori the "stability" of a given or desired colloidal dispersion. As shown in Table 1, there are three components necessary for quantitatively predicting colloidal stability: (i) the forces that dictate the particle motions; (ii) the kinetics of the colloidal breaking processes; and (iii) the population balance equations.

Under certain conditions an emulsion or suspension may be unstable to the extent that it breaks within a matter of seconds (e.g., vinegar and oil), whereas in other systems the colloidal breaking process may be so kinetically limited that the particles remain suspended for very long periods of time (e.g., polystyrene latexes). Consequently, an obvious concern in colloidal systems is quantifying the characteristic time for colloidal breaking mechanisms. It turns out that this characteristic time is highly dependent on the many forces that affect the particle motions. In quiescent media, these forces include Brownian motion, van der Waals attractive and electrostatic repulsive interparticle forces, gravitational forces, and hydrodynamic interactions. Hydrodynamic interactions arise from the resistance of the fluid that has to be pushed from in between two approaching particles.

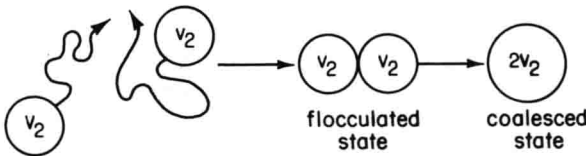
The overall effect of these forces on emulsions and suspensions is manifested in the form of three coupled particle loss mechanisms: creaming, Brownian flocculation, and sedimentation (gravity-induced) flocculation. These breakage mechanisms are depicted in Fig. 1. In creaming, particles either rise or sediment out of the system as a result of the density difference between the particles and the suspending medium. Encounters between particles occur because of random Brownian motion, frequently resulting in particle aggregation if the interparticle interactions are favorable. Gravity-induced flocculation arises from the differential creaming rates of large and small particles. The large particles sweep out the slower-moving small particles in their path, often resulting in particle aggregation if the interparticle interactions are favorable. In the case of emulsions, coalescence of the particles can occur after flocculation.

In order to analyze rigorously the behavior of these particle loss mechanisms on colloidal stability, one must determine the rate at which these mechanisms are occurring. This can be accomplished by solving the governing convective-diffusion equation which describes the distribution of particles around a central or reference sphere. Because of the difficulties generally associated with solving the complete problem in which all the forces acting on the particles are of the same order of magnitude, models applicable for different magnitudes of interparticle, gravitational, and diffusional effects have been developed. Depending on the particle sizes and the net gravitational force, five important regimes can be identified:

1. Creaming:



2. Brownian Flocculation:



3. Sedimentation Flocculation:

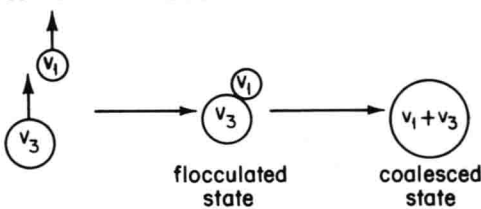


Figure 1. Colloidal breaking mechanisms in quiescent media.