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Rankine cycle with reheat and regeneration pdf answer key pdf

In an isobaric process and the ideal gas, part of the heat added to the system will be used to do work, and part of the heat added will increase the internal energy (increase the temperature). They are not done infinitely slowly. $174 = 1787 + 53.2 = 1840$ kJ/kg)Then the work done by the steam, W_t , is $W_t = \Delta h = 945$ kJ/kg3)Enthalpy for state 1 can be picked directly from steam tables: $h_1 = 174$ kJ/kgState 2 is fixed by the pressure $p_2 = 6.0$ MPa and the fact that the specific entropy is constant for the isentropic compression ($s_1 = s_2 = 0.592$ kJ/kgK for 0.008 MPa). It is the one of most common thermodynamic cycles, because in most of the places in the world the turbine is steam-driven.In contrast to the Carnot cycle, the Rankine cycle does not execute isothermal processes because these must be performed very slowly. Sometimes engineers use the term economizer, a heat exchanger intended to reduce energy consumption, especially in the case of preheating of a fluid.As can be seen in the article "Steam Generator", the feedwater (secondary circuit) at the inlet of the steam generator may have about $\sim 230^\circ\text{C}$ (446°F) and then is heated to the boiling point of that fluid (280°C ; 536°F; 6.5MPa) and evaporated. But real condensers are designed to subcool the liquid by a few degrees Celsius to avoid the suction cavitation in the condensate pumps. The specific entropy of saturated liquid water ($x=0$) and dry steam ($x=1$) can be picked from steam tables. Since this feature allows to increase the peak temperature, the supercritical water reactors are considered a promising advancement for nuclear power plants because of their high thermal efficiency (~45 % vs. The use of the reheater involves splitting the turbine, i.e., using a multi-stage turbine with a reheater. ~33 % for current LWRs).Isentropic Efficiency - Turbine, PumpIn previous chapters, we assumed that the steam expansion is isentropic, and therefore we used T_4 , is as the gas's outlet temperature. At constant pressure, the enthalpy change equals the energy transferred from the environment through heating:isobaric process ($Vdp = 0$): $dH = dQ \quad - \quad Q = H_2 - H_1$ At constant entropy, i.e., in isentropic process, the enthalpy change equals the flow process work done on or by the system:Isentropic process ($dQ = 0$): $dH = Vdp \quad - \quad W = H_2 - H_1$ See also: Why power engineers use enthalpy? (point 4).Calculate:The vapor quality of the outlet steam.The enthalpy difference between these two states (3 \rightarrow 4) corresponds to the work done by the steam, W_t .The enthalpy difference between these two states (1 \rightarrow 2) corresponds to the work done by pumps, W_p .The enthalpy difference between these two states (2 \rightarrow 3) corresponds to the steam generator's net heat. The thermodynamic efficiency of this cycle and compare this value with the Carnot's efficiency.)Since we do not know the exact vapor quality of the outlet steam, we have to determine this parameter. Retrieved 2011-02-04.In modern nuclear power plants, the overall thermal efficiency is about one-third (33%), so 3000 MWth of thermal power from the fission reaction is needed to generate 1000 MWe of electrical power. Many recuperators are designed as counterflow heat exchangers.Supercritical Rankine CyclesSupercritical Rankine cycleAs was discussed, the thermal efficiency can be improved "simply" by increasing the temperature of the steam entering the turbine. ~33 % for current LWRs).Supercritical fossil fuel power plants operated at supercritical pressure (i.e., greater than 22.1 MPa) have efficiencies of around 43%. At constant pressure, the enthalpy change equals the energy transferred from the environment through heating:isobaric process ($Vdp = 0$): $dH = dQ \quad - \quad Q = H_2 - H_1$ At constant entropy, i.e., in isentropic process, the enthalpy change equals the flow process work done on or by the system:Isentropic process ($dQ = 0$): $dH = Vdp \quad - \quad W = H_2 - H_1$ It will be very useful in analyzing both thermodynamic cycles used in power engineering, i.e., in the Brayton and Rankine cycles.The enthalpy can be made into an intensive or specific variable by dividing by the mass. This requires the addition of another type of heat exchanger called a reheater. In the ideal case (no friction, reversible processes, perfect design), this heat engine would have a Carnot efficiency of:Carnot = 1 - Tcold/Thot = 1 - 315/549 = 42.6%where the temperature of the hot reservoir is 275.6°C (548.7 K), the temperature of the cold reservoir is 41.5°C (314.7K).The thermodynamic efficiency of this cycle can be calculated by the following formula: $\eta_{th} = (945 - 5.7) / 2605.3 = 0.361 = 36.1\%$ Ideally, the steam exhausted into the condenser would have no subcooling. The heat transfer into or out of the system does work but also changes the internal energy of the system.Since there are changes in internal energy (dU) and changes in system volume (ΔV), engineers often use the enthalpy of the system, which is defined as: $H = U + pV$ Isobaric Process and the First LawThe classical form of the first law of thermodynamics is the following equation: $dU = dQ - dW$ In this equation, dW is equal to $dW = pdV$ and is known as the boundary work. There is heat transfer from the vapor to cooling water flowing in a cooling circuit. But this requires an increase in pressures inside boilers or steam generators. The goal of maintaining the lowest practical turbine exhaust pressure is a primary reason for including the condenser in a thermal power plant. In these turbines, the high-pressure stage receives steam (this steam is nearly saturated steam - $x = 0.995$ - point C at the figure) from a steam generator and exhausts it to a moisture separator-reheater (point D). The condenser provides a vacuum that maximizes the energy extracted from the steam, resulting in a significant increase in network and thermal efficiency. Steam leaves this turbine stage at a pressure of 0.008 MPa, 41.5°C, and $x =$??? The exhausted steam is at a pressure well below atmospheric, and, as can be seen from the picture, the steam is in a partially condensed state (point F), typically of a quality near 90%. But this temperature is restricted by metallurgical limitations imposed by the materials and design of the reactor pressure vessel and primary piping. The expansion is then completed in the low-pressure turbine from point E to point F.Rankine cycles reheat and superheat the low-pressure stage. In the superheater, further heating at fixed pressure results in increases in both temperature and specific volume. But the condensate at the condenser outlet may have about 40°C, so the heat regeneration in typical PWR is significant.Heat regeneration increases the thermal efficiency since more of the heat flow into the cycle occurs at a higher temperature.Heat regeneration causes a decrease in the mass flow rate through the low-pressure stage of the steam turbine, thus increasing LP Isentropic Turbine Efficiency. To prevent boiling of the primary coolant and provide a subcooling margin (the difference between the pressurizer temperature and the highest temperature in the reactor core), pressures around 16 MPa are typical for PWRs. The reactor pressure vessel is the key component, which limits the thermal efficiency of each nuclear power plant since the reactor vessel must withstand high pressures.Typical parameters at the inlet of condensing turbines of PWRs.As for the Carnot cycle, the thermal efficiency tends to increase as the average temperature at which energy is added by heat transfer increases. There are no changes in the control volume. Still, it is much higher vapor quality than that it would be without reheat. However, metallurgical considerations place upper limits on such pressures. Recuperation of HeatIn general, the heat exchangers used in regeneration may be classified as either regenerators or recuperators.A regenerator is a type of heat exchanger where heat from the hot fluid is intermittently stored in a thermal storage medium before it is transferred to the cold fluid. 45 (1). Higher efficiencies can be attained by increasing the temperature of the steam. The vapor condenses, and the temperature of the cooling water increases. The reason lies in relatively low steam temperature (6 MPa; 275.6°C). But the nuclear power plant is the real heat engine, in which thermodynamic processes are somehow irreversible. Note that at the last stage of expansion, the steam has a very high specific volume.Heat regeneration causes an increase in working steam quality since the drains are situated at the periphery of the turbine casing, where is a higher concentration of water droplets.Regeneration vs. They must consider cost and other factors in the design and operation of the cycle. State 4 is fixed by the pressure $p_4 = 0.008$ MPa and the fact that the specific entropy is constant for the isentropic expansion ($s_3 = s_4 = 5.89$ kJ/kgK for 6 MPa). Most efficient and complex coal-fired power plants operate at "ultra critical" pressures (i.e., around 30 MPa) and use multiple stage reheat to reach about 48% efficiency.Supercritical Water Reactor - SCWRTypical properties of coolant in SCWR.The supercritical Rankine cycle is also the thermodynamic cycle of supercritical water reactors. This inefficiency can be attributed to three causes:Irreversibility of Processes. The work done by the turbine is given by $W_t = H_4 - H_3$. Both processes are very similar in their manner:Superheater - increases the steam temperature above the saturation temperatureReheater - removes the moisture and increases steam temperature after a partial expansion.The superheating process is the only way to increase the peak temperature of the Rankine cycle (and to increase efficiency) without increasing the boiler pressure. The steam works on the surroundings (blades of the turbine) and uses an amount of enthalpy equal to the work that leaves the system. This work, Vdp , is used for open flow systems like a turbine or a pump in which there is a "dp", i.e., change in pressure. To prevent this, condensate drains are installed in the steam piping leading to the turbine. Therefore all important parameters of water and steam are tabulated in so-called "Steam Tables".One of the major advantages of the Rankine cycle is that the compression process in the pump takes place on a liquid. For reversible (ideal) processes, the area under the T-s curve of a process is the heat transferred to the system during that process.Thermal Efficiency of Rankine CycleIn general, the thermal efficiency, η_{th} , of any heat engine is defined as the ratio of the work it does, W , to the heat input at the high temperature, QH .The thermal efficiency, η_{th} , represents the fraction of heat, QH , converted to work. The flow is extracted with a reheater after a partial expansion (point D), run back through the heat exchanger to heat it back up to the peak temperature (point E), and then passed in the low-pressure turbine. This is the common feature of all thermodynamic cycles:Condenser PressureDecreasing the turbine exhaust pressure increases the network per cycle and decreases the vapor quality of outlet steam. The case of the decrease in the average temperature at which energy is rejected requires a decrease in the pressure inside the condenser (i.e., the decrease in the saturation temperature). Therefore, heat engines must have lower efficiencies than limits on their efficiency due to the inherent irreversibility of the heat engine cycle they use.Presence of Friction and Heat Losses. An isentropic process can also be called a constant entropy process.Rankine Cycle - Problem with SolutionLet us assume the Rankine cycle, one of the most common thermodynamic cycles in thermal power plants. Superheating is not typical for nuclear power plants.Typically most nuclear power plants operate multi-stage condensing steam turbines. This form of the law simplifies the description of energy transfer. Therefore it is convenient to use enthalpy instead of internal energy.Isobaric process ($Vdp = 0$): $dH = dQ - Q = H_2 - H_1$ At constant entropy, i.e., in the isentropic process, the enthalpy change equals the flow process work done on or by the system.Rankine cycle - Ts diagramThe Rankine cycle is often plotted on a pressure-volume diagram (pV diagram) and a temperature-entropy diagram (Ts diagram).When plotted on a pressure-volume diagram, the isobaric processes follow the isobaric lines for the gas (the horizontal lines), adiabatic processes move between these horizontal lines, and the area bounded by the complete cycle path represents the total work that can be done during one cycle.The temperature-entropy diagram (Ts diagram) in which the thermodynamic state is specified by a point on a graph with specific entropy (s) as the horizontal axis and absolute temperature (T) as the vertical axis. In this cycle, the heat is supplied externally to a closed loop, which usually uses water (in a liquid and vapor phase) as the working fluid. It is similar to boiling water reactors, steam will be supplied directly to the steam turbine, and the feed water from the steam cycle will be supplied back to the core.As well as the supercritical water reactor may use light water or heavy water as a neutron moderator. The net heat added is given by $Q_{add} = H_3 - H_2$ Isentropic expansion (expansion through turbine) - Steam from the boiler expands adiabatically from state 3 to state 4 in a steam turbine to produce work and then is discharged to the condenser (partially condensed). This upper limit is called the Carnot efficiency. By condensing the working steam to a liquid (inside a condenser) the pressure at the turbine outlet is lowered and the energy required by the feed pump consuems only 1% to 3% of the turbine output power and these factors contribute to a higher efficiency for the cycle.Today, the Rankine cycle is the fundamental operating cycle of all thermal power plants where an operating fluid is continuously evaporated and condensed. Together with Rudolf Clausius and William Thomson (Lord Kelvin), he contributed to thermodynamics, particularly focusing on the first of the three thermodynamic laws.The Rankine cycle was named after him and describes the performance of steam turbine systems, though the theoretical principle also applies to reciprocating engines such as steam locomotives. But also this parameter (condenser pressure) has its engineering limits:Decreasing the turbine exhaust pressure decreases the vapor quality (or dryness fraction). Since energy is conserved according to the first law of thermodynamics and energy cannot be converted to work completely, the heat input, QH , must equal the work done, W , plus the heat that must be dissipated as waste heat QC into the environment. Since the temperature difference is low, about 20°C , its thermal efficiency is also very low, about 3%.In modern nuclear power plants, the overall thermal efficiency is about one-third (33%), so 3000 MWth of thermal power from the fission reaction is needed to generate 1000 MWe of electrical power. The net heat rejected is given by $Q_{re} = H_4 - H_1$ During a Rankine cycle, the pumps' work is done on the fluid between states 1 and 2 (isentropic compression). Answer: $dH = dQ + Vdp$ An isobaric process is a thermodynamic process in which the system's pressure remains constant ($p = \text{const}$). This can be done by transferring heat (partially expanded steam) from certain steam turbine sections, which is normally well above the ambient temperature, to the feedwater. It is at a pressure well below atmospheric (absolute pressure of 0.008 MPa) and is in a partially condensed state (point F), typically of a quality near 90%.In this case, steam generators, steam turbines, condensers, and feedwater pumps constitute a heat engine subject to the efficiency limitations imposed by the second law of thermodynamics. Assuming that the maximum temperature is limited by the pressure inside the reactor pressure vessel, these methods are:Boiler and Condenser PressuresAs in the Carnot, Otto, and Brayton cycle, the thermal efficiency tends to increase as the average temperature at which energy is added by heat transfer increases and/or the average temperature at which energy is rejected decreases. Sub-critical fossil fuel power plants operated under critical pressure (i.e., lower than 22.1 MPa) can achieve 36-40% efficiency.Efficiency of Engines in Power EngineeringOcean thermal energy conversion (OTEC). Typically most nuclear power plants operate multi-stage condensing steam turbines (the high-pressure stage runs on saturated steam). On the other hand, most of the heat added is for the enthalpy of vaporization (i.e., for the phase change.)5)In this case, steam generators, steam turbines, condensers, and feedwater pumps constitute a heat engine subject to the efficiency limitations imposed by the second law of thermodynamics. As can also be seen, wet steam turbines (e.g., used in nuclear power plants) use superheated steam, especially at the inlet of low-pressure stages. The work required for the compressor is given by $W_p = H_2 - H_1$.Isobaric heat addition (in a heat exchanger - boiler) - In this phase (between state 2 and state 3), there is a constant-pressure heat transfer to the liquid condensate from an external source since the chamber is open to flow in and out. In contrast to the Brayton cycle, the working fluid in the Rankine cycle undergo the phase change from a liquid to vapor phase and vice versa.While many substances could be used as the working fluid in the Rankine cycle (inorganic or even organic), water is usually the fluid of choice due to its favorable properties, such as its non-toxic and unreactive chemistry, abundance, and low cost, as well as its thermodynamic properties. In this case, assume a simple cycle without reheat and condensing steam turbine running on saturated steam (dry steam). The term supercritical in this context refers to the thermodynamic critical point of water ($T_{CR} = 374^\circ\text{C}$; $p_{CR} = 22.1$ MPa) and must not be confused with the criticality of the reactor core, which describes changes in the neutron population in the reactor core.For SCWRs, a once-through steam cycle has been envisaged, omitting any coolant recirculation inside the reactor. The fluid does work in the turbine between stages 3 and 4 (isentropic expansion). As can be seen, this form of the law simplifies the description of energy transfer. "Approach to High-Efficiency Diesel and Gas Engines" (PDF). Moreover it has a very high heat of vaporization, making it an effective coolant and medium in thermal power plants and other energy industries. In these turbines, the high-pressure stage receives steam (this steam is nearly saturated steam - $x = 0.995$ - point C at the figure; 6 MPa; 275.6°C) from a steam generator and exhausts it to moisture separator-reheater (point D). This is the common feature of all thermodynamic cycles.One possible way is to superheat or reheat the working steam. In this case, the turbine operates at a steady state with inlet conditions of 6 MPa, $t = 275.6^\circ\text{C}$, $x = 1$ (point 3). The reactor vessel and the primary piping must withstand high pressures and great stresses at elevated temperatures. At some point, the expansion must be ended to avoid damages caused to steam turbine blades by low-quality steam.Decreasing the turbine exhaust pressure significantly increases the volume of exhausted steam, which requires huge blades in the last rows of a low-pressure stage of the steam turbine.In typical wet steam turbines, the exhausted steam condenses in the condenser, and it is at a pressure well below atmospheric (absolute pressure of 0.008 MPa, which corresponds to 41.5°C). $0.694 + (1 - 0.694)$. Supercritical fossil fuel power plants that are operated at supercritical pressure have efficiencies of around 43%. As an example, consider the design of the condenser in the thermal power plants. Engineers use the specific enthalpy in thermodynamic analysis more than the enthalpy itself. But it must be noted that nuclear power plants are much more complex than fossil fuel power plants, and it is much easier to burn fossil fuel than to generate energy from nuclear fuel. The ideal Gas Law almost cannot be used (steam does not follow $pV=nRT$). Accordingly, with the criticality of the reactor core, which describes changes in the neutron population in the reactor core. For SCWRs, a once-through steam cycle has been envisaged, omitting any coolant recirculation inside the reactor. The fluid does work in the turbine between stages 3 and 4 (isentropic expansion). As can be seen, this form of the law simplifies the description of energy transfer. The thermal power plants are currently designed to operate on the supercritical Rankine cycle (i.e., steam pressures exceeding the critical pressure of water 22.1 MPa, and turbine inlet temperatures exceeding 600°C). But all real thermodynamic processes are somehow irreversible. In this process, the surroundings work on the fluid, increasing its enthalpy ($h = u + pv$) and compressing it (increasing its pressure). This requires another type of heat exchanger called a superheater, which produces superheated steam.Rankine cycle with superheating of the high-pressure stage. The reheater heats the steam (point D), and then the steam is directed to the low-pressure stage of the steam turbine, where it expands (point E to F). But it must be noted that nuclear power plants are much more complex than fossil fuel power plants, and it is much easier to burn fossil fuel than to generate energy from nuclear fuel.Sub-critical fossil fuel power plants operated under critical pressure (i.e., lower than 22.1 MPa) can achieve 36-40% efficiency.Supercritical water reactors are considered a promising advancement for nuclear power plants because of their high thermal efficiency (~45 % vs. In real devices (turbines, pumps, and compressors), mechanical friction and heat losses cause further efficiency losses.To calculate the thermal efficiency of the simplest Rankine cycle (without reheating), engineers use the first law of thermodynamics in terms of enthalpy rather than in terms of internal energy.The first law in terms of enthalpy is: $dH = dQ + Vdp$ In this equation, the term Vdp is a flow process work. Note that there is always a temperature difference between (around $\Delta T = 14^\circ\text{C}$) the condenser temperature and the ambient temperature, which originates from condensers' finite size and efficiency.Typical parameters in a condenser of condensing turbinesBoiler PressureAn increase in the boiler pressure is, as a result, limited by the material of the reactor pressure vessel.The increase in the average temperature at which energy is added by heat transfer requires either superheating of steam produced or an increase in the pressure in the boiler (steam generator). Rankine developed a complete theory of the steam engine and indeed of all heat engines. OTEC is a sophisticated heat engine that uses the temperature difference between cooler deep and warmer surface seawaters to run a low-pressure turbine. Again the entropy remains unchanged.Isobaric heat rejection (in a heat exchanger) - In this phase, the cycle completes by a constant-pressure process in which heat is rejected from the partially condensed steam. In an ideal case (no friction, reversible processes, perfect design), this heat engine would have a Carnot efficiency of= $1 - T_{cold}/T_{hot} = 1 - 315/549 = 42.6\%$ where the temperature of the hot reservoir is 275.6°C (548.7K), the temperature of the cold reservoir is 41.5°C (314.7K). It was observed that more than two reheating stages are unnecessary since the next stage increases the cycle efficiency only half as much as the preceding stage.The turbine's high and low-pressure stages are usually on the same shaft to drive a common generator, but they have separate cases. Each heat engine is somehow inefficient. We define parameters η_t , η_p , η_R as a ratio of real work done by the device to work by the device when operated under isentropic conditions (in the case of the turbine). The exhausted steam then condenses in the condenser. The steam must be reheated to avoid damages caused to the steam turbine blades by low-quality steam. Recuperators (e.g., economizers) are often used in power engineering to increase the overall efficiency of thermodynamic cycles, for example, in a gas turbine engine. Therefore we can rewrite the formula for thermal efficiency as: This is a very useful formula, but we express the thermal efficiency using the first law in terms of enthalpy.Rankine cycle - Ts diagramTypically most nuclear power plants operate multi-stage condensing steam turbines. For example, when the hot reservoir has T_{hot} of 400°C (673K) and T_{cold} of about 20°C (293K), the maximum (ideal) efficiency will be: $= 1 - T_{cold}/T_{hot} = 1 - 293/673 = 56\%$. Ts diagrams are a useful and common tool, particularly because it helps to visualize the heat transfer during a process. The supercritical water reactor (SCWR) is a concept of Generation IV reactor that is operated at supercritical pressure (i.e., greater than 22.1 MPa). It has a single flow path in which the hot and cold fluids alternately pass through.A recuperator is a heat exchanger with separate flow paths for each fluid along its passages, and heat is transferred through the separating walls. The difference between the work done by the fluid and the work done on the fluid is the network produced by the cycle, and it corresponds to the area enclosed by the cycle curve (in the pV diagram). Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Technical Review. The recuperator transfers some of the waste heat in the exhaust to the compressed air, thus preheating it before entering the combustion chamber. But currently, improved materials and fabrication methods have permitted significant increases in the maximum pressures, with corresponding increases in thermal efficiency. For turbines, the value of η_t is typically 0.7 to 0.9 (70-90%).See also: Isentropic Process.The isentropic process is a special case of adiabatic processes. In comparison to other energy sources, the thermal efficiency of 33% is not much. In these turbines, the high-pressure stage receives steam (this steam is nearly saturated steam - $x = 0.995$ - point C at the figure; 6 MPa; 275.6°C). The liquid condensate is pumped from the condenser into the higher pressure boiler. For this entropy $s_2 = 0.592$ kJ/kgK and $p_2 = 6.0$ MPa we find h_2 , subcooled in steam tables for compressed water (using interpolation between two states). h_2 , subcooled = 179.7 kJ/kgThen the work done by the pumps, W_p , is $W_p = \Delta h = 5.7$ kJ/kg4)The enthalpy difference between (2 \rightarrow 3), which corresponds to the net heat added in the steam generator, is simply: $Q_{add} = h_3, v - h_2$, subcooled = 2785 - 179.7 = 2605.3 kJ/kgNote that there is no heat regeneration in this cycle. The Rankine cycle is an idealized thermodynamic cycle of a constant pressure heat engine that converts part of heat into mechanical work. This parameter reduces the overall efficiency and work output. In the case of wet steam, the actual entropy can be calculated with the vapor quality, x , and the specific entropies of saturated liquid water and dry steam: $s_4 = sv x + (1 - x) sl$ where $s_4 =$ entropy of wet steam (J/kg K) = 5.89 kJ/kgKsv = entropy of "dry" steam (J/kg K) = 8.227 kJ/kgK (for 0.008 MPa) s_4 = entropy of saturated liquid water (J/kg K) = 0.592 kJ/kgK (for 0.008 MPa)From this equation the vapor quality is: $x_4 = (s_4 - sl) / (sv - sl) = (5.89 - 0.592) / (8.227 - 0.592) = 0.694 = 69.4\%$ 2)The enthalpy for the state 3 can be picked directly from steam tables, whereas the enthalpy for the state 4 must be calculated using vapor quality: $h_3, v = 2785$ kJ/kg4, wet = $h_4, v x + (1 - x) h_4, l$ = 2576 . In real devices (such as turbines, pumps, and compressors), mechanical friction, heat losses, and losses in the combustion process cause further efficiency losses.Design Inefficiency. But it must be noted that nuclear power plants are much more complex than fossil fuel power plants, and it is much easier to burn fossil fuel than to generate energy from nuclear fuel.In an ideal Rankine cycle, the system executing the cycle undergoes a series of four processes: two isentropic (reversible adiabatic) processes alternated with two isobaric processes:Rankine Cycle - Ts DiagramIsentropic compression (compression in centrifugal pumps) - The liquid condensate is compressed adiabatically from state 1 to state 2 by centrifugal pumps (usually by condensate pumps and then by feedwater pumps). These parameters describe how efficiently a turbine, compressor, or nozzle approximates a corresponding isentropic device. The process of superheating water vapor in the T-s diagram is provided in the figure between state E and the saturation vapor curve. This requires maintaining very high pressures to keep the water in a liquid state. Most efficient and complex coal-fired power plants operate at "ultra critical" pressures (i.e., around 30 MPa) and use multiple stage reheat to reach about 48% efficiency.Modern Combined Cycle Gas Turbine (CCGT) plants, in which the thermodynamic cycle consists of two power plant cycles (e.g., the Brayton cycle and the Rankine cycle), can achieve a thermal efficiency of around 55%, in contrast to a single cycle steam power plant which is limited to efficiencies of around 35-45%.Causes of InefficiencyAs was discussed, an efficiency can range between 0 and 1. In an ideal Rankine cycle, the system executing the cycle undergoes a series of four processes: two isentropic (reversible adiabatic) processes alternated with two isobaric processes.Since Carnot's principle states that no engine can be more efficient than a reversible engine (a Carnot heat engine) operating between the same high temperature and low-temperature reservoirs, a steam turbine based on the Rankine cycle must have lower efficiency than the Carnot efficiency.In modern nuclear power plants, the overall thermal efficiency is about one-third (33%), so 3000 MWth of thermal power from the fission reaction is needed to generate 1000 MWe of electrical power. According to the Carnot principle, no engine can be more efficient than a reversible engine (Carnot heat engine) operating between the same high temperature and low-temperature reservoirs. It is tabulated in the steam tables along with specific volume and specific internal energy. This requires a higher temperature in the steam generator.Superheated vapor or superheated steam is a vapor at a temperature higher than its boiling point at the absolute pressure where the temperature is measured.Reheat allows delivering more of the heat at a temperature close to the peak of the cycle. In 1859, a Scottish engineer, William John Macquorn Rankine, advanced the study of heat engines by publishing the "Manual of the Steam Engine and Other Prime Movers". This steam is in a partially condensed state (point F), typically of a quality near 90%. But, this subcooling increases the inefficiency of the cycle because more energy is needed to reheat the water.Thermal Efficiency Improvement - Rankine CycleThere are several methods, how can be the thermal efficiency of the Rankine cycle improved. There is an overall theoretical upper limit to the efficiency of conversion of heat to work in any heat engine. Finally, the last and important source of inefficiencies is the compromises made by engineers when designing a heat engine (e.g., power plant). These assumptions are only applicable with ideal cycles.Most steady-flow devices (turbines, compressors, nozzles) operate under adiabatic conditions, but they are not truly isentropic but are rather idealized as isentropic for calculation purposes. The lowest feasible condenser pressure is the saturation pressure corresponding to the ambient temperature (i.e., the absolute pressure of 0.008 MPa, which corresponds to 41.5°C). This ratio is known as the Isentropic Turbine/Pump/Nozzle Efficiency. The thermal efficiency of such a simple Rankine cycle and in terms of specific enthalpies would be:It is a very simple equation, and for the determination of the thermal efficiency, you can use data from steam tables.Takaishi, Tatsuo; Numata, Akira; Nakano, Ryotju; Sakaguchi, Katsuhiko (March 2008). As can be seen, there are many SCWR designs, but all SCWRs have a key feature, which is the use of water beyond the thermodynamic critical point as primary coolant. It is a reversible adiabatic process. Since neither the steam generator is 100% efficient, there is always a temperature difference between the saturation temperature (secondary side) and the temperature of the primary coolant.Temperature gradients in a typical PWR steam generatorThe hot primary coolant (330°C; 626°F) is pumped into the steam generator through the primary inlet in a typical pressurized water reactor. In real thermodynamic systems or real heat engines, a part of the overall cycle inefficiency is due to the losses by the individual components. For example, water has the highest specific heat of any common substance - 4.19 kJ/kg K. The steam must be reheated or superheated to avoid damages caused to the blades of the steam turbine by low-quality steam. This process is known as heat regeneration, and a variety of heat regenerators can be used for this purpose. The feedwater (secondary circuit) is heated to the boiling point (2 \rightarrow 3a) of that fluid and then evaporated in the boiler (3a \rightarrow 3). On the other hand, the entropy remains unchanged. The working fluid in a Rankine cycle follows a closed loop and is reused constantly.As can be seen, it is convenient to use enthalpy and the first law in terms of enthalpy to analyze this thermodynamic cycle.

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