

## Acknowledgement

Firstly, I would like to gratefully acknowledge my advisor, Assoc.Prof.Dr. Satha Aphornratana. Without his generous guidance and encouragement, the completion of this research would not be possible.

I would like to acknowledge the members of the thesis examination committee, Assoc.Prof.Dr. Bundit Limmeechokchai, Asst.Prof.Dr. Lalita Tantimuratha and Asst.Prof.Dr. Kulachate Pianthong, for their valuable technical advice. I wish to also acknowledge Prof.Dr. Masud Behnia for his comments as the external examiner of this research.

Thanks to the Sirindhorn International Institute of Technology (SIIT) for giving an opportunity to undertake the Ph.D. course. I also wish to acknowledge the financial support from Thailand Research Fund and the Royal Golden Jubilee Program, Government of Thailand for the academic sponsorship. My acknowledgement gratefully extends to the Faculty of Engineering, Ubon Ratchathani University for the contribution of the CFD software (Fluent 6.0).

Grateful appreciation goes to Dr. Kanjanapon Chunnanond, Mr. Raksit Thistipatanapong and Mr. Passakorn Srisastra for their valuable research experiences, technical advice and contributions to this research. Also thanks to Mr. Somrerk Sutthichai and all other technicians for their technical assistance.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to my beloved mum, dad and sister and to my wife and her parents for their enormous support, understanding and endless encouragement in many difficult situations.