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(54) SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR A MULTI-FUEL PREMIXING NOZZLE WITH INTEGRAL LIQUID INJECTORS/EVAPORATORS

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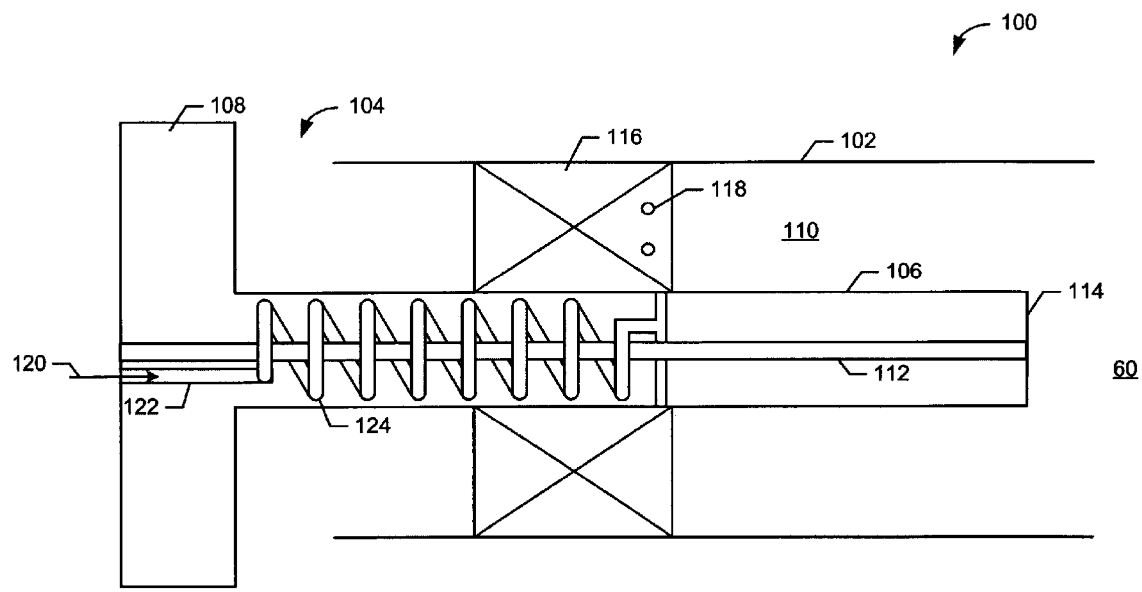
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A fuel nozzle assembly for a gas turbine engine is disclosed herein. The fuel nozzle assembly may include a premixing chamber formed between an outer annular shroud and an inner annular hub, a number of swirler vanes disposed about the premixing chamber between the outer annular shroud and the inner annular hub, one or more liquid fuel injectors positioned about the swirler vanes, and a flow of liquid fuel in communication with the one or more liquid fuel injectors.



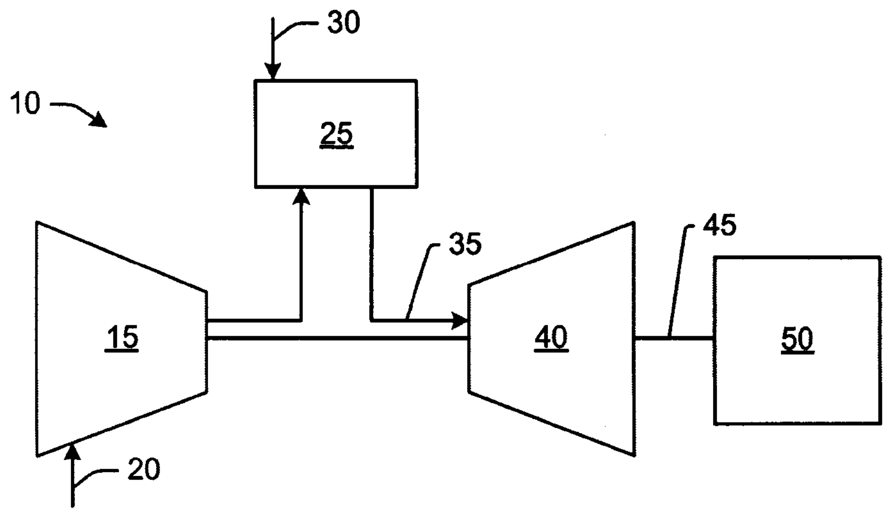


FIG. 1

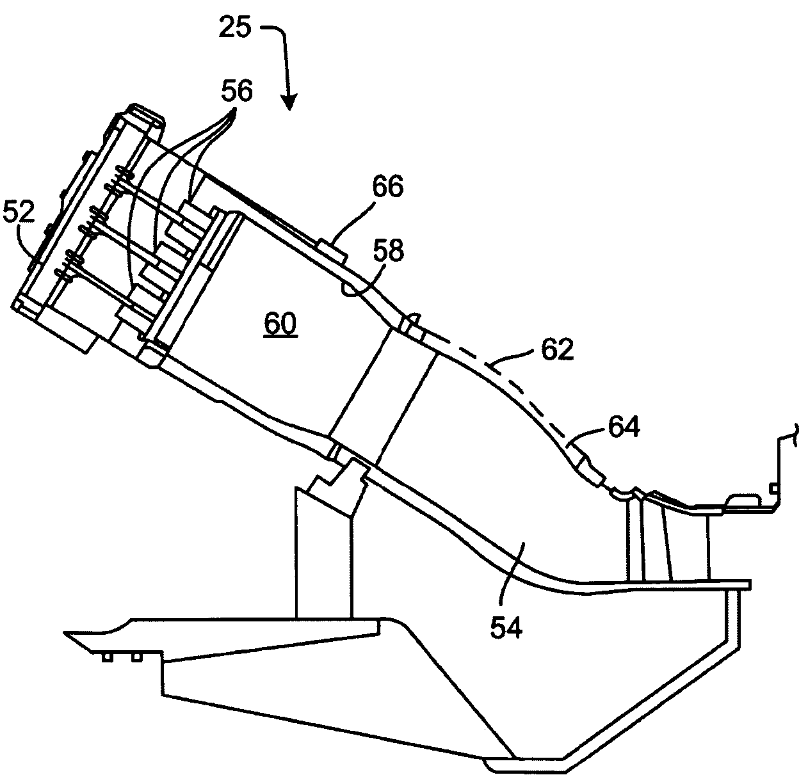


FIG. 2

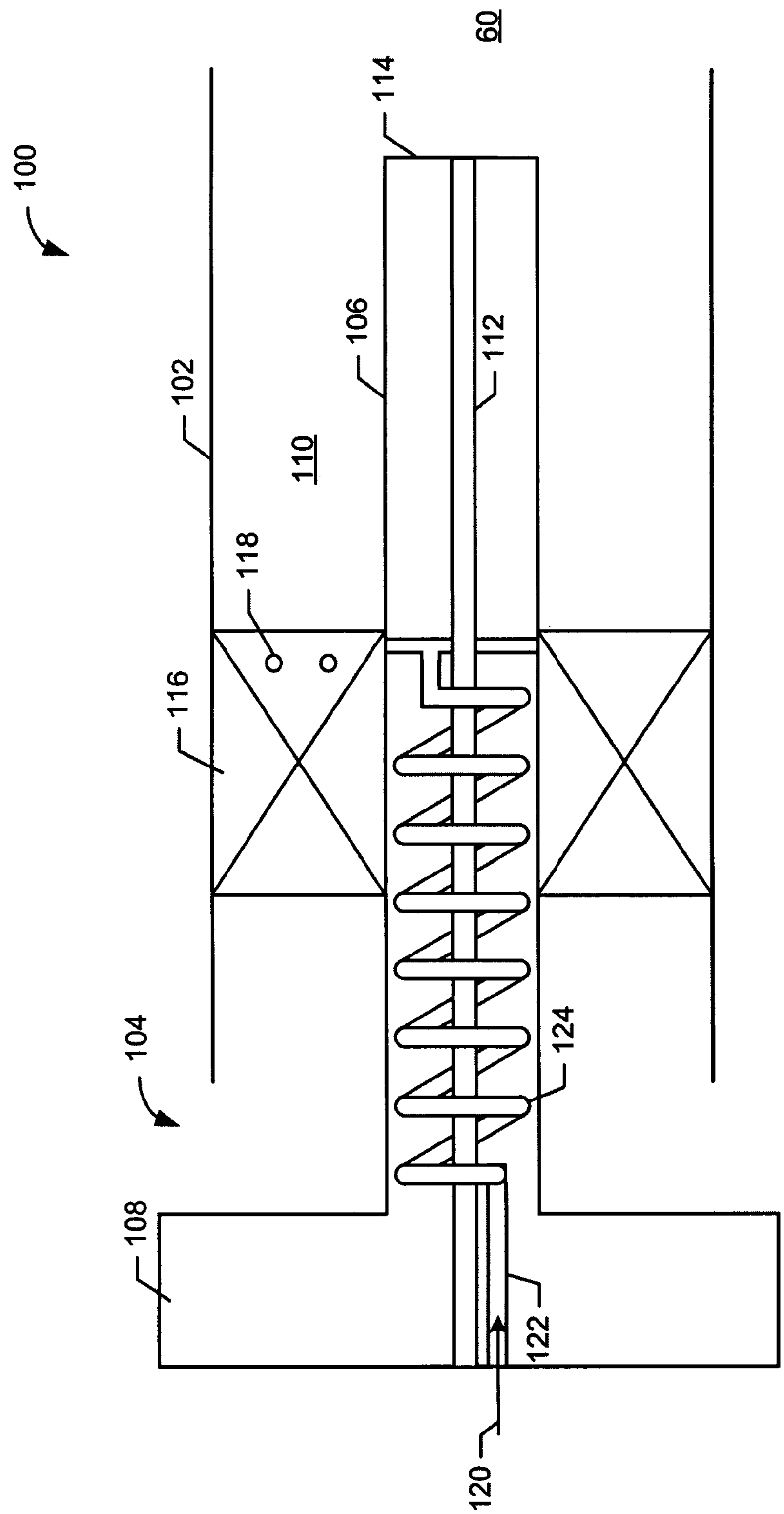


FIG. 3

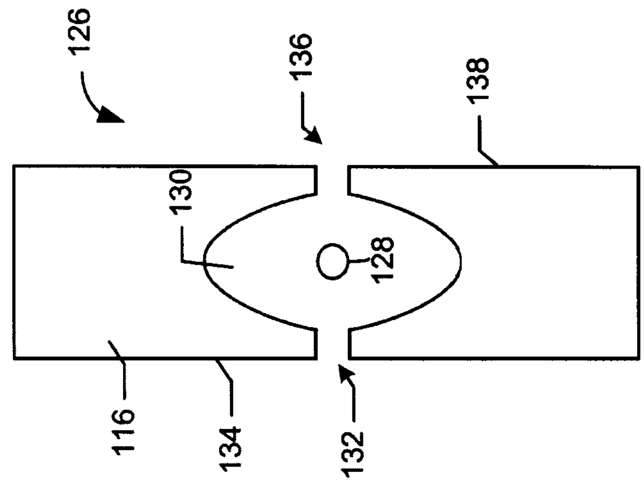


FIG. 5

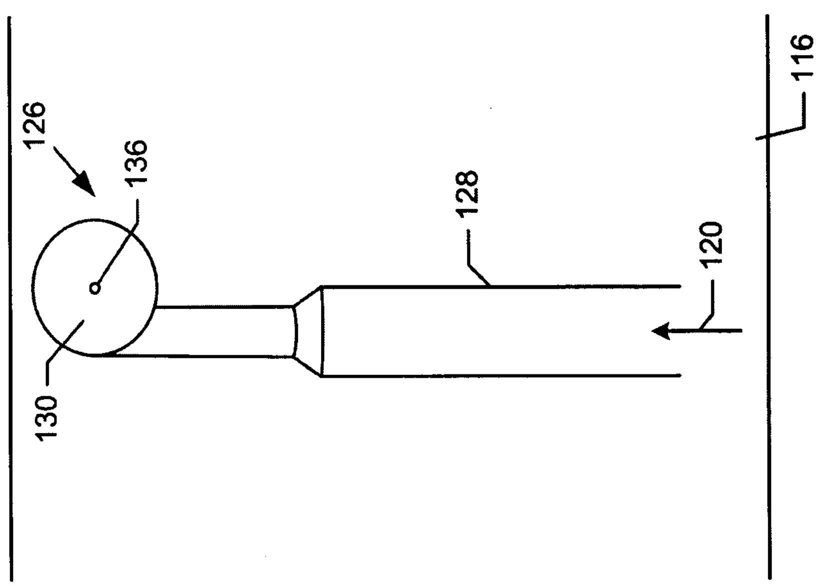


FIG. 4

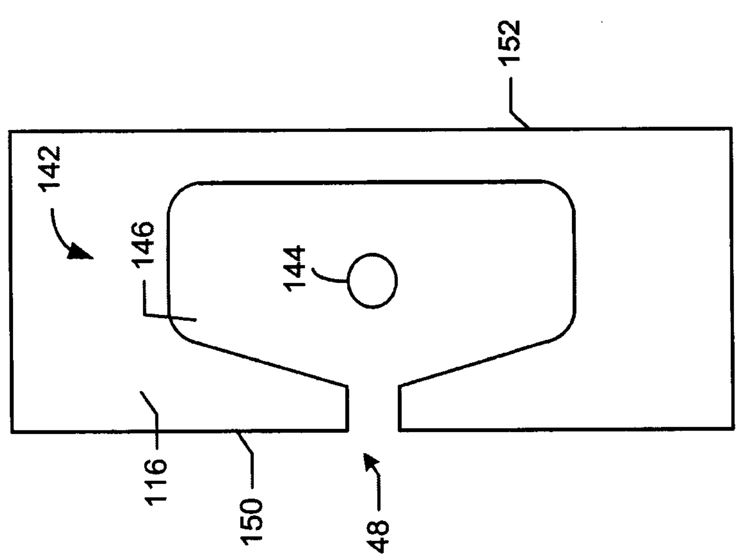


FIG. 6

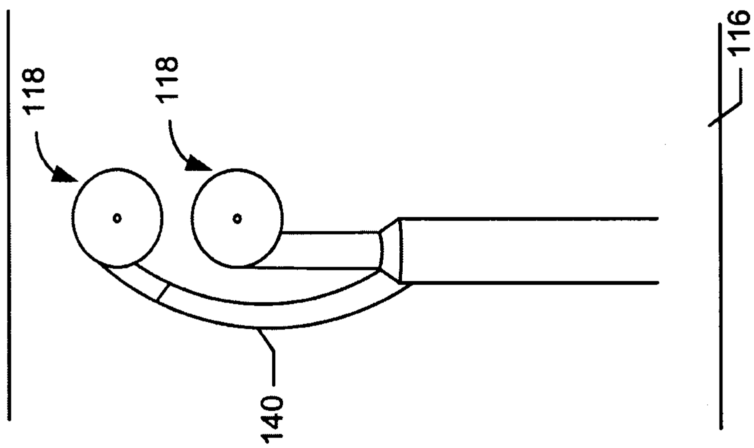


FIG. 7

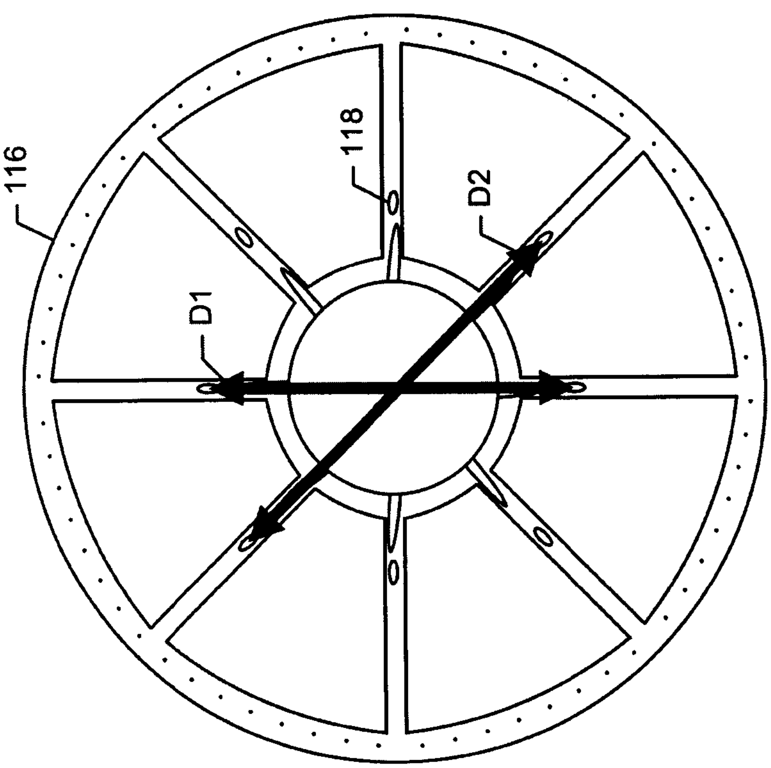


FIG. 8

SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR A MULTI-FUEL PREMIXING NOZZLE WITH INTEGRAL LIQUID INJECTORS/EVAPORATORS

FIELD

[0001] The present disclosure relates generally to gas turbine engines and more particularly relates to systems and methods for a multi-fuel premixing nozzle with integral liquid injectors/evaporators.

BACKGROUND

[0002] The operational efficiency and the overall power output of a gas turbine engine generally increases as the temperature of the hot combustion gas stream increased. High combustion gas stream temperatures, however, may produce higher levels of nitrogen oxides (NOx). Such emissions may be subject to both federal and state regulations in the U.S. and also may be subject to similar regulations abroad. A balancing act thus exists between the benefits of operating the gas turbine engine in an efficient high temperature range while also ensuring that the output of nitrogen oxides and other types of regulated emissions remain well below mandated levels. Moreover, varying load levels, varying ambient conditions, and other types of operational parameters also may have a significant impact on overall gas turbine efficiency and emissions.

[0003] Several types of known gas turbine engine designs, such as those using Dry Low NOx ("DLN") combustors, generally premix the flow of fuel and the flow of air upstream of a reaction or a combustion zone so as to reduce NOx emissions via a number of premixing fuel nozzles. Such premixing tends to reduce peak flame temperatures and, hence, NOx emissions.

[0004] For fuel flexibility and power system availability, low emissions gas turbines are often equipped with a system to inject a liquid fuel as a secondary or a backup fuel in addition to the gas premixers. The liquid fuel injectors may be inserted through the center of the gas premixers. Because the liquid fuel may not evaporate and premix sufficiently with the air prior to combustion, large quantities of water may be injected into the combustion zone so as to reduce the flame temperatures and the resultant NOx emissions. A significant and expensive volume of water thus may be required when operating with such a liquid fuel. Moreover, water injection may lower overall gas turbine efficiency.

[0005] There is thus a desire for an improved dual fuel premixing nozzle. Such a premixing nozzle may accommodate a secondary fuel such as a liquid fuel with reduced overall water consumption or without any water injection while maintaining gas turbine thermal efficiency and power generation.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

[0006] Some or all of the above needs and/or problems may be addressed by certain embodiments of the present disclosure. According to an embodiment, there is disclosed a fuel nozzle assembly for a gas turbine engine. The fuel nozzle assembly may include a premixing chamber formed between an outer annular shroud and an inner annular hub, a number of swirler vanes disposed about the premixing chamber between the outer annular shroud and the inner annular hub, one or more liquid fuel injectors positioned about the swirler vanes, and a flow of liquid fuel in communication with the one or more liquid fuel injectors.

[0007] In another embodiment, a gas turbine engine is disclosed. The gas turbine engine may include a compressor, a combustor in communication with the compressor, and a turbine in communication with the combustor. The combustor may include a fuel nozzle assembly. The fuel nozzle assembly may include a premixing chamber formed between an outer annular shroud and an inner annular hub, a number of swirler vanes disposed about the premixing chamber between the outer annular shroud and the inner annular hub, one or more liquid fuel injectors positioned about the swirler vanes, a flow of liquid fuel in communication with the one or more liquid fuel injectors.

[0008] According to another embodiment, a fuel nozzle assembly for a gas turbine engine is disclosed. The fuel nozzle may include a premixing chamber formed between an outer annular shroud and an inner annular hub, a number of swirler vanes disposed about the premixing chamber between the outer annular shroud and the inner annular hub, one or more liquid fuel injectors positioned about a trailing edge of the swirler vanes, and a flow of liquid fuel in communication with the one or more liquid fuel injectors. The liquid fuel may include a distillate, biodiesel, ethanol, a heavy carbon gases in liquid phase, or a combination thereof. The one or more fuel injectors may inject with atomization the flow of liquid fuel into the premixing/evaporating chamber.

[0009] Other embodiments, aspects, and features of the disclosure will become apparent to those skilled in the art from the following detailed description, the accompanying drawings, and the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] Reference will now be made to the accompanying drawings, which are not necessarily drawn to scale.

[0011] FIG. **1** schematically depicts an example gas turbine engine according to an embodiment.

[0012] FIG. **2** schematically depicts an example cross-section of a combustor according to an embodiment.

[0013] FIG. **3** schematically depicts an example cross-section of a premixing fuel nozzle according to an embodiment.

[0014] FIG. **4** schematically depicts an example cross-section of a fuel injector according to an embodiment.

[0015] FIG. **5** schematically depicts an example cross-section of a fuel injector according to an embodiment.

[0016] FIG. **6** schematically depicts an example cross-section of a fuel injector according to an embodiment.

[0017] FIG. **7** schematically depicts an example cross-section of one or more fuel injectors according to an embodiment.

[0018] FIG. **8** schematically depicts an example cross-section of a swirler according to an embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0019] Illustrative embodiments will now be described more fully hereinafter with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which some, but not all embodiments are shown. The present disclosure may be embodied in many different forms and should not be construed as limited to the embodiments set forth herein. Like numbers refer to like elements throughout.

[0020] Referring now to the drawings, in which like numerals refer to like elements throughout the several views, FIG. **1** shows a schematic view of gas turbine engine **10** as may be used herein. The gas turbine engine **10** may include a compressor **15**. The compressor **15** compresses an incoming flow of air **20**. The compressor **15** delivers the compressed flow of air **20** to a combustor **25**. The combustor **25** mixes the compressed flow of air **20** with a pressurized flow of fuel **30** and ignites the mixture to create a flow of combustion gases **35**. Although only a single combustor **25** is shown, the gas turbine engine **10** may include any number of the combustors **25** arranged in a circumferential array or otherwise. The flow of combustion gases **35** is delivered in turn to a turbine **40**. The flow of combustion gases **35** drives the turbine **40** so as to produce mechanical work. The mechanical work produced in the turbine **40** drives the compressor **15** via a shaft **45** and an external load **50** such as an electrical generator and the like.

[0021] The gas turbine engine **10** may use natural gas, liquid fuels, various types of syngas, and/or other types of fuels and blends thereof. The gas turbine engine **10** may be any one of a number of different gas turbine engines offered by General Electric Company of Schenectady, New York, including, but not limited to, those such as a 7 or a 9 series heavy duty gas turbine engine and the like. The gas turbine engine **10** may have different configurations and may use other types of components. Other types of gas turbine engines also may be used herein. Multiple gas turbine engines, other types of turbines, and other types of power generation equipment also may be used herein together.

[0022] FIG. **2** shows a schematic cross-section of an example of the combustor **25** as may be used with the gas turbine engine **10** described above and the like. The combustor **25** may extend from an end cover **52** at a head end to a transition piece **54** at an aft end about the turbine **40**. A number of fuel nozzles **56** may be positioned about the end cover **52**. A liner **58** may extend from the fuel nozzles **56** towards the transition piece **54** and may define a combustion zone **60** therein. The liner **58** and transition piece **54** may be surrounded by a flow sleeve **62**. The liner **58**, transition piece **54** and the flow sleeve **62** may define a flow path **64** there between for the flow of air **20** from the compressor **15** or otherwise. An outer casing **66** may surround the flow sleeve **62** in part. Any number of the combustors **25** may be used herein in a circumferential array and the like. As described above, the flow of air **20** and the flow of fuel **30** may be ignited in the combustor **25** to create the flow of combustion gases **35**. The combustor **25** described herein is for the purpose of example only. Combustors with other types of components and other configurations also may be used herein.

[0023] FIG. **3** schematically depicts an example cross-section of a premixing fuel nozzle **100** as may be described herein. The premixing fuel nozzle **100** may be used with the combustor **25** or the like. The combustor **25** may include any number of the premixing fuel nozzles **100** in any configuration.

[0024] Generally described, the premixing fuel nozzle **100** may include an outer annular shroud **102**. The outer annular shroud **102** may extend from an air inlet **104** on an upstream end thereof and may end about the combustion zone **60** at a downstream end thereof. The outer annular shroud **102** may surround an inner annular wall or a hub **106**. The hub **106** may extend from a fuel nozzle flange **108** at the upstream end thereof and may end upstream of the end of the outer annular shroud **102**. The outer annular shroud **102** and the hub **106** may define a premixing chamber **110** there between. The premixing chamber **110** may be in communication with the flow of air **20** from the compressor **15** or elsewhere.

[0025] The premixing fuel nozzle **100** also may include a number of tubes defining discrete passages for the flow of different types of fluids. For example, the premixing fuel nozzle **100** may include a number of tubes that define a number of fuel circuits. The tubes may have any suitable size, shape, or configuration. For example, a pilot fuel passage **112** may extend through the middle of the premixing fuel nozzle **100** from the fuel nozzle flange **108** to a pilot tip **114**. The pilot tip **114** may comprise a direct injection pilot nozzle. That is, the pilot fuel passage **112** and pilot tip **114** may be used for flows of liquid or gas fuels or other types of fluids for direct injection into the combustion zone **60**. For example, the pilot fuel passage **112** may include a flow of water and/or other types of fluids could be used herein. Other passages also may be used herein. Other components and other configurations may be used herein.

[0026] A number of swirler vanes **116** may extend from the hub **106** to or about the outer annular shroud **102**. The swirler vanes **116** may have any suitable size, shape, or configuration. As discussed in greater detail below, a number of fuel injectors **118** may be positioned about the swirler vanes **116**. For example, each swirler vane **116** may include one or more fuel injectors **118**. In some instances, each swirler vane **116** may include 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, or more fuel injectors **118**. Any number of fuel injectors **118** may be used herein. In some instances, the fuel injectors **118** may be arranged in a circumferential array at the same radial location about the swirler vanes **116**. In other instances, the fuel injectors **118** may be arranged in a number of circumferential arrays about the swirler vanes **116**. The fuel injectors **118** may be disposed at any location and in any configuration or pattern about the swirler vanes **116**.

[0027] The fuel injectors **118** may act as liquid fuel injectors for injecting and atomizing a liquid fuel into the premixing chamber **110**. In some instances, the fuel injectors **118** may be disposed about a radial midpoint of each swirler vane **116**. In other instances, the fuel injectors **118** may be disposed about a trailing edge of the swirler vanes **116**. The fuel injectors **118** may be disposed at any location(s) on the swirler vanes **116**. The fuel injectors **118** may be in communication with a flow of liquid fuel **120**. For example, the premixing fuel nozzle **100** may include a liquid fuel system **122**. The liquid fuel system **122** may provide the flow of liquid fuel **120**, which may be a liquid fuel (such as a distillate, biodiesel, ethanol, or the like) or a liquid gas (such as heavy carbon gases, etc.). The liquid fuel system **122** may include a liquid fuel passage **124**, which may provide the liquid fuel **120** to the fuel injectors **118**. For example, the liquid fuel passage **124** may extend from the gas fuel nozzle flange **108** to the fuel injectors **118** about the swirler vanes **116**. In some instances, the liquid fuel passage **124** may form a coil about a portion of the pilot fuel passage **112**. The swirler vanes **116** and the fuel injectors **118** thus may provide liquid fuel/air mixing. The flow of air **20** and the flow of liquid fuel **120** may begin to mix within the premixing chamber **110** at or downstream of the swirler vanes **116** and flow into the combustion zone **60**. Other components and other configurations may be used herein.

[0028] FIG. **4** schematically depicts an example cross-section of one of the swirler vanes **116** along an axial plane of the premixing fuel nozzle **100**, and FIG. **5** schematically depicts an example cross-section of one of the swirler vanes **116** along a radial plane of the premixing fuel nozzle **100**. As depicted in FIGS. **4** and **5**, the fuel injectors **118** may comprise double sided atomizers **126**. The double sided atomizers **126** may include a liquid fuel conduit **128** in fluid communication with the liquid fuel passage **124**. The liquid fuel conduit **128** may exit into a cavity **130** disposed within the swirler vane **116**. In this manner, the liquid fuel **120** may exit into the cavity **130**. The cavity **130** may include a first orifice **132** on a first side **134** of the swirler vane **116** and a second orifice **136** on a second side **138** of the swirler vane **116**. The first orifice **132** and the second orifice **136** may inject and atomize the liquid fuel **120** on both sides of the swirler vane **116**.

[0029] FIG. **6** schematically depicts an example cross-section of one of the swirler vanes **116** along a radial plane of the premixing fuel nozzle **100**. As depicted in FIG. **6**, the fuel injectors **118** may comprise single sided atomizers **142**. The single sided atomizers **142** may be similar to the double sided atomizers **126**, except that the single sided atomizers **142** may include only one orifice on one side of the swirler vane **116**.

[0030] For example, the single sided atomizer **142** may include a liquid fuel conduit **144** in fluid communication with the liquid fuel passage **124**. The liquid fuel conduit **144** may exit into a cavity **146** disposed within the swirler vane **116**. The cavity **146** may include an orifice **148** on a first side **150** of the swirler vane **116**. A second side **152** of the swirler vane **116** may not include an orifice. The orifice **148** may inject and atomize the liquid fuel **120** on one side of the swirler vane **116**.

[0031] FIG. **7** schematically depicts an example cross-section of one of the swirler vanes **116** along an axial plane of the premixing fuel nozzle **100**. As depicted in FIG. **7**, the fuel injectors **118** may include a cluster of double sided atomizers **126** and/or single sided atomizers **142**. For example, the double sided atomizers **126** and/or the single sided atomizers **142** may be in communication with one another by way of a connecting conduit **140**. In this manner, a number of double sided atomizers **126** and/or single sided atomizers **142** may be interconnected by way of a number of connecting conduits **140**.

[0032] FIG. **8** schematically depicts an example cross-section of the swirler vanes **116** along a radial plane of the premixing fuel nozzle **100**. FIG. **8** depicts the arrangement of the fuel injectors **118** about the swirler vanes **116**. In some instances, the fuel injectors **118** may be arranged in a single circumferential array at the same radial location about the swirler vanes **116**. For example, fuel injectors **118** may be located at D**1** or D**2**. In other instances, the fuel injectors **118** may be arranged in a number of circumferential arrays about the swirler vanes **116**. For example, fuel injectors **118** may be located at D**1** or D**2**. The fuel injectors **118** may be disposed at any location and in any configuration or pattern about the swirler vanes **116**. The fuel injectors may comprise single sided or double sided atomizers.

[0033] Although embodiments have been described in language specific to structural features and/or methodological acts, it is to be understood that the disclosure is not necessarily limited to the specific features or acts described. Rather, the specific features and acts are disclosed as illustrative forms of implementing the embodiments.

That which is claimed:

1. A fuel nozzle assembly for a gas turbine engine, comprising:

a premixing chamber formed between an outer annular shroud and an inner annular hub;

a plurality of swirler vanes disposed about the premixing chamber between the outer annular shroud and the inner annular hub;

one or more liquid fuel injectors positioned about the plurality of swirler vanes; and

a flow of liquid fuel in communication with the one or more liquid fuel injectors.

2. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **1**, wherein the one or more fuel injectors inject and atomize the flow of liquid fuel into the premixing chamber.

3. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **1**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors comprise double sided atomizers.

4. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **1**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors comprise single sided atomizers.

5. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **1**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors comprise a combination of double sided and single sided atomizers.

6. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **1**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors comprise a cluster of liquid fuel atomizers.

7. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **1**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors are arranged in one or more circumferential arrays at one or more radial locations.

8. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **1**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors are disposed about a trailing edge of the swirler vanes.

9. A gas turbine engine, comprising:

a compressor;

a combustor in communication with the compressor, the combustor including a fuel nozzle assembly, comprising:

a premixing chamber formed between an outer annular shroud and an inner annular hub;

a plurality of swirler vanes disposed about the premixing chamber between the outer annular shroud and the inner annular hub;

one or more liquid fuel injectors positioned about the plurality of swirler vanes; and

a flow of liquid fuel in communication with the one or more liquid fuel injectors;

and a turbine in communication with the combustor.

10. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **9**, wherein the one or more fuel injectors inject and atomize the flow of liquid fuel into the premixing chamber.

11. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **9**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors comprise double sided atomizers.

12. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **9**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors comprise single sided atomizers.

13. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **9**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors comprise a combination of double sided and single sided atomizers.

14. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **9**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors comprise a cluster of liquid fuel atomizers.

15. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **9**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors are arranged in one or more circumferential arrays at one or more radial locations.

16. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **9**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors are disposed about a trailing edge of the swirler vanes.

17. A fuel nozzle assembly for a gas turbine engine, comprising:

a premixing chamber formed between an outer annular shroud and an inner annular hub;

a plurality of swirler vanes disposed about the premixing chamber between the outer annular shroud and the inner annular hub;

one or more liquid fuel injectors positioned about a trailing edge of the plurality of swirler vanes; and

a flow of liquid fuel in communication with the one or more liquid fuel injectors, wherein the liquid fuel comprises a distillate, biodiesel, ethanol, a heavy carbon gases in liquid phase, or a combination thereof, and wherein the one or more fuel injectors inject and atomize the flow of liquid fuel into the premixing chamber.

18. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **17**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors comprise double sided atomizers, single sided atomizers, or a combination thereof.

19. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **18**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors comprise a cluster of liquid fuel atomizers interconnected by one or more connecting conduits.

20. The fuel nozzle assembly of claim **17**, wherein the one or more liquid fuel injectors are arranged in one or more circumferential arrays at one or more radial locations.

* * * * *