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Reactivity of Metal Oxide Sorbents for Removal of H₂S

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Introduction

Removal of hydrogen sulfide contained in hot coal gases produced from integrated gasification combined cycle power generation systems is required to protect downstream combustion turbines from being corroded with sulfur compounds. Removal of sulfur compounds from hot coal gas products is investigated by using various metal oxide sorbents and membrane separation methods. The main requirements of these metal oxide sorbents are durability and high sulfur-loading capacity during absorption-regeneration cycles. In this research, durable metal oxide sorbents were formulated. Reactivity of the formulated metal oxide sorbent formulated coal gas mixtures was examined to search for an ideal sorbent formulation with a high-sulfur-loading capacity suitable for removal of hydrogen sulfide from coal gases.

Objectives

The main objectives of this research are to formulate durable metal oxide sorbents with high-sulfur-loading capacity by a physical mixing method, to investigate reaction kinetics on the removal of sulfur compounds from coal gases at high temperature and pressure, to study reaction kinetics on the regeneration of sulfided sorbents, to identify effects of hydrogen partial pressures and moisture on equilibrium/dynamic absorption of hydrogen sulfide into formulated metal oxide sorbents as well as initial reaction rates of H_2S with formulated metal oxide sorbents at various reaction conditions.

Experimental Approach

Fresh metal oxide sorbent particles with promising formulas and simulated coal gases containing hydrogen sulfide are introduced in a 35 cm³ 316 stainless steel batch reactor (see FIGURE 1). The batch reactor, loaded with a fresh sorbent and a simulated coal gas mixture, is submerged in a fluidized sand bath to maintain the chosen heterogeneous reaction system at a desired reaction temperature¹. Fine metal oxide sorbents are used to minimize effects of

intraparticle diffusion of hydrogen sulfide through sulfided sorbent particles for the evaluation of initial reaction rates of H_2S with formulated metal oxide sorbents. The batch reactor, loaded with a mixture of the fresh sorbent and the simulated coal gas mixture, is shaken in a constant-temperature fluidized sand bath to reduce effects of mass transfer of hydrogen sulfide to the sorbent particles. The sulfidation reaction is terminated at a desired reaction duration. Conversions of the sorbent are analyzed with a gas chromatograph.

The metal oxide sorbents such as TU-1, TU-19, TU-24, TU-25 and TU-28 were formulated with zinc oxide powder as an active sorbent ingredient, bentonite as a binding material and titanium oxide as a supporting metal oxide. This pasty mixture was extrudated 1-mm cylindrical rods. The viscosity of the pasty mixture appeared to be sensitive to the amount of water as well as the amount of bentonite added to the powder mixture at room temperature. Homogeneous mixing of these pasty slurry mixtures seemed to be very important in producing duplicate formulations of sorbents. The formulated metal oxide sorbents were calcined for 2 hours at 800 - 900 °C. The ingredients and some physical properties of the formulated sorbents were presented in TABLE 1.

FIGURE1. Batch Reactor Assembly



The fresh formulated metal oxide sorbents in the form of 1-mm cylindrical rod were crushed to obtain 100- 200 mesh particles and minus 200-mesh particles to evaluate initial intrinsic sulfidation kinetics as well as dynamic absorption of H₂S into sorbents. Metal oxide sorbents with 100-200 mesh particles were reacted with simulated coal gases containing hydrogen sulfide in the 35 cm³ 316 stainless steel batch reactor for 30-150 seconds at 500°C (see Table 2).

The formulated metal oxide sorbents in the form of 1mm cylindrical rod were used in evaluating intraparticular diffusivity of H_2S into the metal oxide matrices. Concentrations of hydrogen sulfide were analyzed with a gas chromatograph at various reaction durations to evaluate reaction rates of H_2S as well as equilibrium/dynamic absorption of H_2S into the sorbents.

	TU-1	TU-19	TU-24	TU-25	TU-28
ZnO, g	1	1	1.8	0.5	1
TiO ₂ , g Bentonite, g	2 0.1	2 0.15	1.2 0.15	2.5 0.15	2 0.1
Calcination Temperature, °C Calcination Duration, min	850 120	800 100	800 100	830 100	830 100
Density of Sorbent, g/cm ³ Specific Pore Volume, cm ³ /g	1.73 0.36	1.73 0.36	1.73 0.36		
Calcination Temperature, °C Calcination Duration, min Density of Sorbent, g/cm ³ Specific Pore Volume, cm ³ /g	850 120 1.73 0.36	800 100 1.73 0.36	800 100 1.73 0.36	830 100	830 100

TABLE 1. Formulation of metal oxide sorbents.

TABLE 2. Experimental conditions for the reaction of H_2S with sorbents.

Reactor Volume, cm ³	35				
Temperature, °C	350 - 550				
Reaction Time, min Particle Size	0.5 - 60 100 - 200 mesh, <200 mesh, 200 µm, 1 cvlindrical rod				
Amount of Sorbent, g	0.015 - 0.4				
Initial Partial Pressure of Hydrogen at 25 °C, psia	14.7 -24.7				
Initial Amount of Water, g	0.085 - 0.120				
Initial Concentration of H ₂ S, ppm	8000 - 8700				
Initial Partial Pressure of Nitrogen at 25 °C, psia	140 -150				
Initial Total Pressure of Reaction Mixture at	164.7				
25°C, psia					

mm

Results

Experimental data of H₂S concentrations at various reaction durations were obtained by reacting H₂S with the sorbents formulated at our laboratory as well as the ZT-4 sorbent formulated at the Research Triangle Institute. Several blank experimental runs were made to evaluate absorption of H₂S into the 316 stainless steel reactor wall at various temperatures. These experimental data were used in evaluating equilibrium/dynamic absorption of H₂S into metal oxide sorbents as well as reaction rates of H₂S with metal oxide sorbents. Experiments on reactivity of hydrogen sulfide contained in a simulated coal gas mixture with the 316 SS batch reactor wall were performed at various reaction temperatures to evaluate effects of reaction temperatures on its reactivity with the wall. The simulated coal gas mixture consists of 9107-ppm hydrogen sulfide (0.005 g; 1 w%), 0.085-g water (15.84 -17.08 w%), 0.0029-g hydrogen (0.58 w%), and 0.4046-g nitrogen (81.34 w%). Absorption of H₂S into the 316 SS wall increases with absorption durations above 400°C. However, absorption of H₂S into the 316 SS wall does not take place at 350°C and previously-absorbed H₂S appears to be released from the 316 SS wall at 350°C^{2.3} (see FIGURE 2).

A series of experiments on effects of ZT-4 sorbent quantities on removal of H_2S were carried out in the presence of initial 8700-ppm H_2S and 0.085-g moisture for 10 min at 500°C (see FIGURE 3). Removal of H_2S increases with amounts of the sorbent, but appears to level off above 0.1-g sorbent. These data may suggest that equilibrium concentration of H_2S in the reaction with the sorbent is reachable within 10-min reaction duration. A series of experiments were carried out in the presence of initial 8700-ppm H_2S and 0.085-g moisture for 60 min at 500°C to investigate effects of varying the amount of TU-19 sorbent in the form of 1-mm cylindrical rod on the removal of H_2S (see FIGURE 4). The removal of H_2S



increases with amounts of the sorbent, but appears to level off above 0.05-g sorbent. These observations may suggest that equilibrium concentrations of H_2S are independent of sorbent quantities above 0.05-g sorbent.

Effects of moisture on reactivity of 200- μ m ZT-4 sorbent with initial 9107-ppm H₂S were investigated at 350°C (see FIGURE 5). Increased moisture increases removal of H₂S below equilibrium absorption. This observation may suggest that dynamic absorption of H₂S into the sorbent is dependent on moisture quantities at 350°C. Equilibrium absorption of H₂S appears to be independent of moisture amounts. This fact may indicate that moisture does not affect equilibrium absorption of H₂S into the sorbent at 350°C.

Reactivity of 200- μ m ZT-4 sorbent with initial 9107-ppm H₂S was examined in the presence of 0.085-g moisture at various reaction temperatures (FIGURE 6). Reactivity of the sorbent with H₂S increases with reaction temperatures. Equilibrium removal of H₂S increases with reaction temperatures and requires longer reaction durations with lower reaction temperatures. Absorption of H₂S into the sorbent increases with absorption durations below equilibrium absorption.

Reactivity of TU-1 sorbent in the form of 1-mm cylindrical-rod with initial 9107-ppm H_2S , the first sorbent formulated at our laboratory, was examined in the presence of 0.085-g moisture at 350°C (see FIGURE 7). Absorption of H_2S into the sorbent also increases with absorption durations below equilibrium absorption, as observed from the experimental data of the ZT-4 sorbent.



Effects of particle sizes of the ZT-4 sorbent on the removal of H_2S were examined in the presence of initial 9107-ppm H_2S and 0.085-g moisture at 350°C as shown in FIGURE 8. The minus-127- μ m (micron) ZT-4 sorbent removes more H_2S than the 200- μ m (micron) sorbent below equilibrium absorption. Equilibrium absorption of H_2S is not affected by particle sizes. These observations may suggest that the intraparticular mass transfer of H_2S into pores of the sorbent is a limiting step for absorption of H_2S into the sorbent at 350°C. These experimental data may indicate that reaction rates of H_2S with the sorbent increases with decreased particle sizes.

Reactivity of TU-19 sorbent in the form of 0.1-g 1-mm cylindrical rod was investigated in the presence of the initial concentration 8700-ppm H_2S and 0.085-g moisture at 500°C and various reaction durations (see FIGURE 9). These experimental data showed that most absorption of H_2S into the sorbent occurs during the first 5-min reaction duration. These experimental data were utilized in evaluating intraparticular diffusivity of H_2S through the TU-19 sorbent matrix, using a developed cylindrical rod model.



Intraparticular diffusivity of H_2S through the TU-19 sorbent in the form of 1-mm cylindrical rods was evaluated at 500°C, using the following cylindrical rod model. The model^{4,5} was developed with the unreacted core assumption and the quasi steady state assumption. Left-side values of Equation (1) were plotted against the right-side values (see FIGURE 10). Intraparticle diffusivity was determined from the slope of this plot. The intraparticle diffusivity of H_2S into the TU-19 sorbent was found to be 2.018x10⁻³ cm²/s at 500°C.

$$\ln(\frac{r}{R})r\frac{dr}{dt} = D_e(\frac{B}{b})(1 + Ar^2) + \text{constant}$$
(1)

$$r = (R^2 - (\frac{C_{AO} - C_A}{bpLr_B})V)^{0.5}$$
(2)

$$B = \frac{C_{Ao}}{r_p} - \frac{bV_B}{V}$$
(3)

$$A = \frac{bpL}{BV} \tag{4}$$

where r: radius of an unreacted core

- R: radius of a cylindrical-rod sorbent
- t: reaction time
- V_B : volume of a cylindrical-rod sorbent
- L: Length of a cylindrical-rod sorbent
- ρ_B : density of a cylindrical-rod sorbent
- *D_e*: intraparticle diffusivity

V: reactor volume

b: equilibrium absorption

 C_{AO} : initial concentration of H_2S

 C_A : concentration of H_2S

Equilibrium absorption of the TU-19 sorbent in the presence of the initial 24.7-psia H₂ is compared with that in the presence of the initial 14.7-psia H₂. Equilibrium absorption of the TU-19 sorbent in the presence of the initial 24.7-psia H₂ is higher than that in the presence of the initial 14.7-psia H₂ (see FIGURE 11). This observation may indicate that partial pressure of hydrogen appears to affect significantly equilibrium absorption of H₂S into the sorbent. Effects of hydrogen partial pressures on reactivity of the 100-200 mesh TU-25 sorbent as well as dynamic absorption of H₂S into the 100-200 mesh TU-25 sorbent were investigated in the presence of 0.085-g moisture for 1 min at 500°C, as shown in FIGURE 12. Reactivity of H₂S with the TU-25 sorbent in the presence of the initial 14.7-psia hydrogen is higher than that in the presence of the initial 24.7-psia hydrogen, and reaction rates of H₂S with the sorbent increases with quantities of the sorbent (see FIGURE 12). Dynamic absorption of H₂S into the TU-25 sorbent in the presence of the initial 14.7-psia hydrogen is higher than that in the presence of the initial 24.7-psia hydrogen, and reaction rates of H₂S into the TU-25 sorbent in the presence of the initial 14.7-psia hydrogen is higher than that in the presence of the initial 24.7-psia hydrogen, and character absorption of H₂S into the TU-25 sorbent in the presence of the initial 14.7-psia hydrogen is higher than that in the presence of the initial 24.7-psia hydrogen, and dynamic absorption of H₂S into the TU-25 sorbent in the presence of the initial 14.7-psia hydrogen is higher than that in the presence of the initial 24.7-psia hydrogen, and dynamic absorption of H₂S into the TU-25 sorbent decreases with increased quantities of the sorbent (see FIGURE 13).



The TU-24 sorbent was reacted with the 8700-ppm initial concentration H_2S in the presence of initial 14.7-psia H_2 and 0.085-g moisture for 30 -150 seconds at 500°C, as shown in FIGURE 14. Concentrations of H_2S decrease with increased reaction durations as well as increased amounts of the sorbent. These experimental data of H_2S concentrations at various reaction durations were used in evaluating reaction rates of H_2S with the TU-24 sorbent as well as dynamic absorption of H_2S into the sorbent at 500°C. FIGURE 15 shows that reaction rates of H_2S with the TU-24 sorbent increase with increased quantities of the sorbent and decreased reaction durations. FIGURE 16 shows that reaction rates of H_2S with the TU-24 sorbent increase quantities of the sorbent as sorbent increased quantities of the sorbent at 500°C increases with increased reaction of H_2S into the TU-24 sorbent at 500°C increases with increased reactions of H_2S . Dynamic absorption of H_2S into the TU-24 sorbent at 500°C increases with increased reactions at various of H_2S . Dynamic absorption of H_2S into the Sorbent as sorbent at 500°C. FIGURE 17. FIGURE

18 shows that reaction rates of H_2S with the TU-24 sorbent decrease drastically with reaction durations for the short reaction duration of 30 - 150 seconds.



The following reaction rate equation may be proposed, since reaction rates of H_2S with TU-24 sorbent are dependent on concentrations of H_2S and quantities of the sorbent, as shown in Figures 15 and 16.

$$-r_{\rm A} = k_{\rm A} C_{\rm A}{}^{\alpha} M_{\rm S}{}^{\beta} \tag{5}$$

where	-r _A :	reaction rates	of H ₂ S,	g-mole/cm	1 ³ /	/s

 C_A : concentrations of H₂S, g-mole/cm³

- M_S : quantities of sorbents, g/cm³
- k_A: reaction rate constant in terms of disappearance of H₂S, $cc^{(\alpha+\beta-1)}/g^{\beta}/g$ -mole^(\alpha-1)/s
- α : reaction order with respect to concentrations of H₂S
- β : reaction order with respect to quantities of sorbents
- cc: cm³

The equation (5) is linearized by applying a logarithm to the both sides of the proposed reaction rate equation^{4,5}. The following linearized equation is obtained to evaluate k_A , α and β .

$$\ln(-r_A) = \ln(k_A) + \alpha \ln(C_A) + \beta \ln(M_S)$$
(6)

The experimental data of H_2S concentrations at various reaction durations (see FIGURE 14) are applied to equation (6), and then the reaction rate constant k_A and the reaction orders such as α and β are obtained using the multiple linear regression method⁶ as well as the Gauss-Seidel method⁷, as shown in equation 7.

$$-\mathbf{r}_{\rm A} = 9908 \mathbf{C}_{\rm A}^{1.5165} \mathbf{M}_{\rm S}^{1.1397} \tag{7}$$

The reaction rate constant k_A in terms of disappearance of H_2S was found to be 9908 cm^{4.9686}/g^{1.1397}/g-mole^{0.5165}/s at the reaction temperature 500°C. The reaction order α with respect to concentrations of H_2S was found to be 1.5165, while the reaction order β with respect to quantities of the TU-24 sorbent was found to be 1.1397. Reaction rates of H_2S obtained from the experimental data points were compared with reaction rates of H_2S predicted from the developed reaction rate equation (see equation 7), as shown in FIGURE 19.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The cylindrical rod model was developed to determine intraparticle diffusivity of hydrogen sulfide into metal oxide sorbents. The intraparticle diffusivity of H_2S into the TU-28 sorbent was found to be 2.018×10^{-3} cm²/s at 500°C. Dynamic absorption of H_2S into the 100-200 mesh TU-25 sorbent decreases with increased sorbent quantities and decreased reaction temperatures.

The reaction rate equation in terms of disappearance of H_2S with the TU-24 sorbent for short reaction durations of 30 -150 seconds at 500°C was developed with the experimental data in order to determine a reaction rate constant in terms of disappearance of H_2S , a reaction order with respect to concentrations of H_2S , and a reaction order with respect to quantities of the solid TU-24 sorbent. The reaction rate constant in terms of disappearance of H_2S was found to be 9908 cm^{4.9686}/g^{1.1397}/g-mole^{0.5165}/s at the reaction temperature 500°C. The reaction order with respect to concentrations of H_2S was found to be 1.5165, while the reaction order with respect to quantities of the TU-24 sorbent was found to be 1.1397.

Effects of hydrogen partial pressures on reactivity of the 100-200 mesh TU-25 sorbent were investigated in the presence of 0.085-g moisture for 1 min at 500°C. Reactivity of the TU-25 sorbent with H_2S was found to be significantly affected by partial pressures of hydrogen. Equilibrium absorption as well as dynamic absorption of H_2S into metal oxide sorbents also was found to be significantly influenced by compositions of hydrogen

contained in simulated coal gas mixtures. Compositions of moisture contained in simulated coal gas mixtures were identified to affect equilibrium absorption of hydrogen sulfide into formulated metal oxide sorbents.

Application

The developed reaction rate equation will be useful in designing a bench-scale or commercial reactor for removal of surfur compounds from hot coal gas mixtures. Effects of hydrogen partial pressures and moisture on equilibrium absorption as well as dynamic absorption of H_2S into formulated metal oxide sorbents should be incorporated into evaluating relatively capacities and reactivities of metal oxide sorbents. Effects of moisture and hydrogen partial pressures on reaction kinetics should be considered in designing a fluidized-bed reactor or a transport reactor for removal of hydrogen sulfide from hot coal gas mixtures.

Future Activities

A durable and reactive metal oxide sorbent with a high-sulfur-loading capacity will be formulated, and its reactivity, durability, and surfur-loading capacity will be evaluated. A reaction rate equation in terms of disappearance of H_2S at various reaction temperatures will be developed to evaluate effects of reaction temperatures on reaction rate constants in terms of disappearance of H_2S . Effects of moisture as well as hydrogen partial pressures on reactivity of formulated sorbents will be delineated. Experiments on effects of hydrogen partial pressures and moisture on equilibrium absorption as well as dynamic absorption of H_2S into formulated metal oxide sorbents will be conducted at various reaction conditions. Reaction kinetics on regeneration of sulfided metal oxide sorbents will be investigated at various regeneration conditions.

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