Zeolite Membrane Reactor for Water-Gas-Shift Reaction for Hydrogen Production

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Overview

Timeline

- Project start date: July 1, 2005
- Project end date: June 30, 2009
- Percent complete: 45%

Barriers

Barrier addressed: Cost reduction of distributed hydrogen production from natural gas and renewable liquids through improvement of reforming and separation efficiencies

Budget

- Total project funding
  - DOE $1,999,727
  - Contractor: $501,310
- Funding received in FY07: $592,165
- Funding for FY08: $467,066
- Funding delayed in FY07, FY08

Partners

- University of Cincinnati
- Arizona State University
- Ohio State University
Objectives

Fundamental study for the development of chemically and thermally stable zeolite membrane reactor for water-gas-shift reaction for hydrogen production

- Synthesis and Characterization of Chemically and Thermally Stable Silicalite Membranes
- Experimental and Theoretical Study on Gas Permeation and Separation Properties of the Silicalite Membranes
- Hydrothermal Synthesis of Tubular Silicalite Membranes and Gas Separation Study
- Experimental and Modeling Study of Membrane Reactor for Water-Gas-Shift Reaction
Zeolite Membrane Reactor for Water-Gas Shift Reaction

Water-gas-shift reaction at one temperature (about 400°C)

Two product streams: pure H₂ and pure CO₂

Zeolite Membrane Requirements:

- Operated in 350-550°C
- Chemically stable in H₂S, thermally stable at ~400°C
- Hydrogen permeance ~ 5x10⁻⁷ mol/m².s.Pa
- Hydrogen selectivity ~ 50
Plan and Approach

- **Task A** - Synthesis and modification of silicalite membranes (90% complete)
- **Task B** - Separation and stability study (Phase II)
- **Task C** Fabrication of tubular support and membrane module (80% complete)
- **Task D** - Hydrothermal synthesis and CVD modification of tubular silicalite membranes (Phase II)
- **Task E** - Microwave synthesis of silicalite membranes (70%)
- **Task F** - Water-gas-shift reaction catalyst and reaction kinetics (50%)
- **Task G** - Membrane reactor modeling and experiments (Phase II)
Phase I Milestones

- Obtain disk-shaped silicalite membranes on the desired intermediate layers with $\text{H}_2/\text{CO}_2$ perm-selectivity over 10 and $\text{H}_2$ permeance larger than $1 \times 10^{-7}$ mol/m$^2$.s.Pa (Accomplished)

- Develop methods to fabricate tubular membrane support with desired intermediate layers (Accomplished)

- Obtain a new WGS catalyst with activity and selectivity comparable to the best available commercial catalyst but with much improved chemical stability $\text{SO}_2$ and $\text{H}_2\text{S}$ containing WGS reaction stream (Accomplished)

- Develop a membrane module and sealing system for tubular membrane reactor that can be operated in the WGS conditions for at least 1 month (Accomplished)

- Develop micro-wave synthesis method to prepare tubular silicalite membranes with $\text{H}_2/\text{CO}_2$ perm-selectivity over 10 and $\text{H}_2$ permeance larger than $1 \times 10^{-7}$ mol/m$^2$.s.Pa (Accomplished)

- Obtain disk and tubular silicalite membranes with $\text{H}_2/\text{CO}_2$ perm-selectivity over 50 and $\text{H}_2$ permeance larger than $5 \times 10^{-7}$ mol/m$^2$.s.Pa (Partially Accomplished)
Schematic of MFI (Silicalite) and DDR-type Zeolite Structure

Intersecting channels

MFI (Silicalite): 10-T-Ring intersecting channels of 5.1-5.6 A

Cages separated by narrow windows

8-T-Ring, Windows of 3.6-4.4 A (studied as a reference)

Technical Progress

- Secondary growth MFI membrane from organic free solution
  - MFI nanoparticle (<100nm) synthesized by high efficiency microwave heating.
  - MFI nano-crystalline seed layer by slip-casting.
  - High quality MFI membranes by microwave and conventional heating

Secondary growth:
Si/Al ratio: \( \infty \sim 80 \)
Microwave synthesis time:
\(~3\) hr at \(180^\circ\)C
Technical Progress

- **Micro-structural Variations of Silicate Membranes**
Technical Progress

• Preparation of silicalite membranes by template-free synthesis

Defect-free continuous zeolite film could be formed on ZrO$_2$ intermediate layer.

Reproducibility of preparation of silicalite membranes was confirmed.

Membrane thickness could be controlled by dip coating times with stable suspension.

SEM image of the cross section of silicalite membranes after secondary growth (180°C, 4h); (a) once dip-coating (YSZ), (b) twice dip-coating (YSZ)
Technical Progress

- Thermal stability Improvement of Silicalite Membranes

*Without YSZ layer*

*With YSZ layer*

(closed symbols on solid line: permeances for fresh membrane, open symbols on broken line: those for after heat treatment in air at 500°C for 100 hrs)
Multi-component gas separation test on Silicalite Membrane

Experimental condition

- Feed gas composition (H₂:CO:CO₂=1:1:1)
- $P_{up}$: 0.3 MPa
- $P_{down}$: 0.1 MPa

At low temperature, this membrane shows CO₂ permeable characteristic.

$H_2$ permeance increases drastically with increasing the temperature, showing the $H_2$ permeable membrane at high temperatures.

(a) high temperature
No adsorption effect

(b) low temperature
Adsorption effect (block the permeation)

Schematic image of CO₂ adsorption on zeolitic pores
Technical Progress

• Diffusion-Controlled Permeation through Microporous Zeolite Membrane

\[
F = \left[ \frac{\phi \alpha}{L \pi \gamma} \right] \left[ \frac{8}{\pi R M_W T} \right]^{1/2} \exp\left( \frac{-E_d}{RT} \right)
\]

**Diffusion length**

(~ \(d_p\) for Knudsen)

**Activation energy**

for diffusion

\[
E_d = f[\lambda, \gamma] = f(d_m, d_p)
\]

\[
\lambda = \frac{d_m}{d_p}
\]

Molecule diameter

Pore diameter

\[
\gamma = \frac{\sigma_m}{d_m}
\]

L-J Length (spherical diameter)

Kinetic diameter

(circular diameter)

Technical Progress

- Single Gas Permeation Silicalite and DDR Zeolite Membranes
• Activation Energy for Diffusion for Silicalite and DDR Zeolites

Silicalite

Activation energy of gas diffusion [kJ·mol⁻¹]

DDR

Activation energy of gas diffusion [kJ·mol⁻¹]
Technical Progress

- CVD Modification to Improve Selectivity

methyl(diethoxysilane) (MDES)

On stream CVD

- TMOS 0.89nm
- TEOS 0.95nm
- MDES 0.4 x 0.9nm
Technical Progress

- CVD Modification on Tubular MFI Type Zeolite Membrane

On Stream CVD Modification with MDES in H₂/CO₂ stream at 450°C.
Technical Progress

- **Synthesis of Improved Tubular Supports**

- Gel-cast tubes ($\alpha$-Al$_2$O$_3$)
- Commercially available (industrial partner)
- AKP30 support on inner surface

Characterized for:
- Permeability
- Porosity
- Pore size
- Surface quality

1.0 cm
Technical Accomplishments

• Membrane Reactor Module Developments
Technical Progress

- Sulfur Tolerant HT-WGS Catalysts

Sulfur Tolerant WGS Activity:

$$\text{Fe}_{3-(x+y)}\text{Cr}_x\text{Cu}_y\text{O}_4 > \text{Commercial} > \text{Fe}_{3-x}\text{Ce}_x\text{O}_4 > \text{Fe}_{3-x}\text{Cr}_x\text{O}_4$$
Future Work for FY08 and FY09

- Task A - Synthesis and modification of silicalite membranes (90% complete)
- Task B - Separation and stability study (Phase II)
- Task C - Fabrication of tubular support and membrane module (80% complete)
- Task D - Hydrothermal synthesis and CVD modification of tubular silicalite membranes (Phase II)
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Summary

• **Relevance:**
  Help to develop processes for cost-effective production of hydrogen from natural gas and renewable liquids

• **Approach:**
  Study fundamental issues related to synthesis of high quality, stable zeolite membranes and performance of the membrane reactor for water-gas-shift reaction and hydrogen separation

• **Technical Accomplishment and Progress:**
  Developed and studied methods and techniques to prepare disk and tubular supports with adequate intermediate layer, zeolite membranes with high H2 permeance and selectivity suitable for WGS membrane reactor application, and catalysts with improved properties for WGS reaction

• **Proposed Future Research:**
  Prepare high performance zeolite membranes and WGS catalysts and study WGS reaction in zeolite membrane reactors.