

GLYCEROL DRY REFORMING FOR
SYNGAS PRODUCTION OVER
Ag-PROMOTED ON Ni-BASED CATALYSTS

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We hereby declare that we have checked this thesis and in our opinion, this thesis is adequate in terms of scope and quality for the award of the degree of Master of Engineering in Chemical

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TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION	
TITLE PAGE	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
ABSTRAK	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENT	v
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF SYMBOLS	xiii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xiv
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of Study	1
1.2 Problem Statement	2
1.3 Objectives	4
1.4 Scope of the Study	4
1.5 Significance of the Study	5
1.6 Organisation of the Thesis	5
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.1 Energy	7
2.2 Biodiesel	11
2.3 Glycerol	12

2.3.1	Physical Properties	13
2.3.2	Application of Glycerol	14
2.4	Syngas	16
2.5	Glycerol as Feedstock for Syngas Production	16
2.5.1	Pyrolysis	17
2.5.2	Steam Reforming	17
2.5.3	Partial Oxidation	19
2.5.4	Autothermal Reforming	20
2.5.5	Aqueous Phase Reforming	21
2.5.6	Supercritical Water Reforming	23
2.5.7	Dry Reforming	24
2.6	Catalysts Selection for Glycerol Dry Reforming	27
2.6.1	Catalyst	27
2.6.2	Catalyst Support	31
2.6.3	Catalyst Promoter	32
2.7	Summary	33
CHAPTER 3 MATERIALS AND METHOD		35
3.1	Introduction	35
3.2	Materials	36
3.3	Catalyst Preparation	37
3.4	Catalyst Characterisation	39
3.4.1	Brunauer-Emmett-Teller (BET) Surface Area	39
3.4.2	Field Emission Scanning Electronic Microscopy - Energy Dispersive X-ray (FESEM-EDX)	39
3.4.3	X-Ray Diffraction (XRD)	39

3.4.4	Thermo Gravimetry Analyzer (TGA)	40
3.4.5	Temperature-Programmed Desorption, Reduction and Oxidation (TPDRO)	40
3.5	Glycerol Dry Reforming	40
3.6	Gas Analysis	42
3.7	Reaction Metrics	43

CHAPTER 4 GLYCEROL DRY REFORMING OVER NI/AL₂O₃, NI/SIO₂ AND AG-NI/AL₂O₃ 44

4.1	Introduction	44
4.2	Glycerol Dry Reforming over Ni catalyst Supported on α -Al ₂ O ₃ and SiO ₂ .	44
4.2.1	Characterisation Study of Ni-based catalyst Supported on α -Al ₂ O ₃ and SiO ₂	45
4.2.2	Glycerol Dry Reforming over Ni catalyst Supported on α -Al ₂ O ₃ and SiO ₂ .	54
4.2.3	Spent Catalyst Characterisation	58
4.3	Glycerol Dry Reforming over Ag promoted Ni catalyst Supported on α -Al ₂ O ₃	60
4.3.1	Characterisation Study of Ag promoted Ni catalyst Supported on α -Al ₂ O ₃	60
4.3.2	Glycerol Dry Reforming over Ag promoted Ni catalyst Supported on α -Al ₂ O ₃ .	66
4.3.3	Spent Catalyst Characterisation	68
4.4	Summary	70

CHAPTER 5 STUDIES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF AG(3)-NI/AL₂O₃ IN GLYCEROL DRY REFORMING FOR SYNGAS PRODUCTION 72

5.1	Introduction	72
5.2	Effect of Parameters on Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ and Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃	72
5.2.1	Effect of Temperature	72
5.2.2	Effect of CO ₂ -to-Glycerol Ratio (CGR)	76
5.2.3	Effect of Weight Hourly Space Velocity (WHSV)	78
5.3	Longevity Study	80
5.4	Summary	81
CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		82
6.1	Conclusions	82
6.2	Recommendations	84
REFERENCES		85
APPENDIX A CATALYST PREPARATION CALCULATIONS		91
APPENDIX B GLYCEROL DRY REFORMING REACTION CALCULATION		92
APPENDIX C START-UP AND SHUTDOWN PROCEDURE FOR GLYCEROL DRY REFORMING EXPERIMENTAL SET-UP		94
APPENDIX D LIST OF PUBLICATION, CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION		95

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Physical properties of glycerol	14
Table 2.2	Reviews on the dry reforming of glycerol	26
Table 2.3	Studies on glycerol reforming on non-noble and noble metal catalysts.	29
Table 3.1	List of chemicals used in catalyst synthesis and glycerol dry reforming reaction.	37
Table 3.2	List of gases used in glycerol dry reforming reaction	37
Table 3.3	Properties of standard gas.	43
Table 4.1	Crystallite size of the Al ₂ O ₃ , Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , SiO ₂ and Ni/SiO ₂ catalysts	47
Table 4.2	BET surface area and pore volume of Al ₂ O ₃ , Ni(5)/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ni(10)/Al ₂ O ₃ and Ni(15)/Al ₂ O ₃	47
Table 4.3	BET surface area and pore volume of SiO ₂ , Ni(5)/SiO ₂ , Ni(10)/SiO ₂ and Ni(15)/SiO ₂	48
Table 4.4	Amount of NH ₃ desorbed and maximum temperature of desorption of Ni(15)/Al ₂ O ₃ and Ni(15)/SiO ₂ .	54
Table 4.5	Gaseous product yield and glycerol conversion at third hour reaction time.	58
Table 4.6	Crystallite size of the non-promoted and promoted Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ catalysts	62
Table 4.7	BET surface area and pore volume of Al ₂ O ₃ , Ni(15)/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ag(1)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ag(2)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ag(4)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ and Ag(5)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ .	62
Table 4.8	Gaseous product yield and glycerol conversion at third hour reaction time.	68
Table 5.1	Gaseous product yield and glycerol conversion at 1073 K, CGR 1 and WHSV 36 L ml g _{cat} ⁻¹ h ⁻¹	79

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1	Total world energy consumption (quadrillion Btu)	8
Figure 2.2	Sectorial energy consumption in Malaysia in 2014	9
Figure 2.3	Total world energy consumption by source in 2013	10
Figure 2.4	Reaction in biodiesel production by base-catalysed	12
Figure 2.5	Flow chart of conventional biodiesel production	12
Figure 2.6	Molecular structure of glycerol	13
Figure 2.7	Glycerol consumption in various products and industries	15
Figure 2.8	Different reaction pathways in catalytic reaction	27
Figure 3.1	Flow chart of the overall experimental works.	36
Figure 3.2	Procedure of nonpromoted catalyst synthesis through wet impregnation technique	38
Figure 3.3	Procedure of promoted catalyst synthesis through wet impregnation technique	38
Figure 3.4	Experimental set-up for glycerol dry reforming	41
Figure 3.5	Schematic diagram of reactor	42
Figure 4.1	XRD pattern for (a) Al ₂ O ₃ , (b) Ni(5)/Al ₂ O ₃ , (c) Ni(10)/Al ₂ O ₃ and (d) Ni(15)/Al ₂ O ₃ [A=Al ₂ O ₃ , N=NiO]	46
Figure 4.2	XRD pattern for (a) SiO ₂ , (b) Ni(5)/SiO ₂ , (c) Ni(10)/SiO ₂ and (d) Ni(15)/SiO ₂ . [S= NiSiO ₃ , N=NiO]	46
Figure 4.3	Morphology structure of (a) Al ₂ O ₃ , (b) Ni(5)/Al ₂ O ₃ , (c) Ni(10)/Al ₂ O ₃ and (d) Ni(15)/Al ₂ O ₃ at 5,000X magnification.	49
Figure 4.4	Morphology structure of (a) SiO ₂ , (b) Ni(5)/SiO ₂ , (c) Ni(10)/SiO ₂ and (d) Ni(15)/SiO ₂ at 5,000X magnification.	49
Figure 4.5	TGA analysis of Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ catalyst series at 10 K min ⁻¹ ramping rate in air blanket.	50
Figure 4.6	TGA analysis of Ni/SiO ₂ catalyst series at 10 K min ⁻¹ ramping rate in air blanket.	51
Figure 4.7	Temperature programmed reduction (H ₂ -TPR) profiles of Al ₂ O ₃ and Ni(15)/Al ₂ O ₃	52
Figure 4.8	Temperature programmed reduction (H ₂ -TPR) profiles of SiO ₂ and Ni(15)/SiO ₂	52
Figure 4.9	Temperature programmed desorption (TPD-NH ₃) profiles of Ni(15)/Al ₂ O ₃	53
Figure 4.10	Temperature programmed desorption (TPD-NH ₃) profiles of Ni(15)/SiO ₂	54
Figure 4.11	Glycerol composition for different composition of Ni catalyst supported on alumina.	56

Figure 4.12	Glycerol conversion for different composition of Ni catalyst supported on silica.	57
Figure 4.13	TPO results of Ni(15)/Al ₂ O ₃ and Ni(15)/SiO ₂ at 10 K min ⁻¹ ramping rate in air blanket.	59
Figure 4.14	SEM image of the spent catalyst at 30,000x magnification. (a) Ni(15)/Al ₂ O ₃ (b) Ni(15)/SiO ₂	60
Figure 4.15	XRD pattern for (a) Ni(15)/Al ₂ O ₃ , (b) Ag(1)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ and (c) Ag(2)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , (d) Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , (e) Ag(4)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , (f) Ag(5)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , [A=Al ₂ O ₃ , N=NiO, *=Ag]	61
Figure 4.16	Morphology structure of (a) Ni(15)/Al ₂ O ₃ , (b) Ag(1)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , (c) Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ and (d) Ag(5)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ at 10,000X magnification.	63
Figure 4.17	TGA analysis of Ag(1)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ag(2)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ag(4)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ and Ag(5)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ at 10 K min ⁻¹ ramping rate in air blanket.	65
Figure 4.18	Temperature programmed reduction (H ₂ -TPR) profiles of Ni(15)/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ag(1)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ and Ag(5)-Ni(15)/Al ₂ O ₃	66
Figure 4.19	Glycerol conversion over Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ag(1)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ag(2)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ , Ag(4)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ and Ag(5)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ .	67
Figure 4.20	TPO results of Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ at 10 K min ⁻¹ ramping rate in air blanket.	69
Figure 4.21	SEM image of the spent Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ (a) filamentous carbon (b) encapsulate carbon deposition	70
Figure 5.1	Effect of temperature on the glycerol conversion over Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ and Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ [Reaction conditions: CGR = 1:1, WHSV = 36 L g _{cat} ⁻¹ h ⁻¹]	74
Figure 5.2	Effect of temperature on the H ₂ , CH ₄ and CO formation rate of Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ [Reaction conditions: CGR = 1:1, WHSV = 36 L g _{cat} ⁻¹ h ⁻¹]	75
Figure 5.3	Effect of temperature on the H ₂ , CH ₄ and CO formation rate of Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ [Reaction conditions: CGR = 1:1, WHSV = 36 L g _{cat} ⁻¹ h ⁻¹]	75
Figure 5.4	Effect of CGR on the glycerol conversion over Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ and Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ . [Reaction conditions: Temperature = 1073 K and WHSV = 36 L g _{cat} ⁻¹ h ⁻¹]	76
Figure 5.5	Effect of CGR on the H ₂ , CH ₄ and CO formation rate of Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ [Reaction conditions: Temperature = 1073 K and WHSV = 36 L g _{cat} ⁻¹ h ⁻¹]	77
Figure 5.6	Effect of CGR on the H ₂ , CH ₄ and CO formation rate of Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ [Reaction conditions: Temperature = 1073 K and WHSV = 36 L g _{cat} ⁻¹ h ⁻¹]	78

Figure 5.7	Effect of WHSV on the glycerol conversion over Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ and Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ [Reaction conditions: Temperature = 1073 K, CGR = 1:1].	79
Figure 5.8	Glycerol conversion during 72-hour reaction on Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ [Reaction conditions: Temperature = 1073 K, CGR = 1:1, WHSV = 36 L g _{cat} ⁻¹ h ⁻¹]	80
Figure 5.9	Product formation rate during 72 hours reaction on Ag(3)-Ni/Al ₂ O ₃ [Reaction conditions: Temperature = 1073 K, CGR = 1:1, WHSV = 36 L g _{cat} ⁻¹ h ⁻¹]	81

LIST OF SYMBOLS

F	Flow rate
X_G	Glycerol conversion
Y_{H_2}	Hydrogen yield
Y_i	Yield of Carbon containing species
λ	Wavelength
θ	Bragg angle

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BET	Brunauer-Emmett-Teller
CGR	Carbon to glycerol feed ratio
FESEM-EDX	Field emission scanning microscopy/Energy dispersive X-ray
IUPAC	International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry
OPEC	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
SEM	Scanning electron microscopy
TGA	Thermogravimetric analysis
TPC	Temperature programmed calcination
TPD	Temperature programmed desorption
TPO	Temperature programmed oxidation
TPR	Temperature programmed reduction
WHSV	Weight hourly space velocity
XRD	X-ray diffraction

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ABSTRAK

Penggunaan gliserol telah dikaji secara meluas dan merupakan salah satu bahan mentah alternatif dalam pengeluaran gas sintetik (*syngas*). Proses tindakbalas gliserol dan CO₂ adalah satu proses yang menarik kerana ia menukarkan karbon dioksida, gas rumah hijau kepada gas sintetik dan pada masa yang sama dikeluarkan daripada kitaran karbon. Objektif utama penyelidikan ini adalah untuk mengkaji tindakbalas gliserol dan CO₂ dengan menggunakan mangkin berasaskan nikel yang ditambah logam (perak) dan logam oksida (aluminium oksida dan silikon oksida). Logam perak jarang digunakan sebagai mangkin dalam kajian pembaharuan (*reforming*). Namun, ia telah dibuktikan bahawa logam perak mempunyai kebolehan untuk mengurangkan pengumpulan karbon di permukaan mangkin dan meningkatkan hasil gas hydrogen di samping ianya lebih rendah dari segi kos berbanding logam di dalam kumpulan logam *noble* yang lain. Mangkin telah disediakan melalui kaedah pengisitepuan (*wet impregnation*) menggunakan kombinasi logam-oksida yang berbeza. Pencirian terhadap sifat mangkin telah dinilai menggunakan kaedah penjerapan fizikal N₂ (kaedah *Brunauer-Emmet-Teller* (BET)), analisis pembelauan sinar-X (XRD), mikroskop elektron pengimbasan (SEM), pengkalsinan suhu berprogram (TPC), penurunan suhu berprogram (TPR), pengoksidaan suhu berprogram (TPO), dan penyahjerapan suhu berprogram (TPD). Kajian saringan pada peringkat awal telah dijalankan untuk menilai prestasi jenis-jenis oksida yang digunakan dan didapati bahawa Ni/Al₂O₃ memberikan tindakbalas gliserol dan hasil hidrogen yang lebih tinggi berbanding Ni/SiO₂ kerana saiz kristal yang lebih kecil di atas permukaan luar mangkin dan luas permukaan yang tinggi. Selain itu, alumina boleh meningkatkan kesebatian logam serta mengelakkan pemendapan karbon dan pada masa yang sama meningkatkan aktiviti dan kestabilan mangkin. Selain itu, apabila campuran Ag yang berbeza telah ditambah kepada mangkin ini, 3wt% Ag dalam Ni/Al₂O₃ memberikan prestasi mangkin yang terbaik kerana kewujudan zarah aktif yang menyebabkan luas permukaan yang tinggi. Campuran Ag (> 3wt%) menyebabkan pembentukan zarah kecil yang menyelaputi tapak aktif mangkin dan menjejaskan prestasi mangkin. Siasatan lanjut mengenai kesan-kesan faktor lain dalam sesebuah tindak balas (iaitu suhu tindak balas, berat mangkin yang digunakan dan nisbah CO₂ kepada gliserol (CGR)) kepada pengeluaran gas sintetik telah dijalankan menggunakan mangkin yg terbaik yang diperolehi melalui ujian saringan mangkin, iaitu Ag(3)-Ni/Al₂O₃. Peratusan tindakbalas gliserol dan penghasilan produk yang terbaik ditemui pada suhu 1073 K, CGR 1 dan WHSV 36 L g_{cat}⁻¹ h⁻¹ yang memberikan 41.09% tindakbalas gliserol dan 32.31% hasil hidrogen. Tindakbalas selama 72 jam mendedahkan bahawa mangkin tersebut stabil sepanjang tempoh tersebut selepas mengalami penurunan pada jam yang kesepuluh. Selain itu, kajian terhadap mangkin yang telah digunakan dalam proses tindakbalas tersebut menunjukkan kehadiran karbon jenis yang berserabut pada permukaan mangkin, yang boleh disingkirkan melalui proses pengoksidaan.

ABSTRACT

The use of glycerol has been widely investigated and one of the possible alternatives is as a feedstock in the production of synthesis gas (syngas). The glycerol CO₂ dry reforming process is an attractive process as it converts carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, into a synthesis gas and simultaneously removed from the carbon biosphere cycle. The main objective of this research work is to study the process of CO₂ dry reforming of glycerol over noble catalyst i.e. a noble metal (silver) promoted on nickel-based catalyst supported on oxides (aluminium oxide and silicon oxide). Silver is rarely used as catalyst in reforming studies. However, it is proven that silver has the ability to reduce the carbon deposition and increase selectivity of hydrogen production besides lower in cost compared to other noble metal. The catalysts were formulated through wet impregnation method using different combinations of noble metal-oxides support. Their physicochemical characteristics were evaluated using nitrogen physisorption (Brunauer-Emmet-Teller (BET) method), X-ray diffraction (XRD), Scanning electron microscopy (SEM), Temperature programmed calcination (TPC), Temperature programmed reduction (H₂-TPR) and Temperature programmed desorption (TPD). The screening study was conducted to evaluate the performance of different types of supports, and it was found that Ni/Al₂O₃ catalyst series gave higher glycerol conversion and hydrogen yield compared to Ni/SiO₂ catalyst series due to their small crystallites size and high surface area. Moreover, alumina support could increase metal dispersion as well as avoiding the carbon deposition, which simultaneously improved the activity and stability of the catalyst. Apart from that, when different Ag loadings were introduced to these catalysts, 3wt% of Ag in Ni/Al₂O₃ was found to give the best catalyst performance due to the well-dispersion of active sites on the catalyst surface, which created high surface area. Higher Ag loading (>3wt%) resulted in formation of small particles, which covered the active sites of the catalyst thus impaired the catalyst performance. Further investigation on the effect of reaction variables (i.e. reaction temperature, weight hourly space velocity (WHSV) and CO₂-to-glycerol ratio (CGR)) to the production of syngas were conducted using the best catalyst obtained from the screening study. The best reaction condition was found at temperature of 1073 K, CGR of 1 and WHSV of 36 L g_{cat}⁻¹ h⁻¹ (catalyst loading of 0.2 g) which gave 41.09% glycerol conversion and 32.31% hydrogen yield. During the catalyst longevity study, Ag(3)-Ni/Al₂O₃ was found to stabilise along the 72 hours reaction after experiencing a reduction at tenth hour. Apart from that, the study on the catalyst deactivation of the used catalyst shows the presence of filamentous and encapsulated carbon types on the catalyst surface, which can be removed through oxidation.

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