



废PET塑料化学解聚和升级再造的研究进展

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摘要 在我国政府加大环保力度、积极倡导实施“双碳”目标的背景下, 塑料废弃物的资源化利用已成为社会关注的焦点议题。一方面, 塑料具有较强的稳定性, 在自然条件下难以降解, 并会释放微塑料不断地毒害生物; 另一方面塑料来自化石资源的合成, 塑料的使用加剧能源的消耗。聚对苯二甲酸乙二醇酯(PET)作为产量最高的聚酯塑料之一, 被广泛用于生产各种日常用品和一次性包装材料。尽管PET的回收从其生产之初已经得到开展, 然而现在PET的回收率仍处于较低水平。近年来关于PET回收技术的研究与日俱增, 尤其在化学回收方面, 以期实现废弃PET的闭环回收。本文回顾了PET塑料的生产和回收技术, 对目前PET化学解聚的传统技术研究现状和解聚单体高值化的新策略进行了系统梳理, 并对未来PET废塑料制备高价值单体的研究重点、难点和发展前景进行了展望, 为推动社会和经济的可持续发展提供了新的视角和思考。

关键词 废塑料, 聚对苯二甲酸乙二醇酯(PET), 化学回收, 解聚, 升级再造

自从发明化石资源合成聚合物以来, 塑料行业一直快速发展^[1]。塑料是一种用途广泛的材料, 因其重量轻、可塑性和柔韧性强、化学多样性强、成本低等优良特性, 已广泛应用于日常生活的各个领域, 从包装、纺织到建筑、运输等^[2-4]。全球从可重复使用容器转向一次性容器加速了其包装应用的增长^[5]。作为石化行业的主要产品部分, 塑料在其整个生命周期中排放的温室气体占全球4.5%^[6]。塑料中添加剂(如染料、阻燃剂等)通常含有较强的生物毒性, 会干扰脂质代谢, 增加患糖尿病、心血管疾病和中风的风险^[7,8]。此外, 塑料垃圾在环境中无处不在, 并逐渐分解成微塑料和纳米塑料颗粒, 持续危害地球上的生物^[9,10]。

塑料的生产、使用和遗弃不仅带来环境和健康问

题, 同时还加剧能源危机。塑料主要由对应的单体聚合而成, 这些单体化学品主要来自石油和煤炭的分离(图1)^[11]。其中石油可以分离出乙烯、丙烯、对二甲苯等化学品, 可以用于生产聚乙烯(PE)、聚丙烯(PP)和聚对苯二甲酸乙二醇酯(PET)等塑料^[12,13]。全球原油总产量中约有8%~10%用于塑料生产, 例如美国每年使用1200万桶石油来制造塑料袋^[14]。据估计到2050年, 全球塑料行业将占石油消耗量的20%^[15]。塑料产量的急剧增长是塑料危害日益加重的主要原因, 每年通过化石资源合成4.6亿吨塑料, 其中3.5亿吨最终会变成废塑料^[16]。

聚对苯二甲酸乙二醇酯(PET)是一种半结晶性质的热塑性聚合塑料^[17]。由于其卓越的热稳定性、耐腐

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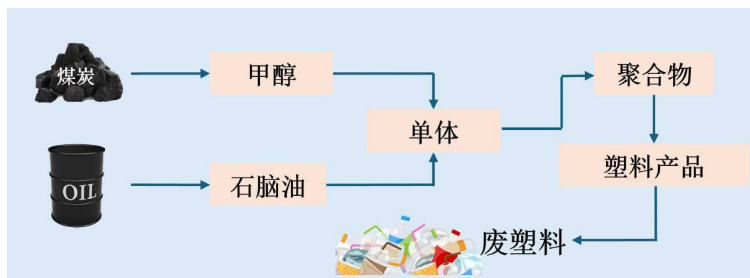


图1 (网络版彩色)从化石燃料到塑料的主要生产路线

Figure 1 (Color online) Main production pathways from fossil fuels to plastics

蚀性和电绝缘性, PET成为当前工业生产薄膜和商品纤维的首选聚酯材料^[18]。全球范围内PET塑料年产量已达7000万吨, 约占总产量的18%, 在全球石油基聚合物中居于第四位, 但目前大多数国家PET的回收率仍不到30%^[19,20]。近年来关于PET的回收利用逐渐引起重视, 相关技术研究正在大规模开展, 同时已经发表了许多综述性文章。尽管PET的回收策略研究非常广泛, 但实现闭环回收是PET回收的最优的路径。本文综述了近年来PET化学回收的研究进展, 主要是化学解聚的单体回收以及衍生单体的升级再造, 讨论PET依托化学解聚实现闭环回收技术的机遇和挑战, 为相关领域的学者和从业人员提供研究思路和应用方向。

1 PET的生产方式

在20世纪40年代, 工业领域首次通过对苯二甲酸(PTA)和乙二醇的缩合反应成功合成聚酯产品, 引起了业界的广泛关注^[21]。随后, 英国化学家John R. Whinfield及其助手James T. Dickson于1941年利用PTA和乙二醇的缩合反应顺利合成PET薄膜^[22]。到了20世纪50年代, 日本帝国化工有限公司开始采用PET生产Terylene纤维, 成为第一家聚酯纤维的企业^[23]。1973年美国杜邦公司的Nathaniel Wyeth申请了PET瓶的第一个专利, 通过吹塑技术生产出第一个PET三维定向结构, 从而大规模替代了金属和玻璃容器, 开启了耐用轻量化PET瓶的快速发展历程^[24]。PET的聚合工艺采用两条平行的路线(图2): (1) 精对苯二甲酸(PTA)与过量的乙二醇在190~220℃下酯化, 生成双(2-羟基乙基)对苯二甲酸酯(BHET); (2) PTA与略过量的甲醇(100℃, 0.35~0.40 MPa)酯化生成对苯二甲酸二甲酯(DMT), DMT和乙二醇在190~220℃下进行酯交换, 生成BHET。BHET通过前期预缩聚(270℃, 2000~3300 Pa)和后期最终缩聚(280~285℃, 60~130 Pa)最终聚合成PET^[25]。在

PET的合成中, 通常使用矿物化合物和金属氧化物作为催化剂(例如 Sb_2O_3 、 TiO_2 和 GeO_2), 这些催化剂具有良好路易斯酸性和高孔隙率^[26]。路易斯酸催化剂可以活化TPA/DMT的羰基官能团, 有利于醇类物质的亲核进攻^[27]。

PET的上游原料主要是对二甲苯, 基本的行业产业链为: 原油→石脑油→混二甲苯→对二甲苯→PTA→聚酯^[28]。其中混二甲苯是由对二甲苯、邻二甲苯及间二甲苯组成, 过去主要来自炼焦工业, 而现在主要来自石脑油的催化重整^[13]。由于石油产业链上原料的限制, 煤炭也可以作为上游生产原料, 通过煤制甲醇, 甲醇制芳香烃, 再进行芳香烃分离提取对二甲苯^[29]。因此PET的大规模生产和使用加剧了石油和煤炭的消耗, 如果不进行回收将会加速不可再生能源的枯竭。

2 PET的回收方式

在2009年, 美国材料与实验协会标准(IUPAC)将塑料废弃物的回收技术确定为化学领域十大新兴技术之一, 引起了世界各地公众和政府越来越多的关注^[30]。根据美国材料与试验协会(ASTM)发布的标准, PET废弃物的回收可分为初级、二级、三级和四级回收^[31]。目前, 大多数PET废弃物主要通过初级和二级回收方法进行机械回收^[32]。其中, 初级回收通常称为闭环回收, 是将未受污染的塑料废物直接重新用于制造新产品的过程; 二级回收是一种“降级”回收方式, 将回收的废PET熔融转化为薄片或颗粒, 然后再制成新产品。这种方法主要用于生产低价值的塑料产品, 例如聚酯纤维和非食品接触瓶^[33]。由于使用后的塑料中存在水和酸性污染物, 会促进PET发生水解和酯交换反应, 因此塑料产品的性能在每次循环后都会下降^[33]。三级回收又称化学回收, 是指通过化学的手段改变原来PET的分子结构或分子量; 四级回收的目的不是生产新材料, 而

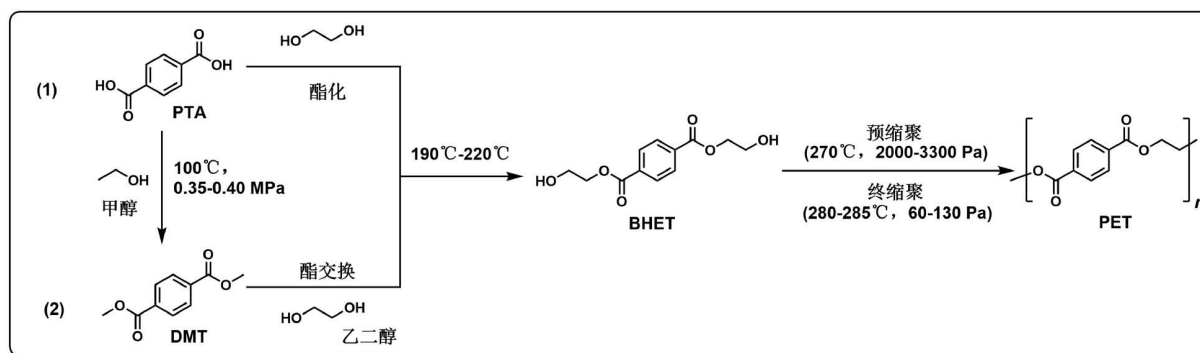


图2 PET聚合的工艺路线图

Figure 2 Process route for PET polymerization

是通过焚烧过程从塑料废物中回收热能^[17]。相比而言,化学回收具有回收聚合物中化石原料成分的优势,这些成分随后可用于再制造塑料或制造其他高价值化学品^[34]。通过PET的化学回收有望真正实现废弃PET的闭环回收,更符合“可持续发展”原则^[35]。

3 PET的化学解聚

化学回收是利用不同形式的化学反应实现PET的分解、改性或改造,主要包括热解/热裂解和解聚两种方式^[36]。PET的化学解聚回收研究可以追溯到20世纪50年代,几乎与其商业化生产同时进行^[37]。PET的化学解聚是PET聚合的逆向过程,解聚反应可以获得合成PET的初始原料。PET化学解聚的机制与其合成的机制类似,根据反应物的类型进行分类,主要有水(水解)、甲醇(甲醇解)、乙二醇(糖醇解)、胺(胺解)和氨(氨解)。反应物充当亲核试剂,根据PET羧基酯的亲核进攻机理,可以生成TPA、DMT、BHET、双(2-羟乙基)对苯二甲酰胺、对苯二甲酰胺和乙二醇^[38]。TPA和DMT主要用于生产聚酯材料,也可以用于绝缘漆、增塑剂等^[39,40]。BHET主要用于合成PET。双(2-羟乙基)对苯二甲酰胺和对苯二甲酰胺可以用于合成聚氨酯(PU)、不饱和聚酯树脂(UPR)、增塑剂和硬化剂等^[41]。乙二醇是一种重要的石油化工原料,主要用于生产聚酯、防冻剂和冷却液等^[42]。本文主要讨论可以实现PET闭环回收的前三种化学解聚类型即水解、甲醇解和糖醇解。

3.1 PET的水解

水解法(hydrolysis)是指PET废料在一定的酸碱条件下和水分子反应生成TPA单体和乙二醇。水解法可以分为酸性水解法、中性水解法和碱性水解法,具体取

决于水性反应介质中所用催化剂的pH^[43]。其中,中性水解通常是将PET在过量的水或水蒸汽中解聚,反应温度在115到420℃,反应压力需要1~42 MPa^[44]。酸性水解一般使用无机酸作为催化剂与PET废料进行反应,其中硫酸使用最广泛^[45]。而碱性水解是将PET废料在水介质中与碱性催化剂反应。碱性水解一般使用金属氢氧化物催化剂进行,如氢氧化钠和氢氧化钾。相较于中性水解和酸性水解,碱性水解的产物主要是TPA的金属盐(如氢氧化钠作为碱性催化剂时产物是对苯二甲酸钠(Na_2TPA))和乙二醇。因此碱性水解的产物需要进一步酸化才能获得TPA。酸化的过程是使用硫酸和盐酸等强酸调节溶液pH达到2,这时TPA可以从水中析出回收,但是加入的碱性催化剂会被消耗^[46]。表1总结了近年来有代表性的水解技术进展。

水解技术在研究之初是为了避免有机溶剂的使用,实际上由于水和PET的反应是非均相的形式,而液相和聚合物的相容性是影响反应进行的关键因素。因此有报道提出在有机溶剂中实现PET的低温常压水解。Zhang等人^[53,54]开发了两种混合溶剂体系,分别使用EG/四氢呋喃(THF)和乙醇(EtOH)/二氯甲烷(DCM)作为溶剂,氢氧化钾作为碱性催化剂实现PET的完全水解。前者在60℃的条件下反应1 h,而后者可以将反应温度降低至室温,反应时间缩短至30 min。Chen等人^[55]以1,3-二甲基-2-咪唑烷酮(DMI)为助溶剂和乙二醇混合作为碱性水解溶剂实现PET在70℃下15 min内完全水解。这些研究发现有机溶剂可以刻蚀PET材料,增大PET与液相的相容性。此外助溶剂的加入可以提高氢氧根的活性,从而提高反应效率。

总而言之,常规的PET的水解技术通常需要水的参与。对于中性水解,由于反应只在水或水蒸汽中发生,

可以认为是一种绿色解聚途径。但是反应条件通常需要高温、高压和高耐受性反应器,同时提纯困难,导致该技术成本过于昂贵,难以作为PET的商业化回收方法。在PET碱性水解过程中消耗碱催化剂,同时在TPA回收过程需要酸化而无法回收碱性催化剂。因此,该技术难以实现催化剂循环利用,经济性较低。由于在较温和的反应条件下进行PET水解的可行性,水溶液酸水解已成为近年来研究和工业关注的焦点。此外,开发绿色溶剂进一步提高水解效率也是可行且必要的。

3.2 PET的甲醇解

甲醇解(methanolysis)是酯交换反应,通过PET的主链酯键断裂,形成对苯二甲酸的烷基酯和乙二醇。甲醇解通常需要过量的甲醇在高温高压下进行反应。Liu等人^[56]研究超临界甲醇条件下PET中对苯二甲酸二甲酯(DMT)的回收,在298℃、112 min、甲醇与PET质量比为6的条件下,得到DMT的产率高达99.79%。也有研究发现,部分PET废塑料在甲醇中无外加催化剂的情况下可以在210℃发生解聚,这一温度下甲醇的饱和蒸气压也达到4 MPa以上^[57]。目前研究人员尝试通过添加催化剂来优化甲醇解的反应条件,如表2所示。

表 1 废旧PET水解研究进展

Table 1 Research progress on hydrolysis of waste PET

反应条件	催化剂	催化剂类型	产物及产率	文献
240℃, 30 min	聚乙二醇(PEG 400)	中性催化剂	TPA(90%)	[47]
150℃, 90 min	浓对甲苯磺酸(PTSA)	酸性催化剂	TPA(96.2%)	[48]
220℃, 180 min	对苯二甲酸(TPA)	酸性催化剂	TPA(95.5%)	[49]
210℃, 4 h	2wt% Zn(OAc) ₂	酸性催化剂	TPA(99.9%)	[50]
180℃, 8 h	ZnCl ₂	酸性催化剂	TPA(98.31%)	[51]
150℃, 4 h	香蕉皮提取物(K ₂ CO ₃)	碱性催化剂	TPA-M ₂ (99.9%)	[52]

表 2 废旧PET甲醇解研究进展

Table 2 Research progress on methanolysis of waste PET

反应条件	催化剂	催化剂类型	产物及产率	文献
130℃, 1 h	1,5-二氮杂双环[430]-5-壬烯(DBN)/苯酚	低共熔溶剂(DES)	DMT(95.3%)	[58]
130℃, 6 h	聚合物氮化碳片(PCNS)	非金属催化剂	DMT(85%)	[59]
170℃, 60 min	PIL-Zn	离子液体	DMT(89.1%)	[60]
200℃、30 min	MgO/NaY	金属氧化物	DMT(91%)	[61]
170℃, 15 min	ZnO纳米颗粒	金属氧化物	DMT(95%)	[62]
170℃, 6 h	Co-SiO ₂	金属氧化物	DMT(97%)	[63]
240℃, 16 h	Cu/ZnZrO _x	金属氧化物	DMT(97%)	[64]
200℃, 90 min	Cu/SiO ₂ -IM	金属氧化物	DMT(99.0%)	[65]
160℃, 2 h	Ti _{0.5} Si _{0.5} O ₂	金属氧化物	DMT(98.2%)	[66]

同水解类似, 助溶剂如对二甲苯、二甲亚砜(DMSO)和DCM与甲醇形成共溶剂也可以在低温下实现高转化率。2021年, Pham等人^[67]使用DCM作为助溶剂, 在室温下高收率(93.1%)生产DMT。值得注意的是, 该反应需要较长的反应时间(24 h)才能达到较高的DMT收率。虽然均相催化剂在温和的反应条件下表现出较好的性能, 但DMT的分离和纯化仍是关键问题。此外DMSO和DCM不属于环境友好型溶剂, 不利于实际工业化应用, 因此开发绿色溶剂体系下的非均相催化剂是PET甲醇解技术富有潜力的发展方向。

3.3 PET的糖醇解

糖醇解(glycolysis)又称乙二醇解, 其解聚产物BHET是PET工业聚合的直接原料, 因此糖醇解相比于水解和甲醇解来说是目前研究中最有价值的PET化学解聚回收技术^[68~70]。糖醇解主要使用乙二醇作为醇解试剂, 在催化剂作用下解聚PET, 反应生成BHET和乙二醇。BHET可以直接聚合生产PET, 而不需要额外的酯化或酯交换反应。目前糖醇解的催化剂主要有金属盐^[71~73]、金属氧化物^[74~76]以及离子液体^[71,77,78]等。此外还有一些研究提供了催化设计新视角。Le等人^[56]使

用助溶剂辅助催化糖醇解,在糖醇解反应体系中加入具有烷氧基的芳香族化合物(如苯甲醚),在153℃的反应温度下将PET转化为BHET, BHET收率超过86%. Enayati等人^[79]使用PET水瓶标签的固体残留物作为催化剂,对同一PET废料进行糖醇解,生产BHET单体,在200℃下1.5 h内可以达到100%的转化率和95.8%的BHET产率. Kim等人^[80]提出一种PET糖醇解和酶解串联耦合技术思路,使用甜菜碱作为新型催化剂对PET进行糖醇解,然后使用PET糖醇解的整个浆料作为底物进行酶水解,最后使用PET糖醇解浆液的酶水解物作为底物进行全细胞生物转化,最终获得原儿茶酸(PCA).

尽管PET的水解和甲醇解工艺已经能够产生较高的单体产量;然而,在工业规模上应用仍然受到经济性的阻碍,比如产物到PET聚合还需要额外的工艺环节.相比之下使用更传统催化剂的糖醇解工艺是一种更可行的选择.然而这项技术在工业规模上应用之前仍需要克服几个挑战.首先,实现低成本的催化剂和产物的分离、催化剂的回收和循环利用是提高工业可行性的关键步骤.其次,在PET糖醇解过程中,除主要产物BHET外,还会产生少量低聚物.有效分离和利用这些副产品对提高资源利用率和经济可行性至关重要.最后,催化剂的成本和用量控制需要考虑更大规模的使用,在提高工业效率的同时降低成本.总体而言,PET的化学解聚是非常具有应用价值的一项回收技术,但是实现工业化生产还需要更多的技术改进和成本优化.

4 PET的升级再造

在PET化学解聚过程中,乙二醇是重要的组成单元.然而由于乙二醇具有高水溶性和沸点,增加了其分离提纯能耗,尤其是在水性体系中,将乙二醇从PET水解过程的水相产物中分离通常需要专用的设备和高温,同时还会产生大量的废水^[81].因此,如何更好地利用乙二醇是PET化学解聚的瓶颈问题.实际上乙二醇也是一种生物质资源,具有最简单的双羟基结构和碳源使其成为良好的化工原料.将PET解聚生成的乙二醇进一步升级为更有价值的化学品,保留高价值的TPA/DMT,既可以实现PET的闭环回收,也能避免复杂的纯化过程.与PET传统的化学解聚不同,PET的升级再造目前处于起步阶段,本文对现有的研究进行简单梳理,概括为乙二醇的捕获转化和乙二醇的重整,旨在为研究人员提供新的视角.

4.1 乙二醇捕获转化

酯交换反应(PET醇解)是可逆反应,因此PET化学解聚的效率与产物的分离密切相关,通过对其中的产物进行消耗/分离,可以加快化学平衡正向移动,从而提升解聚效率.乙二醇作为一种重要的有机合成中间体,通过设计乙二醇捕获反应耦合PET的化学解聚,将乙二醇单元转化新的高价值化学品,同时拉动化学解聚反应平衡正向移动(图3(a)). Tanaka等人^[82]提出使用碳酸二甲酯(DMC)作为乙二醇的捕获剂,以促进PET的甲醇解.在体系中添加DMC可以通过酯交换捕获原位生成的EG单元,从而形成碳酸亚乙酯(EC).该反应需要使用甲醇锂作为催化剂,在50℃下反应5 h可以从1 g PET中回收获得0.95 g的DMT(94%)和0.37 g的EC(图3(b)). EC的粗产品可以进一步制造锂电池电解液.当使用甲醇钠为催化剂时,可以在2 h内获得98%产率的DMT^[83]. Zhang等人^[81]开发了一种使用芳基硼酸作为EG捕获剂的体系,以镁铝层状双氧化物(Mg₄Al₂(OH)₂(LDO)作为催化剂,该方法在最优条件下实现了PET的100%转化率,EG捕获产物芳基硼酸酯和DMT的产率分别为96%和99%.该体系的捕获剂可适用于苯环上容纳了具有不同官能团的芳基硼酸,各种五元环状芳基硼酯产率为95%~97%和97%~99%产率的DMT.作者拓展了具有相邻二醇单元的塑料,如聚琥珀酸乙烯(PES)和聚己二酸乙烯(PEA),以及聚碳酸酯(PPC),在标准条件下均可以转化为相应的硼酸酯和二酯(图3(c)).

Peng等人^[84]设计了一种不同的捕获思路,使用乙酸捕获乙二醇生成乙二醇二乙酸酯(EGDA).与上述甲醇解不同的是,PET在乙酸中的解聚本质上是通过羧酸和酯键进行交换,生成TPA(图3(d)).由于TPA在乙酸中溶解度较小,因此TPA的结晶析出加快了反应平衡正向移动.该体系不需要额外的催化剂,PET瓶的碎片在2 h内可完全解聚,得到高纯度TPA(产率95.8%,纯度99.7%以上)和EGDA(产率95.3%,纯度98.0%以上).水对PET的解聚会产生一定影响,使部分EGDA转化为乙二醇单醋酸酯(EGMA).此外,由于在工业生产TPA时通常用乙酸作为溶剂氧化对二甲苯,因此该工艺可直接用于现有装置.

乙二醇捕获策略改善了乙二醇单元的处理和分离问题,减轻了PET化学解聚时高价值单元的提纯压力,同时将低值单元进行了更有效的利用.然而现阶段该策略仅有少量报道,主要存在以下技术难点:(1)耦合

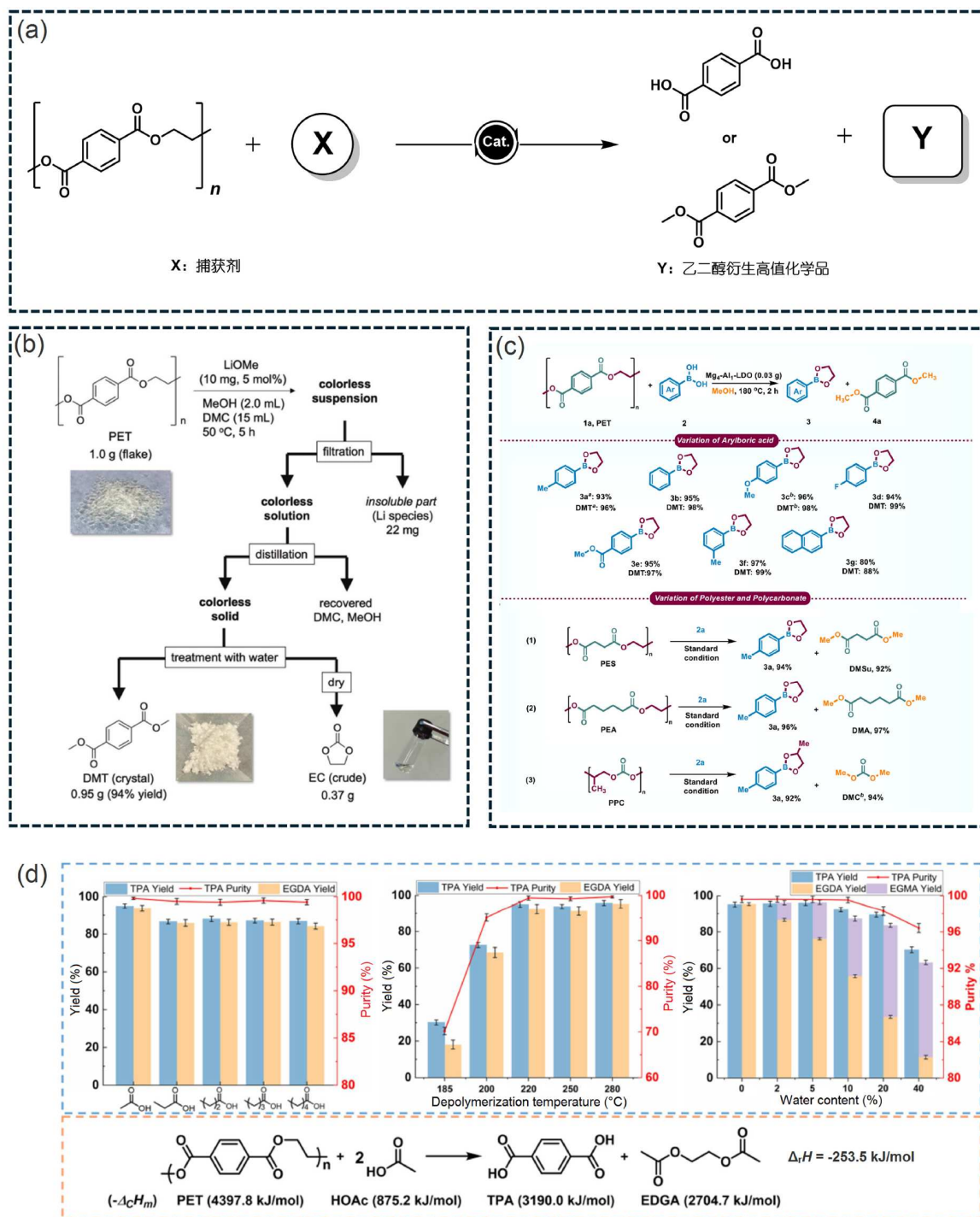


图3 (网络版彩色)乙二醇捕获转化策略。(a) 乙二醇捕获策略示意图; (b) 碳酸二甲酯(DMC)作为乙二醇的捕获剂^[83]; (c) 芳基硼酸作为乙二醇的捕获剂^[81]; (d) 乙酸作为乙二醇的捕获剂^[84]

Figure 3 (Color online) Ethylene glycol capture strategies. (a) Schematic diagram of glycol capture strategy; (b) dimethyl carbonate (DMC) as a glycol capture agent^[83]; (c) arylboronic acid as a glycol capture agent^[81]; (d) acetic acid as a glycol capture agent^[84]

反应要求乙二醇捕获反应和PET解聚具有协同效应, 因此捕获剂的筛选存在较大困难; (2) 捕获剂和乙二醇捕

获衍生物的经济性, 需要廉价的捕获剂获得相比于乙二醇更高价值的化学品; (3) 工艺的应用潜力, 需要同

时满足捕获剂的经济性和捕获后产物的高价值。

4.2 乙二醇重整

乙二醇重整是指通过选择性氧化或者原位水相重整, 将PET解聚后的乙二醇转化为更高价值的化学品或者能源。乙二醇重整实现了碳源和氢源的再利用, 在相对温和的条件下实现废塑料的升级。同时芳香族单体得到保留, 保证PET的闭环回收。目前的研究中主要将乙二醇转化为乙醇酸、甲酸、氢气以及其他衍生的高值化学品(图4)。

4.2.1 乙二醇重整制乙醇酸

乙醇酸是最简单的 α -羟基酸, 是精细化工和制药领域中的重要原料。此外, 乙醇酸可以聚合成聚乙醇酸(PGA), PGA具有良好的生物降解性和生物相容性, 可广泛应用于外科缝合线、组织修复等生物医药领域^[85]。乙二醇选择性氧化为乙醇酸, 不仅可以提高碳水

化合物的原子利用率, 而且实现传统塑料解聚再合成可生物降解塑料的转化。从经济性角度看, 乙醇酸的市场价值为7万每吨, 是乙二醇(3500元/吨)的20倍^[86]。乙二醇选择性氧化为乙醇酸是一个级联催化过程, 首先乙二醇的羟甲基($-\text{CH}_2\text{OH}$)连续脱氢为2-羟基乙酰基($^*\text{OC}-\text{CH}_2\text{OH}$)中间体, 随后 $\text{C}=\text{O}$ 进行活化, 最后 $-\text{OH}$ 偶联形成羧基生成乙醇酸^[87,88]。从结构上讲, 乙二醇含有两个相同的羟甲基, 因此选择性氧化其中一个同时防止过度氧化或 $\text{C}-\text{C}$ 键断裂极具挑战性。目前的研究中主要集中在用电催化技术控制乙二醇的选择性氧化(表3)。

此外, Bhattacharjee等人^[95]设计了一种多功能光电化学平台, 将二氧化碳(CO_2)转化与塑料重整相结合, 使用 $\text{Cu}_{27}\text{Pd}_{73}$ 合金阳极在碱性溶液中选择性地将PET重整为乙醇酸。Yang等人^[96]开发了一种碳化聚合物点-石墨氮化碳(CPDs-CN)二元催化剂, 在太阳光驱动下将PET转化为乙醇酸、乙醇醛和乙醇。Zheng等人^[97]在

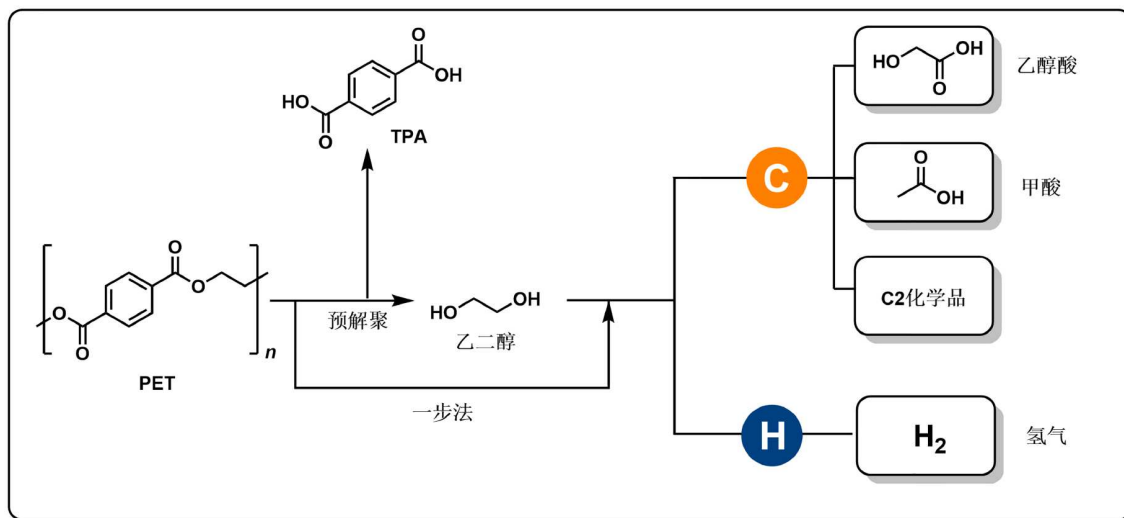


图4 (网络版彩色)PET重整技术路线图

Figure 4 (Color online) PET reforming technology roadmap

表3 电催化重整PET为乙醇酸进展^{a)}

Table 3 Progress in electrocatalytic reforming of PET to glycolic acid

催化剂	反应条件	乙醇酸产率	文献
$\text{Pd-Ni}(\text{OH})_2$	600 mA cm^{-2} @1.15 V vs RHE	91.6%(选择性)	[89]
$\text{mPd}_3\text{Au/NF}$	0.9 V	95.32%(FE)	[90]
$\text{Pd/Ni}(\text{OH})_2$	165 mA cm^{-2} @1.1 V	92.6%	[91]
$\text{Pt-Ni}(\text{OH})_2/\text{NF}$	100 mA cm^{-2} @0.69 V	93%(FE)	[92]
Pd NTs/NF	0.774 V	87.87%(FE)	[93]
$\text{Au/Ni}(\text{OH})_2$	326.2 mA cm^{-2} @1.15 V vs RHE	91%(选择性)	[94]

a) FE, 法拉第效率; RHE, 可逆氢电极

不外加光电条件下,使用负载AuCu的碳纳米管(CNT)催化剂在加热180℃,3 MPa氧气压力条件下将PET重整为乙醇酸(54.3%)。

乙二醇选择性氧化制乙醇酸的策略大大提高了PET的回收价值,但是仍面临一些技术和应用难题。从技术层面来看,单羟基氧化成羧基对催化剂的性能要求极高,双羟基氧化为草酸将大大降低单体的利用价值。从应用层面来看,尽管乙醇酸具有较高的经济价值,但是乙醇酸的全球需求量仍处于较低水平。相反PET废塑料是一种大宗废物,其转化后的产物将会面临销售渠道窄的困境。

4.2.2 乙二醇重整制甲酸

通过光电催化技术将PET水解后的乙二醇重整为甲酸是另一种有效的选择性氧化策略。在这个过程中,通过催化调控氧化性使乙二醇氧化断裂C-C键生成甲酸,同时控制不进一步氧化为CO₂。

天津大学张胜波团队^[98]提出一种光重整PET到甲酸的串联工艺,先借助双核锌催化剂实现PET水解,然后利用Pt/g-C₃N₄光催化剂将乙二醇重整为甲酸,同时水还原成氢气。Li等人^[99]构建了一种可调节的Fe₂O₃/Ni(OH)_x阳极材料,在可见光驱动下调节氧化性将PET预解聚的乙二醇选择性氧化为甲酸,同时耦合电催化技术在阴极同步实现电解水产生氢气。Zhang等人^[100]构建了一种有机配体改性的PdNi双金属(PdNi O-BMs)催化剂,将PET水解后的乙二醇电重整为甲酸。这些技术除了对废PET实现了升级再造,还产生了高附加值产品氢气。

此外,还有研究人员将乙二醇重整制甲酸与一碳化学技术相结合,拓宽了废弃物回收的技术协作。Wang等人^[101]设计了一种CO₂和PET塑料电重整集成策略,同时在阳极和阴极生产甲酸。通过将PET水解产物氧化反应与CO₂还原反应相结合,NiCo₂O₄电催化剂对甲酸生产表现出90%的高法拉第效率,组装的电解槽表现出1.55 V的低电池电压来驱动集成的两个半反应。Ma等人^[102]同样设计了一种同时将PET塑料和CO₂升级为甲酸的策略,所制备的Ni(OH)₂-VO和Bi/Bi₂O₃在超低电位(1.6 V时分别为300 mA cm⁻²和-1.4 V时分别为-272 mA cm⁻²)下实现了高甲酸选择性(分别为86%和91%)和工业级电流密度。

甲酸作为一种大宗化学品,相比乙醇酸需求量更大,因此乙二醇重整制甲酸策略有较好的应用前景。该技术未来需要更多考虑摄入的能量成本和后续的产品

分离,从而实现规模化应用。此外PET和CO₂重整集成技术需要更多考虑CO₂的来源和反应器的设计。总体而言,乙二醇的选择性氧化为光电催化技术在废塑料的处理中提供了新的应用角度。

4.2.3 乙二醇重整制氢气

乙二醇除了具有丰富的碳源外,其双羟基结构也是不可忽视的氢源。乙二醇可以通过水相重整(APR)转化为氢气(H₂)^[103]。为了进一步提高乙二醇重整的反应性,通常使用预处理方法在碱性条件下将PET水解得到单体乙二醇,然后在光的驱动下借助光催化剂的活性完成转化。目前报道的光重整催化剂主要有CdS/CdO_x^[104]、Ru-ZnO^[105]、CN-CNTs-NiMo^[106]和CN/Ni₂P^[107]等。在这个过程中乙二醇分解生成氢气和CO₂,然而CO₂的排放会加剧温室效应^[108,109]。Su等人^[110]提出了一种固定CO₂同时实现PET水相重整制氢的策略,在低至240℃的温度下获得了23.7 mol/kg PET的H₂(浓度约为99%)和Na₂TPA。该策略通过一锅式水热转化,集了解聚、乙二醇原位水相重整和原位CO₂捕获三个步骤。在原位APR阶段,催化剂Ru/MEC中的Ru活性位点对EG中C-C的裂解具有较高的催化活性,导致EG首先生成CO和H₂。随后,Ru/MEC进一步催化CO和H₂O通过水气转换反应生成H₂和CO₂。得到的CO₂通过与NaOH反应生成Na₂CO₃而被去除,从而推动水气转换反应的平衡向CO消耗和H₂生成方向移动。

乙二醇重整制氢气提供了PET升级再造为清洁能源的新思路和视角,与热解制燃油不同的是该策略不需要高温高压等暴力条件。实际上,利用水/醇重整氢气是当前氢能利用的热点话题^[111,112]。乙二醇重整制氢气实现了废弃物向清洁能源的转化,是实现全球零碳目标的重要一步。然而,这项技术面临的挑战除了催化剂寿命、成本和催化效率外,还有氢气的收集和储存,包括安全问题、低存储密度和高运输成本。

5 总结与展望

本文以废PET的闭环回收为出发点,综述了近几年PET化学解聚及其单体的升级再造的最新进展。PET的升级再造技术提供了许多当前塑料回收的创新思路,如合成更高价值的化学品或生产清洁能源。但是大部分技术处于实验室阶段和概念性设计。相比之下PET的化学解聚回收技术伴随着PET的诞生已经开展多年,部分技术在国内已经实现规模化生产和应用,如浙江佳人新材料公司已经实现再生DMT万吨级产量。然而

化学解聚技术在进一步推广过程中仍面临以下问题: (1) 高效性与经济性, 在工业规模上推广面临的挑战之一一是反应条件的苛刻性(如高温、高压)及催化剂的成本高. 如何降低能耗、提高反应速率和选择性是研究的重点; (2) 污染与副产物, 某些解聚过程可能产生有害的副产物, 如酸催化水解产生的酸性废液, 以及醇解产生的残余溶剂, 需进行有效处理; (3) PET废料的杂质影响, 实际PET废物中通常含有染料、添加剂和其他杂质, 这些杂质会干扰解聚反应, 因此如何对PET废物进行预处理也是一个难点. 针对这些问题未来化学解聚PET发展可以有以下方向:

(1) 绿色化与可持续发展: 未来的PET解聚技术将更加注重绿色化, 开发更温和的反应条件、更环保的催化剂(如生物催化剂或可循环使用的催化剂)和绿色溶剂, 以降低对环境的影响.

(2) 循环经济模式: 未来的PET解聚技术将与循环

经济紧密结合, 实现PET废料的大规模回收和再利用. 新型回收技术的开发将有助于减少塑料废弃物, 并提高资源利用效率.

(3) 组合技术的开发: 将化学解聚与其他技术(如物理回收、机械回收)相结合, 形成多元回收路径, 提高PET废物处理的整体效率.

总而言之, 化学解聚技术是通过将废旧PET制品进行“解聚-聚合”实现PET再生的一项循环利用技术, 是实现PET闭环回收的重要途径. 这一过程中PET实现了从聚合物到小分子再到聚合物的转换, 避免了物理回收过程中材质性能下降的问题. 实际上, PET回收也面临技术以外的难题, 如再生产物的销路窄, 再生的PET或者再生PET原料价格高于原材料, 难以打开市场. 因此, 塑料的可持续循环回收不单依赖某一项技术的革新, 更需要多项技术合作以及全社会多领域的共同努力.

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Summary for “废PET塑料化学解聚和升级再造的研究进展”

Research progress on chemical depolymerization and upcycling of PET waste plastics

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Plastics are ubiquitous in daily life due to their outstanding performance and cost-effectiveness. However, plastics are not without their drawbacks. Plastics are synthesized from fossil resources, and their widespread use accelerates the depletion of non-renewable resources. Additionally, their inherent stability makes them resistant to degradation under natural conditions, and they continuously release microplastics that pose significant harm to living organisms. As a result, plastic consumption and pollution are considered to be a critical environmental crisis that threatens sustainable human development. Against the backdrop of China's heightened environmental protection efforts and its active promotion of “dual carbon” goals, the resource utilization of plastic waste has become a central societal issue. Polyethylene terephthalate (PET), one of the most widely produced polyester plastics, is extensively used in the manufacture of various everyday products and single-use packaging materials. PET synthesis began in the 1940s and has been used on a large scale for disposable packaging since the 1970s. PET is synthesized through the polycondensation of bis(2-hydroxyethyl) terephthalate (BHET), which can be produced by esterification of terephthalic acid (TPA) with ethylene glycol or from dimethyl terephthalate (DMT) and ethylene glycol. Despite existing initiatives aimed at recycling PET, the current recycling rate remains low. PET recycling is generally classified into primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary recycling. Primary and secondary recycling involve physical methods that recover PET waste without altering its chemical structure, for instance, PET waste plastic bottles are melt-spun to make recycled polyester fibers. Tertiary recycling restores the molecular value (chemical recycling), while quaternary recycling creates energy from the waste. With the rise of the circular economy, there has been a marked increase in research on PET recycling technologies, particularly in chemical recycling, which aims to establish a closed-loop system in which discarded PET is reintegrated into production. Chemical depolymerization pathways have been developed, allowing PET waste to be broken down into aromatic monomers and ethylene glycol. Through further purification and polycondensation, recycled PET can be produced from these monomers, thereby enabling closed-loop recycling. The depolymerization processes are typically hydrolysis, methanolysis, and glycolysis. Among them, hydrolysis usually requires the participation of water and the reaction with acidic or alkaline substances. Methanolysis requires an excess of methanol to react with PET. Glycolysis likewise requires the addition of large amounts of additional glycol for the reaction. These chemical depolymerization routes have a common by-product, ethylene glycol. However, due to the high boiling point of ethylene glycol, the chemical depolymerization of PET presents significant challenges in terms of separation and purification. In recent years, new recycling strategies have emerged that combine organic synthesis, electrochemical, and photochemical techniques to enhance the utilization of ethylene glycol including selective oxidation reactions to make carboxylic compounds. These innovative strategies not only preserve the valuable aromatic monomers of PET but also facilitate the recovery of new high-value chemicals. This paper reviews the production and recycling technologies for PET plastics, with a particular focus on the chemical depolymerization pathways involved in PET chemical recycling. It systematically examines the current status of traditional PET chemical depolymerization techniques and new strategies for their further development. Additionally, the paper explores the key challenges, research priorities, and prospects for producing high-value monomers from waste PET. This review offers new perspectives and insights for advancing sustainable development and the circular economy while promoting the importance of the waste plastic recycling industry.

waste plastics, polyethylene terephthalate (PET), chemical recycling, depolymerization, upcycling

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