

非金属碳基催化剂氨选择性催化氧化反应性能研究

段汝丞^{1,2†}, 符瑜^{1†}, 何广智^{1,2*}, 余运波^{1,2,3*}, 贺泓^{1,2,3}

1. 中国科学院生态环境研究中心, 环境模拟与污染控制国家重点实验室, 北京 100085

2. 中国科学院大学, 北京 100049

3. 中国科学院城市环境研究所, 城市污染物转化重点实验室, 厦门 361021

† 同等贡献

* 联系人, E-mail: gzhhe@rcees.ac.cn; ybyu@rcees.ac.cn

2024-06-27 收稿, 2024-08-05 修回, 2024-09-02 接受, 2024-09-06 网络版发表

国家重点研发计划(2023YFC3707303)、国家自然科学基金(22276202)和中国科学院青年创新促进会(Y2023011)资助

摘要 氨气(NH_3)是大气颗粒物的重要前体物之一, 对 NH_3 的高效净化是应对颗粒物污染的重要手段。本文研究了碳基催化剂的氨选择性催化氧化($\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$)反应性能, 并探究了影响碳基催化剂 $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ 反应性能的关键官能团物种。研究结果表明, C-OH和C-O-C物种与催化活性密切相关。此外, 本研究提出了一种高效生成表面C-OH和C-O-C含氧官能团的调控方法, 可以有效提升催化剂对 NH_3 的催化氧化能力, 并保持良好的 N_2 选择性。本研究揭示了碳基催化剂在 $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ 反应中的活性位点, 为发展非金属碳基 $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ 催化剂提供了新的思路。

关键词 氨气, 选择性催化氧化, 碳基催化剂, 含氧官能团

氨气(NH_3)是重要的大气污染物之一, 可以与大气中的 NO_x 、 SO_x 等酸性气体结合形成铵盐, 铵盐是大气中 $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ 的重要组成部分^[1~3]。大气中的 NH_3 主要来源于农业源和非农业源, 农业源污染可以通过相应的管理手段得到有效控制^[4]。非农业源排放的 NH_3 主要来源于固定源(如水泥厂和火电厂)烟气和机动车尾气脱硝过程中使用的还原剂氨未完全反应发生的“逃逸”^[5~8]。研究发现, 非农业源排放对夏季北京城区大气 NH_3 的贡献率约为63%^[9]。因此, 非农业源的 NH_3 排放与城市大气颗粒物污染密切相关^[10~12]。

氨气的处理方法包括吸收法、热分解法、生物降解法和催化氧化法, 其中氨选择性催化氧化技术(selective catalytic oxidation of NH_3 , $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$)是一种高效节能的 NH_3 净化方法^[13,14], 是处理固定源(如火电厂和水泥厂)和移动源脱硝过程中未完全反应 NH_3 的最有前景的技术之一^[15,16]。贵金属催化剂具有优异的 $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$

活性, 但仍存在高温选择性差和价格昂贵等问题^[17~19]。因此, 亟需发展具有良好 $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ 活性、高 N_2 选择性且价格低廉的 $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ 催化剂。

碳材料以其较大的比表面积通常作为吸附材料被应用^[20~22]。近年来, 非金属碳基催化剂在 NH_3 选择性催化还原 NO_x 反应($\text{NH}_3\text{-SCR}$)中的应用逐渐受到关注^[23~25], 但对于非金属碳基催化剂在 $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ 反应中的研究尚未见报道。本文通过硝酸氧化、水热处理和惰性气氛处理等手段对碳材料表面官能团进行调控, 制备出具有良好 $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ 性能的碳基催化剂, 结合扫描电子显微镜、程序升温分解-质谱、红外光谱、氨程序升温脱附和X射线光电子能谱等表征手段探究了影响碳基催化剂 $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ 性能的关键因素。研究结果表明, 经过水热处理后的催化剂不仅表现出较高的 $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ 活性, 还保持了良好的 N_2 选择性, 这为设计用于处理固定源含 NH_3 烟气的非金属碳基催化剂提供了

引用格式: 段汝丞, 符瑜, 何广智, 等. 非金属碳基催化剂氨选择性催化氧化反应性能研究. 科学通报, 2025, 70: 2117~2124

Duan R, Fu Y, He G, et al. Study of selective catalytic oxidation of ammonia over metal-free carbon-based catalysts (in Chinese). Chin Sci Bull, 2025, 70: 2117~2124, doi: [10.1360/TB-2024-0690](https://doi.org/10.1360/TB-2024-0690)

可行方案.

1 实验

1.1 催化剂制备

首先, 将活性炭(购买自山西新华化工有限责任公司)在浓盐酸中浸泡12 h, 以去除可能存在的各种杂质并用去离子水洗涤烘干。然后在N₂气氛中900°C处理2 h以去除原本可能存在的含氧官能团, 得到的新鲜活性炭催化剂命名为AC。AC在浓硝酸中氧化3 h, 洗涤烘干后在N₂气氛下400°C处理2 h以去除催化剂孔道中残存的硝酸, 得到OAC催化剂。对OAC催化剂进行水热处理, 即在含5% H₂O的空气气氛中400°C处理3 h, 得到的催化剂命名为OAC-HT。将OAC-HT催化剂在N₂气氛下700°C处理2 h使C-OH和C-O-C官能团分解, 得到OAC-HT-700催化剂。

1.2 催化剂评价与表征

1.2.1 催化剂活性测试

催化剂活性评价实验在自制的固定床反应器上进行, 活性评价装置由进气系统、温控系统和气体检测系统组成。将500 mg催化剂(40~60目)置于10 mm内径的石英反应管中, 并在催化剂两端放置石英棉对催化剂进行固定。反应气体由500 ppm(348 mg/m³)NH₃、5 vol% O₂和N₂组成, 进气和尾气的浓度均由Nicolet iS50红外光谱仪进行检测。

氨气转化率和氮气选择性根据下面的公式进行计算:

$$\text{氨气转化率} = \left(1 - \frac{(\text{NH}_3)_{\text{出口}}}{(\text{NH}_3)_{\text{进口}}} \right) \times 100\%, \quad (1)$$

$$\text{氮气选择性} = \left(1 - \frac{(\text{NO}_x)_{\text{出口}} + 2(\text{N}_2\text{O})_{\text{出口}}}{(\text{NH}_3)_{\text{进口}} - (\text{NH}_3)_{\text{出口}}} \right) \times 100\%. \quad (2)$$

1.2.2 催化剂表征方法

使用日本Hitachi公司生产的SU8000场发射扫描电子显微镜(field-emission scanning electron microscope, FE-SEM)在3 kV加速电压下对催化剂的形貌结构进行观测。使用德国Bruker公司生产的VERTEX 80v傅里叶变换红外光谱仪(Fourier transform infrared spectrometer, FTIR)在真空条件下对催化剂的红外吸收光谱进行测试。使用美国Thermo Fisher Scientific公司生产的ESCALAB250Xi型号的X射线光电子能谱仪(X-ray

photoelectron spectrometer, XPS)对催化剂表面元素(C 1s和O 1s)进行测试, 利用C 1s(BE=284.8 eV)对所得谱图进行校正。使用Mettler-Toledo TGA/DSC1-1100LF系统进行热重分析(thermogravimetric analysis, TGA), 实验气氛由N₂和5 vol% O₂组成, 升温速率为10°C/min。在程序升温分解实验中, 将100 mg催化剂置于4 mm内径的石英反应管中, 并在催化剂两端放置石英棉对催化剂进行固定, 载气为50 mL/min He, 升温速率为10°C/min, 催化剂分解产物(CO和CO₂)使用移动式质谱仪(GSD 350-OmniStar)进行检测。

使用与固定床流动反应器相连的美国Thermo Fisher Scientific公司生产的Nicolet Antaris IGS气体分析仪进行氨程序升温脱附(ammonia temperature-programmed desorption, NH₃-TPD)测试。将250 mg催化剂置于6 mm内径的石英反应管中, 并在催化剂两端放置石英棉对催化剂进行固定。催化剂首先在200 mL/min N₂气氛中400°C预处理以去除表面吸附杂质, 随后在500 ppm NH₃气氛50°C下吸附至饱和, 并使用N₂气氛吹扫, 最后以10°C/min的速率升温至400°C。

2 结果与讨论

2.1 活性评价结果

如图1(a)所示, 未经任何氧化处理的新鲜AC催化剂在250°C以下基本没有NH₃-SCO活性。经过硝酸氧化得到的OAC催化剂的NH₃催化氧化性能有了略微提升, 对OAC催化剂进行水热处理后的OAC-HT催化剂的催化性能显著提高。OAC和OAC-HT催化剂的T₅₀分别为360和310°C, 与AC催化剂的T₅₀(380°C)相比分别降低了20和70°C。OAC-HT催化剂在经过700°C N₂气氛处理(OAC-HT-700)后催化活性明显降低。所有催化剂在整个温度区间内(100~400°C)都保持了95%以上的N₂选择性(图1(b))。

2.2 催化剂表征结果

图2展示了碳基催化剂的形貌信息, 所有催化剂均为不规则的块状结构, 大小在1~50 μm, 并且OAC-HT催化剂表面具有更多孔道结构。在经过不同处理后, 各个催化剂的孔径基本没有发生改变, 与AC和OAC催化剂相比, OAC-HT催化剂的比表面积和孔容显著增加(表1), 以上结果均表明水热处理有助于催化剂孔道的形成, 进而增加反应物与催化剂之间的接触面积。

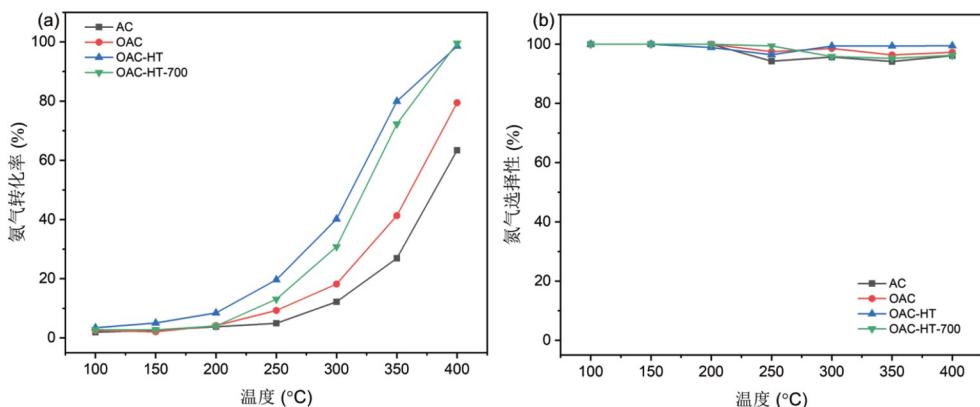


图1 不同碳基催化剂活性评价结果. (a) 氨气转化率; (b) 氮气选择性. 反应条件: 500 ppm氨气, 5 vol%氧气, 氮气为平衡气, 12000 h⁻¹的反应空速

Figure 1 Activity test of various carbon-based catalysts. (a) NH₃ conversion; (b) N₂ selectivity. The reaction condition: 500 ppm NH₃, 5 vol% O₂, N₂ as balance gas, and gas hourly space velocity (GHSV) = 12000 h⁻¹

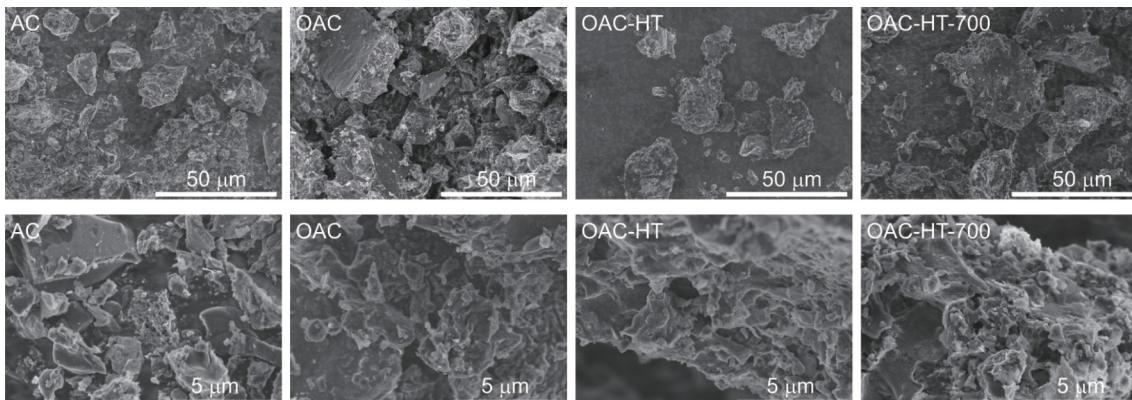


图2 不同碳基催化剂的SEM图像

Figure 2 SEM images of various carbon-based catalysts

表1 不同催化剂的N₂吸/脱附分析结果

Table 1 N₂ adsorption-desorption analysis results of various catalysts

催化剂	比表面积(m ² /g)	孔容(cm ³ /g)	孔径(nm)
AC	288	0.15	2.1
OAC	293	0.15	2.0
OAC-HT	533	0.28	2.1
OAC-HT-700	630	0.33	2.1

碳基催化剂的FTIR谱图(图3(a))表明, 相较于AC催化剂, OAC和OAC-HT催化剂表面的C-OH和C-O-C吸收峰强度明显增强^[26,27]. 经过700°C N₂处理后, OAC-HT-700催化剂表面C-OH吸收峰强度降低, 但C-O-C峰强度基本不变. NH₃-TPD结果(图3(b))显示, NH₃吸附量从高到低排序为: OAC-HT > OAC > OAC-HT-700 > AC, 这与催化剂表面C-OH特征峰的变化一致, 表明C-

OH是碳基催化剂上NH₃的重要吸附位点.

催化剂的O 1s谱图如图4(a)~(d)所示, 结合能在531.1、532.1、533.3、534和535.8 eV附近的峰分别归属为羰基(C=O)、羟基和醚(C-OH/C-O-C)、内酯(-COO-)、羧基(-COOH)和吸附H₂O的特征峰^[23,28,29]. 结果表明, 硝酸氧化(OAC催化剂)和水热处理(OAC-HT催化剂)提高了催化剂的C-OH和C-O-C含量, 700°C N₂处理(OAC-HT-700催化剂)使催化剂表面C-OH和C-O-C相对含量显著降低(图4(e)), 这与FTIR和NH₃-TPD的结论一致.

碳材料表面存在丰富的含氧官能团, 例如羧基(-COOH)、内酯(-COOC-)、酸酐(-COOOC-)、羟基(C-OH)、醚(C-O-C)和羰基(C=O)等. 这些含氧官能团在催化反应中发挥重要作用^[30,31], 因此, 对碳材料表面含氧官能团的表征是探究碳基催化剂NH₃-SCO反应机制的

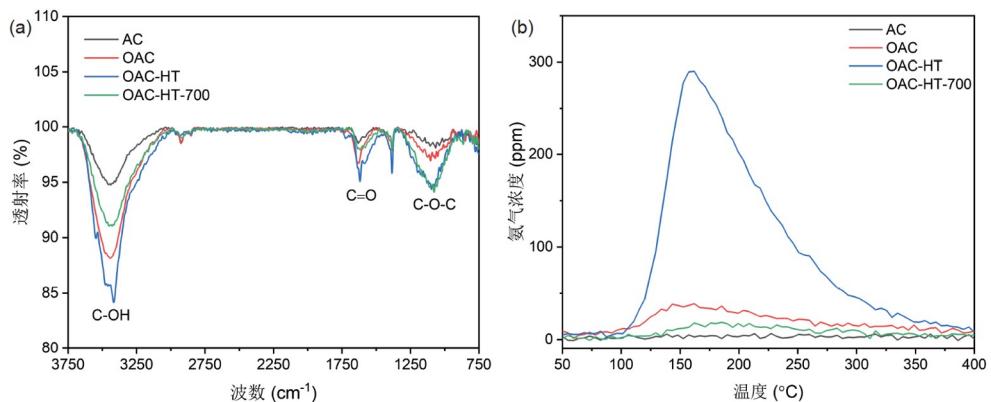
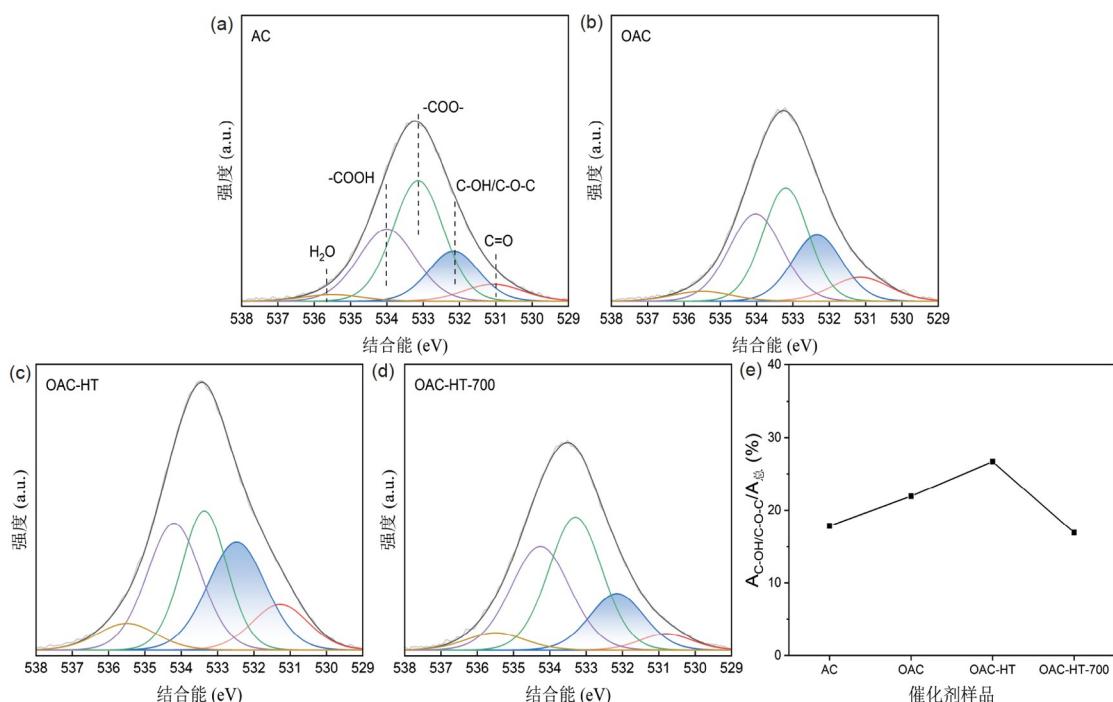
图 3 红外光谱和NH₃-TPD实验. (a) 不同碳基催化剂的红外谱图;Figure 3 FTIR and NH₃-TPD experiments. (a) FTIR spectra of various carbon-based catalysts;

图 4 不同碳基催化剂的XPS分析. (a)~(d) O 1s谱图;

Figure 4 XPS analysis of various carbon-based catalysts. (a)–(d) O 1s spectra; (e) percentage of C-OH/C-O-C characteristic peak area

关键手段。已有研究表明，不同含氧官能团在惰性气氛中的分解温度不同，并且不同含氧官能团分解会释放对应的CO和CO₂分子^[32~34]，因此可以通过设置不同的前处理温度来去除不同的官能团。**图5(a)**展示了OAC-HT催化剂程序升温分解产生的CO₂(红线)和CO(蓝线)信号，180°C附近的CO₂信号来源于-COOH的分解；-COOOC-在430°C附近分解会产生CO₂和CO；-COOC-在460~580°C分解并形成一个大而宽的CO₂

峰；C-OH和C-O-C在550~780°C处分解形成一个明显的CO峰；C=O在850°C处分解产生CO₂和CO。**图5(b)**展示了不同碳基催化剂程序升温分解释放的CO信号，结果表明，水热处理(OAC-HT催化剂)明显增加了C-OH和C-O-C官能团的含量，而OAC-HT-700催化剂的C-OH和C-O-C含量显著下降。以上表征结果都表明C-OH和C-O-C官能团对催化剂的NH₃-SCO性能具有重要作用。

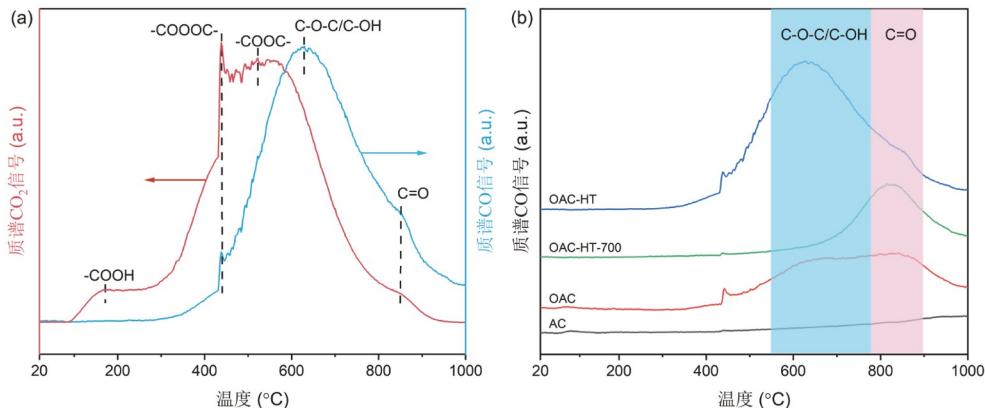


图 5 程序升温分解实验. (a) OAC-HT催化剂分解产生的CO(蓝线)和CO₂(红线)信号;

Figure 5 Temperature-programmed decomposition experiments. (a) CO and CO₂ signals from the OAC-HT catalyst decomposition; (b) CO signals from various carbon-based catalysts decomposition

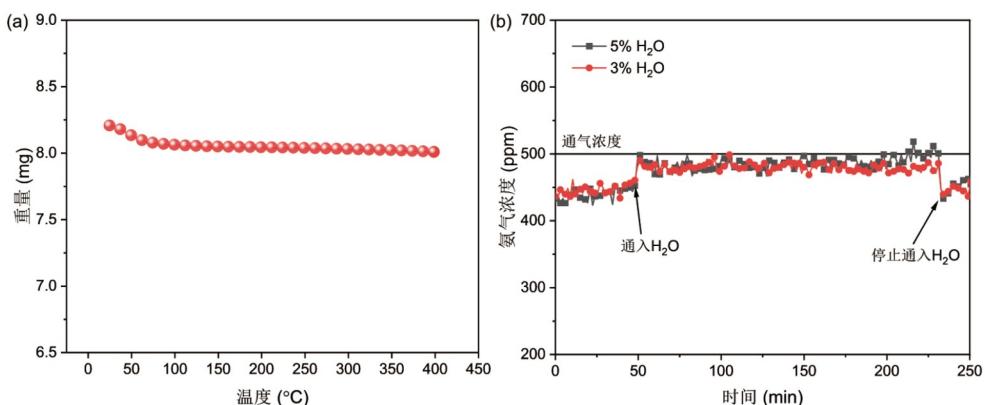


图 6 OAC-HT催化剂的热稳定性和抗水性能测试. (a) 在5 vol% O₂气氛中的热重曲线;

Figure 6 Thermal stability and water resistance testing of OAC-HT catalysts. (a) TGA curve of OAC-HT catalyst at a heating rate of 10°C/min in an atmosphere containing 5 vol% O₂ and N₂ as balance gas; (b) H₂O resistance of the OAC-HT catalyst at 250°C

图6(a)和(b)分别展示了OAC-HT催化剂的热稳定性和其在250°C下的抗水性能。结果表明，催化剂质量在活性测试温度范围(100~400°C)内基本没有变化，具有良好的热稳定性(图6(a))。抗水性能测试结果(图6(b))显示，3%和5% H₂O的通入均抑制了催化剂对NH₃的催化氧化能力，停止通入H₂O后催化剂的活性恢复到初始状态，表明H₂O可能与NH₃发生对活性位点的竞争吸附，从而抑制催化剂的NH₃-SCO活性。该抑制效应具有可逆性，即停止通入H₂O后，催化活性恢复。

3 结论

本研究通过水热处理法对碳材料表面官能团进行调控，在保持良好N₂选择性的同时，提高了碳基催化剂的NH₃-SCO性能。通过FTIR、TPD-MS和XPS等表征手段，揭示了C-OH和C-O-C官能团在NH₃-SCO反应中发挥了重要作用。本研究为制备具有优异NH₃-SCO活性和N₂选择性的碳基催化剂提供了有效策略，并为发展非贵金属NH₃-SCO催化剂提供了思路。

参考文献

- Huang R, Zhang Y, Bozzetti C, et al. High secondary aerosol contribution to particulate pollution during haze events in China. *Nature*, 2014, 514: 218–222
- Gu B, Zhang L, Van Dingenen R, et al. Abating ammonia is more cost-effective than nitrogen oxides for mitigating PM_{2.5} air pollution. *Science*, 2021, 374: 758–762

- 3 Zhai S, Jacob D J, Wang X, et al. Control of particulate nitrate air pollution in China. *Nat Geosci*, 2021, 14: 389–395
- 4 Liu M, Huang X, Song Y, et al. Ammonia emission control in China would mitigate haze pollution and nitrogen deposition, but worsen acid rain. *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA*, 2019, 116: 7760–7765
- 5 Sun K, Tao L, Miller D J, et al. Vehicle emissions as an important urban ammonia source in the United States and China. *Environ Sci Technol*, 2017, 51: 2472–2481
- 6 Wang Y, Wen Y, Zhang S, et al. Vehicular ammonia emissions significantly contribute to urban PM_{2.5} pollution in two Chinese megacities. *Environ Sci Technol*, 2023, 57: 2698–2705
- 7 Yuan J, Wang Z, Liu J, et al. Potential risk of NH₃ slip arises from catalytic inactive site in selective catalytic reduction of NO_x with metal-free carbon catalysts. *Environ Sci Technol*, 2023, 57: 606–614
- 8 Li P, Ma J Y, Chen Z H, et al. Effect of the morphology of Ru/α-MnO₂ on NH₃-SCO performance (in Chinese). *CIESC J*, 2023, 74: 2908–2918 [李盼, 马俊洋, 陈志豪, 等. Ru/α-MnO₂催化剂形貌对NH₃-SCO反应性能的影响. 化工学报, 2023, 74: 2908–2918]
- 9 Bhattacharai N, Wang S, Xu Q, et al. Sources of gaseous NH₃ in urban Beijing from parallel sampling of NH₃ and NH₄⁺, their nitrogen isotope measurement and modeling. *Sci Total Environ*, 2020, 747: 141361
- 10 Liu X, Zhang Y, Han W, et al. Enhanced nitrogen deposition over China. *Nature*, 2013, 494: 459–462
- 11 Farren N J, Davison J, Rose R A, et al. Underestimated ammonia emissions from road vehicles. *Environ Sci Technol*, 2020, 54: 15689–15697
- 12 Cai Y D, Ji X Y, Zhang B F, et al. Research progress in ceria-based catalysts for the selective catalytic oxidation of NH₃ (in Chinese). *Sci Sin-Chim*, 2024, 54: 295–308 [蔡彦迪, 纪小雨, 张弼凤, 等. 镧基催化剂用于NH₃选择性催化氧化的研究进展. 中国科学: 化学, 2024, 54: 295–308]
- 13 Sun H C, Qu Z P. Progress in selective catalytic oxidation of ammonia to nitrogen (in Chinese). *Chin Sci Bull*, 2020, 65: 2835–2852 [孙洪春, 曲振平. 选择性催化氧化含氨废气为氮气的研究进展. 科学通报, 2020, 65: 2835–2852]
- 14 Yue W R, Zhang R D, Liu N, et al. Selective catalytic oxidation of ammonia to nitrogen over orderly mesoporous CuFe₂O₄ with high specific surface area (in Chinese). *Chin Sci Bull*, 2014, 59: 3980–3986 [岳文瑞, 张润铎, 刘宁, 等. 高比表面有序介孔CuFe₂O₄复合氧化物上NH₃选择性催化氧化. 科学通报, 2014, 59: 2582–2588]
- 15 Peng L, Guo A, Chen D, et al. Ammonia abatement via selective oxidation over electron-deficient copper catalysts. *Environ Sci Technol*, 2022, 56: 14008–14018
- 16 Yang Z, Peng L, Yang L, et al. Low-temperature NH₃ abatement via selective oxidation over a supported copper catalyst with high Cu⁺ abundance. *J Environ Sci*, 2024, 143: 12–22
- 17 Yao P, Li J, Pei M, et al. Engineering a PtCu alloy to improve N₂ selectivity of NH₃-SCO over the Pt/SSZ-13 catalyst. *ACS Appl Mater Interfaces*, 2024, 16: 14694–14703
- 18 Lan T, Zhao Y, Deng J, et al. Selective catalytic oxidation of NH₃ over noble metal-based catalysts: State of the art and future prospects. *Catal Sci Technol*, 2020, 10: 5792–5810
- 19 Wang F, Ma J, He G, et al. Nanosize effect of Al₂O₃ in Ag/Al₂O₃ catalyst for the selective catalytic oxidation of ammonia. *ACS Catal*, 2018, 8: 2670–2682
- 20 Wu D, Liu J, Yang Y, et al. The role of SO₂ in arsenic removal by carbon-based sorbents: A DFT study. *Chem Eng J*, 2021, 410: 128439
- 21 Chen S, Guo Y, Zhang J, et al. CuFe₂O₄/activated carbon adsorbents enhance H₂S adsorption and catalytic oxidation from humidified air at room temperature. *Chem Eng J*, 2022, 431: 134097
- 22 Kan Y, Zhang R, Xu X, et al. Comparative study of raw and HNO₃-modified porous carbon from waste printed circuit boards for sulfadiazine adsorption: Experiment and DFT study. *Chin Chem Lett*, 2023, 34: 108272
- 23 Yuan J, Mi J X, Yin R, et al. Identification of intrinsic active sites for the selective catalytic reduction of nitric oxide on metal-free carbon catalysts via selective passivation. *ACS Catal*, 2022, 12: 1024–1030
- 24 Li Q, Hou Y, Han X, et al. Promotional effect of cyclic desulfurization and regeneration for selective catalytic reduction of NO by NH₃ over activated carbon. *J Cleaner Production*, 2020, 249: 119392
- 25 Li H J, Liu Y J, He Z Q, et al. Research progress of low-temperature SCR denitrification with carbon-based catalyst (in Chinese). *Thermal Power Gener*, 2024, 53: 14–23 [李浩杰, 刘永江, 禾志强, 等. 碳基催化剂低温SCR脱硝研究进展. 热力发电, 2024, 53: 14–23]
- 26 Han C, Liu Y, Ma J, et al. Key role of organic carbon in the sunlight-enhanced atmospheric aging of soot by O₂. *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA*, 2012, 109: 21250–21255
- 27 Ye Y, Xie J, Fang D, et al. Effect of acid treatment on surfaces of activated carbon supported catalysts for NO and SO₂ removal. *Fullerenes Nanotubes Carbon Nanostruct*, 2022, 30: 297–305
- 28 Bai Y, Li Q M, Liu Y R, et al. Analysis of oxygen-containing functional groups on the surface of graphene material (in Chinese). *Analyt Instr*, 2020, (4): 83–88 [白云, 李琴梅, 刘奕忍, 等. 石墨烯材料表面含氧官能团的表征研究. 分析仪器, 2020, (4): 83–88]
- 29 Figueiredo J L, Pereira M F R, Freitas M M A, et al. Modification of the surface chemistry of activated carbons. *Carbon*, 1999, 37: 1379–1389
- 30 Zhang H, Geng J, Cai C, et al. Effect of doping order on metal-free heteroatoms dual-doped carbon as oxygen reduction electrocatalyst. *Chin Chem*

Lett, 2021, 32: 745–749

- 31 Wang L, Liu M, Ren S, et al. Recent advance for NO removal with carbonaceous material for low-temperature NH₃-SCR reaction. *Catal Today*, 2023, 418: 114053
- 32 Dünigen P, Schlogl R, Heumann S. Non-linear thermogravimetric mass spectrometry of carbon materials providing direct speciation separation of oxygen functional groups. *Carbon*, 2018, 130: 614–622
- 33 Brender P, Gadiou R, Rietsch J C, et al. Characterization of carbon surface chemistry by combined temperature programmed desorption with *in situ* X-ray photoelectron spectrometry and temperature programmed desorption with mass spectrometry analysis. *Anal Chem*, 2012, 84: 2147–2153
- 34 Kundu S, Wang Y, Xia W, et al. Thermal stability and reducibility of oxygen-containing functional groups on multiwalled carbon nanotube surfaces: A quantitative high-resolution XPS and TPD/TPR study. *J Phys Chem C*, 2008, 112: 16869–16878

Summary for “非金属碳基催化剂氨选择性催化氧化反应性能研究”

Study of selective catalytic oxidation of ammonia over metal-free carbon-based catalysts

Rucheng Duan^{1,2†}, Yu Fu^{1†}, Guangzhi He^{1,2*}, Yunbo Yu^{1,2,3*} & Hong He^{1,2,3}

¹ State Key Joint Laboratory of Environment Simulation and Pollution Control, Research Center for Eco-Environmental Sciences, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100085, China

² University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100049, China

³ Key Laboratory of Urban Pollutant Conversion, Institute of Urban Environment, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Xiamen 361021, China

† Equally contributed to this work

* Corresponding authors, E-mail: gzhhe@rcees.ac.cn; ybyu@rcees.ac.cn

Ammonia (NH_3) is a significant atmospheric pollutant that leads to severe environmental and health risks. NH_3 can irritate the respiratory tract, leading to symptoms such as coughing and wheezing. In the atmosphere, NH_3 is the only alkaline gas and serves as an important precursor pollutant, combining with acidic gases to form secondary pollutants like nitrate and sulfate aerosols, which are key components of the fine particulate matter ($\text{PM}_{2.5}$). $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ is associated with severe health hazards, including the respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and can also impact the growth and reproduction of plants and animals. Therefore, it is essential to eliminate NH_3 and its secondary contamination.

NH_3 emissions arise from various sources. In agricultural production, the ammonia fertilizer and the animal husbandry contribute significantly to atmospheric NH_3 , which are the main sources of NH_3 emissions in the atmosphere. This portion of NH_3 emissions can be limited through appropriate management practices and policy measures. For non-agricultural sources, such as stationary sources and vehicles, NH_3 emissions mainly result from the incomplete reaction of ammonia as a reductant in the de- NO_x process. Methods for treating NH_3 from non-agricultural sources include absorption, thermal decomposition, biodegradation, and catalytic oxidation, among which selective catalytic oxidation of ammonia ($\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$) is an efficient and energy-saving purification method. The development of effective catalysts is crucial for the $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ technology. Noble metal catalysts are commonly used in the $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ reaction due to their high catalytic activity. However, high cost and poor N_2 selectivity at high temperatures limit the use of noble metal catalysts. Therefore, there is a growing need to develop the $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ catalysts with a low-content or even no noble metal.

Carbon materials possess a large specific surface area and are often used as adsorbent materials to treat wastewaters or exhaust gases. Additionally, the surface of carbon materials contains abundant oxygen-containing functional groups, such as carboxyl (COOH), hydroxyl (C-OH), ether (C-O-C), and carbonyl (C=O), which can serve as the active sites for catalytic reactions. These properties make carbon-based catalysts potential substitutes for the noble metal catalysts. Currently, the main methods for modifying the functional groups of carbon-based catalysts involve acid oxidation and alkali treatment. These methods primarily aim to increase the overall content of surface functional groups or to significantly enhance the specific functional groups. In this study, we modified the surface functional groups of carbon-based catalysts through nitric acid oxidation, hydrothermal treatment, and inert atmosphere heat treatment. We then investigated the performance of these metal-free carbon-based catalysts in the $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ reaction.

The physicochemical properties of the catalysts, especially the effects of the oxygen-containing functional groups on the $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ reaction, were analyzed using various characterization techniques, including scanning electron microscopy (SEM), temperature-programmed decomposition-mass spectrometry (TPD-MS), Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), ammonia temperature-programmed desorption ($\text{NH}_3\text{-TPD}$), X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS), and thermogravimetric analysis (TGA). The results indicated that the methods of modifying the surface oxygen-containing functional groups significantly increased the content of C-OH and C-O-C groups, and these species were closely related to the $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ activity. Those methods markedly improved the $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ activity of carbon-based catalysts while maintaining good N_2 selectivity. Furthermore, the modified carbon-based catalysts also maintained good thermal stability.

This study reveals the active sites of carbon-based catalysts in the $\text{NH}_3\text{-SCO}$ reaction and proposes feasible methods to design the metal-free carbon-based catalysts for the treatment of NH_3 -containing flue gas from stationary sources. This study also provides a valuable idea for developing efficient and cost-effective substitutes to the noble metal catalysts for NH_3 elimination.

ammonia, selective catalytic oxidation, carbon-based catalysts, oxygen-containing functional groups

doi: [10.1360/TB-2024-0690](https://doi.org/10.1360/TB-2024-0690)