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Citation	Fluid Phase Equilibria. 2005, 233(2), p. 190-193
Version Type	AM
URL	https://hdl.handle.net/11094/91301
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Fluid Phase Equilibria

Paper

Phase Equilibria for H₂ + CO₂ + H₂O System Containing Gas Hydrates

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Abstract

Isothermal phase equilibrium (pressure - composition in the gas phase) for the ternary system of H₂ + CO₂ + H₂O has been investigated in the presence of gas hydrate phase. Three - phase equilibrium pressure increases with the H₂ composition of gas phase. The Raman spectra suggest that H₂ is not enclathrated in the hydrate-cages and behaves only like the diluent gas toward the formation of CO₂ hydrate. This fact is also supported by the thermodynamic analysis using Soave - Redlich - Kwong equation of state.

Keywords: gas hydrate, solid-fluid equilibria, gas purification, Raman spectroscopy, hydrogen, carbon dioxide

1. Introduction

H₂ has attracted much attention as a clean and coming energy resource. The steam reforming of hydrocarbons is well known as the H₂ production processes. The gas generated by the steam reforming is a mixture composed of CO and CO₂ as well as H₂. The Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) has been often used as one of the H₂ separation methods for such mixtures. A new H₂ separation process using the function of gas hydrates, instead of PSA having large-scale plants, is one of the potentialities because of its efficient storage and filling at high pressures. Gas hydrates are stabilized by the guest molecule enclathrated in the cage of water molecules and are classified into three types, structure-I, -II, and -H. These unit-cell structures are composed of two or three types of cages. All the structures have a common hydrate cage of pentagonal dodecahedron (5¹², S-cage). In addition, the structure-I and structure-II have one other type of cage (5¹²6²(M-cage) or 5¹²6⁴(L-cage), respectively), which is larger than the S-cage. The structure of gas hydrates mainly depends on the size and shape of enclathrated guest species. It is well known that H₂ is too small to generate any hydrates by itself except for a high pressure region of the GPa order [1], that is, H₂ almost never contribute to the stability of hydrate cage. On the other hand, CO₂ generates structure-I hydrate easily in the moderate condition [2, 3]. A new H₂ separation using gas hydrates [4,5] owes to this distinction of hydrate-cage stability.

In the present study, the isothermal phase equilibria (*p*-*y* relation) for the ternary (H₂ + CO₂ + H₂O) system in the presence of gas hydrate phase have been measured in a temperature range of 274.3 - 281.9 K and a pressure range up to 10 MPa. The obtained *p*-*y* relations have been correlated by Soave - Redlich - Kwong equation of state under the assumption of pure CO₂ hydrate formation.

In order to make sure the propriety of the above assumption, the single crystal of gas hydrates prepared from gas mixtures of $\text{H}_2 + \text{CO}_2$ have been analyzed by use of Raman micro-spectroscopy.

2. Experimental

2.1. Experimental apparatus

A schematic diagram of the experimental apparatus used in the phase equilibrium measurement is shown in Fig. 1. The inner volume and maximum working pressure of the high-pressure cell are 150 cm^3 and 10 MPa, respectively. The cell has a set of windows for visually observing the phase behavior in the high-pressure cell. All of them are immersed in a temperature - controlled water bath. The contents are agitated using an up-and-down mixing bar driven by an exterior permanent magnetic ring.

A high-pressure optical cell (with a pair of sapphire window) for Raman micro-spectroscopy is essentially the same to the previous one [6]. The details are not mentioned here.

The equilibrium temperature was measured within an accuracy of $\pm 0.02 \text{ K}$ using a thermistor probe (Takara D-632), which was inserted into a hole in the cell wall. The probe was calibrated with a Pt resistance thermometer. The system pressure was measured by the pressure gauge (Valcom VPRT) calibrated by a RUSKA quartz Bourdon tube gauge within an accuracy of $\pm 0.01 \text{ MPa}$.

2.2. Experimental procedures

The H_2 and CO_2 mixture prepared at a desired composition was introduced into an evacuated high-pressure cell. The contents were pressurized up to a desired pressure by supplying water successively and then continuously agitated using a mixing bar. After

the formation of gas hydrates, the system temperature was kept constant to establish the three-phase coexisting state of hydrate + aqueous solution + gas. The phase behavior was observed straightforwardly through the window. After reaching the equilibrium state of three-phase coexistence, a small amount of gas phase was taken separately out for composition analysis. The equilibrium composition of gas phase was analyzed for H₂ and CO₂ by the TCD - Gas Chromatography (TCD-GC, Shimadzu GC-14B) as the H₂O composition of gas phase is negligibly small under the present experimental conditions.

The single crystal of gas hydrate prepared from H₂ and CO₂ mixture was analyzed by *in situ* Raman spectroscopy by use of a laser Raman microprobe spectrometer with a multichannel CCD detector. The laser beam from the object lens was irradiated to the sample through the upper sapphire window. The backscatter of the opposite direction was taken in with the same lens. The argon ion laser beam (514.5 nm and 100 mW) and He-Ne laser beam (632.8 nm and 35 mW) were irradiated to the sample from the object lens. The spectral resolution was about 1 cm⁻¹. The integration time was varied within the range 10 to 200 sec, depending on the intensity of the Raman scattering.

2.3. Materials

Research grade H₂ of purity 99.9999 % was obtained from the Neriki Gas Co., Ltd. The maximum impurity was 0.2 ppm of nitrogen. Research grade CO₂ of purity 99.99 % was obtained from the Takachiho Tradings Co., Ltd. The distilled water was obtained from the Yashima Pure Chemicals Co., Ltd. All of them were used without further purifications.

3. Results and Discussion

The isothermal phase equilibrium (p - y) relations for the $\text{H}_2 + \text{CO}_2 + \text{H}_2\text{O}$ system containing gas hydrate at 274.3, 276.5, 280.1, and 281.9 K are summarized in Table 1, and shown in Fig. 2. The three-phase equilibrium pressure increases monotonically with the composition of H_2 . The variation of equilibrium pressure with the H_2 composition exhibits similar behavior in the whole temperature range of the present study. The experimental data for the pure CO_2 hydrate (left axis in Fig. 2) agree well with the previous ones [2, 3]. If a gas hydrate generated from the $\text{H}_2 + \text{CO}_2$ mixture is the pure CO_2 hydrate, the H_2 is only like a diluent gas. That is, the CO_2 hydrate is generated at considerably high total pressures where the CO_2 fugacity in the gas mixture exceeds the equilibrium fugacity of pure CO_2 hydrate system. The equilibrium fugacity of pure CO_2 hydrate is calculated from the experimental data obtained in the present study. The equilibrium fugacity of pure CO_2 hydrate is correlated by Equation (1).

$$f = a \exp(b \Delta T) \quad (1)$$

where $a = 0.975$ MPa, $b = 0.108 \text{ K}^{-1}$ and ΔT stands for the deviation of temperature from the quadruple point [12] of hydrate + ice + aqueous solution + gas. It is assumed that the molar volume of CO_2 hydrate is unchangeable.

At a given temperature and gas-phase composition, the total pressure is obtained by numerical calculation in order to give the equilibrium fugacity of pure CO_2 hydrate. The fugacity coefficient of CO_2 in the gas mixture is calculated by the Soave - Redlich - Kwong equation of state [11] with the ordinary mixing rule ($k_{12} = -0.3426$) [8]. The critical constants of CO_2 and H_2 and other parameters in the reference [7] were adopted. The estimated results agree well with the experimental equilibrium pressures as shown in Fig. 2.

Raman spectra of the intramolecular vibration of H_2 and CO_2 at 274.6 K and 15.2

MPa are shown in Fig. 3(a) and (b). In order to avoid the optical effect of sapphire window, the spectra of CO₂ are given by the irradiation of the Ar ion laser, on the other hand, the spectra of H₂ are by the He-Ne laser. The Raman peaks of the intramolecular symmetric C=O stretching vibration mode of CO₂ are detected in both gas and hydrate phases and the spectra exhibit the double peaks because of the Fermi resonance effect. There is no significant difference from the Raman shifts of pure CO₂ hydrate [6] at the same pressure. On the other hand, the Raman peak of the H-H stretching vibration mode of H₂ is detected in the gas phase, while it is not detected in the hydrate phase. According to Mao *et al.* [9] and Mao and Mao [10], H₂ and H₂O mixtures generate the structure-II hydrate at the high-pressure of 200 MPa or the low temperature of about 80 K, where the hydrate cages are multiply occupied with a cluster of two H₂ molecules in the S-cage and four H₂ molecules in the L-cages. The peak corresponding to such H₂ cluster is not detected in the single crystal of gas hydrate prepared from the H₂ + CO₂ mixture in the present study.

The above results reveal that H₂ is not enclathrated in hydrate-cages and behaves only like the diluent gas toward the formation of CO₂ hydrate. At a given temperature, the CO₂ fugacity of gas phase in equilibrium with liquid phase and CO₂ hydrate is calculated from the three-phase coexisting curve of pure CO₂ hydrate. The equilibrium pressure of gas mixture is uniquely obtained at given temperature and mole fraction of gas phase from the above assumption. Therefore, it is possible to estimate the equilibrium pressure - temperature - composition relations by extrapolating the experimental data under the CO₂-fugacity-constant conditions. The estimated equilibrium pressure - temperature projections in this system are shown in Fig. 4. Four curves in Fig. 4 stand for the constant composition of gas phase. The operation temperature of separation process can be estimated under a desired pressure and composition. For example, in order to purify the H₂ + CO₂ mixture into $y_{H_2}=0.90$ or

0.95 at 40 MPa, the operation temperature of separation process is about 275 K or 281 K, respectively.

4. Conclusions

Phase equilibrium relations for the ternary system of $H_2 + CO_2 + H_2O$ in the presence of hydrate phase have been investigated. The gas hydrate prepared from the $H_2 + CO_2$ mixture has been analyzed by use of Raman spectroscopy. The results reveal that H_2 is not enclathrated in the hydrate-cages. That is, H_2 behaves only like a diluent gas toward the formation of CO_2 hydrate. It is possible to estimate the three-phase equilibrium relations (pressure - temperature - composition) of gas hydrate prepared from the H_2 mixtures.

Nomenclatures

f: fugacity (Pa)

k: binary parameter for Soave-Redlich-Kwong equation of state

p: pressure (Pa)

T: temperature (K)

y: composition of gas phase

Acknowledgements

One of the authors (T. S.) expresses his special thanks for the center of excellence (21COE) program "Creation of Integrated EcoChemistry of Osaka University". The authors are grateful to the Division of Chemical Engineering, Graduate School of

Engineering Science, Osaka University for the scientific support by "Gas-Hydrate Analyzing System (GHAS)".

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Figure captions

Fig. 1 Schematic diagram of experimental apparatus for the phase equilibrium measurement

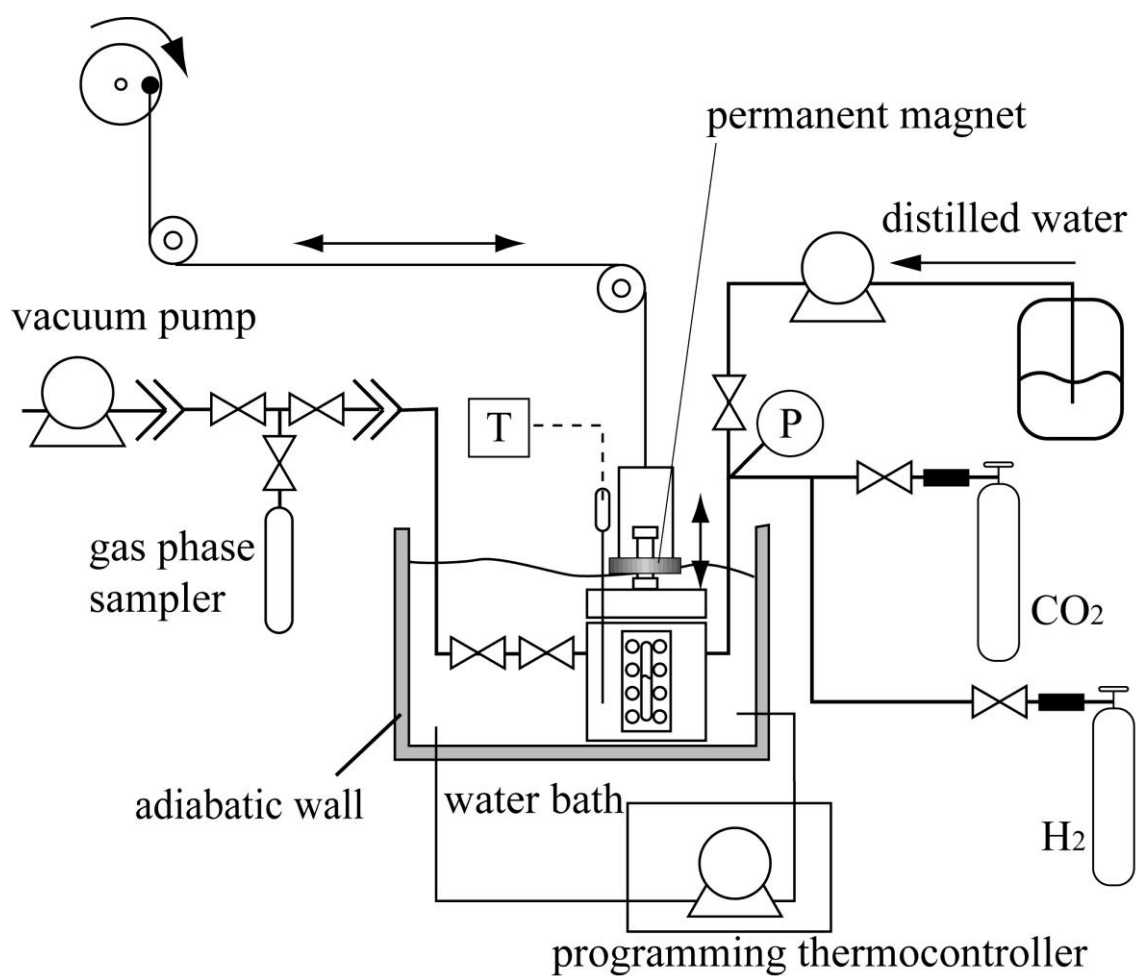
Fig. 2 Isothermal phase equilibrium (pressure - composition) relations for the $\text{H}_2 + \text{CO}_2 + \text{H}_2\text{O}$ system in the presence of gas hydrate phase

Fig. 3 Raman spectra of the intramolecular vibration for H_2 (a) and CO_2 (b) molecules in the gas and hydrate phases. Raman peaks from 4120 to 4150 cm^{-1} are due to the sapphire window of the high-pressure optical cell.

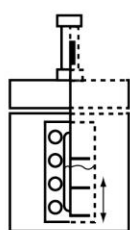
Fig. 4 Pressure - temperature projection estimated by Soave - Redlich - Kwong equation for the $\text{H}_2 + \text{CO}_2 + \text{H}_2\text{O}$ system in the presence of gas hydrate phase

Table 1 Isothermal phase equilibrium data for the H₂ + CO₂ +H₂O system in the presence of gas hydrate phase

	y_{H_2}	p / MPa		y_{H_2}	p / MPa
$T=274.3 \text{ K}$	0.000	1.42	$T=276.5 \text{ K}$	0.693	7.15
	0.140	1.75		0.704	7.46
	0.282	2.23		0.715	7.90
	0.352	2.42			
	0.568	3.58	$T=280.1 \text{ K}$	0.000	2.86
	0.697	5.49		0.061	3.06
	0.734	6.16		0.084	3.21
	0.805	8.89		0.173	3.71
				0.345	4.98
$T=276.5 \text{ K}$	0.000	1.81		0.405	5.35
	0.086	1.99		0.407	5.46
	0.190	2.49		0.435	5.67
	0.329	2.96		0.456	5.97
	0.455	3.46		0.508	6.51
	0.481	3.73		0.549	7.70
	0.497	3.93		0.577	8.69
	0.502	4.01		0.609	9.13
	0.530	4.10			
	0.551	4.48	$T=281.9 \text{ K}$	0.000	3.70
	0.566	4.58		0.134	4.50
	0.594	5.23		0.205	5.30
	0.651	6.21		0.340	6.73
	0.664	6.54		0.484	8.71

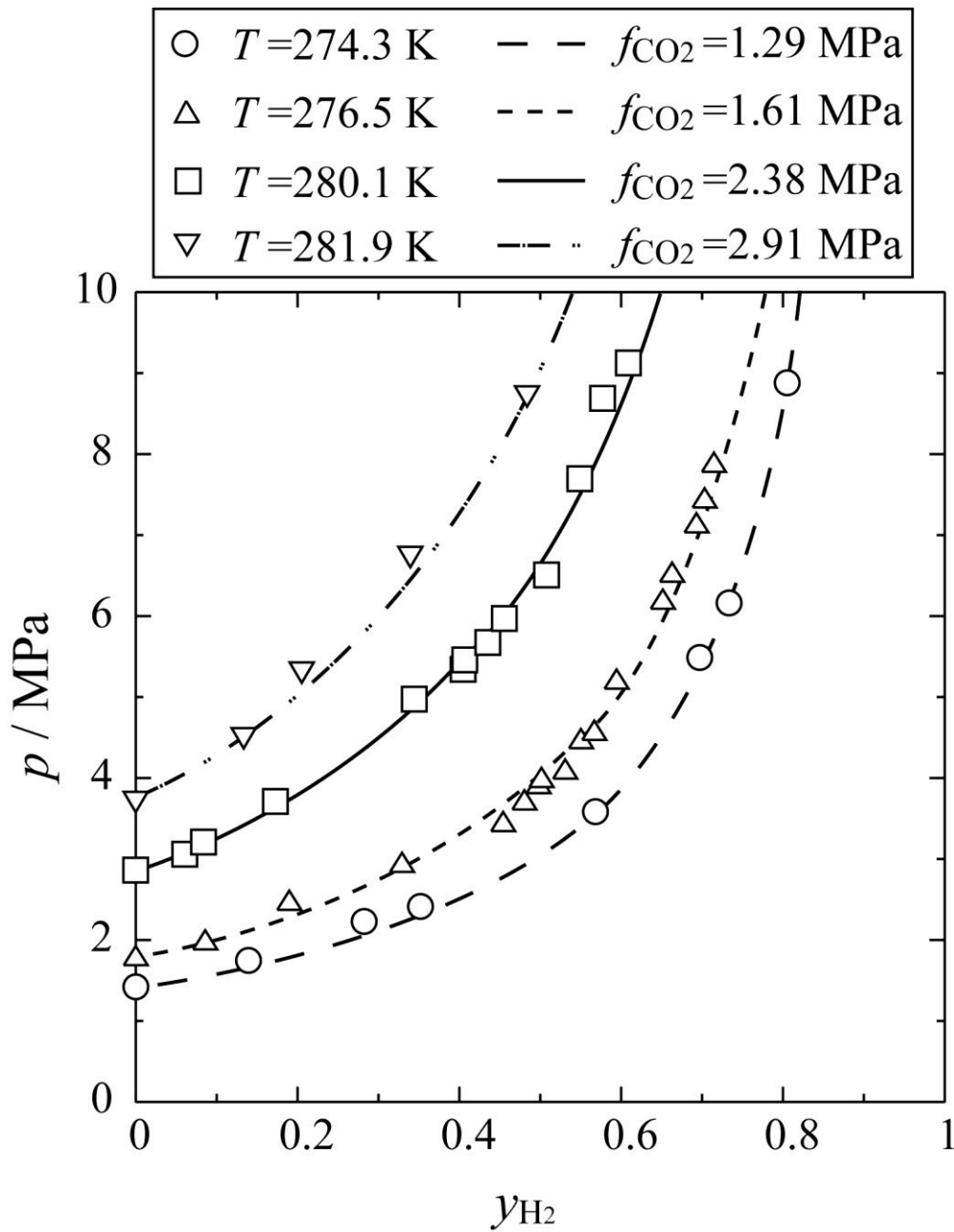


(P) pressure gage (± 10 kPa) [T] thermometer (± 0.02 K)

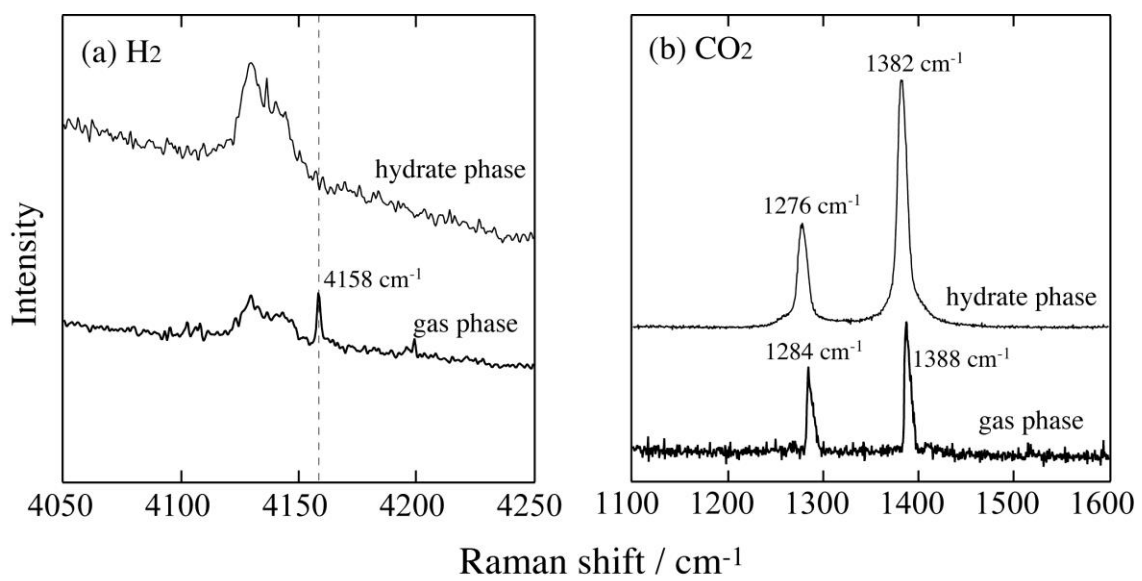


high pressure cell
(inner volume: 150 cm³, maximum pressure 10 MPa)

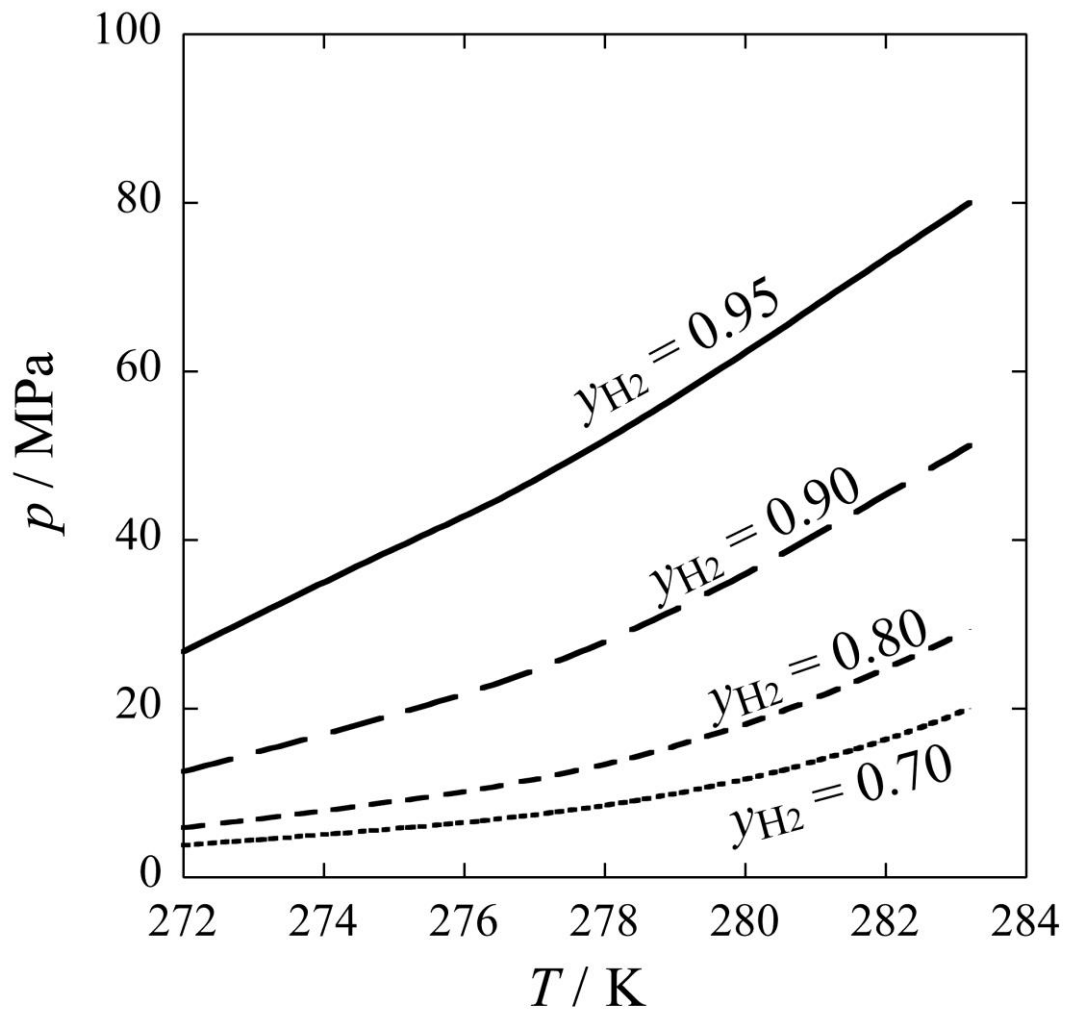
Sugahara *et al.*, Figure 1



Sugahara *et al.*, Figure 2



Sugahara *et al.*, Figure 3



Sugahara *et al.*, Figure 4