

# Mathematical modeling taking into account of intrinsic kinetic properties of cylinder-type vanadium catalyst<sup>①</sup>

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**Abstract:** The method to calculate internal surface effective factor of cylinder-type vanadium catalyst Ls-9 was given. Based on hypothesis of subjunctive one dimension diffusion and combined shape adjustment factor with three-step catalytic mechanism model, the macroscopic kinetic model equation about SO<sub>2</sub> oxidation on Ls-9 was deduced. With fixed bed integral reactor and under the conditions of temperature 350 - 410 °C, space velocity 1 800 - 5 000 h<sup>-1</sup>, SO<sub>2</sub> inlet content 7% - 12%, the macroscopic kinetic data were detected. Through model parameter estimation, the macroscopic kinetic model equation was obtained.

**Key words:** effective factor; internal surface; model; macroscopic kinetics; catalyst

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

In the production of sulfuric acid with contact method, the effect of mass transfer on catalytic SO<sub>2</sub> oxidation is inevitable. Therefore, the effect of mass transfer on intrinsic kinetics needs to be investigated on the base of intrinsic kinetics. Macroscopic kinetics is very important for optimal design and optimal operation of reactor and also very important for preparation and application of vanadium catalyst, for example, selecting carrier and physical structure of diatomaceous earth, using pore maker for controlling porosity and deciding size and shape of catalyst. All of them need to know the physical process related with SO<sub>2</sub> oxidation. SO<sub>2</sub> oxidation on vanadium catalyst involves gas phase, liquid phase and solid phase. In molten salt there are many compounds combined by potassium, sodium, cesium, vanadium and sulphur, and the complex in molten salt varies with components in catalyst, temperature and reactants. Thus, it is very difficult to find out a universal mechanism model. Perhaps it is the main reason that different researchers put forward different macroscopic kinetic models<sup>[1-10]</sup>.

In the previous investigations<sup>[11-14]</sup>, carbonized mother liquor, ultrasonic and plasma were used to prepare catalyst Ls-9, whose activity at 410 °C reaches 54.7%. The alkali metals in carbonized mother liquor can reduce greatly the molten point of catalyst. Ultrasonic can modify the distribution of active com-

ponents, enlarge the specific surface area and increase the concentration of crystal defect. Plasma can reduce apparently the active temperature of catalyst and shorten the active time. To lay the application foundation of Ls-9, based on analyzing the mechanism of SO<sub>2</sub> oxidation and considering internal diffusion, the mathematical model taking into account of intrinsic kinetic properties was deduced.

## 2 MATHEMATICAL MODEL OF MACROSCOPIC KINETICS

### 2.1 Numerical analysis of internal surface effective factor

The internal surface effective factor can be expressed with the ratio of diffusion rate of reactant on external surface to intrinsic reaction rate calculated with reactant concentration on external surface of catalyst. For column-type vanadium catalyst Ls-9 (Fig. 1), the diffusion rate of O<sub>2</sub> on external surface is the actual reaction rate in catalyst and it can be expressed as:

$$N_{O_2, s} = 2\pi R_p L_p D_{\text{eff}, O_2} \left( \frac{\partial C_{O_2}}{\partial R} \right)_{R=R_p} + \pi R_p^2 D_{\text{eff}, O_2} \left( \frac{\partial C_{O_2}}{\partial L} \right)_{L=L_p} \quad (1)$$

Then, the numerical solution of internal surface effective factor can be expressed as:

$$\zeta =$$

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$$\begin{aligned}
 & \frac{2\pi R_p L_p D_{\text{eff}, O_2} \left[ \frac{\partial C_{O_2}}{\partial R} \right]_{R=R_p} + \pi R_p^2 D_{\text{eff}, O_2} \left( \frac{\partial C_{O_2}}{\partial L} \right)_{L=\frac{L_p}{2}}}{\pi R_p^2 L_p \frac{\rho_b}{1-\epsilon} [\hat{r}(C_{O_2})]_{R=R_p}} \\
 &= \frac{2\pi R_p L_p D_{\text{eff}, O_2} \frac{1-p}{R_p R_g T} \left( \frac{\partial y_{O_2}}{\partial X} \right)_{X=1}}{\pi R_p^2 L_p \frac{\rho_b}{1-\epsilon} [\hat{r}(C_{O_2})]_{X=1}} + \\
 & \frac{\pi R_p^2 D_{\text{eff}, O_2} \frac{1-p}{R_p R_g T} \left( \frac{\partial y_{O_2}}{\partial Z} \right)_{Z=\frac{L_p}{2R_p}}}{\pi R_p^2 L_p \frac{\rho_b}{1-\epsilon} [\hat{r}(C_{O_2})]_{X=1}} \\
 &= \frac{\left( \frac{\partial y_{O_2}}{\partial X} \right)_{X=1} + \frac{R_p}{2L_p} \left( \frac{\partial y_{O_2}}{\partial Z} \right)_{Z=\frac{L_p}{2R_p}}}{2\phi_{O_2}^2 [\hat{r}(C_{O_2})]_{X=1}} \quad (2)
 \end{aligned}$$

**2.2 Mathematical deduction of macroscopic kinetic equation**

To obtain the numerical solution of internal surface effective factor of column-type vanadium catalyst Ls-9, Eqn. (2) needs to be simplified. For Ls-9, reaction gases diffuse along end face and sides. If catalyst is simplified as side-closed cylinder, the diffusion of reactant along sides can be neglected and only the diffusion along central axis is taken into account. For flaked differential element shown in Fig. 1, the material balance for O<sub>2</sub> can be carried out.

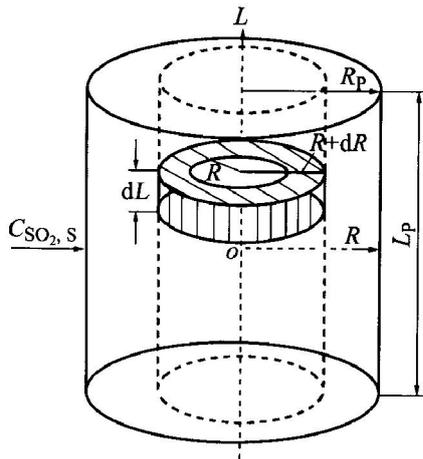


Fig. 1 Sketch of SO<sub>2</sub> diffusion in Ls-9

$$\frac{d^2 C_{O_2}}{dL^2} = \frac{\rho_b}{D_{\text{eff}, O_2} (1-\epsilon)} \hat{r}(C_{O_2}) \quad (3)$$

Defining  $N = \frac{dC_{O_2}}{dL}$ , then

$$\frac{d^2 C_{O_2}}{dL^2} = \frac{d}{dL} \left[ \frac{dC_{O_2}}{dL} \right] = \frac{dC_{O_2}}{dL} \cdot \frac{d}{dC_{O_2}} \left[ \frac{dC_{O_2}}{dL} \right] =$$

$$N \frac{dN}{dC_{O_2}} = \frac{\rho_b}{D_{\text{eff}, O_2} (1-\epsilon)} \hat{r}(C_{O_2})$$

$$N dN = \frac{\rho_b}{D_{\text{eff}, O_2} (1-\epsilon)} \hat{r}(C_{O_2}) dC_{O_2} \quad (4)$$

Its boundary conditions are

$$L = 0, C_{O_2} = C_{O_2, 0}, N = \left( \frac{dC_{O_2}}{dL} \right)_{L=0} = 0;$$

$$L = \frac{L_p}{2}, C_{O_2} = C_{O_2, s}, N = \left( \frac{dC_{O_2}}{dL} \right)_{L=\frac{L_p}{2}} = N_s$$

Integrating Eqn. (4), then

$$\begin{aligned}
 \int_0^s N dN &= \int_{C_{O_2, 0}}^{C_{O_2, s}} \frac{\rho_b}{D_{\text{eff}, O_2} (1-\epsilon)} \hat{r}(C_{O_2}) dC_{O_2} \\
 \frac{1}{2} N_s^2 &= \frac{\rho_b}{D_{\text{eff}, O_2} (1-\epsilon)} \left[ \int_0^{C_{O_2, s}} \hat{r}(C_{O_2}) dC_{O_2} - \int_0^{C_{O_2, 0}} \hat{r}(C_{O_2}) dC_{O_2} \right] \quad (5)
 \end{aligned}$$

Because SO<sub>2</sub> oxidation is a rapid reaction under operation conditions and the reaction at central part of catalyst mostly reach equilibrium. Thus,

$$\int_0^{C_{O_2, 0}} \hat{r}(C_{O_2}) dC_{O_2} = 0$$

and then Eqn. (5) can be transferred into:

$$\begin{aligned}
 N_s &= \left[ \frac{dC_{O_2}}{dL} \right]_{L=\frac{L_p}{2}} = \sqrt{\frac{2\rho_b}{D_{\text{eff}, O_2} (1-\epsilon)}} \cdot \\
 & \left[ \int_0^{C_{O_2, s}} \hat{r}(C_{O_2}) dC_{O_2} \right]^{1/2} \quad (6)
 \end{aligned}$$

When O<sub>2</sub> is regarded as key component, the internal surface effective factor can be expressed as

$$\begin{aligned}
 \zeta &= \frac{2\pi R_p L_p D_{\text{eff}, O_2} \left[ \frac{dC_{O_2}}{dL} \right]_{L=\frac{L_p}{2}}}{\pi R_p^2 L_p \frac{\rho_b}{1-\epsilon} [\hat{r}(C_{O_2})]_{L=\frac{L_p}{2}}} = \\
 & \frac{2D_{\text{eff}, O_2} \sqrt{\frac{2\rho_b}{D_{\text{eff}, O_2} (1-\epsilon)} \left[ \int_0^{C_{O_2, s}} \hat{r}(C_{O_2}) dC_{O_2} \right]^{1/2}}}{R_p \frac{\rho_b}{1-\epsilon} \hat{r}(C_{O_2, s})} = \\
 & \frac{2 \left( \int_0^{C_{O_2, s}} \hat{r}(C_{O_2}) dC_{O_2} \right)^{1/2}}{R_p \sqrt{\frac{\rho_b}{2D_{\text{eff}, O_2} (1-\epsilon)} \hat{r}(C_{O_2, s})}} \quad (7)
 \end{aligned}$$

Let

$$M = \frac{2}{R_p \sqrt{\frac{\rho_b}{2D_{\text{eff}, O_2} (1-\epsilon)}}}$$

then

$$\begin{aligned}
 \zeta &= M \frac{\left( \int_0^{C_{O_2, s}} \hat{r}(C_{O_2}) dC_{O_2} \right)^{1/2}}{\hat{r}(C_{O_2, s})} \\
 r_{SO_2} &= \zeta \cdot \hat{r}(C_{O_2, s}) = M \left( \int_0^{C_{O_2, s}} \hat{r}(C_{O_2}) dC_{O_2} \right)^{1/2} \quad (8)
 \end{aligned}$$

The oxidation of SO<sub>2</sub> on Ls-9 is a three-step reaction and its intrinsic mechanism model equation has been obtained in the previous research<sup>[13]</sup>.

$$r_{SO_2} = \frac{K_1 p_{O_2}^{1/2}}{K_2 + K_2 p_{SO_3} + p_{SO_3} / p_{SO_2}} (1-\beta) \quad (9)$$

Because of the low pressure and high temperature in reaction system, it is suitable to assume that gases components fix with ideal gas condition equation,  $p_{O_2} = C_{O_2}RT$ . Then,

$$r_{SO_2} = M \left[ \int_{O_2, S} \frac{K_1 p_{O_2}^{1/2}}{K_2 + K_3 p_{SO_3} + p_{SO_3}/p_{SO_2}} \cdot \left( 1 - \frac{p_{SO_3}}{K_p p_{SO_2} p_{O_2}^{1/2}} \right) dC_{O_2} \right]^{1/2} = M \left[ \int_{O_2, S} \frac{K_1}{K_2 + K_3 p_{SO_3} + p_{SO_3}/p_{SO_2}} \cdot \left( \sqrt{RT} C_{O_2}^{1/2} - \frac{p_{SO_3}}{K_p p_{SO_2}} \right) dC_{O_2} \right]^{1/2} \quad (10)$$

For  $SO_2$  and  $SO_3$ , the inner diffusion resistance can be neglected and the concentration of  $SO_2$  and  $SO_3$  in tiny pores of catalyst particles approximately is equal to that of outer surface. Thus,  $p_{SO_2} \approx p_{SO_2, S}$ ,  $p_{SO_3} \approx p_{SO_3, S}$ .

$$r_{SO_2} = M \left[ \int_{O_2, S} \frac{K_1}{K_2 + K_3 p_{SO_3, S} + p_{SO_3, S}/p_{SO_2, S}} \cdot \left( \sqrt{RT} C_{O_2}^{1/2} - \frac{p_{SO_3, S}}{K_p p_{SO_2, S}} \right) dC_{O_2} \right]^{1/2} = \frac{2}{R_p \sqrt{\frac{\theta_b}{2D_{eff, O_2}(1-\epsilon)} \frac{1}{RT}}} \cdot \frac{K_1 p_{O_2, S}^{3/2}}{K_2 + K_3 p_{SO_3, S} + p_{SO_3, S}/p_{SO_2, S}} \left( \frac{2}{3} - \beta \right)^{1/2} \quad (11)$$

In view of diffusion of  $O_2$  and  $SO_2$  along sides of cylinder-type catalyst and the ratio of side area to end face area  $L_p/2R_p$ , the actual reaction rate can be expressed as:

$$r_{SO_2} = \left( 1 + \frac{\phi L_p}{2R_p} \right) \frac{2}{R_p \sqrt{\frac{\theta_b}{2D_{eff, O_2}(1-\epsilon)} \frac{1}{RT}}} \cdot \frac{K_1 p_{O_2, S}^{3/2}}{K_2 + K_3 p_{SO_3, S} + p_{SO_3, S}/p_{SO_2, S}} \left( \frac{2}{3} - \beta \right)^{1/2} \quad (12)$$

where  $\phi$  is shape adjustment factor. Actually,  $\phi \approx 1$ . Generally, the external diffusion resistance can be neglected and the concentration of  $SO_2$  and  $SO_3$  on outer surface of catalyst approximately is equal to that of gas phase bulk. Let

$$k = \left( 1 + \frac{\phi L_p}{2R_p} \right) \frac{2}{R_p \sqrt{\frac{\theta_b}{2D_{eff, O_2}(1-\epsilon)} \frac{1}{RT}}}$$

and then,

$$r_{SO_2} = k p_{O_2} \frac{K_1 p_{O_2}^{1/2}}{K_2 + K_3 p_{SO_3} + p_{SO_3}/p_{SO_2}} \left( \frac{2}{3} - \beta \right)^{1/2} \quad (13)$$

### 3 EXPERIMENTAL

An integral reactor was used to measure the macroscopic kinetic data. Its inner diameter is 32 mm and a thermocouple was inserted at inlet side 5 mm away from catalyst bed. In reactor, catalyst Ls-9, whose particle size is  $d_5 \text{ mm} \times 10 \text{ mm}$  and the stacking density is  $480 \text{ kg/m}^3$ , was installed as much as 30 mL.  $SO_2$  and air were dried with molecule sieve and active carbon respectively. After measured by rotary flowmeters, mixed and dried deeply in molecule sieve drying bottle, the mixed gas was finally fed into integral reactor. After reaction, the mixed gas was washed by concentrated sulfuric acid in gas washing bottle in order to doff  $SO_3$  and moisture. Iodometry was used to analyze  $SO_2$  concentration. After absorbed with NaOH solution, the remained gas was let out.

The effect of external diffusion was detected by changing space velocity. Under the same temperature and initial constitute, when the reaction rate of  $SO_2$  varies no longer with the change of space velocity, the effect of external diffusion has been eliminated. In the experiment, the reaction rates of  $SO_2$  at space velocities 1 800, 3 600, 5 000 and 7 000  $\text{h}^{-1}$  were measured and the results are shown in Fig. 2. It can be concluded that under the given conditions, when the space velocity is larger than 1 800  $\text{h}^{-1}$ , the effect of external diffusion has been eliminated.

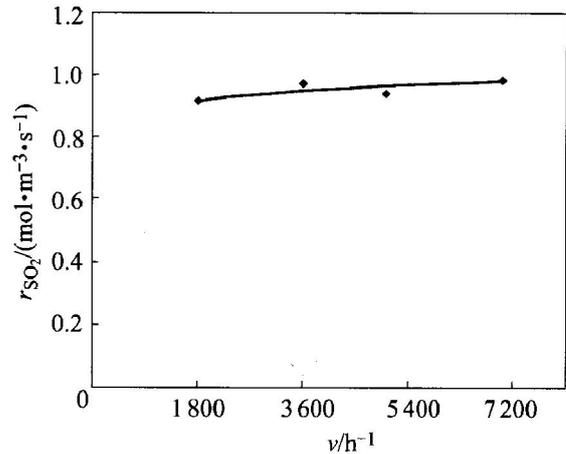


Fig. 2 Effect of space velocity on reaction rate (Innet gas  $SO_2$  10%, reaction temperature 410 °C)

The orthogonal design was adopted to decide the experiment conditions. For the experiment, temperature,  $SO_2$  concentration and space velocity are the main affecting factors. Then, temperature 4 levels, 350, 370, 390 and 410 °C,  $SO_2$  concentration in material gas 3 levels, 7%, 9% and 11%, and space velocity 3 levels, 1 800, 3 600 and 5 000  $\text{h}^{-1}$  were chosen. The macroscopic kinetic experimental data are shown in Table 1.

## 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSS

### 4.1 Data treatment and parameter estimation

**Table 1** Macroscopic kinetic experimental data

No.	$T/K$	$v/h^{-1}$	$y_{SO_2}/\%$	$y_{O_2}/\%$	$x/\%$	$r_{SO_2}/(\text{mol}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}\cdot\text{s}^{-1})$	$k/(\text{mol}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}\cdot\text{Pa}^{-1})$
1	623	1800	7.03	19.5	8.07	0.145	0.215
2	623	1800	9.02	19.1	7.86	0.158	0.332
3	623	1800	11.1	18.7	5.03	0.166	0.201
4	623	3600	7.03	19.5	3.83	0.107	0.227
5	623	3600	9.02	19.1	4.18	0.122	0.107
6	623	3600	11.1	18.7	4.36	0.114	0.279
7	623	5000	7.03	19.5	2.87	0.097	0.386
8	623	5000	9.02	19.1	3.32	0.112	0.257
9	623	5000	11.1	18.7	3.18	0.099	0.413
10	643	1800	7.03	19.5	19.8	0.376	0.688
11	643	1800	9.02	19.1	20.8	0.368	0.470
12	643	1800	11.1	18.7	20.3	0.610	0.896
13	643	3600	7.03	19.5	10.5	0.176	0.537
14	643	3600	9.02	19.1	11.7	0.330	0.790
15	643	3600	11.1	18.7	10.4	0.319	0.480
16	643	5000	7.03	19.5	9.10	0.121	0.707
17	643	5000	9.02	19.1	9.35	0.314	0.552
18	643	5000	11.1	18.7	8.74	0.237	0.326
19	663	1800	7.03	19.5	52.3	0.909	0.959
20	663	1800	9.02	19.1	54.3	1.180	1.330
21	663	1800	11.1	18.7	53.8	1.450	0.729
22	663	3600	7.03	19.5	26.2	0.850	0.753
23	663	3600	9.02	19.1	27.7	0.988	0.870
24	663	3600	11.1	18.7	28.3	0.943	1.020
25	663	5000	7.03	19.5	20.5	0.568	0.957
26	663	5000	9.02	19.1	21.8	0.757	0.934
27	663	5000	11.1	18.7	23.1	0.800	0.700
28	683	1800	7.03	19.5	75.3	0.991	1.760
29	683	1800	9.02	19.1	78.3	0.827	1.950
30	683	1800	11.1	18.7	76.5	1.250	1.700
31	683	3600	7.03	19.5	48.9	0.578	2.030
32	683	3600	9.02	19.1	53.9	1.030	1.340
33	683	3600	11.1	18.7	51.6	1.070	1.710
34	683	5000	7.03	19.5	44.0	0.962	2.060
35	683	5000	9.02	19.1	46.1	1.090	2.170
36	683	5000	11.1	18.7	45.4	1.010	1.930

The reaction rate of SO<sub>2</sub> can be expressed as:

$$\hat{r}_{SO_2} = \frac{C_{SO_2,0} dx_{SO_2}}{d \left[ \frac{V}{v_0} \right]} = \frac{dx_{SO_2}}{d\tau} C_{SO_2,0} \quad (14)$$

The actual value of reaction rate  $\hat{r}_{SO_2}$  and  $k$  are shown in Table 1. Fig. 3 shows the relation of  $\ln k$  with  $1/T$ . It is found that the tendency of  $\ln k - 1/T$  is accordance with Arrhenius relation. Because  $R_p$ ,  $L_p$ ,  $\rho_b$ ,  $\epsilon$  and  $R$  can be regarded as constant,  $\phi$  is in relation to radial diffusion of SO<sub>2</sub> and approximately equal to 1, and  $D_{eff, O_2}$  is in relation to temperature and components,  $k$  varies with the change of temperature and components and then it is probably the main reason that the relation of  $k$  and  $T$  deviates Arrhenius relation. If the change of  $D_{eff, O_2}$  with gas components is neglected,  $E_a$  and  $k_0$  can be calculated according to Arrhenius formula:  $E_a = 118\,176$  J/mol,  $k_0 = 3.56 \times 10^8$  kmol/(m<sup>3</sup>·s·Pa). Finally, the macroscopic kinetic equation about SO<sub>2</sub> oxidation on Ls-9 can be obtained:

$$r_{SO_2} = 3.56 \times 10^8 e^{-\frac{118176}{RT}} p_{O_2} \cdot \frac{K_1 p_{O_2}^{1/2}}{K_2 + K_3 p_{SO_3} + p_{SO_3} / p_{SO_2}} \left( \frac{2}{3} - \beta \right)^{1/2} \quad (15)$$

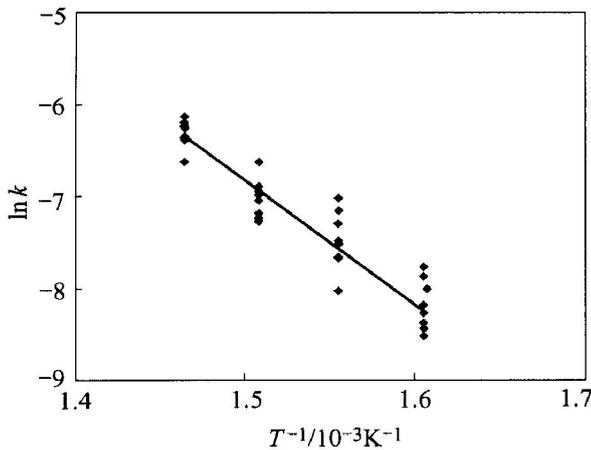


Fig. 3 Relation of  $\ln k$  and  $1/T$

#### 4.2 Error analyses

According to the known characteristics of Ls-9, such as radius  $R_p = 25$  mm,  $L_p = 0.01$  m,  $\phi \approx 1$ , stacking density  $\rho_b = 585$  kg/m<sup>3</sup>, porosity  $\theta = 0.639$ , tiny pores average radius  $r = 4.1 \times 10^{-7}$  m, tortuosity  $\delta = 4.7$ , bed void volume  $\epsilon = 0.4$ ,  $k_c$  can be calculated according to Eqn. (13). Then the reaction rate  $r_{CO_2}$  can be calculated according to Eqn. (15). Fig. 4 shows the relative error  $S_i$  between the actual reaction rate  $\hat{r}_{SO_2}$  and the calculated reaction rate  $r_{SO_2}$ . The relative errors distribute uniformly in the vicinity of  $S_i = 0$  and it shows that the macroscopic kinetic model equation fits in with experimental results well.

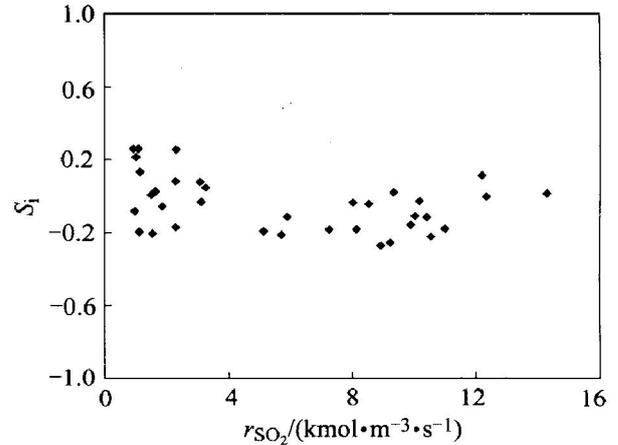


Fig. 4 Error distribution

### 5 CONCLUSIONS

1) The numerical solution of internal surface effective factor for cylinder-type catalyst Ls-9 was given:

$$\zeta = \frac{\left( \frac{\partial y_{O_2}}{\partial X} \right)_{x=1} + \frac{R_p}{2L_p} \left( \frac{\partial y_{O_2}}{\partial Z} \right)_{Z=\frac{L_p}{2R_p}}}{2\phi_{O_2}^2 [\hat{r}(C_{O_2})]_{x=1}}$$

2) Based on the hypothesis of subjunctive one dimension diffusion of reactant in cylinder-type catalyst and combined shape adjustment factor with three-step catalytic mechanism model, the macroscopic kinetic model equation about SO<sub>2</sub> oxidation on Ls-9 was obtained as:

$$r_{SO_2} = \left( 1 + \frac{\phi L_p}{2R_p} \right) \frac{2}{R_p \sqrt{\frac{\rho_b}{2D_{eff, O_2} (1 - \epsilon) RT}}} \cdot \frac{K_1 p_{O_2}^{3/2}}{K_2 + K_3 p_{SO_3} + p_{SO_3} / p_{SO_2}} \left( \frac{2}{3} - \beta \right)^{1/2}$$

3) The macroscopic kinetic data about SO<sub>2</sub> oxidation on Ls-9 were detected with fixed bed integral reactor under the condition of 350 - 410 °C, space velocity 1 800 - 5 000 h<sup>-1</sup> and inlet concentration of SO<sub>2</sub> 7% - 12%. Model parameters were estimated and then simple formula of macroscopic kinetic equation was obtained:

$$r_{SO_2} = 3.56 \times 10^8 e^{-\frac{118176}{RT}} p_{O_2} \cdot \frac{K_1 p_{O_2}^{1/2}}{K_2 + K_3 p_{SO_3} + p_{SO_3} / p_{SO_2}} \left( \frac{2}{3} - \beta \right)^{1/2}$$

4) The macroscopic kinetic model equation fits the experiment data well.

#### Nomenclature

- $C_{O_2}$  — O<sub>2</sub> concentration, kmol·m<sup>-3</sup>;
- $C_{O_2,0}$  — O<sub>2</sub> concentration in the center of cata-

lyst,  $\text{kmol}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$ ;

$C_{\text{O}_2,\text{s}}$ — $\text{O}_2$  concentration on the surface of catalyst,

lyst,  $\text{kmol}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$ ;

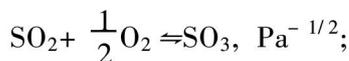
$C_{\text{SO}_2,\text{s}}$ — $\text{SO}_2$  concentration on the surface of catalyst,

lyst,  $\text{kmol}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$ ;

$D_{\text{eff},\text{O}_2}$ —effective diffusion coefficient of  $\text{O}_2$ ,  $\text{m}^2\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$ ;

$K_1, K_2, K_3$ —reaction rate constants;

$K_p$ —chemical equilibrium constant of reaction



$L_p$ —length of catalyst, m;

$N_{\text{O}_2,\text{s}}$ —diffusion rate of  $\text{O}_2$  on the surface of catalyst,

$\text{kmol}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$ ;

$p$ —total pressure of gas, Pa;

$p_{\text{O}_2}, p_{\text{SO}_2}, p_{\text{SO}_3}$ —fractional pressure of  $\text{O}_2, \text{SO}_2$

and  $\text{SO}_3$  respectively, Pa;

$R_g$ —general gas constant,  $\text{J}\cdot\text{kmol}^{-1}\cdot\text{K}^{-1}$ ;

$R_p$ —radius of catalyst, m;

$\hat{\Gamma}(C_{\text{O}_2})$ —calculated reaction rate of  $\text{O}_2$ ,  $\text{kmol}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$ ;

$r_{\text{SO}_2}$ —calculated reaction rate of  $\text{SO}_2$ ,  $\text{kmol}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$ ;

$\hat{\Gamma}_{\text{SO}_2}$ —actual reaction rate of  $\text{SO}_2$ ,  $\text{kmol}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$ ;

$T$ —reaction temperature, K;

$V$ —volume of reactor,  $\text{m}^3$ ;

$v_0$ — $\text{SO}_2$  flux at the inlet of reactor,  $\text{m}^3\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$ ;

$x$ —conversion of  $\text{SO}_2$ , %;

$X$ —dimensionless radius of catalyst,  $X = R/R_p$ ;

$y_{\text{O}_2}, y_{\text{SO}_2}, y_{\text{SO}_3}$ —mole fraction of  $\text{O}_2, \text{SO}_2$  and

$\text{SO}_3$  respectively, %;

$Z$ —dimensionless length of catalyst,  $Z = L/R_p$ ;

$\zeta$ —internal surface effective factor;

$\rho_b$ —bulk density of catalyst,  $\text{m}^3\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ ;

$\varepsilon$ —void volume, %;

$\phi_{\text{O}_2}$ —thiele module,

$$\phi_{\text{O}_2} = \frac{V_p}{S_p} \sqrt{\frac{R_g T}{P} \frac{\rho_b}{D_{\text{eff},\text{O}_2}(1-\varepsilon)}} = \frac{R_p}{2} \sqrt{\frac{R_g T}{P} \frac{\rho_b}{D_{\text{eff},\text{O}_2}(1-\varepsilon)}}, \text{ dimensionless};$$

$\beta$ —dimensionless,  $\beta = \frac{p_{\text{SO}_3}}{K_p p_{\text{SO}_2} p_{\text{O}_2}^{1/2}}$ ;

$\psi$ —shape adjustment factor, dimensionless;

$v$ —space velocity,  $\text{h}^{-1}$ ;

$\tau$ —space time, h.

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