

Azo-containing pyridine amide ligand. A six-coordinate nickel(II) complex and its one-electron oxidized species: Structure and properties

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 17 February 2010

Received in revised form 18 March 2010

Accepted 23 March 2010

Available online 27 March 2010

Dedicated to Professor Animesh Chakravorty on the occasion of his 75th birthday

Keywords:

Azo group containing pyridine amide ligand

Ni(II) complex

Crystal structure

Redox properties

Electrochemically-generated nickel(III)

EPR spectra

ABSTRACT

A new potentially tridentate ligand HL¹¹ consisting of 2-pyridinecarboxamide unit and azo functionality has been used, in its deprotonated form, to prepare a nickel(II) complex which has been structurally characterized. The ligand L¹¹(–) affords a bis-complex [Ni^{II}(L¹¹)₂] (1). In 1, the two L¹¹(–) ligands bind to the Ni^{II} center in a *mer* configuration. The relative orientations within the pairs of pyridyl-N, deprotonated amido-N, and azo-N atoms are *cis*, *trans*, and *cis*, respectively. The Ni^{II}N₂(pyridyl)N₂(amide)N₂(azo) coordination environment is severely distorted from ideal octahedral geometry. The Ni–N_{am} (am = amide) bond lengths are the shortest and the Ni–N_{azo} bond lengths are the longest. Complex 1 exhibits a quasi-reversible Ni^{III}/Ni^{II} redox process. Moreover, the complex displays two ligand-centered (azo group) quasi-reversible redox processes. Spectroscopic (absorption and EPR) properties have been studied on coulometrically-generated nickel(III) species. To understand the nature of metal–ligand bonding interactions Density Functional Theory (DFT) calculations have been performed on 1 at the B3LYP level of theory. Calculations have also been done for closely related nickel(II) complexes of deprotonated pyridine amide ligands and comparative discussion has been made using observed results.

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1. Introduction

Amide bonds are ubiquitous in biochemistry, because they provide the linkages that held together two of the most important types of biopolymers, nucleic acids and proteins. The interest in the study of amide complexes [1] derives from their ability to model active sites present in some metallo-proteins [2], to act as effective catalysts for important organic transformations [1,3], and the search for a better understanding of the physicochemical properties of such complexes, especially to modulate the structural, stereochemical, and electronic properties of transition metal centers [1,4–10]. From this perspective, the ligand systems based upon 2-pyridinecarboxamide [1,4–7] and 2,6-pyridinecarboxamide [1,8–10] are noteworthy. Using electronically/sterically demanding pyridine/pyrazine amide ligands HL¹–H₂L¹⁰ (Fig. 1), in their deprotonated form, we have developed interesting coordination chemistry of a variety of transition metal ions to demonstrate noteworthy molecular structural, electronic structural, and redox properties [4,8].

In pursuit of designing new pyridine amide ligands that will incorporate azo functionality (well known group as π -acceptors

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[11,12] to stabilize low oxidation state of metal ions) in this work we have directed our attention to a new ligand HL¹¹. In order to evaluate the ability of this new potentially tridentate 2-pyridinecarboxamide ligand, appended with azo functionality, to modulate the structural and electronic properties of transition metal ions, we have chosen nickel(II) as a test case. To reveal the stereochemical changes around the nickel(II) center caused by ligand-structure modification of deprotonated pyridine/pyrazine amide ligands upon changing from L⁴(2–) [8c]/L⁵(2–) [6o]/L⁹(2–) [6n]/L^{9'}(2–) [4d] to L¹¹(–) (Fig. 1), we have determined the crystal structure of the new complex [Ni^{II}(L¹¹)₂] (1), revealing Ni^{II}(N_{pyridine})₂(N_{amide})₂(N_{azo})₂ coordination environment. Room-temperature magnetic and spectroscopic properties of 1 have also been investigated. Given the strong σ -donating properties of amide ligands [1,13] and encouraged by our previous experience [4c,8c] of generating/isolating nickel(III) and nickel(IV) complexes [14] we wished to investigate whether or not for the present complex such a possibility exists. Cyclic voltammetric experiments reveal that stabilization of nickel(III) state could be achieved with new deprotonated ligand L¹¹(–). We report the characterization of coulometrically-generated one-electron oxidized form of 1 and confirm that the oxidation process is metal-centered (EPR spectra). Moreover, as it has been demonstrated that pyridine amide ligands

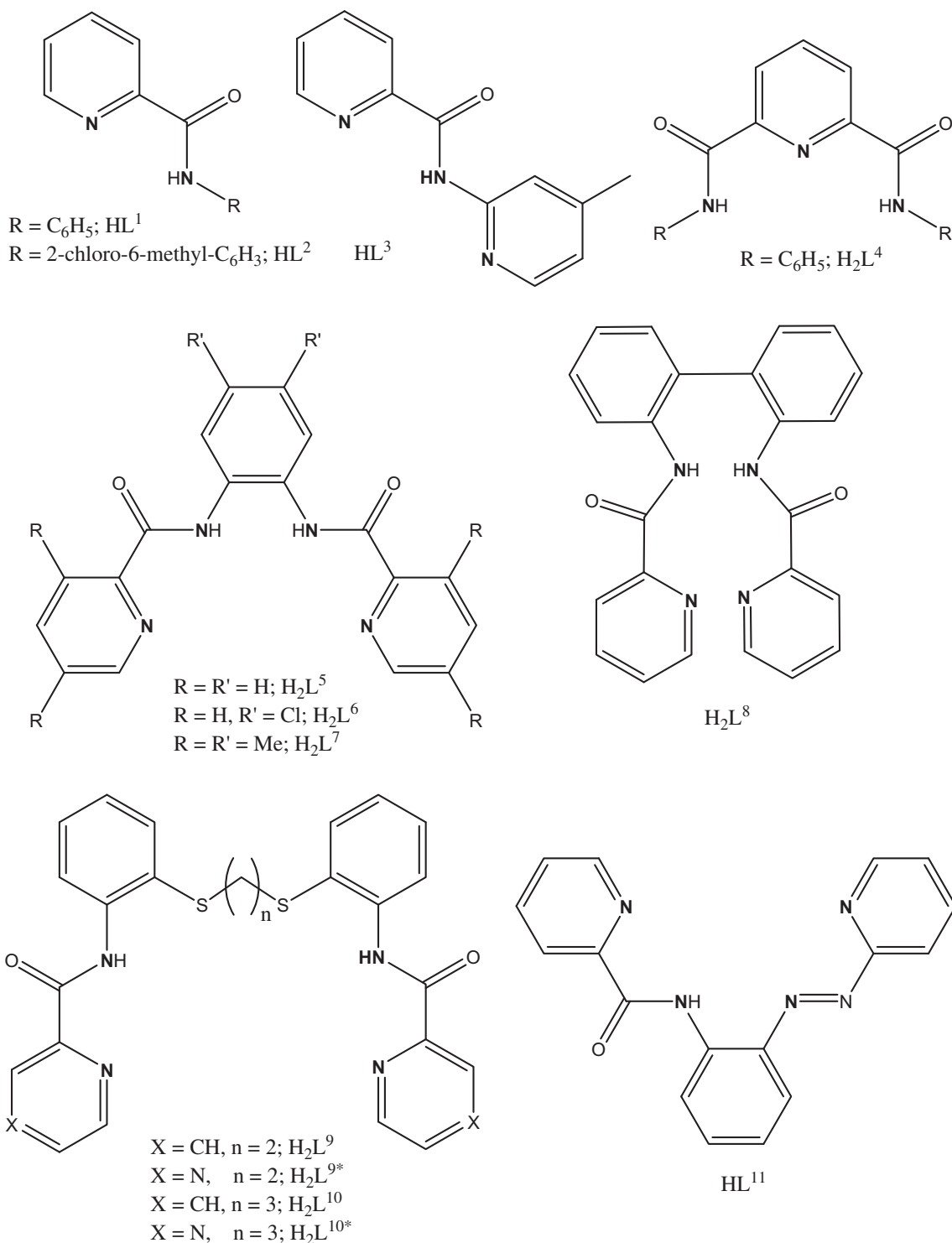


Fig. 1. The ligands of our concern.

are non-innocent [4e,6b,7,8a,15] we have investigated the nature of metal–ligand bonding interactions in **1** and two reported six-coordinate nickel(II) complexes with $Ni^{II}(N_{\text{pyridine}})_2(N_{\text{amide}})_4$ [**8c**] and $Ni^{II}(N_{\text{pyridine}})_2(N_{\text{amide}})_2(S_{\text{thioether}})_2$ [**4d**] coordination sphere. This analysis has given us an opportunity to rationalize the trend in $E_{1/2}$ values of the Ni^{III}/Ni^{II} redox process for the chosen group of complexes.

2. Experimental

2.1. Materials

All reagents were obtained from commercial sources and used as received. Solvents were dried and purified according to reported procedures [4,8]. Tetra-*n*-butylammonium perchlorate (TBAP) was

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