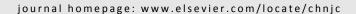
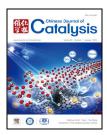


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### Article

# Growth of Cu/SSZ-13 on SiC for selective catalytic reduction of NO with NH<sub>3</sub>

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#### ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received 7 March 2017
Accepted 15 May 2017
Published 5 January 2018

Keywords:
Zeolite
SSZ-13
Silicon carbide
Selective catalytic reduction by ammonia

#### ABSTRACT

Silicon carbide (SiC) was used as a support for SSZ-13 zeolite in an attempt to improve the high-temperature stability and activity of Cu/SSZ-13 in the selective catalytic reduction (SCR) of NO with NH $_3$ . SSZ-13 was grown via a hydrothermal method using the silicon and silica contained in SiC as the source of silicon, which led to the formation of a chemically bonded SSZ-13 layer on SiC. Characterization using X-ray diffraction, scanning electron microscopy, and N $_2$  adsorption-desorption isotherms revealed that the alkali content strongly affected the purity of zeolite and the crystallization time affected the coverage and crystallinity of the zeolite layer. Upon ion exchange, the resulting Cu/SSZ-13@SiC catalyst exhibited enhanced activity in NH $_3$ -SCR in the high-temperature region compared with the unsupported Cu/SSZ-13. Thus, the application temperature was extended with the use of SiC as the support.

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# 1. Introduction

Nitrogen oxides  $(NO_x)$  emitted from vehicles are a major contribution to air pollution because of their toxicity. Selective catalytic reduction (SCR) with  $NH_3$  is regarded as one of the most efficient approaches to remove  $NO_x$ , transforming them into non-toxic  $N_2$  and  $H_2O$ . This approach is widely applied as a denitration (De $NO_x$ ) process [1–3]. Various catalysts have been developed and tested [4–6]. For example, vanadium–tung-sten–titania-based catalysts have been commercially used for more than three decades [7,8]. However, these catalysts fail to

convert  $NO_x$  under lean-burn conditions with high air/fuel ratios

Zeolites have also been widely studied for SCR with NH<sub>3</sub>, including ZSM-5 with the MFI structure, beta zeolite, SAPO-34, and SSZ-13 with the CHA structure [9–11]. The Cu (or Fe) ion-exchanged ZSM-5 exhibited better performance than a commercial vanadia–titania catalyst [12,13]. However, their stability remains an issue because of the sintering of copper species and disruption of zeolitic crystallinity and porosity under harsh reaction conditions [14,15]. In comparison, Cu/Fe ion-exchanged beta catalysts exhibited better durability [1,16]. CHA-

This work was supported by the INCOEmission project coordinated by BASF SE, Germany. Qing Yuan acknowledges the support from the Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities (DC201502080409).

DOI: 10.1016/S1872-2067(17)62870-5 | http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/18722067 | Chin. J. Catal., Vol. 39, No. 1, January 2018

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type zeolite with smaller pores and stronger acidity, especially SSZ-13 zeolite upon exchange with  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$ , has been shown with better NH<sub>3</sub>-SCR activity and selectivity than those of beta catalysts and ZSM-5 as well as higher hydrothermal stability [17–22]. However, these zeolite-based catalysts still undergo deactivation above 550 °C. In real applications, the temperature can reach beyond 800 °C, which frequently degrades the durability of the catalyst. Therefore, it is desirable to develop catalysts which can be applied at a wider temperature window beyond 550 °C or even higher.

Silicon carbide (SiC) is a chemically inert and mechanically stable material with a thermal conductivity that is two orders of magnitude higher than that of SiO2 and three times higher than that of alumina [23-25]. With these interesting properties, we explore the use of SiC as the support for a zeolite-based SCR catalyst in an attempt to strengthen its anti-thermal shock and improve its high-temperature stability. Gu et al. [23] reported that a Mo-ZSM-5/porous SiC catalyst exhibited clearly improved activity in the methane dehydroaromatization reaction. In addition, Elamin and coworkers [24] reported that a SAPO-34/SiC composite with a foam structure exhibited excellent selectivity and stability in methanol dehydration to a dimethyl ether. In this study, we demonstrate that SSZ-13 can be grown directly on the surface of SiC using a hydrothermal method, as confirmed by powder X-raydiffraction (XRD), scanning electron microscopy (SEM), and nitrogen adsorption-desorption results. The use of the SiC support enhances the catalytic activity of Cu/SSZ in the NH3-SCR reaction compared with that of unsupported Cu/SSZ-13.

#### 2. Experimental

### 2.1. Chemicals

NaOH, N,N,N-trimethyl-1-ammonium adamantane (TMAdaOH), Al(OH)<sub>3</sub>, and fine SiO<sub>2</sub> powder were purchased from Sinopharm Chemical Reagent Co., Ltd., InnoCHEM, Tianjin Kemel Chemical Reagent Co., Ltd., and Shenyang Chemical Industry Co., Ltd., respectively. All the chemicals were directly used as received without further purification.

#### 2.2. Preparation

## 2.2.1. Preparation of pure SSZ-13

The pure SSZ-13 was synthesized using a hydrothermal method adapted from that reported by Shishkin et al. [26]. Typically, 4 g  $\rm H_2O$  was added to 3 g NaOH aqueous solution (1 mol/L), followed by the addition of 4 g TMAdaOH. After stirring for 30 min, 0.1 g Al(OH)\_3 and 1.2 g SiO\_2 were added to the mixture. The resulting suspension was then transferred into a 50 mL Teflon-lined stainless-steel autoclave. The autoclave was sealed and maintained at 160 °C for 2 d in a rotary oven (0.7 r/min) and subsequently cooled to room temperature. The resulting white powder was washed with ethanol and deionized water three times, sequentially, using filtration, followed by drying in air at 100 °C overnight. Finally, the powder was calcined for 5 h at 550 °C.

#### 2.2.2. Preparation of SSZ-13@SiC

SiC samples were provided by BASF. The SSZ-13 was grown on SiC using a hydrothermal synthesis method. First, the mother liquor was prepared following the same procedure as that for the unsupported SSZ-13. Then, SiC with dimensions of 0.5 cm  $\times$  0.5 cm  $\times$  1 cm was added into the mother liquor in an autoclave with a capacity of 50 mL. After reaction at 160 °C in a rotary oven (0.7 r/min) for varying periods, the composites were collected and ultrasonically washed with deionized water in a beaker and dried in air at 100 °C overnight. SSZ-13@SiC was finally obtained following calcination for 5 h at 550 °C.

# 2.2.3. Preparation of Cu/SSZ-13@SiC

The SSZ-13@SiC was subjected to ion exchange using 0.5 mol/L  $Cu(NO_3)_2$  aqueous solution at 80 °C for different durations, followed by calcination for 5 h at 550 °C. The resulting catalyst was named Cu(X)/SSZ-13@SiC, where X represents the Cu loading (in mass percentage). For comparison, unsupported Cu/SSZ-13 was also prepared following the same method.

### 2.3. Characterization

Powder XRD was performed on a Panalytical X'Pert Empyrean-100 diffractometer using a Cu  $K_\alpha$  source ( $\lambda$  = 1.5418 Å) at 40 kV and 40 mA. The patterns were recorded in the range of  $2\theta$  = 5°–50° using a step of 0.19°/s. SEM was performed on a FEI Quanta 200 F microscope. The Cu loadings were measured using inductively coupled plasma optical emission spectrometry (ICP-OES; PerkinElmer 7300 DV). N<sub>2</sub> adsorption–desorption isotherms were measured at -196 °C using a Quantachrome QUADRASORB SI system. The specific surface areas of the samples were calculated using the Brunauer-Emmett-Teller (BET) equation.

# 2.4. NH<sub>3</sub>-SCR activity measurements

The catalyst (0.18 g) with a size of 40–60 mesh was loaded into a fixed-bed microreactor made of quartz with an inner diameter of 6 mm. The reaction was performed under the following conditions: 500 ppm NH<sub>3</sub>, 500 ppm NO, 10 vol% O<sub>2</sub>, 5 vol% H<sub>2</sub>O, balance N<sub>2</sub>, 400 mL/min total gas flow, and 80000 h<sup>-1</sup> gas hourly space velocity (GHSV). The concentration of NO in the effluent was analyzed using an ECOTCH ML9841AS analyzer. The NO conversion was calculated using the following equation: NO conversion = ( $C_{\text{NO,in}} - C_{\text{NO,out}}$ )/ $C_{\text{NO,in}} \times 100\%$ .

#### 3. Results and discussion

# 3.1. Structure of SSZ-13@SiC composites

Fig. 1 presents XRD patterns of the SiC support, pure SSZ-13, and SSZ-13@SiC. The XRD pattern for the SiC support (Fig. 1(a)) contains typical diffraction peaks for hexagonal SiC at  $34.1^{\circ}$ ,  $35.6^{\circ}$ ,  $38.1^{\circ}$ , and  $41.4^{\circ}$  corresponding to the (101), (006), (103), and (104) planes (PDF #49-1428), respectively. In addition, the peak at  $21.6^{\circ}$  is attributed to cubic SiO<sub>2</sub> (111) (PDF #27-0605), and those at  $28.4^{\circ}$  and  $47.3^{\circ}$  are indexed as the

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