Report 5

INVESTIGATION OF SULFUR-TOLERANT CATALYSTS FOR SELECTIVE SYNTHESIS OF HYDROCARBON LIQUIDS FROM COAL-DERIVED GASES

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Introduction

Although cobalt and iron-containing catalysts for the Fischer-Tropsch synthesis were developed several decades ago, their selectivity, activity, and stability properties leave much to be desired. Previous investigations were generally conducted on poorly characterized catalysts operating in heat/mass transfer-influenced regimes, and the effects of catalyst properties, promoters, supports, and additives were not well-defined.

Cur work is a systematic investigation of catalyst metal-additive and metal-support interactions and their effects on activity, selectivity, and resistance to sulfur poisoning in Fischer-Tropsch synthesis. This investigation of catalysts for selective synthesis of hydrocarbon liquids began about 3 years ago. The major objectives of the project are three-fold:

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First, to investigate the effects of supports and of sulfur, nitrogen, and boron additives on the activity and selectivity of cobalt and iron catalysts and their sulfur tolerance in CO/E, synthesis.

Second, to correlate these activity/selectivity and sulfur tolerance properties with measureable properties of the active phases such as oxidation state, dispersion, and adsorption capacities.

Third, with this basic understanding, to seek more active, sulfur tolerant iron and cobalt catalysts for selective synthesis of premium hydrocarbon feedstocks.

The work is divided into three tasks. Task 1 is the preparation and characterization of promoted and unpromoted, supported and unsupported cobalt and iron synthesis catalysts. The second is the measurement of synthesis activity/selectivity properties of these catalysts under reaction conditions. The third is measurement of deactivation rates during synthesis in a reaction mixture containing dilute A₂S.

Catalyst Preparation

Figure 1 shows the 28 catalysts to be prepared and characterized.
This experimental grid was designed to systematically investigate effects

of alkali promoters and boron, mitrogen, and sulfur additives and the effects of five support materials, including the novel zeolites ZSM-5 and Silicalite.

The preparation of boride promoted catalysts has been refined in our laboratory, and utilizes the reactions shown in Figure 2. Since much of the borohydride is lost to hydrolysis (top reaction), a fourfold excess of sodium corohydride is used to reduce the metal salts to the dimetal boride (bottom reaction). A subsequent washing of the catalyst to free it of sodium impurities follows.

Catalyst Characterization

Catalyst characterization plans involve a comprehensive, multitool approach to the measurement of basic physical, chemical, and surface properties, and include adsorption measurements, temperature programmed desorption, and analysis by Moessbauer spectroscopy.

As outlined in Figure 3, H₂ and CO chemisorption will be performed on all catalysts to determine active metal surface areas. CO₂ adsorption is used to measure the concentration of alkali promoters on the catalyst surface. C₂ titration gives oxidation states of the metals, and Moessbauer spectroscopy aids in identification of the phases present in the catalyst. Temperature programmed desorption of adsorbed reactants yields valuable information on the effects of promoters, additives, and supports on catalyst adsorption properties.

Our chemisorption experiments are carried out in a standard volumetric apparatus. The system is capable of 10⁻⁶ torr and is equipped with a mercury driven gas buret and manometer. Adsorption isotherms are measured using 1 g samples of catalyst powders.

The samples are loaded into a pyrex reactor cell shown in Figure 4. Once loaded, the catalyst may be reduced in H₂, undergo chemisorption measurements, and be tested for activity without being reexposed to air.

The results of chemisorption measurements on several iron catalysts are shown in Figure 5. As expected, the 3% catalyst is less reducible and more dispersed than the higher leading 15% catalyst. By dispersion is meant the percent of netal atoms exposed to the catalyst surface. Dispersions are very small, in the range of 1 to 4 %. The effect of

potassium promotion may be seen by comparing the 15% Fe/SiO₂ catalyst to the 15% FeE/SiO₂ catalyst results. As can be seen in the table, CO₂ adsorption increased substantially, at the expense of CO and E₂ adsorption. From this data, an apparent surface enrichment of K₂O is nearly 25 times its bulk concentration of 7%. CO/H adsorption ratios of Fe/SiO₂ are near 0.4, while potassium promotion lowers this ratio to 0.3. Fe/ZSM-5 and Fe/Silicalite evidence particularly low CO/H ratios. Borided iron, while less disperse than the unborided catalysts, are sufficiently disperse to evidence similar activity, as will be seen later.

Studies of silica-supported cobalt catalysts have also been conducted. Figure 6 shows that cobalt catalysts are generally more disperse than the corresponding iron catalysts. CO/H ratios are very nearly 1 in the unpromoted catalysts. The percent reduction to metal ranges from 30 to 50% for the cobalt catalysts studied. CO/H ratios for borided catalysts are much lower than the pure cobalt catalysts.

Moessbauer spectroscopy shows additional evidence for metal-support interaction. Figure 7 indicates the presence of ${\rm Fe}^{2+}$ in the 3% ${\rm Fe/SiO}_2$ catalyst, with metal-support interaction indicated by the low recoil-free fraction. In contrast, as shown in Figure 8, the 15% ${\rm Fe/SiC}_2$ catalyst spectrum shows the presence of ${\rm Fe}_2{\rm O}_3$, mainly in small particles. As expected, unsupported Fe consists of large particles of ${\rm Fe}_2{\rm O}_3$, as shown in Figure 9.

H₂ reduction for 36 hours at 723 K reduces the 3% Fe/SiO₂ catalyst only about 30%, in excellent agreement with O₂ titration data (Figure 10). The 15% Fe/SiO₂ catalyst is reduced nearly 100%, with the disappearance of the oxide peaks in the center of the spectrum. (Figure 11). The testing of the catalysts in a mixture of H₂ and CO in the reactor yields the commonly observed hexagonal carbide spectrum of Figure 12.

Activity/Selectivity Measurements

Chice the catalysts have been characterized, they are tested in a laboratory reactor to determine activity/selectivity properties. The experiments cutlined in Figure 15 have been designed to isolate, as much as possible, the effects on selectivity and activity of metal, metal loading, metal-support interactions, promoters and additives, including

sulfur, and the effects of increasing pressure from 1 atmosphere to near industrial conditions at 25 atmospheres.

A laboratory microreactor system has been made fully operational. The schematic in Figure 14 outlines its major features, which include gas purification by molecular sieve and deoxo units, a tubular furnace, a pair of liquid and war traps, and a gas chromatographic analysis. The system is capable of 30 atmospheres, and is equipped with automatic flow controllers. Analysis is performed by a Hewlett-Packard 58344 gas chromatograph which is fully time-programmable. In addition, cryogenic operation to -50 C is available by utilizing a liquid nitrogen feed to the oven space. This greatly enhances analysis of low-boiling hydrocarbon species.

The analysis of Fischer-Tropsch hydrocarbon products is a difficult problem, but simplified by our use of online gas sampling combined with capillary column operation. Hydrocarbons are eluted in nearly boiling point order, as typified by the chromatogram of Figure 15, providing an excellent "fingerprint" of the reaction products. Fixed gases, including H_2 , H_2 , H_3 , H_4 , H_4 , H_5 , and others, are analyzed on a 6-foot Carbosieve B packed column. The total analysis requires about 1 hour.

Before analyzing activity/selectivity data, the catalysts are pretreated in the reactant mixture at reaction temperature for 12 to 20 hours until steady state is reached. Changes in selectivity are due to carbiding of surfaces and the filling of catalyst pores with an inventory of liquids. When steady state is reached, rates and product distributions are considered reliable for comparisons. Conversions are limited to less than 10% and finely crushed powders are used to avoid mass and heat transfer limiting reaction regimes.

Turnover numbers for several iron and cooalt catalysts are shown in Figure 16. As can be seen, the turnover numbers for 3 and 15% Fe/SiO₂ are the same within a factor of 2, while the CO turnover number for 15% Co/SiO₂ is a factor of 20 times larger than that of 5% Co/SiO₂, suggesting the effects of metal-support interaction. The borided catalysts are also generally less active than their unborided counterparts. Potassium addition had little effect on activity, while the zeolite catalysts were

a factor of 10 less active than silica-supported iron. In all cases, cobalt catalysts are an order of magnitude more active than their iron catalyst counterparts.

Product selectivities for iron catalysts are summarized in Figure 17. It is evident that decreasing E_2/CO ratio from 2 to 1 increased the average molecular weight of the product by decreasing methane production. Also, CO_2 selectivity increased significantly. The 5% Fe/SiO $_2$ catalyst produced more methane and a lower molecular weight product than the 15% Fe/SiO $_2$ catalyst. The addition of potassium to the 15% iron catalyst shifted carbon numbers of the product from methane and ethane to the C_{5+} range. CO_2 production also increased. Iron boride catalysts, with a tendency toward high C_{5+} yields and low CO_2 make. Fe/Silicalite produced high olefin yields, especially in the low carbon numbers.

Similar data for three cobalt catalysts are shown in Figure 18. Cobalt/silica catalysts produce higher molecular weight products than iron catalysts at 1 atm pressure. The high yield of alcohols from several unsupported cobalt boride catalysts is especially interesting, along with the unusual high selectivity to CO₂ over the same catalysts.

Figure 19 shows a product selectivity plot for cobalt/silica. The very low C_2 yield is typical of cobalt catalysts. Figure 20 shows the same data for iron/silica. Higher C_2 yields are evident over iron, and the effects of the addition of potassium are shown graphically by the decrease of C_1 and C_2 fractions and increased C_{3+} fractions.

Sulfur Poisoning Tests

Task 3 is the measurement of the effects of dilute H_2S on catalyst activity and selectivity during synthesis. During the tests, 4-6 ppm of H_2S was added to the feed stream after an initial period of 24 hours in sulfur-free reactants.

The effect of sulfur on selectivity over Co/SiO₂ is illustrated in Figure 21. The product distribution of the partially poisoned catalyst shows a marked shift towards higher molecular weight products. This effect is maximized at about 50% activity and 50% sulfur coverage,

but then appears to diminish as sulfur coverage approaches saturation. CO₂ selectivity decreases continuously with CO conversion activity. In the case of Fe/SiO₂ these effects are not observed.

Figure 22 shows the normalized activity of the catalysts tested to date with increasing sulfur exposure. In the case of Co/SiO₂, Fe/SiO₂, and FeK/SiO₂, deactivation is rapid and extensive. Apparently, Fe/SiO₂ is more sulfur tolerant than Co/SiO₂, and the addition of K₂O does lengthen the lifetime of Fe/SiO₂ catalysts. Particularly important is the extended stability of borided iron in sulfur-containing reactants. Little deactivation was observed, even after 5 days exposure to 6 ppm H₂S.

Summary and Conclusions

Task l

- Using techniques developed in our laboratory, it is possible to prepare adequately dispersed iron and cobalt boride catalysts.
- Silica supported iron and cobalt catalysts evidence relatively
 poor metal dispersions in the range of 1 to 10%. Cobalt/silica
 is more dispersed than iron/silica.
- 5. 0₂ titration shows 36-hour reduction of Fe/SiO₂ and Co/SiO₂ catalysts in flowing H₂ is adequate.
- 4. Because of metal-support interaction, lower loading catalysts are less reducible than higher loading catalysts.
- 5. CO/E adsorption ratios observed for Fe/SiO₂ are near 0.4. Potassium promotion lowers this ratio to 0.5. CC/H adsorption ratios for copalt are near 1.
- 6. CO₂ chemisorption has shown that K₂O is concentrated on the surface of promoted iron catalysts to as much as 30 times its bulk concentration.
- Moessbauer spectroscopy of iron catalysts gives evidence for metalsupport interactions.

Task 2

1. A microreactor system and analysis scheme for C₁ to C₃₀ hydrocarbons and fixed gases has been made fully operational.

- 2. Cobalt catalysts produce a higher molecular weight product and are more active than corresponding iron catalysts at 1 atm.
- Decreasing H₂/CO ratio from 2 to 1 causes the average molecular weight of the hydrocarbon product to increase by reducing methane yield.
- 4. Potassium promotion of Fe/SiC₂ shifted carbon numbers to higher molecular weights at the expense of C_1 - C_2 production.
- 5. Iron catalysts produce larger amounts of C₂, alcohols, and clefins relative to cobalt catalysts.
- 6. Borided catalysts produce product distributions similar to unpromoted catalysts, though CoB shows promise as an alcohol producer.

Task 3

- H₂S poisoning of Co/SiC₂ causes a shift to higher molecular weights in the product. This does not occur with Fe/SiO₂.
- 2. Potassium extends the life of Fe/SiO_2 in the presence of E_2S .
- 3. FeB is extremely resistant to poisoning by \mathbb{R}_2^S .
- 4. Fe/SiC₂ is more E₂S poison resistant than Co/SiC₂.

CATALYST PREPARATION PLANS

Metal-Support	Unpromoted	Prozote	d Additi	.ve Pretrea	tments	No.
Combination		K ₂ O Zr	<u>B</u>	N .	<u>s</u>	Catalysts
Fe (Unsupported)	x	x	x	x	X (2)	c 6 .
Co (Unsupported)	x		x		I	3
Fe/SiO ₂	I(2) ^a	x _p x	· x	x b	X(3)	ъ,с _{/9}
Co/SiO ₂	X(2) ^a	$\mathbf{x}^{\mathbf{b}}$	x			4
Fe/Al ₂ 0 ₃	x					1
Fe/ZSM-5	I.					ı
Fe/Silicalite	x	I			Xq	3
Fe/C	r					1
	,		-		Tota	1 28

a 3 and 15 wt. % Loadings

FIGURE 1

b 15 wt. % Loading Only

c Unpromoted and Promoted

d Promoted Only

 $BH_4^- + 2H_2^0 + BO_2^- + 4H_2^-$

 $2BH_4^- + NiCl_2 + 4.5 H_20 + 0.5 Ni_2B + 1.5H_3BO_3 + 6.25H_2 + 2Cl_-$

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TASK 1 EXPERIMENTAL PLAN

DES	CRIPTION	PURPOSE OF STUDY	CATALTSTS
A.	H ₂ and CO Chemisorption Measurements	Determine Active Metal Surface Areas	All Catalysts
В.	CO ₂ Chemisorption Measurements	Determine Alkali Promoter Surface Concentrations	Fe, FeK, Fe/SiO ₂ , FeK/SiO ₂ , Fe/Silicalite FeK/Silicalite, FeZ/SiO ₂ , Co/SiO ₂ , CoK/SiO ₂
c.	O ₂ Titration Measurements	Determine Degree of Metal Reduction	All Catalysts
D.	Moessbauer Spectroscopy	Determine Oxide, Carbide, Nitride Phase Formation Under Preparation and Reaction Conditions	Fe Catalysts
₹.	Temperature Programmed Desorption	Determine Effects of Promoters and Supports on Reactant Adsorption	Fe/SiO ₂ , Fe/Al ₂ O ₃ , Fe/Silicalite, Fe/ZSM-5, Fe/C, FeK/SiO ₂ , FeZ/SiO ₂ , FeN/SiO ₂ , FeS/SiO ₂ , Co/SiO ₂

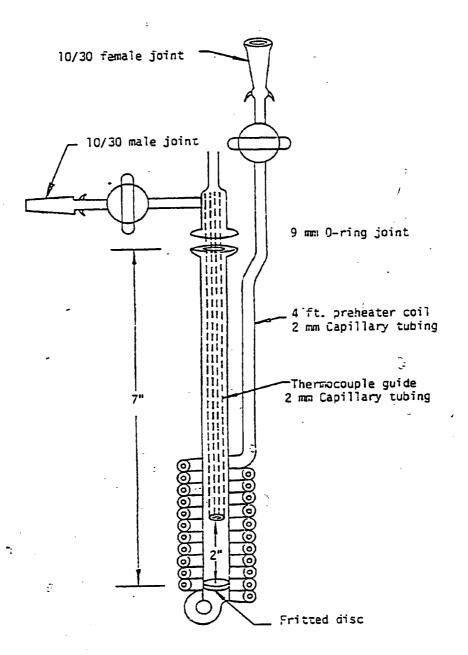


Figure 4. Laboratory Pyrex Reactor.

H2, GO, GO2, and O2 Uptakes on Iron Catalysts

DET Area ⁸ (m ² /g)	! ! !	!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!	: ! !		1 1 1	1 1 1	1	61.7	·
% Dispersion	3.86	1	1,51	1 2 2 1	3 2 2 2	3 - 8	?	1 1	
% Reduction	23	i	62	43	į	ì	i *	i	·
O ₂ Uptake ^d (<u>umoles/R</u>)	91.6	1 1 1	1590	856	1 1 1	1 1 1	:	1 1 1	. •
CO ₂ Uptake ^O (umoles/g)		28,2	1.09	6.56	; ;	1,412	2 7 1		
CO Uptake, (umoles/8)	1,21	17.5	12,2	1,6*1,	7.68	4.55	3,58	1.85	<u>.</u>
ll ₂ Uptake ^a (unoles/g)	2,36	. 23,3	16.0	2 9.11	1-5,22.8	oulite 20.4	10.7	1,013	,
<u>datalyst</u>	3% Fe/8102	15% Fe/810 ₂	15% Ve/810 ₂	15% Fe-K/3102 9.11	14.7% Fe/ZBM-5 22.8	8.3% Fe/Silloulite 20.4	Fe-B/3102	Fe-B	n At 298 K

o At 373 K d At 673 K

e Bused on Fe₂O₃ Stoichiometry

Percent Metal Atoms Exposed

8 By N₂ Adsorption

		:		•			
 	II _{,2} Uptake ^a	CO Uptake ^b	co ₂ Uptake	O ₂ Uptake ^d	%	ж	Areaß
Catalyst	(nmoles/K)	(umoles/8)	(umoles/g)	(umoles/g)	Reduction	Dispersion	(n ² /s)
3% Co/8102 18.8	18.8	55.5	1 1 1	1 1 2	1 1 1	1 1	1 1 1
15% Co/8102 52.4	52.4	89.9	17.9	641	38	10,9	1 1 1
do-B/810 ₂	21.2	24.4	£	7 1	† 1 1	‡ 1 1	; ; ;
Co-B	117.5	32.6	8 1 1 2	1	: : :	.]	6.06
	-	.···		e e			

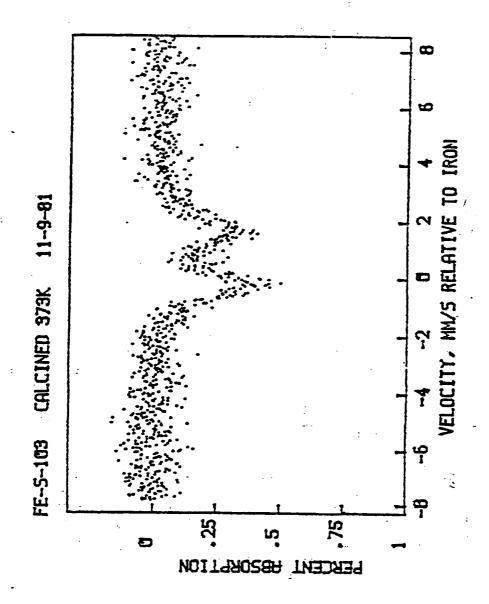
O At 373 K

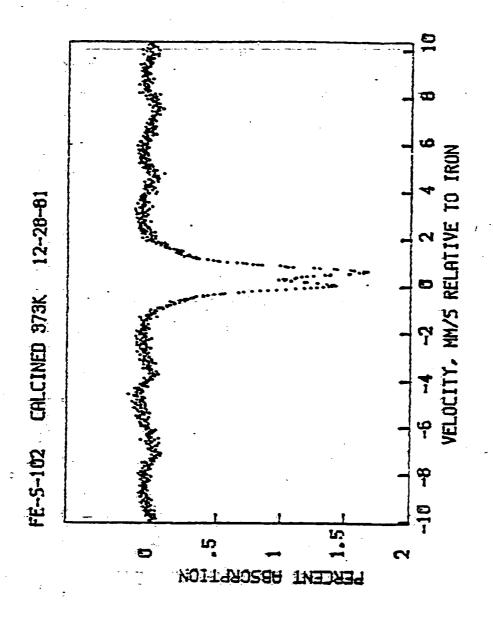
d At 573 K

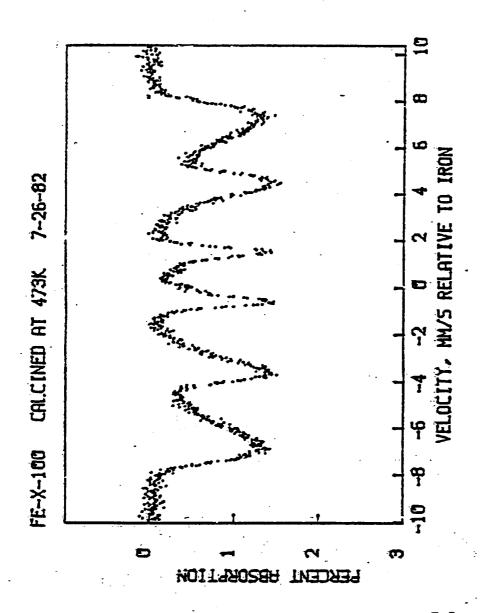
Based on Go₃O_{l,} Stoichlometry

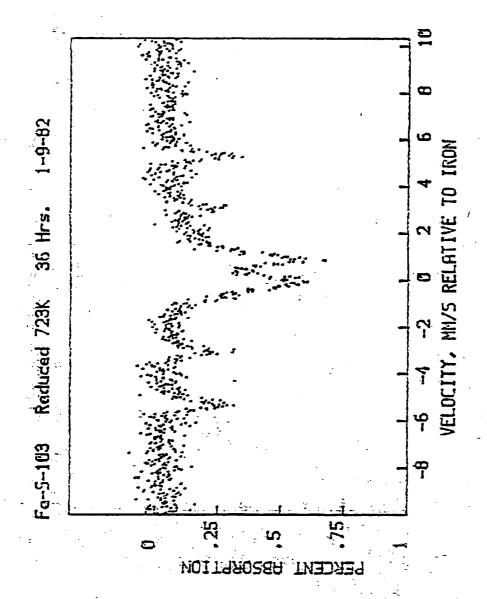
f Percent Metal Atoms Exposed

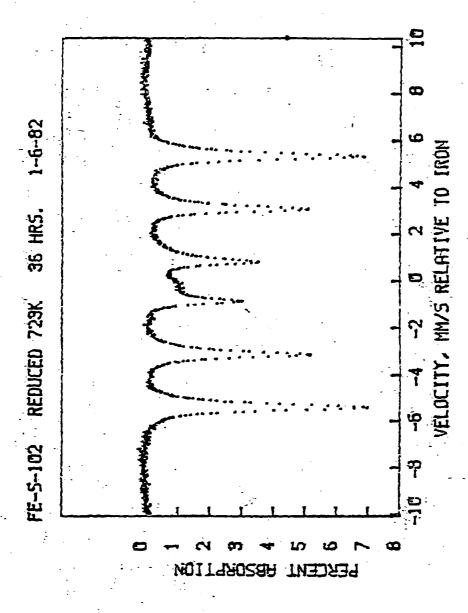
8 By N₂ Adsorption

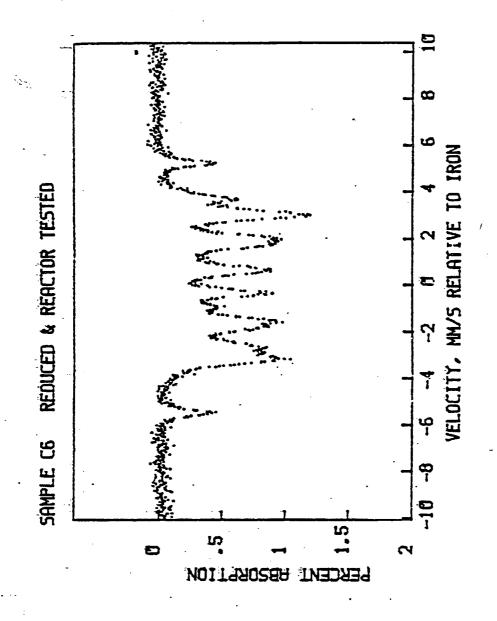








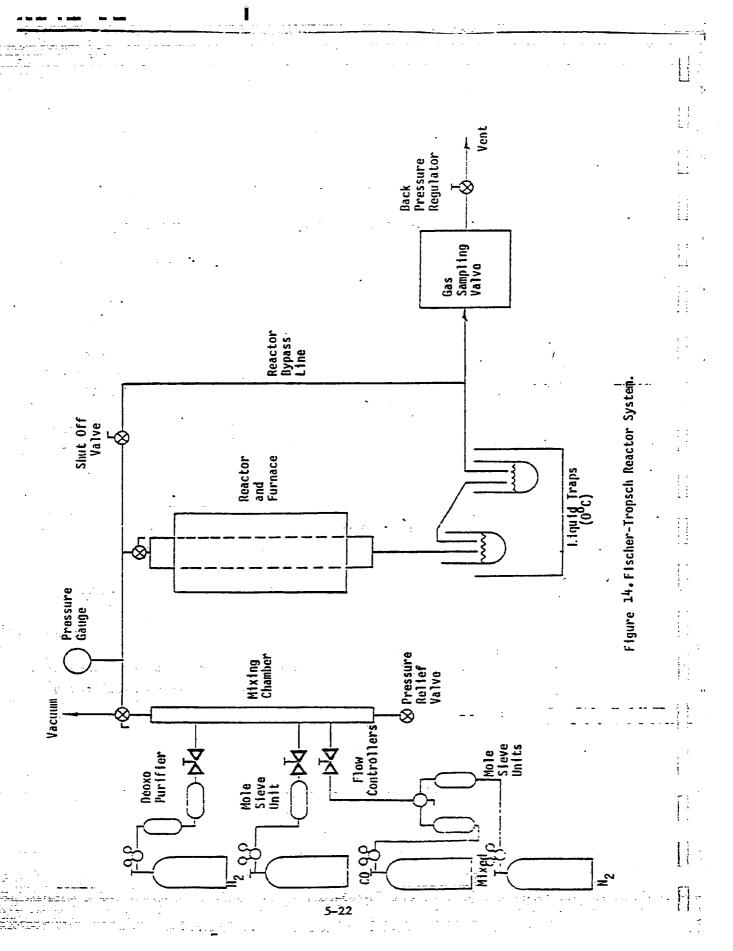




TASK 2 EXPERIMENTAL PLAN

DESCRIPTION	PURPOSE OF STUDY	CATALYSTS
Activity/Selectivity Measurements	Effects of Metal	Fe/SiO ₂ and Co/SiO ₂
€.	Effects of Metal Loading	<pre>3 and 15% Fe/SiO₂, 3 and 15% Co/SiO₂</pre>
	Effects of Support	Fe, Fe/SiO ₂ , Fe/Al ₂ O ₃ , Fe/Silicalite, Fe/ZSM-5, Fe/C, Co, Co/SiO ₂
	Effects of Alkali	<pre>I₂O Promoted Fe, Fe/SiO₂, Fe/Silicalite, Co/SiO₂ ZnO Promoted Fe/SiO₂</pre>
	Effects of Nitriding and Boriding	Fe, Fe/SiO ₂ (nitrided and borided), Co,Co/SiO ₂ (borided)
	Effects of Sulfiding.	Fe, FeK, Fe/SiO ₂ , FeK/SiO ₂ , FeZ/SiO ₂ , FeK/Silicalite, Co (sulfided)
Reactor Runs at 25 atm	Effects of Pressure	5 "best" catalysts based on atmospheric tests

FIGURE 15



SS 98.8 58.8 66.86.8 762.4 คิเต่กุญ 15 19912 19912 29 Z-

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CO TURNOVER NUMBERS

<u>Catalyst</u>	<u>H₂/co</u>	Temperature (K)	Turnover Number	Activation Energy (kJ/gmole)
3% Fe/SiO ₂	2	498	7.0	82.8
	1	49 8	7.0	80.8
15% Fe/SiO ₂	2	498	3• 9	92•5
	ı	498	2.5	99•3
15% FeK/SiO ₂	2	498	6.6	1
14.7% Fe/ZSM-5	2	500 -	0.45	
8.3% Fe/Silicalit	:e 2 _,	500	0.24	
FeB	2	483	8.1	81.4
FeB/SiO ₂	2	498	0.33	*
3% Co/SiO ₂	2	450	3.0	
15% Co/SiO ₂	2	450	: 6 4	****
СоВ	2	485	1.55	140
CoB/SiO ₂	2	504	17	154

FIGURE 16

Product selectivity data for iron (1 atm, 498 K)

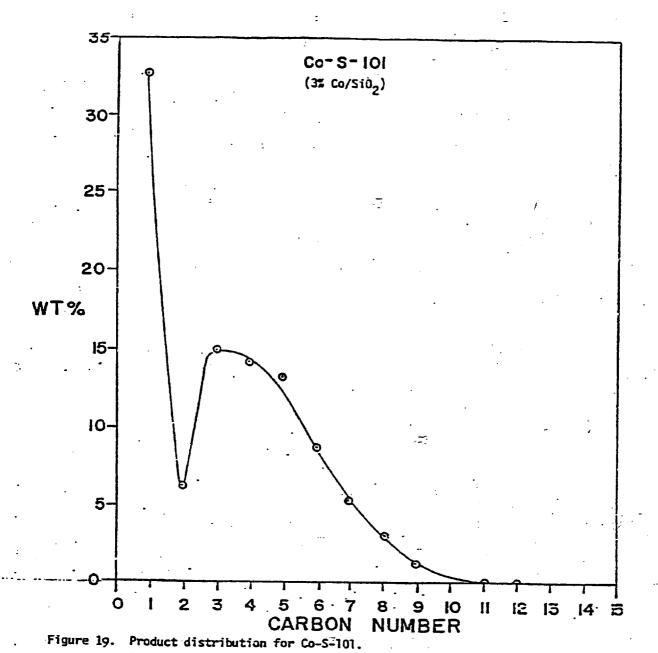
Catalyst	11,700	GII.	(Ş	* · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		•
	22:	Ī		12	3]	Alcohole	Olefin/Paraffin	
.3% Fe/810 ₂	ru	0.25	0.33	40.0	0,30	0.08	0,31	
-	-	0,20	0,31	0.03	96.0	0,10	; ; ;	-
15% Fe/810 ₂	QI .	91.0	0.27	0.03	0.47	0.07	0.33	<u>.</u>
	.	0.12	0,23	0.02	0.56	40°0		
15% PeK/310 ₂	~u	0.08	0,19	0.03	9,0	0.05	‡ 1 1	
14.7% Pu/28M-5	∼	₩6°0;	0.03	0.03	0	0	0.02	•
8,3% Fe/Silloalite	Q.	0.27	0,51	1,000	60*0	60*0	99*0	
Foll	. a	0,17	414.0	0.23	0,10	90*0	# # 1 8	·
FoB/8102	ત્ય	0,26	0,19	•	0.55	0	2 2 2	
	. •							

Or SIGNOTS

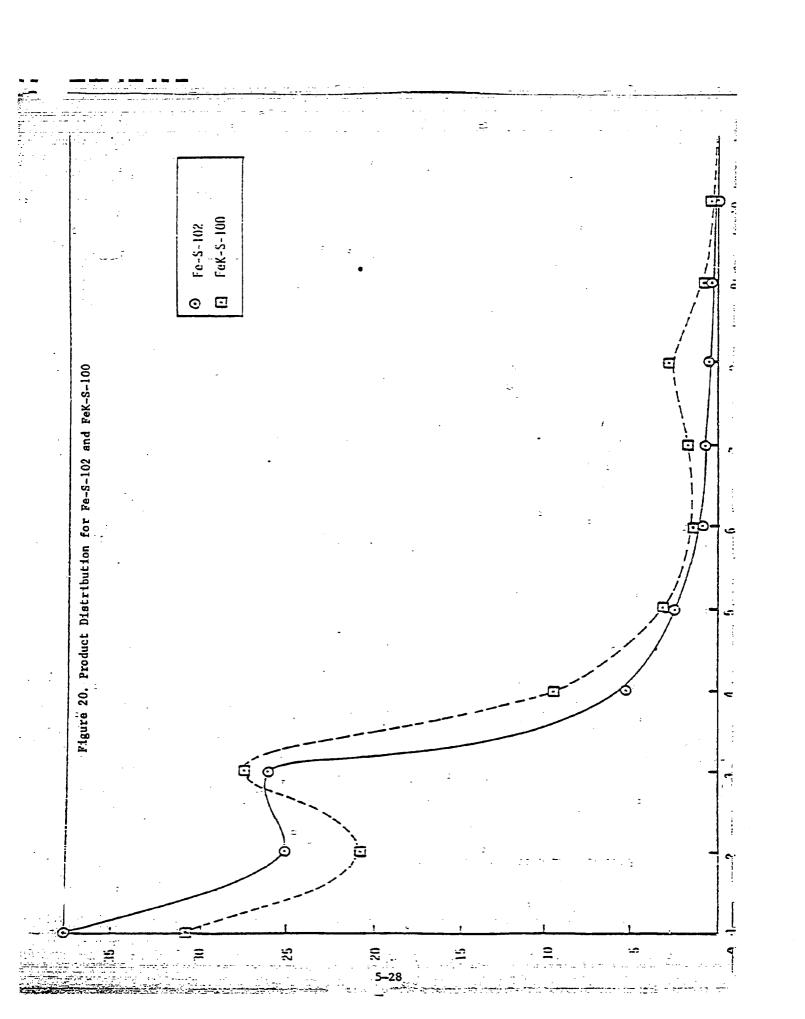
PRODUCT SELECTIVITY FOR COBALT (1 ATM, 473 K)

•	Olefin/Paraffin	0	. !	1 1 1 1
	Alcohols	0,11	0,15	90*0
) 전	1,000	040	90*0
	150 +50	0.34	0.17	0,31
	02 <u>0</u> 1	0.24	0,11	0.26
	1	0.27	0,18	0.31
=	00/ ² 11	cu .	Q .	~
	Gatalyst	3% 00/810 ₂	CoB	00n/8102

FIGURE



5-27



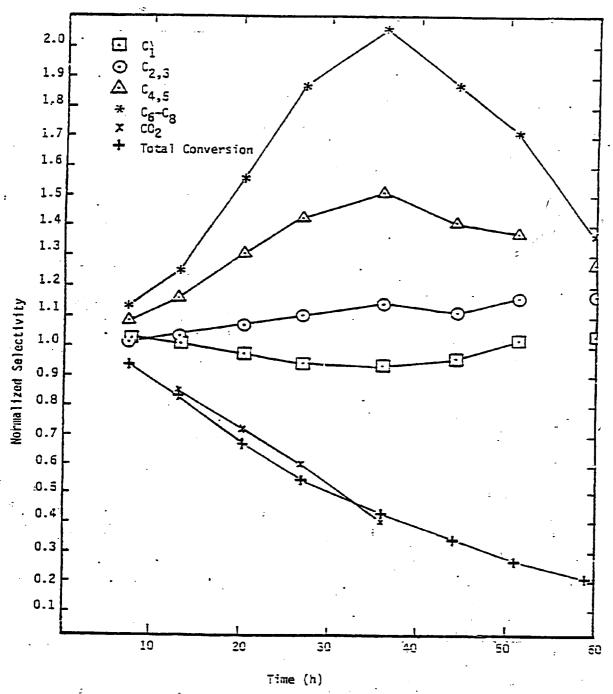
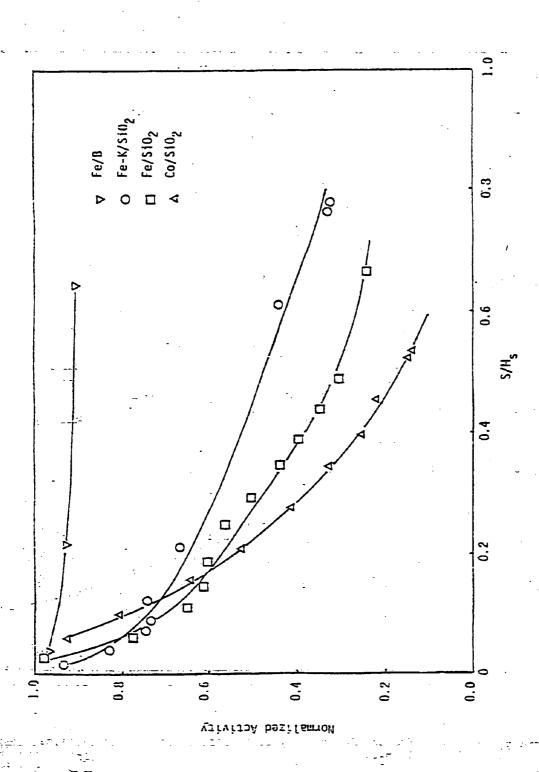


FIGURE 21 Product Selectivity as a Function of Time of Exposure to H_pS .



Normalized Activity Vorsus Sulfur Coverage (atoms of S adsorbed/metal surface atom) during in situ poisoning by 4-6 ppm $\rm H_2S$ (500 K, 1 atm, $\rm H_2/C0$ = 2).

FIGURE 22

: :