

IMPROVEMENT OF CARBON DIOXIDE CAPTURE USING GRAPHITE WASTE/ Fe₃O₄ COMPOSITES

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(Received: July 2017 / Revised: August 2017 / Accepted: October 2017)

ABSTRACT

The abundance of graphite waste can be processed into valuable materials; one alternative is by making it into an adsorbent. Graphite-based adsorbent modification can be accomplished by adding magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄. The addition of magnetite nanoparticles has been reported to improve the adsorption ability of the graphite waste. In this study, we have developed a new carbon dioxide (CO₂) adsorbent based on graphite waste modified with magnetite nanoparticle Fe₃O₄. The Fe₃O₄ were prepared using an impregnation technique. The graphite/Fe₃O₄ composites were characterized by scanning electron microscopy with an energy-dispersive X-ray system (SEM-EDX) and Brunauer, Emmett, and Teller (BET). The CO₂ adsorption performance was evaluated using an isothermal adsorption method at various temperatures (30, 35, and 45°C) and pressures (3, 5, 8, 15, and 20 bar). This resulted in graphite with different magnetite modification levels, namely non-modified graphite (GNM), a graphite/Fe₃O₄ 20% (w/w) composite (G/Fe₃O₄ 20%), and a graphite/Fe₃O₄ 35% (w/w) (G/Fe₃O₄ 35%), which indicated that the largest adsorption capacity is 10.305 mmol.g⁻¹ at 30°C and 20 bar pressure for the G/Fe₃O₄ 20% composite. This finding further revealed that modifying graphite waste with magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ has been proved to increase the capacity for adsorbing CO₂ gas.

Keywords: Adsorption; Carbon dioxide capture; Graphite/Fe₃O₄ composites; Graphite waste; Isotherm adsorption; Magnetite nanoparticle Fe₃O₄

1. INTRODUCTION

Global warming and climate change have now pushed the whole world to reduce the concentration of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) gas (Tiwari et al., 2017). As much as 50 to 80% of the total CO₂ gas emissions have been targeted by intergovernmental panels on climate change to reduce the massive consequences of global warming. Various technologies have been created to reduce CO₂ emissions, such as adsorption using solids, absorption with liquid, membrane technology, and cryogenic distillation (Vilarrasa-García et al., 2017; Shin et al., 2016)

Among the aforementioned technologies, adsorption is the favorite and the most efficient

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Permalink/DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14716/ijtech.v8i8.697>

compared with other techniques (Lee & Park, 2015; Mishra & Ramaprabhu, 2014). Adsorption method using solid sorbents shows many advantages in overcome with CO₂ post-combustion capture (Lee & Park, 2015). CO₂ post-combustion capture used wet or dry sorbents, that it can be used for separation of gas, such as for separate and storage CO₂ using adsorption/desorption (Lee & Park, 2015). Some porous media, such as activated carbons, graphite, zeolite-modified MgO, graphitic carbon nitride nanosheets, graphite oxide (GO), graphitic nanostructure, and graphene, have been used as a sorbent for CO₂ (Rashidia et al., 2016; Mishra & Ramaprabhu, 2011(a); Shin et al., 2016; Casco et al., 2014; Ghosh & Ramaprabhu 2017; Zukal et al., 2017; Babu et al., 2017). CO₂ capture using porous solids has become an advanced technology used to reduce CO₂ emissions (Casco et al., 2014). Activated carbons show a high adsorption capacity (Vences-Alvarez et al., 2015), an easy regeneration, and a high selectivity for CO₂ capture with respect to other compounds, such as methane and nitrogen (Casco et al., 2017).

However, the adsorbents on the market are sometimes expensive and ineffective; therefore, it is necessary to find other types of adsorbent for easy and cheap application in the manufacturing process. Graphite waste can be sourced from the processing in the aluminum industry, particularly in the electrolysis process. The number of industries that use this electrolysis method results in much graphite waste, which can be categorized as a dangerous and poisonous material. However, it could be developed into a new valuable product for use as a sorbent (Pasca, 2016). However, the graphite waste also has a weakness such as quite narrow pore size distribution and un-uniform. They are also difficult to recover after use. Therefore to considered to be suitable as sorbent for CO₂ capture, the surface modification and pore size control are needed. In order to increase the surface area of the graphite waste and increase the recovery of the sorbents, we have to modify the graphite waste with magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄.

Magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ have a high surface area, as good adsorbent due to their colloidal stabilization (Mahmoud et al., 2017) and environmental remediation due to having a rapid adsorption rate, have a high adsorption capacity, have magnetic separation, and this material can be regenerated. Moreover, the addition of magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ makes the graphite become stable when it is used to adsorb gas, especially at high temperatures (Mishra & Ramaprabhu, 2014).

In this study, we have developed new CO₂ adsorbents based on graphite waste modified with magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄. The graphite waste was prepared using a temperature of 60°C and was milled until reached a particle size of 200 mesh. A CO₂ adsorption performance isotherm evaluation was conducted at various temperatures (30, 35, and 45°C) and pressures (3, 5, 8, 15, and 20 bar). The volumetric adsorption measurement technique was used. This method was commonly used and has the advantage of simplicity of design and cost effectiveness (Elsayed et al., 2017).

2. METHODS

2.1. Preparation of Magnetite Nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ and G/Fe₃O₄ Composites

The G/Fe₃O₄ sorbent was prepared in three steps. The first step was preparing the graphite waste by using a heat pre-treatment at 60°C for 3 hours. The pre-treatment was continued by reducing the graphite to powdered particles using a ball mill, which was followed by sieving through a sieve with a filter size of 200 mesh (Pasca, 2016).

In the second step, the magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ were synthesized using a co-precipitation method. The synthesis began with mixing two main precursors, which are FeCl₃.6H₂O and FeCl₂.4H₂O (Merck, USA), with a 3:1 mass ratio with a 1N HCl solvent. The mixture was blended and stirred using a magnetic stirrer until all the soluble and colored material became clear. Further dilution was conducted by adding 15 mL of water de-mineralization, it was

stirred and kept for 15 minutes, then poured into 250 mL of ammonium hydroxide 1.5M, so that it formed a black precipitate and could respond to an external magnetic field. The stirred solution was taken out in 1 hour using a closed container to prevent the Fe₃O₄ becoming oxidized. To obtain dry magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄, the precipitate was washed with aquadest until the pH was 7. The final step was putting the slurry form of the magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ into an oven at a temperature of 60°C.

The last step to prepare the G/Fe₃O₄ composite was combining the graphite that has been pretreated with Fe₃O₄ using an impregnation method. In this study, two variations for the addition of magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ were completed, which are 20% (w/w) and 35% (w/w). The process began with the use of as much as 6.4 g of graphite, while for the Fe₃O₄ 1.6 g was used for the G/Fe₃O₄ 20% composite whereas 5.2 g and 2.8 g were used for the G/Fe₃O₄ 35% composite. Then, the two materials were dissolved into 100 mL of water as a solvent and it was stirred for 4 hours, which was intended to make sure the magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ and graphite were mixed completely and that the bond cannot easily be separated. The process was continued by washing the precipitate with aquadest until pH reached neutral, at 7, and this was followed by drying it in an oven for 2 hours at 60°C.

2.2. Characterization

The morphology and elemental composition of graphite non-modification (GNM) and G/Fe₃O₄ composites were characterized using scanning electron microscopy (SEM) with an energy-dispersive X-ray system (EDX). The specific surface area, pore volume, particle size, and Barrett-Joyner-Halenda (BJH) surface area of the adsorbents were measured at a liquid nitrogen temperature of 77K using a Brunauer, Emmett, and Teller (BET) analyzer (model ASAP 2020 V4.02 (V4.02 E), Micromeritics, US) with analysis adsorptive N₂, an equilibration interval of 5 seconds, and no low-pressure dose. Prior to the BET analysis, the sample was subjected to degassing under high vacuum at 350°C for 4 hours.

2.3. Determination of Adsorption Capacity

The adsorption capacities of CO₂ using GNM and G/Fe₃O₄ sorbents were determined using the adsorption isotherm by volumetric principle. The experiment's setup consisted of two stainless tubes, namely a charging cell (Cc) and measuring cell (Mc); a circulating water bath from HÜBER as the control to keep the water temperature constant; elbow joints; needle valves; a pressure transmitter with a pressure range of 0–40 bar procured from DRUCK PTX 1400; and a thermocouple type K class A that was used to measure the temperature inside the measuring cell and charging cell.

The basis of volumetric measurement is the pressure, volume, and temperature at which data is measured when the adsorbate enters the area where the adsorbent is located. After equilibrium is reached, the amount of CO₂ adsorbed is calculated from the pressure changes that occur by using the ideal gas equation.

The adsorption experiments were performed in the pressure range of 3–20 bar at 30, 35, and 45°C, and each cycle of the adsorption experiment was followed by CO₂ degassing at 150°C under vacuum conditions. This process helps to remove any impurities from the adsorbent (Awaluddin, 2010).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Characterization of Adsorbents

The surface area, pore volume, and particle size of the adsorbents is shown in Table 1. The magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ were prepared using an impregnation technique. The BET surface area of the Fe₃O₄ is 120.20 m²/g. As the magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ were

impregnated and distributed in surface of the graphite waste, and had pores, the surface area of the G/Fe₃O₄ 20% and 35% composites increased after being modified with magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄. The BET surface area of G/Fe₃O₄ 20% and 35% composites are 18.48 and 35.52 m²/g, respectively. We know that if the pore volume is larger than in its pristine condition, the adsorption capacity of CO₂ is also greater (Babu et al., 2017). The BET surface area of GNM is very low and less than 10 m²/g, indicated that the GNM is non-porous. For comparison purposes, the non-porous of glass platelets show no significant pores with an average BET surface area of 0.43 m²/g has been reported Schadeck et al. (2017).

Table 1 BET characterization of the adsorbents

Parameters	GNM	G/Fe ₃ O ₄ 20%	G/Fe ₃ O ₄ 35%	Fe ₃ O ₄
BET surface area (m ² /g)	8.49	18.48	35.52	120.20
BJH surface area (m ² /g)	7.941	18.275	32.11	109.79
BJH volume of pores (cm ³ /g)	0.03	0.07	0.12	0.42
Average particle size (nm)	706.45	324.63	168.93	49.52
Pore diameter (nm)	16.37	14.39	14.42	15.26

SEM is used to study the morphology of graphite and after modified with magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄. All of the SEM imaging appeared as aggregates and roughness, flakes of large particles. No porous was observed. Figure 1(a) shows an SEM image of graphite after pretreated with thermal and mechanic. Figure 1(b) and (c) shows an SEM image of the graphite waste after modified with Fe₃O₄. Both SEM images showed, the entire magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ is well impregnated into surface and pore of graphite waste.

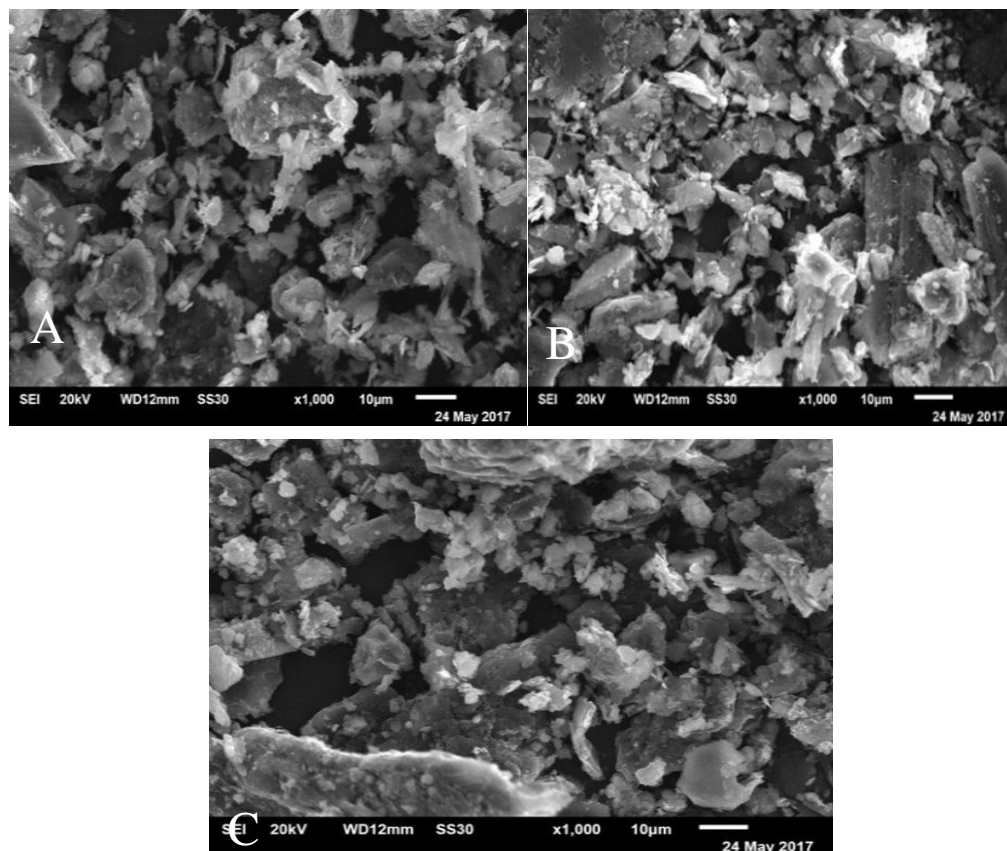


Figure 1 SEM Analysis of: (a) GNM; (b) G/Fe₃O₄ 20% composite; and (c) G/Fe₃O₄ 35% composite

The elemental composition of three types of sorbents was listed in Table 2. The Fe content was observed in both G/Fe₃O₄ 20% and 35% composites. Si in GNM was not observed in both composite sorbents. The G/Fe₃O₄ 35% composite, Fe content is very little. We assumed that it is due to the preparation or saturated the surface of graphite.

Table 2 EDX composition of adsorbent

Element	GNM	G/Fe ₃ O ₄ 20%	G/Fe ₃ O ₄ 35%
C	80.09	76.96	92.8
O	5.22	8.21	-
F	9.58	6.64	4.67
Na	3.35	1.31	1.07
Al	0.97	0.68	0.55
Si	0.19	-	-
Ca	0.60	0.37	0.43
Fe	-	5.82	0.46

3.2. CO₂ Adsorption Isotherms

The amount of CO₂ adsorbed was measured from the pressure changes that occurred by using the ideal gas equation. The mass balance of the adsorbate vapor in the charging cell and the measuring cell can be assumed as follows (Dawoud & Aristov, 2003, Awaluddin, 2010):

$$m_{d,mc} = |m_{cc}| - m_{ads} \quad (1)$$

where $m_{d,mc}$ is the mass of adsorbate in the measuring cell (kg); $|m_{cc}|$ is the mass of adsorbate in the charging cell that migrated into the measuring cell (kg); m_{ads} is the mass of adsorbate that was adsorbed in the adsorbent (kg). During the process of migrating from the charging cell to the measuring cell, the adsorbate had a compressibility factor value (Z value) which transforms Equation 1 into the following:

$$|m_{cc}| = \Delta m_{cc} = m_{cc}(t) - m_{cc}(t + \Delta t) = \frac{(p_{cc}(t) - p_{cc}(t + \Delta t))V_{cc}}{ZR_{cc}T_{cc}} \quad (2)$$

$$m_{d,mc} = m_{d,mc}(t + \Delta t) - m_{d,mc}(t) = \frac{(p_{mc}(t + \Delta t) - p_{mc}(t))V_{mc}}{ZR_{mc}T_{mc}} \quad (3)$$

By substituting Equations 2 and 3 into Equation 1, then we get the following:

$$m_{ads} = \Delta m_{ads}(t) \quad (4)$$

$$m_{ads} = \frac{(p_{cc}(t) - p_{cc}(t + \Delta t))V_{cc}}{ZR_{cc}T_{cc}} - \frac{(p_{mc}(t + \Delta t) - p_{mc}(t))V_{mc}}{ZR_{mc}T_{mc}} \quad (5)$$

Or

$$m_{ads} = \rho_{cc}(P, T)V_{cc} - \rho_{mc}(P, T)V_{mc} \quad (6)$$

All composites are used for CO₂ adsorption at various temperatures ranging from 30 to 45°C, and pressures in the range from 3 to 20 bar. Figures 2(a–c) demonstrate the CO₂ adsorption isotherms of GNM, G/Fe₃O₄ 20% composite, and G/Fe₃O₄ 35% composite at temperatures of 30, 35, and 45°C and pressures from 3 to 20 bar. It is clearly disclosing that the CO₂ capture

capacity increases with pressure at each temperature. It is similar observed with CO₂ capture using Fe₃O₄-graphene nanocomposite by physicochemical adsorption, as reported by Mishra and Ramaprabhu (2014). This increase in capture capacity with pressure may be attributed to the flow rate of the gas pounding on the surface of the graphite waste, which becomes larger as the pressure increases and allows the amount of adsorbate attached to the graphite surface to also get larger (Awaluddin, 2010).

The adsorption behavior of the GNM, G/Fe₃O₄ 20%, and G/Fe₃O₄ 35% at three different temperatures are presented in Figures 2(a–c). A maximum adsorption capacity of 10.305 mmol.g⁻¹ was found for the G/Fe₃O₄ 20% composite, 7.907 mmol.g⁻¹ for G/Fe₃O₄ 35% composite, and 6.437 mmol.g⁻¹ for GNM, at 20 bar and 30°C (see Figures 2(a–c)). At 20 bar and 35°C, the maximum adsorption capacities were 8.182 mmol.g⁻¹, 6.863 mmol.g⁻¹, and 5.597 mmol.g⁻¹ for G/Fe₃O₄ 20%, G/Fe₃O₄ 35%, and GNM, respectively. At 20 bar and 45°C, the maximum adsorption capacities were 5.331 mmol.g⁻¹, 5.323 mmol.g⁻¹, and 4.756 mmol.g⁻¹ for G/Fe₃O₄ 20%, G/Fe₃O₄ 35%, and GNM, respectively.

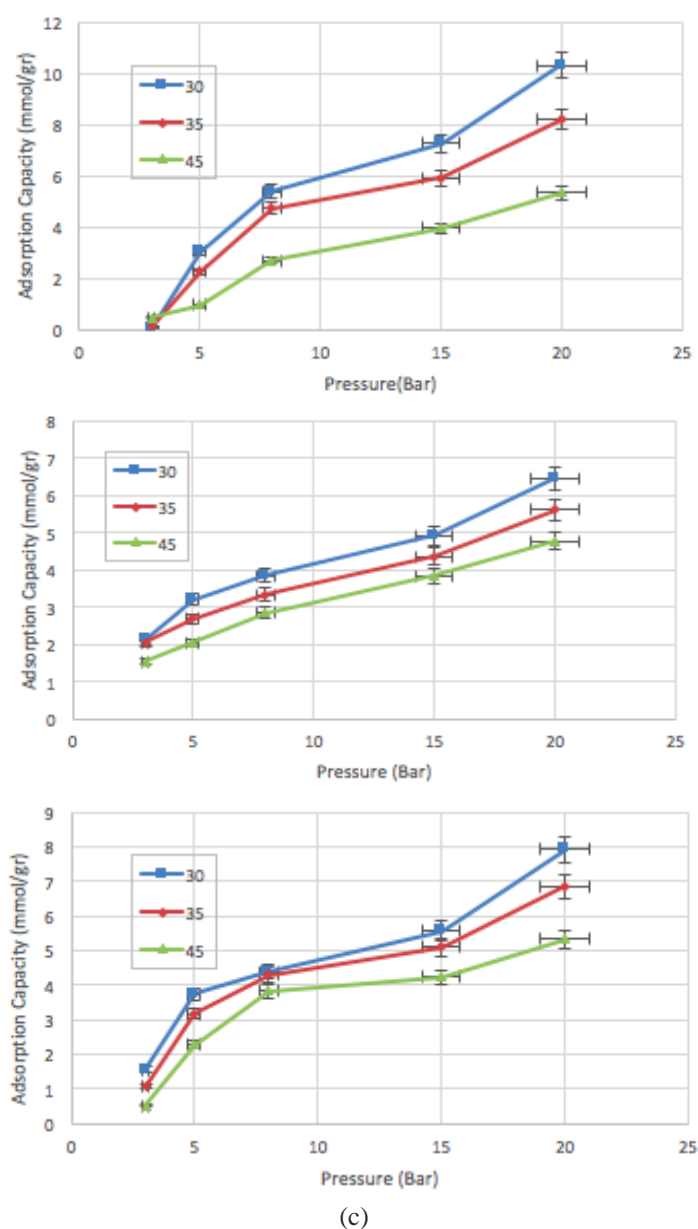


Figure 2 Adsorption capacity of CO₂ versus the pressure of CO₂ for: (a) GNM; (b) G/Fe₃O₄ 20% composite; and (c) G/Fe₃O₄ 35% composite

The modified graphite with magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ is better at adsorbing CO₂ gas when compared with non-modified graphite. The increased amount of CO₂ adsorption capacity for graphite modified with Fe₃O₄ compared to non-modified graphite is due to the fact that physical adsorption is not the only mechanism in the adsorption of CO₂, but chemical adsorption is also involved, which causes the adsorption capacity for CO₂ gas to become larger (Mishra & Ramaprabhu, 2014). The physisorption is associated with the surface area and the pores of the adsorbent, whereas the chemisorption is related to the bonding of CO₂ gas molecules with magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ (Mishra & Ramaprabhu, 2011a). The CO₂ adsorption is physisorption, where the adsorption capacity increases with the CO₂ pressure but it decreases with temperature.

Furthermore, the addition of the magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ 35% does not make the adsorption capacity bigger when compared with the addition of Fe₃O₄ 20%. This is due to the iron content in G/Fe₃O₄ 35% composite not being as much as in the G/Fe₃O₄ 20% composite (see Table 2) due to aggregation among the molecules of the magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄, which leads to the formation of an agglomeration. This phenomenon also makes the binding to the CO₂ molecule less than from the addition of magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ (20% (w/w)).

The effect of temperatures on the adsorption capacity of CO₂ gas can also be seen in Figure 3. It can be observed that the lower the temperature, the greater the adsorption capacity. This occurred because the higher temperatures make the CO₂ gas molecules move faster due to their kinetic energy being increased. This phenomenon causes the interaction between the CO₂ molecules and the G/Fe₃O₄ composite in porous surfaces to become lower, which results in a lower CO₂ adsorption (Mishra & Ramaprabhu, 2011b).

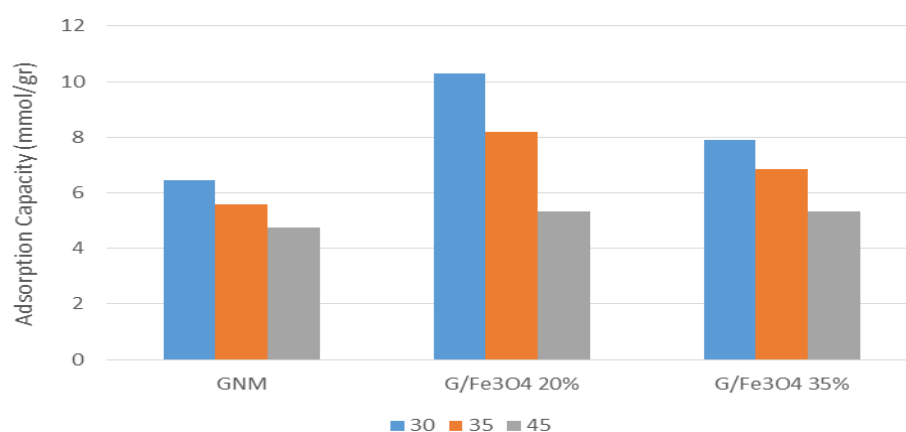


Figure 3 The effect of the type of adsorbent on adsorption capacity

3.3. Comparison of Capacity Adsorption of CO₂ with Other Adsorbents

The best CO₂ adsorption in the present work is using a G/Fe₃O₄ 20% composite, which has a high adsorption capacity of 5.36 mmol.g⁻¹ at 8 bar pressure, but at a maximum pressure of 20 bar, the adsorption capacity of 10.306 mmol.g⁻¹. Mishra and Ramaprabhu (2011b) report that with graphite material nanoplatelets/Fe₃O₄ a capacity of nearly 8.5 mmol.g⁻¹ was acquired at 11 bar pressure and room temperature. A comparison of the CO₂ adsorption for the graphite waste used in this study with other types of adsorbents is summarized in Table 3.

Although the adsorption capacity of CO₂ using G/Fe₃O₄ composites in this study is lower than the other adsorbents mentioned in Table 3, but the graphite waste has potential to compete with other supporting materials and/or other adsorbents. For further study, modifying graphite using magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ has the potential to be used as an industrial-scale adsorbent, whereas other adsorbents, such as activated carbon and zeolites, have limited adsorption only at

room temperature and continue to decrease their capacity as operating temperatures increase (Mishra & Ramaprabhu, 2011b).

Table 3 Comparison of the adsorption capacity of CO₂ with other adsorbents

Authors	Adsorbent	Adsorption capacity (mmol.g ⁻¹)	Operating condition
Present work, 2017	Graphite/Fe ₃ O ₄ 20% composite	5.36	30°C, 8 bar
Mishra & Ramaprabhu, 2011b	Graphite Nanoplatelets/Fe ₃ O ₄	8.5	25°C, 11 bar
Mishra & Ramaprabhu, 2014	Fe ₃ O ₄ -Graphene nanocomposite	60	25°C, 11 bar

4. CONCLUSION

We have developed and tested graphite waste/Fe₃O₄ (G/Fe₃O₄) composites as an adsorbent for the adsorption of CO₂. The best condition for adsorbing CO₂ gas was using a G/Fe₃O₄ 20% composite at 30°C and a pressure of 20 bar, which had an adsorption capacity of 10.305 mmol.g⁻¹. The addition of magnetite nanoparticles Fe₃O₄ produced an adsorption capacity of CO₂ that is higher compared with non-modified graphite (GNM).

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors greatly acknowledge the Universitas Indonesia for providing financial support through a grant, Hibah PITTA No. 774/UN2.R3.1/HKP.05.00/2017.

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