

ABSTRACT

Coal combustion exhaust emissions in the form of NO_x, SO_x, and CO_x are major pollutants that adversely affect the environment and health. This research aims to quantify pollutant removal efficiency and analyze chemical reaction mechanisms using a non-catalytic Dielectric Barrier Discharge (DBD) reactor. The reactor geometry utilizes aluminum foil and mesh electrodes with a pyrex dielectric barrier, operated at voltages from 0 to 15 kV. The reactor's electrical characteristics show compliance with Townsend's law with an I-V quadratic correlation of 0.954 and an initial plasma zone at 4 kV. Measurement results using the Exhaust Gas Analyzer ECOM D at a flow rate of 2 lpm show that maximum removal efficiency was achieved at a voltage of 13.98 kV with a CO reduction of 15.54%, SO₂ of 13.47%, NO of 6.12%, and CO₂ of 4.17%. An anomalous increase in NO₂ concentration reached 110.53%, indicating the dominance of recombination reactions within the oxidative plasma regime. Optical Emission Spectroscopy (OES) diagnosis confirms a transition in energy distribution from a radiative excitation pathway to a destructive non-radiative dissociation route at high voltage, evidenced by a decrease in the relative population area of CO₂⁺ by 13.65% and SO species by 20.1%. This research concludes that the DBD reactor effectively triggers the decomposition of pollutant molecules through a direct electron impact mechanism, with an optimal operating point at a combination of 14 kV voltage and 2 lpm flow rate.

Keywords: DBD Plasma, Emission Reduction, Coal, ECOM D, OES Spectroscopy.