



Prediction of Binary Adsorption Isotherms of Carbon Dioxide and Methane from Pure Adsorption Data

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ABSTRACT

In the area of adsorption, experimental multicomponent data possess challenges in comparison to pure components. By solely relying on the pure adsorption experiment, a model known as Ideal Adsorbed Solution Theory (IAST) can predict binary adsorption isotherms without requiring any experimental multicomponent data. According to our previous work, Co-gallate exhibited higher CO₂ uptakes than CH₄ based on pure adsorption isotherms. However, there is a lack of study on the equilibrium isotherms of binary adsorption calculated by IAST for multi CO₂/CH₄ compositions at different temperature conditions. Therefore, the experimental CO₂ and CH₄ pure adsorption isotherms were fitted with six analytical models, in which Langmuir model yielded the highest goodness-of-fit. IAST calculations via the Python package were employed to predict the equilibrium isotherms of binary CO₂/CH₄ adsorption at different compositions and temperatures. The predicted binary adsorption isotherms revealed that CO₂ adsorption was more favourable on the surface of Co-gallate than CH₄, even though those uptakes were lower than pure adsorption data due to competitive co-adsorption behaviours. Moreover, IAST selectivity suggested that CO₂/CH₄ separation performed better as the CO₂/CH₄ compositions approached unity and at lower temperature condition. IAST approach evaluated that Co-gallate can be a promising solid material for CO₂/CH₄ mixed gas separations.

1. Introduction

The mixed gas adsorption (binary adsorption) on porous solid materials (adsorbents) continues to gain attention, particularly in petrochemical and biochemical processes. The adsorption technology is an operation that is firmly established owing to its efficiency in addressing a wide range of procedures such as purification of gas, separation of recycled streams and removal of impurities [1]. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane (CH₄) mixture separation and purification are among the most crucial processes for upgrading the natural gas and biogas. Natural gas and biogas consist of

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approximately 75-90 % and 50-70 % of methane respectively, in the presence of other components [2,3]. The CO₂ capture from these CH₄-rich streams is important to provide highly purified sources of methane to meet the sale gas specification and to prevent the pipelines and equipment corrosion.

Adsorption is one of the separation technologies by capturing molecules on the surface of adsorbents [4]. A fundamental procedure for adsorptive gas separation and purification involves allowing a gas mixture into a column packed with adsorbents, resulting in a product that is enriched with a component having weaker adsorption. The design of adsorption column requires multicomponent equilibrium adsorption data (equilibrium isotherm of binary adsorption). This equilibrium data involves extensive experimental work and is normally carried out using self-built equipment, which is time-consuming. Therefore, predicting multicomponent equilibrium data for binary adsorption is of great interest.

The equilibrium isotherms of binary adsorption can be predicted by a thermodynamic approach known as Ideal Adsorbed Solution Theory (IAST). Introduced by Myers and Prausnitz, IAST is an analogue of Raoult's law for vapor-liquid equilibria and the prediction depends solely on experimental pure adsorption isotherms, which need to be fitted first to a continuous function to allow for analytical or numerical solutions [5]. This approach assumes that the components in the mixed gas have an equivalent access to the internal surface of homogeneous adsorbent, and there is absence of adsorbate interactions in the ideal adsorbed phase [6]. IAST has been found to be a systematic and adequate approach for predicting the equilibrium isotherms of binary adsorption on metal-organic frameworks, activated carbon and zeolites (MOFs) [7-9]. MOFs have appeared as a prominent class of porous materials due to their distinctive properties including large surface area, great porosity, tailorable pore size, tunable geometry and structure, and stability [10,11].

Various biomass-based materials have been reported as effective adsorbents in a variety of applications [12-14]. Gallate-based metal-organic framework, made up of gallic acid and metal salt has revealed the remarkable performance in CO₂ and CH₄ adsorption, with cobalt gallate (Co-gallate) offering higher CO₂ adsorption capacity compared to CH₄ [15]. However, there is a scarcity of literature reported on the equilibrium isotherms of binary adsorption calculated by IAST for multi CO₂/CH₄ compositions using Co-gallate at different temperature conditions. Therefore, the purpose of this work is to carry out the prediction of equilibrium isotherms of binary CO₂/CH₄ adsorption through IAST calculations using Python Package. The predicted equilibrium isotherms of binary CO₂/CH₄ adsorption were presented at 75:25, 50:50, 25:75, 10:90 compositions at 273, 298 and 313 K. The predicted binary component data were then used to determine the IAST selectivity. These predicted equilibrium isotherms of binary CO₂/CH₄ adsorption are poised to offer valuable insights for the prospective design of CO₂/CH₄ mixed gas separation employing Co-gallate.

2. Methodology

The predicted equilibrium isotherms of binary CO₂/CH₄ adsorption were carried out by IAST calculation using Python Package (pyIAST) based on the experimental CO₂ and CH₄ pure adsorption isotherms conducted in our previous work [15]. The detailed explanations can be found in the previously reported works [16-18]. The calculation of spreading pressure can be conducted using the subsequent equation.

$$\frac{\pi A}{RT} = \int_0^{P_i^0} \frac{n_i}{P_i} dP_i \quad (1)$$

where the spreading pressure is denoted by π , T is the temperature (K), R represents the gas constant (8.314 J/K.mol), A is the specific surface area of adsorbent (m^2/g), and n_i is the adsorption of component i (mmol/g).

The experimental CO_2 and CH_4 pure adsorption isotherms were fitted to the analytical model, $n_i^o(P)$ using a least-squares loss function, resulting in an analytical formula for the spreading pressure [17]. The pyIAST has the capability to fit various established analytical models. It exclusively supports thermodynamically consistent isotherm models adhering to Henry's law at low coverage, as stated in the previous work and listed in Table 1 below [17].

Table 1
 Analytical model and their spreading pressure corresponding to the model

Model	General form	Spreading pressure corresponding to the model
Langmuir	$n_i^o(P) = M \frac{KP}{1+KP}$	$\frac{A}{RT} \pi_i(P) = M \log(1 + KP)$
Quadratic	$n_i^o(P) = M \frac{(K_A + 2K_B P)P}{1 + K_A P + K_B P^2}$	$\frac{A}{RT} \pi_i(P) = M \log(1 + K_A P + K_B P^2)$
BET	$n_i^o(P) = M \frac{K_A P}{(1 - K_B P)(1 - K_B P + K_A P)}$	$\frac{A}{RT} \pi_i(P) = M \log \frac{1 - K_B P + K_A P}{1 - K_B P}$
Henry	$n_i^o(P) = K_H P$	$\frac{A}{RT} \pi_i(P) = K_H P$
Approximated Temkin	$n_i^o(P) = M \left(\frac{KP}{1+KP} + \theta \left(\frac{KP}{1+KP} \right)^2 \left(\frac{KP}{1+KP} - 1 \right) \right)$	$\frac{A}{RT} \pi_i(P) = M \left(\log(1 + KP) + \theta \frac{2KP+1}{2(KP+1)^2} \right)$
Dual-site Langmuir	$n_i^o(P) = M_1 \frac{K_1 P}{1+K_1 P} + M_2 \frac{K_2 P}{1+K_2 P}$	$\frac{A}{RT} \pi_i(P) = M_1 \log(1 + K_1 P) + M_2 \log(1 + K_2 P)$

2.1 Root Mean Square Error (RMSE)

Root mean square error (RMSE) signifies a measure of the average magnitude of the errors between predicted and actual values. A lower RMSE designates better predictive performance, with zero being the ideal value. RMSE can be determined using the equation below [19].

$$RMSE = \sqrt{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N (x_i^{exp} - x_i^{cal})^2} \quad (2)$$

where x_i^{exp} is the experimental value of component i , x_i^{cal} represents the calculated value of component i and N is the number of data points.

2.2 IAST Selectivity

The adsorption selectivity determined through IAST is defined by the following equation [20].

$$S_{ij} = \frac{x_i/x_j}{y_i/y_j} \quad (3)$$

where x_i and x_j signify mole fractions of component i and j in the adsorbed phase, while y_i and y_j denote mole fractions of component i and j in the gas phase (dimensionless).

3. Results

3.1 Analytical Model Fittings

The experimental CO₂ and CH₄ pure adsorption isotherms of Co-gallate were fitted using various models including Langmuir, Henry, approximated Temkin, BET, quadratic, and Dual-site Langmuir. Their model parameters are tabulated in Table 2.

Table 2
 Analytical model parameters

Model	Parameter	CO ₂			CH ₄		
		273 K	298 K	313 K	273 K	298 K	313 K
Langmuir	M	5.1927	8.0105	12.3798	0.9082	1.3956	1.1382
	K_L	6.5122	0.7915	0.2347	0.6758	0.2008	0.1442
	RMSE	0.2065	0.1786	0.1645	4.72×10^{-3}	1.36×10^{-3}	4.67×10^{-4}
Quadratic	M	2.4351	4.7543	7.8109	0.5955	5.25×10^{-4}	5.25×10^{-4}
	K_A	9.8985	1.3728	0.3777	1.0554	5.0×10^{-4}	5.0×10^{-4}
	K_B	59.2289	0.3118	0.0218	0.1496	5.0×10^{-4}	5.0×10^{-4}
	RMSE	0.1892	0.1778	0.1639	4.14×10^{-3}	0.1443	0.0916
	M	8.1795	6.2152	5.25×10^{-4}	0.4034	5.25×10^{-4}	1.1493
BET	K_A	3.5494	1.0521	5.0×10^{-4}	1.7544	5.0×10^{-4}	0.1428
	K_B	-0.3482	0.0676	5.0×10^{-4}	0.2297	5.0×10^{-4}	-6.53×10^{-4}
	RMSE	0.1719	0.1784	1.4656	1.07×10^{-3}	0.1443	4.68×10^{-4}
Henry	K_H	5.1275	3.6559	2.3780	0.3769	0.2354	0.1444
	RMSE	1.2415	0.3335	0.1761	0.0270	6.41×10^{-3}	3.0×10^{-3}
Approximated Temkin	M	4.3152	9.6645	16.2138	0.9091	5.25×10^{-4}	1.1462
	K_T	5.2970	0.6837	0.1829	0.6751	5.0×10^{-4}	0.1432
	θ	-1.6099	0.4130	0.4780	1.84×10^{-3}	5.0×10^{-4}	8.63×10^{-3}
Dual-site Langmuir	RMSE	0.1777	0.1776	0.1638	4.72×10^{-3}	0.1443	4.66×10^{-4}
	M_1	2.5802	5.25×10^{-4}				
	K_1	6.5122	5.0×10^{-4}				
	M_2	2.6125	5.0×10^{-4}				
	K_2	6.5122	5.0×10^{-4}				
	RMSE	0.2065	2.1577	1.4656	0.2326	0.1443	0.0916

Based on the RMSE values, Langmuir model demonstrated the highest goodness-of-fit with relevant parameter values among the studied models for CO₂ and CH₄ pure adsorption isotherms of Co-gallate. Langmuir model, known for describing monolayer adsorption on a homogenous surface of adsorbent, provided a simple yet effective fit [21]. The Langmuir parameter denoted by M , representing the maximum adsorption capacity was observed to increase with temperature for CO₂ adsorption of Co-gallate. In contrast, CH₄ exhibited a fluctuating trend. Meanwhile, the Langmuir constant (K_L) values for CO₂ and CH₄ decreased from 273 to 313 K. The Langmuir constant is related to the affinity between the adsorbate and adsorbent [22]. The higher the constant value the greater interaction is, but it decreases with temperature. Consequently, this parameter contributes to the higher adsorption uptakes at lower temperature. The experimental CO₂ and CH₄ pure adsorption along with Langmuir-fitted isotherms are illustrated in Figure 1.

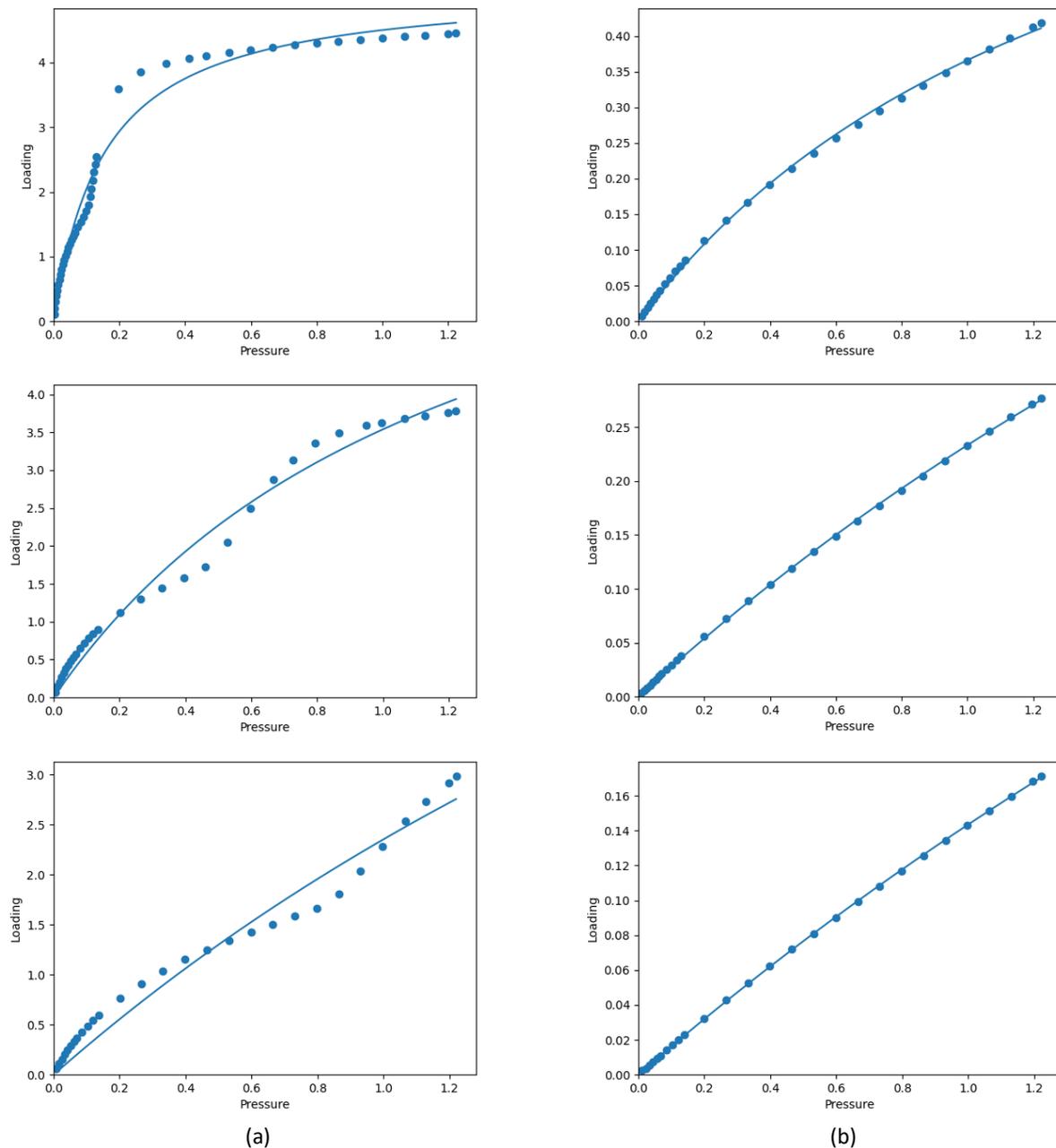


Fig. 1. Experimental pure adsorption (dot) and Langmuir-fitted isotherms (line) for (a) CO₂ and (b) CH₄ at 273, 298 and 313 K. The experimental pure adsorption isotherms are re-plotted based on previous work [15]

3.2 Prediction of Equilibrium Isotherms of Binary CO₂/CH₄ Adsorption

The equilibrium isotherms of binary CO₂/CH₄ adsorption were predicted using IAST calculations at different compositions and temperatures (273, 298 and 313 K) as illustrated in Figure 2.

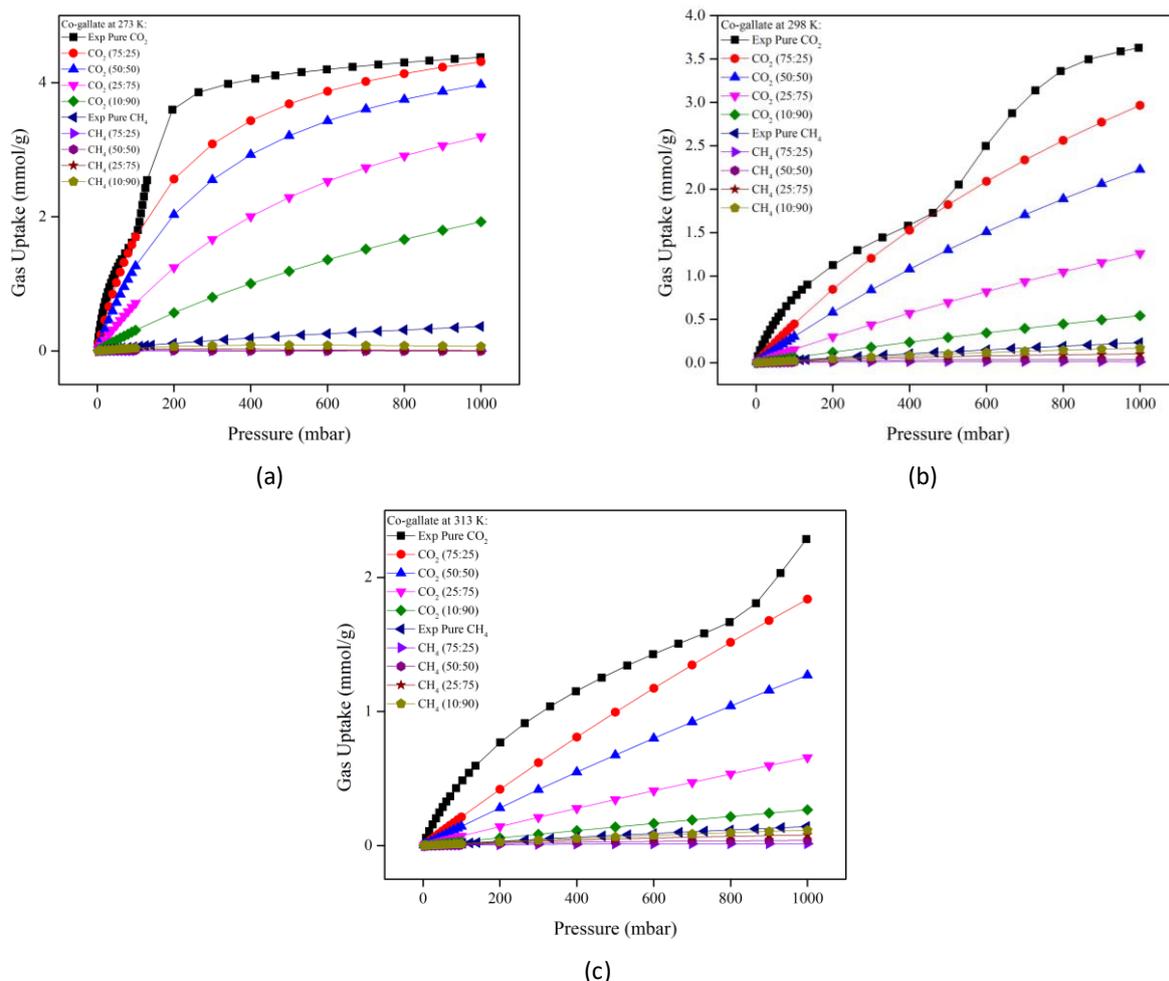


Fig. 2. Experimental (pure component) and predicted (binary component) CO₂ and CH₄ equilibrium adsorption isotherms of Co-gallate for 75:25, 50:50, 25:75 and 10:90 compositions at (a) 273, (b) 298 and (c) 313 K

The co-adsorption was found to impact gas uptakes on the surface of Co-gallate. The predicted CO₂ and CH₄ uptakes were observed to be lower than the experimental values. In all studied compositions, the presence of CH₄ in the mixed gas led to competitive adsorption, resulting in lower CO₂ uptakes compared to pure adsorption. During co-adsorption, the surface of Co-gallate was able to accommodate both CO₂ and CH₄ molecules. Consequently, the CO₂ molecules engaged in competition with CH₄ for the available adsorption sites, thus slightly reducing the accessible sites for CO₂ adsorption. However, despite this competition, CO₂ exhibited dominance and more favourable behaviour than CH₄, leading to higher CO₂ uptakes. This phenomenon is attributed to the thermodynamic equilibrium effect, indicating the stronger interactions between Co-gallate and CO₂ molecules. The thermodynamic equilibrium effect describes different adsorbent-adsorbate interactions, leading to the preferential adsorption of certain molecules over others on the surface of the adsorbent [23]. This preference is due to CO₂ exhibits greater polarizability ($29.1 \times 10^{-25} \text{ cm}^3$ for CO₂, $25.9 \times 10^{-25} \text{ cm}^3$ for CH₄) and possesses a quadrupole moment ($4.30 \times 10^{-26} \text{ esu cm}^2$ for CO₂, 0 for CH₄) in comparison to CH₄ [24].

The predicted equilibrium isotherms of binary CO₂/CH₄ adsorption were observed to increase with both pressure and CO₂/CH₄ compositions. It means that Co-gallate can offer greater gas uptakes at higher pressure and CO₂/CH₄ compositions approached unity. Given that adsorption is classified as an exothermic process, it was noted that gas uptakes were higher at lower temperature condition.

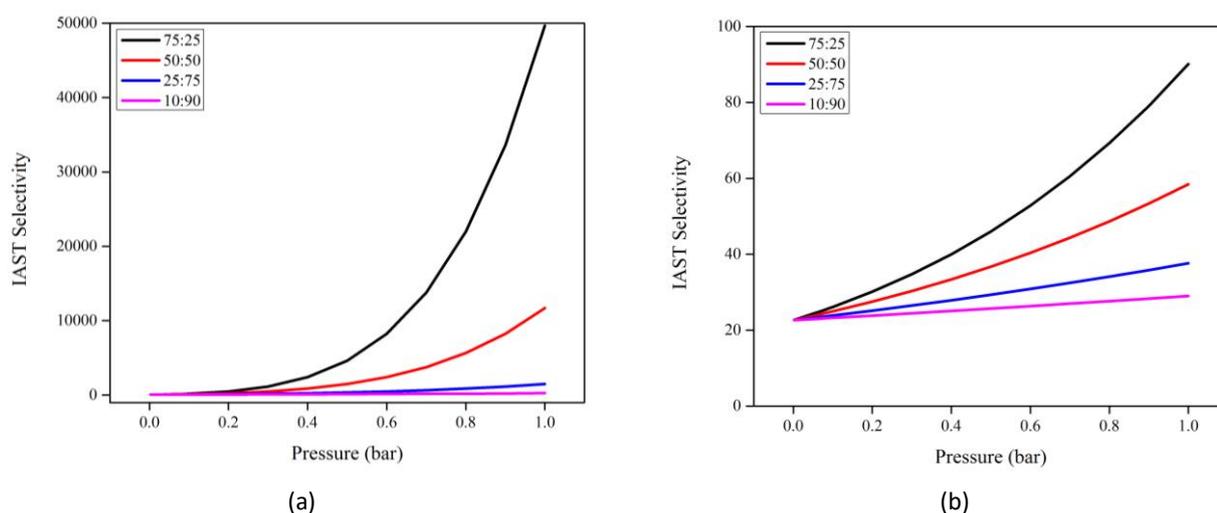
High temperature, being inversely proportional to adsorption, induces the release of adsorbate molecules from the surface of adsorbent. This phenomenon is denoted as desorption, elucidating the diminished adsorption uptake observed under high temperature conditions. The gas uptakes increase with pressure and decrease with temperature, aligns with Le Chatelier's principle [25].

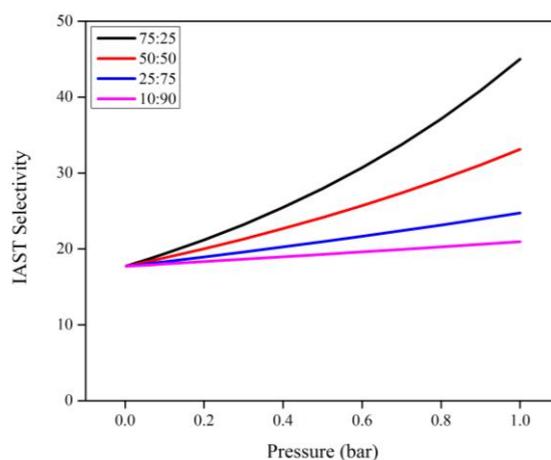
As the CO₂/CH₄ composition approached unity, the predicted CO₂ isotherms shifted to Type I shape particularly at 273 K. The concave curve indicates a rapid increase in CO₂ uptake during initial stage of adsorption due to the accessibility of vacant active sites and gradually occupied until no further adsorption occurred, denoting the saturation was achieved. This corresponds to the completion of a surface monolayer, signifying the gas adsorption limit. Meanwhile, predicted CH₄ isotherms demonstrated plateau pattern with very low uptakes.

3.3 IAST Selectivity

Adsorption selectivity stands as a crucial parameter for assessing the efficacy of an adsorbent in separating gas mixtures. It reflects the contrast in interaction between the different components of the gas mixture and how much the gas component attracted to the adsorbent. In this context, selectivity is straightforwardly explained as the preference of Co-gallate to adsorb CO₂ due to their stronger interaction compared to CH₄. IAST selectivity can be determined from the predicted equilibrium isotherms of binary CO₂/CH₄ adsorption as shown in Figure 3.

With a reduction in temperature, an augmentation in the IAST selectivity was observed, affirming superior performance of Co-gallate at lower temperature for CO₂/CH₄ mixed gas adsorption. IAST selectivity exhibited a rapid escalation as the CO₂/CH₄ compositions approached unity. These values highlight the robust adsorption behaviours of CO₂, indicating a more favourable adsorption affinity for Co-gallate compared to CH₄. In CO₂ capture applications, achieving high selectivity for CO₂ over other components in a gas mixture is imperative.





(c)

Fig. 3. IAST selectivity of Co-gallate for 75:25, 50:50, 25:75 and 10:90 compositions at (a) 273, (b) 298 and (c) 313 K

Nevertheless, an argument can be made that the IAST tended to overpredict the selectivity of the CO₂/CH₄ mixture, particularly at 273 K. This disparity commonly arises when there is a substantial contrast in the adsorption strength between the two components, with CO₂ exhibiting a notably stronger adsorption affinity than CH₄. Moreover, uncertainties emerged when applying IAST in regimes necessitating extrapolation beyond the available experimental data. As mentioned in the literature, IAST possesses one limitation in situations where there are huge differences in the adsorption capacity of components, requiring extrapolations to high pressures and resulting in predictions of multicomponent behaviour that may deviate significantly [26].

4. Conclusions

IAST is an approach used to predict the equilibrium isotherms of binary gas adsorption based on the pure adsorption isotherms. This method starts with the fitting of experimental pure adsorption isotherms using analytical models provided by a Python package. Langmuir model was observed to exhibit the best fit, leading to analytical formula for the spreading pressure. The predicted equilibrium isotherms of binary CO₂/CH₄ adsorption were found to be lower than the experimental data due to co-adsorption behaviours. Nevertheless, the stronger interactions between Co-gallate and CO₂ molecules resulted in higher uptakes compared to CH₄. IAST selectivity was calculated based on the predicted isotherms and demonstrated that the values increased as the CO₂/CH₄ compositions approached unity, indicating CO₂ adsorption was favourable. Therefore, IAST approach suggests that Co-gallate can be commercialized as an effective porous material for CO₂/CH₄ separation.

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