

Sonolytical Decomposition of NHCs in Aqueous Solution

Young-Eok Yoo* and Yasuaki Maeda**

*College of Education, Daegu University, Gyungpook 712-714, Korea

**Graduate School of Engineering, Osaka Prefecture University, 1-1 Gakuen-cho, Sakai, Osaka 599-8531, Japan

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The sonolytic decomposition of NHCs(Nitrogen Heterocyclic Compounds), such as atrazine[6-chloro-*N*-ethyl-*N'*-(1-methylethyl)-1,3,5-triazine-2,4-diamine], simazine(6-chloro-*N,N'*-diethyl-1,3,5-triazine-2,4-diamine), trietazine(6-chloro-*N,N,N'*-triethyl-1,3, 5-triazine-2,4-diamine), in water was investigated at a ultrasound frequency of 200kHz with an acoustic intensity of 200W under argon and air atmospheres. The concentration of NHCs decreased with irradiation, indicating pseudo-first-order kinetics. The rates were in the range 1.06~2.07 ($\times 10^{-2} \text{ min}^{-1}$) under air and 1.30~2.59($\times 10^{-2} \text{ min}^{-1}$)under argon at a concentration of 200 μM of NHCs. The rate of hydroxyl radicals($\cdot\text{OH}$) formation from water is 19.8 $\mu\text{M min}^{-1}$ under argon and 14.7 $\mu\text{M min}^{-1}$ under air in the same sonolysis conditions. The sonolysis of NHCs is effectively inhibited, but not completely, by the addition of *t*-BuOH(2-methyl-2-propanol), which is known to be an efficient $\cdot\text{OH}$ radical scavenger in aqueous sonolysis. This suggests that the main decomposition of NHCs proceeds via reaction with $\cdot\text{OH}$ radical; a thermal reaction also occurs, although its contribution is small. The addition of appropriate amounts of Fenton's reagent [Fe^{2+}] accelerates the decomposition. This is probably due to the regeneration of $\cdot\text{OH}$ radicals from hydrogen peroxide, which would be formed from recombination of $\cdot\text{OH}$ radicals and which may contribute a little to the decomposition.

Key Words : Decomposition, NHCs, Hydroxyl radicals, Fenton's reagent, Thermal reaction, Ultrasonic irradiation

1. Introduction

Irradiation by high power ultrasound in a liquid leads to the acoustic cavitation phenomenon, such as the formation, growth, and collapse of bubbles, accompanied by the generation of local high temperature, pressure, and reactive radical species. Thus, the acoustic cavitation in an aqueous solution results in chemical effects by the ultra-sound^{1~4)}. It has been proposed that three different reaction sites in the cavitation bubble, i.e., the inside of the cavitation bubbles, the gas-liquid interfacial region of the cavitation bubbles, and the bulk solution are present during the ultrasonic irradiation^{5,6)}.

In recent year, many researches on sono-chemical decomposition of contaminants such as chlorobenzene⁷⁾,

aliphatic aldehyde⁸⁾, chlorinated hydrocarbons^{9,10)}, chlorofluorocarbon¹¹⁾, volatile fatty acids¹²⁾, alkylphenol ethoxylate¹³⁾ in aqueous solution have been reported. The ultrasonic irradiation of aqueous systems could be an advantageous method to investigate the reactivity of hydroxyl radicals which play a significant role upon environmental chemistry as well as to investigate the thermal effects caused by ultrasound.

The wide utilization of pesticides for agriculture practices has already contributed to the increasing contamination of the environment. Among the different pollutants, NHCs such as atrazine, simazine and trietazine are priority pollutants to consider since they are widely used all over the world. The removal of such compounds at low levels from water always constitutes a problem. Among the methods employed are either destruction oxidation with ozone^{14~16)}, hydrogen peroxide with different semiconductor suspensions as-

Corresponding Author : Young-Eok Yoo, College of Education, Daegu University, Gyungpook 712- 714, Korea
Phone: +82-53-850-6952
E-mail: youngeok@daegu.ac.kr

sisted by light^{17,18}), adsorption into porous solids such as activated carbon, zeolites. However the decomposition of these compounds by ultrasonic irradiation have not been reported. In this research, we report the results of sonochemical decomposition of NHCs.

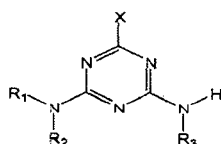
2. Experimental Methods

2.1. Materials

Reagent grade atrazine, simazine and trietazine (c.f., Fig. 1) were purchased from Wako and used without further purification. Argon of five-nine grade was purchased from Osaka Sanso, and all solutions for the experiment were prepared with water purified by a Millipore Milli-Q system ($R = 18.2 \text{ M}\Omega\cdot\text{cm}$).

2.2. Ultrasonic irradiation

Fig. 2 shows the ultrasound irradiation set-up. The ultrasonic reactions were performed using a Kaijo Denki multi-wave ultrasonic generator Model 4021, and a 65 mm diameter barium titan-ate oscillator, operated at 200 kHz, with an input power of 200 W (6



Trivial name	X	R1	R2	R3
Atrazine	Cl	CH ₃ CH ₂	H	CH(CH ₃) ₂
Simazine	Cl	CH ₃ CH ₂	H	CH ₃ CH ₂
Trietazine	Cl	CH ₃ CH ₂	CH ₃ CH ₂	CH ₃ CH ₂

Fig. 1. Chemical structure of used NHCs.

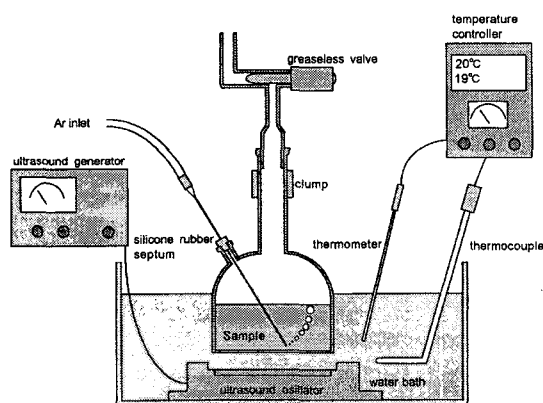


Fig. 2. Schematic description of the ultrasonic irradiation vessel.

W/cm²). The reaction cell was immersed into the water bath, cooled by an external cooler to keep the temperature constant at 25°C. The cylindrical vessel (150 ml) had a side arm with a septum for gas bubbling or/and for extracting the gaseous and liquid samples. The bottom thickness of the vessel was approximately 1.0 mm for good transmission of the acoustic waves during the ultrasonic irradiation. The vessel was mounted at a constant position from the oscillator relative to a nodal plane of the sound wave (3.8 mm: half a length of the ultrasound wave). During the irradiation, the vessel was sealed and sonicated to desired time intervals.

2.3. Identification and determination

Atrazine, simazine and trietazine were analyzed by using a HPLC (Shimadzu LC-6A) equipped with a UV photodetector and an ODS-18 column (6 x 150 mm). A mixture of 100 mM NaClO₄ and CH₃CN (50:50) was used as the eluent with a flow rate of 1.0 ml/min. CO, CO₂ and methane were determined using a GC (Hewlett-Packard 6890) equipped with a thermal conductivity detector, and all the experiments were made in duplicate and the results presented in the paper are the average of two experiment.

3. Results and Discussion

Fig. 3 shows the change in concentration as a function of time during the decomposition of NHCs by ultrasonic irradiation. The initial concentration of all the solutes was 200 μM. The pseudo-first-order rate constants for NHCs decomposition under the conditions of the present work, kt is defined in eq(1) as

$$\ln(C/C_0) = -kt \quad (1)$$

Where C is the NHCs concentration at time t , C_0 is the initial NHCs concentration, and k is the apparent pseudo-first-order rate constants. The apparent rate constants k was calculated from eq(1), these results are presented in Table 1. The degradation rates (10^{-2} min^{-1}) of these solutes under an atmosphere of argon/air followed the order atrazine(2.59/2.07) > trietazine(2.23/1.65) > simazine (1.30/1.06). The decomposition rates of NHCs under argon were faster than that under air. During the sonolysis of an aqueous solute solution, the dependence of nature of the saturating gas, such as the solubility in water and the

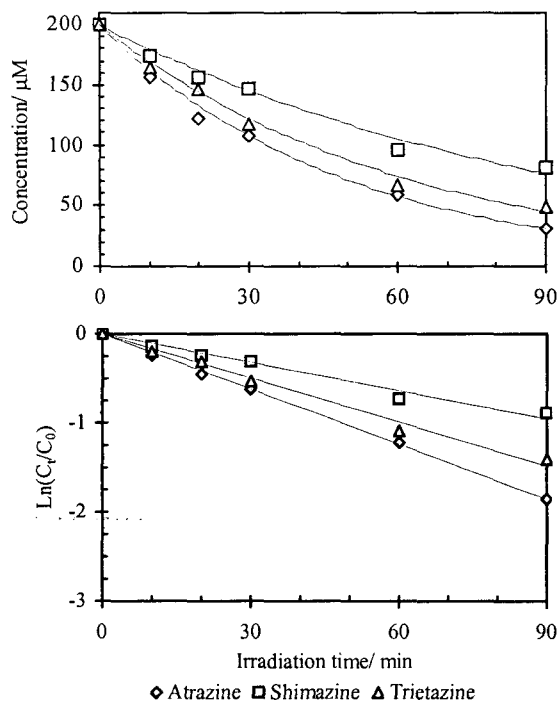


Fig. 3. Change of concentration as a function of the time during the decomposition of NHCs by ultrasonic irradiation under air. The dots represent the logarithm of ratio between actual(C_t) and initial (C_0) concentration.

Table 1. Results of kinetic data for decomposition of NHCs by ultrasonic irradiation

NHCs	k^a		k_{OH}^b
	in air	in argon	
Atrazine	2.07	2.59	4.7
Trietazine	1.65	2.23	3.6
Simazine	1.06	1.30	1.7

a: Pseudo-First-Order rate constants (10^{-2} min^{-1})

b: Rate constants of hydroxyl radical (k_{OH}) reaction ($\text{M}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$)

thermal conductivity was observed in the same manner as our previous studies^{24,25}.

This implied that the maximum temperature inside the cavitation bubble, when acoustic cavitation bubbles were violently collapsed, depends on the ratio of the specific heat ratio ($r = C_p/C_v$) and the thermal conductivity of the saturating gas. In addition, the formation of reactive radical species ($\bullet\text{OH}$, $\bullet\text{OOH}$) would be enhanced because of the high temperature inside the collapsing cavitation bubble. Table 2 indicates the decomposition rates of NHCs in aqueous solution sa-

Table 2. Results of kinetic data for decomposition of NHCs by ultrasonic irradiation

Atmosphere	k^a	C_p/C_v (atm 300k) ^b
Argon	2.59 ± 0.27	1.670
Oxygen	-	1.369
Air	2.07 ± 0.21	1.402
Nitrogen	1.96 ± 0.19	1.401

a: Decomposition rate constants (10^{-2} min^{-1})

b: From Hilsenrth et al., "Table of Thermal Properties of Gases", NBS Circular, 564(1995).

turated with various gases. The order of the decomposition rate is as follows; argon > nitrogen \geq air. Specific heat ratio of the envelope gas used are Table 2, and results show that the decomposition rate was increased with increasing r value of the envelope gas. Fig. 4 shows a pH change of the sample solution during sonication of atrazine under air.

The pH dropped from its initial value of 12.5 to 5.2 at the end of run. It is known that nitrate and/or nitrite anion are produced during a sonication of aqueous solution under air atmosphere and thus, the pH of the aqueous solution usually decreases with sonication time under air atmosphere. In order to examine the effect of pH on decomposition of NHCs by irradiation ultra-sound, the decomposition rate of NHCs in buffer solution was measured at various pH ranging from 4.3 to 11. As shown in Fig. 5, the rate in creased slightly with decreasing pH of the sample solution.

To Enhance the decomposition efficiency, a more effective utilization of $\bullet\text{OH}$ radical is desirable. It is expected that Fe^{2+} ions will regenerate $\bullet\text{OH}$ radicals

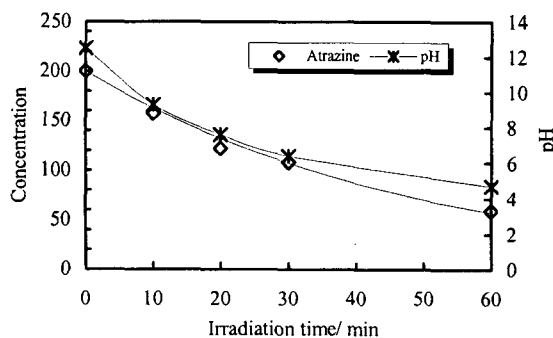


Fig. 4. Change in atrazine concentration and pH versus irradiation time under air.

[Atrazine]_i = 200 µM, initial pH = 12.5.

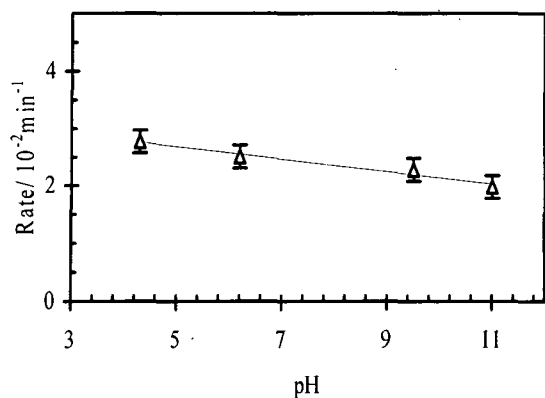


Fig. 5. Effect of pH on the decomposition rate of atrazine by ultrasonic irradiation under air.

from H_2O_2 , thus the efficiency of ultrasonic decomposition of atrazine will increase by presence of an appropriate concentration of Fe^{2+} ions.

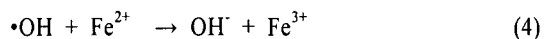
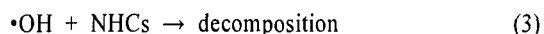
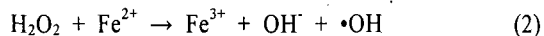


Fig. 6 show the effect of Fe^{2+} ions on the decomposition of atrazine. The decomposition of atrazine was enhanced in the presence of Fe^{2+} : the rate increased to 2.1 times ($4.33 \times 10^{-2} \text{ min}^{-1}$) at 1.0 mM of Fe^{2+} concentration and to 1.6 times ($2.69 \times 10^{-2} \text{ min}^{-1}$) at 2.0 mM. The results suggest that there is an optimum Fe^{2+} concentration for atrazine decomposition with maximal efficiency and that an excessive amount of Fe^{2+} leads to a decrease in the decomposition rate due to the scavenging of $\cdot\text{OH}$ radicals by Fe^{2+} ions as

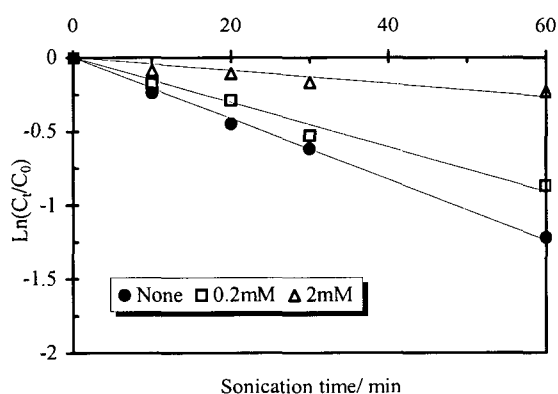


Fig. 6. Effect of Fe^{2+} on the decomposition of atrazine by ultrasonic irradiation under air.

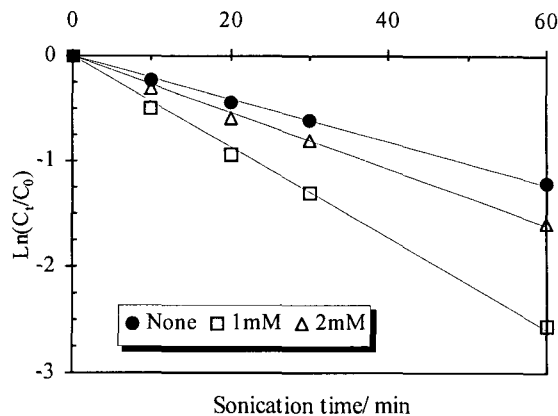


Fig. 7. Effect of *t*-BuOH addition on the decomposition of atrazine by ultrasonic irradiation under air.

in eq.(4).

The contribution of the radical reaction by $\cdot\text{OH}$ radicals was examined by addition of *t*-BuOH, which is known as an effective $\cdot\text{OH}$ radical scavenger, into the sample solution. Result is indicated in Fig. 7. The decomposition of atrazine was suppressed about 78% by the *t*-BuOH addition. This result suggests that decomposition of about 78% proceeds via radical reaction and that of about 28% via thermal reaction in sonochemical decomposition of NHCs in water at the present experimental conditions.

4. Conclusions

The decomposition system using ultrasound irradiation processes was applied to the decomposition of typical nitrogen heterocyclic compounds (NHCs) such as atrazine, simazine and trietazine. The concentration of NHCs decreased with irradiation, indicating pseudo-first-order kinetics. The decomposition rates were in the range $1.06\sim 2.07 (x 10^{-2} \text{ min}^{-1})$ under air and $1.30\sim 2.59 (x 10^{-2} \text{ min}^{-1})$ under argon at a concentration of $200 \mu\text{M}$ of NHCs.

The main results are summarized as follows:

First, this treatment method of ultrasound irradiation is very simple and comfortable for decomposition of NHCs to compare to other treatments have developed.

Second, this treatment has ability to decomposition for NHCs over 50~75% in short treatment time. Also it is very particle method for the price that is very cheap to operate.

Finally, this treatment has high possibility for decomposition NHCs, so that it can be expected highly

as a new treatment method in near future.

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