Supplementary data for

Mechanism of asphaltene aggregation induced by supercritical CO₂: insight from the molecular dynamics simulation

Bing Liu *, Jiawei Li, Chao Qi, Xiaoqi Li, Tingyi Mai, Jun Zhang *

School of Science, China University of Petroleum, Qingdao 266580, Shandong, China
1. The process of asphaltene aggregation

![Fig.S1. Perspective view of oil-scCO\textsubscript{2} system. Snapshots are taken at (a) 0ns (b) 1.2 ns (c) 3.5 ns and (d) 10 ns. Color scheme: red, asphaltene; green, resin; blue, aromatic; yellow, saturate; ScCO\textsubscript{2} is not shown for clarity.](image)

To visualize the process of selective extraction and asphaltene aggregation, perspective view of oil-scCO\textsubscript{2} system were reported in Fig. S1. It can be seen that saturate and aromatic are extracted firstly, as shown in Fig. S1(b). During the extraction of resin, the distance among asphaltenes increases significantly, as shown in Fig. S1(c). Finally, asphaltenes aggregate and form a compact nanoaggregate after other components are extracted, as shown in Fig. S1(d). The formation of asphaltene aggregate coincides with experimental results [1,2].

2. The potential and temperature of system
After 6-7 ns, system’s potential energy essentially halted decline, as shown in Fig. S2(A). System’s temperature was controlled around 372.15 K during simulation, as shown in Fig. S2(B). Base on that, equilibrium is considered has been attained.

3. RDF

2-D molecular number density maps do not include the information content in Z-direction, to assess quantify certainties the radial distribution functions between oil components and CO$_2$ are analyzed. It can be seen that saturate, aromatic and saturate components are more soluble in scCO$_2$ at 20 ns than 3 ns. By contrast, asphaltene is more insoluble at 20 ns than 3 ns, in other words, more compact in scCO$_2$.

4. PMF calculation
In order to investigate the effective interaction among oil components using umbrella sampling method [3], 6 simulation boxes were established as shown in Fig. S4. The upper two boxes contain two asphaltene molecules; the middle two boxes contain one asphaltene molecule and one resin molecule; and the bottom two boxes contain one asphaltene molecule and one aromatic molecule. In addition, the right three boxes fill with CO$_2$ molecules. Then the COM of one molecule was pulled along Z-axis while the other one was restrained.

References


and deposition during CO$_2$ miscible injection into oil reservoirs, Fuel 160 (2015) 132-139.