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# Towards synthetic fuels production from biomass gasification: tar content at low temperatures

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## Abstract

Biomass conversion into biofuels and biogas is a promising way for power and heat generation. Lately, research has focused on the production of biomethane based on biomass gasification followed by methanation as an alternative to fossil natural gas. The challenge of this process remains in the intensive gas cleaning and required tar removal. In order to study tar removal from the producer gas downstream biomass gasification, solid–vapor and liquid–vapor equilibrium must be known for different tar concentrations, ranging between 0.001 and 100 g.Nm<sup>-3</sup>. To assess tar removal by condensation at low temperatures, psychrometric charts are developed. Since the composition of tar is complex, toluene, phenol, indene, naphthalene and fluoranthene are selected as tar representatives. Each component is studied separately in four different producer gas compositions formed mainly of hydrogen, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide and methane in addition to water and nitrogen. Methods for calculating saturation, isenthalpic and constant relative concentration lines are presented. Psychrometric charts of the different tar components are finally plotted at atmospheric pressure. Results show that temperature of 196.15 K is required to reduce the tar content to 0.001 g.Nm<sup>-3</sup>.

Keywords: tar removal, biomass gasification, thermodynamic properties, psychrometric chart.

## 1. Introduction

With the growing interest in fighting against global warming and carbon dioxide emissions, researchers are looking to replace fossil fuels by renewable energy sources. Biomass is one of these energy sources that can serve as a fossil fuel alternative. Converting biomass into bioenergy can be done through biomass gasification. Gasification process converts organic matter into a mixture of gas, tar and char using steam, oxygen, or air as a gasifying agent. The gas is a mixture of carbon monoxide (CO), carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), hydrogen (H<sub>2</sub>), steam (H<sub>2</sub>O), nitrogen (N<sub>2</sub>) and methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) in addition to tar vapors and some other impurities [1]. This gas mixture is known as producer gas and its composition depends on the used gasifying agent as well as on the gasifier type. The end use of the producer gas is limited due to the formation of multiple by-products, such as NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, fly ashes and tars within the gasification process [2].

Among the pollutants, tar removal remains the hardest one to deal with, forming the main drawback of biomass gasification [3]. Tar removal can be carried out inside the gasifier (primary method) or downstream the gasifier (secondary method). As the temperature decreases in the downstream equipment, tars in the gas phase will condense forming a sticky deposit that foul, plug and block heat exchangers, engines and filters. Moreover, tar is one of the main precursors for carbon formation causing catalytic deactivation due to coke deposition [4,5].

The allowable tar content remaining in the producer gas after its treatment is defined by the desired application [2,6]. Lower restrictions on tar concentration are set for combined heat and power generation (CHP), while much stricter limitations are defined for chemical synthesis processes involving a catalyst, such as Fischer-Tropsch, methanation and methanol synthesis. As for CHP, it is enough to reduce the dew point of the tar to a temperature below the lowest one in the process to avoid its deposition. While for chemical synthesis, the catalyst is easily deactivated due to the presence of tar even at low concentrations. At temperatures lower than 1373 K, tar and light hydrocarbons are decomposed into coke that deactivates catalysts [4].

Recently, production of methane based on biomass gasification is gaining attention as a possible route for replacing fossil natural gas. Combining a methanation step with biomass gasification requires intensive gas cleaning and compression. To ensure a proper operation, the tar content remaining in the producer gas prior to the methanation step should be less than 1 mg.Nm<sup>-3</sup> [7].

Tar is defined, according to the tar measurement protocol [8], as hydrocarbons with molecular weight higher than benzene. It is hard to predict the composition of the tar produced during gasification since it depends on many factors such as the type of biomass, gasifying agent, reactor type, operating temperature and pressure. Thus, to facilitate the comprehension of tar composition, tar can be classified according to different characteristics. The most adapted classification is presented in Table 1 where tar compounds are divided into 5 classes according to their condensability and solubility.

After biomass gasification, the tar content in the producer gas varies between 1 g.Nm<sup>-3</sup> and 100 g.Nm<sup>-3</sup> according to the adapted process [10] even if primary methods for tar removal were integrated within the gasifier. Thus, in all cases, secondary methods are required to reduce the tar content to 1 mg.Nm<sup>-3</sup>. Up to now, very few researchers were able to reduce the tar content to this level. The elimination of tar by a single step via a physical/mechanical method is not efficient [3,11] and results in a tar content between 5 g.Nm<sup>-3</sup> and 30 g.Nm<sup>-3</sup>. Combining two physical methods for tar treatment increases its removal efficiency and yields a producer gas with a tar content around 250 mg.Nm<sup>-3</sup>, noting that benzene and toluene were not taken into account [12]. Tar reduction via thermal cracking reduces the tar content to a value between 5 and 7 g.Nm<sup>-3</sup> at high temperatures (1523 K) leading to a high operating cost [13]. Catalytic cracking seems to be a promising method for tar reduction. This method eliminates around 99% of tars, yielding a tar content of 0.16 g.Nm<sup>-3</sup>. However, the high tar removal rate is limited in time due to the rapid deactivation of the catalyst within few hours of operation as a result of coke deposition [14,15]. The highest tar removal efficiencies were achieved by combining at least two operational units. The first unit is assimilated to a pre-treatment step. It increases the lifetime of the second step and reduces its cost by removing the heavy fraction of tar, while lighter tar compounds are being

removed in the second step. Some examples of these two-step techniques are OLGA, which combines a collector followed by an absorber [16], oil or water scrubber followed by activated carbon bed [17], thermal cracking followed by an adsorption bed [18] and absorption followed by catalytic cracking [19]. It was also seen that the reduction of tar content in most of the cases was insufficient for combining gasification and methanation.

**Table 1**  
Tar classification with respect to their molecular weight [3,6,9].

Tar Class	Class Name	Property	Compounds
1	GC <sup>a</sup> -undetectable tar	Very heavy tars compounds that cannot be detected by GC	Determined by subtracting the GC-detectable tar fraction from the total gravimetric tar
2	Heterocyclic	Tar containing hetero atoms; very soluble in water	Pyridine, phenol, cresols, quinoline, isoquinoline, dibenzophenol
3	Light aromatic (1 ring)	Light hydrocarbons with single ring, do not pose a problem regarding condensability and solubility	Toluene, ethylbenzene, xylenes, styrene
4	Light PAHs <sup>b</sup> compounds (2–3 rings)	2 and 3 rings, condense at low temperature at very low concentrations	Indene, naphthalene, methylnaphthalene, biphenyl, acenaphthalene, fluorene, phenanthrene, anthracene
5	Heavy PAHs compounds (4–7 rings)	3 rings and more, condense at high temperatures even at low concentrations	Fluoranthene, pyrene, chrysene, perylene, coronene

<sup>a</sup> Gas Chromatography

<sup>b</sup> Polyaromatic Hydrocarbons

The potential use and temperature ranges of the two steps low temperature removal process, for reducing the tar content down to 1 mg.Nm<sup>-3</sup>, is assessed based on the condensing temperatures of tars. The first step operates at room temperature, while the second one operates at lower temperatures. Adapting low temperature ensures the condensation of tars by cooling the producer gas to a temperature below tar dew point for a concentration of 1 mg.Nm<sup>-3</sup>. Different ways could be adapted in order to cool the producer gas. Suggesting the use of low temperature tar removal offers the possibility to reduce dramatically the content of light tars in the producer gas, while generating condensate fractions of potential market value. Handling condensates, however, remains the main drawback of low temperature tar removal. Formation of solid phase layers could lead to clogging of heat exchangers, as well as a dramatic reduction on heat transfer. For this last, the energy efficiency of the process would decline rapidly and render the process economically unviable. Managing the solid phase formation in heat exchangers is a topic for which technological solutions may be available, for example, de-waxing pig systems (pipe cleaning). Another option is to cycle the temperature of heat exchangers. However, the analysis of such solutions are beyond the scope of this paper.

In order to analyze the condensation behavior of tar components at low temperature and assess the energy required to condense tar compounds, psychrometric charts for tar components in producer gas are plotted. Aspen Properties V10 was used to find the phase equilibrium composition at saturation, as well as assessing the impact of gas mixtures compositions at different temperatures. Equations were developed for calculating the enthalpy of mixtures and the constant relative concentration lines. As mentioned earlier, the producer gas is a multi-component mixture of CO, CO<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>O and some impurities. This composition is affected by the gasification process and its parameters. The psychrometric charts are used to illustrate the tar content in the producer gas at different temperatures and the energy required for condensing tars at different concentrations.

As a part of the state of the art, an open source tool developed by the Energy research Center of the Netherlands (ECN) is available online [20]. This tool enables the calculations of the dew point for a single tar component or a mixture of tar components. It was developed to calculate the temperature at which tar condensation starts for a given tar content expressed in g.Nm<sup>-3</sup> on wet basis [21]. Tar vapors are assumed as ideal gas and have an ideal mixing behavior. The main disadvantage of this tool is that the composition of the producer gas is not well defined and cannot be modified; hence, dew point calculations are limited.

In order to study the impact of the producer gas composition on the condensation behavior of tar components, the dew point of tar components is studied for four different producer gas compositions. Those compositions are selected in a way to cover producer gas compositions obtained from several types of gasifiers and gasifying agents. This enables the comparison of the simulated results with those obtained from the ECN tool. Then, a special attention will be given to the energy required for the condensation of tar by finding the enthalpy of mixtures at several points. The selected physical property method to be used in Aspen simulations and calculations is Non-Random Two-Liquid model (NRTL) since it can handle any mixture of polar and non-polar components. It is widely used for phase equilibria calculations (vapor-liquid and liquid-liquid equilibrium) [22].

This paper is organized as follows: methodology and assumptions are presented in section 2, results are shown in section 3; finally, conclusions are drawn and perspectives are provided in section 4.

## 2. Assumptions and methodology

In this paper, four producer gas compositions are considered in order to study their impact on tar dew point. Single tar component will be considered at each time. The selection criteria of tar components and producer gas composition are explained later on.

### 2.1. Tar representative components

Since tar is a complex mixture, some tar compounds are selected as representatives components per class for which psychrometric charts are plotted separately. The criteria for the selection of tar representative components are:

- the lightest component in each class should be selected, thus the rest of the components in the same class will condense eventually at higher temperatures.
- the fraction of the component should not be negligible.

Table 2 summarizes some physical properties, the class and the mass percentage of the most common components forming the tar. Based on the selection criteria, it can be deduced from Table 2 that tar representative components are phenol for class 2, toluene for class 3, indene and naphthalene for class 4 and fluoranthene for class 5. Two components from class 4 were considered since indene is the lightest one, while naphthalene is present in an important amount and it was considered as tar representative in other studies [11,23,24].

**Table 2**  
Physical properties of common tar components.

Component	Boiling point (K)	Freezing point (K)	Molecular weight (g.mol <sup>-1</sup> )	Class	Mass percentage excl. benzene <sup>[25-27]</sup> (%)
Benzene	353.24	278.68	78.11		
o-cresol	464.15	304.19	108.10	2	1-10
2,6-xylene	474.22	318.76	122.10	3	0.5-2.5
Toluene	383.78	178.18	92.13	3	8-24
o-xylene	411.51	286.41	106.10	3	1-10
Indene	455.77	271.70	116.16	4	2-12
Phenol	454.99	314.06	94.11	2	6-12
Naphthalene	491.14	353.43	128.17	4	10-30
2-methyl-naphthalene	514.26	307.73	142.19	4	4
Biphenyl	528.15	362.65	154.20	4	0-2
Acenaphthalene	543.15	342.35	152.19	4	3-7
Acenaphthene	550.54	366.56	154.20	4	0.5
Fluorene	570.44	387.94	166.21	4	0-2
Phenanthrene	610.03	372.38	178.22	4	2-4
Anthracene	615.18	488.93	178.22	4	0.2-4
Fluoranthene	655.95	383.33	202.25	5	1-2.5
Pyrene	667.95	423.81	202.25	5	0-2

## 2.2. Producer gas composition

As previously mentioned, different producer gas compositions are studied in order to check their impact on the dew point of tar components. The main variation in the composition is the mole fraction of steam ( $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ) and nitrogen ( $\text{N}_2$ ). Steam gasification, for direct and indirect gasifier, yields a producer gas with a high moisture content (30 to 60 mol% on wet basis). While air gasification yields a producer gas with a high nitrogen content (40 to 60 mol% on dry basis). The molar fraction of the remaining components is also affected by the gasifying agent. However, this variation is minor in comparison with the variation of the steam and nitrogen content. Table 3 illustrates the different producer gas compositions used in the calculations to build the psychrometric charts. The first case in Table 3 corresponds to a dual fluidized bed (DFB) gasifier or indirect gasifier where wood-based biomass is being gasified using steam as the gasifying agent [17]. This gasifier yields a producer gas composition suitable for methanation purposes, as it is inert free with high hydrogen to carbon ratios [23,28]. The second and the third cases correspond to a bubbling fluidized bed gasifier operating with air as a gasifying agent. Case 2 [29] corresponds to the gasification of pine wood at 1073 K with an equivalence ratio ( $ER$ ) of 0.25. For case 3 [30], refused-derived fuel (RDF) is gasified at 1093 K with an  $ER$  equal to 0.21. The last case (case 4) represents a sawmill waste downdraft gasifier that uses air as a gasifying agent yielding a producer gas with a low water and high inert contents [31]. The calculated dew points of tar compounds are compared with those obtained from the online tool provided by ECN for the same tar concentration. The composition of the producer gas used by ECN for the calculations of the tar dew point based on tar concentration is not given, but the calculations were based on an atmospheric bubbling fluidized bed gasifier operating at 1123 K. The calculation of tar dew point, forming the saturation line, is explained in the sequel.

The presence of large amounts of water in the producer gas affects tar dew point as well as the enthalpy, mainly for temperatures lower than the water dew point. The initial tar content was set to  $100 \text{ g.Nm}^{-3}$ . Note that the presence of water in the mixture imposes the use of a suitable property method for polar mixtures. In this paper, NRTL is used.

**Table 3**  
Different raw gas compositions in wet basis used for the calculation of tar dew point.

	Case 1 [17]	Case 2 [29]	Case 3 [30]	Case 4 [31]
$\text{H}_2$ , mol%	27.8	9.6	6.0	11.0
$\text{CO}$ , mol%	16.7	14.4	10.9	20.0
$\text{CO}_2$ , mol%	13.8	11.2	12.3	10.0
$\text{CH}_4$ , mol%	6.0	4.0	5.7	3.0
$\text{C}_2\text{H}_n$ , mol%	1.6	2.0	4.6	-
$\text{N}_2$ , mol%	3.7	38.8	48.0	50.0
$\text{H}_2\text{O}$ , mol%	30.4	20.0	12.5	6

## 2.3. Saturation and constant relative concentration lines

Calculations are based on an initial concentration of  $100 \text{ g of tar.Nm}^{-3}$  of raw gas for each tar component. This concentration was selected since it is equal to the highest tar level that could be

obtained from the gasification. In this section, “raw gas” term corresponds to the mixture of components forming the producer gas excluding tar compounds. Same calculations are repeated for each one of the previously selected tar components: phenol, toluene, indene, naphthalene and fluoranthene.

Points of the saturation line for each case were calculated at first. The saturation line, liquid-vapor above the triple point and solid-vapor below it, represents the limit at which tar condensation in the producer gas starts. The vapor fraction ( $VF$ ) was calculated at different temperatures ( $T_i$ ) in order to detect the temperature at which condensation begins ( $VF \neq 1$ ). At this temperature, the gas phase molar fraction ( $y_j$ ) was calculated to compute the amount of tar condensed using a defined property method in Aspen Properties, where  $j$  represents the different components of the producer gas. The amount of tar remaining in the gas phase is calculated according to Eq (1) and Eq (2) where  $w_{tar}$  is defined as the tar content, in  $\text{kg.kg}^{-1}$  raw gas, and it is equal to the ratio of tar mass ( $m_{tar}$ ) to the raw gas mass ( $m_{raw\ gas}$ ). Tar concentration ( $C_{tar}$ ) is deduced from Eq (3) in  $\text{mg of tar.Nm}^{-3}$  of raw gas. Same calculations are repeated for different temperatures. The latter decreases with an interval of 10 K until reaching a tar concentration of 1  $\text{mg of tar.Nm}^{-3}$  of raw gas. The equations presented below (from Eq (1) to Eq (7)) are analogous to the equations used for the psychrometric chart of humid air, however applied for other components.

$$P_{sat}(T_i) = y_{tar}(T_i) \cdot P_{total} \quad (1)$$

$$w_{tar} = \frac{m_{tar}}{m_{raw\ gas}} = \frac{P_{sat}(T_i)}{P_{total} - P_{sat}(T_i)} \cdot \frac{M_{tar}}{M_{raw\ gas}} \quad (2)$$

$$C_{tar} = \frac{w_{tar}}{\rho_{raw\ gas}} \cdot 10^6 \quad (3)$$

where  $M_{tar}$  and  $M_{raw\ gas}$  are respectively tar and raw gas molecular masses in  $\text{g.mol}^{-1}$ ,  $P_{sat}$  is the saturated tar partial pressure in the raw gas in Pa,  $P_{total}$  is the total mixture pressure and it is equal to the atmospheric pressure in Pa and  $\rho_{raw\ gas}$  is the density of the raw gas in  $\text{kg.m}^{-3}$ .

Constant tar relative concentration ( $\phi$ ) curves are then plotted.  $\phi$  is expressed in Eq (4) and it is equal to the ratio of the tar partial pressure in the raw gas ( $P_{tar}$ ) to the saturated tar partial pressure at the same temperature ( $T_i$ ). To plot those curves, tar partial pressure was calculated at each  $T_i$  for a fixed value of  $\phi$  according to Eq (5). Tar vapors are assumed to behave as ideal gases. For each value of  $\phi$ , ranging between 10% and 90%, and for a total pressure of one atmosphere, the tar content was calculated for different temperatures according to Eq (6). Finally, tar content is plotted against the temperature for each value of  $\phi$ .

$$\phi = \frac{P_{tar}(T_i)}{P_{sat}(T_i)} \quad (4)$$

$$P_{tar}(T_i) = \phi \cdot P_{sat}(T_i) = \phi \cdot y_{tar} \cdot P_{total} \quad (5)$$

$$w_{tar} = \frac{\phi \cdot y_{tar}(T_i)}{1 - \phi \cdot y_{tar}(T_i)} \cdot \frac{M_{tar}}{M_{raw\ gas}} \quad (6)$$



#### 2.4. Saturation enthalpy and isenthalpic lines

Isenthalpic lines help in finding, at any condition, the enthalpy of the mixture. They join several points together having an equal enthalpy. The enthalpy of the gas mixture is calculated per kilogram of dry raw gas. Calculations begin by finding the enthalpy at saturation. Plotting enthalpies at saturation versus the temperature yields the saturation enthalpy line. In Fig. 1, points 1 and 2 of the saturation line are considered. Tar contents, dew points and the enthalpies of those points are known. Note that point 1 has the highest dew point. A constant tar content line, drawn as a horizontal line starting from point 2, intersects with the constant enthalpy line of point 1. The intersection point is denoted as point 3. Consequently, the following equations can be concluded:  $h_1=h_3$ ,  $w_{tar,2}=w_{tar,3}$  and  $w_{wat,2}=w_{wat,3}$  where  $w_{wat}$  corresponds to the water content, in  $\text{kg.kg}^{-1}$  raw gas. The enthalpy of the raw gas at any point, expressed in  $\text{kJ.kg}^{-1}$ , is given in Eq (7). This equation describes the conventional enthalpy calculation at dry bulb conditions considering mainly gas and liquid phases. As operating temperatures considered for tar removal are below 273 K, the risk of ice and tar deposit formation exists. Even though preliminary calculations show limited discrepancies between calculated and existing data on psychrometric charts for water, the assessment of the impact of considering L-V or S-L-V phases on enthalpy calculations including water and tars is needed. This is beyond the scope of this work and will be dealt with in future as enthalpy miscalculations could lead to overconsumption of cooling utilities, in particular at low temperatures.

$$h = C_{p,raw\ gas} \cdot T_{DB} + w_{tar} [h_{fg,tar\ (273\ K)} + C_{p,tar,vap} \cdot T_{DP,tar}] + w_{wat} [h_{fg,wat\ (273\ K)} + C_{p,wat,vap} \cdot T_{DP,wat}] \quad (7)$$

where  $C_{p,raw\ gas}$  is the heat capacity of the mixture excluding water and tar component,  $C_{p,tar,vap}$  and  $C_{p,wat,vap}$  are respectively the heat capacity of the tar component and water in the vapor phase expressed in  $\text{kJ.kg}^{-1}.\text{K}^{-1}$ ,  $T_{DB}$  is the dry bulb temperature expressed in K,  $h_{fg,tar}$  is the latent heat of vaporization or the latent heat of sublimation of tar component depending on its triple point expressed in  $\text{kJ.kg}^{-1}$ ,  $h_{fg,wat}$  is the latent heat of vaporization of water expressed in  $\text{kJ.kg}^{-1}$  and  $T_{DP}$  is the dew point temperature expressed in K.

By solving Eq (7) for points 1, 2 and 3, Eq (8) can be deduced. The latter is solved for  $T_{DB,3}$ , thus the coordinates of a new point on the isenthalpic line are found. To reach better accuracy, three-to-four points are considered in the plot of the constant enthalpy line.

$$h_3 - h_2 = C_{p,raw\ gas,3} \cdot T_{DB,3} - C_{p,raw\ gas,2} \cdot T_{DB,2} \quad (8)$$

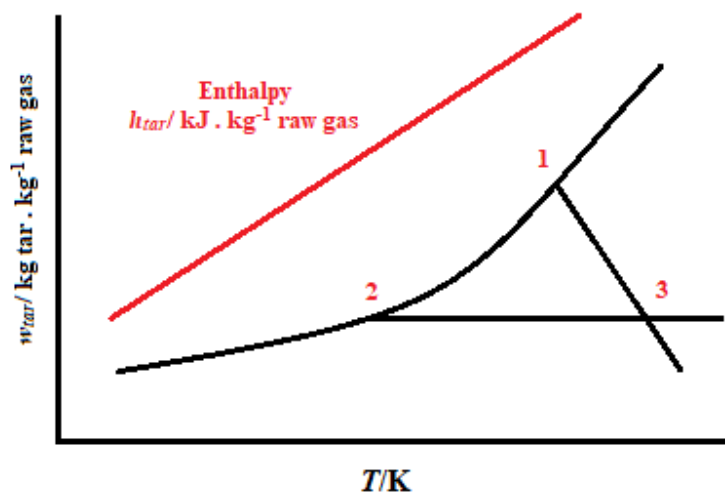


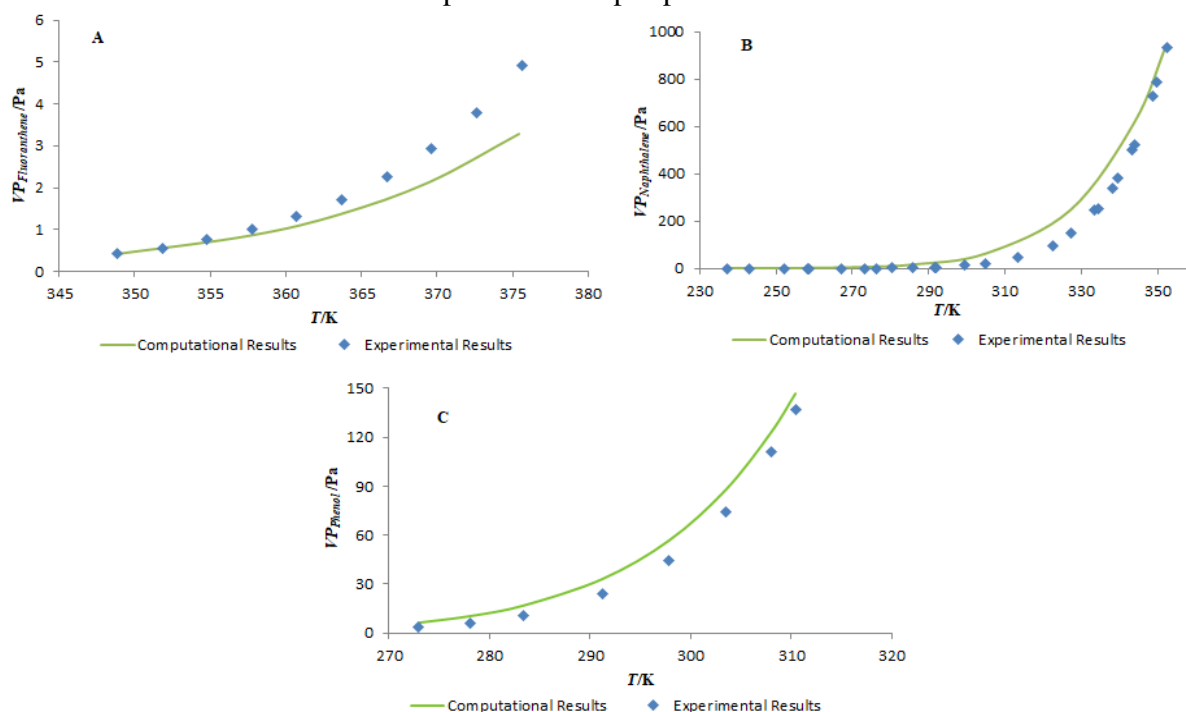
Fig. 1. Illustration of the constant enthalpy line calculations.

When the condensation takes place at a temperature lower than the triple point (in solid phase), the built-in correlations in Aspen Properties do not consider the solid phase condensation and may yield non-accurate results. Studying the solid condensation behavior for each tar compound separately is very time consuming since the composition of tar is complicated and encloses too many compounds. In addition, developing a solid phase characteristic curve for all the compounds is not necessary. Therefore, we investigate in a general way to develop a solid condensation characteristic curve by expanding the liquid condensation laws into the solid phase. To justify the decision of expanding the laws into the solid phase, a comparison between the vapor pressure obtained using Aspen and that found in the literature for multiple compounds is done for a defined temperature interval below the triple point. The comparison was done for fluoranthene, naphthalene and phenol. Note that a comparison with the solid vapor pressure of indene was not done since the latter was not found in the literature review. Similarly for the toluene, which triple point is too low. It is important to mention that the comparison was done based on dry basis raw gas composition. Otherwise, the curves could not be compared since the condensation of water affects the tar condensation.

### 3. Results and discussion

#### 3.1. Solid – gas equilibrium

A comparison between experimental vapor pressures and calculated vapor pressures based on Aspen using built-in correlations for solid – gas equilibrium is illustrated in Fig. 2. The experimental values of vapor pressures for temperatures lower than the triple point for fluoranthene [32], naphthalene [33] and phenol [34] were taken from literature studies. The agreement between the experimental values and the calculated ones shown in Fig. 2 indicates the possibility of extending the correlations used for gas and liquid phases to cover the solid phase. It should be mentioned that the vapor pressure taken from the literature review are for mixtures of fluoranthene, naphthalene and phenol in air and not in producer gas. This might lead to a certain deviation between calculated and experimental vapor pressure values.

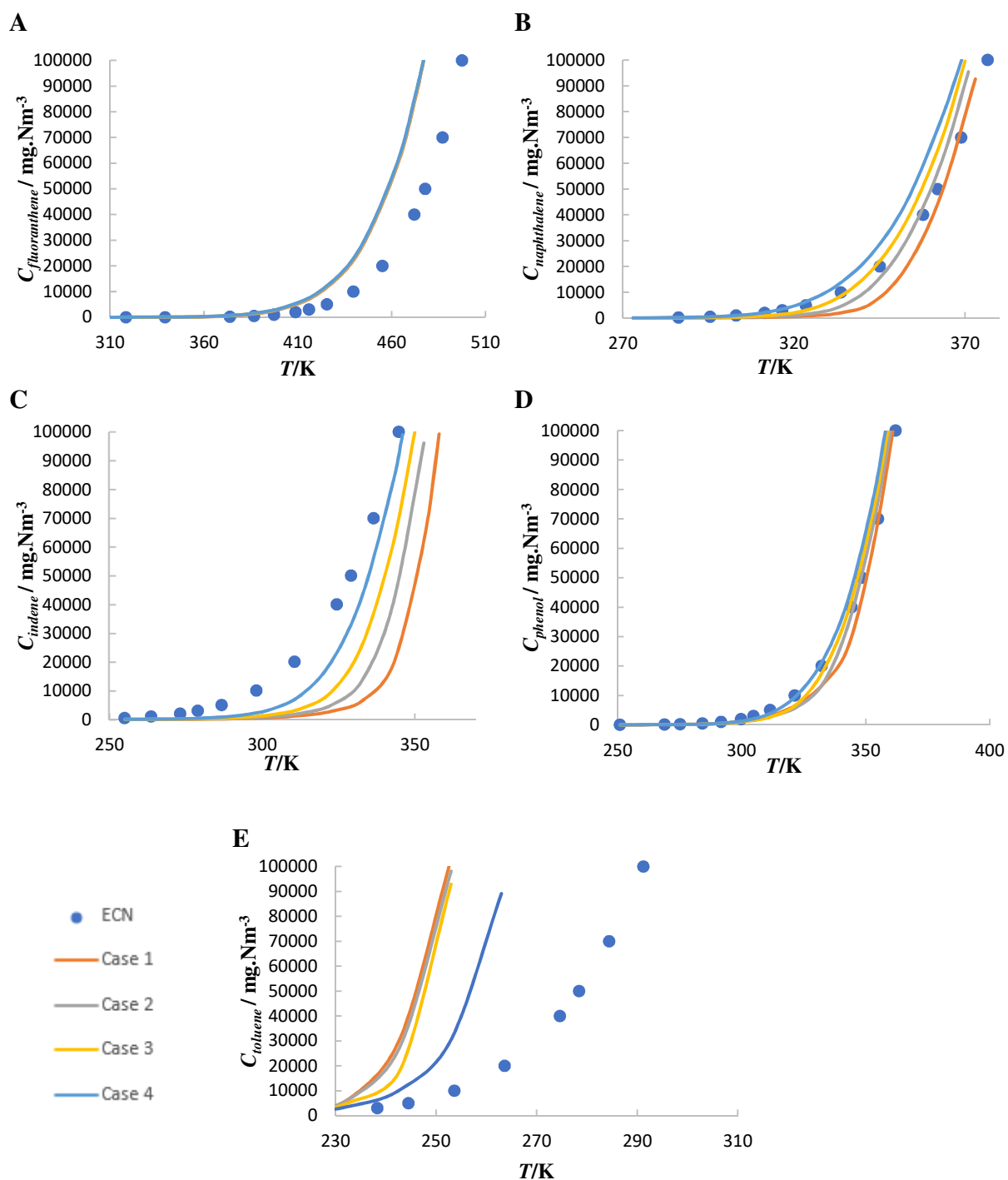


**Fig. 2.** Comparison between the experimental vapor pressures (VP) and the calculated ones based on Aspen correlations for A) fluoranthene [32], B) naphthalene [33] and C) phenol [34] at temperatures lower than the triple point.

#### 3.2. Tar dew point

After validating that the correlations of Aspen could be extended to cover also the solid - gas equilibrium, the dew point of tar representative components can be calculated. A comparison between the calculated dew point of those components and the ones retrieved from the ECN tool is completed. The different cases summarized previously in Table 3 are considered to check the impact of the producer gas composition on tar condensation. The calculations are carried out for a single tar component at a time. Fig. 3 groups all the results calculated for the different producer gas compositions and compare them to the dew point obtained from the ECN online tool for the same tar concentration. It can be observed from Fig. 3 that the dew point of tar components

varies according to the producer gas composition except for fluoranthene. Note that by decreasing the temperature, tar and water initially contained in the producer gas are both being condensed.



**Fig. 3.** Dew point of A) fluoranthene, B) naphthalene, C) indene, D) phenol and E) toluene in producer gas mixtures for different compositions.

The dew point of fluoranthene (Fig. 3 A) is expected to be the highest one since this latter is the heaviest component. ECN stated that their online tool overestimates the dew point of tar by 7 to 14 K at temperature higher than 440 K. This explains the large deviation between the dew points calculated and those obtained from their online tool at high temperatures. The major part of fluoranthene is removed by condensation before reaching water dew point. The latter depends on the initial moisture content (described in Table 3) varying from 303 to 333 K. It can be concluded that the dew point of tar components is mainly affected by the moisture content and the condensation of steam in the producer gas rather than the composition of the non-condensable gases.

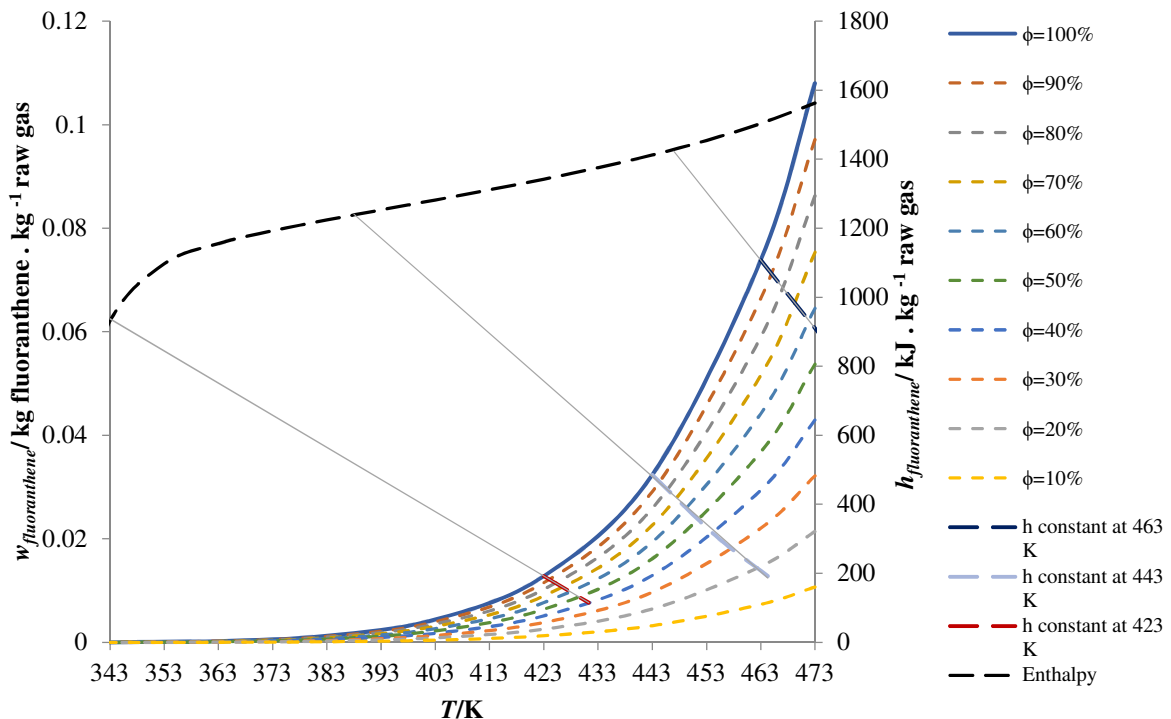
The dew points of naphthalene (Fig. 3 B), indene (Fig. 3 C) and phenol (Fig. 3 D) decrease with the initial moisture content. While for toluene (Fig. 3 E), the higher the initial moisture content, the lower the toluene dew point. Contrary to other tar representative components, toluene with water forms an azeotropic mixture leading to a decrease in the boiling point. This explains the difference in the behavior between toluene and the rest of tar components regarding the variation of the initial moisture content present in the producer gas. The best agreement between the calculated dew point and the ones available online is encountered for phenol and naphthalene. Indene shows a high deviation for high moisture content. The deviation decreases for a low moisture content in the producer gas (6 mol %<sub>wet</sub>). The same analogy applies for the toluene. The highest deviation is faced for Case 1 which corresponds to the highest moisture content (30.4 mol %<sub>wet</sub>). The lowest deviation is achieved for Case 4 having the lowest initial moisture content. Although the deviation decreases with the initial moisture content for toluene, the difference is still high. This may be caused by ice formation at temperatures lower than 273 K.

As seen, tar dew point depends on the composition of the producer gas. However, this composition is not defined for the online tool calculator. It is only mentioned that their tool is based on an atmospheric bubbling fluidized bed operating at 1123 K using air as a gasification agent. All these factors increase the deviation between the calculated tar dew points and those obtained through the online dew point calculator.

### 3.3. Psychrometric charts

By completing the calculations for all the mixtures of tar representative components in the raw gas, psychrometric charts for tar-raw gas mixtures were plotted. Calculations in this section are based on Case 1 in Table 3 referring to a DFB gasifier. The latter is selected since it yields a suitable producer gas composition for methanation. The five psychrometric charts of fluoranthene, naphthalene, indene, phenol and toluene – raw gas mixtures are illustrated in Fig. 4, Fig. 5, Fig. 6, Fig. 7 and Fig. 8, respectively. The aim is to obtain a raw gas with a tar content lower than 1 mg.Nm<sup>-3</sup>. It can be deduced that a temperature around 193 K is required to reach it. Note that the enthalpy difference calculated between two points is more significant than the one calculated at each point since it reflects the required energy for condensing a certain mass of tars. To find the enthalpy of a point on the charts that is not at saturation, the isenthalpic lines are projected until they reach the enthalpy line at saturation (bold black dashed line). The intersection between the projection and the enthalpy at saturation line is then read on the right

axis. This value corresponds to the enthalpy in  $\text{kJ.kg}^{-1}$ . In Fig. 4, Fig. 5, Fig. 6, Fig. 7 and Fig. 8, the light grey lines represent the projection of the isenthalpic lines for better understanding. At a tar content of  $100 \text{ g.Nm}^{-3}$ , the condensation of water and the tar representative component take place simultaneously, except for the heaviest one (fluoranthene) and the lightest one (toluene). The condensation of fluoranthene, toluene and water starts at a temperature of 476 K, 253 K and 355 K, respectively. In other words, fluoranthene condenses prior to water while toluene condenses after it. It can be deduced, from the figures below, that the condensation of water has a higher impact on the enthalpy change. This is justified by the increase in the slope of the enthalpy for temperatures lower than that of water dew point. According to Fig. 4, the enthalpy varies linearly function of temperatures greater than 355 K. This section presents the condensation of fluoranthene only. Below this temperature, water condensation starts, leading to a higher enthalpy variation thus a steeper enthalpy slope. Moreover, the water fraction is higher than the tar fraction in the producer gas, thus the impact of water condensation on the enthalpy is higher. Moving to indene, naphthalene and phenol, the slope of the enthalpy is notably higher than that of fluoranthene. According to Fig. 4 and Fig. 6, to reduce the tar content ( $w$ ) from 0.06 to 0.02  $\text{kg.kg}^{-1}$ , the energy required for fluoranthene is equal to  $98.7 \text{ kJ.kg}^{-1}$  while that of indene is much higher ( $217.4 \text{ kJ.kg}^{-1}$ ). Finally, the condensation of toluene begins after the removal of a high fraction of water. As a result, the energy required for toluene condensation to reduce the content from 0.06 to 0.02  $\text{kg.kg}^{-1}$  is the lowest one ( $28.519 \text{ kJ.kg}^{-1}$ ), as seen in Fig. 8.



**Fig. 4.** Psychrometric charts of fluoranthene-raw gas mixture.

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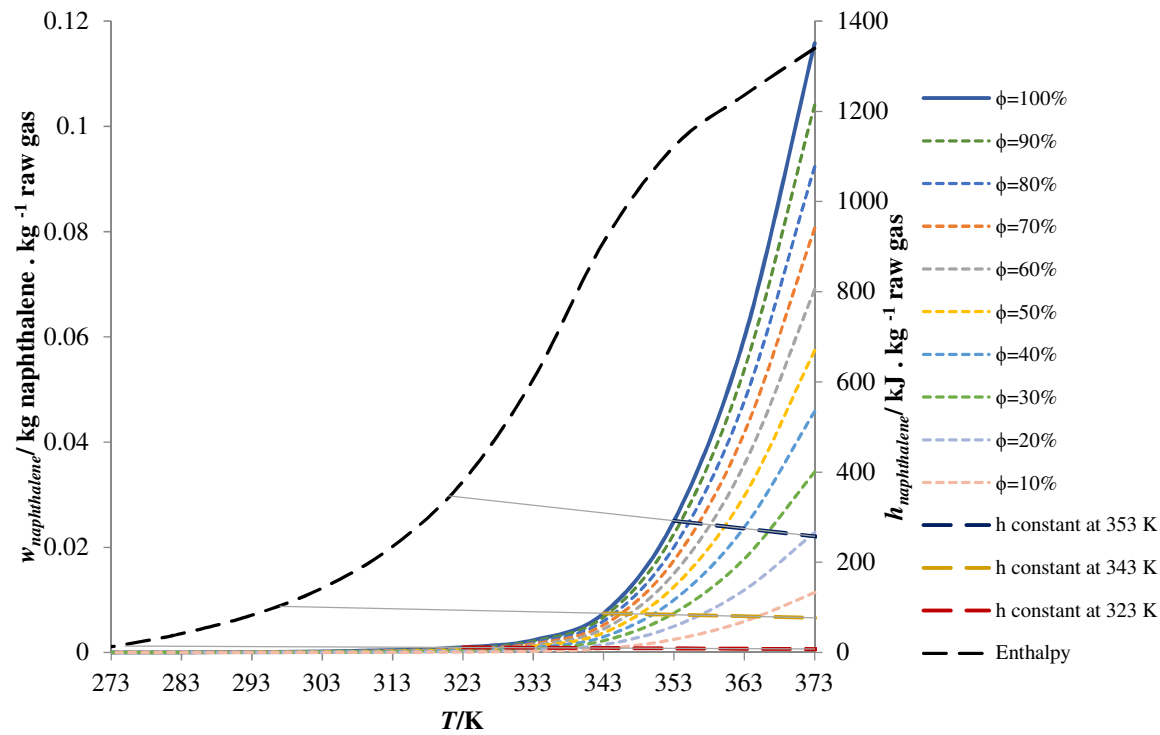


Fig. 5. Psychrometric charts of naphthalene-raw gas mixture.

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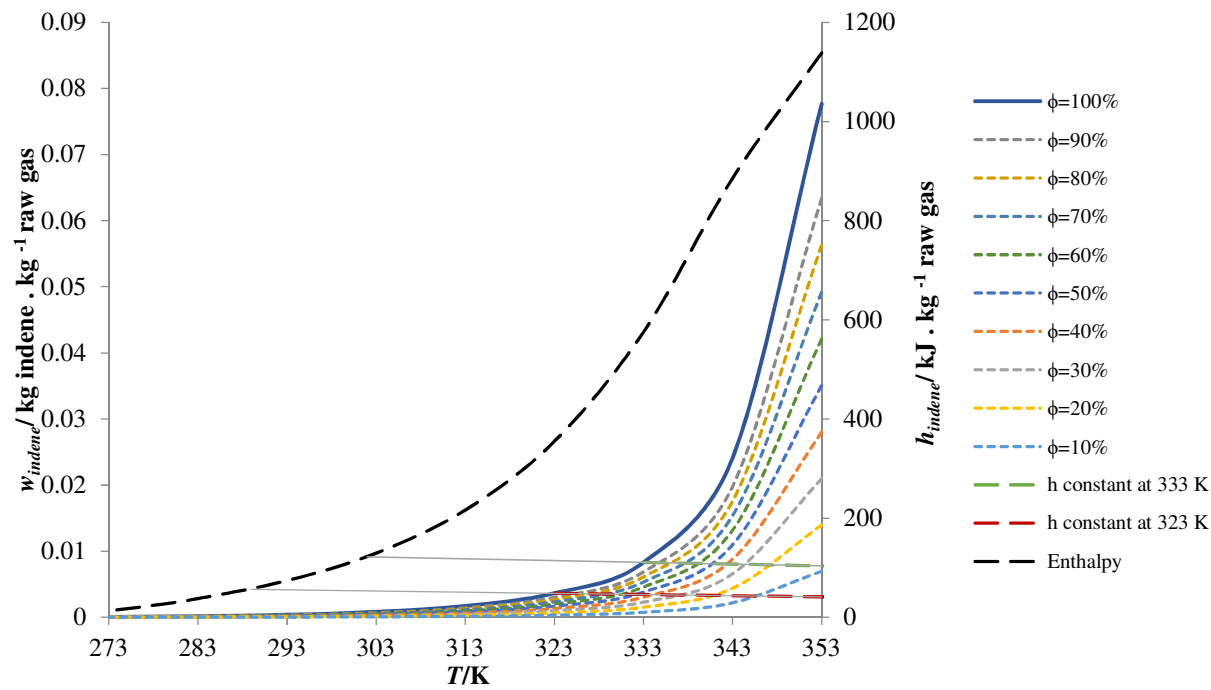


Fig. 6. Psychrometric charts of indene-raw gas mixture.

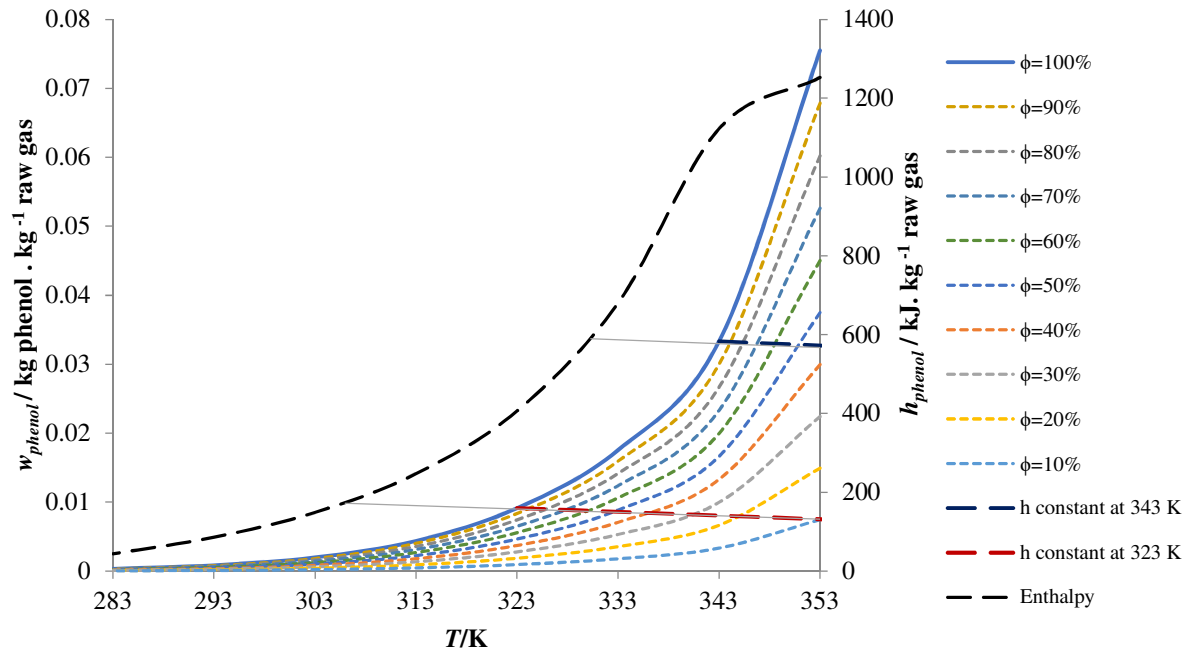


Fig. 7. Psychrometric charts of phenol-raw gas mixture.

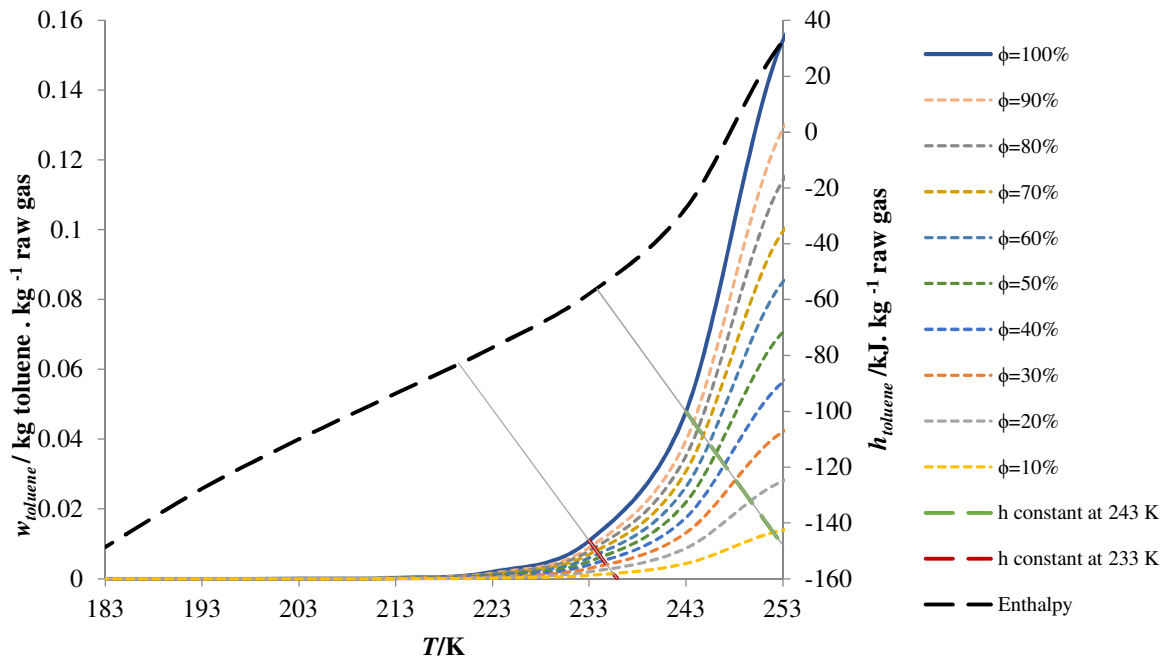


Fig. 8. Psychrometric charts of toluene-raw gas mixture.

We can observe in Fig. 4, Fig. 5, Fig. 6, Fig. 7 and Fig. 8 that, at low temperatures, the charts have very small values and therefore, the tar content is not readable. Table 4, Table 5, Table 6, Table 7 and Table 8 present the tar content and the enthalpy of fluoranthene, naphthalene,



indene, phenol and toluene in function of temperature. The more accurate values may be of a great benefit for those working with gasification and tar removal by physical methods. Moreover, they reflect the required temperature for reaching the limit for any application, not only for biomethane production. The values presented in the tables below correspond to the saturation line where  $\phi=100\%$ .

**Table 4**

Computational mass content ( $w$ ), concentration ( $C$ ) and enthalpy ( $h$ ) at temperature ( $T$ ) and atmospheric pressure for the mixture of fluoranthene in raw gas.

$T / K$	$C_{\text{fluoranthene}} / \text{mg.Nm}^{-3}$	$w_{\text{fluoranthene}} / \times 10^{-5} \text{ kg.kg}^{-1}$ raw gas	$h_{\text{fluoranthene}} / \text{kJ. kg}^{-1}$ raw gas	$T / K$	$C_{\text{fluoranthene}} / \text{mg.Nm}^{-3}$	$w_{\text{fluoranthene}} / \times 10^{-5} \text{ kg.kg}^{-1}$ raw gas	$h_{\text{fluoranthene}} / \text{kJ. kg}^{-1}$ raw gas
393.15	1950.30	244.24	1277.07	359.15	136.62	17.27	1156.64
391.15	1719.08	215.32	1271.17	357.15	109.78	13.90	1144.97
389.15	1511.45	189.34	1265.25	355.15	86.88	11.03	1131.51
387.15	1325.35	166.06	1259.28	351.15	51.31	6.56	1095.98
385.15	1158.86	145.23	1253.25	349.15	38.00	4.88	1071.31
383.15	1010.19	126.63	1247.16	345.15	19.20	2.51	998.15
381.15	877.86	110.08	1240.98	343.15	13.26	1.76	946.38
379.15	760.38	95.37	1234.70	339.15	6.42	0.88	819.66
377.15	656.28	82.35	1228.29	337.15	4.61	0.65	752.77
375.15	564.24	70.82	1221.73	335.15	3.39	0.48	687.98
373.15	483.03	60.66	1214.98	333.15	2.54	0.37	626.96
369.15	348.78	43.85	1200.73	331.15	1.94	0.29	570.43
367.15	293.82	36.96	1193.10	329.15	1.50	0.23	518.54
365.15	245.83	30.95	1185.03	327.15	1.17	0.18	471.15
361.15	167.87	21.18	1167.00	325.15	0.93	0.14	427.97

**Table 5**

Computational mass content ( $w$ ), concentration ( $C$ ) and enthalpy ( $h$ ) at temperature ( $T$ ) and atmospheric pressure for the mixture of naphthalene in raw gas.

$T / K$	$C_{\text{naphthalene}} / \text{mg.Nm}^{-3}$	$w_{\text{naphthalene}} / \times 10^{-5} \text{ kg.kg}^{-1}$ raw gas	$h_{\text{naphthalene}} / \text{kJ. kg}^{-1}$ raw gas	$T / K$	$C_{\text{naphthalene}} / \text{mg.Nm}^{-3}$	$w_{\text{naphthalene}} / \times 10^{-5} \text{ kg.kg}^{-1}$ raw gas	$h_{\text{naphthalene}} / \text{kJ. kg}^{-1}$ raw gas
330.15	1196.61	179.20	527.70	285.15	33.80	5.86	49.18
327.15	902.32	138.01	458.47	282.15	26.65	4.63	38.82
324.15	691.93	107.84	397.86	279.15	20.93	3.64	29.41
321.15	537.34	85.14	345.00	276.15	16.37	2.86	20.83
318.15	421.21	67.71	298.96	273.15	12.75	2.23	12.94
315.15	332.45	54.12	258.83	270.15	9.89	1.73	5.65
312.15	263.68	43.40	223.82	267.15	7.62	1.34	-1.15
309.15	209.83	34.87	193.22	264.15	5.85	1.03	-7.53
306.15	167.32	28.04	166.44	261.15	4.46	0.78	-13.56
303.15	133.55	22.54	142.93	258.15	3.38	0.60	-19.30
300.15	106.61	18.10	122.26	255.15	2.55	0.45	-24.80
297.15	85.04	14.52	104.01	252.15	1.91	0.34	-30.10
294.15	67.75	11.62	87.85	249.15	1.42	0.25	-35.24
291.15	53.87	9.28	73.50	246.15	1.04	0.18	-40.24
288.15	42.74	7.38	60.68	245.15	0.95	0.17	-41.88

**Table 6**

Computational mass content ( $w$ ), concentration ( $C$ ) and enthalpy ( $h$ ) at temperature ( $T$ ) and atmospheric pressure for the mixture of indene in raw gas.

$T / K$	$C_{indene} /$ $mg.Nm^{-3}$	$w_{indene} /$ $\times 10^{-5} kg.kg^{-1}$	$h_{indene} /$ $kJ. kg^{-1}$	$T / K$	$C_{indene} /$ $mg.Nm^{-3}$	$w_{indene} /$ $\times 10^{-5} kg.kg^{-1}$	$h_{indene} /$ $kJ. kg^{-1}$
		raw gas	raw gas			raw gas	raw gas
310.15	839.82	139.19	185.89	272.15	37.86	6.62	10.81
308.15	721.50	120.28	167.86	270.15	31.42	5.50	6.86
306.15	619.87	103.89	151.42	268.15	26.02	4.56	3.13
302.15	457.03	77.31	122.71	266.15	21.48	3.77	-0.40
300.15	392.01	66.58	110.18	264.15	17.69	3.11	-3.77
298.15	335.90	57.25	98.71	262.15	14.53	2.55	-6.98
294.15	245.66	42.13	78.57	260.15	11.90	2.09	-10.05
292.15	209.59	36.05	69.73	256.15	7.91	1.39	-15.85
290.15	178.50	30.77	61.59	254.15	6.42	1.13	-18.60
288.15	151.73	26.22	54.10	252.15	5.19	0.92	-21.27
286.15	128.70	22.28	47.19	250.15	4.18	0.74	-23.87
284.15	108.91	18.89	40.80	246.15	2.69	0.48	-28.88
280.15	77.43	13.47	29.38	244.15	2.15	0.38	-31.31
278.15	65.03	11.33	24.26	240.15	1.35	0.24	-36.04
274.15	45.48	7.94	15.01	237.15	0.94	0.17	-39.50

**Table 7**

Computational mass content ( $w$ ), concentration ( $C$ ) and enthalpy ( $h$ ) at temperature ( $T$ ) and atmospheric pressure for the mixture of phenol in raw gas.

$T / K$	$C_{phenol} /$ $mg.Nm^{-3}$	$w_{phenol} /$ $\times 10^{-5} kg.kg^{-1}$	$h_{phenol} /$ $kJ. kg^{-1}$	$T / K$	$C_{phenol} /$ $mg.Nm^{-3}$	$w_{phenol} /$ $\times 10^{-5} kg.kg^{-1}$	$h_{phenol} /$ $kJ. kg^{-1}$
		raw gas	raw gas			raw gas	raw gas
303.15	1159.37	195.91	118.15	271.15	52.52	9.26	8.52
301.15	975.65	165.62	106.17	269.15	42.05	7.42	3.74
299.15	819.18	139.64	95.08	267.15	33.54	5.93	-0.83
297.15	686.16	117.42	84.81	265.15	26.63	4.72	-5.21
295.15	573.32	98.45	75.29	263.15	21.06	3.73	-9.43
293.15	477.79	82.31	66.45	261.15	16.58	2.94	-13.49
291.15	397.11	68.61	58.22	259.15	12.99	2.31	-17.41
289.15	329.12	57.01	50.55	257.15	10.13	1.80	-21.23
287.15	271.97	47.23	43.38	255.15	7.86	1.40	-24.93
285.15	224.07	39.00	36.67	253.15	6.07	1.08	-28.55
283.15	184.02	32.10	30.37	251.15	4.66	0.83	-32.09
281.15	150.64	26.33	24.44	249.15	3.56	0.64	-35.56
279.15	122.90	21.52	18.85	247.15	2.70	0.49	-38.96
277.15	99.91	17.53	13.55	245.15	2.04	0.37	-42.32
275.15	80.94	14.22	118.15	243.15	1.53	0.28	-45.62
273.15	65.32	11.50	106.17	240.15	0.99	0.18	-50.51

**Table 8**

Computational mass content ( $w$ ), concentration ( $C$ ) and enthalpy ( $h$ ) at temperature ( $T$ ) and atmospheric pressure for the mixture of toluene in raw gas.

$T / K$	$C_{toluene} /$ $mg.Nm^{-3}$	$w_{toluene} /$ $x10^{-5} kg.kg^{-1}$	$h_{toluene} /$ $kJ. kg^{-1}$	$T / K$	$C_{toluene} /$ $mg.Nm^{-3}$	$w_{toluene} /$ $x10^{-5} kg.kg^{-1}$	$h_{toluene} /$ $kJ. kg^{-1}$
		raw gas	raw gas			raw gas	raw gas
223.15	1076.46	197.84	-75.24	209.15	44.90	8.41	-96.65
222.15	887.42	163.26	-76.86	208.15	34.25	6.43	-98.12
221.15	728.20	134.10	-78.47	207.15	25.96	4.88	-99.59
220.15	594.70	109.64	-80.05	206.15	19.54	3.68	-101.05
219.15	483.29	89.20	-81.61	205.15	14.61	2.76	-102.52
218.15	390.77	72.20	-83.16	204.15	10.85	2.05	-103.97
217.15	314.32	58.15	-84.69	203.15	8.00	1.52	-105.43
216.15	251.47	46.58	-86.21	202.15	5.85	1.11	-106.89
215.15	200.09	37.11	-87.73	201.15	4.25	0.81	-108.34
214.15	158.31	29.41	-89.23	200.15	3.07	0.59	-109.80
213.15	124.54	23.17	-90.73	199.15	2.20	0.42	-111.25
212.15	97.40	18.15	-92.21	198.15	1.56	0.30	-112.70
211.15	75.71	14.13	-93.70	197.15	1.10	0.21	-114.15
210.15	58.49	10.93	-95.18	196.15	0.77	0.15	-115.59

The enthalpy variation is caused by three different processes. The latent heat of the tar component condensation, the latent heat of the water condensation and the sensible heat of the gas. For fluoranthene (Table 4), the variation of the enthalpy at high temperature for  $433 K \leq T \leq 473 K$ , is driven by the latent heat of fluoranthene condensation, where 83% of the initial fluoranthene content is condensed. For temperatures ranging between 355 K and 433 K, the sensible heat of the gas occupies the major fraction of the enthalpy variation. Below 355 K, the enthalpy variation is driven by the latent heat of water condensation. For naphthalene (Table 5), indene (Table 6) and phenol (Table 7), the latent heat of the tar component surpasses the rest for temperatures higher than 355 K. Between 355 K and 283 K, the latent heat of water condensation forms the major part of the enthalpy variation. Below 283 K, the sensible heat surpasses both latent heats. For toluene (Table 8), since its condensation starts below 273 K, the latent heat of toluene condensation drives the enthalpy variation for temperatures higher than 243 K. Below this temperature, the weight of the sensible heat on the enthalpy variation becomes greater than the latent heat.

It can be seen that fluoranthene is the first tar representative component that reaches a concentration of  $1 mg.Nm^{-3}$  at a temperature of 325.15 K. On the other hand, toluene is the last tar representative component reaching  $1 mg.Nm^{-3}$  at 196.15 K. Finally, the temperatures for indene, naphthalene and phenol, required to reach a concentration of  $1 mg.Nm^{-3}$ , are 237.15 K, 245.15 K and 240.15 K, respectively. As a conclusion, toluene is the last component reduced to a concentration of  $1 mg.Nm^{-3}$  since it requires the lowest temperature.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this paper, four different producer gas compositions were studied to check their impact on tar removal. The study involves the calculation of the dew point of several components besides water, that are fluoranthene, naphthalene, indene, phenol and toluene. Each component was separately studied with the producer gas. The dew point was calculated for tar concentrations ranging between 0.001 and 100 g.Nm<sup>-3</sup>. Psychrometric charts were plotted for the gas composition of dual fluidized bed gasifier to represent gas stream thermodynamic properties variations during tar capture by applying low temperatures. As a result, the dew points of fluoranthene, naphthalene, indene, phenol and toluene vary respectively from 325 to 473 K, 245 to 374 K, 237 to 359 K, 240 to 361 K and 196 to 262 K. In addition, the high level of required energy for tar removal at temperature lower than the water dew point is a result of water existence in the producer gas. As for future work, we aim at using the obtained results to study the condensation of tar on a vertical plate surface, which could be beneficial in evaluating the tar and water removal efficiency.

## 407 Nomenclature

$C$	Concentration, mg.Nm <sup>-3</sup>
$C_p$	Vapor heat capacity, kJ.kg <sup>-1</sup> .K <sup>-1</sup>
$ER$	Equivalence ratio
$h$	Enthalpy, kJ.kg <sup>-1</sup>
$h_{fg}$	Latent heat of vaporization, kJ.kg <sup>-1</sup>
$m$	Mass, kg
$M$	Molecular masses, g.mol <sup>-1</sup>
$P_{sat}$	Saturation tar partial pressures, Pa
$P_{tar}$	Tar partial pressure, Pa
$P_{total}$	Total mixture pressure, Pa
$T$	Temperature, K
$VF$	Vapor fraction
$VP$	Vapor pressure, Pa
$w_{tar}$	Tar content, kg.kg <sup>-1</sup>
$y$	Vapor phase mole fraction

### *Greek symbols*

$\phi$	Tar relative concentration
$\rho$	Density, kg.m <sup>-3</sup>

### *Subscripts*

DB	Dry bulb
DP	Dew point
j	Raw gas component
tar	Tar representative component
wat	Water

### *Abbreviations*

CHP	Combined Heat and Power
DFB	Dual Fluidized Bed
ECN	Energy research Center of the Netherlands
RDF	Refused-Derived Fuel

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