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Collision-Induced Infrared Absorption and Raman scattering of H₂ in supercritical CO₂

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Abstract

In this study, the solvation of H₂ in supercritical CO₂ was investigated by co-localized infrared absorption/Raman scattering spectroscopies. The Fermi dyad and combinations of vibrational modes of CO₂ were detected by Raman and infrared spectroscopy respectively, with increasing intensities according to CO₂ concentrations varying from 1 to 15 mol.L⁻¹. H₂ rotational bands and vibrons with almost constant intensities were detected by Raman spectroscopy according to a constant H₂ pressure of 3 MPa. In contrast, a collision-induced infrared band of H₂ was reported for the first time in supercritical CO₂ and its intensity was found to be directly proportional to the intensity of the CO₂ bands. In addition, the intensities of the H₂ and CO₂ contributions were found to be sensitive to the local density fluctuations existing near the critical temperature of CO₂ (T_c = 31 °C, P_c = 7.4 MPa).

Keywords: Supercritical CO₂, Hydrogen, Collision induced effects, Infrared, Raman

1- Introduction

In order to take into account the environmental concerns due to anthropogenic emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere, many research works on the potential utilization of CO₂ as a key intermediate for chemistry are currently underway [1–4]. In particular, CO₂ is considered as a substantial C1-carbon source to produce chemicals and fuels. In association with hydrogen (H₂), the CO₂ molecule can lead to basic chemicals such as methane, methanol, formic acid, methylal, methyl formate and dimethylether via the CO₂ hydrogenation reaction [5]. For instance, in the pioneering work of Jessop *et al.* [6] the catalytic hydrogenation of CO₂ to formic acid in supercritical CO₂, in which H₂ is highly miscible, was found to be much faster than in liquid organic solvents under identical conditions suggesting that supercritical CO₂ is a promising medium for homogeneous catalysis. We remember that in the vicinity of the critical point, supercritical CO₂ could display an ‘hyper-compressible’ regime in which the high susceptibility of the density to small pressure variations on a macroscopic scale reflects strong local density fluctuations existing at the molecular level [7–10]. This phenomenon does not have a counterpart in the liquid phase and it has been shown in previous investigations that

these local density enhancements (LDE) might have significant consequences on the solvation and reactivity of a solute in supercritical fluids [11,12].

In this context, the monitoring of supercritical CO₂ and H₂ during the production of various chemicals and fuels is of prime interest for thermodynamic investigations, kinetic studies and mechanisms at work in such processes. To this aim, vibrational spectroscopic methods are powerful tools that are particularly adapted to perform *in situ* and *in operando* investigations. In the case of CO₂-H₂ mixture, both Raman and infrared (IR) spectroscopy might be used to detect both molecules. Thus, it is well known that nonpolar molecules such as H₂ are active in scattering Raman and inactive in IR while CO₂, with its four vibrational modes, can be monitored by both techniques. In order to detect homonuclear diatomic molecules such as H₂ by IR absorption spectroscopy, pressure-induced effect might be used by gas compression or by the addition of a nonpolar gas in the system. In the literature, only few authors have reported pressure-induced IR absorption of H₂ [13,14] and, to the best of our knowledge, CO₂ induced effect on H₂ has not been reported yet.

Generally, IR and Raman experiments are performed separately on two different samples using two different optical cells that are specific to both techniques. Herein, CO₂-H₂ mixtures were investigated by co-localized IR/Raman spectroscopy analysis. We define co-localized IR/Raman measurement to be the sequential or simultaneous acquisition of IR and Raman spectra using a single high-pressure cell for both spectroscopic measurements during the same experiment. Besides the time advantage, the utilization of a single high-pressure cell for the co-localized collection of Raman and IR spectroscopic data allows a direct comparison of the IR and Raman data and avoids any possible experimental errors related to the reproducibility of the experimental conditions when independent IR and Raman experiments are performed.

Thus, the aim of this work is to use co-localized IR/Raman spectroscopies in a single high-pressure cell for the *in situ* monitoring of H₂ in supercritical CO₂. Experiments were performed with 3 MPa of H₂ diluted in CO₂ with increasing CO₂ concentrations from 1 to 15 mol.L⁻¹ at 36 and 60°C. The evolution of the intensity of selected vibrational modes of CO₂ and H₂ detected by both Raman and IR spectroscopies have been analyzed as a function of the CO₂ concentrations. Thus, a collision-induced IR spectrum of H₂ in supercritical CO₂ is clearly put in evidence. On the other hand, the effect of the local density fluctuations existing near the critical temperature of CO₂ on the intensities of the IR and Raman spectra of H₂ and CO₂ are discussed.

2- Experimental

The *in situ* analysis of the CO₂-H₂ mixture by the combination of IR and Raman spectroscopy was done in one high-pressure cell (**Fig. 1**). The home-made stainless-steel cell is composed of three cylindrical windows (one sapphire window for Raman scattering and two silicon windows for IR absorption with a pathlength of 26 mm). Windows were positioned on the flat surface of an inconel plug with a Teflon foil placed between the window and the plug-in to compensate for imperfections at the two surfaces (unsupported area principle). Flat Teflon rings were used to ensure sealing between the plug and the cell body. The heating was achieved using four cartridge heaters disposed in the body of the cell and a thermocouple located close to one

cartridge was used to regulate the temperature at 36 or 60°C with an accuracy of about $\Delta T = \pm 0.5^\circ\text{C}$. The cell was connected via a stainless capillary to a pressurizing system which permits the regulation of pressure with an accuracy of about $\Delta P = \pm 0.01\text{ MPa}$.

Prior to all experiments, the cell was vacuumed at least 15 min to remove atmospheric gases and in particular water. Then, experiments were performed by adding firstly 3 MPa of H_2 (purchased from Air Liquid (99.9999 % purity)) in the high-pressure cell heated at 36 or 60°C. CO_2 (purchased from Air Liquid (99.95 % purity)) was then added in the high-pressure cell using a manual pump (TOP industrie) up to the desired pressure. **Table 1** describes the range of CO_2 pressures and corresponding CO_2 concentrations investigated in this study.

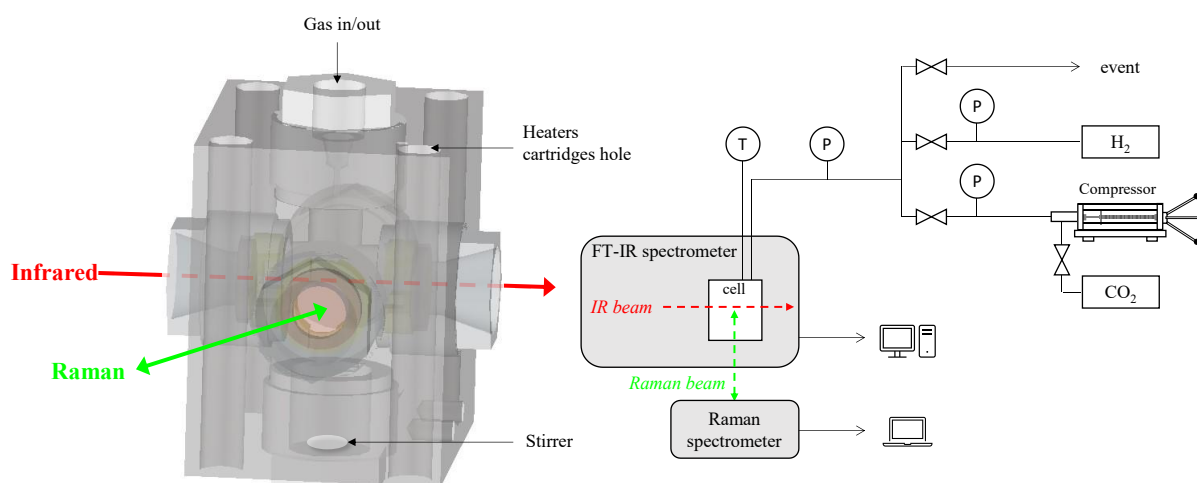


Figure 1: Design of the high-pressure experimental device with a single high-pressure cell coupled with IR and Raman spectrometer for the *in situ* measurements of the $\text{CO}_2\text{-H}_2$ mixture.

For IR absorption measurements, a Nicolet 6700 FTIR spectrometer equipped with a Global source, a KBr/Ge beamsplitter and a DLaTGS/KBr thermal detector was used to investigate the spectral range from 400 to 6500 cm^{-1} . Single beam spectra with 4 cm^{-1} resolution were obtained by Fourier transformation of 100 accumulated interferograms in order to improve the signal to noise ratio. In that region, fundamental and combination bands of CO_2 were observed but only the spectral range between 3800 and 5200 cm^{-1} was analyzed and of interest for our purpose under our experimental conditions. In particular, the strong absorption of CO_2 precludes any quantitative analysis outside this spectral range and only the less intense bands of CO_2 were integrated from 4900 to 4760 cm^{-1} and from 5200 to 5035 cm^{-1} for the quantitative analysis performed in this study (see below). In the same manner, the collision-induced IR spectral band of H_2 that is observed at about 4150 cm^{-1} was integrated from 4585 to 4000 cm^{-1} for the quantitative analysis of induced effect on the H_2 molecule.

For Raman scattering measurements, a portable home-made spectrometer was used and equipped with a laser diode DJ532-40 (Thorlabs) (532 nm – 40 mW) as the laser source and a custom-made USB 2000 spectrometer from Ocean Optics (grating: 1200 lines/mm, slit: 25 μm , CCD detector 2048 pixels) to reach the spectral range between 200 and 4250 cm^{-1} with a spectral resolution between 8 and 4 cm^{-1} (about 6 cm^{-1} at 1000 cm^{-1}). Each spectrum results from the average of 2 accumulated scans with an integration time for each scan of about 30 seconds. Fermi dyad of CO_2 were detected at about 1284 cm^{-1} and 1387 cm^{-1} and they were

both integrated from 1200 to 1500 cm^{-1} for the quantitative analysis. Several rotational bands of H_2 were observed in the spectral range between 300 and 1200 cm^{-1} but only the more intense one at 581 cm^{-1} was integrated from 535 to 640 cm^{-1} . Some fluorescence peaks of the sapphire window in the region from approximately 100 to 500 cm^{-1} were also recorded as a background spectrum before CO_2 and H_2 insertion in the cell.

Table 1: CO_2 pressures and their corresponding concentrations added in the high-pressure cell containing already 3 MPa of H_2 . The concentrations of CO_2 are obtained from the NIST Chemistry Webbook [15,16].

36°C		60°C	
Pressure (MPa)	Concentration (mol.L ⁻¹)	Pressure (MPa)	Concentration (mol.L ⁻¹)
0.78	0.31	0.90	0.33
2.66	1.19	2.90	1.17
4.33	2.18	4.90	2.18
5.22	2.83	6.00	2.84
6.40	4.00	7.61	4.01
7.10	5.06	8.74	5.07
7.53	6.02	9.57	6.02
7.78	6.85	10.20	6.89
8.00	8.06	10.96	8.06
8.20	10.12	12.15	10.13
8.40	12.34	13.70	12.41
8.80	14.03	15.35	14.01
9.60	15.44	17.70	15.47

3- Results and discussion

3-1 Infrared and Raman study of H_2 diluted in supercritical CO_2

The IR and Raman spectra of the H_2 - CO_2 mixtures at a constant pressure of H_2 (3 MPa) were measured at 36 and 60 °C for the same increasing concentration values of supercritical CO_2 (see **Table 1**) using a single high-pressure cell for the simultaneous acquisition of the IR and Raman spectra on the same sample. **Figure 2a and 2c** show the IR and Raman spectra respectively, recorded at 36°C for increasing CO_2 pressures from 0.8 to about 10 MPa. The overview IR spectra of the spectral range from 3900 to 5200 cm^{-1} in **Figure 2a** displays three peaks at 4850, 4980 and 5100 cm^{-1} that are assigned to the combination modes $4\nu_2 + \nu_3$, $\nu_1 + 2\nu_2 + \nu_3$ and $2\nu_1 + \nu_3$ of CO_2 respectively [17]. As expected, their intensities are increasing according to CO_2 pressure. By the same token, a broad band is observed at 4140 cm^{-1} that also increases according to the CO_2 pressure. Such band can be assigned to the collision-induced IR absorption of H_2 that has been reported previously for H_2 diluted in monoatomic gases under high pressure conditions [13,14]. To the best of our knowledge, the collision-induced IR spectrum of H_2 in supercritical CO_2 has not been reported previously. An enlarged view on the absorption IR profile associated with the stretching vibration of H_2 in the spectral range from 3900 to 4600 cm^{-1} is reported in **Figure 2b**. The band-shape is composed of two maxima at 4150 and 4200 cm^{-1} respectively labelled as Q_p and Q_r that are characteristics of the collision-induced IR spectrum of H_2 [14],[18]. As the CO_2 pressure is increasing, the intensity of the whole profile is increasing and the dip between Q_p and Q_r bands is filling up while we do not observe any significant frequency shift of the whole profile. Similarly, we did not observe any variation of the width of the band in the temperature and pressure range investigated.

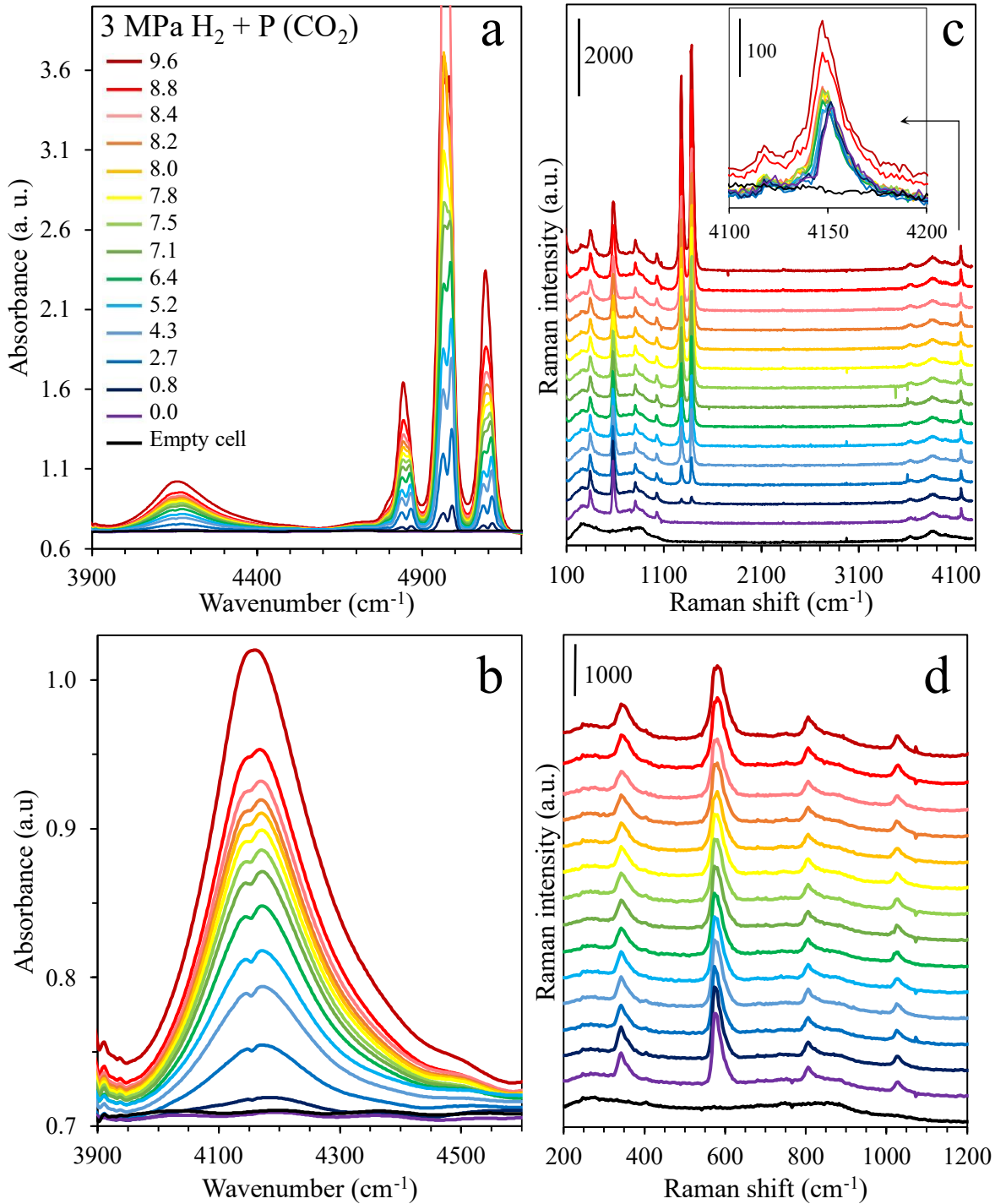


Figure 2: Co-localized IR absorption (top left) and Raman (top right) spectra of the $\text{H}_2\text{-CO}_2$ mixture at 36°C with 3 MPa of H_2 and various CO_2 pressure. Enlarged view of the H_2 peaks (bottom).

Figure 2c shows the Raman spectra of the $\text{H}_2\text{-CO}_2$ mixture recorded from 100 to 4300 cm^{-1} at 36°C for increasing CO_2 pressures from 0.8 to about 10 MPa and an enlarged view on the lower frequency region between 200 and 1200 cm^{-1} is displayed on **Figure 2d**. The Raman spectrum of the empty cell spectrum displays two broad bands from approximately 150 to 1000 cm^{-1} and from 3500 to 4100 cm^{-1} that are related to the fluorescence contribution of the sapphire window. The two bands observed at 1284 and 1387 cm^{-1} are assigned to the Fermi resonance dyad of CO_2 [19–23] and those intensities are proportional to the CO_2 concentration. In the high Raman

shift region that correspond to the ro-vibrational spectrum associated with the stretching vibration of H₂ (also called the vibrons) that is Raman active, we should detect four contributions usually labelled (Q₁ (J=0), Q₁ (J=1), Q₁ (J=2), and Q₁ (J=3) at 4160, 4156, 4145 and 4127 cm⁻¹. Under our experimental conditions and in view of the low signal to noise ratio in this spectral range, we observed at 4152 cm⁻¹ a main contribution that corresponds to Q₁ (J=1) and a weak peak at about 4125 cm⁻¹ that corresponds to Q₁ (J=3) [24–26]. In the low frequency range, rotational bands of H₂ that are also Raman active are observed at 343, 580, 806 and 1031 cm⁻¹ and are related to S₀ branch from the 0 to 3rd rotational level, respectively [24,26,27]. Band shapes and band center frequencies of the Raman spectra of H₂ do not display any significant variation upon an increase of the CO₂ pressure. By the same token, the intensity of the Raman spectra of H₂ is almost constant over the pressure range investigated.

3-2 Analysis of the intensity of the infrared and Raman spectra

In order to compare the evolution of the intensity of the H₂ and CO₂ contribution in both the IR and Raman spectra, we have determined in the IR spectra the integrated area of the H₂ stretching mode at 4150 cm⁻¹ and of the combination $4\nu_2 + \nu_3$ and $2\nu_1 + \nu_3$ of CO₂ at 4850 cm⁻¹ and 5097 cm⁻¹ respectively, and in the Raman spectra, the integrated area of the H₂ rotational band at 580 cm⁻¹ and of the fermi dyad of CO₂. The results are reported as a function of the CO₂ concentration at 36 and 60°C in **Figure 3a and 4a** for the IR and Raman spectra respectively. For each temperature, the same concentration values of CO₂ were measured for proper comparison.

In **Figure 3a**, both IR area of the CO₂ and the H₂ contributions increases with the CO₂ concentration and the curves for both the CO₂ and the H₂ contributions are superimposed for the two temperatures up to about $C(\text{CO}_2) = 6 \text{ mol L}^{-1}$. At higher CO₂ concentrations, we observe a further increase of the area for both the CO₂ and the H₂ contribution but to a lesser extent and in particular at 36°C where a plateau like behavior is observed around $C(\text{CO}_2) = 10 \text{ mol L}^{-1}$. This last observation could be related to the local density fluctuations that are known to take place near the critical point [28,29,7,12,30,31]. Indeed, such LDE have been put in evidence in supercritical CO₂ by Raman experiments [21] and molecular dynamics simulations [32,33] and are found to be detected as much as the temperature of the fluid is closed to that of the critical temperature. We remember that the critical point of CO₂ is at $T_c = 31 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$, $P_c = 7.4 \text{ MPa}$ and $\rho_c = 10.6 \text{ mol L}^{-1}$. Therefore, at 36°C, the LDE are expected to be significant and could explain the plateau like behavior observed at 36°C in the evolution of the CO₂ contribution. At 60°C, the evolution of the area of the CO₂ contribution do not display a significant plateau like behavior in line with the less important expected LDE in supercritical CO₂ at a higher temperature. We remember that as expected from the Beer-Lambert law ($A_i = \varepsilon_i \cdot l \cdot C_i$, with A_i : the measured integrated absorbance of an infrared band associated with the species i (cm⁻¹), ε_i : the molar extinction coefficient of the infrared band (L.mol⁻¹.cm⁻²), l : the thickness of the sample (cm) and C_i : the concentration of the species i (mol.L⁻¹)), the evolution of the area of the CO₂ contribution should be directly proportional to the CO₂ concentration. This observation is valid if we consider that the molar extinction coefficient of the CO₂ band of interest is constant over the range of temperature and pressure investigated. Such rule has been demonstrated by the pioneering work of Buback *et al.* [34] showing that the molar extinction coefficient of

combination bands of CO₂ were almost independent of the CO₂ concentration. In order to see to which extent this rule is still valid in our experiments, we have calculated the molar extinction coefficient ε_i from the equation $\varepsilon_i = A_i / l \cdot C_i$ by using the values of A_i and C_i reported in **Figure 3a** for the two modes of CO₂ at the two different temperatures. The calculated ε_i as a function of the CO₂ pressure are reported in **Figure 3b** for the $4\nu_2 + \nu_3$ and $2\nu_1 + \nu_3$ combination modes of CO₂ for 36 and 60°C. We remember that the ε_i values are related to the transition dipole moment $\delta\mu/\delta Q$ of the vibrational mode under consideration and could be directly compared with infrared intensities calculated by ab-initio methods [35]. At 60°C, we observe a progressive decrease with the CO₂ concentration of the molar extinction coefficient of both combination modes $4\nu_2 + \nu_3$ and $2\nu_1 + \nu_3$ of CO₂ from 1.9 to 1.2 L mol⁻¹ cm⁻² and 2.8 to 2.1 L mol⁻¹ cm⁻² respectively. The same values are obtained at 36°C for low CO₂ concentrations between 1 and 6 mol L⁻¹ whereas at higher concentrations, the decrease is more pronounced at 36°C than at 60°C. Therefore, our results are not consistent with the previous results reported by Buback *et al.* However, we emphasize that the results of Buback *et al.* [34] were averaged over a large domain of temperature between 300 and 500 K whereas in this work, the results are reported for given temperatures that are close to the critical temperature. Under these conditions, the general rule proposed by Buback *et al.* is no longer valid for supercritical CO₂ at temperature close to its critical point. Therefore, we believe that the evolution of the molar extinction coefficient of both combination modes can be interpreted as variation of the molecular interactions in the sample that could change over the pressure and temperature of the supercritical fluid and also directly connected to scattering of the medium due to the LDE that exist in the vicinity of the critical point of supercritical CO₂.

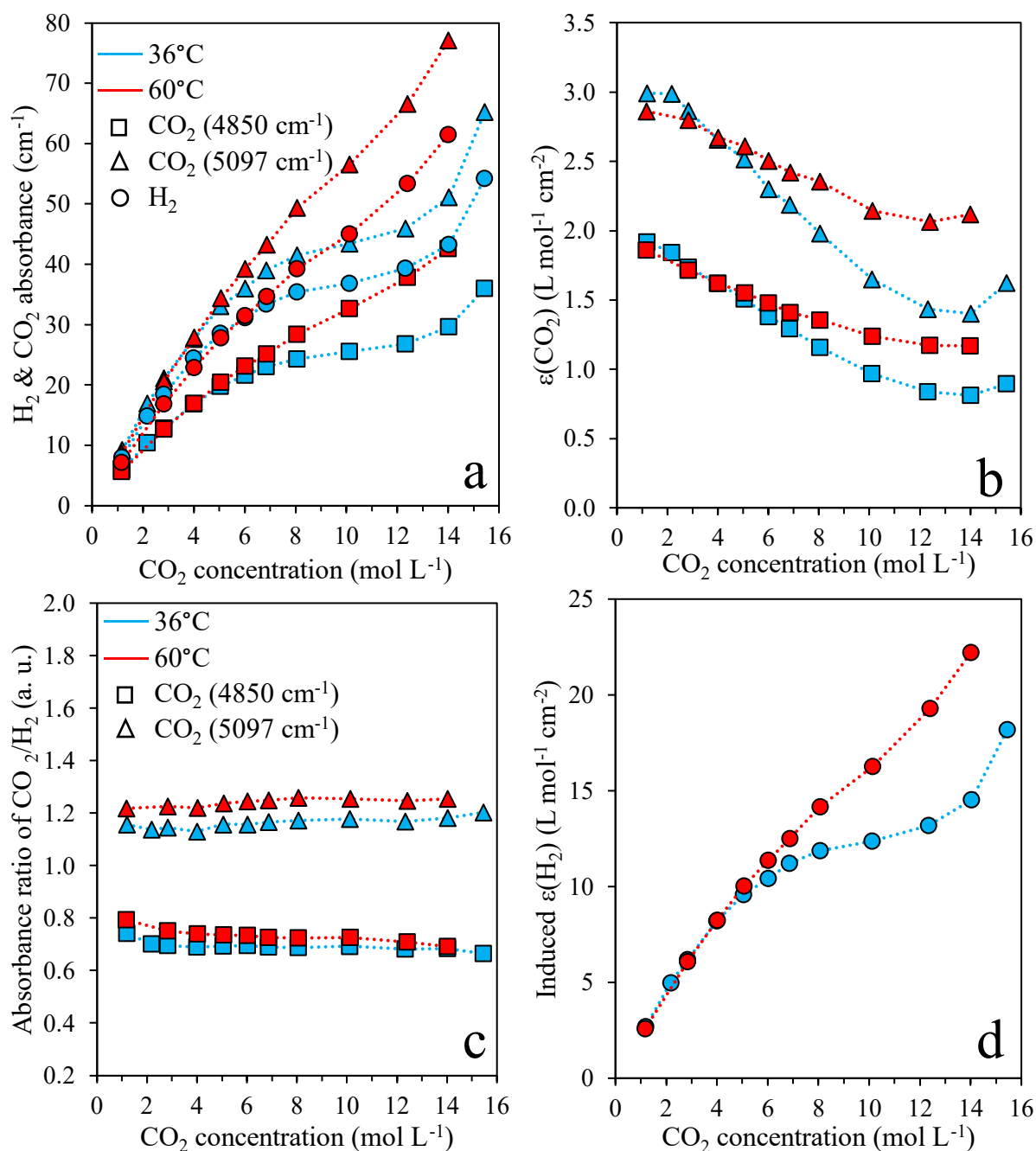


Figure 3: Evolution as a function of the CO₂ concentration at 36 and 60°C of the integrated absorbance of the $4\nu_2 + \nu_3$ (4850 cm⁻¹) and $2\nu_1 + \nu_3$ (5097 cm⁻¹) combination band of CO₂ and of the H₂ peak at 4170 cm⁻¹ obtained by IR spectroscopy (a), the molar extinction coefficient of the CO₂ combinations bands (b), the induced molar extinction coefficient associated with the H₂ peak (d) and the absorbance ratio CO₂/H₂ for both combination modes of CO₂ (c).

Regarding the evolution of the IR area of the H₂ contribution in **Figure 3a**, we observed that it follows the same evolution than the CO₂ contribution. Indeed, the ratios of the area of the CO₂ contributions at 4850 and 5097 cm⁻¹ over that of the H₂ peak at 4150 cm⁻¹ reported in **Figure 3c** are found to be almost constant over the whole range of CO₂ concentration. As the H₂ stretching vibration is inactive in IR spectroscopy, the observed H₂ spectrum in supercritical CO₂ is due to an induced dipole moment on the H₂ molecule that results from its interaction with the surrounding CO₂ molecules. These collision-induced effects have already been

reported for H₂ under high pressure in neat conditions or dissolved in rare gases [13,14]. However, to the best of our knowledge, the collision-induced IR spectrum of H₂ in supercritical CO₂ has not been reported in the literature. Therefore, we have calculated the induced molar extinction coefficient of the H₂ peak at 4150 cm⁻¹ from the evolution of its absorbance as a function of the CO₂ pressure knowing that the concentration of H₂ in the mixture is constant (see **Figure 3d**). The molar extinction coefficient of H₂ increases with the CO₂ concentration similarly for the two temperatures up to about C(CO₂)=6 mol.L⁻¹. At higher CO₂ concentrations, we observe a further increase of the molar extinction coefficient of H₂ but to a lesser extent and in particular at 36°C where a plateau like behavior is observed around C(CO₂) = 10 mol.L⁻¹. This last observation could also be related to the local density fluctuations that take place in the vicinity of the critical point of CO₂.

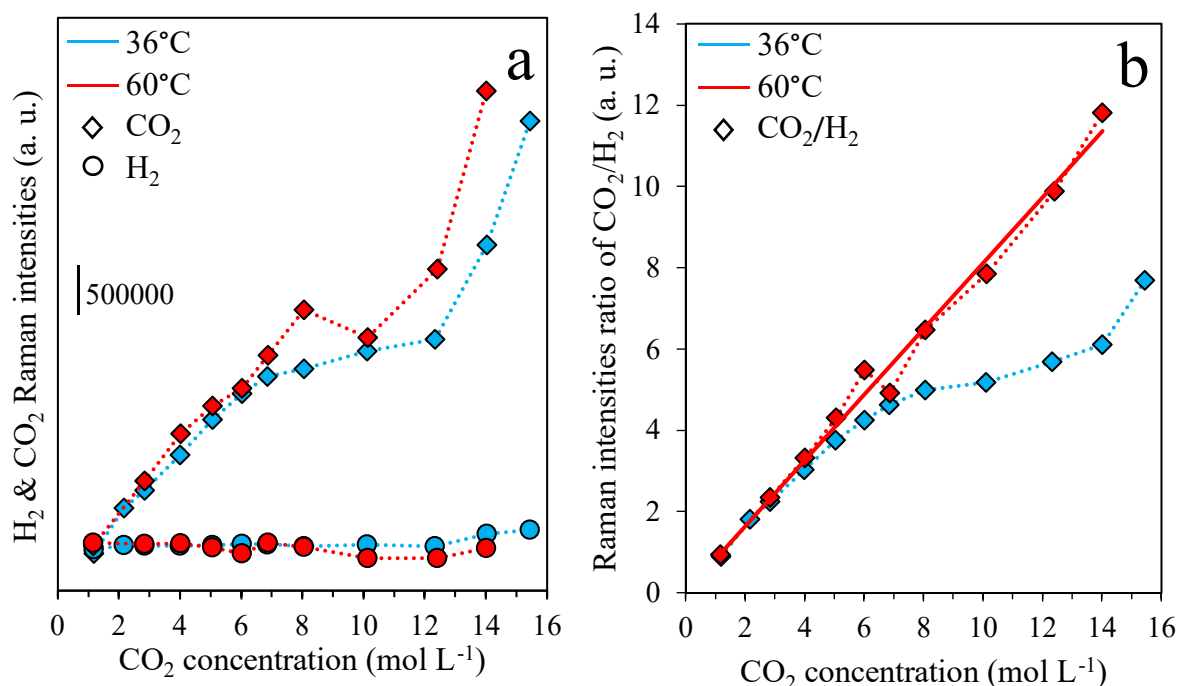


Figure 4: Evolution as a function of the CO₂ concentration at 36 and 60°C of the intensities of the CO₂ Fermi dyad (I_{dyad}) and H₂ rotational mode S1 at 581 cm⁻¹ (I_{S1}) obtained by Raman spectroscopy (a) and the intensity ratio ($I_{\text{dyad}}/I_{\text{S1}}$) (b)

Regarding the Raman data reported in **Figure 4a**, the area of the CO₂ dyad increases non monotonously with the CO₂ concentration displaying a plateau like behavior observed for the two temperatures around C(CO₂) = 10 mol.L⁻¹ as it is observed for the IR spectra. Regarding the area of the H₂ contribution, it remains almost constant regardless of concentration of CO₂ displaying only a weak decrease observed around C(CO₂) = 10 mol.L⁻¹. This result is consistent with the fact that the H₂ concentration in the mixture is constant. Therefore, the Raman data are in qualitative agreement with the fact that in our experiments, the H₂ concentration is kept constant while the CO₂ concentration is increased from 1 to 15 mol.L⁻¹. Although the non-monotonous evolution of the area of the CO₂ dyad could be also due to the LDE that are predominant around the critical density, Raman intensities are not absolute and depend on many factors (laser and detector stability, fluorescence, Mie diffusion, ...). To circumvent the fact that Raman intensities are not absolute, ratio techniques have been proposed in the literature to

obtain quantitative information from Raman spectra in particular for the determination of the solubility of CO₂ in water [36–38]. Thus, the CO₂ bands are referenced to the O–H stretching band of water and the calibration curves relating band height (area) ratios to gas concentration are found to be linear over a range of temperatures and pressures. We have applied this methodology to our Raman data and calculated the ratio of the area of the CO₂ bands to that of the S1 band of H₂ whose concentration is constant over the whole range of CO₂ concentration (see **Figure 4b**). At 60°C, a linear increase of the ratio ($I_{\text{dyad}}/I_{\text{S1}}$) is observed with the increase of the CO₂ concentration. Thus, it results that the concentration of CO₂ in the H₂-CO₂ mixture can be determined using this methodology as it was applied previously for H₂O-CO₂ mixture. However, at 36°C, we observe a departure from the linearity with a plateau like behavior of the ($I_{\text{dyad}}/I_{\text{S1}}$) ratio observed from 8 to 12 mol.L⁻¹ of CO₂ and then a further increase at higher concentration with the same slope than that observed at 60°C. This departure from linearity could result from the local density fluctuations that are expected to be more pronounced in the vicinity of the critical point of CO₂.

4- Conclusion

A single high-pressure cell was used for the *in situ* monitoring of H₂ diluted in supercritical CO₂ by co-localized IR/Raman spectroscopies. A constant pressure of H₂ of 3 MPa was applied in the cell heated at 36°C or 60°C and the concentration of CO₂ was increased from 1 to 15 mol.L⁻¹. In the spectral range between 3800 and 5200 cm⁻¹, IR absorption spectra associated with CO₂ combination modes increases almost linearly with the CO₂ concentration from 1 to around 6 mol.L⁻¹ for both temperature at 36 and 60°C. Above 6 mol.L⁻¹, the increase of intensities was slow down because of a plateau like behavior that was observed mostly at 36°C compared to the higher temperature of 60°C. The same behavior was observed for the collision-induced stretching mode of H₂ observed at about 4150 cm⁻¹ that is reported for the first time in supercritical CO₂. Interestingly, it is found that the ratios of the area of the CO₂ contributions at 4850 and 5097 cm⁻¹ over that of the H₂ stretching mode are found to be almost constant over the whole range of CO₂ concentration.

In the spectral range between 300 and 1400 cm⁻¹, Raman scattering spectra associated with the Fermi dyad of CO₂ are found to increase with the CO₂ concentration from 1 to 15 mol.L⁻¹ whereas the rotational bands of H₂ remain constant which is in accordance with the constant pressure of H₂. In order to analyze quantitatively the Raman data, the intensity of the rotational mode S1 at 581 cm⁻¹ of H₂ was used as an internal standard. At 60°C a linear increase of the ratio ($I_{\text{dyad}}/I_{\text{S1}}$) is observed with the increase of the CO₂ concentration, however, a departure from the linearity with a plateau like behavior for this ratio was observed at 36°C from 8 to 12 mol.L⁻¹. Knowing that the critical concentration of CO₂ is at about 10.6 mol.L⁻¹, the non-linear behavior of the evolution of both IR and Raman intensities was related to the local density fluctuations that are significant near the critical point of CO₂. Finally, the use of co-localized IR/Raman spectroscopies allows to reduce experimental errors related to the reproducibility of the experimental conditions (temperature, pressure, homogeneity of the mixture) when independent IR and Raman experiments are performed.

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