

Contents

Preface XV

List of Contributors XVII

Part One Introduction 1

1	What is Fischer–Tropsch?	3
	<i>Peter M. Maitlis</i>	
	Synopsis	3
1.1	Feedstocks for Fuel and for Chemicals Manufacture	3
1.2	The Problems	5
1.3	Fuels for Transportation	6
1.3.1	Internal Combustion Engines	6
1.3.2	Electric Cars	7
1.3.3	Hydrogen-Powered Vehicles	7
1.4	Feedstocks for the Chemical Industry	8
1.5	Sustainability and Renewables: Alternatives to Fossil Fuels	8
1.5.1	Biofuels	9
1.5.2	Other Renewable but Nonbio Fuels	9
1.6	The Way Forward	10
1.7	XTL and the Fischer–Tropsch Process (FTP)	11
1.7.1	Some History	12
1.7.2	FT Technology: An Overview	13
1.7.3	What Goes on?	13
1.7.4	CO Hydrogenation: Basic Thermodynamics and Kinetics	14
1.8	Alternatives to Fischer–Tropsch	14
	References	15

Part Two Industrial and Economics Aspects 17**2 Syngas: The Basis of Fischer–Tropsch 19***Roberto Zennaro, Marco Ricci, Letizia Bua, Cecilia Querci, Lino Carnelli, and Alessandra d'Arminio Monforte*

Synopsis 19

- 2.1 Syngas as Feedstock 19
- 2.2 Routes to Syngas: XTL (X = Gas, Coal, Biomass, and Waste) 21
 - 2.2.1 Starting from Gas (GTL) 23
 - 2.2.2 Starting from Solid Feeds (CTL, BTL, and WTL) 27
- 2.3 Water-Gas Shift Reaction (WGSR) 31
- 2.4 Synthesis Gas Cleanup 34
- 2.5 Thermal and Carbon Efficiency 37
- 2.6 The XTL Gas Loop 41
 - 2.6.1 Gas Loop for HTFT Synthesis with a Coal Gasifier 41
 - 2.6.2 Gas Loop for HTFT Synthesis with a Natural Gas Feed 42
 - 2.6.3 Gas Loop for LTFT Cobalt Catalyst with Natural Gas Feed 43
- 2.7 CO₂ Production and CO₂ as Feedstock 46
- References 49

3 Fischer–Tropsch Technology 53*Arno de Klerk, Yong-Wang Li, and Roberto Zennaro*

Synopsis 53

- 3.1 Introduction 53
 - 3.1.1 FT Catalyst 54
 - 3.1.2 Operating Conditions 54
 - 3.1.3 FT Reactor Types 54
- 3.2 Industrially Applied FT Technologies 54
 - 3.2.1 German Normal-Pressure Synthesis 55
 - 3.2.2 German Medium-Pressure Synthesis 56
 - 3.2.3 Hydrocol 56
 - 3.2.4 Arbeitsgemeinschaft Ruhrchemie-Lurgi (Arge) 56
 - 3.2.5 Kellogg Synthol and Sasol Synthol 57
 - 3.2.6 Shell Middle Distillate Synthesis (SMDS) 57
 - 3.2.7 Sasol Advanced Synthol (SAS) 57
 - 3.2.8 Iron Sasol Slurry Bed Process (Fe-SSBP) 57
 - 3.2.9 Cobalt Sasol Slurry Bed Process (Co-SSBP) 58
 - 3.2.10 Statoil Cobalt-Based Slurry Bubble Column 58
 - 3.2.11 High-Temperature Slurry Fischer–Tropsch Process (HTSFTP) 58
- 3.3 FT Catalysts 58
- 3.4 Requirements for Industrial Catalysts 59
 - 3.4.1 Activity 59
 - 3.4.2 Selectivity 59
 - 3.4.3 Stability 60
 - 3.4.4 Other Factors 60

3.5	FT Reactors	61
3.5.1	Tube-Cooled Fixed Bed Reactors	61
3.5.2	Multitubular Fixed Bed Reactors	63
3.5.3	Circulating and Fixed Fluidized Bed Reactors	65
3.5.4	Slurry Bed Reactors	68
3.6	Selecting the Right FT Technology	71
3.6.1	Syngas Composition	71
3.6.2	Syngas Purity	72
3.6.3	Impact of Catalyst Deactivation	72
3.6.4	Catalyst Replacement Strategy	72
3.6.5	Turndown Ratio and Robustness	73
3.6.6	Steam Quality	73
3.6.7	Syncrude Composition	73
3.6.8	Syncrude Quality	74
3.7	Selecting the FT Operating Conditions	74
3.8	Selecting the FT Catalyst Type	75
3.8.1	Active Metal	75
3.8.2	Catalyst Complexity	75
3.8.3	Catalyst Particle Size	76
3.9	Other Factors That Affect FT Technology Selection	76
3.9.1	Particle Size	76
3.9.2	Reaction Phase	76
3.9.3	Catalyst Lifetime	77
3.9.4	Volumetric Reactor Productivity	77
3.9.5	Other Considerations	78
	References	78
4	What Can We Do with Fischer–Tropsch Products?	81
	<i>Arno de Klerk and Peter M. Maitlis</i>	
	Synopsis	81
4.1	Introduction	81
4.2	Composition of Fischer–Tropsch Syncrude	82
4.2.1	Carbon Number Distribution: Anderson–Schulz–Flory (ASF) Plots	86
4.2.2	Hydrocarbon Composition	86
4.2.3	Oxygenate Composition	90
4.3	Syncrude Recovery after Fischer–Tropsch Synthesis	92
4.3.1	Stepwise Syncrude Cooling and Recovery	92
4.3.2	Oxygenate Partitioning	94
4.3.3	Oxygenate Recovery from the Aqueous Product	95
4.4	Fuel Products from Fischer–Tropsch Syncrude	96
4.4.1	Synthetic Natural Gas	96
4.4.2	Liquefied Petroleum Gas	97
4.4.3	Motor Gasoline	98
4.4.4	Jet Fuel	99
4.4.5	Diesel Fuel	99

4.5	Lubricants from Fischer–Tropsch Syncrude	101
4.6	Petrochemical Products from Fischer–Tropsch Syncrude	102
4.6.1	Alkane-Based Petrochemicals	102
4.6.2	Alkene-Based Petrochemicals	103
4.6.3	Aromatic-Based Petrochemicals	104
4.6.4	Oxygenate-Based Petrochemicals	104
	References	104
5	Industrial Case Studies	107
	<i>Yong-Wang Li and Arno de Klerk</i>	
	Synopsis	107
5.1	Introduction	107
5.2	A Brief History of Industrial FT Development	108
5.2.1	Early Developments	108
5.2.2	Postwar Transfer of FT Technology across Oceans	110
5.2.3	Industrial Developments in South Africa	110
5.2.4	Industrial Developments by Shell	112
5.2.5	Developments in China	112
5.2.6	Other International Developments	115
5.3	Industrial FT Facilities	116
5.3.1	Sasol 1 Facility	117
5.3.2	Sasol Synfuels Facility	118
5.3.3	Shell Middle Distillate Synthesis (SMDS) Facilities	121
5.3.4	PetroSA GTL Facility	122
5.3.5	Oryx and Escravos GTL Facilities	123
5.4	Perspectives on Industrial Developments	124
5.4.1	Further Investment in Industrial FT Facilities	124
5.4.2	Technology Lessons from Industrial Practice	125
5.4.3	Future of Small-Scale Industrial Facilities	126
	References	128
6	Other Industrially Important Syngas Reactions	131
	<i>Peter M. Maitlis</i>	
	Synopsis	131
6.1	Survey of CO Hydrogenation Reactions	131
6.2	Syngas to Methanol	133
6.2.1	Introduction	133
6.2.2	Synthesis Reaction	134
6.2.3	Mechanism	135
6.2.4	Catalyst Deactivation	136
6.2.5	Uses of Methanol	136
6.3	Syngas to Dimethyl Ether (DME)	137
6.3.1	DME Uses	137
6.4	Syngas to Ethanol	137
6.4.1	Introduction	137

6.4.2	Direct Processes	138
6.5	Syngas to Acetic Acid	139
6.5.1	Acetic Acid Processes	139
6.5.2	Mechanisms	141
6.5.3	Catalyst Deactivation	142
6.6	Higher Hydrocarbons and Higher Oxygenates	143
6.6.1	Isobutene and Isobutanol	143
6.7	Hydroformylation	144
6.8	Other Reactions Based on Syngas	146
6.8.1	Hydroxy and Alkoxy Carbonylations	146
6.8.2	Methyl Formate	146
6.8.3	Dimethyl Carbonate (DMC)	147
6.8.4	Ether Gasoline Additives	147
6.8.5	Hydrogenation	147
	References	148
7	Fischer–Tropsch Process Economics	149
	<i>Roberto Zennaro</i>	
	Synopsis	149
7.1	Introduction and Background	149
7.2	Market Outlook (Natural Gas)	150
7.3	Capital Cost	156
7.4	Operating Costs	162
7.5	Revenues	162
7.6	Economics and Sensitivity Analysis	164
7.6.1	Sensitivity to GTL Plant Capacity (Economy of Scale Effects)	165
7.6.2	Sensitivity to Feedstock Costs	165
7.6.3	Sensitivity to GTL Project Cost (Learning Curve Effect)	166
7.6.4	Sensitivity to Tax Regime	166
7.6.5	Sensitivity to GTL Diesel Valorization	167
7.6.6	Sensitivity to Crude Oil Price Scenario	167
7.6.7	Effects of Key Parameters on GTL Plant Profitability	167
	References	169

Part Three Fundamental Aspects 171

8	Preparation of Iron FT Catalysts	173
	<i>Burtron H. Davis</i>	
	Synopsis	173
8.1	Introduction	173
8.2	High-Temperature Fischer–Tropsch (HTFT) Catalysts	174
8.3	Low-Temperature Catalysts	176
8.4	Individual Steps	177
8.4.1	Oxidation of Fe^{2+}	177

8.4.2	Precipitation of Fe^{3+}	180
8.4.3	Precipitate Washing	188
8.4.4	An Environmentally Greener Process	189
8.4.5	Chemical Promoters	189
8.4.6	Copper Promoters	189
8.4.7	Phase Changes	190
8.4.8	Other Iron Catalysts	190
	References	190

9 Cobalt FT Catalysts 193

Burtron H. Davis

Synopsis 193

9.1	Introduction	193
9.2	Early German Work	193
9.3	Support Preparation	194
9.3.1	Alumina Supports	195
9.3.2	Silica Supports	196
9.3.3	Titanium Dioxide Support	201
9.4	Addition of Cobalt and Promoters	202
9.5	Calcination	203
9.6	Reduction	204
9.7	Catalyst Transfer	205
9.8	Catalyst Attrition	205
9.9	Addendum Recent Literature Summary	205
	References	205

10 Other FT Catalysts 209

Burtron H. Davis and Peter M. Maitlis

Synopsis 209

10.1	Introduction	209
10.2	Ni Catalysts	210
10.3	Ruthenium Catalysts	211
10.3.1	Historical	211
10.3.2	Studies on Ru Catalysts	212
10.4	Rhodium Catalysts	217
10.5	Other Catalysts and Promoters	218
	References	218

11 Surface Science Studies Related to Fischer–Tropsch Reactions 221

Peter M. Maitlis

Synopsis 221

11.1	Introduction: Surfaces in Catalysts and Catalytic Cycles	221
11.2	Heterogeneous Catalyst Characterization	222
11.2.1	<i>Diffraction Methods</i>	222

11.2.2	Spectroscopic Methods	222
11.2.3	Microscopy Techniques	223
11.2.4	Molecular Metal Complexes as Models	224
11.3	Species Detected on Surfaces	226
11.3.1	Carbon Monoxide on Surfaces {CO}	228
11.3.2	Activation of CO	229
11.3.3	Transformations of {CO}	230
11.3.4	Hydrogen on Surfaces {H ₂ } and {H}	231
11.3.5	Transformations of {H}	232
11.3.6	Reactions of {CO} and {H}	233
11.4	Theoretical Calculations	233
	References	234
12	Mechanistic Studies Related to the Fischer–Tropsch Hydrocarbon Synthesis and Some Cognate Processes	237
	<i>Peter M. Maitlis</i>	
	Synopsis	237
12.1	Introduction	237
12.1.1	A Brief Background: Classical Views of the Mechanism	239
12.2	Basic FT Reaction: Dissociative and Associative Paths	240
12.2.1	Dissociative Activation of CO	241
12.2.2	Associative Activation	242
12.2.3	Dual Mechanism Approaches	244
12.3	Some Mechanisms-Related Experimental Studies	244
12.3.1	The Original Work of Fischer and Tropsch	244
12.3.2	Laboratory-Scale Experimental Results	247
12.3.3	Probe Experiments and Isotopic Labeling	249
12.3.3.1	¹³ C Labeling	249
12.3.3.2	¹⁴ C Labeling	251
12.4	Current Views on the Mechanisms of the FT-S	251
12.4.1	The First Steps: H ₂ and CO Activation	251
12.4.2	Organometallic Models for CO Activation	253
12.5	Now: Toward a Consensus?	253
12.5.1	Routes Based on a Dissociative (Carbide) Mechanism	254
12.5.2	Routes Based on an Associative (or Oxygenate) Mechanism	255
12.6	Dual FT Mechanisms	256
12.6.1.1	Dual FT Mechanisms: The Nonpolar Path	256
12.6.2	Dual FT Mechanisms: The Ionic/Dipolar Path	258
12.7	Cognate Processes: The Formation of Oxygenates in FT-S	259
12.8	Dual Mechanisms Summary	260
12.9	Improvements by Catalyst Modifications	260
12.10	Catalyst Activation and Deactivation Processes	261
12.11	Desorption and Displacement Effects	262
12.12	Directions for Future Researches	262

12.12.1	Surface Spectroscopic Studies	262
12.12.2	Surface Microscopic Studies	262
12.12.3	Labeling and Kinetic Studies	263
12.12.4	Theoretical Calculations	263
12.13	Caveat	264
	References	264

Part Four Environmental Aspects 267

13 Fischer–Tropsch Catalyst Life Cycle 269

Julius Pretorius and Arno de Klerk

Synopsis 269

13.1	Introduction	269
13.2	Catalyst Manufacturing	270
13.2.1	Precipitated Fe-LTFT Catalysts	270
13.2.2	Supported Co-LTFT Catalysts	271
13.2.3	Fused Fe-HTFT Catalysts	271
13.3	Catalyst Consumption	272
13.3.1	Catalyst Lifetime during Industrial Operation	273
13.3.2	Fe-LTFT Catalyst Regeneration	273
13.3.3	Fe-HTFT Catalyst Regeneration	274
13.3.3.1	Fouling by Carbon	274
13.3.3.2	Loss of Alkali Promoter	274
13.3.3.3	Mechanical Attrition	274
13.3.3.4	Sulfur Poisoning	275
13.3.4	Co-LTFT Catalyst Regeneration	275
13.4	Catalyst Disposal	276
	References	277

14 Fischer–Tropsch Syncrude: To Refine or to Upgrade? 281

Vincenzo Calemme and Arno de Klerk

Synopsis 281

14.1	Introduction	281
14.1.1	To Refine or to Upgrade?	282
14.1.2	Refining of Fischer–Tropsch Syncrude	285
14.2	Wax Hydrocracking and Hydroisomerization	286
14.2.1	Hydrocracking and Hydroisomerization Catalysts	288
14.2.2	Mechanism of Hydrocracking and Hydroisomerization	290
14.2.3	Products from Hydrocracking Conversion	293
14.2.4	Parameters Affecting Hydrocracking	296
14.2.4.1	Effect of Temperature	296
14.2.4.2	Effect of Pressure	297
14.2.4.3	Effect of H ₂ /Wax Ratio	298
14.2.4.4	Effect of Space Velocity	300

14.2.4.5	Effect of Oxygenates	300
14.2.5	Comparative Environmental Impact	301
14.3	Olefin Dimerization and Oligomerization	301
14.3.1	Dimerization and Oligomerization Catalysts	301
14.3.2	Mechanisms of Dimerization and Oligomerization	302
14.3.3	Products from Solid Phosphoric Acid and H-ZSM-5 Conversion	304
14.3.4	Parameters Affecting Solid Phosphoric Acid and H-ZSM-5 Conversion	305
14.3.4.1	Effect of Temperature	306
14.3.4.2	Effect of Olefinic Composition	306
14.3.4.3	Effect of Oxygenates	306
14.3.5	Comparative Environmental Impact	306
	References	307

15 Environmental Sustainability 311

Roberta Miglio, Roberto Zennaro, and Arno de Klerk

Synopsis 311

15.1	Introduction	311
15.2	Impact of FT Facilities on the Environment	313
15.2.1	Upstream Impact Assessment	313
15.2.2	Downstream Impact Assessment	315
15.3	Water and Wastewater Management	316
15.3.1	Water Produced in FT Facilities	317
15.3.2	Quantities and Quality of Water	318
15.3.3	Water Management Approaches	319
15.3.4	Water Treatment Technologies	321
15.3.5	Benchmark Technology: Water Treatment at Pearl GTL	322
15.3.6	Prospects for Reducing the Water Footprint in CTL	324
15.4	Solid Waste Management	325
15.5	Air Quality Management	326
15.5.1	The CO ₂ Footprint of FT Facilities	327
15.5.2	Is CO ₂ a Carbon Feed of the Future?	330
15.6	Environmental Footprint of FT Refineries	330
15.6.1	Energy Footprint of Refining	331
15.6.2	Emissions and Wastes in Refining	333
	References	334

Part Five Future Prospects 337

16 New Directions, Challenges, and Opportunities 339

Peter M. Maitlis and Arno de Klerk

Synopsis 339

16.1	Introduction	339
16.2	Why Go Along the Fischer–Tropsch Route?	341

16.2.1	Strategic Justification	341
16.2.2	Economic Justification	342
16.2.3	Environmental Justification	343
16.3	Considerations against Fischer–Tropsch Facilities	343
16.4	Opportunities to Improve Fischer–Tropsch Facilities	344
16.4.1	Opportunities Offered by Small-Scale FT Facilities	346
16.4.2	Technical Opportunities in Syngas Generation and Cleaning	347
16.4.3	Technical Opportunities in Fischer–Tropsch Synthesis	348
16.4.4	Technical Opportunities in FT Syncrude Recovery and Refining	349
16.4.4.1	Syncrude Recovery Design	349
16.4.4.2	Tail Gas Recovery and Conversion	350
16.4.4.3	Aqueous Product Refining	350
16.5	Fundamental Studies: Keys to Improved FT Processes	351
16.5.1	New Instrumentation	351
16.5.2	New Catalysts and Supports	352
16.5.3	Isotopic Labeling	352
16.5.4	Surface Microscopy	352
16.5.5	Analytical Methods	352
16.5.6	Greener Procedures	353
16.6	Challenges for the Future	353
16.6.1	Hiatus Effect	353
16.6.2	Practical Constraints	354
16.6.2.1	Critical Materials Availability	354
16.6.2.2	Equipment Availability	354
16.6.2.3	Trained Manpower	355
16.6.2.4	Water Availability	355
16.6.2.5	Environmental Requirements, Permits, and Licensing	355
16.6.2.6	Socioeconomic Impacts	355
16.6.3	Politics, Profit, and Perspectives	355
16.7	Conclusions	356
	References	357

Glossary 359

Index 363