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Influence of TiO₂-based photocatalytic coating road on traffic-related NO_x pollutants in urban street canyon by CFD modeling

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ABSTRACT

The use of titanium dioxide (TiO₂) photocatalytic nanoparticles as road coating to trap and decompose air pollutants provides a promising technology to mitigate the harmful effects of vehicle emissions. However, there are few studies on computational fluid dynamics (CFD) simulations of the effect of NO_x photocatalytic oxidation in street canyon with TiO₂ nanoparticles as pavement coating. This study developed a CFD model with photocatalytic oxidation (PCO) reaction implemented for numerical simulation of NO_x abatement in an urban street canyon with TiO₂ coating, considering the effects of relative humidity (*RH*) (10–90%) and irradiance ($10\text{--}40\text{ W} \cdot \text{m}^{-2}$). Results show that TiO₂ coating road can effectively reduce nitrogen oxide (NO_x) concentration in the street canyon. The average nitric oxide (NO) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) concentrations in street canyon with TiO₂ coating road were reduced by 3.70% and 4.31%, respectively, comparing with street canyon without TiO₂ coating. The irradiance

and relative humidity had great effect on PCO reaction in street canyon with TiO₂ coating road. When the irradiance increased from $10\text{ W} \cdot \text{m}^{-2}$ to $40\text{ W} \cdot \text{m}^{-2}$, average NO conversion rose from 1.35% to 3.70%, and average NO₂ conversion rose from 2.43% to 4.31%. The average conversion of NO and NO₂ decreased from 5.11% to 2.54% and from 5.60% to 3.25%, respectively, when the relative humidity varied from 10% to 90%. Results are useful to transport planners and road engineers who need to reduce NO_x concentrations in urban streets travelled by fossil fuel-powered vehicles. Method of the study can be considered by future research faced with different pavement construction and traffic environment.

Keywords: Street canyon; TiO₂ coating road; NO_x concentration; photocatalytic oxidation (PCO); computational fluid dynamics (CFD) simulation

1. Introduction

The total NO_x emissions were 12.59 Mt in China in 2017 (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2019). Vehicle exhaust is a major contributor to NO_x emissions in cities with the rapidly growing automobile industry and urbanization. These activities yielded an increase of 1.4 Mt NO_x in 2017 compared with the 2010 levels, while pollution control measures have yielded reductions of 1.3 Mt NO_x (Zheng et al., 2018). In 2017, NO_x emissions from vehicles were estimated to be 5.74 Mt (National Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China, 2018), accounting for 45.6% of the total NO_x

emissions in China. NO_x cause a wide range of environmental issues, such as the formation of tropospheric ozone and urban smog through photochemical reactions with hydrocarbons. Furthermore, NO_x can cause acute respiratory tract infections and cardiovascular diseases (Notario et al., 2012). Road pavement, in initial and direct contact with tailpipe emissions, provides an opportunity to retain and convert the pollutants to less harmful substances. Photocatalytic oxidation (PCO) is found effective in reducing air pollution caused by NO_x . PCO using TiO_2 has drawn public attention for air quality reasons with their advantages of high oxidation efficiency, innocuity and low cost (Jiang et al., 2019).

Photocatalytic concrete coated with TiO_2 are widely experimented (Devahasdin et al., 2003; Faraldos et al., 2016). Lasek et al. (2013) summarized the oxidation mechanism, various processes and conditions of PCO for NO_x removal. Mothes et al. (2018) assessed the photocatalytic performance of cement-based materials containing TiO_2 for NO_x reduction, by determining the kinetic parameters under various experimental conditions (relative humidity, flow rate, mixing ratio and light intensity) in small-scale bed flow photoreactor experiments. Some key physic-chemical factors influencing the effectiveness of photocatalytic concrete are tested in experiments by (Macphee and Folli, 2016; Yang et al., 2019) on a micro level. Mendoza et al. (2017) investigated the effectiveness of surface modified by WO_3/TiO_2 (WO_3 , tungsten trioxide) composite particles in removing gaseous NO_x under visible light irradiation. Study by Guo et al. (2017) was focusing on the method of applying nano- TiO_2 to

63 concrete surface. Based on Langmuir-Hinshelwood kinetics equation, the PCO reaction
64 rate was modelled in experiments (Ballari et al., 2010). In other experiments, the
65 reaction rate was fixed considering relative humidity and irradiance (Devahasdin et al.,
66 2003; Lira et al., 2018; Yu et al., 2010).

67 In addition to concrete, experiments were also carried out on asphalt pavement (Chen
68 and Chu, 2011)(Folli et al., 2015). De Melo et al. (2012) tested road pavement overlaid
69 with cement mortar which contains varying levels of TiO_2 (3%, 6% and 10%) for their
70 photocatalytic efficiency. Results indicated that higher TiO_2 contents in a porous
71 pavement surface are more efficient in the degradation of NO_x . Fan et al. (2018)
72 developed a solar photocatalytic asphalt for removing vehicular NO_x and mitigating
73 roadside air pollution problem by chamber tests and field tests, who studied material
74 characterizations and evaluated the durability of the photocatalytic coating.

75 The use of TiO_2 photocatalytic nanoparticles as a road coating to trap and
76 decompose air pollutants provides a promising technology to mitigate the harmful
77 effects of vehicle emissions. Certain types of urban street layouts are known to be
78 detrimental to the dispersion of contaminants. One of the typical configurations for
79 gathering pollutants and causing harm to humans is the so-called street canyon, which
80 means a street flanked by continuous buildings on both sides. Investigations on the
81 characteristics of vehicle emissions dispersion in street canyon with TiO_2 photocatalytic
82 nanoparticles as pavement coating are very important for further understanding the
83 impact of TiO_2 photocatalytic nanoparticles pavement coating on the air quality in

84 urban environment.

85 Computational fluid dynamics (CFD) simulation is used to predict the dispersion
86 of reactive air pollutants within a street canyon, because it is quick and cost effective
87 comparing with photoreactor experiment and field measurements. Baker et al. (2004)
88 and Kikumoto and Ooka (2012) simulated the dispersion and transport of reactive air
89 pollutants (NO, NO₂ and O₃) in an urban street canyon using an LES model. Kwak et
90 al. (2013) conducted numerical simulations with a Reynolds Averaged Naviere Stokes
91 equation (RANS) model to analyze the impact of bottom heating in street canyons on
92 the flow and transport of reactive air pollutants (NO, NO₂ and O₃). Heat intensity,
93 inflow wind and vegetation were found important factors that effect on reactive
94 pollution dispersion in urban street canyon (Xie and Zhu, 2018) (Moradpour et al.,
95 2017). CFD techniques are effective tools for the simulation of reactive flow within
96 photocatalytic devices considering all the coupled phenomena taking place (Lira et al.,
97 2018). CFD has been used to model flat plate photo reactor (Passalia et al., 2011)
98 (Salvado, 2007) (Salvado and Hargreaves, 2007), multi-tube reactor (Jelle Roegiers,
99 2018) (Alpert et al., 2010), impeller reactor (Tokode et al., 2017) and rectangular reactor
100 (Einaga et al., 2015). The effects of film thickness (Vezzoli et al., 2013) and gas flow
101 rate (Alpert et al., 2010) (Einaga et al., 2015) have also been investigated. However,
102 there are few studies on CFD simulations of the effect of NO_x photocatalytic oxidation
103 in street canyon with TiO₂ photocatalytic nanoparticles as pavement coating.

104 This paper aims to develop a coupled CFD-PCO model and investigate the effects of

TiO₂-based photocatalytic road coating on the NO_x reduction in urban street canyon. Furthermore, a comprehensive analysis of the key factors influencing the effectiveness of the TiO₂-based photocatalytic coating road is carried out. Methodology in this study will provide a fast and effective way for the investigation of the PCO reaction in street canyon with TiO₂ coating road. Findings from this study shall be useful to road design and transport planning to reduce reactive pollutant levels in urban traffic environment.

2. Methodology

2.1 Flow modeling

Computational fluid dynamics (CFD) modelling is based on numerical solutions to derive dispersion equations and fluid flow simulation. These solutions are derived from the principles of conservation and transmission. The air in street canyons can be considered incompressible turbulent inert flow, and the density of air and pollutant is assumed to be constant. As Sini et al. (1996) pointed out, these assumptions are reasonable for most low-level atmospheric environments.

Steady RANS model has been widely used because its effectiveness in predicting average airflows. Re-normalization group (RNG) $k-\varepsilon$ model is used in this study according to previous research on the influence of structures on particulate matter dispersion in street canyons by CFD modeling (Hao et al. 2019).

The commercial CFD software Fluent (Fluent, 2009) is used to implement the mathematical model above. Meanwhile, the governing equations are discretized using

the finite volume method and the second order upwind scheme. The SIMPLE scheme is used for the pressure and velocity coupling.

The inlet flow velocity is:

$$u(z) = U_0 \left(\frac{y-H}{Y} \right)^\alpha \quad (1)$$

where U_0 is the wind speed at the boundary, it is set as $U_0 = 3 \text{ m}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$. H is the height of the building and Y is the thickness of the boundary which is set to 80 m in the paper.

The same thickness was also applied in Ai and Mak's simulation (Ai and Mak, 2017).

α is the wind profile exponent indicating the base surface roughness in relation to the terrain category of mid-dense urban area, and was set to 0.22 (Hang et al., 2017).

Simulations in this study are performed with a full-scaled model. Fig.1 shows the computational domain. The buildings' height H and street's width W are all 20 m. The ratio $H/W = 1$. Pollution inlet is set in the middle of the ground with 1 m wide. The domain size is 20 m by 100 m in x and y directions. Regular grids of 0.1 m by 0.1 m are applied to the whole area inside the street canyon. Grid size outside the canyon increases as they have less effect. Velocity-inlet is applied to the air inlet. The outlet is set with outflow condition. The top domain is considered symmetrical. Walls are defined as non-slip walls. Temperature is set as 298K (about 25°C) in the domain and at all the walls, which means the canyons are isothermal.

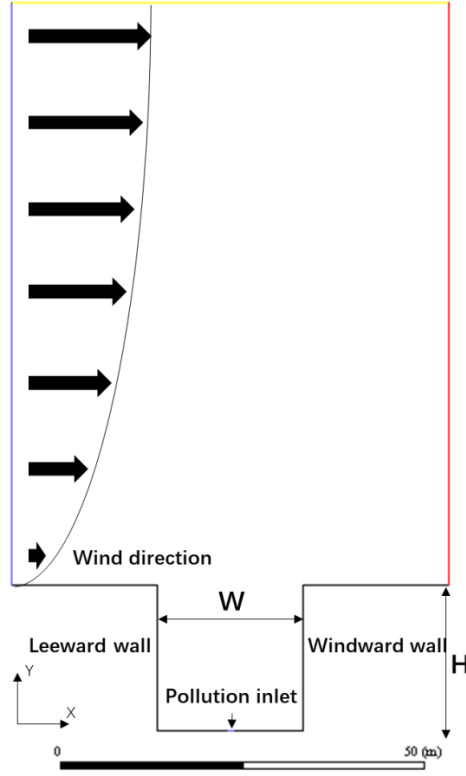
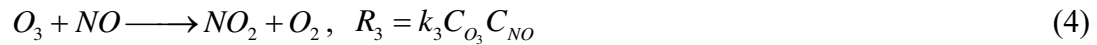
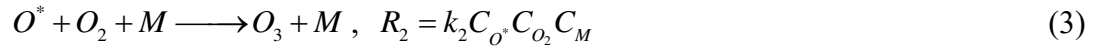


Fig.1. Computational domain

2.2 PCO reaction mechanism

A simplified photochemical steady state (PSS) O_3/NO_x model is implemented if the road is without TiO_2 coating. The chemical reactions considered are (Baik et al., 2007; Carpenter et al., 1998)



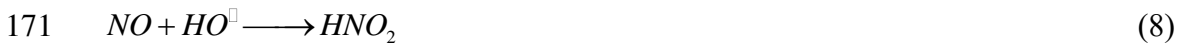
In Eq.(2), $h\nu$ represents photovoltaic processes triggered by sunlight. In Eq. (3), M means a third-body molecule that absorbs energy and stabilizes O_3 . Above reaction mechanism has been widely used in previous studies (García-yee et al., 2018; Han et

155 al., 2018; Muilwijk et al., 2016; Ryerson et al., 2000; Xie and Zhu, 2018).

156 The rate of Eq. (2) is considered infinitely fast compared to the photolysis rate R_1 ,
157 e.g. $k_2 \approx \infty$ (Muilwijk et al., 2016). k_1 is specified as 0.0081 s^{-1} and
158 $k_3 = 44.05 \times 10^{-3} \exp(-1370/T) \text{ ppb}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$ (Baik et al., 2007; Seinfeld, 2007). Eq. 2-4 are
159 combined with the steady RANS method to simulate the dispersion of NO and NO₂.

160 In this simulation, NO and NO₂ are released from the pollution inlet (Fig.1) with a
161 mole fraction of 50 ppm and 5 ppm, respectively. The releasing speed is defined as
162 0.002m/s. It corresponds to about 1000 vehicles per hour, the emission intensity of NO
163 and NO₂ are $120.7 \mu\text{g} \cdot \text{m}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$ and $18.5 \mu\text{g} \cdot \text{m}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$, respectively, assuming the NO_x
164 emission rate is $0.5 \text{ g} \cdot \text{km} / \text{s}$ per vehicle (Baker et al., 2004).

165 Furthermore, road with nanometer TiO₂ coating is associated with the photocatalytic
166 oxidation (PCO) of nitrogen oxides in street canyon. The related reactions are written
167 below (Allen et al., 2003):



174 The Langmuir-Hinshelwood model has been widely used to model the reaction rate
175 for PCO (M. M. Ballari et al., 2010; Mills and Hunte, 1997; Muñoz et al., 2019). Ballari

et al. (2010) developed equations to calculate the reaction rate of NO and NO₂ for surface reactions at constant *RH* and irradiance. Lira et al. (2018) took the effects of *RH* and irradiance into account in developing the equations, which are written below:

$$r_{NO} = -\frac{k'_{NO}C_{NO}}{1 + K_{NO}C_{NO} + K_{NO_2}C_{NO_2} + K_wC_w}(-1 + \sqrt{1 + \alpha E}) \quad (11)$$

$$r_{NO_2} = -\frac{k'_{NO_2}C_{NO_2} - k'_{NO}C_{NO}}{1 + K_{NO}C_{NO} + K_{NO_2}C_{NO_2} + K_wC_w}(-1 + \sqrt{1 + \alpha E}) \quad (12)$$

where k'_i and K_i are intrinsic kinetic and equilibrium parameters, respectively. α is kinetic parameter related to irradiance and E is irradiance. The constants derived by Lira et al. (2018) are based on the values derived by Ballari et al. (2010), which are taken as reference values in this study. The values are listed in Table 2.

Table 2 Values adopted in Eq. (11-12) (Lira et al., 2018)

Parameter	Value	Unit
k'_{NO}	4.18	$m \cdot s^{-1}$
k'_{NO_2}	6.73	$m \cdot s^{-1}$
K_{NO}	8.48×10^8	$m^3 \cdot kmol^{-1}$
K_{NO_2}	3.02×10^8	$m^3 \cdot kmol^{-1}$
K_w	5.07×10^4	$m^3 \cdot kmol^{-1}$
α	2.37×10^{-3}	$m^2 \cdot W^{-1}$

Photoactive components of photocatalytic coatings are activated by ultraviolet (UV) light (de Melo and Trichês, 2012)(Guo et al., 2017)(Diamanti et al., 2013). The proportion of UV light to total radiation intensity is about 8.7% (Zhang, 2014).

According to the radiation intensity and RH data in different region of China (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2019), irradiance (E) varies in the range of $10-40 \text{ W} \cdot \text{m}^{-2}$, RH varies in the range of 10%-90%. E of $40 \text{ W} \cdot \text{m}^{-2}$ and RH of 50% are set as the reference condition in this study.

2.3 Calculation for pollutant conversion

In order to evaluate the effects of TiO_2 coating on the PCO reactions in street canyon, pollutant conversion (X_{NO}) is defined as:

$$X_i = \left(\frac{C_i^{\text{noPCO}} - C_i^{\text{PCO}}}{C_i^{\text{noPCO}}} \right) \times 100\% \quad (13)$$

i stands for the type of the pollutant, here refer to NO and NO_2 . C_i^{PCO} means the average pollutant concentration using the model with PCO reactions. C_i^{noPCO} means the average pollutant concentration using the model without PCO reactions. The higher the X_i , the more effective the PCO reaction is.

3. Model validation

The accuracy of the above developed CFD model was evaluated using results from the wind-tunnel experiments by Allegrini et al. (2014). The validation setups for flow modeling have been detailed in previous publication (Hao et al., 2019). In order to validate the chemical reaction model, a 2D computational domain (Fig.2) with a length ($L+L'$) of 0.4 m and a height (H) of 3 mm was built similar to Lira et al.'s study (Lira et al., 2018) for comparing with Ballari et al.'s experiment (M. M. Ballari et al., 2010).

The domain's height uses value 2H and 4H (keeping the length constant). The bottom of the domain with length L ($0 < x < 0.2$ m) is set as a reactive surface. The reaction mechanism is written in Eq. (5-10). Domain with length L' ($0 < x < 0.2$ m) is set as a control group without PCO to obtain a fully developed laminar velocity profile at $x=0$. Inlet velocity is set to 0.1667 m/s. A concentration of $4.47 \times 10^{-8} \text{ kmol} \cdot \text{m}^{-3}$ for NO and a relative humidity of 50% is set at the inlet. A homogeneous irradiance of $10 \text{ W} \cdot \text{m}^{-2}$ is imposed at the reactive surface. Simulation results are compared to those from Lira et al.'s (Lira et al., 2018) and Ballari et al.'s experiment (M. M. Ballari et al., 2010). In order to compare the experiment results between different tests, the NO conversion (X_{NO}) is specified as:

$$X_{\text{NO}} = \left(\frac{C_{\text{NO}}^{\text{in}} - C_{\text{NO}}^{\text{avg,out}}}{C_{\text{NO}}^{\text{in}}} \right) \times 100\% \quad (14)$$

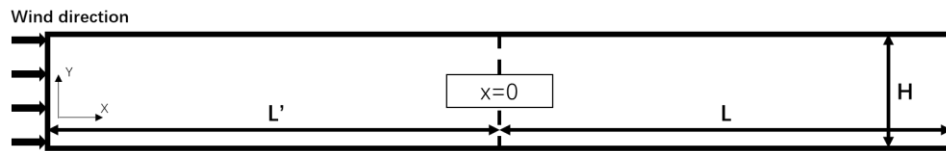
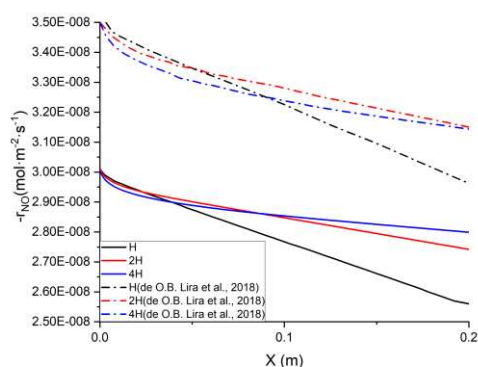


Fig.2. Computational domain for chemical reaction validation

The results including comparison with those by Lira et al. (Lira et al., 2018) are shown in Fig.3. Fig.3(a) shows the reaction rates for NO along x-axis at the reactive surface. A gap was observed when comparing the results with Lira et al.'s. However, the tendency is the same that the rates decrease along the direction of wind. The reaction rates obtained in this study are lower than in the reference study. As a result, the profiles of NO mass fractions obtained for $0 < x < L$ (Fig.3(c)) in this study are higher than Lira et al.'s. The results for NO_2 are shown in Fig.3(b) & (d). Reaction rates of NO_2 at the

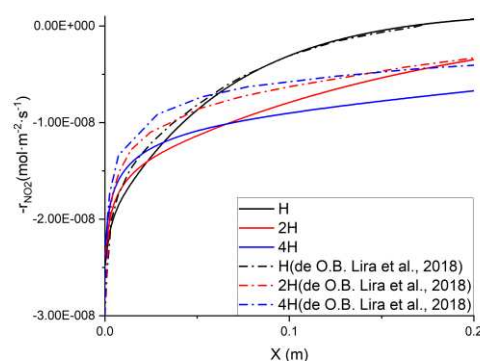
228 reactive surface show high similarity with the reference. Values of NO_2 mass fractions
 229 are higher in this study, compared to the reference.

230 Results for X_{NO} in this validation comparing with reference simulation (Lira et al.,
 231 2018) and experiment (M. M. Ballari et al., 2010) are shown in Fig.4. Clearly, there is
 232 a tendency of decreasing X_{NO} as the relative humidity increases. It is worth noting that
 233 simulation in this validation matches Ballari et al.'s experiment better than Lira et
 234 al.'s study (Lira et al., 2018), although it overestimates NO conversion. After validation,
 235 the chemical mechanism model applied in this study is considered reliable for
 236 predicting the chemical reaction and transformation.



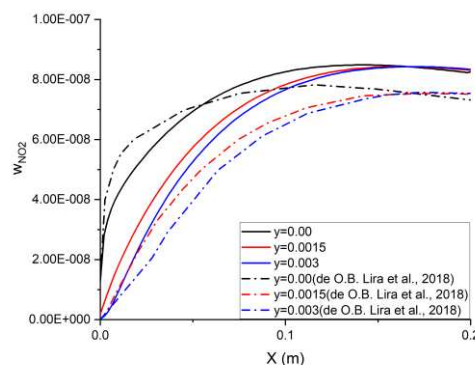
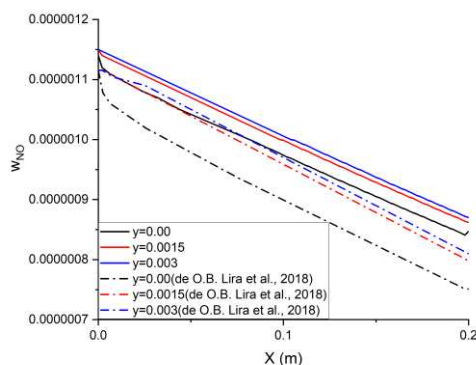
(a) Reaction rates for NO along x-axis at

the reactive surface.



(b) Reaction rates for NO_2 along x-axis

at the reactive surface.



(c) Profiles of NO mass fractions (d) Profiles of NO₂ mass fractions
obtained for $0 < x < L$ at $y = 0.00, 0.0015$ obtained for $0 < x < L$ at $y = 0.00, 0.0015$
and 0.003 m and 0.003 m

Fig.3. Comparison results with Lira et al.

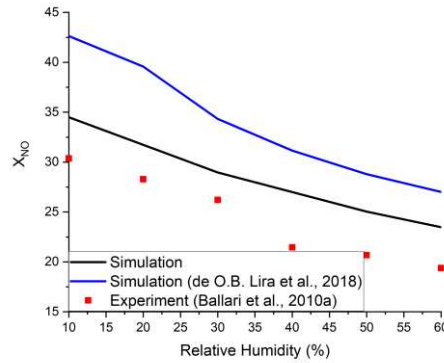


Fig.4. Comparison of NO conversion (X_{NO}) with experiment as a function of
relative humidity

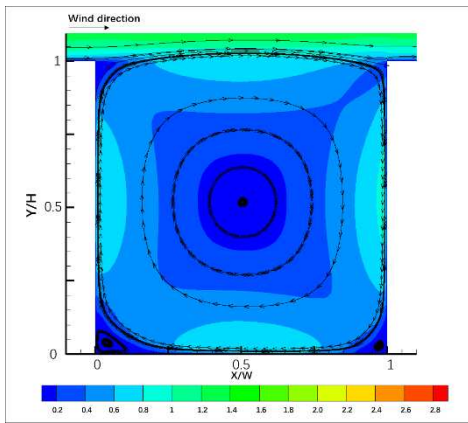
4. Results and discussion

4.1 NO_x dispersion in street canyon with TiO₂ coating road

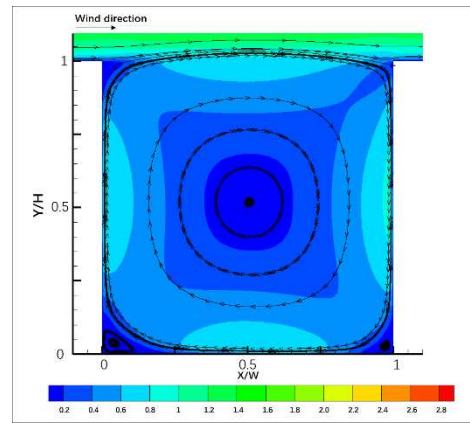
In this section, simulation results of a street canyon with TiO₂ coating road are compared with a street canyon without TiO₂ coating road.

Fig.5 illustrates the wind flow structures and pollutant dispersion patterns in the street canyons with and without TiO₂ coating road. Due to the presence of clockwise eddy, most of the pollutants accumulated in the leeward side, as shown in Fig.5a and Fig.5b. Decreases of NO concentration were observed in the street canyon with TiO₂ coating road. In details, the average concentration of NO inside the street canyon with TiO₂

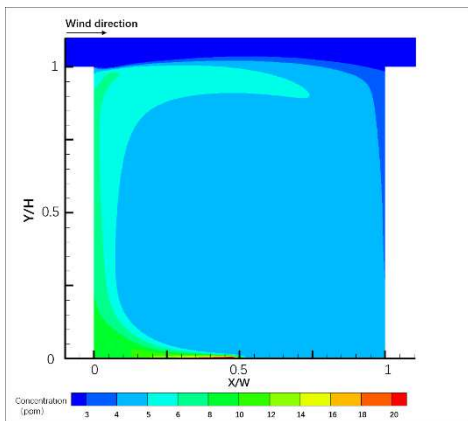
246 coating road is 6.06 ppm, while it is 6.29 ppm inside the street canyon without TiO₂
 247 coating road, as shown in Fig.5c and Fig.5d. This means the average NO concentration
 248 decreases by 3.70% under the influence of PCO reactions. Similar reduction in NO₂
 249 concentration inside the canyon is shown in Fig.5e and Fig.5f. The PCO decreases the
 250 average concentration of NO₂ by 4.31%.



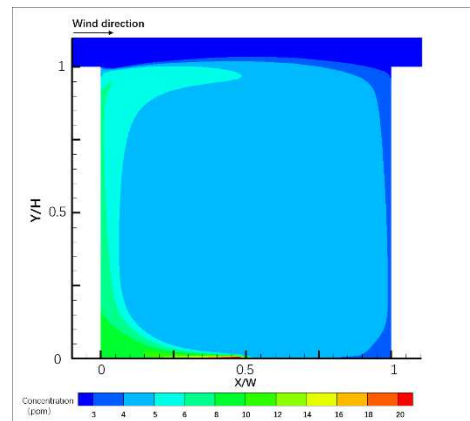
(a) Flow field and velocity contour in canyon without TiO₂ coating road.



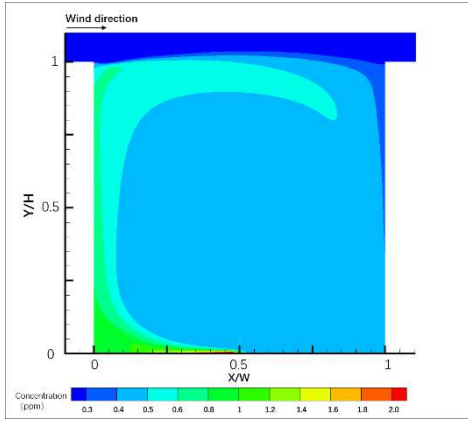
(b) Flow field and velocity contour in canyon with TiO₂ coating road.



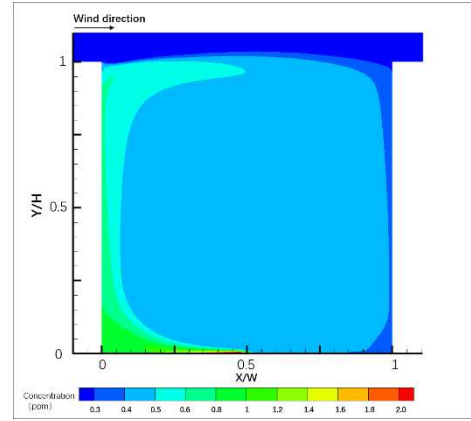
(c) Contour of NO concentration in canyon without TiO₂ coating road.



(d) Contour of NO concentration in canyon with TiO₂ coating road.



(e) Contour of NO₂ concentration in canyon without TiO₂ coating road.

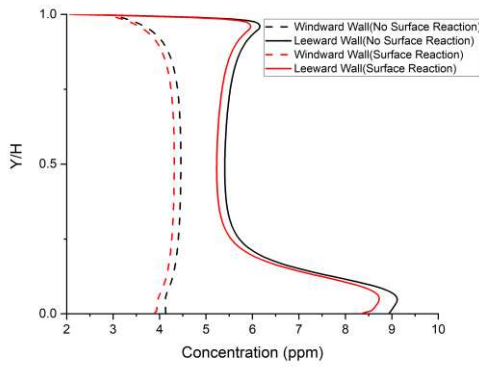


(f) Contour of NO₂ concentration in canyon with TiO₂ coating road.

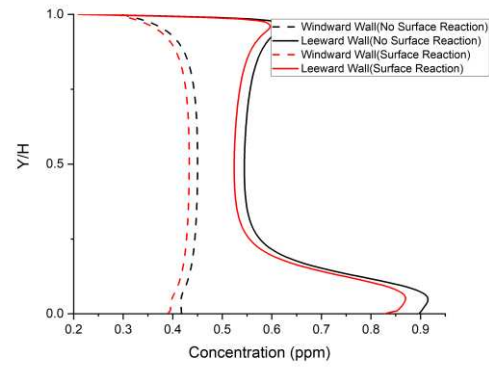
Fig.5 Flow fields, contours of flow velocity and NO_x concentration in the observed street canyons.

251 Profiles of NO and NO₂ concentration at the leeward wall, windward wall and the
 252 breathing zone are shown in Fig.6. The breathing zone is defined as a height of $y=1.5$
 253 m because it is about the nose height of the pedestrians. Concentrations at leeward and
 254 windward wall can influence the health of people who live or work in the buildings on
 255 either side of the street. It is obvious that the NO_x concentration is lower in street
 256 canyons with TiO₂ coating road in all observed profiles. The average NO and NO₂
 257 concentration at the height of breathing zone decrease by 3.29% and 3.88%,
 258 respectively, under the influence of PCO reactions. The average NO concentration near
 259 the windward wall and leeward wall decrease by 3.28% and 3.35%, respectively. The
 260 average NO₂ concentration near the windward wall and leeward wall decrease by 3.84%
 261 and 3.95%, respectively. Conclusions can thus be drawn that the PCO reactions with
 262 TiO₂ coating decrease the NO_x concentration inside street canyon. However, the
 263 characteristics of pollutant profiles are similar for street canyons with and without TiO₂

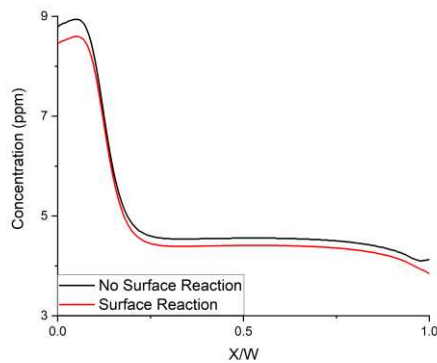
264 coating road. NO and NO₂ concentrations at windward wall reach high level at
 265 $0.25H < y < 0.75H$. Conversely, NO and NO₂ concentrations at leeward wall at
 266 $0.25H < y < 0.75H$ are at a low level, while reaching the peak value at about $y=0.05H$.
 267 NO and NO₂ concentrations at breathing zone have the peak value near leeward wall
 268 ($x \sim 0.2W$). That means pedestrians near the leeward side are exposed to more pollution
 269 than at the windward side. PCO reaction with TiO₂ coating can lead to 3-4% reduction
 270 of NO and NO₂ in this area.



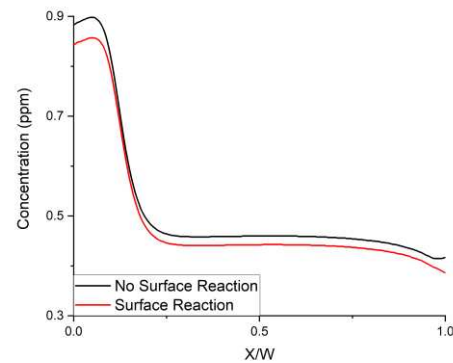
(a) Profiles of NO concentration at leeward and windward wall along $0 < y < H$



(b) Profiles of NO₂ concentration at leeward and windward wall along $0 < y < H$



(c) Profiles of NO concentration at the breathing zone along $0 < x < W$

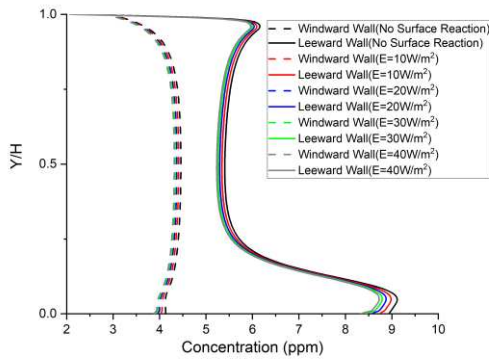


(d) Profiles of NO₂ concentration at the breathing zone along $0 < x < W$

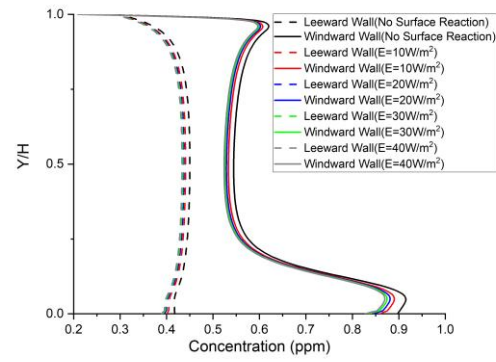
Fig.6 Profiles of NO and NO₂ concentration.

4.2 Effects of irradiance on PCO and NO_x profiles

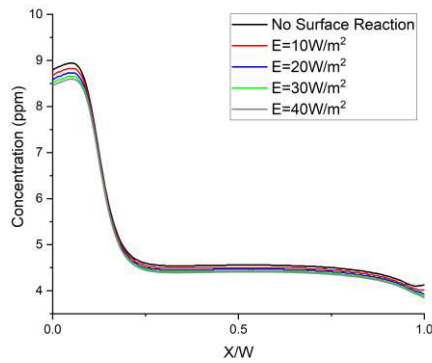
Irradiance (E) is varied in the range of $10\text{--}40\text{ W}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}$ when analysing the effects of irradiance on the PCO and NO_x profiles in street canyon. The relative humidity (50%) is kept constant. Fig.7 shows the profiles of NO and NO₂ concentration in relation to irradiance. At leeward wall, the peak value of NO_x concentration is at $\sim 0.05H$. The peak value decreases from 9.11ppm to 8.7ppm for NO, and from 0.92ppm to 0.87ppm for NO₂, when irradiance increase from 0 to $40\text{ W}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}$. The reductions of NO and NO₂ concentration are 4.5% and 5.4%, respectively. There is a sharp decrease along $0.05H < y < 0.25H$. The NO_x concentration near the roof of the leeward building has a small spike, reaching about 6 and 0.6 ppm for NO and NO₂, respectively. At windward wall, the concentration is in constant change and much lower than the leeward wall. In the breathing zone, the peak value of NO concentration is at about $x=0.1W$ and ranges from 8.5~9 ppm with varied irradiance. The concentration falls rapidly along $0.1W < x < 0.2W$. The reaction rates of NO and NO₂ are monotonic functions of the irradiance (E), i.e. the increase of irradiance accelerates the reaction. NO and NO₂ concentrations in street canyon decrease when the irradiance increase.



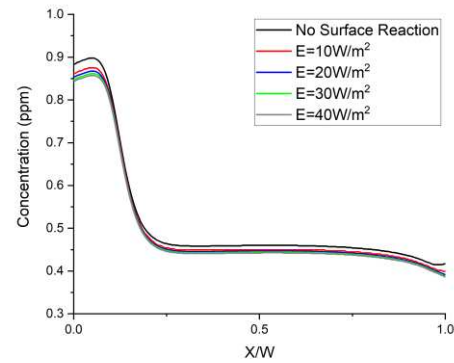
(a) Profiles of NO concentration at
leeward and windward wall along
 $0 < y < H$



(b) Profiles of NO₂ concentration at
leeward and windward wall along
 $0 < y < H$



(c) Profiles of NO concentration at the
breathing zone along $0 < x < W$

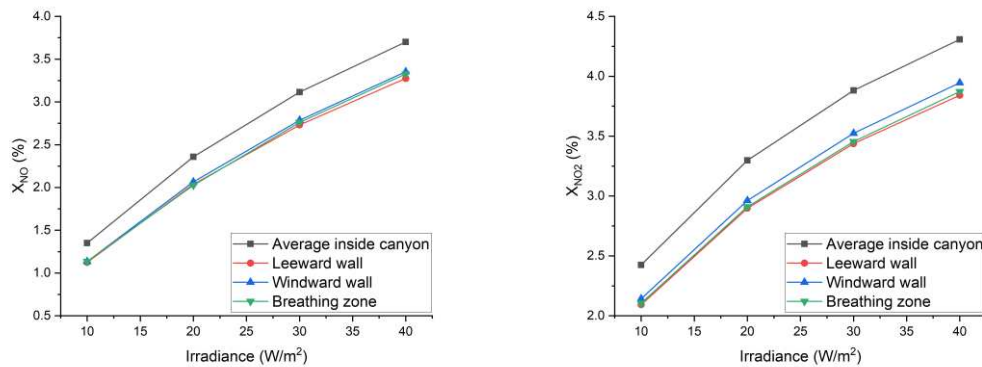


(d) Profiles of NO₂ concentration at the
breathing zone along $0 < x < W$

Fig.7 Profiles of NO and NO₂ concentration in conditions with varied irradiance.

287 Fig.8 presents the NO and NO₂ conversions. For both NO and NO₂, the conversion
288 increases when the irradiance increases. The conversion at leeward wall, windward wall
289 and breathing zone is similar. However, the average conversion of pollutants inside the
290 whole street canyon is higher than all three zones. The PCO reaction happens on the
291 ground while air flow still carries more pollutants to the ground and the buildings'

external surfaces. This explains why the NO_x is absorbed by the TiO_2 coating road but the lowest NO_x conversion is not at the breathing zone which is near the ground. Average conversions of NO and NO_2 in street canyon reduce from 3.70% to 1.35% and from 4.31% to 2.43%, respectively, when the irradiance decreases from $40 \text{ W} \cdot \text{m}^{-2}$ to $10 \text{ W} \cdot \text{m}^{-2}$. It can be seen that the irradiance has a great effect on PCO reaction in a street canyon with TiO_2 coating road. The higher the irradiance, the more effective the PCO reaction is. The NO_2 conversion is always higher than NO , which means NO_2 is more sensitive to PCO reaction in the conditions set in this study.



(a) NO conversion (X_{NO}) as a function of the irradiance. (b) NO_2 conversion (X_{NO_2}) as a function of the irradiance.

Fig.8 Pollutant conversion as a function of the irradiance.

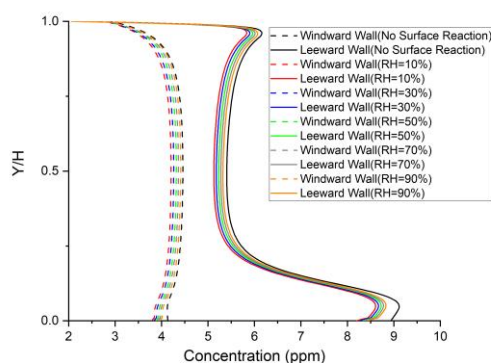
4.3 Effects of relative humidity on PCO and NO_x profiles

The effect of relative humidity on PCO and pollutant concentration in a street canyon with TiO_2 coating road is studied by changing the relative humidity (RH) in the range

of 10-90%. The irradiance ($40 \text{ W} \cdot \text{m}^{-2}$) is kept constant. Profiles of NO and NO₂ concentration at leeward and windward are shown in Fig.9 (a) and (b). It can be seen that the characteristics of pollutant distribution along the walls are consistent with the relative humidity. At leeward wall, the peak value of NO and NO₂ concentration is at $x \sim 0.05H$, and the maximum rising rate is 2.5% (NO) and 1.7% (NO₂) when relative humidity increases from 10% to 90%. NO and NO₂ concentration at the windward side increase more when the relative humidity increases, comparing with that at the leeward side, which see an increase of 5% (NO) and 3% (NO₂) when relative humidity increases from 10% to 90%. NO and NO₂ concentration profiles at the breathing zone is shown in Fig.9 (c)-(d). The NO and NO₂ concentration at the breathing zone rise from 2.6% to 5.3% and from 2.3% to 5.3%, respectively, when relative humidity increases from 10% to 90%. Lower relative humidity results in more effective PCO reaction and lower NO_x concentration in street canyon.

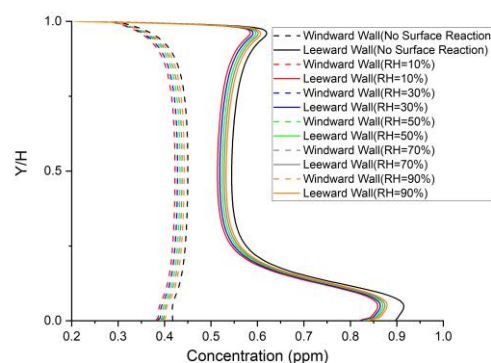
Fig.10 shows the effect of relative humidity on NO_x conversion. It is clear that when the relative humidity increases, the NO and NO₂ conversions decrease in street canyon. The same tendency can be also seen from conversions at the leeward wall, windward wall and breathing zone. However, the change rates in different locations are different. The average conversion of the whole street canyon is higher than the three zones when relative humidity is 50%-90%. The gap between the average conversion of the whole canyon and the zones gets narrower when the relative humidity decreases. When the relative humidity is 30%, the conversions of the four computational domains (whole

street canyon, leeward wall, windward wall and breathing zone) are similar. Average conversion of NO and NO₂ in street canyon decrease from 5.11% to 2.54% and from 5.60% to 3.25%, respectively, when the relative humidity increase from 10% to 90%. Within the pollutant accumulated zone, NO and NO₂ conversion at leeward wall have the greatest change with the same change of relative humidity. Along the leeward wall, the highest NO and NO₂ conversions are 5.77% and 5.23%, respectively, when $RH=10\%$, and the lowest NO and NO₂ conversions are 1.17% and 1.71%, respectively, when $RH=90\%$.



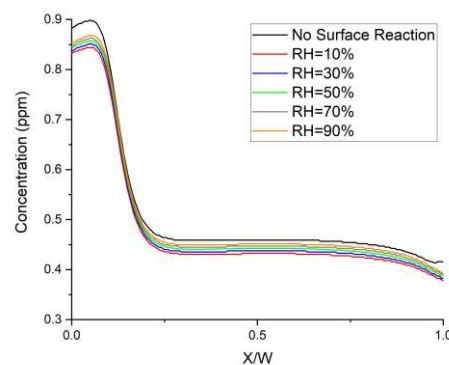
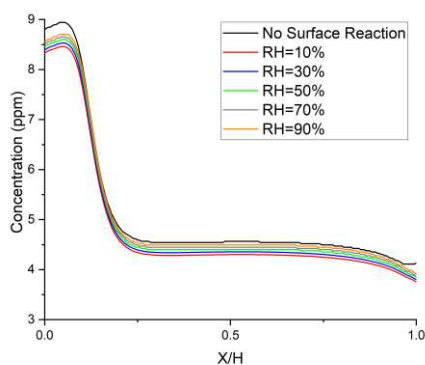
(a) Profiles of NO concentration at leeward and windward wall along

$$0 < y < H$$



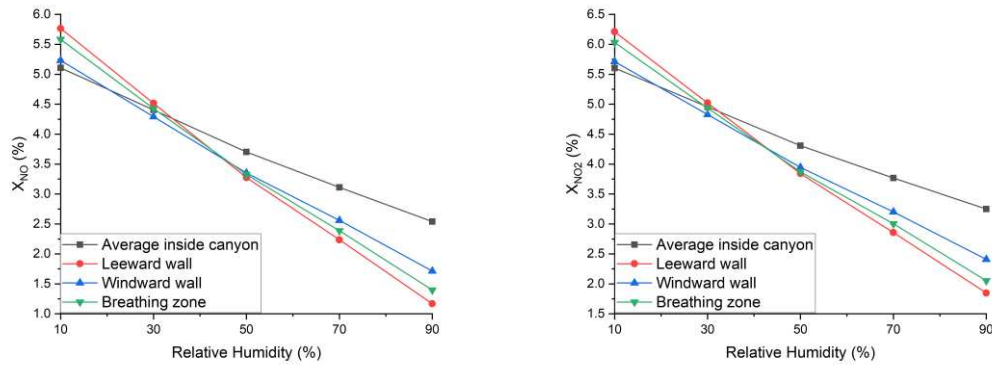
(b) Profiles of NO₂ concentration at leeward and windward wall along

$$0 < y < H$$



(c) Profiles of NO concentration at the breathing zone along $0 < x < W$ (d) Profiles of NO₂ concentration at the breathing zone along $0 < x < W$

Fig.9 Profiles of NO and NO₂ concentration in conditions with varied relative humidity.



(a) NO conversion (X_{NO}) as a function of the relative humidity. (b) NO₂ conversion (X_{NO2}) as a function of the relative humidity.

Fig.10 Pollutant conversion as a function of the relative humidity.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

A CFD model coupled with PCO reaction is implemented and validated with experimental data available in the literature for NO_x abatement in a real urban street canyon with aspect ratio $H/W=1$. Irradiance and relative humidity are investigated, as the factors that can influence the behavior of the TiO₂ coating road with a representative TiO₂ concrete characteristic. Results show that TiO₂ coating road can effectively reduce NO_x concentration in the street canyon. The irradiance and the relative humidity have great effect on PCO reaction and on reducing the NO_x concentration in street canyon

with TiO₂ coating road. The higher the irradiance, the more effective the PCO reaction is. When the relative humidity is increased, the NO and NO₂ conversions tend to decrease.

CFD model implemented in this study can be readily used for the investigation of PCO reaction in street canyon with TiO₂ coating road. Different influencing factors can be investigated using the model, allowing for fast and effective preliminary evaluation of several scenarios aiming at the photocatalytic process. According to experiment studies (Faraldos et al., 2016; Fresno et al., 2014; Lasek et al., 2013), the behavior of TiO₂ concrete is related to the type of TiO₂ concrete and the concentration of TiO₂. For further studies, different types of TiO₂ concrete can be tested and evaluated. Other applications of TiO₂ coating may also be modeled and evaluated, for example, TiO₂ paint coated on building facades.

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