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N-pyrrolylphosphines as ligands for highly regioselective rhodium-catalyzed 1-butene hydroformylation. Effect of water on the reaction selectivity.

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Abstract

The hydroformylation of 1-butene catalyzed by $Rh(acac)(CO)_2$ with an excess of N-pyrrolylphosphine ligands, $L = P(NC_4H_4)_3$, $PPh_2(NC_4H_4)$ or $PPh(NC_4H_4)_2$, was investigated under the constant pressure of the synthesis gas (4-10 bar, $H_2/CO = 1$) and 2 bar of 1-butene at temperatures ranging from 50 to 80 °C. N-pyrrolylphosphine ligands facilitated excellent selectivity towards aldehydes and regioselectivity towards linear aldehyde. The application of a higher temperature, the presence of a small amount of water, and a [L]/[Rh] ratio of ca. 13 resulted in the achievement of the highest n/iso values in a short time. A further increase in selectivity was achieved after the addition of water to the reaction mixture. The catalytic performance of the studied systems showed an increase in selectivity (n/iso) with the increase of the number of pyrrolyl groups in phosphine (P(NC_4H_4)_3 > PPh(NC_4H_4)_2 > PPh_2(NC_4H_4)) > PPh_3.

1. Introduction

The olefin hydroformylation reaction (also known as the Oxo Synthesis or Roelen's Reaction) is the oldest, largest, and most important homogeneously catalyzed industrial process for the production of aldehydes. This reaction was accidentally discovered by Otto Roelen in 1938 at Ruhrchemie, Germany, while he was studying the cobalt-catalyzed Fischer–Tropsch reaction.

Today rhodium is a metal of choice in industrial installations which produce mainly C4 aldehydes by the conversion of propylene. To achieve a high yield and selectivity towards aldehydes, the rhodium precursor should be modified by applying a ligand (preferably phosphorus), in high excess with respect to the metal [1–9]. Several factors are used to characterize the activity of the catalytic system, such as the turnover number (TON), turnover frequency (TOF), yield, reaction rate, selectivity, and n/iso ratio [10].

N-valeraldehyde, manufactured by the hydroformylation of 1-butene, is used as a chemical building block in the production of amyl alcohol (n-pentanol) and valeric acid. It is also employed as a flavoring, a fragrance additive, a rubber accelerator, and in resin chemistry [11–12].

The catalytic system composed of $Rh(acac)(CO)_2$ and an N-pyrrolylphosphine ligand exhibited high regioselectivity towards linear aldehydes in the hydroformylation of 1-hexene [9] and vinylsilanes [10]. The results were significantly better than when $Rh(acac)(CO)_2$ was applied with an excess of PPh₃. During the reaction, rhodium hydrido complexes containing pyrrolylphosphine ligands of the type $HRh[PPh_x(NC_4H_4)_{3-x}]_4$ (x=0–2) and $HRh(CO)[PPh_x(NC_4H_4)_{3-x}]_3$ were identified as catalytically active species. These complexes also exhibited good catalytic activity in the hydrogenation of olefins and arenes [13].

Jackstell et al. applied the same catalytic system in the hydroformylation of 2-pentene at a high pressure (50 bar) and 120 °C with an [L]/[Rh] ratio of 100. A good n/iso ratio was also obtained at a low pressure of the syngas (10 bar) with a P(NC₄H₄) ligand [14]. Van Leeuwen et al. demonstrated the high activity (TOF) and excellent selectivity of ethene hydroformylation in the presence of P(NC₄H₄)₃ [15]. Similarly, Luo et al. reported high selectivity towards dialdehyde in the hydroformylation of dicyclopentadiene in the presence of P(NC₄H₄)₃ [16]. The same system used by Zheng et al. exhibited a high activity in the hydroformylation of α -methylstyrene and enhanced regioselectivity towards the linear aldehyde (99%) with a high TOF (5786 h⁻¹) under mild conditions (syngas pressure of 6 MPa, 110 °C) [17]. In contrast, Breit used the P(NC₄H₄)₃ phosphine for the hydroformylation of styrene with low conversion and poor regioselectivity [18]. A good regioselectivity and high activity has been achieved in rhodium catalyzed hydroformylation of 1-octene with bidentate N-pyrrolyl phosphine [19].

In this paper, we present the application of rhodium systems modified by Npyrrolylphosphines in the hydroformylation of 1-butene in toluene and in a toluene-water mixture. These systems showed a high regioselectivity towards n-valeraldehyde, in most cases higher than with the use of PPh₃.

2. Experimental

2.1. Materials

The rhodium complex $Rh(acac)(CO)_2$ was synthesized according to the literature [20]. Npyrrolylphosphine ligands, $P(NC_4H_4)_3$, $PPh(NC_4H_4)_2$, and $PPh_2(NC_4H_4)$, were synthesized as described in the literature [21]. Triphenylphosphine (PPh₃) was purchased from Avocado; 1Published on 06 June 2017. Downloaded by University of California - San Diego on 06/06/2017 16:36:38

butene was purchased from Air Liquide; hydrogen (H_2 , 99.999%) and carbon monoxide (CO, 99.97%) were procured from Air Products.

2.2. Synthesis of HRh(CO){P(NC₄H₄)₃}₃ and HRh{P(NC₄H₄)₃}₄

The synthesis of HRh(CO){ $P(NC_4H_4)_3$ } and HRh{ $P(NC_4H_4)_3$ } were performed in stainless autoclave (50 ml) under pressure of syngas (H₂/CO =1) and hydrogen respectively. In a typical synthesis Rh(acac)(CO)₂, $P(NC_4H_4)_3$ and toluene were introduced into the autoclave under nitrogen atmosphere (Table 1), the autoclave was closed and flushed with H₂ (5 bar) three times, and thereafter pressurized with the syngas (H₂/CO =1) or hydrogen respectively, heated to 80 °C and stirred for 1 h. After that time, the solvent was removed under vacuum and ethanol was added to precipitate the white complex [9] which was filtered and dried. In a case of HRh{ $P(NC_4H_4)_3$ } [13], the product was filtered and dried.

Complex	$Rh(acac)(CO)_2$	$P(NC_4H_4)_3$	P, bar	Yield
$HRh(CO) \{P(NC_4H_4)_3\}_3$	0.078 g	0.24 g	10 bar of syngas (H ₂ /CO=1)	0.18 g
$HRh\{P(NC_4H_4)_3\}_4$	0.054 g	0.25 g	5 bar of H_2	0.085 g ^b

Table 1. Synthesis of HRh(CO) {P(NC₄H₄)₃}₃ and HRh {P(NC₄H₄)₃}₄ complexes ^a

^a reaction condition: toluene as a solvent (3 ml), 80 °C, 1 h. ^b 0.05 g of $HRh(CO){P(NC_4H_4)_3}_3$ was also formed.

2.3. Hydroformylation of 1-butene

Hydroformylation reactions were carried out in 50 and 100 ml stainless steel autoclaves, each provided with a manometer, a thermostat, a magnetic stirrer, and a gas inlet/outlet system. The catalyst, Rh(acac)(CO)₂ (1.5×10^{-5} mol), with a 13-fold excess of PPh₃, P(NC₄H₄)₃, PPh₂(NC₄H₄), or PPh(NC₄H₄)₂, was introduced into the autoclave. Next, 0.5 mL of toluene (solvent) and 0.25 mL of cyclohexane (internal standard) were added under a dinitrogen atmosphere. In the case of reactions carried out with water, 0.5–2 mL of distilled water was added. The autoclave was closed, flushed with 1-butene (2 bar) two or three times, and thereafter pressurized with 1-butene (2 bar) and then with the synthesis gas (H₂:CO =1:1) to 10 bar and heated to 50–80 °C. After the reaction was finished, the autoclave was separated by vacuum transfer, and the obtained products were analyzed by means of GC and GC-MS (Hewlett Packard).

3. Results and discussion

The hydroformylation of 1-butene catalyzed by four catalytic systems containing the catalyst precursor $Rh(acac)(CO)_2$ with a 13-fold excess of N-pyrrolylphosphine, $P(NC_4H_4)_3$,

Page 4 of 15

 $PPh(NC_4H_4)_2$, $PPh_2(NC_4H_4)$, or triphenylphosphine PPh_3 , was first investigated in toluene. Aldehydes were formed as the main reaction products, namely 1-pentanal (linear aldehyde) and 2-methyl-butanal (branched aldehyde) together with small amounts of 2-butene (isomerization product) (Scheme 1).



Scheme 1. Hydroformylation of 1-butene

The results presented in Table 2 and on Fig. S1 illustrate the effect of temperature increase from 50 °C to 80 °C on the hydroformylation of 1-butene catalyzed by the catalytic system Rh(acac)(CO)₂ + PPh₂(NC₄H₄) with 2 bar of 1-butene and 10 bar of the synthesis gas (H₂/CO = 1). An increase in the yield of aldehydes was observed with an increase in temperature. Thus, when temperature raised from 50 to 80 °C, the n/iso ratio increased from 8.2 to 11.2. The TOF values also increased.

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Table 2. Effect of temperature on 1-butene hydroformylation in toluene

		Conv. ^a %	aldehydes, mol		TOF ^b ,
Entry	T, °C			n/iso	mol x mol ⁻¹ x
					h^{-1}
1	80	95.0	0.010	11.2	667
2	70	94.6	0.011	10.2	733
3	60	92.7	0.010	8.3	667
4	50	45.5	0.003	8.2	200

Reaction condition: $[Rh] = 1.5 \times 10^{-5} \text{ mol}, [L]/[Rh] = 13, L = PPh_2(NC_4H_4), P_{1-Butene} = 2 \text{ bar}, P_{(H2:CO = 1:1)} = 10 \text{ bar}, toluene (0.5 mL), cyclohexane (0.25 mL), t = 1 h. ^a Conversion of 1-butene was calculated according to GC-FID analyses of post-reaction mixture. ^b The TOF values were calculated as moles of the aldehyde/([mol of catalyst] × reaction time).$

Much better results, in particular a higher rate and higher selectivity, were obtained in reactions performed with the addition of water to the reaction mixture. Thus, an increase of

the water amount from 0.5 to 2 mL caused a remarkable increase in the n/iso ratio with a maximum value of 16.2. However, the TOF decreased during the same time from 800 to 667 h^{-1} (Table 3, Fig. S2). This is in agreement with our previous observation that regioselectivity was higher in the presence of water in the reaction mixture [22–23]. However, in contrast to other olefins [22], the hydroformylation of 1-butene only in water was not successful because aldehydes were not formed.

Table 3. Results of 1-butene hydroformylation in a toluene/water solution

		Conv. ^a %	aldehydes, mol		TOF ^b ,
Entry	Water, mL			n/iso	mol x mol ⁻
					${}^{1} x h^{-1}$
1	0.5	92.7	0.012	12.9	800
2	1	94.0	0.010	16.2	667
3	1.5	93.0	0.012	15.9	800
4	2	94.7	0.010	15.4	667

Reaction condition: $[Rh] = 1.5 \times 10^{-5} \text{ mol}, [L]/[Rh] = 13, L = PPh_2(NC_4H_4), P_{1-Butene} = 2 \text{ bar}, P_{(H2:CO = 1:1)} = 10 \text{ bar}, toluene (0.5 mL), cyclohexane (0.25 mL), t = 1 h, T = 80 °C. ^a Conversion of 1-butene was calculated according to GC-FID analyses of post-reaction mixture. ^b The TOF values were calculated as moles of the aldehyde/([mol of catalyst] × reaction time).$

The effect of time was also studied in the catalytic system $Rh(acac)(CO)_2 + PPh_2(NC_4H_4)$ at 80 °C (Table 4). The results showed an increase in the yield of aldehydes with the prolongation of the reaction time. However, simultaneously n/iso also increased from 14.5 after a short time (4 min) (Table 3, entry 1) to 19.1 and 19.7 after 6 and 8 min of reaction time, respectively (Table 3, entries 2 and 3). Then, the n/iso ratio decreased to ca. 14 again. Figure S3 displays the effect of time on the n/iso, pressure drop, and the yield of n and iso aldehydes.

Table 4. Results of 1-butene hydroformylation in toluene

		Conv. ^a %	aldehydes, mol		TOF ^b ,
Entry	t, min			n/iso	mol x mol ⁻¹
					x h ⁻¹
1	4	38.0	0.003	14.5	3000
2	6	53.9	0.005	19.1	3333

3	8	57.9	0.006	19.7	3000
4	10	75.3	0.008	15.5	3200
5	15	82.9	0.0105	14.4	2800
6	17	87.2	0.0109	14.2	2565

Reaction condition: $[Rh] = 1.5 \times 10^{-5}$ mol, $[L]/[Rh] = 13 L = PPh_2(NC_4H_4)$, $P_{1-Butene} = 2$ bar, $P_{(H2:CO = 1:1)}$

= 10 bar, toluene (0.5 mL), cyclohexane (0.25 mL), $T = 80 \,^{\circ}$ C. ^a Conversion of 1-butene was calculated according to GC-FID analyses of post-reaction mixture. ^b The TOF values were calculated as moles of the aldehyde/([mol of catalyst] × reaction time).

The effect of the $[PPh_2(NC_4H_4)]/[Rh]$ ratio on the reaction course was studied in the range from 2 to 13 at 80 °C at 10 bar. The results listed in Table 5 and on Fig. S4 show that, as the $[PPh_2(NC_4H_4)]/[Rh]$ ratio increased from 2 to 13, the n/iso ratio increased from 2.1 to 11.2. While selectivity increased parallel to the amount of the phosphorus ligand, the highest TOF value was achieved at [L]/[Rh] = 6. A further increase in the $PPh_2(NC_4H_4)$ amount caused a decrease of the TOF.

		Conv. ^a %	aldehydes, mol		TOF ^b ,
Entry	[L]/[Rh]			n/iso	mol x mol ⁻¹
					x h ⁻¹
1	2	83.2	0.008	2.1	533
2	4	91.7	0.010	2.4	667
3	6	96.7	0.011	4.3	733
4	8	95.2	0.010	7.2	667
5	10	96.6	0.010	8.9	667
6	13	95.0	0.010	11.2	667

Table 5. Effect of the [L]/[Rh] ratio on 1-butene hydroformylation

Reaction condition: $[Rh] = 1.5 \times 10^5 \text{ mol}, PPh_2(NC_4H_4) \text{ as ligand}, P_{1-Butene} = 2 \text{ bar}, P_{(H2:CO = 1:1)} = 10$ bar, toluene (0.5 mL), cyclohexane (0.25 mL), t = 1 h, $T = 80 \,^{\circ}C^a$ Conversion of 1-butene was calculated according to GC-FID analyses of post-reaction mixture. ^b The TOF values were calculated as moles of the aldehyde/([mol of catalyst] × reaction time).

Applying optimized reaction conditions, we tested three other catalytic systems composed of $Rh(acac)(CO)_2$ and $P(NC_4H_4)_3$, $PPh(NC_4H_4)_2$ or PPh_3 (Table 6). It should be underlined that regioselectivity to n-pentanal was very high in both systems containing $P(NC_4H_4)_3$, $PPh(NC_4H_4)_2$ ligands. An excellent conversion and lower regioselectivity were

obtained by utilizing PPh₃. On the other hand, a remarkable increase in the n/iso ratio was achieved after addition of water to the reaction media. It is also worth noting that the n/iso ratio increased with the increase of the number of pyrrolyl groups present in phosphine. It means that the n/iso ratio decreased in the following order: $P(NC_4H_4)_3 > PPh(NC_4H_4)_2 > PPh_2(NC_4H_4) > PPh_3$ (Scheme 2).

Table 6. Results of 1-butene hydroformylation using $P(NC_4H_4)_3$, $PPh(NC_4H_4)_2$ and PPh_3 as modifying ligands

Entry	L	Conv. ^b %	aldehydes, mol	n/iso	TOF ^c , mol
Entry				mol n/iso 18.6 23.1 15.4 18.2 5.8 9 7.9	$x \text{ mol}^{-1} x h^{-1}$
1	$P(NC_4H_4)_3$	80.2	0.007	18.6	467
2 ^a	- (- ·	85.8	0.0082	23.1	547
3	PPh(NC ₄ H ₄) ₂	88.0	0.009	15.4	600
4 ^a	1111(1(04114))2	88.5	0.009	18.2	600
5	PPh ₂	96.8	0.0132	5.8	880
6 ^a		94.5	0.0129	7.9	860

Reaction condition: $[Rh] = 1.5 \times 10^{5}$ mol, [L]/[Rh] = 13, $P_{1-Butene} = 2$ bar, $P_{(H2:CO = 1:1)} = 10$ bar, toluene (0.5 mL), cyclohexane (0.25 mL), t = 1 h, T = 80 °C. ^a water (0.5 mL),), ^b Conversion of 1butene was calculated according to GC-FID analyses of post-reaction mixture. ^c The TOF values were calculated as moles of the aldehyde/([mol of catalyst] × reaction time).



n/iso ratio

 σ –Donor high activity

Scheme 2. The impact of the P ligand on the activity and the n/iso ratio

Fig. S5 shows an increase of hydroformylation selectivity achieved by addition of water to the reaction mixture. The effect was noted for all studied phosphines, however it was most pronounced for the best π -acceptor one, P(NC₄H₄)₃.

It should be noted that the yield of aldehydes increased with an increase in the autoclave volume. It was demonstrated for the $Rh(acac)(CO)_2 + PPh_3$ system (Table 7). The yields of aldehydes were 0.022 and 0.013 mol in reactions carried out using 100 and 50 mL autoclaves, respectively, and 2 mL of toluene (Table 7). The n/iso ratio was, however, almost the same.

Toluene, aldehydes, TOF^{c} , h^{-1} Conv.^c% Entry n/iso mL mol 1^a 2 0.022 97 3.6 733 2 2 95 0.013 3.8 867

Table 7. Hydroformylation of 1-butene using PPh₃ as the ligand

Reaction condition: $[Rh] = 1.5 \times 10^{-5}$ mol, PPh₃ as ligand, [L]/[Rh] = 13, $P_{1-Butene} = 2$ bar,

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 $P_{(H2:CO = 1:1)} = 10$ bar, cyclohexane (0.25 mL), t = 1 h, T = 80 °C. ^aautoclave 100 mL, t = 2h. ^b Conversion of 1-butene was calculated according to GC-FID analyses of post-reaction mixture. ^c The TOF values were calculated as moles of the aldehyde/([mol of catalyst] × reaction time).

Considering the fact that a higher yield of aldehydes could be obtained in a largervolume autoclave, the effect of the total pressure of the syngas (H₂:CO = 1:1) on the catalytic activity and regioselectivity towards the linear aldehyde was studied using a 100 mL autoclave. The results obtained at 4–10 bar and 80 °C for 2 h employing the catalytic systems [Rh(acac)(CO)₂/ P(NC₄H₄)₃, PPh(NC₄H₄)₂, or PPh₂(NC₄H₄)] are shown in Table 8. Thus, the pressure affected on the catalytic activity of the three systems and the amount of aldehydes decreased when the pressure of the syngas decreased from 10 to 4 bar. The n/iso ratio performed differently, greatly increasing with a pressure decrease from 10 to 6 bar and then starting to decrease at 4 bar. As a result, the highest selectivity (n/iso) was achieved at 6 bar, whereas for P(NC₄H₄)₃ the maximum was reached at 8 bar. Addition of water caused a significant increase of regioselectivity, and the n/iso ratio reached 50.9 at 6 bar using P(NC₄H₄)₃ (Table 8, entry 5). The positive effect of water was also evidenced for other phosphines (Fig. 1).

Table 8. Effect of CO/H_2 pressure on hydroformylation of 1-butene catalyzed by $Rh(acac)(CO)_2$ modified with different ligands.

Entry	Ligand	P, bar	Conv. ^b %	aldehydes, mol	n/iso	TOF ^c , mol x mol ⁻¹ x h ⁻¹
1		10	93.0	0.019	18.0	633
2		8	80.0	0.014	21.7	467
3 ^a	$\mathbf{D}(\mathbf{N}\mathbf{C},\mathbf{H}_{1})$	0	84.9	0.013	46.2	437
4	1 (110 4114)3	6	78.2	0.009	16.5	300
5 ^a		0	80.8	0.011	50.9	367
6		4	45.4	0.004	17.8	133
7		10	96.0	0.021	11.2	700
8	PPh(NC ₄ H ₄) ₂	8	94.0	0.018	22.5	600
9 ^a		0	90.7	0.017	26.8	567
10		6	93.2	0.017	24.2	563
11 ^a		0	81.5	0.011	31.2	367
12		4	68.8	0.007	20.0	233
13		10	94.2	0.018	5.2	600
14		8	93.6	0.020	8.2	667
15 ^a	PPh ₂ (NC ₄ H ₄)	0	86.2	0.016	14.8	533.3
16		6	86.8	0.017	13.3	567
17 ^a		0	88.6	0.017	17.9	567
18		4	47.0	0.004	7.3	133

Reaction condition: $[Rh] = 1.5 \times 10^{-5}$ mol, [L]/[Rh] = 13, $P_{1-Butene} = 2$ bar, $P_{(H2:CO = 1:1)}$, toluene (0.5 mL), cyclohexane (0.25 mL), t = 2h, T = 80 °C. ^a water (0.5 mL), ^b Conversion of 1-butene was calculated according to GC-FID analyses of post-reaction mixture. ^c The TOF values were calculated as moles of the aldehyde/([mol of catalyst] × reaction time).

Catalysis Science & Technology Accepted Manuscript

Page 10 of 15



Fig. 1. Effect of water and pressure on 1-butene hydroformylation catalyzed by Rh(acac)(CO)₂ modified with different ligands at 80°C in 100 mL autoclave.

The ³¹P NMR spectra measured after the hydroformylation of 1-butene evidenced rhodium species formed during the catalytic reaction. Catalytically active hydrido-carbonyl rhodium species [RhH(CO)L₃] were formed in the reactions of Rh(acac)(CO)₂ with an excess of N-pyrrolylphosphine ligands during hydroformylation. As shown in Table 9, the ³¹P-NMR data of the reaction products are in agreement with those reported earlier [9, 13]

Table 9. ³¹P NMR (CDCl₃) data for [RhH(CO)L₃] complexes obtained *in situ* during 1-butene hydroformylation catalyzed by Rh(acac)(CO)₂

Complex	1 H [J(P-H), J(Rh-H)/Hz]	$^{31}P[J_{(Rh-P)},Hz]$
$RhH(CO){PPh_2(NC_4H_4)}_3 [9]$	-8.9 [12.0, < 1]	87.7 [168.8]
$RhH(CO){PPh(NC_4H_4)_2}_3$	-9.0 [9.3, 1.8]	108.5 [187]
$RhH(CO){P(NC_4H_4)_3}_3$ [9]	-9.1 [7.8, 2.7]	108.6 [211.5]

The effect of water on hydrofomylation of 1-butene was also studied by utilizing $HRh(CO){P(NC_4H_4)_3}_3$ and $HRh{P(NC_4H_4)_3}_4$ complexes as catalysts. In the absence of added ligand, $HRh(CO){P(NC_4H_4)_3}_3$ exhibited high catalytic activity in both reaction media, namely toluene and water- toluene mixture. Conversion and selectivity were almost the same in both system, however n/iso ratio was slightly higher in water- toluene mixture (Table 10,

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Catalysis Science & Technology

entries 1 and 2). Addition of 3-fold excess of $P(NC_4H_4)_3$ ligand increased the n/ iso ratio to 4 and 4.8 respectively (Table 10, entries 3 and 4). The reaction rate and conversion decreased at 13-fold excess of $P(NC_4H_4)_3$ with significant increase of regioselectivity towards linear aldehyde. Thus, n/iso ratio increased from 19.7 to 31.3 (Table 10, entries 5 and 6). The unmodified HRh{P(NC_4H_4)_3}_4 catalyst also displayed higher n/iso ratio after addition of water to the reaction (Table 10, entries 7 and 8).

Table10. The effect of water on hydroformylation of 1-butene catalyzed by $HRh(CO)\{P(NC_4H_4)_3\}_3 \text{ and } HRh\{P(NC_4H_4)_3\}_4$

Entry	Catalyst	[L]/[Rh]	Conv. ^a %	Water, mL	aldehydes, mol	n/iso	TOF ^b , mol x mol ⁻¹ x h ⁻¹
1			95.0	-	0.0129	1.7	860
2	$HRh(CO){P(NC_4H_4)_3}_3$	0	96.5	0.5	0.012	1.9	800
3		2	95.5	-	0.0112	4.0	746.7
4		5	96.0	0.5	0.012	4.8	800
5		13	83.3	-	0.0097	19.7	646.7
6		15	84.5	0.5	0.0096	31.3	640
7	HRh{P(NC4H4)2}4	0	94.0	-	0.0115	2.5	766.7
8		0	90.0	0.5	0.0123	3.0	820

Reaction condition: $[Rh] = 1.5 \times 10^{-5}$ mol, $L = P(NC_4H_4)_3$, $P_{1-Butene} = 2$ bar, $P_{(H2:CO = 1:1)} = 10$ bar, toluene (0.5 mL), cyclohexane (0.25 mL), t = 1h, T = 80 °C.), ^a Conversion of 1-butene was calculated according to GC-FID analyses of post-reaction mixture. ^b The TOF values were calculated as moles of the aldehyde/([mol of catalyst] × reaction time).

Conclusions

The hydroformylation of 1-butene catalyzed by Rh(acac)(CO)₂ with an excess of Npyrrolylphosphine and PPh₃ ligands at 50–80 °C and 4–10 bar of syngas (H₂:CO = 1:1) in toluene and in a toluene/water mixture was investigated. Hydrido-carbonyl rhodium species were formed *in situ* during the hydroformylation. Regioselectivity towards the linear aldehyde increased with the increase of the number of the pyrrolyl groups in phosphine ligands. At the same time, the reaction rate decreased in the same order. Thus, better π acceptor properties of the ligand promote the increase of the n/iso ratio. Regioselectivity is highly dependent on the reaction conditions, such as temperature or the [L]/[Rh] molar ratio. In addition, remarkably high regioselectivity towards the linear aldehyde was noted in a shorter reaction time or at a lower syngas pressure.

Interestingly, a similar effect, namely a selectivity increase, was also observed after the introduction of water to the reaction mixture. Moreover, an increase in the n/iso ratio was in this case dependent on the kind of phosphine used. It can be, therefore, assumed that water interacted with the hydrido-olefin rhodium intermediate facilitating the formation of the linear alkyl complex in the migratory insertion step. The effect of water on the increase of the n/iso ratio was most clearly pronounced for the $P(NC_4H_4)_3$ ligand, suggesting an important role of N atoms in the formation of hydrogen bondings. Such interaction caused the decrease of electron density on the rhodium center, which is then reflected in the migratory insertion step (Scheme 3) leading to anti-Marcovnikov (linear) product. In summary, we suppose that selectivity of hydroformylation increased because π -acceptor properties of P-ligands were further enhanced by interaction with water molecules.

However, interaction of water with hydride ligand or with coordinated olefin could be also considered. Water can also facilitate formation of rhodium hydride, which is catalytically active. It is possible that water enhance the hydride transfer step [24].

According to the well accepted scheme of hydroformylation, based on theoretical calculations published till now, insertion step is determining for hydroformylation regioselectivity [25-28]. Thus, stabilization of transition state leading to the linear Rh-alkyl intermediate results in increase of linear aldehyde amount and, consequently, in higher n/iso ratio. This is observed in the presence of water in our system. It could be therefore proposed that nonbonding interactions of water molecules with phosphines, olefin and hydride ligand present in coordination sphere of rhodium, decrease activation energy of the transition state leading to the linear Rh-alkyl intermediate. In this way, the reaction pathway that leads to the linear aldehyde in favored. This hypothesis, based on experimental results, should be verified by theoretical calculations which are in progress.

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Scheme 3. The tentative illustration of the effect of water on hydroformylation selectivity

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Addition of water to the hydroformylation of 1-butene resulted in an increase of n/iso up to 50.