

Performance analysis of detailed reaction mechanisms of neat H₂, neat CH₄ and H₂/CH₄ mixtures under oxyfuel combustion conditions

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Abstract

Reducing CO₂ emissions is a central goal of the energy industry to combat climate change. A promising technology for emission reduction is oxyfuel combustion, which uses pure oxygen instead of air for combustion. This technology is becoming increasingly relevant in the industry, with several large-scale plants already operating on oxyfuel to reduce fuel consumption. Hydrogen/oxygen systems are currently at the pilot and small-scale industrial levels. For the prediction and optimization of such systems, validated detailed reaction mechanisms are necessary. This study extensively reviewed the literature on burning velocity, ignition delay, and species concentration measurements. The reaction mixtures considered may contain water, carbon dioxide and small amounts of noble gases, but not nitrogen. The extracted data (1292 data points in 243 data series) were encoded in ReSpecTh Kinetic Data format XML files. While a good number of measurements are available for neat methane, the literature is much more limited for neat hydrogen. Notably, there is a lack of data for hydrogen-methane mixtures under oxyfuel conditions. The clustered data revealed significant differences in the underlying data for various pressure, temperature, equivalence and diluent ratio ranges. In some cases, the data were inconsistent, and the measurement methods were outdated. Several detailed and optimized mechanisms were employed to predict the experimental data. The performance of these mechanisms was compared in a quantitative way, showing significant differences in lean and rich conditions. This paper highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the mechanisms and provides an idea for further experimental investigations. This study offers valuable insights into the advantages and challenges of oxyfuel combustion of hydrogen-methane mixtures, supporting the development of sustainable and environmentally friendly combustion technologies.

Keywords: Oxyfuel combustion; CO₂-reduction; Methane combustion; Hydrogen combustion; Mechanism development

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1. Introduction

The demand for the reduction of CO₂ emissions in industrial activities is increasing at a large rate nowadays, and several technologies are being developed to reach a transition to net-zero carbon emissions soon. One of these technologies, oxyfuel combustion, is a thermal process in which a fuel is burnt using near-pure oxygen as an oxidant as opposed to conventional combustion, which uses air. By switching from air to oxygen, the behaviour of the whole process can be changed, including the flame characteristics and heat transfer, the composition of the flue gas, the pollutant formation, and the degree of corrosion [1]. Since the nitrogen component of air is not heated, fuel consumption is reduced, and higher flame temperatures are possible. Oxyfuel combustion has also received much attention in recent decades as a potential carbon capture and storage technology, which can be a great step towards net carbon emissions. Hydrogen is a promising alternative to traditional fuels due to its CO₂-free combustion and possible renewable production of the fuel, while methane (natural gas) is still widely used in the combustion of alternative fuels. The oxyfuel combustion of these fuels is of high practical significance, and to facilitate their application, detailed combustion mechanisms are necessary.

Turányi et al. [2] developed a method to test reaction mechanisms, and this method was applied for hydrogen combustion by Olm et al. [3] and methane combustion by Zhang et al. [4-5]. In these papers, several detailed mechanisms were tested against a large amount of experimental data, which did not include oxyfuel conditions. Some detailed mechanisms and large experimental data series are irrelevant to oxyfuel combustion. However, only a limited number of oxyfuel combustion studies are available in the literature. The experiments that have been conducted so far include laminar burning velocity, ignition delay time and species concentration measurements but do not cover all important temperature, pressure and equivalence ratio intervals that might be important for mechanism optimization. This statement is especially true for hydrogen and hydrogen/methane mixtures.

In this study, the literature on burning velocity, ignition delay, and species concentration measurements is extensively reviewed, focusing on reaction mixtures that may contain water, carbon dioxide and small amounts of noble gases but no nitrogen. The available detailed combustion mechanisms suitable for methane and hydrogen combustion are also presented along with highlighting their strengths and weaknesses.

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2. Literature oxyfuel combustion experiments

Our aim was to collect a significant amount of oxyfuel combustion experiments available in the literature. We collected 1292 data points in 243 data series and encoded them in ReSpecTh Kinetic Data (RKD) v2.5 format [6] XML files. The collected publications with the experimental conditions are shown in Table 1. To visualize the data series and the condition ranges they cover, the experimental data are plotted in Fig. 1. In the next section, the most important laminar burning velocity and other experiments focusing on oxyfuel combustion are reviewed in detail.

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2.1 Laminar burning velocity experiments

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The laminar burning velocity (LBV) is a key property of combustible mixtures, defined as the speed at which an unstretched planar adiabatic laminar flame front propagates relative to the unburned gas. LBV is essential for optimizing combustion engine performance, modelling turbulent flames, validating chemical kinetic mechanisms, and ensuring safety in applications such as explosion protection and fuel tank venting. Additionally, it provides insight into the reactivity, diffusivity, and heat release of fuel-air mixtures and is critical for predicting flashback, determining ignition energy, and analyzing flame stability. Laminar burning velocity depends on factors such as fuel composition, equivalence ratio, pressure, and temperature. Accurate measurements are vital for advancing combustion research, improving efficiency, and enhancing safety in fuel systems [1].

Extensive databases for commonly used fuels - such as hydrogen, carbon monoxide, C₁-C₄ hydrocarbons, small alcohols, and esters - are available in the literature, with notable contributions by Konnov et al. [7] covering a wide range of fuels, and Wan et al. [8] focusing on H₂ and H₂/CO, among other comprehensive reviews. However, data availability becomes limited when exploring temperatures beyond 500 K and pressures above 10 bar (see Figure 1). This limitation is primarily due to the significantly higher setup costs and inherent constraints of certain measurement techniques, which have been evaluated and discussed in reviews by Egolfopoulos et al. [9], Konnov et al. [7], and others. Common methods reported in the literature include the cone flame, spherical vessel, and heat flux burner, along with frequent use of the counterflow burner and diverging channel. Less common approaches, such as shock tube LBV measurements and stepwise tube methods, have also been documented.

1 Table 1 List of the collected experimental publications on hydrogen and methane oxyfuel combustion with the 2 conditions and the number of collected data. Notations and abbreviations: LBV: laminar burning velocity 3 measurement; ST: shock tube; FR: flow reactor; T : (cold side) temperature; p : pressure ϕ : fuel-to-oxygen 4 equivalence ratio.

Experiment type	Author	Year	Ref.	Data series/po ints	T / K	p / atm	ϕ
LBV-H ₂	Kuznetsov et al.	(2011)	[10]	5/44	390 – 573	0.99-29.61	1.0
	Koroll et al.	(1988)	[11]	3/16	298 – 373	0.99	1.0
	Qiao et al.	(2005)	[12]	3/7	300	0.70	1.0
	Tse et al.	(2000)	[13]	2/10	298	1.00-20.00	1.5
	Burke et al.	(2010)	[14]	4/24	295	1.0 – 25.0	2.5
LBV-CH ₄	Li et al.	(2015)	[15]	1/4	353	5.0 – 25.0	2.5
	Hu et al.	(2014)	[16]	1/9	300	1.0	0.6 – 1.4
	Zhu et al.	(1989)	[17]	2/11	298	1.0	0.39 – 1.14
	Xie et al.	(2013)	[18]	11/67	1169– 1285	0.99 – 2.96	0.40 – 1.61
	Mazas et al.	(2011)	[19]	3/31	373	1.0	0.5 – 1.5
	Oh et al.	(2012)	[20]	1/16	300	1.0	0.5 – 2.0
	Sentko et al.	(2015)	[21]	5/45	300 – 455	1.0	2.38 – 3.33
	Chen et al.	(2007)	[22]	3/17	298	1.0 - 5.0	0.5 – 0.8
	Almansour et al.	(2016)	[23]	4/22	295	1.0	0.8 – 1.3
	Khan et al.	(2017)	[24]	3/15	300	0.99	0.6 – 1.4
Wang et al.	(2020)	[25]	16/14	298	0.99 – 3.45	0.6 – 1.6	
ST-CH ₄	Asaba et al.	(1963)	[26]	6/74	905 – 1794	7.0	0.22 – 3.00
	Petersen et al.	(1999)	[27][28]	9/27	1128 – 1607	12.0 – 91.3	5.99 – 6.00
	Skinner et al.	(1959)	[29]	1/13	1152 – 1328	6.0	3.0
	Pryor et al.	(2017)	[30]	9/37	1724 – 2038	0.61 – 1.09	1.0
	Liu. et al.	(2018)	[31]	2/21	1503 – 1785	0.74 – 1.98	0.50
FR-CH ₄	Rasmussen et al.	(2008)	[32]	14/126	598 – 763	98.69	40.90 – 113.64
	Chellappa et al.	(1997)	[33]	76/137	623 – 703	33.56 – 49.35	16.00 – 32.00
	Cho et al.	(2008)	[34]	15/75	973 – 1073	1.0	10.0
	Rytz et al.	(1991)	[35]	35/195	723 – 748	29.61 – 49.46	38.0
	Giménez-L. et al.	(2015)	[36]	8/96	771 – 1674	1.0	0.50 – 5.00

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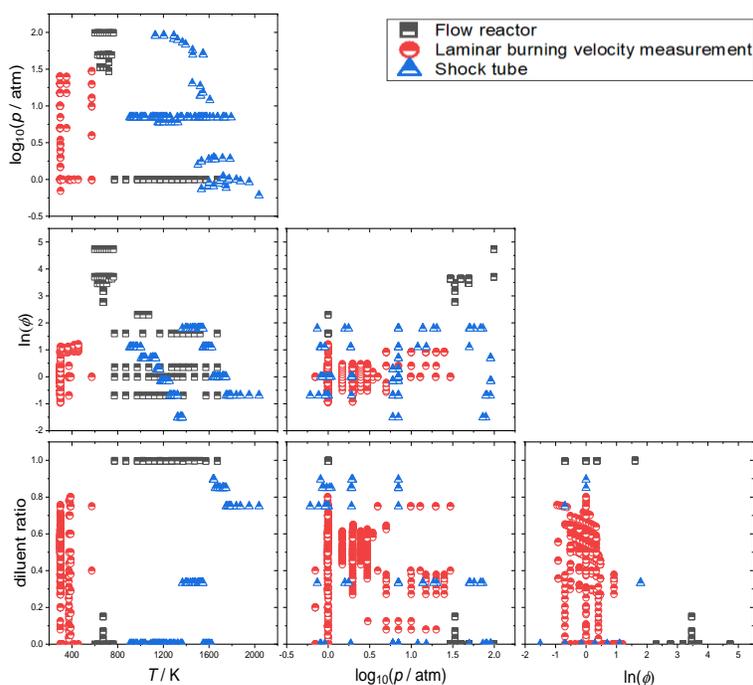


Figure 1 Measured hydrogen and methane oxyfuel data as a function of temperature, equivalence ratio, pressure and diluent ratio.

1 For methane–hydrogen mixtures, most studies use
 2 dry, particle-free compressed air as the oxidizer,
 3 reflecting industrial practice and ease of use.
 4 However, some studies investigate variations,
 5 including oxygen dilution by argon, nitrogen and
 6 helium, water vapor addition, exhaust gas
 7 recirculation, and oxygen-enriched combustion. The
 8 use of pure oxygen as an oxidizer, known as oxyfuel
 9 combustion, is rarely addressed in the literature. Since
 10 LBV is measured in premixed flames, oxygen
 11 enrichment intensifies reactions, increasing burning
 12 velocities and raising flashback risks. As a result,
 13 identifying suitable setups for mixtures from CH₄–O₂
 14 to H₂–O₂ becomes a key challenge.
 15 Setups like heat flux burners and counterflow
 16 burners are not perfectly suitable for oxyfuel
 17 combustion due to their velocity limits and structural
 18 constraints. Diverging channels also struggle with
 19 heat loss from high temperatures. As a result, only
 20 spherical and cone flame setups are commonly used
 21 for very high burning velocities (>1 m/s). Spherical
 22 flames involve igniting a premixed mixture in a closed
 23 vessel, with flame dynamics captured via pressure
 24 sensors and high-speed cameras. However, for fast
 25 oxyfuel flames, only a few usable frames are typically
 26 obtained due to ignition and wall effects.
 27 Data on CH₄–O₂ measurements is limited. Oh and
 28 Noh [20] measured the laminar burning velocity
 29 (LBV) of CH₄–O₂ flames using a Bunsen burner and
 30 the cone method, employing CH chemiluminescence
 31 and Schlieren techniques. They found an LBV of 291
 32 cm/s at $\phi=1.1$. Mazas et al. [19] measured LBVs of

33 methane–oxyfuel flames using a premixed cone flame
 34 and Schlieren method, finding 430 cm/s for
 35 stoichiometric methane–oxygen mixtures at 373 K.
 36 Hu et al. [16] measured LBVs of preheated
 37 hydrogen–air flames at 443 K, reaching 500 cm/s
 38 using a cylindrical setup and an HG-100K camera at
 39 10,000 fps. Krejci et al. [37] replicated these
 40 experiments with a FastCam SA 1.1 camera, facing
 41 limitations in resolution and frame rate. Kuznetsov et
 42 al. [10] performed LBV measurements for hydrogen–
 43 oxygen flames with water vapor addition, finding
 44 discrepancies of up to 35% between pressure and
 45 optical methods, with LBVs ranging from 1200–1300
 46 cm/s for mixtures with 4% H₂O.
 47 Koroll and Mulpuru [11] measured LBVs for H₂–
 48 O₂ flames using the nozzle-burner method, finding
 49 1100 cm/s at 298 K and 1400 cm/s at 393 K, with
 50 nonlinear trends for water vapor, Ar, and He dilution.
 51 Mével et al. [38] used a constant-volume chamber and
 52 a PHOTRON APX camera, obtaining hydrogen–
 53 oxygen LBV values between 1039–1079 cm/s, with
 54 discrepancies in simulations ranging from 20% to
 55 45%.
 56 Qiao et al. [12] examined the effects of flame
 57 stretch and diluents on the laminar burning velocities
 58 of hydrogen premixed flames through both
 59 experimental and computational methods. Oxygen
 60 ratio was maximum at 30%. It was found that flame
 61 stretch significantly affected the laminar burning
 62 velocities. Chemically passive suppression agents,
 63 such as helium, argon, nitrogen, and carbon dioxide,
 64 were found to reduce the unstretched laminar burning

1 velocity in the order of their increasing specific heats
2 and decreasing transport properties.

3 Tse et al. [13] examined the morphology of
4 constant-pressure expanding spherical flames at
5 elevated pressures up to 60 atm, revealing that flame
6 instabilities, particularly hydrodynamic cell
7 development, dominated the flame dynamics. These
8 instabilities were observed for all fuels and
9 equivalence ratios, highlighting their importance in
10 internal combustion engine processes. Helium
11 dilution was shown to be an effective technique for
12 suppressing instabilities in laminar flames, with new
13 stretch-free flame speed data obtained for H₂/O₂/He
14 mixtures at pressures up to 20 atm. The results also
15 emphasize the need to address uncertainties in third-
16 body efficiency factors and transport coefficients,
17 especially at high pressures and varying equivalence
18 ratios, while the apparatus used offers potential for
19 further studying transient, high-pressure flame
20 phenomena.

21 Burke et al. [14] investigated the pressure and
22 flame temperature dependence of mass burning rates
23 for H₂/CO/O₂/diluent mixtures across various
24 conditions. Results showed that at low pressures,
25 mass burning rates increased with pressure, but at
26 higher pressures, they decreased, with CO addition
27 and CO₂ dilution strengthening these dependencies.

28 Li et al. [15] conducted a quantitative uncertainty
29 analysis of an H₂/CO kinetic model using the Data
30 Collaboration method. They identified dataset
31 inconsistencies when including literature data on
32 laminar flame speeds for H₂/O₂/CO₂ mixtures at 15–
33 25 atm, but the new experimental data, obtained under
34 similar conditions, aligned well with the existing
35 dataset.

36 Hu et al. [16] investigated the effects of
37 equivalence ratio, O₂ concentration (max 35 %), and
38 CO₂ dilution on the laminar flame speeds of premixed
39 oxy-methane flames through experimental
40 measurements (cone flame) and kinetic simulations.

41 Two key contributions are made in the study by
42 Zhu et al. [17]. Stretch-free laminar flame speeds for
43 methane/(Ar, N₂, CO₂)-air mixtures were accurately
44 determined over a wide range of stoichiometries,
45 pressures, and flame temperatures.

46 2.2 Other experiments available in literature

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49 As the number of available laminar burning
50 velocity experiments under oxyfuel conditions is
51 limited, other experiments were also included in our
52 study. These experiments were ignition delay time
53 measurements in shock tube [26-31] and outlet
54 concentration measurements in flow reactors [32-36].
55 Although there are several experiments dealing
56 with oxyfuel combustion, the low number of collected
57 data points indicates that more experiments should be
58 conducted, as is also obvious from Fig. 1.

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59 3. Performance of existing reaction mechanisms 60 and possible mechanistic improvements

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63 Our final aim is to develop a more accurate
64 reaction mechanism describing oxyfuel processes.
65 For this reason, 16 existing models were collected.
66 These were developed primarily for methane
67 combustion but contain detailed hydrogen chemistry
68 as well.

69 The collected experimental data were reproduced
70 using the 16 detailed mechanisms. Simulation
71 framework Optima++ [39] was used to perform the
72 simulations, while Cantera [40] was applied as a
73 kinetic solver package. However, not all models were
74 suitable for simulating all points, as 4 mechanisms do
75 not contain helium but in some of the experiments it
76 was used as a diluent gas. For this reason, the helium-
77 containing experiments were treated separately and
78 simulated with only 12 models.

79 Agreement of the simulation results with the
80 experimental data was investigated comprehensively
81 using the following error function:

$$82 E = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{f=1}^{N_f} \sum_{s=1}^{N_{fs}} \frac{1}{N_{fsd}} \sum_{d=1}^{N_{fsd}} \left(\frac{Y_{fsd}^{\text{sim}} - Y_{fsd}^{\text{exp}}}{\sigma(Y_{fsd}^{\text{exp}})} \right)^2 \quad (1)$$

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85 In equation (1), N is the number of experimental
86 data series in the data collection, N_f is the number of
87 datasets (i.e. the number of RKD files), N_{fs} is the
88 number of data series in dataset f , and N_{fsd} is the
89 number of data points in data set f and data series s .
90 Y_{fsd}^{sim} and Y_{fsd}^{exp} are the simulated and experimental
91 values, respectively, of the d -th experimental data
92 point of the s -th data series in the f -th dataset. $\sigma(Y_{fsd}^{\text{exp}})$
93 is the estimated standard deviation of the data point
94 Y_{fsd}^{exp} . The corresponding simulated value Y_{fsd}^{sim} is
95 obtained from a simulation using a detailed
96 mechanism and an appropriate simulation method. If
97 a measured value is characterized by absolute errors
98 (the scatter is independent of the magnitude of Y_{fsd}),
99 then $Y_{fsd} = y_{fsd}$. If the experimental results are
100 described by relative errors (the scatter is proportional
101 to the value of y_{fsd}), then option $Y_{fsd} = \ln(y_{fsd})$ is
102 used.

103 When estimating the standard deviation of the
104 data points, both uncertainty $\sigma_{\text{exp},ij}$ provided by the
105 authors of the publications or estimated in this study,
106 and the $\sigma_{\text{stat},i}$ statistical scatter of the data points were
107 considered:

$$108 \sigma_{fsd} = \sqrt{\sigma_{\text{exp},fsd}^2 + \sigma_{\text{stat},fs}^2} \quad (2)$$

1 **Table 2** Comparison of the investigated reaction mechanisms based on the error function values calculated for all
 2 experimental data and various subsets of them. The final order in this table is based on the overall error function
 3 values for the helium-free experiments. Mechanisms not containing helium-chemistry are indicated with a *.
 4 Colours from green to red indicate growing error function values.

		LBV-H ₂	LBV-CH ₄	ST-CH ₄	FR-CH ₄	Overall	Failed	Overall (He)	Failed (He)
Number of data series		12	48	15	91	166		13	
Number of data points		68	338	86	394	886		40	
FFCM-1-2016	[41]	9.2	14.1	12.7	68.3	28.0	3	38.6	0
USC-II-2007	[42]	9.8	21.6	17.8	83.1	36.4	3	58.4	0
GRI3.0-1999*	[43]	17.4	30.5	15.1	71.5	37.9	3	-	-
SanDiego-2014	[44]	12.5	44.6	7.6	88.3	47.3	3	16.0	0
SanDiego-2016	[45]	12.5	46.9	8.4	84.7	47.6	4	18.4	0
Shrestha-2019	[46]	10.7	4.7	9.2	243.1	70.9	4	26.7	0
CaltechMech-2016*	[47]	9.0	4.7	27.3	264.4	79.1	5	-	-
Konnov-2017	[48]	5.1	13.9	11.3	284.4	86.1	3	11.6	0
Aramco2.0-2016	[49]	3.0	7.8	10.6	320.0	92.5	3	7.8	0
Le Cong-Dagaut-2009*	[50]	11.3	22.3	12.4	292.7	93.1	7	-	-
NUIGMech-2021	[51]	10.3	10.6	9.7	316.1	93.5	3	8.2	0
Hashemi-2016	[52]	5.5	18.5	23.4	309.7	96.8	5	8.8	0
Glarborg-2018	[53]	5.7	29.6	9.2	315.2	101.5	3	7.6	0
Konnov-2009*	[54]	34.3	32.9	26.1	313.0	108.2	3	-	-
CRECK-2014	[55]	21.4	62.4	17.2	352.6	130.0	3	22.8	0
GDFKin-2012	[56]	32.2	39.5	21.9	465.7	151.9	13	19.8	10

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6 The calculated error function values by experiment
 7 type and overall can be seen in Table 2 for the non-
 8 helium experiments. The overall results for the
 9 helium-containing experiments are also shown.
 10 However, not all data points were included in the
 11 comparison. Those data points were excluded from
 12 the comparison for which the error function values
 13 were greater than 9 for all mechanisms. As a few data
 14 points with extremely high error function value (over
 15 10,000) remained, these were excluded as well. The
 16 data points with failed simulations were also not
 17 considered, but their number is indicated for each
 18 mechanism in Table 2.

19 A mechanism can be considered good if it can
 20 reproduce experimental data in their 3σ uncertainty
 21 range, which corresponds to an error function value
 22 not greater than 9. The results show that the FFCM-1-
 23 2016 performs the best for the flow reactor
 24 measurements and overall, considering only the
 25 helium-free experiments. However, its error function
 26 values are greater than 9 for each experiment type.,
 27 There are mechanisms for which the error function
 28 values are smaller than 9 for certain experiment types,
 29 for example Aramco2.0-2016, which is the best-
 30 performing mechanism with an excellent result for
 31 hydrogen-LBV measurements and is also good for the
 32 methane-LBV experiments, for which Shrestha-2019
 33 and CaltechMech-2016 are the best-performing
 34 models. SanDiego-2016 can simulate shock tube
 35 measurements the best, also under 3σ on average.

36 However, none of the mechanisms can reproduce
 37 the flow reactor experimental data within 3σ , and the
 38 overall values are much greater than 9 as well. This

39 indicates that further development of the models is
 40 necessary. It also needs to be noted that more data
 41 points are needed to get a reliable picture of the
 42 performance of the mechanisms.

43 4. Conclusions

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 46 Experimental data from several publications on
 47 methane and hydrogen oxyfuel combustion was
 48 collected and the data was reviewed extensively to
 49 show the shortcomings of the available literature data.
 50 Based on this it can be said that more reliable
 51 experiments are necessary over temperatures above
 52 500 K and pressures over 10 bar.

53 Kinetic simulations were performed with existing
 54 detailed mechanisms to reproduce the data. FFCM-1-
 55 2016 was the best-performing model but no
 56 mechanism could simulate experimental data within
 57 their 3σ uncertainty range on average, meaning that
 58 further development of the models is necessary
 59 focusing on oxyfuel conditions.

60 While the collected 1292 data points in 243 data
 61 series were enough to get a basic picture of the
 62 performance of the mechanisms, more experiments
 63 should be conducted to get more reliable conclusions.

64 65 Declaration of competing interest

66
 67 The authors declare that they have no known
 68 competing financial interests or personal relationships
 69 that could have appeared to influence the work
 70 reported in this paper.

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