

# Investigating the oxidation of dimethyl ether and dimethyl ether/hydrogen mixtures by chemical kinetic modeling

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## Abstract

Dimethyl ether (DME, CH<sub>3</sub>OCH<sub>3</sub>) can be produced from biomass or synthesized with H<sub>2</sub> from renewable sources and captured CO<sub>2</sub>. It is an attractive alternative to conventional diesel fuel for compression-ignition engines. To facilitate its application, chemical kinetic models are needed to describe the combustion of DME under typical conditions of applications. The aim of this work is to make a quantitative comparison of recent detailed DME oxidation mechanisms on a comprehensive experimental data set. 18 detailed DME oxidation mechanisms were collected from the literature in CHEMKIN format. The experimental data (33149 data points in 1252 data series) collected from 98 articles were encoded in ReSpecTh Kinetic Data format XML files. The chemical kinetic simulations were performed with the program *Optima++* and the solver packages *Cantera* and *OpenSMOKE++*. The performances of the reaction mechanisms were compared quantitatively on a wide range of DME and DME-H<sub>2</sub> oxidation experiments including concentration measurements in jet-stirred reactor (JSR), flow reactor (FR) and burner-stabilized flames (BSF), ignition delay time measurements in shock tube (ST) and rapid compression machine (RCM), and laminar burning velocity measurements. The experiments cover wide ranges of equivalence ratio, pressure and temperature. Ignition delay time and laminar burning velocity measurements could be reproduced well by the models, while we have worse results for the concentration measurements. The performance of the models reproducing experimental data was analysed according to experiment types and conditions using quantitative measures. The simulation results for JSR and FR measurements can be sensitive to the temperature used in the calculations, so the effect of experimental temperature uncertainty was also considered. Local sensitivity analysis was performed to identify the most important reactions in the best-performing model. The results can be used in further mechanism development work.

*Keywords:* dimethyl ether; combustion kinetic modeling; mechanism development

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## 1 1. Introduction

2 As the global demand for cleaner and more  
3 sustainable energy sources grows, dimethyl ether  
4 (DME) has emerged as a promising alternative fuel.  
5 DME is a versatile, non-toxic, and easily liquefiable  
6 compound that can be derived from renewable  
7 sources such as biomass, as well as from natural gas  
8 and coal. With its high cetane number, DME is a  
9 viable substitute for diesel oil in compression ignition  
10 engines. Additionally, the combustion of DME  
11 produces significantly lower emissions of particulate  
12 matter and nitrogen oxides compared to conventional  
13 fossil fuels, contributing to improved air quality and  
14 reduced environmental impact [1]. Its compatibility  
15 with existing LPG infrastructure further enhances its  
16 potential for widespread adoption in transportation  
17 and industrial applications.

18 Due to its increasing importance, several  
19 experimental investigations have been carried out and  
20 detailed reaction mechanisms describing DME  
21 combustion have been developed in the last two  
22 decades. However, the performance of these  
23 mechanisms on simulating the experiments is mostly  
24 insufficient, and significant discrepancies in the  
25 simulation results are obtained. Thus, further  
26 investigation and development of these mechanisms  
27 are necessary.

28 In this work, the performance of 18 detailed  
29 reaction mechanisms was quantitatively assessed  
30 based on how well they reproduced the results of  
31 published experimental data. The method developed  
32 by Turányi et al. [2] was used to compare and quantify  
65

66 **Table 1** The collected experimental data and their experimental conditions. Abbreviations and notations: FR:  
67 flow reactor; JSR: jet-stirred reactor; BSF: burner-stabilized flame; ST: shock tube; RCM: rapid compression  
68 machine;  $c_{out}$ : outlet concentration; IDT: ignition delay time; LBV: laminar burning velocity;  $T$ : (cold-side)  
69 temperature;  $p$ : pressure;  $\phi$ : equivalence ratio

| Experimental method | Measured data | number of data points / data series / XMLs | $T / K$    | $p / atm$   | $\phi$        |
|---------------------|---------------|--|------------|-------------|---------------|
| FR                  | $c_{out}$     | 18334/357/56                               | 298 – 1458 | 1.0 – 59.2  | pyrol. – 59.1 |
| FR                  | conc.-time    | 68/4/1                                     | 980        | 10.0        | pyrol.        |
| JSR                 | $c_{out}$     | 2444/161/23                                | 395 – 1275 | 0.9 – 100.0 | 0.17 – 2.00   |
| BSF                 | $c_{out}$     | 9259/367/31                                | 295 – 740  | 0.03 – 1.00 | 0.67 – 2.21   |
| ST                  | IDT           | 1538/173/173                               | 607 – 1657 | 0.7 – 51.8  | 0.43 – 2.00   |
| RCM                 | IDT           | 477/61/61                                  | 610 – 1670 | 1.0 – 60.1  | 0.30 – 5.00   |
| laminar flame       | LBV           | 1029/129/129                               | 285 – 650  | 0.4 – 19.9  | 0.49 – 2.13   |

70

## 71 3. Comparison of the performance of the 72 mechanisms

73

74 Experimental data were reproduced using detailed  
75 reaction mechanisms that are either widely used for  
76 several fuels or were developed exclusively for the  
77 description of DME combustion. All collected  
78 experimental data were simulated with each reaction  
79 mechanism. *Cantera* was used primarily as a solver to  
80 carry out the simulations, while *OpenSMOKE++* was  
81 used to simulate flow reactor measurements.

33 the performance of the mechanisms. Ignition delay  
34 times measured in shock tubes (ST) and rapid  
35 compression machines (RCM), and concentration  
36 measurements carried out in jet stirred reactors (JSR),  
37 flow reactors (FR) and burner-stabilized flames  
38 (BSF), as well as laminar burning velocity (LBV)  
39 measurements were collected from the available  
40 publications. Using the overall best model, local  
41 sensitivity analysis was performed to identify the  
42 most important reactions of the DME combustion  
43 process.

44

## 45 2. Experimental data collection

46

47 Our aim was to collect a large set of experimental  
48 data on DME combustion. The summary of the  
49 experimental data with conditions is given in Table 1.  
50 Besides neat DME, the mixtures containing hydrogen  
51 and/or carbon monoxide were also included in the  
52 present study.

53 All collected indirect experimental data (33149  
54 data points in 1252 data series of 98 experimental  
55 articles) were encoded in ReSpecTh Kinetics Data  
56 (RKD) v2.5 files.

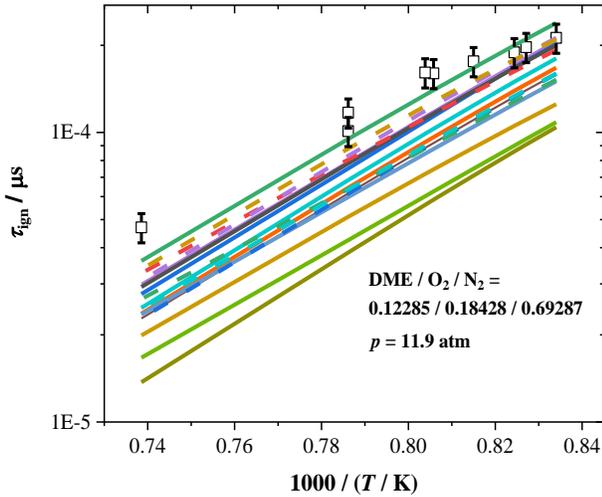
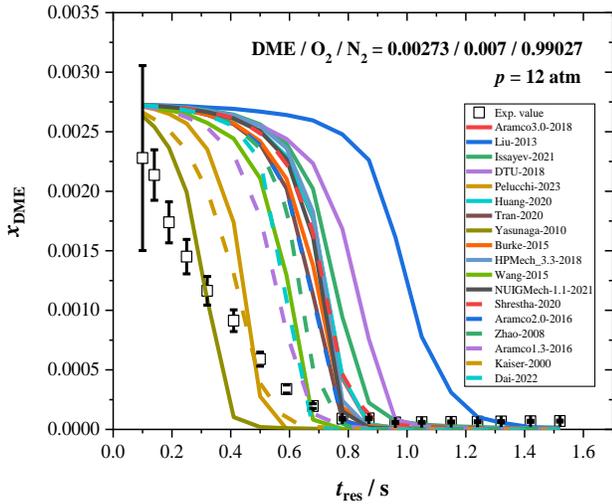
57 The RKD format [3] is XML-based and can be read  
58 well by both humans and computer programs. The  
59 RKD-format files were created with our *Optima++*  
60 code [4]. *Optima++* was also used for reading the data  
61 files, running *Cantera* [5] and *OpenSMOKE++* [6],  
62 which were the two solvers used in the study, and  
63 comparing the simulation results with the  
64 experimental data.

82 The obtained simulation results, belonging to  
83 different mechanisms, were typically different from  
84 each other and sometimes also from the experimental  
85 data. Two typical examples of the behaviour of the  
86 mechanisms can be seen in Figure 1.

87 Agreement of the simulation results with the  
88 experimental data was investigated comprehensively  
89 using the following error function:

$$90 \quad E = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{f=1}^{N_f} \sum_{s=1}^{N_{fs}} \frac{1}{N_{fsd}} \sum_{d=1}^{N_{fsd}} \left( \frac{Y_{fsd}^{\text{sim}} - Y_{fsd}^{\text{exp}}}{\sigma(Y_{fsd}^{\text{exp}})} \right)^2 \quad (1)$$

1 In equation (1),  $N$  is the number of experimental  
2 data series in the data collection,  $N_f$  is the number of  
3 datasets (i.e. the number of RKD files),  $N_{fs}$  is the  
4 number of data series in dataset  $f$ , and  $N_{fsd}$  is the  
5 number of data points in data set  $f$  and data series  $s$ .  
6  $y_{fsd}^{sim}$  and  $y_{fsd}^{exp}$  are the simulated and experimental  
7 values of the  $d$ -th experimental data point of the  $s$ -th  
8 data series in the  $f$ -th dataset.  $\sigma(Y_{fsd}^{exp})$  is the estimated  
9 standard deviation of the data point  $y_{fsd}^{exp}$ . The  
10 corresponding simulated value  $y_{fsd}^{sim}$  is obtained from  
11 a simulation using a detailed mechanism and an  
12 appropriate simulation method. If a measured value is



**Figure 1** Comparison of the experimental values and the corresponding simulation results using two example datasets. a) concentration measurements in a flow reactor by Curran et al. [7]; b) ignition delay times measured in a shock tube by Burke et al. [8].

68  
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13 characterized by absolute errors (the scatter is  
14 independent of the magnitude of  $y_{fsd}$ ), then  $Y_{fsd} =$   
15  $y_{fsd}$ . If the experimental results are described by  
16 relative errors (the scatter is proportional to the value  
17 of  $y_{fsd}$ ), then option  $Y_{fsd} = \ln(y_{fsd})$  is used.

18 When estimating the standard deviation of the data  
19 points, both uncertainty  $\sigma_{exp,fsd}$  provided by the  
20 authors of the publications or estimated in this study,  
21 and the  $\sigma_{stat,i}$  statistical scatter of the data points were  
22 considered:

$$23 \quad \sigma_{fsd} = \sqrt{\sigma_{exp,fsd}^2 + \sigma_{stat,fs}^2} \quad (2)$$

24  
25 For the flow reactor and jet-stirred reactor  
26 measurements, the measured temperature values are  
27 uncertain and the simulation results can be sensitive  
28 to the temperature used in the calculations, so the  
29 effect of experimental temperature uncertainty was  
30 also considered. When estimating the standard  
31 deviation of the data points, an additional  $\sigma_{unc,fsd}^2$   
32 variance term, calculated using the error propagation  
33 formula, was added to Equation (2) to consider the  
34 experimental temperature uncertainty:

$$36 \quad \sigma_{fsd} = \sqrt{\sigma_{exp,fsd}^2 + \sigma_{stat,fs}^2 + \sigma_{unc,fsd}^2} \quad (3)$$

37  
38 The performance of a mechanism can be  
39 considered good if  $E < 9$  is fulfilled, which means the  
40 experimental values were reproduced within the  $3\sigma$   
41 standard deviation limits of the data series on average.  
42 The error function values calculated using all the  
43 experimental data and some subsets based on the  
44 experiment types are shown in Table 2.

45 The table, however, does not contain all the  
46 collected data points. To avoid biased conclusions,  
47 those points were excluded from comparison, for  
48 which the error function value was greater than 9 for  
49 all models, indicating that no mechanism could  
50 simulate them properly. Those data points for which  
51 the simulations failed for at least one of the  
52 mechanisms were also excluded. The number of failed  
53 simulations, along with the remaining data points, are  
54 also shown in Table 2. As can be seen, the number of  
55 failed simulations is especially high for Shrestha-  
56 2020, but negligible compared to the number of total  
57 collected data.

58 As can be seen in Table 2, the overall best-  
59 performing mechanism is HPMech3.3-2018. It is,  
60 however, only under the desirable  $E$  value ( $E = 9$ ) for  
61 the shock tube experiments. In general, most  
62 mechanisms perform worse than this for most  
63 experiment types, as there are  $E$  values under 9 only  
64 for shock tube (most mechanisms), laminar burning  
65 velocity (NUIGMech1.1-2021) and flow-reactor  
66 concentration-time profile measurements (Yasunaga-  
67 2010).

1 **Table 2** Comparison of the investigated reaction mechanisms based on the error function values  $E$  calculated for  
2 all experimental data and various subsets of them. The final order in this table is based on the overall error function  
3 values. In the table, FR-OC refers to outlet concentrations, while FR-CT refers to concentration-time profiles  
4 measured in the flow reactor. The number of unsuccessful simulations is also indicated.

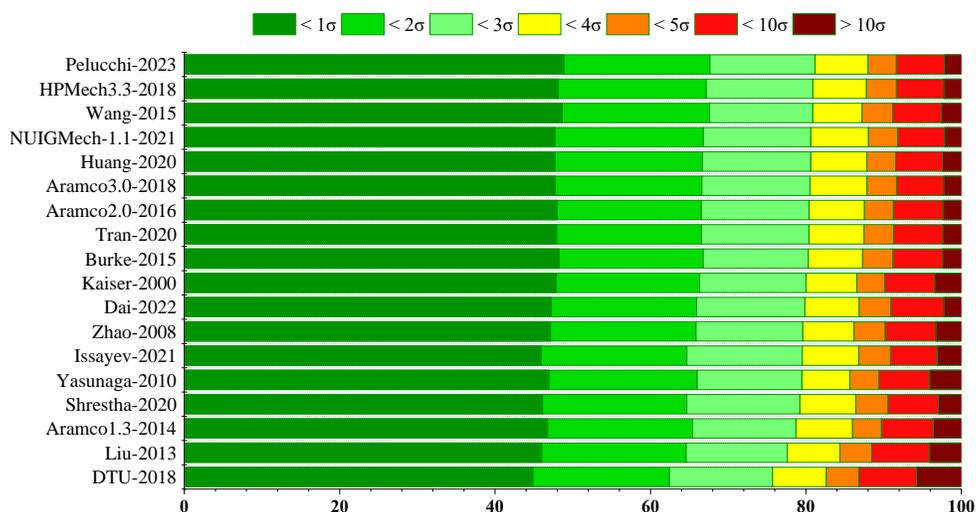
|                       |      | JSR   | FR-OC | FR-CT | ST   | RCM   | BSF   | LBV   | Overall | Failed |
|-----------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|---------|--------|
| Number of data series |      | 157   | 352   | 4     | 167  | 61    | 340   | 129   | 1210    |        |
| Number of data points |      | 2130  | 15097 | 42    | 1290 | 392   | 7146  | 958   | 27055   |        |
| HPMech3.3-2018        | [9]  | 18.2  | 70.6  | 122.5 | 6.5  | 14.1  | 55.9  | 16.2  | 21.7    | 5      |
| Zhao-2008             | [10] | 32.4  | 72.1  | 146.7 | 10.8 | 19.9  | 40.7  | 11.2  | 22.6    | 25     |
| Dai-2022              | [11] | 44.5  | 36.0  | 139.4 | 9.3  | 38.6  | 37.4  | 24.9  | 24.4    | 2      |
| Aramco2.0-2016        | [12] | 37.3  | 76.6  | 137.8 | 4.5  | 26.7  | 86.8  | 17.2  | 26.5    | 1      |
| Wang-2015             | [13] | 18.9  | 37.7  | 107.7 | 14.8 | 16.9  | 45.0  | 43.7  | 28.1    | 17     |
| Burke-2015            | [8]  | 34.1  | 104.6 | 137.8 | 4.5  | 15.2  | 73.3  | 21.8  | 28.6    | 2      |
| Aramco3.0-2018        | [14] | 21.0  | 119.3 | 216.2 | 5.3  | 18.1  | 88.8  | 12.8  | 29.0    | 1      |
| NUIGMech1.1-2021      | [15] | 14.1  | 106.7 | 214.8 | 5.6  | 24.3  | 147.7 | 8.6   | 30.5    | 2      |
| Pelucchi-2023         | [16] | 71.7  | 44.3  | 41.8  | 6.3  | 48.2  | 25.1  | 49.1  | 32.7    | 11     |
| Aramco1.3-2013        | [17] | 49.3  | 111.9 | 237.7 | 5.7  | 36.9  | 102.3 | 18.6  | 34.6    | 0      |
| Tran-2020             | [18] | 37.4  | 78.7  | 137.8 | 4.5  | 26.5  | 86.8  | 82.8  | 44.9    | 3      |
| Shrestha-2020         | [19] | 72.2  | 120.9 | 171.9 | 27.7 | 15.5  | 17.6  | 80.6  | 53.9    | 156    |
| Liu-2013              | [20] | 34.0  | 288.4 | 135.5 | 27.4 | 20.6  | 32.2  | 10.2  | 54.0    | 19     |
| Kaiser-2000           | [21] | 29.6  | 70.6  | 226.5 | 7.2  | 17.1  | 16.1  | 146.7 | 56.9    | 19     |
| Huang-2021            | [22] | 24.5  | 131.8 | 216.2 | 5.3  | 17.8  | 89.8  | 117.7 | 59.9    | 5      |
| Issayev-2021          | [23] | 72.1  | 162.1 | 249.9 | 7.4  | 15.5  | 74.8  | 104.5 | 61.8    | 18     |
| DTU-2018              | [24] | 255.1 | 212.6 | 112.9 | 18.2 | 150.7 | 15.0  | 22.5  | 71.9    | 17     |
| Yasunaga-2010         | [25] | 48.9  | 116.3 | 6.8   | 16.2 | 39.4  | 174.7 | 197.2 | 92.6    | 11     |

5

6 Zhao-2008 and Dai-2022 are the second and third  
7 best models, respectively, with overall  $E$  values under  
8 25, and four more mechanisms are under 30. As these  
9 are the lowest values, the results also indicate that  
10 the mechanisms cannot reproduce the experimental data  
11 within their  $3\sigma$  uncertainty range on average, meaning  
12 that further development of the models is necessary.

13 It is also useful to use stacked bar plots of errors to  
14 compare the mechanisms. This can be seen in Figure

15 2, where the distribution of the error function values  
16 is visualized. It shows the frequencies of data points  
17 that were reproduced by the mechanisms within a  
18 given threshold of the multiple of the estimated  
19 standard deviation. Here, the error function values  
20 were not considered, only the count of them within the  
21 thresholds. Therefore, it resulted in a different order  
22 than Table 2 based on the average error function  
23 value.



**Figure 2** Stacked bar plot of the frequencies of the reproduction of data points within given multiples of the estimated standard deviations of the data. The final order in the figure is based on the “ $< 3\sigma$ ” values.

1 The stacked bar plot shows that there are no great  
 2 differences between the mechanisms in the  
 3 percentages as they reproduce the data points in  
 4 different uncertainty ranges. Based on this  
 5 comparison, Pelucchi-2023 performs the best,  
 6 reproducing 81.19% of the data points within  $3\sigma$   
 7 uncertainty. HPMech3.3-2018, the best model by  
 8 overall average  $E$  value, is the second best here with  
 9 80.91% of the data points under  $3\sigma$ , while Wang-2015  
 10 is the third one with 80.89%. The results show that  
 11 most data points considered in the comparison are  
 12 reproduced within the desirable uncertainty range,  
 13 however, about 20-25% percent of the data points are  
 14 not, and these lead to the high average values in Table  
 15 2. In optimization work, it would be desirable to  
 16 improve the description of these data points as well.

#### 17 4. Results of the sensitivity analysis

18  
 19  
 20 Local sensitivity analysis [26] was carried out with  
 21 the HPMech3.3-2018 mechanism using 4464 data  
 22 points to identify the most important reactions in the  
 23 best-performing model. For the flow reactor, jet-  
 24 stirred reactor and burner-stabilized flame  
 25 measurements, only the concentration changes of  
 26 DME are considered. For the shock tube ignition  
 27 delay time and laminar burning velocity  
 28 measurements, we experienced high running times for  
 29 several XMLs and due to this, only a few  
 30 experimental data points were chosen from these files  
 31 to complete the sensitivity analysis.

32 The sensitivity coefficients of the measured values  
 33 with respect to the +5% relative perturbation of  $A$   
 34 preexponential Arrhenius parameters for each  
 35 reaction were investigated. Table 3 shows the first 10  
 36 reactions with the highest frequencies of significant  
 37 sensitivities from the considered mechanism for each  
 38 experiment type. A sensitivity coefficient is  
 39 considered significant if its normalized absolute value  
 40 is greater than 10% of the highest absolute normalized  
 41 sensitivity coefficient of this data point. The  
 42 frequency values (the freq. columns in Table 3) show  
 43 the ratio of these important data points to all data  
 44 points. The  $|\widetilde{sn}|_j$  values in Table 3 are the mean  
 45 scaled absolute normalized sensitivity coefficients:

$$46 \quad |\widetilde{sn}|_j = \frac{1}{N_i} \sum_{i=1}^{N_i} \frac{|sn_{ij}|}{\max |sn|_i} \quad (4)$$

47 Here,  $i$  is the index of the data point, and  $j$  is the  
 48 index of the reaction ( $A$  parameter) in the mechanism.  
 49 The scaling of the normalized sensitivity coefficients  
 50 described with Equation (4) was done by dividing  
 51 with the maximum sensitivity coefficient of the data  
 52 point.

53 Based on the sensitivity analysis results of Table 3,  
 54 the most important reactions of HPMech3.3-2018 are  
 55 largely dependent on the experiment type, however,  
 56 there are certain reactions that are present for most

57 types. The reaction  $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3 + \text{HO}_2 = \text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2 +$   
 58  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ , when DME reacts with the hydroperoxyl  
 59 radical, is the most important step for the flow reactor  
 60 outlet concentration measurements, but also in the top  
 61 3 for jet-stirred reactor and ignition delay time  
 62 measurements. The reaction of DME with the  
 63 hydroxyl radical,  $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3 + \text{OH} = \text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2 + \text{H}_2\text{O}$  is  
 64 also of high importance for these types (the most  
 65 important for jet-stirred reactor measurements) and  
 66 the burner-stabilized flame experiments as well. Some  
 67 reactions of the species  $\text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H}$  and  
 68  $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2$  are also of high importance for the flow  
 69 reactor outlet concentration, jet-stirred reactor and  
 70 rapid compression machine experiments, e.g.  
 71  $\text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H} + \text{O}_2 = \text{O}_2\text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H}$  and  
 72  $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2 = \text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H}$ . Reactions including  
 73 formaldehyde and formyl radical also appear between  
 74 the most important reactions for several experiment  
 75 types. Except for the flame experiments, the lists lack  
 76 the reaction from the core subsystems, like the  
 77 combustion of hydrogen and syngas, in comparison  
 78 with other fuels like methane, methanol, ethanol or  
 79 butanol where usually the  $\text{O}_2 + \text{H} = \text{O} + \text{OH}$  is the most  
 80 sensitive reaction. Here, this only stands for the  
 81 laminar burning velocity measurements, while it is in  
 82 second place for burner-stabilized flame experiments  
 83 (and also among the highest sensitivity coefficients  
 84 for the shock tube experiments, but it is only 9<sup>th</sup> by  
 85 frequency). Reactions of hydrogen peroxide,  
 86 however, are of higher importance for the rapid  
 87 compression machine experiments (e.g.  
 88  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2 + \text{M} = \text{OH} + \text{OH} + \text{M}$  (LP)). The reactions of methyl  
 89 radical were highly sensitive for shock tube  
 90 experiments and for the flow reactor concentration-  
 91 time profile measurements. The latter only includes a  
 92 few data points corresponding to one experiment,  
 93 which was the thermal decomposition of DME  
 94 (pyrolysis). This is why the list of its most important  
 95 reactions completely lacks steps with oxygen and the  
 96 hydrogen oxidation system. The other experiment  
 97 type that is very different from the others is the  
 98 laminar burning velocity measurement in flames.  
 99 Surprisingly, no DME reactions appeared between the  
 100 10 most important reactions (the first DME reaction  
 101 was 13<sup>th</sup> with a frequency of 2%), but several  
 102 reactions of formyl radical are present, e.g.  
 103  $\text{HCO} + \text{M} = \text{H} + \text{CO} + \text{M}$  (LP) and  $\text{HCO} + \text{H} = \text{CO} + \text{H}_2$ ,  
 104 which are part of the DME oxidation system. It is also  
 105 true that the sensitivity analysis was also performed  
 106 for only a few data points due to the high running  
 107 times, but the results indicate that it should be  
 108 conducted for more points to see a clearer picture of  
 109 the most important reaction steps.

110 Besides these experiments, the most important  
 111 reactions are mostly in accordance with the results  
 112 obtained by other researchers who performed local  
 113 sensitivity analysis on DME combustion [8][27-28].

1 **Table 3** Comparison of the sensitivity analysis results of the  $A$  preexponential factors of the 10 most sensitive  
2 reactions of the HPMech3.3-2018 mechanism. Freq.: The percentage number when the reaction had a higher  
3 absolute sensitivity coefficient than 10% of the largest absolute sensitivity coefficient of the given data point. In  
4 parenthesis: the overall number of data points used for the sensitivity analysis.  $|\widetilde{sn}|_j$ : mean of the scaled normalized  
5 absolute sensitivity coefficients. (LP): low pressure limit. (DUP): the given set of the duplicate Arrhenius-  
6 parameters.

| FR-OC   |  | FR-CT                |           |  |      |       |
|---------|--|----------------------|-----------|--|------|-------|
|         | freq. (%)  | $ \widetilde{sn} _j$ | freq. (%) | $ \widetilde{sn} _j$   |      |       |
|         | (2274)   |                      | (17)      |  |      |       |
| 1.      | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{HO}_2 = \text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2+\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$                         | 51.1                 | 0.223     | $\text{CH}_3+\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3 = \text{CH}_4+\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2$          | 94.1 | 0.941 |
| 2.      | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2 = \text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H}$                              | 50.4                 | 0.171     | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{M} = \text{CH}_3\text{O}+\text{CH}_3+\text{M}$        | 94.1 | 0.743 |
| 3.      | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{OH} = \text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2+\text{H}_2\text{O}$                             | 47.9                 | 0.368     | $\text{CH}_3+\text{CH}_3+\text{M} = \text{C}_2\text{H}_6+\text{M}$                   | 94.1 | 0.561 |
| 4.      | $\text{CH}_2\text{O}+\text{OH}=\text{HCO}+\text{H}_2\text{O}$  | 46.2                 | 0.264     | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{M} = \text{CH}_3\text{O}+\text{CH}_3+\text{M}$ (LP)   | 82.4 | 0.109 |
| 5.      | $\text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H}+\text{O}_2 = \text{O}_2\text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H}$ | 45.3                 | 0.336     | $\text{CH}_2\text{O}+\text{CH}_3 = \text{HCO}+\text{CH}_4$                           | 76.5 | 0.223 |
| 6.      | $\text{CH}_3+\text{CH}_3+\text{M} = \text{C}_2\text{H}_6+\text{M}$   | 41.8                 | 0.257     | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{H} = \text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2+\text{H}_2$              | 5.9  | 0.038 |
| 7.      | $\text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H} = \text{OH}+\text{CH}_2\text{O}+\text{CH}_2\text{O}$              | 40.4                 | 0.243     |  |      |       |
| 8.      | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2 = \text{CH}_3+\text{CH}_2\text{O}$  | 39.9                 | 0.220     |  |      |       |
| 9.      | $\text{CH}_3+\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3 = \text{CH}_4+\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2$                                  | 37.9                 | 0.292     |  |      |       |
| 10.     | $\text{CH}_3+\text{O}_2 = \text{CH}_2\text{O}+\text{OH}$   | 34.5                 | 0.084     |  |      |       |
| JSR     |  | (243)                | IDT-ST    | (929)  |      |       |
| 1.      | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{OH} = \text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2+\text{H}_2\text{O}$                             | 70.4                 | 0.555     | $\text{CH}_3+\text{HO}_2 = \text{CH}_3\text{O}+\text{OH}$                            | 83.6 | 0.320 |
| 2.      | $\text{CH}_2\text{O}+\text{OH} = \text{HCO}+\text{H}_2\text{O}$  | 67.1                 | 0.342     | $\text{CH}_3+\text{HO}_2 = \text{CH}_4+\text{O}_2$                                   | 81.3 | 0.262 |
| 3.      | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{HO}_2 = \text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2+\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$                         | 66.3                 | 0.369     | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{HO}_2 = \text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2+\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ | 80.3 | 0.381 |
| 4.      | $\text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H}+\text{O}_2 = \text{O}_2\text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H}$ | 50.2                 | 0.356     | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{OH} = \text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2+\text{H}_2\text{O}$     | 79.5 | 0.215 |
| 5.      | $\text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H} = \text{OH}+\text{CH}_2\text{O}+\text{CH}_2\text{O}$              | 44.9                 | 0.272     | $\text{CH}_2\text{O}+\text{OH} = \text{HCO}+\text{H}_2\text{O}$                      | 74.3 | 0.209 |
| 6.      | $\text{HO}_2+\text{HO}_2 = \text{H}_2\text{O}_2+\text{O}_2$ (DUP2)   | 44.9                 | 0.133     | $\text{CH}_3+\text{CH}_3+\text{M} = \text{C}_2\text{H}_6+\text{M}$                   | 72.0 | 0.430 |
| 7.      | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2 = \text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H}$                              | 41.6                 | 0.211     | $\text{CH}_2\text{O}+\text{HO}_2 = \text{HCO}+\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$                  | 70.1 | 0.207 |
| 8.      | $\text{CH}_3+\text{CH}_3+\text{M} = \text{C}_2\text{H}_6+\text{M}$   | 35.8                 | 0.156     | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{M} = \text{CH}_3\text{O}+\text{CH}_3+\text{M}$        | 69.0 | 0.397 |
| 9.      | $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2+\text{M} = \text{OH}+\text{OH}+\text{M}$ (LP)  | 32.9                 | 0.190     | $\text{H}+\text{O}_2 = \text{O}+\text{OH}$   | 66.8 | 0.533 |
| 10.     | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2 = \text{CH}_3+\text{CH}_2\text{O}$  | 32.5                 | 0.138     | $\text{CH}_2\text{O}+\text{CH}_3 = \text{HCO}+\text{CH}_4$                           | 65.7 | 0.309 |
| IDT-RCM |  | (445)                | BSF       | (456)  |      |       |
| 1.      | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2 = \text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H}$                              | 100.0                | 0.621     | $\text{HCO}+\text{M} = \text{H}+\text{CO}+\text{M}$ (LP)                             | 88.6 | 0.598 |
| 2.      | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{HO}_2 = \text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2+\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$                         | 99.6                 | 0.695     | $\text{H}+\text{O}_2 = \text{O}+\text{OH}$   | 83.8 | 0.535 |
| 3.      | $\text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H}+\text{O}_2 = \text{O}_2\text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H}$ | 95.5                 | 0.792     | $\text{HCO}+\text{H} = \text{CO}+\text{H}_2$   | 75.9 | 0.307 |
| 4.      | $\text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{O}_2\text{H} = \text{OH}+\text{CH}_2\text{O}+\text{CH}_2\text{O}$              | 93.5                 | 0.757     | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{OH} = \text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2+\text{H}_2\text{O}$     | 72.8 | 0.386 |
| 5.      | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{OH} = \text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2+\text{H}_2\text{O}$                             | 92.8                 | 0.743     | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{H} = \text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_2+\text{H}_2$              | 70.4 | 0.463 |
| 6.      | $\text{CH}_2\text{O}+\text{OH} = \text{HCO}+\text{H}_2\text{O}$  | 90.1                 | 0.468     | $\text{HCO}+\text{O}_2 = \text{CO}+\text{HO}_2$                                      | 64.9 | 0.198 |
| 7.      | $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2+\text{M} = \text{OH}+\text{OH}+\text{M}$ (LP)  | 87.2                 | 0.309     | $\text{CH}_3\text{OCH}_3+\text{M} = \text{CH}_3\text{O}+\text{CH}_3+\text{M}$ (LP)   | 56.4 | 0.225 |
| 8.      | $\text{HO}_2+\text{HO}_2 = \text{H}_2\text{O}_2+\text{O}_2$ (DUP1)   | 81.1                 | 0.199     | $\text{CH}_3+\text{HO}_2 = \text{CH}_3\text{O}+\text{OH}$                            | 42.3 | 0.136 |
| 9.      | $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2+\text{M} = \text{OH}+\text{OH}+\text{M}$   | 78.9                 | 0.142     | $\text{CH}_2\text{O}+\text{H} = \text{HCO}+\text{H}_2$                               | 41.7 | 0.119 |
| 10.     | $\text{HO}_2+\text{HO}_2 = \text{H}_2\text{O}_2+\text{O}_2$ (DUP2)   | 78.7                 | 0.193     | $\text{CO}+\text{OH} = \text{CO}_2+\text{H}$ (DUP1)                                  | 35.1 | 0.141 |
| LBV     |  | (100)                |           |  |      |       |
| 1.      | $\text{H}+\text{O}_2 = \text{O}+\text{OH}$   | 100.0                | 1.000     |  |      |       |
| 2.      | $\text{HCO}+\text{M} = \text{H}+\text{CO}+\text{M}$ (LP)   | 100.0                | 0.349     |  |      |       |
| 3.      | $\text{CH}_3+\text{H}+\text{M} = \text{CH}_4+\text{M}$ (LP)  | 100.0                | 0.188     |  |      |       |
| 4.      | $\text{HCO}+\text{H} = \text{CO}+\text{H}_2$   | 87.0                 | 0.158     |  |      |       |
| 5.      | $\text{CO}+\text{OH} = \text{CO}_2+\text{H}$ (DUP1)  | 82.0                 | 0.382     |  |      |       |
| 6.      | $\text{H}+\text{O}_2+\text{M}=\text{HO}_2+\text{M}$ (LP)   | 77.0                 | 0.233     |  |      |       |
| 7.      | $\text{H}_2+\text{OH} = \text{H}_2\text{O}+\text{H}$   | 56.0                 | 0.098     |  |      |       |
| 8.      | $\text{HCO}+\text{O}_2 = \text{CO}+\text{HO}_2$  | 51.0                 | 0.109     |  |      |       |
| 9.      | $\text{HO}_2+\text{H} = \text{OH}+\text{OH}$   | 51.0                 | 0.096     |  |      |       |
| 10.     | $\text{CH}_3+\text{HO}_2 = \text{CH}_3\text{O}+\text{OH}$  | 46.0                 | 0.100     |  |      |       |

7

8

## 1 5. Conclusions

2  
3 In the present study, 33149 data points in 1252 data  
4 series of 98 experimental articles corresponding to the  
5 combustion of dimethyl ether (neat DME, and DME  
6 mixtures containing hydrogen and/or carbon  
7 monoxide) were collected from the literature and  
8 simulated using 18 detailed reaction mechanisms with  
9 *Cantera* and *OpenSMOKE++* using simulation  
10 framework *Optima++*. The simulation results of  
11 different mechanisms were typically different from  
12 each other and the experimental data in several cases.  
13 The HPMech3.3-2018 mechanism had the best  
14 performance, followed by Zhao-2008 and Dai-2022.  
15 No mechanism could reproduce the experimental data  
16 within their  $3\sigma$  uncertainty range on average, which  
17 means that more model development is necessary.  
18 The error distributions showed that most data points  
19 (about 75-80%) could be reproduced within this range  
20 by the models, and the remaining 20-25% percent led  
21 to these high averages. Local sensitivity analysis was  
22 carried out with the best-performing HPMech3.3-  
23 2018 using selected 4464 data points. The most  
24 important reactions were investigated by experiment  
25 types. The most important steps include DME  
26 reactions with several species, formaldehyde, formyl  
27 and methyl radical reactions and reactions from the  
28 hydrogen oxidation system. For most experiments, the  
29 most important reactions are in accordance with the  
30 findings of other authors. For the LBV experiments,  
31 surprising results were obtained, which require further  
32 investigations.

## 34 Declaration of competing interest

35  
36 The authors declare that they have no known  
37 competing financial interests or personal relationships  
38 that could have appeared to influence the work  
39 reported in this paper.

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