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Direct measurement of N_2O_5 heterogeneous uptake coefficients on atmospheric aerosols in southwestern China and evaluation of current parameterizations

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Abstract: The heterogeneous hydrolysis of dinitrogen pentoxide (N_2O_5) is a critical process in assessing NO_x fate and secondary pollutants (e.g. particulate nitrate) formation. However, accurate quantification of the N_2O_5 uptake coefficient ($\gamma(N_2O_5)$) in the ambient conditions is a challenging problem which can causes unpredictable uncertainties in the predictions of the air quality models. Here, the $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values were directly measured using an improved aerosol flow tube system in a city located on the plateau in southwestern China to investigate its influencing factors and the performance of current $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ parameterization under this typical environmental condition. The nocturnal mean $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ value ranged from 0.0018 to 0.12 with an average of 0.023±0.021. The aerosol water significantly promoted N_2O_5 uptake, while particulate organic and nitrate generally showed suppression effect. We found that median $\gamma(N_2O_5)$

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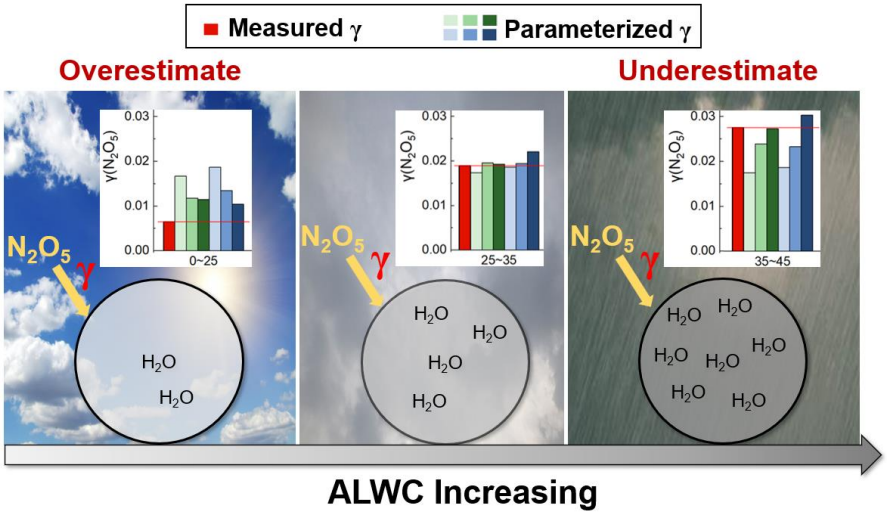
predicted by some parameterizations agreed well with observation, whereas the parameterizations failed to reproduce the range of observed values and showed poor correlations (R^2=0.00~0.09). Elevated differences between prediction and observation specifically occurred at high aerosol liquid water content (ALWC) with an underestimation by -37%~-1% and low ALWC with an overestimation by 34~189%, respectively. Such differences between the measured and parameterized $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ would lead to biased estimation (-77%~74%) on particulate nitrate production potential. Our findings suggest the need for more direct field quantifications of $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ and the laboratory measurements under extreme ALWC conditions to re-evaluate the response coefficients between $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ and aerosol chemical compositions.

Keywords: N_2O_5 uptake coefficient, $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ parameterizations, particulate nitrate formation, nighttime chemistry



Graphic Abstract

1. Introduction

Nitrate radical (NO_3) and dinitrogen pentoxide (N_2O_5) are dominant in nocturnal atmospheric chemistry as reactive nitrogen species that can strongly influence the concentration and distribution of ozone (O_3) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x=NO+NO_2), and

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the air quality (Brown et al., 2006;Wang et al., 2023;Decker et al., 2019;Dentener and Crutzen, 1993). NO_3 is produced by the reaction of NO_2 and O_3 (R1), and there is a thermodynamic equilibrium between NO_3 and N_2O_5 (R2), which is the source of N_2O_5 (Brown and Stutz, 2012). There are two main pathways for NO_3 removal: the direct one is reactions of NO_3 and VOCs (R3), especially alkenes, and the indirect way is the heterogenous hydrolysis of N_2O_5 (Asaf et al., 2009;Ng et al., 2017). N_2O_5 can react with H_2O and chloride (Cl^-) in the particle phase and form soluble nitrate and nitryl chloride ($ClNO_2$) (R4) (Osthoff et al., 2008;Chang et al., 2011). The uptake of N_2O_5 is the main pathway for the formation of particulate nitrate at night, which contributes to $PM_{2.5}$ (<2.5 μm in diameter) pollution. Meanwhile, chlorine radical is produced by $ClNO_2$ photodecomposition in daytime and further regulate the O_3 pollution production by promoting the oxidation of VOCs (Finlaysonpitts et al., 1989;Riedel et al., 2014). Thus, it is important to quantify the rate of the N_2O_5 heterogeneous hydrolysis reaction in ambient conditions.

$$NO_2 + O_3 \rightarrow NO_3 + O_2 \quad \text{(R1)}$$

$$NO_3 + NO_2 + M \leftrightarrow N_2O_5 + M \quad \text{(R2)}$$

$$NO_3 + VOCs \rightarrow Products \quad \text{(R3)}$$

$$N_2O_5 + H_2O/Cl^-(p) \rightarrow NO_3^-(p) + ClNO_2 \quad \text{(R4)}$$

$\gamma(N_2O_5)$ is defined as the net probability of N_2O_5 irreversibly taken up onto an aerosol surface upon collision (McDuffie et al., 2018). According to previous study, the process of N_2O_5 heterogeneous hydrolysis reaction on aerosols was treated as a resistor model including three steps: gas diffusion (R5), surface accommodation, and aqueous reaction (R6~R8) (Abbatt et al., 2012;Fang et al., 2024). This process can be influenced by aerosol chemical compositions (e.g. aerosol liquid water content (ALWC), nitrate (NO_3^-) concentration, Cl^- concentration, and organics), morphology and ambient meteorological factors (Bertram and Thornton, 2009;Mozurkewich and Calvert, 1988;Roberts et al., 2009;Thornton et al., 2003). High concentration of ALWC and Cl^- can promote the uptake reaction (R6~R8), and NO_3^- suppress the reaction (R6). Organics also can suppress the reaction by forming a coating on the surface of the particles and regulating the ALWC and the passage rate of N_2O_5 molecules (Folkers et al., 2003;Gaston et al., 2014;Anttila et al., 2006). However, the above results are mainly based on laboratory studies. In ambient conditions, the correlations between $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ and aerosol chemical compositions were generally weak mainly due to the coupling

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effects of particle morphology, size, mixing state, and meteorological parameters (e.g. temperature and relative humidity) (Phillips et al., 2016;Wang et al., 2020b;Riedel et al., 2012).

$$N_2O_5\ (g) \leftrightarrow N_2O_5\ (aq) \quad (R5)$$

$$N_2O_5(aq) + H_2O(l) \leftrightarrow H_2ONO_2^+(aq) + NO_3^-\ (aq) \quad (R6)$$

$$H_2ONO_2^+\ (aq) + H_2O(l) \rightarrow HNO_3(aq) + H_3O^+\ (aq) \quad (R7)$$

$$H_2ONO_2^+\ (aq) + HX(aq) \rightarrow XNO_2(aq) + H_3O^+\ (aq) \quad (R8)$$

In order to accurately quantify the contribution of N_2O_5 heterogeneous hydrolysis to nitrate formation and NO_x regulation, a variety of parameterizations of $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ have been established based on laboratory and field studies (Evans and Jacob, 2005;Davis et al., 2008;Yu et al., 2020;Bertram and Thornton, 2009). The parameters in parameterizations mainly include the meteorological parameters, concentrations of aerosol chemical compositions, and particle physicochemical parameters. However, the comparisons of parameterized and measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ in field measurements revealed significant discrepancies between them (Brown et al., 2009;Ryder et al., 2014;McDuffie et al., 2018), which mainly lie in the large variations in response of $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ to particle compositions on ambient particles. Moreover, the overestimation or underestimation of the parameterized $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ can leads to unpredictable biases in the simulations of the chemical transport models (Murray et al., 2021;Chen et al., 2018;Ryder et al., 2014).

Until now, only a few studies have quantified $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values in ambient conditions ($<10^{-4}$ to 0.1) mostly by indirect quantification methods (Brown et al., 2016;Wang et al., 2018;Chen et al., 2020b;Morgan et al., 2015;Tham et al., 2018) while some by direct measurements (Yu et al., 2020;Riedel et al., 2012;Bertram et al., 2009a). The N_2O_5 heterogeneous uptake process has been reported to be active in China. The $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values in North China Plain, Yangtze River Delta and Pearl River Delta in China (10^{-2}~10^{-1}) were generally about 1 to 2 orders of magnitude larger than that in European and North America (10^{-3}~10^{-2}) (Yan et al., 2023;Wang et al., 2017b;Wang et al., 2017d;Wang et al., 2017c;Niu et al., 2022). To further investigate the N_2O_5 heterogeneous chemistry in China, the $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values were directly measured in a typical highland city, Kunming, in China using an improved aerosol flow tube system from 15 April to 20 May 2021. The relationship between the $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values and impacting factors was determined. We then examine the performance of current $\gamma(N_2O_5)$

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parameterizations by comparing to the observed values and analyze the causes of discrepancies in extreme ALWC conditions. We further notice the significant biases of particulate nitrate formation potential estimated by $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ parameterization.

2. Methods

2.1. Site description

The field campaign was conducted in Kunming, China from 15 April to 20 May 2021. The main sampling site was on the roof of the Yihe Building, Yijingyuan Hotel (24°59′05″ N, 102°39′40″ E), about 20 m above the ground. As shown in Figure 1, the measurement site was located approximately 1890 m above sea level, 8 km away from the city center, and 1 km from Dianchi Lake to the west. The site receives traffic emissions from two roads within a radius of 500 m. The site was mainly surrounded by residential area and there was no major industrial source around. Besides, the particle composition was measured at Guandu Forest Park (25°00′43″ N, 102°45′55″ E), which was about 9 km away from Yijingyuan Hotel, 5.2 km from the city center and was also mainly surrounded by residential living area. Sunrise was around 06:30 CNST and sunset at 19:30 CNST.

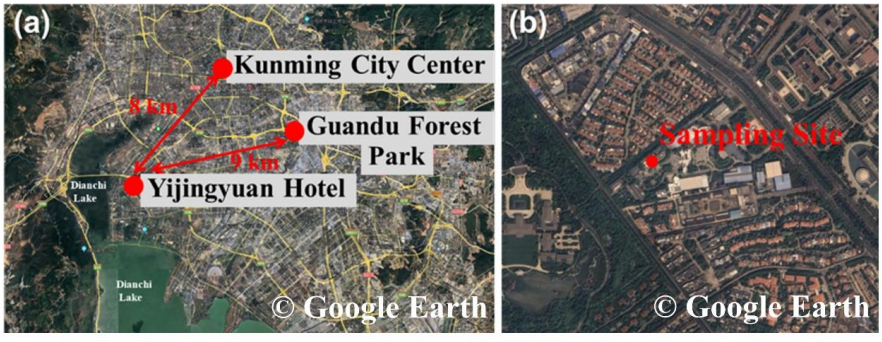

Figure 1. Google Maps images showing the locations of the experimental sites. (a) The location of the Yijingyuan Hotel and Guandu Forest Park. (b) The surrounding environment of Yijingyuan Hotel.

2.2. Instrument setup

Multiple gas phase and particulate parameters were measured during the campaign, including N_2O_5, NO, NO_2, O_3, VOCs, $PM_{2.5}$, particle number size distribution (PNSD), particle composition, and meteorological parameters. The detailed information of the instruments is listed in Table 1.

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N_2O_5 concentration was measured by a cavity-enhanced absorption spectrometer (CEAS) developed by Wang et al. (Wang et al., 2017a), and has been used in several field campaigns. N_2O_5 in the sampling gas was thermally decomposed to NO_3 in a preheated perfluoroalkoxy alkane (PFA) tube (130 °C), and then detected in a resonator cavity maintained at 110 °C to avoid the reversible reaction of N_2O_5 and NO_3. Excess NO was injected to the cavity every 5 min to obtain the reference spectrum by eliminating the influence of water vapor. The N_2O_5 loss in the sampling system and detection system were also calibrated and corrected during data processing. The detection of limit (LOD) of CEAS was 2.7 pptv (1σ), and the uncertainty was 19%.

NO, NO_2 and O_3 were monitored by commercial instruments (Thermo-Fisher 42i and 49i). A total of 117 kinds of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) were measured by an automated gas chromatograph equipped with a mass spectrometer and flame ionization detecter (GC-MS/FID). The particle composition was measured by a time-of-flight aerosol chemical speciation monitor (ToF-ACSM), including sulfate, nitrate, ammonium, chloride and organics. The ALWC was calculated by ISORROPA-II model and did not consider the hygroscopicity of organic compounds (Fountoukis and Nenes, 2007). PNSD were measured by a scanning mobility particle sizer (SMPS, TSI Model 3938) including an Electrostatic Classifier (Model 3082) and a condensation particle counter (CPC, Model 3776). Meteorological parameters, included relative humidity (RH), temperature (T), pressure, wind speed and wind direction, were available during the campaign.

Table 1. The detailed information of instruments during the campaign.

Parameters	Detection of limit	Method	Accuracy
N_2O_5	2.7 pptv (1σ, 1min)	CEAS	± 19%
NO	50 pptv (2min)	Chemiluminescence	± 10%
NO_2	50 pptv (2min)	Chemiluminescence[a]	± 10%
O_3	0.5 ppbv (2σ, 1min)	UV photometry	± 5%
VOCs	2–190 ppt (1 h)	GC-MS/FID	± 5%
PNSD	14–730 nm (5 min)	SMPS	± 10%
Particle composition	m/z 10 – 219 (10 min)	ToF-ACSM	-
$\gamma(N_2O_5)$	0.0016 (40 min)	Aerosol flow tube system	± 16~43 %

[a] Photolytic conversion to NO through blue light before detection.

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2.3. The measurement and calculation of γ(N_2O_5)

The γ(N_2O_5) was directly measured by an aerosol flow tube system (AFTS) coupled with a detailed box model developed by Chen et al. (Chen et al., 2022). The detection limit and accuracy of the AFTS are listed in Table 1. Briefly, the AFTS mainly consists of a N_2O_5 generator, an aerosol flow tube, and detection instruments for N_2O_5, NO_x, O_3 and S_a. N_2O_5 generated by O_3 and NO_2 (excess) was added to the sampling gas in the front of the aerosol flow tube. The aerosol flow tube consist of two cones at both ends with a vertex angle of 15° and a straight cylinder in the middle with an inner diameter of 140 mm and a length of 343 mm. The total flow rate in the tube was 2.08 L min^{-1}, and the residence time was 259 s. The detection instruments used in this study were Thermo 42i-TL to detect NO and NO_2 concentration, Teledyne T265 to detect O_3 concentration, CEAS-PKU to detect N_2O_5 concentration and SMPS (TSI Model 3938) to detect aerosol surface concentrations (S_a). Meanwhile, a RH&T sensor (Rotronic, Model HC2A-S) was used to detect relative humidity and temperature in the flow tube. In a duty cycle, the N_2O_5 concentrations with or without aerosols were acquired at both the inlet and exit of the flow tube, NO, NO_2 and O_3 concentrations were always acquired at the inlet, S_a concentration always acquired at the exit. The loss rate coefficients of N_2O_5 were calculated by a time-dependent box model coupled with NO_3-N_2O_5 chemistry under the constraint of the measurement of N_2O_5 concentrations and other auxiliary parameters to overcome the influence of homogeneous reactions (e.g., NO_2, O_3 and NO) and variations of air mass on γ(N_2O_5) retrieval. The N_2O_5 loss rate in the absence of aerosols was expected as wall loss rate coefficients ($k_{het}^{wo/aerosols}$) of N_2O_5, and the loss rate in the presence of aerosols was expected as the loss rate both on wall and aerosols ($k_{het}^{w/aerosols}$) of N_2O_5. Therefore, γ(N_2O_5) could be calculated by Eq (1). Among them, the loss of S_a concentration in aerosol flow tube was corrected by the penetration efficiency derived in our previous study (Chen et al., 2022) and the dry-state S_a were corrected to ambient (wet) S_a by a hygroscopic growth factor (Liu et al., 2013). A stringent data QA/QC procedure is applied prior to model calculation based on above measured variables to retrieve robust γ(N_2O_5) values. Other detailed information about this system can be found in Chen et al. 2022.

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$$\gamma(N_2O_5) = \frac{4 \times (k_{het}^{w/aerosols} - k_{het}^{wo/aerosols})}{c \times S_a} \quad (1)$$

2.4 The calculation of NO_3 and N_2O_5 reactivity

NO_3 production rate ($P(NO_3)$) was calculated by measured NO_2 concentration and O_3 concentration via Eq.(2), $k_{NO_2+O_3}$ represents the reaction rate of constant of NO_2 and O_3 (Atkinson et al., 2004). NO_3 concentration can be calculated by measured N_2O_5 concentration with the temperature-dependent equilibrium relationship (Eq.3). The steady-state lifetime of N_2O_5 ($\tau(N_2O_5)$) and NO_3 ($\tau(NO_3)$) was calculated by concentrations and $P(NO_3)$ as shown in Eq.(4) and Eq.(5) (Brown and Stutz, 2012). The NO_3 reactivity with VOCs ($k(NO_3)$) can be calculated by Eq.(6), among them k_i represents the bimolecular rate coefficients.

$$P(NO_3) = k_{NO_2+O_3}[NO_2][O_3] \quad (2)$$

$$[NO_3] = [N_2O_5]/k_{eq}[NO_2], \quad k_{eq} = 5.5 \times 10^{-27} \times e^{10724/T} \quad (3)$$

$$\tau(N_2O_5) = [N_2O_5]/P(NO_3) \quad (4)$$

$$\tau(NO_3) = [NO_3]/P(NO_3) \quad (5)$$

$$k(NO_3) = \sum k_i [VOC_i] \quad (6)$$

2.5 The calculation of nitrate production rate

The N_2O_5 uptake for nighttime particulate nitrate production is regarded as a pseudo first order reaction, the rate constant (k_{N2O5}) of which can be calculated from Eq 7 with measured or parameterized $\gamma(N_2O_5)$, where C is the mean molecular speed of N_2O_5. The yield ratio of $ClNO_2$ (φ) was set as a constant of 0.5 in all calculations, which is consistent with the previously observed yield range 0.3~0.73 in North China (Wang et al., 2017d;Wang et al., 2018). The nitrate production rate can be calculated by Eq 8, where $[N_2O_5]$ is the concentration of N_2O_5.

$$k_{N2O5} = 0.25 \times S_a \times \gamma(N_2O_5) \times C \quad (7)$$

$$P(NO_3^-) = k_{N2O5} \times [N_2O_5] \times (2-\varphi) \quad (8)$$

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3. Results and discussion

3.1. γ(N_2O_5) measurement overview and comparison

The mean diurnal of measured N_2O_5 concentration, γ(N_2O_5) values, RH, T, concentrations of NO_2, O_3, NO, $PM_{2.5}$ from 15 April to 20 May 2021 are shown in Figure 2a, and the time series are shown in Figure S1. Higher $PM_{2.5}$ concentration was observed at night (average of 27.8±14.3 ug/m^3, peak of 81.0 ug/m^3) than that in the day (Figure 2a & Figure S1). The NO_2 (average of 6.5±8.4 ppbv) and O_3 (average of 45.5±19.7 ppbv) concentration in Kunming are lower than other regions in China (Wang et al., 2017d;Wang et al., 2020a;Niu et al., 2022;Li et al., 2020), indicating a lower atmospheric oxidation capacity. The mean nocturnal NO_3 production rate (PNO_3) was 0.6± 0.8 ppbv/h, which is also lower than previous reports in China (Tham et al., 2016;Zhai et al., 2023;Wang et al., 2022). During this observation campaign, significant N_2O_5 concentration (at a maximum of 395.1 pptv) was only observed within April 16-27 mainly with low humidity and high precursor concentrations, while the concentrations fluctuated around the detection limit during other periods. The nocturnal mean concentration of N_2O_5 was 33.4±75.2 pptv, which is lower than reported concentrations in other regions of China (Wang et al., 2018;Brown et al., 2016;Zhai et al., 2023). During the field measurement, high temperature (~20℃) favors the equilibrium shifting from N_2O_5 towards NO_3 and site mainly received the emissions from vegetations in the surrounding parks. In that case, the major removal of NO_3-N_2O_5 at night was the reaction of NO_3 with VOCs represented by monoterpene (67%) and isoprene (4%), followed by N_2O_5 uptake (15%) shown in Figure 2c. Rapid depletion of daytime emitted isoprene by NO_3 led to low contribution of isoprene to NO_3 reactivity after sunset (Figure S2). The steady-state lifetime of N_2O_5 (τ(N_2O_5)) was 185±294 s on average and its diel pattern was similar to N_2O_5 concentration. The τ(N_2O_5) in Kunming were higher than most other cities in China (Wang et al., 2020a;Li et al., 2020;Yan et al., 2019). Comparisons of NO_3 and N_2O_5 concentrations, P(NO_3), and other parameters with that recently reported in other regions across the world are summarized in Table S1.

The nocturnal mean γ(N_2O_5) value ranged from 0.0018 to 0.12 with an average of 0.023±0.021. The diurnal profiles showed that the γ(N_2O_5) value decreased after sunset and then sharply increased with relative humidity after midnight, peaking at 5:00 am (Figure 2a). The mean γ(N_2O_5) was lower than that in North China Plain and Eastern

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China, and similar to that in Pearl River Delta China, Europe and North America (Figure.2b) (Yan et al., 2023;Wang et al., 2017b;Wang et al., 2017d;Wang et al., 2017c;Niu et al., 2022;Morgan et al., 2015;Phillips et al., 2016;Bertram et al., 2009a;McDuffie et al., 2018). The detailed comparisons of field derived $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ were summarized in Table S2.

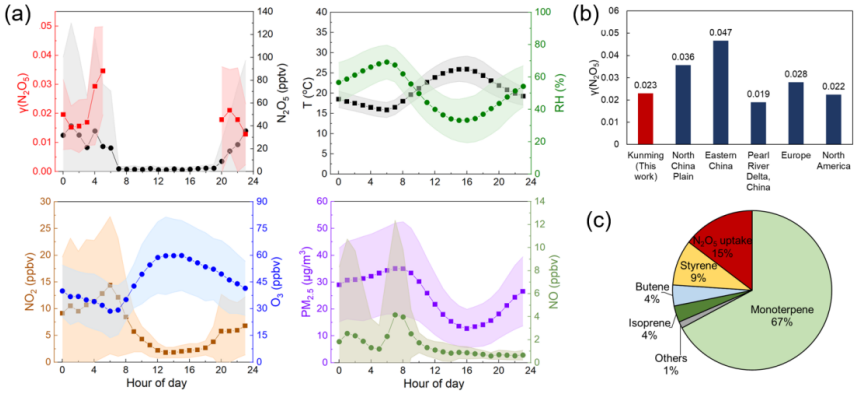

Figure 2. The overview of $\gamma(N_2O_5)$, gas phase and particulate parameters, meteorological parameters and NO_3 loss pathways. (a) Mean diurnal profiles of measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$, N_2O_5, T, RH, NO_2, O_3, $PM_{2.5}$ and NO. (b) Comparison of $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values in China, Europe, and North America calculated from previous work with measured value in this work. (c) The percentage of NO_3 loss pathway via VOCs and N_2O_5 uptake at night.

3.2. Functional dependence of measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values

The dependence of measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values on organics, ALWC, NO_3^- and Cl^- concentration in particle phase in this study are shown in Figure 3. The organic wet mass fraction showed a significant negative correlation (R^2=0.83) with measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values (Figure 3a), indicating that organics in the aerosol significantly inhibited the uptake of N_2O_5 during the measuring period in Kunming. While a large number of studies have observed evident suppression of particulate organic on N_2O_5 uptake on lab-generated aerosols (Escoreia et al., 2010;Cosman and Bertram, 2008;Gaston et al., 2014), the negative correlation of particulate organic and $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ was usually weak derived from field measurements (Brown et al., 2009;McDuffie et al., 2018;Chen et al., 2018;Wang et al., 2020b).

Aerosol liquid water also exhibited controlling role on heterogeneous uptake of N_2O_5 in this study as demonstrated by the evidently positive correlation (R^2=0.74) of

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ALWC and $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ (Figure 3b). A weak correlation was observed with ALWC below 25 M and a significant correlation observed with ALWC higher than 25 M. The similar trend has been reported by previous laboratory studies (Mozurkewich and Calvert, 1988;Bertram and Thornton, 2009;Folkers et al., 2003;Hallquist et al., 2003). When RH is low, the aerosols mainly exist in solid state with low ALWC, limiting the uptake reaction. Whereas the aerosols become deliquesced as the RH (also ALWC) increases, which greatly promote the uptake reaction. Previous field studies also found good correlations of $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values with ALWC or RH in most regions in China, indicating that ALWC may be one of the rate-limiting steps of heterogeneous reaction in China (McDuffie et al., 2018;Yu et al., 2020;Tham et al., 2018;Wang et al., 2022).

Figure 3c showed the negative dependence of measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values on aerosol nitrate concentration, similar to the results of previous laboratory studies and most field observations (Tham et al., 2018;Bertram et al., 2009b;Morgan et al., 2015;Yu et al., 2020). The suppression effect of NO_3^- on the N_2O_5 heterogeneous uptake is mainly caused by the competition of aerosol nitrate with chloride and H_2O for the $H_2ONO_2^+$ intermediate (Bertram and Thornton, 2009). The positive correlation (R^2=0.48) between $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ and molar ratio of Cl^-/NO_3^- values was weaker than that of ALWC (Figure 3d), which indicates that Cl^- may promote the N_2O_5 uptake reaction instead of playing a critical role during our observation. The particulate Cl^- concentration also contributes to weaker enhancement of $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ compared to ALWC in other field observations (Wang et al., 2020b;Yu et al., 2020;McDuffie et al., 2018).

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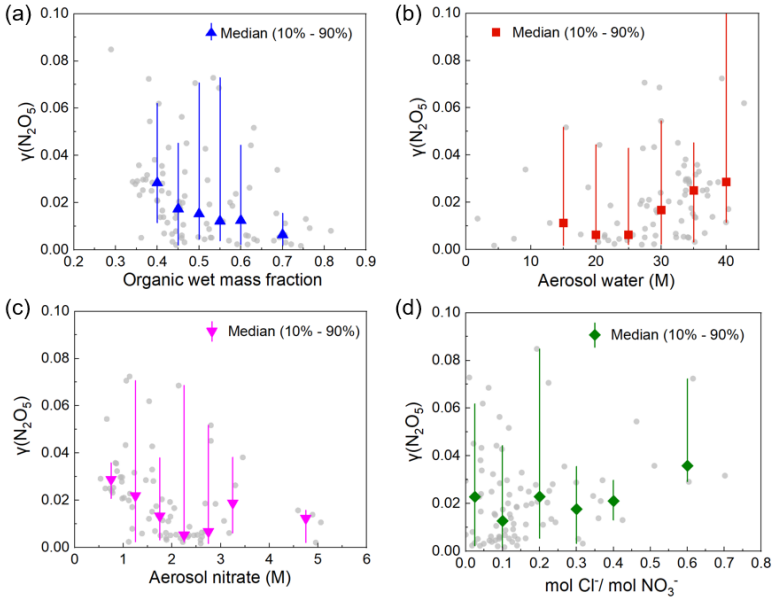

Figure 3. The functional dependence of measured γ(N_2O_5) values on the influencing factors. Variation of γ(N_2O_5) with organic wet mass fraction (a), the aerosol water content (b), the aerosol nitrate content (c), and molar ratio of chloride to nitrate (d). The points represent the median in each bin, and the color lines represent the data range from 10th to 90th percentile in each bin.

3.3. Comparison of parameterized γ(N_2O_5) values

The γ(N_2O_5) values were predicted using ten widely-used parameterizations and compared with the measured results. The details of the parameterizations were summarized in Table S3. Parameterizations were categorized into inorganic-only and inorganic kernel with organic coating or organic mass (inorganic+organic).

The γ(N_2O_5) predicted by inorganic-only parameterizations were generally larger than measurements. Among these inorganic-only parameterizations, RIE03, BT09 w/o Cl and Yu20 exhibited relatively low deviation in predicted median values from measurements (Figure 4a). However, the correlation of predictions and measurements were bad for these three parameterizations (R^2=0~0.09, Figure 4b). The empirical parameterization Yu20 derived from several field campaigns in China showed the best performance with a median difference of 4%, the lowest RMSE (0.0200) and the highest correlation coefficient (R^2=0.09) in Kunming, indicating the effectiveness of the improvement by the localized field results. The overestimation of the DAV08, BT09

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and GRI09 were also reported by previous studies (Bertram et al., 2009b;Brown et al., 2009;Chang et al., 2016;Griffiths et al., 2009;McDuffie et al., 2018). All parameterizations had difficulty in predicting the low and high values of measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$. For the parameterizations with median deviation less than 10%, the parameterized $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values mainly fell in the range of 0.0036~0.035, while the measured values varied from 0.0018 to 0.12, indicating that the relevant parameters in the parameterizations was still inappropriate and cannot reproduce the range of the measurements.

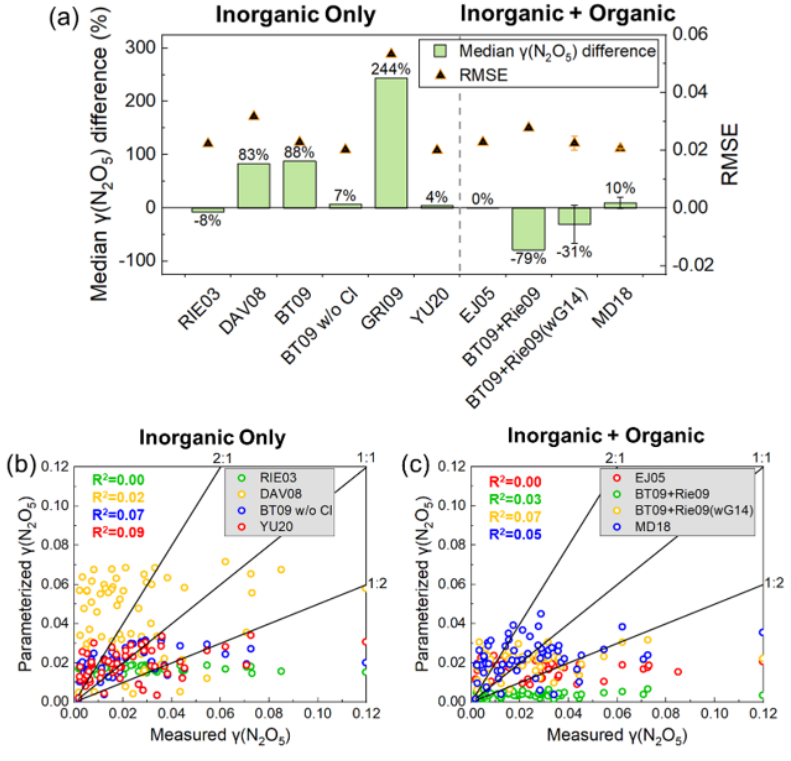

Figure 4. Comparison of parameterized and measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$. (a) Comparison of median difference and root-mean-square-error (RMSE) between measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ and parameterized $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values. The error bar of BT09+Rie09wG14 and MD18 showed the range of the results of O/C setting between 0.5 and 0.8. The distribution of parameterized $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values, including inorganic-only parameterizations (RIE03, DAV08, BT09 w/o Cl^-, YU20) (b), and inorganic+organic parameterizations (EJ05, BT09+Rie09, BT09+Rie09wG14, MD18) (O/C=0.8) (c). The black solid line represents the 1:1, 1:2 and 2:1 line, respectively. The R^2 displayed in different colors

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correspond to the parameterization of the same color.

The inorganic+organic parameterizations tend to underestimate the measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ due to the suppression effects of organics. Worse agreement and larger scatter were found for the parameterized $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ (R^2=0~0.07, Figure 4c) when organics part was added into inorganic. BT09+Rie09(wG14) showed the best correlation with R^2 of 0.07 but relatively large median deviation (-66~5%). EJ05 and MD18 showed the lowest deviations among the four parameterizations, while EJ05 showed the worst correlation (R^2=0.00). Among them, the empirical parameterization MD18, derived from field observations, exhibited the best performance with a deviation of -1~20% and the lowest RMSE (0.0207), which also indicates that parameterization can be improved by fitting to field observations, similar to the results of inorganic-only parameterizations.

3.4. The impact of ALWC on parameterized $\gamma(N_2O_5)$

Although some parameterizations performed relatively well in reproducing the median values of $\gamma(N_2O_5)$, none of the ten parameterizations were able to reproduce the range of measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values (aka. low correlation and RMSE). This phenomenon was possibly caused by several aspects, including the inaccurate estimation on response coefficients of critical aerosol compositions and relative rates of competitive reactions, especially when influenced by organics components. ALWC is one of the factors controlling N_2O_5 uptake during our observation and the coefficients related to ALWC should play a critical role in reproducing the varying range of $\gamma(N_2O_5)$. To investigate the accuracy of the ALWC-related response coefficients in $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ parameterizations, we compared the parameterized and measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values at three ALWC levels: low concentration (0~25 M), medium concentration (25~35 M), and high concentration (35~45 M).

Six parameterizations were selected for the comparison at different ALWC levels due to their low deviations (below 10% of median values) over the entire observation (Figure 5). At low ALWC, all six parameterizations showed overestimation with the maximum difference for EJ05 (189%) and the minimum for MD18 (34%). At median ALWC, the deviation of parameterized $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ reduced to -8~4%. At high ALWC, the parameterizations tend to underestimate the measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ with the difference ranging from -37% to -1%. The treatment of ALWC-related effects on the $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ following BT09 and Rie09 parameterizations framework were generally better than those following RIE03 and EJ05. The YU20 and MD18 showed the best performance

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across all three ALWC levels among inorganic-only parameterizations and inorganic+organic parameterizations, respectively. As a result, the overestimation at low ALWC and underestimation at high ALWC indicated that treatments of ALWC-related coefficients in most parameterizations can hardly reproduce the response of $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ to ALWC.

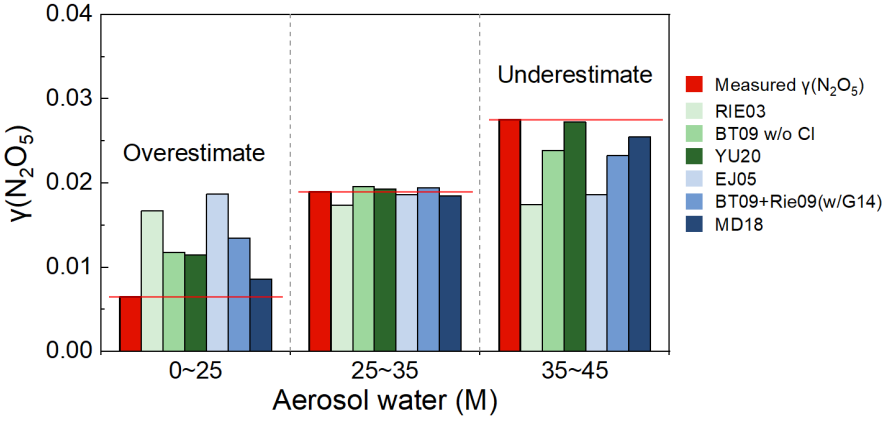

Figure 5. Comparison of the median values of measured and parameterized $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ at low, median and high ALWC levels. The O/C settings of BT09+Rie09wG14 and MD18 were 0.8 and 0.5, respectively.

The biased prediction of $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ at low and high ALWC levels might cause considerable uncertainties on estimating impacts of N_2O_5 uptake when ALWC varies largely in ambient conditions. We calculated the particulate nitrate production potential contributed by N_2O_5 uptake based on measured $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ and six selected parameterizations at low and high ALWC levels, respectively. The maximum deviations of median nitrate production rates were 74% and -77% at low and high ALWC levels, respectively (Figure 6). Our results indicate that current parameterizations may lead to large deviations of nitrate production potential predictions. The contribution of the N_2O_5 heterogeneous reaction to nitrate production is important in some regions (Wang et al., 2021;Chen et al., 2020a;Fan et al., 2020;Wagner et al., 2013), and can be comparable with that of $OH+NO_2$ pathway (Alexander et al., 2020;Fan et al., 2022;Zhai et al., 2023). Therefore, we suggest more $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ measurements need to be conducted under extreme ALWC conditions in future studies, which helps to improve the accuracy of response coefficients.

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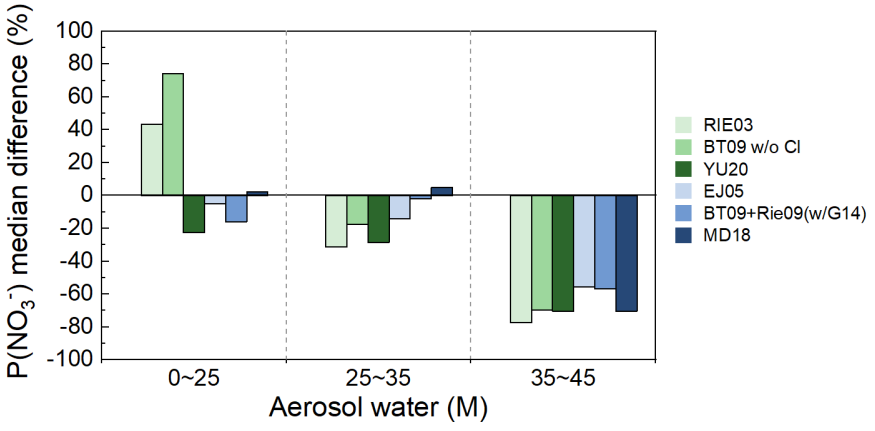

Figure 6. The median difference of the nitrate production rates $P(NO_3^-)$ between measured and parameterized $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ values during low, median and high ALWC conditions. The O/C setting of BT09+Rie09wG14 was 0.8 and that of MD18 was 0.5.

4. Conclusions

The $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ on ambient aerosols were directly measured in Kunming by an aerosol flow tube system. The observed values showed good correlations with organics, ALWC and aerosol nitrate. The median of $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ predicted by inorganic-only and inorganic+organic parameterizations generally overestimate and underestimate the measurements, respectively. While some parameterizations agreed well with the measurements on median values, they failed to reproduce the varying range and showed low correlations. In particular, parameterizations overestimate the $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ by 34~189% at low ALWC and underestimate by -37%~-1% at high ALWC, respectively. Among the ten parameterizations, the empirical parameterizations YU20 and MD18 performed relatively well with lower deviations on median values and RMSE. Our result uncovers the feasibility of fitting with ambient measurements to improve laboratory-derived parameterizations. Therefore, we call for the need to conduct more field observations of $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ directly on ambient aerosols to improve the performance of parameterizations and better elucidate the environmental impacts of N_2O_5 uptake reaction. Meanwhile, further studies on mechanism of N_2O_5 uptake under extreme ALWC conditions would help to improve the accuracy of its response coefficients in parameterizations.

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Author Contributions

X.R.C. and K.D.L. designed the study. K.D.L organized the field campaign with the help from Y.J.G. T.Y.Z and X.R.C measured the $\gamma(N_2O_5)$ data. C.M.L, S.Y.X, H.B.D and S.Y.C provide the field data of normal gases, particulate components and other supporting parameters. J.Y.L, T.Y.Z, X.R.C and H.C.W analyze the data. J.Y.L, T.Y.Z and X.R.C wrote the paper with the input from K.D.L.

Competing Interests

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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