

Enhancement of ethanol production using cellulose-degrading and immobilized-ethanolic microbes in co-culturing systems

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ABSTRACT

It is well known that the expense to purify cellulose for cellulose degradation and ethanol production is relatively high. To reduce the cost, this study has made an effort to construct a co-culturing system. The unique system is a microbial process in which cellulolytic strain serves a function that to hydrolyze cellulose and generate reducing sugar which is being utilized by ethanolic strains. To overcome the inhibition from ethanol of fermentative strains, the study applied immobilized ethanolic strain. The study used batch operation to investigate ethanol production with different strategies. In the phase I study, effects of environmental settings on ethanol production using *Zymomonas mobilis* were investigated. Moreover, comparison on ethanol production between suspended cultures and cell-immobilized bead cultures is conducted. In the phase II study, a feasibility study was conducted to investigate a co-culturing system. The results showed: (1) Immobilized *Z. mobilis* can well produce ethanol at incubation temperature range of 30 – 37 °C and initial pH of 3-11 during 9 – 27 hours fermentation; (2) Because immobilized *Z. mobilis* seemed to be protected by cell-immobilized bead matrix, ethanol production was not significantly affected under different initial pH; (3) The best co-culturing combinations are *Bacillus thermoamylovorans* K2 and immobilized *Klebsiella pneumoniae* THLB0109 in producing ethanol from various cellulosic source among three co-culturing combinations at 30 °C incubation; (4) In the co-culturing system of *Bacillus thermoamylovorans* K2 and immobilized *Klebsiella pneumoniae* THLB0109, the produced ethanol concentrations at 37 °C are in the descending order of Napiergrass, avicel, and carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC); and (5) The incubation temperature affected ethanol production under co-culturing systems.

Keywords : co-culturing system、 cell-immobilized technology、 bioethanol、 cellulose cellulose cellulose

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