

Proceedings

# Structural Characterization by NMR Procedure of C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>Pyrr TFSI Doped with Lithium TFSI Salt in Liquid and Gel States

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Published: date

**Abstract:** Ionic Liquids represent a viable option as electrolytes as many electrochemical applications such as energy storage devices due to their high ionic conductivity and wide electrochemical window. However, liquid electrolytes present important problems of safety and performance, and encapsulation in solid matrix can be a good solution to improve it. In this work, changes on the structure of the mixtures of ionic liquid 1-butyl-1-methylpyrrolidinium bis(trifluoromethylsulfonyl)imide and Lithium bis(trifluoromethylsulfonyl)imide against the concentration of the salt (0, 0.1 and 1.5 molal), and the effect of nanoconfinement through gelation process were studied using NMR technique.

**Keywords:** ionic liquid; nuclear magnetic resonance; electrolytes; gel; pyrrolidinium

## 1. Introduction

The incoming times has as a challenge the decarbonisation, both industry and of the economy for a green and sustainable future. One of the main options is an ecological transition where fossil fuels are replaced by renewable ways of obtaining energy without carbon emissions to the atmosphere. This ecological transition brings new scientific and technical challenges such as the development and improvement of energy storage systems.

The current situation of electrolyte manufacturing is based on flammable and volatile mixtures, that could put the operator's safety at risk when handling and assembling these in a commercial battery. This situation, allows the Ionic Liquids (ILs) and their mixtures with inorganics salts be considered as a good alternative to replace the commercial electrolytes due to their remarkable properties for electrochemical applications[1–3].

One of the main problems of common electrolytes, ILs among them, when handling and assembling in batteries is their liquid condition, which complicates their manufacture when it comes to large-scale implementation. In the case of ILs, a solution could be the nanoconfinement of the ionic

liquid in an organic matrix through sol-gel method [4] in order to keep its main properties intact obtaining a quasi-solid like material [5].

In this work, an NMR study is carried out with the main purpose of a structural analysis with the salt addition and the effect of gelling process on the IL 1-butyl-1-methylpyrrolidinium bis(trifluoromethylsulfonyl)imide C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>Pyrr TFSI and Lithium bis(trifluoromethylsulfonyl)imide (Li TFSI) against the concentration of the salt (0, 0.1 and 1.5 molal).

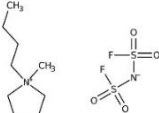
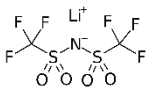
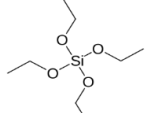
## 2. Materials and Methods

### 2.1. Chemicals

Three different mixtures of the ionic liquid C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>Pyrr TFSI with the salt Li TFSI salt were prepared via stirring procedure (pure IL, 0.1 mol Kg<sup>-1</sup> and 1.5 mol Kg<sup>-1</sup>), being 1.5 mol kg<sup>-1</sup> the saturated one.

In Table 1 a brief description of the chemical compounds used in this work can be found, where the molecular weight, structure, CAS number, supplier and purity is indicated.

Table 1. Chemicals.

Name	Molecular Weight (g mol <sup>-1</sup> )	Structure	Abbreviation CAS Number	Provenance Purity
1-butyl-1-methylpyrrolidinium bis(trifluoromethylsulfonyl)imide	422.41		C <sub>4</sub> C <sub>1</sub> Pyrr TFSI 223437-11-4	Iolitec >0.99
Lithium bis(trifluoromethylsulfonyl)imide	287.09		Li TFSI 90076-65-6	Acros Organics >0.99
Tetraethoxysilane	208.33		TEOS 78-10-4	Sigma Aldrich >0.98

### 2.2. Gelation procedure

The sol-gel process for synthesizing the gel samples was an adaptation of the methodology reported by [6] which was carried out under acidic conditions. A brief description of the used method to gelling samples using volumetric proportions is:

A mixture of 2:1 volumetric parts of Formic Acid (FA):TEOS were stirred during 18 min at 40 °C in a flask. After this time, 4 volumetric parts of IL + Lithium salt at desired concentration were added and stirred for 45 s more.

Finally, the pre-gel sample was deposited in a vial and stored at a room temperature for 24/48 h until fully gelation. Once gelation is complete samples were submitted to high vacuum for 24 h.

## 3. -Experimental Procedure

NMR samples were placed in 5 mm diameter tubes. A spectrometer Bruker DRX500 de 11.74 T (500 MHz resonance of <sup>1</sup>H) were used to analyse both, gel and liquid samples at 313.15 K, equipped by:

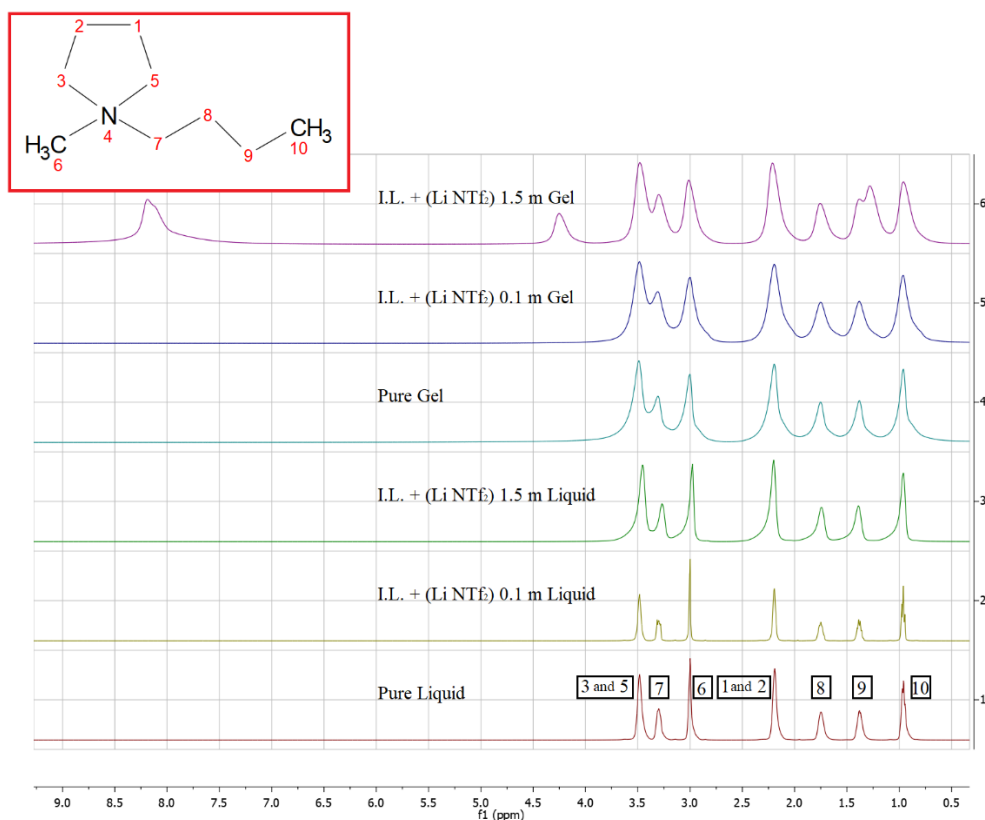
- Reverse detection probe <sup>1</sup>H / <sup>13</sup>C / <sup>15</sup>N (standard tube 5 mm) with Z gradient.
- <sup>1</sup>H / X multinuclear reverse detection probe (standard tube 5 mm) with Z gradient.
- X / <sup>1</sup>H multinuclear probe for 10 mm diameter tube.
- BACSTM 50-sample robot sample changer.
- Two waveform generators for selective pulses.

- Liquid N<sub>2</sub> cooling device for low temperature experiments.
- Top Spin control software v. 1.3 under Linux Red-Hat Enterprise 5.1 Operating System.

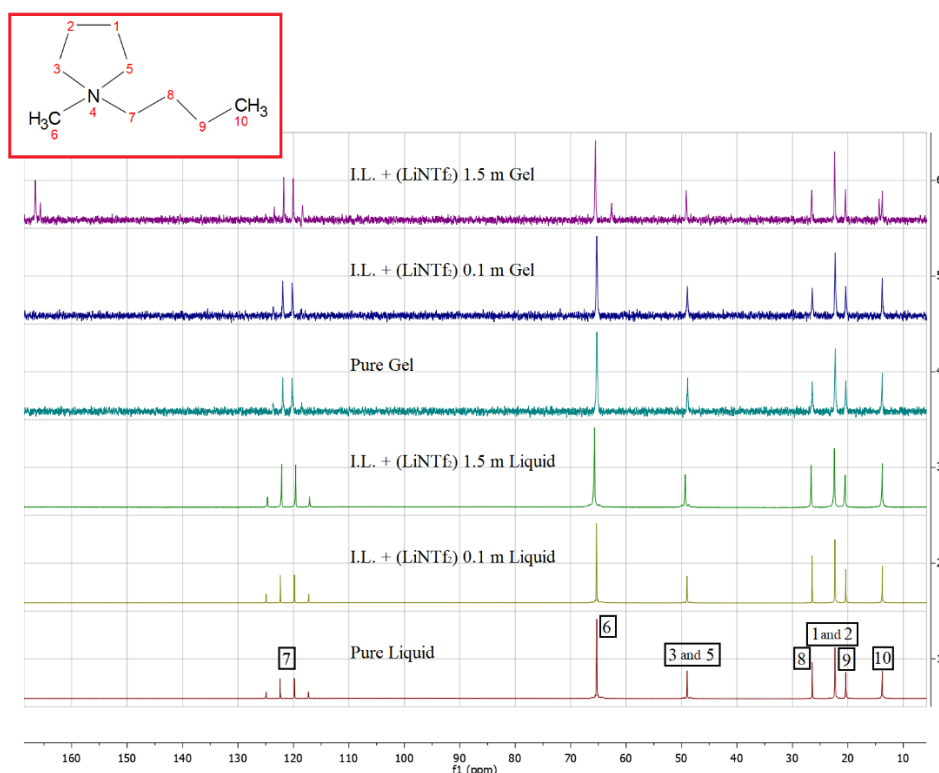
#### 4. Results

Figure 1 shows <sup>1</sup>H spectra for the C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>Pyrr TFSI + Li TFSI mixtures in liquid and gel forms. The relative position of CH<sub>3</sub> corresponding to the butyl chain of the IL has been adjusted to the value provided by Pavel et al. [7] Regarding to multiplet information of the different present peaks, the reached resolution was not enough to determine with exactitude what kind of splitting is present. Peak shift is indicated in ppm and can be found on Table 1. As it can be seen, both the salt addition and the gelation procedure keep the peak position in a similar value (shift) than the pure sample, this indicates that the structure remains constant without a significant change on the structural arrangement. The most remarkable result, in both <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C (Figure 2) spectra, is the apparition of new peaks due to the impurities during gelation procedure on the saturation concentration. These impurities were impossible to extract during the annealing, or vacuum.

As it can be seen in Table 2, nanoencapsulation of the IL translates in a widening of the FWHM (full width at half maximum) both <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C spectrum, this is due by a slight slowdown on molecular dynamics of the ionic liquid [8], but this widening is not enough to consider it as a solid, so the nanoencapsulated IL keeps its properties as liquid like, inside the organic matrix.



**Figure 1.** <sup>1</sup>H spectra of analyzed samples. Inset shows C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>Pyrr cation with the corresponding numbered atomic bonds. Y axis is measured in arbitrary units (A.U.).



**Figure 2.**  $^{13}\text{C}$  spectra of analyzed samples. Inset shows  $\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{Pyrr}$  cation with the corresponding numbered atomic bonds. Y axis is measured in arbitrary units (A.U.).

**Table 1.** Peak shift (in ppm) of liquid and gel mixtures for  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{13}\text{C}$  spectrum.

$^1\text{H}$ Spectra								
Sample	10	9	8	1, 2	6	7	3, 5	
Pure IL (liquid)	0.93	1.35	1.72	2.16	2.97	3.27	3.45	
IL+Li TFSI 0.1m (liquid)	0.93	1.34	1.72	2.16	2.97	3.27	3.45	
IL+Li TFSI 1.5m (liquid)	0.93	1.36	1.71	2.17	2.95	3.24	3.42	
Pure IL (gel)	0.93	1.35	1.72	2.16	2.97	3.28	3.46	
IL+Li TFSI 0.1m (gel)	0.93	1.35	1.72	2.16	2.97	3.28	3.45	
IL+Li TFSI 1.5m (gel)	0.93	1.36	1.73	2.18	2.98	3.27	3.45	
$^{13}\text{C}$ Spectra								
Sample	10	9	1,2	8	3, 5	7	6	$\text{CF}_3$
Pure IL (liquid)	13.40	19.99	21.92	26.03	48.59	64.90	64.95	120.73 (Q)
IL+Li TFSI 0.1m (liquid)	13.40	20.00	21.93	26.04	48.62	64.93	64.98	120.70 (Q)
IL+Li TFSI 1.5m (liquid)	13.40	20.10	22.04	26.21	48.93	65.28	65.38	120.47 (Q)
Pure IL (gel)	13.40	19.98	21.88	26.03	48.52	64.87	UNDEF	120.68 (Q)
IL+Li TFSI 0.1m (gel)	13.40	19.97	21.89	26.02	48.55	64.90	UNDEF	120.68 (Q)
IL+Li TFSI 1.5m (gel)	13.40	20.03	21.99	26.14	48.75	65.14	UNDEF	120.51 (Q)

**Table 2.** FWHM (in Hz) of liquid and gel mixtures for  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{13}\text{C}$  spectrum.

$^1\text{H}$ Spectra							
Sample	10	9	8	1, 2	6	7	3, 5
Pure IL (liquid)	19.29	25.26	28.19	20.49	12.49	25.37	22.59
IL+Li TFSI 0.1m (liquid)	13.89	21.06	23.67	15.56	6.64	19.92	16.55
IL+Li TFSI 1.5m (liquid)	24.66	32.62	35.26	24.86	15.81	31.94	32.72
Pure IL (gel)	58.75	65.47	68.43	62.56	42.89	58.75	72.13

IL+Li TFSI 0.1m (gel)	87.65	100.87	99.37	99.43	88.85	105.36		106.75
IL+Li TFSI 1.5m (gel)	80.54	84.10	79.83	104.22	72.43	108.05		100.13
<b><sup>13</sup>C Spectra</b>								
Sample	10	9	1,2	8	3,5	7	6	CF <sub>3</sub>
Pure IL (liquid)	9.2	9.4	10.3	6.8	9.7	6.7	5.7	5.8; 5.4; 5.2; 5.2
IL+Li TFSI 0.1m (liquid)	5.5	5.7	6.7	4.3	9.1	5.3	6.2	3.9; 3.6; 3.5; 3.5
IL+Li TFSI 1.5m (liquid)	13.2	16.2	18.0	10.9	17.6	8.3	21.6	13.9; 9.4; 8.7; 11.6
Pure IL (gel)	23.7	30.8	31.2	33.4	28.8	40.3		21.3; 25.8; 25.6; 29.1
IL+Li TFSI 0.1m (gel)	27.8	33.6	33.4	39.2	35.6	41.7		23.1; 25.3; 23.9; 25.5
IL+Li TFSI 1.5m (gel)	21.9	24.1	23.1	24.3	27.0	30.8		24.8; 21.3; 23.6; 21.0

## 5. Conclusions

This work reports <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectra for mixtures of an IL, C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>Pyrr TFSI and its mixture with Li TFSI and their gelation via sol-gel process. Slight differences have been found except for saturated mixture on gel sample, which shows impurities versus the rest of samples, liquid and gel.

Most remarkable result is that nanoencapsulated IL keeps its properties as a liquid like, inside the organic matrix.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization, P.V., J.S., V.V.M. and L.M.V.; methodology and data, P.V., J.J.P., L.F.-M., F.S., A.M., A.V.I., K.T.; software, P.V., L.F.M., V.V.M., A.V.I., K.T., and L.M.V. writing—original draft preparation, P.V., J.J.P., J.S., M.V., V.V.M.; O.C. and L.M.V.; funding acquisition, L.M.V., O.C., J.S. and M.V. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**Funding:** This work was supported by Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness and FEDER Program through the projects MAT2014-57943-C3-1-P, MAT2014-57943-C3-3-P, MAT2017-89239-C2-1-P as well as by Xunta de Galicia through GRC ED431C 2020/10 project and the Galician Network of Ionic Liquids (ReGaLIs) ED431D 2017/06. P. Vallet and J. J. Parajó thank funding support of FPI Program from Spanish Ministry of Science, Education and Universities and I2C postdoctoral Program of Xunta de Galicia, respectively.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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