

Rheology Modification of Viscoelastic Diverting Agents using Ionic Co-Surfactants

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Abstract

Various diversion techniques are used in injection treatments, such as matrix stimulation, to ensure total zonal coverage of the treatment fluid. Viscoelastic surfactants (VES) have been used recently as chemical diverters in stimulation of heterogeneous carbonate formations. VES is added to acid solution as an additive. As diverter stage reaches reservoir rock, acid reacts with formation and pH increases. VES apparent viscosity rapidly increases with increasing pH and finally, it forms an insitu gel and diverts acid to other untreated layers. VES based acid can be cleaned up easily and provide higher regained permeability than conventional gelled-acid systems. However, most conventional viscoelastic surfactants lose their viscosity at high temperatures. Co-surfactants can be added to VES to modify its viscosity at high temperatures. In this study, an ionic co-surfactant, named KKJ, is added to VES to improve its rheology. Various experiments are conducted to investigate the effect of KKJ on VES behavior. In addition, effect of NaCl on VES is tested at different conditions. Results of conducted experiments clearly indicate the positive effect of proposed ionic co-surfactant on VES viscosity.

Keywords: *Viscoelastic diverting agent, Carbonate acidizing, Chemical diversion, Ionic co-surfactant, Rheology modification*

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Introduction

The primary purpose of matrix acidizing is to improve flow capacity through a damaged region near the wellbore. Acid treatment in carbonate formations can remove or bypass formation damage. Diversion is a technique used in injection treatments, such as matrix stimulation, to ensure uniform distribution of the treatment fluid across the treatment interval. Injected fluids tend to follow the path of least resistance, and this may lead to inadequate treatment of less permeable areas within the stimulation interval. Therefore, an acid recipe without considering the high contrast in injectivity of the reservoir layers could not lead to acceptable results because the main acid flow would easily penetrate into the high permeable zones and make wormholes within them and other target layers with low permeability remain inert. In order to achieve the main objectives of a uniform stimulation in all layers, an efficient diverting system should be included.

Viscoelastic surfactants (VES) have been used as chemical diverting agents to gain total zonal coverage in stimulation of heterogeneous carbonate formations (Alleman et al. 2003). These surfactants are added to acid solution. VES apparent viscosity rapidly increases as acid reacts with formation, and then forms an in-situ gell. Therefore, it diverts acid to untreated zones. An advantage of VES acid systems is simplicity: they typically require a single-component surfactant additive only. These systems can be used as the main stimulation fluid or included as diverter stages with an untreated acid solution (or other retarded acid system) (Kalfayan, 2008).

VES based acid can be cleaned up easily and provide higher regained permeability than conventional gelled-acid systems (polymer-based). If reservoir fluids (oil, condensate) do not break the formed gell, mutual solvent is typically needed in preflush and overflush to break the formed gel. Most conventional VESs do not tolerate high temperatures. VES tends to degrade under long duration of heating and loses its high viscosity (Crews et al. 2008). Many chemical additives are known to improve the rheological behavior. Such materials are typically called co-surfactants, rheology modifiers, or rheology enhancers, etc.

In this study, effects of an ionic co-surfactant (KKJ) and NaCl addition are investigated on rheology of a commercial VES. Experiments are conducted at surface and high temperature conditions by spent method. Results of this study show that adding KKJ to VES solution can increase apparent viscosity of viscoelastic diverting agent at surface and high temperatures. In addition, adding NaCl to VES can reduce VES viscosity.

1. Experimental studies

Rheology modification experiments of a commercial VES are conducted in Mehran Acid Lab. Below sections present materials used in experiments and test procedures.

1.1. Materials

Hydrochloric acid is titrated with 1 N sodium hydroxide solution to obtain its concentration which is 31 wt.%. All solutions are prepared using distilled water (DW) at room temperature. In addition, a commercial VES, and mutual solvent are used in experiments. CaCl_2 is used to prepare spent solutions. An ionic co-surfactant named KKJ is added to enhance rheology behavior of VES.

1.2. Tests procedures

Spent method is used to investigate rheology of various solutions. In this method acid reaction products are present in solution rather than live acid. Water, CaCl_2 , and carbon dioxide are the reaction products of HCl with calcite. 200cc of solutions with different dosages of co-surfactant (KKJ) and NaCl are prepared. All solutions are prepared to contain 7vol% VES and 44 gr. of CaCl_2 . Prepared solution are put in oil bath for 45 minutes, and then their viscosity were measured at surface conditions and 70-75°C. As an example, Table 1 shows the recipe of spent VES solution with 10 lb KKJ. In spent method calculations, it is supposed that live solutions contain 15wt % HCl.

Table 1: Recipe of spent VES solution with 10 lb KKJ-01

Name	/1000cc	/200 cc	LAB unit
Distill Water	710	142	cc
Co-surfactant	1.2	0.24	gr
CaCl_2	220	44	gr
VES	70	14	cc

2. Results and discussions

Experimental studies are conducted according to previously mentioned test procedures. Results of these tests are observed visually and with a viscometer. Viscosity of VES are measured under various shear rates. Table 2 and Table 3 show the measured viscosity for various solutions at surface and high temperature, respectively. Below sections demonstrate the effect of NaCl, KKJ, and temperature on rheology of viscoelastic diverting agent. Figure 1 and Figure 2 show the results of experiments at surface and high temperatures, respectively.

Table 2: Viscosity of various fluids vs. shear rate at surface condition

Shear rate (s^{-1})	Viscosity of solution at surface condition (cp)							
	VES	VES+5 lb NaCl	VES+10 lb NaCl	VES+20 lb NaCl	VES+5 lb KKJ	VES+10 lb KKJ	VES+15 lb KKJ	VES+10 lb KKJ +15 lb NaCl
10.5	540	407	290	443	850	1200	2280	2300
21	320	234	180	290	600	1100	1420	1400
31.5	224	175	135	200	450	1000	1120	1100
42	180	130	108	170	350	900	990	870
52.5	165	110	92	140	300	800	820	770

Table 3: Viscosity of various fluids vs. shear rate at 75°C

Shear rate (s^{-1})	Viscosity of solution at 75°C (cp)							
	VES	VES+5 lb NaCl	VES+10 lb NaCl	VES+20 lb NaCl	VES+5 lb KKJ	VES+10 lb KKJ	VES+15 lb KKJ	VES+10 lb KKJ +15 lb NaCl
10.5	1300	1056	670	570	1800	2120	2550	2600
21	820	630	380	360	1100	1200	1250	1300
31.5	520	440	280	270	730	860	1020	1070
42	370	320	220	220	580	670	810	820
52.5	300	260	204	200	500	550	700	715

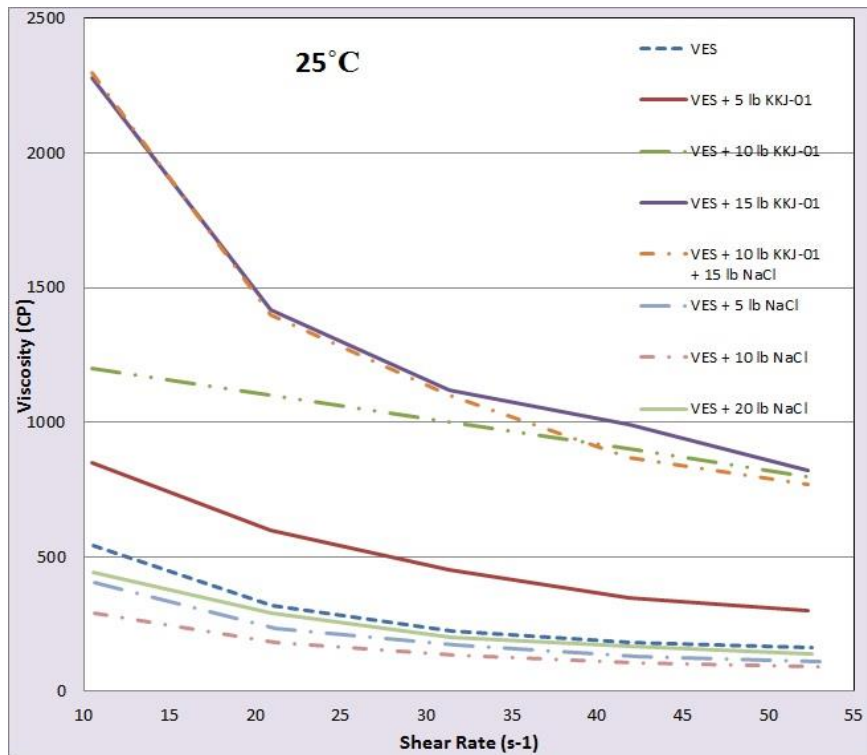


Figure 1: Viscosity of different solutions vs. shear rate at surface condition

According to Figure 1 and Figure 2, VES viscosity decreases with increasing shear rate.

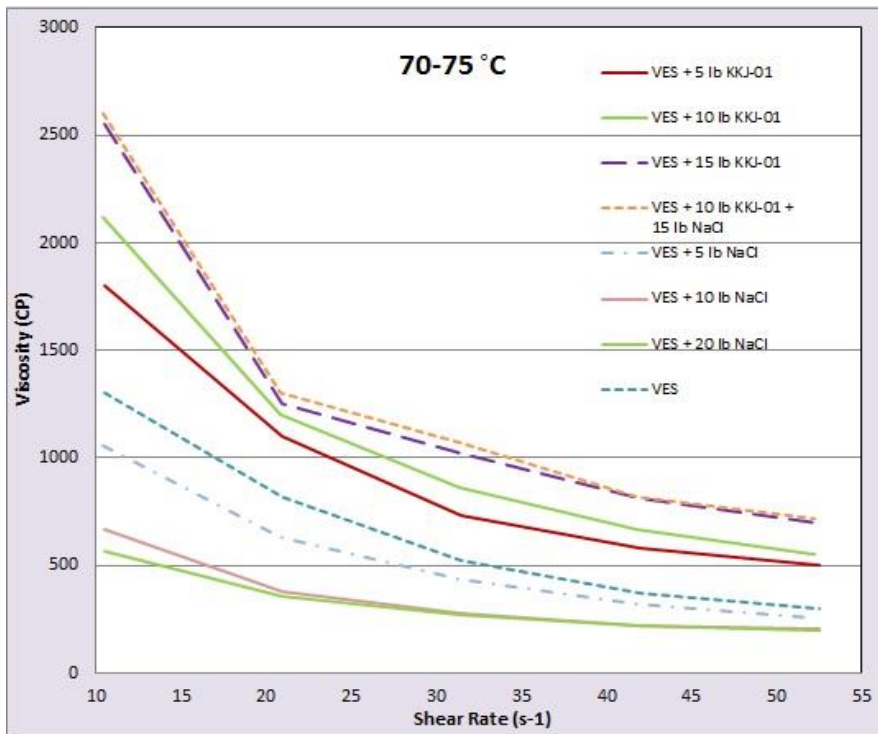


Figure 2: Viscosity of different solutions vs. shear rate at 70-75°C

2.1. Effect of NaCl addition to VES

NaCl is added to VES fluid to investigate the rheology behavior of prepared solution. NaCl dosage vary from 5 to 20 lb(in 1000 gallons) in experiments. Figure 3 shows the effect of NaCl and KKJ concentration on viscosity of VES fluid at low shear rates.

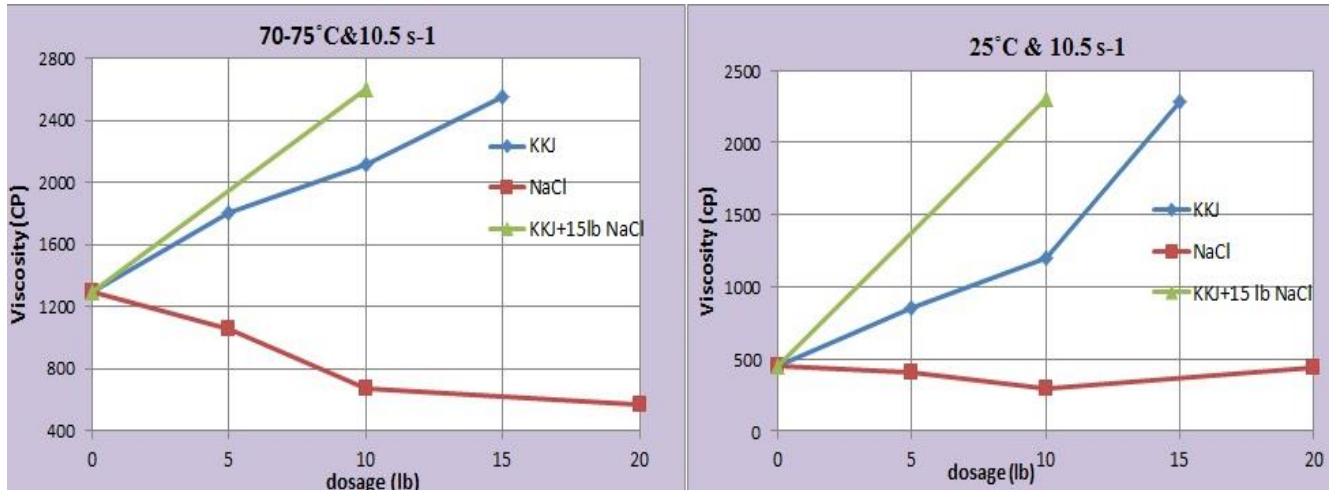


Figure 3: effect of concentration change on VES viscosity (low shear rates)

Figure 4 also shows the effect of NaCl and KKJ concentration on viscosity of VES fluid at High shear rates.

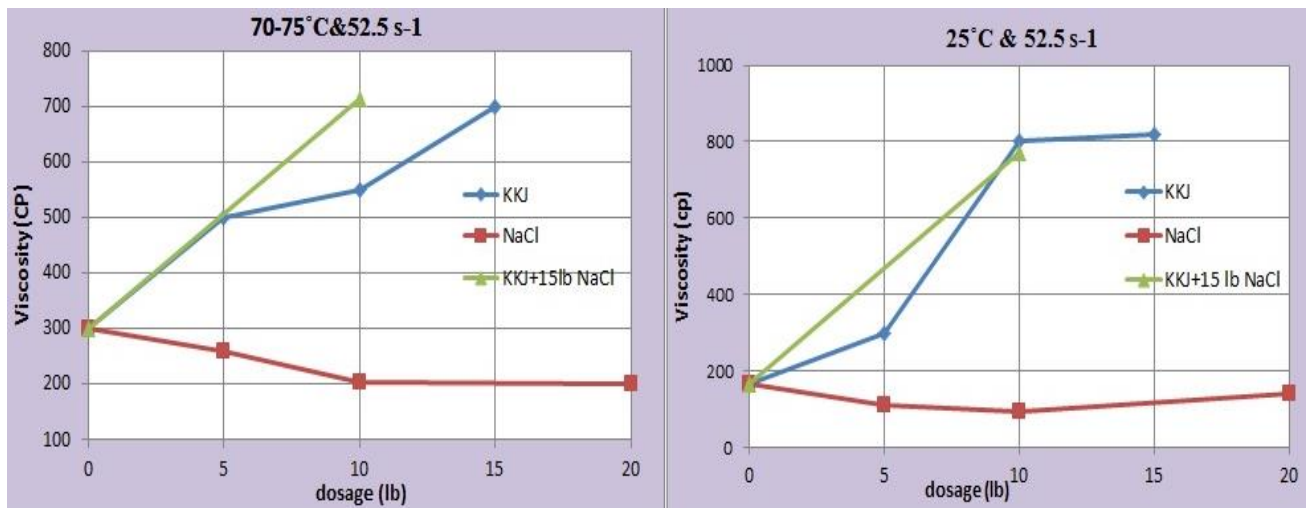


Figure 4: effect of concentration change on VES viscosity (high shear rates)

As per Figure 3 and Figure 4, at surface conditions increasing in NaCl dosage will lead to decrease in fluid viscosity. The rate of viscosity decrease is small in high concentrations greater than 10 lb. At high temperatures (70-75°C), addition of NaCl will decrease fluid viscosity gradually, but at high dosages of NaCl it increases very slowly. To sum it up, NaCl addition will deteriorate VES rheology behavior in some extent.

2.2. Effect of KKJ addition to VES

An ionic surfactant, KKJ, is added to VES to improve its viscosity. KKJ dosage varies from 5 to 15 lb (in 1000 gallons). According to Figure 3 and Figure 4, addition of KKJ to VES increases the viscosity of viscoelastic diverting agent dramatically. This increase is observed in both surface and high temperatures. As per Table 2 and Table 3, apparent viscosity of VES at low shear rate (10.5 s^{-1}) has increased 4.22 and 1.96 times by adding 15 lb KKJ at 25°C and 75°C , respectively. Addition of 15 lb KKJ at 25°C and 75°C also has increased VES apparent viscosity at high shear rate (52.5 s^{-1}) 4.9 and 2.3 times, respectively. Additionally, an experiment is conducted to find out the effect of KKJ in presence of NaCl. In order to achieve this purpose, a mixture of 10 lb KKJ and 15 lb NaCl is prepared. Viscosity of this solution is measured at surface and high temperature. The green lines in Figures 3 and 4 show the viscosity of this solution. It is observed that addition of NaCl to KKJ solution can increase the effect of co-surfactant, further studies are needed to fully understand the interaction between NaCl and KKJ in VES solution.

2.3. Effect of temperature

Figure 5 shows the effect of temperature increase in fluid viscosity. Results of this study show that viscosity of prepared solutions increases with increasing temperature from surface to 75°C (about 170°F). The result obtained is in agreement with Wang et al., (2012) work. It is anticipated that by increasing the temperature above 170°F , VES viscosity will decrease. As per this figure VES+15lb KKJ and VES+10lb KKJ+15NaCl have the highest viscosity at different conditions.

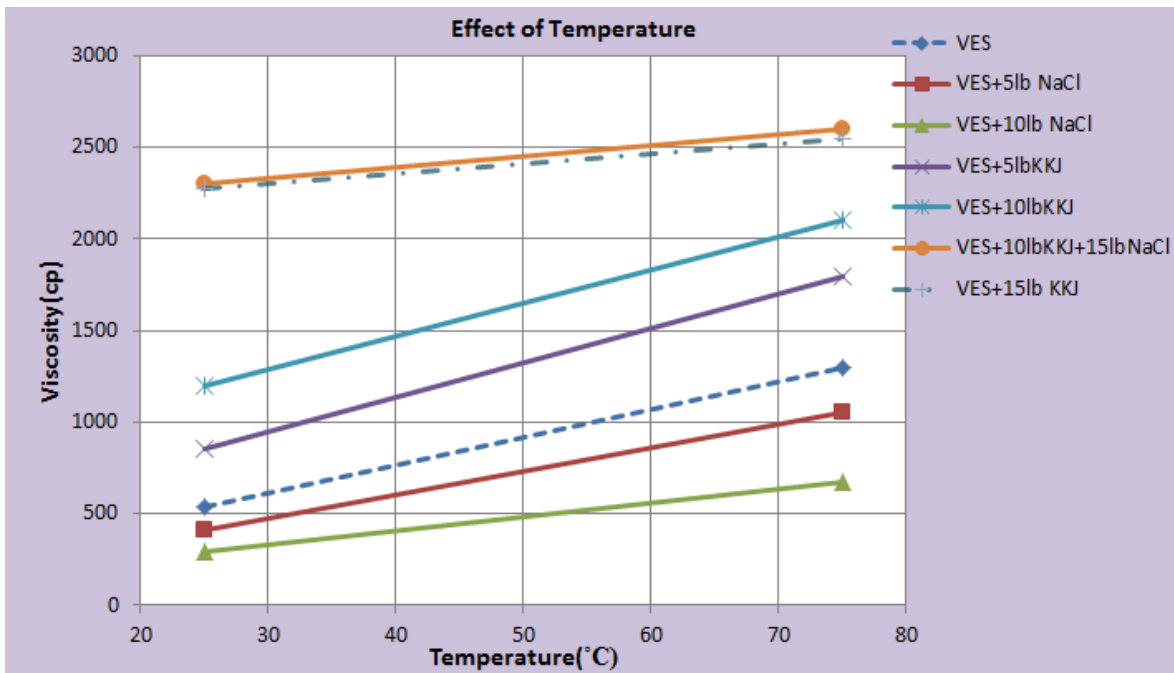


Figure 5: effect of temperature on fluid viscosity (at 10.5 s^{-1} shear rate)

3. conclusions

In this study, an ionic co-surfactant (KKJ) is added to viscoelastic diverting agent to modify its rheology. In addition, effects of NaCl addition is investigated on viscosity of VES solution. Following conclusions can be drawn from the results of conducted experiments:

- ✓ KKJ addition increases VES solution viscosity at both surface and high temperature (75°C) conditions. VES viscosity increases with increasing KKJ concentration.
- ✓ NaCl addition decreases VES solution viscosity at both surface and high temperature (75°C) conditions.
- ✓ Addition of both NaCl and KKJ to VES solution can improve rheological behavior of solution more than KKJ itself.
- ✓ Increasing temperature from surface to (75°C), increased all solutions' viscosity. This behavior is in agreement with the literature.

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4. References

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