

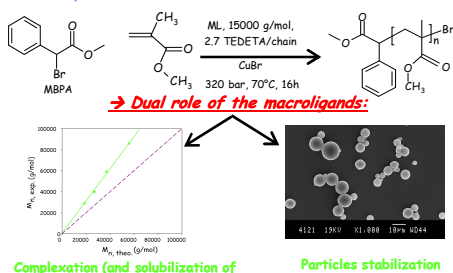


Preparation of living polymer microspheres by dispersion Atom Transfer Radical Polymerization in scCO₂ using fluorinated macroligands

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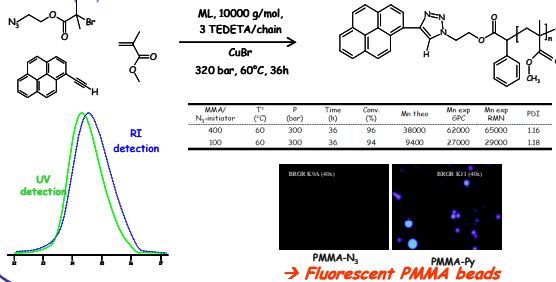
1. Introduction: Atom Transfer Radical Polymerization (ATRP) has emerged as one of the most robust tool for the synthesis of polymers with well defined characteristics. ATRP mechanism is based on the reversible transfer of a radically transferable atom, typically a halogen atom, from a monomeric or polymeric alkyl (pseudo)halide to a transition metal complex in a lower oxidation state with formation of an organic radical, generated through the reversible redox process, and a transition metal complex in a higher oxidation state. The chain control that makes molecular weight predictable and polydispersity possibly low, relies on an equilibrium between active and dormant species as result of the halogen transfer, lowering the instantaneous radical concentration during the polymerization and so limiting the termination reactions by disproportionation or recombination. In this contribution, we report the use of new perfluorinated aminomacroligands for the implementation of ATRP in scCO₂.

2. Dispersion ATRP of MMA: Using the MBPA/Cu(I)Br/macroligand catalytic system, ATRP of MMA was controlled at 300 bar and 70°C as evidenced by the linear increase of Mn exp with the theoretical values and the narrow polydispersity (Mw/Mn ~ 1.2). Moreover, at the end of the polymerization, PMMA was collected as microspheres.

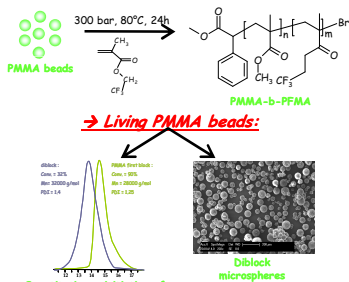


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5. Polymer functionalization by combination of Huisgen's cycloaddition and dispersion ATRP: Because both ATRP and copper catalyzed cycloaddition of Huisgen, that consists of the reaction between alkyne and azide, relies on the use of a Cu(I) catalyst, polymers end-functionalization by combining click reaction and dispersion ATRP was investigated in a one-pot process. Dispersion ATRP of MMA was controlled at 60°C and 300 bar leading to functional polymer beads.

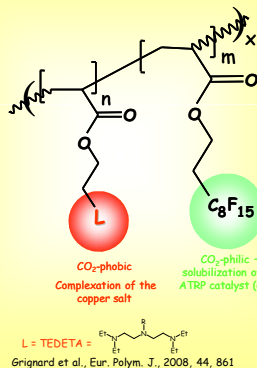


3. Livingness of the PMMA beads: The livingness of the ATRP was demonstrated by the synthesis of diblock copolymer in a one-pot two-step process using PMMA beads as macroinitiator.



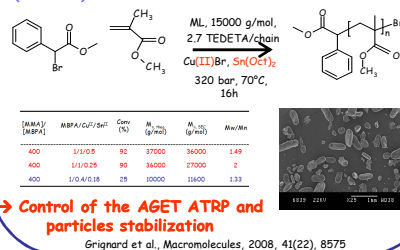
Grignard et al., Macromolecules, 2008, 41(22), 8575

New perfluorinated amino-macroligands



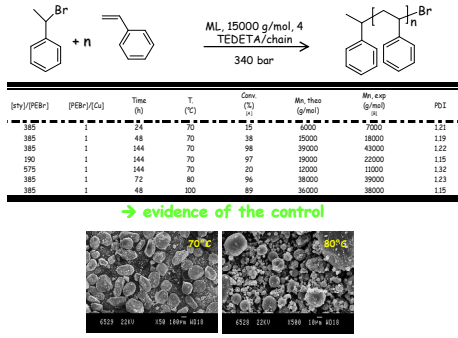
Grignard et al., Eur. Polym. J., 2008, 44, 861

6. AGET ATRP. AGET ATRP was implemented in scCO₂ using Tin(II) 2-ethylhexanoate (Sn(EH)₂) in order to reduce Cu(II) and generate "in situ" the catalyst onto its active form (Cu(I)). This concept was introduced with the hope to improve the poor catalytic activity of the recycled catalyst. Indeed, more than 98% of the catalyst can be removed by SFE with 400 ml of CO₂ at 50°C and 300 bar (5ml/min).



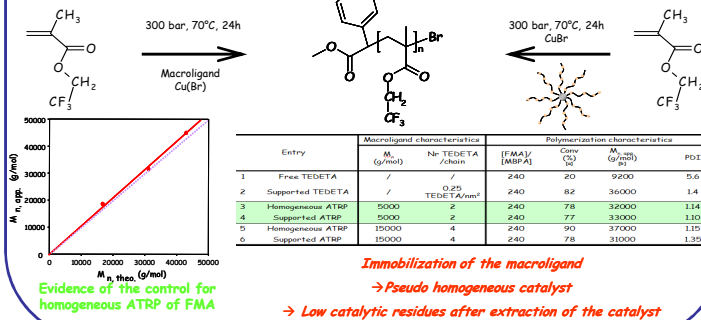
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4. Dispersion ATRP of styrene: Using the PEBr/Cu(I)Br/macroligand catalytic system, ATRP of styrene was controlled at 300 bar and 70°C or 100°C as evidenced by the good agreement between the experimental and theoretical Mn values and the narrow polydispersity. After depressurisation of the cell, PS was collected as a powder.



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7. Homogeneous and supported ATRP of fluorinated methacrylate: The MBPA/Cu(I)Br/macroligand catalytic system was successfully used for preparing perfluorinated methacrylate by homogeneous ATRP in scCO₂. Because both the polymer and the catalyst exhibit high solubility in this medium, the concept of supported ATRP was introduced in order to produce polymers with low catalytic residues. Depending on the molecular weight and TEDETA composition of the macroligand that were immobilized onto Cab-O-Sil EH5, results obtained by homogeneous supported ATRP are identical to those obtained by homogeneous ATRP without need of Cu(II) as deactivator.



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8. Conclusions: We reported the use of new perfluorinated macroligands for controlling the ATRP of vinyl monomers in scCO₂. When the polymerization of fluorinated methacrylate is concerned, polymers with well defined molecular weight and narrow polydispersity were produced by homogeneous or supported ATRP (without need of Cu(II)). In case of heterogeneous ATRP of styrene or MMA in scCO₂, we showed a dual role of these new ligands, i.e. the catalyst complexation and the stabilization of polymers growing chains leading to the formation of microspheres in the case of PMMA. Livingness of the PMMA beads was demonstrated by the synthesis of diblock copolymer that were collected as microspheres. Finally, we introduced the concept of dispersion AGET ATRP in order to improve the catalytic activity of the recycled catalyst and end-functionalized PMMA were prepared by combining Huisgen's cycloaddition and dispersion ATRP in a one-pot process.

Acknowledgments: The authors are indebted to the "Belgian Science Policy" for general support to CERM in the frame of the "Interuniversity Attraction Poles Programme (IAP 6/27) - Functional Supramolecular Systems" and to the "Région Wallonne" for their financial support in the frame of the "Surfaces auto-nettoyantes et anticorrosion" (CORONET) project. B.G. thanks the "Fonds pour la Formation à la Recherche dans l'Industrie et l'Agriculture" (FRIA) for a fellowship. C.D. is a "Maître de Recherche" by the "National Fund for Scientific Research" (FNRS).

