

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

PREPARATION OF NOVEL HOMO- AND COPOLYMERS USING ATOM
TRANSFER RADICAL POLYMERIZATION

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTIONField of the Invention:

This invention relates to a novel method for preparing new homo- and co-polymers by Atom Transfer Radical Polymerization and novel compositions of homo- and co-polymers thereof exhibiting narrow polydispersity index.

Description of the Related Art:

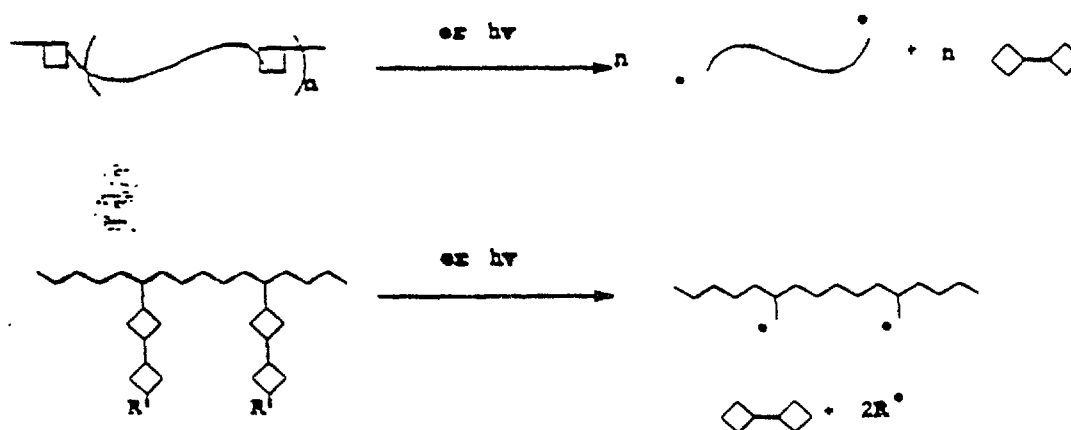
The formation of block or graft copolymers of non-vinyl polymers with vinyl monomers by a radical mechanism, has been reported to have been achieved by two methods. One is the use of an end functional polymer which can react with an end or pendent groups of the second polymer; the second method is to use a starting step-grown polymer as a macroinitiator and grow the vinyl polymer from it, or the use of a monofunctional vinyl polymer in a step growth polymerization with AA and BB monomers.

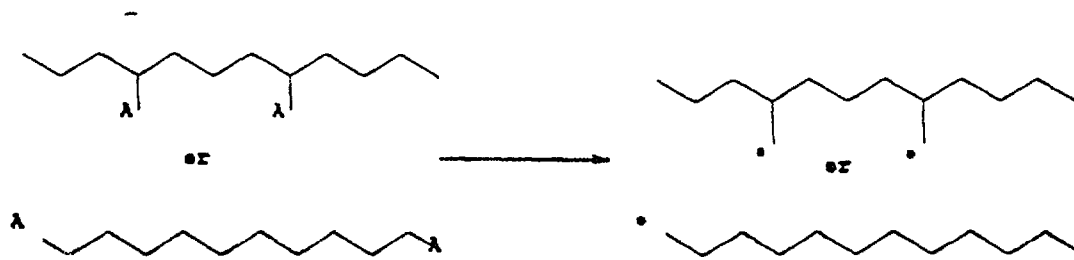
However, both of the above methods have certain limitations. The first method requires that well defined vinyl polymers with known functionalities be made. The other method requires that functional groups must be present at the ends of the polymer (block) or dispersed along the polymer backbone (graft) which can react with those on the vinyl polymer. Also, if the vinyl polymer is not compatible

with the growing polycondensation polymer the polymerization will result in incomplete formation of a block or graft copolymer and a mixture of homopolymers. In the second method, by using conventional radical polymerization, the generation of a radical at either a pendent group or at a chain end results not only in the synthesis of homopolymer, due to transfer to monomer or polymer, but also may lead to the formation of crosslinked gels.

Thus, a polymerization can be initiated by decomposition of a functional group (azo, peroxy, etc.) either in the macroinitiator's backbone or along a pendent side group, Scheme 1. Further, an irreversible activation of a functional group can take place at the polymer chain ends or attached to a pendent side group, Scheme 2.

Scheme 1



Scheme 2

The decomposition of functional groups in a macroinitiator backbone is accomplished by copolymerization of a functional monomer during the synthesis of the macroinitiator. The functional monomer contains a functional group which can decompose. These radicals can then initiate the polymerization of a vinyl monomer to form a block copolymer. If more than one functional group is present in the macroinitiator, then the chain can be broken into smaller chains which have radicals at both ends.

In the literature, there are some examples of the incorporation of azo groups in the backbone of polymer chains. Akar et al (Polym. Bull. 1986, 15, 293) and Hizal et al (Polymer, 1989, 30, 722) use a difunctional cationic initiator with a central azo group. After the synthesis of a polymer by cationic polymerization, the azo group can be decomposed to form polymer chains with a radical at one end capable of initiating radical polymerization. This results in the formation of AB block copolymers.

Udea et al (Kobunshi Ronbunshu, 1990, 47, 321)

discusses the use of azodiols, as comonomers, in condensation polymerizations allowing for the introduction of more than one azo group per polymer chain. Decomposition of this macroinitiator in the presence of vinyl monomer results in the formation of AB block copolymers.

Azodiamines have reportedly been used (Vaslov et al, Makromol. Chemie 1982, 183,2635) as a comonomer in the ring-opening polymerization of N-carboxy anhydrides in the synthesis of polypeptides. Again, these polymers are macroinitiators which can form ABA triblocks by decomposition, followed by initiation of a radical polymerization.

ABA block copolymers have also been synthesized by macroinitiators which have azo groups at the ends of the polymer chain. These macroinitiators were synthesized by the reaction of an azo compound, which had an acid chloride functional group, with the diol end groups of poly(ethylene oxide) (PEO) or poly(dimethylsiloxane) (PDMS) (Harabaglu, Makromol. Chem. Rapid Commun. 1990, 11,433). Decomposition of the azo end groups resulted in either a PEO or PDMS macro radical. When this was done in the presence of a vinyl monomer, ABA polymers were synthesized. However, a radical complementary to the macroradical was also generated resulting in the formation of homopolymer.

Macroinitiators with side chain azo groups (Kerber et al., Makromol. Chem. 1979, 180,609; Nuyken et al., Polym.,

Bull 1989, 21,23) or peroxyester (Neckers, J. Radiat. Curing 1983, 10,19; Gupta, J. Polym. Sci., Polym. Chem. Ed. 1982, 20, 147) groups were used in the synthesis of graft copolymers. These macroinitiators were synthesized by the use of comonomers in step-growth polymers. These systems also formed homopolymer upon decomposition of the peroxyester.

Another category of macroinitiators are those which possess a functional group that can be activated to form a radical. One such example is reported by Bamford (Bamford, New Trends in the Photochemistry of Polymers; Elsevier Applied Science Publishers, London, 1985) when trichloro polymer end groups were irradiated in the presence of manganese pentacarbonyl. In the presence of a monomer, block copolymers were formed.

Polystyrene with dimethylamino end groups, when irradiated in the presence of 9-fluorenone and a monomer, gave block copolymers (Yagci, Polymer Commun; 1990, 31,7). This was done by formation of a radical through the reaction of the dimethyl amine and the triplet state of the aromatic ketone. By analogy, graft copolymers were synthesized by using poly(styrene-co-p-N,N'-dimethylamino styrene) as the macroinitiator (Kinstle et al., J. Radiat. Curing 1975, 2,7).

Although these methods have produced block and graft copolymers, the materials that have been prepared are not

well defined. In most cases, homopolymers of the vinyl monomers are formed due to transfer to monomer during the radical polymerization or because of a second radical formed during the decomposition of the azo or peroxy group, Scheme 1. In the synthesis of graft copolymers, crosslinked gels can be formed if termination of the growing vinyl polymer is by combination. The molecular weights of the grafts or blocks that are synthesized by the radical polymerizations are not well defined. Also, not all of the azo (or peroxy) groups may decompose and/or initiate polymerization during the synthesis of a block or graft copolymer. Because of incomplete initiation, the number of grafts, or length of blocks cannot be accurately predicted.

Thus, there is a need for a method to prepare block and graft copolymers that are well defined and free of homopolymer.

Further, Flory (Flory, P.J. J. Am. Chem. Soc., 1952, 74,2718) first theorized that the copolymerization of a difunctional monomer with AB₂ (see definition below) monomers would lead to branched structures. In his proposal, the density of branching could be controlled by varying the relative concentration of AB₂ monomer to difunctional monomer. This proposal was first put to use in the step-growth synthesis of polyphenylenes by Kim and Webster.

(Webster, O.W.; Kim, Y.H. J. Am. Chem. Soc., 1990 112,4592; Webster, O.W., Kim, Y.H., Macromolecules 1992, 25,5561).

Subsequently, it was extended to other step-growth polymerizations such as aromatic (Frechet, J.M.J.; Hawker, C.J.; Lee, R. J. Am. Chem. Soc. 1991, 113,4583.) and aliphatic (Hult, A.; Malmstrom, E.; Johansson, M. J. Polym. Sci. Polym. Chem. Ed. 1993, 31,619) esters, siloxanes (Mathias, L.J.; Carothers, T.W. J. Am. Chem. Soc. 1991, 113,4043) and amines (Suzuki, M.; Li, A.; Saegusa, T. Macromolecules 1992, 25,7071). Later, it was extended to cationic chain growth polymerizations by Frechet et al., (Frechet, J.M. J.; Henmi, M.; Gitsov, L.; Aoshima, S.; Leduc, M.; Grubbs, R.B. Science 1995, 269, 1080). Shortly afterwards, it was adapted to radical polymerizations by Hawker et al. (Hawker, C.J.; Frechet, J.M.J.; Grubbs, R.B.,; Dao, J., J. Am. Chem. Soc. 1995, 117, 10763) and by Gaynor et al (Gaynor, S.G.; Edelman, S.Z.; Matyjaszewski, K., ACS PMSE Preprints 1996, 74; Gaynor, S.G.; Edelman, S.Z.; Matyjaszewski, K. Macromolecules, 1996, 29,1079).

Further, polymers containing polar groups, such as polyacrylonitrile (PAN) are prepared in general by a free radical polymerization method. W. Berger et al. (Makromol. Chem., Macromol. Symp., 1986, 3, 301), describes such a free radical polymerization method for PAN. However, the free radical polymerization of acrylonitrile (AN) does not produce a polymer with well defined structure and narrow polydispersity index. Further, such free radical polymerization method is not suitable for the preparation of

block copolymers.

Polyacrylonitrile has also been prepared by a polymerization method using an anionic initiator. Such a method is described by Sogah et al (Macromolecules, 1987, 20, 1473); in general, anionic polymerization provides for control of molecular weight distribution by means of the "living" nature of its propagating chain with monomers such as styrene, diene and most non-polar acrylic monomers. However, in the polymerization of monomers with polar groups, such as acrylonitrile, the carbanion initiator attacks the polar group thus losing part of the "living" nature of the polymerization method. These defects have been partly overcome by carrying out the polymerization at very low temperature; this condition, however, renders the process impractical for commercial production of polymers containing polar groups, such as PAN.

Further, Higashimura et al., (Macromolecules, 1993, 26, 744) has described "living" cationic polymerization of styrene with an initiating system based on 1-phenylethyl chloride (1-PhEtCl) and tin tetrachloride (SnCl_4) in the presence of tetra-n-butyl ammonium chloride ($\text{n-Bu}_4\text{NCl}$) in methylene chloride as solvent. In addition, polymers with a variety of terminal functionalities can be obtained by "living" cationic polymerization and some of the end functions may be useful for initiating another polymerization to give block copolymers. Thus, well

defined block copolymers by the transformation of initiating sites from "living" cationic to anionic polymerization have been described by Gadkari et al. (J. Appl. Polym. Sci., Appl. Polym. Symp., 1989, 44, 19), Liu et al. (J. Polym. Sci., A, Polym. Chem. 1993, 31, 1709); Nemes et al. (J. Macromol. Sci., 1991, A28, 311); Kennedy et al. (Macromolecules, 1991, 24, 6567); Kitayama et al. (Polym. Bull. (Berlin) 1991, 26, 513); Ruth et al. (Polym. Prepr. 1993, 34, 479); Nomura et al. (Macromolecules 1994, 27, 4853) and Nomura et al. (Macromolecules 1995, 28, 86). The disadvantage of these techniques is that they include numerous steps, and the number of monomers that can be used with any of the above-described methods is limited to those which can be polymerized by cationic or anionic methods. However, none of the prior art processes results in a polymer with as narrow polydispersity index as the present invention.

It is well known to those skilled in the art of polymers that when the polydispersity index of a polymer is wide the polymer contains polymeric segments with substantial smaller and larger molecular weight segments than the number average molecular weight of the polymer. On the one hand, low molecular weight segments have an adverse effect on physical properties of the polymer such as tensile strength, elongation and flexural modulus; while segments of very large molecular weight result in high melt

viscosity of the polymer and, thus, in inferior processability of the polymer. Thus, there is a need for a polymer with well defined and narrow polydispersity index.

Atom Transfer Radical Polymerization (ATRP) has been described by Wang et al (in J. Am. Chem. Soc., 1995, 36, 2973; and in Macromolecules, 1995, 28, 7572). However, polar monomers, such as acrylonitrile, have not been successfully polymerized by ATRP as of now.

Thus, there is a need for a method to prepare block or graft copolymers with well defined lengths and or number of blocks or grafts that can be tailor made and that a precise number of grafts can be grown from the polymer backbone.

There is also a need for a controlled polymerization of polar monomers, such as acrylonitrile (AN) that can produce a polymer with a narrow polydispersity index and under industrially acceptable conditions.

There is also a need for polymeric materials of controlled architecture and narrow polydispersity index that may optionally contain polar groups that enhance solvent resistance properties. There is, for instance, a need for solvent resistant thermoplastic acrylate elastomers. Thermoplastic elastomers in the context of the present invention are block copolymers consisting of at least two distinct polymeric segments (blocks), which are thermodynamically incompatible and have different glass transition temperatures (T_g).

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Accordingly, Applicants have discovered a novel method which produces a homo- or co-polymer, which may be a block or a graft copolymer, and which may optionally contain at least one polar functional group; the copolymer further exhibits a narrow polydispersity index (M_w/M_n ; where M_w is the weight average molecular weight and M_n is the number average molecular weight); furthermore, this method can be carried out under conditions suitable for commercial utilization. Further, Applicants have discovered that when certain macroinitiators are synthesized and used in ATRP, well defined block and graft copolymers can be obtained.

Thus, it is an other object of the present invention to provide a method to synthesize block copolymers by transformation of "living" carbocation into "living" radical polymerization.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a novel method for the synthesis of a macroinitiator for "living" radical polymerization and for the synthesis of a well defined block or graft copolymer where the macroinitiator constitutes at least one segment of the block copolymer.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a method to prepare a polymer, optionally containing at least one polar group, such as nitrile, which exhibits a narrow polydispersity index.

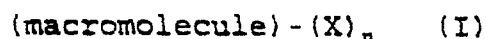
It is an other object of the present invention to provide a polymer composition which optionally contains at least one polar group, and where the polymer exhibits a narrow polydispersity index.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a method for the preparation of a block copolymer, optionally comprising at least one polymer block segment containing at least one polar group, and where the block copolymer exhibits a narrow polydispersity index.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a method to synthesize a branched or hyperbranched macromolecule by atom or group transfer radical polymerization.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide for a block or graft copolymer of polysulfone, polyester, or functionalized polyolefins, such as the ones produced by Shell under the Kraton name.

Accordingly, there is provided a method for atom (or group) transfer radical polymerization, encompassing the polymerization of a vinyl monomer in the presence of an initiating system, which includes: an initiator having a radically transferrable atom or group, a transition metal compound, and a ligand; the polymerization forms a macroinitiator of formula (I):



wherein each X is a halogen atom and n is an integer of 1

to 100; this macromonomer is then used in the presence of a vinyl monomer, a transition metal compound, and a ligand to form a block or graft copolymer, exhibiting a well defined molecular architecture.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

Figure 1 shows kinetic and molecular weight behavior plots for the polymerization of 2-ethylhexylacrylate by atom transfer radical polymerization.

Figure 2 shows kinetic plots and molecular weight behavior for the polymerization of N-butylacrylate by atom transfer radical polymerization.

Figure 3 shows kinetic and molecular weight behavior plots for the polymerization of acrylonitrile by atom transfer radical polymerization.

Figure 4 shows number average molecular weight (M_n), polydispersity index (M_w/M_n) versus conversion plots for the block copolymerization of acrylonitrile using Br-[PEHA]-Br and Br-[PBA]-Br as the initiator in diphenylether (DPE).

Figure 5 shows GPC chromatograms for PSt-Cl and PSt-b-PSt-Cl polymers shown in Table 5 (exp. 1-2).

Figure 6 shows GPC chromatograms for PSt-Cl and PSt-b-PMA-Cl polymers shown in Table 5 (exp. 1 and 3).

Figure 7 shows GPC chromatograms for PSt-Cl and PSt-b-PMMA-Cl polymers shown in Table 5 (exp. 1 and 4).

Figure 8 shows an ^1H -NMR spectrum (CDCl_3) of PSt-b-PMA-

Cl copolymers [$M_n(\text{GPC})=6200$, $M_w/M_n=1.20$, $M_n(\text{NMR})=6020$].

Figure 9 shows an ^1H -NMR spectrum (CDCl_3) of PSt-b-PMMA-Cl copolymers [$M_n(\text{GPC})=11090$, $M_w/M_n=1.57$, $M_n(\text{NMR})=10300$].

Figure 10 shows GPC chromatograms for PSt-Cl and PSt-b-PMA-Cl polymers obtained by one pot polymerization. Experimental conditions identical to those in Table 5 (exp. 1 and 3).

Figure 11 shows an ^1H -NMR spectrum of difunctional polymethylsiloxane macroinitiator.

Figure 12 shows GPC traces of a difunctional polysiloxane macromonomer and the resulting copolymer with styrene.

Figure 13 shows the M_n and polydispersity dependence on conversion for ATRP of styrene with difunctional polysiloxane macromonomer.

Figure 14 shows the ^1H -NMR spectrum of polystyrene-b-polydimethylsiloxane-b-polystyrene block copolymer prepared by ATRP.

Figure 15 shows GPC traces of polysulfone and poly(styrene-b-sulfone-b-styrene).

Figure 16 shows GPC traces of polysulfone and poly(butyl acrylate-b-sulfone-b-butyl acrylate).

Figure 17 shows a ^1H -NMR spectrum of poly(styrene-b-sulfone-b-styrene).

Figure 18 shows a ^1H -NMR spectrum of polysulfone.

Figure 19 shows a ^1H -NMR spectrum of poly(butyl acrylate-b-sulfone-b-butyl acrylate).

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The present invention provides for an atom (or group) transfer radical polymerization to form a homopolymer or a copolymer of a monomer, optionally containing at least one polar group, polymer (A). The polymerization is accomplished in accordance with the present invention in the presence of an initiating system comprising components (i), (ii) and (iii), as described below, to form a polymer..

In addition, the present invention provides for the preparation of a macroinitiator, which can be used in place of component (i) of the initiating system, thus providing for the formation of a block or graft copolymer consisting of at least one block of the macroinitiating moiety and at least one block of polymer (A).

In addition, the present invention provides a method to synthesize novel block or graft copolymers by transformation of a controlled carbocationic polymerization into controlled radical polymerization.

Further, the present invention provides a method to synthesize branched and hyperbranched macromolecules by atom transfer radical polymerization.

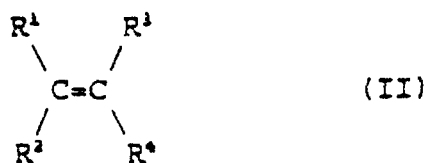
Further, the present invention provides for the synthesis of novel attachable macroinitiators.

In the context of the present application, the term "macromolecule" refers to a molecule containing a large number of monomeric units and having a number average molecular weight (M_n) of at least 500. Further, the term "macroinitiator" refers to a macromolecule having at least one initiating site. The term "macromonomer" refers to a macromolecule having at least one polymerizable site. In addition, the term "living" initiating moiety (anionic, cationic or radical) refers to an initiating moiety that substantially does not undergo termination reaction and thus, polymerization continues until substantially all the monomer is exhausted.

Polymer (A) is a homopolymer, or a block or graft copolymer of copolymerizable monomers, optionally at least one of which contains at least one polar group.

(I) Monomers

In the present invention any radically polymerizable alkene containing a polar group can serve as a monomer for polymerization. The preferred monomers include those of the formula (II):



wherein R^1 and R^2 are independently selected from the group consisting of H, halogen, CF_3 , straight or branched alkyl of

1 to 20 carbon atoms (preferably from 1 to 6 carbon atoms, more preferably from 1 to 4 carbon atoms), aryl, α,β -unsaturated straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl of 2 to 10 carbon atoms (preferably from 2 to 6 carbon atoms, more preferably from 2 to 4 carbon atoms), α,β -unsaturated straight or branched alkenyl of 2 to 6 carbon atoms (preferably vinyl) substituted (preferably at the α -position) with a halogen (preferably chlorine), C_1 - C_6 cycloalkyl, heterocyclyl, $C(=Y)R^5$, $C(=Y)NR^6R^7$ and $YC(=Y)R^8$, where Y may be NR^8 or O (preferably O), R^5 is alkyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, alkoxy of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, aryloxy or heterocyclyloxy, R^6 and R^7 are independently H or alkyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, or R^6 and R^7 may be joined together to form an alkylene group of from 2 to 5 carbon atoms, thus forming a 3- to 6-membered ring, and R^8 is H, straight or branched C_1 - C_{20} alkyl and aryl; and

R^3 is selected from the group consisting of H, halogen (preferably fluorine or chlorine), C_1 - C_6 (preferably C_1) alkyl, $COOR^9$ (where R^9 is H, an alkali metal, or a C_1 - C_6 alkyl group) or aryl; or

R^1 and R^3 may be joined to form a group of the formula $(CH_2)_{n'}$ (which may be substituted with from 1 to $2n'$ halogen atoms or C_1 - C_6 alkyl groups) or $C(=O)-Y-C(=O)$, where n' is from 2 to 6 (preferably 3 or 4) and Y is as defined above; or

R^4 is the same as R^1 or R^2 or optionally R^4 is a CN group;

at least two of R^1 , R^2 , and R^3 are H or halogen.

In the context of the present application, the terms "alkyl", "alkenyl" and "alkynyl" refer to straight-chain or branched groups (except for C₁ and C₂ groups).

Furthermore, in the present application, "aryl" refers to phenyl, naphthyl, phenanthryl, phenalenyl, anthracenyl, triphenylenyl, fluoranthenyl, pyrenyl, pentacenyl, chrysenyl, naphthacenyl, hexaphenyl, picenyl and perylenyl (preferably phenyl and naphthyl), in which each hydrogen atom may be replaced with alkyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms (preferably from 1 to 6 carbon atoms and more preferably methyl), alkyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms (preferably from 1 to 6 carbon atoms and more preferably methyl) in which each of the hydrogen atoms is independently replaced by a halide (preferably a fluoride or a chloride), alkenyl of from 2 to 20 carbon atoms, alkynyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, alkoxy of from 1 to 6 carbon atoms, alkylthio of from 1 to 6 carbon atoms, C₃-C₆ cycloalkyl, phenyl, halogen, NH₂, C₁-C₆-alkylamino, C₁-C₆-dialkylamino, and phenyl which may be substituted with from 1 to 5 halogen atoms and/or C₁-C₆ alkyl groups. (This definition of "aryl" also applies to the aryl groups in "aryloxy" and "aralkyl.") Thus, phenyl may be substituted from 1 to 5 times and naphthyl may be substituted from 1 to 7 times (preferably, any aryl group, if substituted, is substituted from 1 to 3 times) with one of the above substituents. More preferably, "aryl" refers to phenyl,

naphthyl, phenyl substituted from 1 to 5 times with fluorine or chlorine, and phenyl substituted from 1 to 3 times with a substituent selected from the group consisting of alkyl of from 1 to 6 carbon atoms, alkoxy of from 1 to 4 carbon atoms and phenyl. Most preferably, "aryl" refers to phenyl and tolyl.

In the context of the present invention, "heterocyclyl" refers to pyridyl, furyl, pyrrolyl, thienyl, imidazolyl, pyrazolyl, pyrazinyl, pyrimidinyl, pyridazinyl, pyranyl, indolyl, isoindolyl, indazolyl, benzofuryl, isobenzofuryl, benzothienyl, isobenzothienyl, chromenyl, xanthenyl, purinyl, pteridinyl, quinolyl, isoquinolyl, phthalazinyl, quinazolinyl, quinoxalinyl, naphthyridinyl, phenoxathiinyl, carbazolyl, cinnolinyl, phenanthridinyl, acridinyl, 1,10-phenanthrolinyl, phenazinyl, phenoxazinyl, phenothiazinyl, oxazolyl, thiazolyl, isoxazolyl, isothiazolyl, and hydrogenated forms thereof known to those in the art. Preferred heterocyclyl groups include pyridyl, furyl, pyrrolyl, thienyl, imidazolyl, pyrazolyl, pyrazinyl, pyrimidinyl, pyridazinyl, pyranyl and indolyl, the most preferred heterocyclyl group being pyridyl. Accordingly, suitable vinyl heterocycles to be used as a monomer in the present invention include 2-vinyl pyridine, 4-vinyl pyridine, 2-vinyl pyrrole, 3-vinyl pyrrole, 2-vinyl oxazole, 4-vinyl oxazole, 5-vinyl oxazole, 2-vinyl thiazole, 4-vinyl thiazole, 5-vinyl thiazole, 2-vinyl

imidazole, 4-vinyl imidazole, 3-vinyl pyrazole, 4-vinyl pyrazole, 3-vinyl pyridazine, 4-vinyl pyridazine, 3-vinyl isoxazole, 3-vinyl isothiazoles, 2-vinyl pyrimidine, 4-vinyl pyrimidine, 5-vinyl pyrimidine, and any vinyl pyrazine, the most preferred being 2-vinyl pyridine. The vinyl heterocycles mentioned above may bear one or more (preferably 1 or 2) C_1-C_6 alkyl or alkoxy groups, cyano groups, ester groups or halogen atoms, either on the vinyl group or the heterocyclyl group, but preferably on the heterocyclyl group. Further, those vinyl heterocycles which, when unsubstituted, contain an N-H group may be protected at that position with a conventional blocking or protecting group, such as a C_1-C_6 alkyl group, a tris- C_1-C_6 alkylsilyl group, an acyl group of the formula $R^{10}CO$ (where R^{10} is alkyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, in which each of the hydrogen atoms may be independently replaced by halide, preferably fluoride or chloride), alkenyl of from 2 to 20 carbon atoms (preferably vinyl), alkynyl of from 2 to 10 carbon atoms (preferably acetylenyl), phenyl which may be substituted with from 1 to 5 halogen atoms or alkyl groups of from 1 to 4 carbon atoms, or aralkyl (aryl-substituted alkyl, in which the aryl group is phenyl or substituted phenyl and the alkyl group is from 1 to 6 carbon atoms), etc. (This definition of "heterocyclyl" also applies to the heterocyclyl groups in "heterocyclyloxy" and "heterocyclic ring.")

More specifically, preferred monomers include (but not limited to) styrene, p-chloromethylstyrene, vinyl chloroacetate, acrylate and methacrylate esters of C₁-C₂₀ alcohols, isobutene, 2-(2-bromopropionoxy) ethyl acrylate, acrylonitrile, and methacrylonitrile.

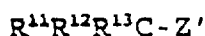
The monomer containing at least one polar group may be present in an amount of 5 to 100 wt% by weight based on the total amount of monomers. A preferred amount of the monomer containing at least one polar group is 10 to 100 wt%; the most preferred amount is 20 to 100 wt% based on the total amount of monomers. This is particularly important in the case of acrylonitrile because an amount of at least 20 wt% assures solvent resistance properties of the resulting polymer A.

(II) Initiating System

The initiating system for the atom or group transfer radical polymerization of the present invention containing components (i), (ii) and (iii) as described below.

component (i)-initiator

Suitable initiators include those of the formula (III):



(III)

where:

Z' is selected from the group consisting of Cl, Br, I,

OR¹⁰ (as defined above), SR¹⁴, SeR¹⁴, -SCN (thiocyanate), OC(=O)R¹⁴, OP(=O)R¹⁴, OP(=O)(OR¹⁴)₂, OP(=O)OR¹⁴, O-N(R¹⁴)₂ and S-C(=S)N(R¹⁴)₂, where R¹⁴ is aryl or a straight or branched C₁-C₂₀ (preferably C₁-C₁₀) alkyl group, or when an N(R¹⁴)₂ group is present, the two R¹⁴ groups may be joined to form a 5-, 6- or 7-membered heterocyclic ring (in accordance with the definition of "heterocyclyl" above); and

R¹¹, R¹² and R¹³ are each independently selected from the group consisting of H, halogen, C₁-C₁₀ alkyl (preferably C₁-C₁₀ alkyl and more preferably C₁-C₆ alkyl), C₃-C₆ cycloalkyl, C(=Y)R⁵, C(=Y)NR⁶R⁷ (where R⁵-R⁷ are as defined above), COCl, OH (preferably only one of R¹¹, R¹² and R¹³ is OH), CN, C₂-C₁₀ alkenyl or alkynyl (preferably C₂-C₆ alkenyl or alkynyl, and more preferably vinyl), oxiranyl, glycidyl, aryl, heterocyclyl, aralkyl, aralkenyl (aryl-substituted alkenyl, where aryl is as defined above, and alkenyl is vinyl which may be substituted with one or two C₁-C₆ alkyl groups and/or halogen atoms, preferably chlorine), C₁-C₆ alkyl in which from 1 to all of the hydrogen atoms (preferably 1) are replaced with halogen (preferably fluorine or chlorine where 1 or more hydrogen atoms are replaced, and preferably fluorine, chlorine or bromine where 1 hydrogen atom is replaced) and C₁-C₆ alkyl substituted with from 1 to 3 substituents (preferably 1) selected from the group consisting of C₁-C₆ alkoxy, aryl, heterocyclyl, C(=Y)R⁵ (where R⁵ is as defined above), C(=Y)NR⁶R⁷ (where R⁶ and R⁷

are as defined above), oxiranyl and glycidyl; such that no more than two of R^{11} , R^{12} and R^{13} are H (preferably no more than one of R^{11} , R^{12} and R^{13} is H).

In the present initiator, X is preferably Cl or Br.

When an alkyl, cycloalkyl, or alkyl-substituted aryl group is selected for one of R^{11} , R^{12} and R^{13} , the alkyl group may be further substituted with an X group as defined above. Thus, it is possible for the initiator to serve as a starting molecule for branch or star (co)polymers. Preferred example is where one of R^{11} , R^{12} and R^{13} is phenyl substituted with from one to five C_1 - C_6 alkyl substituents, each of which may independently be further substituted with a X group (e.g., α,α' -dibromoxylene, hexakis(α -chloro- or α -bromomethyl)-benzene).

Preferred initiators include 1-phenylethyl chloride and 1-phenylethyl bromide (e.g., where R^{11} = Ph, R^{12} = CH_3 , R^{13} = H and X = Cl or Br), chloroform, carbon tetrachloride, 2-bromopropionitrile, C_1 - C_6 -alkyl esters of a 2-halo- C_1 - C_6 -carboxylic acid (such as 2-chloropropionic acid, 2-bromopropionic acid, 2-chloroisobutyric acid, 2-bromoisobutyric acid, etc.) and compounds of the formula $C_6H_x(CH_2Y')_y$, where Y' is Cl or Br, $x + y = 6$ and $y \geq 1$. More preferred initiators include 1-phenylethyl chloride, 1-phenylethyl bromide, methyl 2-chloropropionate, ethyl 2-chloropropionate, methyl 2-bromopropionate, ethyl 2-bromoisobutyrate, α,α' -dichloroxylene, α,α' -dibromoxylene

and hexakis(α -bromomethyl)benzene. The initiator, in accordance with the present invention, is exemplified (but not limited to) an alkyl halide, aralkyl halide or haloalkyl ester. Generally, an aromatic halide such as α, α' -dihalo-p-xylene, benzyl halide, 1-phenylethyl halide and α -haloacrylate are suitable initiators. However, initiators with a cyano group such as haloacetonitrile or halopropionitrile are more effective in the preparation of polymer (A) with narrow polydispersity index. In addition, although any of the halogens is suitable as the halide part of the initiator according to the present invention, bromine or chlorine are preferred.

component (ii) - transition metal compound

Any transition metal compound which can participate in a redox cycle with the initiator and dormant polymer chain, but which does not form a direct carbon-metal bond with the polymer chain, is suitable for use in the present invention. Preferred transition metal compounds are those of the formula $M_n^{n+}X'_n$, where:

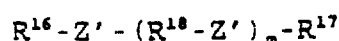
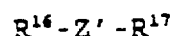
M_n^{n+} may be selected from the group consisting of Cu^{1+} , Cu^{2+} , Fe^{2+} , Fe^{3+} , Ru^{2+} , Ru^{3+} , Cr^{2+} , Cr^{3+} , Mo^0 , Mo^+ , Mo^{2+} , Mo^{3+} , W^{2+} , W^{3+} , Rh^{3+} , Rh^{4+} , Co^+ , Co^{2+} , Re^{2+} , Re^{3+} , Ni^0 , Ni^{1+} , Mn^{3+} , Mn^{4+} , V^{3+} , V^{5+} , Zn^+ , Zn^{2+} , Au^+ , Au^{2+} , Ag^+ and Ag^{2+} ;

X' is selected from the group consisting of halogen, C_1 - C_{20} -alkoxy, $(SO_4)_{1/2}$, $(PO_4)_{1/3}$, $(HPO_4)_{1/2}$, (H_2PO_4) , triflate, SCN (thiocyanate), hexafluorophosphate, alkylsulfonate,

arylsulfonate (preferably benzenesulfonate or toluenesulfonate), SeR^{14} , CN and R^{15}CO_2 , where R^{14} is as defined above and R^{15} is H or a straight or branched C_1 - C_{20} alkyl group (preferably methyl), a benzoic acid derivative, aryl or a heteroaryl group which may be substituted from 1 to 5 times with a halogen (preferably 1 to 3 times with fluorine or chlorine); and n is the formal charge on the metal (e.g., $0 \leq n \leq 7$). As component (ii) a transition metal halide is required. Although any transition metal is suitable in the present invention, a preferred transition metal (but not limited to) is Cu(I). Likewise, the preferred counter ion for the transition metal is chlorine or bromine.

component (iii) - ligand

Suitable ligands for use in the present invention include ligands having one or more nitrogen, oxygen, phosphorus and/or sulfur atoms which can coordinate to the transition metal through a σ -bond, and ligands containing two or more carbon atoms which can coordinate to the transition metal through a π -bond. However, preferred N-, O-, P- and S- containing ligands may have one of the following formulas:



where:

R^{16} and R^{17} are independently selected from the group consisting of H, C_1 - C_{20} alkyl, aryl, heterocyclyl, and C_1 - C_6 alkyl substituted with C_1 - C_6 alkoxy, C_1 - C_6 dialkylamino, $C(=Y)R^5$, $C(=Y)R^6R^7$ and $YC(=Y)R^8$, where Y, R^5 , R^6 , R^7 and R^8 are as defined above; or

R^{16} and R^{17} can be joined to form a saturated, unsaturated or heterocyclic ring as described above for the "heterocyclyl" group;

Z' is O, S, NR^{19} or PR^{19} , where R^{19} is selected from the same group as R^{16} and R^{17} ,

each R^{18} is independently a divalent group selected from the group consisting of C_2 - C_6 alkylene (alkanediyl) and C_2 - C_6 alkenylene where the covalent bonds to each Z' are at vicinal positions (e.g., in a 1,2-arrangement) or at β -positions (e.g., in a 1,3-arrangement), and from C_3 - C_6 cycloalkanediyl, C_3 - C_6 cycloalkenediyl, arenediyl and heterocyclylene where the covalent bonds to each Z are at vicinal positions; and

m is from 1 to 6.

In addition to the above ligands, each of R^{16} - Z' and R^{17} - Z' can form a ring with the R^{18} group to which the Z' is bound to form a linked or fused heterocyclic ring system (such as is described above for "heterocyclyl").

Alternatively, when R^{16} and/or R^{17} are heterocyclyl, Z' can be a covalent bond (which may be single or double), CH_2 , or a 4- to 7-membered ring fused to R^{16} and/or R^{17} , in addition to

the definitions given above for Z'. Exemplary ring systems for the present ligand include bipyridine, bipyrrrole, 1,10-phenanthroline, a cryptand, a crown ether, etc., where Z' is PR¹⁹, R¹⁹ can also be C₁-C₂₀-alkoxy.

Included as suitable ligands are pyridine derivatives which contain substituents in the 2 or 2 and 6 position such as a carbonyl containing moiety, an imine containing moiety or a thioketone containing moiety.

Also included as suitable ligands in the present invention are CO (carbon monoxide), porphyrins and porphycenes, the latter two of which may be substituted with from 1 to 6 (preferably from 1 to 4) halogen atoms, C₁-C₆ alkyl groups, C₁-C₆-alkoxy groups, C₁-C₆ alkoxycarbonyl, aryl groups, heterocyclyl groups, and C₁-C₆ alkyl groups further substituted with from 1 to 3 halogens.

Further ligands suitable for use in the present invention include compounds of the formula R²⁰R²¹C(C(=Y)R⁵)₂, where Y and R⁵ are as defined above, and each of R²⁰ and R²¹ is independently selected from the group consisting of H, halogen, C₁-C₂₀ alkyl, aryl and heterocyclyl, and R²⁰ and R²¹ may be joined to form a C₁-C₆ cycloalkyl ring or a hydrogenated (i.e., reduced, non-aromatic or partially or fully saturated) aromatic or heterocyclic ring (consistent with the definitions of "aryl" and "heterocyclyl" above), any of which (except for H and halogen) may be further substituted with 1 to 5 and preferably 1 to 3 C₁-C₆ alkyl

groups, C₁-C₆ alkoxy groups, halogen atoms and/or aryl groups. Preferably, one of R²⁰ and R²¹ is H or a negative charge.

Additional suitable ligands include, for example, ethylenediamine and propylenediamine, both of which may be substituted from one to four times on the amino nitrogen atom with a C₁-C₆ alkyl group or a carboxymethyl group; aminoethanol and aminopropanol, both of which may be substituted from one to three times on the oxygen and/or nitrogen atom with a C₁-C₆ alkyl group; ethylene glycol and propylene glycol, both of which may be substituted one or two times on the oxygen atoms with a C₁-C₆ alkyl group; diglyme, triglyme, tetraglyme, etc.

Suitable carbon-based ligands include arenes (as described above for the "aryl" group) and the cyclopentadienyl ligand. Preferred carbon-based ligands include benzene (which may be substituted with from one to six C₁-C₆ alkyl groups, e.g., methyl) and cyclopentadienyl (which may be substituted with from one to five methyl groups, or which may be linked through an ethylene or propylene chain to a second cyclopentadienyl ligand). Where the cyclopentadienyl ligand is used, it may not be necessary to include a counteranion (X') in the transition metal compound.

Preferred ligands include unsubstituted and substituted pyridines and bipyridines where the

substituted pyridines and bipyridines are as described above for "heterocyclyl"), acetonitrile, $(R^{10})_3P$, PR^{10} , 1,10-phenanthroline, porphyrin, cryptands such as K_{222} , crown ethers such as 18-crown-6, and nitrogen or sulfur analogs of crown ethers. The most preferred ligands are substituted bipyridine, bipyridine and $(R^{10})_3P$. Examples of such ligands (but not limited to) are 2,2'-bipyridine, a p-alkyl substituted derivative of the 2,2'-bipyridine or a p-alkoxy substituted derivative of the 2,2'-bipyridine.

The mole ratio of the components (i), (ii) and (iii) of the initiating system may range from 1/0.01/0.02 to 1/4/12; the preferred range however is 1/0.1/0.2 to 1/2/6.

In accordance with the present invention, the components (i), (ii) and (iii) of the initiating system are introduced to a reactor, the reactor is subsequently degassed under vacuum and charged with an inert gas, such as argon. No particular order in the addition of the above components of the initiating system is required. A monomer and, optionally, a solvent is then added to the reactor through a rubber septum.

The preferred polymerization temperature to prepare polymer (A) with narrow polydispersity index, in accordance with the present invention, is 0°C to 150°C; it is preferred to use a reaction temperature below the boiling point of the polar group containing monomer, where a narrow polydispersity index is achieved and a loss of the polar

group containing monomer is minimized.

The present polymerization may be conducted in the absence of solvent ("bulk" polymerization). However, when a solvent is used, suitable solvents include ethers, cyclic ethers, alkyl esters, aryl esters, C_5 - C_{10} alkanes, C_5 - C_8 cycloalkanes which may be substituted with from 1 to 3 C_1 - C_4 alkyl groups, aromatic hydrocarbon solvents, halogenated hydrocarbon solvents, acetonitrile, dimethylformamide, mixtures of such solvents, and supercritical solvents (such as CO_2 , C_1 - C_4 alkanes in which any H may be replaced with F, etc.). The present polymerization may also be conducted in accordance with known suspension, emulsion and precipitation polymerization processes.

Suitable ethers include compounds of the formula $R^{22}OR^{23}$, in which each of R^{22} and R^{23} is independently an alkyl group of from 1 to 6 carbon atoms which may be further substituted with a C_1 - C_4 -alkoxy group. Preferably, when one of R^{22} and R^{23} is methyl, the other of R^{22} and R^{23} is alkyl of from 4 to 6 carbon atoms or C_1 - C_4 -alkoxyethyl. Examples include diethyl ether, ethyl propyl ether, dipropyl ether, methyl t-butyl ether, di-t-butyl ether, glyme (dimethoxyethane), diglyme (diethylene glycol dimethyl ether), etc.

Suitable cyclic ethers include THF and dioxane. Suitable aromatic hydrocarbon solvents include benzene, toluene, o-xylene, m-xylene, p-xylene and any isomer or

mixture of isomers of cumene. Suitable halogenated hydrocarbon solvents include CH_2Cl_2 , 1,2-dichloroethane and benzene substituted from 1 to 6 times with fluorine and/or chlorine, although one should ensure that the selected halogenated hydrocarbon solvent(s) does not act as an initiator under the reaction conditions.

A solvent suitable for the preparation of polymer (A) of the present invention must meet the following requirements: it must have low chain transfer constant (as defined in: Polymer Handbook, third edition, J. Brandrup and E.H. Immergut, Editors, II/81); be able to dissolve the initiating system; and must not form a complex with the initiating system. Examples of solvents suitable for the present invention (but not limited to) are: diphenylether, diaryl ether, dimethoxybenzene, propylene carbonate, and ethylene carbonate. Especially useful solvents in accordance with the present invention are propylene carbonate and ethylene carbonate which result in polymer (A) exhibiting narrow polydispersity index.

III) - Use of Macroinitiator for ATRP

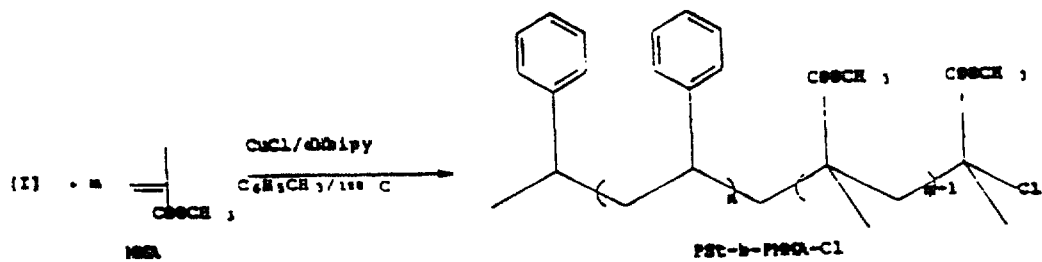
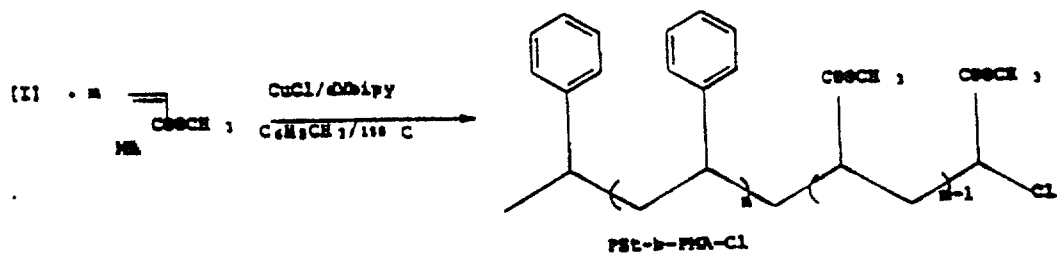
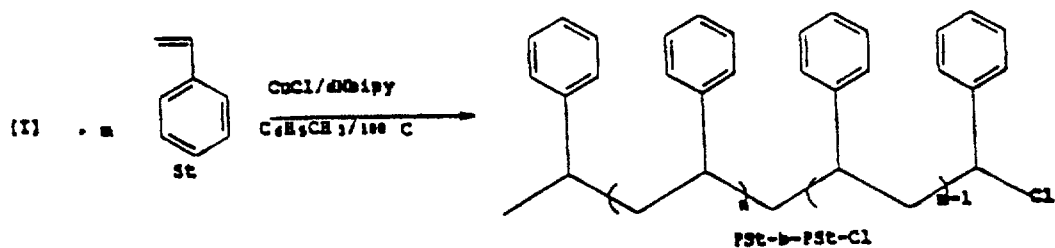
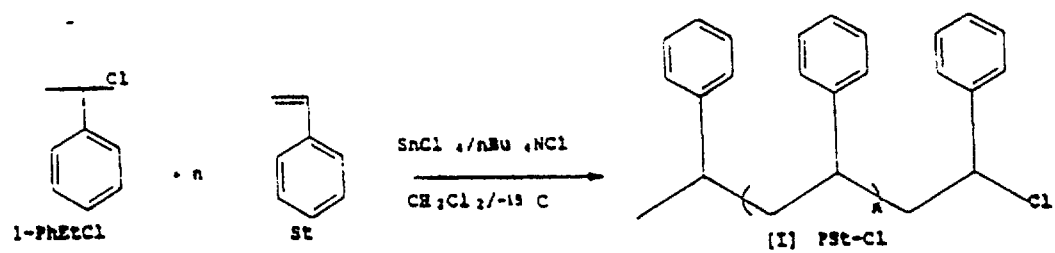
(a) In situ Generation of a Macroinitiator

(i) Transformation of "Living" Carbocationic to "living" Radical Polymerization

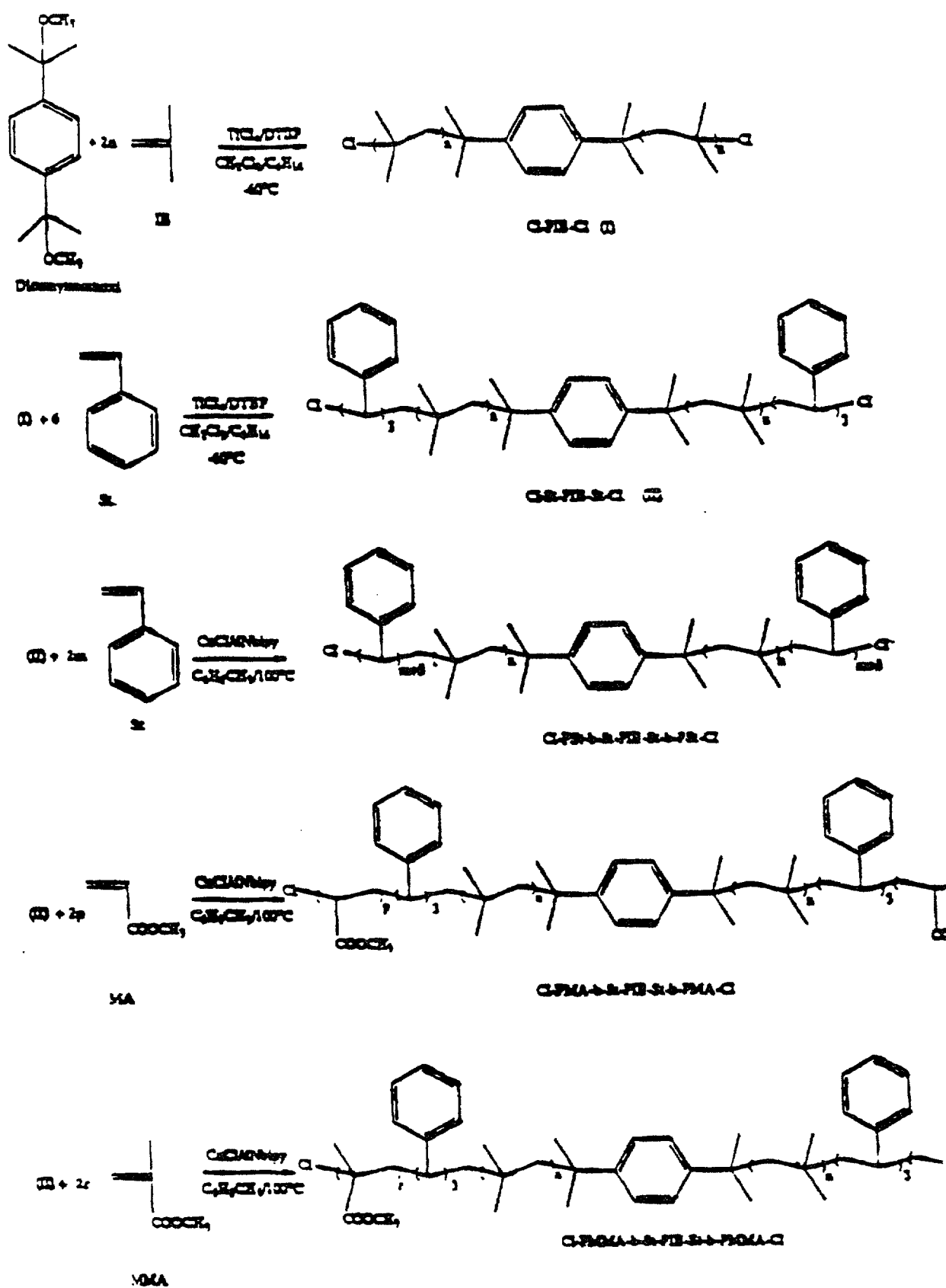
A further object of the present invention is to synthesize a block copolymer by combining a "living" carbocationic polymerization with a "living" radical

polymerization. "Living" cationic polymerizations have been described by Matyjaszewski (Cationic Polymerizations, Mechanism, Synthesis and Applications; Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York, 1996). Thus, a macromonomer can be synthesized by a "living" carbocationic method, having a terminal group, such as a halogen group, which subsequently can be used as an effective macroinitiator in a "living" atom or group transfer radical polymerization. Scheme 3(a) exemplifies the procedure (not limited to the particular examples) for the synthesis of poly(styrene-b-styrene), poly(styrene-b-methylacrylate) and poly(styrene-b-methylmethacrylate) copolymers. In addition, as exemplified in Scheme 3(b), a variety of ABA block copolymers with polyisobutene (PIB) mid block can be prepared.

scheme 3(a):



scheme 3(b) :



(ii) Synthesis of macroinitiator by polyesterification

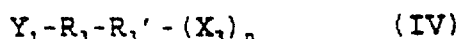
- 1) In situ polycondensation of a monofunctional acid and acid halide containing an activated halogen atom.

An example is the polyesterification of a diol (1.0 mol) with a diacid (0.95 mol) in the presence of 2-bromopropionic acid or chloroacetic acid (0.05 mol) to produce a polyester having a degree of polymerization (DP)=20 and α -halogen end group.

(b) Polymer Modification to Generate a Macroinitiator

Another object of the present invention is to synthesize a novel block copolymer using a novel atom or group transfer radical polymerization initiator.

Thus, according to the present invention, a compound of formula (IV):

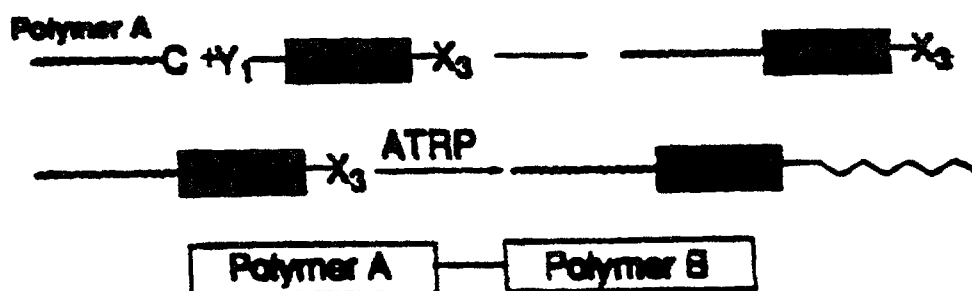


is reacted with a macromonomer that is functionalized with a group C. The functional group C must be able to react with Y_1 to form a stable bond and thus the functional group X_1 is now added to the macromonomer. The addition of the group X_1 to the macromonomer transforms the monomer into a macroinitiator for ATRP. This macroinitiator is used as component (i) of the initiating system to polymerize a

vinyl monomer in the presence a transition metal compound (component (ii)), and a ligand (component (iii)) to form a block copolymer. In formula (IV), X_1 is a halogen (preferentially chlorine or bromine), n is an integer of 1 to 100, preferentially of 1 to 10, Y_1 is any functional group such as (but not limited to) hydroxyl, carboxyl, amine, $-SiH$ or $-C(=O)-X$, where X is a halogen. R_1 is selected from the group consisting of alkyl, aryl and aralkyl group, as defined above, and R_1' is a C_1-C_{20} -alkyl group.

This novel method for the preparation of a block copolymer can best be understood in the scheme 4 below:

Scheme 4



~~Suitable~~ macroinitiators are macromonomers containing at least one functionality such as (but not limited to) hydroxyl, carboxyl, vinyl, amine or thiol. Preferred monomers are acrylic and methacrylic acid esters having from 1 to about 20 carbon atoms in the alcohol moiety, styrene, vinyl substituted styrene, such as α -alkyl styrene or ring substituted styrene such as p-alkyl styrene; such

monomers are commercially available or can be easily prepared by known esterification processes. Preferred esters are n-butyl acrylate, ethyl acrylate, methyl methacrylate, isobornyl methacrylate and 2-ethylhexyl acrylate; preferred styrenic monomers are styrene, α -methyl styrene, p-methyl styrene, p-tert-butyl styrene, p-acetoxy styrene and ring-halogenated styrene.

The following exemplify (but are not limited to) methods of synthesis of multifunctional polymers which can be used in the synthesis of block and graft copolymers in accordance with the present invention.

- 1) Esterification of hydroxy and phenoxy end groups with halo acid halide.

An Example in accordance with this object is polysulfone prepared with an excess of Bisphenol A, esterified with excess of 2-bromopropionyl bromide to provide a polymer with two bromopropionyl end groups.

- 2) Incorporation of benzyl chloride end groups by hydrosilation process.

A polymer containing two unsaturated end groups at both ends, exemplified by a divinyl terminated polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS), is reacted with $\text{H-SiMe}_2\text{-PhOCH}_2\text{-Cl}$ in the presence of Pt catalyst.

- 3) Polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS) containing Si-H groups at the terminal or as pendant units is reacted with p-chloromethylstyrene (p-

ClMeSt) in the presence of Pt catalyst to yield PDMS with terminal or pendant benzyl chloride groups.

The resulting polymer can be presented by:



where X_1 is a halogen and n is an integer of from 1 to 100, preferentially from 1 to 10. Thus, the resulting halogenated macromolecule can subsequently be used as component (i) of the initiating system for the preparation of a polymer optionally containing at least one polar group; the result of the polymerization with the above-discussed macroinitiator may be an ABA block copolymer with the end blocks being a vinyl polymer and the middle block being any polymer.

Examples of novel block or graft copolymers produced by macroinitiators in accordance with the present invention include (but are not limited to) block copolymers containing a block moiety of polysiloxane, polyester, polysulfone or polyamide, or ethylene/butylene copolymer such as the ones produced by Shell under the Kraton name.

II. AB_2 Monomers and their Use in ATRP

AB_2 monomer is defined as a hybrid molecule containing polymerizable double bond (B_2) and an atom or group (A) which can be cleaved homolytically and reversibly.

Atom Transfer Radical Polymerization (ATRP) allows for the controlled radical polymerization of (meth)acrylic esters, (meth)acrylonitrile, dienes and styrenic monomers.

For AB₂ monomers to be used in ATRP, it is required that they have the basic structure of B-R-F, where B is the polymerizable double bond, R is an organic spacer group, and F is a functional group containing a halogen atom which can be homolytically, yet reversibly, cleaved by reaction with copper(I) salts. For example, the B group can be methacrylic, acrylic, or styrenic in nature. The F group could be a benzylic halide, 2-halopropionate, etc. The versatility of this approach is enhanced by the wide variety of R groups that can be inserted between the double bond and the functional group.

Acrylic AB₂ monomers can be synthesized by the reaction of, for example (but not limited to), 2-hydroxyethyl acrylate or 2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate with an acid halide, either 2-bromopropionyl bromide, 2-bromoisobutyryl bromide, or chloroacetyl chloride.

The homolytic cleavage of group A can occur at the stage of monomer, polymer or both. Group A becomes group A' when it is pendent or A'' when it is at the chain end of a macromonomer. Thus, the following possibilities can occur depending on the relative reactivities of A, A' and

25 A'':

a) Description of Reactivity of A-group

(i) Homopolymerization

- 1) Reactivity of group A in monomer is similar to reactivity of groups A' and A" in the polymer.

Examples include (but are not limited to) ATRP of p-chloromethylstyrene, 2-(2-bromopropionoxy)ethyl acrylate, etc., which result in a hyperbranched structure with cluster ("grape bunch") structure.

- 2) Reactivity of $A \gg A'$ (no A" but reactivity $A=A''$)

Examples include (but are not limited to) ATRP of p-chlorosulfonylstyrene, vinyl chloroacetate, etc., which result in a linear "condensation" polymer with pendant A" groups.

- 3) Reactivity of $A = A'$; no A"

Examples include (but are not limited to) free radical polymerization (FRP) of p-chloromethylstyrene, 2-(2-bromopropionoxy) ethyl acrylate, etc., which result in a linear conventional free radical polymer with pendant A' groups.

4) Reactivity of $A \ll A' < A''$

Examples include (but are not limited to) ATRP of chloroacrylates, chloroacrylonitrile, etc., which result in a nearly perfect dendritic structure (no cluster due to lack of terminal B₂ bonds).

Polymers 1-4 above are reacted with styrene, (meth)acrylate, or acrylonitrile, etc. to yield block and graft copolymers by the process of the present invention. The polydispersity of the resulting copolymer is: $M_w/M_n=1.1$ to 3.0.

(ii) Simultaneous copolymerization of AB₂ monomer with a conventional vinyl monomer

- 1) Reactivity of group A in monomer is similar to reactivity of groups A' and A'' in the polymer.

Examples include (but are not limited to) ATRP of styrene/p-chloromethylstyrene, butyl acrylate/2-(2-bromopropionyloxy)ethyl acrylate, etc. The resulting polymers have branched structure with cluster ("grape bunch") structure; branch density depends on comonomer ratio.

- 2) Reactivity of $A \gg A'$ (no A'' but reactivity $A=A''$);

Examples include (but are not limited to) ATRP of p-chlorosulfonylstyrene, vinyl chloroacetate, with styrene, etc., which result in macromonomers with vinyl acetate (VAc), branched structures possibly with p-chlorosulfonylstyrene.

3) Reactivity of $A = A'$; no A''

Examples include (but are not limited to) free radical polymerization (FRP) of p-chloromethylstyrene, 2-(2-bromopropionoxy)ethyl acrylate, etc., with e.g., styrene, which result in a linear conventional free radical (FR) polymer with a few pendant A' groups

4) Reactivity of $A \ll A' < A''$

Examples include (but are not limited to) ATRP of chloroacrylates, chloroacrylonitrile, acrylonitrile, (meth)acrylate esters, etc., with e.g., styrene which result substantially in nearly perfect dendritic structure (no cluster due to lack of terminal B_2 bonds) with a two layer shape due to differences in reactivity of chloroacrylates and styrene; spontaneous star like block copolymer

(iii) Consecutive copolymerization

- 1) Reactivity of group A in monomer is similar to reactivity of groups A' and A" in the polymer.

Representative examples include (but are not limited to) ATRP of p-chloromethylstyrene, 2-(2-bromopropionoxy)ethyl acrylate, etc., followed by styrene or butyl acrylate. The result is a substantially hyperbranched core with cluster ("grape bunch") structure, star-like second layer which can be soft (low Tg segment) or soft followed by hard (high Tg) segment. Another possibility is a free radical (FR) copolymerization of p-chloromethylstyrene (pClMeSt) with styrene or butylacrylate/2-(2-bromopropionoxy) ethyl acrylate and then grafting from the backbone to get a graft copolymer.

- 2) Reactivity of A >> A' (no A" but reactivity A=A")

Examples include (but are not limited to) ATRP of vinyl chloroacetate with styrene, etc. This results in the formation of a macromonomer of polystyrene with a vinyl acetate end group. Another possibility is a free radical copolymerization of VClAc with VAc and then grafting from the backbone.

3) Reactivity of $A = A'$; no A''

Examples are the free radical polymerization (FRP) of p-chloromethylstyrene, 2-(2-bromopropionoxy)ethyl acrylate, etc, with e.g., butyl acrylate. The result is a linear free radical polymer with a few pendant A' groups.

Subsequent polymerization of the second monomer by ATRP results in the formation of a comb/graft copolymer.

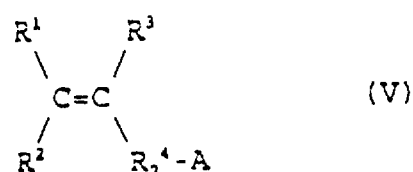
4) Reactivity of $A \ll A' < A''$

Example include (but are not limited to) ATRP of chloroacrylates, chloroacrylonitrile, etc., initiated by an initiator such as sulfonyl chloride, chloromalonate, and optionally additional monomer such as styrene. The result is a nearly perfect dendritic structure (no cluster due to lack of terminal B_2 bonds) with a two layer shape due to differences in reactivity of chloroacrylates and styrene. Several layers of star like block copolymers can be grown.

Some examples of polymeric architecture obtained by a polymerization in accordance with the present invention follow:

(b) Hyperbranched Polymers

In this object of the present invention the AB_2 molecule can be presented by formula V



wherein R^1 , R^2 , and R^3 are as previously described and $R_2^{4'}$ is an organic spacer group and A is selected from the group consisting of $R_2^{4'}-X$ and X, where X is a halogen (preferably chlorine or bromine), and $R_2^{4'}$ is selected from the group consisting of straight or branched alkyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms (preferably from 1 to 6 carbon atoms, more preferably from 1 to 4 carbon atoms), α,β -unsaturated straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl of 2 to 10 carbon atoms (preferably from 2 to 6 carbon atoms, more preferably from 2 to 4 carbon atoms), α,β -unsaturated straight or branched alkenyl of 2 to 6 carbon atoms (preferably vinyl) substituted (preferably at the α -position) with a halogen (preferably chlorine), C_3 - C_6 cycloalkyl, benzyl, heterocyclyl, $C(=Y)R^5$, $C(=Y)NR^6R^7$ and $YC(=Y)R^6$, $C(=Y)-Y-R^5$, $C(=Y)-R^6$ where Y may be NR^6 or O (preferably O), R^5 is alkyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, alkoxy of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, aryloxy or heterocyclyloxy, R^6 and R^7 are independently H or alkyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, or R^6 and R^7 may be joined together to form an alkylene group of from 2 to 5 carbon atoms, thus forming a 3- to 6-membered ring, and R^8 is H, straight or branched C_1 - C_{20} alkyl or aryl; and

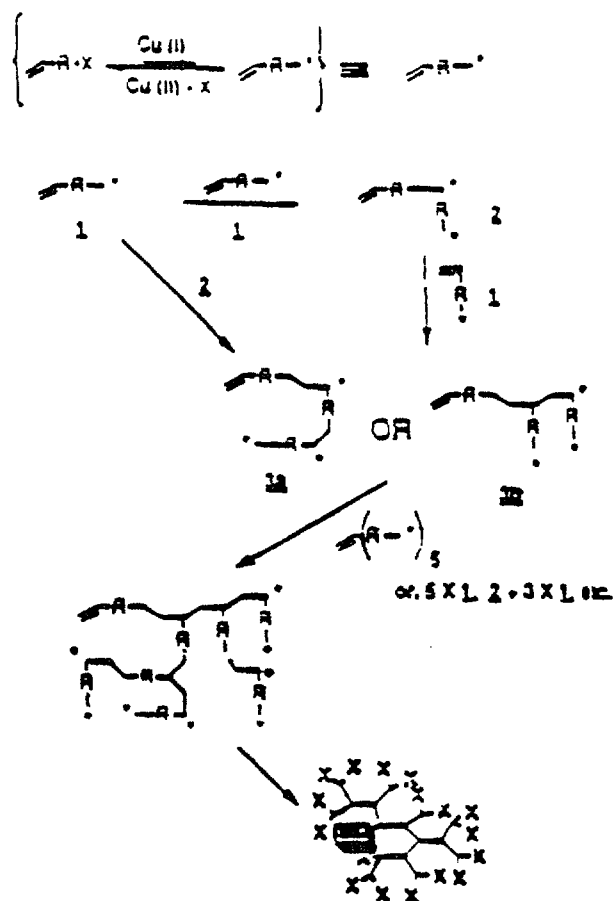
R^1 and R^3 may be joined to form a group of the formula

$(CH_2)_n$, (which may be substituted with from 1 to $2n'$ halogen atoms or C_1-C_4 alkyl groups) or $C(=O)-Y-C(=O)$, where n' is from 2 to 6 (preferably 3 or 4) and Y is as defined above.

Preferred monomers (but not limited to) are p-chloromethylstyrene (CMS), methyl- α -chloroacrylate and 2-(2-bromopropionoxy) ethyl acrylate.

The method, in accordance with the present invention, for making a hyperbranched molecule is illustrated below in scheme 5:

Scheme 5



where R represents an alkyl or any ester, and X is a functional group (preferentially a halogen).

In scheme 5, the activation-deactivation process is shown in the first step and is assumed to occur throughout the polymerization. Activation occurs prior to addition of a monomer unit and deactivation after monomer addition.

Subsequent to the activation of a monomer a second monomer is added. The resulting dimer can then be activated at either site and add an additional monomer. As

the new monomer is added, forming a trimer, another functional site is added to the growing macromolecule. Each functional group can be activated by Cu(I) and add additional monomer units. By repetition of this process, a hyperbranched polymer is obtained. It should be noted that each macromolecule has one double bond and nX groups, where n equals the number of repeated units. Due to the presence of the double bond in the macromolecule, the macromolecule can be incorporated into another macromolecule, similar to a step growth polymerization. In scheme 1, a molecule is advanced from a trimer to an octamer by addition of any combination of five repeat units, i.e., five monomers, a dimer or a trimer etc.

If a hyperbranched polymer is dissolved in a conventional monomer, and then activated with Cu(I), a linear chain of the second monomer can grow off the hyperbranched macromolecule. When the hyperbranched macromolecule is a multi-armed initiator, the resulting copolymer is a multi-armed star copolymer.

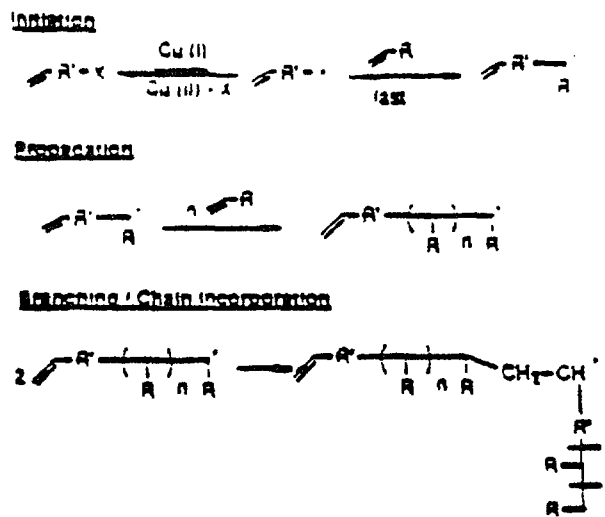
(c) Branched Polymers

When a monomer of formula (IV) is polymerized with a conventional vinyl monomer such as styrene, the density of the branched polymer can be attenuated by changing the amount of branching monomer used.

Scheme 6, shows the chain growth, for a copolymerization of an AB_2 monomer with a conventional vinyl

monomer.

Scheme 6



where R' is a monomer and X is a functional group (preferentially halogen); n is an integer of 1 to 1,000,000.

Initiation, that is the activation of a halide functional group and addition of a monomer, is fast. Fast initiation results in the formation of polymer chain (propagation) with vinyl end groups which can be incorporated into other polymer chains (branching). The rate of chain incorporation depends upon the r_1 and r_2 values for the respective monomer and the polymerizable chain-end functionality on the macromonomer (B_2); (reactivity ratios, "r", are defined in: Polymer Handbook, third edition, J. Brandrup and E.H. Immergut, Editors, Chapter II/153). If r_1 is about equal to r_2 , then the B_2

chain-end is incorporated into other chains throughout the reaction. If addition of the B₂ end-group by the propagating radical is not favored, then the chains are not incorporated into one another until late in the polymerization or even not at all.

(d) Multi - Arm Polymers

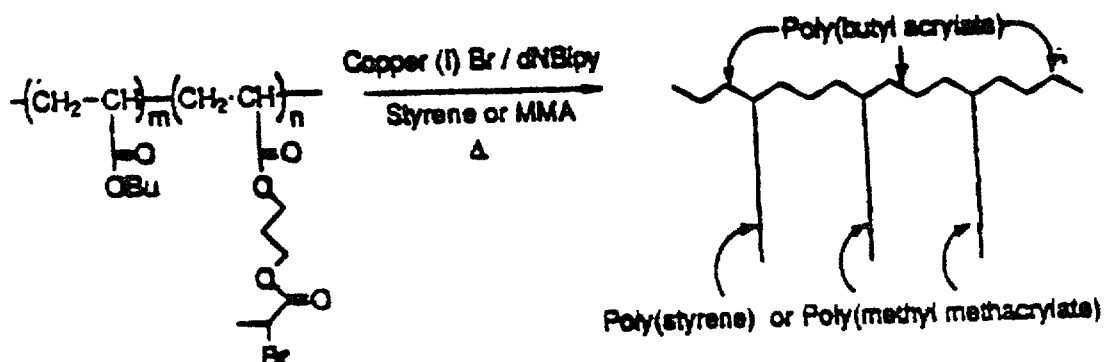
An acrylic hyperbranched polymer of the type obtained by homopolymerization of 2-(2-bromopropionoxy) ethyl acrylate, has n halogen atoms per macromolecule, with n being equal to the number of repeat units. The halogen atoms are all alpha to a carbonyl group as a consequence of either the propagation of a radical across the acrylic double bond followed by deactivation or from monomer ends which were unchanged (the halogen atom was not homolytically abstracted, followed by propagation). As these halogen atoms are all alpha to a carbonyl group, they are good initiating sites for ATRP. After purification, the hyperbranched polymer A was used as a macroinitiator for the ATRP of butyl acrylate.

(e) Comb Polymers

Copolymerization of 2-(2-bromopropionoxy) ethyl acrylate (2-BPEA) (0.5 mol%) with butyl acrylate using a conventional radical initiator such as 2,2'-azobisisobutyronitrile (AIBN), resulted in the synthesis of a high molecular weight, linear acrylic monomer ($M_n = 215,000$; $M_w/M_n = 1.6$). The copolymers have pendent bromine

functional groups, an estimated average of 8 per chain, which are capable of initiating a polymerization under ATRP conditions. Use of the linear butyl acrylate/2-BPEA copolymer as a macroinitiator for the ATRP of styrene (or methyl methacrylate) led to the formation of comb polymers, Scheme 7. These comb polymers have a poly(butyl acrylate) backbone and poly(styrene) (or poly(methyl methacrylate)) grafts. The resulting polymers are good elastomeric materials.

Scheme 7



TYPICAL POLYMERIZATION PROCEDURE

Purification of Reagents: The monomers used in the following examples were passed through aluminum trioxide to remove any inhibitors. The solvents and monomers were degassed by bubbling with argon. α,α' -Dibromo-p-xylene and 2,2'-bipyridine were recrystallized from benzene and hexane, respectively. Copper bromide and copper chloride were purified by stirring in glacial acetic acid, washed with ethanol and then dried.

Reaction Control: Monomer conversion was determined using a SHIMADZU GC-14A chromatograph with a DB-WAX, 30m column; with THF as an internal standard. Gel permeation chromatography (GPC) measurements were carried out using Phenogel columns (100 Å, 1000 Å, linear, guard) in series with a 410 differential refractometer, using DMF (acrylonitrile, 50°C) or THF (35°C) as an eluent. The number average molecular weight was also obtained by ^1H -NMR, using a 300 MHz BRUKER NMR spectrometer. The molecular weight was also determined by Matrix Assisted Laser Desorption Ionization-Time of Flight (MALDI-TOF).

Having generally described this invention, a further understanding can be obtained by reference to certain specific examples which are provided herein for purposes of illustration only and are not intended to be limiting unless otherwise specified.

EXAMPLES

Example 1

Polymerization of acrylonitrile with α,α' -dibromo-o-xylene/CuBr/dNbipy in various solvents

0.2003g (7.595×10^{-4} mol) of α,α' -dibromo-p-xylene, 0.2174g (1.519×10^{-3} mol, of CuBr, and 0.7112g (4.557×10^{-3} mol) of 2,2'-bipyridine (1/2/6 mol ratio) were added to a SCHENLK flask. The reaction flask was tightly sealed with a rubber septum, degassed under vacuum, and charged with argon. 10 mL of solvent and 10 mL (0.1519 mol) of acrylonitrile were then introduced via syringe. The reactions were carried out in diphenylether, dimethylformamide, propylene carbonate, and ethylene carbonate as reaction solvents. The reaction mixture was immersed in an oil bath heated at 45°C, 55°C or 100°C. Samples for kinetic measurements were taken after a specific reaction time from the reaction mixture and diluted with THF. After kinetic measurement, polymers from kinetic samples were precipitated by pouring into methanol then dried. These polymers were used for GPC measurement.

The results of polymerizations were described in Table 1.

Table 1. Polymerization of acrylonitrile using α,α' -dibromo-o-xylene/CuBr/2,2'-bipyridine as an initiating system in several solvents.

Entry No.	Solvent	Temp. (°C)	[M]/[I]	Time/h	Conv. (%)	M_n (GPC)	M_w/M_n
1*	diphenylether	100	380	24	26	22000	1.32
2*	dimethylformamide	100	380	24	5	-----	-----
3*	propylene carbonate	100	380	24	81	17200	1.74
4*	"	100	380	24	69	13900	2.18
5*	ethylene carbonate	100	380	7	71	53100	1.71
6*	"	55	200	8	87	40400	1.54
7*	"	45	380	9	71	45100	1.34
8*	"	100	380	23	69	61900	1.83

* [I]/CuBr/2,2'-Bipyridine: a (=1/2/6), b (=1/2/4), c (=1/2/6), d (=1/3/6); [I] represents the initiator.

Example 2

Polymerization of acrylonitrile with 2-chloropropionitrile/CuBr/dNBipy in ethylene carbonate

0.114g (7.995×10^{-4} mol) of CuBr and 0.3746g (2.398×10^{-3} mol) of 2,2'-bipyridine, and 25g of ethylene carbonate were added to a schenk flask. The reaction flask was tightly sealed with a rubber septum, degassed under vacuum, and charged with argon. 10 mL (0.1519 mol) of acrylonitrile and 0.1415 mL (1.599×10^{-3} mol) of 2-chloropropionitrile were then introduced via syringe. The reaction mixture was immersed in an oil bath heated at 47°C or 64°C. Samples for kinetic measurements were taken after a specific reaction time from the reaction mixture and diluted with THF. After kinetic measurement, polymers from kinetic samples were precipitated by pouring into methanol, then dried. These polymers were used for GPC measurement. The polymerization of acrylonitrile using 2-chloropropionitrile/CuBr/2,2'-bipyridine (=1/2/6 mol ratio) was also carried out in the

same procedure.

The results of the polymerizations are described in Table 2

Table 2. Polymerization of acrylonitrile using 2-chloropropionitrile/CuBr / 2,2'-bipyridine as an initiating system in ethylene carbonate.

entry no.	[I]/CuBr/2,2'-bipyridine	[M]/[I]	temp. (°C)	time (h)	conv. (%)	M _n (GPC)	M _n (NMR)	M _n (calc.)	M _w /M _n
9	1/0.5/1.5	95	47	48	86	25600	----	4300	1.1
10	1/0.5/1.5	95	64	48	93	29500	6700	4700	1.1
11	1/2/6	95	47	24	36	-----	-----	-----	---

[I] represents the initiator

Example 3

Polymerization of acrylonitrile with 2-bromopropionitrile/CuBr/dNbipy in ethylene carbonate

The polymerizations using acrylonitrile/2-bromopropionitrile (=95 and 190 mol ratio) and 2-bromopropionitrile/CuBr/2,2'-bipyridine(=1/1/3, 1/0.5/1.5, and 2/0.1/0.3 mol ratio) were carried out in ethylene carbonate in similar procedure to example 2. The polydispersities and the molecular weights of polymers at several reaction times were described in Table 3.

Table 3. Polymerization of acrylonitrile using 2-bromopropionitrile/CuBr/2,2'-bipyridine as an initiating system in ethylene carbonate at 64°C

entry no.	[I]/CuBr/2.2'-bipyridine	[M]/[I]	temp. (°C)	time (h)	conv. (%)	M _n (GPC)	M _n (NMR)	M _n (calc.)	M _w /M _n
12	1/1/3	95	44	5	73	32800	5580	3680	1.23
				10	84	35300	6060	4230	1.24
				23	91	37300	6450	4590	1.34
13	1/0.5/1.5	95	44	5	81	28400	5590	4060	1.07
				10	89	29600	5910	4460	1.11
				23	94	31900	6200	4750	1.12
14	1/0.1/0.3	95	44	5	31	11600	2200	1580	1.05
				10	32	13300	2610	1590	1.04
				23	38	15600	3030	1930	1.04
15	1/0.5/1.5	95	64	5	91	28400	5820	4570	1.11
				10	95	30400	6120	4760	1.12
				23	97	34200	6510	4870	1.10
16	1/0.1/0.3	95	64	5	23	13600	2560	1130	1.04
				10	32	15600	3080	1630	1.04
				23	49	18100	3900	2460	1.04
17	1/0.5/1.5	190	64	5	77	47000	-----	7710	1.09
				9	81	47100	-----	8140	1.14
				23	88	54100	-----	8870	1.12
18	1/0.1/0.3	190	64	5	26	20200	-----	2640	1.05
				9	33	25200	-----	3310	1.04
				23	48	31600	-----	4860	1.05

[I] represents the initiator

Example 4

Polymerization of acrylonitrile with 2-chloropropionitrile/CuBr/dNbipy in ethylene carbonate

The polymerizations using (acrylonitrile)/(2-chloropropionitrile)/CuBr/2,2'-bipyridine(=1/0.5/1.5 mol ratio) were carried out in ethylene carbonate at 64°C in similar procedure to example 2. The polydispersities and the molecular weights of polymers at several reaction times are described in Table 4.

Table 4. Polymerization of acrylonitrile using 2-chloropropionitrile/CuCl/2,2'-bipyridine as an initiating system in ethylene carbonate at 64°C.

entry no.	[I].CuBr/2,2'-bipyridine	[M]/[I]	time (h)	conv. (%)	M_n (GPC)	M_n (NMR)	M_n (calc.)	M_w/M_n
19	1/0.5/1.5	95	5	71	-----	3110	1550	1.21
			9	89	-----	3610	4460	1.21
			24	94	-----	4670	4720	1.21

[I] represents the initiator

Example 5

Preparation of A-B-A block copolymer

Macroinitiators having a poly(styrene) backbone and a halogen chain-end functionality were prepared by "living" cationic polymerization of styrene with 1-PhEtCl/SnCl₄ initiating system in the presence of n-Bu₄NCl at -15°C in methylene chloride in a schenk flask under dry nitrogen. The results are summarized in Table 5. After 30 minutes, the polymerization was terminated by adding prechilled

methanol. The polymers were purified by repeated dissolution-precipitation in dichloromethane/methanol, and dried under vacuum. The macroinitiators thus synthesized have a narrow polydispersity index ($M_w/M_n = 1.17$); end group analysis by $^1\text{H-NMR}$ showed that polystyrene contain the $\text{CH}_2\text{CH(Ph)-Cl}$ terminal group (broad signal at about 4.4 ppm). The polystyrene macroinitiator having halogen chain-end functionality was used as a macroinitiator in an atom transfer radical polymerization using styrene, methyl acrylate or methyl methacrylate as monomers. Table 5 summarizes representative polymerization results for cationic polymerization of styrene (exp. 1), and a homogeneous ATRP of styrene (St) (exp. 2), methyl acrylate (MA) (exp. 3) and methyl methacrylate (MMA) (exp. 4), initiated with the macroinitiator poly(styrene)-Cl (PSt-Cl) and catalyzed by $\text{CuCl}/4,4'-(1\text{-butylpentyl})-2,2'$ -bipyridine(dNbipy).

Table 5: Results obtained by transformation of "living" cationic to "living" radical polymerization

Exp	Monomer	Initiating system	Temp °C	$M_{n,th}$	$M_{n,exp}$	M
1	$\text{CH}_2=\text{CH(Ph)}$	$1\text{-PhEtClSnCl}_2/\text{nBu}_4\text{NCl}$	-15	2080	2100	1
2	$\text{CH}_2=\text{CH(Ph)}$	PSt-Cl/CuCl/dNbipy	100	5100	5080	1
3	$\text{CH}_2=\text{CH(COMe)}$	PSt-Cl/CuCl/dNbipy	100	6200	6330	1
4	$\text{CH}_2=\text{CCH}_3(\text{COMe})$	PSt-Cl/CuCl/dNbipy	100	10100	11090	1

Conditions: Exp. 1 (St)₀ = 1 mol/L. $[1\text{-PhEtCl}]_0 = 5 \times 10^{-4}$ mol/L.

$[1\text{PhStCl}]/[\text{SnCl}_4]/[\text{nBu}_3\text{NCl}]_0 = 1/5/2$, CH_2Cl_2 , solvent, conversion = 98%; Exp. 2 $[\text{St}]_0 = 3$ mol/L, $[\text{PSt-Cl}]_0 = 0.1$ mol/L, $[\text{PSt-Cl}]/[\text{CuCl}]/[\text{dNbipy}]_0 = 1/1/2$, $\text{C}_6\text{H}_5\text{CH}_3$, solvent, conversion = 98.5%; Exp. 3 $[\text{MA}]_0 = 4.76$ mol/L, $[\text{PSt-Cl}]_0 = 0.1$ mol/L, $[\text{PSt-Cl}]/[\text{CuCl}]/[\text{dNbipy}]_0 = 1/1/2$, $\text{C}_6\text{H}_5\text{CH}_3$, solvent, conversion = 99.5%; Exp. 4 $[\text{St}]_0 = 8$ mol/L, $[\text{PSt-Cl}]_0 = 0.1$ mol/L, $[\text{PSt-Cl}]/[\text{CuCl}]/[\text{dNbipy}]_0 = 1/1/2$, $\text{C}_6\text{H}_5\text{CH}_3$, solvent, conversion = 97.5%.

The experimental values for the number average molecular weight ($M_{n,\text{exp}}$) agree with the theoretical value of M_n ($M_{n,\text{th}}$) which were calculated using expression (1):

$$M_{n,\text{th}} = (\Delta[M]_0/[\text{initiator}]_0) \times (M_w)_0 \times \text{conversion} \quad (1)$$

where $(M_w)_0$ is the formula weight of the monomer, which assumes that each polymer contains one halogen chain- end group. The GPC chromatograms of starting PSt-Cl and PSt-b-PSt-Cl, PSt-b-PMA-Cl and PSt-b-PMMA-Cl copolymers are illustrated in Figures 5-7. The reaction mixture of the block copolymer synthesis was diluted with THF and injected directly into the GPC in order to avoid any fractionation of the polymer sample during isolation. The GPC measurements showed that the molecular weight distribution of the block copolymers were substantially unimodal and narrow. No signal attributed to starting macroinitiator was detected.

The structure of the block copolymers was analyzed by $^1\text{H-NMR}$ spectroscopy. Figures 8 and 9 illustrate 300 MHz $^1\text{H-NMR}$ spectra of PSt-b-PMA-Cl and PSt-b-PMMA-Cl copolymers.

The number average molecular weight (M_n) determined by NMR spectra, by integration of the aromatic protons of the macroinitiator and methoxy group from PMA and PMMA, agrees very well with those determined by GPC. The tacticity of PMMA based on CH_3 signals was (rr) = 59%, (rm) = 32% and (mm) = 9%.

In a schenk flask under nitrogen, the "living" PSt-Cl macroinitiator obtained by cationic polymerization was deactivated by adding methyl acrylate at -15°C . After raising the temperature, to room temperature, CH_2Cl_2 , Lewis acid and ester were removed under vacuum. A solution of CuCl-dNbipy in toluene was added to the PSt-Cl product, followed by the required amount of methyl acrylate and the temperature was increased to 100°C . Experimental conditions identical to those summarized in Table 5 (exp. 3) were used. The GPC traces of macroinitiator and copolymer PSt-b-PMA-Cl confirm the successful one pot transformation as shown in Figure 10.

Example 6

Synthesis of hyperbranched Polystyrene

The homopolymerization of chloromethyl styrene (CMS) was carried out in bulk with 1 mole% CuCl , and 3 mole% 2,2'-bipyridyl. After 6 hours at 110°C the conversion, determined by $^1\text{H-NMR}$, was 64%. The reaction mixture was precipitated into methanol/brine for purification. SEC was

performed on the polymer sample and the molecular weight was found to be: $M_n=1490$, $M_w/M_n=1.4$. The molecular weight as determined by $^1\text{H-NMR}$ was found to be $M_n=1760$, which corresponds to a degree of polymerization (DP) equal to 11.6.

Example 7

Synthesis of star copolymer

This synthesis was demonstrated by dissolving the hyperbranched polystyrene (DP = 11.6) prepared in Example 6, in butyl acrylate (BA), along with CuCl and dNbipy , then heating to 120°C . After three hours, the conversion of the BA was 98% with $M_n = 153,400$; $M_w/M_n = 2.6$. It should be noted that this molecular weight is a low estimate of the actual molecular weight of the polymer due to the star-like nature of the polymer. The hydrodynamic volume of star, or branched, polymers is smaller than that of linear polymers with a similar molecular weight. This difference results in the star polymer having longer retention times in a size exclusion chromatography (SEC) column, thereby giving an apparent, lower molecular weight.

By assuming that a butyl acrylate chain is grown from each function site on the hyperbranched styrene, one can estimate the size of the butyl acrylate chains by dividing M_n (153,400) by the average number of functional groups (11.6). The obtained result was a minimum average of $M_n =$

13,200 per arm.

Example 8

Synthesis of 2-(2-bromopropionyloxy) ethyl acrylate (2-BPEA)

2-BPEA: Under argon, a solution of 2-bromopropionyl bromide (36.45 ml, 348 mmol) in 50 ml of CH_2Cl_2 , was added drop-wise to a stirring solution of 2-hydroxyethyl acrylate (40.0 ml, 348 mmol) and pyridine (31.0 ml, 383 mmol) in 250 ml of CH_2Cl_2 . The reaction was cooled in an ice bath. During the addition, a white precipitate formed (pyridine - HBr). After complete addition of the acid bromide (one hour), the reaction was stirred at room temperature for three hours. This precipitate was then filtered and the CH_2Cl_2 evaporated. Additional precipitate and a yellow oil were obtained. The precipitate was filtered and washed with CH_2Cl_2 . The oil and CH_2Cl_2 wash were combined and washed with water (50 ml three times), then dried over MgSO_4 and treated with decolorizing carbon. The CH_2Cl_2 was evaporated to give a yellow oil. Distillation of the oil at $80^\circ\text{C}/10^{-7}$ mmHg gave a colorless oil. Yield 39.5g (45%).

300 MHz ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) δ : 6.43 (d, 1H); 6.14 (dd, 1H); 5.89 (d, 1H); 4.39 (m, 5 H); 1.82 (d, 3H).

Example 9

Homopolymerization of 2-(2-bromopropionyloxy) ethyl acrylate (2-BPEA):

To a 10 ml round bottom flask, copper (I) bromide

(43.6 mg, 0.3 mmol), copper(II) bromide (6.7 mg, 0.03 mmol), 4,4'-di-*t*-butyl-2,2'-dipyridyl (272.4 mg, 0.99 mmol) and a magnetic stirring bar were added. The flask was sealed with a rubber septum. The contents of the flask were then placed under vacuum and back-filled with argon (three times). Distilled and degassed 2-BPEA (5.0 ml, 30.9 mmol) was then added via a syringe. The flask was heated in an oil bath at 100°C, and stirred for 3.5 hours. Conversion was determined by ¹H NMR (88.6 %). The reaction mixture was dissolved in THF and precipitated into methanol/brine (three times). The polymer was obtained as a viscous solid and was dried under vacuum at room temperature for two days. The results are presented in Table 10 below:

Example 10

Multi-arm Star Poly(butyl acrylate):

Homopolymer of 2-BPEA (DP = 78) (1.0 g, 0.51 mmol (4 mmol Br)), copper-(I) bromide (29.1 mg, 0.2 mmol), 4,4'-di(1-butylpentyl)-2,2'-dipyridyl (163.2 mg, 0.4 mmol), and a magnetic stirring bar were added to a 50 ml round bottom flask. The flask was sealed with a rubber septum. The contents of the flask were placed under vacuum and back-filled with argon (three times). Distilled and degassed butyl acrylate (30.0ml, 209.3 mmol) was added via a syringe. The contents of the flask were dissolved by

stirring at room temperature. The flask was placed in an oil bath at 110°C, and stirred for 17 hours. Conversion was determined by ¹H NMR (79%). The reaction mixture was dissolved in THF and precipitated into methanol/brine (three times). The polymer was obtained as a viscous fluid and was dried under vacuum at room temperature for two days. $M_n = 111,000$ and $M_w / M_n = 2.6$ for multi arm butyl acrylate star polymer.

Example 11

Butyl Acrylate/2-BPEA Random Copolymer

To a 250 ml round bottom flask with a magnetic stirring bar, butyl acrylate (30.0 ml, 209 mmol), 2-BPEA (170 μ L, 1.05 mmol), AIBN (34.3 mg, 0.209 mmol) and benzene (100.0 ml) were added. The flask was sealed with a rubber septum and the flask placed in a 60°C oil bath. After 3 hours the reaction mixture became viscous; at which point it was quenched by precipitation into methanol/brine (three times). The resulting polymer was dried under vacuum at room temperature for one day. Yield 75%, $M_n = 215,000$; $M_w/M_n = 1.6$.

Example 12

Poly(Butyl Acrylate-g-Methyl Methacrylate):

5g of poly(butyl acrylate-co-2-BPEA) was dissolved in 15.0 g of dimethoxybenzene (DMB) at 85°C in a stoppered

round bottom flask. Separately, in a 5 ml round bottom flask, copper(I) bromide (12.3 mg, 0.085 mmol), copper(II) bromide (1.8 mg, 0.008 mmol), and 4,4'-di(1-butylpentyl)-2,2'-dipyridyl (75.7 mg, 0.19 mmol) were dissolved in methyl methacrylate (MMA) (3.0 ml, 28 mmol) under oxygen free conditions. 1.8 ml of this MMA solution was then added to a DMB solution at 85°C. The reaction was heated for 18 hours at 85°C while stirring. The reaction mixture was dissolved in THF and precipitated into methanol (two times). The white, tacky solid was dried under vacuum at room temperature. The results are presented in Table 11 below.

TABLE 10

Results of the Homopolymerization of 2-BPEA by
Atom Transfer Radical Polymerization

Sample	Time (h)	Conv. (%) ^a	M_n^b	M_w/M_n^b	M_n^c	DP ^c	DB ^d	DB ^e
A	3.5	89	4,600	2.8	19,570	78	44.5	42.3
B	23.0	95	8,300	2.0	25,380	101	47.5	43.8

a) As determined by 300 MHz ¹H NMR.

b) As determined by GPC versus narrow, linear poly(MMA) standards.

c) Degree of polymerization: as determined by 620 MHz ¹H NMR.

d) Degree of branching as predicted by $\alpha = \text{conversion}/2$.

e) Degree of branching: as determined by 620 MHz ¹H NMR.

TABLE 11

Graft Copolymers of Butyl Acrylate

Monomer	M_n	M_w/M_n	Amt of Graft Copolymer (mol%)
Styrene	473,000	1.6	31%
MMA	337,000	2.2	11%

Example 13

Hyperbranched Acrylic Polymers with Narrow Polydispersity

Under oxygen free conditions (argon), methyl- α -chloroacrylate (1.0g, 6.6 mmol) was added to a tube containing benzyl chloride (5.75 mL, 0.05 mmol), Cu(I)Cl (4.95 mg, 0.05 mmol), and 4,4'-di-(1-butylpentyl)-2,2'-dipyridyl (40.8 mg, 0.10 mmol). The reaction tube was sealed and then heated to 110°C. After 3 hours the green reaction mixture was viscous and was dissolved in THF. This solution was then precipitated into MeOH/brine (3 times).

Table 9

Sample	[M]/[I]	Time (h)	Conversion	M_n	M_w/M_n
S-12-25	132	3.0	58	2190	1.15
S-12-39A	20	1.5	93	2260	1.24
S-12-41	66	4.5	90	1850	1.13
S-12-43	271	9.0	95	1950	1.15

Example 14

Polymerization of styrene initiated by difunctional polysiloxane macroinitiator

Polymerization of styrene initiated by the difunctional polysiloxane macroinitiator was carried out with CuCl/dNbipy catalyst in phenyl ether at 130°C . The macroinitiator dissolved well in the solvent and the produced polymer did not precipitate, although the catalyst system was not homogeneous. The polymerization was stopped after 480 min, because the reaction mixture became very viscous. The final conversion of styrene monomer was 70%.

GPC traces of the difunctional polysiloxane macroinitiator and the sample at 480 min are shown in Figure 12. The peak of produced polymer was always monomodal during the reaction, and shifted to higher molecular weight. The macroinitiator has $M_n = 9800$, $M_w/M_n = 2.40$, and the polymer produced after 480 min has, after reprecipitation in MeOH, $M_n = 28300$, and $M_w/M_n = 1.52$.

The plot of M_n and polydispersity dependence on conversion in this polymerization is shown in Figure 13. A linear increase of number average molecular weight, M_n , versus monomer conversions was observed. The polydispersity decreased with the progress of polymerization. It shows the reaction was well controlled and the polystyrene blocks have low polydispersity.

$^1\text{H-NMR}$ spectrum of the final product of poly(styrene-b-dimethylsiloxane-b-styrene) copolymer is shown in Figure

14. It reveals that the polymer consists of polystyrene and polydimethylsiloxane. The molar ratio of styrene to dimethylsiloxane unit was 0.84.

Example 15

Polymerization of butyl acrylate initiated by difunctional polysiloxane macroinitiator

Similarly to the poly(styrene-b-dimethylsiloxane-b-styrene) triblock copolymers, the poly(butyl acrylate-b-dimethylsiloxane-b-butyl acrylate) triblock copolymer was prepared. The polymerization of butyl acrylate initiated by the difunctional polydimethylsiloxane macroinitiator was carried out with $\text{CuCl}/\text{dNbipy}$ in 1,4-dimethoxybenzene at 100°C . The polymerization was stopped at 1020 min because of high viscosity. The produced polymer after 1020 min has $M_n = 24000$, and $M_w/M_n = 1.58$. The final product after reprecipitation from MeOH, was viscous solid with $M_n = 36500$, $M_w/M_n = 1.32$.

Example 16

Hydrosilation of 2-(4'-chloromethyl-benzyl)ethyldimethylsilane to vinyl dimethylsilyl terminated high-molecular-weight polydimethylsiloxane

A mixture of vinyl dimethylsilyl terminated polydimethylsiloxane ($M_n = 30,000-40,000$; 10.00 g), 2-(4'-chloromethylbenzyl)ethyldimethylsilane (0.20 g), $\text{Pt}[(\text{CH}_2=\text{CH})\text{Me}_2\text{Si}]_2\text{O}$ complex xylene solution (2.0×10^{-6} mmol)

and benzene (5.0 ml) was stirred at 70°C for 3 hours. Disappearance of the vinyl group of the polysiloxane was confirmed by ¹H-NMR. The reaction mixture was reprecipitated in MeOH to remove excess initiator.

Example 17

Polymerization of styrene initiated by high-molecular-weight polysiloxane macroinitiator

The polymerization was carried out in a previously dried flask equipped with a magnetic stirring bar under Ar. The prepared high-molecular-weight polysiloxane macroinitiator (2.0 g), CuCl (0.043 g), dNbipy (0.36 g) and anisole (1.33 ml) were put into the flask, and then the flask was degassed three times. Styrene (2.0 ml) was transferred to the flask by means of rubber septum and syringe/capillary technique. The mixture was stirred at 130°C under Ar. The conversion of the polymerization was determined by gas chromatography (GC) measurement of sampled reaction mixture. After 6 hours the heating was stopped, when the conversion of styrene was 47%. The reaction mixture was purified by means of short Al₂O₃ column and reprecipitation into MeOH from THF. the final polymer was analyzed by ¹H-NMR to show that the poly(dimethylsiloxane) core block has $M_n=40,000$ and the polystyrene side block has $M_n = 9,200$. THF solution of the polymer was casted on a glass and the solvent was

evaporated slowly to give an elastomeric material.

Example 18

Synthesis of Polysulfone

Polysulfone was synthesized in the following manner: To a 3-neck 300 ml round bottom flask with a Dean-Stark condenser, thermometer, and magnetic stir bar, bisphenol A (5.36 g, 23.5 mmol), 4,4'-difluorosulfone (5.00 g, 19.9 mmol), potassium carbonate (8.13 g, 58.8 mmol), N, N'-dimethylacetamide (60 ml) and toluene (40 ml) were added. The Dean-Stark apparatus was filled with 20 ml of toluene.

The reaction was heated to 140°C for 4 h to dehydrate the reaction. The temperature was then increased to 170°C overnight. The reaction mixture was cooled to rt and precipitated into MeOH/water (50:50). The resulting polymer was dissolved in THF and reprecipitated into MeOH/brine (2 times). Mass 7.53 g; Yield: 79%; $M_n = 4,300$, $M_w/M_n = 1.3$.

Example 19

Synthesis of bromopropionyl end capped polysulfone

5.0 g of polysulfone was dissolved in 50 ml of dry THF. To this stirring solution, pyridine (0.5 ml, 5.88 mmol) and 2-bromopropionyl bromide (0.62 ml, 5.88 mmol) were added. A precipitate formed. After stirring at rt for 1h, the solution was precipitated into a methanol/water

(50:50) mixture. The polymer was reprecipitated three times with THF into MeOH/brine. $M_n = 4,600$; $M_w/M_n = 1.3$.

Example 20

Synthesis of Poly(styrene-b-sulfone-styrene)

1.0 g of the bromopropionyl end capped polysulfone (0.25 mmol, 0.5 mmol of Br), copper (I) bromide (36.1 mg, 0.25 mmol), dNbipy (202.4 mg, 0.5 mmol), and 1.0 of dimethoxybenzene were charged to a 10 ml round bottom flask with a magnetic stir bar. The flask was sealed with a rubber septum and then degassed with argon (vacuum/backfill). Degassed and deinhibited styrene (2.6 g, 25 mmol) was then added to the reaction flask. The reaction was heated to 110°C for 6 hours. Conversion as determined by ^1H NMR was 67%. The polymer was purified by precipitation from THF into methanol. Mass: 2.35 g, 66% yield, M_n by GPC was 9,100, $M_w/M_n = 1.1$. M_n by ^1H NMR was 10,700, with 62% styrene by weight.

Example 21

Synthesis of poly(butyl acrylate-b-sulfone-butylacrylate)

1.0 g of the bromopropionyl end capped polysulfone (0.25 mmol, 0.5 mmol of Br), copper (I) bromide (36.1 mg, 0.25 mmol), dNbipy (202.4 mg, 0.5 mmol), and 1.0 g of dimethoxybenzene were charged to a 10 ml round bottom flask with a magnetic stir bar. The flask was sealed with a

rubber septum and then degassed with argon (vacuum/backfill). Degassed and deinhibited butyl acrylate (3.2 g, 25 mmol) was then added to the reaction flask. The reaction was heated to 110°C for 6 hours. Conversion as determined by ^1H NMR was 95%. The polymer was purified by precipitation from THF into methanol. Mass: 2.85 g, 68% yield, M_n by GPC was 13,800, $M_w/M_n = 1.2$, M_n by ^1H NMR was 15,300, with 74% styrene by weight.

Example 22

Synthesis of Polyester from Adipic Acid and 1,6-Hexanediol

To a three neck round bottom flask with a Dean-Stark trap, nitrogen inlet and a magnetic stir bar, 1,6-hexanediol (5.0 g, 42.3 mmol), adipic acid (4.81 g, 32.9 mmol), 2-bromopropionic acid (1.44 g, 9.4 mmol) and toluene (100 ml) were added. The reaction was heated to reflux overnight. A sample was taken for GPC analysis, $M_n = 2,100$, $M_w/M_n = 1.5$.

To a flask, under an argon atmosphere, containing copper(I) bromide, (1.36.7 mg, 0.94 mmol) and dNbipy (767.0 mg, 1.88 mmol), 53.8 ml of deinhibited and degassed styrene was added. This mixture was stirred until all solids were dissolved and a dark red solution had formed. This solution was transferred to the polyester/toluene solution by cannula under argon. The reaction was stirred at 110°C for 16 hours. The reaction mixture was then cooled and

precipitated into methanol/brine (3 times). Mass: 64.0 g, Yield 86%. GPC: $M_n = 5,950$, $M_w/M_n = 1.3$. ^1H NMR showed 81% styrene by weight.

Example 23

Preparation of Macromonomer from Hydrosilyl Terminated Poly(dimethylsiloxane)

To a mixture of difunctional hydrosilyl terminated poly(dimethylsiloxane) (20.00 g;), vinylbenzyl chloride (3.29 ml, 2.31×10^{-2} mol; m,p-mixture) and benzene was added $\text{Pt}((\text{CH}_2=\text{CH})\text{Me}_2\text{Si})_2\text{O}_2$ xylene solution (0.32 ml, 3.08×10^{-5} mol) at room temperature under air. The mixture was stirred at 50°C for 1 h. A part of the reaction mixture was analyzed by ^1H -NMR showing no remaining hydrosilyl group. The product was isolated by reprecipitation in MeOH. The product had $M_n = 4400$ and $M_w/M_n = 1.25$.

Example 24

Polymerization of Styrene with the Macroinitiator

A mixture of the poly(dimethylsiloxane) macroinitiator (2.00 g), styrene (6.00 ml, 5.24×10^{-2} mol), CuCl (0.068 g, 6.90×10^{-4} mol) and dNbipy (0.56 g, 1.38×10^{-3} mol) was stirred at 130°C under Ar. The mixture was cooled down after 90 min, and diluted with THF. The solution was passed through a short Al_2O_3 column and poured into MeOH to give white precipitate. The precipitate was combined and dried in vacuo. The product had $M_n = 11000$, $M_w/M_n = 1.15$.

The GPC traces were always monomodal during the polymerization.

Obviously, numerous modifications and variations of the present invention are possible in light of the above teachings. It is therefore to be understood that within the scope of the appended claims, the invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically described herein.

IN THE CLAIMS

1. A process of atom or group transfer radical polymerization, comprising the steps of:

polymerizing one or more radically polymerizable monomers in the presence of a system comprising:

a macroinitiator containing at least one radically transferable group,

a transition metal-complex which repeatedly participates in a reversible redox cycle with the macroinitiator and/or the dormant polymer chain end, and the free radical formed at the one or more growing polymer chain ends,

one or more N-, O-, P-, or S-containing ligands which coordinates in a σ -bond or a π -bond to the transition metal, or any C-containing compound which can coordinate in a π -bond to the transition metal,

to form a (co)polymer.

2. The process of claim 1, wherein at least one of said one or more radically polymerizable monomers is present when polymerization is initiated and at least one of said one or more radically polymerizable monomers is added periodically or sequentially to the process.

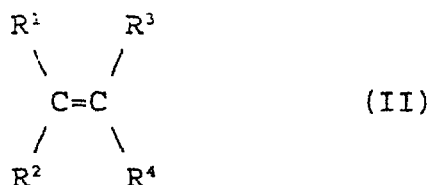
3. The process of claim 1, wherein the polymerizing step



is performed in bulk monomer, in solution, in suspension or emulsion, or in the gas phase.

4. The process of claim 1, wherein the metal complex is a copper salt.

5. The process of claim 1, wherein said one or more radically polymerizable monomers is a member selected from the group consisting of monomers of formula (II):



wherein R^1 and R^2 are independently selected from the group consisting of H, halogen, CF_3 , straight or branched alkyl of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, aryl, α,β -unsaturated straight or branched alkenyl or alkynyl of 2 to 10 carbon atoms, α,β -unsaturated straight or branched alkenyl of 2 to 6 carbon atoms substituted with a halogen, C_3 - C_8 cycloalkyl, heterocyclyl, $C(=Y)R^5$, $C(=Y)NR^6R^7$ and $YC(=Y)R^8$, where Y may be NR^8 or O, R^5 is alkyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, alkoxy of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, aryloxy or heterocyclyloxy, R^6 and R^7 are independently H or alkyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, or R^6 and R^7 may be joined together to form an alkylene group of from 2 to 5 carbon atoms, thus forming a 3- to 6-membered ring, and



R^8 is H, straight or branched C_1 - C_{20} alkyl and aryl; and

R^3 is selected from the group consisting of H, halogen, C_1 - C_6 alkyl, $COOR^9$; where R^9 is H, an alkali metal, or a C_1 - C_6 alkyl group or aryl; or

R^2 and R^3 may be joined to form a group of the formula $(CH_2)_n$, which may be substituted with from 1 to $2n'$ halogen atoms or C_1 - C_4 alkyl groups or $C(=O)-Y-C(=O)$, where n' is from 2 to 6 and Y is as defined above; or

R^4 is the same as R^1 or R^2 or optionally R^4 is a CN group; at least two of R^1 , R^2 , and R^3 are H or halogen.

6. The process of claim 1, wherein said macroinitiator comprises units derived from a second radically polymerizable monomer selected from the group consisting of styrene, α -methylstyrene, p-methylstyrene and isobutene; and wherein said one or more radically polymerizable monomers is a member selected from the group consisting of styrene, vinyl ethers, acrylates, methacrylates and acrylonitrile and wherein said radically polymerizable monomer and said second radically polymerizable monomer are different.

7. The process of claim 1, wherein said one or more radically polymerizable monomers are added prior to initiating the polymerization.



8. The process of claim 1, wherein said macroinitiator is prepared by polymerizing one or more vinyl monomers in the presence of a polymerization system, comprising:

- (i) an initiator having one or more radically transferable atoms or groups,
- (ii) a transition metal compound, and
- (iii) a ligand, able to coordinate with said transition metal compound;

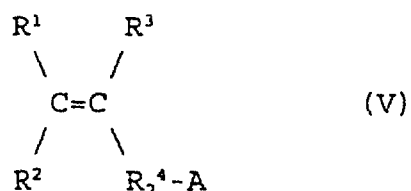
to thereby form a macroinitiator of the formula:



wherein each X is a radically transferable atom or group and n is an integer of 1 to 100, and wherein the number average molecular weight of said macroinitiator is between 500 to 100,000.

9. A process for making a (co)polymer, comprising the steps of:

(a) polymerizing an AB_2 monomer of formula (V):



in the presence of a catalyst system, comprising:



(i) a transition metal compound and
(ii) a ligand able to coordinate with said transition metal compound

to thereby initiate polymerization of said monomer and form a branched polymer;

wherein R^1 and R^2 are independently selected from the group consisting of H, halogen, CF_3 , straight or branched C_1 - C_{20} alkyl, α,β -unsaturated straight or branched C_2 - C_{10} alkenyl or alkynyl, α,β -unsaturated straight or branched C_2 - C_6 alkenyl substituted with a halogen, C_3 - C_8 cycloalkyl, heterocyclyl, $C(=Y)R^5$, $C(=Y)NR^6R^7$ and $YC(=Y)R^8$, where Y may be NR^8 or O, R^5 is C_2 - C_{20} -alkyl, C_2 - C_{20} alkoxy, aryloxy or heterocyclyloxy, R^6 and R^7 are independently H or alkyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, or R^6 and R^7 may be joined together to form a C_2 - C_5 alkylene group, thus forming a 3- to 6-membered ring, and R^8 is H, straight or branched C_1 - C_{20} alkyl or aryl; and

R^3 is selected from the group consisting of H, halogen, C_1 - C_6 alkyl, $COOR^9$, where R^9 is H, an alkali metal, or a C_1 - C_6 alkyl group, or aryl; and

R_2^4 is an organic spacer group and A is selected from the group consisting of $R_2^{4'}-X$ and X, where X is a halogen, and $R_2^{4'}$ is selected from the group consisting of straight or branched



C_2-C_{20} , alkyl, α,β -unsaturated straight or branched C_2-C_{10} alkenyl or alkynyl, α,β -unsaturated straight or branched C_2-C_6 alkenyl, C_3-C_8 cycloalkyl, heterocyclyl, $C(=Y)R^5$, $C(=Y)NR^6R^7$ and $YC(=Y)R^8$, $C(=Y)-Y-R^5-C(=Y)-R^8$ where Y may be NR^8 or O, R^5 is alkyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, alkoxy of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, aryloxy or heterocyclyloxy, R^6 and R^7 are independently H or alkyl of from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, or R^6 and R^7 may be joined together to form an alkylene group of from 2 to 5 carbon atoms, thus forming a 3- to 6-membered ring, and R^8 is H, straight or branched C_1-C_{20} alkyl and aryl; and

R^1 and R^3 may be joined to form a group of the formula $(CH_2)_{n'}$ or $C(=O)-Y-C(=O)$, where n' is from 2 to 6 and Y is as defined above; and, optionally,

(b) using said branched polymer as a macroinitiator for atom transfer radical polymerization of a second radically polymerizable monomer.

10. The process of claim 9, wherein said second radically polymerizable monomer is a second and different AB_2 monomer of formula (V).

11. The process of claim 9, wherein said step (a) further comprises copolymerization of said AB_2 monomer with a second radically polymerizable monomer.



12. The process of claim 9, wherein said AB₂ monomer of step (a) has a polarity that is different from the polarity of said one or more radically polymerizable monomers of step (b).

13. The process of claim 9, wherein said AB₂ monomer is selected from the group consisting of p-chloromethylstyrene, methyl- α -chloroacrylate, 2-(2-bromopropionoxy) ethyl acrylate, p-chlorosulfonyl styrene, vinyl chloroacetate, chloroacrylonitrile, 2-(2-bromopropionoxy)ethyl methacrylate, 2-(2-bromoisobutyryloxy)ethyl methacrylate and 2-(2-bromoisobutyryloxy)ethyl acrylate.

14. The process of claim 9, wherein said branched polymer having one or more radically transferable atoms or groups is a multi-functional initiator and wherein the copolymer formed in step (b) is a multi-armed star copolymer.

15. The process of claim 14, wherein said AB₂ monomer is chloromethyl styrene and said second radically polymerizable monomer is butyl acrylate.

16. A multi-armed star copolymer prepared by the process as claimed in claim 15.

17. The process of claim 9, wherein said AB₂ monomer is 2-(2-bromopropionoxy)ethyl acrylate and said second radically polymerizable monomer is butyl acrylate.



18. A multi-armed star copolymer prepared by the process as claimed in claim 17.

19. The process of claim 1, wherein said macroinitiator is formed by polymerizing or copolymerizing a vinyl monomer and an AB₂ monomer in the presence of a radical initiating system, to thereby form a macroinitiator of the formula:



wherein each X is a radically transferable atom or group and n is an integer of 1 to 100 and is distributed along the copolymer backbone.

20. The process of claim 19, wherein the macroinitiator is a copolymer of butyl acrylate and 2-(2-bromopropionoxy)ethyl acrylate.

21. The process of claim 1, wherein the macroinitiator is prepared by polymerizing a vinyl monomer by a "living" carbocationic process using an alkyl halide initiator and a Lewis acid catalyst to provide a polymeric initiator with one or more terminal halide groups.

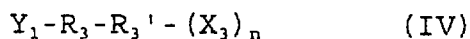
22. The process of claim 21, wherein said vinyl monomer is selected from the group consisting of styrene, α -methylstyrene, p-methylstyrene, isobutylene and vinyl ethers.

23. The process of claim 1, wherein the macroinitiator



is prepared by a process comprising:

reacting a compound of formula (IV):



with a polymer capable of reacting therewith to form the macroinitiator,

wherein X_3 is a radically transferable atom or group, n is an integer of 1 to 100, Y_1 is a functional group, R_3 is selected from the group consisting of alkyl, aryl and aralkyl group, and R_3' is a C_1 - C_{20} -alkyl group.

24. The process of claim 23, wherein said polymer capable of reacting with the compound of formula (IV) is a polydimethylsiloxane.

25. The process of claim 1, wherein said macroinitiator is prepared by polycondensation.

26. The process of claim 1, wherein said macroinitiator is a polysiloxane having one or more radically transferable groups and said vinyl monomer is a member selected from the group consisting of styrene and butyl acrylate.

27. A poly(styrene-b-dimethylsiloxane-b-styrene) block copolymer.

28. A poly(butyl acrylate-b-dimethylsiloxane-b-butyl acrylate) block copolymer.



29. The process of claim 23, wherein said polymer capable of reacting with a compound of formula (IV) is a hydroxy end-capped polysulfone.

30. A poly(styrene-b-sulfone-b-styrene) block copolymer.

31. A poly(butyl acrylate-b-sulfone-b-butyl acrylate) block copolymer.

32. The process of claim 1, wherein said macroinitiator is a polyester prepared by polycondensation of a monomer mixture of 1,6-hexanediol, adipic acid and 2-bromopropionic acid.

33. A poly(styrene-b-polyester-b-styrene) block copolymer.

34. The process of claim 1, wherein said macroinitiator is prepared by anionic polymerization.

35. A process of atom or group transfer radical polymerization, comprising the steps of:

polymerizing one or more radically polymerizable monomers containing a polar group in the presence of a system comprising:

an initiator containing at least one radically transferable group,

a transition metal-complex which repeatedly participates



in a reversible redox cycle with the initiator and/or the dormant polymer chain end, and the free radical formed at the one or more growing polymer chain ends,

one or more N-, O-, P-, or S-containing ligands which coordinates in a σ -bond or a π -bond to the transition metal, or any C-containing compound which can coordinate in a π -bond to the transition metal,

to form a (co)polymer.

36. The process of claim 35, wherein said one or more radically polymerizable monomers containing a polar group is selected from the group consisting of acrylonitrile and methacrylonitrile.

37. A polyacrylonitrile prepared by the process of claim 36.

38. A polymethacrylonitrile prepared by the process of claim 36.

39. The process of claim 35, wherein the polymerization further comprises a radically polymerizable monomer selected from the group consisting of acrylates and methacrylates and wherein the radically polymerizable monomer containing a polar group is selected from the group consisting of acrylonitrile and methacrylonitrile.

