THE SYNTHESIS AND CHARACTERIZATION OF LIQUID CRYSTAL POLYMER

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this thesis is of my own except for the quotation and references, which have been properly acknowledged.

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May, 2008



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Here is a brief poem for all of us to enjoy:

Sadly, perhaps mark the last, But hopefully, not the end, This fond memory of the past, Remain dear as long as can.



ABSTRACT

A liquid crystal polymer was synthesized by AIBN free-radical polymerization from an azobenzene mesogen rod-shaped monomer. The liquid crystal monomer was also synthesized by azo-decoupling reaction and Williamson ether synthesis. The thermal property of the LCP monomer was determined by DSC while the structure was determined by FT-IR. It is possible to further confirmed the structure of the synthesized compound if X-Ray diffraction was done. The presence of the azo linkage in both synthesized compounds showed potential for non-linear optic studies as well as photoswitching experiments concerned with cis-trans isomerization cycles.



ABSTRAK

Hablur cecair polimer disintesis melalui tindakbalas radikal bebas AIBN menggunakan monomer bentuk rod yang bermesogen azobenzene. Hablur cecair monomer pula dihasilkan dari tindakbalas azo-decoupling dan sintesis ether Williamson. Ciri-ciri termal hablur cecair monomer tersebut ditentukan oleh DSC manakala strukturnya ditentukan oleh FT-IR. Strukturnya dapat disahkan dengan lebih tepat dengan kaedah pembelahan sinar –X. Kehadiran rantai azo dalam bahan yang disintesis menunjukkan potensi dalam kajian optik tidak linear serta penukaran foton bekaitan isomerasi cis-trans.



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LIST OF SYMBOLS

°C	= Degree Celcius
LC	= liquid crystal
LCPs	= liquid crsytal polymers
LC	= liquid crystal
mm	= milimeter
g	= gram
mmol	= milimol
MLCs	= monomer liquid crystal
Equiv	= equivalent
DSC	= differential scanning calorimetry
AIBN	= 2,2' –Azobis(isobutyronitrile)
FT-IR	= Fourier Transform Infrared
HPLC	= high performance liquid chromatography
Т	= temperature
NMR	= nuclear magnetic resonance
¹³ C	= Carbon-13
$^{1}\mathrm{H}$	= hydrogen
IR	= Infrared
MCLCP	= main-chain liquid crystal polymer
SCLCP	= side-chain liquid crystal polymer
Tg	= glass transition temperature
HCl	= hydrochloric acid
%	= percent
THF	= tetrahydrofuran



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Polymers which exhibits a combination of long range motion and fluidity together with a degree of order measurable by optical and scattering technique in the quiescent state and over characteristic temperature and concentration range intervals are termed liquid crystal polymers (Aharoni & Edwards, 1994). These materials are receiving more and more interest nowadays because of their unique properties compared with ordinary polymer (Zhong, 1998), for example cooperative behaviour and liquid crystallinity (Aharoni & Edwards, 1994).

Such polymers are of technical interest since they combine the elasticity of polymers and the liquid crystalline properties of the liquid crystal monomers (Li *et al.*, 1996) as anisotropic fluids (Davidson, 1996) to give an overall better mechanical property (Brostow *et al.*, 1999). As cited by Kurihara *et al.* (2007), polymeric LCs are well known to show excellent storage stability in contrast with low molar mass LCs. Also, corrosion resistance of LCP is in general very good with all chemical products



although very few experimental data are available. In general terms, liquid crystal polymers are known to possess very high tensile strength and tensile modulus , high heat deflection temperature and very low coefficient of linear thermal expansion (lower than metallic material coefficient) (Deronzier & Bentolinit, 1997; Wang *et al.*, 2006) as shown from the data in Table 1.1. Similarly, Wang et al. (2006) recognizes liquid crystal polymers as important materials for moulded interconnected devices due to their excellent properties, e.g. high temperature resistance, chemical stability, low-thermal expansion coefficient as well as excellent flow properties for the fabrication of fine structures by moulding techniques.

The morphology of liquid crystal polymers are closely related to its molecular structure and processing histories to give each of this material its specific crystallization and multiphase behaviour resulting in different response time to stress and temperature. (Weiss, 1998). This phenomena of alignment and packing of macromolecules into an organization pattern of the molecules in the systems is due to (Weiss, 1998) inter- or intra- chain hydrogen bonding induced by the presence of mesogenic groups (Aharoni & Edwards, 1994). Mesogenic groups are stiff and elongated units in parallel arrays acting as pendants to chain backbones responsible for stiffness and shape anisotropy (Aharoni & Edwards, 1994).

Huang (1999) proved that molecular interactions between mesogenic moieties of liquid crystal polymer showed various patterns of changes during phase transition processes by studying intermolecular complex formation between mesogenic terohenyldiimide moieties of thermotropic liquid-crystalline (LC) polyimide using florescence technique. Below a glass transition temperature, Tg,



molecular organization may be frozen (Davidson, 1996). Determination of the polymer chain conformation in the different mesophases is a problem because of the competition between the polymer entropy which leads the chain to adopt a random coil conformation and the long range order of the monomers in the mesophases (Li *et al.*, 1996).

Liquid crystal polymers are prepared through combinations of formanisotropic structural units (mesogenic groups) and polymer chains (Zentel, 1998). A characteristic feature of liquid crystal polymers is their ability to have a characteristic alignment according to the external field as they consist of anisotropic mesogens that are very sensitive to external fields such as stress, electric or magnetic field, making it highly valued in numerous applications such as high performance fibers, engineering plastics and functional materials (Zhong, 1989). Mesogenic groups can be incorporated into polymer chains forming liquid crystal main-chain polymer or attached to a flexible polymer chain as side groups forming liquid crystal side-chain polymer (Wittman et al., 1998; Huang *et al.*, 1999; Zentel, 1989).

Liquid crytallinity in liquid crystal polymer is an anisotropic behaviour (Gedde, 1995) of which its properties vary with the measured direction whereby compared with true liquid, a restricted mobility of individual molecules is preserved (Campbell, 1994). The flexible, long chains of polymer molecules are readily compatible with liquid crystalinity where many chains can be aligned with relative ease in a bulk sample when the polymer chain is rather stiff and has limited mobility (Campbell, 1994). This orientational order is a nature feature of liquid crystal polymers in all their mesomorphic states ranging from nematic to smectic (Gedde, 1995).



Mesophases consisting of phase or phases between the low temperature crystalline or glassy state and the high temperature isotropic melt (Aharoni & Edwards, 1998) are differentiated from each other by the different ways by which the molecules pack. (Collyer, 1996). The number of mesophases through which polymer molecules pass is considerably less than those encountered in liquid crystals of low molecular mass (Collyer, 1996). Nematic mesophases shows molecular alignment without a special regularity (Gedde, 1995). The low viscosity exhibited is of interest to polymer processing as used in the spinning of lyotropic dopes to make fibres like Kevlar (Collyer, 1996). In the high viscosity smectic mesophases (Fried, 1995), molecules are aligned and stratified or layered (Wittold, 1994). Due to structural differentiation (Aharoni & Edwards, 1994), as a consequence of the different method in liquid crystal creation in liquid formation. Campbell (1994) indicated two primary classes of liquid crystal polymers, namely the thermatropic and lyotropic types.

Liquid crystal polymers are typically multiphasis and contain at least one LCrich phase which consists of islands (Brostow *et al.*, 1999) where three kinds of LCPs exists:lyotropic, barotropic and thermatropic.Three types of systems widely investigated in previous theory and experiment involved primarily the lyotropic solutions of stiff-chain polymer, thermatropic main-chain and side-chain liquid crystal polymers where the mesogenic group is respectively incorporated into the chain backbone or is pendant from the backbone and thermatropic solutions of LCPs dissolved in low-molar-mass solvent (Jamieson *et al.*, 1996).



1.2 Objective

- 1.2.1 To prepare liquid crystal polymers.
- **1.2.2** To identify the molecular structure by using spectroscopy method.
- 1.2.2 To determine the mesophase using differential scanning calorimetry.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 A brief history of Liquid Crystal Polymer.

In 1888, Austrian botanist Friedrich Reinitzer provided the first scientific description for liquid crystals. In 1988, the German scientist Otto Lehmann coined the term 'liquid crystals'. In 1900, Vorlander started a research group working on liquid crystals and this group continued to exists at Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg up to today with constant contribution by Horst SAckmannn, Dietrich Demus, Frank Kuschel, Horst Kresse and others.

In 1923, after more than two decades of working on MLCs, Vorlander realized that PLCs must exist also. He questioned on whether the possibility of making molecules longer and longer would resulted in the disappearance of the liquid crystalline state. At that time, Volander had already speculated that there was no limit to the liquid crystalline state by chain elongation unless the substance could not melt any more without decomposition and could not be seen under a microscope.



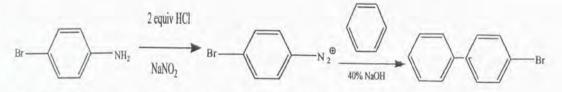
Klepl and later Emil Fischer already obtained long chains but did not realize their liquid crystalline character. Hermann Fischer gave some samples prepared by his father to Vorlander and Vorlander in turn found that they were liquid crystalline. Therefore, German researchers had already discovered liquid crystal polymers in the nineteenth century (Brostow, 1992).

2.2 Organic Synthesis Reaction in Preparation of LCP

2.2.1 Coupling reaction by Gomberg Bachmann reaction

According to Smith (2002), there are many variations of aromatic diazonium salts used to join alkyl fragments or alkyl-aryl fragments in the coupling reaction . One example of generating the diazonium salt is treatment of an aromatic amine with nitrous acid. This reaction occurs through HONO via reaction of HNO₃/ HCl or NaNO₂/2 HCl. In the Gomberg-Bachmann reaction, diazonium salts are coupled to other aromatic compounds in the presence of a base.

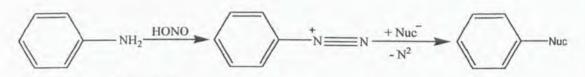
A typical example is the treatment of 4-bromo-aniline with nitrous acid, giving a diazonium salt which reacted with benzene to give biphenyl derivative in 46 % yield as shown in Scheme 2.1. Hydrogenation of the nitrobenzene derivatives gives aromatic precursors.



Scheme 2.1 Coupling reaction by Gomberg Bachmann reaction.



In the example in Scheme 2.2, an aryl diazonium compound (benzenediazonium chloride) is formed when a primary amine such as aniline is treated with nitrous acid (HONO), generated by the reaction of sodium nitrite and HCl or H_2SO_4 . The nitrogen fragments of a diazonium ion (Ar-N2+) is a good leaving group and can be displaced by a variety of nucleophiles to give the substitution product. Many different nucleophiles can react with aryl diazonium salts through different mechanism, ranging from S_N1 type process to those involving radicals (Smith, 2002).



Scheme 2.2 Nucleophilic substitution reaction.

2.2.2 Williamson's Ether Synthesis.

The Williamson reaction is a very useful transformation in organic synthesis since the products are of value in both industrial and academic applications. The Williamson synthesis usually involves the employment of an alkali-metal salt of the hydroxy compound and an alkyl halide. These reactions are usually performed using organic solvents or with phase-transfer catalysts in the presence of a base followed by refluxing for several hours. Methods which involve alkylation of a phenol are usually highly efficient, although some care must be exercised in the choice of solvent in order to avoid formation of both C- and O-alkylated products (Paul & Gupta, 2004).



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