VISCOELASTIC ANALYSIS BY A DYNAMIC SURFACE FORCE APPARATUS OF ADSORBED AND GRAFTED POLYMERS ON INORGANIC SUBSTRATES

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Description of the apparatus

The Surface Force Apparatus

the displacement of the indentor is "given" by a coil and measured with a capacitive sensor. Springs measure the stiffness and damping....

Coil
Spring
Capacitive sensor (displacement)
Drop of polymer
Silicon wafer
The Surface Force Apparatus is used as a **Nanorheometer**

the sphere oscillates at a constant strain around the \( h_0 \) position. The magnitude of the oscillation is around 2 nm.

\[
F^* = \frac{6\pi R^2 U^*}{h_0} G^*
\]

The polymer is confined between the sphere which is made of glass. The radius is equal to about 1 mm. The plate is a Silicon Wafer.

The magnitude of the oscillation corresponds to the linear domain.

We performed frequency sweep.
**Adsorbed polymers**

We have studied series of homopolymers (as Polybutadiene, PolybutylAcrylate, PDMS...)

Frequency range: $3.10^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1} < \omega < 3.10^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$

(we have used also the SFA from Ecole Centrale de Lyon for this study)

Distance range $10 \text{ nm} < h_0 < 1 \text{ mm}$
Results for adsorbed polymers

Polybutadiene, Mw=10000 g.mol⁻¹

One can evaluate easily the passage from nonoverlapping (liquid like) to overlapping (solid like) layers. For the nonoverlapping situation we have measured the zero-shear viscosity and the steady-state compliance for each distance...
Results for adsorbed polymers (nonoverlapping layers)

- The reduced value is equal to the ratio between the parameter at high distance (no confinement) over the parameter at small distance.

- The reduced distance is equal to the distance between the sphere and the plate over $2e$. $e$ is defined as the compression threshold of the adsorbed layer (adsorbed layer are overlapped for $h<e$). For this polymer we have measured $e = 4$ nm $= 1.3 R_g$. 
at higher frequencies, near the rubbery plateau domain, the modulus is lower than the plateau modulus of the homopolymer

which can be explained by slipping effects....
**Grafted polymers**

To control the surfaces, we have synthesized brushes by using «Grafting from» process which allows to control brushes. An anchoring group is attached to the surface and the polymer grafting from in situ by using Controlled Radical Polymerization (CRP).

We add free chains (non entangled chains) to swell the network of tethered chains and confined this system.

Self-Assembled Mono-layer of the agent

In-situ generation of the polymer
Preliminary Results for grafted polymers

We have added free chains on the brushes and explore the behavior according to the confinement. Results show that it is easier to obtain the transition between liquid like and solid like.

We will explore different molecular weight and grafted density... and analyzed slipping effect on the system developed by L. Léger et al. We also prepared symmetrical system (sphere and plate grafted).

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L. Leger et al., CR Chimie, 2006
Chain dynamics

Pr. Montfort has recently proposed a five layer representation of the experimental system:

- the interpenetration between tethered and free chains creates a transition zone or interface
- the penetration length depends on the grafting density and on the chains length
- its dynamics is that of free chains modified by the change of environment: loss of entanglements, variation of the lifetime of entanglements (therefore, of the tube renewal time)
- its extension $\varepsilon$ is higher than the penetration length

Modelization

Semi-local complex compliance:

\[ J^* (\omega, h) = \frac{2}{h^3} \left[ (J_b^* - J_i^*)(4e^2 - 6eh + 3h^2)e + (J_i^* - J_f^*)\left\{4(e + \varepsilon)^2 - 6h(e + \varepsilon) + 3h^2\right\}(e + \varepsilon) + \frac{1}{2}J_f^*h^3 \right] \]

Global complex elasticity:

\[ G^*(\omega, h_0) = h_0 \int_{h_0}^{h} dh \int_{h}^{\infty} \frac{2dh}{h^3 J^*(\omega, h)} \]

Confrontation model-experimental results for adsorbed polymers

**Fit:**

\[ e = 5 \text{ nm} \]

\[ \varepsilon = 5e \text{ for } h_0 > 12 \varepsilon \]

\[ \eta_b / \eta_f = 12, \ J_b / J_f = 3 \]

\[ 1 < \eta_i / \eta_f < 1.8 \quad 20 < J_i / J_f < 2200 \]
Conclusion

We have sketched out a picture of submicronic gaps of polymer melts, dividing it into homogeneous layers

*Prominent role of the interface between trapped and free chains*

*Compliance much more sensitive to the details of the local structure than viscosity*

To improve experimental measurement we propose a symmetrical systems with chains grafted from the sphere and the plate *, and study the slipping effects.
! Thank you!
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