



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**PREPARATION AND CHARACTERIZATION OF POLYLACTIC ACID/  
POLYCAPROLACTONE/ MODIFIED CLAY COMPOSITES**

**WISAM H. HOIDY  
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**By**

**WISAM H. HOIDY**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
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**March 2010**



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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POLYCAPROLACTONE/ MODIFIED CLAY COMPOSITES**

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**March 2010**

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In this study, synthesis and characterisation of fatty hydroxamic acid (FHA) from palm olein with hydroxylamine using reflux method. FTIR spectrum,  $^1\text{H}$  NMR and elemental analysis tests conducted on FHA reveal that FHA was successfully produced from palm olein,. The conversion percentage of palm olein to FHA increases (81%) when the optimum reaction time to be 10 hours and a molar ratio of (hydroxylamine to palm olein) 7:1.

FHA was used as one of the organic compounds to modify natural clay (Na-MMT). The clay modification was carried out by stirring the clay particles in an aqueous solution of the FHA or octadecylammonium (ODA) by which the clay layer distance increases from 12.2 Å to 31.02 Å and 29.49 Å, respectively. The modified clays were then used in the preparation of polylactic acid/polycaprolactone (PLA/PCL) composites. The optimum clay contents that yielded maximum tensile strength were 2% and 3% for PLA/PCL-ODA-MMT and PLA/PCL-FHA-MMT, respectively. The



intercalation of the modifier in the clay layer was characterized by X-ray diffraction (XRD), thermogravimetric analysis (TGA) and Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR). Elemental analysis (CHN) was used to estimate the amount of FHAs and ODA in the clay.

In the first part of the preparation, the composites were synthesized by melt blending of the modified clay and PLA/PCL by a two-roll-mill internal mixer blending at a temperature setting of 185°C, rotor speed of 50 rpm and the mixing time of 12 minutes. Mechanical properties of the produced composites were then characterized by an Instron universal testing machine.

The composites were also synthesized by using solution casting in the second part of the study. In this process, Chloroform was chosen to dissolve PLA and PCL under magnetic stirrer for 1 h. The required amount of the modified clay was added to the mixture, the composites were poured into Petri dish and left to dry.

The results indicate that the presence of the modified clay has dramatically improved the properties. Both of PLA/PCL-ODA-MMT and PLA/PCL-FHA-MMT composites prepared by melt blending have high tensile strength 38.91 MPa and 39.31 MPa compared to those of solution casting 31.43 MPa and 32.84 MPa for PLA/PCL-ODA-MMT and PLA/PCL-FHA-MMT, respectively. These composites were further characterized by XRD, FTIR, TGA and scanning electron microscopy (SEM).

It was found that similar results of FTIR and TGA were obtained when solution casting and melt blending processes were used to produce PLA/PCL, PLA/PCL-ODA-MMT and PLA/PCL-FHA-MMT. Thermal stability of these composites was improved to 349.26 °C and 354.62 °C for PLA/PCL-ODA-MMT and PLA/PCL-FHA-MMT, respectively, compared with the blend of polymers 342.15 °C. While the values of basal spacing in melt blending were higher 34.61 Å and 36.15 Å compare with those of solution casting 31.15 Å and 33.18 Å for PLA/PCL-ODA-MMT and PLA/PCL-FHA-MMT, respectively.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**PENYEDIAAN DAN PENCIRIAN KOMPOSIT TANAH LIAT ASID  
POLILAKTIK/POLIKAPROLAKTON**

Oleh

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Dalam kajian ini, sintesis dan pencirian lemak asid hidroksamik, FHA daripada olein sawit dan hidroksilamine dengan cara refluks. Spektrum FTIR,  $^1\text{H}$  NMR dan ujian analisis unsur dijalankan keatas FHA menunjukkan FHA berjaya disintesis daripada olein sawit. Peratusan perubahan daripada olein sawit kepada FHA bertambah (81%) apabila masa tindak balas optimum sebanyak 10 jam dan molar berat (hidroksilamine kepada olein sawit) 7:1

FHA, digunakan sebagai salah satu sebatian organik untuk mengubahsuai tanah liat semulajadi (Na-MMT). Pengubahsuaian tanah liat dilakukan dengan mengacau partikel tanah liat dalam larutan akueus FHAs atau oktadesilammonium (ODA) yang mana jarak lapisan tanah liat masing-masing meningkat daripada 12.2 Å kepada 31.02 Å dan 29.47 Å. Tanah liat yang diubahsuai kemudiannya digunakan dalam penyediaan komposit asid polilaktik/polikaprolakton (PLA/PCL). Kandungan tanah liat optimum yang menghasilkan kekuatan tegangan yang maksimum ialah 2% dan



3% untuk masing-masing PLA/PCL-ODA-MMT dan PLA/PCL-FHA-MMT. Apitan untuk pengubahsuaian dalam lapisan tanah liat telah dicirikan menggunakan pembelauan X-ray (XRD), analisis termogravimetrik (TGA) dan Spektroskopi Inframerah (FTIR). Analisis unsure (CHN) digunakan untuk menganggarkan amaun FHA dan ODA dalam tanah liat.

Dalam bahagian pertama penyediaan, komposit disintesis melalui pengadunan lebur daripada tanah liat dan PLA/PCL dengan sebatian pencampur dalaman dua-giling-gulung pada suhu 185 °C, kelajuan rotor 50 rpm dan masa pencampuran 12 minit. Sifat mekanikal komposit yang dihasilkan kemudiannya dicirikan dengan mesin pengujian semesta Instron.

Komposit juga disintesis dengan menggunakan penuangan larutan dalam bahagian kedua kajian ini. Dalam proses ini, kloroform telah dipilih untuk melarutkan PLA dan PCL menggunakan pengacau magnetik selama 1 jam. Tanah liat terubahsuai dengan amaun yang dikehendaki kemudiannya ditambahkan ke dalam campuran, Komposit tuang ke dalam piring Petri dan dibiarkan untuk kering.

Keputusan menunjukkan kewujudan tanah liat terubahsuai secara ketara telah memperbaiki sifat komposit. Kedua-dua komposit PLA/PCL-ODA-MMT dan PLA/PCL-FHA-MMT yang disediakan dengan pengadunan lebur mempunyai kekuatan tensil yang tinggi 38.91 MPa and 39.31 MPa berbanding yang dihasilkan melalui penuangan larutan 31.43 MPa and 32.84 MPa. Komposit ini telah dicirikan selanjutnya menggunakan XRD, FTIR, TGA. dan mikroskopi pengimbasan elektron (SEM).

Didapati bahawa keputusan FTIR dan TGA yang serupa diperolehi apabila proses adunan larutan dan pengadunan lebur digunakan untuk menghasilkan PLA/PCL, PLA/PCL-ODA-MMT dan PLA/PCL-FHA-MMT. Kestabilan TERMA komposit dipertingkatkan masing-masing kepada 349.26 °C and 354.62 °C untuk PLA/PCL-ODA-MMT, PLA/PCL-FHA-MMT berbanding odunan polimer 342.15 °C. Sementara itu, nilai jarak tapak dalam sebatian lebur adalah lebih tinggi 34.61 Å and 36.15 Å berbanding dengan adunan larutan 31.15 Å and 33.18 Å masing-masing untuk PLA/PCL-ODA-MMT dan PLA/PCL-FHA-MMT.



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I certify that an Examination Committee met on **18 march 2010** to conduct the final examination of **Wisam H. Hoidy** on his thesis entitled " **Fatty hydroxamic acid modified clay as an additive for polylactic acid/ polycaprolactone composite**" in accordance with Universities and the University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the degree of Master of Science.

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

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**WISAM H. HOIDY**

Date:

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	ii
<b>ABSTRAK</b>	v
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	viii
<b>APPROVAL</b>	ix
<b>DECLARATION</b>	xi
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	xiv
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	xv
<b>LIST OF SCHEME</b>	xviii
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATION</b>	xix
<b>CHAPTER</b>	
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.1 Background of study	1
1.2 Problem statement	2
1.3 Scope of study	3
1.4 Objectives of the study	3
<b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	
2.1 Composite	4
2.2 Microcomposites and Nanocomposites	5
2.2.1 Polymer Layered Silicate Nanocomposites	9 10
2.2.2 Preparation of nanocomposites	11
2.2.3 Polymer nanocomposites	12
2.3 Fatty Hydroxamic Acid	13
2.4 Polymer blends	14
2.5 Biodegradable poly(L-lactide)/poly( $\epsilon$ -caprolactone)	17
2.6 Clay montmorillonite	20
2.7 Clay modification	22
2.8 PLA/PCL blend	23
2.9 Polymer blends/clay composites	25
2.10 Preparation of polymer/clay composites	29
2.11 Properties of polymer/clay composite	
<b>3 METHODOLOGY</b>	
3.1 Materials	34
3.2 Synthesis of Fatty Hydroxamic Acids (FHA)	35
3.3 Preparation of PLA/PCL by solution method	35
3.4 Preparation of PLA/PCL by blending method	36
3.5 Preparation of organoclay	38
3.6 Preparation of PLA/PCL–clay composites (by solution	



	casting).	39
3.7	Preparation of PLA/PCL –clay composites (by blending)	41
3.8	Characterization	43
3.8.1	X-Ray Diffraction (XRD)	43
3.8.2	Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) Spectroscopy	44
3.8.3	Elemental Analysis (CHN)	44
3.8.4	Thermogravimetric Analysis (TGA)	44
3.8.5	Tensile Properties Measurements	45
3.8.6	Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM)	45
<b>4</b>	<b>RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b>	
4.1	Synthesis and characterisation of fatty hydroxamic acid from palm olein	47
4.1.1	Effect of Reaction Time	47
4.1.2	Effect of Organic Solvent	48
4.1.3	Effect of Concentration of Hydroxylamine	50
4.1.4	Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) Spectroscopy	52
4.1.5	<sup>1</sup> H Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR)	53
4.1.6	Elemental Analysis (CHN)	53
4.2	Synthesis and characterisation of organoclay from sodium montmorillonite and fatty hydroxamic acid	53
4.2.1	X-Ray Diffraction (XRD) Analysis	53
4.2.2	Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) Spectroscopy	57
4.2.3	Thermogravimetric Analysis (TGA)	59
4.3	Preparation and characterisation of polylactic acid /polycaprolactone/modified clay composites	61
4.3.1	Elemental Analysis (CHN)	61
4.3.2	Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) Spectroscopy	62
4.3.3	Thermogravimetric Analysis (TGA)	66
4.3.4	Tensile strength	69
4.3.5	X-ray diffraction (XRD)	72
4.3.6	Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM)	78
<b>5</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	81
	Recommendation for further studies	84
	<b>REFERENCES</b>	85
	<b>APPENDICES</b>	95
	<b>BIODATA OF STUDENT</b>	109
	<b>LIST OF PUBLICATION</b>	110

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table</b>		<b>Page</b>
3.1	Amount of PLA and PCL used to optimize the ratio of PLA/PCL by solution casting	36
3.2	Amount of PLA and PCL used to optimize the ratio of PLA/PCL by melt blending	38
3.3	Amount of PLA/PCL and the modified clay in composite samples	41
3.4	Amount of PLA/PCL and the organoclay in composite samples	42
4.1	Conversion percentages of palm stearin, palm olein, and corn oil into FHA using different organic solvents	49
4.2	Numerical presentation of FTIR spectrum conducted on palm olein and FHA	52
4.3	Diffraction angle and basal spacing of montmorillonite and modified montmorillonite with FHA	54
4.4	C, N and alkylammonium group's contents of the FHA modified montmorillonite	54
4.5	Amount of C, N in Na-MMT, ODA-MMT and FHA-MMT	62
4.6	Amount of surfactants presence in the clay layers	62



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
2.1	Three types of composites	7
2.2	Layered silicate of montmorillonite clay	19
2.3	Flowchart presenting the “In-situ polymerization” approach	25
2.4	In-situ polymerization method	26
2.5	Flowchart presenting of the solution approach	27
2.6	Intercalation of the polymer by the "solution" approach	28
2.7	Flowchart presenting the different steps of the melt intercalation approach	28
2.8	Melt intercalation process	29
3.1	Flowchart for Preparation of PLA /PCL by melt blending	37
3.2	Flowchat for the preparation of PLA/PCL-clay composites	40
3.3	Flowchart for preparation of PLA /PCL–organoclay	43
3.4	Dumbbell dimension diagram for tensile test	45
4.1	Effect of time reaction on conversion percentage of FHA fro palm olein. Reaction condition hydroxylamine/palm olein molar ratio 7:1, hexane volume 17 ml and temperature 69 °C	48
4.2	Conversion of palm olein as a function of organic solvent. Reaction conditions: hydroxylamine/palm olein molar ratio 7:1, hexane volume 17 ml, temperature 69 °C and reaction time 10 hrs	50
4.3	Effect of molar ration of hydroxamyline to palm olein on the conversion percentage of the oil to FHA (temperature of reaction is 69 °C, time of reaction is 10 hrs, and organic solvent is hexane)	51
4.4	XRD patterns of (a) Na-MMT and (b) FHA-MMT	55
4.5	The basal distance (d001) of pristine (MMT) and organo modified montmorillonites (OMMT)	56
4.6	XRD patterns of pristine and organo modified montmorillonite with various concentrations of FHA (related to clay CEC)	57



4.7	FTIR spectra of (a) Na-MMT, (b) FHA and (c) FHA-MMT	58
4.8	TGA thermograms of (a) Na-MMT, (b) FHA and (c) FHA-MMT	60
4.9	FTIR spectra of (a) PLA, (b) PCL and (c) PLA/PCL.	64
4.10	FTIR spectra of (a) ODA-MMT, (b) PLA/PCL and (c) PLA /PCL ODA-MMT by melt blending	65
4.11	FTIR spectra of (a) FHA-MMT, (b) PLA/PCL and (c) PLA /PCL-FHA-MMT by melt blending	65
4.12	TGA thermograms of (a) PLA, (b) PCL, (c) PLA/PCL,(d) PLA/PCL-ODA MMT and (e) PLA/PCL-FHA-MMT	68
4.13	DTG thermograms of (a) PLA,(b) PCL,(c) PLA/PCL, (d) PLA/PCL-ODA-MMT and (e) PLA/PCL-FHA-MMT	69
4.14	Effect of adding PCL to PLA on tensile strength by solution casting and melt blinding	70
4.15	Tensile strength of 80PLA/20PCL with various contents of ODA-MMT prepared by solution casting and melt blending	71
4.16	Tensile strength of 80PLA/20PCL with various contents of FHA-MMT prepared by solution casting and melt blending	72
4.17	The XRD patterns of (a) Na-MMT (b) ODA-MMT (c) FHA-MMT	74
4.18	XRD patterns of (a) ODA-MMT, (b) PLA/PCL 1% ODA- MMT, (c) PLA/PCL 3% ODA-MMT, (d) PLA/PCL 2% ODA-MMT, (e) PLA/PCL 4% ODA-MMT and (f) PLA/PCL 5% ODA-MMT (by solution casting)	75
4.19	XRD patterns of (a) FHA-MMT (b) PLA/PCL 1% FHA-MMT, (c) PLA/PCL 2% FHA-MMT, (d) PLA/PCL 3% FHA-MMT, (e) PLA/PCL 4% FHA-MMT and (f) PLA/PCL 5% FHA-MMT (by solution casting)	76
4.20	XRD patterns of (a) ODA-MMT, (b) PLA/PCL 1% ODA-MMT, (c) PLA/PCL 3% ODA-MMT, (d) PLA/PCL 2% ODA-MMT, (e) PLA/PCL 4% ODA-MMT and (f) PLA/PCL 5% ODA-MMT (by melt blending)	77
4.21	XRD patterns of (a) FHA-MMT (b) PLA/PCL 1% FHA-MMT, (c) PLA/PCL 2% FHA-MMT, (d) PLA/PCL 3% FHA-MMT, (e) PLA/PCL 4% FHA-MMT and (f) PLA/PCL 5% FHA-MMT (by melt blending)	78

4.22 SEM micrographs of (a) PLA/PCL solution casting, (b) PLA /PCL melt blending, (c) PLA/PCL 2% ODA-MMT melt blending, (d) PLA/PCL 3% FHA-MMT melt blending, (e) PLA/PCL2%ODA-MMT solution casting and (f) PLA/PCL 3% FHA-MMT solution casting

80

## LIST OF SCHEME

<b>Scheme</b>		<b>Page</b>
4.1	Proposed chemical interactions (intramolecular hydrogen bonding) between PLA and PCL	64

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Acrylonitrile–butadiene-styrene
CBT	Cyclic butylene terephthalate
CEC	Cation exchange capacity
DTG	Derivative thermal gravimetry
ENR	Epoxidized natural rubber
EPDM	Ethylene-propylene-diene terpolymer
FHA	Fatty hydroxamic acids
FHA-MMT	Fatty hydroxamic acids modified montmorillonite
FTIR	Fourier transform infrared
HAF	Hydroxyapatite fibers
HRR	Heat release rate
MAgPP	Maleic anhydride grafted polypropylene
Na-MMT	Sodium montmorillonite
NR	Natural rubber
ODA	Octadecylamine
ODA-MMT	Octadecylamine modified montmorillonite
OMLS	Organically modified layered silicate
OMMT	Organophilic montmorillonite
PCL	Poly( $\epsilon$ -caprolactone)
PCN	Polymer-clay nanocomposites
PEO	Poly(ethylene oxide)
php	Part per hundred polymer
PLA	Polylactic acid



PLS	Polymer layered silicate
PLSN	Polymer layered silicate NANOCOMPOSITES
PMMA	Poly(methyl methacrylate)
PS	Poly styrene
PP	Polypropylene
SBR	Styrene butadiene rubber
SEM	Scanning electron microscopy
TEM	Transmission electron microscopy
TGA	Thermogravimetric analysis
TPE	Thermoplastic elastomer
TPO	Thermoplastic polyolefin
TPV	Thermoplastic vulcanisation
WAXD	Wide angle X-ray diffraction
XRD	X-ray diffraction

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of study

From the last decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century, petrochemical based polymers technology has achieved much benefit to mankind. One of these rapidly grown achievements is the use of plastics in packaging. The most important factor determining rapid growth in the use of plastic in packaging industries is convenient, safety, low price and good aesthetic qualities. The petrochemical-based polymers are produced from fossil fuel, consume and discarded into environment, ending up as spontaneously undegradable wastes. The increase of undegradable wastes are significantly disturbing and damaging the environment.

Till now, the environment specialists do not have the answer about how to deal with these undegradable wastes. Incineration of these wastes produces large amount of carbon dioxide that contribute to global warming. This can also direct us to global pollution if not controlled well.

Based on these backgrounds, there is a dire need for the development of green polymeric materials which would not involve the use of poisonous and toxic constituent in their manufacture. It means that it could be degradable in the nature environmental product. For these reasons, through the world today, the development of biodegradable materials with the controlled properties has been a subject of great research challenge to the community of material and engineers.

Biodegradable polymers are defined as those that undergo microbially induced chain scission leading to the mineralization (Ray and Bousmina, 2005). Biodegradable polymers may not be produced from bio source only, but it can be derived from the petroleum source. Polymers are also being produced from bio source such as polyhydroxybutyrate (PHB) and polyhydroxyvalerate (PHV). On the other hand, biodegradable polymer which is produced from petroleum source is polylactic acid (Ray and Bousmina, 2005).

Polylactic acid (PLA) and polycaprolactone (PCL) are well known biodegradable polymers. Polylactic acid (PLA) has a good biocompatibility and physical properties, such as high strength, thermoplasticity and fabricability. Polycaprolactone (PCL) however has high flexibility, good biodegradability (Wang *et al.*, 1997)

## **1.2 Problem statement**

Most biodegradable polymers have good properties comparable to many petroleum-based plastics and readily biodegradable, and may soon be challenging with goods plastics. Biodegradable polymers have great commercial potential for bio-plastic. However, some of the properties such as brittleness, and low melt viscosity for further processing limit their use in wide-range of applications. Modification of the biodegradable polymers properties to reach end-users demands is required. Nanoreinforcement of pure polymers to prepare nanocomposite has already proven to be an effective way to improve these properties concurrently. Preparation to processing of biodegradable polymer-based nanocomposites, which is, green

nanocomposites are the wave of the future and considered as the next generation materials.

### **1.3 Scope of study**

Thus, in this study, Fatty hydroxamic acid (FHA), synthesized from palm olein with hydroxylamine, and octadecylamine (ODA), were used to modify montmorillonite clay (MMT) for preparation poly(lactic acid) (PLA)/poly(ε-caprolactone) (PCL) nanocomposite.

This work is aimed at preparation and characterization PLA/PCL modified clay composites by both melt blending and solution casting. Properties of the prepared PLA/PCL modified clay nanocomposites by melt blending are compared with that of the prepared by solution casting method.

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The aims of this study are to;

1. Synthesize and characterize the Fatty Hydroxamic Acid (FHA) from palm olein and hydroxylamine;
2. Prepare of PLA/PCL/clay composites by melt blending;
3. Prepare PLA/PCL/clay composites by solution casting;
4. Study the effects of ODA and FHA/clay as organoclay on properties of composites; and



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Composites

Composites are combinations of two or more materials with the properties that are not shown by individual components. They are prepared to perform as a single material. Nature made the first composite in living things. Wood is a composite of cellulose fibers held together with a matrix of lignin. Most sedimentary rocks are composites of particles bonded together by many metallic alloys are composites of some quite different constituents. Steel reinforced concrete, medical pills are composite materials that are homogenous on a macro scale. The term composite was used in the reinforced plastic industry during the 1940s (Donald and Dominick, 1994).

Reinforced polymer is a combination of materials in composition or form on a macro scale. However, all of the constituents in the polymer composite have their identities and do not dissolve or otherwise completely combined into each other. This definition is not completely precise, and it includes some materials often not considered as composite. Some combinations may be thought of as composite structures rather than composite materials. The dividing line is not sharp, and differences of opinion do exist.