

Access to Stereoblock Polyesters via Irreversible Chain-Transfer Ring-Opening Polymerization (ICT-ROP)

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ABSTRACT: Precise control over polymer microstructure can enable molecular tunability of material properties, and stands as a grand challenge in polymer chemistry. Stereoblock copolymers are one of the simplest stereosequenced polymers, yet the synthesis of stereoblock polyesters from prochiral or racemic monomers outside of “simple” isotactic stereoblocks remains limited. Herein, we report the development of irreversible chain-transfer ring-opening polymerization (ICT-ROP), which overcomes fundamental limitations of single catalyst approaches by using transmetalation (e.g., alkoxide-chloride exchange) between two catalysts with distinct stereoselectivities as a means to embed temporally-controlled, multicatalysis in ROP. Our combined small-molecule model and catalytic polymerization studies lay out a clear molecular basis for ICT-ROP, and is exploited to access the first examples of atactic -syndiotactic stereoblock (*at-sb-st*) polyesters, *at-sb-st* polyhydroxyalkanoates (PHAs). We achieve high levels of control over molecular weight, tacticity, monomer composition, and block structures in a temporally-controlled manner, and demonstrate stereosequence control leads to polymer tensile properties that are independent of thermal properties.

INTRODUCTION

Precise control over polymer microstructure (e.g., composition, sequence, tacticity) can enable unparalleled, molecular tunability of material properties and remains a grand challenge in polymer chemistry.¹ Stereoblock copolymers, sequence-specific materials composed of blocks with differing relative tacticity, are attractive targets, as they can display thermal, mechanical, and degradation properties which are distinct from physical blends of corresponding homopolymers.² These materials could be sourced from a single prochiral or racemic monomer pool with the appropriate design of stereospecific catalytic processes. However, this represents a significant fundamental challenge, as a given catalyst-monomer pair typically exhibits a single selectivity. While considerable advances in accessing different stereoblock architectures have been achieved for polyolefins and polyacrylates,³ access to stereoblock polyesters via ring-opening polymerization (ROP) of a racemic monomer remains limited to “simple” isotactic stereoblocks (alternating runs of isotactic *R/S* sequences).⁴

Polyhydroxyalkanoates (PHAs), first discovered nearly 100 years ago,⁵ are promising biodegradable materials which can display comparable properties to traditional polyolefins with appropriate control over their composition and microstructure.⁶ Recently, Chen and coworkers developed an elegant approach to isotactic-stereoblock-syndiotactic (*it-sb-st*) PHAs via the ROP of designer 8-membered diolides using yttrium salen catalysts exhibiting exquisite enantiomorphic site-control (Figure 1A).^{6g} The new stereoblock materials displayed improved mechanical and thermal properties compared to their corresponding homopolymers, but required both *rac* and *meso* diastereomers

(obtained in low overall yields after multi-step synthesis and purification). Instead, routes to stereoblock PHAs from racemic β -lactones would be highly desirable as they can be sourced in one-step via the catalytic carbonylation of epoxides,⁷ yet the generation of stereoblock PHAs from β -lactones remains unknown. Despite the absence of such reports, Coates, Thomas, and coworkers have accessed PHAs with high levels of stereo- and sequence-control (i.e., highly alternating copolymers) via ROP of β -lactones using a syndioselective yttrium salan catalyst exhibiting chain-end stereocontrol.⁸ These novel PHAs displayed thermal properties distinct from their corresponding homopolymers, but required the use of *enantiopure* β -lactones (Figure 1B).

Alternatively, straightforward access to stereoblock PHAs should be possible by leveraging catalysts with distinct stereoselectivities in an integrated, multicatalytic approach.⁹ While multicatalytic approaches have enabled challenging multi-step organic syntheses,¹⁰ implementing such strategies in ROP would require discrete chain-transfer events. Looking to the synthesis of other stereospecific polyesters, intercatalyst polymeryl exchange has emerged as a distinct pathway for polymer stereo- and sequence-control in ROP, including stereoblocks (Figure 1C).^{4a, 11} Although promising, this requires careful management of fast, reversible chain-transfer (k_{ex}) and matched/mismatched rates of propagation (k_p and k_p') to control the properties of the resulting stereoblocks. Chain-transfer agents (CTAs) also induce polymeryl transfer to access block and stereoblock polyesters and polycarbonates,¹² but face similar criteria.

Based on these strategies, we envisioned a modified approach to access stereoblock PHAs from a single racemic

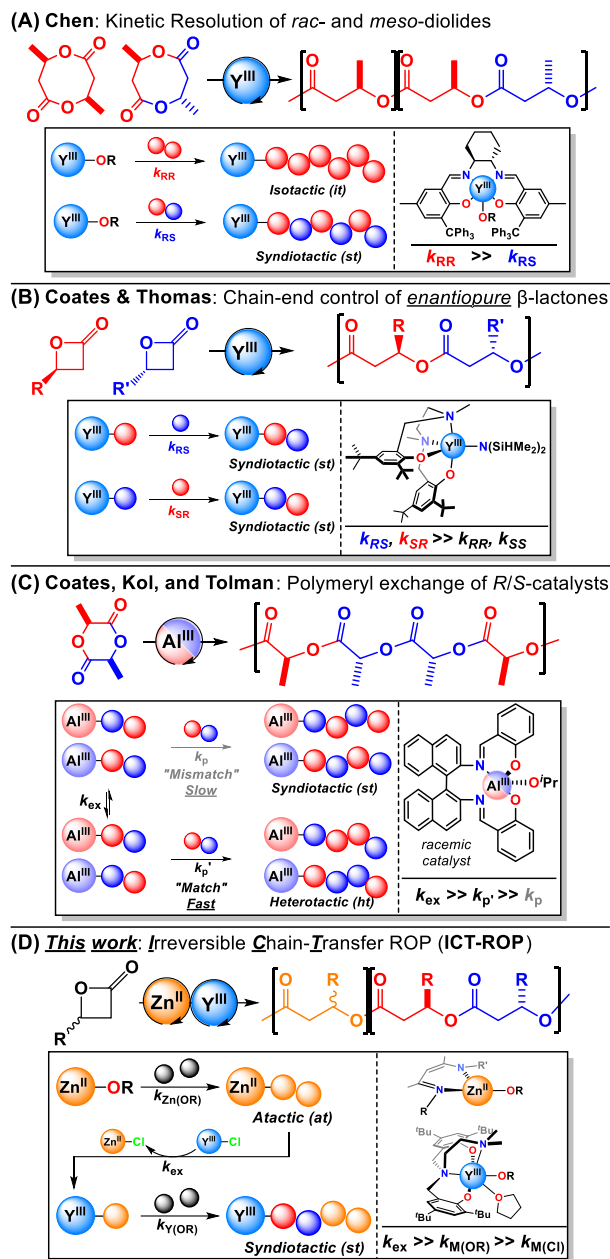


Figure 1. Prior work and mechanistic features driving stereoselectivity to: (A) stereoblock PHA copolymers,⁶⁸ (B) highly-alternating PHA copolymers,⁸ and (C) stereoblock polylactide.^{4a,11} (D) *This work*: access to stereoblock PHA copolymers from *rac*- β -lactones enable by Irreversible Chain-Transfer Ring-Opening Polymerization (ICT-ROP).

monomer feed (β -lactones) through a one-time, irreversible polymeryl exchange event (e.g., transmetalation) between catalysts with distinct stereoselectivities via alkoxide-halide exchange (Figure 1D). Unlike degenerate chain-transfer between active and dormant states in coordination chain-transfer polymerization,¹³ irreversible polymeryl exchange with an inactive nucleophile (e.g., Cl⁻; $k_{M-Cl} \ll k_{M-OR}$) would enable the temporally-controlled synthesis of stereoblock PHAs. Such a mechanistically-distinct polymerization method might enable access to unknown polyester stereoblock architectures, such as atactic-stereoblock-syndiotactic (*at-sb-st*) copolymers. Generally, *at-sb-st* copolymers have

been challenging to access across all polymer classes,¹⁴ requiring either 1) isolated macroinitiators for each step¹⁵ or 2) fractionation to remove atactic or syndiotactic homopolymers.¹⁶ Herein, we report the development of irreversible chain-transfer ring-opening polymerization (ICT-ROP). ICT-ROP provides access to *at-sb-st* PHAs for the first time, and lays the groundwork to access stereo- and sequence-specific polymers using rationally-designed, multicatalytic approaches.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In order to realize the envisioned cooperative, multi-catalyst ICT-ROP, two key criteria must be met: (i) facile, irreversible polymeryl (i.e., alkoxide) transfer and (ii) inactivity of the transferred group (i.e., non-alkoxide) towards ROP. With respect to (i), it is well established that transmetalation between organozinc reagents and metal halides,¹⁷ including with group III,¹⁸ is a key elementary step in a diverse range of catalyzed reactions, where the driving force for exchange often follows differences in electronegativity.¹⁹ With respect to (ii), metal halides are typically poor initiators for ROP of lactones, and could serve as the inactive (dormant) state in ICT-ROP. Although zinc alkoxides can react with metal halides to generate heterobimetallic species,²⁰ quantitative, irreversible alkoxide for chloride exchange is without precedent. With this in mind, we sought to demonstrate the feasibility of these two criteria with two privileged catalyst platforms, zinc beta-diketiminates (BDI)²¹ and yttrium aminobisphenolate (OONN'),²² which can access atactic and syndiotactic poly-3-hydroxybutyrate (P3HB), respectively.

The reaction of 0.5 equiv of Zn Dipp/Bn-substituted beta-diketiminate alkoxide dimer, $[Zn(BDI-1)(O^iPr)]_2$ (**1a-Zn-OⁱPr**); generated *in situ* from **1a-Zn-N(SiMe₃)₂** and ⁱPrOH,^{21b} with one equiv yttrium aminobisphenolate chloride, Y(OONN')(Cl)(THF) (**2-Y-Cl**),²³ was monitored by ¹H NMR spectroscopy in *d*₃-THF (Figure 2A). Over the course of 3 h at RT, **1a-Zn-OⁱPr** and **2-Y-Cl** quantitatively and irreversibly formed the anticipated products of alkoxide-chloride exchange, Zn(BDI-1)(Cl)(THF) (**1a-Zn-Cl**) and Y(OONN')(OⁱPr)(THF) (**2-Y-OⁱPr**) (Figure 2A & 2B). Unambiguous assignment of the products was established through independent syntheses of **1a-Zn-Cl** (Figure 2C, 81% yield) and **2-Y-OⁱPr** (Figure S20).^{22b} The irreversible nature of the alkoxide-chloride exchange reaction was further confirmed by ¹H NMR spectroscopy, where solutions of **1a-Zn-Cl** and **2-Y-OⁱPr** remained unchanged at RT after 24 h (Figure S22). Experimental observations were in good agreement with thermochemical predictions obtained from density functional theory (DFT) calculations performed at the M06-L level of theory (Supporting Information, Section 4),²⁴ with exchange between the hypothetical monomer, **1a'-Zn-OⁱPr**, and **2-Y-Cl** favored by 10 kcal/mol (Table S2). Possible chain-transfer processes were probed by 2-dimensional ¹H NMR exchange spectroscopy (EXSY) experiments, which revealed negligible rates of exchange between **2-Y-OⁱPr** and **2-Y-Cl** or **2-Y-OⁱPr** and **1a-Zn-OⁱPr** at RT on the NMR time-scale (Figure S25–S28).

Consistent with the limited reactivity of halide,²⁵ beta-diketiminate,²⁶ and aminobisphenolate²³ ligands as initiators for the ROP of lactones, both **1a-Zn-Cl** and **2-Y-Cl**, were

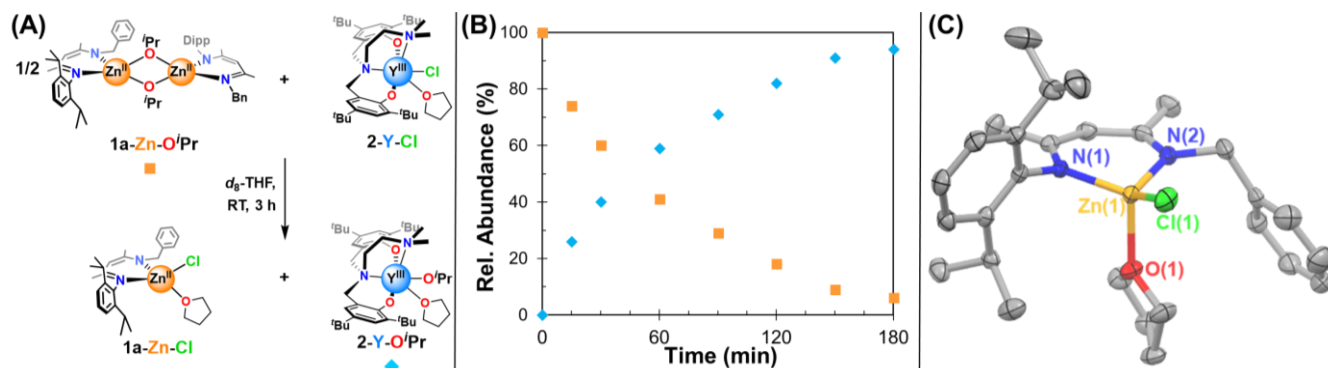
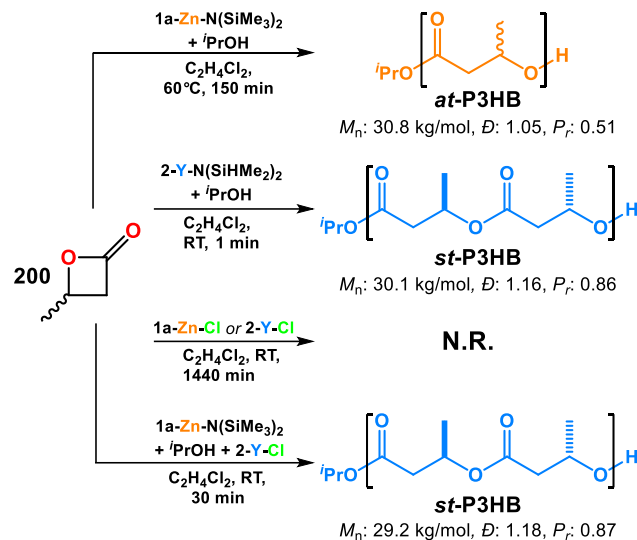


Figure 2. (A) Irreversible alkoxide-chloride exchange between $1a\text{-Zn-O'Pr}$ and 2-Y-Cl . (B) Conversion versus time of (A) monitored by ^1H NMR spectroscopy. (C) Thermal ellipsoid plot (50% probability) of $1a\text{-Zn-Cl}$.



Scheme 1. Homopolymerization controls detailing the reactivity of $rac\text{-BBL}$ with (i) $1a\text{-Zn-O'Pr}$, (ii) 2-Y-O'Pr , (iii) 2-Y-Cl or 2-Zn-Cl , and (iv) $1a\text{-Zn-O'Pr}$ + 2-Y-Cl .

inactive for ROP of $rac\text{-}\beta\text{-butyrolactone}$ ($rac\text{-BBL}$) at RT (Scheme 1; Table S12, entries 1 and 2). Under the same conditions, $1a\text{-Zn-O'Pr}$ and 2-Y-O'Pr generated atactic ($at\text{-P3HB}$, $P_r = 0.51$) and syndiotactic-P3HB (Scheme 1; $st\text{-P3HB}$, $P_r = 0.86$) with narrow molecular weight dispersities (Table S12, entries 3 and 6). Addition of 200 equiv $rac\text{-BBL}$ to a freshly mixed solution (< 1 min) of $1a\text{-Zn-O'Pr}$ and 2-Y-Cl produced $st\text{-P3HB}$ (Scheme 1; Table 1, entry 1,) with equivalent characteristics as using 2-Y-O'Pr (Table S12 entry 6) or 2-Y-O'Pr mixed with $1a\text{-Zn-Cl}$ (Table 1, entry 2). In sum, our experiments support rapid, irreversible transmetalation between a zinc alkoxide, $1a\text{-Zn-O'Pr}$, and yttrium chloride, 2-Y-Cl , and the resulting yttrium alkoxide is a competent catalyst for the stereospecific ROP of $rac\text{-BBL}$.

With both criteria clearly met, we pursued the one-pot synthesis of $at\text{-sb-st-P3HB}$ via ICT-ROP (Figure 3A). In the presence of 200 equiv $rac\text{-BBL}$ and one equiv isopropanol, $1a\text{-Zn-N(SiMe}_3)_2$ reached 47% conversion after 25 min at 60°C to form narrow dispersity $at\text{-P3HB}$ ($M_n = 14.7 \text{ kg/mol}$, $\bar{D} = 1.08$, $P_r = 0.51$; Figure 3B, point 1 and 2). Consistent with the slow reactivity of $1a\text{-Zn-O'Pr}$ with $rac\text{-BBL}$ at RT, negligible monomer conversion was observed upon cooling to

RT and holding for 35 min (Figure 3B, point 3). ROP commenced rapidly upon addition of 2-Y-Cl to generate $at\text{-sb-st-P3HB}$, reaching 96% conversion in ~ 90 min (Figure 3B, point 4; $at:st = 48:52$).

Formation of the desired $at\text{-sb-st-P3HB}$ was unambiguously confirmed by key spectroscopic, chromatographic, and calorimetric techniques. Stereochemical analysis by inverse-gated ^{13}C NMR revealed excellent agreement between experimental ($P_{r,\text{exp}}$, 0.71) and theoretical ($P_{r,\text{theo}}$, 0.70) tacticity values for the $at\text{-sb-st-P3HB}$ stereoblock copolymer (Supporting Information, Section 5). Size-exclusion chromatography (SEC) revealed a narrow, monomodal molecular weight distribution in good agreement with the predicted molecular weight for a living ROP with a single initiation site ($M_n = 32.4 \text{ kg/mol}$, $\bar{D} = 1.13$). This was in line with rapid, quantitative, and irreversible chain-transfer between the zinc alkoxide propagating chain and 2-Y-Cl with minimal termination events. 2D ^1H NMR diffusion ordered

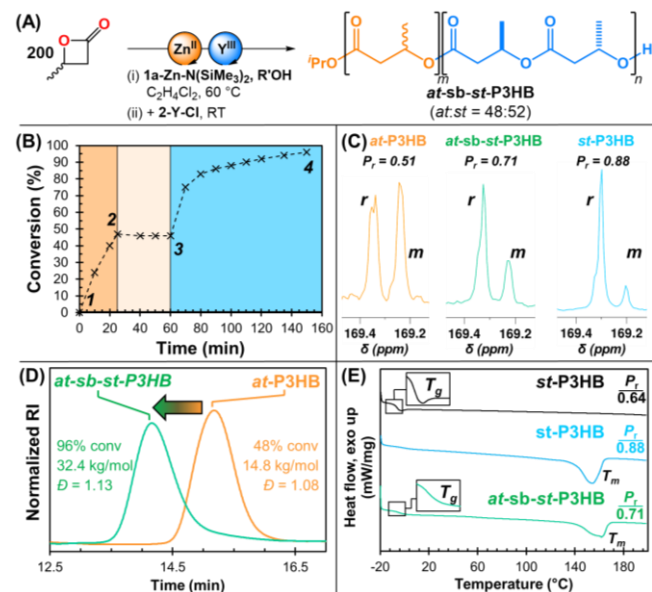


Figure 3. (A) $at\text{-sb-st-P3HB}$ generated from ICT-ROP of $rac\text{-BBL}$ with $1a\text{-Zn-O'Pr}$ + 2-Y-Cl . (B) Conversion of $rac\text{-BBL}$ versus time of (A): (1) $1a\text{-Zn-O'Pr}$, 0%, RT; (2) 48%, 60°C ; (3) 48%, RT; (4) + 2-Y-Cl , 98%, RT. (C) ^{13}C NMR of the P3HB carbonyl region for $at\text{-}$, $at\text{-sb-st-}$, and $st\text{-P3HB}$ generated from $1a\text{-Zn-O'Pr}$, $1a\text{-Zn-O'Pr}$ + 2-Y-Cl (ICT-ROP), and 2-Y-O'Pr , respectively. (D) SEC traces from points (3) and (4) from panel 3B. (E) Thermal properties of $st\text{-P3HB}$ ($P_r = 0.64$), $st\text{-P3HB}$ ($P_r = 0.88$), and $at\text{-sb-st-P3HB}$ ($P_r = 0.71$).

spectroscopy (DOSY) revealed a single diffusion coefficient associated with the copolymer (Figure S36). Finally, differential scanning calorimetry (DSC) revealed distinct thermal properties associated with the novel sequence-specific polymer microstructure (Figure 3E and Table 1, entry 3). Despite being composed of 50% atactic microstructure, *at*-*sb*-*st*-P3HB ($P_r = 0.71$) displayed similar melting (T_m) and crystallization (T_c) temperatures to that of the corresponding *st*-P3HB homopolymer, but with lower enthalpies of fusion (ΔH_m , 28 vs 42 J/g) and a more pronounced glass transition temperature (T_g). In contrast, thermal analysis of an independently prepared *st*-P3HB homopolymer with more comparable *rac* and *meso* diad content ($P_r = 0.64$) was completely amorphous (Figure 3E). The disparate thermal behavior of these two samples underscores the dramatic impact of stereosequence control in the resulting polymer properties.

Access to *at*-*sb*-*st*-P3HB with a range of *at*:*st* compositions and molecular weights were readily achieved by simply adjusting the timing of **2-Y-Cl** addition and ratio of *rac*-BBL to initiator (i.e., **1a-Zn-O'Pr**), respectively. Addition of **2-Y-Cl** to **1a-Zn-O'Pr**/*rac*-BBL solutions at 74, 48, and 27% conversion (35, 25, and 10 min, respectively) generated increasingly *st*-rich, *at*-*sb*-*st*-P3HB (*at*:*st* = 74:26, 48:52, and 27:73), where $P_{r,\text{exp}}$ was in excellent agreement with $P_{r,\text{theo}}$ (Table 1, entries 4–5). DSC thermal analysis of these samples revealed T_m largely insensitive to *st*-content (Table 1, entries 4–5, 155–161 °C), with a positive linear

correlation between ΔH_m and *st*-content (Figure S49 $R^2 = 1.00$). Polarized light microscopy (PLM) studies performed under isothermal or constant cooling crystallization conditions revealed spherulitic morphologies,²⁷ where decreased *st*-content led to smaller spherulite size and higher nucleation density (Figure S89 and S90). Maintaining the time of addition of **2-Y-Cl** at ~50% conversion while adjusting the ratio of *rac*-BBL to initiator from 100:1 to 400:1 generated *at*-*sb*-*st*-P3HB with molecular weights from 14.1–52.4 kg/mol (Table 1, entries 6–7).

Motivated by the high-level tunability of *at*-*sb*-*st*-P3HB achieved through ICT-ROP with the **1a-Zn-O'Pr**/**2-Y-Cl** system, we targeted three additional proof-of-concept studies to explore whether we could leverage other catalysts, monomers, and chain-transfer agents. One potential concern is the compatibility of sterically-demanding catalyst partners, as efficient chain-transfer lies at the heart of ICT-ROP. Gratifyingly, employing the more sterically-demanding and higher activity *N*-dibenzhydrylphenyl/*N*-benzyl variant, Zn(BDI-2)[N(SiMe₃)₂] (**1b-Zn-N(SiMe₃)₂**),^{21b} in place of **1a-Zn-N(SiMe₃)₂**, generated *at*-*sb*-*st*-P3HB with excellent control over composition and molecular weight (Table 1, entry 8 and Figure S59–S63). Small alterations in side-chain identity can lead to pronounced effects on PHA thermal properties²⁸ ($R = \text{Me}$, P3HB: $P_r = 0.94$, $T_m = 178$ °C;²⁹ $R = \text{Et}$, P3HV: $P_r = 0.94$, $T_m = 79$ °C).⁸ *at*-*sb*-*st*-P3HV (*at*:*st* = 52:48) was synthesized via ICT-ROP with **1a-Zn-O'Pr**/**2-Y-Cl**, which led to a ~100 °C decrease in T_m in comparison to *at*-*sb*-*st*-P3HB

Table 1. Synthesis of atactic-syndiotactic stereoblock PHA copolymers via ICT-ROP of β -lactones.^a

(i) **1a-Zn-N(SiMe₃)₂**, R'OH
C₂H₄Cl₂, 60 °C

(ii) + **2-Y-Cl**, RT

at-sb-st PHAs

Entry	R	X (equiv)	Conv. (%) ^b	[at]:[st] ^c	1-Zn-N(SiMe₃)₂ + R'OH		+ 2-Y-Cl					
					$M_{n,\text{exp}}$ (kg/mol) ^d	\bar{D} (M_w/M_n) ^d	$M_{n,\text{exp}}$ (kg/mol) ^d	\bar{D} (M_w/M_n) ^d	P_r^c	T_g (°C) ^e	T_m (°C) ^e	ΔH_m (J/g) ^e
1 ^f	Me	200	81	0:100	--	--	30.1	1.16	0.86	--	160	42
2 ^g	Me	200	67	0:100	--	--	29.2	1.18	0.87	--	160	42
3	Me	200	96	48:52	14.8	1.08	32.4	1.13	0.71	-2	162	28
4	Me	200	93	27:73	9.9	1.05	31.4	1.13	0.77	2	161	40
5	Me	200	90	74:26	22.9	1.06	29.9	1.10	0.61	-3	155	15
6	Me	100	91	49:51	6.4	1.07	14.1	1.18	0.70	-3	152	15
7	Me	400	90	51:49	31.1	1.04	52.4	1.10	0.68	6	164	33
8 ^h	Me	200	96	52:48	17.0	1.05	36.9	1.11	0.69	2	162	30
9	Et	200	92	54:46	14.2	1.06	26.8	1.06	0.65	--	84	24
10 ⁱ	Me	200	93	52:48	15.9	1.07	30.5	1.14	0.67	--	139	16
11 ^f	Me	800	94	0:100	--	--	109.0	1.28	0.87	--	159	41
12 ^h	Me	800	92	74:26	70.9	1.08	94.2	1.08	0.59	1	156	13
13 ^{h,i}	Me	800	93	70:30	73.9	1.08	92.5	1.09	0.61	1	148	14

^a – Unless otherwise noted, reaction conditions are: C₂H₄Cl₂ = 1,2-dichloroethane, [β -lactone] = 2.4 M; [β -lactone]:[**1a-Zn-N(SiMe₃)₂]:[**2-Y-Cl**]:[R'OH] = X equiv:1:1:1, R'OH = ⁱPrOH. Reaction times not optimized and see supporting information for reaction times at specific conversions (including **2-Y-Cl** addition points). ^b – Determined by ¹H NMR. ^c – Determined by inverse-gated ¹³C NMR. ^d – Determined by size-exclusion chromatography (SEC), CHCl₃ mobile phase. ^e – Determined by differential scanning calorimetry (DSC). ^f – **1a-Zn-N(SiMe₃)₂**, ⁱPrOH, and **2-Y-Cl**, followed by adding BBL. Generation of *st*-P3HB homopolymer. ^g – **1a-Zn-Cl**, ⁱPrOH, and **2-Y-N(SiMe₃)₂**, followed by adding BBL. Generation of *st*-P3HB homopolymer. ^h – **1b-Zn-N(SiMe₃)₂** in place of **1a-Zn-N(SiMe₃)₂**, RT instead of 60 °C. ⁱ – R'OH = HO(CH₂)₆OH; formation of *st*-*sb*-*at*-*sb*-*st*-P3HB (ABA**

($T_m = 80\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ vs $162\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$; Table 1, entry 9 vs 3 and Figure S64–S69). Multifunctional chain-transfer agents can generate distinct copolymer sequences and/or topologies, which can directly impact polymer properties. Thermoplastic elastomers containing ABA structures (A = hard block, B = soft block) are used in a broad range of applications, and can be readily accessed using bifunctional (telechelic) initiators.³⁰ Using the bifunctional chain-transfer agent, 1,6-hexanediol, in place of $i\text{PrOH}$ generated the novel ABA triblock, *st-sb-at-sb-st*-P3HB (Table 1, entry 10 and Figure S70–S75). While *st-sb-at-sb-st*-P3HB displayed similar thermal properties to the corresponding homopolymer fragments (Table S12, entries 22–23 and Figure S85), PLM studies following isothermal crystallization support formation of much smaller spherulitic domains and signs of microphase separation (Figure S90).^{30b, 31}

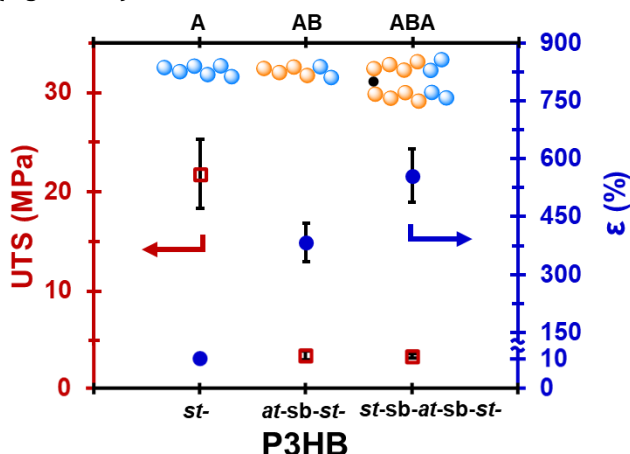


Figure 4. Ultimate tensile strength (UTS) and elongation to break (ϵ) of *st*-, *at-sb-st*-, (*at:st* = 74:26), and *st-sb-at-sb-st*-P3HB (*at:st* = 68:32), A, AB, and ABA copolymer structures, respectively (Table 1, entries 11–13; Table S12, entries 20–23).

Tensile testing with dog-bone specimen of high molecular-weight *st*-, *at-sb-st*-, and *st-sb-at-sb-st*-P3HB (≥ 90 kg/mol; *at:st* = 0:100, 74:26, 68:72, respectively; Table 1, entries 11–13, see Supporting Information for synthetic details) revealed stereosequence-dependent mechanical properties (Figure 4). While *st*-P3HB was strong but brittle (ultimate tensile-strength, UTS: 21.8 ± 3.5 MPa; elongation-to-break, ϵ : $10.4 \pm 1\%$), *at-sb-st*- (AB) and *st-sb-at-sb-st*-P3HB (ABA) were weaker with dramatically enhanced ductility (UTS: 3.3 ± 0.4 and 3.2 ± 0.2 MPa and ϵ : $383 \pm 49\%$ and $556 \pm 70\%$, respectively). The improved ductility qualitatively follows expectations based on the decreasing spherulite domain size observed by PLM,³² where the $\sim 200\%$ increase in ductility moving from AB to ABA architectures underscores the impact of stereosequence control. Alternatively, decomposition (T_d : $246\text{--}256\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$) and melting temperatures (T_m : $148\text{--}159\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$) were insensitive and independent of tacticity (P_r , *at:st* content; Table 1, entries 11–13) or stereoblock architecture (Figures S77–S79, S81–S83, and S85–S87). This stands in stark contrast to the behavior of PHA homopolymers,^{6e, f, l, 29, 33} where both thermal and mechanical properties are highly correlated with tacticity. This suggests distinct opportunities to independently tune critical polymer properties solely by stereosequence control, and further

connections between structure/morphology and stereoblock copolymer properties are underway.

CONCLUSION

We described the successful development of irreversible chain-transfer ring opening polymerization (ICT-ROP), which we leveraged to access the first examples of atactic-syndiotactic stereoblock polyesters, *at-sb-st* PHAs. ICT-ROP overcomes fundamental limitations of the one-catalyst/one-monomer paradigm by using transmetalation (e.g., alkoxide-chloride exchange) between catalysts with distinct stereoselectivities as a means to embed temporally-controlled, multicatalysis in ROP. Our small molecule model studies unambiguously established the irreversible nature of alkoxide-chloride exchange small-molecule, which along with our catalytic polymerization studies laid out a clear molecular basis for ICT-ROP. The highly controlled nature of ICT-ROP allowed for the synthesis of *at-sb-st* PHAs with excellent control over molecular weight, tacticity, monomer composition, and block structures, where stereosequence control directly impact polymer properties. We envision ICT-ROP as a powerful method to access other distinct, stereo- and sequence-specific block structures and topologies, and further studies are currently underway.

ASSOCIATED CONTENT

Supporting Information. The Supporting Information is available free of charge via the Internet at <http://pubs.acs.org>. Detailed materials and methods including synthetic details, characterization, and computational methods.

Accession Codes

CCDC 2266984 contains the supplementary crystallographic data for this paper. These data can be obtained free of charge via www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data_request/cif, or by emailing data_request@ccdc.cam.ac.uk, or by contacting The Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre, 12 Union Road, Cambridge CB2 1EZ, UK; fax: +44 1223 336033.

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Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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