

Table 1. Polymerization Data for Propylene and 1-Hexene^a

entry	catalyst	reaction condition		TOF ^b	M_n^c ($\times 10^{-3}$)	M_w/M_n	polymer properties	
		temp (°C)	time (h)				branches/1000 C ^d	thermal anal. (°C) ^e
Propylene Polymerization Data								
1	1	25	2	2262	327	1.44	216	−23 (T_g)
2	2	25	2	2167	302	1.16	113	−54 (T_g)
3	2	35	1	2205	154	1.06	104	−56 (T_g)
4	2	50	1	2032	133	1.13	105	−55 (T_g)
1-Hexene Polymerization Data								
5	1	25	3	1505	543	1.50	108	−54 (T_g)
6	1	50	3	753	461	1.45	110	−57 (T_g)
7	1	75	3	341	279	1.49	111	−53 (T_g)
8	2	25	3	1331	510	1.22	57	−34 (T_g), 62 (T_m)
9	2	50	3	1901	647	1.13	58	−38 (T_g), 58 (T_m)
10	2	75	3	1822	529	1.17	52	−47 (T_g), 58 (T_m)

^a Polymerization condition: catalyst **1** or **2** (0.005 mmol) activated with 2000 equiv of MMAO; toluene (total volume of toluene and monomer equals 50 mL); propylene pressure 1 atm and 1-hexene concentration 2.66 M. ^b TOF = turnover frequency, which was calculated as the moles of monomer per mole of catalyst per hour. ^c Molecular weight data was determined by GPC using polystyrene standards. ^d Total branching was determined by ¹H NMR spectroscopy. ^e T_m and T_g were determined by differential scanning calorimetry (DSC).

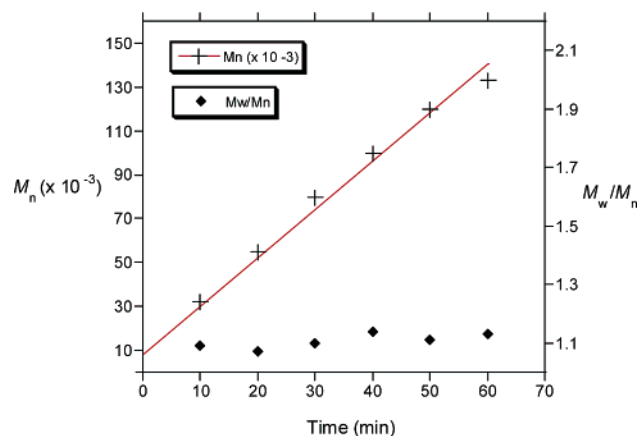


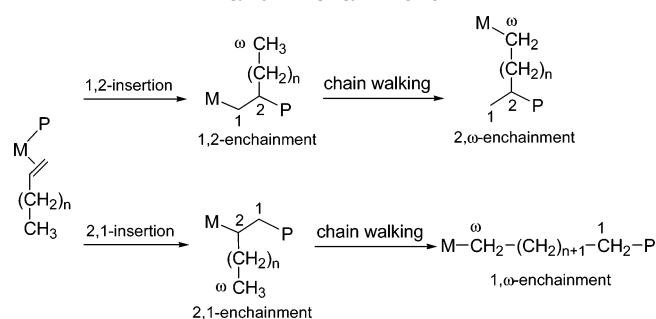
Figure 1. Plot for M_n and M_w/M_n as a function of reaction time for propylene polymerization at 50 °C using **2**/MMAO catalyst.

1-hexene using **1** could only be achieved at subambient temperature (-10 °C) and with relatively low monomer concentration.¹³

The activities of catalyst **2** are very high for propylene and 1-hexene polymerizations. Because of the relatively low thermal stability for catalyst **1**, the turnover frequency (TOF) for 1-hexene polymerization decreased with increasing temperature (Table 1, entries 5–7). On the contrary, the activity for catalyst **2** remained constant with temperature for both propylene and 1-hexene polymerizations. In our previous studies, significantly higher thermal stability was observed in ethylene polymerization for **2** than **1**.²⁸ We attribute the enhanced stability and living polymerization nature for catalyst **2** at elevated temperatures to its unique catalyst structure. The cyclophane ligand may play two critical roles here: (1) the fixed cyclophane ring prevents C–H activation of the metal center to the ligand, which was proposed to be a catalyst deactivation pathway,³¹ and (2) the cyclophane framework keeps the axial sites for the metal center fully blocked, suppressing associative chain transfer of ethylene from the axial sites.²⁸

Compared to the acyclic catalyst **1**, the cyclophane catalyst **2** also afforded polyolefins with significantly different microstructures as revealed by NMR and thermal analysis (Table 1). NMR data show that both PP and poly(1-hexene) (PH) made by **2** have only one-half of the branching density compared to the corresponding polymers made with **1**. The difference in

Scheme 2. Different Modes of Monomer Insertion and Enchainment



polymer microstructure was further reflected by the thermal analysis. Differential scanning calorimetric (DSC) analysis shows that the glass transition temperature (T_g) for PP made with **2** is ~ -55 °C as apposed to -23 °C for PP made by **1**. For PH made with **2**, in addition to lower branching density, two thermal transition temperatures, a melting temperature ($T_m \sim 60$ °C) and a T_g (~ -40 °C), were observed by DSC. For comparison, PH made by catalyst **1** exhibit much higher number of branches and only a T_g around -55 °C.

The differences in branching density and thermal properties can be explained by the insertion mode and chain walking mechanism. As proposed by Brookhart and co-workers for catalyst **1**,¹³ a fraction of α -olefin insertion proceeds in 2,1 fashion (Scheme 2). Metal migration to the terminal carbon and subsequent insertion results in enchainment of α -olefins in a 1, ω fashion. This will result in polymers containing fewer branches than expected from sequential 1,2-insertions, and linear, unbranched segments can be incorporated along the main chain resulting in crystalline domains. The significantly higher level of “chain straightening” in PP and PH made by catalyst **2** indicates that the 2,1 mode of α -olefin insertion occurs more frequently in the polymerizations. Increased 1, ω enchainment in 1-hexene polymerization using **2** leads to PH not only with reduced branching density but also having longer linear segments, resulting in crystalline domains and exhibiting T_m 's. It should be emphasized that the observed increase in “chain straightening” cannot be accounted for by a simple change in relative rates for chain walking and insertion without involving a change in the insertion mode. For example, in propylene polymerization, 1,2-insertion will not be able to lead to any “chain straightening” no matter how fast the chain walking

process is. Only 2,1-insertion followed by chain walking can result in "chain straightening" and a decrease in its total branching density. For polymerization of 1-hexene, whereas 1,2-insertion followed by chain walking can partially straighten the chain, each straightened monomeric unit should have one methyl branch which will disrupt crystal packing and should not result in significant crystalline domains. While the precise mechanism for the increased 2,1-insertion is not clear, we tentatively ascribe this to the unusual cyclophane microenvironment in catalyst **2**. Presumably, the unusual cyclophane environment lowers the activation energy of 2,1-insertion to make it more favorable.

In summary, we report the first late transition metal catalyzed living olefin polymerization at elevated temperatures. Living polymerizations of propylene and 1-hexene were achieved at 50–75 °C by using catalyst **2** developed in our laboratory. Because of the unusual cyclophane ligand framework, catalyst **2** exhibits significantly improved stability and living polymerization nature for α -olefin polymerization at elevated temperatures and gives polyolefins with different microstructures compared to the acyclic catalyst **1**. This highly active and robust living polymerization system offers exciting opportunities for practical design of various polyolefin architectures. Further studies on this living olefin polymerization system and its application to new polymer architecture designs are currently being undertaken in our laboratory and will be reported in the future.

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Supporting Information Available: Details of polymerizations and polymer characterization. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at <http://pubs.acs.org>.

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