Synthesis of A Novel Kind of Amphiphilic Graft

Copolymer with Miktoarm Star-shaped Side Chains

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Supporting Information

Experimental section

Materials. Styrene (St) was washed with 10% NaOH aqueous solution followed by water three times

successively, dried over CaH2 and distilled under reduced pressure. Ethylene oxide (EO) was dried over

CaH₂ and then distilled, stored at -20 °C before use. Glycidol (Acros) and 1,1-Diphenylmethane (99%)

were dried over CaH₂ and distilled under reduced pressure, stored at -20 °C before use. Triethylene

glycol (TEG) was distilled from CaH₂ under reduced pressure, and the fraction at 134 °C /90 Pa was

collected. Bromoethane, N,N-dimethylformamide (DMF), toluene, cyclohexane, 1-butyl chloride, ethyl

vinyl ether (98%, Aldrich), propargyl bromide (□99%) were dried over CaH₂ and distilled just before

use. Bromoisobutyryl bromide (98%, Aldrich) and N,N,N',N",N"-pentamethyldiethylenetriamine

(PMDETA, Aldrich) were used as received. Tetrahydrofuran (THF, 99%) and pyridine (99.5%) were

refluxed over sodium naphthalenide solution and sodium wire respectively and distilled. Copper(I)

bromide(CuBr, 95%) was stirred overnight in acetic acid, filtered, washed with ethanol and diethyl ether

successively, and dried in vacuo. Formic acid, sodium azide (NaN₃, >98%), potassium hydroxide

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(KOH) were used as received. All other reagents were purchased from Sinopharm Chemical Reagent Co., Ltd. (SCR) and used as received, unless otherwise noted.

Diphenylmethylpotassium (DPMK) solution was freshly prepared according to the literature^{S1}, the concentration was 0.61 mol/L. Ethoxyethyl glycidyl ether (EEGE) was synthesized from glycidol and ethyl vinyl ether according to Fitton et al.^{S2}. *n*-Butyllithium (*n*-BuLi) with a concentration of 1.10 mol/L was prepared and analyzed according to the literature^{S3,S4}.

Instrumentation. Size-exclusion chromatography (SEC) was performed in THF at 35 °C with an elution rate of 1.0 ml/min on an Agilent1100 with a G1310A pump, a G1362A refractive index detector and a G1314A variable wavelength detector. One 5μm LP gel column (500 Å, molecular range 500–2×10⁴ g/mol) and two 5 μm LP gel mixed bed column (molecular range 200–3×10⁶ g/mol) were calibrated by polystyrene standard samples. ¹H NMR spectra were obtained at a DMX500 MHz spectrometer with tetramethylsilane (TMS) as the internal standard and CDCl₃ as the solvent. Fourier transform infrared (FT-IR) spectra were recorded on a Magna-550 FT-IR spectrometer. The Ultra Filtration Separator was purchased from Shanghai Institute of Nuclear Research, Chinese Academy of Science, and the cut-off molecular weight of used poly(ether sulfone) membrane was calibrated by global protein.

Preparation of Functionalized α-butyl-ω-hydroxyl, ω'-ethoxyethyl-Poly(styrene) (Polymer 1). The anionic polymerization of styrene was carried out under nitrogen atmosphere. Typically, to a 500 ml dried ampoule, styrene (16.0 ml, 14.6 g, 140.4 mmol), cyclohexane (160 ml) and THF (4 ml) was charged under nitrogen atmosphere, then n-BuLi solution (7.8 ml, 8.6 mmol) was injected by a syringe under magnetic stirring. The reaction was kept at room temperature for 8 h, then the mixture of EEGE (8 ml, 54.8 mmol) and THF (8 ml) were added, and the system was stirred for another 8 h continuously before termination by methanol. The product was purified by dissolution/precipitation twice with THF/methanol, and the obtained functional polymer 1 was dried under vacuum at 40 °C for 12 h until constant weight (14.2 g, yield: 97.3%). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ ppm: 0.80 (C H_3 CH₂-), 1.13 (C H_3 CH₂O-),

1.22 ($-\text{CH}(\text{C}\textbf{\textit{H}}_3)$ -), 1.26-2.01 (m, 3H, aliphatic main chain $-\text{C}\textbf{\textit{H}}_2\text{C}\textbf{\textit{H}}-$ of PS), 3.09-3.43 (m, CH₃C $\textbf{\textit{H}}_2\text{O}-$, $-\text{CH}(\text{OH})\text{C}\textbf{\textit{H}}_2\text{O}-$), 3.52 ($-\text{C}\textbf{\textit{H}}(\text{OH})-$), 4.65-4.76 ($-\text{OC}\textbf{\textit{H}}(\text{CH}_3)\text{O}-$), 6.30-7.30 (m, 5H, aromatic $-\text{C}_6\textbf{\textit{H}}_5$ of PS chain), M_{n,NMR}=1800 g/mol. SEC(THF): M_{n,SEC}=1700 g/mol, PDI=1.06. FT-IR (cm⁻¹): 1600, 1582, 1492, 1452 (aromatic -C-C-), 3494 (-O-H).

Preparation of PS-*b*-PEO Block Copolymer with Ethoxyethyl-Protected Hydroxyl Group at the Junction Point (Copolymer 2). The dried polymer 1 (14.2 g, 8.4 mmol, M_{n,SEC}= 1700 g/mol) in 150 mL THF was charged into a 250 mL dried ampoule, then the required amount of DPMK solution was added. After the addition of the cold EO (14 ml, 277.3 mmol), the solution was heated to 50 °C and stirred for 48 h. After completion of polymerization, an additional amount of DPMK solution (15 ml, 9.2 mmol) was injected into the mixture to guarantee complete protonation of all hydroxyl groups, then terminated with excess bromoethane (15 ml, 201.1 mmol). The crude powder of polymer 2 was purified by extraction with cyclohexane twice to remove the homopolymer PS, then precipitated in cold petroleum ether (30–60 °C) and dried under vacuum at 40 °C (25.0 g, yield: 94.7%). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ ppm: 0.80 (CH₃CH₂—), 1.13 (CH₃CH₂O—), 1.22 (–CH(CH₃)—), 1.26–2.01 (m, 3H, aliphatic main chain – CH₂CH— of PS), 3.05–3.43 (m, CH₃CH₂O—, –CH(O—)CH₂O—), 3.50–3.70 (m, 4H, –CH₂CH₂O— of PEO block), 4.65–4.76 (–OCH(CH₃)O—), 6.30–7.30 (m, 5H, aromatic –C₆H₅ of PS chain), M_{n,NMR}=4200 g/mol. SEC(THF): M_{n,SEC}=4600 g/mol, PDI=1.06. FT-IR (cm⁻¹): 1600, 1582, 1492, 1452 (aromatic –C-C—), 1121 (–C—O—C—).

Preparation of Star (PS-PEO-PEEGE) (Copolymer 3). Firstly, the hydroxyl group was recovered by the hydrolysis of ethoxyethyl group on polymer 2 according to the literature^{S5}. Typically, the (PS-*b*-PEO) polymer 2 (25.0 g) was dissolved in 50 mL THF and 120 mL formic acid, stirred at 35 °C for 5 h, and then the formic acid and THF were evaporated off completely. After the residue was dissolved in 50mL THF, the KOH (2 M) aqueous solution was added until the pH reached 12.0. Then, the mixture was refluxed for 24 h and neutralized with HCl aqueous solution. The product was obtained by removing the formed salts and precipitating in cold petroleum ether (30–60 °C), and then dried under

vacuum at 40 °C until constant weight (23.9 g, yield: 95.6%). This hydrolysis was complete according to the disappearance of the resonance signals of the ethoxyethyl group protons in ¹H NMR spectrum. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ ppm: 0.80 (CH₃CH₂-), 1.13 (CH₃CH₂O-), 1.26-2.01 (m, 3H, aliphatic main chain - CH_2CH_- of PS), 3.00–3.43 (m, $-CH(CH_2OH)O_-$, $CH_3CH_2O_-$), 3.50–3.70 (m, 4H, $-CH_2CH_2O_-$ of PEO block), 6.30–7.30 (m, 5H, aromatic $-C_6H_5$ of PS chain). Secondly, PS-b-PEO with an active hydroxyl group was used as macro-initiator for ROP of EEGE. To a 100 mL ampoule, the dried (PS-b-PEO) polymer with the hydroxyl group at the junction point (10.0 g, 2.4 mmol, M_{n,NMR}=4200 g/mol) in 45 mL THF was charged, then the required amount of DPMK solution and EEGE monomer (6 ml, 41.1 mmol) were added, the solution was heated to 60 °C and stirred for 48 h. After termination with methanol and precipitation in cold petroleum ether (30–60 °C) twice, a light red product star (PS-PEO-PEEGE) copolymer 3 was obtained and dried under vacuum at 40 °C (15.4 g, yield: 96.3%). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ ppm: 0.80 (CH₃CH₂-), 1.13 (CH₃CH₂O-), 1.22 (-CH(CH₃)-), 1.26-2.01 (m, 3H, aliphatic main chain $-CH_2CH_-$ of PS), 3.30–3.50 (m, $CH_3CH_2O_-$, $-CH(O_-)CH_2O_-$, $-CHCH_2O_-$), 3.50–3.80 (m, 7H, $-CH_2CH_2O$ of PEO block and $-CH_2CHO$ of PEEGE block), 4.65–4.76 ($-OCH(CH_3)O$ of PEEGE block), 6.30–7.30 (m, 5H, aromatic $-C_6H_5$ of PS chain). $M_{n,NMR}$ =5900 g/mol. SEC(THF): M_{n SEC}=5100 g/mol, PDI=1.07. FT-IR (cm⁻¹): 1600, 1582, 1492, 1452 (aromatic -C-C-), 1121(-C-O-C-), 3494 (-O-H).

Preparation of Star (PS-PEO-PEEGE) Copolymer with the Propargyl Group at the PEEGE Chain End (Copolymer 4). To a 250 mL dried ampoule, 8.0 g dried polymer 3 ($M_{n,NMR}$ =5900 g/mol, 1.4 mmol) and 60 mL THF were added. Then the system was bubbled with N_2 and DPMK solution was introduced until the solution color was turned to reddish-brown. After the ampoule was placed into ice bath, propargyl bromide (2.0 mL, 3.2 g, 26.9 mmol) was added dropwise during 2 h and the reaction was continued for 24 h at room temperature. The functionalized polymer 4 was obtained by separation of the formed salts and precipitation in cold petroleum ether (30–60 °C) twice, and dried under vacuum at 40 °C for 12 h until constant weight (7.7 g, yield: 96.3%). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) (Figure S1) δ ppm: 0.80 (CH₃CH₂–), 1.13 (CH₃CH₂O–), 1.22 (–CH(CH₃)–), 1.26–2.01 (m, 3H, aliphatic main chain –CH₂CH–

of PS), $2.43(-C \equiv CH)$, 3.30-3.50 (m, $CH_3CH_2O_-$, $-CH(O_-)CH_2O_-$, $-CHCH_2O_-$), 3.50-3.80 (m, 7H, $-CH_2CH_2O_-$ of PEO block and $-CH_2CHO_-$ of PEEGE block), $4.35(-OCH_2C \equiv CH)$, 4.65-4.76 ($-OCH(CH_3)O_-$ of PEEGE block), 6.30-7.30 (m, 5H, aromatic $-C_6H_5$ of PS chain). FT-IR (cm⁻¹): 1600, 1582, 1492, 1452 (aromatic $-C_-C_-$), $1121(-C_-O_-C_-)$, $3252(-C \equiv C_-H)$ (Figure S4).

Preparation of Poly(EO-co-EEGE) (Copolymer 5). The copolymerization was carried out in the kettle, the typical procedure S6.87 was showed as follows: a 150 mL kettle was vacuumed at 80 °C for 24 h, and cooled to room temperature and then to –20 °C, given volume of initiator solution [triethylene glycol (0.67 mL, 5.0 mmol) mixed with DPMK (3.3 mL, 2.0 mmol) in 50 mL THF], EEGE (5.0 g, 34.2 mmol) and EO (44.0 g, 1.0 mol) were introduced successively into kettle under magnetic stirring. Subsequently, it was heated to 60 °C under stirring for 48 h. The reaction was terminated by a few drops of acidified methanol. Then all the solvents were removed by reduced distillation. The crude product was dissolved in CH₂Cl₂, filtered and dried over anhydrous MgSO₄. The copolymer 5 was obtained by precipitation in diethyl ether twice and dried in vacuo at room temperature (44.3 g, yield: 90.4%). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ ppm: 1.19 (t, CH₃CH₂O–), 1.29 (d, –CH(CH₃)–), 3.50–3.80 (m, 11H, –CH₂CH₂O– of PEO block, –CH₂CHO–, –CHCH₂O– and –CH₃CH₂O– of PEEGE block), 4.65–4.75 (–OCH(CH₃)O– of PEEGE block). SEC(H₂O): M_{n,SEC}=9300 g/mol, PDI=1.10. The composition of the copolymer could be obtained by the following formula based on ¹H NMR spectrum (Figure S2).

$$R_T = \frac{4A_a}{\left(A_{sum} - 7A_a\right)} \tag{1}$$

Where R_T was the molar ratio of EEGE to EO in the copolymer 5.

Hydrolysis of the EEGE Units of the Copolymer 5 (Copolymer 6). The hydrolysis process of the copolymer 5 was similar to that of ethoxyethyl group on PS-*b*-PEO copolymer 2. 1 H NMR (CDCl₃) δ ppm: 3.50–3.80 (m, 9H, -C H_{2} C H_{2} O-, -C H_{2} C H_{0} O- and -CHC H_{2} OH), FT-IR (cm $^{-1}$): 1121(-C-O-C-), 3500 (-O-H). SEC(H₂O): M_{n,SEC}=9600 g/mol, PDI=1.10.

Preparation of the Copolymer 7 with Multiple Pending Bromide Groups. A 6.0 g sample of copolymer 6 (M_{n,SEC}=9600 g/mol, 5.6 mmol hydroxyl groups) was dissolved in 100 mL of anhydrous degassed pyridine, then 2.0 mL (16.2 mmol) of 2-bromoisobutyryl bromide was added dropwise at 0 °C for 30 min under vigorous stirring. The mixture was stirred for 3 h at 0 °C, followed by stirring at room temperature for 24 h. After the insoluble salt was removed by filtration, pyridine was removed by azeotropic distillation with dry toluene. The residue was dissolved in CH₂Cl₂ and washed with KOH aqueous solution (1 mol/L), HCl aqueous solution (1 mol/L), and distilled water, respectively. After CH₂Cl₂ was removed by distillation in vacuum, the produced polymer dissolved in ethanol was purified by an ultrafiltration membrane to remove low molecular-weight impurities. Then the ethanol was removed from the yellowy product by distillation, the remains were dried in vacuo at 40 °C (5.4 g, 90%).

¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ ppm: 1.94 (-C(CH₃)₂Br), 3.50–3.80 (m, -CH₂CH₂O-, -CH₂CHO- and -CH₂CH₂OCO-), 4.20 (t, -CH₂CH₂OCO-), 4.36 (d, -CH₂CHOCO-). FT-IR (cm⁻¹): 1121(-C-O-C-), 1738 (-COO-).

Preparation of the Copolymer 8 with Multiple Pending Azide Groups. The azidation of the pending bromide atoms of copolymer 7 was proceeded as follows: Typically, 1.0 g (0.93 mmol bromide atoms) copolymer 7 was dissolved in 15 mL of DMF, then NaN₃ (0.61 g, 9.3 mmol) was added and stirred for 48 h at room temperature. After the remove of salts by centrifugation, the remaining DMF solution containing copolymer (1.0 g, 15 ml DMF) was collected and stored at –20 °C for next coupling reaction. A small amount of DMF solution containing copolymer was purified by dialysis against water for 72 h to remove the salts and DMF solvent for ¹H NMR and FT-IR characterization. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ ppm: 1.47 (–C(CH₃)₂N₃), 3.50–3.80 (m, –CH₂CH₂O–, –CH₂CHO– and –CH₂CH₂OCO–), 4.20 (t, –CH₂CH₂OCO–), 4.36 (d, –CH₂CHOCO–). FT-IR (cm⁻¹): 1121(–C–O–C–), 1738 (–COO–), 2108 (–N₃). From the ¹H NMR (Figure S3), the signal at 1.94 ppm typical of the -C(CH₃)₂Br protons disappeared completely, the signal at 1.47 ppm assigned to the –C(CH₃)₂N₃ protons appeared after substitution of bromide by azide, which confirmed that the derivatization reaction was complete.

Preparation of the Amphiphilic Graft Copolymer 9 with Star-like Side Chains. Typically, into a 50 mL ampoule, 0.3 g copolymer 4 (5.1×10⁻⁵ mol, $M_{n,NMR-coolymer 3}$ =5900 g/mol), 0.9 ml copolymer 8 (5.1×10⁻⁵ mol azide units, $M_{n,SEC-polymer 5}$ =9300 g/mol), DMF (2 mL), CuBr (0.15 g, 1.0×10⁻³ mol), and PMDETA (0.19 ml, 1.0×10⁻³ mol) were charged. The reaction mixture was then vacuumed by three freeze-thaw cycles and purged with N₂, and then heated to 80 °C for 48 h. After the evaporation of DMF, the reaction mixture was diluted with THF and passed through an activated neutral alumina column to remove the copper salts. The crude product was concentrated and dried in vacuo at 40 °C. The purification of 9 was carried out in ethanol by an ultrafiltration membrane. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ ppm: 0.80 (CH₃CH₂-), 1.13 (CH₃CH₂O-), 1.22 (-CH(CH₃)-), 1.26-2.01 (m, 3H, aliphatic main chain – CH₂CH- of PS), 3.30-3.85 (m, -CH₂CH₂O-, CH₃CH₂O-, -CHCH₂O-, -CH₂CHO-, -CH(O-)CH₂O-, -CH₂CH₂OCO-), 4.15 (-CH₂CH₂OCO-), 4.32 (-CHCH₂OCO-), 4.65-4.76 (-OCH(CH₃)O- of PEEGE block), 4.81 (s, 2H, -OCH₂-(4-triazole)-), 6.30-7.30 (m, 5H, aromatic -C₆H₃ of PS chain), 7.76 (s, 1H, -CH- of the triazole ring). SEC(THF): $M_{n,SEC}$ =3300 g/mol, PDI=1.04. FT-IR (cm⁻¹): 1600, 1582, 1492, 1452 (aromatic -C-C-), 1121(-C-O-C-), 1633 (-C=C- of the triazole ring).

Table S1. Polymerization Data of Alkyne-terminated Star Copolymers and the Precursors

Exp.	PS 1				P	PS-b-PEO 2			3	Star polymer 4	
	M _{n,SEC} ^a (g/mol)	PDI ^a	M _{n,NMR} (g/mol)	E.F. ^b (%)	M _{n,SEC} ^a (g/mol)	PDI ^a	M _{n,NMR} (g/mol)	M _{n,SEC} ^a (g/mol)	PDI ^a	M _{n,NMR} (g/mol)	E.F.° (%)
A B	1,700 3,600	1.06 1.06	1,800 3,600	95.1 94.2	4,600 8,300	1.06 1.06	4,200 8,200	5,100 15,00 0	1.07 1.09	5,900 13,10 0	>99 >99

^a Determined by SEC using PS as standard and THF as eluent.

^b E.F. was the efficiency of functionality, which was determined by ¹H NMR in CDCl₃ according to the previous work ^{S8}.

^c E.F. was the efficiency of alkyne group functionality, which was determined by ¹H NMR in CDCl₃ (Figure S1).

Table S2. Polymerization Data of the Main Chain with Multiple Pending Azide groups and the Precursors

Exp.	Poly(EO-co-EEGE) 5					Poly(EO-6	co-Gly)	Main Chain-Br 7	Main Chain-N ₃
	M _{n,SEC} (g/mol)	PDI	R _f ^c	R_T^{d}	N _{EEGE} ^e	M. gro	PDI ^b	E.F. ^f (%)	E.F. ^g (%)
A	9,300 ^b	1.10 ^b	1/29	1/29.44	6	9,600	1.10	100	100
В	$10,000^{a}$	1.07 ^a	1/15	1/16	12	6,000	1.09	100	100

^a Determined by SEC using PS as standard and THF as solvent.

^b Determined by by SEC, calibrated against PEO standard using 0.1M NaNO₃ as eluent.

^c The feed ratio of EEGE to EO.

^d The molar ratio of EEGE to EO in the copolymer poly(EO-*co*-EEGE) **5** calculated from ¹H NMR on the formula (1) in the text.

 $[^]e$ The number of EEGE units in poly(EO-co-EEGE) 5, calculated by the formula: N_{EEGE}=M_{n,SEC}/(146+44/R_{T}^{\ d}).

^f E.F. was the esterification efficiency of the hydroxyl groups of poly(EO-*co*-Gly) **6**, calculated by the following formula: E.F.= $[(4/R_T^d + 3) \times N_{EEGE} \times A_E]/[2(N_{EEGE} + 2) \times A_{sum}] \times 100\%$ (Figure S3).

^g E.F. was the azidation efficiency of the bromide atoms of copolymer **7**, which was determined by ¹H NMR analysis (Figure S3).

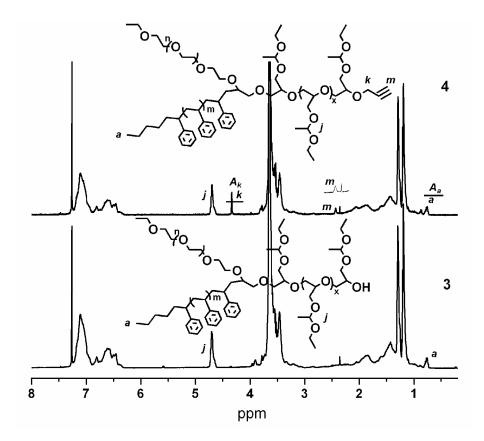


Figure S1. ¹H NMR spectra (CDCl₃) of copolymer 3 and 4.

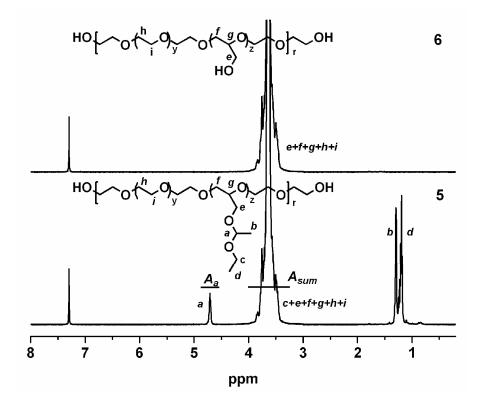


Figure S2. ^{1}H NMR spectra (CDCl₃) of copolymer 5 and 6.

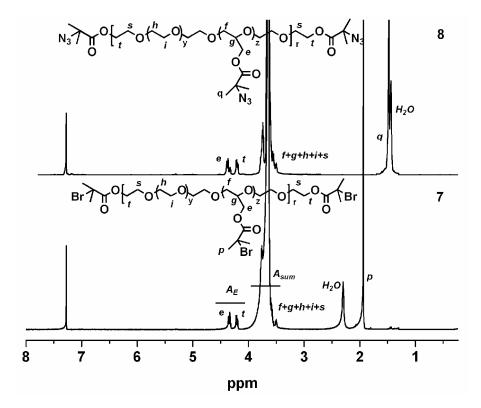


Figure S3. ¹H NMR spectra (CDCl₃) of copolymer 7 and 8.

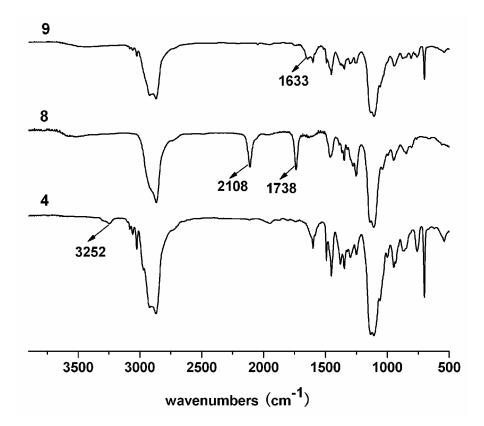


Figure S4. FT-IR spectra of copolymer 4, 8 and 9.

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