Determination of the glass transition region of PVME by means of spectroscopic ellipsometry

Andreas Hertwig\textsuperscript{a}, Sherif Madkour\textsuperscript{b}, Marcel Gawek\textsuperscript{b}, Andreas Schönhals\textsuperscript{b}

\textsuperscript{a}Div. 6.7, BAM, Unter den Eichen 87, 12200 Berlin, Germany, andreas.hertwig@bam.de
\textsuperscript{b}Div. 6.6, BAM, Unter den Eichen 87, 12200 Berlin, Germany

In this presentation, we report on the determination of the glass transition temperature of thin layers of Polyvinylmethylether (PVME) depending on the thickness of the polymer layer. The glass transition of thin polymer layers is currently under much investigation due to the nano-confinement effects proposed to appear in dependence on the layer thicknesses in the nm range. The properties of the polymer, the temperature range, as well as the thickness range of the polymer layers pose a serious challenge to the investigation by means of spectroscopic ellipsometry. By careful choice of experimental parameters, we were able to investigate the thickness change by temperature of PVME layers in the range between 2 and 300 nm and in the temperature range between 200 K and 340 K. By optimizing the analysis process, we were able to determine $T_g$ values within this parameter range with sufficient accuracy to investigate the $T_g$ change due to confinement effects.

Alongside the change of position of the glass transition with thickness, we discuss the details of the ellipsometric analysis and its implications for the resulting thermal properties of the thin polymer layers \cite{Madkour2017} as well as the accuracy of the $T_g$ value with respect to the method used in the analysis process.

\textit{Keywords:} Polymers, PVME, temperature dependent ellipsometry, glass transition

\textbf{References}