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1 Modelling of Physical Ageing in Starch using the TNM equation

- 2 Cecile Morris^{a,*}, Andy J. Taylor^a, Imad A. Farhat^a, William MacNaughtan^a
- ^a University of Nottingham, Division of Food Science, Sutton Bonington, LE12 5RD, United Kingdom
- 4 *Corresponding author: Tel +44 0 1159516578. Fax +44 01159516142. Cecile.Morris@nottingham.ac.uk

5 ABSTRACT

Gelatinised wheat starch, freeze dried and equilibrated at different RH, was aged at different
temperatures and for different times. The Tool-Narayanaswamy-Moynihan (TNM) model was
used to describe the ageing for all samples under all conditions.

9 Three TNM parameters: x, Δh^* and A were determined experimentally using respectively the 10 peak shift method (x) and the dependency of T_f' (the limiting value of T_f) on the cooling rate (Δh^* 11 and A). The non-linearity parameter x and the non exponential parameter β were also estimated 12 by optimising a fit of the experimental normalised specific heat at different ageing times and 13 temperatures to curves generated using the TNM model. The TNM model successfully described 14 the normalised experimental data.

15 It was found that the intermolecular forces were strong and the relaxation times depended more 16 strongly on the glass structure than the glass temperature. The hydration level of the starch had 17 a direct impact of the breadth of the relaxation time distribution. A dependency of the non-18 linearity parameter x on ageing temperature (peak shift method) was observed. This suggests 19 that physical ageing is more complex than is described by TNM formalism.

20 *Keywords:* starch, physical aging, structural relaxation, TNM model

21 **1. Introduction**

Cooling from the liquid state can result in either crystallisation or glass formation. The former
 takes place when the cooling rate is sufficiently slow to allow molecular rearrangement to form a

periodic crystal. Alternatively, cooling the liquid at a sufficiently rapid rate so as to avoid crystallisation traps the system in the non-equilibrium glassy state. When stored below the glass transition temperature, a spontaneous decrease in volume or enthalpy is observed. This is due to the non-equilibrium state in which the glass was "frozen in" at the glass transition and the relaxation towards liquid equilibrium (Figure 1). The enthalpy loss is regained on heating and the pathway out of the glass leads to an endotherm appearing on the DSC thermogram.

30 Figure 1 thereabout

31 This phenomenon is known as physical ageing or structural relaxation. It has been studied as early as 1931¹ when it was first noticed that, due to the non-equilibrium nature of the glass, its 32 configuration maintained at constant temperature and pressure continues to evolve after the 33 glass transition temperature has been traversed. The state of the glass and its departure from 34 35 equilibrium depends on the cooling rate and only an infinitely slow cooling rate from an 36 equilibrium point above the glass transition temperature would ensure that it maintained equilibrium. The mechanical aspects of the relaxation have been extensively investigated² using 37 38 creep compliance tests which are, along with strain-stress tests, the most commonly used experiment.³⁻⁴ An increase in Young's modulus or storage modulus and a decrease in the creep 39 rate are always observed. 40

41 **1.1.Details of the Model**

42 One of the well known features of structural relaxation is its non-linearity. This was demonstrated on the volume recovery after a temperature jump in the glassy state.⁵ After temperature jumps of 43 44 opposite signs, the equilibrium line is not reached symmetrically. This suggests that the transition and the relaxation are governed by the instantaneous state of the glass as well as its 45 temperature. In order to account for this dependency, the fictive temperature T_f (first introduced 46 by Tool in 1931) was used to describe the structural properties of the material and thus the 47 dependency of the average relaxation time on the structure of the glass through the non-linearity 48 parameter x. This is reflected in the expression for the average relaxation time τ_0 as expressed in 49 50 the constitutive equation of the TNM model which takes the form of an Arrhenius type equation with 2 terms accounting respectively for the effects of temperature (T) and glass structure through the fictive temperature (T_f) ⁶ (Eq 1). The fictive temperature represents the temperature at which the glass in this configuration would be at equilibrium.

$$\tau_{O} = A \exp\left\{\frac{x\Delta h^{*}}{RT} + \frac{(1-x)\Delta h^{*}}{RT_{f}}\right\}$$
 Eq 1

54 Where R is the ideal gas constant and A is a pre-exponential factor, Δh^* the activation energy, 55 expresses the temperature dependence of the relaxation time for the linear regime close to 56 equilibrium. The partitioning due to x has no physical basis and its wide use is due to the good 57 agreement with experimental data.

58 The definition of T_f in terms of enthalpy is:⁷

$$H(T_a) = H_e(T_f) - \int_T^{T_f} C_{pg} dT'$$
 Eq 2

59 Where H_e is the theoretical equilibrium enthalpy at an ageing temperature T_a (figure 1) and C_{pg} , 60 the specific heat capacity in the glassy state (C_{pl} is the specific heat capacity in the liquid state). 61 Eq 2 can be differentiated with respect to temperature and rearranged to give Eq 3 which shows 62 that the derivative of T_f is equal to a normalised specific heat capacity which can be obtained 63 experimentally from differential scanning calorimetry (DSC) traces.

$$\frac{dT_f}{dT} = \frac{\left(C_p - C_{pg}\right)_T}{\left(C_{pl} - C_{pg}\right)_{T_f}}$$
Eq 3

In practice, T_f was calculated using equations 4, 5 and 1 with a starting value obtained by assuming that in the liquid equilibrium state, the fictive temperature was equal to the actual temperature of the system (figure 1).

$$T_{f}(T) = T_{O} + \sum_{i} \Delta T_{i} [1 - \phi(t - t_{i}, t)]$$
 Eq 4

T_o refers to the starting temperature of the cooling-ageing-heating cycle, above the glass
transition temperature, in the liquid equilibrium state.

Another important aspect of the structural relaxation is the non-exponentiality of the process. The glass transition and the structural relaxation are governed by a distribution of relaxation times. This is added to the TNM equation in the form of the parameter β , where β is inversely proportional to the width of relaxation time distribution (Eq 5).

$$\phi(t-t_i,t) = \exp\left[-\left(\int_{t_1}^t \frac{dt'}{\tau_o}\right)^{\beta}\right]$$
 Eq 5

The TNM model is the most widely used model to predict physical ageing and has been applied to a range of polymers.⁸⁻⁹ Recently, it has also been used for the description of ageing in biopolymers.¹⁰⁻¹¹ A table of the four parameters used in the TNM equation for a range of synthetic polymers has been published.⁷ However, it is now recognised that the parameters can depend on thermal history¹² which is not in agreement with the theory. x and β were also shown to be interdependent.¹³⁻¹⁴

The objective of this work is to examine the extent to which the ageing at different temperatures and for different times of a starch matrix at various moisture contents can be described by application of the TNM model.

82 **1.2.Experimental estimation of x**

The non-linearity parameter can be calculated using the peak shift method.¹⁵ This method is derived from the equations involving the partial derivatives of the reduced variables of the KAHR (Kovacs-Aklonis-Hutchinson-Ramos) model¹⁶ which shares with the TNM model the same nonlinearity parameter. It was shown that the partial derivatives of the peak temperature (T_p) with respect to any of the four experimental parameters (cooling rate, heating rate, ageing temperature and loss enthalpy) are practically independent of the shape and breadth of the retardation spectrum of the system for well stabilised glasses.¹⁷ They are therefore essentially
dependent only on the structure parameter x.

$$F(x) = \Delta C_p \frac{\partial T_p}{\partial \Delta H}$$
 Eq 6

91 Where ΔH is the enthalpy lost during ageing at the annealing temperature. ΔH was determined 92 by subtracting the DSC scan of a fresh sample to that of the aged sample. Therefore, the 93 mastercurve F(x) can easily be determined experimentally¹⁵ by varying the ageing time while 94 keeping the ageing temperature, cooling and heating rates constant. The slope of Tp vs. ΔH was 95 extracted from cooling-ageing-heating cycles for different ageing times and used in Eq 6. x was 96 calculated by combining Eq 6 and 7.

97 F(x) was approximated as: ¹⁷

$$F(x) = \frac{1}{x} - 1$$
 Eq 7

As already stated, these equations only apply to well stabilised glasses or glasses that have been annealed for a long period and show substantial non-linearity. This is not the case for some of the glasses in the present work. In such cases the estimation either by the peak shift method or by curve fitting is problematical. However in the Foods area short annealing times are commonly encountered and complex DSC curves are observed. Therefore we have decided to use both these methods in the present work despite the limitations.

104 **1.3.Experimental estimations of** Δh^* and **A**

The glassy value of the fictive temperature is denoted T_f (figure 1). It is called the limiting value of T_f and is obtained by integration of the normalised heat capacity measured during heating (Eq 8):

$$T'_{f} = T_{\max} - \int_{T_{\min}}^{T_{\max}} \left(\frac{dT_{f}}{dT}\right) dT$$
 Eq 8

Where T_{max} and T_{min} are, respectively, temperatures well above and below the glass transition
 temperature.

Eq 9 was derived¹⁸ for the evaluation of Δh^* from the dependency of the fictive temperature on the cooling rate (q). It is based on the fact that increasing the cooling rate or equivalently the average relaxation time has an identical effect on the fictive temperature. Eq 9 represents how decreasing the cooling rate (or equivalently τ_0) shifts the relaxation time distribution towards higher temperatures and thus affects Δh^* .¹⁹

$$\frac{d\ln|q|}{d\left(\frac{1}{T'_{f}}\right)} = -\frac{\Delta h^{*}}{R}$$
Eq 9

115 This relation was used to calculate the starting Δh^* value for the fitting routine (see figure 2 and 116 table 2).

117 The pre-exponential factor A can then be evaluated using Eq 10:⁷

$$\ln A = \frac{-\Delta h^*}{RT'_f} + \ln \tau (T'_f)$$
 Eq 10

118 With Ln[τ (T_f')] \approx Ln[τ (Tg)] \approx 4.6 as τ (Tg) can be approximated to 100s⁷

119 The aim of this study was to estimate experimentally the values of Δh^* , A and x for two 120 gelatinised and freeze-dried wheat starch systems (13.0% and 9.8% water). These values were 121 then used to generate a number of thermal histories for the two systems using the TNM model. 122 The parameters β and x were then adjusted to obtain the best fits to the experimental data.

123 2. Materials and Methods

124 **2.1.Sample preparation**

Wheat starch was gelatinised by heating in excess water (9 times the weight of starch) at 80°C for 20 minutes under constant agitation. The samples were then freeze-dried and equilibrated

over saturated salt solutions (KCI: 84%RH and Mg(NO₃)₂: 53%RH) to achieve different water
contents. The water contents were determined in triplicates by placing the samples in an oven at
80°C until constant weight was achieved.

130 **2.2.Differential Scanning Calorimetry**

DSC experiments were carried out using a Perkin Elmer DSC7 with Pyris absolute heat capacity software. The instrument was attached to an intracooler and calibrated for temperature and enthalpy with indium and cyclohexane. A three trace absolute heat capacity measurement method was used. The reference material used for the specific heat determination was sapphire and the baseline reference was an empty pan of the same type as the one used for the sample. Dry air was used as a purging gas over the head.

137 The heating and cooling rates used were 10° Cmin⁻¹.

Stainless steel pans were used and the ageing cycles were performed in the calorimeter without removal of pans in order to completely control the thermal history. The pans were re-weighed after all the thermal cycles had been carried out to check for any weight loss.

141 3. Results

142 **3.1.Determination of the non-linearity parameter by the peak shift method**

143 Table 1 shows the x values obtained for 2 wheat starch systems aged at different temperatures.

144Table 1 thereabout

- The non-linearity parameter x increased with ageing temperature for both wheat starch systems.
 When pooled, the non-linearity parameters of both systems were found to decrease linearly with
- 147 increasing Tg-T_a ($r^2 = 0.89$) (Table 1).

148 **3.2.Determination of T**_f; the activation energy, Δh^* and pre-exponential factor A

The limiting value of the fictive temperature T_f was calculated using Eq 6 for the following cooling rates: 1; 2.5; 5.5; 8; 13; 20; 30 and 45Cmin⁻¹.

- 151 Figure 2 shows how the limiting T_f value (T_f).changes with cooling rate.
- 152 Figure 2 thereabout

153 **Table 2 thereabout**

3.3.Generation of ageing profiles using the TNM model

The values of the experimentally determined parameters Δh^* , LnA and x were used in the TNM 155 156 model to generate ageing profiles for a number of thermal histories. An optimisation routine for the parameters x and β was then used to obtain the best fit to experimental data for each of the 157 ageing profiles. Both Δh^* and LnA were allowed to vary within 5% of the experimentally 158 determined values to take into account the error in the determination of T_{f} and the slope of the 159 160 lines in figure 2. Figure 3 shows the Normalised Specific Heat and curves generated from the TNM model for wheat starch containing 13.0% water aged at 15°C for 0, 1.5 and 6 hours. Also 161 162 shown on this figure is the theoretical result for annealing the glass for 168 hours.

163 Figure 3 thereabout

Figure 4 shows the Normalised Specific Heat and curves generated from the TNM model for wheat starch containing 13.0% and 9.8% water aged at different temperatures for 0 and 6 hours.

166 **Figure 4 thereabout**

Generally, good agreement was observed between the experimental data and the TNM generated curves and the model was able to describe correctly the different shapes of endotherms.

Table 3 shows the 4 parameters used in the TNM equation to generate the normalised specific
heat of wheat starch at 2 different water contents, aged at different temperatures and for 0, 1.5, 3
and 6 hours.

173 **Table 3 thereabout**

Very little adjustment needed to be made on the experimental values of Δh^* (+/-0.5%) and LnA (+/-0.2%) in order to obtain good fits. The x values obtained through the curve fitting method depended strongly on the ageing times for all the systems and ageing times with the initial x value for the "fresh" sample (no ageing) being significantly higher (p<0.001) than the x values for the other ageing times. No trend between x and ageing temperature was observed. There was no significant difference (p=0.8) between the x values of both wheat starch samples.

180 No trend between β and ageing times or ageing temperatures was observed however, the β 181 value of the wheat starch sample at 13.0% was significantly higher (p=0.025) than that of the 182 sample containing 9.8% water.

183 **4. Discussion**

Despite the structural complexity of wheat starch, good agreement between the experimental data and profiles generated using the TNM model was observed. The TNM values derived in this study were found to be different from those reported elsewhere²⁰ for a system of 80% starch, 15% sorbitol and 5% water: Δh^* = 95.6 kCal.mol⁻¹, LnA=-143, β =0.32; x=0.48 but were in closer agreement with those reported for a system of 89% starch and 11% water: Δh^* 114.5kCal.mol⁻¹, LnA=-173.5, β =0.24; x=0.37.¹¹ In these 2 studies however, a maximum of two ageing histories were fitted.

The ranges of x values obtained in this study by firstly the experimental peak shift method and 191 secondly through curve fitting were of the same order of magnitude and on the low side of the 192 range published for less complex carbohydrates: 0.475 for 96% maltose¹¹; 0.47 and 0.59 for an 193 anhydrous mix of trehalose (65%), sucrose (25%), glucose (5%) and lysine (10%)¹⁰; 0.43 to 0.53 194 for sucrose/aspartame mix and 0.41 - 0.50 for aspartame/trehalose²¹ and synthetic polymers: 195 0.37 for polystyrene²², 0.43 for polyvinyl acetate²³; bisphenol A polycarbonate.²⁴ Hodge (1994) 196 published a table of the TNM parameters for synthetic polymers and inorganic glasses, the x 197 values typically lie between 0.2 (PMMA) and 0.68 (LiCl). 198

The correlation between x and the glass structure was studied,²⁵ and it was concluded that for 199 200 organic glasses, x values were related mainly to the magnitude of the intermolecular forces, the 201 greater the intermolecular forces, the lower the x value. Therefore, the small values obtained for 202 starch based systems in this study are indicative of the structure and functional groups found in 203 starch and demonstrate strong hydrogen bonding. The values obtained indicate that while wheat 204 starches of different water contents have similar intermolecular forces, these may strengthen upon ageing as x decreases from \approx 0.4 for a fresh glass to 0.2 at 1.5 hours of ageing to remain 205 206 constant upon further ageing. Attributing a physical meaning to this shift could lead to over-207 interpretation of the data as it relies only on 2 points (the fresh samples) determined by curve fitting. Indeed, x has been reported to increase with ageing time.²⁶ 208

It has also been pointed out that the methods for estimating x, the peak shift method and curve fitting, are less sensitive for glasses not aged sufficiently to show significant non-linearity. The small mid- and sub- Tg endotherms observed here rather than the overshoots at the top end of the glass transition, are consistent with non-stabilised glasses. Hence the reliability of the estimation of x may be limited for the glasses in the present work. Consistent with this is the result for the TNM simulation of a glass aged for 168 hours (1 week) shown on figure 3. The endotherm is developing into an overshoot occurring at a temperature above Tg.

216 No trend was observed between β and any of the other parameters (x, ageing time, ageing 217 temperature). However a significant difference was found between the two samples. The nonexponentiality reflects the distribution breadth of relaxation times and has been shown to be 218 dependent on the cooling rate.²⁷ In this study, the cooling rate was kept constant but the 219 hydration levels of both samples were different and less available water appeared to result in a 220 221 wider distribution of relaxation times. Large β values were linked in polystyrenes to intersegment distances larger than 0.5nm resulting in enhanced segmental mobility.²⁸ This is consistent with 222 these findings where lower β values were observed for the system with the lower water content 223 224 and arguably lower mobility.

The activation energies for amylopectin at three different water contents have been calculated.²⁹ 225 226 It was found that Δh^* values depended greatly on the water content and decreased with increasing water levels. The relationship of the Δh^* values to the structure of polystyrenes was 227 investigated:³⁰ Δh^* increased with the average molecular weight and decreased with broadening 228 229 molecular weight distributions. This is in agreement with the current experiments on starch where 230 increased water contents lower the Δh^* values since the introduction of water broadens the molecular weight distribution as well as lowers the average molecular weight of the system. It 231 has been reported²⁴ that good fits of experimental data using the TNM model could be obtained 232 233 with different activation energies. This points further to the limitations of the model: despite attempts to give the different parameters a physical meaning, they appear to resemble adjustable 234 235 parameters which overlie a deeper more fundamental theory.

236 The Applicability of the TNM model to ageing in starch

Whilst a superficial inspection of figures 3 and 4 would suggest that the TNM model describes qualitatively, if not completely quantitatively, the ageing curves produced in the DSC, a more careful consideration shows that there are some areas of concern. There is a decrease in the experimentally determined value (peak shift method) of the x parameter as a function of the difference between the glass transition temperature and the annealing temperature (Table 1). It would be expected for a successful model that these parameters would be material constants and so would not systematically vary with test conditions.

As an example of how severe the tests of the model in this work are, some of these transitions are approaching a width of 70K as opposed to the more usual values of 15K observed in polymers. Consequently the beta values are well below 1 and characteristic of systems with a very wide spectrum of relaxation times. It is interesting to note however that even on such spread transitions, the TNM model, applied assuming a single glass transition, seems to be sufficient to provide at least a qualitative fit.

250 Limitations of the TNM model

251 Limitations in the applicability of TNM, such as the variation in the parameters x and Δh^* with thermal history, have been noted previously. In particular Hutchinson et al 26 have addressed 252 253 problems with the interpretation of the parameter x based on the non-linear Adams Gibb 254 equation in turn derived from the original Gibbs DiMarzio description of the glass transition. This still retains features of the original TNM and lends a certain familiarity to the derived expressions. 255 In this modification a maximum and minimum T_f is proposed describing slow and fast relaxation 256 257 processes. A new parameter x_s describes the distribution between the equilibrium and structural 258 components (slow processes) of entropy. This parameter has a fundamental meaning and a formal relationship with the x parameter of the TNM model has been derived which implies in turn 259 260 that the parameter x can now be interpreted in more fundamental terms. A minimum value for x was derived: $x_{min} \sim 1 - T_2/T_f$. If we assume typical values for the starch Tg and the universal 261 value from the WLF equation of $T_2 = T_f (Tg) - 51.6$ then this value is about 0.15 which is 262 263 consistent with table 1 (obtained experimentally) and with the exception of a few values also with 264 table 3 (obtained by curve fitting). Values obtained by fitting should be less robust than those obtained experimentally as the interdependence of the 4 parameters means that a small change 265 266 in one can lead to a change in x to compensate. However see the previous discussion on the 267 difficulty of estimating x in non-stabilised glasses.

Another significant point to emerge is that the expressions relating x_s and x contain the terms T, T₂ and T_f, and are such, that decreases in T_f, as in annealing, will cause x to increase. This is not clear from the curve fitting results for x presented on table 3 but relatively short ageing times were used in this study inducing small changes in T_f. Similarly a decrease in the annealing temperature Ta will lead to a decrease in x. This is consistent with the results obtained using the peak shift method (Table 1).

274 **5.** Conclusion

Physical ageing of two starch systems with different water contents was successfully described using the TNM model. The TNM parameters obtained were in broad agreement with the limited results already published on similar systems. It was found that the intermolecular forces in 278 amorphous starch were strong and the relaxation times depended more strongly on the glass 279 structure rather than the glass temperature. The hydration level of the starch had a direct impact 280 on the breadth of the relaxation time distribution. A dependency of the non-linearity parameter x on the ageing temperature using the peak shift method was observed. This suggested that 281 physical ageing is more complex than described by the TNM equation. This has lead others²⁶ to 282 propose a new approach to ageing based on the non-linear Adams Gibb equation in turn derived 283 284 from the original Gibbs DiMarzio description of the glass transition but which retains features of 285 the original TNM. In this modification a maximum and minimum T_f is proposed describing slow 286 and fast relaxation processes. Although this approach seemed to resolve a number of 287 inconsistencies often reported in the TNM model, it has not been developed further, probably 288 because the profiles of thermal histories generated using the TNM model adequately describe 289 experimental data.

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Figure 1 Enthalpy loss during an isothermal ageing process in the glassy state

Figure 2 Determination of the activation energy from the dependency of T_f' on the cooling rate (see
 equation 9)

335 Figure 3 Experimental Normalised Specific Heat and TNM generated curves for wheat starch at a

moisture content of 13.0% and aged at 15°C (288K) for 0, 1.5 and 6 hours. Also shown is the TNM

337 generated curve for a glass annealed for 168 hours. See table 3 for the values used in the fit. The values

used for the 168 hour fit are identical to those for 6 hours.

339 Figure 4 Experimental Normalised Specific Heat and and the normalised specific heat generated from the

TNM model for systems aged for 0 and 6 hours. A) Wheat Starch 13.0% moisture aged at 25°C (298K) B)

341 Wheat Starch 13.0% moisture aged at 40°C (313K) C) Wheat Starch 9.8% moisture aged at 40°C (313K)

342 D) Wheat Starch 9.8% moisture aged at 60°C (333K). See table 3 for the exact parameter values used in
343 the fits.

344 Table 1 Non-linearity parameters for wheat starch equilibrated at two water contents and aged at different345 ageing temperatures

Table 2 Activation energy and pre-exponential factors for the wheat starch systems

347 **Table 3** TNM parameters used for the generation of the thermal profiles of wheat starch