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PII:	S0021-9797(18)30550-2
DOI:	https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcis.2018.05.035
Reference:	YJCIS 23613
To appear in:	Journal of Colloid and Interface Science
Received Date:	7 April 2018
Revised Date:	9 May 2018
Accepted Date:	14 May 2018



Please cite this article as: K. Yu, H. Zhang, S. Biggs, Z. Xu, O.J. Cayre, D. Harbottle, The rheology of polyvinylpyrrolidone-coated silica nanoparticles positioned at an air-aqueous interface, *Journal of Colloid and Interface Science* (2018), doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcis.2018.05.035

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The rheology of polyvinylpyrrolidone-coated silica nanoparticles positioned at an air-aqueous interface

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ABSTRACT

Particle-stabilized emulsions and foams are widely encountered, as such there remains a concerted effort to better understand the relationship between the particle network structure surrounding droplets and bubbles, and the rheology of the particle-stabilized interface. Poly(vinylpyrrolidone) coated silica nanoparticles were used to stabilize foams. The shear rheology of planar particle-laden interfaces were measured using an interfacial shear rheometer and the rheological properties measured as a function of the sub-phase electrolyte concentration and surface pressure. All particle-laden interfaces exhibited a liquid-like to solid-like transition with increasing surface pressure. The surface pressure-dependent interfacial rheology was then correlated to the formed micron-scale structures of the particle-laden interfaces which were imaged using a Brewster angle microscopy. With the baseline knowledge established, foams were prepared using the same composite particles and the particle network structure observed using cryo-SEM. An attempt has been made to correlate the two structures observed at a planar interface and that surrounding a bubble to elucidate the likely rheology of the bubble stabilizing particle network. Independent of the sub-phase electrolyte concentration, the resulting rheology of the bubble stabilizing particle network was strongly elastic and appeared to be in a compression state at the region of the L-S phase transition.

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