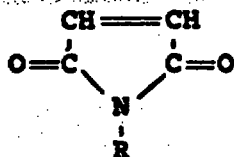


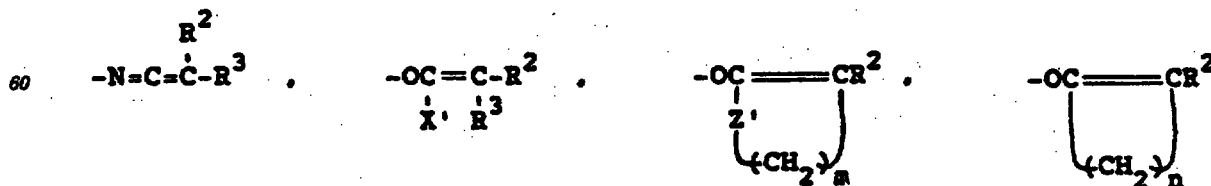
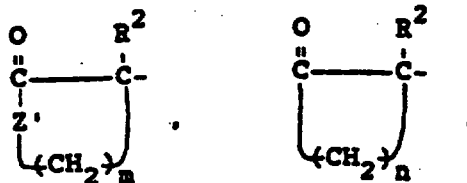
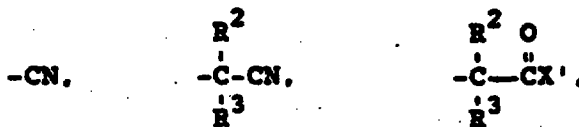
BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 This invention resides in a polymerization process which is catalyzed by oxyanions, and to polymers produced thereby.

United States Patents 4,414,372; 4,417,034; 4,524,196; and 4,508,880 and European Patent Applications
10 Nos. 82303405.3, 84302261.7, 84307669.6, 85201447.1, 85107020.1, and 85308668.4, hereinafter referred to
as "the aforesaid patents and applications", disclose processes for polymerizing polar monomers to
"living" polymers. In certain of the aforesaid patents and applications there is disclosed a process of
preparing a "living" polymer, the process comprising contacting under polymerizing conditions at least
one polar monomer with (i) a tetracoordinate organosilicon, organotin or organogermanium polymer-
15 ization initiator having at least one initiating site, and (iii) a suitable co-catalyst, the polymerization being
characterized by the presence, in the growing and in the grown polymer, of a moiety containing said metal
at "living" ends and said activating substituent or diradical, or a tautomer thereof, at "nonliving" ends of
said polymer, the initiator optionally having one or more substituents that are inert under polymerizing
conditions. The aforesaid patents and applications also disclose processes of polymerizing the monomer
20 selected from the group consisting of $\text{CH}_2=\text{C}(\text{Y})\text{X}$,



Z is an activating substituent selected from the group consisting of



65 and mixtures thereof wherein:

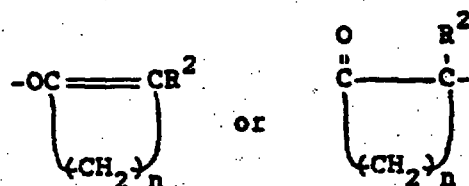
X' is as defined above for the monomer; each of R² and R³ is independently selected from H and hydrocarbyl, defined as for R above;

Z' is O or NR' wherein R' is as defined above;

m is 2, 3 or 4;

n is 3, 4 or 5; and

M is Si, Sn, or GE, provided, however, when Z is



M is Sn or Ge; and

(ii) a co-catalyst which is a source of bifluoride ions HF₂⁻, or a source of fluoride, cyanide or azide ions or a suitable Lewis acid, for example, zinc chloride, bromide or iodide, boron trifluoride, alkylaluminum oxide or an alkylaluminum chloride,

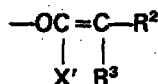
to produce "living" polymer having repeat units of the one or more monomers, said processes further characterized in that:

(a) R¹ is H; provided that at least one R¹ group is not H; and/or

(b) R is a polymeric radical containing at least 20 carbon atoms and optionally containing one or more ether oxygen atoms within aliphatic segments thereof and optionally containing one or more functional substituents that are unreactive under polymerizing conditions; and/or

(c) at least one of any R group in the monomer contains one or more reactive substituents of the formula --Z'(O)C--C(Y')=CH₂ wherein Y' is H or CH₃ and Z' is as defined above; and/or

(d) the initiator is of the formula (R¹)₂M(Z')₂ or O[M(R¹)₂Z']₂ wherein R¹ and M are as defined above and Z' is

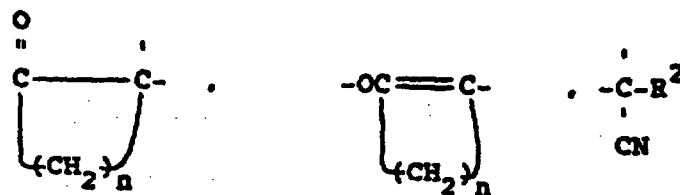
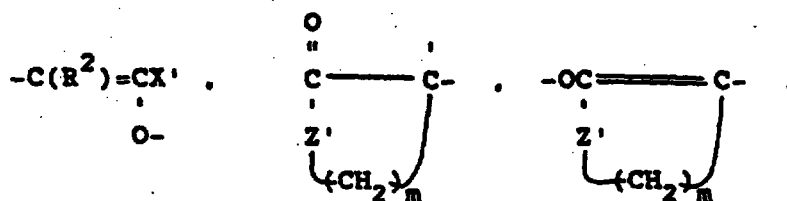
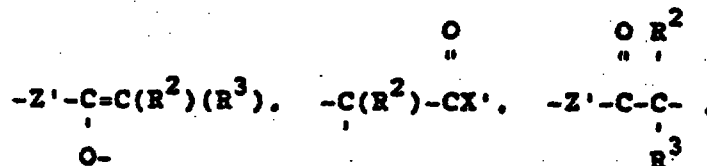


wherein X', R² and R³ are as defined above; and/or

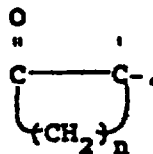
(e) at least one of any R, R² and R³ in the initiator contains one or more initiating substituents of the formula --Z²--M(R¹)₂ wherein

M and R¹ are as defined above; and

Z² is a diradical selected from the group consisting of



and mixtures thereof, wherein R², R³, X', Z', m and n are as defined above, provided, however, when Z² is

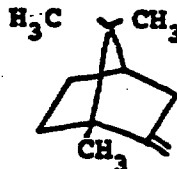


M is Sn or Ge; and/or

(f) Z is selected from the group consisting of $-\text{SR}$, $-\text{OP}(\text{NR}'\text{R}'')_2$, $-\text{OP}(\text{OR}^1)_2$, $-\text{OP}[\text{OSi}(\text{R}^1)_3]_2$ and mixtures thereof,

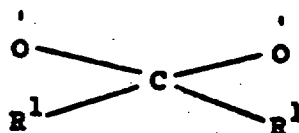
wherein R, R', R' and R'' are as defined above; and/or

(g) R² and R³ taken together are



provided, however, Z is $\begin{array}{c} \text{R}^2 \quad \text{O} \\ | \quad \parallel \\ \text{C} - \text{CX}' \\ | \\ \text{R}^3 \end{array}$ or $\begin{array}{c} \text{OC}=\text{C}(\text{R}^2)(\text{R}^3) \\ | \\ \text{X}' \end{array}$ and/or Z² is $\begin{array}{c} \text{O} \\ \parallel \\ \text{Z}' - \text{C} - \text{C}(\text{R}^2)(\text{R}^3) \end{array}$; and/or

(h) X' and either R² or R³ taken together are



provided, however, Z is $\begin{array}{c} \text{R}^2 \quad \text{O} \\ | \quad \parallel \\ \text{C} - \text{CX}' \\ | \\ \text{R}^3 \end{array}$ or $\begin{array}{c} \text{OC}=\text{C}(\text{R}^2)(\text{R}^3) \\ | \\ \text{X}' \end{array}$ and/or Z² is $\begin{array}{c} \text{O} \\ \parallel \\ \text{C}(\text{R}^2) - \text{CX}' \end{array}$.

As further disclosed in the aforesaid patents and applications, although these processes resemble anionic polymerization, there are significant differences which have commercial significance. These differences include the ability to copolymerize methacrylate and acrylate monomers, or combinations of acrylate monomers, for example, ethyl and sorbyl acrylates, to relatively monodisperse copolymers. Such copolymers are difficult or impossible to obtain by known processes such as anionic polymerization or free-radical polymerization. Moreover, whereas anionic polymerization processes which provide relatively monodisperse polymers are carried out at low temperatures, usually well below -10°C , which require expensive refrigeration equipment for commercial operation, the polymerization processes of the patents are operable over a wide temperature range, from -100°C to 150°C , and they are conveniently operable with many commercially important monomers at about ambient temperatures.

European Patent Application No. 85107020.1 discloses certain tris(disubstituted amino)sulfonium perfluoroalkoxides, including tris(dimethylamino)sulfonium trifluoromethoxide, and the use of this compound as a catalyst in the polymerization processes of U.S. Patents 4,414,372 and 4,417,034. Such use is outside the scope of the invention which is disclosed and claimed hereinbelow, since tris(dimethylamino)sulfonium trifluoromethoxide is not a salt comprising an oxyanion which can form a conjugate acid having the requisite pKa.

It is an object of this invention to provide additional catalysts (referred to in the aforesaid patents and applications as "co-catalysts") which can be used in the processes disclosed in the aforesaid patents and applications. Another object is to provide processes which are similar to the processes disclosed in the aforesaid patents and applications in that they can be carried out with the same monomers and initiators to produce the same "living" polymers, but differing in the type of catalyst used. Still another object is to provide catalysts which are suitable in the processes of the aforesaid patents and applications but which are inoperable in conventional art-recognized anionic processes for polymerizing the same type of monomer. A further object is to provide such catalysts which are readily and economically preparable. These and other objects will be apparent from the disclosure that follows.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The invention herein resides in the polymerization process comprising contacting under polymerizing

(13)

conditions at least one polar monomer with (i) a tetracoordinate organosilicon, organotin or organogermanium polymerization initiator having at least one initiating site, and (ii) a catalyst which is a salt comprising a suitable cation and an oxyanion which can form a conjugate acid having a pKa (DMSO) of 5 to 24, preferably about 6 to about 21, more preferably 8 to 18. Also preferably, the polymer produced is "living" in that the polymerization is characterized by the presence, in the growing and in the grown polymer, of a moiety containing the aforesaid metal at "living" ends and the activating substituent or diradical, or a tautomer thereof, at "nonliving" ends of the polymer.

By conjugate acid is meant the acid formed by protonating the catalytic oxyanion; for example, the conjugate acid of acetate anion is acetic acid, and that of biacetate anion is acetic acid dimer. By pKa (DMSO) of the conjugate acid is meant the negative logarithm of the acidity constant of the conjugate acid, measured in dimethylsulfoxide (DMSO) at 25°C. Methods for measuring pKa values of various acidic compounds, including oxyacids, are abundantly described in the literature, for example, by F. G. Bordwell et al., *J. Org. Chem.*, **45**, 3305 (1980); **46**, 4327 (1982); **47**, 3224 (1982); and **49**, 1424 (1984). A general review of pKa and oxyanion behavior in organic solvents is provided by M. M. Davis in "Acid-Base Behavior in Aprotic Organic Solvents," Natl. Bur. Stand. Monograph, p. 105 (1968).

Oxyanion salts which are operable in the present invention contain cations that are inert under polymerizing conditions, yet render the catalyst available in the polymerizing medium; the medium can include one or more solubilizing agents, such as crown ethers. The cations may be pendant functions on a polymeric backbone, as, for example, in polyamine salts. Preferably, the cation is a quaternary ammonium or tris(dialkylamino)sulfonium (TAS) cation or an alkali or alkaline earth metal. More preferably, the cation is tetraalkylammonium or tris(dialkylamino)sulfonium (TAS) wherein the alkyl group contains 1 to 20 carbon atoms, preferably 1 to 8 carbon atoms. Most preferably, the cation is tetraethylammonium, tetra(n-butyl)ammonium or tris(dimethylamino)sulfonium.

Oxyanion sources which are particularly useful in the present invention include salts of carboxylic and bicarboxylic acids, sulfonic acids, phosphinic and phosphoric acids, phenols and biphenols, nitrous and cyanic acids, trihydrocarbylsilanols, and higher oligomeric forms of these acids, having the aforesaid pKa. Included among such acids are those of the formula $[Q(X^1OH)_p]_q$ wherein X^1 is C(O), S(O) or a single bond, p is an integer and is at least 1, q is an integer and is at least 1, preferably 1 or 2, and Q, of valence p, is CN, N(O), P(O), PH(O), R^4 or R^4_3Si wherein each R^4 , taken independently, is C_{1-20} hydrocarbyl or a polymeric radical containing at least 20 carbon atoms, optionally having substituents that are inert under polymerizing conditions, or optionally interrupted within aliphatic segments thereof with one or more heteroatoms, such as ether oxygen or thioether sulfur, or one or more keto groups. Preferably, X^1 is C(O) or a single bond, Q is R^4 , which preferably is C_{1-8} hydrocarbyl or substituted C_{1-8} hydrocarbyl, and q is 1 or 2; more preferably, Q is R^4 which is phenyl, substituted phenyl or C_{1-8} alkyl. Preferred anions are also ambident, that is, they are anions which can react at more than one site. Representative examples of ambident oxyanion catalysts include acetate, biacetate, benzoate, bibenzoate, cyanate, nitrite, 4-nitrophenolate and bi(4-nitrophenolate). Representative substituents that are inert under polymerizing conditions include $-CN$, $-NO_2$, $-OCH_3$, $-CH_3$, $-CF_3$, $-Cl$, $-F$, $-O_2SCH_3$ and $-N(CH_3)_2$, provided that when the substituent is $-F$, the carbon atom adjacent to $-X^1-$ is unsubstituted.

As is already evident from the above, the oxyanions which are useful as catalysts in the process of the invention include associated or hydrogen-bonded anions, such as bianions which can be formed from one or more of the above acids, for example, by treating a monoanion salt or a related base, such as tetrabutylammonium hydroxide, with one or more of the aforesaid acids; such oxyanions are usually preferred herein. Non-limiting examples of such oxyanions include bicarboxylates of the formula $(RCO_2)_2H$ wherein R is as defined above (each R selected independently), such as biacetate, bibenzoate, bi(4-nitrobenzoate) and bi(4-dimethylaminobenzoate); bi(4-nitrophenolate) and biphenolate; and RCO_2HF , wherein R is as defined above, such as acetobifluoride.

As equilibria are believed to be established between mono- and bianions and the one or more acids, operable oxyanion catalysts include mixtures comprising salts of mono- and/or bianions and their conjugate acids. Preferred oxyanion catalysts are prepared by adding to one equivalent of a monooxyanion source 0.1 to 2 equivalents, preferably about 1 equivalent, of its conjugate acid; such treatment results in partial or complete conversion of monoanion to bion. Although more than about 2 equivalents of conjugate acid may be tolerated, it must be kept in mind that the acid may react with the initiator and thus reduce the concentration of initiator below its desired level. For this reason, therefore, substantial excesses of conjugate acid are to be avoided. Stated in another way, small amounts of free conjugate acid remaining associated with mono- and/or bioxyanion salts as a consequence of their preparation can be tolerated without deleterious effect on the polymerization process. Such is demonstrated in Examples 14 and 46.

Representative oxyanion source compounds which are operable herein include the TAS and the tetramethyl-, tetraethyl- and tetra(n-butyl)ammonium salts of the following anions (the pKa values of the corresponding conjugate acids, if available in the art, are given in parentheses): nitrite ONO^- , cyanate CNO^- , acetate (11.5), cyanoacetate (6.3), benzoate (10.5), 3-chlorobenzoate (9.5), 4-chlorobenzoate (10.1), 4-methoxybenzoate (11.0), 4-cyanobenzoate (8.9), 4-nitrobenzoate (9.0), 3-nitrobenzoate (9.2), 2-nitrobenzoate (8.1), 4-trifluoromethylbenzoate (9.5), 4-methylsulfinylbenzoate (9.1), 4-nitrophenolate (11.0), 3-nitrophenolate (13.7), 2-nitrophenolate (11.9), 4-fluorophenolate (17.6), 4-cyanophenolate (13.1), 2,4,6-trichlorophenolate (10.2), phenolate (18.1), 4-methoxyphenolate (18.2), 4-ethoxyphenolate (23.8),

p-toluenesulfinate, pentafluorophenolate (8.8), pentachlorophenolate (7.1), d-10-camphorsulfinate, picolinate, acrylate (10.5), pentanoate, octanoate, trimethylacetate, 2-ethylhexanoate, 2-methylphenolate, 4-methylphenolate, 6-trifluoromethyl-4-thiahexanoate, trimethylsilanolate, salicylate (6.8), N-methyl-p-toluenesulfonamide, phenylphosphinate, and the bianions previously listed hereinabove.

As demonstrated and disclosed in the examples hereinafter, monomer is preferably fed to the reaction vessel after the oxyanion catalyst source compound, initiator and solvent, if any, have been charged. The oxyanion catalyst source compound can be added as a solution in a suitable non-aqueous solvent, such as tetrahydrofuran, toluene, trifluoromethylbenzene or acetonitrile. Alternatively, a solution of monooxyanion catalyst source may be treated in situ (in the reaction vessel) with one or more oxyacids having pKa values in the aforesaid range, to provide bianions as previously described. The concentration of catalyst as well as the initiator and monomer concentrations employed in the polymerization are the same as disclosed in the aforesaid patents and applications, as are the other conditions employed in the polymerization process of this invention.

As illustrated in Example 48 herein, the oxyanion catalysts of the present invention are also useful in the process of aforementioned application No. 85308668.4 wherein selected chain-transfer agents are employed.

In the following examples, the molecular weights of the polymer products ($\bar{M}_w$ and $\bar{M}_n$) were measured by gel permeation chromatography (GPC). The polydispersity of the polymer is defined by $D = \bar{M}_w / \bar{M}_n$. Unless otherwise specified, any "living" polymer products which were obtained were quenched by exposure to moist air or methanol before molecular weights were determined. All temperatures are in degrees Celsius.

Example 1

Polymerization of Methyl Methacrylate Catalyzed by Trimethylsilanolate Ion

Twenty-five mg of potassium trimethylsilanolate dissolved in tetrahydrofuran (THF) was added to 0.70 mL of [(1-methoxy-2-methyl-1-propenyl)oxy]trimethylsilane (MTS); 5 mL of methyl methacrylate (MMA) was added by syringe to this mixture. The temperature rose immediately, reaching 65°. After the temperature returned to 30°, 4 mL of MMA was added. The temperature again rose to 65° and the solution became very viscous, indicating further polymerization of the initially-formed "living" polymer. After 1.25 h another 4 mL of MMA was added; no exotherm was noted.

Example 2

Part A. Trimethylsilyl p-Toluenesulfinate

p-Toluenesulfonic acid (20.6 g, 0.13 mol) was suspended in hexamethyldisilazane (25 mL). This mixture was heated at reflux for 2 h under nitrogen, at which time ammonia evolution ceased. The resulting cloudy solution was then cooled to room temperature before removing volatiles under vacuum (0.025 mm). The remaining oil was then fractionated through vigorously dried glassware to give trimethylsilyl p-toluenesulfinate (18.2 g, 61% yield) as a colorless oil: bp 65–67° (0.065 mm); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃): 0.2 (s, —SiMe₃, 9H), 2.3 (s, CH₃—Ph, 3H), and 7.3 ppm (ABq, J=8.4Hz, Δv₁₋₃ = 27.3Hz, Ph-H's, 4H). Anal Calcd. for C₁₀H₁₆O₂SiS: C, 52.59; H, 7.06; Si, 12.30. Found: C, 52.19; H, 6.86; Si, 11.92.

Part B. Tris(dimethylamino)sulfonium(TAS) p-Toluenesulfinate

Trimethylsilyl p-toluenesulfinate from Part A (12.00 g, 52.5 mmol) was added dropwise to a stirred solution of tris(dimethylamino)sulfonium(TAS) trimethyldifluorosilicate (14.47 g, 52.5 mmol) in "degassed" acetonitrile (50 mL) cooled to 0° under nitrogen. The resulting solution was stirred for 30 min before warming it to room temperature. The volatiles were removed under vacuum (0.025 mm) to give tris(dimethylamino)sulfonium p-toluenesulfinate (16.58 g, 99% yield) as a white crystalline solid: mp 90–96°; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃): 2.30 (s, CH₃—Ph, 3H), 2.81 (s, (CH₃)₂N, 18H) and 7.37 (ABq, J=5.9Hz, Δv₁₋₃ = 38.4Hz, Ph-H's, 4H); ¹⁹F NMR showed that there were no fluorine-containing impurities present. Anal. Calcd. for C₁₃H₂₅N₃O₂S₂: C, 48.87; H, 7.89; N, 13.15; S, 20.07. Found: C, 48.77; H, 8.03; N, 13.63; S, 19.72.

Part C. Polymerization of Methyl Methacrylate Catalyzed by TAS p-Toluenesulfinate

To a solution of 5 mL of MMA and 0.7 g of MTS in tetrahydrofuran (THF) at 23° was added a solution of 0.05 g of the catalyst compound prepared as in Part B, in 1:1 THF/acetonitrile. The temperature rose slowly to about 47°. After 45 minutes, another 5 mL of MMA was added and the temperature rose as before. After 1 h at room temperature, a third 5 mL portion of MMA was added and the temperature rose to about 44°, indicating further polymerization, a clear indication that the polymer was "living". Evaporation of volatiles gave 18.8 g of polymer. GPC: $\bar{M}_n$ 3390, $\bar{M}_w$ 4820, D 1.42.

When TAS d-10-camphorsulfinate was substituted for TAS p-toluenesulfinate in Part C, exothermic polymerization of MMA was similarly effected.

Example 3

Part A. Tris(dimethylamino)sulfonium 4-Nitrophenolate

[(4-Nitrophenyl)oxy]trimethylsilane (11.5 mL, 60 mmol) was added dropwise to a stirred solution of TAS trimethyldifluorosilicate (16.5 g) in out-gassed acetonitrile (60 mL), cooled to -10° under nitrogen. The

reaction mixture was stirred for 1 h at -10° and then allowed to warm to ambient temperature. Volatiles were removed under vacuum to give a yellow oil (18.5 g). Elemental analysis and ^1H NMR and ^{19}F NMR (CD_3CN) confirmed the title product in good purity.

5 Part B. Polymerization of MMA Catalyzed by TAS 4-Nitrophenolate

A solution of MTS (0.75 g, 4.31 mmol) in THF (15 mL) was treated with a THF solution of the TAS 4-nitrophenolate (0.05 g in 0.5 mL of THF) prepared in Part A. MMA (5 mL) was then added by syringe. Exothermic temperature rise was controlled by a cooling bath. After 1 h at room temperature, a further 5 mL of MMA was added, again followed by a temperature rise. After cooling and solvent removal, 11.5 g of the expected polymer was obtained. GPC: $\bar{M}_n$ 1890, $\bar{M}_w$ 2180, D 1.15.

Example 4

Part A. Tris(dimethylamino)sulfonium Acetate

(Acetyloxy)trimethylsilane (14 mL, 94 mmol) was added dropwise to a stirred solution of TAS trimethyldifluorosilicate (24.7 g, 87.7 mmol) in out-gassed acetonitrile (75 mL), cooled to -10° under nitrogen. The solution was stirred for 30 minutes at 0° , warmed to ambient temperature and evaporated under vacuum to give 20.6 g of a white solid which was shown by elemental analysis and ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) to be the title compound.

20 Part B. Polymerization of MMA Catalyzed by TAS Acetate

To a solution of MTS (0.75 g) in THF was added 0.05 g of TAS acetate, prepared in Part A, dissolved in THF. MMA (5 mL) was added and the exotherm which occurred was controlled by a cooling bath. After 1 h, 5 mL of MMA was added and the temperature rose to 45° . After 1 h, a third 5 mL portion of MMA was added, again followed by an exotherm. After volatiles removal, 19.6 g of the expected polymer was recovered. GPC: $\bar{M}_n$ 2920, $\bar{M}_w$ 9260, D 3.17.

Example 5

Part A. Tetraethylammonium 4-Nitrophenolate

A mixture of 4-nitrophenol (13.9 g, 0.10 mol) and benzene (250 mL) was treated with tetraethylammonium hydroxide (14.7 g, 0.10 mol), added as a 20% aqueous solution. The mixture was heated under reflux until all water was removed by azeotropic distillation. The solution was allowed to cool with continued stirring. Upon standing, 25.4 g of a yellow solid was obtained; it was recrystallized from THF. ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) confirmed the title compound.

35 Part B. Polymerization of MMA Catalyzed by Tetraethylammonium 4-Nitrophenolate

To a solution of MTS (0.75 g) in THF (20 mL) was added 0.075 g of tetraethylammonium 4-nitrophenolate, prepared in Part A, and the resulting mixture was treated with MMA (5 mL). The exotherm which was obtained was controlled to below 35° by a cold bath and slow rate of MMA addition. After 1 h at room temperature, 5 mL of MMA was added; an exotherm was obtained and the above procedure was repeated. After 1 h at room temperature, a third 5 mL portion of MMA was added and an exotherm was again noted. After removal of volatiles, 17.8 g of the expected polymer was obtained. GPC: $\bar{M}_n$ 2900, $\bar{M}_w$ 3950, D 1.36.

Example 6

45 Polymerization of Methyl Methacrylate Catalyzed by Tetraethylammonium Nitrite

Tetraethylammonium nitrite was prepared by the reaction of silver nitrite and tetraethylammonium chloride in water. To a stirred solution of 0.87 g (1.0 mL, 5 mmol) of MTS, and 20 μL of 1 M tetraethylammonium nitrite/acetonitrile in 20 mL of acetonitrile was added 10 g (10.8 mL, 100 mmol) of methyl methacrylate (purified by passage over neutral alumina under argon). One h after the end of the exothermic reaction an aliquot was removed for analysis by GPC and the poly(methyl methacrylate) (PMMA) was found to have $\bar{M}_n$ 1880, $\bar{M}_w$ 2470, D 1.32 (theor. $\bar{M}_n$ 2100) with less than 1% of a high molecular weight component ($\bar{M}_n$ 1,333,000) by GPC. Addition of 5 g (5.4 mL, 50 mmol) of methyl methacrylate gave an exothermic reaction. After 30 min, 3 mL of methanol was added and the solution was evaporated *in vacuo* to 15.2 g of solid poly(methyl methacrylate). The PMMA had an $\bar{M}_n$ 2630, $\bar{M}_w$ 3170, D 1.20 (theor. $\bar{M}_n$ 3100) with less than 1% of a high molecular weight component ($\bar{M}_n$ 1,839,000).

Example 7

Polymerization of Methyl Methacrylate Catalyzed by Tetrabutylammonium Nitrite

To a stirred solution of 20 μL of 1 M tetrabutylammonium nitrite/acetonitrile in 25 mL of tetrahydrofuran was added 10 g (10.8 mL, 100 mmol) of methyl methacrylate, purified as in Example 6. After 3 mL of the monomer had been added, the addition was stopped for 1 h, after which time an aliquot of the reaction mixture was removed for analysis for polymer. GPC analysis showed the absence of detectable polymer. Then 0.87 g (1.0 mL, 5 mmol) of MTS was added, giving an exothermic reaction. The remaining methyl methacrylate was then added. After 1 hr, an aliquot of the reaction mixture was removed for GPC analysis: $\bar{M}_n$ 2070, $\bar{M}_w$ 2450, D 1.18 (theor. $\bar{M}_n$ 2100). Then, 5 g (5.4 mL, 50 mmol) of methyl methacrylate

was added, giving an exothermic polymerization, indicating that the polymer was "living". Removal of solvent *in vacuo* gave 16.5 g of solid poly(methyl methacrylate): $\bar{M}_n$ 2840, $\bar{M}_w$ 3690, D 1.30 (theor. $\bar{M}_n$ 3100).

Example 8

5 Polymerization of Methyl Methacrylate Catalyzed by Tetraethylammonium Cyanate

To a solution of 20 μ L of 1 M tetraethylammonium cyanate/acetonitrile in 25 mL of tetrahydrofuran was added 10 g (10.8 mL, 100 mmol) of methyl methacrylate, purified as in Example 6. After 3 mL of the monomer was added, the addition was stopped for 1 h, after which time an aliquot of the reaction mixture was removed for analysis for polymer. GPC analysis showed the absence of detectable polymer. Then, 0.87 g (1.0 mL, 5 mmol) of MTS was added, giving an exothermic reaction. The remaining methyl methacrylate was then added. After 1 h an aliquot of the reaction mixture was removed for GPC analysis: $\bar{M}_n$ 2690, $\bar{M}_w$ 3240, D 1.20 (theor. $\bar{M}_n$ 2100). Then, 5 g (5.4 mL, 50 mmol) of methyl methacrylate was added, giving an exothermic polymerization, indicating that the polymer was "living". Removal of the solvent *in vacuo* gave 16.5 g of solid poly(methyl methacrylate): $\bar{M}_n$ 4130, $\bar{M}_w$ 5360, D 1.30 (theor. $\bar{M}_n$ 3100).

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Example 9

Polymerization of Butyl Acrylate Catalyzed by Tetraethylammonium Cyanate

To a stirred solution of 0.44 g (0.5 mL, 2.5 mmol) of MTS and 20 μ L of 1 M tetraethylammonium cyanate/acetonitrile in 40 mL of tetrahydrofuran was added slowly 32 g (35.8 mL, 250 mmol) of butyl acrylate, purified by passage over a short column of neutral alumina under argon. The exothermic polymerization occurred slowly during monomer addition and accelerated after the monomer was added. Two more additions of 20 μ L of 1 M tetraethylammonium cyanate/acetonitrile were made, producing a small exotherm with the first addition and no exotherm with the final addition. After addition of 3 mL of methanol, evaporation *in vacuo* gave 36 g of liquid residue. NMR analysis showed the presence of 92.2% poly(butyl acrylate) and 7.8% butyl acrylate. GPC analysis of the polymer showed $\bar{M}_n$ 9510, $\bar{M}_w$ 23900, D 2.52 (theor. $\bar{M}_n$ 12,900).

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Example 10

Polymerization of Ethyl Acrylate Catalyzed by Tetrabutylammonium Cyanate

To a solution of 0.87 g (1.0 mL, 5 mmol) of MTS and 20 μ L of 1 M tetrabutylammonium cyanate/tetrahydrofuran in 20 mL of tetrahydrofuran was added 10 g (10.8 mL, 100 mmol) of ethyl acrylate, purified as in Example 6. The initial exotherm faded after 2 mL of monomer was added and resumed after all of the monomer had been added, carrying the temperature to 58°. After 1 h, addition of 5 g (5.4 mL, 50 mmol) of ethyl acrylate gave no exotherm. After 30 minutes, 3 mL of methanol was added, and the solution was evaporated *in vacuo* to provide 10 g of liquid poly(ethyl acrylate). NMR analysis of the polymer showed the presence of a trace of ethyl acrylate. GPC analysis showed a bimodal distribution, with the principal fraction having $\bar{M}_n$ 6780, $\bar{M}_w$ 14800, D 2.18 (theor. $\bar{M}_n$ 2100).

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Example 11

Polymerization of Methyl Methacrylate Catalyzed by Tetrabutylammonium Cyanate

To a solution of 0.87 g (1.0 mL, 5 mmol) of MTS and 71 mg (0.25 mmol) of tetrabutylammonium cyanate in 20 mL of acetonitrile was added 10 g (10.8 mL, 100 mmol) of methyl methacrylate purified as in Example 6. The exothermic polymerization continued throughout the monomer addition. One h after the end of the addition, 5 g (5.4 mL, 50 mmol) of methyl methacrylate was added, producing an exothermic polymerization. After 30 minutes 3 mL of methanol was added, and the solution was evaporated *in vacuo* to provide 16.3 g of solid poly(methyl methacrylate). GPC analysis showed a bimodal distribution (peak maxima at 2818 and 12,590) with $\bar{M}_n$ 2930, $\bar{M}_w$ 6690, D 3.03 (theor. $\bar{M}_n$ 3100).

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Examples 12 to 46

General Procedure for the Polymerization of Methyl Methacrylate Catalyzed by Various Tetra(n-butyl)ammonium Oxyanion Salts

To a 100 mL round-bottom flask containing a stirred solution of 30 mL of tetrahydrofuran and 0.20 mL (1.0 mmol) of MTS was added 0.02 mmol of tetrabutylammonium ("ate") catalyst (dissolved in acetonitrile in a concentration ranging from 0.28 to 0.55 molar). After 5 minutes 5.0 mL (46.7 mmol) of methyl methacrylate was added dropwise at a rate of 1.0 mL/min. The reaction mixture exothermed. Exactly one h from the time at which the peak temperature was observed, a 0.5 mL sample of polymer solution (A) was withdrawn, after which 5.0 mL (46.7 mmol) of methyl methacrylate was added at a rate of 1.0 mL/min. A similar, but usually slightly lower, maximum temperature accompanied the resulting exotherm. One h from the maximum exotherm temperature, a second 0.5 mL sample of polymer (B) was withdrawn and a third 5.0 mL (46.7 mmol) of methyl methacrylate was added at 1.0 mL/min. The third 0.5 mL sample of polymer (C) was withdrawn either one h from the peak exotherm temperature or 16 h later (the next morning). A fourth 5.0 mL (46.7 mmol) of methyl methacrylate was added (all at once) after the 16 h wait. If no exotherm followed this addition, an acetonitrile solution of 0.01 mmol of the "ate" catalyst was added and the total polymer solution was quenched with methanol after an additional two h. The polymer was precipitated from hexane, dried at 80°/20 mm and a final polymer sample (F) was taken. The four polymer samples were then analyzed by GPC.

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Catalysts employed and the results obtained are given in Table 1. In Examples 12, 14, 15 and 46, molar amounts of biacetate, bibenzoate, acetate and acetic acid are shown. The bibenzoate/benzoic acid catalyst of Example 46 was prepared in situ by adding to a solution of tetrabutylammonium benzoate about 1.7 moles of benzoic acid per mole of benzoate salt. The catalysts of Examples 45 and 46 were dissolved in
5 toluene instead of acetonitrile.

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TABLE 1

Ex.	Oxyanion Catalyst	$\bar{M}_n$ (A) (Theor.) (Obs.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (B) (Theor.) (Obs.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (B/D) (Obs.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (C) (Theor.) (Obs.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (C/D) (Obs.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (F) (Theor.) (Obs.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (F/D) (Obs.)
12	0.7 Biacetate/ 0.3 Acetate	4780	WA	9460	WA	18,300/2.08	—	—
13	Benzoate	4780	4500/1.38	9510	10,500/1.49	14,140	15,200/1.81	18,900 15,300/1.83
14	1.0 Biacetate/ 0.2 Acetic Acid	4780	4450/1.28	9430	8,370/1.35	14,265	13,200/1.46	18,900 17,000/1.54
15	0.7 Acetate/ 0.3 Biacetate	4780	4860/1.32	9420	9560/1.50	14,230	17,200/1.54	19,100 18,600/1.51
16	4-Cyanobenzoate	4780	4080/1.49	9560	7,510/1.44	14,490	13,900/1.26	19,543 11,800/1.48
17	4-Nitrobenzoate	4780	4470/1.51	9590	9,500/1.32	14,550	12,900/1.62	19,704 13,700/1.52
18	Picolinate	4780	4350/1.50	9473	7,110/1.59	14,400	11,900/1.61	19,331 14,900/1.67
19	Acrylate	4780	4710/1.29	9473	9,040/1.59	14,374	13,900/1.61	19,434 12,600/1.84
20	4-Methoxybenzoate ²	4780	4830/1.27	9575	10,000/1.28	14,607	14,700/1.30	19,782 14,100/1.42
21	Phenolate	4780	3340/2.62	—	—	—	—	—
22	2-Nitrobenzoate ³	4780	WA	9600	10,100/1.98	14,200	8,630/2.13	—
23	4-Chlorobenzoate	4780	4660/1.61	9505	8,200/1.72	14,452	14,000/1.72	19,528 14,800/2.12
24	4-Methylbenzene sulfinate	4780	WA	9460	7,860/1.18	14,330	12,700/1.26	19,314 12,700/1.27
25	2-Nitrophenolate	4780	6410/1.14	9560	11,800/1.17	14,460	18,100/1.30	19,455 17,600/1.31
26	3-Nitrophenolate	4780	4860/1.06	9650	9,960/1.16	14,550	19,300/1.14	19,300 Trimodal
27	Bi(4-Nitrophenolate)	4780	4850/1.04	9560	9,610/1.06	14,490	15,200/1.12	19,530 18,900/1.39
28	4-Trifluoromethyl- benzoate	4780	4410/1.10	9620	8,580/1.06	14,570	14,100/1.07	19,580 17,000/1.20

TABLE 1 (continued)

Ex.	Oxyanion Catalyst	$\bar{M}_n$ (A) (Theor.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (A/D) (Obs.)	M_n (B) (Theor.)	M_n (B/D) (Obs.)	M_n (C) (Theor.)	M_n (C/D) (Obs.)	M_n (F) (Theor.)	M_n (F/D) (Obs.)
29	p-Toluene-sulfinate ⁴	4780	4370/1.24	9600	9,100/1.09	14,500	9,950/1.16	—	—
30	4-Cyanophenolate	4780	4940/1.09	9580	Bimodal	—	—	—	—
31	2,4,6-Trichloro-phenolate	4780	4420/1.36	9680	8,650/1.21	14,500	13,500/1.25	19,500	13,400/1.31
32	Pentafluorophenolate	4780	4210/1.25	9500	7,890/1.15	14,500	—	19,300	14,600/1.32
33	3-Nitrobenzoate	4780	3370/1.43	9500	7,120/1.22	14,500	—	19,300	17,800/1.33
34	3-Chlorobenzoate	4780	4340/1.18	9500	8,960/1.11	14,500	13,600/1.17	19,300	17,600/1.35
35	4-(methylsulfonyl)-benzoate	4780	4170/1.24	9500	8,420/1.17	14,500	13,900/1.21	19,300	15,500/1.31
36	4-Fluorophenolate	4780	5190/1.10	9500	10,200/1.35	14,500	—	19,300	14,600/1.92
37	4-Methoxyphenolate	4780	5350/1.11	9500	11,200/1.27	14,500	—	19,300	15,700/1.92
38	Pentachloro-phenolate	4780	3470/1.43	—	—	—	—	—	—
39	Cyanoacetate	4780	6160/1.55	—	—	—	—	—	—
40	N-Methyl p-Toluene-sulfonamide	4780	4510/1.07	9500	9,370/1.33	14,500	17,800/1.48	19,300	14,200/1.67
41	Phenylphosphinate	4780	5300/1.11	9500	10,700/1.26	14,500	17,300/1.42	19,300	15,800/1.53
42	4-Nitrophenolate	4780	4930/1.16	9500	9360/1.28	14,500	14,900/1.34	—	—
43	Bi(3-Chlorobenzoate)	4780	4650/1.03	9500	9030/1.05	14,500	14,000/1.09	19,300	19,000/1.18
44	Biphenolate	4780	4470/1.06	9500	7910/1.23	14,500	12,600/1.29	19,000	13,200/1.36

TABLE 1 (continued)

Ex.	Oxyanion Catalyst	$\bar{M}_n$ (A) (Theor.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (A)/D (Obs.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (B) (Theor.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (B)/D (Obs.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (C) (Theor.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (C)/D (Obs.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (F) (Theor.)	$\bar{M}_n$ (F)/D (Obs.)
45	Benzoate	4780	4170/1.52	9420	4540/1.48	—	—	—	—
46	1.0 Bibenzoate/0.7 Benzoic Acid	4780	4680/1.06	9500	8170/1.12	14,500	14,200/1.16	19,300	13,900/1.23

¹ 10 ml MMA added.² Used 0.01 mmol catalyst ($\frac{1}{2}$ or normal).³ 2nd aliquot of monomer added after 1 day; 3rd added after 3 more days.⁴ Run in dimethylformamide instead of THF; 3rd aliquot of MMA was added the next day.

D = polydispersity

WA = not available.

— = no monomer added in this step.

Example 47

Polymerization of Methacrylate Monomers Catalyzed by Various Tetra(n-butyl)ammonium Oxyanion Salts

A fluorinated methacrylate (5 g) of the formula $\text{CH}_2=\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)\text{CO}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{R}_f$ wherein R_f is perfluoroalkyl of 1 to 20 carbon atoms, or a mixture thereof, was mixed with MTS initiator (0.2 mL, 1 mmol); to this mixture was added a solution (0.2 mL) of the tetra(n-butyl)ammonium salt dissolved in trifluoromethylbenzene (TFB) (0.01 mol of salt in 10 g of TFB). Heat generated by the polymerization, and the rate at which cloudiness developed in the polymerizing system, were used to rate catalyst effectiveness, as shown in Table 2 wherein effectiveness increases on a scale of 0 (no detectable polymerization) to 10.

Salts were prepared by known methods, most generally by reacting the conjugate acids with tetra(n-butyl)ammonium(TBA) hydroxide.

The TBA salts of adipic and boric acids produced little or no polymerization of the fluorinated methacrylate monomer. However, when that monomer was replaced with 2-ethylhexyl methacrylate, vigorous polymerization was observed with these salts. It was also found that the base tetra(n-butyl)ammonium hydroxide catalyzed polymerization of 2-ethylhexyl methacrylate but not the fluorinated methacrylate monomer.

The TBA salts of $\text{R}_f\text{CO}_2\text{H}$, for example, $\text{CF}_3\text{CO}_2\text{H}$, and of p-toluenesulfonic acid produced little or no polymerization; the pKa of these acids is below 5 and the salts are outside this invention.

TABLE 2

Conjugate Acid	Rating
Acetic	10
Pivalic	7
Valeric	8
Hexanoic	8
Octanoic	7
2-Ethyl Hexanoic	8
Benzoic	4
o-Toluic	5
Adipic	0
$\text{R}_f\text{CO}_2\text{H}$	0
$\text{R}_f\text{CH}_2\text{CO}_2\text{H}$	2
p-Toluenesulfonic	0
$(\text{C}_8\text{F}_{17}\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{O}-)_2\text{PO}_2\text{H}$	1
H_3PO_4	3
$\text{R}_f\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{SCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CO}_2\text{H}$	6
H_3BO_4	0
Phenol	3
o-Phenoxybenzoic	1
p-Anisic	2
p-Toluic	2

Example 48

Polymerization of MMA in the Presence of 2-Methylphenylacetonitrile as Chain Transfer Agent Catalyzed by 3-Chlorobenzoate

This example corresponds to Example 9 in Application No. 85308668.4 (supra).

- 5 To a solution of 0.1 mL (0.5 mmol) of MTS and 20 μ L of 0.46 M tetrabutylammonium m-chlorobenzoate/acetonitrile in 30 mL of tetrahydrofuran was added a solution of 459 mg (0.466 mL, 3.5 mmol) of 2-methylphenylacetonitrile in 10.8 mL (100 mmol) of methyl methacrylate. After the monomer chain transfer agent had been added, a slow exotherm began and the temperature gradually rose 22° and then slowly fell. NMR analysis showed 94% conversion to polymer. Precipitation with aqueous methanol gave 9.6 g of
- 10 poly(methyl methacrylate). GPC: $\bar{M}_n$ 4420, $\bar{M}_w$ 10,700, D 2.42 (theor. $\bar{M}_n$ for no chain transfer 18,900; for initiation only by 2-methylphenylacetonitrile 2816). U.V.: $k_{258}=0.054$ corresponding to a $\bar{M}_n$ of 3190 per phenyl group.

BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

- 15 The best mode presently contemplated for carrying out the invention is illustrated by Examples 2—8, 10, 12—20, 22—29, 31—37 and 40—48, provided, however, it is to be understood that the best mode will depend on a variety of factors, which will be obvious to the skilled artisan who reads this specification. For example, as is evident from Example 47, Table 2, the oxyanions vary in their activity as a catalyst. For some applications, particularly commercial applications, it is essential to take into consideration such factors as
- 20 polymerization temperature, solvent medium, reactor size and type, initiator, monomer(s), polymerization rate desired, conversion, yield, recycling capabilities and polymer processing. The point to be made is that, referring again to Table 2, the most active oxyanion catalysts are not necessarily the best catalysts for each and every application. Selection of catalyst, therefore, will depend on the role which the catalyst will play in the overall scheme of the polymerization to be carried out. Moreover, as can be seen from Table 1
- 25 (Examples 12 to 46), catalyst selection influences certain properties, such as molecular weight and polydispersity (D), of the polymer produced, and the life span of "living" ends of the polymer chains.

Claims

- 30 1. Polymerization process comprising contacting under polymerizing conditions at least one polar, acrylic type α -olefinic monomer with (i) a tetracoordinate organosilicon, organotin or organogermanium polymerization initiator having at least one initiating site, and (ii) a catalyst which is a salt comprising a suitable cation and an oxyanion which can form a conjugate acid having a pKa (DMSO) of 5 to 24.
- 35 2. Process of Claim 1 wherein the conjugate acid is of the formula $[Q(X'OH)_p]_q$, wherein Q, of valence p, is CN, N(O), P(O), PH(O), R^4 or R^4_3Si ; each R^4 , independently is C_{1-20} hydrocarbyl or a polymeric radical containing at least 20 carbon atoms; X' is C(O), S(O) or a single bond; and each of p and q is an integer and is at least 1.
- 40 3. Process of Claim 1 or Claim 2 wherein the oxyanion is a mono-oxyanion.
4. Process of Claim 1 or Claim 2 wherein the oxyanion is a bi-oxyanion.
5. Process of Claim 1 or Claim 2 wherein the oxyanion is a mixture comprising mono- and bi-oxyanions.
6. Process of any one of Claims 3 to 5 wherein the oxyanion is a carboxylate.
7. Process of any one of Claims 1 to 6 wherein the suitable cation is a quaternary ammonium,
- 45 tris(dialkylamino)-sulfonium or an alkali or alkaline earth metal cation.
8. Process of preparing the mixture of Claim 5 wherein a suitable mono-oxyanion salt is reacted in situ with one or more conjugate acids having a pKa (DMSO) of 5 to 24.
9. Process of any one of Claims 1 to 8 wherein the polymer produced is "living" and contains the silicon, germanium or tin of the initiator at "living" ends.
- 50 10. Process of Claim 4 or Claim 5 wherein the bioxyanion is admixed with a conjugate acid having a pKa (DMSO) of 5 to 24.

Patentansprüche

- 55 1. Polymerisationsverfahren, welches das Inberührungbringen wenigstens eines polaren α -Olefinmonomers vom Acryltyp unter Polymerisationsbedingungen mit (i) einem tetra-coordinierten Organosilicium-, Organozinn- oder Organo-germanium-Polymerisationsinitiator mit wenigstens einer Initiierungsstelle und (ii) einem Katalysator umfaßt, welcher ein Salz ist, das ein geeignetes Kation und ein Oxyanion umfaßt, welches eine konjugierte Säure mit einem pKa (DMSO) von 5 bis 24 bilden kann.
- 60 2. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, worin die konjugierte Säure die Formel $[Q(X'OH)_p]_q$ aufweist, worin Q der Wertigkeit p, CN, N(O), P(O), PH(O), R^4 oder R^4_3Si ist; jedes R^4 unabhängig ein C_{1-20} -Kohlenwasserstoffrest oder ein polymerer Rest mit wenigstens 20 Kohlenstoffatomen ist;
- X' C(O), S(O) oder eine Einfachbindung ist; und p und q jeweils eine ganze Zahl und wenigstens 1 ist.
- 65 3. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1 oder Anspruch 2, worin das Oxyanion ein Mono-Oxyanion ist.

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Example 48

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10 poly(methyl methacrylate). GPC: $\bar{M}_n$ 4420, $\bar{M}_w$ 10,700, D 2.42 (theor. $\bar{M}_n$ for no chain transfer 18,900; for initiation only by 2-methylphenylacetonitrile 2816). U.V.: k_{255} =0.054 corresponding to a $\bar{M}_n$ of 3190 per phenyl group.

BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

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20 polymerization temperature, solvent medium, reactor size and type, initiator, monomer(s), polymerization rate desired, conversion, yield, recycling capabilities and polymer processing. The point to be made is that, referring again to Table 2, the most active oxyanion catalysts are not necessarily the best catalysts for each and every application. Selection of catalyst, therefore, will depend on the role which the catalyst will play in the overall scheme of the polymerization to be carried out. Moreover, as can be seen from Table 1
25 (Examples 12 to 46), catalyst selection influences certain properties, such as molecular weight and polydispersity (D), of the polymer produced, and the life span of "living" ends of the polymer chains.

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- 30 1. Polymerization process comprising contacting under polymerizing conditions at least one polar, acrylic type α -olefinic monomer with (i) a tetracoordinate organosilicon, organotin or organogermanium polymerization initiator having at least one initiating site, and (ii) a catalyst which is a salt comprising a suitable cation and an oxyanion which can form a conjugate acid having a pKa (DMSO) of 5 to 24.
35 2. Process of Claim 1 wherein the conjugate acid is of the formula $[Q(X^1OH)_p]_q$ wherein Q, of valence p, is CN, N(O), P(O), PH(O), R^4 or R^4_3Si ; each R^4 , independently is C_{1-20} hydrocarbyl or a polymeric radical containing at least 20 carbon atoms; X^1 is C(O), S(O) or a single bond; and each of p and q is an integer and is at least 1.
40 3. Process of Claim 1 or Claim 2 wherein the oxyanion is a mono-oxyanion.
4. Process of Claim 1 or Claim 2 wherein the oxyanion is a bi-oxyanion.
5. Process of Claim 1 or Claim 2 wherein the oxyanion is a mixture comprising mono- and bi-oxyanions.
6. Process of any one of Claims 3 to 5 wherein the oxyanion is a carboxylate.
7. Process of any one of Claims 1 to 6 wherein the suitable cation is a quaternary ammonium,
45 tris(dialkylamino)-sulfonium or an alkali or alkaline earth metal cation.
8. Process of preparing the mixture of Claim 5 wherein a suitable mono-oxyanion salt is reacted in situ with one or more conjugate acids having a pKa (DMSO) of 5 to 24.
9. Process of any one of Claims 1 to 8 wherein the polymer produced is "living" and contains the silicon, germanium or tin of the initiator at "living" ends.
50 10. Process of Claim 4 or Claim 5 wherein the bioxyanion is admixed with a conjugate acid having a pKa (DMSO) of 5 to 24.

Patentansprüche

- 55 1. Polymerisationsverfahren, welches das Inberührungbringen wenigstens eines polaren α -Olefinmonomers vom Acryltyp unter Polymerisationsbedingungen mit (i) einem tetra-coordinierten Organosilicium-, Organozinn- oder Organo-germanium-Polymerisationsinitiator mit wenigstens einer Initiierungsstelle und (ii) einem Katalysator umfaßt, welcher ein Salz ist, das ein geeignetes Kation und ein Oxyanion umfaßt, welches eine konjugierte Säure mit einem pKa (DMSO) von 5 bis 24 bilden kann.
60 2. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, worin die konjugierte Säure die Formel $[Q(X^1OH)_p]_q$ aufweist, worin Q der Wertigkeit p, CN, N(O), P(O), PH(O), R^4 oder R^4_3Si ist; jedes R^4 unabhängig ein C_{1-20} -Kohlenwasserstoffrest oder ein polymerer Rest mit wenigstens 20 Kohlenstoffatomen ist;
 X^1 C(O), S(O) oder eine Einfachbindung ist; und p und q jeweils eine ganze Zahl und wenigstens 1 ist.
65 3. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1 oder Anspruch 2, worin das Oxyanion ein Mono-Oxyanion ist.



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4. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1 oder Anspruch 2, worin das Oxyanion ein Bi-Oxyanion ist.
5. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1 oder Anspruch 2, worin das Oxyanion eine Mischung ist, die Mono-, und Bi-Oxyanionen umfaßt.
6. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 3 bis 5, worin das Oxyanion ein Carboxylat ist.
7. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 6, worin das geeignete Kation ein quaternäres Ammonium-, Tris(dialkylamino)sulfonium- oder ein Alkali- oder Erdalkalimetallkation ist.
8. Verfahren zur Herstellung der Mischung nach Anspruch 5, worin ein geeignetes Mono-Oxyanionsalz in situ mit einem oder mehreren konjugierten Säuren mit einem pKa (DMSO) von 5 bis 24 reagiert wird.
9. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 8, worin das erzeugte Polymer ein "lebendes" ist und das Silicium, Germanium oder Zinn des Initiators an "lebenden" Enden enthält.
10. Verfahren nach Anspruch 4 oder 5, worin das Bi-Oxyanion mit einer konjugierten Säure mit einem pKa (DMSO) von 5 bis 24 gemischt wird.

Revendications

1. Procédé de polymérisation comprenant la mise en contact dans des conditions de polymérisation d'au moins un monomère alpha-oléfinique polaire de type acrylique avec (i) un initiateur de polymérisation organosilicié, organostannié ou organogermanié tétracoordiné comportant au moins un site d'initiation, et (ii) un catalyseur qui est un sel comprenant un cation approprié et un oxyanion qui peut former un acide conjugué ayant un pKa (DMSO) de 5 à 24.
2. Procédé de la revendication 1 dans lequel l'acide conjugué répond à la formule $[Q(X'OH)]_n$, dans laquelle Q, de valence p, est CN, N(O), P(O), PH(O), R^4 ou R^4_3Si ; chacun des radicaux R^4 , indépendamment, est un radical hydrocarbyle en C_1 à C_{20} ou un radical polymère contenant au moins 20 atomes de carbone; X' est C(O), S(O) ou une simple liaison; et chacun des nombres p et q est un entier et vaut au moins 1.
3. Procédé de la revendication 1 ou de la revendication 2 dans lequel l'oxyanion est un mono-oxyanion.
4. Procédé de la revendication 1 ou de la revendication 2 dans lequel l'oxyanion est un bi-oxyanion.
5. Procédé de la revendication 1 ou de la revendication 2 dans lequel l'oxyanion est un mélange comprenant des mono- et bi-oxyanions.
6. Procédé de l'une quelconque des revendications 3 à 5 dans lequel l'oxyanion est un carboxylate.
7. Procédé de l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 6 dans lequel le cation approprié est un cation ammonium quaternaire, un cation tris(dialkylamino)-sulfonium ou un cation de métal alcalin ou alcalino-terreux.
8. Procédé de préparation du mélange de la revendication 5 dans lequel un sel de mono-oxyanion approprié est mis en réaction in situ avec un ou plusieurs acides conjugués ayant un pKa (DMSO) de 5 à 24.
9. Procédé de l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 8 dans lequel le polymère obtenu est "vivant" et contient le silicium, le germanium ou l'étain de l'initiateur aux extrémités "vivantes".
10. Procédé de la revendication 4 ou de la revendication 5 dans lequel le bi-oxyanion est mélangé avec un acide conjugué ayant un pKa (DMSO) de 5 à 24.

