

ABSTRACT

It is an object of the present invention to provide a specific industrial separation process that enables a by-produced alcohol to be separated out efficiently and stably for a prolonged period of time from a large amount (not less than 1 ton / hr) of a low boiling point reaction mixture having a specified composition containing the by-produced alcohol when mass-producing aromatic carbonates on an industrial scale by subjecting a dialkyl carbonate and an aromatic monohydroxy compound to transesterification reaction in a reactive distillation column in which a catalyst is present. Although there have been various proposals regarding processes for the production of aromatic carbonates by means of a reactive distillation method, these have all been on a small scale and short operating time laboratory level, and there have been no disclosures whatsoever on a specific process or apparatus enabling mass production on an industrial scale to be carried out stably for a prolonged period of time. Moreover, there have been no disclosures on a specific process or apparatus enabling the alcohol by-produced when producing the aromatic carbonates on an industrial scale using a reactive distillation system to be separated out efficiently and stably for a prolonged period of time on an industrial scale of not less than 200 kg / hr. According to the present invention, there is proposed a specific process that enables the above object to be attained by using the continuous multi-stage distillation column having a specified structure and a large amount (not less than 1 ton / hr) of a low boiling point reaction mixture having a specified composition containing the by-produced alcohol.