

ABSTRACT

It is an object of the present invention to provide a specific process that enables a high-purity diaryl carbonate that can be used as a raw material of a high-quality and high-performance polycarbonate to be produced stably for a prolonged period of time on an industrial scale of not less than 1 ton / hr using as a starting material a reaction mixture containing an alkyl aryl carbonate obtained through a transesterification reaction between a dialkyl carbonate and an aromatic monohydroxy compound. Although there have been various proposals regarding processes for the production of reaction mixtures containing aromatic carbonates by means of a reactive distillation method or the like, these have all been on a small scale and short operating time laboratory level, and there have been no disclosures on a specific process or apparatus enabling mass production on an industrial scale from such a reaction mixture of a high-purity diaryl carbonate that can be used as a raw material of a high-quality and high-performance polycarbonate. According to the present invention, there is provided a specific process that enables a high-purity diaryl carbonate substantially not containing intermediate boiling point by-products or high boiling point by-products and important as a raw material of a high-quality and high-performance polycarbonate to be produced stably for a prolonged period of time on an industrial scale of not less than 1 ton / hr by taking as a starting material a reaction mixture containing an alkyl aryl carbonate that has been obtained through a transesterification reaction between a dialkyl carbonate and an aromatic monohydroxy compound and subjecting this starting material to a transesterification reaction using a reactive distillation column, and then subjecting a high boiling point reaction mixture obtained from the bottom of the reactive distillation column to separation / purification by distillation using a high boiling point material separating column A, a diaryl carbonate purifying column B and an intermediate boiling point

material separating column C in this order, wherein each of these three columns comprises a specified continuous multi-stage distillation column, the high-purity diaryl carbonate being obtained as a side cut component from said purifying column B.