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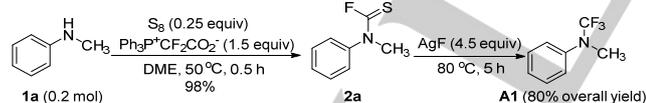
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Reaction of thiocarbonyl fluoride formed from difluorocarbene with amines

Jiao Yu,^[a] Jin-Hong Lin^{[a]*} and Ji-Chang Xiao^{[a]*}

Abstract: The reaction of thiocarbonyl fluoride generated from difluorocarbene with various amines under mild conditions is described. Secondary amines, primary amines, and *o*-phenylenediamines are converted to thiocarbamoyl fluorides, isothiocyanates, and difluoromethylthiolated heterocycles, respectively. Thiocarbamoyl fluorides were further transformed into trifluoromethylated amines using a one-pot process. As thiocarbonyl fluoride is generated in situ and is rapidly fully converted in one pot under mild conditions, no special safety precautions are needed.

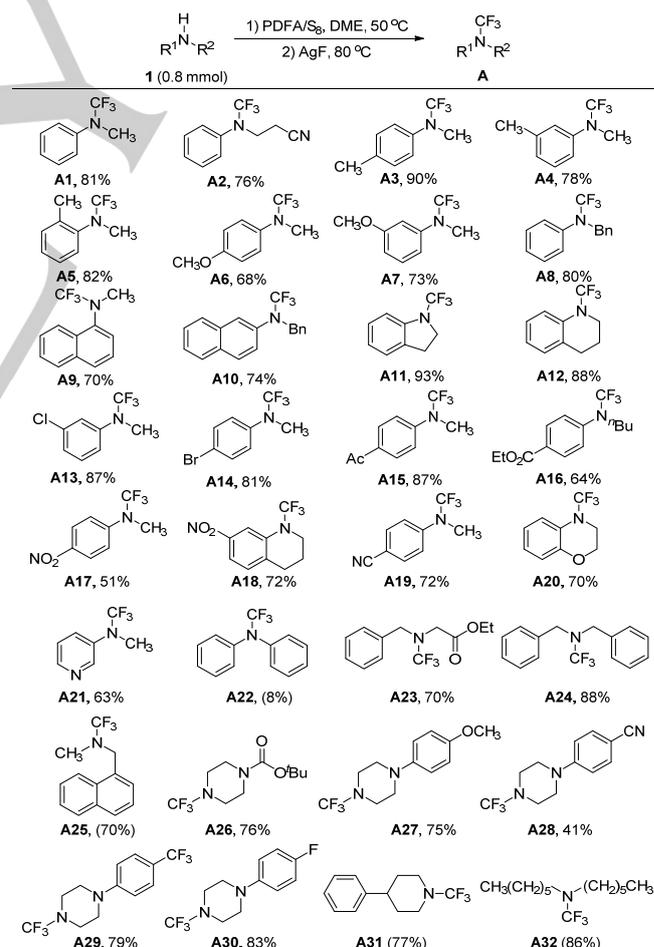
Difluorocarbene is a valuable and versatile intermediate in organic synthesis, particularly for fluorine incorporation.^[1] Recently, we described the use of difluorocarbene generated from $\text{Ph}_3\text{P}^+\text{CF}_2\text{CO}_2^-$ (PDFA), a reagent which was developed by us^[2] and has also been used by other groups,^[3] as a key intermediate in achieving challenging ^{18}F -trifluoromethylthiolation.^[2c, 2f] Our mechanistic investigations of trifluoromethylthiolation showed that the key process is the reaction of difluorocarbene with elemental sulfur (S_8) to produce thiocarbonyl fluoride ($\text{CF}_2=\text{S}$),^[2f] a transformation which has never been reported before. Although thiocarbonyl fluoride is an important fluorinated material, its use in synthetic chemistry remains largely unexplored because its preparation usually requires the use of hazardous reagents (such as thiophosgene) and/or harsh reaction conditions (e.g., pyrolysis at 500 °C). Furthermore, special safety precautions must be taken during storage and transfer of thiocarbonyl fluoride because of its high toxicity and low boiling point (−54 °C).^[4] Our protocol for the use of thiocarbonyl fluoride is convenient and promising because thiocarbonyl fluoride is generated in situ and rapidly fully converted in one pot under mild conditions. Its successful use in reaction with oxygen nucleophiles^[2g] prompted us to investigate nitrogen nucleophiles such as unprotected amines.



Scheme 1. Reaction of thiocarbonyl fluoride with secondary amine and subsequent fluorination in one pot. Yields were determined by ^{19}F NMR.

Our initial reaction of secondary amine **1a** with thiocarbonyl fluoride generated from the PDFA/ S_8 system gave thiocarbamoyl

fluoride **2a** (Scheme 1). A brief survey of the reaction conditions [see the Supporting Information (SI)] showed that the conversion proceeded smoothly using 1.5 equiv of PDFA and 0.25 equiv of S_8 in 1,2-dimethoxyethane (DME) at 50 °C. After complete consumption of amine **1a**, the addition of AgF in a one-pot process resulted in desulfurization-fluorination of **2a** to afford trifluoromethyl amine **A1** in high yield (80% overall yield).^[5] Despite recent important achievements in CF_3 incorporation,^[6] construction of the NCF_3 moiety remains challenging. Traditional synthetic methods such as deoxy(sulfur)-fluorination or halogen-fluorine exchange reactions suffer from tedious procedures or the use of hazardous agent (SF_4 , BrF_3 or HF).^[7] Although electrophilic-, radical- and nucleophilic-trifluoromethylation approaches are effective,^[8] CF_3 -substituted free amines cannot be easily obtained using these approaches because the nitrogen atom in NCF_3 must usually be attached to another heteroatom (nitrogen, oxygen, or sulfur)^[8c-8f] or because the trifluoromethylation reagent is unstable and highly reactive^[8a].



Scheme 2. Substrate scope for one-pot reaction of thiocarbonyl fluoride with secondary amine and subsequent fluorination. Isolated yields. The yields in parentheses were determined using ^{19}F NMR spectroscopy. Reaction conditions: **1** (0.8 mmol), PDFA (1.5 equiv), and S_8 (0.25 equiv) in DME at 50 °C for 0.5 h in a N_2 atmosphere. AgF (4.5 equiv) was then added and the resulting mixture was stirred at 80 °C for 5 h.

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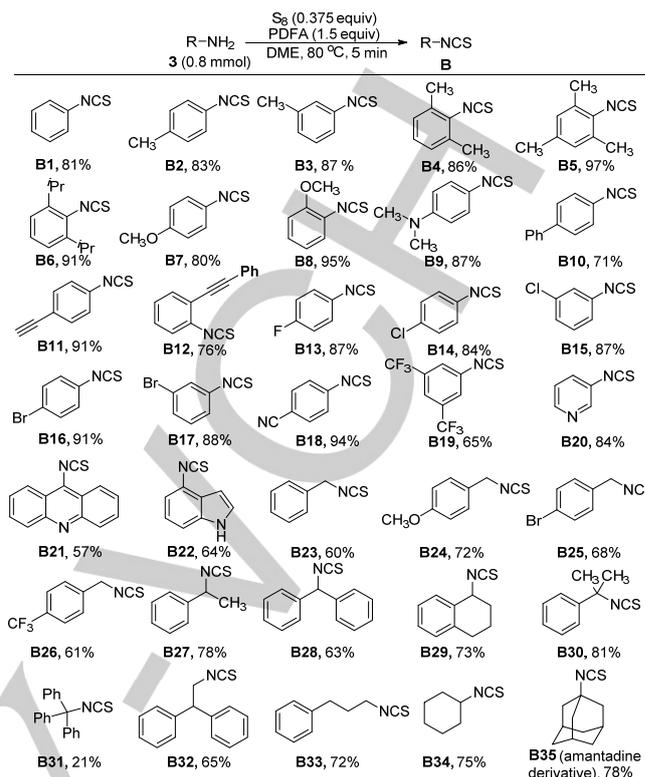
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Electronic Supplementary Information (ESI) available: the optimization of reaction conditions, experimental procedures and characterization for products.

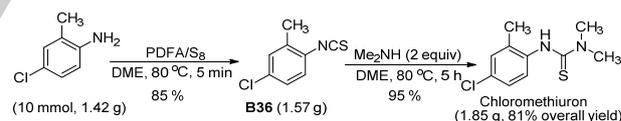
With the optimized reaction conditions in hand, we investigated the substrate scope of the one-pot reaction of thiocarbonyl fluoride with secondary amines and subsequent desulfurization-fluorination (Scheme 2). Various *N*-aryl-*N*-alkyl amines were converted to the desired products in high yields irrespective of whether the aryl groups contained electron-rich, -neutral, or -deficient substituents (**A1–A21**). *N,N*-Diphenyl amine was not suitable for this reaction because of the low nucleophilicity of the amino group (**A22**). The conversion of *N,N*-dialkyl amines proceeded smoothly to furnish the expected products in high yields (**A23–A32**). The stabilities of **A23–A32** depend significantly on the electronic effects of the substituents. The alkyl groups in the *N,N*-dialkyl amines must be attached to electron-withdrawing groups such as Ph (**A23** and **A24**), CO₂Et (**A23**), or CH₂NR' (**A26–A30**); otherwise, the products decompose easily and therefore cannot be isolated using flash column chromatography (**A25**, **A31** and **A32**). *N,N*-dialkyl CF₃ amines readily undergo fluorine elimination because of n(N) → σ*(C-F) electron donation. This decomposition process was retarded by introducing electron-withdrawing groups into the alkyl groups. The formation of heterocycle-containing amines (**A20–A21**, **A26–A30**) may find utility in biochemistry.

The successful reaction of thiocarbonyl fluoride with secondary amines prompted us to investigate its reaction with primary amines. It was found that the PDFFA/S₈ system converted primary amines to isothiocyanates instead of thiocarbonyl fluorides. Scheme 3 shows that all the reactions of primary amines were fast (5 min) in DME at 80 °C. Various aryl amines were converted to the desired products in high yields and with a high level of functional group tolerance (**B1–B19**). Investigation of the electronic effects showed that neither electron-rich nor electron-withdrawing groups suppressed the desired conversion. Gratifyingly, heteroaryl amines were suitable for this transformation (**B20–B22**). The reaction is not sensitive to steric effects, as shown by the high yields of sterically hindered products **B4–B6** and **B21**. We previously reported that an alkynyl group can undergo [2+1] cyclization with difluorocarbene generated from PDFFA,^[2d] but the alkynyl group remained intact in this reaction, confirming high functional group compatibility (**B11** and **B12**). The transformation of amines containing a basic group such as a tertiary amino (**B9**) or pyridinyl group (**B20–B21**) also proceeded smoothly. The tertiary amine group remained intact under these conditions (**B9**) although both primary and secondary amines are highly reactive towards thiocarbonyl fluoride. The yields of the desired products obtained from the reactions of alkyl amines (**B23–B35**) were lower than the product yields from arylamines. The reactions proceeded smoothly irrespective of whether the carbon attached to the amino group was a primary- (**B23–B26**, **B32** and **B33**), secondary- (**B27–B29** and **B34**), or tertiary carbon (**B30**, **B31** and **B35**), further indicating that steric hindrance did not affect the reactions of alkyl amines. Amantadine is an antiviral and antiparkinsonian drug that has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Its isothiocyanate derivative was easily obtained by this strategy (**B35**). Isothiocyanates occur widely in nature and are of interest in various areas such as food science, medicine and synthetic chemistry,^[9] and this convenient protocol has a wide range of potential applications in their synthesis.



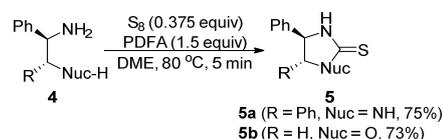
Scheme 3. Reaction of thiocarbonyl fluoride with primary amines. Isolated yields. Reaction conditions: **3** (0.8 mmol), PDFFA (1.5 equiv), and S₈ (0.375 equiv) in DME at 80 °C for 5 min in a N₂ atmosphere.

A convenient route to the insecticide chloromethiuron (CAS registry number: 28217-97-2) from a commercially available amine was developed to show the synthetic utility of this strategy for the conversion of primary amines (Scheme 4). The formation of isothiocyanate **B36** was fast although the reaction scale was increased to 10 mmol. A high overall yield (81%) was obtained via a two-step procedure.



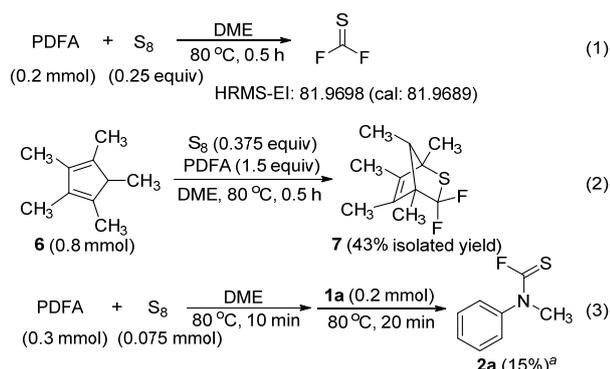
Scheme 4. Synthesis of chloromethiuron

As shown above in Scheme 4, the acyclic thiourea motif was constructed in two steps. It is reasonable to assume that only one step would lead to a cyclic thiourea if two amino groups are present in the substrate. This was confirmed by the rapid conversion of the vicinal diamine **4a** to cyclic thiourea **5a** (Scheme 5). Replacing one amino group with a hydroxy group gave oxazolidinethione **5b** in 73% yield. Thioureas^[10] and oxazolidinethiones^[11] are extensively used in medicinal chemistry and catalysis, therefore, the present protocol will be of great synthetic utility.



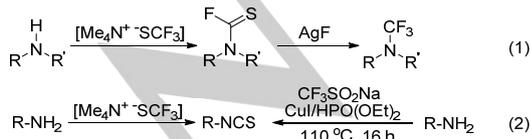
Scheme 5. Reaction of thiocarbonyl fluoride with vicinal diamine and vicinal hydroxy amine

Thiocarbonyl fluoride generated from the PDFFA/S₈ system is the key intermediate in the conversion of both primary and secondary amines. Simply heating a mixture of PDFFA/S₈ in DME produces CF₂=S, as confirmed using HRMS-EI spectroscopy (Scheme 6, eq 1). The reaction of conjugated diene **6** with the PDFFA/S₈ system generates a CF₂S-containing bridged compound (**7**, eq 2). This bridged compound is formed via a Diels–Alder reaction of diene **6** with CF₂=S produced in situ. Furthermore, addition of substrate **1a** after complete consumption of PDFFA by heating the PDFFA/S₈ mixture at 80 °C still gave the desired thiocarbonyl fluoride **2a** in 15% yield (eq 3). This low yield can be explained by side reactions of CF₂=S in the absence of a substrate because of its high reactivity.



Scheme 6. Generation and detection of CF₂=S. ^a The yield was determined using ¹⁹F NMR spectroscopy.

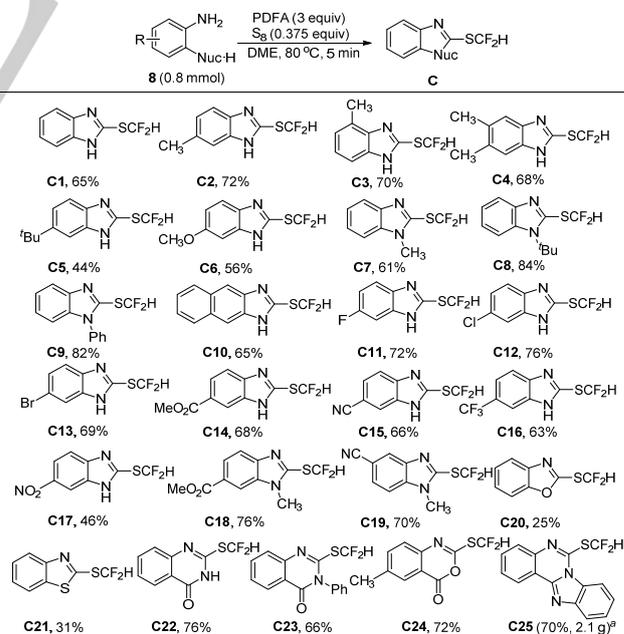
Recently, Schoenebeck reported an excellent procedure for the synthesis of trifluoromethyl amines and isothiocyanates via the reaction of [Me₄N⁺CF₃S⁻] with secondary amines (Scheme 7, eq 1)^[5b] and primary amines (eq 2).^[12] Thioureas could also be obtained if two amino groups are present in the substrates.^[12] Their strategy for the synthesis of trifluoromethyl amines, pioneering work involving a one-pot-two-step transformation, is quite attractive due to a rapid reaction process, a wide substrate scope, and a simple purification procedure.^[5b] Thiocarbonyl fluoride is not the intermediate for Schoenebeck's reaction^[5b,12]. During the preparation of this manuscript, Zheng et al. reported that Langlois reagent (CF₃SO₂Na) can also participate in isothiocyanation of primary amines in the presence of CuI/HPO(OEt)₂ (eq 2).^[13] Although they propose that thiocarbonyl fluoride is one of the key intermediates, no direct evidence was observed. This approach suffers from a narrow substrate scope (limited suitability of alkyl amines), low functional group tolerance (e.g., pyridinyl and terminal alkynyl groups are not tolerated), and the need for long reaction time (16 h).



Scheme 7. Recently reported methods for CF₃ incorporation and isothiocyanation.

The HCF₂S-substituted benzimidazole **C1** (18% yield) was obtained from conversion of vicinal phenylenediamine **8a** under

the same reaction conditions as for the reaction of a vicinal diamine in Scheme 5. This unexpected product was formed via a tandem cyclization/difluoromethylation process (For the proposed mechanism and the experimental evidences, please see SI). After identifying the optimum conditions (See SI), we explored the substrate scope for the reaction of thiocarbonyl fluoride with *o*-phenylenediamines or vicinal hydroxy (or amino) arylamines. As shown in Scheme 8, all the reactions occurred rapidly (5 min) to furnish the desired HCF₂S heterocycles in good yields. The electronic effects of the substituents in various *o*-phenylenediamines (**C1–C19**) were investigated. Although electron-withdrawing groups decrease the nucleophilicity of the amino group, substrates containing electron-withdrawing groups were converted smoothly to the desired HCF₂S-substituted benzimidazoles (**C11–C19**). Replacing one of the amino groups with a hydroxy or thiol group afforded the HCF₂S-substituted-benzoxazole (**C20**) and -benzothiazole (**C21**), respectively, but the yields were lower because of the lower nucleophilicities of hydroxy and thiol groups. Besides five-membered heterocycles (**C1–C21**), six-membered heterocycles were formed using this strategy (**C22–C25**). When the ortho substituent of the amino group was an amide or carboxylic acid group, HCF₂S-substituted 4-quinazolinone (**C22** and **C23**) and 3,1-benzoxazin-4-one (**C24**), respectively, were obtained. The imidazole N-H was able to act as a nucleophilic site to form a bridged ring (**C25**). Increasing the reaction scale to 10 mmol still afforded the desired product **C25** in good yield (70%), showing the synthetic utility of this tandem strategy. Although the heterocyclic N-H group is a potential reactive site for difluoromethylation with difluorocarbene,^[2d] the N-H moieties in the above products remained intact, enabling further transformations. The structures of products **C6**^[14] and **C23**^[15] were confirmed using X-ray diffraction (see the SI).



Scheme 8. Reaction of thiocarbonyl fluoride with *o*-phenylenediamines or vicinal hydroxyl (or amino) arylamines and isolated yields. Reaction conditions: **8** (0.8 mmol), PDFFA (3 equiv), and S₈ (0.375 equiv) in DME at 80 °C for 5 min in a N₂ atmosphere. ^aThe reaction was performed on a 10-mmol scale. A reaction time of 10 min was required.

Heterocyclic compounds are important in many areas of life sciences.^[16] The construction and structural modification of heterocycles have therefore attracted much attention from the chemical community.^[17] The HCF₂S group can act as a lipophilic hydrogen-bond donor, therefore its incorporation into a heterocycles profoundly changes the physicochemical properties of the target compound.^[18] Biologically active HCF₂S-substituted heterocycles have been reported. For example, pyriprole, an insecticide for veterinary use on dogs against external parasites, contains a HCF₂S-pyrazole moiety.^[18b] In recent years, much efforts has focused on the development of efficient methods for the incorporation of HCF₂S functionalities into organic molecules,^[19] but the synthesis of HCF₂S-substituted heterocycles remains largely unexplored. Recent approaches including radical difluoromethylation of heteroareneithiols^[20] and direct difluoromethylthiolation^[21] are effective, but all methods require the use of heteroarenes as substrates. The above strategy is the first example of the fast and convenient construction of heterocycles and further incorporation of a HCF₂S group.

In conclusion, we have described the reactions of thiocarbonyl fluoride formed from difluorocarbene with unprotected amines. Amines undergo different reactions depending on their structures. Secondary amines, primary amines, and o-phenylenediamines are converted to thiocarbonyl fluorides, isothiocyanates, and HCF₂S-substituted heterocycles, respectively. Thiocarbonyl fluorides were further transformed into CF₃-amines using a one-pot process. Thiocarbonyl fluoride is generated in situ and is rapidly fully converted in one pot under mild conditions, therefore no special safety precautions are needed. The convenient use of thiocarbonyl fluoride has potential synthetic applications in various research areas.

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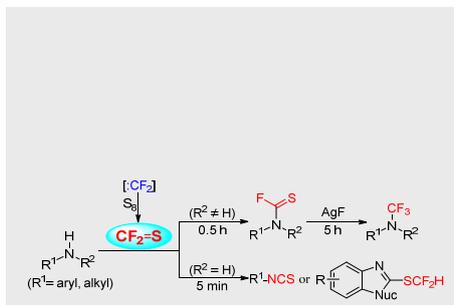
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The reaction of thiocarbonyl fluoride generated from difluorocarbene with various amines proceeded smoothly under mild conditions, giving thiocarbamoyl fluorides (further to trifluoromethylated amines), isothiocyanates, and difluoromethylthiolated heterocycles, respectively. As thiocarbonyl fluoride is generated in situ and is rapidly fully converted in one pot under mild conditions, no special safety precautions are needed.



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