Copper(I)-catalysed homocoupling of organosilicon compounds: synthesis of biaryls, dienes and diynes

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Copper(I) iodide catalyses the homocoupling of aryl-, alkenyl- and alkynyl-substituted chloro- or fluoro-dimethylsilanes under mild conditions to afford biaryls, dienes and diynes, respectively.

Functionalized symmetrical biaryls, dienes and diynes are able to form semiconducting complexes 1 and rigid liquid crystals 2 as well as ligands and precursors of optically active ligands.3 The synthesis of biaryls is usually accomplished from aryl halides catalysed by nickel or palladium complexes in the presence of a chemical reducer such as zinc powder⁴ or upon electrochemical reduction.⁵ This method is used because the reaction proceeds under mild conditions compared with the classical Ullmann coupling. The preparation of conjugated dienes utilizing organo-aluminum, -boron, -cobalt, -copper, -nickel, -lithium, -magnesium and -mercury has been described.7 The synthesis of diynes can be achieved by oxidative dimerization of acetylenes⁸ or lithium diaryl borates with iodine.⁹ Here we report copper(I) iodide-catalysed homocoupling of the substituted chloro- or fluoro-dimethylsilanes to afford biaryls, dienes and diynes (eqn. 1).

$$RSiMe_{2}X \xrightarrow{Cut (5 \text{ mol}\%)} R-R$$

$$\xrightarrow{\text{TBAF, CH}_{3}CN} R-R \qquad (1)$$

$$\xrightarrow{\text{room temp., 5 min}}$$

X = Cl, F

The results of copper-catalysed homocoupling in the presence of TBAF (tetrabutylammonium fluoride) are summarized in Table 1. When chlorodimethylphenylsilane 1a¹⁰ or fluorodimethylphenylsilane 1b10 was reacted with cuprous iodide (5 mol%) and TBAF in CH₃CN, biphenyl 2a was afforded in 73 and 76% yields, respectively (entries 1 and 2 in Table 1). Of the catalysts tested (CuI, CuBr, CuCl, CuCN and CuOTf), CuI gave the best results. The presence of TBAF is essential as an accelerator for transmetallation 11 in this homocoupling. By the same method, chlorodimethyl(2-thienyl)silane 1c 10 was coupled to afford the thiophene dimer **2b** in 71% yield (entry 3). Alternatively, fluorodimethyl(2-thienyl)silane 1d¹⁰ gave 2b in 75% yield (entry 4). This method was also applied to alkenylsubstituted silanes 1e and 1f.12 Treatment of chloro(styryl)dimethylsilane with Pd(OAc)₂ (5 mol%) and TBAF produced the diene 3 in 87% yield (entry 5). Finally, this coupling was extended to alkynyl-substituted silanes 1g and 1 h.10 The chlorosilane 1g10 was readily coupled to give 4 in 91% yield (entry 7). The fluorosilane 1h gave the coupled product 4 (entry 8). In considering the likely mechanism, it is presumed that oxidative addition of activated organosilane to Cu^I salts results in the formation of organo RCuSiMe₂X, 13 which is then ready for transmetallation with the pentacoordinate silicate, 14 formed from TBAF and organosilane, to form R2CuI. The intermediate silicate R₂CuI then undergoes reductive elimination to afford R-R with the liberation of CuI.

 $\begin{tabular}{ll} \textbf{Table 1} & Copper(i)\mbox{-}catalysed homocoupling of organosilicon compounds} & \end{tabular}$

Entry	Silanes	Product	Isolated yield (%)
1	PhSiMe ₂ Cl 1a	Ph-Ph 2a	73
2	PhSiMe ₂ F 1b	2a	76
3	SiMe ₂ Cl	2b	71
4	SiMe ₂ F	2b	75
5	Ph SiMe ₂ Cl	Ph Ph	87
6	Ph SiMe ₂ F	3	89
7	Ph———SiMe ₂ Cl	PhPh	91
8	Ph————SiMe ₂ F 1h	4	94

 $^{^{}a}$ All the reactions were run in the presence of TBAF in CH $_{\!3}{\rm CN}$ at room temperature for 5 min.

Experimental

Preparation of biphenyl 2a

To a mixture of fluorosilane **1b** (350 mg, 2.27 mmol) and CuI (21.6 mg, 5 mol%) was slowly added TBAF (1.0 \upmma in THF; 2.7 ml, 2.7 mmol) *via* a syringe pump. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 5 min and then extracted with diethyl ether (10 ml \upmma 3). The organic layer was dried over anhydrous MgSO₄ and then evaporated *in vacuo*. The crude product was separated by SiO₂ column chromatography (eluting with hexanes, R_f 0.50) to afford the coupled product **2a** (266 mg, 76%), R_f (TLC, SiO₂, hexanes) 0.50, mp 68.5–69.5 °C

(lit., 15 69–72 °C); δ_{H} (400 MHz, CDCl₃) 7.35 (m, 2 H), 7.45 (m, 4 H), 7.61 (m, 4 H); $v_{\text{max}}(\text{KBr})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 3060, 1608, 1475, 832; m/z (EI) 154 (100), 152 (29), 77 (6), 76 (18), 63 (9), 51 (8).

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