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COMMUNICATION

**FLEXIBLE SYNTHESIS OF POLYHYDROXYLATED 2,2-DISUBSTITUTED
PYRROLIDINES¹**

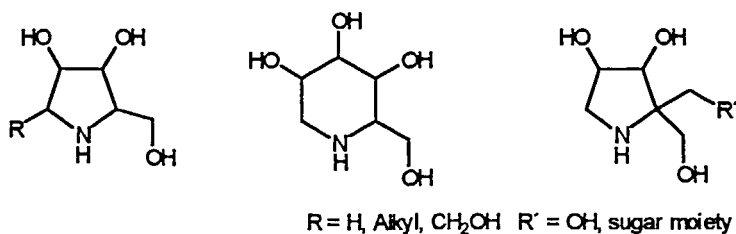
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Many polyhydroxylated pyrrolidines and piperidines have attracted considerable attention because they have been shown to selectively inhibit the oligosaccharide processing enzymes by mimicking the transition state.² Especially their potential to exhibit antibacterial, antiviral³ and cancerostatic activities⁴ has led to a tremendous interest and demand for flexible synthetic strategies.

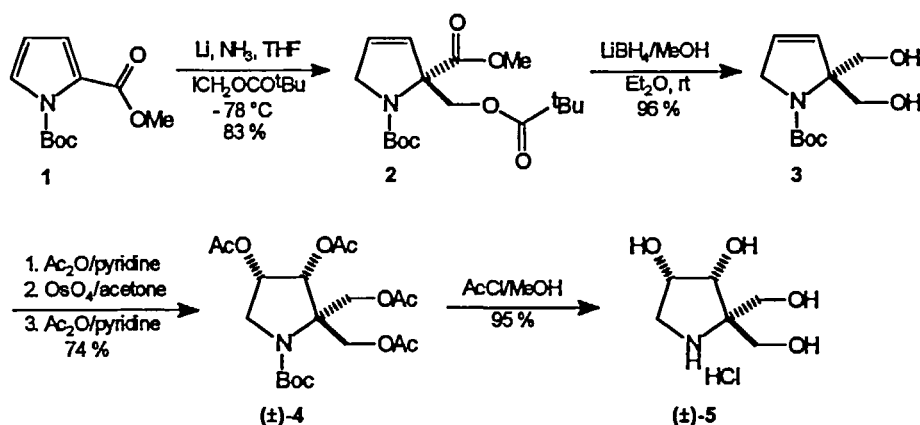
In our continuing work on the synthesis of sugar analogues⁵ we were interested in the development of new types of polyhydroxylated pyrrolidines.



While the 2,5-bis-hydroxymethyl pyrrolidines are well investigated and a large number of syntheses have been published so far,⁶ the polyhydroxylated 2,2-disubstituted

pyrrolidines are representatives of a hitherto unknown class of potential glycosidase inhibitors.⁷ Herein, we wish to report a short and efficient *de novo* synthesis of 3,4-dihydroxy-2,2-bis-hydroxymethyl-pyrrolidine and an imino-*C*-disaccharide derivative. These systems can be prepared from the inexpensive *N*-Boc methyl pyrrole carboxylate **1**⁸ by Birch reduction followed by a reductive alkylation protocol recently published by Donohoe et al.⁹ Subsequent functionalisation of the double bond and deprotection led in a highly diastereoselective manner to the 2,2-disubstituted pyrrolidines in good to excellent yield.

Birch reduction of the pyrrole carboxylate **1** and subsequent alkylation with the C₁-synthon pivaloyl iodomethyl ester were best accomplished by the use of 2.15 equiv of lithium at -78 °C in NH₃/THF followed by the addition of 1.20 equiv of the iodomethyl ester after 30 mins. By this procedure the 2,2-disubstituted 2,5-dihydropyrrole **2** was isolated in 83% yield after flash chromatography. Due to the two preferred amide rotamers the ¹H NMR spectrum of **2** exhibited for the double bond three signals in a ratio of 0.7:0.3:1 at δ 6.00, 5.93 and 5.53 (dt, ³J = 6.1 Hz, ⁴J = 2.0 Hz) and the ¹³C NMR spectrum revealed no methine carbon atom apart from the double bond but instead a new quaternary carbon atom.¹⁰

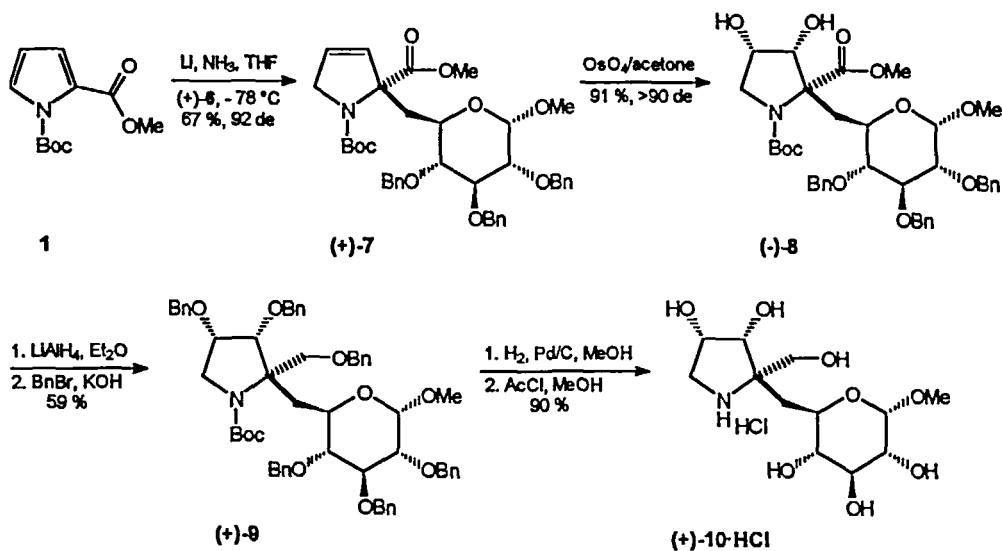


The diester **2** represents an ideal precursor for the synthesis of the *pro*-chiral diol **3**, a flexible building block for the synthesis of the anticipated pyrrolidine iminosugar. Reduction of **2** was performed by the use of lithium borohydride/methanol in 96% yield. The ¹H NMR spectrum of **3** showed for the *pro*-chiral methylene groups an AB system at δ 3.91 (J = 11.2 Hz) and a pseudo singlet δ 4.15 for the methylene protons next to the double bond. Catalytic cis-dihydroxylation of the corresponding diacetate with OsO₄/NMO

in acetone/water followed by acetylation yielded the tetraacetate **4** as a colourless oil after flash chromatography. The two methine protons showed a broad ^1H NMR absorption between $\delta = 5.40 - 5.48$, and mass spectrometry (EI, 70 eV) revealed a peak at m/z 371 ($\text{M}^+ - \text{AcOH}$). Acidic deprotection with acetyl chloride in methanol completed the synthesis of 3,4-dihydroxy-2,2-bis-hydroxymethyl-pyrrolidine *rac*-(**5**).¹¹ In the ^1H NMR spectrum (D_2O) of **5** the two protons at C-3 and C-4 showed a coupling constant of 4.6 Hz which is typical for a syn periplanar arrangement, and the four methylene protons of the side chains revealed two slightly shifted AB spinsystems at δ 3.87 ($J = 12.2$ Hz) and 3.79 ($J = 12.2$ Hz). High resolution mass spectrometry showed a significant base peak at m/z 164 (Calcd. for $\text{C}_6\text{H}_{14}\text{NO}_4$: 164.0923. Found: 164.0916).

In expansion of our methodology we investigated the synthesis of a 2,2-disubstituted iminosugar with a glucose moiety instead of the hydroxymethyl side chain by alkylation with an appropriate glucose halide.¹² Birch reduction of the pyrrole derivative **1** with 2.10 equiv of lithium followed by alkylation with 1.15 equiv of methyl 2,3,4-tri-*O*-benzyl-6-deoxy-6-iodo- α -D-glucopyranoside (**6**)¹³ gave after flash chromatography **7**, $[\alpha]_{\text{D}} +25.9^\circ$ (CHCl_3), in 67% yield¹⁴ and 10% of the elimination product with an exocyclic double bond.¹⁵ Especially remarkable was the diastereoselectivity of the reaction with a ratio of $\geq 95:5$ as indicated by ^1H NMR spectroscopy.

Compound **7** was then treated with a catalytic amount of OsO_4/NMO in acetone/water to give the cis-dihydroxylated derivative **8**. Investigation of the ^1H NMR showed a diastereomeric ratio of $\geq 95:5$. The major isomer was isolated by flash chromatography, $[\alpha]_{\text{D}} -19.8^\circ$ (CHCl_3), in 91% yield and was identified by NOESY NMR experiments to have the two hydroxyl groups trans to the bulky glucose moiety.¹⁶ Reduction of the methyl ester was best accomplished with excess of LAH in diethyl ether and yielded the triol as a colourless foam, $[\alpha]_{\text{D}} +24.2^\circ$ (MeOH), in 71% yield, mass spectrometry (EI, 70 eV) showed a peak at m/z 647 ($\text{M}^+ - \text{CH}_3\text{OH}$). Subsequent treatment of the triol with benzyl bromide/KOH in the presence of a phase transfer catalyst¹⁷ afforded after flash chromatography the stable and easy to handle perbenzylated compound **9**, $[\alpha]_{\text{D}} +4.4^\circ$ (CHCl_3), in 83% yield. The ^1H and ^{13}C NMR spectra are in good agreement with the proposed structure of **9**, mass spectrometry (EI, 70 eV) showed a peak at m/z 828 ($\text{M}^+ - \text{CH}_2\text{OBn}$) and the combustion analysis was consistent with the calcd mass for $\text{C}_{59}\text{H}_{67}\text{NO}_{10}$ (950.18): C, 74.58; H, 7.11; N, 1.47. Found: C, 74.50; H, 7.17; N, 1.56.



Debenzylation of **9** was accomplished by hydrogenolysis using a catalytic amount of 10% palladium on charcoal in methanol (92% yield, $[\alpha]_{\text{D}} +54.4^\circ$ (MeOH)). Deprotection of the carbamate was quantitatively achieved at 0°C by the *in situ* generation of HCl in methanol with acetyl chloride to give the desired disaccharide **10**, $[\alpha]_{\text{D}} +62.0^\circ$ (MeOH). The significant ^1H NMR data of **10** (D_2O) were as follows: δ 4.76 (d, 1H, $J = 3.6$ Hz, $\text{CH}(\text{OMe})$), 3.89 (AB, 2H, $J = 12.3$ Hz, CH_2O), 4.43 (d, 1H, $J = 4.7$ Hz, $\text{CH}(\text{OH})\text{-Cq}$), 3.43 (s, 3H, OMe). The $^{13}\text{C}\text{-}\{^1\text{H}\}$ NMR of **10** showed twelve signals, one of them being a methyl group, three methylene and one quaternary carbon atom, and HRMS revealed a base peak at m/z 310 ($\text{M}^+ + \text{H}$): (Calcd for $\text{C}_{12}\text{H}_{24}\text{O}_8\text{N}$: 310.1502. Found: 310.1502).

In conclusion, the first synthesis of a polyhydroxylated 2,2-bis-hydroxymethyl pyrrolidine and its 2-hydroxymethyl-2 \rightarrow 6-(methyl 6-deoxy- α -D-glucopyranoside) analogue (**5** and **10**) were achieved by reductive alkylation of the pyrrole methyl carboxylate **1** with pivaloyl iodomethyl ester or methyl 2,3,4-tri-*O*-benzyl-6-deoxy-6-iodo- α -D-glucopyranoside respectively. Subsequent functionalisation of the double bond and deprotection yielded the free iminosugars by a short and efficient synthetic sequence. Further studies are under current investigation employing the *pro*-chiral diol **3** as a flexible building block for the synthesis of other 2,2-disubstituted pyrrolidines.

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