

High School Chemistry Teaching: How to Improve it?

On its 35th anniversary, the Brazilian Chemical Society (BCS) reaffirms itself as one of the most prominent scientific societies in Brazil. Its importance for the high standard reached by the Brazilian university system, since its foundation in 1977, can be measured by the several Presidents and Vice-Presidents of Universities from all over the country that have been part of the BCS Boards and Advisory Councils or who have been Regional Secretaries of the BCS. A number of these leaders were forged in the memorable general assemblies of the BCS Annual Meetings.

By launching the journals: *Química Nova*, Journal of the Brazilian Chemical Society (JBCS), *Química Nova na Escola* and, recently, the *Revista Virtual de Química (RVq)*, the BCS has proved it is possible to maintain in Brazil high quality international standard scientific journals. That is the reason why some articles published in the JBCS have already surpassed the hundred and half citations in the Web databases Science and Scopus.¹⁻⁵

Since 1984, the BCS has maintained a close but self-respecting relationship with the Brazilian Government. It has always tried to be representative, leaving aside the lobby, but being critical when needed.

Out of the Mobilizing Axes⁶, partners of the BCS have put forward bold proposals for the graduation level as well as for the qualified human resource formation. Nowadays, thanks to the BCS initiative of bringing the graduation coordinators together, several other areas of knowledge have been adopting that practice, the main purpose of which is to provide transparency to the process of evaluation of the graduation programs of the Brazilian Federal Agency for Support and Evaluation of Graduate Education (CAPES). Currently, the Chemistry graduation area can be proud of being one of the most productive and qualified in the broader area of the Exact and Earth Sciences.

Such examples prove that, when the members of the Scientific Societies act with enthusiasm and dignity, far from the gains that pollute the Brazilian history since the arrival of the Portuguese people, they contribute towards the scientific and technological development. However, if

a lot has already been done by BCS, much more is still to be done.

Despite the development achieved along the past 20 years, Brazil is still an unjust and unequal country for a great part of its population. Both injustice and inequality need to be addressed in the coming years and the solution for this equation is called EDUCATION.

While Junior High School and High School teachers have the worst salaries among all university-level professionals, social development and democracy will be compromised. That is one of the flags that the BCS Board of Directors and the Advisory Board should defend, because, unless something is done to improve the Chemistry teacher education, all the achievements gained so far by the Brazilian chemistry can be lost.

The salary increase is not enough; it is necessary that the Graduation Programs, the large Chemical Companies, Directors and Heads of Chemistry Departments play their part, which is not small. Graduation Program Coordinators, for example, can start by adopting a High School, building up laboratories for chemistry classes.

Is that little? It certainly is, but it may be just the beginning of a great revolution in the Brazilian High School system.

Angelo C. Pinto
JBCS Editor

References

1. Schuchardt, U.; Sercheli, R.; Vargas, R. M.; *J. Braz. Chem. Soc.* **1998**, *9*, 199.
2. Dupont, J.; *J. Braz. Chem. Soc.* **2004**, *15*, 341.
3. Da Silva, J. F. M.; Garden, S. J.; Pinto, A. C.; *J. Braz. Chem. Soc.* **2001**, *9*, 273.
4. Pinto, A. C.; Guarieiro, L. L. N.; Rezende, M. J. C.; Ribeiro, N. M.; Torres, E. A.; Lopes, W. A.; Pereira, P. A. P.; de Andrade, J. B.; *J. Braz. Chem. Soc.* **2005**, *16*, 1313.
5. Dias, L. C. *J. Braz. Chem. Soc.* **1997**, *8*, 289.
6. De Andrade, J. B.; Cadore, S.; Vieira, P. C.; Zucco, C.; Pinto, A. C.; *Quim. Nova* **2003**, *26*, 445.