

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.21698/simi.2020.ab05>

CATALYTIC DEGRADATION OF ORGANIC DYES USING METALLIC NANOPARTICLES

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Keywords: *azo – dyes, catalytic degradation, metallic nanoparticles*

Introduction

Nowadays, there is a growing need for methods that contribute to the environmental protection and help increase the human well – being and, therefore, different pollutants are studied: pharmaceuticals, hormones, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and dyes. Among them, a special attention needs to be paid to dyes and especially organic dyes due to the fact that their accumulation in water bodies is responsible for reducing the reoxygenation ability killing the marine organisms by blocking the sunlight. Photocatalytic degradation using metallic nanoparticles has numerous advantages to the conventional route of quick oxidation because neither polycyclic compounds nor the oxidation of different pollutants appears. This research paper describes the use of silver nanoparticles (AgNPs) and ferrite nanoparticles (Fe₃O₄NPs) for the catalytic degradation of three azoic dyes: Direct Orange 26 (DO26), Direct Black 38 (DBk38) and Direct Brown 2 (DBr2). Silver nanoparticles were prepared using a "green chemistry" approach from aqueous extracts of different plants with important health benefits: Gooseberry, Acacia and Jujube. The degradation of DO26 was also investigated under direct sunlight using TiO₂, ferrite nanoparticles and Fenton reagent.

Materials and methods

For the green synthesis of AgNPs, the three plants (Gooseberry, Acacia and Jujube) were used to prepare the corresponding aqueous extracts, at room temperature, no stirring, for 24 h and then, further, AgNPs were synthesized at room temperature and at 50⁰C. The formation of the AgNPs was investigated using UV-Vis, FTIR, DLS spectra and their antioxidant activity was determined using the DPPH assay. The catalytic degradation of the three azo-dyes using green – synthesized AgNPs was recorded at specific wavelength for each dye.

In the case of ferrite nanoparticles, after the corresponding solutions were prepared, they were kept under direct sunlight for a duration varying from 2 h to 11 and the maximum absorption was recorded at 495 and 519 nm respectively.

Results and conclusions

The qualitative screening for bioactive compounds of the three aqueous extracts revealed the presence of saponins, carbohydrates, alkaloids, etc., highlighting their excellent capacity to green synthesize AgNPs. The UV-Vis spectra were recorded at

different time intervals and exhibited peaks at 437 nm (Gooseberry), 440 nm (Acacia) and 450 nm (Jujube). FTIR measurements showed the presence of major functional groups in the structure of the AgNPs (e.g.: C=C, C=O, C-H, etc.).

The catalytic reductive degradation of the three textile dyes showed that:

- the highest decrease of the maximum absorption intensity and, therefore, the highest degradation of DO 26 and DBk 38 is observed in the case of Gooseberry – AgNPs (Table 1);

Table 1. Experimental data for catalytic degradation

Sample	Reaction time				
	0 min	15 min	30 min	1 h	ΔA
DO 26 (sol 50 mg/L)	1.786	-	-	-	-
DO+AgNPs-Gooseberry	1.496	1.456	1.440	1.411	22.34
DO+AgNPs-Acacia	1.500	1.458	1.392	1.347	28.33
DO+AgNPs-Jujube	1.697	1.674	1.670	1.658	8.79
DO+AgNPs- Gooseberry +reductive agent (RA)	1.151	1.212	1.170	1.125	43.35
DO+AgNPs- Acacia +RA	1.187	1.188	1.124	1.072	46.02
DO+AgNPs- Jujube +RA	1.297	1.291	1.208	1.146	45.02

- in case of DBr 2, the decrease of the maximum absorption intensity is higher than 50%, whatever the raw vegetal material used for the green synthesis of AgNPs;
- in the studied reductive degradation, the highest values for ΔA were found for DBr2.

The exposure of DO26 under direct sunlight in the presence of TiO₂, ferrite nanoparticles and Fenton reagent decolorates the dye. In the first 2 h, the absorbance of DO26 with photocatalysts decreased significantly.

Acknowledgement

This work was realised with the support of Ministry of Education and Research, through the Romanian Nucleu Programme, Project code PN 19.23.03.01.04