

Virtual Atlas of Parasitology: evaluation, remodeling and enlargement

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Abstract

Since its creation the internet has been proving exchange quickly and easily among people. At present, more and more educational institutions construct proposals to make available, through the internet, subjects that facilitates learning and interaction between students and teachers. The use of computer techniques as a means of assisting teaching, using effects such as graphic animation, sounds and simulation have been widely employed. The class of parasitology includes theoretical and practical topics and the use of additional tools such as books and atlases for the necessary support for learning and help routine diagnosis of professionals working in the area. However, the books, in particular, printed atlas showed expensive. In this context, a Virtual Atlas of Parasitology was created with the objective to enable students/professionals to quickly access different images of evolutionary forms of parasites, assisting in their routine activities. The developed Atlas used as an editor Adobe Dreamweaver®, being a complex and painstaking page construction tool for professionals with no specific knowledge of computer science. Based on this context, this study aimed at the remodeling and maintenance of the virtual atlas of parasitology, available on a website of the Federal Fluminense University (UFF), recording images of biological material coming from the research of teachers of this Institution. For remodeling, WordPress® was used, and new images of parasites and videos were inserted. The new version of this atlas is available on the site www.atlasparasitologia.sites.uff.br, presenting a cleaner and easier interface to the user. The Atlas available 22 different genus and species of parasites and two videos about techniques used in diagnosis of intestinal parasites. Of the users, in the year 2015, 16 answered the evaluation questionnaire that was inserted in the Atlas. The results indicated the most students were the health area (93.8%), the reason for access was study (87.5%), curiosity (6.25%) and other purposes (6.25%). Regarding accessibility, 57.1% of the participants considered it optimal, on the quality of the images 57.1% evaluated as optimal, too. In the item information, 61.54% of users considered it excellent and the layout was considered by 50% as good. Although few users have evaluated the atlas, the results indicate that this is a valid tool but it has partially met the objectives that motivated its creation, since it has not been used by professionals in the area of parasitological diagnosis. It is important to increase the dissemination of the Virtual Atlas of Parasitology to these professionals, amplifying the action of this learning strategy.