

Authenticity in Biology Education

Benefits and Challenges



Edited by
Anat Yarden
Graça S. Carvalho

A selection of papers presented at
the VIIIth Conference of European
Researchers in Didactics of Biology
(ERIDOB), Braga, Portugal

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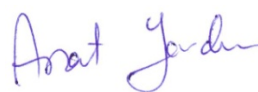
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Preface

This volume consists of 31 original papers presented at the 8th Conference of European Researchers in Didactics of Biology (ERIDOB) held in July 2010 and hosted by the Research Centre CIEC of the Institute of Education, University of Minho, Portugal.

The theme of the conference was *Authenticity in Biology Education: Benefits and Challenges*. This theme emerged from discussions that took place at the ERIDOB 2008 meeting in Utrecht. During those discussions it became apparent that various ERIDOB members relate differently to the meaning of the term authenticity. Some expressed views that activities that are carried outside the classroom are authentic, while others thought that authentic activities should engage students in posing questions and designing their own paths to solve them. During the conference we re-explored the meaning of the concept of authenticity and discussed possible means to implement it in schools. The outcomes of those discussions can be appreciated in the ERIDOB 2010 special issue of the Journal of Biological Education that is devoted to the conference theme (Vol. 45 (3), September 2011) as well as in one of the sections of this volume (Section 1). The theme of authenticity blends wonderfully with many other topics that are of outmost interest to researchers in biology didactics, such as various teaching strategies for the teaching of biology (Section 2), teaching and learning biology in primary schools (Section 3), reasoning and argumentation: the use of controversial socio-scientific issues (Section 4), students' conceptions and conceptual change: focus on evolution (Section 5), and environmental education: field work (Section 6). Altogether, we hope that this volume represents the current state of the art of research in the field of biology education.

Approximately 55 papers were submitted for consideration of publication in this volume, from amongst approximately 200 presentations at the ERIDOB 2010 conference. The ERIDOB Academic Committee, together with other members of the ERIDOB community, peer-reviewed all the papers and helped us put together the selected articles that appear in this volume. We are thankful to all the reviewers who invested significant time and effort in the review process. Our thanks go also to Camille Vainstein for improving the English and for copy-editing the papers, and to Antonio Carlos Jesus for his excellent work in type-setting this volume.



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