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Article

Validation of the use of Bloom's revised taxonomy as a tool for the design of assessment tests.

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Abstract: (1) Background: This study aims to validate the use of Bloom's revised taxonomy as an instrument for the design of assessment tests; (2) Methods: A validation has been carried out by external judges, as well as by teachers and students, validating the instrument by means of Aiken's V; (3) Results: Judges, teachers and students consider Bloom's revised taxonomy as an effective tool for the design of assessment tests; (4) Conclusions: Using Bloom's revised taxonomy as a model for designing assessment tests promotes learning.

Keywords: Bloom; Assessment; Validation

1. Introduction

The quality of assessment evidence is a major issue in education. The effectiveness of an education system can be measured in large part by the quality and accuracy of the tests used to assess student progress and achievement (Popham, 2008). In addition, assessment tests are also central to the work of teachers, as they allow them to measure the success of their teaching methods and to adapt accordingly (Shuell, 1986).

However, despite their importance, the quality of assessment tests is often questionable. A recent study showed that a large proportion of the tests currently used lack reliability and validity (Haladyna, 2004). This can have serious consequences for both teachers and students. Teachers may get misleading results about their students' performance and consequently implement ineffective teaching strategies (Popham, 2008). For their part, students may be evaluated unfairly and receive undeserved grades (Shuell, 1986).

In this context, Bloom's taxonomy has become a widely accepted theoretical framework in the educational community for categorising and classifying the different levels of skills and knowledge to be acquired in the teaching-learning process (Bloom, 1956). Bloom's taxonomy provides valuable guidance for teachers in designing tests that adequately address all relevant levels of skills and knowledge (Krathwohl, 2002).

Given the abstract component that different academic disciplines (mathematics and science in particular) can have, in order to achieve the correct literacy of individuals, it is necessary to minimise anxiety (Hopko et al., 2003) and rejection of this type of discipline (Pérez-Martín, 2018), although not only in science, but in all types of academic knowledge. For this reason, curriculum design is fundamental not only in terms of content, but also in the way they are approached, with practical proposals and guidelines to guide students in their learning and assessment (Acevedo, 2004), taking into account the cognitive development of students (Sacristán, 2007; Razzouk, 2008). In terms of scientific knowledge, there are two similar concepts: literacy (acquisition of knowledge) and competence (use, applicability and transfer of content) (Cañal et al., 2012). Active learning methodologies such as Context-Based Learning (ABC) (Avargil et al., 2012; Sanmartí

and Márquez, 2017), guided constructivist methodologies such as the 5E methodology (García-Grau et al., 2021) among others have been shown to be useful for student literacy. Educational taxonomies are used to organise the learning objectives and outcomes (Bakirci and Erdemir, 2010) that are expected to be developed through planned classroom experiences. One of the most commonly used taxonomies is Bloom's revised taxonomy (Anderson et al., 2001) which establishes a hierarchy of categories, where performance in higher categories requires performance in lower categories. Methodologies based on taxonomies have three clear benefits: (1) It classifies learning objectives and therefore allows comparisons between different curricula and/or subjects. (2) It allows students to know precisely what is expected of each of the contents to be worked on. (3) It allows teachers to design learning sequences from the setting of objectives to their assessment (Amer, 2006).

Numerous countries have used the Revised Bloom Taxonomy (RBT) to evaluate their curriculum documents such as Singapore and Australia (Ang, 2019), Turkey (Seraceddin et al., 2019; Elmas et al., 2020), Indonesia (Poluakan et al., 2019) or Finland (Elmas et al., 2020) or have used it for the analysis of diagnostic tests such as PISA (Vázquez-Alonso et al., 2018; Rosales et al., 2020).

The RBT categories (Table 1) provide a simple tool for analysis, design and comparison, because it forms a two-dimensional matrix in which in each cell there are identifying verbs in which the different assessment criteria can be located and included, as well as an estimate of the cognitive demand (LOTS: acronym for low-level thinking skills; and HOTS: acronym for high-level thinking skills).

Cognitive dimension						
Type of knowledge	LOTS (Low Cognitive Demand)			HOTS (High Cognitive Demand)		
	Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyse	Evaluate	Create
	Factual	Enumerate, list	Summarise	Reply, answer	Select	Check
	Conceptual	Recognise, identify, locate	Classify, Explain	Provide, demonstrate	Differentiate, contrast, relate	Determine
	Procedural	Evoke	Clarify, clarify	Run	Integrate	Judging, criticising
	Metacognitive	Identifying strategies and patterns	Predicting, interpreting	Extrapolate, use	Deconstructing	Reflect
						Design
						Produce, elaborate

It is important not only to validate instruments that ensure their reliability, but also that when involving other educational agents, and especially those who will implement them (teachers) or participate in them (students), there is cohesion and agreement for the development of learning design strategies.

Student and teacher involvement in the design of assessment tests is a major issue in education. Collaboration between students and teachers in the creation of tests can help to ensure that they adequately reflect the content and skills taught in the classroom (Popham, 2008).

Firstly, student participation in test design can help ensure that tests are relevant and adapted to their needs and abilities. Students can provide their perspective and suggestions for improving the quality and relevance of tests (Nitko, 2007). For example, they can suggest to what extent the questions and tasks included in tests reflect the content and skills they have learned in the classroom (Bachman, 1990).

Second, teacher involvement in test design can help ensure that tests are appropriate and consistent with the educational goals and objectives of the school or curriculum. Teachers can bring their knowledge and experience in teaching to create tests that adequately address relevant content and skills (Worthen, Borg, & White, 2018). In addition, they can use their knowledge of the skills and knowledge students are expected to acquire in the classroom to design tests that accurately and fairly assess student progress (Messick, 1989).

Third, student and teacher participation in test design can contribute to improving the quality and reliability of tests. Collaboration between students and teachers can make it possible to detect and correct errors and deficiencies in assessment tests before they are implemented (Shuell, 1986). In this way, they can ensure that tests meet the necessary quality standards and provide accurate and reliable results (Nitko, 2007).

In conclusion, student and teacher involvement in the design of assessment tests is a beneficial practice to ensure that they are relevant, consistent and of high quality. Collaboration between students and teachers can help to improve the accuracy and reliability of assessment tests.

Collaboration between students and teachers in test design can also foster student engagement and motivation in the learning process. By participating in the design of the tests that will assess them, students may feel more involved and engaged in their own learning process (Shepard, 2000). In addition, student participation in test design can help develop important skills such as critical and analytical thinking (Nitko, 2007) which is one of the fundamental categories of Bloom's taxonomy.

Fourth, student and teacher participation in test design can contribute to improved communication and collaboration in the classroom. Collaboration in test design can be an opportunity for students and teachers to discuss and work together on the content and skills to be assessed (Shepard, 2000). This can help improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom and foster a culture of collaboration and communication (Worthen, Borg, & White, 2018).

In summary, student and teacher participation in the design of assessment tests is a beneficial practice that can contribute to improving the relevance, accuracy, quality and reliability of tests. In addition, it can foster student engagement and motivation, develop important skills, and improve communication and collaboration in the classroom.

Instrument validation is a crucial process in science, as it ensures that the results obtained using instruments are accurate and reliable. Instrument validation refers to the assessment of the reliability and validity of a measure or tool used in scientific research. Reliability refers to the consistency and accuracy of the results obtained by using the instrument, while validity refers to the instrument's ability to measure what it is supposed to measure (Haladyna, 2004).

2. Materials and Methods

This research is classified as an instrumental study aimed at the design and study of the psychometric properties of measurement instruments (Ato, López-García, & Benavente, 2013). The aim is to design an instrument to validly and reliably analyse (Corral, 2009) the planning process of assessment tests based on Bloom's revised taxonomy.

The sample was chosen deliberately and intentionally, selecting a group of experts who meet the suitability criteria (Rodríguez, Gil, & García, 1996). The sample selected to validate the analysis instrument consisted of a group of 35 expert teachers (judges), 42 non-expert teachers and 91 secondary school students. Those selected to form the sample of expert judges had to meet 75% of the inclusion criteria established by the researchers:

1. Hold a bachelor's or Graduate degree in your subject
2. Doctorate or postgraduate degree in didactics specific to their subject, without taking into account the didactic training required by law to teach.
3. 10 years of university, secondary and/or primary school teaching experience.
4. Have publications related to the area of general or specific didactics in database journals with quality indexes.

To ensure construct validity, three experts participated in the development of the instrument. These experts met the following inclusion criteria mentioned above. Consensus agreement was used in the process of constructing the categories of analysis (Anguera & Hernández-Mendo, 2013). The items or categories of the measurement instrument should be selected in a way that is tailored to the object of measurement (Thomas, Nelson, & Silverman, 2015).

To assess content validity, the technique of a panel of expert judges was used (Cabero & Barroso, 2013). The experts were asked to give a quantitative assessment on a Likert scale of 1 to 3 points, and at the same time they wanted to compare it with the rest of the teachers, as well as with the students.

The importance of having study subgroups within a population of external judges lies in the need to obtain accurate and reliable ratings of the instrument in question. Aiken's V is commonly used to assess the validity of an instrument by analysing the ratings made by a group of expert judges. However, when working with a very large population of judges, it can be difficult to obtain accurate and consistent ratings (Worthen, Borg, & White, 2018).

It is important to note that not all subjects and their assessment are understood in the same way, so the responses of teachers (judges and non-judges) were divided into three categories, those in the sciences (including experimental sciences, health sciences, engineering and architecture), social sciences (including graduates in the social sciences, law or humanities) and a generic category including those who were considered not to fit into the above categories.

The use of external judges in the validation of instruments is particularly important in education. Assessment tests are a fundamental tool in teaching, as they allow teachers to measure the progress and performance of their students (Shuell, 1986). It is therefore crucial to ensure that the tests used are reliable and valid. The use of external judges in the validation of these tests can help to ensure their quality and accuracy (Bloom, 1956; Popham, 2008).

The creation of study subgroups within the judge population allows judges to be grouped according to their specialisations and areas of expertise. In this way, more accurate and consistent ratings can be obtained, as each subgroup will be composed of judges who are experts in a certain area (Nitko, 2007).

In addition, the creation of study subgroups can also facilitate discussion and the exchange of ideas among judges, which can contribute to improving the quality of the assessments made (Messick, 1989). By working in smaller groups, judges can establish more effective dialogue and develop greater group cohesion and collaboration (Bachman, 1990).

Materials

Statistical analysis

Data were compiled in Microsoft Excel 2016 for descriptive analysis, Aiken's V coefficient and its confidence intervals and cronbach's alpha were calculated to analyse the reliability of the instrument.

In order to validate the instrument exhaustively and with a high degree of consistency, the content validity index, Aiken's V coefficient (Aiken, 1985), was calculated. This coefficient makes it possible to quantify the content validity or relevance of the item with respect to the opinion of a group n of expert judges. The algebraic equation modified by Penfield & Giacobbi (2004) was used to calculate Aiken's V coefficient.

$$V = \frac{\bar{x} - l}{k}$$

Figure 1. V for Aiken

\bar{x} is the mean of the judges' ratings in the sample, l is the lowest possible rating, and k is the range of possible values of the Likert scale used.

Aiken's V coefficient was calculated with Microsoft Excel software at the minimum level of validity according to expert standards; this standard can be at a liberal level (Cicchetti, 1994) of $V > 0.50$, or at a more conservative level, such as $V > 0.70$ or higher (Charter, 2003).

Aiken's V coefficient value and confidence intervals at the 95% and 99% levels were obtained using the score method (Wilson, 1927; Penfield & Giacobbi, 2004) according to the formulae below (Figure 2 and Figure 3):

$$L = \frac{2nkV + z^2 - z\sqrt{4nkV(1-V) + z^2}}{2(nk + z^2)}$$

Figure 2. Calculation of the lower limit of the confidence interval

$$U = \frac{2nkV + z^2 + z\sqrt{4nkV(1-V) + z^2}}{2(nk + z^2)}$$

Figure 3. Calculation of the upper limit of the confidence interval

Where L is the lower limit of the interval, U is the upper limit of the interval, Z is the standard normal distribution value, V is the coefficient of Aiken's V and n is the number of judges.

Aiken's V value was calculated using the initial formula proposed by (Aiken, 1985), applying the central limit theorem for large samples ($n > 25$). The number of judges, teachers and students was 35, 42 and 91 respectively (n), the number of items 11 (m), with a response range of 3 according to a likert(c) scale.

The items that respondents were asked about are shown below.

1. A test/examination should contain questions of varying degrees of difficulty.
2. If a test/exam is graded by levels, learners should know in advance the type of questions for each level and have examples.
3. In a test designed by levels of attainment, the knowledge of one level should be fundamental to answering those of the next level and ensuring that the levels are well distributed.
4. Imagine that in a test ordered by levels of achievement, the student answers the level 2 questions correctly, and not the level 1 questions (the easiest and most elementary ones). Would it make sense, in your opinion, that the result of that test would be a pass?
5. In the case of answering level 3 and 2 questions correctly, but not the first level, the grade should be passed.
6. Would you agree that the tests/exams of your subjects should follow this model if they had a guide/infographic and a small rubric?
7. Would you agree that the qualifications should be:
 - a. Ineligible
 - b. Level 1: Sufficient
 - c. Level 2: Merit
 - d. Level 3: Outstanding
8. If a test/exam were ordered in 2 or 3 levels of difficulty (e.g. pass, B and A), it would make no sense (if the exam is well designed) for a student to know how to answer the difficult ones and not the easy ones.
9. The questions in a test/exam do not need to have an associated numerical mark.
10. In a test/examination there should be compulsory questions that must be answered in order to be considered passed.
11. The marking of a test/exam should be qualitative (e.g. no pass, sufficient, so great/merit, excellent/outstanding) depending on the difficulty of the questions answered correctly.

3. Results

This scientific article discusses the use of an instrument for the design of assessment tests based on Bloom's taxonomy in schools. According to the author, Bloom's taxonomy is a theoretical framework widely accepted in the educational community to categorise and classify the different levels of skills and knowledge to be acquired in the teaching-learning process (Bloom, 1956). The results of the study demonstrate that Bloom's revised taxonomy is a useful tool for the analysis and development of assessment tests.

Aiken's V was used to analyse the assessment tests designed with Bloom's revised taxonomy. The results showed high agreement between the taxonomy and the tests, indicating that the taxonomy is an effective tool to guide the design of tests that adequately assess the content and skills taught in the classroom (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956).

The figure below (Figure 4) shows that there are no significant differences in the number of teachers in the two main categories, representing an unbiased sample.

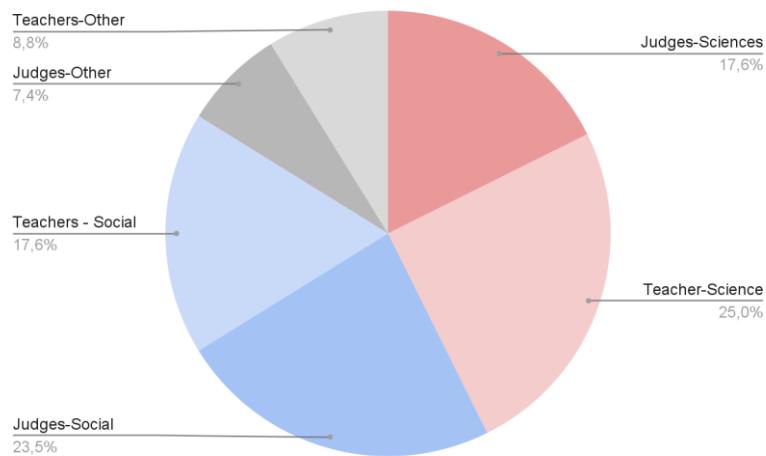


Figure 4. Distribution of teachers according to academic speciality

As can be seen in the following figure (Figure 5), although there are differences between the different expert judges and teachers according to their academic speciality, most of them meet the required Aiken V standards.

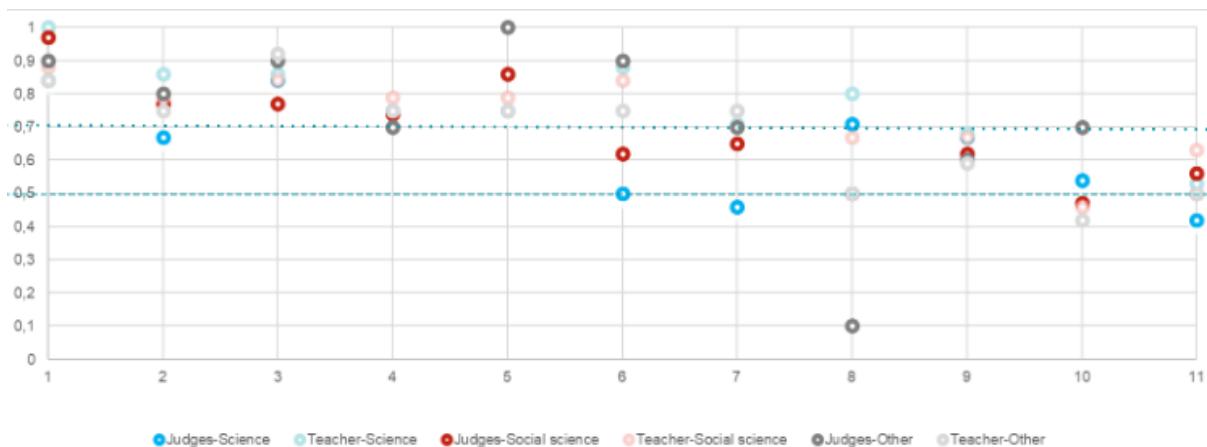


Figure 5. Representation of Aiken's V for each of the items in the teachers according to the different academic categories.

The following table (Table 2) shows the means and standard deviations of each of the items analysed (according to the Likert scale), the corresponding Aiken's V value, as well as the values of the confidence intervals, in this case without differentiating between teachers (expert judges or not according to their academic speciality).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and Aiken's V value

		Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Judges	M±DE	2,77±0,6	2,49±0,7	2,63±0,69	2,43±0,74	2,63±0,55	2,23±0,91	2,11±0,93	2±0,91	2,29±0,79	2,09±0,85	1,97±0,92	
	V	0,89	0,75	0,82	0,72	0,82	0,62	0,56	0,5	0,65	0,55	0,49	

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> 95% CI </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Inf Sup </div>	0,79	0,63	0,71	0,6	0,71	0,5	0,44	0,39	0,53	0,43	0,37
	0,94	0,83	0,89	0,81	0,89	0,72	0,66	0,61	0,75	0,65	0,6
	99%	0,75	0,6	0,67	0,56	0,67	0,46	0,41	0,35	0,49	0,4
		0,95	0,85	0,9	0,83	0,9	0,75	0,69	0,65	0,77	0,69
		Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		M±DE	2,83±0,49	2,55±0,71	2,64±0,62	2,45±0,63	2,6±0,73	2,57±0,67	2,36±0,85	2,36±0,82	2,36±0,82
		V	0,92	0,78	0,82	0,73	0,8	0,79	0,68	0,68	0,68
	95%	Inf	0,83	0,67	0,72	0,61	0,69	0,68	0,57	0,57	0,34
		Sup	0,96	0,86	0,89	0,81	0,88	0,86	0,78	0,78	0,56
	99%	Inf	0,79	0,63	0,68	0,57	0,66	0,64	0,53	0,53	0,31
		Sup	0,97	0,88	0,91	0,84	0,89	0,88	0,8	0,8	0,68
		Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> 95% CI </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Inf Sup </div>	Teacher	M±DE	2,6±0,63	2,63±0,63	2,4±0,7	2,69±0,63	2,86±0,44	1,99±0,77	1,96±0,89	1,9±0,87	1,46±0,69
		V	0,8	0,82	0,7	0,85	0,93	0,5	0,48	0,45	0,23
		95%	Inf	0,69	0,71	0,59	0,74	0,85	0,38	0,37	0,34
			Sup	0,88	0,89	0,79	0,91	0,97	0,61	0,59	0,34
		99%	Inf	0,66	0,67	0,55	0,71	0,81	0,35	0,34	0,31
			Sup	0,89	0,9	0,82	0,93	0,98	0,64	0,63	0,6
			Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			M±DE	2,63±0,63	2,4±0,7	2,69±0,63	2,86±0,44	1,99±0,77	1,96±0,89	1,9±0,87	1,46±0,69
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			Inf	0,71	0,59	0,74	0,85	0,38	0,37	0,34	0,15
			Sup	0,89	0,89	0,79	0,91	0,97	0,61	0,59	0,34
			Inf	0,67	0,55	0,71	0,81	0,35	0,34	0,31	0,13
			Sup	0,9	0,82	0,93	0,98	0,64	0,63	0,6	0,44
			Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			M±DE	2,63±0,63	2,4±0,7	2,69±0,63	2,86±0,44	1,99±0,77	1,96±0,89	1,9±0,87	1,46±0,69
			V	0,82	0,7	0,85	0,93	0,5	0,48	0,45	0,23
			Inf	0,71	0,59	0,74	0,85	0,38	0,37	0,34	0,15
			Sup	0,89	0,89	0,79	0,91	0,97	0,61	0,59	0,34
			Inf	0,67	0,55	0,71	0,81	0,35	0,34	0,31	0,13
			Sup	0,9	0,82	0,93	0,98	0,64	0,63	0,6	0,44
			Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			M±DE	2,63±0,63	2,4±0,7	2,69±0,63	2,86±0,44	1,99±0,77	1,96±0,89	1,9±0,87	1,46±0,69
			V	0,82	0,7	0,85	0,93	0,5	0,48	0,45	0,23
			Inf	0,71	0,59	0,74	0,85	0,38	0,37	0,34	0,15
			Sup	0,89	0,89	0,79	0,91	0,97	0,61	0,59	0,34

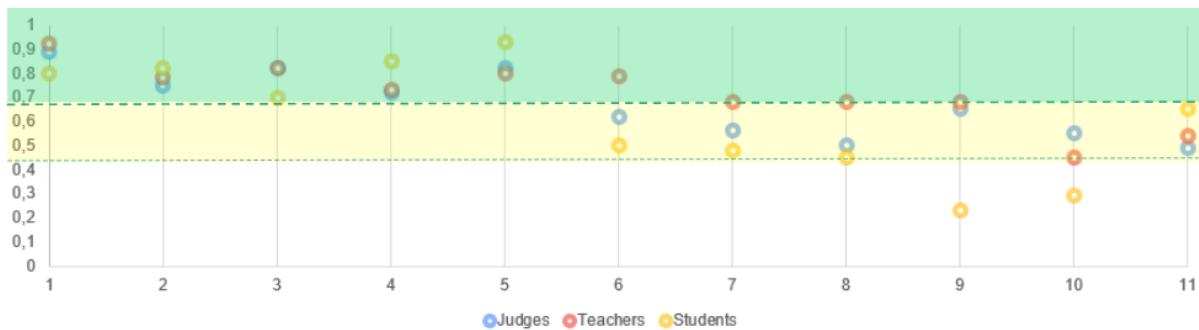


Figure 6. Representation of Aiken's V for each of the items in the expert, teacher and student judges.

Items 9 and 10 refer exclusively to the assessment of one question of an assessment test, and whether there should be compulsory questions to be answered, so item 10 agrees with items 4 and 5, both with an Aiken V value above 0.7 for all three populations, which shows the degree of agreement between the different parties involved in the teaching-learning process as well as in its assessment.

The instrument in question consists of a set of verbs that facilitate the creation of assessment tests (the chosen verb being the central core of the test questions that teachers ask) that cover all areas of Bloom's taxonomy in a balanced way. In this way, teachers can design tests that adequately assess their students' progress and performance in all areas of knowledge (Krathwohl, 2002).

The author presents empirical evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of the instrument in terms of its ability to improve the quality and reliability of assessment tests. In a pilot study conducted (Pizà-Mir, 2021) in a school, the scores obtained by students on tests designed using the instrument were compared with the scores obtained on tests designed in the traditional way. The results showed a significant improvement in the quality and reliability of tests designed with the instrument (Haladyna, 2004).

In addition, the instrument can help teachers develop more effective teaching, as it allows them to design tests that adequately address the different levels of Bloom's taxonomy and thus ensure that their students are acquiring all the necessary skills and knowledge (Popham, 2008; Shuell 1986).

As mentioned above, the most basic and necessary contents to reach the higher stages of taxonomy and achieve true competence are not consolidated, which is in line with the thesis of Thamraksa (2005), Willingham (2009) or Brown, Roediger and McDaniel (2014) and which Ausubel (1978) already pointed out in the seventies.

The results of curriculum analyses from different countries show that there is an expectation of reaching higher stages of Bloom's revised taxonomy, but the need for a factual and conceptual learning base is evident, as already stated by authors such as Willingham (2009) or Ausubel (1978).

In the light of the results of the analyses of the curricular texts as well as the design of tests according to Bloom's revised taxonomy, the theses of Agarwal et al. (2012), McDaniel et al. (2013), McDermott et al. (2014) or Roediger et al. (2011) on how the design of tests and assessment instruments favour the learning of higher processes and promote

the learning of the knowledge they are intended to assess are also confirmed (Agarwal, 2019; Butler et al., 2017; Jensen et al., 2014).

4. Conclusions

In summary, Bloom's revised taxonomy is a good tool for the design of assessment tests, as well as for the design of teaching-learning sequences and their subsequent assessment, whether by means of a written test or otherwise, as can be seen in the studies described in the previous sections.

Therefore, the use of the established levels, according to the category of verbs of the RBT presented, is validated as an instrument for the design of assessment tests, since they conform different psychological processes linked to the learning of the different subjects, and at the same time show the consensus between teachers (experts or not) and students.

In conclusion, the scientific article presents solid evidence suggesting that the use of an instrument for the design of assessment tests based on Bloom's taxonomy is a useful and effective tool in the context of teaching. Its implementation in schools is recommended to improve the quality and reliability of assessment tests and to promote more effective teaching

5. Patents

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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