



Planning the Evaluation of Learning in the Area of Social Sciences of Secondary Education: A Background

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ABSTRACT

Assessment of learning is an exciting, complex, and sometimes controversial topic in the educational field, as it is a key element of educational success. For this reason, planning is supposed to be a fundamental element of this process. However, to have a basic understanding of its importance, we have built its background on theses and research in the Latin American and Anglo-Saxon sphere, which has consisted of a historical-conceptual journey that starts from the concept of assessment in the educational context; It explores the emergence and stages of evaluation models (quantitative, transitional and qualitative approaches); it reviews the emphasis of assessment in the school context (its design, learning-centered, planning), and finally, it concentrates on didactic assessment in the area of social sciences in the Nicaraguan context. The bibliographic research has shown that the didactic evaluation planning is a very little explored and developed element, a reason that justifies the actions to deepen its study, as well as the establishment of proposals that contribute to improving its conception and practice.

INTRODUCTION

This article aims to show some antecedents that support the planning of the evaluation of learning focused on the area of Social Sciences of secondary education, whose conception and practice are intended to be identified in the research consulted. To achieve this, we have started from the bibliographic query made in some search engines for articles related to the subject, such as Scielo, Dialnet, Redalyc, e-spacio.uned.es, scholar.google.es, as well as in university repositories, such as tdx.cat, repositorio.unan.edu.ni, in which some doctoral theses, master's, bachelor's degrees, and articles related to the subject are housed, and which has allowed us to make an approximation to the object of this study. It starts first from a historical generality of educational evaluation, through research done on evaluation models; then focuses on the approach to applied evaluation in subjects of Social Ciencias in the Ibero-American field; and ends with related research carried out in the Nicaraguan context.

DEVELOPMENT

1. Historical background on assessment in the education sector

The didactic element of evaluation has been addressed throughout recent history, as well as the models that have been derived from the paradigms and educational approaches in which they have been circumscribed. The scientific treatment of evaluation in education, as expressed by Blázquez and Lucero (in Medina and Salvador, 2009), is pointed out in the work of Tejada (1999), on some important milestones in the development of this concept (p. 247), where one of the greatest exponents is Ralph W. Tyler (1950, 1969), father of educational evaluation, who sought to know the “extent to which the designed educational objectives are achieved”, whose results derive in a concept of *evaluation characterized by considering it as a process of achieving objectives, which involves both measuring, collecting and valuing information, where objectives are a reference criterion for evaluating* (Medina and Salvador, 2009. p. 248).

Alcaraz (2015), cites the research of Hernández and Guzmán (1991) who mentions that already in the mid-nineteenth century, in Great Britain and Boston (USA) “school performance tests were carried out as a basic source of information to evaluate schools and teachers” (Alcaraz, 2015, p. 13), is considered the first formal evaluation, in an era considered *pre-Tyrelian* by many current authors, marked by the positivism that still permeated any procedure that was considered scientific, including school evaluation.

About the conception of evaluation, Ruiz (2001, p. 194-196), points out that there are authors who focus on *evaluation as an achievement of objectives*, where evaluation aims at systematic control to verify to what extent students achieve the results proposed in educational objectives, such as Lafourcade (1972) and Gronlund (1973). Others focus on evaluation

as *the emission of value judgments*, such as the case of Scriven (1966), Popham (1980), Nevo (1983), and Alvira (1991), understanding educational evaluation as systematic and objective of the valor or merit of some object; where the quality or value of something is appreciated or judged, to imitate judgments based on empirical information collected systematically and rigorously. Mager (1962, cited by Medina and Salvador, 2009) will define evaluation as the “act of comparing a measure with a standard and making a judgment based on comparison” (p. 248). And some authors consider it a “process of information collection for decision making”, and in this group are Cronbach (1963), Tenbrink (1984), Stufflebeam (1993), and Ferrández (1993). It would be a process of gathering information, identifying, obtaining, and providing useful data that describes the value and merit of goals, planning, and verifying the impact they have, and the information obtained guides the making decisions and problem-solving. (Ruiz, 2001, 195).

There are other educational protagonists who have given themselves the task of unifying the previous visions, taking the theories and gathering them to form a single conceptualization, as is the case with De la Orden (1982), Cabrera (1987), Pérez Gómez (1983), Casanova (1995), for whom the evaluation would consist of a systematic process to *collect, obtain and analyze information* (evidence or valid and reliable data), rigorously and systematically, about some facet of the educational reality, or about the functioning and evolution of life in the classroom; to be able to formulate judgments about educational results, according to established patterns or criteria, which serve as a safe basis for making educational decisions, thus being able to correct or improve the situation evaluated, and better understand the effectiveness and educational value of the curriculum (Ruiz, 2001, p. 196).

According to House (1992), who dedicated himself to the study of evaluation for two decades, shows how the concept of evaluation has been *moving* from a vision, which he calls monolithic, to a more plural (p.43); moving from the understanding of evaluation as an application of a test to validate the new curricula –before 1965–, towards a broader understanding of evaluation and not only of a quantitative type, including from the 90s of the twentieth century to qualitative evaluations, which still do not finish having wide acceptance (p. 48).

Following the above and based on the references of Alcaraz (2015, p. 14) and Mateo and Martinez (2008. Pp. 17-25), some key periods are detected (already referred to in the works of Guba and Lincoln, mentioned by various authors):

- The *first period* considered *Measurement-evaluation*, based on the use of tests (until 1930).
- The *second descriptive period*: the evaluation based on the norm, with little impact on the improvement of school practice (1930-1957).

- The *third period or generation of the trial* is characterized by accountability (1957-1972), of which Stobart (2008) detects the PISA evidence, as an updated version of this conception.
- The *fourth period or generation “sensitive” and “professionalization”*, classified as such by Guba and Lincoln (1982, 1989, cited by Alcaraz, 2015, p. 16), arises in the seventies and eighties when evaluation models proliferate (they mention up to more than 40 models).
- A *fifth period: was the integration or generation of negotiation* (the 90s), marked by new evaluative development, paradigmatic permeability, and the evaluative culture. (Arias et al., 2019, p. 20). It is perceived that there is an effort to integrate the evaluation model in response to the constructivist model, where evaluation begins to be understood as an “informed assessment of pedagogical processes. (...) As a strategy for the understanding of teaching and learning, (...) to better understand pedagogical exchanges, to review and improve them” (Rodríguez, 2003, cit. by Alcaraz 2015, p. 18).

2. The emergence of evaluation models

When talking about evaluation models, Arias et al. (2019) address the issue from the perspective of educational evaluation, returning to Bermon (2012) indicate that by *the model* is understood “any ideal representation on a different scale of the entity involved, through which the object itself can be better understood or explained. It can also be considered as a theoretical abstraction of reality” (Arias, 2019, p. 3). For his part, García Cabrero et al. (2008, p.105), consider the model as a conceptual patron that allows outlining clearly and synthetically the parts and elements that you want to observe (...) in which the distributions of functions and sequences of the ideal form are exhibited.

Table 1
Educational assessment methods

Approach	Model	Characteristics
Quantitative	Measurement	Behaviorist type. Evaluation is based on responses to stimuli, by observable behaviors. The summative emphasis, without considering individual characteristics. Evaluation and measurement are interchangeable terms. Starring: Fechner, Galton, Kreaepelin, Binet, Rice, Thorndike. It is the generation of the measure (until 1930).
	Achievement of objectives	Evaluation based on previously established objectives, focused on the product rather than the process, with criteria and levels of achievement. They incorporate performance tests. It is the generation of the description. Starring: Tyler, Mager, Bloom, Popham, Glaser, Cronbach.
	Systems analysis	It has a technocratic approach. It focuses its attention on the input-final result, cause-effect relationship. It seeks to obtain statistically quantifiable data. Objective evaluation based on the standard. They belong to the generation of the description. Starring: Rivlin, Rossi, Freeman, Wright.
	Decision making	Evaluation is a systematic process of collecting and delimiting useful information for decision-making. Efficiency and quality control are sought. Evaluate the context, inputs, process, and outputs. It is located in the generation of judgment. Starring: Stufflebeam.
Transitional	Goal-free	It arises in response to evaluation by objectives or goals. It is a transition model between quantitative and qualitative. It incorporates the distinction between formative and quantitative assessment. Here the achievement takes precedence over the previous intention. Starring: Scriven.

Approach	Model	Characteristics
Qualitative	Based on art criticism	Consider education as art and participants as artists. It focuses on learning assessment. The evaluator makes critical judgments based on his expertise, according to observations and standards to seek improvement. Starring: Eisner.
	Illumination	Holistic evaluation, negotiation approach, of both instructional and environmental aspects, under natural and non-experimental conditions. The evaluator is an impartial observer, inquiring about his educational practice and its improvement. Starring: Parlett and Hamilton.
	Case Study	Evaluation research model or case study. The data is taken from reality but is difficult to organize. They provide a natural basis for generalization. Evaluation data is accessible and public, unlike other evaluation reports. Starring: Jenkins, Kemmis.
	Respondent	Call to the model beginning of the figure. It is located within the perspective of a case study. Its purpose is to describe and judge an educational program. It uses the description matrix and the judgment matrix; evaluates background, processes, and results. Protagonist: Stake.
	Democratic	It follows naturalistic procedures and methodologies. It highlights the interpretations and opinions of the subjects evaluated and the consensus of the product of the evaluation. It promotes dialogue, focusing on changes in beliefs and actions developed by educational programs. Starring: McDonald, Stenhouse, Elliott.
	For quality	It is permanent and free on the part of the educator. Honesty replaces objectivity. Self-assessment plays an important role. The difference between evaluating and measuring is one of attitude. Based on Senge's theories.

Approach	Model	Characteristics
	Process-centric	From a globalizing perspective. It emphasizes the work, creativity, and performance of the learner, projects, meaningful learning, and by discovery, learning to think. Evaluation is a reflection-oriented medium. It is based on cognitive and constructivist theories.
	Evaluation-action	The evaluation focuses on specific aspects of the object evaluated. Evaluators and evaluators engage in reflection processes and take action on the action, to improve the quality of the action. It adopts both the quantitative and qualitative paradigms.

Source: own elaboration from the works of Tejada (1999, in Ruiz, 2001, p. 205); Fonseca (2007); Mateo and Martínez (2008); Ayala (2009); Alcaraz (2015); Arias and Cols. (2019)

Currently, talking about evaluation models must be done on the bases that are based on the constructivist learning of teaching and learning (Olguín, 2017), which demand to go beyond the consumption of knowledge, and provide help because of the development of skills, values, and attitudes (Mejía, 2012, p. 27), in a dynamic where teachers permanently check the achievement of understanding of their students, who must assume the responsibility of reflecting and supervising their progress (Shepard, 2006, cited by Mejía, p. 31).

The trend towards the use of mixed models, with qualitative emphasis, and focused on learning is increasingly accepted. Thus, the *models* of authentic classroom evaluation are found in the literature, referring to the work of students, whose purpose is “that reflect real-life situations and that challenge their ability to test in these situations what they have learned” (Moreno, 2004, p. 104); according to this author, three types of evaluation are developed from this model: *performance-based evaluation*, *evaluation by portfolios and personal records*, and *evaluation of achievement* (p.105). In line with the above ideas, it is common to find proposals for *performance* evaluation based on the development of skills, such as the 360° *model* that has become the business field, and from which you can consult the work carried out by Ahumada (2005), Díaz-Barriga (2006), García et al. (2008), González and López (2010), Jiménez, González, and Hernández (2011), Observatorio de innovación educativa (2015, 2016), Sánchez and Orozco (2020).

3. Recent research addressing assessment in the educational context

In the review of some recent research works on the *evaluation model*, at the level of postgraduate theses in the Ibero-American context, the following trends have been detected:

those that focus on the *design of the evaluation model*; those that focus on the learning assessment; and some that address *assessment procedures and planning*.

On the elaboration of ***the design of the evaluation model***, there are investigations of:

- López Martínez (2009, University of Murcia, Spain), carried out to have an evaluation model aimed at improving learning, student autonomy, and the control and tutoring of teachers in the electronic engineering career.
- García San Pedro (2010, University of Barcelona, Spain), has carried out his work on the design and validation of a competency-based evaluation model for the university in the Spanish context.
- Meneses (2010, Universities of Granada, Spain and Havana, Cuba), has proposed a model of evaluation of information literacy for higher Cuban education, which allows understanding of the phenomenon comprehensively.
- Picón (2012, University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain), has worked on the implementation of learning evaluation models from institutional management, to identify the conditions to evaluate transversal learning, focused on basic competencies.
- Díaz Pinedo (2013, Universidad Peruana Unión), on the degree of acceptance of a competency-based learning evaluation model, in which it is recommended to configure an evaluation system under an evaluation model that integrates performance, performance, scope, goals, and clear and well-defined achievements; and allows identifying the level of efficiency with which the activities are carried out.
- Martínez Royert (2014, Universidad del Atlántico, Colombia), has done so on a model of evaluation of the nursing care process, according to the learning styles of the students.

As for research related to the ***evaluation of learning***, you can consult the works of:

- Saucedo (2008, Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain), carried out to know the methods of evaluation of learning that are handled in the Academic Division of the Faculty of Economic-Administrative Sciences of the Juárez Autonomous University of Tabasco (Mexico).
- Pérez Morales (2008, University of Girona, Spain), addresses a proposal for the pedagogical intervention of evaluation as an instrument to improve the quality of the teaching-learning processes of the English language in psychology students of the Central University “Marta Abreu”, of Cuba.

- Rosas de Báez (2012, University of Córdoba, Spain), addresses the evaluation of learning as a pedagogical strategy to generate competencies in the teaching of primary education, verifies its feasibility of use in the classroom, and the validation of its design by teachers.
- Lorenzana (2012, University of Flensburg, Germany), carries out his work on learning evaluation, for which he designs, applies, and evaluates a competency-based learning evaluation system, which allows modifying the evaluative practice of teachers and students of the Department of Art and Physical Education of the Francisco Morazán National Pedagogical University, of the Republic of Honduras.
- Guevara, Ríos, and Ponce (2016, Mexico), investigate the evaluation of learning in *teacher training programs*, where it is detected that evaluation has fluctuated between scientism and understanding; and that evaluation continues to be carried out through quantitative instruments and techniques.
- Chaviano, Baldomir, Coca, and Gutiérrez (2016, Cuba), study the evaluation of learning from the new trends and challenges for teachers, and point out that the evaluation of knowledge does not have to do with the accumulated contents, but represents a means to learn to do and to be; for this reason, permanent readjustments of evaluative practices are necessary to promote and direct learning according to current trends in pedagogy and didactics.
- The research of Medina Cajina (2019, National Autonomous University of Nicaragua), on the evaluation of the competencies of medical teachers, to evaluate the competencies that, in the opinion of the professors of the Medicine career of the UNAN-Managua, are required in a competency-based curriculum.

Regarding the focus of the topic on ***the procedures and planning of the evaluation***, it has the work of:

- Zambrano (2014, Autonomous University of Barcelona), with work on evaluative practices for the improvement of the quality of learning: a contextualized study in La Unión (Republic of Chile), seeks to characterize and analyze the evaluation process carried out by teachers of basic general education, to check if good evaluation practices improve the quality of learning.
- Gamarra (2016, Universidad Complutense de Madrid), addresses it from the procedures of continuous evaluation in the learning process of students, where it seeks to analyze the use of the procedures carried out by primary education teachers to assess and guide the learning process of students.

- Tristán, J. L. (2010, University of Murcia, Spain), researches the relationship of planning in interaction with teacher behaviors in the case of physical education. It aims to know how the decision-making made by teachers in planning and their perceptions about this phase, justifies the actions taken in the subsequent phases of interaction and post-interaction.

Finally, on some alternative aspects of the evaluation of learning, it is worth consulting the following works:

- González Loayza (2016, Pontifical Catholic University of Peru. Master's thesis), addresses the planning of the evaluation of learning, to analyze the *planning of the evaluation* carried out by teachers of the general courses of a faculty of education in a private university in Lima (Peru); for this part of the description of the actions carried out by teachers on the planning of the evaluation of learning, and then identify the aspects that favor or hinder it.
- The research of Vega Ulsen (2016, University of Chile, master's thesis), who carries out his study on *the construct of learning evaluation*, to know the processes of construction of the concept of evaluation of learning, both in teachers and in students graduated from basic general education of the Catholic University of Maule, to compare this construct with the approach proposed by the Ministry of Education of Chile.
- The work of Arrieta (2017, Tecnológico de Monterrey, master's thesis), on the *evaluation of-and-for learning: feedback processes in face-to-face scenarios of basic secondary education*, was carried out to identify how learning in seventh and eighth-grade students is improved through the use of feedback, as part of formative evaluation.
- Brown, G. T. L. (2002, University of Auckland, USA). He presented his thesis entitled *Teachers' conceptions of assessment* in which he exposes the power of teachers' conceptions to shape the quality of their educational practice, detecting a structure of four factors in evaluation: the curriculum, teaching, learning, and teacher effectiveness. To do this, he designs a questionnaire that helps make conceptions more explicit.

4. The conception and practice of didactic evaluation in the social sciences

It is very significant to start from the XXII International Symposium on evaluation in the didactics of the social sciences, (Murcia, Spain, April 2011), whose results are recorded in the document entitled: "*Evaluation in the teaching and learning process of the social sciences*" compiled by Miralles, Molina, and Santisteban (Eds.) (2011), collects a wide variety of 87 articles and research focused on the evaluation of the teaching-learning process of the social sciences, and the evaluation of programs, materials and educational practice, all of them oriented to the analysis

of different subjects of the social sciences at different educational levels. From the consultation made to postgraduate thesis research, four areas have been grouped (three of international scope and the last of the Nicaraguan context) focused on the following aspects: (a) conceptions of the teachers, (b) evaluation practices in social sciences, (c) the didactic design of evaluation in social sciences of secondary education, (d) and proposals for evaluation in social science subjects in Nicaragua.

(a) On the **conceptions of the teachers** of social sciences of secondary education, around the evaluation of learning, we have the works of:

- Monteagudo, Molina, and Miralles (2015) carry out their research on the *opinions* that second cycle teachers of geography and history have around the evaluation in Murcia (Spain), discovering that teachers have little training in terms of evaluation so that their opinions have traditional positions and their practice focuses on written exams on conceptual contents.
- On the other hand, there is the work of Begoña, Monteagudo, and Miralles (2016, Spain), on *conceptions* of the teaching staff of geography and history of secondary education, around the evaluation of learning, in which it is detected that for teachers the purpose of the evaluation focuses on the objectives of the school institution, training in methodological strategies and evaluation instruments is necessary.

(b) On the **evaluation practices** in the subjects of social sciences, there are:

- Miralles, Villa, and Monteagudo (2015), on the evaluation practices in the subjects of social sciences of compulsory secondary education (ESO of Spain) in the region of Murcia, where the opinion of educational inspectors is consulted, revealing that the evaluation practices in geography and history the written exam are the most important instrument, thus hindering innovation and the development of basic competences.
- Following this in tune, the works of Ortuño, Gómez and Ortiz (2012), and Gómez y Miralles (2015), *review experiences of evaluation of specific contents* of social sciences, in the Spanish context:
 - The *first paper* addresses a state of art in the evaluation of social and citizen educational competence, from the didactics of the social sciences. It is concluded that the introduction of basic competencies must involve a transformation of teaching methods, as well as a change in the orientation with which evaluation is applied, even based on the memory of facts and concepts.
 - The *second work* evaluates the historical contents, and asks whether it would be important to think historically or memorize the past? In the extensive analysis

that is made on the typology of exercises, contents evaluated, cognitive skills required in the tests on concepts of history, the results show the preponderance that has, in the tests, the questions that require a conceptual-factual knowledge, of memorization and with the great absence of procedures.

- In the works of Vargas and Cruz (2018) and Sánchez Mendiola (2018), both from Mexico, the former question: *how do we evaluate the learning of history?* They conclude that continuous self-assessment guides are needed for students to develop research skills in history. The second author asks: *is the evaluation of learning complicated?* He points out that teachers have great challenges in properly carrying out the formative assessment, due to the type of soft skills involved, which is in itself quite complex.
- There is also the work of Bolaños, Mendoza, Vásquez, and Jaramillo (2019, Colombia), on *memory in the evaluation of learning in social sciences*, whose results show that in the applied tests students demonstrate performances of remembering and reproducing, but fail to reach levels of higher thinking.

(c) Other works are aimed at aspects ***of the didactic design of the evaluation***, focused on the phases and instruments of evaluation in social sciences of secondary education.

- The research of Molina and Calderón (2009, Spain), addresses the *criteria* for the evaluation of geography and history in secondary education. They carry out a comparative curricular analysis, whose results reveal that the evaluation process has been conceived as a qualifying function and not as a guiding and motivating function; and that it is easier to apply external criteria to a process (quantitative vision) than to analyze the results of the process itself from the vision of the intervening subjects and the environment in which they take place (qualitative vision).
- Miralles, Villa, and Monteagudo (2014, Spain), address the evaluation of the subject of history in secondary education in the region of Murcia, concluding that there is still a predominance of the exam as a form of evaluation, and that teaching practice has not changed despite reforms to improve learning and evaluation.
- Miralles, Molina, and Monteagudo (2017, Spain), explore *phases and instruments of evaluation* in the geography and history of secondary education, showing that there are different conceptions about evaluation, and that, even when teachers are inclined to current positions, the exam is still the final test to evaluate.

(d) Finally, some studies that approach the object of study, at the level of Nicaragua, focus on *proposals for evaluation in the subjects of social sciences*:

- The doctoral thesis of Orozco Alvarado (2016, National Autonomous University of Nicaragua), shows the impact of the subject of Social Sciences on the performance of teachers, in which he dedicates a section to the *evaluation of learning*, venturing into the definition, functions, and purpose of the evaluation that is used in a general way in the area of social sciences.
- The graduation work of Hernández and Leiva (2017, National Autonomous University of Nicaragua. UNAN-Managua), on the Evaluation System in the Discipline History of Regular Secondary Education in Nicaragua, addresses the type of suggested activities, the classification of evaluation instruments, and methodological and content changes whose treatment has been of a traditional type.
- En el artículo de Sánchez and Orozco (2020): *Competences and evaluation. Towards a model of authentic evaluation of learning*, the authors reflect on how teachers continue to carry out the same didactic and evaluative practices, for which they propose an evaluation method to develop competencies from the perspective of the *authentic evaluation*, as well as the proposal, gives a variety of formats of evaluation instruments that contribute to it.

CONCLUSION

The evolutionary development that the conception and practice of didactic evaluation have had in the educational sector since its origins is intense; Likewise, the effort made by the various subsequent authors in identifying and generating solutions of practical utility, from their lines of research, providing a varied repertoire of ideas is notorious. on the approach to evaluation in the classroom, both in a general way and delimited to the field of social sciences, but not so of the planning of that, being evident that it is a process still little explored and developed, by virtue of which it is merited the deepening of its study and the establishment of proposals that contribute to improving its conception and practice.

Based on the research consulted, there are still some elements pending approach, where a strategy is outlined not *for* evaluation, but the didactic evaluation, of the subjects of social sciences; To focus on the design of didactic planning, by the approach guided by the national curriculum; To identify the specific key actions or categories to be evaluated in the subjects of social sciences, as well as the design of assessment performances and their quality levels; To ensure that teachers have an evaluation design that allows them to close the gap of educational vulnerability in the classroom. Each of these elements is key in a planning strategy focused on constructivist evaluation, aspects such that are not found in previous research, and that pertinent research with the planning of the evaluation must have as a purpose to contribute.

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