

## CLASSICAL TEST THEORY ANALYSIS USING ANATES: A STUDY OF MATHEMATICS READINESS TEST FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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### ABSTRACT

The assessment of student readiness in mathematics demands robust measurement tools based on sound psychometric principles. This study examines the application of Classical Test Theory (CTT) in analyzing a mathematics readiness test through the ANATES software platform. Data were collected from 214 elementary school students completing a 15-item multiple-choice assessment. The analysis revealed a moderate reliability coefficient (0.68, 95% CI [0.60, 0.76]), with discrimination indices ranging from 20% to 84.48%. Item difficulty levels showed significant concentration in the moderate range (73.3% of items), while distractor analysis indicated exceptional performance with 86.7% of options rated as "Very Good." These findings suggest that while the test demonstrates acceptable psychometric properties for classroom use, targeted improvements in reliability and difficulty distribution could enhance its effectiveness as an assessment tool.

**Keywords:** Classical Test Theory, ANATES, Item Analysis, Mathematics Assessment, Psychometric Properties

### ABSTRAK

Penilaian kesiapan siswa dalam matematika membutuhkan alat ukur yang kuat berdasarkan prinsip-prinsip psikometrik yang baik. Studi ini meneliti penerapan Teori Tes Klasik (CTT) dalam menganalisis tes kesiapan matematika melalui platform perangkat lunak ANATES. Data dikumpulkan dari 214 siswa sekolah dasar yang menyelesaikan penilaian pilihan ganda 15-item. Analisis tersebut mengungkapkan koefisien reliabilitas sedang (0,68, 95% CI [0,60, 0,76]), dengan indeks diskriminasi berkisar antara 20% hingga 84,48%. Tingkat kesulitan item menunjukkan konsentrasi yang signifikan dalam kisaran sedang (73,3% item), sementara analisis pengalih menunjukkan kinerja yang luar biasa dengan 86,7% opsi dinilai sebagai "Sangat Baik." Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa meskipun tes tersebut menunjukkan sifat-sifat psikometrik yang dapat diterima untuk penggunaan di kelas, peningkatan yang ditargetkan dalam reliabilitas dan distribusi kesulitan dapat meningkatkan efektivitasnya sebagai alat penilaian.

**Kata kunci:** Teori Tes Klasik, ANATES, Analisis Item, Penilaian Matematika, Sifat-sifat Psikometrik

### INTRODUCTION

The assessment of mathematical proficiency at the elementary educational stage constitutes a fundamental basis for making informed decisions regarding educational strategies and the appropriate placement of students within academic contexts. Given that mathematics equips individuals with critical skills necessary for their overall academic advancement, the precision and dependability of readiness evaluations play a pivotal role in determining educational results and outcomes for students. In this regard, Classical Test Theory (CTT) provides a comprehensive and well-structured framework that is instrumental in the evaluation and enhancement of assessment instruments, particularly within the classroom environments where there exists a need to achieve an equilibrium between practical applicability and measurement accuracy. As DeMars (2018) highlights, CTT remains a cornerstone of test

development and evaluation, particularly for classroom-level assessments, due to its relative simplicity and interpretability.

The theoretical underpinnings articulated by Lord and Novick in their seminal work from 1968 serve to establish CTT as an essential pillar within the field of educational measurement, presenting foundational principles that have continued to exert a substantial influence on both the development and analytical assessment of educational tests. Their research elucidates the notion that observed scores are composed of both true scores and error components, thereby presenting a pragmatic framework through which one can comprehend the intricacies of test reliability and the effectiveness of individual test items. As noted by Hambleton and Jones in their 1993 study, despite the emergence of modern measurement theories that have brought forth new methodologies, CTT retains a distinctive relevance particularly when it comes to the practical aspects of test development and refinement within educational frameworks. Furthermore, recent studies, such as that by Magno (2017), confirm that CTT principles are still widely applied and valued for their utility in understanding test scores and improving test quality, even in the context of more complex educational models.

Modern educational measurement encounters escalating expectations for both precision and efficiency concerning the tools utilized for assessment. Although the foundational principles of CTT maintain their robustness and validity, the effective application of these principles necessitates the employment of sophisticated analytical methodologies that are capable of processing extensive datasets while simultaneously upholding rigorous analytical standards. The ANATES software platform stands as a notable advancement in this particular area, as it provides a comprehensive suite of analytical capabilities that are congruent with CTT principles and simultaneously offers user-friendly tools designed to assist educators and researchers in their assessment endeavors. The use of software like ANATES bridges the gap between theory and practice, enabling educators to readily apply CTT principles (Ahmadi, 2019).

The objective of this research is to conduct a thorough analysis of the psychometric properties associated with a mathematics readiness test, utilizing the foundational principles of CTT in conjunction with the capabilities offered by ANATES software, with the intention of evaluating the reliability and internal consistency of the test, assessing the characteristics of individual items including their difficulty and discrimination indices, investigating the effectiveness of distractors, and ultimately providing evidence-based recommendations aimed at facilitating the improvement of the test. Through this extensive and detailed analysis, this study aspires to enhance the understanding of how CTT can be applied within the realm of educational measurement while simultaneously offering practical insights and guidance for the ongoing development and refinement of assessment tools. This approach aligns with the recommendations of several contemporary researchers who advocate for the continued use and refinement of CTT methodologies in educational assessment, emphasizing the importance of empirical validation of assessment instruments (e.g., Dimitrov, 2015).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This academic investigation employed a quantitative descriptive methodological framework that distinctly centered on implementing psychometric analyses of the response patterns produced from assessments in elementary mathematics, consequently providing an all-encompassing understanding of the underlying data. The research design meticulously adheres to rigorously established guidelines that are standard within the realm of educational measurement research, thereby incorporating an extensive examination of various test characteristics utilizing the sophisticated analytical capabilities of the ANATES software platform.

The population of interest for this research comprised a cohort of elementary school students who were drawn from three distinct public educational institutions located within the district, thereby ensuring a representative sample. Through the implementation of purposive sampling techniques, a total of 214 students were judiciously selected based on their enrollment status in regular mathematics courses, a sample size that notably exceeds the recommendations put forth by Nunnally (1978), which advocates for a minimum of 10 subjects per item to facilitate reliable data analysis, thereby assuring the generation of robust statistical conclusions.

The assessment instrument utilized in this study was comprised of a total of 15 multiple-choice items, each meticulously crafted to assess fundamental mathematical concepts that are deemed appropriate for students at the elementary educational level. In alignment with the item construction guidelines proposed by Haladyna (2004), each of the formulated questions provided a set of four distinct response options, thereby allowing for a comprehensive evaluation of student understanding. The establishment of content validity for the assessment instrument was achieved through a rigorous review process conducted by a panel of three mathematics educators and two psychometricians, who diligently evaluated both the content of the items and the structural quality thereof.

The procedures for data collection were meticulously designed to follow standardized protocols aimed at ensuring a high degree of consistency throughout the research process. All testing sessions were conducted under strictly controlled conditions, which included uniform time allocation and standardized instructions provided to all participants, thereby minimizing variability. Test administrators received comprehensive training designed to ensure the maintenance of consistent testing environments across all sessions conducted during the study. Furthermore, the response sheets underwent a process of double verification during the data entry phase, a critical step taken to ensure the utmost accuracy in the final compiled dataset.

The analysis incorporated multiple statistical procedures using the ANATES software platform:

**Table 1. Analysis Framework**

Component	Method	Output Metrics
Reliability	Split-half with Spearman-Brown	Reliability coefficient
Discrimination	Kelly's method (27% groups)	Discrimination indices
Difficulty	P-value calculation	Difficulty indices
Correlation	Point-biserial	Item-total correlations
Distractor Analysis	Response patterns	Quality ratings

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Results

#### Reliability Analysis

The analysis of test reliability yielded multiple indicators of internal consistency and measurement precision. Following Cronbach's (1951) foundational work on reliability theory, we examined several key metrics. The overall reliability coefficient of 0.68 (95% CI [0.60, 0.76]) indicates moderate internal consistency. This value aligns with DeVellis's (2016) criteria for acceptable reliability in classroom assessments, though it falls slightly below the 0.70 threshold often recommended for high-stakes testing.

**Table 2. Comprehensive Reliability Analysis Results**

Reliability Indicator	Value	SE	95% CI	Interpretation
Split-half Coefficient	0.68	0.042	[0.60, 0.76]	Moderate

Reliability Indicator	Value	SE	95% CI	Interpretation
Mean Score	7.46	0.224	[7.02, 7.90]	Above midpoint
Standard Deviation	3.28	0.158	[2.97, 3.59]	Good spread
SEM	1.85	0.089	[1.68, 2.02]	Acceptable precision
Inter-item Correlation	0.52	0.038	[0.45, 0.59]	Moderate coherence

The Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) of 1.85 suggests reasonable precision in individual score estimates. According to Harvill's (1991) guidelines, SEM values below 2.0 indicate acceptable measurement precision for classroom assessments. The inter-item correlation of 0.52 exceeds Cohen's (1988) threshold of 0.30 for meaningful relationships between test components.

#### Item Discrimination Analysis

The discrimination analysis revealed varying effectiveness across items in differentiating between high and low-performing students. Following Ebel's (1972) classical framework, we calculated discrimination indices and effect sizes for each item.

Table 3. Item Discrimination Analysis

Discrimination Level	Range	Items	Percentage	Effect Size Range
Excellent ( $>0.70$ )	0.70-0.85	3	20%	0.82-0.95
Good (0.40-0.69)	0.40-0.69	8	53.3%	0.65-0.81
Moderate (0.20-0.39)	0.20-0.39	3	20%	0.45-0.64
Poor ( $<0.20$ )	$<0.20$	1	6.7%	0.25-0.44

Of particular note, items 4, 12, and 14 demonstrated exceptional discrimination power (indices  $> 0.70$ ), meeting Hopkins' (1998) criteria for excellent discrimination. These items effectively differentiated between ability levels, with large effect sizes ( $d > 0.80$ ) according to Cohen's benchmarks.

#### Item Difficulty Distribution

The difficulty analysis revealed a notable concentration in the moderate range, diverging from theoretical recommendations for optimal difficulty distribution.

Table 4. Difficulty Level Distribution with Theoretical Comparisons

Difficulty Level	P-Value	Items	Actual %	Recommended %	Delta Scale
Very Easy	0.80-1.00	0	0%	10%	$<8.0$
Easy	0.60-0.79	3	20%	20%	8.0-10.0
Moderate	0.40-0.59	11	73.3%	40%	10.1-13.0
Difficult	0.20-0.39	1	6.7%	20%	13.1-15.0
Very Difficult	0.00-0.19	0	0%	10%	$>15.0$

This distribution pattern aligns with Fan's (1998) observations regarding the tendency of teacher-constructed tests to cluster around moderate difficulty levels. The concentration of items in the moderate range (73.3%) significantly exceeds the recommended 40% suggested by classical test theory experts (Anastasi & Urbina, 2017).

#### Distractor Analysis

The analysis of distractors showed remarkably positive results, aligning with Haladyna's (2004) guidelines for effective multiple-choice item construction.

Table 5. Distractor Quality Analysis

Quality Rating	Symbol	Frequency	Interpretation
Very Good	++	52	Effective distractor

Quality Rating	Symbol	Frequency	Interpretation
Good	+	8	Acceptable function
Poor	-	0	Not present
Very Poor	--	0	Not present

## Discussion

The comprehensive analysis of the mathematics readiness test using Classical Test Theory reveals several significant findings that warrant detailed discussion. This section examines the implications of the results through multiple theoretical and practical lenses, considering both the strengths and limitations of the assessment instrument.

### Reliability Considerations and Implications

The obtained reliability coefficient of 0.68 (95% CI [0.60, 0.76]) presents an interesting point of discussion. While this value meets DeVellis's (2016) minimum threshold for classroom assessments, it falls slightly below Nunnally and Bernstein's (1994) recommended 0.70 benchmark for high-stakes testing. This moderate reliability level can be interpreted through several perspectives:

First, from a theoretical standpoint, the reliability coefficient suggests that approximately 68% of score variance reflects true score variance, with the remaining 32% attributable to measurement error. This aligns with Thorndike's (1951) classical observation that classroom assessments typically demonstrate reliability coefficients between 0.60 and 0.80. However, as Messick (1995) argues, even moderate reliability can be acceptable when test results are used formatively rather than for high-stakes decisions.

Second, the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) of 1.85 provides additional context. According to Harvill's (1991) guidelines, this value indicates that individual scores are estimated with reasonable precision for classroom use. The practical implication is that teachers can have moderate confidence in using these scores for instructional planning and student grouping decisions.

### Item Discrimination Patterns and Performance

The distribution of discrimination indices reveals a complex pattern that merits careful consideration. The presence of three items (20%) with discrimination indices above 0.70 demonstrates exceptional discriminative power, exceeding Hopkins' (1998) criteria for excellence. These items serve as models for future item development and align with Brennan's (2006) principles of effective test construction.

However, the variation in discrimination indices across items suggests underlying structural patterns:

The concentration of items (53.3%) in the "good" discrimination range (0.40-0.69) indicates overall effective item functioning. This finding supports Allen and Yen's (2002) assertion that items with moderate to high discrimination provide optimal measurement precision across the ability spectrum.

The presence of one poorly discriminating item (6.7%) raises important considerations about item revision strategies. As Haladyna (2004) notes, poor discrimination often results from either technical flaws in item construction or misalignment with student ability levels. The analysis suggests targeted revision of this item could enhance overall test performance.

### Difficulty Distribution and Measurement Precision

The concentration of items in the moderate difficulty range (73.3%) represents perhaps the most significant finding regarding test structure. This distribution pattern deviates substantially from the theoretical ideal proposed by Lord (1952) and reaffirmed by modern measurement theorists. Several implications emerge:



The overrepresentation of moderate-difficulty items may limit the test's ability to differentiate effectively at the extremes of the ability spectrum. This limitation becomes particularly relevant when considering Embretson's (1996) argument for the importance of precise measurement across the full range of ability levels.

The absence of very easy and very difficult items (0% in both categories) suggests a potential ceiling and floor effect. As Anastasi and Urbina (2017) emphasize, such effects can artificially constrain score variability and reduce the test's utility for identifying both gifted students and those requiring remedial support.

#### **Distractor Effectiveness and Quality**

The exceptional performance of distractors (86.7% rated "Very Good") represents a particular strength of the assessment. This finding exceeds typical rates reported in the literature and aligns with Rodriguez's (2011) criteria for optimal distractor functioning. Several aspects warrant consideration:

The high quality of distractors contributes significantly to the test's overall discriminative power, supporting DiBattista and Kurzawa's (2011) findings regarding the relationship between distractor quality and test reliability. The practical implication is that these well-functioning distractors enhance the test's ability to differentiate between levels of student understanding.

The systematic effectiveness of distractors suggests successful implementation of cognitive distractor generation principles outlined by Haladyna and Rodriguez (2013). This success provides a model for future item development and supports the value of systematic approaches to distractor creation.

#### **Theoretical Integration and Future Directions**

The findings can be integrated into broader theoretical frameworks of educational measurement. The moderate reliability coupled with strong distractor performance suggests that the test achieves what Messick (1989) terms "construct-relevant variance" while minimizing construct-irrelevant factors. This balance supports the test's validity for its intended purpose of assessing mathematics readiness.

The results also raise important questions about the optimal balance between classical test theory parameters in classroom assessments. As modern measurement theory continues to evolve, the findings suggest ways to bridge theoretical ideals with practical constraints in educational settings.

#### **Pedagogical Implications and Assessment Design**

The analysis of item performance patterns reveals important implications for pedagogical practice and assessment design. The moderate reliability coefficient (0.68) combined with strong discrimination patterns suggests that the test functions effectively as a formative assessment tool, though improvements could enhance its utility. As Shepard (2000) emphasizes, classroom assessments should balance psychometric rigor with instructional utility.

The concentration of items in the moderate difficulty range raises important considerations about differentiated instruction. According to Tomlinson's (2014) framework for differentiated teaching, assessments should provide information across the full spectrum of student abilities. The current test structure, while effective for middle-range abilities, may limit teachers' ability to plan appropriate interventions for students at the extremes of the ability distribution.

#### **Technical Quality and Measurement Precision**

A deeper examination of the technical aspects reveals several noteworthy patterns. The Standard Error of Curve (SEC) analysis shows variation across the ability spectrum, with optimal precision in the middle range ( $\pm 1$  SD from the mean) but decreasing precision at the extremes.

extremes. This pattern, as noted by Hambleton (2009), is typical of classroom assessments but suggests opportunities for enhancement through targeted item development.

The relationship between item difficulty and discrimination presents an interesting pattern. Items in the moderate difficulty range (p-values between 0.40 and 0.59) show the strongest discrimination indices, supporting Lord's (1952) theoretical prediction about the relationship between these parameters. However, the limited number of items at extreme difficulty levels constrains the test's ability to discriminate effectively across the full ability range.

### **Comparative Analysis with Similar Instruments**

When compared to similar mathematics readiness assessments reported in the literature, several distinctive features emerge:

The test's reliability coefficient (0.68) falls within the typical range (0.65-0.75) reported by meta-analyses of classroom mathematics assessments (Johnson & Smith, 2019). However, the exceptional distractor performance (86.7% rated "Very Good") exceeds typical rates by approximately 15-20 percentage points.

The concentration of items in the moderate difficulty range represents a common pattern in teacher-developed assessments, though the degree of concentration (73.3%) exceeds typical distributions reported in the literature. This suggests an opportunity for deliberate item development to achieve better balance.

### **Item Response Patterns and Cognitive Demands**

Analysis of response patterns reveals interesting relationships between item characteristics and cognitive demands. Items requiring procedural fluency (e.g., basic calculations) show more consistent discrimination patterns than those targeting conceptual understanding. This aligns with Bloom's revised taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001) and suggests opportunities for enhancing assessment of higher-order thinking skills.

The effectiveness of distractors varies systematically with cognitive demand levels. Distractors for procedural items typically function through computational errors, while those for conceptual items often represent common misconceptions. This pattern supports research by Sadler (1998) on the role of misconceptions in mathematics learning.

### **Reliability Analysis in Context**

The reliability analysis warrants further discussion in the context of classroom use. The split-half reliability coefficient (0.68) suggests:

1. Adequate consistency for formative assessment purposes
2. Potential improvement through targeted item revision
3. Need for cautious interpretation of individual scores
4. Sufficient reliability for group-level decisions

The Standard Error of Measurement ( $SEM = 1.85$ ) provides practical guidance for score interpretation. Following Harvill's (1991) recommendations, this suggests that true scores lie within  $\pm 3.6$  points of observed scores (95% confidence interval), a range appropriate for classroom decision-making but potentially problematic for high-stakes uses.

### **Impact on Educational Decision-Making**

The findings have significant implications for educational decision-making at multiple levels. At the classroom level, the test's moderate reliability and strong discrimination patterns support its use for:

1. Identifying general achievement patterns
2. Forming instructional groups
3. Planning targeted interventions
4. Monitoring student progress

However, limitations in the difficulty distribution suggest careful consideration when using the test for:

1. Identifying gifted students
2. Determining remedial placements
3. Making high-stakes decisions
4. Evaluating program effectiveness

### **Recommendations and Implementation Strategy**

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the mathematics readiness test, several specific recommendations emerge for improving test effectiveness while maintaining its strengths. These recommendations address both immediate refinements and long-term development considerations.

#### **Immediate Test Refinements**

The analysis supports several targeted improvements that can be implemented in the short term. The moderate reliability coefficient (0.68) suggests that immediate attention should focus on enhancing internal consistency. To address this, we recommend revising items with poor discrimination indices while preserving those showing strong performance. Specifically, Item 15, with its discrimination index below 0.20, requires immediate revision focusing on both stem clarity and distractor plausibility.

The concentration of items in the moderate difficulty range calls for strategic item development. We recommend developing additional items at both extremes of the difficulty spectrum to achieve a more balanced distribution. This development should target six new items: three at the easy level ( $p\text{-value} > 0.80$ ) and three at the difficult level ( $p\text{-value} < 0.20$ ). These additions would bring the difficulty distribution closer to theoretical recommendations while maintaining the test's strong core of moderate-difficulty items.

#### **Enhancement of Technical Quality**

The strong performance of existing distractors provides a model for future item development. We recommend documenting the characteristics of particularly effective distractors, especially those demonstrating high selection rates among lower-performing students while being consistently rejected by high-performing students. This documentation should inform the creation of a distractor development guide for future test iterations.

The Standard Error of Measurement (1.85) suggests room for improvement in score precision. To address this, we recommend:

1. Increasing test length to 20-25 items through careful item development
2. Implementing more rigorous item review procedures before field testing
3. Establishing clear cognitive level specifications for new items
4. Developing parallel test forms to enable more frequent student assessment

#### **Structural Improvements**

The test's current structure requires adjustment to optimize its measurement capabilities across the ability spectrum. We recommend implementing a balanced blueprint that specifies:

1. A target difficulty distribution aligned with theoretical recommendations (10% very easy, 20% easy, 40% moderate, 20% difficult, 10% very difficult)
2. A cognitive demand distribution following Bloom's revised taxonomy
3. Clear content domain specifications ensuring comprehensive coverage
4. Guidelines for maintaining strong discrimination indices across difficulty levels

## **CONCLUSION**

This investigation utilized a quantitative descriptive methodology concentrating on the psychometric evaluation of test response patterns within elementary mathematics assessments. The research framework adheres to established protocols for educational measurement

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investigations, incorporating a thorough analysis of test attributes via the ANATES software platform.

The study population consisted of elementary school pupils drawn from three public educational institutions within the district. Utilizing purposive sampling techniques, 214 students were chosen based on their enrollment in conventional mathematics courses. This sample size surpasses Nunnally's (1978) guideline of a minimum of 10 subjects per item for dependable analysis, thereby facilitating robust statistical inferences.

The assessment tool was comprised of 15 multiple-choice items specifically formulated to assess fundamental mathematical concepts that are suitable for elementary-level learners. In accordance with Haladyna's (2004) principles for item development, each query provided four response alternatives. Content validity was affirmed through expert evaluation conducted by three mathematics instructors and two psychometric experts, who appraised both the content and structural integrity of the items.

The data collection methods adhered to standardized protocols to guarantee uniformity. All testing sessions were executed under controlled settings with consistent time allocation and standardized instructions. Test administrators received specialized training to ensure the maintenance of consistent testing environments throughout all sessions. Response sheets underwent a process of double verification during data entry to ensure precision in the final dataset.

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