

# Discerning Students' Reading Skills: Teachers or Tests?

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## ABSTRACT

Due to the increase of students with reading difficulties, the project *DaF-L* developed a digital screening for students' reading abilities as well as aligned digital reading support with diagnostics to foster the individual student's reading comprehension. The screening contains four subtests: 1. phonological awareness, 2. security of lexical retrieval, 3. speed of lexical retrieval, and 4. meaning-constructing sentence reading (Jungjohann et al., 2023). The screening sorts students into reading ability levels for the reading support. In addition to the screening, students took the standardized test ELFE II (a reading comprehension test for first through seventh graders). The test incorporates subtests for word comprehension, sentence comprehension, and text comprehension (Lenhard et al., 2020). Furthermore, teachers received a quantitative questionnaire (e.g. Ponto, 2015) regarding their students' reading skills. The teachers scored their students based on the following 10 dimensions; phonological awareness, knowledge of basic vocabulary, fast word reading, reading sentences for meaning, active use of language, fluent reading (sentence/text), ability to answer questions on the text surface, summarize or reproduce what has been read, draw inferences, and reading comprehension of texts. The focus of the research is to determine if the screening's scores align with the teachers' scoring as well as the ELFE II scores. The quantitative data was collected from 5 classes consisting of 5 teachers and 100 students in total.

**Keywords:** digital diagnostics, reading screening, reading support, assessment