

ARAL program promotion: research-led interventions on reading proficiency for struggling readers at tangub city national high school

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Abstract - Reading proficiency is a foundational skill for academic success, yet many secondary students at Tangub City National High School remain struggling readers. This study promotes the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program by implementing research-led interventions, providing practical strategies to bridge literacy gaps. Following the mandates of Republic Act No. 12028 and DepEd Order No. 018, s. 2025, a three-week intervention consisting of Phonics Fun, Sight Word Mastery, and Read Aloud sessions was conducted. Utilizing purposive sampling, 48 students from Grade 8 and Grade 9 participated. Results showed significant growth, with Grade 8 reaching a "Proficient" level and Grade 9 attaining "Approaching" proficiency. The study proves that researcher-led strategies are effective catalysts for the ARAL Program.

Index Terms - Reading proficiency, Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program, Research-led Intervention

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading proficiency is a foundational skill needed for academic success and lifelong learning, yet many learners at the secondary level continue to struggle with literacy. This poses a significant challenge to the Philippine educational system, leading to the mandate of the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program through Republic Act No. 12028 [7]. The commitment to improving reading proficiency is a national priority aimed at solving academic gaps through structured guidelines as outlined in DepEd Order No. 018 and Memorandum No. 064 [3, 4].

While foundational reading skills are often the focus of primary education, older students in grades 7-10 require explicit instruction that supports spelling, phonics, and morphology to bridge the reading gap [11]. Students who arrive in secondary school as poor readers are likely to continue struggling because the curriculum places increasing demands on reading comprehension [2]. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching interventions implemented under the ARAL Program for formally identified non-readers at Tangub City National High School.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

Effective reading interventions are rooted in several fundamental approaches:

- **Reading Fluency and Comprehension:** Research indicates a direct correlation between fluency components (speed, accuracy, and expression) and overall comprehension skills [1, 2].
- **Phonics and Explicit Instruction:** Systematic phonics instruction is an evidence-based necessity for teaching children to read, as highlighted by the National Reading Panel [5]. Rosenshine (2012) emphasizes that explicit instruction and guided practice are research-based strategies essential for all teachers [8].
- **Sight Word Mastery:** For students at risk for reading disabilities, the number of exposures required for mastery varies, but focused sight word acquisition is key to developing reading automaticity [9].
- **Read Aloud Supplements:** Structured read-aloud sessions have been shown to improve elementary and junior high school students' comprehension transfer, especially when using content-rich literacy curricula [6].
- **Local Context (Project BASA):** Localized pathways, such as Project BASA, have successfully demonstrated the ability to uplift non-readers by focusing on fundamental literacy and comprehension [10].

III. INNOVATION AND STRATEGY

The primary innovation of this study is the application of research-led remediation strategies specifically for junior high school struggling readers. This strategy promotes the national ARAL Program into an engaging, non-technology-dependent format focused on three core interventions:

1. **Phonics Fun:** Uses sound and blending games to build alphabetic principles.
2. **Sight Word Mastery:** Employs repetition to enhance fluency.
3. **Read Aloud:** Integrates structured reading of short narratives followed by comprehension checks to ensure the transition from decoding to understanding.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that research-led interventions serve as vital solutions for the success of the ARAL Program Promotion. Data proves these strategies provide an evidence-based roadmap to transition secondary students from non-reader status to functional literacy. The Read Aloud intervention emerged as the most effective catalyst for growth, echoing findings that auditory modeling helps older learners overcome decoding frustrations more rapidly. While the research marked a successful implementation, the findings highlight that sustained, long-term intervention plans are necessary to maintain the progress achieved.

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