

## Research Article

# Effectiveness of Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative) in Improving Reading Proficiency of Students

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**Abstract:** This study was conducted to determine the efficacy of the reading program Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative) in improving the reading proficiency of students. In this study, reading intervention was utilized to help learners improve their reading skills. The purpose of the study was to assist learners to improve their word reading and comprehension. Fifty-nine (59) Grade 7 students took part in this study. They were those who fell under frustration level after the pre-reading assessment was administered. It was followed by the utilization of reading intervention wherein another assessment was done during the period of implementation. At the end of the intervention period, a post-reading assessment was given to compare the results of the three assessments. The outcome of the study showed an improvement in students' performance in reading.

**Keywords:** Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative), reading assessment, reading intervention, reading proficiency, reading program.

## Introduction

Reading is a complex process that includes both learning to decode text and learning to understand text. It requires identifying and understanding strings of words dynamically. It is a detailed process that includes comprehension, word recognition, participation, and fluency. The importance of reading is completely undeniable. Learning to read is one of the most important educational outcomes of primary education. It is a vital part of all learning and is tied to achievement in an individual's education and success in their career (Garnes & Wichowski, 2004). "Reading is critical because a great deal of formal education depends upon being able to read with understanding. Reading difficulties will inevitably create educational difficulties, which in turn, are a major source of economic and social disadvantages" (Hulme & Snowling, 2011, p. 139). Wise (2009) avowed that regardless of grade level, literacy is the foundation of all student achievement.

To be effective readers, children must be able to use a combination of the six elements namely oral language, phonological awareness, phonology, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Therefore, an integrated approach to explicitly teaching reading is essential to provide relevant learning that connects to other experiences. While teachers can highlight individual components at different times, they are not a separate skill set and should be integrated in the day's reading opportunities. To support the implementation of the K to 12 Basic Education Program, the Department of Education (DepEd) continuously fulfills its mission to produce productive and responsible citizens with skills and abilities required for lifelong learning. For every learner to become a proficient reader, schools

across the country have a mission to help the learners develop their reading skills. However, the initiatives are still not enough based on the recent results of national assessments of student learning. The results revealed that many learners are still struggling to meet the standards for early language learning, literacy, and numeracy. In addition, it was found out that many students who scored low were unable to understand Math and Science word problems because they were written in English. In addition, elementary and high school learners still lack in literacy skills, both in terms of language and content, especially reading skills.

These gaps have made the agency aware of the need to strengthen each learner's reading skills and maintain a reading culture, a required skill in all content areas. To achieve this goal, DepEd will strengthen the Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP).

Accordingly, as mandated to DepEd Memorandum 173, series of 2019, all offices at the Central Office (CO), Regional Offices (ROs), Schools Division Offices (SDOs), and school levels are strongly encouraged to respond to Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative) by intensifying their reading advocacy to turn all learners into readers at their grade level and allowing teachers to become effective reading facilitators.

Lipa City National High School, in response to DepEd's advocacy in intensifying reading proficiency among students, held a year-round reading assessment using reading intervention under the program Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative). 496 Grade 7 students from 11 sections underwent the Pre-reading assessment. The school used different platforms in utilizing the reading intervention and assessment like face to face, online, recorded video, and in-house. The assessment focused on reading word list and reading comprehension. The reading level of students were categorized into frustrated, instructional and independent. The reading coordinators identified the level of the students after the Pre-reading assessment was administered. Based from the results, 59 or 11.90% of total number of students fell under Frustration Level. A total of 437 or 88.10% was categorized into Instructional Level while none for Independent Level. The 59 students who were categorized under Frustration Level underwent reading intervention.

Relevant to this, the school designed and implemented reading intervention which were appropriate to the needs, economic status, and health risks of students due to COVID-19 pandemic. The school with its reading coordinators conducted home visitations to administer in-house reading to the students. The activity was properly coordinated to the barangay officials for safety health protocols. Moreover, some students were accompanied by their parents to the school for the reading administration. Further, the reading coordinators sent reading materials which accord to the reading level of students, established constant communication with the parents regarding the reading progress of their children, sent a workable reading time schedule for the continuous reading progress of the students, and sent recorded audio or video that the student is reading a material from any received learning modules. During the period of reading intervention an assessment was done and the results showed that 38 students or 64% fell under Instructional level while 21 students or 36% were still under the Frustration level. After the implementation of reading intervention, a post reading assessment was administered. It revealed that 59 students or 100% were already under Instructional level and no more under Frustration level.

The program, Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative) aims to achieve learners reading proficiency where learners can read and understand independently at their grade level which will ultimately lead to improve learning outcomes. As educators, the teacher-researchers were motivated to conduct this action research to evaluate Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative).

### **Research Objectives**

The study aimed to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the reading program Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative) through intervention in improving the reading proficiency of students.

Specifically, it aimed to analyze the level of reading proficiency of Grade 7 students at Lipa City National High School; identify the results of reading assessments before, during, and after administering reading interventions under the implementation of the reading program; and lastly, analyze its effectiveness.

### **Methodology**

This research utilized descriptive research design in quantitative approach. Fifty-nine (59) Grade 7 students from Lipa City National High School took part in the study. These 59 students were those who fell under Frustration Level after the administration of the pre-reading assessment.

A pre-reading, during, and post-reading assessment were used to collect data for this study. The researchers adopted the gathering of data from the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) Manual 2018. The assessment was an oral reading divided into two, word reading and comprehension. In word reading, the scores were grouped into independent (97-100%), instructional (90-96%), and frustration (89% and below). While in comprehension, the scores were grouped into independent (80 to 100%), instructional (59 to 79%), and frustration (58% and below). A pre-reading assessment was conducted for all Grade 7 students enrolled at Lipa City National High School for School Year 2020-2021. This pre-reading assessment determined the level of reading proficiency of students. This test was conducted before the reading intervention was implemented. The students who fell under Frustration level were given intervention and were administered an assessment during the period of utilization of the intervention. After carrying out the intervention, a post-reading assessment was conducted and the result compared with the pre-reading and during performance to see whether the intervention worked or not. In presentation of data, data collected from the pre-reading assessment, during, and post-reading assessment were presented in the form of table.

### **Results and Discussion**

This part covers the presentation, interpretation and analysis of the data gathered by the researchers. Below is the oral-reading level of students showing their performance before, during and after the intervention presented in a table 1.

**Table 1. Performance of Students during the Pre-reading Assessment, during, and Post-reading Assessment**

Oral Reading Level	Number of Students		
	Pre-reading Assessment	During	Post
Independent	0	0	0
Instructional	0	38	59
Frustration	59	21	0

From the table above, it shows that from 59 students who fell under Frustration level in Pre-reading Assessment, 38 or 64% of students goes up under Instructional level while 21 or 36% remains under Frustration level during the period when the reading interventions were utilized. Moreover, after the implementation of the reading interventions, the Post-reading Assessment reveals that 59 or 100% of students falls under Instructional Level while no more under Frustration level.

The results of this study reaffirm that the use of reading intervention to facilitate reading program is an aid to improve the reading proficiency of students. Teachers should choose intervention based on several factors such as availability of materials, suitability for student age group, need of student, and reading approach to use. Designing a reading intervention by the reading coordinators of the school is a crucial part of the process which should be taken due consideration especially now that there is no face-to-face teaching due to pandemic. The researchers used different ways in utilizing the reading intervention and assessment to the students for safety reasons due to the current health crisis. These were home visitation, dropping the students to the school, online platform, and providing

printed materials to the students. The intervention activities used included decoding and recognition of word, reading with proper phrasing, pausing, and stopping, listening to story read aloud by the teacher followed by predicting, inferring and answering critical comprehension questions, integrating, repeating, and using vocabulary words both in oral and written language meaningfully, and watching videos on reading fluency online.

The activities were learner-centered. The teacher started the session with the prepared text appropriate to the students' need and capability. The teacher extracted vocabularies which he thought were unfamiliar to the students. He let the student repeat and say each word. Moreover, he allowed the students to connect the new vocabulary to their prior knowledge, use them often in discourse both in oral and written. The teacher either read aloud the text or let the student do it. Letting the student read the text, he guided the students in reading taking into account proper phrasing, pausing, and stopping. After reading the selection, the teacher allowed the students to predict, infer and answer comprehension questions to know if the students understood what they have read or listened. In addition, the teacher also incorporated technology in utilizing the intervention activities by providing video clips on reading fluency.

The details of the activities carried out during the intervention period are described below.

**1) Drills:** During the intervention period, part of the session is drill on reading. The activity comprises of words, phrases, and sentences drill. Guided by the teacher, the students enabled to decode and recognize words. This capacitated students to read with proper pronunciation, diction, intonation, and enunciation. Moreover, this allowed students to read with proper chunking and pausing.

**2) Paired Reading:** The students were matched with the family members who were capable of assisting the learners while reading. Procedures for correcting errors and giving frequent praise are specified. The teacher considered time, space, and suitable reading materials relevant to this approach. The teacher organized the idea of paired reading by giving training to the tutors, monitoring of students' progress, and maintenance of the program.

**3) Computer-aided Instruction:** The teacher provided video clips on reading fluency. He incorporated the use of ICT as part of instruction in reading. This enhanced the students' ability to pronounce and enunciate the word correctly and read with proper phrasing, expression, and pace.

**4) Reading Journal:** This was a notebook where the students wrote vocabularies, answered to comprehension questions, and other relevant exercises given which need to be written so that the students can go back with them for retention and mastery.

The intervention covered the six elements of reading as proposed by the program HAMON: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative). These include spoken language, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension that learners must understand and be able to use in combination to learn how to read.

**Oral language:** It is impossible to understand the written form of a language without a wide vocabulary and familiarity with language structures. These are, in most cases, already well-developed before a child begins school (Reese, Sparks & Leyva, 2010; Skeat *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, oral language forms the basis for learning to read and is directly related to overall reading comprehension. Children develop their vocabulary when they are surrounded and involved in increasingly complex conversations. They increase the complexity of the language structure used. They become language risk carrier. They build trust in the way they communicate. They clarify their thoughts and deepen their understanding of the world. They listen to the sounds of the standard language.

**Phonological awareness:** Phonological awareness refers to the ability to concentrate on the sounds of a language. This includes rhythm, rhyme, sound, and syllable recognition. Awareness often begins with the rhythm, for example when children hit the beat of their name. The next step is often rhyme. Creating rhyme patterns such as kings, wings, and songs shows early phoneme recognition. This is the most important subset of phonological recognition in reading and spelling development. It allows children to identify and focus on individual sounds in words: phonemes. Children then learn to break down syllables into individual sounds and manipulate them to form different words. Then you can introduce the relationship between letters and tones, and from this point on, you can teach your children phoneme and phonic skills at the same time.

**Phonics:** Phonics involves recognizing the relationship between letters and sounds, sometimes called the alphabetic principle. Current empirical evidence supports teaching beginning and struggling readers using a synthetic approach to phonics (Johnston & Watson, 2003; Rose, 2006). This approach teaches a combination of a single character and a common character in a separate, systematic, and explicit way. The order in which they are taught facilitates their blending into simple words allowing children to quickly practice their new skills, automaticity, and confidence. The study also recommends strengthening these new skills as soon as possible by having children listen to high-quality texts and read connected text themselves. Explicit phonics instruction is essential for most beginning and all struggling readers, but should always be combined with the many other elements of an effective reading program, such as rich oral language instruction, and modelled and guided reading (Konza, 2011).

Phonics instruction doesn't help children understand irregular 'sight words such as said, was, and saw. These words need to be learned through fast word recognition to the point of automaticity. For this reason, sight words are taught systematically and explicitly, and are not only dealt with when children encounter these words in the text. Comprehension is aided by giving enough practice to use these newly-learned sight words in context. If the reader can quickly recognize some words correctly, they can focus on the new or less familiar words and give meaning, rather than just decoding.

**Vocabulary:** When children know the meaning of a word, they are much easier to read and make sense of it within a text. Children need to constantly expand their vocabulary to understand and use in context. Vocabulary development' is both an outcome of comprehension and a precursor to it, with word meanings making up as much as 70-90% of comprehension' (Bromley, 2007). Vocabulary is, for the most part, learned through repeated exposure to new words in conversations, by listening to stories, by reading, and through different media (Senechal, 1997). Exposure to words in meaningful contexts helps to make meanings clear and children can then easily add them to their word bank. This type of indirect vocabulary acquisition is particularly effective for children who arrive at school having been exposed to a wide and rich vocabulary. For other children who have a more restricted vocabulary (Biemuller, 2009) and have less access to the vocabulary of books, the explicit teaching of vocabulary is essential (Beck & McKeown, 2007).

**Fluency:** Fluency isn't just about the ability to read quickly. Fluent reading is the ability to make reading sound like spoken language. It is reading with appropriate phrasing, expression, and pace. Fluent readers understand and make meaning of the text as they read. Core components include accuracy, pace expression, and volume. There is a strong correlation between fluency and comprehension.

Even a very capable reader will not be able to speak fluently if the text contains a lot of new, unfamiliar, or technical words for the reader. Fluency requires that the text correspond to the reader's independent reading level. For this reason, beginning and struggling readers need simple texts at an independent level to gain speed and confidence. When children are sent home with books that they can 'already read, they have opportunities to develop appropriate expression, to practice chunking

and pausing, and, most importantly, to build their confidence. On the other hand, reading quickly without paying attention to punctuation, expression, and comprehension is not fluency. Reading speed should not sacrifice comprehension.

**Comprehension:** Effective readers understand the purpose of their reading and adjust their reading behavior (skimming, scanning, or reading closely for detail) according to that purpose. Learn how text looks different depending on identified purpose, context, and audience. Readers' understanding of the features of different types of text will help them make meaning.

Competent readers monitor their understanding as they read new information and integrate it with existing knowledge and experience. They focus on the relevant parts of the text to distinguish between important content and details. They make and monitor predictions and evaluate content as they read. In addition, they learn to adapt their reading strategies, their pace and their vocabulary knowledge, as well as their strategies for decoding and chunking to read the unfamiliar.

Moreover, it is worth considering who can provide effective intervention to struggling readers. Teacher education and continuing professional development are must. As Hall and Harding (2003) states that, 'many curriculum approaches and packages have been found both to work and to fail: what seems critical is the skills of the teacher' (p1). The NRP (2000) reported that 'in service professional development produced significantly higher student achievement' (p17). Slavin *et al.*, (2008) found that extensive professional development of teachers produced significant results. Not surprisingly, the first recommendation of the Rose Report (2009) was that there should be further investment in the training of specialist teachers to assist students with literacy difficulties.

There is research to indicate that the quality of the relationship between the student and the teacher, particularly in support settings, is a significant factor in program outcomes (Barret and Varma, 1996). For example, an important feature of the successful Reading Recovery approach (Clay, 1993) is the development of the relationship between the student and teacher. Additionally, the acquired professional development and expertise of teachers should be taken into account by the principal when allocating teaching responsibilities, in order to ensure that students with the greatest needs are supported by teachers who have the relevant expertise and who can provide continuity of support.

Further, now that we are experiencing health crisis, it is deemed necessary to address the part plays by the parents in achieving the success of a reading program. Parental involvement leads to positive outcomes for students, especially so for younger students (Education Endowment Foundation, (2017), Centre for Effective Services (2016), Department of Education (2009). Shiel, Evers, Perkins, and Cosgrove (2005) recommended that schools should make significant efforts to help parents in developing their children's language and literacy skills. Research shows that there seems to be a consensus that parents want to help their children at school but may not know how best to do this. In schools that are situated in areas of economic and social disadvantage, some parents may feel unable to become actively involved due to their own lack of reading confidence and/or reading competence and yet, parental involvement may be particularly important for their children (see National Economic and Social Forum, 2009). One way to increase parent involvement in reading instruction is to train parents to tutor/help their children and implement effective reading intervention.

The result of this study shows that the reading program HAMON: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative) by the Department of Education is an effective way to address the problem on reading in the country.

## **Conclusion**

The reading program like HAMON: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative) by the Department of Education is an effective way to address the reading problem in the country. It improves the reading level of students in consonance to word reading and reading comprehension. It was found out that the

kind of reading intervention and the expertise of the teacher as reading coordinator are the key factors to consider in implementing a reading program. Moreover, the role plays by parent in the administration of the reading program is significant specially this time of pandemic.

### **Recommendation**

Reading programs like Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative) is helpful to improve the reading proficiency of students. Programs like this should be intensified. Concerns like education and trainings of reading coordinators, kinds of intervention to be utilized, approaches and strategies to facilitate reading instruction, and engagement of parents, community, and the students should be prioritized.

Continuing what has started through the program Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative), schools through the initiatives of the reading coordinators may pursue to design reading interventions that will help to improve the reading ability of the learners. There is still the need to explore new approaches, strategies, and methods of teaching reading particularly to those students under the Frustration level. Moreover, the need to let parents engage in activities that would capacitate reading ability of the students is pivotal.

**Conflicts of interest:** There is no conflict of interest of any kind.

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