

THE CONTRIBUTION OF READING LESSONS ON STUDENTS' GENERAL OR WORLD KNOWLEDGE

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ABSTRACT

The aim of English language teaching programs is primarily to improve students' English language proficiency. The general knowledge or background knowledge students bring to the lessons are important in building language proficiency and for reading comprehension. Also, content or topics covered in language course books have important effects on the learner, such as increasing, motivation, interest, and comprehension. Besides improving language proficiency, language programs can add to the general knowledge of learners by incorporating topics that are new or interesting to the learners. Therefore, this study investigates whether the content of an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) reading course contributes to the general or world knowledge of students. The data were collected through open ended questions about the topics in the reading books used in the reading lesson. 48 EFL students at an English Language Preparatory School participated in the study. Subjects were at the beginner and elementary level of language proficiency. Participants were asked questions on the topics covered in the units of the reading course book. The results revealed that students already some general knowledge on certain topics before taking the reading course and that most of the topics in the reading lesson added to the students' general knowledge and.

Key Words: Reading comprehension, world knowledge, general knowledge.