

ROLE OF COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIC READING IN POST-PANDEMIC EFL READING CLASS: A QUASI- EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The transition of learning mode from online to offline in this post-pandemic era affects the EFL struggling students' achievement in the reading context. This quasi-experimental study with a One-Group Pretest-Posttest design was intended to know the significant difference between the mean scores of the pretest and the posttest in reading obtained using Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) and reveal students' reflections on using CSR in the reading classroom. Sixty-eight students in a senior high school in Indonesia were involved as participants. Data were collected through pretest-posttest and a questionnaire. The pretest and posttest results indicated that using CSR as a reading strategy significantly improved students' reading skills in collaborative nuance. The students' perspectives on using CSR were positive since they felt highly motivated to practice reading collaboratively, where each reading phase has a relevant strategy, namely, Preview, Click and Clunk, Get the Gist, and Wrap up. Integrating CSR into reading may have positive pedagogical impacts for EFL teachers who want to try CSR in teaching reading in this post-pandemic nuance since it eliminates students' anxiety in the transition of learning mode after the COVID-19 outbreak.

Keywords: collaborative reading; collaborative strategic reading; reading proficiency; reading comprehension; post-pandemic learning

Introduction

In a post-pandemic atmosphere, multifaceted issues in teaching learning reading arise. One of the issues is the students' adaptation to the transition of learning mode. The gloom and doom of the spread of COVID-19 affected the style of students and teachers in the EFL reading classes. For an extended period, the students stayed at home. They joined learning activities through online learning platforms that forced them to rapidly adapt to the situation and complexity of using technology tools and platforms (Su, 2020; Sumardi & Nugrahani, 2021). Since remote learning should be conducted, most teachers use technology to integrate the reading class with a simpler hybrid distance learning format (Kasim et al., 2022; Masalimova, 2021; Su, 2020). Yet, the tasks given were dominated by multiple-choice questions, which may be less effective in assessing and monitoring students' reading competence. In this case, improving the learning loss of EFL students in the post-pandemic era becomes "homework" for teachers and stakeholders.

In the post-pandemic era, students have returned to school to learn face-to-face. They attend physically in the actual classroom nuance by obeying the health protocol. Again, they should adapt the learning transition mode from online to offline. Dealing with a problematic situation, students need assistance from teachers to decrease their stress in reading English texts. Thus, choosing reading material and strategy is essential in this case. Teachers should be intelligent and selective in choosing or determining the English reading materials that benefit students. Most importantly, reading material can eliminate students' anxiety in reading English text (Namaziandost, 2022; Rao, 2019; Ross, 2000).

Besides, the appropriate reading material selection can be familiar and authentic in students' daily lives. The more they are familiar with the material, the more they get used to it. The more they get used to it, the more they engage in the reading context. Nevertheless, as stated by Limeranto and Subekti (2021), EFL students still pose reading difficulty in English as second language (L2) since their proficiency is also affected by their native language (L1). The statement aligns with Ke and Chan's (2017) perspective, where the students have metacognitive knowledge in reading based on their literacy experiences in learning their L1. Still, they have linguistic knowledge limitations of L2. The teacher should be brave enough to use authentic material in teaching reading (Herda et al., 2022), supported by an appropriate strategy to enhance students' reading proficiency. Therefore, teachers should be ready to arrange fun and challenging activities simultaneously that make students comfortable learning English. As it is, in 21st-century learning, students should get used to the English context, especially in their EFL reading classroom, since they need to become lifelong readers (Moreillon, 2007; Whidden, 2022) who are challenged to face reading activities for academic and global demands. It means they should be assisted in solving classroom reading problems.

This situation influences their motivation to absorb knowledge in every activity. They need treatment to recover their reading proficiency in this new normal era in the post-pandemic to lessen their stress level in the EFL context. It cannot be denied that students feel alone and struggle when they face reading texts. In the EFL context, the term struggling lingers in the learning process identical to those who are less experienced, complicated, and unmotivated to solve the reading problem (Kamal, 2019). Furthermore, the transition from online to offline learning makes them reluctant to face the real reading class. The researchers opined that to recover their reading proficiency in this post-pandemic pedagogy, collaboration, as one of the 4Cs core skills in this 21-st century learning (Fadel, 2008), is demanding and should be involved in responding to this crucial situation (Kasim et al., 2022).

Indeed, the collaboration here is not merely sitting in a small group to answer the reading comprehension questions. It is beyond that point since the collaboration needed by students is a collaboration that covers strategy for each reading phase (before, during, and after reading). As Klingner and Vaughn (1988) stated, improving reading comprehension, conceptual learning, and student involvement in the classrooms becomes the aim of CSR. One of the reasons that CSR is considered appropriate for collaborative reading is that several phases can be used as guidelines for students in carrying out activities. The students practise the CSR four comprehension strategies (before, during, and after reading), namely, (1) Preview, (2) Click and Clunk, (3) Get the gist, and (4) Wrap up (Klingner & Vaughn, 1988; Vaughn et al., 2011). At this point, students gain knowledge and develop their communication and social skills within teamwork.

Furthermore, the previous study on CSR conducted by Babapour et al. (2018) investigated the effect of two strategies on 144 Iranian EFL students' reading comprehension that involved two proficiency levels (elementary and intermediate). One of the strategies was CSR. The study showed that CSR became the most effective strategy for EFL students' reading proficiency. The other experimental study, *Progressive Outcomes of Collaborative Strategic Reading to EFL Learners* by Gani et al. (2016), involved 67 participants. It revealed that the experimental group taught using CSR achieved better scores than those taught using the non-CSR in the control group. Besides that, the implementation improved their reading skills and produced positive outcomes in their social relationships and interactions in the classroom. These previous studies indicate that CSR is an appropriate strategy for collaborative reading classes that can enhance EFL students' reading comprehension skills and social relationships. The change of learning mode from online to face-to-face nuance is categorised as a new learning environment that may provide students with abilities and visual perception of challenges and perceived skills (Myhre et al., 2023) in this post-pandemic situation.

The quasi-experimental study examined the role of collaborative strategic reading in post pandemic EFL classroom. The research questions are:

- (1) Is there a significant difference between the mean scores of the pretest and the posttest in reading performance obtained by the experimental group using CSR?

- (2) What are the students' reflections on using CSR in the reading classroom? The results of this study give insight into EFL teachers who want to improve students' reading proficiency and lessen their anxiety in post-pandemic reading classrooms.

Literature Review

A Learning Theory: Constructivism

A strong foundation is about the learning theory and philosophy, which is crucial in teaching and learning success since teachers may understand how their students learn. By understanding learning theory, teachers may optimally help students reach the learning target by designing relevant and exciting materials. In line with that, teachers should provide rooms where students can actively build their understanding together with their partners as co-learners. In this case, constructivism, a branch of cognitive theory (Clark, 2018), believes that individuals learn best when they actively construct the knowledge and meaning of new content from an interaction between their experiences and ideas (Gao & Bintz, 2019).

Additionally, Bada and Olusegun (2015) state that students work primarily in groups to be expert learners. Teachers act as facilitators who guide students to be active participants and make meaningful connections between prior knowledge, new knowledge, and the processes involved in learning. Therefore, the use of constructivism in EFL collaborative reading classes contributes to language learning that is not only for students themselves but also for their peers. In this case, collaboration is needed to help students reflect on the learning materials and pick up strategies and methods from one another. In line with that, this learning theory is a learner-centered model that becomes an essential contribution to constructivism based on the premise that cognition results from students' mental construction (Bada & Olusegun, 2015; Clark, 2018), where each individual has a different learning experience.

Compared to traditional classrooms, constructivist classrooms see knowledge as a dynamic process that is affected by the change in the learning experience (Bada & Olusegun, 2015; Clark, 2018). The difference concerns how students perceive new understanding in good circumstances and environments. The EFL teachers who apply this learning theory may pay attention to the seven pedagogical goals of constructivist learning environments (Honebein, 1996) consisting of (1) providing experience with the knowledge construction process, (2) providing experience in and appreciation for multiple perspectives, (3) embedding learning in realistic contexts, (4) encouraging ownership and a voice in the learning process, (5) embedding learning in social experience, (6) encouraging the use of multiple modes of representation, and (7) encouraging awareness of the knowledge construction process.

To sum up, student-centered learning becomes the most important contribution of constructivism since it is a learning theory that emphasizes how individuals make sense of information related to learning theories that they perceive; then, they construct their

knowledge. In the collaborative scenario, as one of the pedagogical principles, students may build their understanding with their peers and choose their relevant strategy or method. Meanwhile, constructivist teachers, as facilitators, should encourage their students in the learning process to constantly assess how the activity is helping them gain new understanding. Thus, to encourage students in learning activities, teachers should implement appropriate strategies and act as facilitators who help students to be actively involved in collaborative classrooms.

CSR

In the L2 context, reading English texts are challenging and sometimes becomes a “specter” for students whose first language is not English. As written in the previous section, individuals face many problems in reading classrooms, such as lacking vocabulary, motivation, and feeling alone. Dealing with their issues, they learn best when actively constructing knowledge and meaning of new content from an interaction between their experiences and ideas (Gao & Bintz, 2019). From this viewpoint, students need to have a different reading experience combined with appropriate strategies to develop their knowledge since reading strategies have been declared vital in reading comprehension among EFL classrooms (Isozaki, 2022; Suraprajit, 2019).

In this case, collaboration is an interactive activity where students collaborate with peers to learn reading materials and work on tasks (Anwar, 2020; Herda, 2023; Limeranto & Subekti, 2021). Moreover, during collaborative learning, students interrelate with each other since the feedback, reinforcement, and support come from student peers in the group, not teachers (Borich, 2017). In this case, teachers act as facilitators that monitor students’ progress from the first activities to the end. That is why collaboration should be motivating and helpful in producing critical thinking skills in the context of higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) to improve the student's reading proficiency. In this case, the researchers considered CSR an appropriate strategy for boosting students’ reading proficiency. The comprehension strategies cover the essence of collaboration as one of the 4Cs’ core skills in this 21-st century learning (Fadel, 2008).

CSR as a research-based instructional practice (Abuhasnah, 2015; Vaughn et al., 2011; Klingner et al., 2004; Klingner & Vaughn, 1988) is fit to be conducted in reading comprehension classes. It becomes the teachers’ effort to maximise students’ involvement, especially in enhancing the content area of learning. In CSR, there are three reading phases, namely before, during, and after reading; each phase consists of a strategy, and they are helpful for students who feel alone and find it difficult to understand the L2 texts. Therefore, CSR consists of four strategies, which are (1) Preview, (2) Click and Clunk, (3) Get the Gist, and (4) Wrap Up (Klingner & Vaughn, 1988). The first strategy, Preview, is implemented in the first reading phase (Before reading). The activities cover using prior knowledge and making predictions about the text. Students’ prior knowledge affects what is understood, remembered, or learned (McCarthy & McNamara, 2021). The first strategy helps students since it directly influences their

comprehension and knowledge, making it easier to connect the text (Goldman et al., 2012; Shapiro, 2004).

Click and Clunk is the second strategy aimed at knowing how well students understand the texts, or maybe they fail to understand and make meaning. In this stage, the students monitor the vocabulary they do not know and then apply a fix-up strategy to understand the unfamiliar word meanings. In this case, understanding the word meaning is one of the predictors of their comprehension (Stahl et al., 2019). Thus, they need to list their unknown vocabulary and activate their competence in making meaning through a fix-up strategy (Hardiyanti & Herda, 2023; Suhermanto, 2019) to interpret and discover the problematic words. The third strategy is Getting the Gist. In this phase, students will identify the text's main idea and elaborate on them with their language to ensure they understand better. However, the main idea is essential because it is identified as one of the highest-impact instructional practices teachers can apply to improve reading comprehension (Solis et al., 2021; Wilawan, 2012). On the other hand, students can also self-monitor and ensure they can find the central thought of the reading selection.

Last but not least, the students generate questions and try to answer them to check their comprehension of the Wrap-Up strategy. They review what they have learned by trying to create questions and answers based on the material to improve their knowledge, understanding, and memory (Riyawi, 2018). Students are trained to practise every single strategy before, during, and after reading as whole reading activities. Teachers should direct and ensure students have practised the CSR strategy based on the abovementioned phases.

Method

A quasi-experimental study with one group pretest-posttest design was conducted to investigate the effects of CSR on the students' reading skills.

The participants were 68 EFL students from a senior high school in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, of which 39.7% were female students (N=27), and 60.3% were male (N=41). Most of the students were over 20 years old (44 or 64.7%) and 34 (or 35.3%) were under 20 years old.

Two instruments were used to collect data. The pretest and posttest were in the form of a reading comprehension with five questions (see Appendix A and B). A 12-item questionnaire in Google Forms was used to gather information about students' perspectives on using CSR in reading Analytical Exposition text (see Appendix C). A five-point Likert scale was used for the items: (5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) neutral, (2) disagree, and (1) strongly disagree.

The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the Berlin Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development and approved by the Institutional Review Board of Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta (Protocol Code: B/20/UN34.12/KP/2023 (approval date: January 28, 2023)). Informed consent was obtained from respondents.

The research lasted for two weeks in February 2023 in the academic year 2022/2023. In the first week of February 2023, all participants did a pre-test for about 20 minutes. Students did the reading test in conventional ways, individually reading the text and answering the five essay questions. After that, the researchers monitored the pre-test result by looking at the students' scores. The researchers informed the teacher and prepared a large room for collaborative reading activity using CSR in the second week.

The students sat down together in groups of four. The researchers gave explanations and instructions on how to practise CSR. Students had facilitated a learning log and a handout covering the brief materials learned with the classroom teacher before this implementation so that they had gained knowledge of the nature of Analytical Exposition text, including its generic structure, social function, and language features. The implementation covered the three phases of reading comprehension represented by the Preview, Click and Clunk, Get the Gist, and Wrap up. Learning progress was monitored in their learning logs. Then, using the text learned in the CSR implementation, the students were tested in an individual post-test with five essay questions to determine their reading comprehension after being taught using CSR.

The pretest-posttest scores were analyzed using SPSS statistics version 25. Firstly, after knowing that the data were homogenous, the researchers conducted a paired samples t-test to compare the means and draw a conclusion on the first research questions. The questionnaire responses based on the Likert Scale was interpreted using Buphate and Esteban (2022) as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Likert Scale Interpretation (Buphate & Esteban, 2022)

Average Score	Meaning
4.51 - 5.00	Participants strongly agreed with the statements.
3.51 - 4.50	Participants agreed to the statements.
2.51 - 3.50	Participants' position was neutral to the statements.
1.51 - 2.50	Participants disagreed with the statements.
1.00 - 1.50	Participants strongly disagreed with the statements.

Results and Discussion

Effects of Using CSR

To know the effect of using *Storynory*, the researchers set a null hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the pretest and posttest in the reading test using CSR. After testing the homogeneity and the result showed that the data collected were distributed normally, a parametric test employing a two-tailed was used

here. The mean of the pretest was 51.38, and the posttest was 81.32, and the improvement was 29.94 after the treatment (Table 1). A paired-sample t-test indicated that the increase was statistically significant, $t(68) = -36.276$, $p < 0.05$. The results showed that the students had performed better in their reading proficiency after being taught by using CSR. CSR affects students' success in reading proficiency. The students answered the questions independently, yet they gained the confidence to answer all questions after practising collaborative reading using CSR.

Table 3
Paired Sample Test

Pretest – Posttest	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)
	-29.941	6.806	.825	-36.276	67	.000

Students' Perspectives on Using CSR

Table 4 shows the questionnaire results of students' perspectives on using CSR in reading classrooms. There were none who disagreed. The students viewed the strategy in CSR as very procedural because each reading phase has a sequence of activities because 39 students (57.4%) agreed, 16 (23.5%) strongly agreed, and 13 students (19.1%) chose to be neutral. Those who decided to agree and strongly agreed exceeded half of the total participants. Additionally, the students reported that they could collaborate (work together) at every stage of reading through CSR because 42 (61.8%) of the 68 participants agreed and nine (13.2%) chose to be neutral in this case. The students also reported that they learned to direct themselves to interact, communicate, and think critically during collaborative reading activities (self-direction). The result showed 35 (51.5%) agreed with the statement, 27 (39.7%), and six (8.8%) were neutral.

Table 4
Students' Perspectives on using CSR in Reading Classroom

No.	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral
1	The strategy in CSR is very procedural because each reading phase has a sequence of activities.	23.5%	57.4%	19.1%
2	I can collaborate (work together) at every reading stage through CSR (collaboration).	61.8%	25%	13.2%
3	I learned to direct myself to interact, communicate, and think critically during collaborative reading activities (self-direction).	39.7%	51.5%	8.8%

Indeed, collaboration benefits EFL students to solve reading problems together in a well-planned procedure. Students, as readers, could construct meaning actively from an interaction between their experiences and ideas (Gao & Bintz, 2019) within collaborative activities. Moreover, students interrelate with each other in the collaborative reading since the feedback, reinforcement, and support come from student peers in the group, not teachers (Borich, 2017). In this case, the collaboration differs from the typical group work that emphasises students reading the whole texts and answering the questions. This study focuses on CSR as a comprehensive procedure for students, so they realize that collaborative reading of English texts is fun and valuable.

As Klingner and Vaughn (1988) stated, improving reading comprehension, conceptual learning, and student involvement in the classrooms is the strong point of CSR. By following each strategy as a reading comprehension procedure, students could manage their understanding of the texts through the level of reading comprehension, namely literal, inferential, and critical comprehension levels (Brassel & Rasinski, 2008).

Additionally, 51.5% (N=35) of students agreed that they learned to direct themselves to interact, communicate, and think critically during collaborative reading activities (self-direction). The demands of 21st-century learning cover the 4Cs (Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, and Critical Thinking) that ideally should be integrated into the teaching process, including in reading class. By using CSR, students can practise all the 4Cs. The results showed that students' critical thinking improved during the reading process. It can be gathered that the students performed their in-depth thinking skills by demonstrating their curiosity and raising questions as essential thinking characteristics (Saleh, 2019), where they try to find answers to the questions. How the students demonstrated their critical thinking may prepare social relationships (Renatovna & Renatovna, 2020) among them in collaborative reading nuances.

Conclusion

The quasi-experimental study concludes that CSR effectively enhanced EFL students' reading skills in the post-pandemic EFL classroom, based on pre- and post-test scores and students' perceptions. The CSR treatment significantly affects students' achievement, shown by the mean score of the pretest and posttest, supported by the analysis result of the paired sample t-test that showed CSR affects students significantly in reading proficiency. Each phase of CSR consists of a strategy that provides a new learning experience for students: Preview, Click and Clunk, Get the Gist, and Wrap up. Again, using CSR benefits students in the EFL reading context since they can explore their understanding of the English texts with the group members, improve reading proficiency, and develop social skills to fulfil the demands of 21st-century learning skills.

This study shows that a collaborative strategy is one of the ways to enhance students' motivation and ability to read and Klingner and Vaughn's (1988) CSR is a good approach to adopt. Collaboration among students may improve their skills, such as critical

thinking, reasoning, problem-solving, and social life in the classroom. Moreover, during collaborative learning, students interrelate with each other since the feedback, reinforcement, and support come from student peers in the group, not teachers (Borich, 2017). Collaborative strategies in teaching reading foster interactive activities where students collaborate with peers to learn reading materials and work on the tasks (Anwar, 2020; Limeranto & Subekti, 2021). Therefore, it substantially supports EFL students' reading comprehension development since it is appropriate for content-based learning (Walldén, 2022; Stevens & Vaughn, 2020; Grabe, 2009).

However, this study is still limited in terms of the research design. The researchers conducted a quasi-experimental design with one pretest-posttest design, with only experimental groups to observe. Future studies should employ broadened research perspectives and experimental studies with control groups and even classroom action research to obtain better insights on teaching reading skills.

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Appendix A

Pretest for Students

Read the following Analytical Exposition, "Banning Motorbikes Is Necessary for Housing Areas," then answer the questions thoughtfully!

Motorbikes are a nuisance and a cause for great distress. Even though motorbikes are considered the most convenient transportation, I believe they are a hazard to humans, animals, and the environment. I think banning motorbikes in housing areas is necessary for the following reasons: cause of the amount of unreasonable noise, air pollution, and accidents.

First, I would like to point out that motorbikes are a major contributor to pollution worldwide. Research has shown that motorbikes emit a deadly gas that is dangerous to the environment. Consequently, long-term gas emission from motorbikes is a major contributor to global warming (Science Daily). Secondly, motorbikes create so much noise. There is "vroom vroom" noise everywhere. It is extremely difficult to sleep. Parents with infants find it highly challenging. Experts believe that if there is extreme noise can lead to deafness and lack of concentration in children and adults (Fields, 1993).

Finally, motorbikes are responsible for horrible accidents. In some cases, there are deaths. Motorbike riders go so fast that they cannot stop on time. Thus they hit other people or animals.

In conclusion, based on the arguments above, I strongly believe banning motorbikes from housing areas is the appropriate solution. Minimizing the harmful effects on Society's health and comfort is necessary.

Adapted from:

Bashir, Makhrukh. (2017). *Buku Siswa Bahasa Inggris (2nd Ed.)*. Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.

Questions:

1. There are some reasons for banning motorbikes in housing areas. Mention and explain them!
2. Based on the text, why are motorbikes responsible for horrible accidents?
3. It is written in the text that *Experts believe that if there is extreme noise can lead to deafness*. What do you know about deafness?
4. The text says, *"Parents with infants find it highly challenging."* Why is it called highly challenging?
5. Does the writer agree or disagree with the whole content of the text? Could you show me the evidence from the text?

Appendix B

Posttest for Students

Read the following analytical exposition, "The Urgency of Three Levels of Government in Australia," then answer the questions thoughtfully!

Society needs a government in every country *to make decisions and get things done*. Therefore, in Australia, there are three levels of government, namely the federal government, state government, and local governments. I think all of these government levels are necessary for Australians' life. Why do I say so? These are why having three levels of government in Australia is beneficial.

First, the federal government is necessary for the big things. They are **responsible for issues that affect all Australians**. They keep the Economy in order and look after the defense. Similarly, the state governments look after middle-sized things. For example, they look after law and order, preventing things like vandalism in school. They are responsible for the issues affecting **people in that state or territory**. Finally, the local government looks after the small stuff. They look after things like monitoring the parking area and collecting and recycling the rubbish. Otherwise, everyone would have the disease.

Thus, for the reasons above, we can conclude that Australia's three levels of government are necessary. Society can feel safe and comfortable when there is good government support that is complete with each other.

Modified from: <http://englishadmin.com/2018/11/50>

Questions:

1. Mention and explain the three levels of Australia's government, with each responsibility!
2. In the eighth line, it is stated that the state governments look after middle-sized things. Why is it called middle-sized things?
3. At the end of the text, it is written *Society can feel safe and comfortable when there is good government support that is complete with each other*. What does it mean?
4. The text says, "*the local government looks after the small stuff*." Why is it called the small stuff?
5. Does the writer agree or disagree with the whole content of the text? Could you show me the evidence from the text?

Appendix C

Questionnaire for CSR Implementation

No	Statement	Score				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The strategy in CSR is very procedural because each reading phase has a sequence of activities.					
2	I don't hesitate to give predictions regarding the content of the text.					
3	It helps me to think critically because I record/classify unfamiliar vocabulary or don't know the meaning.					
4	I found essential parts/points of each paragraph in the Analytical Exposition text.					
5	My reading comprehension of the text is improving by successfully compiling questions and answers that follow the contents of the Analytical Exposition text.					
6	I can practice proper and accurate communication with my teammates (communication).					
7	I can collaborate (work together) at every reading stage through CSR (collaboration).					
8	My team and I showed creativity in solving problems in each phase of reading the Analytical Exposition text (creativity).					
9	I can train myself to think critically about ideas and solutions during reading activities (critical thinking).					
10	During the discussion, the team and I presented ideas and answers (taking turns).					
11	I learned to respect/appreciate colleagues' opinions during the collaborative reading process (respecting the rights of others).					
12	I learn to be able to control my emotions as a form of self-control (learning self-control)					
13	I learned to be able to direct myself to be able to interact, communicate, and think critically during collaborative reading activities (self-direction).					