

# Critical Responses of Junior High School Students to Deviant Social Practices in Their Environment Using Creative Dialogue

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**Abstract** — This article reports the findings of qualitative research on the critical responses of junior high school students to deviant social practices in their environment using a creative dialogue learning model. The focus of this research is what deviant social practices most students find in their environment and how students' critical responses to such deviant practices are. The subject of this research is the seventh grade students of SMPN 3 Malang. Research data is in the form of students' responses to the type of deviant practices and students' critical responses to such deviant social practices. Data were analyzed by using spiral process, i.e. describing, classifying, and interpreting. The findings of the study indicate that the most disturbing social practices found among students in their environment are domestic violence and bullying. Students' critical responses are diverse, i.e. arguments, criticisms, and suggestions.

**Keywords** — *Critical responses, deviant social practices, creative dialogue*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Modern literacy approach views the activity of reading as a social process [9]. The impact is that the readers' interpretation of the text content involves negotiations among authors and readers around meanings, purposes, and contexts [3]. This is consistent with the nature of a text as a manifestation of social activity and which has a social purpose. A text exists due to the demands of a social activity, which is why reading a text cannot be separated from its social context. The readers' interpretation of the text content is affected by their social experiences and social context in which readers live [18].

The paradigm of reading as a social process is a critical reaction to a view that expresses reading as a process of interaction between readers and the text, can be separated from its social context [9]. More recently, social theories of language and literacy have conceptualized text in social rather than cognitive ways [18]. Reading as a social process requires recognition, assessment, and writer-reader interaction and also creates social relations between the parties involved in the reading process.

In the perspective of reading as a social process, reading is not seen as a neutral activity [9]. Every speech delivered by the author, illustrator, or other social actors, consciously or not, is a discourse that is not only derived from ideas that exist in the minds of the social actors, but also come from social practice that is deeply rooted and oriented to the real social material structure [4]. Hence, critical attitude is always necessary to question what lies behind the words, and from whom the words were coming from. Language is a social practice that requires us to be critical, not just accepting any ideas, concepts, or collections of considered established ideas. The underlying assumption is that there are no pure or simple words.

Every reading activity contains construction of ideology and power. Those social relationships are connected by the method to reveal text's meaning through parties involvement in reading activities, such as linking one event to another event. Reading activity in the perspective of social process aims to foster reader's critical response of the social practices in the text [10]. Critical response is a critical expression of the text resulting from the growth of critical consciousness. Critical consciousness is defined as the ability to recognize conditions that led to the appearance of privileged parties who can dominate others. Having critical awareness means being aware of the acceptable and not acceptable historical, social, cultural, or ideological in a given society [5]. It cannot be denied because, in daily life practice, we live with the idea about what is acceptable and not acceptable, what is right and wrong, or neutral. Beliefs about the right, the wrong, the acceptable, the unacceptable, or the neutral are not always the same in every context between individuals and society.

Junior high school students, in general, do not have the critical response of social practices that occur in their everyday environment because they are mostly still preoccupied with themselves and living in their own world [10]. Johnson's [10] opinion is refuted by a classroom action research conducted by Man and Lau [14] on novice English students which shows that students' personal reasoning and expressions gradually increase to critical responses after learning through creative dialogue. This improvement is supported by the willingness of educators to provide

classroom conditions, social structures, and modeling practices that help students to gradually improve critical responses [14]. Man and Lau [14] also state that learners are not only invited to analyze social problems as intellectual exercises but also involve their emotional level to discuss their attitudes toward social issues.

Inspired by Man and Lau's research findings, the authors conducted a qualitative study to expose the critical responses of junior high school students to deviant social practices in their environment using creative dialogue. The focus of this research is what deviant social practices most students find in their environment and how students' critical responses to such deviant practices are.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### A. Critical Response

Critical response is a critical expression of the text resulting from the growth of critical consciousness. Critical consciousness is defined as the ability to recognize conditions that led to the appearance of privileged parties who can dominate others. Having critical awareness means being aware of the acceptable and not acceptable historical, social, cultural, or ideological in a given society [5]. It cannot be denied because, in daily life practice, we live with the idea about what is acceptable and not acceptable, what is right and wrong, or neutral. Beliefs about the right, the wrong, the acceptable, the unacceptable, or the neutral are not always the same in every context between individuals and society.

The critical response needs to be raised towards what is happening at home, what they should and should not do, what their parent like and dislike, and what values should be applied in the environment [10]. This critical response should be introduced to junior high school students so that our younger generations are not alienated from society and have a concern/sensitivity to the problems faced by society/nation, and able to provide solutions to various problems faced by the community/nation. Education is for self-activating explores for life, for citizens [11].

Literature is an excellent tool to foster junior high school students' critical response to the socio-cultural practices in a text by associating them with the life facts of the students. This is because literature has a potential to provide information or educate through imaginative representations of human experiences [7]. Literature also involves the use of language, imagination to objectify, restate, create and explore human experience [7]. In addition, literature is an abstraction of life and life is a social reality [17]. Literature is a portrait and social product because a writer is a member of the community and he or she creates works to be enjoyed, appreciated, and is as mean of catharsis for the society.

Junior high school students need to have their critical response cultivated to the social facts with the added flavor of the author's imagination, and then the students are asked to compare or associate them with concrete facts in everyday life, after which the student do reflection. The ultimate goal is for students to identify, be sensitive, and be concerned about

societal problems in their environment and contribute in providing the best solution to the phenomenon. The result of this growth of critical response is to give contributions to the social changes along the lines of power relations in the communication process [16].

Social skill, a skill to interact with others directly and deeply to understand what they are feeling and to provide responses and solutions to the problems faced by others, is an important skill that must be cultivated on the younger generation of the digital age and generation Z. This is because the younger generation from digital/z era tends to lack social skills and have low attention spans to social problems [13]. Therefore, teachers need to provide serious attentions to this problem and design activities that can foster their critical awareness to the social practices around them.

Having critical response means having an awareness of social practices contained in the context of a particular community. In certain communities, such as some Javanese communities, there are traditions that grant privileges to men; men have higher positions than women. There is female subordination or second-class label against women that causes men to have the privilege to be the first in almost everything that matter. Women are second class citizens; so even to eat, they have to wait for their husbands as the head of the family. Men are prohibited from doing female works, namely cooking, washing, sweeping, or mopping.

### B. Creative Dialogue Learning Model

This creative dialogue learning model is adapted from [1] which states that creative dialogue is a responsive reading learning model involving four stages of interactive dialogues between teacher-students. The four stages of the creative dialogue are (1) descriptive phase, (2) personal interpretation phase, (3) critical/multicultural/anti-bias phase, and (4) creative phase. Descriptive phase is the stage of understanding the contents of the read text, especially understanding the factors of domination, power, and ideology behind the text. Interpretation phase is the stage to encourage students to use their knowledge, experience, and emotions to provide personal critical reflection. Critical phase is the stage to give a critical response to the social aspects contained in the text by combining intellectual and emotional abilities. Creative phase is the stage of constructing / producing critical attitudes that are found using various forms to further raise the critical awareness of learners of the text.

The creative dialogue learning model by Ada and Campoy [1] is adapted to foster critical response of junior high school students to deviant social practices in their environment under the same name, which is the creative dialogue learning model (revision). Creative dialogue learning model (revision) is a learning model consisting of four stages. The outline of the creative dialogue learning model syntax that is used to cultivate students' critical response of social practices in the text can be seen in the following example.

TABLE 1. Stages of Creative Dialogue Learning Model (Revision)

Learning stages	Learning activities
<b>Stage 1: Recognizing the Deviant Social Practices in the text</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students read literary texts that contain deviant social practices.</li> <li>▪ Students identify the deviant social practices in text through the guiding question that have been provided by their teacher.</li> <li>▪ Students read materials related to the issue of the deviant social practices.</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 2: Responding to the Deviant of Social Practices in the Text</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students discuss in groups and give some response to social practices in the text.</li> <li>▪ Students discuss in groups to offer some response whether they have or have not encounter events described in the text in daily life.</li> <li>▪ Students discuss in groups to offer some response about what they will do if they experience such events.</li> <li>▪ Students discuss in groups to assess whether the solution drawn by characters in the face of these problems is correct or not</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 3: Having a Dialogue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students and the teacher are having a dialog to reflect on all the students' response to social problems revealed in literary texts that they read</li> <li>▪ The teacher appreciates students' response and provides reinforcement</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 4: Communicatin g Personal Response in Essay Form</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Each student writes his/her personal response to the social practices in the text in the form of a simple essay.</li> <li>▪ Each student edits and revises the essay that they have written.</li> </ul>

### III. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

#### A. Research context and participants

This research was conducted in one of junior high school in Malang, namely SMPN 3 Malang, in the grade 7. The subjects of this research are 25 students. The research is focused on literary texts, especially short stories. This research is integrated with literary learning schedule conducted by teachers in the classroom, so as not to interfere with the teaching-learning process that has been designed by the teacher. Researchers collaborate with Indonesian language teachers to carry out this research project. Researchers and teachers jointly carry out the teaching and learning activity by following the four stages of creative dialogue learning (revision).

#### B. Procedures

The study was conducted for 4 weeks, but not consecutively because it follows the schedule determined by the teacher. Within a week there are two meetings. In week 1, the selected short story text is a text related to bullying problem. The selected short story is titled *Violina's Musical*

*Scale (Tangga Nada Violina)* [2]. At week 2, the selected text is a text containing gender bias issue. The selected short story is titled *Shivering Dining Table (Meja Makan yang Menggigil)* [19]. In the 3rd week, the selected short story text is a text that contains problem of domestic violence. The selected short story is titled *The Story of Kedesih* [6]. In the fourth week, the selected text is titled *Jakarta* by Tjitrawasita [8]. Procedures of activities in each week are carried out in accordance with the four steps defined in the creative dialogue learning (revision), namely (1) recognizing the deviant social practices in the text, (2) responding to the deviant of social practices in the text, (3) having a dialogue, and (4) communicating personal response in essay form.

#### C. Data collection and analysis

The data were collected by asking all of the subjects of this study to read the specified short story, identifying deviant social practices in the text and responding; the students' responses deepened through dialogue, where the dialogue is linked to the phenomenon of deviant social practices existing in the text with those present in everyday life in the student environment, then the students write down their critical attitude to the deviant social phenomenon in the form of short essays. This research data is in the form of students' critical responses to deviant social practices that exist in the text and that exists in their daily life expressed by students through creative dialogue and simple essay. Data were analyzed by using spiral process, i.e. describing, classifying, and interpreting.

### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The focus of this research is what deviant social practices most students find in their environment and how students' critical responses to such deviant practices are. In accordance to the focus of the study, the findings of this study were divided into two, namely deviant social practices found in students' environments and students' critical responses to deviant social practices in their environment or in readable texts.

#### A. Deviant Social Practices That Students' Encounter In Their Environment

The findings of the study indicate that the most deviant social practices found among students in their environment are domestic violence and bullying. Some examples of deviant social practices that students find in their environment, expressed by students through creative dialogue, are presented in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2. EXAMPLES OF DEVIANT SOCIAL PRACTICES STUDENTS FIND IN THEIR ENVIRONMENT

Students' Name	Question/Dialogue	Students' Response
Khoridia Anisa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In your everyday life, have you ever encountered such deviant social behavior similar with</li> </ul>	I have. I have a very tortured neighbor because of her husband's abusive behavior. My neighbors are fighting every day and his wife is always being the victim.

	what you have read in the short stories? Tell me if you have!	Sometimes she is beaten, her hair pulled, and dragged.
	▪ Did you watch the event personally?	Yes, I often play with their son, so I've seen it myself.
	▪ Is there anything else you know about that event?	Yes, I heard suddenly that the husband and wife had a big fight inside a room, accusing each other with harsh words, and then there was physical violence to his wife.
Kharisma YN	▪ In your everyday life, have you ever encountered such deviant social behavior similar with what you have read in the short stories? Tell me if you have!	Yes I have. There is a family who think the father has special privileges in the family
	▪ What do you mean by special privileges?	According to their tradition, it was the father who should eat first. If the children or mother eat before the father then they are considered rude or do not appreciate the father as head of the family.
	▪ Do you know the family's reaction to the tradition?	Yes, his son (my friend) often tells me that he feels tortured by the rules.
Eka Nefi	▪ In your everyday life, have you ever encountered such deviant social behavior similar with what you have read in the short stories? Tell me if you have!	I have. There's a male friend at my school. He is always being bullied by his friends. He is always being asked for his pocket money, his uniform ruined, being beaten, ridiculed, scolded and so forth. He can only stay still and complain to the teacher.
	▪ How did the teacher react to the event?	The teacher did not respond very much, because it was considered as something normal.
	▪ How did you feel after seeing that?	How unfortunate the child is. It is pitiful. Why does he still befriend those who bullied him when there are many other friends that are much better?
M David Mahmudi	▪ In your everyday life, have you ever encountered such deviant social behavior similar with what you have read in the short stories? Tell me if you have!	I have. In Indonesia, many children have become house servants and are often tortured by their employers.
	▪ How do you know?	From television, social media, newspapers.
	▪ How did you feel after seeing that?	Sad, why didn't they fight back?
David	▪ In your everyday life, have you ever encountered such deviant social behavior similar with what you have read	Yes, my father was snapping at my sister because she made a mistake.

	in the short stories? Tell me if you have!	
	▪ What did your sister do?	Look down and then cry. Then she did not want to leave the room.
	▪ How did you feel after seeing that?	I was sad for her, but I didn't dare to disturb her.

### B. Student's Critical Response to Deviant Social Practice in Their Environment

Students' critical responses when asked to respond to deviant social practices that exist in their environment in the form of short essays are diverse. Students' critical responses are diverse, i.e. arguments, criticisms, and suggestions. Examples of students' critical responses to deviant social practices in their environment / their experience can be seen in Table 3 below.

TABEL 3. STUDENTS' CRITICAL RESPONSES AGAINST DEVIANT SOCIAL PRACTICES IN THE ENVIRONMENT / THAT THEY EXPERIENCE

Student's Name	Form of Response	Examples of Critical Responses in Brief Essays
Ananda Pratiwi	Argument	<p>When night comes, I often cry, tears flowing remembering my friends' remarks about myself. I am beautiful-looking, has shapely-white nose, waist-long hair with curly shapes. However, my height is the only thing that has become the stuff of joke for my friends. They call me a Beautiful Dwarf.</p> <p>Do my friends not understand that their words are like knives that can slice and hurt others? So easy they said that I'm like a pretty dwarf. Doesn't that make my confidence weaken? My tears show my regrets why I was born this way.</p> <p>My judgment changed 360 degrees after I vaguely heard a song telling that no one has the right to judge who we are but ourselves. Happiness does not come from other people, the happiness lies in our mindset. If we are grateful for what God has given and believe that that is the best for us, then there will be no regret.</p> <p>Slowly I woke up, I think about every word written in the song. Yes it is true, indeed we are the determinants of our own happiness not others.</p>
Sulistyaning Pawes Tri Utami	Argument	<p>Do not think that people who have shortcomings have no merit. But instead.... a person who has the deficiency must have and will show his various good features. Behind one's disadvantages, there are still thousands of privileges.</p>
Yoga Saputra	Criticisms	<p>News of employers' atrocities to domestic workers is often I see on television and in social media. So is the violence of senior to junior which is often viral in social media. The cruelty of the employers to their domestic workers does not only happen in this country, even abroad, phenomena like this also happen. We often see news of women workers who work for years abroad, go home without salary and have physical disabilities due to the atrocities of their employers or even go home nameless and without salary. Employers only exploit the domestic workers. Exploitation is also done</p>

		<p>by parents who should love and protect their children but instead rent or sell their children, or turn them into a beggar.</p> <p>I wonder why many children like to hurt their friends or others, do they not think about the impact suffered by those who are hurt? Why are people or perpetrators of violence in cyberspace increasingly prevalent?</p> <p>I also wonder why many employers have no compassion for the domestic workers who prepare all their needs every day.</p> <p>Why do many children grow up to be those who torture their own friends out of envy and jealousy? Would they be proud of their sneaky ways to achieve their goals?</p>
Puji Lestari	Suggestions	<p>I hope that teachers do not ignore even the smallest report from his students. If ignored, the perpetrators of bullying will be increasingly more rampant. Do not wait for the victim to fall, teachers should be attentive to bullying and to anticipate the terrible events that befall their students. Physical violence to a fellow junior high school student which is viral in social media today may be due to the teachers ignoring the reports.</p>

From the data above, it can be seen that through the dialogue between teacher-students, students disclose the deviant social practices that exist in their environment, especially in the family and school environment because that's their immediate environment every day. Domestic violence i.e. fights between mother and father, bullying at school. Students recognize deviant social practices in their environment and students' emotions are also involved to contemplate solutions to such deviant social practices, for example by the emergence of questions: why they do not want to fight back, why they do not want to run, why they have no heart, etc. From the data, it can be said that through interactive dialogue of students not only honed his cognitive skills but also honed his emotional and social sensitivity. Actively, students are invited to discuss social issues that exist in the environment. This is in line with the opinion of Misson and Morgan [15] which states that student involvement with text, be it drama, song, film, or short story texts, not only hone the intellectual / cognitive abilities of students but also hone their affective abilities.

Junior high school students need to have their critical awareness cultivated to the social facts with the added flavor of the author's imagination, and then the students are asked to compare or associate them with concrete facts in everyday life, after which the student do reflection. The ultimate goal is for students to identify, be sensitive, be concerned about societal problems in their environment and contribute to providing the best solution to the phenomenon. The result of this growth of critical awareness is to give contributions to the social changes along the lines of power relations in the communication process [16].

Social skill, a skill to interact with others directly and deeply to understand what they are feeling and to provide responses and solutions to the problems faced by others, is an important skill that must be raised on the younger generation

of the digital age and generation Z. This is because the younger generation digital/z era tends to lack social skills and have low attention spans to social problems [13]. Therefore, teachers need to provide serious attentions to this problem and design activities that can foster critical awareness to the social practices around them.

The above data also shows that through the interactive dialogue, junior high school students can give aesthetic critical responses to the social deviant practices that surround them. Their critical responses are also quite diverse, some of which give responses in the form of touching arguments, formal arguments, criticism, and suggestions. The findings also show that the stages of creative dialogue can encourage students' productive and creative actions. This is understandable because social issues in texts linked to the social irregularities in their environment can trigger constructive actions to address social problems. This is in line with the findings of Misson and Morgan [15] which suggest that the creative stages in the Compoy creative dialogue learning model can encourage the growth of constructive and creative actions in addressing the social issues discussed in the classroom. Social issues discussed in the classroom trigger the growth of attitudes and increase students' awareness of their position in addressing these social problems.

## V. CONCLUSION

### A. Summary of the findings

The findings of the study indicate that the most disturbing social practices found among students in their environment are domestic violence and bullying. Students recognize deviant social practices in their environment and students' emotions are also involved to come to the solution of such deviant social practices. Students' critical responses are diverse, i.e. arguments, criticisms, and suggestions. The findings also show that the stages of creative dialogue in the creative dialogue learning can encourage students' creative and productive acts. This is understandable because social issues in texts linked to the social irregularities in their environment can trigger constructive actions to address social problems.

### B. Implications of the research

Based on the above explanation, Creative Dialogue Learning Model needs to be continuously applied in learning. Implementation of creative dialogue learning model is required to foster students' critical awareness of social practices in a text, relate it to the social reality around them, and also contribute in finding the best solution to the problems of social culture conveyed by the author in the text. Due to those statements, conventional learning with tasks that rely on the question of what, when, and how is no longer appropriate because the answers to these questions can be easily obtained by students by simply typing the keywords on their smartphone. Learning tasks should enable their critical responses that trigger real problem solving that surrounds the student. Therefore, it is necessary to apply Creative Dialogue Learning Model that can be used to foster critical awareness of

junior high school students (SMP), so that high school students are not alienated with the problems in their environment and are involved in finding solutions.

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