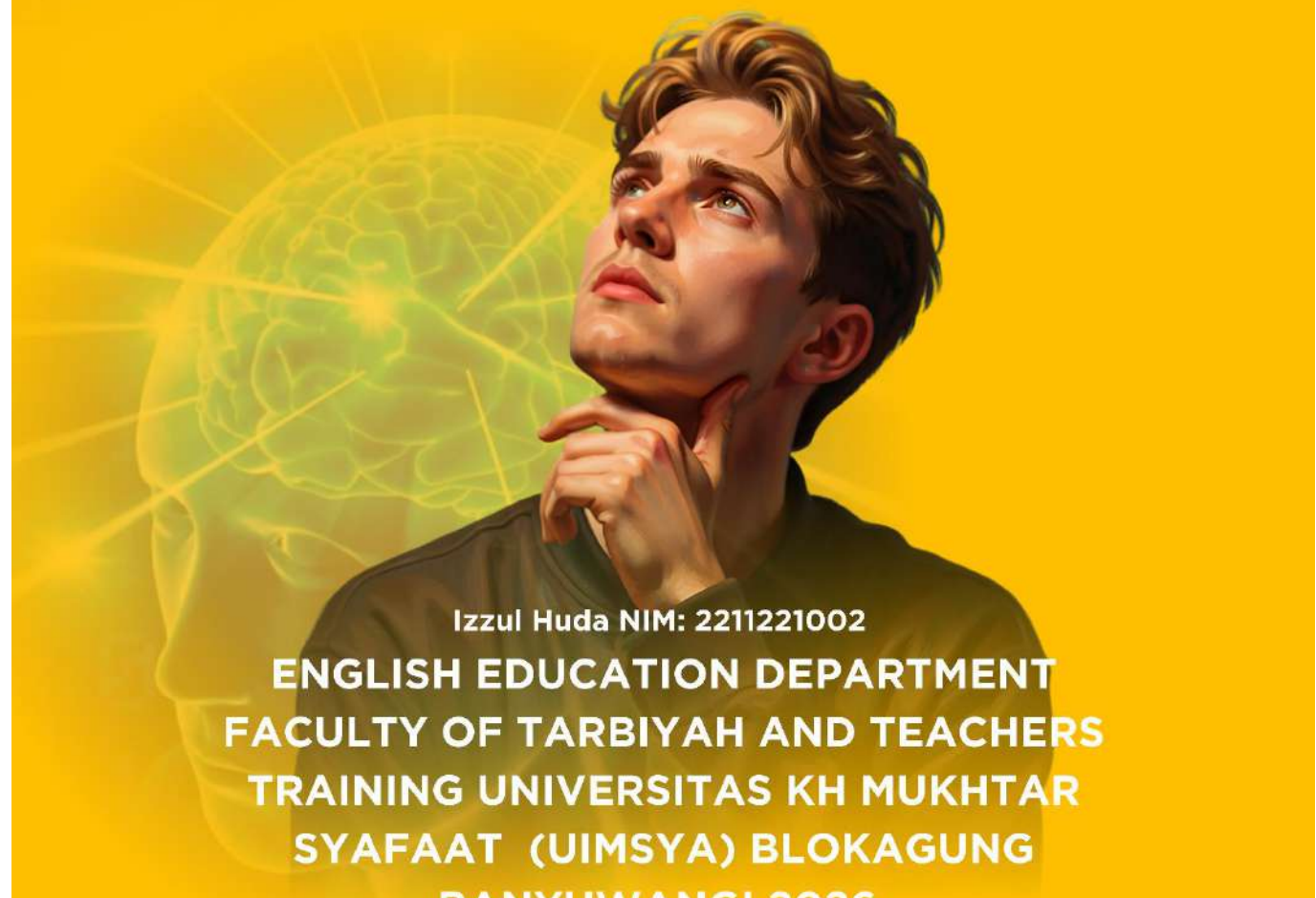
THE WILLINGNESS OF STUDENTS TO USE

CRITICAL THINKING

IN SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION AT SMK DARUSSALAM BLOKAGUNG 2



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BANYUWANGI 2026

THESIS

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BLOKAGUNG BANYUWANGI

2026

DEGREE PREQUISITES

THE WILLINGNESS OF STUDENTS TO USE CRITICAL THINKING IN SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION AT SMK DARUSSALAM BLOKAGUNG 2

THESIS

Presented to faculty of tarbiyah and teachers training Universitas KH. Mukhtar Syafaat in a partial fulfillment of the Requraiment for the degree of satra 1 In English Education departement (S.Pd.)

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2026

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Saturday, 7 July 2026

and has been accepted and validated as one of the requirements for obtaining a Bachelor of Education degree (S.Pd.)

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MOTTO AND DEDICATION

KNOW** the way, **GO** the way, **SHOW** the way, **HOME

The First, Know the way is This stage refers to understanding the right path, gaining knowledge, and identifying clear goals. Before taking action, a person needs to learn, seek guidance, and understand what should be done.

Second, Go the way is After knowing the path, the next step is to follow it through action. This stage emphasizes commitment, discipline, and perseverance in applying what has been learned.

Third, Show the way is Once a person has gained experience and success, they should guide and inspire others. This stage reflects leadership, mentoring, and sharing knowledge to help others grow.

The last, Home is Once a person has gained experience and success, they should guide and inspire others. This stage reflects leadership, mentoring, and sharing knowledge to help others grow.

To the all of my lecturers, my mentors, I'll say thanks very much to give me knowledge, experiences, and guidance, that have spread with my journey, and to my friends, remember your struggle is your future.

Declaration of Authenticity of Thesis

Bismillahirrahmanirrohim Here with I am:

Name	: Izzul Huda
NIM	: 2211221002
Study program	: English education department
Addres	: Sarongan, Pesanggaran, Banyuwangi, jatim

Declare that:

1. This thesis has never been submitted to any other educational institution for any other academic degree.
2. This thesis is the sole work of the author and has not been written in collaboration with any other person, nor does it include without due acknowledgment, the work of any other person.
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Banyuwangi, 16 juni 2026

Declarator,

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ABSTRACT

Huda, izzul. 2026. The willingness of students to use critical thinking in small group discussion at SMK Darussalam Blokagung DUA. Thesis. English Education Department. Faculty of tarbiya and Teachers Training. Universitas KH. Mukhtar syafaat (UIMSYA) Blokagung Banyuwangi. Advisor: Ahmad faruk, M.Pd.

Keywords: willingness, critical thinking, small group discussion, vocational high school students, qualitative study.

This study aimed to explore students' willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussions at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2. The study focused on three aspects: how students demonstrated their willingness to use critical thinking, how they perceived the use of critical thinking during discussion activities, and what factors influenced their willingness. A descriptive qualitative research design was employed to obtain an in-depth understanding of students' behaviors, perceptions, and experiences in English learning activities. The participants of this study were students of class XI RPL and an English teacher as a supporting informant. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The data were analyzed using the qualitative data analysis procedures of data reduction. The findings revealed that students demonstrated their willingness to use critical thinking through several observable behaviors, including expressing opinions, asking questions, responding to peers' ideas, providing reasons for their arguments, and offering solutions during small group discussions. The study also found that students generally perceived critical thinking as an important skill that helped them communicate more effectively, understand discussion topics more deeply, and engage actively in collaborative learning. However, while many students were willing to participate in discussions, only a limited number were able to provide detailed explanations and logical justifications to support their arguments. This finding indicates that students' willingness to participate was relatively high, but their ability to apply higher-level critical thinking skills still varied among individuals. Furthermore, the study identified several factors influencing students' willingness to use critical thinking, including self-confidence, peer support, and the relevance of discussion topics. Students with higher self-confidence were more likely to express opinions and engage in discussions. The findings suggest that small group discussions provide an effective learning environment for promoting

critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and student engagement in English learning. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to implement discussion-based learning activities that foster students' confidence, active participation, and critical thinking skills in vocational high school contexts.

ABSTRAK

Huda, izzul. 2026. The willingness of students to use critical thinking in small group discussion at SMK Darussalam Blokagung DUA. Thesis. English Education Department. Faculty of tarbiya and Teachers Training. Universitas KH. Mukhtar syafaat (UIMSYA) Blokagung Banyuwangi. Advisor: Ahmad faruk, M.Pd.

Keywords: kesediaan, berpikir kritis, diskusi kelompok kecil, siswa SMK, studi kualitatif.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi kesediaan siswa dalam menggunakan kemampuan berpikir kritis saat diskusi kelompok kecil di SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2. Penelitian ini berfokus pada tiga aspek: bagaimana siswa menunjukkan kesediaan mereka untuk menggunakan berpikir kritis, bagaimana persepsi mereka terhadap penggunaan berpikir kritis selama kegiatan diskusi, serta faktor-faktor apa yang memengaruhi kesediaan tersebut. Desain penelitian kualitatif deskriptif digunakan untuk memperoleh pemahaman mendalam mengenai perilaku, persepsi, dan pengalaman siswa dalam kegiatan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Partisipan penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas XI RPL dan seorang guru bahasa Inggris sebagai informan pendukung. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan dokumentasi. Data dianalisis menggunakan prosedur analisis data kualitatif, khususnya tahap reduksi data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa menunjukkan kesediaan menggunakan berpikir kritis melalui beberapa perilaku yang dapat diamati, seperti mengemukakan pendapat, mengajukan pertanyaan, menanggapi gagasan teman, memberikan alasan atas argumen mereka, dan menawarkan solusi selama diskusi kelompok kecil. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa siswa pada umumnya memandang berpikir kritis sebagai keterampilan penting yang membantu mereka berkomunikasi secara lebih efektif, memahami topik diskusi secara lebih mendalam, dan terlibat aktif dalam pembelajaran kolaboratif. Namun, meskipun banyak siswa bersedia berpartisipasi dalam diskusi, hanya sebagian kecil yang mampu memberikan penjelasan rinci dan pembenaran logis untuk mendukung argumen mereka. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa kesediaan siswa untuk berpartisipasi tergolong tinggi, namun kemampuan mereka dalam menerapkan keterampilan berpikir kritis tingkat tinggi masih bervariasi antarindividu. Selain itu, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi beberapa faktor yang memengaruhi kesediaan siswa untuk menggunakan berpikir kritis,

antara lain kepercayaan diri, dukungan teman sebaya, dan relevansi topik diskusi. Siswa dengan tingkat kepercayaan diri yang lebih tinggi cenderung lebih berani mengemukakan pendapat dan terlibat dalam diskusi. Hasil penelitian menyarankan bahwa diskusi kelompok kecil menyediakan lingkungan belajar yang efektif untuk mendorong kemampuan berpikir kritis, komunikasi, kolaborasi, dan keterlibatan siswa dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Oleh karena itu, guru disarankan untuk menerapkan kegiatan pembelajaran berbasis diskusi yang dapat menumbuhkan kepercayaan diri, partisipasi aktif, dan keterampilan berpikir kritis siswa dalam konteks sekolah menengah kejuruan.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Alhamdulillah, all praise be to Allah SWT, this thesis can be completed thanks to His grace, blessings, and love.

May peace and blessings always be upon the Prophet Muhammad SAW, who is a role model for his people.

The author fully realizes that the successful completion of this thesis cannot be separated from the support of various parties. Therefore, the author would like to express his deepest gratitude and appreciation to:

1. Dr. KH. Abdul Kholiq Syafa'at, M.A. as the Chairman of the Senate of the KH. Mukhtar Syafaat University (UIMSYA) Blokagung Banyuwangi
2. Dr. KH. Ahmad Munib Syafa'at, Lc., M.E.I. as the rector of the KH. Mukhtar Syafaat University (UIMSYA) Blokagung Banyuwangi
3. Dr. Zulfi Zumala Dwi Andriani, M.A. as the dean of the Faculty Of Tarbiyah And Teachers Training
4. Mr. Ahmad Faruk, M.Pd as the Head of the English Education Department
5. Mr. Ahmad Faruk M.Pd. as an advisor lecturer in writing this thesis
6. The lecturers of Universitas KH. Mukhtar Syafaat (UIMSYA) Blokagung Banyuwangi
7. My beloved parents, Abdur rosyid and Indamah, have prayed for me and provided support and motivation in completing this thesis.
8. All my friends and colleagues, who are too numerous to mention, for their encouragement, ideas, and positive support

Furthermore, I realize that this report is still far from perfect due to limited knowledge and references. Therefore, I welcome constructive criticism and suggestions to improve it.

I can only pray to Allah, the Most Gracious and Merciful. May He reward the kindness of everyone who supported me. I hope this thesis proposal benefits us all, especially in the field of Education and English Language Education.

Finally, I surrender everything to Allah 'Azza wa Jalla. I hope this work is written with His blessing and provides benefit. Amin Ya Robbal ‘Alamin

Banyuwangi, 20 january 2026

Izzul huda

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

English has grown to be a significant worldwide language in the contemporary globalization era and is used extensively in a variety of spheres of life, such as commerce, education, technology, and the workplace (Qiao & Zhao, 2023). The capacity to communicate effectively in English is becoming a vital prerequisite as global connection increases, particularly for students who will be entering professional situations. English proficiency is essential for vocational high school students to be able to communicate effectively in professional contexts and adjust to cross-cultural surroundings. professional competency is bolstered by this skill, which also equips them to compete globally in ever-changing employment markets. As a result, it is anticipated that English instruction at vocational schools will improve students' higher-order thinking abilities, especially critical thinking, in addition to their language proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Incorporating critical thinking into English language instruction is thought to be crucial because it enables students to assess various viewpoints, examine data, and successfully address communication difficulties in everyday situations. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that incorporating technology into vocational English courses promotes intercultural competency beyond native-speaker models, better equipping students for meaningful international communication and real-world globalization (Fadillah & Jumadi, 2023.

Since "critical thinking is a vital component of English language development, especially in today's dynamic educational landscape," critical thinking is widely acknowledged as an essential 21st-century talent (Elder & Paul, 2023, p. 1). Students must not only comprehend linguistic forms but also process and interpret information critically in

a time of rapid information flow and complicated communication needs. In the context of English communication, critical thinking is crucial for assisting students in responding correctly to the ideas of others, expressing thoughts coherently, and actively participating in debates. Additionally, the growth of critical thinking skills boosts students' self-assurance and communication efficacy by improving their capacity to articulate concepts clearly, formulate logical arguments, and participate in meaningful dialogues (Hanim, 2024, p. 4).

Students' involvement in English communication activities varied greatly, according to preliminary observations at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2 (Firmansyah, 2022). While some students were able to confidently and actively participate in class discussions, others tended to hesitate, remain mute, or participate just minimally in communicative activities (Rahmani, 2023). This variance points to variations in students' preparedness and willingness to engage in English-language. Additionally, presenting justifications, or critically analyzing concepts. (Bayu et al., 2025)These patterns show that students' critical thinking abilities in English communication are still developing, especially when it comes to problem-solving and deliberate responses in interactive settings (Kapitan, 2025).

Therefore, it is important to investigate the willingness of critical thinking for English communication at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2. (Bagirzada Vuqar, 2025)Understanding students' willingness to apply critical thinking in English communication is essential, as willingness plays a key role in determining how actively and thoughtfully students engage in communicative activities. This study aims to describe how students demonstrate their willingness to use critical thinking when communicating in English, particularly in classroom interaction and discussion activities. In addition, the study seeks to explore students' perceptions of the importance of critical thinking in English

communication, as well as to identify various internal and external factors that influence their willingness(Annamalai et al., 2015) The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for English teachers, curriculum developers, and educational practitioners in developing effective learning strategies and classroom practices that encourage students to be more willing, active, and critical in English communication, thereby supporting the improvement of students' communicative competence and critical thinking skills.

In the context of learning English, classroom interaction and the general caliber of communication activities are greatly influenced by students' readiness to apply critical thinking During English communication exercises, students that exhibit a high degree of willingness typically ask questions, voice their perspectives, give justifications, and react critically to concepts put forth by others. Students are able to interact with learning materials more deeply and create meaning through this kind of active participation. On the other hand, children who have low willingness tend to be passive, give brief or memorized responses, and mostly rely on the teacher for guidance and information (Mardatillah & Prayudha.S, 2024). Students have less opportunity to develop critical thinking and genuine communication as a result of this low involvement. Because they are less motivated to study data, consider many viewpoints, and use English effectively in interactive circumstances, this condition may impede the development of students' communicative competence and critical thinking abilities (Setiawan & Sukyadi, 2022).

1.2 Research Problem

1.2.1 How do students at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2 demonstrate their willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussuion?

1.2.2 How do students percieve the use of critical thinking in small group discussion?

1.2.3 What experiences influence students' willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussion?

1.2.4 What factor influences students' willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussion at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2?

1.3 Research Objective

1.3.1 To identify how students at SMK Darussalam 2 demonstrate their willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussion.

1.3.2 To describe students' perceptions toward the use of critical thinking in small group discussion.

1.3.3 To explore the experiences that influence students' for using critical thinking in in small group discussion

1.3.4 To analyze the factor that influence students' willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussion at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2

1.4 Research Significannces

It is anticipated that this study will make substantial theoretical and practical advances to the field of English language instruction. This study attempts to provide a deeper understanding of how cognitive and affective aspects interact in language learning, especially in vocational high school contexts, by concentrating on students' willingness to use critical thinking in English communication (Niyozov et al., 2023).

Additionally, the goal of this research is to provide a better understanding of how cognitive and affective factors interact during language acquisition. Cognitive elements, such critical thinking abilities, are crucial in helping students evaluate data, articulate concepts rationally, and provide insightful English responses. However, students' ability and willingness to use these cognitive abilities in authentic communication contexts is greatly influenced by affective factors, such as willingness, attitudes, and perceptions (Raj et al., 2022).

This contact becomes especially crucial in the setting of vocational high schools, where students are expected to acquire useful communication skills that will assist their future academic and professional needs. In addition to comprehending English-language content, vocational students must actively communicate, solve problems, and make decisions in a variety of contexts. Thus, investigating students' readiness to apply critical thinking in English communication can yield important information on how English language instruction can be planned to better promote vocational high school students' cognitive growth and affective engagement.

1.4.1 Theoritical Benefits

Theoretically, by enhancing current theories on critical thinking and English communication, this (Gultom & Oktaviani, 2022). This study provides a deeper understanding of how cognitive elements, like critical thinking skills, interact with affective elements, like willingness, attitudes, and motivation, in the process of language learning by concentrating on students' willingness to use critical thinking in English. Additionally, this study offers theoretical (Bayu et al., 2025)insights into how willingness functions as a mediating component that affects students' cap(Qureshi et al., 2022)king (Gultom & Oktaviani, 2022)abilities in authentic communication

contexts. Additionally, it is anticipated that the results would reinforce and broaden current theoretical frameworks that highlight the incorporation of learner affect and higher-order thinking skills in English language acquisition, especially in vocational education contexts. Because of this contribution, the study could be used as a reference for future investigations into the connection between learner willingness, critical thinking, and successful English communication.

Additionally, it is anticipated that this study will broaden theoretical perspectives that see effective English learning as a process that incorporates students' affective preparedness to communicate and higher-order thinking skills in addition to the development of linguistic competence (Boy Jon et al., 2021). This study clarifies why students with critical thinking abilities do not always use them in English communication tasks by looking at the impact of willingness. The results emphasize the significance of addressing both cognitive and affective dimensions in English language learning by highlighting willingness as a critical mediating factor that links students' cognitive abilities with their actual performance in English communication (Songsiengchai et al., 2023).

Furthermore, by offering empirical insights into the notion of critical thinking willingness in the setting of vocational high schools, this study makes a theoretical contribution (Li & Dewaele, 2025). The results may aid in the creation of more thorough theoretical frameworks that take into account both the cognitive and affective aspects of learning English, since vocational education places a strong emphasis on practical communication skills for future professional (Bayu et al., 2025). Thus, it is anticipated that this study will be a useful theoretical resource for next research on critical thinking, willingness, and English communication (Crisianita & Mandasari, 2022).

1.4.2 Practical Benefits

Practically speaking, it is anticipated that the results of this study will make significant contributions to the teaching and learning of English, especially in vocational high school settings(Michael & Edwards-Fapohunda, 2024). Teachers, schools, and other educational stakeholders may be able to better understand students' real behaviors, perceptions, and difficulties during English communication activities by learning how students exhibit their willingness to use critical thinking in English communication. This knowledge can help teachers create more engaging lesson plans, classroom interactions, and educational activities that motivate students to actively participate, think critically, and speak English more fluently. Furthermore, the results might be used as a guide to enhance instructional strategies that promote critical thinking abilities and students' readiness to apply them in relevant communication situations(Bagirzada Vuqar, 2025).

It is anticipated that this study will raise students' understanding of the significance of being willing to use critical thinking when speaking in English(Annisa et al., 2023). Students may be motivated to participate more actively, express ideas more confidently, and engage more meaningfully in English communication tasks both inside and outside of the classroom by having a better understanding of how critical thinking supports effective communication.

The results of this study may be used by English teachers as a useful guide when creating educational activities and teaching (Ramzan et al., 2023). By promoting open dialogue, problem-solving exercises, and reflective communication techniques that encourage students' willingness to think critically, teachers can use

the findings of this study to design classroom environments that support students' cognitive engagement and affective readiness (Zhang et al., 2020).

1.5 Definition of terms

The following definitions are given in order to prevent misunderstandings and to make clear the meaning of important terminology used in this study:

1.5.1 Willingness

The preparation, purpose, and drive of students to actively use critical thinking abilities when speaking in English are referred to in this study as willingness. It involves students' willingness to ask questions, respond to others, voice their opinions, and actively engage in English communication exercises.

1.5.2 Critical thinking

The ability to analyze data, assess concepts, provide justifications, resolve issues, and reach logical conclusions is known as critical thinking. In the context of this study, students' capacity to articulate viewpoints, make arguments, and intelligently respond during English conversation is indicative of critical thinking.

1.5.3 Small group discussion

Small group discussion is a learning activity in wich students work together in small groups to ideas, express opinions, solve problem, and discuss particular topics during the learning process. In this study, small group discussion refers to classroom discussion activities involving several students who interact actively with one another in order to exchange thought and participate in

collaborative learning activities at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2.

1.5.4 The willingness of students to use critical thinking in small group discussion at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2

Students' readiness and intention to use critical thinking techniques when speaking in English is referred to as their willingness of critical thinking for English communication (Alshumaimeri & Alshememry, 2024). By incorporating higher-order thinking into core WTC models, this phrase highlights the integration of cognitive (critical thinking) and affective (willingness) aspects in students' English communication.

1.5.5 SMK Darusssalam 2

The vocational high school where this study is being carried out is called SMK Darussalam 2. It functions as the research environment where the willingness of students to apply critical thinking in English communication is examined.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Theoritical Review

2.1.1 Small group discussion

small group discussion is a teaching and learning exercise in which students are split up into smaller groups to discuss certain subjects, exchange ideas, work together to solve problems, and communicate information. According to Johnson et al. (2014), this educational exercise promotes students' active participation and communication with other group members during the discussion process. Small group discussions provide "structured interaction among students to maximize their learning" which improves students' social and cognitive engagement, according (Perez et al., 2023). Through active information sharing among group members, this strategy has also been shown to be successful in enhancing critical thinking abilities and collaboration (Millis, 2016).

in language education, communication is not merely the transmission of information, but also a dynamic process of meaning-making between speakers and listeners, in which messages are interpreted and negotiated based on context and interaction. In English learning, students are required not only to understand linguistic forms, such as vocabulary and grammar, but also to use English appropriately and meaningfully in real communication contexts that involve social and cultural considerations. Accordingly, both linguistic and communicative competence that is, the capacity to choose appropriate language forms, express goals clearly, and react to others in interactive situations are necessary for effective English communication(Chen, 2025). Students are required to engage more actively in English communication and make efficient use of the language for real-

world situations through the development of communicative competence.

Generally, a small group consists of three to six students who work together to achieve shared learning objectives through discussion and collaborative activities. In small group discussions, students have opportunities to express opinions, ask questions, respond to others' ideas, and develop interaction skills in a more comfortable and supportive learning. (Zhang et al., 2020). Compared to whole-class interaction, small group discussions often provide students with greater opportunities to participate actively because the learning environment tends to be less formal and less intimidating. Through this interaction, students are encouraged to share ideas more freely, exchange perspectives, and practice communication skills collaboratively. As a result, small group discussions can support the development of students' confidence, communicative competence, and critical thinking abilities during English learning activities.

According to educational experts, small group discussion is considered an effective learning strategy because it promotes active learning, student participation, and collaborative interaction among learners (Sappaile et al., 2023). Through small group discussions, students are encouraged to exchange ideas, share opinions, and solve problems together in a more interactive learning environment. Instead of receiving information passively from the teacher, students become actively involved in the learning process through interaction and collaboration with peers (Prince, 2004). This active involvement helps students develop communication skills, increase confidence, and improve their ability to express ideas clearly. (Stojanov, 2023) In addition, small group discussions provide opportunities for students to practice

critical thinking by analyzing information, responding to different viewpoints, and constructing logical arguments during discussion activities.

2.1.2 Critical Thinking

Critical thinking can be seen in classroom activities when students are able to ask pertinent and meaningful questions, provide perspectives that are backed up by logical arguments, and intelligently reply to the ideas of others during interaction. These skills are especially crucial for English communication exercises like debates, discussions, and problem-solving assignments where students must assess various viewpoints, analyze problems, and express their thoughts in English (Ansari et al., 2022)Students are urged to go beyond memorization and repetition and become active participants who create meaning via communication by practicing critical thinking. Therefore, critical thinking fosters more meaningful engagement and aids in the development of students' communicative competence as well as their capacity to utilize English successfully in authentic learning environments.

Critical thinking can be seen in classroom activities when students are able to ask pertinent and meaningful questions, provide perspectives backed by logical arguments, and intelligently reply to the ideas of others during. These skills are especially crucial for English communication exercises like debates, discussions, and problem-solving assignments, where students must assess various viewpoints, analyze problems, and clearly communicate their thoughts in English(Hollister et al., 2022) .Instead of continuing to be passive consumers of knowledge, students are encouraged to become active participants who participate in discussion, negotiate meaning, and actively contribute to classroom engagement through the practice of critical thinking. Consequently, critical thinking

facilitates more meaningful communication and improves students' proficiency with English in interactive learning environments.

The development of students' communicative competence which encompasses linguistic, sociolinguistic, and strategic skills in effectively utilizing the language is also greatly aided by the incorporation of critical thinking into English language instruction(Bagirzada Vuqar, 2025). Students are more likely to arrange their thoughts rationally, assess information, select suitable language forms, and communicate ideas to others in a clear and coherent manner when they use critical thinking during communication. Furthermore, critical thinking improves students' communication skills by encouraging them to take the audience and context into account while communicating their views. Therefore, including critical thinking helps students communicate in English more effectively, meaningfully, and purposefully, allowing them to engage more actively and confidently in a variety of communicative contexts(Sa'ad et al., 2023).

As a result, critical thinking should be seen as a crucial component of learning English that enhances students' capacity for successful communication. According to (Qu & Wu, 2024)critical thinking is directly related to students' willingness to use their thinking skills in English communication. This is because students require both cognitive ability and the motivation to exhibit critical thinking during contact.

2.1.3 Willingness

When it comes to students' participation, engagement, and active involvement in communication activities, willingness is a crucial affective factor in the language acquisition process (Onu et

al., 2024). During classroom interactions, students' willingness affects their decision to talk, offer ideas, ask questions, or react to others. Students' readiness, intention, and motivation to participate in educational activities and apply their knowledge and abilities during interaction are generally referred to as willingness(Qu & Wu, 2024). This idea represents students' confidence and psychological readiness to communicate in the target language in addition to their enthusiasm for studying. Since willing students are more likely to apply what they have learned in relevant and engaging learning contexts, willingness is an important affective factor in bridging the gap between students' cognitive ability and their actual performance in communication.

According to Arzety setia wulandari (2026), students' willingness to communicate, express ideas, ask questions, and respond to others during interactions is a major factor in English communication. When given the chance to join, pupils' willingness influences whether they actively participate in conversation or stay mute. Students may decide not to speak in English if their level of willingness is low, even if they have adequate language knowledge and cognitive aptitude (Putri & Santosa, 2024). This condition emphasizes that emotive elements also play a role in successful communication, in addition to language proficiency. Students' propensity to engage in English communication activities is frequently influenced by a number of factors, including anxiety, low self esteem, making mistakes, and low motivation(Starichkova et al., 2022). Students' willingness may also be further diminished by an unsupportive classroom setting or unfavorable peer reactions, which restricts their chances to practice communicating in English and advance their communicative ability.

Affective components of learning, such as students' attitudes, feelings, and perceptions regarding the learning process and the use of English, are directly linked to willingness (Neenaz et al., 2023). Pupils who view studying English favorably and who feel at ease, encouraged, and welcomed in the classroom are more likely to communicate, actively participate, and take part in a variety of learning activities. Anxiety can be decreased and students are encouraged to voice their opinions without worrying about to make errors in a supportive school environment. On the other hand, pupils who suffer from anxiety, low self esteem, or unfavorable attitudes about learning English could refrain from speaking the language in class. Their chances to engage in meaningful social interactions, practice communication, and use higher-order thinking abilities are restricted by this avoidance tendency. The development of students' English communication skills and critical thinking abilities, which are crucial for successful learning and future professional situations, may be hampered by a lack of willingness to speak.

According to this study, willingness is seen as a crucial component that affects students' application of critical thinking in English communication since it establishes whether or not they are ready and driven to employ their cognitive abilities during contact. Despite having sufficient linguistic knowledge and critical thinking abilities, students may be reluctant or decide not to use these abilities when speaking in English, especially in classroom environments that demand active engagement(Novia et al., 2024). This condition suggests that students' affective preparedness for communication is just as important to the effective use of critical thinking in English communication as their cognitive competence. In order to explain how and why students exhibit critical thinking

when speaking in English, it is crucial to comprehend their readiness.

2.1.4 Willingness of Critical Thinking in English communication

Students' readiness, intention, and psychological readiness to apply critical thinking skills during a variety of English communication activities, including discussions, presentations, and interactive classroom tasks, are referred to as their willingness of critical thinking in English communication. This idea highlights how closely cognitive elements especially critical thinking abilities and affective elements especially students' willingness integrated in the process of learning English. It emphasizes that having critical thinking abilities on their own is insufficient if students are unwilling to apply them in communication(Starichkova et al., 2022)Therefore, in order to communicate effectively in English, one must not only be able to utilize language forms accurately and smoothly, but also be willing to evaluate information, analyze concepts, and articulate ideas in a meaningful way. In the end, this integration fosters the development of both communicative competence and higher-order thinking skills by encouraging students to actively participate, react critically to others' views, and communicate more meaningfully.

While willingness determines whether students are ready and motivated to use these skills in actual communication situations, critical thinking in English communication allows students to analyze information, assess ideas, and give logical and well-reasoned responses during interaction(Pohan et al., 2025). Students are encouraged to contribute ideas, take chances when using English, and actively participate in conversations when they are willing. High willingness students are more likely to voice their thoughts, give concise justifications, pose pertinent queries, and

thoughtfully address the perspectives of others, all of which promote more meaningful and participatory conversation. On the other hand, students with low willingness might have critical thinking abilities but decide not to apply them in communication exercises because of things like worry, a lack of confidence, or a fear of making mistakes. Students' overall communicative ability and involvement in classroom interactions are impacted by this hesitation, which restricts their opportunity to practice critical thinking and English communication(A. Welzel & Vincent, 2026)

In classroom communication activities like discussions, debates, and problem-solving assignments, where students are required to actively participate in conversation and exchange ideas using English, the integration of willingness and critical thinking proves especially important. According to mr libasul ulum (2026), these exercises require students to think critically, examine problems, assess other viewpoints, and express their thoughts clearly and logically. Students are given the chance to negotiate meaning, address opposing ideas, and gain a greater comprehension of the subjects covered through active involvement. However, without adequate willingness, students often avoid participation, limit their verbal contributions, and rely heavily on the teacher or more active peers. This restricted engagement reduces opportunities for students to demonstrate and further develop their critical thinking skills within English communication contexts. As a result, the lack of willingness may hinder the effectiveness of communicative activities and prevent students from fully benefiting from learning experiences designed to promote both critical thinking and communicative competence

Additionally, students' readiness to use critical thinking in communication tasks is greatly influenced by how they view studying English and critical thinking. Students are more likely to

be motivated and actively participate in class activities when they believe that English communication tasks are helpful, meaningful, and pertinent to their learning goals. Under these circumstances, students are more inclined to share their thoughts, pose inquiries, and react to the perspectives of others, which enables them to apply critical thinking abilities more successfully when speaking (Bayu et al., 2025). On the other hand, unfavorable attitudes about learning English, together with unsupportive learning situations like teacher-centered instruction or the fear of receiving a poor grade, can deter students from actively participating. This unwillingness limits students' chances to use critical thinking in their communication attempts, which hinders the growth of their higher-order thinking abilities and communicative competence(Boy Jon et al., 2021).

Since it reflects the meeting point of students' cognitive capacities and their affective preparedness for communication, the desire to apply critical thinking in English communication serves as the primary research focus in this study. Students' actual participation, engagement, and use of critical thinking during English communication tasks can be better understood by analyzing how they exhibit this willingness and determining the elements that drive it. This knowledge is crucial for explaining why, despite having comparable verbal and cognitive abilities, some pupils are able to use critical thinking successfully while others stay inactive. Additionally, this idea serves as the theoretical basis for analyzing how students at SMK Darussalam 2 behave, perceive, and learn English communication. This study intends to support the creation of more successful English teaching strategies that promote critical engagement, active involvement, and meaningful communication in the classroom by utilizing willingness as a key lens.

2.2 Previous studies

The factors of influencing students' engagement and performance in English learning contexts has been highlighted by a number of prior studies that have examined issues related to English communication, critical thinking, and affective factors in language learning (Sappaile et al., 2023). These studies have looked at a number of topics, including how well students communicate, how critical thinking affects language use, and the impact of affective factors including motivation, attitudes, and willingness to engage in communication activities. The results of offer significant theoretical and empirical insights on the development of critical thinking and English communication in classroom environments. They also help the current study uncover research gaps, narrow its emphasis, and gain a better understanding of how willingness affects students' use of critical thinking in English communication.

No	Research title	Article link	Equality	Difference
1	Developing Critical Thinking in Language Teaching	Bagirzada Shahin Vuqar Nakhchivan State University, shahinbagirzade @gmail.com https://doi.org/10.69760/aghel.02500132	the ability to make favorable decisions and solve problems should be formed in students, intellectual, physical, emotional, and spiritual factors	Class discussions are a method of motivating students to use skills such as critical thinking,

			should be properly balanced	
2	Importance of Critical Thinking in the Education	URL: https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v12n3p126	The capacity to think clearly and reasonably about what to do or believe is known as critical thinking.	synthesize information and use creative thought to construct an argument, solve problems, or reach a conclusion in the most basic sense
3	Small Group Discussion Learning Model to Increase Student Learning Motivation in Islamic Religious Education Subjects	Volume 4 Nomor 4 Tahun 2022 E-ISSN: 2685-936X dan P-ISSN: 2685-9351	The purpose of this study was to analyze the Small Group Discussion learning model in increasing students' learning motivation in Islamic Religious	g the learning process and the teacher's role as facilitator, motivator and evaluator

			Education subjects.	
4	THE USE OF SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION TO IMRPOVE STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL	Vol. 3, No. 1, June 2022, 61-66 E-ISSN: 2723-617X available online at:https://ejurnal.teknokrat.ac.id/index.php/JoRLE/index	understanding what others are saying and self-expression are about using language to express thoughts and feelings	the intellectual agility in using language can be increased.
5	Relevant prior knowledge moderates the effect of elaboration during small group discussion on academic achievement	Instr Sci (2013) 41:729–744 DOI 10.1007/s11251-012-9252-3	n. In a 2 9 2 experimental design, 66 undergraduate students observed a video showing a smallgroup problem-based discussion about thunder and lightning. In the video, a teacher asked questions to	Cognitive elaboration in collaborative learning

			the observing participants.	

especially in the context of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The study highlighted that rather than just concentrating on grammar drills and mechanical language activities, effective English learning necessitates that students actively engage and participate in relevant and authentic circumstances. Students are encouraged to utilize English for authentic communication, negotiate meaning, and take part in communicative activities including role plays, discussions, and group projects by putting CLT concepts into practice. The study's conclusions showed that students' active engagement in communicative activities greatly aids in the development of language abilities, such as communicative competence and speaking fluency. However, neither the degree to which critical thinking abilities are used during communicative activities nor the students' willingness to engage in communication were expressly examined in the study. Because of this, little is known about the affective component of students' motivation and preparation as well as the function of critical thinking in English communication. The current study, which aims to combine willingness and critical thinking in analyzing students' English communication practices, focuses on filling this gap.

In a different study, (Bayu et al., 2025). looked at the idea of willingness to communicate in a second language and emphasized how crucial it is to understanding why students engage in communication activities. According to the study, students' propensity to engage in second language communication is greatly influenced by a number of emotional characteristics, including motivation, anxiety. The results showed that even if students be able to difrentiate language knowledge and proficiency, they may still shy away from communication activities

when they are not very willing. This suggests that learners' affective preparedness for interaction is just as important to successful communication as language proficiency. This study did not explicitly investigate the relationship between willingness and the use of critical thinking in English communication, although offering a solid theoretical basis for comprehending want to communicate. And the next, the study did not concentrate on vocational school settings, where students are required to use critical thinking and communication skills in real world and professional scenarios. As a results, this restriction draws attention to a research gap that the current study attempts to fill by investigating students' readiness to apply critical thinking in English communication in a vocational high school context.

Additionally, examined the connection between students' emotional characteristics and their English communication engagement, paying special focus to how emotions affect students' involvement in classroom interaction. The results showed that students' active participation and deeper engagement in a variety of communication tasks are greatly influenced by positive emotions including enjoyment, confidence, and interest as well as favorable impressions about learning English. During English communication exercises, students who were in favorable emotional states were more inclined to engage, communicate, and react to others. This study provides compelling evidence that affective factors are crucial to learn and communicating in English. The study did not specifically address students' willingness to use critical thinking during English communication tasks, despite its important contributions. Because of this, the relationship between emotional elements, willingness, and the actual use of critical thinking in English communication is still little understood, especially in vocational high school contexts. This is a major issue that the current study attempts to solve.

English communication, critical thinking, and willingness have been extensively discussed in the field of English language education, especially in relation to communicative approaches, affective factors, and students' involvement in classroom interaction, according to earlier research. Regarding the significance of communication, higher-order thinking abilities, and affective readiness in English acquisition, these studies have produced insightful theoretical underpinnings and empirical results. Nevertheless, few research has explicitly examined students' propensity for employing critical thinking in English communication as an integrated construct, despite the increased emphasis to these ideas. In addition, despite the fact that vocational students are expected to acquire practical communication and critical thinking abilities for their future academic and professional careers, there is still a dearth of study on this topic in vocational high school contexts. In order to close this gap, the current study will examine how students at SMK Darussalam 2 demonstrate their willingness to use critical thinking in English communication, how they view the application of critical thinking in this context, and what factors influence their willingness to do so. With this emphasis, the research aims to advance a more thorough comprehension of how cognitive and emotive elements interact in English communication.

2.3 Research Thought Flow

The field of English language education has extensively discussed English communication, critical thinking, and willingness, especially in relation to communicative approaches, learner engagement, and affective factors that influence students' participation in classroom interaction. The function of communication in language learning, the significance of critical thinking for meaningful language use, and the impact of willingness on students' preparedness to speak in English have all been clarified by prior research. Though these ideas have been discussed extensively, few

studies have particularly examined students' propensity to apply critical thinking as an integrated part of English communication . And the next, despite the fact that vocational students must acquire critical thinking and practical communication skills to satisfy academic and professional demands, there is still a dearth of study on this topic in vocational high school contexts. In order to close this research gap, the current study will examine how students at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2 demonstrate their willingness to use critical thinking in English communication, how they view the use of critical thinking in this context, and what factors influence their willingness to apply critical thinking during English communication activities. It is anticipated that this research will advance a more thorough comprehension of how the cognitive and affective aspects of English language learning interact.

However, students' cognitive aptitude and critical thinking proficiency are not the only factors that influence how critical thinking is applied in English communication. Students' readiness, motivation, and confidence to use critical thinking during communication activities are greatly influenced by affective elements, especially willingness (Dewaele, 2025). The relationship between pupils' actual performance in English communication and their cognitive capacity is mediated by willingness. Even if pupils have sufficient language knowledge and critical thinking skills, they could decide not to show them if they are not very willing. This reluctance could be brought on by a number of things, including low self-esteem, a fear of making mistakes, communication anxiety, or unfavorable opinions about learning English and interacting with others in the classroom. As a result, there are less opportunities for students to acquire both communicative competence and critical thinking abilities through meaningful English communication since they may stay silent, give few answers, or refrain from voicing critical viewpoints. Even if pupils

have sufficient language knowledge and critical thinking skills, they could decide not to show them if they are not very willing. This reluctance could be brought on by a number of things, including low self-esteem, a fear of making mistakes, communication anxiety, or unfavorable opinions about learning English and interacting with others in the classroom (Koumpouros, 2024). As a result, there are less opportunities for students to acquire both communicative competence and critical thinking abilities through meaningful English communication since they may stay silent, give few answers, or refrain from voicing critical viewpoints.

English communication is a crucial ability that helps students' future academic and professional demands in the context of vocational high schools since it allows them to engage successfully in both educational and professional settings. Vocational students are required to develop practical communication skills that can be used in real life circumstances, such as problem-solving, teamwork, and workplace communication (Mayer, 2024), in addition to mastering technical competences relating to their fields of study. Students are encouraged to use English in meaningful contexts for active communication, idea expression, and problem solving during English learning activities. As a result, a crucial element influencing the caliber of English communication in classroom activities is students' readiness to apply critical thinking. Students are more likely to actively participate, analyze problems, assess other viewpoints, and express their ideas clearly when they have a high degree of willingness. On the other hand, poor desire may restrict students' involvement and opportunity to apply critical thinking and communication skills, both of which are vital for their future academic and professional growth.

This study focuses on the willingness of critical thinking in English communication at SMK Darussalam 2 based on the theoretical review and earlier research, since willingness is thought to be a crucial affective factor that affects students' engagement and performance in communication activities (Imran et al., 2023). The purpose of this study is to investigate how students exhibit their readiness to apply critical thinking when interacting and learning in English. The study also intends to investigate how students perceive the application of critical thinking in English communication, including its significance, applicability, and difficulties in the educational process.

Additionally, this study looks into the elements that affect students' willingness, including both external elements like teaching methods, the classroom setting, and peer interaction as well as internal elements like motivation, confidence, and attitudes. It is anticipated that by comprehending these facets, this study will offer more profound insights into how cognitive elements specifically, critical thinking abilities and affectively, willingness interact in the process of learning English. The results are expected to enhance English teaching and learning methods, especially in vocational high school settings where students must acquire both higher-order thinking capabilities and practical communication skills.

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Research Design

This study using a descriptive design and a qualitative research methodology. Because the goal of this study is to explain and investigate students' readiness to apply critical thinking in English communication rather than to measure variables or test quantitatively, a descriptive qualitative approach was selected. Understanding students' actions, attitudes, and experiences in authentic classroom environments is the main goal of this study.

This study is a good choosing for qualitative research since it gives the researcher a deeper understanding of the topic under investigation. The researcher can investigate how students show that they are willing to apply critical thinking while talking in English, how they view the use of critical thinking in English communication, and what influences their willingness using qualitative methodologies. Numerical data alone is insufficient to fully represent these elements; in depth explanations and interpretations are necessary.

This study's descriptive design is to give a clear and thorough account of SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2 students' willingness to use critical thinking in English communication. This study aims to depict the actual conditions of English learning in the classroom by monitoring students' communicative activities and gathering their viewpoints. The emphasis is on characterizing behavioral patterns, attitudes, and factors that affect students' willingness.

Additionally, this study is carried out as a case study in SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2, a particular educational setting. The school was chosen as the research setting because it is a vocational high school where students' future professional needs depend on their

ability to communicate in English and think critically. By concentrating on this specific context, the study seeks to offer a thorough comprehension of the event in its actual environment.

This qualitative descriptive design the researcher to methodically gather and analyze data through observation, interviews, and recording in accordance with the research problems. It is anticipated that the results will provide significant insights into how students' willingness, critical thinking, and English communication interact, which can help to improve English language instruction.

3.2 Location and Time of Research

This research conducted at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2, a vocational hight school located in krajan, stail, genteng district, Bangyuwangi Regency, East Java. The school was selected as the research site because it provides an appropriate context for investigating students' willingness to use critical thinking in English communication. As a vocational hight school, SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2 emphasizes the development of practical skills, including English communication, with the focus of the study.

The study was conducted in the second semester of the XI class, the time of the research that included the communication tasks including talks, Q&A session, and classroom interactions, and discussion the research was be able to watch how students naturally communicate in English classes by conducting the study during this time

To make a sure that enough data was gathered, this time allocation was be able was record changes in students' behavior and views during the learning process and obtain a thorough grasp of students' propensity to apply critical thinking in English communication thanks to this time allocation.

3.3 Research Subjects

Students from SMK Darussaalam Blokagung 2 who participated in English language learning activities served as the subjects of this study. These students were chosen because they seldom participate in classroom communication activities like discussion, Q&A sessions, and presentation that call for the use of English. Participants were chosen based on how well they fit the study's goals, especially when it came to assessing students' preparedness and willingness to use critical thinking in English communication. This study intends to gather important information about the behaviors, perspectives, and experiences of students who frequently participate in English learning activities when utilizing critical thinking in English communication.

The researcher was chosen identified students who actively engaged in English communication activities in the classroom. These students were considered capable of providing rich and relevant data related to the research problem, including how they demonstrate their willingness to use critical thinking, how they view its application, and what influences their willingness in English communication.

The research subjects consisted of students from one selected at XI RPL SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2. The class was chosen because English learning activities in this class involved interactive communication, such as discussion and Q&A session, which required students to apply critical thinking skills. By focusing on a specific class, the researcher was be able to conduct in depth observations and obtain detailed insights into students' communication behavior.

Except students, the English teacher was also involved as supporting subject in this research. The teacher's involvement aimed to provide additional information related to classroom practices, students' willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussion.

The inclusion of the teacher helped strengthen the data through multiple perspectives

3.4 Informan

The study's informants were people who were deemed qualified to offer comprehensive, precise, and pertinent information about the research's main topic students' propensity to apply critical thinking in English communication. These informants were specifically chosen based on their experiences taking part in classroom communication exercises and their direct involvement in English learning activities. The purpose of the selection process was to guarantee that the informants could give detailed accounts of their actions, viewpoints, and experiences to the application of critical thinking in English communication. This study's use of purposive sampling allowed for the acquisition of in information that supports a more thorough comprehension of the research topic.

The main informants of this study were several students of SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2 who participated in each english classes. The students were chosen as informants because they directly experienced English communication activities in the classroom. Through the students, the researcher obtained information regarding how they demonstrate their Willingness to use critical thinking when communicating in English, how they perceive the use of critical thinking in English communication, and what factors influence their willingness.

The English teacher participated as a supportive informant in addition to the students. The teacher's participation in supporting English instruction and regularly observing students' communicative behavior led to their selection. The teacher's information was used to supplement and enhance the data collected from the students, especially with regard to classroom settings, instructional techniques,

and variables affecting students' propensity to apply critical thinking in English communication.

The goal of using several informants was to increases the data's credibility. This study used data triangulation to get information from both the teacher and the students in order to have a more through picture of the willingness of critical thinking in small group discussion at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2.

3.5 Data and data Sources

In this research, the data were be collected from students of SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2, specifically from the 10 grade students. The research focuses on gathering both qualitative data to analyze the relevant variables related to the study, and the data source are:

a) primary data sources: primary data will be directly taken from students who are the subject of this research trough quessionaires, interview, and surveys, this instrument is very precise information obtained and ensuring the validity of data.
b) Secondary data source: secondary data will be taken ffrom academic journals, books, research studies and also some teachers of SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2, and of course this data is also supported by several documents teken from the official SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2

3.6 Data collection procedures

In order to get reliable and pertinent information about students' readiness to apply critical thinking in English communication at SMK Darussalam 2, the data collection procedures in this study were carried methodically. Preparation, observation, interview, documentation, and data organization were among the phases of the procedures.

3.6.1 Preparation stage

Based on the study's goals, the researcher developed the research focus and research problems during the planning phase. To make sure that the information gathered was pertinent to the subject, the researcher produced research tools like interview questions and observation guidelines. Additionally, the researcher organized the research timetable with the English teacher and asked the school for permission to conduct the study.

3.6.2 Observation procedure

The observation was conducted during English learning activities in the classroom. The researcher observed students' English communication activities, particularly during discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and interactive learning tasks. The observation focused on how students demonstrated their willingness to use critical thinking, such as expressing opinions, giving reasons, asking questions, and responding to others' ideas in English. The observation was carried out in several classroom meetings to obtain comprehensive data on students' communication behavior.

3.6.3 Interview procedure

Interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights into students' perceptions and the factors influencing their willingness to use critical thinking in English communication. The interviews involved selected students and the English teacher as informants. A semi-structured interview technique was used to allow informants to freely express their opinions while still focusing on the research

objectives. The interviews were recorded and noted to ensure the accuracy of the data.

3.6.4 Document organization

Documentation was used as supporting data to strengthen the findings obtained from observation and interviews. The documents collected included lesson plans, teaching materials, students' assignments, and other relevant classroom documents related to English learning activities. These documents provided additional context for understanding implementation of English communication and critical thinking in the classroom.

3.6.5 Data organization

After collecting the data, the researcher organized the data by transcribing the interview recordings and compiling observation notes and documents. The data were then categorized based on the research problems to facilitate the data analysis process. This step helped ensure that the data were systematically arranged and ready to be analyzed.

3.7 Data validity

The correctness and reliability of the data collected during the research process are referred to as data validity in qualitative research. In order to verify that the results accurately represented students' readiness to apply critical thinking in English communication at SMK Darussalam 2, a number of procedures were used to establish data authenticity.

Triangulation was one method used to guarantee the veracity of the data. By gathering information from several sources—students and the English teacher—triangulation was used. Additionally, a variety of methods, such as observation, interviews, and documentation, were used to gather the data. The researcher was able

to confirm the reliability and consistency of the results by comparing data from different sources and techniques.

Prolonged involvement was another method tried to improve data validity. In order to better understand how students communicate and to lessen the chance of misunderstandings, the researcher observed students over multiple class meetings. This made it possible for the researcher to see how eager students were to use critical thinking in various educational contexts.

Member checking was also applied in this study. After the interviews were conducted, the researcher clarified and confirmed the interview results with the informants to ensure that their responses were accurately interpreted. This process helped minimize misunderstandings and strengthened the validity of the data.

Through these techniques, the researcher ensured that the data collected were credible, reliable, and relevant to the research objectives. Therefore, the findings of this study are expected to provide an accurate description of students' willingness to use critical thinking in English communication at SMK Darussalam 2.

3.8 data analysis

In this study, a qualitative descriptive technique was used for data analysis. The purpose of the analysis was to analyze and characterize the data on SMK Darussalam 2 students' willingness to apply critical thinking in small group discussion. To address the research issues of this study, the information gathered via observation, interviews, and documentation was methodically examined, Three primary steps comprised the data analysis process: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The qualitative data analysis model frequently employed in educational research served as the basis for these procedures.

CHAPTERS IV
FINDING AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Research finding

Based on classroom observation conducted during small group discussion activities, students demonstrate different levels of willingness to use critical thingking several students actively participated by expressing opinions, asking, questions, responding to peers' ideas, and providing reasons for their arguments. These behaviors indicated their willingness to engage critically in the discussion process. Through a number of observable behaviors that demonstrated their active participation in the communication process, students demonstrated their desire to apply critical thinking during the conversations. (Bagirzada Vuqar, 2025). They started by making an effort to share their thoughts on the subject under discussion, offering their own perspectives, experiences, or interpretations. Second, some students agreed, disagreed, or provided additional justifications to bolster or refute the arguments put forth by their classmates. Their capacity to take into account and assess many view points during communication was evident in this exchange.

During small group discussion exercises, students showed varying degrees of willingness to apply critical thinking, according to the classroom observation done in class XI RPL. According to the observation, a number of students actively participated by giving ideas and opinions about the discussion subject, Some students demonstrated their willingness to participate in the debate by sharing their opinions with other group members, even if not all of them contributed equally.

The observation also indicated that students were willing to ask questions when they needed clarification or additional information.

During the discussion process, several students asked follow up questions to better understand the opinions and explanations provided by their peers. This behavior reflects students' curiosity and their effort to gain a deeper understanding of the topic being discussed.

The findings from the interviews revealed that students' previous experiences in small group discussions influenced their willingness to use critical thinking during English learning activities. Most students reported that they had limited experience in participating actively in discussion-based learning. As a result, they were not accustomed to expressing opinions, providing logical reasons, or responding critically to their classmates' ideas. During the discussion sessions, many students tended to give short answers and relied on more active group members rather than developing their own arguments. This finding indicates that students' lack of experience in conducting in depth discussions affected their confidence and ability to apply critical thinking. Therefore, limited discussion experience became one of the factors influencing students' willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussions.

The findings of this study revealed that one of the main factors influencing students' willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussions was the lack of opportunities to practice expressing their opinions. Based on the interview data, most students admitted that they were not accustomed to sharing their ideas during classroom discussions because they rarely had opportunities to practice giving opinions in English learning activities. As a result, many students felt hesitant and lacked confidence when they were asked to express their thoughts, provide arguments, or respond to their classmates' ideas. During the observation, the researcher also found that several students preferred to remain silent or only gave brief responses rather than elaborating on their opinions with logical explanations. This

finding indicates that insufficient practice in expressing opinions has limited students' ability and willingness to apply critical thinking during small group discussions. Therefore, providing students with more opportunities to participate in discussion-based learning activities is important to improve their confidence, communication skills, and critical thinking abilities.

In addition, some students attempted to provide reasons for their opinions. However, only one or two students were able to explain their arguments in detail and support them with examples. This finding suggests that while students were willing to participate in discussions, only a limited number demonstrated a higher level of critical thinking through logical reasoning and justificatio of their ideas.

Overall, the observation findings indicate that students in class XI RPL demonstrated their willingness to use critical thinking through several observable behaviors, including expressing opinions, asking questions, responding to peers' ideas, providing reasons, and offering solutions during small group discussions. However, the level of participation and critical engagement varied among students, with some showing higher willingness than others.

4.1.1 Field Data Overview

The field data for this research were collected through classroom observation conducted on 6 JUNI 2026 at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2. The observation was carried out to investigate students' willingness to use critical thinking during small group discussion activities in English learning. Through direct observation, the researcher was able to examine students' participation, interaction, and responses during the learning process in a natural classroom setting. This method allowed the researcher to observe how students expressed

opinions, responded to their peers' ideas, asked questions, and provided reasons to support their arguments. In addition, the observation provided valuable information regarding students' engagement and readiness to apply critical thinking while communicating in English. By observing students' behaviors directly, the researcher gained a deeper understanding of how willingnesswas in classroom with communication activities and how students interacted with one another throughout the discussion process.

The participants of this research were students of class XI RPL at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2. This class was selected because the students frequently participated in discussion-based learning activities, providing an appropriate context for observing their willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussions. In addition, the students were considered capable of engaging in communicative activities that required them to express opinions, exchange ideas, and respond to different viewpoints during English learning. The observation involved all students who were present during the learning activity and focused on their behaviors, participation, and engagement in group discussions. Particular attention was given to how students demonstrated their willingness to use critical thinking, such as by asking questions, providing arguments, giving explanations, responding to peers' opinions, and contributing actively to the discussion. Through the observation of these activities, the researcher was able to gather detailed information about students' interaction patterns and their readiness to apply critical thinking in English communication within a collaborative learning environment.

The learning situation during the observation was generally conducive and interactive. The teacher organized students into small groups and assigned a discussion topic to be discussed collaboratively. During the discussion process, students exchanged ideas, expressed opinions, responded to their peers' statements, and attempted to solve problems together. Not mostly students actively participated by sharing their thoughts and asking questions, while others tended to be less active and participated only when encouraged by their group members or teacher. Overall, the classroom atmosphere supported student interaction and provided opportunities for students to demonstrate their willingness to use critical thinking during small group discussions.

The small group discussion activities were conducted in class XI RPL at SMK Darussalam Blokagung dua. A total of [13 students, students participated in the discussion session. To facilitate effective interaction among students, the teacher divided the class into several small groups consisting of there are 13 students divided into 2 grous, each group has 7 and 6 students in each group. This grouping strategy was intended to encourage active participation and provide opportunities for all students to contribute their ideas during the discussion.

During the activity, students were assigned to discuss a topic related to the leraning material being studied. The discussion topic focused on "studying alone is better than studying with a teacher" dan "should students be allowed to use smartphones during in the classroom" wich required students to share opinions, exchange information, respond to different viewpoints, and a collaboratively develop solution and conclusion, trough this activity, students were expected to engage actively with their peers and demonstrate their

willingness to use critical thingking during the discussion process.

Throughout the discussion, the teacher played the role of a facilitator rather than the main source of information. The teacher monitored each group, provided guidance when necessary, clarified instructions, and encouraged students to participate actively in the discussion. In addition, the teacher helped maintain a positive learning environment by motivating students to express their ideas, ask questions, and respond respectfully to the opinions of others. This supportive role enabled students to interact more freely and contributed to the effectiveness of the small group discussion activities.

Based on the classroom observation conducted during the small group discussion activities in class XI RPL at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2, the researcher found that students demonstrated varying levels of participation and critical engagement throughout the discussion process. Several students showed confidence in expressing their opinions and sharing ideas related to the discussion topic. Their willingness to speak indicated an active involvement in the learning activity and a readiness to contribute to the group discussion.

In addition, some students asked questions to obtain clarification and gain a better understanding of the issues being discussed. These questions reflected students' curiosity and their effort to comprehend the information presented by their peers. However, although many students were willing to express their opinions, only a few students were able to provide clear reasons, explanations, or examples to support their arguments. This finding suggests that the use of critical thinking was still limited among some participants.

The observation also revealed that most students responded to their peers' opinions in a simple manner, such as expressing agreement or giving short comments. While these responses contributed to the continuity of the discussion, they often lacked deeper analysis or evaluation of the ideas being presented. Nevertheless, several students attempted to offer solutions to the problems discussed within their groups, demonstrating an effort to engage in problem-solving and collaborative thinking.

Furthermore, differences in participation levels were evident during the discussion activities. Some students actively engaged in the conversation, frequently sharing ideas and responding to others' opinions. In contrast, a few students remained passive and participated minimally throughout the discussion. These students tended to listen to the discussion rather than contribute actively. Overall, the observation findings indicate that students demonstrated different degrees of willingness to use critical thinking during small group discussions, ranging from active participation and problem-solving to limited engagement and passive involvement.

No	Observation indicator	observed	Notes result
1	Student express opinions quickly	Done	Several students little bit shared ideas
2	Students ask questions	Done	Some students asked for clarification
3	Students provide reasons for opinions	Done	Only one or two Students explained arguments with examples

4	Students respond to peers' opinions	Done	Mostly Students agree or politely
5	Students offer solutions to problems	Done	Some students agree solutions
6	Students show curiosity	Done	Students agreed follow-up questions
7	Students participate confidently	Done	Active students spoke little confidently
8	Students remain passive	Done	A few students participated minimally

4.1.2 Field Data Verification

The observation data in this study were collected through direct classroom observation conducted during small group discussion activities in class XI RPL at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2. The observation was carried out on several occasions throughout the research period to obtain comprehensive data regarding students' willingness to use critical thinking. Conducting more than one observation allowed the researcher to gain a broader understanding of students' behaviors and participation patterns during discussion activities

The primary focus of the observation was students' willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussions. Specifically, the researcher observed several indicators, including students' ability to express opinions, ask questions, provide reasons for their arguments, respond to peers' ideas, offer solutions to problems, demonstrate curiosity, participate confidently, and engage actively in discussion activities. These indicators were selected based on the objectives of the study

and served as the basis for identifying students' willingness to use critical thinking.

To verify the credibility of the observation data, the researcher examined the consistency of students' behaviors across different observation sessions. The findings showed that similar patterns repeatedly emerged during the discussions. Several students consistently active participation by expressing opinions and responding to their peers, while a few students remained relatively passive throughout the activities. Moreover, students' tendencies to ask questions, seek clarification, and provide simple responses were observed repeatedly during the discussion sessions. The consistency of these findings indicates that the observation data were sufficiently reliable and accurately represented students' willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussions.

No	Source	Information Obtained
1	Observation	Students mostly not giving opinion
2	Interview	Students stated the discussion helped share ideas

The verification of interview data was conducted to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the information obtained from the participants. In this study, the researcher interviewed thirteen students from class XI RPL at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2. The participants were selected based on their different levels of participation during small group discussions, including active, moderately active, and passive students. This selection enabled the researcher to obtain diverse perspectives regarding students' willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussions.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the data, member checking was applied during the interview process. After the interviews were conducted, the researcher reviewed the participants' responses and confirmed several important statements with them. This process was intended to ensure that the participants' opinions, experiences, and explanations had been accurately understood and recorded. Through member checking, the researcher minimized the possibility of misinterpretation and increased the credibility of the interview findings.

Furthermore, the interview data were carefully examined by reviewing the interview transcripts and comparing the responses among participants. The researcher identified recurring themes, similarities, and differences in the students' answers related to their willingness to use critical thinking during small group discussions. This examination process helped the researcher verify the consistency of the information and provided a clearer understanding of the factors influencing students' participation and critical thinking behaviors during classroom discussions.

4.2 Discussion

The findings showed that students demonstrated their willingness to use critical thinking in various ways during small group discussions. Most students actively expressed their opinions, provided reasons to support their ideas, asked questions, responded to their peers' opinions, and offered solutions during discussion activities. These findings indicate that students were willing to engage cognitively and actively participate in the learning process.

One of the most common forms of willingness observed in this study was students' willingness to express their opinions during

discussions. The observation and interview results revealed that many students voluntarily shared their ideas and perspectives regarding the discussion topics. This finding supports the theory of small group discussion proposed, who state that small group discussions provide opportunities for students to express opinions and participate actively in a supportive learning environment. The students' active participation suggests that small group discussions can encourage learners to become more involved in classroom interaction.

Another important finding was students' willingness to provide reasons for their opinions. Many students not only expressed their ideas but also explained the reasons behind their viewpoints. This behavior reflects the characteristics of critical thinking described, who argue that critical thinking involves logical reasoning and the ability to justify ideas with appropriate arguments. By providing explanations and examples, students demonstrated that they were evaluating information before reaching conclusions. This finding suggests that students were not merely sharing opinions but were also applying critical thinking processes during discussions.

The findings also revealed that students asked questions when they needed clarification or additional information. According to Facione (2015), asking relevant questions is one of the indicators of critical thinking because it demonstrates curiosity and analytical thinking. Through questioning, students attempted to understand issues more deeply and gather information from their peers. This finding supports the view of Paul and Elder (2019), who emphasize that critical thinkers actively seek information and examine different perspectives before making judgments.

Furthermore, students demonstrated their willingness to use critical thinking by responding to their peers' opinions. During the discussions, students often agreed or disagreed with their friends'

ideas and provided explanations for their responses. This finding is consistent with Ennis (2011), who states that critical thinking involves evaluating information and considering alternative viewpoints. Through this interaction, students were encouraged to analyze different perspectives and construct logical responses. Small group discussions therefore created opportunities for meaningful interaction and critical engagement among students.

Another important finding was that several students offered solutions to the problems discussed in their groups. Students proposed alternative ideas and attempted to solve issues collaboratively. This behavior reflects higher-order thinking skills because students were required to analyze problems, evaluate possible alternatives, and determine appropriate solutions. According to Paul and Elder (2019), problem-solving is one of the essential components of critical thinking. Therefore, students' ability to suggest solutions indicates their willingness to apply critical thinking during discussion activities.

Overall, the findings suggest that students demonstrated their willingness to use critical thinking through expressing opinions, providing reasons, asking questions, responding to others' ideas, and offering solutions. These findings support the theories of Ennis (2011), Facione (2015), and Paul and Elder (2019), which emphasize that critical thinking is reflected through reasoning, questioning, evaluating information, and problem-solving. Furthermore, the findings confirm the arguments of Barkley et al. (2014) and Gillies (2016) that small group discussions provide an effective environment for encouraging active participation, interaction, and critical thinking among students.

CHAPTER V
CLOSING

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the students of SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2 demonstrated their willingness to use critical thinking during small group discussions in several ways. The students showed their willingness by expressing their opinions, providing reasons to support their ideas, asking questions to gain a better understanding of the topic, responding to their peers' opinions, and offering solutions to problems discussed in the group. These behaviors indicate that students were actively involved in the discussion process and were willing to use critical thinking when interacting with their classmates.

The study also found that several factors influenced students' willingness to use critical thinking. Internal factors included self-confidence and students' understanding of the discussion topic. Students who were confident and had sufficient knowledge about the topic tended to participate more actively and express their ideas more freely. Meanwhile, external factors included peer support and the learning atmosphere. Students were more willing to participate in discussions when they felt supported, respected, and comfortable sharing their opinions with their group members.

Furthermore, small group discussions played an important role in supporting the development of students' critical thinking. Through small group discussions, students had opportunities to exchange ideas, consider different perspectives, evaluate information, and solve problems collaboratively. The discussion activities encouraged students to become more active participants in the learning process and provided a supportive environment for practicing critical thinking

skills. Therefore, small group discussions can be considered an effective learning strategy to encourage students' willingness to use critical thinking in classroom activities.

5.3 Research Implication

The findings of this study have several implications for theory, practice, and future research. Theoretically, this study supports the concept of critical thinking proposed by Ennis and Facione, which emphasizes the importance of expressing opinions, providing reasons, asking questions, evaluating ideas, and solving problems. The findings indicate that students demonstrated these aspects of critical thinking during small group discussions, suggesting that discussion activities can encourage students to engage in critical thinking processes.

Practically, the findings imply that small group discussions can be used as an effective learning strategy to encourage students' participation and willingness to use critical thinking in the classroom. Through discussion activities, students have opportunities to share ideas, respond to different perspectives, and develop their confidence in expressing opinions. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to create more discussion-based learning activities that provide students with opportunities to think critically and participate actively in the learning process.

For future research, this study may serve as a reference for researchers who are interested in investigating critical thinking in different educational contexts. Future studies may involve a larger number of participants, different grade levels, or different research methods to obtain broader findings regarding students' willingness to use critical thinking. In addition, future researchers may explore the relationship between critical thinking and other aspects of learning,

such as communication skills, problem-solving abilities, or academic achievement.

5.2.1 Theoritical Implications

The findings of this study provide theoretical implications for the concepts of critical thinking and small group discussion. The study found that students demonstrated their willingness to use critical thinking by expressing opinions, providing reasons, asking questions, responding to their peers' ideas, and offering solutions during small group discussions. These findings support the theory of critical thinking proposed, which states that critical thinking involves reasoning, questioning, evaluating information, and making decisions based on logical consideration.

Furthermore, the findings support the theory of small group discussion proposed by Barkley et al. (2014) and Gillies (2016), which suggests that discussion activities encourage students to participate actively, exchange ideas, and learn from different perspectives. The results of this study indicate that small group discussions provide opportunities for students to practice critical thinking through interaction and collaboration with their peers.

In addition, the findings contribute to the understanding of willingness in the learning process. The study shows that students' willingness to use critical thinking is influenced by both internal factors, self-confidence and understanding of the topic, and external factors, such as peer support and the learning environment. Therefore, this study strengthens the theoretical view that willingness plays an important role in encouraging students to participate actively and engage in critical thinking during classroom discussions.

5,2.2 Practical Implications

The findings of this study have several practical implications for teaching and learning activities. The study revealed that students demonstrated their willingness to use critical thinking through expressing opinions, providing reasons, asking questions, responding to their peers' ideas, and offering solutions during small group discussions. Therefore, small group discussion can be considered an effective learning strategy to encourage students to participate actively and think critically in the classroom.

For teachers, the findings suggest the importance of creating learning activities that provide opportunities for students to discuss, share ideas, and solve problems collaboratively. Teachers are encouraged to use small group discussions regularly and create a supportive classroom environment where students feel comfortable expressing their opinions without fear of making mistakes. Such an environment can help increase students' confidence and willingness to participate in discussions.

For students, the findings indicate that active participation in small group discussions can help them develop critical thinking skills and improve their ability to communicate ideas effectively. Through discussion activities, students can learn to evaluate information, consider different perspectives, and provide logical reasons for their opinions. These experiences can support their academic development and prepare them for future learning challenges.

In addition, the findings may be useful for schools in promoting learning approaches that encourage student-centered learning. By providing more opportunities for discussion-based activities, schools can help students become more active, independent, and critical thinkers in the learning process.

5.3 Research Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study was conducted only in one class, namely class XI RPL at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2. Therefore, the findings may not fully represent the willingness of students to use critical thinking in other classes educational settings.

Second, the number of participants involved in the interviews was limited. Although the participants provided valuable information related to the research topic, a larger number of participants might have produced more diverse perspectives and richer data.

Third, the study was conducted within a limited period of time. As a result, the observations only captured students' behaviors during several small group discussion sessions. Students' willingness to use critical thinking may vary in different situations, topics, or learning environments.

Finally, this study focused only on students' willingness to use critical thinking in small group discussions. Other factors that may influence critical thinking, such as teaching methods, learning materials, or individual learning styles, were not examined in depth. Therefore, future research is encouraged to explore these factors to gain a broader understanding of students' critical thinking in educational contexts.

5.4 Suggestions

Based on the findings of this study, several suggestions are proposed for teachers, students, and future researchers.

For teachers, it is recommended to use small group discussions more frequently in classroom activities. Small group discussions can provide students with opportunities to express their opinions, ask questions, respond to different ideas, and develop their critical thinking skills. Teachers are also encouraged to create a supportive and comfortable learning environment so that students feel confident in participating actively during discussions.

For students, it is suggested that they participate more actively in small group discussions and take advantage of discussion activities to improve their critical thinking skills. Students should be encouraged to express their ideas, provide reasons for their opinions, ask questions when they do not understand a topic, and respect different perspectives shared by their peers. Active participation in discussions can help students become more confident and independent learners.

For future researchers, it is recommended to conduct similar studies with a larger number of participants and in different educational settings. Future studies may also explore other factors that influence students' willingness to use critical thinking or examine the relationship between critical thinking and other aspects of learning, such as communication skills, problem-solving abilities, or academic achievement. Such studies may provide a broader understanding of students' critical thinking in educational contexts.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Guidance Card

NIM	2211221002
NAMA	IZZUL HUDA
FAKULTAS	TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN
PROGRAM STUDI	S1 TADRIS BAHASA INGGRIS
PERIODE	20252
JUDUL	THE WILLINGNESS OF CRITICAL THINKING FOR ENGLISH COMMUNICATION AT SMK DARUSSALAM 2



No	Periode	Tanggal Mulai	Tanggal Selesai	Uraian Masalah	Bimbingan
1	20252	20 Januari 2026	20 Januari 2026	conclution, suggest	acc
2	20252	10 Januari 2026	10 Januari 2026	finding	acc
3	20252	03 Januari 2026	03 Januari 2026	finding	acc
4	20252	30 Desember 2025	30 Desember 2025	finding	revisi
5	20252	27 Desember 2025	27 Desember 2025	methode	acc
6	20252	24 Desember 2025	24 Desember 2025	methode	revisi
7	20252	22 Desember 2025	22 Desember 2025	methode	revisi
8	20252	18 Desember 2025	18 Desember 2025	methode	revisi
9	20252	16 Desember 2025	16 Desember 2025	literature review	acc
10	20252	09 Desember 2025	09 Desember 2025	literature	revisi
11	20252	30 November 2025	30 November 2025	key term	revisi
12	20252	25 November 2025	25 November 2025	objective	acc
13	20252	16 November 2025	16 November 2025	problem	acc
14	20252	05 November 2025	05 November 2025	introduction	acc
15	20252	31 Oktober 2025	31 Oktober 2025	introduktion	revisi
16	20251	28 Oktober 2025	28 Oktober 2025	judul dan introduction	revisi
17	20252	25 Oktober 2025	25 Oktober 2025	konsultasi judul	revisi

APPENDIX 2: Guidance Card



YAYASAN PONDOK PESANTREN DARUSSALAM BLOKAGUNG DUA
SEKOLAH MENENGAH KEJURUAN
"SMK DARUSSALAM BLOKAGUNG DUA"
NPSN : 69967029
website : www.darussalam2.com | e-mail : smkdarussalamblokagungdua@gmail.com
Alamat : Jl. Raden Supono, Dsn. Krajan 1, Ds. Setail, Kec. Genteng, Kabupaten Banyuwangi, Jawa Timur 68466 | No. Telp : 0853 3644 8714

SURAT KETERANGAN
TELAH MELAKSANAKAN OBSERVASI
Nomor : 17.2/206/SMKDB2/ P.K /S.1/VI/2026

yang bertanda tangan dibawah ini:

Nama	: Mahrus Hadi, M.Pd.I
NIPY	: 17201080419850010
Pangkat/Golongan	:-
Jabatan	: Kepala Sekolah
Unit Kerja	: SMK Darussalam Blokagung Dua

Menerangkan dengan sebenarnya bahwa:

Nama	: Izzul Huda
NIM	: 2211221002
Program Study	: Tadris Bahasa Inggris (TBIG)
Fakultas	: Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan (FTK)
Universitas	: UNIVERSITAS KH. MUKHTAR SYAFAAT

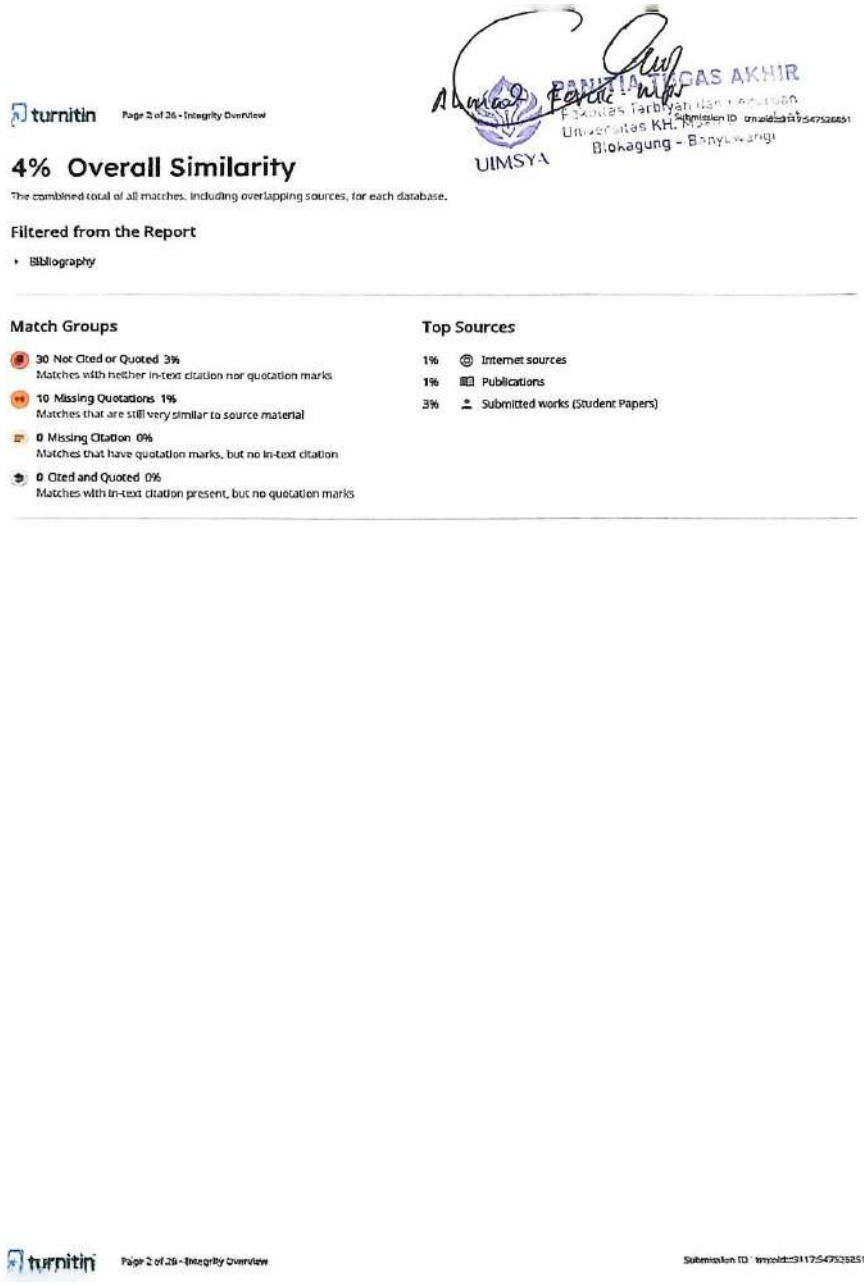
Telah melaksanakan penilaian di SMK Darussalam Blokagung Dua Genteng Kabupaten Banyuwangi dalam rangka melaksanakan program tugas akhir artikel dengan judul **the willingness of students to use critical thinking in small group discussion at smk darussalam blokagung Dua**

Demikian surat keterangan ini dibuat, untuk dapat dipergunakan sebagaimana semestinya

Genteng, 16 Juli 2026
Kepala Sekolah

MAHRUS HADI, M.Pd.I
NIPY.17201080419850010

APPENDIX 3: Certificate of Plagiarism



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APENDIX 4: Research Documentation



Picture 1. Classroom observation during the willingness off students to use critical thinking activity



Picture 2. Students' small group discussion with the topic



Picture 3. Interview session with the English teacher



Picture 4. Giving opinion and answer session

APENDIX 4: Interview Guideline

Research title: The Willingness of Students to Use Critical Thinking in Small Group Discussion at SMK DARUSSALAM BLOKAGUNG 2

Purpose of interview:

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe students' willingness to use critical thinking during small group discussions at SMK Darussalam Blokagung 2.

Place: SMK Darusalam Blokagung dua
Interviewer: Izzul Huda

1. How Do you feel about participating in small group discussions?
2. How often do you participate actively in small group discussions?
3. What do you usually do during a group discussion?
4. Do you usually express your opinions during group discussions? Why or why not?
5. How do you feel when expressing your opinions in front of your group members?
6. Do you ask questions when you do not understand the topic being discussed? Why or why not?
7. . Do you like responding to your friends' opinions?
8. What makes you confident to speak during discussions?

APPENDIX 6: Interview Transcript

A. Interview Transcript with students

Participant: student 1 (S1)

Researcher : How Do you feel about participating in small group discussions?

S1: I feel its too hard, because learning so really seriously

Researcher: do you feel more motivated in english learning?

S1: yes, ‘cause small group discussion, sp we were excited.

Research: what activities did you do?

S1: giving each opinions, brave to speak up, solving problem, blaming each other

Reaserach: what dificulties did you face?

S1: The weakness of knowleadge, answering questions,

History list life



Nama	: IZZUL HUDA
Nim	: 2211221002
Ttl	: Banyuwangi 25-08-2003
Jenis Kelamin	: Laki-laki
Agama	: Islam
Prodi	: TBIG
Alamat	: Sarongan Pesanggaran, Banyuwangi, RT/RW (RT01). (RW02)

Riwayat Pendidikan:

1. Paud Sarongan (2008-2010)
2. SDN 3/5 Sarongan (2010-2016)
3. MTs Al-Amiriyah (2016-2019)
4. MA Al-Amiriyah (2019-2022)

Pengalaman Organisasi:

1. Anggota Paduan Suara UIMSYA (gaverdas) masa abdi (2024-2025)
2. Anggota HMPS masa abdi (2023-2025)

THE WILLINGNESS OF STUDENTS TO USE

CRITICAL THINKING

UIMSYA

UNIVERSITAS KH. MUKHTAR SYAFAAT

IN SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION AT
SMK DARUSSALAM BLOKAGUNG 2

