

The Relationship between L2 Willingness to Read and Reading Achievement among Indonesian Theology Students

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Abstract Second/foreign language (L2) Willingness to Read (WTR) is thus far under-researched in the Indonesian context despite its strategic position for L2 learning. This study intends to investigate the L2 WTR of Indonesian learners of English and its predictive power on their reading achievement. To this end, 41 English for Specific Purposes (ESP) for Theology students participated in a survey and four of them took part in interviews. The study revealed that the participants generally reported a high level of L2 WTR. The participants reported a willingness to read texts with visuals for easier comprehension when they needed to read the texts for academic success and when they felt they could understand them with teacher support. The study also found that the participants' L2 WTR significantly predicted their reading achievement, accounting for 13.20% of the total variance in reading achievement. Pedagogical implications include enhancing relevance and channelling the participants' interest through

various multimodal instructional activities to enhance interest in L2 reading.

INTRODUCTION

Among the skills necessary in second/foreign language (L2) learning, reading proficiency becomes one of the determining factors for academic success. Teachers and researchers in L2 reading may have paid much attention to the mechanics of L2 reading, such as phonemic awareness, grammar, syntax, and comprehension strategies. However, less focus has been given to learners' Willingness to Read (WTR) despite its potential to interact with reading outcomes. WTR is one's preparedness to start reading material when given the chance and time (Khajavy & Ghonsooly, 2017). Hassanpour et al. (2017) described WTR as the intention to start reading activities. In L2 contexts, L2 WTR is defined as learners' inclination or readiness to read L2 texts or engage in L2 reading activities on their initiative or with assistance from parents or instructors (Abdul-Hamid et al., 2020). Compared with the concept of L2 reading motivation, which solely focuses on the underlying reasons why learners choose to read L2 texts (Dhanapala & Hirakawa, 2015), L2 WTR could be broader in scope. L2 WTR can affect learners' overall engagement in L2 reading activities, while L2 reading motivation can mainly influence their choice of L2 texts and persistence in reading due to intrinsic or extrinsic factors. Hence, L2 WTR may encompass the motivational aspects of L2 reading.

Furthermore, regarding the availability of previous studies, compared to the concept of L2 Willingness to Communicate (WTC), which refers to a readiness to speak in L2 with interlocutors (MacIntyre et al., 1998), L2 WTR is less researched. While there have been many studies on L2 WTC in different contexts over the past three decades (e.g., Baghaei & Dourakhshan, 2012; Fernando & Subekti, 2023; MacIntyre et al., 1998, 2002; Subekti, 2019, to name a few), the area of L2 WTR is relatively under-explored despite its potential in influencing L2 reading and, eventually, L2 learning in general. L2 WTR is regarded as an important affective component for developing learners' reading skills (Geva et al., 2019; Huang, 2006).

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Together with other affective factors like attitudes, it can influence how effectively and frequently learners read L2 texts, eventually leading to vocabulary development and reading comprehension.

Despite the scarcity of L2 WTR studies, such studies have been conducted in several L2 contexts, for example, in Serbia (Knezevic & Halupka, 2015), Iran (Hassanpour et al., 2017; Khajavy & Ghonsooly, 2017), Taiwan (Huang, 2006), and Malaysia (Abdul-Hamid et al., 2020), and in Indonesia (Wate & Subekti, 2025). In Iran, a study by Hassanpour et al. (2017) suggested metacognitive strategies' role in enhancing L2 WTR. This finding indicates that as learners could regulate their own reading processes, that is, to plan, monitor, and evaluate their comprehension and learning, they tended to have a higher level of L2 WTR. In other studies, several similar findings regarding L2 WTR emerged. For example, the studies identified several contributing factors positively influencing L2 WTR. These are teacher and parent persuasion and perceived support (Abdul-Hamid et al., 2020; Huang, 2006), readiness seen from positive L2 learning experience (Khajavy & Ghonsooly, 2017), and perceived linguistic competence (Huang, 2006; Knezevic & Halupka, 2015). From these findings, it can be seen that L2 WTR can be affected by both cognitive (Hassanpour et al., 2017) and affective factors (Huang, 2006; Khajavy & Ghonsooly, 2017; Knezevic & Halupka, 2015), and probably the combination of both. A recent study by Wate and Subekti (2025) revealed that the existence of reading goals, teachers' supporting practices, and alignment of L2 texts with reading preference could positively influence L2 WTR.

Regarding perceived competence, quite a few studies have contemplated various aspects necessary for successful L2 reading. For example, studies suggest that students tend to read L2 texts with favorable appearances, such as the presence of visuals and clear structures that help them navigate the texts (Guo et al., 2020; Long & Szabo, 2016). A recent study by Rahmah et al. (2023) also revealed that students tend to read L2 texts containing vocabulary they were familiar with. Although none of these studies specifically investigated L2 WTR, the findings could give a glimpse of conditions that are likely conducive to L2 WTR, such as presentations of L2 texts, vocabulary mastery, and familiarity with L2 texts. These

conditions may be linked to the findings of several L2 WTR studies suggesting the role of positive L2 learning experiences and perceived competence on L2 WTR (Huang, 2006; Khajavy & Ghonsooly, 2017; Knezevic & Halupka, 2015).

Several studies also revealed that external factors from teachers and instructional practices may also be at play in influencing L2 WTR. For instance, several studies reported that students were more willing to read when informed that there would be some reading assessment (Indrayadi, 2021; Liswaniso, 2023). Though not in the field of L2 WTR, a study by Limeranto and Subekti (2021) also revealed that the presence of teachers' support alleviated students' reading anxiety, and its absence increased their anxiety, making them lose interest in the L2 texts. All these aspects can directly or indirectly influence L2 WTR and eventual L2 achievement.

Furthermore, in the Indonesian L2 context, studies specifically investigating L2 WTR may be limited with the exception on a recent qualitative study exploring possible sources of L2 WTR mentioned earlier (Wate & Subekti, 2025). That being said, researchers in this context have conducted quite extensive studies examining the association of L2 reading comprehension and factors that could be related to L2 WTR, for example, reading motivation (Erliana, 2015; Fauzi et al., 2022; Kurniawati et al., 2023; Radiyah et al., 2023), reading interest (Alfatihah & Tyas, 2022; Fitria, 2019) and reading attitudes (Septianingsi & Atmanegara, 2021). Two correlational studies involving junior high school students (Fitria, 2019) and university students (Alfatihah & Tyas, 2022) revealed that reading interest positively correlated with reading comprehension. Furthermore, three other correlational studies involving junior high school students (Radiyah et al., 2023) and university students (Erliana, 2015; Fauzi et al., 2022) reported that reading motivation significantly and positively correlated with comprehension of English texts. Earlier, Septianingsi and Atmanegara (2021) revealed that negative feelings about L2 texts prevented students from achieving optimal reading comprehension. Despite the possible contributions of these studies in the field of L2 reading in Indonesia, these studies seemed to focus heavily on reading comprehension as the indicator of the learning of L2 reading. L2 reading achievement, in comparison, goes beyond solely comprehending L2 texts.

It encompasses learners' overall performance in L2 reading activities, and comprehension is only one of the indicators. Lending to what Moskovsky et al. (2016) asserted, L2 learning is "about achievement, that is, about attaining an adequate level of proficiency" (p. 3), it becomes crucial to conduct a study contemplating whether an under-research yet potential construct, L2 WTR, actually influences L2 reading achievement. Such a study potentially provides insights tailored to the unique educational environment of students in Indonesia, home to the third largest number of L2 learners of English worldwide.

L2 WTR can be crucial for students taking English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classes focusing on sharpening reading skills. In ESP class, students would very likely encounter authentic texts where L2 texts are seen not only as linguistic objects but as vehicles of information (Bojovic, 2010). Ideally, the main focus of such ESP classes is on extracting information rather than the details of the language. The application of information from the L2 texts is crucial, and students are expected to link the new information they obtain from the L2 texts to their existing content knowledge related to the students' respective disciplines. This higher demand for L2 reading potentially places L2 WTR, one of the affective factors, in a strategic position as students may need an intrinsic driving force to persist in ESP reading.

One of such classes is ESP for Theology students. Pierson and Bankston (2013) stated that reading skills are paramount for theology students to analyze theological perspectives and arguments widely available in English. They would likely interact with texts that are conceptual, reflective, and spiritual. Hence, reading activities may not solely focus on the mastery of language and vocabulary. For example, compared to ESP in Business and Engineering fields, which tend to focus on practical functions, reading in a Theology context may invite stronger affective and personal engagement with the reading content. This possibility may shape students' L2 WTR through the combination of academic demand, religious relevance, and personal engagement with the reading topics. Despite this urgency, in the Indonesian L2 learning context, students of ESP for Theology have been under-represented in the plethora of ESP and L2 reading studies. Only a few studies have involved this segmentation of research participants, for example, in the areas

of L2 speaking strategies (Palimbunga' et al., 2023), reading anxiety (Limeranto & Subekti, 2021), and material development (Pongsapan, 2017). However, studies have yet to attempt to find Indonesian ESP for Theology students' L2 WTR and its possible interaction with students' L2 reading achievement. L2 WTR can be a determinant factor influencing the intensity and effectiveness of learners reading L2 texts (Geva et al., 2019). As such, for learners, having L2 WTR could lead to enhanced comprehension, expanded vocabulary, improved critical thinking, and eventually, better L2 reading achievement. Considering that theology students likely need to read a lot of L2 texts, having L2 WTR can be particularly important for the success of these students' learning. For this reason, involving such participants in an L2 WTR study can be worthwhile.

The Present Study

This study aims to answer two research questions: First, what is the level of L2 WTR of ESP for Theology students? Second, to what extent does the students' level of WTR influence their L2 reading achievement?

Several rationales become the basis of conducting this study. L2 WTR studies are thus far unavailable in Indonesia. Hence, conducting an L2 WTR study in this context could fill the gap in the literature and potentially become a basis for further investigations in the field of L2 WTR. Secondly, students of ESP for Theology have thus far been under-represented in the plethora of L2 reading and ESP literature in Indonesia. That is despite the fact that theology students are projected to be ministers or pastors who likely need to read extensively, including in foreign languages (Hussey, 2015; Pierson & Bankston, 2013). For this prospect, students in Theology departments are often required to engage with English texts early in their studies. In such a condition, students' L2 WTR may play a role in affecting their reading achievement. Considering this study might be the first in the Indonesian context, its findings could offer an initial insight into Indonesian students' L2 WTR. For English teachers, especially those teaching ESP in Theology departments, or classes sharing similar characteristics, the findings can provide insights into designing a more engaging, relevant learning environment that could help boost learners' L2 WTR. For example, informed by this study, teachers could better design reading strategies,

align theological and linguistic goals, and cater to students' professional goals and interests, thus boosting their L2 WTR. Informed by the findings of this study, curriculum developers may create materials catering to theological education's unique demands while enhancing L2 WTR. Policymakers could ensure the gradual progression from simpler L2 texts to more complex texts in theology, which enables students to maintain their L2 WTR even as the text difficulty level increases. Furthermore, research on WTR may be necessary even beyond the theology field considering the long-term impact of WTR on language acquisition and educational outcome, which could lead to professional and academic success.

METHOD

This study used a mixed-method approach, primarily focusing on quantitative data through paper-based questionnaires, with interviews conducted to support the quantitative findings. The selection of the survey method was in line with the purposes of the study, which were to find students' level of L2 WTR and to see whether the students' L2 WTR could predict their achievement. Besides, studies on L2 WTR have been conducted quantitatively in different L2 contexts, for example, in Taiwan (Huang, 2006), Iran (Khajavy & Ghonsooly, 2017), and Malaysia (Abdul-Hamid et al., 2020). However, L2 WTR studies in Indonesia have yet to be available. Hence, conducting a study on L2 WTR and its possible influence on L2 reading achievement in Indonesia could provide a ground for future WTR studies in the context.

The participants of the survey part were 41 students taking ESP for Theology at a university in central Java, Indonesia. ESP for Theology was an obligatory three-credit class. Students could take this class after they passed three levels of non-credited Reading for Theology classes. Each class could only be completed within a semester. Hence, the participants of this study had at least three semesters of Reading for Theology classes before taking the ESP for Theology and participating in this study. Although these learners had not taken any standardized proficiency tests, based on the information obtained from the Reading for Theology teacher, most students had approximately intermediate levels of language proficiency. Of the

41 participants, 20 participants (48.80%) were females, while 21 others (51.20%) were males. They were aged 17 to 29 ($M = 19.41$, $SD = 2.60$). Of these 41 survey participants, four participants were invited for short interviews based on purposive sampling. Two interviewees reported a high level of L2 WTR, while two others reported moderate levels of L2 WTR. No participants reported a low level of L2 WTR.

The instruments used in this study were a paper-based questionnaire, the participants' final grades, and an interview checklist. Each questionnaire set consisted of a consent form, a demographic questionnaire asking the participants' age and gender, and a questionnaire on L2 WTR in Indonesian. The L2 WTR questionnaire consisted of 17 Likert-scale items adapted from a WTR questionnaire in English used in a study in Taiwan (Huang, 2006). An example of the items was "Are you willing to read text that is equipped with clear graphs, tables, and illustrations?". Four possible responses were available: "Very willing to read," "Willing to read," "Unwilling to read," and "Very unwilling to read." This was a modification from the original questionnaire, providing only three responses "Very Willing to Read," "Neutral," and "Very Unwilling to Read." The modification was made considering that Indonesian students may be more familiar with the modified version. The neutral response was omitted to avoid it being a possible 'dumping ground' for participants who wanted to avoid reporting their standpoint if they thought it was undesirable (Chyung et al., 2017).

The questionnaire was translated into Indonesian and back-translation was also done to ensure that there was no change in meaning during the translation process. Before being distributed, the Indonesian version of the questionnaire was validated using Aiken's V , to ensure all the items were relevant to the construct being measured. It was then piloted using the data of twenty university students. They also gave feedback on the readability of the questionnaire from participants' viewpoints.

The questionnaires were distributed to the target participants using convenience sampling, where participants were recruited for easier access (Gray, 2022). The choice of convenience sampling was mainly attributed to the relatively limited availability of target participants, Christian theology students in the area, and

the need to have uniform assessments if participants were from several institutions. To minimize possible biases, however, questionnaires were distributed to students in all three ESP for Theology classes at the selected university during the second semester of the 2023/2024 academic year.

Furthermore, the participants' final grades comprised several small reading assessments throughout the semester. As seen in the class syllabus, the reading assessments were 1) journal writing where learners summarized weekly readings and wrote reflections on them, 2) group projects where learners worked in groups and presented their understanding of theology texts and insights they obtained from them, and 3) mid-semester and final tests where learners demonstrated their comprehension on theology texts. Only one teacher taught Reading for Theology class, and she used similar assessments across the three parallel classes. The uniform assessment components may help reduce potential confounding variables.

Ethical principles were adhered to throughout the research process. Gatekeeper consent was obtained from the Head of the Theology department organizing the ESP for Theology classes. Questionnaires were distributed within class hours with the permission of the teacher, who decided on the best schedule to minimize possible disturbance. The researchers orally explained the research while distributing the questionnaires. The participants indicated their consent to participate in the consent form provided on the first page of the questionnaire. The consent form informed the target participants about the researchers' identities, their rights, and responsibilities if they participated (Israel & Hay, 2006). The target participants were also informed that by participating, they consented to the researchers to use their final grades in the ESP for Theology class for research purposes. Pseudonyms are used to report the interview data to protect participants' confidentiality.

The following are the steps of data collection and analysis. With the teacher's permission, the first author distributed the questionnaires to the target participants at the beginning of each class from February 20 to 22, 2024. The Likert-scale questionnaire data were recorded then in SPSS as follows. "Very willing to read" was recorded as four points, "Willing to read" as three points, "Unwilling to read" as two points, and "Very unwilling to read" as one point. The final grades were

obtained from the course secretary based on the data from the returned completed questionnaire. After all data had been recorded, the WTR questionnaire was tested for validity using Pearson correlation and reliability using Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega coefficients. In the validity test, all seventeen items of L2 WTR were correlated with the overall construct. All the items were found to be valid, seen from the correlation coefficient bigger than the critical value of Pearson correlation coefficient ($N = 41$, $df = 39$) at $\pm .30$. The coefficients ranged from .42 to .69, $p < .01$. The items also produced a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .88 and a McDonald's omega coefficient of .87, indicating reliability. Next, the questionnaire data were used to find the answers to the research questions. To answer the first research question, the researchers employed descriptive analysis. The results are presented in percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations. A bivariate linear regression was performed to answer the second research question with L2 WTR as the independent variable and the participants' final grades as the dependent variable. Next, short interviews were conducted in Indonesian with four purposively selected participants from 16 to 17 March 2024. The interview checklist included factors that could influence their L2 WTR. Interview results are presented descriptively to add depth to the study and provide qualitative explanations of the quantitative findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Participants' Level of L2 Willingness to Read

Employing descriptive statistics on the seventeen items on L2 WTR, this study found that the participants' composite L2 WTR had an average composite mean score of 55.65 ($SD = 5.60$). It means each item had an average mean score of 3.27 from the possible range of 1 to 4, indicating a WTR tendency ranging from "Willing" to "Very willing". This finding was in line with the findings of a study in Serbia (Knezevic & Halupka, 2015). This previous study also found that ESP students from Humanities departments had a higher L2 WTR than students from Sciences departments. In the present study, the high L2 WTR level reported by the theology students could result from intertwined factors. For example, these students may have high motivation when enrolling in the program due to its relatively clear career

trajectories, being ministries or pastors. Family factors may also play a part. Some students likely came from families of pastors who had previously studied in theology departments. Hence, they might have known what they were required to do to succeed in the program, and this included mastery of English, especially reading skills (Pierson & Bankston, 2013). Within the instructional practice, the three-semester experience of Reading for Theology classes may have shaped their reading habit and, in the process, nurtured their L2 WTR.

Next, for more thorough data presentation, the more detailed results on the questionnaire items are presented in three different categories “Willingness to Read associated with Readability and Text Presentations” (items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6), “Willingness to Read associated with Academic Demands” (items 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12) and “Willingness to Read associated with Perceived Competence and Teacher Support” (items 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17).

Table 1 shows the participants' responses to the first category, "Willingness to Read associated with Readability and Text Presentations."

Table 1. Willingness to Read associated with Readability and Text Presentations

Item No.	Statements	Very Willing	Willing	Unwilling	Very Unwilling	M	SD
1	Are you willing to read text equipped with clear graphs, tables, and illustrations?	8 (19.51%)	31 (75.61%)	1 (2.44%)	1 (2.44%)	3.12	.56
2	Are you willing to read a text where important points are highlighted?	21 (51.22%)	18 (43.90%)	2 (4.88%)	-	3.46	.60
3	Are you willing to read the text with	7 (17.07%)	27 (65.85%)	7 (17.07%)	-	3.00	.59

Item No.	Statements	Very Willing	Willing	Unwilling	Very Unwilling	M	SD
	limited new vocabulary?						
4	Are you willing to read books written with simple grammar?	26 (63.42%)	14 (34.15)	1 (2.43%)	-	3.61	.54
5	Are you willing to read a book that does not have a translated version?	6 (14.63%)	21 (51.22%)	13 (31.71%)	1 (2.44%)	2.78	.73
6	Are you willing to read if the arrangement and layout of the reading in the book are easy to follow?	24 (58.53%)	16 (39.03%)	1 (2.44%)	-	3.59	.50

The results in Table 1 are as follows. In item 1, 39 participants (95.12%) reported they would read texts with clear graphs, tables, and illustrations. Related to that, a study by Guo et al. (2020) also found that the presence of graphics in texts could improve students' reading comprehension. In item 2, 39 participants (95.12%) reported their WTR when important points in texts were highlighted. This finding aligned with at least two previous studies that reported participants' enthusiasm in reading texts whose important points had been highlighted (Guo et al., 2020; Huang, 2006). Similarly, as seen in item 6, as many as 38 participants (92.68%) also reported their WTR if the reading materials had an easy-to-follow arrangement and layout. These findings highlighted the importance of visually improved reading texts to increase students' WTR. Visual elements in reading texts may help students to find detailed information easily and facilitate reading comprehension. These findings suggested that students may be inclined to read when they could likely read more easily, and the presence of helping visuals seemed to be a contributing factor. A study by Long and Szabo (2016) also suggested that students were more willing to

read texts with clear structures. These findings could inform teachers to allow for more visuals when teaching reading. While some reading texts, such as academic texts, may not always accommodate appealing visuals, teachers can equip students with reading strategies such as scanning to enable them to identify and highlight important points themselves. Teachers could also present the reading texts in parts and have class activities facilitating multiple modalities.

Items 3, 4, and 5 are about L2 WTR associated with the readability of L2 texts. In item 3, 34 participants (82.93%) reported their willingness to read texts with limited vocabulary. As many as 38 participants (92.68%) reported WTR dealing with texts written in simple grammar. The findings in these two items suggested that the participants perceived vocabulary and grammar as challenging aspects. Hence, this explains their willingness to read texts with easy vocabulary and grammar. For example, a previous study in Indonesia also reported that students preferred reading English texts whose vocabularies they were likely able to comprehend (Rahmah et al., 2023). The present study's findings suggested that participants' comfort levels with reasonable language difficulties in terms of vocabulary and grammar impact their willingness to read. This tendency seemed to be confirmed in item 5, where 'only' 27 participants (65.85%) reported willingness to read a book that did not have a translated version, with 14 participants (34.15%) reporting their unwillingness. This item produced the lowest mean score of all the seventeen items, at 2.78. This result could be attributed to students' lack of interest in reading English texts that have a translated version. They would likely choose to look for the translated version rather than having to read the original English text because of the perceived difficulties. This speculation seemed to be confirmed in the interviews. Two interviewees, Fajar and Ardi, reported that they preferred to read L2 texts that were easy to understand. Regarding this, Fajar mentioned:

“The text itself also plays a role because I prefer texts in English that are engaging and easy to understand. But sometimes, the language in the texts can be too formal or stiff in English. That makes me less interested in reading them (texts)” [Fajar/Moderate WTR]

These findings suggested that students tended to be more willing to read texts in their comfort zone regarding language difficulty. Informed of that, teachers should ensure that instructional practices provide students with the right amount of challenge in their reading activities. For example, when required to read an academic text containing complex vocabulary, students need to be prepared in the pre-reading activities, allowing them to learn new words or phrases in context together. Teachers could also give students more time to understand texts using flipped learning. They could also assign jigsaw learning activities in small groups to give students a sense of responsibility to master the texts and teach their groupmates.

Table 2 presents the detailed results of the participants' responses in the second category, "Willingness to Read associated with Academic Demands."

Table 2. Willingness to Read associated with Academic Demands

Item No.	Statements	Very Willing	Willing	Unwilling	Very Unwilling	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
7	Would you be willing to read if required to write a report of your reading?	4 (9.76%)	27 (65.85%)	10 (24.39%)	-	2.85	.57
8	Would you be willing to read if required to make an oral report of your reading?	6 (14.63%)	28 (68.29%)	7 (17.07%)	-	2.98	.57
9	Would you be willing to read if you were required to participate in a class discussion for a passage you were required to read?	9 (21.95%)	31 (75.61)	1 (2.44%)	-	3.20	.57
10	Are you willing to read if the weekly reading scope is clearly assigned?	16 (39.02%)	24 (58.54%)	1 (2.44%)	-	3.37	.54
11	Are you willing to read if the exams are directly based on English reading materials?	11 (26.83%)	25 (60.98%)	5 (12.19%)	-	3.15	.62
12	Are you willing to read if the teachers ask you to answer questions after you read?	12 (29.27%)	26 (63.42%)	3 (7.32%)	-	3.22	.57

The results can be outlined as follows. In item 7, 31 participants (75.61%) reported WTR if they were required to make a written report of their reading. Likewise, in item 8, as many as 34 participants (82.93%) reported their WTR if they were required to make an oral report of their reading. Items 7 and 8 produced relatively low mean scores of 2.85 and 2.98 respectively. In comparison, as seen in item 9, as many as 40 participants (97.56%) reported their WTR if they were to participate in a class discussion about the reading. Next, in item 10, 40 participants (97.56%) reported WTR if they were given clearly assigned weekly readings. In item 11, 26 participants (63.42%) reported WTR if the exams were directly based on the reading materials. Likewise, as seen in item 12, as many as 38 participants (92.68%) also reported WTR if their teachers asked them questions about the reading materials after they finished reading.

In the interviews, Winda, Dito, and Ardi reported that reading goals improved their L2 WTR. Winda stated, "What makes me enthusiastic for reading is when there's a goal to achieve... For example, wow, I want to read this because I want to know more" [Winda/Moderate WTR]. Likewise, Dito also mentioned, "The most influential factor would be.... whether or not reading is necessary or urgent for class plays a significant role" [Dito/High WTR]. Specifically mentioning grades and GPA, Ardi stated, "They (L2 texts) are important, and I am very willing (to read) if the English reading materials are for increasing our knowledge, so that our grades, like our GPA or others, can improve and increase" [Ardi/High WTR]. The survey and the interview findings suggested that the participants' WTR seemed to be influenced by how much their mastery of reading materials could affect their academic achievement in class. In this case, academic demand compelling students to read was becoming instrumental necessity to comprehend learning materials and fulfil academic expectation. In other words, such academic demand could be an external determinant of L2 WTR even when intrinsic drive to read may not have been fully developed. That is to state that L2 WTR may not be related to personal choice alone but more of student perception on the importance of reading for their academic success. Related to these findings, a study involving Indonesian L2

learners of English by Indrayadi (2021) also reported that students were motivated to read because they expected to obtain good grades, among other reasons. Although reading motivation and L2 WTR are distinct constructs, similar findings from Indrayadi (2021) and the present study suggest that the expectation of favorable results may enhance both L2 WTR and motivation. The present study's findings may inform teachers that in reading class, the more students' reading activities are explicitly channeled in the class assessments, the more likely students are willing to read the assigned texts. Moreover, a recent study in Africa by Liswaniso (2023) also reported that explicit instructional practices could improve students' reading, even those in challenging educational contexts. In the case of the present study, assessments can take up several forms, for example, weekly reading logs, reflections, and online discussion boards. Such assessments could be graded based on submissions showcasing students' reading progress rather than focusing on 'right' or 'wrong' responses. Such assessment may send a message that teachers appreciate students' reading progress, and this progress could pragmatically benefit students in passing the class and even obtaining good grades. This strategy could be a middle ground, considering that students' WTR can be more extrinsically driven rather than intrinsically driven.

Next, the findings in the third category, "Willingness to Read associated with Perceived Competence and Teacher Support," can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Willingness to Read associated with Perceived Competence and Teacher Support

Item No.	Statements	Very Willing	Willing	Unwilling	Very Unwilling	M	SD
13	Are you willing to read if the English vocabulary contained in the text has already been taught?	20 (48.78%)	19 (46.34%)	2 (4.88%)	-	3.44	.59
14	Are you willing to read if special terms in the text are explained?	23 (56.10%)	17 (41.46%)	1 (2.44%)	-	3.54	.55
15	Are you willing to read if the sentence	18 (43.90%)	22 (53.66%)	1 (2.44%)	-	3.41	.55

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Item No.	Statements	Very Willing	Willing	Unwilling	Very Unwilling	M	SD
	structures and grammar are explained?						
16	Are you willing to read if reading skills and strategies have been taught?	24 (58.54%)	15 (36.59%)	2 (4.88%)	-	3.54	.60
17	Are you willing to read if the teacher is willing to answer the questions that you encounter while doing reading activities?	18 (43.90%)	22 (53.66%)	1 (2.44%)	-	3.41	.55

The findings on items 13 to 17 can be summarized as follows. In item 13, as many as 39 participants (95.12%) reported WTR if the reading materials contained vocabulary they had been taught. In item 14, 40 participants (97.56%) were willing to read texts if the special terms within the texts had been explained. Similarly, in item 15, the same number of participants reported WTR if the structures and grammar essential to understanding the text had been explained. Likewise, in item 16, as many as 39 participants (95.12%) also reported WTR if reading skills and strategies had been taught. Lastly, as seen in item 17, 40 participants (97.56%) reported WTR if their teachers were willing to help them if they had difficulty reading. All in all, the findings in all five items in the third category suggested that the participants reported WTR when they felt they could comprehend the reading texts and obtained necessary support from their teachers.

Furthermore, the interview data also seemed to support the quantitative finding on the perceived support from teachers in the development of L2 WTR. Three participants mentioned that their current L2 WTR was influenced by the support (or lack thereof) from their English teachers throughout their formal education and their language learning experiences with those teachers. Ardi, for example, reported:

“During high school, my teacher always said my language skills were good, so I should read books frequently to expand my knowledge. That has influenced me up to now, and I started to enjoy reading texts in English as well” [Ardi/High WTR]

Several aspects of these findings can be commented on. This quantitative finding confirmed the findings of several previous studies on L2 reading in different contexts on the roles of vocabulary mastery (Sabet et al., 2017; Webb & Chang, 2015), grammar mastery (Dahlina, 2020), and mastery of reading skills (Banditvilai, 2020) in reading comprehension. Though these studies did not investigate WTR, their findings can give some kind of explanation as to why, in the present study, the participants reported a high level of WTR when they perceived themselves to be capable and obtained necessary support from teachers. That was probably because these two conditions led to reading comprehension and prevented them from cognitive overload when reading.

Furthermore, the interview results suggesting the role of L2 learning experiences on L2 WTR also conformed with the findings of a study by Khajavy and Ghonsooly (2017). The study reported L2 Learning Experience, a motivational construct, as the strongest predictor of L2 WTR. As English teachers were found to influence learners' L2 WTR, teachers are expected to create a supportive classroom environment. Teachers' role in creating a supportive classroom atmosphere involves actively supporting learners, offering constructive feedback, using engaging and challenging reading comprehension materials, and promoting cooperation among learners during reading activities. Besides, diverse reading materials can be incorporated. In the context of ESP for Theology or other L2 classes sharing similar characteristics where students are exposed to academic texts, students could be given the freedom to select academic texts whose topics the students are interested in. This freedom could enhance relevance and, eventually, L2 WTR. Engaging activities such as debates and discussions on issues or reading circle activities can be promoted. In the context of ESP for theology, such activities would not only benefit them in terms of language skills but also, to a certain extent, reflect their future roles as pastors who need to nurture dialogues continually. Asking students to deliver short-role-played sermons inspired by academic articles they read or asking them to do other activities relevant to their career prospects could also enhance relevance, which probably enhances their willingness to read despite the students' possible linguistic limitations.

The Influence of L2 Willingness to Read on L2 Reading Achievement

To find the predictive power of L2 WTR on L2 reading achievement, the L2 reading achievement, the dependent variable, was regressed on L2 WTR, the independent variable. However, before the regression was performed, assumptions of normality, homoscedasticity, and linearity was examined. Histogram and scatterplot results indicated that the data could be used for regression.

The ANOVA results and model summary are in Tables 4 and 5, respectively.

Table 4. ANOVA Results with Students' L2 Reading Achievement as the Dependent Variable

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	31.828	1	31.828	5.917	.020 ^b
	Residual	209.770	39	5.379		
	Total	241.598	40			

a. Dependent Variable: L2 Reading Achievement

b. Predictors: (Constant), L2 Willingness to Read

Table 5. Model Summary of the Bivariate Linear Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.363 ^a	.132	.109	2.31921	1.232

a. Predictors: (Constant), L2 Willingness to Read

b. Dependent Variable: L2 Reading Achievement

As seen from Table 4, the participants' L2 WTR was found to significantly predict their reading achievement, $F(1, 39) = 5.92, p < .05$. In Table 5, it can be seen that the model could explain 13.20% of the total variance in reading achievement. Table 6 presents the beta coefficient.

Table 6. Coefficients with L2 Reading Achievement as the Dependent Variable

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-2.281	3.653		-.624	.536
	L2 Willingness to Read	.159	.065	.363	2.433	.020

a. Dependent Variable: L2 Reading Achievement

The data presented in Table 6 reveals that the participants' L2 WTR significantly influenced their reading achievement, $B = .16$, $t = 2.43$, $p < .05$. The positive beta coefficient indicates that the interaction direction was positive, meaning L2 WTR positively influenced L2 reading achievement where the higher the former, the higher the latter.

Studies may have yet to be available specifically contemplating the possible interaction between L2 WTR and L2 reading achievement. Nonetheless, several studies have reported a positive association between reading comprehension, which may be somewhat similar to reading achievement, and various factors that might be related to L2 WTR, for example, L2 reading motivation (Fauzi et al., 2022; Kurniawati et al., 2023; Radiyah et al., 2023), positive reading attitudes (Septianingsi & Atmanegara, 2021), and reading interest (Alfatihah & Tyas, 2022; Fitria, 2019). In the present study, the more students were willing to read, the more likely they would succeed in reading class. The finding could also highlight the role of engagement in reading. Those willing to read are likely to engage with reading texts more frequently and intensely. This engagement could expose them to a broader range of vocabulary, sentence structures, and text content, eventually leading to better L2 achievement.

However, it should also be noted that students may not be willing to read if they perceive the texts to be too difficult in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and content and if they feel they do not obtain the necessary support from teachers. For this reason, reading instructional practices should provide a supportive climate for developing students' L2 WTR. Teachers could enhance relevance, cater to students' interests, and employ multimodal activities and reading assessments. In the case of English for Theology, such as the one in this study, mastery of reading materials can be demonstrated in several possible class activities. The examples are theological debates and guest-speaker role-plays, where students showcase their understanding of academic texts by pretending to be guest speakers in a talk-show format.

As the finding suggests, L2 WTR only predicted 13.20% of the total variance in L2 reading achievement. This means that most of the factors of reading

achievement have yet to be accounted for. While L2 WTR can drive learners to engage themselves with L2 texts, other factors such as vocabulary, cognitive abilities, and L2 learning experiences like exposure to L2 input also play crucial roles. Besides, L2 WTR alone may not automatically translate into enhanced achievement. As an illustration, even though learners are willing to read an L2 text, their interpretation and overall comprehension of the text may be heavily influenced by aspects like reading strategies or current L2 proficiency. Besides, the interview findings presented earlier suggest that external factors like appropriate and relevant reading materials, quality of teaching, and teacher support also play a part in influencing how willing they were to read L2 texts. These external factors may moderate the extent to which L2 WTR could be associated with L2 reading achievement. However, future studies may be necessary to contemplate the possible intertwined interactions among these factors specifically.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study fills the gap in L2 WTR studies in Indonesia, which was previously underexplored in the L2 WTR field. It also sheds light on the interaction between L2 WTR and reading achievement among previously under-represented L2 learners -- Christian theology students in the Muslim-majority Indonesian context. Given the limited WTR research, bivariate regression employed in this study may provide a clear initial exploration of the interaction between L2 WTR and reading achievement in Indonesia. The results may lay the groundwork for developing a more complex model involving L2 WTR and reading achievement.

Several pedagogical implications can be outlined. The findings of this study may guide curriculum developers in integrating strategies to improve students' L2 WTR in Indonesian Theology departments, thereby enhancing students' overall L2 reading achievement. Implications may extend beyond Theology department contexts, for example, other ESP contexts focusing on reading with similar characteristics. In such contexts, providing a supportive learning climate that nurtures L2 WTR and enjoyment of reading is important. Promoting multimodal activities in such reading classes, thereby catering to students' diverse interests and

talents, may positively enhance students' L2 WTR and prevent boredom, especially when students have to deal with lengthy academic texts. Next, using varied and multimodal assessments in reading class, such as oral presentations, role-plays, and visual representations like posters, can possibly give students more opportunities to showcase their reading progress regardless of their field of study. This approach caters to their diverse interests and facilitates a sense of competence, further nurturing L2 WTR. The findings may also support the notion that those who were willing to read L2 texts independently are likely to develop better L2 reading proficiency. As such, this study could have a broader implication for autonomous learning promotion, encouraging learners to find reading opportunities beyond class.

This study also has limitations. First, confounding variables like motivation and external support may also have come into play, affecting the present study's results. Next, the quantitative findings may need to be seen as exploratory and may not be generalized to a wider population due to the limited number of participants recruited using convenience sampling. The finding suggesting the predictive power of L2 WTR on L2 reading achievement at 13.20%, despite statistically significant, can still be considered low. It means that other factors, accounting for 86.80% of L2 reading achievement, were outside the formula and beyond the scope of this study, suggesting a limitation. The use of student final grades as the measurement of L2 reading achievement may not fully capture the L2 reading attainment of the participants as accurately as a standardized reading test.

Future studies may involve the following possible directions. First, future studies may benefit from longitudinal data collection allowing researchers to see the dynamics of L2 WTR across time period. Furthermore, large-scale quantitative studies on L2 WTR can also produce generalizable results and stronger pedagogical implications. It can also be strategic to conduct comparative studies involving cross-disciplinary ESP contexts.

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