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Students' Perceptions of a YouTube Video as a Pre-Assessment Stimulus in EFL Dialogue-Based Speaking Assessment

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ABSTRACT

Speaking assessment in EFL contexts presents persistent challenges, particularly when students have limited familiarity with assessment topics. This study examines how eleventh-grade students at a senior high school in West Java, Indonesia perceived a YouTube video used as a pre-assessment stimulus before a single dialogue-based speaking assessment session. Using a qualitative case study design, data were collected through students' written responses to an open-ended questionnaire administered to 30 students immediately after the assessment and analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. Three themes emerged. First, students perceived the video as building topical familiarity, helping them approach the dialogue with greater understanding of the content. Second, students viewed the video as a linguistic model, particularly for pronunciation, intonation, and spoken language examples. Third, students associated video viewing with greater psychological readiness, though this benefit depended on factors such as video length, speech rate, and vocabulary difficulty. These findings suggest that, within this single-session context, a purposefully selected YouTube video may support students' topical, linguistic, and psychological readiness before a dialogue-based speaking assessment. Practical implications for EFL teachers seeking accessible pre-assessment resources in secondary school contexts are discussed.

Keywords: EFL speaking; YouTube Videos; Pre-Assessment Stimulus; Dialogue-Based Speaking Assessment; Students' Perceptions

INTRODUCTION

Speaking ability serves as a core indicator of communicative competence in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, encompassing the capacity to use language appropriately and effectively across varied interactional contexts (Canale & Swain, 1980). Within EFL education, speaking is widely regarded as one of the most challenging skills to develop and assess, as it requires learners to simultaneously coordinate linguistic knowledge, communicative intent, and interactional responsiveness within real-time exchanges (Luoma, 2004). Consequently, speaking

assessment occupies a central position in EFL education, functioning not only as a tool for evaluating oral performance but also as a means of informing instructional decisions (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). Among the formats available for assessing oral ability, dialogue-based speaking assessment has gained particular attention for placing learners in interactive situations that resemble authentic communicative use, requiring spontaneous response, meaning negotiation, and real-time interaction (Hasanah et al., 2024). Unlike monologic formats such as presentations or scripted recitations, dialogue-based assessment evaluates learners' ability to communicate rather than merely demonstrate isolated linguistic knowledge.

Yet despite its communicative value, dialogue-based speaking assessment is not without challenges for learners in EFL contexts. Students frequently encounter linguistic and affective barriers during speaking assessment, including limited vocabulary, restricted grammatical resources, and anxiety associated with speaking in evaluative settings (Purwati et al., 2023; Sabilla & Kaniadewi, 2025). Topic familiarity has been identified as a particularly significant factor shaping oral performance: learners with greater familiarity with assessment topics tend to produce more fluent and elaborated responses, as they can direct cognitive resources toward language production rather than content generation (Bukhari et al., 2023). These findings suggest that preparation activities designed to build topical understanding before assessment may benefit learners' readiness and participation, particularly in dialogue-based formats where content knowledge and language production operate concurrently.

In the context of the present study, this challenge was reflected in students' questionnaire responses prior to and surrounding the pre-assessment activity. Many students reported that they were able to understand assessment-related content adequately when conceptualized in their first language, yet found it difficult to formulate equivalent ideas in English, indicating a gap between conceptual understanding and linguistic production rather than a lack of comprehension itself. This difficulty was often compounded by affective barriers, as students also reported low self-confidence when attempting to speak English in evaluative settings, consistent with findings that link learners' difficulties in spoken English to a combination of linguistic constraints and low self-confidence (Kulsum et al., 2025). These classroom-specific difficulties point to a need for preparatory support that addresses both linguistic and psychological readiness before students engage in dialogue-based speaking assessment.

Digital technologies, and YouTube in particular, have increasingly been integrated into EFL learning environments as accessible resources for supporting language development (Shoufan & Mohamed, 2022). Research has documented a range of benefits associated with YouTube use in EFL speaking contexts, including improvements in fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary use, and overall oral performance (Saed et al., 2021). YouTube's multimodal format, combining moving image, natural speech, and on-screen text, enables learners to encounter spoken English in meaningful context and to observe pronunciation patterns, intonation,

and vocabulary use in ways that written materials cannot provide (Andini & Zaitun, 2022; Kulsum et al., 2023). Beyond its linguistic affordances, YouTube-based activities have also been associated with positive affective outcomes, including increased learner motivation, greater engagement, and reduced anxiety in speaking-related tasks (Latifah et al., 2025; Setiawati et al., 2025). These qualities suggest that YouTube may hold particular promise not only as a medium for long-term language instruction but also as a short-term preparatory resource in contexts where learner readiness before assessment is a pedagogical concern.

However, existing studies have examined YouTube primarily as a long-term instructional medium through which learners develop language skills over time (Saed et al., 2021; Purwanti et al., 2022; Shoufan & Mohamed, 2022). Considerably less attention has been directed toward how YouTube might function within the assessment process itself, particularly as a preparatory resource in the stage immediately preceding speaking assessment. How students perceive YouTube videos when used as pre-assessment stimuli that support their readiness before dialogue-based speaking assessment therefore remains underexplored in the existing literature.

Against this background, the present study examines students' perceptions of YouTube videos as a pre-assessment stimulus in a dialogue-based speaking assessment conducted in an Indonesian secondary EFL classroom. The study is guided by the following research question: [1] How do students perceive a YouTube video as a pre-assessment stimulus in dialogue-based speaking assessment? Unlike prior studies that have largely examined YouTube as a tool for extended language instruction, this study contributes a novel perspective by situating YouTube within the assessment event itself, examining its short-term function as a preparatory stimulus immediately before a single dialogue-based speaking assessment. In addressing this question, the study seeks to contribute to the literature on technology-mediated speaking assessment by exploring an underexamined dimension of YouTube use in EFL contexts, namely its preparatory function within the assessment event itself rather than as an extended instructional intervention.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Related Studies

Saed et al. (2021) investigated the use of YouTube in developing the speaking skills of EFL university students in Jordan. The study involved students who were exposed to YouTube content over an extended period as part of their speaking instruction, and the findings demonstrated that YouTube use contributed positively to several dimensions of oral performance, including pronunciation accuracy, fluency, and overall spoken production. Unlike Saed et al. (2021), the present study focuses on a single pre-assessment encounter with a YouTube video and explores how students perceive that experience as preparation for dialogue-based speaking assessment rather than as an ongoing instructional intervention.

Purwanti et al. (2022) reviewed the benefits and challenges of using YouTube videos to improve speaking skills in EFL contexts, finding that YouTube offers accessible audiovisual content that supports learners' engagement with spoken language and provides models of natural English use. The review also identified challenges related to material selection and learner motivation. The present study extends this line of inquiry by situating YouTube within the assessment context itself, specifically examining students' perceptions of a YouTube video used as a preparatory stimulus immediately before a dialogue-based speaking assessment.

Shoufan and Mohamed (2022) conducted a scoping review of research on YouTube and education, confirming that YouTube's multimodal format makes it well suited to supporting a range of learning outcomes, including those related to language development. However, as a broad scoping review, the study did not address the specific role of YouTube in relation to speaking assessment, nor how learners perceive it when used as a preparatory resource in the moments before an evaluative speaking activity. The present study addresses this more specific and underexplored dimension. Taken together, these studies establish YouTube as a valuable resource for EFL speaking development, particularly through its audiovisual affordances. Research on its role within the assessment process itself, however remains limited. The present study addresses this gap by examining students' perceptions of a YouTube video used as a pre-assessment stimulus in an Indonesian secondary EFL classroom.

Speaking Assessment in EFL Contexts

Speaking assessment in EFL education is widely recognized as one of the most complex evaluative processes, requiring learners to coordinate linguistic knowledge, communicative intent, and interactional responsiveness simultaneously within real-time exchanges (Luoma, 2004). Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) describe speaking assessment as serving a dual function: it evaluates learners' oral performance while also generating information that informs instructional decision-making. Among the formats available for assessing oral ability, dialogue-based speaking assessment has gained attention for placing learners in interactive situations that approximate authentic communicative use, requiring spontaneous response, meaning negotiation, and collaborative construction of discourse (Hasanah et al., 2024). Unlike monologic formats such as presentations or scripted recitations, dialogue-based assessment evaluates learners' capacity to communicate rather than merely demonstrate isolated linguistic knowledge, making it closely aligned with communicative approaches to language teaching and assessment (Canale & Swain, 1980). Despite its communicative value, this format presents notable challenges in EFL settings, as students frequently encounter linguistic and affective barriers including limited vocabulary, restricted grammatical resources, and anxiety associated with speaking in evaluative conditions (Purwati et al., 2023; Sabilla & Kaniadewi, 2025).

Topic Familiarity and Pre-Assessment Preparation

Topic familiarity has been identified as a theoretically significant variable shaping learners' oral performance in speaking assessment. Bukhari et al. (2023) found that learners who possess greater familiarity with the topic of an assessment task tend to produce more fluent and elaborated spoken responses, because familiarity reduces the cognitive load associated with content generation and allows learners to redirect attentional resources toward language production. This theoretical position suggests that preparatory activities capable of building topical understanding before an assessment may meaningfully support learners' participation, particularly in dialogue-based formats where content knowledge and language production operate concurrently. The concept of pre-assessment preparation is therefore understood not as a form of test coaching but as a pedagogically grounded strategy for supporting learner readiness across cognitive, linguistic, and affective dimensions.

YouTube as Audiovisual Input in EFL Learning

YouTube has been widely discussed as an accessible source of audiovisual input that supports language learning through multimodal engagement. Shoufan and Mohamed (2022) describe YouTube as a platform that enables learners to encounter language in meaningful context, combining auditory and visual information in ways that support comprehension and language processing. Within EFL speaking contexts specifically, Saed et al. (2021) found that YouTube exposure contributed to improvements in pronunciation and fluency, while Andini and Zaitun (2022) demonstrated that YouTube content can serve as a model of spoken English, providing learners with examples of pronunciation, intonation, and natural speech patterns that they can observe and imitate. Kulsum et al. (2023) further noted that YouTube videos support vocabulary development by presenting words and expressions within meaningful visual contexts, enabling learners to connect spoken and written forms in ways that deepen understanding. The audiovisual nature of YouTube content is therefore understood to offer a form of linguistic input that differs qualitatively from written materials, making it a potentially valuable resource for learners preparing to engage in spoken interaction.

Affective Dimensions of Learner Preparation

The affective dimensions of learner preparation are equally relevant to understanding how YouTube may function as a pre-assessment stimulus. Latifah et al. (2025) reported that exposure to authentic materials can positively influence learners' motivation and reduce anxiety in speaking-related activities, suggesting that the affective benefits of pre-assessment preparation extend beyond cognitive readiness. Purwanti et al. (2022) similarly noted that YouTube-based activities tend to be perceived by learners as more engaging than conventional instructional materials, a finding consistent with the broader literature on technology-enhanced language learning. Setiawati et al. (2025) further found that YouTube enhances learner engagement and confidence by presenting content in ways students find

more interesting and relatable than traditional classroom materials. Taken together, these perspectives suggest that YouTube videos, when purposefully selected and integrated into the stage immediately preceding a dialogue-based speaking assessment, may support learners across multiple dimensions of readiness: topical, linguistic, and psychological.

METHOD

Design and Samples

This study employed a qualitative case study design to examine students' perceptions of a YouTube video as a pre-assessment stimulus in dialogue-based speaking assessment. The case was defined as a single dialogue-based speaking assessment event in which a YouTube video was deliberately used as a preparatory resource before the assessment interaction, a bounded and observable phenomenon aligned with the exploratory aims of qualitative inquiry (Yin, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The study was conducted in an eleventh-grade English classroom at a state senior high school in West Java, Indonesia. The participants consisted of 30 eleventh-grade students comprising the entire class, selected through class-based purposive sampling on the grounds that they had directly experienced the YouTube-mediated pre-assessment activity and were therefore positioned to provide relevant and meaningful responses regarding their perceptions. Given the qualitative, single-case orientation of the study, a full class of 30 students was considered sufficient to capture a range of perceptions within this bounded context, consistent with qualitative case study conventions that prioritize depth and contextual richness over statistical generalizability (Yin, 2018). Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the school prior to data collection. Students' participation in the questionnaire was voluntary, and responses were anonymized and coded (S1–S30) to protect participants' confidentiality throughout data collection, analysis, and reporting.

Instrument and Procedure

Data were collected through an open-ended questionnaire, written in Indonesian to allow students to express their perceptions without being constrained by limited English proficiency, administered to all 30 participants immediately following the assessment session. The questionnaire served as the sole data collection instrument, designed to elicit students' perceptions of the YouTube video as a preparatory resource across three dimensions of their experience: motivation, confidence, and engagement. Items were presented in open-ended format to allow respondents to express their perceptions in their own words, generating rich and contextually grounded data well suited to qualitative thematic analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Students completed the questionnaire without time constraints immediately after the assessment session was concluded.

Although the questionnaire items were framed around motivation, confidence, and engagement, the three themes reported in the Findings—topical familiarity,

linguistic modeling, and psychological preparation—emerged inductively through thematic analysis of students' open-ended responses rather than being predetermined by the item labels. Students' responses to all three items frequently referenced overlapping aspects of their experience with the video; for instance, a response addressing "motivation" might simultaneously describe gains in topical understanding and a sense of psychological readiness. The three reported themes therefore represent patterns of meaning that cut across the original item categories, consistent with the inductive, data-driven logic of reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021), in which themes are generated from the dataset as a whole rather than mapped directly onto individual instrument items.

In terms of procedure, the assessment session was conducted in a single class meeting. The video used as the pre-assessment stimulus addressed the topic of personal money management, ran approximately six minutes in length, was presented at an intermediate language level, and included English subtitles to support comprehension of the spoken content. The video was selected by the teacher based on its topical relevance to the upcoming assessment and its accessibility for eleventh-grade learners. Students viewed the video together as a class on a single occasion, with no repeated viewings.

Following video viewing, students participated individually in a one-on-one dialogue-based speaking assessment with the teacher. Students were called forward one at a time, and the teacher posed questions and prompts related to personal money management, the same topic addressed in the video, allowing students to draw on the content and language they had just encountered. Immediately after each student completed the assessment, the open-ended questionnaire was distributed and students provided their written responses. No additional preparation activities or instructional interventions were introduced between the video viewing and the assessment interaction.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis following the six-phase procedural framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2021). In the first phase, the researcher read all 30 questionnaire responses repeatedly to develop thorough familiarity with the data as a whole before any coding was initiated. In the second phase, meaningful units across the responses were identified and assigned initial codes reflecting students' expressed perceptions of the YouTube video. In the third phase, related codes were grouped into candidate themes that captured broader patterns of shared meaning across the dataset. In the fourth phase, candidate themes were reviewed against the full set of coded data to assess their coherence, distinctiveness, and overall fit. In the fifth phase, each theme was clearly defined and named to reflect its specific focus and its relationship to the research question. In the sixth and final phase, themes were written up with supporting evidence drawn from students' responses and presented as contextually specific findings. Responses were analyzed inductively to allow themes to emerge from the data rather than being imposed through predetermined categories. Table 1 illustrates this process,

presenting sample responses alongside their corresponding initial codes, categories, and final themes.

To strengthen the credibility of the findings, the researcher employed systematic rechecking of the dataset as a verification strategy, whereby key thematic interpretations were cross-referenced against the full range of student responses to ensure that emerging themes accurately reflected the breadth of perceptions in the data rather than privileging isolated accounts. This process involved repeated reading of the dataset, consistent application of the coding scheme across all 30 responses, and the use of direct participant quotations to support each theme, consistent with established strategies for enhancing credibility in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Because thematic interpretations were not returned to participants for confirmation, this process is best understood as a form of internal data verification rather than member checking. Consistent with the interpretive purpose of qualitative case study research, the findings are presented as contextually specific rather than empirically generalizable.

Table 1. Example of the Coding Process

Sample Response (Translated)	**Initial Code**	**Category**	**Final Theme**
"There was a dialogue example that could be studied in advance" (S30)	Prior content exposure	Content readiness	Topical Familiarity
"Clear pronunciation examples that could be imitated" (S13)	Pronunciation modeling	Linguistic exposure	Linguistic Model
"I became more enthusiastic when the video was clear and easy to follow" (S23)	Affective engagement	Motivational response	Psychological Preparation

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are presented and discussed through three interrelated themes that emerged from the thematic analysis of open-ended questionnaire data. These themes address the research question concerning how YouTube videos were perceived to function as pre-assessment stimuli in a dialogue-based speaking assessment. The first theme focuses on the role of YouTube in developing students' topical familiarity before the assessment. The second theme examines how students perceived the video as a source of linguistic input that supported their participation during the dialogue. The third theme explores the contribution of video viewing to students' psychological readiness prior to the assessment. Although each theme highlights a different aspect of students' preparation, the findings suggest that the YouTube video played multiple roles in supporting students before they engaged in the dialogue-based speaking assessment

YouTube as a Source of Topical Familiarity

The first theme suggests that students perceived the YouTube video as a useful resource for developing familiarity with the assessment topic before participating in the dialogue-based speaking assessment. Approximately 21 of the 30 students referenced this dimension across their responses. Many students indicated that the video helped them understand the content before the assessment, allowing them to approach the dialogue with greater awareness of the topic being discussed. One student reported that the activity was beneficial because it provided opportunities to practise speaking directly, adding that prior familiarity with the content made participation feel more manageable, "the experience was quite positive because the activity allowed me to practise speaking directly, and I became more enthusiastic because I had already understood the content" *("pengalaman saya cukup baik karena kegiatan ini bisa melatih untuk berbicara langsung dan saya jadi lebih semangat karena sudah memahami isinya," S27).* Similarly, another student highlighted the value of having a dialogue example available to study beforehand, "there was a dialogue example that could be studied in advance" *("ada contoh dialog yang bisa dipelajari lebih dulu," S30)*. Another student similarly observed that the video made the material more accessible, noting that it "made the material easier to understand" *("video ini juga membuat saya lebih mudah memahami materi," S26)*. A further student also noted that the format made it easier to grasp natural ways of speaking in English ("*lebih gampang ngerti cara speaking yang natural," S20).* Collectively, these responses indicate that students perceived the video as a resource that introduced them to the topic and provided a foundation for subsequent participation in the dialogue.

However, topical familiarity was not experienced uniformly across the class. A smaller number of students reported that the video's content did not meaningfully support their preparation, attributing this primarily to limited interest in the topic itself rather than the video format. One student explained that motivation suffered specifically because "the topic was not very interesting" *("topik kurang menarik," S10)*, while another noted that the benefit depended on how relatable the specific dialogue felt: "it depends on the dialogue's context for me, some parts were motivating and some were not" *("kalo aku tergantung konteks dialogue nya sih, ada yang beberapa termotivasi dan ada juga yang tidak termotivasi," S3)*. These responses indicate that the benefit of topical familiarity was conditional on the perceived relevance of the specific topic selected, rather than guaranteed by video use alone.

This finding aligns with previous research emphasizing the importance of topic familiarity in speaking assessment. Bukhari et al. (2023) found that learners who possessed greater familiarity with assessment topics tended to demonstrate stronger oral performance than learners with limited topical knowledge. According to the authors, familiarity with a topic enables learners to focus more effectively on expressing ideas because they do not need to generate content entirely during the interaction itself. Although the present study did not directly measure speaking performance, students' responses suggest that prior exposure to the topic through

video viewing helped them develop a clearer understanding of the content before participating in the assessment.

The finding also complements previous studies investigating the educational value of YouTube in EFL contexts. Shoufan and Mohamed (2022) describe YouTube as an accessible source of educational content capable of supporting learners' understanding of various subjects through audiovisual presentation. Similarly, Purwanti et al. (2022) argue that YouTube videos facilitate learning by presenting information in ways that are both contextualized and engaging. The students in the present study appeared to experience a similar benefit. Rather than encountering the assessment topic for the first time during the dialogue, they were able to engage with the content beforehand through video viewing.

Taken together, these findings indicate that students perceived YouTube as a useful preparatory resource that helped them become familiar with the assessment topic, although this benefit was conditional on students finding the selected topic relevant and engaging. While the findings do not demonstrate a direct causal relationship between video viewing and assessment performance, they suggest that prior exposure to topic-related content may help students approach dialogue-based speaking assessments from a more informed and prepared position.

YouTube as a Linguistic Model

The second theme suggests that students perceived the YouTube video as a valuable source of linguistic input before participating in the dialogue-based speaking assessment. Approximately 19 of the 30 students referenced this dimension across their responses. Several students reported that the video provided useful examples of how English is spoken, particularly in relation to pronunciation and spoken language use. One student explained that the assessment was helpful because it offered a direct model of correct spoken English, "the assessment through YouTube videos was quite helpful because I could see examples of how to speak correctly" *("Menurut aku penilaian lewat video YouTube cukup membantu karena bisa sambil lihat contoh cara ngomong yang benar," S14)*. Another student similarly highlighted that the video provided "clear pronunciation examples that could be imitated" *("memberikan contoh pronunciation yang jelas untuk ditiru," S13)*. Students also highlighted the role of the video in supporting pronunciation practice more broadly. One student reported that the video was "quite helpful for practising pronunciation and listening" *("lumayan membantu buat latihan pronunciation dan listening," S21)*. Another student elaborated that the expressive and natural delivery of the video made it easier to follow intonation and vocabulary choices *("aku gampang ngikutin intonasi nada sama pemilihan vocabnya," S19)*.

At the same time, several students reported that the video's linguistic input was not always sufficient to overcome difficulties they encountered during the dialogue itself, particularly when unfamiliar vocabulary was involved. One student explained that motivation decreased specifically due to vocabulary difficulty: "I became less enthusiastic when there was a lot of new vocabulary" *("aku jadi kurang semangat*

kalau videonya susah dipahami atau banyak vocab baru," S22). Another student reported that confidence was undermined by a mismatch between their own pronunciation and the model provided in the video: "I still felt nervous because my pronunciation was different from the example in the video" *("masih merasa gugup karena salah pengucapan saya berbeda dengan contoh yang ada di videonya," S29)*. These responses suggest that while the video functioned as a useful linguistic model in principle, its effectiveness depended on the gap between the vocabulary and pronunciation demonstrated in the video and students' existing linguistic resources.

This finding is consistent with previous studies that identify YouTube as a valuable source of authentic language input in EFL learning. Andini and Zaitun (2022) found that YouTube content can support pronunciation development by providing learners with accessible models of spoken English. Similarly, Saed et al. (2021) reported that exposure to YouTube videos contributed positively to learners' speaking development, including aspects such as pronunciation, fluency, and overall speaking performance. The findings also align with Kulsum et al. (2023), who found that YouTube videos support language learning by presenting vocabulary and language expressions within meaningful visual contexts, making it easier for learners to connect words and expressions with their intended meanings.

At a broader level, the findings support Purwanti et al.'s (2022) review, which concluded that YouTube can contribute to multiple aspects of language development, including pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. However, the present study highlights a somewhat different aspect of YouTube use. Previous research has largely examined how YouTube contributes to language learning over extended periods of instruction. In contrast, students in this study described the video as an immediate linguistic resource that supported their preparation shortly before assessment, with its usefulness moderated by how closely the video's language matched their own proficiency level.

Overall, the findings suggest that students perceived YouTube not only as a source of information about the assessment topic but also as a source of linguistic input that exposed them to pronunciation patterns and examples of spoken English—benefits that were strongest when the video's language demands aligned with students' existing vocabulary and pronunciation ability.

YouTube as Psychological Preparation

The third theme suggests that students perceived the YouTube video as contributing to their sense of readiness before participating in the dialogue-based speaking assessment. Many students described the activity as engaging and motivating, indicating that prior exposure to the topic through video viewing helped them feel more prepared for the assessment. One student reported feeling enthusiastic because the learning method was more interactive and the atmosphere was not overly tedious, noting that “the learning activity was more interesting, there were direct conversation examples, and the atmosphere was not too boring”

("pembelajarannya lebih menarik, ada contoh percakapan langsung, dan suasananya tidak terlalu membosankan," S18). Another student described the experience positively, explaining that it made them feel more confident about speaking in English, even if not yet fully fluent *("jadi lebih pede buat ngomong Inggris walau masih belepotan dikit," S17)*. These responses suggest that students associated the pre-assessment video with a greater willingness to participate in the subsequent dialogue activity.

Other students expressed similar views regarding the motivational value of the activity. One student explained that learning through video examples was more enjoyable than relying solely on written materials, adding that the overall experience offered a different kind of learning *("suasana pembelajarannya terasa lebih menarik dibanding hanya membaca teks," S15)*. Another student noted that "I became more enthusiastic when the video was clear and easy to follow" *("aku lebih semangat karena videonya jelas dan mudah diikutin," S23)*. Likewise, one student reported that the speaking activity was "not boring and quite interesting," which encouraged them to participate more actively *("kegiatan speaking ini membuat saya lebih active karena nggak membosankan dan cukup menarik," S30)*. Taken together, these responses indicate that students generally viewed the video-based preparation as an engaging experience that supported their readiness before assessment.

The finding is consistent with previous studies examining the affective benefits of YouTube in EFL learning. Setiawati et al. (2025) found that YouTube promotes learner engagement by providing audiovisual content that captures students' attention and increases their involvement in learning activities. Similarly, Purwanti et al. (2022) reported that YouTube-based activities often enhance learner motivation because students perceive video materials as more interesting and accessible than conventional instructional materials. The responses gathered in the present study reflect comparable perceptions, as many students emphasised enjoyment, interest, and enthusiasm when describing their experiences with the video.

The findings also resonate with Latifah et al. (2025), who reported that authentic materials can positively influence learners' motivation and reduce anxiety in speaking-related activities by making topics more accessible and familiar. Several students in the present study suggested that the video helped them feel more prepared before the assessment because they had already been exposed to the topic and examples of spoken interaction. Although the study did not directly measure anxiety levels, students' comments indicate that familiarity with the content may have contributed to a greater sense of readiness before participating in the dialogue.

However, students' perceptions were not uniformly positive. One student explained that motivation decreased when the video was too long or the material was presented in a rigid manner: "I felt less enthusiastic when the video was too long or the content felt too stiff" *("aku kurang semangat kalau videonya terlalu panjang atau isi videonya terlalu kaku," S16)*. Another student reported that enthusiasm

decreased when the video was difficult to understand or contained too many unfamiliar vocabulary items *("aku jadi kurang semangat kalau videonya susah dipahami atau banyak vocab baru," S22)*. One student also noted that videos became less helpful when the dialogue was delivered too quickly, making it difficult to follow comfortably *("saat dialog dalam video terlalu cepat untuk dipahami," S13)*. These responses suggest that the benefits of YouTube were influenced not only by the use of video itself but also by the quality and suitability of the selected material.

This study extends previous research by highlighting the importance of video selection in assessment preparation. While studies such as Setiawati et al. (2025) and Purwanti et al. (2022) generally report positive learner responses toward YouTube-based activities, the present findings suggest that engagement and readiness are not automatically generated by video use. Instead, students' experiences appeared to depend on factors such as video length, speech rate, vocabulary difficulty, and overall comprehensibility. Videos that were perceived as accessible and engaging tended to support students' readiness, whereas videos that were perceived as difficult or excessively long could reduce enthusiasm and limit the perceived benefits of the activity.

Overall, the findings suggest that students perceived YouTube as a resource that supported psychological preparation before dialogue-based speaking assessment. Rather than eliminating nervousness altogether, the video appeared to help students become more familiar with the topic and assessment context, contributing to a greater sense of readiness prior to participation. At the same time, the findings indicate that the effectiveness of YouTube as a preparatory resource depends partly on the appropriateness of the selected video for learners' needs and proficiency levels.

Taken together, the three themes identified in this study suggest that YouTube videos can serve multiple preparatory functions within dialogue-based speaking assessment. As a pre-assessment resource, the video appeared to support students in becoming familiar with the assessment topic, accessing topic-related language, and developing a greater sense of readiness before participating in the dialogue. In terms of topical familiarity, the video provided students with a shared content base that supported their participation during the assessment and helped establish a common reference point for discussion. From a linguistic perspective, the video exposed students to vocabulary, expressions, and pronunciation patterns related to the topic, which some students perceived as useful when responding during the dialogue. In addition, questionnaire data suggested that prior exposure to the topic contributed to students' sense of preparedness, although the extent of this benefit varied across individuals. Across these three dimensions, the findings indicate that the role of the YouTube video was primarily preparatory rather than instructional. Rather than functioning as a tool for long-term language development, the video served as a short-term stimulus that introduced students to relevant content and language before the assessment took place. This study offers insight into a less frequently discussed aspect of YouTube use in EFL contexts. While previous

studies have largely focused on YouTube as a medium for language learning and skill development, the present study suggests that it may also support assessment preparation by helping students engage with assessment topics before participating in communicative tasks. Although the findings are limited to a single classroom context, they point to the potential value of carefully selected YouTube videos as part of a structured pre-assessment sequence in dialogue-based speaking assessment.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that eleventh-grade EFL students at a state senior high school in West Java, Indonesia perceived a YouTube video used as a pre-assessment stimulus as a multifaceted source of support before a single dialogue-based speaking assessment session. Through reflexive thematic analysis of open-ended questionnaire responses from 30 students, three interrelated themes emerged: students perceived the video as supporting their topical familiarity with the assessment content, providing accessible linguistic models of spoken English, and contributing to their psychological readiness before the assessment interaction. These benefits, however, were not experienced uniformly; students' responses indicate that the video's effectiveness depended on the relevance of the topic, the difficulty of the vocabulary, and the length and pacing of the video itself.

These findings extend the existing literature by situating YouTube within the assessment event itself rather than as a long-term instructional medium, suggesting that a single, purposefully selected video can support multiple dimensions of student readiness within a short pre-assessment window. The practical implication is direct: teachers seeking to use YouTube as a pre-assessment resource should prioritize videos that are short, clearly delivered, level-appropriate, and closely connected to the assessment topic, as these qualities appeared to determine whether students experienced the video as supportive or as a source of additional difficulty.

These findings are limited to a single classroom, a single school, a single video, a single assessment session, and a single data collection instrument, and should therefore be interpreted as contextually specific rather than generalizable to other settings. Future research is encouraged to examine YouTube's pre-assessment function across different school contexts, year levels, and proficiency groups, and to incorporate multiple data sources—such as classroom observation or performance-based speaking measures—to determine whether the perceived benefits identified in this study correspond to measurable improvements in speaking performance.

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