Perception of Reductions by English Language Learners

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Dedication

To my beloved parents

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to my first reader, Prof. Douglas Wulf, for his guidance and insightful feedback throughout every stage of this paper. My sincere thanks also go to my second reader, Prof. Matthew C. Kelley, for his continued support along the way. I extend my appreciation to my colleagues at Jazan University for their assistance in obtaining a supplementary IRB approval from Jazan University and facilitating data collection, and to all the participants whose time and commitment made this study possible. Special thanks are due to Dr. Mohammad Jareebi for his generous statistical expertise; his guided tutoring sessions, from data cleaning and coding to interpretation, were invaluable. Finally, heartfelt thanks, always, to my family and friends for their unwavering support.

Abstract

This study investigates the extent to which English language learners (ELLs) struggle with perceiving lexicalized reduced forms compared to their full-form counterparts in spoken English and evaluates the relative effectiveness of explicit training and implicit exposure in improving this perceptual skill. Grounded in Skill Acquisition Theory (SAT), the study examines how learners' transcription accuracy reflects the development of perceptual skill, shifting from limited declarative awareness of these forms toward more proceduralized listening abilities. Pre-intervention results confirmed that learners experienced significantly greater difficulty recognizing reduced forms than full forms, demonstrating the persistent challenge these variants pose due to their divergence from the canonical forms emphasized in classroom instruction. Following intervention, both explicit and implicit groups showed improved accuracy; however, the statistical comparison revealed no significant difference between the two instructional approaches. Although the explicit group demonstrated a modest numerical advantage, this trend was not robust, suggesting that while explicit focus on the phonetic properties of reduced forms may offer some benefit, the present evidence does not clearly establish its superiority over implicit exposure.

1. Background

1.1. Phonetic Reduction in Spontaneous Speech

Spontaneous speech refers to naturally occurring, unrehearsed language produced in everyday interaction. In contrast to careful or laboratory speech, spontaneous speech is characterized by considerable phonetic variability. A central contributor to this variability is phonetic reduction, a gradient and context- sensitive phenomenon shaped by factors such as articulatory economy, speech planning, lexical frequency, and informational predictability (Tucker & Mukai, 2023). In spontaneous speech, such reduction can surface as shorter segmental durations, incomplete articulatory targets, overlapping gestures, and even the omission of segments, yielding pronunciations that diverge from canonical dictionary forms.

In this study, however, the emphasis is on lexicalized reduced forms, expressions such as *wanna, 'cause,* and *would've*, which function as stored multiword units in the mental lexicon of native English speakers (Ernestus & Warner, 2011; Tucker & Mukai, 2023). Although phonetic reduction is widespread in spontaneous speech, these items are not produced through real-time articulatory undershoot; rather, they are entrenched variants with identifiable full-form counterparts (e.g., *want to* → *wanna*). Accordingly, the present study examines learners' perception of these lexicalized variants instead of online phonetic reduction processes.

1.1.1. Perceptual Challenges for L2 Learners

Second language (L2) learners often struggle with spoken English in conversational settings, partly because spontaneous speech contains extensive phonetic reduction, including undershoot, shortened segments, and omitted sounds. Such variability can block the acoustic cues learners rely on, making it harder to map the incoming signal onto intended lexical items (Kul, 2024; Tucker & Mukai, 2023; Verbeke et al., 2025).

The central challenge for L2 listeners is that reduced forms deviate substantially from the canonical pronunciation typically taught in the classroom. As Ernestus and Warner (2011) note, heavily reduced forms can become unrecognizable and cannot be looked up in a dictionary, even though native speakers process them effortlessly. This mismatch between acoustic input and stored lexical representation is further compounded by the high degree of variability inherent in spontaneous speech, which Tucker and Mukai (2023) describe as a continuum of phonetic alterations that significantly impact listener processing.

This ambiguity translates into increased cognitive load during perception. Research consistently shows that non-native listeners are less accurate at identifying reduced forms than full forms (Kul, 2024), and physiological evidence provides further insight into the processing demands they face. Pupillometry studies, which measure pupil dilation as a reliable index of mental effort, demonstrate that reduced forms elicit greater pupillary dilation than unreduced forms, reflecting higher effort to resolve the acoustic ambiguity (Mukai et al., 2023). This effect is amplified for L2 listeners, who generally require greater cognitive resources to decode the signal (Borghini & Hazan, 2018). As a result, the effort required to cope with high-variability input hinders overall comprehension, taxing cognitive resources that would otherwise support higher-level semantic processing (Ernestus et al., 2017).

1.1.2. Instructional Approaches

A growing body of research emphasizes the effectiveness of explicit instruction over implicit approaches in developing L2 learners' phonological accuracy and awareness. (Lacabex

& Gallardo-del-Puerto, 2020) have found that learners who receive direct, structured training on reduced vowels in English disyllabic words demonstrate significantly greater gains in phonological awareness than those exposed only to native speech without explicit guidance. Explicit instruction not only improves learners' ability to identify and produce reduced vowels but also enhances phonotactic awareness and leads to better pronunciation and listening skills, a finding supported by studies on various learner groups (Akakura, 2012; Lacabex & Gallardo-del-Puerto, 2020; Saito, 2011). While implicit instruction and exposure to authentic language input can contribute to language development, the evidence strongly supports the integration of explicit, focused training to accelerate and solidify learners' acquisition of complex phonological processes.

1.2. Skill acquisition Theory (SAT) in Second Languages Learning

Skill Acquisition Theory (SAT) provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how L2 learners develop linguistic abilities, conceptualizing language learning as a process akin to acquiring any complex skill. According to SAT, L2 development unfolds through three distinct cognitive stages. The first step is the declarative stage, where learners consciously absorb explicit knowledge about language rules and patterns, often through direct instruction or study of grammar and vocabulary. This knowledge is initially supported by the declarative memory system and is accessible for conscious reflection, but tends to be easily lost if not reinforced (Criado, 2016; Kachinske, 2021; Maie & Godfroid, 2025).

As learners engage in focused practice, they move into the procedural stage, in which explicit knowledge is gradually converted into procedural knowledge. At this point, learners begin to apply language rules more efficiently in real-time conversation without having to consciously recall them. This proceduralization is facilitated by repeated exposure and meaningful practice and is associated with the development of more stable and context-sensitive language use (Criado, 2016; Kachinske, 2021; Lyster & Sato, 2013; Maie & Godfroid, 2025). Finally, through extensive practice and interaction, learners reach the automatic stage, where language processing becomes rapid, accurate, and largely unconscious, allowing for effortless communication (Criado, 2016; Kachinske, 2021; Lyster & Sato, 2013; Maie & Godfroid, 2025).

1.2.1. Relevance to the Study

SAT is particularly relevant for understanding the persistent challenges L2 learners face in perceiving reduced forms. Various studies confirm that L2 learners initially struggle to recognize reduced forms due to limited exposure and increased processing demand (Morano et al., 2024; Wong et al., 2017). This challenge is consistently observed, as learners tend to respond less accurately and more slowly to reduced forms than to full forms, highlighting the importance of targeted instructional interventions (Morano et al., 2024; Wong et al., 2017). Research further demonstrates that explicit intervention not only leads to greater improvement in learners' perception and processing of reductions than implicit approaches, but also provides opportunities for practice and feedback, which are essential for proceduralizing and ultimately automatizing skills (Lee & Lyster, 2016; Stratton, 2025).

1.2.2. Previous SLA research with SAT

Empirical research supports the validity of the three-stage model of SAT in L2 acquisition. These studies demonstrate that learners' performance initially correlates with their declarative learning abilities, but as practice continues, procedural learning mechanisms become more predictive of proficiency outcomes (Kachinske, 2021; Maie & Godfroid, 2025). Moreover, research conducted in instructional settings highlights that explicit instruction, when combined with ample opportunities for guided practice, promotes significant improvements in both perception and production of L2 features, including pronunciation and connected speech (Inceoglu, 2021; Lyster & Sato, 2013; Pawlak, 2025; Stratton, 2023). However, the effectiveness of these learning mechanisms remains mediated by factors such as individual differences, the complexity of the target features, and the quality and quantity of practice opportunities (Criado, 2016; Kachinske, 2021; Pawlak, 2025). In summary, SAT underscores the role of deliberate instruction in enabling L2 learners to proceduralize and automatize complex skills, thereby offering a framework for developing more native-like language processing skills (Criado, 2016; Kachinske, 2021; Lyster & Sato, 2013; Maie & Godfroid, 2025; Pawlak, 2025; Stratton, 2023).

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants

The participants in this study were English language learners (ELLs), undergraduate students at Jazan University. Before data collection commenced, the study was approved by two institutional review boards: the Local Committee for Research Ethics at Jazan University and the Office of Research Integrity & Assurance at George Mason University.

Participants were recruited in a variety of way. Several colleagues at Jazan University assisted by distributing the survey links to their students. Additionally, the survey invitation was shared publicly[1] via social media platforms, including X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn, and through word of mouth.

[1] The invitation flyer used for participant recruitment is included in the Appendix section.

A total of 106 responses were received across all surveys. After data cleaning, which excluded incomplete responses, approximately 10 valid responses were retained for each survey form. The English proficiency of participants was approximately determined via self-assessment of their listening skills (i.e., beginner, intermediate, or advanced). No objective measure was administered. Demographic data, specifically age range (18-20, 21-23, 24-26, or 27 or older), was also collected.

2.2. Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions: 1. To what extent can English learners struggle with the perception of lexicalized reduced forms compared to their full-form counterparts in spoken English? 2. Does explicit training lead to greater improvement in English learners' recognition of lexicalized reduced forms compared to implicit training?

2.3. Hypotheses

The current study was guided by two primary hypotheses:

1. Before instruction, participants will demonstrate lower transcription accuracy for sentences containing lexicalized reduced forms compared to full forms, reflecting the reduced cues and the lexicalized, conversational nature of these expressions.
2. Both instructional conditions, implicit versus explicit, will improve learners' perception of lexicalized reduced forms at post-test, with greater gains expected in the explicit training group.

2.4. Stimuli

The experimental material was a listening task consisting of 40 recorded sentences per survey form. The sentences were divided evenly across a pre-test and post-test (20 sentences each). All recordings were produced by a native English speaker in a sound-attenuated booth at George Mason University, ensuring high-quality audio.

The stimulus sentences included both full forms and lexicalized reduced forms of common English expressions, such as *want to* versus *wanna.* The sentence below illustrates several of these lexicalized items as they commonly occur in conversational English:

> [lɛmɪ tɛləm aɪ ɡɑrə ɡoʊ tu: ðə stoɚ kəz aɪ wʊdəv fɚɡɑtən ʌðɚwaɪz]
> ‘Lemme tell ‘em I gotta go to the store ‘cus I would’ve forgotten otherwise.’

In the present study, these forms are treated as lexicalized variants with identifiable full-form counterparts (e.g., *because* → *‘cause*). The selected items provide a representative sample of high-frequency expressions that commonly occur in informal spoken English, ensuring that participants are tested on forms they are likely to encounter in authentic conversational interactions.

2.5. Experimental Procedure

The experiment was administered online via the Qualtrics platform to measure participants’ baseline ability to perceive and recognize reduced forms in spoken English. The total study duration was approximately 60 minutes[2].

[2] Refer to the appendix for study materials.

The session sequence was as follows: participants first granted informed consent, completed a brief demographic questionnaire, and then proceeded through a pre-test, an intervention (training) session, and a post-test.

The study employed a parallel design using two survey versions, Form A and Form B, which were counterbalanced:

- Intervention Difference: Form A provided explicit instruction, while Form B involved implicit exposure.
- Test counterbalancing: the pre-test in Form A served as the post-test material in Form B (and vice versa).

The core task required participants to transcribe the sentences heard as accurately as possible. Each audio recording was played only twice to simulate real-world listening conditions. These sentences were presented in a randomized order to mitigate potential bias from pattern recognition.

Both intervention types lasted approximately 15 minutes:

- Explicit Training (Form A) included direct instruction on the alternation between full and reduced forms using minimal pair comparisons (e.g., *Do you want to come with me?* versus *Do you wanna come with me?*). This was followed by a cognitively lighter Full versus Reduced Match Task, where participants selected the canonical written form that corresponded to a reduced audio sentence. Immediate feedback was provided, and retry options were available, reinforcing the mapping between the reduced input and its full equivalent.

- Implicit Training (Form B) provided solely exposure to natural reduced forms embedded in short casual dialogues and media clips[3]. Participants then answered multiple-choice comprehension questions focused on meaning of the interactions rather than the target linguistics form. Unlike Form A, this intervention offered no explicit instruction, drew no attention to the reductions, and provided no corrective feedback.

3. Results

3.1. Participant Characteristics

A total of 21 participants completed the study, with 11 assigned to Form A and 10 to Form B. The sample was predominantly female (i.e., 81.0%, n = 17), with Arabic being the L1 for all participants. Participants' ages ranged from 18 – 27+ years, with the largest group being 27 or older, (i.e., 42.9%, n = 9). The distribution of self-reported English listening proficiency levels extended across beginner (28.6%, n =6), intermediate (47.6%, n = 10), and advanced (23.8%, n = 5). Complete demographics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Participant demographics (n = 21)

Variable	Category	n	%
Age	18-20	3	14.3
	21-23	5	23.8
	24-26	4	19.0
	27 or older	9	42.9
Sex	Female	17	81.0
	Male	4	19.0
First Language	Arabic	21	100
English Listening Skills	Beginner	6	28.6
	Intermediate	10	47.6
	Advanced	5	23.8

[3] Extracted from YouGlish https://youglish.com and downloaded and clipped using https://en1.savefrom.net/13RZ/.

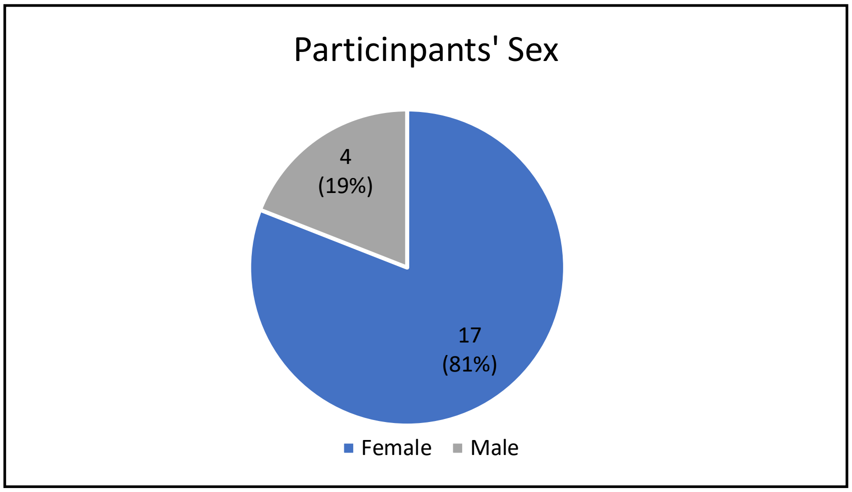

Figure1. Sex distribution among participants

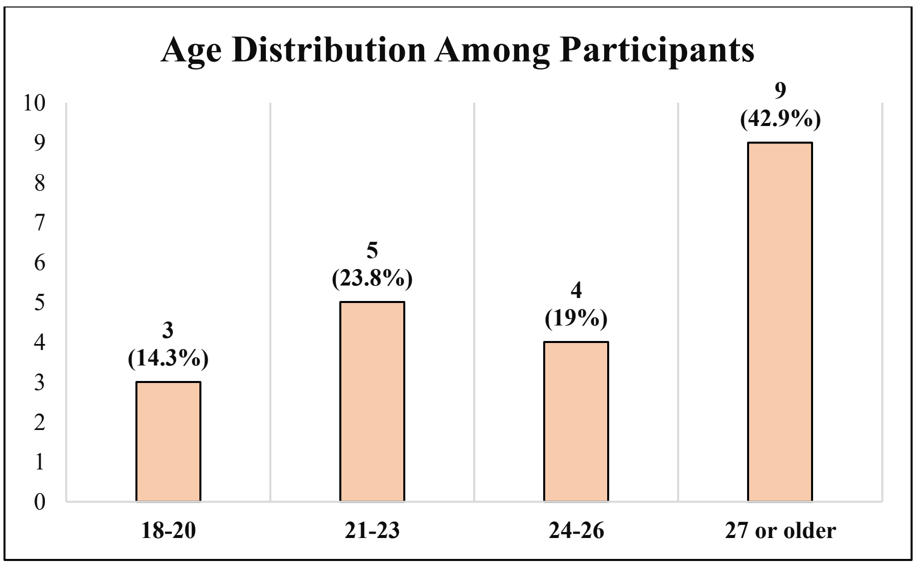

Figure 2. Age distribution among participants

3.2. Perception of Reduced versus Full Forms

To address the first research question "*To what extent can English learners struggle with the perception of lexicalized reduced forms compared to their full-form counterparts in spoken English?*", pre-test scores were analyzed for all participants before the intervention. Descriptive statistics showed greater mean performance on full forms (M = 6.27, SD = ±3.25) compared to reduced forms (M= 5.00, SD = ±3.34), representing a mean difference of 1.27 points. Both measures demonstrated substantial variability, with full range utilization (0-10) and standard deviations exceeding 3.0 (see Table 2).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Pre-test Performance on Reduced and Full Forms

Form Type	n	M	SD	Mdn	Min-Max
Reduced Forms	21	5.00	±3.34	5.00	0-10
Full Forms	21	6.27	±3.25	7.00	0-10
Note. Maximum possible score = 10					

A paired-sample t-test was conducted to evaluate whether the observed difference between reduced and full form perception before intervention was statistically significant. Results indicated that participants performed significantly better on full forms than reduced forms, ($p = 0.003$, 95% CI [0.48, 2.06]). Detailed test statistics are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Paired-Samples t-Test: Reduced Forms vs. Full Forms

Comparison	MD	p	95% CI
Full - Reduced	1.27	0.003	[0.48, 2.06]
Note. MD = Mean Difference; positive values indicate superior performance on full forms			

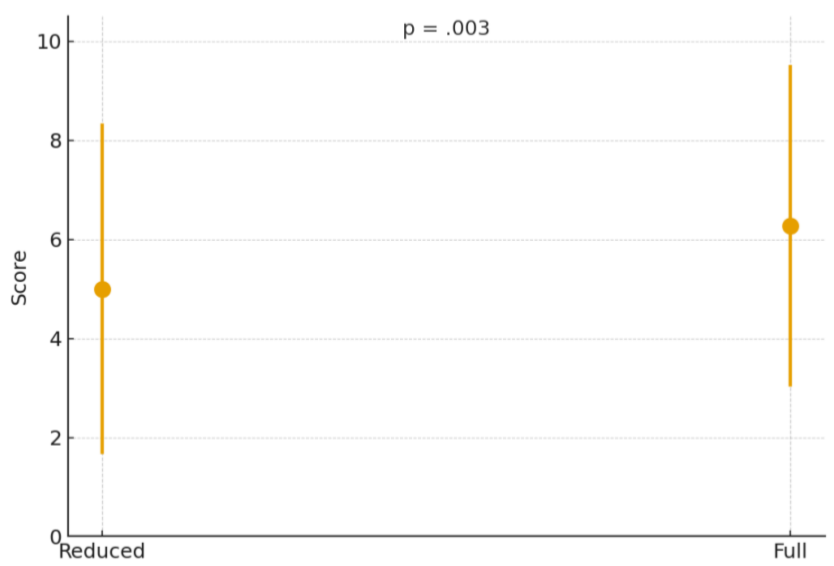

Figure 3. Pre-test Performance on Reduced vs. Full Forms

3.3. Differential Performance Across Learner Characteristics

To explore whether the perception gap between reduced and full forms differed across proficiency levels, descriptive statistics were calculated for each subgroup. Interestingly, the results reveal a counterintuitive pattern: the gap in perception widened progressively with increasing proficiency. Beginner learners showed only a slight difference (0.50), intermediate learners a moderate one (1.30), and advanced learners the largest (2.40) (see Table 4). This expanding gap implies that while higher proficiency is correlated with improved comprehension of full forms, the ability to perceive reduced forms does not advance at the same pace. Although advanced learners performed near ceiling on full forms ($M = 8.00$), their performance on reduced forms remained relatively moderate ($M = 5.60$), pointing to a persistent limitation in phonological processing even at higher proficiency levels.

Table 4. Pre-test Performance by English Listening Proficiency Level

Proficiency	n	Reduced Forms M (SD)	Full Forms M (SD)	Difference
Beginner	6	4.33 (4.23)	4.83 (3.92)	0.50
Intermediate	10	5.60 (2.80)	6.90 (2.51)	1.30
Advanced	5	5.60 (3.21)	8.00 (2.12)	2.40

Additional analyses examined performance across age and sex categories. All age groups showed the anticipated pattern of better performance on full forms, with differences ranging from 1.00 to 1.80 (Table 5). The 21-23 age group displayed the most significant perception gap. Similar patterns were observed for both male and female participants; however, females showed a slightly greater difference (1.41) than males (1.00), though the limited male subsample ($n = 4$) constrains interpretability (Table 6).

Table 5. Pre-test Performance by Age Group

Age Group	n	Reduced M (SD)	Full M (SD)	Difference
18-20	3	5.67 (2.89)	6.67 (1.15)	1.00
21-23	5	6.20 (3.56)	8.00 (2.12)	1.80
24-26	4	4.75 (4.11)	6.50 (2.08)	1.75
27+	9	4.78 (3.19)	5.78 (4.06)	1.00
Note. Difference = Full Forms M - Reduced Forms M				

Table 6. Pre-test Performance by Sex

Sex	n	Reduced M (SD)	Full M (SD)	Difference
Female	17	5.24 (3.42)	6.65 (3.28)	1.41
Male	4	5.25 (2.63)	6.25 (1.71)	1.00

3.4. Most and Least Difficult Items

Across all survey items, some sentences notably proved particularly difficult, while others appeared to be perceived with relative ease. The most challenging items tended to include reduced forms, such as *gotta, would've/should've,* and *v+'em*. For instance, sentences such as *I gotta clean the house* and *I saw 'em waiting for the bus* seemed to consistently present challenges to participants, implying a lack of familiarity or perceptual prominence for these kinds of reductions.

Conversely, the items that appeared to be more easily perceived tended to include clearer or common occurring forms, such as *give me, going to, because,* and *let me.* Sentences such as *Give me a moment to think* and *I'm going to call her now* may be more salient or familiar to participants, possibly because their segmental patterns are relatively clearer and occur more often in everyday communication.

3.5. Intervention Effectiveness: Explicit versus Implicit Training

The second research question investigated the comparative efficacy of explicit versus implicit training in enhancing learners' perception of lexicalized reduced forms. Descriptive statistics highlighted a difference in outcomes. Participants receiving explicit training showed greater mean performance (M = 13.9, SD = ±7.1) compared to those receiving implicit training (M = 13.09, SD = ±6.1). Admittedly, substantial variability existed within both intervention groups. This differential effect was amplified at the item level. Explicit training achieved a mean accuracy of 69.5% (SD = 11.5%) across the 20 items of the post-test, whereas implicit training produced a mean accuracy of 63.5% (SD = 20.6%).

Table 7. Post-test Performance by Intervention Type

Intervention	**n**	**Total Score M (SD)**	**Item-Level M %**	**Item-Level SD%**	**MD**	**p**	**95% CI**
Explicit	10	13.9 (7.1)	69.5	11.5	0.8	0.795	[-5.683, 7.301]
Implicit	11	13.09 (6.1)	63.5	20.6			

Note. Maximum possible total score = 20. Item-level statistics represent mean accuracy across 20 items

A two-sample t-test was conducted to evaluate whether the observed difference in post-test performance between the explicit and implicit training groups was statistically significant. Results indicated that the explicit group outperformed the implicit group by a small margin; however, this difference was not statistically significant (p = 0.796, 95% CI [-5.68, 7.30]).

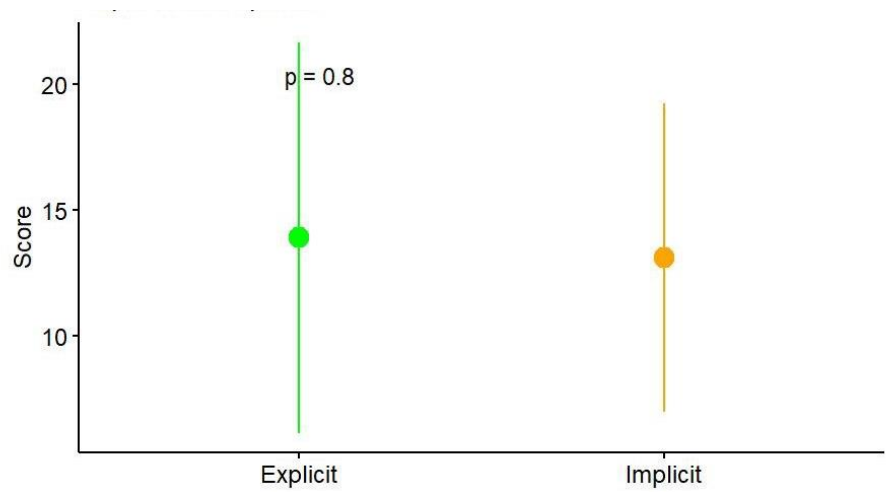

Figure 4. Mean post-test scores for explicit and implicit training groups

4. Discussion

This study explored ELLs' ability to identify reduced forms in spoken English, adding to current studies on perception of reductions with data from Arabic L1 ELLs. The results confirmed the first research question, demonstrating that ELLs struggle substantially more with the perception of reduced forms compared to their full form counterparts. A substantial performance disparity was observed in the pre-tests, where participants exhibited greater recognition of full forms over reduced forms (M_{diff} = 1.27 points, p = .003), indicative of a medium-to-large effect size (d = 0.716). This outcome aligns with a broad body of research indicating that non-native speakers often encounter difficulties in processing non-canonical phonetic realizations of fast speech. The greater recognition of full forms implies that ELLs listeners rely heavily on clear, canonical input.

An impressionistic view of item performance further supports these interpretations. Highly reduced or coalesced forms, such as *gotta, would've* and *v+'m* appeared notably more difficult for participants across both training conditions. Conversely, items characterized by clearer or more frequent forms, such as *give me, because,* and *going to*, were recognized with relatively less effort. This observed pattern implies that learners' perception is influenced not only by intervention type but also by the degree of phonetic reduction and the prior familiarity with the target linguistic forms.

The comparison between explicit and implicit training showed trends favoring explicit instruction; however, the inferential analysis did not confirm a statistically significant advantage. Although descriptive statistics suggested that learners who received explicit training performed slightly better on the post-test, the two-sample t-test indicated that this difference was small and not statistically significant. This outcome implies that, withing the present study, explicit instruction did not reliably outperform implicit instruction in improving learners' perception of lexicalized reduced forms. At the same time, descriptive tendency is consistent with claims in Skill Acquisition Theory that explicit instruction may facilitate the proceduralization of perception. Nevertheless, the high variability observed across participants and items, as well as the small sample pool (N=21), suggests that the pattern should be interpreted cautiously. Withing these constraints, the findings point to a modest, but statistically inconclusive, advantage for explicit training.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study confirms that ELLs face a persistent challenge in perceiving reduced forms in spoken English. Both explicit training and implicit exposure contributed to improving learners' perceptual accuracy; however, the inferential analysis did not show a statistically significant difference between the two intervention types. Although the explicit group displayed a slight numerical advantage, this effect was small and statistically inconclusive.

These findings suggest that explicit instruction may offer some perceptual benefit, but the current evidence is not strong enough to assert its superiority over implicit exposure.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, participants' proficiency in English was not objectively measured. Instead, participants self-reported their listening proficiency, which provided only a general indication of ability and may not accurately reflect their actual listening performance. Second, although the study originally intended to include a delayed post-test to examine retention, this component could not be implemented due to participant unavailability. Future research should employ longitudinal designs to examine the durability of perceptual gains over time.

The small sample pool (N = 21) also limits the strength of the conclusions. With such a small number of participants in each intervention group, the study was likely underpowered to detect subtle instructional effects that may emerge in larger samples. Finally, different participants completed Form A and Form B of the survey. Because the same individuals did not participate across testing sessions, the comparability of the post-test results was limiting the strength of inferences regarding intervention's effectiveness. These limitations indicate that while the study provides preliminary insights into the perception of lexicalized reduced forms and the role of instruction, further research with larger and more controlled samples is needed to confirm these findings.

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Appendix A

Experimental Material

Age range\ الفئة العمرية:

- 18-20
- 21-23
- 24-26
- 27 or older

Sex\ النوع:

- Male\ ذكر
- Female\ أنثى

What is your first language? \ ماهي لغتك الأم؟

……………………………………………

How would you rate your English listening skills? \ كيف تُقيّم مهارة الاستماع لديك في اللغة الانجليزية؟

- Beginner\ مبتدئ
- Intermediate\ متوسط
- Advanced\ متقدم

A pre-test

You will hear 20 recorded sentences, one at a time. Your task is to transcribe exactly what you hear. Try to write down everything as accurately as possible. You may need a stable internet connection and access to headphones or speakers to complete the listening tasks effectively.

اختبار قبلي

سوف تستمع\ين إلى 20 جملة مسجلة، كل على حدة. مهمتك هي كتابة ماتسمعه\ينه بأكبر قدر من الإتقان. قد تحتاج\ين إلى اتصال انترنت مستقر وسماعات أو مكبر صوت لإتمام الاختبار بكفاءة

Write the sentence you hear in English: قم بإملاء الجملة التي تسمعها باللغة الانجليزية

1. I want to watch a movie.
2. They wanna use the kitchen.
3. I’m going to call her now.
4. I’m gonna travel to Spain.
5. I have got to finish my homework.
6. I gotta wake up early tomorrow.
7. Give me a moment to think.
8. Gimme a second to finish this task.
9. Let me check the schedule.
10. Lemme bring the keys.
11. He could have called me.
12. He could’ve joined us.
13. They would have stayed longer.
14. She would’ve come if she was free.
15. They should have asked first.
16. They should’ve apologized.
17. I saw them at the store.
18. I saw ’em waiting for the bus.
19. She didn’t call because she was busy.
20. I stayed home ‘cause I felt sick.

Explicit Training:

What are 'reductions' in spoken English? In everyday English, native speakers often pronounce words in a shortened or altered way. This is called reduction. It's common in fast, casual speech, and it can make listening challenging. Here are a few common examples: “Going to” becomes "gonna". "should have" becomes "should've". "have got to" becomes "gotta".

Why do these 'reductions' happen?

Speakers reduce sounds to save time and effort.

Reduced forms often involve:

- Dropping sounds
- Merging sounds
- Changing consonants or vowels

Instructional Minimal Pari Examples:

In fast casual speech, "Could have" is reduced to "Could've", listen to the difference:

She could have gone to the meeting. *She could've gone to the meeting.*

The /h/ sound is dropped, making the phrase shorter.

Native speakers usually say “gotta” instead of “have got to”. For example:

I have got to finish this work. *I gotta finish this work.*

The phrase shortens to a single word; “gotta”.

In everyday spoken English, the word “because” is often shortened to “’cuz”. Listen to the following examples:

I stayed home because it was raining. *I stayed home ’cuz it was raining.*

This shorter form is very common in casual conversations.

The phrase “want to” often blends into “wanna”. Listen to the difference:

Do you want to come with me? *Do you wanna come with me?*

The /t/ sound is softened or lost, and the two words blend together naturally.

When spoken quickly, “Give me” often becomes “gimme”. Listen to the difference in the following examples:

Can you give me that pen? *Can you gimme that pen?*

The /v/ sound is omitted, making “give me” shorter in connected speech.

Full vs. Reduced Match Task: Listen to the audio. Then choose the full sentence that matches what you heard.

What is the full form of the sentence? “He’s gonna take the bus”.

a. He is going with the bus.
b. He is going to take the bus.
c. He’s going in the bus.

What is the full form of the sentence? “Lemme check my schedule”.

a. Let me check my schedule.
b. Let us check my schedule.
c. Let me see your schedule.

What is the full form of the sentence? “I would’ve told you”.

a. I would have told you.
b. I will have told you.
c. She would’ve been told.

What is the full form of the sentence? “I saw’em at the store”.

a. He saw me at the store.
b. I saw them at the store.

c. I said that he was at the store.

What is the full form of the sentence? “We’re late ‘cause of traffic.”

a. We’re late from traffic.
b. She was late because of traffic.
c. We’re late because of traffic.

Implicit training:

Understanding Casual English Speech: Native English speakers often speak quickly and blend words together. This is a normal part of casual conversation. In this section, you'll hear real-life speech and practice understanding fast, everyday English.

You will watch a few short video clips of everyday English conversations. Just pay close attention to how people speak and complete the short tasks that follow. No preparation or note-taking is needed.

Video 1: what did the speaker most likely say?

a. We have got to grow the economy.
b. We will grow the economy.
c. We should grow the economy.

Video 2: what did the speaker most likely say?

a. They trusted god, and god took care of them.
b. They trusted god, and god took care of us.
c. She trusted god, and god took care of her.

Video 3: what did the speaker most likely say?

a. I will tell you a little bit about our company.
b. Let me tell you a little bit about our company.

c. We should tell you a little bit about our company.

Video 4: what did the speaker most likely say?

a. He will not take me to his favorite restaurant.
b. He took me to his favorite restaurant.
c. He is going to take me to his favorite restaurant.

Video 5: what did the speaker most likely say?

a. Also, there will be enough food for everyone because it takes one pound of grain.
b. Also, there will be enough food for everyone that is why it takes one pound of grain.
c. Also, there will be enough food for everyone even though it takes one pound of grain.

You're doing great! In this activity, you will listen to a few short audio clips taken from everyday conversations. After each clip, you'll answer a question about what the speaker means. There's no need to focus on exact wording; just listen carefully and choose the option that best captures the speaker's intended message. When you're ready, click Next to begin.

1. Audio: "He's gonna take the bus."

Question Prompt: What does the speaker plan to do?

a. Go somewhere by bus.

b. Take someone to the bus stop.

c. Drive the bus himself.

2. Audio: "Lemme check my schedule."

Question Prompt: What is the speaker most likely doing?

a. Looking to see if they are available.

b. Asking someone else for their schedule.

c. Making plans without checking availability.

3. Audio: “I would’ve told you.”

Question Prompt: What does the speaker mean?

a. They already told you.

b. They regret not telling you.

c. They don’t want to tell you.

4. Audio: “I saw’em at the store.”

Question Prompt: What happened?

a. The speaker saw someone at the store.

b. The speaker went to the store alone.

c. Someone told the speaker about the store.

5. Audio: “We’re late ‘cause of traffic.”

Question Prompt: Why is the speaker late?

a. They missed the bus.

b. They had an emergency.

c. There was a lot of traffic.

Post-test

Write the sentence you hear in English: قم بإملاء الجملة التي تسمعها باللغة الانجليزية

1. I want to go for a walk.
2. I wanna help with the project.
3. I am going to fix the car.

4. She’s gonna be late.
5. I have got to call my mom.
6. I gotta clean the house.
7. Give me a call when you are free.
8. Gimme your email.
9. Let me explain what happened.
10. Lemme check my schedule.
11. You could have reminded me.
12. He could’ve finished earlier.
13. They would have tried again.
14. The team would’ve won.
15. You should have told me.
16. We should’ve left sooner.
17. I saw them leaving the building.
18. I saw ’em at the park.
19. He was late because he had a meeting.
20. She’s upset ’cause she lost her keys.

Delayed post-test

You will hear 20 recorded sentences, one at a time. Your task is to transcribe exactly what you hear. Try to write down everything as accurately as possible. You may need a stable internet connection and access to headphones or speakers to complete the listening tasks effectively.

اختبار بعدي مؤجل

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1. I want to go shopping.
2. We wanna grab lunch together.
3. I'm going to take a break.
4. He's gonna start without us.
5. I've got to finish this today.
6. I gotta run to the store.
7. Give me the book.
8. Gimme another chance.
9. Let me know what you decide.
10. Lemme get back to you.
11. You could have called yesterday.
12. She could’ve helped if she had time.
13. I would have said something.
14. He would’ve stayed for lunch.
15. You should have waited for me.
16. They should’ve emailed me.
17. I saw them walking home.
18. I saw ’em at the mall.
19. We left because it got too loud.
20. He stayed ’cause he was tired.

Delayed post- test

You will hear 20 recorded sentences, one at a time. Your task is to transcribe exactly what you hear. Try to write down everything as accurately as possible. You may need a stable internet connection and access to headphones or speakers to complete the listening tasks effectively.

اختبار بعدي مؤجل

ستستمع\ين إلى 20 جملة مسجلة، كل على حدة. مهمتك هي كتابة ماتسمعه\ينه بأكبر قدر من الإتقان. قد تحتاج\ين إلى اتصال انترنت مستقر وسماعات أو مكبر صوت لإتمام الاختبار بكفاءة.

1. I want to talk to you.
2. They wanna see the movie again.
3. She's going to meet you there.
4. We're gonna miss the train.
5. I’ve got to write a report.
6. I gotta go now.
7. Give me some time to think.
8. Gimme the remote.
9. Let me handle this.
10. Lemme grab my bag.
11. He could have called someone else.
12. They could’ve taken the bus.
13. You would have liked the show.
14. She would’ve asked for help.
15. I should have brought my jacket.
16. He should’ve locked the door.
17. I saw them at the station.

18. I told ’em to wait outside.

19. She left because she felt sick.

20. We stayed ’cause it was fun.

Appendix B

Invitation Flyer