

# Meaning-Inferred Gloss and Meaning-Given Gloss on Incidental Vocabulary Learning

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## Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to examine whether meaning-inferred gloss (MI), involving mental processing of new words through decision-making process, generates better vocabulary learning than meaning-given gloss (MG) does. Also, it is our concern whether proficiency levels (High and Low) enhance vocabulary learning together with the two gloss types in question. The participants in the present study were 175 English learners from four intact classes in a senior high school in central Taiwan: two classes were third-year students (High) and the other two first-year students (Low). One class in each year was assigned to MI and the other MG. The treatments were that, when reading two passages, participants of the MI group were given three alternatives of each target word in L1 while those of the MG group were given single L1 translation of each target word. All participants were repeatedly tested on the target words before, immediately after, and two weeks after reading the passages. The results of this two-by-two factorial design analyzed by two-way ANOVA reconfirmed, in both vocabulary gain and retention, that the two glosses are beneficial for incidental vocabulary learning and that the effects of meaning-inferred gloss are greater than those of meaning-given gloss. The factor of proficiency levels, on the other hand, was found non-significant in both vocabulary gain and retention.

**Keywords:** Gloss types; incidental vocabulary learning; meaning-given gloss; meaning-inferred gloss; proficiency levels