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Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners (4th Edition)

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Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners: T

Author: Jana Echevarría, MaryEllen Vogt, and Deborah J. Short (2012)

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As U.S. K-12 classrooms move to incorporate 21st Century Skills, Common Core State Standards, and Response to Intervention (RtI), there is an intensified focus on instructional considerations that result in deeper proficiency resulting in deepened comprehension. Therefore, now more than ever, educational design and delivery demands the demystification of the language learning process. Likewise,

increasing need to saturate native speakers of English with academic language learning for great variance and room for growth with regard to academic language proficiency. The SIOP Observation Protocol, is a framework for comprehensive academic interventions for students. This publication, *Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners: The SIOP Model* (4th Edition), by MaryEllen Vogt, and Deborah J. Short encompasses a fifteen-year research journey, resulting in research-based material solidifying the notion that all teachers are language teachers.

The text is strategically presented in 12 chapters, intentionally designed for myriad ranges of background knowledge concerning second language acquisition. The publication may be read by pre-service candidates, graduate students who are also practitioners in the field, or in-service educators. The publication's presentation also includes a sense of versatility encompassing a wide variety of educational settings including community colleges and universities. Some of these include English as a second language programs, dual language programs, intensive English programs, and general education classes from a content delivery perspective. The SIOP Model framework is comprised of eight components and provides each with in-depth information regarding the model's thirty corresponding components. The book begins with introductory information on the research behind the model development, academic language development process, connections to special populations of students within the EL demographic, and how to apply the lesson design and delivery. The 4th Edition describes the following with regard to educational settings:

Chapter One: Introducing the SIOP Model

This chapter illustrates demographical trends, diverse characteristics of English learners, and the impact of school reform, standards, and accountability. Likewise, details are provided to clarify academic standards simply in the context of language arts instruction but, for *all teachers with all students*, “because all are alike” (p. 10). The information then glides into understanding how the SIOP Model framework informs instructional design and delivery.

Chapter Two: Lesson Preparation

The keystone of the framework focuses on the concept of teachers including content and language objectives. Each chapter themselves each have content and language objectives to model their foundation. This chapter presents detailed information on how content and language objectives are formed and how they provide the literal foundational building blocks for the remaining components of the framework. This includes appropriate content concepts, the use of supplementary materials, the adaptation of content to meet the needs of all students, and the use of meaningful activities for all students' language production and application are clarified.

Chapter Three: Building Background

Understanding how students come to US classrooms from a vast array of linguistic and cultural speakers, the model provides great emphasis for considering students' background experiences. Therefore, this component's features of linking students' experiences to current learning, and the vocabulary within a lesson are formidable aspects of differentiated instruction.

Chapter Four: Comprehensible Input

Centered on Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis, this chapter focuses on how teachers develop students' linguistic competencies. The component features of using appropriate speech, providing a variety of techniques within classroom instruction highlight the supporting ideas that students learn more than simply "learning it" in a superficial, memorized way. The authors' statement "Students who meet high academic standards in a language they do not speak or comprehend completely require a message understandable" (p. 97) expresses the importance of all teachers understanding and using comprehensible input.

Chapter Five: Strategies

Once the framework has been established and explained, the component chapters begin to show teachers how to understand how to apply these ideas in the classroom. The Strategies component details the component features of strategies, scaffolding techniques (verbal, practical, and questioning) and tasks truly begin to demystify how teachers design and deliver instruction in the classroom. Details are provided with a focus on content-based lessons, making the chapter applicable to all content areas. Specific examples are given demonstrating the ideas in various contexts.

Chapter Six: Interaction

Parallel to chapter four, the application of language acquisition requires students' frequent interaction with the curricular information on a daily basis. Often times, teachers struggle with the actual application of language learning, especially at the secondary level. This component's features of frequent opportunities for interaction, providing sufficient wait time, and the use of native language for clarification all support to ensure student activities as clarified in this chapter.

Chapter Seven: Practice & Application

Hands-on practice, application of content and language knowledge in new ways, and the integration of the Practice & Application component. These chapter details support the previous components of the framework, being more circular in nature. The text truly supports readers' conceptual expansion and work in tandem with one another, as well as working in tandem with the content standards.

continues to express the need for language application for *true acquisition*.

Chapter Eight: Lesson Delivery

Lesson delivery is directly connected to lesson preparation. This chapter reveals the deep showcasing the features of supporting content and language objectives during a lesson, promoting student engagement, as pacing lessons appropriately for all students. Similarly teaching ideas for lesson delivery to support the component features.

Chapter Nine: Review & Assessment

While this component is presented at the end of the framework, the authors truly give emphasis on assessing students' learning throughout the lesson design and delivery process. The features of lesson objectives also take a circular approach accordingly with both formative and summative assessments. The text provides educators with understanding scaffolding techniques for students who "perform satisfactorily" in the classroom and how to structure meaningful feedback regarding students' language output.

Chapter Ten: Issues of Reading, RtI, and Special Education for English Learners

Educators continue to grapple with understanding the differences between language acquisition and reading needs. This chapter delineates how teachers continue to decipher students' difficulties with reading those based on special needs. The SIOP Model components and corresponding features are described through the use of RtI. Parallel connections to tiers of intervention are described and how to implement the SIOP.

Chapter Eleven: Effective Use of the SIOP Protocol and Chapter Twelve: Implementation of the SIOP Model

Once educators have familiarized themselves with the instructional framework, its components and application of the protocol are essential aspects of the process. These two chapters guide educators through the SIOP for professional development. As a practitioner, I appreciated these chapters even though all educators need support in small increments for gradual implementation. More often than not, the kind of instructional strategy to the extent that it becomes overwhelming. The text in this context is being just that—a process. When teachers begin to incorporate the SIOP as a philosophical approach rather than something they are required "to do", then SIOP takes shape.

Additional observations and benefits of the text are related to each chapter's dedication to

the protocol itself, differentiating ideas for multi-level classes, and most importantly, pathways for reflective discussion questions. These consistent chapter elements ensure the readers' ability to apply the newly gained information. Correspondingly, yet another powerful factor of the "Online PDToolkit." This virtual bank of resources includes sample SIOP lesson plans, teaching and learning, SIOP resources, as well as numerous video clips regarding the SIOP model as well as classroom teachers' perspectives. Video clips include scenes from actual classrooms as well as interviews with teachers, administrators, and students expanding on their experiences. All content is made accessible to readers for one full year with the purchase of the book.

In final review, the authors provide up-to-date, research-based information regarding assessment and content making content comprehensible. Pre-service teachers as well as in-services educators all benefit from the design and deliver learning opportunities with dynamic, viable associations to content and language in classrooms. Even highly adept practitioners in the field of teaching English as a Second Language benefit from the nature in contextualizing teacher preparation, as well as faculty and staff development to support culturally responsive teaching and learning. Ultimately, the versatility of the book facilitates the use of the methodology as well as content area methodology within teacher preparation programs. Likewise, it is also extremely valuable within the context of inclusive practices, multicultural education, and diversity courses.

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