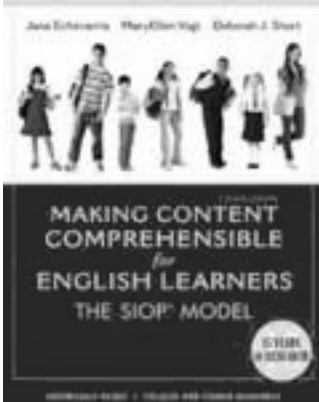# Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners: The SIOP Model (4th Edition)

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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, the Next Generation Science Standards, and Response to Intervention (RtI), there is an intensified focus on instructional considerations of core concepts with academic language proficiency resulting in deepened comprehension. Therefore, now more than ever, educators require significant insight on how lesson design and delivery demands the demystification of the language learning process. Likewise, from a more critical perspective, there is an increasing need to saturate native speakers of English with academic language learning for often times, these students come to school with great variance and room for growth with regard to academic language proficiency. The SIOP Model, or the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol, is a framework for comprehensive academic interventions for students' increased academic language proficiency. This publication, *Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners: The SIOP Model (4th Edition)* written by Drs. Jana Echevarría, MaryEllen Vogt, and Deborah J. Short encompasses a fifteen-year research journey, resulting in the continued arrangement of crucial 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 readers with regard to experience and background knowledge concerning second language acquisition. The publication may be used with undergraduate pre-service teacher candidates, graduate students who are also practitioners in the field, or in-service

educators in need of professional development. The publication's presentation also includes a sense of versatility encompassing a wide variety of program designs across the K-16 spectrum, including community colleges and universities. Some of these include English as a second language programs, bilingual education programs, dual language programs, intensive English programs, and general education classrooms, all from an instructional design and delivery perspective. The SIOP Model framework is comprised of eight components and plausibly so, the chapters are dedicated to each of them with in-depth information regarding the model's thirty corresponding component features. Also presented are chapters for introductory information on the research behind the model development, academic language and the second language acquisition process, connections to special populations of students within the EL demographic, and how to apply the use of the protocol itself for lesson design and delivery. The 4th Edition describes the following with regard to educator preparation and working with English learners:

Chapter One: Introducing the SIOP Model

This chapter illustrates demographical trends, diverse characteristics of English learners, and an overall introduction to the connections to school reform, standards, and accountability. Likewise, details are provided to clarify academic language and literacy development, not simply in the context of language arts instruction but, for *all teachers with all students*, "both native English speakers and English learners alike" (p. 10). The information then glides into understanding how the SIOP Model framework results in effective content-based instructional design and delivery.

Chapter Two: Lesson Preparation

The keystone of the framework focuses on the concept of teachers including content and language objectives in all lessons. In fact, the chapters themselves each have content and language objectives to model their foundational importance within the framework. This chapter presents detailed information on how content and language objectives are formed, with whom they are used, and how they provide the literal foundational building blocks for the remaining components of the framework. The additional features of age-appropriate content concepts, the use of supplementary materials, the adaptation of content for all levels of language proficiency, and the use of meaningful activities for all students' language production and application are clarified in chapter two.

Chapter Three: Building Background

Understanding how students come to US classrooms from a vast array of linguistic and cultural backgrounds, including native English speakers, the model provides great emphasis for considering students' background experiences within the teaching and learning process. Therefore, this component's features of linking students' experiences to current learning, both past and present, as well as emphasizing key 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 design lessons to increase students' academic linguistic competencies. The component features of using appropriate speech, providing clear explanation of academic tasks, and using a variety of techniques within classroom instruction highlight the supporting ideas that students must acquire language to produce it rather than simply "learning it" in a superficial, memorized way. The authors' statement "Students learning rigorous content material to meet high academic standards in a language they do not speak or comprehend completely require specialized teaching techniques to make the message understandable" (p. 97) expresses the importance of all teachers understanding how to make content comprehensible.

Chapter Five: Strategies

Once the framework has been established and explained, the component chapters begin to shift toward an intensified focus on helping teachers understand how to apply these ideas in the classroom. The Strategies component is just that—strategies for real-world application in the classroom. The component features of strategies, scaffolding techniques (verbal, procedural, and instructional), and higher-order questioning and tasks truly begin to demystify how teachers design and deliver instruction for expanded academic language acquisition. Details are provided with a focus on content-based lessons, making the chapter applicable to all teachers at a variety of grade-levels. 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 opportunities to interact with one another and with the curricular information on a daily basis. Often times, teachers struggle with the actual manifestation of focused cooperative learning, especially at the secondary level. This component's features of frequent opportunities for interaction, grouping configurations, providing sufficient wait time, and the use of native language for clarification all support teachers implementation of interactive classroom 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 all language skills are the features of the Practice & Application component. These chapter details support the previous components to bring the understanding of the framework, being more circular in nature. The text truly supports readers' conceptual expansion of understanding how the components work in tandem with one another, as well as working in tandem with the content standards for academic language acquisition. The chapter 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 connection between the two components by showcasing the features of supporting content and language objectives during a lesson, supporting language objectives during a lesson, promoting student engagement, as pacing lessons appropriately for all students. Similarly, readers are provided with specific examples of 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 to the importance of reviewing and assessing students' learning throughout the lesson design and delivery process. The features of reviewing lesson objectives and assessing lesson objectives also take a circular approach accordingly with both formative and summative assessments. This chapter justly assists educators with understanding scaffolding techniques for students who "perform satisfactorily and those who struggle" (p. 212) 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 students with special education needs. This chapter delineates how teachers continue to decipher students' difficulties with reading and learning based on language versus those based on special needs. The SIOP Model components and corresponding features also support in assisting struggling learners through the use of RtI. Parallel connections to tiers of intervention are described and how each of the three is supported through the implementation of the SIOP.

Chapter Eleven: Effective Use of the SIOP Protocol and Chapter Twelve: Frequently Asked Questions: Getting Started with the SIOP Model

Once educators have familiarized themselves with the instructional framework, its components and their features, the implementation and application of the protocol are essential aspects of the process. These two chapters guide teachers and administrators to the actual use of the SIOP for professional development. As a practitioner, I appreciated these chapters even from a pre-service teacher perspective in that, all educators need support in small increments for gradual implementation. More often than not, teachers are asked to implement some kind of instructional strategy to the extent that it becomes overwhelming. The text in this case, emphasizes the implementation process as being just that—a process. When teachers begin to incorporate the SIOP as a philosophical approach to lesson design and delivery 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 providing teaching scenarios with connections to the protocol itself, differentiating ides for multi-level classes, and most importantly, pathways for readers to synthesize the

information via reflective discussion questions. These consistent chapter elements ensure the readers' abilities to make "next-step" connections for actual application of the newly gained information. Correspondingly, yet another powerful factor in recommending the text, is Pearson's creation of the "Online PDToolkit." This virtual bank of resources includes sample SIOP lesson plans and activities, theoretical references for teaching and learning, SIOP resources, as well as numerous video clips regarding the SIOP model, both from the authors' perspectives as well as classroom teachers' perspectives. Video clips include scenes from actual classroom lessons, professional development sessions, as well as interviews with teachers, administrators, and students expanding on their experiences with the SIOP Model. The resources are all 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 academic language acquisition for all students via making content comprehensible. Pre-service teachers as well as in-services educators all benefit from this deeper understanding of how to design and deliver learning opportunities with dynamic, viable associations to content and language in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms. Even highly adept practitioners in the field of teaching English as a Second Language gain from the book due to its pragmatic nature in contextualizing teacher preparation, as well as faculty and staff development to expand cultural and linguistic competencies for culturally responsive teaching and learning. Ultimately, the versatility of the book facilitates its use in courses focused on TESL methodology as well as content area methodology within teacher preparation programs, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Likewise, it is also extremely valuable within the context of inclusive practices, multicultural education, and educational policy, culture, and diversity courses.

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