Using the SIOP Model to Address the Language Demands of the CCSS: Extending Think-Pair-Share

Marybelle Marrero-Colón

Think-pair-share is a widely-used strategy that can be successfully implemented in classrooms across all grade levels. This learning strategy promotes structured student interaction and is a great way for teachers to support the features of the Interaction component of the SIOP Model. It can also be an effective way to differentiate instruction by providing students time and structure for thinking about a given topic, enabling them to formulate individual ideas and share these ideas with a peer, and ultimately the entire class/group (Simon, 2014).

Many teachers think that there is only one way of conducting think-pair-share. The teacher asks a question, the students turn to a partner and discuss their thoughts and ideas, and then share out to the larger group. In actuality, think-pair-share can be extended in a number of different ways. These variations extend the quality and amount of output that students produce, which will lead to an increase in oral language development and help students better process and communicate complex ideas. Below are some variations to the traditional think-pair-share technique.

- **Think-Pair-Share-Listen**
  This version follows the traditional format as described above. However, when students share out to the class what has been discussed in pairs, they must talk about what their partners said, not their own opinions. So it is necessary for students to carefully listen to their partners before sharing out with the whole group.

- **Think-Write-Pair-Share/ Think-Draw-Pair-Share**
  In this version, students are asked to think about a particular topic or question and write or draw their ideas. They then turn and talk with a partner about what was written. Finally, they share with the whole group.

- **Survey-Think-Write-Pair-Share**
  This version requires that students skim through a reading passage to get the main idea or in response to a question, think about the information, and then write a response before pairing up and sharing their answers.

- **Think-Pair-Share-Square**
  This technique starts out like the traditional version. Students think about their answers, pair up, and then share their responses. Then, after they have shared,

the discussion pair turns to another pair to create a group of four. That group of four then shares what has already been discussed.

- **Think-Pair-Pod-Share**
  Students first share with a partner. Then they bring all thoughts together as a table (pod) prior to sharing out with whole group (wordpress.com, 2014)

- **Mix-Pair-Share**
  Students silently mix around the room without talking. When the teacher calls out the word "pair," the students pair up with the person closest to them and shake hands. The teacher asks a question and gives the students think time. The students then share with their partner as per teacher instructions.

- **Think-Text-Share/Think-Email-Share**
  This version follows the same format of the traditional think-pair-share, except that the students will either write an email or text their partner, they then verbally report what was shared through writing.

- **Formulate-Share-Listen-Create**
  In this version, the teacher presents a question and the students formulate an answer individually. Then they share their answers with a partner. They listen carefully to their partner's answer, note the similarities and differences, and they both create a new answer that incorporates the best of both ideas. They then present their combined answer to the rest of the class.

While these variations have different formats, they all share a common formula. In each of these activities, students are required to think, communicate their ideas, and verbally share their responses with a larger group. These techniques foster purposeful, structured interaction that allow students to more fully develop and express their ideas.