This Bulletin initiates a focus on aspects of language and cultural diversity that affect equitable access to education for language minority learners in the K-12 mainstream classroom. Learners of all ages who come from different cultures and who speak other languages possess unique background knowledge and experiences which can add curriculum variety for teachers in any classroom context. At the same time, these learners possess unique characteristics which challenge traditionally held views of teaching and learning.

This Bulletin focuses on what teachers need to do to ensure comprehensible delivery of language in their classrooms. The following is appropriate for all students; however, the limited experience of language minority learners in using English and in experiencing U.S. culture makes these suggestions a necessary classroom practice for all teachers.

1. **Incorporate student's prior knowledge.** What do learners know about a particular topic? Through word splashes, semantic webbing, and graphic organizers, teachers can elicit known content and scaffold new content.

2. **Add more nonverbal expression to oral delivery of instruction.** How can teachers increase the comprehensibility of oral language? Gestures and facial expressions can add additional information and help to emphasize more significant concepts for comprehending oral messages.

3. **Repeat the message in different ways.** How can the oral message be reinforced? By repeating it using different words and expressions, teachers can expand the possibilities of vocabulary and language forms which are familiar to learners.

4. **"Measure" speech.** How can speech be varied in delivery in order to promote greater understanding? By being aware of 1) how to choose words; 2) repeating the intended message using different words to convey the same message; 3) idiomatic language; and 4) the impact of connecting words
e.g., although, because, on the other hand, for example, still, etc.), the oral message can be clarified.

5. Elaborate with pictures, graphs, and other visual aids whenever possible. What ways can language be further clarified? Accompanying oral and written language with appropriate and connected visual information provides additional context through which learners can better comprehend content.

6. Focus on key vocabulary. How can core concepts be remembered? In delivering instruction, keep core concepts and key language visible through oral emphasis, writing the words on the board, and highlighting text. Ask learners to summarize key concepts or explain important vocabulary items through word splashes, semantic webbing, and requiring oral/written explanations.

7. Reinforce with print. Why should print accompany oral presentation? Whenever possible, accompany oral language with print language through references to associated textual information, providing guided outlines, and graphic organizers. This serves to reinforce one language medium (e.g., oral language) with another (e.g., written).

8. Allow use of the learner's first language. Should learners be allowed to use their first language in the classroom? Perhaps one of the most important ways to "shortcut" comprehension in English is to permit learners of the same first language to communicate with each other in their native language. This enables learners to have the opportunity to quickly modulate their understanding by helping one another clarify concepts and define vocabulary.

9. Provide positive and immediate feedback. How can English language learners improve their oral and written language? Assisting second language learners with appropriate feedback techniques that immediately inform them of correct language use is an important consideration.

To improve oral proficiency, there are common feedback techniques for supporting repair of language: elicitation, i.e., repeating part of the response, allowing the learner to complete the response at the place where the error occurred (Learner: "Last night I goed to the movies." Teacher: "Last night I ________."); repetition, repeating the incorrect response in question form ("Last night I goed to the movies?"); and recasts, or reformulation of the response in a correct manner (Teacher: "Last night I went to the movies.").

To correct written errors after modeling correct forms, allow learners to identify and correct their mistakes, targeting only certain types of errors at a time, is an appropriate way to assist learners.

Comprehensible instruction involves a variety of language delivery options. The purpose is not to simplify English as the language of instruction; rather, the purpose is to increase the options available for learners to make cognitive connections to better comprehend language that is intended, i.e., grade appropriate use with appropriate vocabulary and language structure. In this manner, learners can increase their repertoire of language comprehension and usage.