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**Journal Article Summary:**  
**“Spoken Language and Language Impairment in Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children”**

Sahlén, B., Hansson, K., Lyberg-Åhlander, V., & Brännström, J. (2018). Spoken language and language impairment in deaf and hard-of-hearing children. *Oxford Scholarship Online*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190880545.003.0006>

Birgitta Sahlén, Kristina Hansson, Viveka Lyberg-Åhlander and Jonas Brännström, researchers at Lund University in Sweden, published a chapter in *Evidence-based Practices in Deaf Education*, which was reproduced as a journal article. In their writing, the researchers conducted an exploration of their own research studies, along with those of other researchers, to investigate the influences on the language acquisition and communication of deaf and hearing impaired students in mainstreamed classrooms.

The researchers explained that, while there have been many medical advances in assistive technology and treatment for the hearing impaired, students with a hearing disability have a much higher rate of language acquisition deficit than hearing-abled students. Students with a hearing disability were also at a distinct disadvantage in communication and spoken language proficiency, and fully “twenty percent to 50% of deaf children still meet criteria for language impairment” (Sahlén, et. al., 2018). The researchers also found that most students with hearing impairments and deafness are in mainstreamed learning environments, but that subpar acoustics in the classroom contribute significantly to the gap in language acquisition between hearing impaired and non-hearing impaired students.

The results of the researchers’ focus found that there are many positive classroom interventions that can be used to help bridge the language acquisition deficit for children who are deaf and hearing impaired. The researchers concluded that much can be done to increase language acquisition and spoken language proficiency in students with hearing disabilities. Some of the interventions offered were teacher education, the use of hearing assistive technologies in the classrooms to cut down on ambient noise and improve acoustics, and early identification using linguistic testing methods.

**References**

- Knors, H., & Marschark, M. (2019). *Evidence-based practices in deaf education*. Oxford University Press.
- Sahlén, B., Hansson, K., Lyberg-Åhlander, V., & Brännström, J. (2018). Spoken language and language impairment in deaf and hard-of-hearing children. *Oxford Scholarship Online*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190880545.003.0006>