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# An Exploratory Study of the Oral Language and Behavior Skills of Children with Identified Language and Emotional Disabilities in Preschool\*

## Abstract

*As the pre-school initiative in the USA continues to grow in the public school sector, the need to understand and be prepared to address the needs of this population of students is vital. This paper provides an exploratory analysis of language and behavioral skills in children aged three to five years old served in inclusive public preschools. Preschool children documented with language impairments (LI), or emotional and behavioral disorders (ED) were compared to a typically developing group using the Test of Early Language Development-3 and the Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scales. Results suggest that preschoolers with identified language delays or behavior disorders were significantly different in both language development and behavior ratings when compared to typical developing peers. Second, no significant differences were found between students with language delays and socio-emotional disabilities. Implications regarding the need for comprehensive screening, continuous assessment, targeted intervention, and professional development for teachers across both developmental areas in the early childhood education settings are presented.*

*Key words: language disabilities, emotional and behavioral disabilities, inclusion, preschool*

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