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Moats, Louis Cook. (2010). *Speech to Print: Language Essentials for Teachers*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

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Reviewed by Cynthia Crosser
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This is the second edition of Moats' *Speech to Print*. Like its predecessor, this edition is designed to provide teachers with a background in the language structure of English and to assist them in using this knowledge to teach literacy. Moats, who studied reading research and human development at Harvard Graduate School of Education, has been active at the national level in research related to policy issues in reading instruction and teacher preparation. Her accomplishments include serving as member of the National Academy of Education's Reading Sub-Committee (see Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005) and representing the American Federation of Teachers in a position paper on teaching preparation for reading instruction (Moats, 1999).

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Reading instruction and teacher preparation are political topics that elicit strong reactions. Beginning reading instruction in the United States has vacillated between approaches that focus on systematic phonics instruction for decoding words and approaches that focus on the use of context cues for deciphering meaning (see Pearson, 2004 for a discussion of this topic). Moats, who is associated with the strong phonics position, has written two reports for the Thomas B. Fordham Institute in which she strongly criticizes the whole language approach with its emphasis on context cues (Moats, 2000, 2007).

The passage of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (2002) has affected both teacher preparation and the implementation of beginning reading instruction in schools with its mandate for evidence-based instruction and standards-based assessment. Its influence can be seen in the two most recent revisions of the International Reading Association's *Standards for Reading Professionals* (2004, 2010) which show an increased emphasis on evidence-based instruction and state, national, and professional standards. Teachers and teacher educators, who embraced the whole language approach for beginning reading instruction, have had to modify their approach to include instruction on phonemic awareness and phonics. Many of these teachers and teacher educators may be uninterested in acquiring the more extensive language structure background offered by Moats. This is a shame, since understanding the structure of English is especially important for teaching English language learners, students with special needs, and low income students (see Snow, Griffin & Burns, 2005).

Speech to Print is a good resource for teachers because it does not assume any background knowledge of formal linguistics and makes explicit the connections of language structure to literacy. The level of sophistication in describing the structure of language is on par with an introductory text in linguistics such as Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyam's *Introduction to Language* (2003). Moats' introduction provides the philosophical and research foundation for using the structure of language to teach literacy, while the concluding chapter provides systematic connections for literacy stages. The linguistics content covers the topics most relevant to literacy and includes

chapters on phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and the orthography of English. In these chapters, Moats provides basic information about the topic, exercises to reinforce the concepts, teaching suggestions for the classroom, and additional information resources. The appendices contain developmental inventories, answer keys to the exercises, and a glossary. Most teachers will find Moats' book a useful tool for understanding the structure of English and its relationship to literacy.

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