



Preface

Our reason for writing this text is straightforward: In our experience working with preprofessional language interventionists, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, we found that many students struggled with syntactic terminology and analysis in classroom and clinical tasks. For example, many students had difficulties analyzing the syntactic structures present (or absent) in clients' language. Likewise, these students had problems devising educational or clinical goals specifically related to syntax. We heard their frustration when we asked them to analyze clause or sentence structure in the narratives of school-age children. And we weren't alone. Several of our colleagues who also teach courses in language development and disorders had made similar observations.

Our students believed that their lack of such a basic understanding of syntax was hindering their ability to participate in higher-level clinical activities. Consequently, a number of these students asked us for materials that they could use to help them better understand syntactic forms and functions and their relationship to syntactic analysis. We also received similar requests from advanced professionals working in the field. Despite our searching, we were unable to find materials directed at helping preprofessional and professional language interventionists increase their knowledge of syntax and apply this knowledge to their work. That's where we came in. We wrote *The Syntax Handbook* to fill this void in our profession and to help ease the frustration of learning about syntax. We tried to make this book both educationally relevant to the speech-language reader and at the same time keep it friendly and fun (as friendly and fun as the topic of syntax can get, anyway). We hope *The Syntax Handbook* remains a handy reference tool for you long after you have mastered the basics.

Given the topic addressed in this book, there have been relatively few major changes made to this updated second edition. (In other words, there isn't too much regarding syntax that has changed in the last decade!) While we have made some refinements to this second edition of the book—including the addition of Chapter 13, which covers more complex syntactic issues—many of the original concepts and examples are still applicable and thus have remained the same.

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