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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LINGUISTIC FEATURES ANALYSIS

(Pennington, NJ, June 2009) Second-language acquisition is often misunderstood. Professional development needs to concentrate on this area to foster appropriate educational programming in public schools. For example, a child exposed to English normally has a *silent period* during which he or she may not use the new language to speak.

This silent period is often mislabeled as problematic and even as a possible symptom of language disorder. And the implications of inappropriate special education referral of a bilingual child are enormous. It is likely that if professionals possessed the tools and resources to conduct second-language analyses giving insight into children's abilities as second-language learners, the perceived need for bilingual testing of these children (intended to detect problems and fix them) would decrease drastically.

Ever feel that because you do not speak the child's first language, you are at a disadvantage to interact and study the child's language and literacy behaviors? This is the source that will assist you in that it provides the features of various languages to you so as to assist in comprehensive second language analysis.

But there is an alternative to testing. A second-language analysis directly addresses the problem, providing a unique way for professionals to examine and more carefully consider the impact of first-language development on, and its role (interference) in, second-language development. Children who are learning can often miss out on specialized language support and on access to mainstream curriculum, thus redirecting their academic futures. Misdiagnosis or overdiagnosis can place typically developing children in restrictive settings not appropriate to their unique learning styles. Parents should know the duration and type of language support children from second-language homes often require.

The linguistic features analysis product was created from the notion and true realization that without the provision of the features of various languages to practitioners, consideration of first language impact upon second in terms of interference would be more difficult to establish. Not only does it provide this information needed to conduct second language analyses but also provides examples of how to conduct second language analyses as well. Both skill sets will better position the professional to deal with this population of children –ranging from ELLs coming from divergent and discrepant educational backgrounds to ELLs with stronger educational backgrounds with emerging literacy in English.

The linguistic features analysis product will avail to the practitioner not only the various features of different language systems commonly represented in public schools but also provide general guidance as to how to use this information to conduct second language analyses. When done accurately, these analyses look at the competencies of second language learners and have implications for feeding input to guide the creation of more effective instructional practices for ELLs.

This product will assist the practitioner and the user in the endeavor of differentiating language difference from disorder and will assist in doing comprehensive second language analyses wherein the competencies of second language learners in the acquisition of English is at the heart of our efforts—in this way, we in essence seek to replace the temptation and trend of testing to find a problem when in reality in many instances the children who are learning English as a second language are exhibiting differences.