



### 140 The Discriminative Power of Criteria-Based Content Analysis: A Simulation Study in Children With Immediate and Delayed Interview

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The goal of this study is to assess the discriminative power of the instrument Criteria-Based Content Analysis (CBCA), the main component of the Statement Validity Analysis (SVA), used to evaluate the accounts of two groups of subjects: (1) children who have actually experienced an event, and, (2) children to whom the same event was only described. An additional objective is to verify the same power of the instrument in relation to the reports of the same two groups of children, but obtained after four months from the events experienced or described.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by demonstrating how some of the criteria of the CBCA seem to have a significant power to discriminate only if evaluated at a later time (i.e., after four months).

**Method:** Two hundred interviews were analyzed using CBCA. From a total of 100 interviewed participants, 50 were subjected to a real event (simulation of a medical examination) and the remaining 50 participants were told the story about a boy/girl who had been subjected to a medical examination (this story was the same script subjected to the former 50 subjects by an actor who impersonated the physician). After four months, all the children were subjected to a second interview about what they had experienced (lived or described) previously. For the analysis, 17 of the 19 CBCA criteria were used.

**Results:** The following statistical analyses were used: a one-way Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) for each item of the questionnaire; the "structure" of the discriminant function with the relative "weight" of each item in the process of division of the subjects in the two groups; a  $\chi^2$  statistic for the verification of the non-dependence from the case; and an index of canonical correlation (Pearson's  $r$ ) between the function itself and the dependent variable "group." The results of the study show that some of the CBCA criteria discriminated between those children who actually lived the event, as compared to those for whom the event was only described.

**Conclusions:** Despite the presence of some limitations of the study, the objectives were achieved, in part: a number of the CBCA criteria seemed to be able to discriminate between those who actually lived an event and those to whom the event was only described. Furthermore, some of the criteria of the CBCA seemed to have significant power in discriminating when evaluated after four months.

#### Minor Testimony, Child Abuse, CBCA