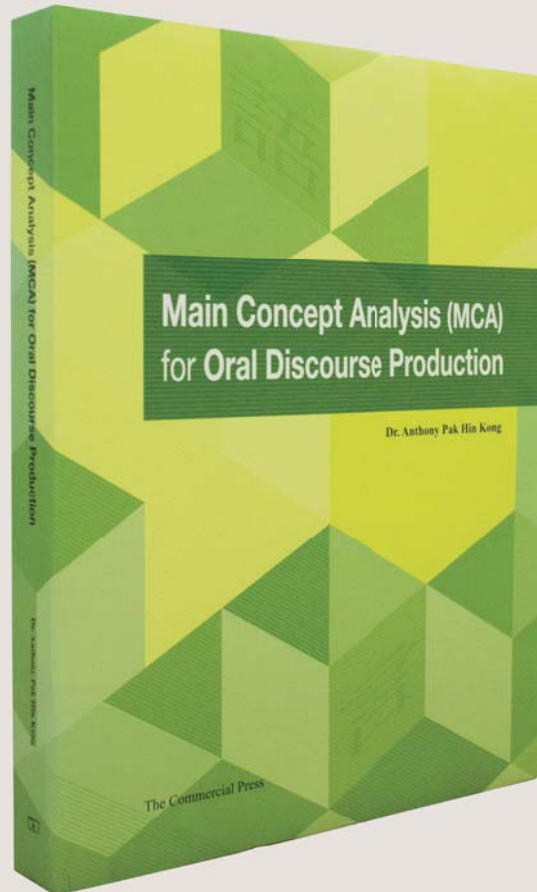# Main Concept Analysis

The Main Concept Analysis (MCA) for oral discourse production

Dr. Anthony Pak Hin Kong

- The MCA is a clinical assessment tool that allows a quick and simple clinical evaluation of discourse performance among speakers with acquired language disorders.

- The MCA was standardized in native English, Cantonese, and Mandarin using speakers of each of these languages recruited in the USA, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, respectively.

- The tool uses a sequential picture description task to elicit language samples, which are then utilized as the basis of discourse analysis.

- The data collection and index calculation of the test can be completed in 20 minutes for most examinees.
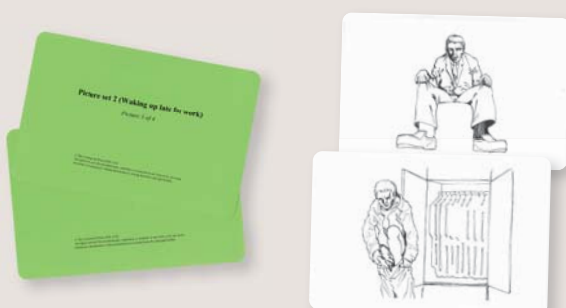
The MCA assessment package comprises of a test manual, four sets of sequential pictures (each set containing four detached single black-and-white line drawings), and three sets of scoring forms (in English, Cantonese, and Mandarin, respectively).

What MCA is?

The MCA was established based on the rule-based system to quantify oral discourse proposed by Nicholas and Brookshire (1995). It was developed with the purpose to extend the conventional use of standardized language assessment batteries in diagnosing aphasia or related neurogenic communication disorders. In particular, the MCA examines a speaker's oral functioning beyond the sentence level through the use of a sequential picture description task. The degree of presence, accuracy, and completeness of main concepts within a language sample can be readily and objectively identified. The results are clinically meaningful and useful for describing the expressive ability of a speaker and can supplement the findings of most existing formal language assessment tools.

Why MCA?

Speech and language pathologists generally do not carry out extensive discourse analysis among speakers in the clinical population of aphasia or related neurogenic communication disorders, mainly because of two reasons: (1) the relatively limited amount of research done in this area, as compared to other aspects of communication disorders, and (2) the lack of appropriate clinical materials that they can use readily in their daily practice.

The Main Concept Analysis (MCA) aims to fill the gap by proposing a clinical tool of discourse analysis that will be of interest to speech and language pathologists and related healthcare professionals who work with English-, Cantonese-, or Mandarin- speaking clients. More specifically, speech and language pathologists and other healthcare practitioners who need to provide language assessment and/or intervention to speakers with acquired language disorders should find the MCA a suitable tool to supplement existing language batteries.

Eligibility for MCA test administrators

The MCA is suitable for use by clinical practitioners and related healthcare professionals, research associates or personnel, students, or clinical assistants in the following disciplines:

- Communication Sciences and Disorders
- Speech and Hearing Sciences
- Speech and Language Pathology
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Psychology
- Linguistics
- Psycholinguistics
- Cognitive Sciences
- Bilingual/ Multilingual Studies
- Nursing
- Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
- Social Work

The following clinical professionals who provide language assessment or intervention to speakers with acquired language disorders as well as research staff who looks for evidence-based objective measures of monolingual or multilingual speakers of English, Cantonese, and Mandarin are potential users of the MCA:

- CCC-SLP (speech and language pathologists)
- Qualified speech therapists
- Registered research psychologists
- Clinical psychologists
- Student clinicians, research assistants, or research personnel who have completed training for using the MCA

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About the author

Dr. Anthony Pak-Hin Kong is Associate Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Central Florida. He has a special interest in aphasiology. Dr. Kong's research focuses on discourse production by individuals with aphasia, development of assessment tools of aphasia and related cognitive disorders, and gesture production and neurogenic communication disorders in multi-lingual speakers. His other research interests include distinctive linguistic properties and prosodic features of speakers with aphasia, community support to individuals with aphasia and their families, relationship between bilingualism in aphasia and language recovery and processing, and clinical application of technology to manage aphasia, dementia, and other related cognitive-communicative disorders.

Dr. Kong is an internationally known and dedicated research scholar in speech and language pathology. He has a long and solid line of international research with extramural funding sponsored by the US National Institutes of Health, The Hong Kong SAR Government Research Grants Council, and The Hong Kong SAR Government Research Office of the Food and Health Bureau. Dr. Kong has active research and/or academic collaborations with The University of Hong Kong, The Polytechnic University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Institute of Education, and The Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education. He has also served as research, clinical, and/or professional consultants on numerous international agencies, including Aphasia United (Australia, United Kingdom, and USA), Hong Kong Productivity Council, The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation, Self Help Group for the Brain Damaged (Hong Kong), Hong Kong Hospital Authority, The Hong Kong Association of Speech Therapists, Hong Kong Society for the Deaf, Guangdong Work Injury Rehabilitation Hospital (People's Republic of China), and Jiangsu Province Hospital (People's Republic of China).