

Our study aims to identify characteristic variables of individual narrative habits. 59 participants each related three personal experiences of varying emotional valence. Their transcribed statements were coded for a range of novel linguistic and content-related variables and aspects of narrative style. In addition, transcripts were analyzed by the computer program Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC). By definition, a variable was considered to be indicative of the individual depictive style when all correlations in the three paired conditions of the three statement conditions as well as the global measure of internal consistency were significant. Ten novel variables and eight LIWC features met the predefined demands. Factor analyses were computed to illuminate underlying cognitive mechanisms. The meaning of the results for deception detection is discussed: Sometimes, vague descriptions and overgeneralizations might be considered as indicators of deception; at other times, they are just the expression of a stable individual narrative habit.

## Deceptive intentions: Processes underlying deception in an interview setting

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### Background:

When people deceive, they most of the time stick to the truth and only lie incidentally. Therefore, truth telling with the intention to lie makes up a great part of a deceptive attempt. The aim of this study was to examine whether people feel already stressed and cognitively challenged when they merely intent to deceive and how their physiological response looks like.

### Methods:

In an assessment center cover story, participants (N=65) were seduced to commit fraud by signing of an unauthorized document. After that, the participants were confronted with the fraud detected, and informed that they would be interviewed about it. We created three veracity conditions. In the intention condition, participants were told that the best strategy to go about it would be to tell the truth on all questions but to lie about signing the document - a question appearing at the end of the standardized interview. We contrasted this with a truth and lie condition

where they were "instructed" to tell the truth or lie on all questions. During the interview, skin conductance (SC) was measured. Afterwards, self-reports of cognitive load and stress were assessed.

#### Results:

Self-reported cognitive load and tonic SC were higher in the lie compared to the truth and intention condition ( $p < .05$ ); no difference was found between the latter two. In both the lie and intention condition, participants experienced elevated stress levels compared to the truth condition ( $p_s < .05$ ). Only in the intention condition, Phasic SC showed a sharp increase at the signature question ( $p < .05$ ).

#### Discussion:

Fully deceptive accounts differ from truthful ones in terms of tonic SC, as well as experienced stress and cognitive load. Deceptive accounts, consisting mainly of truth telling with only one (crucial) lie, differed from truthful ones in terms of higher overall stress and elevated levels of phasic SC at the lie moment itself.

## Lying takes time: A meta-analysis on reaction time measures of deception

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Lie detection techniques are frequently used in many countries. Most of them have been criticized for the lack of an underlying psychological theory and the lack of empirical evidence for their validity. These criticisms have led to an increased scientific effort to unravel the cognitive mechanisms underlying deception. Recent evidence indicates that lying is more demanding than truth telling. This cognitive approach to deception has sparked renewed interest in reaction times (RTs) to differentiate lies from truths. A meta-analysis of 85 independent studies ( $n = 1965$ ) indicates that in computerized paradigms, lying takes longer than truth telling. This standardized RT difference remains large after correction for publication bias ( $d = 0.902$ ; 95% CI [0.767; 1.036]). There was a large heterogeneity between studies: The RT deception effect was smaller, yet still large, in studies in which participants were not instructed to respond as fast as possible, and in studies in which partici-