Detecting Deception: Studying the cues people use to distinguish between truth-tellers and liars

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Previous research has found that although people are generally not accurate at detecting deception, when people are forced to process videos or stories intuitively, they are better at distinguishing between lies and truths (Albrechtsen, Meissner, & Susa, 2009). However, this research has not yet incorporated open-ended measures to determine what cues participants use to detect deception, and whether conscious use of cues relates to intuitive lie detection. The current study works to replicate previous findings along with learning more about what types of cues influence participants’ judgments of lies and truths and their ratings of liars and truth-tellers. Our results will contribute to previous research on lie detection by combining measurements of accuracy, intuitive processing, and the types of cues being attended to. We will recruit 150 participants. Participants were asked to view 16 video clips, some truths and some lies. After viewing each clip, participants were asked to determine whether the video clip was a truth or a lie and also to rate the likability of the person telling the story. Participants were also asked to write down any deception cues they noticed that helped them make their decision. Following the video clips, participants responded to a scale measuring the extent to which they rely on intuition when making judgments as well as demographic questions. Data collection is ongoing, and we expect to complete data collections by March, 2012. We hypothesize that overall accuracy for lie detection will not be significant, however we expect that those who are more accurate in lie detection will have higher intuition ratings and will notice more deception-relevant cues than participants who are less accurate at lie detection. We plan to conduct a mixed ANOVAs to compare participant’s’ ratings and types of cues noticed between the lie and truth videos (a within-subjects variable), and to assess difference based on the extent to which participants rely on intuition when making judgments (a between-subjects variable). Our results will contribute to research already done on lie detection in we will learn more about the types of cues people are attending to when detecting deception. This research will combine individual difference measures of use of intuition, along with assessments of the cues that participants use, which has not yet been done in previous research.