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COOPERATIVE AND NON COOPERATIVE LIES IN CLOSE AND CASUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Deceptive communication is created and ruled by a reciprocal game between the communicators. As many researchers have pointed out, senders and receivers influence one another's behaviour as deceptive interchanges unfold. Since people tend to adapt their communication stream over time, it appears to be critical to consider not just individual psychological features but also interpersonal communicative processes when analyzing deceptive communication. In particular, deceivers have the chance to cooperate with victims when lying, e.g. anticipating their needs. The current study aimed at investigating the relevance of social interaction and of shared intentionality in deceptive communication by analyzing cooperative lies as activities which anticipate targets' needs. Specifically, we analyzed the differences between cooperative and non cooperative deception in close and casual relationships. In a diary study, 101 graduates and 70 community members recorded daily their social interactions and lies for a week. Data showed that deceiving is more cooperative in close relationships rather than in casual relationships. Social implications of the current findings in interpersonal relations were discussed.

Keywords: deceptive communication, shared intentionality, cooperative lies, content analysis.

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1. Deceptive Communication in Social Interaction

A considerable amount of research (especially in police interviews, or analysing people working in legal field) has examined the differences between truth messages and deceptive messages (Caso et al. 2005). However, deceptive communication seems to be a heterogeneous communication field, featuring different kinds of deception and deceptive messages which are designed *in situ* (Anolli, Balconi & Ciceri 2002).

Buller & Burgoon (1996) argued that to predict the behaviour of deception, it is vital to take into account not just individual psychological features but interpersonal communicative processes as well. People tend to adapt their communication stream and design over time. Deceivers usually engage in several tasks simultaneously: create messages, manage conversation, cope with their self presentation, continuously supervise their targets for likely signs of suspiciousness, and accommodate their behaviour accordingly. This facet of deception is a basic hint because deception typically occurs in conversation. It involves, as does every conversation, the co-participation of communicators (White & Burgoon 2001).

Drawing upon the interactivity principle, *Interpersonal Deception Theory* (IDT; Buller & Burgoon 1996) specifies relationships among sender and receiver cognitions and behaviours prior to, during, and following deceptive exchanges. Stated formally, it posits that sender and receiver cognitions and behaviours vary systematically as deceptive communication contexts vary in the characteristics associated with the actual interaction (Buller & Burgoon 1996). Interactions between people are constantly changing, which allows deceivers the chance to repair any possible verbal and nonverbal leakage by altering what they say and what they do as the conversation progresses.

Instead of looking at the behaviours that distinguish truthtellers from deceivers, the current study aimed at investigating the relevance of social interaction and of shared intentionality in deceptive communication by analyzing cooperative lies as activities which anticipate targets'needs.

2. The Role of Shared Intentionality in Deceptive Communication

According to *Deceptive Miscommunication Theory* (DeMiT; Anolli, Balconi & Ciceri 2002), deceptive communication is managed by an

intentional stance characterized by an internal gradation according to different degrees of intention (first, second, third order intention). This intentional arrangement significantly contributes to adjust and monitor a deceptive message design suitable in a given situation and a contingent relational web. *Intentional gradation,* requested by any communicative act, can also manage different kinds of deceptive message, from white lies to fabricated (prepared) and bold-faced ones (Anolli 2003).

From a pragmatic point of view, deceptive messages as communicative acts are not planned and carried out according to an abstract and universal rule set, but according to the contextual conditions. As a matter of fact, "message structure and function are not holistic, but rather reflect the grounding of messages in an ongoing stream of thought and action" (O'Keefe & Lambert 1994: 59). As Anolli (2006) pointed out, message design arises as the focus moves through the field of thoughts.

The actual message, rather than being a functionally packaged and unified act, is a collation of thoughts, each of which can have distinctive effects. The diversity of messages in communication situations is grounded on the variety of intentions and on the variety of paths combined with those intentions. Focus shifting leads to diversity in the thoughts selected, time by time, for utterances and to differences in the message forms.

Therefore, deceptive communication is a heterogeneous communication field, featuring different kinds of deception and deceptive messages which are basically situated. Deceptive communication is context-bound, then the final arrangement of the deceptive message is built up during the course of the conversation. Hence it requests a local management of conversational exchanges.

This general attitude concerns not only the speaker in producing his/her communicative act but also the addressee in recovering and interpreting the meaning of the speaker's message, attributing to it a specific intention. In this way, as, among other scholars, Anolli (2006) has proposed, the communicative exchange is created and ruled out by a mutual game between the communicators: from one hand, the display and ostension of a given intention by the speaker and, from the other, the ascription and attribution of a certain intention to him/her by the addressee.

Within this perspective, deception is seen as one of a number of routes which speakers may choose to reveal their sensations, thoughts, beliefs,

emotions and desires. One can resort to a deceptive message in order to acquire or protect one's own resources, or to manage the relationship with a partner, or else to maintain or enhance self-esteem. On the contrary, people can package a deceptive message with the purpose of gaining at the expense of other people, and manipulating or harming them (Anolli 2003). Revenge, vindictiveness, retaliation, sabotage, and hatred can serve as examples of exploitation and malevolent deception.

3. Cooperative and Non Cooperative Lies

A number of researchers tried to investigate the reasons participants give for telling their lies. Many years ago Goffman (1974) introduced the difference between the *benign fabrication* and the *exploitative fabrication* of deceptive acts, while DePaulo and her colleagues classified such reasons of lying into two mayor categories: self-centered and other-oriented lies (DePaulo et al. 1996; DePaulo & Kashy 1998).

In the current study the reasons participants give for telling each of their lies were differentiated as *cooperative* or *non cooperative.* According to the *Perlocutionary Cooperative Principle* (PCP), the interlocutor has to "cooperate in whatever goals the speaker may have in initiating a conversational exchange, including any non-linguistic, practical goal" (Attardo 1997: 766).

In particular: (1) if someone needs or wants something, give it to him; (2) if someone is doing something, help out; (3) anticipate people's needs, i.e., provide them with what they need, even if they do not know that they need it.

As Attardo (1997) pointed out, cooperation has mainly two meanings: (a) *locutionary cooperation* (LC): the amount of cooperation that two speakers must put into the text in order to encode and decode its intended meaning; (b) *perlocutionary cooperation* (PC): the amount of cooperation two speakers must put into the text/situation to achieve the goals that the speaker (and/or the hearer) wanted to achieve with a given utterance.

Sometimes deception, though violating the PCP at the locutionary level, at the perlocutionary level aims at achieving the addressee's goals, *even if he/she does not know that he/she has such goals.* In such a case, we refer to the deception as a cooperative act.

In the current research *cooperative lies* were defined as "lies told to protect or enhance other persons psychologically or to advantage or protect the interests of others" (Kaplar & Gordon 2004). The cooperative lies told for psychological reasons included lies told to preserve other persons from disapproval or having their feeling hurt; from embarrassment, loss of face, or looking bad; and from worry, conflict, or other unpleasantness. Moreover, they included lies told to make other persons appear better (or just different) than they are; to regulate their own feelings, emotions, and moods; and to safeguard their privacy.

Non cooperative lies were defined herein as "lies told to protect or enhance the liars psychologically or to advantage or protect the liars' interests" (Kaplar & Gordon 2004). Lies told to elicit a particular emotional response that the liars desired were also embraced. The lies told for psychological reasons included lies told to protect the liars from disapproval or having their feeling hurt; from embarrassment, loss of face, or looking bad; and from worry, conflict, or other unpleasantness. Moreover, they embraced lies told to make the liars appear better than they are; to manage the liars' own feelings, emotions, and moods; and to shield the liars' privacy.

4. Objectives and Hypotheses

Based on the foregoing theoretical perspective, the current study aimed at investigating shared intentionality in deceptive communication by analysing cooperative lies as activities which anticipate victim's needs. Particularly, we were interested on the relevance of deceiving in close and casual relationships by analyzing the differences between cooperative and non cooperative deception in these two types of relationships. A research question was posited concerning the frequency of cooperative and non cooperative lies in everyday interaction:

RQ: Do participants report to tell more frequently cooperative or non cooperative lies in everyday interactions?

Because cooperative lies (also called "altruistic") can communicate caring, DePaulo & Kashy (1998) found that relatively more of the lies told to friends would be altruistic rather than self-serving, whereas the reverse would be true of lies told to acquaintances and strangers. Therefore, we predicted that:

H: Cooperative lies will be more frequent when participants report to lie in close relationships than when they lie in casual relationships.

5. Method

5.1. Participants

Participants were 101 university students (27 male and 74 female) and 70 community people (23 male and 47 female). They ranged in age from 20 to 30 (mean age, 24.43 ± 4.36). The study did not include participants who did not record at least one social interaction per day nor those who did not entirely fill in their protocols.

5.2. Procedure

Phase 1 – Introduction to the study. All participants attended an initial 20-minutes briefing session in which the study and the procedures were explained. They were told that they would be recording all of their social interactions and all of the lies that they told during those interactions every day for a week.

The investigators explained that they did neither condone nor condemn lying; rather, they were studying it scientifically and trying to learn the answers to some of the most basic questions about such phenomenon. They encouraged the participants to think of the study as an unusual opportunity to learn more about themselves.

In order to clearly explain the task to be carried out to the participants, a *social interaction* was defined as "any exchange between you and another person that lasts 10 minutes or more, in which the behaviour of one person is in response to the behaviour of another person" (DePaulo & Kashy 1998: 66). Many examples were given. An exception to the 10-min rule was added: for any interaction in which participants told a lie, they were also to fill out a social interaction record, even if the current interaction lasted less than 10 min.

To explain what participants should consider a *lie,* we noted that "a lie occurs any time you *intentionally try to mislead someone.* Both the intent to deceive and the actual deception must occur" (DePaulo & Kashy

1998: 66). Examples of lies were then used to clarify such explanation. Participants were urged to record all lies, no matter how big or how small. They were instructed that if they were uncertain as to whether a particular communication should be qualified as a lie, they should record it. Even nonverbal intentional attempts to mislead were told to be encompassed in our definition. The only example of lie they were asked not to record was saying "Fine" in response to "How are you?" questions.

Participants were asked to complete one deception record for every lie that they told. Sample records were distributed, and the investigators explained how they were to be filled in. Participants were then instructed to fill up the forms (both social interaction records and deception records) at least once a day. It was suggested that they set aside a particular time or set of times to do so.

Other additional steps were taken to encourage the reporting of all lies. Participants were told that if they did not wish to reveal the contents of any of the lies that they told, then in the space on the deception record in which they were to report their lie, they could instead write "rather not say." That way, the investigators would still know that a lie was told, and they would know other information about the lie and the social interaction in which it was told from the other parts of the records that the participants completed.

Moreover, participants were instructed that if they did not completely remember everything about a lie that they told, they should still fill in as much of the information on the form as they could. Finally, the researchers told them that if they remembered a lie from a previous day that they had not recorded, they should still turn in a form for that lie.

The importance of accuracy and conscientiousness in keeping the records was emphasized throughout the session. To assure anonymity, participants were given an identification number, which they used throughout the study.

Before they left, the investigators gave the participants typed copies of all of the instructions and definitions they had been given during the session. This instruction booklet also included names and phone numbers of members of the research team with whom they had met and whom they could contact at any time with any questions or concerns they might have. Appointments were made with each participant to meet with a

researcher to drop off completely social interaction forms and check on any questions related to the study.

Phase 2 – Recording social interactions and lies. During the seven-day recording period, participants completed a social interaction record for all of their social interactions and a deception record for all of their lies.

The *social interaction record* was adapted from the *Rochester Interaction Record* (RIR; Wheeler & Nezlek 1977). On each record, participants wrote their identification number and the date, time, and duration of the interaction. For interactions involving three or fewer other people, participants recorded the initials and the gender of each of those persons. The initials were then reprinted on an "initials form" together with the material collected. Such "initials form" would be used to complete the final questionnaire. For interactions with more than three other people, participants simply recorded the total number of male and female interaction partners.

Printed on the same page as the social interaction record was the *deception record.* Participants were asked to "briefly describe the lie" in a blank space. Below this was another blank space for them to "briefly describe the reason why you told the lie" (DePaulo & Kashy 1998: 67).

Phase 3 – Additional measures. After the completion of the seven-day recording period, participants responded to one more set of measures. We gave them back the list of all of the initials (initial forms) they had used to refer to all of their interaction partners, and we asked them to fill out a separate form for each of those persons. On such forms, participants indicated the person's age and gender. Next they completed two 15-point scales: "How close do you feel to this person?" and: "How much do you like this person?"

Since participants' responses to those two questions were highly correlated (university students: $r = .88$, $p < .001$; community people: $r = .83$, $p < .001$), they were averaged to form the measure of closeness. Moreover, participants indicated how long they had known the person and how frequently they interact with him/her (in years, months, and days) and checked off the particular category that best described their relationship

with the person (best friend, friend, acquaintance, stranger, romantic partner, brother or sister, family, other relative).

5.3. Content Categories and Coding Procedure

In a preliminary stage three deceptive communication experts created a grid of categories relevant to the analysis. Such grid included an *Interaction* code and a *Deception* code. Moreover, two levels of *Cooperation* (cooperative lies; non cooperative lies), and eight levels of *Relationship* (romantic partner; family; brothers/sisters; best friends; other relatives; friends; acquaintances; strangers) were added. Subsequently, these categories were applied to the protocols (recorded lies).

Given the nature of the current data and variables, *ATLAS.ti* software package was used (for a detailed description, see Barry 1998). In particular, in this study two instruments of *ATLAS.ti* were used: the *Hermeneutic Unit Editor,* and the *Query Tool.* The first one is a kind of container, an organizational data structure which included the basic project components (primary documents, quotations, and codes). In the course of text analysis, the text is broken into relevant text passages called "quotations" (that is, continuous pieces of text created in the process of coding), connected to codes (for instance, "best friend," "cooperative lie"). If codes were part of categories, they were grouped into families *(Relationship, Cooperation).*

The *Query Tool* offered support for retrieving text pieces through combinations of codes. In particular, it has been useful in supporting the construction of queries with boolean operators (and, or, not, or). The output of the *Query Tool* was calculated as number of occurrences of categorized terms.

The coding of the text was performed by two human researchers. Interrater reliability was then calculated on 100 % of written samples. Reliability regarded the correct and consistent attribution of the different categories to the text. To assess intercoder reliability, Cohen's Kappa was calculated for each content code or category: *Interaction* (.99), *Deception* (.95), *Cooperation* (.93) and *Relationship* (.97). When disagreements were identified, they were discussed and agreed by both coders. Intrarater

reliability on 20 % of the samples was also completed. The overall agreement in attributing the categories was very high (.95).

6. Results

First of all, participants recorded 3347 different interactions in their social interaction records, and 835 lies in their deception records. As a whole, it means that participants reported to tell one lie about every four interactions with their relational partners.

6.1. Experimental Group Features: Closeness, Duration, and Frequency

Because we were interested in predicting the rate of lying (that is, number of lies to the partner divided by number of social interactions with the partner) from the quality of participants' relationships with particular other people, the present analysis included only those lies told to just one person (dyadic lies).

A GLM Multivariate analysis was used, considering *Closeness, Duration,* and *Frequency* as dependent variables, and *Relationship* and *Experimental Group* (1 – university students; 2 – community participants) as independent factors. Table 1 shows the mean level of closeness, the mean duration of the relationship, and the mean frequency of the interactions with partners in each relationship category.

The college students and community members were remarkably similar in their self-reported closeness to different categories of relationship partners, both in the rank ordering of the categories and the absolute values of the means. Both groups reported extremely high levels of closeness to their romantic partners, to their family, to their brothers and sisters, and to their best friends. They also reported fairly high levels of closeness to other relatives and to their friends, and very low levels of closeness to acquaintances and strangers. The community members reported significantly higher level of closeness with "family" ($F = 4.93$; $p < .05$; $n^2 = .19$) than the university students, while the last ones showed higher level of closeness with "other relatives" ($F = 10.19$; $p < .01$; $n^2 = .25$) than the community participants. The rank ordering of the relationship types by *Closeness* was not significantly different for the two groups.

Table 1: Mean Closeness, Duration, and Frequency of Interacting for Different Relationship Categories

Relationship category	*n*[a]	*Closeness*[1]	*Duration*[2]	*Frequency*[3]
Romantic partner				
University student	50	1.32	6.95	8.22
Community participant	21	1.38	7.38	7.33
Family				
University student	108	2.25	16.69	3.1
Community participant	76	1.68*	17.01	3.92
Brothers/Sisters				
University student	41	2.22	15.4	2.57
Community participant	20	2.8	15.51	2.22
Best friends				
University student	63	2.24	9.6	2.61**
Community participant	23	2.94	9.23	1.79
Other relatives				
University student	40	4.02**	14.47	1.48
Community participant	21	6.76	15.13	1.23
Friends				
University student	91	6.06	8.43	1.7*
Community participant	58	6.31	8.22	1.41
Acquaintances				
University student	82	11.52	4.79	1.16
Community participant	60	11.63	5.24	1.46**
Strangers				
University student	28	14.60	0.79	1.18
Community participant	27	14.63	1.13	1

[a] Number of participants who had at least one dyadic interaction with someone in the category;

[1] Scale 1–15, with higher numbers indicating lower closeness.

[2] Square root of number of months.

[3] Mean number of dyadic interactions for participants who interacted with someone in the category at least one time.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *Note:* Means were computed by summing for each participant and then averaging across participants.

Considering the *Duration* of the relationship, it was not detected any significant difference between university students and community participants among all the relationship categories. Moreover, the rank ordering of the relationship types by *Duration* was not significantly different for the two groups.

With regard to the *Frequency* of the interactions, the college students reported relatively more interactions with "best friends" ($F = 7.97$; $p < .01$; $n^2 = .05$) and with "friends" ($F = 4.95$; $p < .05$; $n^2 = .05$) than did the community members, whereas the community members showed relatively more interactions with "acquaintances" ($F = 14.42$; $p < .01$; $n^2 = .19$). The rank ordering of the relationship types by *Frequency*, however, was not significantly different for the two groups.

Previous research showed that when closeness, frequency of interacting (*Frequency*), and relational duration (*Duration*) were considered simultaneously, it was subjective closeness that aroused as the only significant predictor of deception (DePaulo & Kashy 1998). Since our data confirmed this finding, we firstly assumed closeness as unique relationship quality. A *General Linear Model* (GLM) Univariate analysis was sketched out, with *Closeness* (mean values of two 15-point scales: "How close do you feel to this person?" and: "How much do you like this person?") as the dependent variable, and *Relationship* (8 levels, randomly inserted) as the independent factor.

Results ($F = 440{,}07$; $p < .01$; $n^2 = .79$) allowed to categorize the *Relationship* variable as follows (1 as closest relationship; 8 as most casual relationship): 1 – romantic partner (spouse/boyfriend/girlfriend); 2 – family; 3 – brothers/sisters; 4 – best friends; 5 – other relatives; 6 – friends; 7 – acquaintances; 8 – strangers. Such categorization was used in the following analyses.

6.2. Predicting Cooperation from Social Relationship

To answer the question whether participants tend to tell more cooperative or non cooperative lies as a whole, a chi-square test was used. Results pointed out that participants reported to tell significantly more non cooperative ($N = 504$) rather than cooperative ($N = 331$) lies as a whole ($\text{chi-square}_{1\text{d.f.}} = 37.79$, $p < .001$) (see Table 2).

Table 2: Overall Frequencies of Cooperative Lies and Non Cooperative Lies

Lies	*Social interactions*	*Cooperative lies*	*Non cooperative lies*
835	3347	331***	504***

*** Chi-square$_{1d.f.}$ = 37.79, $p < .001$

Table 3: Frequencies of Cooperative Lies and Non Cooperative Lies in each Relationship Category

		Lies	*Inter-actions*	*Cooperative lies*		*Non cooperative lies*	
		N	N	N	Rate of lying	N	Rate of lying
Relationship category	Romantic partners	88	395	47	11.9	41	10.38
	Family	114	342	32	9.36	82	23.98
	Brothers/Sisters	36	184	22	11.96	14	7.61
	Best friends	48	223	27	12.11	21	9.42
	Other relatives	51	182	12	6.59	39	21.43
	Friends	229	954	109	11.43	120	12.58
	Acquaintances	234	982	79	8.04	155	15.78
	Strangers	35	85	3	3.53	32	37.65
	Total	835	3347	331	9.89	504	15.06

To test our hypothesis that participants tell more cooperative lies in close relationships than in casual ones, we first calculated the *rate of lying* (that is, number of lies to the partner divided by number of social interactions with that partner) for each level of *Cooperation*. Kruskal Wallis' H test for k-independent samples was then carried out, considering *Cooperation* as dependent variable and *Relationship* as independent variable. Data analysis sketched out an overall significant difference between the 8-levels *Relationship* factor, and *Cooperation* (Chi-square$_{7d.f.}$ = 52.62, $p < .001$). Frequencies of cooperative and non cooperative lies in each relationship category are reported in Table 3. Results of Post Hoc Test showed that the

number of *Cooperative* lies participants reported to tell per interaction was significantly higher and the number of *Non Cooperative Lies* participants reported to tell was significantly lower when they interacted with brothers/sisters, with best friends, and with romantic partner, rather than when they interacted with strangers, with other relatives, with family, and with acquaintances.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

Although the data of the present research lend some support to our hypothesis and general line of argument, there are some methodological caveats that might threaten the validity of our findings. First, as we asked participants to note down a side of their own behaviour that is considered socially undesirable in their culture, it is critical to address the question of whether we can believe these self-reported lies (Kaplar & Gordon 2004). Self-report measures of deception are commonly used (e.g., Cole 2001; Ennis, Vrij & Chance 2008), but often questioned based on response biases and individuals' awareness of how frequently they lie. For instance, lie tellers may give socially desirable responses and misrepresents their motivations for lying (Paulhus 2002). To reduce such uncertainty, before the recording period we had an extensive initial meeting with the participants in which we explained what counted as a lie in great detail and in which we emphasized the importance of accuracy and conscientiousness. We collected participants' diary entries several times throughout the week so that they would record their own behaviour soon after it occurred, and we assured them that their anonymity would be preserved. Participants in both studies could have relied on similar response biases; however, if true, such a bias is likely to be pervasive. A reassurance of the validity of our findings is that participants reported a high rate of non cooperative lying, and such lies have negative connotation for the self (DePaulo et al. 1996). Therefore, they did not try to convince us that all or even most of their lies were cooperative.

Second, the diary methodology may be a reactive one. For example, perhaps participants who perceived that they told many cooperative lies to some of their interaction partners felt more close to those partners as a consequence, and rated their closeness to them accordingly at the

end of the study. Nevertheless, such observation does not explain why we also found fewer non cooperative lies to close partners when closeness was operationalized by relationship category (that is, participants maintained to tell fewer non cooperative lies to their romantic partners, families, brothers/sisters, best friends, and friends, rather than to strangers). Furthermore, our data related to frequency of lying were very consistent with the findings of Ennis, Vrij & Chance (2008) who used self-report measures of deception. If two studies obtained similar results using different methodologies, it seems that the validity of both sets of findings may be strengthened.

Being aware of these caveats, nevertheless, the present findings are worth of being deepened. The relevance of both social interaction and of shared intentionality in deceptive communication was sustained by the current data. In particular, according to our predictions, we found that participants reported lies were more cooperative (at a perlocutionary level) in close relationships rather than in casual ones.

Cooperative lies included lies told for other persons' personal gain, to help them get *information* or get their way, or to make things easier or more pleasant for them. They also comprised lies told to safeguard other persons from loss of status or position or to protect them from doing something they preferred not to do or from being bothered. Lies told to preserve other persons from physical punishment, or to protect their property or assets or their safety were also included.

Participants might try to communicate their love and concern for the important persons in their lives by telling cooperative lies. They might compliment them, pretend to agree with them, and claim to understand, such as in:

(114) *Lie:* ho detto che mi piaceva la sua moto nuova (I said that I like his new motorbike)
(115) *Reason:* per fargli piacere (to please him)

(332) *Lie:* ho assecondato un discorso affermando che la società per la quale lavoro è in crescita (I went along with the discourse saying that the society in which I work has an economic growth)
(333) *Reason:* per non dare preoccupazioni al mio interlocutore (not to worry the addressee)

(76) *Lie:* alla domanda "è chiaro?" ho risposto "sì" anche se in realtà non avevo ascoltato (even if I did not listen, I answered "yes" to the question "is it clear?")
(77) *Reason:* mi dispiaceva far ripetere tutto dall'inizio a questa persona, perciò ho preferito cercare di capire da sola (it would be unpleasant for this person to repeat everything, so I tried to understand by myself)

The implicit meaning of this kind of lies may be supportive rather than threatening. By lying, the liars may be saying that they care more about the other person's feelings than the truth.

Non cooperative lies included lies told for the liars' personal gain, to help them get information or get their way, or to make things easier or more pleasant for them. They also embraced lies told to shield the liars from loss of status or social position, as well as to protect them from doing something they preferred not to do or from being bothered, as in:

(312)*Lie:* ho detto a mio padre di non avere interesse per una persona (I told my father that a person was not of interest to me)
(313)*Reason:* non fargli credere che non amo più il mio partner (not to make him believe that I do not love my partner anymore)

Lies told to shelter the liars from physical punishment, or to protect their property or assets or their safety were also included as in:

(278)*Lie:* parlando del prossimo week-end non ho detto a mia mamma che avevo intenzione di andare a dormire dal mio ragazzo (talking about the next week-end, I did not tell my mother that I would sleep at my boy-friend's home)
(279)*Reason:* so che non le fa piacere, quindi rimando eventuali reazioni negative agli ultimi giorni (I know she does not like the fact, so I delay her reproof until last days)

Data showed an important exception to our findings that closeness predicted cooperation when lying. Participants told significantly more non cooperative lies than cooperative lies to their families. As Tyler and Feldman (2004) stated, such exception may occur because closeness is not the only important predictor of lying. Lying may also be predicted by the power of the targets of the lies. Especially for people whose age range between 20 and 30, fathers, mothers and other relatives frequently

manage and check out significant resources and privileges. In particular, participants reported lies were more non cooperative rather than cooperative to their families when they believed it was necessary to avoid conflict and to preserve what they regard as their privileges or their rights to make decisions independently of their parents' influence (Jensen, Arnett, Feldman & Cauffman, 2004), as in:

(106)*Lie:* ho detto a mia mamma che ho studiato tanto per l'esame (I told my mother that I've studied hard for the exam)
(107)*Reason:* mi ucciderebbe se pensasse che non studio (she would kill me if she thinks I'm not studying)

(244)*Lie:* ho detto a mio padre di aver saldato tutti i miei debiti (I told my father that I'd paid off all my bills)
(245)*Reason:* così mi aiuterà per l'acquisto della mia nuova casa (so he will co-sign for my new house)

The influence of social interaction and of different relational categories on cooperative processes in deceptive communication endorse the importance of considering not just individual psychological features but also interpersonal communicative processes when analyzing deception (Buller & Burgoon 1996). Deceptive exchange, as in the standard communication, is created and ruled out by a reciprocal game between the communicators: the display and ostension of a given intention by the speaker and the ascription and attribution of a certain intention to him/her by the addressee (Anolli 2006). Such intentional stance in deceptive communication is strictly context-bound. According to DeMiT, deceptive act is the outcome of an evaluation of the contingent situation in order to optimize the given chances and to reach a convenient and more desirable solution in terms of costs and benefits (Anolli et al. 2002). The deceptive message is generated by rational people, who can only reach the so-called *local best,* that is, the solution that maximizes opportunities and minimizes risks at a certain time.

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