

The Influence of Communication Mode on Deception Strategies

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Abstract

This study investigates how communication mode—face-to-face (FtF) versus computer-mediated communication (CMC)—influences the strategies individuals use when deceiving others. Drawing from empirical research across psychology, neuroscience, and communication theory, it hypothesizes that deceivers use more verifiable information in FtF contexts and more unverifiable information in CMC to avoid detection. Evidence from six peer-reviewed studies is synthesized to support this claim, including work on cognitive load, verifiability theory, and neural activation during lying. The analysis reveals that FtF interactions heighten anxiety, cognitive effort, and social accountability, prompting liars to include specific, fact-checkable details. In contrast, CMC affords anonymity, delayed feedback, and reduced social presence, making vague or unverifiable deception more feasible. These findings underscore the adaptability of lying strategies to situational demands and communication formats. The implications of this research extend to forensic interviews, digital communication, and psychological assessments of credibility. Future research is encouraged to explore deception in hybrid communication modes and examine the role of personality and emotional regulation in strategy selection.

Keywords: anxiety; deception; communication; cognition; verifiability