

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between cultural effect, theory of mind, liar intention, lie content and the evaluation of lies in 7- and 9-year-old children and their change after a year. Cultural effect was not found to be a predictor of evaluation of lies. Higher second-order belief understanding was found to predict lower evaluation scores for prosocial lies concerning reality and opinion while partial correlation showed a significant yet weak negative correlation between second-order belief understanding and liar intention sensitivity in lies concerning reality. The results of the present study were in contradictions with previous findings. Possible reasons were discussed. Inhibitory control was found to be a significant predictor for lie evaluation and future increases in evaluation scores of prosocial lies. This was suggested to be related to the need to inhibit the well-learned negative thoughts associated with lying. The lie content effect was demonstrated and was found to be more pronounced in lies with a prosocial motive.

Keywords: Cultural effect, theory of mind, liar intention, lie content, evaluation of lies