ABSTRACT

THESIS: What’s Power got to do with it? Linguistic Differences and Detection of Text Message White Lies as a Function of Power

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This two-part study investigated the linguistic features of white lie deceptive text messages, whether others can detect these deceptions, and whether power influences either of these processes. The results suggest that the linguistic features of white lie text messages are different from other forms of computer-mediated deception; many of the previously demonstrated linguistic features of deceptive texts did not occur with white lie messages, and some (e.g., word count) were actually reversed. Moreover, in contrast to prior research on deception, the current study found that participants were able to detect white lies. Power did not influence the linguistic differences nor the deception detection of these white lie text messages.