

UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
INSTITUTION OF PSYCHOLOGY

**Do Suspects Use the Counter-Interrogation Strategies They
Say They Use?**

Clara Håkansson

Psychology: Master thesis 30 hp
Master thesis
PX2503
Autumn semester 2019

Supervisor: Timothy Luke

Do Suspects Use the Counter-Interrogation Strategies They Say They Use?

Clara Håkansson

Abstract. The aim of this study was to identify guilty suspects' counter-interrogation strategies and compare self-reported strategies and objective behaviors. Participants ($N = 299$) committed a mock crime and were then asked to convince an interviewer of their innocence. Self-reports regarding strategies and interview transcripts were coded and compared. Fifteen strategies were identified, such as *close to truth* and *whitewashing evidence*. For some but not all strategies, participants' self-reports matched their objective behavior in the interview. One possibility is that participants' self-reports were accurate when the strategy led to clear behavioral manifestations (e.g., having a cover story), but they were less accurate when the strategy could lead to various behaviors (e.g., providing detail).

Introduction

Almost every suspect's goal in a police interview is to be perceived as innocent, no matter if the suspect is innocent or guilty. Since both the innocent and guilty suspect do not want to be perceived as a liar, they might apply strategies to avoid being perceived as such (Granhag, Hartwig, Mac Giolla & Clemens, 2015). Focus within the field has so far been aimed towards identifying suspect's strategies and mapping out differences and similarities between liars and truth tellers (e.g., Hartwig, Granhag & Strömwall, 2007; Hines et al., 2010). The most common measurement used to study suspects' strategies have been self-reports, but no one has explored if suspects actually use the strategies they report using (Granhag et al., 2015).

Since the research on suspects' strategies is fairly new and limited, the present study aims to expand the research on what strategies guilty suspects use and explore the correlation between guilty suspects' subjective strategies and their objective behavior. Amplifying the research on suspects' strategies and exploring correlations between suspects' self-reported strategies and their actual behavior is beneficial from different points of view. It can provide indications of suspects' self-accuracy when reporting strategies which in turn can aid in interpreting past research and conducting future research.

In the introduction, I will first explain why suspects might use strategies in a police interview with the help of the self-presentational perspective. Understanding why suspects have strategies can help interpret the goal of using such strategies and understand how suspects reasons. An overview of previously identified strategies will follow and how they could be interpreted through the lens of information management and impression management. I then provide a justification for the importance of studying strategies and argue how we can use the results deriving from such studies and question if previous results are reliable. Finally, I will clarify the specific aims of the current study. That is, in addition to identify guilty suspects' strategies and thereby amplify previous

research, I will compare guilty suspects' self-reported strategies with their observable behavior in the interview.

Counter-Interrogation Strategies and their Theoretical Background

Why do suspects use strategies in a police interview in the first place? Being judged as culpable of a crime might lead to negative consequences, such as incarceration. Suspects most often have the desired outcome of being judged as innocent and facing a potential negative consequence could make them motivated to alter their behavior in order to appear credible and honest. Such alterations of oneself could be understood through the lens of the self-presentational perspective (DePaulo, 1992; Hartwig, Granhag, Strömwall & Doering, 2010). That is, when a person has a desired outcome or goal of an interaction, such as being perceived as innocent in a police interview, that person will present themselves in a constructed manner to appear in the desired way to reach that goal (DePaulo, 1992). In terms of suspects in a police interview, employing strategies to achieve the goal of being perceived as innocent is referred to as counter-interrogation strategies (Granhag et al., 2015). Counter-interrogation strategies can be used by both guilty and innocent suspects. In other words, suspects will edit and control themselves by applying different counter-interrogation strategies to achieve their goal of being judged as innocent. Since the focus of this study concerns guilty suspects, I will only make a brief comparison with innocent suspects later in this section.

Consistent with the self-presentational perspective, Hartwig et al. (2010) suggested that suspects will engage in *information management* (controlling speech content) and *impression management* (attempting to influence others' perception of oneself). Extending the theoretical background to these two types of managements could draw a distinction between different types of self-presentations and counter-interrogations and the intentions of the behaviors. As mentioned, one type of management suspects might engage in is information management (Hartwig et al., 2010). This refers to when a person tries to control the information he or she disclose in order to mislead the perceiver of the message (McCornack, Morrison, Paik, Wisner & Zhu, 2014). In other words, the guilty suspect will balance on a fine line between what to say and not to say in order to be perceived as innocent. The guilty suspect could, for example, decide to reveal some true, nonincriminating, information while concealing incriminating information to appear truthful and innocent. Previous research has identified specific counter-interrogation strategies consistent with the idea of information management. It has been found that some suspects prefer to stick close to the truth and avoid lying (Hartwig et al., 2010; Strömwall & Willén, 2011), while others would prefer to keep their story simple and to be restrictive with what they say (Granhag, Mac Giolla, Strömwall & Rangmar, 2013; Strömwall, Hartwig & Granhag, 2006). It has also been found that some suspects find it important to give a detailed story while others find it more important to give a minimally detailed story (Hartwig et al., 2007; Hines et al., 2010).

If the suspect's goal is to convince the interviewer of their innocence, it might not be enough to engage in information management. Hartwig et al. (2010) suggests that suspects also tries to make a positive impression by regulating their demeanor to achieve their goal. This is referred to as impression management (Schlenker, 2002). That is, a person with the motivation to create a desired impression for the receiver will alter their behavior. In line with impression management, Hines et al. (2010) found that suspects

tried to be calm, consistent and confident in order to appear honest. It has also been found that suspects try to control their body movement to make a credible impression (Strömwall et al., 2006). Most of the strategies identified to make a positive impression have been consistent between studies. However, Strömwall and Willén (2011) found that some suspects report avoiding eye contact is important to create a credible impression, while others mean that keeping eye contact is important (Hines et al., 2010; Strömwall et al., 2006).

Going beyond the lens of the self-presentational perspective by implementing impression management and information management to the field of counter-interrogation strategies has, for example, led research to detect additional differences between innocent and guilty suspects. Previous research has suggested that strategies employed by a liar most often use both impression and information management, while a truth teller mostly engages in impression management (Hartwig et al., 2010; Hines et al., 2010; Strömwall et al., 2006). This could be explained by the fact that both liars and truth tellers want to be perceived as innocent and will therefore manage their behavior to appear in the desired way. Furthermore, liars are more concerned with what information to reveal or conceal, whereas truth tellers most likely will not have anything to conceal.

Additional to specific counter-interrogation strategies, it has also been found that some guilty suspects report that they have no strategy at all (Hartwig et al., 2010; Strömwall et al., 2006; Strömwall & Willén, 2011). However, Hartwig et al. (2010) argues that this might be a strategy itself since having no strategy could be an attempt to be as natural as possible and to have “the desire to produce spontaneous and unrehearsed behavior” (p. 15) in order to convince the interviewer of their innocence.

The Need for Research on Counter-Interrogation Strategies

Practical applications. Research on counter-interrogation strategies has value for both theoretical and applied purposes. We can get a better understanding of the differences between the guilty and innocent suspects’ cognitive processes and how it manifests in concrete counter-interrogation strategies. Research has also been valuable in terms of developing interview techniques. For example, the Strategic Use of Evidence (SUE) technique used to interview suspects has its origins from the idea that suspects will apply different strategies to convince the interviewer of their innocence (Hartwig, Granhag & Luke, 2014). Even if there is variability in strategies that suspects use, the SUE technique seems to work well by inducing statement-evidence inconsistencies. Inducing statement-evidence consistencies could make it easier for the interviewer to discriminate between liars and truth tellers, regardless of what strategies they use. Based on the principles of the SUE technique, Granhag and Luke (2018) proposed the Shift-of-Strategy (SoS) approach with the goal of having the suspect shift from a less to a more forthcoming strategy. Research on suspect’s strategies has been of value concerning both theoretical- and applied science. As described above, research on counter-interrogation strategies has given a better understanding of guilty and innocent suspects’ cognitive processes and interview methods such as the SUE-technique (Hartwig et al., 2014) and the SOS-approach (Granhag & Luke, 2018) have derived from such findings. Applied science rests on theoretical knowledge with the assumption that theoretical knowledge is accurate. One way of improving interrogation research is to assess the extent to which self-reports are accurate reflections of suspects’ behavior. By doing so, we can to a greater

extent rely on previous research and contribute with new insight to the theoretical work on cognitive processes and research on counter-interrogation strategies.

Methodological issues. Researchers have so far mainly relied on participants' self-reports regarding counter-interrogation strategies, but Nisbett and Wilson (1977) suggested that it could be rather difficult for individuals to accurately report on cognitive processes retrospectively. Suggesting that people might not have direct access to higher mental processes when trying to evaluate their own behavior. Furthermore, Hall, Murphy and Schmid Mast (2007) pointed out that people are only moderately accurate when reporting on one's own nonverbal behavior. Various factors can lower self-accuracy, including high demand on cognitive processes (such as lying) and lack of awareness that they are going to report on it later.

When the demand for cognitive processes is lower and when visual aid of oneself is available, people might be more self-accurate when reporting on nonverbal behavior (Hall et al., 2007). It has also been suggested that people are better when they report on their own positive characteristics and behavior, rather than negative, unsocially desirable characteristics and behavior. Furthermore, Nisbett and Wilson (1977) suggest that people are capable of accurately reporting on emotions, plans, focus of attention and attitudes.

Through the perspective of counter-interrogation strategies, we could question if mock suspects are aware of what strategies they use in an interview and if they can report accurately on what strategies they used in hindsight? In an attempt to compare subjective strategies and actual interview performance, Granhag et al. (2013) found results that could support accurate self-reports. As a result of coding participants' self-reports (one open question about what strategy the participant used), they found that the majority of liars preferred to be restrictive while truth tellers preferred to be honest. Comparing those two strategies to participants' actual performance by coding participants' interview scripts for forthcomingsness (on a 5 point Liker-scale), liars were less forthcoming than truth tellers. This type of comparison could be an indication of accurate self-reports. Even if there is some support for suspects accurately reporting on their strategies, the evidence is not sufficient.

The Present Study

The first aim of the present study is to build on previous research on what type of counter-interrogation strategies guilty suspects use in a police interview. Building on previous research on what counter-interrogation strategies guilty suspects' use could give additional support to previously identified strategies and possibly identify new strategies.

To my knowledge, no study has so far explored the direct differences and/or similarities between suspect's subjective counter-interrogation strategies and objective behaviors. Therefore, the second aim of this study is to explore the differences and/or similarities between guilty suspects' self-reported strategies and objective behaviors. Regardless of results, findings could provide new insight. First, attempting to compare self-reported and observable behavior can provide insight on how previous results most appropriately could be interpreted. If self-reported counter-interrogation strategies are similar to observable behavior, it could be an indication of good self-accuracy. Furthermore, it could support the usage of self-reports and increase the reliability of results deriving from such studies. If the self-reported counter-interrogation strategies are different from their observable behavior, this might be a warning for using self-reports as

a measurement and something to take into consideration when interpreting previous findings. Comparing self-reported strategies and observable behavior can also offer guidelines for how future research could be conducted. The second aim of this study can therefore be to provide a better understanding of the past while also improve future research. Second, the results deriving from this study might also be of theoretical value by exploring how aware individuals are of their own behavior. Third, in addition to getting a better understanding of suspect's counter-interrogation strategies and how to reliably measure them, the results can potentially aid in enhancing and developing interview techniques.

Method

This study was conducted within the frame of the project “The Shift of Strategy (SoS) Approach: A laboratory test” (<https://osf.io/vwemq>). The aim of the project was to investigate if different interview tactics could make suspects change their counter-interrogation strategies, from a less to a more forthcoming strategy.

Participants

A total of $N = 318$ people were recruited through the University of Gothenburg's online participation pool and posters at the university's different institutions. Due to missing recordings, misunderstanding the purpose of the interview, and missing data in the questionnaires, 19 people were excluded. Thus, the final sample consisted of $N = 299$ participants (188 women, 108 men and 3 other). Their age ranged from 18 to 74 years ($M = 29.8$, $SD = 10.8$, $Mdn = 26$). Most of the participants were students (208 students, 91 others). Participation was voluntary and took approximately 30-45 minutes. Participants received a compensation of 100 SEK (approximately \$10). Randomization was determined before data-collection and participants were balanced evenly across conditions (see Appendix A).

Materials and Procedure

Informed consent. Participants read and signed an informed consent with information about the purpose of the study and its procedures. They were, for example, instructed that they would perform a mock crime and then get interviewed about their activities. Participants were then informed that the interview would be recorded and that their data would be treated with confidentiality. They could decide to withdraw their consent at any time and cancel their participation.

Mock crime. Every participant conducted one out of three mock crimes (see Appendix B for an example of a mock crime). Every mock crime contained a brief overview that the participant was a part of a political organization and that they were about to gather information about illegal activity at the University of Gothenburg (e.g., staff stealing money from funding or concealing detrimental information). Every mock crime consisted of three stages with one fictitious illegal act on every stage they had to perform. The order of the different stages was spread evenly across the mock crime

procedures. When returning from the mock crime procedure, the participant handed over stolen items to the experiment leader to make sure that the participant followed through with the entire procedure.

Pre interview questionnaire. After conducting the mock crime, participants received instructions that their mission was to convince the interviewer that they are innocent of the illegal activities they just conducted. If they would succeed to convince the interviewer of their innocence, they would enter a lottery to win an additional 500 SEK (approximately \$50). They were also asked to rate how confident they are in their ability to convince the interviewer of their innocence and how motivated they were to do so on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = not at all confident/motivated, 7 = totally confident/motivated). Participants were then given a couple of minutes to prepare for the interview.

Interview. All participants were interviewed individually with one out of three interview conditions, with two of them deriving from the SoS-approach (Granhag & Luke, 2018). The different interview conditions were spread evenly across the mock crime procedures and participants. Three research assistants conducted the interviews. The interview conditions are described below but will not be in focus for the purpose of this study. In every interview condition, the participant was first asked to give a free recall about their activities during the day and then asked specific questions about the two first stages of the mock crime procedure. The interviewer always had evidence pointing on the participant's guilt for the first two stages, but never on the third stage. In the *direct* interview condition, the interviewer never mentioned the evidence, even if the suspect contradicted the evidence. If the suspect was consistent with the evidence in the *selective* and *reactive* interview condition, the interviewer would present evidence to make the suspect aware of the interviewer's knowledge. However, if the suspect contradicted the evidence, the interviewer confronted the suspect. In the *selective* interview condition (SoS-approach), the interviewer confronted the participant in a nonjudgmental manner about being at the scene, but never about their activities at the scene. For example: "What you're saying doesn't seem to match the information we have. We have CCTV of you in the area outside the library. Can you help me understand this?". In the *reactive* interview condition (SoS-approach), the interviewer confronted the participant in a nonjudgmental manner about their activities at the scene. For example: "What you're saying doesn't seem to match the information we have. We have CCTV footage of you crouching under the table outside the library touching a box. Can you help me understand this?". Each interview took approximately six minutes ($M = 352$ sec, $SD = 151$ sec, $Mdn = 328$ sec). All interviews were video- and/or audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Post interview questionnaire. After the interview, participants were asked to answer a post interview questionnaire. First, there were four statements describing how well they think they did in the interview (e.g., "I am confident the interviewer believed I was innocent.", "The statement I gave the interviewer was convincing.") on a 5 point Likert scale (1 = Do not agree at all, 5 = Totally agree). They then rated on a 7 point Likert scale how much they thought the interviewer knew about the participant's activities before the interview (1 = Nothing at all, 7 = Everything) and how much new information they thought they gave the interviewer (1 = Nothing at all, 7 = A substantial amount). They were then asked if they had a strategy to convince the interviewer of their innocence and if they answered yes, they were asked to describe their strategy. After that, they were asked if they changed their strategy during the interview and if they answered yes, they were asked to describe how and why they changed their strategy. The question of whether

they had a strategy or changed strategy was the main focus of the current study. At the end of the questionnaire, they were asked to rate the interview and the interviewer followed by demographic information such as age, gender, and occupation.

Debriefing. Participants were finally asked to fill out a receipt and were given the 100 SEK. They were debriefed and told that they would enter the lottery for the extra 500 SEK no matter how they performed in the interview. They were also asked not to discuss the project with any other potential participants.

The materials were originally in English and then translated to Swedish. All materials can be found at <https://osf.io/vwemq>.

Coding

The first step of the coding-process was to code the self-reported (subjective) strategies to identify what strategies participants used in the interview. I identified 20 strategies that were later merged into 15 strategies due to low frequencies and similarities. Based on the 15 strategies, I generated predictions about what behaviors people should display if they used that specific strategy. Behaviors for nine of the 15 strategies were considered as appropriate for objective coding on interview transcripts and a coding scheme was created based on those behaviors.

Subjective strategies. An inductive content analysis was done of the participants' self-reported strategies in the post questionnaire. That is, a predefined coding scheme was not used. I read through all the self-reported strategies and created data-driven strategies based on the participants' answers. After identifying 20 strategies, a research assistant and I independently coded 60 participants' responses (approximately 20% of the data). We scored 1 if a strategy was present, and 0 if it was not. Inter-rater reliability was calculated with Gwet's AC (Gwet, 2002). The inter-rater reliability ranged from .84 to 1.00 and indicated high agreement. See Table 1 for agreement for each strategy. After the other coder and I discussed and resolved the disagreements, I coded the remaining of the data. In order to structure the identified strategies, I decided to divide strategies into themes; *impression management strategies* and *information management strategies*. Three strategies were not in line with either two of those management-strategies and were consequently grouped as *other*. *Overall strategy* emerged because four participants answered both yes and no on the question if they had a strategy or changed their strategy and was therefore coded into either having a strategy or changing strategy.

Table 1

Identified strategies and agreements between the coders.

| Theme | Strategy | Example | Agreement |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|-----------|
| Impression management strategies | <i>Impression of innocence</i> | “At first I thought I was going to be calm, positive and convincing...”, “Be kind and confident in my answers.” | .95 |
| | <i>Control body movement</i> | “Try to look in the interviewer’s eyes.”, “Answer fast without excess movements and shake/nod my head to be more credible.” | 1.00 |

Table 1 Continued

Table 1 Continued

| Theme | Strategy | Example | Agreement |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|--|-----------|
| Impression management strategies | <i>Act incompetent</i> | “When I realized the interviewer knew more than I thought I started acting dumb.”, “I described another floor when I got the question to describe floor 4. I tried to move around the time perspective.” | .98 |
| | <i>Lack of memory</i> | “Tried not to remember everything.” | 1.00 |
| | <i>Positive impression</i> | “Create a trust.”, “Show myself cooperative.” | .98 |
| | <i>Vocal strategies</i> | “Try to talk with a flow.” | .98 |
| | <i>Compelling story</i> | “Tell a coherent story.”, “Everything has to be logic and have an explanation.” | .93 |
| Information management strategies | <i>Change cover story</i> | “I changed my cover story after she said there were fingerprints.” | .98 |
| | <i>Cover story</i> | “I tried to prepare a reason for why I was there.”, “To tell that I was waiting for a friend that was late, so I wandered around the building until he wrote to me.” | .84 |
| | <i>Avoiding</i> | “Only skip the part that was the crime.”, “...only leave out the criminal activities.” | .97 |
| | <i>Escaping</i> | “Deny all answers regarding the thefts.” | 1.00 |
| | <i>Lying</i> | “My strategy was to lie about the stuff I took.” | NP* |
| | <i>Avoid details</i> | “...to give as few details about my movements as possible...” | 1.00 |
| | <i>Give details</i> | “Very detailed, even in the small stuff.” | NP* |
| | <i>Whitewash evidence</i> | “My fingerprints could have gotten there if the box were somewhere else...” | .96 |
| | <i>Keep it simple</i> | “I decided to tell as little as possible.”, “...let the interviewer ask me instead of starting to explain how innocent I am.” | .96 |
| | <i>Close to truth</i> | “I used a partly true story.”, “To stick as close to the truth as possible.” | 1.00 |
| Other | <i>Self</i> | “Imagine that what I said was true.”, “Believe 100% that you are innocent, persuade yourself.” | 1.00 |
| | <i>Question evidence</i> | “Tried to accuse their techniques of being bad...”, “The witness must have mixed up the floors.” | 1.00 |
| | <i>Question situation</i> | “Questionable about the situation later in the talk to make it look absurd that I was a suspect.” | NP* |
| Overall strategy | <i>Have a strategy</i> | | .97 |
| | <i>Change strategy</i> | | 1.00 |

Note. Examples of participants' answers were originally in Swedish and translated by me.

*The strategy was never coded as present within the 20% of the data and agreement could therefore not be calculated. The coders completely agreed on the absence of the strategy.

Upon completion of coding, some strategies were merged due to similarities between them and low frequencies. The following strategies were merged: act incompetent and lack of memory; control body movement and vocal strategies; cover story and change cover story; keep it simple and avoid details; and question evidence and question situation. Fifteen strategies remained (see Table 3).

Objective behaviors. Based on the 15 subjective strategies, I predicted what behavior people should display if they used a specific strategy and created coding schemes appropriate for each behavior. Table 2 provides an overview of final strategies that were compared to objective behavior, quotes from transcripts, predictions of behavior and how each strategy was coded.

With regards to the strategy *act incompetent*, I predicted that people would express that they do not know where a specific object or room is located, or stating that they do not remember or do not know what they saw, where they have been or what they have done. The behavior was subsequently coded as the total amount of times the participant provided a statement as described above.

I predicted that participant's reporting *cover story* as a strategy would provide a false story about their activities in the building. Hence, the strategy was scored a 1 if a false story was provided (e.g., "I only came here to eat lunch with my girlfriend") and 0 if a true story was provided (e.g., "I participated in a study in the basement").

If participants used the strategy *close to truth*, I predicted that they would disclose information and that participants would conceal information if they used the strategies *escaping*, *avoiding* and *keep it simple*. These four behaviors were therefore coded with information disclosure, which had previously been coded for the purpose of the project "The Shift of Strategy (SoS) Approach: A laboratory test" (<https://osf.io/vwemq>). Two research assistants coded the amount of disclosed information by coding how much each participant revealed for each of the three mock crime stages on a scale from 0 (completely denies) to 5 (performing the criminal activity).

I also predicted that participants using the strategy *keep it simple* gave short statements in the interview. Therefore, I counted the number of words they provided in the interview. Similarly, I also predicted that people who reported the strategy *give details* would provide longer statements and coded the behavior by counting the number of words they said in the interview.

For the strategy *whitewash evidence*, I predicted that when the participant would get confronted with evidence, the participant would accept the existence of the evidence but would provide an innocent explanation for it. The behavior was coded as the total amount of times the participant gave such explanations. Likewise, I predicted that participants using the strategy *questioning* would question the existence of the evidence or question the interview-situation. I coded the behavior as the total amount of times the participant questioned the evidence or the interview-situation.

The materials used for the coding process were interview transcripts. Therefore, I did not find it appropriate to objectively code behaviors that would indicate the strategies *control body movement*, *impression of innocence*, *positive impression*, *compelling story*, *lying*, and *self*.

The research assistant and I individually coded 60 interview transcripts each (approximately 20%). After the initial coding, the definition of the strategy act incompetent was not satisfactory and led us to redefine the variable. In the initial coding, we counted every time participants said "I don't know", but realized that participants could state those words without indicating the strategy. For example "I don't know how

to describe the room, but it was big and bright”. We decided to exclude such statements and only include statements more in line with the strategy. For example: “I don’t know where that room is”. The agreement for act incompetent was initially .94. After redefining the variable, we coded another 60 interview transcripts. Inter-rater reliability was calculated with Gwet’s AC (Gwet, 2002) for the strategy cover story and intraclass correlation for the remaining of the strategies. The inter-rater reliability ranged from .79 to .92 and indicated high agreement. See Table 2 for agreement for each strategy. Disagreements were discussed and resolved between the research assistant me. I then coded the remaining portion of the data.

Table 2

Overview of the nine strategies that were objectively measured, followed by examples from the transcript, predicted behavior, how the strategy was measured and inter-rater reliability.

| Strategy | Example | Predicted behavior | Coding | Agreement |
|------------------------|--|--|--|-----------|
| <i>Act incompetent</i> | “I don’t know what floor you are talking about, they all look the same.”, “I don’t remember.” | Reporting the strategy positively correlates with statements of acting incompetent. | Frequency of claims of act incompetent | .90 |
| <i>Cover story</i> | “I came here to eat at the café.”, “I walked around to look for my supervisor, but I couldn’t find her.” | Reporting the strategy increases the probability of behavior being scored as present. | 1 (present) or 0 (absent) | .92 |
| <i>Avoiding</i> | | Reporting the strategy negatively correlates with information disclosure. | Information disclosure | .88* |
| <i>Escaping</i> | | Reporting the strategy negatively correlates with information disclosure. | | |
| <i>Close to truth</i> | | Reporting the strategy positively correlates with information disclosure. | | |
| <i>Keep it simple</i> | | Reporting the strategy negatively correlates with (1) scoring on information disclosure. | | |

Table 2 Continued

Table 2 Continued

| Strategy | Example | Predicted behavior | Coding | Agreement |
|---------------------------|--|--|---|-----------|
| <i>Keep it simple</i> | | and (2) response length. | Amount of words | ** |
| <i>Give details</i> | | Reporting the strategy positively correlates with response length. | | |
| <i>Whitewash evidence</i> | “Yeah, I wanted to see if the plant was real.”, “Maybe I touched the box earlier and then someone moved it there.” | Reporting the strategy positively correlates with statements of whitewashing the evidence. | Frequency of claims of providing innocent explanations for the evidence | .79 |
| <i>Questioning</i> | “The witness must have mixed me up with someone else.”, “I don’t think your fingerprint tests are reliable.” | Reporting the strategy positively correlates with questioning the evidence or the situation. | Frequency of claims of questioning the evidence or the situation | .87 |

Note. Examples of participants’ answers were originally in Swedish and translated by me.

* Information disclosure was coded by two other research assistants.

** Word count measure was only calculated by me.

Results

Subjective Counter-Interrogation Strategies

In total, 243 participants reported they had a strategy and/or changed strategy (81.3%) and 56 people reported not having a strategy (18.7%). Participants reporting having a strategy (and changing) reported up to 6 strategies ($M = 1.98$, $SD = 1.01$, $Mdn = 2.00$). Three participants stated that they did not have a strategy but wrote down answers that were coded as strategies. The most popular strategy amongst all participants was to have a *cover story* (46.1%), followed by *close to truth* (34.2%), *impression of innocence* (17.3%), *escaping* (14.4%), *keep it simple* (14.0%), *act incompetent* (12.3%), *compelling story* (11.5%), *whitewash evidence* (10.3%), *control body movement* (7.0%), *lying* (5.8%), *avoiding* (5.8%), *give details* (5.8%), *self* (4.9%), *questioning* (4.9%) and finally *positive impression* (4.1%). See Table 3 for a comprehensive frequency distribution of the different strategies.

Table 3

Frequencies of reported strategies

| | Strategy | All participants (N = 299) | Participants reported having a strategy (n = 243) |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Impression management | <i>Impression of innocence</i> | n = 43 (14.4%) | n = 42 (17.3%) |
| | <i>Act incompetent</i> | n = 31 (10.4%) | n = 30 (12.3%) |
| | <i>Compelling story</i> | n = 28 (9.4%) | n = 28 (11.5%) |
| | <i>Control body movement</i> | n = 18 (6.0%) | n = 17 (7.0%) |
| | <i>Positive impression</i> | n = 11 (3.7%) | n = 10 (4.1%) |
| Information management | <i>Cover story</i> | n = 113 (37.8%) | n = 112 (46.1%) |
| | <i>Close to truth</i> | n = 84 (28.1%) | n = 83 (34.2%) |
| | <i>Escaping</i> | n = 37 (12.4%) | n = 35 (14.4%) |
| | <i>Keep it simple</i> | n = 34 (11.4%) | n = 34 (14.0%) |
| | <i>Whitewash evidence</i> | n = 25 (8.4%) | n = 25 (10.3%) |
| | <i>Lying</i> | n = 15 (5.0%) | n = 14 (5.8%) |
| | <i>Avoiding</i> | n = 14 (4.7%) | n = 14 (5.8%) |
| Other | <i>Give details</i> | n = 14 (4.7%) | n = 14 (5.8%) |
| | <i>Self</i> | n = 12 (4.0%) | n = 12 (4.9%) |
| | <i>Questioning</i> | n = 12 (4.0%) | n = 12 (4.9%) |

Note. Several strategies could be identified for one participant; hence the total percentage does not equal 100%.

Subjective Counter-Interrogation Strategies and Objective Behavior

The strategy cover story had two dichotomous variables and therefore, a chi-square test was conducted for that strategy. Welch's t-test was conducted for the strategies with a continuous variable, in order to account for inequalities of variance (Delacre, Lakens & Leys, 2017). The self-reported strategies were treated as the independent variable and the objective coding of the transcripts was treated as the dependent variable.

Participants reporting *escaping* as a strategy disclosed significantly less information than those who did not report the strategy, $t(56.3) = 3.56, p = .001, d = 0.49$. Opposite to escaping, participants who reported *close to truth* as a strategy disclosed significantly more information than participants who did not report close to truth as strategy, $t(135) = -3.09, p = .002, d = 0.41$. Those reporting an *avoiding* strategy did not significantly differ regarding information disclosure compared to those who did not report the strategy, $t(15.6) = 0.43, p = .673, d = 0.09$. There was no significant difference between participants reporting the strategy *keep it simple* and those who did not report the strategy regarding information disclosure, $t(41.4) = 0.02, p = .982, d = 0.00$ or response length, $t(45) = 0.50, p = .620, d = 0.08$. Participants reporting the strategy *give details* did not significantly differ from those participants who did not report the strategy when counting on response length, $t(13.7) = -1.69, p = .114, d = 0.62$.

Participants who reported *act incompetent* as a strategy did not significantly differ from those who did not report the strategy with regard to the number of times they made a statement referring to their incompetence or lack of knowledge, $t(35) = -1.35, p = .185, d = 0.29$. Participants reporting the strategy *whitewash evidence* provided innocent

explanations with regard to the evidence significantly more often than participants who did not report the strategy $t(26.4) = -3.73, p = .001, d = 0.98$. Similarly, those reporting *questioning* as a strategy had a significantly higher number of instances where they questioned the evidence or the situation compared to those who did not report the strategy, $t(11.1) = -2.46, p = .031, d = 1.58$.

Finally, participants reported having a *cover story* had a cover story to a significantly higher degree than those who did not report having a cover story. $\chi^2(1, N = 299) = 6.42, p = .011, OR = 5.58$ (95% CI: 1.27-24.64). See Table 4 for a comprehensive overview.

Table 4

Overview of differences between participants' self-reported strategies compared to objective coding. See Table 2 for more information on objective coding.

| Strategy | Reporting the strategy | | Objective coding | | | p-value | Effect size |
|---|------------------------|-----|------------------|------|------|---------|-------------|
| | | n | M | SD | Mdn | | |
| <i>Act incompetent</i> | | | | | | | |
| Frequency of claims of act incompetent | Yes | 31 | 2.39 | 2.31 | 2.00 | .185 | $d = 0.29$ |
| | No | 268 | 1.81 | 1.92 | 1.00 | | |
| <i>Cover story</i> | | | | | | | |
| Present (1) or absent (0) | Yes | 113 | 0.98 | 0.13 | 1.00 | .011 | $OR = 5.58$ |
| | No | 186 | 0.91 | 0.29 | 1.00 | | |
| <i>Avoiding</i> | | | | | | | |
| Information disclosure | Yes | 14 | 4.43 | 2.53 | 4.50 | .673 | $d = 0.09$ |
| | No | 285 | 4.73 | 3.51 | 4.00 | | |
| <i>Escaping</i> | | | | | | | |
| Information disclosure | Yes | 37 | 3.22 | 2.62 | 2.00 | .001 | $d = 0.49$ |
| | No | 262 | 4.93 | 3.52 | 4.00 | | |
| <i>Give details</i> | | | | | | | |
| Word count | Yes | 14 | 654 | 410 | 517 | .114 | $d = 0.62$ |
| | No | 284 | 467 | 293 | 417 | | |
| <i>Close to truth</i> | | | | | | | |
| Information disclosure | Yes | 84 | 5.75 | 3.74 | 5.00 | .002 | $d = 0.41$ |
| | No | 215 | 4.32 | 3.28 | 4.00 | | |
| <i>Keep it simple</i> | | | | | | | |
| Word count | Yes | 34 | 497 | 266 | 452 | .620 | $d = 0.08$ |
| | No | 265 | 473 | 305 | 417 | | |
| Information disclosure | Yes | 34 | 4.71 | 3.56 | 3.50 | .982 | $d = 0.00$ |
| | No | 265 | 4.72 | 3.46 | 4.00 | | |
| <i>Whitewash evidence</i> | | | | | | | |
| Frequency of claims of providing innocent explanations for evidence | Yes | 25 | 1.40 | 1.16 | 1.00 | .001 | $d = 0.98$ |
| | No | 274 | 0.52 | 0.84 | 0.00 | | |

Table 4 Continued

Table 4 Continued

| Strategy | Reporting the strategy | | Objective coding | | | <i>p</i> -value | Effect size |
|--|------------------------|----------|------------------|------------|------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | <i>n</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Mdn</i> | | | |
| Questioning | | | | | | | |
| Frequency of claims of questioning the evidence or the situation | Yes | 12 | 1.25 | 1.42 | 1.00 | .031 | <i>d</i> = 1.58 |
| | No | 287 | 0.24 | 0.55 | 0.00 | | |

Note. This table provides a list of each strategy where a comparison between the subjective strategy and objective behavior was made. The measurements for the objective coding are listed under each strategy (in bold and italic font). The table then provides the number (*n*) of participants reporting the strategy (Yes) versus not reporting the strategy (No) in their self-reports, followed by descriptive statistics for the objective coding.

Discussion

The first aim of this study was to expand the research on what counter-interrogation strategies guilty suspects' use in a police interview based on self-reports. While some identified strategies in the current study replicate previous findings, new strategies were also identified (e.g., *whitewashing evidence* and *acting incompetent*). The second aim was to explore if the guilty suspect actually uses the strategies they claim using by comparing the self-reported strategies with their observable behavior in the interview. Assuming the predicted behaviors can differentiate between participants enacting a strategy versus not enacting a strategy, it seems like suspects' self-accuracy might be better for some strategies (e.g., having a *cover story* or sticking *close to the truth*) than for others (e.g., *acting incompetent* or *to give details*).

The following discussion will first address the results regarding identified counter-interrogation strategies and reflections on newly identified strategies. Next, I will focus on the comparison made between subjective strategies and observable behaviors and how these results can be interpreted. I discuss future directions, such as how self-reports could be improved, and limitations regarding our mock crime and sample. I finally provide my conclusions of the current study.

Identified Counter-interrogation Strategies

Most of the identified strategies in the current study have been identified before, such as *close to truth*, *escaping*, *keep it simple*, *avoiding*, *give details*, *lying*, *self*, and *control body movement* (e.g., Hartwig et al., 2010; Hines et al., 2010; Strömwall & Willén, 2011). Other strategies identified in the current study that I will highlight in this section are either newly identified strategies or strategies with a wider meaning than previously identified strategies.

To my knowledge, four new strategies emerged in the current study; *whitewash evidence*, *questioning*, *act incompetent* and *positive impression*. I suggest that the identification of whitewashing evidence and questioning the evidence is due to different interview methods. For example, if the suspect is confronted with (to the suspect) unknown evidence, the suspect could have the opportunity to whitewash the evidence or to question its existence. It would be interesting to further explore how the suspect reason

when being confronted with evidence in order to maintain their credibility and how different responses could influence the interviewer's perception of the suspect. The SUE-technique, where the suspect is confronted with evidence, has been used as an interview method in previous studies about counter-interrogation strategies (Granhag et al., 2013; Hartwig et al., 2007). Therefore, I find it surprising that the strategies whitewashing evidence and questioning evidence have not been identified before. One possible explanation is that attempting to whitewash- or question evidence could be buried under other previously identified strategies. For example, when previous research identified plausibility as a strategy it is not clear in what context the plausibility is given (before or after being confronted with evidence if e.g. the SUE technique is used). Furthermore, behaviors coded in line with positive impression (e.g., creating a trust to the interviewer or using humor) and partly act incompetent (e.g., act confused on purpose) have, to my knowledge, not been identified before. However, the strategy act incompetent in the current study also included blaming lack of memory, which has been identified as a counter-interrogation strategy before (Alison et al., 2014). The newly identified strategies could partly be explained by an increase in sample size compared to previous studies.

The most frequent strategy in this study was to have a *cover story*. To my knowledge, to have a cover story as a strategy has only been identified when suspects were questioned about future intentions (Clemens, Granhag & Strömwall, 2013). Having a cover story has previously been defined as a false statement about a future intention or action (Mac Giolla, Granhag & Vrig, 2015) but the results in the current study could extend the definition to include past actions as well.

Some of the identified strategies in the current study include a wider range of behaviors than those previously identified. For example, previous studies have identified being calm, confident and relaxed (e.g., Hines et al., 2010; Strömwall & Willén, 2011) as specific individual strategies. The strategy *impression of innocence* includes those three behaviors and newly identified behaviors such as to be kind, act normal and be serious. Once again, this could partly be explained by an increase in sample size. Initially, 115 specific behaviors were identified in the content analysis. Subsequently, they had to be categorized and clustered in strategies with a wider meaning for structure.

Participants in the current study reported strategies that indicated that they were mindful of how they should alter themselves in order to appear innocent. In other words, it was evident that participants had the desired goal of being judged as innocent and presented themselves in an edited manner to achieve that goal, which is supportive of theoretically based reasoning of the self-presentational perspective from a suspect's perspective (Hartwig et al., 2010). Furthermore, it was apparent that suspects were concerned with how much information they should reveal or conceal, and how to construct their story to be perceived as innocent. As described above, reported strategies also indicate that participants were aware of how they attempted to make a good impression on the interviewer. The identified strategies support the idea that guilty suspects engage in both information management and impression management.

In hindsight, I am unsure if whitewashing evidence is purely attached to information management. I suggest that suspects might try to save their credibility when they are questioned with contradicting evidence. Therefore, I propose that suspects using whitewashing evidence as a strategy engage in both information management and impression management. I also suggest that questioning the evidence or the situation might be an attempt to engage in impression management since it might be an attempt to save their credibility when confronted with evidence.

Objective behaviors and Counter-Interrogation Strategies

The results of the comparison between subjective strategies and observable behaviors are mixed. There was a significant difference regarding observable behavior between participants reporting the strategies *close to truth*, *cover story*, *escaping*, *whitewash evidence* and *questioning* in comparison to participants who did not report those strategies. Furthermore, there was no significant difference regarding observable behavior between participants reporting the strategies *keep it simple*, *give details*, *avoiding* and *act incompetent*.

Assuming the predicted behaviors can differentiate between participants enacting a strategy versus not enacting a strategy, it seems like participants in the current study were more accurate when reporting some strategies they used and less accurate when reporting other ones. The fact that participants were more accurate when reporting some strategies might be due to participants being able to observe their direct behaviors and therefore be more accurate when reporting such behaviors. In other words, I suggest that participants could monitor their direct behaviors of either enacting or not enacting the strategies *close to truth*, *cover story*, *escaping*, *whitewash evidence* and *questioning*. For example, participants could accurately monitor if they either escaped (denied) or not, questioned the evidence or not or to have a cover story or not. The argument by Nisbett and Wilson (1977) state that people might not have direct access to higher mental processes when evaluating one's own behavior. The results in the current study might be an indication that the more direct a behavior is, the less cognition and evaluation is involved and therefore leads to higher self-accuracy when reporting that behavior.

Non-significant results do not necessarily have to indicate that participants are incapable of reporting their strategies accurately, but merely an accurate reflection of their own behavior that only applies to oneself and not the general population. That is, it could be argued that participants might have a subjective opinion or reference point of how to enact strategies as *keep it simple*, *give details*, *be avoiding* or *act incompetent*. Enacting such a strategy might be a subjective interpretation. For example, a person that is overly communicative usually, might be "normally" communicative in an interview and still interpret that behavior as keeping it simple. Hoeffel and Howard (2010) suggest that self-reports could be superior to behavioral measurements. This, since the behavioral measurement does not necessarily measure the actual behavior and suggest that additional validation of such measures is needed. Such additional measurements could include people's own subjective meaning of the behaviors to explore whether such interpretations differ amongst people.

Another interesting finding when comparing subjective strategies and observable behaviors I wish to highlight concerns the strategy cover story. Participants reported having a cover story were more likely to have a cover story than those who did not report having a cover story. But, looking at the rate at which participants reported this strategy, approximately 90% of participants not reporting having a cover story, still had a cover story. I speculate if having a cover story is necessary in order to lie and obvious to have for suspects in order to be judged as innocent, and would therefore not report that strategy. It would be interesting to further explore to what extent a suspect might use a cover story and if it is deemed as obvious to use by the suspect.

Future Directions

Many previous studies regarding counter-interrogation strategies use self-reports such as open questions and/or rating statements on Likert-scales. There might be a difference in reported strategies if the questions prompt for specific strategies. In other words, it would be interesting to explore if there would be a difference in reported strategies if suspects are asked one open question versus if they were asked, for example, ten questions similar to “To what extent did you try to be as detailed as possible?”, or “To what extent did you try to control your body movements?”.

Furthermore, Hall et al. (2007) claims that people’s lack of self-accuracy could be due to a lack of visual ability of one’s own behavior. If we provide suspects with a visual ability by letting them watch the video of their interview afterward, they might be more accurate when reporting on their strategies. A participant could, for example, get the chance to correct their own self-reports afterward by looking at their interview.

Most importantly, I would find it important to further explore levels of objectivity and subjectivity for behaviors regarding counter-interrogation strategies and further demonstrate how self-accuracy of self-reports might be affected by such levels.

Limitations

Participants in the present study took part in a fictitious crime and were then instructed to convince an interviewer of their innocence. They had to be concerned about their style of presentation in the interview to not be perceived as a liar. In a real-life situation, high stakes are involved (e.g., jail). No stakes were at risk for the participants in the current study and a motivational factor might have had an effect on the results.

Most participants in the present study were students. We did not ask the participant if they had any previous experience with police interviews. Granhag, Andersson, Strömwall and Hartwig (2004) found a difference between unexperienced suspects and experienced suspects. Experienced suspects had a different way of thinking than unexperienced suspects and this could indicate that experienced suspects use different strategies. In line with the results of Granhag et al. (2004), Granhag, Clemens and Strömwall (2009) found that experienced suspects revealed less incriminating information than unexperienced suspects. Contrary to those results, Strömwall and Willén (2011) found results that indicated some similarities between experienced and unexperienced suspects.

Conclusions

Some identified strategies in the current study have been identified in previous research and new strategies such as whitewashing evidence or acting incompetent were identified. I suggest that newly identified strategies could be due to the type of interview method and an increase in sample size compared to previous studies. Results deriving from the comparison between objective behaviors and self-reported strategies led to two conclusions. If the predicted behaviors could differentiate between participants either enacting a strategy or not enacting a strategy, people might be able to accurately report

some strategies while not being able to accurately report on others. I suggest that the results could partly be due to people's ability to directly observe some behaviors, such as they either do it or not without interpretation. However, results that indicate that people are not good at enacting a strategy they reported using do not have to indicate low self-accuracy. Instead, such results could partly be explained by the fact that enacting a strategy with regards to behavior could be open to subjective interpretation and therefore differ between individuals.

References

- Alison, L., Alison, E., Noone, G., Elntib, S., Waring, S., & Christiansen, P. (2014). The Efficacy of Rapport-Based Techniques for Minimizing Counter-Interrogation Tactics Amongst a Field Sample of Terrorists. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 20(4), 421-430. doi: 10.1037/law0000021
- Clemens, F., Granhag, P. A., & Strömwall, L. A. (2013). Counter-Interrogation Strategies when Anticipating Questions on Intentions. *Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling*, 10(1), 125-138. doi: 10.1002/jip.1387
- Delacre, M., Lakens, D., & Leys, C. (2017). Why Psychologists Should by Defaults Use Welch's t-test instead of Student's t-test. *International Review of Social Psychology*, 30(1), 92-101. doi: 10.5334/irsp.82
- DePaulo, B. (1992). Nonverbal Behaviour and Self-Presentation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 111(2), 203-243. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.111.2.203
- DePaulo, B. M., Lindsay, J. J., Malone, B. E., Muhlenbruck, L., Charlton, K., & Cooper, H. (2003). Cues to Deception. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129(1), 74-118. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.129.1.74
- Granhag, P. A., Andersson, L. O., Strömwall, L. A., & Hartwig, M. (2004). Imprisoned knowledge: Criminals' beliefs about deception. *Legal and Criminological Psychology*, 9(1), 103-119. doi: 10.1348/135532504322776889
- Granhag, P. A., Clemens, F., & Strömwall, L. A. (2009). The Usual and Unusual Suspects: Level of Suspicion and Counter-Interrogation Tactics. *Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling*, 6(2), 129-137. doi: 10.1002/jip.101
- Granhag, P. A., & Hartwig, M. (2008). A new theoretical perspective on deception detection: On the psychology of instrumental mind-reading. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 14(3), 189-200. doi: 10.1080/10683160701645181
- Granhag, P. A., Hartwig, M., Mac Giolla, E., & Clemens, F. (2015). Suspects' Verbal Counter-Interrogation Strategies: Towards an Integrative Model. In P. A. Granhag, A. Vrij & B. Verschuere (Eds.). *Detecting Deception: Current Challenges and Cognitive Approaches* (pp. 293-314). Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- Granhag, P. A., & Luke, T. J. (2018) How to Interview to Elicit Concealed Information: Introducing the Shift-of-Strategy (SoS) Approach. In J. P. Rosenfeld (Ed.). *Detecting Concealed Information and Deception: Recent Developments* (pp. 271-295). London: Academic Press.
- Granhag, P. A., Mac Giolla, E., Strömwall, L. A., & Rangmar, J. (2013). Counter-Interrogation Strategies among Small Cells of Suspects. *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*, 20(5), 705-712. doi: 10.1080/13218719.2012.729021

- Gwet, K. (2002). Kappa Statistic is not Satisfactory for Assessing the Extent of Agreement Between Raters. *Statistical Methods For Inter-Rater Reliability Assessment, 1*.
- Haeffel, G. J., Howard, G. S. (2010). Self-Report: Psychology's Four-Letter Word. *The American Journal of Psychology, 123*(2), 181-188. doi: 10.5406/amerjpsyc.123.2.0181
- Hall, J. A., Murphy, N. A., & Schmid Mast, M. (2007). Nonverbal Self-Accuracy in Interpersonal Interaction. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 33*(12), 1675-1685. doi: 10.1177/0146167207307492
- Hartwig, M., Granhag, P. A., & Luke, T. (2014). Strategic Use of Evidence During Investigative Interviews: The State of the Science. In D. C. Raskin, C. R. Honts & J. C. Kircher (Eds.), *Credibility assessment: scientific research and applications* (pp. 1-36). Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Hartwig, M., Granhag, P. A., & Strömwall, L. A. (2007). Guilty and innocent suspects' strategies during police interrogations. *Psychology, Crime & Law, 13*(2), 213-227. doi: 10.1080/10683160600750264
- Hartwig, M., Granhag, P. A., Strömwall, L. A., & Doering, N. (2010). Impression and Information Management: On the Strategic Self-Regulation of Innocent and Guilty Suspects. *Open Criminology Journal, 3*(1), 10-16. doi: 10.2174/1874917801003010010
- Hines, A., Colwell, K., Hiscock-Anisman, C., Garrett, E., Ansarra, R., & Montalvo, L. (2010). Impression Management Strategies of Deceivers and Honest Reporters in an Investigative Interview. *The European Journal of Psychology Applied to Legal Context, 2*(1), 73-90.
- Mac Giolla, E., Granhag, P. A., & Vrij, A. (2015) Discriminating between True and False Intentions. In P. A. Granhag, A. Vrij & B. Verschuere (Eds.), *Detecting Deception: Current Challenges and Cognitive Approaches* (pp. 155-174). Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- McCornack, S. A., Morrison, K., Paik, J. E., Wisner, A. M., & Zhu, X. (2014) Information Manipulation Theory 2: A Propositional Theory of Deceptive Discourse Production. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 33*(4), 348-377. doi: 10.1177/0261927X14534656
- Nisbett, R. E., & Wilson, T. D. (1977) Telling More Than We Can Know: Verbal Reports on Mental Processes. *Psychological Review, 84*(3), 231-259. doi: 10.1037/0033-295X.84.3.231
- Schlenker, B. R. (2002). Self-presentation. In M. R. Leary & J. O. Tangney (Eds.), *Handbook of self and identity* (pp. 492-518). New York: Guilford Press.
- Strömwall, L. A., & Willén, R. M. (2011). Inside Criminal Minds: Offenders' Strategies when Lying. *Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling, 8*(3), 271-281. doi: 10.1002/jip.148
- Strömwall, L. A., Hartwig, M., & Granhag, P. A. (2006). To act truthfully: Nonverbal behavior and strategies during a police interrogation. *Psychology, Crime & Law, 12*(2), 207-219. doi: 10.1080/10683160512331331328

Appendix A

Distribution (n) of the participants in the different conditions

| | | Mock Crime Procedure | | | Total |
|---------------------|-----------|----------------------|-----|-----|---------|
| | | MC1 | MC2 | MC3 | |
| Interview condition | Direct | 30 | 40 | 30 | 100 |
| | Selective | 36 | 25 | 39 | 100 |
| | Reactive | 34 | 34 | 31 | 99 |
| Total | | 100 | 99 | 100 | N = 299 |

Appendix B

Mock Crime Procedure 2

Overview:

During this experiment, we would like you to imagine you are part of a political organization that is concerned that the University of Gothenburg has been concealing information about a new therapy method in use that endangers the patient's mental health and should be discontinued.

You will complete a series of tasks in which you attempt to steal materials belonging to university staff who may be responsible for suppressing information about patients who have been harmed by therapy. The materials you will steal might contain important information.

Note that none of these activities are *actually* criminal, and that this scenario is fictional. However, for the purposes of the study, we would like you to imagine the activities are illegal. It is important that you proceed with every stage in order and that you return all the materials to the person who gave you this mission when you completed all three stages.

Stage A:

Your task is now to steal a binder with patient-information.

Go to Room 326 on floor 3. Do not enter the room.

Outside the room, there will be a mailbox. In that mailbox, there will be a binder labeled "Projekt SoS". Take that binder.

Before you continue, make sure you have the binder.

When you are done, proceed to the next stage.

Stage B:

Your task is now to steal an envelope that contain complaints from patients.

Go to the mail room on the left side of the reception on the entry-floor.

Find the postal box that belongs to Timothy Luke. Take the envelope with his name on it marked with a red X in the top right corner.

Before you continue, make sure you have the envelope with Timothy Luke's name on it marked with a red X.

When you are done, proceed to the next stage.

Stage C:

Your task is now to steal video-recordings of therapy-sessions.

Locate conference room 2 (room K2) on floor 4. Do not enter the room.

To the left of this room, there is a storage room. Go inside the storage room and locate the box on the floor marked “Terapisessioner SoS” and take the three DVDs marked “E.B. – 2019-01-05”, “E.B. – 2019-02-05” and “E.B. – 2019-03-05”. Do not take anything else from this room.

Before you continue, make sure you have the three DVDs.

When you are done, return to the person who gave you this mission.