

Ko laže, a ko govori istinu? Uloga obrazovanja u razvoju razumevanja laži

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Apstrakt

Laganje je česta pojava koja se javlja u određenom trenutku čovekovog individualnog razvoja. U mnogim slučajevima deca uče da lažu zbog loše izabranih obrazovnih metoda. Kada je porodično ili školsko obrazovanje zasnovano na principu kažnjavanja, deca brzo nauče da laganje može pomoći u izbegavanju posledica. Istovremeno, laganje je društveno neprihvatljivo ponašanje. Deca stiču društveno prihvatljiva ponašanja kako razvijaju svoje socijalne kompetencije. Za decu, ono što je dobro i loše ne mora se nužno poklapati sa onim što društvo smatra prihvatljivim. Naše istraživanje ispituje da li deca starijih razreda osnovne škole i adolescenti posmatraju laganje na isti način kao odrasli ili različito doživljavaju različite situacije laganja i elemente laganja. U našem istraživanju smo replicirali eksperiment Kolmana i Kaja o laganju, koristeći njihov instrument za merenje prilagođen na mađarski jezik. Studija je sprovedena među učenicima starijih razreda osnovnih škola u Srbiji čiji je maternji jezik mađarski. Rezultati pokazuju da deca drugačije razmišljaju u odnosu na odrasle kada je u pitanju percepcija laganja i procena složenih elemenata koji čine laž. Naši rezultati istraživanja mogu istaći ključnu ulogu koju škole i adekvatno odabrane obrazovne metode imaju u oblikovanju ispravnog sistema moralnih vrednosti, posebno u razvoju socijalnih kompetencija.

Ključne reči: razvoj socijalnih kompetencija, razumevanje laži, prototipske laži, moralne vrednosti.

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Uvod

Kada određujemo da li je neka ljudska aktivnost dobra ili loša za pojedinca ili zajednicu, prosuđujemo prema normama te zajednice. Ova moralna evaluacija i donošenje odluka uvek su situacioni, razlikuju se u zavisnosti od epohe, društva i situacije, a takođe zavise i od starosti pojedinca i nivoa njegovog moralnog razvoja (Füsti-Molnár & Miklós, 2021).

Individualni stavovi prema laganju variraju od osobe do osobe, i ostaje nejasno da li sklonost ili „talenat“ za laganje zavisi od faktora kao što su starost, inteligencija, obrazovanje ili genetsko nasleđe (Tang & Davis-Kean, 2015). Istraživanja pokazuju da laganje obično počinje da se razvija kod dece oko druge do treće godine i naglo se povećava s godinama. Pijažeevo istraživanje (Vincze, 2002) ukazuje na to da deca mlađa od šest godina imaju tendenciju da sve netačne izjave tumače kao laži, uključujući pogrešne pretpostavke i lažne izjave kao što je psovanje (Evans & Lee, 2013). Za decu, dobro i loše ne znače nužno ono što društvo smatra prihvatljivim. U slučaju dece, dobro i loše često su ono što odrasli smatraju da jeste, jer deca još uvek nisu u stanju da prosuđuju o datoj situaciji na osnovu svojih uverenja. Dečija percepcija stvarnosti nije deo stvarnosti odraslih, niti njena minijatura kopija, već specifična predstava koja proističe iz specifične spoznaje. Ako smatramo pretpostavku laganja subjektivnom, problem postaje još akutniji, jer razlika između istine i laži koja proizlazi iz ograničene spoznaje dece ne odgovara uvek onoj odraslih (Dósa, 2020).

Ova perspektiva je takođe podstakla naše istraživačko pitanje, koje ima za cilj da ispita da li adolescenti posmatraju laganje na isti način kao odrasli ili različito doživljavaju različite situacije laganja i elemente laganja. Istraživanje laganja na ovaj način ima obrazovnu relevantnost, jer su, prema dobro utvrđenim nalazima psiholoških studija, laganje u detinjstvu i širok spektar drugih problematičnih ponašanja pozitivno povezani, kao što su ometajuće ponašanje, agresija, poremećaji ponašanja, krađa, bežanje iz škole ili kriminalno ponašanje (Gervais et al., 1998; Gervais et al., 2000). Štaviše, longitudinalne studije pokazuju da laganje u ranom uzrastu ima prediktivnu ulogu u kriminalnom ponašanju ili upotrebi droga u adolescenciji i odraslom dobu (Cauffman et al., 2023).

Teorijske osnove

Uloga obrazovanja u formiranju koncepta laganja i razvoju ličnosti dece

Najranija forma laganja koju učimo da koristimo je izbegavanje kazne (Lync et al., 2020). Ova vrsta laganja obično se razvija oko druge godine i postaje uobičajena do četvrte godine (Peskin, 1992). Kao deca, učimo da ne priznajemo svoja dela nakon kazni za priznanje krivice. Laganje često postaje alat komunikacije za decu koji koriste kada se plaše kazne, žele da izbegnu osećaj srama ili samo žele pažnju (Gordon, 2015; Lynch et al., 2020; Wilson et al., 2003). Razvoj socijalnih kompetencija omogućava pojedincima da osiguraju da njihovo ponašanje bude društveno prihvatljivo i da ne dolazi na račun drugih (Zsolnai

et al., 2007). Razvoj socijalnih kompetencija zavisi od spontane i namerne socijalizacije, kao i od obrazovanja. Centralni zadaci obrazovanja uključuju pomoć u razvoju individualne svesti i socijalne kompetencije (Zsolnai et al., 2012).

Prema principu razvoja tokom celog života, razvoj ličnosti se može tumačiti ne kao uzastopne faze, već kao nivoi koji se nadovezuju jedni na druge, hijerarhiju u kojoj se individualni nivoi razvijaju odražavanjem iz nižih nivoa, dok njihova relativna nezavisnost ostaje (Blair et al., 2015). U okviru razvojnog procesa u kojem deca uče uzročno-posledične odnose, pravilno izražavanje emocija i odgovarajuće socijalne interakcije takođe uče šta je laž (Orza, 2022; Talwar & Lee, 2008; Talwar et al., 2011). Mlađa deca prioritet daju poštenju, čak i ako to može povrediti druge. Međutim, starija deca obično pozitivnije gledaju na prosocijalne laži dok kažnjavaju antisocijalne laži (Talwar et al., 2002). Pored toga, socijalni i kulturni faktori takođe utiču na to kako deca percipiraju laži sa moralnog stanovišta (Lee, 2013). Važno je da roditelji i učitelji poznaju razvojne faze koncepta laganja; kada ih uhvate u laži, važno je poznavati pozadinu i razloge za to ponašanje (Bair et al., 2015; Tang & Davis-Kean, 2015). Prepoznavanje ovih faktora može pomoći u odabiru odgovarajućih obrazovnih metoda koje odgovaraju ličnosti pojedinog deteta. Umesto korišćenja kažnjavajućih pristupa, pristup zasnovan na nagradama je efikasniji u pomaganju deci da razviju svoje razumevanje laganja na društveno prihvatljive nivoe (Lynch et al., 2020). Dete koje nije kažnjeno za priznanje greške verovatnije je da će biti pošteno (Gordon, 2015).

Istraživanje prototipske laži među manjinskim učenicima mađarskog jezika u starijim razredima osnovne škole

Preduslovi istraživačke metodologije

Kolman i Kaj (1981) predlažu tri konstitutivna elementa prototipske laži: objektivna laž, verovanje u laž i obmanjujuća namera. Objektivna laž znači da se činjenična izjava izražena u tvrdnji ne poklapa sa stvarnošću. Verovanje se odnosi na uverenje govornika da je njegova izjava lažna. Element namere se odnosi na namernu netačnost govornika, što znači da ima za cilj da prevari svog sagovornika. Na osnovu njihovih istraživačkih nalaza, najznačajniji element prototipske laži za izvorne govornike engleskog jezika bio je element verovanja, zatim namera, a na kraju objektivna laž. Eksperiment Kolmana i Kaja ponovljen je s izvornim govornicima nekoliko jezika, pri čemu su rezultati bili delimično slični i delimično različiti u različitim kulturama. Govornici arapskog i ekvadorskog španiskog jezika ocenjivali su laži slično kao izvorni govornici engleskog jezika, pridržavajući se redosleda snage: verovanja > namera > laž. Međutim, za izvorne govornike indonežanskog jezika, prototipski koncept laganja koji su predložili Kolman i Kaj (1981) ne važi. U indonežanskoj kulturi, najvažniji element laži je činjenična laž, zatim namera, a komponenta verovanja nije nužno prisutna u konceptu laganja (Adha, 2020). Vajtai (Vajtai, 2013) je prvi sproveo eksperiment Kolmana i Kaja (1981) s izvornim govornicima mađarskog jezika. Prema rezultatima studije, primarni element u određivanju da li se izjava u datoj situaciji smatra lažju je namera da se prevari. Nemet i Ada ponovili su eksperiment

2021. godine sa većim uzorkom izvornih govornika mađarskog jezika. Njihova studija je pokazala da je redosled tri prototipska elementa laganja koje su predložili Kolman i Kaj (1981) u upotrebi mađarskog jezika: verovanje u laž > namera da se prevari > objektivna laž. Ovaj redosled odgovara sekvenci koju su uspostavili Kolman i Kaj (1981) na osnovu ocena izvornih govornika engleskog jezika.

Ciljevi i istraživačka pitanja studije

Naša studija je replicirala eksperiment Kolmana i Kaja (1981) o prototipskim lažima među učenicima starijih razreda osnovne škole koji govore mađarski u Vojvodini. Naš uzorak se razlikuje od originalne studije kako u pogledu korišćenja jezika tako i u pogledu starosne grupe. Naš primarni cilj bio je da utvrdimo da li se razumevanje laži među učenicima starijih razreda osnovne škole koji žive u manjinskom kontekstu razlikuje od razumevanja laži kod odraslih, i kako se njihova percepcija prototipskih elemenata laži poredi sa percepcijom odraslih.

(1) Naše prvo istraživačko pitanje je: Kakav je redosled važnosti elemenata prototipske laži, kako ga percipiraju učesnici studije, u poređenju sa redosledom koji su identifikovali Kolman i Kaj (1981) u svojoj studiji o odraslima?

(2) Naše drugo istraživačko pitanje je: Koliko su učenici sigurni u svoje ocene laži, i da li postoje faktori koji utiču na njihove procene?

Razumevanje odgovora na ova pitanja je ključno, jer može informisati obrazovne prakse kako bi se poboljšalo moralno rezonovanje i socijalne kompetencije učenika. Prepoznavanjem načina na koji učenici percipiraju elemente laganja i njihove sigurnosti u tim procenama, nastavnici mogu prilagoditi intervencije i kurikulume koji podstiču kritičko razmišljanje i etičko donošenje odluka, što na kraju pomaže učenicima da se efikasnije snalaze u složenim socijalnim interakcijama.

Metode i tehnike

U našoj studiji koristili smo merni instrument koji su razvili Nemet i Ada (2021), a koji je adaptacija upitnika korišćenog u eksperimentu Kolmana i Kaja (1981) za mađarski jezik. Upitnik sadrži osam moralnih priča koje kombinuju tri elementa prototipskih laži: (a) objektivna laž, (b) verovanje u laž i (v) obmanjujuća namera. Tokom prevođenja originalnog upitnika, autori su osigurali da je jezik priča kulturno prihvatljiva za izvorne govornike mađarskog jezika. Nakon analize priča, zaključili smo da se njihov sadržaj može interpretirati na isti način lingvistički i kulturno među korisnicima mađarskog manjinskog jezika kao što je to slučaj u populaciji izvornih govornika mađarskog jezika.

Tabela 1 prikazuje kombinacije tri elementa prototipske laži u osam priča. U tabeli, znak + označava prisustvo odgovarajućeg elementa u priči, dok znak - označava njegovu odsutnost.

Tabela 1

Prisutnost elemenata prototipske laži u moralnim pričama

Osobine priče	Objektivna laž	Verovanje u laž	Obmanjujuća namera
1. Máté – torta	+	+	+
2. Dávid – golf	–	–	–
3. Patrik – bilijar	+	–	+
4. Katalin – ispit	–	+	+
5. Sándor – večera	+	+	–
6. Mária – bivša prijateljica	–	–	+
7. Betti sestra – apendiks	+	–	–
8. Miklós – bol u stomaku	–	+	–

Metoda evaluacije odgovora

U eksperimentu, nakon čitanja svake priče, učesnici su morali da odgovore na dva pitanja kako bi se utvrdio nivo ocene laži i sigurnosti u svojoj oceni. Prvo pitanje imalo je za cilj da proceni da li je glavni lik u priči lagao ili ne, dok se drugo pitanje fokusiralo na to koliko je učesnik siguran u svoj odgovor na prvo pitanje. Prva i druga priča su služile kao kontrolne priče. Za prvu priču, očekivani odgovor je bio da Mate je lagao, dok je za drugu priču očekivani odgovor bio da Janoš nije lagao. Ako učesnici nisu odgovorili kako se očekivalo na bilo koju od ovih priča, isključeni su iz analize, a njihovi odgovori na ostale priče takođe su zanemareni. Od 191 učesnika u studiji, 125 je dalo validne odgovore za obe kontrolne priče. Njihovi odgovori su uzeti u obzir u daljoj analizi.

Uzorak

Podaci o uzorku prikupljeni su putem anonimne onlajn ankete na platformi Gugl ankete, u junu i julu 2022. godine, pretežno u severnom delu Vojvodine. Istraživanje je sprovedeno onlajn. Učešće je bilo dobrovoljno i anonimno. Prikupljanje podataka je dobilo etičko odobrenje. Predstavljamo pozadinske varijable uzorka učesnika koji su dali validne odgovore na kontrolna pitanja (N=125).

Opšti podaci: Prosečna starost ispitanika je 12,8 godina (učenici viših razreda). 66% validnog uzorka (83 učenika) dolazi iz Čantavira, dok 32% (40 učenika) dolazi iz Feketića (2 učenika nisu odgovorila).

Porodični status: Među ispitanicima, 103 osobe žive s oba roditelja. Dvanaest osoba živi samo s majkom, a jedan ispitanik živi samo s ocem. Pored toga, pet ispitanika živi s hraniteljima, a četiri ispitanika žive sa svojim bakama i dekama. Stotinu četrnaest učesnika ima braću i sestre. Što se tiče obrazovanja roditelja, većina očeva i majki je završila srednju školu. Kod 51% učenika, oba roditelja su zaposlena, 38% ima samo jednog zaposlenog

roditelja, a u devet slučajeva (7%) nijedan roditelj nije zaposlen. Četiri procenta učesnika nije odgovorilo na ovo pitanje. Dvadeset šest procenata porodica ispitanika prima socijalnu pomoć.

Podaci o školskom učinku: Ukupni prosek ocena učenika u uzorku je 4,17, pri čemu 84% učenika ostvaruje rezultate iznad nivoa dobre ocene. Osamdeset jedan procenat učenika je učestvovao na akademskim takmičenjima. Samo 8% uzorka (10 učenika) zahteva pojačanu obrazovnu podršku. Osamdeset devet procenata učenika ima uzorno ponašanje. Osamdeset procenata učenika nije primilo nikakve opomene. Šest procenata je primilo verbalnu opomenu, još 6% je primilo opomenu razrednog starešine, 2% je bilo opomenuto od strane razrednog veća, dok je dodatnih 6% primilo opomenu direktora.

Rezultati vezani za istraživanje prototipičnih laži

Kao što je pomenuto tokom prezentacije metodologije ankete, ispitanici su morali da odgovore na dva pitanja za svaku priču. Prvo pitanje se odnosilo na procenu laži, dok se drugo pitanje ticalo koliko je ispitanik siguran u svoj odgovor. Poeni su određeni kombinovanjem odgovora na ova dva pitanja za svaku priču, posebno za priče 2-8 (pitanja koja funkcionišu kao prava test pitanja, a ne kao kontrolne priče). Uzimajući u obzir sistem ocenjivanja korišćen u eksperimentu Kolmana i Kaja (1981), odgovori na prvo pitanje koji su označeni kao „ne znam“ automatski su dodeljivali 4 poena, dok se odgovor na drugo pitanje nije uzimao u obzir. Ako je odgovor na prvo pitanje bio „lagao“, onda je drugo pitanje „potpuno siguran“ vredelo 7 poena, „prilično siguran“ 6 poena, a „nije baš siguran“ 5 poena. Ako je odgovor na prvo pitanje bio „nije lagao“, tada je drugo pitanje „potpuno siguran“ vredelo 1 poen, „prilično siguran“ 2 poena, a „nije baš siguran“ 3 poena. Proces evaluacije je sažet u Tabelama 2 i 3 kako bi bio ilustrativniji.

Tabela 2

Vrednosti za prvu grupu odgovora

Odgovori	Vrednost
1. laž	7 ili 6 ili 5 poena u zavisnosti od dodatnog odgovora (videti Tabelu 3)
2. nije laž	1 ili 2 ili 3 poena u zavisnosti od dodatnog odgovora poena (videti Tabelu 3)
3. ne znam	4 poena

Tabela 3

Vrednosti za drugu grupu odgovora

Odgovori	Laž	nije laž
1. potpuno siguran:	7 poena	1 poen
2. sasvim siguran:	6 poena	2 poena
3. nisam baš siguran:	5 poena	3 poena

Slično istraživanju Nemeta i Ade (2021), odredili smo prosečnu ocenu za svaku priču zbrajanjem ocena koje su dodelili validni ispitanici i deljenjem s brojem validnih ispitanika. Rezultati su prikazani u Tabeli 4.

Tabela 4

Ocene za osam priča zasnovane na odgovorima 125 ispitanika

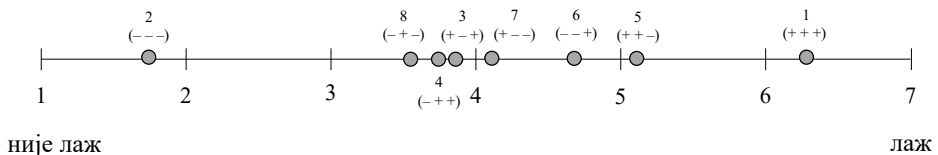
Priča	Ukupan bod	Prosečan bod
1. Máté – torta (+ + +)	798	6,38
2. Dávid – golf (– – –)	227	1,82
3. Patrik – bilijar (+ – +)	491	3,93
4. Katalin – vežba (– + +)	483	3,86
5. Sándor – večera (+ + –)	647	5,18
6. Mária – bivši prijateljica (– – +)	596	4,77
7. Betti nővér – apendiks (+ – –)	515	4,12
8. Miklós – bol u stomaku (– + –)	448	3,58

Prosečni rezultati prikazani u Tabeli 4 ukazuju na to kako su pojedinačne priče ocenjene kao prototipske na osnovu odgovora ispitanika. Ako se prosečna ocena približava 7, ispitanici su ocenjivali da je glavni lik u priči počinio prototipsku laž, dok su, ako se prosečna ocena približava 1, verovali da glavni lik nije počinio prototipsku laž.

U našoj studiji, rezultati za test pitanja ispunjavaju navedene kriterijume. Bodovi za prvu priču (koja uključuje laž) snažno se približavaju vrednosti 7, dok se bodovi za drugu priču (koja ne uključuje laž) približavaju vrednosti 1 (Slika 1). U studiji Nemeta i Ade (2021), ispitanici su ocenjivali da je u četiri priče (priče 1, 4, 5 i 6) lik počinio prototipičnu laž, dok su u četiri priče (priče 2, 3, 7 i 8) tvrdili da nije došlo do prototipične laži. Prema našim rezultatima, ispitanici su takođe odredili prototipične laži u četiri slučaja i nije bilo prototipičnih laži u četiri slučaja, ali se ove priče ne poklapaju potpuno s pričama iz studije Nemeta i Ade (2021). U našoj studiji, ispitanici su smatrali da likovi u pričama 2, 3, 4 i 8 nisu lagali, dok su likovi u pričama 1, 5, 6 i 7 lagali (Slika 1).

Slika 1

Položaj priča na skali laži



Prema Kolmanu i Kaju (1981), ako priča sadrži samo jedan ili dva od tri sastojka laži, smatra se slabijom laži u poređenju sa situacijom kada su prisutna sva tri ili dva elementa. U skladu s tim, u Figuri 1, laž sa manje od tri prototipična elementa trebalo bi da se približi levom kraju skale vrednosti laži, što znači da bi trebalo da se smatra manjom laži.

U našoj studiji ova hipoteza nije potvrđena za pitanja 6 i 7, gde se u svakom slučaju javlja samo jedan prototipičan element laži. Oba pitanja se nalaze na desnoj strani skale laži, što znači da su bliža kraju „laž“. Ispitanici su kategorisali priču 8, gde se kao element laži pojavljuje samo verovanje u neistinu, na odgovarajuću stranu skale laži. Procena ove priče podržava hipotezu Kolmana i Kaja (1981). Upoređujući elemente laži prisutne u pričama, može se odrediti njihova snaga. Na skali laži, pomerajući se ulevo od neutralne vrednosti prema kraju „nije laž“ – u proceni svake priče – objektivna neistina se pojavljuje u jednom slučaju, dok se verovanje u neistinu i obmanjujuća namera pojavljuju u po dva slučaja. Pomerajući se prema kraju „laž“, objektivna neistina se pojavljuje u tri slučaja, dok se verovanje u neistinu i obmanjujuća namera takođe pojavljuju u po dva slučaja (Tabela 5).

Tabela 5

Postavljanje pojave elemenata laži na osnovu rezultata studije

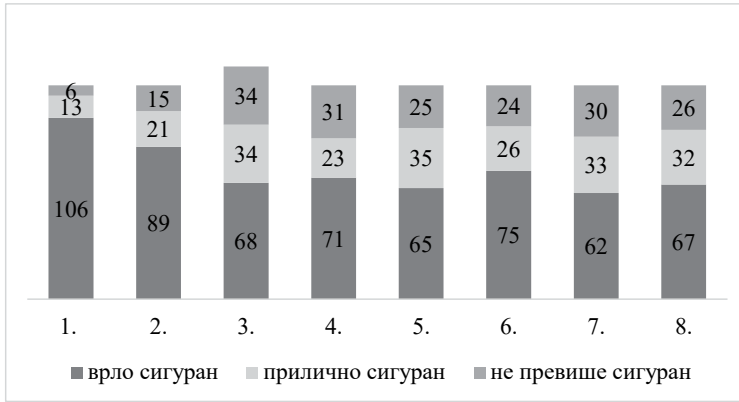
	Objektivna laž	Verovanje u laž	Obmanjujuća namera
Nije laž	1	2	2
Laž	3	2	2

Ovaj rezultat sugerise da među studentima koje smo ispitivali objektivna laž češće ukazuje na percepciju laži u poređenju s druga dva elementa laži. Snaga verovanja u laž i uticaj obmanjujuće namere određeni su poređenjem prosečnih ocena datih pričama, što takođe odražava redosled. Redosled snage među elementima laži je sledeći: objektivna laž > obmanjujuća namera > verovanje u laž. Ovaj rezultat se protivi nalazima Nemeta i Ade (2021), kao i Kolmana i Kaja (1981), gde je objektivna laž najslabija od tri elementa, a redosled je: verovanje u laž > obmanjujuća namera > objektivna laž.

Takođe smo ispitivali stepen poverenja u odgovore koje su dali učenici koristeći podatke iz drugog pitanja vezanog za priče. Za ova pitanja smo pitali učenike koliko su sigurni u svoje odgovore u vezi s procenom pojedinačnih elemenata laži. Tri opcije odgovora bile su: potpuno sigurni, prilično sigurni i ne baš sigurni. Pridružili smo ocene od 3, 2 i 1 poen, redom, na osnovu snage odgovora. Stoga je ocena mišljenja vezana za svaku priču mogla varirati između 1 i 3 poena. Za sve priče, većina ispitanika bila je potpuno sigurna u svoje mišljenje o lažima (Slika 2).

Slika 2

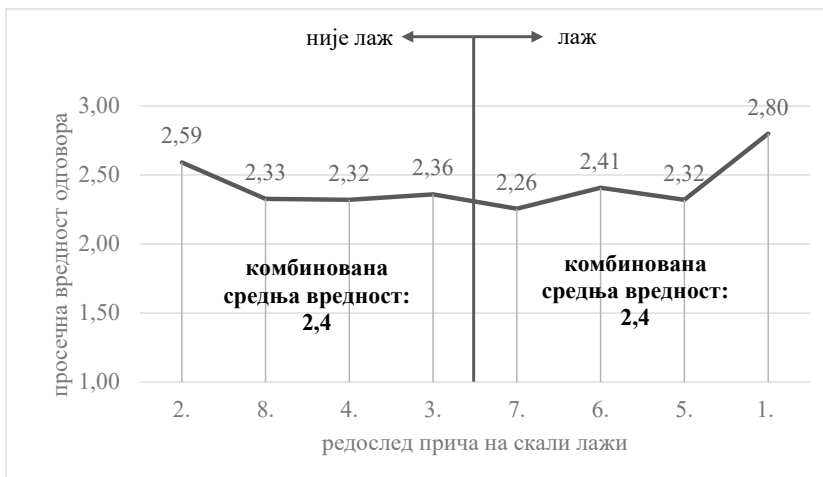
Sigurnost u odgovore date za ocenjivanje priča



Najveća sigurnost zabeležena je u prvoj i drugoj test priči, gde su svi elementi laži bili prisutni ili potpuno odsutni. Ova okolnost takođe podržava tačnost njihovog daljeg ocenjivanja. Da bismo utvrdili da li su ispitanici bili sigurniji u identifikaciji istine ili laži, uporedili smo prosečne ocene dobijene za odgovore na priče koje se nalaze na suprotnim stranama skale laži (Slika 1 i Slika 3). Rezultati pokazuju da su prosečne ocene identične za četiri pitanja sa svake strane skale, sa prosečnom ocenom od 2,4 poena.

Slika 3

Poverenje u date odgovore prilikom ocenjivanja priča



Poverenje učenika u sopstvene odgovore dodatno osnažuje prethodne rezultate hipoteza, koji sugerišu da, prema mišljenju učenika, objektivni element laganja igra najvažniju ulogu u određivanju činjenice laganja.

Analize korelacije zasnovane na pozadinskim faktorima

Rezultati studija u vezi s porodičnom pozadinom

Istraživali smo korelacije između odgovora učenika na pojedinačne priče i relevantnih pozadinskih varijabli. Za porodičnu pozadinu, rezultati su dobijeni za tri faktora u analizama korelacija. Nivo obrazovanja oca, struktura porodice i zanimanja roditelja uticali su na odgovore na pojedinačne priče, posebno na dve kontrolne priče.

Što se tiče obrazovnog nivoa oca, postoji razlika u ocenjivanju prve priče (+ + +). Učenici čiji očevi nisu završili osnovnu školu ređe su prepoznavali nepoštenje u priči u poređenju s decom očeva sa višim nivoima obrazovanja (jednosmerna ANOVA: $F=8,6$ $p=0,001$). U slučaju druge priče (– – –), deca koja žive s oba roditelja ređe su prepoznavala nepoštenje nego učenici iz nekompletnih porodica (t-test za nezavisne uzorke: $t=-2,44$ $p=0,02$).

Faktori da li roditelji rade na radnom mestu, rade od kuće ili su nezaposleni pokazuju razlike u ocenjivanju priča 1, 2 i 5. U prvom slučaju, deca nezaposlenih ili roditelja koji rade od kuće prepoznala su laži ređe nego deca čiji su roditelji zaposleni (jednosmerna ANOVA: $F=9,6$ $p=0,001$). U drugoj priči, deca nezaposlenih roditelja su češće prepoznala laž nego deca zaposlenih roditelja (jednosmerna ANOVA: $F=5,2$ $p=0,001$). U petoj priči (+ + –), gde likovi predstavljaju hijerarhiju zaposleni–šef, deca nezaposlenih roditelja znatno ređe su prepoznavala laži u poređenju s decom zaposlenih roditelja (jednosmerna ANOVA: $F=2,5$ $p=0,03$).

Rezultati istraživanja u vezi sa školskim učinkom

U proceni školskih performansi uzeli smo u obzir faktore kao što su da li je učenik učestvovao na takmičenjima, da li je dobio dodatnu obrazovnu podršku, njegovo ponašanje i njegov prosek ocena. Ove pozadinske varijable su se pokazale povezane s evaluacijom elemenata poštenja u određenim pitanjima. Ovde je razlika pretežno očigledna u slučaju dve kontrolne priče, kao i u korelaciji s određenim varijablama u petoj i osmoj priči.

Što se tiče učešća na takmičenjima, učenici s boljim školskim učinkom češće su prepoznavali nepoštenje u prvoj i petoj priči u poređenju sa učenicima koji su postizali slabije rezultate (prva priča: $t=-2,7$ $p=0,007$; peta priča: $t=-2,27$ $p=0,03$). Prva priča uključuje sva tri elementa nepoštenja, dok peta priča sadrži dva: objektivno nepoštenje i verovanje u laž.

Učenici kojima je potrebna dodatna obrazovna podrška manje su prepoznavali nepoštenje u prvoj priči ($t=4,32$ $p=0,001$), ali više u drugoj priči ($t=-3,17$ $p=0,02$), koja nije sadržala elemente nepoštenja. Ovaj rezultat ukazuje na to da su bili manje sposobni

da procene elemente nepoštenja u kontrolnim pričama. Isti rezultat se primećuje i kod varijable ponašanja. Učenici s uzornim ponašanjem koji nisu primili formalne opomene prepoznali su nepoštenje češće u prvoj priči nego oni koji su primili opomene u školi (razredni učitelj, razredni savet, direktor) ($t=2,98$ $p=0,003$).

Analiza korelacije zasnovana na akademskim prosečnim ocenama pokazuje razlike u mišljenjima učenika u vezi s prvom, drugom i osmom pričom. U slučaju prve priče, učenici sa nižim akademskim prosekom ređe su prepoznavali nepoštenje nego oni sa višim prosekom (jednosmerna ANOVA: $F=10,86$ $p=0,001$). U slučaju druge priče, učenici sa višim akademskim prosekom ređe su prepoznavali nepoštenje nego oni sa nižim prosekom (jednosmerna ANOVA: $F=4,3$ $p=0,03$). Za osmu priču, učenici sa nižim akademskim prosekom ređe su identifikovali nepoštenje nego oni sa višim akademskim prosekom (jednosmerna ANOVA: $F=2,5$ $p=0,04$).

Budući da učenici s nižim akademskim prosekom manje verovatno prepoznaju nepošteno ponašanje, ciljani intervencijski programi mogli bi biti korisni. Programi osmišljeni da poboljšaju kako akademske veštine tako i razumevanje etike mogu podržati ove učenike u prepoznavanju važnosti poštenja i etičkog donošenja odluka. Nastavnici bi trebalo da budu obučeni da prepoznaju ove razlike u percepciji i da olakšavaju diskusije o etici u učionici. Programi profesionalnog razvoja mogu opremiti nastavnike strategijama za uključivanje učenika u razgovore o moralnom rezonovanju, prilagođenim njihovom akademskom nivou.

Sažetak rezultata i zaključaka

U našoj studiji analizirali smo razumevanje laganja među učenicima viših razreda koji govore mađarski jezik u Vojvodini. Naše prvo istraživačko pitanje je bilo da utvrdimo da li se razumevanje laganja kod učenika razlikuje od onog kod odraslih i da li se elementi laganja procenjuju slično u obe grupe. Rezultati pokazuju da učenici smatraju objektivnu neistinu značajnijim faktorom u određivanju laži u poređenju s odraslima. Za učenike, hijerarhija elemenata laganja je sledeća: objektivna neistina > obmanjujuća namera > verovanje u neistinu. Ova saznanja su u suprotnosti sa studijama sprovedenim s odraslima, gde je objektivna neistina smatrana najslabijim od tri elementa, sa hijerarhijom: verovanja u neistinu > obmanjujuća namera > objektivna neistina (Coleman & Kay, 1981; Németh & Adha, 2021). Posledično, razumevanje laganja među decom se razlikuje od razumevanja odraslih.

Ova razlika naglašava važnost fokusiranja na razvoj socijalnih kompetencija i moralnog rasuđivanja među učenicima, posebno u razumevanju i ocenjivanju različitih aspekata laganja. Integracija programa socijalno-emocionalnog učenja (SEL) koji naglašava empatiju, komunikacione veštine i etičko donošenje odluka može umnogome poboljšati svest učenika o uticaju njihovih reči i dela na druge. Pored toga, obuka nastavnika treba da istakne razumevanje razvojnih razlika u moralnom rezonovanju, opremajući nastavnike da se suoče sa zabudama i kreiraju podržavajuće okruženje pogodno za učenje. Ovaj pristup ne samo da podstiče nijansirano razumevanje laganja i poštenja, već i promoviše sveukupni razvoj socijalnih kompetencija učenika.

Naše drugo istraživačko pitanje ispitivalo je koje pozadinske varijable karakteristične za uzorak mogu uticati na njihove vrednosne sudove. Identifikovali smo porodične okolnosti i akademske performanse kao ključne faktore. Rezultati su pokazali da određene socijalne i kognitivne karakteristike učenika zaista utiču na njihovu procenu moralnih priča koje se odnose na laganje.

Nalazi naše studije ističu kritičnu važnost institucionalnog obrazovanja u podršci razvoju socijalnih kompetencija i odgovarajućeg socijalnog ponašanja. Korišćenje nekaženih obrazovnih metoda, kao što sugerišu Talvar i saradnici (2011) i Gordon (2015), uz odgovarajući pristup upravljanju laganjem, može podstaći poštenje tokom detinjstva i adolescencije. To doprinosi uspostavljanju zdravih socijalnih odnosa i efikasnom rešavanju konflikata. Pored toga, ovi pristupi mogu pomoći mladima da razviju i učvrste svoje moralne vrednosti.

Međutim, studija ima svoja ograničenja. Na primer, veličina uzorka može ograničiti generalizaciju nalaza, a pošto je bilo prekida u istraživanju, nismo mogli da procenimo promene tokom vremena. Pored toga, oslanjanje na podatke dobijene samoprocenom može da uključuje pristrasnosti u vezi s razumevanjem učenika o poštenju i nepoštenju.

Zaključno, naši nalazi naglašavaju potrebu za ciljanom obrazovnom praksom koja se bavi ovim razvojnim razlikama. Buduća istraživanja bi trebalo da teže proširenju raznolikosti uzorka kako bi istražila kako različite demografske grupe utiču na percepciju laganja. Longitudinalne studije bi bile korisne za procenu dugoročnih efekata obrazovnih intervencija na moralno rezonovanje učenika. Pored toga, razvijanje i evaluacija specifičnih programa socijalno-emocionalnog učenja fokusiranih na poštenje i moralno rezonovanje moglo bi doneti dragocene uvide u njihovu efikasnost. Ulaganje u profesionalni razvoj edukatora je ključno, kao i podsticanje roditeljskog uključivanja u diskusije o etici, stvarajući podržavajuće okruženje koje se proteže izvan učionice. Redovne procene razumevanja etičkih koncepata kod učenika takođe bi trebalo da se sprovode kako bi se informisale i prilagodile obrazovne strategije. Baveći se snagama i slabostima naše studije, dok jasno povezujemo naše zaključke sa nalazima, možemo bolje informisati buduće obrazovne prakse i istraživačke inicijative usmerene na unapređenje moralnog i socijalnog razvoja učenika.

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Who is Lying and Who is Telling the Truth? The Role of Education in the Development of Understanding of Lies

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Abstract

Lying is a common phenomenon that becomes a part of human life from a certain point in individual development. In many cases, it is through poorly chosen educational methods that children learn to lie. When family or school education is based on the principle of punishment, children quickly learn that lying can help them avoid consequences. At the same time, lying is a socially unacceptable behavior. Children acquire socially acceptable behaviors as they develop their social competencies. For children, what is good and bad does not necessarily align with what society deems acceptable. Our research question focuses on whether adolescent children view lying in the same way as adults or if they perceive various lying situations and elements differently. In our study, we replicated Coleman and Kay's experiment on lying using their measurement tool adapted to the Hungarian language. The study was conducted among upper primary school students who are native Hungarian speakers in Serbia. The results show that children differ from adults in their perception of lying and their evaluation of the complex elements that constitute lies. Our research findings highlight the crucial role that schools and appropriately chosen educational methods can play in shaping a proper moral value system, particularly in developing social competencies.

Keywords: *development of social competence, understanding of lies, prototypical lies, moral values.*

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Introduction

When determining whether a human activity is good or bad for the individual or the community, we judge according to the community's norms. This moral evaluation and decision-making is always situational, varying by era, society, and situation, and also depends on the individual's age and level of moral development (Füsti-Molnár & Miklós, 2021).

Individual attitudes toward lying vary from person to person, and it remains unclear whether the propensity or "talent" for lying depends on factors such as age, intelligence, education, or genetic inheritance (Tang & Davis-Kean, 2015). Research supports that lying typically begins to develop in children around 2-3 years old and increases rapidly with age. Piaget's research (as cited in Vincze, 2002) indicates that children under the age of 6 tend to interpret all inaccurate statements as lies, including incorrect assumptions and false statements such as swearing (Evans & Lee, 2013). For children, good and bad do not necessarily mean what society deems acceptable. In the case of children, good and bad are often what adults consider to be, because they are not yet able to judge a given situation based on their own convictions. Children's perception of reality is not a part of adult reality, or a miniature copy, but a specific representation that arises from specific cognition. If we consider the assumption of lying as subjective, then the problem becomes even more acute, because the distinction between truth and lies, arising from children's limited cognition, does not always match that of adults (Dósa, 2020).

This perspective has also prompted our research question, which aims to investigate whether adolescent children view lying the same way as adults do, or if they perceive different lying situations and lying elements differently. Researching lying in this manner has educational relevance because, according to well-established findings from psychological studies, lying in childhood is positively associated with a wide range of other problematic behaviors, such as disruptive conduct, aggression, conduct disorders, theft, truancy, or criminal behavior (Gervais et al., 1998; Gervais et al., 2000). Moreover, longitudinal studies show that lying at an early age plays a predictive role in criminal behavior or drug use in adolescence and adulthood (Cauffman, et al., 2023).

Theoretical Foundations

The Role of Education in the Formation of the Concept of Lying and the Development of Children's Personalities

The earliest form of lying that we learn to use is to avoid punishment (Lynch et al., 2020). This type of lying typically develops around the age of two and becomes commonly used by the age of four (Peskin, 1992). As children, we learn not to admit our actions following punishments for admissions of guilt. Lying often becomes a communication tool for children, which they use when they are afraid of punishment, want to avoid feeling ashamed, or just want attention (Gordon, 2015; Lynch et al., 2020; Wilson et al., 2003). The development of social competencies enables individuals to ensure that

their behavior is socially acceptable and does not come at the expense of others (Zsolnai et al., 2007). The development of social competencies depends on both spontaneous and intentional socialization, as well as education. One of the central tasks of education is to support the development of individual awareness and social competence (Zsolnai et al., 2012).

According to the principle of life-span development, personality development can be interpreted not as successive stages, but as levels built on each other, a hierarchy, in which the individual levels are developed by unfolding from the lower levels, while their relative independence remains (Blair et al., 2015). Within a developmental process where children learn cause-and-effect relationships, the correct expression of emotion and appropriate social interactions, they also learn what a lie is (Orza, 2022; Talwar & Lee, 2008; Talwar et al., 2011). Younger children prioritize honesty even if it may hurt others. However, older children tend to view prosocial lies more favorably while punishing antisocial lies (Talwar et al., 2002). Additionally, social and cultural factors also influence how children perceive lies from a moral standpoint (Lee, 2013). It is important for parents and teachers to know the developmental stages of the concept of lying, and if children are caught lying, it is important to know the background and reasons for this behavior (Bair et al., 2015; Tang & Davis-Kean, 2015). Recognizing these factors can help select appropriate educational methods that match the individual child's personality. Rather than using punitive approaches, a reward-based approach is more effective in helping children develop their understanding of lying to socially acceptable levels (Lynch et al., 2020). A child not punished for admitting a mistake is likelier to be honest (Gordon, 2015).

Investigation of the Prototypical Lie Among Minority Hungarian-Speaking Upper Primary School Students

The antecedents of the research methodology

Coleman and Kay (1981) propose three constitutive elements of the prototypical lie: objective falsehood, belief in the falsehood, and deceptive intent. Objective falsehood means that the factual statement expressed in the claim does not align with reality. Belief refers to the speaker's belief that their statement is false. The intent element refers to the speaker's intentional lack of truthfulness, meaning they aim to deceive their partner. Based on their research findings, the most significant element of the prototypical lie for native English speakers was the belief element, followed by intent, and finally, objective falsehood. Coleman and Kay's experiment was repeated with native speakers of several languages, yielding results that were partially similar and partially different across cultures. Arabic and Ecuadorian Spanish speakers evaluated lies similarly to English speakers, adhering to the strength order of belief > intent > falsehood. However, for Indonesian native speakers, the prototypical concept of lying proposed by Coleman and Kay (1981) does not hold. In Indonesian culture, the most important element of a lie is factual falsehood, followed by intent, and the belief component is not necessarily present in the concept of lying (Adha, 2020). Vajtai (2013) first conducted Coleman and

Kay's (1981) experiment on Hungarian native speakers. According to the study's results, the primary element in determining whether a statement is judged to be a lie in a given situation is the intent to deceive. Németh T. and Adha repeated the experiment in 2021 with a larger sample of Hungarian native speakers. Their study found that the order of the three prototypical elements of lying proposed by Coleman and Kay (1981) among Hungarian native speakers is: belief in falsehood > intent to deceive > objective falsehood. This order matches the sequence established by Coleman and Kay (1981) based on judgments by English speakers.

Objectives and Research Questions of the Study

Our study replicated Coleman and Kay's (1981) experiment on prototypical lies among Hungarian-speaking upper primary school (grades 5-8) students in Vojvodina. Our sample differed from the original study in terms of both language use and age group. Our primary aim was to determine whether the understanding of lies among upper primary school students living in a minority context differs from that of adults, and how their perceptions of the prototypical elements of lies compare to those of adults.

(1) Our first research question was: What is the order of importance of the prototypical lie elements, as perceived by the participating students, compared to the order identified by Coleman and Kay (1981) in their study of adults?

(2) Our second research question was: How confident are the students in their judgments of lies, and are there any factors that influence their assessments?

Understanding the answers to these questions is crucial, as it can inform educational practices to enhance students' moral reasoning and social competencies. By recognizing how students perceive the elements of lying and their confidence in these judgments, educators can tailor interventions and curricula that foster critical thinking and ethical decision-making, ultimately helping students navigate complex social interactions more effectively.

Tools and Methods of the Study

In our study, we used the measurement tool developed by Németh T. and Adha (2021), which is an adaptation of the questionnaire used in Coleman and Kay's (1981) experiment for the Hungarian language. The questionnaire contains eight moral stories that combine the three elements of prototypical lies: (a) objective falsehood, (b) belief in the falsehood, and (c) intent to deceive. While translating the original questionnaire, the authors ensured that the language of the stories was culturally acceptable for Hungarian native speakers. After analyzing the stories, we concluded that their content is interpretable in the same way linguistically and culturally among Hungarian minority language users as it is within the native Hungarian-speaking population.

Table 1 shows the combinations of the three elements of the prototypical lie in the eight stories. In the table, the + sign indicates the presence of the respective element in the story, while the - sign indicates its absence.

Table 1

The Presence of Prototypical Lie Elements in the Moral Stories

Story Characteristics	Objective Falsehood	Belief in Falsehood	Intent to Deceive
1. Máté–cake	+	+	+
2. Dávid–golf	–	–	–
3. Patrik–billiard	+	–	+
4. Katalin–exam	–	+	+
5. Sándor–dinner	+	+	–
6. Mária–exfriend	–	–	+
7. Betti nővér–appendix	+	–	–
8. Miklós– stomachache	–	+	–

Method of Evaluating the Responses

In the experiment, after reading each story, participants were required to answer two questions to determine the level of judgment regarding the lie and the certainty of their judgment. The first question aimed to assess whether the main character in the story had lied or not, while the second question focused on how confident the participant was in their response to the first question. The first and second stories functioned as control stories. For the first story, the expected answer was that yes, Máté had lied, while for the second story, the expected answer was that no, János had not lied. If participants did not respond as expected to either or both of these stories, they were excluded from the analysis, and their responses to the other stories were also disregarded. Out of the 191 participants in the study, 125 provided valid responses for both control stories. Their answers were considered in the subsequent analysis.

Sample

The data collection sample consisted of participants surveyed in June and July 2022 using an anonymous online questionnaire on the Google Forms platform, primarily in the northern part of Vojvodina. The research was conducted online. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. Ethical approval was obtained for data collection. We present the background variables of the sample elements, which provided valid responses to the control questions (N=125).

General data: The average age of the respondents is 12.8 years (upper primary school students). 66% of the valid sample (83 students) come from Čantavir, while 32% (40 students) come from Feketić (2 participants did not answer).

Family status: Among the respondents, 103 persons live with both parents. Twelve people live only with their mother, and one respondent lives only with their father. Additionally, 5 respondents live with foster parents, and 4 respondents live with their grandparents. One hundred and fourteen participants have siblings. Regarding the parents' educational level, most fathers and mothers have completed secondary education. For 51%

of the students, both parents are employed, 38% have only one employed parent, and in 9 cases (7%), neither parent is employed. Four percent of the participants did not answer the question. Twenty-six percent of the respondents' families receive social assistance.

School performance-related data: The overall academic average of the students in the sample is 4.17 out of 5, with 84% of the students performing above the good grade level. Eighty-one percent of the students have participated in academic competitions. Only 8% of the sample (10 students) require reinforced educational support. Eighty-nine percent of the students have exemplary behavior. Eighty percent of the students have not received any reprimands. Six percent have received a verbal warning, another 6% have received a class teacher's reprimand, 2% have been reprimanded by the class council, and an additional 6% have received a principal's reprimand.

Results related to the investigation of prototypical lies

As mentioned during the presentation of the survey methodology, the respondents had to answer two questions for each story. The first question was about the assessment of the lie, and the second question was about how certain the respondent was about their answer. The scores were determined by combining the responses to these two questions for each story, specifically for Stories 2-8 (the questions that function as real test questions rather than test stories). Considering the scoring system used in the Coleman and Kay (1981) experiment, responses to the first question that were marked as *'I don't know'* were automatically assigned 4 points, and the response to the second question was not taken into account. If the answer to the first question was *'lied'*, then for the second question, *'completely sure'* was worth 7 points, *'quite sure'* was worth 6 points, and *'not really sure'* was worth 5 points. If the answer to the first question was *'did not lie'*, then for the second question, *'completely sure'* was worth 1 point, *'quite sure'* was worth 2 points, and *'not really sure'* was worth 3 points. The evaluation process is summarized in Tables 2 and 3 to make it more illustrative.

Table 2
Values for the first response group

Answer	Value
1. lied	7 or 6 or 5 points depending on the additional answer (see Table 3)
2. did not lie	1 or 2 or 3 points depending on the additional answer (see Table 3)
3. I don't know	4 points

Table 3
Values for the second response group

Answer	Lie	did not lie
1. completely sure:	7 points	1 points
2. quite sure :	6 points	2 points
3. not really sure:	5 points	3 points

Similarly to the research by Németh and Adha (2021), we determined the average score for each story by adding up the scores assigned to the valid respondents and dividing the sum by the number of valid respondents. The results are illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4

Scores for the eight stories based on the responses of the 125 respondents

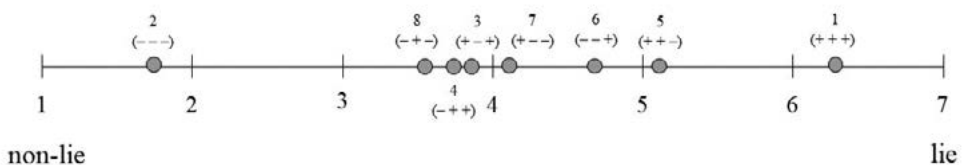
Story	Total score	Average score
1. Máté–cake(+ + +)	798	6,38
2. Dávid–golf (– – –)	227	1,82
3. Patrik–billiard (+ – +)	491	3,93
4. Katalin–exam (– + +)	483	3,86
5. Sándor–dinner (+ + –)	647	5,18
6. Mária–exfriend (– – +)	596	4,77
7. Betti nővér–appendix (+ – –)	515	4,12
8. Miklós– stomachache (– + –)	448	3,58

The average scores shown in Table 4 indicate how prototypical the individual stories are considered based on the respondents' answers. If the average score approaches 7, the respondents judged that the main character in the story committed a prototypical lie, whereas if the average score approaches 1, the respondents believed that the main character did not commit a prototypical lie.

In our study, the results for the test questions meet the above criteria. The scores for the first story (which involves a lie) are strongly approaching the value of 7, while the scores for the second story (which does not involve a lie) are approaching the value of 1 (Figure 1). In the study by Németh and Adha (2021), respondents judged that in four stories (Stories 1, 4, 5, and 6), the character committed a prototypical lie, while in four stories (Stories 2, 3, 7, and 8), they stated that no prototypical lie occurred. According to our results, respondents also determined prototypical lies in four cases and no prototypical lies in four cases, but these stories do not completely match the stories in the Németh and Adha (2021) study. In our study, respondents found that the characters in Stories 2, 3, 4, and 8 did not lie, while the characters in Stories 1, 5, 6, and 7 did lie (Figure 1).

Figure 1

The placement of the stories on the lying scale



According to Coleman and Kay (1981), if a story contains only one or two of the three components of lying, it is considered a weaker lie compared to when all three or two elements are present. Accordingly, in Figure 1, a lie with fewer than three prototypical elements should approach the left end of the lying value scale, meaning it should be considered less of a lie.

In our study, this hypothesis was not confirmed for Questions 6 and 7, where only one prototypical element of lying occurs in each case. Both questions are located on the right side of the lying scale, meaning they are closer to the 'lying' end. Respondents categorized the 8th story, where only belief in falsehood appears as an element of lying, on the appropriate side of the lying scale. The assessment of this story supports Coleman and Kay's (1981) hypothesis. Comparing the elements of lying present in the stories, their strength can be determined. On the lying scale, moving left from the neutral value towards the 'not lying' end 'in judging each story' objective falsehood occurs in one case, while belief in falsehood and deceptive intent each occur in two cases. Moving towards the 'lying' end, objective falsehood occurs in three cases, while belief in falsehood and deceptive intent each occur in two cases as well (Table 5).

Table 5

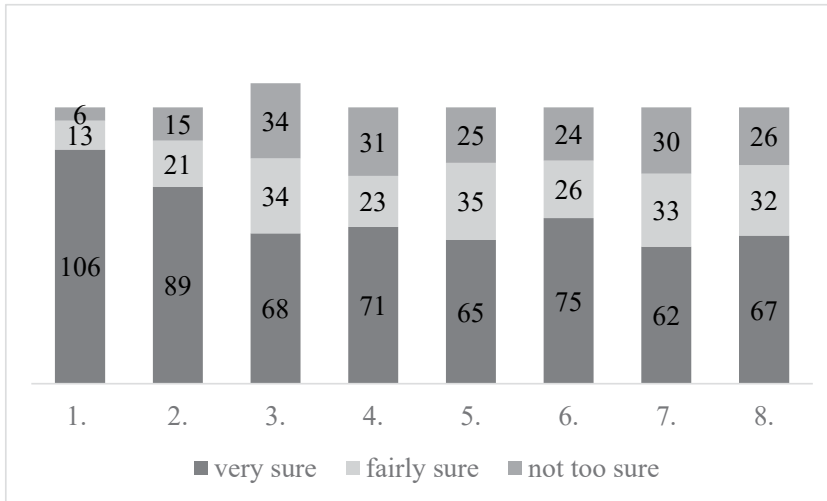
Placement of the occurrence of lying elements based on the results of the study

	Objective Falsehood	Belief in Falsehood	Deceptive Intent
Does not lie	1	2	2
Lies	3	2	2

This result suggests that among the students we examined, objective falsehood more often indicates the perception of a lie compared to the other two elements of lying. The strength of belief in falsehood and the effect of deceptive intent was determined by comparing the average scores given to the stories, which also reflects the order. The order of strength among the elements of lying is as follows: *objective falsehood* > *deceptive intent* > *belief in lies*. This result contrasts with the findings of Németh and Adha (2021) as well as Coleman and Kay (1981), where objective falsehood is the weakest of the three elements, and the order is: *belief in falsehood* > *deceptive intent* > *objective falsehood*.

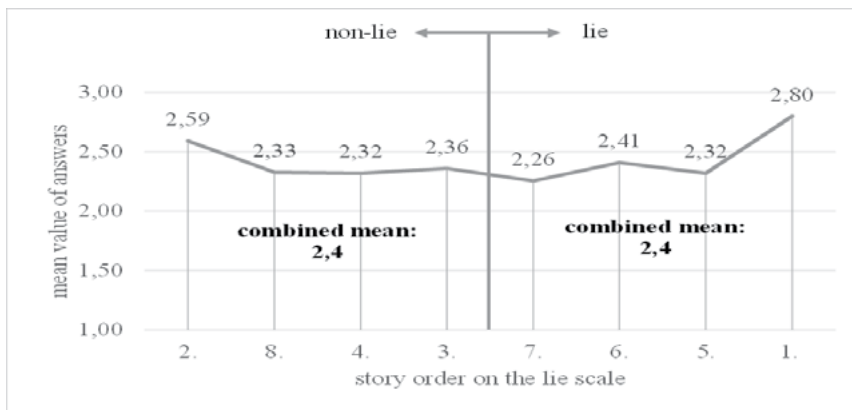
We also examined the degree of confidence in the responses given by the students using the data from the second question related to the stories. For these questions, we asked the students how confident they were in their responses regarding the evaluation of the individual elements of lying. The three response options were: completely confident, quite confident, and not very confident. We assigned scores of 3, 2, and 1 points, respectively, for the strength of the responses. Therefore, the evaluation of opinions related to each story could range between 1 and 3 points. For all stories, the majority of respondents were completely confident in their opinions about the lies (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Confidence in the responses given in the assessment of the stories

The highest confidence was observed in the first and second test questions, where all three lying elements were present or completely absent. This circumstance also supports the correctness of their further assessment. To determine whether the respondents were more confident in identifying the truth or lies, we compared the average scores received for the responses to the stories located on either side of the lying scale (Figure 1) (Figure 3). The results show that the average scores are identical for the 4 questions on each side of the scale, with an average of 2.4 points.

Figure 3

Confidence in the responses given in the assessment of the stories

The students' confidence in their answers further reinforces the previous hypothesis results, which suggest that, according to the students, the objective element of lying plays the most important role in determining the fact of a lie.

Correlation analyses based on background factors

Results of the studies related to family background

We examined the correlations between the student's responses to the individual stories and the relevant background variables. For family background, results were obtained for three factors in the correlation analyses. The father's education level, family structure, and parents' occupations influenced the responses to the individual stories, particularly the two control stories.

Regarding the father's educational level, there is a difference in the evaluation of the first story (+ + +). Students whose fathers did not complete elementary school identified dishonesty less frequently in the story compared to children of fathers with higher levels of education (one-way ANOVA: $F=8,6$ $p=0,001$). In the case of the second story (– – –), children who live with both parents identified dishonesty less frequently than students from incomplete families (two-sample t-test: $t=-2,44$ $p=0,02$).

The factors of whether parents work at a workplace, work from home, or are unemployed show differences in the assessment of Stories 1, 2, and 5. In the case of the first story, children of unemployed or work-from-home parents identified lies less frequently than those whose parents are employed (one-way ANOVA: $F=9,6$ $p=0,001$). In the second story, children of unemployed parents identified the fact of lying more frequently than children of employed parents (one-way ANOVA: $F=5,2$ $p=0,001$). In the fifth story (+ + –), where the characters represent an employee-boss hierarchy, children of unemployed parents identified lies significantly less frequently than children of employed parents (one-way ANOVA: $F=2,5$ $p=0,03$).

Results of the studies related to school performance

In assessing school performance, we considered factors such as whether the student had participated in academic competitions, whether they had received enhanced educational support, their behavior, and their academic average. These background variables were found to be related to the evaluation of the honesty elements in certain questions. Here, the difference is primarily evident in the case of the two control stories, as well as in the correlation with certain variables in the 5th and 8th stories.

Regarding participation in competitions, higher-performing students identified dishonesty more frequently in both the first and fifth stories compared to lower-performing students (1st story: $t=-2,7$ $p=0,007$; 5th story: $t=-2,27$ $p=0,03$). The first story includes all three elements of dishonesty, while the fifth story features two: objective dishonesty and the belief in falsehood.

Students needing enhanced educational support identified dishonesty less in the first story ($t=4,32$ $p=0.001$), but more in the second story ($t=-3,17$ $p=0.02$), which did not contain elements of dishonesty. This result indicates that they were less capable of evaluating the elements of dishonesty in the control stories. The same result is observed with the behavior variable. Students with exemplary behavior who have not received any formal reprimands identified dishonesty more frequently in the first story than those who had received school (class teacher, class council, principal) reprimands ($t=2,98$ $p=0.003$).

The correlation analysis based on academic averages shows differences in students' opinions regarding the first, second, and eighth stories. In the case of the first story, students with a lower academic average identified dishonesty less frequently than those with a higher average (one-way ANOVA: $F=10,86$ $p=0,001$). In the case of the second story, students with higher academic averages identified dishonesty less frequently than those with lower averages (one-way ANOVA: $F=4,3$ $p=0,03$). For the eighth story, students with lower academic averages identified dishonesty less frequently than those with higher academic averages (one-way ANOVA: $F=2,5$ $p=0,04$).

Since students with lower academic averages are less likely to identify dishonest behavior, targeted interventions could be beneficial. Programs designed to improve both academic skills and ethical understanding can support these students in recognizing the importance of honesty and ethical decision-making. Educators should be trained to recognize these differences in perception and to facilitate discussions about ethics in the classroom. Professional development programs can equip teachers with strategies to engage students in conversations about moral reasoning, tailored to their academic levels.

Summary of Results and Conclusions

In our study, we analyzed the understanding of lies among upper primary school students speaking Hungarian in Vojvodina. Our first research question sought to determine whether the students' understanding of lies differs from that of adults and whether the elements of lies are judged similarly in both groups. The results indicate that students consider objective falsity to be a more significant factor in determining a lie compared to adults. For the students, the hierarchy of the elements of lying is as follows: objective falsity > deceptive intent > belief in falsity. This finding contrasts with studies conducted with adults, where objective falsity was regarded as the weakest of the three elements, with a hierarchy of belief in falsity > deceptive intent > objective falsity (Coleman & Kay, 1981; Németh & Adha, 2021). Thus, the understanding of lying among children diverges from that of adults.

This distinction underscores the importance of focusing on developing social competencies and moral judgment among students, particularly in understanding and evaluating different aspects of lying. Integrating Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs that emphasize empathy, communication skills, and ethical decision-making can significantly enhance students' awareness of the impact of their words and actions on others. Furthermore, teacher training should prioritize understanding developmental differences in moral reasoning, equipping educators to address misconceptions and

create a supportive environment conducive to learning. This approach not only fosters a nuanced understanding of lying and honesty but also promotes the overall development of students' social competencies.

Our second research question examined which background variables characteristic of the sample might influence their value judgments. We identified family circumstances and academic performance as key factors. The results indicated that certain social and cognitive characteristics of the students indeed influence their evaluation of moral stories related to lying.

The findings of our study highlight the critical importance of institutional education in supporting the development of social competencies and appropriate social behavior. Utilizing non-punitive educational methods, as suggested by Talwar, Carlson & Lee (2011) and Gordon (2015), along with an appropriate approach to handling lies, can foster honesty during childhood and adolescence. This contributes to the establishment of healthy social relationships and effective conflict resolution. Additionally, these approaches can aid young people in developing and reinforcing their moral value systems.

However, the study does have its limitations. For instance, the sample size may restrict the generalizability of the findings, and the cross-sectional design limits our ability to assess changes over time. Furthermore, reliance on self-reported data may introduce biases regarding students' understanding of honesty and dishonesty.

In conclusion, our findings emphasize the need for targeted educational practices that address these developmental differences. Future research should seek to expand the diversity of the sample to explore how different demographics influence perceptions of lying. Longitudinal studies would be beneficial to assess the long-term effects of educational interventions on students' moral reasoning. Additionally, developing and evaluating specific SEL programs focused on honesty and moral reasoning could yield valuable insights into their effectiveness. Investing in professional development for educators is crucial, as is encouraging parental involvement in discussions about ethics, creating a supportive environment that extends beyond the classroom. Regular assessments of students' understanding of ethical concepts should also be conducted to inform and adjust educational strategies. By addressing the strengths and weaknesses of our research while clearly linking our conclusions to the findings, we can better inform future educational practices and research initiatives aimed at enhancing students' moral and social development.

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