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Probability & Statistics

According to Brookes’ statistical data analysis lets us view data in a whole different way that may not be noticeable at first. This data can be useful in many ways such as determining human behavior and the thought process of a person. It allows people to look at things from a different perspective and at the same time analyze the data no matter how irrelevant it may be. Data analysis plays a key role in our everyday lives whether or not we are aware of it.

Brookes’ mentions Pennebaker’s computers that are used to detect subtle verbal patterns that our brain cannot. One of the things that was interesting was that a computer was able to detect if a person was lying or not based on certain words they use such as “friend” or “pal”. According to blifaloo.com, humans can learn how to see if a person is lying based on their body language and verbal context. Although we often overlook small gestures people make when they are lying at other times we convince ourselves not to believe that the person is lying. One of the signs is that a person who is lying often cannot look at the person they are lying to in the eye. Most of the time a person who is guilty will get defensive compared to an innocent person who will go on the offense. Even though we can train ourselves to view these signs of deception it is not as accurate as a computer would be. The data that can be gathered by a computer to detect lies that a person is telling is the most efficient way.

Data shows us patterns of behavior that we may not have noticed. According to Pennebaker, “when people are feeling confident, they are focused that the task at hand, not on themselves”. Liars tend to use words that seem upbeat compared to words like but, except, and also. We can notice these patterns because of the data that is available today. However, data does have its limitations on certain things such as a computer can measure how much a person interacts with someone but it cannot show the emotions behind that interaction. This is also another factor to consider because data is limited to certain actions and as humans we must use our judgment and leave certain things up to us instead of relying on the data. Based on the research from people.com we can conclude that everyone does lie and that a baseline has to be established in order to detect that the person is lying but even so it is not guaranteed.

Pennebaker analyzes and shows that people who are confident use fewer “I” words. Brooks’ says that liars use more upbeat words such as “friend” or “pal” and exclude words such as “but” and “except”. Liars will also stop using contraction words, such as “wasn’t” and “didn’t”. One way for someone to tell if the other person is lying is to keep asking questions and see if that person’s story matches up. Lying for some may be a very difficult thing to do and for others might be easier but there are hints in deception that can be useful to see if someone is lying to you. Brooks’ says that when telling a story it is hard to include those words because it is hard to include details that a person did not see or think about. For some they might be able to look a person in the eye and tell a lie. These signs are not to be characterized for everyone. There are many ways for a person to manipulate themselves into believing a lie or even looking past one. Our brains do not notice subtle verbal patterns but we can also train ourselves to notice changes in a person’s attitude and behavior to see if they are telling a lie. Statistical data analysis does play a very important role in studying human behavior but it is limited to a certain extent just like how humans cannot be entirely sure a person is lying; a computer can report reoccurring human behavior but it cannot predict the human mind.

Data analysis can be very useful and practical for those who are studying a certain field and want to know the mechanics behind a certain subject. One of the ways statistical data can be used is to figure out if a person is lying but there are limitations and we cannot rely on just the data to determine a human’s behavior and thought process. Everyone can use data and use it to their benefit because it can be applying to our everyday lives. We can utilize data and its resources when it comes to studying a subject or by just using it to see the statistics behind our favorite basketball team.