

New Perspectives on Faking in Personality Assessment

EDITED BY

Matthias Ziegler
Carolyn MacCann
Richard D. Roberts

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Oxford University Press, Inc., publishes works that further
Oxford University's objective of excellence in research,
scholarship, and education.

Oxford New York
Auckland Cape Town Dar es Salaam Hong Kong Karachi
Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Nairobi
New Delhi Shanghai Taipei Toronto

With offices in
Argentina Austria Brazil Chile Czech Republic France Greece
Guatemala Hungary Italy Japan Poland Portugal Singapore
South Korea Switzerland Thailand Turkey Ukraine Vietnam

2012

Copyright © 2011 by Oxford University Press, Inc.

Published by Oxford University Press, Inc.
198 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10016
<http://www.oup.com>

Oxford is a registered trademark of Oxford University Press

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means,
electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise,
without the prior permission of Oxford University Press.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Ziegler, Matthias, 1978-

New perspectives on faking in personality assessment/Matthias Ziegler, Carolyn MacCann,
Richard D. Roberts.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-0-19-538747-6 (hardcover) I. MacCann, Carolyn.

II. Roberts, Richard D. III. Title.

BF698.4.Z54 2011

155.2'8—dc22

2010052039

Printing number: 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
Printed in the United States of America
on acid-free paper

■ CONTENTS

<i>Foreword</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>xv</i>
<i>Contributors</i>	<i>xvii</i>

PART ONE ■ General Background

1. Faking: Knowns, Unknowns, and Points of Contention 3
MATTHIAS ZIEGLER, CAROLYN MACCANN, AND
RICHARD D. ROBERTS

PART TWO ■ Do People Fake and Does It Matter? The Existence of Faking and Its Impact on Personality Assessments

2. People Fake Only When They *Need* to Fake 19
JILL E. ELLINGSON
3. The Rules of Evidence and the Prevalence of Applicant Faking 34
RICHARD L. GRIFFITH AND PATRICK D. CONVERSE
4. Questioning Old Assumptions: Faking and the
Personality–Performance Relationship 53
D. BRENT SMITH AND MAX McDANIEL
5. Faking Does Distort Self-Report Personality Assessment 71
RONALD R. HOLDEN AND ANGELA S. BOOK

PART THREE ■ Can We Tell If People Fake? The Detection and Correction of Response Distortion

6. A Conceptual Representation of Faking: Putting the
Horse Back in Front of the Cart 87
ERIC D. HEGGESTAD

vi ■ Contents

7. **Innovative Item Response Process and Bayesian Faking Detection Methods: More Questions Than Answers** 102
NATHAN R. KUNCEL, MATTHEW BORNEMAN, AND THOMAS KIGER
8. **Searching for Unicorns: Item Response Theory-Based Solutions to the Faking Problem** 113
MICHAEL J. ZICKAR AND KATHERINE A. SLITER
9. **Methods for Correcting for Faking** 131
MATTHEW C. REEDER AND ANN MARIE RYAN
10. **Overclaiming on Personality Questionnaires** 151
DELROY L. PAULHUS
11. **The Detection of Faking Through Word Use** 165
MATTHEW VENTURA

PART FOUR ■ **Can We Stop People from Faking? Preventive Strategies**

12. **Application of Preventive Strategies** 177
STEPHAN DILCHERT AND DENIZ S. ONES
13. **Social Desirability in Personality Assessment: Outline of a Model to Explain Individual Differences** 201
MARTIN BÄCKSTRÖM, FREDRIK BJÖRKLUND, AND MAGNUS R. LARSSON
14. **Constructing Fake-Resistant Personality Tests Using Item Response Theory: High-Stakes Personality Testing with Multidimensional Pairwise Preferences** 214
STEPHEN STARK, OLEKSANDR S. CHERNYSHENKO, AND FRITZ DRASGOW
15. **Is Faking Inevitable? Person-Level Strategies for Reducing Faking** 240
BRIAN LUKOFF

PART FIVE ■ Is Faking a Consequential Issue Outside a Job Selection Context? Current Applications and Future Directions in Clinical and Educational Settings

16. **Plaintiffs Who Malingers: Impact of Litigation on Fake Testimony** 255

RYAN C. W. HALL AND RICHARD C. W. HALL

17. **Intentional and Unintentional Faking in Education** 282

JEREMY BURRUS, BOBBY D. NAEMI, AND
PATRICK C. KYLLONEN

PART SIX ■ Conclusions

18. **Faking in Personality Assessment: Reflections and Recommendations** 309

CAROLYN MACCANN, MATTHIAS ZIEGLER, AND
RICHARD D. ROBERTS

19. **Faking in Personality Assessment: Where Do We Stand?** 330

PAUL R. SACKETT

Index 345

10 Overclaiming on Personality Questionnaires

4 ■ DELROY L. PAULHUS

5 In this chapter, the term *faking* will be interpreted in the broader sense of self-
6 presentation, that is, motivated distortion of self-reports. At the private level, self-
7 presentation is typically labeled *self-deception* (Paulhus, 1984) or *self-enhancement*
8 (Baumeister, 1982). At the public level, self-presentation is most commonly labeled
9 *impression management* (Paulhus, 1984). I will treat them together because both
10 forms of positive self-presentation constitute a threat to the validity of personality
11 scales. Moreover both forms of positive self-presentation can be measured with
12 the overclaiming technique (OCT).

13 The OCT was designed to measure knowledge exaggeration and knowledge
14 accuracy simultaneously and independently (Paulhus, Harms, Bruce, & Lysy, 2003;
15 Paulhus & Harms, 2004). Respondents are asked to rate their familiarity with a set
16 of topics relevant to a content domain (e.g., academic facts, workplace items, con-
17 sumer products). Critical to the technique is the inclusion of some items that do
18 not actually exist (i.e., *foils*).

19 A respondent's knowledge exaggeration and accuracy are calculated from two
20 values: (a) the proportion of real items rated as familiar and (b) the proportion of
21 foils rated as familiar. Exaggeration is indexed by the respondent's tendency to
22 claim familiarity with items (especially foils) whereas accuracy is indexed by the
23 respondent's ability to distinguish real items from foils. To the extent that an audi-
24 ence is salient, exaggeration can be interpreted as impression management; other-
25 wise, it is best interpreted as self-deceptive enhancement.

26 Details about the history, psychometrics, and applications of the OCT are
27 fleshed out in the following sections. For illustrative purposes, Table 10.1 provides
28 an example of the OCT format: It includes familiarity ratings provided by two
29 hypothetical respondents.

30 ■ HISTORY OF THE TECHNIQUE

31 There are several historical precedents for the notion that claiming familiarity with
32 foils is a face-valid indicator of knowledge exaggeration. The earliest published
33 example is a 25-item test included in the omnibus appendix of instruments devel-
34 oped by Raubenheimer (1925), a student of Lewis Terman. Respondents were
35 asked to check off which books they had read. Out of 25, 10 were nonexistent.
36 Whereas "Robinson Crusoe" was a genuine book, "The Prize-Fighters Story" was
37 used as a foil.

TABLE 10.1 *Sample Page from the Academic Overclaiming Questionnaire (If You Are Familiar with the Item, Please Check the Box)*

Fine Arts	Respondent 1	Respondent 2
Mozart	✓	✓
A cappella	✓	
The Pullman paintings*		
Art deco	✓	✓
Paul Gauguin	✓	
Mona Lisa	✓	✓
La Neige Jaune*	✓	
Mario Lanza	✓	
Verdi	✓	
Jan Vermeer	✓	
Windermere Wild*	✓	✓
Grand Pooh Bah		
Botticelli	✓	
Harpsichord	✓	✓
Dramatis personae	✓	

Note: The three foils are marked with asterisks.

1 Although failing to acknowledge that precedent, two subsequent studies pro-
 2 posed and applied a similar notion (Anderson, Warner, & Spencer, 1984; Phillips
 3 & Clancy, 1972). More recently, Stanovich and West (1989) used fictitious items as
 4 a covariate for self-reports of books read. None of those studies, however, consid-
 5 ered foil claiming as a meaningful variable in its own right.

6 Inspired by the Phillips and Clancy paper, my students and I launched into a
 7 comprehensive research program that began with a 1990 conference presentation
 8 by Paulhus and Bruce. About the same time, Randall and Fernandes (1991) devel-
 9 oped a set of 10 foils for use in ethics research. Since that time, further critiques of
 10 social desirability scales have escalated the need for an alternative approach to
 11 measuring self-presentation in surveys.

12 ■ PROBLEMS WITH PREVIOUS MEASURES

13 Self-presentation on questionnaires is typically referred to as *socially desirable*
 14 *responding* (SDR). Over the years, a host of SDR measures have been targeted spe-
 15 cifically at the detection of faking on self-reports of personality. Currently the two
 16 most popular are the Marlowe–Crowne scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960) and the
 17 Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR) (Paulhus, 1998). Unfortunately,
 18 some researchers continue to indict the validity of self-report instruments if they
 19 show high correlations with SDR measures (e.g., Davis, Thake, & Vilhena, 2010).
 20 Other researchers continue with attempts to control faking post hoc by including
 21 SDR scales as covariates in prediction equations.

22 Critics of SDR scales have complained that SDR measures confound fact with
 23 fiction (e.g., Block, 1965; McCrae & Costa, 1983). After all, some people actually
 24 are blessed with an abundance of socially desirable attributes. Without faking, they

1 can record high scores on SDR scales. To address this confounding, some research-
 2 ers turned to an approach based on departure from reality (e.g., John & Robins,
 3 1994). Specifically designed to incorporate a criterion, it requires a contrast of
 4 self-evaluations with intrapsychic or external criteria. For example, self-reports of
 5 personality can be residualized on informant reports to provide an index of self-
 6 presentation (e.g., Paulhus & John, 1998).

7 To avoid the confound problem entirely, Holden and colleagues have developed
 8 a reaction-time technique (Holden, Kroner, Fekken, & Popham, 1992). That
 9 method exploits the fact that the response times of fakers exhibit a pattern distinct
 10 from those of individuals who respond honestly. For detailed examples, see Paulhus
 11 and Holden (2010).

12 Each category of methods entails a tradeoff of advantages and disadvantages.
 13 SDR scales offer easy administration but lack a criterion to distinguish distortion
 14 from valid personality variance. Criterion discrepancy measures tap departure
 15 from reality but are impractical in standard administration settings because they
 16 require collection of the criterion. The response-time method is objectively scored
 17 but requires an elaborate laboratory procedure.

18 In sum, the diagnosis of faking has been hampered by the difficulty of distin-
 19 guishing accuracy from bias. The failure to find significance with group-level sta-
 20 tistics does not rule out the possibility of some individual-level faking (Holden,
 21 2008). On other hand, allegations of faking against individuals actually possessing
 22 positive traits would be—not merely unjust—but contrary to the goal of optimal
 23 personnel selection. Extant techniques do not seem capable of correcting person-
 24 ality scores post hoc, that is, after faking has occurred (Griffith & Peterson, 2008).

25 ■ RATIONALE FOR THE OVERCLAIMING TECHNIQUE

26 The OCT was designed as an optimal compromise between earlier approaches. It
 27 captures departure from reality, but in a more concrete fashion than does the cri-
 28 terion discrepancy method. Respondents are asked to rate their familiarity with a
 29 set of persons, places, items, or events. A proportion (typically 20%) of the items
 30 are foils: They do not actually exist. In Table 10.1, for example, the historical item
 31 “Paul Gauguin” refers to an actual nineteenth-century post-impressionist painter.
 32 By contrast, the item “Windermere Wild” seems as it could be genuine but, in fact,
 33 refers to a poem known only to the present author and his college girlfriend: It
 34 does not appear in a Google search.

35 Respondents are assigned high accuracy scores to the extent that they claim
 36 greater familiarity with real items than with foils. A high exaggeration score ensues
 37 from an overall tendency to claim items—especially foils. The intuitive appeal of
 38 this index follows from the assumption that claiming familiarity with nonexistent
 39 items is a face valid index of faking.

40 In short, the goal of developing the OCT was to unravel the typical inter-
 41 weaving of fact and fiction in self-descriptions. The rates of claiming real and foil
 42 items are used to create independent indexes of accuracy and exaggeration via
 43 signal detection analysis. Details of those calculations come next.

1 ■ **PSYCHOMETRICS**

2 People are often called upon to make “yes” or “no” decisions regarding the existence
 3 of stimuli that are enveloped in noise. To model the human ability to process such
 4 information, Swets (1964) developed a framework called *signal detection analysis*.
 5 His two key performance parameters were accuracy (the ability to distinguish real
 6 stimuli from false alarms) and bias (the overall tendency to say “yes”).

7 This signal detection framework can be applied to people’s familiarity ratings of
 8 real items and foils (Paulhus & Bruce, 1990). People assign familiarity ratings on
 9 the basis of a fuzzy memory trace rather than a clear recollection. The large sam-
 10 ples of such ratings collected on overclaiming questionnaires are summarized by
 11 two values. First is the proportion of hits (PH), that is, real items claimed. Second
 12 is the proportion of false alarms (PFA), that is, foils claimed. These two values can
 13 be analyzed with standard formulas to yield indexes of accuracy and exaggeration
 14 (Paulhus & Petrusic, 2010).

15 Note that in the signal detection model, accuracy and exaggeration are not
 16 opposites but are scored independently. As a result, there is no inherent cross-
 17 contamination of the OCT accuracy and exaggeration indexes. Of course, this
 18 independence does not preclude the two indexes from being correlated across
 19 individuals.

20 A variety of signal detection formulas are detailed by Paulhus and Petrusic
 21 (2010). Of these, the most intuitively compelling are the so called *common-sense*
 22 *measures*. Accuracy is simply the difference between the hit rate and the false-
 23 alarm rate (i.e., $PH - PFA$). Knowledge exaggeration is indexed by their mean:
 24 $(PH + PFA)/2$. The inclusion of PH in the latter formula is based on the assump-
 25 tion that those who exaggerate on the foils also exaggerate on the reals: Such
 26 respondents inflate their familiarity ratings on both sets of items. Alternatively,
 27 PFA can be used directly as an index of exaggeration: If so, then PH should be
 28 partialled out (Paulhus et al., 2003).

29 To illustrate, Table 10.2 presents the values calculated for the hypothetical
 30 respondents in Table 10.1. Respondent 1, for example, claimed familiarity with
 31 most of the items, including two out of three foils. As a result, this respondent
 32 received a relatively high exaggeration score of 0.80. Respondent 2 claimed only

TABLE 10.2 *Sample Calculations of the Accuracy and Exaggeration
 Indexes from Table 10.1 Responses*

	Respondent 1	Respondent 2
Hits (out of 12)	11	4
False alarms (out of 3)	2	1
Proportion of hits (PH)	$(11/12) = 0.92$	$(4/12) = 0.33$
Proportion of false alarms (PFA)	$(2/3) = 0.67$	$(1/3) = 0.33$
Accuracy index ($PH - PFA$)	0.25	0.00
Exaggeration index ($(PH + PFA)/2$)	0.80	0.33

Note: Alternatively, PFA can be used directly as an index of exaggeration. If so, PH must be partialled out.

1 five items (including one foil) resulting in an exaggeration index of 0.33. In fact,
 2 Respondent 1 scored higher than Respondent 2 on both accuracy and exaggera-
 3 tion, thereby illustrating that accuracy and bias are not polar opposites within a
 4 signal detection framework.

5 Users preferring more sophisticated signal detection formulas may opt for
 6 indexes such as d -prime and criterion position. A comprehensive comparison of
 7 10 accuracy and 8 bias measures is provided by Paulhus and Petrusic (2010). Their
 8 analyses indicated that, with a few exceptions, indexes within the accuracy (or
 9 bias) category yield similar results and are relatively orthogonal to those across
 10 categories.

11 Reliability Assessment

12 A special approach to reliability assessment is required for overclaiming indexes.
 13 Because there are two types of items (reals and foils), the individual item ratings
 14 do not form meaningful responses. At least one real and one foil are required to
 15 calculate either index. Instead, the appropriate method is to calculate correlations
 16 of the accuracy scores across topics (e.g., philosophy, life sciences). The topics
 17 become the elementary units and the usual reliability indexes (e.g., alpha) can be
 18 calculated on the resulting correlation matrix. This process is then repeated to
 19 calculate the reliability of the exaggeration index.

20 In the studies reported here, that procedure resulted in reasonable alpha values
 21 (in the 0.70 to 0.94 range) for both accuracy and bias. Such values are not unlike
 22 those of standard personality scales: Thus it appears that two coherent individual
 23 differences are being tapped.

24 ■ VALIDATION OF THE TWO INDEXES

25 Knowledge Exaggeration

26 The exaggeration index has been validated both as a state and a trait measure of
 27 self-presentation. Its utility as a state measure has been demonstrated by its ability
 28 to track the level of self-presentational demand across situations. In one study,
 29 participants asked to “fake good” scored significantly higher than a group asked to
 30 respond honestly (Paulhus et al. 2003, Study 2): On average, participants inflated
 31 their familiarity ratings 2.1 points on a 7-point Likert scale. Other studies have cor-
 32 roborated this ability of the exaggeration index to track public self-presentation
 33 demand (Roeder & Paulhus, 2009; Tracy, Cheng, Robins, & Trzeszniewski, 2009).

34 The exaggeration index also correlates positively with trait measures of self-
 35 presentation. These criteria include the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Paulhus
 36 & Goldberg, 2008; Paulhus & Williams, 2002; Paulhus et al., 2003; Tracy et al.,
 37 2009), Self-Deceptive Enhancement (Paulhus et al., 2003; Randall & Fernandes,
 38 1991), and global self-reports of knowledge (Paulhus & Bruce, 1990). These validi-
 39 ties ranged between 0.19 and 0.46. In sum, it appears that the exaggeration index
 40 has trait-like properties. It captures meaningful individual differences when all
 41 respondents are measured in the same context.

1 Knowledge Accuracy

2 Scores on knowledge accuracy have been validated against credible alternative
3 measures of knowledge. In one study, for example, general knowledge of psychol-
4 ogy was measured with three formats: OCT accuracy, multiple choice, and short
5 answer (Nathanson, Westlake, & Paulhus, 2007). After disattenuation for unreli-
6 ability, the alternative methods correlated 0.66 and above with the OCT accuracy
7 index.

8 When the questionnaire topics include a range of academic content, OCT accu-
9 racy scores appear to tap global cognitive ability (Paulhus & Harms, 2004). This
10 conclusion is supported by validation against standard objective measures such as
11 the Wonderlic IQ test, Raven's matrices, and, especially, the UBC Word test. These
12 correlations range from 0.31 to 0.50 (Paulhus & Harms, 2004; Bertsch & Pesta,
13 2009). Similar associations were obtained with Chinese versions of a general over-
14 claiming questionnaire and Chinese IQ test (Liu & Paulhus, 2009). The fact that its
15 strongest correlate is the UBC Word test (a measure of verbal ability) suggests that
16 the academic accuracy index taps a crystallized form of verbal intelligence (see
17 Ackerman, 2000).

18 The Role of Item Content

19 The OCT was designed as a methodological framework rather than a fixed set of
20 items. In their original overclaiming questionnaire (OCQ), Paulhus and Bruce
21 (1990) included only academic content: 15 items in each of 10 categories (e.g., sci-
22 ence, law, philosophy, history, literature, language). The primary source was the set
23 of items compiled by Hirsch (1987): That item set was held to circumscribe the
24 minimal cultural literacy of an educated American.

25 A subsequent series of studies with the academic OCQ demonstrated that the
26 accuracy index predicted verbal IQ scores in the 0.40–0.60 range (Paulhus &
27 Harms, 2004). The exaggeration index correlated moderately (0.25–0.38) with
28 trait self-enhancement measures such as narcissism and self-deceptive enhance-
29 ment (Paulhus et al., 2003).

30 Since then, a variety of other overclaiming questionnaires have been developed.
31 One is the music OCQ, which covers 10 types (classical, jazz, country, pop, etc.).
32 Most elaborate is the lay OCQ, which includes topics more relevant to less edu-
33 cated samples. It includes 25 topics ranging from sports to fashion to world leaders
34 (Nathanson & Paulhus, 2005).

35 For nonacademic items, the link between the exaggeration index and trait self-
36 enhancement was more nuanced. For example, correlations with narcissism were
37 significant only for topics that the respondent valued (Nathanson & Paulhus,
38 2005). It stands to reason that people do not invest their egos in knowledge about
39 topics that are irrelevant (or in opposition) to their identities (Ackerman, 2000).

40 Interestingly, the accuracy index predicted IQ for virtually all of the lay topics.
41 Across the board, high-IQ respondents seem to be able to distinguish real items
42 from foils—even for topics in which they expressed little interest. (Of the 25 lay
43 topics, only two accuracies yielded negative correlations with IQ: professional

1 wrestling and monster trucks.) Our curiosity about such findings led to the labora-
2 tory research described in the next section.

3 The Nature of Overclaiming Behavior

4 What would lead individuals to claim knowledge of nonexistent foils—even under
5 anonymous circumstances? Preliminary evidence from our laboratory suggests
6 that cognitive, motivational, and self-presentational elements are at work (Williams,
7 Paulhus, & Nathanson, 2002).

8 To evaluate the degree of automaticity involved in overclaiming, our laboratory
9 study included a manipulation of stimulus presentation time. The presentation was
10 either speeded (1 second) or extended (3 seconds). The substantial drop in accu-
11 racy scores confirmed that less attentional capacity was available under the speeded
12 condition. The exaggeration scores, however, were unaffected and remained cor-
13 related with narcissism. This robust pattern suggests that the underlying exaggera-
14 tion process is more automatic than controlled (Williams et al., 2002).

15 We also addressed the possibility that overclaiming is simply a memory bias. In
16 other words, people may vary in knowledge exaggeration because they differ in the
17 “feeling of knowing.” For some people, everything looks familiar; for other people,
18 the sense of familiarity with stimuli is calibrated with actual exposure to those
19 stimuli. Both phenomena may be explained by the concept of perceptual fluency
20 (Bernstein & Harley, 2007; Yonelinas & Jacoby, 1996). To index individual differ-
21 ences in the cognitive component, we collected standard measures of memory
22 bias. Results confirmed that individuals with high OCT exaggeration scores also
23 showed a global memory bias. In regression analyses, however, narcissism retained
24 its association with knowledge exaggeration after controlling for memory bias. In
25 short, overclaiming has a motivational component (narcissism) along with a cog-
26 nitive component (memory bias).

27 As noted earlier, exaggeration scores are subject to situational demand (Paulhus
28 et al., 2003). However, narcissists exaggerate their knowledge even under anony-
29 mous conditions. Hence, overclaiming is not entirely a matter of conscious impres-
30 sion management: Compared to nonnarcissists, narcissists sense that many (even
31 novel) items are familiar. This hindsight effect appears in narcissists even under
32 speeded conditions, where participants cannot accurately distinguish real items
33 from foils. In short, there remains a self-deceptive element to the narcissistic ten-
34 dency to overclaim.

35 ■ ADVANTAGES OF THE OVERCLAIMING TECHNIQUE 36 OVER CONVENTIONAL DETECTION METHODS

37 The advantages of the OCT approach include simplicity, practicality, and robust-
38 ness across contexts. Its robustness encompasses several important contexts.
39 Under fake-good instructions, for example, exaggeration scores increase but the
40 validity of accuracy scores is sustained (Paulhus & Harms, 2004). Under warning
41 conditions (“some items don’t exist.”), mean exaggeration scores decrease (Calsyn,
42 Kelemen, Jones, & Winter, 2001; Hughes & Beer, 2010), although their validities

1 (correlations with narcissism) are sustained (Paulhus et al., 2003). Understandably,
 2 warning about foils also introduces a correlation of exaggeration with impression
 3 management scores (Randall & Fernandes, 1991).

4 A singular advantage of OCT is the minimization of stress during test adminis-
 5 tration. Respondents are simply asked to rate their familiarity with items; no abil-
 6 ity testing is implied and no time limit is imposed. Compare that framing with the
 7 stress induced by standard ability test instructions: “Get as many correct answers
 8 as you can before we stop you.” The minimization of pressure also reduces the
 9 motivation to cheat. As a result, overclaiming questionnaires can be administered
 10 without supervision. We have confirmed this feature by showing valid results even
 11 when participants are allowed to complete the questionnaire at home or on the
 12 web (Paulhus et al., 2003).

13 In sum, the OCT offers a practical and efficient method for indexing exaggera-
 14 tion and accuracy in a targeted knowledge domain. It is robust across a variety of
 15 administration conditions. Finally, the method is largely nonthreatening and unob-
 16 trusive because the apparent purpose is a survey of idiosyncratic familiarities.

17 ■ APPLICATIONS

18 In this section, I describe how the OCT has been applied to address questions in
 19 the domains of education, survey research, and personnel evaluation. By dint of
 20 their success, these studies also contribute to the construct validity of the two OCT
 21 indexes.

22 Personnel Selection

23 Among those most concerned with faking on personality tests are psychologists
 24 involved in personnel selection (see Griffith & Peterson, 2006). This concern is
 25 growing with accumulating evidence that personality is a useful predictor in appli-
 26 cant evaluations (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Hogan, Hogan, & Roberts 1996).

27 Because of the optimal properties detailed above, the exaggeration index has
 28 potential for use as a moderator or suppressor in application contexts. A recent
 29 study by Bing and colleagues has confirmed this promise (Bing, Kluemper,
 30 Davison, Taylor, & Novicevic, 2009). They administered the academic OCQ to 408
 31 business students along with self-reported achievement motivation and actual
 32 GPA. Results showed a suppressor effect of the OCQ exaggeration index on the
 33 association between self-report motivation and actual GPA. In short, controlling
 34 for exaggeration improved the predictive validity of the self-report measure.

35 If this result holds up in future studies, the overclaiming technique may provide
 36 a valuable research tool for personnel selection. With a few exceptions (Berry, Page,
 37 & Sackett, 2007; Schmitt, Oswald, Kim, Gillespie, & Ramsay, 2003), researchers
 38 have had difficulty in establishing either suppressor or moderator effects for SDR
 39 measures. As noted earlier, the fundamental weakness in traditional SDR scales is
 40 the confounding of content and style. As Paulhus and Holden (2010) pointed out,
 41 overclaiming avoids that confound because of the objective scoring procedure.
 42 Claiming familiarity with nonexistent items is a more face-valid, concrete indicator

1 of distortion compared to SDR scales, which simply accumulate claims to possess
2 desirable characteristics.

3 Educational Contexts

4 In the previous section on knowledge accuracy, I noted a study that compared
5 the validity and efficiency of three educational test item formats, namely, multiple
6 choice, short essays, and overclaiming accuracy (Nathanson et al., 2007). These
7 formats competed head to head in predicting the final course grades. The perfor-
8 mance of the OCT accuracy index proved exceptional in two ways. First, it was the
9 most efficient based on validity per unit time. Second, students reported that over-
10 claiming induced less stress than did the other two formats. Interestingly, the OCT
11 exaggeration index also contributed independently to the prediction of final course
12 grades. This index may contribute by tapping a student's overall sense of confi-
13 dence about expertise in the field of psychology.

14 A similar result was recently reported by Pesta and Poznanski (2009) who dem-
15 onstrated the broader utility of the exaggeration index. Along with predicting IQ,
16 the exaggeration index predicted several indexes of MBA student success. The
17 authors suggested that this predictive power derives from the fact that the opti-
18 mism implicit in overclaiming promotes success in business.

19 Finally, OCT has proved useful in tapping knowledge about mental health
20 (Swami, Persaud, & Furnham, 2011). These findings point to the serious conse-
21 quences of assuming that the general public is sufficiently educated about impor-
22 tant social issues.

23 Marketing Research

24 Another practical application is to the field of marketing surveys (Nathanson et al.,
25 2007; Roeder & Paulhus, 2009). In traditional measurement of product familiarity,
26 a survey with a list of product names is administered. But foils are rarely included.
27 To control for overclaiming in the study by Nathanson and colleagues, we devel-
28 oped a consumer OCQ with 10 items for each of 12 product categories (e.g., wine,
29 cars, fashion designers, cosmetics brands). Following the standard OCT proce-
30 dure, 20% of the items in each category served as foils.

31 In both studies, participants responded under one of three instructional sets:
32 honest responding, fake good, and sabotage. As expected, respondents in the fake-
33 good condition showed the highest exaggeration scores. However, the validity of
34 the accuracy index (i.e., its correlation with IQ scores) held up even under instruc-
35 tions to fake good. Validity was largely undermined in the sabotage condition.

36 In our more recent study (Roeder & Paulhus, 2009), we expanded the con-
37 sumer OCQ to 180 items. The newer version includes more topics relevant to
38 women's consumer interests (e.g., fashion, cosmetics). The survey package also
39 included a measure of cynicism about advertising. Results confirmed the robust-
40 ness of the accuracy measure under conditions of purposeful exaggeration.
41 Interestingly, cynical consumers were more knowledgeable and overclaimed less
42 than noncynics.

1 Together, these two studies suggest that the overclaiming technique is a promis-
 2 ing tool for characterizing two parameters of product recognition. Although it
 3 cannot prevent sabotage, the method does help counter impression management.

4 ■ ETHICS RESEARCH

5 Another domain in which it would be naive to accept self-reports is in the mea-
 6 surement of ethical behavior. It is not surprising, then, that the overclaiming tech-
 7 nique has been applied to that domain (Joseph, Berry, & Deshpande, 2008; Randall
 8 & Fernandes, 1991). In self-reports of business ethics, Randall and Fernandes (1991)
 9 showed that overclaiming scores were associated with two forms of socially desir-
 10 able responding, that is, both impression management and self-deceptive enhance-
 11 ment. That finding was recently clarified by showing that overclaiming is associated
 12 with self-reports of ethical behavior but not with reports of ethical behavior by
 13 others (Joseph et al., 2008).

14 ■ FUTURE DIRECTIONS

15 Although we encourage the application of the OCT to other domains, a number
 16 of caveats should be heeded. First, the OCT is a method rather than a fixed ques-
 17 tionnaire. The original academic version of the OCQ (Paulhus & Bruce, 1990)
 18 proved successful in research 1990s-era North American college students. That
 19 version should remain valid because there is reasonable stability in the content of
 20 a liberal education. By contrast, the lay versions of the OCQ may quickly lose
 21 validity because of instability in the content of popular culture. Researchers must
 22 revise (and, if possible, pretest) item sets to suit their sample.

23 In this process, the selection of foils is a vital step. In principle, researchers
 24 should perform a Google search to verify (the nonexistence of) foils immediately
 25 before administration of an overclaiming questionnaire. Whereas real items are
 26 relatively stable, the status of foils can change overnight.

27 Nor can the original item set be assumed to work in other cultures. Despite
 28 a shared language, the ideal item sets may differ for Scottish university students,
 29 Australian bus drivers, and Indian civil servants. Needless to say, translations
 30 to other languages require special sensitivity to linguistic issues. Although Liu
 31 and Paulhus (2009) had considerable success in comparing Mandarin and
 32 English college samples, it may well be that the technique cannot be applied to
 33 some languages.

34 Another recommendation is to consider the ego-relevance of the items
 35 (Ackerman, 2000). Our work with the lay OCQ, for example, showed that the
 36 exaggeration index works (i.e., correlates with trait self-enhancement) only in
 37 knowledge domains valued by the respondent. No matter how narcissistic, those
 38 who despise country music will not be inclined to exaggerate their familiarity with
 39 the topic. A failure to ensure ego-relevance may impair the detection of individual
 40 differences in exaggeration. This floor effect should not be an issue in high-stakes
 41 contexts such as scholastic testing and job interviews because all candidates value
 42 the job knowledge—at least for the duration of the interview.

1 A remaining challenge is to determine if the overclaiming method can be
 2 applied to *moralistic biases* as well as *egoistic biases* (see Paulhus & John, 1998;
 3 Lonngqvist, Verkasalo, & Bezmenova, 2007). Knowledge exaggeration is certainly
 4 relevant to egoistic bias—the form that distorts self-reports of agentic traits such
 5 as intelligence, power, autonomy, and creativity (see Calsyn et al., 2001). It is harder
 6 to see how knowledge overclaiming can ever capture the moralistic bias that dis-
 7 torts self-reports of communal traits (e.g., nurturance, cooperation, and self-
 8 sacrifice). Nonetheless, research continues on that problem.

9 A recent development is the use of the OCT to determine the neuropsycholo-
 10 gical processes underlying self-enhancement. Using neuropsychological meth-
 11 ods, Hughes and Beer (2010) demonstrated the activation of the prefrontal cortex
 12 when participants are warned about the presence of foils. Presumably, such par-
 13 ticipants are actively trying to suppress their typical overclaiming tendencies.
 14 Another study found that transcranial magnetic stimulation of the prefrontal
 15 cortex tends to reduce OCT exaggeration (Kwan et al., 2007). Such studies suggest
 16 that faking is best framed as an inhibition process that can be mapped onto neuro-
 17 logical substrates.

18 ■ SUMMARY

19 The over-claiming technique (OCT) shows promise as a method of identifying
 20 fakers while simultaneously measuring their expertise in specific knowledge
 21 domains. The procedure is straightforward: Respondents are asked to rate their
 22 familiarity with a range of items relevant to a *faking domain* (e.g., academic facts,
 23 workplace items, consumer products). Knowledge accuracy is indexed by a respon-
 24 dent's ability to distinguish real items from nonexistent items (foils). Exaggeration
 25 can be measured either by (1) the tendency to claim familiarity with foils or (2) the
 26 overall tendency to claim familiarity.

27 These OCT indexes have proved their utility in a variety of assessment con-
 28 texts. The exaggeration index has been validated against trait measures of self-
 29 enhancement. It has also been shown to track self-presentational demand across
 30 situations. Thus, the utility of the OCT appears to extend to both private self-
 31 enhancement and conscious impression management.

32 The accuracy index has been validated against IQ scores and objective mea-
 33 sures of knowledge. It retains its validity under varying levels of self-presentational
 34 demand. Applications of the OCT have expanded to include marketing research,
 35 educational measurement, and ethics research, as well as personnel selection.

36 The construct validation reviewed in this chapter suggests that the OCT is a
 37 powerful framework for self-report assessment. Although application to the faking
 38 of personality self-reports remains preliminary, the prospects are exciting.

39 References

- 40 Ackerman, P. L. (2000). Domain-specific knowledge as the “dark matter” of adult intelli-
 41 gence: Gf/Gc personality and interest correlates. *Journal of Gerontology: Psychological*
 42 *Sciences*, 55, 69–84.

- 1 Anderson, C. D., Warner, J. L., & Spencer, C. C. (1984). Inflation bias in self-assessment
2 examinations: Implications for valid employee selection. *Journal of Applied Psychology*,
3 69, 574–580.
- 4 Barrick, M. R., & Mount, M. K. (1991). The Big Five personality dimensions and job perfor-
5 mance: A meta-analysis. *Personnel Psychology*, 44, 1–26.
- 6 Baumeister, R. F. (1982). A self-presentational view of social phenomena. *Psychological*
7 *Bulletin*, 91, 3–26.
- 8 Bernstein, D. M., & Harley, E. M. (2007). Fluency misattribution and visual hindsight bias.
9 *Memory*, 15, 548–560.
- 10 Berry, C. M., Page, R. C., & Sackett, P. R. (2007). Effects of self-deceptive enhancement on
11 personality-job performance relationships. *International Journal of Selection and*
12 *Assessment*, 15, 94–109.
- 13 Bertsch, S., & Pesta, B. J. (2009). The Wonderlic Personnel Test and elementary cognitive
14 tasks as predictors of religions sectarianism, scriptural acceptance, and religious ques-
15 tioning. *Intelligence*, 37, 231–237.
- 16 Bing, M. N., Kluemper, D. H., Davison, H. K., Taylor, S. G., & Novicevic, M. M. (2009).
17 *A measurement of faking that enhances personality test validity: Overclaiming's suppres-*
18 *sion effect*. Academy of Management, 69th Annual Conference, Chicago, IL.
- 19 Block, J. (1965). *The challenge of response sets: Unconfounding meaning, acquiescence, and*
20 *social desirability in the MMPI*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.
- 21 Calsyn, R. J., Kelemen, W. L., Jones, E. T., & Winter, J. P. (2001). Reducing overclaiming
22 in needs assessment studies: An experimental comparison. *Evaluation Review*, 25,
23 583–590.
- 24 Crowne, D. P., & Marlowe, D. A. (1960). A new scale of social desirability independent
25 of psychopathology. *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 24, 349–354.
- 26 Davis, C. G., Thake, J., & Vilhena, N. (2010). Social desirability biases in self-reported
27 alcohol consumption and harms. *Addictive Behaviors*, 35, 302–311.
- 28 Griffith, R. L., & Peterson, M. H. (2006). *A closer examination of applicant faking behavior*.
29 Greenwich, CT: Information Age.
- 30 Griffith, R. L., & Peterson, M. H. (2008). The failure of social desirability measures to cap-
31 ture applicant faking behavior. *Industrial and Organization Psychology: Perspectives on*
32 *Science and Practice*, 1, 308–311.
- 33 Hirsch, E. D. (1987). *Cultural literacy*. New York: Vintage Books.
- 34 Hogan, R. T., Hogan, J., & Roberts, B. W. (1996). Personality measurement, faking, and
35 employment selection. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92, 1270–1285.
- 36 Holden, R. R. (2008). Underestimating the effects of faking on the validity of self-report
37 personality scales. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 44, 311–321.
- 38 Holden, R. R., Kroner, D. G., Fekken, G. C., & Popham, S. M. (1992). A model of person-
39 ality test item response dissimulation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63,
40 272–279.
- 41 Hughes, B. L., & Beer, J. S. (2010, February). *Not so fast: Social accountability reduces evalu-*
42 *ative bias by increasing rather than decreasing cognitive control*. Poster presented at the
43 meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Las Vegas.
- 44 John, O. P., & Robins, R. W. (1994). Accuracy and bias in self-perception: Individual differ-
45 ences in self-enhancement and the role of narcissism. *Journal of Personality and Social*
46 *Psychology*, 66, 206–219.
- 47 Joseph, J., Berry, K., & Deshpande, S. P. (2008). Impact of emotional intelligence and
48 other factors on perception of ethical behavior of peers. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 89,
49 539–546.

- 1 Kwan, V. S. Y., Barrios, V., Ganis, G., Gorman, J., Lange, C., Kumar, M., Shepard, A., &
- 2 Keenan, J. P. (2007). Assessing the neural correlates of self-enhancement bias: A tran-
- 3 scranial magnetic stimulation study. *Experimental Brain Research*, 182, 379–385.
- 4 Liu, C., & Paulhus, D. L. (2009). *A comparison of overclaiming tendencies among Canadian*
- 5 *and Chinese students*. Unpublished data, University of British Columbia, Vancouver.
- 6 Lonngqvist, J. E., Verkasalo, M., & Bezmenova, I. (2007). Agentic and communal bias in
- 7 socially desirable responding. *European Journal of Personality*, 21, 853–868.
- 8 McCrae, R. R., & Costa, P. T. (1983). Social desirability scales: More substance than style.
- 9 *Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology*, 51, 882–888.
- 10 Nathanson, C., & Paulhus, D. L. (2005, June). *Accuracy and bias in lay knowledge*. Poster
- 11 presented at the meeting of the Canadian Psychological Association, Calgary.
- 12 Nathanson, C., Westlake, B., & Paulhus, D. L. (2007, May). *Controlling response bias in the*
- 13 *measurement of consumer knowledge*. Presented at the meeting of the Association for
- 14 Psychological Science, Washington, D.C.
- 15 Paulhus, D. L. (1984). Two-component models of socially desirable responding. *Journal of*
- 16 *Personality and Social Psychology*, 46, 598–609.
- 17 Paulhus, D. L. (1991). Measurement and control of response bias. In J. P. Robinson,
- 18 P.R. Shaver, & L. S. Wrightsman (Eds.), *Measures of personality and social psychological*
- 19 *attitudes* (pp. 17–59). San Diego: Academic Press.
- 20 Paulhus, D. L. (1998). *Manual for Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR-7)*.
- 21 Toronto: Multi-Health Systems.
- 22 Paulhus, D. L., & Bruce, M. N. (1990, June). *Claiming more than we can know: The Over-*
- 23 *claiming Questionnaire*. Presented at the meeting of the Canadian Psychological
- 24 Association, Ottawa.
- 25 Paulhus, D. L., & Goldberg, L. A. (2008). *Correlates of overclaiming in a community sample*.
- 26 Unpublished data from the Eugene-Springfield Community Sample.
- 27 Paulhus, D. L., & Harms, P. D. (2004). Measuring cognitive ability with the overclaiming
- 28 technique. *Intelligence*, 32, 297–314.
- 29 Paulhus, D. L., Harms, P. D., Bruce, M. N., & Lysy, D. C. (2003). The over-claiming tech-
- 30 nique: Measuring self-enhancement independent of ability. *Journal of Personality and*
- 31 *Social Psychology*, 84, 681–693.
- 32 Paulhus, D. L., & Holden, R. R. (2010). Measuring self-enhancement: From self-report
- 33 to concrete behavior. In C. R. Agnew, D. E. Carlston, W. G. Graziano, & J. R. Kelly (Eds.),
- 34 *Then a miracle occurs: Focusing on behavior in social psychological theory and research*
- 35 (pp. 227–246). New York: Oxford University Press.
- 36 Paulhus, D. L., & John, O. P. (1998). Egoistic and moralistic biases in self-perception: The
- 37 interplay of self-deceptive styles with basic traits and motives. *Journal of Personality*, 66,
- 38 1025–1060.
- 39 Paulhus, D. L., & Petrusic, W. M. (2010). *Measuring individual differences with signal detec-*
- 40 *tion analysis: A guide to indexes based on knowledge ratings*. Unpublished manuscript.
- 41 Paulhus, D. L., & Trapnell, P. D. (2008). Self-presentation of personality: An agency-
- 42 communion framework. In O. P. John, R. W. Robins, & L. A. Pervin (Eds.), *Handbook*
- 43 *of personality: Theory and research* (3rd ed.)(pp. 492–517). New York: Guilford Press.
- 44 Paulhus, D. L., & Williams, K. M. (2002). The Dark Triad of personality: narcissism,
- 45 Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 36, 556–563.
- 46 Pesta, B. J., & Poznanski, P. J. (2009). The inspection time and over-claiming tasks as predic-
- 47 tors of MBA student performance. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 46, 236–240.
- 48 Phillips, D. L., & Clancy, K. J. (1972). Some effects of “Social Desirability” in survey studies.
- 49 *The American Journal of Sociology*, 77, 921–940.

164 ■ New Perspectives on Faking in Personality Assessment

- 1 Randall, D. M., & Fernandes, M. F. (1991). The social desirability response bias in ethics
2 research. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 10, 805–817.
- 3 Raubenheimer, A. S. (1925). An experimental study of some behavioral traits of the poten-
4 tially delinquent boy. *Psychological Monographs*, 159, 1–107.
- 5 Roeder, S., & Paulhus, D. L. (2009, February). *Measuring consumer knowledge in the face*
6 *of exaggeration and sabotage*. Poster presented at the meeting of the Society for Consumer
7 Psychology, San Diego.
- 8 Schmitt, N., Oswald, F. L., Kim, B. H., Gillespie, M. A., & Ramsay, L. J. (2003). Impact of
9 elaboration on socially desirable responding and the validity of biodata measures.
10 *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88, 979–988.
- 11 Stanovich, K. E., & West, R. F. (1989). Exposure to print and orthographic processing.
12 *Reading Research Quarterly*, 24, 402–433.
- 13 Swami, V., Persaud, R., & Furnham, A. (2011). The recognition of mental health disorders
14 and its association with psychiatric scepticism, knowledge of psychiatry, and the Big
15 Five personality factors: An investigation using the overclaiming technique. *Social*
16 *Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 46, 181–189.
- 17 Swets, J. A. (1964). *Signal detection and recognition by human observers*. New York: Wiley.
- 18 Tracy, J. L., Cheng, J. T., Robins, R. W., & Trzesniewski, K. H. (2009). Authentic and hubris-
19 tic pride: The affective core of self-esteem and narcissism. *Self and Identity*, 8, 196–213.
- 20 Williams, K. M., Paulhus, D. L., & Nathanson, C. (2002, August). *The nature of over-claim-*
21 *ing: Personality and cognitive factors*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the
22 American Psychological Association, Chicago.
- 23 Yonelinas, A., & Jaccoby, L. (1996). Noncriterial recollection: Familiarity as automatic, irrel-
24 evant recollection. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 5, 131–141.