Reviewer's report

Title: The effect of coaching on the simulated malingering of memory impairment

Version: 4 Date: 26 July 2008

Reviewer: Martin Rohling

Reviewer's report:

The authors have addressed most of my concerns, but I have a few remaining, all of which fall under the heading Minor Essential Revisions.

1. In response to my 1st comment, the authors responded by noting that they had repeated their statistical analyses using nonparametric procedures. They claimed to have found no differences between the two. As a result they noted that they “… decided not to add a comment on this issue in the ms.” I think this is a mistake on the authors’ part. I recommend the following statement be added to the paper.

Data Analysis: Parametric statistics were chosen for our analyses. When it was considered informative, nonparametric analyses were also conducted to ensure that the most appropriate methods were used (e.g., Pearson r and Spearman Rho). However, since all of the results of these two procedures were similar in magnitude and direction, we chose to report the results that we consider to be more user-friendly for clinicians, which are the parametric results.

In response to my 2nd comment, they did not adjust their alpha levels. It would appear unnecessary to do so, so I see no problem with their response.

2. In response to my 7th and 8th comment, the authors chose to not implement my suggestions. First, the reported variance statistic remains standard errors. I am convinced that the standard deviations would be better. As a meta-analyst, I have seen this type of reporting of variance cause future meta-analysts to calculate effect sizes incorrectly. I continue to recommend that they change this to standard deviations and not standard errors, or they could report both if they feel so inclined. Similarly, they chose to not insert effect size metrics. This is inconsistent with guidelines for publishing empirical research generated by the American Psychological Association. In fact, all APA Journals now require authors to include an effect size metric in their manuscripts. I remain convinced that they authors should add these data.

3. In response to my 9th comment, related to using numbers for author names, they current authors left the number [26] in a sentence on page 6 of their revised manuscript. I do not know the format requirements of the journal, but will leave it to the editor to decide whether this needs to be changed.

4. In response to my 12th comment, the authors noted that they could not find the double period. It remains in their revised paper and is located on page 13 line
20.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests.