

The effect of Physical Proximity on Empathy and Prosocial Behavior through reading

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Abstract

Prosocial behavior plays a large role in everyday society; the purpose of this research was to identify the relationship between perspective taking and prosocial behavior. Participants ($N=120$) received an instruction to imagine themselves, imagine as the main character or a control-instruction (counting words) before receiving a text they had to read. After reading the text, about a boy thinking about his last lesson French during World War I, empathy, personal distress and transportation were measured with scales. After that they had to do a 'game,' which had prosocial, individualistic and competitive options and they were asked if and how much hours they were willing to spend on volunteer work. The expectation was that imagining yourself as the main character would stimulate feelings of empathy which lead to prosocial behavior. This would be strengthened by physical proximity when asking for a prosocial act (hours volunteer work). However, this was not the case, although participants imagining as themselves and imagining as the main character score higher on transportation (loosing yourself into a story), which lead to more hours of volunteer work participant were willing to spend. The main conclusion is that perspective taking through reading can make you lose yourself into a story which leads to a greater willingness of prosocial behavior.

Abstract (Dutch)

Pro sociaal gedrag speelt een belangrijke rol in ons dagelijks leven; het doel van deze studie was om de relatie tussen perspectief nemen en pro sociaal gedrag te identificeren. Participanten ($N=120$) kregen de instructie om zichzelf in te leven als zichzelf, als de hoofdpersoon of een controle-instructie (woorden tellen) voordat zij de tekst die zij moesten lezen ontvingen. Na het lezen van de tekst, over een jongen denkend aan zijn laatste les Frans tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog, werden empathie, persoonlijk ongemak en transportatie gemeten met een schaal. Daarna moesten zij een 'spel' doen, waarbij er pro sociale, individualistische en competitieve opties waren. Vervolgens werd er gevraagd of zij bereid waren, en zo ja, hoeveel, om enkele uren vrijwilligerswerk te doen. De verwachting was dat wanneer men zich inleeft dan wel als jezelf, dan wel als de hoofdpersoon, dat dit gevoelens van empathie stimuleert en deze zullen leiden tot pro sociaal gedrag. Dit zou dan nog versterkt worden door fysieke nabijheid tijdens het vragen naar een pro sociale daad (vrijwilligerswerk). Dit was echter niet het geval, wel bleken participanten die zichzelf inleven in zichzelf of als de hoofdpersoon hoger te scoren op transportatie (opgaan in een verhaal), hetgeen leidde tot grote bereidheid om vrijwilligerswerk te doen. De belangrijkste conclusie is dat perspectief nemen door middel van lezen ervoor kan zorgen dat je opgaat in een verhaal en leidt tot een grote bereidheid om je pro sociaal te gedragen.

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Introduction

In early life we teach children to share with other kids and give to other people who are in need. Further in life we want to make sure that it is common sense to help an elderly person when needed and to donate money to charity. Prosocial behavior seems to be an internalized concept in everyday life. There is research at different levels that has been done on the subject of prosocial behavior. There seem to be different factors that can influence people's prosocial behavior. Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin and Schroeder (2005) argue that the broad and diverse range of research that has been done on prosocial behavior can best be organized and understood from a multilevel-perspective. Prosocial behavior at a micro-level refers to the study of the origins of prosocial tendencies and the sources of variations in these tendencies. Prosocial behavior at a macro-level is about prosocial actions that occur within the context of groups and large organizations. Prosocial behavior at a meso-level gives us insight in one helping another in a specific situation. Research that has been done at the meso-level differ between "when people help" versus "why people help" (Penner et. al.) "When people help" mostly depends on whether the situation needs assistance or not, the feeling of personal responsibility and the decision how to help. "Why people help" can depend on three types of mechanisms; learning, social/personal standards and arousal and affect. Learning (Grusec, Davidov & Lundell, in Penner et. al.) refers to social learning and operant conditioning and how it acquires helping skills and beliefs about why these skills should be used to benefit others. The social/personal standards approach point out how norms such as social responsibility and reciprocity (Dovidio, 1984) can advance helping as people strive to maintain positive self-images or achieve their ideals (Schwartz & Howard, in Penner et. al.) and fulfill personal needs (Omoto & Snyder, 1995). The approach of arousal and affect acknowledge the important role that emotion plays in motivating people to act in a prosocial way. Affect plays an important role in many helping situations (Eisenberg & Fabes, in Penner et. al.). Most researchers agree that empathic arousal also plays an important role in many kinds of helping (Davis, in Penner et. al.), although they do not agree about the nature of empathy and how it motivates people to help. How arousal is interpreted can shape the prosocial motivation (Penner et. al.). Feelings of empathic concern, such as sympathy and compassion, arouse altruistic motivation with the primary goal of improving the welfare of the person in need (Batson, in Penner et. al.).

Being the first one to do extensive research on empathy and its implications, Stotland (1969) stated the idea that empathy might be related to prosocial behavior. He defines empathy as 'perceiving the other's emotions.' Stotland argued that empathy is responding to the emotions that another individual is experiencing. When people see others' emotions, they react emotionally as well.

On the other hand Batson, Early and Salvarani (1997) showed that there are two different types of perspective taking, causing different types of prosocial behavior. The first one is imagining yourself in

a given situation and the second one is imagining how someone feels in that situation. Imagining how someone feels in a given situation triggers empathic response and imagining yourself in a specific situation also stimulates personal distress. Empathy is related to softhearted, warm, sympathetic, compassionate, tender and moved, while personal distress is related to being alarmed, grieved, troubled, upset, disturbed and worried (Shotland & Stebbins, 1983). Batson et al. argue that whether someone acts in line with prosocial behavior, it does not only depend upon feelings of empathy, but also on the type of perspective taking that was applied.

For example, chronically delinquent boys who took part in an experimental training program which employed drama and the making of video films as a tool for helping them to see themselves from the perspectives of others and for providing remedial training in deficient role-taking skills, were in the end less likely to show delinquent behavior compared to the other group chronically delinquent boys who did not take part in this intervention (Chandler, 1973). People who are willing to take the perspective of others are more motivated to improve their attitude towards others. They are able to create a feeling of empathy and this feeling of empathy can lead to the intention to help others or to act in a prosocial way (Vescio, Gretchen & Paolucci, 2003). Perspective taking, from the other or yourself, leads to more prosocial behavior than when you are not taking perspective. People are more willing to show prosocial behavior when they read a text in which they are asked to take the perspective of another person. The study of van de Pieterman (2015) showed that empathy was significantly correlated to the participant's extent of helping picking up papers (prosocial behavior). He concluded that perspective taking and empathy leads to prosocial behavior. This was only true for helping picking up papers the researcher dropped in front of the participant, not for willing to spend some volunteer work-hours to help other students study.

Maybe this has something to do with proximity, because our most important social interactions still occur among people who find themselves in the same place at the same time (Latane, 1995). Where we live influences the friends we make. People are more likely to become friends with residents of nearby apartments than with those who lived farther away (Festinger, 1950). College students who live in off-campus apartments etc. tend to date those who live either nearby (Hays, 1985) or in the same type of housing as they do (Whitbeck & Hoyt, 1994). This is called the proximity effect (Kassin, Fein & Markus, 2011). So therefore people may be more willing to help people who are physically near.

Taking all these studies into account the research question will be:

Does perspective taking influence empathy and prosocial behavior? And is this influenced by physical proximity?

Theoretical framework

Empathy

Davis (1983) proposed four basic dimensions of empathy. Fantasy, perspective taking, empathic concern and personal distress. The first two dimensions are defined as cognitive empathy and the last two dimensions are named as affective empathy. Fantasy was described as the ability to transpose oneself into the feelings and action of a fictional other. Perspective taking is the ability to place oneself in another one's shoes and comprehend his or her point of view. Empathic concern is about caring about the welfare of others and becoming upset over their misfortunes. Personal distress is described as one's anxiety that is connected with the suffering of another. Bagozzi and Moore (1994) studied the effect of a television commercial about child abuse on the negative emotions that it brings to help, their feelings of empathy, and on the willingness to help in the end. Anger, sadness, fear and tension seem to affect empathy and leads to the decision to help. Substantial behavioral evidence on empathy points to the fact that humans use their own representations in order to feel and understand the state of the object for example, the empathy increased due to shared past experiences, similarity and familiarity. There is a lot unclear about empathy, for instance, is there a difference between negative and positive feelings related to hurting the enemy or to help a loved one? Does it make a difference for the level of empathy to imagine yourself as the subject or imagine how it feels for the other to be the subject (Preston, 2006)?

Perspective taking

Perspective taking is described as the cognitive capacity to consider the world from another individual's viewpoint, whereas empathy is only the ability to connect emotionally with another individual (Galinsky, Maddux, Gilin & White, 2008). Myers, Laurent and Hodges (2013) showed distinct effects of perspective-taking instructions. Imagining oneself as the other leads to a great sense of consciously perceived connection to and overlap with the other person. This is associated with a greater likelihood of helping a target who is in distress, so the instruction for perspective taking can influence the way someone finally ends up with prosocial behavior. Myers et al. found that when people took the perspective of the other or oneself, this led to an increase in empathy resulting in helping the target. Instead of staying objective or imagining the others feelings, imagining oneself as the target led to an increase of self-other overlap with that person. Envisioning oneself as the other led to an indirectly increasing likelihood of helping via empathic concern. Whereas taking persons own perspective led to an indirectly increasing likelihood of helping via empathic concern and direct self-other overlap. Myers et al. concluded that imagining yourself as the other person brings more motivational routes to help.

Green (Green & Brock, 2000; Green, 2010) introduced the concept of transportation, which he called 'losing oneself into a story', which is perspective taking as well. Transportation causes heightened

emotional response, resulting in empathy for the characters. Transportation was correlated to creating attachment to, and feeling empathy for, characters and the theme of the story (Green & Brock, 2010). Novels have an influence on our empathic abilities and these novels can even increase those abilities. Empathic abilities means having a better understanding of and reacting to the emotional state of other people. Through reading, people can experience new ways of thinking by ‘inhabiting’ the minds of the characters and are more able to realize that one can question decisions and society’s norms. Reading makes us take the perspective of the characters, question decisions and comprehend a character’s train of thought (Pinker, 2011). Moreover, reading fiction narratives can have a greater impact on social competence than nonfiction. Shen, Ahern and Baker (2014) found that narrative informational news had a greater impact than informational news on attitudes, because it is more effective in evoking empathy.

Prosocial behavior

A person’s social value orientation seems to have an effect on the way people weigh and interpret information about others. These differences seem to have an impact on how people tend to approach others in social dilemmas and are therefore important for our understanding of cooperative choice behavior in situations of social interdependence.

Prosocial people emphasize moral implications by considering the consequences of their own actions on another. Individualists and competitors emphasizing rationality and intelligence by considering the consequences for their own welfare (van Lange & Kuhlman, 1994). The evidence that women behave more cooperatively than men in social dilemmas is not very reliable. Some studies found this difference, but others have not (Simpson, 2003). Men seem to respond more competitively in response to motives involving greed, whereas women are more likely to respond competitively in response to motives involving fear of being exploited by others (Ko Kuwabara, 2005).

Van Lange, Bekkers, Schuyt and van Vugt (2007) showed that individual differences in social value orientation are predictive of various donations. Prosocials reported to greater donations relative to individualists and competitors. Especially in the case of donations to ‘third world organizations’ social value orientation was strongly related; 52% of prosocial people, 42% of individualists and 21% of competitors donated in a year. Van Lange et al. investigated individual differences in social value orientation, assessed with experimental games, to predict everyday-life forms of prosocial behavior. Theoretically the social value orientation extends the ‘rational self-interest’. Assuming that individuals systematically differ in their interpersonal preferences, with some seeking to enhance joint outcome and equality in outcomes (prosocial), some to enhance their own outcomes in absolute terms (individualistic), some enhance their own outcomes relative to others (competitive). Methodologically it is related to game behavior (Messick & McClintock, 1968). The study of Messick and McClintock (1968) investigated the relationship between people's social value orientations and helping behavior.

Subjects classified a priori as either cooperators, individualists, or competitors were mailed a request to volunteer from zero to ten hours of their time to a worthy cause. Subjects were asked to indicate on their response forms the number of hours, that they wished to contribute and to return these forms using an enclosed self-addressed envelope regardless of whether they intended to donate any hours. The results revealed that subjects of all three social value orientations were equally likely to comply to the small request to return their response forms. However, the number of hours that subjects contributed differed as a function of their social values. Cooperators contributed significantly more of their time to the cause than did individualists and competitors. McClintock and Allison (1989) related these findings to previous research on social values and helping behavior. Researchers classify individuals into one of three social value orientations: Individuals with a prosocial, cooperative orientation seek to maximize joint gains or achieve equal outcomes; Individualists seek to maximize their own gain; People with a competitive orientation seek to maximize their own gain relative to that of others (Kassin, Fein, & Markus, 2011).

Empathy and prosocial behavior

Prosocial behavior is promoted by sympathy and empathy, and both constructs are assumed to have evolved from the mother-offspring bond (Preston, 2013). Empathy is presented as one of the human traits that can distance a person from violent behavior and guide them towards peacefulness and altruism and thereby to more prosocial behavior (Pinker, 2011).

Empathy is often linked to prosocial behavior although empathy seems to have several components that are all contributors to prosocial behavior. Perspective taking may be particularly helpful for facilitating good relationships and promoting satisfactory constructive interactions. Personal distress may be far less helpful (Leith & Baumeister, 1998). The method of assessing empathy seems to influence the relation between empathy and prosocial behavior; according to Eisenberg and Miller (1987) picture/story measures of empathy were not associated with prosocial behavior, whereas nearly all other measures were. Eisenberg and Miller found only moderated correlations between empathy and prosocial behavior and argue that prosocial behavior is merely a way to reduce one's own distress. Stotland (1969) also stated that reaction to another person's distress does not necessarily have to be in the form of helping, it is also possible to deny or avoid distress. Eisenberg & Fabes (1990) stated that other-oriented sympathetic responding is positively related to prosocial behavior whereas personal distress reactions are sometimes associated with low levels of helping.

Stotland and Stebbins (1983) found that urgency is an important variable; the more urgent a situation where help is required appears to an individual, the more likely this individual is to help. Low empathic response only seems to lead to help when it was difficult to escape without helping. High empathic response to a person in distress led to helping regardless of whether escape without helping was easy or difficult (Batson, Duncan, Ackerman, Buckley & Birch, 1981).

Physical proximity

Physical proximity is the most basic type of proximity, which refers to the spatial closeness between a decision maker and those affected by the moral act. In contrast to social and psychological proximity, physical proximity does not imply closeness on 'personal' levels. Physical dimension was found to moderate the relationship between magnitude of consequences and utilitarian evaluations as well as the magnitude of consequences and moral intention. This means that when the information regarding the closeness between decision-maker and those affected is weak (no social/psychological proximity, but physical proximity), information regarding the severity of harm has a significant impact on the way in which alternatives are evaluated and intentions are formed. When physical proximity was present, HRM professionals perceived the decision-maker to consider the outcomes and form more ethical intentions given severe harm information rather than mild harm information (Mencel & May, 2009). In situations where relatively weak social or physical bonds (there is only physical proximity) are present between the decision-maker and others, the magnitude of consequences is expected to more strongly influence the ethical decision making components (Mischel, 1977). People seem to carefully consider their decision making when they are physically near the other person(s) affected by the decision.

In the paper of Paiva et al. (2005) they tried to build a program to address bullying problems at schools using empathic synthetic characters. Hereby they focused on the proximity effect. They designed the program in a way that the whole situation and environment made the user feel some degree of familiarity and closeness with the characters, environment and situations. By using the proximity effect, children showed higher levels of empathy.

Current research

In the study of Van de Pieterman (2015) both perspective-taking conditions did score higher on empathy, personal distress and transportation and showed more prosocial behavior in urgent situations (picking up papers). Imagining yourself as the main character in a stressful situation (in this research: being late for class and finding out it will be the last lesson) did not stimulate personal distress and stimulate prosocial behavior in a non-urgent situation (volunteer work) more than imagining yourself or not imagining at all. However, in the study of Van de Pieterman participants were only willing to help through picking up papers the experimenter dropped. If they were asked to spend some hours voluntarily to teach other students to help them pass their exams, only 8 of 101 people were willing to help. In the situation of helping picking up papers the level of physical proximity is high, whereas in case of the volunteer work the physical proximity is much lower. Therefore, we would like to test if physical proximity influences the effect from empathy on helping behavior.

As described in Figure 1 below, people had to take the perspective of oneself, another person or none. Then empathy was measured with a scale. In line with van de Pieterman (2015) also personal distress and transportation, to check for manipulation, were measured with a scale. People had to fill in a game which contains prosocial, individualistic and competitive choices. Furthermore, people were randomly assigned to a high proximity, asking if they want to spend some hours doing volunteer work, face-to-face or reading and filling in, the hours of volunteer work they were willing to spend, on the forms their selves (low proximity). The game and hours volunteer work were used to measure prosocial behavior.

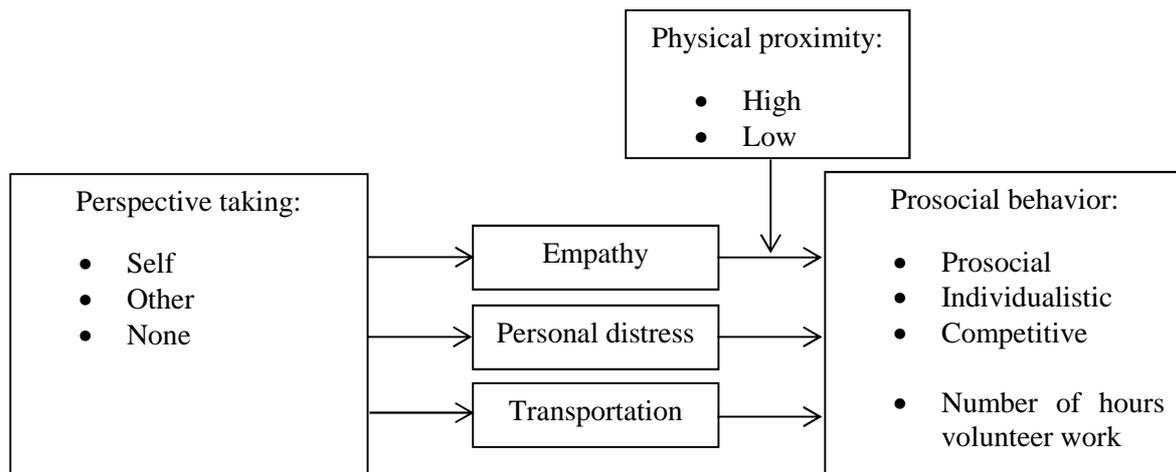


Figure 1. Conceptual model of current research

To answer the research question the following hypotheses are stated:

H1: People who are taking perspective as oneself in a situation and taking perspective as another person feel more empathy than people who are not taking perspective.

H2: People who are taking perspective as oneself in a situation and taking perspective as another person feel more empathy and are willing to spend more hours of volunteer work than people who are not taking perspective. Higher empathy when people taking perspective as another person.

H3: People are prosocial orientated because of the higher levels of empathy these people are feeling.

H4: People who are feeling higher levels of empathy are willing to spend more hours of volunteer work than individualistic and competitive people.

H5: People in the high proximity-group are feeling higher levels of empathy and are willing to spend more hours of volunteer work than people in the low proximity-group.

H6: People who are taking perspective as oneself in a situation and taking perspective as another person and are in the high proximity-group feel more empathy, are prosocial and are willing to spend more hours of volunteer work than people who are not taking perspective and are in the low proximity-group who are individualistic and competitive.

Method

Participants

There were 120 participants in this study, of which 47 were Dutch, 64 German and 9 from another nationality. Of the 120 participants, 31 were male and 89 were female. The average age (ranged 17 to 30) was 21.74.

Participants were recruited through convenience sampling at the University of Twente. Participants subscribed at SONA and received course credits after they took part in the study. Snowball sampling was also used, by asking participants if they knew fellow students who would be willing to participate and get course credits in reward. To get some more attention students were also informed of the study through social media. The full experiment was conducted in Dutch and English, participants had to choose between the Dutch or English version. The text participants have to read was only conducted in English. Participants were told that they can quit the study at any time and all personal data would be processed anonymously.

Design

The research was a true experiment, with research participants being randomly assigned to one of the cells of a 3 (Perspective Taking: Self versus Other versus Control) x 2 (Physical Proximity: Low versus High) between participants design. This type of research was picked as it is the best way to expose causal relationships between variables.

Procedure

Participants were seated in a quiet room, where they received the research papers, starting off with an introduction to the research, informed consent and guarantee of anonymity (Appendix A). To check for difference in age, sex, nationality, study program and reading behavior these items were also asked at the beginning of the study. In all conditions, participants started off with this questions according to their demographics (Appendix B).

One of the independent variable was Perspective Taking; the instructions were imagining how you would feel (Self), imagining how the other feels (Other) and a control group had to count the words (Control). Participants imagining Self, received the instruction to read the text and clearly imagine how he/she would feel when he/she was in the situation of the main character (“Don’t focus too much on all of the other information; please focus on how would you feel in the situation.”). Participants imagining Other received the instruction to read the text and clearly imagine how the main character would feel in the given situation (“Don’t focus too much on all of the other information; please focus on how the main character is feeling in the situation.”). Participants in the Control group received the instruction to count the words “I” and “you” in the text (“Only read the text once, don’t count the

words afterwards. Don't focus on how the character is feeling, try to stay objective.”). Full text instructions can be found in appendix C. The following three pages included the text, which was a short story about a boy going to school and think back and experiencing the last lesson from his teacher during World War I (“My children, this is the last lesson I shall give you. The order has come from Berlin to teach only German in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine. The new master comes tomorrow. This is your last French lesson. I want you to be very attentive.” “What a thunderclap these words were to me!”) (appendix D). This text was selected through a pilot study among ten friends and family members of the researcher. Three different types of stories, not used before in research, were randomly picked from the internet. After reading each text, the participants in the pilot study had to judge the following five statements from 1 (fully disagree) to 5 (fully agree): “This text made me feel compassionate”, “I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the narrative”, “While I was reading I could easily picture the events in it taking place”, “I found my mind wandering while reading the narrative” and “I wanted to learn how the narrative ended”. Try measuring the level of transportation and empathy the texts could bring, the text chosen scored highest on “compassionate” and “learn how narrative ended”. Indicating that this text could evoke levels of transportation and empathy both.

Afterwards, all participants were asked to fill in a set of items (Appendix E), while keeping experience from the text in mind. Empathy and personal distress were measured with validated six item scales (Batson et al., 1997) and literally translated, for the Dutch version, to remain valid. Transportation was measured with an eleven-item scale developed and validated by Green and Brock (2000), which was literally translated, for the Dutch version, as well. These scales are used in previous research, for example by Van de Pieterman (2015). The questions were divided in three sets: empathy (“this text made me feel compassionate” Alpha of .68), personal distress (“this text made me feel alarmed” Alpha of .85) and transportation (“I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the narrative” Alpha of .67). In the research, empathy and personal distress items were mixed using 5-point Likert scales for each item, in order to camouflage the constructs of empathy and personal distress. Using scales outside scientific literature can threaten the validity; validated scales ensure high construct validity. The research had relatively low face validity due to the variety of conditions in which the research was conducted (time, day, location). For this research a significance level of $p .05$ was used.

The other dependent variables were how prosocial, individualistic and competitive participants seemed (social value orientation) and how much hours of volunteer work they would be willing to do. Social value orientation was measured with the Social Value Orientation Scale (SVO) which consist of nine items in which participants could choose option A, B or C. One option is a prosocial-choice, one option is an individualistic-choice and one of them is a competitive-choice. When a participant for example chooses six or more of the nine items according to the prosocial options, this participant has a prosocial value orientation. To see, for each participant separately, the difference between prosocial,

individualist and competitive choices, we measured the total scores for a prosocial, individualistic and competitive option separately. There was a short explanation and example about the social value orientation 'game' (Appendix F). The idea is to divide points to yourself and to another that you don't know, the more points, the better. People who are more prosocial choose more often for equal outcomes for both the other and themselves. People who are more individualistic orientated choose more often the option that brings more gain to their own. People who are more competitive choose more often the option that brings more gain to their own relative to the other person (Messick & McClintock, 1968). After completing this 'game', participants were told that the study has come to an end. In fact, there was one more question left according to the volunteer work they were willing to do.

The experimenter came to the participant and said there was one more question left. In case high Physical Proximity, the experimenter came to the participant and asked face-to-face if the participant was willing to do some volunteer work in favor of her and the university. The experimenter filled in the hours the participant was willing to do. In case low Physical Proximity, the experimenter told the participant that there was one more question left and gave the participant the paper and then left again. The participant filled in the hours him-/herself. The volunteer work consisted of reading voluntary more of the texts they just read during the study. Participants were told that "the university of Twente takes place in a program to create a database with appropriate texts for future research." Participants were asked to read and evaluate some of these texts. If they were willing to do so, they can fill in the number of hours they were willing to spend and their email address. If not, they can just fill in zero and leave the email address out (Appendix G).

The participants were debriefed with a document about the real purpose of the study, which they had to sign afterwards to indicate that they endured no harm (Appendix H).

Results

Table 1

Correlations of all variables used in this study

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1. Sex(0=man)	.74	.44	-																
2. Nationality(1=Dutch)	1.68	.61	.10	-															
3. Age	21.74	3.13	.22*	.39*	-														
4. Study(1=Psychology)	1.66	.91	.14	.62*	.64*	-													
5. Read fun month	10.48	10.29	.15	.06	.03	.11	-												
6. Read non-fiction month	9.98	11.61	.23*	.07	.01	.06	.49*	-											
7. Read fiction month	4.85	7.87	.07	.05	.20*	.23*	.59*	.15	-										
8. Read romans month	.79	1.35	.18	.12	.21*	.20*	.40*	.62*	-										
9. Last time read romans(1=yesterday/today)	3.10	1.13	.12	.17	.23*	.17	.39*	.04	.63*	.71*	-								
10. Perspective Taking(1=Self)	2.00	.82	.07	.02	.04	.01	.09	.04	.16	.21*	.15	-							
11. Volunteer work	.88	1.76	.13	.25*	.16	.22*	.44*	.13	.29*	.34*	.34*	.22*	-						
12. Proximity	.50	.50	.06	.06	.10	.19*	.10	.19*	.02	.02	.12	.00	.12	-					
13. Empathy	3.10	.70	.10	.22*	.23*	.22*	.00	.03	.07	.21*	.14	.18	.10	.06	-				
14. Personal Distress	2.90	.88	.32**	.11	.12	.16	.04	.06	.11	.21*	.18*	.11	.01	.00	.42**	-			
15. Transportation	3.02	.56	.09	.37*	.18*	.23*	.09	.08	.11	.26*	.25*	.26*	.31**	.06	.47**	.46**	-		
16. Prosocial orientation	5.63	3.75	.10	.06	.02	.06	.09	.04	.08	.04	.06	.03	.11	.05	.08	.08	.05	-	
17. Individualistic orientation	2.63	3.42	.05	.12	.06	.03	.10	.10	.18	.05	.10	.00	.09	.02	.10	.08	.12	.81*	-
18. Competitive orientation	.74	2.26	.10	.08	.13	.06	.00	.09	.13	.02	.04	.04	.04	.05	.01	.01	.09	.45*	.17

Note. N= 120. *p<.05. **<.001.

Perspective Taking is significant correlated with read romans month ($r=-.21$). Volunteer work is positively correlated with nationality ($r=.25$), read fun month ($r=.44$), read fiction month ($r=.29$) and read romans month ($r=.34$). Volunteer work is negatively correlated with study ($r=-.22$), Perspective Taking ($r=-.22$) and last time read roman ($r=-.34$). Proximity is correlated with study ($r=-.19$) and read non-fiction ($r=.19$). Empathy is positive correlated with nationality ($r=.22$) and read romans month ($r=.21$). Empathy is negative correlated with age ($r=-.23$) and study ($r=-.22$). Personal distress is positive correlated with sex ($r=.32$), empathy ($r=.42$) and read romans month ($r=.21$). Personal distress is negative correlated with last time read romans ($r=-.18$). Transportation is negatively correlated with

age ($r=-.18$), study ($r=-.23$), last time read roman ($r=-.25$) and Perspective Taking ($r=-.26$). Transportation is positively correlated with read romans month ($r=.26$), volunteer work ($r=.31$), empathy ($r=.47$) and personal distress ($r=.46$). Individualistic orientation is negative correlated with prosocial orientation ($r=-.81$) and competitive orientation is negative correlated with prosocial orientation ($r=-.45$).

A MANOVA was conducted with Perspective Taking and Physical Proximity as independent variables and empathy, personal distress, transportation, prosocial, individualistic and competitive value orientation and volunteer work as dependent variables. This analysis yielded a significant multivariate effect of Perspective Taking ($F(14, 216) = 1.91, p < .05$); Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.792$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.110$. The main effect Physical Proximity did not reach significance ($F(7, 108) = 0.483, NS$); Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.970$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.030$, therefore we already cannot accept hypothesis 5: "People in the high proximity-group are feeling higher levels of empathy and are willing to spend more hours of volunteer work than people in the low proximity-group." The interaction between Perspective Taking and Physical Proximity neither did reach significance ($F(14, 216) = 1.002, NS$); Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.882$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.061$.

Empathy, personal distress and transportation

To test hypothesis 1: "People who are taking perspective as oneself in a situation and taking perspective as another person feel more empathy than people who are not taking perspective," a univariate analysis of variance with empathy as dependent variable was conducted. There was no main effect found of Perspective Taking for empathy; $F(2, 114) = 2.11, ns$) and personal distress; $F(2, 114) = 0.81, ns$). Although people imagining Self and Other score somewhat higher in the overall on empathy than people in the Control condition, the difference is not significant, therefore we cannot accept this hypothesis.

A univariate analysis of variance with transportation as dependent variable yielded a main effect of Perspective Taking ($F(2, 114) = 7.01, p < .01$); the Self imagining-instruction triggered higher transportation ratings compared to the Control-instruction ($M_{self} = 3.12, SD = 0.50$ versus $M_{control} = 2.77, SD = 0.60$; $F(2, 114) = 7.01, p < .01$). The Other imagining-instruction triggered higher transportation ratings compared to the Control-instruction ($M_{other} = 3.18, SD = 0.48$ versus $M_{control} = 2.77, SD = 0.60$; $F(2, 114) = 7.01, p < .01$). Between Perspective Taking as Self and Other was no significance difference found ($M_{self} = 3.12, SD = 0.50$ versus $M_{other} = 3.18, SD = 0.48$; $F(2, 114) = 7.01, NS$).

Social value orientation

There was no main effect found of Perspective Taking for a prosocial value orientation; $F(2,114)=0.64$, NS) and a individualistic value orientation; $F(2,114)=0.04$, NS).

A univariate analysis of variance with a competitive value orientation as dependent variable yielded a marginal effect of Perspective Taking ($F(2, 114) = 2.66, p = .07$); the Other imagining-instruction triggered higher competitive value orientation-ratings compared to the Control-instruction ($M_{\text{other}} = 1.40, SD = 3.04$ versus $M_{\text{control}} = 0.30, SD = 1.29$; $F(2,114)=2.66, p < .05$). The Self imagining-instruction did not show a significance difference related to Other ($M_{\text{self}} = 0.53, SD = 2.00$ versus $M_{\text{other}} = 1.40, SD = 3.04$ versus; $F(2,114)=2.66$, NS) and Control ($M_{\text{self}} = 0.53, SD = 2.00$ versus $M_{\text{control}} = 0.30, SD = 1.29$; $F(2,114)=2.66$, NS).

Hours volunteer work

To test hypothesis 2: “People who are taking perspective as oneself in a situation and taking perspective as another person feel more empathy and are willing to spend more hours of volunteer work than people who are not taking perspective. Higher empathy when people taking perspective as another person,” a univariate analysis of variance with hours of volunteer work as dependent variable was conducted. This yielded a marginal effect of Perspective Taking ($F(2, 114) = 2.91, p = .06$); the Self imagining-instruction triggered higher numbers of volunteer work compared to the Control-instruction ($M_{\text{self}} = 1.38, SD = 2.07$ versus $M_{\text{control}} = 0.45, SD = 1.06$; $F(2,114)=2.91, p < .05$). The Other imagining-instruction ($M = 0.83, SD = 1.85$) did not show a significance difference related to Self ($M_{\text{other}} = 0.83, SD = 1.85$ versus $M_{\text{self}} = 1.38, SD = 2.07$; $F(2,114)=2.91$, NS) and Control ($M_{\text{other}} = 0.83, SD = 1.85$ versus $M_{\text{control}} = 0.45, SD = 1.06$; $F(2,114)=2.91$, NS) . People in the Self condition compared to the Other and Control condition are willing to spend some more hours of volunteer work, therefore we can partly accept hypothesis 2.

Because there were no significant main effects and interaction effects found of Perspective taking and Physical Proximity on Empathy, Prosocial Value Orientation and Hours Volunteer work, we cannot accept hypothesis 6: “People who are taking perspective as oneself in a situation and taking perspective as another person and are in the high proximity-group feel more empathy, are prosocial and are willing to spend more hours volunteer work than people who are not taking perspective and are in the low proximity-group who are individualistic and competitive.”

Social value orientation and Hours volunteer work

A Multiple Regression Analyses was used to see the effects of empathy, personal distress, transportation and the moderator empathy*Physical Proximity on a prosocial, individualistic and competitive value orientation and hours volunteer work people were willing to spend.

Table 2

Multiple regression analyses prosocial value orientation as dependent variable

Predictor	ΔR^2	<i>B</i>	p
Step 1	-.02		
Intercept		3.96	.06
Empathy		.33	.58
Personal distress		.23	.62
Transportation		-.00	1.00
Step 2	-.03		
Intercept		3.97	.06
Empathy		.33	.58
Personal distress		.23	.62
Transportation		-.01	.99
Empathy*Physical Proximity		.02	.96

Note. N=120.

Table 2 shows the linear regression from empathy, personal distress, transportation and empathy*Proximity on a prosocial value orientation

To test hypothesis 3: “People are prosocial orientated because of the higher levels of empathy these people are feeling,” a regression with empathy, personal distress and transportation as independent variables and prosocial value orientation as dependent variable yielded, respectively, non-significant *B*-weights of 0.33, 0.23 and -0.00, indicating that empathy, personal distress and transportation did not

triggered a prosocial value orientation ($t = 0.56$; $t=-0.50$; $t=-0.01$; all NS). Therefore, we cannot accept this hypothesis. Inserting the moderator, empathy*Physical Proximity, as an additional variable in this regression yielded no significant effect ($B = 0.02$; $t = 0.05$; NS), indicating that the moderator did not triggered a prosocial value orientation.

Table 3

Multiple regression analyses individualistic value orientation as dependent variable

Predictor	ΔR^2	B	p
Step 1	-.01		
Intercept		5.18	.06
Empathy		-.25	.63
Personal distress		-.07	.87
Transportation		-.52	.44
Step 2	-.01		
Intercept		5.13	.01
Empathy		-.27	.61
Personal distress		-.06	.88
Transportation		-.49	.47
Empathy*Physical Proximity		-.25	.44

Note. N=120.

Table 3 shows the linear regression from empathy, personal distress, transportation and empathy*Proximity on a individualistic value orientation.

Second a regression with empathy, personal distress and transportation as independent variables and individualistic value orientation as dependent variable yielded, respectively, non-significant B -weights of -0.25, -0.07 and -0.52, indicating that empathy, personal distress and transportation did not triggered a individualistic value orientation ($t = -0.48$; $t=-0.16$; $t=-0.77$; all NS). Inserting the

moderator, empathy*Physical Proximity, as an additional variable in this regression yielded no significant effect ($B = -0.25$; $t = -0.77$; NS). Indicating that the moderator did not triggered a individualistic value orientation.

Table 4

Multiple regression analyses competitive value orientation as dependent variable

Predictor	ΔR^2	B	p
Step 1	-0.01		
Intercept		-.14	.91
Empathy		-.08	.83
Personal distress		-.17	.55
Transportation		.53	.25
Step 2	-0.01		
Intercept		-.10	.94
Empathy		-.06	.86
Personal distress		-.17	.55
Transportation		.50	.27
Empathy*Physical Proximity		.23	.28

Note. N=120.

Table 4 shows the linear regression from empathy, personal distress, transportation and empathy*Proximity on a competitive value orientation.

Third a regression with empathy, personal distress and transportation as independent variables and competitive value orientation as dependent variable yielded, respectively, non-significant B -weights of -0.08, -0.17 and 0.53, indicating that empathy, personal distress and transportation did not triggered a competitive value orientation ($t = -0.22$; $t = -0.90$; $t = 1.17$; all NS). Inserting the moderator, empathy*Physical Proximity, as an additional variable in this regression yielded no significant effect

($B = 0.23$; $t = 1.08$; NS). Indicating that the moderator did not triggered a individualistic value orientation.

Table 5

Multiple regression analyses hours of volunteer work as dependent variable

Predictor	ΔR^2	B	p
Step 1	.10		
Intercept		-1.73	.06
Empathy		-.00	.99
Personal distress		-.39	.06
Transportation		1.25	.00
Step 2	.09		
Intercept		-1.74	.06
Empathy		-.01	.98
Personal distress		-.39	.06
Transportation		1.85	.00
Empathy*Physical Proximity		-.06	.70

Note. N=120.

Table 5 shows the linear Regression from empathy, personal distress, transportation and empathy*Proximity on hours volunteer work.

Finally to test hypothesis 4: “People who are feeling higher levels of empathy are willing to spend more hours of volunteer work than individualistic and competitive people,” a regression was conducted with empathy, personal distress and transportation as independent variables and hours volunteer work as dependent variable. This yielded a non-significant B -weight of -0.00, a marginal B -weight of -0.39 and a significant B -weight of 1.25. Indicating that empathy did not triggered hours of volunteer work ($t = -0.01$; NS), therefor we cannot accept this hypothesis. Personal distress triggered

hours of volunteer work marginal ($t=-1.95$; $p=0.06$) and transportation triggered hours volunteer work significant ($t=3.80$; $p < 0.001$). Inserting the moderator, empathy*Physical Proximity, as an additional variable in this regression yielded no significant effect ($B = -0.06$; $t = -0.38$; NS). Indicating that the moderator did not triggered hours of volunteer work. The effects found of personal distress and transportation remain (marginal) significant.

Conclusion and Discussion

Conclusion

The main conclusion of this study shows that there was a significant difference between the perspective taking of the `Self`, `Other` and the `Control` when looking at transportation (being able to immerse oneself in a story). People imagining oneself as the main character score higher on transportation than people in the control-group, also people imagining oneself score higher on transportation than people in the control-group. Between imagining self and imagining other there was no significant difference found. Transportation also had a significant effect on the number of hours of volunteer work people were willing to spend. So giving people the instruction to imagining themselves as themselves or the main character while reading, make people put themselves in their shoes, which leads to prosocial behavior, in this case spending hours voluntarily reading texts for someone else.

The higher the level of transportation the more hours people were willing to spend on volunteer work. There was no significant effect found of perspective taking on a competitive value orientation or hours volunteer work people were willing to spend. Looking closer there was a marginal difference between people who take perspective as another person and people in the control-group. Perspective taking as the other seems to make people act in a more competitive way compared to people in the control-group. A significant difference was found between people taking their own perspective and people in the control-group in relation to hours of volunteer work they were willing to spend. People imagining oneself were willing to spend more hours of volunteer work than people in the control-group.

There was no significant effect found of perspective taking on empathy, personal distress, prosocial or individualistic value orientation. Furthermore, there was no significant effect found of physical proximity on one of the above mentioned variables. Empathy, personal distress and the moderator empathy and physical proximity had no significant effects on a prosocial, individualistic and competitive value orientation or volunteer work.

Discussion and implications

In contrast to prior research from, for instance, Stotland (1969), Eisenberg and Miller (1987) and Van der Pieterman (2015) there is no effect found of empathy on prosocial behavior. Perspective taking also did not have an effect on empathy, it is possible that the sort of texts being used will make a significance difference on the fact that perspective taking can provoke empathy and prosocial behavior. Different studies have shown that reading personal narratives can have a positive impact on empathy and perspective taking (Mar, Oatley, Hirsh, Paz & Peterson, 2006; Shen, Ahern & baker, 2014). Shen et. al showed, comparing narrative and informational news, narrative informational news had a greater impact than informational news on attitudes, because it its more effective in evoking empathy. Reading others emotions could have an impact on own emotions. On the other hand, Whalen (1989) stated that both fiction and nonfiction narratives can enhance emotional and social competences

such as empathy and perspective taking. The story used in this study, about a boy living in WWI, can be seen as personal narrative and informational, and fiction and non-fiction. Maybe the texts would have evoked more feelings of empathy when it was rather personal or narrative informational or fiction or non-fiction. This way there would have been more space for the emotions of the character. Davis (1983) named four dimensions of empathy, one of them is perspective taking. Maybe it seems logical that it takes some more aspects of the other three dimensions; fantasy, empathic concern and personal distress to reach “real” empathy. For future research it could be interesting to measure fantasy and empathic concern as well. On the other hand, perspective taking and fantasy were defined by Davis as cognitive, whereas personal distress and empathic concern defined as emotional. It could be that perspective taking and fantasy is something one can easily manipulate or learn, whereas personal distress and empathic concern is something innate and difficult to change.

It appears perspective taking had a significance effect on transportation, losing oneself into a story, as was also showed by Green (Green & Brock, 2000; Green, 2010). Showing that the perspective-taking-instruction people got before reading the text worked out. Transportation causes heightened emotional response, resulting in empathy for the characters, however, this is not shown in this study. It is probable that the story used, reduced the amount of transportation possible from people simply based on the fact that the war described in the story was long ago, the age and setting does not represent the reader. Thereby reducing the emotional value and thus the amount of empathy (Stotland, 1969). As mentioned before, there is still a lot unclear about empathy (Preston, 2006). There seem to be several components of empathy that can influence prosocial behavior (Leith & Baumeister, 1998). According to Eisenberg and Miller (1987) also the method of assessing empathy seems to matter. Stotland and Stebbins (1983) also added the urgency of the situation as an important factor whether empathy leads to prosocial behavior. Taking all this into account it is clear that empathy is a difficult variable to understand and therefore to manipulate. Doing extensive research on empathy is the first and most important thing to do. The next step is to see how we can evoke empathy, the step afterwards is to see how empathy can evoke prosocial behavior.

To measure prosocial behavior in a different way, people had to fill in the social value orientation ‘game’. According to the social value orientation none of the variables had a significant influence. Several participants failed to adequately fill in the ‘game’ even though the instruction was clear. It could be due to the fact that they were less precise in filling in the questionnaire after reading the text, and already having put effort in the exercise, making them more error prone further on. Another problem with the ‘game’ was that some people, after they took part in the study, mentioned that they found it difficult dividing points, preferring to have more options to choose from. Perhaps in this case people do not feel fully prosocial, individualistic or competitive or this ‘game’ is not suitable to measure prosocial behavior in the shape of “why people help” in a valid and reliable way. At the meso-level of prosocial behavior “when people help” was also named. “When people help” has to do

with costs and reward analysis of helping (Piliavin, in Penner et. al. 2005); people try to minimize their costs and maximize their rewards. This is called a more economic view of human behavior. The game people had to fill in is more in line with this view instead of the to be measured “why people help.” In contrast, and as expected, this study showed significance negative correlations between a prosocial value orientation, individualistic and competitive value orientation. For example, when people are prosocial they seems not to be individualistic or competitive orientated. A suggestion for future research is to measure social value orientation before and after people read a text to see if there is an effect of reading on social value orientation possible.

After people got to know the real purpose of the study they told the researcher that they were willing to do the volunteer work if it was in favor of the researcher herself instead of the university of Twente. Physical proximity did not make a significant difference in this case. Perhaps social/psychological proximity instead of physical proximity would have made a difference in outcome. This could also be explained through the fact that in-group members, a fellow student, are favored and students want to preserve their solidarity (Brewer, 1979; Cikara, Botvinick & Fiske, 2011). In the case of high physical proximity people seem to want to explain why they do not want to spend hours reading texts. Most of the time they explained it as being too busy with their own lectures, readings, assignments etc.

Another explanation for the low levels of hours of volunteer work people were willing to spend might be that people do not like reading in the first place. Sometimes people found the text they read too boring and difficult, this may have discouraged them. People who filled in one or more hours of volunteer work willing to spend, explained that they liked reading anyway. There are significant and positive correlations found between how many times people read for fun, read fiction, read novels a month, and the last time they read a novel compared to the hours of volunteer work they were willing to do in this study. In line with Shotland and Stebbins (1983) it is possible that the intention to help is influenced by whether helping is urgent or non-urgent. The more urgent the situation is, the more likely someone is willing to help. Helping the University of Twente read and evaluate some texts for future research seems not to be urgent enough.

Most of the participants in this study were young German females studying Psychology at the University of Twente. This is not a representative sample of the total population. The sample was not very large (N=120). For example, there are negative correlations found between age and how many times people read fiction and romans a month and the level of empathy and transportation. When people get older, they seem to take less time to read and it could be that they are less likely to have empathic feelings When people are younger their ability to fantasize is bigger and therefore, they are better able to lose themselves into a story. Davis (1983) already mentioned fantasy as a basic dimension of empathy. For future research it is recommended to take a more representative and larger sample of the total population to see if this is the case.

The most important thing we can take from this study is that reading can influence the way people feel and behave. Perspective taking had a significant effect on transportation and transportation had a significant effect on the hours of volunteer work people were willing to spend. When people were told to read a story and imagine themselves as the other, people can put themselves into the shoes of this other, which resulted in people willing to spend hours on volunteer work, which is a measure of prosocial behavior. This is in line with previous research that showed reading helps to develop social competencies and thereby has an impact on prosocial behavior (Mar et. al., 2006). How many novels people read and the last time they read a novel was positively correlated with empathy, personal distress and transportation. For future research it could be interesting if this effect is also shown through gaming. Gordon and Schirra (2011) showed that while playing a character it clearly made an impression on players, one that manifested in an emotional connection to a neighborhood and its community. Although it did not easily translate into a rational decision-making process, it seems possible to evoke empathy through games. Furthermore, Boltz, Hendriksen and Mishra (2015) pointed out that video-games can expand or alter empathetic thinking skills for learners. Learning to take perspective and empathy through gaming is a fast-growing phenomenon in 21st century learning.

Knowing this, we can motivate people to read with the instruction to put themselves in the shoes of another. This could lead to a better understanding of another person, as described by Green (2010). This, in turn, can lead to people be more willing to act prosocial, especially voluntary, for someone else. Using this knowledge in real life, for example in increasing the amount of money people donate, in preventing criminals from relapsing. Or even in education, strengthening the importance of reading from an early age to stimulate and increase prosocial behavior in the future.

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Appendix

Appendix A

Date:

Welcome to this study. I am a psychology student at the University of Twente. Now I am writing my master-thesis in the field of Psychology of Conflict, Risk and Safety.

In the following you will be asked to read a text. After reading the text you will be asked to answer a few questions. The study takes about 15 minutes.

If you want to quit the study, no matter what reason, this is no problem. Just tell it to me and the study will be broken down.

All answers will be treated anonymously. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me by email or phone that are below.

Thank you for your participation!

Best wishes,

Justine Verhoeven
+316 28 83 94 53
j.m.c.verhoeven@student.utwente.nl

Appendix B

Please fill in the answer behind the question.

What is your gender?

What is your nationality?

What is your age?

What are you studying?

How many times a month do you read for fun?

How many times a month do you read non-fiction?

How many times a month do you read romans (fiction)?

How many romans did you read last month?

When did you read a roman for the last time?

What is your SONA number? (if you wish to receive credits)

Appendix C

Condition Self:

On the next page you find the text. While reading, try to imagine how would you feel when you passed through the situation described. And how would it influence your life. Don't focus too much on all of the other information; please focus on how would you feel in the situation.

Condition Other:

on the next page you find the text. While reading, try to imagine how the main character is feeling in the situation described. And how would it influence his life. Don't focus too much on all of the other information; please focus on how the main character is feeling in the situation.

Condition Control:

On the next page you find the text. While reading, try to count how often the words "I" and "you" are mentioned. Only read the text once, don't count the words afterwards. Don't focus on how the character is feeling, try to stay objective.

Appendix D

I started for school very late that morning and was in great dread of a scolding, especially because M. Hamel had said that he would question us on participles, and I did not know the first word about them. For a moment I thought of running away and spending the day out of doors. It was so warm, so bright! The birds were chirping at the edge of the woods; and in the open field back of the sawmill the Prussian soldiers were drilling. It was all much more tempting than the rule for participles, but I had the strength to resist, and hurried off to school.

When I passed the town hall there was a crowd in front of the bulletin-board. For the last two years all our bad news had come from there—the lost battles, the draft, the orders of the commanding officer—and I thought to myself, without stopping:

“What can be the matter now?”

Then, as I hurried by as fast as I could go, the blacksmith, Wachter, who was there, with his apprentice, reading the bulletin, called after me:

“Don’t go so fast, bub; you’ll get to your school in plenty of time!”

I thought he was making fun of me, and reached M. Hamel’s little garden all out of breath.

Usually, when school began, there was a great bustle, which could be heard out in the street, the opening and closing of desks, lessons repeated in unison, very loud, with our hands over our ears to understand better, and the teacher’s great ruler rapping on the table. But now it was all so still! I had counted on the commotion to get to my desk without being seen; but, of course, that day everything had to be as quiet as Sunday morning. Through the window I saw my classmates, already in their places, and M. Hamel walking up and down with his terrible iron ruler under his arm. I had to open the door and go in before everybody. You can imagine how I blushed and how frightened I was.

But nothing happened. M. Hamel saw me and said very kindly:

“Go to your place quickly, little Franz. We were beginning without you.”

I jumped over the bench and sat down at my desk. Not till then, when I had got a little over my fright, did I see that our teacher had on his beautiful green coat, his frilled shirt, and the little black silk cap, all embroidered, that he never wore except on inspection and prize days. Besides, the whole school seemed so strange and solemn. But the thing that surprised me most was to see, on the back benches that were always empty, the village people sitting quietly like ourselves; old Hauser, with his three-cornered hat, the former mayor, the former postmaster, and several others besides. Everybody looked sad; and Hauser had brought an old primer, thumbed at the edges, and he held it open on his knees with his great spectacles lying across the pages.

While I was wondering about it all, M. Hamel mounted his chair, and, in the same grave and gentle tone which he had used to me, said:

“My children, this is the last lesson I shall give you. The order has come from Berlin to teach only German in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine. The new master comes to-morrow. This is your last French lesson. I want you to be very attentive.”

What a thunderclap these words were to me!

Oh, the wretches; that was what they had put up at the town-hall!

My last French lesson! Why, I hardly knew how to write! I should never learn any more! I must stop there, then! Oh, how sorry I was for not learning my lessons, for seeking birds' eggs, or going sliding on the Saar! My books, that had seemed such a nuisance a while ago, so heavy to carry, my grammar, and my history of the saints, were old friends now that I couldn't give up. And M. Hamel, too; the idea that he was going away, that I should never see him again, made me forget all about his ruler and how cranky he was.

Poor man! It was in honor of this last lesson that he had put on his fine Sunday clothes, and now I understood why the old men of the village were sitting there in the back of the room. It was because they were sorry, too, that they had not gone to school more. It was their way of thanking our master for his forty years of faithful service and of showing their respect for the country that was theirs no more.

While I was thinking of all this, I heard my name called. It was my turn to recite. What would I not have given to be able to say that dreadful rule for the participle all through, very loud and clear, and without one mistake? But I got mixed up on the first words and stood there, holding on to my desk, my heart beating, and not daring to look up. I heard M. Hamel say to me:

"I won't scold you, little Franz; you must feel bad enough. See how it is! Every day we have said to ourselves: 'Bah! I've plenty of time. I'll learn it to-morrow.' And now you see where we've come out. Ah, that's the great trouble with Alsace; she puts off learning till to-morrow. Now those fellows out there will have the right to say to you: 'How is it; you pretend to be Frenchmen, and yet you can neither speak nor write your own language?' But you are not the worst, poor little Franz. We've all a great deal to reproach ourselves with.

"Your parents were not anxious enough to have you learn. They preferred to put you to work on a farm or at the mills, so as to have a little more money. And I? I've been to blame also. Have I not often sent you to water my flowers instead of learning your lessons? And when I wanted to go fishing, did I not just give you a holiday?"

Then, from one thing to another, M. Hamel went on to talk of the French language, saying that it was the most beautiful language in the world—the clearest, the most logical; that we must guard it among us and never forget it, because when a people are enslaved, as long as they hold fast to their language it is as if they had the key to their prison. Then he opened a grammar and read us our lesson. I was amazed to see how well I understood it. All he said seemed so easy, so easy! I think, too, that I had never listened so carefully, and that he had never explained everything with so much patience. It seemed almost as if the poor man wanted to give us all he knew before going away, and to put it all into our heads at one stroke.

After the grammar, we had a lesson in writing. That day M. Hamel had new copies for us, written in a beautiful round hand: France, Alsace, France, Alsace. They looked like little flags floating everywhere in the school-room, hung from the rod at the top of our desks. You ought to have seen how every one set to work, and how quiet it was! The only sound was the scratching of the pens over the paper. Once some beetles flew in; but nobody paid any attention to them, not even the littlest ones, who worked right on tracing their fish-hooks, as if that was French, too. On the roof the pigeons cooed very low, and I thought to myself:

"Will they make them sing in German, even the pigeons?"

Whenever I looked up from my writing I saw M. Hamel sitting motionless in his chair and gazing first at one thing, then at another, as if he wanted to fix in his mind just how everything looked in that little school-room. Fancy! For forty years he had been there in the same place, with his garden outside the window and his class in front of him, just like that. Only the desks and benches had been worn smooth; the walnut-trees in the garden were taller, and the hopvine that he had planted himself twined

about the windows to the roof. How it must have broken his heart to leave it all, poor man; to hear his sister moving about in the room above, packing their trunks! For they must leave the country next day.

But he had the courage to hear every lesson to the very last. After the writing, we had a lesson in history, and then the babies chanted their ba, be bi, bo, bu. Down there at the back of the room old Hauser had put on his spectacles and, holding his primer in both hands, spelled the letters with them. You could see that he, too, was crying; his voice trembled with emotion, and it was so funny to hear him that we all wanted to laugh and cry. Ah, how well I remember it, that last lesson!

All at once the church-clock struck twelve. Then the Angelus. At the same moment the trumpets of the Prussians, returning from drill, sounded under our windows. M. Hamel stood up, very pale, in his chair. I never saw him look so tall.

“My friends,” said he, “I—I—” But something choked him. He could not go on.

Then he turned to the blackboard, took a piece of chalk, and, bearing on with all his might, he wrote as large as he could:

“Vive La France!”

Then he stopped and leaned his head against the wall, and, without a word, he made a gesture to us with his hand:

“School is dismissed—you may go.”

Appendix E

Please answer by circling the number that is most applicable to you about the text, 1=fully disagree to 5=fully agree.

This text made me feel alarmed	1	2	3	4	5
This text made me feel upset	1	2	3	4	5
This text made me feel disturbed	1	2	3	4	5
This text made me feel compassionate	1	2	3	4	5
This text made me feel tenderly	1	2	3	4	5
This text made me feel agitated	1	2	3	4	5
This text made me feel warm hearted	1	2	3	4	5
This text made me feel sad	1	2	3	4	5
This text made me feel burdened	1	2	3	4	5
This text made me feel confused	1	2	3	4	5
This text made me feel sympathetic	1	2	3	4	5
This text made me feel worried	1	2	3	4	5

While I was reading the narrative, I could easily picture the events in it Taking place.

1 2 3 4 5

While I was reading the narrative, activity going on in the room around me was on my mind.

1 2 3 4 5

I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the narrative.

1 2 3 4 5

I was mentally involved in the narrative while reading it.

1 2 3 4 5

After finishing the narrative, I found it easy to put it out of my mind.

1 2 3 4 5

I wanted to learn how the narrative ended.

1 2 3 4 5

The narrative affected me emotionally.

1 2 3 4 5

I found myself thinking of ways the narrative could have turned out differently.

1 2 3 4 5

I found my mind wandering while reading the narrative.

1 2 3 4 5

The events in the narrative are relevant to my everyday life.

1 2 3 4 5

The events in the narrative have changed my life.

1 2 3 4 5

Appendix F

In this task we ask you to imagine that you have been randomly paired with another person, whom we will refer to simply as the “Other.” This other person is someone you do not know and that you will not knowingly meet in the future. Both you and the “Other” person will be making choices by circling either the letter A, B, or C. Your own choices will produce points for both yourself and the “Other” person. Likewise, the other’s choice will produce points for him=her and for you. Every point has value: the more points you receive, the better for you, and the more points the “Other” receives, the better for him=her. Here’s an example of how this task works:

	A	B	C
You get	500	500	550
Other gets	100	500	300

In this example, if you choose A you would receive 500 points and the other would receive 100 points; if you chose B, you would receive 500 points and the other 500; and if you chose C, you would receive 550 points and the other 300. So, you see that your choice influences both the number of points you receive and the number of points the other receives. Before you begin making choices, please keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers—choose the option that you, for whatever reason, prefer most. Also, remember that the points have value: the more of them you accumulate the better for you. Likewise, from the “other’s” point of view, the more points s=he accumulates, the better for him=her.

For each of the nine choice situations, circle A, B, or C, depending on which column you prefer most:

	A	B	C		A	B	C
(1) You get	480	540	480	(6) You get	500	500	570
Other gets	80	280	480	Other gets	500	100	300
(2) You get	560	500	500	(7) You get	510	560	510
Other gets	300	500	100	Other gets	510	300	110
(3) You get	520	520	580	(8) You get	550	500	500
Other gets	520	120	320	Other gets	300	100	500
(4) You get	500	560	490	(9) You get	480	490	540
Other gets	100	300	490	Other gets	100	490	300
(5) You get	560	500	490				
Other gets	300	500	90				

The study has now ended. Thank you for your participation.

Appendix G

UNIVERSITEIT TWARTE.

The university of Twente takes place in a program to create a database with appropriate texts for future research. We would like to ask you if you are willing to read and evaluate texts a couple of hours. If you are willing to do so, you can fill in the number of hours you are willing to help and an email address to contact you. If you are not willing to help, you can fill in 0 and leave out the email address.

I am willing to spend Hours unpaid reading and evaluating texts.

My email address

Appendix H

Thank you for participating in this study. I would like to inform you right now about the real purpose of this study.

The aim of this study is to see if perspective taking provoke feelings that stimulate prosocial behavior. Prosocial behavior has been measured by the hours of volunteer work you filled in and how you divided the points between yourself and the other. Both situations are simulated. Also the volunteer work isn't real.

If there are any questions left, you can ask me right now or reach me through info below. I would like to ask you to sign below, to get your permission to process data and make sure you didn't experience stress during the study. If this is not the case, please let me know.

Thank you again!

Best wishes,

Justine Verhoeven

+316 28 83 94 53

j.m.c.verhoeven@student.utwente.nl

- I agree on data processing and I didn't sustain damage in any way through this study.
- I am interested in this study and I would like to receive the outcomes of this study. My email address.....

Signature:-----

Datum:

Welkom bij dit onderzoek. Ik ben psychologie student aan de Universiteit Twente. Op dit moment schrijf ik mijn master-thesis op het gebied van conflict-, risico- en veiligheidspsychologie.

Hier na zal je gevraagd worden een tekst te lezen. Na het lezen zal je gevraagd worden een paar vragen te beantwoorden. In totaal zal de studie ongeveer 15 minuten duren.

Mocht je op enig moment willen stoppen met het onderzoek om welke reden dan ook, dan is dit geen probleem. Meld dit aan mij en dan wordt het onderzoek direct afgebroken.

Er zijn geen juiste of onjuiste antwoorden op de vragen. Alle antwoorden zullen anoniem verwerkt worden. Bij vragen of opmerkingen kun je me altijd bereiken op onderstaand e-mailadres en telefoonnummer.

Bedankt voor je medewerking!

Groeten,

Justine Verhoeven

+316 28 83 94 53

j.m.c.verhoeven@student.utwente.nl

Vul a.u.b. het antwoord in achter de vraag.

Wat is je geslacht?

Wat is je nationaliteit?

Wat is je leeftijd?

Wat studeer je/heb je gestudeerd?

Hoe vaak per maand lees je voor je plezier?

Hoe vaak per maand lees je non-fictie?

Hoe vaak per maand lees je romans (fictie)?

Hoeveel romans heb je de afgelopen maand gelezen?

Wanneer heb je voor het laatst een roman gelezen?

Wat is je SONA nummer? (indien je credits wilt ontvangen)

Conditie Zelf:

Op de volgende pagina vind je de tekst. Terwijl je leest, probeer je voor te stellen hoe jij je zou voelen als je de beschreven situatie zou meemaken, en hoe dit je leven zou beïnvloeden. Richt je niet te veel op alle informatie; concentreer je op hoe jij je zou voelen in de situatie.

Conditie Ander:

Op de volgende pagina vind je de tekst. Terwijl je leest, probeer je voor te stellen hoe de hoofdpersoon zich voelt, en hoe dit zijn leven beïnvloedt. Richt je niet te veel op alle informatie, concentreer je op hoe de hoofdpersoon zich voelt in de situatie.

Conditie Controle:

Op de volgende pagina vind je de tekst. Terwijl je leest, probeer bij te houden hoe vaak de woorden "I" en "you" worden gebruikt. Lees de tekst maar één keer, dus tel de woorden niet achteraf. Richt je niet op hoe de persoon zich voelt, maar probeer objectief te blijven.

I started for school very late that morning and was in great dread of a scolding, especially because M. Hamel had said that he would question us on participles, and I did not know the first word about them. For a moment I thought of running away and spending the day out of doors. It was so warm, so bright! The birds were chirping at the edge of the woods; and in the open field back of the sawmill the Prussian soldiers were drilling. It was all much more tempting than the rule for participles, but I had the strength to resist, and hurried off to school.

When I passed the town hall there was a crowd in front of the bulletin-board. For the last two years all our bad news had come from there—the lost battles, the draft, the orders of the commanding officer—and I thought to myself, without stopping:

“What can be the matter now?”

Then, as I hurried by as fast as I could go, the blacksmith, Wachter, who was there, with his apprentice, reading the bulletin, called after me:

“Don’t go so fast, bub; you’ll get to your school in plenty of time!”

I thought he was making fun of me, and reached M. Hamel’s little garden all out of breath.

Usually, when school began, there was a great bustle, which could be heard out in the street, the opening and closing of desks, lessons repeated in unison, very loud, with our hands over our ears to understand better, and the teacher’s great ruler rapping on the table. But now it was all so still! I had counted on the commotion to get to my desk without being seen; but, of course, that day everything had to be as quiet as Sunday morning. Through the window I saw my classmates, already in their places, and M. Hamel walking up and down with his terrible iron ruler under his arm. I had to open the door and go in before everybody. You can imagine how I blushed and how frightened I was.

But nothing happened. M. Hamel saw me and said very kindly:

“Go to your place quickly, little Franz. We were beginning without you.”

I jumped over the bench and sat down at my desk. Not till then, when I had got a little over my fright, did I see that our teacher had on his beautiful green coat, his frilled shirt, and the little black silk cap, all embroidered, that he never wore except on inspection and prize days. Besides, the whole school seemed so strange and solemn. But the thing that surprised me most was to see, on the back benches that were always empty, the village people sitting quietly like ourselves; old Hauser, with his three-cornered hat, the former mayor, the former postmaster, and several others besides. Everybody looked sad; and Hauser had brought an old primer, thumbed at the edges, and he held it open on his knees with his great spectacles lying across the pages.

While I was wondering about it all, M. Hamel mounted his chair, and, in the same grave and gentle tone which he had used to me, said:

“My children, this is the last lesson I shall give you. The order has come from Berlin to teach only German in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine. The new master comes to-morrow. This is your last French lesson. I want you to be very attentive.”

What a thunderclap these words were to me!

Oh, the wretches; that was what they had put up at the town-hall!

My last French lesson! Why, I hardly knew how to write! I should never learn any more! I must stop there, then! Oh, how sorry I was for not learning my lessons, for seeking birds' eggs, or going sliding on the Saar! My books, that had seemed such a nuisance a while ago, so heavy to carry, my grammar, and my history of the saints, were old friends now that I couldn't give up. And M. Hamel, too; the idea that he was going away, that I should never see him again, made me forget all about his ruler and how cranky he was.

Poor man! It was in honor of this last lesson that he had put on his fine Sunday clothes, and now I understood why the old men of the village were sitting there in the back of the room. It was because they were sorry, too, that they had not gone to school more. It was their way of thanking our master for his forty years of faithful service and of showing their respect for the country that was theirs no more.

While I was thinking of all this, I heard my name called. It was my turn to recite. What would I not have given to be able to say that dreadful rule for the participle all through, very loud and clear, and without one mistake? But I got mixed up on the first words and stood there, holding on to my desk, my heart beating, and not daring to look up. I heard M. Hamel say to me:

"I won't scold you, little Franz; you must feel bad enough. See how it is! Every day we have said to ourselves: 'Bah! I've plenty of time. I'll learn it to-morrow.' And now you see where we've come out. Ah, that's the great trouble with Alsace; she puts off learning till to-morrow. Now those fellows out there will have the right to say to you: 'How is it; you pretend to be Frenchmen, and yet you can neither speak nor write your own language?' But you are not the worst, poor little Franz. We've all a great deal to reproach ourselves with.

"Your parents were not anxious enough to have you learn. They preferred to put you to work on a farm or at the mills, so as to have a little more money. And I? I've been to blame also. Have I not often sent you to water my flowers instead of learning your lessons? And when I wanted to go fishing, did I not just give you a holiday?"

Then, from one thing to another, M. Hamel went on to talk of the French language, saying that it was the most beautiful language in the world—the clearest, the most logical; that we must guard it among us and never forget it, because when a people are enslaved, as long as they hold fast to their language it is as if they had the key to their prison. Then he opened a grammar and read us our lesson. I was amazed to see how well I understood it. All he said seemed so easy, so easy! I think, too, that I had never listened so carefully, and that he had never explained everything with so much patience. It seemed almost as if the poor man wanted to give us all he knew before going away, and to put it all into our heads at one stroke.

After the grammar, we had a lesson in writing. That day M. Hamel had new copies for us, written in a beautiful round hand: France, Alsace, France, Alsace. They looked like little flags floating everywhere in the school-room, hung from the rod at the top of our desks. You ought to have seen how every one set to work, and how quiet it was! The only sound was the scratching of the pens over the paper. Once some beetles flew in; but nobody paid any attention to them, not even the littlest ones, who worked right on tracing their fish-hooks, as if that was French, too. On the roof the pigeons cooed very low, and I thought to myself:

"Will they make them sing in German, even the pigeons?"

Whenever I looked up from my writing I saw M. Hamel sitting motionless in his chair and gazing first at one thing, then at another, as if he wanted to fix in his mind just how everything looked in that little school-room. Fancy! For forty years he had been there in the same place, with his garden outside the window and his class in front of him, just like that. Only the desks and benches had been worn smooth; the walnut-trees in the garden were taller, and the hopvine that he had planted himself twined

about the windows to the roof. How it must have broken his heart to leave it all, poor man; to hear his sister moving about in the room above, packing their trunks! For they must leave the country next day.

But he had the courage to hear every lesson to the very last. After the writing, we had a lesson in history, and then the babies chanted their ba, be bi, bo, bu. Down there at the back of the room old Hauser had put on his spectacles and, holding his primer in both hands, spelled the letters with them. You could see that he, too, was crying; his voice trembled with emotion, and it was so funny to hear him that we all wanted to laugh and cry. Ah, how well I remember it, that last lesson!

All at once the church-clock struck twelve. Then the Angelus. At the same moment the trumpets of the Prussians, returning from drill, sounded under our windows. M. Hamel stood up, very pale, in his chair. I never saw him look so tall.

“My friends,” said he, “I—I—” But something choked him. He could not go on.

Then he turned to the blackboard, took a piece of chalk, and, bearing on with all his might, he wrote as large as he could:

“Vive La France!”

Then he stopped and leaned his head against the wall, and, without a word, he made a gesture to us with his hand:

“School is dismissed—you may go.”

Omcirkel a.u.b. het antwoord dat op jou van toepassing is na het lezen van de tekst, 1=helemaal mee oneens t/m 5=helemaal mee eens.

Door deze tekst voel ik me gealarmeerd	1	2	3	4	5
Door deze tekst voel ik me van streek	1	2	3	4	5
Door deze tekst voel ik me verstoord	1	2	3	4	5
Door deze tekst voel ik me medeleven	1	2	3	4	5
Door deze tekst voel ik me teder	1	2	3	4	5
Door deze tekst voel ik me bewogen	1	2	3	4	5
Door deze tekst voel ik me warmhartig	1	2	3	4	5
Door deze tekst voel ik me bedroefd	1	2	3	4	5
Door deze tekst voel ik me bezwaard	1	2	3	4	5
Door deze tekst voel ik me in de war	1	2	3	4	5
Door deze tekst voel ik me sympathiek	1	2	3	4	5
Door deze tekst voel ik me bezorgd	1	2	3	4	5

Terwijl ik de tekst las, kon ik me gemakkelijk de gebeurtenissen voorstellen die erin voorkwamen.

1 2 3 4 5

Terwijl ik de tekst las, was ik bezig met activiteit die in de kamer plaatsvond.

1 2 3 4 5

Ik zou mijzelf in kunnen beelden in de scene die beschreven werd in de tekst.

1 2 3 4 5

Ik was mentaal betrokken bij de tekst terwijl ik hem las.

1 2 3 4 5

Toen ik klaar was met het lezen van de tekst, kon ik hem makkelijk uit mijn hoofd zetten.

1 2 3 4 5

Ik wil weten hoe de tekst afloopt.

1 2 3 4 5

De tekst had emotionele invloed op me.

1 2 3 4 5

Ik dacht er over na hoe het verhaal anders had kunnen aflopen.

1 2 3 4 5

Ik merkte dat mijn gedachten afdwaalden bij het lezen van de tekst.

1 2 3 4 5

De gebeurtenissen in de tekst zijn relevant in mijn dagelijks leven.

1 2 3 4 5

De gebeurtenissen in de tekst hebben mijn leven veranderd.

1 2 3 4 5

In deze taak vragen we je om je in te beelden dat je willekeurig bent gekoppeld met een ander persoon, die we verder de ‘ander’ zullen noemen. Deze persoon is iemand die je niet kent en die je niet zal gaan ontmoeten in de toekomst. Zowel jij als de ‘ander’ zullen keuzes maken door de letters A, B of C te omcirkelen. Jouw eigen keus zal punten opleveren voor jezelf en de ‘ander’. Hetzelfde geldt voor de keus van de ‘ander’, hij/zij genereert punten voor zichzelf en voor jou. Elk punt heeft een waarde: hoe meer punten je ontvangt, hoe beter voor jou en hoe meer punten de ‘ander’ ontvangt, hoe beter voor hem/haar. Hier is een voorbeeld van hoe deze taak werkt:

	A	B	C
Jij krijgt	500	500	550
Ander krijgt	100	500	300

Als je in dit voorbeeld kiest voor A, dan zou je 500 punten ontvangen en de ander ontvangt 100 punten; als je kiest voor B, zou je 500 punten ontvangen en de ander 500; en als je kiest voor C, zou je 550 punten ontvangen en de ander 300. Dus je ziet dat jouw keuze van invloed is op het aantal punten dat jij ontvangen en op het aantal punten dat de ander ontvangt. Voor je de keuzes maakt, onthoud dat er geen juist of onjuiste antwoorden zijn- kies de optie, om welke reden dan ook, die jij het best vindt. Maar denk er aan dat de punten waarden hebben: hoe meer punten je verzamelt, hoe beter voor jou. Maar uit het oogpunt van de ‘ander’, hoe meer punten hij/zij verzamelt, hoe beter voor hem/haar.

Omcirkel voor elk van de volgende negen situaties A, B, of C, afhankelijk van welke kolom je het best vindt:

	A	B	C		A	B	C
(1) Jij krijgt	480	540	480	(6) Jij krijgt	500	500	570
Ander krijgt	80	280	480	Ander krijgt	500	100	300
(2) Jij krijgt	560	500	500	(7) Jij krijgt	510	560	510
Ander krijgt	300	500	100	Ander krijgt	510	300	110
(3) Jij krijgt	520	520	580	(8) Jij krijgt	550	500	500
Ander krijgt	520	120	320	Ander krijgt	300	100	500
(4) Jij krijgt	500	560	490	(9) Jij krijgt	480	490	540
Ander krijgt	100	300	490	Ander krijgt	100	490	300
(5) Jij krijgt	560	500	490				
Ander krijgt	300	500	90				

Het onderzoek is nu afgelopen. Bedankt voor je deelname.

UNIVERSITEIT TWENTE.

De universiteit Twente neemt deel aan een programma waarbij een databank aangemaakt wordt met geschikte teksten voor onderzoek. We willen je vragen of je wilt bijdragen door een aantal uren verhalen te lezen en beoordelen. Indien je mee wilt doen, vul dan hieronder het aantal uren in dat je zou willen helpen, en je emailadres waarmee we contact met je kunnen opnemen. Als je niet wilt helpen, kun je 0 invullen en je emailadres weglaten.

Ik wil uren onbetaald verhalen lezen en beoordelen.

Mijn emailadres is

Hartelijk bedankt voor je deelname aan dit onderzoek. Ik zou je nu graag op de hoogte willen brengen van het werkelijke doel van het onderzoek.

Het doel van dit onderzoek is om te kijken of het inleven in een tekst gevoelens opwekt die pro sociaal gedrag stimuleren. Pro sociaal gedrag werd hier gemeten door te kijken hoeveel uren vrijwilligerswerk je aangaf te willen doen en op welke manier je de punten tussen jezelf en de ander hebt verdeeld. Beide situaties zijn gesimuleerd. Het vrijwilligerswerk is dus ook niet echt.

Mocht je nog vragen hebben, dan kun je me nu benaderen, of via onderstaande gegevens. Ik zou je willen vragen om hieronder je handtekening neer te zetten, om aan te geven dat je akkoord gaat met het verwerken van jouw data in dit onderzoek en dat je geen stress hebt ondervonden aan dit onderzoek. Mocht dit niet het geval zijn, meld dit dan alsjeblieft bij mij.

Nogmaals bedankt!

Groeten,

Justine Verhoeven
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- Ik ga akkoord met de dataverwerking en heb op geen enkele manier schade ondervonden aan dit onderzoek.
- Ik heb interesse in dit onderzoek en wil van de uitkomst op de hoogte worden gehouden. Mijn emailadres is.....

Handtekening:-----