THE IMPACTS OF THE COOPERATIVE LEARNING ON THE TURKISH STUDENTS' POPULAR MUSIC PREFERENCES AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THE VALUE OF COURAGE

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Özet

Bu araştırmanın amacı Avrupa Birliği tarafından desteklenen "Sounds Identifying Learners' Values in Europe" (141858-2008-LLP-BE-COMENIUS-CMP) konu başlıklı, SILVER projesinin Türkiye'deki uygulamaları kapsamında İşbirlikli Öğrenmenin Türk öğrencilerinin popüler müzik tercihleri ve "cesaret" değerine yönelik algılamalarını ortaya koymaktır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi 75. Yıl Özel İlköğretim Okulu, Buca Anadolu Lisesi ve Betontaş Lisesinde okumakta olan 295 öğrenci oluşturmuştur. Proje kapsamında, Türkiye, Belçika, İsveç, Slovenya ve Estonya'da öğrenimleri devam etmekte olan ve projeye seçilmiş olan her sınıftaki 3 öğretmen adayı tarafından Birlikte Öğrenme Tekniği uygulanmıştır. Araştırmada Kişisel Bilgi Formu, Müzik Tercihi Ölçeği, Cesaret Değerine Yönelik Ölçek ve İşbirlikli Öğrenme Yaklaşımına Yönelik Ölçek kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada tek gruplu ön test sontest deseni uygulanmıştır. Araştırmada aritmetik ortalama, t-testi, varyans analizi, kovaryans analizi kullanılmıştır. Kız öğrencilerin "cesaret" değerine yönelik algılamalarında seçilen popüler müzik tercihlerinde anlamlı bir farklılık görülürken, erkek öğrencilerde anlamlı bir farklılık görülmemektedir. Herhangi bir çalgı çalan öğrencilerin, bir çalgı çalmayan öğrencilere göre "cesaret" değerine yönelik algıları anlamlı şekilde daha yüksektir. Kız öğrencilerin öğretim yaklaşımına ilişkin görüşleri erkek öğrencilere göre olumlu yönde anlamlı farklılık göstermektedir. Popüler müzik türlerinin öğrenme alanlarında İşbirlikli Öğrenme teknikleriyle birlikte kullanılması, öğrencilerin müzikten ve müzikle birlikte daha fazla öğrenmesini sağlayabilir**.**

Anahtar kelimeler: işbirlikli öğrenme, müzik, cesaret

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impacts of the cooperative learning employed on the Turkish students' popular music preferences and their perceptions of the value of courage in the EU funded SILVER Project"Sounds Identifying Learners' Values in Europe" (141858-2008-LLP-BE-COMENIUS-CMP) . The participants of the study were 295 students from Betontas High School, Buca

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Anatolian High School and 75th Year Primary School of Dokuz Eylul University. In the project, a group of 3 teacher trainees from Turkey, Belgium, Sweden, Slovenia and Estonia implemented the cooperative learning tecnique with the Turkish students in each class. The scales of the Personal Information, Music Preferences, The Value of Courage and the Attitude to Cooperative Learning Technique were administered in this pre and post test one experimental group design with the means, t-test and covariance tests. The study indicated that the girls showed a significant difference in their music preferences and the value of courage in their post test results whereas the boys did not. The students who played instruments scored higher on the value of courage. The girls showed more positive attitude towards the cooperative learning technique than the boys. The results of the study are in tune with the advantages of the cooperative learning technique which might lead to students' better learning through music and with music.

Key words: cooperative learning, music, courage

Introduction

Methods train prospective teachers to teach and build positive attitudes toward teaching the subject matter in question. Within music methods courses, for example, nonmusic majors in elementary and secondary education are taught the basics of teaching music with the intent that they will learm to appreciate good music and be committed to teaching music to their future students. If they do not like music and do not feel able to teach it, they will not do so. Working cooperatively promotes more positive attitudes toward the work than working individualistically does. On the basis of his theory, we hypothesized that more positive attitudes toward music and the teaching of music would be promoted in a music methods course that is taught cooperatively rather than individualistically.

Cooperative learning has recently been hailed as 'one of the greatest success stories in the history of educational innovation' (Slavin 1999: 74). On the other hand, the slow uptake of cooperative learning methods has been put down to, 'cynicism among teachers about the actual benefits which group work brings' (Cowie et al. 1994: 59). An examination of numerous research studies has suggested that cooperative approaches to learning lead to higher academic achievement than individual or competitive approaches (Johnson, Johnson and Stanne 2000). This has been found to be the case for both high- and low-ability children, for students of all ages, and across a wide range of subjects in the curriculum (Cohen 1994; Hodson and Hodson 1998; Marzano 1992; Sharan 1994).

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The term 'cooperative learning' has been used to cover a wide range of different strategies and approaches. A recent review identified 10 different widely disseminated methodologies (Johnson, Johnson, and Stanne 2000). Sufficient studies had been conducted on eight of these for them to be included in a meta-analysis comparing their impact on student achievement with that of traditional methods. All eight cooperative learning approaches were found to have had a greater impact on achievement than competitive learning, but the biggest effects were found for 'Learning Together' and 'Academic Controversy' (Johnson and Johnson 1991), followed by 'Student Teams Achievement Divisions' and 'Team Games Tournaments' (Slavin 1999), who all define cooperative learning in terms which exclude mere contact and sharing in small groups. They insist that the term cooperative learning can only be applied to activities where there is individual accountability and positive interdependence linked to group rewards or goals. Individual accountability, 'exists when the performance of each individual student is assessed and the results given back to the group and the individual' (Johnson and Johnson 1991: 57), whereas positive interdependence is present when, 'students perceive that they can reach their learning goals if and only if the other students in the learning group also reach their goals' (Johnson, Johnson and Holubec 1993: 6).

Surveys show that cooperative learning is quite popular in the USA: A study reported that 79% of third-grade teachers and 62% of seventh-grade teachers made regular use of cooperative learning approaches (Slavin 1999). Research conducted in primary schools in England (Kutnick, Blatchford and Baines 2002) has suggested that cooperative group work is rarely used, that teachers rarely think about the strategic use of groups in relation to learning tasks, and that little training is provided to help children to develop the skills necessary for working in groups. Research carried out in secondary schools in England found that teachers had little awareness of the pedagogic potential of group work, had limited training in conducting group work, and had little faith in the ability of students to work in groups (Blatchford et al. 2001).

Johnson and Johnson (1989) have described five conditions that are necessary in order for learning to be truly cooperative. The first is positive interdependence, which occurs when (a) all members of a learning group are oriented toward the same general outcome or goal

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("outcome interdependence"), (b) each member has only part of the resources needed to complete the task ("resource interdependence"), and (c) every member has an essential yet complementary role to play in producing the final result ("means interdependence"). Positive interdependence is further enhanced when (d) the boundaries between learning groups are clear, that is, when participants know exactly who is part of their group and who is not ("boundary interdependence"). It is not that there needs to be competition between groups. Rather, within each group, participants must perceive that their individual success is inextricably linked with the success of all the other members. For this reason, most research suggests that cooperative learning groups should be kept small; three to five members is ideal (Bacon et al. 1999; Gottschall and García-Bayonas 2008; Slavin 1983).

The second condition for cooperative learning is individual accountability, which exists when participants are assessed primarily on their individual performance but the results of the individual assessments have a direct impact on the rest of the group. This aspect of cooperative learning sometimes makes students and instructors uncomfortable. However, participants must understand that the purpose of cooperative learning is not simply to complete a group project but to increase the knowledge and skills of each and every member. Finding some way to link the success of each individual to the performance of all the others conveys this understanding and can be done in ways that respect each person's privacy and produce individual evaluations that are fair (Slavin 1983, Kocabas 2009).

Whatever methods of accountability are adopted, it is crucial to avoid competition among members of a learning group and to minimize possibilities for finger pointing or blame. In other words, it is essential that such policies be mindful of the third condition for cooperative learning, promotive interaction. For learning to be truly cooperative, participants must be willing and able to exchange needed resources and provide efficient and effective assistance. They must also be motivated to provide honest feedback, which includes challenging the other members' conclusions and reasoning when necessary to improve their knowledge and skills. The task for instructors is to ensure that this is done in a way that promotes more and better learning, rather than embarrassment or frustration. This means that careful attention must be paid to assignment design (Matchett 2009: 28).

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When cooperative learning activities are explicitly designed to incorporate multiple points of view, participants understand the need to respect each member's contributions. This is linked to the fourth and fifth conditions for cooperative learning: appropriate use of social skills and attention to group processing. There is, of course, no guarantee that individuals who are good at working cooperatively will think in more sophisticated ways. And similarly, there is no guarantee that individuals with highly sophisticated cognitive skills will be particularly adept at sharing the results of their thinking with others.

Hence, instructors must carefully specify not only what kind of learning the group is expected to demonstrate, but also how each individual will contribute to that outcome. This helps to develop the forms of trust, listening, and communication skills that are necessary to group success. The possible inclusion of positive interdependence and individual accountability is therefore a key issue for the implementation of cooperative learning. It is important to investigate whether individual accountability and positive interdependence are essential for optimising student achievement through the use of cooperative learning activities. It is also important to study whether the inclusion of these two elements affects the qualitative experience of students involved in cooperative learning (Hornby 2009: 163). The role of the instructor within cooperative learning situations is that the instructor assigns students to learning groups, sets the learning task, and carefully monitors the functioning of the learning groups. The major resources for learning, however, are classmates rather than the teacher. Most of the interaction within the classroom takes place among students; the teacher is consulted only when no one in the group understands.

Research suggests that social and group-processing skills are increased most dramatically when participants remain in the same cooperative learning groups for a substantial length of time—an entire semester or the duration of a workshop. This means that careful attention must be paid to how the groups are formed, with the aim of ensuring a roughly equal balance of background knowledge and ability levels within each learning group. Although at least one study suggests that graduate students prefer self-assignment to groups (Bacon et al. 1999).

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The studies (Green 2005, 2008, Kocabas 2001) conducted on using group learning techniques in music educations show that students learn better in groups, get to grips more with the lesson's basic aims, even disaffected students can accomplish better and gain leadership roles, inclusion enables all students including those with low ability achieve in ways they have not done before, and over two years, across 17 of the schools, 95% of pupils reported they preferred the project's approach to the 'normal' curriculum.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impacts of the cooperative learning employed on the Turkish students' popular music preferences and their perceptions of the value of courage in the EU funded SILVER Project. The study is guided by the following research question.

Are there significant differencies between the students' popular music preferences and their perceptions on the value of courage in the pre and post test results and does this difference vary with gender and change according to students' ability to play instruments?

The hypotheses of the study have been listed as follows:

1.1. Students show different music preferences and perceptions of the value of courage between their pre and post test results in terms of gender.

1.2. There are significant differences between pre and post test results of genders in terms of their attitude towards the cooperative learning technique .

1.3. There are significant differences between pre and post test results of the students who play instruments and who do not in terms of music preferences.

1.4. There are significant differences between pre and post test results of the students who play instruments and who do not in terms of the value of courage.

Method

The design of the research method was a quasi-experimental study based on one experimental group with pre and post tests. In the experimental group one of the cooperative learning techniques "Learning Together" was applied.

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Table 1

Design of the Method, Only Experimental Group with Pre-test and Post-test

Groups' Number	Name of the group Experimental Groups	Pre-test Experimental Groups	Experimental proceses	Post-test Experimental Groups
1-R	Dokuz Eylül University 75 th Year Primary School	1.Individual Information Form	Learning Together Techniques	2.The scale of musical preference
2-R	Buca Betontaş High School	2.The scale of musical preference		3.Scale of the value of courage
3-R	Buca Anatolian High School	3.Scale of the value of courage 4.The scale of the cooperative learning attitude		4.The scale of the cooperative learning attitude.

Participants

115 students from Dokuz Eylül University 75 th Year Primary School, 94 from Buca Betontaş High School, 86 from Buca Anatolian High School, totally 295 students participated in the study. In the distrubition of the gender there were 122 male and 173 female students whose ages vary between 13-16. The schools were one private primary school (where students take intensive English courses unlike the regular sttae primary schools), a high school where students took extensive English classes and an Anatolian high school where students had to pass a state-held exam to be registered in those schools. Because teacher trainees are from European countries, schools where the students' proficiency level is high are selected not to create any language barriers between teacher trainees and students.

Data Gathering Instruments

For this study, three types of scales were designed and developed after a semi-structured questions were administered to Slovenian students. After the scales were designed, all the participants of SILVER comenius projects asked their colleagues' opinions (four from each country) for the content validity. Then they were administered to 300 students in the different classes of these schools: the scale of musical preference, the scale of the value of courage and the scale of the cooperative learning attitude. Their reliability scales to be held in Turkey are .80, .80 and .74 respectively. The first scale was composed of the types of

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music genres and their playing instruments or not. The second scale about "courage" was concerned with whether students were scared of animals (spiders, crocodiles), or of the public humiliation, being recognised as a liar, and of being in the closed areas. The third scale consisted of the items such as whether they liked the group discussion, whether they enjoyed working through music, whether such a technique encouraged them to speak more and participate in the discussions more andw hetehr their ideas about " courage" changed or not after the class.

Procedural way of "Learning Together Technique"

Teacher trainees prepared the lessons (90 minutes) on the value of 'courage' using the following plan, which was based on the list of the pieces of music chosen by students (their homework task). The lesson plans were designed in the following way and all teacher trainees conducted the classes depending upon this plan with students in the selected schools.

I Introduction (5 minutes)
- Stating the aim of the lesson.
- Teacher trainees' introducing themselves

II Group discussion (20 minutes)
- Explaining the task
1) Each group member brought a song and introduced their piece of music to the others explaining why or how the piece conveyed the value of 'courage';
2) The whole group then decided on one piece which expressed the value of 'courage' best supporting their choice with statements. "We are the Champions", "In the end", "Meet me halfway", " Eye of the Tiger", "Shut it down" were some of the selected songs by the students.

- Forming groups of 4.
Note: If the class was smaller than 15 pupils, groups of 3 were formed. If the class was bigger than 30 pupils, groups of 5 were formed.

III Listening to the songs chosen by groups (20 minutes)
Tasks were delegated within the groups:

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Pupil 1 wrote the title of the piece of music and the name of the performer on the board;
Pupils 2 & 3 shortly summarised the group decision;
Pupil 4 played the whole piece or a fragment of it to the whole class.

In the case of groups of 5 an extra task for the fifth pupil was given.

IV Plenary discussion on the value (20 minutes)
A whole-class discussion (a question-answer session) focusing on 'courage' was held.

V Filling in the post-test (15 minutes)

Findings and Interpretations
Data analyses are given according to the order of the hypotheses.

1.1. Students show different music preferences and perceptions of the value of courage
   between their pre and post test results in terms of gender. Both male and female
   students' pre and post test music preferences were between 54.10 and 54.38. There were
   not any remarkable differences in their preferences.

Table 2
The t-test results of the female and male students in relation to the musical preferences

Group	n	$\overline{X}$	S	Sd	t	Sig.
Pre –Test/ Female	172	54,26	13,23	171	- 0,071	0,94
Post – Test/Female	172	54,38	13,94			p>0,05
Pre – Test/Male	122	54,10	13,62	121	0,113	0,910
Post – Test/Male	122	54,22	13,11			p>0,05

When the gender issue was tackled, it was found out that girls' musical preferences did not
change in the post test scores although their means were so closer to each other and there
was no statistically significant difference betwen pre and post test results of the girls. The
boys' musical preferences did not show any difference in the post test results and their
means were between 54.10 and 54.22. There was no difference for both boys and girls
regarding their musical preferences in pre and post test results.

Table 3

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The t-test results of the female and male students in relation to the value of "Courage"

Group	n	$\overline{X}$	S	Sd	t	Sig.
Pre –Test/ Female	173	40,08	12,01	172	3,539	0,01
Post –Test/ Female	173	43,14	12,85			p<0,05
Pre –Test/ Male	122	44,54	12,97	121	0,549	0,584
Post –Test/ Male	122	45,26	12,52			p>0,05

After the classes were conducted on the importance of value by listening to music, girls' perceptions of the value of courage changed significantly in their post test scores and their means were slightly different as well. The boys' perceptions of the value of courage did not change after the treatment and their means stayed almost the same after the treatment.

1.2.There are significant differences between genders in terms of their attitude towards the cooperative learning technique.

Table 4

The t –test results of students in terms of their opinion to the teaching technique

Group	n	$\overline{X}$	S	Sd	t	Sig.
Male	122	14,91	4,50	293	-2,903	0,004
Female	173	16,42	4,29			0,05 <p

When the students' overall attitude to the teaching technique (the cooperative learning technique) is tackled, it is found out that girls demonstrate a higher tendency to use the cooperative learning technique as shown in Table 4 than boys and their means were slightly higher than the boys'.

1.3.There are significant differences between pre and post test results of the students who play instruments and who do not in terms music preferences.

Table 5

The t-test results of students playing instruments in relation to their music preferences

Group	n	$\overline{X}$	S	Sd	t	Sig.
Pre - Test	149	57,18	13,09	148	0,678	0,499
Post - Test	149	56,49	13,80			p>0,05

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As to whether there was a difference for the students playing instruments or not in terms of their music preferences, it was found out there was no significant difference in their music preferences as in Table 5.

Table 6

The t-test results of the music preferences of the students who do not play any instruments

Group	n	$\overline{X}$	S	Sd	T	Sig.
Pre – Test	145	51,19	13,02	144	-0,849	0,397
Post – Test	145	52,08	13,01			0,05 >p

The students who do not play any instruments did not show any changes in their preferences in music and their means were not so radically different either.

1.4. As to the differences between pre and post test results of the students who play instruments and who do not in terms of the value of courage, a t-test is computated, the slight difference is found to be 0.028 (0,05 <p)

The students who do not play any instruments did not change their opinion when it came to the value of courage as shown in Table 7 unlike the students who know how to play instruments and who love to perform playing instruments.

Table 7

The t-test results of the value of courage by the students who do not play instruments

Group	n	$\overline{X}$	S	Sd	t	p
Pre - Test	146	39,77	11,54	145	-1,739	0,084
Post - Test	146	41,28	12,37			0,05 >p

Discussions and Conclusions

The study funded by EU SILVER Project aimed to find out whether there was a meaningful difference between students' pre and post test results regarding music preferences, their perceptions on the value of courage and attitudes towards the cooperative learning technique.

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1. Students' music preferences and perceptions of the value of courage between their pre and post test results in terms of gender: Students pick up the same type of rock, pop and hiphop groups and singers as they favourite (Queen's "we are the champion", "The eye of the tiger" by Survivor and some songs by Cranberries) Their choices did not change even after they were exposed to different genres during the intervention. The age group (between 11-17) and the type of school were not influential in their music preferences. There was no difference between genders both in pre and post test results. Their music tendencies did not show varieties and they did not display any different genres that they preferred predominantly.

When it comes to the value of courage, after the intervention, girls scored highly in the post test. They indicated they were scared of animals more but after the post test, this fear lessened. It could be said that in the group they learned to be more selective and showed more courage. Chinn et al. (2000) found that when children were required to discuss reasons for their conclusions, they used higher quality discourse than their peers who did not engage in argumentative discourse. Such kind of discussions and argumentations did wonders especially on girls who needed group and team support more. In effect, Chinn et al. argue that teachers need to be explicit in the thinking skills they teach if children are to use such skills and enrich their learning.

2. Students' attitude towards the cooperative learning technique: Students showed a positive attitude for the cooperative learning, which is in line with many studies conducted in this area. Hertz-Lazarowitz and Shachar (1990) found that when teachers implement cooperative learning in their classrooms, it changes the way they interact with their students. In these classrooms, teachers interact with small groups of children so their language is more personal, friendly and supportive of their efforts than it is in whole-class settings where teachers often spend more time directing, lecturing, questioning, and disciplining students. In effect, the authors argued, when teachers change to cooperative learning they become involved in a complex process of linguistic change where they move from more formal and non-intimate interactions (typical of whole-class instruction) to more informal and intimate interactions with their students (Shachar, 2004).

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3 and 4. The students who play instruments and who do not: The main difference was seen among these two groups when it came to the change in their perception of value. Those who play instruments showed more openness to the value "courage". The cooperative learning technique was very successful in those students and they got more benefit from the way the intervention took place. This could be clarified with the view that the students who play instruments are active participants of their own learning and can colve their problems easily and independent learners. The technique which is grounded on these basic tenets could enrich such students more in comparison with the students who do not play instruments.

This study yields the results that support literature records indicating the following facts: a) cooperative learning promotes use of effective and positive attitude towards learning, and b) those who play instruments show more openness to discussion and coperative learning. In order to solve problems of music education and to increase quality of science instruction, strategies like cooperative learning and concept mapping should be utilized in classes. To be able to do this, teachers and teacher trainers should be given opportunities to learn how to implement them. Further research examining the effects of cooperative learning and concept mapping on other subject matters and other levels, is needed to make generalizations.

Acknowledgement

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The Impacts of The Cooperative Learning on the Turkish Students' Popular Music Preferences and Their Perceptions of the Value of Courage

Slavin, R.E. (1987). Cooperative learning and the cooperative school. *Educational Leadership* 45, 3: 7–13.

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Personal information

Your class number	…………………
Your year of birth	…………………..
Are you a?	Boy ❑ Girl ❑
How many languages do you speak?	1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3❑ More❑

On average, how many hours per school day do you listen to music?

………..h   ……….m

On average, how many hours per weekend day do you listen to music?

………..h   ……….m

I play an instrument in school.	Yes ❑ No ❑
I play a classical instrument.	Yes ❑ No ❑

    If yes, which instrument(s)?

………………………………………………..

I play an modern instrument.	Yes ❑ No ❑

    If yes, which instrument(s)?

………………………………………………..

I make music with electronic devices.	Yes ❑ No ❑
I scratch.	Yes ❑ No ❑
I mix music.	Yes ❑ No ❑
I sing	Yes ❑ No ❑
I am a dj	Yes ❑ No ❑
I don't make any music for myself.	Yes ❑ No ❑

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Preferences and Their Perceptions of the Value of Courage

2011

Musical taste

For the following items, please indicate your basic preference level for the genres
listed using the scale provided.

1---------------2---------------3-------------4--------------5--------------6-------------7
Strongly dislike   neither like   Strongly like   nor dislike

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Classical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Blues	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Country	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dance/Electronica	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Folk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Rap/hip-hop	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Soul/funk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Religious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Alternative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Jazz	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Rock	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pop	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Heavy Metal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Soundtracks/theme songs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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Courage

Please check the box according to your comprehension of the value of courage

1---------------2---------------3---------------4---------------5---------------6-------------7
Strongly disagree I am indifferent   Strongly agree this has nothing to do with courage

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To attack a tank with bare hands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To stick your head into a mouth of a crocodile.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To be afraid of spiders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To step into an elevator although you are afraid of small rooms.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To kiss a frog..	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To tell the truth no matter the consequences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To have a public speach although you are uncomfortable with large crowds.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To stick your hand into a snake pit.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To lean over the balcony on 47th floor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To lie no matter the consequences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To use the stairs because you are uncomfortable with elevators and other small rooms.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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