Moral Dilemma Discussion Revisited -
The Konstanz Method[1]

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- in progress -

1. Summary

Blatt and Kohlberg's method of moral dilemma discussion (MDD) has been introduced more than 30 years ago and since then it has been tried out in many intervention studies, and become part of teacher education programs in many countries. It rests on three assumptions:

a) Moral and democratic behavior is largely dependent on a person ability to apply his or her moral ideals in a conflict situation, that is, on his or her competence to make moral judgments and to enter a moral discourse with opponents.

b) These moral competencies can (and need to) be fostered through out the life-span, that is, from early age through childhood, youth and adulthood, in family, schools, university and at the workplace.

c) Moral competence and other desired outcomes are best fostered through providing an learning environment in which the individual is challenged by a moral task and in which s/he feels safe to freely express his/her moral ideals and arguments and in which s/he also respects others' right of their own opinion.

In contrast to many other methods of moral education, this method is well-founded in the philosophy of education and in psychological and educational research, and its effects have been thoroughly studied in well-designed studies (Enright et al., 1983; Higgins, 1980; Leming, 1985; Lockwood, 1978; Schläfli et al., 1985; Lind, 2002a). From the beginning, the method of MDD has shown to have a substantial effect size; hardly ever were negative effects reported. However, there is still little know about the critical conditions in this method to promote development, and there are still controversies regarding the question of how to make this method more effective, for which population it is best suited, and what design should be used to evaluate its effects empirically. To make the effects of this method more effective and to make this method better teachable and applicable in classroom teaching, we have experimented with various changes of the dilemma discussion and thoroughly studied their effects and the effects of other intervention experiments.

In this paper I will present the Konstanz method of dilemma discussion as it has emerged out of these studies. The Konstanz method is based on a critical review the original Blatt-Kohlberg method and empirical evaluation studies (e.g., Berkowitz, 1981; Berkowitz et al., 1980; Oser & Althof, 1994; Schläfli et al., 1985; Walker, 1983). To create an optimal learning environment, the Konstanz method employs semi-real dilemmas as tasks. Semi-real dilemmas are dilemmas which cause a real conflict within the individuals between their moral ideals, and also cause controversies between the participants, thus triggering real moral emotions in them, but do not really affect any participant in a dilemma discussion nor anyone else. Their role in the stimulation of moral judgment and discourse

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competence is seen to be similar to a vaccination, in which weakened viruses are injected into the body to stimulate its ability to resist the real virus. Furthermore, the Konstanz method has been designed to facilitate free moral deliberation and discourse through several features: a) as already mentioned, semi-real (rather than real) dilemmas are given; b) sufficient is allowed for the clarification of the dilemma; c) the teacher withholds his/her opinion of the dilemma and even gives up the discussion chair; and d) participants built up solidarity in small group meetings. Finally, to keep the attention and learning motivation at an optimal level, a dilemma discussion session is divided into phases of *support* and *challenge*, which rhythmically alternate about every ten minutes. Special features of the Konstanz method are: a) sufficient time at the beginning of the session to bring out and clarify the different perceptions of the presented problem by the participants, b) or dilemma a phase in which participants rank order the arguments of their opponents, and a concluding phase of session evaluation asking the students questions like What have you learned? Was it wasted time or would you like to do it again sometime? etc.

2. The Core Features of Blatt-Kohlberg Method and its Offsprings

Since Moshe Blatt (1969) used the method of dilemma discussion to stimulate morel development for the first time, his method was not just copied but changes in many ways. Yet some features seem to have been in common, which makes us call this the "Blatt method" (see Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975; Hersh et al., 1979; Gomberg et al., 1980; Kuhmerker et al., 1991). Blatt's intervention looked like this:
- Twelve to eighteen dilemma sessions, one every week.
- Hypothetical dilemmas are used for starting of a discussion in class.
- Provision of a non-threatening classroom atmosphere.
- Opportunities for student-student interaction.
- Use of probe questions and of arguments at the students' stage of moral reasoning as well as one stage above theirs ("plus-1-rule").
- Additional methods like role-playing, filmstrips, audiotapes, video clips, short questionnaire, etc. are used to add to the vigor of the discussion and prevent boredom among students.
- Inclusion of dilemma discussion in the mainstream curriculum.
   Aside from this, the Blatt-method of dilemma discussion was modified in many ways. At the beginning, the discussion was often lead by a researcher or doctoral student who was interested in trying out this method and studying its effects. From these studies we can gain many valuable insights today, which help us to better understand how this method works and what its critical conditions are.
   Later also many teachers started to use this method and learned to integrate it into their curriculum design. In contrast to external discussion leaders they were able to follow-up on the classroom discussions. The original study by Moshe Blatt (Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975) showed that teachers were more effective than external discussion leaders with the younger students and with disadvantaged students. A meta-analysis of over 140 interventions (Lind, 2002a) showed also that teachers had a more sustained impact on the development of moral competencies in their students.

3. Methodological Notes: Ways of Estimating Impact through Effect Sizes

From the beginning, the effects of dilemma discussion have been very intensively studied, probably more intensively than any other method of moral and democracy education. In the early years, evaluation studies typically consisted of a pretest-posttest design with a control group, and employed Kohlberg's *Moral Judgment Interview* (MJI) for measurement. A few studies (like Blatt's) conducted also post-posttests to see if the gains could be sustained. Gains through the educational intervention were measured in terms of *Stage* movement or increase of *Moral Maturity Score* (MMS), which ranges from 100 to 500. For example, in Blatt's first intervention, 64 percent of the participants had developed one full stage in their moral reasoning as measured by the MJI. On eyear later, the experimental group maintained this lead over the others (Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975).

In agreement with conventional educational research, these measures were accompanied by the calculation of statistical significance, and most summary articles based their conclusions on "significance counts:" How many of the interventions showed "significant" gains? Because, statistical significance testing is highly controversial, Lind (2002a/1993) re-analyzed all available first generation studies (done from about 1969 to 1986) and calculated correlation coefficients r as a measure of effect size. The meta-analysis of the re-analyzed data showed surprisingly high effect sizes of the Blatt method of dilemma discussion: the mean effect sizes was $r = 0.50$, which is far above the mean effect size of $r = 0.30$ which we can expect from effective psychological and educations interventions (Lipsey & Wilson, 1993). Lind (2002a) also found that dilemma discussion was, as Blatt and Kohlberg (1975) already noted, most effective in early adolescents, between 10 and 16 years.

A second generation of intervention studies introduced two major changes (Schläfli et al., 1985): Instead of the MJI, these studies used a measure of preference for principled moral reasoning, the *Defining Issues Test* (DIT) by Jim Rest (1979), and instead of calculating discrete stage scores, they used a continuous scale, the P-index. They also calculated a measure of effect size, namely d, which is similar to r but can become larger than 1.0. The meta-analysis of these interventions brought about a different picture: The overall effect on preference for principled moral reasoning was much lower than could be expected. Only in the group of adult participants, the dilemma discussion showed substantial effect sizes (mean $r = 0.28$), which were, however, far below the ones in the MJI-studies. The use of the DIT was obviously not the best way to make progress in moral education. The method of dilemma discussion was designed to foster moral judgment competence but not necessarily impose on the subjects a preference for principled moral reasoning. The MJI was not perfect in tapping the competence aspect of morality (cf. Lind, 1989). But at least it did. The P-index is also not sensitive to changes at lower developmental levels, which may partly explain why adolescents did hardly show gains in their P-score during dilemma discussions.

In a third generation of dilemma discussion studies we introduced several innovations aiming at a more effective use of dilemmas for moral education and a more valid evaluation methodology. We re-designed the Blatt-method (see below) and devised a new measure of moral judgment competence, the *Moral Judgment Test* (MJT; see Lind, 2002b). This new method of measurement proved to have some true advantages over the others:
- Aside from indices of moral preferences, the MJT also provides a pure measure of moral judgment competence, which makes it more valid for studying the effects of dilemma discussion on moral judgment competence than a preference test (like the DIT) or a mixed competence-preference test

(like the MJI).

- The MJT is much shorter and economical than the MJI and the DIT and thus is better suited for multiple re-testing (to study lasting effects) and large-scale comparison group studies.
- The MJT is more sensitive to change in lower developmental phases than the DIT or another test, the Socio-moral Reflection Measure (SRM) by Gibbs (Lind, 2002).
- The MJT can be objectively scored and requires no subjective rating like the MJI.

However, like all ability tests, the MJT showed to be vulnerable to test-taking fatigue. In several studies, no increase in the MJT's C-score could bee seen. It seemed that a considerable proportion of participants had been annoyed by our request to fill out the MJT twice of more often. Some participants complaint aloud. Interestingly, this disturbing effect was mostly confined to the participants with high C-scores, and to re-tests within half a year or shorter (we did not observe this phenomenon in our longitudinal studies, in which the assessments were two years apart). We hypothesized that the subjects would not find it so annoying to fill out the test twice if we had talked to them more openly about this. In fact, when we used a new instruction for the MJT, in which we explained why we had to use parts of the questionnaire twice, the mean test scores went up.

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4. What is the Impact of Schooling on Moral Competencies

5. What is the Impact of the Blatt-Kohlberg Method on Moral Competencies, and How Can it be Optimized?
    a. The Mean Effect Size: Enhancing the Effect of Schooling
    b. Age Level

"[T]he junior high school age was considered as 'optimal period for a moral discussion program, a notion supported by the results of Study 1." (Blatt & Kohlberg, 1985, p. 143)

    c. The Plus-One-Rule

The Plus-One-Rule or convention, i.e., the rule that the teacher confronts the student with moral arguments just one stage above the student's level of moral reasoning, has shown to be at odds with Kohlberg's own constructivist theory of learning (which says that children need to discover the rightness or wrongness of their beliefs rather than being told what to belief), that it is impractical (a teacher can hardly assess all of his/her students' levels of moral reasoning all the time nor can he/she address all levels which are in her/his class simultaneously), and that it has not shown to be effective or more effective than other approaches.

As to the teacher's role in the dilemma discussion Berkowitz observes that "teachers are there as models and facilitators rather than simply as producers of moral reasoning. For the latter role we may rightly turn to students' peers. Peer reasoning is often more seductive, moral convincing, and more stimulating. ... It is the teacher's duty to promote an atmosphere of fairness, i.e., a context in which the democratic interplay of moral ideas promotes an atmosphere conductive to student development" (Berkowitz, 1981, p. 489)

d. Counter-Arguments

An alternative method of eliciting moral reasoning and thinking in students is to confront them with counter-arguments, not by the teacher but by the peers. This method seems to be more in line with the basic constructivist notions of Piaget and Kohlberg and seems to have at least as strong an effect on moral learning as has the Plus-One-Rule. In a carefully experimental study, Lawrence Walker found "that these moral discussions will be most effective when they incorporate high levels of conflict in both opinion and reasoning." (Walker, 1983, p. 109)

(The remainder is still work in progress)

e. Hypothetical vs. 'Real' Dilemmas

6. What is the Impact of the Blatt-Kohlberg Method on Moral Preferences?

7. The Konstanz Method as a Response to Open Problems
    a. Identifying the Most Effective Features of Dilemma Discussion

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Feature One: Mutual Respect,
especially moral and intellectual respect of the teacher for the children's views and values.

Feature Two: High Learning Motivation
through alternating phases of support and challenge to keep an optimal level of curiosity and attention.

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    b. Measuring Moral Competencies & Preventing Interference by Testing Fatigue
    c. Conducting a Dilemma Discussion; Phases of Support & Challenge
    d. First Generation Studies: No effects
    e. Second Generation Studies: Doubling and Tripling Effect Sizes

8. Next Steps: Teaching Teachers

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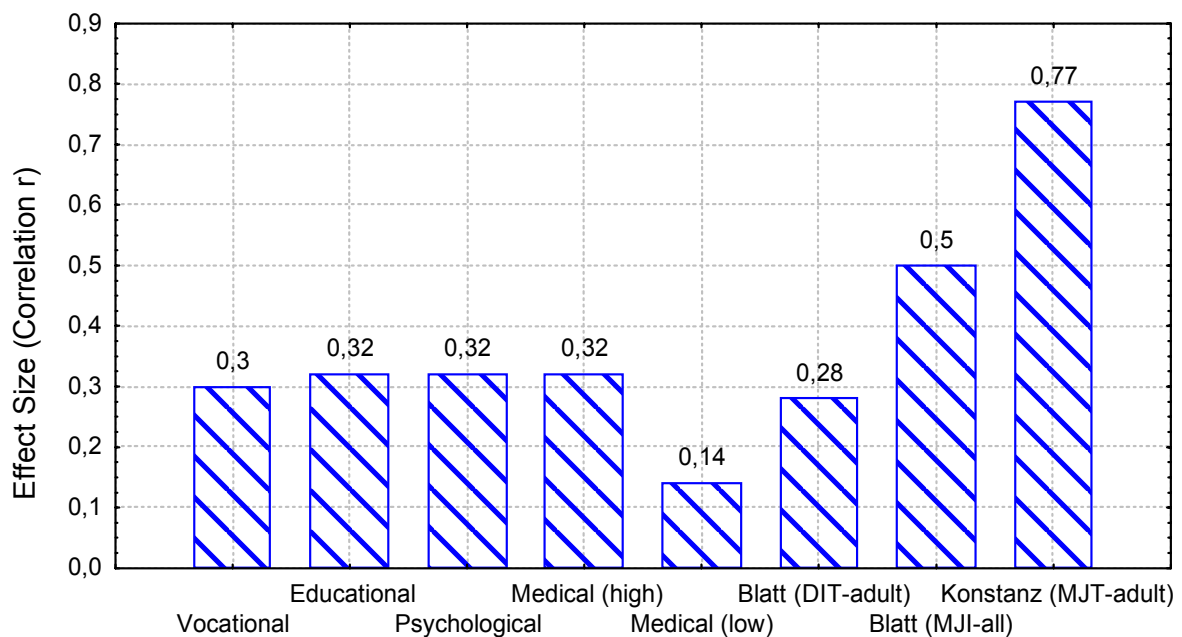Oser, F. (1999). Grundsätze einer umfassenden Moralerziehung: Der vergessene Orestes-Effekt

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Lawrence Kohlberg

Moral judgment competence is "the capacity to make decisions and judgments which are moral (i.e., based on internal principles) and to act in accordance with such judgments"
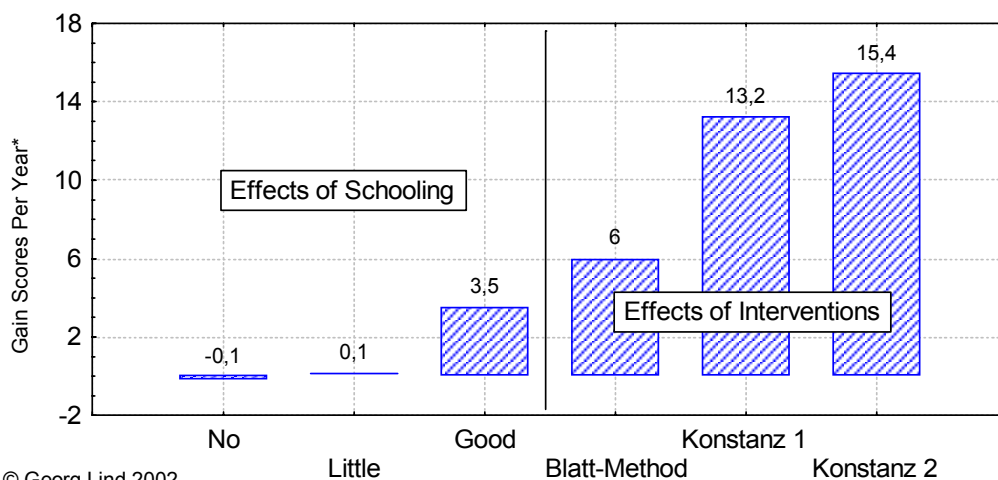(Kohlberg, 1964, p. 425)

Relative Effect Sizes of Dilemma Discussion in Comparison with Other Interventions & Treatment

Effect Size (Correlation r)

- Vocational: 0,3
- Educational: 0,32
- Psychological: 0,32
- Medical (high): 0,32
- Medical (low): 0,14
- Blatt (DIT-adult): 0,28
- Blatt (MJI-all): 0,5
- Konstanz (MJT-adult): 0,77

Absolut Effect sizes: Gain of Moral Judgment Competence by Quality of Education or Intervention

Estimations of Gains per Year on a Scale From 0 to 100 (for the Konstanz method: gains per semester)

Gain Scores Per Year*

Effects of Schooling
- No: -0,1
- Little: 0,1
- Good: 3,5

Effects of Interventions
- Blatt-Method: 6
- Konstanz 1: 13,2
- Konstanz 2: 15,4

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Identifying the Critical Conditions of Dilemma Discussion

1. **Plus-1 Rule**: Teachers Presents reasoning one stage above students' stage of moral reasoning.
   ☞ 1/3 Stage is more effective (Berkowitz et al., 1981).
   ☞ Counter arguments are at least as effective (Walker, 1983), more practical and are better in line with cognitive-developmental theory (Lind, 2003).

2. **Intensity of Session:** Several dilemmas in a 45-minute sessions are effective, yet the effects do not last long.
   ☞ 90-minute sessions with only one dilemma allow more time for clarifying students' perceptions of the dilemma and more student involvement, and produce more lasting effects (Lind, 2002a).

3. **Frequency of Sessions:** Every week one or two sessions over several weeks.
   ☞ Three to four sessions already produce lasting effects.
   ☞ Longer intervals (of two or three weeks between) are as effective and prevent boredom (Lind, 2002a).

4. **Teacher Interventions:** Teacher intervenes frequently in the discussion process.
   ☞ Teacher should be a facilitator rather than a moralizer (hidden curriculum).
   ☞ Teacher should provide opportunities for role-taking rather than role-playing.
   ☞ The *structure* of discourse must be moral, not merely the vocabulary (Lind, 2003).

5. **Structure of Session**: The method consists only of the dilemma and some probing questions; no further didactical aids are given.
   ☞ Didactical guidelines based on modern learning theories need to be worked out (e.g., alternating phases of support and challenge, wait-time)
   ☞ Semi-real dilemma situation: the dilemmas are hypothetical, but the moral feelings which they trigger should be real (Lind, 2003).

6. **Evaluation:** For evaluating dilemma discussions, preferences for certain kinds of moral reasoning (e.g., principle moral reasoning) are assessed.
   ☞ Now tests of moral cognition & competence are available which cannot be faked upward yet are sensitive enough to measure even small effects of educational interventions (Lind, 2002b).

Moral Dilemma Discussion - "The Konstanz Method"

a. Creating an effective learning environment
  i. Developmental moral tasks: Moral dilemmas
  ii. Free moral discourse: Government by rules rather than authority
  iii. Conditions of optimal learning: Support and challenge

b. Building support:
  i. Clear and simple (hypothetical) dilemma
  ii. One dilemma, not many
  iii. Sufficient time for clarifying the dilemma core
  iv. Clear and simple rules for controversial discussions
  v. Intermitting small group work
  vi. Opportunities for reflection and meta-cognition
  vii. Sufficient time for discussion

c. Providing challenge:
  i. Difficult decision related to a moral dilemma
  ii. Voting on a decision in a social context
  iii. Articulating opinion and reasons in a social context
  iv. Defending one's stance against opponents
  v. Reflecting on counter-arguments

d. Reflection and evaluation
  i. Reflection on the learning process as an integral part of dilemma discussion
  ii. Cognitive and affective criteria for the evaluation of dilemma discussion

e. Stumbling blocks for a good results
  i. Too much support (little challenge)
  ii. Too much challenge (little support)
  iii. Too much "teaching" (little free discourse)
  iv. In appropriate observation tools
  v. Wrong evaluation criteria

Developments in the Method of Dilemma Discussion (1969 - 2002)

Georg Lind

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1. Introduction
    a. Aims of Moral Dilemma Discussion

J. Delors (1997): "Ziel ist es nicht moralische Prinzipien als starre Regeln zu unterrichten, was einer Indoktrination nahekäme, sondern demokratische Praxis in der Schule einzuführen. Die Schüler sollen anhand praktischer Fälle verstehen lernen, was ihre Rechte und Pflichten sind und wie ihre eigene Freiheit durch die Rechte und Pflichten anderer begrenzt sind." (S. 50)

L. Kohlberg (1963): Moral judgment competence..........

    b. Before Blatt: Herrmann Roth (1915)
    c. The Blatt-Study (1969)

Ergebnis: "significant stage change" (S. 142-143)
Blatt-Intervention: 12 - 18 Wochen, 1 Dilemma pro Woche,
Ergebnis: 64 % entwickelten sich 1 ganze Stufe; die Gewinne waren auch nach einem Jahr noch feststellbar.

Paolitto-Method:
- one semester
- discussion of hypothetical and personal dilemmas in small groups
- films
- journal writing
- role play
- role-taking through interviewing each other." (p 142)

    d. The Fenton-Method (Gomberg et al., 1980)

Zitiert nach L. Kuhmerker (1991):
Der Lehrer muss
1. unbedrohliche Klassenzimmer-Atmosphäre schaffen
2. Zeit effektiv einteilen; Probeabstimmungen
3. Schüler-Schüler-Interaktion anregen; Kleingruppen, die das beste Argument herausfinden
4. geschickt im Stellen von explorierenden Fragen sein.
5. Keine Stufen-Theorie im Unterricht diskutieren lassen.
6. Kinder mit "höher entwickelten Denkweisen konfrontieren" (+1-Konvention)

7. Die Mehrheit des Lehrpersonals einer Schule sollte Diskussionen einsetzen
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Keine Angaben zum Ablauf der Dilemmadiskussion außer den Nachfragen (Warum?)

    e.   Controversies: +1, Optimal Age, Direct Teaching, Ceiling Effect (Watson, Oser & Althof), No Effects (Prim, 1989; Uhl, xx)

J. Piaget ( ): "From 11-12 years to 14-15 years a whole series of novelties highlights the arrival of a more complete logic that will attain a state of equilibrium once a child reaches adolescence at about 14-15 years. ... The principle novelty of this period is the capacity to reason in terms of verbally stated hypotheses. .... To reason hypothetically ... is a formal reasoning process. ... [p. 3] From the social point of view, there is also an important conquest. Firstly, hypothetical reasoning changes the nature of discussion: a fruitful and constructive discussion means that by using hypotheses we can adopt the point of view of the adversary (although not necessarily believing it) and draw the logical consequences it implies. ...

   Secondly, the individual will interest himself in problems that go beyond his immediate field of experience." (S. 4)

M. Gross (1997). "The irony should not be lost here - socialization and moral development are effective only into early adulthood. Unfortunately, by the time the fruits of these efforts can be observed, they probably cannot be changed." (P. 87)

2.   Core features of the original method and some variations
    a.   Dilemma
    b.   Questions
    c.   Session Length
    d.   Session Frequency
    e.   Program Length
    f.   Creating a Supportive Atmosphere (Fenton, Kuhmerker)
    g.   +1-Convention (Arbuthnot; Berkowitz)

Dan Lapsley et al. (1985): "plus-one interventions are generally effective in promoting moral development". (p. 248)

A. Flammer (1988):"Die Hauptmethode der externen Steigerung des moralischen Urteils ist die Konfrontation mit Dilemmata ... besonders aber mit Argumenten, die um eine Stufe höher liegen als die durch das Individuum bereits verwendeten Argument (sog. Plus-eins-Methode)." (p. 178)

S. Uhl (1996): "Die Disäquilibrien entstehen hauptsächlich durch die Begegnung mit ranghöheren moralischen Antwortmustern, die das Individuum zwar als intellektuell anspruchsvoller empfindet und deswegen als anziehend findet (Rest 1976, S. 202-205, und 213-216), aber auf seiner eigenen Stufe nicht voll verstehen kann. Das schafft den Anreiz, sich näher mit ihnen zu beschäftigen, sie zu begreifen

zu lernen und sie früher oder später selbt zu verwenden. Damit ist der Übergang zur nächsten Stufe vollzogen und das Gleichgewicht wieder hergestellt." (p. 88)

Das wichtigste Mittel, das der Lehrer dafür hat, wird in der Terminologie der Kohlberg-Schüler "Plus-Eins-Argumentation" genannt. ... (S.

Enright et al., 1983: "The plus-one technique is effective not only in early adolescence, but also as early as kindergarten ... and even into adulthood." (p. 138)

ABER:

Marvin Berkowitz (1986): Die +1-Konvention "ist keine empirisch stark gestützte Konvention. . . . [Sie] erscheint weitgehend eher als Fabelwesen. Erzieher scheinen einfach keine "+1"-Argumentationen in Moraldiskussionen vorzubringen. .... solche Aufgaben von Moralerziehern sind hochgradig undurchführbar und unrealistisch." (S. 91; siehe auch Fraenkel, 1978).

"Mir war es unmöglich, +1-Verhalten in expertengeleiteten Diskussionen zu finden" (p. 91).

"Teachers are there as models and facilitators rather than simply as producer of moral reasoning. For the latter role we may rightly turn to students' peers. Peer reasoning is often more seductive, moral convincing, and more stimulating." (S. 489) ... It is the teacher's duty to promote an atmosphere of fairness, i.e., a context in which the democratic interplay of moral ideas promotes an atmosphere conductive to student development." (S. 489)

Georg Lind (1998): "I believe that the use of counter-arguments is more effective and more practical than the +1-convention because ...

1) it agrees better with cognitive-developmental theorizing. The '+1 convention' is more consistent with socialization theory than with cognitive-structural theorizing.

2) it can also account for the fact that +1-arguments can be effective in stimulating moral development because they can be the 'other arguments' that necessitate a rethinking of one's moral judgments;

3) it is well supported by empirical and experimental studies (e.g., Walker, 19..);

4) it frees us from much unwarranted didactical load (like permanent testing of students and inception of the discussion process to ensure higher order arguments.)"

h.   Counter-Arguments

Marvin Berkowitz (1986). Der kognitive Konflikt "ist vielleicht deren fundamentalster Bestandteil und einer, der sich in einer wichtigen Hinsicht von der +1-Konvention ... unterscheidet. ... Kognitiver Konflikt ist eine Variable 'erster Ordnung' " (p. 94).

Prim, R. (1986)."Bis Mitte der 70er Jahre war Kohlberg in der kognitivistischen Vorstellung befangen, die Höherentwicklung der moralischen Urteilsfähigkeit ließe sich alleine durch die Diskussion von Gesinnungskonflikten bzw. von Dilemmata im Unterricht fördern" (p. 361) .

"Diese spezielle Variante pädagogischer Autonomie hielt Erfahrungen mit Umsetzungsversuchen nicht stand und vertrug sich auch nicht mit den Ergebnissen empirischer Untersuchungen über das Verhältnis zwischen moralischem Urteil und moralischem Handeln." (S. 362)

Larry Walker:

    i.   Votes
    j.   Large Group
    k.   Small Groups
    l.   Stage Scoring / Ordering of Arguments
    m. Teaching the (Kohlberg-) Stages
    n.   Understanding the Dilemma
    o.   Encouraging Taking a Stance
    p.   Encouraging Listening to a Stance
    q.   Reflection and Meta-Cognition

Prim, R. (1986).
    r.   Optimal Age (Blatt; Schläfli et al., 1986; Lind, 2002/1993)

Blatt & Kohlberg (1975): "[T]he junior high school age was considered as 'optimal period for a moral discussion program, a notion supported by the results of Study 1." (p. 143)

    s.   Embedding into the Curriculum (Fenton)
    t.   Teacher Training

3.   Standing on the Shoulders of a Giant: The Konstanz Method

Aims: - Focus on the interaction of the students rather than merely on moral rethoric
- Neither uncommitted play (word games) nor frightening reality
- Integrating moral emotions (affects, attitudes) with rationality and reflection
- Fostering moral judgment competence rather than changing moral attitudes and values

Method: - Careful framing of the moral dilemma; moral = universalizable values or principles; dilemma = conflict between principles
- Alternating phases of support and challenge, community and justice;
- Priority, yet not exclusiveness, of behavior: the role of reflection and meta-cognition.
Findings:
- Age range: > 10 years of age
- Subjects of teaching: all
- Types of dilemma contents:
- Subjects of teaching: all
- Three types of dilemma contents:
  1. Taken from everyday experience (often too boring)
  2. in reach of imagination; anticipated (optimal)
  3. out of reach (often too overwhelming)
- Duration of teacher training and supervision:
  1 year of training

2 years of supervision

- Limits of the MDD method:
  1. Too overwhelming for low-scorers, low-educated
  2. Too boring for high-scoring, high-educated
  3. Re-enforcing taboos if not restricted

Desiderata:
- Broader sets of measurement topics and tools
- More fine-tuned feedback for teachers

Signs of success (beyond MJT) in the classroom:
- a) Students exhibit split votes and admit controversies
  b) Students express support for minority opinions
- a) Ss articulate counter arguments
  b) Ss articulate their own opinion
- a) Ss speak up against others' arguments
  b) Ss call up an adversary to speak
- a) + b) Ss experience inconsistency between supportive and counter-argument
- a) Ss are aroused by counter-arguments
  b) Ss listen to rejoinders

4. Measuring the Outcomes
    a. Evaluation Studies

Gage & Berliner (1983): "Trainingsprogramme [zur Moralentwicklung] machen auf die Länge kaum einen Unterschied aus (Turiel, 1966; Blatt, 1969)." (S. 377)

G. Lind (1998): "I agree, there are very little good evaluation studies been done regarding the effects of moral/character education programs though there are many individual studies now which would lend themselves to such evaluations. The problems are manifold. There is little agreement

- on what standards should be used to evaluate these programs: Specific rule conforming behavior? General moral attitudes and values? Moral cognitions and competencies? (My own preference, for reasons I have outlined elsewhere, is the latter),

- on the kind of measures for these standards: Should we use self-reports? Teachers' or parents' reports? Projective tests? Open answers? Attitude tests? Competence tests? (My preference, of course, is with competence tests), and

- on the method of finding a conclusion from diverse sources of information: subjective summaries?

Preference for certain kinds of measures (like open interviews vs. closed questionnaires)? Counting significance tests? Averaging effect sizes (meta-analysis)? (Given the state of the art, the latter seems the only that can be defended on scientific grounds.)

As far as I know, there have been done only six meta-analytic studies done in the field of moral/character education (Enright et al., 1981; Higgins, 1980; Leming, 1981; 1992; Lockwood, 1978; Schlaefli et al., 1985). All focused on the cognitive-developmental approach, and one focused also on the values clarification approach. Other approaches, it seems, have not been subjected to scientific evaluation yet.

Four of the these three meta-analyses (Enright et al., Higgins, Leming, Lockwood) have dealt with moral education programs using Kohlbergs Moral Judgment Interview (MJI). They showed that the cognitive-developmental approach has consistent positive effects, while the values clarification approach did not. Unfortunately, these meta-analyses use only significance counting, which can mislead any conclusions, rather than effect sizes (like d, or r).

The sixth analysis used an effect size measure ("d") but provides only a restricted basis for conclusions since it focused only on studies using the DIT for measuring effects. Since the DIT is more a measure of moral attitudes (the subject's preference for principled morality) than moral competencies (as the MJI and Lind's Moral Judgment Test, MJT, claim to measure) its conclusions seem to be rather limited. For example, while most MJI based studies found that moral interventions are most effective in the ages 12 to 16, DIT based studies found substantial effect sizes only in young adults.

So Lind (2002/1993; also Lind, 1996: http://www.uni-konstanz.de/ag-moral/optimal.htm) analyzed the effect sizes of about 70 intervention studies mainly using the MJI (a few also used the MJT). He found
a) that, like in Lockwood's and Leming's analyses, cognitive-developmental interventions had a consistent, positive effect on students' moral judgment competence. There is no study that showed a negative effect, and many studies which show high or very high effects,
b) that the average effect size (r = .40) is very high as compared to effect sizes found in other areas of educational, psychological or medical intervention,
c) the highest effects are reached with children ranging from about 12 to 16 years of age, and
d) that only dilemma discussions, as proposed by Moshe Blatt and Lawrence Kohlberg, showed sustained effects after some time.

As to Geri's question about duration: three to four session seem to be necessary to produce a measurable growth of moral judgment competence. More sessions do not seem to have a proportional increase of impact.

For literature no consistent impact on moral development could be demonstrated so far. One reason for this seems to be, as Darcia Narvaez (1998) demonstrates, that the moral message of moral literature cannot be adequately understood by most children.

   b.   Stage Counting

    c. Statistical Significance
    d. Competence Scores
    e. Attitude Scores

D. Fasko, 1997: "In an extensive meta-analysis of the moral education literature, Schlaefli, Rest and Thoma (1985) found that moral discussion techniques produced modest effects." (S. 15)

    f. Quantifying and Comparing Effects: Gain Points per Year

5. Singling Out Success
    a. The Effect of Good Schools on Moral Development (3 Points)
    b. The Effect of the Blatt-Method and its Variants (6 - 7 Points)
    c. Replication of the Blatt-Effect with the MJT
    d. Going Beyond the Blatt-Effect (12 Points and More)

6. Essentials of an Effective Moral Dilemma Discussion
    a. Creating a Supportive and Challenging Learning Environment: Achieving an Optimal Level of Arousal and Attention
    b. Designing an Educative Moral Dilemma
    c. Support: Giving Sufficient Time for Thinking, Reflection, Clarification of the Dilemma on the Level of the Individual and the Group; Reducing the teachers' role in the discussion process (Edelstein, 1985, p. 395)
    d. Challenge: Creating Moral Emotions by Pressing for Decisions and Votes, by Identifying Opposing Groups (Sherif-and -Sherif-effect), and by Confrontation with Counter Arguments (Walker, 198., Festinger, 195.;);
    e. Preventing Anxiety by Clear Rules and by Using Hypothetical Dilemmas
    f. Optimal Session Length: 80 to 120 Minutes
    g. Optimal Session Frequency: Every Other Week or Monthly
    h. Optimal Program Length: From Three to Any Number of Sessions
    i. Curriculum Integration: Part of Most or All Subjects Rather than Special Class
    j. Teacher Training: One to Two Semesters

7. Effective or not?

S. Uhl (1996). "Die empirische Forschung hat immer wieder gezeigt, daß die reinen Diskussionsprogramme für sich allein genommen keinen nennenswerten Ertrag haben" (p. 108)

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Quotations:

Edelstein, W. (1985). "Teachers in their institutional roles have serious difficulties here. ... It isn't the teachers' job to provide moral instruction. What they are to do is to organize the prerequisites for moral discussion in the classroom." (S. 395)

Arbuthnot & Faust (1981): "Die Fähigkeit zur +1-Argumentation - gemessen an der der Schüler - ist notwendig, um bestimmte Aufgaben eines Moralerziehers zu erfüllen, und deshalb erscheint sie wesentlich für die optimale Moralerziehung." (S. 110)

Hersh et al., (1978): The Paolitto-Method
- one semester
- discussion of hypothetical and personal dilemmas in small groups
- films
- journal writing
- role play
- role-taking through interviewing each other
Finding: "significant stage change" (p. 142-143)
Keine genaueren Angaben.dazu.

Umberto Ecco (2001): "Alle Religionskriege, die jahrhundertelang die Welt mit Blut getränkt haben, sind aus dem leidenschaftlichen Festhalten an vereinfachenden Grundsätzen entstanden, wie etwa Wir und die Anderen, Gut und Böse, Weiß und Schwarz. " (S. 200; erster Satz)
"Wir stellen unsere Parameter [= Maximen] ständig zur Diskussion. ... Die Schule muss lehren, die Parameter, auf denen unsere leidenschaftlichen Behauptungen beruhen, zu analysieren und zu diskutieren." (S. 204)
"Gerade [in Zeiten großer Verwerfungen] muss man es verstehen, dem eigenen Aberglauben wie dem der anderen entgegenzutreten: mit den Waffen der Analyse und Kritik. Ich hoffe, dass diese Themen nicht nur bei Pressekonferenzen angsprochen werden, sondern auch in den Schulen." (S. 206; letzter Satz)

Hermann Roth (1915): "Wir wollen nicht sagen, dass in [den höheren Klassen] Moralunterricht gegeben werde. Aber in dieser Zeit müssen moralische Probleme vor die Seele geführt werden. Sie werden sie nicht nur mit warmen Herzen hören, sondern auch gerne zu ihnen kritisch Stellung nehmen."

P.Scharf (1978):
Effective dilemmas:
1. have conflicting claims
2. focus on a particular stage (sensu Kohlberg)
3. involve life experience that is real to the participants' situations.
4. involve clearly defined facts so that the primary focus is ethical and not

scientific or historic

5. include questions which force students to think more deeply about the moral
issues implied in a particular case." (s. 76)

Matching students and dilemmas: "A good match ... includes an assessment of the students' moral
stage and the types of issues which genuinely interest and excite them." (s. 77)

Berkowitz (1986): Erfolgreiche moralische Diskussionen können auch in Gleichaltrigengruppen ohne
Erwachsene stattfinden ... ohne Lenkung durch Lehrer. Es komme darauf an, Bedingungen zu
arrangieren, die Diskussionen unter Gleichaltrigen erleichtern. (S. 89-123)

Rebecca Watson (1995): "Jung-Lehrer mit niedrigen DIT-Werten (<23.33) profitieren mehr von der
Intervention als solche mit hohen DIT-Werten (>23.33)."

J. Delors (1997): "Ziel ist es nicht moralische Prinzipien als starre Regeln zu unterrichten, was einer
Indoktrination nahekäme, sondern demokratische Praxis in der Schule einzuführen. Die Schüler sollen
anhand praktischer Fälle verstehen lernen, was ihre Rechte und Pflichten sind und wie ihre eigene
Freiheit durch die Rechte und Pflichten anderer begrenzt sind." (S. 50)

Flammer (1988): ""Die Hauptmethode der externen Steigerung des moralischen Urteils ist die
Konfrontation mit Dilemmata ... besonders aber mit Argumenten, die um eine Stufe höher liegen als die
durch das Individuum bereits verwendeten Argumente (sog. Plus-eins-Methode)." (p. 178)

Rest & Narvaez (1991). "Recently a study reported by Penn (1989) challenges the view that effective
moral education is best accomplished by nondidactive methods. Penn's most convinving argument is to
cite data that show that his didactic approach repeatedly produced effect sizes over twice that of the
Dilemma discussion method and of the Personality development method.

. . . the biggest effects were with Groups 1-3, those containing the didactic teaching concepts of moral
philosophy. We note that in Groups 1-3, the effect sizes of 1.00, .94, and .84 are over double the effect
sizes in Table 9.4 for the Dilemma discussion and Personality development groups (.41 and .36,
respectively. The argument can be made that getting students active in their own learning does not
entail that the teacher be passive (see discussion, for instance, by Anderson, 1989). Penn argues that
the instruction of physics does not proceed by just placing the student in a lab and letting the student
discover anew the laws of physics. There are past discoveries worth telling to the student. (Of course,
this must be done in a way that the student can comprehend.) Similarly, Penn argues, there are
important tools of thought that moral philosophers have discovered, and these need to be presented
didactically in a way that the student can follow and understand. Properly taught, students can
appropriate discoveries of the past and use them in operative moral decision-making" (p. 242-244)

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