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Teaching Responsibility

Designing Effective Learning Environments for Fostering Democratic Competencies

Georg Lind

University of Konstanz

<http://www.uni-konstanz.de/ag-moral/>

<http://www.uni-konstanz.de/ag-moral/lind.htm>

Overview

- P What does *responsibility* mean?
- P The two aspects of responsibility: Desire and competence
- P Favorable learning environment: Opportunities for responsibility-taking and guided reflection (N. Sprinthall)
- P Building a greenhouse for responsibility development with the *Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion* (KMDD)^(R)
- P The effectivity and the secrets of the KMDD
- P Four principles of responsible and effective teaching
 - ▶ A democratic learning community (free of fear, rule of principles)
 - ▶ Affect regulation
 - ▶ Co-construction
 - ▶ Self-evaluation

The moral ideal of democracy

"A democracy is more than a form of government: it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience."

Dewey, J. (1966). Democracy and education. An introduction to the philosophy of education. New York: The Free Press

Minima Moralia

The Teaching of Great Moralists

- P Konfuzius: Do not do to others that you do not want them to do to you!
- P Sokrates: Try to understand what is morally good!
- P Aristoteles: Keep always a balance between the largest possible number of values and principle!
- P Jesus: Love your enemies!
- P Immanuel Kant: Dare to think!
- P Habermas: Use moral dialogue rather than force to solve a conflict!

The pillars of democratic government: Considering long-term consequences

P “I will argue that [moral and cultural] bindings, along with legal ones, helps to prevent what I will call *shortcut culture* — the privilege of shortcuts, or of short-term results, blindness about long-term consequences, and about consequences for people that are different from us.”

Antanas Mockus, 2003, Do Constitutions Constrain? Legal, Moral, and Cultural Self-Bindings to Prevent Shortcuts. Conference ‘*Constitutions, Democracy, and the Rule of Law*’ at Columbia University, Oct. 16, 2003.

What does *responsibility* mean?

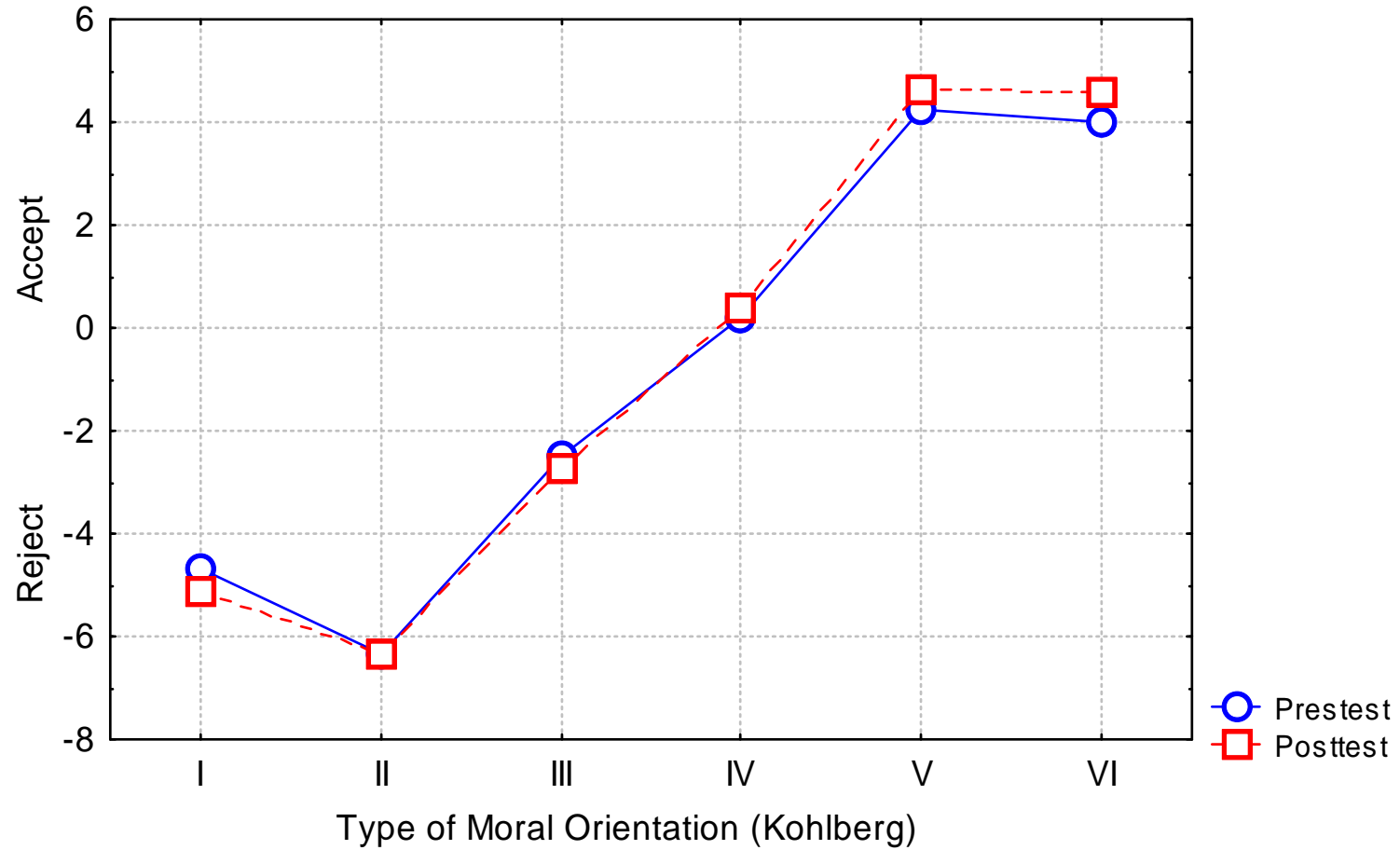
Responsibility means responding ...

	to ...	about the consequences of one's action ...
1	oneself	for one's own well-being
2	a significant other person	for the good relationship between oneself and the other
3	one of the groups to which one belongs	for the maintenance of the group relationship (e.g., family, friends, neighbors)
4	society	for the functioning of a democratic society
5	all living people	for the validity of negotiated contracts
6	all mankind, past and future	for the validity of universal moral principles (e.g., justice, human rights, mutual respect, benevolence)

These levels are modelled after Kohlberg's (1984) six "stages."

Impact of Education (one Term) on Preference for Moral Reasoning

$F(5,5960)=7,68; p<,0000; N = 3102$



Values are not enough:
The Dual-Aspect Theory of Morality

SOCRATES: But if this be affirmed, then the desire of good is common to all, and one man is no better than another in that respect?

... And if one man is not better than another in desiring good, he must be better in the power of attaining it?

from Plato: Socrates' dialogue with MENO

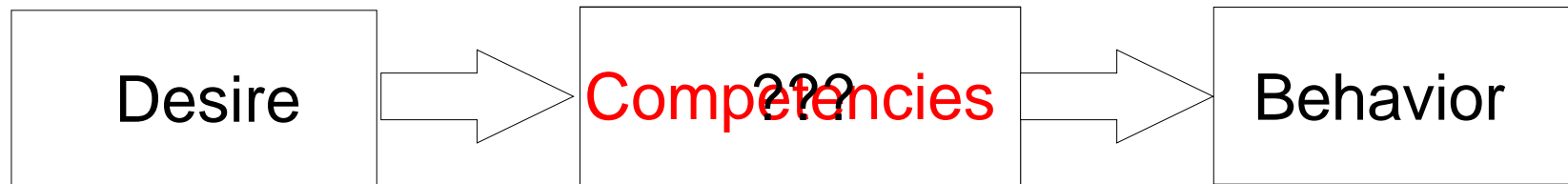
A Modern Definition: Moral Judgment Competence...

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."

(Lawrence Kohlberg, 1964, p. 425)



Mature moral and democratic decision-making
requires moral-democratic competencies



Living together in a democracy requires both, moral values or ideals *and* moral competencies

- P Democracy is *government* by the people, rather than by a king or tyrant.
- P The *formal power* of the people is embodied in the shared moral ideals and institutions of a democracy (elections, parliament...).
- P The *real power* of the people is embodied in the citizens' ability to make moral judgments and to engage in a moral discourse.

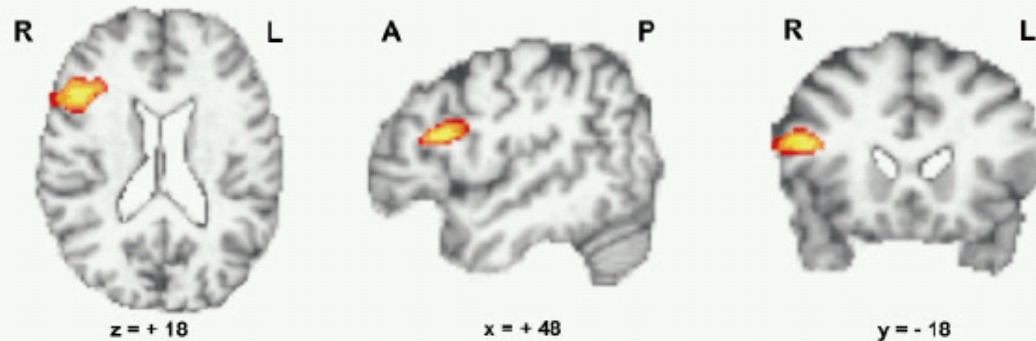
Responsibility as a challenge for moral-democratic development

Going from level 1 to 6 ...

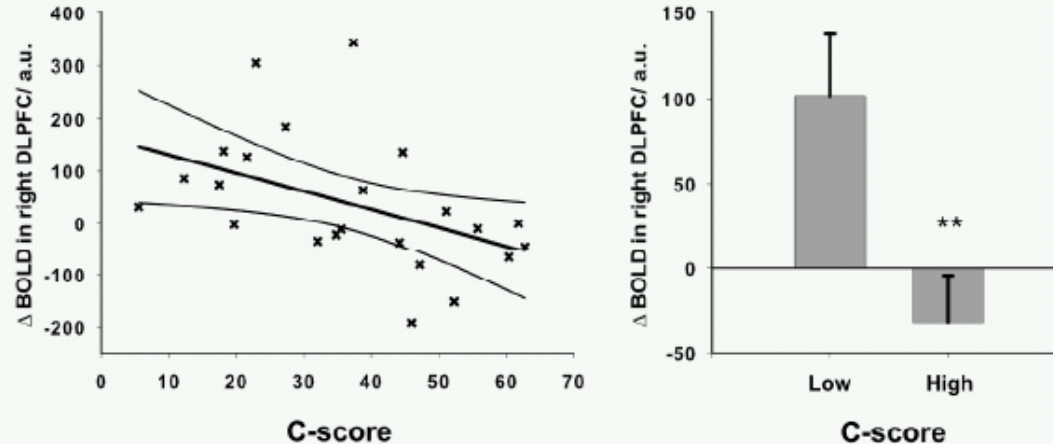
- P Each level of responding includes, and extends, the foregoing level
- P Each level becomes more abstract and complex
- P From level to level there will be more conflicts between various responsibilities, i.e., more moral dilemmas
- P Hence: Each level requires higher competence of moral judgment and democratic discourse
 - ▶ This competence is more practical than theoretical

Neural correlate of moral judgment competence

a) Covariation of C-scores with BOLD responses in right DLPFC



b) Socio-normative judgments



The Experiment

N = 23 women

Dep. var.: BOLD; Indicator for activity in the right DLPFC

Method: fMRI

Indep. var.:

a) Task: Judgment on the norm-conformity of statements (contrasted with judgments on the grammaticality of statements)

b) Moral Judgment Competence (C-Wert, MJT)

Finding: Persons with high C-score could solve the task with less activity in the right DLPFC than persons with low C-score. Effect size $r = .45$

Kirstin Prehn, NeuroImaging Center, Charité University Medicine Berlin (2007): Influence of individual differences in moral judgment competence on neural correlates of socio-moral judgments. Unpublished manuscript, pp. 17 & 40

Does higher education has an impact on moral development?

Question: “What does college do for a person?”

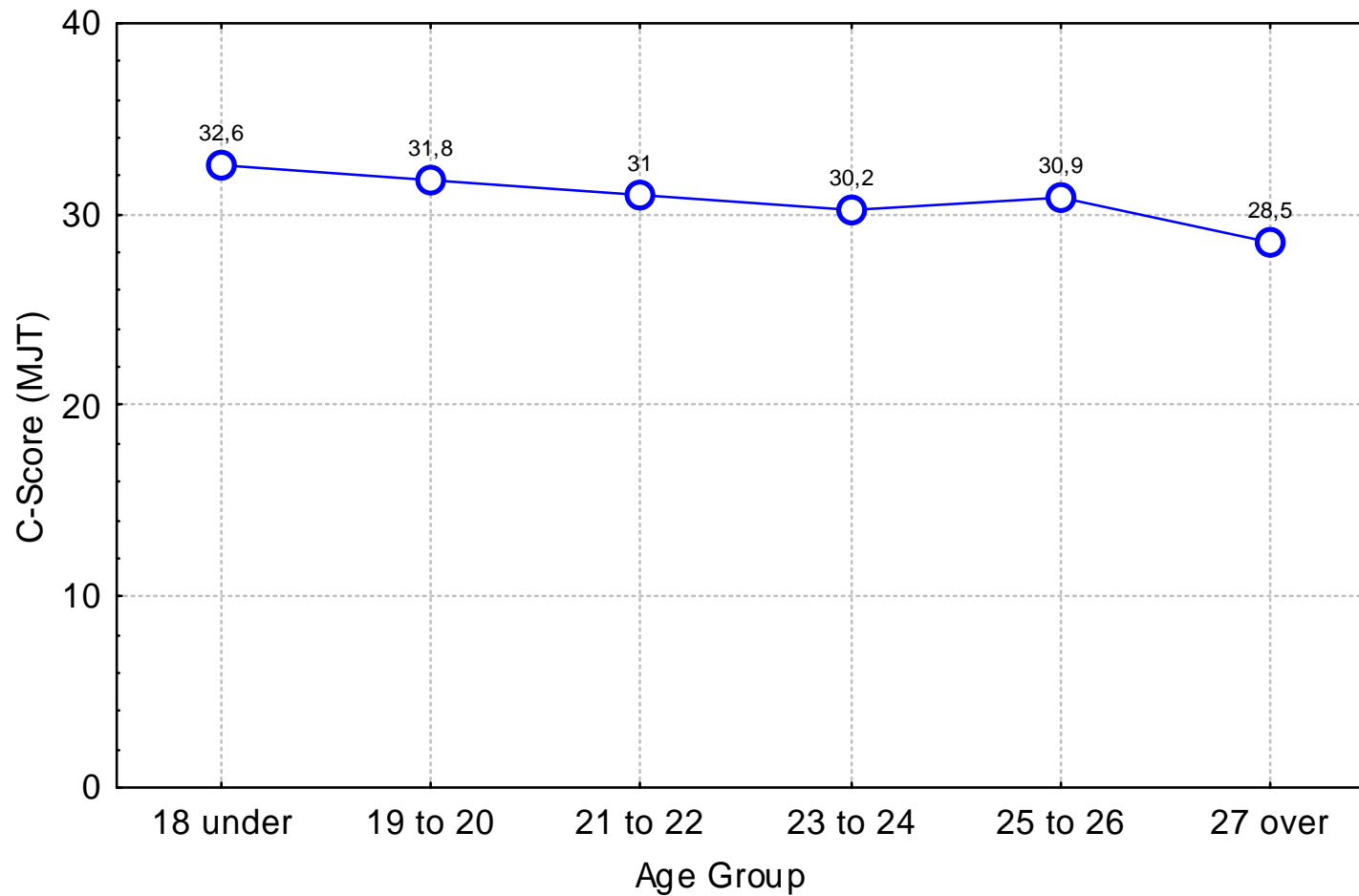
Theodore Newcomb: “Frankly, very little that is demonstrable”

Interview with Theodore Newcomb, famous educational researcher, in ‘Psychology today,’ 1974

Moral competence requires schooling

The Impact of Age on Moral Judgment Competence

$F(5,2348)=1,55$; $p<,1719$; $N = 3102$



Responsibility as an aim and a means of moral education

- P Sprinthall's theory of a favorable learning environment:
 - Opportunities for responsibility-taking *and* opportunities for guided reflections

- P Supportive findings from empirical studies in Germany, Brazil, Switzerland, and Romania (Lind, 2000; Schillinger, 2006; Lupu, 2009)

A greenhouse for moral development:
the *Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion*
(KMDD)^(R)

- P Direct aim: Fostering of moral & democratic competencies
 - ▶ The ability to speak up, to listen to, and to reflect upon moral dilemmas
- P Indirect aims:
 - ▶ Better learning
 - ▶ Better decision-making
 - ▶ Keeping (just) laws
 - ▶ Caring for others
 - ▶ Protecting democracy
- P Benefits
 - ▶ Less violence
 - ▶ Less drug addiction
- P Application: all fields, all people (age 8 upward)

The secrets and effects of the KMDD

! The secrets: Five principles of effective education

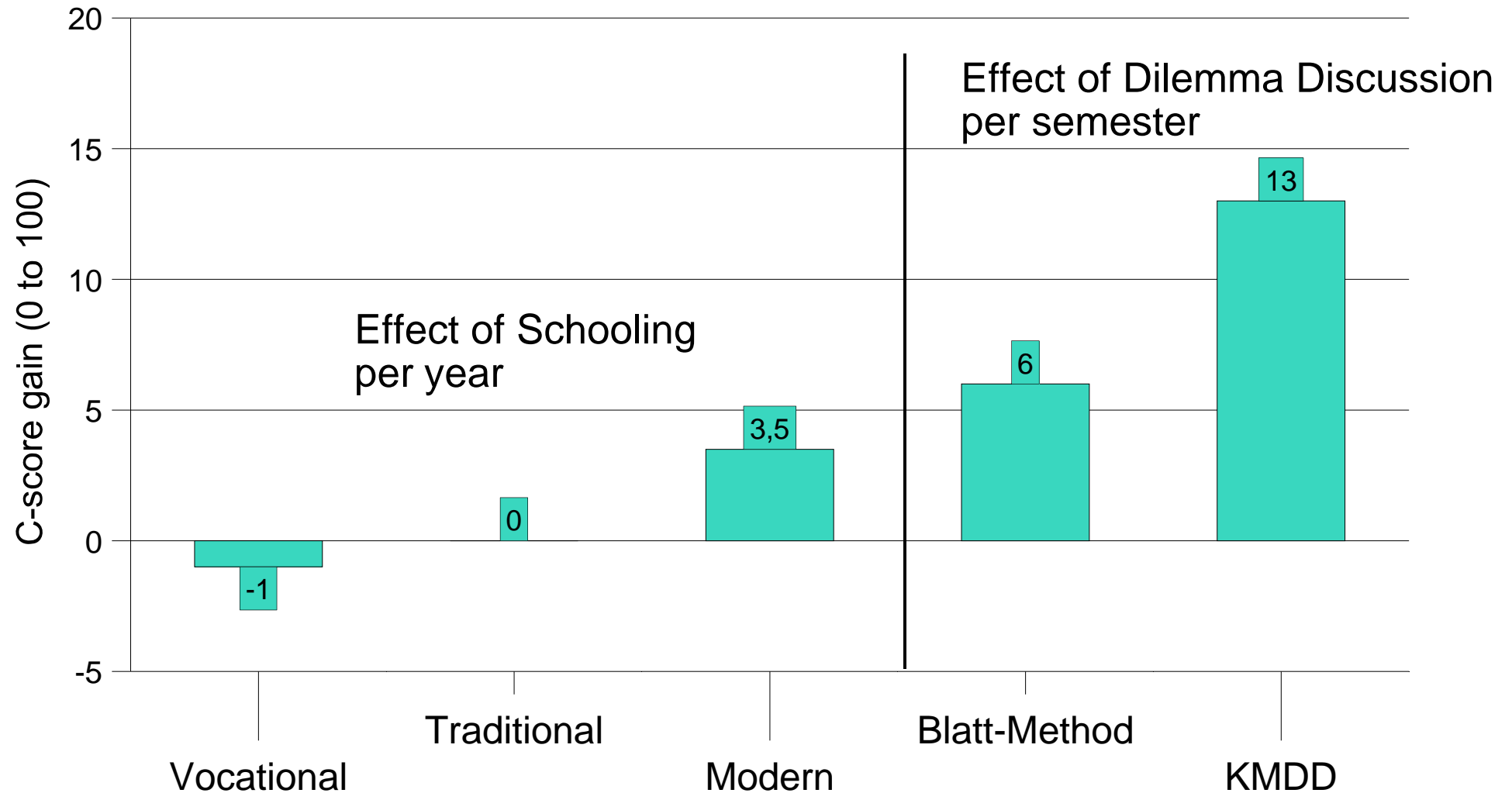
- ▶ 1. *Democratic learning community* through opportunities for responsibility-taking, mutual respect and freedom of fear
- ▶ 2. *Affect regulation* through cycles of support und challenge
- ▶ 3. *Successfull understanding* through opportunities for co-construction
- ▶ 4. *Quality mangement* through adequate self-evaluation
- ▶ 5. *Thorough teacher training*

! The effects

- ▶ Relative effect sizes: $r > 0.50$ (standard requirement: $r = 0.3$)
- ▶ Absolute effect sizes: $ES > 5$ points for one lesson (90 min)

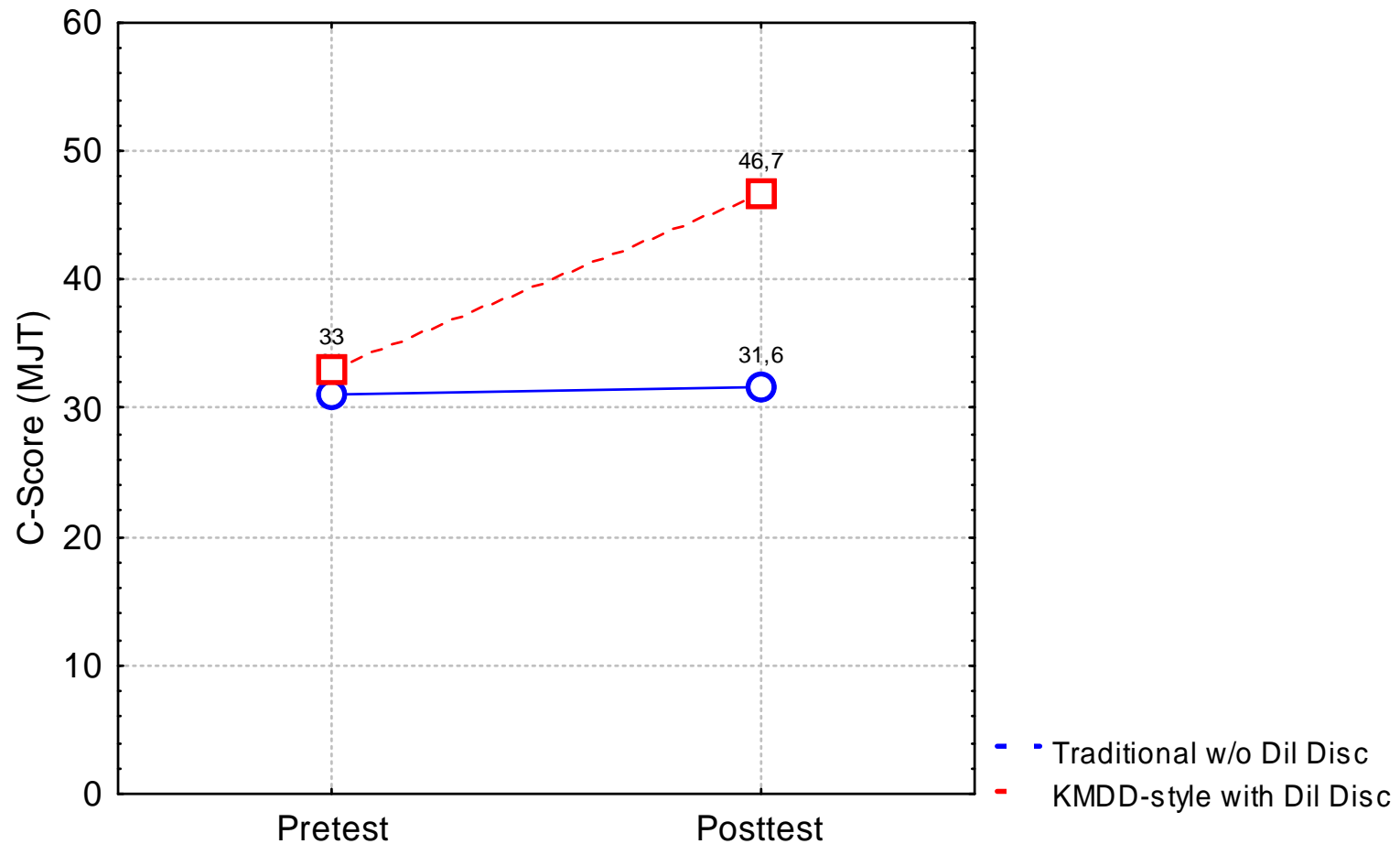
Estimated Absolute Effect Size of the KMDD

(Sources: Lind, 2002; 2009)



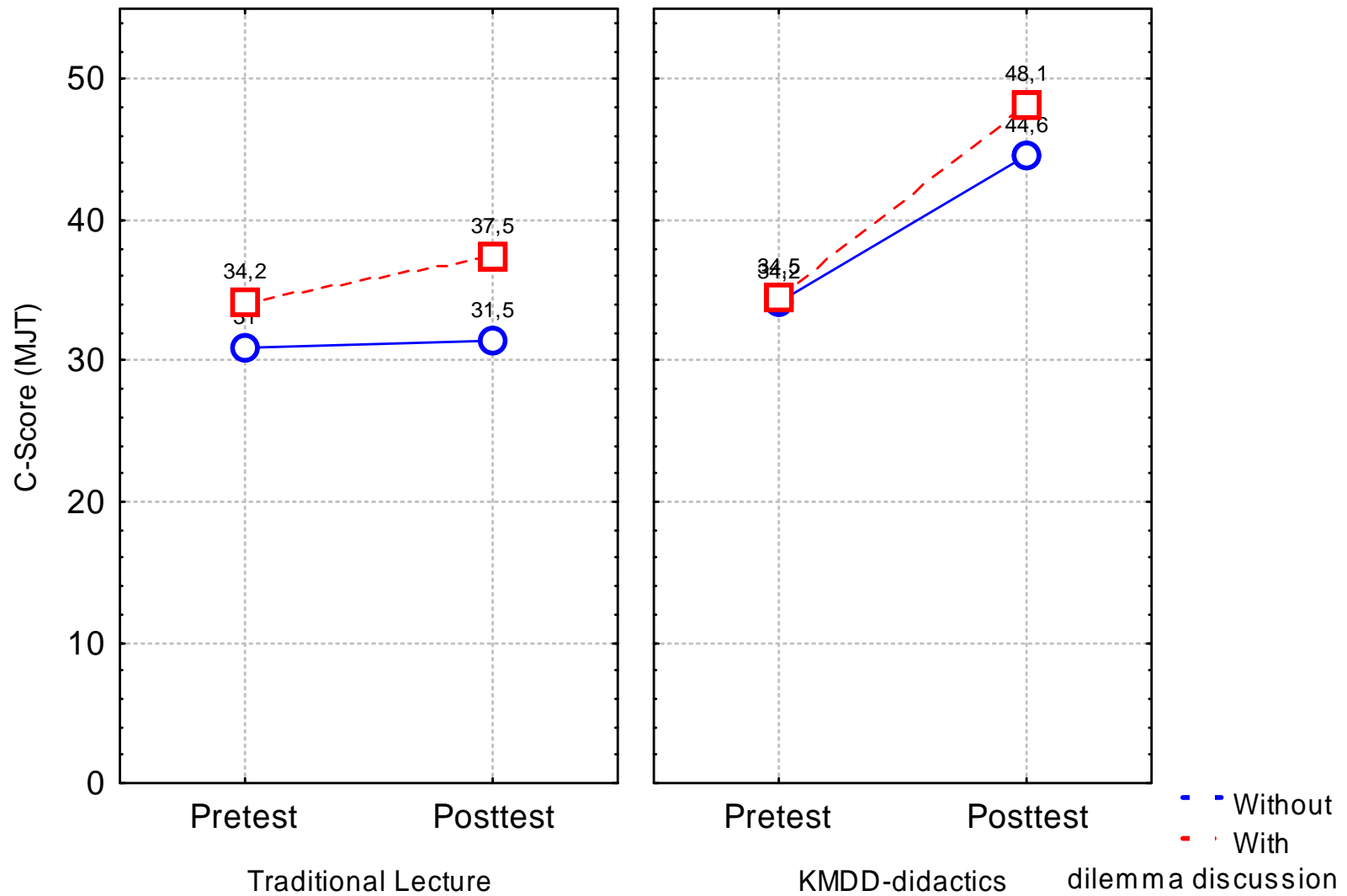
Impact of KMDD-style and Traditional Teaching on Moral Judgment Competence

$ES_{KMDD} = 13,1$; $ES_{Wfen} = 2,8$



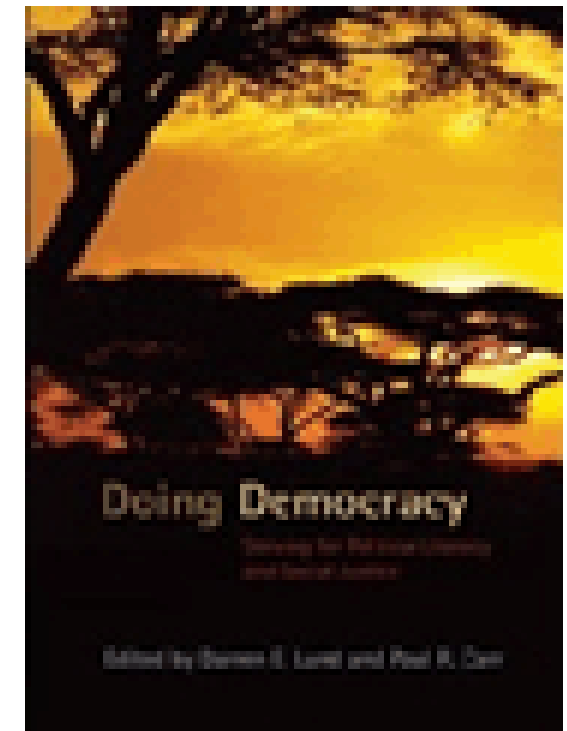
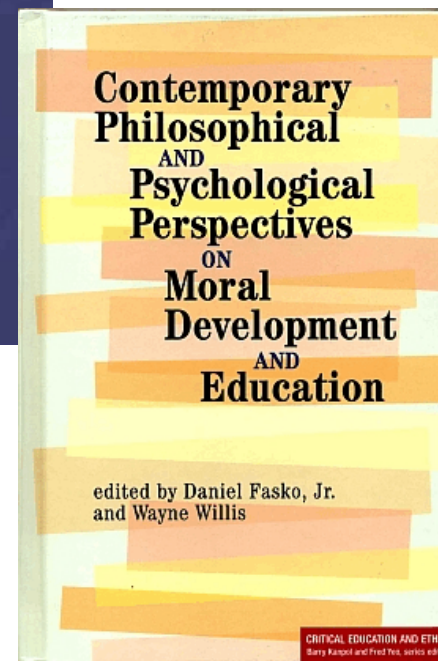
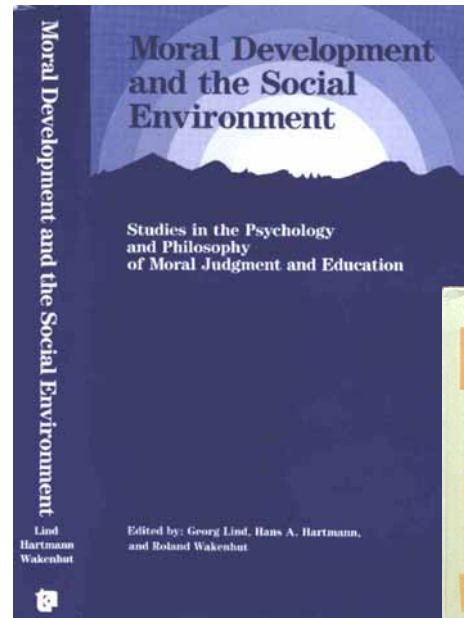
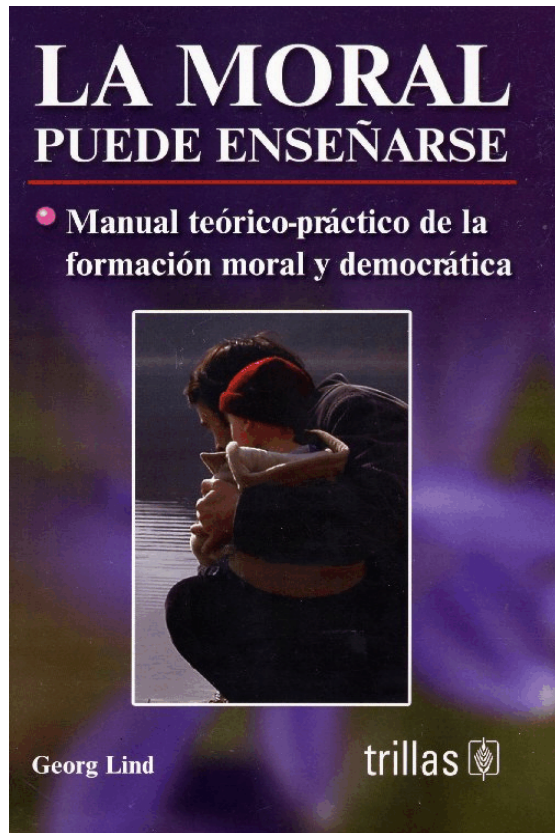
Note. "ES" means absolute effect size: $aES = (C_{t2} - C_{t1})_{kmdd} - (C_{t2} - C_{t1})_{trad}$

$F(1,1053)=,01$; $p<,9323$; $N = 3102$; aES (DiIDisc) = 2.8 and 3.2 (added value)



Source: Lind, G. (2009). Favorable learning environments for moral development – A multiple intervention study with nearly 3.000 students in a higher education context. Paper to be presented at the annual meeting of AERA in San Diego, April 13 - 17, 2009

More on moral & democratic competencies:



P Web-site: <http://www.uni-konstanz.de/ag-moral/>

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- Source: Lind, G. (2009). Favorable learning environments for moral development – A multiple intervention study with nearly 3.000 students in a higher education context. Paper to be presented at the annual meeting of AERA in San Diego, April 13 - 17, 2009
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