

# ETHICAL COMPETENCE: PROBLEM- BASED LEARNING APPROACH IN MORAL EDUCATION

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# Aim and Tasks of Presentation

*Aim of Presentation* - Introduce to Ethical Competence as modern Moral education theory and to review some of its educational approaches.

## *Tasks of Presentation:*

1. Discuss some of Moral educational approaches in Lithuania nowadays;
2. Introduce to Ethical Competence definitions as an ability to solve moral problems;
3. Represent Holistic model of Ethical Competence;
4. Review some of Ethical Competence approach in educational practice (problems and challenges).



# Moral educational approaches in Lithuania nowadays

- Education should be based on invaluable sense of humans worth, humans ability to choose freely, moral responsibility, democratic conditions and traditions of Nation (Law of Education, 2003).
- It's important to educate Value orientations for the Young persons that would lead them to morally right life; would help to become more independent, responsible, patriotic oriented; promote his communicational skills needed for nowadays life (Law of Education, 2003).

# Moral educational approaches in Lithuania nowadays

## Values based education

Values can be internalized by educating person about higher – spiritual values, prompting to follow them (Aramaviciute, 2005; Martisauskiene, 2007).

## Educational object in Moral education:

Values, Moral Attitudes, Value orientations, Hierarchy of Values, Internalization of Values, Interactions among Teacher and Learner.



# Ethical Competence - Towards New Conception of Moral Education

- We need another Ethics' learning theory and practice – *more integrated* and more corresponding to the real Human beings (Liszka, 2003);
- We need more theory of Psychology explaining *WHY* and *HOW* Moral understanding leads to the Moral action (Nucci, 1990);
- Education of Character should be based on valid researches of Psychology science. *Integrative Ethics Education* focus on humans character as a specter of certain *Abilities*, that could be educated to the higher levels (Narvaez, 2008).

# Definitions of Ethical Competence

Reflecting existing definitions of Ethical Competence (Kavathatzopoulos, 2000; Brytting, 2000; Liska, 2003; Podolskij, 2008; Whitton, 2008), it could be summarized in following:

1. Ethical Competence is associated with the ability to make decisions and to solve Ethical problems;
2. Competence is ability to distinct between Moral knowledge, skills, values, faith, commitment, feelings;
3. Ethical competence reflects the ability to analyze „self“ and to apply meta-cognitive abilities describing own actions;
4. Ethical competence is related to analysis of other people's interests, feelings, values, motives;
5. Ethical competence is always related to the decision-making in a given situation;
6. Ethical competence connected to critical thinking skills: arguments, motivation, reasoning;
7. Ethical competence connected to divergent, dialogical, dialectical thinking.



# Holistic Model of Ethical Competence

Grundtvig Partnerships Project "Ethical Competence As Educational Component in Adult Education" (2009-2011)

Moral  
knowledge

- Moral values
- Moral principles;
- Moral rules.

Moral  
problems  
solving  
skills

- Identification of Moral problem;
- Understanding "I" , "Other" interests, values, motives, feelings considering the circumstances;
- Prediction further scenarios of action and its outcomes;
- Decision making according certain criteria;
- Justification of the moral position.

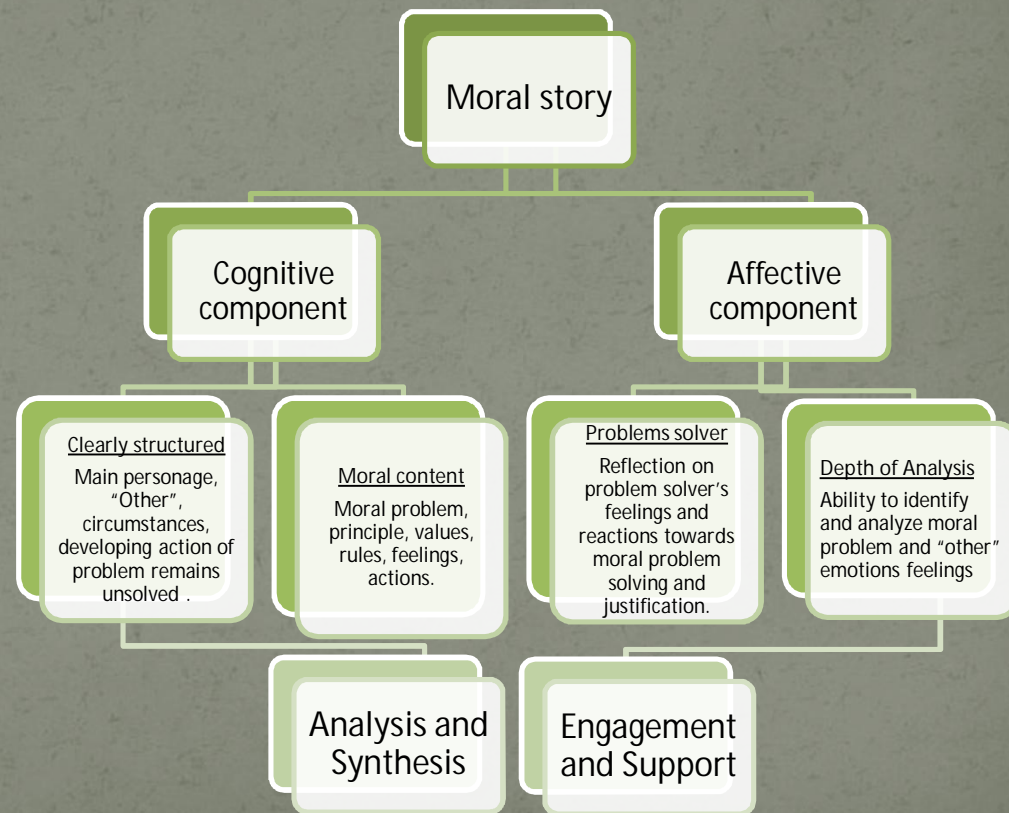
Moral  
problems  
decisions  
implement  
ation skills

- Defending of Moral position;
- Realization of moral position, drawing implementation strategy

# The structure of Moral problem

Jonassen (2000) composed a typology of problems, declaring that *Dilemmas* (Moral problems) as the most *Ill-structured problems* - often no the right one answer to solve the problem.

1. Logic problems;
2. Algorithms;
3. Story problems;
4. Rule-using/rule-induction problems;
5. Decision making;
6. Troubleshooting;
7. Diagnosis-solution problems;
8. Strategic performance;
9. Policy-analysis problems;
10. Design problems;
11. *Dilemmas*.





# Education of Moral Competence

- Educational project was implemented for 4 month in Vilniaus kolegija / University of Applied Sciences applying Ethical Competence education, using problems-based educational strategies:
- 1. Working in groups with 3-4 persons in each (groups Leader, Information searcher/ Notices maker; Representer). 40 students participated.
- 2. Three parameters for evaluation: Cognitive, Affective and Metacognitive.

# Education of Moral Competence

## Cognitive

- Ability to identify Moral problems, its structuring, decision making by selecting the one and its justification.

## Affective (Moral imagination)

- Ability to reflect other emotions, feelings, interests;
- Ability to prognose of further possible scenarios according current situations.

## Metacognitive

- Ability reflect and justify of organization team work (Leader);
- Ability to reflect, describe on information searching process (Information searcher);
- Ability to reflect and justify of work representing issues (Representer).



# Results of Educational project in Education of Ethical Competence

- In most cases problems recognition is better preceded than its argumentation/justification; It shows necessity to pay attention to critical thinking skills more intensively.
- Moral imagination (for both – problem explication and ways to solve them argumentations) of future ethical problems is quite poor; It shows that promotion of moral imagination skills for IT engineers and Business managers still should be fostered applying fine arts and other methodologies in the studies.
- Students noticed, that its very difficult to solve problems once they get involve themselves into deeper considerations;
- Working in groups gave opportunity for closer communication among IT students;
- Students prefer using Audio-visual educational material more than written ones;
- Students are motivated solving the real life , professional problems more, than hypothetical ones;
- Majority of students find interesting of analyzing different case studies concerning moral problems, because they feel a greater responsibility for the learning outcomes, solving different moral problems most creatively and efficiently;
- Ethical Competence methodology is efficient to promote Moral decision skills in Adult education once its adopted to learners interests, profession, experience, abilities.

# Conclusions

1. Lack of nowadays didactics principles implementation in Educational practice leads to non-progressive, passive forms of Moral education in Lithuania (based on internalization of values, forming of Moral attitudes, Value orientations);
2. New approach to Moral education is expressed in definition of Ethical Competence that is an ability to solve moral problems and take the right decisions using critical thinking, problem solving, moral imagination, decision making skills;
3. Ethical Competence as ability to solve Moral problems uses almost the same problem-based education strategies: group work; differentiation of group roles; Evaluation of Cognitive and Metacognitive abilities;
4. Researches demonstrated, that students look very positive towards PBL approach in solving Moral dilemmas, because they feel greater responsibility for their learning outcomes; Critical thinking and Moral imagination skills are the weakest link in students Moral problem solving, that's why it's important to develop it.



Thank you