Strengthening Moral Competence with Commercial Videogames: Integrating Papers Please into Lind's Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion

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ABSTRACT

Commercial videogames have come a long way since their emergence in the 20th century. They remain, however, widely excluded from educational discourse. A reason is the absence of reliable methodologies that ensure effective learning through videogames. There have been attempts to teach historical or other content-centred topics to students through edutainment software. It is argued, however, that games are much more effective in strengthening cognitive decision-making processes. One of these cognitive abilities is moral competence. This paper discusses the possibilities of strengthening moral competence through integrating the videogame *Papers, Please* into Lind's Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion (KMDD®). The goal is to craft a didactic framework in which a measurable learning curve in moral competence can be ensured by selecting games that provide a suitable degree of moral complexity. Through clearly defined goals, well-moderated discussions and streamlined reflections, games hold the potential to complement contemporary reading materials in schools and universities.

Keywords: game-based learning; moral competence; papers please

Introduction

The promising use of commercial videogames in classrooms has only recently come closer to the attention to educators (Shute et al., 2015; Barr, 2017a; de Sousa, 2017; Bell & Gresalfi, 2017). Since the 1970s, edutainment had been the favoured compromise teachers and parents made regarding the use of videogames in the education of elementary, middle and high school students (Eggenfeldt-Nielsen, 2007, p.263). In addition, legal and financial aspects have "complicated their adoption in public schools" (Brown, 2008, p.121). Edutainment, an idea that emerged from Clark Abt's book *Serious Games from 1970, would serve as blueprint for* a future counter-model to commercial and violent videogames and their alleged negative effect on players (Squire, 2003, p.55; Ferdig, 2016, p.318; Markey & Ferguson, 2017, p.101). Abt

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imagined serious games to have "an explicit and carefully thought-out educational purpose" which was "not intended to be played primarily for amusement" (1987, p.9).

Serious games, that are intended to serve an external goal such as learning or fitness (Dörner et al., 2016), were since then often described as "*advergaming* (advertisement), *edutainment* (education), and *exergaming* (health and wellness)" (Ferdig, 2016, p.319). Edutainment was therefore deployed as unharmful rationalised play, or in Sutton-Smith's words, "adult control of children's play: to stimulate it, negate it, exclude it, or encourage limited forms of it" (2001, p.49). However, the *career* of edutainment is arguably of a somewhat failed nature (Egenfeldt-Nielsen, 2007; Ferdig, 2016; Barr, 2017b). With *failed* meaning here having failed to engage pupils and teachers sustainably with the medium and thus enhance learning comprehension efficiently compared to conventional didactic methods (Egenfeldt-Nielsen, 2007, pp.267-268).

Bruckmann's curious term "chocolate-dipped broccoli" (1999) sums up the central issue of edutainment. Students easily detect its dubious design, which appropriates play for educational purposes (Barr 2017b, p.293). Edutainment titles seldom live up to the expectations they set out for educators and students and do in reality little to tackle "pervasive student disengagement" (Hamari et al., 2016, p.170).

The reasons for that are as follows: *little intrinsic motivation* (edutainment offers no end in itself), *exogenous game mechanics* (playing and learning do not merge into a cohesive experience in edutainment), *limited player agency* (players can barely influence events in the game), and *no teacher presence* (no control over learning outcomes) (Egenfeldt-Nielsen et al., 2020, p.253).

Accepting the failure of edutainment to educate and engage students means looking back at what has been there before already, namely, commercial videogames. Instead of producing games that become tools of pre-existing school curricula, available games must be critically interrogated for what they *can* teach or help teaching. No longer should we ask "'Does this game work?', but rather 'Under what conditions does this game work?'" (Ferdig, 2016, p.322).

This paradigm shift leading to the use of commercial videogames in classrooms corresponds to the question of what should be taught at schools at all nowadays (Anetta, 2008, p.231; Shute et al. 2015, p.58; Barr 2017a, p.86). Researchers and educators stress the importance of skills that prepare students for their adult/civic life and increase their employability on the job market (Kay & Greenhill, 2011; Virtanen & Tynjälä, 2018; Succi & Canovi, 2020; Hiroyuki 2021). These skills include, among others, "problem-solving, communication, resourcefulness or adaptability" (Barr, 2017b, p.283). But also ambiguity tolerance (Storme et al., 2017, p.274) and democratic behaviour (Lind, 2012 p.62).

Latter skills have become more critical in diverse and inclusive western societies where people of different cultures and identities rely on well-disposed social organisation, mediation, cooperation and representation (Gray, 2014; Colombo, 2015, p.816, Mbembe, 2017, p.177-178, Cole & Zammit, 2020, p.21). Georg Lind argues that increased moral competence, which enables democratic behaviour, is a key to "more peace, a strong decline in all types of

corruption, crime, war and misuse of power" through resolving "conflicts by weighing moral principles and through discussions with people who have a dissenting opinion" (2019, p.110).

However, while the number of new skills that have to be learned increases, practical methods to foster and advance these skills sustainably remain sparse. Even though edutainment could not live up to these tasks, various studies have proven commercial videogames to be ready at hand for that purpose (Shute et al., 2015; Barr, 2017a; de Sousa, 2017; Bell & Gresalfi, 2017).

This paper introduces moral competence as a progressive skill that should and can be taught at schools with the help of videogames. To do so, the paper intends to introduce the notion of moral competence to the reader and present the Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion (KMDD®) as an effective tool to increase students' moral competence. Moreover, the game *Papers, Please* (Pope, 2013) is presented and outlined by key characteristics that make it a suitable videogame to complement the KMDD®. Further, the reader is walked through a theoretical KMDD® session with *Papers, Please* as the object of discussion. At the end, a conclusion discussed the central perspectives of the paper.

2. Moral Competence

Moral competence is the ability to translate one's moral orientations into action (Lind, 2019). Lind argues that "moral orientations, as Socrates and Kant assumed, are innate instincts common to all people. People all over the world share the same basic moral ideals" (2019, p.10). These orientations are internalised in childhood and part of becoming a member of society. Therefore, teaching ethics in the eyes of Lind is futile, because everyone already possesses intuitive moral principles. However, what has to be taught is moral competence, "the ability to solve problems and conflicts through deliberating and discussion based on moral principles" (Lind 2019, p.7). Higher moral competence correlates with greater political and civic engagement (Lind 1987, p.94; Winston, 2002, p.9; Lind, 2012, p.70).

Arguably, the most crucial fact about moral competence is that it can be measured empirically, by employing a test with high validity, that has been in use for over forty years and has been translated into almost forty languages. (Lind 2019, p.14). The Moral Competence Test (MCT), in its standard version, consists of two fictional moral dilemmas that are presented to participants and takes around 15 minutes (Lind 2019, p.57). In these fictional stories, a protagonist solves these dilemmas. Participants enter on an inverted numeric scale in how far they agree or disagree with the protagonist's actions. A score from 0-100 is then calculated for the participants. "The Moal Competence Test has been submitted to rigorous tests of its theoretical and empirical validity. It meets all criteria even though these are more rigorous than the criteria usually used in educational and psychological measurement" (Lind 2019, p.63).

Most experiments that use the MCT help to highlight the phenomenon of having moral principles, but possessing no competence to deploy them. In an experiment by Sharon McNamee in 1977, participants were instructed in a room on a task. While they were listening

to the instructor, an actor passed by and staged a collapse. The study "found that participants with low levels of moral competence were less likely to help people in distress." (Lind 2021, p.90). Participants with higher moral competence scores were among the people who helped the collapsed actor, while participants with lower scores remained primarily passive. However, the moral orientations of all participants were mostly similar. "They have, as these and other studies show, often the same high moral ideals and are just as willing to help. They lack only the ability to make decisions in a short time. In many situations, this is crucial" (Lind 2019, p.74).

Many studies empirically prove the point of McNamee's experiment repeatedly (Asch, 1955; Kohlberg, 1984; Prehn, 2013). The lack of moral competence is a social issue that disrupts peaceful and progressive co-existence, making us more susceptible to the use of violence, deceit, or submission to autocratic authorities in order to solve conflicts (Lind, 2021, p.91). The most efficient way to address this deficit is to begin strengthening the moral competence of teenagers (age 11-16), as meta-analyses show the most significant potential to increase moral competence in this age group (Lind, 2019, p.93). Hence, education must be aware of the need for ways to foster moral competence among students. Effectively, "enabling students to experience self-determination and moral-democratic ways of dealing with others in an atmosphere free of compulsion and fear is one of the core tasks of education in and for democracy" (Lind, 2012, p.70).

But besides positive outcomes in a social sense, moral competence is also capable of improving the quality of life for individuals. The ability to efficiently translate one's internalised moral intuitions into actions helps to tackle various problems in one's private life and decreases mental stress caused by decision-making procrastination (Lind, 2019, p.75). Moral competence nourishes an optimistic and courageous attitude towards facing complex problems with uncertain outcomes and decreases inner conflict of opposing wants and orientations. Which moreover supports focusing on one's personal development and individual projects (Lind, 2019, p.76).

3. Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion (KMDD®)

Being able to measure moral competence does, however, not suffice to influence or strengthen it. The Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion by Georg Lind (KMDD®), based on Blatt and Kohlberg's dilemma discussion method (1975), is a licensed, certified, and practical strategy that has proven to increase moral competence through making use of *communicative action* (Habermas, 1990).

KMDD® sessions last 90 minutes and need at least 15 participants. A dilemma is presented, followed by a brief period of individual reflection. Further, a concise first discussion is opened to assess the detection of the dilemma by the participants. Then the participants are asked to join in little groups (2-3 persons) to prepare for a plenary discussion. The beginning and end of the session are framed by pre- and post-assessments of the Moral Competence scores of the

participants. (Lind, 2019, p.102). Sessions are suggested to be held twice a year. The success of the KMDD® also depends strongly on the didactic qualities of the teachers, who require official KMDD® training to be certified. (Lind, 2019, p.103)

By providing these workshops, the central goal of the KMDD® is to foster and advance moral competence. This is accomplished by making one sensitive toward moral feelings and allowing one to articulate these. In addition participants are made to consider situations more objectively and to find compromises in order to resolve conflicts between one's moral principles. Moreover, confidence to communicate one's own moral resolutions against opposing ones is strengthened, which shall increase efficiency in making moral decisions under pressure. Ideally, participants learn to tolerate and value different perspectives and thoughts on moral conflicts (Lind, 2019, pp.98-99).

To enable these learning effects, the KMDD® must follow certain conditions:

Optimal learning climate

A relatable dilemma for participants is crucial to increase engagement and learning effect through an environment of interest. Sessions are supposed to be essentially self-moderated and governed by the *ping-pong rule* (i.e., arguments are exchanged spontaneously in dialogue). Effectively granting participants more agency increases involvement. To facilitate comfort for the participants, discussions must always target the dilemma and not be directed at people. Participants shall not be judged for their arguments. The role of the teacher is to enforce these principles, allowing self-moderation, but not to influence the discussion itself. (Lind, 2019, p.99)

Semi-real dilemma stories

Selected dilemmas for a session need to be semi-real. They need to represent *relatable* events (i.e., a policeman considers torturing a kidnapper to rescue an abducted child). Still, they cannot be based on *actual* events (i.e., the kidnapping of Jakob Metzler, during which a German police officer threatened the abductor with torture if he would not reveal the child's location). This enables sufficient engagement with the dilemma without exceeding a degree of emotionality, which would eventually undermine the principles of a session (i.e., ping-pong rule, making no judgments about other participants) (Lind, 2019, p.99).

Support and challenge

Alternating phases of support and challenge by the teacher create a stable learning environment. Through minimal intervention by the teacher, clues or perspectives can be given to participants to help the flow of the discussion in either making it easier or more challenging for participants to talk about the dilemma (Lind, 2019, p.99). Basically, maintaining an equal level of challenge among all participants.

Self-moderation

The discussion should be essentially self-moderated. It is crucial to let participants remain autonomous in how they contribute to the debate. Becoming more morally competent means becoming more active in decision-making processes. Hence, participants must engage in discussions and decisions on positions they take to achieve a learning effect. The more moderation is required in a session, the lesser the learning effect will be (Lind, 2019, p.100).

Factual orientation versus personal orientation

The quality of discussions in KMDD® sessions and subsequent learning effects are fundamentally based on the kind of arguments deployed by its participants. Participants should be encouraged to use objective moral reasoning based on facts and logical principles instead of personal opinions based on prejudice and affection. That quality difference needs to be understood by participants and, if necessary, highlighted by the teacher.

The KMDD® has been in use for around two decades and has been constantly modified to increase learning outcomes for participants. Lind's licensed method has been successfully deployed in various social and professional contexts, such as schools, universities, military academies, corporations and other institutions (Lind, 2006; Bardzinski & Szopka, 2011; Serodio et al., 2016; Lind, 2019; Stec et al., 2021).

The biggest issue with the approach remains within institutions and individuals themselves, as in many cases, increased moral competence is not sustained. Moral competence can also degenerate if humans decrease their engagement in social, civic or political discussion (Lind 2019, p.84), where they can perform *communicative action* as an act of deliberating critically, yet peacefully, to reach a shared understanding (Habermas, 1990, p.149). This indicates that the KMDD® may increase moral competence immediately, but its effective purpose is another. Namely, to promote a toolkit of discussion strategies for its participants, which they must repeatedly consult in their future lives to achieve a sustainable gain in moral competence, eventually paving the way for a better co-existence (Lind 2019, p.110).

4. Papers, Please

The videogame *Papers, Please* by Lucas Pope from 2013 operates arguably like a serious game, resembling a job training mini-game (Lellock, 2015). In the game, players take the role of a border guard officer in the fictional communist state Arstotzka. Players are offered a mixed visual perspective in 2D, in which one has a first-person view with two perspectives (frontal and towards the desk) in the patrol office on the lower half of the screen, and an isometric view of the surroundings on the upper half (see Figure 1).

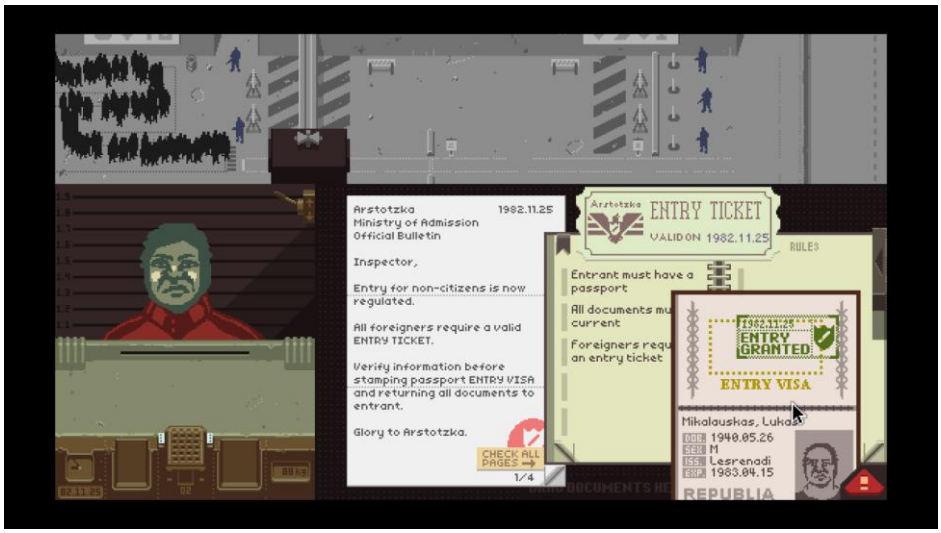

Figure 1 Admitting an immigrant in *Papers, Please* © B. Hanussek

In the game, players decide on admitting or rejecting immigrants on basis of processing their documents. Further context through the games' narrative transforms almost every decision into a moral conflict (Formosa et al., 2016, p.212). The game and level design are essentially constructed around a cyclical nine-to-five job schedule, where players process documents in their office. At the end of a cycle, players are informed about their financial situation and the health of their family members. Players earn money per successfully admitted or rejected immigrant and receive fines if they fail to process documents properly. With the money earned, one has to provide for the officer's family through food and medicine (see Figure 2). However, a main story about terrorists trying to overthrow the state, and (multiple) sub-narratives, like the personal perils of certain immigrants, unfold over the course of succeeding cycles in the game.

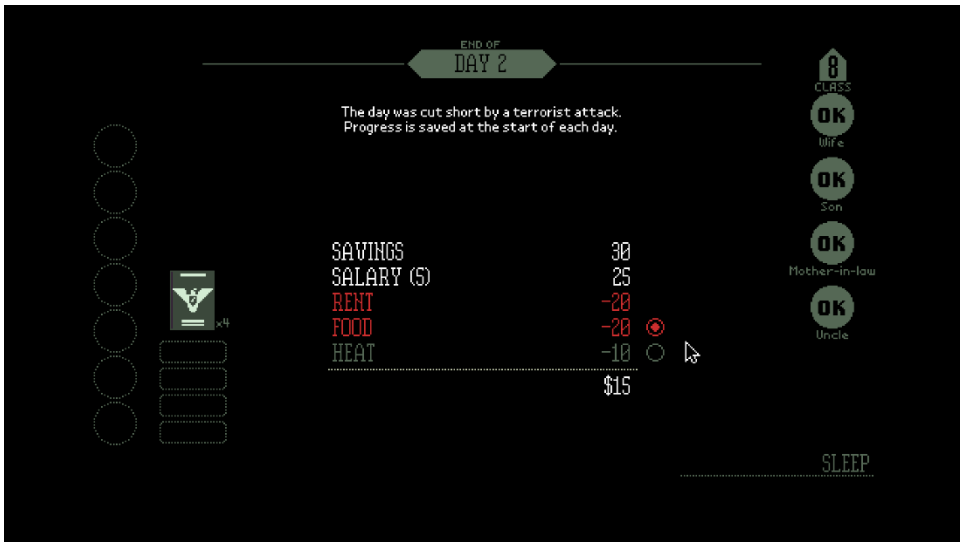

Figure 2 Paying bills and providing for one's family © B. Hanussek

Papers, Please has been interpreted by some to represent the downfall of the Soviet regime or anti-immigration politics in Arizona (Kelly, 2018, p.416). Game creator Lucas Pope has denied any direct links to real-world events and stated that the game should primarily stress the dilemma of making complex decisions under time pressure, financial stress and a corrupt climate (Kelly, 2018, p.416).

In the game, one will often have to make decisions with uncertain outcomes in an environment of systemic *unfairness*. The game design intentionally makes it difficult for players to make morally right decisions through its scripted approach and attempt to streamline the player's gameplay experience (Formosa et al., 2016, p.213). The player shall, as Pope stated, experience the complexities of realistic moral pondering in simulating a stressful and unfair environment where decisions receive no direct feedback and where time is against us (Sicart, 2019, p.151).

In the game, players decide to admit or reject illegal immigrants after listening to their heart-breaking stories, knowing that they will face death if they return to their country. Players can accept bribes from colleagues and make more cash by detaining more immigrants if they are running out of money to help their family. Players can assist terrorists in their attempt to overthrow the corrupt regime that they are working for or remain loyal to the state. Either way, players have to deal with acts of impending violence.

The list of these moral encounters in *Papers, Please* is long, and its *moral complexity* through its alternatives and commentary on violence and deceit (Hanussek et al., 2021, p.216) is intriguing. The game offers much to ponder and a playing experience one could categorise as non-entertaining in a normative sense (Barr 2017a, p.88; Morrisette, 2017).

The game has been analysed thoroughly over the years (Bourg, 2014; Lellock, 2015; Lopez, 2015; Formosa et al., 2016; Derk, 2016; Lohmeyer, 2017; Morrisette, 2017; Sicart, 2019). Therefore, deeper insight into the moral complexities of the game is not the objective of this paper. Instead, focus is to establish a set of characteristics that demonstrate *Papers, Please* as a suitable complement to a KMDD® session for high school students. Characteristics are (a) moral complexity; (b) representation; (c) mechanics/difficulty; (d) rating; (e) developer type; (f) costs; (g) system requirements and (h) academic backlog. These traits have been chosen to increase accessibility for teachers and students alike (Brown 2008: 121) and correspond to aspects of the KMDD®.

(a) Moral complexity

Moral complexity in videogames is the degree to which game design offers alternatives and commentary to violence and deceit to players (Hanussek et al., 2021). That means that a game like *Grand Theft Auto V* (Rockstar Games, 2013), that centres its gameplay experience essentially around violent and deceitful acts with little or no alternatives or commentary to them, contains low moral complexity. That does not mean that such games cannot be used at all as an object of dilemma discussion. However, they need critical contextualisation and explanation by a teacher, which contradicts the self-moderation principle of the KMDD®. A game such as *Papers, Please* on the other hand, exhibits high moral complexity as it technically

always allows for non-violent or non-deceitful alternatives to moral conflicts. In addition, the game does offer frequent critical commentary through its dialogues and overall cynical atmosphere. Thus, allowing deeper individual reflection. It is essential to mention that the games' "string of beads" structure ensures a streamlined experience even with players retaining their agency (Formosa et al., 2016, p.219). That means that even though players have alternatives, there are key events in the game's progress that are part of every playthrough. This aspect is crucial for ensuring that all pupils experience the same key sections in the game.

(b) Representation

Most videogames are poetic representations of real-world objects (i.e., persons, cultures, events, epochs, etc.). That means that they do not faithfully translate into what they represent, yet they function as a creative amalgamation of their authors' beliefs and opinions on something (Young, 1999, p.133). While Pope dements any real-world association, it is out of the question that *Papers, Please* bears a representation of the Cold War epoch and communist Realpolitik in former soviet countries (Kelly, 2018, p.417). That means that pupils from post-soviet countries are likely to relate differently to the game than pupils from western countries. In how far that would benefit or disturb a KMDD® session needs empirical testing. However, it is not unlikely to think that a session with *Papers, Please* in high school could increase interest in history classes that discuss the Cold War during the same year (cp. Chapman, 2016, p.31). This means that the game's theme needs to be considered with care in regards to its audience, so as to increase engagement.

(c) Mechanics/difficulty

Mechanics are integral rules of videogames that restrict how a game is operated and determine to a large extent the gameplay experience and difficulty (Hunicke et al., 2004). With accessibility in mind, one needs to select games with necessary but not complicated mechanics. The more rules to learn, the more difficult it is for inexperienced players to operate a game in a *flow* state, during which their experience is considered to be optimal (Csikszentmihaly, 2002). Assuming that not all pupils (and teachers) possess the same competencies in gaming (cf. Paul, 2018, p.132), one needs to choose games that are neither competitive nor too complex, yet challenging enough to drive engagement. *Papers, Please* makes a fair candidate under these conditions. Its controls are simple and can be entirely operated by mouse clicks. The rules under which immigrants have to be rejected or accepted are introduced in a well-designed onboarding experience (i.e., explanation of mechanics while beginning to play). Rules are alternated and expanded and establish a learning curve for the players in learning and applying them in-game. Time pressure is also part of the experience, which enhances the experience of having to make decisions under stressful circumstances. Moral decisions in the game become implicit mechanics in the course of the game, and the difficulty of solving those depends on players' moral competence.

(d) Ratings

PEGI or USK ratings evaluate specific content in videogames (i.e., violence, nudity, drug reference, language) and set out binding age restrictions (Egenfeldt-Nielsen et al., 2020, pp.166-167). It is not just important in the context of legality, to think about ratings in games before using them for students, but it also helps to address specific audiences. In the case of high school students, games with 18+ ratings should be excluded in general because it would exclude pupils from playing who are not of legal age yet. Games with a 16+ rating make sense not only from a legal, but also from an engagement perspective. High school students that are at least sixteen years old could eventually have an issue with games of lower ratings that cater to younger audiences by their use of language and imagery. *Papers, Please* possesses a 16+ rating, which helps to narrow down its potential audience to upper high school classes.

(e) Developer Type

It is suggested to mind the development background of a game. Deploying videogames in classrooms means being accountable for their background. Video games developed by corporations such as EA, Activision, or RIOT are commonly associated with exploitation, sexism, harassment and dubious business practices (Drummond et al., 2020; Cole & Zammit, 2021; Grind & Needleman, 2021). To avoid double standards, they should be categorically excluded from educational contexts. Strengthening moral competence by making use of games of ominous development processes is morally conflicting. Turning to smaller studios might help facilitate direct exchange between educational institutions and developers (Pearce, 2020), enabling potential cost reduction or even licensing of their titles for schools. *Papers, Please* was developed by a single person, Lucas Pope, a respected game designer, who received various awards for his games that are known to inhibit conceptual or even philosophical depth (Machkovech, 2019).

(f) Costs

To ensure accessibility for pupils, videogames for a KMDD® session should be inexpensive to acquire. In optimum, they should be free for participants. Still, the almost non-existent ties between educational institutions and game developers or publishers make it difficult at this time to think about licensing or discount options for schools. Free games are in most cases unsuitable for moral discussion except for few examples like *Path Out* (Causa Creations, 2014), where one is led through the perils of being a Syrian refugee. *Papers, Please* is, with a fluctuating market price on different online platforms (i.e., Steam, GOG), of about 10€ affordable but not favourable. It is suggested that games should not cost more than 5€. This price is oriented at the cost of common mandatory school readings in high schools in central Europe (i.e., classics, novels).

(g) System requirements

While around 90% of high school students in Europe and the US possess laptops or PCs (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019), they do not support system requirements for

any kind of game. For low-tier devices (+/- 300€), higher graphics and RAM requirements are an obstacle. In addition, different operating systems are in use (i.e., Windows, macOS, Linux), thus demanding games that function cross-platform. *Papers, Please* has very favourable system requirements that support low-tier models in all regards (i.e., 2GB RAM, basic graphic cards) and all three central operating systems on the market Windows, macOS and Linux (Statista, 2021). Suitable videogames for a KMDD® session running on smartphones would also increase accessibility; however, many mobile games feature casual game design (Egenfeldt-Nielsen et al., 2020, p.174), unsuitable for dilemma discussions.

(h) Academic backlog

Videogames that have been part of academic or intellectual discourse by researchers allow deeper involvement with and understanding of the medium by teachers that intend to host a KMDD® session. Further readings on the chosen videogames can also increase the acceptance of the videogame and highlight its educational merits to sceptics such as worried parents who fear moral degradation through the use of videogames (Egenfeldt-Nielsen, 2020, p.254). As mentioned earlier in this section, *Papers, Please* has been subject to numerous studies and analyses that have provided much thought and insight on the game. It is suggested that these criteria, which have been selected in correspondence to accessibility and to the KMDD®, provide a helpful tool to determine suitable commercial videogames for educational contexts such as a KMDD® session in high school.

5. Integrating *Papers, Please* to KMDD®

The previous two sections outlined the structure and purpose of the KMDD® and *Papers, Please* as a suitable complement for a session with high school classes. The integration of a videogame to a KMDD® session replaces the semi-real dilemma usually presented at the beginning of a section. The first practical problem in integrating these two components is time and place related. To experience an intriguing moral dilemma in a game means spending reasonable time within the game's virtual space to become involved with the world and its characters (cf. Aldred, 2016, p.356; Egenfeldt-Nielsen et al. 2020, p.150). To be concerned about one's family in the game means to have gone through a couple of cycles in the game. Above that, potential dilemmas that are chosen for a session can be located at a later point in the game. That means that allowing participant to develop a relationship to the game during a 90-minute KMDD® session is impossible. Another point is having over 15 pupils sitting in one room playing the game, could have a neutralising impact on the individual experience of the game. To get involved with and remain focused on the game, it is recommended to play the game individually in a zoned place (i.e., at home, in the library).

Hence, the only reasonable solution for this circumstance is to make playing the game a prerequisite to the KMDD® session. This also has another benefit besides allowing pupils to take their time and place for playing – as a concern for Lind when choosing the dilemma is to "keep the degree of emotionality in the class on a middle-range level" (2020, p.99). *Papers,*

Please engages and provokes players through its mechanics and the commentary within its narrative, which could influence students and their genuine opinion on moral issues. That could distort the pre-MCT assessment at the beginning of a KMDD® session if it is done immediately after playing. Playing the game on one's own time at least a day before the session decreases reactivity (cp. Egenfeldt-Nielsen, 2020, pp.293-294; Franceschini et al., 2021). Lind suggests participants to take notes during a KMDD® session, especially during the presentation of the dilemma (2020, p.102). Therefore, it is recommended that students do that as well, or that they write a videogame diary after a playing session, allowing them to process and store their experience from the virtual space (Mekler et al., 2014, p.433).

During the actual KMDD® session (once the pre-MCT was conducted), a carefully chosen section by the teacher (i.e., key events such as helping/rejecting terrorists or taking bribes for detaining more immigrants) should be presented via in-game footage of a playthrough. That shall help pupils recall their memory of the section and ensure that all students have understood the dilemma. From here on, the KMDD® proceeds in its structure as it is (i.e., individual reflection period; brief opening discussion; preparation in small groups for plenary discussion; plenary discussion; post-MCT). It is important to emphasise that this approach is purely theoretical at this stage and requires practical experimentation and modification with repeated practice to develop a sustainable and effective method, eventually reaching standardisation that helps to foster moral competence among high school students.

6. Conclusion & Discussion

This paper has outlined the failure of edutainment in its *crusade* to educate students around the globe with the use of its interpretation of game design. This failure is however not absolute, as new generations of educational smartphone apps seemingly achieve positive learning outcomes especially in language education (Van et al., 2021, p.30). Despite that, appropriating play for antiquated school curricula is prone to fail. However, the demise of edutainment also revealed another issue. Namely, the needed epistemological transformation in educational institutions. The digital revolution has changed how knowledge is constructed, how learning is processed and which skills are needed to build a sustainable future for oneself in our society.

In this paper it has been argued that moral competence is a future-oriented skill that is urgently needed in our society. Changing moral competence among contemporary adult generations might be unrealistic, but we can invest in future generations. To do so, we need smart frameworks that support effective education. Effective education, in this regard, relies on the autonomous and wilful participation of students in knowledge creation and the strengthening of moral competence. Commercial videogames are ready at hand to endorse this process. Needless to say, tact and flair are necessary when deploying videogames in class, to avoid a similar situation, as with edutainment. Videogames have to be used for what they are best at, namely, engaging people effectively and in this case, engaging students. Games cannot replace teachers, but they can complement their lessons. Combining games such as *Papers, Please* that

fulfil criteria of accessibility with empirically tested frameworks such as the KMDD®, eventually will do the trick. Yet, it demands more empirical research in that field to assess the effectiveness of these approaches. In addition, collaborations between educational institutions and game developers or publishers are urgently needed to provide affordable solutions for all students. School discounts or licensing options for games worth deploying in educational contexts should be part of future discussions in that regard. Also, educational institutions should begin consulting more videogame experts in order to work on didactic frameworks. After all, if one decides to use commercial games, a council of experts would be needed to evaluate the merit of games in specific contexts. Either way, accepting edutainment's bankruptcy is a new chance to approach game-based learning appropriately and sustainably.

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