# DISCLAIMER AND NOTES:

I’m uploading this as is. I first wrote it in 2009 as an essay on the Values, Aims and Society (VAS) module of my Philosophy of Education Masters (I got a distinction). I forget my thought process, but I think I then submitted to a competition (didn’t win) and then a journal (wasn’t accepted). I made one revision, but then life intervened and I just didn’t have time to ever consider submitting again.

So, very unconventionally, I’m posting the last version I have, with a summary of comments from the reviewers (I think they’re all fair enough). I’m doing this for two reasons:

1. The paper might be moderately interesting to some people. I enjoyed writing it, and it’s probably the only thing I’ll ever write about moral education.
2. It’s hard to find rejected manuscripts with comments. I’m not publishing all track changes or whatever (I don’t even think I have them!) but maybe someone will find the brief summary comments here along with the original manuscript useful.

# Reviewer comments:

1. Felt I needed to link DSA and extended approaches better
2. Felt I needed to elaborate Tappan and relationship to type 2 more (and more broadly, that the descriptions of Tappan, Clark and Lapsley & Hill were too brief)
3. Felt the section ‘sociocultural perspective’ was too close to stringing quotes together
4. Felt importance of ‘language’ as a tool for morality needed further explanation particularly in light of animal research indicating strong reactions against perceived unfairness
5. Felt Extended’s perspective to brain, and mind needed further elaboration, particularly given DSA appears to rely on brain
6. Felt use of ‘internalisation’ and ‘representation’ were seemed very cognitive, given the claim for sociocultural/extended perspective made (which would seem to reject such internalist accounts)
7. Felt it needed closer proofing (very fair).

# Abstract

I first discuss the relationship between moral theories, theories of moral development and perspectives on moral education. This discussion leads to a conclusion regarding the decision criterion for inclusion of an educational component into a model of moral education.

I go on to consider Kohlberg’s perspective on moral *development*. That is, development of the child’s cognitive facility in relation to moral judgments. This is critiqued with reference to the special issue of JME.

I then present some alternative perspectives on moral development including Tappan’s sociocultural perspective. Finally, I conclude that Clark’s ‘extended mind’ thesis offers a unifying model for moral development which gives us some crucial insights into moral education.

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## What is moral education?

How we conceive moral development is conceptualised via our understanding of morality more generally. Correspondingly, a theory of morality with no bearing on moral development seems impossible to imagine. However, the role that moral education takes in our moral development is a secondary question; this role should presumably reflect directly how we conceive the development. In a world with fully stage coded predictable development, no education would be necessary, in a fully culturally bound moral theory, enculturation may provide the only basis for moral development.

Of the common moral theories, one might take one of two caricatured views. On the one hand, the Kantian imperatives, with an emphasis on reasoned codified morality, and on the other an Aristotelian approach aimed at the cultivation of a ‘good’ character over codification.

This divide is reflected in moral education. Teaching methods in which specific, codified, and impersonal rules are to be applied form the Kantian education. Specifically, we imagine the teaching of doctrines, religious tenets, and more generally the formation of the Categorical Imperative. Within this scheme, moral education is that which addresses the codes of the approach. That is, moral education is very specifically induction into the ethical code of the society in which one lives. Moral education thus consists of the linguistically stated ‘rules’. Moral development is the ability to navigate these rules in a roughly Kohlbergian, reasoned way. This is not to say that this education consists in rote learning. Mathematics is rule based, but the teaching of it can be dialogic in nature; similarly for this Kantian project. However, the aims of the project are rule directed morality – and this distinguishes it from the Aristotelian approach in which morality consists in the dialogue itself. Note that this model is not classical Kantian in its ethical output, but rather in its mode of reasoning via rules, and is thus characterised in this way following on from the Kohlbergian literature.

In contrast, an Aristotelian approach is more rounded, aimed at the building of a moral character. Within this context it seems moral education is likely to take the form of induction into a culture. It is thus that McDowell (e.g. 1996) considers initiation into ethical reasoning (in an Aristotelian vein) as part of the general initiation into second nature or Bildung. This type of education is more likely to include the broad spectrum of socio-cultural teachings within schools. Moral development on this account is the development of a ‘moral character’ which is attuned to moral situations and responds to these without explicit reasoning. In this view, responses to moral problems are taken without explicit moral reasoning but are instead a result of a practiced moral character.

Whatever the target of moral education – rules or character – the question is still open as to what *exactly* its active components might include towards aiding moral development. In particular, at one extreme one might argue that all those things which address critical understanding, the development of a unified and consistent character, and social skills in general are all moral education. However, one might argue that only those things which specifically address the moral character and its development – moral discussion and problem solving, for example – are in fact moral education.

The decision criterion here is that something is a component of moral education iff it aids one’s moral functioning – either via reasoning abilities or more automatic character based responses. This loose criterion may produce controversial results. Under this model things which are not targeted at moral education specifically might nonetheless come out as components of moral education. Instruction in collaborative working and or general reasoning skills are particularly salient examples here.

We can better address these secondary questions by understanding more clearly how our moral character and reasoning capabilities are construed. I propose that the ‘dynamic systems approach’ (DSA) (Kim & Sankey, 2009) provides a suitable model of the driving processes of moral development, while the extended mind thesis provides a useful and compatible addendum which provides some understanding of the components of moral education. I thus conceive of a Kantian-Virtue ethic hybrid model in which morality is not solely about either character or linguistically stated rules. Similarly, the active components of moral education are not just those which elucidate ethical codes, nor simply a ‘catch all’ – anything which inducts one into a culture.

# Where does epistemological data fit in?

Sanger and Osguthorpe’s (2005) paper provides a framework to make sense of the various approaches to moral education and their components. Crucially, they noted that although some theories could be distinguished which elucidated psychological assumptions, all theories must make such assumptions, even if they are implicit and potentially open to interpretation.

Thus, it is important to note the epistemological assumptions of the philosophical stances, and those psychological theories which build on them. I take it that Kantian ethics assumes that humans reason via rule based knowledge. This reasoning is *autonomous* and thus not bound by the culture or ethical environment in which one exists. Following Brinkmann (2007) I suggest that Kohlberg’s stage theory: “…culminates with principle-oriented morality, a form of Kantian deontological universalism, where the rational moral agent is capable of identifying phenomena like freedom and dignity as universalisable values, completely independent of, and prior to, the actor's participation in concrete social practices.“ (Brinkmann, 2007).

However, it may be that we can reject either Kohlberg or Kant without eliminating the other. If our psychological evidence suggests that Kohlbergian reasoning does not take place – we develop differently, situation plays more of a role – this may have implications for Kantian ethics. However, generally, rule based systems *may* still have a role to play in our understanding of moral development. Similarly, even if Kohlbergian models are rejected, that is not to say that our rule based reasoning cannot develop via some more ‘connectionist’ model in which rules consist of, and develop from, statistical networks[[1]](#endnote-1). Both these issues are left to Kantian ethicists to reconcile given the model I put forward. Furthermore, we might reject Kantian ethics whilst modelling a system of moral reasoning which utilises rational rule based discourse in character development.

Similarly, virtue ethics approaches assume that the virtuous person reasons via trained intuitions regarding the ‘virtuous’ course of action to take. Character notions built on this system can thus be critiqued by data showing situational variation in ‘virtuous’ behaviour – for example theft under varying circumstances[[2]](#endnote-2). That is not to say that some model of Aristotelian ethics cannot be created, based on character, or finer grained situational-sensitive notions. Moreover, if the psychological data shows that, although imperfectly, humans reason via broadly held intuitions regarding ‘virtue’, we may wish to proclaim a victory for some neo-Aristotelian model.

Of course, in both cases we may still *aspire* to, or hold a model of Kantian or Aristotelian ethics. I take no stand on the *moral philosophy* here, instead focussing on one model which can integrate these theories alongside epistemological data. Some philosophers will reject this model, perhaps because they see no place for epistemologically driven philosophy. Others will reject it because they see no place for philosophically driven psychology. While certainly as a model it rejects many notions of Kantian or Aristotelian ethics, these systems are not entirely rejected by it; the model I present allows an integrative system which may utilise much of its predecessors’ work.

# What is moral development?

Discourse surrounding moral education has tended to focus on either developmental models such as Kohlberg’s (1958) or virtue ethics programs in particular following on from Alasdair MacIntyre’s work in the area (e.g. (MacIntyre, 2007)).

For the 50th anniversary of the publication of Lawrence Kohlberg’s theory of moral development The Journal of Moral Education ran a special issue (September, 2008, 37[3]). In this issue, various concerns regarding the psychology of moral development and the implications of this for moral education were discussed. Conversely, a number of articles also discussed the psychological assumptions that current discourse regarding moral education must take – explicitly or implicitly.

The papers in this special issue were in broad agreement that a strict Kohlbergian analysis of moral development is no longer deemed plausible, in large part because the psychological assumptions of the theory (which were, of course, explicit) have strong evidence against them. To name a few critiques, some of which are reflected in Kristjánsson’s (2009) response to the Special Issue: Kohlberg’s theory is considered ethnocentric and reductionist due to variations across cultures, and within-participant variation for varying moral concerns respectively. Furthermore, Kohlberg’s ‘stage theory’ has, along with most stage theories, been critiqued as too prescriptive and failing to capture the texture of development. Finally, Kohlberg, in parallel to Kant, is criticised for ignoring the affective aspects of moral cognition. Of course, these critiques are in themselves not without psychological assumptions concerning, for example, levels of explanation, and philosophical assumptions, including naturalistic questions regarding the is-ought problem. Indeed, as discussed above some would argue that the actual nature of moral development has little bearing on the model of morality one endorses. Following on from the special issue, I take no stand on this issue instead offering a descriptive account.

The issue presented various alternative themes for moral development but no unified theory was offered.

*“The first three papers in the Special Issues suggest, among other things, not only the need for early physical contact and nurturing (Narvaez & Vaydich, pp.301-303…), but also the importance of educational strategies that promote both pro-social schema definition and accessibility (Lapsley & Hill, pp. 326-327) and identity formation for moral centrality and integrity (Frimer & Walker, see pp. 340-344 & 346-349),”* (Reed & Stoermer, 2008, p. 426)*.*

# What is the Dynamic Systems Approach?

Kim and Sankey’s (2009) response to the Special Issue goes some way to addressing this lack of unified theory. They propose that a DSA to moral development can provide a unified theory, encompassing brain and culture. They invite the reader to “*suppose for a moment that there is no design, no stages, no schema, just a process of emergent self-organisation.”* (p.287). In terms of moral development, they reject the linear process of development along a genetically or normatively programmed set of stages. Instead they suggest we view the changes and stability involved in moral development as a progressing trajectory in interaction with an *“ever-changing environmental landscape”* (2009, p. 291)*.*

In this model, rigidly held moral positions should be taken as held firmly in an ‘attractor state’ – “*a stable point into which a given system will preferably settle”* (p.290) for example, the swing into which a pendulum naturally falls after the initial push. The bigger variation in movement and wider swing of the pendulum at the initial point represents its movement through *state space.* This movement is analogous to the more loosely held moral positions which may vary greatly within their *state space* prior to settling into an ‘attractor state’. To give an extreme example, a child may hold the stable view that abortion is wrong (x1) and this is an *attractor state* for that environment. However, as they age the environment may change, and their view may swing through a *state space* perhaps from x2 – militant pro-life, to x3 – active pro-choice, to x4 – sometimes abortion is ok, another *attractor state,* a stable view.

The Centre for the Study of Human and Moral development in Education (2009) suggests that in contrast to the “orderly, progressive and incremental process” at the Kohlbergian level of magnification, a DSA approach suggests that the greater level of magnification reveals a moral development that is “messy, unpredictable, individually variable, context-sensitive; the result of emergent self-organisation.”

Note that, this is a *process* position describing the development of moral positions which, while acknowledging the complex environment in which these positions are formed, does not address the specifics of the environmental impact on individual and (crucially) group development. It is for this reason that I later bring in extended mind to extend the DSA for a fully unified model of moral development[[3]](#endnote-3). The DSA provides us with the driver, if the extended mind provides understanding of the ‘vehicles’ of thought. The DSA explains the impact of one’s environment, linguistic markers – the labelling of morally salient events – provide particularly prominent ‘attractor states’ in this model. The component missing from this model is the ‘rules of the road’ – unsurprisingly, the rules, or moral system in which we work – which as mentioned above, we will not address here.

## The Sociocultural Perspective

Given the prominence placed on language in this unified model, it is here useful to take a scenic route to consider why the extended mind, as opposed to other previously considered models – in particular Tappan’s – is most appropriate for this synthesised model. Within the special issue, Tappan’s (1998) discussion of the implications of Vygotsky’s work for moral education was paid special attention to by Haste and Abrahams (2008). In particular, Tappan is interested in the role of discourse and narratives in the zone of proximal development (ZPD)[[4]](#endnote-4).

The following presentation of Tappan may take a somewhat caricatured view of his position – a strict interpretation. My intention here is to show that this view can be integrated into an Extended Mind approach to moral development, although with modification of such a strict view. So much the better if, in fact, I am interpreting Tappan in a too firmly ‘rule based’ light for such an integration for any variation in the other direction should make integration easier. Certainly it seems my presentation cannot be too lose a presentation – if I err, it is erring towards a strict model. While Tappan has suggested the salient dialogue is explicitly moral *“Internalisation occurs, therefore, as external speech between people becomes inner speech within people…as overt, external moral dialogue becomes silent, inner moral dialogue…”* (1998, p. 148)he clarifies this position later to suggest that by virtue of its interactive nature, which fosters care, concern and compassion, (1998, p. 155)all dialogue is moral. The implication of this is that all education inducing dialogue, of any form, is moral education – a strong ‘dialogic position’. Thus, language, in general, is salient for moral development –the development of reason is itself the development of moral reason.

Tappan later developed this view to a view of moral functioning as mediated action. “*Mediated action entails two central elements: an ‘agent’ – the person who is doing the acting – and specific ‘cultural tools’ or ‘mediational means’ – the tools, means or instruments appropriated from the culture, and then used by the agent to accomplish the action in question.”* (2006, p. 3)*.*

These cultural tools/meditational means are *appropriated* (p.4) via mastery “*developing the skill or know how to use a particular cultural tool with a relatively high degree of facility”* (p.4) and ownership “*taking a given meditational means, something, quite commonly, ‘that belongs to others [at least initially] and making it one’s own.’”* Importantly, *“The meditational means/cultural tools most often employed in mediating moral functioning are words, language and forms of discourse, which profoundly shape moral thinking, feeling and acting”* (p.5). For Tappan, the crucial element of moral education is exposure to a range of voices, which become internalised – it is these voices which provide the conflicting and complementary moral perspectives which the child must utilise in his/her moral discourse.

Fernyhough (2008) offers a psychological perspective using this Vygotskian model to explain moral development:

*“…the DT [Dialogic Thinking] model speaks to our intuition that SU [social understanding] must be at least partly dependent upon social experience, particularly that which builds upon pre-existing SU competence. Second, it allows us to examine the development of SU within a broad, gradualist context of social-cognitive development. Thirdly, the DT model proposes detail on the cognitive-developmental mechanisms that might lead from particular types of social interaction to enhanced SU, specifically those relating to the internalization of mediated dialogue. Finally, the DT approach is effective in accounting for the evidence concerning the typical development of SU, findings of associations between individual differences in SU and social experience, and atypical development.”*

Fernyhough (2008, and elsewhere) builds on Tappan whilst also acknowledging Clark’s stance on language and extended mind – that internalization of the symbols of the discourse – i.e. language – reduces the personal level processing costs involved in reasoning capabilities. I raise these views here because they provide salient stepping stones to Clark’s view and much of their support is compatible with his view. The ‘extended mind’ and relevant divergences with Tappan’s perspective will be outlined below with these divergences summarised in Table 1.

## Where do we stand?

In the special issue, Lapsley and Hill (2008) discuss a dual classification for moral reasoning – system 1 and system 2. System 1 ‘computations’ are associative systems which encode statistical regularities and draw inferences on these. System 2 processing, in contrast, is rule-based, explicit, rational, and conscious. This latter is obtained by formal instruction and the authors place Kohlberg in this system.

Tappan’s view is very distinct from Kohlberg’s model. However, I take it to fall into this rule-based reasoned system in which the narrative and linguistic skills are part of the moral process. This is in explicit contrast to models which suggest these linguistic stories are post-hoc justifications for moral intuitions. Where system 1 ‘computations’ might fall into Tappan’s theory they would be primed by system 2 learning. This is in line with Lapsley & Hill’s discussion of the expertise and accessibility models and their implications for educational theory. Here they suggest that system 1 learning is primed by system 2 learning. That is, that the more automatic ‘associative response’ systems arise from direct tuition of rules, as amateurs in a system 2 setting (2008, p. 10). As shall become clear below, this marks a major digression from the extended mind perspective.

# Extend Mind – Where are my morals?

## Tappan and extended Mind

Tappan says *“…it is not until after the child can use the languages of justice and/or care to mediate her experiences of relationship that she can say to herself, in inner dialogue, ‘she’s bigger than me; this is unfair.’”* (1991, p. 249)*.* Fernyhough (2008) reflects this when he says:

*“…Vygotsky’s theory requires us to rethink our notions of ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ as they apply to human psychology, and to be sensitive to the various ways in which mind can ‘extend beyond the skin’ (Geertz, 1973; see also [Clark, 1998] and [Clark and Chalmers, 1998]). In an important development in clarifying this aspect of Vygotsky’s theory, Tomasello et al. (1993) have considered internalization as a form of cultural learning, whereby the individual gradually comes to take the other’s perspective in thinking. Internalization is thus developmentally constrained by children’s emerging concepts of others as intentional, mental, and reflective agents. …Tomasello et al. are correct to point out that children’s developing pre-theoretical and theoretical conceptions of others are bound to influence the kinds of interpersonal exchanges they will be able to enjoy.”*

It is significant that, although reference is made to Clark, Fernyhough’s use of Tomasello is not quite ‘extended’ enough. Fernyhough and Tappan both discuss the value of linguistic tools in our reasoning and reasoning about other’s views. However, because their understanding of cognition relies on the internalisation of such tools, they – by definition – reject at least partially, the ‘extended’ nature of ‘extended mind’. That is, that some tools can be external to the brain. Thus, for example, external dialogue regarding a moral problem is not just a tool for a novice prior to the internalisation of the dialogue, but an active and important component of the extended mind. Similarly, observation of other *external* events – including reading novels or watching plays – might provide salient and high level tools for this purpose (see the discussion on emulator-based strategies below).

With this understanding in mind, educationally, the implication is that, *“teachers and educators using a narrative approach to moral education should provide opportunities for students to tell their own moral stories,”* (Tappan, 1991, p. 252) because it is by doing this that students may *internalise* other view points; a notionextended mind would happily accommodate.

However, while ‘extended mind’ has areas of agreement with Tappan and Fernyhough, there are divergences. Tappan’s suggests (1991, fig. 1, p.251) that language leads to moral experience/ functioning which then leads to ‘narrative’ as a secondary phenomenon, saying, the narrative reveals something, *“important…about the cognitive, affective and conative dimensions of her moral functioning in response to that experience*” (Tappan, 1991, p. 251). However, I argue that the narrative not only reflects linguistic abilities and understanding (as opposed to moral or worldly understanding), but also that it constitutes a working element of that linguistic expertise and discourse, and as such is a part of the linguistic understanding.[[5]](#endnote-5)

Clark’s extended mind account specifically rejects simple system 2 rule based accounts *“our moral knowledge may quite spectacularly outrun anything that could be expressed by simple maxims or moral rules”* (Clark, 2006, p. 6). Extended mind truly integrates Lapsley and Hill’s (2008) system 1 and system 2 processing as shall be outline below.

## Extended mind – what is it?

My print outs of Tappan’s articles are highlighted and scribbled over.  I don’t remember them precisely. No doubt when reading, there were sections I didn’t understand, or didn’t give full consideration to; some might be marked ‘incomprehensible’ while others were simply neglected.  What do I need to do if I want to retrieve my knowledge of these texts? Well, I know that, by flicking through, referring to particular papers or references, and following my page references I can read not just a summary of, but a representation of my understanding of *them*.  This will be complete with misconceptions, misplaced emphasis and indeed missed points – because unfortunately I rarely read that much of the bits that aren’t highlighted – but this is a representation of my original (one or two) readings and attempts to understand them. Clark in various places[[6]](#endnote-6) has argued that, artefacts like these texts represent not just interesting cultural or personal items, but actual extensions of minds; my copy of the articles is thus not merely a reference, but an actual extension of my mind; it doesn’t represent something in my head, it embodies, or quite literally constitutes my knowledge of that book in just the same way as I imagine a better philosopher, or a cyborg with a memory chip, might represent their knowledge of the book in their (skull located) mind’s.

All cultural artefacts, Clark contends, can be considered to be part of an extended mind. The massive power of the brain, Clark argues, is its flexibility and ability to manipulate and use, in particular its ability to augment its own capacity and abilities with artefacts. Thus my memory is saved turmoil by my phonebook, but further than this, by utilizing some of the things we see as fundamentals of our culture and indeed all cultures we know of, most prominently language, we have augmented our computational power massively. This augmentation does not simply represent a 'taking on board' of the world of language; rather, it represents an extension of our mind into that world of language.

## Extended Mind and Morality

Clark posits that extended mind can give us an insight into moral functioning (Clark, 1996, 2000). Like Tappan, he suggests that *“key features of this effort [to achieve consensus] include discussion, joint planning, critiquing of each other’s ideas, and requests for clarification”* and that *“…many moral problems basically consist in the need to find some practical way of accommodating multiple perspectives, including perspectives on each others’ views and interests.”* (Clark, 1996, p. 121).

For Clark though, the linguistic element is not just the tool of the novice,

*“…summary rules and principles are themselves negotiable, but they provide the essential starting point of informed moral debate. Their role is to bootstrap us into a kind of simulation of the others’ perspectives*… *This is not, however, to give such formulations a marginal or novice-bound role, nor is it to depict them as solely tools aimed at manipulating all parties into the activation of a common prototype. Rather, it is a matter of negotiating some practical response that accommodates a variety of competing prototypes.”* (Clark, 1996, p. 122).

We thus see a compatibility with Tappan’s perspective – that linguistic formulations allow us to take the ‘other view’. However, Tappan seems to suggest an internalised formulation *represents* the moral understanding and our experience of it. In contrast Clark gives these formulations a strong role; they are fully negotiable, and act as bootstrapping devices for higher order thinking and moral negotiation.

In Clark’s view, summary linguistic formulations are, “*essential parts of the socially extended cognitive mechanisms which support communal reasoning and collaborative problem solving, and are thus crucial and (as far as we know) irreplaceable elements of genuinely moral reason.”* (Clark, 2000, p. 10)*.*

Utilising Lapsley and Hill’s (2008) system 1 and 2 distinction, we can see that rather than Type 2 being conceived as the tool of the novice, it is a tool for experts and novices alike: “*It is our exposure to moral labels (labelling acts as kind, greedy, selfless, misguided and so on) that enables our pattern-sensitive brains to isolate morally salient patterns which might otherwise remain buried beneath the noise of morally superficial similarities and dissimilarities”* (Clark, 2000, p. 13)- for example in Catholic education, learning the term “double effect” allows Catholics to distinguish quickly and easily those situations in which a pregnant woman’s life is in danger from the continuation of a pregnancy, from those in which it is not and make a moral decision accordingly.[[7]](#endnote-7) To develop this, Clark (2000) suggests that: *“When we learn about promises, duties, rights, obligations and so on, we are not just learning labels for morally relevant states of affairs. We are learning to see the world through a new lens…language, on this account, is the special tool which brings the moral realm into focus for biological pattern-based engines of reason by displaying a “virtual reality” in which morally salient patterns and descriptions are the concrete objects of subsequent thought and reason”* (p. 12)

We can develop this idea further by understanding how Clark thinks language and representation map the world. Clark (2006) accounts for language development and language use using his “complementary” theory – suggesting language builds on our biological architecture, perhaps via various bootstrapping devices, to bring to it a ‘cognitive bonus’. The suggestion is not that my brain thinks in English, or that my English is translated into some kind of mentalese. Rather, sometimes certain patterns in the world, including in oneself – emotional responses for example – come to be labelled or given heightened significance via their labelling. This linguistic labelling serves to aid operations on those patterns in some way, and this association between pattern and label greatly aids our cognition. As mentioned above, this labelling aids our recognition of certain patterns – acceptable violence versus non-acceptable, for example. While there is little space to delve into this fully, it should also be noted the potential to that these labels may be applied to internal states such as emotions – something of interest to Humean ethicists, again providing an integrative framework for linguistic factors alongside other approaches.

Another linguistic strategy worth mentioning is Clark’s discussion of ‘emulator-based strategies'[[8]](#endnote-8). These consist of internal hypothesising about situations, and the set of external situations we make use of to fulfil a similar role. External emulators may involve the observation of an example of our target situation: if I’m thinking about a café for a date, I might watch how couples interact in that café. Alternatively, we may use ‘surrogate situations’ (p.155) – situations in which one uses a stand in to think about a real situation; this might be as simple as drawing a rough sketch of a webpage, in order to think about what the real design will be. Thus, these strategies, *“enable us to explore a space of possibilities without the commitments and risks that would otherwise be involved,”* (p.156).

INSERT LINK TO DSA HERE

Note that Clark relates to Dynamic Systems in various bits of work, may also be able to link to ecological psychology & Gibsonian theory.

Table 1 - Comparison of Clark and Tappan's positions

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|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. System 2 drives – language is crucial to moral understanding, it allows thinking of the kind ‘she’s bigger than me; this is unfair.’” (Tappan, 1991, p. 249)
2. Language enables deeper understanding of morality, exposure to a range of ‘voices’ enriches this
3. Language enables us to act based upon this understanding of linguistically encoded rules. Understanding ‘this is unfair’ allows access to actions based on that morality.
4. Linguistic narratives lead to a labelling of events based on system 1 associations, the associations are built up via experience, and are those of an expert. The rules are a training route for novices.
 | 1. System 1 drives – we spot statistical patterns and begin to understand our social sphere via this pattern recognition
2. System 2 linguistic formulations label patterns and offer shortcuts for ‘working’ with them
3. We navigate these formulations with awareness of intricacies and statistical regularities in application (system 1). We are capable of ‘rebooting’ to tweak our rules – i.e. conducting meta-analysis of the rules which is not just linguistically based
4. ‘Complementary theory’ – narrative labels our experience, allowing use of emulator-based strategies, prototype sharing, etc. Systems 1 and 2 are inseparable.
 |

# Conclusions – how extended mind brings something new to the table

In their response to the JME Special Issue, Kim and Sankey (2009) suggest that, although it raised concerns, the Special Issue *“fell short of providing a comprehensive vision of what the new integrated model might be; one, for instance, encompassing brain and culture…”* (p.284). Thus, while they credit Naravaez and Vaydich’s (2008) focus on neurological development and Frimer and Walker’s (2008) paper on moral personhood they criticise the lack of overarching integrative model for moral development. This of course presupposes that such a model can both psychologically and explanatorily exist. It is somewhat ironic that Sanger and Osguthorpe’s (2005) analysis of approaches includes, within their simple framework, the consideration of the methods of instruction, the materials used, the programmatic ends (behaviours, identification with a group, etc.), moral content (what is good/right/virtous, etc.) – but *not* the process of moral development. It is to this that Kim and Sankey’s DSA turned. In contrast, Clark’s extended mind addresses the method, materials and moral fibre of the educational system. The extended mind offers one possible refinement, which implicates the important components involved in moral education, to the Dynamic Systems Model proposed by Kim and Sankey –which provides the processes.

## Conclusion – a unified model

Tappan and Fernyhough go some way to explicating the detail of a sociocultural perspective on moral development. However, their focus on language as a source of moral experience as opposed to a tool is too limiting. By using their analysis alongside Clark’s extended mind, it seems we have a theory which allows us to analyse the *components* of moral development (and development of mind in general). In contrast, the DSA seems to give us an explanatory *process* model to describe how moral positions are taken up and altered – but not the specific tools/components which allow for these changes and the dialogue surrounding them.

Educationally, the critical idea is that,

 “T*he development of moral knowledge and expertise is thus crucially dependent on rich and varied moral experience. It cannot be successfully instilled by exposure to simple sets of moral maxims, any more than great (or even good) chess play can be achieved without dense and repeated practice. Seen in this light, the provision of ‘moral tales’ and (even better) our occasional immersion in rich, often morally complex or ambiguous, novels takes on a new importance.”* (Clark, 2000, p. 7)

In this sense, we can say that anything which addresses a range of experience – whether explicitly moral or not – can aid our moral development. The study and practice of discourse in general aids our moral cognition via two related means – the provision of linguistic skill and the provision of a range of prototypical and complex example situations. The former provides summative rules for bootstrapped reasoning (in various arenas including the moral), while the latter provides the rich pattern recognition and negotiation skills (again, in various arenas including the moral). They provide external tools (system 2, extended mind) which both drive, and provide support for the system 1 DSA. To be clear, the theory offers a descriptive account of development and reasoning – not a normative account of ‘what is right’ in terms of overarching ethical theories.

For Clark neither Aristotle nor Kant win out, because “*it is the cognitive symbiosis between basic, prototype-style, pattern-based understanding and the stable surgical instruments (for learning, criticism and evaluation) of moral talk and discourse that conjures real moral understanding”* (Clark, 2000, p. 16). It is because of this, that neither rule-based instruction *nor* a caricatured character education in which rules are not expressed can win out. It is also because of this that we can understand all education aimed at aiding children (and adults) to critique and evaluate ideas as conducive to, if not explicitly, moral education.

In his highly critical response to the Special Issue, Kristjánsson (2009) says of the type 1 type 2 distinction, *“what worries me, however, is the image of emotion as steam rising automatically from internal kettles and of the moral self as the battleground of two systems where the desired end-product is some sort of armistice or dialectical harmony between two essentially opposing elements”* (p.266).

Clark’s view offers this ‘dialectical harmony’, recognising that they are, in fact, not essentially opposing elements. Additionally we benefit from his explication of how the external integrates with the internal – while emotion is crucial, we must recognize the role of the extended mind in our judgments generally alongside the sociocultural aspect of self and morality including the range of ‘mind tools’ the external world brings to our development.

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1. David Chalmers has compiled a bibliography on connectionism and in particular whether the position can be used instead of classical models for representation and thought here <http://consc.net/mindpapers/6/all#.6.3> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. For a discussion of these issues with experimental data see, for example, Appiah, 2008, chap. 2. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Clark discusses DSA in some detail here (Clark, 1997) and makes reference to it elsewhere in his later work as a view which *may* be complementary to the extended mind perspective (see for example (Clark, 2008, pp. 23-28). Note that, by incorporating Clark’s conception of Extended Mind into a DSA for moral development, we address some of the issues Clark highlights (Clark, 2008, pp. 23-28) relating to the seemingly inadequate focus of the DSA’s on physical-level explanations for complex human behaviours involving, for example, the use of ‘information-guided choice’ (p.26). Kim & Sankey’s paper focuses on traditional DSA physical description examples, whereas my example is lacking in this system level information. While Clark and DSA theorists may wish to refine the system I present, broadly speaking I think it is the correct model for creating a unified, extended mind model of moral development. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. For some experimental support for this notion see for example, Turner & Chambers (2006) [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. His latter comment *“our very experiences themselves are mediated by a common set of narrative forms and structures that are available to us as members of our culture”* (Tappan, 1998, p. 152) may support my clarification that linguistic skill not only influences our experience and subsequent narrative but also is influenced by our experience and narrative, and the shared narratives of our culture although this isn’t clear, and may rely more on cultural aspects than the individual level ‘extended mind’. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. See for example (Clark & Chalmers, 2002; Clark, 1999, 2000, 2008) [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. “In a similar vein, Nancy Fraser (1989) traces the way changes in the way we talk about spousal abuse have gone hand-in-hand, historically, with changes in the way we evaluate such behaviour” (Clark, 2000, p. 20) [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Ch7 in Clark. This kind of approach is also discussed as ‘ecological rationality’ (Robbins & Aydede, 2008). [↑](#endnote-ref-8)