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CONTEMPORARY THEORIES OF RELIGION TEACHING. BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY

Abstract: The author attempted to present the following main theories of teaching religion: the theory of personality, theory of authenticity, theory of testimony, theory of the Holy Spirit, dialogue theory, proclamation theory and teaching theory. All of the theories with their obvious advantages, claim the broadly understood theory of teaching to be the most useful in the practical activities. The teaching theory contains the most important elements of other theories. It has a huge potential for explanation, thus becoming the essence of all theories of teaching religion. It ultimately determines the most effective model of practical activities that make up the process of modern religion teaching. This article refers directly to the paradigm of the theoretical teaching of religion and religious knowledge, while indirectly to the other paradigms, because the theory of teaching religion (like any other teaching theory) determines the type and quality of its practice.

Keywords: teaching theory; religion; religious education; religiosity; a new paradigm for teaching religion.

Introduction

Many areas of socio-cultural life are currently undergoing intensive change, both quantitative and qualitative. Religiousness as a social fact manifesting itself in the consciousness and life of individuals and human communities, does not remain indifferent to this change. From a sociological point of view, an increase in the religiousness of the Polish society is observed, but only at the national level, i.e. “faith of the nation”, while the level of it in everyday life is much lower and undergoes multidirectional changes, especially towards selectivity (“religion of life”).

If, citing Janusz Mariański (2009, p. 9), religion is understood as “an institutionalized system of beliefs, values and symbols, and related activities shared and

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fulfilled by a group of people”, this definition can be justified by the following paradigms: 1) global attitudes towards religion, 2) religious practices, 3) religious knowledge, 4) religious beliefs, 5) moral beliefs.

The analyses of this text refer directly to the paradigm of the theoretical teaching of religion and religious knowledge, while indirectly to the other paradigms, because the theory of teaching religion (like any other teaching theory) determines the type and quality of its practice. This is primarily because it is the theory that builds practice, creative invention and indicates the main directions of pedagogical activity. Pedagogical practice, on the other hand, is basically a function of a specific theory which is its source and foundation. Individual theories of religion teaching differ from each other, and the determinant of such a distinction is basically the moment or category of time at which they will be used by the teacher.

The theory of teaching not only provides explanations, but also practical activities. It allows you to simulate their effects, as well as forecasts for the near future. That is why it is so important to choose the most appropriate theory of teaching (out of many existing ones) that positively correlates with the effectiveness of teaching, optimizes practice, and also most accurately takes into account the social context and the teacher-student relationship. The theory we want should most of all be useful, meaning, it should educate and shape (Patalon, 2014). This rule applies to all teaching categories, including religion teaching. This article presents the main theories of religion teaching. These are the theory of personality, theory of authenticity, theory of testimony, theory of the Holy Spirit, dialogue theory, proclamation theory and teaching theory presented in the perspective of the correlation principle together with an indication of their contemporary necessity and meaning. What is more, it is also an attempt to answer the question about an adequate, multidimensional theory of religion teaching – responding to the challenges of today. The challenges societies face include people’s awareness of growing religious diversity, and stronger socio-cultural and religious identities. These factors may help us understand why some religious groups and ethnic communities demark their separate territories (Jonkers & Wiertz, 2020).

Personality theory

The basis of personality theory is a claim that the teacher’s personality is a factor that conditions the model of student’s position towards religious components. It is guided by the statement: “Show me a teacher with a strong, dynamic and exciting personality and they will show you a religion lesson effectively taught”.

The term “personality” can be interpreted differently in a semantic sense. Some understand it as a synthetic form of human behavior, others as an internal scheme of references to self-esteem. Still others use this term to describe organic human features, such as traits, attitudes, ability to accept or deny certain situations, enthusiasm, apathy, prudence or lack of reflection on a particular action. It is

difficult to say, however, which definition of personality best relates to the process of teaching religion (Hall & Lindzey, 1999; Macario & Sarti, 2013).

However, it seems justified to combine personality theory with charisma, because it has a special reference to Christians. Because Charisma has been associated with the *pneuma* or the Holy Spirit, it is attractive to believers (Berger, 2007; Michalski, 2004). This is indicated by the long history of the Church, in which the ecclesial role of clergy has been considered a manifestation of special power and grace leading enthusiastically to apostolate and expectation.

Regardless of the historical perspective, it should be stated that the personality of the teacher is the most significant natural variable affecting the achievement of intended outcomes in religion teaching. Personality shapes social relations, the student's actions and the results they achieve. The syllabus, teaching methods and structure are also driven by the teacher's perception. They strengthen the student's behavior.

However, it is not right to directly correlate the teacher's personality traits with the student's outcomes (Weiberg-Salzmann & Willems, 2020). What students learn is also dependent on varied educational environments (family, peer group) they live in, as well as complex personal interactions. The student's personality, individual perception and reception of the social reality surrounding them are not without influence on the effectiveness of the teaching process. What is more, the level of teacher influence on students is also different. Depending on the accumulated experience, knowledge and the ability to process it, personality, competences and attitudes of the teacher are perceived differently. This reveals the weakness of the personality theory in relation to the usefulness of religion education, because it is difficult to explain on its basis and also to predict the course of the process itself.

The confirmation of such reflection is the very classification of both teachers and students. Their personalities can be broken down into orderly, systematic, timid, fighting, compliant, conformist. Depending on the predominating features on both sides of the interaction, one can speak of more or less effective teaching of religion. This is confirmed by numerous empirical studies on teacher-student interaction (Marianski, 2018; Wysocka, 2000). They reveal that it is the propensity or preference of one's own and other person's behavior that determines the success, effectiveness and quality of social communication, regardless of its essential content.

Research on the personality traits of teachers confirms the hypothesis that both teachers and support staff (priests, social workers, psychologists) strive in their professional experience for domination, omniscience, and omnipotence (Marianśki, 2018; Wysocka, 2000). It seems that a teaching career, without self-control, creates a special opportunity for it. It is also worrying that social studies conducted, for example, among students of education at public and private universities, revealed their lesser intellectual capabilities than among students of other professions. However, future teachers show greater social sensitivity and more acute empathy (Barone et al., 2007).

A broader and deeper reflection on this research could lead to a rather disturbing conclusion that teachers are more controllable and less creative. This would mean they are likely to transfer similar personality preferences to their students during the teaching process.

There are other reasons why personality theory seems to be ineffective as a macro-theory of religion teaching. Teachers of religion often have a strong need for psychological acceptance by the recipient. They have a strong desire to be liked by taking advantage of different opportunities. This situation can inevitably lead to students taking control over the teaching process, its forms and content, and even to the manipulation of the teacher. The emphasis on raising the rank of the teacher's personality theory in teaching religion turns out to be inadequate in this view, because it can lead to teacher building self-worship, thereby obscuring other, more important elements of the teaching process. Josef Goldbrunner (2002) even notes that treating personality as a decisive force of the effectiveness of activity leads not only to the rejection of the essence of pedagogical practice, but also to "textbook exegesis" performed by a teacher.

Thus, the theory of teacher personality appears in the process of teaching religion, either as global and specific, or as unregulated with no coherent and effective provisions for broadly understood educational practice. Its undoubted advantage is to provide color and individuality in the teaching practice, while the low effectiveness of influencing the structure of this practice is a real limitation. Zelindo Trenti (2016, p. 72) puts it as follows, "You cannot teach anything that you are not." This means that a teacher who does not identify with their profession, and who is unsympathetic, introverted and "closed", often with the greatest desire, will not evoke the expected pedagogical attitudes and behavior in students.

The teacher chosen by God is one that is fully aware of his own pedagogical behavior. He also realizes what the consequences can be and properly controls their behavior.

Theory of Authenticity

It is a concept related to personality theory, because it suppresses the authenticity of teacher's behavior as a factor conditioning effectiveness of teaching. It has two main sources in the Christian religion. The first is the way of grace, Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit apparently reveal themselves in the behavior of a religion teacher. The other is the form of this disclosure to students in which the teacher becomes a living celebration of God (Schweitzer, 2005). There are numerous studies emphasizing the importance of this theory for the effectiveness of religion teaching (Giusti, 2012).

Carl Rogers (2014) emphasizes that a teacher is only credible and effective if they do not hide behind a mask of artificiality and untruth. For him, being authentic means being "transparent", open in interactions with the student. This requires the internal and external features of the teacher be congruent.

Despite its undoubted strengths, the theory of authenticity also has weaknesses. One of them is the fact that it is primarily based on the psychological or existential state of the teacher at a particular moment. It is less important to control your own behavior to obtain specific learning outcomes. A teacher, wanting to retain their authenticity, reveals it regardless of external factors, circumstances or situations. Therefore, they become a prisoner of their own feelings and spontaneity, regardless of the effects it causes. If teachers want their naturalness and authenticity to be effective in the process of teaching religion, they must self-control their own reactions (Pihlström, 2020). Hence, the theory of authenticity is only a theory related to or supporting other theories of teaching religion.

The authenticity of the teacher's feelings, experiences and emotions must not interfere with the learning process. Their objective is to support the most effective strategies that shape the student's religious development. Each pedagogical practice contains specific goals, and when they are obscured by the teacher's excessive emotions, the whole perspective of the process of teaching religion changes. If the theory of authenticity becomes a macro-theory of religion teaching, it can lead to the fact that only the teacher will become the main subject of this process, not taking into account the subjectivity of the student, which is fundamental in the theory of dialogue. It is even said that the theory of authenticity is in fact a psychological cover, whether realized or not, of the need for complacency (Michalski, 2011; Groppo, 2011).

The key question when analyzing the theory of authenticity is to what extent the naturalness and authenticity of the teacher is effective in the process of teaching religion? The results of research on teacher characteristics preferred by students can be helpful in finding the answer. It turns out that the most valued are those features that facilitate the acquisition of skills and develop learning ability, while the features of naturalness are considered secondary (Marianski, 2016).

It also turns out that authenticity as a trait is subject to change and is conditioned by certain events of the past or the present. If that is the case, it is difficult to talk about true authenticity. Meanwhile, the Religion teacher is more required to be consistently authentic and free from frequently disastrous influences of situational factors. Thus, the theory of teacher authenticity can only enrich and facilitate the learning process, but it cannot be a goal or a cornerstone of that process. Carl Rogers (2014), quoted earlier, emphasizes that the teacher's professionalism consists precisely in the skillful, optimal use of their authenticity in the right place and time, where naturalness can only be conducive to the implementation of their function and role. On the other hand, uncontrolled spontaneity of the teacher's behavior can lead to the non-pedagogical behavior of students that may result in breaking the process of the effective teaching of religion.

Theory of testimony

The theory of testimony assumes that the testimony of the Christian Good News, impacts students' religious behavior through the teacher's word, actions and lifestyle. This theory stems from the analysis the ways teacher present Christian truths.

The theory of testimony is one of the most popular theories used in the process of teaching religion by Christian teachers. Ricardo Tonelli (2008, p. 37) writes that "the catechist testifies to the presence of the Holy Spirit, showing that their whole life is filled with the Spirit of God. Without minimizing the importance of educational tools, i.e. techniques, methods, etc., it can still be assumed that the teacher as an apostle of testimony is at the focal point of catechetical activities." It means that the most effective testimony of the Gospel is housed in man, i.e. in the teacher of religion . This principle explains the effectiveness of Jesus as a teacher because he was the Good News.

J. Jungmann (2000) and G. Groppo (2002) were the most ardent supporters of the theory of testimony. They claimed that the religion teacher is an ambassador of God and therefore, in order to convince students to the dignity of their role, they must be permeated with the greatness of divine revelation. The dignity would manifest itself with zeal, love and reverence to the Lord to acquire spiritual dispositions in this way.

The basis of the theory of testimony lies is grounded on identification with God, and consequently on modeling or shaping others. What is important here is the students' attitude towards a specific, consciously accepted and presented by the teacher-catechist lifestyle as a role model. Identifying oneself with the teacher usually involves the following aspects: adopting behavioral patterns; faith of the student in their own similarity to the teacher; sharing attitudes, values, emotions, views etc.

Identifying with a teacher is therefore a kind of tendency to model, shape and copy other people's behavior (Kohlberg, 2001). At the same time, this applies to all behaviors, not just selected ones. There are three different understandings of identifying with another person. The first concerns imitation of the teacher's behavior patterns, the second relates to the external and internal motivation to act as a teacher, and the third understanding refers to imitation as a process that stimulates or evokes the expected behavior.

From a psychological point of view, identification has its basis in various theories. Teaching theory, for example, assumes that unexpected events in an individual's life determine the limitation of the other person's behavior. Developmental theory assumes that the model's behavior patterns are so important and necessary in the life of the individual that they decide to accept them as their own. Analytically speaking identification is a function of individual actions undertaken to maintain the friendship or love of the person with whom they identify. There is also a theory

of social strength, explaining the power-holders identification, and finally a psychoanalytical theory, justifying any imitation of competitors.

Numerous studies support the claim that learning theory is the most appropriate explanation of the phenomenon of identification (Michalak, 2003). Regardless of which theory explains the essence of identification most fully, it is beyond dispute that individuals actually imitate the behavior of significant persons, including teachers.

Modeling or shaping attitudes involves at least three aspects: 1) character traits, temper, motivation; 2) social roles as binding behavioral patterns; 3) what rules of behavior are expected (required) (Weber, 2005). Relatively little research has been done on modeling or shaping the situations in which the teaching and learning processes take place. However, much has been done about modeling family behavior patterns. They show that effective emotional education, fulfilling optimal family functions, modeling accepted attitudes and behaviors to children, most effectively foster socialization. If it were translated into the teaching - learning process, it would turn out that the principle of identification with the teacher included in the theory of testimony is justly credited for effectiveness in teaching. The individual's ability to become like a significant person indicates precisely the positive impact on shaping and developing the model behavior of an individual (Kohlberg, 2001). What is more, this strengthens the system of moral assessments made by students based on the hierarchy of values adopted by the teacher.

Despite many strengths, the theory of testimony also has some imperfections that do not allow it to be considered an exhaustive macro theory that builds the practice of religion teaching. For if the theory of religion teaching is to have the power to explain and forecast pedagogical activities, then it cannot be based on one-dimensional strength of the teacher's personality or the power of giving testimony. The effectiveness of religious education theory cannot be based solely on who the teacher is.

The weakness of the theory of testimony is also the concealed fact that a religion teacher is a kind of sacrum regardless of their own knowledge, skills and attitudes. This is a serious negation of the essence of the very process of learning and teaching, in which the teacher is to be only a guide leading to independent learning about the meaning of life. Therefore, the uncritical imitation of teacher attitudes can generate the possibility of imitating attitudes, also those pedagogically undesirable. The assumption that the religion teacher by definition exemplifies the "Testimony of Christianity" is a mistake. Such a testimony, however, consists of various factors, such as gender, liturgical or canonical status, age, social environment, etc. As a consequence, a type of Christian testimony can simply not suit the students. It is difficult to find at least one teacher who would satisfy the expectations of all students.

The theory of testimony is also not conducive to the development of student creativity. Through identification, often uncritical, they become passive, hardly

involved and imitative. There is also a danger of the individual becoming overly dependent onto a significant role model. Therefore, the theory of testimony can be considered definitely limiting the student's freedom in the teaching process and in Christian life.

Finally, the theory of testimony highlights the subjectivity of the teacher too much, at the same time diminishing the student's subjectivity in mutual interactions. No teacher can be validated to believe that the student will spontaneously accept and recognize his behavior as presented by them (Benner, 2001).

Theory of operations of the Holy Spirit

Although rationally difficult to justify, the theory of operations of the Holy Spirit assumes the influence of the Holy Spirit as the basis and the only variable modifying the student's behavior according to religious principles. This theory is of course derived from the interpretation of the Gospel of Saint John (J. 3,8), in which we read that "the Spirit blows whenever he wants," as well as from the theological concept of God's supernatural power and the resulting possibility of supramundane existence.

The theory of the Holy Spirit's influence is widely recognized by both Protestant and Catholic religion teachers. For example, Dorothee Sölle (1995) maintains that religious learning, understood as a transformational type of God's communication with people, cannot be structurally limited by a teacher. It is (this teaching) essentially an action of the Holy Spirit. Similarly, other religious educators declare that the effects of religion teaching are not subject to specified and planned prior activities, nor are they subject to control or manipulation. They are free, just as the competence of the Holy Spirit is free. This view is represented, among others, by Cyprian Rogowski (2002, p. 137), who claims that "the teacher only encourages the student to talk to God and to answer His instructions. However, when, where and how the student does it is no longer a matter of the teacher, but of the Holy Spirit."

The advantage of the presented theory is undoubtedly the opportunities it creates for all religious achievements that can renew, refresh and illuminate humans. From a practical point of view, however, it is unpredictable when it comes to the effects of pedagogical strategy in teaching, especially in the field of applied methods, techniques or tools. The theory of the operations of Holy Spirit can be classified as a speculative theory, as it does not explain how a teacher should "trigger the awareness of the Holy Spirit." If this is the case, then at the level of interpersonal communication between participants of the teaching/learning process, one can observe some mutual destruction. This mainly applies to the role of the teacher in this process, because the effects of their activities depend to a small extent on their individual characteristics: personality, knowledge, skills and competences. According to this theory, they depend on the power and competence of the Holy Spirit. Many years of research conducted on the dynamics of the teaching and learning process show that its effectiveness is largely a function of the teacher's

impact and their pedagogical potential. Teachers can creatively impact development, create emotional and social atmosphere in the group, integrate, and form the train of behavior. The application of the theory discussed here clearly limits such teacher interactions (Rekus, 2013).

The targeted application of this theory does not mean rejecting it or controlling the actions of the Holy Spirit. It is rather about shaping the right conditions for the Spirit's presence to support the purposefulness of the teacher's activities. From a pedagogical point of view, this theory in religious education explains the relationship between human experience and what God says to us. This approach creates the foundation for an independent educational process that involves both teachers and students. It makes all participant aware of who or what stands behind this process (Borghini, 2015; Brezinka, 2004).

Theory of Dialogue

At the roots of the theory of dialogue lies the belief that a modification of student's references to religion depends on leveling the playing fields between the teacher and the student. The theory of dialogue is equaled to the dialogic pedagogy by Martin Buber. Namely, he believed that man does not function in isolation from reality and their "being" is always defined by relationships. There is essentially no such concept as "man for himself" but "man for another man" (Buber, 1992, p. 17). The dyad You and I forms the deepest dialogue and each of the entities enriches and develops through a personal interaction.

Making this assumption, T. Knauth (2007) formulated the theory of dialogue in religion teaching. In his opinion, only through dialogue can people save themselves and free themselves from hostility towards other people. The dialogue, by determining forms of learning religion, makes the student become the teacher of their teacher, without depriving them the teachers of their role.

In turn, D. Hunter, following M. Buber's philosophy, formulated the theory of commitment, meaning "meeting-learning-answering-responding-love-hate" (2003, p. 12). According to Hunter, only this kind of involvement can become the basis for a meeting between man and the world, with other people and with God. The theological foundation, however, lies in the fact that God affects people's lives regardless of their will and is always involved in their existence. Hunter believes that God, in the act of religion teaching, enriches the dialogues between interlocutors, transforming them into a rich mutual pedagogy of commitment. In it, man becomes a full being and experiences self-realization.

It is recognized that W. Rood (1995) developed the most complex form of dialogue theory. To determine the most distinctive features of this theory he proposed the relational triad: teacher-student-content. Namely, he believes that it is by using the method of lecture, debate or discussion that relationships between the student and teacher are built, using the appropriate content of religion teaching. The adopted

method determines a person's activity in the dialogue. In the case of a lecture, the teacher plays a decisive role in the teaching process. During a debate the teacher stimulates the learners to respond to the content. During the discussion, the level of activity is often balanced. Rood stated that permeating methods indicate teachers are taking a role of students. This creates a unique opportunity to comprehend mutual dialogue, mental and emotional integration, leading through the act of transition to mutual love. Including the religion teaching content in this concept would mean bringing the participants together through God and vice versa, getting closer to God through personal relationships. In this way, the theory of dialogue can be the quintessence of religious content in a particular person.

The following are the strengths of the described theory:

- direct teacher-student relationship;
- interpersonal (personal) nature of mutual relationship;
- teacher's respect for the student;
- the theory focusing on the teaching process, rather than on the content.

Despite the above positive aspects of this theory, it should be noted that its weakness is its too strong connection with the theory of the Holy Spirit's influence. It also emphasizes the forms of communication (type of communication) in the teaching process more than the content. This concept, in the opinion of its opponents, isolates religion teachers from the essential content of the message and belittles the remaining elements of the teaching process, e.g. the structure of the physical environment, which is used, among others in the pedagogical practice of M. Montessori (2006). Finally, the theory of dialogue does not define sharp boundaries between the participants. They are rather fluid, because every student can also become a teacher. Therefore, its opponents are more likely to recognize the theory of dialogue as supporting, therapeutic or complementary to the macro theory of religion teaching.

Theory of proclamation (preaching the Good News)

The theory of proclamation was developed from two sources, namely the exegesis of the key biblical texts and the dissemination of the teaching of religion within the structures of the Church preaching the mission. It finds many supporters in the European cultural circles, among others, because in Europe religious education is more based on preaching and interpreting the Word of God. The radical supporters of the theory of proclamation believe that "man cannot discover on his own the News of Salvation, which is a Divine Revelation, and that it is the teacher of religion who is called to present and report divine deeds to the community of the faithful" (Bissoli, 2011, p. 16).

The strength of proclamation theory is its cognitive nature regarding the content provided during religion lessons. The content is well worded, saved and developed in the form of curricula. Particularly noteworthy are the forms of recording the

liturgy as the basis of the proclaimed News, and therefore also the foundation of faith. The theory assumes a theological, hierarchically ordered set of issues, thanks to which the student logically learns about various stages of preaching the News. Any randomness in the selection of content, logical and psychological inconsistency is unacceptable. Proponents of this theory see this as a particular effectiveness of pedagogical activities.

However, the theory of proclamation also has significant shortcomings. It is unidimensional as it focuses exclusively on the content of teaching-learning process. It also pays little attention to such process variables as the student's behavior or their educational environment. It also ignores the results of the teacher's attitudes and behavior, reducing their role to the transmitter of content and thus impoverishing the teaching context (Nanni, 2012). In such a situation, the student basically constantly remains passive, not motivated to think or carry out creative activities. Their role is to memorize assigned content or blindly reproduce it.

J. Jungmann (2000) even suggests a ban or skepticism about possible discussions during religion classes. This would ensure the teacher's absolute control over the course of the lesson. The theory of proclamation therefore emphasizes the absolute, religious, intellectual and social authority of the teacher, especially in terms of the content they present. It also maintains a certain distance between the parties in the teaching process and limits student activity.

This theory is also accused of misusing Scripture as the basis for religion teaching. It should assimilate the literary and pedagogical content of the Bible, convey the history of Salvation in the form of a parable, and illustrate the meaning and quality of the News (Kudasiewicz, 1991; Läßle, 2003). It turns out that the proponents of the theory of proclamation too often selectively treat the content of the Holy Bible, presenting hand-picked passages to justify their own behavior.

Thus, the theory of proclamation cannot be treated as a macro-theory in religion teaching. Its transmissive character and the emphasis of the authority of the teacher blur the personal and community aspects of religious education.

Theory of dedication to teaching

The theory of dedication to teaching assumes a directly proportional reception and perception of religious events by students in order to involve the teacher in the teaching process. It emphasizes dedication, pedagogical talent and a particular personality predisposition of the teacher determine the success and effectiveness of teaching religion. By definition it is a particularly "natural" theory, congruent with the theory of dialogue. It promotes the development of contacts with students and good communication with them. According to proponents of this theory, total dedication to the teaching profession favors the atmosphere of learning religious content and is sufficient to achieve the goals and learning outcomes that have been set.

The opponents of the theory of dedication to teaching, on the other hand, emphasize that good will and willingness are insufficient and need to be complemented by skills, knowledge and competences that a teacher should possess (Brezinka, 2001, Biser, 2011). They should be highly qualified in every dimension. Teachers should avoid complacency and never cease to learn.

The theory of dedication also suggests that the essence of Christianity could be conveyed by an amateur or even ignorant, if only he did it with dedication (Majcher, 2003). Such reasoning is therefore not only harmful, but also destructive to professional knowledge and skills that are, after all, necessary for effective religion teaching.

The theory of broadly understood teaching

The theory of broadly understood teaching maintains that effective modification of student behavior towards religious content depends on many elements that are part of the teaching process. According to the teaching theory, the knowledge base about the effectiveness of this process are the empirical data on the dynamics of its development and implementation. In pedagogical practice, it does not allow any intuitive, pointless and stagnant activities called learning. Learning according to the theory of teaching is a fundamental change caused by the teacher and at the same time a consequence of his behavior towards the student. Such a change must be made each time, intentionally scheduled by the teacher. This means that in the act of religion teaching, the teacher's pedagogical activities and student's results are initially analyzed. Effectiveness is therefore conditioned by planning, researching, assessing and modifying educational goals (cognitive, emotional, psychomotor, etc.). The teacher should differentiate and adapt the repertoire of teaching methods and techniques to the presented content, however, using primarily methods that engage students. Therefore, this theory assumes the cooperation and integration of many components of the religion teaching process, namely teacher predispositions, student capabilities, curricula and syllabi, and social environment as an educational environment. What is more, the theory of teaching looks for causal relationships between the components to achieve the most successful learning outcomes (Weidmann, 2005).

The theory of teaching is, in relation to those previously described, a multidimensional theory that comprehensively treats all elements of the teaching process, taking into account its complexity and, above all, the mutual interactions of the participating entities (Bagrowicz, 2000; Michalski, 2004; Mensching, 2006). It therefore stresses that the most effective pedagogical strategy in religion teaching is a structured learning strategy. D. Hunter (2003, p 17) suggests that building a lesson involves "leadership, orchestration, a political campaign, or even planning a large-scale military operation".

The theory of teaching also assumes blurring the differences between religion as a subject and other school subjects, e.g. literature or history. Theology functions within the overall structure of social sciences and there are no reasons to emphasize its individual separateness. Such an approach would close its social dimension.

The history of religion teaching indicates a special need for applying the multidimensional theory of teaching. It is the most adequate theory, because it is rooted in social sciences, and they, after all, *eo ipso* control the process shaping the student's behavior, which is part of religion teaching.

Conclusion

The purpose of this sketch was – on the one hand – to present various, theoretical approaches to religion teaching, most often used in pedagogical practice, and on the other to pose questions, rather than provide conclusive answers regarding the most accurate theory of religion teaching. I am convinced that the discussion about contemporary pedagogy of religion requires continuation and enrichment with new threads. Each of the theories described in this text, regardless of its strengths and weaknesses, contains a certain truth relating to the teaching-learning process. The main conclusion that stems from their descriptions is the postulate of using primarily a multidimensional teaching theory that would contain the best elements of all theories. Thus, it determines the most effective model of practical activities that make up the process of teaching religion.

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WSPÓŁCZESNE TEORIE NAUCZANIA RELIGII. MIĘDZY TRADYCJĄ A NOWOCZESNOŚCIĄ

Streszczenie: Autor podjął próbę prezentacji głównych teorii nauczania religii. Są to: teoria osobowości, teoria autentyczności, teoria świadectwa, teoria działania Ducha Świętego, teoria dialogu, teoria proklamacji i teoria nauczania. Wszystkie te teorie, jakkolwiek posiadają bez wątpienia wiele zalet, suponują jako najużyteczniejszą w działaniach praktycznych, szeroko pojętą teorię nauczania. Skupia ona w sobie najistotniejsze elementy pozostałych

teorii, posiada ogromny potencjał wyjaśniania, stając się w ten sposób istotą wszelkich teorii nauczania religijnego. Wyznacza tym samym najskuteczniejszy model praktycznych działań, składających się na proces współczesnego nauczania religii. Artykuł niniejszy nawiązuje wprost i bezpośrednio do paradygmatu teoretycznego nauczania religii i wiedzy religijnej, natomiast pośrednio do pozostałych paradygmatów, ponieważ teoria nauczania religii (podobnie jak każda inna teoria nauczania) warunkuje rodzaj i jakość jej praktyki.

Słowa kluczowe: teoria nauczania; religia; wychowanie religijne; religijność; nowy paradygmat nauczania religii.