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THE CATEGORY OF COMPETENCE AND THE THEORY OF MORAL EDUCATION IN THE LIGHT OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF JÜRGEN HABERMAS AND JACQUES MARITAIN

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Abstract: The subject of moral education evokes categories such as standards, values or virtues, by means of which the teleology of education is usually drawn up in this area. Meanwhile, the beginning of the twenty-first century has brought us a transfer of the concept of competence into the field of moral education. The article is an attempt to understand what content this category includes with regard to educational-moral reflection, and to answer the question of what value the category of competence has for the theory of moral education. References to comparative studies were made in this research. The category of competence was compared with the category of virtue, but defined with reference to Jürgen Habermas' ideas, whereas the category of virtue was considered in the light of the moral philosophy of Jacques Maritain. These analyses led to drawing attention to the following issues: linking the interpretation of the category of competence with certain philosophical assumptions; referring the category of competence not so much to the quality of action, but to the ability to formulate moral standards, that is, to a theoretical skill, minimalism and ethical relativism as a consequence of the interpretation of moral competences in accordance with the assumptions of the critical theory.

The particularity of the concept of competences

The subject of moral education evokes categories such as standards, values or virtues, by means of which the teleology of education is usually drawn up in this area. Meanwhile, the beginning of the twenty-first century has brought us a transfer of the concept of competence into the field of moral education. It is introduced into general use, *inter alia*, through the policy of the European Union. The concept of competence is in fact crucial for the Lisbon Strategy, the European Qualifications Framework and related National Qualifications Frameworks. Referring the notion of competence to the field of morality is associated with attempts to describe social competences. They are understood as

„social maturity”, „socialization”, an „ability to find oneself appropriately in a situation” (Sławinski et al. 2011, p. 36-38). While in EU documents moral competences are not talked about directly, the exemplary learning outcomes for individual courses of study as well as the standards of training preparing for the teaching profession use the concept of moral competences (Regulation 2011; Regulation 2012). Therefore, the penetration of this concept into the discussion on moral education, and not just on the occasion of making reflections on higher education, but also ones regarding other levels of education which are to develop key competences of students, must be taken into account.

Referring to a new conceptual category indicates that it has some content that was not contained in the terms used previously. What is more, it suggests that by using the previously used concepts one cannot adequately capture and resolve the educational-moral problems diagnosed today. What is the specificity of this concept? What new things does it bring to the reflection on moral education? The first observation results from the comparison of the concepts. The terms of „standard” or „value” refer to that which is external, which is the object of a human act, while using competences we describe the subject. Competences of the type „capable of formulating principles of action” or „able to establish dialogue and find compromise solutions” focus our attention on the quality of the subject; the object of the act is not unimportant, but it is shifted to the background. The term of „competences” is therefore used to describe the equipment of the acting subject, which is a kind of a tool to solve moral problems faced by man in everyday life. Shifting attention from the object of action onto its subject discloses a conviction that in the modern, fluctuating, and thus complex world, the knowledge of standards or values is not enough. In specific, unique situations, a subject must independently work out the principles of action which are the best for him or her. To achieve this, the subject needs appropriate competences.

The statement that the term *competences* indicates the quality of the acting subject, in contrast to other terms used in the theories of moral education that draw attention to the object of action, is true with regard to the category of standards or values. The shift towards the subject, however, is also implied by the category of virtue. Thus, the question of what the category of competence brings that is new in relation to the concept of virtue seems reasonable. An attempt to look at a particular theory, a category against other categories, allows us to notice not only its specificity, but also provides us with a chance to answer the question of whether it adequately describes the reality to which it refers, what its strengths are and what its weaknesses are. These questions are important not only for theoretical reasons, but also because of the impact of theoretical findings on educational practice. Therefore, this paper will be an attempt to speak in the debate on the value of the category of competence for the theory of moral education. In this reflection the category of competence will be presented against the background of the category of virtue.

I would like to invite to the dialogue on the subject formulated above two thinkers: Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Maritain. The choice may seem surprising, given that neither of the philosophers mentioned deals directly with the category of competence. However, the selection is not accidental. There is no doubt that Jürgen Habermas's theory constitutes in Poland a point of reference for many of the proponents of the term of *competences* in the educational-moral reflection. In other words, the term moral competences is interpreted with reference to Habermas's theory. To see it, one should in the first place refer, for example, to Robert Kwaśnica's considerations on two rationalities – adaptive and emancipatory. Already in the introduction, he declares that his inspiration to undertake the research was Jürgen Habermas's critical philosophy (Kwaśnica 1986; Kwaśnica 2007, p. 7). When in another text he writes about the professional preparation of teachers, he defines their practical-moral competences in accordance with the idea of emancipatory rationality (Kwaśnica 1993, pp. 92-93; Kwaśnica 2004, pp. 300-301). Another example is the research conducted by Maria Czerepaniak-Walczak. The term „competences” is the key one in her monograph on the emancipatory theory of education. The theoretical foundation for this research is created first of all by the critical thought of the Frankfurt School, and especially the theory of Jürgen Habermas (Czerepaniak-Walczak 1994, pp. 28-33). Also in recently issued publications, such as for instance the *Pedagogical Encyclopaedia of the Twenty-First Century*, we find the juxtaposition of emancipatory and adaptive competences, which indicates a reference to the thoughts of the German philosopher (Męczkowska 2003, pp. 693-695). Therefore, a reference to the writings of Habermas in this article results from the belief that an attempt to understand the concept of moral competences requires delving into the foundations on which the interpretations of the term are built.

In the introduction, however, yet another issue requires an explanation. The term „moral competences” is often replaced with the much broader term of „social competences”, whereby the interpretation of social competences indicates a clear reference to morality. Attempting to define social competences as emancipatory ones, Maria Czerepaniak-Walczak uses the concepts of the „principle” or „standard” of action and also draws attention to the example of responsibility as an important component of their structure (Czerepaniak-Walczak 1994, pp. 134-146). Therefore, why do we speak of social competences and do not attempt to clarify what moral competences are? The answer to this question is related to the assumptions of Habermas's theory, which sees the source of principles in the agreement achieved in social life. Therefore, the reference to moral competences as distinct from social ones would suggest that morality has different sources than the consensus reached by an agreement in community life. Differentiating moral competences from social ones would result in a requirement to clarify the issue of the source of morality.

The choice of Jacques Maritain's thoughts as the background for the considerations of the value of the category of competence in the theory of moral education is also grounded. The philosopher is a neo-Thomist, that is, he represents the trend in philosophy which develops the theory of moral virtues. Hence, it is this category that draws attention to the quality of the acting subject and for whom the category of moral competences is an alternative. Neo-Thomism has numerous representatives. In Poland, for example, the Dominican Jarek Woroniecki conducted a reflection in his spirit. However, Maritain's thought seems to be more suitable for the research undertaken here, as Maritain focuses on the relationships between intellectual development and the moral value of an act of a certain person, whereas Woroniecki is interested in the influence of the will on the quality of a subject's moral action. I shall begin my considerations from a short reconstruction of fragments of Habermas' theory, particularly inspiring for the theory of moral education, in order to reflect on this theory in the light of Jacques Maritain's moral philosophy later on.

Jürgen Habermas' theory and the issue of moral competences

The philosophical reflection of Jürgen Habermas, one of the most widely read and influential contemporary thinkers, is focused on the problem of developing public space, and in particular on the process of social integration. Thus, it is located on the border between sociology and philosophy (Habermas 1983, p. 24; Habermas 1999, p. 8), treating anthropological issues as secondary. Habermas is looking for answers to the questions of how public space is built, how people enter into communicative interaction and come to an agreement formulating the principles of social life. However, these questions are not only an expression of theoretical research. The story of Habermas' life, for which World War II constituted the horizon and the subsequent trial of totalitarianism in the form of Nazism, has contributed to the fact that the German philosopher has been looking for a theoretical foundation for the process of democratization. For he is convinced that totalitarianism cannot be overcome by liberalism, but by such a system of social life which is based on commonly applicable standards. Moreover, he is accompanied by the awareness that the changes of mentality of individuals are the condition of moral renewal (Habermas 2012, pp. 21, 23).

The answer to the question of where to find the justification for commonly applicable standards is embedded in social theory. Habermas believes that the law that is applicable is that which is acceptable to each participant in a particular community, that is, it regulates a given matter in the equal interest of all. Furthermore, he believes that such a law can arise only through a debate which is initiated by putting forward normative value claims by its participants, and one of its dimensions is accepting the perspectives of all others, leading to the verification of whether a formulated standard could be adopted by them. It is

only through such a debate that an agreement is possible. The search for a principle of conduct carried out in a different way, especially through intellectual considerations, must – according to Habermas – ultimately fail. For principles formulated in this way are in fact out of context, out of history, and certainly do not take into account the interests of those who have shaped their identity and function in traditions other than those of a given subject. In return, these principles usually connect a standard with the personal project of the life of an individual subject. Therefore, the German philosopher advocates total rejection of the vertical perspective, that is, one of exploration by man of his own project of life, in favour of the horizontal perspective – an interpersonal one (Habermas 1983, pp. 41-44; Habermas 1999, pp. 45-49, 58-61, 144, 462; Habermas 2002b, pp. 10-18; Habermas 2009, pp. 43-45).

In addition to indicating what the source of an objective standard is, regarding which issue Habermas does not agree with Immanuel Kant, accusing him of lack of historical perspective (Habermas 2009, p. 45), the remaining elements of the moral theory of the contemporary German philosopher have been taken from Kant. The philosopher from Königsberg perceived the will as good when subjected to the a priori, universal, and necessary moral law, which reason inferred from itself, whereas he did not attribute such value to the will, which was driven by other motives of action (Glencoe 1995, p. 178; Copleston 1996, pp. 332-370). Similar theses can be found in Habermas, who appreciates the will only when it is determined by an insight into what we all might wish for (Habermas 2009, p. 43).

A concept of subjective conditions that would be desirable in the perspective of participation in and co-creation of public space by the individual emerges from the above considerations. They certainly include the ability of insight into what claim is made by another participant of the debate (Habermas 1999, pp. 131-140). Another important issue is the ability to critically approach the traditions, religions, or conventions not taking into account these value claims, regarding the validity of which the subject deluded him- or herself earlier, followed by the ability to create new values and standards (Habermas 1983, pp. 47-9; Górnicka-Kalinowska 1999, p. 117; Szahaj 2008, pp. 93-95). The autonomy of the will, consisting in binding it by reason, i.e. submitting itself to standards worked out by means of discourse, even though they may be contrary to the previously recognized values and principles, or even the personal project of life, should also be considered as desirable.

Habermas's renowned thought thus implies the conditions to formulate a theory of moral competences. From the perspective of the social theory formulated by him, this theory does not seem to be questionable. It is, however, worthwhile to reflect on it from the perspective of moral philosophy, built under a different tradition of thinking than Habermas's theory. Jacques Maritain's thought, belonging to the Thomistic tradition, seems to be a foundation suitable for this purpose.

The theory of moral competences referring to the thoughts of Jürgen Habermas in the light of the moral philosophy of Jacques Maritain

1. Introducing Habermas' thoughts, I pointed out, not without reason, that he formulates a social theory and deals with anthropology only as a secondary issue. Jacques Maritain adopts a reverse course of exploration. The primary fact for his analyses in the field of moral philosophy is a moral obligation. Maritain ponders over what its source is. Following the Thomistic tradition, he takes the position that it is born thanks to the desire for happiness inscribed in human nature (Maritain 2001, pp. 100-115). What is the relationship between these two facts? The desire for happiness is synonymous with the desire for one's own fulfilment and is something independent of man. It cannot be rejected. Yet it is not a determining desire. Maritain compares it to an empty frame, which every man fills with the good with which he equates the attainment of happiness (2001, pp. 91-93). Some people connect their own fulfilment and the happiness accompanying it with material goods, others with pleasure. There are also those who see it in professional success, and those for whom the primary objective is the happiness of their nearest and dearest, for example, their own children. Primary objectives can also be placed in transcendent reality, i.e. they may have a religious dimension. Those objectives primarily affect the will that desires them. What is the relationship they have with the moral assessment of specific situations and obligations discovered in the circumstances of making choices? In the Thomistic tradition, a practical judgement, a judgement of conscience, is seen as a result of a dialogue between reason, which is a cognitive power, and the will, or appetitive power. Reason assesses somewhat according to what the will wishes for, indicating which actions bring one closer to the ultimate goal, to one's own fulfilment and happiness, and which ones move us away from it (Maritain 1993c, pp. 74-75; Maritain 2005a, p. 169; Maritain 2005b, pp. 73-76). The fact that it explains the differences between moral obligations experienced by individuals speaks for the veracity of this theoretical construct. According to it, someone focused on the pleasures in life will not be experiencing the obligation of doing good to another human being, when it results in unpleasant consequences for them. On the other hand, someone who wants, above all, the good of their loved ones, will be experiencing an obligation to take difficult actions, or ones demanding sacrifices, if they bring the good of their relatives. This theory also explains the fact of discovering by some people the obligation to sacrifice their own goods for the sake of strangers, justifying this obligation with the hope to fulfil oneself in relation to the Absolute.

The Thomistic theory, which Maritain develops, and the theory of Habermas, which refers to the thoughts of Kant, are two completely different theoretical constructs that attempt to describe and explain the reality of morality. Therefore, what results in practice from Habermas's theory and the theory of moral competences deriving from it, if we look at them from

Maritain's point of view? Such an approach raises doubts as to whether acquiring moral competences will translate into morally valuable actions. Since what is the use of the fact that a subject recognizes in communicative space the normative value claims of others and establishes norms of behaviour which will take into account the value claims of all participants in social life, if they do not experience in their conscience the obligation to respect these standards? The subject will not experience it because he or she will not be stimulated by the desire of good, the achievement of which is linked to the achievement of happiness. Let us refer to the following example. A teachers' moral competences allow him or her to identify the needs of two students who need school equipment and textbooks to develop themselves, and their parents cannot provide them with these because of poverty. Let us introduce a significant difference to these children from the teacher's perspective, i.e. let one of them belong to his or her family. Will the teacher discover the obligation to purchase these things for the children? This will be dependent on what such a teacher is focused on and expects in life. Recognizing that his or her own personal fulfilment demands meeting the needs of both children, he or she can purchase the necessary school equipment and books, but feeling an obligation to care for his or her loved ones, he or she can also meet the needs of only one child; such a teacher may also, on the assumption that the money he or she earns belongs only to him/her, spend it on pleasures that will satisfy his/her hedonistic needs. What will the teacher's specific attitude depend on? It will depend on what he or she truly loves, that is, what his or her will is focused upon. Thus, the above analyses lead to the conclusion that having moral competences does not translate directly into morally good action. Morality has its own characteristics, so moral competences are not the same as technical competences. A subject having for instance language skills (competences) can use them without involving the whole of his or her personality. Morality, on the contrary, calls for such a commitment. Therefore, a subject prepared to identify the normative value claims of other people and able to search for solutions satisfactory to all will not necessarily act in accordance with established standards, and may even violate them in the event of not controlling their actions under the influence of addiction to alcohol, drugs or sex.

Does this mean that we should not develop moral competences? Certainly, we cannot draw such a conclusion on the basis of the above analyses. However, one should be aware of the limitations which having moral competences involves, and of the necessity for not so much teaching but educating maturing people, so that they could in specific life situations not only well recognize a situation and determine the best action in it, but also implement this action, even if it is difficult, requiring sacrifice and renouncing the goods that appear to be important and deserved by a given subject. Thomistic pedagogy indicates that a category more adequate than competence to describe morality and moral development is the category of virtues. These are based on the four cardinal

virtues: prudence, justice, moderation, and courage, of which as many as three, beginning with justice, indicate the maturity of others rather than the intellect of the powers of human nature.

2. Although the category of moral competences does not, as it seems, carry the content indicating the efficiency of morally good actions, but only the efficiency of the search for moral solutions to the situations which given subjects have found themselves in, one cannot depreciate it. The world in which modern man must live is extremely complicated. Life brings ever new variables and, therefore, people still face the necessity of developing principles of action in situations new for them. It is then that ethical knowledge becomes not so much valuable, as the very competences to understand reality in terms of moral good and evil, to listen to what others are saying about issues important to them and to find practical solutions to such contentious issues, which will be an expression of concern not only about their own good, but also about the good of another human being.

Reading through the thoughts of both Habermas and Maritain, one can say that both philosophers appreciate the importance of such theoretical skills. At the same time it should be noted that each of them would understand the concept of competence as something else. Habermas understands social life as a reality created on the foundation of normative value claims put forward by different subjects. Putting forward such a claim is combined with the necessity to engage in arguing for one's own stand. Habermas called a person who is capable of doing this a rational one (Habermas 1999, pp. 29-33, 45-49). At the same time, Habermas advocates against the valuation of individual claims. For each valuation is done in reference to a criterion, that is, it already assumes the existence of a prior normative order and, therefore, it would be an attempt to impose by one party their own way of understanding reality on all others. Competences in Habermas's terms would therefore be an ability to invest reality with a moral dimension through communication and negotiation.

Maritain's theory, in contrast, assumes that what others claim must be evaluated. Why? Because their demands may result not so much from a rational determination of moral good, but from desires and violent yearnings, fuelled by instinct and emotion (Maritain 2005b, p. 59). Therefore, Maritain would not agree with the fact that one should ignore claims put forward by participants in a discussion, and consequently deny the validity and legitimacy of any claim put forward. In my opinion referring to Maritain's theory one could also derive the concept of moral competences, but completely different from that which stems from Habermas's philosophy. Following Maritain's reasoning leads to the thesis that part of the concept of moral competences accepted by him would be the ability to determine ontological good, and then moral good. By ontological good Maritain understands what is appropriate for a particular being (Maritain 1988b, pp. 249-250), for example, in relation to man ontological good would be appropriate food or school equipment and textbooks for children. Moral good is

identified in a specific order, which is man's fulfilment and achievement of happiness. Not every ontological good turns out to be good in the moral order. Striving for goods that do not cause direct damage to man, but bring him pleasure, may be positive from the ontological perspective, while it may be bad from the moral one. This happens when in the long run it results in failing to fulfil a person, bringing disappointment instead of happiness. Therefore, we should include in moral competences the ability to discover ways of fulfilling human existence (Maritain 1988a, p. 336; Maritain 2001, pp. 42-52; Maritain 2005a, p. 33).

In Maritain's writings we find guidelines on how to achieve it. He argues for the key role in this process of asking important existential questions, provoking reflection on the issues of honour, despair, dignity of man, love and mercy, complications of good and evil, asceticism (Maritain 1991, pp. 35-36; Maritain 1993b, p. 142). A practical idea that Maritain formulates is the „passionate and greedy” reading of books (Maritain 1993c, p. 171), which is to lead to an encounter with the inner world of man, and especially to the discovery of the course of human maturation (Maritain 1991, p. 36). Similarly to Habermas, Maritain speaks of insight into the world of another person, but this is not an insight assuming the validity of each claim, but one leading to evaluation, to perceiving in human life its developmental dynamics and sketching an orienteering map in order to understand oneself and other people. Moral competences in Maritain's terms would be primarily skills of understanding reality and one's own action in it, taking directly into account the good of another human being and indirectly one's own personal fulfilment. We can say that such competences are achieved neither in the process of education nor in the process of debates, but they are the result of life experience, including the negative one, when decisions taken incorrectly result in disappointment and remorse.

Moreover, the communicative embedding of a public debate seems to favour the model resulting from Maritain's philosophy. People demanding in this debate some good for themselves can, arguing for the need to grant them this good, introduce into their own presentation non-substantive elements. It is a broad issue. At this point, for example, let us refer only to the language using which we can validate or discredit someone's views. Validation is related to attributing the label „scientific” to a view, while the view is in fact just an outlook, built for example on the materialist basis of scientific results. The terms „modern”, „tolerant”, „archaic”, „fundamentalist” have a similar „power” of validating or discrediting (Dębowski 2003). A subject wishing to find a practical principle of action, i.e. one taking into account the good of all the people involved in social life, must then separate substantive arguments from those elements of communicative reality which are an attempt to exert influence on him or her. In order to find oneself in this space, to be able to determine whether a given good should belong to a specific person, or maybe whether this

person demands some goods that he or she does not deserve, the subject needs directions, which can only be provided by competences, formed according to the model that results from Maritain's theory.

3. Attention should also be paid to which moral standards and what understanding of morality the concepts discussed lead to. Moral competences, which result from Habermas' theory, would become the cornerstone of an agreement allowing for the interests of all participants in social life. His meditations are guided by the purpose of creating a society that may not be perfect, but at least is one that seeks to achieve agreement and creates space for the peaceful coexistence of different subjects and communities. There is no doubt that agreement is necessary, especially when followers of different religions and non-believers, or representatives of different cultural traditions, live together in one space (Habermas 2012, pp. 7-8). However, narrowing ethics to standards which are established in public space results in certain consequences. Since participants in social life are people with differently shaped ethical systems (primarily due to differences in the adopted criteria of good and evil), focused on various goods as ultimate goals of their own aspirations, agreement between them can therefore be achieved at a low level, basically in the scope of determining limits which must not be exceeded. Maritain says that the search for a common denominator for conflicting beliefs is always chasing commonness and a sign of mental cowardice, which weakens the mind and leads to the renunciation of truth (Maritain 2007, p 142; Maritain 1981, pp. 103-104). We can say that the search for a common denominator results in minimalism, which Maritain opposes with maximalism.

Differences between Habermas' and Maritain's theories concern not only the quality of standards whose development they lead to, but they are much deeper, as they apply to the concept of morality. The French philosopher points out that morality cannot be narrowed to complying with the standards which have been formulated in social life. In his view, morality is revealed in meeting the challenges that people discover, looking back over their life from the perspective of personal fulfilment and achievement of happiness. This is particularly evident when conscience commands a person to take a position contrary to the claims put forward by others and prohibits negotiations aimed at the formulation of compromise solutions.

The problem of understanding morality is crucial both for the theory of moral education and for its practice. The answer to the question about the purpose of education, be it equipping subjects with the ability to negotiate and reach a compromise, and then to respect established norms, or stimulating people to ask questions about what actions bring human beings closer to personal fulfilment and consequently to achieving happiness and then to following solutions discovered in their conscience, even if they are not understandable for the majority of participants in social life, is fundamental for these areas. Opting for the first solution may lead to educating people who will

not have anything to complain about regarding their own actions, because they will identify their own moral goodness with respecting the standards that are widely recognized. In reality, however, their actions will be difficult to be called morally good.

4. The last issue that should be mentioned is the issue of relativism of moral standards, which is introduced by means of the concept of moral competences, derived from Habermas's theory. Although the German philosopher is not a proponent of relativism, and his theory constitutes, at the time of rejection of religion, a search for a foundation for standards that would be universally applicable, then in a way, it simply leads to relativism. For by defining moral competences in line with the assumptions of Habermas's thought we assume that there are no objective moral standards, ones that would result, following Aristotle's wordings, from the nature of things (Aristotle, 1094b). After all Habermas draws up a theory of reason which gives meaning, evaluates and liberates from existing structures (Habermas 1999, p. 49). Can a theory based on such assumptions imply a conviction that there are some impassable principles? It is difficult to answer this question positively. Habermas' theory basically suggests that every rule in the situation of an individual moral choice can be approached from a distance, explaining the difficulty of its application for example by stating that personal value claims are not covered by this principle. Reason will certainly not have problems with identifying them if rebellion against acting in accordance with this principle occurs in a subject.

The Thomist system, of which Maritain is a supporter, is built on different assumptions. The conviction of the existence of natural law lies at its foundations. Under this name hides an order that is inscribed into reality and according to which something is appropriate and something is inappropriate for a given being, something right and something is wrong for him or her (Maritain 1988b, pp. 249-250). Moral good, although it is not a direct implication of natural law, is connected to it and is dependent on respecting it (Maritain 2002, pp. 42-52). Although moral good demands respecting natural law, man is not determined by it. People's knowledge of reality is always incomplete and often leads to errors. In addition, people must answer the question about moral good in reference to natural law in complex practical situations, in which it is sometimes difficult to assess what is compatible with natural law and what is not. Therefore, determining moral good is a great challenge for reason (Maritain 1993a, pp. 91-102). Consequently, Maritain ascribes great importance to the intellect in the field of morality. However, he grants it the right to measure values, but not to create them. He calls giving reason the right to create values rationalism and subjects it to deep criticism (Maritain 1993a, pp. 116-117; Maritain 2005b, pp. 127-128). Adopting the assumption of the existence of natural law makes the subject try to seek answers to the question of moral good and evil in specific practical situations, and treat the discovered values as binding for use in their own action, even though sometimes they may be

difficult for the subject and require the sacrifice of some good he or she deserves (Maritain 2002, p. 167).

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the category of competence has become firmly established in the educational-moral reflection. The evidence of this, among others, can be its occurrence in the documents governing the process of education at different levels of the system of education. Using it in school and university education seems reasonable, given that the domain of the school is to educate. The value of this category in the context of contemporary socio-cultural determinants and its appropriateness to describe the processes taking place in the school, however, cannot lead to its uncritical application. It is important to first of all recognize that moral competences, although they are not the same as ethical knowledge, relate to intellectual development and do not translate directly into the moral quality of action of a subject equipped with them. It is also debatable what these competences are to be made of. Are they to be the ability of insight into normative value claims put forward by participants in social life and the skill of searching for solutions satisfying all, or perhaps the ability to view individual actions from the perspective of personal fulfilment of an acting subject? Any decision regarding this question will lead to certain consequences in the form of an absolute or relative character of moral standards and minimalist or maximalist ethics. The sympathies of the author of this text clearly lie with the theory referring to Jacques Maritain's thoughts. However, regardless of the fact which expression of moral competences will be introduced into specific educational projects, one should be aware of its advantages and disadvantages.

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Kategoria kompetencji i teoria wychowania moralnego w świetle filozofii Jürgena Habermasa i Jacquesa Maritaina

Słowa kluczowe: wychowanie moralne, kompetencje, cnoty, Habermas, Maritain

Streszczenie: Temat wychowania moralnego przywodzi na myśl takie kategorie, jak normy, wartości czy sprawności-cnoty, za pomocą których kreśli się zazwyczaj teleologię wychowania w tym obszarze. Tymczasem początek XXI wieku przyniósł przeniesienie w dziedzinę wychowania moralnego pojęcia kompetencji. Artykuł stanowi próbę zrozumienia, jaką treść kryje w sobie owa kategoria w odniesieniu do refleksji pedagogiczno-moralnej oraz odpowiedzi na pytanie, jaką wartość ma kategoria kompetencji dla teorii wychowania moralnego. W badaniach odwołano się do komparatystyki. Kategorię kompetencji poddano porównaniu z kategorią sprawności-cnoty, przy czym kategorię kompetencji zdefiniowano w nawiązaniu do myśli Jürgena Habermasa, natomiast kategorię cnoty rozważano w świetle filozofii moralnej Jacquesa Maritaina. Analizy doprowadziły do zwrócenia uwagi na następujące kwestie: powiązanie interpretacji kategorii kompetencji z określonymi założeniami filozoficznymi; odniesienie kategorii kompetencji nie tyle do jakości działania, co do umiejętności formułowania norm moralnych, czyli do umiejętności teoretycznej; minimalizm oraz relatywizm etyczny jako konsekwencję interpretacji kompetencji moralnych zgodnie z założeniami teorii krytycznej.

Kompetenzkategorie und Theorie der Moralerziehung im Lichte der Philosophien von Jürgen Habermas und Jacques Maritain

Schlüsselwörter: Moralerziehung, Kompetenz, Tugenden, Maritain, Habermas

Zusammenfassung: Im Zusammenhang mit dem Thema der Moralerziehung werden solche Begriffe assoziiert wie „Normen“, „Werte“ und „Tugenden“, mit deren Hilfe bis dato erziehungsteleologische Ansätze diesen Bereich suchten zu umschreiben. Seit dem Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts findet der Begriff der Kompetenz in dem ethisch-pädagogischen Diskurs breiten Eingang. In dem vorliegenden Artikel wird versucht erstens herauszubekommen, was für ein Verständnis von Moralerziehung die neue Kategorie in sich birgt und zweitens, welcher Stellenwert ihr bei der Ausformung einer Moralerziehungstheorie zukommen sollte. Bei der Untersuchung wurde vergleichsanalytisch vorgegangen, d.h. der Begriff der Kompetenz wurde vor dem Hintergrund der Kategorie „Tugend/Fertigkeit“ interpretiert, wobei Kompetenz im Anschluss an die Position von Jürgen Habermas definiert, hingegen zur Bestimmung des Tugendbegriffs auf die Moralphilosophie von Jacques Maritain zurückgegriffen wurde. Bei den

Analysen wurde im einzelnen erörtert: Verbindung des Kompetenzverständnisses mit den philosophischen Voraussetzungen, Bedeutung des Begriffs „Kompetenz“ nicht für die Bestimmung einer Handlung, sondern im Zusammenhang der Fähigkeit, ethische Normen eigenständig zu formulieren (moraltheoretische Kompetenz), ethischer Minimalismus und Relativismus als Konsequenzen der Moralkompetenzinterpretation gemäß dem Ansatz der Kritischen Theorie.

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