Hoffman, L; Janse van Rensburg, J
University of the Free State

Spiritual formation of adolescents – a semiotic analysis[1]

ABSTRACT

How do adolescents describe their own spiritual journey? Can people involved in the spiritual formation of adolescents glean helpful information from adolescents' descriptions? Fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with five grade 10 learners from Bloemfontein, South Africa. Through semiotic analysis, the following syntagms were found: family, spiritual leader, knowledge, community, school, speech act and friends. These syntagms fitted into three paradigms: process, role players and content. A semiotic square was constructed for the term "process". Habermas's theory of communicative action can be applied to these findings. The study suggests important communicative principles to be utilized in the spiritual formation of adolescents. Limitations and suggestions for further research are also pointed out.

INTRODUCTION

How do adolescents describe their own spiritual journey? Can people involved in the spiritual formation of adolescents glean helpful information from adolescents' descriptions? Smith did a comprehensive research project on American adolescents' faith and found the following (2005:262): "Very many religious congregations and communities of faith in the United States are failing rather badly in religiously engaging and educating their youth." There is also concern in the South African community regarding the effectiveness of religious education in helping children and youth actualise their faith in their daily lives (Venter & Van der Merwe, 2005:114). How can adolescents be best accompanied on their spiritual journey? A brief literature overview will sketch the background for this study on the spiritual formation of adolescents.

1. LITERATURE OVERVIEW

1.1 Spiritual formation

Spirituality is a multifaceted construct that, amongst others, refers to beliefs and attitudes, self-transcendence, emotional phenomena and a search for the sacred side of life (Van Rooyen & Beukes 2009:27; Wong, Rew & Slaikeu 2006:163). "Spiritual formation is a rather general term referring to all attempts, means, instruction and disciplines intended towards deepening of faith and furtherance of spiritual growth" (May 1992:6) For the purposes of this research project, the research was limited to Christian spirituality as the research group was from a population with a Christian spirituality. Strategies for Christian spiritual formation include religious practices, formal and informal study and the practice of spiritual disciplines (Upper room ministries 2010, Wikipedia 2010).

Religious practice forms part of spiritual formation and is associated negatively with drug and alcohol abuse, crime, depression and early sexual activity (Ebaugh, 2005). The positive outcomes of religious practice for the youth are also witnessed by a growing body of research and include overall well-being, altruism, service, resilience, coping and positive forming of identity (Kaster

---

2006:7).

1.2 Characteristics of adolescents

According to Erikson's developmental stages, identity formation vs. role confusion is one of the major developmental tasks adolescents have to master (Patient teaching 1990). A role model and peer pressure can have a great influence on them. They have to integrate different roles into a self-image.

Intellectual developments enable adolescents to reason hypothetically and think about moral issues in broader terms. Piaget calls this the level of formal operations (Olds & Papalia 1986:324). "The more adolescents talk about their personal theories and listen to those of other people, the sooner they arrive at a mature level of thinking" (Looft 1971 in Olds & Papalia 1986:328).

Cognitive development aids in moral development, as abstract thinking is necessary to move from Kohlberg's conventional to the post-conventional stage of moral thinking. Where adolescents are given the opportunity to talk about moral issues and are exposed to a person at a higher level of moral thinking, their level of moral thinking can be raised (Olds & Papalia 1986:329).

From the age of 12 years, Fowler's stage of synthetic-conventional faith is reached (Ellias 1983:127-128). Custom and consensus of groups and individuals are relied upon. At this stage, the person understands that everyone is personally responsible for accepting faith, but the authority still lies outside the person. There is a reliance on a community nurturing the values and beliefs. At this stage, faith needs to provide a helpful synthesis between the different roles an individual plays.

According to research, religious and spiritual issues are important to adolescents. Furthermore, adolescents with higher levels of spirituality and religiosity show greater competence in life skills than their less religious and less spiritual peers (Cotton et al. 2006:472).

Against the above-mentioned background, a study was conducted on the spiritual formation of adolescents. More specifically, the religious practices of these adolescents and how they influence their spiritual formation were studied.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research design

This research project was designed as a qualitative study. The aim is to look for patterns and contextual findings (Maykut & Morehouse 1994:21). A purposive choice was made regarding the sample of Christian congregations to be included in this study (cf. Glicken 2003:185). Three congregations with three different faith formation programmes were contacted. Grade 10 learners were to be included in the study as they are in the semi-final year of the congregation's faith formation programme and can reflect on their spiritual formation due to the intellectual development at this age.

2.2 Participants

Information-rich resources were used to identify five adolescents from three different Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) congregations in Bloemfontein, South Africa, for interviews concerning their spiritual formation. Religious education teachers from three different congregations were asked to each identifies two adolescents from their religious education classes who had different spiritual experiences. These included adolescents from single parent homes, homes where both father and mother wee present, as well as from different schools. Fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with five grade 10 learners. Interviews were recorded digitally and transcribed verbatim afterwards. The participants included three boys and two girls attending

four different secondary schools. Their average age was 15.5 years. Since the participants were under age, their parents gave written permission for their participation in the project. (Pseudonyms were used when referring to the participants.)

Themes investigated included spiritual formation and its influencing factors. During the first interview, five general questions regarding spiritual formation were asked, including the influence of the church, religious education and parents. In the second interview, four questions were asked regarding religious education, dealing with the content, religious education teacher and children in their religious education classes. During the third interview, questions regarding their own personal experience of faith were asked.

2.3 Analysis technique

Semiotic analysis functioned as the primary analysis technique. However, incorporating the grounded theory approach, which provided the concepts to be analyzed (Cf. Charmaz 2006:7 et seq.; Glaser & Strauss 1967: 28 et seq.). The grounded theory approach aims to generate theories that explain an aspect of the world. The theory must be deducted from reality (Osmer 2008:52). A theory explaining adolescents' experience of faith formation might be developed from this information. Information is coded in three ways:

- Open coding (Strauss & Corbin 1990:61) – Investigate, compare, conceptualize and categorize data.
- Axial coding (Strauss & Corbin 1990:96) – Make connections between categories (themes or syntagms).
- Selective coding (Strauss & Corbin 1990: 116) – Select the main category (theme or syntagm), and connect it with other categories (themes or syntagms).

The following concepts of the semiotic code, listed in the order they appear in this article (cf. Manning 1987:33), were utilized in this research: semioses (growth and change in the meaning of signs, p. 63); syntagm (a syntactic string of words forming part of a bigger syntactic unit); paradigm (associative context in which syntagms are grouped, p. 58) and the semiotic square. The realizing of differences on a deeper level gives meaning in a discourse (Speelman 1995:19). Amongst others, these differences can be expressed in a semiotic square. Greimas, an important exponent of semiotic analysis, utilized the semiotic square in following Aristotle's "square of opposites" (cf. Greimas 1970:136-140). The semiotic square is a conceptual network as well as a visual representation of the network that can aid in oppositional analysis (Hébert 2005:27). The semiotic square contains four terms where one term is put in contrast to another, thus gaining meaning. A semiotic square is demonstrated in Figure 1. In this study, the semiotic square will be used on a semantic level, examining the interviews for semantic possibilities (Hébert 2005:33).

Fig 1: A semiotic square (Speelman 1995:20)
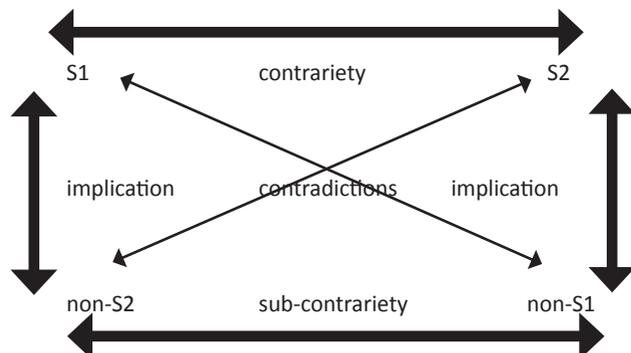
3. RESULTS

In this section, the results of the research will be sketched in the light of the grounded theory approach, which first considers the reality of a situation and only afterwards considers possible interpretations (cf. Charmaz 2006:7). In section 4, the results will be discussed in more detail and compared with other studies.

3.1 Open coding
In studying the different interviews, the following syntagms came to the fore: family, religious education teacher/leader, knowledge, church/congregation, koinonia, school, speech act and friends. (The term "speech act" was chosen in the light of Habermas's theory.) All three interviews with each adolescent were coded according to these syntagms. Individual responses were given to enable the researcher to trace patterns in adolescents and in their congregations more easily.

Interview 1
Three of the five adolescents referred to specific incidents that brought about a turning point in their spiritual journeys. After such an event, religious education, church and other activities had more meaning. With four of them, the parents played important roles in their spiritual lives in the example they set and in practicing religious activities together. In congregation A, the adolescent felt that religious education should be more like a prayer group. In congregation B, the positive relationship with the religious education teacher had a great influence. In congregation C, the knowledge element was emphasized. The adolescents partially agreed about the influence of religious education on their faith. Their responses are given in Table 1.

Table 1: What is the influence of religious education on your faith?

Congregation A	Congregation B		Congregation C	
Albert	Belinda	Betty	Christopher	Collin
Same influence as church. Can voice your opinion. Talk together. Learn. Your attitude determines whether you learn something.	Gives steadfastness in a changing world. Informal. The content stays more with you than in a sermon. Can share your problems.	Teacher gives practical demon-strations. Learn a lot.	Learn more. Gives content to your faith.	It helps you more than church. You can ask questions. Meet as a small group.

Interview 2
In this interview, three aspects of religious education were investigated: the handbook, religious education teacher and koinonia experienced in religious education. No adolescent ascribed

advanced spiritual formation to religious education. From their answers, it is evident that the fellowship of believers (koinonia) plays an important role in spiritual growth. Koinonia was also found in religious education and was mentioned in this context in interview 1. Another theme that is beginning to crystallize is actively doing something and helping others to do something for the Lord. More than one of the adolescents mentioned that one grows spiritually when one helps others to grow spiritually. What they can recall about the content of religious education pertains to lifestyle issues. One of the adolescents mentioned that religious education was a preparation for adulthood.

Interview 3
The five adolescents had five different answers to the question: "Who or what do you think has had the greatest influence on your spiritual journey until now?" However, the uniting factor was a significant other: a leader, friends, etc. Friends apparently play an important role, both on a negative and a positive side. Two of the adolescents described their relationship with the Lord in terms of friendship. Betty made a statement that might warrant further investigation: "When you talk about something, it strengthens your faith. It makes you more mature." The issue of "believe and confess" – to give verbal expression to your faith – may play a significant role in spiritual formation. Albert remarked, "Teenagers have a great impact on the world – if one can make use of that, you can have a great influence on society." Little new information was gleaned from interview 3. However, themes from earlier interviews were repeated, for example to talk about one's faith.

A few of the adolescents gave feedback on how they had experienced the interviews. It implored them to rethink religion and religious education. They were encouraged to do what they had been talking about – reading the Bible regularly, witnessing and attending church services.

In each interview, the question was asked, "What helps you to grow spiritually, to become spiritually more mature?" Table 2 gives and exposition of each adolescent's response.

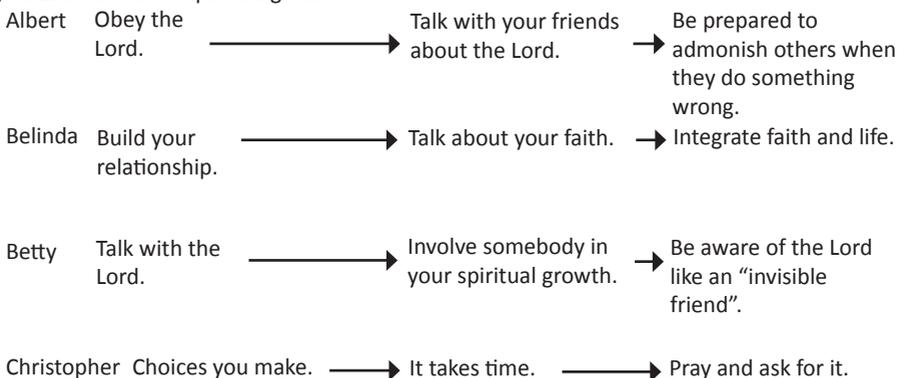Table 2: What makes an adolescent grow spiritually?

Congregation A	Congregation B		Congregation C	
Albert	Belinda	Betty	Christopher	Collin
Interview 1 Work for the Lord. Obey the Lord. Mean something for somebody else.	Build your relationship with the Lord. Talk to other people about religion. Friends can help you grow spiritually.	Talk to the Lord. Read the Bible. Read spiritual books.	Relationship with the Lord. Choices you make. It takes time.	You must continue believing.

Interview 2	Give your heart to the Lord. Live fully for the Lord. Talk with your friends about the Lord.	Talk about faith. Be "committed" to reading the Bible, praying and going to church. You want to do it.	Involve somebody else in your spiritual growth. Try to help other people grow spiritually.	It takes time. You must grow.	Stay on the right road. Make the right choices. Help other grow spiritually.
Interview 3	When an adolescent experiences that the Lord is real. Live out the Word (Bible). Talk about the Lord. Be prepared to exhort somehow when others do wrong things.	Talk about your faith. Integrate faith with whole life.	Talk to the Lord. Be aware of His presence like an "invisible friend".	You must pray and ask for it.	Help others grow spiritually.

The adolescents' references to "talking about your faith" and "helping one another" concur with other studies that also found that strategies that were most effective in religious education were those that involved the adolescents in the learning process and let them act as "teachers" (Theisen n.d : 5).

With each of the adolescents, semioses of the concept "spiritual growth" was evident. It is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Semioses of spiritual growth

Albert — Obey the Lord. ⟶ Talk with your friends about the Lord. ⟶ Be prepared to admonish others when they do something wrong.

Belinda — Build your relationship. ⟶ Talk about your faith. ⟶ Integrate faith and life.

Betty — Talk with the Lord. ⟶ Involve somebody in your spiritual growth. ⟶ Be aware of the Lord like an "invisible friend".

Christopher — Choices you make. ⟶ It takes time. ⟶ Pray and ask for it.

Collin   Continue believing. ⟶ Make the right choices. ⟶ Help others grow spiritually.

As is evident from Figure 2, intensification in the adolescent's thinking on spiritual growth has taken place during the course of three interviews. Apparently, spiritual growth results in faith becoming more integrated in your whole life (and thus influences your lifestyle) so that you may even admonish others and urge them to grow spiritually. This semioses in the concept "spiritual growth" illustrates how a concept develops the more one talks about it.

3.2 Axial coding

Subsequently, three clusters were identified to combine the different syntagms (axial coding). Syntagms within the clusters were arranged in order of importance given by the respondents. Although this is not a quantitative study that counts the number of responses, the number of times something is referred to in a qualitative study can indicate the importance of a theme to a participant. Cluster 1 contains the themes *knowledge* and *religious education teacher/leader*. It represents the cluster with the highest number of responses (religious education teacher/leader). The themes *religious education teacher* and *knowledge* were combined in one cluster, as the religious education teacher/leader primarily imparts knowledge (compare Table 3).

Table 3: Cluster 1

Cluster 1	Albert	Belinda	Betty	Christopher	Collin
Religious education teacher/ leader	Does not always know the religious education teacher personally.	Makes the classes fun, can talk about personal issues.	Helps with adjustment at new school. Makes it interesting. Helps to remember and enjoy. Some teachers at school make an impression.	It is important who presents the class. When pastor presents classes, it is different.	The person who presents the class is impor-tant.
Knowledge	Wants to learn more than is taught in religious education.	Got practical knowledge on lifestyle issues.	Involve people who know more than you do in your spiritual growth.	Bible knowledge, guidelines for faith and life. Gets more knowledge when presented by pastor.	Receives most know-ledge at school.

In cluster 1, Belinda and Betty's responses were a little more than those of Christopher and Collin were. Albert had the fewest responses here. It is notable that in this cluster and the next two clusters, the adolescents from the same congregations had the same kinds of responses and the same number of responses in each cluster. It could indicate that the common factor (religious education model) may have a bigger influence on their faith formation than their different

contexts (e.g. school and family).

Cluster 2 contains the themes *friends*, *koinonia* and *speech act*, since koinonia is experienced with friends and that is where they talk about their experiences (compare Table 4).

Table 4: Cluster 2

Cluster 2	Albert	Belinda	Betty	Christopher	Collin
Friends	If you do not have friends in the religious education class, you must make friends. One friend had the greatest influence on his spiritual life.	Friends have a greater influence than parents have. Sees her relation-ship with the Lord like a friendship.	Your friends must grow spiritually with you. In religious education class, one makes friends and learns to trust one another. Friends play an important role. Sees relation-ship with the Lord as a friendship.	Has an influence on your faith.	Get to know one another.
Koino-nia	Religious education must be like a prayer group.		The religious education class have a nice time together. Learn to trust one another.	Experiences koinonia in big group and in class. Has a social relationship with class. In big youth group, trust one another.	Glad to see one another because during the week they are in different schools.
Speech act	Communi-cate with one another in class. When you talk about spiritual things, you grow.		Talking with friends about spiritual life makes you grow spiritually. When you talk about something, it strengthens your faith.		

In cluster 2, Albert said the most and Christopher and Collin the least. The table once again highlights the important role that friends play. Sometimes, a circle of friends outside the religious education class is mentioned. At other times, reference is made to friends in the religious education class. The social structure of friends plays an important role in the adolescents' experience and practicing of their faith.

Cluster 3 contains the syntagms *school*, *church/congregation* and *family* – representing the social spheres that form part of the adolescent's world of life. This cluster represents items that scored the lowest number of responses (compare Table 5). Table 5: Cluster 3

Cluster 3	Albert	Belinda	Betty	Christopher	Collin
School					Learned the most in school. Has the biggest influence on his faith.
Church/ congregation	He receives a message at the church service.	The church strength-ens your faith.		The church inspires.	The church is people who stand together for the truth.
Family	Example of parents and practicing religion together is important.	Friends have a greater influence than parents have.	Practice religion together. Their example is im-portant.		

3.3 Selective coding
Combining these clusters in a joint table makes selective coding possible. Shared themes between clusters can be compared now (see Table 6).

Table 6: Selective coding of clusters

CLUSTERS	CLUSTER 1 (Religious education teacher/ leader and knowledge)	CLUSTER 2 (Friends, koinonia and speech act)	CLUSTER 3 (School, church/ congregation, family)
CLUSTER 1 (Religious education teacher/ leader and knowledge)	Method/style (P) Bible knowledge (C) Lifestyle knowledge (C)	Shares knowledge with friends (C)	Gets knowledge at school and church (C)

CLUSTER 2 (Friends, koinonia and speech act)	Religious education teacher helps to build relationships (R) Religious education teacher creates atmosphere (P)	Social relationships (R) Spiritual growth (P) Part of a group (R)	Feels part of a group (R)
CLUSTER 3 (School, church/ congregation, family)	Church is context of relationship with religious education teacher (R)	"Belong to" (P)	"Belong to" (P) Parents bind adolescent with church (R)

P = process   R = role players C = content

Through semiotic analysis, three "paradigms" (associative context of grouped syntagms, cf. Manning 1987:58) that are necessary for spiritual formation can be deduced, namely process, role players and content (cf. Figure 3).
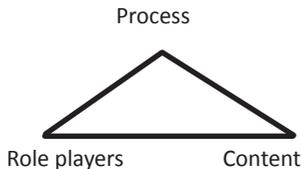

Fig 3a: Critical elements in spiritual formation (according to present findings)
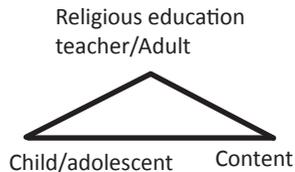
Fig 3b: Critical elements in spiritual formation (according to literature)

Often the critical elements in spiritual formation are seen as the religious education teacher, child/adolescent and the content (cf. Avenant et al. 2003:6 et seq.). According to the findings of the present study, however, the critical elements are process, role players and content.

The adolescents experienced being part of the process of religious education via the religious education teacher's presentation and the relationship that developed. To the extent that religious education is experienced as a process and not just as an item on the congregations' programme, it contributed to the spiritual formation of the adolescent. The adolescents that experienced spiritual growth also mentioned "belonging to", e.g. "The church is people who stand together for the truth." As was seen in Table 3 on spiritual growth, the adolescents regarded spiritual growth as a process.

Faith formation is also a process in which religious education does not play the only role. The school, friends and the congregation also play a part. The question could be asked what unique role religious education can play in faith formation.

In Religious education, role players include parents, the religious education teacher and friends. Content also seems to be important in religious education. Knowledge obtained in religious education (content) regularly came to the fore as an important aspect of religious education.

Not all findings were analyzed in the smallest detail, but only those that contributed to a better understanding of the meaning of concepts (cf. Speelman 1995:98). Since "process" crystallized

as an important aspect in this study, a semiotic square was constructed for the process in faith formation (see Figure 4).

Fig 4: Semiotic square for "process" in faith formation

Process	Homeostasis
Acquiring knowledge	Not grow together spiri-
Practical teaching method	tually as friends
Talk	Not enough knowledge
Grow together spiritually as friends	gained
Do religious activities together	
Non-homeostasis	**Non-process**
Friends	Atmosphere
Gives inspiration	No personal knowledge
Get less knowledge from some teachers	of teacher
Social relationships	Teacher influences
Learn to trust	Pleasant times

The semiotic square can be utilized to develop the "process" of faith formation. The contribution of the semiotic square to the understanding of faith formation will be discussed further in the next section.

4. DISCUSSION

Theories from different fields referred to below were confirmed in this study.

4.1 Psychology and education theories

Friends play an important role in the developmental stage of the adolescents in this research (cf. Olds & Papalia 1986:345). It can explain why the adolescents frequently talk about the role of friends. A circle of friends presents the opportunity to share their ideas, to talk to adolescents experiencing the same problems, to experience closeness and trust (Olds & Papalia 1986:347). It becomes evident in the interviews where reference is made to koinonia experienced in religious education and the necessity to grow spiritually with your friends.

The need to identify with religious education as something that is theirs and where their needs and questions are addressed relates to the need to belong. It also relates to the seeking of identity. The important role that a religious education teacher can play as a mentor and role model is also clear from other research on the topic (cf. Rhodes 2001; Zimmerman, Bingenheimer & Notaro 2002).

Effective learning entails that a person acquires knowledge on a practical level, is able to practice what he or she has learnt and that he/she internalizes it. This issue is also mentioned in the discussion of the semioses of the term "spiritual growth". According to Edgar Dale's pyramid of learning, a person will learn much more if he or she does something personally rather than just acquire knowledge on a topic (Cone, n.d.).

4.2 Communicative theories

Communication as part of spiritual formation came to the fore in this study. Furthermore, communication played an important role in the research technique used, namely in the interviews.

Communication plays an important role in the "process" of faith formation, as expounded in the semiotic square (compare the previous section). Communication makes the exchange of meaning between adolescent and adult possible. Habermas refers to three worlds involved in communication (1984: 275 ff.): an inner world (of the speaker), a social world (in the contact made with the listener) and an outer world (represented in what is being said). Where these three "worlds" meet, a dynamic process occurs.

The current research emphasizes that a process must take place between these three "worlds". Mere knowledge of the adult, adolescent and content is not enough to facilitate spiritual formation. The semiotic square shows that gaining knowledge is part of a process. People, including the adolescent, friends and adults involved, are also part of the process. Speech acts (conversation) are an important part of the process. The process of faith formation becomes a homeostasis if the adolescent does not get to know the involved adult personally. Furthermore, the process can be hampered if the adolescent feels that his/her friends are not growing spiritually, too, as illustrated in Figure 4.

In ideal contact between people, communicative acts take place (Habermas 1982). In this interaction, participants acknowledge one another unconditionally, are committed to mutual consensus and communicate in freedom and on the same level (cf. Pieterse 1993:94).

A relationship of authority exists between the religious education teacher and the adolescent, as is evident from the communication about the religious education teacher. Since it is a teaching situation, communication cannot take place fully on the same level and in freedom. However, it seems that where a religious education teacher showed respect and interest in the adolescent (regarded the adolescent as on the same level), communication was more effective.

Speech acts can be fully successful only if they satisfy the demands of the three basic validity claims: sincerity, rightness and truth (Habermas 1984: 1, 275 et seq.). For example, this implies that, where an adolescent experience the sincerity of an adult involved in his/her spiritual formation, the discourse between them is more successful. Where the adolescent's parents live according to what they teach as the truth, the discourse between them and the adolescent is more successful.

Religious education is a good example of indirect dialogical communication where the listener and the speaker come together as "specialists" (Dingemans 1991:141). It forms part of the communication theory of symbolic interactionism, where the speaker and listeners want to communicate about a specific issue (Pieterse 1993:154).

Language plays an important role in transferring and understanding knowledge in religious education. If adolescents cannot put the content of what they have learnt in religious education in their own words, it is a question whether the language/symbols/signs used were meaningful. "The importance of communication as a dynamic process of interaction and reciprocity" (Pieterse 1993:154) was evident in the case of the adolescents who experienced more in their spiritual life because of the dynamic communication with the religious education teacher (for example in congregation B).

The dialogical communication theory accentuates the inter-humanness of communication and spiral character of communication – "continuous and ever-evolving constitution and exchange of meaning between participants" (Jansen & Steinberg 1991:13). In the light of the results of this research, the question may be asked about the "exchange of meaning between participants" that should take place in the discourse. In the congregation where the adolescents could communicate their questions in class (congregation C), something of this "exchange of meaning" can be found. This explains why it was a positive experience for the adolescents.

The adolescents regard themselves as part of the role players in their spiritual formation, together with others like friends, parents, pastors and religious education teachers. This illustrates

the paradigm shift from modernism to post-modernism where the relationship of subject/object between a teacher and the person he or she is teaching does not exist anymore (cf. Janse van Rensburg 2000:36). The adolescent is an active agent engaging with adults, friends and parents, gaining knowledge and experience that contribute to his/her own spiritual formation.

CONCLUSION

In describing their spiritual journey, adolescents mention a few important aspects (some of which are to be expected as found in other theories): the important role of a mentor figure like the religious education teacher, as well as the role of parents and friends. However, the description of their journey also draws attention to a few other aspects (that might be less expected):
- The knowledge aspect of religious education is important to the adolescents.
- Faith formation must be undertaken as a process.
- The important role of communication theories in faith formation must not be ignored.

In adolescents' journey of spiritual formation, discourse plays a cardinal role. In this communication process content as well as the process of the dialogue are important. Knowledge is an aspect of the process in a dialogue (Gadamer 1979:143).

People involved in the spiritual formation of adolescents can consider the following:
- Do not give more attention to the content than the process of communication in spiritual formation.
- In addition to the content and lesson, the dialogue process should be planned in more detail.
- Focus on communication as a spiral process in which participants increasingly learn from one another.
- The adolescent and the adult are both partners in the communication process.

Even though only a small number of adolescents were involved in the interviews, this research project in the qualitative research tradition could still contribute to make contextual findings and discover possible patterns (Maykut & Morehouse 1994:21). A quantitative study involving larger numbers of adolescents will shed more light on adolescents' spiritual experience in varying contexts and on what can contribute to more effective formation of their faith.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Avenant, J, Blaauw, P., Cronjé, H., Dressels, L., Dreyer, D., Malan, D., Muller, C., Roos, L. & Van der Merwe, C. 2003. Handboek vir die kategeet. Graad 10. Bloemfontein: CLF Printers.

Charmaz, K. 2006. Constructing grounded theory. A practical guide through qualitative analysis. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Cone of Learning n.d. Cone of learning (Edgar Dale). Retrieved from http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/agexed/sae/ppt1/s1d012.htm on September 28, 2009.

Cotton, S., Zebracki, K., Rosenthal, S.L., Tsevat, J. & Drotar, D. 2006. Religion/spirituality and adolescent health outcomes: A review. Journal of Adolescent Health, 38:472-480.

Dingemans, G.D.J. 1991. Als hoorder onder de hoorders. Een hermeneutische homiletiek. Kampen: Kok.

Ebaugh, H.R. 2005. Handbook of Religion and Social institutions. New York: Springer Science and Business Media, Inc.

Ellias, J.L. 1983. Psychology and religious education. Malabar, Florida: Kriger Publishing Company.

Gadamer, H-G 1979. Truth and method. London: Sheed and Ward.

Glaser, B.G. & Strauss, A.L. 1967. The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

Glicken, M.D. 2003 *Social research. A simple guide.* AB Longman: USA

Greimas, A.J. 1970. Du Sens. Essais sémiotiques. Paris: du Seuil.

Habermas, J. 1982. Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns. Bd. I & Bd II. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

Habermas, J. 1984 The theory of communicative action, Vol I: Reason and the rationalization of society. Translated by T McCarthy. Boston: Beacon.

Hébert, L. 2005. Tools for text and image analysis. An introduction to applied semiotics. Limoges, Presses de l'Université de Limognes.

Janse van Rensburg, J. 2000. The paradigm shift. An introduction to postmodern thought and its implications for theology. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Jansen, N. & Steinberg, S. 1991. Theoretical approaches to communication. Cape Twon: Juta & Co.

Kaster, J. 2006. The state of adolescent catechesis today. Washington: Momentum. Retrieved June 22, 2009 from http://www.nfcym.org

Manning, P.K. 1987. Semiotics and fieldwork. Qualitatiev Research Mehtods, Volmue 7.

Newbury Park, Beverly Hills, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications

May, G.G. 1992 Care of mind, care of spirit: A psychiatrist explores spiritual direction. 1st HarperCollins paperback edition. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco.

Maykut, P.S. & Morehous, R. 1994 Beginning qualitative research: A philosophical and practical guide. London and Washington: Falmer Press.

Olds, S.W. & Papalia, D.E. 1986. Human development (3rd ed.). Singapore: Fong & Sons Printers(Pty) Ltd.

Osmer, R.R. 2008. Practical theology. An introduction. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Patient Teaching 1990. Erikson's developmental stages. Loose Leave Library. Spirng House Corporation.

Pieterse, H.J.C. 1993. Praktiese teologie as kommunikatiewe handelingsteorie. Pretoria: R

Rhodes, J. 2001. Youth Mentoring in Perspective. The Center (Summer). Republished in the Encyclopedia of Informal Education, www.infed.org/learningmentors/youth_mentoring_in_perspective.htm.

Smith, C. 2005. Soul searching: The religious and spiritual lives of American teenagers. Oxford: Oxford Unviersity Press.

Speelman, W.M. 1995. The generation of meaning in liturgical songs. Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing House.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. 1990. Basics of qualitative research. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Theisen, M. n.d.. Adolescent catechesis today: On the road to transformation. Retrieved Ocotber 7, 2009 from http://catholicyouthministryofdallas-org.ecatholicchurches.com

Upper Room Ministries 2010. The Academy for spiritual formation. Retrieved May 31, 2010 from http://www.upperroom.org/academy

Van Rooyen B. & Beukes, R.B.I. 2009. Narrating spiritual well-being in relationship to positive psychology and religion. Koers, 74(1&2): 23-42.

Venter, C.J.H. & Van der Merwe, C.N. 2005. Die verwerkliking van die geloof in die kerklike kategese: Basisteoretiese perspektiewe. Acta Theologica, 25(1): 112-133.

Wikipedia 2010. Spiritual formation. Retrieved May 31, 2010 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spiritual_formation

Wong, Y.J., Rew, L & Slaikeu, K.D. 2006. A systematic review of recent research on adolescent religiosity/spirituality and mental health. Issues in Mental Health Nursing, 27:161-183.

Zimmerman, M.A., Bingenheimer, J.B. & Notaro, P.C. 2002. Natural mentors and adolescent resiliency: A study with urban youth. American Journal of Community Psychology, 30(2):221-243.

TREFWOORDE
Geestelike vorming
Adolessent
Kommunikasie
Habermas

KEY WORDS
Spiritual formation
Adolescent

Communication
Habermas

Dr L Hoffman
Research associate: Department Practical Theology
Faculty of Theology
University of the Free State
Bloemfontein
9300
hoffmanl@ufs.ac.za

Prof J Janse van Rensburg
Department Practical Theology
Faculty of Theology
University of the Free State
Bloemfontein
9300
jjvanr@yebo.co.za