The Educational Pedagogy of the Four Sons

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ABSTRACT. The Passover Haggadah speaks about the four sons—the wise, simple, etc. Using a method of biblical exegesis suggested by Rabbi Joseph Baer Soloveitchik, it is shown that these four sons implicitly define a two-dimensional learning model in which learners are classified in the dimensions of knowledge [details-simple] and respect [apathy-wickedness]. This biblical multidimensional learning model is compared to traditional contemporary learning models including the models of Kolb, Myers-Briggs, and Canfield. A recent comprehensive study of Gredler then shows that the biblical multi-dimensional learning model focuses more on global issues while contemporary learning models are narrower in focus. The learning models are analyzed and compared with respect to the attributes of consistency, utility, and learning style inventories. □

I: Introduction

This article was motivated by the following comment of the Rav—Rabbi Dr. Joseph Baer Soloveitchik.[1]

> The Passover Haggadah speaks about the four sons. These four sons are normally translated into English as follows: The *wise* son, the *simple* son, the *wicked* son and the son *who can't ask*.
>
> I, however, would suggest the following translation: The *wise, simple, wicked* and *apathetic* son.
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> The suggested translation of *apathetic* vs. *who can't ask* reflects the position that the four sons are really four typologies. That is, the four sons are not four real *people* but rather four *extremes* or four *ideals*. In the real world no particular child is ever exactly like one of these four sons. Rather, each child is a *mixture* of these four extremes; the individuality of the child lies in his/her unique mixture of the four typologies.
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> If we accept this assumption—that the four sons are four ideals—then it follows that the traditional translation would render two of the sons—the *simple and* the *who-can't-ask*—as the same ideal. But these sons are distinct Biblical paragraphs and therefore should represent two different extremes of behavior. It follows that it would be preferable to select a translation where these four sons represent four *distinct* extremes.

[1]The Rav lectured weekly on Saturday nights at the Maimonides school in Brookline. It was his custom every year to review the Passover Haggadah during the month preceding Passover. The citation in this paper was made in March of 1971 and was obtained from the author's notes on these lectures.

> My suggested translation—*apathetic*—is also consistent with the Hebrew. In fact, the Hebrew root Yud-Dalet-Ayin can mean *care* as well as *know*.[2] Thus the Hebrew phrase *sheayo yodaya lishol* could be translated as "Who doesn't *care* to ask" vs. "Who doesn't *know how* to ask."

Pedagogues involved in educational theory can immediately recognize that the Rav developed his remarks using concepts from the theory of multidimensional learning style models. Accordingly, in Section 2 of this paper, we briefly review the theory of multidimensional learning models. Using this background we present, in Section Three, the multidimensional model implicit in the Rav's remarks. However, to further develop the Rav's multidimensional model we require specific methods of biblical exegesis, implicit in the Passover Haggadah, as modified by the Rav. These exegetical methods will also be made explicit in Section 3. Finally in Section 4 we will explore the differences in emphasis between the multidimensional model of the Rav vs. several current multidimensional models. We conclude, in Section 5, with applications of the findings and methods used in this paper to areas of Jewish pedagogy.

2. A Review of Multidimensional Models

The purpose of this section is to review the traditional issues, terminology, and approach involved in multidimensional learning style models. Such an exposure will enable us to formulate and review the Rav's multidimensional model against a firm background.

The fundamental assumption of learning-style theory is that the seemingly random variation in learning behavior between different individuals is due to basic differences in the ways these individuals learn. A good history of the development of learning style theory may be found in Tamaoka,[3] who presents three classical multidimensional learning style models. For a more recent review of the literature see Wilson.[4]

[2]The Rav's translation of Yud-Dalet-Ayin as *care* raises problems (since the primary meaning of the root is *to know)*. The Rav's real point is that this root has *emotional* as well as *intellectual* overtones. Some familiar biblical examples might be Genesis 4:1, the so called biblical know ("Adam *knew* his wife"), or Exodus 22:25 ("And God saw [the suffering] of the Jewish People; and God *cared*").

In further support of the Rav we cite the Radack in his book, *Biblical Roots*: Radack states that "The fundamental meaning of Yud-Dalet-Ayin is *knowledge;* but nevertheless, many verses have a usage denoting*feeling*."

[3]K. Tamaoka, *Historical Development of Learning Style Inventories from Dichotomous Cognitive Concepts of Field Dependence and Field Independence to Multi-dimensional Assessment* (ED [ERIC Database] 339729, 1985).

[4]V. Wilson, *Learning How They Learn: A Review of the Literature on Learning Styles* (ED427017, 1998).

The simplest type of multidimensional model is a dichotomous one-dimensional model. Such a one-dimensional model was formulated by Witkin, who originated the study of learning and cognitive styles.[5] The Witkin GEFT (Group Embedded Figure Test) determines a learner's cognitive style by studying how the learner finds simple geometric figures embedded in more complex figures.[6] Witkin devised this test after preliminary results from three other experiments—the Body-Adjustment Test, which studied how subjects determined the upright position in the absence of a surrounding visual field, the Rod-and-Frame Test, which studied how different positions of rod-tilt and body-posture affected the perception of the upright position, and the Rotating Room Test, which studied how a basic change in postural factors affected perception of the upright position—showed two fundamental approaches to cognition determinations. This led Witkin to formulate the concept of *field-dependence:*

> A *field-dependent* cognitive style refers to a way of organizing and processing information in which the field is seen as a single unit. This definition includes a tendency to rely mainly on external references.
>
> By contrast, a *field-independent* cognitive style refers to a way of organizing and processing information in which the objects in one's field of vision are seen as separate units. This definition includes a tendency to rely upon internal references.

Field-(in)dependence may be called a dimension of cognitive style, since each subject is classified as being either *field-dependent* or *field-independent.* It is important to emphasize that

- Cognitive style is an attribute of the individual, not of the particular learning situation. Thus Witkin showed *consistency* among subjects—those say, who were field-dependent in the rotating-room test, also, by and large, tended to be field-dependent in the rod-and frame test. Consistency may be established statistically after the results of several learning situations, to a group of subjects, have been performed.
- The *consistency* of a learning-style dimension is important since it establishes stability over time, and it is precisely this stability that allows us to call the dimension an attribute vs. a process.

[5]To be technical, learning style is distinct from cognitive style. Cognitive style focuses on how the learner perceives or relates the different parts of his learning environment. Learning style focuses on attitudes or how the learner receives information from his learning environment. The term learning style focuses on the totality of an individual's attitudes towards learning situations, materials, teachers and group activities. Since, however, the focus in this paper is on multidimensionality and not on learning vs. cognition, we will not (in this paper) emphasize the learning-cognition difference.

[6]H. A. Witkin, "Individual Differences in Ease of Perception of Embedded Figures," *Journal of Personality* 19 (1950): 1–15.

- The study of the *consistency* of the dimension of field-(in)dependence continues by modern researchers. For example, French found positive relationship between the GEFT and scores on (an adaptation of) Kagan's visual analysis task.[7]
- Witkin suggested that cognitive style was independent of intelligence. Such an independent helps justify the term *style.* There have been several studies of correlation between intelligence and learning style attributes.

We continue our review of the multidimensional literature by studying next a two-dimensional model.

Kolb[8] uses a two-dimensional learning-style model which classifies all learners in the two dimensions of abstract vs. concrete and active vs. reflective. It is a standard procedure to take all pairs of extremes of a multidimensional model to obtain a full spectrum of learner types. By pairing the extremes of Kolb's two dimensions we obtain four learner types, which are called the *converger, diverger, assimilator*, and *accommodator.* Using these four categories, Kolb developed the Learning Style Inventory (LSI), which contained nine items each consisting of four words. The subject was required to rank the words in order to characterize his learning style.

The consistency of the Kolb learning styles was established by Cahill and Madigan,[9] who administered the LSI to students involved in different modes of learning, at the beginning and end of a one-year-period The students exhibited no significant change.

Kolb studied correlation between learning style, as exhibited on the LSI, and student majors. Other researchers continued these studies. Thus, Carrier, Newell and Lange,[10] Laschinger and Boss,[11] and West[12] found relationships between style, personality characteristics, and career selections. Not all studies are positive. For example, although

[7]M. French, *Defining Attributes of Analytic Ability as a Prerequisite for Selection of Instructional Strategies* (ED 256312, 1985).

[8]D. Kolb, *Individual Learning Styles and the Learning Process,* Working Paper #535-71 (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. [Sloan School of Management], 1971); D. Kolb, "Learning and Problem Solving," in D. Kolb, I. Rubin and J. McIntyre, eds., *Organizational Psychology*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974), pp. 27–42.

[9]R. Cahill and M. Madigan, "The Influence of Curriculum Format on Learning Preference and Learning Style," *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, Vol. 38, No. 10 (1984): 683–686.

[10]C. Carrier, K. Newell, and A. Lange, "Relationship of Learning Styles to Preferences for Instructional Activities, *Journal of Dental Education*, Vol. 46, No. 11 (1982): 652–656.

[11]H. Laschinger and W. Boss, "Learning Styles of Nursing Students and Career Choices," *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, Vol. 9 (1981): 375–380.

[12]R. West, "A Construct Validity Study of Kolb's Learning Style Types in Medical Education," *Journal of Medical Education*, Vol. 57, No. 10 (1982): 794–796.

Laschinger and Boss found positive relationship between results of the LSI and Nursing majors, no relationship was found between LSI classification and career choice (i.e., which nursing specialty was preferred). Ruble and Stout have provided a comprehensive critique of Kolb's LSI.[13] The list below contains a brief summary of the chief attributes of Kolb's four learning styles as seen in these studies:

Converger: engineers, factual, pragmatist, things vs people, good at one-solution problems

Diverger: social sciences, imagination, innovative, good at many-perspective items

Assimilator: researchers, thinker, creates models, good at inductive reasoning

Accommodator: salespeople, action-oriented, risk-taker, good in trial-and-error problems

These correlational studies give utility to multidimensional models. By utility we refer to the capacity of a theory to be used to facilitate teaching. Claxton and Ralston[14] provide several implementation approaches to using the Kolb multidimensional model in education: sharing knowledge about learning style with students, use of differing instructional modes consistent with different student styles, and use of learning style information at the institutional level. Ehrman[15] discusses utility for distance learning.

We complete this modest review of learning-style theories with the popular Myers-Briggs four-dimensional learning model. Both Canfield[16] and Myers-Briggs[17] proposed independently four-dimensional learning style models. These models are used both in the education as well as the work environment. Since portions of the MBTI correlate positively with Canfield's LSI, we may assume the two instruments can be interpreted as measuring aspects of the same personality preferences. Both instruments are rooted in Jungian theory. By pairing the extremes of the four-dimensional models we obtain 16 learner types. The four dimensions are perception (sensing vs. intuition), judgment (thinking vs. feeling), personality (extroversion vs. introversion), and information acquisition (judgment vs. perception).

[13]T. Ruble and D. Stout, *A Critical Assessment of Kolb's Learning Style Inventory* (ED 377221, 1994).

[14]C. Claxton and Y. Ralston, "Learning Styles: Their Impact on Teaching and Administration," AAHE-ERIC/Higher Education Research Report No. 10 (ED 167065, 1978).

[15]M. Ehrman, "Psychological Factors and Distance Education," *The American Journal of Distance Education*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (EJ [Eric Journal] 410616, 1990): 10–24.

[16]A. Canfield, *Canfield Learning Styles Inventory* (Western Psychological Services, LA, 1988).

[17]B. Rowan, *The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator: A Critical Review and Practical Guide* (London: Stanley Thornes, 1997); I. Briggs-Myers, and M. McCaulley, *A Guide to the Development and Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychological Press, 1985).

There are a variety of other multidimensional models such as those that focus on which senses are used in learning or those focusing on usage of the left vs. right brain hemisphere.[18] However, for the purpose of familiarizing ourselves with the issues, terminology, and perspectives involved in learning theory models, the above examples should be sufficient.

The above review of the literature has exposed us to the following five fundamental concepts:

1. Learning-style-dimension
2. The pairing of learning-style extremes to produce all learner types
3. The use of verbal assessment tests to classify a subject
4. Consistency (stability over time)
5. Utility (correlation of assessment scores with other subject attributes) with applications to improvement

These concepts provide an adequate background to study the Rav's multidimensional theory.

3. The Rav's Two-dimensional Learning Style Model

We now precisely formulate and critically examine the Rav's implicit multidimensional theory. This formulation will expose fundamental differences in approach between the Rav and other current multidimensional models.

A problem, however, arises in that the Rav only commented on the *apathetic* son. The Rav did not further elaborate on his position that the four sons represent four extremes. More specifically, the Rav did not re-examine the classification of the other three sons. Therefore if we seriously wish to further develop his thesis, then we must transfer his basic idea—that the four sons represent four typologies—to the biblical exegesis that yields the four sons.

Such an undertaking, while yielding more general results, involves assumptions of exegesis. We must carefully show that it is reasonable to assume that the Rav held these exegetical assumptions (as otherwise we will be presenting our own theory, not the Rav's).

Let us begin with a simple observation: A database query shows that there are exactly four biblical paragraphs containing a commandment for humans to communicate to other humans about the Exodus from Egypt. They are Exod. 12:25–28, Exod. 13:1–10, Exod. 13: 14–16, Deut. 6:20–25.

The Table below compactly summarizes several attributes of these four biblical paragraphs. This table will be used both to harmonize the Rav's analysis with the author of the Haggadah and to transfer his basic assumption to the classification of the other three sons.

[18]B. McCarthy, "Using the 4MAT System to Bring Learning Styles to Schools," *Educational Leadership* Vol. 48, No. 2 (EJ 416429, 1990): 31–37.

Biblical paragraph	**Learner type**	**Why this classification?**	**Dimension of respect: does Bible use *say* or *ask*?**	**Dimension of knowledge: How many details occur in question?**
Exod. 12: 25–28	Cynical	He says vs. asks	When your children SAY	What is this service
Exod. 13: 1–10	Apathetic	He doesn't ask		
Exod. 13: 14–16	Simple	No details	When your child ASKS	What is this?
Deut. 6: 20–25	Wise	Many details	When your child ASKS	What are the testimonies, statutes, laws, ...

Table 1: A comparison—using the dimensions of *Knowledge* and *Respect*—of the four biblical paragraphs containing commandments to humans to communicate to other humans about the Exodus. The analysis in the table justifies the Passover Haggadah classification system of four types of learners.

The interpretation of this table should be clear. For example, the first record points out that the paragraph Exod. 12:25–28 contains the verse Exod. 12:26: "When your children *say* to you 'What is this service.'" Notice how this biblical verse uses the verb *to say* (Hebrew root Aleph-Mem-Resh) to indicate a question. By contrast the other paragraphs use the verb *to ask* (Hebrew root Shin-Aleph-Lamed) to indicate a question.

This comparison of usage of *say* vs. *ask* is summarized in the **Dimension of Respect** column of the above table. This contrast could lead us to classify the son spoken about in this paragraph—Exod. 12:25–28—as being disrespectful, since *saying a question* has nuances of cynicism and disrespect.

Similarly a review of the **Dimension of Knowledge** column shows that the son described in Exod. 12:25–28—uses more details in his description of the Passover offering than the other sons ("service" vs. "this"). Thus the son spoken about in Exod. 12:25–28 could be classified as leaning more towards the extreme of knowledge (more precisely, knowledge of details) vs. simplicity.

The Learner Type column contains the final classification of the son in Exod. 12:25–28. This classification —*cynical*—reflects the two dimensions of disrespect and knowledge.

Finally, the **Why this Classification** column contains a brief summary of the contrasts exhibited in the **Dimension of Respect** and **Dimension of Knowledge** column.

Note in Table 1 that

- The **Dimension of Knowledge** column shows that only two of the sons use specific commandment words—such as "service," "testimonies," "statutes," "laws"—when asking their question.
- The **Dimension of Respect** column shows that only two of the sons ask questions. The other sons either don't care to ask or react cynically (say their question).

If we assume the implied exegetical methodology exhibited in Table 1, then we have that the biblical four sons, as presented by Table 1, implicitly define a two- dimensional learning model using the dimensions of respect [respect vs. disrespect] and knowledge [knowledgeable vs. simple]. Pairing extremes of these two dimensions gives rise to four types of learners: Wise (knowledgeable–respectful), Simple (simple–respectful), Cynical (knowledgeable–disrespectful), and Apathetic (simple–disrespectful).

This analysis would agree with the Rav's classification of the fourth son as apathetic. This analysis would also enable extension of the Rav's remarks on the apathetic son to specific comments on the other three sons: for example, the wicked son could more precisely be called the cynical son. Let us therefore carefully expose the underlying exegetical methodology.

Examining Table 1 we see two important features.

Commonality: We deal with a collection of biblical paragraphs that have a commonality. In practice this commonality manifests itself in a database query. (Thus in the example above the four paragraphs are the only paragraphs with commands for humans to communicate to humans about the Exodus from Egypt.)

Minor differences in comparisons: The comparison of these paragraphs, relative to certain attributes, exhibits minor differences. (In the example above a comparison of words used in the Biblical question showed different verbs of inquiry [e.g., *say* vs. *ask*]; similarly a comparison of the description of the Passover service showed different levels of detail (e.g., *this* vs. *statutes, laws, . . .*.)

We can now state the fundamental biblical exegetical assumption.

Differences identify dimensions: Under the above two conditions it is justifiable to interpret each minor difference as indicating the extreme of the dimension which is traditionally associated with that minor difference. (This is the main point: The use of the verb *say* in and of itself could be an accident of style and need not indicate anything. We therefore are explicitly assuming an exegetical approach in which the compared minor differences—*say* vs. *ask*—are equated with extremes of some dimension. Or, to use the Rav's terminology, we assume that the minor differences in the four Biblical paragraphs describe and indicate typologies.)[19]

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[19]Traditional Rabbinic biblical exegesis allows for the extraction of (a) any nuance from (b) any biblical word. By contrast, this paper has proposed a more modest approach—biblical exegesis is only justified in (a) inferring dimension extremes from the nuances of words, and (b) performing exegesis

To recap, this biblical exegetical assumption:

- Assumes that biblical paragraphs describe dimensions, ideals, and extremes
- Concurs with the Rav's translation of the fourth son as *apathetic.*
- Translates all four sons as follows: *Knowledgeable, simple, cynical, apathetic*

We therefore argue that it is reasonable to extend the Rav's basic assumption—that the four sons indicate typologies vs. real situations—to a Biblical-exegetical assumption—that Biblical paragraphs indicate dimension extremes. If we agree to adopt this extension, then we may extend the Rav's methodology and rename all four sons.

The above principle of exegesis can be applied to other comparisons in the four paragraphs. This allows us to infer a multiplicity of attributes about these learners. It will also prevent the misunderstandings that come from approximating whole clusters of attributes with single terms. For example, the word *wise* includes many capacities, such as the capacity *to analyze, to model, to be detailed.* But a review of the verses shows that the so-called *wise* son is characterized by his awareness of *many categories,* not by his analytic or modeling abilities.

This point will be discussed further in Section 5.

4. The Difference in Approach

In Section 2 we reviewed multidimensional learning models. In Section 3 we presented the Rav's multidimensional model. Our goal in this section is to critically compare the Rav's multidimensional model with other current models. This analysis will be facilitated by using the five concepts that we defined and illustrated in Section 2: *dimension, pairing of dimension extremes, assessment, stability, utility.* We begin our analysis with those areas where the theories agree.

Pairing of dimension extremes: We have transferred the modern idea of viewing learner types as emanating from the pairing of dimension extremes, to the biblical setting. This led to our enriching our understanding of the four sons of Passover as extremes in the two dimensions of Knowledge (knowledge vs. simplicity) and Respect (respect vs disrespect).

only when the alignment of similar biblical texts shows minor differences. A more comprehensive review of biblical exegesis cannot be performed in this paper.

Note further that it is well known that the author of the Haggadah seems to mis-cite biblical references connected with the four sons. There is a rich literature on the resolution of these Haggadah citations. The contribution of this paper has been to shed light on the Rav's views on this subject. For further discussion on the text of the Haggadah see, for example, the classical Haggadahs such as *The Amsterdam Haggadah* (1712) with the Abarbanel's commentary (Ramat Gan: Kinneret Publishing House and Tel Aviv: Nahar Publications, 1986), pp. 6–7, or *The Maharal's Haggadah* (London: L. Honig and Sons Ltd, 1960), pp. 65–70. For modern compendiums of Haggadah commentaries see *Haggadah with 238 Commentaries*, ed. P. Krauss (New York: Saphograph, 1960), pp. 40–48.

Assessment: Recall that the biblical approach presented in Table 1 identified learner dimensions based on word preferences. Thus *say* vs *ask* or *thing* vs *statutes* identifies a person as being disrespectful or knowledgeable.

This is consistent with almost all other theories whose assessment vehicles typically ask a subject to select or rank word preferences for particular situations. These word preferences are then used to identify the subject's place in a learning dimension.

Of course, the word preferences in the biblical theory lie in the biblical paragraphs, while the word preferences in the modern theory lie in the subject's preferences. We would suggest the development of a BLSI, a Biblical Learning Style Inventory, that would assess a subject's current classification.

Utility: Utility is the first place where the modern and biblical theory differ. The emphasis in modern theory is on acceptance of the student and adaptation of the instructor (or working environment). The emphasis in the biblical theory is on the mutual adaptation of the student and instructor for purposes of either change or maintenance.

For example, suppose the Kolb LSI revealed a person to be a Converger. We might suggest this student seek an engineering (or similar) major. Similarly we might use instruction, which emphasizes one-solution problems.

By contrast if a son is classified as Simple, then while there is adaptation by the instructor—thus the Haggadah recommends providing simple instructional units—there is also expectation that over time this Simple son will become Wise.

The Haggadah makes this expectation of change most explicit by the Cynical son: "Weaken his arguments and tell him 'Because of my observance God saved **me**'—if you—who mock at these commandments—were in Egypt, then you would not have been saved." Thus the idea is to confront him in the hope of change.

Stability: Stability is an important part of any theory. Several modern theories show stability—that is, the subject classification remains stable over time even after exposure to a variety of learning situations.

By contrast, as we have just seen, the biblical theory is interested in change. A simple son who practices learning will eventually become knowledgeable. A cynical son who avoids the groups who have influenced him will eventually become respectful.

Hence, *stability* requires a new definition in the biblical theory: *Stability* would not refer to absolute constancy over time, but rather it would refer to constancy over time in the absence of factors that change a person's status. In other words a person who was simple *and* who didn't learn would remain simple over time. Similarly, a person who was cynical *and* who avoided the Jewish group would remain cynical.

Thus the biblical theory requires identification of those factors that change classification.

Dimension: There seems to be a difference in the concept of learning dimension between the Rav's theory and modern pedagogical theories. To present this difference

we use the classification of learning theories presented by Gredler,[20] who classifies learning theories into three broad categories:

- The information processing theories: Including the theories of Skinner, Gagne, etc.
- The Cognitive Development theories: Piaget and Vygotsky
- The recent social-context theories: e.g., Bandura and Weiner

As we review the two dimensions in the Rav's theory we notice that

- The dimension of *respect* fits in best with the social-context theories
- The dimension of *detailed-knowledge* fits in best with the information processing theories

To further defend this we recall why the social-context theories emerged. Prior to the social-context theories the information processing theories posited that if we had the right conditioning and the right structures and schemes then we could learn everything. The social-context theories however showed that we must also take into account the motivation of the learner. For example, according to Bandura, if a person has poor role models for a teacher, or, according to Weiner, if the learner attributes learning errors to his environment rather than to himself, then that learner will not succeed in learning, even if proper conditioning and appropriate mental categories exist, since the learner lacks the motivation to improve.

We can now formulate the difference in the concept of learning dimension between the Rav and modern theorists.

The Rav's / Bible's multidimensional model is more concerned with the global issues in learning while the other modern multidimensional theories are more concerned with specific learning issues.

- The Rav is concerned with the more global picture. That is, a good learner needs components from each of the major theories. A good learner needs respect for teachers (and oneself); a good learner needs to amass information in his approach to learning.
- The modern theorists are concerned more with specific issues of learning. For example, the information processing theorists are concerned with the various types or stages of conditioning. Similarly the information processing theorists might be concerned with the various ways that knowledge can be detailed. The social-context theorists might be concerned with the various types of teacher-student respect and how they are achieved rather than with the existence of respect.

[20]M. E. Gredler, *Learning and Instruction: Theory into Practice*, 4th Edition (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Merrill, 2001).

This completes our comparison of the Rav's vs. the Modern theories. The above analysis shows areas of agreement and areas of disagreement, as well as suggestions for enriching the respective theories.

5. Summary

In this final section we (lightly) review several areas of possible application. Some of these comments are sketchy or heuristic. Our goal is to illustrate the type of applicability possible as well as the tools used.

Assessment tools

In Section 4 we have suggested that Jewish pedagogy might benefit from a BLSI, which could identify a student's placement in the two dimensions of knowledge and respect. This BLSI instrument could be constructed using preferences in verbal descriptions of situations along the same lines as the Kolb LSI or the Myers-Briggs tests. Such assessment tools could be used before and after exposure to methods designed to change classifications.

Jewish Education Law

The preceding analysis provides us with tools to analyze the Jewish laws of learning as they occur in standard legal texts. For example a review of the Rambam's Laws of Learning in his Mishneh Torah clearly shows the two dimensions of the Rav's model.

Remarkably, 50 percent of the chapters in Maimonides' code deal with the issue of respect. I know of no other educational code that devotes so much time to discipline problems and/or respect.[21]

Similarly, the code places an emphasis on acquisition of knowledge vs. the more creative aspects of thinking such as analysis, modeling, and creativity.[22]

[21]The following chapters in Maimonides' code deal with Respect: Chapter 4 states that disrespectful students should not be accepted into schools; Chapter 4 deals defines the respectful way of asking questions; Chapter 5 deals with the respect in the teacher-student relationship; Chapter 6 deals with the respect due to scholars; Chapters 1, 2, and 3 deal with acquisition of knowledge. Hence we have a 50-50 split. (A more precise analysis would have to propose a methodology to count and classify laws. However the above analysis, even though it is heuristic, should be sufficient to show our point.)

[22]Here are some examples of emphasis on knowledge vs. creativity: Chapter 3 emphasizes that initially one third of one's learning time should be devoted to memorization of laws and only then may the analysis stage be embarked on. (In contrast, most modern pedagogues do not place a one-third-time emphasis on rote memorization.) Chapter 1 emphasizes that everybody—even sick and old people —must learn. Presumably this refers to amassing of knowledge (knowing what to do) rather than analysis. Chapter 3 (and some of Chapter 2) emphasizes the requirement of continual learning day and night. Again the emphasis seems to be on acquiring knowledge, since it is not possible to do continuous research.

Knowledge vs. Creativity

The exegetical analysis performed above identified wisdom with knowledge of details. In contrast to the emphasis in the modern era, which focuses on development of creativity, the biblical emphasis seems to be on amassing details and distinctions.

There are two approaches to this emphasis on knowledge vs. creativity: There is the obvious historical approach; there is also a conceptual approach which posits that creativity need not be taught (as the modern theorists believe) but rather creativity naturally arises in a mind filled with knowledge and details.[28]

Utility

A very modern approach is the adaptation of instructional resources to the particular learner type. The Biblical exegetical method presented in Section 3 can be applied to other passages in the four Biblical paragraphs on the four sons. In particular we may infer specific approaches to both pedagogy and outreach. Here are a few examples:

Analysis of Plurality. The verbs in the chapter of the wicked son are all in the plural. By contrast the verbs in the chapter on the apathetic son are all in the singular. (The other sons have mixed uses of the plural and singular). This suggests that

- Cynicism never exists by itself but arises because of a circle of friends which the cynical son has become involved with (that is, the cynical son intrinsically is plural—belongs to a group)
- Apathy cannot be cured in a group setting but always requires personal individual attention[23] (Singular vs plural)

Abstract vs. Concrete. In responding to the inquiries of the four sons about the Exodus it is recommended to tell the children about other commandments. The tefillin commandment (which contains a scroll talking about the exodus) is only mentioned in the chapters dealing with the simple and apathetic sons.

But the simple and apathetic son have a commonality of simplicity in the dimension of knowledge. Thus we have the pedagogical suggestion that teaching should not only use verbal methods but should use symbolic methods as well.[24]

In conclusion, we believe that this two-dimensional educational model of the Rav—along with the implicit exegetical method used to support it—has the potential to offer useful insights into other aspects of Jewish education.

[23]Other grammatical analysis supports this. For example the indirect object— e.g., "And it shall be *for you*—occurs frequently in the paragraph on the apathetic son but not elsewhere. This suggests a fine point of outreach—emphasize to the apathetic that God did these miracles *for him*.

[24]In fact an analysis of the chapter on the apathetic son shows that quite a few symbols occur only in that chapter (for example, the symbolism of making Passover fall during the Springtime is mentioned; similarly the symbol of not eating bread but eating matzo is mentioned).