

**COMMUNICATIVE ACTION THEORY. A SYSTEM –
LIFEWORLD COMPATIBILITY OR INCOMPATIBILITY?**

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Abstract

Jürgen Habermas focused, with his "Theory of Communicative Action", on the balancing of system-lifeworld, which is one of the most fundamental problems of social sciences. He tries to do this by using the "rational communication" ignored by structural and action theorists. Habermas pays attention to examining and evaluating different philosophical and sociological ideas in his works. By reflecting his knowledge and experience formed by this attitude, he tries to explain the relationship between system and lifeworld by developing a new intersubjective concept. This study has two objectives. First to reveal what kind of different suggestions Habermas offers to save the idea of the Enlightenment. Secondly to discuss what the positive and negative criticisms brought to these proposals are and their applicability in today's society, in the presence of relevant literature.

Keywords: Communicative Action, Public Sphere, Lifeworld, System.

1. Introduction

Jürgen Habermas, who played an important role in the Student Movements of 1968, especially in the 1960s, when he was under the influence of Marxist ideology was criticized heavily as an enemy of democracy. In the last 20-30 years, he was awarded by many political and social institutions for his contribution to German Democracy and social peace. So what is the reason for this change? What kind of intellectual background did Habermas have, that he was declared first as a rebellious communist and later became a patriotic defender of democracy. Habermas answered this question in an interview: Even someone who takes a little careful glance at my works can see that I am influenced by Marx. On the other hand, everybody can also see that I have nothing to do with the Stalinist communist party that was practiced in the eastern bloc countries (Habermas, 1984, Vol. I: xviii). From these expressions, it is understood that Habermas did not elaborate on a Stalinist communism implemented in the eastern bloc, and that his main goal was a western libertarian and democratic society. Habermas also argued that the process of modernism has not yet been completed by defending modernity against postmodernity in a period that can be seen as the transition from modernity to postmodernity. Habermas's discussion with postmodern thought has an important place in his own discourse on modernity. While defending the Enlightenment against the criticisms brought to it, he at the same time criticized modern western philosophy. He locates rationality in structures of

interpersonal discursive communication rather than in the structure of the cosmos. He thinks that it is not possible to criticize or defend modernity within the limits of philosophy of the subject. Habermas disagreed with the intellectual thinkers of his critical school, which he believed to be nourished by the radical counter-discourse of modernity, and embarked on a comprehensive advocacy of modernity. The fact that he acts with a Weberian approach that ignores the material foundations of modernity while sharing common views on language and understanding with poststructuralists, combining contrasting approaches, makes him very komplex, but enables him, at the same time, to have a special perspective.

In the second part of this study, where the concepts used by Habermas and the criticisms to his theory are discussed and interpreted, the answer to the question of how Habermas, who made important contributions to the development of 20th century Western Thought both as a philosopher and as a sociologist, formed the intellectual background underlying the Communicative Action Theory. The third chapter will explain the different concepts Habermas used by creating the Communicative Action Theory. In the fourth chapter includes a general framework of the theory. And in the final chapter, the question of how successful the Communicative Action Theory is in achieving the balance of the system-lifeworld, will be discussed from a critical point of view in the light of the relevant literature.

2. Background of the Communicative Action Theory

It will be useful to spent, in advance, some words about Habermas' intellectual identity as philosopher and also as sociologist, because these characteristics are significantly reflected in his works.

Habermas, a representative of the last generation critical theory known as the Frankfurt School, was interested in the fields of Philosophy, Sociology, Economics and politics as well as in language and communication. He is a distinctive, productive and questioning philosopher and sociologist, inspired by the ideas and methods of especially Marx and Freud and many other system and action sociologists, to analyze social and individual variations and changes. But Habermas is also a reconstruction thinker. In this context, he tried to reconstruct the important approaches of the philosophers and sociologists of his age and before by examining and criticizing them. Habermas defines him as a radical democrat Lemasson, L (2008). as described in his theory as "discursive democracy" stemming from the abstract ideal of community organized by free and equal citizens. In this respect, he has an identity as a peace activist, beyond his philosophical and a sociological character. His struggle against all kinds of discriminatory thoughts and behaviors, especially racism, was observed and resonated all over the world, especially in his own country (Timur, 2008). After a lot of sociological and philosophical works and analyses, Habermas pointed out that the mankind possesses a mind, that he has carried throughout his history without being aware of it, and that the salvation of mankind depends on this mind. In this sense, with his "Communicative Action Theory". He opened new horizons to philosophical discussions, especially with his thoughts in the field of communication philosophy he reconstructed from the speech-act philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein, J. L. Austin and John Searle. Thus, he gained an important position in the field of social philosophy as the most

important last generation German philosopher of the Frankfurt School (Güçlü et al, 2008). He put forward the thesis that the transformative and liberating power of society is not in a certain social class, but in communication, which is a common element inherent in all people, and in the spoken language, which he considers as the cornerstone of communication.

In his opening speech at the Frankfurt School in 1965 in the presence of the most important representatives of critical theory such as Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, Habermas used the following statements on the importance of language:

“That which lifts us out of nature is the only fact that we can naturally know: Communication. With its structure, maturity is set for us. The intention of a general and informal consensus is clearly expressed in the first sentence. Maturity is the only idea that we are capable of in the sense of the philosophical tradition. (Habermas, 1965)”

Habermas has carried out studies in different fields in accordance with the characteristics of the periods he lived in. For example, when we look at Habermas’s work “Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere”, one of his works, which is still used as a reference, we can see that he has put forward one of the most important works of political theory, which discusses subjects like public opinion, public sphere, and private sphere. Towards the end of the 1960s, Habermas focused his attention on the philosophy of knowledge. His work "Knowledge and Human Interest" is the product of his intention to form a new theory of knowledge. In 1981, he published his most comprehensive and best-known work “The Theory of Communicative Action”, which consists of 2 volumes where he tries to find a way to ground the social sciences in a theory of language. Although he is quite old, Habermas still continues to produce new works in the fields of philosophy, sociology and EU-politics and to give conferences at universities. These different vital and intellectual characteristics of Habermas have found their reflections in his work “The Theory of Communicative Action”.

In short we can say that the main feature that makes Habermas's theory outstanding is that he examines, criticizes and reconstructs different sociological theories from Max Weber, Émile Durkheim, and George Herbert Mead; the theories of linguistic philosophy and speech act from Ludwig Wittgenstein, J.L. Austin, and John Searle's and the ideas of important German philosophers like Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Schelling, Georg Hegel, Wilhelm Dilthey, Edmund Husserl, and Hans-Georg Gadamer in his theory (Moody, H. R. & Powell, J. L. (2003).

3. Concepts Underlying the Theory of Communicative Action

Due to the fact that “Communicative Action Theory” is very complex and difficult to understand as containing many different philosophical and sociological theories, it would be appropriate to clarify some important concepts that constitute the framework of the theory.

3.1. Case and Value Concepts

According to Habermas, everything that is included in the field of social life is accepted as the object area of social sciences. Here we can see an

important critic to positivism, who ignored the social facts in the objective world. For him the human is a being that is constantly interacting with his environment. This sphere of communicative interaction and lifeworld is surrounded by very different social norms. However, positivism ignores the "value" that shapes the relationship between the human beings and life, and moves from an objective fact independent of value, which is for Habermas an unavoidable interaction (Rutherford, 2000). For Habermas, the fact that positivist theory tries to apply the mainstream laws, which are supposed to be valid in natural sciences to the field of social sciences, makes it impossible for a man either to have any sovereignty over his actions, neither to think and make reflexive evaluations about it. For this reason, positivism does not have the ability to see and understand the variable structure prevailing in social sciences. This variable and dynamic structure that continues at all times in the social life does not validate a determined and causal process in which the same results occur in every situation. This means that it is not possible to investigate social sciences using methods that are assumed to be valid in natural sciences because social facts have subjective characteristics. Thus he explicitly refers to the dualism between the natural sciences and the social sciences. However, he states that this approach is methodologically first addressed by Rickert (Habermas, 1967). In fact, this understanding can also be found in Vico, Herder, Dilthey and Weber (Özkul, 2013). According to the approach of all these thinkers, while general laws are valid in the field of natural sciences, values are valid in the field of social sciences. At this point, Habermas uses the concept of "social life spaces". For him, the "social life space" constitutes the object of social sciences. It is the space in which "we", as ordinary people, are constantly active (Habermas, 1996). The life space in which the individual is shaped and the language surrounding the individual is structured. Here we can see the importance of communicative action. Because every individual forms his / her personality in this area or universe in which he/she is surrounded, and accordingly communicates and acts.

3.2. Communicative Action / Strategic Action

While creating these concepts, Habermas made use of notions such as human potential, human activity and human existence, which he takes from Marx, but reconstructed them. He did not consider human formation by reducing it to a single concept of labor, as Marx did, but made a distinction between labor as rational action, and human interaction as communicative action. For Habermas is communicative action a consensual form of social coordination, in which actors in society seek to reach common understanding and to coordinate actions by reasoned argument, consensus, and cooperation rather than strategic action strictly in pursuit of their own goals (Habermas, 1984, Vol. I: 86). According to Habermas, actors who interact for this purpose try to reach a consensus on a subject in the world through argumentations and comments they put forward on the basis of tradition and culture. Habermas states that individuals who interact with the aim of achieving a consensus try to achieve this through argumentations and comments they produce on the common ground of tradition and culture. In this process, they refer to real situations, social sphere and private life sphere. Communicative action is based on rationality. In other words, communicative action also appears as

communicative rationality. Communicative rationality is a sociological alternative that can be developed to create a common goal (Atiker, 1998).

Communicative action is not dependent on rules like instrumental action. Therefore, it cannot be based on the subject-object contrast; It represents intersubjectivity. It is a process of interaction and involves a reflexive thinking. Just as I can affect other individuals in this process, I can also be affected by those individuals (Güngen, 2013). Strategic Action follows technical norms based on experimental knowledge. At this point, it is necessary to draw attention to an important distinction made by Habermas: Habermas underscores that the actor follows technical rules in strategic action, unconsciously or unawares. Compliance with compulsory valid norms in communicative action, on the other hand, is the situation that occurs as a result of interaction. Expressing a liberation by reflexive thinking by the actors, and then a mutual judgement and negotiation process, after which the rules we agree upon are binding us. This represents the normative dimension of Habermas's theory (Habermas, 1984b, Vol. I: 397).

3.3. Communicative Rationality

One of the most important concepts of Habermas's theory is the concept of “communicative rationality”. While developing this concept, Habermas examined the thoughts of thinkers such as Kant, Weber, Mead and Horkheimer about reason and rationality, criticized the points he evaluated as incomplete or incorrect and thus restructured his own concept of rationality. However, in order to better understand the communicative rationality, it is necessary to look at how Habermas defines the mind. First of all, Habermas places the concepts of rationality taken from Weber and Horkheimer, which he defines as teleological mind or subject-centered mind against his notion of communicative rationality in order to make the communicative mind more visible (Habermas, 1990: 294). Unlike Weber, Habermas deals with the mind in two dimensions as communicative and strategic mind. On the other hand, Weber evaluates mind only in the context of purpose-means (Pensky, 2001: 53).

Habermas mentions 3 types of rationality except communicative rationality: discursive rationality, epistemic rationality and teleological rationality. Communicative rationality, on the other hand, is the rationality that emerges as a result of people using language rationally in order to reach a consensus (Habermas, 1967).

Looking at these explanations, one understands that Habermas regards his communicative rationality as the purpose Habermas (1984c, Vol. I: 17), not as the means as in other types of rationality. In summary, Habermas tries to define rationality as an inter-subjective principle by taking the mind from individualism and moving it to the dimension of interpersonal communication

3.4. Discourse Ethik

Discourse ethics was developed in Germany since the early 1970s by Karl-Otto Apel and Jürgen Habermas, and soon gained international attention. With this theory Habermas tries to answer, like Karl-Otto Apel in his communicative theory, anew the question raised by Kant about the conditions of true knowledge. In contrast to the widely held view that there can be no

ultimate truths without falling back into metaphysics or theology, they insist on being able to determine a rational foundation of reason in a generally binding way. Habermas does not look for a final reason (such as being or god), but tries to make reasoning and disputing, arguing itself the subject of his investigation. Thus, it is not the thinking of the individual (as in Kant), but the communal argumentation, which has always been linguistically conveyed, the discourse, that forms the starting point of the considerations.

Conditions of reasoning

Whoever takes part in a discourse has already acknowledged the reflexively and rationally ascertainable rules of argumentation. Arguing, even the most sceptical, has the structure of inescapability. Argumentation cannot be abandoned argumentatively.

Habermas identifies four general presuppositions for argumentation:

1. No one capable of making a relevant contribution has been excluded,
2. Participants have equal voice,
3. They are internally free to speak their honest opinion without deception or self-deception,
4. There are no sources of coercion built into the process and procedures of discourse (Habermas, 2005).

This concept of discourse ethics is actually the basis for his Communicative Action Theory in a general sense. He assumes that despite man's ability to reason, it has not been possible to develop a good life in a just society (Brüning, 2021). For Habermas, the reason for this lies not in reason, but in interpersonal communication, which is usually functional. This means that every person tries to assert his interests in a communicative situation as much as possible and to get the best result for himself. This also applies to social and ethical discourses. Habermas therefore proposes to make these discourses "free from domination". None of the participants can claim to be an irrefutable authority. Every subject capable of speech and action has the same opportunities to participate in the discourse and may problematize his or her proposals. Everybody commits themselves voluntarily to the search for truth by taking part in this discourse.

Habermas's discourse ethics is his try to provide an explanation for the implications of communicative rationality within the sphere of ethical perception and normative validity. It is a complicated theoretical attempt to reformulate the essential insights of Kantian deontological ethics in phrases of the evaluation of communicative structures. It is likewise a cognitivist ethical theory, this means that it holds that justifying the validity of ethical norms may be accomplished in a way analogous to the justification of facts (Brunkhorst, 2018).

3.5. System and Lifeworld

An important subtitle of Habermas's theory is the concept of "lifeworld". He used this concept inspired by Husserl (Brand, 1973, p. 143), who first used it in his work "The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental

Phenomenology”, and then by Schütz, who brought a new interpretation to the concept. For Husserl, the world of life is a space that exists before theory / science (Schutz, 1962, p.120), includes all entities, arranged in space-time dimensions, and is the “soil” for all social human experience (Husserl, 1970; Schutz, 1970, s. 116).

Habermas, on the other hand, thinks that the interactions between people in the lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*) do not take place in the consciousness of individuals (Husserl 1969: 12), but in a common space. The lifeworld (Habermas, 1971). According to him, one of the places where the negative effects of rationalization underlying modernity, such as cultural transformation, are seen most intensely is the lifeworld, which is an area of interpersonal interaction. Habermas, who attaches great importance to this sphere as the area where social rationalization takes place through language, argues that this area is occupied by the system and its subsystems such as power and money (Habermas, 1984d, Vol II: 318) and shows that this space is not rationalized sufficiently in a communicative sense (Habermas, 1984e Vol. II: 119, 173).

Husserl explains the reason behind his development of the concept of the “*lifeworld*” as an effort to find a solution to the separation of the objective-scientific field from the subjective lifeworld as the cause of an increasing crisis of meaning in the field of European science.

Habermas, on the other hand, states that he developed the concept of the “*lifeworld*” against the possible invasion of the private sphere, where agreement-oriented communicative action is carried out, from the system and its subsystems such as power and economy, which operate with reason for success. Because the system and its subsystems has the possibility to occupy private space in conflict situations that prevent his success (Habermas, 1984f II,: 318-331).

This means that, with the concepts of System and Life world, Habermas tries to explain how a two-level social structure can coexist. This effort is in fact the duality such as individual-society, subject-object, theory-practice, nomothetic-idiographic, natural sciences, social sciences and structure-subject, which both philosophy and sociology have worked on and tried to overcome. These oppositions appear, for example, as the opposition of science and social sciences in the Enlightenment, as the opposition of the nation-state, individual-society in the French revolution, and as the product of human development in the technological field in the industrial revolution, the opposition of the acting and transforming subject and the object connected to it.

The opposition Habermas tries to overcome or balance is the opposition of the system, which is the field of material production, and the life world, which is opposed to it and consists of the private and public sphere* where symbolic production is realized. Taking these two concepts together and explaining their contrasts will make the meaning of these concepts for communicative action theory more visible.

Habermas, in his two-structured social theory, explains the duality of symbolic and material reproduction of society through the “*lifeworld*” and “system” concepts.

“System and lifeworld are each evolutionarily and structurally differentiated social spheres, subsystems or even sovereign territories that are either systemically or socially integrated” (Habermas, 1981: 140).

For the structure of modern, differentiated societies, this means that the system and lifeworld exist in them as concretely separated systems of action and can be set in relation to one another (in the sense of: boundaries, primacy, superiority / subordination, mutual penetration interpenetration, mediatization, colonization).

The economy and the state administration are systemically integrated, formally organized sub-systems of purposeful rational action, which are driven by money and power as media of action release. They serve the material reproduction, disturbances of the same are to be understood as system crises or control crises. These systems are subject to the imperatives of increasing complexity. People have official roles and must seek certain goals, even if sometimes with ethical restraints.

The lifeworld on the other hand is the daily world that we share with others. This includes all facets of life, apart from organised or institution-driven ones. For example, family life, culture and informal social exchange. It is the sphere within which we lead much of our social and individual life (Habermas, 1984g, Vol. II: 126). It's based on an implicit foundation of shared values and understandings. that give us the ability to perform actions that we know others will understand. Thus daily actions that we produce in the lifeworld are generally communicative in nature (Cooke, 1998).

If one follows the thesis of the colonization of the lifeworld, reifying effects only arise when systemically established obligations impose oneself into the lifeworld.

“It is not the uncoupling of media-steered subsystems and of their organizational forms from the lifeworld that leads to the one-sided rationalization or reification of everyday communicative practice, but only the penetration of forms of economic and administrative rationality into areas of action that resist being converted over to the media of money and power because they are specialized in cultural transmission, social integration, and child rearing, and remain dependent on mutual understanding as a mechanism for coordinating action” (Habermas, 1984h, Vol. II: 330).

Habermas's goal with the rationalization of the lifeworld and the system is the rationalization of both in their own unique way. On the one hand, the structures of the system should become more complex by differentiating, on the other hand, the lifeworld should provide an environment for free and independent communication and ensure that the best arguments are accepted as a result of consensus. According to Habermas, this is a formulation that will ensure that the life-world and the system balance each other and will have a positive effect on their development.

3.6. Public Sphere

In order to understand Habermas's definition of the concept of public sphere, it is necessary to look at the historical development process of this concept. Habermas, in his work titled “The Structural Transformation of the

Public Sphere” published in 1962, creates the definition of the concept by considering the historical, social and philosophical phenomena together. Habermas, with this definition, actually reveals also the difference between public sphere and lifeworld.

The history of this distinction is based on “polis”, known as “city state” and emerged in Ancient Greece. While the public sphere of the city-states (polis) was common to free citizens (koine), the private sphere of the household (oikos) belonged to each individual realm (idia) (Habermas, 1962). Public life took place in the market places (agora), which are common spaces. Individuals' participation in the public sphere was dependent on the free will of the household owner. The public sphere itself emerged as a result of the discussions (lexi) and joint action of the participating individuals (praxis).

When we look at ancient Rome, we see a similar distinction between these concepts. The public sphere, called “res publica”, refers to the sphere in which people who do not have family or other close ties come together and interact and constitute social and political ties (Sennett, 1996: 16). Over time, this sphere lost its function as a sphere for voluntary unity and discussion where different social and political issues were discussed, and became a compulsory association sphere for passive participating masses. So the Roman citizens sought spheres where they could freely and voluntarily discuss and share their ideas.

After the collapse of the Roman Empire, the administrative vacuum that emerged in Europe was filled with the pressure of the Monarchic kingdoms and the religious vacuum, so the formation of the public and private sphere became almost impossible (Habermas, 1962b: 7).

The concept of public sphere in the sense of Habermas is connected with the bourgeois society that emerged as a result of some historical and social events that took place at the end of the eighteenth century. Habermas expresses this transformation process in his work as follows:

“The major tendencies that prevailed by the end of the eighteenth century are well-known. The feudal powers, the Church, the prince, and the nobility, who were the carriers of the representative publicness, disintegrated in a process of polarization; in the end they split into private elements, on the one hand, and public ones on the other. The status of the Church changed as a result of the Reformation; the anchoring in divine authority that it represented—that is religion—became a private matter. The so-called freedom of religion historically secured the first sphere of private autonomy; the Church itself continued to exist as one corporate body among others under public law. The first visible mark of the analogous polarization of princely authority was the separation of the public budget from the territorial ruler’s private holdings. The bureaucracy, the military (and to some extent also the administration of justice) became independent institutions of public authority separate from the progressively privatized sphere of the court. Out of the estates, finally the elements of political prerogative developed into organs of public authority: partly into a parliament, and partly into judicial organs. Elements of occupational status group organization, to the degree that they were already involved into the urban corporations and in certain differentiations within the estates of the land, developed into the sphere of “civil

society” that as the genuine domain of private autonomy stood opposed to the state” (Habermas, 1962c:12).

3.7. Ambiguity of the Distinction Between Public Sphere and Private Sphere

When focusing on the formation process of the public sphere, the question arises whether lifeworld / private sphere is ignored or whether it has melted into the pot of the public sphere and transformed into a subset of the public sphere. The underlying reason for this confusion are the important differences between the public sphere which was formed in seventeenth and eighteenth century and today's public sphere (Çaha, 1998). This differentiation process is also the reason for Habermas work “The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere”. By transformation, he means the transition from the concrete and homogeneous individual-centered bourgeois public sphere to the differentiated public sphere created by civil society in real social life. He also links the process of the delineation of the bourgeois public to the increase of economic market relations and the realization of production through exchange by a predominantly privatized society, although it is directed by the state that holds public authority by saying that this situation started to reverse with the state interventions appeared in nineteenth century. What creates these new state interventions is the search for a solution by transferring unresolved interests in the private sphere to the political sphere. In this way, the state holding the public / political power directly adopted the interests stemming from the private sphere. Thus, the expansion of the public power towards the private sphere eliminates and obscures the private space in which private people, organize their general issues (Habermas, 1962d:141).

Habermas determines two types of public spaces as a result of the development of communication technologies, the gaining power of the media and its proximity to public authority. The first of these is the “inherited” public space formed as a result of the affiliation of the companies holding the media power with the state administration. The other is the “unhereditary” lifeworld created by the civil society (Kremers and Izuta, 2017).

While Habermas thus demonstrates the enlightenment reason and the problems it faces, he also forms the foundations and framework of the main character of his theory. After this conceptual framework, we can now look at the Communicative Action Theory.

4. The Theory of Communicative Action

People who constitute a community in some form also share certain common beliefs. These form their lifeworld. This lifeworld determines the actions of people and represents the background against which all communication takes place.

To sum up, we can say that actions regulated by norms , expressive self-presentations , and also evaluative expressions, supplement constative speech acts in constituting a communicative practice which , against the background of a lifeworld , is oriented to achieving , sustaining , and renewing consensus and indeed a consensus that rests on the intersubjective recognition of criticizable validity claims (Habermas, 1984i, I: 17).

Archaic societies have a fixed worldview that is shaped by myths and beliefs. Such a worldview arises when people feel helplessly exposed to the forces of nature that they experience every day. People in archaic societies do not distinguish between subjective ideas and the objectively perceptible world; in their worldview both are mixed. In societies that are determined by a mythical worldview, there are usually fixed norms of behavior that apply to all members. These standards also regulate interpersonal communication. They ensure that the understanding works and that a consensus can be reached. As a society evolves, its lifeworld becomes more rational. People are increasingly able to differentiate between the objectively perceptible world and subjective beliefs. The common, mythical worldview is becoming less important, and so are the norms and rules of conduct associated with it. Instead of following guidelines, people are increasingly taking their own, rational decisions. In a rationalized world, the individual has the opportunity to act rationally himself and to lead his whole life rationally. However, the more unclearly a society's worldview is defined, the greater the likelihood that there will be disputes in communication before a consensus can be reached.

4.1. Rational Speaking and Acting

An action is considered rational when it is purposeful and has a chance of success. Using the example of a rational statement, this means: It can be justified, criticized and reviewed. This inspection usually takes place in exchange with other communication participants, in the form of an argument. The speaker makes a validity claim with his statement, which is verified for correctness by the communication partner: The partner can accept or reject the validity claim. The goal of argumentation and communication in general is to reach consensus between the interlocutors (Habermas, 1984j, Vol. I: 75).

Human action can be divided into different categories; For each of these categories a certain usage of language and certain world references are typical:

- Teleological or strategic action is goal-oriented and based on things in the objective world.
- Norm-regulated action is based on the values that are given in a society. It applies not only to the objective but also to the social World.
- Dramaturgical action serves the self-portrayal of the actor. Another dimension comes into play here, namely the subjective world of a person who puts himself in the limelight in front of others and reveals something about himself.

Every statement makes a claim to validity. In the case of constative statements, this validity claim is the truth: You must allow yourself to be measured against the conditions of the objective world. The claim to validity of normative statements, in turn, is validity. This raises the question of whether the underlying norm is also seen as legitimate by others. Finally, expressive statements lay claim to truthfulness; The question here is to what extent the agent's statements appear credible in the overall context of his or her behavior.

4.2. The Communicative Action

In addition to these three forms of action, there is a fourth, communicative action. Here the participants try to find a consensus through communication in order to coordinate their actions. Its medium for communication is language. The speakers refer to an objective, a social and a subjective world at the same time. This is the normal case in human communication. Usually all statements lay claim to truth, validity and truthfulness at the same time and are measured by the other parties involved (Habermas, 1984k., Vol I: 106)

4.3. Understanding And Consent In Communicative Action

Communicative action has the purpose of coordinating the actions of the communication partners. What conditions must be met so that people can use communication to coordinate their actions? The listener's reactions to the speech act take place on three levels: First, he must understand the meaning of the statement, then he must comment on it, accept or reject it. If he accepts the statement, then he or she next orients his actions to the specifications that are defined by conventions as a reaction to the statement. In this way, he coordinates his actions with those of the communication partner. If he rejects the statement, then those involved must try to find a consensus through argumentation (Habermas, 1984l, Vol. I: 340)

Whether and how an understanding is reached in communication is determined by various factors: on the one hand, by the reference of those involved to the objective, social and subjective world; then through the validity claims to truth, validity and truthfulness that arise from these references to the world; and finally through the agreement that arises between the communication participants when they accept the validity claims of the other.

5. Criticism of the Communicative Action Theory

What seems problematic here is that Habermas acted from some ethical pre-acceptance that was universal and mandatory for ideal/argumentative communication. Critics of Habermas's ethical theory of discourse seek answers to the following question: How can the Theory of Communicative Action, which is based on Habermas' principle of universalization, contribute to better communicative understanding in today's globalized World to common problems like environmental disasters, climate change, terrorism or social imbalance which affect people of different languages, religions, and cultures all over the world who have their own understanding of ethics and norms? However, in the theory of discourse ethics, it is seen that the "hermeneutic" phenomenon, which aims to "understand" the other side, is missing. In summary, the validity and applicability of the rules, which are accepted as a prerequisite for an ideal communication, constitute the main topics of discussion.

Gorz draws attention to the pressure that the system creates on the lifeworld and expresses the following criticisms:

Pressures arising from the whole system instrumentalize the lifeworld: these pressures force individuals to achieve their own goals through predetermined behaviours and procedures imposed on them. The same pressures compel individuals to serve the purposes and interests imposed on them from outside

(The System) In this way, the increasingly complex economic-political system penetrates ever deeper into the symbolic reproduction of the lifeworld, drawing ever-new spheres of communicatively structured interaction into the vortex of capitalist growth (Gorz, 1997).

Drawing attention to the difficulty of providing an ideal speaking environment in the sense of Habermas, Özalp states that Habermas is successful in terms of guiding experimental studies, creating a theoretical framework for political discussions and producing new concepts (Özalp, 2004).

According to Bellamy (2007), Habermas assumes that the communicative mind does not give opportunities to situations such as partiality and prioritizing individual interests. But he ignores that it is not possible for the compromise targeted for the sake of the common interest to be realized at a rate that satisfies each participant.

The aspiration is to make political deliberation on matters of public policy more equitable, appreciative of the range of concerns in play, and focused on the common good. It's certainly a laudable ambition and one, as we shall see below and more especially in chapter 5, that political constitutionalism shares. Where this style of argument goes wrong is in assuming this goal can be generally (if ever) achieved to everyone's reasonable satisfaction. That assumption leads certain advocates of deliberative democracy to consider any failure to reach a consensual agreement as a sign of malign intent, ignorance or stupidity on the part of those concerned – especially when matters of principle, such as constitutional issues, are at stake (Bellamy;2007).

Another criticism directed at Habermas' theory is that his theory remains incomplete and abstract from an experimental point of view, and cannot comprehensively address differences such as culture, gender, ethnicity that exist in the public sphere, so it is difficult to institutionalize democratic debates (Could 2004).

Touraine, on the other hand, criticizes the theory of communicative action, arguing that the communicators are not individuals themselves, but rather the confrontation of individuals who strive to meet their needs in the lifeworld and the institutions of the system, which are economic, political and military administrations. According to him, individuals are more involved in dependency or cooperative relationships than in discursive discussions in society/lifeworld. He argues that in modern democracy the emphasis should be placed on the subject, not on the inter-subjects.

We no longer perceive the existence of a society organized around political institutions. We see centres of economic, political and military administration on the one hand, and the private world of needs on the other. There no longer seems to be any correspondence between actor and system. We no longer belong to a society, a social class or a nation to the extent that our lives are in part determined by the world market, and in part confined to a world of personal life, interpersonal relations and cultural traditions (Touraine; 1995).

Vollrath, who has made a similar criticism, says that the concept of an "Ideal speech state" contains an exclusion mechanism. According to him, if the state of "Ideal speech state" is considered as the only principle of communication, all differences that individuals participating in communication

have will be ignored, every moment of difference will be devalued (Vollrath; 1983).

Another dimension of criticism directed to the Communicative Action Theory is the distinction between the lifeworld and the system and the regulations of the relations between them. Habermas bases his theory on the idea that modern capitalist society can liberate itself by resisting the oppression and domination exerted by the system through communicative intelligence (Douglas Kellner). He interprets society as a structure consisting of “lifeworld” and “system” dimensions. He defines the lifeworld as a rational area of communication in which individuals who are discussing practical problems about common life (Torun, 2018, s.181), communicate and interact with each other in a compromise direction, while he tries to explain the system formed by the state, economy and money from the framework of rational action. For Habermas, who considers the colonisation of the lifeworld by the system, where the society and individual can live freely, as the crisis of modernity, poses this colonisation also an important threat that stands in front of the potential for individual and social change and prevents the formation of a (private) public sphere, which is an element of the lifeworld and acts as a “buffer zone” between the system and the lifeworld.

Habermas's suggestions to overcome the crisis, which he considers as the siege of the lifeworld by the system, and to ensure that the system and the living space continue to survive by separation, have also been criticized in many ways. First of all, Habermas himself admits that the system is constantly penetrating into the lifesphere by using its political, economic and financial tools (as an excuse) and besieging it. But Habermas offers the lifeworld an idealized tool of rational communication between people, whose applicability and validity are highly questioned. He also doesn't need to explain how the opinions of the individuals who agree on the best argument by discussing rationally on a common problem in the lifeworld, will be reflected in the system and how it will affect the system (Outhwaite, 1994).

Gould, on the other hand, argues that Habermas limits the powers of the public sphere in making decisions regarding common goals and leaves the final decision (authority) to the state (Gould, 1999: 244)

Morel emphasizes that the System and the living space cannot be independent from each other. According to him, the system depends on the lifeworld in terms of institutionalizing system-building mechanisms, legitimizing the consequences and effects of system dynamics, and motivating members of society to participate in the system as necessary and the lifeworld depends on the system in terms of providing the necessary materials and environment for cultural, social and individual reproduction within its lifeworld (Morel. 1989).

For Atiker Habermas makes the lifeworld dependent on the system in terms of power, which is one of the most important means of influence, while trying to save the lifeworld from the influence of the system (Atiker, 1998). He considers power as the administrative power existing in the system and the communicative power as the power produced in the lifeworld and states that all of these are realized on the basis of purpose and rationality (Habermas, 1984r, Vol. I: 15). On the other hand, he sets the precondition that the communication to be realized in the lifeworld should be free from rationality. By doing this, he

confirms that the communicative power, which is actually produced in the lifeworld and purified from rationality, does not mean anything to the administrative power produced in the system and is ultimately dependent on it (Greven, 1991).

According to Thompson, who criticized Habermas on the principle of participation in the public sphere says the participation in the public sphere, which should be open to all society, has become a sphere of participation for a limited part of society. He compares this situation with the bourgeois public sphere emerged in the eighteenth century, where generally educated and proprietor people participated, arguing that it produces a class inequality (Thompson 1994). In addition, the fact that the state and industrial organizations, which have started to intervene more in this field due to social responsibility or conflict resolution reasons restricts the scope validity of the public sphere and turns it into a politicized area where certain interest groups struggle to get access to resources. Moreover the development of communication technologies such as television, internet and social networks gives rise to large-scale (commercial) mass communication companies which start to transform the public sphere, which should be a free discussion space, into a cultural consumption area (Thompson, 1994).

Another group that criticizes Habermas' theory over the concept of public sphere is the feminist group. Especially feminist social scientists such as Nancy Fraser and Rita Felski criticized Habermas's definition of the public sphere as an idealized bourgeois public sphere ignoring social differences. They argued that society does not consist of a uniform structure, rather there are different ethnic classes and genders in society that cannot be represented within the framework of such an idealized public sphere. For Fraser, the idealized public sphere ignores the mechanisms of social exclusion by claiming to be open to all social groups and all kinds of discussion. In other words, the public sphere cannot be transformed into a space where every group of the society get access and can easily participate in discussions by expressing freely their ideas (Fraser, 1990). This means that the subject and the way of the discussion in the public sphere will be determined by "dominant" groups. Discussion topics about women are postponed from the public sphere to the private sphere, arguing that they are "private subjects" (Fraser, 1990). It is important that the problems to be discussed in the public sphere are opened to discussion by all social groups participating in this field because there are no predetermined natural boundaries in the relationship between public and private sphere. What will be considered as a public sphere discussion subject and what will be considered as a private sphere subject can only be determined after discursive discussions to be held in the public sphere. As an example for this Fraser shows that, for a long time, the violence women experience in the family was considered as a problem of private sphere and only after long time of discussions held in the public sphere it was accepted as a common problem of the public sphere (Fraser, 2004).

Also feminist writers like Benhabib, Eley and Ryan argue that Habermas excludes subjects related to women and different identities in the society by idealizing the public sphere (Benhabib, 1992; Calhoun, 1992; Keane, 1984; Salvatore, 2007).

5.1. Discussion

The core problem in Habermas's argument is the question of a possible universalization of his theory, so the tension between facts and norms. The difficulties begin with the unjustified, central theorem, according to which the telos of understanding is inherent in language. Even if this is true, it does not yet show why understanding must be thought as a consensus, whose achievement, preservation and renewal communicative practice has ever aimed at. This claim constitutes one of the most sensitive points of Habermas's theory. Habermas himself is actually aware of this:

That the conception of "reality" must be regarded as intelligible and applicable outside the context of scientific reasoning itself, since it is that to which scientific notions do, and unscientific notions do not, have a relation (Habermas, 1984m, Vol I: 57).

However, Habermas seems to take refuge behind formal logic instead of justifying this claim. In other words, it puts forward the correctness of the claim in terms of form, not the correctness of content.

The method used by Habermas to defend modernity actually contains a very clever tactic. On the one hand, he interprets the modernity project he defends as rational and as a political and social progress, and defines all those who criticize this project as anti-modern by gathering them under the heading of "conservatives". He considers them to be those who curse all logic and completely reject rational discourse.

However, postmodern philosophers such as Foucault and Derrida, who criticize Habermas's defense of modernity and rationality, actually show a purpose of the modern thought tradition by thinking of the unthinkable. While it should be taken natural that they contradict these approaches with the idea of seeking universal rationality only within the limits of communicative competence, as Habermas tries to do; Isn't it actually contradictory to critical thinking, one of the most fundamental phenomena of modernity, to describe this way of thinking as anti-modern and illogical?

At the same time, according to (Hoy, 130), the postmodern understanding of pluralism contradicts the late modern thinkers like Habermas's effort to reach the universal rationality desired by the modern tradition in a single theory, such as communicative competence. From another point of view, can't it be said that Habermas has eliminated all kinds of counter-thoughts that produce different ideas and reveal the potential of self-liberation (Coole, 226)?

The postmoderns' pluralism contrasts with the drive of a late modern like Habermas to find in a single phenomenon – communicative competence – the unique a priori structure from which to derive the universal rationality to which the modern tradition aspires (Hoy, 1989).

Habermas' analysis of the mystical worldview of pre-modern societies also contains some problems in itself. First of all, Habermas mentions the "High Culture" in his theory, but it does not provide an explanation about what the primitive cultures he deployed against it. This, in turn, brings to mind the question: All these primitive cultures that do not conform to Habermas's "modern" worldview and do not have scientific-Western standards of rationality. does he place it on the other side of the scale? While Habermas analyzes these

two different world views, he identifies the general characteristics that apply to each world view. According to him, the modern worldview encompasses differentiated validity claims and an objective, social and subjective vision of the world that are lacking in non-modern mystical cultures, at best, it is potentially present in it (Masschelein 1987).

By making this determination, Habermas shows that the modern worldview is more privileged and more rational. Here, the following question comes to mind: To what extent were these world visions influenced by Habermas' interests at the forefront? and do these visions of the world allow us to get an adequate idea of the "primitive" other? Is it possible that Habermas is so interested in the comparison of modern culture – primitive/mythical culture that he is using it as a tool to shape the modern worldview that he represents and is perhaps not as homogeneous as he thinks? His following statements can be understood as looking for the answer to such a question:

The deeper one penetrates the network of a mythical interpretation for the world, the more strongly the totalizing power of the "savage mind" stands out (Habermas, 1984n, Vol I: 45).

Habermas expresses his intention to compare modern culture – primitive / mythical culture with the following statements:

The test case for a theory of rationality with which the modern understanding of the world is to ascertain its own universality would certainly include throwing light on the opaque figures of mythical thought, clarifying the bizarre expressions of alien cultures, and indeed in such a way that we not only comprehend the learning processes that separate "us" from "them" but also become aware of what we have unlearned in the course of this learning (Habermas, 1984o Vol. II,: 400).

Discourse ethics, which forms the backbone of Communicative Action Theory, also comes across as the most critical subject. The main reason behind these criticisms is that Habermas attributes the language used for communication to him a transcendent quality "Telos", which he thinks contains all mutual agreements. He believes that individual freedom and public responsibility exist within the structure of the language itself.

From one perspective the telos inherent in rationality appears to be instrumental mastery, from the other communicative understanding (Habermas, 1984p Vol. I: 11).

The problem for Habermas is: How can we appropriate naïve, everyday ethical knowledge in a critical fashion without at the same time destroying it through theoretical objectification? (Larrain, 1994). Because, according to Habermas, the world of life, colonized by the economy and power, can only survive this pressure with sufficiently rationalized Moldaschl, M. & Sauer, D. (2000) communicative action (Habermas, 1992: 139).

Habermas suggests that the moral-practical problems of individuals arising in the worlds of life can only be solved by the communicative mind (Sitembölükbaşı, 2005: 149- 150; Dursun, 1999: 113; Fox ve Miller: 1995: 11-12), which manifests itself in an ideal communication environment between subjects on the basis of real reconciliation. But what seems problematic here is that Habermas acted from some universal and mandatory moral pre-acceptance for ideal/argumentative communication.

In this regard, I tried to delineate the general pragmatic presuppositions of argumentation as specifications of an ideal speech situation.²⁵ This proposal may be unsatisfactory in its details; but I still view as correct my intention to reconstruct the general symmetry conditions that every competent speaker must presuppose are sufficiently satisfied insofar as he intends to enter into argumentation at all. Participants in argumentation have to presuppose in general that the structure of their communication, by virtue of features that can be described in purely formal terms, excludes all force-whether it arises from within the process of reaching understanding itself or influences it from the outside-except the force of the better argument and thus that it also excludes, on their part, all motives except that of a cooperative search for the truth). From this perspective argumentation can be conceived as a reflective continuation, with different means, of action oriented to reaching understanding (Habermas, 1984q, Vol.II, 25).

6. Conclusion

Jürgen Habermas's work "*Theory of Communicative Action*" is an endeavour to advance a socially-based theory of action as an alternative to the subjectivist and individualist underpinnings of much of social theory, a "two-level concept of society that brings together the "lifeworld" and "system" patterns. His work can be considered as a deconstruction and reconstruction of some important theories of 20th century disciplines such as philosophy, sociology, linguistics, history, anthropology, and phenomenology. By combining important discussion topics such as communicative rationality, action and system under a theory, he has opened new horizons to social sciences (Timur, 2008: 145). He has been in an effort to balance the dilemmas and one-sided rationalization created by the modernity, with the concept of lifeworld, which he structured on the basis of the communicative action and positioned against the system.

Through the concepts of "public sphere", "lifeworld" and "deliberative democracy" he developed, also the fields of discussion and the theoretical frameworks he evolved, gave the individual and the society the opportunity to realize themselves, relatively independent of the system, helping to reveal social problems and thus trigger empirical research and further theoretical debates (Held ve Simon, 2006: 410-411). In addition, the fact that it provides important perspectives on how the virtual communication environments that emerged due to the rapid developments in communication technologies can be evaluated for individual and social freedoms, shows that the theory is also an important reference for today's communication society.

On the other hand, his theory has been subject to criticism from multiple parts of intellectual life for using the concepts like public discourse of rationally-grounded argumentative speech or communicative action, disregarding the various ethnic groups existing in today's society, postponing women's problems to the private life sphere, inconsistency of the discourse participants and the preconditions of participation with the realities of today's social life.

As a result, Habermas's struggle to balance the system and lifeworld, theory and practice, in a lifeworld where people come together without being exposed to external and internal pressures, taking part by their own will and

share their opinions and arguments and reach a consensus for a common purpose are, as understood from the criticisms brought to the theory, quite optimistic, considering the possibility of being applied in today's complex, differentiated and fragmented social structure.

Despite all these criticisms, I think that the new horizons it opens up for the pursuit of individual and social freedom, worthy of human dignity, can be considered as important achievements for humanity.

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