

The Research on Habermas' Communicative Action Theory

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Abstract:

Habermas' Communicative Action Theory is a traditional German rationalism philosophy and sociology, Mead's symbolic interaction theory and modern language philosophy and critical theory of comprehensive. To overcome is the purpose of this integrated division of life world and the system in the modern world. And based on the concept of the life world of ordinary, pragmatics in Habermas' view, is the necessary way for modern people to freedom. Habermas' theory of communicative action to provide the synchronic dimension of human society, show the micro social panorama, specific social system structure. Habermas structure function analysis method in a certain sense, made up for the inadequacy of Marx linear causal reduction methods, make the true nature of human society more clear and true. This method is more contemporary than Marx's historical analysis method, the correct direction of capitalist society and the development of human society has very important significance. From the ultimate goal of social criticism, the human ultimate concern, Habermas' theory of communicative action does not leave the aim. The difference between Habermas' theory of communicative action and Marx's historical materialism just lies in the way different, opinions, conclusions, etc. In this sense, Habermas' theory of communicative action and no betrayal of Marxism, the opposite is the inheritance and development of Marxism.

Key words: Habermas, Theory of Communicative Action, Marxism

1. Introduction of Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action

The late 60s to the early 70s, Habermas clarifies the methodological problems, he intends to establish the theory of Communicative Action after he transfer his interests from methodology to entity. In the mid-70s, he criticizes the Frankfurt school's theory of 'social criticism' and make sure the use of 'universal pragmatics' in establishing Communicative Action theory. Habermas found that if he delved on explain theory, language theory, behavior theory and the method of analytical philosophy, he will pay more attention on the details of each theory and take the details as the purpose of the study, and ignore the comprehensive analysis and study the society as a whole. So he combed his thoughts and paid all focus on society research and system create. He embodied the final results of the study in 'Communicative Action Theory (1981)'.

'The Communicative Action Theory' is the core of Habermas' thought and also is the systematic expression of Habermas' communication behavior though. Habermas critically absorbed the various schools of western sociology thought in modern times, expounded his theory of communicative action in 'Communicative Action Theory'. He analyzed Weber, Durkheim, Mead, Lukacs, Hawk Hammer, Adorno and Parsons's work and gradually expanded the concept of 'behavior'. When he learned the conflict theory on social ideal and the tradition of social criticism, learned the thought of analyzed the function of social system equilibrium and the pursuit of the idea of social integration based on shared values, and also learned the interaction theory from the perspective of social psychology research society, from the point of view of the interaction between individual explain social phenomenon. He reviewed the main schools of modern western sociology and main thinkers point of views in this book, tried to include them and learn their own ideological system. Habermas mentioned rational communicative action should follow the background of 'interactive the life world and systematic procedure', and criticism of the alienation of modern industrial civilization society phenomenon, he put forward his 'ordinary pragmatics' idea, made his own thought logic and history become a unification.

In the Communicative Action Theory, Habermas clearly put forward three times on the definition of 'Communicative Action'. For the first time, Habermas mentioned the concept of 'Communicative Action' in the introduction. He said: 'The concept of Communicative Action is the relationship between a person with individuals (verbally or external action), at least two or more people who has internal activities such as language ability and action ability.' Added: 'Only the Communicative Action model, first put language as a kind of media of direct understanding, here, speakers and audiences, from their own interpretation of the life world view, and things in the society world/objective world and subjective world, in order to study the status of the common regulations.' 'The concept of Communicative Action, first put language as a kind of media which participants can have relations with the world and each other can accept and reject the use of language.' For the second time, in the middle of the first stage, Habermas made a precise rules of the concept of 'Communicative Action'. He

said 'Communicative Action is the internal activities which refers to that based on participants can have consensus of opinion, Individual action plans become of cooperative.' For the third time, in the middle of the second stage, Habermas said: 'Communicative Action is not only the explanation process', 'Communicative Activities means the process of social unity and socialization'.

In the Communicative Action Theory, Habermas proposed the concept of 'the life world and the system process'. In Habermas' view, life world and system process is the basic environment and background of communication behavior'.

Habermas rethought the concept of 'The other world', he thought 'Worldview Diversification' should be 'the most important aspect of world view of the development'. Habermas also criticized 'The colonization of life world'. He criticized the modern capitalism based on his Communicative Action Theory which the best part of the whole theory.

Habermas criticized modern capitalism as 'The colonization of life world' or 'system is the invasion of the life world'. The ultimate goal of Communicative Action Theory can be understood as a rescue of the life world or reconstruction the relationship between system and life world. In his view, life world is organized by language, in this world, we can achieve self-identity by the identity of language expression. This cultural identity includes small-scale family, face-to-face groups and some of the public domain. The system Habermas mentioned is mainly about modern social economic and political. The difference between them and living world is that system is not organized by daily language, it is organized by currency and the rights of the mediation. Originally, currency and the rights should serve the life world, people can effectively get items to support the life world, but the broken of modernity and the unilateral of rationalization causes the system invade of the life world and causes the colonization of life world.

In order to solve these problems, avoiding invade of the life world and causes the colonization of life world, and leading to the life world of irrational consequences. Habermas pointed out that we must reset the system to fit the life world, which means that we must reform the legal and moral coercion, the market is subject to the requirements of the people with power, rather than dominate people's needs.

Habermas also put forward the concept of ordinary pragmatics. 'Ordinary Pragmatics' is a theory about the ideal discourse environment. In the ideal discourse environment: 'All participants aim to strengthen the language semantics without reservation, in order to reach a consensus, for every man's pursuit of a plan of action to consistent coordinate basis.'

Habermas mainly put forward in the Communicative Action Theory: First, put forward four types of language activities and the division of 'Three Worlds'; Second, give detail definition of the core concept of 'life world' of the theory of Communicative Action: 'life world' has three layers structure such as culture, society and individual character. Life world is the background of communicative action, life world is the repository of understanding each other's faith, life world is the precondition of objective world, social world and the world possible conditions; Third, states the conception of 'Rationality of the communication'; Four, to show the 'Unlimited communication community; Five, through the theory of Communicative Action to reconstruct historical materialism.

To sum up, we can put the explanation of the concept of Habermas about 'Communicative Action' into the following conclusion: 'Communicative Action' refers to a social activity that at least two of the main body take life world as the background, language as a media, for the purpose of understanding the cooperative action and individual socialization.

2. Research Overview of Theory of Communicative Action

In 70th and 80th of the 20th century, Habermas started study 'Communicative Action Theory'. 'Communicative Action Theory' is a progressive expansion, development and perfect system, this is mainly embodied in Habermas' following works: 'The Interaction and the Social Evolution', 'Communicative Action Theory', 'Understanding and Interest', 'The road to Understanding', 'The Structural Transformation of the Public Domain', 'the Reconstruction of Historical Materialism', 'Legitimacy Crisis', 'After Metaphysics'. In these books, Habermas aimed at the phenomena of alienation in modern industrial civilization, he expanded the Max Weber's limitation of rational knowledge, and gradually set up his own rational reason and the theory of communication action.

Habermas' theory of communicative action takes understanding as the core theory, the mutual subjectivity as the basic characteristics. He reconstructed philosophy and sociology from a new perspective, embodied the modern society which is one of the main body of interactive behavior between relations, this caused wide attention of scholars both at home and abroad. The more famous foreign scholars include: Eve - Maire · Engels 'The Habermas' Concept of Social Criticism'; Kruger's 'Production and Communication'; H · Balknar's

'Habermas' Choice of Progress, Rational and Democratic' ; Hank ·Van · Leiqbal's 'Jürgen Habermas: After Marx's Social Theory' . M · Seccotal's 'Jürgen Habermas' Theory of Philosophy of Social Science Foundation'. Rocco Mohr's 'The Modernity and Rational: Habermas and Hegel'; K · Gaiman's 'Habermas' Footprint of Early Life World'. W · R · Schaefer's 'Jürgen Habermas' and so on.

'Jürgen Habermas', from an overall study of Habermas' theory system and expounded, while 'the Modernity and Rational: Habermas and Hegel' and 'Jürgen Habermas: After Marx's Social Theory' is on the basis of comparing of Habermas', Hegel and Marx's theory, expounds the internal relationship among Habermas' theory and Hegel and Marx's theory. 'The Habermas' Concept of Social Criticism', 'Production and Communication',

'Habermas' Choice of Progress, Rational and Democratic', 'Jürgen Habermas' Theory of Philosophy of Social Science Foundation' and so on are discussed the internal connection between social theory of Habermas' and the theory of social criticism of Frankfurt School's. 'Habermas' Footprint of Early Life World' focuses on the life world theory.

Domestic papers mainly include: 'Moral Utopia Reconstruction-Research on Habermas' Communicative Ethics Thought', this paper comprehensively expounded and analyzed Habermas' Communicative Action Theory, which focuses on the detail of the medium that discourse on the behavior of communication. He took the philosophical criticism and reflection as the basis, discussed rational and explain Habermas' Communicative Action Theory in 'An Vision of A Just Utopia World'. Wei-dong Cao's 'Communicative Rationality and Poetic Discourse' and 'Wei-dong Cao Talks About Habermas'. In the book 'Wei-dong Cao Talks About Habermas', it introduces Habermas' knowledge background and living background, and catches Habermas' thought from the era of social and philosophical development system. This paper discusses the realistic significance and theoretical value of Habermas' communication action theory, and also gives the high affirmation of Habermas' communication action theory and its possibility of application. There are other papers such as Hua Xue's 'Habermas' Discourse Ethics', Xue-ming Chen's 'The Evaluation of Habermas' Late Capitalism'. Zhong-shang Li's 'The Third Road: Research on Marcuse and Habermas' Theory of Social Criticism'. Yong-jun Fu's 'The Critical Significance: The Research on Marcuse and Habermas' Cultural and Ideological Criticism Theory'. Li-ou Tong's 'The Critical Theory of Habermas' etc.

3. Focus Issues and Controversial Issues of Theory of Communicative Action

Habermas' Communicative Action Theory has profound influence around the world. Chinese and western scholars both did in-depth research and discussion. In the process of research, mainly have the following questions:

3.1 Only from the dimension of language to study the communication behavior

Habermas just regarded communication as in order to achieve mutual understanding to have 'communication behavior' and 'verbal communication', and one-sided confine communication behavior to spiritual interaction. But we know that the spirit communication is just a part of interpersonal communication, not all of them. Habermas extracted verbal communication from the people's material intercourse, took it as one of the main factors of the research, it has its limitations. Human communication not only include the spirit communication, as well as material intercourse. The material intercourse limits spirit communication of people.

3.2 Life world' is just an ideal discourse environment

Habermas set up a freedom and equality communication environment which takes languages as mediums for communication behavior, this environment is referring to 'life world'. Only in the 'life world', people can have rational communication. 'Life world' is an ideal world, in this world, any communication behavior is not taking benefit as the starting point. This world is the world Habermas' separated it from the material world in which only has the spirit communication and emotional communication. The world does not exist in reality; it is an ideal condition which has typical character of the 'Utopia'. Because people can never be separated from the material world in real life world, without the support of the material world, it is impossible for people to survive and live. As long as personal interests exist, there will not have pure spirit communication between humans. So the life world which Habermas set is just an ideal state.

Habermas exaggerated the role of language in the ideal discourse environment, he thought that if there is an appropriate language, it can make all social humans have a freedom and equality environment to speak and contact and achieve mutual understanding, this appropriate language can eliminate all inharmonious factors, eliminate misunderstandings and conflicts. But Habermas ignored that in the real world, the communication between people is not only a simple verbal communication, but also must be accompanied by other forms of communication.

So we can see, 'life world' which Habermas set is a set that is virtual and divorced from the foundations of the reality, it is only existed in ideal world and has Utopia character. By using 'Universal Ethics' to make

rationalization of communication come true, but it lacks of practical support

Habermas tried to change 'distorting' in western society people by establishing a common code of conduct. He thinks if people want an orderly and reasonable communication to achieve mutual understanding and communication, it is necessary to establish a reasonable standard to promote the realization of the interests between communicative subjects. He thinks ethics can play a reasonable role in human communication, he thinks ideal ethics is an important way to solve the unreasonable communication in the modern society, even can make the ideal of sociology change come true. Habermas' endeavor to a certain extent it is unrealistic.

First, it is difficult to realize the generalization of ethics. Because everyone is an independent individual, who has its own interests' pursuit. In the process of making moral codes, it is difficult to balance the interests of all parties and hard to reach consensus. Second, It is hard for common morality to play a role in the complex conditions of social. In the modern society, even it has legal protection, moral is sometimes difficult to play its role. Because except having universal ethics, people need to respect and practice of ethics, or 'universal ethics' is just a paper empty talk. Finally, neglecting the material root of the interpretation 'distorted communication'. The unreasonable production relations is the root of all inequality and no freedom. If there is something causes unreasonable contact material and private ownership of production relations is not eliminated, it is hard for universal moral to play a role.

3.3 The rationality of communicative behavior

Marx's theory of social liberation is built on the basis of the criticism of capitalist society. There late capitalism society, Habermas thinks that the new changes mean that Marx's theory of social liberation has lost its social critical realistic foundation and basis. That is to say, of Marx's social theory of the liberation of architecture have been out of date. Therefore, the contemporary social criticism model will need to find a new critical path and social liberation road. The starting point of this path is "theory of communicative action". Communicative action theory is not only the innovation of traditional critical theory, but also on the basis of Marx's theory of social liberation "reconstruction". So-called reconstruction, in Habermas' view, is neither restoration, which "means back to initial condition during this period has been rotten up", nor is it a revival, namely "seems to mean that in this period has been abandoned by the traditional update, there is no need for revival of Marxism". Unwrapped a theory but ", to be combined with the new form, in order to better achieve the theory established goals. This is treated in some aspects need to be modified, but it still encouraging potential without exhaustion theory "of a normal attitude. Habermas' decision to hold this attitude, value "still exist, but need to be further revised", on the basis of historical materialism of Marxism theoretical basis the specification of the reconstruction. Therefore, Habermas from criticism of late capitalism society "legitimacy crisis", the introduction of language as communication medium of communicative action theory and communicative rationality.

The discussion of Habermas' theory of communicative action is based on his reflection and exploration of rational problem. In Habermas' view, we must all and ways of the rational as the main body, as in the production, life, exchanges and fundamental principle of thinking and attitude. This fundamental principle dominates our behavior and attitude, affect our life, and throughout the us as its according to the established theory system. It is in this sense, Habermas point out that "the rationality of the opinions and behaviors is a traditional philosophy research topic. So far as to say that philosophy is derived from the embodied in the rational reflection of cognition, language and behavior. The rational constitutes the fundamental issue of philosophy."

Habermas argues that still need with the aid of the force of reason, just be with neither a priori reason, nor the tool rationality, but the communicative rationality, because of the communicative rationality is the basis and prerequisite for instrumental rationality and its implication in the structure of language communication, the objective conditions of late capitalism, has made the people can fully realize it. So only the communicative rationality as a judge behavior and the standard of social rationality, the rationality of the world uses it to rebuild their lives, to transform the world, get rid of the plight of traditional rationalism, save the crisis of late capitalism.

Communicative behavior is behavior under the guidance of communicative rationality thought. Habermas' communicative rationality is put forward, the purpose is to provide reasonable relationship between each other as the main body behavior according to, and the reasonable according to the can't go to the world of things to find, must be found to the people of the world. Therefore, Habermas serious study and reform the popper's theory of "three world", the world is divided into three parts: the objective world, social world and human's subjective world; Corresponding to this, he learned the mead and on communication and social interaction theory, especially the mead theory gave Habermas much inspiration. Mead discussion from the perspective of linguistic interaction, mutual understanding and mutual communication among subjects, he points out, the human mind and consciousness exists in human behavior, people's behavior is a kind of social behavior, therefore, mind, consciousness is in the process of social communication use the language symbols. That is to say, in mead's view, is interactive between individual and society rather than passive, so he will be rational positioning in the behavior of society, think that people's behavior is in language symbol under the mediation of social behavior. Gisela from the interaction of individual and groups, from the group of the relationships between individuals in

social norms. Based on this, puts forward the concept "communicative action", Habermas and further to the behavior concepts used in social science theory according to the behavior, associated with the world comes down to four: objective behavior, regulating the behavior of behavior, drama and communicative behavior.

4. The influence of Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action

Habermas' Communicative Action Theory has very profound influence on the middle of the twentieth century, he has made a contribution to the development of western philosophy, sociology. The contribution of Communicative Action Theory mainly include the following:

4.1 Promoted the modern western philosophy turns linguistic

After the middle of the 19th century, there was a trend modern western philosophy paying more attention to study language, this kind of 'linguistic turn' through the language's characteristics, such as essence, structure and function to study the human's existence and the new understanding of relationship with the world. Habermas was deeply influenced by "linguistic turn" in modern western philosophy, but he is by no means confined to the logical analysis of language, but emphasizes the practical meaning of a language. He took language as a precondition to realize self and mutual understanding, promoted the reasonable communication between humans. In his opinion 'General linguistics task is to identify and reconstruct to understand is a universal condition.'

Habermas' universal pragmatics criticized the previous language philosophy, he thought they only paid attention to the structure of language, meaning, and 'scientific asking'. Habermas Investigated the function that languages played between main bodies of mutual understanding and communication in 'life world', to search an appropriate language to understand the relationship between human beings and the world. He devoted himself to change the philosophy of language from the objective and subjective to public and intersubjective, also laid language an important condition in the mutual understanding and reasonable communication between the human beings.

4.2 Provide a new theoretical perspective for the alienation of human

In Marx's opinion, alienation is a phenomenon that comes with the private ownership exist, it reflects the people's material or spiritual activities and its products not become itself theory, on the contrary, it is a frame-up phenomenon that dominating human. Marx reveals the alienation of the main is the alienation of human labor and people. But in a new stage of the development of capitalism, the alienation of people has already penetrated into every field of life.

Habermas investigated 'distorted intercourse' and pseudo communication in the modern western industrial society and revealed the alienation of modern society human's communication. He found that rational tool is the orientation of modern social communication, rational tool can promote the rapid social development, enhance the efficiency of society, provide space for human development, but make the relationship between the main body to become complicated. Habermas revealed the 'distorted intercourse' and criticized modern capitalist civilization, and believes it alienating relationship of human, suppress the people living environment and lost the freedom of independent rights. Habermas hoped that through the mediation of language to criticize the communication which take currency and power as a medium, and do some research of language and the practice of communication studies to study the dissimilation phenomenon. Frankfurt school's theory of social criticism opened a new perspective of alienation criticism.

Habermas also provided the theoretical basis for Communicative Action Theory by pragmatics theory, through the study of language and the understanding of people, Habermas proposed the theory of Communicative Action Theory. At the same time, he analyzed the phenomenon of alienation from the perspective of the people, and considered human not only have a reasonable purpose when they communicate, but also has interaction subject of reasonable communicative. Habermas emphasized the communicative rationality, respected people's subjectivity and human discourse right. He thought that a man use language to communicate will eventually replace the material exchange, can be obtained through mutual understanding and mutual negotiation of social norms, finally realize the solution of the problem. Habermas' theory can provide a new research angle and solution for human alienation phenomenon.

4.3 Enrich the Frankfurt school critical theory

As the representative figure of Frankfurt school, Habermas is under the influence of social critical theory of Frankfurt school. He said: 'Lukacs guide me to the young Marx, Adorno played a key role in my academic career'. Habermas' Communicative Action Theory has a strong sense of social criticism, through the layer by layer exploring the illusion of abundance capitalist material, lack of human spiritual life, the pain of the human spirit, and study the system which use currency and rights as medium at the same time, and finally reveal its damage and erosion of the truth of the life world, achieve the goal of liberation of human nature.

Habermas used the research methods of multilingual, interdisciplinary implements transcendence the original social critical theory and a single language towards critical of Frankfurt school. In the Communication Action Theory, using comprehensive discourse, cut into the life world through communication action, through rationalization communication to establish a reasonable world, give people a free and equal communication

environment.

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