



SEEK WISDOM, ELEVATE YOUR INTELLECT AND SERVE HUMANITY!



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**Critique of Classical Epistemological Thinking: A Postmetaphysical  
and Postmodern Perspective**

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## Abstract

*In the history of philosophy, epistemological thought has taken on many forms and has been the subject of numerous epistemological doctrines. In order to provide valuable answers to epistemological questions, some philosophical positions are located in the abstract, supersensible, or transcendental realm. While the other philosophical positions are located in subject-object philosophy. However, with the emergence of postmetaphysical thinking and postmodernism, the classical epistemological thought has come under heavy criticism. Because both of them operate in a linguistic and socio-historical turn in philosophy. Such questions about the subject and the universal conception of truth are disregarded. Postmetaphysical thinker Jürgen Habermas disregarded the abstract world; in return, operating within the linguistic turn, he developed communicative rationality as an alternative foundation of theory of knowledge and truth. Communicative rationality holds that truth and knowledge are rooted in language rather than the transcendental realm. On the other hand, Jean-François Lyotard was one of the postmodern thinkers who criticized the universal, transcendental classical conception of epistemological thinking because it entertained grand narratives and founded mini narratives as alternative means to provide knowledge and truth. Therefore, both Habermas and Lyotard embrace their new alternative theory of truth by criticizing classical epistemological assumptions. One of this thesis's central questions is to answer, "Do they succeed?" In this thesis, my aim is two-fold: first, to discuss, examine, and criticize Habermas' communicative paradigm and Lyotard's conception of mini narratives as an alternative foundation of truth. Second, through such analysis and examination, I shall argue that both Habermas' communicative paradigm and Lyotard's mini narratives do not succeed as alternative foundations of truth. I argue that Habermas' communicative paradigm does not fully succeed because, it has some Eurocentric element, it is instrumental, and it is just an ideal/utopian concept. It also fails to ensure equal opportunity for all and fails to be universal at all, or cannot escape from relativism. Furthermore, I argue that Lyotard's conception of mini narratives, as an alternative foundation of truth does not succeed because it fails to overcome the crisis and societal problems. Having different conceptions of truth fosters a sense of meaninglessness and purposelessness. Therefore, in this thesis, I argue that both Habermas and Lyotard's alternative theories of truth lead to nihilism; we need to evaluate, improve and revise their theories.*

**Key words:** Postmetaphysical, Postmodern, Language, Philosophy of the subject, Mini Narrative, Communicative Action

## **Introduction**

In order to discover fundamental meaning and answer to the basic questions that trouble people throughout their lives, philosophy is a subjective, reflective intellectual process. This philosophy includes questions about God, time, truth, existence, causality, reality, and knowledge, among other things. The branch of philosophy known as epistemology examines the nature, boundaries, implications, and potential of knowing. It addresses questions related to belief, opinion, veracity, falsity, reason, experience, and faith. The term "theory of knowing" is another name for epistemology. It is the investigation of the character, origin, and reliability of knowledge. It aims to provide answers to fundamental issues like "what is the source of knowledge?" "How do we know?" and "What is true?" also, it questions like; whether knowledge is objective or subjective, is truth subjective or universal concept? Is truth discover in the material world or somewhere else? (Steup, Matthias and Ram Neta, 2020).

In the history of philosophy, epistemology has taken on many forms and been the subject of numerous epistemological doctrines. The classical epistemological thinking relied on the world, which is beyond our experience, and they grounded on attempted to find a transcendental or supersensible reality that serve as an alternative foundation of knowledge. They used to believe that the sensible world is incapable of providing valuable answer for epistemological question or they are an able to provide ultimate truth and reality.

Epistemology has been a philosophical preoccupation since the time of the ancient Greeks, and knowledge and truth have always occupied a prominent place in platonic discussion. Plato believed that there was an unchanging universal truth. He also claimed that knowledge is justified true belief, which means that I can only claim that a belief (or an observation) is knowledge if it can be justified and it turns out to be true. Truth is defined in Plato's epistemological formulation as something that is perfect and eternal and cannot be found in the imperfect or physical world of matter (Tylor, 2001).

In return, during the modern epistemological assumption there were the relation between the subject and object and metaphysical dualism. The modern epistemological thinking mostly relied on the subject/ consciousness. René Descartes, developed the autonomous monological knower (the subject or the thinking being) to prove his own existence and the other's existence through methodic doubt. The primary element of Descartes' theory of knowledge is that sense experience

is unreliable; he maintains that only the application of pure reason can result in actual knowledge, and that knowledge is gained through methodic doubt. (Descartes, 1968). On the other hand, Immanuel Kant in his epistemological thinking made an attempt to understand the conditions of the possibility of human understanding. Kant also argues for a two-world reality, though, unlike Plato, he named the two worlds differently: the world of phenomenal and the world of noumenal.

However, with the emergence of postmodernism and Postmetaphysical thinking in the history of philosophy both the classical epistemological thinking and the modernist understanding of truth and knowledge has come under heavy criticism and their epistemological thinking were rejected altogether. Such question of the subject is going to be abandoned altogether. Because postmodernism and post-metaphysical thinking are operating at what is known as linguistic and socio-historical turn in philosophy. They no longer assume that, there is a division between the subject and object, on the contrary both orientations are dealing with the idea of intersubjectivity. Intersubjectivity is a type of relationship that is thought to be between people or between subjects. The Theory of Communicative Action by Jurgen Habermas will tell us of the genuine kind of communication that will be useful in establishing an intersubjective relationship. For Habermas, intersubjectivity contrasts depend on the consciousness of the persons. The interplay of various subjectivities results in intersubjectivity, a medium of communicable knowledge that is formed and sustained. Intersubjectivity, on the other hand, is an inheritance that postmodern practice contributes to this process of perspective construction. It speaks of the relationships between the interpretations put forth by various individuals. Intersubjectivity can be shown debate amongst community members who are reflecting on a shared experience. Although their interpretations of the experience may not ultimately agree, they will interact and change throughout the discussion.

Therefore, there is no antagonism between the subject and object, as well as the human being and the physical world. Because they are essentially involved in day-to-day horizon. Post metaphysical thinking developed by Jürgen Habermas, and postmodernism developed by thinkers like Lyotard, Foucault, Derrida and other. Both movements are similar to one another, because both of them tell us the classical conception of truth have scrambled or the classical epistemological needs to abandon altogether.

So, what is the solution? According to postmodernism, we need to develop new reality where there is no universal truth. Reason is abandoned in favor of emotion and passion. Postmodernism needs to abandon the existing theory of knowledge and truth. Post metaphysical thinking tried to develop a communicative oriented conception of rationality. It says that, there is still a way of rescuing the project of modernity and emancipation by embarking on everyday discourse, language and communicative action.

As a result, there has been a substantial paradigm change in the history of philosophy from philosophy of the subject/consciousness to linguistic turn. The linguistic turn advocated by Habermas, linguistic turn is not merely a turn toward language rather turn away from "the paradigm of the philosophy of consciousness," He thus challenges mind-body dualism, which is the view that there are two separate types of substance—the thinking and body, and Cartesian subjectivity (the subject or self). He also challenges foundationalism and subject-object metaphysics (Finlayson, J. G., 2005).

In his celebrated work "The Theory of Communicative Action" (1984), published in two volumes, Habermas introduces a new conception of the theory of knowledge and truth, known as the Theory of Communicative Rationality. Thus, the theory of communicative rationality tells us truth is linguistically mediated concept, truth is the attribute of language rather than the attribute of the physical world, truth is not manifestations of the physical world, rather than it is the concept constructed within the bound of everyday discourse and everyday language (Habermas, 1984). According to Habermas' communicative action, the aim is to achieve mutual understanding. It then coordinates action towards social integration and solidarity. Finally, communicative action is the process through which people form their identities (Habermas, 1987 P.140).

On the other hand, the postmodernism movement rose in the history of philosophy and was characterized by broad skepticism or relativism, and a general suspicion of reason. Postmodernism accepts the core ontological tenet of relativism and maintains that there cannot be an "objective" or ultimate truth because all "truth" is socially constructed. Knowledge, truth, and reality embodied in culture, history, politics, and human relations. Furthermore, postmodernism holds that we need to create reality based on our wants, preferences, prejudices, and cultural norms (Duignan, B., 2002) and (N. Elaati, 2016).

The term postmodernism came into discourse with the philosophical insight developed by Lyotard. The term postmodernism first entered the philosophical lexicon in 1979 with the publication of *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* by Jean-François Lyotard. The book surveys the status of science and technology, examines the condition and changing nature of knowledge, and emphasizes the replacement of grand narratives by little narratives in the postmodern era (Lyotard, 1984). The central claim is that Lyotard argues that in the postmodern era, knowledge has become a commodity (knowledge-driven economy) that is a key means of surviving, flourishing, and making profits (power). He contends that the prevalence of such power-oriented knowledge in the postmodern age represents the failure of the Enlightenment's universal emancipatory mission. Therefore, he criticizes "grand narratives," such as Marxism, which he refers to as the totalizing tendencies of history and society. Lyotard emphasizes rejecting grand theories—those ideas and systems that assert to be able to explain everything. Lyotard announces the demise of three metanarratives: Christianity, liberal humanism, and Marxism. Lyotard considers that such doctrines have 'lost their credibility' since the Second World War (Lyotard, 1984 p. xxiv).

Therefore, this thesis intends to demonstrate the philosophical arguments of classical epistemological thinking and how philosophers like Habermas, Jean-Francois Lyotard, and postmodern philosophers' critique of classical epistemological thinking and its conception of truth, which is based on a transcendental world or beyond physical reality. The thesis consists of four chapters; the last chapter would offer a critical analysis of Habermas' communicative paradigm and Lyotard's postmodern assumption.

Chapter One, *The classical epistemological thinking*, offers the classical conception of truth and knowledge. In this section, I will provide an overview of the classical conceptions of knowledge and truth, which include Plato, and then attempt to look at the philosophy of consciousness/subject. This helps us to see paradigm shifts through the history of philosophy, from the philosophy of consciousness/subject to the linguistic turn. It tries to show how Habermas adopted the linguistic paradigm over the cognitive paradigm of the philosophy of consciousness.

Chapter Two, *Habermas' Account of Knowledge and Truth in Communicative Action*, directly discussed the theory of communicative action and the new alternative foundation of truth, which

Habermas calls the theory of communicative rationality. In addition, I will discuss Habermas' account of universal validity claims and their relation to truth.

Chapter Three, *The issue of Knowledge and Truth in Postmodern condition*, I will discuss the assumptions behind modernism and postmodernism in this chapter. The theme of this chapter is to show how Lyotard's critique towards the classical conception of truth, which is universal and absolute; then come up with mini narratives. Moreover, I try to show how Lyotard defined postmodernism and how he abandoned the grand narrative and grand theories, which gave a totalizing picture of truth, knowledge, reality, and morality come up with mini narratives.

Chapter Four, *Habermas' communicative paradigm and Lyotard's postmodernism examined*, this chapter consists of two sections. In the first section of this chapter, I will try to show some of the positive aspects of Habermas' communicative paradigm in relation to African philosophy, which offer opportunities to comprehend many of the others' realities. Instead of abandoning reason and truth, he places a greater emphasis on studying language, taking a 'linguistic turn' through the properties of language. Moreover, in the section, I will also discuss some gaps or shortcomings of Habermas' communicative paradigm in relation to communicative paradigms as utopian/ideal, relativistic, Eurocentric, instrumental, and blind to gender issues. The second section of this chapter will offer a critical examination of the assumptions of postmodernism as a whole and Lyotard's postmodernism in particular. I will try to examine postmodernism in relation to the post-truth situation and its effect on contemporary societies. At last, I will examine Lyotard's postmodernism, his understanding of reason, conception of truth, grand narrative, and mini narrative. The paper ends with a brief conclusion.

Generally, both Habermas and Lyotard criticized the classical conception of truth and modernist epistemological thinking, and they developed new alternative theories of knowledge and truth. Habermas came up with the communicative paradigm, the theory of communicative rationality. Likewise, Lyotard also criticized the grand narrative, which gives a general picture about the nature of truth, knowledge, reality, and morality; then he comes up with mini narratives as an alternative foundation of truth. Therefore, this thesis is developed; having central argument that, even if Habermas and Lyotard carries out their new alternative theory of truth by criticizing the classical conception of truth and modernist epistemological thinking however, I argue that their theories donot fully succeed as alternative theories of truth.

## Chapter One

### 1. Classical Epistemological Thinking

What does knowledge actually entail, what is it capable of, and how do we know? As seen by their great interest in cosmology and their criticism of several theories that seek to explain how the world works, philosophers have always been concerned with epistemological questions. From ancient times to the present, philosophers have debated the difficulties associated with the mind's function in understanding reality or truth, leading to a variety of philosophical responses. In contrast to the pre-Socratic philosopher in investigations into the fundamental components of the universe; Skeptics denied the possibility of knowledge; Sophists saw knowledge as being relative in nature; whereas for Socrates, knowledge is certain, objective, universal, and a recollection of innate ideas. In the ancient period, philosophy developed out of curiosity. Though Plato places reality in the realm of forms, he maintains the Socratic tradition.

René Descartes often regarded, as the founder of modern philosophy, was unsatisfied and demoralized by the skepticism and prejudice that characterized conventional philosophy during the contemporary era. Descartes' general skepticism led him to subjectivity because, after he doubted everything, Descartes discovered himself as the first and only certain being. He then considered the axiom "I think, therefore I am" (cogito) as the basis of cognition and every being in the world, including the being of God and physical substances. His goal was to establish a solid foundation of undeniable knowledge (Descartes, 1968).

On the other hand, Kant contends, in the Critique of Pure Reason, that space and time are just formal characteristics of how we see objects and not entities in themselves that exist separately from us or things that have attributes or connections among them. He claims that while objects in space and time are described as "appearances," we actually know very little about the actual entities for which they are appearances, Kant refers to this belief or set of ideas as transcendental idealism.

Therefore, in this chapter, I try to expose the classical epistemological thinking of Plato, Descartes, and Kant. In doing so, I try to discuss the paradigm shift from the paradigm of consciousness/ the philosophy of the subject to the linguistic turn. According to Habermas

historical perspective, the paradigm of the philosophy of consciousness starts with Descartes and established as fundamental in the time between Descartes and Kant. The linguistic turn, or the end of the philosophy of consciousness, would be the topic of the last chapter. In this regard, we will talk about how the linguistic turn first appeared in philosophical history, how it revolutionized and Habermas saw classical epistemological thinking.

### **1.1. Plato and the Classical Epistemological Thinking**

The pre-Socratic philosophers were primarily focused on the sense, trying to ascertain the overarching principle of everything, and they focused on the nature of primordial stuff, primordial matter, as well as cosmological and metaphysical questions, but not epistemological ones. The question of epistemology was present for the first time in the discussion between Plato and the Sophist, who focused on issues such as the social value of knowledge and the objectiveness and universality of knowledge. The sophists attempted to commodify knowledge and truth; they thought that knowledge is a thing that is traded freely on the open market and has no intrinsic worth. Additionally, they contend that knowledge is relative in nature, this is in line with their beliefs about the nature of truth and knowledge. Plato and Socrates, on the other hand, believed that knowledge was objective, equally binding, and universal in nature. They argued that something, in order to count as knowledge, should be universal in its nature and have an objective foundation. Furthermore, Plato and Socrates believed that knowledge has value in order to live a life that has virtue in its nature and is characterize by its moral nature. (Miller, 2008).

According to Plato, knowledge is more than just "true judgement." Because it is possible to make incorrect judgements, Theaetetus realizes he cannot claim that judgement in and of itself is knowledge. Consequently, he believes that knowledge is genuine judgement, at least as a preliminary definition, until analysis of it reveals whether it is true or false. At this point, Socrates deviates in an attempt to understand how incorrect judgements created and how they do so. One type of mistaken judgement, for instance, results from the mixing up of two separate items, one a memory image and the other a present object of sense perception. A man can believe—incorrectly—that he perceives his friend as being so far away. He is not his friend, yet there is someone there. Furthermore, Plato asserts that truthful judgement plus an "account" is

not knowledge. As we have seen, genuine judgement may simply refer to true belief, and knowledge is not the same as true belief. To begin, if giving an account or explanation entails listing fundamental components, then these components must be known or knowable; otherwise, the absurd conclusion would follow that knowledge entails supplementing true belief by reducing the complex to unknown or unknowable components (Copleston, 1946).

What then is "genuine knowledge"? For Plato, knowledge is a true justified belief rather than a perception, because the definition that Theaetetus proposed "knowledge is perception" has the following implications: truth is relative; this is a universe in flux, a universe of individual things. He argues that true knowledge comes from knowledge of forms. Moreover, Plato considered that knowledge was achievable and that it had to be infallible and actual. Any mental state that is unable to substantiate all of these claims cannot be actual knowledge. True knowledge must thus possess both of these qualities. He demonstrates in Theaetetus that neither sense perception nor real belief possess all of these characteristics; as a result, none can be equate with actual knowledge. In contrast, knowledge—absolute and infallible knowledge—is attainable, but it cannot be the same as sense perception, which is relative, elusive, and subject to the influence of all kinds of temporary influences on the part of both subject and object. In order to demonstrate that the conception of "knowledge" that has been attained does not meet the criteria for true knowledge, which Plato assumes, must be infallible, he uses dialectic to elicit a clear statement of the theory of knowledge true is not about sense experience (Copleston, 1946).

In this regard, I share this idea with Plato that knowledge must be infallible, because can we really consider it as knowledge? If there is a chance that our current knowledge is wrong, was it ever really knowledge? Therefore, I argue that in order to consider something as knowledge, it must be true, and it should be grounded in deductive argument instead of inductive or probabilistic reasoning. As a result, we must be certain about the proposition of "P" in order to consider "P" as knowledge. If we are not certain about the proposition of "P," then it does not qualify as knowledge. Because "p" has a possibility of being false; therefore, if the proposition of "P" has a possibility of becoming false, we cannot consider that proposition as knowledge because, we need to be certain about something in order to consider it as knowledge or truth.

### **1.1.1. The Two Worlds: Being and Becoming**

Plato initially put dualistic view of reality forth in the early stages of philosophical development. Although he did it by using the phrases "Becoming" and "Being," Plato also described it as the difference between appearance and reality. Such words confirm Plato's conviction that there is another world, an eternal and unchanging reality, in addition to the ever-changing one around us. Why could someone believe in an extra-dimensional existence? Plato believed in a transcendent realm, or a reality that existed outside of space and time, for a variety of reasons. (Miller, 2008).

Since eternal truths exist in the domain of ideas rather than what we would call the physical world, Plato holds that exact knowledge and truth depend on the world of being. These eternal truths can exist in your mind, but they are not visible or perceptible outside of it (consider for a moment what the term "physical world" refers to: that world that follows the laws of physics or that world of objects with mass). In other words, truth does not exist in the realm of our senses, such as sight, sound, and so on. The "sensible" world, or "the world grasped by the senses," is what Plato refers to as this unreal world. Therefore, Plato uses "The Allegory of the Cave" to demonstrate this idea: what we perceive in the physical world is shadows compared to pure, intelligible knowledge, yet even this reality is really a shadow of the sun itself.

### **1.2. Philosophy of the Subject/ Consciousness**

An entity with a relationship to another entity that exists independently of itself or a creature with a unique consciousness and/or unique personal experiences is referred to as a "subject." The word "subject" therefore plays a vital part in talks about the self and is essential to Continental philosophy. Cartesian dualism came as a philosophical breakthrough in the 17th century, propounded by Descartes. In his work "Meditations on First Philosophy 1641," Descartes is the first to draw a sharp line that separates thought from being, cognition from reality, beginning with his famous dictum "I think therefore I am." He argued that there is an absolute distinction between mental (mind) and material substance (body) as they refer to different kinds of entities. According to Descartes, they have their own qualities. The body occupies space while the mind is conscious or thinking. The construction of the subject out of the stream of sense impressions

was a topic of discussion for Kant; the concept of the subject was undertaken by Kant in terms of transcendental idealism (Heartfield, James 2002). Hence, there is a formal question about whether and what we can know or understand in general, and upon what basis knowledge founded. In this regard, in the Western tradition of modern philosophical thought, this problem approached through the concept of the subject.

The philosophy of consciousness has a "monological" perspective, starting with the individual subject, who is acting and knowing, and opposing an objective reality of objects and occurrences. From an epistemological perspective, the subject's relationship to the world can only be understood in light of their ability to understand current conditions or to create them in an instrumentalist way. Linguistically, the universe reduced to fact-stating language, with a propositional truth imagined as accessible in the interiority of the conscious subject being the sole legitimate claim. The subject-object model, which holds that the universe is made up of a totality of things that are distinct from and stand in opposition to a generally solitary subject, whether empirical, transcendental, or acting in both capacities at once, can be considered to be the paradigm's defining characteristic. The paradigm of consciousness frequently operates on the implicit premise that the subject, as the locus of awareness and the origin of free will, differs fundamentally from the world of things (Fritsch, M., 2019).

The concept of a prima philosophy that underpins the social and natural sciences is therefore another defining aspect of the philosophy of the subject (Habermas, 1987: 138). In his systematic quest for certainty, Descartes established the foundationalist paradigm that, while the sciences do not necessarily presuppose philosophy, the idea of foundationalism dependent upon philosophy to define the basis for and the means of gaining, correct and certain knowledge. Philosophy claimed to acquire knowledge that is deeper and more fundamental than other types of knowing by engaging in self-reflection on the accomplishments that awareness and subjectivity make up.

The epistemology in the philosophy of consciousness is intimately connect to the importance of subjective self-reflection, frequently in a foundationalist epistemological endeavor. Habermas refers to the paradigm as "the philosophy of reflection" (Habermas, 1995:78) or "the paradigm of self-consciousness," that is, the paradigm that gives foundational primacy to "the relation-to-self

of a subject knowing and acting in isolation." This is because it claims that knowledge of the world is gained through the self-reflection of the subject (Habermas, 1995: 310).

One alternative is that the existence of a "world" at all, rather than chaotic incoherence, depends on "subjectivity," the "I" in the extremely broad sense it frequently has for German Idealism. Therefore, "subjectivity" is what creates enduring shapes and transforms nature into something intelligent and lifelike. The "light" that thinking sheds on nature would not exist, and nature would be invisible to itself. The idea that organisms undergo material replacement throughout their lives without changing into something else might help make sense of this type of approach. This meant to imply that a certain understanding of "mind," in the sense of that, which gives rise to understandable forms, has priority over nature because nothing definable can develop at all in the absence of mental activity. As a result, the focus of philosophy shifts from the explanation of the objective natural world to the subject's activities (Andrew, 2005).

According to Habermas' historical perspective, the time between Descartes and Kant saw the establishment or installation of the paradigm of consciousness/philosophy of the subject that begins with Descartes (Habermas, 1987: 134). So, let us look at two of them:

### **1.2.1. Rene Descartes on the Firm Foundation of Knowledge**

In his Theory of Knowledge, Descartes introduced an important method known as methodic doubt. Methodic doubt is primarily idealistic, yet it is characterized by an epistemological approach. Descartes' principle intended to find the truth and natural reality, and it has played an important role in the formation of modern science because it encourages doubting everything and not taking anything at face value. He was a dualistic thinker, and in his *Meditation on first philosophy* in 1641, he argued that there is an absolute distinction between mental (mind) and material substance (body) as they refer to different kinds of entities. According to Descartes, they have their own qualities. The body occupies space while the mind is conscious or thinking.

Additionally, in his *Meditations on First Philosophy*, he makes an effort to come up with a core set of ideas that are undeniably true. Descartes begins with just one proposition: thinking is real. I exist because thought is inextricably linked to me (*Meditations on First Philosophy*). This is known under the phrase "I think, therefore I am" (*cogito ergo sum*) (Descartes, 1977).

Descartes concludes that he can be certain of he exist. How exactly? He experiences his body through the senses, although they have been shown to be untrustworthy in the past. Descartes concludes that his identity as a thinking being is his sole unquestionable knowledge. His ability to think who is he; it is the single quality about him that cannot be questioned. "Thought" (cogitatio) is defined by Descartes as "what happens in me such that I am immediately conscious of it." Thus, "thinking" refers to any action that a person is instantly aware of himself or herself. The first tenet of Descartes' theory of knowing is "Cogito ergo sum," because he is sure that no rational individual will question whether or not they are a conscious, thinking being who is aware of thinking about themselves. Even if we are dreaming, having visions, or having our consciousness controlled by an outside force, it is still my self-aware self that is doing the dreaming, having the illusions, or being controlled.

#### **1.2.1.1. Subjectivism and Subject in Descartes**

According to subjectivism, I can only know for sure who I am as a conscious subject and what I am thinking. It holds that the only thing I can be certain of is what is in my mind. Subjectivism implies that the only way to establish, if at all, that I know other people's minds and material objects is by drawing conclusions from my own subjective awareness and my own thoughts or ideas. Descartes reflected this in his meditations, which is why Meditation two is titled "Of the Nature of the Human Mind and That it is Easier to Know Than the Body." Therefore, for subjectivism, it is necessary to provide evidence for the existence of everything else, including my body, the sun, other people's brains, God, and the physical cosmos. The thinking, active self, often referred to as the "ego," is the subject. The self is perceived as the organized, ongoing topic of experience and the creator of action. (Descartes, 1968).

To conclude, Descartes sought to establish a basis for knowledge in his meditations. To achieve this, he immersed himself in skepticism and cast doubt on what he believed to be true in an effort to discover an unquestionable truth. The "cogito ergo sum" (I think therefore I am) argument is how he came to his conclusion. Descartes wants to determine whether there is anything, about which he can be absolutely certain, as well as what he can and cannot question. When you consider it, the two things are clearly not the same. Finding a belief, you cannot possibly doubt is not always the same as finding a belief you cannot be wrong about. For example, there may be some beliefs we cannot doubt because of how we are constructed, because we simply cannot

imagine them being otherwise, but we are still mistaken about them, and they are still incorrect in their fundamental form. Descartes' association of anything being undoubtable with being unquestionably true, or, to put it another way, his association of being undoubtable accurate with being unquestionably true, is thus questionable. Moreover, how can we be sure that what we think is a clear and distinct perception really is clear and distinct? If we are not certain that judgments based on clear and distinct ideas are true before we prove God's existence, then we cannot be certain that we are a thinking thing.

### **1.2.2. Immanuel Kant's Transcendental Idealism**

Plato developed transcendent philosophy during the ancient period. Transcendent is a simple idea: that reality is not exhausting in the physical world. There is a higher domain of reality that goes beyond the realm of physical space and time. Against platonic transcendent, Kant claims that there is no higher reality that that could be discovered by law of human reason and rationality. Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher, established the transcendental idealism school of thought in the 18th century (1781). By transcendental, Kant indicates that his philosophical view of knowing goes beyond merely taking into account the data from the senses and necessitates knowledge of the mind's natural ways of interpreting that evidence.

Kant describes how time and space are fundamentally human intuitions produced by our own faculty of sensitivity in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Since they are the "subjective" forms of our sensitivity and hence the required a priori circumstances under which the things we meet in our experience might ever appear to us, space and time do not exist "outside" of us. Time and space are "empirically real" according to Kant, yet they are transcendently ideal (Kant, 1929).

As a result, the long-running conflict between rationalists and empiricists was mediated and settled by Kant. Since reason is the sole legitimate source of knowledge, anything that is not "analytic a priori" cannot be considered knowledge, according to rationalists. Conversely, empiricists maintained that all knowledge must come from experience—or be "synthetic a posteriori" (Ochulor et al., 2011, pp. 35–36). By integrating a third epistemic platform into the cognitive process, Kant solved this issue. He referred to this as "synthetic a priori," where he meant that real knowledge must be both "a priori," as rationalists contend, and "synthetic," as empiricists say. (Allison 2004, pp. 250–261).

### **1.2.2.1. The Noumenal and the Phenomenal World**

The tenet of "transcendental idealism," which emphasizes a contrast between what we can experience (the natural, observable world) and what we cannot ("supersensible" items like God and the soul), is the cornerstone of Kant's theory. The phenomenal and noumenal are the two different types of reality, in Kant's view. The appearance- and accessibility-based universe is the phenomenal world. What may found in the phenomenal world? In the phenomenal world, humans are capable of knowing science, morality, and art. Contrarily, the noumenal, cannot be comprehend by human experience, cannot be comprehend by human beings using their mental faculties. What exactly is contained in the noumenal world, then? For instance, we are unable to prove God's existence or the immortality of the soul. As a result, the question "What can I know?" can be answered. Kant responds that although we can comprehend the visible, natural world, we are unable to comprehend the noumenal world.

In order to place Kant's transcendental idealism in the history of philosophy and, more specifically, epistemology, one must consider his interpretation of philosophical idealism. Additionally, Kant presents "things in themselves" and "appearances" as different realms of reality. The phenomenal are understandable, whereas the noumenal, while understandable, is outside the realm of possible human experience and thus cannot be known or verified. The question then is, "If the noumenal is unknowable, how does Kant know that it exists?" Therefore, to claim that "things in themselves" exist and at the same time posit there in cognizable is self-contradictory. According to Allison, 2004, pp. 78–80, all the same, if the noumenal are not humanly intelligible, how did Kant presuppose the role they play, together with the mind and its categories, in the reconstruction of the phenomena? Like Berkeley, Kant denies phenomena an external existence and still fails to affirm the noumenal that would otherwise ground them in reality (Allison, 2004).

### **1.3. From the Philosophy of Subject/Consciousness to Linguistic Turn**

The philosophy of the subject/consciousness beginning with the individual subject who is knowing and acting, confronts an objective universe of things and events, the "monological" approach to the philosophy of consciousness begins. Here, the entire set of things that may be represented functions as a condensed ontology of the cosmos. From an epistemological

standpoint, the subject's place in the cosmos can only be comprehend in light of the capacity to comprehend the present situation or actively contribute to its creation.

Epistemology is primarily associated with the subjective self-consciousness or the ego in the framework of philosophy of consciousness or philosophy of the subject. As a result, knowledge of the world is primarily acquired by the subjective or self-reflective, with the subject at its center. However, Habermas highly criticizes the paradigm of philosophy of consciousness or the philosophy of the subject in return, and he claims that we have to start a new approach to social philosophy, one that starts with an examination of language usage and pinpoints speech as the rationale for the coordination of action. He links this novel strategy to a broader philosophical trend known as the "linguistic turn." So, what is a linguistic turn?

Every philosophical perspective has a different way of knowing the truth, whether it is in the areas of epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, etc. The body of philosophical knowledge has been enhanced and extended by the many different ways used to discover the unknown. Through the study of language, an endeavor was made to come up with a novel approach to the philosophical dilemma. The philosophical movement known as the "linguistic turn" looked to language analysis as a possible solution to philosophical issues. The goal of the linguistic turn is to discover the truth through examining language. According to linguistic theory, language reflects reality. The goal of the linguistic turn is to describe the world via the study of an appropriate language.(Glock, H., and Kalhat, J., 2018).

In challenging, the paradigm of consciousness/subject Habermas seems to assume that there is some sort of relationship between the subject-object paradigm and the philosophy of the subject. Since it is true that Kant suffers terribly to explain how we may know the subjective nature of factual knowledge in the framework of what he called a transcendental deduction, Habermas emphasizes the key question at stake. Habermas contends that the subject's philosophy is face confused. Habermas contends that this explains why the subject's philosophy is committed to a dualistic ontology that is inherently contradictory. While the subject is likewise an object in the world, it stands in contrast to the world of objects.

Thus, Habermas believes a new way of doing philosophy can and must be understood by associating critical social theory with the linguistic turn. The term "linguistic turn" indicates that

the conceptual truths inherent in language usage initially referred to numerous attempts by various 20th-century philosophers to address seemingly unresolvable epistemological and philosophical issues. The fundamental approach was to consider inquiries into what is, what can be known, and how we may know it as inquiries into what we mean, what it refers to, and how (Finlayson 2005).

Turn to language and intersubjective understanding, Habermas claims, permits a definitive break with what he calls the philosophy of the subject, or of consciousness, whose primary characteristic is the subject–object model and the attempt to ground knowledge in the self-relation of subjective consciousness. In the 1960s and 1970s, Habermas came to believe that the serious flaws in the first generation of critical theorists' work were at least partially caused by the methodological flaws of the philosophical paradigm of mentalism. (Habermas, 1984).

The noumenal and phenomenal worlds are the two basic divisions that Kant makes of reality early on in the exposition of his theory of transcendental deduction. According to Kant, all knowledge of the universe—including knowledge of science, ethics, and the arts—is based on the phenomenal world, and people can never use their brains to grasp and comprehend the noumenal reality. Habermas is attempting to reintroduce the Kantian idea, but the fundamental framework is different. In the case of Kant, it is true that the three components of knowledge are derived through the use of transcendental deduction, categories, and structure. But Habermas offers a language foundation for truth. According to Habermas, communicative rationality is the foundation of truth; truth is found in the language. Habermas claimed that, with in the language there are three claims that are being forwarded each and every time when we interact with one another. The validity claims of truth serve as foundation of scientific knowledge, the validity claims of rightness serve as foundation of morality, and the validity claims of truthfulness serve as artistic knowledge.

Therefore, according to Habermas two-part paradigm of subject and object must be replaced by the three-part paradigm of intersubjective understanding, which holds that the objective world can only ever be perceived through the communicative efforts of two (or more) subjects who are attempting to understand the objective, the social, or the subjective world. The priority of epistemology in the philosophy of consciousness is intimately connected to the importance of

subjective self-reflection, frequently in a foundationalist epistemological endeavor. Habermas holds that "the philosophy of reflection" (Habermas, 1987:78) or "the paradigm of self-consciousness," that is, the paradigm that gives foundational primacy to "the relation-to-self of a subject knowing and acting in isolation" (Ibid, 310), is how one learns about the world.

Generally, the philosophy of Descartes and Kant, according to Habermas, has a flaw in that it places the locus of reason and validity in a subject, whether it be a single person or a group of people. A topic with specific aims or principles stands in opposition to the world, including the world of other subjects, which it can only perceive as obstacles that must be overcome in order to realize its goals and principles. This type of philosophy views rationality as a means-end connection. In response to the subject's philosophy, Habermas takes the "linguistic turn" and makes the case for a paradigm shift towards intersubjectivity. By situating reason and validity in the intersubjectivity of free and open discussion, he attempts to avoid issues with the subject's philosophy.

According to James Gordon Finlayson's discussion, what Habermas generally means by the philosophy of consciousness to show that Habermas does go beyond this subject-centered philosophy. Habermas' linguistic turn is not just a turn towards language; it is a turn away from what he calls "the paradigm of the philosophy of consciousness." Therefore, Finlayson identifies, under the term "philosophy of consciousness," that there are five major orientations or characteristics in Western philosophy to which Habermas' communicative paradigm supposedly stands in opposition.

The first characteristics of the paradigm of consciousness, which Habermas opposed, is Cartesian subjectivity. According to "Cartesian subjectivity", the subject is monological knower of existence of his mind and an objective world. In return, in his communicative paradigm Habermas claims that, since "I" or the subject or individual cannot be isolated or separated from others in his perspective. Instead, there is a universe of claims that allow one to assert their particular identity by making different claims with communicating with others. "Metaphysical dualism" the second tenet of philosophy of consciousness that Habermas stand opposed in his communicative paradigm. According to Habermas, the thinking and the body cannot be separated. He assumed that, that contemporary people have the opportunity to discuss their

concerns with one another and so coordinate their activities. The third tent of paradigm of consciousness is subject-object philosophy. "Subject-Object Metaphysics", it is characteristic of this idea that subjects are not thought of as being parts of the world on which they operate. On the contrary, in his communicative paradigm Habermas try to show that, people make claims about the objective, social, and subjective elements of reality and are prepared to defend them in an intersubjective setting where they form their identities. The fourth characteristics philosophy of the subject were foundationalism. "Foundationalism" refers in the broad sense to the epistemological quest for certainty that characterizes much of modern philosophy from Descartes onwards. Instead, in his communicative paradigm Habermas stated that intersubjective ground in which claims to truth are made. The fifth tent is "First Philosophy" it holds that knowledge, truth, and reality are the chief task of philosophy. However, with in Habermas communicative paradigm philosophy is located in everyday validity claim, everyday discourse and communication (Finlayson, 2005, pp. 29–30).

To sum up, Habermas claims that a new method of doing philosophy can and must be constructed by combining critical social theory with the linguistic turn, and as such, Habermas criticized the paradigm of the philosophy of consciousness. Habermas takes the "linguistic turn" and makes the case for a paradigm shift towards intersubjectivity by rooting reason and validity in the intersubjectivity of free and open discourse, the latter of which avoids the issues with the philosophy of the subject. This serves as the theoretical underpinning of his communicative action theory. As a result, he asserts that the shift to language and intersubjective understanding allows a clear break from what he refers to as the philosophy of the subject, or consciousness, whose main feature is the subject-object model and the attempt to ground knowledge in the self-relation of subjective consciousness. Therefore, the next chapter will be devoted to explaining communicative action theory, communicative rationality, and the account of knowledge and truth in communicative action.

## Chapter Two

### 2. Habermas' Account of Knowledge and Truth in Communicative Action

In the previous chapter, we attempted to examine the epistemological tradition that goes back to the time of the ancient Greeks that includes Plato and the Sophist. In the conversation between Plato and the Sophists, the Sophists argued for the importance of sense perception while denying the function of reason in the pursuit of knowledge and truth. Plato emphasized the importance of reason by contending that, sense experiences should be supported by reason and that we may understand metaphysical concepts and imagine a perfect being using our reason. Next, we attempted to explore the philosophy of consciousness, which encompasses Descartes and Kant, from a modern epistemological perspective. Descartes developed the first premise of his theory of knowing throughout the modern era, "Cogito ergo sum," because he was sure that no rational person would question whether they were conscious, thinking beings who were aware of thinking about themselves. Descartes and Plato contend that reason is the means through which we may understand ultimate reality, truth, and knowledge. By limiting the power of reason Kant argues that, we cannot have real knowledge about things in themselves. These things in themselves include whether a necessary perfect being exists. The content of knowledge comes from the senses and the organization of these contents is done by the mind (reason). In this case, he limited the power of reason and argues that we can think about them and for that let us provide room for faith.

In response, Habermas appears to presume that the subject-object paradigm and the philosophy of the subject are somehow connected. Habermas therefore highlights the essential issue at hand, since it is true that Kant struggles mightily to explain how we might know the subjective nature of factual knowledge in the context of what he terms a transcendental deduction. According to Habermas, the philosophy of the subject faces a puzzle. Habermas claims that this is why the subject's philosophy is devoted to an intrinsically paradoxical dualistic ontology. The knowing subject stands in opposition to the world of objects, yet the subject is also an object in the world.

How therefore can we resolve the issues brought up by Kant's philosophy of "phenomena and noumenal" and Descartes' "Cartesian subjectivity"? Habermas contends that the only way to resolve the issue is to change the paradigm.

Operating in a linguistic turn, Habermas introduces what is known as the theory of communicative rationality. So, he starts with the following assertion: he says that there is still a way of rescuing the project of modernity, the idea of emancipation, and the idea of free will in individuals from religious exploitation, so the solution is that we need to embark on communicative rationality.

Therefore, in searching for an alternative foundation of truth, there are basically three major positions that Habermas introduces in his work throughout his philosophy; the first one is the idea of the public sphere. Habermas argues that in modern society there is a public domain, a public space where individuals can come together to freely and equally discuss and identify social problems in the community. So, whenever they come into the public sphere, they all use reason and dialogue in order to communicate with one another and to express their truth. This was the first foundation of truth that Habermas tried to identify. Then Habermas affirmed this position because it is in favor of Marxist analysis (Habermas, 1989). In the second alternative, he develops the idea of knowledge and human interest. Basically, he is saying that knowledge and truth should not be conceived as abstract intellectual activities that are actually divorced from and forced apart from existing human relations. Knowledge is an activity that takes place in the interest of the individual. So, he basically argues that knowledge cannot be separated from human interest, and it is the desire to control the world, the desire to control one another, and the desire to lead a life of freedom that essentially make for the emergence of truth and knowledge (Habermas, 1968).

Habermas adopted what he called the "linguistic turn" and came up with *the theory of communicative action*. Following that, he developed a new alternative theory of knowledge and truth, which has been ignored throughout the epistemological tradition and is known as the Theory of Communicative Rationality. In his well-known book, *Theory of Communicative Action*, he rejects all of this traditional epistemological thinking and subject/consciousness philosophy in favor of a new understanding of the theory of knowledge and truth. Via his two-

volume *Theory of Communicative Action* project, Habermas seeks to root the social sciences in a philosophy of language (Habermas, 1984).

The *theory of communicative action* creates a two-level concept of society that incorporates the life-world and systems paradigms, this theory is concerned with developing a concept of rationality that is no longer constrained by and tied to the subjectivistic and individualistic premises of modern philosophy and social theory. It also sketches out a critical theory of modernity that analyzes and accounts for its pathologies in a way that suggests a redirection rather than an abandonment (Ibid).

In this work, Habermas comes up with a new foundation of knowledge and truth, which is known as communicative rationality. Communicative rationality is a theory or set of theories that describe human rationality as a necessary outcome of successful communication and the potential for certain kinds of reason is inherent in communication itself (Ibid). Therefore, the theory of communicative rationality tells us truth is a linguistically mediated concept; truth is an attribute of language rather than an attribute of the physical world; truth is not a material entity of physical reality, rather it is constructed within the bounds of everyday discourse and everyday language (Ibid).

As a result, in this chapter, we will discuss a new basis for truth and knowledge that has been forgotten throughout the epistemological tradition. According to Habermas, this foundation is established through the study of language and everyday discourse. Regarding this, this chapter provides a brief overview of the Habermasian concept of knowledge and truth in the *theory of communicative action*. According to Habermas' *theory of communicative action*, truth is discovered through language and everyday speech rather than in the outside world. He therefore contends that whenever we use language, three validity claims—truth, rightness, and truthfulness—are advanced. This chapter also demonstrates the relationship between truth and validity claims, or the Habermasian view of truth as a validity claim. At the end, I will demonstrate the relationship between validity claims and the consensus theory of truth.

## **2.1. What is Theory of Communicative Action?**

To get to Habermas' theory of truth and knowledge, we have to start with *The Theory of Communicative Action* (1984). The German sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas developed communicative action theory. This theory is applicable to social issues and politics

and belongs to the philosophical subfields of epistemology, ethics, and philosophy of language. Communicative action explains and establishes the rationale for liberation from authoritarian political systems as well as the significance of just democracies.

The theory of communicative action, according to Habermas, is an action that involves at least two people who are able to engage with one another through speech and actions. Ordinary communication, according to Habermas, differs from other human actions in that it strives for mutual understanding rather than "success"; more specifically, it seeks to achieve "intersubjective" understanding as opposed to controlling the environment through instrumental action (Habermas, 1984:86). Communicative action includes establishing or happening of social relations between two or more social actors and is directed toward mutual understanding and agreement. Because such action is meaningful, it includes an appeal by using regular language, by saying or writing on something.

Therefore, whenever individuals use communication to coordinate their action there are certain criteria or conditions that must be fulfilled: he must first comprehend the statement's intent before he may respond, accept, or reject it. If he or she agrees with the assertion, they next direct their behaviors in response to the assertion in accordance with the parameters that are predetermined by convention. He works with his communication partner to coordinate their efforts in this way. Those engaged must use arguments to try to reach a consensus if he disputes the assertion (Habermas, 1984: 340).

Let us take an example: On Saturday night, Elsa and Betty decide to go out together. They both believe that what counts most is that they enjoy each other's company and pursue shared hobbies. That is a communication action. The claim that communicative action is an unreachable dream can only be made by individuals who have never experienced Elsa and Betty's mindset. In the communicative model of action, language is proposed as a medium of knowing with the only function of coordinating action. This is how language is conceptualized in the *theory of communicative action*. Therefore, the meaning that Elsa and Betty give to their activity (going to the movies) is connected to the interpretation that a researcher may give to their acts about cinematographic preferences.

Thus, Habermas claims that the development or maintenance of social relationships between two or more people is a communicative action. Saying or writing anything will also require some form of appeal to common language since such actions are meaningful. When developing a *theory of communicative action*, Habermas wants a theory that takes into account the fact that we do a variety of different things when we communicate. Habermas' communicative action theory is grounded on the idea that language provides a medium for mutual understanding between individuals. It asserts that individuals are capable of sharing their experiences, opinions, and beliefs through language, which leads to consensus building and social integration. At the same time, Habermas' communicative action theory also acknowledges that humans engage metaphysical concepts while communicating with one another. Thus, communicative action as presented by Habermas can be viewed as having metaphysical elements since it acknowledges the fact that human communication often involves more than just shared experiences and empirical knowledge, but also involves transmitting and negotiating metaphysical concepts.

Therefore, communicative action can be a way of doing something in the world, such as threatening, ordering, or promising. It can be used to establish social order, convey information, and express one's own opinions. Therefore, communicative action embraces consensual action; where common assumptions are taken for granted and action-oriented to reach an understanding. The subject of the perfect circumstances for conversing and coming to a mutual understanding and agreement arises since every communication aims to achieve agreement. These circumstances correspond to what Habermas considers the ideal speech situation. It contends that in a world in which communication between people guided by fundamental, implicit norms, speech is most optimal. In an ideal speech situation, participants would be able to assess each other's claims exclusively based on logic and evidence in an environment free of any rational "coercive" effects, including both physical and psychological coercion. A reasonable consensus would also be the only motivation for all parties. As a result, communication between agents who can talk and act takes place through communicative action. Interpretation, which is defined as a discussion of definitions amenable to agreement, is the key concept (Ibid).

How can people live together in society? Habermas' central thesis in *The Theory of Communicative Action*. He draws a fundamental distinction between instrumental or object-oriented action and communicative or understanding-oriented action (Ibid. 333).

Habermas makes a distinction between the use of language for success and the use of language to achieve mutual understanding. Understanding-oriented action is interacting with your interlocutor without preconceived notions or making an effort to coerce or influence them, allowing them to freely come to their own conclusions. As a result, agents can persuade others rather than use force to force them into agreeing in decision-making and conflict situations. On the contrary, agents engaged in strategic action will make an effort to accomplish their objectives with or without the approval of other agents, either by employing techniques like bullying or giving rewards (open strategic action) or by feigning understanding-oriented behavior (concealed strategic action). When someone manipulates their partner without their knowledge and with what appears to be "the best of intentions," the agent may be conscious of the deceit (deliberate manipulation). It should be made clear that they are ideal kinds that typically do not appear in ordinary communication in a pure form but rather as a combination with variable degrees of understanding-oriented communication and manipulation (Ibid.).

Social action, social relations must have meaning, to be designed in a particular way. Rationality connects things in a certain way, giving them meaning. The interest for rationality is actually an interest for communication because communication is rational. Rationality serves as the foundation for communication. To put it another way, communicative action and communicative reason coexist. A social alternative that might be established to achieve a shared objective is communicative rationality. Habermas has put forth a communicative rationality model that is based on an integrative view of humanity and community in opposition to subject-centered reason and instrumental reason. This model of communicative rationality is based on the fact that, linguistic intersubjectivity views communicative reason as essentially a cooperative activity. In daily life, Habermas claims, communicative rational action is commonplace. When we request someone to be reasonable, we are pleading with that person to exercise critical thought, to offer persuasive reasons for or against a claim, and, most importantly, to genuinely try to come to an agreement with us. In accordance with Habermas' definition, communicating rationally entails a practice.

As Habermas claims, the aim of communicative action is to achieve mutual agreement and understanding through rational dialogue and discussion. This implies that, whenever individuals participate in the communicative process, they have shared meaning, belief, value, and

assumption, so that they can come to agreement through logical reasoning. Here is the question that remains for me: does the occurrence of mutual agreement or understanding always guarantee communication? I contended that the existence of mutual understanding or agreement does not always guarantee communication. Because having the same belief, value, meaning, and assumption may not always be true. Just because a majority opinion or a large group of people agree on something does not necessarily mean it is true and rational.

There are two basic forms of rationality: social agents make instrumental use of knowledge; they propose certain goals and aim to achieve them in an objective world. When we use reason to control the world, we use reason as an instrument or tool in order to exercise our own power over the physical world, which is known as instrumental rationality or system. On the contrary, when we use reason for the purpose of communication, when we use reason to analyze in connection with achieving understanding in language, we use it for reaching an understanding known as communicative rationality of the life world (Habermas, 1987).

Habermas divides society into the 'system and the lifeworld' (Habermas, 1984:118) categories as a result, with the system being integrated through instrumental-strategic activity and the lifeworld being integrated through communicative action. The lifeworld is an implicit underlying agreement for communication that social actors can nonetheless problematize. The lifeworld is the environment in which we regularly reside. All aspects of life are included in this, excluding those that are institutionalized or organized. Among the examples are family life, culture, and informal social interactions.

The lifeworld is, to put it simply, a term "complementary to that of communicative action" (Habermas, 1984:118). It is the environment which we live on a daily basis, it includes organized or institutionalized life. It encompasses, for instance, social contacts informally and within the context of family and culture. It is, the environment in which we spend most of our time in both our personal and social lives, and it enable individuals to perform their action through having shared value, meaning, assumption and understanding. The term "system," on the other hand, describes patterns of strategic behavior that advance the objectives of institutions and organizations. Money and power are the primary forces behind systemic acts. To put it simply, the system manipulates people using resources such as money and power in order to further its own goals. When people are controlled in this way, the phrase "instrumental action" is used to

characterize the acts that are employed, it's aim is towards accomplishing particular goals, regardless of whether there is a shared understanding of the aims, it is obvious that such acts are connected to strategic actions.

Thus, by distinguishing between action and rationality, Habermas connects sociology and philosophy in a way that is typical of Critical Theory. The term "instrumental rationality" refers to a subject-object dynamic. Similar to instrumental rationality, strategic rationality relates to situations when one subject regards another subject as an object. The success criteria are the effectiveness of the means in obtaining dominance, whether that dominance is over nature or other people. Communicative action is not about asserting one's power or being efficient in any way; rather, it is about reaching a consensus or mutual understanding. In communicative rationality, action is situated not in a subject but rather in the nature of the interactions between subjects, or more particularly, in relations that are free from relations of power, it's based on logical reasoning (Habermas, 1984, p: 31).

Strategic action is the reverse of communicative action, so to speak. Furthermore, according to Habermas, the telos of language is an orientation toward understanding. Language and semantics naturally support communicative thinking. Therefore, "common" language is inherently focused on social consensus. It is obvious that morally speaking, communicative rationality is viewed as good, but strategic reasoning seen as both morally bad and unsociable. By locating the moral perspective into the communication, Habermas suggests a social interpretation of rational action. By refocusing the idea from the individual to the society, Habermas advances earlier theories on moral action.

Strategic communication is connected to a selfish foundation. In other words, we are powerless to refrain. It is the deliberate, premeditated manipulation of others. While communication in the real world aims to increase comprehension, strategic action aims to undermine the rules of communication in order to have impacts that result in greater confusion. There are some questions that remain for me, such as: aren't there any purposes, aim calculations, goals, or consciousness behind every action, even communicative actions?

## 2.2. The Universal Validity Claims

At the center of both Habermas' theory of communicative action and his account of communicative rationality is the thesis that speech acts are the smallest unit of communication. This thesis raises various kinds of validity claims. Every meaningful act holds validity claims, according to Habermas, who contends that a claim made in a communicative action is a claim to validity. The concept of validity plays a central role in Habermas' theory (1984). Instead of one-sided view, Habermas wants to establish a theory of communication as a way to reach a shared understanding. In order to arrive at such a shared understanding, the speaker and listener must agree on the universal validity claims raised in communication. Therefore, validity claim is supposed to legitimize one's statements or actions for others. When participants engage in communication or certain actions, the success of their task is dependent on the validity claim, which states that as long as both participants (speaker and hearer) are unable to understand and justify their positions, understandings between these two people will be ineffective.

In this regard, when a speaker is performing a speech act, he is raising a number of validity claims. These validity claims can potentially be challenged by the listener. To accept a speech act, the listener accepts the validity claims raised. Habermas presents three kinds of validity claims that he asserts to be universal: claims to truth, normative rightness, and truthfulness. However, which is a more fundamental claim directly related to the use of language as a medium for communication. If the speaker cannot present a linguistically understandable utterance, then there is, by definition, nothing to understand and assess. The three universal claims are associated with the three functions of language that Habermas presupposes. He distinguishes three fundamental uses of language: the cognitive use, the interactive use, and the expressive use (Ibid). In Habermas ontology, these three modes have their origins, the objective world, the social world, and the subjective world (Ibid., p. 100).

In other words, a validity claim is an assertion made by an actor that his or her utterance is of "truth, truthfulness, and rightness" (Ibid., p. 24). Nevertheless, depending on how persuaded the interlocutor is, they may accept, dispute, or abstain from the actor's assertion or validity claim. In the case of each claim, only support can be given. How do the actors decide whether the validity claims are truth, rightness, and truthfulness? What standards are used to evaluate the assertions, in other words? According to Habermas, each meaningful act's claims fall into one of three

types, each with its own set of standards for judging whether the claims are true. The objective world, the social or normative world, and the subjective world are the three categories (Habermas, 1984:100).

Action coordination is only possible when all parties involved mutually agree to accept the speech act offer, which is why communicative action is fundamentally intersubjective in nature. Each person is assumed a competent actor who can evaluate the inherent validity claims made by others. These validity claims play a fundamental role in communication according to Habermas:" The idea of communicative action assumes that language serves as the means for a certain type of understanding, during which the participants establish mutual validity claims that can be accepted or disputed." (ibid., p. 99). As Habermas stated, whenever there is communication between a speaker and listener, it is constituted by the existence of three universal validity claims.

Now let us take a closer look at the details of Habermas distinction between three different validity claims: validity claims to truth, validity claims to rightness, and validity claim to truthfulness.

### **2.2.1. The Claim of Truth**

The language employed is appropriate for the cognitive style of communication, and the validity claims of this sort of claim are included into constative speech actions. The legitimacy of such a claim is determined by how closely it corresponds to the shared worldview among members of a certain community. The argument that the facts we discussed are real and accurate is related to more than just the fact that we understand one another. After we have understood ourselves, the facts we discussed must be true and accurate. The validity claim of truth criteria considers the accuracy of the expressions used in the discourse regarding the social and natural contexts. It also calls into question the utterance's cognitive content, and it most obviously manifests itself in constative speech actions like statements, justifications, descriptions, and the like. The validity of Habermas' assertion about truth relates to how truthful a statement is in relation to objective facts. (Habermas, 1984).

### **2.2.2. The Claim of Rightness**

The validity of rightness claims challenges the speaker's right to initiate a conversation. Roles are normatively prescribed, so the validity claim demands that speakers consider the legitimacy of those roles or relevant norms and their relationship to them. Habermas maintains that when I make a validity claim to the rightness of an utterance, I also make a claim to the rightness of based on the underlying norm. For example, if I say that "abortion is wrong", I implicitly claim that I could adduce reasons that would convince my interlocutor that aborting is wrong (Ibid).

### **2.2.3. The Claim of Truthfulness**

Truthfulness refers to the speaker's sincere aim, which is necessary for the listener to develop trust. It is the degree to which, an utterance accurately reflects the speaker's intention. In addition, another world an actor and speaker live in and relate to is their own subjective world of thoughts, feelings, interests, and judgements. The truthfulness of the validity claim of the communication is connected with the freedom the participants in the communication have in presenting themselves to others. Nevertheless, at the same time, truthiness (or sincerity) in communication is connected with the style of expression of the social actors (Ibid.). In the dialogue between the professor, Elsa, and Betty, let us see an example of each of the three sorts of validity claims.

Assume that Elsa and Betty were among the students in the professor's undergraduate course on critical reading. For this lesson, there was a group project. May I collaborate with Betty on the group assignment? Elsa requested the professor. This question thematized a statement in the objective domain that you intended to collaborate on the group project with Betty, a student in his class. The professor tries to check his class list to verify if Betty was in his class in order to determine whether Elsa's assertion was accurate or not. The professor might then request that you and Betty come see me in person to ensure that she is registered in and wants to be in my class. Professor tries to check his class list to verify if Betty was in his class in order to determine

whether Elsa's assertion was accurate or not. In order to confirm that Betty wereregistered in my class and wants to collaborate with you, the professor could also invite you and Betty to come see me in person. Elsa and Betty started working on the project with the professor's approval and chose a topic in which they were both interested but wanted to be sure the professor shared their opinion. Elsa and Betty discuss their project concept with the professor when they visit his office, and the professor responds, "That's a terrific idea! I enjoy it. He made a subjective claim that was highlighted in his response. I said I loved your concept. Privilege access served as the standard for assessing a subjective claim. After a few days, Elsa and Betty arrived in the professor's office to explain that due to scheduling issues, it was nearly impossible for them to collaborate on the assignment. Get the professor's approval by saying, "Maybe we ought to choose a different partner for the group project." In this case, the professor's final assertion was a normative claim that suggested you should look for a different companion. Recall that the primary terms employed in a normative assertion are "right," "wrong," "good," "bad," "appropriate," "inappropriate," "should," "should not," etc. A normative claim judge according to common interests. A normative assertion refuted by establishing consensus among the disputing parties and then making an argument from that point in favor of the norm or value stance that is being questioned.

Therefore, in the above example, I was trying to show that validity claims cannot be established once and for all; they are relative and fallible, and they can be changed over time. Which means that, especially when new discoveries are made, we think at first that it is a good idea, but later on, we find out that another idea is better than the first one. Therefore, we reject the first one and try to adopt the later one. Validity claims are fallible and subject to revisiting. So, here the question is: if there is a possibility of error or fallibility in our previous assertion of validity claims, does this guarantee the truth and validity of those claims?

In Habermas' view, the telos of language is to achieve understanding or consensus. There are three validity claims that may be brought forward during communication whenever language is used as a medium: by the speaker and the hearer. If we examine them closely, the three validity assertions that Habermas offers are all related to the past or something that already exists. The "existing state of affairs" is something that truth is concerned with, according to Habermas (1984:88). As we have seen, the claim of rightness addresses the current normative setting. The

assertion of truthfulness relates to the speaker's purpose. This indicates that all validity claims are covered or dealt with in the current situation and not in the future. Habermas' communicative theory fails in this area. Communication that considered both the present condition and the future state would be preferable.

To conclude, the mature presentation of the view occurs in communicative action, in which Habermas suggests that the three different validity claims constitute three different ways of presenting the propositional content of an utterance in the three corresponding utterance types (Habermas, 1984: p. 309). If a statement is true, it expresses what the world, and a directive is successful in bringing about a desired state of affairs. If a statement is right with respect to existing norms, and the existing norms are legitimate with respect to values. If a subjected experiences, desires, and feelings are truthfully expresses, the three-world concept forms a reference system that is assumed by the actors in social interactions (Ibid).

### **2.3. The Linguistic Foundation of Truth**

Jürgen Habermas known for his belief that community, sociality, and agreement are more crucial when considering truth than theorizing about the metaphysical connection between words and things. Truth is a regulative ideal for Habermas that is closely connected to knowledge, validity assertions, justification, and general epistemic practice. The actions that are grounded in what he famously referred to as *communicative action* serve as conduits for meaning, knowledge, justification, and the complete spectrum of norms that make up social and political value systems. This kind of activity seeks to achieve agreement or mutual understanding through deliberative process of creating true and respectable standards for language users: "The idea of communicative action assumes that language serves as the means for a form of attaining understanding, in which the participants, via responding to a reality, reciprocally establish validity claims that may be accepted or challenged." (Habermas, 1984: 99).

In Habermas' view, truth is merely one of several validity claims that may be raised by different speech acts. The two others are rightness, which is associated with regulative speech acts (or imperatives), and sincerity, which is associated with avowals (Ibid: 297–305). Therefore, according to Habermas, discourse and validity claims depend on their redeemability through argumentation.

He writes:

*"I may ascribe a predicate to an object if and only if every other individual who could enter into discussion with me would ascribe the same predicate to the same object. In order to distinguish true from false statements, I refer to the judgment of others—in fact, to the judgment of all others with whom I could ever undertake a discussion (among whom I include counterfactually all the partners in discussion that I could find if my life history were coextensive with the history of mankind). The condition for the truth of statements is the potential agreement of all others. Every other person would have to be able to convince himself that I ascribed the predicate "p" correctly to the object x and would have to be able to agree with me. Truth means the promise of achieving a rational consensus" (Habermas, 1990c: p. 116).*

As the ancient cosmic realm passed away, truth was no longer to be discovered, according to Habermas, in the material world. In contrast, it is found in language and discourse. The validity claims therefore depend on the disenchantment thesis' epistemic justifiability, according to his assertion that it must be strictly embraced. While there is no truth in the Platonic sense, truth is nevertheless something that may be redeemed discursively, according to this school of thought.

Habermas agrees with philosophers of language that truth is attached to propositions; he claims that there is no truth in its substantive sense out there, or that truth not found in the physical world and truth is not an attribute of the physical world; rather, he attempts to find it within our everyday language. He states that truth is a concept that only constructed, rebutted, affirmed, and valued all within the boundaries of discourse and everyday language. Truth and knowledge are not attributes of the physical world and do not derive from the existence of a higher world; they are formulated within the boundaries of everyday language. Therefore, truth is one of three mutually irreducible dimensions of validity in formal pragmatics and is linked to the representational function of language. The other two, according to Habermas, are "truth-analogous," though only rightness claims can be justified discursively like truth claims. Since truth is associated with the propositional component of an utterance, truth claims are raised at least implicitly in all speech acts, although speech acts themselves are neither true nor false.

Thus, Habermas holds that the objective world rather than an ideal consensus is the truth maker; in other words, a proposition is true because it accurately refers to existing objects or represents states of affairs, albeit only those that we can describe using our current linguistic resources. Therefore, the question is if truth is not to be understood, as something that transcends language

and culture, does not this lead to a relativistic position? On the other hand, if there is a different ideal consensus, doesn't that create different assumptions and understandings of truth around the world?

#### **2.4. Truth as a Validity Claim**

Habermas uses "validity," instead of "truth" to emphasize that truth should not be perceived monologically, but contested and validated dialogically or communicatively. Habermas made an effort to define the concept of truth by outlining the possible defenses for making claims to the truth. His major premise is that when we use language to interact with one another, we unintentionally make validity claims, and that if we are to have any hope of understanding one another, these claims must be redeemed or justified discursively.

In essence, this is how Habermas sees truth as a validity claim: every time a speaker asserts the claim  $p$ , she does so with the conviction that  $p$  is true. Participants in an idealized discourse must obviously be pragmatically connected in order for there to be a "rationally driven consensus," as he calls it, between what is stated and how it actually is. The following equation used to represent this viewpoint: If a statement " $p$ " is true, then the subject of a consensus that is driven by reason. (Finlayson, 2005b).

Habermas' definition of truth as a validity claim is one such component. Habermas holds that there are two separate and important claims here. The first is that the concept of truth is epistemic: truth can be exhaustively analyzed into the concept of ideal acceptability in discourse. The second is that truth can be and should be understood as a specification of an underlying generic notion of validity, i.e., that it is some kind of construct of a single underlying pragmatic norm of correctness. While using communicative language, if I am challenged, I am expected to come up with an adequate response, which will be either approved or disapproved by my communicative partner. As we previously mentioned, three validity claims are therefore advanced anytime we use language to speak with one another. Habermas thus considers this validity claim to be truth (Habermas, 1990:179–208).

#### **2.5. Consensus Theory of Truth and Validity Claims**

The lifelong endeavor of Habermas to articulate a critical theory of modern society gives rise to his definition of truth. He explained how truth claims might be justified in an effort to explain the idea of truth. His main argument is that truth has more to do with the discursive justification or when we use language as a medium of communication, when we use language to communicate with one another validity claims are forwarded. These three validity claims—claims to truth, rightness, and truthfulness or sincerity—are all expressed in our different speech actions, either expressly or implicitly (Habermas, 1984).

As we have seen, Habermas analyzes truth as a 'validity claim,' which is a paradigmatic one. He claims that truth must be defined in terms of rational consensus. He writes, "I am entitled to ascribe a predicate to an object if and only if any other person who could enter in to a discussion with me would ascribe the same predicate to the same object; the condition for the truth of statements is the potential agreement of everyone else" (Habermas, 1994:109).

Due to this, when we examined the consensus theory of truth, it claimed that there was an agreement among a group of truths that might act as an explanation (Sholihah, 2020). According to Jürgen Habermas, the truth is a claim of validity when speakers' communicative justifications during conversation are made without any speakers sensing that they are not taken into consideration in terms of sound (Bufacchi, 2021). According to Habermas (2003), when a person asserts anything, such as "Tsion is brilliant," they are also asserting that the assertion is true, that it is normatively correct, and that they are making the assertion true. The speaker requests the audience's consent to these assertions. The three categories of claims listed above are referred to as "validity claims," and they are crucial to Habermas' consensus theory. Namely, the "discourse" that Habermas refers to, in which reasons for the validity claims are only provided if the listener challenges the validity claims and requests justification for the essential validity claims. Consensus or discursive theories claim that truth is that which results from a process of inquiry that produces a consensus among those who are most fully informed—in the case of science, scientists. (Habermas, 1978; Mingers, 2014).

Hence, does it become problematic whether truth in this situation is a question of rational consensus or ideal consensus? The occurrence of agreement does grant good communication? The claim that the truth of a statement depends on the agreement of an unlimited communication community and rational consensus seems problematic. This is because it leads to what is known

as a Euthyphro like dilemma: is it true because we agree to it, or do we agree because it is true? Therefore, I argue that rational consensus cannot be defined truth alone, or that rational consensus cannot function as a criterion of truth. Habermas discusses the issue of validity only from the perspective of the participant in an ideal speech situation. They would agree on the truth of the statement rationally since they found the reason for agreeing to be valid. Nonetheless, some of them refuse to consider to part of a rational consensus; they would agree out of fear or pretend to agree. So when we consider this from the other person's perspective, things would be different, what they consider a good reason might become deceptive. Furthermore, what makes a statement true because there is consensus about its validity? Or there is a consensus because the statement is true? Therefore, in this case, Habermas' assumption that truth is made through rational consensus will lead to a dilemma.

It also assumes that if everyone agrees on something, it must be true or rational. However, just because a large group of people believes or agrees on something does not necessarily mean it is true or rational. According to my view point, mutual understanding or agreement or rational consensus does not always guarantee the validity of communication. Habermas argues that communicative action is based on mutual understandings and agreements, which are achieved through rational discussion and argumentation. However, does that imply that everyone involved in the communication process already holds the same ideas, values, and presumptions and those they can always reach an understanding by using reason?

Generally, in the *theory of communicative action*, Habermas is trying to develop a communicative conception of rationality; he tries to rescue the ideas of emancipation and transcendence, but the way is by embarking with in everyday discourse and language. According to Habermas through rational engagement, we can discover the nature of truth without appealing to transcendental reality. For example, claims about the truth of what we say in relation to the objective world; or claims about the rightness, appropriateness, or legitimacy of our speech acts in relation to the shared values and norms of our social life world; or claims to sincerity or authenticity in regard to the outward manifestations of our intentions and feelings.

On the contrary, the assumption of truth and knowledge has completely changed because of the emergence of post-modernism. Post-modernism needs to be abandoned with the existing theories of knowledge and truth, which I return to as the emergence of a new reality where there is no

objectively binding or equally accepted conception of truth. Post-modern philosophers no longer believe in truth since truth is social construct, so they signify the downfall of truth and the loss of the emancipatory power of knowledge. Therefore, in the third chapter, we will consider post-modernist assumptions of knowledge and truth in the post-modern condition.

## **Chapter Three**

### **3. The Issue of Knowledge and Truth in Postmodern Condition**

In the preceding two chapters, we looked at the features of conventional epistemological traditions and Habermas' critique of them. We have already seen some of traditional epistemological thought in the first chapter, such as Plato's categorization of a dualistic conception of reality. He contends that knowledge and absolute truth are dependent upon or located in the universe of being. From this point forward, the philosophy of consciousness or philosophy of the subject exists in opposition to the platonic notion of transcendental reality or the realm of being. Descartes relocated to the subject in this paradigm; the subject in this instance is the one who is aware of the objective reality. Immanuel Kant's transcendental idealism is the other concept that is take into consideration. In his main argument, Kant argued that reality extends beyond the confines of physical space and time.

The conventional thesis of reality and the classical presupposition of epistemological reasoning, however, are completely abandoned with the rise of postmodernism and post metaphysical thought. Habermas develops Postmetaphysical thought. According to Postmetaphysical thought it's aims is to provide a conception of rationality that is communicatively focused, and it asserts that there is still a way to save the modernity project by addressing communicative rationality as well as everyday language and discourse.

In this sense, the second chapter focuses on a new alternative foundation for knowing and truth that Habermas refers to as his theory of communicative rationality. Because he contends that truth, knowledge, and reality found in language and discourse rather than in a transcendent cosmos, Habermas is strongly attacking the platonic dualistic interpretations of reality. Since he contends that reality and truth are not constrained by subject and object dualism, Habermas again challenging the philosophy of the subject or consciousness. On the other hand, both are discussing the concept of intersubjectivity. According to Habermas, there is no antagonism between the subject and object because they are both fundamentally a part of the day-to-day perspective.

Nevertheless, the concept and the view of truth and knowledge have completely changed with the rise of postmodern and Postmetaphysical thought in the history of philosophy. Thus, in this chapter we will discussed about the postmodern critique of the traditional epistemological thinking and analyze the problem of knowing and truth in the postmodern era. As a result, modernity supports enlightened values. It fosters logical standards and consensus and it's connected to awareness. While modernism was dominant, in cultural thought and practice in the early and middle decades of the 20th century, postmodernism may be understood as a reaction against its ideals and values as much as a description of the time that followed. The phrase connotes doubt, irony, and philosophical challenges of the notions of universal truths and objective reality.

In contrast to earlier rationalist and empiricist ways of thinking, postmodernism defines itself as being against Platonic objective idealism, which holds that truth resides in a transcendent sphere of Ideal Forms, empiricist reflections, which portray the mind as a glassy essence. Kantian transcendental idealism, which subsumes historical and contingent subjectivity into categorical and a priori mental structures that provide the universal contour. These are Jean Baudrillard, Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Fredric Jameson, Jean-François Lyotard, and Richard Rorty are a few well-known intellectuals who are link to postmodernism. Thus, I will be concerned with Lyotard postmodernism and the issues of knowledge and truth in this chapter.

According to Jean-François Lyotard's definition of philosophical postmodernism in *The Postmodern Condition*, which he wrote "I define postmodern as incredulity towards meta narratives," (Lyotard, 1984: xxiv), a metanarrative is a unified, comprehensive, universal, and

epistemically certain totalizing and overarching stories that the goal of human race ground and it's legitimize knowledge and cultural practices. Therefore, rejecting the grand narratives Lyotard come up with mininarratives

This chapter intended discusses about the postmodern critique of the classical epistemological thinking. This allows us to see Lyotard's presupposition of the postmodern situation and the abandoned of grand narrative in the postmodern world. In doing so, we shall examine mini narratives in place of grand narratives.

### **3.1. Modernisms and Postmodernism**

The name "postmodernism" suggests a connection to modernism. There was undoubtedly an idea of modernism before there was a concept of postmodernism. It was created throughout the modern era in conjunction with industrialization, market-driven capitalist economies, new social classes, democracy, and "reason and progress" ideas from the Enlightenment. It is feasible that "the establishment of objective truths and universal ideals" will be accomplished through this contentious philosophy, the philosophy of the Enlightenment. (Heywood, 2012). Modernism is a movement founded on reason and logic, employing scientific analysis to achieve certain knowledge about transcendental creatures or ultimate reality. The rationalist school of philosophy best describes the search for epistemology in contemporary times. Unlike mediaeval thinkers, proponents of modernism employed pure reason to find objective truth and the essence of reality. It has been stated frequently that postmodernism is both a continuation of and a rejection of the modernist perspective (Anderson, 1999).

According to Britannica, postmodernism, is a late 20th century intellectual movement that emerged as a reaction to modernism in western philosophy. The prefix "post" in the term "postmodern" denotes a modification of the modern, or that follows, replaces, or disturbs it. Postmodernism is distinguished by a generalized skepticism, subjectivism, or relativism; a

widespread skepticism of reason; and an acute awareness of the role that ideology plays in establishing and sustaining political and economic power (Britannica, 2019).

One of the best ways to characterize postmodernism as a philosophical movement is as a form of skepticism, specifically skepticism about authority, received wisdom, cultural and political norms, and so on. This places postmodernism in a long line of Western philosophical movements that dates back to classical Greek philosophy. Skepticism, which aims to disprove other philosophical doctrines that assert to have the last word or standards for judging what qualifies as the final word, is largely a negative type of philosophy (Stuart Sim, 2011).

The postmodernist criticized the emancipatory elements of reason, in contrast to modernism is established on an illogical, irrational cognitive process and opposes logical reasoning because it sees reason as a discursive and situated component to society's actions. So, in the postmodern age, the fall of the modern understanding of truth as absolute, abstract, and universal provided room for another alternative form of truth, namely, the interpretive, relative, specific, and contextual aspect of truth.

The following are the perspectives of post-modernism; first, Considering the goal Determine the most significant natural reality—one whose existence and characteristics are logically independent of human beings—of their brains, societies, social customs, or research methods. However, postmodernists reject this notion. Secondly, according to postmodernists, the world that exists is a conceptual construct that is a product of scientific methodology and terminology. The study of historical events and the description of social organizations, structures, or practices by social scientists both fall under the purview of this argument. Whereas, modernism signify scientific and historical descriptions and explanations can be either objectively correct or wrong. Nevertheless, the rejection of an objective natural reality that results from the postmodern denial of this worldview is frequently stated by claiming that there is no such thing as Truth. Thirdly, modernism emphasizes that humans are likely to improve themselves and their communities in the contemporary era by using reason and logic along with the more specialized instruments offered by science and technology. Postmodernists, on the other hand, contest this Enlightenment belief in the role of science and technology in advancing humankind. They hold that since wicked individuals, particularly throughout the 20th century, to destroy and oppress others, science, have utilized them technology, and even reason and logic, are intrinsically

harmful and oppressive. Fourthly, Reason and logic are universally legitimate for modernist, or its principles apply equally to all thinkers and all fields of knowledge, from the perspective of modernism. While, reason and logic are also essentially conceptual creations in the eyes of postmodernists, making them only meaningful within the confines of long-standing intellectual traditions. Fifthly, Modernism also holds that language relates to and depicts a reality that is external to itself. Postmodernists, in contrast, once held the idea that language is not quite the "mirror of nature," as the American pragmatic philosopher Richard Rorty had described the Enlightenment viewpoint (Duignan, B., 2016).

### **3.2. Jean-François Lyotard's Postmodern Assumptions**

A great deal of postmodernist theory depends on the maintenance of a skeptical attitude: and here the philosopher Jean-François Lyotard's contribution is essential. Lyotard are highly criticize the classical conception of truth and knowledge. Lyotard argues that Habermas is offering "one more grand narrative of emancipation." (Lyotard, 1984: p.60). according to Lyotard, the main criticism towards Habermas' based on his thought that modernity is an unfinished project and there is a chance to rescue modernity. According to the proponents of postmodernists, including Lyotard, modernity must be abandoned at its fullest with its quest for truth, rationality, epistemological analysis, and metaphysical thinking. He argued in his *La condition postmodern* (published in French in 1979, in English in 1984) that we now live in an era of master narratives' that serve to legitimize society are in problem and declines. Major philosophies like Kantianism, Hegelianism, and Marxism, which contend that knowledge, may liberate us and that all knowledge has a hidden unity, contain or imply these narratives. According to Lyotard's renowned definition of the postmodern in his book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* 1984, he defined "postmodernism as incredulity towards metanarratives," In his Preface to *The Postmodern Condition*, Lyotard makes a declaration (Lyotard, 1984: xxiv).

According to Lyotard, modern thinking supports its claims with references to "grand narratives of emancipation," progress, reason, and science, all of which are governed by uniform standards and assert "universal knowledge." The "heterogeneity of language games" that all these "metanarratives" are missing, according to Lyotard (1984:75), is of course something that postmodern knowledge offers. The stance of the postmodern situation has evolved from "skepticism" to "pluralism"; knowledge becomes the primary method of production, shifting the focus from "the ends of action [telos] to its means" (Ibid: 37). Like Derrida, Rorty, and other poststructuralists, Lyotard rejects the idea of absolute knowledge and truth.

Actually, skepticism is the attitude that characterizes postmodernism the most. Its narratives are skeptical of any ethical, moral, or political conclusions because they establish the legitimacy of any solitary, privileged position and a particular truth. Postmodernism no longer trusts in the accuracy of metanarratives; rather, it proposes alternative possibilities for the production of truth (Christopher Butler, 2002). Therefore, Lyotard defined postmodernism as incredulity towards metanarratives. What are metanarratives or grand narratives according to Lyotard?

### **3.2.1. Lyotard and Grand Narratives**

In *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1984), Jean-François Lyotard criticized the idea of grand narrative or metanarrative. Lyotard refers to the "postmodern condition" in this essay, which he defines as increasing skepticism towards the totalizing tendency of "metanarratives" or "grand narratives." Additionally, it makes use of the argument from universal truth or universal ideals to attempt to provide a summarizing, complete explanation of numerous historical events, experiences, and social and cultural phenomena (Ibid., p. 29). This type of metanarrative organization is typical of pre-modern societies, according to Lyotard. Lyotard proposes another type of metanarrative the grand narratives of modernity. This form, which is founded on the interaction between past and present, is not. According to Lyotard, the dependence on metanarratives that portray human progress characterizes modernity. They differ from conventional metanarratives in that they anticipate a time when a society's issues, which are sometimes, considered as issues affecting all of humanity—will be resolved.

Therefore, the classical epistemological thinking has criticized by Lyotard, because they are embedded in a process that entertains grand narratives that serve as reference and legitimation

for societies in general. These narratives might be in knowledge, religion, spiritual life, science, history, metaphysics, morality, aesthetics. In order to explain the concepts of rationality and reason are important concepts in classical epistemological and metaphysical thinking in order to discover higher reality, knowledge, and truth. On the contrary, Lyotard stated that those are grand narratives, therefore, we no longer believe in those grand narratives, and we no longer refer to them for legitimation as they lost impact in postmodern society. For instance, classical metaphysical thinking is highly concerned with forming grand narratives simply because its existence is concerned with Meta narratives. For instance, Plato draws that if we really need reliable, certain knowledge and to discover truth, we have to rely on reason and the world of being. So in this sense, Plato's grand narrative for knowledge is reason and the reference for truth is the world of being. Therefore, in this sense, Plato's grand narrative for knowledge is reason and authority for truth is the world of being. In Descartes' case, he argues that reason is innate, and the only way to have "clear and distinct ideas" is to have knowledge about transcendental God. So Descartes is setting a grand narrative that will explain and give meaning for all phenomena, Cartesian dualism is an abstract dualistic essentialist paradigm that draw foundation for every knowledge and this attributes of it never allow a space for other alternative truth and context.

In Kant's case, he was also setting a Meta narrative, which is an enlightenment reason as well. According to Kant, even if we cannot explain the transcendental world using reason, we can get knowledge of morality, aesthetics, and science using reason as the center of discourses. According to Lyotard, appealing to systems of ideas, generalized systems, and universalistic thinking is already an obsolete matter in postmodernism. The feature that distinguishes classical epistemological thinking from postmodernism is that we no longer believe in grand or Meta narratives. Consequently, classical epistemological thinking in its nature sets grand narratives in different dimensions, but postmodernism sets quite a distance from this thinking, that attempts to draw legitimation strategies on a universal level.

As a result, in *The Postmodern Condition*, Lyotard distinguishes between two important categories of modern metanarrative: the speculative grand narrative and the narrative of liberation (or freedom). The central idea of the speculative grand narrative is that human life progresses by increasing its knowledge. All the different language games are come together by

philosophy in order to present a 'universal' (Lyotard, 1984: p. 34). All knowledge is thus related to a system of philosophy, and, according to Lyotard, true knowledge is composed of reported statements that are incorporated into the metanarrative of a subject, which guarantees their legitimacy. For the speculative grand narrative, all possible statements are, come together under a single metanarrative, and their truth and value are judged according to its rules. Which means that the truth or falsity of any statement or language game is determined by its relation to the whole of knowledge.

The grand narrative of emancipation or liberation is the second type of modern metanarrative. During the project of enlightenment, reason leads to freedom and emancipation and, they are highly dedicated in the assumption of that, having knowledge leads to emancipation. However, according to postmodernism, knowledge did not lead in to emancipation and happiness. Therefore, unlike the speculative grand narrative in which knowledge is an end in itself, this grand narrative presents knowledge as being valuable because it is the basis of human freedom. Here, 'humanity is the hero of liberty. In this narrative, knowledge is the basis of freedom from oppression, and the developments in knowledge are valued because they set humanity free from suffering. Here, then, the basis of truth is morality: however, according to Lyotard 'Knowledge is no longer the subject, but in the service of the subject (1984: 36).

Lyotard demonstrates that when knowledge has become a commodity, it loses its emancipatory power; he claims that knowledge does not emancipate individuals and lead them to freedom because it has become a commodity that is bought and sold on the market and is the basis of power in society. 'Knowledge in the form of an informational commodity indispensable to productive power is already, and will continue to be, a major stake in the worldwide competition for power' (1984: 5). The most powerful nations are the ones who have the greatest knowledge resources: those with the best technology, the most advanced communications and weapons systems, the most highly developed medicines, and the means to collect the most detailed information about their competitors. The global competition for power is now contest out as a battle for knowledge, just as it used to be for resources like coal, gas, and oil. Lyotard foresees a time when nations may literally go to war over knowledge, just as they have fought over land and raw materials such as oil in the past (1984: 5).

However, knowledge can sometimes help people free themselves from oppression and from various cultural, religious, and custom practices, at the same time Knowledge will also cause us to become distracted. From my viewpoint, everything depends on us—how we use our knowledge and comprehend various circumstances and situations. If we use our knowledge to good aim, we will not only free ourselves from oppression and exploitation but also elevate other people, societies, and even our own families. So, when I say that sometimes knowledge is a cause of distraction and creation, I mean that during the enlightenment period there were technological advancements and science and technology became dominant. During the enlightenment period, using their knowledge, scientists started producing different weapons, such as the atomic bomb Missiles. So, at this time, the advancement of science and technology causes war, genocide, and distraction. Therefore, when we observe this case, knowledge by itself does not cause distraction or problems in societies. All those distractions—war, genocide—happen because of the way we use our knowledge. However, I believe that some knowledge is good in itself, valuable and an end in itself. Knowledge is valuable and the basis for human freedom because those who have it can understand what is being practiced they can defend other positions.

Therefore, the rejection of the grand narrative led to a situation known as a legitimation crisis. What, then, is a legitimation crisis? According to Lyotard, metanarrative lost its ability to serve as a guide, a tower, and a shaping structure in order to accomplish its objectives. People lost trust in them as historical sources and authorities of the period when the metanarratives were destroyed. According to Lyotard, there is no such thing as true or false in postmodern society because of the legitimation crisis. People struggle to distinguish between good and bad. (Lyotard, 1984). What is the solution or what solutions does Lyotard use in order to overcome the legitimation crises?

### **3.2.2. The Replacement of Grand Narrative with Mini Narratives**

Lyotard is criticizing grand narrative, the platonic foundation of truth, the world of form and transcendental reality, the universal conception of truth, modernist assumptions and understandings of truth and knowledge, and transcendental realm. Lyotard then comes up with the concept of a mini-narrative.

Therefore, Lyotard developed mini-narratives to address the crisis that the overabundance of the grand narrative causes. According to Lyotard, the state of having a legitimation crisis causes people to create their own narratives because, in a world where grand narratives ruled, contradictions and inconsistencies were denied a voice, but when people create their own mini narratives, they celebrate the inherent contradictions and differences that exist in society. This narrative, in which people describe their position, status, beliefs, and interpretations of the world, is what Lyotard refers to as a mini narrative. In contrast to grand narratives, little or mini narratives focus on the smaller-scale practices, tales, local conventions, norms, and traditions that make up a society. These mini-narratives are local rather than universal, situational rather than fixed, and provincial rather than national. Mini-narratives are typically not created in order to discover absolute truth, ultimate reality, a supersensible being, transcendental reality, or an eternal entity, or to provide legitimacy on a global scale; rather, they are localized, brief narratives that are embedded in diversity and always provide localized legitimacy for the society that creates its own narrative. Local or small-scale narratives offer instant validity, in stark contrast to the legitimacy game played in the west (Lyotard, 1984).

In order to displace the great totalitarian and universal narratives, Lyotard predicts that mini-narratives will compete with one another to become society's dominant mini-narratives. The linguistic promises of rationality, truth, ultimate reality, and ultimate knowledge are abandoned in postmodernist mini-narratives that strive to provide a totalizing, complete, universal, and encompassing explanation of the many worldly experiences—metaphysical, political, scientific, and ethical, etc. Mini-narratives are therefore the most effective means to produce knowledge, truth, reality, and moral value, according to Lyotard. In ways that are particular, contextual, social, and cultural in character, mini-narratives investigate truth, reality, knowledge, and moral value. They also demonstrate how diverse individuals that are equally valid and accurate in certain situations may hold distinct facts.

As a result, it follows that Lyotard's theory of mini-narratives—according to which knowledge, reality, and morality are form. Therefore, unlike the grand narratives of traditional epistemological thinking, these mini-narratives are specific, temporal, and situational. In this situation, mini-narratives will show truth that is rooted in the interpretation and contextual status of the particular civilization, rejecting standard epistemological thinking that is built on purely

rationality, ultimate reality, universal truth, and knowledge. In Lyotard's opinion, truth, reality, knowledge, and moral standards all rely on this mini-narrative. Lyotard contends that a mini-narrative can serve as the context-sensitive criteria for determining if something is good, bad, right, or wrong. The knowledge system that classical epistemological reasoning inspired has therefore been lost in postmodern times. Given that truth is the foundation of all existing knowledge, the pursuit of metaphysical truth is closely tied to the idea of discovering truth.

### **3.2.3. Lyotard and Postmodern Knowledge**

Lyotard argues that the advances in communications that have taken place since the Second World War have affected not just, how knowledge is transmitted but also the status of knowledge itself. It is not just that we can store more information on computers and send messages across the world quickly by post, telephone, and now email. It is also that these changes in storage and communication are transforming how we use and value knowledge: 'the miniaturization and commercialization of machines is already changing the way in which learning is acquired, classified, made available, and exploited' (1984: p. 4). In other words, in what Lyotard calls the 'postmodern condition', knowledge itself has changed.

Lyotard distinguishes two types of knowledge in his analysis of the state of knowledge in postmodernity: "narrative" knowledge and "scientific" knowledge. Narrative knowledge is the sort of knowledge prominent in "primitive" or "traditional" societies, and on their cultural and traditional practices. Narrative knowledge has no resort to legitimation its legitimation is instantaneous inside the tale itself, in the "timelessness" of the narrative as an eternal tradition it is repeated by individuals who once heard it to listeners who will one day tell it too. Nevertheless, when it comes to scientific knowledge, we always ask legitimation and legitimate. Lyotard thinks that scientific knowledge only has factual statements, and does not include any stories or other types of narrative knowledge. As Lyotard holds that narrative of science believes that only approved knowledge is valid and acceptable so that Knowledge at all. Scientists use certain rules to justify their research, like doing the same experiment several times. In contrast to narrative knowledge, scientific knowledge has no option it needs legitimation, but according to scientific criteria narrative knowledge is not knowledge at all. He also claims that scientific knowledge is superior to narrative knowledge (Lyotard, 1984: 7). Is it possible to Prioritize or

rank scientific knowledge over narrative knowledge or narrative knowledge over scientific knowledge?

My point of view is that neither narrative knowledge nor scientific information is superior or worse than from the others. I claim that both scientific knowledge and narrative knowledge are essential through our life in order to have valuable answer the question those we have. It is true that, there are questions or narrative knowledge cannot provide valuable answer, at the same time there are some questions that can only be answered with the help of narrative knowledge. Therefore, I argue that it is not appropriate to prioritize scientific knowledge over narrative knowledge and vice versa.

Hence, post-modern condition seems to smash this pillar principle of thought, "All humans by nature desire to know," because as the legitimating crisis appears, things fail under the interpretation, the way individuals understand it, since the pillar standards have less impact. In postmodern conditions, the thought that knowledge leads to emancipation means that classical knowledge is push in the box of uselessness.

Therefore, Lyotard's critique of science is aimed at its grand narratives, which he sees as repressive of other kinds of knowledge. Nonetheless, one may argue that science is capable of recognizing its limitations and tolerating alternative viewpoints. It is possible to accept science's weaknesses and limits while still appreciating its potential for growth and advancement. Criticizing science does not imply completely dismissing. Knowledge is composing not just of large myths but also of modest and gradual discoveries. Ignoring science completely means missing out this never-ending stream of discovery. Rejecting science and knowledge may breed anti-intellectualism and pessimism, denying society the benefits of education, creativity, and development.

## **Chapter Four**

### **4. Habermas' Theory of Communicative Paradigm and Postmodernism Examined**

In the previous three chapters, we examined how the epistemological thought has been changed throughout the history of philosophy when it comes to thinking about the ideas of knowledge, truth, and reason. Different philosophers and scholars have attempted to construct various notions and thoughts that depend on abstract worlds or realms outside of our senses in order to attempt to answer or find a solid response to epistemological questions. They use the subject/consciousness to address the epistemological question. Other scholars, on the other hand, reject the universality of knowledge, reason, and reality. On the contrary, language and everyday communication, as well as reason, are used to find answers to basic and fundamental questions.

In the first chapter, I addressed the nature of classical epistemological thought, such as Plato's, and the philosophy of the subject or consciousness, which includes Descartes and Kant. Plato's epistemological thinking relies on transcendental reality. He contends that truth and knowledge derive from the world of form, and additionally, he contends that knowledge is attainable and must be infallible. Descartes believed that all knowledge must be built on a solid foundation of undeniable truths. He claims that there is a subject called 'I' who is aware of his own existence as well as the physical universe. As a result, he views reality as two distinct entities: the mind and body are distinct substances; the body exists independently of the mind; and the mind is rational. Following this, Kantian transcendental idealism was considered, argues that there is an epistemological assumption that reality is beyond the limit of reason, reason can only be a perfect tool for attaining the phenomenal world, and we must appeal to practical faith in order to grasp the nominal world. Kant argues in his critique of pure reason that space and time are merely formal characteristics of how we see objects, not realities that exist independently of ourselves. Objects in space and time are considered "appearances," and he claims that we know nothing about these things.

Following that, criticizing platonic transcendent reality, Cartesian foundationalism, subject-centered philosophy, or the philosophy of consciousness/subject Habermas turned into language or linguistic turn. Operating in the linguistic turn in philosophy, Habermas develops what is known as the theory of communicative rationality, to which I devoted the second chapter. As a result, Habermas contends that the new theory of knowledge and truth must go beyond the dichotomy of subject and object; it must go beyond foundationalism and the philosophy of origin. As a result, in the second chapter, we looked at Habermas' alternative foundation of truth and knowing, the theory of communicative rationality. Habermas contends that truth and knowledge require a new foundation, and hence he offers the linguistic foundation of truth. He contends that truth is an attribute of language and that truth is a concept that is only produced, rebutted, affirmed, and valued through everyday discourse and language.

On the contrary, with the emergence of postmodernism, assumptions about truth and knowledge changed. The objective nature of reality, truth, and reason is criticized by postmodern thinkers. Therefore, this is the third chapter; I tried to look at Lyotard's assumption of the postmodern situation. Lyotard, as a postmodernist, believes that traditional metaphysical thought and

classical epistemological thinking are in states of crisis and that truth must be abandoned; hence, postmodernism represents the denial of classical conception of truth and rationality. He defines postmodern as "incredulity towards metanarratives". According to Lyotard, the project of modernity is to introduce grand narratives. Individuals are relied on grand narratives to understand the nature of the world, reality, and human value. So, he abandoned the grand narratives and replaced them with mini narratives, and mini narratives serves as the foundation of truth and reality.

Thus, Lyotard claims that the modernity project and the philosophy that underpins it are fundamentally flawed and should be abandoned, whereas Habermas contends that modernity has not failed but is simply unfinished, and its emancipatory promise can yet be achieved. Both Habermas and Lyotard are similar in that they both agree that all foundationalist philosophy based on apparently irrefutable, absolute, universal, transcendent, or timeless metaphysical or epistemological principles has lost its credibility. Both Lyotard and Habermas rejection of classical foundationalism is justified because classical foundationalism is inherently flawed.

As a result, this chapter has two important sections. In the first section, Habermas' communicative paradigm will be examined. In this chapter, I will carry out my argument under the guidance of the following question: since one important contribution made by Habermas is the concept of validity claims. As he states, communication between a speaker and a listener is constituted by the existence of three universal validity claims. So, here the questions is; universal validity claims are really universal and objective at all? Or does Habermas' communicative paradigm go beyond relativism/objectivism dichotomy? Abandoning the classical conception of truth, foundationalism, and transcendental realm, Habermas comes up with a new foundation of truth which is known as communicative rationality. So, does communicative rationality succeed as an alternative theory of knowledge and truth? Moreover, if truth is not understood as something transcendent, language and culture doesn't it leads them into relative account. Is really truth can define through rational consensuses? As Habermas stated that, as long as there is language and discourse, truth can be achieved through contesting, debating and arguing; if so, is it possible to communicate every human aspect and dimension through language? Having different ideal consensus doesn't it creates different assumption or understanding of truth among the individuals? Or doesn't it become problematic whether truth is the question of rational

consensus? So, the answer is yes according to Habermas, Habermas stated, as long as there is language and discourse, truth can be achieved through arguing; if so, is it possible to communicate every aspect of a human being and everything using language?

In the second section, postmodernism and Lyotard's postmodernism assumption will be examined. I will address the following questions in order to reach my argument: As Lyotard abandoned reason and emancipation, and as he opposed universal truth and knowledge, is it possible to reject reason as a whole? In doing so, Lyotard is highly critical of grand narratives; he abandoned grand narratives, which give a totalized picture about the nature of the world and truth, and replaced them with mini narratives. So, can we totally abandon the grand narrative? Do mininarratives succeed as an alternative foundation for truth? Are mininarratives really overcomes crisis and societal problems? Having different conceptions and understandings of truth that are constructed within different groups of people doesn't cause chaos among individuals?

Therefore, Habermas and Lyotard have carried out their alternative foundation of truth by criticizing the classical conception of truth and the modernist assumption of epistemological thinking, criticizing the transcendental and universal view of truth and knowledge. Then they came up with a new foundation, which is relative, temporary, subjective, and fallible. Therefore, the main contention of this thesis is that neither Lyotard's mininarratives nor Habermas' communicative paradigm can fully succeed and serve as an alternative foundation for truth.

#### **4.1. Examining Habermas' Communicative Rationality**

Habermas' theory of Communicative action had a significant impact on the mid-twentieth century; he contributed to the advancement of western philosophy. He tries to solve many of the problems, though from a different angle. These include the question of reason, the relationship and boundaries between the public and private spheres, and the evaluation of various techniques for bringing about social change.

I admire Habermas' communicative paradigm because, rather than abandoning reason, modernity, truth, and knowledge, he created new foundations and advanced modern Western philosophy's linguistic turn. Western philosophy places a greater emphasis on studying language,

taking a 'linguistic turn' through the properties of language, such as essence, structure, and function, to investigate the human experience and a new understanding of one's interaction with the world. He viewed language as a prerequisite for realizing oneself and mutual understanding, and he advocated for acceptable human communication. Furthermore, he provides a novel theoretical perspective on human alienation. It is crucial to give Habermas credit for his communicative paradigm, according to which intersubjective agreements are necessary for any claim to be true about universal facts and standards. These universal validity claims go beyond the claims of a rational subject's validity, yet they were not previously considered in conventional epistemological thought.

According to my viewpoint, Habermas' communicative paradigm is significant because, in the new paradigm, an individual subject is not required to be rational to doubt and question their surroundings, themselves, others, and all of humanity in order to know reality, truth, and any other valid principles. Again, there is no requirement for a priori preconditions of cognition universally justify potential truth across subjects. Contrarily, with in Habermas' communicative paradigm, people are free from these sorts of obligations it is through intersubjective communication that truth, reality, and other standards are formed by rational speech act.

In addition, Habermas' communicative rationality emphasizes, valuing people's subjectivity and the right to human discourse. He believed that a man's use of language to communicate would eventually replace material exchange, and that the solution might be attained by mutual understanding and mutual negotiation of social standards. Habermas' theory can provide new aspect and answer to the phenomenon of human alienation.

Furthermore, Habermas' communicative paradigm offers an opportunity to comprehend many of the other's reality, concepts, civilizations, and dimensions. In my opinion, Habermas' communicative paradigm creates a space for understanding other people, particularly African philosophy, their culture, traditions, and worldviews. As well as I believe that, we can use Habermas' communicative paradigm in order to deconstruct the identity that which is impose on Africa by European intellectuals. European intellectuals have long held the belief that Africans have a primitive mind; they lack history, civilization, reason, etc. Because communicative action is taken place by having shared meaning, language, cultural background, assumption and beliefs system. So, anytime individuals' belief to participate in communicative space or discussion their

must be common ground between the two peoples. So, it's open opportunity for the western to understand the non-westerns culture, civilization, history and dimensions; and used to remove the blind thinking. Moreover, Habermas' theory of communicative action, which is used towards achieving mutual understanding and connects to the objective, social, and subjective worlds simultaneously, plays a crucial role. So, in order to fully understand the African community, philosophy, way of life, and culture, a person must engage in the other culture, negotiate the definition of the issue, engage in debate and cooperative integration of the event and goal, as well as reveal their own personal desires, feelings, and experiences.

Thus, the cooperative nature of argumentation and the coordination of various plans of action are indicators of the effectiveness of Habermas' communicative paradigm. Therefore, the communicative paradigm offers theoretical tools for investigating and seeing others critically. Relations between cultures are strengthened through communication and engagement. Additionally, it helps in understanding people, civilizations, and connections with coworkers and family. Additionally, it helps to strengthen the assimilation of others with similar goals. It shapes the communication of social awareness in the cultural sphere and supports all components of the lifeworld in social production.

From the aforementioned standpoint, I may generally draw the conclusion that Habermas' communicative paradigm has significant aspects. However, it also has some shortcomings. I argue that Habermas' communicative paradigm does not fully succeed and fails as an alternative foundation of truth and knowledge because it is instrumental, relative (even the idea that universal validity claims are not universal at all), Eurocentric, and idealist/utopian.

#### **4.1.1. Communicative Paradigm as just an Ideal/Utopian**

In *The Ethic of Care for the Self as a Practice of Freedom* by Foucault in 1988, *Habermas, and the Public Sphere* by Calhoun in 1992, both authors criticized Habermas' communicative paradigm for being utopian and idealistic.

According to Habermas' communicative paradigm theory, wherever communication occurs using language as a medium, everyone in the environment has equal access to freedom and opportunity. This setting is the "lifeworld" (1984:119). Lifeworld is the world where individuals

can only communicate logically, communication is focused on agreement, and individuals are actively involved in it. However, lifeworld is an ideal or utopian world. Because, Habermas distinguished the world from the material realm or entities, and individuals have only the spirit of communication. As a result, an idealized state possesses the characteristics of a "utopia" and cannot exist in the real world. The reason is that, humans cannot be truly detached from the material world because they are egotistical and materialistic by nature. Without the support of the material world, it is difficult for humans to flourish and live. Humans will not be able to communicate in their pure spirits as long as there are personal, material and economic interests. As a result, the life world that Habermas created is only an ideal situation. This is the first justification.

The second objection is that Habermas' communicative paradigm is unrealistic, unsuitable, and inapplicable everywhere. Since, there are several distinct types of communities which exist around the world. Therefore, communication will not be successful if a person is unable to interact in a communicative setting logically. Since only those who can communicate logically are required under his communicative paradigm. Additionally, in order to communicate, we must have some understanding of the subject, be able to support one viewpoint with arguments, be able to defend the other position with the support of reason, and be capable of critical thought. As a result, such people cannot be found everywhere in the world. Therefore, Habermas' communication paradigm is just an ideal and utopian.

Therefore, I contend that in order to completely use or implement Habermas' communicative paradigm, there must be Habermasian societies, or we must have Habermasian societies. This means that it is necessary to guarantee equal opportunity for everyone, and that all members of society must have equal status in terms of their gender, ethnicity, economic standing, power, and educational attainment.

#### **4.1.2. Communicative Paradigm as Relative**

Relativism opposes any claim of universal or objective reality, whereas fallibility recognizes the universal with a condition that may fail in the future. According to Habermas, the objective world, rather than an ideal consensus, is the truth maker, which means that if a statement is true because it is accurate, it relates to an existing object using a communication paradigm. If this is

the case, and truth is not understood as something transcendent but rather as language and culture, it leads to a relative viewpoint. I argue that various ideals of consensus and agreement among individuals in different places will result in different assumptions and understandings of truth.

As Badillo (1991) claims that Habermas' communicative rationality is one that goes behind the objectivist/relativist dichotomy. However, according to my point of view, Habermas' communicative paradigm is trapped in a relative position. What makes Habermas' communicative paradigm universal is that whenever we try to communicate with one another in our daily lives, we use reason and language. Reason makes his paradigm universal; unfortunately, we use language to forward our reason and try to communicate rationally, but I think with language there is culture, tradition, and custom. The way we use and understand different concepts and ideas is limited and shaped by our culture, custom and tradition.

Habermas claims that the kind of rationality he identifies and tries to develop in modern societies is postmetaphysical in that it is situated in daily uses of language having both particular and universalistic dimensions. I argue that Habermas did not escape the relative stance since he favors the communicative paradigm. Because when we examine Habermas' view of the ideal speech situation is one technique to demonstrate that communicative action is not a universal phenomenon. According to Habermas, communication takes place when people engage in mutual understanding under the presumption of sincerity and universality. The participants in this ideal conversation scenario must have a shared common language, cultural background, and set of presumptions. This means that communication is constrained by the social and cultural setting in which it occurs and may not always be applicable in all situations. The other is that Habermas assumes that his communicative paradigm is universal, but he fails to account for the existence of cultural differences. Because different cultures have different norms, cultural practices, and ways of communicating, so, ignoring the existence of the difference may lead to miscommunication and misunderstandings.

Habermas' approach includes three validity claims that are universal in communication and acknowledged as universal: the claims of truth, rightness, and truthfulness. In this regard, one of the smallest elements of Habermas' communicative action is the speech act; his speech act requires two or more participants, and he contends that any genuine speech act makes three

separate validity claims. However, I contend that these widely and universally accepted universal claims are not universal at all because they are universally accepted in a specific domain, context, place, time, and community. Take, for example, the validity claim of rightness: suppose there are two participants, A and B. Person A makes the claim of rightness that "abortion is good." Person B can refute the notion that "abortion is good" by arguing that "no, it is wrong." As a result, this speech act is a refusal of the request. Abortion, according to B, involves killing a person; on the other hand, abortion, according to A, is a beneficial act because it relieves women of unnecessary obligations. Because of their cultural and religious heritage, A denied the request. According to B, abortion is an act of killing an innocent human being; accepting the request would be a sin. As a result, I contend that Habermas' assertions of universal validity are not universal at all because the claim of rightness is ambiguous and stays relative.

Furthermore, because validity claims are made whenever a speaker and a listener communicate, they raise certain issues, debates, and questions. As a result, I argue that Habermas' validity claims only apply and work to those who raise the issue or idea and agree on it, and they do not work to those who do not present the issue or idea and who communicatively agree. Take, for instance, the following situation: A (the speaker) asks B (the hearer) to switch off the light in a room. In this case, the speaker already knows what a light is, its purpose, and whether it is on/off. However, the listener does not know. In the first place, the concept of light is true for the speaker who raised the issue. In this regard, the speaker expects the hearer to understand what he is saying in order to reach mutual understanding.

#### **4.1.3. Communicative Paradigm as Eurocentric**

According to Gunaratne, A. (2006), Habermas' Communicative Rationality is Eurocentric. Habermas views human culture, history, civilization, and modernism only from a western perspective. Habermas does not take into account that there are different societies across the world because certain countries and societies suffer from different weaknesses.

Therefore, I also argue that one of the main problems of Habermas communicative paradigm is eurocentrism since Habermas put different societies on a linear historical trajectory. He believes that the western way of life is the only possible way to live. The first justification is that Western Europe, to use an example, has advanced in science and technology more than other nations. In

this situation, the western culture has the ability to engage in open, logical discourse; they can express their opinions and counter those of others; they can reach agreements and comprehend one another. On the other hand, many non-Westerners lack access and to engage in private, rational communication. Habermas consequently overlooked the existence of these communities. Although what makes Habermas' communicative rationality Eurocentric is connected to the assumption that his alternative theory of rationality is established through especially European life experience, custom, or practice, in what logical sense is his theory of rationality, which is based on western practices, supposed to work and solve social problems that occur within non-western societies? The assumption of rationality, which is rooted in western culture and practice, is neither harmful nor improper, but making it applicable to all societies, irrespective of other people's identities and cultures, does not make it acceptable to all societies.

Additionally, Habermas seeks to comprehend the history and development of humanity from the perspective of western societies. He asserts, for instance, that discussion, dialogue, and consent can all lead to the discovery of truth wherever language and speech exist. The issue is that some societies and communities do not have language and do not interact with one another in that way. If this is the case, does that mean there is no truth to those individuals if we say they have no language and cannot come to mutual consent and agreement? Habermas' communicative rationality does not fit ontologically, epistemologically, or historically with the reservoir of non-westerners.

#### **4.1.4. The Communicative Paradigm as Instrumental**

According to Habermas, a communicative paradigm is a social activity whose goal is the development of communicative action directed towards mutual understanding. Communicative action based on deliberation, in which two or more individuals engage and coordinate their actions based on an agreed-upon understanding of the circumstances. Communicative action differs from other actions, such as instrumental action; communicative action aim reaching mutual agreement, common understanding and consensus. While, instrumental action is goal-oriented and focused on success. Moreover, in order to reach mutual agreement and understanding, there must be a content that needs to be understood and agreed upon. As Habermas stated, the validity claims of truth, rightness, and truthfulness are the content we need to understand. Whenever we use language in order to interact with one another, this validity

claim is being forwarded, and according to Habermas, this validity claim is only made for the purpose of agreement and understanding in communicative action. However, I claim that Habermas' communicative action is also goal-oriented, instrumental, in addition to being understanding- and consensus-oriented. My point of view is that one does not necessarily communicate with another person for the sake of the other person. Rather, maybe one basically communicates with the other when the communication is critical for him or her, and when he or she finds out that coming to a common understanding, consensus, or agreement is critical, they wish to have success. Therefore, whenever two people need to comprehend something or come to an understanding, we need to look at their intents, their justifications, and the entire conversation, and we need to look at the reasons why they need to understand one another. Therefore, there is a purpose, a goal, and an understanding behind every conversation. There is a reason why they must come to an understanding, if we can see it.

To conclude, Habermas' communicative paradigm fails as an alternative foundation of truth because the negative impact has more weight than the positive one. It has an undeniable shortcoming. So, as Habermas stated, as long as there is language, discourse truth can be achieved through arguing. In this case, the claim that truth depends on the statement, language, or argumentation of unlimited communication leads us into problems. Moreover, according to my perspective, it is not possible to express every aspect and diminutions of human life using language. Because, language has limitations. It is not possible to reach agreement and consensus on every dimension of human life and everything using language because language cannot fully express every human thought. Therefore, I contended that Habermas exaggerated the role of language in the ideal discourse environment. According to him, as long as there are discourses and language, it can give all social humans the freedom and equality to communicate with one another and reach mutual understanding. It can also get rid of all disruptive elements, as well as miscommunications and conflicts. However, Habermas disregarded the fact that in the actual world, communication between individuals requires more than just verbal exchanges and must also include other forms of communication.

#### **4.2. Postmodernism Examined**

Postmodernism's rejection of enduring concepts like reality, truth, value, and knowledge is one of its primary defining traits. Pluralism, inclusivity, and diversity have received more attention in

this situation because of postmodernism. The other is then more able to accept and comprehend the other's different histories, attitudes, and presumptions about reality, beliefs, and lifestyles. The advent of postmodernism has also provided the voiceless with a platform, enabling them to hear and accept new and insightful viewpoints. Perhaps the most beneficial contribution of postmodernism is, first, that it has challenged the dominant worldview of the modern era, which was mostly founded on naturalistic humanism. Modernism distinguished between matters of "faith" and matters of objective knowledge about the real world in its quest to arrive at absolute knowledge through scientific research. Even though postmodernism, in my opinion, has some advantages, it also has some drawbacks. Let us examine a few of them: postmodernism and post-truth, postmodernism and its effect in contemporary societies.

#### **4.2.1. Postmodernism and Post-Truth**

As the Word of the Year in 2016, the Oxford Dictionary indicated "post-truth" and characterized it as a word referring to or designating situations in which appeals to emotion and personal conviction have more power to influence public opinion than do objective facts. Personal views and emotive appeals to emotion are more successful at influencing public opinion than objective information in a post-truth world. In a post-truth environment, personal beliefs and emotional appeals to emotion are more effective at altering public opinion than objective facts. Which facts are being replaced by alternative facts, feeling overriding logic, and constructed truth taking the place of objective truth (Oxford Dictionary selected, 2016).

Ultimately, when Lyotard conceives postmodernism as "incredulity towards meta narratives," Postmodernism is characterized as a shift from modernity to postmodernism, from universality to particularity, from pure rationality to winning argumentation, from truth to post-truth, from reality to interpretation, from reason to passion and emotion, from one center to multiple centers, and generally as a condition in which we no longer need to refer to a single universal center (Lyotard, 1984).

Thus, postmodern situation caused a post-truth situation. Since postmodernists did not believe in objective truth, the consequence was that we had to turn to our own emotions and subjectivity. According to my perspective, postmodernism had to pay its dues for the post-truth situation. If the attitude of modernism towards absolute truth and rationality was one of the primary issues

for postmodernists, then the fact that the idea of post-truth is intimately related to it should not come as a surprise. In reality, as previously established, post-truth is a condition in which truth loses its value, a state in which facts no longer matter and the only thing that matters is the capacity to manipulate and take advantage of the emotions that are present in the angry masses. From their perspective, neither the majority nor everyone else are genuinely looking for the truth. Therefore, postmodernism is often called upon to explain the phenomenon of post-truth, which suggests that individual belief or opinion has superseded rational, objective fact. Postmodern thought is often too content to simply reject modernism's certainties, privileging instead its own forms of relativism, which can become dogma and feed into the post-truth era. Postmodernism may have played its part, but there are other factors contributing to the emergence of a post-truth situation that are not fully to blame for it.

#### **4.2.2. The Effect of Postmodernism in Contemporary Societies**

Postmodernism denies "grand narratives," or universalizing ideas, as well as other authoritarian ideologies. A grand narrative, also known as a metanarrative, is a story that makes the claim that it can explain numerous historical occurrences and connect disparate events and phenomena by making use of a common understanding or schema. As a result, post-modernism may promote pessimism and a lack of hope, which are detrimental to both people and societies. Since the individual has the power to decide what is right and wrong, postmodernism promotes permissiveness. In the postmodern age, individuals would be affected by a permissive attitude.

The definitions of what it means to be a human, a man, and a woman will now be redefined or eliminated, and we are free to define those terms as we choose. This is the entire conclusion of the process. This is a great illustration of how postmodernism has influenced our culture and changed the way we see really significant issues. What we are actually witnessing in this type of climax of the sexual revolution, the walk towards transgenderism, and other things like that are postmodern values developed in our culture. In addition, postmodernism relativizes reality and truth. It states that because there is no objective reality or truth, what is true to one person may not be true to another. It makes it difficult to accept cultural norms that have been valued for centuries since it denies the existence of objective truth. Additionally, it casts doubt on societal norms, laws, and regulations, which has a negative effect on society.

The rejection of absolute and objective truths, facts, moral values, and conscience is the postmodernist perspective's flaw and dilemma. The idea of morality has actually become absurd and meaningless because of this. Despite the fact that, certain values are widely regarded as desirable and others as negative. For instance, establishing peace, avoiding harming others, fairness, and truthfulness are all regarded as positive values on a worldwide scale. Every culture shares a set of moral principles, such as those of friendship, bravery, and courage. These shared values are widely held because they are essential to the growth and well-being of a society. A society may be threatened and endangered from within if certain ideals are missing.

Consideration of moral principles as subjective without regard to any objective standard is another component of moral relativism. This will also lead to chaos since everyone will be allowed to maintain his or her own unique opinions on all issues. On the other side, postmodernists undermine religious institutions and undermine our sense of morality, which causes moral confusion in society. Postmodernists want to give people permission to pursue their own wishes by abolishing moral standards and religious commandments. Thus, by attacking the intellectual framework and objectivity of religion, they demolish and dismantle the value system it offers.

### **4.3. Critique to Lyotard's Postmodern Assumptions**

The absolutistic, universalistic, and transcendental concepts of classical conceptions of truth and knowledge are criticized by Lyotard's postmodern movement. In this instance, two things should be taken into consideration. The first is Lyotard's pillar of postmodern argument, which holds that since we live in a postmodern era, we no longer believe in grand narratives or absolute meaning but instead in a meaning trapped in randomness, alienating both traditional and contemporary intellectuals. The second point relates to the approach taken by classical and contemporary philosophers to arrive at what they referred to as the universality and objectivity of reason, or rationality. In contrast to the first, in contemporary times they adopted the technologies that science offered. They believe that reason is what makes for a happy existence.

The Enlightenment promised that scientific knowledge is something that liberates people from chaos and allows them to live a simple, prosperous, and good life, and rationality was promised to be a stage that connects human beings with eternity, truth, reality, and clear and distinct ideas to fully comprehend humanity. However, postmodernists contended that World War II, which resulted in numerous deaths, displaced populations, and psychological traumatization, was a tool that made use of both tools derived from rational human beings, including scientific knowledge.

There are various objections to Lyotard's postmodern premise in this area. For instance, some claim that Lyotard's ideas contradict themselves since the postmodern condition appears to have its own grand narrative in the metanarrative of demise. Metanarratives can be thought of as worldviews in a certain sense. If this is the case, postmodernism is a worldview. Again, we run into the same issue as before: postmodernism affirms what it denies (Callinicos, Alex, 1991).

W. Bertens and D. Fokkema (1997: 94) stated that Lyotard was incorrect in assuming that science relies on a grand narrative for social and epistemological validation rather than the accumulation of many smaller narrative achievements. Science was one of Lyotard's targets.

Postmodernists frequently draw attention to a problem without offering a solution to it. Many individuals think postmodernism is only a theory, not an established reality. According to Spiro, the postmodernist critique of the scientific method is in no way persuasive. Spiro rejects the postmodernist claim that humanities-related fields cannot be referred to as "scientific" Finding the truth is hampered by subjectivity. Spiro added that while the social sciences require different methods than the natural sciences, this does not negate the need for an objective scientific approach (Spiro, 1996, P: 570–80).

Therefore, I will critically examine Lyotard's postmodernism in this section, including the rejection of grand narrative, the abandonment of reason, and his conception of truth and mini narratives. I will present my case here using the following premise: This mini-narrative, in Lyotard's view, provides an alternative basis for knowledge, morality, and reality. If so, can this little narrative succeed as an alternative foundation for truth?

### **4.3.1. Lyotard's and the Crises of Reason**

Lyotard is well known for his works on postmodernism; he might be characterized as an extreme postmodernist who rejects knowledge, universal truth, and reason. The powers of reason are regularly called into doubt in Lyotard's philosophy, which contradicts many of the assertions made about them throughout philosophy's history. For Lyotard, the issues with representation make the limits of reason more clear. Since Descartes, the idea that the human subject represents the external world to itself has been the predominant paradigm of rational thought in Western philosophy. It is sometimes asserted that in this fashion, comprehensive and definite knowledge is theoretically conceivable. Through his contention that events transcend representation, Lyotard casts doubt on such assertions.

Thus, when Lyotard characterizes postmodernism as "incredulity towards metanarratives," he suggests a suspicion and critique of the very notion of an autonomous reason—a universal rationality without commitments. This is how Lyotard's "incredulity towards metanarratives" description of postmodern criticism replaces the idea of autonomous reason as a myth. The postmodernists' attempt cannot thus succeed if there is no reason. They support their viewpoints with arguments that are grounded in reason. This is a contradiction. One of the most challenging aspects of his philosophical thinking for me is that, rather than seeking new ideas, he just abandons reason as a social construct and science as a legitimate source of knowledge. As a result, totalizing criticism of knowledge and reason cannot be the remedy for modern society.

I argue that it is difficult to ignore the importance of reason in human affairs. Can we imagine a society without reason? What sort of societies can we have? Obviously, reason is what sets humans apart from other animals as a species. Therefore, he or she reasoned, it must be this capacity that is the primary tool that helps us to distinguish between what is "good" for humans and what constitutes a "good life." The modernists have taken reason to extremes, but the denial of reason is absurd. Humans need reason to perform anything from simple, fundamental tasks to complex computations, logical analysis, and scientific and technical research. It is up to us to establish the true essence of reason, which is inclusive and helps to resolve the challenges we are facing in the social, cultural, scientific, and political issues of our societies. Reason may be emancipatory at times and oppressive at others. Thus, just because reason is in crisis does not mean we have to abandon the entire mission that reason can solve.

### **4.3.2. Critique to Lyotard's Rejection of Metanarratives**

Let us first identify the basic elements of a metanarrative as Lyotard understood them in order to evaluate postmodern discourse with respect to them in the best possible way. A metanarrative or grand narrative often includes thoughts and actions intended to describe historical processes and present what is considered an absolute reality. The narrative in this situation is a story that serves to justify societal norms, power, and authority. A grand narrative that makes the claim can explain numerous historical occurrences and connect different events and phenomena by making use of a common understanding or schema. Grand narratives refer to a broad spectrum of ideas, such as Marxism, religious ideologies, the idea of progress, universal reason, and others.

Can we completely or totally reject metanarratives? That crucial question remains. Therefore, I argue that Lyotard and other postmodernists have issues because they are suspicious of grand narratives. I contend that we do not have to reject all grand narratives out of skepticism since some of them do hold promise for the future of human life. This is one of the main justifications for why individuals adhere to faiths that hold ideas about the afterlife. In addition to rejecting metanarratives, one must also reject transcendent meaning and hope. We need grand stories that present a comprehensive view of reality, truth, knowledge, and morality since we are human beings and creatures. Postmodernism thus has an impact on all of our core values and beliefs.

For instance, history creates narratives about the past; psychology offers stories about the self; or sociology illustrates various social formations and the impact they have on people. In a similar manner, narratives that express the physical world are used to communicate scientific statements. Even mathematical experts are compelled to transform their equations into narratives that explain the effects of their results in order to defend and explain their discoveries. In this sense, narrative serves as the foundation for human experience and society since it reflects who we are and gives expression to our beliefs and aspirations. Of course, the various narrative forms utilized in various discourses adhere to various norms. Whether it be physics, chemistry, literature, laws, conventions, or even conversations, each discourse that makes up a society's body of knowledge has its own set of standards for what constitutes true assertions.

Therefore, according to my point of view, postmodernism, which rejects metanarratives, universal truths, and moral law, merits criticism. Postmodernists reject any narrative that

attempts to capture the full scope of reality and the truth. Lyotard proposes mini-narratives, sometimes known as "petit-narratives," as a means of rescuing civilizations from their legitimation issue. These are the narratives of certain civilizations that define reality for them without implying that they represent other cultures or the entire globe.

### **4.3.3. Examining Mini Narratives as an Alternative Foundation of Truth**

Lyotard no longer uses grand narratives because they produce "legitimation crises," as he refers to the issues they bring to societies. Therefore, Lyotard developed "mini narratives" or "little narratives" to help him get through the crisis. Grand narratives insist on totalizing and universalistic explanations of discourse that are quite disconnected from people's reality, and which causes distraction for humanity. It is true that not all grand narratives have an effect on people and cause distractions, but some of them do. Nevertheless, there are certain valuable narratives that may be used to understand various ideas, such as the idea of God and the existence of the cosmos. However, Lyotard claims that mini narratives are a new conception and understanding of truth, reality, knowledge, and moral value. It seems to imply that little narratives are what save societies from a legitimation crisis brought on by the rejection of grand narratives. This results in the replacement of grand narratives with mini narratives, of universal conception with relative conception, and of general explanation with specialized explanation. Therefore, in Lyotard's view, mininarratives serve as the basis for truth, reality, knowledge, and moral principles.

Initially, do Lyotard's mininarratives succeed? In addition, does it really serve as an alternative foundation for truth? According to Lyotard's understanding of truth, which is fallible and multi-layered, if everyone has created their own version of truth and if truth is socially constructed, is it really possible to refer to such kinds of conceptions of truth as true? Does it really overcome societal problems? Because Lyotard develop mini narratives to overcome the crisis. In contrast to grand narrative, mini narratives are contextual, subjective, particular, and interpretive. As a result, different individuals and group of peoples have their own conception of truth, moral value and system. Postmodernist belief in relative attitude it results self-destructing in many ways. In the postmodern world, people have lost their places and value. They are unable to locate any framework or principle in order to comprehending the universe or themselves. They Feels

insecure about their life, and they start to question about the meaning and purpose of life. Rejection of truth, invites a free flow of power and the absence of clear truths they feel fear and they never know when to claim justice and rights. Therefore, mini narrative fosters a sense of meaninglessness or purposelessness. The absence of universal principle or metanarrative or having relative moral value and truth will also result interest of conflict, among individuals it also results state of anarchy because everyone is free to keep their own individual interest and opinion. Furthermore, individualism is closely related with postmodernism, it also results or individual will be racist, nationalist, and religious fanatics.

Therefore, I argue that Lyotard's mini narrative does not succeed and serves as an alternative foundation of truth since it does not really overcome the crisis and societal problems. Instated, it leads the societies into a state of meaninglessness and hopelessness, and his relative conception of truth leads the societies into a state of nihilism. I claim that, still, societies are in a state of chaos and unstable life, and they are living meaningless lives because the rejection of grand narrative and because of the different conceptions of truth that are constructed by groups of individuals and different moral assumptions within different cultures. As a result, societies are unable to distinguish right from wrong, good from bad, true from false.

#### **4.3.4. Lyotard's Truth and Nihilism**

Lyotard's rejection of universality also raises the question of how to assess knowledge claims or conduct scientific inquiry if there is no criterion for truth and objectivity beyond the various local narratives or language games in which knowledge claims are made. Lyotard's emphasis on the plurality of narratives may lead to moral relativism and the inability to make moral judgments that transcend local contexts. If no universal norms or standards exist, then it becomes difficult to determine the right or wrong actions or behaviors in a given context. Moreover, his emphasis on local and temporary narratives can lead to moral relativism and the inability to make moral judgments.

Relativism is a key aspect of postmodernism, there is no absolute truth or reality that applies to everyone, according to the theory and set of ideas known as relativism. Each person's perception of the truth is distinctive and varies. As we previously mentioned, Lyotard rejects social constructions of morality as well as objective, universal truth, reality, and knowledge. According

to my perspective, the most important weakness and problem with Lyotard's postmodernist perspective is the denial of absolute and objective truths, facts, moral values, and conscience. This has actually made the concepts of truth, reality, and morality absurd and meaningless. I argue that if there is an absence of at least a single universal truth that binds everyone all over the world and if there is no single universal moral value that helps us distinguish between right and wrong and good from bad, we cannot live a stable life, or our life would be meaningless.

Because he argues that there is no overarching metanarrative or great theory that can provide objective truth, Lyotard's presupposition of truth leads to nihilism. As human beings, we have various questions that we are waiting for an answer to; it can be a religious question about reality, the existence of the universe, or any other fundamental question. So, using science and technology or our intellectual reasoning, we still cannot find a valuable answer. In this case, narratives can provide answers to those questions. Therefore, totally rejecting grand narratives, it may encourage pessimism and a lack of hope. So, this leads us into nihilism. It is because Lyotard contends that no objective or universal claims to truth can be made. Since it fosters a sense of meaninglessness or purposelessness, this concept leads to nihilism. There can be no consistent system of values or ideas without a secure or dependable foundation for truth. This can lead to feelings of despair or pessimism since people may believe their lives have no ultimate purpose or direction. Furthermore, because there is no shared philosophy or belief system that may unite individuals, it might be impossible to form any type of cohesive community.

Ultimately, Lyotard's truth assumption leads to nihilism by undermining the foundations of meaning and value that individuals rely on to make sense of the world. Lyotard's denial of truth allows for the free flow of power and may inspire anxiety in people who may never know whether to assert their legal and constitutional rights. Because they lack a sense of respect in the absence of unambiguous truths, people are more inclined to become subjects of their master. In addition, it is impossible to construct any cohesive system of meaning or belief in the absence of objective truth. Hence, in order for people all over the globe to engage communally, come to a certain understanding, and solve globalized societal problems, I would suggest that there is a requirement for us as humans to have certain universal laws, such as certain universal moral standards, principles, and justice. People deal with their everyday social, economic, and political

concerns and come to certain agreements that are nearly understood and agreed upon because of a certain universal and common understanding.

Generally, Lyotard tries to create truth in a relative and fallible sense but not in a universal sense. Having fallible, temporal, relative, and subjective conceptions of truth will lead individuals and societies to states of meaningless and absurd life; so, they fail. My point of view is that there are certain universal truths and moral values that are undeniable. There are undoubtedly certain values that are generally regarded as good and others that are seen as evil, such as truth and moral values. For instance, establishing peace, refraining from injuring others, pursuing justice, and telling the truth are all seen as positive values. Every culture shares a set of moral principles, such as those of friendship, bravery, and courage. These shared values are widely held because they are essential to the growth and well-being of a society. Since they apply to everyone in the entire world and provide a general understanding of something, we cannot completely reject them, nor can we abandon them.

### **Conclusion**

There are so many ways of understanding the concepts of reality, truth, and knowledge. The philosophical position during the classical period, located in the abstract and transcendental realm, was the way of grasping reality, truth, and knowledge, and there were absolute and universal assumptions of truth and knowledge. On the other hand, there is the subject, individual, or thinking being who is the knower of the existence of himself, others, and even the environment. It is trapped within subject-object dualism, an inseparable relationship between subject and object. However, with the emergence of postmetaphysical and postmodern thinking, such kinds of assumptions and the classical and modernist conceptions of truth and knowledge

have now come under heavy criticism. Such a question of the subject is going to be abandoned altogether because both are operating in what is known as a linguistic and socio-historical turn in philosophy. They no longer assume that there is antagonism between subject and object; on the contrary, by appealing to the phenomenological tradition, both orientations are dealing with the idea of intersubjectivity.

Habermas was one of the philosophers who disregarded the classical epistemological assumption and the philosophy of consciousness/subject and said that there is still a way of rescuing the project of modernity, the idea of emancipation, free of individual exploitation. In return, Habermas came up with a new alternative foundation of truth, which has been neglected throughout epistemological tradition; he developed a communicative conception of rationality. The theory of communicative rationality claims that truth is a linguistically mediated concept that is affirmed and rebutted within the discourse of language.

Just like Habermas, Lyotard highly criticizes the classical conceptions of truth, knowledge, and rationality. According to Lyotard, the project of modernity or the ideas of modernity require the introduction of grand narratives. Thus, he claimed that we no longer believe in grand narratives, absolute meaning, universal reality, or truth. In return, he claims we need to situate ourselves in relative reality and truth, where grand narratives are replaced by mini-narratives. Therefore, according to Lyotard, mini narratives are the most effective means to produce knowledge, truth, reality, and moral value. Mini-narratives are typically not created to discover absolute truth, ultimate reality, a supersensible, transcendental reality, or an eternal entity, or to provide legitimacy on a global scale; rather, they are localized, brief narratives that are embedded in diversity and always provide localized legitimacy for the society that creates its narratives.

What makes Habermas and Lyotard similar is that both criticize the classical-modern conception of truth and the universalistic and absolutistic understanding of truth. Both tell us that the classical conception of truth and metaphysical thinking have scrambled and need to be abandoned altogether. In this thesis, I tried to examine Habermas' communicative paradigm and Lyotard's conception of mini narrative; through such analysis and critical examination, I argued that neither Lyotard's mini-narrative nor Habermas' communicative paradigm fully succeeds as an alternative theory for truth and knowledge. Both theories lead to nihilism.

In Habermas' communicative paradigm, truth is made through rational consensus. Nevertheless, there is no guarantee that the subjects of the intersubjective agreements will ever come to an understanding, so what if they did not reach a consensus and mutual understanding after having reengaged repeatedly? In this case, individuals will lose faith in the discussion, just as individuals drive towards nihilism.

In the case of Lyotard's mini narratives, because there can be no system of value or idea that provides a reliable foundation for truth and there is no shared philosophy or belief system that unites individuals, ultimately Lyotard's conception of mini narratives leads individuals to nihilism. In other words, the collapse of grand narratives can introduce some form of nihilism into the human condition. In our daily lives, we are searching for answers; for example, the question of our existence, the existence of the physical world, or the existence of the universe, question to various questions. In this regard, using our intellectual reasoning or science and technologies, we are unable to provide an answer to the question. Therefore, narratives provide a suitable response to those questions. I argue that rejecting grand narratives may encourage pessimism and a lack of hope; these attributes lead to nihilism.

Therefore, even if Habermas' communicative paradigm consists of strong features and it is true that our diverse world needs rational communication, individuals and countries need rational-oriented communication and understanding for a better future; however, I argue that we need to evaluate, improve, and revise the communicative paradigm that Habermas forwards. Moreover, we need to evaluate and improve Lyotard's postmodern assumption. Just because reason is in crisis, we should not be skeptical and abandon the entire mission of reason in human life, and we cannot totally deny all grand narratives because some significant grand narratives give transcendental hope and life to individuals.

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