Media and communication in critical theory

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Abstract

This article aims to shed light in general on the vision of the critical theory of the media, which came in the context of two basic trends: The first is the Frankfurt School trend. The proponents of this trend look at what the media presents with a view that links economic analysis with cultural and ideological analysis. Jurgen Habermas is the most famous contemporary researcher on this trend. The second is critical cultural studies, which sees that the media play a complex role rather than contributing to the formation of meanings or the technological transmission of culture. Stuart Hill is considered one of the most prominent thinkers in critical cultural studies.

Keywords: media, communication, critical theory.

* Introduction

The social sciences' intellectual heritage is full of attempts. Researchers in many fields have tried to define theory. Some define theory as "a set of linked structures (concepts), definitions, and assumptions. They give a systematic view of phenomena by showing relationships between variables. The goal is to explain and predict the phenomena" (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). They also say that theory has abstract or concrete concepts. These serve as representations or means to understand and deal with complex reality. Cohen (1968) defines it as: "These are general ideas. People made them for a purpose. Seleman Rejoice (2018) defines it as: "a conceptual explanation of a phenomenon." It is a narrative of why and how events occur." Obasi (2000) defines it as: "... It's a set of ideas or a fact (i.e., an experienced statement). It explains what a natural or social phenomenon is. It also explains the relationships between variables or

phenomena. The literature refers to three general types of theories. These are commonsense theories, or theories in use. Ideologies often shape these types. They come from family, friends, or colleagues. They are useful because they often underlie our decisions about how to communicate.

But, sometimes our common sense can backfire. The second type of theory people know as working theory. Some professions make these generalizations. They are about the best techniques for doing something. They are more systematic. Professionals have agreed ways of doing things. Scientists may base these theories on scientific theories. But they more represent guidelines for behavior. The third type is theory. Researchers have studied these theories. They give more complete, accurate, and abstract explanations than older theories. It is this last type that falls under the critical theory that is the focus of our interest in this article.

Critical theory has come a long way since the works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

But, Marxism remains its original source. Critical theory is often called (neo-Marxism). Marxism and the monetarists differ on two basic matters. The first is about the Marxist model (political economy). It says that the means of production shape society. So, the economy forms all social structure. Profit drives production in capitalism.

But, this process ends with the oppression of workers. Workers can only change production and achieve freedom by rebelling against the powerful. Marxism has a simple model.

But, most critical theories see social processes as hard to define. They see these processes as from many sources. They see social structure as a system. Many factors - the economy is one - interact and influence each other. Second, Marxism views communication as the result of tension. It is between individual creativity and social limits on it. Freedom will only come when people can and express themselves.

But, language also limits individual expression. The language of the dominant class is hard for workers to understand. It hides their conditions and the path to freedom. In other words, dominant language defines and perpetuates the oppression of marginalized groups. The critical theorist's task is to create new language. It enables them to expose the dominant ideology and to make the conflicting ones heard.

Despite this difference, interest in conflict, domination, and oppression is important. It remains so between the two visions.

* **The main ideas of the critical perspective**

Many critical social orientations exist. According to Littlejohn and Foss (2011), they all share three basic features. The reference is missing from the bibliography. The same authors are present, but the date in the bibliography is 2009.

1- The critical tradition seeks to understand the dominant systems, power structures, and beliefs. These beliefs are ideologies that dominate society. It focuses on what serves the interests of the power structures. This approach raises typical questions. This includes: who speaks and who does not speak, what they say and what they do not say, and who benefits from a system.

2- Critical theorists want to uncover oppressive social conditions. They seek liberation and understanding oppression. They see these as steps to dispelling illusions and overcoming oppressive forces.

3- Critical studies try to integrate theory and action. They work to change the conditions that affect society.

* **Critical perspective and media**

The critical tradition in media studies has been influenced by cybernetics. Many forces show hegemony, according to critical studies. No one force, like the media, makes all the power structures in society. Instead, many local institutions interact to make them. At the same time, critical theory rejects old order theory. Old order theory is "aim" and descriptive. It fails to identify the social realities created by systems. The Sociocultural Tradition has influenced critical approaches. It focuses on interpretation and social interaction. In these processes, different structures and meanings form. And The Semiotic Tradition. Finally, the semiotic tradition has influenced the critical tradition. Most critics reject early semiotic theories. But, they acknowledge that the freedom of symbols is powerful. It plays a key role in creating cultural forms, including oppressive ones. The critical tradition integrates the three parts of communication. This helps us understand the role of media in society. (Littlejohn and Foss, 2011). In general, the trend was critical. It clarified the role of the media and communication. They shape and strengthen culture in capitalist societies. It showed how the dominant class and stakeholders

control and direct the media. This ensures its continued influence and control. Curran (2002) says the key idea in studying communication is to oppose current media. This is because they serve a specific function.

A- Helping those in power impose their influence and dominance.

B- The media tends to promote unbalanced content. It favors the interests of the dominant class in society.

C- Focus on the importance of analyzing the symbolic meaning of media content. It promotes the interests of the capitalist-owning class among the exploited working class.

D- This trend has one goal. It's to show that media studies are false and unrealistic. American businessmen fund them.

The study of communication and media saw a critical perspective. This happened in the context of two basic trends. They have much in common. Both worked within a new Marxist model of society. Both see a link, weak or strong, between economic interests and ideologies. Both portray the media as serving dominant groups. These are two trends: the Frankfurt School trend and the cultural studies trend. We will discuss them below.

* First: the Frankfurt School trend.

They were Marxist thinkers. They believed that corporate-owned media oppressed the working class. Frankfurt School theorists called them. They are responsible for the name "critical theory," which is still used as a synonym for it. This trend is due to a group of philosophers. They were German sociologists and economists. In 1923, researchers established the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt. It had a connection with them. Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse were among its most famous members. With the rise of the Nazis in 1930s Germany, many Frankfurt scholars moved to the US. There, they founded the Institute for Social Research at Columbia University. While in the United States, they became interested in media and communications. They saw them as tools of oppression in capitalist societies. Jones (2010, p.119) says that critical theory has focused on the tools and means of rational control. It sees these as the key to success in capitalism. Critical theory points out three features of capitalist culture. It says they serve a specific function of these means:

1- People call the way of thinking instrumental or instrumental reason. Graib 1984 described it as the way of

looking at the world. This view justifies control of people and the system's control over numbing individuals.

2- The media and popular culture shape how people think. They make them unable to oppose their society.

3- A certain type of personality is dominant and widespread. They not only accept control or domination, but also desire it.

Supporters of this trend believe in the need for linking disciplines. They believe in linking philosophy, sociology, economics, and history. This linking is to create a broad social philosophy or critical theory.

This theory can examine the contradictions and connections in society well. The Frankfurt School takes inspiration from Marxism. But, they differ in their abandonment of the idea of the working class as an agent for change. This led others to attack them as elitist and averse to populist culture. They also reject activism in favor of thought. Supporters of the trend view media from an angle. It links economic with cultural and ideological analysis. They claim that capitalist monopoly. They say the ruling class owns the means of mass culture and dominates society. They aim to deepen false awareness. They say they do this to suggest to people something. They want to suggest that the current system is rational and inevitable. The capitalist system based false consciousness on the sanctification of commodities. One of its key traits is the inability to discover and realize social relations. This is because they are changing historical achievements. Instead, people have a false awareness of their lives. This is because they are the product of an unchanging social reality" (Abdel-Gawad, 2002, p. 421) These thinkers believe that someone made and sent media messages for one purpose. It is to serve capitalist interests. The media in capitalism may claim they provide info for the "public good." But, profit is the end goal. It frames every message. (West and Turner ,2010).

Jürgen Habermas is the most famous current researcher. He studies the Frankfurt critical trend. His work was the most widespread after World War II. He presented a huge project under the name (theory of communicative action). This place does not expose us to these details. So, we will point out some of the basics of this theory. The theory is as follows:

1-Types of interests: according to Aknan (2018).

Habermas distinguished between three types of interests:-

A- performance interest: This is about technical or performance interest. This is because the value of its experiments lies in their technical use. This is the secret of the link between experimental knowledge.

B- Scientific interest: This field is about communication between humans. It starts with understanding meaning through interpretation, such as interpreting speeches and texts.

C - The interest in liberation: The interest in liberation is in the critical social sciences. It holds that reflection frees the self from illusions and stagnation. Habermas believes that we always develop knowledge for a purpose. Achieving that purpose is the basis of our interest in the knowledge. Language is the other way humans change their environment. It leads to the "practical interest." Habermas wrote about it in his (1981) book (The Theory of Communicative Action). In it, he presents his thesis in two stages. The first stage calls for emancipation from experimental thought. This is the second stage. He thinks action can take two forms: strategic action and communication action.

2- Communicative action theory: Habermas's concept of rationality inspired his theory of communicative action. In it, he tried to link rationality and practice. He emphasized the need to reformulate Marx's historical materialism. The reformulation should give more confidence than Marx did. It should stress the absolute difference between introspective and analytical knowledge. Habermas's reformulation of historical materialism took the form of his communication theory. He tried to change critical social theory. He aimed to transform it. He called it the model of consciousness, but he wanted it to be the model of communication. This change would enable the creation of scientific strategies. They are for criticizing ideology, building communities, and forming movements. (Abdul-Gawad, 2002, p.424). Habermas defines communicative action as a theory of communication. It crystallizes the laws that control it. This free communication is a parallel relationship between many groups of society.

They have varying relationships. They seek to build free awareness. Institutions or ideologies imposed by political systems won't control it. Habermas' theory of communicative action includes making laws for communication. These laws deepen talk between individuals and society (Abu Al-Nour, 2004). Habermas defined communication as: "those skills. In

them, participants agree to coordinate their plans." Humans in communicative activity motivate others.

They do this by having each person act together through speech" (Zawraq, 2015). He also defined communicative actions as "those actions. In them, the actors' actions are not tied to politics' needs. Instead, acts of understanding link them (Trad, 1987). He went to enhance his idea of communicative action. He wanted to better understand social relations in society.

The communicative act is different from other acts. It does not seek to search for means to influence others. Instead, it seeks to reach an understanding and agreement with them. It does so without coercion or force (Ali, 2013).

Habermas criticized the absolute philosophy for obstructing rationality. It imagined it had the truth. Habermas wants rationality in today's society. It is a type of reason tied to real life. It is critical and based on communication. To expand it, he criticized new trends. These trends admire science so much that they deify it. Philosophy must confront every hegemony. They work to objectify and commodify men. Thus, philosophy will seek to create a dialogue.

The dialogue will take place in a society free from the rule of science. Technology plays a big role in removing all traces. The traces have distorted the dialogue that can bring humans to maturity. Habermas tried to integrate the theories of action and systems theory. He did this to support rational communication. He distinguishes between the physical and spiritual realms. In it, communication participants reach a common understanding about something. This is in contrast to the larger social system and its sub-systems (Abdel-Gawad, 2002).

3- Communicative rationality: Habermas tried to explain modern society with communicative rationality. It has three parts. First, the knowing self's relation to facts. Second, its relation to a social world of effectiveness and personal interaction. And third, a person's relation to their inner nature. Also, their relation to the subjectivity of others (Habermas (1986)). This concept includes all mental activity. Habermas classified it into two types.

First is cognitive-instrumental mental activity, which is activity directed toward a goal. We achieve benefits and harness knowledge for success. Man uses this type of activity to learn about his surrounding environment. Habermas

defines the relationship between rationality and knowledge as follows: Rationality is "not so much about having knowledge as about how people who can speak and act use it." Second: subjects who can speak and act perform mental and communicative activities. Performative activity aims to gain success through technology. It aims to control the natural and human environments. In contrast, communicative activity is about social life. It aims to move towards understanding each other. Habermas (1984).

4- Stages of communicative action: According to Habermas (2002), it has three basic stages.

A- The stage of interaction mediated by symbols. This stage involves two actions: making a statement and taking action. The statement expresses a desire for behavior. The action fulfills this desire. This forms a dialogue.

B- The stage of discourse that is distinct in relation to its content. At this stage, the statement is separate from the action. So, only the actor cannot rely on them. The position is that of the person who observes and joins in the dialogue. Here, the participants in the dialogue can exchange perceptions.

C- The stage of demonstrative (argumentative) discourse. Here, we form the validity requirements. They link two aspects. The first is the language . The second is addressing the assumptions of the standards. They must be capable of being legitimate or illegitimate.

5- Conditions for achieving the communicative experience: Maqura (2013) said the conditions for the communicative experience, per Habermas, are: -

A- communicative action is a relationship of interaction. It is between two or more subjects in the living world. So, anyone who can act has the right to talk and join in the dialogue. They can take part in the conversation, as long as they say they agree to the demand for honesty.

B- language is the spirit of communication. It is between the subjects in the interaction and between them and the outside world. Language is the basis of communication for speakers and listeners.

C- Each participant has equal opportunities in the dialogue. They have the right to defend, object, or question. But they must recognize the possibility of making and correcting mistakes.

D- Discussion breaks free from all tyranny and hegemony. These may

come from the outside. Dialogue must be free between free subjects of equal status.

E- The basis for dialogue must be moral consensus.

F- The experience aims to reach agreement between the participants. It assumes they know each other and have similar views.

G- The ethics of discussion assume that communicators choose a reasonable and accurate expression. They do this so that others can understand them.

H- Honesty builds communication. Doubt can expose it. Or, the participants cannot justify it with reason. Then, the claims of honesty become questionable. Communication may break down or stop.

6- Conditions for moral consensus: Habermas set himself apart from the pioneers of the traditional critical Frankfurt School. He did this through his interdisciplinary work.

He combined the three philosophies (positivist, analytical, and pragmatic). He opposed them at times. He did this to make a rational reconstruction. He saw language as the basis of communication. He also saw ethics as standards. Social institutions govern it. This is part of what Habermas calls "philosophy of mind." In this view, Griffinkl (2012) says Habermas assumes that in a culture or society, people can agree on the good they want. Over time, they gain wisdom. To achieve this, we cannot reach a moral consensus unless we meet three basic conditions:

A- Anyone affected by the standards can attend to hear them. It does not matter what their status is.

B- Everyone should engage in genuine reciprocity in discussions. They are not trying to see if the action serves the greater good.

C- The condition of justification: What makes moral claims legitimate and makes everyone committed to generalizing them is "their acceptance not only among those through whom they arise or agree to live within them, but by anyone affected by them. If understanding is the ultimate goal, the communicative act, it cannot be imagined between the talking parties except under conditions, the most important of which is that one party does not influence another, because if that happens, it will inevitably lead to the failure of communication. In this, Habermas believes, "The activity of mutual understanding is subject to a basic condition through which the concerned parties achieve a project for their common agreement." They seek to avoid two dangers: the first is

represented by the failure of mutual understanding and misunderstanding, while the second is represented by the failure of the project of action and complete failure, so eliminating the first danger is a necessary condition for avoiding the second." There is a difference, then, between agreement, which is a descendant of understanding, and influence, which is a descendant of coercion and pressure, in which the communicative action is characterized by domination (Aali, 2013), and achieving a communicative structure for social interaction according to Habermas based on standards and conditions that govern communicative discourse. According to Khaira (2018), the ethical conditions for communicative discourse can be summarized as follows:

1- Reasonableness, which is one of the permanent and necessary conditions for the act of communication. This is because it fulfills the linguistic aspect (soundness of language), as there is no reasonableness in communication without proper linguistic formulation.

2- Truth: It is the condition that functionally guarantees the description of an existing realistic situation, that is, the conformity of the statement with reality.

3- Credibility: It relates to the verbal aspect according to which a straight relationship can be established between people.

4- Honesty: It is related to the speaker's intentions, which are supposed to be sound, good, and honest.

* Second: The critical cultural trend

The cultural studies approach in the media is a meeting point between two main theoretical trends: culture and structuralism. The cultural mentality emerged from the post-war British cultural environment, with key members being the cultural historian Richard Hoggart (1957), the historian of the English working-class E. P. Thompson (1963), and the cultural theorists Raymond Williams (1958) and (1977). The structural mentality came from the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, the anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss (1958), the Marxist political sociologist Louis Althusser (1971), and the Italian semiotician Umberto Eco (1979). The first precursors to cultural studies were represented by Leavis' founding of the magazine Scrutiny as a cultural platform against the defamation and poor

quality of media content and the call for a return to authentic English culture in 1932. Then there was the Birmingham Center for Cultural Studies in 1964, which is considered one of the most important intellectual and research currents that embodied this. Meaning in the context of his research into the relationship between the media phenomenon and its overall cultural context.

Cultural studies were influenced by Marxist thought, but they went beyond the strict and limited Marxist interpretation of society and moved towards a broader concept of culture, which prompted some scholars to make cultural studies a new Marxism. However, according to West and Turner (West and Turner, 2010, p. 363), cultural studies It differs from classical Marxism in several ways, which we summarize below: -

1- Unlike Marx, cultural studies advocates incorporated a variety of perspectives into their thinking, including perspectives from the arts, humanities, and social sciences.

2- Theorists in cultural studies have expanded the base of the subordinate group to include more vulnerable and marginalized people, including ethnic minorities, women, and children, not just workers. These groups include gay men and lesbians.

3- Marx's daily life focused on work and family, while cultural studies were also concerned with leisure activities and sporting events in an attempt to understand how individuals function in society.

According to West and Turner (2010), cultural studies are based on two basic assumptions: -

1- Culture pervades and permeates all aspects of human behavior: the norms, ideas, values, and various forms of understanding in society that help people interpret their reality are part of the ideology of culture, and ideology means "those images, concepts, and premises that provide the frameworks through which we represent, interpret, perceive, and understand." "Some aspects of social existence," or ideologies, include the languages, concepts, and categories that different social groups combine in order to make sense of their environments. (Hall, 1981) The media plays a more complex role than contributing to the formation of meanings or the technological transmission of culture, as it has begun to invade our lives, shape our tastes, teach us, and persuade us about products and policies. Rather, it has begun to intrude on our private dreams and public fears with the messages it contains. Intentional or unintentional.

2- People are part of the hierarchical structure of power. People in cultural studies view people as an important part of the social hierarchy of forces or authorities that operate at all levels in society. However, power in this sense is not based on role, as he sees it. Rather, culturalists are interested in the power possessed by social groups or between groups. In line with the Marxist tradition, power is something that subordinate groups desire but cannot achieve. There is often a struggle over power, and the victor is usually the individual at the top of the social pyramid. Culturalists believe that the media is very powerful, that it is not neutral, that no media institution should have the ability to decide what the public hears, or that media professionals act as guardians of the nation's cultural activities through what they consider important or otherwise.

Determinants of communication in the direction of cultural studies: -

1- Ideology: Most critical theorists agree that one of the foundational dimensions of hegemony is ideology, or belief systems that serve as the basis for the group's view of the world and its perception of reality and consciousness. These ideas structure what people believe about others and the world. Stuart Hall (1981) argues that power imbalances may not always be the result of intentional strategies on the part of the powerful. Rather, ideology, or "those images, concepts, and premises that provide the frameworks through which we represent, interpret, and understand" some aspect of social existence (Hall, 1981), and dominant ideologies are shaped by the dominant discourses and discursive practices within a society or institution, and it is the process by which it produces what scholars call hegemony. Cultural studies theorists share a concern with the ideologies that dominate culture, but they focus on social change from the point of view of culture itself: "to make the real movement of culture intelligible as it is registered in social life, group and class relations, politics, institutions, and values." And ideas "from the standpoint of a populist orientation, in contrast to the elitist intellectual bias of the Frankfurt School (Littlejohn and Foss, 2011).

2- Hegemony: that is, influence over the masses. The concept of hegemony is an important feature of cultural studies, and a large part of the direction of cultural studies depends on understanding this term. It means "the dominance of one group over another, which is usually weaker" (West and Turner, 2010). According

to this view, the dominant values in the news are particularly effective in penetrating the common sense of the recipient audience. Because they are made to appear natural, not through coercion but indirectly through the normal workings of routine media, the relative independence of the media gives their messages more legitimacy and credibility than if they were subject to direct censorship. Thus, by forcibly not being publicly visible, this control is more effective, and this occurs largely through the acceptance of frames imposed on events by officials and the marginalization and delegitimization of voices that fall outside dominant elite circles (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). Hall believes that the media maintains the dominance of those already in positions of power and that the media exploits the poor and powerless through corporate control of mass communications. Hall believes that we must study the unified atmosphere in which they all occur and from which they emerge— human culture. In line with Marxist theory, he also insisted that communication studies should examine power relations and social structures. For Hall, stripping the study of communication from the cultural context in which it exists and ignoring the realities of the unequal distribution of power in society has weakened our field and made it less theoretically relevant. Hall and scholars who follow his example want to shed academic light directly on the ways in which media representations of culture reproduce dysfunctional social connections, rendering the average person more or less powerless to do anything but function within a commodified and shared world. (Griffin,2012)

3- Counter-hegemony: that is, the influence of the masses on the dominant powers. This trend gives great importance to the relationship between the media and society and places it in a broader social-cultural context. It is concerned with cultural analysis to monitor the extent of the connection between what is presented through the media and people's lives, the cultural and semantic interpretation of the context of media discourse, and the way in which the audience of recipients adds their own meanings to the media discourse (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). Although the concept of hegemony is a basic concept associated with cultural studies, However, audiences are not always fooled into accepting and believing everything that dominant powers offer. Sometimes, audiences will use the same resources and strategies as dominant social

groups to challenge that dominance. This is what Gramsci called counter-hegemony (West and Turner, 2010, p. 367), and counter-hegemony is an important part of cultural studies thinking. Because it indicates that the masses are not necessarily ready and compatible, and this concept is clearly evident in cultural studies, especially feminist thought, which is based on the principle that combating hegemony is through raising silent voices through the thought of counter-hegemony as a point of awareness of the ability of individuals to do something against hegemony. . As Hall sees it, the weak can be equally stubborn by resisting the dominant ideology and translating the message in a way more favorable to their own interests. (Griffin,2012)

4- Encoding/Decoding: Stuart Hall and his famous study that he presented in 1973 when he was director of the Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham on understanding television discourse, in which Hall, Williams, and the Birmingham School took a position, unlike some other Marxist approaches that have given a relatively independent role to the cultural sphere in society. His approach challenges traditional linear models of communication by highlighting the dynamic and multifaceted nature of cultural interactions. By recognizing the fluidity and unpredictability of meaning-making processes, the model encourages a more nuanced understanding of how individuals engage with media and cultural practices. (Cobley and Schulz ,2013) were concerned with studying the patterns of receiving and interpreting the media message based on the social-cultural context of the recipient. It is one of the pioneering attempts in this direction concerned with monitoring the reality of the impact of the media on recipients in societies, considering that the media system and means of communication are among the most important organizations that work in the information industry, and they are subsystems. It is linked to the general cultural system that constitutes the cognitive and ideological framework of society.

Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model is considered one of the pioneering and influential contributions in the context of cultural studies of media. In it, Hall departs from the literature that sees the communication process proceeding in a linear form—sender, message, receiver—and presents a vision. There are different ways to

explain the process of communication. He believes that the interpretation of media texts varies depending on the social and cultural factors that constitute the cultural system and that communication does not proceed in a linear manner, but rather the future has to add new modifications to the message according to the following processes: production › transmission › distribution › consumption › reproduction, and according to "Hall" that What is shown on television is not reality (despite the attempts of the hegemons to convince us - otherwise - that is, that events are not raw, and in order for us to be able to transmit and understand them, they must carry meaning, that is, be encoded, and several factors intervene in this process - that is, the process of encoding media messages, including: The bureaucratic organization of work within the media institution, the dominant ideology, the desires of the audience, and finally the atmosphere of prevailing opinions in which the sender must position himself if he wants to deliver his message (Laslaj and Mabna, 2020)

Hall (1980) identifies three options for the audience to decode by resisting the dominant ideology and having the audience translate the message in a way that is more appropriate to its own interests, according to the following positions:

A- The dominant-hegemonic position is where individuals work within a code that dominates and exercises greater power than other codes. The viewer does not know the terminology used, cannot follow the unfamiliar or complex logic of the argument or presentation, finds the concepts too strange or difficult, or is full of explanatory narrative.

B- The negotiated position: where the public can accept the prevailing ideologies with some exceptions to the cultural rule, and Hall believes that members of the public always reserve the right to apply local conditions to large-scale events, and this occurs frequently when the media talk about laws. Which are enacted at the national level and interpreted at the state or community level.

C- Oppositional position: This can lead to a significant shift in the interpretation and understanding of the message being communicated. It challenges the authority and influence of the media by encouraging individuals to think critically and form their own opinions.

* Conclusion

Critical theory played an effective role in clarifying the role

that the media and communication play in shaping and strengthening culture in capitalist societies and how the dominant class and stakeholders control and direct the media in a way that ensures its continued influence and control. The critical vision in the study of communication and media was based on the principle of opposing the existing media conditions because they perform a specific function: helping those in power impose their influence and dominance. The content promoted by the media tends to provide unbalanced coverage of social relations that promotes the interests of this dominant class in society. And focusing on the importance of analyzing the symbolic meaning of the content provided by the media that promotes the interests of the capitalist-owning class among the exploited working class.

Exposing the falsity and unreality of media studies funded by dominant businessmen. Critical theory analysis in the study of communication and media came in the context of two basic trends that have many commonalities, namely that both worked within a new Marxist model of society.

Both view a connection, whether weak or strong, between economic interests and ideological representations. Both portray the media as serving dominant groups. The first is the Frankfurt School trend: The proponents of this trend look at what the media presents with a view that links economic analysis with cultural and ideological analysis, claiming that the capitalist monopoly and the control of the class that owns the means of mass culture and dominates society essentially aim to deepen false awareness in a way that suggests to people the rationality and inevitability of the social system. . Jurgen Habermas is considered the most famous and widespread contemporary researcher of this trend. He presented a huge project under the name Theory of Communicative Action, and we will briefly point out some of the basic features of this theory.

The second is critical cultural studies, which sees that the media play a complex role rather than contributing to the formation of meanings or the technological transmission of culture. No media institution should have the ability to decide what the public hears, and media professionals should act as guardians of the nation's cultural activities, whether they are considered important or not. We will briefly refer to some of the determinants of communication,

according to Stuart Hill, one of the most prominent thinkers in critical cultural studies.

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