The Politicized Mediatization Of Discourse And Consumerism: A Critical Discourse Analysis Of Don Delillo's White Noise

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Abstract

This research articlediscusses the negative effects of media discourse and consumerism onthe characters living in the postmodern age, in Delillo's White Noise.Employing Fairclough's idea of politicized mediatization of discourseand Wodak's concept of visual communication, it has been arguedthat consumerism hasa far reaching physical as well as psychological effects on the postmodern individuals' lives.Under theoverwhelming influence of media discourse and visual communication, the crisisof legitimization is determined by effectively blurring the distinction between media and politics and between fiction and reality,and accordingly, the postmodern community has been deprived of the ability to locate differences between signifier andsignified. To conclude, Delillo's White Noisenot only offers a clear picture of the postmodern world marked with uncertaintybut also reinstates that people's identity, their minds and their actions all are predisposed by the logic provided by media discourse and consumerism.

KeyWords: media discourse, images, visual communication, consumerism, critical discourse, postmodernism

1. Introduction

It is a threat of the white noise that is being experienced by the characters living in the postmodern American society. Published in 1985,the title ofDelillo's novel, White Noise has been given different explanations.In literal sense, it stands for a special sort ofnoise that is

caused due to the unifying sounds of variousfrequencies together.In technical term, it refers to theunavoidable toxic environment which is presented as white noise in the novel; sometaphorically, it might be taken as an index of the pervasive consumerism in the postmodern society.The logic of media discourse and consumerism almost penetrates into all beings and all places, so,the white noise is in everything and everywhere. By using critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA) as a theoretical framework, this research paper discussesthe negative effects consumerism on the psyche of consumers and their responses to the emerging powers of media discourse and visualcommunication.

Macdonell (1986) defines discourse as anexercise of social exchange which is well-ordered around certain doctrinesinvolving social relations.ForHall (2004, p.60)discourse is a way of representing–awell-defined kind of knowledge about a subject based on a set of statements, while Parker's (1992) descriptionproposes that it is "a system of statements which constructs an object" (p. 5).Butit is Fairclough's definition of discourse/mediatization of discourse that weshall utilize for doing a CDA of thenovel at hand.According to Fairclough (1995, 2003) and Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) discourse is a way of constructing knowledge about an explicit topic at a given moment in the history, primarilythrough the use of language in texts, images and speeches;and such knowledge productionformulates or is formulated by socio-political institutions.Hence,discourse is helpful not only in identifying a subject's characteristicsbut also in exposing how it is constructed through linguistic media/discursive practices.Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) maintain that discursive practices include asocial relations, the material world, material practices, social actions and interactions, and by extension, beliefs, rituals, values, attitudes, and yearnings of individuals, and institutions can be taken as sprouting from such practices (p. 28).In other words, discourse is instrumental in sustainingpower relations in the societyand configuring a subject's identity in some prescribed manner.

Fairclough (1995)argues that the word 'critical'in CDAmeansto elucidatethe social determinations and their effects on discourse which otherwise characteristicallyremain opaque to the participants. He further states that that despite the fact that the technologization of discourse has given birth to new ideological manifestations in discourse studies, the predominantly descriptive nature ofdiscourse analysishas failed to investigate such implications at length.Therefore, herecommends three-dimensional model of discourse analysis or what he calls as the social theory of discourse. First,discourse as a text, seconddiscourse as a discursive practice that is the production,distribution, consumption of the text; and the third is discourse as a social practice, that the text is used as an instrument for perpetuating a certain ideology and unequal power distribution withinsocial relations(1995, p.73). This is the reason that he sees intersexuality playinga

decisive role in text-production, for it isnot constructed in isolation "but through other texts" (p.9).We can say that the relationship between the ways of acting and the ways of being and the modes of representing that being/subject within the text is of a vital significance to the understanding of Fairclough'ssocial theory of discourse.For Fairclough, a genuine understanding of the sound effects of discourse is impossible without looking thoroughly at what happens when people talk or write (Fairclough, 2003, p. 3).

As far as concept of 'mediatization of discourse' is concerned, Fairclough (1995) is of the view thatdiscourse representation in news media can be taken as an instance of ideological processwhich is of considerable social importance (p.65). The 'mediatized political discourse' is therefore anew hegemony in the contemporary society and the audience are being constructed as consumersand not citizens:"One might see this in terms of the possible emergence of a new hegemonicstructure in the domain of politics and political "broadcasting" andassociated ideological changes affecting social identities, social relations and knowledge"(p. 168). By giving more value to ordinary life and its practices, the media apparatuseshave devalued publicand impersonalpractices thereof (p.179).This is what we see happening in the novel,White Noise in which the characters have been treated as consumer beings and not human beings.

In the same vein, according to Stocchetti and Kukkonen (2011) theimages are the part of theprocesses of negotiating/proliferating of social values, politics and power. Notably, the images in themselves are not either seductive or dangerous unless they are used; a process through which the agents, though unidentifiableseek to attain some goals by restoring them tovisual communication and this takes us to the concept of images in use,which stresses the need of focusing more on the process and not on an object.Put simply, the images are not meaningful in and of themselves unless scrutinized within the context of their use and the agents behind them are brought to foresight. The same is the case with Prof. Gladney;an important character in the novelis more interested in making his image look like sober persons. Through this character, Dellilo wants to expose how electronic media uses manipulated images to render humans as consumer beings. Therefore, the tradition developed by postmodernism advocates an uncompromising critique of political powerand questioning ofthe epistemological grounds of truth.For, Lyotard (as cited in Stocchetti and Kukkonen, 2011) sees postmodernism as a condition in which there exists crisis of truth.Likewise,for Baudrillard (1994)"the subversion of reality"is the defining featureof postmodern society: "Simulation envelops the whole edifice of representation itselfas a simulacrum" (p.6).
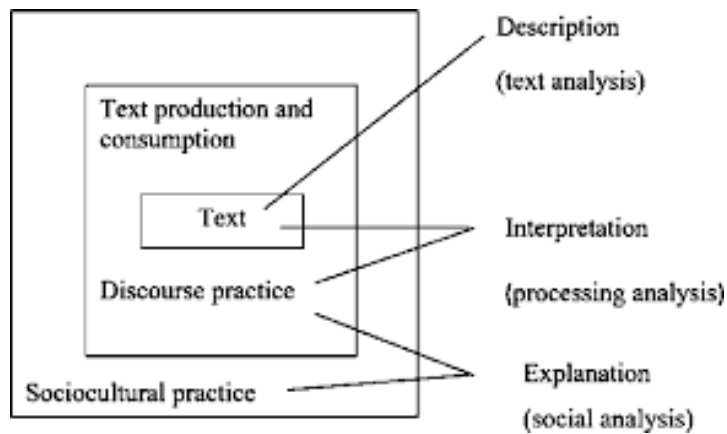
Fig. 1. Fairclough's 3D model of critical discourse analysis. (1st dimension = Inner layer, 2nd dimension = middle layer, 3rd dimension = outer layer).

In view of that, in the novel, the simulated characters' blind observance to the consumerist ecstasies and media discourse is the major factor that creates environmental hazard/white noise,which inevitably harms their physical as well as mental health.Delillo has shown how postmodern characters are being brainwashed by media discourseas it not onlyblurs the distinction between real and unrealbut also stimulates themprefer to shop andconsume in order to construct their simulated identity.Hence, unlike the previousreading of the novel which interpret it as an 'eco-text' (Rettberg, 1999) and/or an effectively resisting voice against the technological impacts on American society (Heise,2002); this study however contends that it is not just consumerism or technology that has distorted/harmed the American society but equally important is that power of media discourse along withthe prevalence of well-wrought images that has effectively weakened the reasoning power of postmodern individuals to bifurcate between real and unreal. It is argued thatthe mesmerizing impacts of media discourseand its distorted logic have created aflawed perception in the characters' mind, ultimately resulting in generating a culture of simulation and simulacra, a copy without origin. In this way, the study would be helpful in giving a new perspective to the novel under discussion as it upholds that the images/visuals on screen produce such a hyperreal culture in the novel that the characters are only encountered with an endless chain of floating signifiers, emptied frommeaning because of thescheming use of media discourse. Although, audio/video media presents senseless information, people believe it because of their being metanarratives created in the name of science and logic and this discourse awardsadisunited identityto the postmodern individuals.

2. Methodology
The study is qualitative in nature and CDA providestheoretical basis for doing a rereading of the novel at hand.Fairclough's (1995) concept of 'mediatization of discourse' and

Wodak's (2011) 'visual communication/images in use' are the two main threads that help the researchers investigate the text. The novel under discussion is the primary source of data collection and analysis. Fairclough's three-dimensional model, that is moving from text level of analysis to the concepts such as discursive practices and discourse as a social practice, and Wodak's idea of 'images in use'and Baudrillard's'simulation' and 'simulacra'havebeen equally supportive for doing a postmodern reading of the novel. Following Fairclough (1995; 2001), Baudrillard (1994) and Wodak (2011)we argue mediatization of discourse, consumerism and visual communicationin combination a significant role in regulating the psycho-social life of the characters in the White Noise.In an attempt to merge these different ideas by situating them in the socio-political aspect of text-fabrication, 'textual analysis method' has been employed and we have tried to investigate the effects of media discourse and floating images on the psyche of individuals to show how they render them as passive observers and buyers of whatever is presented to them in the form media logic.Specifically, I have employed Fairclough's CDA approach with regard to mediatization of discourse in the study of the novel, for he offers "a theory-method linkage that is absent in many sociological discussions of everyday life and language use and in many linguistic discussions of social dynamics" (Bloome and Talwalkar, 1997, p. 105).

3. Literature Review

According to Chilton and Wodak (2005) the history of contemporary CDA can be tracedfrom the CL, or Critical Linguistics of the 1970s. They contend that 'critical' approaches to language studies had been an integral part of human civilization. Nevertheless, it was mainly in the late twentieth century that the politically and socially aware scholars of University of East Anglia started focusing systematically on developing the methods to analyze the social andpolitical dimensions of a text.To Fairclough, any social phenomenon has three levelsi.e., social formation, social institution and social actionand these are closely interlinked with each other. Because social institutions are determined by social formation and social action is determined by social institutions (Fairclough, 1995, p.37). This is the reason that for Fairclough, the concept of "background knowledge" which has a wide application in the "descriptive discourse" becomes a tool to reproduce certain sort of ideological effects and this places Discourse Analysis in the position of "uncritical "or "non-critical" approach as it fails to investigate thehidden power structure operating within a society. Hinting at the difference of CDA from DA, he writes:

> Discourse Analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relation of casualty and determination between a) discursive practices, events and texts and b) widersocial and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices,events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of

power andstruggles over powers; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships betweendiscourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony. (1995, p.133)

Stocchetti andKukkonen (2011) have talked about the power of 'images' in visual communication. They argue thatalong with visual communication, the images too are deeply rootedin politics/ideology. Lyotard (ascited in Barry, 1995, p.86) defines postmodernism as "incredulity towards metanarratives" so grand-narratives or totalizing patterns are no more tenable in the contemporary society.Whereas for Baudrillard (1994), the signs have lost their signified and hence they are not representational of reality at all. As in the novel, we see that media discourse serves as an inflated sign of reality and it gives birth to what Baudrillard calls hyperreal culture and therefore it cannot be taken as emblematic of reality. Accordingly, postmodernism in combination with CDA providesa theoretical framework for the current study.

While analyzing Delillo's White Noise, the critics reached at different conclusions and interpretations.Rettberg (1999) classifies the novel as essentially a postmodern novel, as he discusses it in the light of the postmodern theory,highlighting the effects of post-industrial andtelevisual culture on individuals' lives. Using eco-criticism in the background, Heise (2002) affirms thatthe novelis all about the society whose environment is under the constant risk of technology. Similarly, Matrucci (2007) points out that the novel effectively delineates the conflicts between traditional society and technological society and shows how technology negatively affected the perceptions and lifestyle of techno-men. The brief overview of the criticism on the novel is enough to showcase that so far it has not beeninvestigated how mediatization of discoursein terms of images on screen has impacted the characters by making them merely consumer beings who wander in an overstated signifiers-laden/hyperreal society.

4. Textual Analysis: Investigating the Politicized Mediatization of Discourse and Consumerism in White Noise

Representations of language in terms of sounds, images and texts, whether spoken or written are the "key raw materials out of which specific discourses, understood as bounded (sometimes strictly so) ways of representing the world, get shaped" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 2).Therefore, For Fairclough (2003),as the texts are combined with verbal and visual features such as gesture,depiction, typography and graphics, all thesecan be considered as the working forms of discourse.For Fairclough (1995) the connection between the text and social practice is of paramount importance as these mutually impact the formation processes of the text (p.133). As a result, texts are instrumental in providing us insights into language and how it is used in the text "is an irreducible part of social life, dialectically

interconnected with other elements of social life, so that social analysis and research always has to take into account language" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 2).Put simply, although social relations yield a notable role in the creation of structures, language, events, action and agency, but primarily, it is language that provides us insights into discourse-use.

In what follows, we will see how the novel can be interpreted using Fairclough's CDA concept, mediatization of discourse in the background. In this respect,media has snatched the true identity from its viewers/consumers at a large scale. Instead of going for real identity, the postmodern displaced generation in the White Noise allows media to condition their self. For example, the Gladneys are persuaded or motivated by media to such an extent that they choose to discuss their routine matters, by referring to whatever they watch on TV or hear on radio. They do not even rely on their common senses. Heinrich, the son of Jack instead of trusting his own sense opts to believe what is transmitted/broadcast on the radio (p.16).We see how media has manipulated the postmodern generation. Although, there was actually raining the moment they were talking, even then, the radio-disseminated information is treated truer than the actual reality. The same dialogue also depicts Jack's dilemma, who being a late modernist is displaced in a postmodernist consumerism-based society. Fairclough (1995) maintains: "One might see this in terms of the possible emergence of a new hegemonic structure in the domain of politics and political broadcasting, and associated ideological changes affecting social identities, social relations, and knowledges" (p.168).

Similarly, we see the characters in the novel running after fashioning themselves on the basis of the fascinating 'images' sprouting from supermarket products that they consume, and it is being desired only in order to have anappropriate image of their personality in the eyes of the public. Jack's being obsessed with shopping for various products from the supermarkets(as reflected in the following lines from the novel) is what reinforces our claim:

> I filled myself out, found new aspects of myself, and located person I'd forgotten existed. Brightness settled around me. We crossed from furniture to men's wear, walking through cosmetics. Our images appeared on mirrored columns, in glassware and chrome, on TV monitors in security rooms. I traded money for goods. The more money I spent, the less important it seemed. (p.42)

In these lines, Jack, the seemingly protagonist of the novel desires to restyle his representation under the overwhelming power of supermarket images and for this; he purchases the products which might make his image eye-catching for people.The instance tells us that there is no real identity for Jack that he can identify himself with, he rather seems to be aconsumer being.Healso places the 'extra initials' to his name as "J.A.K.

Gladney" on the advice of the chancellor, so that he might be taken as the innovator of Hitler Studies (p.14). Nigel Waston (2005) upholds:"People actively wish to join in and actively desire the opportunities for self-expression and display which are provided by the choices of the pink shopping malls…. We like to identify with the style that best represents the way that we wish to be seen" (p.37).

Furthermore, Jack himself acknowledges the fact thathe is "the false character that follows the name around" (p.14). He wears the glasses with "heavy, black thick frame" with dark "lenses" and adoptsthis style as an alternative choice for himself, for his former wife did not like the bushy beard. For Babette, Jack's wife, the new style was not in any sense a cheap method for getting attention, for "it intimated dignity, significance and prestige" (p.14). This is how 'stimulation'in itself becomes'simulacrum' as it renders the connection between signifier and signified as untraceable. Baudrillard (1994) is therefore of the view that "whoever stimulates an illness produces in himself some of the symptoms" andsuch a case, pretending/dissimulating leaves the principle of reality intact because the difference is always clear and it is simply masked; whereas simulation threatens the difference between the "true" and the "false" the "real" and the "imaginary" (p.3). The Dyler drug in the novel is yet another example to reinforce this point. It is believed that by consuming the drug, the person feels freefrom the fear of death. Although, it did not work for Babette, even then,Jack is keen about it and wants to consume it at any cost so that he can do away with his own fear of death and anxiety. Thus, Dyler is a consumer product being aired on TV with the promise that itcan fulfill consumers' needs in terms of anxiety and fear (p. 179).This shows how media discourse constructsits audience as increasingly consumer beings rather than citizens and this leads to the creation of hyperreal culture in the society.

It would be note-worthy to point out that after the occurrence of a natural calamity called 'toxic event' at school caused due to the leakage of a Nyodene D-tank; the family of Jack Gladney scrabbles to leave for shopping. Dellilo, by juxtaposing together the scenes from supermarket and toxic event wants to convey the idea that the postmodern characters in order to forget the fatal incidents and minimize the risk of death choose to shop.In the view of Stocchetti (2011), the very concept of visually had become a distinctive form knowledge/power in the contemporary society, due to its being uniquely suitable for effectively exercising "the practices of control" (p.24).The subsequent lines from the novel express the same:

It seemed to me that Babette and I, in the mass and variety of our purchases, in the sheer plentitude those crowded bags suggested, the weight and size and number, the familiar   package designs and vivid lettering, the giant sizes, the family bargain packs…it seemed   we had achieved a fullness of being that is not known to people who need less, expect   less, who plan their lives around lonely walks in the evening. (p.15)

In the above-quoted lines, the words/phrases,'package designs','bargain packs','crowded bags' and'the weight and size and numbers'indicate the prevalent power of images projected through the use of an agenda-oriented visual communication on supermarket-sign boards/TV screen. This mediatized/politicized discourse portrays the visual images as if they are the only relief available to the character in the novel and this also reinforcesthe point that under the overwhelming power of such images, the tv-viewers and supermarket-visitors have been reduced to merely consumer beings.For, both Jack and Babette believe that they have "achieved fullness of being" because of their purchase-power which is unknown to other people. In as much as, they trust more in the superficial floating images prevalent in the supermarket than their own reasoning faculty. It seems that they do not have any other option except following the emerging trends/fashion based on consumerism. Stocchetti (2011)has rightly stated that "since agency has disappeared in visual discourse, politics is beyond reach. Once images are looked at as natural phenomena, their social purpose remains invisible, criticism become impossible and the only option is adaptation" (p.28).

In view of that, postmodern people do not do an in-depth analysis of the stimuli presented to them,they rather welcome them in whatsoever form they reach to them. Therefore, they crave to design their appearances in line with the fashions widespread in the markets. Murray Siskind, a college professor is downplayed by Jack on the grounds that he bought the non-branded products from the market, as Jack says: "His basket held generic food and drink, non-branded items in plain white packages with simple labeling" (p.14). In addition to that, Murray also has been criticized for not having constructed his appearance that can meet the emerging trends/fashions inan increasingly materialist society in which the signs are detached from their immediate significance, creating a hyper-real culture.Stocchetti (2011) is of the view that images/visuals provide a better chance to the people in power to maintain and execute it from behind the curtains, as the agency remains hidden from the eyes of the viewers.In fact, images are politics-embedded, but it is theunseen agency that dispenses them such powers. Stocchetti (2011) maintains:

Images are objects and objects cannot have power-except in physical terms, e.g. an engine producing a certain amount of power in the form of speed, heat, etc. Objects cannot 'do' anything by themselves because they do not have a will, an autonomous capacity for doing anything. (p.24)

Delillo has successfully shown how the use of provoking images on TV as well as on supermarket sign bords has snatched the power of making distinction between real and unreal from postmodern society.

Indeed,in Delillo's White Noise, TV as a tool of visual communication is being exploited for the projection of consumerismand is therefore another thing that the characters are obsessed with in the novel.In the postmodern age, TV is not only the most impressive technological device that plays an important role in people's everyday but also an important weapon in the hands of capitalists to alter the established criteria of reality/truth. Athorough critique of the novel illustrates that just like supermarkets, TV too influences the thinking/behavior of the characters, living under an unending threat of white noise of consumerism. This is true about almost all the important characters of the novel, forJack, the protagonist, his friend Siskind and Gladney's family-members all believe in whatever is presented on TV.To Murray, a friend and college-colleague of Jack, TV has transformed his thinking and he considers it a new source of knowledge, as ithas helped him generate a new vision of life. He tells Jack how he convinces his students about the positive change that TV has brought in their life:

> Television is just another name for junk mail. But I tell them I can't accept that. I tell them I've been sitting in this room for more than two months, watching TV into the early hours, listening carefully, taking notes. A great and humbling experience let me tell you. Close to mystical. (p.28)

To put it another way, TV has itself become a hyperreal phenomenon -more real than the actual realitybecause for Murray it not only brings to the people a huge amount of data but also "incredible amounts of psychic data" (p.28). This also shows how postmodern people/TV-viewers have surrendered their senses-powers to this new source of information/data and how the stimulation of TV has created the network of little buzzing dots in the minds of its audiences. Fairclough (1995) has remarked that:

> The mediazation of politics has entailed a shift from the media merely transmitting political events happening elsewhere whose nature was determined autonomously, to the media generating its own political events… events that happen elsewhere being reshaped to enhance their media worthiness. (p.179)

Instead of sympathizing with calamity-hit people and instead of being afraid of the disaster-scenes that are being broadcast on TV, the characters in the novel enjoy such events as thrilling and exciting.The following lines reflect how the Gladney family-members, sitting in front of TV set, react to such disasters:

> Heinrich came running down the hall, burst into the room. "Come on; hurry up, plane crash footage." Then he was out the door, the girls were off the bed, all three of them runningalong the hall to the TV set. I sat in bed a little stunned. The swiftness and noise of their leaving had put the room in a state of molecular agitation. (p.34)

The quoted lines clearly indicate that the siblings call each other to watch TV and enjoy the catastrophes. Once again, the power of images/ideologically laden media discourse is what surfaces here as it captures the minds of the watchers in such a way that they all end up as having no option except confusing signifiers/images with real meanings. Jack finds it hard to come to terms with those who question the 'ecstasy' that viewers experience while watching the scenes of destructions being aired on, as he remarks: "Why is it, that decent, well-meaning, and responsible people find themselves intrigued by a catastrophe when they see it on TV" (p.34). Wodak (2011) has preciselyobserved:

a lot of media coverage tends togenerateand encourage rather unrealistic expectations among laypeople that politics or politicians are capable of solving urgent problems in rational andeffective way. The media, especially television news formats, seemtobe reducing complex processes into brief spotlight,snippets or scoops. (p.74)

Media discourse in the novel seems to be acting in hyperreal manner because Alfonse, yetanother character in the novel goes on to assert that there are only two places available to most of the people.The first is where they live andthe second one is their TV set. He also goes on to declare that the viewers have the rightto be fascinated by "whatever" is aired on TV (p.35).In other words, televised visual/images are being aired in such anenthralling way that they generate the 'implosion of meaning', an idea advanced by a Canadian tourist, MarshalMcLuhan (1967) who believed that media is no more a source of knowledge/socialization,or an interactionbetween the medium and the subject. Contrarily, it has eroded the possibility of having contents of meaning as it has evolved such a situation in which 'form' matters morethan the content. Accordingly,every 'medium'in itself has become a 'message' in postmodern conditions.We see the same happening here,for being a postmodern generation,when the characters of the noveldo not have anything else to consume, theyconsume TV news,footages and commercials and their blind observance to what is conveyed to them through the showing-chatting-box is what shapes their world view, although a distorted one and far away from reality or truth:

Complex processes in the media are then reduced to certain images while many other an accompanying,often contradictory, processes and positions are simply not mentioned anymore or swept under the carpet. History is thus reduced to static events captured by images and the agenda-setting by journalistic news production. (Wodak,2011,p.75)

This is the reason that Delillo's novel seems to be concerned with highlightingthe negative impacts caused by politicized media discourse in the name of disseminating information through the chatting-box to the viewers.

Equally pertinent is to mention here that narrative of the novel,to a greater extent resembles to working style of TV. Like TV, the interaction/dialogue among the Gladneys in particular, and over all structure of the novel in general supply an assortment of information with imploded meanings.Usually, the dialogues seem to be quite out of context, unnecessarily prolonged, self-reflexive and misleading to the readers, for these are not meant to exchange any coherent idea.When Jack discovers that her wife has been secretly taking the drug-Dyler to minimize her fear of death, he has a discussion with her and the incoherent dialogue goes on like this:

I found the Dyler.

What Dyler?

it was taped to the radiator cover.

Why would I tape something to the radiator cover?

That's exactly what Denise predicted you would say.

She is usually right.

I talked to Hookstratten, your doctor.

I'm in super shape, really.

That's what he said.

Do you know what these cold gray leaden days make me want to do?

What? (p.82).

As the question-mark in the last line indicates that the on-going dialogue does not end here butcontinues to include other topics. It is to be noted here that the answer to the question in line-4 isnever given. Instead, the topic of the discussion keeps on shifting from one idea to another idea which imparts the expression like the switching between TV channels through remote control (Bhatti,2020). It also echoes a situation in which a person confronts with the ever fluctuating and pervasive hostof signifiers without any significations thereof. The characters have to live under an unending chain of illusive signs that have been presented to them as the hyperreal version of reality. As media reflects the implosion of meaning, so is the case with the above-mentioned extract that isempty of concrete meanings: "A hyperreal henceforth sheltered from the imaginary and from any distinction between the real and the imaginary, leaving room only for the orbital recurrence of models and for the simulated generation of differences" (Baudrillard,1994, p.2-3).

The hyperreal mediatization of images-discourse produced on through TVcommercials and supermarkets alluring scenes is what makes the character to view death as a premature phenomenon. Jack says:"Every death is premature. There's no scientific reason why we can'tlive a hundred and fifty years. Some people actually do it, according to a headline I saw at the supermarket" (123). We argue that the metanarratives projected through supermarkets-images and TV-news/adds make the characters believe them as truth and one can see the dominance of simulacrum orcrisis of truth as the formative feature of postmodern society. Even, Heinrich, asks his father, Jack to submit his senses/reasons before the ideas proven in scientific "laboratory" (p.16). Hence, the characters in the novel trust more on the world of simulacraor meta-narratives of broadcast and images than relying on their own senses. They fail to understand the working of maneuvered media discourse which has brainwashed them to such an extent that they cannot even discern that the signifiers being aired on media, are emptied of anysignified. Wodak (2011) is of the view that "journalist field" more focuses on "goodstory", a story that might increase the readers in case of newspaper; and viewership in case TV and therefore the criterion, "newsworthiness" (p.76) is what make an integral part of media discourse.

In the same vein,by showing ads/commercials of leading brands, media is able to powerfully capture the minds of the viewers that they seem to be helpless in its controllers' commanding hands. Even, during sleep, they keep on uttering some of the names of brands orauto-mobiles and such examples of fragmented memory abound in the novel. For example, the meaningless phrases without proper context that are uttered by Steffie, the daughter of Jack, "Toyota Corolla, Toyota Celica, Toyota Cressida" (p.71) are enough to support our stance. McLuhan (1976) has accurately argued that the essential role of mediawith regard to adds/commercials is to implode such a message in which the meanings are blurred, for the ads are the "seconds sandwiched between the hours of viewing" which don't "allow the narrative totake its form"(p.126). Thus, the power of visuals/images on TV is an ample proof that consumer objects not only affect consumers'mind/behavior but also their unconsciousness to a greater extent. Herkman (2011) says:

> Today's media culture is loaded with all kinds of media texts, and better than by visualization, the era can probably be described by the concept of mediatization -
"the   process whereby media increasingly come to saturate society, culture, identities and everyday life. (p-.51)

5. Conclusion

To conclude,by utilizing Fairclough and Wodak's respective thoughts on mediatization of discourse and visual communication, it has been found that Delillo has perfectly handled different aspects of postmodern life. He has illustrated how media discourse on the basis of visual communication and consumerism-aggravating imageshas affected the meaning of reality in the postmodern age. The novelportrays how postmodern people not only take TV as an indispensable icon of reality-transmitting but alsobelieve in its simulated vision,for their behaviors and worldview have been conditioned through this grand-narratives projecting device.All this suggestively express the point that the novel talks about the role of media discourse in distorting and disfiguring the viewers' perceptions with its own ideological manifestations, which havemetamorphosed human beings to consumer beings whobeing devoid of any sophisticated thinking, are allured tothe signs representing nothing.Given the dynamic powers within discourse studies,we believe that Fairclough and Wodak'srespective CDA approaches with regard to mediatization of discourse and images in use,might beappropriate methodologies for researchers trying to explain and understandthe manipulative powers of suchdiscourse in regulating the socio-psychological lives of postmodern consumer beings.

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