abstract

In this paper, by adopting the concept of eco-phenomenology, the awareness of naturalism in Don DeLillo’s *White Noise* (1985) is discussed to address a question—the logic maintained in nature is an opposite of human knowledge or an epistemological aporia which human mind cannot penetrate. In *White Noise*, from the perspective of the protagonist Jack Gladney, DeLillo depicts a life swaying between the fear of death and the senselessness of daily trifles. While death, a natural law of human life, is the causality beyond human intentionality, daily trifles, a necessary sustainment of life, presents a repetitious process without specific aims. That is to say, in the novel, the former embodies an incomprehensive must and the latter a graspable order. With the repetition of routines, this indifferent senselessness of everyday life not only keeps Jack away from the threat of death. It also becomes a utopian desire which he always longs for. However, in the end of the novel, by trying to execute the power of death and kill the one who cuckolds him, Jack realizes the distance between death and daily trifles is like the one between the deviation and the routine of everyday life. While death is what Jack cannot explain from his reason, daily trifles grounds what he has and prevents him from drifting in a nihilistic chaos. In this paper, as eco-phenomenology is taken to read DeLillo’s *White Noise*, the opposition between death and daily trifles would be interpreted as the separation between naturalism and phenomenology—a non-human logic and a human one. Then, focusing the issue of death, two kinds of attitudes—being a killed or a killer—in the novel would be discussed. Lastly, from ambiguity disclosed by the awareness of death in the novel, an epistemological aporia would be probed—how would one understand the alien logic in his/her own logic?

**Key Words:** Eco-phenomenology, everyday life, utopia, *White Noise*