

National Taiwan University  
Graduate Institute of Foreign Languages and Literatures  
2023 Ph.D. Program Admissions Examination  
Subject: American Literature (40%)

Linguistic studies have demonstrated that language has the power to maintain existing dominance in sexist, racist, and ageist discourses that favor particular groups of language users over others. English, for example, contains gender-biased vocabulary and grammatical structures that mirror the historical dominance of men in society. The unquestioned employment of this language by both genders in everyday life reinforces male supremacy and perpetuates sexist inequalities. Likewise, other linguistic styles, such as those that exhibit racism or ageism, demonstrate similar patterns.

Non-mainstream writers, nevertheless, must still navigate the dominant language and its underlying cultural norms, while also developing strategies to subvert and/or transcend them. Choose at least two non-mainstream and/or underprivileged American writers from at least two different literary periods, and discuss how they resist and/or work around the language power of the status quo.