

## Language

... the more flowery a person's speech, he [Rodolphe Boulanger] thought, the more suspect the feelings, or lack of feelings, it concealed. Whereas the truth is that fullness of soul can sometimes overflow in utter vapidness of language, for none of us can ever express the exact measure of his needs or his thoughts or his sorrows; and human speech is like a cracked kettle on which we tap crude rhythms for bears to dance to, while we long to make music that will melt the stars.

**Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*  
Trans. by Francis Steegmuller**