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| *Jailbreak from Language* |
| *Chapter 3 Quote Analysis* |
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| ***Brian Petersen*** |
| ***Period 4*** |

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*“Speech is but a broken light upon the depth of the unspoken.”*

**George Elliot 1819 – 1880**

Is speech the limiting factor in the expression of human emotion? Elliot suggests, as stated in the quote, that speech, or language, is something that is a ‘broken light.’ This broken light is the idea that language cannot truly encompass the entirety of anything of any subject, and thus language becomes a limiting factor as to how humans can express thoughts and ideas. The extent of this effect’s influence varies depending upon the subject being dealt with. The more materialistic, the less of the influence, for abstract concepts, a little stronger and for human emotion, it is quite strong. I agree with this idea that language is simply ‘broken light upon the depth of the unspoken’ because language is just a general representation of physical matter and it cannot express the entirety of abstract concepts and emotions.

To begin with, language limits materialistic things because language does not express everything there is to know about the object being expressed. The word associated with the physical thing does not express all the parts and functions that the object possess. For example, when the world ‘table’ is said, most people do not directly think of the flat surface of which you put things on and the legs that support this surface nor the nails or screws that attach these two elements together to make the table as a whole. As well, it is not intuitive to think of all the functionalities of a table. This is why language limits materialistic things thus language has been but a broken light because it did not express the unknown things related to the table. This example can be used with any number of other tangible, materialistic objects. Language is ambiguous and it becomes even more so for abstract concepts.

Next, language cannot express the entirety of abstract concepts. (For the sake of this paper, an abstract concept is an idea that does not exist in a tangible form). Just like for materialistic things, language does not express all the things that contribute and are related to the abstract concepts nor the intricate influences that are upon humans. This is how language becomes a limiting factor in this sense.