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## Spinoza's Philosophy of Language: Physiology, Imagination, and Education

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Propositions accompanying the thesis

## **Spinoza's Philosophy of Language: Physiology, Imagination, and Education**

**by Li-Chih Lin**

1. Spinoza has a theory of language which is based on his account of the mind's power of imagination.
2. Spinoza's account of imagination is rooted in a physical-physiological mechanism. I call it the physical-physiological mechanism of language.
3. Language as a physical entity shapes the way in which individuals interact with each other. Language constitutes and sustains the *ratio* by which a State maintains itself as an individual.
4. Spinoza's philosophy is essentially eudaimonic. Language has an important role in Spinoza's pedagogy.
5. The prophets as educators address the mind's power of imagination and provoke fear and a continuation of wonder to inspire obedience.
6. Spinoza's use of the geometrical method establishes a semi-artificial language designed for reasoning by addressing the mind's power of imagination directly.
7. With regard to Spinoza's theory of language and his pedagogical concerns, the "free man" should be interpreted as a literary persona.