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**Abstract****Rousseau and Wallon, on the Prelinguistic Sensibility  
for Affective Communication****TERASAKI Keiko**

This article examines the discussion on infant language acquisition and communication with reference to J.-J. Rousseau's treatise *Emile* (1762) and H. Wallon's essays on this treatise (1958 and 1961). Rousseau asserted that there exists "a natural and common language" in the interactions between an infant and a nurse; Wallon referred to this primordial language as a natural and universal language. The two shared a view of language development in infancy as foregrounded by prelinguistic affective communication in vital dynamism of nursing and mothering.

Rousseau's conception was based on the primitive meaning of education, *educare* in Latin, meaning "nourishment" or "nurse," and on the archaic word *infant*, meaning "non-speaking." He described the "education of nature" and "negative education" and pointed out that we rightly enter into learning to live at birth. With regard to these radical statements in *Emile*, Wallon appreciated and recognized the dictum of the modern new education movement in connexion with the rights of the child, and he was aware of the limitations of progressive education; we miss the true nature of education because, as Rousseau pointed out, we misunderstand baby talk as being useless to language acquisition.

Wallon encouraged us to reread *Emile* carefully. In addition, he provided insights into psycho-biological study, including via his works on the nature of the mother-child bond as the postural-emotional function of holding and his understanding of terms symbiosis and cenesthesia.