
Abstract**Rousseau's Thesis of Natural Language:
Linguistic Development and Education in Infancy****Keiko Terasaki**

A paradoxical connection between humans and animals appears in the possibility of oral communication based on a common language. Since ancient times, most discussions on the origin of language have referred to the conditions of common humanity. Many philosophers have tried to search for a primordial language which encompasses double, proto and genesis stages. Jean Jacques Rousseau, in his book, *Emile*, attempted to trace the original language back to a first word, and noticed that a common and natural language in lived experience was founded on an interactive communication between the babies and their caretakers, peculiarly in nourishment, that was the original meaning of education.

In this article, I explore Rousseau's thesis on common and natural languages related to the primordially of linguistic development and education in infancy. His consideration stemmed from a unique standpoint which was both genetic and botanic. He observed the phenomena of natural language in embryo, and elucidated the natural dimensions of language development: in sub-linguistic schema and in intercorporeal interactions between infants and parents as nourishers, i.e., the immediate, affective co-response between crying and lulling, and between babbling and motherese, rich in repetition, accents, and rhythmical voices that sounded onomatopoeic. They enjoyed phatic coaction together: that was the very natural ground of language development.

Rousseau found the field of affective sensations to be the source of expression and the basic condition of development, and the foundation beneath *connaissance* (knowledge and consciousness) as well. Such a field of affective sensations, within conditions of interactive ensembles, forms the common ground of communication, according to M. Merleau-Ponty's thought: sensible experience, communion, co-existence, syncretic sociability, and intersubjectivity. In this way we can, in the light of phenomenology, read Rousseau's discourse on linguistic development and education in early childhood.