



Teaching Chinese in Preschool Using the Montessori Method

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The purpose of the research was to verify if preschool pupils taught in the prepared environment according to the Montessori method are able to learn the Chinese language.

In the introduction to the hereby presented research it was assumed that under certain conditions, namely carefully prepared learning environment, it is possible for the pupils to acquire substantial knowledge in any subject, including as abstract a choice as the Chinese language.

A special 12-months'-long custom-written programme was implemented in one of Poznań private Montessori preschools and consequently realised in a group of 10 pupils at the initial age of 3 and 4. In completion of the programme the pupils' language skills were tested. Given the rather modest scale of the project the author's observations constitute a part of the research to support the measured results.

Both the test and the results are presented at length, grouping the data in a number of charts and graphs. The final results are criss-crossed with the results of Sabina Guz's test taken in the Montessori preschools in Lublin, concerning the Polish language skills.

The results of the Chinese language proved to be on a comparable level to those scored by Polish pupils in their mother tongue, in three out of four tested aspects.

The key to the success was the Montessori method used as a foundation to the programme, and the carefully prepared environment which supported the author's attempts to break the stereotypical scheme of class work. The incorporation in the programme of Montessori sensorial materials enhanced the learning capacity of the pupils, building their hand-eye coordination and tactile sense. Thus introducing the novelty of the subject through the material which the children were familiar with while taking advantage of their sensitive periods simultaneously.