Trabajo Fin de Grado

Montessori Teaching Method analysis from an applied linguistics’ point of view

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Abstract

The research and investigation carried out during five months has shown several features of the Montessori Teaching Method and what does it contribute to in the educational field. Maria Montessori is also presented as the creator and developer of this method and is compared with other famous authors dealing with education and pedagogy.

In order to accomplish this study, the applied linguistics’ perspective has been analysed and exploited. This has exposed that this method deals with all the parts belonging to linguistics as the four main basic skills.

Furthermore, the evolution of children as learners is appreciated leaving aside the fact of exposing children to tests and exams. This has set them aside from an oppressive education in which they are supposed to learn by heart different subjects and information. In this manner, they will have started a way of learning, discovering and enjoying at the same time.

Key words: Montessori Teaching Method, pedagogy, education, applied linguistics, children, basic skills.

La búsqueda e investigación llevadas a cabo durante cinco meses han mostrado diversas características de Método de Enseñanza Montessori y de qué manera contribuye en el campo de la enseñanza. María Montessori es, también, presentada como la creadora y descubridora de éste método y es comparada con otros autores famosos que tienen relación con la educación y la pedagogía.

Para poder realizar este estudio, el punto de vista de la lingüística aplicada ha sido analizado y examinado a fondo. Esto ha propuesto que el método trata cada una de las partes pertenecientes a la lingüística, así como las cuatro destrezas básicas.

Además, se valora la evolución de los niños como aprendices dejando a un lado el hecho de que sean expuestos a exámenes o pruebas. Esto hace que estén apartados de una educación opresiva en la que se ven obligados a aprender de memoria diferentes materias e información. De esta manera, al mismo tiempo, habrán empezado una forma de aprendizaje, descubrimiento y diversión.

Palabras clave: Método de Enseñanza Montessori, pedagogía, educación, lingüística aplicada, niños, destrezas básicas.
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1. Introduction

1.1. Contextual factors

The modern educational world is surrounded by new technologies and interactive items that make the children be more focused on what they are working with than in the main subject to study. What is more, the new teaching methodologies ward off the figure of the teacher from the students. This means that, as the child is centralised in working with the Internet, computers, tablets, smartphones or any kind of new technologies; the relationship within the teacher is almost lost.

This project tries to show different ways of teaching methodologies based on a direct contact in between the children, during a crucial process of their lives; and the teacher, the head that is going to help the child to develop new knowledge but giving, at the same time, as much freedom as needed. This kind of methodology is appreciated in the method proposed by Maria Montessori which is going to be analysed along this investigation.

Furthermore, during the analysis of the method, there will be references to the linguistic field, concretely dealing with applied linguistics. As linguistics is so important for the acquisition of new insights, some of its parts as phonetics or grammar are going to be explored in relation with this teaching method.

1.2. Justification of the choice of the topic

The main reason why I have chosen this topic is because, during the scholar course that took place in between 2016 and 2017, I had the opportunity of going to Poland for studying along that year of my degree. It was because of an Erasmus grant that I received together with my best friend. We both went to Opole, a small city from the south of Poland and, as we study the same degree, English Philology, we also had the same subjects. The thing is that one of the subjects was called “Teaching English to Young Learners”. At the beginning, we were scared since this subject was from a Master course, but these lessons became our favourite one, ironically.

In that subject, were taught to act as teachers in proper way following Maria Montessori’s steps. Every day we had to get into the skin of a real teacher and prepare our lessons with the correspondent exercises destined to very young learners. If we made mistakes,
the teacher was so kind that she helped us as much as she could in the nicest way ever (maybe that was one of the reasons why I enjoyed this subject so much).

But, what amazed me the most, was the fact that one week we had to attend lessons in a kindergarten\(^1\) from Opole. That was really exciting for me to see how children from zero to five years old were learning everything in two different languages at the same time, Polish and English. Having seen this kind of “social experiment” I realised I did not want to become an ordinary teacher that goes to school every single day with the aim of teaching a boring and monotonic lesson. Actually, my dream is to have my own kindergarten in which children can be taught both English and Spanish at the same time during the very first stages of their lives and, of course, to follow the Montessori system.

2. Stage of the investigation

The main goal of this part of the project is to exploit and analyse the main influences extracted from the bibliographical references. First of all, it may be said that many articles from different magazines, several books and some other study-researches have been useful for developing the main topic; the Montessori Teaching Method.

The technique developed by Maria Montessori has been the subject matter for many different anthropologists, psychologists or, in general, people belonging to the educational field. For this reason, a wide number of different researches and ideas in relation to the method can be found. They are going to be presented chronologically.

At the very beginning, the figure of Johan Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) should be presented. He was one of the first influencers in the pedagogical field, since he proposed a change based on the creation of the “popular education”; an educational system for every child. But, what characterizes him most, is the aim of basing the education from a more individual perspective starting from the observation of the child. This was one of the strongest influences for Maria Montessori.

Then, Jean Itard (1777-1834) launched the proposal of the need of submitting the child to school. This means that every single child would had the obligation of attending school. This objective would be committed taking into a count several kind of adequate materials and tools for children’s education.

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\(^1\) German term created by Fiedrich Fröbel which designs a play for children during their pre-school education.
The perspective of Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852) was one of the strongest, or even the strongest influences for Maria Montessori. Froebel stabilised a big different in between mind and object saying that there was no relationship among both terms. For Maria Montessori, the difference between them was not so distant. Starting from this main idea of mind and object, Maria Montessori started her pedagogical teaching method.

Also, Eduard Seguin (1812-1880) deserves to be mentioned, inasmuch as he was one the most famous pedagogics from the century. Maria Montessori went to Paris in order to meet Seguin and Itard and extract some ideas from them.

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) appears in almost every literary work from Maria Montessori. The author affirms that Freud supposed a big impact in her way of thinking. Both Freud and Montessori, believed that the first five years of the human life were sensitive periods that determine humans’ future. In this way, basing on Freud’s point of view, Maria Montessori stood up for an education that starts from zero to five years old, instead of stating from six years old (as in many other cultures).

Later on, John Dewey (1859-1952) came up with the idea of a psychology based on the education as a discipline, in between the behaviour sciences and the educative practice, parting from the experience. His proposal says that the bases of the educative theory are the anthropology and the psychology. Also, he was against the traditional education, as he defends that the school must be a “social laboratory” in which the human should be analysed as a creative figure. On the other hand, Maria Montessori sees the metaphysics as the basis of the education, being on this way against Dewey’s ideal of an educational system standing on letters-studies field.

As an introduction of this part, these six authors have been presented. They were some famous entities who dealt with the main topic of this project, the educational system, before Maria Montessori did so. After the study and influence of the Montessori Teaching Method, we find that there were some other psychologists or pedagogics who agreed or, in the other way round, disagreed Maria Montessori.

Firstly, the entity of Alfred Adler (1870-1937) was born the same year as Maria Montessori. Both bet on a peaceful education for the human race and they worked together since the vision of a child pending on an adult by his side and all the environment required for the child’s education. Montessori’s Method and Dewey’s positive discipline are nowadays present in many different positions of the society (schools, families…).

Ovide Decroly (1871-1932) was one of the figures who set the principles of the New School. “School has to be designed for the child, not the child for the school” (Decroly, 1907).
3. Maria Montessori

The main character of the matter of this project is Maria Tecla Artemisia Montessori, better known as Maria Montessori. She was born in Chiaravalle, Italy, in 1870 a date marked by several and important political and social changes.

Maria Montessori can be denoted as a multifaceted woman due to along her life she was a scientific, a doctor, a teacher, a pedagogue, a philosopher, a physiatrist, an anthropologist, a biologist and a psychologist. Taking into account the crucial period of time in which Maria Montessori lived, she was a kind of “heroine” for those women who were committed to not study, to not work, just staying at home for cleaning, maintaining the house and being the
servants of their families. The fact that women were independent and self-sufficient in those decades was not well seen, since the figure of men was more important than the women’s one, they were supposed to have a more special role in life than women. So, having the career of Maria Montessori was like an achievement that almost no woman could get. With the passing of time this has changed so much, but still, nowadays, there people who think that women are worthless than men. In other words, our author broke through the barriers of the female life of that time.

Firstly, Maria Montessori decided to study engineering and, as she got graduated, she was encouraged by her parents to take part in the teaching field, although she changed her mind and, finally, she became a doctor. This also supposed an opposition from her father who thought that medicine was only a male issue. But, this did not stop her from achieving what she wanted to. While being a doctor, she started to work within retarded children, children who suffered mental problems and illnesses, in summary, children that used to have complex behaviours because of different reasons (illnesses, personal problems, behaviour-disorders…). According to this, Maria Montessori defended that children with a mental deficiency needed a higher level of pedagogy instead of giving them any kind of medicine as pills. “Personal health is related to self-control and to the worship of life in all its natural beauty-self-control bringing with it happiness, renewed youth, and long life.” (Montessori, 1949: 95). Subsequently, in 1901, Dr. Montessori took the decision of submerging herself into philosophy and anthropology studies. It was then when she realised that she wanted to dedicate her life to children’s education. After that, she created some schools merged under the name of Casa dei Bambini ² (House of Children) in which little kids got a notable educational progress since the age when they were born, until the first five years of their lives.

By the beginning of the 20th century, the influence of Maria Montessori in the educational field was so deep that many countries of central Europe as Germany, The Netherlands, France, Spain, Switzerland and, of course, Italy, were witnesses of the Montessori phenomenon. But, with the setting of the First World War in 1918, many schools were bombed, especially in Germany. Mussolini wanted to join those schools that dealt with the Montessori system to the fascist youth movement, but Dr. Montessori refused to do that, so that she expanded her ideas out of Europe and all over the world. By 1920, there were Montessori schools in different parts of the world such as Argentina, China, India, Australia, The United States, The United Kingdom, Japan or Korea.

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² (House of Children) Name of several schools created by Maria Montessori which were adapted for children and their own necessities.
It may be said that the most influenced areas by the Montessori system were India, Spain, The United States and finally, The Netherlands where Maria Montessori spent the final years of her life. Notwithstanding that strong influence, The United States gave her the major support, where she took part in many different educational movements and nations as the National Education Association in which our author developed her own programme and showed it to other educators and philosophers.

Nonetheless, in 1946 Maria Montessori decided to move back to Europe and settle in The Netherlands, concretely Amsterdam and opened some centres in which she implanted her own methodology. Furthermore, she wrote some of her most famous works as *The Absorbent Mind* which has been so useful and followed by many educators of the last century and in which she explains the principal basis of her teaching methodology. It was there, in The Netherlands where Maria Montessori died at the age of eighty one, but, having left a new way of thinking and teaching to the following educators and people from her discipline. It was a new way of thinking since she was a reference for many other women who were being repressed with no goal to achieve in life and hence a new way of educating children since they were born.

4. The Montessori Teaching Method

4.1. The Method

Having introduced a summary of some biographical facts about our author, this part of the project will be devoted to the Montessori system itself.

First of all, to take this scenario into consideration, the origins of this system are located in a deep observation of children in the way they live in their houses and in the way they interact with their surroundings.

The alterations suffered by our homes and inside them for the familiar institution, have endangered the children education and this new situation creates a serious warning for the world of pedagogy. The environment that surrounds children is essential for their education and behaviour. When every single person is born, save the fact of suffering a mental problem, has the ability of learning everything more easily during the very first years of life. It means that since we are born, our brains are capable of absorbing every kind of new information and knowledge but, as we are getting older, is more difficult for us to acquire new data although it does not mean that it is impossible. Following Maria Montessori’s ideas, the first five years of life are crucial for children. During this period the transcendence of the unconscious and subconscious appear during the human development. What is more, the stage of life that takes
place along the first three years constitutes, in accordance with Dr. Montessori and other famous anthropologists, the period of “creative building”. This is called so as this is the stage in which people start developing their creativeness.

To start a deep analysis of the children’s learning process, we must deal with “the imaginary”. Maria Montessori used to call “the imaginary” to all those mental images from children as from their direct or indirect experiences with “the other”; the one who is not me, but share my own features. This idea of “the imaginary” can be separated into true and fiction. Children’s minds are so creative that can formulate more fictive thoughts than real ones, they are supposed to be more genuine than adults. During this process of “the imaginary” those mental images try to order the reality that is being perceived by children. Usually, we tend to look for a “collective imaginary” which is the reality that people acquire in common; how humans understand the world. We make use of words and images in order to shape a reality. “El hombre tiene que hacerse a sí mismo; tiene que asumir sus facultades de tal modo que se sienta dueño de su personalidad ante las grandes eventualidades del mundo actual y con ello todo el dinamismo que exigen las circunstancias” (Helming, 1970: 10).

The Montessori pedagogy is meant to be the reference of this situation. As she founded her first school in 1907, Casa dei Bambini, she gave the responsibility to other people of educating others. Although she wrote some different works, she preferred the contact within the practice so that she concreted, developed, leaded and fomented the realisation of her pedagogical method.

The main idea of the Montessori system was to know the one who is being educated in a deep way since that person can only be educated. She stablished a relationship in between the subject and his biological, psychological, psychic and socio-cultural dowries. We have to bear in mind that not every people live with the same conditions. Starting from a biological point, many people are born with some health problems as, Autism, Down syndrome, Bipolarity or any other kind of retardation. Following Aristotle’s words, humans come to the world being “scraped tables” ³ and are ready to start learning anything, unless there is any kind of mental problems. To give a brief example, if there is a child who is born with Down Syndrome, the attempt of teaching this person, for example, how to speak his mother tongue, will carry a longer process of teaching than if he were an ordinary child and, maybe, it would include the need of different teaching methodologies.

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³ From Latin: Tabula Rasa. Means to not have information in our brains because of not being in contact with the world.
Also, from the environmental point of view, it must be said that everything that surrounds the child will affect him, in a nice or in a bad way. Imagine this situation: a child is living in a house with his parents and they spend the whole day arguing and, also, they taste drugs. What will be this child’s behaviour? He will be an easy person to argue-with and the most probable issue is that, in a future, this child will be a drug taster too. What I want to show with this is the fact that every little mistake during our very first period of life, childhood, will be developed in our brains; as children absorb information as sponges.

Maria Montessori conceives the term pedagogy as a vital element for humans so that every pedagogical approach has to deal with the principle of life: the totality of the man and, particularly, his “mysterious” beginning in the process of learning while living, “We live for living” (Helming, 1970: 24). In addition to this, Dr. Montessori was ensured that she wanted to respect the free-imagination and the spontaneity of the child’s soul. She did not want to interrupt a process in which the child was creating new things in his mind while imagining and discovering new knowledge. In her eagerness of finding the proper person that impulses the child through his personal development, Maria Montessori focusses her thesis in Bergson’s Élan Vital⁴ and the Libido⁵ of Freud; but, finally, she decides to focus on the term Horme⁶ “vital process that makes the child develop himself while being unconscious” (Helming, 1970: 25). Subsequently, Dr. Montessori coincides with some recent outstanding anthropologists and biologists as Adolf Portmann that prefers the term “construction” rather than the term “development”.

This process of vital pedagogy submerges the child into an innate process that ends up with a person that acts and thinks in a free and conscious way and, at the same time, this contributes to the awakening of the his spirit. This process is better known as “self-construction” and is facilitated to the child by an adult. Likewise, this educational help has to follow the vital phases of the child and, also, the “sensitive periods” that take place during childhood.

4.1.1. The Absorbent Mind

To understand that educational system, the term of absorbent mind need to be introduced. It makes reference to the capacity that humans have to acquire new information, feelings and sensations in their brains. The absorbent mind assimilates the fundamental

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⁴ French expression belonging to Bergson that makes reference to the term “vital impulse”.
⁵ Latin expression that makes reference to sexual desire.
⁶ Term that refers to the personification of the active energy.
acknowledge that are set in the pre-consciousness, the part of our brains that keeps the information which we are not conscious of but, at the same time, we are not being unconscious of it, so that part of this information will be assimilated and some other will not. For Maria Montessori, the execution of this term was followed by the notion of “authority” in order to carry through an authoritarian pedagogical system. “La educación no es impartida por el maestro, si no que se trata de un proceso natural a través del cual el niño crece y se desarrolla con el mundo que le rodea” (Helming, 1970: 9). This method was generally based in the observation of the child from an adult’s point of view. “The child is the human’s father” or “an inner teacher” were some sentences that settled the basis of the Montessori system in which the child is the author of its learning period and is not controlled by nobody else.

Maria Montessori studied the deep psychology in relation with her vision about the child’s behaviour. Her ideal about this type of psychology is found in her work La mente del bambino (1949). Her approaches to this gave more importance to the personality construction, as she conceives life as “the unconscious of the child”, “the absorbent spirit” and “Mneme” or “Memoriam”. “Un niño descuidado que sonríe a la persona que se fija en él, comunicando así las primeras emociones de su alma, está mucho más a merced de su semejante de lo que cree”. (Montessori, 1949: 52).

4.2. Casa dei Bambini

“We Italians have elevated our word casa to the almost sacred significance of the English word home.” (Montessori, 1937: 20)

As it has been mentioned before, Maria Montessori created La Casa dei Bambini, in English, The House of Children. This invention had the purpose of propitiate a detailed place in which every single corner was devoted to children. This type of school had its own rules and features, although the three main ones are “a humble teacher”, “an adapted environment” and “scientific material”. In addition, it is interesting to mention that about twenty thousand schools are making use of the Montessori system today over all the continents.

To start with, this type of school was propitiated for children from eighteen months old to three years old. As Maria Montessori defended, “the early education is the key for a society improvement” (Montessori, 1949: 52). Since children are older than eighteen months, they are supposed to start the so-called development stage. Children were learning being leaded by a

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7 Greek term that makes reference to a Greek Muse; the muse of memory.
8 Latin term that refers to “memory”.

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teacher who was prepared for giving them freedom enough in order to interact with their atmosphere. The educator must be patient with the child answering to his necessity of “leave me doing it alone”. This means that children are free but, at the same time, they receive the help needed in order to facilitate this freedom. It is said that adults usually see children as nervous, restless and apathetic beings that are not able to understand the reality as it is. So, for this reason, the teacher should not give them any kind of prize or punishment depending on how they behave like. Montessori schools allow the child to have his own space for his intimate learning process and, in this way, to let him enough freedom to develop his mind.

Dealing with the structure of Casa dei Bambini, it must be said that it was organised in a very careful way. The school counts on delimited spaces, a comfort or resting zone (no cribs), a lecturing corner, a mirror; furthermore, everything is adapted to the children’s height, toys are well-organised and no heaped, light colours are used followed by multiple pictures and photos and, obviously, all of this is submerged into aesthetic order and sense.

More deeply studied, on the inside, the school in full of little light chairs and tables for children to make use of them, also the tables are round for letting children cooperate by teams and, in addition, the round form of the tables facilitates children the possibility of taking-and-leaving materials and tools on them. The school also should have a big closet divided into several drawers (one per child). This fact gives autonomy and freedom to children in order to keep their materials by their own and try to not mix them within his classmates’ ones. Walls must be full of windows or big panels, so that the children can be able to see the big green area of the playground surrounded by natural elements which children are in touch with, as well as light and fresh air. This happens in spring time and in summer time but, during winter time, it is recommended to decorate the windows in order to create a pleasant atmosphere or even, in autumn, children can recollect leaves from the ground for decorating the room.

4.3. The method in the daily routines

Leaving aside the scholar place where children were educated by teachers, the other half of the education of children was composed by their day-to-day lives. In their daily routines at home, parents must familiarize children with the home-work, since in the place where the children live within their parents, will be an adequate place for carrying out the home-tasks. Moreover, as the child comes in the house, he must take off his cap, his coat and change his shoes and, of course, he should help the others to do so. If in our civilization, taking into account the big technological and scientific advance, there is no a protected placed devoted to the child;
if there are no responsible adults, whether teachers or politicians, that guarantee a place in the human society, the child will not be able of going on in the path of renovation and increase of our culture, giving place to a process of decadence.

Finally, to end up with the Montessori Teaching Method, this project should allude to the required materials; everything that is designed as “material” takes a precise place in the Montessori system. Usually, we all can make a bad use of material if we are not well informed about it, for example, the famous Montessori project of the anti-stress bottle. It is about a plastic bottle that is full of water mixed with soft plastic materials, or sometimes with glitter dust. Its main function is to make people be relaxed by spinning it around. For Maria Montessori, the materials should be colourful and fashionably designed although, in relation with toys, is not as attractive and eye-catching as them. This materials are conceived with the aim of satisfying the children’s necessities, usually hidden and unseen by adults. The Montessori tools do not tend to liberate a reaction in the child, but they try to elicit an activity to the subject, in other words, this kind of materials make the children be implicated in an activity and focus their attention on what they are doing. Dr. Montessori adopted some materials from some famous French doctors as Itard and Seguin. Seguin, by his part, developed a sensorial activity in order to excite the child’s senses; that is why he was one of the biggest influences for Maria Montessori. Nevertheless, this part of the method will be exploited more deeply in the next section.

As summary, just reduce this fragment saying that the Montessori Teaching Method used to have its own rules and adequate places in order to satisfy children’s necessities and needs while their learning process. We find this method concluded in the autonomy of children and the level of freedom they used to have while they were being taught since they counted on a prepared teacher who delivered them liberty enough to discover the world by themselves.

5. Tools and environment

A certain study of Dr. Montessori’s approach determines that, for making her educational system possible, there are some factors required to take into account. Following our author, Montessori, words the modern education had to avoid the use of the old methodology and formalities so as to break up with the antiquate stamen and teaching-and-learning cannons:
Si la educación siempre ha de concebirse según los mismos criterios anticuados de mera transmisión de conocimientos, poco se puede esperar de ella en cuanto a la mejora del futuro del hombre. ¿Pues de qué sirve transmitir el conocimiento si el desarrollo total del individuo se queda atrás? (Montessori, 1949: 44).

In the last headland of the project the Montessori Teaching Method has been made some references to the tools or materials and environment required to let it happen. In this section these two basics of the Method are going to be exploited from another different point of view. To give a brief example, a study of non-adapted materials for children is going to be presented, as Dr. Montessori defended the idea of adapting tools for the child’s needs.

Additionally, the factor of the working-atmosphere required for this method is going to be exploited focused in a different way, as for example, discussing the idea of working with children at schools versus the aim of working with them at home. So, different points are going to be a matter of analysis:

5.1. Usual or adapted materials

Prior researches suggest that Maria Montessori looked for materials that were adapted to the child but, what is true, is the fact that almost all the Montessorian materials has preserved their origins. She modified the materials that were directed to the children in order to adjust them to her educational system’s rules. When we talk about adapted materials, we make reference to those stuff that are on track to stimulate the five human senses: sight, audition, taste, smell and touch. Dr. Montessori used to make use of natural resources as plants and flowers for creating such materials that would develop the sense of smell. In terms of touch, Maria Montessori tried to apply as many different textures as possible in her instruments so that children could keep in touch with them and, of course, to know and discover new surfaces.

A very nice example of stimulating the touch sense is the importance of working with clay of different colours; on this way the child can create different objects and accomplish one step closer to creativity. Dealing with the sense of sight, our author chose different vivid colours for her scholar decoration in order to catch and stimulate children’s eyes. When a thing is more colourful than other, it is more attractive. Finally, to motivate the auditory part of the human’s physiognomy, she tried to play with instruments as triangles or bells that produced different sounds. As it is notable, this materials answered to children’s educational needs.

By the other hand, when we speak about non-adapted materials, we tend to make reference to ordinary toys that usually every child has. Toys had become into a commercial object created for exploiting the sensorial capacity of children and not to make them happy and
enjoy. Actually, Maria Montessori did not want to eliminate toys from the children’s routines, but she wanted them to keep in touch with another different kind of material apart from that standard one. To give an illustration, the traditional wooden horse rocker is usually ridden by a child because this person wants to have fun and is not riding this wooden horse in order to learn or acquire new acknowledge.

Considering this idea of differentiating both types of stuff, Dr. Montessori established a list which contained every single tool required and needed for her educational system. Every material is solid, not so big nor small and carefully well-finished so that these tools can last more than the rest of materials. Such stuff was:

a) **The pink tower**: it consists on ten cubes or blocks that are not same-size so that they are gradually decreasing from the biggest to the smallest one. The child has to order them by size.

b) **The brown stairs**: it is formed by ten wooden prisms all painted in the same colour and the only different between them is the thickness that, gradually, gets thicker or fatter so that the child can appreciate the differences between them.

c) **The red rods**: this is a set of red sticks that have different length. The first one lengths one meter and the rest are decreasing ten centimetres less each one. Children have to order them by staggering.

d) **The cylinders blocks**: this game is divided into four different blocks. The very first block counts on four long sticks and ten cylinders that fit on the sticks. The second block is formed by a set of ten cylinders of the same height but with a different diameter. In the third block, the cylinders vary on height and diameter and some of them seem to be bigger than others. Finally, the fourth and last block is made of a three-dimensional variation, it means that it is composed by a set of different objects in 3D.

e) **The colours tablets**: this tool is formed by small boxes that are composed by three small boards; one yellow, one blue and another red one. The child has to order the
different boards depending on their colours. For example, the yellow one within another yellow one and so.

f) The chest of drawers: it is about a cupboard made of six drawers and each drawer has six different geometrical figures. The child has to order them and insert them into the several drawers. This exercise stimulates the sight and the touch senses.

g) Touchy boards: this material is formed by smooth surfaces and rough ones in order to establish the differences between both textures. The child has to pair the same textures.

As it is notable, the Montessori material leaves the child be part of a process in which he is able to find his own errors and mistakes and, in this way, try to correct them in the better way possible. “El hombre tiene que hacerse a sí mismo” (Helming, 1970: 49). Within the use of her own materials, Dr. Montessori wanted to facilitate the order of the chaos that affects the child’s reality. Furthermore, the child is not obligated to learn but he has been motivated to do it, so the process of learning is not supposed to be a weight or a heavy stuff for him. We have to bear in mind that when a person is indebted to do anything, that person will not enjoy doing so or, in the other way round, he or she will hate what is being done. Also, if it is about adults, it would be easier to force them to do things by compulsory but, in the case of children, this would be a total mess. Actually, that happens in our daily lives; we only have to focus on those children that go to school and, as soon as their parents leave them alone in school, they start to cry since they do not want to stay there. Of course, this is a difficult task for teachers to try to motivate them if they refuse to learn, that is why we must try to make them feel motivated to learn from the precise moment they are alive. That is what Maria Montessori tried to show in her educational system and this is one of the most important reasons why it became such an important system and why it still is so relevant nowadays.

Today, up to the year 2018, it is common to see how children’s ways of learning and acquiring new acknowledge has changed. New technologies have marked a before and an after in our lives. In this moment, children are accustomed to have a smart phone, a tablet, a laptop or any type of technologies that we usually have around us. It is sad to see how life has gone upside down and how the traditional values of teaching are lost, giving children the inopportune of perceiving the reality as people used to do some years ago. The reality of children does not go further than a screen, a keyboard or whatever interactive machine they
have. Thus, analysing and re-studying educational systems such as the Montessori one, can lead us to re-start making use of the old methods at the same time that the influence of the new technologies is added.

5.2. House vs School

Maria Montessori spent many years of her active life as a researcher where she discovered the enthusiasm and the interest of pre-school-age-children for learning; so that she decided to build a proper environment for them. The Montessori schools became so popular that important people, as the royalty or the head of the state, went to Italy to meet her and have a look at those schools.

Anne George (1927-2001) was the first Montessori-trained American Teacher. Following Maria Montessori’s steps, she created her own school within the Montessori system and formed by people from the middle-upper class. This collaborated in the expansion of the method through many parts of the world, especially in the United States, and, of course, in the apparition of new Montessori schools.

However, after having explained the function and structure of the Casa dei Bambini before, we may throw the following question: “is it possible to apply the Montessori Method at home?”

Well, as stated by Jane Ronald (1929-) in her book The Schoolhome: Rethinking Schools for Changing Families (1992), it should be taken into account the environmental resources of the child since this person can deal with a “disordered family”⁹. Many years ago, the fact of belonging to a “disordered family” was not well seen by society since the circumstances were quite different in comparison with nowadays. Homosexual parents were not well-accepted, economical problems were so close up because of several Civil Wars in different parts of the world, or health problems as epidemics were real issues of the 19th and 20th centuries. This kind of matters impacted on the children’s educational process.

And there is still more variability in that supposedly unchanging invention of nature, for an increasing number of couples are delaying childrearing or opting against it altogether, a growing proportion of the population is living alone, and a surprising number of adults, both unmarried and married, with children and without, are re-entering the homes of their parents. (Roland, 1992: 7).

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⁹ This makes reference to families having parents divorced, economical problems, health problems, etc.
As mentioned in point 4.2 Casa dei Bambini, Dr. Montessori disagreed at the point of translating the word “casa” by the English version “house”.

Montessori’s description of what the literal home might one day become captures the spirit of that metaphorical home named school: “It may be said to embrace its inmates with the tender, consoling arms of a woman. It is the giver of moral life, of blessings; it cares for, it educates and feeds the little ones.” Her idealized version of home is echoed by the image of a womb she invoked in the talks on education and peace she delivered in Europe in the 1930s. (Roland, 1992: 13).

Following those words, what our author wanted to show within this idea of “casa” vs “house” was the similitude of the term “casa” to the term “home” instead of “house”. When we talk about a “house” we make reference to the physical aspect of a building in which people live in; moreover, dealing with the word “home” we are referring to the fact of connivance among some family members and everything it implies. Maria Montessori opposed to such comparison of meanings and defended the idea of creating schools with a homelike touch in which children would not feel prisoned and obliged to start their learning process.

When we are children, we tend to see our homes like the best place to stay, as if it were a refuge in which everything is possible for us. In this manner, it is said that the Montessori schools make children feel like home. “Over and beyond this, the children in the Casa dei Bambini would have a double sense of belonging: they would feel that they belonged to this home and also that it belonged to them.” (Roland, 1992: 13).

To end up with this part of the project, just summarize the fact of applying the Montessori Method at home saying that it is possible to do it by connecting the school and the house by one word; home. Children must feel that they are learning as something natural, not as a compulsory life fact so that they react in a confident way being mature enough to face their leaning progresses. By the other hand, obliging children to do so, would change their points of view and, of course, their behaviour in the education field.
6. An applied linguistics’ point of view

This fragment will be devoted to how the Montessori Teaching Method deals within the applied linguistics field. Then, it is going to be divided into several topics, such as phonetics or writing, in which the method is going to be analysed more deeply.

First of all, the terms linguistics and applied linguistics must be described and differentiated. The first one, linguistics as the Cambridge Dictionary of English ¹⁰ stated, is “the scientific study of the structure and development of language in general or of particular languages” (Cambridge English Dictionary, 2018). Secondly, following the Linguistics Society of America (LSA)¹¹ words, “the term 'applied linguistics' refers to a broad range of activities which involve solving some language-related problem or addressing some language-related concern” (Tucker, 2012: 1); in other words, this term investigates the problems of language in relation with the real life. As it is notable, the main different among both terms is that the first one is more general, meanwhile the second one is devoted to certain cases of our daily lifes. In addition, some fathers of linguistics as Noam Chomsky (1928-) related this term to its implementation to children’s education saying that

The child, placed in a linguistic community, is presented with a set of sentences that is limited and often imperfect, fragmented, and so on. In spite of this, in a very short time he succeeds in "constructing," in internalizing the grammar of his language, developing knowledge that is very complex, (…) (Chomsky, 1979: 80)

The link between the Montessori Method and “applied linguistics” is the widespread use of the language. People use the language for carrying out almost everything and for relating with other people. The language can be spoken, written or mimics but, all in all, the purpose is the same, to connect with our surroundings. Dr. Montessori presented her way of working by means of spoken language. This means, she tried to interact with children by using the spoken language, not the mimics’ one nor the written one. She defended the fact of using the oral communication in order to stimulate the children’s brains by tasks like singing songs for making them enjoy the process.

¹⁰ Created in 1995, is the most popular dictionary among the British English language.
¹¹ Linguistics Society of America (1924). American association that deals within the linguistics field in a scientific way.
The field of linguistics counts on seven different levels that compound it. These levels are introduced and defined below following some famous scholars’ quotations and thesis such as:


b. **Phonology**: “It is primarily concerned with how we interpret and systematize sounds. It deals with the system and pattern of the sounds which exist within particular languages.” (Kelly, 2000: 87).

c. **Morphology**: “Morphology, the study of forms, is the branch of linguistics that deals with the internal structure of complex words.” (Schleicher, 1859: 37)

d. **Lexicology**: “Lexicology is a branch of linguistics, the science of language. The term ‘lexicology’ is composed of two Greek morphemes: lexis meaning ‘word, phrase’ (hence lexicos ‘having to do with words’) and logos which denotes ‘learning, a department of knowledge’. Thus, the literal meaning of the term is ‘the ‘lexicology’ science of the word.” (Ginzburg, 1979: 6).

e. **Syntax**: “Syntax is the branch of linguistics that concentrates on the formation of sentences.” (Haegeman, 2006: 4).

f. **Semantics**: “Linguistic semantics is the study of how languages organize and express meanings.” (Kreidler, 1998: 3)

g. **Pragmatics**: “Pragmatists focus on what is not explicitly stated and on how we interpret utterances in situational contexts. They are concerned not so much with the sense of what is said as with its force, that is, with what is communicated by the manner and style of an utterance.” (Finch, 2000: 162).

All these levels form part of the linguistics field but, focusing of the applied linguistics version, this project is going to deal with just some linguistic levels that have been analysed according to the Montessori Method as for example, phonetics, the grammar the English levels or the methodology followed by the method for evaluating children. I have focused this part of the project on these levels since, from my personal point of view, the method followed by Maria Montessori gives such a big importance to the oral communication but, this is not meant to leave aside other important facts of linguistics as, for example, phonetics. That is why this fragment is an investigation of how Dr. Montessori paid attention to all the different categories or abilities of the communicative perspective and if the results were good enough and better or not than the traditional way of teaching-and-learning methodologies.
6.1. Basic Skills

First of all, in order to study how the Montessori Teaching Method works on children from an applied linguistics’ point of view, it must be analysed how the four main basic skills are exploited by our author. From the communicative perspective, there are four main basic abilities or skills that are better known as listening, speaking, reading and writing (also named LSRW skills). These capabilities are present by order of acquisition so that, first, a person hears and listen sounds (words, noises, onomatopoeias, etc.), then he learns how to produce those sounds with the organs of speech and, finally, this person should know how to reproduce those words by writing and reading them. This is why these four skills are divided into receptive; the ones that are directed to the person and then he receives information (listening and reading), and the productive ones; in which the person generates information by producing (speaking and writing). Thereby, this abilities are going to be presented later on.

6.1.1. Listening

The listening ability is the first one to be acquired by a person. When we are born, we are not conscious of the fact that the only manner of learning and acquiring information is by hearing and listening to our surrounding. Then, this person will learn and start evolving the other capabilities or skills as speaking, writing or reading.

Accordingly, listening is the first skill that people acquire in their native languages. This is one of the receptive skills as the subject who listens acquires information by hearing or listening to it so that he receives the communicative action. Later on, our brains process such information and generate new acknowledge for us. Unless a person is born with any health problem or disability, the majority of people have the ability of listening. If not, the process of learning a communicative process will be different, as by mimics of symbols language.

6.1.2. Speaking

The second skill to be developed is the speaking one. The second step after listening a sound is to reproduce it by the organs of speech\textsuperscript{12}. So, in other words, the ability of speaking in an innate skill that almost everybody has, unless they suffer any kind of disability, and consist on producing sounds (usually words) by the organs of speech. This happens when our brains

\textsuperscript{12} Organs that make possible the production of speaking. These organs are lips, teeth, alveolar ridge, hard palate, velum (soft palate), uvula, glottis and several parts of the tongue.
and our vocal tracts are connected in order to produce a communicative act. The vocal cords vibrate and produce sound that goes out by the articulation of our mouth.

In terms of the Montessori Method, our author proposed the idea of teaching how to speak, depending on the age of the children. This means that she proposed three different groups divided into children from between zero and three years old; another group of children from between three and six years old and, finally, another group compounded by children from six years old until twelve years old. As this teaching-and-learning process in divided into three groups, the level of each group is also different; the older the children are, the more level of language they will have.

The idea is to introduce a higher level of language step by step and little by little. The first year of their life, babies are characterized by the identification of their senses with their environments. As they cannot speak or talk when they are too little, they absorb all the information that is being thrown to them. Here is where Maria Montessori focused her thesis of *The Absorbent Mind*, based on the easiness of children’s brains to get information. “The 'absorbent mind' welcomes everything, puts its hope in everything, accepts poverty equally with wealth, adopts any religion and the prejudices and habits of its countrymen, incarnating all in itself. This is the child!” (Montessori, 1949: 1). The main way of teaching language to little children is to integrating them in conversation so that they feel comfortable enough about what they are doing. Then, other options as telling stories, watching films or reading letters are good the progressive development of the language.

Once the children interrelate the act of listening, comprehending what they listen to and the fact of reproducing words in order to reply to what they are hearing, the communicative act is being processed.

### 6.1.3. Writing

This section of the project will be devoted to the writing field or, in other words, how Dr. Montessori dealt with the writing category. Moreover, it must be said that Maria Montessori defended the idea of learning how to write before reading. This theory is collected in the so many different studies and researches as the T. Ryan’s, a student from the University of Wisconsin, named *The Importance of writing before reading; How Montessori materials and curriculum support this learning process* and elaborated in 2015. This research approves that by making using of the Montessori Method, the learning of writing before reading shows a more effectiveness and efficacy in the child’s self-esteem.
To begin with, as the Cambridge Dictionary of English states, writing is “the skill or activity of producing words on a surface” (Cambridge English Dictionary, 2018). So, summarizing, this part is related to how children from Montessori schools represents the words in the written form.

The methodology followed by Maria Montessori was such a different one from the traditional ones used in the ordinary primary schools. Firstly, children are shown the form of the lower-case-letters. Once their brains know the form of one letter, they are given a paper containing different dots that form the structure of a letter. Children have to follow and link those dots in order to recreate the supposed letter. Repeating this technique by writing all the letters, make children memorize them while they are enjoying doing so. This technique is known as “dotted letters”. Meanwhile they are learning a letter, the teacher does not tell the child the name of the letter but its sound. For example, the letter “c” would be taught as its spelling; letter “/si:/”.

Once the children have a first contact with the letters of the alphabet (not using capitals), they should start writing basic words. Also, practicing the writing skill at home, supported by the parents’ help, will make the child evolve this ability and will learn faster than if he only practices it in the school.

That is the way in which Dr. Montessori focused her aim of teaching and developing the writing skill while, at the same time, they are having fun and enjoying of what they are doing.

6.1.4. Reading

Finally, last but not least, the reading skill is another productive one as it implies comprehension from the child, the processing of information and the acquisition of it in order to understand what is being read. Consequently, it consists on giving sense to the written symbols and signs.

For Maria Montessori, the reading task was seen from a different perspective. She supported the idea of start its learning process by a phonological reading. This was possible as children from Montessori schools first learned the sound of the letters. Once the child learns several consonants, e.g. /m, c, t, and p/, and one single vowel, e.g. /a/, they are able to form basic words; for example /cat/. One famous task applied in the Montessori schools in one based on using some boxes full of plastic letters; the child has to pick up one letter, blindly, and start forming a word. The more language culture the child has, the more words he will create.
Furthermore, practicing story-telling and reading books at home are some useful activities for parents to help children develop their language level.

6.2. Phonetics

According to the definition of “phonetics” in David Crystal’s *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics* published in 2008, this term is described as

The science which studies the characteristics of human sound-making, especially those sounds used in speech, and provides methods for their description, classification and transcription. Three branches of the subject are generally recognized: (a) articulatory phonetics is the study of the way speech sounds are made (‘articulated’) by the vocal organs; (b) acoustic phonetics studies the physical properties of speech sound, as transmitted between mouth and ear; (c) auditory phonetics studies the perceptual response to speech sounds, as mediated by ear, auditory nerve and brain. (Crystal, 2008: 389).

By contrast, despite its similarity within the term phonology, both are connected but they do not study the same. Phonology deals with how sounds are interpreted by humans, meanwhile “phonetics” are related to the way we do it.

In relation to the Montessori Method, what is the connection between Dr. Montessori’s way of teaching and phonetics? Maria Montessori focused her teaching method on the use of the oral communication so, in other words, it is related to phonetics. The thing is that when a child conceives the sound of one word for the very first time, this person get used to reproduce that sound in that way. For example, the proper manner of saying the word “mother” in British English (BrE) would be /mʌðə/ but, every single child will reproduce that word in the way they listen it for the few first times. As has been mentioned in some other parts along this project, children’s brains are like sponges since they are born until they are thirteen years old and, furthermore, the first six years of their lives are crucial for their learning period. So, whatever information a child acquires in the beginning-stage of his life, this person will, probably, never forget such data.

At the time of introducing letters and symbols to children, Maria Montessori established several principles in order to facilitate its teaching process. What our author defended the most was the aim of pronouncing and repeating each letter several times so that the child can get the way reproducing them. “Repetition is an extremely important part of development in early childhood” (Chitwood, 2013: 17). Also, making use of the lower-case-letters will make its
learning more easily than if they are taught in capital-letters. Another remarkable advice to bear in mind is to change the letters order; to not follow the ordinary order of ABC… and choose a more adequate order for children to memorize them better. Finally, as many other Montessorian materials, Dr. Montessori created a movable alphabet 13 which allowed children to play with the letters and establish a personal order that let them learn the alphabet in the easiest way.

For children, showing trust and respect is the most important phenomenon coming up from their parents as this is the way of making them self-confident of what they are doing. As Deb Chitwood proposed in his book Montessori at Home of School: How to Teach Grace and Courtesy published in 2013, children are not empty glass that parents have to fill of education and new information, but they have an inner guide that allows them to develop their internal way of knowing and learning. “A 2-6 yr. old is not an empty vessel for us to fill with knowledge. Instead, we acknowledge that our child has an inner guide that leads her, in only a few years, from the apparent helplessness of infancy to the child we see at six, ready to head out the door and go to school”. (Chitwood, 2013: 10).

As it is obvious, the Montessori Teaching Method does deal with the phonological part of the learning process as it counts on the oral language, in which the producing of sound is set, and the practical part in which children work within the letters and their sounds. Phonetics is a very important part of the language and studying it makes people have a better understanding of the language and, also, a better production of the oral language.

6.3. Grammar

Having dealt with phonetics, now it is time to treat with the relationship of grammar and The Montessori Method.

First of all, supporting Noam Chomsky’s idea of “grammar”, he defended that this term establishes a double path in the language field, one in the phonetic way and the other one which deals with semantics.

The grammar of a language, as a model for idealized competence, 1 establishes a certain relation between sound and meaning – between phonetic and semantic representations. We may say that the grammar of the language L generates a set of pairs (s, I), where s is the phonetic representation of a certain signal and I is the semantic interpretation assigned to this signal by the rules of the language. To

13 Montessorian material composed by a white table and all the alphabetical letters made of wood (to be taken by children).
discover this grammar is the primary goal of the linguistic investigation of a particular language. (Chomsky, 2006: 103).

The most important question in this fragment of the project is; how is grammar presented by Maria Montessori? The very first contact with grammar is produced in the lower level of a Montessori school. At the beginning of their learning process in the school, children are in relation with some materials that deal with grammar, as for example, the fact of representing a noun with a black triangle and a verb with a red circle. Children start working with the function of words by using symbols. Of course, grammar is not presented as a boring task so that children enjoy what they are learning; they are playing with different symbols at the same time they are dealing with the different functions of words as they are physically involved in the lesson.

Grammar lessons in Montessori schools start with a set of nine “grammar boxes” in which words, as nouns or verbs, are represent by different forms. While using those “grammar boxes” children are presented the nine part of speech 14 (noun, pronoun, adjective, determiner, verb, adverb, preposition, conjunction, and interjection). Having dealt within the different grammatical categories, at the end of the lesson children have to solve some grammar exercises from the textbook. Maria Montessori set that she did not want grammar books to be replaced by her creation of “grammar boxes”.

This way of educating young learners is such a very useful one. For example, in the case of a child who is being taught in a bilingual mode, for example in English and in Spanish, this methodology can help him to clarify his own ideas of both languages and this can also facilitate him understanding the differences and similitudes between both languages. This person will grow up developing two different languages as his first languages at the same time; in other word, this child will be native in English as well as in Spanish.

To sum up this part of the project, it may be remarked that Dr. Montessori wanted, once again, to make children enjoy what they are learning meanwhile they are acquiring new useful information. For this, she created some interesting material and, also, she recurred to the traditional method of textbooks. In this way, she combines the traditional within her own way of teaching. Moreover, in that way, children will not think that they are committed to be taught and they will not see education as a compulsory task in their lives; this gives them freedom enough to decide whether they want to learn or not.

14 Different grammatical categories.
7. Stages

As the age of one person normally defines his capabilities, this part of the project will cope with the levels established by Maria Montessori during her teaching process. Assigning different tasks to people from different ages was what characterized the Montessori Teaching Method the most. Our author divided her teaching-and-learning process into three different stages or periods.

The first period is the so-called *The Absorbent Mind* or *The Construction of Individuality* and is composed by people from zero to six-aged. This stage is named as *The Construction of Individuality* since is in that moment when a child starts to develop himself soaking every kind of information around him. Once again, the idea of *The Absorbent Mind* is present, comparing the children’s brains to sponges that acquire everything. At the same time, this period is divided into an unconscious stage and a conscious one. The unconscious one is characterized by the information that we keep in our short-term memory so that our brain eliminates the unimportant information, although sometimes unconsciously we memorize some information and we remember it without noticing that we learnt so. This stage takes place during the first three years of life (from zero to three). By the other hand, the conscious stage is the one in which we keep the information in our long-term memory so that we memorize almost everything we have learnt. Subsequently, this stage occurs in between the age of three and six years old.

The second period is known as Acquisition of Culture and The Cosmic Plan. It is developed among children from the age of six to the age of twelve. This period is the transition from *The Absorbent Mind* to the stage in which children start reasoning their ideas with matureness. During this stage, children start wondering about moral question and start finding meaning to some of the information that they have in mind. That is why Maria Montessori named this period as *The Cosmic Plan*.

The final one is the stage that comprises children from twelve years old until the age of eighteen and is called The Development of Personality and Earth Children. Along this period, children become adolescents and more mature people so that they start worrying about what is their role in life. Moreover, every single feeling and thought is magnified and children from this age spend much more time thinking about everything than younger children. It is true that matureness is something that grows gradually, although there some people that, even being younger than others, have a more settled mind and way of thinking.

Maria Montessori set these three groups of people in order to impart a more well-distributed and completed teaching process.
If puberty is on the physical side a transition from an infantile to an adult state, there is also, on the psychological side, a transition from the child who has to live in a family, to the man who has to live in society. These two needs of the adolescent: for protection during the time of the difficult physical transition, and for an understanding of the society which he is about to enter to play his part as a man […..]This means that there is an opportunity to learn both academically and through actual experience what are the elements of social life. We have called these children the ‘Erdkinder’ because they are learning about civilization through its origin […] they are the “land-children. (Montessori, 1948: 70)

8. Evaluation

Finally, this last part of my project is going to handle with the methodology required for evaluating in the Montessori Teaching Method. To begin with, it may be mentioned that this method is not characterized by being competitive, but it works to cooperate with culture and a global vision of life.

The teacher who works in a Montessori schools has to bear in mind the important value of observing. A Montessori teacher has to be focused on his pupils and be aware of what they are doing. Additionally, it is required to recompile the progress of children since the fact of synthetizing information and keep it all is so complicated. This information can be collected in such ways as videos about the progress of one students, the drawings that this person paints during a period of time or photos. Another important feature of the Montessori teachers is the design of an agenda telling the most curious things about students as, for example, some anecdotic moments during theirs learning period. These registers in the agenda can either be individually, about just one person, or of a general group. Also, in addition to this agenda, the evolution suffered among their families should be written down in order to collect it.

All in all, the Montessori way of evaluating and giving qualifications to students is to collect all the information in form of registers or agendas that contain everything about the students. Later, this recompiled information is reflected into some questioners that include some different question about the learning process of those pupils. In the end, these questioners are the ones that show the process of the students.

The fact of not being competitive make students enjoy their process of learning in a different manner, on the contrary, people that are taught by tests and exams get anxious and stressed because of the pressure of being examined.
9. Conclusion

The presented project shows a deep analysis of the Montessori Teaching Method, the one that was created some decades ago in order to change or, at least, to shake up the world of teaching. This was proposed in order to develop a teaching-and-learning process focused on the student and not in a mark or score that determines his future.

Having analysed all the research done during five hard months, I have extracted some main ideas as conclusions of this topic.

First of all, this teaching method is one of the most famous ones all over the world, thus it is not so much practised nowadays. When it appeared for the very first time, it caused such sensation that a wide number of countries wanted to install this methodology in their primary schools. Today, it has been so deeply studied and investigated that there are many active Montessori schools although, from my personal point of view, there should be more inasmuch as the settled and basic methodology is normally the traditional one based on making students study compulsory.

Deriving from the first conclusion, I can extract a second one; the fact of obligating children to study and learn whatever the teacher/school/administration wants to. I really think that the aim of learning step by step and from an own decision determines that this person will learn more easily than another person who is under the pressure of learning.

The third conclusion that I get from this project is that teachers and all the staff that forms part of the educational field, should have to take more care about the process of The Absorbent Mind. I mean, the first period of one person’s life in which his brain is comprising so much information. Honestly, nowadays people does not pay too much attention to babies and young learners while they are breaking through this crucial stage of their lifes in which the basis of their learning process are being set.

Another thing to take into account is how children and parents are liked by the teaching-and-learning process. This happens since the Montessori Method is not only applied in schools but also at home. As a matter of fact, the continuation of the method at home makes children be more integrated with their families meanwhile they are being taught. The education is not a thing that belongs only to the scholar field but, for me, learning at home is, indeed, much more important than doing so at school. A child will always be joined, by an indestructible link, to his parents more than to an unknown person who is teaching him.

For the future, making use of such methodology as this one, would help society to create a system full of free people who are capable of thinking by themselves and that are not being
controlled by nobody else. Moreover, these people would be able to reason about their own ideas and mistakes and they should be mature enough to not have fear to commit a mistake. The most valuable part of this educational system is the fact of finding children who, throughout their hard work, are acquiring and understanding new principles about nature and life.

Finally, I support the ideas and the contribution of many other authors that have investigated the case of Dr. Montessori and that share, or not, some of her thoughts. In my opinion, if we mix all the different input proposed by several scholars that are, or have been, looking for a better education, we will obtain the best way of teaching. But, as almost everything in life, it is almost impossible to check if the way we are doing things if the most correct one or not. So, the only thing that professors can do, is to keep on discovering and developing different ways of teaching and learning so that we get, at least, the one most approached to the correct one.

The future is tomorrow and, if we take care of it, tomorrow’s children will have the facilities for learning that not everyone has had during his life.

“Cuando los niños manifiestan su espíritu, se comprende, quizás por primera vez, qué es realmente el amor”. (Montessori, 1986: 355).
10. Bibliographical references


