

**THE USE OF PEDAGOGICAL SYSTEM
OF MARIA MONTESSORI IN UKRAINIAN EDUCATION**

<https://doi.org/10.24919/2413-2039.9/41.175703>

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Бібліографічний опис статті: Дудник, Н., & Свйонтик, О. (2019). The use of pedagogical system of Maria Montessori in Ukrainian education. *Людинознавчі студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*, 9/41, 88–99. doi: 10.24919/2413-2039.9/41.175703.

To cite this article: Dudnyk, N., & Sviontyk, O. (2019). The use of pedagogical system of Maria Montessori in Ukrainian education. *Liudynoznavchi studii. Seriiia «Pedahohika» – Human Studies. Series of «Pedagogy»*, 9/41, 88–99. doi: 10.24919/2413-2039.9/41.175703.

Історія статті

Одержано: 23 травня 2019

Прорецензовано: 23 липня 2019

Подано до редакції: 20 липня 2019

Доступ он-лайн: 24 вересня 2019

Article history

Received: May 23, 2019

Received in revised form: July 23, 2019

Accepted: July 20, 2019

Available online: September 24, 2019

Journal homepage:

<http://lssp.dspu.edu.ua/>

p-ISSN 2313-2094

e-ISSN 2413-2039

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УДК 37.091.4:37.091(477)

ВИКОРИСТАННЯ ПЕДАГОГІЧНОЇ ТЕХНОЛОГІЇ М. МОНТЕССОРИ В УКРАЇНСЬКІЙ ОСВІТІ

У статті розкрито особливості становлення та розвитку педагогічної системи М. Монтессорі, яка є актуальною в умовах сучасної тенденції освіти щодо впровадження ідей дитиноцентризму. Проаналізовано основні філософські засади цієї педагогічної системи та визначено її переваги у процесі виховання дитини в умовах самостійного розвитку. Виокремлено систему дошкільного виховання як початкову та важливу ланку у процесі освітньої практики. Визначено вимоги до створення спеціального освітнього простору у процесі розвитку дитини, охарактеризовано особливості методичних засад у підготовці педагогів до роботи з дітьми дошкільного та молодшого шкільного віку. Описано умови діяльності школи «Смайлик», яка працює за системою М. Монтессорі в місті Івано-Франківськ. Виокремлено умови налагодження діяльності дітей та педагогів з метою індивідуалізації освітнього процесу, сприяння розвитку дітей у природовідповідному середовищі, вироблення власних стратегій співпраці батьків вихованців і педагогів. Педагогічний рівень системи М. Монтессорі сприяє реалізації засад теорії дитиноцентризму та відповідає умовам розвитку дитини у демократичному суспільстві, бо трактує проблему взаємодії дорослого і дитини в процесі освітньої діяльності як вільну доцільну діяльність дітей у спеціально організованих дидактичних умовах. Методичний рівень системи М. Монтессорі розкриває конкретні прийоми та засоби виховання і навчання дітей, експериментально перевірену методiku роботи з комплексом оригінальних дидактичних Монтессорі-матеріалів. Педагогіка М. Монтессорі інтереси дитини ставить на чільне місце в організації освіти, забезпечуючи умови індивідуального розвитку. Такий підхід забезпечує виконання основних гуманістичних традицій української етнопедагогіки, де дитина є суб'єктом соціального розвитку. А створена впродовж останніх десятиліть українська модель Монтессорі-школи підтверджує актуальність цієї системи для задоволення сучасних запитів суспільства у вихованні вільної, самостійної, ініціативної, громадянсько відповідальної, інтелектуально грамотної особистості. У статті підкреслено переваги використання педагогічної технології М. Монтессорі у роботі з дітьми дошкільного та молодшого шкільного віку в одному освітньому просторі, де система розвитку дитини реалізовується послідовно на засадах наступності.

Ключові слова: педагогічна технологія М. Монтессорі; дитина дошкільного віку; освітній процес; саморозвиток; педагогічне спостереження; дитиноцентризм.

THE USE OF PEDAGOGICAL SYSTEM OF MARIA MONTESSORI IN UKRAINIAN EDUCATION

The article reveals the features of the formation and development of the pedagogical system of M. Montessori, which is relevant in the context of the modern

tendency of education in introducing the ideas of child-centrism. The basic philosophical foundations of this pedagogical system are analyzed and its advantages in the process of raising a child in conditions of independent development are determined. The system of preschool education is highlighted as the initial one in the process of educational practice. The requirements for the formation of a special educational space in the process of child development are defined; the features of the methodological foundations in preparing teachers for work with children of preschool and primary school age are highlighted. The conditions of the activity of the school «Smiley», which works on the M. Montessori's system in the city of Ivano-Frankivsk, are described. The conditions for improving the activities of children and teachers in order to individualize the educational process, promote the development of children in a nature-friendly environment, and develop their own strategies for cooperation between parents of pupils and teachers are highlighted. The pedagogical level of the M. Montessori's system contributes to the implementation of the theory of child-centrism and meets the conditions of child development in a democratic society, since it treats the problem of interaction between an adult and a child in the process of educational activity as a free expedient activity of children in specially organized didactic conditions. The methodological level of the M. Montessori's system reveals specific techniques and means of raising and educating children, an experimentally tested methodology for working with a complex of original didactic Montessori materials. Pedagogy of M. Montessori puts the interests of the child at the forefront in the organization of education, providing conditions for individual development. This approach ensures the implementation of the basic humanistic traditions of Ukrainian ethnic pedagogy, where the child is the subject of social development. And the Ukrainian model of the Montessori-school, created over the past decades, confirms the relevance of this system for solving the modern needs of society in raising a free, independent, proactive, civic responsible, intellectually literate person. The article emphasizes the advantages of using the pedagogical technology of M. Montessori in working with children of preschool and primary school age in one educational space, where the child's development system is implemented sequentially on the basis of continuity.

Key words: *pedagogical system of M. Montessori; a child of preschool age; educational process; self-development; pedagogical observation; child-centrism.*

Acknowledgments. Sincere thanks to the director of the Ukrainian Montessori school «Smailyk» (Ivano-Frankivsk), director of the Montessori Educational Complex specialized in English by Natalia Pribilska and Deputy Director Zhanna Gryadovkina.

Funding. The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Introduction

In modern conditions of education development, there is a tendency to expand educational institutions in Ukraine, which provide the educational system; and the emergence of copyright schools, alternative to state educational institutions and at-

traction to the principle of child-centrism acquires the individual nature of the parents' request for educational services. So, I. Pidlasyi, highlighting three technologies, gives a description of social requirements for educational services. In particular, the subject-oriented, where the development of the child's intellect dominates, the personality-oriented, in which the individual emotional-axiological aspect of education takes the dominant position and the pedagogy of cooperation, in which the emotional-value sphere of the child's development is balanced with the conditions of intellectual development, and the techniques are in the nature of research, projects, independent search of the child. Changing the strategy of education in the direction of competence formation encourages researchers and practicing teachers to turn to the experience of European education and modernize national educational traditions in order to meet social requirements in meeting educational services and educating citizens of our state as independent, intellectually literate, with value views and initiative in creative use of their capabilities in life (Lillard & Taggart, 2019). Accordingly, education and upbringing should be as close as possible to the abilities and characteristics of a particular child, contribute to its development, especially at preschool age, when the foundations of knowledge and the value worldview are laid, a model of social behavior is formed, and thinking methods, independence and responsibility are produced.

Child psychologist A. Zaporozhets regarding the intrinsic value of preschool childhood stresses the importance of developing children's thinking skills and one of the main tasks of education is to demand assistance in creating a developing environment in which pupils will have the ability to reason, orient themselves in space, to assess life situations from an early age, make independent decisions, argue their actions, notice the peculiarities and differences of events and things, and the like. In solving this problem, the study of the best practices of foreign practitioner teachers and the improvement of modern education becomes of decisive importance. In Ukrainian education, at the beginning of the 21st century, interest in the use of one of the most commonly used in the world practice of personal self-development technology, which was created by the famous Italian teacher of the twentieth century M. Montessori has grown (1870–1952).

Analysis of recent research and publications. One of the first Ukrainian teachers who adapted the M. Montessori system to Ukrainian education was S. Ruzova, who at the beginning of the 20th century established children's educational institutions that worked according to the system of a famous educator and innovator. In modern educational conditions for the development of Ukrainian education, the Montessori technology has been used for over twenty years as an alternative system for teaching and educating children of preschool and primary school age, which suggests that this practice contributes to the quality of both basic educational tasks and the creation of conditions for full self-development of personality. The studies of I. Dychkivska, T. Ponimanska are devoted to the processing of the theory and practice of M. Montessori's pedagogy in the context of modern education in Ukraine. In particular, the translation of the main works of the scientist regarding the

philosophy of modern Ukrainian education, which has a practical direction on the education of an independent personality in the work «Montessori: Theory and Technology». Research of A. Storonska «Pedagogical Heritage of M. Montessori in Studies of Domestic and Foreign Scientists» and M. Chepel (2017) «Maria Montessori's Pedagogy in Pre-School Education at Universities of Ukraine» are devoted to the study of the works of M. Montessori on raising a child on the basis of child centrism. The works of S. Yakymenko «Pedagogical ideas of Sophia Rusova and Maria Montessori: a comparative analysis» (Yakymenko & Milenina, 2015), N. Karhapoltseva «Socialization and education of the individual in Montessori-education» are dedicated to covering the problems of comparative pedagogy in comparing the ideas of the formation of children's thinking and behaviour.

Practical use of the experience of educational institutions working on the M. Montessori system is described in studies of domestic scientists who in the early 90s under the guidance of scientist and public figure B. Zhebrovskyi, created a center of practical application of this technology, which today is successfully represented by works of innovative teachers such as J. Hryadovkina, A. Reshetnyak, T. Korshunova, A. Nadvorna, T. Mykhalchuk, N. Kravets, N. Prybylska (Zhebrovskyi, 2007). The question of introducing the process of individualization of education in an elementary school working on the technology of M. Montessori, are raised in the works of D. Ackerman (2019), C. Bruce (2014). Practical approaches to the modern application of logical and mathematical thinking teaching methods with the help of special didactic material based on the authorial system of M. Montessori were studied by O. Hiltunen (Khiltunen, 2008) and presented in the method of use by modern Ukrainian practitioners O. Naumenko, A. Nayda (Zhebrovskyi, 2007) and others.

Highlighting previously unsolved parts of the general problem to which this article is dedicated. Modern teachers, followers of M. Montessori's technology, modernize the theory on the basis of experiments, complementing it with the practice of using, taking into account the requirements of scientific and technological progress, trends in the social development of society. However, the basic principles such as the method of observation, the creation of a special developing environment, the dominance of the child's independent search over group activities, the development of children's freedom and independence, early socialization, individualization in obtaining knowledge of a child of preschool age, which are strategic in M. Montessori's pedagogy are often implemented in the practice of educational institutions fragmentary, inconsistently; the philosophy of this educational practice is applied alongside other theories and practitioners, and educational work among parents wants to be more systematic and informatively qualitative. Therefore, the study of the leading ideas of M. Montessori and the popularization of successful activities of educational institutions working on this technology consistently and holistically is a prerequisite for improving educational services in a democratic society.

The purpose of the article is to highlight the benefits of applying the pedagogy of M. Montessori in the process of raising and educating children of preschool

age in the context of the activities of modern institutions of preschool education in Ukraine, as well as showing the advantages and the need for a holistic use of this pedagogical system.

The ideas of child-centrism in the pedagogical technology of M. Montessori

In the context of rapid information progress, Ukrainian educational theory and practice have the opportunity to interpret the best domestic experience and actively apply the achievements of recognized foreign pedagogical systems which have shown high quality results. One of those which have received world recognition and wide approbation in all leading countries is the pedagogical system of the famous Italian scientist, psychologist, doctor, teacher, and public figure M. Montessori. In terms of content and philosophy these systems are considering a child from the position of recognizing its intrinsic value, ability for self-development; while the organization of special developmental conditions, the method of minimum adult intervention in the unique children's world are among main teachers' tasks.

In Ukrainian education, as in most of the leading countries of the world, M. Montessori's pedagogy began to be used at the beginning of the XX-th century, and then it was banned because of the totalitarian regime, as contrary to the political principles of the socialist system, when the performers were needed, while this system educated an independent active person. At the end of the XX-th century, in the period of building independence, M. Montessori's system became one of the leaders having the goal of meeting the needs of the child's self-development and gained new supporters who adapted this technology with the modern requirements of a democratic Ukrainian society. Since 1992, a group of scientists of the Ukrainian Association of Montessori-Pedagogy began working on the founding the school that for many years has been implementing the principles of child upbringing according to M. Montessori's authorial educational technology. This technology meets modern needs in the formation of competences of the intellectual, social and personal development of the child, and creates a favourable emotional environment for independent research and self-expression of the child.

The pedagogical and social activities of the famous Italian scientist, paediatrician, teacher, public figure M. Montessori are multi-vector and multi-aspect in innovations; therefore, they require more in-depth analysis and present scientific interest of modern researchers. M. Montessori as a leading research practitioner played an important role in the development of concepts of the activity approach in the philosophy of education, created the authorial technology of the child's mental development and carried out the selection of special educational didactic materials, became the organizer and populariser of her pedagogical system in world practice, and was also an active public activist in the creation and dissemination of the women's movement, popularized the ideas of peacekeeping. For such an outstanding and progressive work, M. Montessori was awarded prizes from governments, universities, scientific societies of many countries; in particular, she was an Honorary Doctor of Durham University (USA), an Honorary Member of the Scientific Society of the Pedagogical Institute in Edinburgh (Scotland), Honorary Doctor of Phi-

losophy of the University of Amsterdam. For activity in peacekeeping in the post-war period, M. Montessori's candidacy was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize (1949, 1950, 1951) (Zhebrovskyi, 2007, p. 7).

Turning to the pedagogical heritage of M. Montessori, we note that tens of thousands of schools operating under her authorial system are widely popular on all continents where humanity lives, and all leading universities prepare Montessori-teachers. In the modern conditions of the New Ukrainian school development, M. Montessori's pedagogy acquires relevance and should become one of the strategic directions for improving Ukrainian preschool education, leads the preparatory stage in shaping the intellectual potential of children's thinking, develops independence and courage in judgments, prepares for humane social relations, forms an active civil position. Leading Ukrainian teacher V. Kremen stresses: «the principle of child-centrism comes to the fore, but not in the meaning of attention to the child as such, to the child abstract, generalized, which was often proclaimed and done here before, but to a specific child with his essential characteristics. This is important at all stages of educational activities: from pre-school education and ending with the university. It is necessary to bring as close as possible the education and upbringing of children to the specific essence of each individual. It is not necessary to form a child under your own copy either by father, or mother, or the state, or someone else, and recognize its essence and cherish the personality» (Kremen, 2009, p. 2).

Since the work of M. Montessori occurred precisely during the period of active development of social relations, major political changes, progress in the humanities and discoveries in medicine, her pedagogical system revolutionized the children's education system, because in contrast to the existing scholastic education and social care after preschoolers she built a pedagogical system of child's self-development (Pate et al., 2014). The appeal of Ukrainian researchers and practitioners to M. Montessori's educational technology is relevant, since due to the obvious social demand of Ukrainian society for the education of a free person, able to react ahead of the changes in the socio-economic space and adapt to them in order to find ways of self-realization, as well as in connection with the introduction of the best foreign experience and the lack of scientific recommendations for their practical implementation in the context of reforming the education system in Ukraine.

Analyzing the ideas of child-centrism, which are the basis of pedagogical systems and scientific theories of different times, we turn to the educational philosophy of Y. Komenskyi, J.-J. Rousseau, J. Piaget, D. Dewey, F. Frebel, M. Montessori, S. Freinet, V. Lai, E. Key, K. Ushynskyi (1983), V. Sukhomlynskyi (1976), C. Rogers, L. Vyhotskyi (1991) etc. Thus, D. Dewey placed the child at the center of the pedagogical system and emphasized that the child is the sun, and all education must spin around him; the interests of the child become the values of education and the basis for the organization of all educational processes; the child's upbringing and education must take place without coercion or pressure (Dewey, 2000, p. 112).

E. Kay in her work «The Age of a Child» noted that the goal of education is not the transfer of knowledge, but the harmonious development of a child based on

his abilities and life experience. J. Piaget highlights the important role of children's cooperation when the outward manifestations of proper behavior (rules) include child's attitude, its character, and emotions (Piaget, 1977, p. 89). The leading idea of S. Freinet is the assertion that the school of the future will be child-centred, emphasizing ensuring the child's natural desire for knowledge, creating favourable conditions for self-development, developing the child's individual creative abilities and the natural need for self-realization. V. Lai considered the child as an active part of the social and biological environment, whose activity is a reaction to the surrounding world, therefore he shifted the center of education to the sphere of activity; the group influences the individuality of the child, because it is when the children get together, everyone wants to reveal all the best that he is capable of, becomes more active and inventive.

L. Vyhotskyi, paying attention to the peculiarities of the formation of children's independence in mental activity, emphasized that the teacher is obliged to use the «zone of actual development», which is ready to develop both mentally and behaviourally, contributing simultaneously to perspective; in addition, ensuring the formation of individual morality through enrichment with knowledge skills, he can achieve progress in the development of children's consciousness through the development of a sense of responsibility in life situations, which contributes to interpersonal communication experience (Vyhotskyi, 1991, p. 110). V. Sukhomlynskyi, highlighting the need to form a child's self-consciousness, writes that when receiving education, everyone should learn to be an educator of himself (Sukhomlynskyi, 1976, p. 192).

In Ukrainian pedagogy, the first attempt at a holistic study of a child on the basis of the anthropological principle, trying to reveal to parents and teachers the great importance of a comprehensive study of a child, was made by K. Ushynskyi. The teacher expresses the conviction that the main goal of education is a person, since everything in this world (both the state, people and humanity) exists only for the person, the soul is the dominant essence of the person compared to the body, and the dominant attitude of the soul is activity (Ushynskyi, 1983, p. 244).

The famous Ukrainian public activist and teacher S. Rusova, the founder of the first preschool institutions, supporting the anthropological foundations of child development and being inspired by the pedagogical ideas of M. Montessori, considered the child «the most valuable treasure in the world», urging educators to take an active, progressive position, to new searches in humanistic education, noted the development of independence of the child. The newly created children's institutions of S. Rusova introduced the principles of humane pedagogy, adhering to the principle of nature compatibility in education, and their main function was to make learning a process of joy in a child's world discovering. In the work «Preschool education», she turns to the pedagogical ideas of M. Montessori, where the nomenclature lessons that prepare the child for abstract thinking are based on creating conditions in the involvement of the senses in order to «teach how to feel, perceive various signs of

objects around, to accustom independent classes ..., attentive attitude to a child's soul, which required an individual approach» (Rusova, 1918, p. 78).

M. Montessori's pedagogical ideas in Ukrainian education

The Ukrainian network of Montessori Schools has a wide geographical presentation in modern conditions: Kyiv, Odesa, Dnipro, Mykolaiv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Vinnytsa, Lviv and others. Introducing M. Montessori's pedagogical system in the Ukrainian education, we note that the historical development of the theory of free education was accompanied by the statement of important humanistic values and attitudes in pedagogical science such as: recognition of the child as the highest value of the pedagogical process; focus on self-actualization, development and self-realization of the child in various activities; the dominance of the interests of a person who learns the world and socially develops; orientation on the pedagogy of cooperation between teachers, pupils and their parents; the importance of expanding the freedom of the child, who develops on the basis of his rights and the expansion of life prospects; the need to train a humanist teacher with professional knowledge of M. Montessori's pedagogy. This alternative educational system provides for the rejection of the typical education (utopian idealism), and involves the introduction of a methodology for applying the principle of independent free activity of the child (pragmatism), the creation of a special developmental environment and groups of children of different ages (experimental pedagogy), the application of the theory of free education and sensualism (feeling is the only source of knowledge) in pedagogical practice.

M. Montessori, explaining the development of the child, wrote that «the child contains a mental laboratory that performs chemical transformations. All impressions not only penetrate the child's mind, they form it, and they are processed in it, because the child «builds» his own mental body using environmental objects». And the teacher called this mind «absorbing», and noted that teachers and parents of pupils need to understand the magnitude of its strength (Dychkivska & Ponimanska, 2006, p. 211). The realization of this is ensured by a favourable psychologically and organized didactically environment. A child is able to perceive and absorb any environmental objects (both subject and social), for example, spatial and temporal connections, social and cultural characteristics, relationships between people and the like. The functioning of this important ability, which absorbs knowledge, is time-limited but this time is enough for the child to receive the necessary amount of knowledge about the world around him. The process of cognition of the world has a high concentration in the use of involuntary attention, with the participation of «absorbing mind», which is inherent only in preschool children. Therefore, adults must create an environment for the child where he can find everything necessary and useful for his development, get a variety of sensory (sensitive) impressions, adopt the right literary rich language, socially acceptable ways of emotional response, the rules of rational activity with objects, patterns of positive social behaviour and the like.

The creative team of the Ukrainian Montessori-school «Smiley» in the city of Ivano-Frankivsk (Ukraine) has been working since 2011. The philosophy of the

school is «creativity, mutual discovery and respect, cherishing humanity in children». A daytime training center was created in 2007 and covered dozens of preschool age children. Now the school has more than a hundred pupils and has a preschool and elementary department. The name «Smiley» is not accidental. The children are friendly, they boldly enter into a conversation with the guests, hospitably invite to their classes, gladly share their skills, abilities to use special didactic material (kits for dividing and multiplying numbers), joyfully report that they have achievements in studying Indian ocean inhabitants and demonstrate a selection of materials that are made with their own hands on the basis of reading a children's encyclopedia and Internet sources. Learning with pleasure, without comparisons and marks, is an inspired process of developing a child's thinking based on independent choice. The school was built in a new sub-district of the city with modern infrastructure: playgrounds and sports grounds, public gardens and green areas for walking, a river with aquatic animals (nutria) that live in natural conditions – this is the environment that, accordingly, opens up the humane world of people coexistence.

In the center of M. Montessori's pedagogy child abuse is unacceptable; the problem of self-development of the child; the creation of a special system of education and training in which the «prepared environment» and special didactic material play a central role; a mixed age approach to raising and educating children; the need for a child to be studied by a teacher to facilitate his successful «self-construction», his spiritual development (Kremen, 2009, p. 196). The school «Smiley» has a new, modernly equipped building – wide corridors, bright rooms that can be freely zoned, exotic indoor plants and animals (iguana), a well-equipped kitchen, bedrooms with wooden crib-beds, a salt room for classes in order to prevent diseases of the upper respiratory tract, a large sports hall equipped for creative music and dance events. To provide didactic material for acquiring writing skills for children, abacus sets with wooden letters of the corresponding colour and size were specially made. In the rooms of preschoolers, there are always classic Montessori materials, and the older ones have a lot of books and laboratory equipment. A significant part of the study time is devoted to the independent work of children to choose from.

The humanization of modern Ukrainian education actualizes the requirements for pedagogical professionalism of teachers and the creation of a personality-oriented, competency-based model of the educational process, which involves subject-subject relations between teacher and pupil. The «Smiley» teaching staff includes specialists with appropriate education and special Montessori-courses. All educators and teachers are young and welcoming. They do not really stand out in the society of children and do not occupy a leading role in their life activities and creative presentations. Such a democracy creates an atmosphere of equality of participants in the educational process, even slightly raising the activity of children who, getting into small groups or individually are very purposefully engaged in «their own affairs»: compose texts from letters and words, count on special tables, examine the globe, create a calendar of spring flowers that bloom in the Carpathian region, set the table for lunch, or build Lego robots.

The implementation of the idea of each child's free choice of activity and arbitrary duration of classes, the use of a specially developed set of didactic material, the absence of tests and assessments help to meet the children's needs for creative activity. This environment provides the development of each child at his individual pace. The task of the teacher is primarily to provide the child with means for self-development and disclose the rules for their use. Autodidactic (self-learning) Montessori-materials, with which the child works first imitating the teacher, acting according to the model, and then independently performing various exercises, are of great interest to children. The teacher does not become the organizer of the learning process, but creates the prerequisites for promoting the didactic, sensory, social activities of the child. This confirms the main motto of M. Montessori's pedagogy: «Help me do it myself».

Conclusions

The pedagogical level of the M. Montessori's system contributes to the implementation of the theory of child centrism and meets the conditions for the development of the child in a democratic society, as it interprets the problem of the interaction of an adult and a child in the process of educational activity as the free and expedient activity of children in specially organized didactic conditions. The methodological level of the M. Montessori's system reveals specific techniques and means of raising and educating children, an experimentally tested methodology for working with a complex of original didactic Montessori materials. Pedagogy of M. Montessori does not oppose the personality of the teacher and the child, considering them to be equivalent in education. This approach binds it with the humanistic traditions of Ukrainian ethnic pedagogy with modern concepts of training and education. And the Ukrainian model of the Montessori-school, created over the past decades, confirms the relevance of this system to the modern needs of society in the education of a free, independent, proactive, civic responsible, intellectually literate person.

Prospects for further research. Having analyzed the relevance of the principles of M. Montessori's pedagogy in the development system of modern Ukrainian education, its main principles and methods of application in one of the educational institutions, for further research we offer a methodical study of the practical experience of the pedagogical system by Ukrainian pedagogical practitioners in other educational institutions where practice and social conditions modernize it in accordance with the use conditions, social needs and economic and technological progress.

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