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Zásady pro vypracování:

Studentka se bude ve své bakalářské práci zabývat výukou anglického jazyka v Montessori školách, a to zejména z pohledu využívání materiálních didaktických prostředků. V teoretické části nejprve popíše základní principy Montessori vzdělávání, dále vymezí základní cíle výuky anglického jazyka se zaměřením na čtení s porozuměním v prostředí českého vzdělávacího systému a poté popíše materiální didaktické prostředky. V praktické části bude studentka zkoumat využívání materiálních didaktických prostředků v hodinách anglického jazyka na prvním stupni Montessori školy. Za použití vhodných výzkumných nástrojů bude zjišťovat, zda využívání těchto prostředků reflektuje principy Montessori vzdělávání i obecné cíle výuky anglického jazyka.

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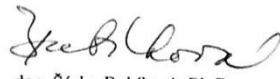
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Souhlasím s prezenčním zpřístupněním své práce v Univerzitní knihovně.

V Pardubicích dne 25. 5. 2017.

Monika Stenzlová

ANNOTATION

This bachelor thesis deals with Montessori principles and compares them with general objectives of teaching English at elementary schools in the Czech Republic. The paper is divided into two parts. The theoretical part introduces Montessori principles which are compared with modern principles in English language teaching. Then, the objectives of teaching reading comprehension are described. In the practical part, Montessori principles are compared with the objectives of English language teaching, and the last part of the thesis explores how Montessori principles are reflected in a specific didactic material Leveled Books focusing on reading comprehension.

KEY WORDS

Montessori, educational system, objectives of elementary education, language acquisition, didactic material, reading comprehension

TITLE

Výuka anglického jazyka v Montessori školách

ANOTACE

Tato bakalářská práce pojednává o Montessori principech společně s obecnými cíli anglického jazyka v rámci českého základního vzdělávacího systému. Práce je rozdělena na dvě části. V teoretické části jsou představeny Montessori principy, které jsou porovnány s principy pro současnou moderní výuku anglického jazyka. Nakonec jsou popsány cíle pro výuku anglického jazyka se zaměřením na čtení s porozuměním. V praktické části jsou Montessori principy porovnávány s cíli pro výuku anglického jazyka a následně je zjišťováno, zda se reflektují v konkrétní didaktické pomůcce, zaměřené na víceúrovňové čtení.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Montessori vzdělávací systém, cíle základního vzdělávání, osvojení si jazyka, didaktické pomůcky, čtení s porozuměním

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Introduction

In recent years there has been a growing concern about the way of teaching and learning the English languge. Universal principles recommended to professionals to be applied in the English language teaching (hereinafter referred to as ELT) vary with the learners' needs throughout time. The issues of learner-centered approach and autonomous behavior of the learners have been controversial and much disputed issues within the field of modern principles in ELT. Thus, there has been a shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred teaching.

This bachelor thesis first introduces the Montessori educational system, which is characterized by placing learners at the center of education. Rather than waiting for the teacher's command to do a task, Montessori learners are motivated to study more independently and choose tasks of their particular interest. These Montessori principles are then discussed in detail, especially their application in the area of second language acquisition and teaching. The thesis endeavours to answer the following questions: How are the Montessori principles reflected in the process of learning and teaching the English language? How are the Montessori principles integrated into the didactic materials that learners work with during English lessons in order to keep to the pillars of Montessori?

This bachelor thesis is organized in the following way – the theoretical and practical part. The theoretical part consists of four chapters. The first chapter deals with Maria Montessori and her life, explaining why she felt the need to bring changes into pedagogy and examining what influenced her to invent new didactic materials for learners. The second chapter concerns the Montessori principles. Since this bachelor thesis focuses on English as a second language and Maria Montessori does not explicitly characterize the way children should learn the second language, the Montessori principles and ideas of learning and teaching the first language are compared with modern universal principles in the ELT. The third chapter is aimed to explain second language acquisition and the objectives of second language acquisition at elementary schools in the Czech Republic. The main focus of the thesis is the Montessori didactic material aimed at reading comprehension. The Montessori didactic material, its purpose and the way reading is taught in Montessori schools is mentioned in the last chapter of the theoretical part. Again, the Montessori way of teaching reading is then compared with modern principles of teaching reading in English. Finally, the crucial didactic material invented by Maria Montessori to teach reading in the mother tongue is briefly characterized in the last chapter, for it is a starting point for any work with other didactic materials developing the skill of reading.

The aim of the practical part is to find out if – and how – the Montessori principles are reflected in the didactic material called Leveled Books and whether they are in accordance with the objectives of ELT at primary schools. Two methods will be used to conduct the research. First of all, the method of participant observation will be applied to observe learners during English lessons and their work with the didactic material Leveled Books. Then, the method of interview will be adapted for collecting additional information concerning the guide's attitude towards the used of the didactic material Leveled Books.

1 MONTESSORI EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The Montessori approach has been developed to value child's spirit and its physical, cognitive, social and emotional development. Therefore, it is considered to be a peaceful educational system. In other words, it breaks all social, ethnic and religious rules. Maria Montessori actually pays more attention to the different relationship between the guide (= the teacher), the learner and other learners within the class. In her study she emphasis individual work of each learner to support learner's creativity and intelligence. As Maria Montessori argues, each human being is a unique personality. Therefore, every child in a class should be encouraged to choose a task of any kind he/she would like to study, and to work independently (18, p. 9-11).

Whenever learners need help, they may ask either their guide or they may discuss the problem with their classmates. This form of educating children is highly effective in terms of self-organization. Moreover, it is the way children can follow their own pace when learning new information and therefore do not feel interrupted by faster or slower pupils in a particular class. Every child is permitted to move freely in a classroom, ask questions anytime he/she needs and individually correct his/her mistakes if the material or task he/she works with enables him/her to do it (7, p. 12-13).

1.1 Maria Montessori

Maria Montessori was born in 1870 in an Italian town Chiaravalle. She became the first woman who gained a university degree in medical studies at the University of Rome in Italy (19, p. 10).

Maria Montessori started her medical career by working with abandoned children. A large number of the children came from a different cultural and social backgrounds. Some of them, especially the mentally handicapped children[1] needed a different approach. For example, they, needed to work at a slower pace. While on the contrary, gifted and talented children needed quite the opposite. Such an enormously varied working environment gave Montessori the opportunity to help mentally handicapped children. Montessori realized a very important fact when taking care of these children. The mental handicap the children suffered from was not

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[1] Mentally handicapped children are characterized as those whose developmental functions show a fundamental defect of the psychological functions of all kinds of their personality in terms of the physical, intellectual and social aspect. Mentally handicapped children have lower IQ and the emotional and volitional area is affected as well (5, p. 20).

only the matter of medicine, but predominantly it was the matter of pedagogy. Her main purpose was to present the findings she came with and apply them in the educational system for heathy children (7, p. 9).

A crucial point in Montessori's life was the opening of the Children's House (Casa dei Bambini) in Rome where she studied child's behavior and the way children gained new knowledge. Montessori based her scientific approach to education on observation and experimentation. She was inspired by two doctors of French origin and their literal works. Even though she did not have enough financial resources, she managed to get appropriate furniture and even made her own didactic material (19, p. 10-11). Many other Children′s Houses were established according to the Montessori method (7, p. 10). The principles were soon brought to the United States where Maria Montessori delivered her lectures (25, p. 7).

In the long term, Montessori had a strong desire to make her educational methods accessible for all the children around the world. However, no country in Europe seemed to be a safe place for her, as the dictators of World War II did not allow Montessori to spread her ideas at all. Her materials and books were burnt during that period.

Maria Montessori died in Nodrwijk (Holland) in 1952. Her thoughts were spread by her son Mario and granddaughter Renilde (7, p. 11).

1.2 Montessori Curriculum

Montessori school may seem like a miniature research laboratory rather than a school modeled on the tradition with classes filled with desks in rows. Montessori children learn by pursuing their own projects and get lessons across their curriculum (21, p. 28-29). Maria Montessori divided children into several age groups. Usually there are three age mixed levels corresponding with the three evolutionary grades.

First of all, there is the Montessori primary for learners between 3 and 6 which is the first stage of the Montessori curriculum. Then, there is the Montessori elementary which typically divides children into mixed-age classrooms of 6 to 9 (lower elementary) and 9 to 12 (upper elementary). To make her educational system complex, Maria Montessori formulated major principles which are the pillars of her educational system.

2 MONTESSORI PRINCIPLES

Maria Montessori based her educational system on several principles which play a crucial role in Montessori pedagogy. The principles illustrate the immense complexity of the theoretical ideas implemented into practice.

The principles help children evolve their free will and support their imagination. The principles also enable children to become a part of a modern society in which they are encouraged to find their own way of life with enough confidence. Learners should get the feeling of self-reliance and realize how to use their logical thinking, which might finally lead them to achieve their desired results. The principles, when applied correctly, can become generally supportive in learners' both professional and personal lives (20, pp. 15-16).

2.1 Principle of Freedom

Independent progress is one of the key principles of the Montessori educational system. To deny independence in Montessori schools, means to deny the whole Montessori psychology of the system. According to Maria Montessori, it is absolutely necessary to give each child his/her own space in a classroom. (15, p. 19).

Freedom in Montessori schools means to move around the school freely, communicate with others and improve skills and abilities. On the other hand, it is definitely not allowed to waste time, harm classmates or anyhow damage the provided facilities. By freedom, Maria Montessori wanted learners to be respectful and responsible (20, p. 35). Freedom is also reflected while being engaged in an activity. When the activity is done spontaneously, the child is able to act independently. In other words, the child is able to decide what to do and what not to do at a particular time. He/she can realize the possibility of choosing from different varieties (15, p. 19). These given possibilities should lead children to choosing their own strategies and motivate them to solve their freely picked tasks. In an English lesson, for instance, learners are recommended to choose from two or three specific didactic materials for the lesson. However, they can choose any other didactic material provided in the prepared environment. The child can practice days of the week instead of learning about the verb *can* if he/she chooses so. Nevertheless, the learner is required to do certain tasks throughout the day.

Freedom in Montessori pedagogy should not be understood as arbitrariness. The idea of freedom in Montessori schools needs to be explained clearly to learners. "Freedom and liberty are not endless, they need to be realized within certain limits" (15, p. 19). Montessori claims

that if there were no limits at all, the process of self-realization would never be completed (22, p. 22).

2.2 Principle of Heterogeneous Classrooms

The principle of heterogeneous classrooms is meant to educate learners of different age at the same time. Learners are divided into classrooms according to their ages. These multi-aged classrooms consist of the parent infant (learners from 0 to 3 years), preschool (3 to 6 years), lower and upper elementary (6 to 9 and 9 to 12 years) and middle elementary (12 to 14) (25, pp. 31-34).

The main purpose of multi-aged classrooms is to create sufficient space for the learners. They are able to learn from one another which gives each individual a special opportunity to exchange their unique experiences. Neither a guide nor a parent can enable this kind of care to a child. The reason is simple. Children think very similarly and, therefore, can exchange their thoughts and other discoveries quite easily. Younger learners get a chance to observe older learners at Montessori school. By doing so, they get quickly motivated to try more complicated tasks they want to work on. To give an example from an English lesson, this perfectly works when the whole mix-aged classroom of learners sings a song in English and dances along with it. The older children help the younger ones understand certain moves.

The older learners suddenly find themselves in situations where they are required to explain certain tasks to their younger classmates. The scale of their knowledge is widened. They have to understand the structure of the tasks and need to be able to explain it in a comprehensive way. This might also help to increase their self-confidence. One day the tasks learners had to solve were difficult to them, but now they can help their younger counteparts with their solution (22, p. 17). This approach might also help the guide. He/she does not need to explain the tasks over and over again. However, the guide must check if the pupils explain the tasks appropriately.

Another advantage of multi-aged classrooms is that both talented and slower learners can find younger or older friends among their classmates and realize that each person is good at a different area (22, pp. 17-18). Nowadays, modern principles in language teaching also point out the importance of interaction among classmates. Be it a written or oral discourse, learners communicative competences are enhanced (2, p. 54). The mixed-aged classrooms, however, are neither specifically mentioned nor recommended in modern ELT.

2.3 Principle of Autonomy and Free Choice of Tasks

Montessori defines autonomy as having control over yourself. Freedom, as mentioned above, means to learn how to behave independently and autonomously at the same time. To achieve autonomy in the classroom, it is necessary to engage learners in activities and work on various tasks regularly. Montessori believed that only by working on a task which had grabbed learners' attention the most, pupils might gain certain discipline and freedom (18, p. 75). Maria Montessori discovered that by choosing a task of the greatest interest at a particular moment, a learner is actually more focused on the task. She observed that learners seemed to thrive on having a choice and control in their environment (21, p. 30).

At the time the learner is working on an intentionally chosen task, he/she can learn a lot more than he/she would learn from the task assigned by a guide. Maria Montessori calls this "a free choice of task". Pupil's wish to learn about a particular subject means that he/she would like to understand it properly and therefore is willing to work on his/her own. For example, a guide introduces the months of the year in English to pupils and makes a reference to a didactic material focused on practicing the written form of the months. Afterwards, while working independently, learners might get curious about the written form of the months in English and they intentionally choose the mentioned didactic material.

The book *Teaching by Principles* was chosen to compare Montessori principles with the principles applied in modern ELT. H.D. Brown also defines autonomy as the ability to control one's own process of learning (2, p. 70). For instance, autonomy is manifested in the classroom by initiating a conversation or solving problems in group work. However, while in Montessori's prepared environment learners are encouraged to choose most of the tasks themselves and thus monitor their learning progress, modern principles in ELT instruct teachers to assign tasks which are of the same type for all learners. As a result, learners attending mainstream schools lose the possibility of a 'free choice' and their autonomy is therefore limited.

2.4 Principle of Sensitive periods

After several years of study, Maria Montessori revealed a new developmental theory. She was inspired by a very significant psychologist – Jean Piaget – who was the chairman of Montessori Institute. She also lead discussions about her studies with other professionals from the area of developmental psychology to expand her scientific findings.

An important source of her study was the information gathered during her careful observations of children. What is considered to be very unique of her study is that Montessori connects each

developmental phase of a child with as it is called "sensitive period". This term signifies that there are certain periods in a child's life in which certain methods should be used to make the teaching effective (19, pp. 14-15). In other words, a child becomes highly sensitive to learning new skills. Unfortunately, these sensitive periods fade away quickly. Moreover, it can be difficult to identify them during the child's mental development. As every single person is an individual human being, the sensitive periods can become evident at various periods of time. As stated above, the periods are temporary and serve only for the purpose of gaining a particular skill. When a child learns the skill, the sensitive period vanishes and the sensitivity towards learning the particular skill is no longer there (20, pp. 48-49).

2.5 Principle of Prepared Environment

The term prepared environment in Montessori educational system stands for a place stimulating learners to act spontaneously. The term, however, does not refer only to material equipment, didactic means and exercises. Learners also need to be integrated into the prepared environment step by step to understand the complex system of Montessori education. Teachers, therefore, must be qualified and able to prepare the environment for the sensitive periods in order to support learners' activity and learning processes (25, p. 41). Generally speaking, the Montessori classroom is arranged into areas, usually divided by low shelving. Each area is equiped with a set of materials (the Montessori term designating educational objects) for working in a particular subject area (language, mathematics, art, music, science and others) (21, p. 20).

More importantly, there are always more learners working in the prepared environment who can move freely, choose the tasks individually and ask for help if they need to. It means that considerable amount of mutual respect must be present. As the prepared environment gives children wide possibilities of freedom, it is required from them to follow certain boundaries. Every individual has a unique opportunity to realize how to deal with others and how to manipulate with the didactic material (20, p. 55). The principle of freedom and responsibility must be balanced in the prepared environment. Although given a significant amount of freedom, learners need to respect the rights of each individual within a classroom and his or her sphere of activity (19, p. 45).

What is absolutely crucial for the prepared environment is the sense of order. Didactic materials usually have a given place in the shelves, so everyone knows where to find them and where to put them back. Order, reliability and security is very good for learners' psychical health. Learners must be provided with enough space and the rest of the facilities must be fitted in the

rooms in order to guarantee the physical safety (20, p. 55). Furthermore, the required routine of order pushes children to care about the environment around them. This kind of routine also helps them to achieve emotional stability. Therefore, atmosphere in Montessori schools is considered to be more peaceful and relaxed (19, pp. 46-47). The primary goal is that each of the pupils finds out the answers himself or herself using the didactic material and asking for help if needed to. The prepared environment is characterized by a very flexible approach, and it is absolutely necessary for guides in Montessori schools to observe patiently their learners and give them opportunities to practice and broaden their skills. Learners need to be patiently pushed by a guide to experience new ways of learning with the didactic material and to be able to choose freely among the offered tasks (19, pp. 48-50).

2.6 Principle of Guidance

The term *guide* is used in this thesis to refer to the person responsible for the process of teaching in the Montessori educational system. The term was adopted by Maria Montessori who preferred to call the educator a *guide* rather than a *teacher*. She believed that the educator does not teach the learner because learners learn themselves. The guide, however, provides learners with new information and keeps them mentally and physically active (25, p. 75).

The role of a *guide* in Montessori schools is to prepare the appropriate environment and suitable didactic material for learning. He/she is not meant to be the one who organizes every activity of learners. On the contrary, the guide is in the classroom for the purpose of being an advisor and is supposed to help his/her learners whenever they do not know what to do with a chosen task (15, p. 71). In other words, the Montessori guide is not meant to be the focus of attention; he or she can often be difficult to spot, as he/she moves freely among learners and gives advice. Typically, you can find him or her sitting on the floor or at a table, observing his/her learners as they work and making notes about their progress, or consulting with an individual or a small group.

To become an involved observer, the guide needs to learn how to analyze collected data in order to be able to assist learners with the choice of appropriate material and to prepare suitable learning environment (20, p. 49). He/she should be able to help with forming a learner's independent personality. Each pupil is taken as an individual unit and the guide looks at him/her from several points of view. The guide observes the pupils' learning styles, their development and behavior during the working period and school days. Then he/she prepares the output and development profile (20, pp. 28-29).

Another task of the Montessori guide is to become a role model for children and show them how to respect each other. For that reason, the mentor must pay attention to the whole class and relationships within the group of learners (15, pp. 71-72). The guide's role is not to overwhelm learners with too much information but rather to grab learners' attention and motivate them to develop their potential and skills (19, p. 50).

2.7 Principle of Self-control

Unfortunately, there has been a pedagogical myth connected to the belief that it is possible to live and learn without making mistakes. As a result of such a view, making a mistake might be considered shameful in contemporary society. This belief, however, is very misleading, for making mistakes is completely natural. The fact that all human beings make mistakes had been one of the important aspects which Maria Montessori took into account when formulating her teaching philosophy. She developed didactic materials containing a self-control section. The aim of the section is to prevent learners from being afraid of making mistakes. Most people are scared of situations when they realize they made mistakes and they do not want to admit it. (20, p. 37). Moreover, grades and highly competitive teaching methods used to motivate students to work harder may become ineffective. They may lead to unacceptable behavior in the form of competitiveness among pupils. Excessive rivalry acquired in an early age may never disappear and a person is then haunted by the feelings of dissatisfaction and anger.

As a reaction to this, Maria Montessori argues that if a child is given an opportunity to spot his/her own mistake, it can be easier to aviod doing the same kind of a mistake again. Allowing a child to monitor his/her own development throughout making mistakes, is one of the biggest occasions in his/her psychological development. To realize one's own mistakes is a part of everybody's life and their correction afterwards is encouraging (19, p. 17).

Children should be shown the ways of correcting mistakes and improving their behavior from the very beginning of their lives. Naturally, learners attending schools must be given enough time to practice the skill of self-correction. To be able to correct one's behavior and mistakes, a learner needs special material which enables him or her to control his or her work. That is why Montessori incorporated special self-correction sections to the developed materials (20, p. 37).

2.8 Comparison with Modern Principles in English Language Teaching

To teach the English language in Montessori schools, one must take into account not only the Montessori principles but also modern principles of ELT and the context of teaching teaching English as a foreign language. The principles depicted in the book *Teaching by Principles* by

H.D. Brown are used to make a comparison between the Montessori principles and modern principles applied in today's English lessons. Naturally, these principles have been constantly changing along with the newest theories (2, p. 17).

First of all, the current trend in ELT (as well as in teaching any other subject) is the shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred classroom. Montessori concept of educating learners is based on learner-centred approach as well. Both educational ideologies claim that a learner should be encouraged to try out several strategies related to his/her needs and learning styles which allow the learner to be creative and innovative. Each learner should be encouraged to use such techniques that enhance his/her sense of competence and self-worth. A Montessori guide must simply apply the learner-centred approach to his/her way of teaching and partially thinking as well. Modern research shows that a teacher of English needs to play several roles in the classroom. According to Harmer (8, pp. 108-110), the teacher happens to be a controller, prompter, participant, tutor and resource of knowledge. The roles of a teacher vary depending on the activities he/she prepares for the learners. Even though a Montessori teacher is rather a guide most of the time, he/she finds himself/herself in several roles too. For example, in frontal teaching, he/she is more like a knower, in the prepared environment he/she provides learners with free space and becomes more of an advisor if learners ask him/her for help. A similar role of a teacher might be found in the principle of modern ELT – the teacher is described as a *facilitator*, i.e. someone who prefers democratic principles to the autocratic ones. Someone who fosters learner autonomy and acts more as a resource rather than a transmitter of knowledge. To sum up, the following terms – the *facilitator* in modern ELT and the *guide* in Montessori pedagogy – basically mean the same (8, p. 108).

What the Montessori systém also shares with modern principles of ELT is as i tis called a *learning triangle*. The triangle is composed of three important factors – the guide, the learner and the prepared environment (Montessori terms); the teacher, the learner and the program-syllabus (ELT terms). What is, however, different is the conception of didactic material. While Montessori didactic material (flashcards, handouts, charts, and other) is usually developer by the teacher, mainstream ELT is mostly based on the pre-defined textbooks, even though personalizing the curriculum is also highly recommended in modern ELT, for it is a motivating factor for both the teacher and the learner (2, p. 158).

The concept of learner autonomy is also crucial for both systems. In modern ELT it appears in forms of initiating oral production of the language and the possibility of learning and practicing

the language in groups (2, p. 70). H.D. Brown suggests that learners should be nudged into activities in the classroom where they would have to communicate face-to-face (2, p. 70). In Montessori pedagogy, on the contrary, children are not forced to communicate with one another. They are given more freedom in choosing when and with whom they will speak, which might, unfortunately, lead to situations where a child will not speak to anyone during the English lesson at all. Nevertheless, children in Montessori schools, especially those in the early school years[2], are taught English by frontal teaching, for instance, by singing songs and saying riddles. Montessori believed in sensitive periods for language acquisition and therefore first wanted to make children ready for producing language by giving them several opportunities. Montessori adopted an approach called learning by listening. She called this method absorbing. The way Maria Montessori understood the development of language is explained in the following chapter.

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[2] The period of the early childhood concerns children whose age is between 6 or 7 to the age of 8 or 9 years old. (24, p. 107).

3 LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Language acquisition, in general, is a complex and lengthy process of how the extent of language is absorbed by an individual in order to be able to communicate in an appropriate and comprehensive way (11, p. 1-2). Patsy M. Lightbown and Nina Spada (11, p. 10) claim that the school setting gives pupils in the early childhood a special opportunity to extend already acquired knowledge and skills of language from the pre-school period of the pupils' lives. Children become more aware of the aspects of the language development, for instance, they learn to read. "Seeing words represented by letters and other symbols on a page leads children to a new understanding that language has a form as well as meaning. Reading reinforces the understanding that a 'word' is separate from the thing it represents" (11, p. 8). The ability to read gives children other opportunities. After they get to know that words can have more than one meaning, they can tell word jokes and short stories, ask tricky questions, learn riddles, etc. (11, p. 9).

3.1 First and Second Language Acquisition

Language acquisition is further divided into two categories – first language acquisition and second language acquisition. First language acquisition means learning one's mother tongue from the infancy through the early school years on (11, p. 10). As the term suggests, second language acquisition means that a learner has already acquired one language. The crucial difference between the two acquisitions is that very young learners in the early childhood do not have the metalinguistic knowledge and cognitive maturity when they begin to learn a language. In other words, learners in their early childhood do not have the ability to fully realize what is going on in their minds. For instance, metacognition becomes the key factor for learning and teaching reading (Nuttall, Teaching Reading, p. 33).   On the other hand, older learners are already aware of certain rules of their mother tongue and are therefore more cognitively mature when studying a second language (11, p. 30). The following three perspectives (behaviorism, innatist, and interactional/developmental perspective) have been studied over the past fifty years with the aim to explain how the language development takes place. For the purpose of this thesis, the innatist perspective by Noam Chomsky was described and compared with the way Maria Montessori understood language acquisition.

Noam Chomsky came with a theory claiming that "all human languages are fundamentally innate and that the same universal principles underline all of them (11, p. 15).." In other words, Chomsky believed that each human being is biologically programmed for learning the language. His theory is based on an idea that language development is activated in just the same

time as other biological functions. One of the examples Chomsky mentions is that if a child is provided with sufficient nourishment and free movement, he/she will learn to walk. Language development in Chomsky's view, works on a similar principle. A child is born with an ability which is innate and serves him/her to gradually discover the underlying rules of a language system he/she is exposed to (11, p. 15). Krashen's theory of 'comprehensible input' takes second language acquisition even further. He defines the term 'comprehensible input' as the second language to which a learner understands eventhough it is one level beyond his/her current stage of linguistic competence (10, p. 20). He argues that this 'comprehensible input' is crucial for language development.

3.1.1 Language Acquisition According to the Montessori Educational System

Maria Montessori's approach towards language acquisition is actually similar to Chomsky's perspective because she claims in her book *Absorbent Mind* that a process of learning and teaching language happens to be "activated" spontaneously, as it is a natural process developing in every human being (14. p. 83). She explains that the process starts at the unconscious level of the mind. She then explains that the process begins and unfolds in the darkest depths of the unconscious, and when it emerges it becomes as fixed acquisition.This is how Maria Montessori understands language acquisition in general. She points out that learning a language starts in the early school years and calls the period the sensitive period for learning a language.

However, she does not mention the acquisition of the second language. Montessori claimed that to master a foreign language, a learner needs to hear the language produced by someone who is a very good model so that the learner can absorb the appropriate form of the language (14, p. 87).

When taking into account second language acquisition, there is a critical period in which a child has the best mental conditions to learn a language. It is before he/she is aware of all the metalinguistic abilities because the learners may draw on the abilities too precisely and, as a result, can no longer access the language naturally as they could as younger learners (11, p. 31). As pointed out by a Montessori guide and the founder of Montessori school in Pardubice, Marcela Žáková, there are two significant breakthroughs in learning the second language[3]. Žáková claims that children are highly sensitive for absorbing a language in general at the age of six or seven. Unfortunately, if the second language is taught to learners at this age, they can

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[3] According to the e-mail from 27th February 2017.

lose their sensitivity for learning the mother tongue properly. Therefore, it is better to start teaching the second language either earlier (before they enter the primary school) or later (after they have gained the metalinguistic knowledge of their mother tongue) (26). Krashen, however, claims that the earlier the learners start acquiring the language, the better, for they have a greater chance to master that language (10, p. 43).

3.2 Objectives of the Elementary education

The document *Framework Education Programme for Basic Education* was created by Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy and defines all the objectives, key competences and expected outcomes required from the learners of elementary schools (13, p. 1). For the purpose of the bachelor thesis, the following information was obtained from the newest version of the *Framework Education Program for Basic Education* from 2016 with the reference to the older document from 2007, as the newest version has not been translated into English yet. Curriculum at elementary schools is based on this document, i.e. English (as well as any other subject) must be taught with the objectives in mind, and the way of teaching should help pupils to form and develop their key competencies. The key competencies include knowledge, skills, abilities, values and attitudes which are considered crucial for the personal development of each individual in the society and his/her participation in it. They are interconnected with one another and, therefore, the activities at school and the entire educational content in general must be aimed at acquiring these key competencies. What follows are the key competences for the elementary stage of education: learning competency, problem-solving competency, communication competency, social and personal competency, civic competency, professional competency. (13, p. 11). The chapter 3.3 is focused on the description of the objectives of second language teaching.

3.3 Objectives of Second Language Acquisition

Second language acquisition in the early school years is one of the objectives of the elementary education in the Czech Republic and should be acquired by learners during their elementary education. The objectives of the second language acquisition require abilities to discover facts which are beyond the limits of the mother tongue. Pupils should get the language basis for communication within an integrated Europe and the rest of the world. Foreign language skills help pupils reduce language barriers and form their educational and career plans. (13, p. 16). Learners should also gradually obtain the language and be able to express their ideas and present their attitudes and experiences. The knowledge of the historical and cultural aspects of the

language is also necessary. This objective is connected to interpersonal communication and its perspective in the sense of establishing a positive attitude towards a given cultural environment. Learners should also work independently when getting information from various types of sources. They ought to learn about different literary sources and texts and then be able to share their reading experiences and become confident enough for participation in public performance showing the marks of the ability to express himself/herself in a cultivated way (13, p. 17). For the purpose of this paper, the attention is focused on reading comprehension.

3.3.1 Reading Comprehension

The objectives for reading comprehension for early school-years children of elementary schools include that a learner is able to look for needed information in a simple piece of text related to the topics discussed in the classroom. Another objective is the ability of a learner to understand a short, simple texts concerning everyday life, especially if the learner has visual support at his/her disposal (13, p. 26).

4 DIDACTIC MATERIAL

The previously mentioned Montessori curriculum is also called 'material curriculum'. Obviously because of the very specific role of the material in the Montessori education. "Over the next 50 years Dr. Maria Montessori developed a radically different system of education by testing new approaches and materials and noting children's reactions" (21, p. 18). Maria Montessori engaged children into everyday situations. She started to teach them ordinary household chores such as dusting, sweeping the floor, etc. in order to make children be responsible. Later on, she developed more advanced materials for activities as writing, reading, counting and others (19, p. 15).

She made her own didactic material that enabled children to learn throughout their senses. The main purpose of the didactic material was to practice practical skills, such as gross and fine motor skills and use their senses at the same time. During the process of observing children, Dr. Maria Montessori, found out that children who have the appropriate material available and are situated in a well prepared environment have a tendency to entertain themselves. The didactic material should involve learner's activity and support the development of their abilities and skills. At the same time, the material should provide them with the support of dealing with their specific needs that they might have without any excessive need of help from their guide (19, pp. 52-53).

4.1 Descriptions of the Montessori Didactic Material

The Montessori didactic material is the term for the educational tool that evolves children's knowledge. In other words, Montessori brought a completely new idea of the tools which lead children throughout the process of getting knowledge. Maria Montessori believed that children gain new information more effectively while working with their hands, hence materials. As soon as children manipulate with things and put their experience into practice, they successfully get the needed information. Since they have experienced it on their own, the possibility of forgetting their knowledge is lower. The Montessori didactic material was designed to evolve children's spontaneous activity and therefore lead them towards an individual way of learning. The didactic material includes several areas which should support children's education.

Harald divides these areas into five major categories:

-       The practice for the practical part of life

-       Sensual material

- The material for reading and writing

- Cosmic material

- Math material (7, pp. 59-60)

As this bachelor thesis deals with the didactic material focused on teaching English, the sensual material and exercises are mentioned. To prepare for writing, reading and mathematics, children usually use 'plane insets, metal insets, sandpaper letters and numbers, movable alphabet, various geometric forms, phonogram materials, word games, concrete objects, grammar symbols, reading analysis, language cards, definitions, nomenclature, words, sentences, stories, numerical rods'. Children also do creative activities including painting, cutting and drawing. They use 'charts, cards, puzzles, maps, models, time-lines, books and others (25, pp. 48-63).

4.2 Principles of the Didactic Material

The Montessori didactic material is based on very important principles that must be introduced to learners.

First of all, the didactic material must be simply designed for the learners to understand it and be able to use it without being given any instructions by a guide. The didactic material should attract the learners. Therefore, it is mostly made of wood or other natural materials. The didactic material is also of bright colors because it has been proved that bright colors significantly attract children's attention (21, p. 21-25).

Secondly, the self-control of errors should be a part of each of the didactic material so that the learners can get the opportunity to control their own mistakes and cultivate their autonomous behavior. (19, p. 17).

Thirdly, it is required that the didactic material is created for learners of different intelligence quotients, paying special attention to learners' skills and abilities (16, p. 66-68). Learners can use the chosen didactic material for a period of time. Tasks differ from basic ones to more difficult ones. In each class there are various didactic materials, but there is just one piece of each type. Children have to decide on their own about the order of using didactic material (19, p. 16). Each didactic material has its logical structure. It is presented to children individually. The guide instructs the learner about how to use the didactic material. When the learner is able

to use the didactic material, he/she keeps to the principle of free work. It should help the learner realize his/her own needs and respect the learner's interests (25, pp. 33-34).

Didactic material and exercises are organized in the prepared environment. First of all, there are exercises focused on practical life. Secondly, there are sensual materials and exercises. Then, there are exercises practicing writing, reading, mathematics and other educational areas. Finally, there are creative expression and cultural input (19, pp. 57-59). Since this thesis is focused on the didactic material which should help learners improve their reading skills, the process of teaching reading will be dealt with in the following chapters.

4.3 Teaching Reading in Montessori Schools

After years of experience, Montessori discovered that writing precedes reading and these two abilities do not necessarily evolve at the same time. According to Maria Montessori's theory, the process of reading is the interpretation of a thought with the help of graphic symbols. Montessori claimed that a child does not read until he or she is able to imagine a concrete image of a written word. For example, if a learner sees letters forming a word (cat, house, elephant) and he or she knows the meaning of the word, it means that he or she can read. In other words, reading is the ability of intellectual powers.

The didactic material in Montessori schools is designed to learn how to write words at first. However, it is assumed that it will enable pupils to learn how to read without many complications. When writing, a child mechanically transforms the voice sound of what he or she hears. During this process, he or she might be able to think of the meanings of the letters and their final meanings in the form of words (15, p. 144). As a result, the process of imagination and other aspect of language development are activated by the activity of reading.

The first step when teaching reading in Montessori class is terminology. A learner needs to be able to read names of objects which are familiar to him or her. As a learner is already able to read a word as a group of voice sounds from the activity focused on writing, he/she should be asked by a guide to read phones of a concrete word. Then, the learner should say it over and over again until he/she manages to pronounce it in a proper way. Lastly, the learner should try and guess the meaning of the practiced word (15, p. 145). Montessori described these steps as three essential components of reading. It is the phonic component, comprehension based on the ability to visualize words and lastly it is the component of learning to read for meaning (28).

4.3.1 Teaching Reading in the Light of Modern ELT

To teach reading successfully, one must realize that it is necessary to use modified texts which should suit the level of the learners. At the same time, the texts used for teaching reading should inform and entartain the learners. Primarily, the purpose of texts is first and foremost to convey a message because the major goal of reading is to derive messages from given texts (17, p. 30). The teacher's role is to make sure that every learner works productively on the given task and to his/her full potential. To manage it, the teacher needs to encourage his/her learners by promoting text-focused discussion and enabling the learners to interpret the text themselves instead of having to rely on the teacher. Another very crucial role of the teacher while teaching reading is to monitor the progess of the learners to make sure that every learner in the class improves steadily (17, p. 33). On the other hand, learners need to be able to monitor their own comprehension while reading. For example, when the learner does not understand a piece of text, he/she needs to adopt a strategy that will help him/her to understand the text (17, p. 33).

Several researchers have studied the issues of second language reading pedagogy since the year 1970 and came up with a variety of methods which might lead to effective teaching reading. Brown in his book *Teaching by Principles* describes two very prominent methods: bottom-up and top-down processing. These two methods became the pillar of teaching reading. The first method, bottom-up processing, means that a learner must first master the metalinguistic knowledge of the language. In other words, the learners must be able to recognize a multiplicity of linguistic sings such as letters, morphemes, syllables, words, phrases and others. After that the learner must process all this linguistic information and put it in logical order in his/her mind to be able to imagine what he/she has just read about.

However, the learner needs to decide for himself/herself what to remember from the piece of text and what not to. Here comes the importance of top-down processing method which is, speaking in terms of intelligence and experience, more about one's individual ability to understand the given piece of text. (2, p. 358).

As both the methods are important, recent research on teaching reading has shown that the best way to teach reading is to combine these methods together in a classroom. The learner actually uses top-down processing to predict possible meanings and then he/she checks whether it is really what the writer says using a bottom-up approach (2, p. 358).

In addition, it is very important to keep in mind the importance of interrelationship of skills when teaching a second language. In other words, to teach reading successfully, one must combine it with listening, speaking and writing activities (2, p. 357).

4.4 The Description of the Montessori Didactic Material Used for Teaching Reading

Learners in Montessori schools develop their reading skills by reading first texts containing the basic phonetic words and then more complex texts. This is connected to the fact that learners gradually enlarge their vocabulary. Pupils are introduced the basic grammar rules in a simple and understandable way. Three series for the development of literacy were developed by Maria Montessori and they are presented to leraners in a special order. She distinguished two stages of literacy – the early and the later literacy. The early literacy contains two series and grammar introduction. They differ in color, and the level of complexity. The first one is 'Pink series' followed by more complex 'Blue series' and the introduction to grammar. After mastering these basic series, the 'Green series' can be introduced as a part of later literacy (15, pp. 134-135).

Naturally, other kinds of didactic materials can be used for teaching reading in Montessori schools. Apart from introducing the Montessori pedagogy – her principles and ways of teaching language in general – one of the reasons for writing the theoretical part was to depict the dominant position of Montessori didactic material. One of the didactic materials focused on reading comprehension was chosen for the research. The whole process of the research is described in the practical part of this thesis.

Practical part

5 Research Design

The main motive for writing this bachelor thesis was the need to explore how reading in taught in Montessori schools and how learners of a selected Montessori school work with one particular didactic material during the lessons of English. Another aim was to find out how Montessori principles reflect the general objectives of ELT, special attention being paid to reading skills and learners' work with the selected didactic material. The main aim of the practical part is to describe the steps of the qualitative research and to answear research questions stated in the introduction.

The overall aim of the research was to find out if and how the Montessori principles are implemented into originally non-Montessori didactic material Leveled Books, and how the principles are reflected in the objectives of teaching reading in ELT. Since Maria Montessori had not explicitly stated how English as a second language should be taught, the modern principles applied in ELT must be taken into consideration as well. This research should provide information about the Montessori principles, their reflection in the didactic material, interconnectedness with the modern principles in ELT and finally learners' manipulation with the didactic material.

5.1 Research question

The path towards the achievement of the overal aim of the research and its comprehensible interpretation leads the researcher to the process of setting a specific research question. Gavora mentions that the clearly stated research question is inevitable for conducting qualitative research. On the contrary, the researcher can also start by choosing a specific target group of people for the research study and gradually narrow the research question according to the collected data and their classification (6, p. 143). For this bachelor thesis the latter of the two processes was chosen, helping the researcher to define the research question.

The research question:

How are the Montessori principles and general objectives of teaching reading in ELT reflected in the didactic material Leveled Books while the learners are working with it?

The research question was narrowed down after several visits in the Montessori primary school, and the terms and data for the theoretical part of the thesis were gradually defined. Having

written the theoretical part, the research question was segmented into smaller parts. As Švaříček and Šeďová point out, the research question should guide the researcher towards formulating more concrete questions helping the researcher to be more specific in his/her process of gathering data (23, p. 70). Regarding this fact, the the procedure of segmenting the research question was used in order to compile the observation sheets. The observation sheets along with the narrowed questions will be described in more detail in the Chapter 5.2.2.

5.2 Methods of data collection

For the purpose of data collection, the method of participant observation was chosen. According to Švaříček and Šeďová, the method of participant observation means that the observer becomes a part of the social group which he/she decides to observe. The participant observer's main goal is to undergo a lenghty and systematic process of gathering data in order to interpret the events which appear within the observed group (23, p. 143). Since the result of this method provides the researcher with a different type of information, the method of interview was chosen as well in order to notice participants' thoughts and opinions about an issue studied by the researcher (23, p. 144). The combination of these two methods is recommended by Švaříček and Šeďová. They claim that it gives the reader more complex vision of the researched matter (23, p. 158). Gavora also mentions that the application of participant observation and interview are typical methods used for qualitative research (6, p. 142). The two above mentioned methods were chosen by the researcher in order to ensure validity and reliability of this research. To make the research even more complex, the method of a studied document was added for the purpose of trinagulation which is explained as a process of gathering data from several different types of resources (6, p. 162).

5.2.1 Content study of school document

One selected part of the School Educational Programme of the Montessori basic school proceeding from the document *Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education (FEP BE) in the Czech Republic* was studied as a part of the thesis. The content study focused only on one specific part of the document describing the outcomes of learners of the 3rd grade of their early school years (8 to 9 years old) in the area of the English language. The content study of this part of the document should partially contribute to research validity, as the stated outcomes were compared with the outcomes from the FEP BE. The document was created by the headmaster and came into force on 1st September 2016.

The content study of the document was carried out in the first half of February 2017. The chapter 5.5 dedicated to the conclusion of results mentions the comparison of information from this document with information from the FEP BE.

5.2.2 Observation Sheets

As stated above, research questions were split into more specifying questions and, on the basis of those questions, observation sheets were created serving the researcher for detailed guidance in the process of collecting the data. Gavora claims that participant observer's main goal is to write down all the information possible and then sort it out into categories which are thematically related to one another (6, p. 156). The main focus of the observation sheets is Montessori principles and their implementation into the selected didactic material. The sheets contain the following questions:

Question 1 related to the PRE-OBSERVATION SHEET 1:

What is the position of the didactic material in the prepared environment?

Question 2 related to the PRE-OBSERVATION SHEET 2:

How are the objectives of teaching reading according to Montessori principles reflected in the didactic material Leveled Books?

Question 3 related to the OBSERVATION 1:

Do the learners demonstrate the signs of autonomous behavior while working with the didactic material Leveled Books?

Question 4 related to the OBSERVATION 2:

Does the guide adopt a learner-centered approach towards his/her learners during the learners' work with the material?

Firstly, *PRE-OBSERVATION SHEET 1* was focused on the Principle of prepared environment and the position of the didactic material in it, and the Principle of self-control. Secondly, the objectives of teaching reading in modern ELT and their comparison with teaching reading in Montessori pedagogy were examined in PRE-OBSERVATION SHEET 2. This pre-observation was oriented towards the work with Leveled Books. *OBSERVATION SHEET 1* was focused on learner's behavior during the work with the didactic material. The following

Montessori principles were to be explored – the Principle of freedom, autonomy and free choice of tasks, for all these principles are related to the learners' behavior during the work with the didactic material. The role of the guide was observed in *OBSERVATION SHEET 2*. In other words, this observation sheet was targeted to the principle of guidance. Each observation sheet can be found in APPENDIX A.

The researcher pre-prepared the observation sheets and realized structured participant observation at the Montessori school. The observation that was carried out was open and direct (23, pp.144-146).

The researcher prepared four observation sheets in total. Each of the observation sheets includes a table for marking the predefined features. The observer ticked specific features anytime they had been observed. The observation sheets also contained the column "Comments" allowing the researcher to write down other possible comments or concrete examples relevant to the observed phenomena. The method of yes/no questions was chosen in the observation of the Principle of self-control (*PRE-OBSERVATION SHEET 1*) and the Principle of free choice of tasks (*OBSERVATION SHEET 1*). Since the observer had the opportunity to talk to the English guide about the observed lessons and application of the Montessori principles, additional notes were made and later used while analyzing the data. The observation sheets were consulted with the supervisor and were modified several times for the purpose of research validity.

The process of collecting the data through a set of observations took place during March and April 2017. The total number of the observed lessons was four. Each observation sheet was filled in once. The researcher's presence was announced before each lesson and the researcher observed the learners unobtrusively. No participation was involved from the side of the observer. The researcher was moving freely among the learners who were sitting on the floor or by the desks in the prepared environment. Notes were being written down into the sheets during the individual observations.

5.2.3 Interview

The third method used for this research was the method of semi-structured interviewing. Descome explains a semi-structured interview as an interview based on the list with predetermined questions with allowance of freely added questions which might help the researcher to find more relevant anwers for the research. In other words, the researcher lets the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the topic (4, p. 175).

The researcher has interviewed the English guide of the 3rd graders from the Montessori basic school. The main purpose of the semi-structured interview was to obtain data which the researcher had not been able to observe before. Another purpose of the interview was to find out about the guide's opinion on the didactic material Leveled Books.

The semi-structured interview was created with the help of the book *The Good Research Guide*. The individual phases are explained in the book systematically (4, pp. 184-187). The form of the applied interview for the purpose of this bachelor thesis can be seen in APPENDIX B. The researcher decided to conduct the interview in Czech in order to prevent possible misunderstandings, as both participants' – the interviewer and the respondent's – mother tongue is the Czech language. APPENDIX B explicitly demonstrates the structure of the interview. It consists of the introduction where the interviewer introduces herself and states the reasons for conducting the interview. The reasons for interviewing are stated and the research aim is pointed out there. The second part contains the questions. Finally, the interviewer's gratitude is expressed to the respondent for the time and effort involved in answering the questions. The validity of the interview was consulted with the supervisor.

The interview was conducted on 25th April, after the last observation had been done. It took about fifteen to twenty minutes and it was carried out in the pleasant atmosphere. The order of the questions contained in the interview was controlled by the researcher.

5.3 Realization

5.3.1 Description of the Montessori Primary School

The reason for selecting the particular Montessori primary school was the huge variety of didactic materials offered to the researcher. Majority of the materials were developed by the English guide teaching at the school. The data related to the didactic material were collected using a *snowball sampling* method. Gavora explains the *snowball sampling* as a procedure allowing the researcher to widen the circle of people who will be involved in the research study (6, p. 144). Thus, the researcher had the opportunity to talk to the manager of the school and the English guides teaching at the school, and decided to cooperate with the one who focuses on self-made didactic material. Although the intial thought was to study self-made didactic material, the researcher was introduced didactic material focused on leveled reading which grabbed the researcher's interest most of all.

5.3.2 Description of the Didactic Material

The chosen didactic material focusing on leveled reading (also called Leveled Books) was not originally created for teaching reading in Montessori classrooms. This was one of the main reasons why the researcher wanted to find out how the Montessori principles are implemented into the work with this particular didactic material. The Montessori basic school has bought a license to be allowed to use the didactic material Leveled Books. The Leveled Books come from the American websites called Learning A-Z which provide online curriculum resources. Leveled Books can be found under the section Reading A-Z. It is an ever changing online programme because every month new books and lesson plans are added. The material has been designed in a way to meet the unique needs of every learner (29).

Chart 1 shows instructions crucial for the work with Leveled Books. Each learner has the chart sticked in his/her special notebook called READING (designed exclusively for the work with Leveled Books). After all instructions have been followed by a learner, the guide considers the work with a particular Leveled Book completed.

How to work with "Leveled Books"
1. Listen 3x and read
2. Write new words on little cards
3. Write the title of the book, its level and date
4. Copy the text
5. Draw the parts of speech
6. Write a book report
7. Read to others
Jak pracovat s "víceúrovňovými knížkami"
1. Vybranou knížku si 3x poslechni a přečti.
2. Napiš si nová slova na kartičky (na rub nakresli obrázek).
3. Do sešitu READING napiš název knihy, její úroveň a datum.
4. Opiš text na levou stranu sešitu.
5. Přelož text na pravou stranu na stejný řádek.
6. U prvních 2 anglických vět urči slovní druhy.
7. O čem knížka je? (1větu)

8. Přečti 2x – pokaždé někomu jinému, zapiš, komu jsi četl(a).

Chart 1 – Instructions

Each learner has one more chart sticked in their notebook READING (*Chart 2* below), which serves them as a tool for maping their own progress. The learners can tick what tasks they have already fulfilled.

The title and the level of the book	listen	write						read		
	3 x	new words	the text	the translation	the parts of speech	the sentences	the book report	to yourself	to a friend	to a teacher

Chart 2 - Learner's individual chart

The researcher observed how children of the 3rd grade of elementary Montessori school learned throughout the didactic material. Special attention was paid to reading comprehension and reflection of both the Montessori principles and the objectives of English language teaching stated in the *Framework Educational Programme of Basic Education* (FEP BE) (with a detailed insight into the area of reading comprehension).

5.3.3 Description of the Target Group and the Prepared Environment

As has been stated above, the targer group for the research are learners of the 3rd grade of the selected Montessori school. The total number of the learners is 26. They, however, do not spend all the learning time together as it is common in mainstream schools. Instead, they are spread into three classrooms and study in mixed-age groups with the 1st and 2nd graders. Then, they also come to study in the prepared environment without their younger counterparts. The researcher observed a group of 7 learners of the 3rd grade only in the prepared environment. The guide's name will not be mentioned to guarantee anonymity.

Since this research is focused mainly on the work with the chosen didactic material, the observer drew a schema of the prepared environment in the PRE-OBSERVATION SHEET 1 (APPENDIX C) to depict the prepared environment. The main part of the prepared environment consists of shelves situated on the side of the walls, providing learners with one or two pieces of didactic material of the topics they are asked to learn and practice. The didactic material Leveled Books is placed on the floor in the right corner of the prepared environment. Leveled Books are arranged in three wooden boxes. Each box has a label signifying the reading level. Three reading levels had been chosen by the English guide for the 3rd graders. The levels are: aa level (consisting predominantly of single words or word phrases), A level (consisting of simple sentences) and B level (consisting of simple sentences and broadening the learners' range of vocabulary). The examples of randomly chosen Leveled Books can be seen in Appendix D. The prepared environment also includes a case where the learners can find other books, CDs and other didactic material.

5.4 Data analysis and interpretation

The purpose of this chapter is to describe how the data collected in the observation sheets and the interview were analysed. Each observation sheet was analysed in relation to the major research question and the subquestions mentioned in Chapter 5.2.2. The technique of 'Laying Cards' was chosen to interpret the data. Švaříček and Šeďová describe this technique as a technique of paraphrasing the content gained from coding the collected data (23, p. 226).

5.4.1 PRE-OBSERVATION SHEET 1

The answer to the related question 1 stated for the PRE-OBSERVATION SHEET 1 was obtained in the following way. Since the question asks about the position of the didactic material Leveled Books in the prepared environment, the researcher included the desription of the didactic material. The Principle of Self-Control was also explored, as it is slightly connected to the didactic material. The description of the prepared environment and the material's exact

position in it was also examined. The answer to the related question 1 *What is the position of the didactic material Leveled Books in the prepared environment?* is as follows.

The results from the PRE-OBSERVATION SHEET 1 explicitly show that the Principle of Prepared Environment is strictly followed in the selected Montessori school. The didactic material is to be found in its given place and is easily accessible to the learners. The sense of order is ensured by the labels on the boxes. Each box provides the learners with a different level of reading difficulty. Having finished with the reading and the work with the didactic material, learners must place the chosen book back to the appropriate box with a label corresponding with the reading level of the book.

While the Principle of prepared environment is strictly followed, the Principle of self-control is not a part of the didactic material Leveled Books at all. Therefore, learners have no possibility to self-check their reading and pronunciation. Their only possibility to be corrected in terms of pronunciation is while they are reading the didactic material to their classmates or to the teacher. However, as Montessori claimed that the ability to read is not only about pronouncing single words correctly and fluently, but more importatntly, about understanding the meaning of the words, the learner's task is to draw nouns from the reading on flashcards which should support the learner's understanding of what the learner read about. Nevertheless, this activity does not contribute to self-correction of learners.

5.4.2 PRE-OBSERVATION SHEET 2

The main purpose of the PRE-OBSERVATION SHEET 2 was to answer the related question 2: *How are the objectives of teaching reading according to Montessori principles reflected in the didactic material Leveled Books?*

Since this question is connected to the work with the didactic material and their instructions described in Chapter 5.3.2, the following chart is shown again in order to answer the related question 2.

How to work with "Leveled Books"
1. Listen 3x and read   2. Write new words on little cards and draw pictures of the words   3. Write the title of the book, its level and date   4. Copy the text

5. Draw the parts of speech

6. Write a book report

7. Read to others (2 classmates, once to the guide)

Chart 3 - Instructions

The researcher further split the related question into two follow-up questions:

How are the three Montessori essential components of reading practiced while learners work with the didactic material Leveled Books?

Montessori described the three essential components of reading: a phonic component, the aility to visualize and the ability to read for meaning. The phonic component relates to pronunciation, meaning that the learner will learn the proper pronunciation while reading. This component is ensured by step number 1 when the learner is supposed to read the book along with the audio recording. The learner's appropriate pronunciation is then checked by the guide. The second component of reading is, according to Montessori, the ability to visualize e.g. concrete objects which he/she reads about. The third component is that the learner is able to learn to read for meaning. These two components are conveyed in step 2 by the activity of transforming the words into pictures. To be able to draw a picture of a new word, one must first understand the word and be able to visualize it. Step number 6 ensures that the learner really knows what he/she has read about.

To prove the interconnectedness of the Montessori principles for reading with the modern principles in ELT, the researcher answered the following question: *Does the didactic material Leveled Books provide learners with practicing other skills while working with it?* Each step of the chart explicitly demonstrates that the learners are practicing all the language skills (reading, listening, speaking, writing) while working with the didactic material Leveled Books. Reading is ensured by steps number 1 and 7. The skill of listening is practiced in step number 1. Learners have a chance to practice speaking in step number 7. And finally, writing is practiced through steps number 2, 3, 4 and 6.

5.4.3 OBSERVATION SHEET 1

The related question 3 to the OBSERVATION SHEET 1 relates to learners' autonomy while working with the didactic material Leveled Books. Three of the Montessori principles were

observed – of freedom, autonomy and free choice of tasks. The Principle of freedom is connected to organizational forms of learners and their decision to work with a particular didactic material. The following chart shows that the learners could choose among pair work, individual work or group work.

	Learners' choice
Pair work	✓
Individual work	✓ , ✓, ✓
Group work	

Chart 4 - Organizational forms

The ticks in *Chart 4* denote the presence of the phenomenon during the learners' work with the didactic material. There were seven learners in the prepared environment. Two learners chose to work with the didactic material Leveled Books in pairs. Three learners from the observed group chose to work with the didactic material individually. Lastly, there were two learners chose to work with Leveled Books during the lesson at all. They decided to work with different didactic material instead. Learners did not work as a group with the didactic material. Pair work proved that learners helped one another while working with the didactic material. The researcher also noticed that the learners did not need to ask the guide for approval to choose particular tasks while working with Leveled Books.

The Principle of autonomy is depicted in *Chart 5* focusing on interaction patterns between the guide and the learner(s).

	G – L	G - Ls	L – L	L – Ls	L - G	Ls – Ls	Other:
Frequency	✓,✓,✓	✓	✓,✓,✓,✓	✓,✓	✓,✓,✓,✓		

Chart 5 - Interaction patters

As the chart suggests, it is learners who talk most during the lessons. It was found out that the guide basically talks to the whole group of learners only at the very beginning of the lesson

when giving instructions and recommending didactic material for the day, or when revising the previously learned topic. After the guide encourages the learners to use several didactic materials, she moves among the learners freely and talks to each learner individually, if she thinks it is necessary. The guide monitors each learner's individual work and answears his/her questions. The work with the didactic material Leveled Books actually requires interaction from both – the learner and the guide. Moreover, learners need to read the book they choose to two of their classmates and finally to the guide. It means that interaction among the learners is quite high even in such a small group of learners. What also needs to be mentioned is that each learner organizes the work with the didactic material himself/herself. Therefore, it is entirely up to his/her ability to organize whom he/she will read the chosen book.

The filled-in OBSERVATION SHEET 1 (APPENDIX C) consists of examples of questions raised by the learners towards the guide. These examples are an evidence of learners' autonomous behavior when learning through the didactic material Leveled Books.

Lastly, the OBSERVATION SHEET 1 was aimed to observe whether the learners have a completely free choice of tasks when it comes to the work with the Leveled Books. From *Chart 4* it is obvious that two learners had not picked the didactic material Leveled Books. As stated in Chapter 5.3.2. above, the learners are assigned to work with Leveled Books at least once a month. The guide needs to check her notes about each learner and if he/she has not read a book from the Leveled Books, the guide's role is to recommend it to the learner. Otherwise, the learners have a completely free choice of tasks.

5.4.4 OBSERVATION SHEET 2

The related question 4 to the OBSERVATION SHEET 2: *Does the guide adopt a learner-centred approach towards his/her learners during the learners' work with the matrial?* The question aimed at examining the Principle of guidance. Therefore, the guide's role and her approach applied during the learners' work with Leveled Books was observed.

Chart 6 shows that the guide applies a learner-centred approach, as she does not assign the work with the didactic material Leveled Books to all the learners at once. The reason is that the guide keeps regular notes of each learner's reading. She sees very quickly who has read and worked with Leveled Books and who has not. Then, she individually recommends a particular learner to choose the Leveled Books.

The guide assigns the work with the didactic material Leveled Books to: (✓)

All learners	Most learners	An individual
		✓

Chart 6 - Assigning the work with the Leveled Books

The following two charts indicate the guide's role.

moves among learners without interrupting	✓
moves among learners and interrupts when he/she sees a problem	✓
does not move among learners	

Chart 7 - Guide's role 1

Observing each learner	✓
Making notes	✓
Filling in the learner's portfolio	✓
Discussing the reading	✓

Chart 8 - Guide's role 2

The Principle of guidance was also followed while the learners worked with the Leveled Books, as the guide moved among the learners freely and interrupted them only when she recognized they came across a problem they did not know how to solve. While the guide was observing the learners, she was making notes about their individual progress. For instance, the guide wrote down wrong pronunciation of the words one learner had difficulty with. The guide gradually filled the portfolio of the books each learner has read. By the time a learner came to the guide to read the chosen book from Leveled Books, she discussed the reading with him and checked his notebook and all the tasks he was supposed to fulfil.

5.4.5 INTERVIEW

The results from the interview provided the researcher with interesting data that could not have been observed during participant observation. The first question of the interview – *Why did you decide to use the didactic material Leveled Books in your classroom?* – was aimed at teacher's attitude to Leveled Books and the aims of the work with this didactic material. There

is a very significant reason for the teacher's decision to use Leveled Books in her classroom: multifunctionality of this didactic material. The teacher explained that the requirements for the work with Leveled Books were created in accordance with the school document of the Montessori school. To meet the outcomes stated in the school document, learners must be provided with didactic materials focused on practicing all the language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking). Using Leveled Books, learners obviously practice all of the skills by fulfilling the tasks created for the didactic material.

The second question the teacher was asked is as follows: *I noticed that when you go to the prepared environment for the English language, the learners are divided into smaller groups. Do the learners work with the didactic material Leveled Books in heterogenous groups or not?* The teacher explained that before the learners approach the prepared environment for the English language, they are separated from their younger/older classmates. They are of the same age (8 to 9 years old). This fact answers that the Principle of heterogeneous classroom is not applied while the learners work with the Leveled Books in the prepared environment.

The last question asked in the interview was: *Do the learners always finish the work with the didactic material Leveled Books?* The teacher admitted that she tends to leave most of the management connected to the work with Leveled Books to each individual. The major reason is to support learners' autonomy and provide them with enough space for making their own decisions while learning through Leveled Books. However, exceptions can be made. For instance, if the teacher notices that the learner has not read any of the Leveled Books within three weeks of a particular month yet.

5.5 Conclusion of results

To sum up, the results gained from the observation sheets and the interview have revealed that most of the Montessori principles studied within the framework of this thesis are reflected in the didactic material Leveled Books. The researcher found out that only two principles are not applied during learners' work with the material, more specifically, the Principle of self-control and the Principle of heterogeneous classroom. On the basis of the interview and the study of the school document and its comparison with the state document *Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education*, the researcher came to the conlusion that the objectives of teaching reading in the English language correspond with one another. The stated outcome of teaching reading described in the school document is that the learner understands the content of a short piece of text which was delivered to the learner in a slow pace with appropriate pronunciation, and supported with visual aids.

Conclusion

This bachelor thesis deals with Montessori principles and their reflection in the didactic material called Leveled Books. The principles are compared with general objectives for teaching reading stated in the *Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education (FEP BE)*. The thesis is divided into two parts: theoretical and practical. The essential concepts discussed within the thesis are Montessori principles, the objectives of teaching reading in English, Montessori didactic material Leveled Books, and the modern principles in ELT.

The first Chapter introduced the Montessori educational system and clarified why Maria Montessori decided to develop a new educational system based on as it is called material curriculum. Then, the Montessori principles were presented and each of the principles was described in detail. Since the trends in modern ELT are ever changing and the Montessori principles were established by Maria Montessori at the end of the 19th century, the comparison with modern principles in ELT was drawn. In Chapter 3 the process of language acquisition was examined for the purpose of depicting Montessri's attitude to learning languages. Since Montessori did not explicitly describe the way a second language should be taught, theories of important linguists have been added to this chapter to briefly depict the way of teaching a second language. The following part of the chapter was aimed at the description of teaching English derived from the principal document *FEP BE*, special attention being paid to teaching reading. The importance of the Montessori didactic materials and their purpose was included in the closing chapter of the theoretical part. The chapter first discussed Montessori materials in general, and then attention was focused on didactic materials for teaching reading. Once again, the Montessori way of teaching reading was contrasted with the way reading is taught according to modern principles in ELT.

The main aim of the practical part was to introduce the qualitative research conducted as a part of the thesis. The researcher chose to collect the data by means of participant observation and interview. The research was carried out in a selected Montessori basic school in the Central Bohemian Region in the Czech Republic. The main aim of the research was to find out how the Montessori principles and the objectives of teaching reading in English are reflected in the didactic material Leveled Books, and to observe the way learners work with the didactic material. The researcher formulated several related questions from the main research question which was based on the research aim. The researcher decided to create her own observation sheets for the data collection. Another method used was the method of interview. The objectives of reading comprehension mentioned in the document *FEP BE* were compared with the

outcomes for the learners of the 3rd grade stated in the school document. All the collected data were analysed and used to answer the research question and achieve the overall aim.

It was found out that most of the Montessori principles are strictly followed while learners work with the didactic material Leveled Books. The results have revealed that the requirements for the work with Leveled Books involve learners into activities which can help them enhance their autonomous behavior. For instance, while working with Leveled Books, they have a free possibility of interaction within the prepared environment and a completely free choice of how to work with the didactic material. Autonomy is actually one of the main pillars of English language teaching, connecting the Montessori principles and the principles in modern ELT. (To make a connection between the Montessori principles and modern principles in ELT). This means that Leveled Books follow both the educational trends – the Montessori way of teaching reading as well as the standards of modern ELT. Therefore, the results indicate that there is a strong bond between each of the Montessori principles (and the principles of ELT). The absence of the Principle of heterogeneous classroom points out the guide's crucial decision to teach children of the same age, splitting them into even smaller groups in order to provide them with more space to ensure the principle of freedom and autonomy.

Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce pojednává o základních principech montessori vzdělávání. Konkrétně se zaměřuje na to, jak se tyto základní montessori principy reflektují při práci se zvolenou materiální didaktickou pomůckou nazvanou „Leveled Books". Montessori principy jsou v práci porovnávány společně s obecnými cíli pro čtení s porozuměním, stanovenými pro výuku anglického jazyka v českém vzdělávacím procesu. Práce je rozdělena do dvou částí – teoretické a praktické. Cílem teoretické části bylo představit zásadní teoretické koncepty, které se vztahují k základním principům montessori vzdělávání a jejich porovnání s moderními principy, platnými pro výuku anglického jazyka. Také bylo nezbytné zmínit obecné cíle pro výuku anglického jazyka v České republice a výstupy pro čtení s porozuměním, které jsou jejich součástí. Dále byly popsány principy pro využívání materiálních didaktických prostředků v montessori školách.

Teoretická část začíná stručným popisem vzdělávacího systému, který Maria Montessori založila a který se snaží především vysvětlit důvod, proč Maria Montessori usilovala o založení tzv. „materiálního" kurikula. Jinými slovy, proč chtěla založit učení dětí na základě práce s materiálními didaktickými pomůckami. Stručně je zmíněn život samotné zakladatelky montessori vzdělávání a rozepsané montessori kurikulum.

Ve druhé kapitole jsou v práci rozebrány montessori principy a jeden po druhém jsou postupně vysvětleny. Je popsán princip svobody, který je naprosto klíčovým bodem v montessori pedagogice a odvíjí se od něj všechny další principy. Dále je rozveden princip věkově heterogenních tříd. To znamená, že Maria Montessori usilovala o to, aby žáci nebyli rozřazeni do tříd podle stejného věku, ale naopak chtěla, aby se učili společně žáci rozdílného věku. Konkrétně rozdělila děti v rozmezí tří let, vytvořila tzv. trojročí. V prvním trojročí se nachází děti ve věku od 6 do 9 let, ve druhém trojročí pak děti od 9 do 12 let a tak dále. Hlavním důvodem takového roztřídění žáků je, aby starší žáci mohli pomáhat mladším, což může být na první pohled zavádějící. Nicméně, Montessori tvrdila, že při tom, když starší žák vysvětluje látku mladšímu žákovi, dochází k oboustrannému učení. Starší žák si již naučenou látku procvičí a navíc si vyzkouší, zda ji zvládne vysvětlit někomu jinému. Mladší žák se tímto přirozeně učí také.

Jako další je popsán princip autonomie a svobodného rozhodování. Z pohledu moderních principů pro výuku anglického jazyka je na autonomii ve vyučování kladen velký důraz, především z hlediska vlastního rozhodování se žáků o tom, s kým budou spolupracovat na daném úkolu, či jak si mezi sebou rozvrhnou ve skupině daný úkol. Velmi zajímavým zjištěním

tedy je, že Maria Montessori budování autonomního chování u žáků popsala již před několika desetiletími. Dále je v práci zmíněn princip senzitivního období pro výuku jazyka, což podle Montessori znamená, že děti jsou schopny v určitém věku si osvojit jazyk mnohem rychleji než v jiném věkovém rozmezí. Tento princip je podrobněji vysvětlen v náledující kapitole, jež pojednává o procesu osvojování jazyka. Je také zmíněn princip polarizace, připraveného prostředí a vedení. Připraveným prostředím je v montessori školách místo, ve kterém mají žáci k dispozici materiální didaktické pomůcky, díky kterým si sami procvičují probranou látku a měl by je vytvářet tvz. průvodce, nikoliv učitel. Montessori totiž chápala roli učitele spíše jako roli průvodce, který by měl své žáky provádět, nikoliv řídit a určovat veškeré jejich kroky ve výuce. Jako poslední je vysvětlen princip zaměřený na kontrolu svých vlastních chyb. Tento princip úzce souvisí s autonomním chováním, které by mělo vést žáky k tomu, aby si sami zjistili, zda udělali v daném úkolu chybu nebo měli vše správně. Kontrola vlastních chyb by také měla vést žáky k tomu, aby neměli zájem chtít opisovat od druhých, ale stali se plně zodpovědní za své vlastní učení. Vzhledem k tomu, že Montessori popsala své principy na sklonku 19. století, stručné porovnání těchto montessori principů s moderními principy pro výuku anglického jazyka je uvedeno na konci kapitoly, neboť stejně tak, jako se mění doba, mění se i trendy ve výuce anglického jazyka ve školách.

Následujícím tématem, kterým se zabývá třetí kapitola teoretické části práce, je způsob, jakým si (v tomto případě žáci ve školách) osvojují jazyk. Protože Maria Montessori nezkoumala přímo způsob osvojování si druhého/cizího/ jazyka, je v práci uvedeno několik teorií publikovaných od významných lingvistických odborníků, jako je například Noam Chomsky, které pojednávají o této problematice z mnohem hlubšího úhlu pohledu. V rámci této kapitoly byly také popsány obecné cíle pro výuku anglického jazyka v rámci českého vzdělávacího systému. Pro tyto účely byl použit dokument *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání*, odkud byly čerpány potřebné informace. Dokument sloužil k popsání obecných cílů pro výuku anglického jazyka v České republice, ale především také k popsání výstupů žáka pro čtení s porozuměním.

V poslední kapitole teoretické části jsou popsány materiální didaktické pomůcky a vysvětlen jejich princip při výuce v montessori školách. V úplném závěru kapitoly je zmíněn Montessori pohled na způsob výuky čtení. Opět je výuka čtení porovnána s výukou čtení druhého/cizího jazyka podle současných principů uplatňovaných ve výuce anglického jazyka.

Cílem praktické části bylo představit kvalitativní výzkum. Data z výzkumu byla sesbírána pomocí dvou výzkumných metod – participačního pozorování a rozhovoru. Výzkum byl zrealizován v prostředí jedné montessori školy ve Středočeském kraji v České republice. Hlavním cílem kvalitativního výzkumu bylo zjistit, jak se montessori principy společně s obecnými cíly pro výuku anglického jazyka zaměřené konkrétně na čtení s porozuměním reflektují v materiální didaktické pomůcce „Leveled Books" a jakým způsobem s ní záci při výuce anglického jazyka pracují. Na základě hlavního cíle práce byla sestavena výzkumná otázka, která byla dále rozebrána na menší podotázky. Data byla sesbírána pomocí samostatně vytvořených observačních listů, které měly pomoci při zkoumání, zda se Montessori principy reflektují při práci se zvoleným materiálem či nikoliv. Rozhovor sloužil při výzkumu k tomu, aby byly získány další potřebné informace, které nešly zjistit při pozorování. Výše zmíněný dokument *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání* stanovujíce cíle pro výuku anglického jazyka zaměřené na čtení s porozuměním, byly porovnány s informacemi uvedenými ve školním vzdělávacím programu zvolené školy. Všechna sesbíraná data byla vyhodnocena a vedla k odpovědi na výzkumnou otázku a k dosažení hlavního cíle práce.

Na základě výše popsaného výzkumu bylo zjištěno, že většina Montessori principů je reflektována při práci se zvolenou materiální didaktickou pomůckou „Leveled Books". Výsledky výzkumu navíc ukázaly, že zvolená materiální didaktická pomůcka zapojuje žáky do aktivit, které napomáhají žákům budovat autonomní chování. Dochází k tomu například, když si žáci sami zvolí, s kým budou v připraveném prostředí se zvolenou pomůckou pracovat nebo v momentě, kdy se sami rozhodují, zda si vůbec danou pomůcku vyberou. Autonomní chování je u žáků při práci s materiální didaktickou pomůckou „Leveled Books" podpořeno především díky požadavkům, určeným pro práci s ní. Požadavky stanovují žákům, co všechno mohou s pomůckou dělat. Jinými slovy, jak se mají s pomůckou učit. Požadavky k „Leveled Books" byly sestaveny učitelkou/průvodkyní. Dalším příkladem je ukázka velmi úzkého propojení Montessori principů se zvolenou materiální didaktickou pomůckou. A sice, žáci si sami mohou rozplánovat způsob, jak budou s pomůckou pracovat. Daný den si mohou splnit například půlku požadavků a příští hodinu angličtiny si mohou dodělat chybějící zbytek. Tento příklad poukazuje konkrétně na provázanost principů svobody a autonomního chování při svobodném výběru práce. Dnešní trendy ve výuce angličtiny dnes výrazně poukazují na důležitost autonomního chování žáků a navádí učitele k sestavování aktivit ve výuce anglického jazyka, které by takové chování podpořily. Výsledky tedy ukazují, že zvolená materiální didaktická pomůcka „Leveled Books" vede žáky k autonomnímu chování, tudíž podporuje jednak

Montessori způsob výuky, ale je vhodná i pro výuku v jiných školách, například v běžných základních školách. Výsledky výzkumu poukazují na fakt, že mezi jednotlivými Montessori principy je velmi úzká provázanost. Je tedy zřejmé, že vyskytuje-li se jeden princip při práci s pomůckou, ve spojitosti s tím na něj bude navazovat druhý princip a podobně. Výsledky ukázaly ale také to, že ne vždy je nutné, aby byly ve výuce obsaženy všechny montessori principy. Při rozhovoru s učitelkou/průvodkyní bylo totiž zjištěno, že dva z výše popsaných principů se při práci se zvolenou materiální didaktickou pomůckou nereflektují. Je to princip věkově heterogenních tříd a princip sebekontroly. Vysvětlením pro absenci principu věkově heterogenních tříd je ten, že žáci jsou při odchodu do připraveného prostředí pro anglický jazyk rozděleni do dvou menších skupinek. Důvodem je, že má-li být zachován princip svobody, je pro žáky lepší pracovat s materiální didaktickou pomůckou v menším počtu žáků. Při práci s „Leveled Books“ žáci totiž potřebují přehrávač a v připraveném prostředí jsou k dispozici pouze dva přehrávače. Bylo by pro ně tedy mnohem složitější pracovat se zvolenou pomůckou ve větším počtu z hlediska střídání se u rádia. Princip sebekontroly se v didaktické materiální pomůcce nijak nereflektuje, neboť pomůcka neobsahuje část, kde by si děti samy mohly ověřit správnost své vypracované práce. Nicméně, otázkou zůstává, jak by k práci se zvolenou materiální didaktickou pomůckou mohla být přidána tato část obsahující sebekontrolu, když se pomůcka týká především čtení. K pochopení obsahu při čtení jsou přidány na každé stránce knížky obrázky, aby žák získal představu o tom, co čte. Dále je při práci rozvíjen poslech s porozuměním, kde si žák procvičuje správnou výslovnost daných slov, slovních spojení a na závěr celých vět. Zde slouží dítěti ke kontrole samotná nahrávka, kde má příležitost si naposlouchat správnou výslovnost a zastavovat si nahrávku podle vlastních potřeb a přitom si nahlas procvičovat výslovnost daného textu. Při práci s pomůckou mají děti za úkol také psát. V tomto případě si žáci mohou zkontrolovat opsaný text podle daného textu v knížce. Větu, shrnující celkový obsah knížky, jim ale musí zkontrolovat učitelka/průvodkyně. Knížky neobsahují žádné shrnutí. Otázkou zůstává, jestli by žáka příliš nelákalo věty pouze opsat, stejně jako to dělá při opisu vět z knihy, pokud by byly shrunující věty o obsahu knížky jejich součástí. Kontrolu textu tedy opět provádí učitelka/ průvodkyně.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A – Observation sheets

APPENDIX B – Interview

APPENDIX C – Completed observation sheets
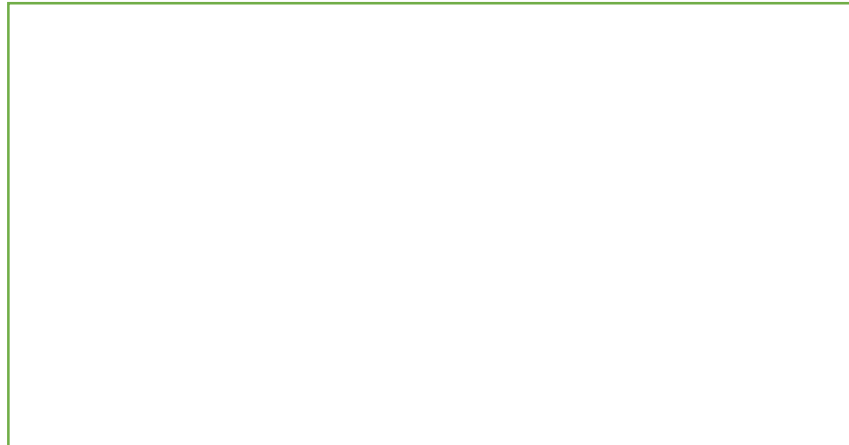
APPENDIX D – An example of the Leveled Book

APPENDIX E – Charts

APPENDIX A – Observation sheets
PRE-OBSERVATION SHEET 1 - DIDACTIC MATERIAL – LEVELED BOOKS

Description of the Didactic Material Leveled Books (comments)

Principle of Prepared Environment

The picture of physical setting of the prepared environment (position of shelves, desks, chairs, carpets, didactic materials, …)

Position of the didactic material Leveled Books in the prepared environment: (comments)

The didactic material Leveled Books is available and easily accessible for the learners (comments)

Principle of Self-Control

Does the didactic material Leveled Books consist of self-control section?

     YES   x   NO

Comments:

PRE- OBSERVATION SHEET 2 – DIDACTIC MATERIAL – READING COMPREHENSION

Reading Comprehension

How are the three Montessori essential components of reading practiced while learners work with the didactic material Leveled Books? (comments)

Does the didactic material Leveled Books provide learners with practicing other skills while working with it? (comments)

OBSERVATION SHEET 1

Principle of Freedom

Organizational forms the learners decided to choose for working with the didactic material

Leveled Books (✓)

	Learners' choice
Pair work	
Individual work	
Group work	

Learners help one another without approval of a guide (✓)

Principle of Autonomy

Interaction patterns (✓)

G = guide

L = learner

(e.g. G – L, guide talks to a learner)

	G – L	G - Ls	L - L	L – Ls	L - G	Ls – Ls	Other:
Frequency							

Examples of questions raised by the learners towards the guide:

Free Choice of Tasks

In the prepared environment, learners are allowed to choose a task themselves:

YES   x   NO

Comments:

OBSERVATION SHEET 2

Principle of Guidance

The guide assigns the work with the didactic material Leveled Books to: (✓)

All learners	Most learners	An individual

Comments:

When observing the learners working with the didactic material Leveled Books, the guide:

(✓)

moves among learners without interrupting	
moves among learners and interrupts when he/she sees a problem	
does not move among learners	

The guide encourages the learners to solve the problems they come across while working with the didactic material Leveled Books(comments)

How does the guide monitor the learner's work with the didactic material Leveled Books?

Observing each learner	
Making notes	
Filling in the learner's portfolio	
Discussing the reading	

Comments:

APPENDIX B – Interview

Introduction

Dobrý den, jmenuji se Monika Stenzlová a jsem studentkou bakalářského studia, oboru Anglický jazyk – specializace v pedagogice. Velmi mě zajímá výuka anglického jazyka v Montessori školách. To je důvod, proč jsem se rozhodla zrealizovat výzkumnou část své bakalářské práce v Montessori škole. Bakalářská práce se zabývá principy Montessori pedagogiky a jejich propojením s konkrétním materiálem nazvaným Leveled Books (knížky zaměřující se na dovednost víceúrovňového čtení), který je využíván při hodinách anglického jazyka. Cílem výzkumu je zjistit, jak se reflektují Montessori principy společně s obecnými cíli stanovenými pro výuku anglického jazyka v rámci českého vzdělávacího systému v konkrétní didaktické pomůcce nazvané Leveled Books. Výzkum je zaměřen především na cíle anglického jazyka v rámci jedné rozvojové oblasti, na kterou by měla být pomůcka primárně zaměřena, a sice na čtení s porozuměním.

Jako hlavní výzkumnou metodu jsem si zvolila pozorování. Během toho jsem ale přišla na několik otázek, které nelze pouhým pozorováním zodpovědět. Ráda bych se Vás zeptala na dané otázky, protože by mě zajímal Váš názor. Otázky se vztahují výlučně na práci s vybranou didaktickou pomůckou Leveled Books.

Předpokládaná doba rozhovoru je 15 minut a bude s Vaším svolením nahráváno na záznamník. Záznam nebude nikde uveřejněn. Bude použit čistě k práci při vyhodnocování dat. Vaše jméno a název instituce nebude v práci zmíněn z etických důvodů.

Souhlasíte-li s nahráváním dat, můžeme přejít k samotným otázkám.

1. Proč jste zvolila metodu víceúrovňového čtení pomocí Leveled Books do hodiny anglického jazyka?

2. V průběhu pozorování jsem si všimla, že předtím, než jdete s dětmi do připraveného prostředí, jsou děti rozděleny do menších skupin. Jsou děti rozděleny do skupin podle věku nebo je skupina věkově heterogenní?

3. Dokončí žáci vždy práci s didaktickou pomůckou Leveled Books? Jinými slovy, jsou žáci povinni dokončit všechny požadavky, které mají vlepené v sešitě a které se vztahují k práci s pomůckou?

To je ode mne vše. Dovolte mi tímto poděkovat za Váš čas a účast na rozhovoru. Tímto považuji rozhovor za ukončený.
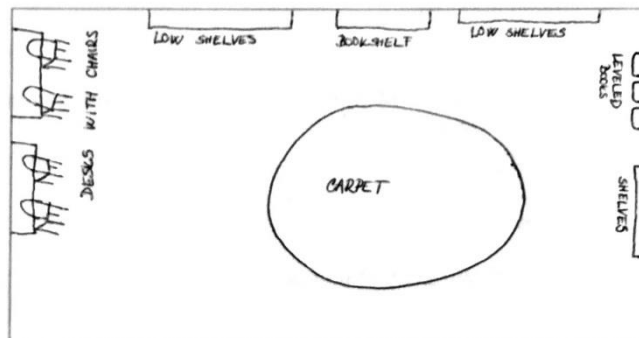
APPENDIX C – Completed observation sheets

PRE - OBSERVATION SHEET 1 - DIDACTIC MATERIAL – LEVELED BOOKS

Description of the Didactic Material Leveled Books (comments)
- available on the websites READING A-Z (licensed)
- paper books of A5 format , 5-6 pages each book, pictures on every page
- 3 reading levels - aa, A, B (for the 3rd graders)

Principle of Prepared Environment

The picture of physical setting of the prepared environment (position of shelves, desks, chairs, carpets, didactic material …)

Position of the didactic material Leveled Books in the prepared environment: (comments)
The didactic material 'Leveled Books' is stored in the wooden boxes in the right corner of the prepared environment.

The didactic material Leveled Books is available and easily accessible for the learners
(comments) ✔
The wooden boxes with the 'Leveled Books' are placed on the floor. The Learners can easily approach the didactic material.

Principle of Self-Control

Does the didactic material Leveled Books consist of self-control section?

YES   x   (NO)

Comments:
The didactic material 'Leveled Books' does not consist of self-check part. The learners cannot correct their possible mistakes themselfes.

PRE-OBSERVATION SHEET 2 – DIDACTIC MATRIAL – READING COMPREHENSION

Reading Comprehension

How are the three Montessori essential components of reading practiced while learners work with the didactic material Leveled Books? (comments)

- Phonic Component — the learner listens to the audio recording of the book. Then he/she practices the pronunciation by saying the text out loud.
  -- lastly the guide checks the learner's pronunciation.

- Comprehension on the ability to visualize — the learner draws his/her own pictures on flashcards
  — pictures in the books might help the learners to visualize as well

- Component of learning to read for meaning — the learner needs to write a short summary (one sentence) of what the book was about to make sure he/she understands the content of the book

Does the didactic material Leveled Books provide learners with practicing other skills while working with it? (✓)

- Reading
  ✓

- Listening
  ✓

- Speaking
  ✓

- Writing
  ✓

The interconnectedness of the language skills can be seen in the requirements for work with the didactic material Leveled Books.

OBSERVATION SHEET 1

Principle of Freedom

Organizational forms the learners decided to choose for working with the didactic material
Leveled Books (✓)

	Learners' choice
Pair work	✓
Individual work	✓✓✓
Group work	

Learners help one another without approval of a guide (✓)

✓

Principle of Autonomy

Interaction patterns (✓)

G = guide

L = learner

(e. g. G – L, guide talks to a learner)

	G – L	G - Ls	L - L	L – Ls	L - G	Ls – Ls	Other:
Frequency	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓		

Examples of questions raised by the learners towards the guide:

1. "Kam si mám napísať sen preklad?"
2. "Kde nájdu sen prolech?"
3. "Môžem si to prečítol?"

4. "Máš čas? Prosečka lych si snietlu."

Free Choice of Tasks

In the prepared environment, learners are allowed to choose a task themselves:

(YES)   x   NO

Comments:
The learners do not have to choose to work with the didactic material at all during
a lesson. They have to work with it at least once a month and fulfill all the
requirements assigned by the teo guide. Each learner has the requirements sticked
into their notebooks for work with the didactic material 'Leveled Books'.

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OBSERVATION SHEET 2

Principle of Guidance

The guide assigns the work with the didactic material Leveled Books to: (✓)

All learners	Most learners	An individual
		✓

Comments:
The guide monitors the learner's readings by making notes about what books they have read to her. She individually recommends each learner to read another book. The guide does not prefer to assign the reading to all the learners at once.

When observing the learners working with the didactic material Leveled Books, the guide: (✓)

moves among learners without interrupting	✓
moves among learners and interrupts when he/she sees a problem	✓
does not move among learners	

The guide encourages the learners to solve the problems they come across while working with the didactic material Leveled Books (comments)

If the guide sees a problem, she guides the learners to take a step back. For example, if the learner does not know how to pronounce a word, she tells him/her to listen to the audio recording of the book again.
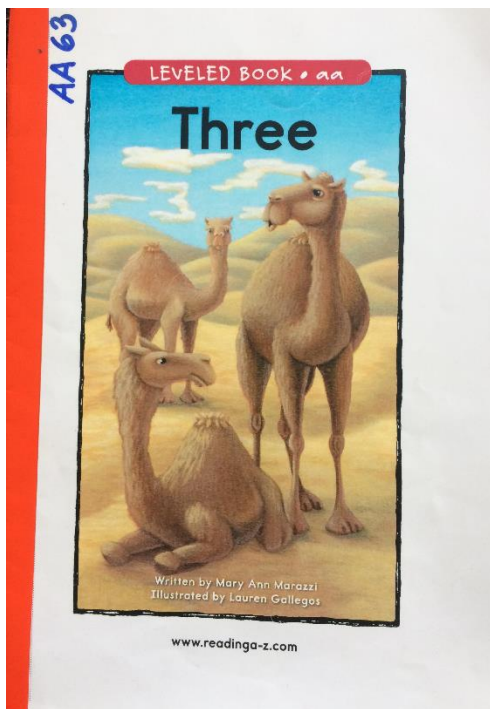
How does the guide monitor the learner's work with the didactic material Leveled Books?

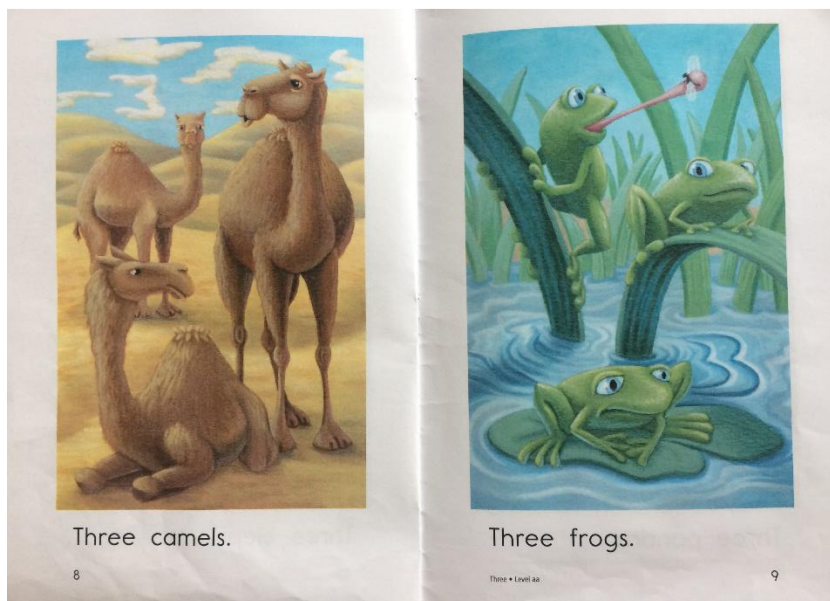| Observing each learner	✓
Making notes	✓
Filling in the learner's portfolio	✓
Discussing the reading	✓

Comments:

The guide has her own list and she keeps notes of the names of the books together with a name of a learner according to what he/she read.

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APPENDIX D – An example of the Leveled Book

Picture A

Picture B

APPENDIX E – Charts

Chart 1 - Requirements

How to work with "Leveled Books"
8. Listen 3x and read
9. Write new words on little cards
10. Write the title of the book, its level and date
11. Copy the text
12. Draw the parts of speech
13. Write a book report
14. Read to others

Jak pracovat s "víceúrovňovými knížkami
9. Vybranou knížku si 3x poslechni a přečti.
10. Napiš si nová slova na kartičky (na rub nakresli obrázek).
11. Do sešitu READING napiš název knihy, její úroveň a datum.
12. Opiš text na levou stranu sešitu.
13. Přelož text na pravou stranu na stejný řádek.
14. U prvních 2 anglických vět urči slovní druhy.
15. O čem knížka je? (1větu)
16. Přečti 2x – pokaždé někomu jinému, zapiš, komu jsi četl(a).

Chart 2 – Learner's individual chart

The title and the level of the book	listen	write						read		
	3 x	new words	the text	the translation	the parts of speech	the sentences	the book report	to yourself	to a friend	to a teacher

Chart 3 - Requirements

How to work with "Leveled Books"

1. Listen 3x and read
2. Write new words on little cards and draw pictures the words
3. Write the title of the book, its level and date
4. Copy the text
5. Draw the parts of speech
6. Write a book report
7. Read to others (2 classmates, once to the guide)

Chart 4 – Organizational forms

	Learners' choice
Pair work	✓
Individual work	✓ , ✓, ✓
Group work	

Chart 5 – Interaction patterns

	G – L	G - Ls	L - L	L – Ls	L - G	Ls – Ls	Other:
Frequency	✓,✓,✓	✓	✓,✓,✓,✓	✓,✓	✓,✓,✓,✓		

Chart 6 – Assigning the work with the Leveled Books

All learners	Most learners	An individual
		✓

Chart 7 – Guide's role

moves among learners without interrupting	✓
moves among learners and interrupts when he/she sees a problem	✓
does not move among learners	

Chart 8 – Guide's role

Observing each learner	✓
Making notes	✓
Filling in the learner's portfolio	✓
Discussing the reading	✓