

## On Montessori's Thought on Mixed Age Game Education

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### Abstract

In the mid-19th and 20th centuries, the Italian bourgeois industrial revolution took place, and new technologies were widely used, requiring a large amount of labor in society. The bourgeoisie recognizes that changes in the field of education are an important force in promoting social development. So there is an increasing emphasis on improving the quality of education. At that time, compulsory education had already begun to be popularized in Germany. More and more education reformers are also beginning to oppose the medieval view of "little adults" that extinguished children's nature. A new education movement that respects children's subjectivity has emerged in Europe. Montessori was one of them - an outstanding representative advocating for the establishment of "science education". Advocate for education that is closely related to children's lives.

### Keywords

Montessori's, Thought, Education.

### 1. Ideological Content

Montessori believed that children's development is achieved through work. "Work" is the main way for children to interact with the outside world and gain experience. She advocates that "whether it is the value of children's work, the content of children's work, the process of children's work, or the guiding strategies of children's work, they are all playful." Only in the perspective of adults will games and work be divided into two things. In the world of children, the two are inseparable. Work is game, work is work, and mixed age games are also what we call constructivism and constructivist teaching today. But what she opposes is the hypothetical game - that is, the hypothetical game of "using people and objects" is not practical and is not conducive to children's development.

In the early 20th century, Montessori established a children's home, and its teaching model was not the traditional same age teaching model, but organized children of different age groups to carry out learning activities in the same area. She believes that only when children of different ages are together can they to some extent promote their social development. The mixed age activities themselves have their own characteristics, mostly carried out in a "big with small" mode, allowing more children of different ages to learn, communicate, supervise, and imitate each other. During the activity, emotional experiences such as sharing, mutual assistance, and empathy were fully reflected, and a new teaching mode was achieved. Early childhood is a relatively important period of development. If good sociality and social interaction habits are not formed, children may have a tendency to commit crimes in the future.

The mixed age activities mentioned in this study refer to activities in which children aged 4-6 engage in activities such as playing, learning, sharing, and cooperating with their peers freely within a fixed area within a specific time frame through language, communication, and interaction. There are three main types of mixed age games:

### 1.1. Sports Games

Carry out sports activities for mixed age individuals. For example, the game "hide and seek" allows children of all ages to participate.

### 1.2. Performance Games

Carry out performance games for mixed age groups, such as "role play" and the "family wine" game that children love to play. Children can play the role of parents, while other children can play the role of babies. Children experience family affection while playing. There is also the story of "Children's Country", which allows children to play the role of people from different countries according to their age and gender, take turns as the protagonist, feel and feel a distinct personality, and have a preliminary impression of society. During the process, the children fully enjoyed the fun brought by the game.

### 1.3. Music Games

Music is the common language of children. One of the important educational methods of Montessori is mixed age music games, and mixed age education is mainly conducted through music games. Games are a major way for young children to understand their own world. If music is added to this way, children's games will have fun and richness.

Mixed age games are also accompanied by timely rewards. Through games, students are taught responsibility and collective dedication, achieving results that exceed repeated orders and reprimands.

## 2. The Educational Significance of Montessori's Thought on Mixed Age Games

Anthropologist Melvin believes that "young children are born with a tendency towards different ages." However, our daily life in kindergarten is limited by the emphasis on age differences, which limits the innate tendencies of young children. Montessori believed that "dividing by age is one of the most immoral things that humans do, and this is also true for young children." The same age group breaks the social contract and plunders the nourishment of life. Many schools initially divided classes by gender and then by age. This is an artificial isolation that blocks the progress of social consciousness. Montessori strongly opposed grouping young children according to age. She believes that the value of kindergarten life and learning lies in the fact that a child can meet many different companions. Moreover, young and older children help them better adapt to social life, so it is necessary for children of different ages to learn and live together. Classroom arrangement according to age can deprive children of the nourishment of life and hinder their social development. Mixed age class arrangement can provide children with more opportunities to experience different roles, enabling them to learn to think from the perspective of others, understand and tolerate others, and better handle problems.

The educational form of mixed age games provides a real educational atmosphere for young children, helps them understand the real human society, and promotes their social development. In a real educational atmosphere, children play games, learn from each other, cultivate empathy, and foster a supportive attitude towards life. Kindergartens should first create a spiritual environment for children that is loving, free, and inclusive. The Montessori teaching method advocates allowing children to learn the essence on their own, and providing opportunities for communication with peers with children as the center of everything. The mixed age games in kindergarten can be played on a regional basis. In the process of carrying out mixed age games, teachers should give young children full freedom, encourage them to communicate and discuss with peers of different ages, and strive to create a relaxed and

enjoyable communication environment for them. For example, in response to the anxiety that many young children experience when entering kindergarten, kindergarten teachers can design some mixed age game activities with high participation and active atmosphere to attract the attention of new students and help young children adapt to the kindergarten environment as soon as possible.

Montessori said, "We hope to give children freedom." Let them move independently according to natural laws, and children can only truly develop through free activities and environmental experiences. The mixed age games in kindergarten emphasize the subject status of children, allowing them to choose game activities independently and freely, enriching their experience in playful communication. Moreover, the spatial environment of kindergartens should be planned from the perspective of children. To maintain a certain degree of openness and variability, it is necessary to have lively scene settings, which can quickly break the boundaries between class and noon age and integrate into mixed age games. The outdoor activities in kindergarten are divided into classes, and the activities and partners of the children are single, even resulting in limited outdoor activity time. If kindergartens can implement mixed age games in outdoor activities, these situations will be solved. In this way, children will not only increase their interest in outdoor activities, but also constantly meet new friends, promoting their social development. For the development of mixed age games, children should be the center.

### 3. Reference Value for Today

Increase outdoor mixed age activities to maintain children's curiosity and curiosity. An educator is responsible for forming a "police" group, with each group leader serving as a small police officer, patrolling and ensuring safety, and reporting progress.

Set up teaching scenarios on campus, organize cross grade and cross gender group projects, complete them on campus, or have guardians and parents lead social practice activities to end communication.

Specifically, there was a relay diary experiment conducted by Liu Jing at Experimental Primary School in Panzhihua City, Sichuan Province. Starting from the class, students relay the diary for a week and ask them to read it aloud in person. The mutual evaluation between the teacher and students developed into pasting the diary on a display board, and students from different grades observed and learned from each other. This is also a form of mixed age game. Zhang Zhenwu Primary School in Zhushan County launched an educational activity called "Learn from Role Models Around Us, Strive to Be a Good Youth in the New Era", organized all students to participate, and held a grand award ceremony. Students were organized to discuss and evaluate their advanced deeds, which is also a transformation of mixed age education games.

Develop integrated indoor and outdoor curriculum for young children, maintain childlike innocence, and educate a sound personality and cultural system. Taking the Third Kindergarten directly under Hubei Province as an example, the kindergarten adopts the guiding spirit of gamification, life oriented, and experientialization in the "Guidelines for Learning and Development of 3-6 Year Old Children" and the "Guidelines for Kindergarten Education", and the curriculum concept of "life enlightenment and game stimulation". It adheres to the principle of putting children first, increasing the proportion of independent activities, and exploring the integration of game curriculum.

From this, it can be seen that Montessori mixed age games are gradually becoming localized, and Montessori's educational philosophy has a certain inspiring effect on the development of mixed age games in kindergartens. Firstly, to create a suitable material environment, it is even more necessary to create a loving spiritual environment for children. Secondly, it is up to the child to choose their own game content, materials, and gameplay. We also need to give full play

to the guiding role of teachers... We need to be both observers and guides. Finally, corresponding adjustments need to be made based on the actual situation of early childhood education in China.

#### 4. Conclusion

This article summarizes the background, content and educational significance of Montessori's mixed-age play thought, and its educational value for today from the perspective of education: students continue to contact mixed-age play, their body and mind can be developed, and a relaxed and pleasant environment can be created, which is conducive to solving the problem that activities are greatly reduced in the campus life of primary and secondary school students, and avoid giving up eating for fear of choking. I lost the opportunity to exercise my life in games and activities.

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