


A case studies on reader sponsorship. Promoting inclusive education

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Abstract

This work aims at understanding how the practice of reader sponsorship or storytelling favours the presence, participation and achievement of all students. This study, of descriptive nature, was conducted following a qualitative approach. The method chosen is the case study and the cases are restricted to three classrooms. In the first case study, the participants were 25 students from fifth year of Primary School, a trainee student and the tutor teacher. The second case study corresponds to two classrooms of the second year of Primary School. In the first classroom, the participants were 28 students, and in the second classroom, 27 students, two tutor teachers, a trainee student and 8 mothers. The information was gathered by scientific observation, semi-structured interview and documentary analysis. A deductive content analysis was conducted using the Themis tool. The results show how reader sponsorship is implemented in the cases chosen. As a conclusion, the methodological strategy of reader sponsorship promotes the presence (taking into account diversity), participation (empowerment) and achievement (progress and assessment) of all students.

Keywords: Active learning; inclusive education; Preschool Education; Primary Education; reading assignments.

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Estudio de caso sobre la estrategia del apadrinamiento lector. Fomentando una educación inclusiva

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Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio radica en comprender cómo la práctica de apadrinamiento lector o cuentacuentos favorece la presencia, la participación y el progreso de todos los estudiantes. Este estudio, de tipo descriptivo, se ha realizado desde un enfoque cualitativo. El método seleccionado ha sido el estudio de casos. Los casos se delimitan en tres aulas. En el caso uno, han participado 25 alumnos de 5º de Educación Primaria, un estudiante de prácticas y el docente tutor. El caso dos corresponde a dos aulas de 2º de Educación Primaria. En la primera han participado un total de 28 alumnos y en la segunda 27 alumnos, las 2 docentes tutoras, un estudiante de prácticas y 8 madres. La recogida de la información se realizó mediante la observación científica, la entrevista semiestructurada y el análisis de documentos. Se ha realizado un análisis de contenido deductivo a partir de la herramienta Themis. Los resultados muestran cómo se lleva a cabo la práctica del apadrinamiento lector en los casos seleccionados. Como conclusión, la estrategia metodológica del apadrinamiento lector favorece la presencia (teniendo en cuenta la diversidad), la participación (empoderamiento) y los logros (progreso y evaluación) de todos los estudiantes.

Palabras clave: Aprendizaje activo; educación inclusiva; Educación Infantil; Educación Primaria; tareas de lectura.

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Introduction

Inclusive school is characterised by respect and reliability towards every human being. Thus, [López-Melero \(2012\)](#) considers it a good opportunity for making us more human. But where is inclusive school heading now? It has come a long way since the Salamanca Statement and the Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, going through UNESCO's 48th International Conference on Education or the Incheon Declaration, until today. Nevertheless, talking about inclusive education makes us look to the future to be able to fulfil the Sustainable Development Goals stated in the 2030 Agenda, specifically Goal number 4, which directly addresses Quality Education ([Arnaiz, 2019](#); [Arnaiz and de Haro, 2020](#)).

It is frequent that, when talking about inclusive education, not all agents involved (researchers or practical agents) have a common understanding. [Sánchez-Serrano et al. \(2021\)](#) distinguish four main approaches: 1) curricular (respond to diversity from the curriculum); 2) school improvement (at the level of the educational community), 3) psycho-pedagogical (students with specific needs of educational support, social exclusion or behavioural problems) and 4) system of values, beliefs or principles (equal opportunities, right to education, participation, among others). This work is framed within the first approach, that is, taking inclusive classroom practices as a reference and putting all the students in the spotlight ([Sanahuja & Benet, 2020](#)) in order to guarantee the presence, participation and achievement of all students ([Ainscow et al., 2006](#)). These are basic principles that must prevail in inclusive classrooms and are focused on the curricular work of all the students, in the ordinary classroom, with pedagogical proposals that favour participation of all students and allow, at the same time, to generate valuable learning in each of them. Inclusive classrooms are characterised by the differentiation of structures, that is, they offer a variety of groupings or working modalities, use different working spaces, introduce flexible working times and use different material and human resources, at a range level ([Leroux & Paré, 2016](#); [Sanahuja et al., 2020](#)). Inclusive teachers use a wide variety of active didactic methods ([Muntaner et al., 2022](#); [Orozco & Moriña, 2020](#)) that allows to articulate different learning strategies in the classroom and make the curriculum more flexible ([Inostroza-Barahona, 2021](#); [Muntaner, 2014](#)). The use of different active didactic methods also allows for executing the principles of universal design for learning ([Alba-Pastor, 2019](#); [Cantuña et al., 2021](#); [Delgado, 2021](#)), while a flexible and inclusive assessment is conducted simultaneously ([Elizondo, 2021](#); [López & Manghi, 2021](#); [Tomlinson & Moon, 2013](#)).

This paper focuses on classroom practices that revolve around the story as an educational resource. These can adopt different forms depending on its applicability: reader sponsorship ([Dopazo, 2015](#); [Romero, 2014](#)), storytelling in Preschool Education ([Pérez, 2016](#)) or Kamishibai, traditional Japanese storytelling ([Aldama, 2005](#); [Cid, 2009](#)). Furthermore, there are more and more works that point to its digital format ([Alcalde-Peñalver & Santamaría-Urbieto, 2021](#); [de Jager et al., 2017](#); [Gürsoy, 2020](#); [Hava, 2019](#); [Lestari & Nirmala, 2020](#), among others). Broadly speaking, these practices consist of bringing students from higher grades together with the youngest ones in order to share readings or short theatre plays. Multimodal or Transmedia strategies and resources corroborate that the use of different semiotics, as well as addressing different competences, contributes to expand the narrative universe of the story ([Hernández-Ortega et al., 2021](#); [Sánchez-García et al., 2021](#)). Some previous works ([Alvarez-Rementería et al., 2022](#); [Azorín, 2017](#) and [2018](#)) have revealed that this methodological strategy promotes inclusion in the school and enhances reading comprehension and the taste for reading ([Santana et al., 2017](#)). Furthermore,

there are experiences that show that storytelling is a practice that fosters an intergenerational communication and linked to the territory (Lozano et al., 2021).

This study aims at understanding how the practice of reader sponsorship or storytelling favours the presence, participation and achievement of all students. To achieve this aim, we have explored two cases that implement, in a systematised way, this educational practice.

Method

This study, of a descriptive nature, was conducted following a qualitative approach (Cerrón, 2019; Johnson-Mardones, 2017; Sánchez, 2005). The method chosen is the case study (Stake, 2013). It is an instrumental case study, since it allows to understand how reader sponsorship is implemented in the classrooms chosen. Case selection was intentional and for research convenience. Some selection criteria were considered (for example, Primary School teachers who had implemented reader sponsorship for more than five academic years, who were recognised by their peers for implementing inclusive classroom practices and who were from a near context: the Province of Castellón, Spain).

Participants and context

In the first case, the participants were 25 students (11 girls and 14 boys) of the fifth year of Primary School (from which 8 students were interviewed), a trainee student and the tutor teacher. In this case, the students of Primary School performed the activity in only one classroom of Preschool Education (4 years old). The families did not participate.

The second case consists of two classrooms: the classroom of the second year of Primary School «A», with a total of 28 students (15 girls and 13 boys) and the classroom of the second year of Primary School «B», with a total of 27 students (16 girls and 11 boys). A total of 6 students were interviewed. The teachers of 2nd «A» and 2nd «B» work in a coordinated manner, thus, these two classrooms are considered as a single case study. A trainee student also participated. In addition, 8 mothers also participated in this second case study. The six classrooms of Preschool Education benefited from 'reader sponsorship', that is, the students of 2nd «A» and 2nd «B» read stories in all the classrooms of Preschool Education of the establishment.

Data collection techniques and tools

The data collection techniques used in this study are the ones characteristic of qualitative methods: scientific observation, semi-structured interview and analysis of the documents generated during the practice of reader sponsorship.

Observation is a research technique widely used in socio-educational contexts (Morentin & Izquierdo, 2019), which requires a structured and careful recording of data (Peña, 2011). Hence, the situations observed, focused on reader sponsorship, were video recorded and registered in a chart where the elements to be observed were established, based on Prud'homme et al. (2013). These elements are: rigor and coherence between the objectives, contents and pedagogical activities; anticipation (planning) and consideration of diversity; teaching and assessment practices; management of the classroom environment and the resources allocated to perform adaptations, modifications and to offer a specific support. Observation was supported by the tool *DCOS-Assessing Classroom Differentiation Protocol-Revised* (Cassady et al., 2004). Three observations were conducted, which lasted 45 minutes each.

The Semi-structured interview (Ballestín & Fàbregues, 2018) was another data collection technique. Thus, three interviewing protocols were implemented: 1) for teachers (for instance, Does reader sponsorship allow to respect each student's learning pace?, Does it encourage students to assume responsibility for their own learning?), 2) for students (for instance, How do you create the stories you tell to preschoolers?, Would you like to change your partner to be able to tell stories to other preschoolers?) and 3) for the mothers who participate in the second case study (for instance, How do you prepare the stories at home?, How do you value reader sponsorship?). A total of 32 interviews were conducted (see table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of interviews conducted in each case study

Case	Interviews
1 (Classroom of 5 th year of Primary School)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial interview with the teacher. Final interview with the teacher. 8 interviews with the students (there were 2 students in each interview) 1 interview with the trainee student
2.1 (Classroom of 2 nd year of Primary School «A»)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial and group interview (2 tutor teachers). Final and group interview (2 tutor teachers). 6 interviews with the students (there were two students in each interview, classroom «A»)
2.2. (Classroom of 2 nd year of Primary School «B»)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 interviews with the students (there were 2 students in each interview, classroom «B») 1 interview with the trainee student (classroom «B») 4 interviews with the families (there were 2 mothers in each interview)

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Furthermore, an analysis of the documents on didactic practice was also conducted (25 stories created by the students, an Educational Innovation Project, among other documents).

Regarding the criteria to evaluate the research process, we must highlight subjective relevance (Conejero, 2020) and triangulation (Jiménez, 2021; Okuda & Gómez-Restrepo, 2005; Vallejo & Finol, 2009): of time (initial and final interview in the case of the teachers), of data collection methods (interview, scientific observation and documentary analysis) and of participants (teachers, students, mothers and trainee students).

Research procedure and analysis of the results

Before starting the research, all the necessary authorizations were obtained and the informed consent was signed (Sales et al., 2019). An initial interview was then conducted in each case study with the participating teachers, and they agreed the sessions and the schedules when data collection would be conducted, in order to interfere as little as possible in the practice analysed. Observations of reader sponsorship were conducted and the documents and materials originated during the practice were gathered. Later, some students were interviewed (who were chosen by the teachers on the basis of their academic performance and communication skills), the two trainee students of the Primary Education Degree (case 1 and case 2) and the mothers (case

2). To finish the data collection, a final or closing interview was conducted with the participating teachers.

Once the information gathering was completed, content analysis was processed (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Saldaña, 2009) using the tool ATLAS.ti (version 8). It was followed by a deductive reasoning logic through the categories defined in the Dimension c. Developing inclusive processes (see table 2) of the *Themis* tool (Azorín & Ainscow, 2018) focused on the presence, participation and achievement of all students. Moreover, with the aim of identifying the origin of the data, a code system was established: case (C), teacher (T), student (S), trainee student (TS), mothers (M), interview (I): initial interview (I.I) y final interview (F.I), observation (O), field notes (FN), DCOS tool (DCOS) and analysis of the material (AM). For instance, case 1, final interview, student 1 [C1_F.I_S1].

Table 2. Dimension c. Developing inclusive processes of the Themis tool

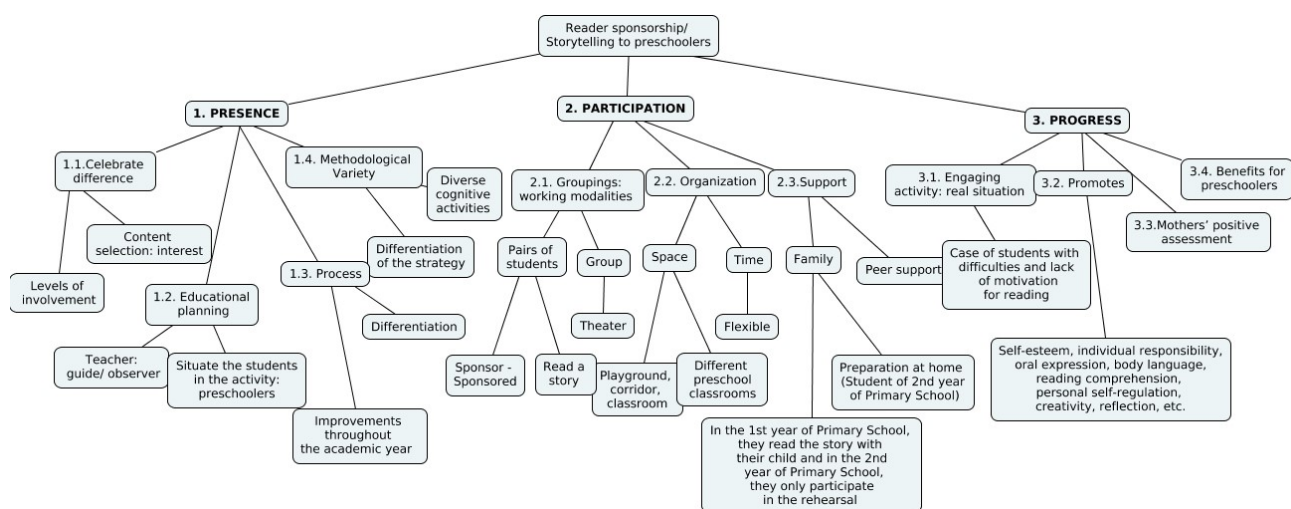
C.1. Presence: taking diversity into account
C.1.1. Celebration of diversity. Do teachers celebrate student diversity in the learning process?
C.1.2. Teaching planning. Does your teaching planning consider all the students?
C.1.3. Education process. How is the education process carried out?
C.1.4. Variety of methodology. Do teachers use a wide range of methodological strategies?
C.2. Participation: empowerment of all
C.2.1. Flexible heterogeneous groups. Is student heterogeneity a basic criterion when organising work groups?
C.2.2. Organisation of times and spaces. Are times and spaces flexible in order to adapt to students' characteristics?
C.2.3. Support. Does the student support process carry out inclusive?
C.3. Achievement: progress and assessment
C.3.1. Evaluation. When evaluating, is a student's progress measured according his or her possibilities?
C.3.2. Transit between stages. Does the school provide guidance to students and their families in the transit from one educational stage to another?

Source: Azorín and Ainscow (2018).

Results

To respond to the objective of this study, in this section, we present the results. Firstly, a conceptual map is shown (see figure 1) and later we proceed to illustrate each theoretical category: 1) Presence: considering students' diversity, 2) Participation: empowerment of all students and 3) Achievement: progress and assessment.

Figure 1. Conceptual Map



Source: Compiled by the authors.

Case 1

Presence: considering students' diversity

The activity of storytelling and theatre in Preschool is performed weekly in the subject of Valencian Language and Literature. The teacher differentiates this methodological strategy throughout the academic year. In the first term, the students of the fifth year of Primary School read a book to their sponsored students of Preschool Education (4 years old). In the second term, the students of 5th year of Primary School write and create stories individually to tell them to their sponsored student. In the third term, in groups, they prepare a short theatrical performance. Sometimes, in the third term, the dynamics was that the preschoolers wrote their own story with the assistance, guidance, advice and corrections of their classmate of 5th year of Primary School. The teacher had already implemented this activity in the previous academic years and had applied for an Educational Innovation Project to the Regional Government of Education in the Autonomous Community of Valencia called: *What's the purpose of language? The love... for language* (2015), from which another version of this dynamics derives, the Kamishibai.

“a new way to do it consists on changing the strategy again to avoid making the same mistake over and over [...]. The idea is that students prepare in groups (4 each month), during a month (4 or 5 sessions), a story in the Kamishibai format.

- 1) Create and write a story among all the group members (4 students);
- 2) Schematise and reduce it to comic strips, scenes that they will have to draw and colour,
- 3) Think about the elements that must be included in each scene and how it is organised;
- 4) Specify the sentence or sentences of each scene;
- 5) Rehearse the staging;
- 6) Once a month go to the preschool classroom to tell the three Kamishibai created;
- 7) Write and publish a blog post telling their experience and giving their personal assessment and opinion.” [C1_AM_TO].

The fact that each student can write and create his own story, following different formats, favours flexible learning and product differentiation. “Some of us use a paper [...], others use a computer, but I use the story format” [C1_F.I_S1]. The teacher supervises the students’ autonomous work to guide them to improve their creations.

“I like reading stories, telling them something about it, specially about the topic dealt with or the contents written, to make them reflect, since I gave them freedom” [C1_F.I_T].

This activity allows different levels of students’ involvement.

“If you say: I want you to submit the story written down in a card, glued and I want the title written in this way, then, everybody is going to do the same thing” [C1_F.I_TS].

In the third term, the theatre activity in Preschool is performed. The Preschool teacher, benefiting from the fact that they are working some classic stories, proposes the stories to be performed theatrically. The plays performed have been: *Puss in Boots*, *Peter Pan*, *The Three Little Pigs* and *Hansel and Gretel*, among others. The teacher asks them to choose the classic story that they want to work, and they have some weeks to prepare it. Once the group has chosen the classic story, they organise it and rehearse it. “We worked it, learned the script, did some masks and performed the theatre play” [C1_F.I_S1]. Sometimes, to surprise preschoolers, they change or adapt the end of the story.

“The story of *The Three Little Pigs* that we played, well, we changed the end. Instead of being eaten by the wolf, it only wanted to eat with them. [...] A group brought a cake because they were playing *Hansel and Gretel*, and we all shared it” [C1_F.I_S8].

There is a wide range of cognitive activities. Remembering (the students of 5th year of Primary School prepare and rehearse the story or the theatre in advance), understanding (they have to understand what they want to tell), applying (the students, when writing the story in Valencian language, have to apply the knowledge acquired both in written and spoken language—such as telling a story, intonation in questions, etc.), creating (they have to create a story, not only write it, but the story’s format also improves considerably throughout the academic year: 3D stories, etc.) [C1_O_DCOS].

Participation: empowerment of all

This methodological strategy favours students’ participation and responsibility.

“Telling stories is a cooperative participation activity with preschoolers, inter-level, in such a way that the students of my classroom take responsibility for a preschool student [...]” [C1_I.I_T].

The degree of participation and commitment of the students is high in the first and second term and moderate in the third term. In the third term, to perform the theatre play, only the group who performs each week participates, the rest of the classmates of 5th year of Primary School are spectators, as well as the 4-years-old preschoolers. “Now, with the theatre, we don’t participate, well, only those who play in the theatre [...]” [C1_F.I_S6].

As previously mentioned, the first two modalities of the activity (1st and 2nd term) are performed in pairs of students (sponsor-student and sponsored-student) and the theatre (3rd term) is played in groups of 3 or 4. The pairs of students (sponsor-student and sponsored-student) between the students of 5th year of Primary School and preschoolers (4 years-old) are assigned by the teacher at the beginning of the academic year. The pairs of students are the same during the first and second term. As the number of students is uneven, some preschoolers listen to two

stories. When asking the students if they would like to change their partner to do the activity, they answer 'no'. Strong bonds are created among both of them.

Regarding space-temporary organization, it is important to point out that this activity is performed in the playground, or when it is cold outside, in the corridor. To perform the theatre play, they stage it in the preschool classroom. The pace is flexible.

"Each student marks the time, the activity is not stopped nor interrupted. When the students of 5th year of Primary School arrive, take their preschool sponsored-student and choose a place where they feel comfortable to do the activity. When they finish, they come back to the preschool classroom where they continue interacting, sometimes the preschoolers draw something related to the story, until everybody finishes and returns to his/her classroom. Later, in the classroom of 5th year of Primary School, they reflect or exchange reading books for the following week, in the case of the first term." [C1_O_FN].

Families do not help students to prepare the theatre, they have full autonomy. "In my group, we did it alone. Our families didn't help us" [C1_F.I_S1].

Achievement: progress and assessment

When the students of 5th year of Primary School finish telling the story or playing the theatre, they return to their classroom and hold a brief discussion thereon.

"In the storytelling, there is usually a small group self-assessment on how it has gone, what has to be improved and what not, how they have felt. It is a more qualitative assessment, not so much quantitative like what mark would you give yourself, but: what has worked? What hasn't worked? What must be improved?" [C1_II_T].

As the teacher reflects on in her blog, with this activity they work: self-esteem, individual responsibility, oral expression, body language, reading comprehension, personal self-fulfilment, creativity, reflection, etc.

"Curricular work such as writing, improving oral expression, improving written expression, interacting with younger people and the individual responsibility it bears." [C1_F.I_T].

This activity does not only have benefits and learnings for the students of 5th year of Primary School, but also for the preschoolers.

"Usually, the youngest child also feels really grateful for having another child telling him a story, listening to him, and paying attention to him. I think this activity is very interesting and reinforces my students a lot" [C1_II_T].

The teacher states that the results of this methodological strategy always exceed her initial goals.

Case 2

Presence: considering students' diversity

In this occasion, since they are studying the 2nd year of Primary School, the students go in pairs to a preschool classroom to read a story. Every week, the designated pair of students, that is, those children who tell the story, go, while the rest continue working in their classroom. Each pair of students, before going to the preschool classroom, do a general rehearsal in front of their classmates.

“This week, this pair of students prepare themselves, have different rehearsals and later they rehearse it in front of the class, and when they are prepared, they go to the preschool classroom” [C2.2_FI_T2].

The stories are chosen by the pair of students who are in charge of reading the story to the preschoolers that week. “We choose the book and go to read it” [C2.2_FI_S6]. Nevertheless, the teacher negotiates with the pair of students which are the most appropriate stories for preschoolers.

“This is our reflection before we get started, because you have to situate them in the activity we are going to do, and it’s true that they are the ones who provide all the information about the stories [...]. We raise the question and ask them to think about which stories are appropriate, and we check if their contributions meet the criteria. We try to coordinate their answers, but they are the ones who give the solutions” [C2.1_I.I_T1].

Some of the stories chosen by the students were: *Hansel and Gretel*, *Hatch, egg, hatch!*, *Snow White*, *Tom Thumb*, *The 7 Kids and the Wolf*, among others.

“In the culture week, M. (preschool teacher) told me: ‘Why don’t you tell the story of *Hansel and Gretel*? We are working it this week’. Well, she proposed it, I proposed it, and as it was a story in which the characters spoke, like a theatre, what we did was that instead of being 2 students, they were 4, each student played a character, and when their character had to intervene, they read it, and it was also OK” [C2.2_FI_T2].

They also wrote a sentence to finish the story. “Our ending was ‘Here is a dog, here is a cat, the final has come, this story has ended’ [C2.2_FI_S1]. “Our ending was ‘Story told, story ended, push the cat’s tail’ [C2.2_FI_S2].

In addition, the previous year, they had created a story together with the title *The Adventure of Meteo* [C2.2_AM_T.O].

“It is a story that they make up and write together, in pairs. Later, they also do drawings, recopy it on a new sheet, and we do it in a big format so that the preschoolers can see the drawing while they read what is written on the reverse. They are very excited” [C2.2_FI_T2].

To write the story, they benefited from the project on the Universe that they had done in the first year of Primary School. They also used the same topic in their contribution to the school’s magazine.

“They used it twice, because they had also read in the school’s magazine a story they wanted to make up. We took benefit from this and said, since we write it for the magazine, then we will write it in a bigger format to read it to the preschoolers. You do it with two purposes” [C2.2_FI_T2].

Sometimes they give the book written among all the students to a preschool classroom.

The cognitive activity is different and varied. “Remember (the students previously rehearse how to tell the story), understand (it is necessary to read the story comprehensively to be able to tell it to the youngest students later), among others” [C2_O_DCOS].

Participation: empowerment of all

The degree of participation and commitment of the students is generally high. Regarding the assignation of the pairs who would read the story in the preschool classroom, the own students were the ones who chose their partner. Nevertheless, the selection procedure differed in the two classrooms. “They chose their partner freely. In my case, as it was done voluntarily [...] nobody complained, I had no problem” [C2.1_FI_T1]. However, the other teacher assigned the pairs in

another way, that is, she asked the students to write down the name of four students with whom they would like to work.

“I asked them to write down on a piece of paper the name of 4 students they would like to be with [...]. It helped me to realise who were the most valued students in the class, and that there were two girls who nobody had chosen” [C2.2_FI_T2].

Once the reading is finished, the students comment it.

“When the reading is finished, the students explain the story content, helping each other. In addition, they give their opinion on the story, share related experiences and reach proper conclusions on the topic worked” [C2.2_FI_TS].

In the first year of Primary School, they had already performed the activity of storytelling. At that time, the participating families were an important support.

“In the first year of Primary School, the parents who had prepared a story with their child came [...]. The father or the mother came, they sat next to their son/ daughter, everybody was listening, and the mother or the father with their child read the story together to the classmates. They prepared the story they wanted, the one they liked or had at home and wanted to read” [C2.2_FI_T2].

In the second year of Primary School, the families also participate in this activity. “This year, for the activity of the stories, a father came to help with the rehearsal. Before reading the story in the preschool classroom, a father came and helped the pair of students with the rehearsal” [C2.1_FI_T1]. When the families cannot go to the classroom, they help their child to prepare the story and rehearse it at home.

“My daughter, at least, brought home a story and she spent days reading it and preparing it [...]. I didn't come to do the reading activity. I know that some parents came to read a story, but I couldn't because of my job [...]. We prepared it at home. We read a lot, and sometimes she memorised it and told it to me and I told her: ‘Very well, but in this sentence, well, you have to say it more as an exclamation, or if it is a question you have to raise the intonation’. She prepared it, but I didn't have the opportunity to come” [C2.1_FI_M1].

They perform this activity in different preschool classrooms, that is, they do not always go to the same classroom to read the story. The performance is in a classroom or another one depending on different variables.

“They choose if they have a little brother or sister. ‘My little brother is in this classroom or my cousin is in this classroom’. Well, this is how we choose the classroom, and then we also try to meet the needs of preschool teachers” [C2.2_FI_T2].

Regarding the pace of the activity, it is flexible. “The pace is set by each pair or trio. They rehearse for a week and then they go to tell the story to the classroom where they have a relative (sisters, cousins, etc.)” [C2_O_DCOS].

Achievement: progress and assessment

This activity is very engaging for the students since they are allowed to read in a real context.

“Every situation that is as real as possible motivates them. The fact of going to the preschool classroom where their brothers or sisters are, and prepare themselves to go... They are very excited! A particular case that was the most exciting was the one of D., because he has two twin sisters in Preschool Education. D. doesn't like reading. We spend the whole year trying it and there is no way of drawing his attention, and when he had

to go to read to his twin sisters, wow!!! The interest he put, and the preparation [...] That's the beginning, it doesn't mean that from now on he will be a reader, but at other times, he understands that the reading activity is important and he works the best he can" [C2.2_F.I_T2].

The mothers also perceive that this activity is engaging and their children like it. They highlight the leading role that the students play in this activity when they go to read to lower grades.

"The fact that she was the one who was going to tell the story to the youngest children or to another classroom, that she would be, as they say, the protagonist [...]. She was growing up, she was older, and she liked it a lot" [C2.1_F.I_M1].

"They know many children who are in the lower grades, that's why they are a little bit more motivated. We are going to read to my brother, my sister, my cousin, etc." [C2.2_F.I_M6].

Discussion and conclusions

This study aimed at understanding how the practice of reader sponsorship or storytelling favours the presence, participation and achievement of all students.

Firstly, the results of this study allow us to state that this practice really favours the presence of all students through the positive recognition and valuation of diversity in the classroom (Muntaner, 2014; Orozco & Moriña, 2020; Sanahuja et al., 2020), promoting different levels of involvement and differentiating the process and the content (Leroux & Paré, 2016) through the choice of the stories or its writing and presentation in different formats. That is, through the students' freedom in its execution (Alba-Pastor, 2019; Cantuña et al., 2021; Delgado, 2021). It has also been shown that it is necessary to situate the students (of Primary School) in the activity to anticipate the characteristics and needs of the preschool public at whom it is aimed. Similarly, it has been evidenced how the teachers, throughout the academic year or during the different academic years in which this activity is performed, vary or differentiate this methodological strategy. That is, they do not always implement it in the same way. Furthermore, in the two cases addressed, they promote the use of different cognitive activities (remember, apply, create, among others) to execute the activity, which has an impact on the improvement of the students' linguistic and communicative skills (Pérez, 2016; Romero, 2014).

Secondly, participation of all students is guaranteed through collaborative work (Azorín, 2017), as well as through different working modalities or groupings, such as pairs of students (sponsor and sponsored or reading pairs) or groups (theatre plays). It has been shown how interpersonal relationships are promoted (inter-level) weaving strong bonds and links among the participants (Azorín, 2017; Santana et al., 2017). With regards to space-temporal organization, in both cases studied, different spaces are used to perform the activity (playground, classrooms, corridor) and the time is flexible (Sanahuja et al., 2020), that is, it is set by the students throughout the activity. In addition, since these activities are very visual, they attract the youngest students (Aldama, 2005). Another important element that guarantees the participation of all students lies in the supports (Muntaner, 2014). In the three classrooms that have participated in this study, a collaborative culture is fostered through peer support, and in the second case, the families are a key element for the success of the activity. It has been shown how they reiterate their support, and the kind of support given changes from the first to the second academic year.

Thirdly, it must be stressed that this strategy also promotes the progress of all students (Ainscow et al., 2006). It is an engaging activity for the students of Primary School (Pérez, 2016), since they face a real situation. Through reader sponsorship or storytelling to pre-schoolers,

the students of Primary School work self-esteem, individual responsibility, oral expression, body language, reading comprehension, personal self-fulfilment, creativity and reflection. For Primary School students, the self-assessment conducted throughout the activity is interesting, which allows them to improve (Elizondo, 2021; Tomlinson and Moon, 2013). Moreover, reader sponsorship or storytelling also benefit the youngest students. In addition, this practice can also favor the transition between educational stages. It is an indicator shown in the tool used for the analysis of the results (Azorín & Ainscow, 2018) which allows to advance towards more inclusive institutions.

To sum up, and in view of the above, we can state that reader sponsorship or storytelling favour the presence, participation and progress of all the students who have participated in this study. Nevertheless, we must be aware of some limitations that this study presents, since only two cases have been addressed. Although, as we can observe in the literature review, different experiences have been reported (Alcalde-Peñalver & Santamaría-Urbieta, 2021; Alvarez-Rementeria et al., 2022; Azorín, 2017 & 2018; Dopazo, 2015; Pérez, 2016; Romero, 2014, among others) that echo the advantages and benefits of educational proposals based on the interaction between the older students and the younger ones. As future work, it would be interesting to understand and explain how the teacher of the first case study implements Kamishibai (Aldama, 2005; Cid, 2009), since during the practice observation it was not implemented, and we only know the planning of the activity through the Educational Innovation Project submitted to the Regional Government of Education in the Autonomous Community of Valencia. It would also be interesting to interview the preschool teachers whose classrooms benefited from reader sponsorship or replicate the study in other contexts or in other educational stages (for example, in Compulsory Secondary Education).

In conclusion, it must be highlighted that these *humble* and *local* teaching practices give us clues about how the principles of inclusive education are embodied from the practice (Bunch, 2008; Díaz-Posada & Rodríguez-Burgos, 2016; Duk & Murillo, 2018; Echeita, 2016), which may result inspiring and engaging for other inclusive teachers who are interested in educational innovation.

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Notes

The comments of the participants have been translated from Spanish to English.