A Narrative Inquiry into Identity Construction and Classroom Participation of an EFL Student with a Physical Disability: Evidence from Indonesia

Emy Sudarwati
Department of Languages and Literature, Universitas Brawijaya, Indonesia, emoy_sanyoto@ub.ac.id

Utami Widiati
Department of English, Universitas Negeri Malang, utami.widiati.fs@um.ac.id

M. Faruq Ubaidillah
Department of English Education, Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia, mfubaidillah@unisma.ac.id

Luluk Sri Agus Prasetyoningsih
Department of Indonesian Language Education, Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia,
luluksap58@unisma.ac.id

Urip Sulistiyo
Department of English Education, Universitas Jambi, urip.sulistiyo@unja.ac.id

Follow this and additional works at: https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr

Part of the Disability and Equity in Education Commons, and the Higher Education Commons

A Narrative Inquiry into Identity Construction and Classroom Participation of an EFL Student with a Physical Disability: Evidence from Indonesia

Abstract

While studies on English as a foreign language (EFL) students' identity construction and classroom participation in English language learning have been widely explored, there is a paucity of research addressing how EFL students with physical disabilities develop their identities within classroom participation. To fill this lacuna, the present narrative study looks into how an Indonesian female English student with a physical disability developed her identity through classroom participation and how her identity changed over time. The data were garnered through in-depth interviews and analyzed following Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. The present study revealed that the participant negotiated her identity gradually in a complex classroom atmosphere through multiple stages: the orientation, the rising state, the shock, the adjustment, and identity development. In addition, the study also portrayed that the participant enacted continued and sustained identity changes for her self-survival amid imperfection into the escalation of competence geared from her site of struggle in the community of practice. Implications from the study's findings are discussed at the end of this paper.

Keywords

EFL student, identity construction and changes, physical disability, second/foreign language learning, situated learning

Creative Commons License

A Narrative Inquiry into Identity Construction and Classroom Participation of an EFL Student with a Physical Disability: Evidence from Indonesia

Emy Sudarwati[1, 2], Utami Widiati[1], M. Faruq Ubaidillah[3],
Luluk Sri Agus Prasetyoningsih[4], and Urip Sulistiyo[5]
[1]Doctorate Program in English Language Teaching, Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia
[2]Department of Languages and Literature, Universitas Brawijaya, Indonesia
[3] Department of English Education, Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia
[4]Department of Indonesian Language Education, Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia
[5]Department of English Education, Universitas Jambi, Indonesia

While studies on English as a foreign language (EFL) students' identity construction and classroom participation in English language learning have been widely explored, there is a paucity of research addressing how EFL students with physical disabilities develop their identities within classroom participation. To fill this lacuna, the present narrative study looks into how an Indonesian female English student with a physical disability developed her identity through classroom participation and how her identity changed over time. The data were garnered through in-depth interviews and analyzed following Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. The present study revealed that the participant negotiated her identity gradually in a complex classroom atmosphere through multiple stages: the orientation, the rising state, the shock, the adjustment, and identity development. In addition, the study also portrayed that the participant enacted continued and sustained identity changes for her self-survival amid imperfection into the escalation of competence geared from her site of struggle in the community of practice. Implications from the study's findings are discussed at the end of this paper.

Keywords: EFL student, identity construction and changes, physical disability, second/foreign language learning, situated learning

Introduction

"Because a man lacks the use of his eyes doesn't mean he lacks vision."

The quote from Stevie Wonder above appears to symbolize the voices of persons with disabilities. Their voices are so powerful that they can force the implementation of policies and initiatives that are successful in relieving the difficulties they face. Living with a disability, in reality, has both positive and negative implications. People with disabilities face discrimination and stigma in the form of attitudinal hurdles, negative labeling, and prejudices in their daily interactions with able-bodied counterparts (Rohwerder, 2018; Singh & Chopra, 2018). They may also be prevented from accessing equal rights and opportunities to access assistive technology (Barbareschi et al., 2021).

In response to disability stigma that is widely acknowledged, the UN Convention of Article 8 on the Rights of Persons with disabilities was finally established to combat disability

stigma and ensure that all people with disabilities are treated with dignity and respect (Barbareschi et al., 2021). Further efforts in this area include campaigns, policies, and other initiatives to let the public know that people with disabilities have equal rights with people without disabilities. Furthermore, policies regarding rights for persons with disabilities are reinforced by governments around the world. In particular, policies on learning by students with disabilities have been enacted (see Braun & Naami, 2021; Price & Slee, 2021; Salmi & D'Addio, 2021). In the Indonesian context, specifically, the Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education Regulation has issued regulations for students with disabilities (No. 46 of 2017) (Lintangsari & Emaliana, 2020). This legislation encourages Indonesian universities to welcome and serve students with disabilities by creating a Centre for Disability Service (CDS) in each institution. For example, a CDS has provided academic services such as sign language interpreters, volunteers for book digitization, accompaniers for the blind and wheel-chair users, and research and initiatives connected to inclusive education in Indonesia (Lintangsari & Emaliana, 2020). Such policies could provide beneficial practices for teaching students with disabilities in higher education contexts.

However, despite the negative stigma pointed out by other people toward disabled persons, there are many people with disabilities who embrace their limitations with grace because they no longer consider their disabilities to be a tragedy and they have come to realize that this is a part of their lives that they must live as best as they can. Several studies have shown that persons with disabilities can embrace their disabilities and strive to live effectively with their disabilities (see Cox et al. 2017; Papadimitriou, 2008; Parker & Yau, 2012; Saltes, 2013; Sheldon et al., 2011). Positive acceptance of disabilities is extremely crucial for people with disabilities to position themselves and their identities in this ever-changing world.

This sort of acceptance does not merely symbolize the willingness to accept the current condition but more respecting one's current condition by accepting oneself as a worthy person, despite having a disability (Kaur et al., 2015). People who can accept their disabilities will usually also have strong psychological resilience and this will be helpful for them to face life (Xia et al., 2014). They still feel they are worthy persons and strive to keep their existences recognizable. In other words, persons with disabilities also want their identities acknowledged by other people.

Identity for persons with disabilities is essential as it serves as a means of connecting themselves to the rest of the world (Van Lier, 2007). Individuals' identities are concerned with how they struggle in the situated contexts, which is in line with Norton (2000) who contends that the process of identity construction is "the site of struggles … multiple, and contradictory" (p. 127). Thus, identity is also seen as "a way of talking about how learning changes who we are and creates personal histories of becoming in the contexts of communities" (Wenger, 1998, p. 5). Moreover, learning transforms who we are and what we can do; it is an experience of identity as it is not just an accumulation of skills and information, but a process of becoming – to become a certain person or conversely, to avoid becoming a certain person (Wenger 1998, p. 215).

Empirically, education is a given context where students negotiate their identities through learning. Learning a new language can be one of the means with which to construct one's identity. It is in line with Norton (1997) who argued that language learners are constantly engaged in a continuous process of identity construction every time they speak. Moreover, it is believed that learning a new language is an overarching experience that involves the whole person: physically, cognitively, and emotionally. In this experience, language learners fluctuate between an understanding of themselves as speakers of their first language (L1) and their awareness of themselves as learners of a second language (L2), of how they "identify" themselves (Hatam & Sa, 2017). Therefore, it is believed that identity construction through language use is an ongoing, continuous, and dynamic process (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2007). In the same way as their

normal counterparts, students with disabilities also experience classroom situations they can participate in and begin to develop their identities as competent language learners.

Access of rights to education for students with disabilities has been a contentious issue. The attention is directed toward giving disabled students the same access to all levels of education, equal to students with no disability. To emphasize, access to higher education became a subject of international human rights with the passage of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2019). Article 24 of this convention mandates that educational institutions make reasonable adjustments, adaptations, and modifications for students with disabilities.

Research studies investigating the identity construction of persons with disabilities, particularly those dealing with physical disabilities, have been available in the literature (Dvir, 2015; Smith et al, 2016; Wickman, 2007). Despite a large body of research on persons with disabilities in relation to their surrounding contexts as members of a social group, the lived experiences of students with physical disabilities in constructing their identities through classroom participation have not received much attention. Moreover, research to date in the Indonesian setting has not looked into the identity construction and evolvement of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in relation to their classroom participation. Therefore, the current study aims to fill this void by analyzing the identity construction process and classroom participation of an Indonesian EFL student with a disability as seen via her personal lived experiences and how her identity changes over time. This study is greatly influenced by our experiences as lecturers who taught EFL students with physical disabilities. The present study was carried out using narrative inquiry. It was mainly based on the lived experiences of an Indonesian EFL student with a physical disability. This issue has remained underexplored in L2 literature; their efforts in learning the language are worth investigating, for research results regarding this issue will definitely widen readers' perspectives on how self-belief, self-acceptance, self-confidence, and person's classroom participation will eventually contribute significantly to the development of identity construction of a person which later can inspire others positively.

Literature Review

The present study was situated in an EFL context in Indonesia to uncover how an EFL student with a physical disability developed her identity through classroom participation and explore how her identity changed over time. In so doing, we employed Norton's (2000) analytics of identity in a poststructuralist view and Lave and Wenger's (1991) situated learning theory that focuses on the community of practice.

Identity from a Poststructuralist View

Identity has been regarded as an important issue in understanding learners' L2 learning experiences in a given context and classroom condition (Norton, 2000; Ubaidillah & Widiati, 2021). Through this lens, a learner's relationship with the social world can be well understood. Theoretically, identity denotes "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (Norton, 2000, p. 5). Therefore, identity is important in shaping the participation of individuals in a community (Wenger, 1998). Participation of learners in a community is not merely taking place in a new cultural setting but is also part of the personal struggle on the part of learners to reconstruct themselves (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). Based on this perspective, understanding identity is an integral component to be considered by language

researchers in their general quests to understand language learners' participation in using the target language in a community. Identity is thus one of the most essential factors in determining whether a person with a disability can live a normal life. Persons with disabilities should learn how to accept their condition amid their typical counterparts as part of the self-acceptance process (Mueller, 2021; Szumski et al., 2020).

Situated Learning Theory

From a situated learning perspective, second/foreign language learning is considered a social process by which learners attempt to gradually participate in the learning process and move from a peripheral to a legitimate position. In this regard, the learning takes place as processes of legitimate peripheral participation and interactions with senior members (old-timers) in order to negotiate membership and competence in a given community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In this community of practice, learners' participation entails a process of identity construction and "gaining access to sources for understanding through growing involvement" (p. 37). Classroom participation has been viewed as a site of student struggle enacted through multiple efforts in learning discourses (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In the current study, we were curious about observing how Nana, our research participant, developed her identity as an EFL student with a physical disability at the university through her classroom participation and how her identity changed over time.

Previous Studies

Several studies have sought to document the efforts made to assist people with disabilities in becoming well engaged in learning. So far, the majority of what is accessible in the literature focuses solely on the efforts of past scholars in addressing the difficulties of how learners with disabilities might learn English better by providing various approaches (Astri & Wahab, 2019; Cheng & Beigi, 2011; Kamali Arslantas et al., 2021; Lintangsari & Emaliana, 2020). For example, Cheng and Beigi (2011) analyzed data using content analysis whether students with disabilities have been depicted in Iranian EFL secondary and high school textbooks. The findings show the importance of presenting textbook materials discussing the existence of students with disabilities. The efforts to present several contexts related to learners with disabilities will also help non-disabled children to understand that their environments do not only consist of non-disabled peers. It later results in the awareness of the condition and stronger support given to disabled friends.

By creating, producing, and assessing the instructional efficiency of a web-based English vocabulary drill program built for visually impaired middle school students under the development and process methodology, Kamali Arslantas et al. (2021) showed how technology may aid visually impaired kids in learning. The findings revealed that pupils made significant progress on the vocabulary exams and maintained their performance following the study. The findings also showcased that teacher support and motivation in vocabulary learning help improve students' academic performances.

Research conducted in the Indonesian context using a pre-experimental design by Astri and Wahab (2019) also showcased how a Total Physical Response (TPR) method can be used to help students with disabilities in learning English vocabulary. TPR is a language teaching method that combines body movement and language use (Widodo, 2005). After being treated using the TPR method, students' vocabularies improved significantly.

In Lintangsari and Emaliana's (2020) case study research, the government is expected to provide training for EFL teachers on how they could teach students with disabilities effectively

using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Differentiated Instruction (DI) as a framework of teaching.

To the best of our knowledge, none of the research accessible in the literature addresses the issue of identity construction and classroom participation enacted by people with disabilities in relation to EFL learning. Thus far, the identity formation of people with disabilities has primarily been examined through their lived experiences with identity and employment (Cunnah, 2015; Enoch et al., 2016), identity and self-concept (Islam, 2008; Sheldon et al., 2011), and identity and sexuality (Parker & Yau, 2012; Payne et al., 2016; Wheeler, 2007).

From this study, we hope to contribute to the enactment of the identity of EFL learners with physical disabilities in Indonesia and how they can be better treated during classroom activities. This study is essential for teachers to enact effective teaching with disabled students in their classrooms. The policymakers should also benefit from this study as they are expected to provide practical training for teachers on treating students with disabilities and issue policies that support learning by these students.

Research Questions

The present study addresses two research questions:

1. How did the participant with a physical disability develop her identity while participating in the classroom activities?
2. How did the participant's identity as an EFL student with a physical disability evolve over time as she participated in the classroom?

Researcher Positionality

It is essential in qualitative research that researchers "explicitly identify their biases, values, and personal interests about their research topic, process, and access to the participants" (Creswell, 2002, p. 184). The principal investigator in this study is a faculty member at the Department of Languages andtheme Literature, Brawijaya University, in Malang, Indonesia. She is currently undertaking a doctorate degree in English Language Teaching at the State University of Malang, Indonesia. She has been involved for several years in second language learning with students with physical disabilities in a university context. The second author is a professor in the Department of English, State University of Malang. Most of her research publications employ a qualitative paradigm; thus, she helped with the conceptualization of our project using the qualitative lens. The third author holds a Master's degree in English Language Teaching from the University of Islam Malang, Indonesia, and is currently doing PhD research in the Department of Language Education Science, State University of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. He is also a junior lecturer in the Department of English Education, University of Islam Malang, Indonesia. He is experienced in using narrative inquiry as a methodology in language teaching and learning research. The fourth author in this study is an associate professor in the Department of Indonesian Language Education, University of Islam Malang, Indonesia. She has been engaged for more than 20 years in research with students with physical disabilities in Indonesia. The last author is also an associate professor in the Department of English Education, Jambi University, Indonesia. He has published papers in narrative inquiry and other qualitative designs, including papers that have appeared in The Qualitative Report.

The five authors in this study were involved with the current project as researchers, but their roles were different. The first author collected the data by interviewing the participant. The second author helped with the methodology during the research enactment by suggesting steps

of data collection and analysis and how those data were encoded into specific themes following Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. The third author checked the final manuscript for its meaningful presentations, including participants' extracts and the themed findings. The fourth author looked at the theoretical bases of disability and previous studies reviewed for the present study. Lastly, the fifth author wrote up the findings and discussion sections.

Method

Design

The primary goal of this project is to conduct a narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 2006) in which we collected narrative data from an EFL student with a physical disability in a public university in Malang, East Java, Indonesia. This design is situated within the view that "human beings both live and tell stories about their living" (Clandinin, 2006, p. 44). For this reason, a narrative inquiry approach is considered appropriate for the study. We recognize that narrative inquiry is subjective, but it reflects the intricacies of meanings inherent within the stories that constitute an in-depth investigation of data. This methodology allowed us to analyze the participant's development of identity through her lived experiences of learning and using English, which was impacted and informed by social, cultural, and political discourses in the study's context (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). We decided to recruit one participant for this study as we were aiming at having an in-depth exploration of the meanings people assign to their experiences.

Research Context

The present study was situated in the English department of a public university in Malang, East Java, Indonesia, which primarily focuses on a single participant's identity construction and classroom participation as an undergraduate student in the EFL classroom. The university has a Center of Disability Studies (CDS) for students with disabilities who wish to broaden their knowledge about teaching English as a foreign language in the region. This center is currently managing nearly 200 students with disabilities who enroll as undergraduate students in the university to obtain academic degrees for future lives.

Participant's Profile

Nana comes from a low-income family and lives below the poverty line. She is the eldest of three siblings, her father works as a scavenger, and her mother is a housewife. She is the only child with physical restrictions; she has difficulties with moving and wears prosthetic legs. She also was born without fingers.

Nana successfully completed her official education up to the high school level in her homeland, and she pursued an undergraduate degree at a public university in Malang, East Java, Indonesia through the *bidikmisi* scholarship. Nana traveled to Malang with the scholarship funding to cover her daily requirements and continue her education. Nana is the first author's student in the English reading classes. In the seventh semester, Nana took her undergraduate thesis and the first author was her supervisor. In other words, the first author had already been with her in two reading classes she took in the previous semester and during the undergraduate thesis completion. The efforts she showed during her time as an English department student along with her life experiences triggered us to recruit her as a participant in this study. Thus, the identity construction of Nana with her physical disability during her classroom participation is worth investigating.

Nana and the first author of this study first met in 2016. Nana attended the first author's reading class. She talked about her struggles as an EFL student at the English department and how the government eventually sponsored her studies through the *bidikmisi* scholarship, despite her restricted physical capabilities and low economic status. She was overjoyed – her ambition of attending university had come true. She described how she battled to thrive in an atmosphere that is very different from her homeland of Banyuwangi, an eastern part of East Java Province. Fortunately, she received a lot of assistance from the Center of Disability Service (CDS) at the university. It has been extremely beneficial in assisting her, especially during her early years in Malang. She began to adjust to university life, which was considerably different from what she had in Senior High School. She was also assisted in locating a boarding place not far from the university, allowing her easy access to campus.

Nana is a pleasant and lively learner who, despite her limits, continued to study at an undergraduate level. She has enacted efforts and struggles to participate and engage in classroom learning. Such an effort allowed her to attain membership in the classroom together with her senior friends who are not in disabled conditions. Her identity construction is very much affected by her unending effort to strive through her limitation during her study. At the time when the study was conducted, Nana was the first author's undergraduate thesis supervisee. She has recently graduated from the university and has worked in one of the government's state institutions. In the present study, we invited Nana to participate voluntarily via WhatsApp and email communications. This recruitment method involved a convenient sampling as the participant is the first author's student. Thus, access to the participant was easily attained (Saumure & Given, 2008).

Data Collection

In collecting the data, we employed in-depth interviews to elicit the participant's lived experiences (Yulianti & Mukminin, 2021). In this regard, we conducted multiple in-depth interviews via WhatsApp voice notes over a period of two months, from July to August 2021. The interview method was chosen due to the COVID-19 pandemic which had affected the participant's willingness to gather in common physical locations. The interviews were conducted using the participant's national language (Indonesian language). In other words, we permitted her to tell the story using Indonesian language in order for the participant to express her feelings without language hindrances. The interviews were done three times and lasted around 45 minutes to one hour each. We also sent messages to the participant to clarify any vague and unclear statements she shared in the voice note interview sessions. After gathering the data, we transcribed the voice note interviews for the analysis step.

In the interview sessions, the participant was asked about her lived experience regarding her developing identity in the classroom activities and how her identity as an EFL student with a physical disability evolved over time. The interview questions were developed in accordance with Norton's (2000) identity notion and Lave and Wenger's (1991) situated learning theory. For instance, some questions (i.e., how do you see yourself and the environment around you?; how did you choose to learn English for your academic degree?; how do you view yourself in the future?) were aligned with identity notion and other questions (i.e., how did you participate in the classroom activities?; what difficulties did you encounter in the classroom activities?; how did you cope with those difficulties?) correspond to the situated learning theory. The questions addressed in the interview sessions were the following:

1) How do you see yourself and the environment around you?
2) How did you choose to learn English for your academic degree?

      3) How did you participate in the classroom activities?
      4) What difficulties did you encounter in the classroom activities?
      5) How did you cope with those difficulties?
      6) How do you view yourself in the future?

Data Analysis

Data for the study were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six thematic analysis steps. First, all authors attempted to commence with the data thoroughly by familiarizing ourselves with the participant's voice notes by listening to the recordings several times. This means closely listening and re-listening to the data as a whole and subsequently highlighting the participants' significant narratives (e.g., "*Never have in my life I regretted my condition, my family life, for I believe this is the life that I have to go through to make me stronger enough to be called a human being.*"). Second, we transcribed the recordings and read the interview transcripts multiple times to have a comprehensive understanding of the shared stories. Through this method, we could do "an interpretive act" (Bailey, 2008, p. 130). Third, we read the interview transcripts at least three times as Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that "it is ideal to read through the entire data set at least once before you begin your coding, as ideas and identification of possible patterns will be shaped as you read through" (p. 87). In this phase, formal coding was achieved. Fourth, when we read and re-read all the transcripts multiple times, we marked any instances of what the participants said about the English language learning experiences in the classroom. We marked them up with different colored pens or used highlighters to indicate both potentially tacit or implicit notions from the stories. Fifth, after all data were initially coded and collated, we then documented a long list of the different codes identified across the data set and re-focused "the analysis at the broader level of themes, rather than codes, involves sorting the different codes into potential themes and collating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 89). Lastly, we concluded the codes into themes: the orientation, the rising state, the shock, the adjustment, and identity development (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Our themes, *the orientation, the rising state, the shock, the adjustment, and identity development,* are inclusive of our stance from situated learning theory as the themes represent the legitimate peripheral participation of a newcomer, Nana, for the first time in the classroom, to be accepted in the learning community by the old-timers. In the *orientation* phase, the participant portrayed herself positively as a disabled student. In the *rising* phase, the participant was immersed in a new environment; that is, her university, and found challenges as a disabled student. In the *shock* phase, the participant faced serious challenges as a disabled student in terms of her social interactions with friends and classroom participation. In the *adjustment* phase, the participant began to adjust her disabled condition to the learning community and moved to be accepted from peripheral to full participation in the class. Lastly, in the *identity development* phase, the participant, after a series of her experiences from beginning to the end, has developed her identity gradually within the classroom participant, indicated by her being accepted fully in the community and her understanding that physical disability does not ruin her ability to be a successful EFL student in the department.

Trustworthiness of the Study

In order to ensure the trustworthiness of the study, we employed member checking (Merriam, 1998) in the process of data verification. This was done in the following steps: first, we invited the participant to review, comment, and provide suggestions on the data. Second, we

provided rich and thick descriptions related to the findings (Merriam, 1998; Yulianti & Mukminin, 2021). Third, we asked the fourth author who is also a lecturer and researcher in disability studies to check the final manuscript in order to confirm the flow and meaning-building. In this phase, the fourth author checked the suitability of the theoretical foundation underlying disability and how this theory suits the participant's flow of stories which later can be connected through the construction of participant's identity. In addition, the previous studies were also checked to ensure that the studies used are relevant to the present study.

Ethical Considerations

To address the research ethics, we provided a consent form for Nana to sign, indicating her agreement to have all the data published. We also ensured that the participant understood the purpose of the study and that ethical clearance was maintained in which the participant's rights during participation are well treated. It was essential to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the participant in the study. As Nana was willing to participate in the study, she was required to fill out and sign the informed consent form, declaring that she understood and wanted to get involved in the study. We handed her a consent form and explained our research objectives as well as the benefits that others would gain from reading the article. She consented to be the participant, and we made an agreement, that is, keeping all data confidential by choosing a pseudonym, Nana.

Although other universities worldwide may require an Institutional Review Board (IRB) for research projects with humans, the present study did not attain such an IRB from our university because researchers are not required to obtain the review from the ethics commissions. Thus, an informed consent form was sent to the participant. This was used as a signal that we pay attention to the issue of ethics in doing narrative inquiry with humans (Labov & Waletsky, 2003).

<div align="center">

Findings

</div>

The present study inquired about how Nana developed her identity in her learning communities, which showed different realities, facts, and experiences. As a result, in this investigation, we revealed five themes based on Nana's stories: the orientation, the rising state, the shock, the adjustment, and identity development. Such themes are aligned with identity theory in the case that the participant enacted efforts to understand herself as an EFL student with a physical disability and situated learning theory by which the participant gradually experienced changes in the community of practice.

The Orientation

Under the idea of the self-portrait concept, we came up with the idea of viewing Nana not only as a self-representation but also how she constructed her self-portrait over time (Gorichanaz, 2019). Besides this idea, her personal and social interaction and the place where she was brought up also contributed to her development of identity.

Nana was an independent girl who had been accustomed to living simply since she was a child because her family was not financially prosperous. Growing up in a humble family with three siblings had taught her many lived experiences which later developed her strong intention for the efforts she could put in later in life to improve her family's living standard. Despite the fact that she was the only one with physical disabilities, she had never regretted her birth. Her way of valuing life and what God had given to her has led her to accept her fate gracefully and thus developed her strong personality. Such a positive feeling led her to participate actively in

classroom activities with her peers. Nana was also never bullied by her friends or her community members. This was assuredly caused by her acceptance and the self-value she held. In addition, it also affected her educational experience which was comparable to that of her peers. Nana's positive self-perception had been a point for her to obtain scholarships and attend formal schooling. Her endeavor to manage her desire of becoming someone who can transform the family situation was such a blessing for her because she rarely felt down for her shortcomings. She had no negative feelings about herself as she had full awareness that what she was now was her best version given by God. Fortunately, she had no feelings of inferiority as a student with a physical disability. This was likely one of the reasons she was able to complete her studies well.

> Never have in my life I regretted my condition, my family life, for I believe this is the life that I have to go through to make me stronger enough to be called a human being. I think God will never be wrong for choosing me to be the impaired one as I believe God must have a purpose which I need to reveal later in my life when I finally say "oh this is what God means" well, I think maybe because I have a very supportive family and relatives and my surrounding is also so kind-hearted as they never look at me with one eye [she smiled].

Her parents and family supported her schooling, and they never said anything that made her upset. Nana noted that her family members were very important to her as a young university student, and even as she graduated from the English literature study program, that positive attitude has stayed with her to this day.

> They never said anything negative about my physical state, which eventually encouraged me to follow my desire. For some reasons, I've always thought positively about my illness since I was a child; perhaps it's due to the family factor.

Nana became interested in language acquisition when she was in kindergarten. As a form of local content, English was introduced. She was fascinated by English since she discovered that the way it is written differs greatly from the way it should sound. She told us that she routinely mispronounced words and thought it was hilarious. She continued to adore English, in particular. She fantasized about mastering English as she thought that the English language was a ticket to becoming a successful woman later in life; she was enamored with the phrase, "conquer the world," with language, and with English as it is the international language. Her desire to travel abroad and contribute to the family's economic well-being became her top focus. In addition to English, her favorite subject was the Japanese language. She was originally undecided between English and Japanese for her university level, but after some thought, she opted for English.

> I am really interested in foreign languages, and my favorite subjects are Japanese and English. Since kindergarten, there have been many English songs with the same tone as Indonesian songs, and I loved them so much that they continued ringing in my head. They say that if you can speak English, you can go abroad if you want to. Because I was so thrilled with the two languages when I was in high school, I eventually chose a language major. However, I was undecided on which degree to pursue. However, after speaking with a counselling teacher, I decided on English because it offers more work options. To be honest, one of my college ambitions is to help my family's economics. Thank God for the *bidikmisi* scholarship, which covers my schooling and living expenses in Malang.

She told us that her family was incredibly proud to have her as a university student. They never thought that it was going to be real. Nana decided to pursue her study at a public university and began to start a new independent life far away from her family and relatives. It was not easy, but she somehow kept going through this journey enthusiastically.

The Rising State

Nana's first year in Malang was difficult because she had to deal with constraints on her own. Her parents were in Malang for her first few days, but they quickly left due to financial constraints. She was greatly assisted by the university's Disability Center, known as PSLD, in finding an affordable and accessible boarding house that did not require her to walk quite far, despite the fact that it is still considered an effort for students with a physical disability like her. She rapidly became acquainted with several PSLD students and mentors on campus who were quite helpful to her. She confirmed:

> PSLD was very helpful in my first years in Malang. In addition to the support, PSLD staff also provided support for study scholarships and daily needs which of course really helped me while in Malang. This institution is really needed by students with special needs like me.

Nana had a lot to say about her first days in Malang as an EFL student. She went through what is known as "the ups and downs," one of which left her in despair. The following lines described the stages she went through throughout her first year in Malang.

Nana told us that her first days, up to the first half-year in Malang, were quite fun. However, there were also some challenges she had to face: adapting to a new environment with her condition was not an easy thing to do. Her eagerness to study English contributed much support, allowing her to adapt to her campus life quickly. Getting along with people who once never knew her habit of doing so was also a challenge for many people who saw her as helpless. She faced a lot of things dealing with her limited physical condition; for example, it was not easy for her to go back and forth, moving from one place to another place. This limitation did not deter her desire to pursue her education in Malang in the major she had chosen. With the assistance of extremely loving people, several types of obstacles related to the transfer of adaptation to a new environment could be overcome. She shared that:

> At first, I was happy to be able to go to Malang to continue studying even though I was in a new environment, but I really enjoyed this transfer process. My mom was only here for a few days because if it takes too long it will be very difficult financially, we have to save money. My first days in Malang were a lot of fun; everything was new to me, but I definitely wanted to keep doing it, so what was I waiting for when I walked into class for the first time? But, yes, not everything went as planned; there were many problems, but we remained optimistic.

Nana enjoyed the process of becoming an EFL freshman, a dream that had become true. Nana felt very motivated to come to her first class at the university, and at the same time, she was also curious to find out what her classroom would look like.

The Shock

The first day of school in college had given Nana lots of shocks. When she attended her first meeting, she felt a little bit uneasy, which might have been caused by her physical appearance. She felt that everyone seemed to take pity on her condition which she actually thought was not a big deal. The next challenge dealt with the class medium of instruction. The class had English as its medium of instruction with little Bahasa Indonesia. However, this proved unimportant because everything was still understandable, as the topic of the discussion in the classroom is about basic English grammar. The need to get accustomed to this situation was a must and she realized it as a part of a process, though it was a bit hard. She still felt uneasy in getting along with the class members for the first few weeks or so. She was still unable to engage in class discussion well; as a result, she kept silent because she was afraid of making mistakes. She remembered:

> The first day of college was enjoyable, despite the fact that some people looked at me with disdain, but that's typical because I'm unique and this isn't the first time this has happened to me. When I first went to college, I was very enthusiastic about getting to know the lecturers, the campus environment and new friends, everything was fun, I guess. But you know it was a bit surprising knowing that I am still unable to get engaged well and get along with them. For the first weeks or so I just have one classmate a close one and I tend to be silent during class. Moreover, the lessons are all delivered in English with little Bahasa Indonesia. I thought at that time that I need to keep positive and try to be more active. I know that my friends are all good and they are just not accustomed to communicating with a person with a disability like me. This is certainly an encouragement in itself to continue learning. I am not a very active student, but I am quite following lectures, but I am still unable to participate actively except when the lecturer pointed me to do the assigned tasks. Fortunately, I get along well with most of my boarding friends for they have already known my shortcomings and consider me their sister, so we often study together, and it is a mood booster in itself.

Nana explained that semesters one and two were hard for her, for she felt inadequate and wanted to give up like she was going in the wrong way, and she wanted to go in this second year. This situation could be attributed to the difference in the school environment between senior high school and university. At college, students are expected to be more independent, as instructors no longer transfer knowledge as it is but instead serves learning facilitators. Furthermore, students are encouraged to be more active and responsive in their learning, as well as to be less reliant on the lecturer. Nana experienced a lot of difficulties as her English was not that good. She told us,

> The difficult and somewhat shocking thing was at the beginning of the first and second semesters. It happened when I had a lot of assignments and I started to get stuck, and the scientific level was also increasing where the percentage of learning English where English as the main language was increasing. I'm physically different, so with a lot of work I'm a bit out of breath too. I started to feel less capable, and I tried to think positively, but it continued for a long time until the end of the second semester to be exact for a year in semesters one and two. My GPA is less satisfactory because my motivation to study was also lacking.

Nana's difficulty in almost any subjects got her down and this prompted her to solve her problem by considering another major she wished to take. She considered switching to a psychology major which she believed was more appropriate for her. Psychology is the field of study in which, at that time, she wanted to enroll, until finally, she chose English. Her difficulty in pursuing her major in English made her remember one of the study programs she wanted to get into at that time. To proceed with this, Nana attempted to confer with one of her teachers with whom she had a close relationship (the first author), and the lecturer asked her to reconsider her decision, though the possibility was wide open. The teacher suggested that she think twice about moving into another major for she thought that what Nana was experiencing was just a process of adjustment to new learning habits and surroundings. Nana stated:

> I began to think if this choice was wrong, there was a desire to change majors but it's already semester two and I think it's not too late. I was starting to get nervous about wanting to change into a psychology major because I started to like the way things were related to psychology. There is a feeling of laziness and there is only a kind of feeling ah just going in, but I can't get the spirit of learning, so I kept being so silent in class and feel less enthusiastic about learning. Some lecturers started asking me for I frequently miss the task and get a low score. I consulted my problem with one of the lecturers I feel I was close to, and I told her that I felt that I was in the wrong major and wanted to change to another major. Mrs. E suggested reconsidering and encouraging me to stay and keep on path. This restlessness and feeling of hopelessness continued until the end of semester two.

The Adjustment

In the second year of study, Nana attempted to get her motivation back and find her real purpose for coming to Malang. She began to be able to set aside her ego in order to obey her will, but she returned to her original objective of changing her fate and her family's desire for knowledge by becoming a learned person. Nana considered keeping the English major as her choice and decided to do things to boost her English as well. In semester three, she had already had many friends and she got along well with her classmates. To catch up due to her lack of the previous semester, she started to implement some learning strategies to overcome her difficulties in some language skills, particularly listening and writing. She managed to get used to the habit of reading English sources, which she admitted really helped her increase her vocabulary and added to her background knowledge. In addition, she prepared for the lesson before class, and it helped her to get ready with the class tasks and activities, making her more confident in expressing ideas in class and participating in class. She also became enthusiastic about boosting her marks from the previous semester by retaking the course. There are several courses requiring at least a B score, for they are needed to deal with thesis requirement writing. Slowly, her enthusiasm and optimism began to return. She stated in the following excerpt:

> I started to regulate my emotions by reviewing my goals and trying to come to terms with my previous choices which I also thought that I couldn't go on like this. I have to get up and pursue my dreams. I started trying to grow my love for the major that I had chosen, I did the assignments given by understanding that this was part of the process, and I started working on what I had left behind in the last year. I started to be active again in class and engaged in learning because I started to prepare the lesson, so it made me ready for learning. I also had the habit of reading which I kept up to now as it really helps me a lot. I had writing

problems as my grammar is bad. I overcame this by studying more and asking my friend whose grammar is good. Besides, I finally realized that my habit of reading a lot affected my grammar understanding as I became more aware of rules which I previously felt confused about. I also made my own diary written in English which I used as a medium to practice my writing skill. For listening skills, I started listening to English songs and movies in English and it helped me a lot with understanding the English talks the teacher brought in listening class.

Nana had been able to adjust herself well and managed to rearrange her goals. She started organizing her goals in learning and got herself into good habits in order to boost her academic achievement. This 23-year-old girl managed to graduate in exactly four and a half years and managed to write a thesis smoothly as well. Nana was an organized child; whenever the first author gave input regarding her undergraduate thesis draft, she always fixed it according to the advice given. Her interest in linguistics prompted her to write a thesis entitled, "figurative language for an IKEA advertisement." Nana also managed to pass the thesis exam stages well and smoothly. It is depicted in the interview:

I learned a lot from what happened to me in the first and second semesters. It was my family and my environment that kept me consistent with my choice, and the support from the environment was also very strong. No friends stayed away from me while I was a student here, even if I could say everything was good and the feeling of sisterhood was so real, for they were willing to share and help me. Finally, the four and a half years as an undergraduate student have passed well. Thank God.

In the interview, Nana shared how she adapted well to her classroom participation as mediated by family support and classmates. It is essential to note that relationships with peers and family were salient in improving learning participation, as experienced by Nana. Though she had experienced the ups and downs during her study completion, she managed to successfully finish her study well. This was because of the way her family and surroundings treated her; thus, it affected the way she saw the world in a positive way. Her relationships were important in supporting her study when she was physically distant from her beloved family.

Identity Development

The following part explores how Nana's identity developed by negotiating her participation in the classroom despite her limitation. This part also explains the strategy she used to keep engaged with the classroom environment. When students whose first language is not English encounter learning English as an additional language for the first time, they cannot avoid the issue of learner identity because they must participate in a community that is different from what they are used to.

Nana, who had earlier appeared confident, found it difficult to adjust to college life. Her mental vision of college did not match reality because, in Malang, she encountered a variety of people with diverse cultural origins and customs, which were unmistakably different from her high school milieu. Nana's adaptation process was relatively challenging given that she not only had to deal with new people and a new setting, but she also had to deal with her limitations and how she accepted herself in that situation. Nana's passive character at the start of the semester and her low level of participation in class were physical manifestations of how Nana exposed her individuality. Nana's experiences at the start of college have helped shape her identity as a

legitimate English student, complete with obligations and responsibilities. Nana's friends and teachers were very tolerable of her. Assuredly, such a treatment made her a little happy.

The special treatment that Nana received in the classroom can be seen in the way her friends serve her for things that she can actually do herself; for example, lifting a chair and coming to the front of the class to write. She told us that her lecturers are very facilitative in helping her do activities in the classroom when she thought she could just do them by herself. She felt that they just took pity on her. However, she always tried to think positively about the tolerance given and began to think that it is part of their human nature, not on the basis of pity. Lecturers and friends were even willing to help Nana with her writing skill development. One thing that she learned from the class is that she did not need to feel inferior as her classmates really supported her. The attitudes of her peers and teachers had a tremendous impact on an individual with a disability like Nana. She said that she did not need to deal with the problems of being excluded, as the classroom environment was so supportive and everyone there, along with the lecturer, acknowledged her existence. However, still it took her two semesters to get used to college life and love her choice. Nana felt that:

> At the beginning of my study, there were no problems, but there were many adjustments, or it could be said as challenges, that I faced. It's not easy to be different from those who are normal, you understand what I mean right. Sometimes I feel that my friends and even lecturers just took a pity on me for all tolerance given but over time I brushed it off because I didn't see these limitations and imperfections as obstacles from the start. I try to follow the class well and even during discussions, for example, I don't miss participating, and giving opinions and I'm grateful to be in an environment where my friends don't make any difference, I've never seen them talk bad things behind my back.

Nana's first and second semesters were relatively hard for her. Because Nana was not born into a family of academically gifted children, enrolling in an English literature major required her to work extra hard in order to adapt to her friends and the classroom demands. She learned some learning strategies to get her adjusted to the classroom situation. Nana struggled with grammar among the four current language abilities, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which hampered her ability to write. The writing course she took was inadequate for her, so she had to retake it to earn a better grade. Nana found it simple to enroll in the listening and speaking classes because two of her favorite hobbies are listening to music and watching movies in English. Nana was a typical student who did not like studying alone, so she often studied in groups with her friends while listening to music. Nana tried to overcome her shortcomings in the grammar aspect by improving the reading aspect, and indeed, she admits that the habit of reading is not formed in her. Her strong intention to be able to adapt to the existing courses was what made her love reading. Gradually, the problem of grammar could be mastered well.

Another challenge dealt with Nana being passive at the beginning of the semester, particularly in speaking. This happened when she had to share her own opinion or speak in front of the class. She felt that it was difficult for her to share her ideas in front of other people, as she was afraid of making mistakes. Nana told us that it was not her own problem, but it was a problem for most of the students in the class, as they are not accustomed to doing that – using English for sharing ideas. To solve the problem, the lecturer then began to change the seating arrangement into a U-shape format, allowing for closer interactions between students and the lecturer. U-shaped seating arrangement really worked well and helped the students to engage well in a classroom situation and participate a lot. It happened for the first half of the semester. Again, this sort of seating arrangement really helped Nana to get well engaged with her other friends and

lecturer. As a result, Nana gained her self-confidence little by little, and managing to speak in front of the class was not burdensome anymore.

Nana experienced failures and despair in relation to the language learning she was undergoing. As already mentioned, in the course of learning English, Nana experienced the toughest obstacles in the first and fourth semesters of the learning situation and she had to work harder. The use of English on a larger scale, as well as the presence of several content courses that had been introduced to previous foreign English language studies, required students to be more independent in learning and more diligent in digging for information outside the classroom. Nana told how she experienced a tremendous change in mindset when she was facing this problem and recounted her efforts to get out of the existing problem; she called this the process of maturation and the search for true identity to be able to learn a lot about what it was to be responsible for the decisions taken, to learn the meaning of struggle, to figure out what maximum effort was needed, and how to endure discomfort. She stated:

> When I'm stuck doing assignments that I don't even have a hard time understanding, I feel that I was in the wrong major and made the wrong decision. Indeed, I have struggled with this uncertainty for a long time and my grades have been sacrificed in the end, and my GPA has fallen apart. In fact, I am grateful that I have reached the point where my maturity is being questioned because I am here being trained on how to be responsible for the decisions that I have taken and how to not just follow my ego. I finally succeeded and got out of this comfort zone and regret zone. I forced myself to get up, I forced myself to study hard, apply study hours and consistent reading habits, and the result is that reading is not just reading but the value I get from reading literature about the content courses I take greatly affects my life. I am just feeling lazy, it is not about I am not competent; it is just about how I deal with my own ego.

Nana stated that she chose English formerly because of the prestige that came from this internationally spoken language. However, this was not her only reason for being an EFL student at FIB. It has taught her many things about values, self-reliance, trust, confidence, and any other positive values which really develop her emotionally and cognitively. In the interview, Nana narrated that:

> Indeed, I did not pass and had to repeat, but from courses such as English Culture, I learned many things about the history of the English language. There are many good values that I can take and the philosophy of life that I can learn. So indeed, learning is not only a matter of value but also about what value we can get. I realized that good communication can open up a million opportunities and miscommunication can create war. From the history of England, for example, I have learned a lot about upholding values. From its literature written in English, I learned about the values of other cultures I have never encountered before. Finally, I can move on and enjoy my choice again. While studying psycholinguistics, for example, my self-identity was challenged again when I read a lot of literature about many people with disabilities like me, even worse, being able to succeed and enjoy life and learn languages fluently and be accepted in their community. I then became more and more convinced and realized that this is not a matter of whether we are physically perfect or not, but rather how we intend to change for the better. Various kinds of courses that I take teach infinite values. My independence is also demanded, for example, in extensive reading

courses where we all have to read a number of short stories, novels, and scientific articles, which of course are hard, but I am very grateful because from there, my insight becomes open about how valuable the value of life is from what I used to consider just a course for graduation.

In the above excerpt, Nana's identity evolved gradually after taking some courses. She began to understand that the English language brings wider opportunities for her to develop professionally, and that communication did not involve physically perfecting individuals to succeed, but rather, everyone had the chance for success. For example, in the course on English Culture she took, Nana became acquainted with literature written by Western scholars. In her course on psycholinguistics, Nana realized that everyone is subject to effective communication using his or her competencies. Lastly, her course on extensive reading opens knowledge for her to know various readings. Such engagement in the reading allowed her to finally consider the course more than just "a course for graduation."

Discussion

Early Identity: Self Survival Amidst Imperfection

Our analysis revealed that Nana experienced a gradual and complex identity formation when becoming an EFL student. Her belief in her self-portrait as a full human being despite her disability had remained influential to her and this made her strong, persevering with the choice she had once made, and responsible for the consequences she had to take. This belief then always became a shadow, guiding her to feel confident in handling situations even when she despaired. Her belief in seeing herself not being less supported her in managing her surroundings and making her life feel easier and more meaningful despite the physical constraint she has. This is in line with Mehrad (2016), who stated that a person's self-concept, cognitive and social development, academic performance, and general psychological health were based on the attitude of society. In this regard, Nana's condition does not hamper her to perform well like other normal people. The way she sees herself and the way she leads her life with grace gives more empirical evidence like previous research investigating disabled people who can live without disappointment (Cox et al., 2017; Papadimitriou, 2008; Parker & Yau, 2012; Saltes, 2013; Sheldon et al. 2011).

Most importantly, Nana's early identity gradually developed and was interwoven at the time she moved to Malang and faced a new environment requiring her to keep in line with the choice she has made. Her initial encounter with the English learning environment at the beginning of the semester may have contributed to this development. Nana's experiences as an English student have led her into a whole person physically, cognitively, and emotionally (Hatam & Sa, 2017). In one place, she had to acknowledge her own condition of being different compared to others, but she should always positively think that she and her other friends were just the same. Her cognitive abilities were also well challenged in a way that she was able to go through the ups and downs of becoming an EFL student whose emotional state sometimes fluctuated about her identity as a competent English student. Therefore, this is in line with Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2007), who contended that the development of a person's identity construction through language use is an ongoing, continuous, and dynamic process. This can be seen from the flow of thought that Nana had once she came to the honeymoon, shock, adjustment, and adaptation periods; in each stage, she dynamically changed her identity in relation to her position as an EFL student. Through this, she enacted a gradual identity development in the classroom, as depicted in her being active in classroom participation.

This study also documented that Nana reflected on her previous learning experiences. In this context, Nana was insecure with her status as a disabled student and showed minimum performance in the learning activities. However, in the present learning experiences, Nana successfully proved that she could attain competence and was active in the classroom activities. Her being insecure as an English department student is unreasonable, as shown by her success in completing her study well and graduating as a legitimate English language learner.

The Changes in Identity and Classroom Participation

Our analysis shows gradual changes in Nana's identity and classroom participation by the end of her study. Nana had negotiated her identity dynamically versus statically. For example, she continuously attempted to understand the causes of her previous passive learning and began to deal with them. Her habit of reading has helped her in reconstructing her identity as a legitimate EFL student. She finally realized that a new reading habit contributed to her academic leap. Instead of being silent, Nana kept on struggling to get herself well-acknowledged as a legitimate English learner. Some students construct their identity in L2 or EFL learning differently. Liu's (2002) study, for example, showed how Chinese students constructed their L2 identities through silence in the language classroom. These students were concerned with losing face if they gave incorrect answers to teachers' questions, so they listened attentively instead of orally participating, and this was part of their identity as L2 learners. By contrast, Nana in this study kept participating during class discussions and showed her capability in expressing her opinion regardless of whether it was right or wrong. Moreover, the social interaction between Nana and her classmates and lecturers also contributed to her endurance when experiencing great despair at the beginning of her college life. Another study by Morita (2004) also provided a good example of how L2 students from Japan negotiated their membership and identities in the new academic communities in a Canadian university setting. The findings indicated that Japanese students under-performed in the university, as they could not understand reading materials and lecturers' explanations and were passive in the classroom activities. In addition, these students often constructed this identity based on the ways other peers perceived them. However, some of the L2 students began to negotiate their identities, and one student, in particular, employed several strategies such as preparing items to talk about before class and asking instructors questions after class. This is in line with what Nana did in order to catch up with what she perceived as lacking. Therefore, in learning participation, she began to employ various learning strategies to enhance her academic achievement. She began to get engaged in regular reading habits, consult her classmates for things she did not understand, and actively participated in class discussions. These things were all done to build a sort of identity that Nana wanted other people to acknowledge.

Norton's (2000) term for the process of identity construction as "the site of struggles … multiple, and contradictory" (p. 127) is clearly seen in Nana's identity construction. Empirically, Nana experienced the lowest condition in her life as a person with a disability. Such a condition drove her to struggle and develop self-confidence. The efforts she made and Nana's way of talking about how learning changes who she is through her classroom participation and personal history in the context of EFL have shown clearly that the way she developed her identity from time to time is in line with the idea from Wenger (1998). Her gradual but consistent desire to learn English has raised certain potential concerns legitimating her identity as an EFL student, one of which is pertinent to her identity as a language learner after being exposed to English as a foreign language. These narratives paint a picture of how Nana, an EFL student, established her identity through classroom involvement and how that identity developed over time. The findings recorded Nana's contact with classmates and lecturers, the setting of learning activities, and the temporality of her past schooling and its relationships.

Conclusions

The study's findings highlight that Nana experienced a gradual and complex identity construction as an EFL student with a physical disability during classroom participation. Changes in her identity evolved through several stages such as orientation, rising state, shock, adjustment, and identity development. In the orientation phase, the study revealed how Nana saw herself as an empowered person with a disability due to her positive self-portrait and family support. In the rising state, Nana was unconfident with herself due to her status as a freshman in the English department, where she knew did not have any friends for the first time. Nana gradually experienced shocks during the first time in classroom participation. She felt insecure about her physical look and the medium of language instruction which is fully carried out in English. As a result, in this condition, Nana chose to be silent and passive in the classroom activities. In the adjustment phase, Nana began participating actively and engaging herself fully in the classroom discussions. She adapted her learning to a positive class atmosphere with her colleagues. In addition, Nana embarked on negotiating her identity as an EFL student through her active participation. Lastly, in the identity development phase, Nana was seen as more encouraged in her major as an EFL student. She enacted a site of struggle and efforts to attain membership and develop her competence in the class. Finally, she was also aware of the importance of learning English for her future career.

Limitations and Implications of the Study

This study has yielded significant findings from the participant's experiences. However, it is also still open to several boundaries. First, recruiting a single participant, although doable, is risky in the context of bias and subjective findings. Thus, future research agendas are encouraged to recruit more participants so that findings from similar studies are better conveyed and verified. The use of in-depth interviews in the present study is not without any problems. Future studies should employ multiple data collection in order to document a more comprehensive data collection. We also motivate future researchers to study participants learning languages other than English, as it is important to yield varied perspectives from multiple languages.

Understanding findings in the present study could motivate English teachers, be they in secondary or post-secondary education contexts, to treat disabled students with caution and emotional manners. Stories shared by the participants in this study inform pedagogical impacts for re-designing curricula that specialize in disability learning. Policymakers could also take advantage of the present study's findings in the context of enacting training for teachers on how to treat disabled students effectively.

References

Astri, Z., & Wahab, I. (2019). The use of TPR method for disabled students with different learning styles in English vocabulary development. *Scope of English Language Teaching, Literature and Linguistics*, *2*(2), 66-75.

Bailey, J. (2008). First steps in qualitative data analysis: Transcribing. *Family Practice, 25*(2), 127-131. https://doi.org/10.1093/fampra/cmn003

Barbareschi, G., Carew, M. T., Johnson, E. A., Kopi, N., & Holloway, C. (2021). "When they see a wheelchair, they've not even seen me" – Factors shaping the experience of disability stigma and discrimination in Kenya. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *18*(8), 1-20. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18084272

Braun, A. M., & Naami, A. (2021). Access to higher education in Ghana: Examining experiences

through the lens of students with mobility disabilities. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, *68*(1), 95-115. https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2019.1651833

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77-101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Cheng, K. K. Y., & Beigi, A. B. (2011). Addressing students with disabilities in school textbooks. *Disability and Society*, *26*(2), 239-242. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2011.544063

Clandinin, D. (2006). Narrative inquiry: A methodology for studying lived experience. *Research Studies in Music Education, 27*(1), 44-54. https://doi.org/10.1177/1321103X060270010301

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research.* Jossey-Bass.

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (2006). Narrative inquiry. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, & P. B. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (pp. 477-488). Lawrence Erlbaum.

Cox, B. E., Thompson, K., Anderson, A., Mintz, A., Locks, T., Morgan, L., Edelstein, J. A. & Wolz, A. (2017). College experiences for students with autism spectrum disorder: Personal identity, public disclosure, and institutional support. *Journal of College Student Development*, *58*(1), 71-87. https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2017.0004

Creswell, J. W. (2002). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. SAGE.

Cunnah, W. (2015). Disabled students: Identity, inclusion and work-based placements. *Disability & Society*, *30*(2), 213-226. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2014.996282

Dvir, N. (2015). Does physical disability affect the construction of professional identity? Narratives of student teachers with physical disabilities. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 52*, 56-65. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2015.09.001

Enoch, A., Edusei, A. K., Paul, O., Mensah, A. K., Adjei, R. O., & Appiah-Brempong, E. (2016). "We are not getting jobs": Job seeking problems of people with disability and coping strategies adopted in an urban traditional community in Ghana. *Disability, CBR and Inclusive Development*, *27*(1), 109-125. https://doi.org/10.5463/dcid.v1i1.499

Gorichanaz, T. (2019). Self-portrait, selfie, self: Notes on identity and documentation in the digital age. *Information*, *10*(297), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.3390/info10100297

Hatam, S., & Sa, T. (2017). Foreign language learning and identity reconstruction: Learners' understanding of the intersections of the self, the other and power. *Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal*, *7*(4), 13-36. https://doi.org/10.26529/cepsj.362

Islam, Z. (2008). Negotiating identities: The lives of Pakistani and Bangladeshi young disabled people. *Disability & Society*, *23*(1), 41-52. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687590701725625

Kamali Arslantas, T., Yıldırım, S., & Altunay Arslantekin, B. (2021). Educational affordances of a specific web-based assistive technology for students with visual impairment. *Interactive Learning Environments*, *29*(6), 1037-1054. https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2019.1619587

Kaur, G., Leong, T. P., Yusof, J. M., & Singh, D. (2015). Perception of people with disability in creating sustainable public policy. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 168,* 145-155. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.10.220

Labov, W., & J. Waletsky. (2003). Narrative analysis: Oral versions of personal experience. In C. Bratt Poulston & G. Tucker Eds.), *Sociolinguistics: The essential readings* (pp. 74-104). Blackwell.

Larsen-Freeman, D., & Cameron, L. (2007). *Complex systems and applied linguistics*. Oxford University Press.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge University Press.

Lintangsari, A. P., & Emaliana, I. (2020). Inclusive education services for the blind: Values, roles, and challenges of university EFL teachers. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, *9*(2), 439-447. https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v9i2.20436

Liu, J. (2002). Negotiating silence in American classrooms: Three Chinese cases. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, *2*(1), 37-54. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708470208668074

Mehrad, A. (2016). Mini literature review of self-concept. *Journal of Educational, Health and Community Psychology*, *5*(2), 62-66. https://doi.org/10.12928/jehcp.v5i2.6036.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. Jossey-Bass.

Mueller, C. O. (2021). "I didn't know people with disabilities could grow up to be adults": Disability history, curriculum, and identity in special education. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, *44*(3), 189-205. https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406421996069

Morita, N. (2004). Negotiating participation and identity in second language academic communities. *TESOL Quarterly*, *38*(4), 573-603. https://doi.org/10.2307/3588281

Norton, B. (1997). Language, identity, and the ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, *31*(3), 409-429. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587831

Norton Pierce, B. (2000). *Identity and language learning: Gender, ethnicity and educational change.* Longman Pearson Education.

Papadimitriou, C. (2008). Becoming en-wheeled: The situated accomplishment of re-embodiment as a wheelchair user after spinal cord injury. *Disability & Society*, *23*(7), 691-704. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687590802469420

Parker, M. G., & Yau, M. K. (2012). Sexuality, identity and women with spinal cord injury. *Sexuality and Disability*, *30*(1), 15-27. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11195-011-9222-8

Pavlenko, A., & Lantolf, J. P. (2000). Second language learning as participation and the (re) construction of selves. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 155–177). Oxford University Press.

Payne, D. A., Hickey, H., Nelson, A., Rees, K., Bollinger, H., & Hartley, S. (2016). Physically disabled women and sexual identity: A photovoice study. *Disability & Society*, *31*(8), 1030-1049. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2016.1230044

Price, D., & Slee, R. (2021). An Australian curriculum that includes diverse learners: The case of students with disability. *Curriculum Perspectives*, *41*(2), 71-81. https://doi.org/10.1007/s41297-021-00134-8

Rohwerder, B. (2018). *Disability stigma in developing countries* (K4D Helpdesk Report). Institute of Development Studies.

Salmi, J., & D'Addio, A. (2021). Policies for achieving inclusion in higher education. *Policy Reviews in Higher Education*, *5*(1), 47-72. https://doi.org/10.1080/23322969.2020.1835529

Saltes, N. (2013). Disability, identity and disclosure in the online dating environment. *Disability & Society*, *28*(1), 96-109. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2012.695577

Saumure, K., & Given, L. M. (2008). Convenience sample. In L. M. Given (Ed.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (pp. 124-125). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Sheldon, A. P., Renwick, R., & Yoshida, K. K. (2011). Exploring body image and self-concept of men with acquired spinal cord injuries. *American Journal of Men's Health*, *5*(4), 306-317. https://doi.org/10.1177/1557988310375714

Singh, R., & Chopra, G. (2018). 'Don't stare at me….': Exploring the lived experiences of adults with disability. *IJDS: Indonesian Journal of Disability Studies*, *5*(1), 10-25.

Smith, B., Bundon, A., & Best, M. (2016). Disability sport and activist identities: A qualitative

study of narratives of activism among elite athletes with impairment. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 26,* 139-148. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2016.07.003

Szumski, G., Smogorzewska, J., & Grygiel, P. (2020). Attitudes of students toward people with disabilities, moral identity and inclusive education – A two-level analysis. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, *102*, 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ridd.2020.103685

Ubaidillah, M. F., & Widiati, U. (2021). Stories of identity construction and classroom participation in an English-medium university. *JEELS (Journal of English Education and Linguistics Studies)*, *8*(1), 147-174.

United Nations. (2019). *Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Awareness-Raising under Article 8 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/ 43/27

Van Lier, L. (2007). Action-based teaching, autonomy and identity. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, *1*(1), 46-65. https://doi.org/10.2167/illt42.0

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511803932

Wheeler, P. (2007). 'I count myself as normal, well, not normal, but normal enough': Men with learning disabilities tell their stories about sexuality and sexual identity. *Tizard Learning Disability Review*, *12*(1), 16-27. https://doi.org/10.1108/13595474200700003

Wickman, K. (2007) "I do not compete in disability": How wheelchair athletes challenge the discourse of able-ism through action and resistance. *European Journal for Sport and Society, 4*(2), 151-167. https://doi.org/10.1080/16138171.2007.11687801

Widodo, H. P. (2005). Teaching children using a total physical response (TPR) method: Rethinking. *Bahasa Dan Seni*, *33*(2), 235-248.

Yulianti, K., & Mukminin, A. (2021). Teaching and learning during COVID-19 pandemic: A qualitative study on elementary school teachers in Indonesia. *The Qualitative Report*, *26*(12), 3900-3910. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2021.5079

Xia, Z. Y., Kong, Y., Yin, T. T., Shi, S. H., Huang, R., & Cheng, Y. H. (2014). The impact of acceptance of disability and psychological resilience on post-traumatic stress disorders in burn patients. *International Journal of Nursing Sciences, 1*(4), 371-375. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnss.2014.10.018

Author Note

Emy Sudarwati (corresponding author) is a lecturer in the Department of Languages and Literature, Universitas Brawijaya, Malang, East Java, Indonesia. She is now pursuing her doctorate degree in English Language Teaching, Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia. She has published research papers in national and international journals. Email: emoy_sanyoto@ub.ac.id.

Utami Widiati is a Professor in English Language Teaching (ELT) in the Department of English, Faculty of Letters, Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia. She obtained her professorship in the area of literacy learning in 2009. Her research interests include foreign language literacy, SLA, curriculum and material development, and teacher professional development. She has been active in pre- and in-service teacher education and professional development in Indonesia and has written secondary school English textbooks prescribed by the Indonesian government. She has published extensively in the area of English Language Teaching. Email: utami.widiati.fs@um.ac.id

M. Faruq Ubaidillah teaches in the Department of English Education, Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia. He is currently undertaking Doctor by Research in the Department of Language Education Science, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta,

Indonesia. His research interests include identity in language learning and the use of narrative inquiry in second/foreign language education research. Email: mfubaidillah@unisma.ac.id

Luluk Sri Agus Prasetyoningsih is an Associate Professor in the Department of Indonesian Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Islam Malang, East Java, Indonesia. She has been involved actively in researching issues of language learning with special needs students in Indonesia for more than 20 years. She can be contacted at luluksap58@unisma.ac.id.

Urip Sulistiyo is an Associate Professor in the Department of English Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Jambi, the Province of Jambi, Indonesia. He has published extensively in reputable international journals. Email: urip.sulistiyo@unja.ac.id

Article Citation

Sudarwati, E., Widiati, U., Ubaidillah, M. F., Prasetyoningsih, L. S. A., & Sulistiyo, U. (2022). A narrative inquiry into identity construction and classroom participation of an EFL student with a physical disability: Evidence from Indonesia. *The Qualitative Report, 27*(6), 1534-1556. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2022.5174