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Emotional Experiences of EFL Adolescents in a Narrative Writing Class: A Photovoice Case Study

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Abstract

Photovoice studies in EFL writing classes have mostly reported skills and attitudes, and say little about the emotions students feel while writing. This study asked what emotional experiences EFL adolescents express in a narrative writing class when they reflect on it through photovoice. It is a descriptive qualitative case study of ten ninth-grade students in a junior high school in North Sumatra, Indonesia, over one month. Each student photographed a moment in the writing class and explained it in a caption. The photographs were read at denotation and connotation levels. A 33-item questionnaire adapted from the Foreign Language Writing Emotion Survey Questionnaire and semi-structured interviews gave comparison data. Analysis followed Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's (2014) model, with Pekrun's (2006) control-value theory as the lens. The photographs and captions produced 19 emotion codes, 16 negative and three of enjoyment, and seven students received only negative codes. Thirteen of the 19 codes rest on an emotion word the student wrote, and on that narrower count anxiety is no longer the most frequent code. The questionnaire put the emphasis elsewhere, with mean item scores of 4.10 on the positive items and 2.98 on the negative items (five-point scale), but the sources differ in timeframe and format, so they are contrasted here and not used to test one another. In interviews, at least eight students described both good and bad feelings. For at least nine of the ten students the photographs and the interview showed different valence patterns. The researcher's reading linked difficulty getting ideas to seven photographs, but the students' own words support that link clearly in only two, so it is treated as a tentative signal. Photovoice brought blocked moments into view; whether it gave them more weight than students' general experience cannot be settled with these data. With ten

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students, one coder, no reliability evidence, two questionnaire records that could not be matched to a student, and no available record of consent, the findings describe this class and do not show that photovoice improved reflective learning.

1. Introduction

Writing in a foreign language asks adolescents to hold ideas, vocabulary, and text organization in mind at once, and the effort is rarely emotionally neutral. Control-value theory gives one account of why. It proposes that achievement emotions arise from appraisals of how much control a person has over an activity and how much the activity matters (Pekrun, 2006). On this account, a student who cares about a narrative task but cannot get started on it should be prone to anxiety or hopelessness, and a student who feels in control of a task that matters to them should be more likely to enjoy it. Longitudinal evidence links achievement emotions and performance in both directions (Pekrun et al., 2017), and the framework has been carried into language classrooms (Shao et al., 2019; Shao et al., 2020).

Research on emotions in second language learning began with anxiety. A meta-analysis found that second language anxiety is negatively related to achievement (Teimouri et al., 2019), and a scale built specifically for writing anxiety has been in use for two decades (Cheng, 2004). More recent work has added positive emotions to the picture (Dewaele et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021). Dewaele and Alfawzan (2018) examined enjoyment and anxiety side by side to ask which mattered more for performance, and MacIntyre and Vincze (2017) showed that positive and negative emotions both underlie motivation to learn a language. Boudreau et al. (2018) went further by tracking enjoyment and anxiety during second language communication and found that both change from moment to moment. This matters for method. A rating made once, after the event, cannot show how a feeling moved while the student was writing.

Photovoice offers a different way in. Wang and Burris (1997) described it as a process in which participants photograph their own surroundings, talk about the photographs, and so bring forward what they consider important. In EFL writing classes it has been used with several groups. Ferdiansyah et al. (2020) used it with undergraduates and reported more engagement in the writing process and more reflective thinking. Nisa (2021) used it with high school students and analyzed their photographs with the SHOWeD questions. Militansina (2023) found that student teachers reported more self-awareness, motivation, and reflective learning habits after writing essays with photovoice. Mudra (2023) asked five university students to photograph their barriers to writing a research paper and found linguistic competence, a rigid journal template, and anxiety about written corrective feedback.

At the junior high level in Indonesia, Drajati et al. (2020) used a visual method to elicit students' voice about literacy. Sari and Sultan (2022) come closest to the present topic: they used photovoice with reflective journals to explore novice writers' emotions and reported that it helped students become more critically aware of their learning.

These studies leave a gap, and it is partly a gap of design. Most report positive outcomes, and most of those outcomes come from what participants said about the photovoice activity itself, such as whether it was interesting or motivating. Whether a student enjoys taking photographs is a different question from how that student feels while writing a narrative. Photographs are also selective. Liebenberg (2018) cautions that what a photovoice project produces depends on what participants choose to photograph and on how researchers interpret the images. Studies that use photographs to elicit emotions seldom set them against another measure of the same emotions, so it is not known whether the picture they give agrees with, or departs from, what students report on a questionnaire or in conversation.

This study addresses that gap with a small case. It asks one question: *What emotional experiences do EFL adolescents express in a narrative writing class when they reflect on it through photovoice?* The objective is to describe the emotions that ten ninth-grade students expressed in photographs and captions, and to compare that description with their questionnaire responses and interview accounts, including the reasons they gave. The contribution is modest and specific. The study does not claim that photovoice works as a teaching method. It offers a student-by-student contrast of three sources that differ in timeframe and format, and it reports where they point in different directions without treating any one of them as the benchmark.

2. Method

2.1 Design, setting, and participants

The study is a descriptive qualitative case study in which photographs, a questionnaire, and interviews were collected from the same students and analyzed together (Miles et al., 2014). The case is one ninth-grade class in a junior high school in North Sumatra, Indonesia, studied during writing lessons on narrative text. Ten students from that class took part. According to the source thesis, they were chosen by purposive sampling, with willingness to participate, varied language proficiency, and varied writing ability as the criteria.

The thesis does not say how these criteria were checked, how many students were eligible or invited, or who made the final choice, so the selection cannot be reconstructed and the ten should not be taken as representative of the class. Their EFL and writing experience (for example, years of English study or earlier narrative writing) was not recorded. The thesis also does not report how many narrative-writing lessons the photographs came from, what those lessons covered, or whether the researcher observed or taught them. The students' ages and genders were not recorded. To protect their identity, they are called S1 to S10 here, in the order in which their photographs were analyzed.

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The thesis gives one month as the duration of the research, including analysis, and does not separate the period of data collection from the period of analysis, so the actual collection window is unknown. The school was chosen because the researcher had run a small pilot study there the year before, and the thesis says the pilot findings matched the aims of the present study. This history may have shaped the data in two ways. Students and staff who already knew the researcher may have agreed to take part more readily and may have given answers they thought were welcome, which would matter most for the questionnaire and the interviews. A site chosen because earlier findings fitted the study's aims may also have encouraged a reading of the new data that confirmed those aims. Neither effect can be measured here, so both are treated as threats to the findings.

2.2 Photovoice procedure

The students were asked to photograph a scene or situation during the writing class that represented what they felt while writing. They then described each photograph in writing, guided by questions adapted from Nurhadi et al. (2022) on what the photograph represented, why it was taken, and what they felt at that moment. Photographs could show the students themselves or the situations and objects they met while writing. The thesis describes the procedure only in outline. It does not give the exact wording of the instruction, the time allowed, whether students took several photographs and chose one, who made the final selection, or the language and length of the captions.

These details should be added from the original instruction sheets, if they exist. The analysis covers ten photographs, one for each student. The photographs were read at two levels in the semiotic tradition (Barthes, 1967). The denotation level records what or who is shown. The connotation level interprets what the objects or people stand for. Captions and interview answers were used to anchor the connotation reading, but the reading was made by the researcher, and some meanings were not stated by the students themselves.

Three photographs sit awkwardly with the instruction to photograph the writing class. S1's photograph was taken in the schoolyard at break time, S2's shows the sun and clouds, and S3's shows the top of the class building against the sky. None shows writing, so each is tied to the lesson only by the student's caption. They are better read as metaphorical images than as records of a writing episode, and the schoolyard photograph in particular says little about what happened during the lesson itself.

Photovoice in the sense of Wang and Burris (1997) also involves group discussion of the images and participatory interpretation. The thesis describes no such step. No group session, joint selection of images, or student review of the researcher's readings is documented, so interpretation was led by the researcher alone. What this study used is the photograph-and-caption component of photovoice, with one image per student. That component can show what each student chose to show, but it cannot show what a wider set of images or a group conversation would have added. The term photovoice is kept in the title because the students made and captioned their own photographs, and it should be read with this limit in mind.

2.3 Questionnaire

Emotions were also measured with the Foreign Language Writing Emotion Survey Questionnaire (Hu, 2022), which combines a negative part of 22 items covering anger, anxiety, shame, hopelessness, and boredom, adapted from the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (Cheng, 2004), and a positive part of 11 items covering enjoyment, hope, and pride, adapted from the Chinese version of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (Li et al., 2018). Items were answered on a five-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Scores are reported here as item means, that is, the subscale total divided by the number of items, so that both subscales can be read against the same 1 to 5 scale with a midpoint of 3.00.

The thesis does not include the 33 items or a scoring key, so they cannot be reproduced here. They should be supplied as an appendix, with the source of each item (original or adapted) and the emotion it was meant to represent. The claimed coverage of emotions is also hard to verify from the cited sources. The Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory has 22 items and measures somatic anxiety, cognitive anxiety, and avoidance behavior (Cheng, 2004), and the Chinese Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale has 11 items grouped as private enjoyment, teacher-related enjoyment, and classroom atmosphere (Li et al., 2018). Neither names anger, shame, hopelessness, or boredom, or hope and pride. Because the item counts match the source scales exactly, the items may have been used with few changes, and scores cannot be attributed to particular emotions.

The two sets of items are therefore treated here only as a general indication of how strongly students endorsed negatively and positively worded statements about writing, and no score is reported for any single emotion. The thesis also does not say in which language the questionnaire was given, how it was translated, whether any items were reverse-scored, how missing responses were handled, or which time frame the instructions asked students to think about.

If the source inventory contains reverse-worded items and they were not reversed, the negative totals would be distorted. The time frame matters for the comparison with the photographs, because a general statement about writing and a photograph of one chosen moment do not ask the same thing of a student. With ten respondents a reliability coefficient would mean little, so none is given. That choice is reasonable, but it does not settle the separate uncertainty about item content and score construction.

2.4 Interview

A semi-structured interview adapted from Miri and Joia (2018) asked students how they felt in writing class and why. The answers were transcribed. They were short, usually two brief statements per student, and this limits what can be said about reasons. The thesis reports the quotations in English and does not say in which language the interviews were held, who transcribed them, or how any translation was done, and the interview schedule is not included. Some phrasings (for example "I feel enjoy" and "It makes me bad") cannot be traced to the students' original words, so the quotations are used here as reported and not as verbatim speech.

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2.5 Analysis and credibility

The data were analyzed with the interactive model of Miles et al. (2014): condensation, display, and conclusion drawing. Captions and photograph descriptions were coded for the emotions in Pekrun's (2006) list (anger, anxiety, shame, hopelessness, boredom, enjoyment, hope, pride) and for emotions the students named that fall outside it, here confusion and annoyance. Frequencies count codes, not students, since one student can receive several codes. The thesis contains no written codebook. The rules in Section 3.1 were reconstructed from the coding as it was applied, and they are stated there so that the frequency ranking can be checked.

Interview answers were coded as positive or negative and for the reason given. Questionnaire scores were summarized descriptively. Two questionnaire records could not be matched to a student. In the thesis tables one participant label appears twice and another participant has no record, so the two records belong to S1 and S6 in an order the thesis does not state. Section 3.2 sets out both possible assignments, and any statement that needs a verified identity is kept to students whose record is not part of this pair. The thesis names member checking as a credibility procedure but documents no instance of it, so it is not counted here as verification. The only credibility step that can be shown is the comparison of three sources, which differ in timeframe and format (Section 4). One researcher did all the coding, and no second coder or audit trail was used, which falls short of the practices described by Nowell et al. (2017).

2.6 Ethical considerations

The source thesis states that participation was voluntary, and this article identifies students only by codes (S1 to S10). The thesis contains no record of ethics review, school authorization, parental or guardian consent, student assent, or the safeguards used given the researcher's existing relationship with the school. This article therefore does not claim that these permissions were obtained, and the statement of limits in Section 5 cannot stand in for them.

[To be completed by the author from contemporaneous records before submission: (a) the body that reviewed the study and the approval reference, or a plain statement that no formal review took place; (b) the school's written authorization; (c) parental or guardian consent and student assent, with the date and language of the forms; (d) the steps taken to keep participation voluntary and unrelated to grades, given the prior pilot study and any teaching role of the researcher; (e) permission, from the classmates or on their behalf, for the photographs of S1 and S8, which show other students; and (f) how the photographs are stored and whether permission to disseminate them was given.]

No photograph is reproduced in this article, and the images are described only as far as the analysis requires. If permission for the classmates who appear in the photographs of S1 and S8 cannot be recovered, those images should not be published, and the analysis of the two cases should rest on the captions.

3. Results

3.1 Emotions in the photographs and captions

The photographs and captions yielded 19 emotion codes, 16 negative and three of enjoyment (Table 1). Anxiety was the most frequent code, followed by confusion and annoyance. Hopelessness and anger each appeared once. The ranking holds only under the broader reading of anxiety described below.

Table 1. Emotion codes in the photographs and captions

Emotion	Valence	Codes	Share of codes (%)
Anxiety	Negative	7	36.8
Confusion	Negative	4	21.1
Annoyance	Negative	3	15.8
Anger	Negative	1	5.3
Hopelessness	Negative	1	5.3
Enjoyment	Positive	3	15.8
Total		**19**	**100.0**

Note. Percentages are shares of the 19 codes, not of students, and are rounded.

Counting by student gives a clearer view. Seven students (S4 to S10) received only negative codes, two (S2 and S3) received only enjoyment, and one (S1) received both. The first analysis described S3 as mixed because the student reported being tired, but the same analysis also stated that tiredness is not an emotion, and Table 1 does not count it. Tiredness is therefore left out here, and S3 is treated as an enjoyment-only case.

The thesis contains no written codebook, so the rules used here were reconstructed from the coding as applied (Table 2). A code is explicit when the student's own words name the emotion or a close synonym ("confused", "annoyed", "angry", "enjoy", or "panicked" for anxiety). A code is inferred when the student named no emotion and the researcher judged it from a described state such as lost focus or dizziness. Tiredness is excluded because the thesis treats it as a state that affects emotion, not an emotion. Annoyance is treated as a weaker form of anger but coded separately because students used the word, and confusion is coded separately because it has no place in Pekrun's list yet appeared in the students' own words.

On these rules, 13 of the 19 codes are explicit and six are inferred: anxiety for S5 to S9 and confusion for S5. Counting explicit codes only, anxiety falls to two (S1 and S4), against three each for confusion, annoyance, and enjoyment and one each for anger and hopelessness. If "panicked" is also set aside, because mapping panic to anxiety is itself an interpretation, anxiety has one code. The seven students with only negative codes (S4 to S10) remain negative-only on the narrower count, but negative codes fall from 16 of 19 (84.2%) to 10 of 13 (76.9%), and the ranking in Table 1 cannot be treated as settled. None of the inferences was checked with the students.

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Table 2. Evidence behind the emotion codes and the idea-generation attribution, by student

Student	Codes (basis)	Wording in the caption	Link to difficulty with ideas
S1	Enjoyment (explicit); anxiety (explicit word "panicked")	"I was enjoying my class"; "how panicked I was at the beginning to make my class icon"	None stated
S2	Enjoyment (explicit)	"I enjoy writing narrative text because I can express my ideas well."	None stated (ideas expressed well)
S3	Enjoyment (explicit); tiredness not coded	"I enjoyed during the writing class."	None stated in the quoted caption
S4	Anxiety, confusion, anger (all explicit)	"I was confused and anxious."; "...sometimes are confused and angry."	Researcher's attribution; quoted wording does not mention ideas
S5	Hopelessness (explicit); confusion and anxiety (inferred from an empty, unfocused mind)	"I feel hopelessness, my mind was blank."; "thoughts that are not focused and empty because I was thinking about what I want to write"	Closest to the student's own words; the interview names vocabulary
S6	Annoyance (explicit); anxiety (inferred from lost focus); researcher's reading of the image was confusion, not coded	"I'm not focusing on getting the idea because I'm annoyed with the situation."	Reverse order: annoyance is given as the reason for not focusing on ideas
S7	Annoyance (explicit); anxiety (inferred from lost focus)	"I can't focus because..."; "how tangled my thoughts are" and "my annoyance when writing a narrative"	Researcher's attribution; "tangled thoughts" fits but is not specific
S8	Annoyance (explicit); anxiety (inferred from tiredness and lost focus); tiredness not coded	"I feel annoyed because I did not write well."; "I can't focus on writing because my friend disturbing me."	Competing cause in the caption: classmates' disturbance
S9	Confusion (explicit); anxiety (inferred from dizziness)	"I feel confused and dizzy when writing narrative text."	Researcher's attribution; quoted wording does not mention ideas
S10	Confusion (explicit)	"I was very confused about writing, my mind was very empty."	Closest to the student's own words

Note. Explicit = emotion word in the student's own caption. Inferred = judged by the researcher from a described state. Quotations are from the captions as reported in the source thesis; ellipses mark text the thesis does not show.

The photographs themselves fall into two groups. Five show writing materials in a state of failure: crumpled paper with a lamp drawn on it (S4), a pen beside a blank crushed sheet (S5), crumpled paper with a tangled scribble (S7), two blank sheets and a pen (S9), and crumpled paper with a tangled drawing of two doves and a snail (S10). All five belong to students coded as negative only. The three enjoyment photographs show a schoolyard at break time (S1), a bright sun among clouds and branches (S2), and the top of the class building against a blue sky (S3). None of them shows anything about writing.

Their link to the writing class comes only from the captions, for example S2's "I enjoy writing narrative text because I can express my ideas well." The remaining two photographs, tangled cables beside two hall pillars (S6) and a boy standing on a chair on a table (S8), are read as signs of lost focus and of being disturbed by classmates.

The connotation reading did not always agree with what students wrote. S6's tangled cable was read in the analysis as a sign of confusion, while the student's own caption named annoyance and lost focus, and Table 1 codes S6 for anxiety and annoyance but not for confusion. This is a small case of the researcher's reading running ahead of the student's words.

Seven photographs (S4 to S10) were read as tying the emotion to trouble getting ideas for the narrative, and these are the same seven students who received only negative codes. The support for that reading is uneven (Table 2). In two cases the students' own words describe an empty mind while thinking about what to write: S5 ("my mind was blank") and S10 ("my mind was very empty"). Even there, an empty mind is not the same as a stated problem with ideas, and S5's interview points to vocabulary. In two cases the captions give a different or reversed cause: S6 wrote that not focusing on getting an idea was due to annoyance with the situation, and S8 blamed classmates for the lost focus.

In three cases (S4, S7, and S9) the quoted captions do not mention ideas, and the link was made by the researcher. Other readings fit the same material. According to the thesis the topic was given by the teacher, so the difficulty may lie in the task and not in a general problem with ideas. Limited vocabulary (S5), tiredness, annoyance, and noisy classmates could each break concentration, and crumpled paper and blank sheets are the obvious things to photograph when writing goes badly, whatever the cause. Difficulty getting ideas is therefore a plausible common thread that the data do not verify.

3.2 Questionnaire scores

On the questionnaire, the students endorsed the positive items strongly and the negative items near the scale midpoint (Table 3). The positive subscale had a mean item score of 4.10, and every student's item mean was above 3.00. The negative subscale had a mean of 2.98. Three students had negative item means above 3.00, and two were exactly at 3.00.

Table 3. Questionnaire results by subscale (n = 10)

Subscale	Items	Observed total	Mean total	Item mean	Range of student item means	Item mean above 3.00 (n)
Positive emotions	11	34-50	45.1	4.10	3.09-4.55	10
Negative emotions	22	59-74	65.6	2.98	2.68-3.36	3

Note. Possible totals are 11-55 (positive) and 22-110 (negative). Item mean = subscale total divided by number of items; the midpoint of the scale is 3.00. Totals are as recorded in the thesis tables, and item content was not available (Section 2.3).

Nine of the ten students had a higher mean on the positive items than on the negative items. The exception was S2, whose record, as labelled in the thesis tables, has a positive item mean of 3.09 and a negative item mean of 3.36. The two sets of items contain different content and were not built to be subtracted from one another, so the comparison is rough. A higher positive mean does not by itself show that positive feelings dominated: agreeing with statements about writing in general is not the same as feeling something during one lesson, and this study has no benchmark against which to read the scores. The result is

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therefore read as a difference in emphasis between the questionnaire and the photograph codes, where 16 of 19 codes were negative, and not as evidence that either source is the more accurate.

Table 4 shows the two records that could not be assigned. One has 46 positive and 62 negative points and the other 49 and 59. Whichever record belongs to S1 and whichever to S6, both give a higher positive than negative item mean (4.18 against 2.82, and 4.45 against 2.68), so the direction reported for these two students in Table 6 does not depend on the assignment, and neither do the class means in Table 3, which use all ten records. What does depend on it is any exact score for S1 or S6, and none is reported. The record labelled as S2's is not part of the unresolved pair and carries a label of its own. A labelling error in the same tables is still a reason to check every record against the original response sheets, so S2's totals are reported as labelled and should not be read as verified.

Table 4. Questionnaire records that could not be matched to a student

Record	Totals (positive / negative)	Item means (positive / negative)	Higher item mean
Record A	46 / 62	4.18 / 2.82	Positive
Record B	49 / 59	4.45 / 2.68	Positive

Note. Records A and B are the first and third rows of the questionnaire tables in the thesis, which carry the same participant label. They belong to S1 and S6 in an order the thesis does not state (A = S1 and B = S6, or the reverse). Item means are totals divided by 11 and by 22.

3.3 Interview accounts and reasons

The interviews gave a more mixed picture than either of the other sources. At least eight students (S2, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, and S10) described both positive and negative feelings, often in the same breath. S9 said, "When writing narrative texts, I felt happy, sad, and confused at the same time, but I enjoyed the atmosphere." S1 described only positive feelings in the excerpt, and S3's excerpt contained only confusion, although a quotation attributed to S3 later reports happiness (see below). The vocabulary was also broader than the photograph codes. Students used "sad" and "scared" (S6, S7, S9) and the plain words "good" and "bad" (S1, S2, S3, S4, S10), which were coded as positive and negative but are ambiguous. A student who says writing "makes me bad" may be describing a feeling or a judgment of their own text.

Each student was credited with one main reason for how they felt (Table 5). The thesis shows one excerpt per student and does not say whether the student gave a single reason or the researcher reduced several to one, so "main reason" here is the researcher's label, and the full transcripts are not available. Co-occurring reasons are visible even in the short excerpts. S5 tied a happy feeling to a calm mind and tied anger to an anxious mind and hunger in the same answer, and S6 described writing as a way to talk about things that bother the mind, which is a positive reason that presupposes troubled feelings.

Three reasons were given by two students each (personal relevance of the story, language proficiency, and confidence in being able to write), and four by one student each (workload from other subjects, writing outside class, comparison with classmates, and mood). S10 was earlier grouped under confidence, but S10 linked writing well to being in a good mood, which is a statement about mood and not about belief in one's own ability, so mood is now listed separately.

Table 5. Reasons for emotions given in the interviews

Reason given	Direction	Students	Illustrative quotation
Personal relevance of the story	Positive	2 (S6, S8)	"It's my own story, none of my stories are sad, or bad." (S8)
Language proficiency	Negative	2 (S5, S7)	"I am confused about the vocabulary." (S5)
Confidence in own writing	Positive	2 (S3, S4)	"I feel good because I write down what I think is a great idea in the text." (S4)
Mood	Positive	1 (S10)	"Because I am in a good mood. So, I can write well." (S10)
Workload from other subjects	Negative	1 (S1)	"There are many tasks from other subjects to be done and completed." (S1)
Writing outside class	Positive	1 (S9)	"I had tried writing stories on the Wattpad application and yes, quite a lot of people read my stories." (S9)
Comparison with classmates	Negative	1 (S2)	"When I think about the challenges of my classmates who can finish early, so I have to think harder." (S2)

Note. Quotations are as recorded in the interview transcripts, in the language in which the thesis reports them. Each student appears once, with the single excerpt the thesis presents, and direction is the researcher's coding of the reason. The reasons for S1 and S3 conflict with their interview classification in Table 6 (see text).

Two classifications conflict and are left open. S1's quoted answers ("I feel pleased" and "I feel good") are positive, and Table 6 classes S1 as positive only, yet the reason credited to S1 in Table 5 is workload from other subjects, which the thesis reads as a source of negative emotion. Either the full interview contained negative feelings that the excerpt leaves out, or the reason was coded in the wrong direction, and the available material cannot say which. S3 shows the reverse. Table 6 lists S3 as negative only, on the basis of "I feel confused", but the reason quotation credited to S3 is "I feel happy when I write because I have ideas to write". Both students are marked as unresolved in Table 6.

None of these categories names difficulty getting ideas, which the researcher's reading attached to confusion, annoyance, and hopelessness in seven of the ten photographs (Section 3.1). It appears in the interview table only indirectly, through language proficiency (S5 wrote about vocabulary) and through S4's remark about writing down a great idea. The two sources point to different causes for the same students. S5's photograph speaks of a blank mind, while the interview speaks of vocabulary. These may be two faces of one problem, but the data cannot show that.

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3.4 Comparing the three sources

Table 6 sets the three sources side by side for each student. For nine of the ten students the photograph codes and the interview answers show different valence patterns, and S1 depends on how the unresolved interview classification described above is settled. No student shows the same pattern in all three sources. S3 is the sharpest case, with enjoyment in the photograph and confusion in the interview excerpt (although see the reason quotation above). S2 is the second. S2 is one of two students, with S3, whose photograph and caption were coded as enjoyment alone.

In the thesis tables, S2's record has the lowest positive total (34 of 55) and the highest negative total (74 of 110) on the questionnaire. In the interview S2 mentioned both pride and feeling "something bad" and named comparison with faster classmates as the reason for feeling pressed. The photograph and caption expressed enjoyment only, but they refer to one moment, while the other two sources are general, so the three do not necessarily contradict each other. What can be said is that they give S2 three different emphases. A single photograph cannot show how consistently happy a student was.

Table 6. Valence pattern by student and source

Student	Photographs and captions	Interview	Questionnaire (higher subscale)
S1	Enjoyment and anxiety	Positive only in the excerpt; reason coded negative (unresolved)	Positive (Table 4)
S2	Enjoyment only	Pride and "bad"	Negative
S3	Enjoyment only (tiredness not coded)	Confusion in the excerpt; reason quotation positive (unresolved)	Positive
S4	Negative only (anxiety, anger, confusion)	Both (happy, confused)	Positive
S5	Negative only (anxiety, confusion, hopelessness)	Both (confusion, anxiety, anger, happiness)	Positive
S6	Negative only (anxiety, annoyance)	Both (joy, sadness, fear)	Positive (Table 4)
S7	Negative only (anxiety, annoyance)	Both (joy, sadness, annoyance)	Positive
S8	Negative only (anxiety, annoyance)	Both (anxiety, joy)	Positive
S9	Negative only (anxiety, confusion)	Both (happy, sad, confused)	Positive
S10	Negative only (confusion)	Both (enjoyment, "bad")	Positive

Note. Questionnaire direction compares the positive and negative item means for each student. The questionnaire records for S1 and S6 could not be matched with certainty, but both give a positive direction under either assignment (Table 4). S2's totals are as labelled in the thesis tables. S1 and S3 are marked as unresolved in the interview column (Section 3.3).

4. Discussion

The photographs and captions give one answer to the research question: in this class, students' photographs mostly expressed confusion, annoyance, and anxiety, with enjoyment in a small minority. The questionnaire and interviews give a second answer, which is that students felt both good and bad about writing, with positive feelings rated highly. These answers differ in emphasis, and the data do not allow one to be called more accurate than the other.

A cautious summary is ambivalence, with negative moments prominent in the photographs and positive endorsement prominent in the questionnaire, and not a ranking in which negative emotions came first. The ranking appears only in the photograph codes, and even there it depends on how the anxiety code was applied. That coexistence is not strange. Positive and negative emotions have both been linked to motivation for language learning (MacIntyre & Vincze, 2017), and enjoyment and anxiety have been examined as separate contributors to performance (Dewaele & Alfawzan, 2018).

Control-value theory fits the pattern of reasons, though it was not tested. The negative emotions that the analysis attached to ideas, such as S5's hopelessness with a blank mind, are what the theory would expect when a task matters and control over it is low (Pekrun, 2006). The positive reasons were the ones that gave students control over content, such as writing their own story (S6, S8) or having ideas ready (S3, S4). Narrative writing about personal experience may therefore be a favorable task, since the student already owns the material. But the study did not measure control or value appraisals. The fit is an interpretation, and a different set of appraisal items would be needed to check it.

The sources differ in timeframe, unit, and response format, so their divergence is an interpretive contrast and not a test of whether photovoice is valid. A photograph shows one moment that the student selected, the questionnaire records general endorsement of 33 statements on a five-point scale, and the interview gives two brief answers. The questionnaire is not an established benchmark here, because its item content and scoring are undocumented (Section 2.3). Why do the sources diverge? Five explanations are plausible, and the data do not decide among them. First, a photograph freezes one moment, and the moment a student chooses to photograph is probably a salient one. A blocked moment is easy to picture: a blank page, a crumpled sheet. Satisfaction in writing is hard to photograph, and the three enjoyment photographs show the setting instead.

The medium may thus favor frustration. Boudreau et al. (2018) showed that feelings change within a single communicative task, so a selected moment and a general rating need not agree. Second, the questionnaire asks about writing in general, and positive enjoyment items tend to be endorsed readily, particularly in a school where the researcher was already known. Third, the coding of anxiety was generous. Fourth, the interview answers were very short and the researcher assigned their valence. Fifth, the prompts were not aligned: students were asked about one lesson moment in the photograph task but about writing in general in the questionnaire. A follow-up study could word the questionnaire items and interview questions about the photographed moment itself, so that the sources answer the same question. Each of these could produce disagreement without any real difference in feeling.

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The results also bear on how photovoice is described. Earlier studies of photovoice in writing classes report positive attitudes (Ferdiansyah et al., 2020; Militansina, 2023; Nisa, 2021), whereas most photographs here were negative. The difference may be one of object. Those studies asked students about the activity, while this one asked students about writing. A student can enjoy making a photograph about a hard moment. In this class photovoice brought difficult moments into view and gave students a way to name them, which fits the reports by Mudra (2023) and Sari and Sultan (2022), although only the photograph-and-caption component was used, with one image per student (Section 2.2). They do not show that photovoice improved reflective learning.

There was no measure of reflection, no baseline, and no comparison with another activity, and the reflections obtained were mostly one emotion word and one reason per student. Liebenberg's (2018) caution also applies. Meaning was assigned by the researcher at the connotation stage, and S6's photograph shows that the assigned meaning can differ from the student's own. Two photographs show classmates (S1 and S8). Section 2.6 sets out what the thesis does and does not document about permission, and until that documentation is recovered these two images should not be reproduced or shared.

For teaching, the signal is practical, modest, and tentative. The researcher's reading linked seven of the ten photographs to trouble getting ideas, but the students' own words support that link clearly in only two, and other explanations fit the same material (Section 3.1). Prewriting support, such as talking through a topic before drafting or choosing a topic from the student's own experience, might address difficulty with ideas more directly than advice to stay calm, if that is the problem. This suggestion rests on a small sample and was not tested. A teacher who uses photographs to find out how students feel should also ask a second question in another form, since the photograph alone gave a different emphasis from the questionnaire for seven of these ten students, although the two were not designed to measure the same thing.

5. Conclusion

Ten ninth-grade EFL students who reflected on a narrative writing class through photovoice expressed mainly confusion, annoyance, and anxiety in their photographs and captions, and enjoyment in a minority of them. The questionnaire and the interviews showed more ambivalence, with high positive ratings and negative ratings near the midpoint. The photographs, the questionnaire, and the interviews did not give the same pattern for any single student. The anxiety count was partly inferred from lost focus and dizziness. The researcher's reading linked trouble getting ideas to the negative emotion in seven photographs, but the students' own words support that link clearly in only two, and their stated reasons pointed to relevance, proficiency, confidence, and mood, among others. Idea generation is therefore a tentative signal that needs to be checked with the students.

The study has clear limits. It has ten participants chosen by purposive sampling at a school the researcher already knew, one month of data including analysis, one coder, and no reliability evidence. The questionnaire items and scoring could not be documented, and two questionnaire records could not be matched to a student. The anxiety code was

partly inferred, the connotation readings were the researcher's, and the interview answers were brief. Ethics review, school authorization, parental consent, student assent, and permission to photograph classmates are not documented in the source thesis (Section 2.6).

The findings describe this class and should not be generalized, and they do not show that photovoice improved reflective learning or writing. Future studies should double-code the photographs, ask students to confirm the readings of their own photographs, word the questionnaire and interview questions about the photographed moment, add a pre-and-post measure of reflection if reflection is the claim, and report agreement between sources student by student. Teachers can use photographs as a way into a conversation about writing, but not as a rating of how students feel.

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