

Beyond themes: Learning how to 'see' L2 motivation in qualitative data

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And life generally? he asked. How's life?
Fine, I said.

The Beholder by Ali Smith

Iveta



Iveta: An EFL Secondary School Teacher in Slovakia

- Transcripts of audiorecordings and ethnographic field notes from 8 classroom observations
- Ethnographic field notes from 5 visits to Iveta's school
- 5 in-depth ethnographic interviews over the period of one year
- Ethnographic field notes from the TD course sessions



Grounded theory ethnography

- involves a prolonged engagement in the field
- integrates multiple points of view
- orients to participants' perspectives
- pays attention to their use of language
- **aims to arrive at a conceptual understanding of phenomena or processes occurring in the particular context (cf. Charmaz, 2006)**



T: We talked about winning a lottery, winning a lot of money. What were we talking about?

S1: About people who won a lot of money.

T: Uhm? About the people who won a lot of money? And we were also talking about what we would do with the money. Right? For example, xxx, xxx, xxx, for example, Eva said, even if she's not here today (smiles), she said she would give it to her parents. Do you remember? (some noise, students comment, they seem to recall it) You were so surprised, why would you give it to your parents? (laughs)

xxx

T: And also ehm Adrian said he would xxx and Pavol would buy a house. Uhm? But what else can you do with a lot of money. Can you think of anything else you can do with a lot of money. (1) You can buy a house? OK? But what else? What else can you do with a lot of money?

S1: Charity.

T: Charity. Adrian (laughs) I didn't expect YOU to=

S1: =xxx (laughs)

T: Perfect! This is what I wanted to hear. (smiles) I just didn't expect you to say that. (laughs) So I'm quite surprised that you are the one to think about it also. (1) OK. What is charity? What do you describe as charity? What is it?

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And another aim I had was that apart from getting them interested in what they were about to listen to, and, basically introduce the topic, I wanted to know their opinions, wanted to know what they thought about it, so to make them think about it. And you could see it for yourself, they would do this, they would do that, but it occurred to no one that someone might actually need the money. Maybe it will force them to think about it a bit at home too – because it's not just about teaching them English. It's about getting them to understand, in that lesson, something human, natural things, so who knows, maybe they will start to be interested, they weren't aware of a single charity, When you think about it – it's awful – they don't know a single charity; ... They don't know, but I think it's important. At least they have these articles in the coursebook, they can talk about it a little, maybe they become interested in it.

(Interview 1)

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(Interview 1)

Early 'tensions'...

Language Teachers' Sense Making

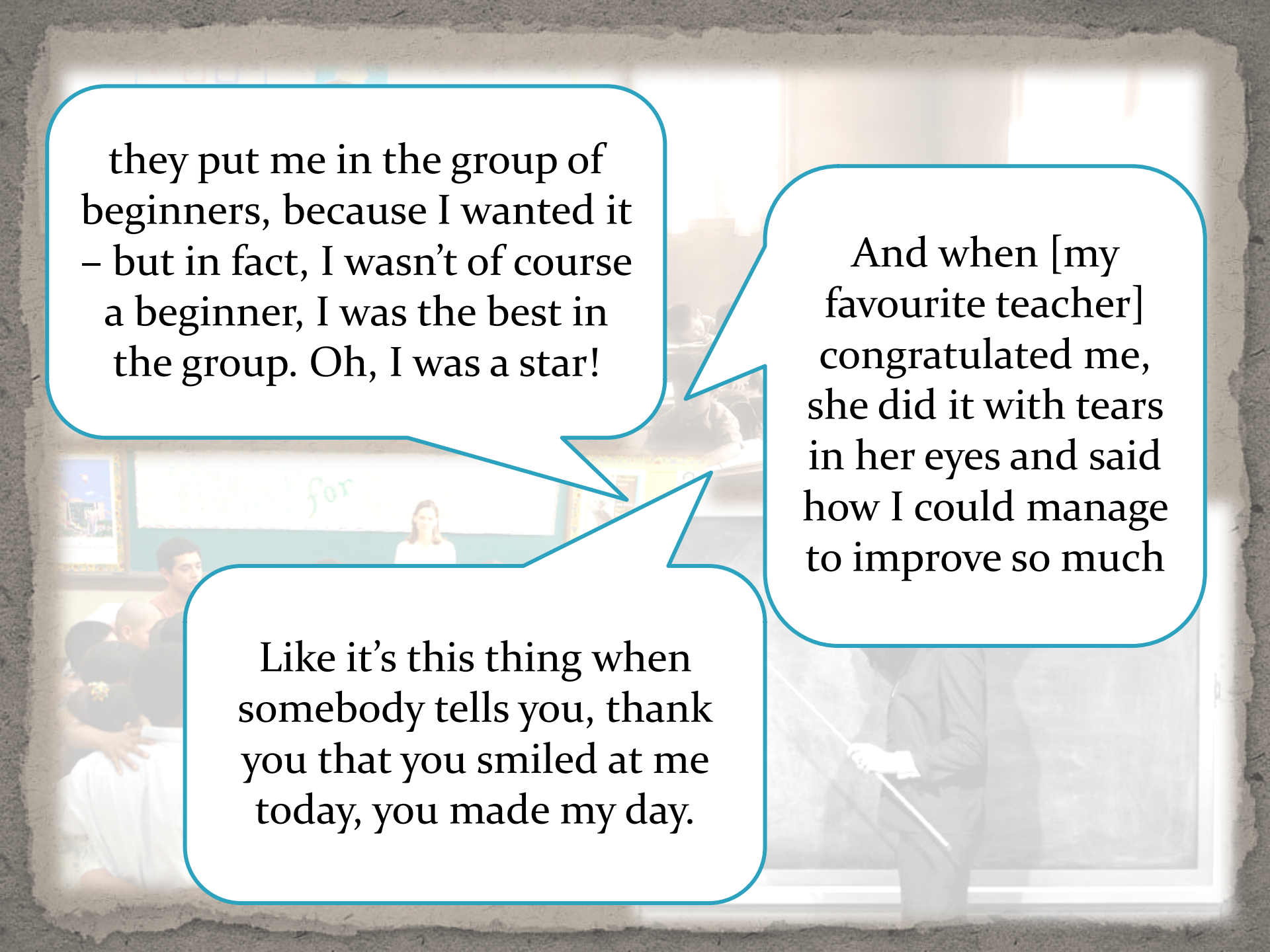
Emergent Acts of Imagination

Desired Images of
Future Selves





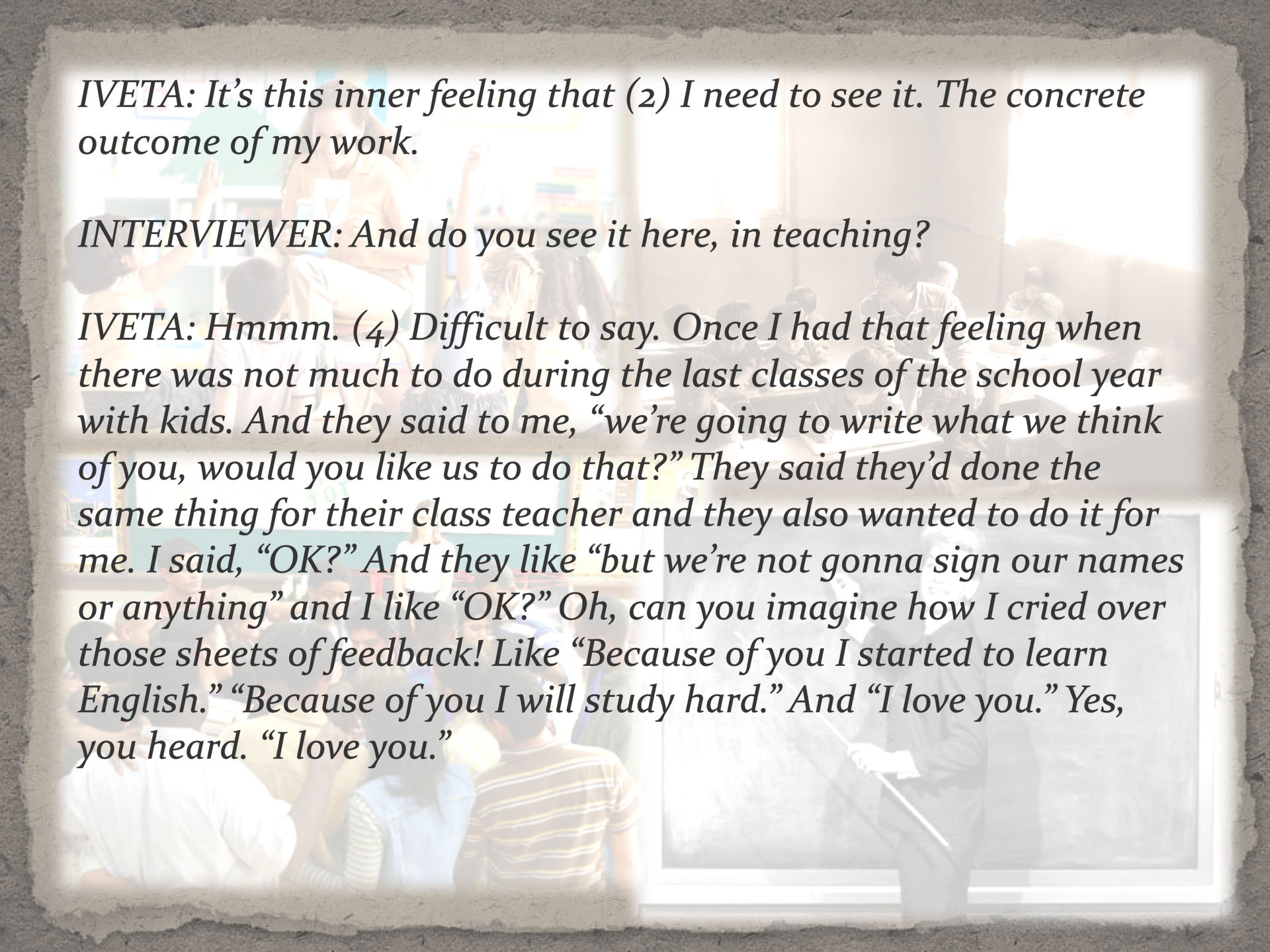


The background image shows a classroom scene. In the foreground, a teacher is interacting with a group of students. In the background, another teacher is standing at a whiteboard. The text is overlaid on this scene in three speech bubbles.

they put me in the group of beginners, because I wanted it – but in fact, I wasn't of course a beginner, I was the best in the group. Oh, I was a star!

And when [my favourite teacher] congratulated me, she did it with tears in her eyes and said how I could manage to improve so much

Like it's this thing when somebody tells you, thank you that you smiled at me today, you made my day.

A faded background image of a classroom. In the foreground, several students are seated at desks, some with their hands raised. In the background, a teacher is standing near a chalkboard, and other students are visible. The overall scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

IVETA: It's this inner feeling that (2) I need to see it. The concrete outcome of my work.

INTERVIEWER: And do you see it here, in teaching?

IVETA: Hmmm. (4) Difficult to say. Once I had that feeling when there was not much to do during the last classes of the school year with kids. And they said to me, "we're going to write what we think of you, would you like us to do that?" They said they'd done the same thing for their class teacher and they also wanted to do it for me. I said, "OK?" And they like "but we're not gonna sign our names or anything" and I like "OK?" Oh, can you imagine how I cried over those sheets of feedback! Like "Because of you I started to learn English." "Because of you I will study hard." And "I love you." Yes, you heard. "I love you."

To conclude...





A flower is relatively small. Everyone has many associations with a flower – the idea of flowers.... Still – in a way – nobody sees a flower – really – it is so small – we haven't time – and to see takes time, like to have a friend takes time....So I said to myself – I'll paint what I see – what the flower is to me but I'll paint it big and they will be surprised into taking time to look at it.

Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986)