


If ESOL learners are disadvantaged when moving on to Functional Skills, how can we bridge the gap? Joy Tomlinson



Recommendations

1. Team teaching is a consideration for the following academic year to continue this effective method of bridging the gap for those moving from ESOL to Functional Skills.
2. A further PLAR is established and funded to ascertain if our initial assessment process is fit-for-purpose within the current context.
3. As an organisation, we continue to share teaching ideas so that we can improve our teaching and learning ideas.



Joy Tomlinson

Methodology

Initially, an action plan was created. From this, primary and secondary research was undertaken.

Comparing quantitative data of success rates for last year against the results of the pilot by the end of the PLAR.

The primary research included team teaching with an experienced ESOL tutor, gathering qualitative data by interviewing peers and recording comments from learners.

A systematic approach has been used to understand a question about practice; asking tutors, learners and observations. Sachs (2003) says collaboration in PLAR is key.

Interviewing my colleagues

Over the period of the PLAR, 5 colleagues were interviewed and the findings were entered into a table.

Four questions asked:

1. Do FS make any assumptions?
2. How are ESOL learners disadvantaged?
3. How can we adapt our teaching methods?
4. How can we adapt our teaching resources?

Interviewee	Do functional skills make any assumptions?	How are ESOL learners disadvantaged?	How can we adapt our teaching methods?	How can we adapt our teaching resources?
1	That people in the class understand English language. I was told that they do not.	It is not their cultural background. I was told that they do not understand the language. I was told that they do not understand the language. I was told that they do not understand the language.	A learning model to give them the time to progress into the language. I was told that they do not understand the language. I was told that they do not understand the language. I was told that they do not understand the language.	As ESOL teacher to teach them. I was told that they do not understand the language. I was told that they do not understand the language. I was told that they do not understand the language.
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Findings

- Initially, I found it difficult to formulate a hypothesis. So from basic research, I changed the question to an assumption.
- When comparing achievement data, it was interesting to note the differences between withdrawal (those who drop out of the programme) and continuers (those who needed to carry on after the end date for achievements).
- The data from the pilot suggested that retention had improved. It also implied that all candidates are expected to achieve. The non-achievers are marked thus because they failed writing despite passing reading and speaking and listening. However, what is interesting to note is that the two learners who are non-achievers on the pilot, still have time to complete before the end of July 2015. Potentially this could mean 100% achievement.

Comparison of Achievements

- When comparing achievement rates from 2014 with those of the pilot, the % had increased 24.43%.
- Furthermore, while the non-achieved % remains similar to last year's data, there is sufficient guided learning hours for the learners to achieve.
- It was interesting to note that one of the two learners who are still to complete the full qualification, because they failed the writing element, are not engaging in the same daily activities as those who have passed already.

Findings from the Interviews

The majority believed that there are...

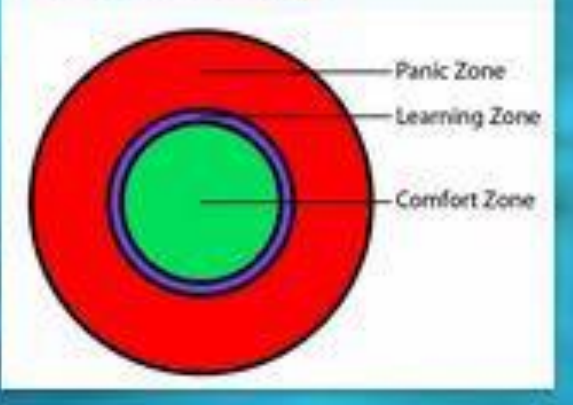
Team Teaching

Every week from October to the present day, I have piloted team teaching with a colleague who is an experienced ESOL teacher.

Together, we have facilitated learning to a group of seven ESOL learners at Level 1 in English FS, which is different methodology from the normal practice of one tutor teaching the whole qualification.

I cannot be a teacher without exposing who I am.

Reflective practice of team teaching



Summary of findings of team teaching

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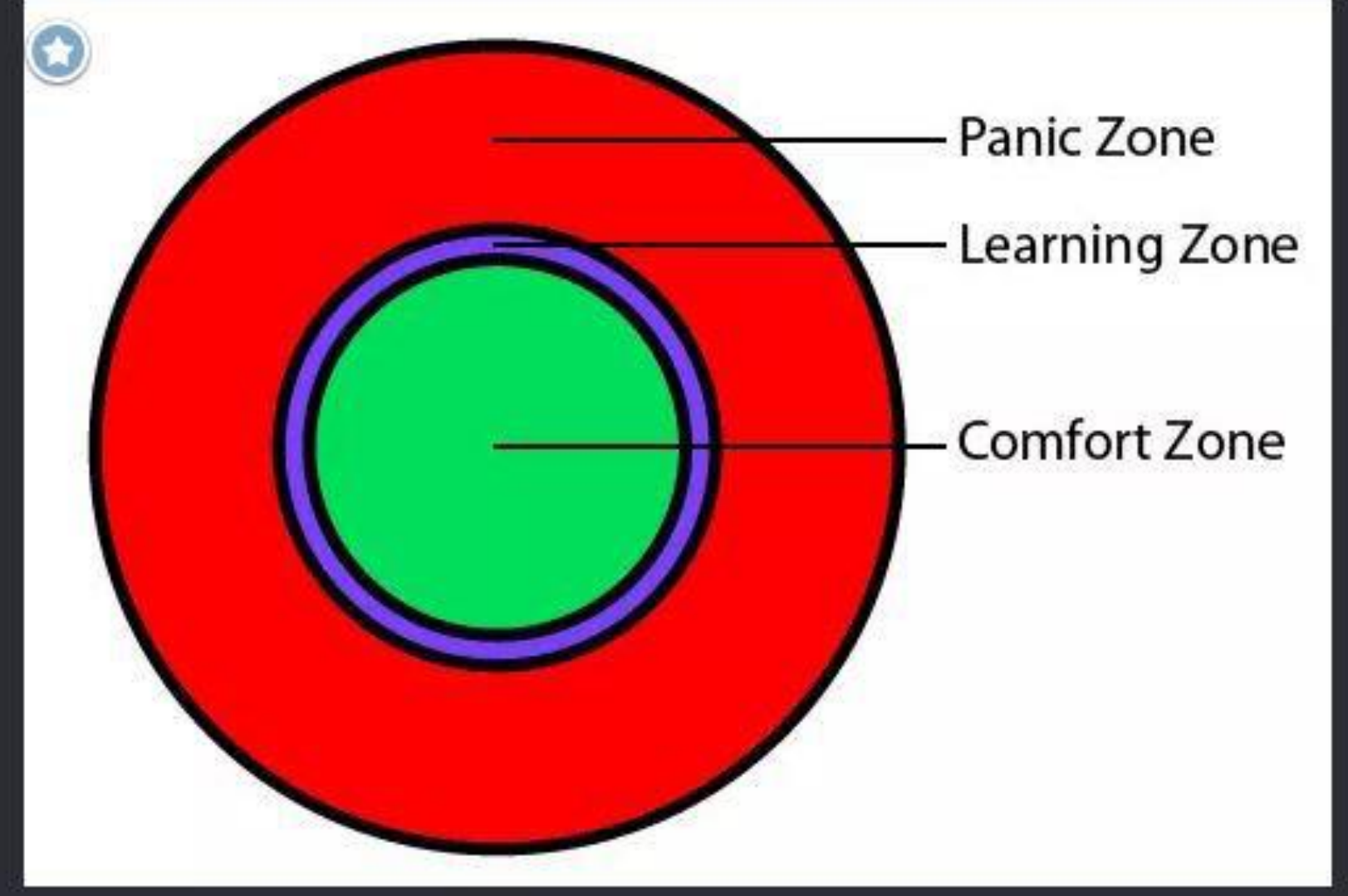
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I cannot be a teacher without exposing who I am.

Paulo Freire



Reflective practice of team teaching



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