

The 'Quick Fix'

Implementing the Fractal Approach will take time and a certain amount of adjustment. However, there are a few things that teachers can do quite quickly in order to derive benefit for their students from these insights.

1. Use more real-world English in the class.
2. Don't oversanitise the language in order to teach it.
3. Test all grammar rules against experience before passing them on.
4. Do not search for examples in order to prove a rule. If it does not work, throw it out.
5. Introduce new material from a wide range of sources.
6. Make a clear distinction between learning activities and practice activities.
7. Always keep the real needs of your students in mind.
8. Remember that your students are language-learners not language generators.
9. Encourage your students to explore new paths.
10. Accept that knowledge, including your own, is sometimes incomplete.
11. Be sensitive to change.
12. Emphasise the influence that the context has on meaning.

The Fractal Approach to Teaching English as a Foreign Language

13. Do not accept oversimplified models.
14. Teach the language actually required for coping with specific real-life situations.
15. Make role plays realistic.
16. Teach real-world reading skills, e.g. skimming, scanning and reading for detail.
17. Teach real-world listening skills, e.g. listening for gist, listening for specifics.
18. Provide your students with packages of ready-made real-life English.
19. Concentrate on what you teach rather than on how you teach it.
20. Expand your own language skills by discovering new areas of English.

Points to remember:

Language is chaotic. The task of teachers and course designers is not to create artificial order for classroom purposes, but to prepare students for dealing with the chaos of real-world language. However, it is not necessary for the students to be able to produce the same range of language as they can understand. Not even native speakers can do this.