ESL Conversational Proficiency for Intermediate Learners

Background Information:

Target Population: This is a high intermediate ESL class of adult English language learners from a variety of backgrounds who are ages 18 to 30 years old. There are 12 students in the class. These students are in the ELI program preparing for college course work. Students’ short term goals are to improve listening comprehension and speaking skills while their long term goal is to be prepared to take college level courses at an American institution. This class will be taught in an ELI classroom at University of Texas at Arlington.

Course Goal: The students will become more comfortable using a variety of grammatical structures necessary for communication at the college level. Although reading and writing are often viewed as more important in the college context, students must be able to communicate clearly with classmates and the instructor in college courses. Students will practice listening and speaking skills that are necessary for success in the college classroom. They will actively practice holding conversations with each other and with the teacher as well as practice important grammatical structures necessary for more advanced communication. Activities will include worksheets, pair work, role playing, and group discussions

Lesson Context: Today we will be discussing how to give advice in a formal setting, while using the subjunctive construction. This class will focus on how to give advice to coworkers or other people we don’t know as well. The grammatical focus will be on learning the construction of “that + subjunctive” clause. This particular class will take place near the end of the semester, after the lessons on the gerund and infinitive. It will occur after having discussed constructions, such as verb + infinitive and verb + gerund. We will be moving from somewhat more basic complements to more difficult ones, involving the subjunctive. After this lesson, we will review the different types of clausal complements and then move on to other subjunctive constructions, such as the “if, then” construction.

Lesson Overview: Class will begin with me talking about my coworker who needs advice about a trip she is taking. I will provide samples of advice I gave her, modeling the target construction, such as “I suggest that...” Then I will have students add suggestions. Then we will discuss the grammatical rule and talk about the construction. We will move on to an activity in which students give advice to practice the construction. Throughout the class we will talk about certain aspects of the construction and the formal vs. informal factor. I will finish up with assigning homework and reviewing with the students. 2

Resources Used:
http://busyteacher.org/17726-how-to-teach-subjunctive-mood.html

Objectives for this particular class:
By the end of this lesson, students will be able to
• Give advice in both formal and informal settings
• Identify the subjunctive construction
• Correctly use the subjunctive construction in “I VERB that…”

This lesson fits the overall goals of the course because:
• Students’ understanding of English grammar continues to improve
• Students correct use of English grammar continues to improve
• Students continue to actively practice conversation with others.
• Students are able to give advice, which is a necessary skill to have

Materials and Equipment
• Class handouts (x12) – “Handout for sample tips and verbs” (pg. 19), “I demand that…” assignment (pg 22)
• powerpoint with advice
• slips of paper with scenarios for advice
• white board markers and eraser and/or chalk and eraser

Overview of the Class Schedule. Details are provided on the following page, after the chart.

Procedure: (Total class time is 60 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part of Procedure</th>
<th>Estimated Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
<td>Story about an acquaintance</td>
<td>I talk about someone who I know who is going on vacation and how she needs some advice. I give examples of advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
<td>Ask students if they have any advice for my friend.</td>
<td>I will ask students if they have any more additional suggestions. Write them on the board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body of Lesson</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
<td>Grammar and Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Introduce subjunctive construction</td>
<td>I will have students pick out the main verb in the sentence and then identify the following word(typically “that”). We will then discuss the pattern.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We will also discuss the difference between formal and informal advice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-5 minutes</td>
<td>Generating scenarios</td>
<td>I will ask students what kind of situations would people need advice for. I will have some suggestions, but students can provide more situations. I will write these down on slips of paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-15 minutes</td>
<td>Giving advice</td>
<td>Students will have scenarios and have to give each other advice for a specific situation. More details below the chart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Discussion of Advice</td>
<td>Students share the best advice they gave and received. The class talks about whether certain advice was good or bad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion of formal vs. informal advice</td>
<td>I will ask students what kind of settings do we talk more formally vs. informally. When would we use “you should” vs. “I advise” vs. “I insist” I will provide some sample settings, i.e. a doctor with patient for formal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>Homework Assignment</td>
<td>Handout homework assignment and explain. Students need to come up with situation and how</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
they want things to be done

Review

Review material and ask students if they have any questions

**Introduction:** (estimated time 10 minutes)

**Story about a coworker:** (3 minutes) [Educational value: Introducing students to the topic of the day by talking about someone I know who needs advice for traveling. Provides example sentences for the target language we will be discussing.] I will talk about a coworker of mine who is going on a trip to Europe. She hasn’t traveled very much so she needs some advice. She is someone who I don’t know as well, so I am probably going to speak more formally. This set of sentences will be presented in a powerpoint, so I don’t have to spend time writing them on the board.

**Ask students for advice:** (2 minutes) [Educational value: this activity allows students to join in on discussion and brainstorm own suggestions. Makes it more relevant]. I will then ask students if they have any advice for my acquaintance. As I write their suggestions on the blackboard, I will make sure to recast their suggestions in the target form, i.e. “I suggest that…”

**Body of Lesson** (estimated time 45 min)

**Introduce Subjunctive Construction + Comparing Advice:** (10 minutes) [Educational value: I will now use the advice that my students and I gave to my co-worker to present the subjunctive construction. Students use relevant examples to understand construction]. After giving the advice, I will then have my students pick out the main verb and the following word, which should typically be “that”. We will talk about how certain verbs, especially verbs of advice require this construction. I will point out that the “that” is actually optional, but for the activity I want students to include it in their advice. I will then recast the advice we gave to something like “I advise that she…” so we can focus on the form of the verb that follows the “she”. I will point out that it is not the present tense, but instead the bare form, and I will make sure students understand these different forms. I will also at this time talk to students about formal vs. informal advice. If we were giving advice to a friend, we would probably say things like “you should buy your ticket early.” However, if we are giving advice to someone we don’t know so well, we are more likely to use the “I suggest/recommend…” form.

**Generating Scenarios** (3 minutes) [Educational value: Students get to be involved in picking situations to give advice for. Makes the activity more relevant for them.] I will then ask students what kinds of situations they can think of in which someone would need advice. I would have a few back-up ones, and might suggest a few of these, like losing weight or making money. I would write these suggestions on slips of paper.
Giving Advice Activity: (15-20 minutes) [Educational value: students will have to practice the target construction by giving advice to each other about certain situations.] Once we have a good selection of activities for advice, I will then give students a handout, “Handout for sample tips and verbs” on page 19. The handout will include the sample advice I gave my coworker at the beginning of the class, as well as a list of verbs that might be helpful for the activity, such as “advise,” “suggest,” and “recommend”. I will then have students get into pairs for the activity. To each pair I will hand one of the slips of paper that has a scenario. The students will role-play with one student giving advice to the other student about his/her situation. Students will be encouraged to make notes about the advice they gave and received. Once the pair has completed about 4-5 pieces of advice, the students will give me their slips of paper. I will then shuffle the slips and hand them back out to pairs, ensuring that no pair gets the same slip of paper as before. This ensures that the second student in the pair will be giving advice on a new topic to his/her partner. Students will then repeat the activity with the new scenario. Once students have each given each other advice, the class will discuss the activity.

Class Discussion of Advice (10-12 minutes) [Educational value: students will have to change the form of the sentence in order to talk about advice given and received, and so will have further practice of the subjunctive construction.] Once the activity is completed, students will then share the best piece advice they gave and received. For sharing the best advice they received, they will have to say something like “Kayla suggested that I go to the gym.” For the best piece of advice they gave, they will have to say something like “I suggested she get a job.” Sharing the best advice that the student gave is crucial in order to bring their attention to the verb in the complement. There must be a third person singular as the receiver of the advice in order to show that the following verb is in the bare form, not the present singular. The other constructions with “I suggest that you…” and “she suggested that I…” are important to practice, but do not show that important feature of the subjunctive verb. After students finish sharing the advice they gave and received, they can discuss whether they agree with the advice. For example, students can discuss whether going to the gym is really important for losing weight, or if they thought there is another more important piece of advice, such as eating healthy.

Closure (estimated time 10 minutes)

Explanation of Homework (5 minutes) [Educational value: students will have an activity that will require them to further practice the subjunctive construction, but now with incorporating other verbs that often occur with this construction]. Students will be handed their homework assignment. The homework assignment will require them to come up with a job that they want someone to do. However, this is a very special job that requires lots of details, and must be done perfectly. Students will be using constructions like “I insist that you…” or “I demand that you…” The homework assignment has complete directions and can be found on pg. 23.

Review: (5 minutes) [Educational value: Summarizing class activities helps students review the important points discussed in class and allows for questions.] Remind students that today we talked about giving advice in a more formal setting to people such as coworkers or others we don’t know so well. In order to do that, we must use the subjunctive construction. Ask if anyone has any questions about what we studied today. (PAUSE)
Assessment: The students will have both informal and formal assessment. I will evaluate student work objectives by observing the activities. If they use the grammar correctly during the activity and give reasonable advice, then I will consider the objective completed in class. I will further assess students in a homework assignment. Students will be given the assignment sheet “I demand that you…!” The assignments can be found after the three lesson plans, on page 23. They will be asked to come up with details of a project that they want someone to do. This project requires a lot of specific details and the student is very anxious about it being done right. They must write a short essay of what they will say to their workers, including phrases such as “I insist that…” or “I prefer that…” The assessment will be graded according the rubric on pg. 25