

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents theories regarding speech acts of suggestion. It provides overview about speech act, the study of suggestion in speech acts which covers its linguistic structures, strategies, and the use mitigation devices; and also a brief profile of *Dr. Phil Show*.

#### 2.1 Speech Acts

The concept of speech act is firstly defined by J.L Austin, a British philosopher, in his book entitled *How to Do Things with Words* in 1962. The book contains a compilation of Austin's series of lectures regarding act of utterances. In that book, Austin argued that language isn't only used to say something, but also to perform some actions. Austin stated "to say something is to do something; or in which by saying something, we are doing something" (1962: 90).

Following Austin's work, several studies on speech act were conducted by some authors such as Searle, Bach and Harnish, Hymes, Sinclair and Coulthard, Levinson, Yule, Leech etc. They have defined speech act as the actions performed in saying the utterances which intended to be correctly interpreted by the hearer. In other words, speech act theory covers the speaker's intended actions (or to be done by the hearer) within his utterances. The studies' findings regarding speech

acts have completed each others in order to develop the speech act theory. For example, Yule (1985) and Searle (1969) proposed the completion of illocutionary act types by Austin; and Bach and Harnish (1979) developed Searle's illocutionary act types to be sorted based on its communicative purposes.

Speech acts contain some acts to perform within the utterances. Austin (1962, 100-101) classified those acts into three types; these types of acts are also postulated by other related speech act theories. The first type is **locutionary acts** or the act of saying something. It means to utter something understandable and meaningful which purposes to inform or describe something to the hearer. Searle (1969) defined this act as *propositional act* since it is only related to the meaning of utterances.

The second type is **illocutionary acts** or the act of doing something. This act becomes the greatest attention in speech act theories since it deals with speaker's intention within utterances. It refers to the types of actions that the speakers want to accomplish (for themselves or the hearer(s)) by their utterances (Yule, 1996: 48). To deliver the intended actions, both interlocutors need to notice the external factors in communicating, such as the contexts and circumstances in order to achieve the intended purposes. The term "illocutionary acts" is very frequently used interchangeably with "speech acts"; Searle even stated that speech act is the term for the solo illocutionary act (Wales, 2014: 389). Austin in Searle (1975: 8) classified illocutionary acts into five categories: Verdictives, which consists of giving verdicts or findings, e.g. the verbs "acquit", "describe", "characterize", etc; Exercitives, which consists of giving decision toward a certain

course of action, e.g. the verbs “order”, “command”, “advice”, etc; Commissive, which consists of committing the speaker to a certain course of action, e.g. the verbs “promise”, “guarantee”, “swear”, etc; Expositives, which are used in acts of exposition involved conducting arguments and clarifying usages or references, e.g. the verbs “affirm”, “deny”, “emphasize” etc; and Behabitives, which includes the notion of reactions to other people’s behavior, e.g. the verbs “apologize”, “thank”, “congratulate”, etc.

John Searle, the scholar of speech act theory and also one of the notable Austin’s students had made an improved classification of illocutionary acts sorted into macro-classes. Searle (1975: 354-358) classified illocutionary acts also into five categories: Representative or Assertive, which aims to commit the speaker (in varying degree) to something’s being case and assessable on the dimension of true or false assessment, e.g. reports, predictions, claims, etc; Directive, which aims to get the hearer do something, e.g. “request”, “command”, “suggestion”, etc; Commissive, which aims to commit the speaker to some future course of action, e.g. “promise”, “threat”, “vow” etc; Expressive, which aims to express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about state of affairs identified in the proportional content, e.g. “congratulate”, “apologize”, “welcome”, etc; and Declarative, which there is a corresponding relation between the propositional content and reality, e.g. “decide”, “declare”, “punish”, etc.

In addition to Searle’s classification, Bach and Harnish (1979) in Geis, (2006: 18) identified four classes of communicative illocutionary acts particularly in communication process: Constatives, express the speaker’s belief, desire, and

intention that he wants to convey to the hearer; Directives, express the speaker's attitude toward hearer's future actions which intended to be taking value from his utterances; Commissive, express the speaker's intention and belief that his utterances permit him to do certain action; and Acknowledgements, express feelings regarding the hearer and the speaker's intention to satisfy certain social expectation.

The third type of speech act is **perlocutionary act**. Austin (1962) defined it as the effects resulted after saying something. Saying something will often, or even normally produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the hearer, or of the speaker, or of other persons. The illocutionary acts produce certain effects, intentionally or not, which influence the hearer; and the effect achieved by the utterances on the addressee, such as frightening, amusing, persuading, and intimidating (Wales, 2014: 312). The hearer will recognize and make assumption to the effects which the speaker's intended within his utterance.

In sum, speech act is the using of language in utterances which also a part of doing or performing certain actions. By comprehending speech act theory, it can improve our ability in using language to communicate effectively.

## 2.2 Suggestion in Speech Acts

Suggestion belongs to the group of directive speech acts. According to Searle (1976) in Martinez-Flor and Juan (2010:4), suggestions are those in which the speaker's purpose is to get the hearer to commit him/herself to some future course of action. In making suggestion needs interaction(s) between the speaker and the hearer in order to get it performed. As Alcón and Safont (2001) stated in Martinez-Flor (2005: 158), suggestion belongs to directive speech acts, in which both the interlocutors' presence and the hearer response to speaker's intentions are highly required; since the action will be done as the result of the hearer's right comprehension in interpreting speaker's intentions. In the group of directive speech acts, according to Haverkate (1984), suggestion belongs to the non-impositive directives of which the objective is to benefit the hearer. In sum, suggestion is a directive speech acts that the speaker believes will benefit the hearer and leave the hearer free to do as prefers.

Although the objective of suggestion is to benefit the hearer, according to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, this speech act is regarded as a face-threatening act (FTA). While suggesting someone, the speaker is in some way intruding into the hearer's world by performing an act that concerns what the latter should do. As stated by Banerjee and Carrell (1988), speech acts of suggestion is disturbed the negative face of the hearer. Negative face is the "basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction" (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 61). Hence, several factors should be considered while making a suggestion, they are: the urgency of the suggestion, the degree of embarrassment

in the situation, and the social distance and power between the speaker and the hearer (Banerjee and Carrell, 1988: 319). Thus, the speaker should try to soften or mitigate the suggestion by utilize some politeness strategies or mitigation devices in order to minimize the chance of threatening the hearer's negative face.

In addition, it is also important to mention that the terms suggestion and advice are still ambiguous, whether both of them are sharing similar meaning or instead disparate from each other. Several studies have shown that traditionally the terms suggestions and advices have been employed interchangeably to refer to the same speech act (Searle 1969; Wardhaugh 1985; Wierzbicka 1987; Banerjee and Carrell 1988; Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford 1993, 1996; Tsui 1994; Koike 1996; Hinkel 1997; Mándala 1999; Matsumura 2001, 2003). As further explanation, Martinez-Flor (2005) has described two of the studies stated above. The study conducted by Banerjee and Carrell (1988) focused on the speech acts of suggestion. The authors took Searle's definition of advisement in order to develop the based theory of speech acts of suggestion; since Searle (1969: 66-67) had classified suggestion and advice into one group of advisives speech acts. Moreover, Tsui (1994) had also described the advisives speech acts as a type of directive speech acts that pioneering a course of action for benefiting the hearer. He also argued that the acts of advising, suggesting, and recommending are belonged to a group of advisives speech acts.

In its formation, there are three features that essentially contained in speech acts of suggestion: linguistic structures, strategies, and mitigation devices which are explained further in this chapter.

### 2.2.1 Linguistic Structures of Speech Acts of Suggestion

Suggestion has certain linguistic structures that patterned in all suggesting utterances. Jiang in his journal entitled *Suggestions: What Should ESL Students Know* (2006) made a classification of the linguistic structures of suggestion according to the grammatical features. He composed the linguistic structures' list by collecting data from variety of sources: ESL students' suggestion transcripts, ESL's textbooks, some websites, grammar books, and other related sources (Jiang, 2006: 41). Jiang classified those suggestion linguistic structures into nine categories, as presented in Table 2.1

<b>Linguistic Structures</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Let's	Let's...
Modals and semi-modals	Passive with modals You can... You need to... You should...
Wh- questions	Why don't you... How about...
Conditionals	If I were... If you...
Performatives	suggest/recommend/suggestion/recommendation/proposal
Pseudo-cleft structures	One thing you could do is... All...is... What...is...
Extraposed <i>to</i> -clause	It might be. . . to... It never hurts/. . .won't hurt... to...
Yes-no questions	Have you thought of/about . . .? Would you consider . . .?
Imperative	Try... Write...

Table 2.1. Linguistic Structures of Speech Acts of Suggestion by Jiang

The first category listed is “**Let's...**”which described as “an inclusive imperative” that “includes the speaker with the addressee” (Celce-Murcia and

Larsen-Freeman, 1999: 233). According to Biber et al. (2002), Let's... is typically used to propose a joint action by speaker and hearer. It is the first person suggestion; but sometimes in practical, the meaning and intended action of suggestion is carried out by the hearer as the second person. This type is called as "cryptodirective" camouflaging an authoritative speech act as a collaborative one (1999: 117). In other words, by using "Let's" in the suggestion, the speaker seems to not ruling the hearer to do certain action; instead to involve the hearer in some field of actions which the speaker's intended. The using of "Let's" in making suggestion is also considered as direct strategies. The second category listed is **Modals and Semi-Modals**. Modals are divided into two types based on the degree of authority and urgency: obligation modals such as "should/ought to" and "must"; and probability modals such as "can", "need", "might", "could", and the semi-modal "had better". According to Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999), the speakers use modals to perform a variety of social functions, for example, expressing politeness or indirectness when making requests, giving advice and suggestion, or granting permission.

The third and fourth category on the list that belongs to interrogative forms is **Wh-questions** and **Yes-No questions**. Those conventionalized forms have acquired idiomatic status for indirect suggestions. They also have been considered as the most common forms in making suggestion. These interrogative forms probably considered as less polite, but it leaves the hearer with few options whether to perform the speaker's desired actions. The fifth category listed is the use of **conditionals** in making suggestion. Conditionals are often considered as an



indirect way of making suggestions, showing the politeness of the speaker. Conditionals consist of the word “If” to mark the state of possibility. Brown and Levinson (1987) stated that by including a notion of possibility, suggestions may sound more polite.

The sixth category on the list is the use of **performative verbs**. It is associated with the performance of direct speech acts, for example, saying “I suggest...” or “I advise...” in order to perform the act of advising (Searle, 1969). Performative verbs are used in suggestion more frequently from the higher-status to the lower-status interlocutor on more serious topics, or things the speaker strongly believes the hearer should do. By using performative verbs, the speaker seems to be more authoritative and the suggestion sounds more formal and forceful (Jiang, 2006: 45).

The seventh category on the list is **pseudo-cleft structures**. Pseudo-clefting is a process that transforms a simple sentence by taking out a phrase, turning the rest of the sentence into a kind of relative clause and putting the two pieces back together with the verb “be” in between (Mikkelsen, 2005). One of pseudo cleft structures associated with suggestions is the “What-cleft”, as in “What you need to do is...” or “What I would suggest is...”. These pseudo cleft sentences are considered “as mechanisms for agent de-emphasis” by Hudson (1990, p. 288). Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) refer to Wh-clefts as important focus constructions that give special emphasis to the component by following some form of the verb “be”. Therefore, the function of a cleft sentence is to emphasize and draw the hearer’s attention to the main part of a suggestion.

Suggesting is to some extent considered as face-threatening act (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Thus, the functions of the pseudo cleft structures include giving the hearer thinking time, emphasizing the content, and delaying unpleasant information regarding FTA.

The eighth category listed is **extraposed to-clauses**. Extraposition is used to “lighten” the load of a sentential subject (and less frequently, an object) by demoting a subordinate clause from subject (or object) position to the end of a sentence with the help of the inserted pronoun “it” (Biber et al. 2002), as in “It might be...to...”. In making suggestion, this structure is considerably similar to pseudo cleft structure in terms of its function; which to emphasize and also attract the hearer to the part of suggestion where lied the speaker’s intended actions. The ninth and last category on the list is **Imperative**. The use of imperatives are also regarded as the most direct and impolite forms of making a suggestion, since they have the most literal pragmatic force. Several authors (Wardhaugh 1985; Koike 1994; Tsui 1994; Koester 2002) have argued that the using of imperative in suggestion is not widely employed in everyday life.

### 2.2.2 Strategies of Speech Acts of Suggestion

The strategies of speech acts of suggestion are presented by Martinez-Flor (2005). In a journal entitled “A Theoretical Review of the Speech Acts of Suggesting: towards A Taxonomy for its Use in FLT”, she proposed taxonomy of suggestion strategies which based on two theoretical frameworks: speech act and politeness theory. Speech act theory is taken due to the strategies show direct and

indirect types from universal pragmatic strategies; while politeness theory is also taken due its relation to “on” and “off” record in Brown and Levinson (1987) theory. The taxonomy of linguistic realization strategies of speech acts of suggestion by Martinez-Flor (2005: 175) is presented in Table 2.2.

Type	Strategy	Examples
Direct	Performative Verbs	I suggest that you... I advise you to ... I recommend that you ...
	Noun of Suggestion	My suggestion would be...
	Imperative	Try using...
	Negative Imperative	Don't trv to...
Conventionalised Forms	Specific Formulae (interrogative forms)	Why don't you...? How about...? What about...? Have you thought about... ?
	Possibility/probability	You can... You could... You may... You might...
	Should	You should...
	Need	You need to...
	Conditional	If I were you, I would...
Indirect	Impersonal	One thing (that you can do) would be Here's one possibility: ... There are a number of options that you... It would be helpful if you... It might be better to... A good idea would be... It would be nice if...
	Hint	I've heard that...

Table 2.2. Taxonomy of Suggestion Strategies by Martinez-Flor

There are three types of suggestion strategies as stated in Table 2.2: direct, conventionalized forms, and indirect. The first type of suggestion is **direct strategy**, in which the speaker clearly states what he/she means (Martinez-Flor,

2005: 174). It also means that in making a suggestion, the speaker is straightly to the point without using any distracting devices and willing to make the hearer(s) instantly get the meaning of that suggestion. Direct suggestion is performed by means of performative verbs, noun of suggestion, imperative and negative imperative. In using performative verbs and noun of suggestion, it is clearly visible that the speaker is giving suggestion to the hearer by stating the word led to suggesting, such as the word “advice”, “recommend”, and “suggest”. On the other hand, imperative and negative imperative have the most literal force since it precisely led to make the hearer do something preferred by the speaker. In using imperatives, suggesting has almost the same pragmatic force as instructing; still they differ in the benefit disposition.

The second type is **conventionalized forms strategy**, which adopted from Banarjee and Carell’s study (1988). This strategy still allows the hearer(s) to understand the speaker's intentions behind the suggestion. In other words, while making suggestion, the speaker still tries to divert from actual effort of suggesting, but it still has the indicator of suggestion force. Then, the hearer(s) won’t feel being suggested at the moment but still get the speaker’s intention of suggesting afterward. There is a greater variety of linguistic realization of this strategy, such as the use of specific formulae that is interrogative forms, expressions of possibility or probability, suggestions performed by means of the verbs “should” and “need”, and the use of the conditionals.

The third type is **indirect strategy**, which refers to those expressions in which the speaker's true intentions are not clearly stated. These indirect forms for

suggestions do not show any conventionalised form; there is no indicator of the suggestive force in the utterance, so the hearer has to infer that the speaker is actually making a suggestion ( Banarjee and Carell, 1988: 175). In this strategy, the speaker doesn't leave any trace that she/he is suggesting; it leaves to the hearer(s)'s interpretation whether they feel being suggested or not. The use of different impersonal forms has been regarded as a way of making indirect suggestions according to Hinkel (1994); Koike (1994); and Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford's (1996). The use of "hint" is considered as the most indirect type of suggesting since the suggestive force is very subtle and implicit, e.g. "I've heard that you are smoking cigarettes two packs a day. You have an option to save money by not buying cigarettes everyday". This utterance is taken as a suggestion since it is not to take a course of the speaker's own benefit, but to the hearer's

The linguistic structures and strategies of speech acts of suggestion are still classified separately. There seems to be a need to provide a more comprehensive set of taxonomy by combining both linguistic structures and strategies into one classification that can be used for the research on speech acts of suggestion. Abolfathiasl and Abdullah in their journal entitled "Pragmatic Strategies and Linguistic Structures in Making Suggestions: Towards Comprehensive Taxonomies" (2013) proposed an improved classification of linguistic structures as well as strategies of speech acts of suggestion by merging the list of linguistic structures of speech acts of suggestion by Jiang (2006) and the taxonomy of speech acts of suggestion strategies by Martinez-Flor (2005). The categories which were absent in either classification, such as "let's" in

Martinez-Flor's taxonomy which belongs to direct strategies and "hints" in Jiang's classification which belongs to indirect strategies had been integrated in this improved taxonomy. Martinez-Flor's taxonomy which included "possibility and probability", "should" and "need" had been integrated into one group in "modals and semi-modals" of Jiang's list of structures. The word "have to" which is a very commonly structure to make suggestion (Jiang, 2006) but absent in the latter categorization had been integrated as well in this group.

Moreover, Jiang (2006) had focused on two structures using "yes/no questions" and "wh-questions"; while Martinez-Flor (2005) had put these two categories under the single category of "specific formulae" or "interrogative forms". By presenting this "interrogative forms" into two separate categories ("yes/no questions" and "wh-questions"), it is more helpful, easier to understand and use, and more inclusive. With the same token, the "pseudo-cleft structures" and "extra-posed to-clauses" categories in Jiang's classification seem to explain the Martinez-Flor's "impersonal" strategies in a more detailed and easier-to-understand way. In addition, Martinez-Flor (2005) had categorized "performative verbs" and "noun of suggestion" as two separate strategies in making suggestions; while Jiang (2006) had presented them together under the single category "performatives". Although "performatives" itself has covered both verb and noun forms, separating the 'performative verbs' and "nouns of suggestion" (as provided by Martinez-Flor) would make the taxonomy easier to understand and use; and also make it more clearly in distinguishing their word classes. The types

of strategies were also reclassified to be more precise based on the directness level of suggestion.

Eventually, this improved taxonomy of suggestions' strategies and structures is considered to be more inclusive, detailed, easier to understand and utilize in research on speech acts of suggestion. This improved suggestions' taxonomy, as presented in Table 2.3, will be used by the writer in this study to analyze the data.

Strategies	Linguistic Structures	Example
DIRECT	Performative; Performative Verbs and Noun of Suggestion	I suggest/recommend/propose My suggestion/advice is that...
	Imperatives & Negative imperatives	Ask them about... Don't try to use...
	Let's...	Let's work together on the project.
(INDIRECT) CONVENTIONALISED FORMS	Modals & Semi- modals	You...have to/need to/should (shouldn't)/ought to/can/could/might/had better...
	Conditionals	If you... If I were you
	Wh-Questions (interrogative)	Why don't you...? How about...? Why not...?
	Yes-no Questions (interrogative)	Would you consider...? Have you thought of...?
INDIRECT	Pseudo-cleft Structures (impersonal)	All...is... One thing you could do is... One important thing to keep in mind is...
	Extra-posed to-clauses (impersonal)	It might (not) be...to... It is ...to...
	Hints	I've read/heard that...

Table 2.3. The Improved Taxonomy of Linguistic Structures and Strategies of Speech Acts of Suggestion by Abolfathiasl and Abdullah

### 2.2.3 Mitigation Devices of Speech Acts of Suggestion

Suggestion is considered as FTA (Face Threatening Act) since it is threaten the negative face of the hearer(s). In order to lessen the threat in suggesting, Martinez-Flor and Juan in the book *Speech Act Performance: Theoretical, Empirical, and Methodological Issues* have proposed taxonomy of suggestion's mitigation devices adopted from House and Kasper (1981) classification. House and Kasper (1981) conducted a study regarding the use of modality markers in their effects to downgrade (mitigating) or upgrade (intensify) speech acts forces in the field of inter-language pragmatics, especially in request and complaint. Martinez-Flor and Juan (2010) specifically classified the downgrader or mitigation devices used to soften suggestion. Downgraders defined as the markers that play down the impact that a speaker's utterance may have on the hearer. They are also selected only three from eleven different types of House and Kasper's downgrader types that usually used in mitigating speech acts of suggestion. The taxonomy of mitigation devices of speech acts of suggestion by Martinez-Flor and Juan (2010: 261) is presented in Table 2.4.

<b>Type</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Downtoner	Just Possibly Perhaps Probably Maybe
(minus) Committer	I think I guess I believe I suppose In my opinion
Forewarn	I'm not sure, but...

Table 2.4. Taxonomy of Mitigation Devices of Suggestion



The first type is **downtoner**, which consists of word modifiers used by the speaker in order to soften the impact of his/her utterances on the hearer. The use of modifiers lessens the force of suggestion and makes the suggestion utterance less convincing, e.g. “You could perhaps study harder”; the word “perhaps” implies the less illocutionary forces and speaker’s uncertainty. The second type is **(minus) committer**, which refers to a type of modifier employed by the speaker to lower the degree of his/her commitment to the state of affairs referred to in the utterance by explicitly showing his/her personal opinion (2010: 216). The use of words that reflects personal opinion, such as “in my opinion”, “I think”, etc are able to mitigate the force since they create an impression that the speaker is less objective but more subjective in proposing his/her intention through suggestions.

The third type is **forewarn**, which expresses a kind of anticipatory device used by the speaker before making a suggestion to prevent the hearer’s refusal or possible negative reaction toward the suggestion. This type usually consists of a preliminary meta-comment about what the speaker is going to do in order to soften what could be a potential offence (2010: 261). Forewarn commonly uses conjunction “but” before stating the intended suggestion, e.g. “I’m not sure, but it is a good idea to study harder”. This type of mitigation devices somewhat can be defined as the extension of “minus committer”, added with certain conjunction, in order to try validating or justifying the speaker’s subjectivity impression in his/her suggestion.

### 2.3 Dr. Phil Show

*Dr. Phil* is a talk show and lead media platform of Dr. Phil McGraw, an American television personality, author, former psychologist, and the well-known health professional. The daily one hour talk show which debuted on September 16, 2002 is the successor of McGraw's special segments on *Oprah Winfrey Show* in the late 1990s. *Dr. Phil* is produced by *Winfrey's Harpo Studios* which carrying advice-suggesting format; offering advice and suggestion on full range of topics regarding psychological affairs for the troubled guests. It is also stated in <http://www.drphil.com/aboutdrphil>, "Dr. Phil McGraw in the show continues to offer his unique tell-it-like-it-is brand of advices and suggestions on a full range of topics".

*Dr. Phil* champions those who suffer from such "silent epidemics" such as domestic violence, bullying, child abuse, depression, racism, drug abuse and various forms of severe health and mental illness that are prevalent in society, but go largely undiscussed by their victims (<http://www.ctv.ca/DrPhil/About.aspx>). The show also covers a wide variety of topics, including weight loss, financial planning, errant children, rebellious teenagers, troubled adult, dysfunctional families, etc. In the show, there are invited some guests who have certain conditions and problems. Together with Dr. Phil McGraw as the lead host, they discuss their problems and also the way to resolved them guided by some advices and suggestion from Dr. Phil himself. The show is generally serious in tone, and then leavened with humor from time to time.

The show which in the syndicated US markets airs on weekdays at 3 p.m and at 9 p.m in Eastern/Pacific Times on CBS International Channel has run for 13 years since 2002 until now with 13 seasons. *Dr. Phil* also has received some award nominations and winnings. As retrieved from [imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com), there are 27 nominations from Daytime Emmy Awards 2003-2012 and one nomination from GLAAD Media Awards 2006. According to <http://www.drphil.com/shows/page/bio/>, the show won five PRISM Awards, for the accurate depiction of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse and addiction as well as the MADD Media Award.

The episodes of *Dr. Phil Show* that are used for the data is taken from Season 13; the latest season and still airing until now. As the format of the show is advice-suggestion giving which all episodes will cover, the total eight episodes are selected randomly since the writer will analyze the speech acts of suggestion in the show, particularly in Dr. Phil McGraw's utterances.