

# The Expressive Speech Act of Javanese Expletive Utterance Endhasmu in President Prabowo's Political Speech in the Anniversary of Gerindra Party

SriKuncoro DibyoSarjono Maskuri<sup>1\*</sup> Puput Mulyono<sup>2</sup> Sukris Sutiayatno<sup>3</sup>

1. English Study, Law and Business Faculty, Universitas Duta Bangsa  
Jl. Ki Mangun Sarkoro No.20, Surakarta, Central Java, Indonesia
2. Communication Study, Law and Business Faculty, Universitas Duta Bangsa  
Jl. Ki Mangun Sarkoro No.20, Surakarta, Central Java, Indonesia
3. English Education Study, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Universitas Ma'arif Nahdlatul Ulama  
Jl. Kutoarjo Km 05, Jatisari, Kebumen, Central Java, Indonesia

\* E-mail of the corresponding author: [sri\\_kuncorodibyo@udb.ac.id](mailto:sri_kuncorodibyo@udb.ac.id)

## Abstract

This pragmatic research aims to comprehend the meaning of the Javanese expletive utterance endhasmu 'your head' within the context of President Prabowo's political speech in the anniversary of Gerindra party 2025. In the frame of speech act theory, which postulates that language is fundamentally a type of action, this research scrutinizes how speech acts function and mean. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative method with a psycho-pragmatic approach, this study analyzes critically the function and meaning of the expressive speech act of expletive utterance endhasmu 'your head'. The findings indicated that the Javanese expletive utterance Endhasmu in President Prabowo's political speech functions as an expression of displeasure, anger and or annoyance, the utterance is identical to swear word and vulgarism. The meaning behind this utterance is not merely an emotional expression, but it also demonstrates an attitude and action to respond powerfully or verbally strike political opponents who criticized the government policy. This expletive utterance is interpreted as an attempt to affirm a stance while simultaneously dismissing or counter-attacking arguments deemed to undermine the credibility or policies being promoted. Furthermore, the expletive utterance Endhasmu in this context means as a rhetorical strategy to silence opposition and strengthen President Prabowo's leadership image and social-politic position.

**Keywords:** pragmatics, expressive speech act, expletive utterance, president, political

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## 1. Introduction

A president in a sovereign nation is the foremost and most influential national figure of country, he or she is a public or community figure for his/her nation and country.

Public figures have the power to persuade others by showing charismatic images, having strong determination and being able to motivate others to have the same or even more advanced mindset (Huang, 2015). In addition, public figures have more opportunities to speak out; every word or utterance they express and everything they do can affect ordinary people (Ellwanger, 2012). On the basis of the public figure concepts from Huang and Ellwanger, it can be comprehended that a president's address in a public communication event plays a significant role in shaping public view and influencing society. This social-cultural fact also applies to President Prabowo Subiyanto as the 8th President of the Republic of Indonesia for the period of 2024–2029 when he delivers his speech before public.

Every utterance or word delivered by President Prabowo can be directly and indirectly observed and judged by the people, and it has a great and widespread social effect for all Indonesian citizens. Furthermore, in the digital era at present, the utterances or language use of President Prabowo are easily found on digital social media such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok; the digital social channels have an effective function to accelerate engagement and generate public opinion. As long as the president's speech contains a constructive message and meaning for the wider community, it is fine. However, if the speech contains a destructive message and meaning for society, it has the potential to cause unrest and even physical or non-physical harm to the community. A president, both as a statesman and a politician, is crucial to be mindful of the words he uses, diction. This careful

selection is necessary to effectively deliver messages, evoke public sentiment, and influence public perception because as politician express not only their thoughts and beliefs, but also their feelings and emotions.

The present research scrutinizes speech acts or utterances within the framework of speech act theory, it is a theoretical construct based on a fundamental concept of language as action. Language is used by speakers in various ways and purposes. Speakers use language to communicate not only their ideas but also their emotions and what they aim to do. The language i.e. utterances spoken by a president, the head of state, can have either a constructive or destructive effect for public as listeners. In the sphere of pragmatics, this influence is in accordance with pragmatic force (Leech, 1983). An example of President Prabowo's impactful speech was an utterance or word in the Javanese language *endhasmu* 'your head' addressed in a formal setting during the anniversary celebration of the Gerindra political party. The utterance *endhasmu* 'your head' is a type of expletive or swear-word utterance used to express displeasure, annoyance, irritation, or anger towards other person or hearer.

The expletive or swear word utterance is often defined as offensive words or taboo. In Cambridge dictionary, expletive is classified as a noun referring to a rude or offensive word used to express anger, pain, annoyance, and similar emotions. (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org>). Hence, the expletive utterances have relation to psychological states, the use and understanding of expletives utterance involve several cognitive and emotional processes. In psychological perspective i.e. appraisal theory, (Ellsworth, 2003) emotions are the result of a process of cognitive evaluation i.e. appraisal of an event; an appraisal is usually conceived as an unconscious process during which an event is evaluated in relation to different variables, such as pleasantness, relevance for personal goals or novelty. The psychological perspectives are in accordance with pragmatics ones, the utterances of expletive is a form of speech act that Austin (1962) elucidated it as the action of doing something with words. Afterwards, denoting to the concept of typology of speech act from Searle (1974), the expletive utterance is typologized into the expressive speech act; it is a speech act where a speaker expresses a psychological state towards the listener. It is added that expressive speech acts are used to express psychological states that are determined in a sincere condition specific to a state determined by propositional content (Budiarta, 2021).

The utterance of *endhasmu* 'your head' is a word from Javanese language, the biggest local language in Indonesia that is hugely used in Indonesia. Javanese language has social stratification in its use for interaction, and it is founded on the social status \_intimacy, age, occupation, or education\_ between the speaker and the listener/interlocutor. There are three social grades in using Javanese language for interaction i.e. *ngoko* 'colloquial', *krama madya* 'middle politeness', and *krama inggil* 'high politeness' (Poedjasoedarma, et.al., 1979). The *ngoko* 'colloquial' is used in interaction when the speaker and interlocutor have equal social relation in age, job/profession, education, and such. The *krama madya* 'middle politeness' is used to maintain politeness, for example, when speaking to interlocutor that the speaker is not very close with or when the speaker wants to show respect to interlocutor without having to use overly formal language. And the *krama inggil* 'high politeness' is the most refined and formal used to speak to interlocutors the speaker esteem, such as parents, officials, teachers, religious or cultural leaders. The Javanese word *endhas* has a literal meaning of 'head' referring to the uppermost part of the human body. The word *endhas* is *ngoko* 'colloquial' form\_ impoliteness mode. The word *endhas* has *krama madya* 'middle politeness' form namely *sirah*, and its *krama inggil* 'highest politeness' form is *mustaka* derives from the word *sirah* (Widada, et.al., 2001). In everyday conversation, the word *endhas* 'head' is often used with various figurative meanings depending on the context. When the word *endhas* is combined with possessive adjective of Javanese language *mu* 'your', it transforms to be a noun phrase *endhasmu* 'your head'.

The speech of President Prabowo before the cadres of Gerindra political party in the anniversary of Gerindra political party 2025 illustrated a political communication event between President Prabowo as the speaker and the cadres of Gerindra political party as the internal interlocutors or listeners. However, the speech of President Prabowo had been recorded and shared in YouTube, consequently it can be accessed by public globally\_ external interlocutor. The President Prabowo's speech in the political party anniversary tends to be in one way direction, the president, as a speaker, plays a primary and central role in the speech event, he is able to control the communication process absolutely. Such communication circumstance is similar to Islamic Friday

sermons in mosque where Khatib 'Islam preacher' become the main controller in the communication process (Maksum, 2024).

The language use of President of Republic Indonesia Prabowo Subiyanto in the speech of a political party anniversary is intriguing to investigate pragmatically for the utterances of a president have power to amend the world. This reason is in line with the thought explaining that language does not have power by itself but is used by influential speakers and politicians to inspire and influence audiences in terms of intended goals and meanings (Woods, 2014). Furthermore, the political party, Gerindra, is the party founded by President Prabowo Subiyanto; as a result, he has great force and chance to generate utterances as he intends to utter.

There are several previous studies of expressive speech acts having relation to the present study. The first study was Analyzing Expressive Speech Acts in the Late Late Show with James Corden (Nazrah & Rosida, 2024). The study had discovered 25 types of expressive speech acts performed by James Corden; they were 1 speech act of Apologize, 4 speech acts of Thank, 1 speech act of Condole, 3 speech acts of Complain, 4 speech acts of Lament, 5 speech acts of Protest, 1 speech act of Deplore, 1 speech act of Boast, 5 speech acts of Compliment, 4 speech acts of Welcome, and 3 speech acts of Greet. The study has provided various use of verbal utterance to express something to the listener/hearer.

The second study entitled Functions of Society's Expressive Speech Acts (Usman et al., 2023) aimed to analyze speech act to finally describe the function of the society's expressive speech acts towards Covid-19 survivors. The results revealed that during the COVID-19 pandemic, people used expressive language in many ways. Some of this language was negative, like doubting, complaining, yelling, and cursing. This was used to discourage people who had recovered from COVID-19 from making the same mistakes. On the other hand, people also used language to show support and encouragement. This included apologizing, offering condolences, and motivating others. This positive language was meant to help those who were suffering and recovering from the virus.

The third study was Expressive Speech Acts in the KPU RI Instagram Comments (Nafila & Ningsih, 2024), the study explored and elaborated on expressive speech acts in response to the KPU\_RI Instagram post titled "KPU's Statement Regarding the 2024 Election Debate and Vice Presidential Candidates". The findings revealed that people used expressive language in different ways in online conversations about the 2024 Presidential and Vice-Presidential Election debate. They offered praise and congratulations, but also used criticism, gratitude, blame, and condolences. The most common form of expression was criticism, which showed that many people were unhappy or disagreed with the KPU's decisions and policies. These findings illustrate us how people used language to express their feelings about elections on the internet.

The other previous studies having relation to the present study were the Language of Diplomacy in Inaugural Speeches: Roberta Metsola's Speech as the New President of the EU Parliament (Pierini, 2022), Complaining Expressions Used by the Characters in the Movie Entitled Two Weeks Notice: A Pragmatics Study (Ramdani & Indrayani, 2018), The Analysis of Expressive Speech Act on Tilik Short Film by Agung Prasetyo (Sukarto & Anggraini, 2022).

On the basis of the phenomenon of language use mentioned above, this research examined profoundly the expressive speech act i.e. the utterance of expletive endhasmu 'your head' performed by President Prabowo when he addressed his speech in the anniversary of Gerindra political party. It elucidates the foremost discrepancy of the related previous researches, it is specifically and distinctively to deepen the Javanese expletive utterance of endhasmu 'your head'. This research uncovers a question what is the function of expressive speech act and the meaning of expletive utterance endhasmu 'your head' performed by President Prabowo Subiyanto in his speech in the anniversary of Gerindra political party?

## 2. Research Method

This research utilizes a descriptive qualitative method which is the appropriate method for a deep dive into language. It can drive the researcher explores and analyze linguistic phenomena in detail, relying on qualitative data without involving numerical data or statistical calculations.

The primary data for this research were utterances acquired from YouTube video of President Prabowo Subianto's political speech containing the speech acts of assertive or representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declaration, this is the primary data of this research. The data were then analyzed in psychopragmatic approach by using the expressive act theory from Searle (1979) specifying on the expletive utterance *endhasmu* 'your head' and the appraisal theory of emotion. The secondary data comprises comments, suggestions from other linguists and colleagues presented in the focus group discussion and peer debriefing.

The data collection method used in this study is documentation using technique of watching and listening the video of President Prabowo Subianto's speech and making a note of the remarks on the expressive utterances performed by President Prabowo Subianto. The presentation of research findings on language can be accomplished formally and informally. As stated by Sudaryanto (1993: 144), the formal method is a way of presenting data analysis results that is concise and dense; at a glance, the presented description can be fully grasped, while the informal method is a method that presents a detailed description of the data analysis results, giving the impression of being relatively lengthy. This research used the formal method to present the data analysis results in the form of tables, and the informal method is used to narrate or describe the research findings.

### 3. Findings and Discussion

#### 3.1. The Context of Expressive Speech Act of Expletive Utterance *Endhasmu* 'Your Head' of President Prabowo Subianto's Political Speech

The context of expressive speech acts of the expletive utterance *endhasmu* 'your head' of President Prabowo Subianto's political speech was occurred in the speech event of the anniversary of Gerindra party in 2025. The content of the speech is unavoidably in line with the political discourse i.e. political issues or government policies emerging pro and cons in public. There were three political issues functioning as the utterance context revealed in this study, firstly it was the government policy on the provision of free nutritious meals for Indonesian students. Secondly, it was a critique from public about Kabinet Merah Putih 'the Red and White Cabinet' that was considered to have large number of ministers and deputy ministers or overweight cabinet. And thirdly, there was assumption that President Prabowo Subianto is under the control of the former president Joko Widodo.

Gerindra is a political party founded by President Prabowo Subianto in February 6, 2008. The speech of President Prabowo Subianto is a political speech event in a formal atmosphere where he was the only one speaker in the event. President Prabowo has absolute authority to speak and control the communication process, it tends to be in one way traffic communication. Furthermore, a president is the topmost leader of a country and has highest social status in public, this social background is non-lingual element that can affect why the expletive utterance *endhasmu* was uttered by President Prabowo Subianto. The cadres of political party, as the audiences or listener, were not recommended to interrupt or respond when President Prabowo was addressing his speech.

#### 3.2. The Function of Expressive Speech Act and Meaning of Expletive Utterance *Endhasmu* 'Your head' of President Prabowo's Political Speech

The data scrutinized in this research are expressive illocutionary acts in the form of utterances performed by President Prabowo Subianto in the anniversary of Gerindra, one of big political parties in Indonesia. The finding of study revealed 33 expressive speech acts describing 24 functions i.e. to pray others safe, to give a special salute, to give a general salute, to give a general salute and praise at once, to apologize, to express thanks, to give general salute and joke at once, to greet, to express pride, to respect and apologize at once, to express dislike, to show confidence, to show a delight, to voice a hope, to express honor, gratitude and glad at once, to express thanks to God, to voice disappointment, to vent or swear word directly, to vent or swear word indirectly, to wonder, to remind, to show a bravery, and to give a praise. This research specified on the speech act of expletive or swear word having two functions, first, to vent a negative emotion directly, and second, to vent a negative emotion indirectly. Hence, it is only expletive utterance of *Endhasmu* 'Your head' that is scrutinized profoundly in the recent research.

The expletive utterance of 'endhasmu' 'your head' is categorized into expressive speech act, it illustrates the speaker's feeling of anger, disapproval, irritation, annoyance, unhappiness discontent, and such. The findings of this research are represented in the following table.

**Table: The Function of Expressive Speech Act and The Meaning of Expletive Utterance Endhasmu of President Prabowo's Political Speech**

Utterance Context	Illocutionary Expressive Speech Act	Expressive Utterance Function	Expletive Utterance	Expletive Utterance Meaning
<i>Kritik mengenai kebijakan pemberian makan bergizi gratis untuk murid-murid sekolah di Indonesia</i> 'Critique on the government policy of the provision of free nutritious meals for Indonesian students'	<i>Biasa ada yang nyinyir, Mana bisa kasih makan?, Mana bisa? Uangnya gak ada</i> ' Those who are cynical said: 'How are you going to feed them?', 'How can you even do that? There's no money,' ( <i>prosody_98-TTE21</i> ) <i>Sudah mulai kita gelar sekian ratus, sekian ini, masih ada yang komentar "Iya tapi belum banyak.</i> 'We have started to roll out hundreds, or X amount of these, but there are still people commenting, "Yes, but it's still not a lot." <i>(prosody_105TTE22)</i> <i>Kalau enggak ada wartawan saya bilang Endhasmu! Sorry ye!</i> Kalau enggak ada wartawan saya bilang Endhasmu 'If there were no journalist, I said:Your head Sorry ye! (106-TTE23).	<b>Mengumpat secara tidak langsung</b> 'To vent indirectly'	<b>Endhasmu!</b> 'Your head'	<i>Menunjukkan rasa tidak senang atas kritik tentang kebijakan pemberian makan gratis</i> 'Expressing displeasure over criticism of the free school meal policy in Indonesia'
<i>Kritik mengenai kabinet Merah Putih, yang dipimpin oleh Presiden Prabowo , memiliki banyak menteri dan wakil menteri sehingga disebut kabinet gemuk</i> 'Critique on Red White Cabinet led by President Prabowo considered to have large number of ministers & deputy ministers, so called overweight cabinet.	<i>Ada orang-orang pintar bilang, "Kabinet ini kabinet gemuk, terlalu besar,. Endhasmu!"</i> Some smart people said This is a fat cabinet, too excessive'. Your head! (110TTE25).	<b>Mengumpat langsung</b> 'To vent directly'	<b>Endhasmu!</b> 'Your head!'	<i>Menunjukkan sikap sangat kesal kepada para pengkritik tentang jumlah menteri dalam kabinet merah putih</i> 'Expressing strong annoyance towards critics of the number of ministers in the "Merah Putih" (Red and White) cabinet'

<p><i>Anggapan bahwa Presiden Prabowo dikontrol oleh mantan Presiden Joko Widodo</i>                  ‘Assumption that President Prabowo is under the controll of the former president Joko Widodo’</p>	<p>Nanti dibilang, saya,apa pak? “<i>Saya dikendalikan Pak Jokowi, “Cawecawe” Endhasmu!</i>”                  ‘What will people say, sir? I am being controlled, Mr.Jokowi is interfering. Endhasmu! ‘Your head!’ (121-TTE27)</p>	<p><b>Mengumpat langsung</b>                  ‘To vent directly’</p>	<p><b>Endhasmu!</b>                  ‘Your head!’</p>	<p><i>Menunjukkan sikap sangat kesal kepada para pengkritik karena pemerintahan Presiden Prabowo dianggap diatur oleh mantan Presiden Jokowi</i>                  ‘Expressing strong annoyance towards critics because President Prabowo’s government is perceived to be controlled by former President Jokowi’</p>
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The table illustrates the result of research on the use of expletive utterance *endhasmu* ‘your head’ performed by President Prabowo Subianto. The utterance *endhasmu* occurred three times, the first on the utterance with the code 106TTE23, the second on the utterance with the code 110TTE25, and the third on the utterance with the code 121TTE27.

The context of expletive utterance *endhasmu* ‘your head’ in 106TTE23 is the government policy on the provision of free nutritious meals for Indonesian students from pre-kindergarten to high school students, and its utterance function is to vent or to swear word indirectly. This context is indicated with the expressive utterance, 98TTE21, *Biasa ada yang nyinyir, Mana bisa kasih makan?, Mana bisa? Uangnya gak ada.* ‘Those who are cynical said: ‘How are you going to feed them?’, ‘How can you even do that? There’s no money,;’ this expressive utterance was performed by President Prabowo using sarcastic tone included as prosody, that illustrates to hurt someone’s feeling, his political opponent, in humorous way. The context of expletive utterance is also supported with the expressive utterance, 105TTE22, *Sudah mulai kita gelar sekian ratus, sekian ini, masih ada yang komentar; “Iya tapi belum banyak”* ‘We have started to roll out hundreds, or X amount of these, but there are still people commenting, “Yes, but it’s still not a lot.” The expressive utterance is indicated in utterance *Iya tapi belum banyak* ‘Yes, but it’s still not a lot’, it was also performed by using sarcastic tone, included as prosody, by Presiden Prabowo. The sarcastic tone represented a displeasure expression of President Prabowo. On the basis of the two expressive utterances, 98TTE21 and 105TTE22, the expletive utterance *endhasmu* was performed indirectly by President Prabowo. The indirectness of the expletive utterance of *endhasmu* is indicated with the use of utterance: *Kalau enggak ada wartawan saya bilang Endhasmu!* ‘If there were no journalist, I said *endhasmu* ‘Your head!’’. The utterance of *Kalau enggak ada wartawan saya bilang ...* ‘If there were no journalist, I said ...’ is an hedging utterance; the utterance *Kalau* ‘If’ is a hedge marker functioning to mitigate the expletive, avoid an impression being rude, or protect oneself from negative assumption. This utterance illustrates that President Prabowo uttered *endhasmu* indirectly, and its utterance function is to vent indirectly as well. The meaning of this utterance is to demonstrate annoyance at criticism regarding the free nutritious meal policy for Indonesian students.

The context of expletive utterance *endhasmu* in 110TTE25 is a critique surrounding Kabinet Merah Putih" the Red and White Cabinet', led by President Prabowo, concerns its large number of ministers and deputy ministers. Public, especially political opponents, criticized that it was an oversized cabinet; and its the utterance function of *endhasmu* is to vent or swear word directly. The directness of utterance in 110TTE25 was performed by President Prabowo by uttering *endhasmu* ‘your head’ directly after the expressive utterance of *Kabinet ini kabinet gemuk, terlalu besar* ‘This is a fat cabinet, too excessive’. The expressive utterance *Kabinet ini kabinet gemuk, terlalu besar* ‘This is a fat cabinet, too excessive’ is a critique utterance generated by public, especially the political opponents of President Prabowo. It was a critique on the number of ministers and vice ministers in President Prabowo’s cabinet. President Prabowo reuttered or imitated the critique utterance

from public by using sarcastic tone in such away i.e. prosody, and the tone or intonation illustrated the sneering utterance directed to the criticsizers or political opponents. The meaning of *endhasmu* 'your head' in this utterance is to expose the total displeasure of President Prabowo to the criticsizers i.e. political opponents, considering that President Prabowo's cabinet is over size, too many ministers.

The context of expletive utterance *endhasmu* in 121TTE27 is the public assumption that President Prabowo Subiyanto is being controlled by former President Joko Widodo. The utterance function of *endhasmu* in 121TTE27 is also to vent directly. The directness of the utterance was responded by President Prabowo by uttering *endhasmu* 'your head' directly or automatically after the utterance he made *Nanti dibilang, saya apa pak? Saya dikendalikan Pak Jokowi, Cawe-cawe. Endhasmu!* 'What will people say, sir? I am being controlled, Mr. Jokowi is interfering. *Endhasmu!* 'Your head!' . The expletive utterance *endhasmu* was performed linguistically by President Prabowo without any hinderance ; the way *endhasmu* was uttered without using the hedging utterance. The meaning of expletive utterance of *endhasmu* in 121TTE27 is to express deep resentment, anger or annoyance to criticsizers.

In the psychological point of view, the expletive utterance of *endhasmu* performed by President Prabowo represents a negative expression of anger or displeasure. In addition, the utterance *endhasmu* emphasizes a supremacy of authority or power of President Prabowo over the criticsizers, particularly his political opponents. While for some audiences i.e. particularly President Prabowo's alliance, the expletive *endhasmu* 'your head' can be perceived as a form of assertiveness and emotional honesty, for a broader or neutral audience, the diction may actually damage his image of statesmanship and suggest a lack of self-control. This kind of reactive communication style also shows a defensive tendency, instead of addressing criticism argumentatively or rationally, President Prabowo chooses an approach that is aggressive and goes out of discussion.

#### 4. Conclusion

The expletive utterance is one of manifestations in expressive speech act like utterances of praising, thanking, apologizing, complaining, and the others. The expletive utterance *endhasmu* 'your head' is a response from President Prabowo conveying emotional reactions reflecting psychological attitudes. The emotional reactions emerged as a result of public critique towards the government's or president's policy regarding the free meal program for Indonesian students, the oversize red-white cabinet, and the perceived interference of former President Joko Widodo in President Prabowo's administration.

This recent study found that the of expletive utterance *endhasmu* 'your head', performed by President Prabowo in the political speech before the cadres of Gerindra political party has two functions. The functions relate to the way how the expletive utterance was performed by President Prabowo ; there are two ways namely, first, to vent or swear word directly and , second, to vent or swear word indirectly. The expletive utterance functions are influential instances of expressive speech act communicating sturdy emotional decline and displeasure. Then, the meaning of expletive utterance *endhasmu* 'your head' of both utterance functions is same i.e. to show annoyance, displeasure, or fury to the criticsizers or political opponent. Although it is only a single word, the expletive utterance *endhasmu* 'your head' contains pragmatic force, rhetorical weight and sparked wide-ranging responses for public. In other words, the expletive utterance *endhasmu* 'your head' can result in a copious large social impact to Indonesian public. A president is typically expected to uphold a certain standard of propriety or politeness. Using such expletives can violate the social norms leading to public shock or outrage, because public commonly expect leaders to use language carefully and respectfully. A president's utterance convey significant weight due to their position of social and political power. When a president uses expletive utterances it can signal a strong emotional state or a particular stance on an issue, affecting public perception and potentially polarizing opinions. Therefore, the expletive utterance can be viewed as more than just a word; it can reflect the president's attitude, intention or political agenda, and political position. Forthcoming research is fortified to explore other expletive utterances by other leaders or public figures such as minister, governor, mayor, parliament member, artist, musician, or sportman, and compare the pragmatic meaning and social impact of expletives used by the leaders or public figures in different cultural contexts or social factors like impoliteness, taboo words, or cultural sensitivity.

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