

Conference Paper

Development of Critical Audience Attitudes towards Information in Media Radio

Tita Melia Milyane

Langlang Buana University

Abstract

The background of this case study is the development of acritical attitude among listeners of Bianglala Pagi program on Reks Radio. Bianglala Pagi Program is a public sphere where people of Garut can express ideas, criticism and opinions to government and stakeholders also the policies made by the government. In Bianglala Pagi program, listeners can criticize the government and stakeholders, from public service problems and legal cases to politics. The government is known to use this program as inputs for government policy-making and serve as the basis of assessment of government performance. The main focus from this research is to find out the evolving ideology at Reks radio and listeners so that listeners can better use radio as the medium to convey their aspirations and opinions without fear of intimidation.

Corresponding Author: Tita
Melia Milyane; email:
eliamilyanenane@gmail.com

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1. Background

Since 1998 when Soeharto government collapsed, of the media have enjoyed greater freedom to voice public criticism of government policies. The mass media in the fast-growing city of Garut in Western Java. Based on data from *Indonesian Broadcasting Commission* (Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia, thereafter called KPI), Garut have 33 commercial radios, one local television and 9 newspapers. Reks Radio has the largest audience and the Bianglala is the most popular radio program. Reks Radio founded in 1969 has the upper middle class segment. Bianglala Pagi is an interactive program that accommodates aspirations of the people of various classes. Since 1998 Bianglala program has become the main channel for the Garut community to convey their aspiration. Bianglala program broadcasts everyday, from 06.00 until 09.00. The listeners expressed much aspiration, criticism, idea, information and opinion about public service problems, environmental health, frequent power outages, water services, health services, BPJS, KTP/identity card and family card, the traffic, until governance problems, government regulations, the local government budget (APBD), corruption, law cases, and so on.

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Interestingly, the government of Garut city makes the listener's opinions and aspirations the inputs to the government policy-making and the evaluation of government performance. Garut Regent stated that the audience's aspirations are actually remarkably critical because they not only dared to criticize the social situation and the performance of government, but also have influence on government decision-making. Garut Regent also stated that much of government regulations made are based on the opinion from listeners like PKL regulation, a good governance regulation, environmental hygiene regulation and waste disposal, sand mining regulation at Guntur Mountain, and so on. Through Bianglala programs, listeners are free to speak a variety of issues related to public interest, and based on facts, but not tendentious and adhere to journalistic ethics. Sometimes listeners give wrong information and cause misunderstanding, and certain parties' offense against the information submitted on the Bianglala Pagi causing the problem requiring legal solution, but the listeners have never been afraid. Listeners express their aspirations more excitedly.

2. Method

This research used a qualitative descriptive methodology with a case study on the development of a critical attitude among listeners of the Bianglala program. The techniques of collecting data used were in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with six active listeners, three Bianglala program announcers, two passive listeners and one of the government official in this case the regent of Garut. The observations were made by listening to and observing the broadcasting of Bianglala Pagi event. Documentation is done by collecting listeners' data, listeners' activity and broadcasting transcripts of Bianglala program.

3. Findings and Discussion

The dynamic development of the critical attitude among the listeners sees their aspirations channeled through Bianglala show program in Reks Radio. Anyone, having previously received a PIN number which is used as the identity of the confidentiality listener, can speak at Bianglala program. Bianglala's listeners have a special designation, Bianglala members. Currently the member of Bianglala has reached 3,500 out of a population of 3 million in Garut. Members / listeners of Bianglala criticized the government and other stakeholders on a range of socio-economic and political issues ranging from social problems such as very frequent power cuts, environmental hygiene, waste disposal arbitrarily, endemic diseases such as dengue fever and avian flu, government services in the manufacturing KTP/id cards and family cards, extortion in various government agencies, and the cases of corruption involving local officials,

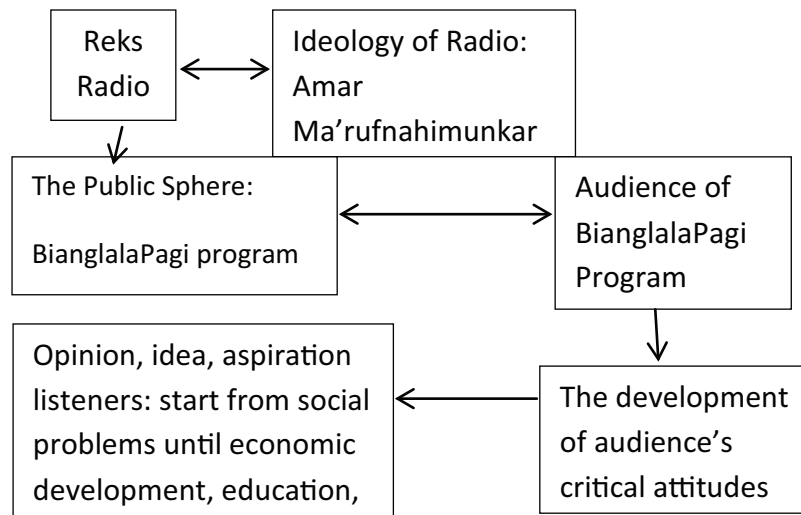


Figure 1: Ideology of audiences

to the use of the local government budget or APBD, cases law, the tax office services, BPJS, and political promises elected Regent.

Bianglala Opinion listeners also led the former Garut Regent to deal with the law as he was seen to be guilty of corruption and eventually imprisoned. Bianglala opinion listeners also led to the next Garut Regent being dismissed because ethical violation in which he divorced his second wife through sms (short messages service), resulting in public outrage and led to the dismissal of the Regent. This last case got international attention and was covered by a variety of national and international mass media, so that the President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono through the Secretary of State for Administrative officials dismissed the regent. Besides, the fact that the critical attitude of the listeners has significant effect on Garut government, the ideology of radio and listeners also makes this program is the only program to channel their aspirations.

From this study, we find that the ideology of Radio Reks is *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* meaning enforcing goodness and forbidding evil. This ideology is translated into a vision of Reks Radio: the realization of faithful and devoted people, saying firmly and acting responsibly in order to obtain the results of actions leading to forgiveness of Allah. While the ideology of listeners is precisely to make the Bianglala program their ideology. This means that listeners make this program their way of life, through which they convey the aspirations honestly and openly; information and opinions should be delivered based on facts rather than defamatory statement, exalting truth of the information, non-judgmental and courteous in speech. The reasons the listeners make Bianglala program their ideology are:

- 1) Bianglala program provides accurate information and appropriate facts that are impartial, not cornering and based on the presumption of innocence. Bianglala is regarded as a facilitator capable of solving all the problems arising in society.
- 2) Listeners give information and ideas directly, without complicated procedures, and usually directly addressed by the government and stakeholders.
- 3) Listeners have the freedom to voice any information in this program, without fear of being judged, intimidated or discriminated against by any party.
- 4) Listeners make Bianglala program a medium of information exchange between the listeners and the government and society.
- 5) Listeners' freedom to voice the aspiration is supported by local governments, in which the regents instructed all departments / agencies of government to listen to this program every day.
- 6) The local government makes this program the aspirations of the bottom up so that it often serves as valuable input for the government to find solutions for the problems occurring in the district of Garut.
- 7) A large number of active and critical listeners in this program lead the regent to socialize the government programs eagerly at the same time to clarify if there is a problem needing clarification.

The findings of this research are described in Figure 1 chart.

4. Conclusion

The conclusions of this research are:

- 1) Reks Radio as the only mass media in Garut providing public space through Bianglala Pagi program.
- 2) The listeners used these programs to convey aspiration, factual information, idea, and opinion about much problems ranging from social problems like bureaucracy serviced, KTP, BPJS, service of health, patients' service by hospital, tax, poverty, unemployment, teacher's certification fund, and public infrastructure repairing, to economic development, APBD use, education, politics, corruption, morality, local regulations, and other social problems.
- 3) Aspirations from listeners then will be clarified by government and stakeholders. The Government makes the aspiration appearing in Bianglala the inputs to the government programs and the evaluation of government programs. The listeners' aspiration serves as social control for government.

- 4) The effect of Bianglala on the progress in Garut makes Bianglala as a representative of the listeners' ideology.

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