

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Semarang is one of large cities in Indonesia that has developed rapidly in its regional and urban activities. This aligns with research which states that Semarang plays a role as a center of activity supported by community mobility and economic interactions with surrounding regions (Marshush & Hilmansyah, 2024). Geographically, Semarang consists of hilly and coastal areas that support the development of various tourism potentials. The city's unique and attractive tourism potential can be further developed (Utami & Widiasputri, 2023). As a tourism icon in Central Java, Semarang offers a wide variety of tourism experiences, such as historical, cultural, religious, nature, marine, and highly recommended culinary tourism. Culinary tourism in this city has great potential to be developed as a leading tourism sector and an alternative choice for both domestic and foreign tourists (Rahma, 2017).

The phrase “culinary tourism” was first coined in 1998 by Lucy Long, an assistant professor of food and culture at Bowling Green State University, Ohio (Muliani, 2019). According to Lucy (1998), culinary tourism is a tourist activity undertaken by domestic and foreign tourists to explore the flavors of food and eating habits of a particular region. Culinary tourism is also related to traditional cuisine from the destination area (Hjalager & Richards, 2002). Thus, traditional cuisine is an important part of the tourism experience because it encourages tourists to explore the culinary traditions of a region, which indirectly involves the local community as culinary players. Semarang itself is a city that offers several types of unique culinary delights that attract food lovers, especially domestic and foreign tourists. The diversity of Semarang traditional cuisine is influenced by its varied ethnic and tribal background, resulting in unique characteristics, especially in terms of taste, as it uses traditional recipes (Rahma, 2017).

Some of Semarang's famous traditional cuisine icons are *Lumpia*, *Wingko Babat*, and *Bandeng Presto*. However, apart from these icons, there are still various

other traditional cuisines of Semarang that are not yet widely known such as *Nasi Ayam*. In addition, *Roti Ganjel Rel* is also known as one of Semarang’s traditional cuisines that is increasingly less common due to its limited availability, even in traditional markets (Rochmawati et al., 2013). Furthermore, based on an interview with the Head of the Marketing Division of the Semarang City Culture and Tourism Office, *nasi glewo* is one of Semarang’s traditional signature cuisines. However, it is not widely known to the public and is becoming increasingly difficult to find because only a few vendors sell it. Therefore, *nasi ayam Semarang*, *roti ganjel rel*, and *nasi glewo* were selected as the focus of this study because they are traditional cuisines that are still less recognized by the public and require more engaging promotional media. Meanwhile, these cuisines have great potential to be developed as tourist attractions (Sumastuti et al., 2021). This indicates the problem is caused by a lack of effective promotion efforts (Safitri et al., 2024). To reinforce these indications, the researcher conducted a preliminary survey of 55 respondents, including both local residents of Semarang and those from out of town, with the majority of respondents coming from outside Semarang. The survey aimed to assess respondents’ knowledge of several traditional cuisines of Semarang. The survey results are presented in a bar chart in Figure 1.1 below.

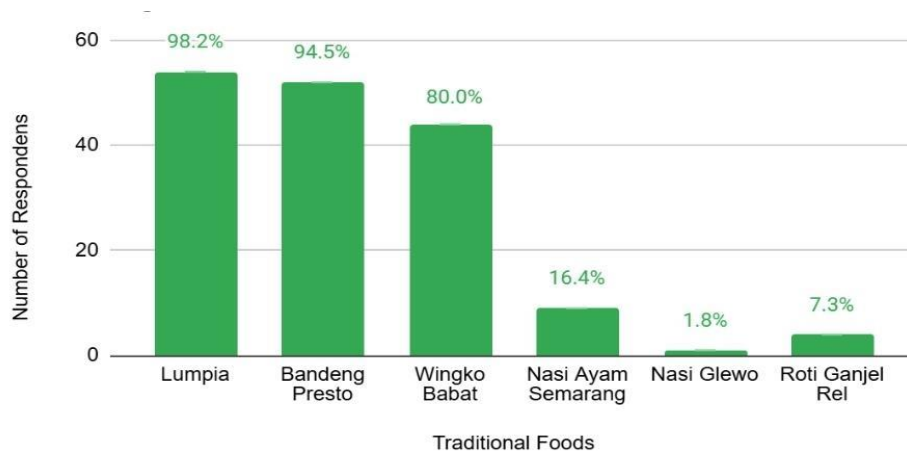


Figure 1.1 Respondents’ Knowledge Level Regarding Traditional Foods Of Semarang in 2026

Based on the data above, it can be observed that foods such as *lumpia*, *bandeng presto*, and *wingko babat* have very high levels of familiarity among respondents, at 98.2%, 94.5%, and 80.0%, respectively. Meanwhile, other traditional foods show significantly lower familiarity levels, such as *nasi ayam Semarang* at 16.4%, *roti ganjel rel* at 7.3%, and *nasi glewo* at 1.8%. These findings indicate that several types of Semarang signature cuisine are still less recognized by the public. The results also support the selection of *nasi ayam Semarang*, *roti ganjel rel*, and *nasi glewo* as the focus of this study because they represent traditional cuisines that require greater promotional efforts. This indicates that more optimal promotional efforts are needed to promote Semarang's lesser-known traditional foods to a wider audience.

The Accountability Report (LKPJ) of Semarang City also emphasizes that tourism promotion remains one of the main issues in the development of the regional tourism sector. Based on data from the Culture and Tourism Office of Semarang Municipality, the promotion of various types of tourism, especially culinary tourism, is still not optimal, resulting in many of Semarang's traditional cuisines remaining unknown to tourists (Noviyanti et al., 2017). This situation indicates that the low level of familiarity with several traditional Semarang foods is closely linked to the suboptimal promotional strategies that have been implemented. This statement is also supported by the study conducted by Noviyanti et al. (2017), which revealed that one of the Commissions B of the Semarang City Council stated that the aspect of promotion has not received much attention and tends to focus only on the implementation of activities that have been budgeted in the APBD. Although the Semarang City Government has made various promotional efforts, such as establishing a Tourism Promotion Agency in 2012, organizing Fam Trip programs, and collaborating with PT Sido Muncul on the "*Ayo Wisata ke Semarang*" advertising campaign, these promotional strategies are considered to be less than optimal in attracting attention and increasing tourist visits (Putra et al., 2015). It reflects that the promotion is still focused on tourism in general, while traditional cuisine of Semarang has not been optimized as the main focus of promotion. This situation shows that there's a disparity between Semarang's culinary potential and

the promotion strategies that are being used. Therefore, promotional media that can convey messages in a more concise, attractive, and communicative manner is needed.

Based on these issues, this study focuses on three traditional cuisines of Semarang, which are *nasi glewo*, *roti ganjel rel*, and *nasi ayam Semarang*. The selection of these three foods is based on the low level of familiarity among respondents compared to iconic local foods, with percentages of 1.8%, 7.3%, and 16.4%, respectively. This indicates that these three dishes remain relatively lesser known among respondents, suggesting a potential for further development through more effective promotional strategies.

The development of technology has made selecting the right type of promotional media an important factor in increasing tourist interest in traditional cuisine of Semarang. According to Ardan (2021) in an article published by *Media Indonesia*, media are classified into three types, including visual media, audio media, and audio-visual media. Among the three, audio-visual media are considered to have an advantage because they combine audio and visual elements, thereby presenting more engaging information about traditional cuisine of Semarang. According to Sajaroh and Imanto (2026), audio-visual media is considered an effective promotional tool because it conveys messages in a more engaging and interactive way than traditional media. Furthermore, by combining visuals and storytelling, audiovisual media can reinforce a product's identity and increase its appeal to consumers. Research shows that audiovisual media not only attracts consumers' attention through engaging visuals but also reinforces taste impressions and sensory experiences that can boost buying interest. Therefore, audiovisual media plays a crucial role in culinary promotion, especially in today's digital age. However, the use of audio-visual media specifically designed to promote traditional cuisine of Semarang is still limited, leaving significant potential for further development (Sajaroh & Imanto, 2026).

Based on these issues, it is necessary to develop more focused audio-visual promotional media to promote traditional cuisine of Semarang. To ensure that the promotional message is conveyed effectively, the short movie was developed by

applying the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action) model, which is designed to capture audience attention, stimulate interest, create desire, and encourage action. Through the implementation of this model, the short movie is expected not only to promote Semarang's traditional cuisine but also to encourage audiences to experience it directly. Therefore, this study focuses on the development process of "*Simpul Merekah*" short movie. It presents detailed visualizations of food and creates an experience and atmosphere felt by the audience through dialogue that flows naturally with the storyline. This concept is expected to enhance the visual appeal of Semarang's traditional cuisine, which is not yet widely known, thereby attracting tourists. Through this final project, "*Simpul Merekah*" short movie is expected to be used as a promotional media for traditional cuisine of Semarang.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Based on the problem identified by the researcher, several research problem are expected to be answered through this research, as follows:

1. How does the development of "*Simpul Merekah*" short movie?
2. What is the stakeholder feedback of the short movie?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the research problem above, the research objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To explain the process of developing "*Simpul Merekah*" short movie.
2. To explain the feedback from the stakeholders of the Semarang City Department of Culture and Tourism.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Based on the research objectives above, the expected benefits of this research are for:

1. For the Applied Foreign Language Study Program

This research is expected to reinforce previous research related to the development of short films as a promotional medium. Furthermore, this

study can also serve as a reference for future research in relevant fields of study.

2. For the Students

This research is expected to provide knowledge and insights to students regarding the development of audiovisual promotional media. Additionally, this study can serve as a reference for students conducting similar research or developing related projects in the future.

3. Semarang City Department of Culture and Tourism

This study is expected to support the Semarang City Department of Culture and Tourism in promoting Semarang's traditional culinary specialties through the short movie developed in this research.

1.5 Output

The output of this research is a short movie with 18-minute duration entitled "*Simpul Merekah*" uploaded on the Applied Foreign Language YouTube channel. It is created as a promotional medium for traditional cuisine of Semarang, which is expected to increase tourist appeal and attract tourists to visit Semarang City. The short movie tells the story of Galih and Karin, who are reunited by chance after a long separation. During a simple journey of one day, flashbacks of the past they once shared resurface. However, a text message on Galih's phone reminds him of an opportunity to realize his dream of pursuing a career in London. The title "*Simpul*" symbolizes the bond between Galih and Karin, while "*Merekah*" depicts the feelings that bloom anew during their one day together.