

Narrative Storytelling Culinary Speciality of Watugajah Community in Probolinggo Indonesia

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to map and describe how the logic and important symbols of the Watu Gajah community are narrated in typical culinary storytelling. The Watu Gajah community has a certain pattern in telling their special culinary. Culinary wealth that is told in a certain pattern is a strategic regional object for the promotion of culture (OPK) as a source of learning in Indonesian language learning. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to map and describe the meaning in the form of logic and symbols of the Watu Gajah community in telling their culinary storytelling. The data are the results of intense observations, structured and in-depth interviews about (1) how the logic of the Watu Gajah community is constructed in typical culinary storytelling and (2) how the symbols of the Watu Gajah community are used in typical culinary storytelling. This study utilizes a literary gastrocrit-ical lens to reveal the logic and symbols of the Watu Gajah community that correlate with gastronomy in the storytelling narrative of their typical food. The results of the study show that the typical culinary of the Watu Gajah community has various origin stories. From every name that can unite the Indonesian people because these foods have previously been present and become the staple food of the Watu Gajah community which has now turned into traditional snacks in the market.

Keywords

semiotics; narrative strorytelling; Watu Gajah typical culinary; objects of cultural promotion; gastrocrit-ic



I. Introduction

Indonesia is a country with the nickname of the largest gastronomic kitchen globally. Based on the study results, there are 150 types of food and drinks served on the dining table of the Indonesian people (Gardjito, 2018). Various culinary characteristics are attached to each type of food in the area. Even the unique culinary is a form of representation of each region. The attraction is being present as a noble food with supportive packaging (Rahman, 2016).

Semiotics is a scientific discipline and analytical method that can examine the signs contained in an object to find out its meaning contained in the object. Semiotics comes from the Greek "*semeion*", which means sign. Semiotics is the study of signs (signs). In Zoest's view, anything that can be observed or made observable can be called a sign. Moreover, signs are not limited to objects (zoest, 1993). The word semiotics is derived from English, namely semiotics. Another name for semiotics is semiology. Both have the same meaning, namely the science of signs. Both semiotics and semiology come from Greek, namely *semeion*, which means sign (Sobur, Semiotika, 2010).

Semiotics consists of theories about how signs represent objects, ideas, circumstances, situations, feelings, and conditions outside the signs themselves. Semiotics is one of the studies that has even become a tradition in communication theory. The

semiotic tradition consists of theories about how signs represent objects, ideas, circumstances, situations, feelings and conditions outside the signs themselves. According to Littlejohn in his book *Communication Theories of Human Communication* edition 9, Semiotics aims to find out the meanings contained in a sign or interpret these meanings so that it is known how communicators construct messages (Umsu, 2021)

Storytelling consists of two words, namely story and telling. In short, storytelling is the activity of telling stories. People who do storytelling are called storytellers. Traditionally, storytelling is done orally. However, storytelling can also be done with the help of several tools and media. For example, writers who use paper or books or even blogs to tell their stories, musicians who use songs to tell stories, and designers who use clothing to tell stories. Teachers usually use storytelling in learning methods, especially in learning English. Thus, it is easier for them to digest the material. (juli, 2021)

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Watu Gajah Village is one of the villages in Probolinggo Regency, East Java Province. This village is located in the southern area of the Probolinggo Regency. As an area that still maintains ancestral cultural values, Watu Gajah Village can maintain its culinary presence as a manifestation of values summarized in the form of ingredients and the taste of the food.

The outbreak of this virus has an impact of a nation and Globally (Ningrum *et al*, 2020). The presence of Covid-19 as a pandemic certainly has an economic, social and psychological impact on society (Saleh and Mujahiddin, 2020). Covid 19 pandemic caused all efforts not to be as maximal as expected (Sihombing and Nasib, 2020).

The city of Probolinggo is a horseshoe area of East Java and is the main route to the North Coast, which is the link between Java and the island of Bali. The number of tourist visits in Probolinggo City has decreased due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, those visit was not accompanied by an increase in the length of stay or the population of Probolinggo City (Aminza & Ernawati, 2014). Watu Gajah Village is one of the villages in Probolinggo Regency, East Java Province. This village is located in the southern area of the Probolinggo Regency. As an area that still maintains ancestral cultural values, Watu Gajah Village can maintain its culinary presence as a manifestation of values summarized in the form of ingredients and the taste of the food.

Tourism is a sector that is heavily affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. This is due to restrictions imposed by the government, thus affecting the mobility of tourists (Setiawan dan Cahyono, 2021). The tourist visits to Probolinggo City in recent years are as follows:

Table 1. Tourist Visits

Year	Number of Visits
2020	474.615
2019	1.086.015
2018	1.236.203
2017	1.082.917

Source: BPS in Figures

For tourists, culinary spending is more important than accommodation in the Probolinggo City area. Tourists are more interested in visiting sellers directly rather than buying through applications such as online motorcycle taxis or delivery (Oktiviana dan Indraprasti, 2016).

Culinary tourism is one of the leading tourist attractions in Probolinggo City. Because of its location close to the sea area, this city has a wealth of processed sea. The strategy of strengthening marine culinary tourism is to attract tourists who visit Probolinggo City (Basman, 2011).

In addition, Probolinggo City is also known as the city of manga and wine. The City of Probolinggo processes manga and grapes into souvenirs which become a separate source of income for all Human Resources in the City (Firdhiana dan Anggapuspa, 2021).

One area that is frequently visited is Watu Gajah Village. The name Watu Gajah comes from the presence of a large rock in the village, which has a shape resembling an elephant. This stone is in the middle of a rice field that is about 1 km from residential areas.

Some of the culinary characteristics of Watu Gajah Village are *brittle*, *klecci* and *pletter*. Culinary is favoured by the public and tourists who visit. Behind the unique culinary names, there is storytelling of each snack.

Storytelling is an effort made by storytellers to convey the contents of feelings, thoughts and stories to children verbally (Aliyah, 2011). Storytelling is an imaginary story that is considered not happening by the storyteller or listener.

Storytelling is a way of telling stories to listeners who have a pleasant nature and do not feel they have more knowledge and can increase imagination (Ramdhani et al., 2019). The storytelling narrative will fill the memory of each individual with a variety of information and life values (Alkaaf, 2017).

Satriya et al. (2021) explain that the narrative of storytelling can show the conditions of existence and organization scientifically in every human being. With the existence of myths, legends and fairy tales providing explanations related to important elements in terms of culture, it can be widely accepted (Bassano et al., 2019).

Narratives built by storytelling can inspire people to creatively live and work in their surroundings (Pera & Viglia, 2016). The storytelling narrative can determine the success of an empowerment communication strategy (Handoko et al., 2019).

The object of cultural promotion is intellectual work. As intellectual work, it needs to be organized, maintained and saved. In other words, it needs to be protected. With the promulgation of law no. 5 of 2017, concerning the Promotion of Culture on May 29, 2017, the arrangement of objects for promoting culture will be clearer (Zulkifly, 2020). In recent years, many objects of the advancement of Indonesian culture have been claimed by other nations. Moreover, conversely, foreign cultures are sometimes more popular when compared to their own culture. Therefore, it is necessary to realize how important it is to preserve the nation's culture (Azhari, 2020) while Watu Gajah Village strongly maintains a culture that has existed since ancient ancestral times. Even people from outside the village of Watu Gajah are very impressed with the attachment of Watu Gajah's uniqueness which is still maintained to this day.

Rochmawati et al. (2013) conducted a study under the title Tracing Traces of Semarang Typical Food as an Inventory and Promotion of Javanese Culinary Tourism. The results showed that other cultures were brought by several groups from outside and influenced Semarang's culinary tastes. The European community, whose data has been to Semarang until now, shows that the culinary traces found are *Toko Oen* (Oen's Shop), which is located on Pemuda Street.

Kusumaningtyas (2016) conducted a study entitled *The Effect of Peer Education Model With Storytelling Method on Increasing Knowledge of Snack Food Selection*. The results showed an influence of the peer education model with the storytelling method on increasing elementary school students' knowledge in choosing snacks at SDN (Elementary School) Ngadirgo 03 Mijen Semarang City.

This research aims to know the semiotic meaning of the typical cuisine of the Watugajah Probolinggo people of Indonesia. Suppose previous research focused on tracing the traces of typical food and the influence of storytelling on selecting snacks. In that case, this study focuses on studying the philosophy of the typical food of the Watu Gajah area, which has a certain sign or meaning in each food.

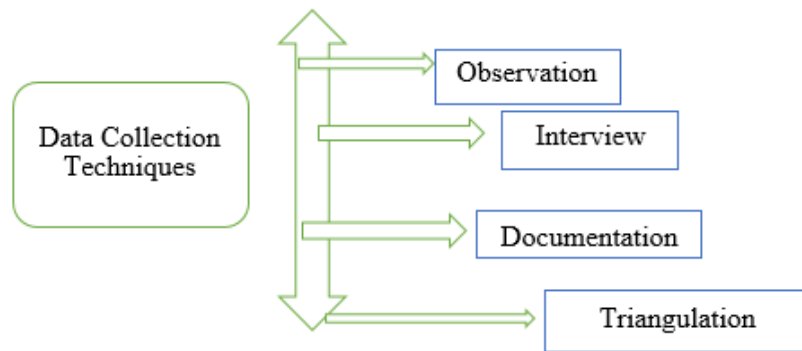
II. Research Method

This type of research is descriptive qualitative. Qualitative descriptive research is one of the types of research included in the type of qualitative research. This study interprets and describes the data concerned with the current situation, attitudes and views that occur in a society, the conflict between two or more circumstances, the relationship between variables that arise, the differences between the facts and their influence on a particular situation conditions, and so on (Agung, 2016)

According to (Nazir, 2016) descriptive method is a method of examining the status of a group of people, an object, a set of conditions, a system of thought or a class of events in the present. This descriptive research aims to make a systematic, factual and accurate description, picture, or painting of the facts, characteristics, and relationships between the phenomena being investigated. Meanwhile, (Sugiono, 2017) states that the descriptive method is used to describe or analyze a research result but is not used to make broader conclusions.

Taylor in (Ahmadi, 2020) states that the qualitative method is a research procedure in the form of descriptive data in the form of speech, writing, or observed behaviour (research subject) (Ahmadi, 2020). In line with Patton in (Ahmadi, 2020), a qualitative approach aims to understand phenomena naturally and in natural conditions (Ahmadi, 2020). Understanding this phenomenon is done by describing and exploring it in the form of a narrative.

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach in the form of written and spoken words from the objects observed in the typical culinary arts of the Watugajah Probolinggo Indonesian people. This research uses a technique of validity triangulation which is used to examine related phenomena from different points of view and perspectives. While the data analysis technique used is Roland Barthes' semiotics, which analyses the meaning of message symbols in typical culinary names. Data was collected using observation, interview, documentation and triangulation. The data source in this study came from interviews with researchers with Ms Saniya and Mrs Susmiyati during a visit to a tourist stall in Watu Gajah Village. The activity was carried out on April 20, 2022. The data for this research is a story that tells about Watu Gajah Village's typical food and the origins and sum-bol of the food. The conversations carried out during the interview described the ingredients and meanings of regional specialities.



III. Results and Discussion

In the study results, researchers will describe and discuss the typical food of Watu Gajah Village, which includes *brittle*, *klecci* and *pletter*. The storytelling narrative contained in the name of the food is as follows:

3.1 Getas



Source: Probolinggo Portal

Figure 1. *Getas*

According to the folklore of Watu Gajah residents, *getas* is a very strange food. People will assume that something is easily broken or fragile, starting from the name. *Getas* is a hard thing but breaks easily. This cake is often added to traditional markets.

The *getas* cake has a hard texture, but the sugar that covers it easily 'falls' with a sweet taste because of the sugar that surrounds it. The *getas* cake is made from glutinous rice flour. This cake has a delicious sweet taste and is wrapped in sugar (Nurhayati et al., 2013). This cake is crunchy and delicious, served with a warm drink as a friend to relax in the afternoon.

Getas that comes from Watu Gajah is black. This black gum is made from black sticky rice. Based on the brittle texture, people describe the condition of the future bride and groom. If the texture of sticky rice is fluffier, it means that the bride and groom have a soft heart, and if the opposite happens, the bride and groom are likened to being hard workers (Sunarti et al., 2018). *Getas*, which is used as a mandatory food in the wedding ceremony, is a manifestation of the culture that grows in the life of the Watu Gajah village community. Modern patterns have not displaced the stories of the people that have survived to this day. *Getas* is still used as a mandatory food that must always be present in engagement and wedding events. The manifestation of the form and taste of brittle is traced based on the meaning of the material used. As emphasized by (krisnadi, 2018) that a distinctive culture is a source of creativity growth. Managing this brittle is still very traditional, so the taste from ancient times until now remains the same, namely using

selected black sticky rice and fried on *tumang* (pot) using firewood. The sugar topping is the same, traditionally, too, namely by melting sugar in a large skillet until the sugar boils, half cold, then the brittle is put in the sugar that has been processed earlier to coat the entire brittle side.

Food is a tradition because, at first, food had a role in various rituals and traditional ceremonies and was made from generation to generation. In food processing, both methods and raw materials are continuously passed down from generation to generation. Food is not just for consumption but is a medium for establishing a relationship between humans and God or ancestral spirits, fellow humans, and nature. Food can also be seen as mixing more than one culture. Furthermore, traditional food is food and drink usually consumed by certain people, with a distinctive taste that is accepted by that community. In making traditional food, the role of culture is very important, namely in the form of skills, creativity, a touch of art, tradition and taste. The higher the culture of a community, the wider the variety of forms of food and the more complex the way of making it and the more complicated the way of serving it (Hasnah, 2021)

Table 2. Typical food of Watu Gajah *Getas*

Name	Symbol	Meaning
Pletter	Unity	not easily separated or not easily decomposed and has a strong bond, and is not easy to fall apart.

3.2 Klecci



Source: <https://kuenusantara.blogspot.com/2013/12/kue-kelici.html>

Figure 2. *Klecci*

According to the folklore of Watu Gajah residents, *klecci* cakes are made from grated cassava and then steamed. *Klecci* can be enjoyed with coconut and brown sugar topping. This cake is coloured red, yellow and green. This cake has a chewy texture. *Klecci* cake in ancient times was a staple food for the Watu Gajah community. This is different from what is currently considered a market snack. *Klecci* is often associated with lower-middle-class food, but in reality, this cake is a form of food security made from natural ingredients, namely cassava. Its colourful shape has its charm to attract people to enjoy it.

The chewy and sticky texture of *Klecci* symbolizes that the Indonesian state has a strong and attached brotherhood to one another. In any condition, the Indonesian people can help each other overcome the worst conditions, such as in the case of the food crisis, by creating food innovations from other carbohydrate sources into a staple food (Yunitasari, 2016).

Klecci, made from cassava, contain various important nutrients for the body. In 100 grams of boiled cassava, there are calories, of which 98 percent come from carbohydrates, and the rest comes from protein and fat. In the same measure, cassava also contains fiber, vitamins, and minerals (Salwa, 2016). The ancient Indonesians were more used to calling something easy, similar to the sound or the maker's name. Derived from the word "*klinci*", they then called it *Klecci*. Watu Gajah Village is very famous for this *klecci* special food. Once you enter Watu Gajah Village, you will immediately see a series of local businesses not far from cassava. In this village, creativity is proven to become an important thing in developing culinary tourism. Residents in this village have turned cassava, or cassava, identified with traditional food, into various culinary delights with present flavors (Sulaiha, 2018).

Table 3. Typical Food of Watu Gajah *Klecci*

Name	Symbol	Meaning
<i>Klecci</i>	Rainbow Textured Sticky	symbolizes that the Indonesian state has a strong brotherhood and is united

3.3 Pletter



Source: www.kompasiana.com

Figure 3. Pletter

Pletter is a processed food made from grated cassava mixed with brown sugar and topped with grated coconut. The pellets are usually wrapped in banana leaves to have a distinctive aroma of village food. *Platter* was originally a staple food for the local community (Arziana dan Pangesthi, 2015). However, now it has turned into a traditional snack.

Platter means not easily separated or not easily decomposed and has a strong bond and is not easily broken apart. This shows that the Indonesian people will continue to be united, not divided, be careful in taking action and make it very difficult to be disturbed by other parties. *Pletter* is assumed to be one Indonesian that is culturally diverse and will remain united and not easily separated (Kuswanto, 2018).

3.4 As for Storytelling

According to (Nurwitasari, 2020), gastronomy or gastronomy is the art or science of good food (good eating). A shorter explanation mentions gastronomy as everything related to the enjoyment of eating and drinking. Based on the above understanding, it can be concluded that the study (science) of gastronomy is about the culture and history contained in it, which makes the cultural identity of a region.

Palm sugar is a sweetener made from sap. The sweetness in palm sugar is quite mild. Palm sugar is considered an alternative sweetener because it is healthier and involves a simple manufacturing process (without adding chemicals). Palm sugar has a low glycemic index when compared to other sweeteners. Some ongoing research says palm sugar is good for people with diabetes (Sulistioeati, 2017).

Table 4. Typical Foods of Watu Gajah *Pletter*

Name	Symbol	Meaning
Pletter	Unity	not easily separated or not easily decomposed and has a strong bond, and is not easy to fall apart.

3.5 Gastronomy Typical food of Watu Gajah

As a Culinary Tourist Attraction, Watu Gajah is one of the villages that has become a favourite tourist destination for tourists, both tourists from local villages and tourists from outside the area. Watu Gajah has a natural beauty, namely a large rock in the shape of an elephant and is in the middle of rice fields right at the foot of the hill. Watu Gajah is known as the name of a traditional culinary village. The variety of culinary offerings at Watu Gajah presents all its authenticity, uniqueness, diversity, and authenticity, making this culinary much sought after by visitors. These dishes are *getas*, *klecci*, *pletter*, which are favourites of visitors who stop at Watu Gajah Village. The appeal of these culinary delights has their magnet for its visitors. By adding storytelling to these cuisines, visitors or tourists will get new experiences when they eat the dishes they eat. Storytelling can provide knowledge and insight for the visitors. In addition, if the visitors can see the process of making or processing the dishes they ordered, these culinary specialities will be unique because visitors can see the process directly. With experiences like this, visitors will tell their friends, relatives or relatives so that they will come back again to enjoy these culinary delights.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the research and discussion above, it can be concluded that the typical cuisine of the Watu Gajah community has various origin stories. Each name used has a good meaning. The philosophy of each name is a hope that can unite the Indonesian people because these foods have previously been present and become the staple food of the community, which has now turned into traditional snacks in the market.

As a gastronomic speciality of Watu Gajah Village, the culinary delights that are visitors' favourites can be developed by sustainably marketing the culinary and introducing the culinary arts by providing knowledge about the origins and processing methods used in storytelling to increase knowledge and insight for tourists. In addition, being allowed to see the manufacturing process adds to the uniqueness of Watu Gajah's special food through a series of gastronomic tours. With this interaction, indirectly, there are additional activities for tourists or visitors enjoying the cuisine. These tourist experiences will recommend the next visit for family, colleagues or relatives to come and enjoy the typical culinary offerings of Watu Gajah. Thus the typical cuisine of Watu Gajah Village will always be sustainable, and the culinary motivation of tourists to visit Watu Gajah Village will also increase.

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