

### **BUDDHI DHARMA UNIVERSITY**

# THE ANALYSIS OF FEMALE MASCULINITY THROUGH MIKASA ACKERMAN'S CHARACTER IN THE ANIMATION SERIES BASED ON THE SUBTITLE OF "ATTACK ON TITAN" SEASON ONE BY HAJIME ISAYAMA

Presented as a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Undergraduate

Program

SHINTA KHOERUNISA

20180600018

## FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES ENGLISH DEPARTMENT TANGERANG

2022



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### FINAL PROJECT APPROVAL

### Final Project Titles

1. The Analysis of Female Masculinity through Mikasa Ackerman's Character in the Animation series "Attack on Titan" season 1 by Hajime Isayama.

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by Hajime Isayama.

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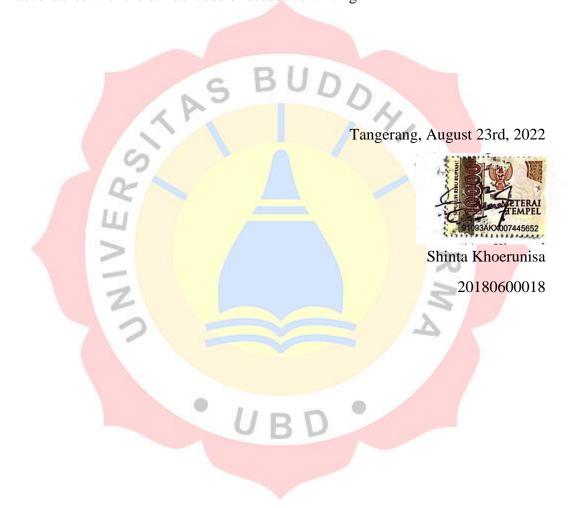
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### STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

I honestly declare that this thesis is my own writing, and it is true that I do not take any scholarly ideas or work from others. Those all citied works are quoted in accordance with the ethical code of academic writing.



### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I hereby would thank God, for the good health and wellbeing that helped the writer to complete this study. This study entitled "The Analysis of Female Masculinity through Mikasa Ackerman's Character in the Animation series "Attack on Titan" by Hajime Isayama" is submitted as the final requirement in accomplishing degree at English Literature in Social and Humaniora at Buddhi Dharma University. Though, this study is far from perfect knowing limited knowledge, experience and time that writer have but please allow the writer to express her sincere gratitude for:

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Tangerang, August 23rd, 2022

Shinta Khoerunisa

### **ABSTRACT**

We are living in a generation where society assumes that masculinity is always in form of a man. Though, society have assumed it wrong. This study, analyzed that masculinity is not always owned by man. With the title "The Analysis of Female Masculinity through Mikasa Ackerman's Character in the Animation Series Based on the Subtitle of "Attack on Titan" season one by Hajime Isayama" this study analysis the female masculinity through a Japanese animation series character, Mikasa Ackerman. Female Masculinity is women who consider themselves to be more masculine than feminine. The purpose of this study is to find the female masculinity through a character from the animation series, Attack on Titan, from her personality which can be included into a masculine traits, from the texts of the dialogues, from the way she act, her clothes, her action and the way she is responsible towards people around her. This study used descriptive qualitative method and will be collecting the data with the dialogues from the script and screenshot of the situation. Using the theory of female masculinity from Judith Halberstam (1998), she separated female masculinity into five categories they are butch realness, femme pretender, male mimicry, fag drag, and denaturalized masculinity. Mikasa Ackerman is able to fulfilled the requirements of four out of five categories which proves she is a masculine woman. The conclusion of this study, even Mikasa have fulfilled the category of female masculinity, she still have not met one category.

Keywords: female masculinity, masculine and feminine, animation series.

### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

FINAI	L PROJECT APPROVAL	i
	OMMENDATION FOR THE ELIGIBILITY OF THE FINAL ECT EXAMINATION	
	BOARD OF EXAMINERS	
	EMENT OF AUTHENTICITY	
	NOWLEDGEMENT	
	RACT	
TABL	E OF CONTENTSPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	V111
	PTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Background of the study	
1.2	Statement of the problem	3
1.3	Research Question	3
1.4	Scope of limitations	
1.5	Goal and function	
1.6	Conceptual framework	5
	<mark>PTE</mark> R II PR <mark>EVIOUS ST</mark> UDIES & THEO <mark>RETICAL F</mark> RAME <mark>V</mark>	
2.1 P	Previous Studies	7
2.2 T	Гheoretical Basis	9
2.2	2.1 Gender Roles & Gender Stereotypes	9
2.2	2.2 Masculinity	12
2.2	2.3 Femininity	13
2.2	2.4 Judith Halberstam's Female Masculinity Theory	13
2.3 Iı	introducing Anime	17
2.3	3.1 Intrinsic Elements	18
СНАР	PTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	20
3.1 S	Subject Matter	20
3.2 Material		
3.3 A	Approach	20
	Procedure	
	PTER IV DATA ANALYSIS	
	Female masculinity reveal in Mikasa Ackerman's character	
	1.1 Butch Realness	22

4.1.2 Femme Pretender	26
4.2.3 Male Mimicry	29
4.2.4 Fag Drag	33
4.2.5 Denaturalized Masculinity	35
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION	39
5.1 Conclusion	39
5.2 Suggestion	39
REFERENCES	41
SYNOPSIS	43
APPENDICES	47
APPENDIX 2APPENDIX 2	47
APPENDIX 2	49
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### CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

In a simple definition, literature is a written work. Literary works consist of various types, for example, poetry, prose and drama. Literature can be in the form of fictional stories through the author's imagination as well as an experience through a portrait of real life from the author. Wellek and Warren (1963) once said, "Also state that the term literature seems best if we limit it to the art of literature, that is, to imaginative literature. Literature is also produced by imagination of the author. Literature is not just a document of facts, it is not just the collection of real events though it may happen in the real life. Literature can create its own world as a product of the unlimited imagination."

Literature could be in any form, *anime* is one of the types of literature. *Anime* is a Japanese animation, the embodiment of contemporary literature with tendency to display Japanese pop culture influences that are globalize. According to D. Fennell (2021), anime is capable of interweaving images of fantasy from Japanese culture, other cultures, and concerns relevant to our globalizing world. Anime is the same with Disney's animation, it's just that anime originally made in Japan. The difference is, anime usually inspired by a manga (Japanese comic) and depicted through anime.

In literature also often brings up the issue of 'gender'. Usually, in literary works women are always described as having gentle characteristics, a princess who cannot stand alone or feminine and vice versa, men are always described as

intelligent, strong, and active people or in other words, masculine. Halberstam (7:24) ever stated that: "It is crucial that masculinity does not belong to men, has not produced only by men and does not properly expressed male heterosexuality... what we call 'masculinity' has also been produced by masculine women, gender deviants, and often lesbians." Which we can conclude that those characteristics of men that have mentioned above not only belong to men, but women also.

The writer took *Attack on Titan* as the media to support this study. *Attack on Titan* is basically a shonen or dark-fantasy or post-apocalyptic story. It tells a story about Eren Yeager, a young man who has ambitions to eliminate Titans who always terrorize humans accompanied by his two friends, Mikasa Ackerman and Armin Arlert. They are fighting for their lives to become the Titan exterminator soldier or Scout Regiment in order to fulfill their dream; seeing the sea. Mikasa is Eren and Armin's childhood friends. Mikasa in this comic is depicted as a scary but elegant Asian girl, has a strong physique and is protective of Eren. Since childhood Mikasa was determined to protect Eren no matter what.

In this research, writer puts interest in analyzing Mikasa Ackerman's characters as she represents the female masculinity in the animation series. Mikasa Ackerman's in this series will label that women are not weak and should not be subordinated. The values of feminism depicted through this character will be clear in this anime. Feminism itself demands gender equality between men and women. Henceforth, writer interested to describe the masculinity of female through Mikasa Ackerman's character. The title of this research will be "The Analysis of Female Masculinity through Mikasa Ackerman's Character in the Animation series based on the Subtitle of "Attack on Titan" Season one by Hajime Isayama".

### 1.2 Statement of the problem

Attack on Titan tells a story of the people who lives behind the walls to protect themselves from a Titan. Beside those walls, to protect the people from the Titans, in the city there is a military that is trained so that they are able to fight the Titans using tools made by the government. Mikasa is one of those warriors who is considered perfect for this part. Even though she is a woman, Mikasa is one of the strongest warriors among the male warriors. Based on the explanation above, this research will analyze the female masculinity of the main female character in the series, Mikasa Ackerman.

### 1.3 Research Question

Based on the reference above, the question of this research will be: "How does female masculinity reveal in the animation series *Attack on Titan* through Mikasa Ackerman's character?"

### 1.4 Scope of limitations

This research will use Judith Halberstam's female masculinity theory. This research will focus on how Mikasa Ackerman reveal the female masculinity through her characteristics. Though, there will be some support theory such as feminism (to show Mikasa's equality as a soldier) and gender roles theory. Writer uses female masculinity theory to describe the character of Mikasa Ackerman in the series whether her character's valid to the theory or not. The limit of this study will only focus on Mikasa Ackerman's characteristics, her purpose of life, and her equality as a soldier in society based on the series. It is also to prove that masculinity

was not only for men, it could also be living inside women's body. Therefore, the limit of this research will only based on the Japanese animation series *Attack on Titan* season one.

### 1.5 Goal and function

The goal of this research is to reveal female masculinity in the animation series Attack on Titan through Mikasa Ackerman's character. The function of this research is writer hoped everyone will have new perspective in the concept of masculinity, especially masculinity in women. Beside that, this research also hoping that it could give a new knowledge for readers through Japanese animation series about masculinity.

### 1.6 Conceptual framework

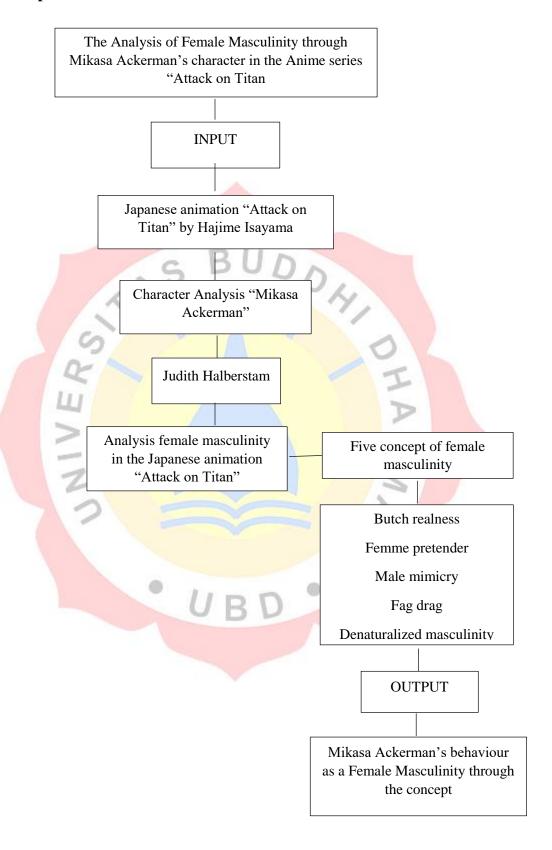


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Based on the figure above, the conceptual framework of this research will be:

- 1. The writer watched the animation series Attack on Titan in Netflix.
- 2. The writer identifying the characteristics of the female character, Mikasa Ackerman.
- The data classified using the theory of Female Masculinity by Judith Halberstam (1998) and divided into five concepts.
- 4. The writer found the female masculinity through Mikasa Ackerman's character.



### **CHAPTER II**

### PREVIOUS STUDIES & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Previous Studies

Before doing this research, the writer has conducted research by reading several journals and theses that have the same theory. The first journal was made by Retno Sulistia (2016) from State University of Surabaya, with the title Female Masculinity of Fa Mulan and It's Impact towards Her Relationship with Male Characters in Disney Movie Mulan. The researcher uses textual method with Disney entitled Mulan movie as the object. The second method that researcher uses are several books, journals, and some previous research that were using the same theory.

In her research, Retno shows that Mulan is an independent, strong, brave, heroic, rational and responsible female figure. That's a masculine characteristics which is proven to be Mulan's. She even could do all the things that men's usually do such as archery, sword and fighting. Though, after she changed her appearance into male, all friends of the opposite sex from her, sees her as a male instead of female. Writer uses this research because Retno use movie as her primary data which is come from a popular country. Even though writer will not use the same media, instead, writer choose an animation series from Japanese.

The second research comes from Parvathi (2017) from Indian Institute of Technology, with the title Female Masculinity in Dystopian Adolescent Fiction – Suzanne Collins Hunger Games Series. In her research, Parvathi read the three series from Hunger Games and she uses masculine and female masculinity as she doing a research on the main character, Katniss Everdeen. Parvathi found that

Katniss have a masculine characteristics that were made because of her sister, Primrose and her weak mother after her father died. Katniss thought that nobody would protect her family if it's not her. But her masculine stop in the third book Mockingjay, when she becomes a wife and have a daughter. It could be concluded that Katniss' masculinity is temporary. Parvathi, in her research, wrote that she rejects Halberstam's theory that female masculinity is a genuine and subversive act, and supports Judith Gardiner's theory which states that masculine attitudes towards women are only an imitation of hegemonic masculinity.

On Retno's research, the writer found the similarities such as analyzing the female character from a famous movie. Therefore, the previous study that writer used as reference, has the differences. Retno used a main character from Disney movie, Mulan, and she also analyzing the relationship between Mulan and the male character in the movie. The writer only analyzed the characteristics of Mikasa Ackerman using the five concept of female masculinity by Halberstam (1998).

The second previous studies, the writer also found the similarity, Katniss was not a masculine female before, but because of one situation, she has to be one. Mikasa also used to be a normal, weak girl who only lives with her family but one condition made her changed her character into a masculine female. Henceforth, there is also a difference. While Parvathi reject Halberstam (1998) concept of female masculinity, the writer uses Halberstam's theory (1998) to support analyzing the data in her research.

### 2.2 Theoretical Basis

This research will use Female Masculinity theory by Judith Halberstam (1998). The theory will support with gender stereotypes theory which include masculinity and femininity. Masculinity will be used to find characteristic of masculine in Mikasa Ackerman's. Then, the gender roles and stereotypes to describe the meaning of gender and the female masculinity will be use to prove that masculinity is not only for men through Mikasa Ackerman's characteristics.

### 2.2.1 Gender Roles & Gender Stereotypes

Gender roles define the various roles that people play throughout their lives, ranging from clothing to occupation (Johnson and Repta 7). In industrial societies, for example, girls learn nurturing skills to help them take domestic responsibility for caring for their family and community members, whereas boys learn aggressiveness, which is thought to be necessary for their expected roles as leaders, combatants, and providers in a highly competitive society. According to Anggarwati, gender roles are "socially and culturally defined prescriptions and beliefs about the behavior and emotions of men and women" (Anselmi and Law) (19). Gender roles are defined by the frequency with which women and men engage in activities (Williams and Best 28). As a result, the male gender role or female gender role is similar to a rule that men and women must follow in order to fulfill their roles in acting masculine or feminine (Brannon 168).

Brannon also stated that behavior defines gender roles, whereas gender stereotypes are beliefs and attitudes about masculinity and femininity. Gender stereotypes are beliefs about psychological traits and characteristics, as well as

activities that are appropriate for men or women. The public's perception of gender stereotypes is that men are masculine and women are feminine. Men are viewed as strong, while women are viewed as weak. Though, sometimes this perception are not always accurate. This perceive was made because of the traditional patriarchal culture.

Society was wrong in assuming gender is the same as sex. Gender is formed primarily through processes and actions that are subject to change and can occur at any time. Sex, on the other hand, is the biological status of humans accompanied by biological indicators such as chromosomes, reproductive organs, and genitals. Gender theory explains how the differences between men and women are innate gifts that are formed by the backgrounds that a person is taught from childhood. However, gender was constructed into two main characters, feminine and masculine. Here are the two characters made by the society:

### Traditional Gender Characteristics

Feminine: Masculine:

Submissive Dominant

Dependent Independent

Emotional Rational

Receptive Assertive

Intuitive Analytical

Timid Brave

Passive Active

Sensitive Insensitive

Gender stereotypes are extremely restrictive. They tend to attribute to women and men qualities that are also required of women and men. For example, stereotypes of women as warm and caring are matched by a societal prescription that they should be. Similarly, the stereotypical belief that men are strong and agentic is matched by societal expectations that they be strong and agentic. Pretince and Carranza's work emphasizes the quoted criteria that yielded some feminine and masculine characteristics that appear on the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI).

Masculine characteristics include: acting as a leader, being forceful, striving, logical, confident, sporty, competitive, defending one's own beliefs, being dominant, influential, having leadership abilities, being liberated, individualistic, making quick decisions, masculine, having a strong personality, being willing to take a stand, and being willing to take risks. Caring, joyful, naïve, kindhearted, does not use harsh language, eager to soothe hurt feelings, feminine, flatterable, gentle, innocent, loves children, loyal, sensitive to the needs of others, shy, soft spoken, sympathetic, tender, understanding, warm, and yielding are all feminine characteristics (19).

Gender roles, unlike sex, are mutable, which means they can change. Gender is more than just picking a role to play; it is influenced by parents, experiences, peers, culture, and society. According to Terman and Miles, men are stereotypically active, competent, rational, independent, and adventurous in Western culture, whereas women are passive, less competent, irrational, dependent, and unadventurous. In the past, measures of femininity or masculinity were frequently used to diagnose what were thought to be problems with basic gender identification, such as feminine-males or masculine-females (Burke and Stats 100).

### 2.2.2 Masculinity

Men are not born naturally masculine; rather, their surroundings shape them. In other words, culture determines masculinity and femininity. David Collinson and Jeff Heam (1994) argued that masculinity is something; which is not constant. This means that someone can be both feminine and masculine. Stimpson went on to say that masculinities are "the products of historical processes, not of God or nature" (as citied in Handajani, 2010:36). Masculinity is multifaceted, and "far from being limited to men, the concept of masculinity engages, inflects, and shapes everyone" (Halberstam, 1998: 14).

There are seven categories of masculinity according to what Janet Saltzman Chafetz (1978) have explained: 1.) male supposed to have strengths such as athletic and brave, 2.) masculinity requires to have a great responsibility for himself or family, 3.) have experienced in having a relationship with women, 4.) have a great way to control or hide his emotions, 5.) has an intelligence in the way he thinks, also logical, objective and rational, 6.) the conditions where a man could be responsible, independent, and dominance, 7.) also others characteristics such as trustworthy, competitive, ambitious, and egoistical.

Domination, power, and competitiveness are masculine values, according to Connell. Men are far more likely to hold positions of power in the state. Violence is a component of a dominance system, but it is also a measure of its flaws. There are two types of violence situation patterns. To begin, many members of the privileged group use violence to maintain their dominance. Second, violence becomes important in men's gender politics. The majority of major violence

incidents (including military combat, homicide, and armed assault) are between men (2005:82-83).

### 2.2.3 Femininity

According to Sandra Bartky (1997), femininity is the practice that results in women's bodies exhibiting feminine attitudes and behaviors. Tenderness, patience, kindness, and other feminine characteristics are examples. This trait is typically associated with women, reflecting elegance and strong femininity, but it can also be found in men, albeit in an unnatural manner. This is because femininity is the polar opposite of masculine traits found in men and gender stereotypes in society.

Femininity, like masculinity, is a set of skills and knowledge that organizes the structure of beauty and its power dynamics. It shapes not only how we do things, but also why we want to do them – it gives us our desires as well as the means to (almost) achieve them (Francis, 2003).

### 2.2.4 Judith Halberstam's Female Masculinity Theory

Masculinity does not always belong to men; women can have it as well, and vice versa. As previously stated, gender stereotypes about masculinity and femininity are created by society and reinforced by environment, culture, family, and experience. Society refers feminine and masculinity as how a man should be a man, woman should be a woman. Males see themselves as masculine figures, whereas females see themselves as feminine figures. But it is also possible for one to be female and choose herself as masculine or to be male and choose himself as feminine (Burke-Stets, 1985).

Judith (Jack) Halberstam has been instrumental in shifting the conversation away from a stigmatized and toward a positive view of female masculinity. Halberstam begins by assuming the term rather than clarifying it. S/he introduces her book Female Masculinity by stating that it is about women who consider themselves to be more masculine than feminine. Halberstam (1998) mentioned in her book: "it is crucial that masculinity does not belong to men, has not produced only by men and does not properly expressed male heterosexuality... what we call "masculinity" has also been produced by masculine women, gender deviants, and often lesbians."

Female masculinities are framed as rejected scraps of dominant masculinity in order for male masculinity to appear genuine, and heroic masculinity has been produced by and across both male and female bodies. As writer has mentioned above, based on Judith Halberstam theory, masculinity does not belong to men. Women are permitted to possess qualities associated with masculinity. According to Betty Freidan, if everyone develops the assumption of having masculine and feminine traits, there is no reason to consider women less than men (Tong, 2009:36). Female masculinity in general refers to the presence of masculine traits in the female body (Halberstam, 1998). The presence of female masculinity raises hopes for new undetectable genders such as tomboy, butch (masculine lesbian), drag king (woman dressed in male costume), and so on. Halberstam (1998) hopes to demonstrate that masculinity can be constructed in a woman's body and against female stereotypes to create a new masculinity without men by introducing the concept of female masculinity.

Halberstam's (1998) research on contemporary drag kings has gotten attention from ethnographic solidarity because it includes a subject of color who is often overlooked in discussions about alternative gender formations. Halberstam divided Drag King participants into five categories based on the concept of female masculinity in her research on the Drag King contest, which was very popular in America at the time: *Butch Realness, Femme Pretender, Male Mimicry, Fag Drag, and Denaturalized Masculinity*.

### A. Butch Realness

Butch realness could be a natural female who can easily pass as a male. Women who exude butch realness want to present themselves as men. "Similarly, masculinity within butch realness is neither assimilated into nor opposed to maleness; rather, it involves an active disidentification with dominant forms of masculinity, which is then recycled into alternative masculinities." (Halberstam, 1998). The point is that the concept of butch realness requires a sense of manliness in terms of appearance; it requires masculine appearance in order to pass as a male.

An active disidentification, or "a mode of dealing with dominant ideology, one that neither opts to assimilate within such a structure nor strictly opposes it," is one way to describe the relationship between butch realness and male masculinity. Similarly, masculinity is neither assimilated into nor opposed to maleness within butch realness; rather, it involves an active disidentification with dominant forms of masculinity, which are then recycled into alternative masculinities.

### **B.** Femme Pretender

Femme Pretender is a type of performative masculinity in which the person does not appear to be naturally masculine. It is predisposed to masculine acts rather than masculine appearance. A femme pretender will usually appear and dress up as a butch or male in a drag king contest to demonstrate how their femininity interferes with their appearance and fails to present their own masculinity convincingly. Finally, female pretenders are likely to use drag king contest to bridge the gender gap (Halberstam, 1998). In other words, women are expected to have masculine performance over appearance, according to the theory of the femme pretender.

### C. Male Mimicry

Male mimicry is demonstrated in the drag king show by women taking an identifiable form of male masculinity and attempting to replicate it. The main feature of male mimicry is the way women train to be able to act like men. Many courses even provided training services for women to be able to display masculine things at the time. They learn basic male manners such as walking, sitting, talking, and lying down. They are also taught the art of men taking up space, dominating, being generally rude, and even picking their nose.

### D. Fag Drag

A woman who fetishizes gay male culture by parodying gay masculine men is referred to as a fag drag. Gay male masculinity, like other forms of minority masculinity, stands apart from mainstream conceptions of maleness and is easily imitated by drag kings. Furthermore, some lesbians have positively fetishized gay

male sex culture in recent years, and some women base their masculinity and sex play on gay male models. The fact that the image has already been identified as a clone implies that replication and impersonation are already involved in its creation (Halberstam, 1998).

### E. Denaturalized Masculinity

Denaturalize masculinity may be a more showy frame of manliness than butch realness. Denaturalized manliness, on the other hand, investigates alternative masculinities to those embodied by male mimicry. The emcee of the drag king contest, for the most part, makes a display of vile manliness and misogyny. While the Drag King Workshop reflects maleness without satirizing it. However, sexism makes for good theater, and the drag king's exposure of sexism as the foundation of masculine realness serves to reveal the ideological stakes of male non-performativity (Halberstam, 1998).

### 2.3 Introducing Anime

Despite the growing body of anime literature, few people have investigated what the term actually means. Most people associate "anime" with "Japanese animation"; this is a relatively simple "out" to avoid difficult definition questions, and one that I admit to using on occasion. Anime could be mean as an animated series, which is a grouping of animated works that all have the same series title and are usually related to one another. These episodes should typically contain the same main characters, a diverse cast of secondary characters, and a central theme.

### 2.3.1 Intrinsic Elements

A literary work's intrinsic element is also known as its framework. The presence of this element renders the text literary and directly contributes to the construction of a story. Among the intrinsic elements are themes, settings, characterizations, plots, narrative points of view, language or language style, and other elements.

### 2.3.1.1 Character and Characterization

Essentially, all stories in literary works depict human behavior through the characters they contain. Character, on the other hand, refers to a character's personality and attitude as perceived by the reader, more specifically the personal qualities of a character. Characters are a picture of someone who is clearly displayed in a story, whereas characters are more directed to the story actors. Abrams (1999:46) defines character as a person who possesses certain "intellectual," "emotional," and "moral qualities." In Aspects of the Novel, Forster distinguishes two types of characters based on the complexity of their characteristics. They are both flat and round characters. Flat characters are easily understood and remembered because they are made up of only one characteristic that is not affected by circumstances.

Characters, according to Steven Croft (2002:113), are the most important aspect of any play or novel. Here are some methods for developing a character image: how the character appears, what the character says and how they say it, character's thoughts from soliloquies, how they act, how their words match their underlying motives, and so on. According to Jacob (1987), when analyzing a literary character, the writer begins to identify the character's distinguishing

characteristics. A trait is a mental or habitual quality. Robert and mode behavior, such as never repaying borrowed money, avoiding eye contact, or always believing oneself to be the center of attention, are discussed in their book "literature: an Introduction to Reading and Writing."

In anime, characters are depicted in a variety of moods, emotions, and expressions. Basic facial positions include front and side views, as well as moderate high and low angles and close-ups. With an amplified eye shape and large irises, anime eyes are a prominent feature. Expressions are formed in tandem with the eyelid and brow. Minimal facial features and clothing details, such as a nose or an unadorned dress, are all common in anime. Lip-synching is used in anime to simplify character interaction. When closed, anime mouths are a simple shaped line, and lips are shaded.

### **CHAPTER III**

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Subject Matter

The subject of this study is a Japanese animation series entitled *Shingeki no Kyojin* or its English version is Attack on Titan. Originally, Attack on Titan comes from a Japanese comic series (manga) illustrated by Hajime Isayama and it was adapted into a animation series around April 7, 2013. In the United States and Canada, the series has streamed on Crunchyroll, Funimation, Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Hulu, in addition to airing on Adult Swim's Toonami programming block in the U.S. The writer put an interest to analyze the character from this series because writer loves to watch an animation series from Japan, or we can say anime.

### 3.2 Material

Attack on Titan season one which has a total of 25 episodes released on 2013 but only 8 episodes will be the material of this study. The data will also be collected by some information from the internet, such as journals, article, and previous studies about the female masculinity to help with the data source in this research.

### 3.3 Approach

This study will use descriptive qualitative method as the data for this study. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), qualitative research is descriptive in nature, with data collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers.

Which means, research procedures that produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words about the characteristics of an individual, state or symptom of a particular group that can be observed.

Descriptive qualitative method what is meant in this study are data that collected in the form of words, phrases, clauses, sentences or paragraphs to understand descriptive data in the form of pictures and words (in conversation). Because researchers try to understand the phenomenon of what the research subject experiences, for example: behavior, perception, motivation, action and others.

### 3.4 Procedure

There will be several procedures that writer will use to analyze this study. The procedure will tell how the writers find information about the topic and how she collects the data in this study. The writer will watch the Attack on Titan season one and identifying the characteristics of Mikasa Ackerman by sorting out related scenes and dialogues. Then, writer will classify the data based on the female masculinity theory by Judith Halberstam. Writer will also capture, analyze, and display scenes related to the problem. The data will also used a transcript of Attack on Titan season one to support the writer analyzing this research.