

英 文 要 旨	
論文題目	The Novel as a Stage, Narrative as a Medium: Performativity and (Un)translatability in the Works of Dazai Osamu
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Dazai Osamu's literature is marked by its distinctive narrative style and prose, characterized by techniques that break away from conventional novelistic forms. In many works, the narrator shifts rapidly between perspectives, altering not only the pronouns but also his own stance within the text and toward the reader. Unlike the fixed and consistent perspective typically associated with the *Shishōsetsu*, Dazai's narration resembles a staged performance, in which the narrator assumes different roles and voices much like an actor on stage. Through these shifts, the relationship between narrator and reader, and the distance between reader and the world of the text, are dynamically reconstructed, generating both immersion and tension.

Dazai's distinctive narrative voice continues to resonate with Japanese readers today, and his major works have been translated into more than twenty languages, reaching a wide international audience. New translations continue to appear, yet the challenge remains how to reproduce the allure of his narration without diminishing its performative qualities.

Structured in two parts, this thesis first analyzes Dazai's narrative techniques, with particular attention to the fluid use of first, second, and third person perspectives in works such as *Dōke no Hana* and *Ōtō*. These shifts, I argue, generate a multilayered narration that exceeds conventional categories of prose and brings his writing into dialogue with Japanese orature, including *Rakugo* and *Gidayū*. Works such as *Otogizōshi*, *Sarumenkanja*, and *Randa no Karuta* are read not only as literary texts but also as performances that create a distinctive reading experience. The second part of the thesis turns to translation, examining existing English and Arabic versions of Dazai's works and evaluating how shifts in pronouns and narrative voice have been rendered. It also considers how these choices affect, and at times transform, the tone and the reading experience produced by the original.

This thesis does not argue that Dazai's voice is untranslatable. Rather, it contends that what may initially appear untranslatable in his literature—the shifting pronouns, performative voice, and multilayered narration—is in fact precisely what most urgently demands translation. These elements are not obstacles but the very core of Dazai's artistry. To convey them, the translator must assume the role of a co-performer alongside Dazai and his characters, re-creating the immersive experience of the original by restaging its performative narrative act and inviting readers into the text.

By foregrounding Dazai's performative narration and situating it within traditions of orature and performance, this thesis offers a methodological lens that moves beyond autobiographical reduction so often found in non-Japanese scholarship. In doing so, it pens new pathways in Dazai scholarship. At the same time, by framing translation as a mode of performance, it contributes to the field of translation studies more broadly, proposing a practical strategy for carrying Dazai's performative narration into other languages.

**Keywords:** Dazai Osamu; Performativity; Multilayered Narratives; Translation; Untranslatability; English; Arabic