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Reconstructing modality in intersemiotic translation: Pragmatic strategies of fascinative communication

Modalumo rekonstrukcija intersemiotinėje vertimo plotmėje:
pragmatinės žavėjimo komunikacijos strategijos

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Abstract

This article explores the reconstruction of modality in intersemiotic translation through the lens of pragmatic strategies that foster fascinative communication. Focusing on Dan Brown's novels and their Ukrainian translations, it shows how modality shapes readers' perception and narrative immersion. Drawing on pragmalinguistics, cognitive linguistics, semiotics, and translation studies, the analysis highlights the role of Grice's cooperative principle and implicatures, conventional and unconventional, functioning as carriers of modal meanings across cultural boundaries. Ultimately, the study argues that translating modality involves not only linguistic conversion but also cognitive and cultural adaptation, thereby positioning intersemiotic translation as a dynamic site of intercultural communication. The findings contribute to broader discussions in translation theory by highlighting the necessity of context-sensitive, pragmatically-informed strategies to preserve the fascinative potential of literary texts in cross-cultural settings.

KEYWORDS: modality, literary translation, intersemiotic translation, fascinative communication, implicature, verbal and non-verbal means.

Introduction

Contemporary translation studies increasingly emphasise a departure from the principle of dichotomy, pointing to the dissolution of binary oppositions and the search for compromises (Holmes, 1972) in the reproduction and transmission of key elements of the

source text – specifically, the modality of the message. Modality¹ is understood here as a new, more pragmatically oriented concept in terms of analysing and comprehensively studying the means of expressing modal relations. These theoretical postulates necessitate the identification of the modal nature of the speaker's or author's subjective attitude toward the information, as well as the evaluation of that information by the speaker and, by extension, the author of the literary text.

Communication (Heath & Bryant, 2000) as a dynamic and evolving phenomenon, often relies on strategies that captivate and engage audiences. One such approach is fascination (Kozyarevych-Zozulya, 2023), a rhetorical and semiotic tool that enhances the effectiveness of messages across different modalities. The aim of this article is to analyse the functioning of modality in Dan Brown's literary works as a means of fascinating communication and the specifics of translation into Ukrainian. This article explores the mechanisms of fascination within intersemiotic translation – the process of transferring meaning between distinct sign systems, such as language, image, sound, facial expressions, body language, eye contact, tone of voice, touch, appearance, and proxemics. By examining how fascination operates in cross-modal communication, we aim to uncover the principles that govern its impact on interpretation, reception, and engagement. The study draws upon interdisciplinary insights from semiotics, linguistics, discourse studies to provide a comprehensive perspective on how fascination strategies shape meaning-making processes in contemporary literary discourse.

In light of this, the relevance of this research is associated with its potential to contribute to current questions at the intersection of modality, fascinating communication and translation, related to (a) determining how epistemic modalities are restructured in intersemiotic translation to preserve fascinating potential and to ensure cultural resonance across semiotic systems; (b) identifying the role of pragmatic implicatures – both conventional and unconventional – in shaping modal meanings and how these implicatures are adapted in translation to maintain narrative intrigue; (c) establishing the translator's role as a semiotic mediator in facilitating the cooperative principle and managing the intercultural negotiation of meaning through verbal and non-verbal modal cues; (d) analysing how multimodal fascinating strategies – such as typography, gesture, proxemics, and paralinguistic features – contribute to reader engagement and how these are reinterpreted within the target culture and language.

The novelty of the article lies in its multi-faceted and interdisciplinary approach to exploring the reconstruction of modality within the framework of intersemiotic translation, with a particular focus on fascinating communication. Unlike prior studies that treat modality predominantly within the boundaries of linguistic structures or translation equivalence, this research expands the concept by integrating pragmalinguistic, cognitive, and semiotic perspectives to examine how modality functions as a tool of fascination in literary discourse. By analysing Dan Brown's novels and their Ukrainian translations, the article foregrounds the translator's active role in reshaping epistemic modality through verbal and non-verbal semiotic resources, including implicatures, typography, proxemics, and paralinguistic cues. Moreover, the study uniquely positions intersemiotic translation as a dynamic site of intercultural and intermodal negotiation, emphasising the cooperative principle as a guiding mechanism for sustaining narrative intrigue across cultural and linguistic boundaries. This comprehensive perspective offers a new lens for understanding the cognitive and affective dimensions of modality, contributing to broader theoretical discussions in translation studies, discourse analysis, and semiotics.

Through a comparative study of the original texts and their Ukrainian translations, this research seeks to uncover the impact of modality on the reader's perception and the overall narrative experience. Additionally, the study will consider the broader implications of these findings for translation theory and practice, particularly in literary translation.

¹ Although the linguistic literature on modality remains relatively limited, no consensus exists on how modality might be conceptualised or analysed. Whereas some linguists approach modality by identifying sentence-level structures that contain dedicated modal indicators (e.g., Palmer, 1986), others identify modality primarily with the speaker's intended meaning (Lyons, 1977). Given that our interest is not only in linguistic universals but rather in analysing intentionality, both approaches are applied in the context of intersemiotic literary translation.

Theoretical Background

Recent advances in linguistics and Translation Studies have redirected scholarly attention toward the dynamic, multimodal, and socially situated nature of meaning-making (Alves & Jakobsen, 2020; Pérez-González, 2014). Research in discourse analysis, cognitive linguistics, and pragmatics has foregrounded communication as a process of active stance-taking and subjective positioning (Asoulin, 2016; Barker, 2004; Capone, 2019). This shift toward a discourse- and cognition-oriented paradigm has encouraged the re-examination of classical categories – including modality – through the lenses of pragmatics, cognitive processing, and multimodal meaning-making (Asoulin, 2016; Capone, 2019). Within this expanded framework, modality is no longer viewed solely as a grammatical subsystem, but as a composite semiotic resource through which speakers and writers encode stance, knowledge assessment, inference and evaluative judgment. Within this paradigm, modality emerges as a central semiotic resource through which speakers and writers construe judgments, express knowledge and belief, and negotiate interpersonal relations. This view complements earlier foundational accounts rooted in philosophical logic (von Wright, 1951; Lewis, 1973), but extends them by integrating cognitive, cultural, and pragmatic dimensions (Nuyts, 2001; Mello & Raso, 2011).

Contemporary linguistic models conceptualise modality as a multifaceted category encompassing epistemic, deontic, and evaluative components (Palmer, 1986; Downing & Locke, 1992), while recent empirical studies highlight its context-sensitive and language-specific realisation across genres and cultures (Kranich, 2016; Yu & Wang, 2023). Within literary discourse, modality contributes to narrative tension, mystery, and epistemic ambiguity, functioning as a key mechanism through which readers are invited to evaluate probabilities, infer hidden meanings, and engage with narrative uncertainty in creating suspense and guiding reader perception (Kranich, 2016; Yu & Wang, 2023). These insights are particularly relevant to the genre of the intellectual thriller, represented prominently by Dan Brown's novels. These insights align with cognitive-pragmatic approaches showing that modal meanings frequently depend on implicature, inference, and subtle multimodal cues rather than explicit linguistic marking (Grice, 1989; Wharton, 2012).

Contemporary translation theory conceptualises intersemiotic translation as a transformative process that distributes meaning across linguistic, visual, spatial, and embodied modalities (Canepari, 2022; Queiroz & Ată, 2023). From a cognitive-semiotic perspective, meaning transfers depend on conceptual blending, cultural schema activation, and semiotic reinterpretation (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002; Paolucci, 2021). In this framework, translators act as semiotic mediators who reconstruct relationships between text, image, gesture, and symbolic systems (Petrilli, 2015; 2017; Campbell & Vidal, 2018).

Ukrainian scholarship has increasingly engaged with these multimodal and intersemiotic perspectives. Research by Lukianova (2020), Marunina and Pidhrushna (2024) demonstrates that intersemiotic translation in the Ukrainian context frequently entails the systematic re-encoding of visual, prosodic, and paralinguistic cues into verbal or hybrid structures, highlighting the active transformation of semiotic resources rather than their direct transfer. Building on this line of inquiry, Holubenko and Kukarina (2024) show that modality in English–Ukrainian literary translation functions as an interpretive and evaluative category shaped by the translator's semiotic choices, which mediate between linguistic form, narrative intention, and cultural frames of reference. Furthermore, recent studies in audiovisual and literary adaptation (Khutorna, 2023) underscore the importance of semiotic layering, multimodal cohesion, and culturally situated meaning-making, illustrating how translators and adaptors reconstruct affective, symbolic, and epistemic dimensions across media. Collectively, these works signal a growing recognition within Ukrainian translation studies of the complex multimodal and cognitive operations underlying intersemiotic meaning transfer.

However, despite these contributions, systematic analyses of how multimodal and modal meanings are reconstructed in translations of globally influential fiction remain scarce. Together, these works focus broadly on semiotic transfer, humour, culture-specific items, or filmic discourse, leaving the interaction between modality and fascinative strategies underexplored. These above mentioned multimodal and pragmatic dimensions position Dan Brown's works as exemplary cases for investigating how modality and multimodality jointly construct fascinative communication – understood as discourse strategies that sustain cognitive intrigue, emotional tension, and interpretive engagement (Hogshead, 2010; Kozyarevych-Zozulya, 2023).

Dan Brown's novels provide an especially rich empirical field for intersemiotic analysis: their multimodal elements – encoded symbols, inscriptions, artworks, architectural diagrams, religious iconography – demand interpretative transformation. Translating these semiotic layers into Ukrainian requires reconstructing not only linguistic content but also symbolic density, cultural allusions, and genre-specific modes of fascination.

Despite extensive research on modality, multimodality, and intersemiotic translation, existing studies have not systematically examined modality as a fascinating strategy or addressed the multimodal reconstruction of encoded and symbolic structures in English–Ukrainian translations of intellectual thrillers such as Dan Brown's works. Moreover, the ways in which translators mediate implicatures, epistemic cues, and typographic signals that sustain narrative intrigue in Brown's fiction remain largely unexplored. This study addresses this gap by analysing how epistemic, deontic, and axiological modalities are reconstructed in Ukrainian to preserve fascinating potential across semiotic systems.

Methodology

The investigation of modality as a means of fascinating communication in intersemiotic translation employs a multi-step, interdisciplinary methodology that integrates theoretical analysis with empirical research. The approach is guided by the principles of anthropocentrism, pragmatism, interdisciplinarity, systematicity, and integrity. Anthropocentrism highlights the translator as the central agent whose semiotic choices shape modal reconstruction. Pragmatism emphasises the role of inferred meaning and communicative intention, extending beyond the semantic-syntactic layer. Interdisciplinarity draws upon translation studies, cultural studies, cognitive linguistics, and semiotics to account for the complexity of cross-modal meaning transfer. Systematicity treats modality as a structured network of interrelated verbal and non-verbal elements, while integrity requires that the translated text preserves the functional impact of the source text on its reader.

The theoretical foundation integrates key concepts from cognitive linguistics, cognitive semiotics, and Translation Studies. Epistemic modality is examined in line with Palmer's (1986) framework, which links modal expressions to assessments of knowledge, probability, and belief that shape narrative ambiguity and tension. Translation is understood not merely as linguistic substitution but as a cognitive-semiotic process (Catford, 1965; Neubert, 1992), requiring adaptation of conceptual structures and culturally conditioned interpretations. This study adopts the cognitive-semiotic paradigm (Petrilli, 2017) and Chesterman's (1997) translation strategies to elucidate how modal nuances shift across languages and semiotic systems. Pragmatic interpretation follows Grice's (1989) principles of cooperation and implicature, recognising that modal meaning often resides in what is suggested rather than explicitly stated.

The distinction between explicit propositional content and implicature is central to analysing modal reconstruction. Explicit meaning corresponds to the factual, declarative layer of the utterance, while implicatures – both conventional and unconventional – serve as carriers of modal force that guide the reader's interpretation and emotional engagement. This framework allows for a fine-grained understanding of how translators negotiate modal meaning in cross-cultural contexts.

The methodological design is structured around three core research tasks: (1) to identify and analyse key verbal and non-verbal modal markers in Dan Brown's novels and their Ukrainian translations; (2) to examine how these markers are restructured in intersemiotic literary translation; and (3) to determine the translation strategies used to transfer modal and multimodal meanings and assess how fascinating effects are preserved across semiotic and cultural boundaries.

Corpus and Data Collection

The empirical material comprises a corpus of four Dan Brown novels: *The Da Vinci Code*, *Angels & Demons*, *The Lost Symbol*, and *Inferno*. These works were selected due to their multimodal narrative architectures, reliance on epistemic puzzles, and dense symbolic layering. The corpus includes 2567 pages of English source texts and 2152 pages of Ukrainian translations. A total of 9376 instances were extracted for analysis: 5051 verbal markers (modal verbs, modal adverbs, epistemic expressions), and 4325 non-verbal markers (typography, paralinguistic descriptions, gesture references, symbolic and diagrammatic elements). Seg-

ments were selected for their relevance to epistemic modality and fascinative communication, ensuring representation across narrative functions and multimodal cues.

Analytical Procedures

A two-stage analytical procedure was used to investigate how modality and fascinative effects are reconstructed in translation.

Semiotic-Pragmatic Analysis

This stage examines how modal meanings are encoded or implied in the English texts. Guided by Grice’s cooperative principle and implicature theory, each segment was analysed to determine: 1) explicit vs. implicit modal meanings; 2) the role of implicatures as carriers of epistemic, deontic, and axiological force; and 3) the interaction between verbal markers and non-verbal cues (typography, visual references, gesture descriptions) in creating fascinative effects. Non-verbal modality was examined here using cognitive-semiotic models (Paolucci, 2021) to understand how multimodal features support narrative ambiguity, suspense, and interpretive engagement.

Contrastive Translation Analysis

The second stage compares English source segments with Ukrainian translations using frameworks from Catford (1965), Neubert (1992), Chesterman (1997), and Petrilli (2017). The analysis focuses on: (1) shifts in epistemic strength (e.g., increased certainty, weakened probability); (2) changes in illocutionary force of modal expressions; (3) cultural adaptation of modal cues and implicit knowledge structures; and (4) re-semiotization of multimodal elements, including typographic and symbolic features.

Special attention is given to cases where modal meaning is redistributed across semiotic channels, e.g., when implicit cues in the English text are verbalised in Ukrainian, or when symbolic artefacts require culturally aligned reinterpretation. The analytical framework used to examine how modal meanings and fascinative effects are reconstructed across linguistic and semiotic boundaries is schematically presented in **Table 1** based on the works of Petrilli (2017) and Chesterman’s (1997) translation strategies, Grice’s (1989) cooperative principle and Palmer’s (1986) epistemic modality:

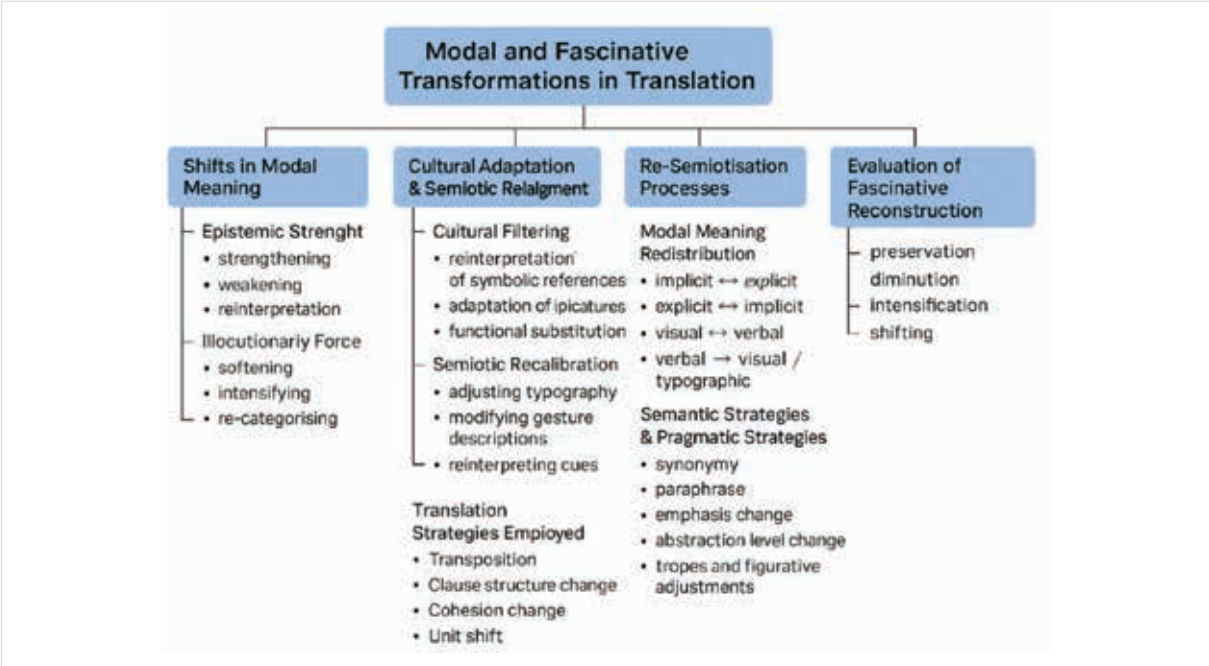


Table 1 Modal and fascinative transformations in translation

The map integrates six dimensions of analysis: (1) shifts in epistemic strength (strengthening, weakening, reinterpretation); (2) shifts in illocutionary force (softening, intensifying, re-categorising); (3) cultural adaptation and semiotic realignment of implicit cues and symbolic references; (4) re-semiotisation processes that redistribute modal meaning across channels (implicit ↔ explicit; visual ↔ verbal); (5) translation strategies employed according to Chesterman's syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic categories; and (6) evaluation of fascinate reconstruction, coded as preservation, diminution, intensification, or functional shifting. Together, these components provide a comprehensive mapping of how translators negotiate epistemic tension, multi-modal ambiguity, and narrative engagement in Dan Brown's novels.

This integrated methodology ensures a coherent and rigorous approach to examining how modality and fascinate communication are reconstructed across linguistic and semiotic boundaries in the Ukrainian translations of Dan Brown's novels.

Results and Discussion

This study investigates the verbal and non-verbal means of modality in selected works by Dan Brown and their Ukrainian translations, with a particular emphasis on their intention and intersemiotic translation. Drawing on data from both the source texts and their translated counterparts, we identified the pragmatic and semiotic mechanisms involved in encoding and decoding meaning-naming. These mechanisms are essential to the reader's interpretive engagement and the text's fascinate potential. From a cognitive semiotic perspective (Paolucci, 2021), seemingly mundane verbal and non-verbal elements are shown to carry profound epistemological weight, often shaping the reader's perception of narrative reliability and ambiguity. The study further explores how translation strategies mediate this process, assessing the extent to which modality is preserved, adapted, or transformed in the target language. Pragmatic insights – particularly those concerning implicature, speaker intention, and contextual inference – are central to this comparative analysis, revealing how the interplay between form and meaning contributes to the evocative and intellectually stimulating nature of Brown's narrative style. Selected examples from both the English originals and their Ukrainian versions are provided to illustrate these theoretical observations and the translation strategies employed in rendering modality across languages and cultures.

Thus, Palmer (2002) points out that one of the challenges in analysing modal verbs lies in their diverse contextual usage, which cannot always be determined by formal or semantic features (Palmer, 2002, p. 27). In fulfilling their primary function, modal verbs convey the speaker's modal attitude toward the action itself, expressing necessity, possibility, or desirability of the action being performed. At the same time, each modal verb possesses a core meaning that serves as the basis for possible nuances of this attitude. Additionally, modal verbs perform a secondary function, expressing the speaker's modal stance toward the entire proposition.

A stylistically adequate translation is one in which the semantic core of the units in both the source and target languages aligns, and the expressive elements of the translation correspond to those of the original in both functional and structural content (Halverson, 2020; Holmes, 1972). Accordingly, the key idea of intersemiotic translation is that an adequate translation requires comprehension and interpretation of information encoded at both linguistic and non-linguistic levels, and its reproduction in other semiotic systems in a way that preserves the original meaning intended by the author of the literary text. The analysis of the data reveals the intersemiotic nature of translating both verbal and non-verbal expressions of modality, functioning as part of the author's fascinate strategy. This strategy involves the transposition of non-verbal elements into verbal forms, thereby: (1) enhancing the sense of mystery; (2) facilitating cultural adaptation, thus bridging two distinct cultural contexts to improve comprehensibility and resonance within the target audience; and (3) modifying the illocutionary force of the utterance. In this process, verbal expressions of modality – such as modal verbs and markers – undergo transformation into more figurative and culturally marked language, while non-verbal cues – such as gestures, facial expressions, proxemics, and typographic features – are reinterpreted through verbal means. This phenomenon is illustrated in the following examples.

The modal verb “should” is rendered through adaptive translation transformations involving a shift in illocutionary force:

Ex 1 *Bellamy smiled and retrieved a pencil and paper for Langdon. “Then perhaps you should enlighten us? (Brown, 2008, p. 46).*

Беламі посміхнувся і подав Ленгдонові олівець та аркуш паперу.

– Тоді просвітїть нас, зробіть ласку (Brown, 2023, p. 62).

In the excerpt from *The Lost Symbol*, the character Bellamy addresses Langdon with the phrase “Then perhaps you should enlighten us?”, implying that Bellamy believes Langdon possesses crucial information that could shed light on a particular issue or mystery. The modal verb “should” here functions as a polite suggestion or piece of advice, encouraging Langdon to share his knowledge or insight on the topic under discussion. In the Ukrainian translation, however, the modal verb is omitted and replaced through syntactic and lexical shifts. Specifically, the imperative form is employed alongside a traditional Galician-Ukrainian idiomatic intensifier – “зробіть ласку” (literally, “do us a kindness”) – which serves to convey politeness and rhetorical urgency.

The phrase “зробіть ласку” has deep cultural and literary roots in Ukrainian, notably appearing in the epistolary style of the renowned Ukrainian poet Lesya Ukrainka. For instance, she writes in her letters: “Будьте ласкаві, добудьте мені адресу Павла Граба” (Be so kind as to obtain Pavlo Hrabo’s address for me) (to M. Pavlyk) and “Зробіть велику ласку, нагляньте особисто, щоб на 24 стор. було надруковано як слід...” (Do me a great kindness and personally ensure that page 24 is printed correctly...) (Ukrainka, 1978, pp. 129, 134). This stylistic choice in translation not only localizes the utterance culturally but also maintains the pragmatic function of the original – that of urging an informative response – while subtly recontextualizing it within Ukrainian linguistic and cultural norms.

Ex 2 *Fache’s brow furrowed in apparent confusion. He opened his mouth to speak, but Sophie had already turned back to Langdon. “Mr. Langdon,” she declared, pulling a small slip of paper from her pocket, “this is the number for your embassy’s messaging service. They asked that you phone in as soon as possible.”*

She handed him the paper with an intent gaze. “While I explain the code to Captain Fache, you need to make this call.” (Brown, 2006, p. 17).

Фаш наморщив чоло, не знаючи, як учинити. Він уже було відкрив рот, щоб щось сказати, але Софі знову звернулася до Ленгдона.

– Мєсьє Ленгдон, – сказала вона, витягаючи з кишені якийсь папірець, – ось телефон поштової служби посольства. Вони просили, щоб ви зателефонували якнайшвидше. – Вона простягнула йому папірець, уважно дивлячись просто у вічі. – Подзвоніть зараз, доки я пояснюватиму капітанові цей код (Brown, 2022, p. 19).

The translation of the phrase “He opened his mouth” as “Він уже було відкрив рот” (lit. “He had already opened his mouth”) in *The Da Vinci Code* through the use of the Ukrainian past anterior tense introduces a significant shift in the dynamic modality of the original expression. In the source language, the phrase “He opened his mouth to speak” directly indicates an action initiated with the intention to speak, which is then interrupted by another event. This structure creates a sense of tension and anticipation regarding what was about to be said.

The use of the past anterior in the Ukrainian translation, via the construction “уже було відкрив рот”, adds an additional layer of meaning to the scene. This formulation does not merely narrate an action but subtly suggests a sense of incompleteness or withdrawal from an intended act, emphasizing that the character had already made a movement towards speaking but was interrupted before he could proceed. Such an adap-

tation enhances the emotional nuance of disappointment or hesitation, reinforcing the moment's abruptness and unpredictability – elements that are less overt in the English original.

Similarly, the translation of the phrase “turned back” as “знову звернулася до” (lit. “once again addressed”) in the corresponding excerpt from *The Da Vinci Code* results in minor but noticeable changes to the dynamic modality. In the source text, “turned back” denotes Sophie’s physical motion as she turns her attention back to Langdon after being momentarily distracted. This action carries a clear visual dimension, underscoring the physical reorientation between characters. In the Ukrainian version, however, “знову звернулася до” shifts the focus from physical motion to the communicative intent of re-engaging, thus softening the visual imagery and highlighting a more interpersonal dimension. This translational choice subtly alters the interpretation of the scene, emphasizing Sophie’s purposeful action and reshaping the viewer’s perception of character interaction.

Subsequently, Sophie extends a note to Langdon “with intent gaze”, which, according to the Oxford Learner’s Dictionary, denotes “a strong interest and attention” (Oxford University Press, n.d.). In the Ukrainian translation, this is rendered idiomatically through the participial construction “дивлячись просто у вічі” (“looking straight into [his] eyes”), with the addition of the intensifying adverb “просто” (“straight”), which amplifies the visual component and conveys a strong emotional charge creating the fascination effect. This choice emphasizes directness, openness, and boldness of action, adding expressive force that corresponds with the affective intensity suggested in the original.

Ex 3 “Someone was shooting at us.” “Shooting at you, Professor. Let’s be clear on that.” (Brown, 2013, p. 18).

– Стріляли не в нас, а в тебе. Це однозначно (Brown, 2023, p. 31).

In *Inferno* the omission of the word “shooting” in the translation of the phrase “Someone was shooting at us” into Ukrainian as “Стріляли не в нас, а в тебе. Це однозначно.” (lit. “They weren’t shooting at us, but at you. That’s for sure.”) results in a shift of focus from the act of shooting itself to the direction or target of the action (“not at us, but at you”). This reorientation makes the utterance more personal and direct. The removal of the lexical unit “shooting” functions as a stylistic adaptation strategy that emphasizes the intended target rather than the action itself. Consequently, the stress is placed on the object of the shooting – in this case, “the Professor.”

In the original English text, the use of italics for “you” and the inclusion of the title “Professor” enhance both the emphasis and the specificity of the message. The italics serve to underscore that the act of violence was specifically directed at “you”, while the reference to “Professor” identifies the addressee with clarity and formality. In the Ukrainian translation, the absence of these elements makes the statement less specific and diminishes its emotional intensity. Whereas in the English version, the sentence’s focus is clearly directed at the act of shooting and the explicit reference to “you, Professor,” lending it a sense of immediacy and personal engagement, the Ukrainian translation diffuses this focus. The lack of italicization and formal address renders the statement more general and less direct.

Furthermore, the repositioning of the ellipsis in the translated version influences the reception and interpretation of the message. This typographical change alters the rhythm and pacing of the utterance, potentially affecting how the message is emotionally processed by the reader. This phenomenon will be further illustrated and analyzed through specific examples in the following sections.

Ex 4 *He’ll tell me to upload this video to the world, no questions asked [...] and he’ll be furious at me for asking* (Brown, 2013, p. 19).

Він накаже мені оприлюднити це відео [...] скаже, щоб я не ставив зайвих запитань, і розлютиться на мене через те, що я прийшов до нього зі своїми сумнівами” (Brown, 2023, p. 33).

In the source *Inferno* text, the ellipsis is positioned after the phrase “no questions asked,” which creates a deliberate pause and heightens the sense of tension or ambiguity before the subsequent part of the sentence. In the Ukrainian version, however, the ellipsis appears after “оприлюднити це відео” (“to release this video”), thereby shifting the pause and altering the focal point of dramatic tension in the sentence. This repositioning of the ellipsis also affects the rhythm and flow of reading. In the original, the pause separates the command for unquestioning compliance from the implied consequences of disobedience, subtly evoking an unspoken threat. In contrast, the Ukrainian translation draws attention to the act of releasing the video itself, and only then transitions to instructions and consequences. This change in the placement of the ellipsis thus transforms the contextual emphasis and modulates the interpretive rhythm of the utterance.

The pause before the phrase “скаже, щоб я не ставив зайвих запитань” (“will tell me not to ask unnecessary questions”) lends it greater weight in the translation, reinforcing the imperative and authoritative tone of the directive. While the shift in ellipsis position does not fundamentally alter the core meaning of the phrase, it significantly influences the emphasis, pacing, and overall impression conveyed by the text.

In a subsequent passage from Dan Brown’s *Inferno*, the use of italics carries specific pragmatic functions – highlighting mysterious and symbolically charged elements in the narrative, such as the line of seven “P”s. This typographic choice draws the reader’s attention to these symbols, underscoring their importance in unraveling the novel’s central enigma. In the Ukrainian translation, however, this use of italics is omitted.

The use of italics for enigmatic elements contributes to the atmosphere of mystery and tension that is crucial for reader engagement and narrative intrigue. In the context of *Inferno*, where symbolic references play a pivotal role, the italicization of such elements – particularly the seven “P”s – signals their symbolic connection to Dante’s creative legacy. The omission of italics in the Ukrainian version reflects a shift from nonverbal (typographic) to verbal means of emphasis, thereby altering the dynamic modality and semiotic configuration of the original.

Ex. 5 *Langdon nodded calmly as he studied the line of text—seven identical letters carefully inscribed in calligraphy across the inside of Dante’s forehead.*

PPPPPPP

“Seven Ps,” Sienna said. “What are we supposed to do with this?”

Langdon smiled calmly and raised his eyes to hers. “I suggest we do precisely what this message tells us to do.”

Sienna stared. “Seven Ps is [...] a message?”

“It is,” he said with a grin. “And if you’ve studied Dante, it’s a very clear one.” (Brown, 2013, p. 121).

Ленгдон спокійно кивнув, придивляючись до рядка тексту – сім однакових літер, ретельно виписаних каліграфічним письмом на зворотному боці Дантового лоба.

– Сім літер P, – мовила Сієнна. – І що ж ми тепер із ними робитимемо?

Ленгдон спокійно подивився на неї.

– Я пропоную робити те, що наказує нам це послання.

Сієнна аж сіпнулася від несподіванки.

– Сім літер P – це послання?!

– Так, – усміхнувся Ленгдон. – І якщо ти читала Данте, то це абсолютно чітке послання. (Brown, 2013, p. 147).

In the phrase “Seven Ps,” Sienna said. “What are we supposed to do with this?” the demonstrative pronoun this is italicized to emphasize the cryptic reference to the string of seven letters “P.” In the Ukrainian transla-

tion, however, this emphasis is omitted. The effect is partially compensated by rendering the verb “said” as “мовити” (to utter), a more poetic and stylistically elevated equivalent in Ukrainian. This choice, frequently used in literary or formal contexts, lends the utterance a tone of solemnity, significance, or stylistic refinement. The verb “мовити” also highlights that an important idea or thought is being expressed.

The italicisation in the phrase “*this message tells us to do*” conveys a sense of deontic modality, marking the force of instruction or obligation. In the Ukrainian version, this emphasis is removed and instead replaced with contextual specification of the modal verb “tell”, which is interpreted more definitively as “наказує нам це послання” (“this message orders us”).

In the subsequent phrase Sienna stared. “Seven Ps is [...] a message?”, the emotional impact is further intensified in the Ukrainian version as “Сієнна аж сіпнулася від несподіванки. – Сім літер Р – це послання?!” (Sienna flinched from surprise – Seven Ps is a message?!). While the English message can denote any kind of transmitted information, the Ukrainian “послання” tends to carry a more formal or elevated connotation, often associated with profound, symbolic, or significant content. This lexical shift adds gravity to the Ukrainian rendering.

Moreover, the axiological modality – the speaker’s value-based stance – is somewhat attenuated in translation. In the English original, the phrase “say with a grin” introduces a subtle emotional coloration. The word “grin” implies a broad or joyful smile, often expressing amusement, irony, or friendly sarcasm. When someone “says something with a grin,” the speech is emotionally marked – fascinating, playful, teasing, or light-hearted. In the Ukrainian translation, however, this is neutralized to the verb “усміхнувся” (smiled), which lacks the nuanced affective connotations of the English “grin”, thereby softening the emotional tonality of the utterance.

Taken together, the analysis demonstrates that the reconstruction of modality in the Ukrainian translations of Dan Brown’s novels is a profoundly intersemiotic and pragmatically driven process. Verbal and non-verbal cues – ranging from modal verbs, idiomatic intensifiers, aspectual choices and address forms to gestures, ellipses and typographic highlighting – jointly shape epistemic stance, illocutionary force and axiological evaluation, thereby sustaining or reconfiguring the texts’ fascinative potential. The examples show that translators systematically mobilise syntactic, lexical and discourse-level shifts to transpose non-verbal and culturally embedded signals into linguistically and culturally salient forms, at times intensifying narrative tension and, at other times, attenuating or redistributing it. These findings confirm that adequate intersemiotic translation requires not only semantic equivalence but also sensitivity to implicature, speaker intention, and culturally grounded interpretive habits, positioning the translator as a semiotic mediator who actively renegotiates narrative reliability, ambiguity and intrigue for the target audience.

Conclusion

This study examined the reconstruction of modality in English-Ukrainian intersemiotic translation through the prism of fascinative communication, demonstrating that modal meaning in Dan Brown’s novels emerges from a complex interplay of verbal, non-verbal, and multimodal cues. The analysis confirms that modality in literary discourse extends far beyond the grammatical realisation of epistemic, deontic, or axiological meanings; it is embedded in implicature, semiotic density, visual inscriptions, proxemic contours, typographic emphasis, cultural schemas, and narrative pacing. Consequently, the act of translating modality requires a nuanced negotiation between linguistic form, cognitive inference, and semiotic re-contextualization.

The semiotic-pragmatic analysis confirmed that implicatures – both conventional and unconventional – function as key carriers of modal force and fascinative effect. Translators respond to these implicit meanings by employing a range of strategies, including idiomatic amplification, restructuring of aspect and tense, and shifts from visual to verbal emphasis (replacement of italics or graphic prominence with lexical intensification). These choices frequently entail modifications in illocutionary force, degrees of epistemic commitment, and the emotional colouring of utterances, illustrating that translating modality is inseparable from negotiating interpersonal stance and narrative rhythm.

The findings show that translators consistently operate as semiotic mediators who reconstruct the epistemic landscape of the narrative by navigating shifts in epistemic strength, modulating illocutionary force, realigning culturally embedded cues, and redistributing modal information across semiotic channels. Chesterman's syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic strategies, when applied to the corpus, elucidate how translators compensate for, preserve, or intensify fascinate effects. Crucially, the study reveals that transformations in the target text – such as the explicitation of implicit cues, adaptation of idiomatic forms, reorientation of typographic emphasis, and intensified interpersonal modulation – are not merely technical solutions but deliberate cognitive-pragmatic recalibrations aimed at maintaining narrative intrigue and reader engagement within Ukrainian cultural and linguistic norms.

The contrastive translation analysis further revealed systematic patterns of re-semiotisation. Non-verbal elements such as italics, ellipses, and symbolic inscriptions were often reinterpreted through verbal means, while some explicitly modal forms in English were rendered more implicitly in Ukrainian, or vice versa. Such shifts highlight the translator's role as an active semiotic mediator who balances fidelity to the source text with the need for cultural and cognitive accessibility in the target context. At the same time, certain attenuations – such as the neutralization of expressive nuances – that not all facets of fascinate communication are fully retained, pointing to zones of inevitable loss and creative compensation.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings support a view of modality as a cognitive-pragmatic and multimodal category that extends beyond the sentence and beyond language proper. By integrating insights from pragmalinguistics, cognitive linguistics, semiotics, and translation studies, the article has repositioned modality as a key mechanism of fascinate communication in popular narrative fiction. The research also refines the notion of intersemiotic translation by foregrounding the ways in which modal meanings are redistributed across sign systems – between the verbal text, typographic design, symbolic artefacts, and culturally saturated idioms – in the process of translation.

Future research could extend this inquiry by exploring multimodal corpora across different genres, comparing intersemiotic strategies in translations of symbolic fiction into other Slavic languages, or examining how digital typographic features (e.g., fonts, colour, layout) influence the perception of modality in electronic literary formats. Such studies would further illuminate the evolving interface between modality, multimodality, and translation in an increasingly semiotically saturated communicative landscape.

In sum, this article demonstrates that reconstructing modality in intersemiotic translation is a cognitively and semiotically complex endeavour. It requires the translator to mediate between systems of knowledge, codes of inference, and culturally embedded symbolic structures. By foregrounding fascinate communication as an analytical lens, the study contributes to an enriched understanding of how translations can sustain narrative intrigue, epistemic ambiguity, and multimodal resonance across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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Santrauka

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Modalumo rekonstrukcija intersemiotinėje vertimo plotmėje: pragmatinės žavėjimo komunikacijos strategijos

Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjama modalumo rekonstrukcija intersemiotinėje vertimo plotmėje, remiantis pragmatinėmis strategijomis, kurios stiprina fascinacinę komunikaciją. Analizuojant Dano Browno romanus ir jų vertimus į ukrainiečių kalbą parodoma, kaip modalumas formuoja skaitytojo suvokimą ir naratyvinį įsitraukimą. Remiantis pragmatolingvistikos, kognityvinės lingvistikos, semiotikos ir vertimo studijų įžvalgomis, atskleidžiamas Grice'o kooperacijos principo bei implikatūrų – tiek konvencinių, tiek nekonvencinių – vaidmuo, veikiant kaip modalinių reiškinių nešėjams per kultūrinės ribas. Galiausiai teigiama, kad modalumo vertimas apima ne tik lingvistinę transformaciją, bet ir kognityvinę bei kultūrinę adaptaciją, todėl intersemiotinis vertimas suprantamas kaip dinamiška tarpkultūrinės komunikacijos erdvė. Tyrimo rezultatai papildė platesnes vertimo teorijos diskusijas, pabrėždami kontekstui jautrių, pragmatiškai pagrįstų strategijų būtinybę, siekiant išlaikyti literatūrinių tekstų fascinacinį potencialą kultūrinio perkėlimo procesuose.

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