
Graphemic means of intensification in French personal blogs: A longitudinal case study

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I report on a case study of three graphemic means of intensification (capitalization, letter iteration, and the use of multiple exclamation marks) used by a single French blogger over a time span of more than twenty years (February 2004–today, $N_{\text{entries}} = 4635$ as of July 2025). The study expands on existing research on graphic variation and enregisterment (Squires 2010; Spitzmüller 2021) by focusing on the question how the individual chooses between different strategies of intensification to convey the desired persona over time, while the indexicality of the graphic resources themselves is subject to change.

The results of the quantitative analysis (Fig. 1) show an increase of all three strategies over time, which accelerates in 2018—the year of publication of the blog author’s bestselling book—and is most clearly visible in the use of multiple exclamation marks. During the presentation, I will discuss the role played by social factors (in particular, audience design) and grammatical factors (the extension of letter iteration from gradable predicates to non-gradable ones, e.g. *une looongue période* ‘a very long period’ vs. *un meeec dans toute son horreur* ‘a real dude in all of his atrocity’) in this expansion.

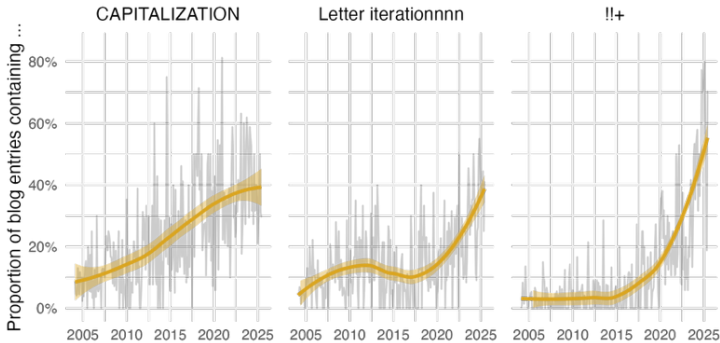


Figure 1: Relative frequency (aggregated by month) of blog entries containing at least one instance of capitalization (left), letter iteration (center), or multiple exclamation marks (right), over time

References: • Spitzmüller, J. (2021). Approaching typographic variation. *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University: Language and Literature* 18(4), 910–928. • Squires, L. (2010). Enregistering internet language. *Language in Society* 39(4), 457–492.