
Between graphetics and typography: strategies of intensification in handwriting and print.

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It is often assumed that handwritten texts feature a wider range of graphic variation than printed texts – particularly because writers can individually influence the shape and connection of letters (cf. Reinken 2022, 2023). This assumption is certainly true in the area of graphetic and graphotactic variation. In the area of typographic design – for example, by font size, emphasis, underlining or colour – however, the opposite is true: printed texts, especially visually designed formats such as advertising flyers or information brochures, have a much richer repertoire of marking options.

The contribution examines which graphic means are used in handwriting and in print to intensify utterances. I draw on a framework for intensification (Cotgrove 2025) that describes various functional strategies for enhancing meaning and categorises them typologically. Using a corpus of handwritten school-leaving exams and typographically designed printed texts I will first compile a catalogue of typographical features. Building on this, I will analyse which of these features are used in which contexts, what functions they perform and to what extent they contribute to intensification. The aim is to identify differences and similarities between the two forms of writing in terms of their intensifying potential and thus contribute to a functional description of graphic intensification.

References: • Cotgrove, L. (2025). ☺ 📏 📐 📏: Entstehende Arten von Intensivierung in der digitalen Kommunikation junger Menschen. *Deutsche Sprache* 1, 2–18. DOI: 10.37307/j.1868- 775X.2025.01.03. • Reinken, N. (2022). Funktionalisierte Variation in Handschriften. *Linguistische Berichte* 269, 55–88. • Reinken, N. (2023). Handwritten letters and grammatical structures in German. A framework. *Written Language & Literacy* 26(2), 155–187. DOI: 10.1075/wll.00077.rei.