

Is a Suiggle Easy to Imitate?

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Forgery covers a variety of possibilities regarding the imitation of handwriting, signatures, squiggles, manipulation of an existing document or even the construction of a document from the beginning. Forgers usually consider a squiggle easier to imitate due to the restricted extension of the authentic specimen.

Keywords: *forgery; squiggle; imitation; difficulty.*

Чи легко наслідувати розчерк?

Павлос Кіпоурас

Підробка охоплює різноманітні можливості наслідування почерку, підписів, розчерків, а також маніпуляції з наявним документом або навіть створення документа від самого початку. Фальсифікатори зазвичай вважають, що розчерк легше наслідувати через обмеженість автентичного зразка.

Ключові слова: *підробка; розчерк; наслідування; складність.*

The forgers' aim is the construction, manipulation and use of documents which will allow him to succeed in his fraud. Their intention is basically focused on the successful reproduction of the handwriting or signature of a person involved, in order to deceive in practice by giving the impression of an authentic specimen. This imitation itself as a procedure is a difficult task which is applied in 3 phases [1], reason why the forger rather prefers to avoid extended texts when he is obliged to simulate the

handwriting. In case of signatures, forgers usually consider a squiggle easier to imitate in relation to a signature, because it is often less complicated in its morphology.

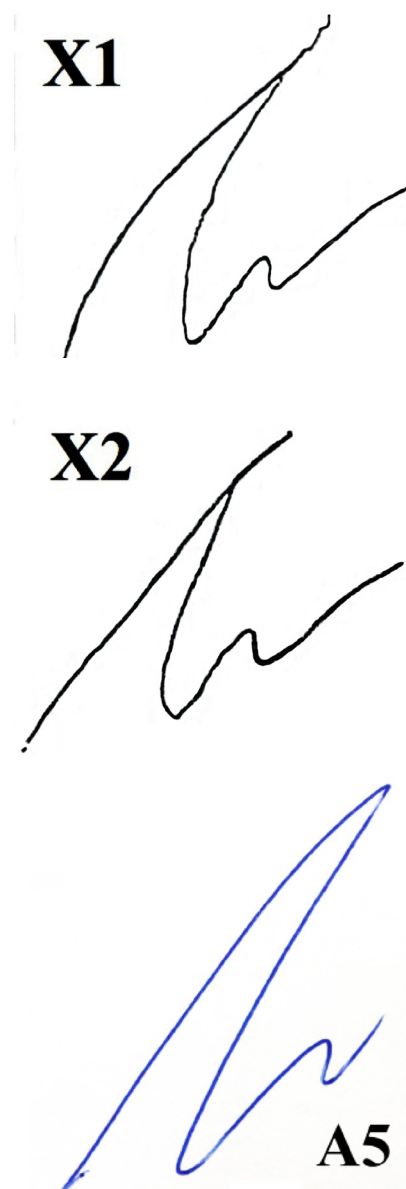
Squiggles often become means of forgery. There is a variety of documents in which there might be a tentative of reproduction of a squiggle. Documents which do not regard fulfilling a pre-existent printed form leave free space to the graphic expression of the imitator. On the other hand, signing in an already

existent form of document, such as a cheque, a declaration or any other kind of official document leaves a well defined space for signing on it, which may be restrictive for the signer, if compared to the real dimensions of the authentic specimen.

Authentic squiggles enclose a more spontaneous way of expression of the hand's graphical characteristics and they are usually produced with more automation and more speed. The dynamical characteristics of a squiggle can be easily hidden in its small extension in respect to a wider signature. There can be very complex and stylized ones or others that are simplified and this is the point in which the forger gets trapped on his decision to imitate a squiggle rather than a signature. In addition, simplified squiggles usually present a wide range of variation which makes the forger's work easier [2, 3]. Sometimes, the easier an authentic squiggle seems, the more difficult becomes to imitate. The main reason is the false sensation of the forger that his task is easy, which reduces his status of attention in his attempt to identify the characteristics to imitate. Of course, the final effort to reproduce the forged squiggle encompasses other difficulties. Although the morphological reproduction may be quite successful, the execution of the movement might not present the appropriate speed [4] of the authentic specimen. One of the most difficult characteristics to reproduce is the ratio between vertical and horizontal dimensions of the specimen [5, 6].

Case study

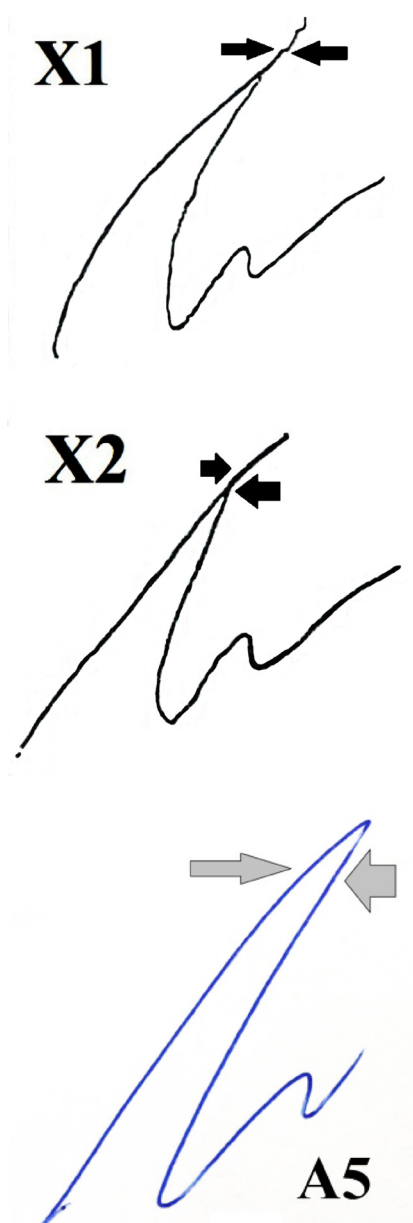
The squiggles of the representative of a company are found in 2 printed checks. The stamps presented on these squiggles reproduce the data of the company, although the alignment, the fonts and their dimension is different. The forger has tried to reproduce the authentic squiggle which seemed to be easier. The questioned (**X1**, **X2**) and original squiggles (**A**) are the following:



Im. 1. Suspected squiggles **X1-X2** and comparative specimen (**A5**)

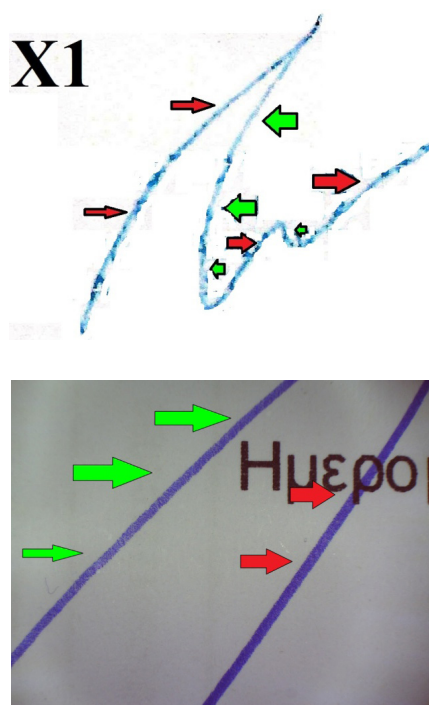
The forger did not succeed in reproducing the ratios between height and width and the suspected signatures do not belong to the authentic range of variation.

In the same time, the forger did not succeed in reproducing the initial form, since he has traced 2 overlapping lines instead of one in the form of 'Λ'.



Im. 2. The overlapping traces of X1-X2 do not exist in the comparative material (A5)

Another very important difference, which is surprisingly easy to diagnose even from the photocopies of the suspected documents, is the inverted way of the distribution of the graphic pressure. The authentic specimen present the traces heading **downwards** more intense as far the color or the thickness of the trace is concerned, while the suspected squiggles present the opposite characteristic.



Im. 3. The distribution of graphic pressure is inverted in the suspected squiggles

Conclusion

Forgery is usually the result of an intention of fraud. When the selected method regards the imitation of a signature, forgers usually prefer to simulate brief signatures or squiggles rather than an extended specimen. Although this choice is considered safer, there are many dynamical aspects hidden in the authentic squiggles which may not be identified by the forger.

References

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