Different types of memory and its role in signature falsification.

Abstract:

In the area of document examination the forgery of signature is the most common type of crime. Forgers use in criminal practice also signatures that were previously seen and memorized. For experts who analyze handwriting the most important issue is to determine how the writing is memorized, registered and used through time. Basing on experts' experience and research, the author of the presentation indicated that in the process of memorizing of third persons handwriting the conscious and unconscious mechanisms are at play and it is necessary to determine after what period of time, and to what extend the forgery of memorized signature can still be successful.

Taking into account the methodology of handwriting identification it seems that both declarative and procedural memory, but mostly procedural, are essential for the identification of a forger. During research the impact of a memory on forging processes had been examined and the effectiveness of methods used for collection of comparative material had been analyzed. What was subject to verification, was also the potential dominance of the individual features of participants (falsifiers) over the features of the signature intended for falsification and whether the collection of personal signatures from suspects is justified. According to the author, the presented theoretical aspects supported by research will change current understanding of falsification processes and falsification of signatures in particular. The presentation aimed to underlie the usefulness of neurological and psychological knowledge for the work of expert specializing in handwriting examination. Moreover, it signalized the importance of biological processes for writing and memorizing, as it is necessary to revive the discussion on the interdisciplinary nature of the research concentrating on writing. Using research methods from different disciplines may help in understanding the role of memory in forgery to a much greater extent.

Keywords: signature, forgery from memory, declaration of memory, procedural memory, reconstruction of a trace from memory