

**THE EVOLUTIONARY TRAJECTORY OF WRITING SYSTEMS: FROM
PICTOGRAPHY TO MODERN GRAPHIC SYMBOLS**

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Abstract. This article examines the historical evolution of writing systems and analyzes the distinct characteristics of its developmental stages. Starting from the earliest forms of visual communication, such as pictography, the study traces the transition toward more complex systems, including ideographic (hieroglyphic), phonographic (syllabic), and modern graphic (alphabetic) writing. By utilizing a comparative analysis, the research highlights the advantages and limitations of each stage, focusing on how human cognition and social demands necessitated the shift from visual memory to abstract linguistic symbols. The findings suggest that the development of writing is not merely a technical advancement but a fundamental process in the preservation of intellectual heritage and the globalization of education. The article concludes that modern graphic systems serve as the ultimate foundation for contemporary international cultural integration and scientific progress.

Keywords: pictography, ideography, phonography, graphic writing, linguistic evolution, communication systems.

INTRODUCTION

Language, at first glance, constitutes a stable, unchanging phonetic, lexical and grammatical system. The fact that our children and grandchildren can easily use the Uzbek language, which we use to communicate without any difficulty, is a living proof of this. However, this is not a basis for calling a language that changes every minute something rigid and unchanging. The slowness of changes in a language is such that it is difficult to distinguish them during a person's lifetime. Changes that are taking place or have taken place in a language can be seen after three or four generations. We will definitely identify and analyze a language that requires such slow changes through writing. The importance of writing for studying and analyzing not only human life but also the whole world is so strong that if there were no writing, we would not be able to read the various works written by our ancestors or use the sources written by our scholars such as Abu Ali Ibn Sina in modern medicine or other things. Even today, writing is becoming one of the most important habits in human life. In fact, unlike the emergence of language, it has not been long since writing appeared. Even some indigenous representatives of the American continent still do not have a specific writing system.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of the origin of writing and its stages of development is one of the most widely studied topics by many of our scientists from the point of view of linguistics. In this study on the types of writing and their differences, first studying the origin of writing and analyzing it helped to further clarify what was being studied. The scientific works of B. Musayeva and Z. Nazirova, as well as Kobilova Marjona Erkinjon kizi, played an important role in this work.

B. Musayeva and Z. Nazirova in their article "The History of the Origin of Writing and Its Stages of Development" analyze the emergence of writing in relation to the historical



development of mankind and its development. The authors indicate pictographic writing as the first form of writing, emphasizing that thoughts and information were expressed in it through pictures. Also, the emergence of ideographic and phonographic writing types is explained by the increasing need for information exchange in society. This article also acknowledges that before the emergence of writing, people worked more with memory and tried to send messages by giving various forms to any object, which is called "object writing". This study is significant in that it sheds light on the gradual development of writing from a historical perspective. [1]

In the article titled "Writing and its stages of development" by Qabilova Marjona Erkinjon kizi, the issue of writing is analyzed more linguistically and communicatively. The article provides brief but understandable information about the types of writing and confirms their use in modern life with many examples. For example, it is explained in detail that the depiction of men's and women's handwashing rooms in public places through simple pictures that do not require any knowledge to understand is the basis of pictographic writing, or that signs for traffic rules belong to hieroglyphic writing. In addition, the formation and differences between pictographic, ideographic, phonographic and graphic writing types were analyzed.

The article by Musayeva B. and Nazirova Z. made it easier to understand the relationship of writing to history, while M. Kadirova helped us understand the types of writing and its practical application.[2]

Therefore, this article aims to systematically cover the main stages of the development of writing, summarizing the results of previous research.

DISCUSSION

Writing, as a product of human civilization, is not a phenomenon that emerged in an instant. It has gone through long and complex evolutionary stages before reaching its current perfect form. Each stage differs from each other in its own characteristics and communication capabilities, based on the socio-economic needs of its time.

Pictographic writing (Illustrative writing). The oldest type of writing in the history of mankind is pictography, which is based on expressing a certain idea or concept through object images (pictograms). At this stage, ancient people, intending to perpetuate or transmit information over a distance, tried to reflect reality using various symbolic images.[3]

According to many researchers, it was pictography that served as the cornerstone and basis for the development of all subsequent writing systems. However, this system had serious methodological shortcomings:

- Polysemy: A certain image could be interpreted differently by different people, which undermined the accuracy of the information.
- The problem of abstraction: It was almost impossible to express abstract concepts, feelings, or complex actions using pictograms.

Over time, the strengthening of the foundations of statehood in society, the complexity of the economic and management system, and the proliferation of new terms showed that the capabilities of pictographic writing were insufficient. These needs required the transition to a new, more advanced stage of writing.

Ideographic (Logographic) Writing Stage

As a result of the improvement of pictograms, a more complex form of writing was formed - ideographic writing (sometimes also called logographic or hieroglyphic writing). The essence of this system is that each symbol (ideogram) does not directly represent an image of an object, but rather a specific concept or meaning of a word.

- Difference between Pictogram and Logogram: If a pictogram represents the appearance of a specific object (for example, the sun through the image of the sun), then a logogram, as a



conditional sign, interprets the semantic meaning of a word (for example, the concepts of "hot", "light" or "day" through the image of the sun).

- **Advantages:** Ideographic writing ensured the clarity of the text and put an end to the ambiguity of pictograms. This system made it possible to express more complex abstract concepts.

- **Disadvantages and crisis:** The main problem of this system was the excessive number of hieroglyphs. The need to master a separate character for each new word complicated the writing. Over time, in order to increase the speed of writing, people began to simplify the characters (switch to cursive writing). As a result, the visual similarity between the character and the object it represented disappeared. This marked the transition of writing from a semantic (spiritual) basis to a phonetic (sound) basis - that is, the era of phonography.

Phonographic writing: Graphic representation of speech

A revolutionary turn in the evolution of writing is associated with the emergence of phonographic writing. In this system, signs no longer began to represent meaning, but speech sounds. Its development took place in several stages:

1. **Syllable writing (Syllabic writing):** At this stage, each graphic sign represented a certain set of sounds - a syllable. This method made it possible to write the composition of words in parts, significantly reducing the number of necessary characters.

2. **Sound (Letter-sound) writing:** The foundation of modern graphic writing was laid by adding additional diacritical marks to syllables or dividing them into separate sounds.

Graphic Writing and the Alphabetic System

Graphic writing, which forms the basis of human communication today, is a system of special letter symbols for each sound. This system is distinguished by its universal nature, ease of learning, and the ability to form an unlimited amount of information of any complexity. All the scientific, literary, and technical achievements of modern civilization are preserved precisely thanks to this convenient and flexible type of writing.[4]

Through the following table, you can clearly see the differences between the stages of writing:

Writing Type	Method of Expression	Advantages	Disadvantages
Pictographic Writing	Thoughts and information are expressed through pictures [pictograms].	Almost everyone can understand it, regardless of the language they speak.	Abstract concepts are difficult to express, and a specific picture can be interpreted in several ways.
Ideographic [Hieroglyphic] Writing	Each symbol represents a word or a concept.	The meaning is clearer, and it is possible to express some abstract words.	A separate symbol was required for every word, which necessitated memorizing a vast number of characters.
Phonographic Writing	Each symbol represents a syllable [sound].	Ability to write more words due to a reduction in the number of symbols. Ability to write almost all words.	Inconsistency between pronunciation and writing; speakers of different dialects may struggle to read words written in another dialect.
Graphic Writing	Letters form syllables, and	Simple. Easy. Ability to write all words.	Sound limitations: some sounds in the Uzbek



	syllables words.	form	Stability.	language do not exist in certain countries [e.g., Arabia, Great Britain]. For example: q, o'.
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CONCLUSION

The evolution of writing, from pictography to modern graphic systems, is not merely a change in technical tools, but a process reflecting the advancement of human thought and social relations. The analysis conducted shows the following:

1. **Evolutionary Necessity:** Each new type of writing (ideography, phonography) emerged from the need to overcome the shortcomings (ambiguity, complexity) of the previous system.
2. **Information Security:** Writing has shaped the collective memory of humanity. While pictograms relied solely on visual memory, the modern alphabet system has enabled the precise preservation of abstract and scientific knowledge.
3. **A Universal Tool:** The formation of graphic writing served as the fundamental cornerstone for the popularization of education and the facilitation of international cultural integration.

In conclusion, **writing is the most powerful intellectual tool** for studying human history, preserving cultural heritage, and building the civilization of the future.

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