Letterforms as Visual Communication Elements

Tatiana Ribeiro

CUNY New York City College of Technology

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DIFFERENT LANGUAGES


For the purpose of this research below is the comparison similarities, some of the sounds they represent are different. between Greek, Latin and Cyrillic Alphabets.

The diagram below shows the common letters languages share the same graphemes (letters) at their composition using basic design elements and principles and explore three abstractions outside their direct conventional meaning. During the research, we will look at typographic elements as subject matters in abstract art to challenge our accepted ideas of what is considered meaningful, explore visual aesthetics of letterforms in two and three-dimensional mediums, compare similar letterforms in different languages and touch upon the history of symbolic communication development from ancient to modern letterforms.

The findings of this research will demonstrate how we are able to recognize letterforms even when they are presented as basic abstract shapes within or without their usual context, which will show how deeply ingrained our visual perception of letterforms is. Additionally, we will learn about the role of human visual perception in creating mental letterform representation and get familiarized with letterform similarities and differences across different languages. Being one of the most important design elements, typography is an incredibly powerful tool. The findings of this study will provide an impactful insight to any designer who wants to broaden their spectrum of understanding typography.

METHODS:
This research looks into what makes a letterform and how the symbolic communication system of language is unique to humans, introduces concepts and methods of analyzing our ability to create mental images, compares similar letterforms in different languages and explores aesthetics of typography in 3-Dimensional space and as a subject matter in abstract art.

LETTERFORMS AS VISUAL COMMUNICATION ELEMENTS

WHAT MAKES A LETTERFORM?

A letterform is a type of glyph (FIG.1), which is a specific, concrete way of writing an abstract character or grapheme. In typography, a glyph (right) is an elemental symbol within an agreed set of symbols, intended to represent a readable character for the purposes of writing. Glyphs are considered to be unique marks that collectively add up to the spelling of a word or contribute to a specific meaning of what is written, with that meaning dependent on cultural and social usage.

In most languages written in any variant of the Latin alphabet, the dot on a lower-case i is not a glyph because it does not convey any distinction, and in which the dot has been accidentally omitted is still likely to be recognized correctly. However, in Turkish it is a glyph because language has two distinct versions of the letter i, with and without a dot.

In linguistics, a grapheme (FIG.2) is the smallest unit of a writing system of any given language. An individual grapheme may or may not carry meaning by itself, and may or may not correspond to a single phoneme of the spoken language. Graphemes include alphabetic letters, typographic ligatures, Chinese characters, numerical digits, punctuation marks, and other individual symbols. A grapheme can also be considered as a graphical sign that independently represents a portion of linguistic material. The word grapheme, coined in analogy with phoneme, is derived from Ancient Greek γράμμα (graphē), meaning ‘writing’, and the suffix -eme by analogy with phoneme and other names of emic units. The study of graphemes is called graphemics. The concept of graphemes is abstract and similar to the notion in computing of a character. By comparison, a specific shape that represents any particular grapheme in a specific typeface is called a glyph. For example, the grapheme corresponding to the abstract concept of “the Arabic numeral one” has two distinct glyphs (allographs) in Times New Roman and Helvetica fonts.

In graphemics, the term allograph (FIG.3) denotes any glyphs that are considered variants of a letter or other grapheme, like a number or punctuation. An obvious example in English (and many other writing systems) is the distinction between uppercase and lowercase letters. Allographs can vary vastly, without affecting the underlying identity of the grapheme. Even if the word “cat” is rendered as “cAt”, it remains recognizable as the sequence of the three graphemes ‹c›, ‹a›, ‹t›.

Thus, if a group of individual glyphs (shapes that may or may not represent the same letter) are allographs (they do represent the same letter), they all represent a specific sound sound sound or sound sound sound represented by the individual graphemes. The result of this is that the sound is perceived independently of context where the memory was evoked. It is now a proven fact that Homo Sapiens is the only species with a symbolic language. Some of the major ideas for such evolutionary selection suggest that language brings with it the ability to inform one another about prey, dangers of different sorts, as well as replace the social grooming found in monkeys and apes as an instrument for building social bonds. It has also been proposed that language is a “mother tongue” that evolved among kin and/ or triggered by a recent situation. It is a memory of something that can be evoked independently of context where the memory was evoked.

SYMBOLIC COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

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