

ISOGRAMS: THE SEQUEL

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In the May 1985 Word Ways, Dmitri Borgmann defined an isogram (actually, he recommended "asogram") as a verbal entity in which each of the alphabetic letters used appears an equal number of times. He further defined a solo isogram as an isogram in which said equal number was one (CAT), a pair isogram when the number was two (DODO), and a trio isogram when the number was three (CHA-CHA-CHA). It is more natural to refer to a solo isogram as a heterogram (Susan Thorpe) or perhaps a haplogram (J H Marshall), rather than an isogram. The problem is avoided if we always use the word solo together with isogram when wishing to emphasise the family isogram connection, or heterogram when wishing to emphasise the difference aspect. This article excludes heterograms except for the next-to-last section, on English placenames.

SUMMARY OF ISOGRAMS

Here is an attempted summary of isograms I have encountered or found. The amount of space taken by articles on isograms is out of all proportion to the actual number of them--perhaps because it takes a paragraph to justify each coined word! Many words listed below have appeared in Word Ways, especially in articles by Jeff Grant in August 1982 and by Dmitri Borgmann in May and August 1985.

When the "equal number" (call it n) is large, isograms are very rare and not very interesting, which is no doubt why there are so many coined words in the literature.

$n=7$ BUBUBUBUBUBUBU (WW 73-147)

$n=6$

$n=5$ ZZZZZ (WW 70-252)

$n=4$ AAAA, KEEKKEEK (OED), KUKUKUKU, MMMM, OOOO, PEEPPPEEP, ZZZZ.

All but the second have appeared in Word Ways; ZZZZ is in the American Thesaurus of Slang. Borgmann (WW August 1985) offered the unsourced words DEDEEDED, ANTI-ANTI-TITANIAN and KINNIK-KINNIK.

$n=3$ AIAIAI, CHACHACHA (OED), DEEDED, ESSEES, FEFTEE, GEGGEE, LIL-LII, MEHMEHMEH, POPPOLOLL, SESTETTES, SHEESHEHS, SHSHSH (OED), TAPTAPTAP?, YACKYACKYACK. SHEESHEHS is the longest word with a group occurring three times in different forms: SHE,ESH,EHS). All but TAPTAPTAP have appeared in Word Ways; POPPOLOLL is in the English Dialect Dictionary. Borgmann (WW August 1985) suggested the non-dictionary words ANTI-TITANIAN, METATEAMMATE, INTRATRANSNISTRIAS;

Jeff Grant suggested MONIMOLIMNION'LL (from an OED word).

n=2 There are many examples, so the following list is restricted in two ways. All words have at least 8 letters, and obvious tautonyms like CHUG-CHUG (almost 60% of the cases) are omitted. However, I have left a few that caught my fancy, and any like HOTSHOTS which are not tautonyms in the semantic sense (the word is HOT-SHOTS). Words can be found in Pulliam, Stedman, Webster 2, OSPD or the OED; words in Word Ways are marked w, and palindromes indicated by p. Words labeled ? are unsourced, and ! symbolizes "ugh".

ADINIDAN	ANTIPERSPIRANTES w	APPARELLER?
APPEARER	APPEASES	ARRAIGNING
BILABIAL	CANCELLANSES w	CAUCASUS w
CHARACTERETH w	CICADELLIDAE	CICADIDA?
COINICON w	CONCISIONS w	CONOCUNEUSES w
DETANNATED wp	DIKWAKWADI	ESOPHAGOGRAPHERS
ETERNITARIAN	GAMMAGEE?	GENSENGS
GINGELLINE	GNIPPING wp	GRADGRINDIAN w
HAPPENCHANCE	HORSESHOER	HOTSHOTS
INACCIDENTATED! w	INDENIED	INSCIENCES w
INTERINSERTS w	INTESTINES	JIPIJAPA
JIRIJARA	LEADLAPPED?	MAAMSELLES w
MESOSOME	MIASMATIST	MILLIEME
MIMETITE	MONONEME	MONONYMY
MOTORMETER	NAASSENE?	NOTIONISTS w
NOTITION	OPPINION	OPPYNYON
PADLEPALDE w	PANELPLANE?	POCKETAPOCKETA
PYNEPENY	RAPPAREE	RATTAREE
REAPPEAR	RECHERCH?	REPROPOSES
REREIGNING w	RETARDATED!	REWAREWA
RIVERVILLE?	ROCKCORK?	ROVEOVER?
SCINTILLESCE	SEMAEOSTOMAT?	SHAMMASH
SHANGHAIINGS w	SHIPPISH	SIGNINGS
SNEDDENS wp	SQUARESQUARE	STELLETS wp
TAENIODONTIDAE	TEAMMATE	TEISTIES w
TELLURURET	TESSELLATA w	TETRAPAPER
TITANIAN	TOOLSTEELS w	TRANSNISTRIA w
TRISECTRICES w	TROMOMETER	UNENDUED
VETITIVE	VIVIENNE	WELLWOODED
	YLANGYLANG	

The longest ones are ANTIPERSPIRANTES (WW 82-138) and ESOPHAGOGRAPHERS (Stedman), both with 16 letters; and INACCIDENTATED (WW 82-137), POCKETA-POCKETA (sound of an engine, e.g. Thurber OED), SCINTILLESCE (OED), and TAENIODONTIDAE (Web 2), all of 14 letters. We might also accept UNSUFFICIENCES, an inferred plural.

In *Language on Vacation*, Borgmann suggested RE-RESIGNINGS and SPHEROPHORES. I have assumed that BILABILA is a tautonym so it is not listed. In his Word Ways article, Borgmann suggests the following non-dictionary words:

ARCORESONANCES	COUNTERTROUNCE	ENDODONTISTISE
NOTIDANOIDEATE	PHILADELPHIADE	PTERIDOPTEROID
PTERODOPTEROID	UNCONSTRUCTORS	ANTITRANSVERSIVE
COUNTERUNCORSETS	MALINTERTERMINAL	TELEPHILOSOPHIST
COPRAETERPOLITICAL		ULTRATRANSLUCENCES
PSEUDOAUTOHERMAPHRODITISM		

It is worth examining shorter pair isograms in which the letters in the second half are a rearrangement of those in the first half. Borgmann discarded such words as having a pattern, but I think they are very interesting, especially those that are not palindromes. Note that all palindromes of even length appear. Here is a list of such words with six letters:

AENEAN	AMIMIA	CNICIN	DEGGED p
DENNED p	DREDER	FINNIF wp	GALLAG wp
GUNUNG	HALLAH p	HANNAH p	HECCHE
KALLAK p	KASSAK? p	KREKER	LEFFEL p
LEPPEL wp	LITTIL wp	LUFFUL p	LYSYLS
MALLAM p	MARRAM p	MODDOM p	NATANT
PULLUP p	RATTAR p	REDDER p	RENNER p
REPPER p	RETTAR p	SAMMAS wp	SELLES p
SEMMES? p	SHOOSH w	SIRRIS p	SOCCOS wp
SUCCUS p	TALLAT p	TAMMAT wp	TARRAT p
TEBBET p	TENENT	TENNET p	TERRET p
TERTRE	TIBBIT p	TILLIT wp	TINNIT wp
TIPPIT p	TIRBIT p	TUBBUT wp	TUFFUT wp
WOLLOW wp	WONNOW wp	WORROW p	YEZZEY wp

All but three of the words marked w appear in an article on palindromes by Jeff Grant in the November 1978 Word Ways.

ENGLISH PLACENAMES

The readers of Saga magazine in the United Kingdom have supplied the 13-letter heterograms BUCKFASTLEIGH and BERWICK ST JOHN to equal Borgmann's BUSLINGTHORPE, and the 14-letter BRICKLEHAMPTON to surpass it.

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