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Amid the frozen fastnesses of the winter wonderland known as Little America, Antarctica, I have been contemplating a further exploration of the subject of language levels, first broached in a previous article devoted to the names of mammals and birds.

The next logical animate group to tackle, if you will pardon the pun, is that of fishes. My piscatory peregrinations have produced the following roster of fish names:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>fish name</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>fish name</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>fish name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ANCHOVY (2)</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>JEWFISH (3)</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>ROACH (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BASS (2)</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>KINGFISH (3)</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>SALMON (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>COD (1)</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>LING (2)</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>TROUT (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>DOGFISH (2)</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>MACKEREL (2)</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>UMBRA (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>EEL (2)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NEEDLEFISH (4)</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>VIPERFISH (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>FLOUNDER (2)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>OARFISH (4)</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>WHITEFISH (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>GOLDFISH (2)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>PERCH (2)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>XUREL (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>HERRING (1)</td>
<td>Q</td>
<td>QUINNAT (4)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>YELLOWTAIL (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>INCONNU (4)</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>ROACH (2)</td>
<td>Z</td>
<td>ZINGEL (5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The four names on level (1) are common enough to be included among the 6,000 most frequently used English words, as shown in An English-French-German-Spanish Word Frequency Dictionary by Helen S. Eaton (Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1961). The sharply reduced number of (1) words, as compared to their counterparts in the lists of mammals and birds, indicates that fish are not nearly as often spoken about as are their confreres on land and in the air. However, there are 11 words on level (2), signifying their inclusion in The New Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary, so that we still have a total of 15 quite common words, almost as many as in the lists of mammals and birds.

Two more words are added on level (3): the Fourth Edition of the Thorndike-Barnhart High School Dictionary (Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1965). Yet another five join the list on level (4): the Funk & Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary (Funk & Wagnalls Company, New York, 1963). Of these five, three consist of everyday English language elements. None of the words has a definition interesting enough to quote: fish are fish, as the saying goes!

For the remaining four names, we are compelled to rise to the aristocracy of level (5), represented here by the Third Edition of the Merriam-Webster unabridged dictionary: UMBRA, a Mediterranean food...
fish; VIPERFISH, a deep-sea fish; XUREL, the big-eyed scad; and ZINGEL, a European perch.

Observe that 8 of the 26 names end with the element -FISH. Esthetically, it would be nice to diversify this cluster of commonality, but that could be done only by pushing to higher levels. Also of interest is the fact that 8 of the 9 names on levels (4) and (5) are in the last half of the alphabet, demonstrating that the uncommon letters of the alphabet are in that half.

A statistically-oriented inquiry into the origin and destiny of insects has developed the next list. Note that this is a list of insects only; other groups, such as arthropods, have been rigorously excluded.

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
A &=& \text{ANT} (1) & J = \text{JARFLY} (5) \\
B &=& \text{BEE} (1) & K = \text{KATYDID} (2) \\
C &=& \text{CRICKET} (1) & L = \text{LOCUST} (1) \\
D &=& \text{DRAGONFLY} (2) & M = \text{MOSQUITO} (1) \\
E &=& \text{EAWIG} (3) & N = \text{NUN} (5) \\
F &=& \text{FLY} (1) & O = \text{OXFLY} (5) \\
G &=& \text{GRASSHOPPER} (1) & P = \text{PISMIRE} (2) \\
H &=& \text{HORNET} (2) & Q = \text{QUAKER} (5) \\
I &=& \text{ICHNEUMON} (3) & R = \text{ROACH} (2) \\
J &=& \text{JARFLY} (5) & S = \text{SCARAB} (2) \\
K &=& \text{KATYDID} (2) & T = \text{TERMITE} (2) \\
L &=& \text{LOCUST} (1) & U = \text{UNDERWING} (4) \\
M &=& \text{MOSQUITO} (1) & V = \text{VICEROY} (4) \\
N &=& \text{NUN} (5) & W = \text{WASP} (1) \\
O &=& \text{OXFLY} (5) & X = \text{XYLOCOPID} (5)
\end{array}
\]

As in the case of fish, there are 15 names on levels (1) and (2), but the distribution is more favorable, with 8 of them on the first level. Once again, another 2 names come in on level (3).

The rest of the list is distinctly less common. Only two more names, UNDERWING and VICEROY, are added on level (4), with 7 names being drawn from level (5).

The meanings of the less common words are not especially significant. NUN, QUAKER, and UNDERWING are moths; OXFLY and ZIMB are flies; the JARFLY is a cicada; the YELLOWJACKET is a wasp; and the VICEROY is a butterfly.

Three names merit special attention. ROACH has made it over from the fish list to the insect list, being both a sunfish and a cockroach. YELLOWJACKET, spelled as one word instead of two, was taken from an unabridged dictionary smaller than Webster's Third Edition -- from The Unabridged Edition of The Random House Dictionary of the English Language (Random House, New York, 1966).

The letter X presented a devil of a problem! By consulting both Webster's Second Edition and The Oxford English Dictionary, it was possible to complete the list with XYLOCOPID. A xylocopid is any insect of the genus Xylocopa. That genus includes only the carpenter bees. If CARPENTER BEE were a single-word term beginning with X, there would be no reason to exclude it from the list. Accordingly, there is no reason to exclude XYLOCOPID from the list. With that bit of logological sleight of hand, we bid the insect world a fond farewell.
My next analysis attacks the realm of imaginary creatures. Carefully excluded from that world, for obscure reasons I do not care to plumb here, are names from the Judaeo-Christian conceptual framework and names from Greek, Roman, and Norse mythology. Furthermore, all names to be included must be general, not proper names of specific creatures. With that introduction, I proudly present what follows:

A = APPARITION (2)  J = JINNI (3)  R = ROC (3)
B = BROWNIE (2)   K = KOBOLD (2)  S = SPOOK (2)
C = CHANGELING (3) L = LEPRECHAUN (2)  T = TROLL (2)
D = DRAGON (1)     M = MERMAID (2)  U = UNICORN (2)
E = ELF (1)        N = NIXIE (3)    V = VAMPIRE (2)
F = FAIRY (1)      O = OGRE (2)     W = WITCH (2)
G = GIANT (1)      P = PIXIE (2)    X =
H = HOBGOBLIN (2)  Q = QUEEN (7)    Y = YAHOO (3)
I = IMP (2)        R = MERMAID (2)  Z = ZOMBI (3)

The list is an astonishing one, as far as distribution between the different levels is concerned. Although there are only 4 words on level (1), 24 of the 26 terms are taken from the first three levels. Incidentally, I could have kept the letter S on level (1) with SPRITE, but superimposed my judgment that SPOOK is a word more common, known to more people, than is the word SPRITE.

Here, too, is a list that waxes poetic, with the NIXIE-PIXIE rhyme. Of course, there are enough possible rhymes on other lists: MONKEY-DONKEY for mammals, PIGEON-WIGEON for birds, BURBOT-TURBOT for fish, MAYFLY-DAYFLY for insects. The list of rhymes is endless.

Letters Q and X present extraordinary problems. To solve the Q enigma, I went beyond the non-Websterian unabridged dictionaries on level (6), to Lewis Carroll's Through the Looking Glass. There, I found QUEENS such as the Red Queen and the White Queen: imaginary talking chess pieces. Although the word QUEEN itself is common enough to be on level (1), this meaning of it must be placed on level (7), beyond the largest dictionaries.

The X enigma has not been solved at this writing. There may be some imaginary X-creatures in a work of literature, by H.G. Wells or someone else, that do not occur to me just now. Assistance from readers of Word Ways in plugging the gap in the dike is indicated. Wire or phone the editor immediately, with your contribution! Yes, you may save the day for us all!

At a suitable time, I propose to reveal to the world further studies in language levels, probably drawing on the botanical realm.