This is a sequel to *Unusual Words* (Word Ways 2008145) which examines words with single like letters having different pronunciations, thus being represented by different phonetic symbols. *Arbitrary Words* looks at words with two like bigrams which have different pronunciations and different phonetic symbols. ARBITRARY is one such word, the first AR being pronounced as the A in bath, the second AR as the AR in arise. Words in which one of the two bigram letters is represented by the same phonetic symbol in both bigrams are not included. Thus the Os in the TO bigrams in TORONTO are represented by different phonetic symbols, but the Ts are both represented by t, so Toronto cannot be included. I use the phonetics list of the Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd Edition and the words can be found therein.

**BIGRAMS**

**AC**

*Phonetic symbols:*  
\( \text{ak}^1 \) (as in barrack)  \( \text{ei}^2 \) (A, éte)  \( \text{ak}^3 \) (aconite)  \( \text{as}^4 \) (arduous)  
\( \text{ac}^1 \text{ac}^2 \) ia  
\( \text{ac}^3 \) urac^4 y

**AG**

*Phonetic symbols:*  
\( \text{ag}^1 \) (agony)  
\( \text{id}^2 \) (Egyptian)  \( \text{ae}^3 \) (agile)  \( \text{eg}^4 \) (ago)  
\( \text{va}^1 \text{ag}^2 \) e  
\( \text{na}^3 \text{ya}^4 \) ite

**AH**

*Phonetic symbols:*  
\( \text{ah}^1 \) (Oklahoma)  \( \text{ai}^2 \) (agal)  
\( \text{ah}^5 \) (a:)

**AI**

*Phonetic symbols:*  
\( \text{ea}^1 \) (rare)  \( \text{ei}^2 \) (A, ate)  
\( \text{ai}^1 \) \( \text{ma}^2 \) i

**AR**

*Phonetic symbols:*  
\( \text{ar}^1 \) (bath)  
\( \text{ar}^3 \) (Arab)  
\( \text{er}^2 \) (arise)  
\( \text{a}^4 \) (alert)  
\( \text{er}^5 \) (area)  
\( \text{ea}^7 \) (daring)  
\( \text{ar}^2 \) (bitar) y  
\( \text{ar}^3 \) (istar) ch  
\( \text{ar}^4 \) (dar)  
\( \text{tar}^1 \) tar^3 ic  
\( \text{bar}^1 \) bar^2 ous  
\( \text{war}^6 \) far^7 e  
\( \text{bar}^1 \) bar^5 ian  
\( \text{war}^6 \) far^2 in

**AS**

*Phonetic symbols:*  
\( \text{as}^1 \) (glacé)  
\( \text{a}^2 \) (haut-pas)  
\( \text{as}^3 \) (arduous)  
\( \text{el}^4 \) (acer)  
\( \text{a}^6 \) (acid)  
\( \text{eiz}^6 \) (lazy)  
\( \text{az}^7 \) (Aztec)  
\( \text{ae}^8 \) (cast)  
\( \text{chas}^1 \) selas^2  
\( \text{das}^3 \) tas^4 e  
\( \text{phanta}^1 \) mas^2 cope  
\( \text{elas}^4 \) tas^4 e  
\( \text{plas}^7 \) moblas^8 t  
\( \text{gynmas}^6 \) las^5 t
AU
Phonetic symbols: $\text{d}^1$ (odd) $\text{a}^2$ (call)
pau’hau$^2$gen

AW
Phonetic symbols: $\alpha$:w$^1$ (Malawi) $\text{a}^2$ (call)
paw’aw$^2$

CE
Phonetic symbols: si$^1$ (C, see) $s^2$ (sag) $se^3$ (subject)
preci’dence$^2$ lice’nce$^2$

CH
Phonetic symbols: x$^1$ (ouch) $\varphi^2$ (gemütlich)
Sach’lich$^2$keit

CI
Phonetic symbols: si$^1$ (cedilla) $f^2$ (shop) $kr^3$ (kid) sa$^4$ (sigh)
Ci’sterci$^2$an molluscic’i$^4$de $ci^3$catric$^2$al

EA
Phonetic symbols: $\text{iae}^1$ (hysteria) $\varepsilon^2$ (pet) $\epsilon\epsilon^3$ (daring) $\alpha^4$ (bath) $i^5$ (E, see)
$\varepsilon^6$ (alert)
drea$^1$rihea$^2$d hea$^2$dwea$^3$r hear$^4$tea$^5$se lea$^2$dbea$^5$ter
pea$^3$ceae$^2$ble whea$^5$tea$^1$r

EI
Phonetic symbols: ei$^1$ (A, ate) $\text{eai}^2$ (voltaïte)
tei’nei’te

ER
Phonetic symbols: ir$^1$ (bereft) $\varepsilon^2$ (alert) $\epsilon:\epsilon^3$ (ergot) $\epsilon\epsilon^4$ (error)
er$^1$aser$^2$ er$^3$gost$^4$er ol

EU
Phonetic symbols: ju$^1$ (use) $\upsilon\epsilon^2$ (assure)
eu$^1$dipleu$^2$ral

EY
Phonetic symbols: ai$^1$ (l. eye) $r^2$ (pit) ei$^3$ (A, ate)
ev$^1$ey$^2$ whey$^3$ey$^2$
**GE**
*Phonetic symbols:*
- g\(e\)^1 (gazelle)
- d\(e\)^3 (giant)

**GY**
*Phonetic symbols:*
- g\(a\)\(^1\) (guy)
- d\(3\)\(^1\) (jib)

**IA**
*Phonetic symbols:*
- a\(i\)\(^1\) (lambic)
- e\(^2\) (hysteria)
- a\(i\)\(^3\) (lown)
- e\(^4\) (alert)
- e\(^5\) (genethiology)
- a\(i\)\(^6\) (tiara)
- a\(^7\) (yep)
- a\(^8\) (ballet)

**IE**
*Phonetic symbols:*
- j\(e\)^1 (yes)
- i\(^2\) (brasserie)
- e\(^3\) (hysteria)
- e\(^4\) (pit)
- e\(^5\) (bijou)

**IO**
*Phonetic symbols:*
- i\(e\)^1 (audio)
- a\(i\)\(^2\) (ion)
- e\(^3\) (alert)

**IS**
*Phonetic symbols:*
- i\(s\)^1 (iris)
- a\(i\)\(^2\) (adviser)

**NG**
*Phonetic symbols:*
- n\(d\)\(^1\) (angel)
- n\(^2\) (sing)
- n\(^3\) (enquif)

**OA**
*Phonetic symbols:*
- o\(u\)^1 (so)
- o\(^2\) (orient)

**OE**
*Phonetic symbols:*
- u\(^1\) (fully)
- u\(^2\) (truce)

**OI**
*Phonetic symbols:*
- e\(^1\) (alert)
- o\(^2\) (alloy)
OS
Phonetic symbols: ðz¹ (nozzle)  aʊs² (boast)
oso¹moʊs²is

OU
Phonetic symbols: aʊ¹ (out)  æ² (alert)  u³ (fully)  u₄ (abstruse)  oʊ⁵ (ford)
ʌ⁶ (hump)  uə⁷ (assure)
moun⁴tainou²s  cau³tchou⁴cin  crou⁴pou²s  ou¹tpou⁵r
rou⁶ghou²t  tou⁶chou²s  trou⁴badou⁵ or 7 r

OW
Phonetic symbols: aʊ¹ (out)  æu² (so)
dow¹nthrow²  know²how¹

PS
Phonetic symbols: s¹ (sag)  ps² (psalm)
ps¹eudocarps²

SE
Phonetic symbols: s¹ (sag)  z² (lens)  sɪ³ (Sid)  se⁴ (sedge)
else¹wise²  se³cluse²  Se⁴negalese²

SI
Phonetic symbols: zai¹ (preside)  sɪ² (Sid)  zɪ³ (basil)  saɪ⁴ (sigh)  j⁵ (shop)
babes¹asi²s  phthiṣ³ogenesi²s  Sɪ⁴lesi⁵an

SO
Phonetic symbols: z(e)¹ (prison)  sʌ² (insult)
poiso¹nso²me

SU
Phonetic symbols: sʌ¹ (insult)  zə² (freesia)
su¹btreasu²rer

TI
Phonetic symbols: ti¹ (tip)  j² (shop)
eti¹olati²on  intersti¹ti²al

UE
Phonetic symbols: wɛ¹ (web)  juːz² (minuet)  the second UE in each word is silent³
sque¹teague³  statue²sque³
Unusual Words revealed that θ appears to top the list of phonetic symbols with regard to the number of different single letters of the alphabet that it can represent, namely A, E, I, O, U, Y and R. Examples are given for each of these letters, along with the word polymerosomatous in which the letters O, E and A are all represented by θ, as also is the bigram OU. Arbitrary Words has now shown that there are bigrams other than OU that are represented by the symbol θ. These can be found above in words listed under AR, EA, ER, IA, IO and OI. This brings the (running?) total of θ representations to 14: 7 single letters and 7 bigrams.

A CHRISTMAS WISH

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