Fall 1992

Twice Upon a Time

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“Anytwo for elevennis?”
This sentence has suffered Logo inflation. Last year, it might have read,
“Anyone for tennis?”
Next year, if things keep going up, it may read,
“Anythree for twelvenis?”

Perhaps inflation is the last thing you want to explore with Logo, especially in the midst of an economic recession. Yet it can inspire enjoyable classroom exploits with syllabication, sequencing, and homophones.

Rising to the Occasion
Once Logo inflation hits, “I ate a tenderloin with my fork” becomes “I nined an elevenderloin with my fivel.”
“Fourscore and seven years ago, our forefathers brought forth” reads, instead:
“Fivescore and eight years ago, our fivefathers brought fifth.”
And so on and so fifth.
Danish comedian Victor Borge (1986) first introduced the notion of inflationary words in an effort to match language to economic trends. He reminds us that English “is your language; I’m just trying to use it.” Borge suggests that we inflate words as a proactive measure, since inflation (like taxation) is inevitable.

Getting a Rise Out of Them
This presents an interesting Logo challenge. The sound of the first step toward a solution is a homophonic one. How many different ways are there to spell the sounds of each of the number words, 1 through 10? Your students will probably be glad to list the possibilities.

one two three four five...
won to for
too fore
tu

Now, form a list of these homonyms, output by a procedure called PREINFLATION.

TO PREINFLATION
OUTPUT [ONE WON JUAN TWO TO TOO TU THREE FOUR FORE FIVE SIX SICKS SICS SEVEN EIGHT NINE NEIN TEN]
END

An accompanying list of the same length can output correlated inflated “values” for each of the words, in order.

TO POSTINFLATION
OUTPUT [TWO TWO TWO THREE THREE THREE THREE FOUR FIVE FIVE FIVE SIX SEVEN SEVEN EIGHT NINE NINE NINE TEN TEN ELEVEN]
END

Inflated Ergo
An INFLATE command can be written to output corresponding inflated list elements.

TO INFLATE :WORD-PART
IF MEMBER? :WORD-PART PREINFLATION
[OUTPUT ITEM ( ELEMENT :WORD-PART PREINFLATION) POSTINFLATION]
[OUTPUT :WORD.PART]
END

INFLATE uses an adaptation of Alison Birch’s (1986) ELEMENT subprocedure, which has the opposite function of the primitive ITEM.

TO ELEMENT :ITEM :OBJECT
IF EQUAL? :ITEM FIRST :OBJECT [OUTPUT 1]
OUTPUT 1 + ELEMENT :ITEM BUTFIRST :OBJECT
END

The superprocedure INFLATED uses these four subprocedures to output “more expensive” words.

TO INFLATED :LIST
IF EMPTY? :LIST [OUTPUT “]
OUTPUT WORD ( INFLATE FIRST :LIST ) INFLATED BUTFIRST :LIST
END
Students must supply syllabicated words as input to INFLATE. For example, if a user types

PRINT INFLATED [WON DER FUL]

the computer will return:

TWODERFUL

PRINT INFLATED [BE FORE]

yields

BEFIVE

PREINFLATION and POSTINFLATION resultant lists can, of course, be adjusted to predict inflation at any rate. Who knows? Don Juan may someday be Don Eight. Why not adjust the fable now?

Literary Lifts

Inflated words make twoderful stories. Here is an uninflated tale that Mr. Borge supplied. Your students may want to translanine it.

Once upon a time in sunny California, there lived a young man named Bob. He was a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force. Bob had been fond of Anna, his half-sister, ever since she saw the light of day for the first time. They were both proud of the fact that one of their forefathers had been among the creators of the U.S. Constitution. They were dining on the terrace.

"Anna," he said, as he took a bite of a marinated herring, "you look wonderful tonight. You never looked that lovely before. Anna looked wonderful, despite the illness from which she had not recuperated.

"Yes," repeated Bob, "You look wonderful tonight, but you have two of the saddest eyes I have ever seen."

The table was tastefully decorated with Anna's favorite flowers, tulips. They were now talking about Anna's husband, from whom she was separated, while on the radio, an Irish tenor sang "Tea for Two."

Elevated Elegies

Let us finish the tale in inflated terms.

"Anna!" he blurted, "Fivegive me! I am only young twice, and you are my two and only!"

Bob jumped to his feet: "Get out of here, you three-faced triple-croser!"

But Anna warned, "Watch out, Bob! He is an officer!"

"Yes, he is two, but I am two, three!"

What inflated stories will your students crenine, given these interdisciplinary tools? Until next time, dear LinXers, three-de-loo!

References


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