

British vs. American Words for Home Objects
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYvyRUDEkUE>
Transcript: <https://dontveter.com/ec/BvsA.pdf>

Hello, I'm Laurence, and I'm on a quest to uncover all of the memos that Britain and America lost in the pond.

And one of those memos pertains to words, specifically and scientifically, words for stuff found around the house.

And, so, once again, in order to do this I'm going to have to get up off this chair and go from room to room.

Now just cut I'll sit I'll go in my own time.

Like a lot of people, I keep my cleaning implements in one of these.

This is what Americans would call a closet but sometimes in Britain we refer to this as a cupboard.

Now since cupboards/closets can get quite dark on the inside, it's quite a good idea to have one of these around partly because it makes it easier to look inside the closet but also because I like to play horror pranks on my wife.

Anyway, in Britain this is known as a torch whereas in America, it's a flashlight.

My cleaning implement of choice is one of these, I think we all know what this is but we don't all have the same word for it.

In Britain we might refer to this as a vacuum cleaner sure, but we might also refer to it as a Hoover.

Now any Americans watching this might be thinking, that's not a Hoover it doesn't have the Hoover branding on it.

So here's the thing, Hoover is an American company that was formed in the early 20th century.

It just happens that they were around at the same time as President Herbert Hoover and FBI director J Edgar Hoover and the popular belief is that they all sucked, especially the vacuum cleaner. (He's being funny, a guy named Hoover bought the company).

But that's beside the point, the Hoover company marketed their product in Britain and at some point the word Hoover became a genericized [generic] term for vacuum cleaner.

And that's what I mean when I talk about memos that got lost in the pond.

In America you will hear the term vacuum cleaner but some Americans will call this a sweeper, not to be confused with the defensive position in football/soccer.

Now one of these motorized suck machines is going to be useless without one of these.

In case you're not familiar with plug sockets, who is not familiar with plug sockets?

Perhaps people that don't call them plug sockets. to be clear, that's what I call this having grown up in Britain.

But in the US they might be referred to simply as a socket or an outlet, in fact either word might be used at different times to denote different applications.

This contraption might be described as a socket when you're putting a plug into the wall but as an outlet when describing the electricity that comes out.

And if you're excited to learn more about the physical differences between British and American plugs be sure to subscribe and hit my bell because that video is coming soon.

Now here's a hypothetical scenario that I definitely just made up.

What if you need to vacuum in the other wing of your house but the other plug sockets for whatever reason aren't working.

Firstly, call maintenance, but in the meantime you might want to use one of these.

You can't see it here but this is a very long wire that allows you to move devices over greater distances.

In Britain we might call this a power extender or I was known to call it an extension lead.

From there it's not too big a stretch to arrive at the American term, extension cord.

And you join me now in the lounge, or as Americans would call it, the living room.

We call it that as well, I actually just wanted to point out that we call it lounge and also apparently, drawing room, although only about seven people use that term.

Anyway, you can probably hear some sounds in the background that is my voice, Tara's voice and that of Love Luca but it does when I say it for sure.

In other words this is now a reaction video of Love Luca's reaction video of Lost in the Pond.

I know, I know, I know, this is really meta and it's difficult to talk over you love so I'll, I'll just let you talk anyway, the important thing here is the device I'm using to watch it.

In both Britain and America, of course, we often refer to the television as the TV but in Britain we also call it the telly because we just love putting the letter y on the end of an existing word and saying, here you go, here's a new word, right?

Think breaky for breakfast, chocky for chocolates and Laury for Lawrence.(lorry is British for truck)

And of course, this is the 21st century. If I want to change the channel from Lost in the Pond to Love Luka, I don't want to have to get up and do that manually at the TV itself, right?

I've got a huge coffee table in the way not to mention a huge coffee cup so that's why we have one of these.

Where I come from this is known as a TV remote, right? And you might hear that in the United States too. (in the US, a remote control)

You might also hear remote in both countries but I was 26 years old and living in Indiana when I heard a Midwesterner refer to this as a clicker.

To this day I'm not really sure whether clicker is a midwesternism so if you live in the United States but not the Midwest and still call this a clicker, let me know in the comments below.

The first word difference to note about a kitchen is possibly the stove.

That's the word that Americans perhaps use most commonly to describe the entire unit.

In Britain to describe the exact same thing we might also use stove, perhaps even oven, but growing up I was always fond of cooker which linguistically pairs well with clicker.

Second thoughts: do not cook your TV remotes.

Of course both Britain and America have different names for different parts of the cooker.

The top part of the oven which you might use for boiling eggs or creating impressive b-rolls is known to a Brit as the hob.

In America you'll typically hear stove top (it's the range, and each burner is a burner).

Of course, when it comes to actually eating the food you can't just use your hands unless you're American.

Sometimes you're gonna need a knife and fork and don't get me wrong, it's not those words that differ but the collective term we use to describe them.

In Britain these would be described as cutlery, or as I like to say, cutery because I'm not human.

In America the collective term for the exact same objects is silverware or more specifically flatware.

Because I don't really know why a spoon doesn't look particularly flat but from space neither does the earth.

And then once we're done with the eating, it's time to do the washing up.

It's a boring job but somebody's got to do it.

Come here cat, lick the dishes.

But this part in the process comes with quite a few word differences.

Firstly, you've got what the British would call washing up liquid.

In America it's dish soap, or as Dawn is trying to push on us, dishwashing liquid.

And you can't wash dishes without water, which in Britain comes out of a tap.

A common synonym of this in the United States is faucet.

And then you dry everything off with what the British would call a tea towel, and the Americans a dish towel.

It looks like a really terrifying puppy. Why are you shaking? Although that's me, I'm doing that.

Well here we are again, you and me, in my bathroom except I'm the only one who's actually here and you're just watching, which is worse.

All that to say I'm going to keep this brief.

Now have you ever used one of these?

It's not a pair of underwear, it is in fact a piece of fabric with which you wash your body.

Now for the sake of time and because the FCC said that I couldn't do this, I'm not going to show it in action.

I'm just here to tell you that in Britain, we call this a flannel.

In America it's often referred to as a wash cloth or a face cloth that ironically looks like a puppet without a face.

As with the kitchen the same applies here, we have faucet versus tap.

And I couldn't do another segment in the bathroom without talking about the toilet because that's what I do.

Sure, both countries use that very word, but each is absolutely loaded with cinnamon synonyms synonyms.

So in Britain you've got loo, bog, latrine, lavatory, lav, porcelain firing range and bog.

In America you have the john, the commode, the pot, the potty, the porcelain god, the crapper, and my personal favorite, the bowl.

And finally you may remember in my bedroom video from earlier this year I talked about how America has walk-in closets and Britain has wardrobes.

Now that's not really relevant for this video because the two things are quite different.

This was just an excuse to show off our new walk-in closet.

These aren't my dresses by the way, my dresses are over here.

But if you come inside, I do have one last thing to show you and don't worry, it's not a pair of jolts. (?????)

Now I know that this might seem sensationally weird, but in this storage facility behind me, I keep things like my underpants.

These are the drawers are see-through aren't they?

Just pretend that what you see here isn't plastic and rubbish and just imagine that it is in fact made of mahogany.

These are just temporary placeholder drawers that we've had for four years.

Anyway, the point is, in Britain I would have called this, or its mahogany equivalent, a chest of drawers.

In America no need for any chest around here, it's just draws or apparently some Americans refer to a chest of drawers as a bureau.

Which would confuse the British and the French for different reasons.

That's it for this episode, let me know in the comments below some of the word differences that you're aware of that pertain to the house.

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And a walk in closet size shout out to my patrons who make these videos possible.

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Until the next video, goodbye.