

"We have really everything in common with America nowadays except, of course, language" - Oscar Wilde, *The Canterville Ghost*, 1887

The idea for this dictionary began during a survey/scout of a theater/theatre in Brussels prior to an Anglo-American television production. The director selected camera locations. Two were to be located towards the rear of the lowest level of audience.

I wandered off to discuss technical issues with the stage crew. My French is poor and my Flemish essentially non-existent, but I had little difficulty communicating with the Belgians. I returned to find the American female producer and the British male producer screaming at each other. They were saying exactly the same thing and didn't realize it.

He: So we're having two cameras in the stalls.

She: No, we agreed not to put cameras in the boxes; they're going in the orchestra.

He: We agreed not to put cameras with the musicians!

She: Of course we're not having cameras in the pit!

He: Yes, we are!

It helps to know that the lowest level of theatrical audience in English is called the *stalls*, which seems suspiciously like *boxes* to an American. The same level is called the *orchestra* by an American, which means the *musicians* in English. To the American, those musicians play in the *pit*. But the *pit* is an old English theatrical term for the lowest level of audience.

Professions often have their own jargons, never mind American/English language variations. How many people not employed in theatrical work know that *tormentors* hide the view of off-stage areas from the audience or that *vomitories* are entrances piercing the seating? Abbreviate those terms as *torms* and *voms*, and people can't even look them up in dictionaries. *Front porch*, *back porch*, *breezeway*, *flag*, and *pedestal* might have certain meanings in architecture; they're also used differently to describe components of a U.S.-standard composite-color video signal.

Then there are those American/English variations. Americans in northern England giggle when they hear someone say he's *knocked up* the vicar's wife; the English in America find *Don't Honk* street signs equally amusing. It helps to know that *to knock up*, a perfectly respectable northern English term for *to pay a visit* means *to impregnate* in American slang. Similarly, *to honk*, perfectly normal American for *to toot* an automobile horn, is British slang for *to vomit* or *to stink*.

Times are changing. A *billion* used to be a *thousand million* in American but a *million million* in English, where a *thousand million* was a *milliard*. Since the 1970s, however, the thousand-million connotation has been used in Britain, though *milliard* is still used in non-UK English. Similarly, *CSO* is now usually called *chroma key* on both sides of the Atlantic. So take what follows with a grain of salt.

Enjoy!

Mark Schubert

American

A1
A2
analog
antenna
audio (department)
Belden 8281
bird
black (power hot wire)
black/red/blue (three phase)
black (video level)
board (control or mixing)
booth (trade show)
broadcast-quality monitor
Bruce (regional)
bug (logo)
cable puller
Chyron
color
color correction
colorist
console (control or mixing)
control room
dissolve
DTV (digital television)
effects (sound)
EIC
Elvis
equalize, equalizing
ESU, equipment set-up
file (footage)
hot (in power wires)
gaffer
ground, grounded, grounding
IRE
lighting instrument
machine room
MMDS
monitor wall
MOS
Nielsen
painting
pedestal (black signal level)
PL
power

English

sound mixer
sound assistant
analogue
aerial (domestic receiving)
sound
BBC PSF1/2
satellite
brown (mains live wire)
brown/black/grey (three phase)
lowest luma level ~50 mv above blanking
desk
stand
Grade 1 monitor
Gordie, locked-off camera, lock-off
ident, DOG, DINGO
basher
Aston
colour
grading
grader
desk
gallery
mix
DTT (sometimes)
gramms
EM, engineering manager, TM, SRM
EVS disk recorder/server
equalise, equalising
rigging (approximate)
archival, library
live, phase
lighting assistant, electrician
earth, earthed, earthing
(Institute of Radio Engineers) 7.14-mv units
luminaire
CAR (central apparatus room)
MVDS
production stack
no sound
BARB (approximate)
racking
sit
talkback
mains

production switcher
production truck
program (a broadcast)
prompter
racking
remote, remote site
roll (tape)
router, routing switcher
senior video
set-up (black signal level)
shading
shake, shaker
spool
SVO
switcher
synchronize, synchronizing
TD
technical director
teleprompter
translator (RF)
truck (production)
tube (electronic component)
tube (euphemism)
TV
ute, utility
V1
V2
video (department)
video (person)
vertical interval
VITS (vertical interval test signal)
VO
white (power neutral wire)
zee (pronunciation of z)
zero

vision mixer
OB van, scanner
programme
autocue
changing focus
OB
run (VT)
matrix, switcher
VS, vision supervisor
sit
racking
frame synchronise, frame synchroniser
reel
vision supervisor
vision mixer
synchronise, synchronising
vision mixer
vision mixer
autocue
transposer
OB van, scanner
valve
telly
telly
rigger, basher
VS, vision supervisor
assistant vision controller
vision, racks
vision controller
field blanking
ITS
vision controller, racks
blue (mains neutral wire)
zed
cipher, nought

English

advert
aerial (domestic)
analogue
Aston
autocue
BARB (British Audience Research Board)
bash (cable)
basher
BBC PSF1/2
beamer (non-UK)
black (video level)
blue (mains neutral wire)
brown (mains wire)
brown/black/grey (three phase)
cinema (place)
cipher (rare in UK)
colour
CSO (colour separation overlay)
desk (control or mixing)
DINGO
DOG
DTT, dTTb
earth, earthed, earthing
EM
EOP
equalise, equalising
field blanking
gaffer
gallery
general view
Gordie
grade (verb)
Grade 1 monitor
grader
grading
gramms (sound)
GV (general view)
ident (logo)
inlay
ITS (insertion test signal)
kit
live (in mains wiring)
luminaire
mains

American

commercial, spot
antenna
analog
Chyron
prompter
Nielsen (approximate)
pull, dress
cable puller, ute, utility
Belden 8281
projector
0 IRE, same as blanking level
white (power neutral wire)
black (power wire)
black/red/blue (three phase)
movie theater
zero
color
chroma key
board, console
bug (visual identification)
bug (visual identification)
digital terrestrial television broadcasting
ground, grounded, grounding
technical manager, EIC, sometimes LD
end of part (end of segment)
equalise, equalizing
vertical interval
foreman, head, chief
control room
exterior establishing shot
Bruce, locked-off camera
color correct
broadcast-quality monitor
colorist
color correction
phono, music & sound effects
exterior establishing shot
bug
key (effect)
VITS
equipment, equip
hot
lighting instrument, light
power

matrix
milliard (rare in UK)
mix (video)
MVDS
nought
OB (outside broadcast)
OB van
overlay
phase (in mains wiring, rare in UK)
Pres
production stack
programme (broadcast content)
queue
racks
racking
rigger
rigging
run (VT)
scanner (vehicle)
SCART
sit (black signal level)
SOP
sound (department)
sparkies, sparks
stand (exhibition)
synchronise, synchronising
tape
TARIF
transposer (RF)
turn it over
valve
video (object)
vision
vision controller
vision mixer (equipment)
vision mixer (person)
vision supervisor
VS
VT
wobulator (RF)
zed (pronunciation of z)

router, routing switcher
billion
dissolve
MMDS
nothing, zero
remote site, remote
remote truck
key (effect)
hot
network control, master control
monitor wall
program
waiting line
video operator
adjusting video, painting, shading
utility, ute (approximate)
ESU, equipment set-up (approximate)
roll (tape)
production truck
consumer component audio/video connector
pedestal, set-up
start of part (start of segment)
audio
electrician, gaffer
booth
synchronize, synchronizing
audio tape
color correction, to color correct
translator
roll to record
tube
VCR, prerecorded videocassette
video
video operator, VO, V2
production switcher, switcher
TD, technical director
V1, senior video, SVO
V1, senior video, SVO
tape (video)
sweep generator
zee