# American children adopting British accents and slang from Peppa Pig sparks debate



American parents have recently voiced their frustrations about the British animated series Peppa Pig, claiming that it is causing their children to adopt British accents and terminology, a phenomenon they have come to label as “brainwashing.” This discourse emerged prominently on social media, particularly on platforms like Reddit, where parents expressed concerns over their offspring's newfound affinity for British slang. Stories abounded of children referring to swimsuits as "swimming costumes" and gardens as "the garden," with one parent lamenting the drastic linguistic shift, stating, "I told her that we are American and in this country we say swimsuit."

Such anecdotal evidence suggests a growing trend among American children who are not only picking up British terms but also altering their pronunciation. Comments from parents on Reddit revealed that many had noticed similar changes, with expressions like "petrol" instead of "gas" and "holiday" rather than "vacation" becoming common. Some parents found this shift endearing, whilst others viewed it with dismay, particularly when children began mimicking specific character idiosyncrasies from the show. One parent mentioned that their child developed a habit of speaking out of the side of their mouth, a style adopted from Peppa and her family.

Despite the complaints, some parents embraced these linguistic transformations, viewing them as charming quirks rather than detrimental changes. One Reddit user remarked how their children now referred to the backyard as "the garden," a term that resonated positively with them, while another parent recalled their daughter saying “taking ages” during simple daily tasks, thanks to the influence of another popular children’s show, Bluey.

The phenomenon, often referred to as the "Peppa Effect," has caught the attention of linguistic experts who express skepticism regarding the actual impact of television on accent development. Most argue that a child’s primary linguistic influences stem from their immediate environment rather than media. According to these experts, while it is unsurprising that children pick up certain phrases or pronunciations from shows they watch, these instances do not necessarily support the notion that extensive exposure could alter their foundational accents.

One measure of Peppa Pig's popularity in the U.S. is its overwhelming viewership, which has been reported at 112% higher than in its native UK. This data points to a strong cultural reception, one that transcends mere amusement and engenders deeper engagements, particularly among children who are prone to imitation.

The show's characters, particularly Peppa, have not only entertained young audiences but also sparked discussions among parents about the moral lessons embedded within its narratives. Some parents have observed unflattering behavioural traits attributed to Peppa, labelling her as "rude" and "impatient," which in some cases seemed to resonate with their children's own developing behaviours. Kayla Tychen, a mother from Houston, articulated this sentiment, identifying behavioural changes in her child that mirrored Peppa's adventurous yet sassy persona.

As excitement mounts around the recent announcement of Mummy Pig's third child, critics and fans alike continue to engage in discussions about the show's influence on young minds. The debut of baby Evie has reignited the cultural dialogue surrounding Peppa Pig, but as the series continues to capture viewers, the question remains whether its linguistic and behavioural impacts will endure in the hearts and minds of children across the Atlantic.

As such conversations proliferate on social media, it remains clear that the complex interplay between favourite animated characters and children’s developing vocabularies is a rich vein for exploration among parents and educators alike.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14742281/Americans-accuse-Peppa-Pig-brainwashing-children-US-kids-start-using-British-slang.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2021/jul/19/peppa-pig-american-kids-british-accents), [[3]](https://www.itv.com/news/2019-02-12/american-children-develop-british-accent-after-watching-peppa-pig)
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2. <https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2021/jul/19/peppa-pig-american-kids-british-accents> - An article from The Guardian discussing how American parents have observed their children adopting British accents after watching Peppa Pig. The piece highlights various instances where children have started using British terms and pronunciations, such as 'mummy' instead of 'mommy' and 'to-mah-to' instead of 'to-may-to'. Linguistic experts are cited expressing skepticism about the extent of this phenomenon, suggesting that children typically develop accents from their immediate environment rather than from television shows. The article also notes the show's popularity in the U.S., with audience demand 112% higher than in the UK.
3. <https://www.itv.com/news/2019-02-12/american-children-develop-british-accent-after-watching-peppa-pig> - A report by ITV News covering American parents' observations that their children are adopting British accents after watching Peppa Pig. The article includes anecdotes from parents who have noticed their toddlers using British terms and pronunciations, such as 'mummy' and 'tomatoes'. Experts are quoted expressing skepticism about the extent of this phenomenon, suggesting that children typically develop accents from their immediate environment rather than from television shows. The piece also notes the show's popularity in the U.S., with audience demand 112% higher than in the UK.
4. <https://www.foxnews.com/entertainment/is-peppa-pig-causing-american-children-to-speak-with-british-accent> - An article from Fox News discussing the 'Peppa Effect', where American children are reportedly adopting British accents after watching Peppa Pig. The piece includes personal accounts from parents who have observed their children using British terms and pronunciations, such as 'mummy' and 'petrol station'. Linguistic experts are cited expressing skepticism about the extent of this phenomenon, suggesting that children typically develop accents from their immediate environment rather than from television shows. The article also notes the show's popularity in the U.S., with audience demand 112% higher than in the UK.
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6. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/news/peppa-pig-children-american-english-accent-cartoon-network-a8777581.html> - An article from The Independent discussing American parents' observations that their children are adopting British accents after watching Peppa Pig. The piece includes anecdotes from parents who have noticed their children using British terms and pronunciations, such as 'mummy' and 'tomatoes'. Linguistic experts are cited expressing skepticism about the extent of this phenomenon, suggesting that children typically develop accents from their immediate environment rather than from television shows. The article also notes the show's popularity in the U.S., with audience demand 112% higher than in the UK.
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