



About American iTalk™

The second edition of this new textbook and program developed for teachers who speak some English, but not enough to develop English speaking students.

How many English speaking teachers do you hire over the period of one year? How would you like to train your native teachers (especially those who already speak a little English) to speak American English? It is now possible for such a movement to begin!

A 2nd edition of American iTalk™ with Hyper-Vowels™©. is now available. This newly revised text book is the result of twenty years of teaching international students. The 2nd edition has been reorganized and updated with additional information to make it easier to use for both teachers and students. A teacher with a reasonably good understanding of the use of phonics in teaching English and reading should be able to use this new edition effectively.

The author began teaching international students with the arrival of Korean students into the U. S in the mid 1980's. The students have ranged in age from kindergarten to professional men and women wanting to improve their English. At that time there was a severe lack of teaching materials available. As one age group completed the author's program another group presented itself. Over the course of time a book of sounds, letters and pronunciation was developed.

The 2nd edition is now available, and the author of the book is also available to teach your national teachers how to correctly teach and use the text book. While American iTalk™ is a text for teachers *and* students the book is not a self-teaching text for students, but it is a work text enabling teachers to make correct sounds for the students. Since there is a need to learn the pronunciation of the 62 + English sounds which include the hyper-vowel sounds, a teacher who speaks fluent English is necessary.

For more information go to: [www. Americanitalk.com](http://www.Americanitalk.com) to find contact information and more about the teacher/student textbook and its use.

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Author of: American iTalk™ with Hyper-Vowels™©

American iTalk™ with Hyper-Vowels™

**Teaching International Students to Read, Speak and begin Writing.
This method also helps in reducing accents**

It is imperative that we begin at the **beginning** of the English language in ESL programs working through the sounds of the alphabet. "*Hyper-Vowels™*" refers to the fact that there are not just 5 or 6 vowel sounds in the English language, **but more than 30 that must be mastered in order to speak and read English effectively.**

**A PROGRAM GUARANTEED TO TEACH
ENGLISH TO INTERNATIONALS WHEN
FOLLOWED CORRECTLY.**

This method can also be used to address the “Johnny can’t read” issue in our own educational system.

Introduction

While more and more internationals are moving into the United States, most are feeling the frustration and disappointment of being unable to find an answer to their literacy problem. Who is going to teach them? Who will they find to encourage them and show them how to overcome the language barrier? One in five of our international high school students are dropping out every year. That is a terrible failure rate!

Who do I think I am that I should and can be so critical of the “reading programs”, and the ESL programs in the public schools? I am a career teacher who has spent years teaching internationals from all over the world to read, speak and write English! These are non-English speakers in some cases, but they are able to learn within the frame work of a program that takes 12 weeks to teach (and I’m not the smartest brick on the block!) By keeping class sizes of 4-6 students, all students receive instant feed-back and help

Why am I writing this? I believe there is a way to teach students without computers, headphones, memorization and the latest technologies as well as with the technology if the classes are kept small and provides each student with immediate input and evaluation and instruction. I believe that students should have an instant response to develop proper skills with the help of a trained teacher. We do not need huge sums of taxpayer money for all of these little programs that will fall by the wayside when someone else offers another new concept or innovation.

Joy and satisfaction of a job well done were and are our measures of success when we see a non-reader, non-English speaker turn his/her life toward better choices by learning to read, write, speak and participate in conversations and activities once believed to be closed to them. These students are a privilege to know and to work with. Let us begin to open the doors to reading, speaking and writing while the students are young and ready for the knowledge it affords.

Why The Book Was Written

More than twenty years ago, I left the world of public and private education to set out on a journey that has led me as a teacher to many nations of the world via my international students. Men, women and children have come to the U.S. seeking freedom, a better way of life, financial gain and further success for their families.

Those international students fortunate enough to have a little background in English and some extra money for education have moved along into colleges and universities and then on to well paying jobs. However, this has not been the case of many millions who are in the United States trapped in an alien culture with no future and often no job for lack of English speaking skills. These are our millions of non-English speaking residents.

Many internationals have sought help from ESL programs in churches, community colleges, libraries and other publicly sponsored programs for those who desire to speak the language. These potentially productive citizens arrive believing that they will begin to find their dream a reality. Such is not usually the case!

Students are handed a form to fill out and a new book. They are asked to pay for the book and told to find a seat and open the book. As the students are non-English speaking, they glance around to see if there is anyone in the group they know. Most will “follow the leader” – someone who looks as though she knows what is being said. This class may hold from 10-20 students. Many of the students are reserved in manner, and a little hesitant. Some, having already experienced some form of ESL instruction, sit tense and expectant. Many things have happened in other classrooms across the area. All are hopeful that this time there will be just what is needed to move forward in this new life.

Most teachers of ESL are volunteers and have no idea what to do other than “open the book and begin reading”! These volunteers are willing and have a “heart” for helping others, but they are about to meet failure from the “get-go”! The teacher welcomes the class in English. Everyone is introduced, and, if possible, is asked to tell others a little about themselves. This takes approximately ten minutes of class teaching time as no one really wants to speak. The teacher resumes her position at the desk, and then instructs the students to open their new books.

They are told to turn to page one, lesson one of the new Grammar Book just purchased by the student!

These students cannot recognize the letters or sounds of the English language, but they are expected to learn grammar! These students cannot read a sentence let alone write one, but they are handed a grammar book! This concept defies understanding. Educators know or should know that little children should begin learning at the very basic part of reading! (***Letters and Sounds***) Because these students are older and more mature does not mean the basic concepts of learning to speak our language, read our language, and write our language should be skipped or set aside!

This book is a compilation of learning and of experience of a teacher who has worked, taught and designed a program over 20 years. It is believed to be needed at this time in the lives of so many who deserve to be taught that English can be learned in a systematic manner, that there is order in the language and that it can be spoken, read, written, and, that even grammar will find its place in the student's life!

If used and taught in the orderly fashion in which the material is presented, a student will begin speaking and reading confidently within 5-6 weeks. All students will increase in grade level comprehension and vocabulary to 5th-7th grade levels within 12 weeks. Some will even begin writing complete sentences which is the last element an international student achieves. (They must be able to think and speak in English in order to write in English.) Some students will need more time in order to write longer, complete sentences, but now they are willing and able to understand what is happening! As students begin the blending of the first and second languages a confident student begins to emerge. This only comes when the teacher "puts the cookies on the bottom shelf"!

It is my prayer that this text will begin to meet the needs of some of the immigrants who desire to rise above the limitations now placed upon them by language. May they soar and gain new insights in this great nation of ours, and may their dreams come true.

Overview of the Text

This book/work-text is written for the multitude of teachers and the hundreds of thousand of international students who have experienced or may experience the need for materials to enable adult internationals to speak correctly, read and write with confidence and to find jobs and areas of interest in which they may excel.

Many internationals have arrived in this nation with little or no English speaking skills while some may come from countries where a form of English is taught, but the language is not the same. It is these groups for whom this material was written. There are thousands upon thousands of foreign students who are searching for a way to break through the educational barrier that has been placed before them. Although the money is still being made available through our federal government, this money has not reached the innovative or creative writers and teachers who could make the program move into this century. ESL programs understandably had some problems during that period but most the same problems are still in exist today. It is imperative that we begin at the beginning of the program and introduce some fresh ideas and words of encouragement to the students. Students should not have to spend months and years trying to climb out of the slow process of learning the English language. This text will present some ideas of moving these students along at a faster rate and enable the student to get the job done well.

According to some national statistics, 20-27% of our international students are not graduating from high school and are unable to move from the lower socio-economic levels into higher paying jobs because students are not taught the basics of the language (**sound and letters**). The Head Start Program has had the most success simply because it began with the very basics of the English program and most of the students spoke English or heard English spoken while playing.

Through the last twenty plus years I have searched through many ESL textbooks and workbooks from different publishers, read the many different approaches and tried many skill sheets, nothing that I have found has been of more help than to add one more work sheet to an

already tall pile in my collection. I have found that if one is to teach ESL, one is going to have to go to the very beginning of English – *letters, sounds, and writing*. Returning to the very beginning of the language and bringing the students forward within twelve to fifteen weeks places these students at a fifth or sixth grade reading level depending upon study and homework time spent. (Most of our nation's materials are now written at a sixth grade level.) By adding more materials in grammar and writing if the student wishes to continue classes, he/she then proceeds on to higher levels of vocabulary usage and sentence structure. Many students using this program are obtaining jobs because they have now become bilingual and can address people in two languages – first language and English. While some methods work for some of the students other methods may be needed for a small struggling group. Many successful students have begun businesses in which family and friends work. Their personalities and confidence grow and manifest themselves in their countenance and in their joy.

All of the methods in the text have been tried and tested and found to be successful. The book, *which you are now holding* is the work of many years and is appropriate for all levels of learning

The History Of The School

The *Academy for English Studies* (A.E.S) began in officially in 1989 as an outcome of volunteering to teach English in 2 church seminaries in Dallas, Texas. At that time there were many international students who wanted private instruction time and needed some extra help. At about the same time, four junior high/high school students arrived in Dallas needing a full time teacher. On the recommendation of a Korean pastor, I accepted these students and began teaching early morning classes. After accepting these four international students more students arrived. I continued to teach English in the Korean seminary until the workload became too intense.

As more students came as referrals from the first students, I began to realize the importance of not only speaking English correctly, but that writing the language is essential. Through recognition of vowel, vowel digraphs, consonant blends, open and closed vowels, etc., students began to read and pronounce words quickly, but translation from first language to second language was progressing more slowly. Writing remained the hardest part of English training. I discovered that writing is the last element students incorporate into the program. The student must be able to think and read in English and then develop a writing form.

The time for translation dropped as we worked through several methods of reading and speaking. Through this process I began to see that some students learned differently and most needed several different ways to learn. The program eventually evolved to methods that accomplished the teaching of effective speaking and writing in approximately 12 weeks. (Age usually causes some variation in the time.)

Most of the students were quickly placed into public and private schools in the Dallas area. These students moved to the upper student levels within their classes, and those who have graduated from high schools and colleges have been in the higher levels of achievement. Most of the high school students received college scholarships and grants to continue toward a chosen profession.

As a result of teaching high school students, many siblings arrived in the States for several weeks of lessons during semester breaks or summer terms in the home countries. Even some parents and other relatives arrived to share in the time for some English lessons. Several businessmen wanted to take lessons which encouraged many other parents to send their children.

At this point in time, many second generations of students have come to take classes and learn about living in the States.

Never give advice...A wise man will not need it and a fool will not heed it.”

EDUCATOR'S BACKGROUND

Some people are born to sing, to become scientists, mathematicians or national leaders. Others of us are born to teach! Just give us a topic, shuffle the books, give us some training in the topic and let the papers fly! Reading and teaching are the joys of my life next to home, family and more teaching!

I was born into a family of preachers and teachers some (many) years ago and have taken continuing education classes and taught at all grade levels.

I began my tours of educational service as a junior high teacher in Louisiana and moved into Elementary, then into Junior High School. After moving from large public schools into private school education, it became clear that continuing education would become a necessity if I was to stay in the field of education. I much preferred to design and implement my own curriculum.

Some of the greatest thrills a teacher can have are watching a student rise above a label that was given early in his life, to begin achieving honor and recognition by peers and teachers. A child labeled “non-reader”, “withdrawn” or “slow-learner” or “emotionally disturbed” will usually begin to perform on or near grade level when success in learning occurs. Continually watching, changing methods of instruction, giving individual attention in order to locate a learning style and a teaching method geared to that student’s style, increases the challenge. Such was the process I followed over the years to teach students not only from the States but I found the same methods work for international students as well.

Regardless of the American educators’ ideas of teaching the “whole child” that concept becomes impossible for teachers who are given 20-30 students per class. There is no time available to work with individual students who need more help. Only those students with strong educational backgrounds and agile minds are able to keep up with learning new concepts, testing materials and completing assignments without further instruction.

Teachers must labor under staggering classroom size, lesson planning, instruction testing, grading papers, recording grades, contacting the counselor/principal/curriculum coordinator, etc., taking up homework assignments, checking it and then recording grades. (This is a small list of the “to do” items teachers face daily.)

As the years have progressed our nation's schools have moved through the stages of small town schools to larger neighborhood schools to *monstrous* consolidated school campuses that now incorporate children from many neighborhoods. Many students "drop-out" or leave school when they become a number or a "blip" on the classroom computer screen. Granted, more programs become available with the increased monies, but the children become non-entities in the metropolis of the campus.

As more and more internationals (immigrants) arrived in the States no one was prepared to teach them. There were no teachers, no textbooks, no plans for these students. When President Johnson signed the Elementary and Secondary School measure in 1965, Federal dollars were made available for poverty level students under Title I, Head Start Programs and immigrants through the bilingual programs.

From the very beginning funding was handed out with one hand while restrictions and limitations were handed out with the other. Whether through ignorance, lack of teaching preparation with respect to learning processes of children, or being overwhelmed by number of students in the classes, frustration of both students and teachers, and failure of both became evident.

In the classes of immigrant students, many children of many cultures were placed into bilingual education. The bilingual teacher (singular) was unprepared to deal with the different children of different languages. Statistics show that many Asians (Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, etc.) were mixed with children of Spanish language and descent. While small children are able to play together without using a common language, older children cannot and do not mix well. Their language sounds are different and means of visual signals are different.

While our national leaders have wavered regarding the teaching of English as the nation's primary language, students in our school have suffered – billions in government funds are being daily poured into a system that offers unproven materials and programs that are supposed to aid the flow of immigrant students and adults who desire to speak English.

American education was viewed by other nations in the '60's and '70's as outstanding at all levels. There are currently myriads of papers as results of studies regarding the teaching of English to our nations' immigrants. Public money is poured into these studies and money is poured into teacher training programs. Money which could now be used to teach these

immigrants is being spent on programs for students but not teachers and more certification programs.

As I moved into the volunteer programs, teaching adults and children, I began to realize that there were no books and no materials that would fit the needs of non English speaking adults. I fell into the same trap as most other teachers- get the pictures, show pictures, and pronounce words about pictures! This became a process of memorization that lasted until the student went home and returned to his first language. Memorization of facts, words and conversations is a short term method for a student who must learn hundreds and hundreds of words in order to communicate. What to do? Frustration and failure by the students quickly became evident. There were tears, lowered voices of uncertainty and slumped, resigned postures, indicating that this “simple” approach was not the answer.

As is usually the case when one is thinking, the answer was in my own classroom of children! As I began teaching international children, I was able to keep the classes small – 2 or 3 students or, four at the maximum. These children began the program of learning English at about the same level. In these classes we used all of the sensory methods – touching and running fingers along the shapes of the letters, pronouncing the sounds of the letters, hearing the letter sound from the teacher, and pronouncing the letter name again as the letters were shifted. Writing the letter was also important and should always be included as a part of learning. This practice and work took place until the students were able to quickly find the letter pronounced by the teacher. Each child was given the opportunity to mix the letters, hold a 3-dimensional shaped letter (usually textured). With his eyes closed the student was handed a letter and asked to name the letter. By this time there were very few mistakes! Unmistakable joy on the faces of the students gives the teacher the incentive to keep on keeping on! Using all of the student’s senses to develop a life-long process places the international student on the proper road to reading, writing, spelling, and pronunciation of words. I call this a “win-win” process!

“Books like friends, should be well chosen!”

Never stop reading, never, never, never!

Ja's Story

An eight year old Korean with no English comes to the U.S.

Standing at my schoolroom door was my Korean friend who married a U.S. Lawyer. With her was a Korean family of 3 – mother, father and a little boy who was obviously excited. He was hopping from one foot to another and chattering to his father in his first language.

As my friend interpreted for the mother I watched the little boy and his father. By placing his hand on the child's shoulder, the little one would settle down and pay attention to what his mother, my friend and I were saying. His attention span would last from 2-3 minutes before he began shifting, nodding and then hopping again. He never stopped smiling.

I began to understand that Ja was eight years old and has been attending elementary school in Korea for 3 years. His parents had decided to move to the U.S. and establish a home in Dallas. As Ja's mother continued to talk, I began to understand that I had been chosen to teach this active creature who was beginning to edge away from his father and move toward the center of the classroom. As he turned in a circle looking at everything I observed dark eyes looking at me, at the desk, at the room with something akin to wonder and concern. (He was to tell me later that he had never been this close to an American before, and he was afraid he would be left at this strange place!)

Having been told by my friend that the parents had talked to other parents of some of my younger students, they decided that they would like me to teach their son! As I had never before worked with a child this young and one who had no concept of the English language I felt my teaching world tilt and roll. This was something I had never considered – a non-English speaking child. I knew that if I took the position of teacher for Ja, I was going to be working as never before! Every teaching concept was going to have to be used, refined and applied. Some things would possibly be useful but visual and auditory application would of necessity be the first skills to try. If these procedures were successful then we would add all of the kinesthetic measures.

I decided to try teaching Ja for my own experience as well as Ja's. I asked the parents to give me a week as I planned lessons and projects, photos and picture books and located

sets of textured letters in various sizes and read various materials on teaching non-English speaking children. The time was over too soon, but realizing that this was a rare opportunity, I began looking forward to the day!

Ja and his mother arrived with the lawyer/interpreter. As I explained the project and intentions of using different forms of presentation materials, I began to see enthusiasm and hope on the mother's face. (The family had been told that Ja would need to be left with an English speaking family!)

We set the days and time that Ja and his mother would be with me, what he needed to bring with him. We were going to be able to use some of his toys and games which delighted Ja! The count down began-

The first day was the hardest for him. He was excited, apprehensive and afraid at the same time! With the help of his mother he was able to sit for 2-3 minutes at one time, then he would bounce up and check out everything in the room.

Ja began with pictures and sounds, shapes and puzzles. He was a delightfully happy child. We worked through some anatomy parts (i.e. head, eyes, nose, mouth, teeth, chin, hair, etc). We moved from the top of his head to his little feet! He laughed, he chattered and he rested.

Our days (1½ hr periods per day) were spent in learning and laughter. He was a charming, well adjusted little boy. By the end of the second week he was saying the alphabet sounds clearly, able to feel the shapes of the letters with his eyes covered and writing letters and understanding sound corrections by the teacher.

The end of week *four his time with me grew longer saw him working on* short and long vowel sounds, short vowel words, writing and speaking in short sentences. Ja's mother had stayed with him during this period and worked along with him. Her presence added to his delight when he realized he could do some things faster than she. I soon realized they were spelling words, writing words and speaking to each other in English! Mother was also learning the language!

Between the fifth and eighth week Ja and his mother advanced to quickly identifying long and short vowels, recognizing vowel-consonant e words, and other syllable forms. By the end of 12 weeks Ja and his mother could divide 2 and 3 syllable words, pronounce most

words (unless the word contained the “vowel r” sound, or “l” sound). (Both of these sounds are non-existent or rare in Asian words.) Both continue to make progress.

At the end of 14 weeks Ja was speaking English, writing and reading, and ready to attend public school. There was still some English vocabulary that he would have to assimilate and absorb by association with others his own age.

Ja, his mother and I made an appointment to take Ja to the neighborhood school and enroll him. Upon arrival we were ushered into the Counselor’s office and asked various questions regarding age, nationality, time in the States and length of time he had been studying English. Without talking to the child or his mother or asking him any questions, the Counselor began to fill out forms to place Ja in a first grade E.S.L. program. I questioned the decision for first grade. I was told that since I did not represent the boy or the mother that I was not a part of the decision process and that the school had a reputation for correctly placing a student where he needed to be.

At this point I had a little eight year old boy who could not only speak English, but who could also read, write and spell at the third grade level. This little boy was brimming with eagerness to be with other children his age, but when the Counselor mentioned first grade Ja spoke to his mother saying “No, no!”

His mother and I took him into the hallway and before we could ask about his problem he responded with “I don’t want to be in a class with little kids younger than me!” Being a large little 8 year old he knew he would not fit in a 1st grade classroom in E.S.L. He could read; they could not. He could spell; they could not. He was more advanced in every way than first graders.

After talking to his mother, she decided that she would have him study with me for another 4 weeks. During that time I would teach him and at the same time work on test taking skills that would document his abilities.

His parents looked for a home in a new school area, took Ja by the school and had him tested. He was placed in an upper third grade classroom and from that point on moved along from class to class.

Ja is now a college student in the U.S. He speaks with no accent and has continued to excel in his classes. Most people meeting him for the first time would never know that when he first arrived in the States he spoke no English.

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