

# Hands Aid in Teaching

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News Editor

A young, newly-arrived Cuban refugee with a look of confusion on his face and a schedule in his hand entered the room and approached the teacher, Mr. John Branstetter.

Without speaking Spanish, Branstetter, pointing at the clock and the schedule, managed to tell the student where and when his homeroom was.

"I was taught in college a technique where the teacher does not translate for a student when teaching a foreign language," he explained. But, according to him, at times he will translate for his class of Cuban refugees so they will know he is not embarrassed to speak Spanish. He believes this might help them to overcome their embarrassment of speaking English.

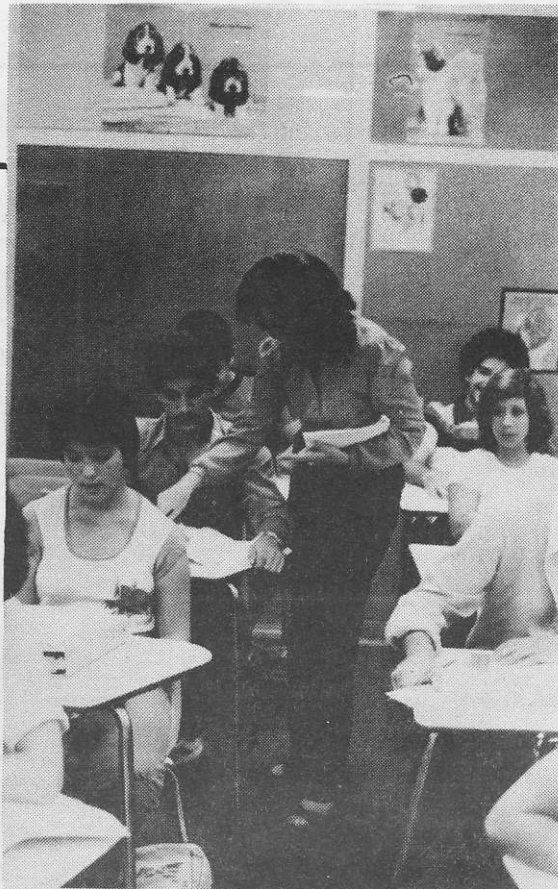
Branstetter is one of the three English teachers instructing the refugees. The other two are Miss Diana Jehl and Mrs. Vickie Durham.

Although there are 43 refugee students in Branstetter's two-hour class, he has not encountered any serious problems. He is able to communicate very well with the students in English, he said.

"Most of the students studied English for several months (during summer school) and they understand almost everything I say," said Branstetter.

Since there are no books or teaching materials, Branstetter

**Ms. Vickie Durham, English teacher takes time to instruct a newly-arrived Cuban refugee.**



must prepare all the lessons. Behind him, on a blackboard, is a list of prepositions he must teach the students by using his own methods.

According to him, they face many problems other than learning prepositions.

Said Branstetter, "They are frustrated because they don't understand, they're too shy to speak, and there is prejudice against them - it will be worse later because now they don't understand the remarks, but they will later.

"One thing I cannot understand is why Cuban-American kids make fun of these

students. Many of them (the Cuban-Americans) are also refugees. To me, there is no difference between the two groups."

Another of their biggest problems, according to Branstetter, is that they tend to ignore American teachers. He says they do not do it purposely, but that they just aren't aware they should pay attention to their teachers.

There are no behavior problems in his classroom, he says, except they "make fun of each other" when they talk English. "They are very polite and respectful," he said.