

"My most favorite thing about *China* is the food."

Xingzhi Tan ('26)



NATIVE TONGUE

Students share their favorite thing about their native country.

"[My favorite thing about] *Mexico* is the environment and visits there to see my family."

Cesar Quinteros Ortega ('26)



"My favorite thing in *El Salvador* is hiking because we have so many mountains and volcanoes."

Meybelline Mena Mejia ('24)



MANDARIN

photos by: ashley oscanoa leon

SPANISH

A fun way to learn. Holding a white vocabulary card, *Yolanda Teran Juarez ('24)* participates in a game with her classmates. In ESL, students engage in diverse activities to learn new words "[My favorite activity in class is] when we play games, like vocabulary games because they're really helpful for me to learn new [words]," said Teran Juarez. *photo by sonia henderson*



LANGUAGE

has no LIMITS

spread by: sonia henderson & ashley oscanoa leon

English as a second language (ESL) students receive support and bond through learning a new language.

ANYTHING is POSSIBLE

An ESL senior shares her four-year journey learning English in ESL.

The ESL classroom supports students from different parts of the world; that is, students from 18 countries who speak 12 different languages and have different cultures.

Jennifer Shafeik ('24) has been in ESL all her four years of high school to improve her English skills after moving from her native country. Shafeik had to overcome several challenges when learning a new language.

"It was definitely hard, the [transition] from Egypt to here. Everything was different and it was hard because I [was] leaving my family and friends behind," said Shafeik.

ESL gave Shafeik the confidence she needed to make new friends and be more vocal.

"ESL helped me feel welcomed and feel better about myself and have confidence," said Shafeik.

ESL is a "family" and her peers make her feel like she is a part of something bigger.

"In the classroom, you feel like you're at home with your family and they try to make sure you feel involved and included," said Shafeik.

The ESL staff, Mrs. Simona Gould, Mrs. Alexis Hafner Abbott, and Mrs. Petra Holt strive to make activities

fun and exciting for these students learning new languages.

"My favorite activity in class is when we do presentations or games about our cultures or where we came from. I love how I get to learn about other cultures," said Shafeik.

ESL has also taught Shafeik how to be patient with herself and teach others to do the same.

"ESL has impacted my personal life [and taught me to] give myself a chance and go slow. I think about the good things and that everybody starts [somewhere] and they grow from [it]," said Shafeik.

Shafeik looks back at the obstacles she had to face to get to the place she is now.

"My four years of being in ESL was interesting. Every time I look at my test [scores] and [see] how [much] I've improved [I know that] I can be more independent [now] because I understand more English than before," said Shafeik.

From only speaking Arabic to fluently speaking English, Shafeik has taught us that anything is possible and that life has no limits.

When Shafeik graduates she will miss her friends who also struggled fitting in but she knows, "we will grow out of it". story by: ashley oscanoa leon

Language has power.

Focused on her work Alison Abarca Cruz ('25) works on a class activity. ESL has given Abarca Cruz the chance to meet people who are in a similar situation as her. "It's been good because we all speak the same two languages so we can understand each other," said Abarca Cruz. photo by sonia henderson

Cultures unite. Holding a card on his forehead, Yurem Leon ('26) plays a game with his peers. ESL has given Leon a new perspective on various cultures and has brought his classmates together. "[In ESL] you get to meet new people and hang out. Sometimes you get to do other things like seeing other cultures and more," said Leon. photo by sonia henderson

A brighter future. Receiving advice, Kenia Hernandez Teran ('27) gets feedback from Mrs. Simona Gould. Learning a new language has given Hernandez Teran more opportunities to support her goals and dreams. "[ESL] helps me in learning English and is really helpful for my future," said Hernandez Teran. photo by sonia henderson



photo by ashley oscanoa leon

WHAT IN THE WORLD did you just say?

One ESL student shares his favorite English word that he has learned.

"[My favorite English word is] *dilly dally* because it sounds silly."

Leonardo Frank Patino ('24)