

Mi arte es mi lengua: Promoting nuestro español through art and resistance

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Teaching Spanish in school continues to be problematic, especially in regions where there are large numbers of Spanish-speaking communities. Few schools offer Spanish for bilingual learners; most continue to teach Spanish as a foreign language, using Other Spanish (Mena, 2022) as the norm for curricularization (Valdés, 2017) of what is taught and how it is taught. Accordingly, Spanish taught most schools adheres to a principal of white centered first, owing to beliefs about white supremacy and the inherent value of Standard language used by Other Spanish speakers (Schwartz, 2023). In this presentation, I use artwork I have created over the years into the present (Faltis, 2010; 2012; 2013), coupled with my own writings and others' understandings about Spanish in the U.S. (Caldas & Faltis, 2017; Constantino & Faltis, 1998; Faltis, 1981; 1984; Faltis, J. 1951; Johnson, 1945; Parra & Faltis, in press; Valdés-Fallis, 1978), to argue that nuestro español vale in ways that white and European Spanish teachers fail to grasp (Faltis, 2022; 2022b).

The presentation weaves a discussion of nuestro español and how it has been portrayed in the literature, what I refer to as the *distribution of deficiency*, with art that I have created on various topics concerning the treatment of bilingual Spanish speakers and how to resist this treatment by creating space for these students to expand their Spanish repertoires. The distribution of deficiency refers to the long-standing demonization of Spanish speakers in the U.S., particularly the Spanish of U.S. bilinguals schooled in English-only, the default means of academic acculturation. Spanish speaking bilingual children and youth are portrayed as speaking pocho Spanish, Spanglish, Tex-Mex, and other macaronic ways of using Spanish that according to many Standard Spanish teachers (Schwartz, 2023; Valdés, 1999) has no place in the classroom, and needs to be eradicated (Valdés-Fallis, 1978; Valdés, 2017). ¡Ya basta!

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