Listen

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Abstract
This poem is an interpretive poetic transcription inspired by conversations I had with several children and adolescents from immigrant families. In teacher education programs, we often feel pressured to formalize curricula in a way that is oblivious to our students’ needs. Both our teacher candidates and their future students deserve more and better.

Keywords
Education, Interpretive Poetic Transcription

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Cover Page Footnote
For the all children who want to be heard and the ones who trusted me with their words.
Listen!
Laura Zucca-Scott, Minot State University

I hate school
And I don’t like teachers either
I came here
Because I had to
But I miss my home every day
I miss my grandpa and my grandma
And the sunshine on the hills
The tomatoes don’t taste the same here
They taste like rotten water

People say I sound weird
But I don’t
Not in my language
Not when I sing my songs
The ones I learned
When I was younger and happier
Back home

I have to learn what they tell me
But I don’t care
Nobody really understands
This language is wrong
You cannot speak the truth with it
Only empty words
Like promises never kept
And when they tell me
I need to try harder
I don’t want to
Don’t feel bad for me
I just want you to understand
I need my voice
To be heard

No more singsong answers
I do, we do, you do
Let’s all try this together
My brain does not need anesthesia
I need to speak the truth:
Before you teach me
Listen to me