

An Analysis of Latino/a/x Engineering Students' Experiences of Racialization through Pláticas



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ABSTRACT

The last three decades have witnessed a surge in research examining the experiences of Latino/a/x students at Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and emerging HSIs. However, a lesser explored area has been on the impact of historical, cultural, and linguistic racialization and its impacts on Latino/a/x students' trajectories to and through engineering. This seminar seeks to unveil the systemic practices that continue to perpetuate racialized ideologies about Latinos/as/xs, who gets to become an engineer, and what determines the normative engineering ways of being, knowing, and doing. A raciolinguistic ideologies lens is used to analyze pláticas stemming from a multi-year ethnography with Latino/a/x engineering students from two public emerging HSIs, one private emerging HSI, and one public HSI located in the U.S. Southwest. Raciolinguistic ideologies frame Latina/o/x engineering students as needing remedial education by virtue of being racialized bilinguals, which is also reflected on how students are seen and perceived in engineering spaces. The goal of this seminar is to amplify the conversation in engineering education research regarding linguistic discrimination and the effects of racialized positioning of Latinos/as/xs in engineering programs by virtue of their economic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Joel Alejandro (Alex) Mejia is an Associate Professor with joint appointment in the Department of Biomedical Engineering and Chemical Engineering and the Department of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies at The University of Texas at San Antonio. His research has contributed to the integration of critical theoretical frameworks in engineering education to investigate deficit ideologies and their impact on minoritized communities, particularly Mexican Americans and Latinos/as/xs in the Southwest United States. Through his work, he analyzes and describes the assets, tensions, contradictions, and cultural collisions many Latino/a/x students experience in engineering through testimonios. He is particularly interested in approaches that contribute to a more expansive understanding of engineering in sociocultural contexts, the impact of critical consciousness in engineering practice, and the development and implementation of culturally responsive pedagogies in engineering education.



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