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2 PM – 3 PM EST (12 PM – 1 PM MST)

English language policy and planning in Bangladesh: My lived experience

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Abstract:

This language policy study examines the English language policy and planning of Bangladesh, a South Asian country with a long history of British colonization. Roughly 95 to 99 per cent of Bangladeshis speak

Bangla as their national language but their level of literacy is routinely measured by their English knowledge. During 200 years of colonial rule, English was legislatively imposed as the language of schooling. Since gaining independence in 1971, Bangladesh continues to uphold the place of English in education. This practice produces inequitable access to education. In light of this reality, this research explores the historical and structural factors that have led to English language policy in Bangladesh; the systems of inequality that have been sustained through language policy in the educational institutions of Bangladesh; and the impact of language policy on my life as a student. Since 1947 in Bangladesh, rapid political changes have constantly influenced language policy. Schools and universities adapt their own language policy. As a result, I paid the unfair price of learning English to access education that brought advantages later in my life. I make recommendations for creating stable English policy and considering the impacts of English language policy on individual lives in Bangladesh.

Rubina Khanam is a PhD candidate and sessional lecturer in the Faculty of Education at the University of Regina. Her doctoral dissertation examines English language policy in Bangladesh. She teaches pre-service teachers in the areas of multilingualism in schools, second language pedagogy, cross-cultural teaching strategies, social justice issues, and treaties in classroom.

[Please fill out this form to register](#) for this talk and to receive the Zoom link closer to the presentation dates. For more information, please contact John Wayne N. dela Cruz (john.delacruz@mail.mcgill.ca, Organizer) or Lana Zeaiter (lane.zeaiter@mail.mcgill.ca, Zoom Host). *The *Plurilingual Lab Graduate Talks* is hosted by McGill University's Faculty of Education. This event is **not** video recorded.