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The design, population and management of a database of language practitioners as envisaged by the legislation

Submitted to: Department of Sports, Arts and Culture | **Submitted by:** Nelson Mandela University





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September 2025

Table of Contents

Abbreviations	16
Executive summary	19
Introduction.....	19
Database Definition.....	20
Content of report	20
Section A.....	22
1. Chapter 1 Overview and Report Context.....	23
1.1. Purpose and Scope of the Report.....	23
1.2. Definition of Language Practitioner.....	23
1.2.1. Europe	23
1.2.2. International Standards.....	24
1.2.3. Qualifications.....	24
1.3. Language Professions and Occupations to be Included in the Database.....	24
1.3.1. Core Language Professions	24
1.3.2. Related Language and Communication Roles	25
1.3.3. Educational and Academic Roles.....	25
1.3.4. Government, Legal, and International Roles.....	25
1.3.5. Business and Media Roles	25
1.3.6. Other Occupations Involving Language Skills	25
1.4. The POPI Act	26
1.5. The Brief	26
1.6. Structure of the Report.....	27
2. Chapter 2 Theory and Literature Review.....	29
2.1. Introduction.....	29
2.2. Language Policy and the Expanding Language Sector.....	29
2.3. Towards the Professionalization of the Language Sector	30
2.4. The Transformative Effect of Digital Technologies on the Professions	33
2.5. Digitalization and the Language Economy	33
2.6. The Application of the Economics of Language to the Language Policy	39
2.7. Economics of Language and the Language Sector in South Africa	42
2.8. Conclusion	44
3. Chapter 3 Methodology and Research Methods	45
3.1. Introduction.....	45

3.2. Research Design	46
3.2.1. Stakeholder Mapping and Interviews	46
3.2.2. Literature Review and Policy Analysis.....	46
3.2.3. Data Collection.....	46
3.2.4. Membership Strategies.....	47
3.2.5. Database Structure	47
3.2.6. Comparative and Benchmarking Analysis.....	47
3.2.7. Data Collection Methods	47
3.2.8. Analytical Approach	48
3.3. Conclusion.....	48
4. Chapter 4 Policy Context.....	48
4.1. Introduction	48
4.2. National Policies and Legislation	49
4.3. Provincial and Local Policy Frameworks.....	49
4.4. International and Regional Policy Benchmarks	50
4.5. Policy Implications for Database Development	51
4.6. Key Issues From EOL Report 1	51
4.6.1. Key Issues Identified in the First Report	52
Section B.....	54
5. Chapter 5 Financial Models for the SALPC	55
5.1. Introduction	55
5.2. Benchmarking with Comparable Councils	55
5.2.1. Comparable Bodies in the Language Space	56
5.2.2. Statutory Councils.....	57
5.2.3. Potential Revenue Streams.....	59
5.2.4. The Sustainability of a Pure Fees-Based Model.....	63
5.2.5. Phasing the System and Scope	63
5.2.6. What Fee Levels Imply for Revenue.....	63
5.2.7. Designing the Organisation to the Budget.....	63
5.2.8. Cost Behaviour as the Register Grows	64
5.2.9. Concluding Thoughts on a Pure Fees-Based Model.....	64
5.2.10. Grant Funding	64
5.2.11. Grants for a Statutory Regulator.....	64
5.2.12. Appropriate Funders and Alignment	65
5.2.13. Potential for Private Sector Investment / Support	65
5.2.14. Strategic Considerations – African Language Practitioners Council	66
5.3. Establishment Costs.....	67
5.4. Operational Cost.....	69
5.4.1. Cost Architecture and Drivers	69
5.4.2. Budget Governance	70

5.5.	Conclusion	70
6.	<i>Chapter 6 Classification System.....</i>	71
6.1.	Introduction.....	71
6.2.	Rationale for a Classification System.....	71
6.3.	Categories of Language Practitioners	72
6.4.	Classification by Service Type, Sector, and Language	72
6.5.	Harmonisation with International Standards.....	72
6.6.	Updating and Maintaining the Classification System	72
7.	<i>Chapter 7 Accreditation</i>	73
7.1.	Purpose and Scope	73
7.2.	Statutory Basis	73
7.3.	Objectives and Principles of Accreditation	74
7.3.1.	Registration and certification: the high-level flow (detail in Ch. 9–10).....	74
7.4.	Interfaces and Collaboration.....	74
7.5.	How Accreditation Ensures Quality	75
7.5.1.	Building on Existing Organisations	75
7.6.	Conclusion	76
8.	<i>Chapter 8 Code of Conduct.....</i>	77
8.1.	SALPC Regulatory Functions	77
8.2.	Professional Conduct.....	77
8.3.	Core Ethical Principles for Language Practitioners	78
8.4.	Enforcement and Disciplinary Procedures	78
9.	<i>Chapter 9 Registration on the Database.....</i>	79
9.1.	Eligibility Criteria for Registration	79
9.2.	Proof of Qualifications and Experience.....	80
9.3.	Admission to Register.....	80
9.3.1.	Accreditation certificate.....	81
9.4.	Updating the Database.....	81
9.4.1.	Change of Name	81
9.4.2.	Change of Residential and Postal Address	81
9.5.	Disqualification	81
9.5.1.	Suspension from Practising	82
9.6.	Removal from the Register	82

9.6.1.	Removal by Council Resolution and Upon Court Order Notification	83
9.6.2.	Lapsing of Registrations	83
10.	Chapter 10 Qualifications Requirements	84
10.1.	Categories.....	84
10.1.1.	Levels within categories.....	84
10.1.2.	Authorised Titles.....	85
10.2.	Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Obligations	85
Section C.....		86
11.	Chapter 11 Membership Strategies	87
11.1.	Introduction.....	87
11.1.1.	Compulsory Membership	87
11.1.2.	Approach to Universal (Registration	88
11.1.3.	Pathways for Voluntary Registration	88
11.1.4.	Incentives for Registration	89
11.2.	Registration Strategies	89
11.3.	Conclusion	90
12.	Chapter 12 Protection of Information.....	91
12.1.	Introduction.....	91
12.2.	Key Aspects of POPIA Relevant to Database Management	91
12.2.1.	Lawful Processing and Accountability.....	91
12.2.2.	Conditions for Lawful Processing.....	91
12.2.3.	Role of the Information Officer.....	92
12.2.4.	Data Breach Notification.....	92
12.2.5.	Data Transfers.....	92
12.3.	POPIA Compliance Framework	92
12.3.1.	Roles and Accountability.....	92
12.3.2.	Lawful Basis and Purpose Limitation	93
12.3.3.	Special Personal Information and Children.....	93
12.3.4.	Openness and Transparency.....	93
12.3.5.	Data-subject Rights	93
12.3.6.	Information Quality	93
12.3.7.	Security Safeguards.....	93
12.3.8.	Retention and Disposal	93
12.3.9.	Cross-border Processing and Cloud	94
12.3.10.	Prior Authorisation and Impact Assessments.....	94
12.3.11.	Breach Response and Notification	94
12.3.12.	Training, Monitoring and Assurance	94
12.3.13.	Public Register Minimisation	94
12.3.14.	Implications for Database Management	94
12.4.	Secure Database Platform Selection	95
12.4.1.	Options and recommendation.....	95

12.4.2.	Network Security	96
12.4.3.	Server Security	96
12.4.4.	12.4.4 Access Control and Auditing (Application security)	98
12.4.5.	12.4.5 Access Control Models	98
12.4.6.	12.4.6 Data Encryption	99
12.4.7.	12.4.7 Backup and Recovery	99
12.5.	Conclusion.....	100
13.	Chapter 13 User Data Management.....	101
13.1.	Introduction	101
13.1.1.	System of record and identifiers	101
13.1.2.	Public vs non-public fields	101
13.2.	Core Components	101
13.2.1.	Data Collection	101
13.2.2.	13.2.2 Data Integrity.....	102
13.2.3.	Update and Verification Cycles	102
13.2.4.	User Self-Service Portals and Web Interfaces	103
13.2.5.	Integrity and Oversight in Self-Service	103
13.2.6.	Integrations and Data Sharing (APIs).....	103
13.2.7.	Data Quality Monitoring (KPIs).....	104
13.3.	Conclusion.....	104
Section D		105
14.	Chapter 14 Database Structure	106
14.1.	Key Design Considerations	106
14.2.	Defining the System.....	106
14.3.	Key Functions of the System	107
14.4.	System and Platform Design	108
14.4.1.	SADiLaR Server and Tools.....	108
14.4.2.	Professional Association Platforms	109
14.4.3.	Open-source and Customisable Frameworks.....	109
14.4.4.	Database Management Systems (DBMS).....	109
14.4.5.	Language Technology and NLP Tools	109
14.4.6.	Modularity.....	110
14.4.7.	Workflow Example: From Registration to Verification.....	110
14.5.	Security, Performance, and Compliance	111
14.6.	Conclusion.....	112
15.	Chapter 15 User Interface and Experience Design	113
15.1.	Importance of User Interface (UI) and User Experience (UX)	113
15.2.	UI/UX Best Practices for Database Systems	113
15.3.	User-Centred Design Principles and Role-Based Interfaces	114

15.3.1.	Identifying and Understanding User Groups	114
15.3.2.	Task and Workflow Analysis	115
15.3.3.	Adaptive Interface Logic	115
15.3.4.	Iterative Prototyping and Feedback.....	115
15.3.5.	Accessibility and Inclusivity.....	115
15.4.	Navigation and Layout	115
15.4.1.	Menu Hierarchies.....	116
15.4.2.	Consistent Placement of Navigation Elements	116
15.4.3.	Clear and Descriptive Labelling	116
15.4.4.	Logical Grouping of Functions.....	116
15.4.5.	Orientation Aids	116
15.4.6.	Layout Consistency and Visual Rhythm	116
15.5.	Data Entry Optimisation.....	117
15.5.1.	Understanding the Workflow Before Designing the Form	117
15.5.2.	Input Controls for Error Prevention	117
15.5.3.	Input Masks for Structured Data	117
15.5.4.	Auto-Complete and Predictive Entry	117
15.5.5.	Field Validation and Real-Time Feedback	117
15.5.6.	Logical Tab Order and Flow.....	118
15.5.7.	Reducing Cognitive Load with Progressive Disclosure	118
15.5.8.	Providing Context and Guidance Within the Form	118
15.6.	Feedback and System Status	118
15.6.1.	Immediate and Meaningful Acknowledgement	118
15.6.2.	Clear, Actionable Error Messages	118
15.6.3.	Contextual Feedback Within the Workflow.....	119
15.6.4.	Undo and Recovery Options	119
15.6.5.	Status Visibility for System Processes	119
15.6.6.	Building Trust Through Transparency	119
15.7.	Visual Design and Readability.....	119
15.7.1.	Purposeful Use of Colour	119
15.7.2.	Typography and Hierarchy.....	120
15.7.3.	Spacing, Alignment, and Grouping	120
15.7.4.	Contrast and Accessibility.....	120
15.7.5.	Visual Consistency Across the System	120
15.7.6.	Reducing Cognitive Load Through Design.....	121
15.8.	Search and Retrieval Interfaces	121
15.8.1.	Balancing Simplicity and Power	121
15.8.2.	Filters, Facets, and Drill-Down Navigation	121
15.8.3.	Results Presentation and Interaction	121
15.8.4.	Search Memory and Saved Queries.....	122
15.8.5.	Performance and Feedback in Search	122
15.8.6.	Error Handling and No-Result States	122
15.9.	Responsiveness and Performance.....	122
15.9.1.	Perceived vs. Actual Speed	123
15.9.2.	Optimising Data Queries and Retrieval.....	123
15.9.3.	Asynchronous Processing and Partial Loading.....	123

15.9.4.	Device and Network Adaptability.....	123
15.9.5.	Consistency and Predictability in Performance.....	124
15.10.	Security and Trust in the Interface.....	124
15.10.1.	Role-Based Access and Context-Specific Views	124
15.10.2.	Visible Security Cues	125
15.10.3.	Session Management and Data Protection	125
15.10.4.	Transparency and Auditability	125
15.10.5.	Designing for Responsible User Behaviour	125
15.11.	Accessibility and Inclusion.....	126
15.11.1.	Designing for Universal Access	126
15.11.2.	Multilingual Support as Core Functionality.....	126
15.11.3.	Cultural and Linguistic Sensitivity in UX Copy	127
15.11.4.	Inclusive Design for Varying Digital Literacy	127
15.11.5.	Testing With Real Users	127
15.12.	Conclusion.....	128
16.	<i>Chapter 16 System and Platform Design.....</i>	<i>129</i>
16.1.	Introduction	129
16.2.	Database Structure	130
16.3.	Database Population	130
16.4.	Structured vs. Unstructured Data	131
16.5.	Tables and Relationships.....	131
16.6.	Metadata, Indexing, and Unique Identifiers.....	131
16.7.	Security and Privacy.....	132
16.8.	Web Interface Design – User Front-End for Data Management.....	132
16.9.	Conclusion.....	133
17.	<i>Chapter 17 Institutional Capacity and Requirements</i>	<i>134</i>
17.1.	Introduction	134
17.2.	Governance and Oversight.....	134
17.2.1.	Mandates and Roles	135
17.2.2.	Decision-making Process	135
17.3.	Organisational Structure	136
17.3.1.	Board	137
17.3.2.	Governance and Executive	138
17.3.3.	Compliance and Information Governance	139
17.3.4.	Stakeholder & Sector Development.....	139
17.3.5.	Corporate Services	139
17.4.	Technical Skills Requirements	139
17.4.1.	Project Manager.....	139

17.4.2.	Database Administrator or DBA.....	140
17.4.3.	Front-end Developer.....	140
17.4.4.	Back-end Integration Developer	140
17.4.5.	Data Capturer.....	140
17.4.6.	Support Developer for Ongoing Maintenance.....	140
17.4.7.	Technical Support for Software Installation and Server Support	141
17.4.8.	Software Tester.....	141
17.4.9.	Integration with Council Operations.....	141
17.4.10.	Lines of Reporting.....	142
17.5.	Human Resource Capacity	142
17.5.1.	Training and Capacity-Building	142
17.5.2.	Succession Planning	143
17.6.	Technical Infrastructure	143
17.6.1.	Software and Hardware Environment	143
17.6.2.	Strategic Considerations	144
17.6.3.	Hosting	145
17.6.4.	Challenges	145
17.6.5.	Hosting on AWS Cloud	145
17.7.	Conclusion	146
18.	<i>Chapter 18 Statutory Council Structures</i>	<i>147</i>
18.1.	Introduction.....	147
18.2.	Mechanisms for Professional Recognition and Standards	147
18.3.	Conclusion	147
Section E.....		148
19.	<i>Chapter 19 Online Survey Review.....</i>	<i>149</i>
19.1.	Introduction.....	149
19.2.	Overview of All Respondents.....	149
19.3.	Employment Sectors and Roles	153
19.4.	Willingness, Need, Benefits, and Risks of a National Database.....	158
19.5.	Individual Practitioners	162
19.6.	Organisations and Stakeholders	172
19.7.	Language Councils and Sectoral Bodies	180
19.8.	Conclusion	183
20.	<i>Chapter 20 Strategic Interviews Findings.....</i>	<i>185</i>
20.1.	Introduction.....	185
20.2.	20.2 Respondents Roles and Experience in the Language Sector	186

20.3.	Theme 1: Purpose and Role of Database Systems	187
20.3.1.	Professionalisation and Standards	187
20.3.2.	Visibility, Networking, and Opportunities	188
20.3.3.	Inclusivity and Grassroots Representation.....	188
20.3.4.	Economic and Developmental Role	189
20.3.5.	Heritage and Cultural Preservation	189
20.4.	Theme 2: System Architecture and Design.....	189
20.4.1.	Verification and Reliability	189
20.4.2.	Accessibility and Inclusivity	190
20.4.3.	Integration and Interoperability.....	190
20.4.4.	Simplicity and User Experience	191
20.4.5.	Sustainability and Maintenance	192
20.5.	Theme 3: User and Stakeholder Needs	192
20.5.1.	Practitioner Needs: Recognition, Visibility, and Opportunity	192
20.5.2.	Institutional Needs: Efficiency, Coordination, and Oversight	193
20.5.3.	Building Trust: Accessibility, Inclusivity, and Privacy.....	193
20.6.	Theme 4: Access, Security, and Privacy.....	194
20.6.1.	Data Protection and Compliance	194
20.6.2.	User Access Permissions	195
20.6.3.	System Accessibility and Governance	195
20.7.	Theme 5: Integration and Interoperability.....	196
20.7.1.	Fragmentation and the Case for Consolidation	196
20.7.2.	Standardisation as a Prerequisite.....	197
20.7.3.	Extending Utility Beyond the Language Sector	197
20.7.4.	Barriers to Integration	198
20.8.	Theme 6: Sustainability and Resourcing	199
20.8.1.	Funding Models	199
20.8.2.	Human Resources.....	200
20.8.3.	Technical Sustainability	200
20.9.	Theme 7: Reflections and Lessons Learned	201
20.10.	Conclusion.....	202
Section F.....	203	
21. Chapter 21 Implementation Plan.....	204	
21.1. Steps for Data Collection and Migration	204	
21.1.1. Migration	204	
21.2. Communication Strategy with Language Professionals.....	205	
21.2.1. Key Messages	205	
21.2.2. Channels	206	
21.2.3. Measurement and Evaluation	206	
21.3. Rollout and Timeline.....	207	
21.4. Conclusion.....	208	

22. Chapter 22 Risks and Challenges.....	209
22.1. Introduction.....	209
22.1.1. Funding	209
22.1.2. Timely Development and Implementation	209
22.1.3. User Adoption and Database Completeness	209
22.1.4. Data Errors and Mitigation	209
22.1.5. Design and Development Risks	209
22.1.6. Operation and Data Management Risks	210
23. Chapter 23 Synthesis and Conclusion.....	211
23.1. Rationale and Policy Context for a National Database	211
23.2. Professionalisation, Governance, and Financial Sustainability	211
23.2.1. Financial Sustainability.....	212
23.3. Database System Design, Security, and User Experience	212
23.3.1. User Interface	212
23.4. Implementation, Membership Strategies, and Communication	212
23.5. Research Findings, Key Challenges, and Future Outlook	213
23.5.1. Risks and challenges	214
23.6. Policy recommendations	214
23.7. Future Research	214
Section G	216
24. References.....	217
Appendix A: Institutions Representing Language Practitioners	224
Appendix B: The Language Practitioner Ecosystem	226
Appendix C: Schedule of Semi-Structured Interviews.....	227
Appendix D: SALPC Forms	228
Appendix E: Online Survey Questionnaire	240

Figures

Figure 1: The process being followed.....	19
Figure 2: Summary of language practitioner roles.	26
Figure 3: Potential revenue streams.	62
Figure 4: A comprehensive security framework.....	98
Figure 5: Key functions of the system.	108

Figure 6: Practitioner verification cycle.....	111
Figure 7: The design process.....	130
Figure 8: Online survey breakdown by gender.....	149
Figure 9: The language practitioner ecosystem.....	226

Tables

Table 1: Comparison of professional bodies for language practitioners.....	56
Table 2: Summary of statutory council structures and fees.....	58
Table 3: Potential revenue from fees.....	63
Table 4: Establishment cost structure.....	69
Table 5: Operational Cost Structure.....	70
Table 6: Selection of database tools.....	110
Table 7: Respondents by population group.....	150
Table 8: Respondents by age group.....	150
Table 9: Respondents by province.....	151
Table 10: Respondents by qualification.....	152
Table 11: Respondents by language in which they communicate.....	153
Table 12: Sectoral representation of respondents.....	154
Table 13: Roles within public and government services.....	155
Table 14: Roles within private and professional services.....	156
Table 15: Roles within media and publishing.....	157
Table 16: Roles within development, research and civil society.....	158
Table 17: Willingness to register on SALPC database.....	159
Table 18: Perceived need for national database.....	159
Table 19: Key reasons for registering on database.....	160
Table 20: Risks and concerns over database development.....	160
Table 21: Preferred primary language for database.....	162
Table 22: Registration with professional body.....	163

Table 23: Practitioners' Working Contexts.	163
Table 24: Years of professional experience.	164
Table 25: Views on the current state of the language sector.	165
Table 26: Challenges finding suitable work opportunities.	166
Table 27: Perceived Level of Organisation in Field	166
Table 28: Current Use of an Online Member Portal or Profile System	167
Table 29: What should the Member Portal or Profile System be used for?	167
Table 30: What should the SALPC System Offer?	168
Table 31: What would encourage you to register and update your information?	168
Table 32: Frustrations with Current Systems	169
Table 33: Requested key features of database.	170
Table 34: Requested accessibility features of database.	170
Table 35: Data privacy concerns.	171
Table 36: Advice on design of system.	172
Table 37: Organisational functions.....	173
Table 38: Management of database.....	173
Table 39: Members can Update own Profile	174
Table 40: Verification Processes for Data	174
Table 41: Database systems used.....	175
Table 42: Who Maintains the Database?	176
Table 43: Data Sharing Arrangements.....	176
Table 44: Importance of central database for sector.	177
Table 45: Willingness of organisation to share data with SALPC.	177
Table 46: Privacy Concerns about Sharing Personal Information on National Database. ..	178
Table 47: Perceived benefits of national database.	179
Table 48: Potential challenges for a national database of language practitioners.	179
Table 49: Features that the SALPC system should have.	180
Table 50: Respondent roles and experience.	187

Table 51: Identifying and managing database risks. (Carson, 2025)210

Abbreviations

AAUSC	American Association of University Supervisors, Coordinators and Directors of Foreign Languages Programs
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ASEP	Australian Standards for Editing Practice
BPO	Business Process Outsourcing
CASE	Council of Australian Societies of Editors
CBE	Council for the Built Environment
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
CPD	Continuing professional development
CRL	Cultural, Religious and Linguistic
CSA	Cultural Satellite Account
DPWI	Department of Public Works and Infrastructure
DSAC	Department of Sport, Artis and Culture
EAC	Editors' Association of Canada
ECML	European Centre for Modern Language
ECSA	Engineering Council of South Africa
ELO	Early Learning Organisation
ELT	English Language Teaching
EOL	Economics of Language
ETHCOM	Ethics Committee
EU	European Union
FIPLV	International Federation of Language Teacher Associations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GVA	Gross Value Added
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HPCSA	Health Professions Council of South Africa
IB	International Business

ICT	Information, and Communications Technology
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IO	Input-Output
IPEd	Institute of Professional Editors
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
KWF	Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino
LACS	Language Associations and Collaborative Support
LL	Linguistic Landscape
LMDSA	Labour Market Dynamics of South Africa
LPC	Legal Practice Council
LPFF	Legal Practitioners Fidelity Fund
LPP	Language Policy and Planning
LSSA	Law Society of South Africa
LTA	Language Teaching Associations
MNC	Multinational Corporation
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIDS	National Income Dynamics Study
NLP	Natural Language Processing
OQLF	Office québécois de la langue Française
PA	Professional Association
PanSALB	Pan South African Language Board
PDF	Portable Document Format
PRODCO	Professional Development Committee
QLFS	Quarterly Labour Force Survey
RAF	Road Accident Fund
REGCO	Registration Committee
SA	South Africa

SACE	South African Council for Educators
SACO	South African Cultural Observatory
SADiLaR	South African Centre for Digital Language Resources
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SALPC	South African Language Practitioners' Council
SAM	Social Accounting Matrix
SAOU	Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysers Unie
SASL	South African Sign Language
SATI	South African Translators' Institute
SIC	Standard Industrial Classification
SNA	System of National Accounts
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA	United States of America

Executive summary

Introduction

Designing a comprehensive database of language practitioners in South Africa requires a structured approach that reflects the country's rich linguistic diversity, legal framework, and professional standards.

South Africa is home to at least 35 languages, with 12 official languages. This multilingual context necessitates a database that can accommodate practitioners working across diverse languages and language services.

The database will be the engine room of the national practitioner management system. It is not something users will see directly, but it must be robust, well-structured, and future-proof.

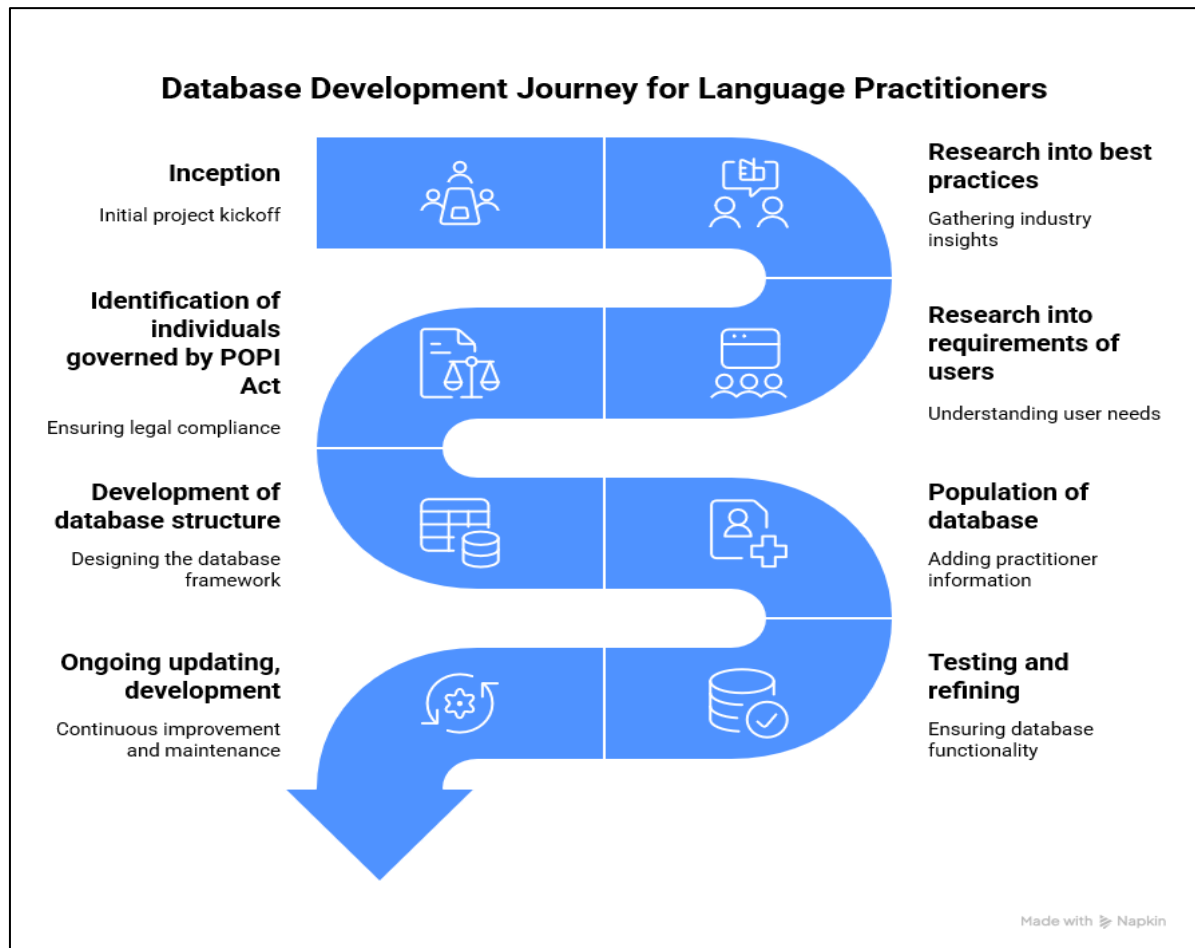


Figure 1: The process being followed.

The success of the system as a whole will depend on the quality, completeness, and reliability of the information it holds, as well as the design of its underlying architecture.

This study identified that a number of association and professional databases are still paper-based or use rudimentary spreadsheets.

In the following sections, the report differentiates the database from the system that operates on top of it, and the user interface that allows people to interact with it.

Database Definition

In the context of this report, a database refers to the structured, digital repository that stores and organises information about language practitioners in South Africa. It is the central data backbone of the proposed national system and serves as the foundational layer upon which all user interactions, administrative functions, and analytical processes will depend.

A modern database is not simply a list or spreadsheet. It is a carefully designed **information architecture** — comprising multiple interrelated tables, rules, and relationships — that enables efficient storage, retrieval, validation, and management of data.

In this case, the database would contain all relevant data on language practitioners, such as their:

- Biographical details
- Language competencies and pairings
- Qualifications and training records
- Accreditation and memberships
- Employment history
- Continuing professional development (CPD) activities
- Geographic location
- And more.

This information will be organised using **relational or hybrid database models** that support complex queries, verification processes, and reporting functions — all while ensuring data consistency, privacy compliance, and long-term scalability.

Content of report

This report provides a comprehensive blueprint for the design, population, and management of a national database for language practitioners, as mandated by the South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC) Act of 2014.

The initiative aims to address the significant fragmentation and lack of coordination within South Africa's language economy, which undermines professional standards and limits economic potential. The database is envisioned as the central "engine room" of a national practitioner management system, designed to be robust, secure, and future-proof.

The report proposes a detailed framework for the professionalisation of the language sector. A core component is a standardised classification system that categorises practitioners into three levels based on qualifications and experience:

Paraprofessional (Level 1), Professional (Level 2), and Expert (Level 3). Accreditation will serve as the primary mechanism for quality assurance, with a key principle of "alignment over

duplication" to recognise existing credible credentials from bodies like the South African Translators' Institute (SATI) wherever possible. All registered practitioners must adhere to a statutory Code of Conduct covering principles of competency, integrity, and confidentiality, and participate in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to maintain their registration.

System design is guided by a user-centred approach and stringent security standards. The database architecture must ensure strict compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), treating the SALPC as the "Responsible Party" for all personal data.

This includes implementing robust security safeguards like role-based access control, end-to-end encryption, and tamper-evident audit trails. The user interface (UI) and experience (UX) are critical for adoption and must be intuitive, accessible, and fully multilingual to reflect South Africa's linguistic diversity.

Recognising financial realities, the report recommends a hybrid funding model combining transitional public funding with a tiered, cost-reflective fee schedule for practitioners. A purely fees-based model is considered unsustainable in the initial years. The implementation strategy advocates for a phased rollout, prioritising practitioner groups in high-risk fields such as court and health interpreting before expanding.

The guiding principle is "no compulsion without a pathway," ensuring accessible routes to registration—including through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)—are established before it becomes mandatory. Incentives such as increased visibility and access to job opportunities will be used to encourage early adoption.

Empirical research, including an online survey of 149 participants and 16 strategic interviews, confirms strong support for the initiative. Practitioners are motivated by the prospect of professional recognition, standardised qualifications, and improved access to work. However, significant concerns were raised regarding data security and privacy (91%), the potential for high registration costs, and the need for the system to be inclusive of informal practitioners. Interviews reinforced that success depends on building a system that is trusted, user-friendly, and sustainable.

Ultimately, this report provides a detailed roadmap for establishing a transformative tool that can unify, regulate, and empower South Africa's diverse language sector.

Section A

Overview and Report Context

1. Chapter 1 Overview and Report Context

1.1. Purpose and Scope of the Report

Act 08 of 2014 establishes the South African Language Practitioners' Council to regulate the training, accreditation, and control of language practitioners and set standards for quality in translation and interpretation.

This section of the report deals with the design, population and management of a database of language practitioners as envisaged by the legislation. The effectiveness of the SA Language Practitioners' Council will depend on the quality of the database as well as the benefits and services provided.

1.2. Definition of Language Practitioner

This is a critical step in the database development process as it identifies the professions and occupations which need to be included.

The South African Language Practitioners' Council Act defines a language practitioner as a person whose paid occupation involves the work including, but not limited to translators, interpreters, language planners, terminologists, lexicographers, text editors and any other person conducting language related work, registered as such under the Act.

'Language profession' means work related to such fields as language editing, translation, terminology, lexicography, or any other work related to language.

Practitioners are divided into categories and subcategories, such as:

- Translators (paraprofessional, professional, sworn)
- Interpreters (paraprofessional, professional simultaneous, professional consecutive)
- Text editors (paraprofessional, professional)

They are also classified by levels:

- **Level 1:** Paraprofessional (informal or community-based practitioners without formal qualifications)
- **Level 2:** Professional (qualified with tertiary education or recognized prior learning)
- **Level 3:** Expert (highly experienced, competent in complex and technical work, benchmarked internationally) (Government Gazette, 2014)

This system emphasizes formal accreditation, registration, and continuing professional development.

1.2.1. Europe

In Europe, language proficiency and practitioner competence are measured against the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which standardizes

language ability across six levels (A1 to C2). The framework is widely used for validating language skills of practitioners such as translators and interpreters.

1.2.2. International Standards

ISO standards (including ISO 29991 for language learning services; ISO 24183:2024 for technical communication vocabulary; and ISO/PRF 24495-2 for legal communication in plain language) provide best practice guidelines and quality requirements for language practitioners. The organisation has published 86 language-related standards and is developing a further 21 as of July 2025. (ISO, 2025)

1.2.3. Qualifications

Qualifications that typically define a language practitioner include a combination of formal education, specialized training, language proficiency, and practical experience:

- **Formal Language Training:** Most language practitioners have completed formal studies in language, linguistics, translation, interpreting, or related fields. In South Africa, this often means obtaining a relevant qualification from a tertiary institution, such as a diploma or degree in language practice, translation, or linguistics
- **Experience:** Practical experience, such as internships, mentorships, or on-the-job training, is highly valued and sometimes required, especially for specialized or advanced positions
- **Proficiency in Multiple Languages:** Language practitioners are usually fluent in at least two languages. High-level proficiency in both the source and target languages is essential for roles such as translation and interpreting
- **Specialized Skills:** Depending on their area of focus, practitioners may need expertise in translation, interpreting, editing, terminology management, or language planning. These skills are often honed through both academic coursework and practical experience
- **Professional Levels and Registration:** In South Africa, the South African Language Practitioners' Council Act defines categories and levels of practitioners (e.g., paraprofessional, professional, expert) based on qualifications and experience. Registration with a professional body may be required for certain roles, especially in legal or governmental contexts
- **Continuous Professional Development:** Language practitioners are encouraged to pursue ongoing learning through short courses, mentorship, and professional development to keep their skills current and relevant.

1.3. Language Professions and Occupations to be Included in the Database

There is an extensive list of occupations and professions. It is recommended that they be prioritised for inclusion in the database, in order to break the population of the database into manageable projects.

1.3.1. Core Language Professions

- Academic (Professor, lecturer, researcher, educator)
- Writers (journalists, authors, scriptwriters, copywriters, social media content providers)
- Translator (literary, legal, medical, technical, audiovisual subtitles)

- Interpreter (simultaneous, consecutive, liaison, sign language)
- Language Teacher (foreign language teacher, ESL/EFL teacher, adult education)
- Language Practitioner (general term for professionals working with language services)
- Linguist (theoretical, applied, computational linguistics)
- Terminologist (specialist in terminology management)
- Lexicographer (dictionary compiler)
- Text Editor/Proofreader (language editing and quality control)
- Language Planner (policy and language development)

1.3.2. Related Language and Communication Roles

- Language Consultant (advising on language use and communication strategies)
- Language Analyst (advertising, communication, government, intelligence)
- Speech-Language Pathologist (speech therapy and rehabilitation)
- Dialect Coach (training actors or speakers in specific accents)
- Localization Specialist (adapting products and content for different languages/cultures)
- Subtitler/Captioner (transcribing and translating audiovisual content)

1.3.3. Educational and Academic Roles

- University Professor or Lecturer (linguistics, languages, translation studies)
- Classroom language teacher
- TESOL/TEFL Instructor (teaching English to speakers of other languages)
- Language Curriculum Developer
- Language Assessment Specialist

1.3.4. Government, Legal, and International Roles

- Sworn/Certified Translator or Interpreter (legal, court, official documents)
- Diplomatic Language Officer
- Foreign Service Officer
- Customs Officer with language skills
- Liaison Officer (international cooperation)
- Intelligence Specialist (language analysis)

1.3.5. Business and Media Roles

- Technical Writer (multilingual manuals and documentation)
- Journalist/News Presenter (multilingual reporting)
- Public Relations Specialist (multilingual communications)
- Marketing and Communications Specialist (multilingual campaigns)

1.3.6. Other Occupations Involving Language Skills

- Actors
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Language Technology Specialist (natural language processing, speech recognition)
- Voice-over Artist
- Audiovisual Translator
- Language Support Specialist (customer service, helpdesk in multiple languages)

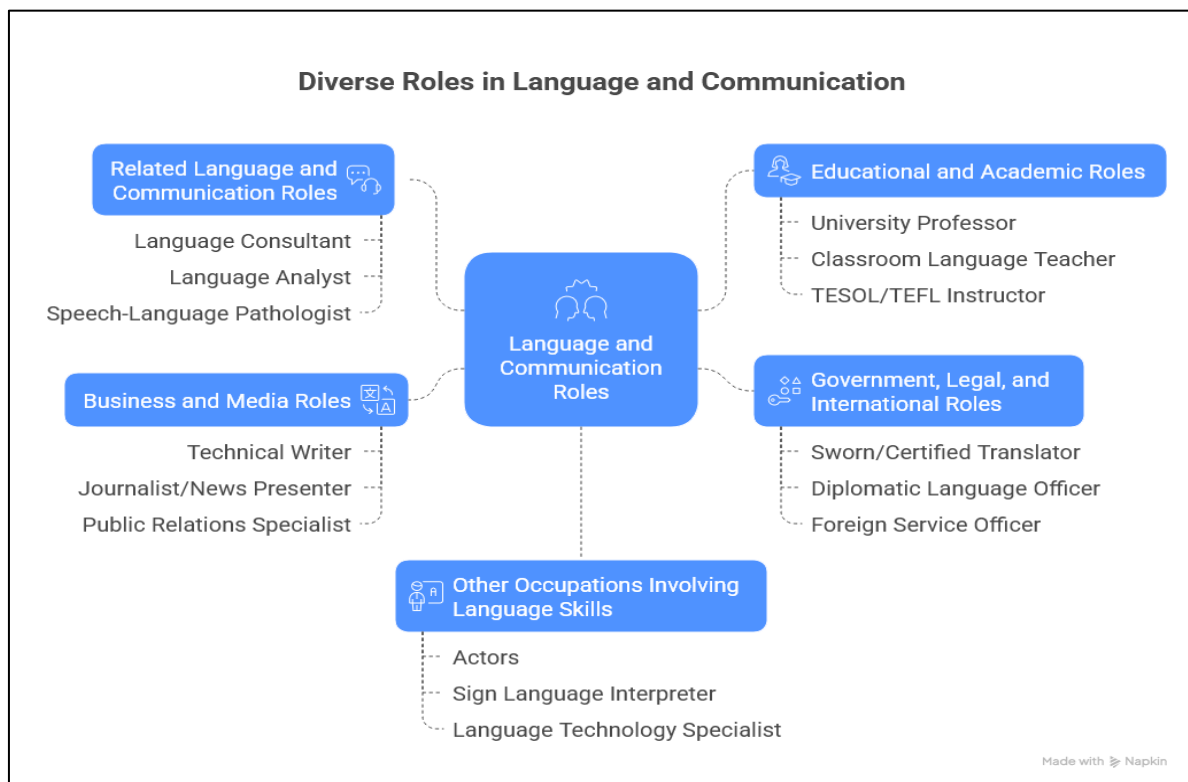


Figure 2: Summary of language practitioner roles.

1.4. The POPI Act

This legislation informs the scope and recommendations of the report.

The development and maintenance of personal databases in South Africa is regulated by the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) that governs the collection, processing, storage, and management of personal information by public and private entities. It came into effect in June 2021 and sets conditions for the lawful processing of personal information to safeguard individuals' privacy rights. (Government Gazette, 2013)

1.5. The Brief

The brief relating to the database is detailed below:

1. Membership and data management strategies
 - Identify strategies to ensure universal membership of all qualified language practitioners (estimated at 60 000–70 000 members)
 - Develop plans and timetables for regular updates of the information
 - Provide incentives and benefits for practitioners to encourage registration and participation
 - Develop a secure member portal that allows practitioners to update their information while maintaining strict data protection protocols

2. Key features of the database system

- Comprehensive practitioner profiles with verified credentials and experience records, areas of specialisation and operation
- Advanced search and filtering capabilities to facilitate client-practitioner matchmaking
- Job board and project portal for posting and responding to language service opportunities
- Automated notifications for industry updates, job postings, and certification renewals
- Real-time verification protocols for clients to confirm practitioner credentials
- Integration with training and certification bodies to track professional development
- Mentorship programs to support new and emerging practitioners
- Resource libraries with access to industry guidelines, research, and best practices
- Event and conference management features to promote networking and knowledge sharing
- Human Language Technology (HLT) integration to facilitate innovation in translation, transcription, and language processing
- Quarterly newsletters to maintain contact with those listed on the database
- Provide portals for collaboration and knowledge sharing
- Regular training and workshops for CPD points.

3. Potential benefits of the database

a) For practitioners

- Increased visibility and access to job opportunities
- Access to continuous professional development resources and certifications
- Improved networking and collaboration opportunities

b) For clients (government, businesses, NGOs)

- Streamlined access to qualified and accredited language professionals
- Improved service quality and consistency in language-related work
- Data-driven insights to support strategic planning and policy development
- Dispute mechanism for mediating between client and professional language professional.

c) For the language sector

- Strengthened professionalisation and standardisation of language services
- Increased demand for language services, driving industry growth
- Promotion of multilingualism as a tool for socio-economic and cultural development
- Information on employment various employment sectors employment sectors for language practitioners viz., private sector, public sector, freelancing.

1.6. Structure of the Report

The report is introduced by a brief executive summary.

It is then divided into:

Section A: Overview and Report Context

The opening section of the report provides the essential background and context. Chapter 1 introduces the overall objectives and scope of the study, setting the scene for why the work is important and how it contributes to the establishment of the South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC). Chapter 2 reviews relevant theories and literature, drawing on both national and international perspectives to establish a strong conceptual foundation. Chapter 3 presents the methodology and research methods, detailing the approaches used to collect and analyse data for the study. Finally, Chapter 4 outlines the policy context, situating the research within broader legislative and institutional frameworks.

Section B: Financial Models for the SALPC

The second section explores the operational frameworks that would underpin the SALPC. Chapter 5 examines possible financial models, assessing sustainability and potential funding mechanisms. Chapter 6 considers the classification system for language practitioners, which will provide the structure for recognising diverse roles and service categories. Chapter 7 addresses accreditation processes, focusing on how standards will be set and maintained. Chapter 8 reviews the code of conduct, identifying ethical and professional expectations for practitioners. Chapter 9 turns to the requirements for registration on the database, while Chapter 10 looks specifically at qualifications, defining the educational and professional criteria necessary for participation.

Section C: Membership Strategies

This section proposes strategies to support the growth and sustainability of the SALPC membership. Chapter 11 outlines membership strategies, considering how to attract, retain, and serve practitioners across the sector. Chapter 12 addresses the protection of information, ensuring compliance with legal frameworks and safeguarding sensitive practitioner data. Chapter 13 explores user data management, providing guidelines for the secure handling, updating, and use of member information within the system.

Section D: System Design Considerations

The fourth section focuses on technical and institutional design issues. Chapter 14 examines the structure of the database itself, setting out the logic for categorisation and data storage. Chapter 15 explores user interface and experience design, emphasising accessibility and ease of use. Chapter 16 investigates system and platform design, identifying functional and technical requirements. Chapter 17 considers institutional capacity, including the skills, resources, and processes required to support the system. Chapter 18 reviews statutory council structures, situating the database within broader governance and organisational frameworks.

Section E: Empirical Research Findings

The fifth section details the findings from the study's empirical components. Chapter 19 reviews the online survey, summarising practitioner responses and highlighting key trends. Chapter 20 presents the findings from strategic interviews, providing in-depth insights into stakeholder perspectives, opportunities, and challenges facing the SALPC.

Section F: Implementation and Conclusion

This section turns towards practical application and final reflections. Chapter 21 presents an implementation plan, mapping out the steps necessary to establish the SALPC and its systems. Chapter 22 considers risks and challenges, anticipating obstacles and proposing mitigation strategies. Chapter 23 synthesises the findings across all sections and draws the study to a conclusion, reaffirming the significance of the work and its recommendations.

Section G: Appendices

The final section contains the appendices, which provide supporting material, technical detail, and reference documents that complement the core report.

2. Chapter 2 Theory and Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This literature review provides an overview of strategic issues which impact on the relationship between the changing language sector and its economy on the one hand and the imperatives and challenges of professionalization of the sector and its practitioners writ large. This review should be read with relevant discussions in the subsequent policy-oriented chapters and relevant specialist discussions. The review takes due cognizance of the impact of digitalization and the associated media platforms, as well as the burgeoning use of AI resources and techniques in the language industry.

2.2. Language Policy and the Expanding Language Sector

An introductory chapter to an edited collection on *Advances in Interdisciplinary Language Policy*, by Grin, László & Pokorn (2023) focusses on strategic options for the European Union in responding to new socio- economic and cultural changes in the macro region with accelerated migrancy and finding a substantive inter- disciplinary approach to language policy making. They argue that the notion of inclusion should entail a social, political, cultural, linguistic or other environment in which to include people (Grin, Marác, & Pokorn, 2023).

This in turn means that differing locales should retain a developed sense of identity which also has the implication that the uniqueness and sense of place should be nurtured. Thus, language policy when supporting multilingualism and linguistic diversity, should ensure that local linguistic specificity is not compromised as it is integral to the specific and unique profile of each locale. The idea of linguistic diversity is vacuous without the means of identifying and developing the components of this diversity (ibid. pp19-20). The affirmation of people's sense of place will ensure that such people will be better prepared to encounter and welcome 'other' cultural and linguistic persons and incomers.

A 'clear sense of space' and the accompanying feeling of security within it, is an essential precondition for constructing space for an expanded spectrum of linguistic and cultural expressions which reflects increased globalization. Indeed, this factor underpins linguistic human rights (ibid. p20). By the same token, 'inclusion' should be a process for everybody – not confined to minorities or immigrant communities. Inclusion should be viewed by majorities as part of socio-political and cultural initiative that will be serving their interests as well. Furthermore, the realization that the components of a diverse country or region are not 'closed

sets' does not undercut the thesis that diversity makes no sense 'without distinct, identifiable elements' (ibid. p20). And this has real implications for those working with or taking cognizance of linguistic diversity from different perspectives.

Ahmad Aljarelah (2024) examines the expanding role of language in international communication. He stresses that language is central to the contemporary global community in enabling cross-cultural communication. The study goes on to discuss the value of language in international relations and its effects on business, cultural exchange and diplomacy. The importance of learning a new language (or languages) is underlined, as this can improve processes of communication between nations, which in turn would reduce tensions and facilitate cooperation. The study also explores the question of the question of being bilingual in global contexts, and the related challenges of language diversity (ibid.). The study also emphasizes the importance of well-designed national language policies and language education which aim explicitly at enhancing global engagement.

2.3. Towards the Professionalization of the Language Sector

The importance of grasping the historical development and particularities of the professions and professionalism is stressed in a classic study by Morgan & Neal (2000). They argue that the tendency in scholarly debates is to depict professionalization as a recent and relatively uniform phenomenon. Employing a comparative historical perspective the article delineates the stages by which occupations in the UK and Germany became the recognized professions of today. They show that the processes of professionalization in the two countries differ significantly. This is particularly so in respect of the role of the state in the initiating and management of professional organizations (Neal & Morgan, 2000).

The study shows that the process of professionalization in the UK has been of a 'bottom up' kind, with professional associations mostly the result of intrinsic activities at the occupation level to attain professional status. On the other hand, professionalization in Germany, has generally been of a 'top down' nature, in which the state has intervened directly in the establishment and administration of the professions. The authors seek to provide empirical resource for future researcher in detailing the differing patterns of organizational development of the professions. The study also analyses the burgeoning role of the EU in the administration, training and accreditation of professionals. The authors point out that while specific EU directives and measures impacted on the relationship between the state and the professions in the two countries, large-scale intervention by the EU [prior to Brexit] has seen a new form of 'Euro-professionalization' exemplified by the profession of 'eco-auditors' (ibid. p9).

A commercially oriented policy brief by Matt Loeb (2022) examines the strategic issue of how contemporary professional organizations can reinvent member value. In the past, he argues, the demonstration of value to members was not the problem it has become today for professional associations and societies, and trade bodies (Loeb, 2022).

Conferences and events were the primary means for professionals to connect and network with like-minded colleagues and those in adjacent fields. Furthermore, many organizations were the only places where members could address critical requirements for employments such as licensing, certification, and professional development. Value was more implicit and assumed. The digitalization of national and international economies has in effect changed all this (ibid).

It is far easier for professionals today to locate each other and collaborate via platforms such as LinkedIn, Teams, Zoom, Facebook and other relevant social media and networking platforms. Non-profit industry certification programmes, at one time crucial for employment, are under threat to competing institutional offerings from universities and even employers themselves. A pre-pandemic US survey reported that 68 percent of respondents experienced difficulties in growing their organization; 11 percent had shrunk and 25 percent had no growth. The remaining 32 percent grew by only 1-5 percent. With their core value propositions under threat, professional societies and trade associations, are realizing that members require considerably more than an annual conference, credentialling programmes and organization newsletter or magazine to continue paying their dues and maintaining their professional loyalties. Possibly more concerning is that some members are questioning what their members want and how their current and predicted needs can be met (ibid.).

Strategic consulting firms are finding that both non-profit association and professional society clients are asking the same questions that are asked for by for-profit businesses. There is, indeed, little difference between the two sectors nowadays. Just as a business must cater to customer needs, non-profits must discover what their current and potential member really want. Strategic consulting firms are deploying a framework informed by user-centred design principles known colloquially as 'jobs-to-done'. This entails the 'hiring' by clients or customers of products or services to enable members to accomplish tasks ranging from the small to the large (ibid.). There are two general categories of such jobs. Firstly, members will require professional bodies and trade association to assist them professionally. Secondly, they may also have altruistic considerations such as an desire to advance their profession's role in improving society and its challenges. The leadership in such associations should see how they can best respond to these needs and requirements on either front. Two key questions should be posed: Firstly, are the organization's services providing members with things that they deem important and are not able to access with less difficulty or less costs or with more value from elsewhere. Secondly, does the organization's mission have meaning for members and prospective members (ibid.).

The author also points out that while the modes and techniques of convening have become more commercialized, membership organizations still retain the power to convene, whether in situ or virtually. Select research shows that in a post-pandemic environment people are keen to recommence in-person travel to conferences and gatherings. Consequently, rather than perceiving social media and collaboration tools as a problem, non-profit and state-linked associations should look to leverage these technologies to develop and plan for engaging, inclusive and informative content and experiences that align with the needs and expectations of their members (ibid.). And one of the best ways to determine whether an organization is meeting the correct needs is to discover where members and potential members are spending their time.

A recent study (Montenegro et al 2023) by academics at a leading Mexican university languages centre raises the importance of professionalization including an increased proficiency in languages for academics. They stress that the teaching of English as a second language is vital for professionalization in Mexico and by implication other established and emerging economies. English, it is argued is closely entwined with the expectations of the international population, as well as educational demands, research and internationalization (Montenegro, Gutiérrez Vázquez, Castillo, & de León Sangabriel, 2023).

The most important task of every professor (academic) in Mexico the authors underline, is to surmount obstacles in the personal and professional field which 'prevent them from projecting their improvement' (ibid.). Thus, learning a language and/or developing an existing expertise has a significant influence on those differing fields that enable the development and capitalization of skills and cumulative academic endeavours to transform the process of language acquisition into a 'professionalizing transforming axis' (ibid.). There are four key qualities that characterize the professional, namely speed, accuracy, precision and care in the preparation and delivery of each project.

Professionalization within academia should

- Enable the design of professional training processes
- Encourage practices that enhance quality
- Improve communication in differing areas
- Reinforce the interrelation of knowledge and disciplines in educational and training contexts
- Integrate the needs of institutions and individuals
- Give impetus to the creation of research and
- Discern the kinds of information and mass media to provide it.

The authors point out that professionalization should be viewed as a process while professionalism is a competence or skill. In teaching the professionalization path includes the drive to acquire the characteristics of high-status occupations, including the certification and accreditation and the development and maintenance of professional associations. In a university institution setting, learning a language entails more than an educational experience, 'but it can very well be the solution for obtaining, managing, and using information, the link of knowledge, and update of the same, in addition to the investigation and dissemination of all professional activity' (ibid.).

Among the responses of professorial interviewees, one observed that 'the English language is the Latin of our times, especially for academics' with around 70% of scientific literature written in English, as is most of the scientific journals, conferences, books, and online resources relevant to research. This led to an inescapable fact that 'to access the most up-to-date and relevant information in their field, academics need to understand and communicate in English'. The respondent also emphasized that overall, English proficiency is crucial for academics as it allows them access to global resources and opportunities, enables improved collaboration with colleagues from different countries, a means to effectively communicate their research, and increase their employability in academia and the workplace (ibid.).

The authors conclude that:

Today, education brings with it that all professors in our country have the essential skills to be able to function optimally in regional, national, and international areas... [there is a] need for professors in our country [Mexico] to learn and acquire linguistic skills related to a second language. The acquisition of a second language not only allows professors to communicate abroad but also allows them to have job opportunities in transnational companies. Fulfilling an assignment abroad becomes a priority task for every teacher and researcher, languages then become an axis that consolidates all the opportunities

that can be accessed... The construction of new or innovative schemes will not be able to transcend borders without professionals trained to share them with the rest of their international peers.

2.4. The Transformative Effect of Digital Technologies on the Professions

An early study by Fenwick and Edwards (2015) notes that digital technologies along with ‘big’ data and emerging AI were already having a substantive impact on professional practices at individual, organizational, national and international levels. Relationships between professional institutions, professionals and their clients and/or users. Furthermore, new forms of accountability and responsibility are emerging because of these trends. This in turn raises key questions about accountability and decision-making in professional practice. These are considered in the study. (Fenwick & Edwards, 2015)

The authors stress the need to rethink how it is enacted through its entwinement with digital technologies. This could lead see new professionals reevaluating the principles and techniques of responsibility, the development of new purposes and learning strategies for embracing and deploying digital technologies with care and due responsibility. As digital analytics and technologies are increasingly influential actors in professional practices, they are transforming work, and the division of labour as happened in the 19th century Industrial Revolution. This includes the need for ongoing debate within professional education concerning digital technologies and professional responsibilities (ibid. 128). At the time of writing, the authors note that the education of professionals were not adequately embodying such changes.

2.5. Digitalization and the Language Economy

Recent research suggests that a dynamic and reflexive national approach to digitalization of a country’s language economy, contributes to overall economic development and growth.

An article by industrial economists Alexksandrova, Truntsevsky and Polutova (2022) on the prospects of the digitalization on the Russian economy deploys several indicators to evaluate the effect of digitalization processes on economic growth in the country. The system of indicators comprises three groups. The first group consists of economic growth indicators including GDP per capita; the Global Competitiveness Index. The second group of indicators, the Digitalization Indicators, consist of Telefonica’s Index on Digital Life; and the Digital Adoption Index of the World Bank. The third group consists of Resilience indicators (risk assessment) and is based on the FM Global Resilience Index which measure the ability of differing countries to withstand a variety of disruptions. The resultant in-depth examination utilizing a three-pronged model demonstrated that the state of the macroeconomic environment, and the readiness of the population for digital transformation did not all the economic growth rate in Russia to be seriously impacted (Aleksandrova, Truntsevsky, & Polutova, 2022).

A study by Oliynyk et al (2023) considers the impact of digital and internet technologies on language development with reference to Ukrainian and English languages. The study includes a survey of internet users who provided opinions regarding the use of new words, most particular

words of foreign origin and slang words, in processes of communication. The results show that digital technology has distinct effects on language development, including the expansion of digital technology, but there is not necessarily a systematic broadening of vocabularies. The authors find that young people, even those possessing a good knowledge of English, do not know much business slang, while more mature generations have little or no knowledge of youth slang primarily deriving from entertainment. The authors point out that the study has relevance for language and digital technology professionals seeking accessible modes of communication through the expansion of speech vocabularies with words derived from computer and internet usage. These insights in turn should inform new approaches to the professionalization of language development (Oliinyk, Romaniuk, Kuznetsova, Horbenko, & Senchylo-Tatlilioglu, 2022).

Karpunina et al (2023) discuss the question of developing a methodological approach to the management of the professional development of employees to enable the optimal digital transformation of the organization. Focussing on the processes of digitalization of organizations in the Federation of Russia, they identify structural limitations and slippages compared to developed countries, thus highlighting the risks of digital transformation of the organization. There is a major disjunction between the levels of development of an organization's personnel as well as the adaptive capacity of the staff, and current and emerging digital requirements. These should be addressed as a matter of priority. The authors put forward a methodological approach for the construction of a management system for the professional and digitally oriented development of the organization's personnel. The model proposed would be based on the creation of a profile of employee competencies; the identification and evaluation of the personnel risk of digital transformation; and the 'realisation of a differentiated set of measures' (ibid. 365) (Karpunina, Okunkova, Molchan, Belova, & Kuznetsova, 2023).

In a study by Ionescu-Feleagă et al (2022) on the development and digitalization of the professional services in the accounting and finance fields helps delineate the relationship between professionalization and differing economic development trajectories in countries in differing EU countries. In addition, the study also identifies factors driving the development of the accounting and finance professions at international levels providing further comparative perspectives.

They find that the extent of the digitalization of the profession is a not only a prominent membership service but also a key characteristic of country competitiveness. Results show that high-income countries have significantly more professional associations compared to middle-income countries. In addition, high-income countries have a significantly larger number of professional associations and services than middle-income countries. Moreover, the accounting and finance professions in high-income countries provide a greater number of accounting, finance and membership services.

The size of the population and competitiveness of national economy are the prime predictors of the extent of the digitalization and development of the respective accountancy and finance professions. The research has real world implications for professional associations and national regulators in reducing in-country disparities in accounting education and service quality. It also provides the relevant institutional actors with a holistic overview of the dynamics of accounting and finance professions at national and international levels. The research further suggests that substantive improvement in the digitalization of the finance and accounting professions, as well as with other professions, will enhance efforts to improve the

competitiveness and development trajectory of the national economy in question. Digital competitiveness is built on three key factors: knowledge, technology and future readiness. A focussed response to increased demands for professional digital services is predicated on more complex, diverse and reflexive university curricula, and professional training programmes (ibid, p18) (Ionescu-Feleagă, Dragomir, Bunea, Stoica, & Barna, 2022).

A study by Snow et al (2017) is one of the earlier efforts to consider the question of designing the digital intensive organization. They note that opportunities, the delivery of goods and services and interacting with customers, clients and other stakeholders is occurring digitally. Big data, social media and mobile computing are increasingly shaping the current and future workplaces. These and other digitally based technologies are disrupting industries and pressurizing organizations to create new capabilities and reshape their institutional cultures. The emphasis is to design for 'self-organization' as opposed to using hierarchical modes and practices to control and coordinate activities and outcomes. The resultant organizations should be collaborative and agile. This approach requires a smart alignment of digital technologies within the organization, taking the strategic and cultural imperatives, into direct consideration. The authors further stress the importance of placing 'actor-oriented' principles at the centre of the design of digital organizations. The actor-oriented architecture of the digitally responsive organization should include three key aspects: (a) across who possess the values and abilities to self-organize; (b) a 'commons' where actors are able to accumulate and share resources; and (c) the infrastructure; processes and techniques that allow collaboration between actors (ibid. 6) (Snow, Fjeldstad, & Langer, 2017).

An article by De la Hoz-Ruiz et al (2025) examines the contribution of digital competencies to the construction of social capital and professional recognition. It finds that a heightened emphasis on the communicative and network-based digital capabilities, most especially digital communication, information management and virtual collaboration – are now key assets in professional settings.

Indeed, recognition may often take the form of largely non-material, visibility-explicit, and extrinsic forms. And with social media proficiency becoming a dominant factor in social recognition, this will tend to favour those persons who are able to develop and mobilize their networks in a strategic fashion. This factor suggests a reframing of signal theory in view of the pervasiveness of digital platforms and their ecosystems. Recognition is less tied up with a person's ability to render their capabilities and talent legible and visible within structure environments. Rather those who skilled at mastering the processes and codes of ensuring visibility and building reputations online, will be better placed to convert this recognition into social capital and professional opportunities.

As the authors emphasize, the more actors are involved in reciprocal recognition, the more will their capacity to access and mobilize social capital. The more actors engage in reciprocal recognition, the greater their capacity to access and mobilize social capital. This allows for 'relational embeddedness' and cognitive congruence. These factors in turn help ensure 'collective efficacy' and personal advancement (ibid. p.13). Thus, social media platforms perform the simultaneous functions as sites for growing professional networks and gaining recognition. These processes are in effect mutually reinforcing and beneficial. As actors widen their relational bonds, they increase the visibility and dissemination of their competences. Such recognition in turn develops their social capital and enhances their presence within the network (ibid. pp.13-14) (De la Hoz-Ruiz, Chaker, Fernández-Terol, & Olmo-Extremuera, 2025).

A cases study of the maritime industry by Pareliussen, Æsøy & Giskeødegård (2022) show how developments within digital technology are often viewed as a kind of enabler, by means of which professions can link with outside players for added competence and suggesting new ways of performing their professional work. Simultaneously, external referencing can also be threatening, constituting challenges to professional assertions of competence and status. The authors find that digital technology exerted pressure on the profession in question when their capabilities did not provide for the maintenance of this new technology. The solution for the employer was to bridge the competency gap with further digital technology – particularly technology that allowed more connectivity with the outside world. The profession in question benefitted by connecting with outside partners which enabled them to accumulate new competencies and embed these in their professional work. These new relationships inform the professional work (of ship engineers in this case) and help shift the profession to a state of ‘connective professionalism’ (ibid., p100). This study contributes to scholarly knowledge by helping to identify key factors and mechanisms such as the pressure to articulate with outside actors; the identification and removal of impediments; and the perceived value of professional work. These mechanisms are crucial in one’s understanding of the dynamics of connective professionalism.

The authors stress that there should be a substantive and demonstrative benefit for the professions involved and the partners, so that the overall value of the connective professional interventions is sufficient to sustain the relationship. Examples of this added value could include improved efficiency; enhanced performance; and the leveraging of synergy effects. Overall, the mechanisms highlighted in the study underline that professionalism is a continuous process that is affected by outside forces such as pressures to be financially viable. The implication of this is that a core aspect of connective professionalism is to demonstrate the added value of connected professional work to external stakeholders. If not, maintaining such relationships and connective processes across organizational domains will be problematic (ibid. p115) (Pareliussen, Æsøy , & Giskeødegård , 2021).

A paper by dos Santos, Chinkes, & Carvalho, M.A.G. et al (2023) assesses the digital competence of academics in select Latin American countries and Portugal, with a view to establish the strategic challenges and to provide specific policy recommendations. The study found that around 70% of the academics surveyed had an average intermediate level of competence. Interestingly, there was no significant difference between young and senior academics, as well as between women and men. The study reveals that respective areas in which the educators involved see themselves as the most and least competent. The authors show how the degree of institutional support offered by the universities in question, impacts on the perceptions of the academics of their level of digital competence. The results and recommendations of the study are outlined for HEIs, with the overall aim of assisting academics. assist higher-education institutions and governments in implementing policies capable of improving digital competence.

The results underline the need for further support for academics, in respect of their own practices as well as in improving the digital expertise of their students. With enhanced digital competence, students would be more able to function in society as empowered and reflexive citizens regarding the responsible use of technology. Furthermore, there seems to be scope for inter-institutional collaboration at regional, national and even international levels (ibid. p22) (dos Santos, Chinkes, Carvalho, Solórzano, & Marroni, 2023).

Piotr Hetmańczyk (2023) examines select aspects of the impact of digitalization on the labour market and education fields. He argues the need for 'multi-dimensional professional training' of employees to respond to the challenges of rapidly evolving digitalization, and by implication the competitiveness of the economy. The author suggests a future in which humans and social reality will be predicated on the advancing processes of digitalization including AI technologies. While this transition may lead to 'a fading of the known world' and a paradigmatic shift to a new world shaped by technologies linked with the flow of data and the analysis thereof. However, it is argued, knowledge will remain crucial for such a transition. It is important for people to be well trained in the ways and means of using information techniques in daily living and to minimize the marginalization of citizens at risk in processes of 'digital exclusion' (ibid. p11132) (Hetmańczyk, 2023).

Nilsson and Hertzberg (2022) examine the discourse of professionalism and the professionalization of career guidance counselling in Sweden in contrast to the differing dynamics of professional practice. The restructuring of the labour market in the country in recent decades saw a growing emphasis on individual educational and occupational choices and alignment of career management skills to individual pathways informed by personal interests. The authors also note that individual agency has also grown in relation to more quantitative planning of secondary and tertiary education with the aim of more bespoke matching of supply and demand in the labour market. Given the relative dominance of an instrumental and technical paradigm predicated on individual agency and rational choice, career guidance and counselling has assumed increased importance. The incorporation of market-friendly management approaches in the Swedish welfare sector the previously dominant discourse of professional responsibility has been superseded in part by professional accountability.

In Sweden, policy makers have primarily pushed for the professionalization of the emerging proto profession of career guidance and counselling. Instead of being shaped by practising professionals, professionalism in this field has been framed externally in policy reports and pronouncements by consultants and elites. Thus, core competencies in career guidance and counselling have become strongly aligned with political considerations. It is also pointed out that the practice of career guidance and counselling is not strongly governed with only modest external evaluation. Professionals in these fields have relatively autonomy and not insignificant scope in confronting challenges and developing solutions, but do not receive much in the way of organizational support (Nilsson & Hertzberg, 2022).

These shifts in discourse and practice in Sweden have a comparative aspect and developed and middle- income countries need to reflect on their changing national practices on professionalism (ibid).

A study of the impact of IT technologies on the development of digital technologies suggests expanded opportunities as well as challenges for the changing language sector on national and international levels. The study focuses on the question of advancement of digital literacy in contemporary society. The authors emphasize that no field of social activity can function without IT technologies which points to the need for the inculcation of digital literacy and digital literacy competencies in human actors. The authors argue that the imperatives and dynamics of IT-technologies now require a thoroughgoing interdisciplinary approach to study. A review of relevant digital products and services underlines the efficacy of IT-technologies in professional activities (especially in translation activities) and the associated problem-solving capacity. This

is exemplified by Google Translate and PROMPT services, technologies that both simplify and quicken a translator's work and ensure that there is adherence to a high quality of translation. The findings of the study suggest that IT-technologies are a tool of the realization of 'professionally significant goals and tasks' the solution of which is made possible by the growing presence of digital competencies (ibid.). The article advises that the enhancement of digital literacy of specialists operating in various industries via the continuous introduction and upgrading of IT skills through systematic interacting with IT technologies and programmes. This also suggests the importance of IT technology developers ensuring their products are more user-friendly and adaptable (Miletova & Chalaya, 2024).

Cao, Arumugam & Aravind (2023) consider the significance of the rise of technology in education including language learning. They stress the importance of digital competency for teachers so that they can more effectively incorporate technology into their work and enhance language teaching. Contemporary technology allows access to crucial materials, facilitates interactive exercises and possibilities for collaboration. Such developments, however, are not without substantive challenges for teachers regarding the integration of technology. Through a study of 344 selected language teachers in a metropolitan city, the article finds that a positive correlation between digital competency and language proficiency outcomes. Participants with higher levels of digital competency achieved better language learning outcomes than those with lower levels of digital competency. Moreover, the study found that the deployment of sustainable practices such as digitized learning materials and virtual classrooms had a positive contribution to language learning outcomes. Overall, the findings suggest that digital competency has a central role in language learning outcomes most specifically within the context of 'smart education'. The authors recommend that language educators should focus more on developing digital competency and applying relevant sustainable practices into their language classroom activities to help achieve meaningful language learning (Cao, Bhuvaneswari, Arumugam, & Aravind, 2023).

While previous studies have indicated a statistically significant correlation between the digital literacy and employment rates of citizens, there is still a lack of clarity, Spurava & Kotailen (2023) argue, regarding the kinds of digital literacy employees require in the contemporary, evolving and 'algorithm-driven world' (ibid. 48).

The drawing on a large EU skills project the article examines how digital literacy is seen from a professional perspective and discusses its relationship to professional development. Collectively the results suggest that professional digital literacy ranges from entry-level 'techno-practical skills' to a detailed and critical understanding of the digital landscape. A key dimension of digital literacy is the broader context of changes in information and communication technologies. An ability to critically evaluate information was seen as a preeminent digital literacy skill for workers. A capacity to engage wisely and effectively with information is vital in decision-making and should be coupled with a sound grasp of the operational and business workings of algorithm powered digital media platforms which constitute information infrastructure. The study underlines the need for a digital literacy and media literacy studies to be combined with platform studies to in turn shape strategies for enhancing employees' critical understanding of a digital world dominated by a algorithmic digital media platforms. (Spurava & Kotilainen, 2023).

2.6. The Application of the Economics of Language to the Language Policy

An important study “Using Language Economics and Education Economics in Language Education Policy” (2002) with policy applications for the EU and other politico-geographic regions, EOL specialist Francois Grin discussed the contribution to policy development through the consideration of the costs and benefits of language learning. Grin points out that the design and development of language policies usually relies on approaches derived from the language sciences, especially applied linguistics, and the education sciences particularly the sub-discipline of language didactics. Unsurprisingly, the concepts and tools from these disciplines are deployed, particularly regarding the category of language policies that concern second or foreign language acquisition – the focus of the study in question.

A reliance on these disciplines and associated approaches has advantages and disadvantages. In terms of the former, relevant policy productions usually evince a close understanding of language as a central aspect of human experiences, as well as a deep appreciation of the particularities of (second) language acquisition (Grin F. , 2002).

However, the problem with such approaches is that they are not usually adequately equipped to deal with language education at the macro level of public policy including the provision of a rationale for decision- making (ibid. pp7). Policy analysis (one of the sub-fields of Political Science), and the related inter-disciplinary discourse of Policy Studies, at the time of writing had not paid much attention to language policies as public policies.

The report provides an overview of and economics of language approach as an instrument of the formulation of language policies. This can in time become a means for the development of a comprehensive ‘policy analysis approach’ to language education policies, both in general and for specific EU countries. Grin stresses the importance of distinguishing between the internal and external efficiency in evaluation processes.

Internal efficiencies involve the relationship between inputs in the learning process and the outputs of this process. External efficiency encompasses the results of the education process which are treated as inputs, (e.g. indicators of results and skills) and outputs, which comprise the accrued benefits for the economic actors in their social, professional and personal life, because they have a set of skills. The ‘external’ dimension connotes the relationship between those inputs and outputs that take place outside of the formal education system.

The study then proceeds in the next chapter to a short overview of the economics of language, and key streams of research. A central emphasis is that of language status rather than related to questions regarding the body of language knowledge. A core concern is the ‘value’ of linguistic diversity. Chapter three shows how a combination of language economics and education economic can be applied to language policy issues and decision making. The following chapter discusses select models which illuminate the market value of second language skills. He notes that despite its current preeminent positions English may ‘no longer be a sufficient condition for socio-economic success and other languages may become more profitable’ (ibid p37).

Grenier and Zhang (2021) tackle the question of the value of language skills. They point out that in the contemporary globalized world, people are becoming more mobile and often need to communicate across language barriers. The authors stress that learning a new dominant language is in effect an investment in one's human capital. Furthermore, there are significant financial benefits to those members of linguistic minorities who learn the dominant language. Conversely, those who rely on their native language, especially migrants, do not experience such benefits in the labour market. The authors note that migrants are usually obliged to learn the language of their destination country. However, even non-migrants are often required to learn additional languages most particularly in their work entails communicating with foreigners and external firms and institutions. A variety of economic studies demonstrate that language is important for economic success and improves economic performance. It is also advised that because of externalities in employing a common language, allowing individuals to follow their self-interest may not optimize outcomes. The authors maintain too, that the continued trend toward English as a common second languages provide certain advantages and is not likely to be reversed in the foreseeable future.

The overall message of the paper is fourfold. Firstly, a dominant language enables people to communicate with others within a particular region or country. Secondly, having a common international language extends the ability to communicate beyond national borders. Thirdly the acquisition of a dominant of common language represents a sensible investment in human capital. In the fourth place, people however also value their native language and are keen to maintain and preserve it. There is thus a trade-off between these two objectives. However, they can be jointly pursued if more people aspire to become bilingual or multilingual. Fifthly, in highly educated countries the relevant parts of the education curriculum should consciously encourage the learning of foreign languages and cultures . (Grenier & Zhang, 2021)

The importance of language planning in improving multilingual capabilities in international trading is shown in Habib's study of the impact of linguistic skills and expertise on the export performance of selected German, French and Swedish small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It is pointed that contrary to conventional wisdom, English is not sufficient only in economic relations as a variety of tenders are lost because of a lack of skills in the local languages. SMEs often use the specific language of the country to which they export to enable them to gain an increased presence in emerging markets. The research shows the close links between multilingualism and economic competitiveness. French, German and Swedish SMEs all to a lesser or greater extent leverage multilingualism as a strategy for exportation. However, the author points out, only 27% of Swedish SMEs present a multilingual export strategy, compared to 68% of Danish SMEs, 63% of German SMEs and 40% of French SMEs (ibid.). These variances appear to influence export performance. The percentage of companies that declare they have missed out on exportation contracts due to language barriers were much higher in Sweden (20%) than in Denmark (4%), Germany (8%) and France (13%) (Habib, 2011).

A study by Shigeru Ozaki (2022) considers the effects of English as an official language in several Southeast Asian countries, especially 'Outer Circle' countries, with specific reference to the Philippines. He notes that there is not yet a 'comprehensive picture' of the socio-economic impact of English on the country which is known for its excellence in new industry development which in turn is partly predicted on Filipinos' high proficiency in English as a second language. This is particularly the case with the country's burgeoning call centre sector. The author provides a useful historical context and then considers the performance of Filipinos vis-à-vis

the international benchmarking of English proficiency. The dynamics of the use of English in the workplaces is also discussed as a potential variable. English based industries such the call centres and ESL (English Special Language) industries are examined. The problems of using English as a medium of instruction and the relationship of exploitation of the inexpensive workforce in the English-based industries is also scrutinized (Ozaki, 2022).

Several concluding observations and recommendations are advanced. The author contends that although the use of the English language contributes significantly to the Philippine economy, particularly via the call centre and ESL industries, there remains an 'excessive dependence' on developed countries and the disadvantages of EMI (English Medium of Instruction) constitute a serious set of challenges for the nation. To solve such problems, policy makers and policy implementation agents should reappraise their prescriptions for economic development and the citizens' proficiency in English. Examples include the utilization of English for technological advancement which would open a path for the Philippines for more independent and endogenous economic development. The case of Singapore, which was also colonized by an English-speaking country and adopted English, as an official second language as well as an educational language was able to become one the more advanced and wealthier countries in the world (ibid. p23).

Ayers-Bennet and Hafner (2022) argue that while English is vital as a lingua franca in contemporary international business, it is not the only driver of current trade flows across differing business sectors. Their study underlines how the sharing of spoken languages can reduce trade barriers. By way of illustration, they estimate that if the populations who speak Spanish, Mandarin, French and Spanish across the world, could communicate with the peoples of the UK without difficulty, then UK exports would increase by an impressive

£19bn a year. They examine how such potential financial benefits might be attained via the institution in UK schools of an intensive language programme for Arabic, French, Spanish or Mandarin.

For example, a 10% increase in the UK Key Stage3/4 pupil numbers could boost cumulatively the UK's GDP over 30 years by between £11.8bn and £12.6bn -- about 0.5% of the UK's 2019 GDP. Similar benefits for Mandarin, French and Spanish were calculated. By comparing such benefits to potential costs, they found that £1 spent in 2022 could return £2 by 2050. Their recommendations are three-fold:

- (i) The formulation of policies to promote the UK should accord more attention to the importance of language skills in the globally integrated business community, most particularly with the increasing geopolitical and economic importance of countries such as China.
- (ii) Existing programmes such as the MEP (Mandarin Excellence Programme) should be expanded and enhanced for other international languages deemed strategic.
- (iii) The economic argument for languages in terms of cost-benefit analysis should be used to generate additional funds for language education, and to promote in government circles and in the country more generally the value of languages in securing the UK's prosperity (Ayers-Bennett & Hafner, 2022).

A book chapter by Kathleen Turner (2018) argues that while millions of people around the globe are learning English, Australia has in effect fallen behinds by not devoting sufficient, resources, time and effort to the imperative of second language learning. While it is not disputed that

Australia was lacking the necessary language skills for national economic growth because of the status of English as the language of international communications. However, as she stresses Australia's declining investment in foreign language skills and the promotion thereof, constitutes a 'language debt' that undercuts in competitiveness, influence and participation in the global economy, most especially as it aims to expand its role and influence in Southeast Asia. This deficit impedes deeper engagement with major international markets, constraining Australia's capacity to partner and compete effectively in an increasingly interconnected world (Turner, 2022).

Turner points out that language learning at Australian schools and universities has experienced a downward trend for some times, with widespread disillusionment among educators and advocates of foreign language literacy, and a cessation in the teaching of certain languages. Compounding the problem is the seeming failure of governments and local decision makers to view language acquisition as an asset in the development of bilateral and multilateral relationships. There has been a series of budget and staff cuts at a range of Australian universities in teaching of languages particular of those situated in the Asian and East Asian regions. While Australia has a growing interest especially in Southeast Asia, it consequently lacks the levels of language proficiency to properly benefit from such opportunities. Language skills are in fact most strategic on the international stage, and help inculcate cultural competence, enable intercultural communication and help build stronger relationships between other nations. The policy implication is that there should be a conscious increase in investment in language programmes by both government and the business community (ibid.).

2.7. Economics of Language and the Language Sector in South Africa

Apart from recent SACO reports (2023 and 2025), there remains a relative paucity of work on the language economy and the application of economic analysis to the working of sectors in South Africa. Most of the more explicit economic work to date has primarily focussed on the question of the investment in and/or impact of proficiency in English within the broader economy. More encompassing application of an EOL (Economics of Language) approach to the particularities of the South African case is still required from local and international scholars.

This kind of intervention will need more active engagement with current and emerging international debates and include substantive consideration of the impact of language instruction and deployment on reinforcing national economic competitiveness, and improved interaction with other countries. The dominant perspective is still informed by the linguistics and sociolinguistics orientation, and conventional language planning considerations, with a strong emphasis on the conservation and promote indigenous languages and the connection to local identity politics.

While such emphases and priorities are understandable, a more reflexive and comprehensive outlook is required which takes a more evidence-led and more inclusive inter-disciplinary approach in which economic imperatives and outcomes are taken more productively into account.

Such an approach must also take stock of the qualitative restructuring by economic digitalization of local and international language sectors. More considered and expansive approaches may well have a win-win effect, in which options for local beneficiation and

promotion of indigenous languages are in fact enhanced by engagement with Africa and the other regions.

New and expanded offerings of dominant trading languages with South Africa's neighbours is one such dimension. Also, the improved individual and national proficiency in major international trading languages as indicated in the above discussion/s will help grow and develop South Africa's language economy.

An early study by language scholar Laurence Wright's early study 'Language as a 'Resource' in South Africa: The Economic Life of Language in a Globalising Society' (2002) calls for a broader and more economically informed debate around language planning. He notes

...how little the South African discussion has been informed by reference to ordinary economic viewpoints...The assumption seems to be that language and culture somehow belong to a different order of things – that while there may be direct and indirect economic benefits from language viewed as an industry, language itself is fundamentally a matter of social identity, political redress and cultural reconstruction, issues to be pursued without reference to what might be called the economic life of language (ibid.p3).

He questions whether the dominance and influence of English in the national economy should be reduced, as it constitutes a national resource of international economic value for all South Africans. It provides them with a competitive advantage vis-à-vis other countries which do not possess the same kinds of opportunities for learning and deploying English (ibid).

Zien, Muller and Vermaak (2019) examine the effect of language on labour market success for both black African immigrants and citizens in South Africa. Using 2011 South African Census data, they find that immigrants are more successful than locals, in part because many speak English as a second language. By contrast, speaking English as a second language for locals is less valued in the labour market. Individuals who speak English are more active, have a greater chance of obtaining employment and earn higher wages than non-English speakers (ibid.)

John Casale and Dorrit Posel (2011) explore the returns to language skills in a developing country environment – in this case, where the primary language for business, government and education is that of the former colony. They found at the time that while a small fraction of the African majority population group spoke English as a home language, their findings indicated that those Africans who read and wrote English well, especially if they possessed a tertiary level qualification, demonstrated large returns – around an additional 97% in earnings (ibid.). Kahn et al. (2019) in a national study of English language proficiency in the South African labour market, find substantive evidence of the positive impact of English language proficiency on employment options and wages 'over and above socio-economic circumstances' (2019:26). They authors point out that irrespective of the level of education of the recipient, training in English language skills will advantage adult participants in the labour market (ibid.). In addition, they underline the importance of the inculcation of good and competitive English language skills in schools to provide learners with the linguistic means for future advancement into the labour market (McKenzie & Muller 2017).

Siziba, L & Maseko, B (2022) Enabling the Economics of African Language Policies of South Africa and Zimbabwe. African Journal of Inter/Multidisciplinary Studies, 6 (1) 1-11.

Siziba & Maskeo (2022), noting the increased interest in the intersection of language economics and language planning. However, they maintain, there is an overemphasis by economists on global languages and their role in facilitating entry into job markets. They argue that in contexts where indigenous languages are looking to break into public areas, proficiency in these languages constitutes an important aspect of the human capital assets of the actors in questions. Drawing on Bourdieu's notion of language as a form of cultural capital they seek to assert the importance of the revalorization of indigenous African languages within the globalizing experience. They contend that for African languages to gain prestige, the right conditions should be created to promote their use. Language policies in South African and Zimbabwean contexts should find ways to convert linguistic capital into economic capital.

Mohohlwane (2020) provides a socio-economic assessment of the policy choice of mother-tongue instruction or 'straight-for-English' education. Although noting several studies dealing with the question of the benefits of mother-tongue education in primary schooling in South Africa, she argues that such efforts to develop mother-tongue instruction are undermined by implementation and capacity issues (ibid.). She acknowledges scholarship that indicates that being literate in English seems to be more important for most South Africans than a mastery of a home language and studies that show a relationship between English proficiency and a return on earnings. She thus looks to a solution that would recognize 'the role and significance of English while also affirming the increasing multilingualism of African learners and ensuring that all learners in South Africa learn an African language at the First Additional Language level' (ibid. 48-9).

2.8. Conclusion

This literature review has considered select thematic issues which will inform the conceptualization and shaping of the platform and data base dynamics for practitioners of language in South Africa. The first sub-section considers the question of national and regional language policy in a globalizing and digitized world. The central role of language in enabling and enhancing inter-cultural communication and even national economic well-being is noted. The second sub-section examines strategic insights regarding the changing face of professionalization worldwide and more specifically the professionalization of the language sector and economy.

Thereafter the profound effects of digitalization on the professions are considered. Thereafter, the interplay between digitalization and on the language sector and economy is raised. The changes wrought and policy implications are extensive and suggests a comprehensive rethinking of the existing approaches and measures to defining and professionalizing language practitioners.

The fourth sub-section considers the advantages of applying an EOL (Economics of Language) approach to language policy and planning. For instance, Grin (2002) in an EU report points out the tendency of language policies to be based on approaches from the language sciences and sections of the education sciences. Such approaches, however, are not, he argues, properly equipped to deal with language education at the macro level of policy making including the provision of a rationale for decision-making.

The importance of language proficiency and strategic multilingualism both on the domestic and international levels is stressed, as this provides for improved returns on personal cultural

capital investment, as well as enhancing economic performance. The study by Montenegro et. al (2023) brings together the question of professionalization and language competency for academics, with implications for other professionals, with the insistence on the need for Mexican academics to master English as a second language to operate in an increasingly international sphere.

The final part of the literature review examines select aspects of the application of an EOL approach to the language sector in South Africa. It notes that most of the specific economic work to date has focussed mainly on the question of the investment in and/or impact of proficiency in English within the broader economy. More encompassing application of an EOL (Economics of Language) approach to the particularities of the South African case is still required from local and international scholars.

Such an approach must take due account of the extensive impact of economic digitalization on local and international language sectors and work. More inclusive and inter-disciplinary approaches to language policy, embracing an EOL dimension, are essential and provide improved options for the local beneficiation and promotion of indigenous languages. New relationships in terms of indigenous language use and proficiency with South Africa's neighbouring African economies is one such possibility. Improved proficiency in major international trading languages could also demonstrate mutual benefits, and help grow and develop South Africa's diverse language economy and resources.

3. Chapter 3 Methodology and Research Methods

3.1. Introduction

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the research methodology and methods which were used in this study on The Design, Population, and Management of a Database of Language Practitioners as Envisaged by the Legislation. The methodology served to create an organized system for information collection and analysis which would help establish a framework for the creation and sustainability of such a database.

The research employed a mixed-methods approach which integrated quantitative and qualitative methods to study the sector. The research team used this approach to study the sector through policy and legislative evaluation, stakeholder mapping, direct practitioner contact and economic and sectoral data assessment. The research included both comparative benchmarking and ecosystem mapping to position South Africa's language economy within international standards and national professional environments.

The chapter explains the research approach and supporting methods which included policy and literature review, stakeholder identification, semi-structured interviews, online surveys, sectoral and ecosystem studies and benchmarking analysis. This research generated provided an evidence base necessary to design a credible, inclusive, reliable database system which would support professional recognition and sectoral development.

3.2. Research Design

3.2.1. Stakeholder Mapping and Interviews

The researchers included a comprehensive stakeholder mapping process to understand the real-world experiences within the sector. This included:

The research team used semi-structured interviews to collect qualitative data about practitioners' everyday experiences and their challenges with regulations as well as their training requirements and institutional responsibilities. Through these interactions researchers gained specific insights about the existing gaps between established policies and actual operational practices. The research design used a multi-layered approach that integrated desktop research with field-based data collection methods. The methodology comprised of the following key components:

3.2.2. Literature Review and Policy Analysis

The research began with an evaluation of existing literature and policy documents. Researchers analysed academic papers, government documents and industry reports to gain insight into the language economy. Special attention was paid to national and international policies that establish regulatory systems, multilingual governance approaches and institutional frameworks supporting language development. The analysis revealed significant coordination challenges and deficiencies in policy execution within South Africa's language sector. This highlight the need for better alignment between policy intentions and practical implementation.

3.2.3. Data Collection

A combination of primary and secondary data collection methods was used:

- An online survey aimed at both language experts and general public participants generated quantitative information along with qualitative feedback.
- Researchers employed semi-structured interviews to gather detailed information from stakeholders.
- Primary and secondary literature was reviewed to obtain baseline data.

The research involved stakeholder mapping and engagement via a series of semi-structured interviews. This mapping process identified key players within government departments, higher education institutions, professional associations, translation agencies and independent practitioners.

The semi-structured interviews provided delivered detailed qualitative data regarding practitioners' real- world experiences, highlighting their needs, regulatory challenges and organizational constraints. This analysis uncovered discrepancies between official policies and the actual work contexts of practitioners, demonstrating the necessity to address gaps in developing a sustainable professional language sector.

Additionally, the research team collected data through an online survey, professional body registry data, and information from academic and industry databases. By incorporating data from both primary and secondary sources, researchers aimed to bolster the qualitative findings.

3.2.4. Membership Strategies

The research team explored membership strategies to understand how practitioners could engage with, and access, the proposed database. This involved assessing potential pathways for registration, including criteria for eligibility, levels of practitioner participation, and strategies to encourage uptake across diverse sub- sectors.

Stakeholder feedback highlighted the need for flexible models that recognise both formal qualifications and experiential learning, given the diverse entry points into the language professions. The analysis also considered how incentives such as professional recognition, access to training, and career development opportunities could encourage practitioners to register and maintain active membership. These findings informed a set of strategies designed to promote inclusivity while ensuring credibility and accountability within the system.

3.2.5. Database Structure

In addition to examining membership strategies, the study analysed possible models for the structure and design of the database. This included identifying key design considerations such as data fields, categories of practitioners, and mechanisms for ensuring accuracy and security of information. The methodology involved a review of best practices in database architecture, including structured versus unstructured data management, metadata standards, and user interface requirements. Consideration was also given to issues of accessibility, compliance with data protection regulations, and the technical infrastructure needed to support a scalable and secure system. The research therefore provided the conceptual foundation for defining the core functions of the database, ensuring that it can serve both as a professional registry and as a resource for sector-wide planning and development.

3.2.6. Comparative and Benchmarking Analysis

Finally, the research employed comparative and benchmarking analysis to situate the South African context within both national and international professional frameworks. The international benchmarking process included examining structures and functions of language councils and professional bodies in multilingual contexts such as Canada, India, and Switzerland, highlighting lessons that could be applied locally.

In addition, comparative analysis explored how other regulated professions within South Africa—including law, healthcare, and engineering—organise accreditation and professional recognition. This comparative perspective provided a useful lens for considering potential models of governance, regulation, and professional development for the language sector.

3.2.7. Data Collection Methods

A combination of primary and secondary data collection methods was used:

- An online survey aimed at both language experts and general public participants generated quantitative information along with qualitative feedback.
- Researchers employed semi-structured interviews to gather detailed information from stakeholders.
- Primary and secondary literature was reviewed to obtain baseline data.

3.2.8. Analytical Approach

Quantitative data was summarised through descriptive analysis while qualitative data (survey feedback and interview transcripts) was thematically analysed to identify recurring patterns, risks, and opportunities. This dual approach ensured both numerical trends and contextual nuances were reflected in the findings.

3.3. Conclusion

The mixed-methods approach used in this study facilitated a thorough exploration of the South African language economy and provided a solid evidence base to inform the design, population, and management of a database of language practitioners, as required by the legislation. By integrating literature and policy reviews, stakeholder engagement, sectoral and ecosystem mapping, economic and market analysis, comparative benchmarking, membership strategies, and database structure, the study achieved a comprehensive understanding of both systemic challenges and practical opportunities.

This methodology ensured that the proposed database framework is grounded in rigorous research while being responsive to the needs of practitioners, institutions, and regulatory requirements. It lays the groundwork for creating a credible and sustainable database that can enhance professional recognition, improve sectoral coordination, and support the long-term development of language professions in South Africa.

4. Chapter 4 Policy Context

4.1. Introduction

The policy framework guiding the South African Language Practitioners Council (SALPC) is anchored in both legislative mandates and national language policy. Established under the South African Language Practitioners' Council Act, 2014 (Act No. 8 of 2014), SALPC's primary role is to regulate and advance the profession of language practice across South Africa.

The Act sets forth the Council's objectives, powers, duties, and functions, which include overseeing the training, accreditation, and registration of language practitioners, formulating codes of conduct, safeguarding professional interests, and providing government advisory support on language-related matters.

SALPC operates within a supportive policy environment that champions multilingualism, advocates for language rights, and ensures the protection and promotion of all official South African languages, encompassing indigenous and sign languages. The Council actively coordinates with entities such as the South African Qualifications Authority and the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) to ensure consistency with national language policies, to uphold standards in language practitioner education and training, and to stimulate opportunities for employment and service delivery in language-related sectors.

Furthermore, the broader policy context is underscored by the Constitution and complementary statutes like the Use of Official Languages Act, alongside national language

policies that emphasize linguistic diversity, safeguard language rights, and foster social cohesion through effective language use.

In this capacity, the SALPC functions as a regulatory, advisory, and developmental body, fully aligned with the nation's commitments to multilingualism and language rights, thereby promoting the professionalization and standardization of language practice throughout South Africa.

4.2. National Policies and Legislation

The South African Language Practitioners Council (SALPC) is governed primarily by the South African Language Practitioners' Council Act No. 8 of 2014. This legislation provides the national policy and legal framework for the Council's establishment, objects, powers, and functions. Key provisions include:

- SALPC is established as a juristic person to promote and protect language practice in South Africa
- It is a national public entity subject to the Public Finance Management Act
- The Council's objects include promoting language practice, scrutinizing registration particulars, registering and accrediting language practitioners, developing and enforcing codes of conduct, protecting practitioners' professional interests, and protecting the public who use language services.
- It regulates the provision of language services and encourages participation from indigenous communities
- SALPC advises the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture on language profession matters
- It consults with bodies such as the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), Council for Higher Education, and National Skills Authority to align training, registration, and accreditation with national education and skills frameworks
- The Council is responsible for setting strategic policies on finance, education, registration, ethics, and standards in language practice
- Regulations for registration and practitioner conduct are published under this Act
- SALPC's establishment and functions also align with the 2013 National Language Policy Framework and the Constitutional obligations regarding multilingualism. This Act and its regulations form the cornerstone of the national policy and legislative framework that governs SALPC's mandate and operations.

4.3. Provincial and Local Policy Frameworks

SALPC's regulatory and developmental role is supported by provincial and local language policies and frameworks that promote multilingualism, language rights, and community participation in language planning and implementation.

Provincial and local policy frameworks supporting the South African Language Practitioners Council (SALPC) are guided by the National Language Policy Framework (NLPF) of 2002, which mandates harmonization of language policy at all three spheres of government—national, provincial, and local. Key points include:

- All government structures, including provincial and local governments, are bound by the NLPF to promote multilingualism and language equity
- Provinces are expected to formulate language policies tailored to their regional circumstances, taking into account the linguistic preferences and needs of their communities as outlined in the Constitution
- Local governments are tasked with determining the language preferences of their communities and developing, publicizing, and implementing multilingual language policies that reflect these preferences through broad community consultation
- The NLPF promotes a decentralized and participatory approach to language planning and policy implementation, relying on community-based approaches to multilingualism
- The policy frameworks at provincial and local levels emphasize equitable access to government services and information in the official languages, protection and promotion of indigenous languages, and fostering linguistic and cultural diversity
- SALPC operates within this policy context to regulate, promote, and protect language practice, coordinating with provincial and local bodies to ensure effective implementation of language policy
- Additionally, provincial and local policies align with Constitutional provisions and legislation like the Use of Official Languages Act, with language services being an essential part of public administration and communication.

4.4. International and Regional Policy Benchmarks

International benchmarking practices define language practitioner standards by establishing clear, evidence-based proficiency levels and competencies that practitioners must meet to ensure consistent quality and effectiveness across different contexts and countries.

Key elements include:

- Identifying specific language competencies such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics that language practitioners are expected to master.
- Setting measurable benchmarks for language skills, including letter-sound recognition, reading comprehension, oral reading fluency, and accuracy, which can be quantitatively assessed.
- Using expert panels and data-driven approaches to translate performance descriptions into concrete, standardized proficiency targets.
- Applying various methodologies for benchmark setting, including analysis of existing datasets, collecting additional targeted data, or conducting primary data collection that is fit for purpose.
- Aligning benchmarks with both national curriculum standards and international assessment frameworks (e.g., TIMSS, PIRLS) to ensure comparability.
- Viewing standards as policy-judgment decisions informed by empirical data to ensure alignment with real-world linguistic demands.
- Establishing subject-specific benchmark statements that articulate the minimum and aspirational competencies required for practitioners in linguistic disciplines.
- Ensuring inclusivity by incorporating considerations of equality, diversity, accessibility, and sustainable development in defining benchmark standards.

(Jukes, et al., 2020), (Phillips, 2014), (QAA, 2023), (Bennett, et al., 2009), (Pace Institute, 2020)

4.5. Policy Implications for Database Development

The policy implications for the South African Language Practitioners Council (SALPC) in developing its database are aligned with national language and technology policies:

- The Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC) promotes the development of language applications, software, and systems embracing all official South African languages. SALPC's database development should align with this mandate to support multilingualism and language preservation through digital tools.
- Projects developing language resources or applications, such as databases for language practitioners, should support the Use of Official Languages Act, promote accessibility, and adhere to open-source licensing, facilitating wider public access and collaboration
- The database should incorporate international standards and best practices in data management to ensure quality, interoperability, and security
- SALPC must ensure effective management and governance of the database, including clear milestones, deliverables, evaluation procedures, and cost management
- Collaboration with key stakeholders—including PanSALB, provincial departments, linguists, government entities, and subject specialists—is essential to ensure the database meets the needs of diverse users and linguistic contexts
- Terminology management policies emphasize the coordination and avoidance of duplication; SALPC's database should integrate with existing terminology registers and language resource initiatives
- SAQA language policy highlights the importance of multi-language accessibility; thus, SALPC's
- database interface and communication must cater to all official languages
- Data privacy, confidentiality, and ethical considerations must be upheld as critical features in the collection and management of practitioners' information.

In essence, the SALPC database development is policy-driven to promote linguistic diversity, technological innovation, transparency, inclusiveness, and compliance with national legislation supporting multilingualism and professional language services. (SAQA, 2017), (Government Gazette, 2015), (DSAC, 2025),

4.6. Key Issues From EOL Report 1

In June 2025, SACO submitted a report, entitled: “A Preliminary Scoping Exercise of the Dynamics, Resources and Access to Data in the South African Language Economy” to DSAC.

This was the first of a series of four commissioned reports. The report provided a preliminary study of the South African language economy in order to lay the foundation for the subsequent reports. The four reports will collectively inform the establishment of a nationally integrated database of language practitioners. This initiative will draw from best practices in other regulated professions and language councils worldwide. The database will not only serve as a registry but also function as a resource for policymakers, businesses, and government entities seeking qualified language professionals.

The first report contained the following information:

- The South African language economy produces around R10,3 billion GVA while employing approximately 66 000 people and generating R713 million in public revenue
- The South African government supports multilingualism through constitutional provisions and evaluates PanSALB functions and educational frameworks and other institutional bodies
- An ecosystem map revealing multiple stakeholders with their value chains and institutional arrangements which show a disorganized system with duplicated efforts and unmet requirements
- An examination of current sector conditions and practitioner needs and future developments through survey data from 88 participants and expert interview insights from 13 professionals
- An overview of international best practices for language work regulation and governance systems and professional development methods.

4.6.1. Key Issues Identified in the First Report

4.1.1.1 Fragmentation and Poor Coordination

The language industry operates through multiple separate entities leading to duplicated responsibilities and inadequate coordination between different groups.

The lack of a unified professional organization has resulted in training and accreditation challenges and insufficient support for practitioners.

4.1.1.2 Data Gaps and Invisibility

The language sector lacks proper national statistical tracking because it does not have a dedicated "language economy satellite account."

The absence of reliable employment statistics and market information hinders policymakers and practitioners from developing effective planning strategies.

4.1.1.3 Policy and Implementation Gaps

While South Africa has strong constitutional and policy frameworks for multilingualism, the implementation of these principles is inconsistent.

Funding for indigenous languages remains inadequate allowing English to dominate over other languages.

4.1.1.4 Professionalisation and Standards

There is an urgent need for professional recognition programmes, accreditation systems and ongoing professional development opportunities within the sector.

Many struggle to access affordable training or certification programmes, resulting in a lack of professional value and support for practitioners.

4.1.1.5 Technological Disruption

The sector is undergoing transformation due to AI, digital platforms and translation tools, which offer opportunities for productivity growth but also risk creating unequal due to insufficient support for African languages.

Practitioners advocate for the preservation of human expertise alongside technological advancements.

4.1.1.6 Funding and Sustainability

SALPC faces sustainability challenges due to unclear funding sources, payment methods and fee structures.

Practitioners call for innovative public-private collaborations and business models to replace traditional funding sources.

4.1.1.7 Equity and Inclusion

Khoi, Nama, San and other indigenous languages continue to face marginalization despite constitutional protections.

The full potential of language diversity for social inclusion, as well as educational and economic development remains unrealized.

4.1.1.8 Opportunities for Reform

Establishing the SALPC as a single professional organization would promote sector unity, enhance quality standards and strengthen advocacy efforts.

Creating an Economics of Language research unit together and a language economy satellite account system would support evidence-based policy development.

Collaboration among the state, academia and the private sector collaboration would contribute to new innovations, digital systems and trade possibilities.

The first report highlights South Africa's untapped economic potential stemming from its multilingual capabilities. However, the country faces a number of challenges, including sector fragmentation, insufficient data, weak implementation and the undervaluation of indigenous languages. The establishment of SALPC, along with related reforms offer a chance to develop a coherent language sector which is professionalized and economically empowered.

Section B

Financial models for the SALPC

5. Chapter 5 Financial Models for the SALPC

5.1. Introduction

This report focuses on the development of database supporting CRM platform and overall operational system that will underpin the work of the South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC). Because that system is the operational backbone—handling registration, billing, concessions, CPD, examinations, sanctions, and reporting—discussion inevitably touches on issues that are adjacent to pure technology, notably the financial model that the system must implement.

For the Database/CRM to function, key financial design choices are required: what to charge and to whom (tiers, concessions, practising/non-practising status), how revenue is collected (invoicing cadence, payroll/bulk deductions, payment gateways), how non-payment and arrears are managed, and how alternative income streams (e.g., examinations, certificates, training, programme grants) are represented in workflows and reports. These choices shape data structures, business rules, integrations, and user experience; they therefore need to be articulated at least at a high level alongside the technical specification.

It is within this context that the chapter sets out financial models for the SALPC — identifying typical revenue lines, registration tiering approaches, and governance/oversight requirements — so that the Database/CRM is built around realistic, sustainable rules. Detailed tariff setting, sensitivity analysis, and stakeholder consultation on affordability and equity will be undertaken in subsequent reports.

5.2. Benchmarking with Comparable Councils

This section benchmarks two sets of organisations:

- i. Voluntary, member-based bodies in the language sector.
- ii. Statutory professional councils established by law. The aim is to inform the design of the SALPC's fee architecture and revenue mix for a compulsory Register, not to replicate the services or "membership" benefits of associations.

Because statutory regulators and professional associations are constituted for different purposes and under different legal frameworks, their funding logics also differ. The Council must align with its enabling legislation and public-finance requirements, whereas associations set voluntary dues to fund member services. Benchmarking both groups helps the SALPC to (a) understand the existing fee burden already borne by language professionals, (b) locate its own tariffs within a credible, affordable range, and (c) adopt good practice from peer regulators on concessions, renewals, reinstatements, examinations, and CPD recognition.

Accordingly, the analysis that follows compares fee structures (e.g., registration and renewal, practising/non- practising, early-career and concession categories), common charges (certificates, conversions, examinations, training), and typical governance/oversight arrangements for setting and reviewing fees. This provides context for a credible, affordable SALPC fee schedule anchored in its regulatory mandate.

5.2.1. Comparable Bodies in the Language Space

The table below summarises indicative fees charged by voluntary, member-based organisations in the language sector. These are professional associations and learned societies—not regulators. Joining may enhance credibility, networking, and access to training/CPD, but membership is not a prerequisite for employment or practice in South Africa (where licensure applies, it sits with statutory councils, not the bodies listed). Fees are indicative and subject to change.

Table 1: Comparison of professional bodies for language practitioners.

Organisation	Who it serves	Member categories (examples)	Indicative annual fee*
SATI – South African Translators’ Institute	Translators, editors, interpreters	Individual, student, corporate	R1 440 (checkout shows price); Student R720
PEG – Professional Editors’ Guild	Text editors/proofreaders	Individual, couples, student	R720 individual; R1 090 couples; R320 student
SAFREA – Southern African Freelancers’ Association	Freelance writers, editors, creatives	Full, associate, corporate	R550 (full, annual)
ALASA – African Language Association of Southern Africa	African-language scholars/teachers	Individual	R300 membership (often bundled with conf reg)
LSSA – Linguistic Society of South Africa	Linguists	Individual	R400 (stated as current annual fee); also appears in 2025 CFP
SALALS – Southern African Linguistics & Applied Linguistics Society	Linguistics/applied linguistics	SA/Regional/Outside Africa	R385 (Rest of Africa), R880 (Outside Africa)
SAALT – SA Association for Language Teaching	Language educators	Teacher, school, student, academic/institution	R250 (teacher), R500 (school/academic), R200 (postgrad)
EASA – English Academy of Southern Africa	English language & literature community	Full, joint, concessionary, corporate, institutional	R420 full; R5 600 corporate (2023/24)
SAGE – SA Guild of Editors (film/TV)	Screen editors (post-production)	Full, associate/affiliate, student	R500 (full/associate/affiliate); R200 student; registered students free
ATKV – Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging	Afrikaans language & culture supporters	Individual	R1 460/yr (or R135/month)
SASLHA – SA Speech-Language-Hearing Association	Speech therapists & audiologists	Professional, Premium, Essential, Pensioner, International, Affiliate, Student, Comm Serve	R1 500–R2 650.50 (tiered; students & comm-serve free)
NeXLA – Network for Experimental Linguistics in SA	Linguistics researchers	Student, ordinary, institutional, associate	R50–R200 (by category)
SACEE – SA Council for English Education	English educators/advocates	Individual/branch members	Individual R50, Student R25, School R250, disadvantaged school 100

Price levels are generally modest. Across the sample, regular individual dues cluster in the R300–R800 range, with a small number of higher-priced outliers: SATI (R1,440), ATKV (R1,460), and SASLHA (R1,500–R2,650.50). Student rates are typically discounted (often R0–R400, with some categories free), and several bodies provide institutional or corporate tiers (e.g., EASA). These levels indicate what practitioners already choose to pay, voluntarily, for community, signalling, and access to resources.

A notable pattern is tiering and modularity. Associations differentiate fees by experience, geography, or role (e.g., SALALS’ regional/Outside Africa rates; SAGE’s student/affiliate/full structure) and frequently unbundle value: discounted conference rates, journals as add-ons, or paid accreditation exams. SATI’s per-language exams illustrate a meaningful non-dues revenue stream that cross-subsidises services; SAFREA typifies the “directory + training/networking” model; ALASA and LSSA lean on conference ecosystems (sometimes bundling dues with conference registration) to smooth cash flow; SAALT prices journals separately, showing modular pricing in practice.

For SALPC, this landscape serves as affordability and expectations context, not a blueprint. The Council’s fees will fund a regulatory function—registration, renewals, certificates and letters, examinations where applicable, conversions and reinstatements, CPD recognition, and sanctions administration—rather than member benefits. Fee design should therefore remain clearly separate from association-style offerings, be cost-reflective, and incorporate concessions (students, early-career, non-practising, pensioners) in line with norms already familiar to practitioners, while recognising the voluntary dues many already pay.

With the voluntary landscape defined, the next section turns to statutory councils, where fees are compulsory and governance, concessions, and enforcement mechanisms provide the closest benchmark for the SALPC’s regulatory tariff structure.

5.2.2. Statutory Councils

The table below summarises selected South African statutory professional councils as comparators for the SALPC. These entities administer compulsory registration for practice; their charges are regulatory registration fees, not association dues. For each, we show the latest available year, staff complement, register size (number of registrants), indicative average annual fee per registrant (noting tiered categories), fee revenue, grant/transfer income, total income, and expenditure.

For reference, the other statutory councils are:

Law – Regulated by the Legal Practice Council (LPC)

Health Professions – Regulated by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA)

Engineering – Regulated by the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA)

Education – Regulated by the South African Council for Educators (SACE)

Built Environment Professions – Coordinated by the Council for the Built Environment (CBE)

Figures come from the most recent published sources and are not all of the same year across councils; amounts are indicative and may exclude once-off charges, penalties, or category-

specific variations. “Average annual fee” is a shorthand to make ranges comparable across multi-tier schedules.

Note that the Council for the Built Environment (CBE) is an umbrella/oversight body for the built-environment councils (including ECSA). Its mandate and funding model (grant-led) differ from practitioner regulators, so it is included for context but is not directly comparable on a per-registrant basis.

Table 2: Summary of statutory council structures and fees.

Items	LPC	HCPSA	SACE	ECSA	CBE
Year	2020	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2024
Staff Compliment	400	272	111	124	42
Membership Base	79 000	240 040	457 664	50 745	89 862
Average Annual Fee per Member	R 2 135 / R 4 980	R 232 - R 3 286	R198	R 2 082 - R 5 703	
Annual Income from Fees	R 130 mil	R 380 mil	R 91 mil	R 141 mil	R 5 mil
Grant & Related Income			R 15,6 mil		R 54,7 mil
Total Income (Incl. Interest & Other Income)	R 132,9 mil	R 381 mil	R 129,3 mil	R 157,7 mil	R 63,3 mil
Annual Expenditure	R 294 mil	R 369,2 mil	R 120 mil	R 146,4 mil	R 68,3 mil

Upon viewing the table, two themes recur. First, most councils finance themselves primarily from regulatory fees, with only limited transfers in evidence (SACE’s recent baseline grant; CBE’s grant-led model). Second, expenditure patterns mirror mandate complexity: where there are multiple professional boards, high-touch inspections, heavy complaints and discipline, and litigation exposure, the cost base rises accordingly. For the SALPC, which will not inherit clinical oversight or trust-account inspections, a lean, digital-first operating model is both realistic and prudent.

The paragraphs that follow set out the size comparators, explain the LPC’s Fidelity Fund arrangement, distinguish flat versus tiered fee structures, and argue that — pending a full business plan—a cautious ceiling for annual operating costs sits in the SACE/ECSA range, with the true requirement likely lower if scope and processes remain tightly aligned to the Council’s statutory purpose.

ECSA (50 745 registrants; 124 staff) is the smallest of the practitioner regulators here and the closest size proxy for the SALPC Register. HCPSA operates at far larger scale (240 040 registrants) across multiple professional boards; SACE is a mass register (457 000+). The LPC is mid-sized (79 000) but carries additional trust-account and discipline functions.

A specific feature to note is the Legal Practitioners' Fidelity Fund (LPFF) in the LPC ecosystem. The LPFF (formerly the Attorneys Fidelity Fund) exists to indemnify members of the public who suffer pecuniary loss due to the theft of money or property from attorneys' trust accounts. It is not a government grant; it is industry-funded, primarily from bank-remitted interest on attorneys' trust accounts and fidelity-fund certificate fees. In terms of the Legal Practice Act, the Fund also underwrites parts of the regulatory system (e.g., inspections of trust accounts) and may make transfers/subventions to the LPC to defray defined regulatory costs. Practically, that means a share of LPC's budget is supported by LPFF resources, in addition to the LPC's own fee income.

On fee structures, SACE is the outlier with a flat, very low annual charge ($\approx$ R198) made viable by its very large register and some grant support. HPCSA, ECSA, and (in practice) LPC all use tiered schedules: different annual amounts by category/scope of practice, with additional charges for specific regulatory services (certificates/letters of good standing, conversions, reinstatements, late penalties, examinations, etc.). For a regulator serving tens of thousands of registrants, tiering is the norm because workload and risk differ by category.

While fee income draws attention, for tariff design the expenditure line is more instructive. In the period shown, SACE has the lowest total expenditure ($\pm$ R120 m), followed by ECSA ($\pm$ R146 m). HPCSA and the LPC are materially higher ($\pm$ R369 m and $\pm$ R294 m, respectively), reflecting cost drivers such as multi-board governance, extensive complaints/discipline caseloads, national office footprints, inspections (HPCSA clinical environments; LPC trust-account oversight), litigation, and legacy systems. SALPC's mandate is narrower than HPCSA's and lacks the LPC's trust-account inspection burden, so a leaner operating model is both feasible and advisable.

Pending a full business plan that itemises activities, staffing, ICT operations, and compliance costs, a conservative upper-bound for SALPC annual operating expenditure is in the SACE/ECSA range—not more than R150 million—with the true requirement likely lower if the Register is digital-first, processes are right-sized, and enforcement focuses on proportionate risk. This puts the emphasis on designing tiered, cost-reflective fees, with concessions, and on keeping the organisation's scope and processes tightly aligned to its statutory purpose.

With regards to an appropriate fee, a dedicated financial modelling exercise should be undertaken supported by consultations with stakeholders in the language space to determine the appropriate fee structure – However reviewing the fees charged by other statutory bodies and other language sector member bodies would suggest that fees in the range of R500 for junior members up to R2500 for full members would be feasible.

5.2.3. Potential Revenue Streams

The range of revenue streams for statutory bodies is split broadly between income from fees charged to members, and income from Government grants or other support programmes, however these income streams can take many different forms. A review of revenue streams of other statutory councils in South Africa has revealed the following broad revenue streams (revenue streams specific to a particular council have been omitted).

5.2.3.1. Registration / Accreditation fees

For statutory councils such as the SALPC, accreditation and registration fees constitute the primary source of income. Fees are typically structured in tiers that reflect the practitioner's professional category or accreditation level.

Tiers often align with seniority or scope of practice, with reduced fees for students, candidates, or paraprofessionals, and higher fees for fully accredited or senior practitioners. Additional distinctions may be made between practising and non-practising registrants, early-career versus experienced professionals, and concessionary categories such as pensioners or those on a career break.

Different categories of fees may also reflect the rights and obligations they confer—for example, eligibility to use protected professional titles, listing on the public register, access to accredited CPD, or eligibility to serve on statutory committees or panels.

In practice, most councils combine these two logics: status-based pricing (e.g., student, candidate, accredited practitioner, senior specialist) and benefit-based bundles (e.g., inclusion on the register, CPD recognition, certification privileges). This approach allows fees to remain equitable across career stages while ensuring that those with greater professional rights and benefits contribute proportionally more to the cost of regulation.

5.2.3.2. Certificate Fees

Many organisations issue professional certificates that serve as formal proof of competency or current standing, and in some sectors these certificates are a legal prerequisite to practise. Certificates can denote initial registration or licensure, specialist endorsements, or “good standing”/fitness-to-practise status recognised by employers, courts, and public bodies.

Fees are commonly charged on first issue of a certificate, with renewal payable on an annual or multi-year cycle. In some systems the first practising certificate is bundled into the annual registration fee, while others price initial issue and renewal separately. Renewal is often contingent on meeting conditions such as CPD compliance or confirmation of practice status.

Additional certificate-related charges are widely used, including reprints or replacements (e.g., name changes), certified copies, letters of good standing, and third-party verification requests. Digital credentials and QR-verified PDFs are increasingly offered alongside—or instead of—physical documents, sometimes with a modest verification fee for institutional look-ups.

5.2.3.3. Conversion Fees

Many regulators levy a fee when a registrant changes their registration status or scope. Conversions commonly include moves between fields or categories as well as adding or removing scopes. Where Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is involved—such as crediting experience from another jurisdiction or adjacent profession—an assessment or evaluation fee is typically charged to cover portfolio review, interviews, or testing.

Fees are usually calibrated to the administrative or assessment effort: routine category updates attract a modest charge; conversions requiring peer review or examinations cost more; and expedited processing may carry a surcharge where offered. Some frameworks also distinguish reinstatement (after lapse) from conversion and price it separately.

5.2.3.4. Enrolment Fees

These are charges paid to join training or professional development programmes (rather than to join the register itself). Typical forms include a once-off fee per course or cohort, per-module enrolment for multi-part programmes, and small administration fees for late changes, rescheduling, or certificate issuance on completion.

5.2.3.5. Examination Fees

Fees charged for assessments that test competency or eligibility. Common forms include per-sitting charges for written, oral, practical, or viva exams; component fees for multi-part pathways; and administration charges for late entry, rescheduling, re-marks, or appeals. Remote exams may add online proctoring costs, while on-site assessments may include venue or invigilation fees. Where recognition of prior learning (RPL) involves a challenge exam or portfolio assessment, a separate evaluation fee is typically applied.

5.2.3.6. Training Fees

Charges linked to professional development activities such as CPD short courses, workshops, webinars, and multi-session programmes. Pricing often varies by duration and delivery mode (self-paced e-learning vs instructor-led sessions), with options for bundle discounts, institutional block bookings, or season passes. Some systems distinguish attendance fees from provider accreditation/endorsement fees (paid by organisations seeking approval to offer CPD) and may add small charges for completion certificates or post-course assessments.

5.2.3.7. Fines

Monetary penalties authorised in statute or rules. Typical categories include administrative penalties (e.g., late renewal, failure to update details, CPD non-submission) and disciplinary fines imposed after findings of misconduct. Schedules often set caps, escalators for repeat offences, and interest on overdue amounts. In some frameworks, cost orders may be levied to recover expenses arising from non-cooperation (e.g., missed hearings), distinct from the fine itself.

5.2.3.8. Government Grants

While many statutory councils are largely fee-funded, some receive state transfers that materially support operations or specific programmes. Under the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (PFMA) and its Treasury Regulations, grants/transfers generally fall into four categories:

- i. Statutory transfers to public entities (often called “baseline appropriations”) made in terms of the legislation governing that entity;
- ii. Programme (conditional) grants to public or private entities for specified outputs, with defined reporting and performance conditions;
- iii. Division of Revenue Act (DoRA) grants to provinces and municipalities for conditional purposes in those spheres; and
- iv. Grants and contributions (e.g., to households or other recipients) that are not tied to a specific public-entity mandate.

For professional councils, the practically relevant forms are the statutory transfer/baseline appropriation and programme grants earmarked for defined initiatives (e.g., large-scale CPD roll-outs or language-access projects). These transfers are subject to PFMA controls — ring-fenced purposes, performance indicators, procurement rules, Auditor-General oversight, and in-year/annual reporting — and should be treated as supplementary to own-revenue streams, given their dependence on the budget cycle.

5.2.3.9. Other Revenue Streams

Beyond practitioner fees and statutory charges, some income can be raised on a cost-recovery basis to offset programme and publication costs rather than to fund core operations.

- Events (conferences, workshops, awards). Revenue typically comes from attendee registrations (with early-bird and concession rates), paid workshops or masterclasses, exhibitor/vendor packages (booths, tables), sponsorship tiers (naming rights, session sponsors), and ancillary sales (proceedings, merchandise). These lines are generally designed to cover venue, production, catering, speaker, and logistics costs.
- Publications and journals. Income may include individual and institutional subscriptions, single-issue sales, advertising space (print and digital), sponsored inserts, and paid reprints or permissions. Pricing usually aims to recover editorial, production, hosting, and distribution expenses, with surpluses—if any—reinvested in publication quality and access.

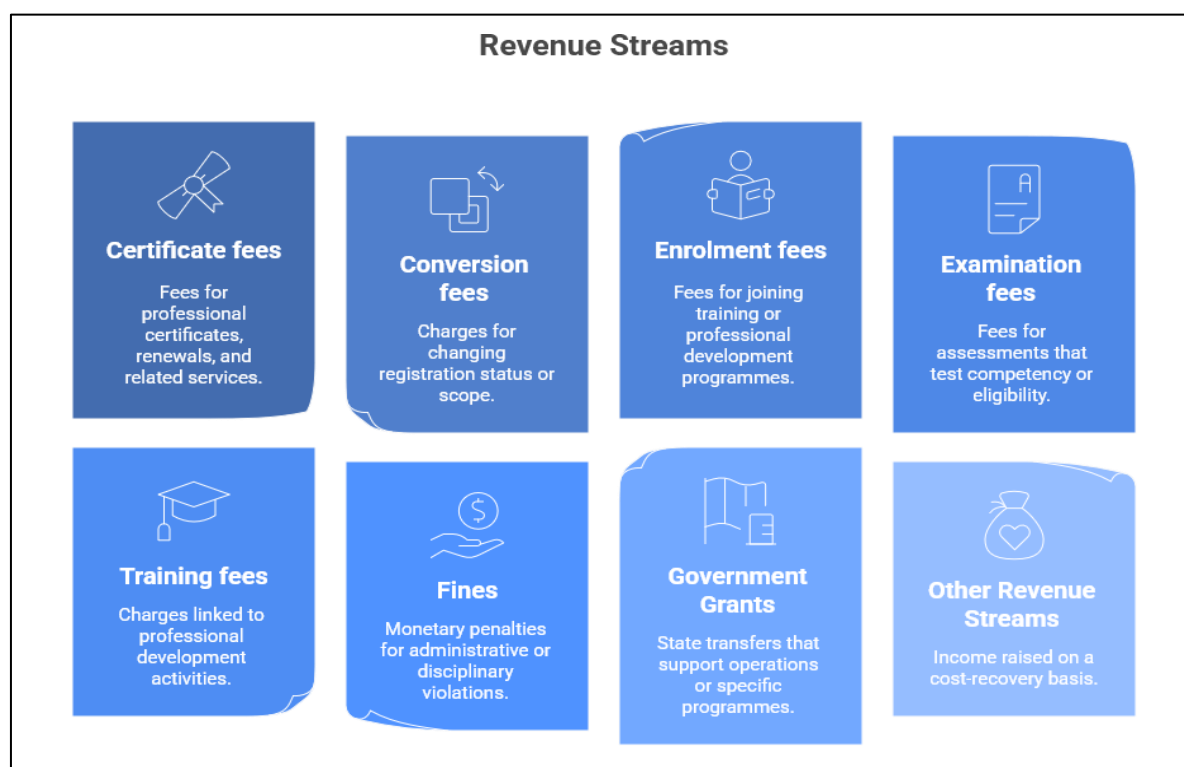


Figure 3: Potential revenue streams.

5.2.4. The Sustainability of a Pure Fees-Based Model

A fully self-financed regulator is possible in principle, but only if scope, pace, and pricing are aligned. For the SALPC, three realities shape the answer:

- i. A phased roll-out of the Register and supporting Database/CRM
- ii. A moderate initial register size.
- iii. CPI-capped annual adjustments that limit how quickly tariffs can be raised. Together these imply that a pure fees model is unlikely to be sufficient in the first years without transitional support.

5.2.5. Phasing the System and Scope

A phased approach is prudent: launch core functions (registration/renewal, certificates/letters, basic queries, complaints intake, minimal CPD recording) and expand into examinations, provider accreditation, fuller CPD tooling, and analytics over time. Phasing contains early costs (ICT build, staffing, support) and reduces failure risk, but it also constrains early-year revenue, because not all fee-earning services are live from day one.

After phasing in priority fields, a reasonable working assumption is 25,000–30,000 registered professionals in the first few years, growing as additional practice fields are designated and as the profession expands.

5.2.6. What Fee Levels Imply for Revenue

Illustrative arithmetic (registration fees only; excludes service charges such as conversions, reinstatements, late penalties, examinations, certificates, etc.):

Table 3: Potential revenue from fees.

Registrants	Fees	Annual income
20 000	R1 500 – R2 000	R30 – R40 million
25 000	R1 500 – R2 000	R37,5 – R50 million
30 000	R1 500 – R2 000	R45 – R60 million

To approach budgets on the order of ~R100 million (like SACE/ECSA), one needs higher fees or a larger base; for example, $40\,000 \times R2\,500 = R100\,000\,000$. These ranges show that, at anticipated scale, registration fees alone will not reach nine-figure budgets unless prices rise or the register grows substantially.

5.2.7. Designing the Organisation to the Budget

Functions, staffing and ICT should be designed from a realistic revenue envelope, confirmed through a dedicated business planning process. That plan should detail activity volumes, service levels, staffing ratios, ICT run costs, compliance/legal needs, and enforcement intensity. A lean, digital-first model — right-sized service levels; strong self-service; targeted enforcement — keeps expenditure aligned with fee capacity.

Because phasing limits both volume (fewer registrants at start) and scope (fewer billable services live), cash flow in the first 2–3 years is likely to trail steady-state costs (helpdesk,

verification, system ops, audits, legal, governance). CPI-capped increases further slow catch-up. Accordingly, transitional funding is advisable— e.g., a baseline appropriation, a time-bound programme grant for system build-out, or ring-fenced support for examinations/CPD ramp-up — so that regulatory functions are not compromised while the Register matures.

5.2.8. Cost Behaviour as the Register Grows

Much of the cost base scales with registrants (application handling, assessments/exams, CPD verification, complaints/discipline), while platform and governance costs are partly fixed. As numbers rise, unit costs should fall (economies of scale and automation), but variable work (e.g., examinations, provider accreditation, reinstatements) rises with participation.

5.2.9. Concluding Thoughts on a Pure Fees-Based Model

In the first years — under a phased build and a 25 000–30 000 register — fees alone are unlikely to fund the full operating model. A hybrid path is recommended:

1. Transitional public support to underwrite system build and early operating deficits;
2. A tiered, cost-reflective fee schedule with appropriate concessions; and
3. Disciplined scope and digital operating practices so that, as the register deepens and additional fee- earning services come online, the Council moves toward long-run fee sustainability without over- pricing entry to the Register.

5.2.10. Grant Funding

A phased, digital-first regulator with a moderate early register (±25 000 – 30 000 registrants) will not reach steady-state revenue on fees alone in its first years. Grant funding is therefore not a luxury but a transition instrument: it underwrites the once-off build, cushions early operating gaps while phasing brings functions and registrant numbers online and protects the quality and independence of statutory functions.

Grant funding should not substitute for a disciplined, tiered, cost-reflective fee schedule with concessions (students, early-career, non-practising, pensioners) and service charges that map to effort (conversions, reinstatements, late penalties, certificates/letters, examinations). Instead, grants bridge the early revenue gap and finance non-recurring build costs so that fees can remain affordable while the Register scales.

5.2.11. Grants for a Statutory Regulator

In South Africa's public-finance setting, three grant types are realistic and appropriate:

- **Baseline/Statutory Transfer:** A recurring allocation that covers a defined share of core operations. Appropriate where Parliament has created a new public function that cannot immediately be self- financing. For the SALPC, this is best framed as time-bounded (declining over the MTEF) with explicit glide-path milestones to fee sustainability.
- **Conditional/Programme Grants:** Earmarked funding for specific, measurable programmes with outputs (e.g., Register and Database/CRM build-out, national CPD framework, provider accreditation system, SASL-inclusive access features, public-register verification tools, cybersecurity hardening). Funds are ring-fenced, reported on separately, and lapse if conditions are not met.

- **Once-off Capitalisation / Set-up Grants:** One-time funding for non-recurring assets and transition costs: systems design and development, data migration and cleansing, integrations with identity/payment services, initial security and privacy tooling, and training/onboarding materials. This avoids loading capex into the annual fee base.

5.2.12. Appropriate Funders and Alignment

- **Primary line department:** The SALPC should seek support via its Executive Authority's vote for baseline or programme grants aligned to national language-access and professionalisation objectives.
- **Cross-government programmes:** Technology build, cybersecurity and digital inclusion can be justified for programme grants where they deliver public-good infrastructure (e.g., multilingual access, Deaf services readiness, open verification of credentials).
- **Partnership funding:** Universities, research facilities and language-infrastructure bodies may co-fund targeted components (e.g., CPD research, graduate-outcomes tracking, corpus/tools interoperability) under Memoranda of Agreement. Such arrangements must not purchase regulatory outcomes and should be structured to protect independence.

5.2.13. Potential for Private Sector Investment / Support

A business case needs to be made for support from the private sector through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) structure, which could ensure financial sustainability and neutrality through several mechanisms:

- PPPs are designed to deliver value for money by balancing affordable service provision, operational efficiency, and the reinvestment of surplus funds into the project or broader public services.
- PPP projects typically combine public funding with private investment, leveraging long-term financing and prioritizing low-cost debt to align with project cash flows over extended periods. This structure enables effective management of operational and maintenance expenses, as well as capital repayment, ensuring fiscal sustainability without placing undue strain on public finances. Comprehensive financial modelling and prudent risk allocation further serve to mitigate early project failures and unforeseen expenditures
- To maintain neutrality, PPP contracts establish clearly defined performance standards, pricing frameworks, and risk-sharing mechanisms, preventing private entities from exploiting monopolistic or exclusive positions. Regulatory measures such as capped user fees, profit-sharing arrangements, and reinvestment obligations are implemented to safeguard the public interest.
- Transparent procurement procedures, independent audits, and ongoing oversight by designated public authorities uphold the integrity and accountability of PPP initiatives, minimizing bias or undue influence from any party involved
- Private sector partners will need to be certain that the significant up-front investment and opportunity cost required to commit to developing and mobilising a PPP will be justified by a successful partnership which benefits from the public partner's full support
- Risks are assigned to the party most equipped to manage them; for instance, construction and operational risks are typically borne by the private partner, whereas the public partner may address regulatory or political uncertainties. This approach balances incentives and responsibilities across stakeholders.

- Effective negotiation, implementation, and supervision of PPPs require robust governance structures and advanced project management capabilities, thereby reinforcing long-term sustainability and neutrality.

In summary, structuring PPPs with balanced risk-sharing, regulatory oversight, transparent performance measurement and financing aligned to project cash flows ensures sustained operation without compromising neutrality or public accountability (Baxter, 2025), (Fabre & Straub, 2021), (National Treasury, 1999), (Local Government Association, 2022), (World Bank, 2015), (European Commission, 2024).

5.2.14. Strategic Considerations – African Language Practitioners Council

While not a focus of this report, the notion of a larger body to promote the development of language practitioners and the language economy as a whole on the African continent has emerged during the exploration of financial aspects of the SALPC.

Upon considering potential private sector or even international NGO / donor funding for the SALPC, it became clear that certain funding options were more feasible for a national body, and others for a more expansive regional body. For instance, an Africa-wide language body may be able to access funding from the following organisations easier than would the SALPC:

5.2.14.1. Pan-African public institutions:

- African Union (AU)
- AfCFTA Secretariat
- AUDA-NEPAD

5.2.14.2. Regional Economic Communities (RECs):

- SADC
- ECOWAS
- EAC
- COMESA
- IGAD

5.2.14.3. Pan-African finance & trade banks:

- Afreximbank
- African Development Bank
- TDB (Trade & Development Bank)
- DBSA
- BOAD
- BADEA

5.2.14.4. Multilateral & UN system:

- UNESCO
- World Bank
- IFC
- UNDP
- UNICEF
- ITC
- ILO
- UNIDO

5.2.14.5. EU & other international public finance:

- European Commission
- EIB
- GIZ/KfW
- AFD
- DANIDA

5.2.14.6. Corporate & ecosystem partners:

- Mastercard Foundation
- Google
- Microsoft
- Meta
- AWS (Amazon Web Service)

These examples are more likely to support a regional initiative than a local one. Establishing such an organisation – as an extension of the work being done to establish the SALPC – could have numerous strategic benefits.

Firstly, by taking the lead in establishing such an organisation, South Africa would entrench itself as a leading for language development on the continent and the champion for the growth of the language economy on the continent.

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, such an organisation may be able to mobilise significant funding for the development of language professions and the language sector as a whole. This funding could be distributed – in part – to language professional councils across the continent including the SALPC.

Thirdly, developing the language sector across the continent should lead to more opportunities for language professionals, boost intra-African trade, and open up new opportunities for business and cultural ties between African nations and the rest of the world.

5.3. Establishment Costs

Establishing the South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC) requires a concentrated, time-bound investment to build the legal, technical, and organisational

foundations. At the heart of this effort sits the practitioner database and its surrounding functions—registration, verification, accreditation/assessment, CPD tracking, and complaints/discipline workflows. These systems shape user experience, data integrity, compliance, and ultimately cost. What follows is a high-level description of establishment cost components with indicative ranges to guide budgeting conversations. A dedicated financial planning exercise will still be required to convert these into a detailed, phased budget with procurement packs, staffing profiles, and cash- flow timing.

Cost Components

1. **Institutional & Legal Setup:** Foundational governance instruments (board/committee charters, delegations), rules and guidelines, MoUs with partner bodies, and procurement templates.
2. **Core Platform (Register/CRM) – Selection & Configuration:** Licensing model selection, data model design (titles/levels, practitioner profiles, CPD, sanctions), workflow configuration (onboarding, renewals, verifications), payments, and portals. Configuration-first (not custom build) is assumed.
3. **Data Migration & Cleansing:** Consolidation of legacy lists from associations and public entities; deduplication; data quality rules; document capture standards.
4. **Identity & Qualification Verification Enablement:** Batch verification setup (ID/identity, qualifications), initial API integrations where feasible (e.g., SAQA/HEIs), exception-handling processes, and evidence management.
5. **Accreditation & Assessment Design:** Standards mapping (levels ↔ competencies), rubrics, pilot examinations/assessments, assessor/moderator recruitment and training, secure content handling.
6. **POPIA & Security Baseline:** Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA), privacy notices and consent flows, role-based access controls, logging/monitoring, encryption at rest/in transit, breach response playbooks, and initial penetration test.
7. **People & Operating Model Setup:** Recruitment of a lean secretariat (registry operations, accreditation/CPD, complaints & discipline, ICT product owner, finance/admin, stakeholder relations), HR policies, induction, and initial training.
8. **Stakeholder Onboarding & Recognition Campaign:** Employer and procurement recognition, sector briefings, guidance notes, website and help materials, multilingual FAQs.
9. **Premises, Equipment & Initial Fit-Out:** Hybrid office footprint, meeting/hearing rooms fit-for-purpose, user devices, peripherals, secure storage, and conferencing capability.
10. **Programme Management & Quality Assurance:** Central PMO, change control, vendor oversight, independent QA/IV&V for platform configuration and data processes.
11. **Contingency (Scope & Re-work Allowance):** To cover unforeseen configuration changes, additional integrations, legal reviews, or expanded pilots.

Table 4: Establishment cost structure.

#	Establishment step	Indicative cost (R, ex-VAT)
1	Institutional & legal setup	0.35m – 1.00m
2	Core platform (Register/CRM) – selection & configuration	2.50m – 7.50m
3	Data migration & cleansing	0.50m – 2.00m
4	Identity & qualification verification enablement (batch/API pilots)	1.00m – 3.00m
5	Accreditation & assessment design (standards, rubrics, pilots)	0.75m – 2.00m
6	POPIA & security baseline (DPIA, controls, initial pentest)	0.50m – 1.50m
7	People & operating model setup (recruitment/induction)	1.00m – 3.00m
8	Stakeholder onboarding & recognition campaign	0.40m – 1.25m
9	Premises, equipment & initial fit-out	0.40m – 1.00m
10	Programme management & independent QA/IV&V	0.50m – 1.50m
	Subtotal (excl. contingency)	7.90m – 23.75m
11	Contingency (10–20% of subtotal)	0.79m – 4.75m
	Total incl. contingency	± 8.69m – 28.50m

5.4. Operational Cost

Operating the SALPC requires a predictable core of fixed expenditure and a set of variable pools that expand or contract with activity volumes. The fixed core covers the secretariat, governance and audit, and the registry/CRM platform that underpins all functions. Variable costs arise chiefly from identity and qualification verification, accreditation and examinations, CPD quality assurance, and complaints and discipline.

Consistent with our design recommendations, the operating model prioritises a lean internal team focused on policy, registry operations, and product ownership, while outsourcing/rostering assessors, moderators, hearing panellists, and specialist providers to handle peaks in throughput. This approach keeps permanent headcount stable while aligning spend to real demand. Actual budget figures will be set through a dedicated financial planning exercise once the final mandate, verification pathways, and recognition/enforcement measures are confirmed.

5.4.1. Cost Architecture and Drivers

- **Fixed core (relatively stable):** secretariat and governance; platform licences/hosting/support; POPIA and security obligations; premises and general administration.
- **Volume-sensitive pools:**
 - **Verification:** scales with new intakes and annual renewals, moderated by the share handled via batch/API vs manual exceptions.
 - **Accreditation & exams:** driven by the number of assessments/sittings and reuse of assessment content.
 - **Complaints & discipline:** driven by caseload and case complexity (investigations, panels, legal).

- **CPD quality assurance:** scales with approved providers and sampling intensity.
- **Design choices that contain cost:** configuration-over-build (platform), digital-first verification, self- service portals for renewals and payments, and formal recognition of SALPC titles in procurement/HR to improve compliance and spread fixed costs over a larger paying base.

Table 5: Operational Cost Structure.

#	Expense Category	Description	Nature of Expenditure
1	Secretariat and governance	Core FTEs for registry ops, accreditation/CPD QA, complaints/discipline, ICT product owner, finance/admin; board/committees; external audit	Fixed core with minor growth as scale increases
2	ICT licences, hosting and support	Registry/CRM licences, cloud hosting, maintenance SLAs, monitoring, user support	Fixed/step-fixed; efficiency improves with scale
3	Identity & qualification verification	Batch/API checks; manual exceptions; evidence management	Variable (unit-cost driven by method mix)
4	Accreditation and examinations	Assessor/moderator rosters; sittings; secure content handling/proctoring	Variable (driven by assessment volumes)
5	CPD quality assurance	Provider approvals; sampling/audits; guidance	Variable (driven by providers and sampling rate)
6	Complaints, ethics and discipline	Intake/triage; investigations; hearing panels; transcription; external legal where required	Variable (caseload and complexity)
7	Stakeholder services and communications	Helpdesk/contact centre; employer outreach; multilingual website/FAQs	Semi-variable (driven by user volumes; mitigated by self-service)
8	POPIA and compliance	DPO/IO duties; DPIA refresh; staff awareness; breach drills; periodic security testing	Fixed with periodic spikes (testing/audits)
9	Premises and general admin	Hybrid office; utilities; insurance; consumables; outreach/hearings travel	Fixed with modest scale effects
10	Research, monitoring and reporting	Market scans; affordability checks; annual reports; M&E	Fixed/programmable (policy-driven)

5.4.2. Budget Governance

Final operational budgets should be produced through a separate business planning process with: (i) confirmed service levels and SLAs, (ii) benchmarked unit costs for verification and assessment methods, (iii) a staffing/outourcing mix tied to volumes, and (iv) sensitivity tests for compliance rates, concession policies, and caseload. Annual reviews will adjust volumes and service mixes based on actual experience.

5.5. Conclusion

A sustainable and neutral funding model for a national registry of language practitioners ideally blends public funding with independent revenue, supported by robust governance and transparency.

- Public funding from government budgets provides stable, long-term financing aligned with national
- policy priorities while maintaining the registry’s mission and public accountability
- Independent revenue sources—including practitioner registration fees, accreditation charges, and service fees—add to government funding, supporting financial sustainability and decreasing reliance on political cycles
- Financial independence is managed through transparent budgeting, audited financial reporting, and governance structures that define accountability and oversight roles for the managing board or council
- Diversified funding sources minimize the influence of any one stakeholder, supporting neutrality and impartiality in governance and decision-making
- Sustainable finance principles focus on transparency, risk management, and adherence to institutional mandates to guide efficient resource use alongside capacity building and service quality
- This model incorporates practices from public financial management such as merit-based budgeting, performance monitoring, and stakeholder engagement to support trust and credibility.

Thus, a mixed funding model with stable public funds complemented by earned income under robust, transparent governance offers sustainability and neutrality for a national registry institution. (Ayinkamiye & Spencer, 2021)

6. Chapter 6 Classification System

6.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the classification system as the backbone of the database. It ensures consistency in how language practitioners are identified, grouped, and matched to opportunities. Without such a system, data can quickly become fragmented, making it difficult to assess the profession’s scale, monitor supply and demand, or design policies. (Government Gazette, 2015)

6.2. Rationale for a Classification System

The classification system provides:

- Standardisation – creating a shared understanding across government, institutions, and industry
- Transparency – enabling practitioners to see where they fit and how to progress
- Policy alignment – supporting professionalisation goals under national and regional frameworks
- International comparability – positioning South African practitioners in a global marketplace
- Data accuracy – reducing duplication, errors, and inconsistencies in practitioner records. (DSAC, 2025)

6.3. Categories of Language Practitioners

The system can define broad professional categories, e.g.:

- Translation and Interpreting (literary, technical, community, sign language, court, simultaneous, consecutive)
- Language Editing and Proofreading (academic, publishing, business)
- Terminology and Lexicography (researchers, compilers, terminologists)
- Language Technology Specialists (localisation, NLP developers, corpus managers)
- Language Teaching and Training (foreign/second language teaching, home language teaching, academic literacy)
- Cultural and Knowledge Mediation (storytelling, indigenous knowledge documentation, subtitling, voice-over).

These categories could form the top tier of classification, each with sub-levels based on qualifications, experience, and specialisations. (Government Gazette, 2015)

6.4. Classification by Service Type, Sector, and Language

Beyond categories, classification should also consider:

- Service type – e.g., freelance vs in-house; private vs public sector; commercial vs academic
- Sector – legal, medical, education, government, media, corporate, cultural
- Language – first language of practice, working languages, proficiency levels

This creates a multi-dimensional matrix, enabling the database to generate detailed practitioner profiles (e.g., “isiXhosa/English legal court interpreter, freelance, 8 years’ experience”).

6.5. Harmonisation with International Standards

To ensure global recognition and mobility, the classification system should align with frameworks such as:

- ISO standards on translation and interpreting services
- European Master’s in Translation (EMT) competence framework
- UNESCO and ILO occupational classifications
- SADC and AU language frameworks, where relevant.

Harmonisation helps practitioners gain credibility outside South Africa and attracts international clients/employers. (Phaahla, 2015)

6.6. Updating and Maintaining the Classification System

The system must be dynamic, not static. Processes should include:

Annual reviews by a governing body (e.g., PanSALB, professional councils, or a Language Practitioners' Board).

- Practitioner feedback loops, so updates reflect real-world practice
- Integration with training institutions to reflect new qualifications and skills
- Technology monitoring to incorporate emerging roles (e.g., AI post-editing, speech-to-text captioning).

This ensures the classification evolves with the profession and keeps the database relevant.

7. Chapter 7 Accreditation

7.1. Purpose and Scope

Accreditation is the mechanism that turns professional intent into consistent, reliable outcomes. The stakes are clearest in South African Sign Language (SASL) interpreting: when competencies and credentials are unclear, Deaf users encounter uneven quality and may be excluded from essential services; institutions cannot procure with confidence; and practitioners lack recognised pathways to demonstrate capability and progress.

Where standards are defined, assessments (including RPL) are recognised, renewal is tied to CPD, and credentials are easy to verify, outcomes improve for users, risk falls for institutions, and interpreters gain a transparent route to specialisation and advancement. The same logic applies across translation, court and clinical interpreting, editing, and terminology.

This chapter therefore sets the policy and institutional frame for certification and accreditation of language practitioners in South Africa. It clarifies roles (what is registered, what is accredited, what is recognised), explains the principles that make accreditation fair and effective, and shows how a statutory system can build on existing sector strengths (e.g., SATI credentials and recognised qualifications) rather than duplicate them—adding stricter requirements only where risk and law require it. (Parkins-Maliko, 2015)

7.2. Statutory Basis

The statutory authority is the South African Language Practitioners' Council Act, 2014 (Act 8 of 2014) and its Regulations. Within this framework:

Registration places an individual on the official register of language practitioners

Accreditation recognises an individual's competence for a defined category/level/scope

Certification is the (physical/digital) evidence of registration/accreditation

Recognition/approval applies to training providers, qualifications and examinations; organisations are not "accredited" as practitioners. (Government Gazette, 2015)

7.3. Objectives and Principles of Accreditation

Accreditation safeguards users of language services and builds a credible profession, while enabling a dynamic, inclusive language economy. The system is guided by five principles:

Public interest & quality. Protect courts, clinics, schools, broadcasters, publishers, companies and communities through competence and ethics

Proportionality. Match requirements to risk (e.g., court/clinical interpreting warrant stricter thresholds than low-risk contexts)

Pathways & mobility. Provide multiple routes—recognised qualifications, examinations and RPL—to reach the same standard, with clear progression

Alignment over duplication. Build on credible sector credentials (e.g., SATI), aligning them to statutory levels wherever feasible

Equity & transformation. Expand participation (including township and rural practitioners), support multilingualism, and avoid unnecessary barriers. (Khumalo, 2015)

7.3.1. Registration and certification: the high-level flow (detail in Ch. 9–10)

1. Application (individuals only): identity, language profile, and evidence (recognised qualifications, exams, portfolio/RPL)
2. Evaluation & decision: competence assessed against category/level standards; conditions may be applied where risk demands it
3. Certification & publication: certificate/digital credential issued; the public register is updated for verification
4. Renewal (time-bound): CPD and continued fitness-to-practise confirmed
5. Enforcement: Code of Conduct breaches or CPD non-compliance trigger proportionate sanctions; restoration routes are provided. (Government Gazette, 2015)

7.4. Interfaces and Collaboration

Accreditation attaches to individual practitioners. Employers, agencies and platforms are stakeholders; providers/exams are recognised/approved so their outputs count as evidence. Collaboration is structured to preserve existing strengths and minimise burdens:

- **Voluntary bodies (e.g., SATI).** Where SATI's credentials test the same competencies, SALPC maps them to statutory categories/levels and, where needed, adds narrowly targeted bridging assessments or CPD modules to meet statutory or higher-risk requirements—preserving SATI's role and giving incumbents a clear, fair transition.
- **Qualification authorities and HEIs (SAQA/QCTO/Universities).** Recognised qualifications may satisfy part or all of the competence requirement; SALPC may specify supplementary practicals or domain modules (e.g., legal/clinical interpreting).
- **Sector partners (PanSALB, departments, courts, broadcasters, publishers).** Usage standards—rosters, procurement criteria, editorial policies—should reference statutory categories/levels so accreditation has real market traction.

- **RPL and bridging.** Experienced practitioners without formal credentials can demonstrate competence through structured portfolios, supervised assessments, and time-limited provisional recognition with targeted upskilling.

(Implementation tools—MoUs, mapping tables, mutual recognition agreements, pilot cohorts—are described in Chapter 9; category/level descriptors are in Chapter 10.)

7.5. How Accreditation Ensures Quality

Accreditation improves quality by making competence clear, portable and enforceable:

Clear standards per context. Defined categories/levels (e.g., court interpreter; sworn translator; editor; terminologist) matched to risk and purpose, so clients know exactly what a credential implies.

Reliable entry routes. Recognised qualifications and exams, plus RPL, ensure consistent minimum competence while accommodating diverse practitioner journeys.

Specialisation and progression. Structured pathways to upgrade levels or add scopes as experience grows, building a culture of mastery.

CPD as maintenance of competence. Renewal tied to ongoing learning and practice, keeping skills current with technology, ethics and domain knowledge.

Ethics and accountability. A Code of Conduct, fair complaints processes, and proportionate sanctions uphold trust in the profession.

Market uptake and user protection. Public-sector rosters and procurement criteria that reference statutory levels reduce risk in courts, clinics, schools and state communications; private clients gain simpler, safer vendor selection.

Verification (an enabler, not the core). Public, real-time confirmation of a practitioner's status (name, category/level, validity, conditions) reduces misrepresentation and transaction costs, allowing the market to rely on the standard-assessment-CPD-enforcement cycle.

7.5.1. Building on Existing Organisations

South Africa already has substantial investments in qualifications, examinations, voluntary credentials and terminology resources. A statutory system will only succeed if it adds assurance where necessary and otherwise rides on what already works. The Council's default posture is co-operation and alignment: recognise credible sector credentials; avoid reinventing well-functioning assessments; and co-design narrow, risk-based bridges only where the law or public-interest risk demands it. This respects sector investments, accelerates professionalisation, and keeps costs down for practitioners and clients.

To make this concrete, SALPC will:

- **Recognise** voluntary credentials (e.g., SATI) towards statutory accreditation where competencies align, publishing mapping tables to the statutory categories/levels.
- **Co-design bridging** where gaps exist (targeted modules, supervised practice, domain exams), with time-bounded transition arrangements for incumbents.

- **Conclude recognition agreements** with HEIs/assessment bodies so their outputs flow seamlessly into accreditation decisions.
- **Link to** existing terminology and language resources rather than recreate them, keeping specialists in the loop and avoiding duplication. (UNESCO, 2003)

7.6. Conclusion

Accreditation is the profession's quality engine: it sets risk-appropriate standards, provides fair routes to meet them (including RPL), sustains competence through CPD, and enforces ethics. The Council's role is to lead and align—recognising credible sector credentials (like SATI), adding statutory assurance only where needed, and making competence visible and verifiable to the market.

By prioritising alignment over duplication and focusing on real-world uptake (courts, clinics, education, public communication and private procurement), the system protects users, lowers transaction costs, and expands equitable participation in South Africa's multilingual language economy.

8. Chapter 8 Code of Conduct

The Council is responsible for administering a code of conduct and must ensure that all language practitioners are provided with a copy of the code of conduct and that the code is available to all language practitioners and members of the public at all reasonable times.

All registered language practitioners must comply with the code of conduct and failure to do so will constitute improper conduct on their part.

The Council is responsible for determining the rules applicable to the code of conduct for language practitioners and for specific categories and subcategories of language practitioners to be published by Notice in the Gazette.

8.1. SALPC Regulatory Functions

The South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC) has regulatory functions aimed at overseeing and advancing the language profession in South Africa. These functions include:

- Promoting and protecting language practice in the Republic
- Scrutinizing the particulars of people intending to register as language practitioners
- Registering and accrediting language practitioners
- Developing, implementing, revising, and enforcing a code of conduct for registered language practitioners
- Protecting the professional interests of language practitioners and the public who use their services
- Regulating the provision of language services to the public
- Promoting access and participation in the language profession, especially for indigenous communities
- Advising the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture on matters affecting the language profession
- Coordinating with education and training authorities to regulate and set standards for language practitioner training
- Administering funds appropriated by Parliament and other sources to support its functions
- Convening meetings between organs of state and stakeholders to promote uniformity and cooperation in language practice
- Developing strategic policy related to finance, registration, accreditation, ethics, standards, and professional competence in language practice.

8.2. Professional Conduct

The professional conduct rules for language practitioners, according to the South African Language Practitioners' Council Act, emphasize several key duties that registered language practitioners must uphold. These include:

- Conducting themselves professionally with due care, skill, and diligence.
- Undertaking only work within their competence based on education, training, and experience.
- Adhering to professional norms of the language practice.

- Acting with integrity, fidelity, and honesty, avoiding corruption, dishonesty, or bribery.
- Keeping all assignment-related information strictly confidential.
- Maintaining impartiality and professional detachment in their work.
- Taking full responsibility for their work.
- Supporting and respecting fellow language practitioners.
- Upholding the dignity of the profession and refraining from maliciously injuring the reputation of others or the Council.
- Not advertising services misleadingly or critically attacking others' work except where justified by law.

In addition, language practitioners are required to participate in continuing professional development and adhere strictly to a code of conduct administered by the Council. Breaches of these conduct rules can lead to disciplinary investigations and hearings. The Council appoints disciplinary committees to hear cases of alleged improper conduct.

These rules frame the ethical and professional standards expected of language practitioners, focusing heavily on competence, integrity, confidentiality, impartiality, and mutual respect within the profession (Government Gazette, 2015).

8.3. Core Ethical Principles for Language Practitioners

The core ethical principles for language practitioners based on the South African Language Practitioners' Council Act and related professional standards include:

- **Competency:** Practitioners must perform their work with due care, skill, and diligence, only undertaking tasks they are qualified for by education, training, and experience.
- **Integrity:** They must conduct themselves with honesty, fidelity, and avoid any corrupt or dishonest practices.
- **Confidentiality:** All information related to assignments must be treated as strictly confidential.
- **Impartiality:** They must maintain professional detachment and impartiality in their work.
- **Responsibility:** Practitioners accept full responsibility for the quality and accuracy of their work.
- **Professional respect:** Support and respect for fellow language practitioners is mandatory.
- **Upholding the profession's dignity:** They must conduct themselves in a manner that enhances the profession's image and avoid any actions that could harm other practitioners or the Council's reputation.
- **Continuous development:** Commitment to ongoing professional development and adherence to the code of conduct is required.

These principles collectively ensure that language practitioners maintain ethical standards that promote trust, accountability and professionalism in their practice.

8.4. Enforcement and Disciplinary Procedures

The Council is responsible for appointing a Disciplinary Committee to attend to disciplinary hearings through the following procedures —

- (a) Investigation of a charge of improper conduct —
 - (i) Subject to the provisions of section 14 of the Act, the Council must establish an Investigating Committee for matters brought to it for investigation.
- (b) (b) The Council must refer any matter brought against a registered or accredited language practitioner to an Investigating Committee if —
 - (i) the Council has reasonable grounds to suspect that a registered and accredited language practitioner has committed an act which may render him or her guilty of improper conduct; or
 - (ii) A complaint, charge or allegation of improper conduct has been brought against a registered language practitioner by another language practitioner or any member of the public.
- (c) At the request of the Council, the investigating committee must —
 - (i) Investigate the matter; and
 - (ii) Obtain evidence to determine whether or not in its opinion the registered language practitioner concerned may be charged and, if so, recommend to the Council the charge or charges that may be brought against the registered language practitioner

The full procedure for disciplinary hearings and sanctions are contained in the Government Gazette: South African Language Practitioners' Council Act, 2014: Regulations (Government Gazette, 2015)

9. Chapter 9 Registration on the Database

The South African Language Practitioners' Council Act, 2014 sets out the registration requirements, criteria and procedures.

9.1. Eligibility Criteria for Registration

Subject to section 21(3)(b) of the Act and in terms of regulation 4(5)(f), an accreditation fee will be determined by the Council and published by Notice and gazetted. The fee will not be refunded if the application is withdrawn or abandoned or whatever the outcome of the application may be.

The following particulars must be entered in the register as contemplated in section 26 (1) of the Act in respect of each applicant for registration —

- a) Full names
- b) Residential address
- c) Postal address
- d) Email address
- e) Telephone contact details
- f) The date of lodgement and application number
- g) Registration number and registration date which will be deemed to be the date of lodgement of the initial application to register (form SALPC 1)
- h) Qualification(s), name of institution and year in which they were obtained where relevant in the event of prior learning and experience, details of the referee
- i) date of accreditation which will be deemed to be the date the council has satisfied itself as to the language practitioner's compliance with the quality assurance system and

- j) Accreditation level under the quality assurance system.

9.2. Proof of Qualifications and Experience

An application for registration and accreditation must be made on the prescribed Form SALPC 1 and accompanied by:

- a) Certified copy of the applicant's identity document and/ or passport
- b) Certified copies of a certificate(s) of any relevant qualification(s), where
- c) Appropriate in terms of the quality assurance system
- d) An academic record issued by the tertiary institution or language
- e) Learning institute which conferred said certificate in sub-regulation
- f) Where appropriate, details of prior experience in terms of the quality
- g) Assurance system as set out in form SALPC 1
- h) Where appropriate, references and testimonials confirming prior
- i) Experience in terms of the quality assurance system
- j) The registration and accreditation fee as determined by the council and gazetted, which will not be refunded if the application is withdrawn or abandoned or whatever the outcome of the application may be
- k) If called upon to do so by the council, such other information as the
- l) Council may determine, which may include proof of the authenticity and validity of the documents submitted and/ or such details of the course and examination as the Council may consider necessary.

Upon compliance with the quality assurance system and acceptance by the Council the language practitioner will be granted accreditation denoted by category, subcategory and level of language practitioner.

9.3. Admission to Register

The quality assurance system, as defined in the regulations, will be utilised by the Council together with the required supporting documentation as set out in Form SALPC 1, when reviewing the application for registration and accreditation to determine the level at which the language practitioner should be accredited within the category(ies) and subcategory(ies) of language practitioner selected.

- i. A person who has lodged Form SALPC 1 and submitted the information as set out in the form and paid the registration fee determined by the Council by Notice in the Gazette will receive confirmation of said lodgement and be provided with an application number.
- ii. Once the Council has satisfied itself as to the formalities having been met, in that Form SALPC 1 has been duly completed, the relevant supporting documentation submitted and the registration fee paid, the Council will issue the person with a registration number and a registration certificate.
- iii. A person who has registered, paid the required accreditation fee and complied with the quality assurance system to be determined by the Council will be considered a registered and accredited language practitioner and will be issued with an accreditation certificate.

- iv. The certificates of registration and accreditation will be issued in forms to be determined by the Council and signed by the chief executive officer or a person with delegated authority to do so in terms of section 38(3) of the Act.

9.3.1. Accreditation certificate

In terms of section 22(1) of the Act, a certificate of accreditation must be issued in a form determined by the Council and signed by the chief executive officer or a person with delegated authority to do so.

9.4. Updating the Database

- i. In the event that a registered and accredited language practitioner obtains an additional qualification, such language practitioner may apply to record a change of accreditation level in the register upon completion of the relevant portion of Form SALPC 1.
- ii. The registered and accredited language practitioner will, upon payment of the required accreditation fee and compliance with the quality assurance system to be determined by the Council, accordingly, be issued with a new accreditation certificate.
- iii. The registrar must send the certificate of accreditation to the language practitioner by registered post to the postal address or residential address reflected on the register for the language practitioner or by any other means to be determined by Council.

9.4.1. Change of Name

A registrant must specifically notify the Council in writing of a change of name by completion and lodgement of Form SALPC 4 accompanied by a certified copy of their marriage certificate or any such documentation in law authorising such change of name.

Upon lodgement of such form and documentation, the Registrar will update the register accordingly and confirmation of such change of name will be sent by registered post to the registrant at the postal address reflected on the register for said registrant or by any other means to be determined by the Council.

9.4.2. Change of Residential and Postal Address

A registered person must specifically notify the Council in writing of a change of residential and postal address by completion and lodgement of Form SALPC 4 accompanied by proof of such change of address such as a utility bill.

Upon lodgement of such form and documentation, the registrar will update the register accordingly and confirmation of such change of residential address will be sent by registered post to the registrant at the postal or residential address reflected in the register for said registrant or by any other means to be determined by the Council.

9.5. Disqualification

The Council has the right to refuse the registration of an applicant —

- a) If the applicant has been removed from an office of trust or on account of improper conduct

- b) If the applicant has been convicted of an offence in the republic, other than an offence committed prior to 27 April 1994 associated with political objectives, and was sentenced to imprisonment without the option of a fine, or, in the case of fraud, to a fine or imprisonment or both
- c) If the applicant has been declared by the high court to be of unsound mind or, mentally disordered or is detained under the mental health care act, 2002 (act no.17 of 2002)
- d) For as long as the applicant is disqualified from registration as a result of any punishment imposed on him or her under the act
- e) If the applicant is a rehabilitated insolvent whose insolvency was caused by his or her negligence or incompetence in performing work falling within the scope of the category in respect of which he or she is applying for registration.

Where the Council refuses to register an applicant on the basis of the reasons above or any other reason, the Council will provide the applicant with a notice of refusal and remedial recourse for the applicant.

9.5.1. Suspension from Practising

Subject to section 28 of the Act, the registrar must mark in the register the name of a registrant who has been suspended from practising and must indicate in the register the period of suspension.

The registrar must send the required notice of suspension to the registrant by registered post at the postal address reflected in the register for the registrant or by any other means to be determined by the Council.

The registrar must remove the details of suspension from the register —

- a) Upon expiry of the period of suspension, provided that the language practitioner has met all conditions that had to be met during the period of suspension, or
- b) At an earlier date by resolution of the council.

The registrar must send confirmation of removal of suspension details to the language practitioner by registered post to the residential or postal address held in the register or by any other means to be determined by Council.

9.6. Removal from the Register

The name of a person must be removed from the register, as contemplated in section 27(1) of the Act, upon submission of Form SALPC 2 accompanied by —

- a) A certified copy of a death certificate provided by next of kin or any interested person in the event of the death of the registrant.
- b) A sworn affidavit executed by any interested person in the event of absence from the republic by a registrant for a continuous period of three years, setting out details of the absence and reasons for removal due to said absence: provided that the council has satisfied itself that attempts have been made to contact the registrant at all contact details reflected in the register.

- c) An affidavit as mentioned in a form determined by the council in the event of a registrant requesting his or her own removal.
- d) A sworn affidavit executed by any interested person in the event of a registrant having been registered in error or through fraud.

9.6.1. Removal by Council Resolution and Upon Court Order Notification

The removal of a name from the register must be effected by a resolution taken by the Council

- a) If in terms of section 27(1)(f) of the Act, the qualification by virtue of which the registrant's registration was granted is withdrawn, cancelled or suspended by the issuing institution.
- b) If the registrant's registration was granted in error or through fraudulent means.
- c) Upon receipt of a court order declaring a registrant a mentally ill person.

9.6.2. Lapsing of Registrations

- a) In terms of section 27(1)(e) of the Act, upon failure to pay the annual fee within 90 days as prescribed under regulation 6, the registrar upon direction of the Council must effect removal of a registrant from the register.
- b) Upon removal from the register, the registrar must notify the person of such removal by registered post, at the address reflected in the register for the language practitioner or by any other means to be determined by Council.

10. Chapter 10 Qualifications Requirements

Subject to section 21 of the Act and regulations 3 and 4 as they relate to admission to the register, a person seeking accreditation must complete Form SALPC 1 which includes selection of the category(ies) and subcategory(ies) of language practitioners being applied for and submission of supporting documentation in relation to said category(ies) and subcategory(ies) of for accreditation evaluation purposes.

10.1. Categories

So as to implement the provisions of sections 21(3), 21(4) and 33 of the Act and these regulations, the Council identifies the following categories, subcategories and levels of language practitioners —

- a) The categories of language practitioners are as defined in the Act, including but not limited to translators, interpreters, text editors, terminologists and lexicographers.
- b) The subcategories of translators are paraprofessional translators, professional translators and sworn translators.
- c) The subcategories of interpreters are paraprofessional interpreters, professional simultaneous interpreters and professional consecutive interpreters.
- d) The subcategories of text editors are paraprofessional editors and professional editors.

10.1.1. Levels within categories

The levels identified within each category are level one for paraprofessional language practitioners, level two for professional language practitioners and level three for expert language practitioners.

Level one — Paraprofessional language practitioners represent persons who have no formal qualifications and practise as language practitioners in informal situations within a community environment. These include but are not limited to persons who interpret in churches, assist members of their community by interpreting for them at hospitals and clinics, assist the Deaf and similar activities.

Level two — Professional language practitioners represents language practitioners whether working on a full- time or part- time basis, who are fully competent in the field of language practice concerned and are in possession of either a degree or postgraduate degree or approved prior learning and experience in lieu of such degree. This category includes but is not limited to formal-hearing interpreters and medical interpreters.

Level three — Expert language practitioners represents language practitioners who have been accredited at level two prior to applying for accreditation at level three and have the competency to handle complex, technical and sophisticated language practice work. The standard of an expert will be benchmarked according to international practice. The person must be in possession of either a degree or postgraduate degree or recognised prior learning and experience in lieu of such degree accompanied by a wealth of experience in the relevant field, which may include but is not limited to sworn translators with relevant legal knowledge and high-level conference interpreters.

Except for paraprofessionals, no person may practise at any of the levels contemplated in these regulations unless he or she has been accredited at that level within the quality assurance system. (Government Gazette, 2015).

10.1.2. Authorised Titles

A person who is registered and accredited at any of the levels referred to in regulation 14(3)(e) may describe himself or herself as and use the following titles —

- a) If accredited at level one — Paraprofessional Language Practitioner.
- b) If accredited at level two — Professional Language Practitioner.
- c) If accredited at level three — Expert Language Practitioner.

Any registered and accredited person must use their title in all services rendered, in any report produced or in any other documentation prepared by them in the course of their work.

10.2. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Obligations

Except for paraprofessionals, persons registered with the Council will be required to participate in a system of continuing professional development (“CPD”) that will be introduced and administered by the Council in association with accredited institutions.

- a) The Council will determine the CPD system to be used and the portfolio required towards earning CPD units.
- b) Registered language practitioners who do not comply with the CPD system stand to have their registration withdrawn.
- c) The Council must create relations with accredited institutions and in collaboration with these accredited institutions confirm events, courses and workshops to be conducted annually and the CPD units to be allocated to these.

Section C

Membership strategies

11. Chapter 11 Membership Strategies

11.1. Introduction

Professions such as Law, Health, Education, and Engineering are long-established, tightly regulated domains with reserved acts, clear points of service delivery, and institutional checkpoints. Legal advice is rendered by admitted practitioners in firms and courts; healthcare by registered professionals within licensed facilities; teaching within accredited institutions; and engineering sign-off by registered persons on identified classes of work. These characteristics create formal channels through which regulation, data collection, discipline, fee collection, and compulsory registration naturally flow.

By contrast, the language economy is broad and variegated. Services are delivered across courts and clinics, yes, but also publishers and media, NGOs, universities, corporate communications, software localisation, community interpreting, and global online platforms. Supply is fragmented—freelancers, small agencies, in-house teams, and gig models—work is often remote and cross-border, and there is no single set of universally recognised reserved acts for all language services. The sector’s boundaries and risk profiles are still being mapped, and public-interest risk varies markedly by context (for example, sworn translations and court/health interpreting versus low-stakes editorial tasks).

These structural differences suggest three design consequences. First, evidence and scoping must come first: market mapping, risk analysis by setting and modality, and clear stakeholder typologies are a prerequisite to durable rules. Second, standards should be risk-proportional and context-aware—prioritising high-risk environments and using guidance rather than heavy prescription in lower-risk domains. Third, incentives should accompany graduated compulsion in the early years: in a diffuse market with fewer natural checkpoints, registration uptake grows fastest when pathways are clear and benefits are visible, with enforcement strengthening as those pathways mature.

Against this backdrop, SALPC’s registration strategy would proceed in phases: prioritising fields with established standards and evident public-interest risk; opening voluntary and provisional routes elsewhere; and building the enabling foundations—scopes of practice, qualification and RPL routes, CPD frameworks, assessment capacity, employer alignment, and clear communications—so that universal compulsory registration becomes both feasible and credible.

11.1.1. Compulsory Membership

The Act sets a clear requirement: practitioners who provide prescribed language services must be registered, and employers and the public must be able to verify that status. Reaching that destination requires sequencing. The sector is heterogeneous—some fields already operate within formal registration or accreditation conventions (e.g., sworn translators; teachers under SACE), while others are informal, fragmented, or lack common standards. SALPC would therefore adopt a phased roll-out: early phases concentrate on occupations with evident public-interest risk and existing standards; later phases develop the pathways where they do not yet exist.

In the near term, SALPC would seek broad coverage where readiness is highest, while laying the groundwork elsewhere—scopes of practice, qualification and RPL routes, CPD expectations, assessment capacity where appropriate, employer agreements, and clear communications. Over the medium term, coverage would expand toward universal registration, supported by routine renewal and proportionate enforcement.

The guiding principle is thus not to pursue compulsory registration without a suitable pathway being in place. A phased approach will ensure that compulsory registration is achieved lawfully and credibly—bringing practitioners in as soon as it is feasible to do so and avoiding exclusion where the necessary routes to registration still need to be built.

11.1.2. Approach to Universal (Registration)

A practical route to universal coverage is to group professions into phases according to readiness, risk, and feasibility. Readiness includes the existence of standards/qualifications and an identifiable employer base; risk considers harm from unqualified practice (e.g., court and health-sector interpreting); feasibility covers the size and informality of the field and the time needed to create assessment and CPD capacity.

Illustrative phasing (to be confirmed with stakeholders):

Phase 1 (0–18 months): sworn translators; court interpreters; government/para-public interpreting pools; language professionals already registered elsewhere (e.g., teachers) where role mapping applies; and practitioners with recognised credentials from credible bodies. During this phase SALPC would publish scopes of practice and protected titles, set fees and renewal rules, open the Register, establish recognition- of-equivalence and RPL routes, and run assisted onboarding with large employers (Justice, Health, Education) and professional bodies.

Phase 2 (18–36 months): general translators/interpreters in large employers and LSPs; editors, proofreaders, terminologists; SASL and Deaf-services practitioners beyond the courts; and emerging digital/localisation roles. In this period SALPC would complete standards and CPD frameworks, stand up examinations/assessments where warranted, expand the verification API for employers, and begin proportionate enforcement via contract conditions and panel requirements.

Phase 3 (36–60 months): remaining niches and freelancers in informal markets, and niche/emerging roles that require bespoke pathways. Over this phase SALPC would prioritise targeted RPL, outreach and assisted registration, and finalise the enforcement posture (including late penalties and reinstatements) once pathways are demonstrably available.

Each phase should carry dated targets (registrations achieved, assessments delivered, CPD providers accredited) and SALPC deliverables (standards approved, pathways opened, employer MOUs signed). Movement between phases should be contingent on readiness gates—for example, no compulsory cut-over for a field until an accessible registration pathway (qualification, RPL, or assessment) and appeal/complaints mechanisms exist.

11.1.3. Pathways for Voluntary Registration

Compulsory registration will arrive in waves. In the interim, voluntary registration should be open to practitioners outside the current onboarding phase. This builds the data foundation, familiarises practitioners with the Register, and signals the future norm.

Voluntary routes should include provisional categories (e.g., “candidate” or “provisionally registered”) with clear upgrade paths once additional evidence is provided or assessments are passed. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is essential for experienced practitioners without formal qualifications; grandparenting can be offered time-limited and conditional on CPD or assessment. Students and recent graduates should have an entry-level status linked to supervised practice or CPD.

The aim is to invite practitioners into the system early, not to exclude them pending later phases.

11.1.4. Incentives for Registration

Even where registration will ultimately be compulsory, positive incentives accelerate adoption and reduce resistance, especially during transition. Incentives should benefit both practitioners and employers without straying into price-setting or anti-competitive ground.

Visibility and trust: listing on the public Register with verifiable digital credentials (QR-verifiable certificate, letter of good standing) that employers can check instantly.

Market access: eligibility to appear on public panels or to tender for certain language-service contracts; simple procurement rules that request an SALPC registration number.

Financial incentives: early-bird or first-year concessions; bundled fees where assessment plus first-year registration are taken together; discounted CPD from accredited providers.

Professional benefits: access to complaints resolution and ethics guidance; CPD tracking and recognised micro-credentials; optional inclusion in a registrant directory or contact relay (without exposing personal contact details).

Institutional levers: MOUs with large employers (courts, government departments, public entities, publishers/media) to **prefer or require** registered practitioners over time, with reasonable lead-in periods.

These incentives should be published alongside the phasing timeline so the pathway and benefits are clear from the outset.

11.2. Registration Strategies

The registration drive should combine direct onboarding with institutional channels to reach scale efficiently and lawfully.

Affiliated bodies and recognition: conclude data-sharing and recognition agreements (POPIA-compliant operator contracts) with credible professional bodies (e.g., SATI, PEG, SASLHA, SAALT/SALALS, SAGE). Prior learning, exams, and accreditations from such bodies can be mapped to SALPC categories or used as partial evidence, subject to SALPC review.

Employer-led onboarding: work with major employers such as Departments of Justice (DoJ&CD), Health (DoH), Basic/Higher Education (DBE & DHET), provinces/metros, public entities, and large LSPs to preload practitioner lists (with consent or lawful basis), run assisted registration sessions, and phase in contract conditions that prefer/require SALPC registration.

Education pipeline: partner with universities and training providers to certify graduates directly into “candidate” or entry categories, publish curriculum guidance aligned to scopes of practice, and accredit CPD providers.

Assisted registration and outreach: provide multilingual materials, clinics, and help-desk support; use mobile or virtual onboarding for remote areas; offer fee concessions where appropriate.

Standards and pathways first: for each target field, publish scope of practice, qualification / RPL / assessment routes, CPD expectations, and transitional provisions before enforcing compulsory status.

Proportionate enforcement: once a pathway exists and the communication period lapses, introduce soft enforcement (contract conditions, letters of non-compliance), followed by administrative penalties only where justified and feasible.

11.3. Conclusion

Compulsory registration is the statutory destination; a phased, risk-based roll-out is the credible route to get there. The chapter has set out how SALPC would prioritise high-risk contexts with existing standards, keep voluntary and provisional routes open elsewhere, and pair gradual compulsion with practical incentives so uptake grows without excluding practitioners who still need a pathway. The underlying principle is simple: no compulsion without a pathway, and once a pathway exists, proportionate enforcement follows.

Implementation would work as a programme rather than a once-off event: dated phases with readiness gates; clear scopes of practice and titles; qualification, RPL and CPD routes; assessment capacity where warranted; and institutional partnerships with employers, higher-education, and credible professional bodies to onboard at scale. Early incentives (visibility on the Register, procurement preferences, concessions, CPD benefits) would smooth adoption; enforcement would strengthen only where pathways and communications are demonstrably in place.

To keep the programme accountable, SALPC would publish a public roadmap and monitor a small set of milestones—pathway readiness by field, the share of practitioners registered in priority settings, verification usage by employers, and turnaround on applications and upgrades — reviewed at defined intervals.

12. Chapter 12 Protection of Information

12.1. Introduction

The SALPC will hold and process significant volumes of information in fulfilling its statutory mandate: applicant and registrant records, accreditation evidence, CPD histories, sanctions outcomes, payments, complaints, and a limited set of Public Register fields. Protecting this information is not merely a technical concern; it underpins the legitimacy of the Register, public trust in language-access regulation, and the Council's compliance with South African law.

This chapter sets out the governance and control framework for confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information across the system lifecycle—design, build, operation, support, disclosure, retention, and disposal. It distinguishes between:

- Public-facing data (minimal, purpose-bound Register fields released for verification), and
- Non-public data (application files, identity documents, health/disability indicators where relevant to practice fields such as Deaf services, complaints/discipline records, payment data, logs, and analytics).

Core principles apply throughout: purpose limitation and data minimisation, privacy-by-design, role-based access, defence-in-depth security, auditable processing, and proportionate disclosure. The SALPC remains the Responsible Party for all personal information processed—whether handled directly or by contracted service providers (“operators”). Subsequent sections (separate from this legal framing) will map the technical controls and operational playbooks that give effect to these principles.

The POPI Act (Protection of Personal Information Act) is South Africa's data privacy law, effective since July 1, 2020. It regulates how organisations collect, use, store, and share personal data to protect the right to privacy. The Act grants individual rights, sets conditions for data processing, and imposes penalties of up to R10 million or imprisonment for violations.

12.2. Key Aspects of POPIA Relevant to Database Management

12.2.1. Lawful Processing and Accountability

Organizations (referred to as “responsible parties”) must ensure that personal data in their databases is processed lawfully, fairly, and transparently, and only for specific, explicitly defined purposes related to their functions (Government Gazette, 2013)⁵. They are accountable for compliance with all POPIA conditions and must implement policies and procedures accordingly.

12.2.2. Conditions for Lawful Processing

POPIA outlines eight conditions that govern data processing, including:

Accountability: Responsible parties must comply with POPIA provisions and take responsibility for personal data processing

Processing limitation: Data must be collected and processed only when justified by consent or other lawful grounds

Purpose specification: Data must be collected for a clear, lawful purpose and not used beyond that without further consent

Information quality: Data must be accurate, complete, and kept up to date to ensure database integrity

Openness: Data subjects must be informed about the collection and use of their data

Security safeguards: Reasonable technical and organizational measures must protect personal information against loss, unauthorized access, or damage

Data subject participation: Individuals have rights to access, correct, or delete their personal data held in databases.

12.2.3. Role of the Information Officer

Each organization must appoint an Information Officer responsible for ensuring POPIA compliance, managing data protection policies, and liaising with the Information Regulator.

12.2.4. Data Breach Notification

In the event of unauthorized access or data breaches, organizations must notify affected data subjects and the Information Regulator promptly, detailing the breach's consequences and mitigation steps (Termly, 2024).

12.2.5. Data Transfers

POPIA restricts transferring personal data outside South Africa unless the recipient country has adequate data protection laws or the data subject consents.

12.3. POPIA Compliance Framework

The Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (POPIA) sets conditions for lawful processing of personal information in South Africa. In short: process lawfully for a defined purpose, collect the minimum necessary, keep information accurate and secure, be transparent, enable data-subject rights, retain only as long as permitted, and protect cross-border flows.

The Council will be the Responsible Party for all personal information processed in the Register and supporting systems. POPIA therefore shapes what the database must enable by design—purpose tagging and minimal capture, role-based access, auditability, retention controls, secure disclosure of limited Public Register fields, and oversight of any third-party Operators (e.g., hosting, payments). The points below set out the requirements to be met in the system and associated policies; detailed operating procedures will be developed during implementation.

12.3.1. Roles and Accountability

Responsible Party: SALPC (the Council). Ultimate accountability sits with the Council's Information Officer (IO) and formally designated Deputy Information Officers.

Operators: Any third parties processing personal information on SALPC's behalf (e.g., hosting, payments, identity verification, bulk messaging). Every operator must be governed by a written operator agreement that sets security standards, sub-processor controls, audit rights, breach duties, and data-return/erasure on exit.

12.3.2. Lawful Basis and Purpose Limitation

Processing must be lawful, minimal, and for specified purposes directly linked to the SALPC's statutory mandate (e.g., registration, accreditation level/title, renewals, CPD recognition, complaints/discipline, publication of limited Register entries). Where the mandate provides the legal basis, consent is not required; where the mandate does not cover a use (e.g., optional newsletters), obtain specific, informed consent or do not process.

12.3.3. Special Personal Information and Children

If processing special categories (e.g., health/disability information relevant to practice in Deaf language services; biometrics for identity verification) or information about children (e.g., student applicants), apply POPIA's additional requirements and safeguards: explicit lawful ground, strict minimisation, compartmentalised access, stronger encryption/key management, and shorter retention.

12.3.4. Openness and Transparency

Publish clear privacy notices at the point of data collection (online and paper), a PAIA Manual, and a Public Register Disclosure Policy that lists exactly what fields are publicly visible and why. Provide channel(s) for data-subject queries and complaints, and log all disclosures.

12.3.5. Data-subject Rights

Provide accessible processes to access, correct, object to certain processing, and request deletion where retention is no longer authorised. Responses must be tracked, time-bound, and auditable. Where requests are refused (e.g., statutory retention), communicate the legal ground and the right to complain to the Information Regulator.

12.3.6. Information Quality

Adopt controls to keep records accurate, complete, and up to date: structured onboarding, validated fields, evidence checklists, periodic recertification for registrants, and administrator review workflows. Record provenance (who supplied/verified what, and when).

12.3.7. Security Safeguards

Implement appropriate technical and organisational measures proportional to risk: role-based access, MFA, least privilege, segregation of duties, encryption in transit/at rest, secure key management, patching, monitoring, tamper-evident audit trails, secure SDLC, and supplier security assurance. (The detailed control set appears later in this chapter.)

12.3.8. Retention and Disposal

Define a records retention schedule by record type (applications, registration records, CPD, finance, complaints, sanctions) with legal bases and time limits. Enforce automated triggers for

archival and secure destruction (or anonymisation) when retention expires. Prevent use of production PII in development/test; apply masking where necessary.

12.3.9. Cross-border Processing and Cloud

If any processing/storage occurs outside South Africa (or via cloud regions with cross-border replication), ensure compliance with POPIA section 72: adequacy of protection, binding agreements with operators and any sub-processors, or explicit, informed consent where appropriate. Maintain a data-location register and disclose locations in privacy notices.

12.3.10. Prior Authorisation and Impact Assessments

For high-risk processing (e.g., unique identifiers processed for a purpose unrelated to their collection, large-scale profiling, or new biometric uses), conduct a Privacy Impact Assessment and determine whether prior authorisation is required. Bake “privacy by design” checkpoints into project governance.

12.3.11. Breach Response and Notification

Maintain an incident response plan: detection, containment, forensics, legal assessment, and notification. POPIA requires notification to the Information Regulator and affected data subjects as soon as reasonably possible after becoming aware of a compromise. Keep approved templates, contact lists, and an evidence log; test this plan annually.

12.3.12. Training, Monitoring and Assurance

Run mandatory POPIA and security training for all staff and contractors; include role-specific modules for administrators and reviewers. Track completion. Schedule periodic audits, access recertification, and metrics (e.g., time to close access on leavers, failed-login anomalies, patch latency). Report to the Council and Audit/Risk Committee.

12.3.13. Public Register Minimisation

Publish only what is necessary for verification (e.g., name, registration number, accreditation level/title, status, languages, and broad location). Use rate-limiting/anti-scraping, a contact-relay (so personal emails aren’t exposed), and a documented process for redaction where safety or protection orders apply.

12.3.14. Implications for Database Management

- Design databases to minimize data collection to what is necessary and ensure clear documentation of data processing purposes.
- Implement strict access controls, encryption, and audit trails to safeguard personal information.
- Regularly update and verify data quality to maintain accuracy and completeness.
- **Maintain transparency with data subjects** through privacy notices and mechanisms for data access or correction.
- **Establish incident response plans** for timely breach detection and notification.
- Train staff and appoint a dedicated Information Officer to oversee compliance efforts.

By integrating these POPIA requirements into database management practices, South African organizations can protect personal information, build trust with data subjects, and avoid legal penalties. (michalsons, 2025); (Government Gazette, 2013).

12.4. Secure Database Platform Selection

The SALPC Register requires a secure, ACID-compliant relational data platform that supports strong access control, encryption, auditable processing, and high availability across on-premises or cloud deployments. Several mature platforms meet these needs (for example Microsoft SQL Server, PostgreSQL, and MySQL/MariaDB, as well as managed variants such as Azure SQL Database or AWS RDS). The final platform will be confirmed through open procurement; the recommendation below reflects current fit to requirements and local support maturity.

Microsoft SQL Server is a relational database management system (RDBMS) designed to store, retrieve, and manage structured data. It supports transactional processing, business intelligence, and analytics across on-premises and cloud environments. SQL Server is widely used for enterprise applications, web platforms, and data warehousing. Microsoft SQL Server is the proposed platform for data storage, manipulation, and management on this project (including managed offerings such as Azure SQL Database, where appropriate).

In today's digital landscape, safeguarding information is not just a technical requirement—it's a business imperative. This section outlines a robust web-based solution powered by SQL Server, designed with comprehensive security measures to protect data from external threats, internal errors, and system failures. By integrating layered defences across authentication, encryption, auditing, and disaster recovery, the solution ensures data integrity, confidentiality, and availability. These protections are aligned with industry best practices and regulatory standards, providing stakeholders with confidence in the system's resilience and trustworthiness.

In designing a secure web-based solution on the selected platform (illustrated here with SQL Server), it is essential to recognize and mitigate a wide spectrum of threats that could compromise data integrity, confidentiality, and availability. These threats include external attacks such as SQL injection, brute-force login attempts, and ransomware payloads; internal risks like unauthorized data updates, excessive user privileges, and misconfigured access controls; and system-level failures including hardware faults, database corruption, and unpatched vulnerabilities. Additionally, risks such as data exfiltration, insecure network exposure, and weak authentication mechanisms must be addressed through layered security practices. The approach described here outlines a defence-in-depth strategy that combines encryption, access control, auditing, and disaster recovery to ensure robust protection against known threat vectors.

12.4.1. Options and recommendation.

Subject to procurement, SQL Server is recommended on the basis of mature, built-in controls relevant to a regulator (e.g., Transparent Data Encryption, Always Encrypted, Row-Level Security, native auditing, and high-availability features, with strong AD/Azure AD integration) and broad local skills/support. Where licensing, neutrality, or existing enterprise standards favour PostgreSQL or managed Postgres, an equivalent control set can be achieved (e.g., RLS,

column/field-level encryption, external key-vault integration, managed HA), and should be evaluated on equal footing during procurement.

12.4.2. Network Security

To ensure secure communication between the web application and the SQL Server database, the solution employs SSL/TLS encryption—commonly referred to as SSL. This protocol protects data in transit from interception, tampering, and man-in-the-middle attacks. SSL/TLS certificates can be purchased or obtained from trusted providers such as Cloudflare, DigiCert, Sectigo, GeoTrust, or GoDaddy, which offers fast, auto-renewing certificates that simplify deployment and reduce administrative overhead. By integrating certificate-based encryption with strong authentication and access controls, the system ensures that sensitive information remains protected across all layers of the architecture.

12.4.3. Server Security

To ensure the security and reliability of the server tier (hosting the web application and, during early phases, its database), the environment must be safeguarded using the following technologies and controls:

Firewall: A firewall is a network/host security control that monitors and controls traffic based on predefined rules. Use a deny-by-default posture on inbound rules, restrict egress to what the application requires, place servers in segmented subnets, expose only necessary ports, and log/review dropped/accepted traffic.

Anti-virus: Anti-virus software detects, prevents, and removes malicious code. Modern tooling should also address ransomware and suspicious behaviours (not just signature-based threats) and report centrally for incident response.

Anti-malware: Broader protection against spyware, ransomware, rootkits, and zero-day exploits using behavioural and heuristic analysis. In practice, this capability is typically delivered as part of a unified endpoint protection/EDR suite.

Patch Management: Patch management is the systematic process of identifying, acquiring, testing, and deploying security and functionality updates for operating systems, applications, and drivers. Define SLA windows for critical patches, schedule maintenance windows, and verify compliance regularly.

Configuration hardening: Build from hardened images/baselines (e.g., CIS), remove unnecessary services/packages, enforce secure defaults, disable legacy protocols/ciphers, and enable Secure Boot. Prefer immutable or template-driven builds so compromised hosts can be rebuilt cleanly.

Privileged access controls: Enforce MFA for administrators, avoid shared local admin accounts, use Just-in-Time elevation and Privileged Access Management (PAM) with break-glass procedures. Apply segregation of duties so no single person can deploy code, alter DB schema, and manage backups.

Secrets management: Store connection strings, keys, and credentials in a secrets vault (not in code or flat files). Rotate secrets on a defined cadence and on personnel changes; audit all access.

Environment segregation: Strictly separate dev/test/uat/prod. Do not use live personal data in non- production; use masked or synthetic datasets. Block lateral (east–west) traffic between environments.

Vulnerability management: Run continuous vulnerability scanning (OS, containers, language runtimes / dependencies) and periodic penetration tests. Track findings to closure with risk-based SLAs.

Logging & monitoring: Forward OS, application, and security logs to a central SIEM with time-synchronised hosts (NTP). Alert on failed-login spikes, privilege escalations, unexpected outbound connections, process anomalies, and file-integrity changes.

Disk encryption: Encrypt server volumes (e.g., full-disk encryption) and protect keys in a hardware-backed key vault/HSM. Pair with database-level encryption controls described elsewhere.

Backup & recovery (host level): Back up system states, configurations, and golden images separately from database backups. Test restore and rebuild procedures regularly to meet defined RTO/RPO targets.

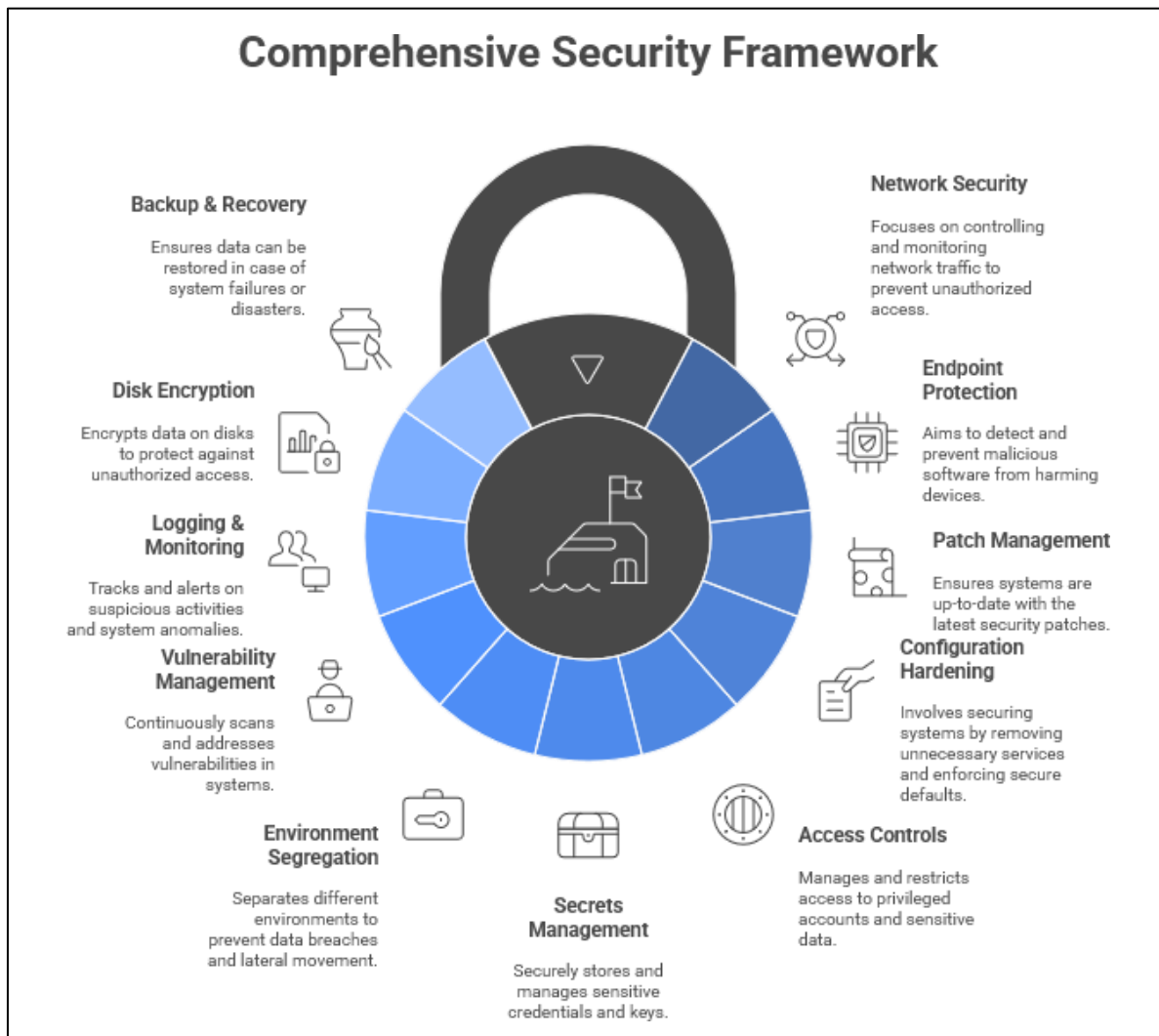


Figure 4: A comprehensive security framework.

12.4.4. 12.4.4 Access Control and Auditing (Application security)

Access control comprises the policies, procedures, and technologies that determine who may perform which actions on systems, data, and facilities. Effective access control safeguards confidentiality, integrity, and availability.

12.4.5. 12.4.5 Access Control Models

- Role-Based Access Control (RBAC): permissions are assigned to defined job roles (e.g., Registrar, Reviewer, Finance).
- Discretionary Access Control (DAC): the resource owner grants or revokes access.
- Mandatory Access Control (MAC): centrally enforced policies based on classifications govern access.
- Attribute-Based Access Control (ABAC): decisions consider attributes of the user, resource, and context (e.g., role + location + time).

Core practices

- Least privilege: grant only the minimum access necessary for assigned duties.
- Multi-factor authentication (MFA): require MFA for administrative accounts and sensitive functions.
- Segregation of duties: separate initiation, approval, and execution of high-risk actions.
- Joiner–Mover–Leaver (JML): provision, adjust, and revoke access promptly as personnel join, change roles, or depart.
- Periodic recertification: review inactive accounts and excessive permissions on a fixed schedule; remove or reduce as appropriate.
- Auditability: log access grants, changes, and privileged activity to a central system for monitoring and compliance.

12.4.6. 12.4.6 Data Encryption

Data encryption is the process of converting readable data (plaintext) into an unreadable format (ciphertext) using cryptographic algorithms. This ensures that only authorized parties with the correct decryption key can access the original information. It's a cornerstone of modern cybersecurity, protecting sensitive data from unauthorized access, tampering, and breaches.

Recommendations for data encryption:

- **When Data is Stored (At Rest):** Encrypts stored data—files, databases, backups.
- BitLocker for disk encryption,
- Transparent Data Encryption (TDE) for SQL Server.
- **When Data is Sent (In Transit):** Secures data moving across networks.
- TLS/SSL for HTTPS,
- VPN tunnels.
- **When Data is Processed (In Use):** Emerging techniques like confidential computing encrypt data even during processing.
- Example: Intel SGX or AMD SEV for memory-level protection.

12.4.7. 12.4.7 Backup and Recovery

SQL Server backups are essential for data protection, disaster recovery, and operational continuity. A robust backup strategy ensures you can recover from hardware failures, accidental deletions, or corruption.

SQL Server support a number of backup and recovery strategies:

- **Full Backup** – Captures the entire database. Foundation for all other backup types.
- **Differential Backup** – Captures changes since the last full backup. Faster and smaller than full.
- **Transaction Log Backup** – Captures all transactions since the last log backup. Enables point-in-time recovery.
- **Copy-Only Backup** – Independent backup that doesn't affect the backup chain. Useful for ad hoc.
- **File/Filegroup Backup** – Backs up specific files or filegroups. Ideal for large databases.

Backup operations can be automated and configured to execute at defined intervals, ensuring consistent data protection. For enhanced resilience and security, implementing offsite backups provides an additional safeguard against local system failures or data loss.

12.5. Conclusion

The SALPC's Protection of Information framework rests on a simple premise: the Register's legitimacy depends on lawful, minimal, and secure handling of personal information throughout its lifecycle. This chapter has set out the principles (POPIA compliance, purpose limitation, data minimisation), the governance expectations (roles, accountability, transparency, data-subject rights), and the technical baselines (secure platform choice, network and server hardening, access control, encryption, and recoverability).

Three guiding principles anchor the approach:

Compliance by design. POPIA requirements are treated as product requirements for the Register and Database—driving purpose tagging, limited public disclosure, role-based access, auditability, retention and disposal controls, and oversight of Operators.

Defence in depth. No single control is sufficient. A secure network posture, hardened servers, strong authentication and least privilege, encryption at rest and in transit, tamper-evident logs, and a tested backup/restore regime together safeguard confidentiality, integrity, and availability.

Proportionate transparency. The Public Register exposes only what is necessary for verification, with safeguards (rate-limiting, contact relay, redaction process) to balance openness and privacy.

The detail of how these controls are operated will be finalised during implementation. Immediate next steps include: confirming platform selection through procurement; approving the Public Register Disclosure Policy and Records Retention Schedule; executing Operator agreements; setting RPO/RTO targets and testing restores; and instituting training, monitoring, and periodic recertification. With these in place, the Council can progress to build and commissioning confident that the Register will be both usable and trusted—meeting statutory duties while protecting the people whose information it stewards.

13. Chapter 13 User Data Management

13.1. Introduction

Registrant Data Management covers the processes and technologies used to collect, validate, store, secure, update, and govern data about practitioners (registrants), administrators/registrars, institutional partners (e.g., universities, CPD providers), and employers/verifiers. The SALPC Register is the authoritative system of record. All other systems (portals, reporting, integrations) consume or contribute data under the controls set out here and in Chapter 12 (Protection of Information).

This chapter focuses on data quality, provenance, and operational efficiency. It distinguishes Public Register fields (minimal data released for verification) from non-public data (applications, identity/qualification evidence, CPD, complaints/discipline, payments, logs). UI/UX design principles are covered in Chapter 15; only data-management implications of self-service are addressed here.

13.1.1. System of record and identifiers

- **Unique Registrant ID (RID):** Every registrant is assigned an RID; it is the primary key for all records and events
- **External identifiers:** South African ID/passport numbers and professional numbers from other bodies may be stored for verification but are **never exposed** on the Public Register
- **De-duplication:** New applications are screened using deterministic and fuzzy matching (e.g., SA ID/passport + name + date of birth + contact details). Potential duplicates trigger manual review with audit notes.

13.1.2. Public vs non-public fields

- **Public Register:** Only necessary verification fields (e.g., name, RID, accreditation level/title, status, languages, broad location)
- **Change control:** Any edits to public fields route through an **approval workflow** with reason codes and audit logs. Non-public fields follow role-based workflows.

13.2. Core Components

13.2.1. Data Collection

Primary channels for authoritative capture:

- **Structured portal forms** (registrant and admin portals) with validation, help text, and multilingual labels.
- **Vetted APIs** for institutional partners (e.g., universities submitting qualification confirmations; CPD providers submitting completions), using scoped tokens and rate limiting.

Exception/adjacent channels (subject to verification before ingestion):

- **Editable PDF forms** or **mobile forms** for assisted onboarding where needed, with operator verification on import.
- **Surveys** only for research/engagement—not for authoritative Register data.
- **Third-party systems** may integrate where operator agreements and data-sharing scopes are in place (see 13.6).

13.2.2. 13.2.2 Data Integrity

Data integrity means information remains **accurate, consistent, and reliable** throughout its lifecycle. A layered approach combines technical safeguards, process discipline, and clear workflows.

1. **Accurate capture**
 - **Validation at entry:** format/range/required checks on client and server.
 - **Controlled inputs:** dropdowns, radio buttons, autocomplete, language pickers.
 - **Real-time feedback:** immediate, understandable error prompts.
2. **Consistency across systems**
 - **Centralised data model:** defined schemas, field types, constraints, and relationships.
 - **Normalisation & referential integrity:** avoid duplication; keep linked records in sync.
 - **Versioning & provenance:** store who supplied/verified each field, timestamps, evidence links; allow rollback where appropriate.
3. **Secure and authorised access**
 - **RBAC** aligned to SALPC roles (registrar, reviewer, finance, complaints, auditor, IT ops).
 - **Audit trails:** who/what/when/why for all create/update/delete events; tamper-evident.
 - **Encryption:** TLS for all connections; encryption at rest for databases and backups; hashed passwords.
4. **Approval and verification workflows**
 - Multi-step approvals for risk-sensitive changes (e.g., accreditation level/title, status)
 - Change requests from registrants route to admin review; decisions recorded with reason codes
 - Notifications/escalations for pending or overdue items.
5. **Data hygiene and maintenance**
 - Duplicate detection (unique constraints + fuzzy match queues)
 - Periodic reviews of key fields and evidence (linked to renewal/CPD cycles)
 - Archiving & retention per Chapter 12; non-active records move to performance-friendly stores without breaking auditability.

13.2.3. Update and Verification Cycles

Update cycles keep stored information current; verification cycles confirm accuracy and compliance.

Drivers of updates

- **Registrant-initiated:** profile/contact changes, scope updates, name changes
- **System-triggered:** status changes (e.g., renewal due/overdue), workflow transitions, time-based recalculations
- **External integrations:** qualification verifications, CPD completions, payment confirmations
- **Administrative:** bulk corrections, policy changes, sanctions updates.

Verification scenarios

- **Periodic reviews:** typically annual (with renewal) or aligned to CPD cycles
- **Event-based:** after onboarding, before publication of status/title changes, prior to audits
- **Automated checks:** scripts/workflows flag anomalies (e.g., mismatched IDs, missing evidence, expiry dates)
- **Manual spot checks:** performed by data stewards/registrars with sampling plans.

Service levels

Set and monitor SLAs for update/verification turnaround (e.g., 5 business days for routine profile changes; 10 for scope/title updates), with visibility in the admin dashboard and escalation when breached.

13.2.4. User Self-Service Portals and Web Interfaces

Self-service is central to data quality and efficiency: registrants update details, upload evidence, track requests, and manage renewals; employers verify status via a public search or verification API. Interfaces must be multilingual, accessible (screen-reader labels, clear focus order, plain-language prompts), and consistent across devices. Design patterns are documented in Chapter 15 (UI/UX).

13.2.5. Integrity and Oversight in Self-Service

- Validation and guidance reduce entry errors.
- Embedded workflows route risk-sensitive changes for approval before they affect public outputs.
- Clear state and feedback (received, in review, approved/declined with reason) build trust.

13.2.6. Integrations and Data Sharing (APIs)

Where third-party systems participate (e.g., universities, CPD providers, employers), integration follows these rules:

- **Verification API:** exposes only Public Register fields; requires API keys or OAuth scopes; rate-limited; logs all lookups; no bulk PII exports.
- **Data-submission APIs:** partners submit structured evidence/events under operator agreements (Chapter 12), with schema validation and replay-safe design.
- **Data location & operators:** any external processing/storage must adhere to POPIA and the data- location register.

13.2.7. Data Quality Monitoring (KPIs)

Track a small set of KPIs and review them monthly:

- **Profile completeness rate** (mandatory fields present).
- **Duplicate rate** (new applications flagged/confirmed as duplicates).
- Average verification turnaround (by change type).
- **CPD currency** (% of registrants with up-to-date CPD/attestations).
- **Public Register accuracy** (sampled error rate on published fields).

13.3. Conclusion

Registrant data is the Register's most critical asset. This chapter has defined how that data is collected, validated, stored, updated, shared, and retired within a single authoritative system of record. The approach distinguishes minimal Public Register fields from non-public information, applies structured capture channels (portal and vetted APIs) with clear provenance and versioning, and embeds approvals and verification cycles aligned to renewal and CPD. Access is governed through role-based controls and auditable workflows; quality is maintained through duplicate detection, periodic reviews, and a small set of operational KPIs.

The result is a management model that supports both accuracy (validated inputs, provenance, approvals) and efficiency (self-service, automation, integrations), while remaining aligned to Chapter 12's POPIA requirements for purpose limitation, minimised disclosure, retention, and secure disposal. External data sharing is enabled via a scoped, rate-limited verification API that exposes only public fields; bulk exports of personal information are expressly excluded.

Section D

System Design Considerations

14. Chapter 14 Database Structure

Effective database design, population, and management are crucial for data integrity, system performance, and scalability. Best practices include structured design principles, efficient data entry, and proactive maintenance.

Populating a database through questionnaires and interviews involves a structured process that ensures data quality, consistency, and usability for future analysis.

14.1. Key Design Considerations

The following design considerations are proposed to guide the configuration and implementation of the SALPC register and its enabling system. They synthesise statutory requirements with pragmatic operational needs and are intended to be technology-agnostic, vendor-neutral, and proportionate to the Council's mandate and resources.

Items marked as regulatory reflect binding provisions; all other elements are recommendations to be tested with stakeholders and confirmed through detailed design and procurement. The list is not exhaustive and should be read as a baseline for a minimum viable system, to be iterated as the Council's functions mature.

1. **Comprehensive practitioner profiles:** Each entry should capture essential information such as name, contact details, languages of proficiency, category of practice (e.g., translator, interpreter), level of qualification, registration status with the Language Practitioners' Council, and areas of specialization (legal, medical, technical, etc.).
2. **Multilingual support:** Given South Africa's linguistic diversity, the database interface and data fields should support multiple languages, including official and recognized unofficial languages to ensure accessibility and inclusivity.
3. **Standardized classification:** The database will use the categories and levels as defined by the Language Practitioners' Council Act to systematically classify practitioners
4. **Search and filter functions:** The user interface will include search and filter functions which will enable users to customise search fields to meet their requirements.
5. **Data quality and verification:** Incorporate mechanisms for verifying qualifications and registration, ensuring the database maintains up-to-date and accurate records, in line with the Council's mandate to scrutinize particulars of registrants
6. **Privacy and security:** Protect personal data in compliance with South African data protection laws.
7. **Integration with National Language Services:** The database should support the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture's mandate to promote and develop all official languages by facilitating access to qualified language practitioners.

14.2. Defining the System

In this report, "the system" refers to the software application layer that sits between the raw database and the users of the platform. It provides the logic, rules, and functionality that determine how users interact with the data and how the data responds to various inputs, tasks, and workflows.

Essentially, the system is the brain that tells the database what to do and how to do it. Unlike the database, which passively stores and organises information, the system is active — it governs how that information is accessed, processed, validated, updated, and presented.

14.3. Key Functions of the System

The system performs a range of essential functions that make the database usable, secure, and aligned with institutional needs. These functions include:

1. User Management

- a) Handles user registration, login, authentication, and access rights.
- b) Differentiates between roles: practitioners, administrators, employers, and institutional partners.
- c) Enforces permissions (e.g. a practitioner can edit their profile but not another's).

2. Workflow and process automation

- a) Directs how certain actions occur: e.g., when a new user registers, the system sends an email, places the record in a verification queue, and flags the admin dashboard.
- b) Manages approval processes (e.g. for accreditations or CPD submissions).
- c) Automates repetitive tasks like sending reminders for CPD renewals.

3. Data validation and error checking

- a) Enforces rules on how data is entered (e.g. date fields must contain valid dates)
- b) Flags incomplete, inconsistent, or duplicate entries
- c) Prevents users from bypassing critical steps in registration or verification
- d) System triggers six monthly updates to ensure the information is up to date.

4. Reporting and analytics

- a) Allows administrators to generate reports on:
 - i. Total number of practitioners by language or region
 - ii. Average income
 - iii. Sources of income
 - iv. Accreditation status
 - v. CPD participation rates
 - vi. Supply-demand gaps in specific language services.
- b) Supports policy, planning, and operational decision-making through custom queries and visual dashboards.

5. Integration and Interoperability

- a) Enables the system to interact with external platforms:
 - i. Import training records from partner institutions
 - ii. Verify qualifications against national registers
 - iii. Push notifications through messaging services
 - iv. Integrate with Human Language Technologies (HLT) or CRM systems.

14.4. System and Platform Design

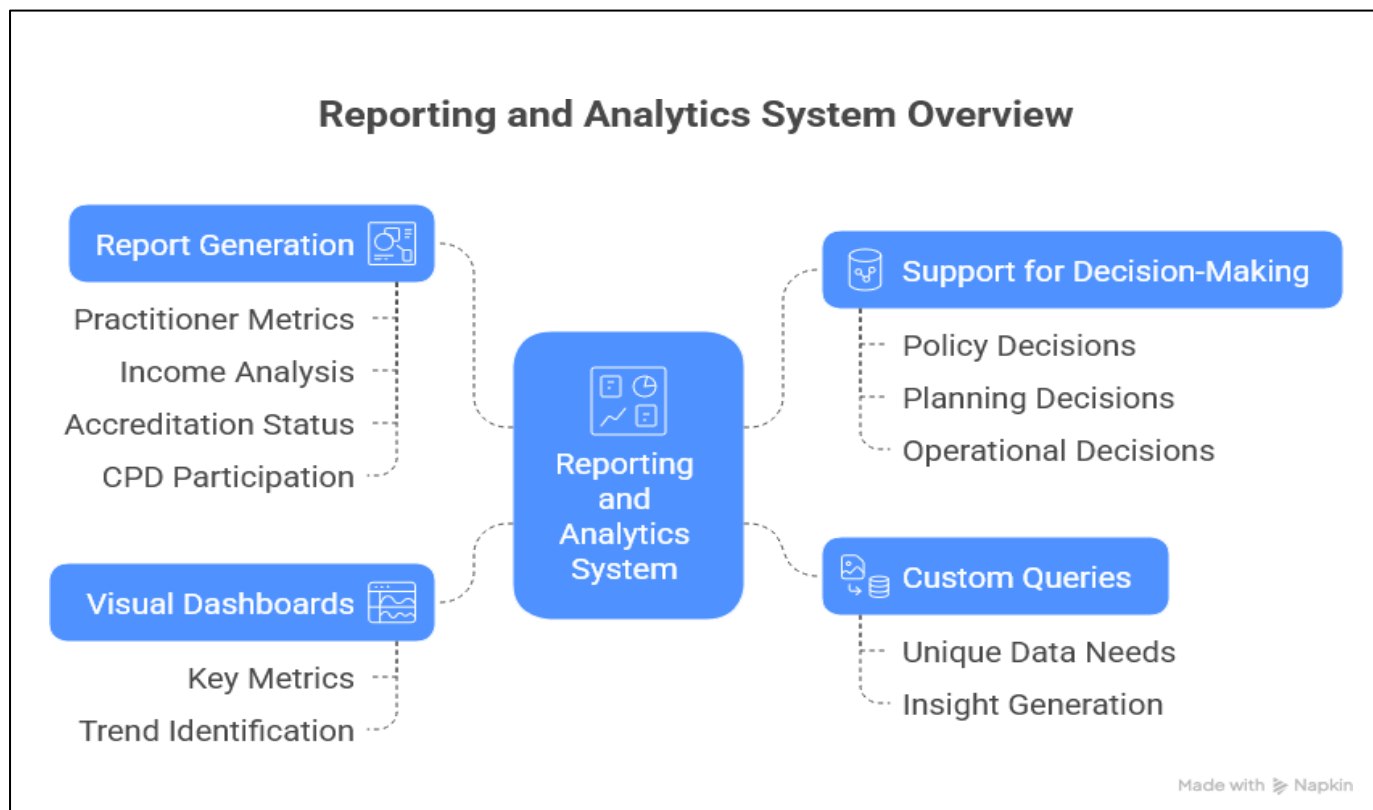


Figure 5: Key functions of the system.

For designing and managing a comprehensive database of language practitioners in South Africa, several database tools and related digital language resource platforms can be considered, based on current developments and resources available in the country:

14.4.1. SADiLaR Server and Tools

The South African Centre for Digital Language Resources (SADiLaR) provides a robust infrastructure for managing digital language resources, including multilingual linguistic terminology and wordnets for South African languages. Its server supports stable hosting and continuous technical support, which can be leveraged for database management and language resource integration.

SADiLaR also offers open-source Python packages and APIs for language processing, which could be integrated for advanced search and categorization features in the database. (SADiLaR, 2025), (UNISA, 2025)

It was, however, determined in discussions with SADiLaR that its technology would not support the language practitioner database, but that the two systems would complement each other.

14.4.2. Professional Association Platforms

Organizations such as the South African Translators' Institute (SATI) and South African Freelancers Association (SAFREA) maintain membership databases and could provide insights or collaboration opportunities for database standards, user authentication, and professional accreditation tracking.

14.4.3. Open-source and Customisable Frameworks

Open-source frameworks such as NativeScript and Angular (used in SADiLaR's dictionary app) make it possible to develop mobile-friendly web applications which can support multilingual interfaces and offline functionality. This is useful for practitioner databases accessible on multiple platforms. (NWU, 2025)

Open-source tools such as Lanfrica enable the cataloguing of African language resources with participatory data contribution and language-focused filtering. Functions include allowing community input and comprehensive metadata tagging. (Lanfrica, 2025)

14.4.4. Database Management Systems (DBMS)

Relational databases such as MySQL, PostgreSQL, Amazon RDS, and Google Cloud SQL are designed and proven to store structured data and support complex queries by language, qualification, registration, and specialisation. For flexible schemas or varied data formats, NoSQL options like MongoDB may work well, especially for integrating linguistic resources or practitioner portfolios.

14.4.5. Language Technology and NLP Tools

Incorporation of natural language processing (NLP) models like InkubaLM (a local AI model supporting African languages) can enhance search capabilities, automatic language identification, and data validation within the database. (Mzekandaba, 2024)

Text-to-speech and speech recognition tools (e.g. Qfrenzy Voices) can improve accessibility and user interaction, especially for practitioners and users with disabilities. (Qfrenzy, 2025)

Table 6: Selection of database tools.

Tool/Platform	Purpose/Use Case	Notes
SADiLaR Server & Tools	Hosting language resources, terminology databases	Stable, supported by DSTI, supports multilingual data
NativeScript & Angular	Cross-platform app development	Enables mobile and web access with offline mode
Lanfrica	Cataloguing African language resources	Participatory, language-focused resource catalogue
Relational DBMS (MySQL, PostgreSQL)	Structured data storage and querying	Suitable for practitioner profiles and classifications
NoSQL DBMS (MongoDB)	Flexible schema for diverse data types	Useful for unstructured or semi-structured data
InkubaLM NLP Model	Language identification, enhanced search	Supports African languages, improves data handling
Text-to-Speech Software (Qfrenzy Voices)	Accessibility and user interaction	Supports local languages and accents
SATI Membership Systems	Professional accreditation and membership management	Potential integration for verification and updates

14.4.6. Modularity

A modular system should be built or selected over a monolithic platform. Modular systems are made up of discrete, interconnected components that can be added, upgraded, or replaced without overhauling the entire infrastructure.

Examples of system modules include:

- Registration and verification module
- CPD tracker
- Search and matchmaking engine
- Notifications engine
- Analytics and reporting dashboard
- Api integration layer

This modularity is essential for futureproofing the system and allowing it to adapt to new needs or technologies without becoming obsolete.

14.4.7. Workflow Example: From Registration to Verification

To illustrate how an automated system would function, consider the following scenario:

1. A new practitioner completes a registration form on the user interface.
2. The system receives the information, stores it in the appropriate tables in the database, and initiates a verification process.
3. The system flags the administrator dashboard, prompting a review of the uploaded documentation.

4. Once verified, the system updates the user's status and sends an email notification.
5. The practitioner's profile is now visible to approved clients or institutions.
6. Prompts sent to practitioner every six months to verify data.
7. Telephonic follow up if no response received in eight months.

14.5. Security, Performance, and Compliance

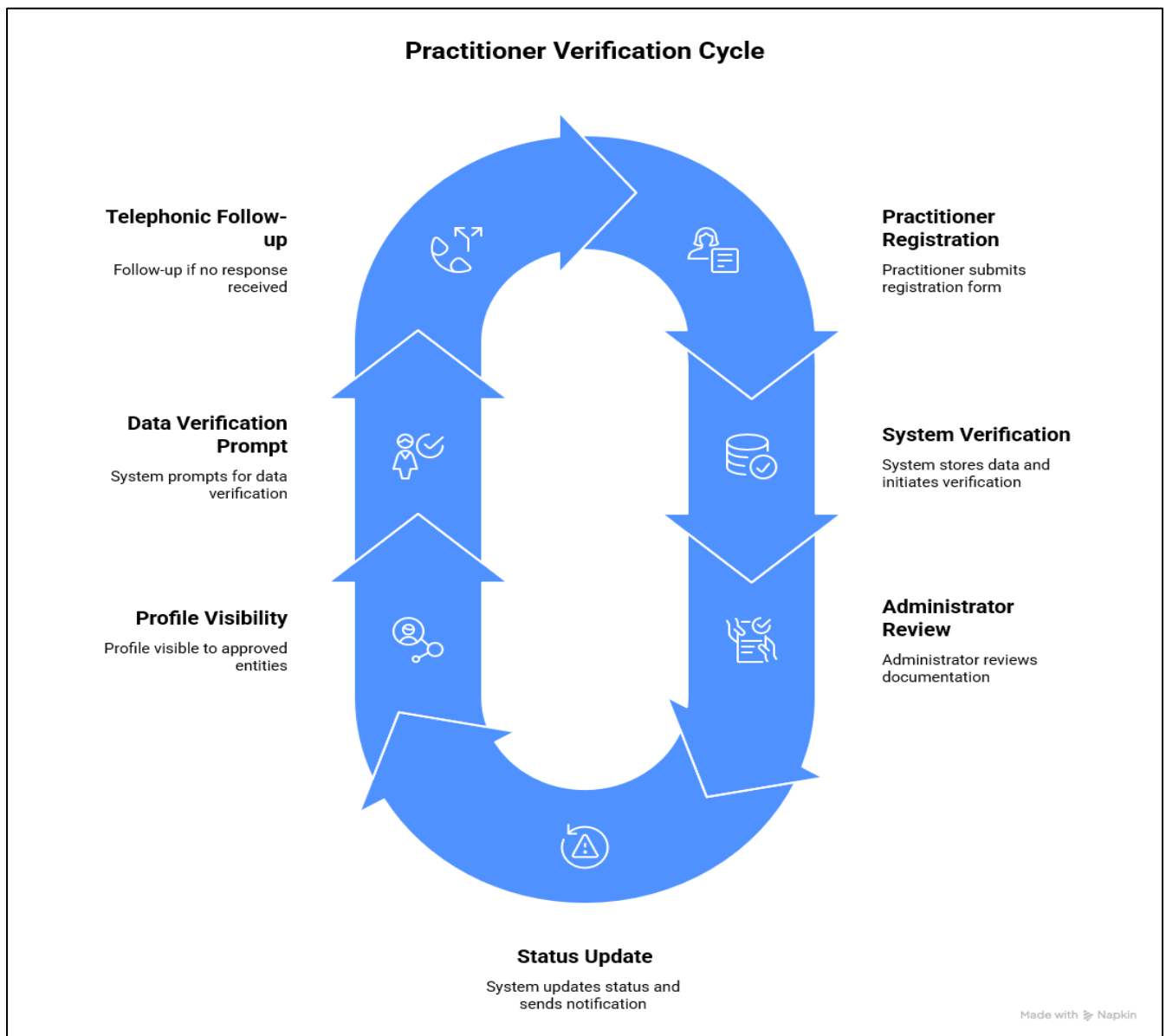


Figure 6: Practitioner verification cycle.

The system is also responsible for enforcing security protocols and compliance standards:

- Password encryption and secure login mechanisms

- Audit trails for all administrative actions
- Role-based access control (RBAC)
- Real-time system monitoring and logging
- Ensuring compliance with POPIA and related legislation.

14.6. Conclusion

The system is the intelligent layer that gives life to the database. It transforms static information into usable knowledge, navigates complex workflows, enables real-time decision-making, and ensures accountability. It is both the rulebook and the referee of the platform, maintaining order, enabling functionality, and supporting strategic objectives.

In the next section, we turn to the user interface — the front-facing layer that users interact with directly, and which is powered invisibly by the database and the system beneath it.

15. Chapter 15 User Interface and Experience Design

The User Interface (UI) refers to the visible, interactive layer of the system that users engage with directly — whether via a web browser, mobile device, or other application. It is the access point through which users input information, retrieve data, perform tasks, and interact with the database and the system's functions.

The UI does not store or process information on its own; rather, it translates complex processes and data structures into simple, intuitive interactions. It is the part of the system that people "see" and "touch."

15.1. Importance of User Interface (UI) and User Experience (UX)

A User Interface (UI) is the part of a system that people interact with directly — the screens, forms, buttons, and navigation elements. It is the "face" of the database system. User Experience (UX) is broader — it's about the overall ease, efficiency, and satisfaction a person feels when using the system. Together, UI and UX determine whether the database will be adopted, used effectively, and trusted by the people it is intended to serve.

In practical terms, even the most powerful database with the most accurate information will fail to deliver its intended benefits if the interface is confusing, cumbersome, or unintuitive. Poor UI/UX leads to low adoption rates, higher training costs, data entry errors, and user frustration. A well-designed interface, by contrast, encourages consistent use, improves accuracy, and reduces the administrative burden.

In the context of the newly established Language Practitioners' Database, the UI is critical because:

Non-technical users — Many intended users (e.g., council staff, practitioners, administrators) will not be IT specialists. The interface must be approachable.

Data quality — Intuitive forms and well-structured workflows reduce the risk of incorrect or incomplete data entry.

Operational efficiency — A clean, logical UI reduces time spent navigating the system, freeing staff to focus on core tasks.

Trust and credibility — A professional, well-presented interface reflects institutional competence and helps build confidence among stakeholders.

As Connolly & Begg (2015) note in *Database Systems: A Practical Approach*, "the design of user interfaces is as critical to the success of an information system as the database design itself." In other words, the user sees the interface, not the schema — so the interface must make their job easy.

15.2. UI/UX Best Practices for Database Systems

Designing the user interface (UI) and user experience (UX) for a database system is not simply an aesthetic exercise—it is a direct determinant of system adoption, efficiency, and accuracy

of use. A well-designed interface ensures that users across skill levels can interact with the system effectively, retrieve data quickly, and execute operations with minimal cognitive load.

According to Connolly & Begg and Coronel & Morris, the key objective of UI/UX design in database systems is to align functionality with user needs, streamline workflows, and provide clarity in presenting complex information. Poorly designed interfaces increase the likelihood of data entry errors, user frustration, and ultimately project failure, even if the underlying database schema is technically sound.

The key components of UI/UX best practice are listed below, and will be discussed separately in the following sections of this chapter.

- User-Centred Design Principles and Role-Based Interfaces
- Navigation and Layout
- Data Entry Optimisation
- Feedback and System Status
- Visual Design and Readability
- Search and Retrieval Interfaces
- Responsiveness and Performance
- Security and Trust in the Interface
- Accessibility & Inclusion

15.3. User-Centred Design Principles and Role-Based Interfaces

An effective database interface starts with an evidence-based understanding of the people who will use it. The goal is not to make users adapt to the logic of the system, but to design the system so that it fits the mental models, workflows, and constraints of its users. This approach maximises adoption, reduces training overhead, and lowers the risk of costly errors. For the South African Language Practitioners' Database, the diversity of stakeholders — from individual practitioners to government administrators — makes this principle especially critical.

15.3.1. Identifying and Understanding User Groups

The first step is to clearly identify the distinct user groups the system will serve. These groups differ in their goals, skill levels, and access needs, requiring tailored interfaces that balance functionality and simplicity.

Core user categories include:

1. **Practitioner Portal** – For translators, interpreters, terminologists, editors, proofreaders, and related professionals, ranging from new graduates to experienced specialists. Their interface should prioritise self-service profile management, secure document submission, accreditation tracking, and access to job and CPD opportunities.
2. **Administrator Dashboard** – For authorised SALPC, PanSALB, and other oversight body staff responsible for vetting applications, maintaining data integrity, managing communications, and generating compliance and policy reports.
3. **Client/Employer Search Interface** – For organisations and individuals seeking language services, providing advanced search, filtering, verified credential access, and secure contact or project posting capabilities.

4. **Institutional Partner Access** – For universities, professional associations, and accredited training providers to upload verified data, validate CPD entries, and track graduate outcomes.

15.3.2. Task and Workflow Analysis

Design should be grounded in how each group actually works, not on assumptions. Observing users in their operational environment — documenting real steps, common bottlenecks, and workarounds — allows these insights to be translated into functional requirements. For example, if administrators frequently cross-reference multiple records to verify credentials, the dashboard can integrate side-by-side comparison tools rather than forcing repeated navigation.

15.3.3. Adaptive Interface Logic

While the database's core remains the same, role-based access control (RBAC) ensures that each user only sees tools and data relevant to their responsibilities. This improves usability, reduces cognitive load, and safeguards sensitive information. Adaptive logic can also progressively reveal more advanced features to users as their familiarity with the system grows.

15.3.4. Iterative Prototyping and Feedback

Prototyping should be part of the design process from the earliest stages. Low-fidelity wireframes can quickly test navigation flows, while interactive prototypes let users simulate real workflows. Feedback from these sessions drives incremental improvements, ensuring the final system aligns with both operational needs and user comfort.

15.3.5. Accessibility and Inclusivity

Accessibility is not a compliance box-tick — it is a design principle that benefits all users. The interface should follow recognised best practice guidelines, including:

Visual accessibility: High-contrast themes, colour-blind-safe palettes, scalable text.

Motor accessibility: Full keyboard navigation, logical tab orders, and sufficiently large interactive elements.

Screen reader compatibility: Accurate labelling of UI elements and logical reading order.

Clear language: Avoiding unnecessary jargon and providing plain-language instructions. This is further expanded in later sections.

15.4. Navigation and Layout

Navigation is the skeleton of a database interface. If it is poorly structured, even the most powerful features will feel cumbersome and inaccessible. The aim is to design navigation that is predictable, shallow in hierarchy, and consistent across the application. Users should always know where they are, how they got there, and how to return without feeling lost.

15.4.1. Menu Hierarchies

Menu hierarchies should be designed deliberately rather than grown organically over time. Best practice recommends starting from logical groupings of system objects and operations, then mapping these into a navigation tree or menu structure. This approach prevents “sprawl” and allows new users to quickly form a mental map of where features reside. Each tier in the hierarchy should serve a clear purpose — for example, a first-level menu grouping “Data Entry,” “Reports,” and “Administration,” with second-level menus containing related functions.

15.4.2. Consistent Placement of Navigation Elements

Users rely on predictable positioning to navigate quickly. Core navigation should be anchored in familiar locations, such as a persistent left-hand panel or a top horizontal navigation bar. Consistency reduces the learning curve and ensures that frequent users can navigate largely from memory rather than constantly reorienting themselves.

15.4.3. Clear and Descriptive Labelling

Labels should prioritise clarity over brevity, avoiding internal database jargon that only developers understand. A button labelled “Submit Record” is clearer than “Commit,” and “Tenant Performance Reports” is more descriptive than “Report Type B.” Descriptive labelling is particularly important in multi-role environments where the same term might mean different things to different user groups.

15.4.4. Logical Grouping of Functions

Functions that are commonly used together should be grouped together visually and logically. For example, all customer-related operations — from adding a new customer record to generating a customer report — should be located in the same menu or screen section. Logical grouping not only speeds up task completion but also reduces cognitive load by reducing the need for users to remember where disparate functions are located.

15.4.5. Orientation Aids

Orientation aids such as breadcrumb trails, highlighted active menu items, or contextual page headers help users understand their current location within the system. This is particularly important in multi-step processes where users may drill down several layers deep. Breadcrumbs also enable one-click navigation back to higher-level menus, reducing the frustration of having to “start over” from a main dashboard.

15.4.6. Layout Consistency and Visual Rhythm

Beyond navigation menus, the placement of interface elements within each screen should be consistent across the system. For example, filters should always be located in the same position, such as the top-left of a report view, while action buttons should consistently appear in a predictable order (e.g., “Save” before “Cancel”). A consistent visual rhythm helps users develop efficient habits and reduces the mental effort of scanning for controls.

15.5. Data Entry Optimisation

Data entry interfaces are often the most intensively used component of a database system, and they represent one of the highest risk areas for error. Even small inefficiencies can compound into significant productivity losses over time, while poor design can undermine data integrity. Optimising this area requires balancing speed, accuracy, and usability, with a clear understanding of how users actually perform their tasks.

15.5.1. Understanding the Workflow Before Designing the Form

Before building any form, it is essential to map out the exact sequence of steps users take when entering data. This should include understanding the source of the data (e.g., manual input from paper forms, importing from spreadsheets, real-time entry from interviews), the logical order in which it is captured, and any dependencies between fields. Designing forms to match the natural flow of work reduces unnecessary navigation and helps users maintain focus.

15.5.2. Input Controls for Error Prevention

One of the most effective ways to prevent errors is to replace free-text fields with structured input controls wherever possible. Dropdown menus, radio buttons, and checkboxes enforce controlled vocabularies and eliminate typographical mistakes. For example, if a database must record a project's status, a dropdown with fixed values such as "Pending," "In Progress," and "Completed" ensures data is consistent across records — something that would be impossible with free typing, where variants like "In-Progress" or "complete" can creep in.

15.5.3. Input Masks for Structured Data

Certain data types, such as phone numbers, postal codes, and ID numbers, benefit from input masks that enforce a consistent format as the user types. This prevents incomplete or misformatted entries and ensures that subsequent processing functions, such as automated lookups, work correctly. An input mask for a South African ID, for instance, can automatically structure the 13-digit number into the correct pattern while rejecting invalid formats in real time.

15.5.4. Auto-Complete and Predictive Entry

For fields with a large number of potential values — such as supplier names, product SKUs, or location codes — auto-complete and predictive text functions can drastically reduce keystrokes and speed up entry. These tools also minimise spelling inconsistencies, as users are more likely to select an existing database entry rather than type a variant. Predictive functions can adapt over time, offering the most likely suggestions based on previous usage patterns.

15.5.5. Field Validation and Real-Time Feedback

Validation rules should be applied to critical fields to ensure data is entered correctly before it is saved. Real-time validation — where errors are flagged immediately as the user moves away from a field — is generally preferable to post-submission error screens, which force the user to revisit and re-enter multiple fields. For example, an email address field might check for the "@" symbol and a valid domain structure, while a numerical field could restrict input to positive integers only.

15.5.6. Logical Tab Order and Flow

The tab order of fields should reflect the natural flow of data entry. If users frequently have to jump back and forth between unrelated fields, it slows them down and increases the likelihood of skipping important inputs. Thoughtful tab ordering also benefits accessibility by ensuring keyboard-only users can move through the form efficiently.

15.5.7. Reducing Cognitive Load with Progressive Disclosure

Not all users need to see every possible field all the time. Progressive disclosure — where additional fields or sections appear only when relevant — keeps forms uncluttered and prevents overwhelming the user. For example, a “Payment Method” field set to “Credit Card” might reveal card details fields, while selecting “Bank Transfer” would instead display account details.

15.5.8. Providing Context and Guidance Within the Form

Inline help text, placeholder examples, and context-sensitive tooltips can help users understand exactly what is expected for each field. This is particularly important in specialised databases where the meaning of certain inputs may not be obvious. For instance, a “Transaction Code” field might include a short explanation of acceptable formats or a link to a reference list.

15.6. Feedback and System Status

A well-designed database interface is not a silent partner — it communicates with the user at every step. Feedback serves two essential purposes: it reassures users that their actions are being processed correctly, and it guides them when something goes wrong. When designed effectively, these cues reduce uncertainty, build trust, and improve efficiency.

15.6.1. Immediate and Meaningful Acknowledgement

Every significant user action — whether saving a record, initiating a search, or running a report — should trigger a visible response from the system. This can take the form of a brief “Saved successfully” toast notification, a status icon change, or a progress indicator. The aim is to reassure the user that the system has registered their input and is actively processing it. For lengthy operations, such as data imports or report generation, providing a visible progress bar or percentage complete prevents the perception that the system has stalled.

15.6.2. Clear, Actionable Error Messages

Errors are inevitable, but frustration is not. Poorly written error messages — for example, “Invalid input” or “Database error 3241” — do little to help the user recover. Instead, messages should describe the problem in plain language and, where possible, suggest a remedy. For example:

“The date entered is not in the correct format. Please use DD/MM/YYYY.” This empowers the user to correct mistakes without needing technical support, reducing downtime and training costs.

15.6.3. Contextual Feedback Within the Workflow

Feedback does not always need to be disruptive or modal. Inline messages — such as a red outline on an incorrect field with a small note explaining why — allow users to address issues without losing their place in the form. Similarly, subtle success indicators (a green checkmark next to a completed field) can reinforce correct behaviour without breaking the workflow.

15.6.4. Undo and Recovery Options

Whenever feasible, the system should provide a way to undo recent changes or cancel pending actions. This is particularly critical for high-impact operations such as deleting records, approving transactions, or publishing updates to multiple users. Even if a true “undo” is not technically feasible, an intermediate confirmation step (“Are you sure you want to permanently delete this record?”) offers a safeguard against irreversible errors.

15.6.5. Status Visibility for System Processes

Beyond individual actions, users also need visibility into the system’s broader status. This includes knowing when the system is connected to the database, when data is synchronising, or when scheduled tasks are running in the background. A small but persistent status indicator — such as a sync icon in the toolbar — can prevent confusion when data appears “out of date” due to an unsynchronised state.

15.6.6. Building Trust Through Transparency

Feedback is also an opportunity to convey the system’s reliability and professionalism. Well-timed, informative status messages signal that the system is robust and well-managed. For example, during a temporary service disruption, an honest status alert (“Our servers are currently undergoing maintenance. Service will resume in approximately 15 minutes.”) preserves user trust far more effectively than leaving them to guess why operations have slowed.

15.7. Visual Design and Readability

The visual layer of a database interface is not merely decorative; it is a functional component of usability. Thoughtful design choices reduce cognitive load, make key information more discoverable, and guide the user’s eye through the workflow. When done well, visual design quietly supports the user’s objectives without drawing attention to itself.

15.7.1. Purposeful Use of Colour

Colour is a powerful visual signal — but its overuse can be as damaging as underuse. In database UI/UX, colour should serve a functional purpose:

- **Status indicators:** Green for success, amber for warnings, red for errors. These should be used consistently across the system to train user recognition.
- **Section differentiation:** Subtle background hues or accent colours can distinguish between different modules (e.g., “Reports” vs. “Data Entry”).
- **Highlighting key actions:** Primary action buttons (e.g., “Save”, “Submit”) can be coloured more prominently than secondary actions to guide the user’s decision-making.

Consistency is essential — a colour that means “danger” in one part of the application must not mean “draft” elsewhere.

15.7.2. Typography and Hierarchy

Readable, well-structured text improves comprehension and reduces the chance of user error. This requires:

- **Legible font choices:** Sans-serif fonts are often preferred for screen use due to their clarity at small sizes.
- **Hierarchy through size and weight:** Titles, section headers, and field labels should differ in font weight or size to visually indicate their relative importance.
- **Avoiding decorative typefaces:** Functional clarity should always take precedence over stylistic flair in database interfaces.

Proper typography hierarchy helps users scan the interface quickly, identifying where to focus their attention first.

15.7.3. Spacing, Alignment, and Grouping

The human eye perceives related items as belonging together — a principle known as the Gestalt law of proximity. Effective database UI design uses this principle to:

- Group related fields within a form using white space or subtle borders.
- Align input fields and labels to reduce visual noise and scanning time.
- Maintain consistent spacing between similar components to avoid the appearance of “visual clutter.”

This spatial organisation creates a visual rhythm that feels intuitive and predictable.

15.7.4. Contrast and Accessibility

Strong visual contrast between text and background is essential for readability, especially for users with low vision or colour vision deficiencies. Meeting accessibility standards (e.g., WCAG guidelines) ensures that:

- Text remains readable in varying lighting conditions.
- Information conveyed by colour alone is reinforced with a secondary indicator (such as an icon or label).
- The interface remains functional for all users, including those relying on assistive technologies.

Accessibility is not an optional enhancement; it is a fundamental quality of a professional database system.

15.7.5. Visual Consistency Across the System

Visual consistency supports mental mapping. If users encounter the same layout patterns, button styles, and icons across different screens, they can predict how to interact with new

features without extensive retraining. This is especially critical for large database systems with multiple modules or sub-applications.

15.7.6. Reducing Cognitive Load Through Design

A cluttered, overly complex screen forces the user to think about the interface rather than the task. Clean design — characterised by adequate white space, a restrained colour palette, and clear visual hierarchy — frees mental capacity for the work at hand. Every extra visual element should be evaluated for necessity; if it does not support the task, it is a distraction.

15.8. Search and Retrieval Interfaces

A well-designed database is not just a storage repository — it is a retrieval system. If users cannot locate information quickly and accurately, the system's value drops dramatically. Search functionality therefore sits at the core of effective UI/UX design for databases, and it must accommodate both casual and expert users.

15.8.1. Balancing Simplicity and Power

Search tools must strike a balance: simple enough for infrequent users to get quick results without training, but powerful enough for experienced users to perform complex queries.

Simple search: A single search box supporting keyword lookups or basic identifiers (e.g., customer ID, invoice number). This should be forgiving of typographical errors through techniques like fuzzy matching.

Advanced search: A separate interface with multiple filters, Boolean logic, range searches, and conditional criteria. Experienced users can build highly specific queries without manually writing database code.

The system should remember the last-used search settings for a given user session, saving time for repetitive tasks.

15.8.2. Filters, Facets, and Drill-Down Navigation

Modern search is rarely linear — it's often a process of progressively narrowing down results. Faceted navigation allows users to apply filters (such as date ranges, status, category, or assigned user) without reloading the entire search screen.

Dynamic filtering: Filters that update available options based on current results prevent “dead-end” searches.

Hierarchical categories: Allowing drill-down from broad groups to specific records helps maintain orientation.

Faceted search improves both precision and recall in large datasets.

15.8.3. Results Presentation and Interaction

The way search results are displayed has a direct impact on user productivity. Best practice guidelines recommend:

- **Sortable and filterable tables:** Columns should be sortable with a single click, and filters should be applied without refreshing the page.
- **Highlighting matched terms:** Clearly show the search term within the returned records so users can confirm relevance at a glance.
- **Pagination vs. infinite scroll:** For structured datasets, pagination (with the ability to set results per page) is often more predictable and user-friendly than endless scrolling.

Users should be able to take immediate actions — such as opening, editing, or exporting a record — directly from the results view.

15.8.4. Search Memory and Saved Queries

Many database workflows are repetitive. Providing features to save and recall frequent searches can reduce friction:

- **Saved queries:** Let users store complex search parameters for one-click recall.
- **Search history:** Allow retrieval of past searches, especially useful when tracking down intermittent or recurring issues.

These functions turn search from a repetitive task into an optimised workflow.

15.8.5. Performance and Feedback in Search

Slow search is one of the fastest ways to erode trust in a database. To avoid user frustration:

- **Optimise indexing:** Well-structured indexes enable near-instant retrieval even in large datasets.
- **Asynchronous loading:** Show partial results quickly while continuing to load more in the background.
- **Progress indicators:** A spinning icon or percentage complete message reassures users that the system is working, not frozen.

Consistent speed and feedback encourage users to rely on the search tool as their primary navigation method.

15.8.6. Error Handling and No-Result States

Even the best search systems will sometimes return no results. Poorly handled, this can lead to user confusion or wasted time. Effective no-result states include:

- Suggestions for alternative queries or broader filters.
- Confirmation that the search was conducted correctly but yielded no matches.
- Links to relevant help resources or direct query-building assistance.

A thoughtful no-result design keeps the user moving forward instead of hitting a dead end.

15.9. Responsiveness and Performance

A well-designed interface is only as good as the system's ability to respond quickly and predictably. Responsiveness in UI/UX is not just about raw speed; it's about how the system

feels to the user. Even slight delays, if unexplained, can create frustration and erode trust. The goal is to maintain a smooth, uninterrupted flow of work regardless of dataset size, number of users, or task complexity.

15.9.1. Perceived vs. Actual Speed

From the user's perspective, perceived performance often matters more than absolute processing time.

- **Progress indicators:** Even if a process takes several seconds, showing a progress bar, percentage complete, or “loading” animation reassures the user that the system is working.
- **Skeleton screens:** Displaying placeholders for content that is still loading makes the interface appear faster and avoids sudden visual jumps when data arrives.
- **Immediate UI responses:** Button clicks should always yield a visible response — such as changing colour or showing a “working” state — even if the underlying process takes longer.

Good UI design uses these techniques to make a 3-second wait feel like 1 second.

15.9.2. Optimising Data Queries and Retrieval

Performance starts with the database layer itself. Slow queries or poorly structured indexes can drag down the entire user experience.

- **Indexing and query tuning:** Ensure common search and retrieval operations are backed by well-maintained indexes.
- **Batch processing:** Where possible, retrieve and process data in batches instead of loading everything at once.
- **Pagination over bulk loads:** Display only what's needed at any given time to reduce memory and rendering costs.

These optimisations should be paired with monitoring tools to identify performance bottlenecks as datasets and usage grow.

15.9.3. Asynchronous Processing and Partial Loading

Not all operations need to block the user from continuing other tasks.

- **Asynchronous operations:** Long-running tasks — such as generating a large report — can be processed in the background, with the user notified when they're ready.
- **Partial loading:** Show initial results or summary statistics first while the rest of the data loads in the background.
- **Non-blocking UI:** Avoid freezing the interface during calculations; instead, allow users to navigate to other sections or cancel the operation if needed.

This approach maintains the rhythm of work and reduces perceived downtime.

15.9.4. Device and Network Adaptability

Modern database systems are often accessed from multiple devices — desktops in the office, tablets in the field, or smartphones on the go.

- **Responsive layouts:** Ensure the interface adapts fluidly to different screen sizes without sacrificing readability or function.
- **Offline or low-bandwidth modes:** Where relevant, design for intermittent connectivity, caching critical data locally, and syncing changes when possible.
- **Optimised asset delivery:** Compress images, scripts, and style sheets for faster loading on mobile or slow connections.

This adaptability ensures usability across diverse working conditions.

15.9.5. Consistency and Predictability in Performance

Users value not just speed, but predictable speed. A task that takes 3 seconds today and 12 seconds tomorrow will frustrate even patient users.

- **Performance benchmarking:** Regularly measure the time taken for common operations and maintain targets.
- **Load testing:** Simulate high-traffic scenarios to ensure performance holds up under peak usage.
- **Feedback loops:** Provide administrators with performance metrics so they can proactively address issues before they affect end users.

Predictable performance builds user trust and supports adoption at scale.

15.10. Security and Trust in the Interface

The security posture of a database system is not just a matter of backend architecture and encryption protocols — it is also communicated directly through the interface. Users form perceptions of safety and professionalism based on how security is signalled, how access is controlled, and how incidents are handled. A well-designed UI makes the security model visible, understandable, and reassuring, encouraging responsible data handling and reducing the likelihood of mistakes.

15.10.1. Role-Based Access and Context-Specific Views

Access control should be embedded into the design at a granular level.

- **Role-based permissions:** The interface should display only those modules, menus, and data fields relevant to a user's role, eliminating clutter and reducing the risk of unauthorised actions.
- **Progressive disclosure:** Sensitive information should be revealed only when required for a specific task, not as a default view.
- **Dynamic UI states:** When permissions change (e.g., a temporary access grant for a project), the interface should adapt immediately, adding or removing options without requiring a full reload.

By tailoring what users see and can do, the interface becomes a guardrail against both deliberate misuse and accidental exposure.

15.10.2. Visible Security Cues

Users need continual reassurance that their data and actions are being protected.

- **Lock icons and labels:** Simple visual markers next to sensitive data fields help users identify restricted or encrypted information.
- **Secure connection indicators:** Prominent display of “Secure” or HTTPS status within the application reinforces trust, especially for web-based systems.
- **Action confirmation:** For high-impact operations, a confirmation step that explains why the extra security is necessary can foster understanding rather than annoyance.

These cues work best when consistent across the system, so that their meaning becomes second nature.

15.10.3. Session Management and Data Protection

Many security breaches occur not from malicious actors but from unattended sessions or lapses in situational awareness.

- **Timeout warnings:** Alert users before an automatic log-out, giving them the opportunity to save work or extend the session.
- **Session re-authentication:** For sensitive operations (e.g., exporting confidential reports), require users to re-enter credentials even within an active session.
- **Auto-save and draft retention:** In the event of a forced log-out, allow safe recovery of in-progress work without risking data leaks.

This combination balances security with usability, reducing frustration while maintaining safeguards.

15.10.4. Transparency and Auditability

Trust grows when users feel the system is accountable.

- **Accessible audit trails:** Allow authorised roles to view detailed logs of data changes, access events, and administrative actions.
- **Change attribution:** Always record who made a change, when, and from which location or device.
- **User-friendly log views:** Present logs in an understandable, filterable format so that non-technical managers can review them without specialist help.

Audit features are not only a compliance requirement in many sectors; they are also a communication tool, showing that the system takes accountability seriously.

15.10.5. Designing for Responsible User Behaviour

Security is a shared responsibility between system and user.

- **Contextual guidance:** When users are about to take an action that could compromise security, explain the implications in plain language.

- **Error prevention over error recovery:** Disable or hide destructive options unless explicitly enabled for the current workflow.
- **Security onboarding:** Provide short, role-specific security orientation when new users first log in.

Embedding these practices into the interface trains users to make safer choices, turning the UI into an active participant in risk management.

15.11. Accessibility and Inclusion

A well-designed database interface must not only be functional and visually appealing — it must be usable by everyone who needs it, regardless of physical ability, language background, or technical literacy. Accessibility is both a legal obligation and an operational necessity when dealing with a diverse user base, particularly for a national body like the language council, whose mandate includes promoting multilingualism and inclusivity.

15.11.1. Designing for Universal Access

Accessibility begins with the principle that no user should be excluded from performing essential tasks because of the way the interface is built. This requires:

- **Keyboard navigation:** All functions should be operable without a mouse, using logical tab orders, shortcut keys, and visible focus indicators.
- **Assistive technology compatibility:** The interface must work seamlessly with screen readers, speech recognition tools, and magnification software, ensuring that visually impaired users can fully participate.
- **Colour contrast and visual clarity:** Adhering to recognised guidelines (such as WCAG) for contrast ratios improves readability for users with low vision or colour blindness.
- **Scalable text and responsive design:** Users should be able to adjust font sizes and zoom without breaking layout or functionality.

These features are not “extras” — they form part of a baseline design standard that benefits all users, not just those with disabilities.

15.11.2. Multilingual Support as Core Functionality

For the language council database, multilingual support is not an afterthought — it is a *core system requirement*. A user’s ability to navigate, input, and interpret data in their preferred language will directly influence adoption rates, accuracy, and trust in the system.

Key considerations include:

- **Full interface localisation:** Every navigational label, menu item, button, and message should be translatable into supported languages — not just content fields.
- **Dynamic language switching:** Users should be able to change languages at any time without losing context or data in progress.
- **Data model design for multilingual records:** The database should allow entries to store equivalent terms in multiple languages, so that search, filtering, and reporting can work seamlessly across linguistic variations.

- **Right-to-left (RTL) language readiness:** If the system supports languages with RTL scripts, the UI should adapt layouts, alignments, and reading order accordingly.

This level of support sends a powerful message: the system values all languages equally, aligning the interface with the council’s policy commitments.

15.11.3. Cultural and Linguistic Sensitivity in UX Copy

Language in the interface should be clear, inclusive, and culturally respectful. This means:

- **Avoiding jargon:** Use plain, everyday language for instructions, warnings, and system feedback.
- **Contextual accuracy:** Ensure translations reflect the correct professional or cultural usage, especially for specialised terms in the language practitioner sector.
- **Consistent tone across languages:** The interface should “feel” equally professional and welcoming regardless of the language chosen, avoiding unintended shifts in tone or formality.

Culturally sensitive language use reinforces the council’s role as a champion of linguistic diversity.

15.11.4. Inclusive Design for Varying Digital Literacy

Inclusion is not only about disability or language — it also means accommodating different levels of digital experience.

- **Progressive disclosure of complexity:** Beginners see only the most essential functions, while advanced users can access more detailed or technical tools.
- **Contextual help and tooltips:** Provide in-line guidance that explains functions without requiring the user to leave their workflow.
- **Visual cues and iconography:** Use intuitive icons, but always accompany them with text labels to avoid ambiguity.

This ensures that the system is usable by everyone from community-based practitioners with minimal IT exposure to experienced administrators and analysts.

15.11.5. Testing With Real Users

Accessibility and inclusion can only be validated through engagement with actual end-users. This should include:

- **Diverse participant recruitment:** Test with people who have different language preferences, disabilities, and skill levels.
- **Assistive technology testing:** Actively verify compatibility with common tools used by visually impaired and mobility-impaired users.
- **Feedback loops for continuous improvement:** Build in a mechanism for users to flag accessibility or language issues directly from within the interface.

Through inclusive testing, the database will evolve into a genuinely universal tool that supports the council’s mission both technically and symbolically.

15.12. Conclusion

The design of a user interface for a database system is not a cosmetic afterthought — it is a strategic element that directly influences adoption, accuracy, and long-term sustainability. A well-designed UI, guided by user-centred principles, makes complex systems approachable, reduces training time, and safeguards data integrity. By tailoring interfaces to distinct user groups, ensuring navigation is predictable, optimising data entry, providing meaningful feedback, and embedding security and accessibility into the very fabric of the design, the Language Practitioners’ Database can serve its diverse stakeholders with confidence and efficiency.

Accessibility and multilingual support, in particular, are not optional features but core system requirements that reflect the council’s mission to support linguistic diversity and inclusion. Combined with robust performance, clear visual design, and responsive search tools, these elements create a system that is not only functional but trusted and valued. Ultimately, the measure of success will be a database that feels natural to use, inspires confidence, and supports the professional and institutional goals of all who depend on it.

16. Chapter 16 System and Platform Design

16.1. Introduction

The design starts with an inclusive description of the purpose of the database, including how it will be used and by whom.

This will provide a lodestone for reference during the design process. Having such a statement helps you focus on your goals when you make decisions.

The design process consists of the following steps:

1. **Determine the purpose of the database:** This provides the foundation for the remaining steps.
2. **Prioritise groups:** The project is too large to be tackled in one go.
3. **Determine the requirements of the users:** Through qualitative and quantitative research.
4. **Identify sources of information:** Work with existing organisations to reach their members, advertise in journals.
5. **Data mining:** Gather the information required to populate the database.
6. **Capture information in discrete fields:** Avoid clustering information within one field – a person's name, for example, should be captured as first name, second name, surname.
7. **Specify primary keys:** The primary key is a column that is used to uniquely identify each row. An example might be Product ID or Order ID.
8. **Set up the table relationships:** Look at each table and decide how the data in one table is related to the data in other tables. Add fields to tables or create new tables to clarify the relationships, as necessary.
9. **Refine your design:** Analyse your design for errors. Create the tables and add a few records of sample data. See if you can get the results you want from your tables. Make adjustments to the design, as needed.
10. **Testing:** Apply normalisation rules and request user feedback to see if the tables are structured correctly. Make adjustments to the tables as needed.
11. **Ongoing maintenance:** Data expires or ages quickly. The database should automatically send requests for updates every six months. It should flag those for which no response has been received so they can be done manually.

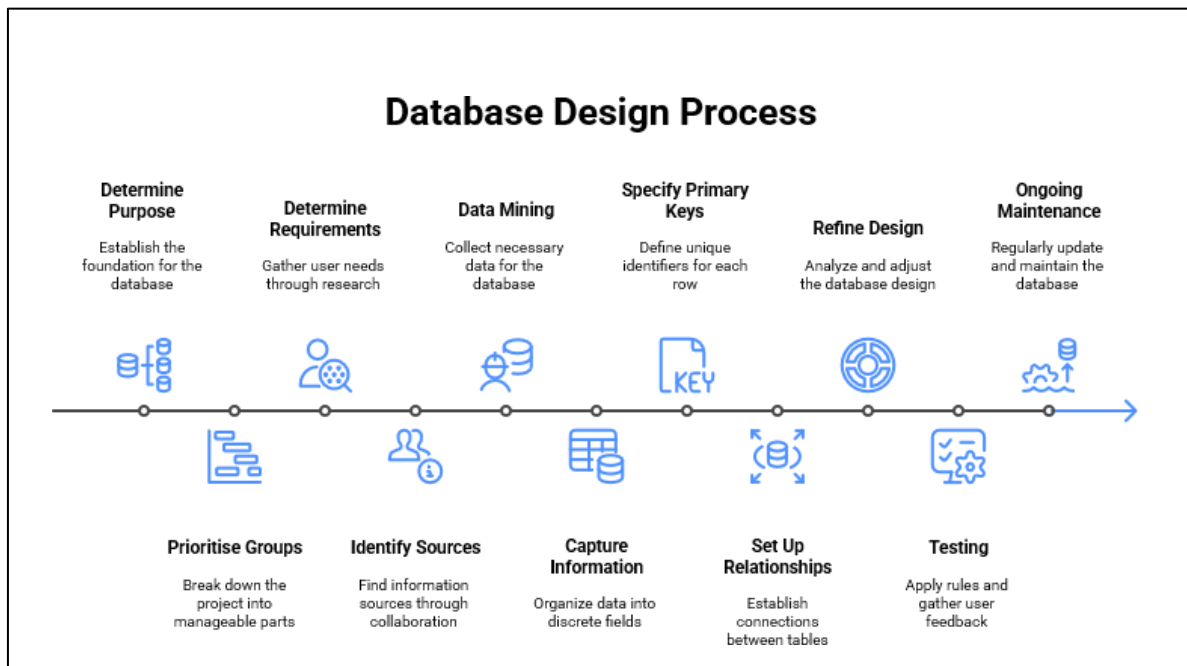


Figure 7: The design process.

16.2. Database Structure

A well-structured schema minimises redundancy and ensures data accuracy:

- **Avoid data redundancy:** Though normalization, which involves splitting the database into several smaller, logically connected tables, where each table focuses on a specific subject or entity.
 - All values are atomic (indivisible)
 - Each column has a unique data type
 - No repeated groups or arrays exist in a column.
- **Define relationships:** Use primary keys (e.g., ProductID) for unique row identification and foreign keys to enforce table relationships (e.g. linking qualifications to job descriptions). (Microsoft, 2025), (Haidiner, 2025)
- **Model requirements first:** Analyse needs and create Entity-Relationship Diagrams (ERDs) to visualize data relationships.
- **Optimize for performance:** Index frequently queried columns and partition large tables (e.g., by date ranges) for faster access.
- **Store information in its smallest logical parts:** If you combine more than one kind of information in a field, it is difficult to retrieve individual facts later. Break down information into logical parts; for example, create separate fields for first and last name, or for product name, category, and description.

16.3. Database Population

Accurate data ingestion prevents errors downstream:

Standardize formats: Enforce consistent formats for dates, addresses, and other fields (e.g., YYYY-MM-DD for dates).

Automate validation: Use tools like Optical Character Recognition (OCR) for automated data capture and set validation rules for mandatory fields or value ranges.

Implement verification: Cross-check entries via double data entry or automated checks to catch errors early.

Leverage real-world data for testing: Populate test environments with production-like data to validate schema efficiency.

16.4. Structured vs. Unstructured Data

Most of the information to be captured — such as names, dates, qualifications, and language pairings — is structured data. It fits into predefined fields and formats, much like entries in a form. Structured data is best managed using Relational Database Management Systems (RDBMS) such as MySQL, PostgreSQL, or Microsoft SQL Server.

The requirements for the language practitioner database is that it needs to store unstructured or semi-structured data such as uploaded CVs, letters of recommendation, scanned certificates, or narrative descriptions. For this reason, a hybrid model combining relational and document-based storage (e.g., using NoSQL solutions like MongoDB or integrated file storage) may be considered to meet the full range of functional requirements.

16.5. Tables and Relationships

At the core of a relational database are tables — similar to structured spreadsheets — that group related information. For instance:

- A Practitioner table might contain names, IDs, and contact details.
- A Qualification table would list types of degrees, awarding institutions, and dates.
- A Language Pair table would capture working language combinations.

These tables are linked by relationships:

- One practitioner may hold multiple qualifications (one-to-many).
- Practitioners may work in multiple language pairs (many-to-many).
- CPD events attended by one practitioner may be shared by others (many-to-many).

By designing these relationships carefully and enforcing data integrity rules, the system avoids duplication, ensures accuracy, and supports advanced querying and analysis.

16.6. Metadata, Indexing, and Unique Identifiers

Each record in the database must include a unique identifier — such as a practitioner ID — to ensure that users and systems can track, reference, and manage data consistently.

Additional metadata (e.g., timestamps, last updated by, status flags) can help administrators manage verification workflows, update logs, and audit trails.

Indexing is another technical feature that enhances the speed and efficiency of searches, particularly important when dealing with tens of thousands of practitioner records.

16.7. Security and Privacy

Given the sensitivity of personal and professional data, the database must comply with South Africa's Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), as well as international standards for data protection.

Security measures will include:

- Access control and permissions
- Encryption (at rest and in transit)
- Regular backups and recovery protocols
- Secure authentication and audit trails

16.8. Web Interface Design – User Front-End for Data Management

Web interface design is a multidisciplinary effort that blends usability, aesthetics, performance, and accessibility into a cohesive user experience. At its core, the goal is to create interfaces that are intuitive, responsive, and aligned with user expectations—whether the audience is internal staff, customers, or external partners.

One of the primary considerations is responsiveness. A well-designed interface must adapt fluidly across devices and screen sizes, from desktops to tablets to mobile phones. This involves using flexible layouts, scalable typography, and media queries to ensure that content remains legible and interactive regardless of the viewing context. Responsiveness isn't just about layout—it's about preserving usability and clarity across environments.

Cross-browser compatibility is equally essential. Users may access your site through Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Edge, or other browsers, each with its own rendering quirks. Designers must test and optimize for consistent behaviour, avoiding browser-specific code and relying on standardized HTML, CSS, and JavaScript practices. Tools like BrowserStack or native developer consoles help identify and resolve inconsistencies early in the development cycle.

Accessibility plays a vital role in inclusive design. Interfaces should support screen readers, keyboard navigation, and high-contrast modes, ensuring that users with disabilities can interact with the system effectively. Semantic HTML, ARIA roles, and thoughtful colour choices contribute to a more equitable experience for all users.

Performance also matters. Fast-loading interfaces reduce bounce rates and improve user satisfaction. This means optimizing assets, minimizing HTTP requests, and leveraging caching strategies. A sluggish interface—even if beautifully designed—can undermine the entire user experience.

Finally, clarity and consistency in visual design and interaction patterns are key. Users should be able to predict how elements behave, navigate without confusion, and receive immediate feedback on their actions. This involves using consistent styling, intuitive icons, and clear call-to-action elements that guide users through their tasks.

Together, these considerations form the foundation of a robust, user-centred web interface—one that's not only functional but also engaging, inclusive, and scalable.

16.9. Conclusion

This chapter set out a pragmatic pathway to move from concept to an operational SALPC register and enabling database: prepare and clean priority datasets, communicate clearly with practitioners and partners, and roll out a minimum viable system in phased increments.

The approach remains technology-agnostic and vendor-neutral and is designed to be proportionate to the Council's mandate, budget, and capacity while meeting statutory obligations (particularly POPIA) and laying a foundation for future scale.

The recommendation is for the Council to adopt the phased plan as a working baseline, with final choices confirmed through procurement and stakeholder engagement. In practical terms, immediate next steps would be to:

- i. Approve the MVP scope (registration, verification, practitioner profiles, and search)
- ii. Initiate a structured data-migration and quality process
- iii. Establish the communication plan and support channels; and set success measures (data completeness, verification turnaround, user adoption, and service uptime).

17. Chapter 17 Institutional Capacity and Requirements

17.1. Introduction

The South African Language Practitioners' Council Act of 2014 provides a comprehensive institutional framework that covers several of the requested elements relevant to a centralized database of language practitioners. According to this Act:

- Governance and oversight are vested in the South African Language Practitioners' Council, a national public entity subject to public finance management
- Mandates include promotion and protection of language practice, scrutiny and registration of practitioners, accreditation, development and enforcement of a code of conduct, and safeguarding public interests in language services
- Decision-making is strategic and policy-driven with the Council responsible for finance, education, registration, accreditation, ethics, professional standards, disciplinary procedures, and practitioner competence
- Policy alignment is achieved through consultation and liaison with national education, skills, and language bodies, and advising the Minister on language professional matters
- Staffing requirements include appointing a board with oversight capabilities across multiple relevant disciplines and stakeholder representation
- Lines of reporting involve notification and accountability to the Minister, Cabinet, and Parliament regarding appointments, performance, and functionality
- Skills requirements span audit, risk management, communication, education, and language-specific competencies
- Training and capacity building are aligned with national education frameworks and quality assurance agencies
- Succession planning involves transparent nomination, merit-based selection, and ministerial appointments to ensure functional governance continuity.

This framework entails a centralized registration and accreditation system with professional standards that align well with the institutional requirements for a centralized database of language practitioners, including governance, mandates, decision-making, staffing, skills, training, and succession planning elements.

Additional governance principles related to oversight and decision-making in public entities can be drawn from general frameworks on independent oversight institutions, ensuring balance between accountability and operational independence, as well as merit-based appointments to key positions to maintain integrity and functionality (Vrieze, 2019), (Government Gazette, 2015), (School of Government, 2022).

17.2. Governance and Oversight

The governance model that best fits a national centralized registry of language practitioners is a statutory council model, such as the South African Language Practitioners' Council. This model involves establishing a legally mandated, independent public entity with the following characteristics:

- The Council operates under an enabling Act of Parliament, which clearly defines its objects, powers, duties, and functions related to registration, accreditation, and regulation of language practitioners.
- Governance is by a board appointed to provide strategic oversight, policy determination, and financial accountability.
- The Council has mandates for registration, accreditation, professional conduct regulation, skills development, and promoting language practice standards.
- Decision-making is centralized in the Council with accountability to a government minister, supporting autonomy while ensuring alignment with national policies.
- The Council liaises with relevant education, skills, and language bodies to ensure policy and quality assurance alignment.
- Staffing includes expert personnel capable of managing registration, quality assurance, training, and compliance monitoring.
- The model supports sustainable governance through clear lines of reporting, capacity building, and transparent appointment and succession planning processes.

This model balances operational independence, government oversight, stakeholder participation, and professional standards enforcement, making it suitable to manage a national centralized registry of language practitioners efficiently and with credibility. (Government Gazette, 2015), (Beukes A.-M. , 2008), (Government Gazette, 2015), (Government Communications, 2020), (COGTA, 2016), (Marais, 2013).

17.2.1. Mandates and Roles

The South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC) has the following key mandates and roles:

- Promote and protect language practice in South Africa
- Scrutinize and register people who qualify to be registered language practitioners
- Accredite people who are accreditable by the Council
- Develop, implement, revise, and amend a code of conduct for registered language practitioners
- Protect the professional interests of language practitioners and protect the public who use their services
- Regulate the provision of language services to the public
- Provide and encourage opportunities, especially for persons from indigenous communities, to enter and participate in the language practice field
- Contribute to an enabling environment for job creation in language practice.

These roles ensure the professional regulation, development, and promotion of language practitioners in South Africa, safeguarding both practitioners and the public relying on their services.

17.2.2. Decision-making Process

Decision-making for the South African Language Practitioners Council (SALPC) is governed by the South African Language Practitioners' Council Act, 2014 (Act No. 8 of 2014), which establishes the Council as a juristic person and national public entity. The Council is mandated to regulate language practitioners by accrediting and registering them, developing and

enforcing a code of conduct, protecting practitioners' and public interests, and advising the Minister on language profession matters.

Governance and Board Structure

- The Council is managed by a Board consisting of eight to 12 members appointed by the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture
- Board members serve terms of up to 5 years and can be reappointed for up to 10 years
- The Board appoints a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) as an ex officio member without voting rights
- Board meetings and procedures, conflict of interest declarations, member remuneration, terms of office, vacancies, and member removal are regulated by the Act.

Functions of the Council

- Administer funds appropriated by Parliament and other funding sources
- Oversees the accreditation, registration, and conduct of language practitioners
- Develops, revises, and implements a code of conduct
- Promote language practice, especially encouraging participation from indigenous communities
- Protects both language practitioners' professional interests and the public's usage of language services
- Regulate language service provision standards.

Decision-Making Framework

- Decisions are made primarily by the Board in meetings with procedures laid out in the Act
- Members must declare any financial or other interests that may influence decisions
- Committees may be established to assist the Board in decision-making
- Members can be co-opted to the Board or committees to provide expertise
- The CEO oversees administrative functions under Board direction but does not have voting rights
- The Council advises the Minister and can make recommendations affecting policy and practice.

In summary, decision-making at the South African Language Practitioners Council follows a structured, board-led process as outlined in the 2014 Act, with requirements for transparency, accountability, and professional regulation consistent with constitutional multilingualism objectives and language-sector development.

17.3. Organisational Structure

Beyond the database-specific staff functions, the SALPC will require a management team to carry out the organisation's other critical functions—governance and compliance, registration and accreditation, professional conduct, CPD and standards, stakeholder partnerships and communications, finance/SCM, HR/administration, and front-line support.

The final organisational design and staffing numbers are best confirmed through a dedicated organisational requirements study with a detailed staffing plan; in the interim, the roles listed below are proposed for consideration.

Note that some roles may be combined initially or split as volumes and risk increase, and other roles may be outsourced depending on the workload and staffing strategy employed.

17.3.1. Board

The PanSALB requirements are that nominees should be South African citizens, have a broad understanding and experience in the field of language, be broadly representative of the diversity of the users of official languages (including Sign Language), and have linguistic knowledge. Nominations of persons with legal expertise, expertise in financial management, fundraising expertise, corporate governance, or in any other field that will allow the Board to fulfil its obligations are also encouraged (PanSALB, 2023).

One of the first tasks of the Board will be to develop a corporate governance framework for the SALPC to provide a framework for corporate governance practices, policies, procedures, protocols and frameworks.

Board Charter

The Board Charter spells out the role, structure, responsibilities and operations of the Board:

- Role of the Board
- Delegation to management
- Board committees
- Conduct of Board members.

Board Protocol (Rules of Engagement)

The Board Protocol refers to rules and guidelines governing SALPC Board Members:

- Recognition of responsibility and common purpose
- What is expected of PanSALB directors
- Rights of directors
- Benefits of directors.

Executive Committee and Charter

An Executive Committee should be established by the Board to act on behalf of the Board in overseeing all material aspects of SALPC's business.

- The objectives of the Executive Committee are to assist the Board and Executive Management to discharge their corporate governance responsibilities, to exercise due care and diligence and skill to:
- Determine urgent matters to be approved between Board meetings
- Give strategic direction to Executive Management on organisational matters
- Provide guidance in urgent matters requiring the attention of the Board.

Structure and composition

- The SALPC EXCO shall consist of the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and CEO
- Board members and/or Executive Management may be invited to attend specific meetings of EXCO
- The Chairperson of the Board shall be the Chairperson of EXCO and in his/her absence the Deputy Chairperson shall chair
- The Board Secretariat shall be the Secretary of EXCO and shall be the custodian of the minutes of meetings and documents that are tabled at meetings.

Reporting

The committee reports to the Board after each meeting and circulates its minutes to the Board as soon as practicable.

Authority

Overseeing all material aspects of SALPC's business.

Functions/Responsibility

- Implementation of approved strategy, business plan and budget, all policies and procedures and Board decisions within the organisation
- Prioritising the allocation of capital, technical and human resources
- Establishing best management practices and functional standards
- Ongoing identification and management of organisational risks
- Applying the principles of governance and applicable codes of best practice to all activities and decisions
- Monitoring all operational matters so as to ensure a detailed understanding of the overall business of the organisation and together with the Executive Management team being accountable for the overall performance of the organisation
- Reviewing and recommending any changes to the approved budget, strategy, business plans, policies and procedures of the organisation
- Reviewing operational financial reports, assessing financial performance, including management of assets and liabilities and ensuring compliance with the SALPC Act, the Public Finance Management Act and Treasury Regulations
- Measuring the performance of the organisation against its strategic goals and budgets as well as clearly defined indicators against which the organisation can be measured, and reporting the results to the Board.

17.3.2. Governance and Executive

- **Registrar (Chief Executive):** Overall accountable officer for service delivery, compliance, and execution of Board decisions; signs off releases, budgets, and external agreements within delegated authority.
- **Board Secretariat / Legal:** Manages the governance calendar, committee packs and minutes; maintains the policy library, delegations of authority, and supports procurement and legal review.

17.3.3. Compliance and Information Governance

- **Information Officer (POPIA/PAIA):** Oversees privacy and access-to-information compliance, approves sensitive data access/exports, leads breach response, and maintains records of processing.
- **Risk & Internal Audit (part-time/outsourced):** Maintains the risk register, tests key controls (PFMA/King IV alignment), reports on findings, and tracks remediation.

17.3.4. Stakeholder & Sector Development

- **Stakeholder Partnerships Lead:** Manages relationships with DSAC, SADiLaR, universities, professional associations, and employers; brokers data-sharing MoUs and joint initiatives.
- **Communications & Outreach:** Produces guidance, notices and FAQs; manages the website, newsletters and status updates; coordinates practitioner engagement campaigns.
- **Research, Monitoring & Evaluation:** Analyses labour-market trends, practitioner uptake, and service outcomes; publishes dashboards and annual insights to inform policy.

17.3.5. Corporate Services

- **Finance & Supply Chain Management:** Manages billing/fees, grant accounting, budgeting and reporting; oversees procurement, contracts and supplier performance.
- **HR & Administration:** Handles recruitment, contracts, induction, performance, and records management; supports training and organisational development.
- **Service Desk Coordinator:** First-line support and ticket triage for practitioners and stakeholders; tracks SLAs and escalations, and feeds issues into the product backlog.

17.4. Technical Skills Requirements

The success of a development team lies in its ability to transform complex challenges into elegant, scalable solutions through collaboration, clarity, and technical excellence. When developers align around shared goals, communicate openly, and iterate with purpose, they build not just reliable systems—but trust, innovation, and long-term impact. A truly successful team doesn't just deliver code; it delivers confidence.

The project will demand a diverse skill set distributed across multiple technical roles.

17.4.1. Project Manager

A strategic leader responsible for guiding a project from initiation to completion, ensuring that goals are met within defined constraints such as time, budget, and scope. They coordinate teams, allocate resources, manage risks, and maintain clear communication with stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle. Rather than executing technical tasks directly, the project manager orchestrates the overall effort—setting timelines, resolving conflicts, and adapting plans as needed to keep progress on track. Their role is both operational and interpersonal, requiring a blend of organizational skill, leadership, and problem-solving to deliver successful outcomes.

17.4.2. Database Administrator or DBA

Plays a critical role in ensuring that an organization's data infrastructure is secure, efficient, and reliable. They are responsible for designing and maintaining database systems, managing access controls, and optimizing performance to support business operations. Their work involves configuring servers, monitoring system health, implementing backup and recovery strategies, and safeguarding data against unauthorized access or loss.

17.4.3. Front-end Developer

A software professional who specializes in building the visual and interactive elements of websites and web applications—the parts users see and engage with directly. Their role centres on translating design mock-ups and user experience concepts into functional, responsive interfaces using technologies like HTML, CSS, and JavaScript.

They ensure that layouts are intuitive, accessible, and consistent across devices and browsers, often working with frameworks such as React, Vue, or Angular to streamline development. Beyond aesthetics, front-end developers also optimize performance, handle client-side logic, and collaborate closely with designers and backend engineers to deliver seamless, user-centred digital experiences.

17.4.4. Back-end Integration Developer

Is a specialist who designs and implements the behind-the-scenes connections that allow different systems, services, and databases to work together seamlessly. Their role focuses on building APIs, middleware, and server-side logic that enable data exchange between applications, ensuring that front-end interfaces can reliably interact with back-end resources.

They often work with RESTful or GraphQL APIs, manage authentication flows, and integrate third-party services or legacy systems into modern architectures. This developer ensures that business logic, data storage, and external services are harmonized into a cohesive, scalable, and secure infrastructure—making them essential for robust, enterprise-grade solutions.

17.4.5. Data Capturer

A professional responsible for accurately entering, verifying, and organizing information into digital systems or databases. Their role is essential to maintaining data integrity and ensuring that records are complete, up-to-date, and accessible for analysis or operational use. Data capturers often work with spreadsheets, forms, or specialized software to input data from various sources such as paper documents, surveys, or electronic files.

Precision, attention to detail, and confidentiality are key traits, as they frequently handle sensitive or business-critical information. By transforming raw inputs into structured data, they support decision-making, reporting, and compliance across an organization.

17.4.6. Support Developer for Ongoing Maintenance

A technical professional dedicated to sustaining and improving software systems after their initial deployment. Their role involves diagnosing and resolving bugs, implementing updates to ensure compatibility with evolving platforms, and refining performance based on user feedback.

and operational needs. They work closely with QA teams, users, and other developers to maintain system stability, security, and usability over time.

Beyond reactive fixes, support developers often engage in preventive maintenance—anticipating potential issues and applying patches or optimizations proactively. Their work ensures that software remains reliable, scalable, and aligned with business goals throughout its lifecycle.

17.4.7. Technical Support for Software Installation and Server Support

Refers to the specialized role of assisting users and organizations in setting up, configuring, and maintaining software applications and server infrastructure. This support professional ensures that software is correctly installed and tailored to the system's requirements, resolving compatibility issues and guiding users through setup processes.

On the server side, they handle tasks such as deploying server environments, monitoring performance, troubleshooting hardware and network issues, and applying updates or patches to maintain security and stability.

17.4.8. Software Tester

A quality assurance specialist who evaluates software applications to ensure they function correctly, securely, and efficiently before release. Their primary role is to identify bugs, inconsistencies, and usability issues by executing test plans and simulating real-world usage scenarios. Software testers work closely with developers and project teams to validate that the software meets both technical specifications and user expectations.

In many small to mid-sized projects, especially during early development phases, these roles—ranging from database administration and front-end development to server support and ongoing maintenance—are often consolidated into a single individual. This multi-skilled contributor wears multiple hats, balancing technical depth with cross-functional agility. While each role has its own specialization, combining them allows for tighter integration, faster iteration, and a more cohesive understanding of the system as a whole. It's a demanding setup, but when managed well, it can drive remarkable efficiency and ownership.

Generally, a senior developer (full-stack developer) brings a broad and versatile skill set that spans far beyond writing code. They're fluent in multiple programming languages and frameworks, but what sets them apart is their ability to architect solutions, mentor junior team members, and bridge technical decisions with business goals. Their experience allows them to anticipate challenges, design scalable systems, and ensure maintainability across the stack. Whether it's optimizing database queries, refining user interfaces, or integrating third-party services, a senior developer operates with both depth and agility—making them a cornerstone of any successful development team.

17.4.9. Integration with Council Operations

The register and its enabling system should operate as a core service of the Council rather than a parallel technical project.

Day-to-day, the Registrar acts as service owner and bridge between administrative and technical streams, with the IT/Systems Lead, Product Owner and Information Officer reporting

in plain language and on short cycles. The emphasis is on “no surprises”: technical risks, incidents and change impacts are surfaced early and translated into the decisions, budgets and timelines that Council processes require.

A weekly one-page operational note to the Registrar (uptime, verification turnaround, data completeness, open incidents, releases shipped, and any decisions needed) is paired with a monthly Council dashboard that rolls up KPIs, spend and SLA highlights.

Integration also depends on shared planning and communication. Backlog refinement and quarterly road- mapping should include Registration, Accreditation/QA, Conduct, Finance/SCM and Communications so that operational needs drive sequencing, and practitioner-facing changes are accompanied by notices, FAQs and training.

17.4.10. Lines of Reporting

Effective reporting and communication are as important as the technology itself. The recommendation is for a flat structure with short reporting lines, so information moves quickly from front-line staff to decision- makers. This is especially important for technical roles: risks, requirements and incidents are often hard to translate for non-technical executives, and they should not be diluted or delayed by layers.

In practice, the IT/Systems Lead and the Information Officer should report directly to the Registrar for operations, risk and incident escalation. Routine updates should be concise and frequent (one-page weekly notes and a monthly KPI dashboard), with urgent issues escalated immediately. Technical reports should be paired with a plain-language executive summary (severity, impact, decision required, deadline). A culture of “no gatekeeping” should protect upward reporting of risk.

17.5. Human Resource Capacity

17.5.1. Training and Capacity-Building

The integrity of a national register is reliant not only on robust systems but equally on the capabilities of its personnel. As legislation, technology, and stakeholder expectations evolve, an absence of structured and continuous learning will inevitably erode organisational performance, regardless of the underlying platform's quality. Consequently, it is recommended that training and capacity development be established as central operational disciplines—strategically planned, adequately resourced, and regularly reviewed—rather than approached as ad hoc or one-time initiatives.

Training needs should be systematically assessed. A concise diagnostic, aligned with the organisation’s requirements assessment, should delineate each function's primary responsibilities, expected service levels, and associated risks, from which the requisite competencies can then be determined. This process must encompass both administrative functions (such as registration, accreditation and quality assurance, professional conduct, finance and supply chain management, communications) and technical domains (including product management, IT/systems, data stewardship, and information governance).

For every organisational function, this analysis should specify essential knowledge (for example, POPIA/PAIA compliance, security protocols, incident escalation procedures), role-

specific skills (such as standards for document verification, release/change management, taxonomy maintenance), as well as cross-functional awareness to guarantee effective transitions between teams and prevent issues from being overlooked.

Role profiles should translate into tailored curricula and delivery plans. The Registrar, as service owner, should sponsor the programme; managers should confirm the scope and sequencing for their teams; and the Information Officer should assure the privacy and information-governance elements.

Delivery can be blended but materials should remain vendor-neutral and focused on SALPC's processes. To reduce operational risk, cross-training should be used to remove single points of failure, and key procedures should be documented in concise, searchable runbooks that are updated after releases and incident reviews.

Capacity development should also operate at the level of the individual. Personal progression plans are recommended for each staff member, setting out current competence, target proficiency for the role, and time-bound development actions.

These plans should incorporate formal learning, on-the-job practice and mentoring, and they should link to measurable service outcomes (for example, verification turnaround, data quality, incident response times and audit findings). Progress should be reviewed at regular intervals using simple evidence—completion records, supervised task sign-offs and performance metrics—so that training remains relevant and is adjusted where gaps persist.

17.5.2. Succession Planning

To support continuous service delivery, a structured approach to succession and knowledge retention is recommended. Each key role should have an assigned deputy and a coverage plan for leave and unexpected vacancies, accompanied by handover packs outlining responsibilities, contacts, open risks or issues, and routine procedures.

Core processes are to be documented in searchable runbooks and regularly updated after releases, audits, and incident reviews.

Cross-training and periodic shadowing can help reduce single points of failure. Acting appointments and delegations of authority are to be pre-approved to allow decision-making during absences, and minimum staffing levels for essential functions should be established and monitored.

Exit processes should include systematic knowledge capture through documents, checklists, and records of lessons learned to facilitate expertise transfer. Collectively, these practices aim to ensure coverage, maintain institutional memory, and support compliance and service continuity during staff transitions.

17.6. Technical Infrastructure

17.6.1. Software and Hardware Environment

The choice of technology stack directly influences the selection of an appropriate hosting environment and underlying hardware infrastructure. Each stack comes with its own

performance requirements, compatibility considerations, and deployment preferences, which must be aligned with the capabilities of the hosting platform and physical or virtual resources.

When Microsoft SQL Server is selected as the database engine, it naturally aligns with a Windows-based hosting environment. This setup typically leverages Internet Information Services (IIS) as the web server, which integrates tightly with .NET applications, ASP.NET Core, and other Microsoft technologies.

Advantages:

- Seamless integration with Active Directory, Windows authentication, and enterprise security policies.
- Optimized performance for .NET-based applications, especially when using Entity Framework or ADO.NET.
- Rich tooling ecosystem (e.g., SQL Server Management Studio, PowerShell, Visual Studio).
- Support for advanced features like SQL Agent, SSIS, and transactional replication.

This stack is ideal for enterprise-grade applications requiring high scalability, granular access control, and integration with other Microsoft services like Azure, SharePoint, or Exchange.

17.6.1.1. MySQL + PHP on Apache (LAMP Stack)

On the other hand, choosing MySQL as the database often pairs naturally with PHP and the Apache web server, forming the classic LAMP stack (Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP). This configuration is widely used for open-source applications, content management systems (like WordPress or Joomla), and lightweight web portals.

Advantages:

- Cost-effective and widely supported across hosting providers.
- Strong community support and extensive documentation.
- Flexible deployment on Linux servers, which are known for stability and performance.
- Easy integration with front-end technologies and RESTful APIs.

This stack is particularly well-suited for rapid development, prototyping, and applications that prioritize portability and open-source compatibility.

17.6.2. Strategic Considerations

- **Security Models:** Windows/IIS environments may offer tighter integration with enterprise identity systems, while Linux/Apache setups rely more on file-based permissions and modular security configurations.
- **Maintenance & Support:** SQL Server environments may require licensed support and specialized administration, whereas MySQL setups benefit from broader community tools and open-source flexibility.
- **Performance Tuning:** SQL Server offers advanced indexing, partitioning, and query optimization features, while MySQL is lightweight and efficient for read-heavy workloads.

17.6.3. Hosting

Hosting on a **private server** means deploying your application and data on **physical or virtual machines** that are owned, managed, and maintained by your organization. These servers are typically located on-premises or in a dedicated data centre.

Advantages:

- **Full Control:** You have complete authority over hardware configurations, operating systems, network policies, and security protocols.
- **Customization:** Tailor the environment to specific performance, compliance, or integration needs—especially useful for legacy systems or specialized workloads.
- **Data Sovereignty:** Sensitive data remains within your infrastructure, which may be critical for regulatory compliance or internal governance.

17.6.4. Challenges

- **High Capital Expenditure:** Requires upfront investment in hardware, cooling, power, and physical security
- **Maintenance Burden:** Ongoing patching, upgrades, backups, and disaster recovery are your responsibility
- **Limited Scalability:** Scaling up means purchasing and provisioning new hardware, which takes time and planning.

This model is often preferred by institutions with strict data governance requirements, such as banks, government agencies, or large enterprises with existing IT infrastructure.

17.6.5. Hosting on AWS Cloud

Amazon Web Services (AWS) offers a **fully managed, elastic cloud platform** where you can deploy applications, databases, and services on-demand without owning physical hardware.

Advantages:

- **Scalability & Flexibility:** Instantly scale resources up or down based on traffic, usage, or business growth
- **Cost Efficiency:** Pay-as-you-go pricing eliminates capital expenditure and allows precise budgeting.
- **Global Reach:** Deploy workloads across multiple regions for performance optimization and redundancy
- **Advanced Services:** Access cutting-edge tools for AI, analytics, security, and automation—without building them from scratch.

Challenges:

- **Less Direct Control:** While you manage configurations, the underlying infrastructure is abstracted
- **Ongoing Costs:** Long-term usage can become expensive if not optimized

- **Vendor Lock-In:** Deep integration with AWS services may make migration to other platforms more complex.

17.7. Conclusion

The staffing and rollout of the SALPC is a multi-faceted project which will need to be led by the Board.

There will be a phased approach which will be determined by the priorities set by the board and the available funding.

18. Chapter 18 Statutory Council Structures

18.1. Introduction

This chapter explores how professional regulatory bodies are structured and governed in South Africa, with the aim of informing the proposed institutional design of a National Language Council. The focus is on professions that, like the language sector, are governed through statutory councils established by an Act of Parliament.

These bodies carry legal mandates to regulate qualifications, uphold professional standards, enforce codes of conduct, and often manage accreditation and continuing professional development. Five sectors have been selected as benchmarks: Law, Health Professions, Engineering, Education, and the Built Environment Professions.

Law – Regulated by the Legal Practice Council (LPC)

Health Professions – Regulated by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA)

Engineering – Regulated by the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA)

Education – Regulated by the South African Council for Educators (SACE)

Built Environment Professions – Coordinated by the Council for the Built Environment (CBE)

18.2. Mechanisms for Professional Recognition and Standards

The proposed South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC) is a statutory body established to regulate, professionalise, and support the language services sector—with a focus on translation, interpreting, editing, terminology development, and related linguistic work.

As outlined in the South African Language Practitioners' Council Act (2014), the Council is expected to carry out functions such as setting national standards, accrediting practitioners and training providers, maintaining a register, and enforcing ethical codes of conduct. If implemented as intended, it will serve both as a professional regulator and as a public-interest institution ensuring the quality and accountability of language service provision in all sectors.

18.3. Conclusion

Lessons can be learned from the existing statutory council in terms of their governance, funding and interaction with members and broader stakeholders.

Section E

Empirical Research

19. Chapter 19 Online Survey Review

19.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the results obtained from the online survey "Investigation: Language Practitioner Database System." The survey collected opinions from professionals and the general public about whether South Africa needs a unified database system that would track language practitioners throughout the nation. The research was conducted in collaboration between PanSALB and the SACO. The survey reached participants through the South African Cultural Observatory (SACO) database and social media platforms.

The survey sought to examine the dispersion of practitioner information across different institutions and investigate how the establishment of a central database could standardize qualification systems, monitor professional development, enhance job access and improve access to qualified language professionals.

The survey was completed by 149 respondents (out of the 150 who started the survey). The findings presented in this chapter provide essential feedback of survey participants, reflecting the needs, concerns and expectations of the South African language sector.

19.2. Overview of All Respondents

Figure 8 to the right shows that a total of 149 respondents completed the survey at the time of this analysis. The majority of respondents – almost 61,07% - were female and some 38,93% were male.

Table 7 below presents the racial composition of survey respondents, with the majority being African (69,23%), followed by White (28,67%) and Coloured (2,10%) participants.

Figure 8: Online survey breakdown by gender.

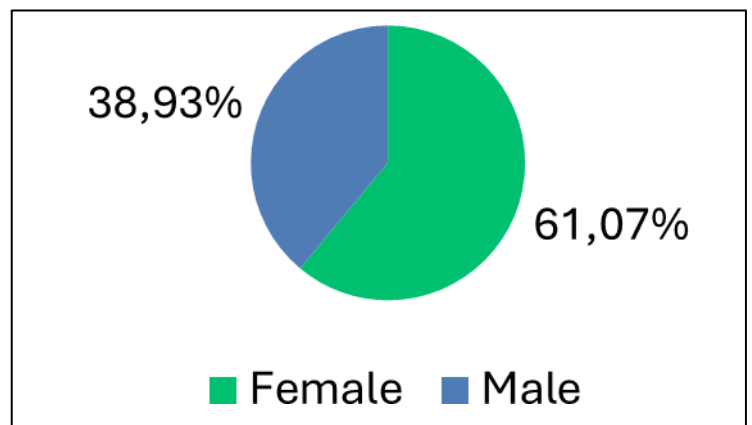


Table 7: Respondents by population group.

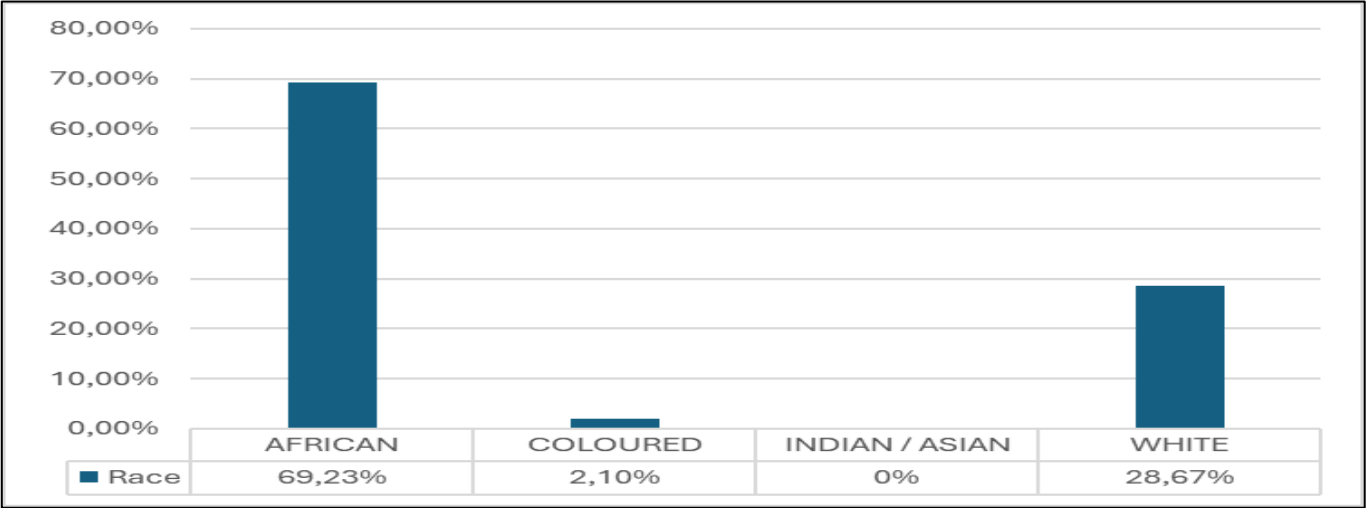
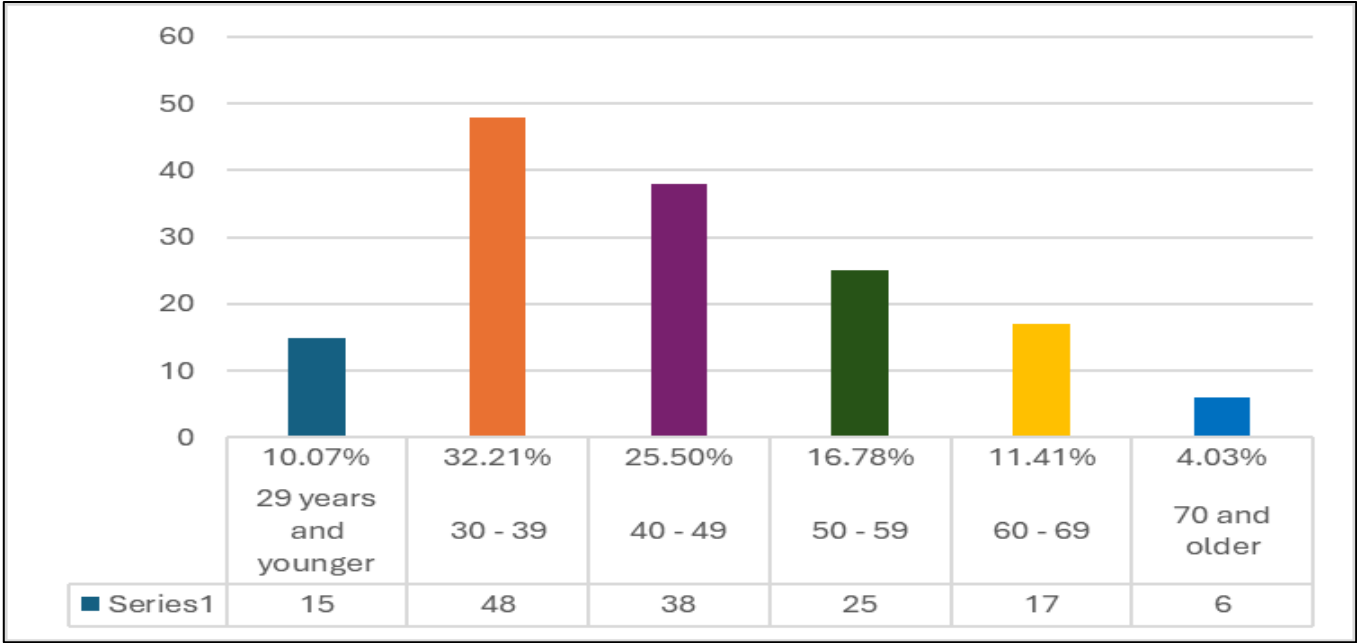


Table 8 below presents the distribution of respondents across various age groups, with the highest proportion falling within the 30–39 age range (32,21%), followed by 40–49 years (25,50%), 50-59 years (16,78%), and 60-69 years (11.41%)

Table 8: Respondents by age group.



Responses were received from all nine provinces. Table 9 shows that the majority of responses were received from Gauteng (25,17%) This was followed by:

- Western Cape (17%)
- North-West (12,93)
- Mpumalanga (11,56)
- Eastern Cape (7,48%)
- Northern Cape (7,48%)
- KwaZulu-Natal (7,48%)
- Limpopo (6,80%)
- Free State (4,08%)

Table 9: Respondents by province.

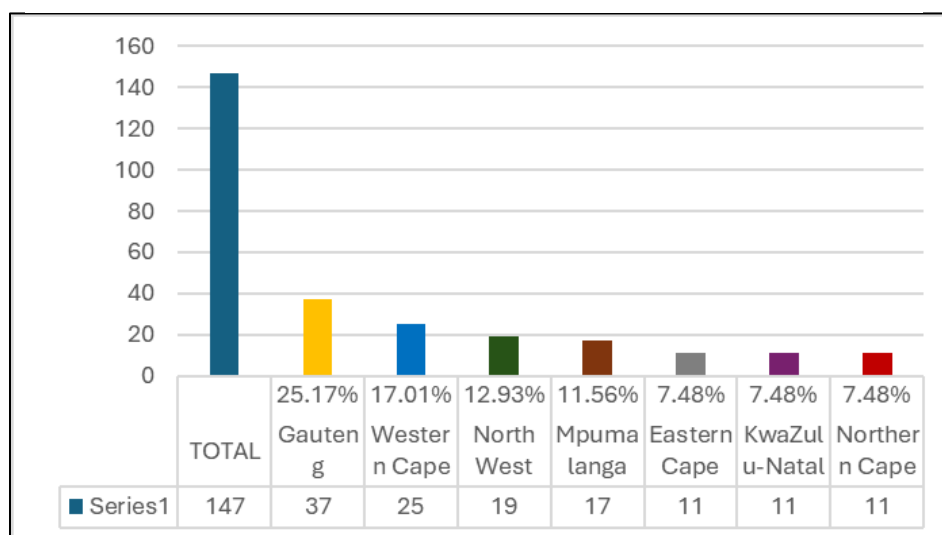


Table 10 below presents the percentage of respondents by qualification type. 38,10% of respondents hold postgraduate qualifications, while 17,01% have degrees and 10,20% have diplomas. There is a significant representation of respondents with matric certificates (18,37%), apprenticeship/post-matric certificates (9,52%) and Grade 10 qualifications (6,80%), highlighting that people across a broad spectrum of educational backgrounds are concerned about and want to be actively involved in investigating the possibility of establishing a unified database system to track language practitioners throughout the nation.

Table 10: Respondents by qualification.

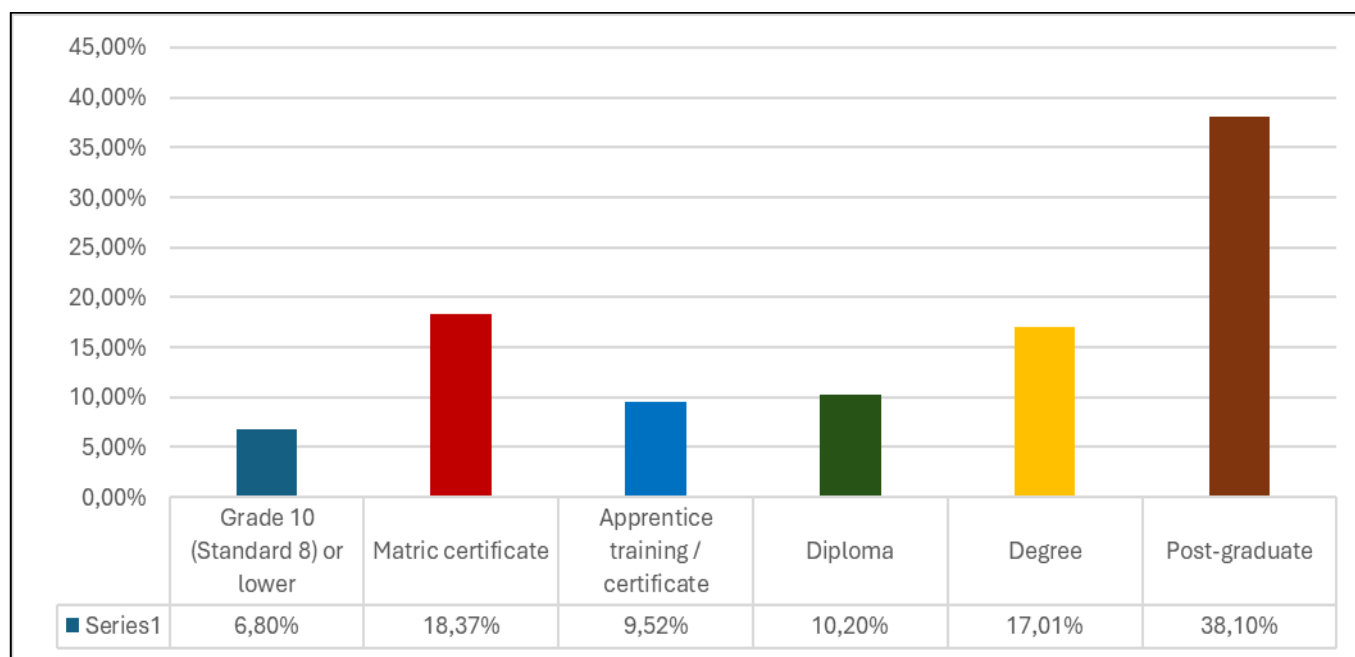


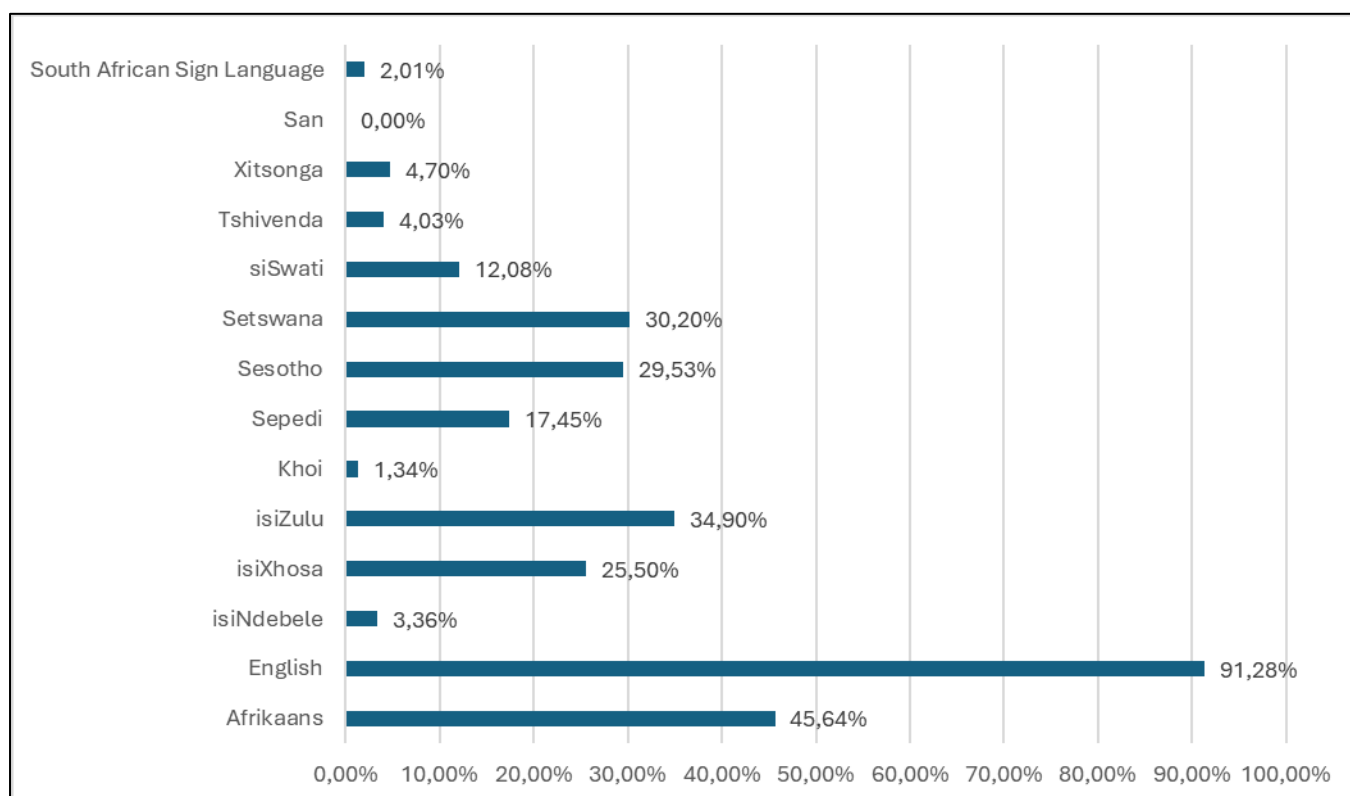
Table 11 below presents the languages that respondents use to communicate, reflecting South Africa's multilingual landscape. The survey results showed English (91.28%) as the primary language of communication with Afrikaans in second place with 45,64%. isiZulu (34,90%), Setswana (30,20%), Sesotho (29,53%) and isiXhosa (25,50%) are also a popular languages.

The remaining languages included Sepedi at 17.45%, siSwati at 12,08%, Tshivenda at 4,03%, Xitsonga at 4,70% and isiNdebele at 3,36%. It is important to note that 1,34% (2) respondents selected Khoi and 2,01%

(3) respondents selected South African Sign Language (SASL) indicating that these languages remain marginalised in official and professional contexts.

The survey results demonstrate that English dominates the South African language economy while highlighting the multilingualism of respondents.

Table 11: Respondents by language in which they communicate.



19.3. Employment Sectors and Roles

The initial survey questions (above) focussed on developing a demographic overview of respondents. The next set of questions (8-12) focus on the professional settings where language practitioners currently work. The survey questions reveal information about employment sectors and professional roles which practitioners perform in public institutions, private enterprises, media and publishing, development research and civil society domains.

The survey reveals the extensive reach of the language profession in South Africa, highlighting the diverse functions that language practitioners fulfil, including include teaching, interpreting, editing, cultural heritage work, research and policy development. Identifying and mapping these roles enables researchers to understand both the current work requirements of practitioners and the potential benefits that a national database would bring. Benefits such as improved professional exposure, specialized networking opportunities and customized assistance.

Questions 8-12 establishes a foundation for the current economic and social positions of practitioners while demonstrating the need for a system that supports diverse professional environments for language service delivery.

Table 12 below illustrates the distribution of survey respondents across employment sectors. The survey data shows that South African language practitioners work in a wide variety of professional fields. The largest proportion of practitioners are engaged in Public & Government Services and Private & Professional Services which together account for more than two-thirds of this sample. This reflects the high demand for language services in education, government communication, translation, interpreting and corporate services drives.

The two sectors' Media & Publishing and Development (14,48%) and Research & Civil Society (14,48%) represent smaller, but important shares of the language practitioner's profession. These sectors provide an overview of the contributions of practitioners in creative industries, content production, cultural heritage, policy development, and advocacy.

The distribution pattern shows that language practitioners work in both institutional environments and knowledge-based, community-oriented and creative-based sectors, underlining the need for a national database system to accommodate and support professional collaboration between all practice areas.

Table 12: Sectoral representation of respondents.

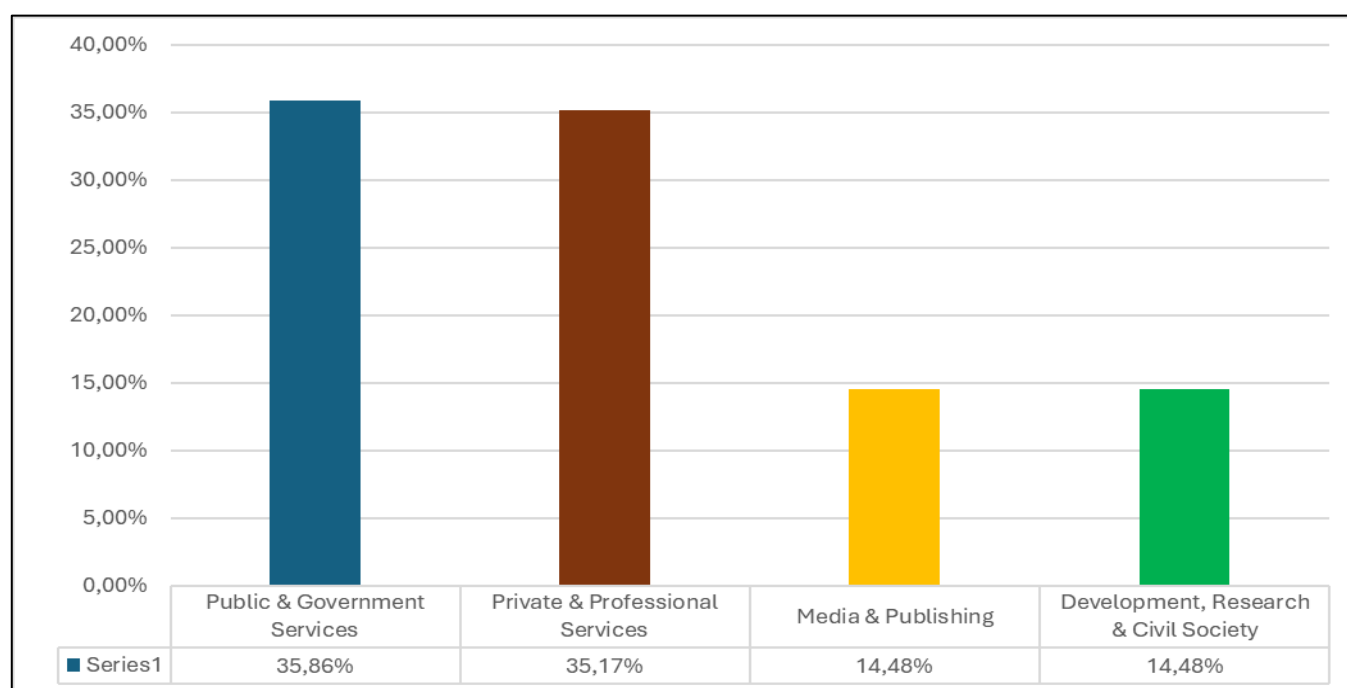


Table 13 reveals that language practitioners working within the Public and Government Services sector, cover a wide range of functions that represent the central institutional needs of the state, as well as the requisite specialised services for communities. The highest levels of participation are found in basic education (31.37%) and higher education and academic institutions (23.53%). This confirms the core role of language professionals in teaching, learning, and knowledge production. Not far behind are the translation and interpreting services (29.41%) and editing and proofreading (29.41%). This underlines the demand for accessible and accurate communication with due credibility, across government and public platforms.

Substantive public engagement is also found in language development and planning (25.49%), emphasizing the significance of the institutional activity in the implementation of multilingualism and language policy.

Other contributions include roles and functions in provincial and national government departments (19.61%), municipal services (15.69%), and research and policy work (15.69%). Collectively these activities reveal how practitioners constitute a vital resource in governance, administration, and reinforce evidence-based planning. More modest but still important percentages, are involved in social development and welfare (7.84%), legal services (5.88%), security services (5.88%), and public healthcare (3.92%). These all suggest the specialised interpreting and communication support required in strategic service delivery.

This distribution demonstrates that language practitioners in the public domain are not confined specifically to teaching or translation, but rather contribute to a wider ecosystem of services which range from education and policymaking to social and legal support. These services collectively enable and sustain communication and multilingual access in South Africa's public life.

Table 13: Roles within public and government services.

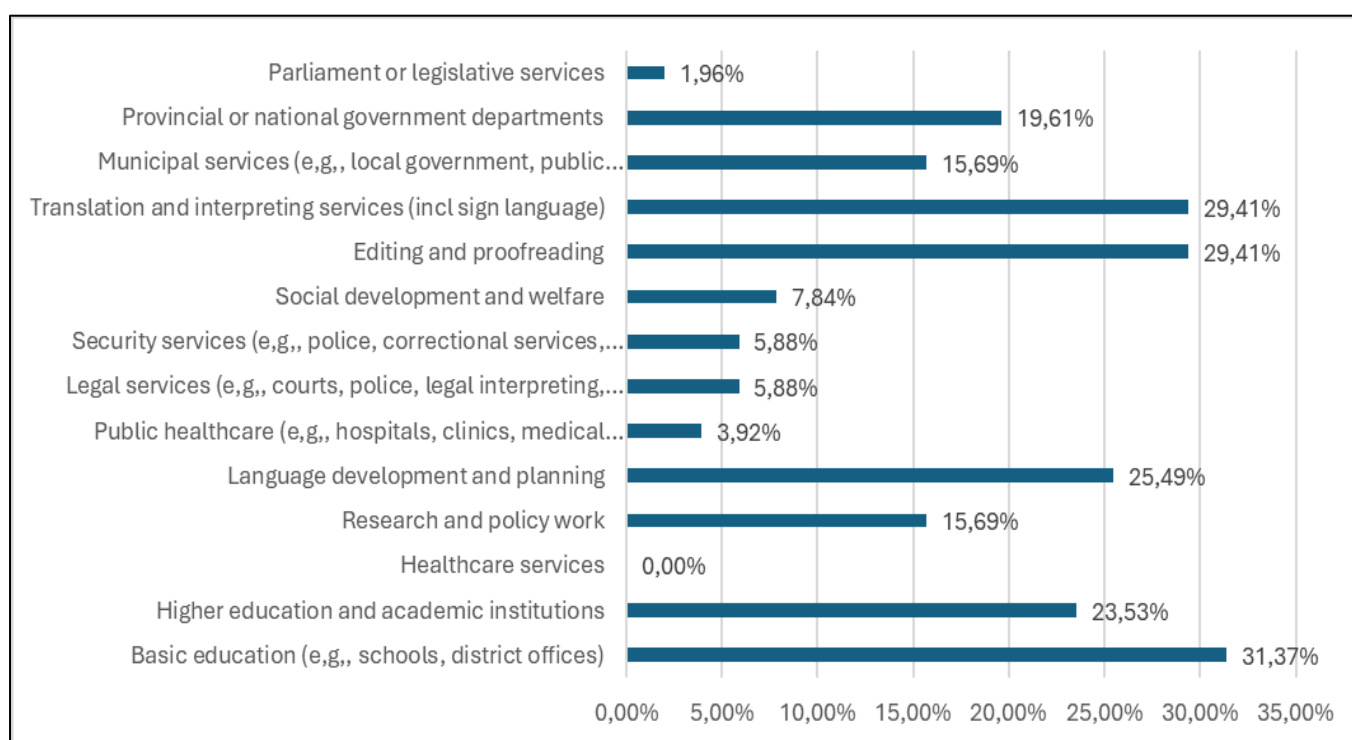


Table 14 below underlines that the Private and Professional Services sector is a diverse terrain, where language practitioners can deploy their skills across the fields of business, education, and independent practice. The main areas of work are language teaching (56.82%) and freelance/independent language services (56.82%). This shows that many practitioners operate either as educators or self-employed professionals within private institutions. This highlights

the entrepreneurial nature of the sector and the continuing demand for teaching and training in multiple languages.

Substantial engagement is also evident in private education and training institutions (31.82%) and editing and proofreading (25.00%). This demonstrates the sector's role in supporting professional communication, literacy development, and capacity building. Somewhat more modest, but not insignificant percentages of practitioners work with translation and interpreting agencies (11.36%) and in the business and corporate sector (11.36%), providing crucial services in financial, legal, HR, and internal communications circles.

There is limited representation in science, engineering, and technology (2.27%). Private healthcare providers (0%) do not feature in this sample. These findings indicate that while particular industries are less represented, the private sector comprises a major source of innovation, adaptability, and entrepreneurial practice within the broader language economy.

Table 14: Roles within private and professional services.

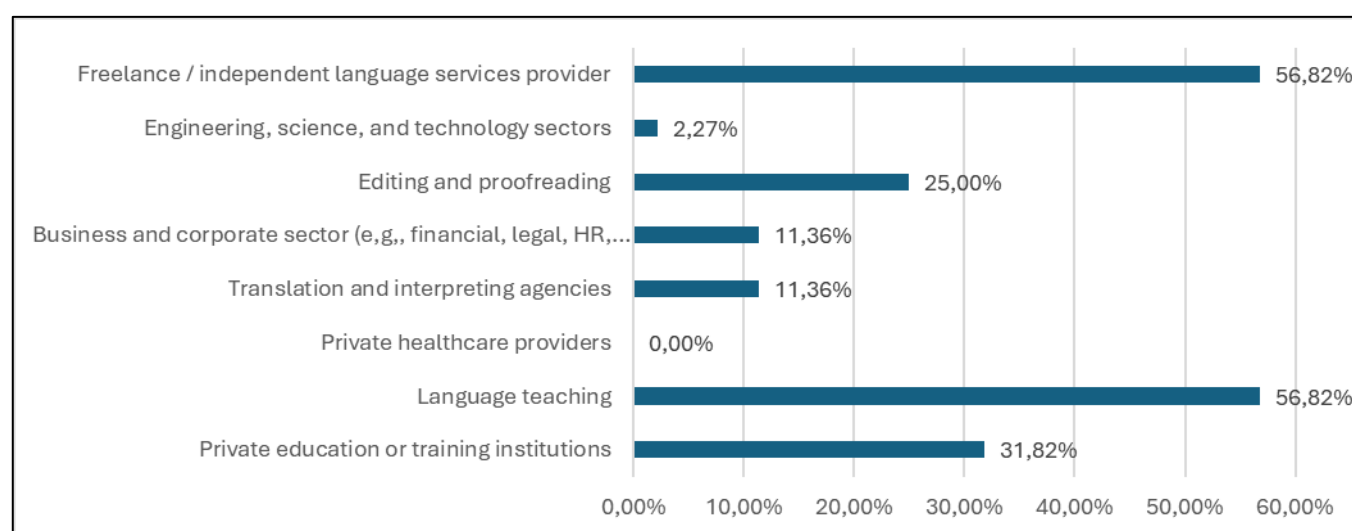


Table 15 below shows practitioners employed across traditional industry roles in publishing (including authoring, editing, and publishing), creative functions (e.g. script writing and performing arts), as well as contemporary digital media preserves such as online content creation and voice activities AV platforms. Most especially, book publishing (in the role of authors) and the performing arts are the fields most often cited as spheres of engagement, followed by editing, proofreading and script writing.

This distribution underlines the broad spectrum of opportunities within the sector and the continued deployment and value of language skills in creative, print, and digital contexts. It also highlights the capacity of the sector to provides spaces traditional linguistic work, as well as for artistic and performance-driven contributions. This in turn extends the profile of language practitioners beyond strictly technical roles.

Table 15: Roles within media and publishing

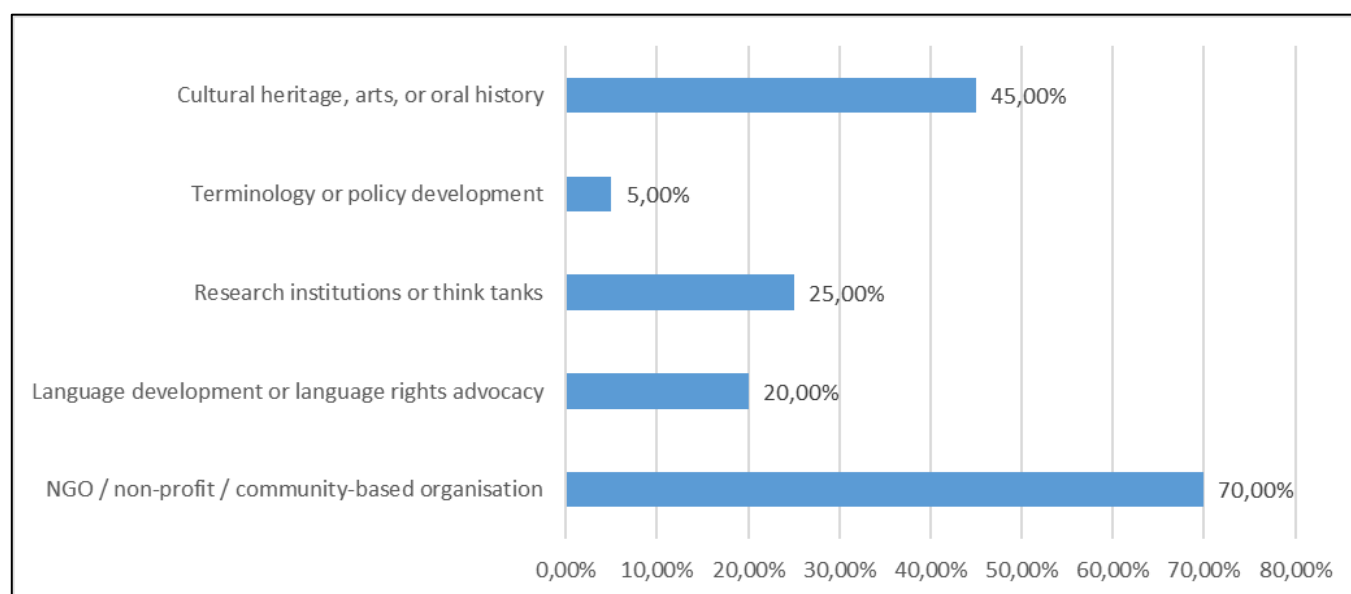


Table 16 below indicates the number of respondents active in the development, research, and civil society sector, demonstrating the strategic role that language practitioners play beyond government and commercial contexts. While only 20 practitioners completed this section, their collective responses show an array of contributions spanning institutions and initiatives.

The highest share (70%) is linked with NGOs, non-profits, or community-based organisations. This underlines how language work often intersects with community-oriented development, local philanthropic activity, and social advocacy. Just under a half (45%) contribute within the cultural heritage, arts, or oral history fields, strengthening the sector's role in ensuring linguistic and cultural diversity. A somewhat smaller but still important percentage is involved in work with research institutions or think tanks (25%) and in language rights advocacy (20%). This helps ensure that language remains central in policy and planning work and applied research. A modest number of respondents (5%) are engaged in terminology and/or policy development, which indicates a space for more focussed institutional support.

These responses reveal that practitioners in the sector often facilitate the meshing of community engagement, cultural and heritage preservation with research activity. This helps situate language work as a means of articulating heritage, development and evidence-driven policy activity.

Table 16: Roles within development, research and civil society.



19.4. Willingness, Need, Benefits, and Risks of a National Database

Questions 13–17 of the survey examined practitioners’ willingness to register on a centralised national database; their views on the necessity of such a system; and their considerations of its specified benefits and potential risks. These related questions go beyond demographic and sectoral profiling to the main aim of the investigation: whether the formation of a South African Language Practitioner Council (SALPC) database would be (i) well supported, and (ii) of practical value to the broad community of language practitioners.

Respondents were first asked about their willingness to register, on the understanding that the system is secure and professionally managed (Q13), and thereafter about the overarching need for a national database (Q14). This was followed by questions regarding languages preference for the use of the system (Q15), the chief reasons for developing such a database (Q16), and the risks and concerns to be carefully managed (Q17).

Collectively, these questions provide strategic insights into the following:

- the receptivity and willingness of practitioners to participate,
- the degree of consensus on the need for a centralised database,
- the key outcomes practitioners prize most (such as recognition, access to opportunities, and data for strategic and policy purposes), and
- the safeguards and risk management priorities that must be accommodated in the design of the system (including cost considerations, inclusivity, and data security).

This section therefore is pivotal stage in the survey, linking practitioners’ current experiences to their expectations for a future system, and providing practical guidance for the design, governance, management, and sustainability of a national database.

Tables 17 and 18 below show the respondents' willingness to register on the South African Language Practitioner Council (SALPC) database, on the understanding that it was secure and well-managed, and inclusive of their views on the broader need for a centralised national database for language practitioners.

The results reveal a particularly strong support for the initiative. A large majority of respondents (nearly 70%) declared that were very willing to register on the SALPC database, with a further 18% somewhat willing. Only a small minority (around 3%) stated they were not willing, while about 10% were unsure. This strong positive response demonstrates the perceived value of such a system as well as practitioners' readiness to participate, on the condition that matters of trust, security, and governance are sufficiently addressed.

When questioned about the overall need for a centralised national database, the consensus was even more clear cut. Almost 87% of respondents declared that South Africa requires such a system. Only a small proportion (2%) disagreed, while about 11% remained uncertain. This finding reflects a strong and distinct belief within the profession that a single and trusted database could help combat institutional fragmentation in the sector, enhance professional career development and recognition, and widen access to opportunities.

Overall, this suggests that the community of language practitioners is receptive to, and indeed actively calling for the establishment of a national database, with the expectation that it is implemented in a transparent, inclusive and sustainable way.

Table 18: Perceived need for national database.

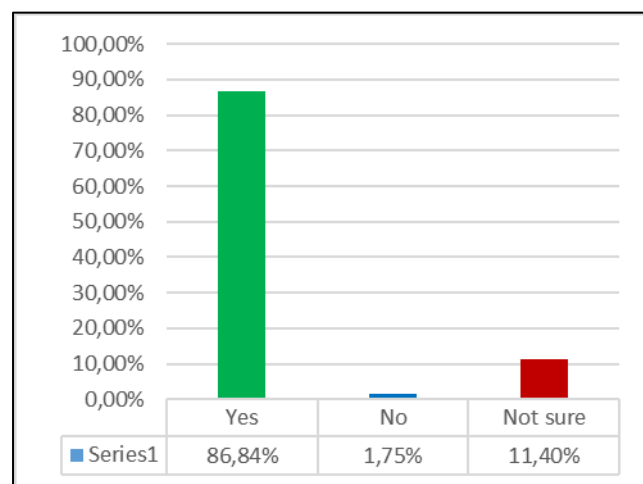
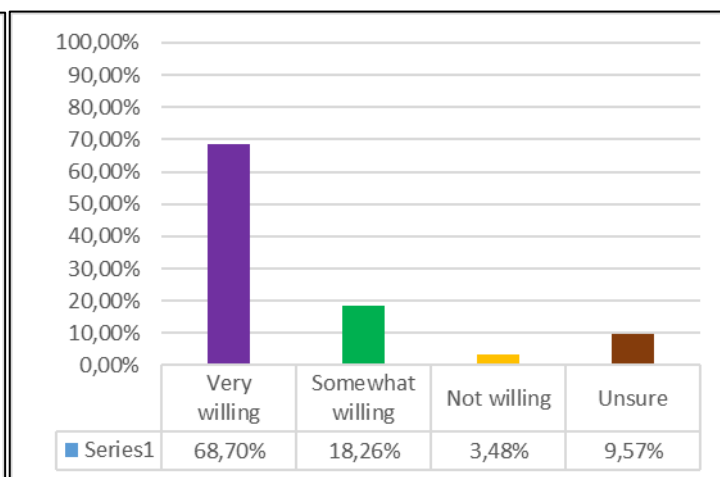


Table 17: Willingness to register on SALPC database.



Apart from assessing their willingness to register, respondents were asked to reflect on the main reasons for creating a national database (Table 19) and the major risks that would need to

be managed (Table 20). These questions illuminated both the expected benefits of such a system, and the essential safeguards required to ensure its success.

Table 19: Key reasons for registering on database.

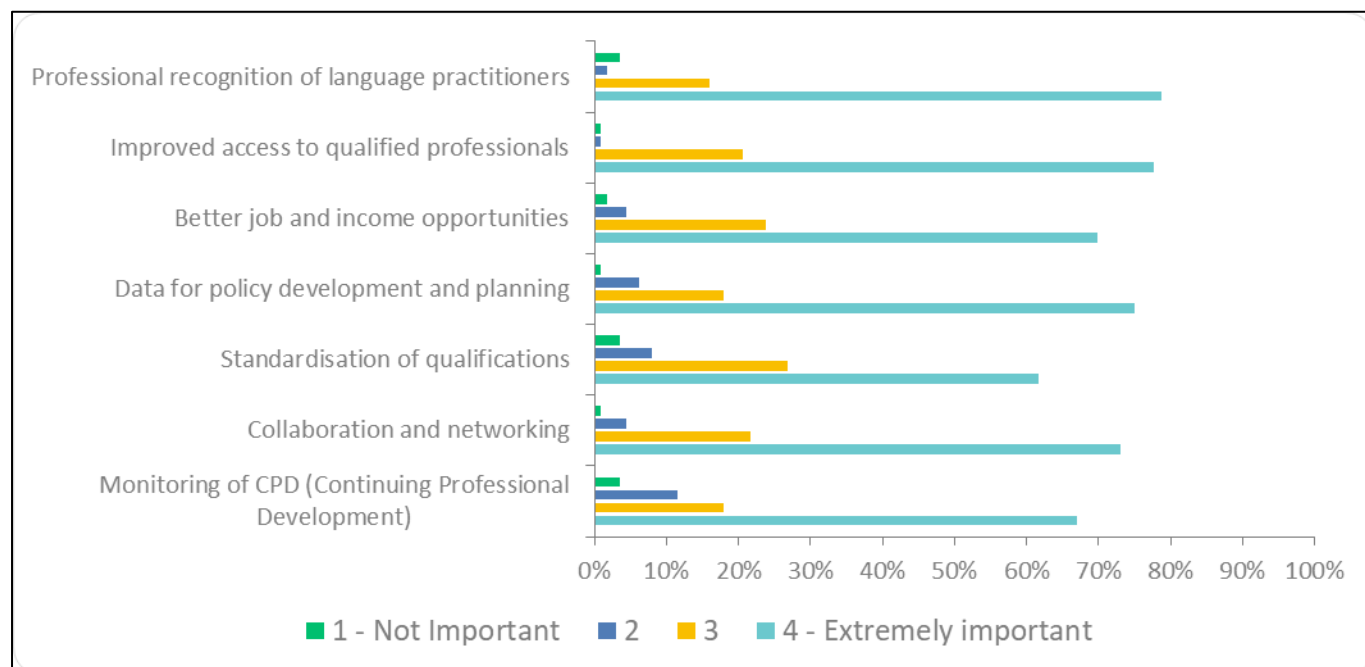
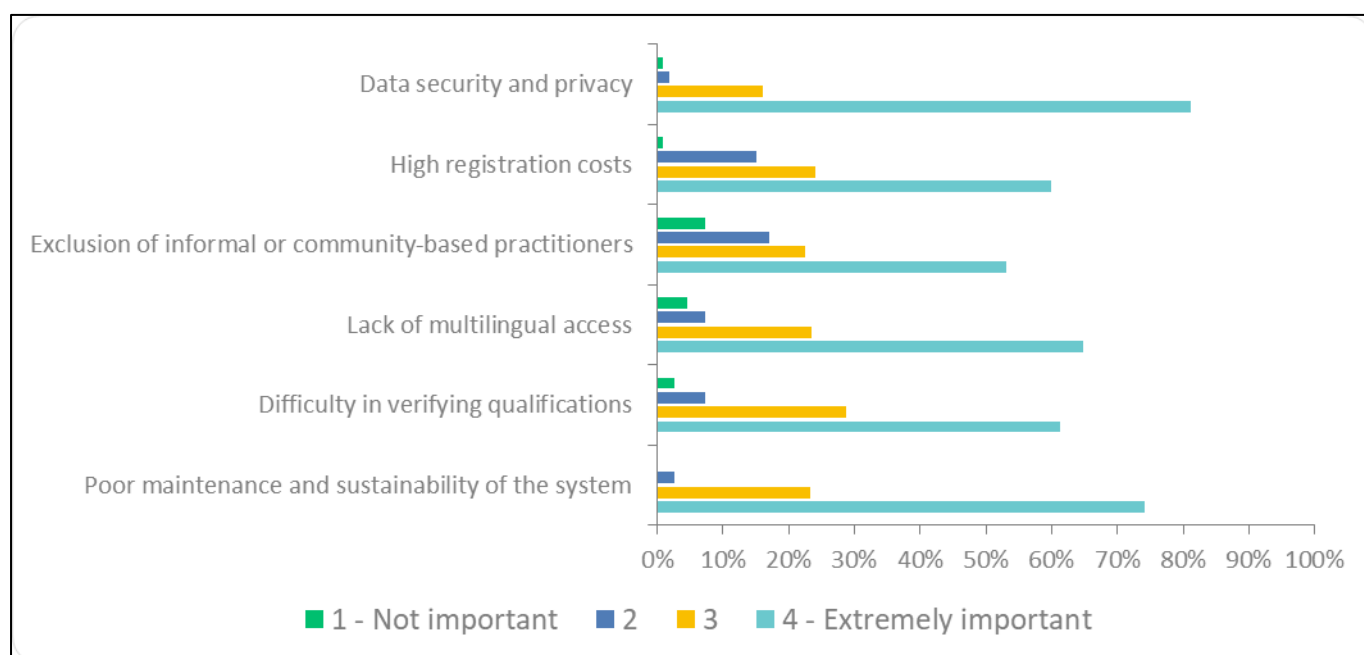


Table 20: Risks and concerns over database development.



On the one hand, respondents emphasized the positive outcomes a database could bring, including professional recognition, improved access for qualified practitioners, and enhanced job and income opportunities. The production of reliable data for policy and planning is also noted. The standardisation of qualifications and support for CPD (Continuous Professional Development) monitoring were also seen as crucial for the consolidation and professionalisation of the sector.

On the other hand, practitioners were just as emphatic about the attendant risks to be addressed in the design of the system. Foremost among these risks were data security and privacy, concerns about sustainability and maintenance, and the possibility of high registration costs excluding many practitioners. Respondents also stressed the need of securing multilingual access, averting the exclusion of community-based and informal practitioners, as well as responding to potential challenges in qualification verification.

Collectively, these responses indicate that practitioners are optimistic as well as pragmatic. Thus, they value the benefits of a centralised database, but are equally aware that without thoughtful planning, due emphasis on inclusivity and sound governance, the system could contradict its own objectives.

Table 21 below illustrates that, when asked about their preferred language for system use, most respondents (90%) selected English, making it the preferred choice across the survey group. This reflects both the extensive use of English as a lingua franca in professional and digital environments, and its function and practicality as a default working language for a national system.

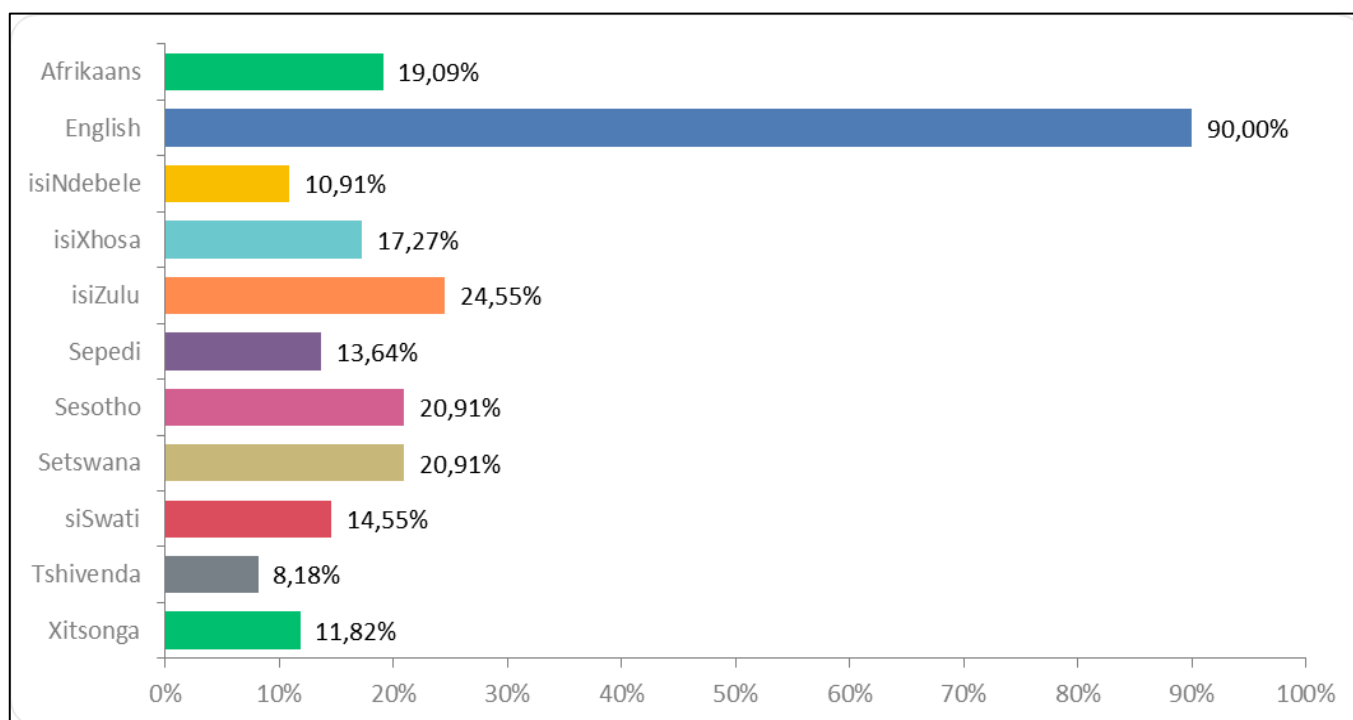
However, the responses also reveal that many practitioners' stress multilingual accessibility. Significant proportions indicated preferences for isiZulu (24.6%), Sesotho (20.9%), Setswana (20.9%), Afrikaans (19.1%), and isiXhosa (17.3%). This underlines the importance of ensuring representation for South Africa's major indigenous languages. Other languages such as Sepedi, siSwati, isiNdebele, Xitsonga, and Tshivenda also received support, indicating that practitioners expect the system to take due account of the linguistic diversity of the country.

The open-ended comments confirm this picture. Several respondents stressed that the system should allow users to select their preferred language, ideally with available options in the four most widely spoken languages or more inclusively offering all 11 official languages. Some respondents requested dynamic digital features. These included one-click switching between languages on websites or mobile platforms and glossing options to aid comprehension when operating in multiple languages.

Furthermore, there were also calls for languages beyond the official eleven spoken languages and the inclusion of South African Sign Language (SASL) – now the official 12th language -- and even San languages. Furthermore, there were also calls for certain international languages, most particularly German. These additions and modifications would help make the system properly accessible and equitable.

Collectively, the results reveal that while English will remain the practical baseline language, the inclusivity, credibility and reflexivity of the system will be contingent on its capacity to cater for multilingual options, accommodate indigenous and minority languages, and be accessible for users who require Sign Language support.

Table 21: Preferred primary language for database.



Taken together, the results show that while English will remain the practical baseline language, the credibility and inclusivity of the system will depend on its ability to provide multilingual options, accommodate indigenous and minority languages, and ensure accessibility for users who require Sign Language support.

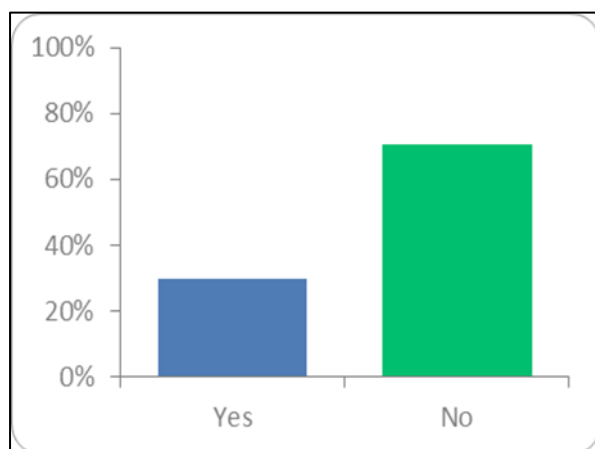
19.5. Individual Practitioners

This section was focused on individual language practitioners operating independently or within organisations (e.g., interpreters and translators, teachers, writers, editors, language developers and content creators). It examines their professional affiliations, work contexts, the length of experience, before proceeding to the practical challenges faced—such as finding work, identifying opportunities, verifying credentials, and dealing with limited organization within the sector.

Practitioners were also asked about their use of online portals, the features and resources they would prioritize in a national database, and their concerns about accessibility, and system design. Overall, these questions provide insight into the everyday realities of practitioners and highlight the core requirements for a secure, inclusive, and useful database system.

Table 22 reveals that most respondents are not registered with a professional body (around 70%). This underlines a large gap in formal affiliation within the sector. This suggests that many practitioners operate beyond established structures and highlights the importance of a national database for recognition and professional controls.

Table 22: Registration with professional body.



In respect of employment categories, Table 23 shows that practitioners are dispersed within different sectors. The largest group categorized themselves as working as freelancers or self-employed. They were followed closely by those in the public sector (schools, government departments). Smaller numbers are engaged in the private sector or academic/research institutions, while a minority indicated they are not currently working. This spread reflects the sector's diversity. It also shows practitioners' reliance on freelance and contract work.

Table 23: Practitioners' Working Contexts.

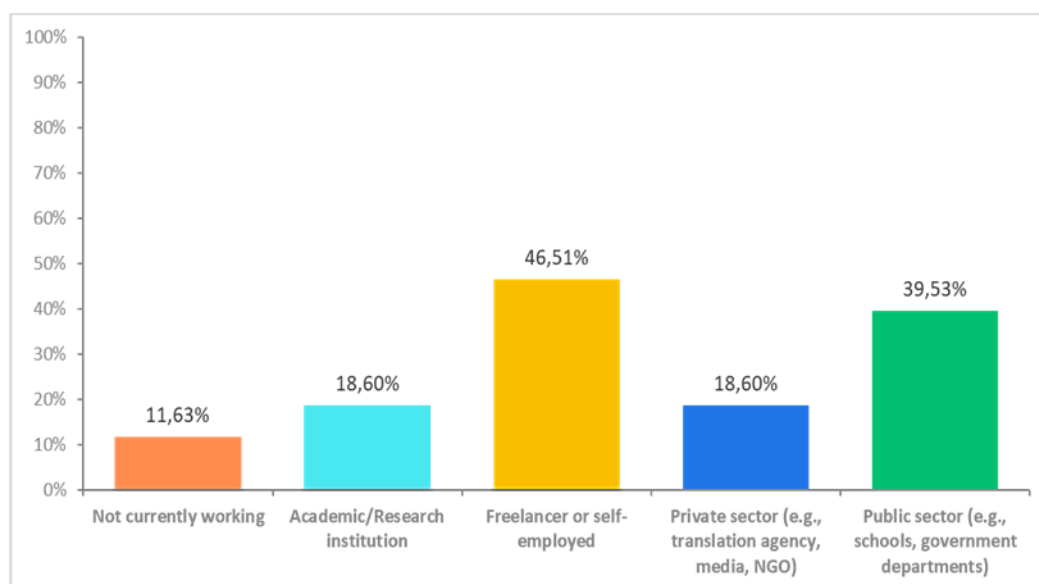


Table 24 considers professional experience, showing that over 40% of respondents have over 20 years of experience. The remainder are distributed evenly across the early- to mid-career

stages (1–14 years). This indicates a solid base of experienced professionals mixed with entrants who may require support in in terms of networking, professionalization and recognition

Table 24: Years of professional experience.

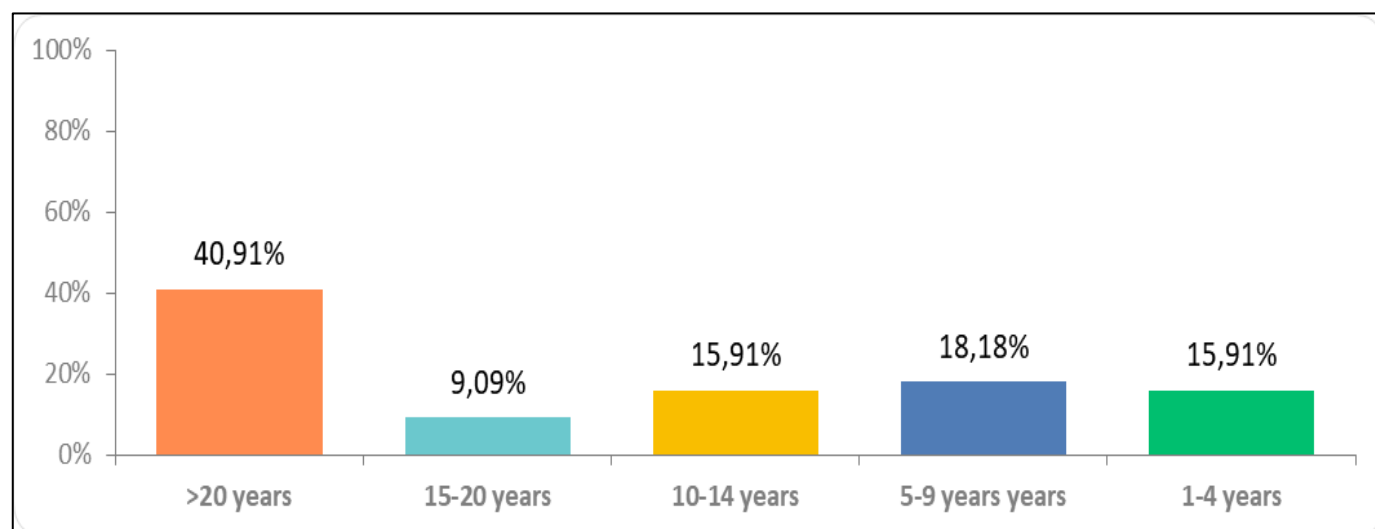
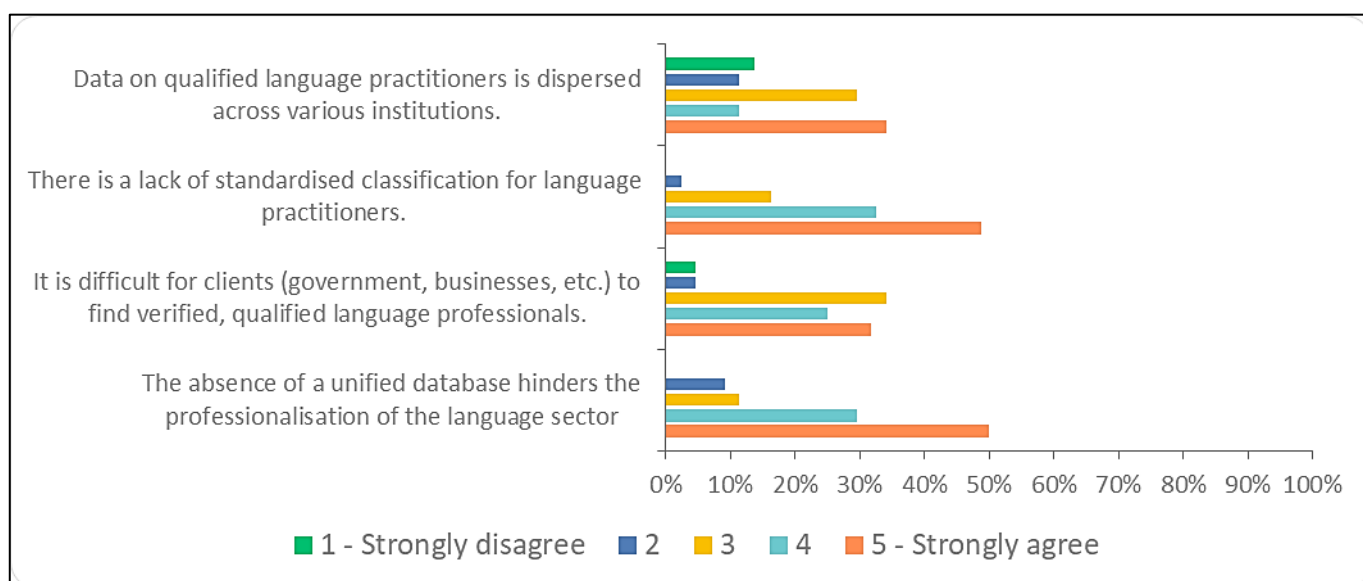


Table 26 below shows that the bulk of respondents agree or strongly agree that data on practitioners is fragmented. A standardised classification has still to be achieved, and the lack of a consolidated database inhibits professionalisation. Respondents also indicated that clients struggle to find professionals with the appropriate qualifications and verification. This situation is exemplified by an important point from one of the respondents, namely that the South African Council for Educators (SACE) does not recognise foreign languages as a specific category among its Special Registration Categories. This oversight means that teachers of languages such as German do not have a dedicated registration pathway, despite their international qualifications. Consequently, foreign language educators face barriers to professional recognition and continuing professional development, despite the high and growing demand for multilingual education. This suggests a structural policy gap that weakens professionalisation in the sector.

Table 25: Views on the current state of the language sector.

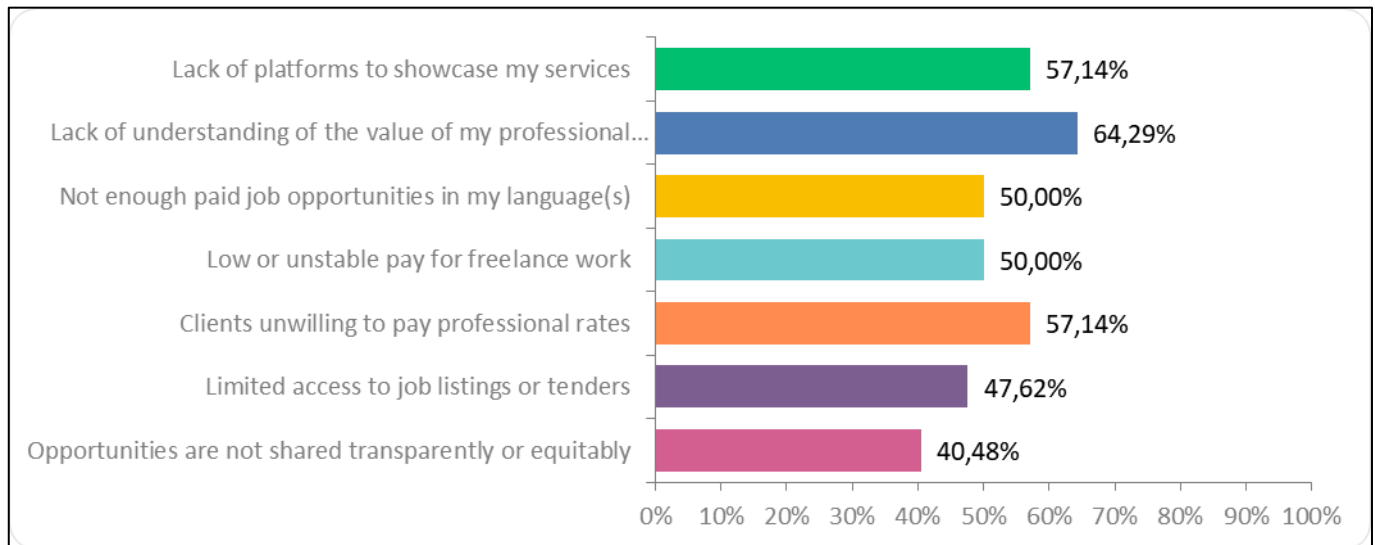


In Table 27 below, the various barriers that hinder work opportunities in the sector. Most concerning is the lack of dedicated platforms to promote services and the low levels of appreciation of the value of professional qualifications, which in turn diminish their credibility and public perception. Most practitioners, especially those working with languages that are not so widely spoken, stressed that relative paucity of paid opportunities. Also, those working as freelancers often face low or unstable remuneration.

Moreover, respondents noted the disinclination of clients to pay professional rates and limited and problematic access to tenders and job listings, as well as a differential allocation of opportunities across the sector.

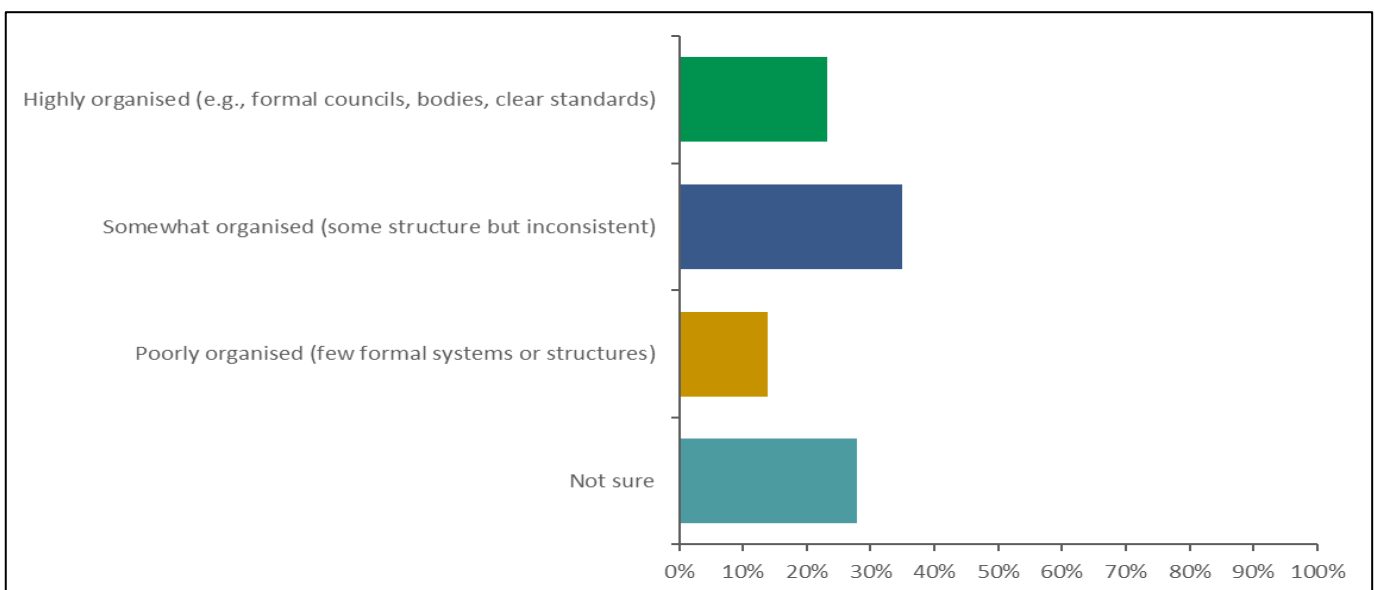
These collective challenges indicate deep-lying problems regarding professional recognition and visibility, and fair and equitable treatment. They also underline the precarity of work underscore experienced by many practitioners, particularly those operating as freelancers. There is a daily struggle to find reasonably compensated, and sustainable employment in a fractured market.

Table 26: Challenges finding suitable work opportunities.



Respondents also point out that verification of qualifications and experience is still problematic. A good many practitioners commented that they are not captured in recognised databases. Nor is there a central system for the verification of credentials. Others find accreditation processes too cumbersome and complex. Also, there is a sense that clients do not really grasp the value of credentials. This leads to a credibility disjunction, that undercuts trust as well as professional standards in the sector.

Table 27: Perceived Level of Organisation in Field



Regarding questions of organisation within their domain, most respondents considered it only “somewhat organised” or poorly organised and lacking in systematization and structure (Table 27). A substantial percentage said they were “not sure,” indicating an uncertainty and/or fragmentation across sub-sectors. In the comment section, respondents pointed out that community-oriented language work is often marginalized, notwithstanding its major role in the areas of education, multilingual communication, and heritage. The paucity of formal recognition for such work, widens the gap between institutionalised and community-oriented language expression.

The survey shows mixed responses regarding current online tools and clearly articulated expectations about the kinds of services required from a new national system. Table 28 shows that just over half of respondents (53%) indicated they do not use any online member portal or profile system, while about 28% do, and nearly 19% were unsure.

Table 28: Current Use of an Online Member Portal or Profile System

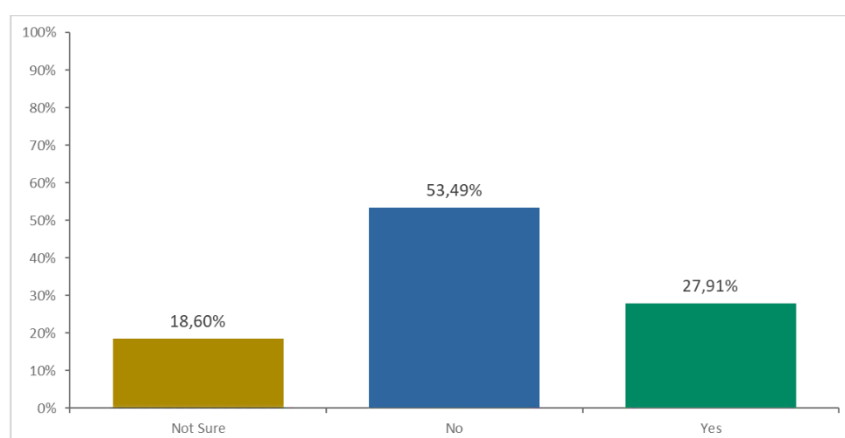
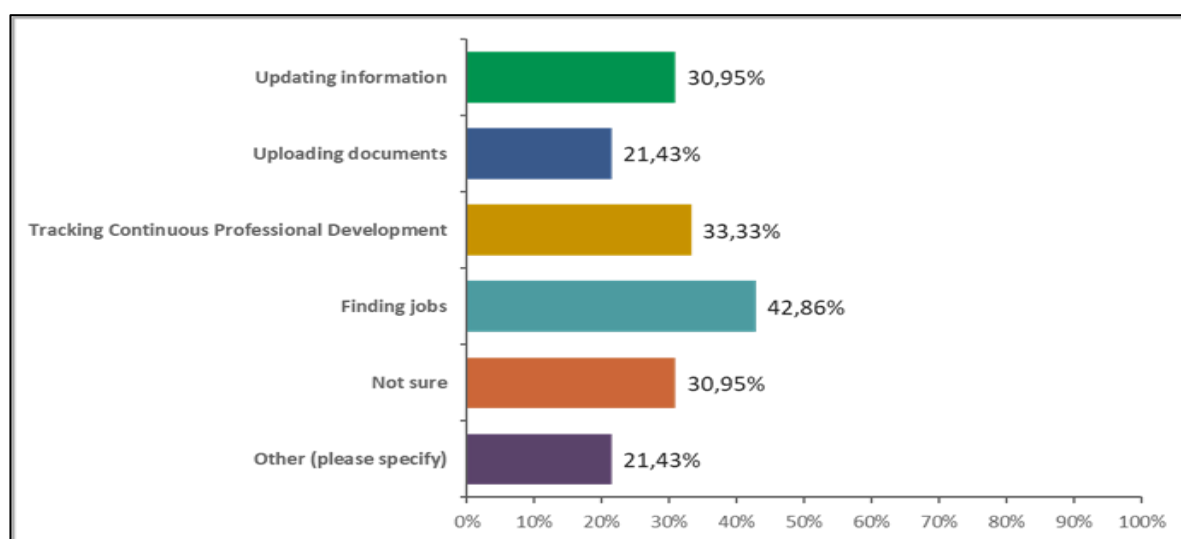


Table 29 highlights that for respondents who avail themselves of the services, portals are mostly used for finding employment (43%), tracking CPD (33%), and updating information (31%). Smaller percentages use them to upload documents or for other functions. This indicates that current systems have restricted coverage and are not yet an integral part of the professional routines of many practitioners.

Table 29: What should the Member Portal or Profile System be used for?



When questioned what the SALPC system should offer (Table 30), respondents prioritized verified professional profiles, a secure place to manage qualifications, job and tender notifications, and professional credibility and recognition. Networking, training access, and inclusion in language policy processes, were also appreciated. This indicates that for practitioners a central database is much more than a means of record-keeping tool but rather a thoroughgoing professional support system.

Table 30: What should the SALPC System Offer?

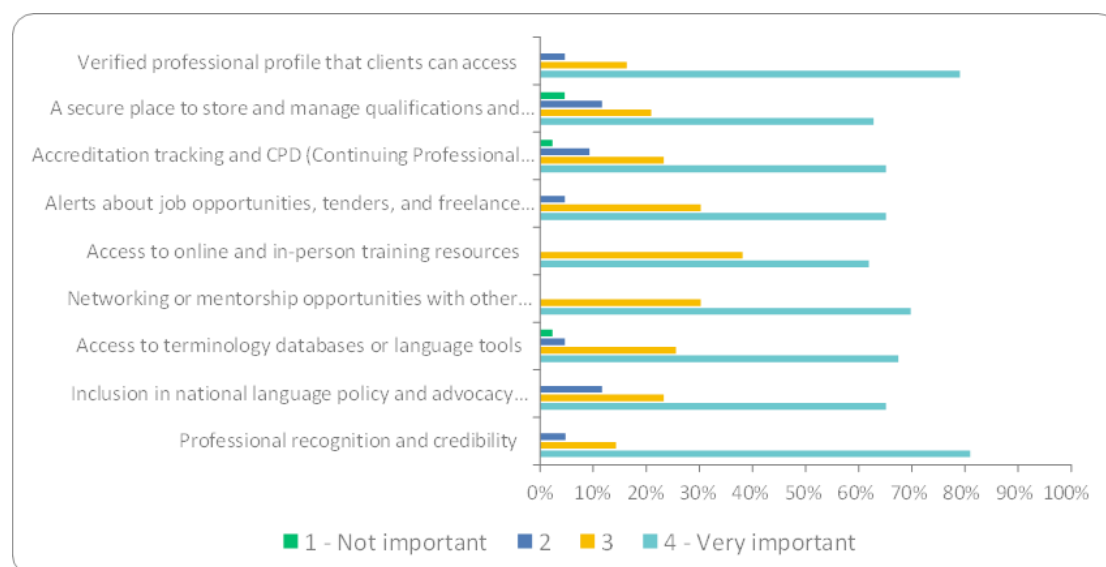


Table 31: What would encourage you to register and update your information?

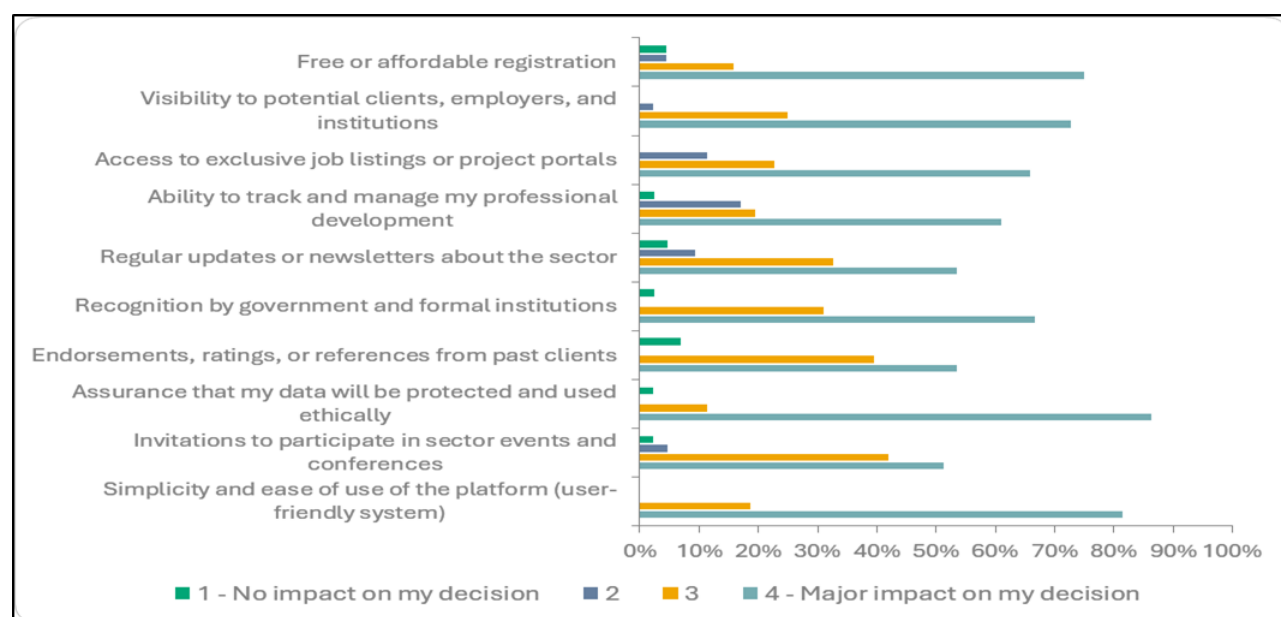
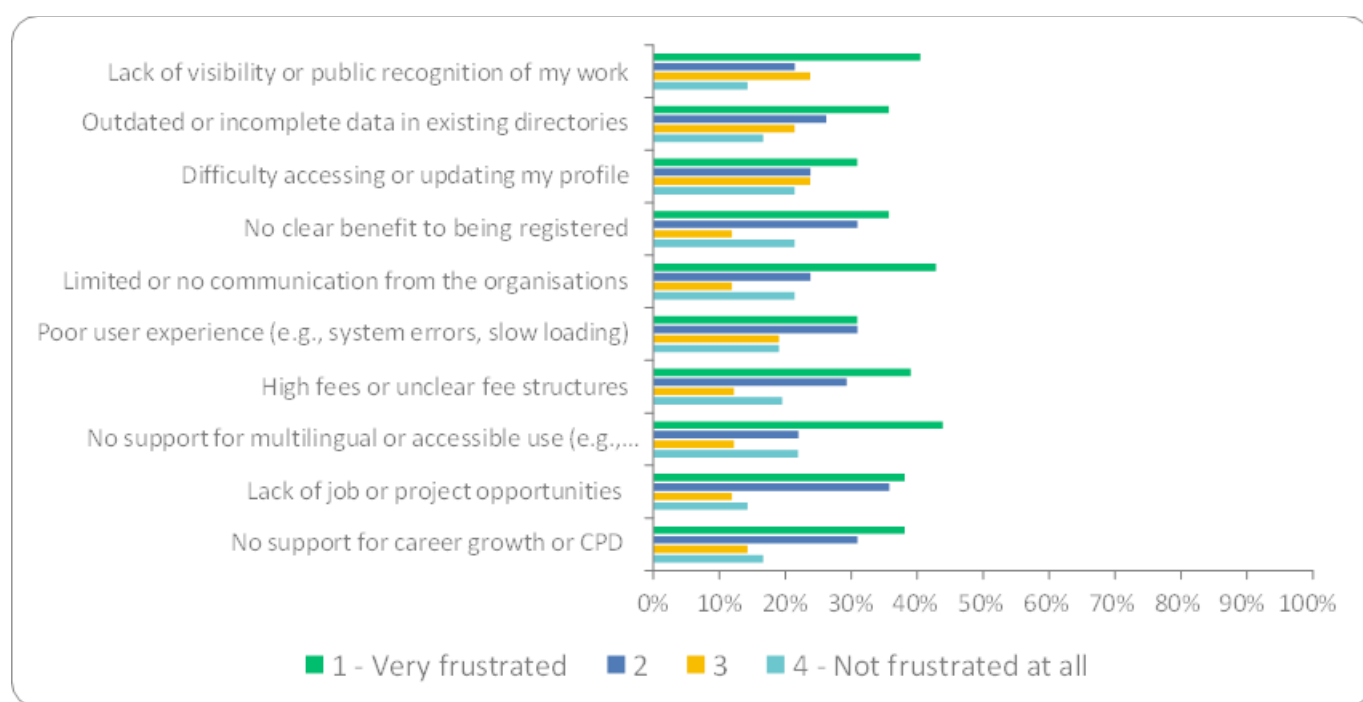


Table 31, above, reveals that the incentives for practitioners to register and regularly update information included free or affordable registration, visibility to clients and employers, exclusive access to jobs and projects, and assurance of data security. Ease of use, client endorsements, and formalized recognition by public institutions were also emphasized. These findings underline stress the need for a low-cost, trustworthy, and user-friendly data system.

Respondents expressed their considerable frustration with existing systems (Table 32). Particular emphasis was placed on the lack of visibility and recognition; the lack of clarity on the benefits of registration; dated and/or incomplete data, sizeable fees and the opacity of the fee system; as well as inadequate communication from organisations. Poor user experiences was also a common complaint. Such experiences included slow responding systems, recurrent system errors, and a poor multilingual accessibility. Significantly, the fragmentation of the language sector was emphasized. This included inadequate coordination and support for emerging practitioners, particularly those operating in rural and indigenous language settings. The reality of fragmentation reinforces inequalities and constrains opportunities for newer entrants to the sector.

Table 32: Frustrations with Current Systems



Regarding Table 33 below, respondents elaborated on the key features and safeguards for a future national database system, and their criteria for its design and functionality. The most favoured features are verified profiles (79%), which establish credibility, ensuring credibility, as well as job boards, multilingual access, and a set-up that is mobile friendly (each 67%). Other key requirements included the provision of qualification uploads (60%) and training access (65%), to facilitate professional development and recognition. There were fewer calls for features such as messaging platforms, which suggests that practitioners are prioritizing

professional validation and growth, access to employment opportunities, and system functionality.

Table 33: Requested key features of database.

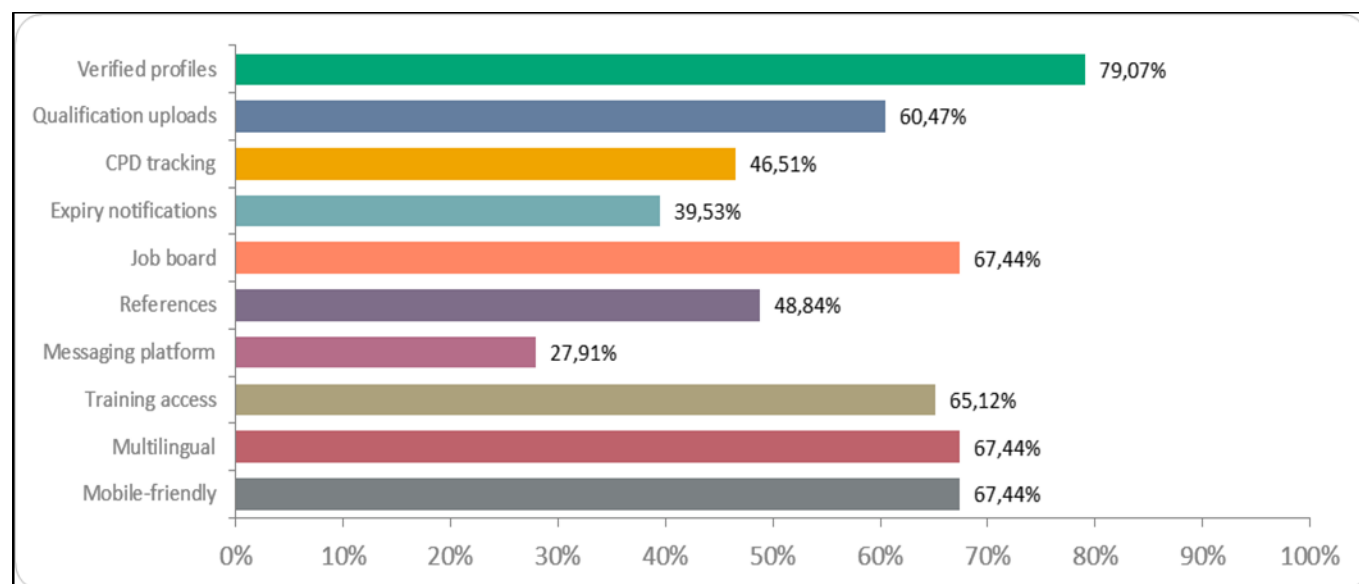


Table 34 highlights that respondents valued inclusive design. The main priorities comprised offline accessibility (79%), a mobile-friendly interface (67%), and multilingual audio guides (60%). Other key requirements included screen reader compatibility (56%), adjustable text size (51%), and voice-to-text tools (44%). Overall, these responses show that the incoming system should be accessible across the board and ensure that practitioners in rural or resource-constrained settings are fully included.

Table 34: Requested accessibility features of database.

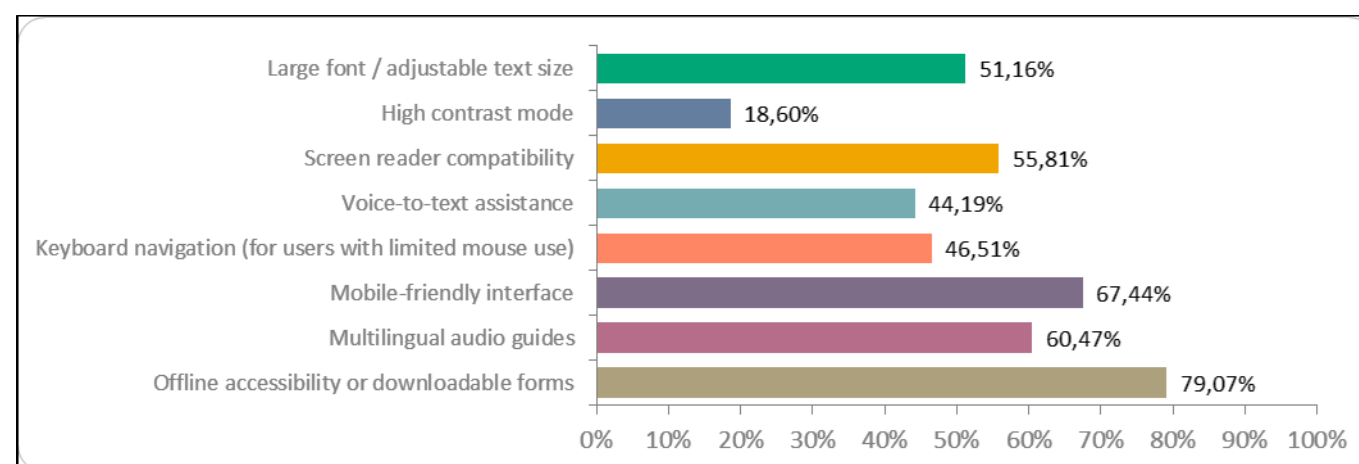


Table 35 below presents the concerns of respondents on data privacy. Security constituted a major issue. The vast majority feared the misuse or unauthorised sharing of personal data (91%). This was followed by concerns about data being sold or provided to third parties (81%), identity theft (79%), and poorly articulated protection policies (70%). Notably, each of the respondents indicated their concerns, underlining that transparent and trustworthy management of data is central to the acceptance of the new system.

Table 35: Data privacy concerns.

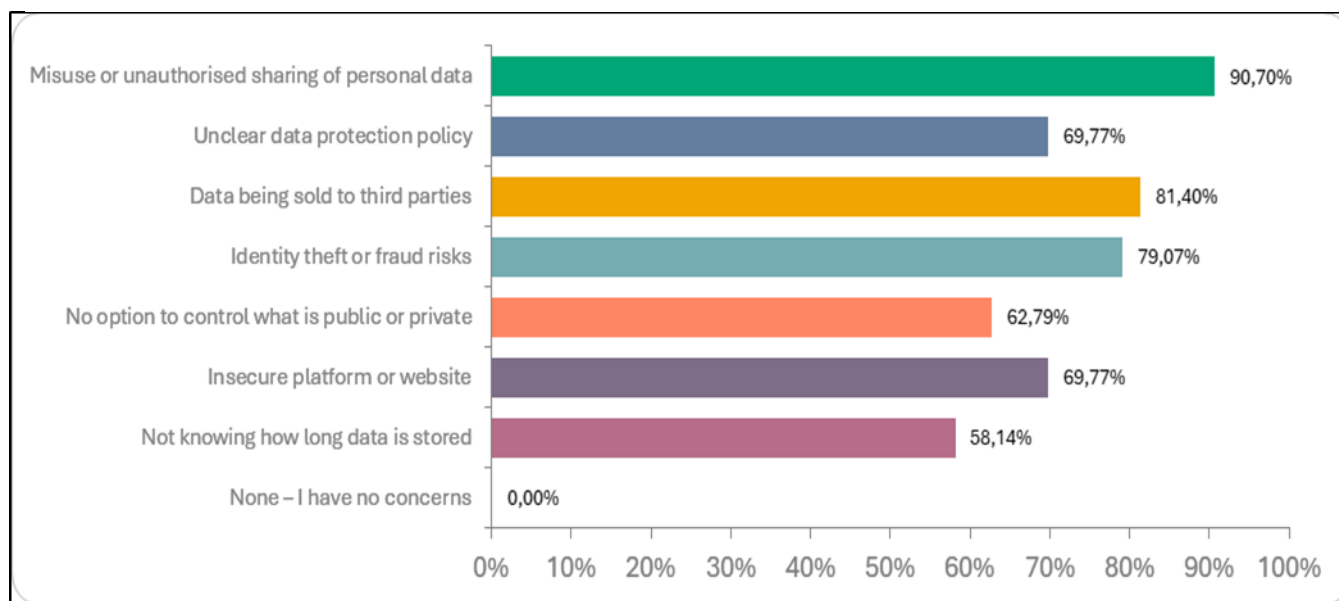
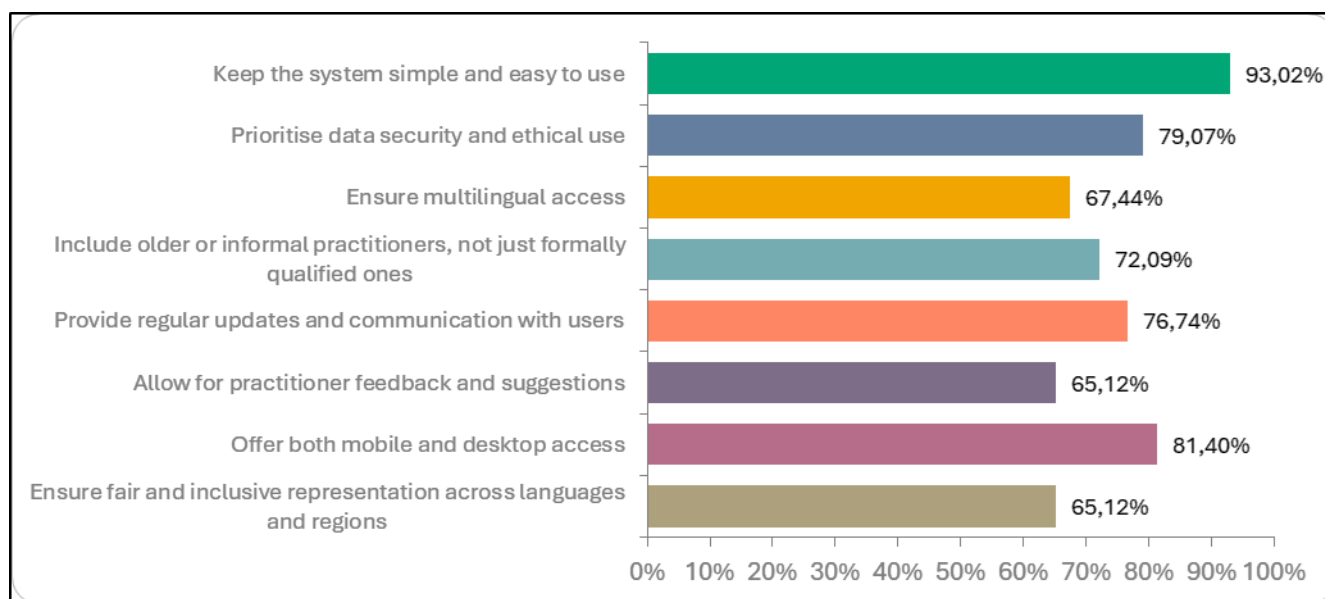


Table 36 below displays the respondents' advice for the development team. The main priorities noted include establishing and maintain a system that is simple and usable (93%); providing high data security (79%) and providing proper mobile and desktop access (81%). Respondents also emphasized the need for inclusivity— ensuring multilingual access (67%), catering for older and informal practitioners (72%), and fair and guaranteed representation across languages and regions (65%). Regular updates, substantive communication with users, and feedback mechanisms were also identified as essential components for a responsive and trusted system.

Table 36: Advice on design of system.



Responses from individual language practitioners working independently or within an organisation (e.g., translator, interpreter, writer, editor, teacher, content creator, language developer, etc.) reveal a fragmented and under-recognised language sector, with both formally qualified and community-based practitioners struggling to gain professional recognition.

Current digital infrastructure is inadequate, leaving practitioners without the platforms they need to showcase their work, access opportunities, or build credibility. To address these gaps, respondents called for a centralised, secure, and inclusive database that provides verified profiles for credibility, job boards and training for career growth, and accessibility features to ensure equitable participation across diverse contexts.

Establishing such a system will be essential to strengthen professionalisation, visibility, and sustainability within the sector.

19.6. Organisations and Stakeholders

This section of the survey gathered input from organisations involved in the language sector, looking at their primary functions, their data management practices, and the extent to which they verify or update practitioner information. The responses highlight a sector that is diverse in role but inconsistent in systems, underscoring the need for greater standardisation and centralisation.

Table 37: Organisational functions.

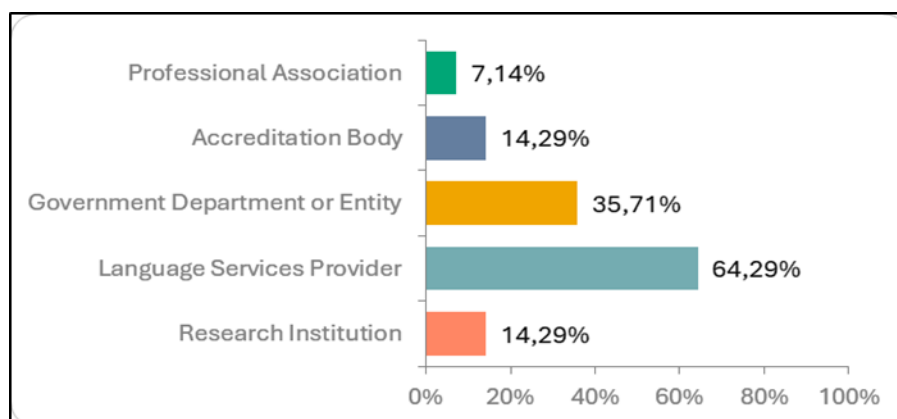


Table 37 shows that the most respondents listed as language service providers (64%), followed by government departments or agencies (36%), with smaller shares accounting for research institutions (14%), accreditation bodies (14%), and professional associations (7%). This spread reveals that the sector does not have a single and dominant kind of organisation, but instead comprises a mix of service delivery, regulatory, and research roles. Each of these have different expectations and responsibilities for data handling.

Table 38: Management of database.

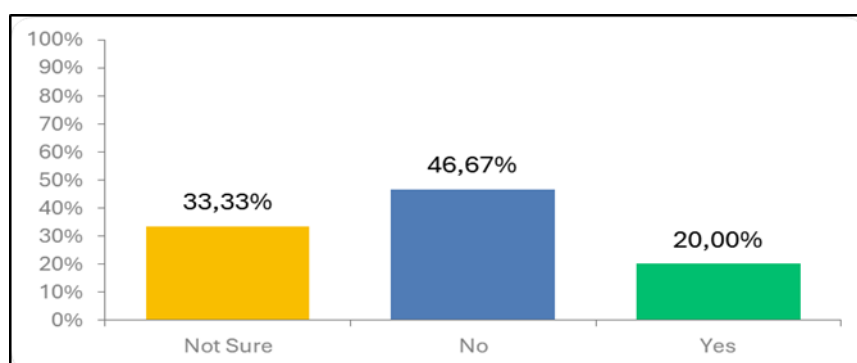


Table 38 reveals that when questioned whether they manage a membership or practitioner database, only 20% answered in the affirmative, while almost half (47%) reported to the contrary. Significantly, a third of the organisations (33%) were unsure, which indicates either a dearth of formal systems or poor staff awareness of the mechanics of the storage of practitioner information. This reduced awareness, carries risks for accountability and suggests insufficiently developed and coordinated record-keeping practices throughout the sector.

Table 39: Members can Update own Profile

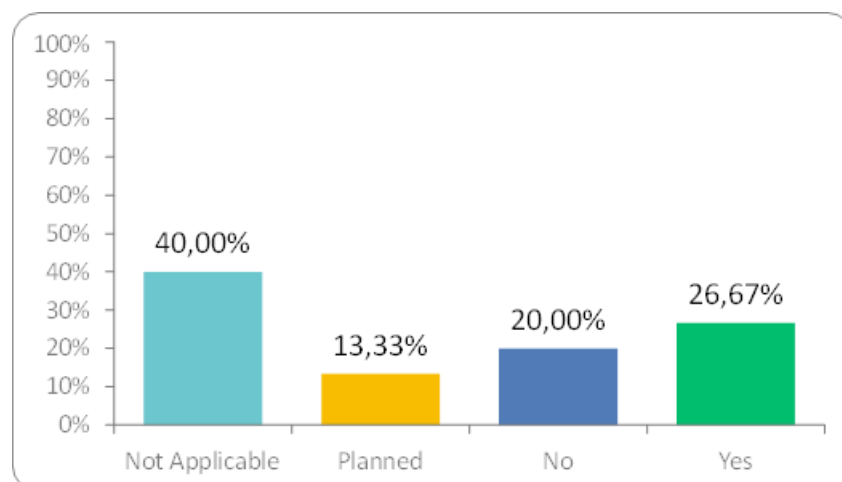


Table 39 shows that many databases allow members to update their details themselves. Only 27% of organisations allow members to update their own profiles, with 20% of organizations not providing this option. In addition, 13% said they will be introducing this feature. A good proportion of respondents (40%) listed the question as not applicable. This suggests inter alia, organizations without functional membership processes.

Table 40: Verification Processes for Data

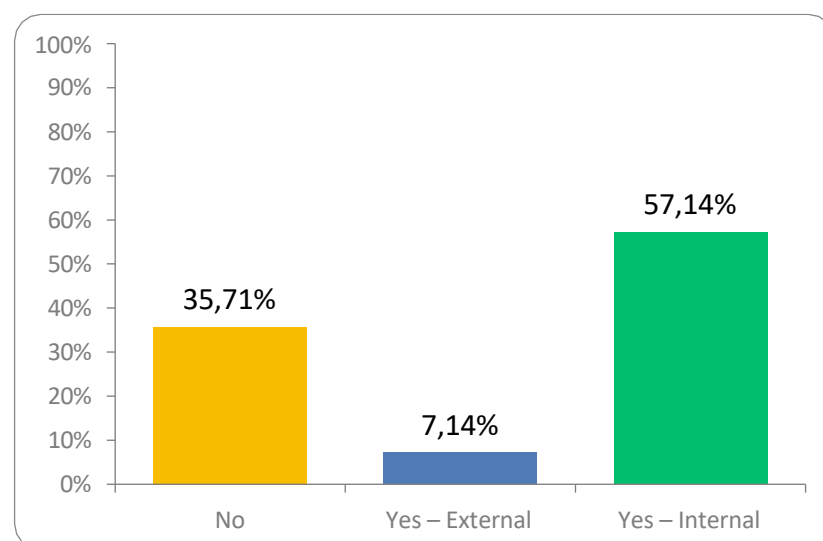


Table 40 suggests that organizations perform better in verification practices, 57% conducting internal verification of practitioner qualifications. But the percentage resorting to external verification is a very modest (7%). Of concern is that 36% of organizations do not have verification processes, which raises the issue of the reliability of their data on language practitioner members.

Table 41: Database systems used.

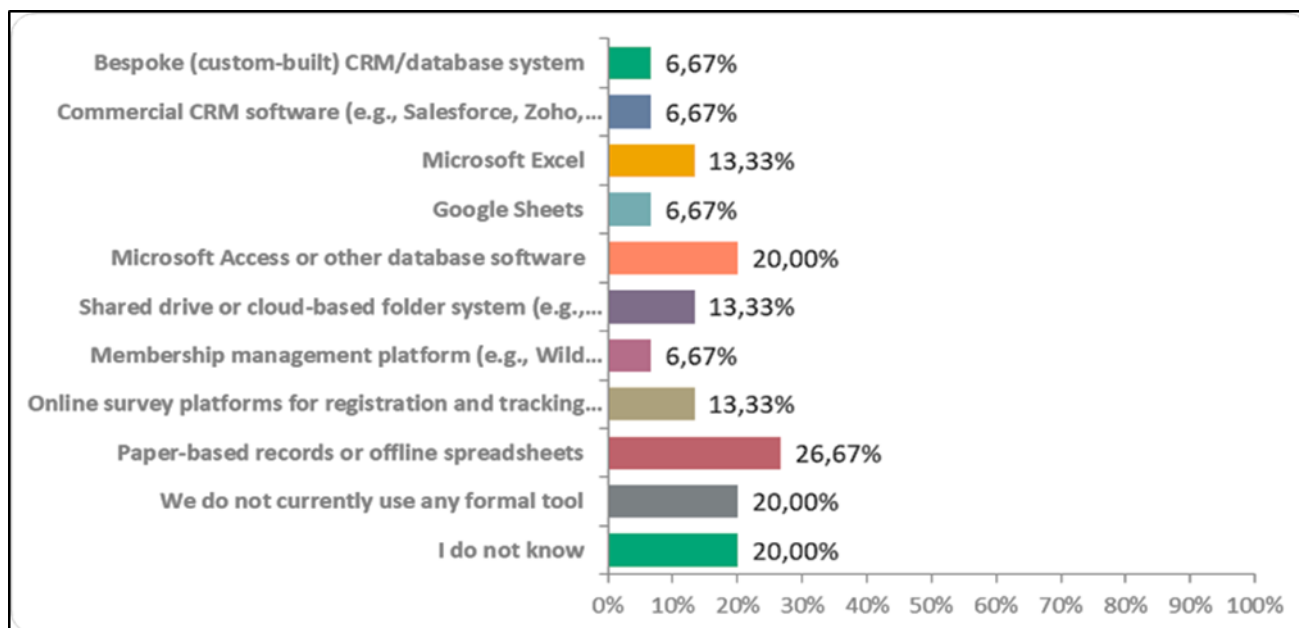


Table 41 underlines that among those organisations tracking practitioner or member data, methods used vary considerably. The most common practices are paper-based records or offline spreadsheets (27%). These are followed by Microsoft Access (20%), and various popular spread sheet software such as Excel, Google Sheets, and online survey platforms (each around 13%). Only a small number deploy more advanced solutions such as custom CRM systems, commercial CRM software, or membership management platforms (6–7%). Moreover, 20% declared that they did not use formal tools, while a further 20% remarked that they were unaware what systems were in place. These results underscore the extensive reliance on low-cost, manual, or ad hoc systems, which limit standardization, inter-operability, and compromise the long-term reliability of data.

Table 42: Who Maintains the Database?

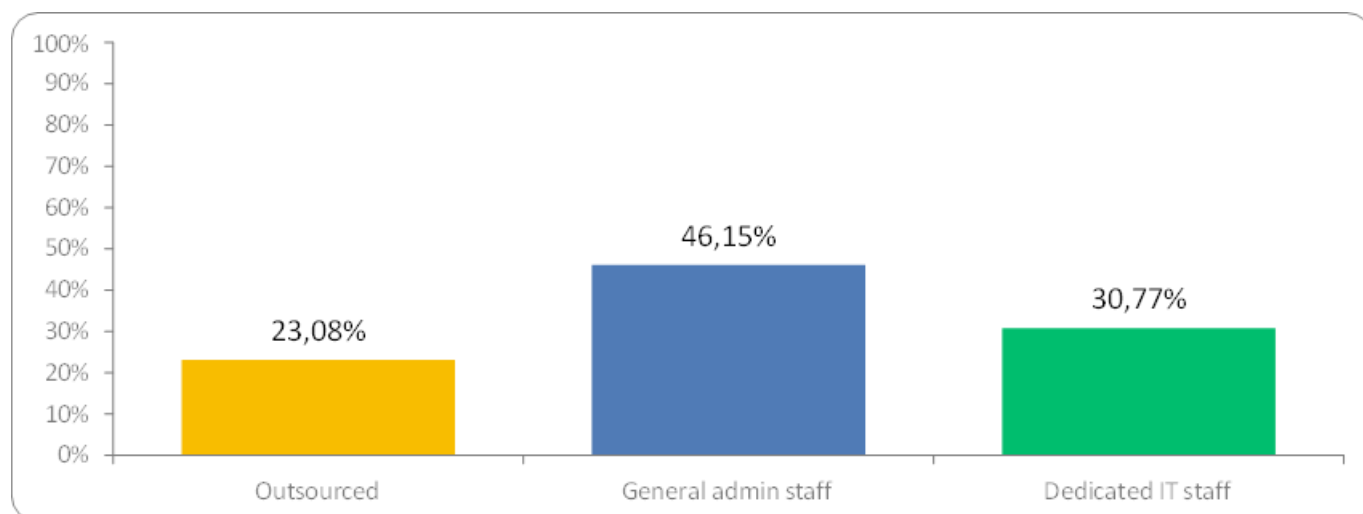
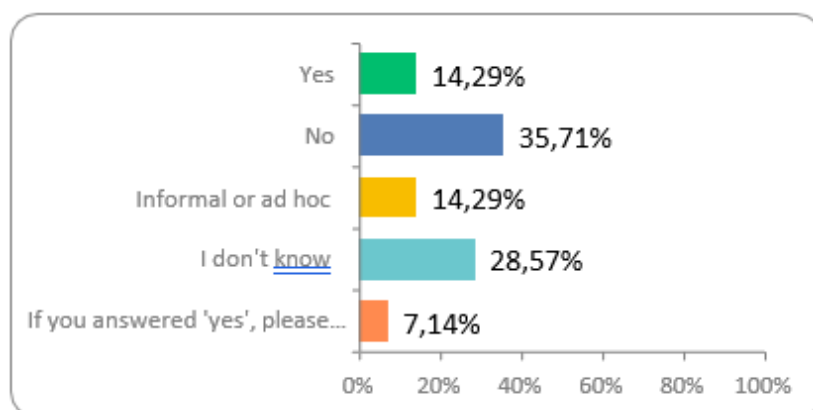


Table 42 shows that, in respect of staff maintaining databases most organisations deploy general administrative staff (46%), with a smaller portion turning to dedicated IT staff (31%) or outsourced service providers (23%). This distribution pattern indicates variances in organizational resources. It also highlights the difficulties of allocating and financing such technical tasks especially in those settings where resources are constrained.

Table 43: Data Sharing Arrangements



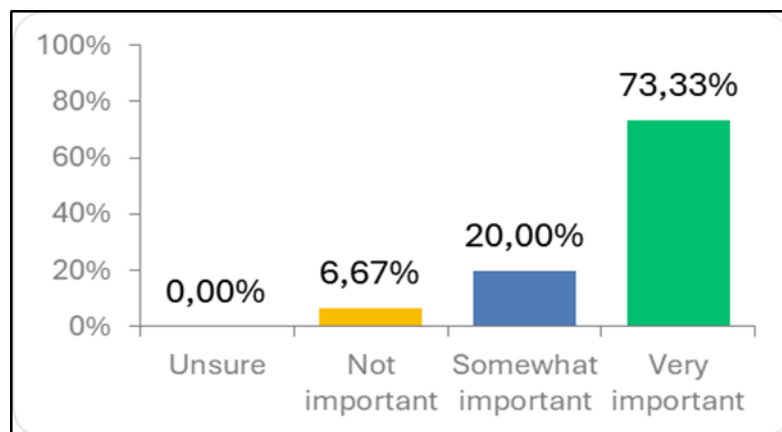
Tables 43-47 provide an overview of the views and concerns of organisations about sharing their data and participating in a centralised national platform for language practitioners. The findings reveal a mixed landscape of current practices.

Regarding current data-sharing arrangements (Table 43) only a small number had had formal agreements in place. Most organizations had not done this, were uncertain or had an ad hoc approach to such practices. This situation underlines the fractured nature of data governance in the sector.

Despite this, there is strong consensus on the importance of a centralised database (Table 44). Nearly three-quarters of respondents described it as very important, while very few dismissed

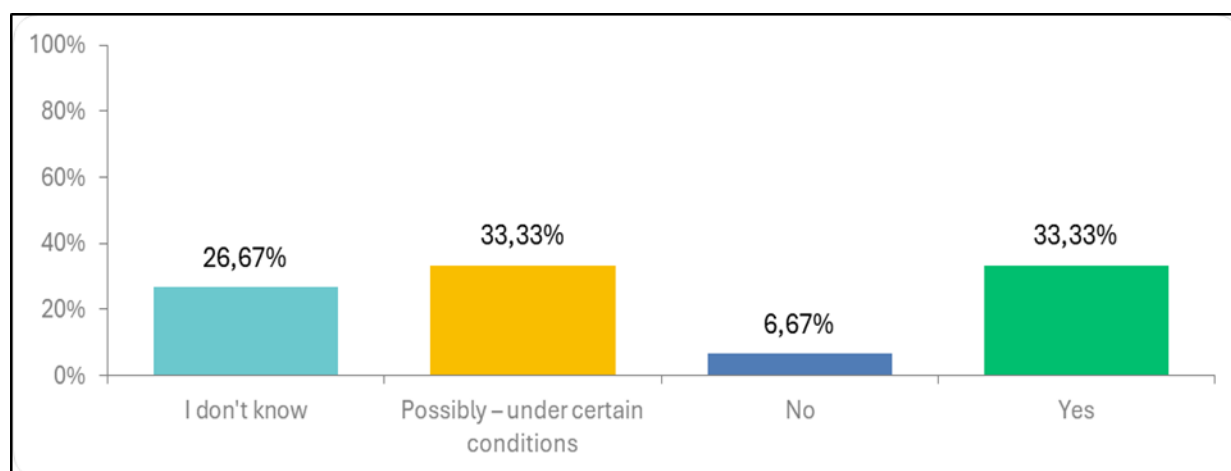
its value. This suggests broad recognition that a central system could bring coherence, professional credibility, and coordination to the sector.

Table 44: Importance of central database for sector.



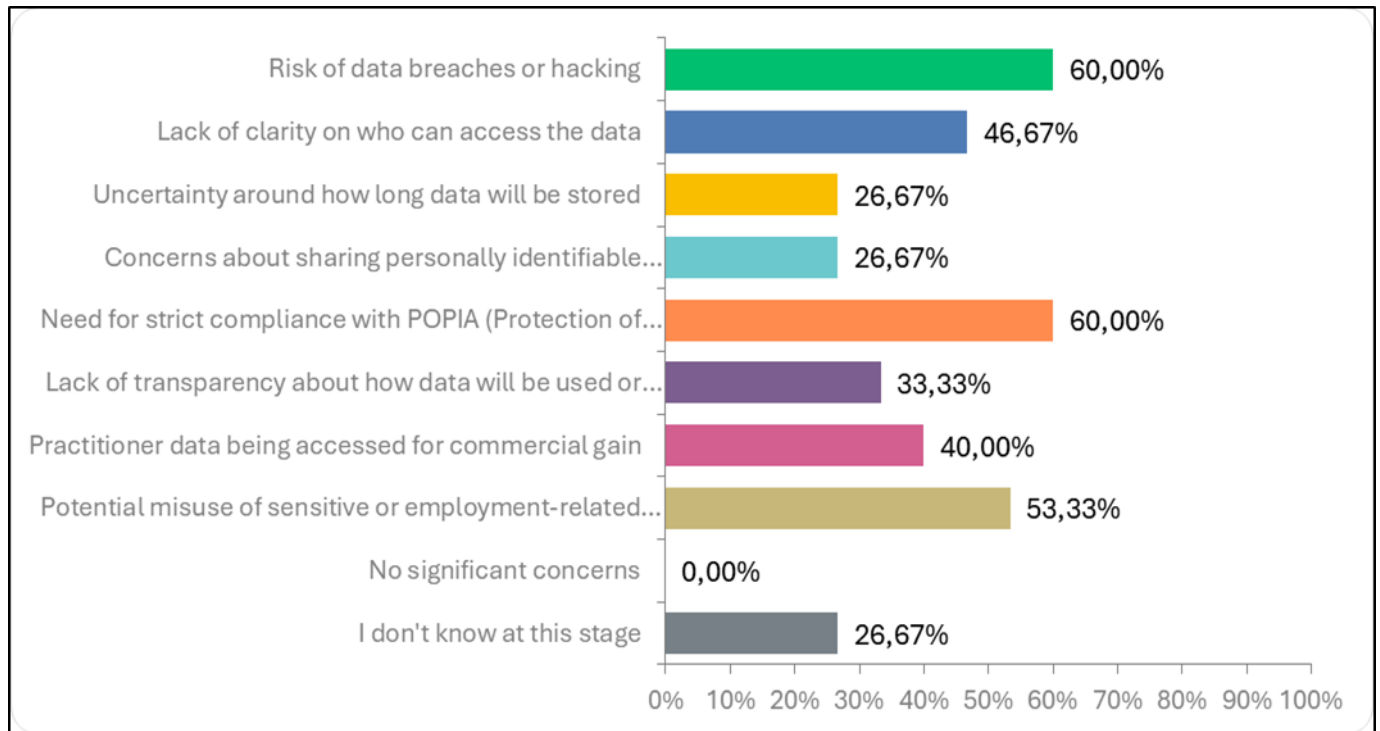
The stated willingness of respondents to share data under secure conditions (Table 45) was encouraging, with one-third expressing readiness and another third open to the idea under certain conditions. However, hesitancy remains, as a significant portion were unsure, pointing to the need for strong assurances on security, compliance, and governance.

Table 45: Willingness of organisation to share data with SALPC.



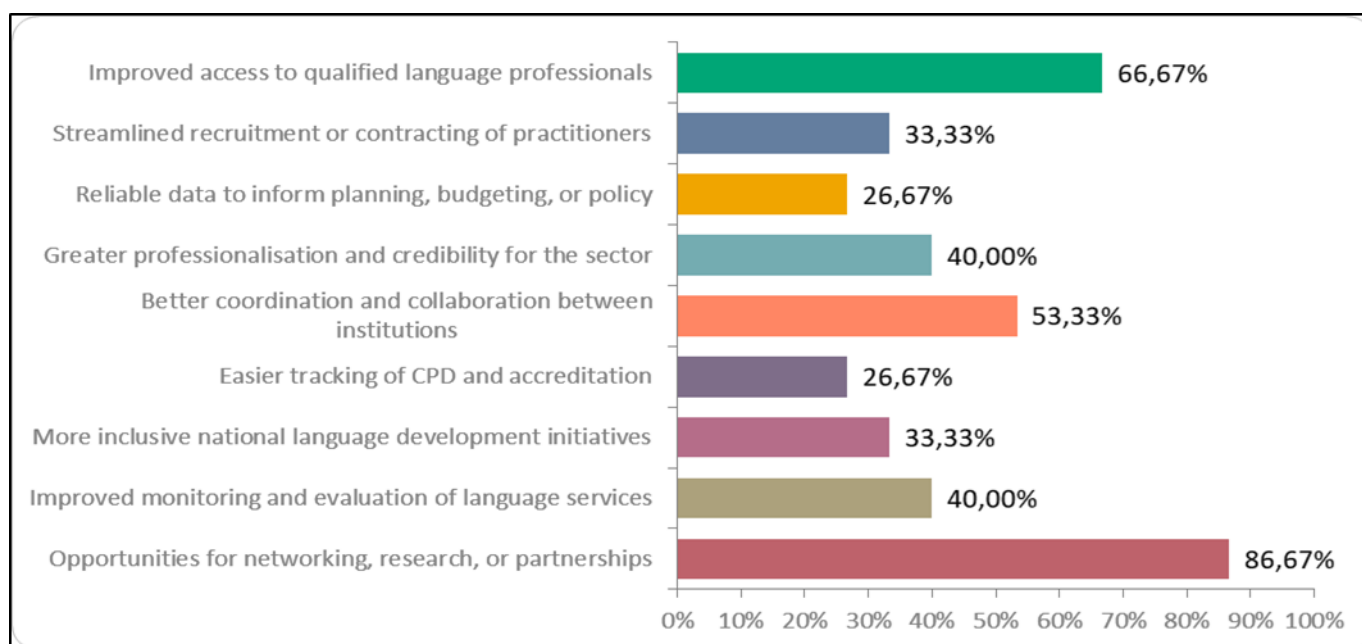
This is reinforced by the data privacy concerns expressed as highlighted in Table 46 below. The most common issues raised were the risk of breaches or hacking, the need for strict POPIA compliance, and fears of misuse of sensitive data, including practitioner information being accessed for commercial gain. More than half also raised concerns about transparency and clarity on access and storage policies, underscoring the importance of building trust through robust safeguards.

Table 46: Privacy Concerns about Sharing Personal Information on National Database.



At the same time, Table 47 shows that respondents identified clear benefits that such a database could deliver (Q47). These include networking and partnership opportunities (87%), improved access to qualified professionals (67%), better coordination between institutions (53%), and enhanced monitoring and evaluation of language services (40%). Collectively, these benefits point to a system that not only supports professionalisation but also strengthens collaboration and policy alignment across the sector.

Table 47: Perceived benefits of national database.



However, respondents also foresee significant challenges (Table 48). These include ensuring sustainable funding, avoiding duplication with existing systems, and standardising data across diverse institutions. Concerns were also raised about resistance to change, capacity gaps in rural areas, and the risk of overloading the system with complexity. These insights stress that careful planning, phased implementation, and stakeholder buy-in will be crucial to success.

Table 48: Potential challenges for a national database of language practitioners.

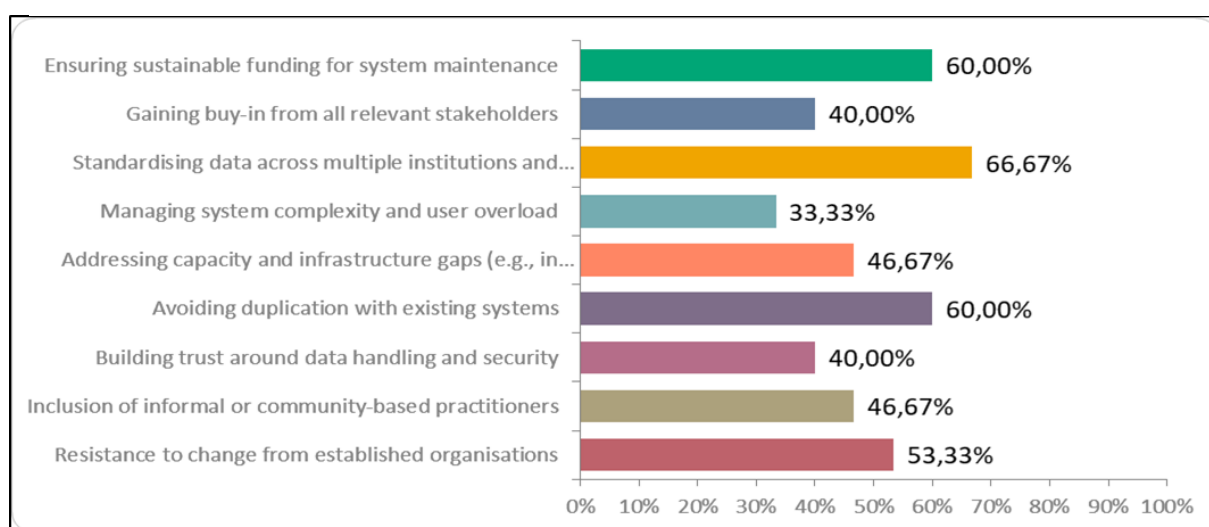
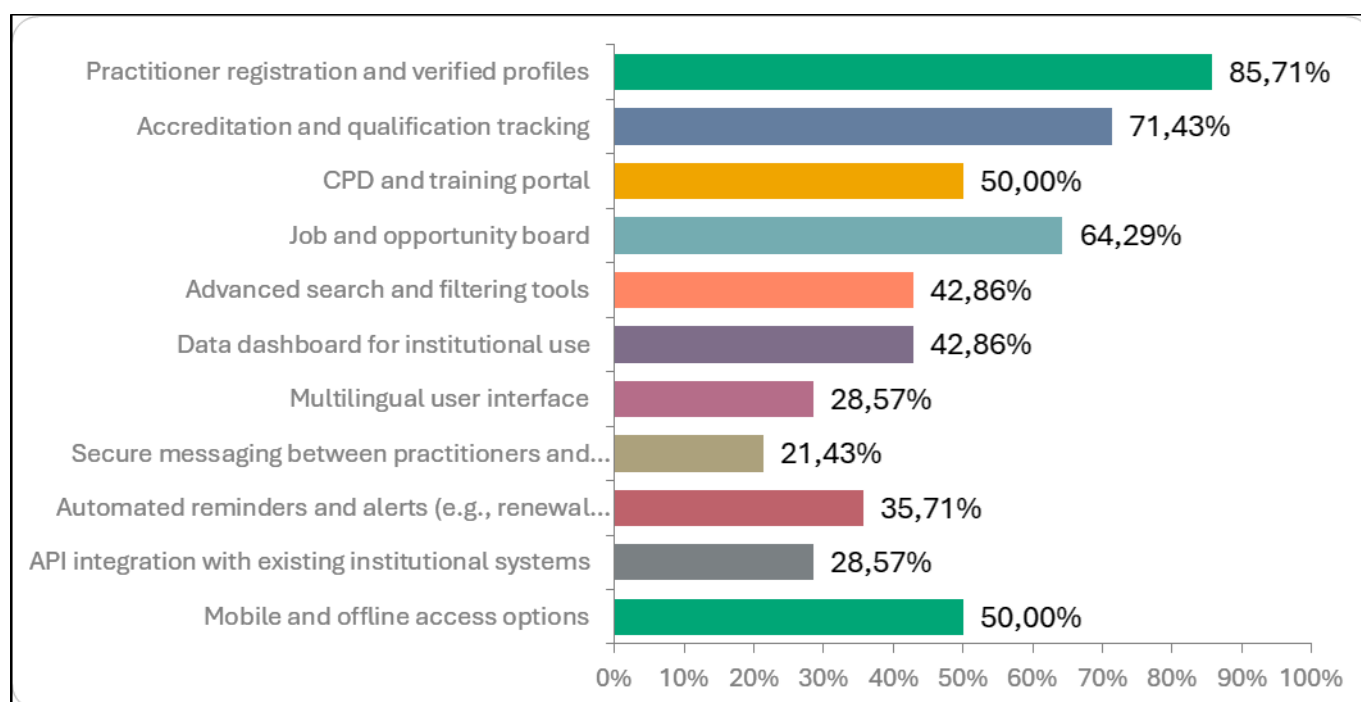


Table 49 below highlights the respondents' guidance on the features that the SALPC system should prioritise). The strongest support was for practitioner registration and verified profiles (85%), followed by qualification verification (71%), job boards (64%), and CPD tracking (50%).

Table 49: Features that the SALPC system should have.



Additional priorities included mobile and offline access, multilingual interfaces, institutional dashboards, and in some cases API integration to link with existing systems. Collectively, these preferences highlight the need for a secure, inclusive, and professionally credible system that balances technical functionality with accessibility and ease of use.

19.7. Language Councils and Sectoral Bodies

This section focusses on the perspectives of language councils, professional bodies, and sectoral structures involved in the governance, regulation, and development of the language sector. Unlike earlier sections that focused on individual practitioners and organisations employing language workers, these questions addressed the mandates, databases, and operational practices of institutions that set standards, accredit professionals, advocate for language rights, and shape policy.

Respondents were asked about the primary mandates of their organisations (Q52), the sectors and language services they represent (Q53), and whether they currently maintain databases or registries of practitioners (Q54–Q55). The section explored the purpose and accessibility of these databases (Q56–Q57), the verification processes in place (Q58), and the technical or operational challenges faced in managing such systems (Q59–Q61). Questions also probed the

extent of POPIA compliance (Q62), the capacity for integration with government and university systems (Q64), and the funding models supporting their operations (Q65).

Finally, the survey asked councils and sectoral bodies to assess the current state of language practitioner data in South Africa (Q66), to identify the most important features of a future national database (Q67), and to outline the areas in which they would be willing to contribute to its success (Q68). Respondents also reflected on potential funding models (Q69), the role of a database in professionalisation and standardisation (Q70), and shared lessons for SALPC (Q71).

The three responding organisations reflect diverse mandates. Two indicated a primary role in professional accreditation and certification, while one is focused on professional development and training. Other mandates represented include advocacy for language rights and research and policy development. This spread highlights how language councils and sectoral bodies often carry overlapping responsibilities, balancing regulatory, developmental, and advocacy functions.

Language Sectors Represented: Organisations reported representing multiple areas of the language sector. The majority are active in core language services (translation, interpreting, editing, terminology), while others engage in education, research, and development. A smaller share is involved in media and communication, covering writing, broadcasting, and online content. This mix reflects the breadth of institutional involvement across both traditional and emerging domains of language practice.

Maintenance of Practitioner Databases: Of the three organisations, one maintains a database, one holds only partial records, and one does not maintain any system. This variation underscores the fragmented and uneven nature of data management across institutions, with no standardised approach to record-keeping.

Types of Information Collected: Where a database is in place, the organisation reported collecting contact details, qualifications, areas of specialisation, professional experience, and accreditation records. This shows that even among limited databases, the focus is on information critical to verifying practitioner competence and supporting recruitment or accreditation processes.

Purpose of Practitioner Databases: The two organisations with databases identified multiple purposes. These include maintaining registers of accredited practitioners, supporting professionalisation, matching practitioners with opportunities, and informing policy and sector planning. This reflects the multifunctional role databases can play, extending beyond record-keeping to sector-wide governance and visibility.

Database Access: Access to existing systems is restricted to internal staff and registered members, with limited or no access for external partners or the public. This suggests current databases are designed primarily for administrative use, rather than public-facing visibility or sector-wide integration.

Verification Processes: Verification practices are uneven. One organisation relies on internal checks, while another uses institutional partnerships for external validation. This inconsistency points to the absence of standardised verification protocols, which a centralised database could help establish.

Backend Maintenance: Two organisations reported backend management handled internally, but with limited IT capacity. This reflects how many sectoral bodies lack the dedicated technical support required to maintain robust, scalable systems.

Data Maintenance: Responsibility for updating records rests mainly with internal teams, with no indication of member-driven updates. This creates risks of outdated or incomplete records and places additional strain on administrative staff.

Technical and Operational Challenges: Key challenges include limited IT support, difficulty maintaining accurate data, and lack of integration with other systems. Organisations also reported budgetary constraints as a barrier to upgrading or sustaining databases. These challenges illustrate why so many rely on outdated or piecemeal methods.

POPIA Compliance: Only one organisation reported having formal POPIA-compliant protocols in place. This raises concerns about data privacy and governance across the sector, as compliance with South Africa's Protection of Personal Information Act is a legal requirement.

Ability for Users to Self-Update: Two organisations confirmed that users cannot self-update their profiles, reinforcing the issue of administrative bottlenecks and outdated data. Allowing practitioners to directly update their profiles would improve accuracy and reduce institutional workload.

Integration with Government/University Systems: None of the organisations reported active integration with SAQA, DHET, or other government/university systems. This indicates a lack of interoperability, further fragmenting practitioner data and limiting opportunities for standardisation.

Funding Models: Only one organisation reported a funding model for its database, relying on membership fees. Others indicated no clear source of funding, reflecting the financial fragility of current systems and the need for sustainable resourcing models if a national database is to succeed.

Current State of Language Practitioner Data in South Africa: Responses reflect agreement that data is fragmented across multiple institutions, making it difficult to build a reliable national picture. Participants highlighted the lack of a standardised classification system for language practitioners, challenges in verifying credentials, and the impact of this fragmentation on professionalisation and regulation. Together, these findings underscore the pressing need for a coordinated, unified database that can provide consistency, reliability, and sector-wide alignment.

Important Features of a National Database: The strongest priorities include comprehensive practitioner profiles with verified credentials, integration with training and certification bodies, and real-time verification mechanisms. Organisations also stressed the importance of advanced search tools, CPD tracking, data analytics, and multilingual access. These results show that stakeholders expect a system that is not only secure and credible but also functional, inclusive, and directly supportive of professional development and policy needs.

Willingness to Contribute: Here, respondents highlight readiness to share practitioner data (within POPIA compliance), collaborate on classification systems and accreditation protocols, and promote the database within their networks. Some also expressed willingness to contribute to resource libraries, user testing, and dispute resolution mechanisms. This demonstrates a

spirit of collaboration and shared ownership, provided the system is designed transparently and inclusively.

Sustainable Funding Models: The strongest support was for government funding or subsidies, followed by blended models that combine membership fees, donor funding, service fees, and partnerships. Less support was expressed for commercial approaches such as advertising or corporate sponsorship. The results make clear that organisations see the database as a public good that requires strong government backing but may be supplemented by carefully structured, diversified funding streams.

Contributions to Professionalisation and Standardisation: Top priorities included the formal recognition of qualified practitioners, easier verification of credentials, and promotion of shared standards and ethical guidelines. Respondents also emphasised the database's potential to support CPD, regulate informal service providers, enable better coordination between stakeholders, and improve public access to reliable services. This illustrates the expectation that the system will be a cornerstone for professionalisation, credibility, and growth in the sector.

Willingness to Join a Working Group: While the number of responses is small, the willingness shown suggests a core group of committed stakeholders who are ready to help shape the design and implementation of the database. This willingness provides a valuable foundation for establishing an advisory or pilot structure during the system's development.

Together, these questions provide a comprehensive picture of how sectoral bodies currently operate, the challenges they face, and their expectations for a centralised, nationally integrated database that can strengthen professionalisation, improve coordination, and ensure compliance with data protection and quality standards.

19.8. Conclusion

The data in this section reveals a fragmented landscape of organisational practice, with some entities maintaining robust internal systems while many others lack databases or rely on outdated, manual methods. This current inconsistency undermines the reliability and accessibility of practitioner data, limiting fair recognition, effective sector planning, and alignment with national policy.

At the same time, organisations recognise the value and urgency of a centralised, professionalised database that can reduce duplication, enhance accountability, and strengthen practitioner records. While concerns around privacy and governance remain, there is broad agreement that such a system must be built on transparency, inclusivity, and sustainability in order to provide credibility, recognition, and meaningful opportunities for sector growth.

The online survey provided valuable essential information about South African language practitioners via their individual responses and organizational and sectoral body feedback. The survey results reveal that the sector operates is currently fragmented, lacking proper recognition and facing inconsistent support from existing structures. This creates obstacles for both qualified and community-based practitioners to gain visibility and work opportunities.

The majority of respondents endorse establishing a unified national database because it could potentially help professionalize the sector and create standardized qualifications and better access to job opportunities and improve sector credibility.

The survey respondents emphasized that the system needs to be secure and affordable while supporting multiple languages, ensuring inclusivity to provide verified professional profiles and job boards and CPD tracking and reliable data for policy planning.

Respondents expressed ongoing concerns about data protection of data and system sustainability and fair access which require detailed governance structures and transparent management systems with extended planning horizons.

The survey results show that organizations and sectoral bodies are ready to work together by sharing data under specific terms and participating in standard development and classification system creation.

This provides a clear mandate that the language sector is eager for the establishment of a professional database system which will bridge different sectors and lay the foundation for an coordinated environment and credible language economy in South Africa.

20. Chapter 20 Strategic Interviews Findings

20.1. Introduction

This chapter presents insights gathered from semi-structured interviews conducted with 16 respondents – all of which were conducted via online platforms. The interviews were designed to obtain the perspectives of practitioners, language councils and sectoral stakeholders about how a database could function. Their purpose was to inform the design of the South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC) system by identifying needs, risks, and opportunities for professionalising the language sector.

The discussions then explored the following themes:

Theme 1: Purpose and Role of Database Systems

The interviewees discussed why practitioner databases exist as a core element of the field. The interviewees assessed which system features matter most for registration and professional recognition and CPD tracking and advocacy and sectoral coordination to establish the national platform's essential value and operational function.

Theme 2: System Architecture and Design

The second theme explored the technical elements which form the basis of database structure. The discussions focussed on how system architecture and design principles and verification methods affect system reliability and usability and accessibility.

Theme 3: User and Stakeholder Needs

The third theme analysed the needs of both practitioners and institutional actors who will use the system. The interviewees identified possible system features, benefits and support mechanisms which will drive user participation while fulfilling professional and operational requirements.

Theme 4: Access, Security, and Privacy

The fourth theme investigates data protection methods and user access permissions and POPIA compliance strategies. The goal of this theme was to consider which security measures should be enacted to protect user data while allowing system accessibility.

Theme 5: Integration and Interoperability

The fifth theme investigated how a database system would link with outside databases and information systems. The purpose of this was to obtain insight into standardization barriers while exploring opportunities for platform integration with government systems and institutions to achieve sector-wide data consolidation.

Theme 6: Sustainability and Resourcing

The aim of the sixth theme was to consider on how to develop sustainable funding models which will enable database operation during extended periods. Interviewees considered methods to

acquire financial, human resources and technical capabilities which will sustain long-term operational stability of the system.

Theme 7: Reflections and Lessons Learned

The seventh theme required interviewees to review their current practices and accumulated knowledge. The purpose of this theme was to extract valuable knowledge and recommendations which will help the South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC) create an improved system that will last into the future.

Together, these themes provide a holistic picture of the expectations and requirements for a centralised practitioner database. They underscore that the success of the SALPC system will depend on balancing practitioner needs with institutional priorities, while ensuring that sustainability, trust, and professional value remain at the core of its design.

Each of the respondents signed a consent form before participating in the interview to indicate that they understood the nature of the study and that they agreed to participate voluntarily in the interview. The consent form provided information about the study, its purpose and the procedures involved, as well as the respondent's rights, including the right to terminate the interview at any stage. The anonymity of the respondent was discussed and assured.

The oral interviews were generally between 30 and 120 minutes and were recorded. Transcripts were produced and archived. Summaries of all interviews have also been produced and archived. The respondents constituted a diverse, informed group with a rich set of relevant experience and provided the researchers with a wealth of information, insight, and enhanced understanding of the complexities of work in the language sector.

20.2. 20.2 Respondents Roles and Experience in the Language Sector

The respondents interviewed hold various positions throughout South Africa's language economy. They include academics, researchers, government officials, civil society and youth advocates, and representatives from the media and creative industries. This rich diversity of roles means that collectively, respondents bring deep expertise, lived experience, and strategic insight into the South African language sector.

Table 50: Respondent roles and experience.

Sector	General Description of respondents
Government & Public Sector	Representatives from national statistics and cultural policy bodies, providing insights into policy frameworks, data systems, and state priorities.
Academia & Research	Participants from universities and research centres engaged in language development, training, and knowledge production, offering perspectives on education, research, and system design.
Professional & Sectoral Bodies	Leaders from professional associations and forums in the language field, highlighting issues of practitioner recognition, advocacy, and professionalisation.
Cultural Institutions & Community Organisations	Contributors from heritage, community, and economic development organisations, reflecting on inclusivity, access, and the role of languages in broader societal contexts.
Publishing / Private Sector	A representative from the publishing industry, providing perspectives on the role of private enterprise and market-linked approaches within the language economy.

20.3. Theme 1: Purpose and Role of Database Systems

The interviews showed that people agree that a national database needs to provide more than basic listing of names. Respondents agreed that the system needs to establish professional standards, improve visibility, achieve inclusivity, drive economic development and protect linguistic heritage.

20.3.1. Professionalisation and Standards

Many respondents saw the database as a cornerstone of professionalisation in the language sector. By centralising information and setting clear requirements, the system could build trust and recognition for practitioners. As Respondent 15 explained:

“It’s very important... it can establish standards, set boundaries, admission requirements, and make them known to the broader public”.

Respondent 3 reflected on the historic role of earlier government initiatives and the move towards formalisation:

“The department used to keep what we used to call a directory for language services. It was a publication that was done manually... we are trying to move back to having a central database which can accommodate everybody, unlike decentralizing them in terms of the focus areas”.

But I think the, let's say the mapping of the environment in terms of different role players is valuable for something like a national language policy. Because I don't know whether

there is an entity in South Africa that really has that map, that idea. So I think that's kind of the two elements for me, sure.

20.3.2. Visibility, Networking, and Opportunities

Respondents highlighted the value of a national database as a tool for mapping the broader language sector, enabling greater visibility of role players and informing future policy development. Respondent 7 explained:

“But I think the, let's say the mapping of the environment in terms of different role players is valuable for something like a national language policy. Because I don't know whether there is an entity in South Africa that really has that map, that idea.”

Academics and practitioners stressed that databases must not only store information but also create visibility and generate professional opportunities. Respondent 12 recalled how being listed gave them access to mentorship and visibility in the sector:

“Well, so I joined as a student. My details were there, and they gave me a mentor, who was working with me throughout so then, so my name ended up being in the in the database, so people would contact me, because they've got the name from the database, but they would actually reach out to me because my contact details were there

Respondent 15 highlighted the role of databases in fostering collaboration and easing professional connections:

“Well, to an organisation like a university... it eases collaboration”.

20.3.3. Inclusivity and Grassroots Representation

A strong concern raised by community-based organisations was that the database must avoid reproducing elitist or purely institutional models. Instead, it should reflect the realities of grassroots practitioners, activists, and smaller players in the language economy.

“Our commitment is grassroots... we are more focused on what people are actually doing, rather than institutions.. So we'll take the little guy who's trying to do something and try to amplify it” (Respondent 13).

Inclusivity was highlighted not only in terms of grassroots practitioners but also in ensuring that the database itself reflects South Africa's full linguistic diversity, with Respondent 3 noting:

“For me, it will be ideal if the system can cater for all official languages... the ultimate goal should be that it caters for all official languages. Stakeholders who belong to South African Sign Language, at some point they should also be catered for.”

This emphasis underscores that the system should not only serve formally trained practitioners but also recognise those contributing to language preservation and promotion in community contexts.

20.3.4. Economic and Developmental Role

Respondents from township economies and small-business associations directly connected language access with economic inclusion. Respondent 16 argued that the database should help businesses access the right language expertise, thereby supporting local economies.

“If a business owner is unable to communicate on a language basis with the customer... then the business is losing a customer”.

The need for international communication was also flagged by Respondent 14:

“If they are serving the local communities or areas, the language that is present in that community is very important, ... But when small businesses starts to grow and start to develop, they need to understand that the international language. So if you are a small business and looking to grow your business in terms of importing and exporting or dealing with businesses from other countries, the language that is going to be required is English.

These insights highlight that a database should enable links between practitioners and enterprises at multiple levels—from township survivalist businesses to globally-oriented SMEs.

20.3.5. Heritage and Cultural Preservation

Some respondents located the purpose of a national system in cultural and symbolic terms. Beyond jobs and recognition, the database could help preserve linguistic diversity and strengthen South Africa’s multilingual heritage.

“People don’t have as much access to their languages, and the languages are disappearing. Younger generations aren’t using their languages... there’s still a huge need for new material and also convincing parents that people are not going to be locked out of the economy because they speak their language” (Respondent 13).

Taken together, the perspectives show that the purpose of a national database is multifaceted. It must professionalise and regulate the sector, enhance visibility and networking, ensure inclusivity for grassroots actors, support economic growth and preserve cultural heritage. Respondents emphasise that unless the database balances all these functions, it risks being seen as another bureaucratic exercise rather than a transformative tool for the language economy.

20.4. Theme 2: System Architecture and Design

The architecture and design of a national practitioner database is not a purely technical concern; it directly shapes trust, usability, and inclusivity. Respondents consistently highlighted the importance of verification, accessibility, interoperability, simplicity, and sustainability as foundational features.

20.4.1. Verification and Reliability

Verification mechanisms were seen as essential to build trust and to distinguish a professionalised system from informal listings. Respondent 8 warned of the danger of compliance-only approaches, stressing that the system must aim higher:

“The biggest risk of a system like this is that it is massive overhead for the sake of compliance... I think the question is, how do we orient it really aimed at excellence, building of aiming at excellence rather than compliance”.

This perspective shows that the credibility of the database will depend not only on recording practitioner data, but also on meaningful validation processes that safeguard professional standards.

20.4.2. Accessibility and Inclusivity

Respondents explained that accessibility is not only about multilingual interfaces or offline options, but also about ensuring that the system is intuitive and genuinely useful in practice.

“If the database is quite rich and easy to search, I imagine that would be much more helpful” (Respondent 9).

Respondents also noted that the database must be designed to accommodate South Africa’s diversity of contexts, from digitally connected users to those with limited access. Offline options were seen as just as vital as online ones:

“The database should be sort of made to be more accessible online and offline... because we must understand that we are dealing with stakeholders from different backgrounds who might... not have the necessary resources to access online solutions” (Respondent 3).

Grassroots organisations also stressed that inclusivity is not only about technology but about representation:

“I think it’s very important, because you need to streamline and understand who’s doing what so there isn’t duplication... currently there’s a lot of duplication because institutions don’t want to work with one another” (Respondent 13).

This call for transparency and coordination reflects a desire to break silos and create a shared space where grassroots practitioners are visible alongside institutional actors.

20.4.3. Integration and Interoperability

Interviewees also emphasised that the database should not duplicate existing systems but rather connect with them. It was emphasised that the success of a national practitioner database depends on its ability to integrate with existing platforms and avoid unnecessary duplication. Rather than creating another isolated system, respondents highlighted the value of linking to current repositories, directories, and tools to maximise reach and efficiency.

Respondent 7 explained that integration can be achieved through networking practitioners, resources, and datasets, using existing platforms such as stakeholder maps and repositories:

“The idea of this was to also link people in the network... so someone can fill in their basic information, and then, based on that, you can view different subsets of the bigger database — what tools are available, what datasets, what learning materials, what CPD things... the principles behind that are quite useful and reusable.”

Respondent 7 also highlighted how interoperability could extend beyond practitioner records to include outputs generated through language work, creating feedback loops between practice and infrastructure:

“If we can design a workflow to make it easy for people to submit their translated work back, or use tools that automatically do that, that’s something that can help build datasets that feed into things... that’s our mandate, but that’s kind of now the big picture.”

When asked whether their organisation would be open to integrating or exchanging data with the proposed SALPC database, respondents generally expressed openness, provided that the process was secure and well regulated. For some, this willingness was framed as a natural extension of their participation in the consultation process itself. As two respondents explained:

“Of course, in terms of willingness, we would because that’s why we’re in this meeting. It’s an interest to or an indication for willingness” (Respondent 16).

“We work with various organizations, and we will very much welcome to work with SACO ... arrangements moderated by a memorandum ... So typically, we would love for all of the materials that come to us, that are plugged into our platforms, to be made open” (Respondent 5).

This highlights not only a readiness to collaborate, but also the importance of trust-building through transparent engagements, where participation signals a genuine commitment to explore integration opportunities. This suggests that the SALPC system should be designed to complement and link to existing networks, not replace them.

20.4.4. Simplicity and User Experience

Ease of use was identified as another critical design principle. Respondents cautioned against overly complex or burdensome systems that alienate users:

“But like I’m saying, the landing page of the database. Man, it should be simplified in such a way that you don’t have to click a number of times to get to where you want to go. Yes, you should just click at once and see all the information that you are looking for. And if it needs to redirect you to other links, then it should redirect you, but you shouldn’t be held on for maybe a few minutes to get to the main information that you are looking for” (Respondent 3).

“I think, visibility and ease of search, okay, are definitely going to be the jumping off points for a database like that” (Respondent 15).

To minimise the ongoing administrative load associated with constant system maintenance, Respondent 7 described the value of adopting simpler solutions:

“So we’re currently looking at much more kind of simple way to do, essentially, ... to publish, like a static image that shows, you know, this is what is there, and we update that regularly. So it just reduces this element of having someone to manually maintain some kind of electronic process”.

At the same time, smaller organisations highlighted that even basic tools can function as effective systems if they are easy to manage:

“When information is entered via our website it automatically feeds into the database, which we can then use to contact our members” (Respondent 14).

This reinforces the importance of designing a user-friendly interface that allows practitioners to self-manage their data, reducing administrative bottlenecks.

20.4.5. Sustainability and Maintenance

Participants pointed to sustainability risks if systems are developed without long-term maintenance plans. As Respondent 7 noted:

“I think my biggest my just a concern that ... a system gets developed, and then it just moved. And the problem is, all the people managing this [were] not involved in the development process. So now the thing moves there. There's maybe not maintenance plan into that. So the system works for a year or two, or is behind a firewall or somewhere, and then it breaks because it's not being updated. It's not being maintained. And there are so many examples of that out there.”

The interviews revealed that respondents believe the SALPC database structure needs to achieve both strictness and user-friendly design. The system needs verification processes to prove professional standards yet its design should focus on making the system accessible to all users and represent grassroots communities. Integration with current systems will boost its applicability and long-term protection of the investment through sustainable maintenance. The system needs to achieve technical sustainability while also preserving cultural aspects, maintaining both operational effectiveness and South African language diversity visibility.

20.5. Theme 3: User and Stakeholder Needs

The third theme examined the needs of both practitioners and institutional actors who would rely on the proposed SALPC system. Across interviews and survey responses, stakeholders emphasized that the success of the database would ultimately depend on its ability to respond to diverse user expectations, while simultaneously fulfilling professionalisation, governance, and operational requirements.

20.5.1. Practitioner Needs: Recognition, Visibility, and Opportunity

From the perspective of individual practitioners, the system must be practical, visible, and rewarding. Practitioners stressed the importance of verified professional profiles that clearly reflect qualifications, areas of expertise, and languages of practice. Respondent 11 explained the risk of listing unverified practitioners alongside experienced professionals:

“In Brazil... anyone could just sign up and they would be listed there, and they pay a very small fee... that meant that people with, say, a master's in translation, and someone who had no qualifications whatsoever was put on the same list. There was no accreditation or anything like that”.

To avoid this, practitioners recommended that the SALPC database provide legitimacy and confidence for both clients and employers. Similarly, Respondent 4 underscored the importance of detailed profiles that distinguish between skills:

“It would be helpful to know, to be able to find... people who are qualified writers, editors, translators, and with each of those things being, to me, very discreet skill sets, because translation is an art in itself”.

Beyond formal qualifications, respondents stressed the importance of showcasing specific expertise and prior experience to enhance visibility and match opportunities more effectively. As Respondent 9 noted:

“I would be interested to know who has experience in a particular field, say, if I’m hosting a linguistic seminar who has done that kind of interpreting”.

Users also expressed strong interest in features that support career development, including job opportunities, CPD tracking, and professional networking. Respondent 6 emphasized the importance of making it easy for practitioners to keep their details current:

“Just me being able to... allow the users to update information, and how easy that would be. Because you’re consciously developing your skills... just being able to update your details, I think that’s it”.

20.5.2. Institutional Needs: Efficiency, Coordination, and Oversight

Institutional stakeholders, including professional associations, government entities, and academic bodies, framed their needs around efficiency and reliable data. For example, Respondent 1 stressed that a well- designed system could provide a valuable pool of information for policy planning:

“For us, we would want a system that gives us accurate and reliable data, so that when we plan for surveys or we need expertise in certain languages, we know where to find them”.

Respondent 2 echoed this, highlighting the importance of the system’s role in sector coordination:

“The system should not just be for registration. It should help us understand capacity in the sector... who is there, what languages they cover, what qualifications they have. That way we can align resources better”.

Institutions also valued tools like dashboards and integration mechanisms that would allow them to connect the SALPC system with their own data flows, reducing duplication.

20.5.3. Building Trust: Accessibility, Inclusivity, and Privacy

Underlying these needs was a strong call for trust and sustainability. Users emphasised that they would only invest time in registering and maintaining their information if the system was reliable, easy to navigate, and demonstrably valuable. Several pointed to accessibility and multilingual interfaces as non-negotiable. Respondent 3 highlighted inclusivity:

“For me, it will be ideal if the system can cater for all official languages... the ultimate goal should be that it caters for all official languages. Stakeholders who belong to South African Sign Language, at some point they should also be catered for”.

Equally important were privacy safeguards. Practitioners such as Respondent 6 were willing to share professional information but wanted personal data excluded:

“Okay, I would want anything that is related to the work that I'm doing or the work that I'm offering to be included, and also people being able to reach out to me. So for example, I honestly I wouldn't mind having my phone, cell phone number there my email address, so that it's easier for people to assess me right, ... and information that I wouldn't want people to know, then would be my family, like more about my film, which I don't think it's like, really relevant..”

The perspectives gathered highlight that a user-centred approach is not optional but fundamental to the legitimacy and longevity of the SALPC system. Practitioners want visibility, recognition, and opportunities, while institutional actors seek credible data, streamlined operations, and tools for sectoral coordination. Meeting these combined needs will be critical for ensuring both uptake and sustainability, allowing the database to serve as more than a static registry and instead function as a living platform that strengthens professional practice, sectoral governance, and the broader language economy.

20.6. Theme 4: Access, Security, and Privacy

The fourth theme explored the balance between ensuring broad system accessibility and maintaining robust data protection in line with South Africa's Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA). Participants consistently highlighted that the credibility and long-term success of a practitioner database would rest on its ability to safeguard sensitive information, while still remaining easy to use and beneficial for practitioners, institutions, and the public.

20.6.1. Data Protection and Compliance

Respondents acknowledged that the database would necessarily contain both professional and personal data, from qualifications and affiliations to contact information and, in some cases, home addresses. Ensuring compliance with POPIA was therefore seen as essential not only from a legal standpoint but also for building trust among practitioners who may otherwise hesitate to register. Respondent 14 cautioned,

“No, I don't think it should be a problem, because obviously we are all governed by the POPI Act. So obviously, in terms of how you collect your information, store your information, share information, it's under the guidelines of POPI, and it's the same thing with us. Also, obviously, if we receive any information... we are guided by that in terms of how we share that information”

Respondent 9 reflected on the practical implications of compliance, stressing that

“qualification verification is difficult, and your qualifications and your actual skills are not the same thing”

These perspectives highlight the need for both technical safeguards and nuanced criteria in managing data securely and fairly. They reinforce that respondents saw compliance with POPIA as a non-negotiable foundation. They also acknowledged real challenges—like whether older directories could legally be shared under the new Act—and stressed the need for transparent data handling rules to protect both professional and personal details.

This highlights trust in the system’s legal framework, provided that strict adherence to national data protection standards is maintained.

20.6.2. User Access Permissions

At the same time, user access permissions were seen as a key mechanism to balance openness and protection. Several respondents highlighted the importance of giving practitioners control over what personal details they choose to share, while also recognising that participation in a public database inherently involves some level of information disclosure. As Respondent 4 explained:

"I hadn't thought about that, but I would say, for my point of view, it's not to minimize but it's sort of a jobs board situation, you know. So I think as long as people have the option to just say, maybe they don't want to share a phone number or WhatsApp number, you know, I think that option should be there. But me, if you're participating in this, probably because you're a practitioner and you are looking to work in the field. To me, you have an implicit and you could probably, you should probably make it explicit, I guess, to comply with POPI and things. But like, there is an agreement that your information is being uploaded so that can be shared, so that you can be found. But I'm also not a cyber security person, so I don't know how those things work, but I think as long as it's clear that if you're being uploaded to a public database to me, you're giving permission to share and so I wouldn't have any concerns about that."

Respondents argued that different levels of access should be built into the system: for example, a public-facing directory offering only essential professional details, and a more restricted backend where institutions or verified clients could view extended information under regulated conditions. However, others emphasised the need to allow individuals to control their own profiles, with Respondent 9 suggesting that

"on an annual basis... you need to complete the form, and then obviously you would update it. If they wanted to update something in between, they would have to send an email"

Respondent 13 raised concerns about grassroots autonomy and avoiding over-centralisation:

"We would be open to that, as long as we still feel like we've got some level of autonomy where we still"

20.6.3. System Accessibility and Governance

Respondents stressed that overly rigid or complex security protocols could undermine the usability of the database, discouraging practitioners from registering or keeping their information up to date. Instead, security features needed to be designed in ways that did not create unnecessary administrative burden. As Respondent 7 explained,

“So we’re currently looking at much more kind of simple way to do... a database to publish, like a static image that shows, you know, this is what is there, and we update that regularly. So it just reduces this element of having someone to manually maintain some kind of electronic process”

Respondent 10 reflected on the deeper link between language, heritage, and trust, warning against exclusion and misuse of language as a tool of control:

“Language should not be used to intimidate people, and language should not be used to exclude... because when you do that, you deny somebody an opportunity to belong.”

This underlines that security is not just technical but also cultural — protecting data must go hand-in-hand with fostering inclusivity.

Participants emphasised that trust-building would depend not only on technical safeguards but also on governance. Clear accountability structures, formalised data-sharing agreements with external entities, and transparent communication with users about data usage were all seen as vital. As Respondent 9 noted,

“We can consider [sharing data]... what would make sense to me would be that we contact our members... If you send us a clear brief on what type of professionals you’re looking for and what qualifications, then people with the relevant profile will contact you”

From the interviews, it is clear that the proposed system must walk a fine line: it needs to be open and accessible enough to serve practitioners and clients effectively, but secure and compliant enough to protect sensitive information and build lasting trust. Accessibility, security, and privacy are not opposing goals but must be designed as complementary features of the same system.

20.7. Theme 5: Integration and Interoperability

A recurring theme in the interviews was the importance of ensuring that a South African Language Practitioners’ Council (SALPC) database does not operate in isolation but instead connects meaningfully with other platforms. Respondents emphasised that integration is not only a technical issue but also a strategic necessity for sector-wide data consolidation. By linking to existing systems across government departments, universities, professional bodies, and private sector organisations, the SALPC database could provide a unified view of practitioner data and reduce duplication of effort.

20.7.1. Fragmentation and the Case for Consolidation

Several respondents pointed to the problem of fragmentation, where multiple organisations already host partial or siloed databases of practitioners. Without alignment, these systems risk competing with rather than complementing one another. Integration, therefore, was seen as a way of creating efficiencies and building trust, since practitioners and institutions would be more likely to participate if they could rely on one consolidated record rather than navigating numerous disconnected registries.

“So we shouldn't make it difficult and make the technology to be so complicated in such a way that you have to have this specific software to access the database, because if we approach it that way, a lot of people will be sort of left out” (Respondent 3)

As Respondent 4 observed:

“My experience has been that each distributor manages their own database, so that the publishers have their own internal databases. These don't always fully communicate with each other... a lot of the smaller publishers may not have the capacity in terms of just the staff with hours available to do that work... So it's very helpful, and it's a huge step forward... I'm just saying there's quite a lot of work to happen to integrate that”

This highlights the need for formal agreements—such as memoranda of understanding—that establish clear rules of engagement, define responsibilities, and protect data rights.

20.7.2. Standardisation as a Prerequisite

Respondents stressed that standardisation—such as common metadata structures, language tags, and verification protocols—would be critical in making integration possible. Without harmonised standards, interoperability would remain an aspiration rather than a reality.

Respondent 4, reflecting on the publishing sector, explained the inefficiencies caused by poor standardisation and the absence of a unified, national system for managing metadata, noting that

“South Africa has never joined the main Global System for consolidating that data worldwide ... [which means] we don't have a unified system within the country for sharing that information”.

This results in practical challenges—for example, a book may be entered into a database with its title recorded in English, even though the publication itself is in Setswana. Such inconsistencies create “an enormous problem” for discoverability. This case illustrates how fragmented systems erode efficiency and trust, underscoring the need for standardisation if the SALPC database is to succeed.

20.7.3. Extending Utility Beyond the Language Sector

Interoperability was also framed as an opportunity to extend the database's utility beyond the language sector itself. For example, integration with education and training systems could help track qualifications, accreditation, and continuing professional development. Similarly, links with government procurement systems could support job-matching and service provision, ensuring that qualified practitioners are visible to state institutions.

However, when asked about their willingness to integrate or exchange data with the proposed SALPC database, respondents expressed a spectrum of perspectives—ranging from unconditional willingness to conditional openness based on formal agreements, to more cautious approaches requiring governance approval.

At one end of the spectrum, some organisations expressed immediate and unconditional willingness, framing participation as a natural extension of their presence in the consultation process:

“Of course, in terms of willingness, we would because that's why we're in this meeting. It's an interest to or an indication for willingness” (Respondent 16)

Others signalled readiness to collaborate, but stressed the importance of formal agreements and clear parameters to safeguard institutional interests, while also affirming the principle of open access:

“We work with various organizations, and we will very much welcome to work with [the Council] and our arrangements moderated by a memorandum. If it's a memorandum of agreement, we can agree on specific areas of collaboration. So it's a memorandum of understanding, we can agree on the parameters of our understanding, but all our resources, all of them are public, so they are available... to any citizen or any researcher sitting anywhere in the world” (Respondent 5)

Finally, more cautious voices emphasised that such decisions cannot be made unilaterally and would require internal consultation and board approval:

“Well, I can't really make that decision. It will have to go to a board and make that decision” (Respondent 13)

Taken together, these perspectives highlight both enthusiasm and caution—pointing to the need for secure, regulated frameworks that balance trust, governance, and inclusivity in future integration efforts.

20.7.4. Barriers to Integration

However, respondents also acknowledged significant barriers. Technical challenges included incompatible software, lack of common standards, and insufficient ICT infrastructure within smaller institutions. Equally pressing were institutional and political barriers, such as data ownership concerns, licensing restrictions, and reluctance among organisations to share information.

Respondent 5 cautioned:

“If you are going to share resources, there must be a memorandum of understanding... so that there is accountability, and also to avoid conflict around ownership of the data”.

Respondent 13 stressed the importance of protecting autonomy:

“We would be open to that, as long as we still feel like we've got some level of autonomy where we can continue with our work without feeling necessarily managed by government”.

Analysis of the interviews shows that integration and interoperability were not seen as optional extras but as foundational principles for the success of the SALPC database. A well-designed system that can connect to other platforms under secure and regulated conditions would not only strengthen the credibility of the

database but also help professionalise the sector as a whole. Conversely, failure to ensure interoperability would risk perpetuating the very fragmentation that the SALPC seeks to overcome.

20.8. Theme 6: Sustainability and Resourcing

The sixth theme focused on how to ensure the long-term viability of a national language practitioner database. Interviewees emphasised that sustainability extends beyond simply launching the system: it requires careful planning for consistent funding, reliable human resourcing, and ongoing technical support. Without these elements, even the most well-designed system risks becoming obsolete, underutilised, or abandoned.

20.8.1. Funding Models

A central concern raised was the development of robust funding models. Respondents noted that databases of this scale often begin with project-based funding but struggle to maintain operations once initial grants or donor support ends. Respondent 7 warned:

“So I think that's one of the biggest challenges with this is as part of the development recommendations is to see, how can you partner sufficiently with somebody, maybe on the outside, to ready it's or something, but essentially that the maintenance is just maintained, because otherwise, again, there's just so many examples [of the] the bodies because they sit down at this stage.”

To avoid this cycle, respondents suggested exploring blended approaches that combine public funding through the DSAC or PanSALB, contributions from professional associations, and possible subscription or service fees for certain users. Respondent 7 described the possibility combining secure baseline funding from government with diversified income streams to extend the system's reach and reduce its vulnerability to budget fluctuations.

“We are funded by government, so if we were to stop, a lot of our stuff would stop... But for other things... we are trying to kind of move towards this community development, community source type of way... we want to use external funding to extend things further. So it's really something that's not just built on our ability to contribute funds to something like that.”

This perspective illustrates that while core support may come from government (e.g., DSAC or PanSALB), sustainability requires broadening the funding base through community-driven contributions and external sources—echoing the blended model suggested by respondents. At the same time, many cautioned that fees must remain affordable to avoid excluding grassroots practitioners. Respondent 3 explained that affordability was key to inclusivity:

“it's a very difficult question, I must say. But from an experience, it should be maybe, let me say it will be a good thing if we can benchmark with other councils going back to where they were established, councils such as, I'm thinking of the South African nursing councils, yes, and the pharmacy councils, I think if we benchmark with them and check how far back they have gone in terms to of where they are today, it can assist a lot. But for me, as a start there, the year in, year out affiliation, it should be affordable, ..., okay, maybe a certain percentage, minimal percentage, can be added up in the next year and so forth. Okay? Because I want to believe that even with well-established councils, they

didn't start affiliating with the kind of amounts that they are affiliating today. Yes, we should start small and incrementally increase the annual fees and so forth.”

20.8.2. Human Resources

Human resources were identified as equally critical. Sustaining the database requires not only technical staff to maintain and update the platform but also trained personnel to manage user support, data verification, and compliance with privacy regulations. Several participants warned that without dedicated staff, responsibility often falls to overburdened academics or civil servants, leading to delays, inconsistencies, and declining trust in the system.

Respondent 15 explained:

“it has to be compiled and run and managed by someone who is passionate about it, who wants to have it done. That there are necessary funds to do it, and the necessary training is given for people to maintain it, to build it and maintain it.”

20.8.3. Technical Sustainability

Technical sustainability was consistently highlighted as a challenge for the long-term viability of a national database. Respondents stressed that if proper planning for regular upgrades, backups, and interoperability improvements is not built in from the start, the system risks becoming outdated or irrelevant within only a few years.

As Respondent 3 cautioned:

“There should be some backup platforms that are implemented in the system to make sure that in a case, if it crashes out, we can always go back and retrieve the information and move on.”

Respondent 16 stressed that sustainability cannot depend on piecemeal or improvised support:

“The initial database that we had in the Eastern Cape? No, it's not being managed by dedicated staff, but we are utilizing the resource that we have, the human resource we have, Of course, that's not continuous, because these are people that are committed to other things as well.”

This view was echoed in the academic sector, where the importance of dedicated technical infrastructure was emphasized:

“We do have a technical department that looks after the technical repository of all the information that we get, or resources that we get, and typically, these resources would need to be compatible with our technical infrastructure so that they can be supported” (Respondent 5).

Taken together, these perspectives underline that technical sustainability is not only a question of software design, but also of institutional commitment. Without clear plans for ongoing updates, proper backup systems, and technical staff to ensure infrastructure compatibility, the SALPC database risks obsolescence and a loss of trust among practitioners and institutions.

20.9. Theme 7: Reflections and Lessons Learned

The seventh theme invited interviewees to step back and reflect on their existing systems, practices, and experiences. Their responses offered critical insights into what has worked, what has failed, and what lessons should guide the South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC) as it designs a sustainable and credible practitioner database.

A recurring lesson was the need for perseverance and resilience in building and maintaining a national system. As Respondent 2 urged,

"Please don't give up. It can be frustrating, because you will feel like you're running around. But definitely just start where... you'll get something that you wanna get. Then... build from there and use these conferences... But it's doable. Nothing is impossible"

This sense of determination reflects recognition that progress will be incremental, but achievable if grounded in clear goals and persistent effort. Linked to this was the importance of clarity and standardisation. Several interviewees warned that inconsistencies across institutions can quickly undermine credibility. Respondent 2 explained:

"When you go to different universities, you might find that the areas of specialisation [are] called different things... The key is your translation, your editing, your terminology development... So at least have a basic, generic list of those areas of specialisations"

Without such harmonisation, comparisons across data sources would be unreliable, obstructing both trust and efficiency. Interviewees also stressed the importance of designing the system with practitioners' real needs in mind, particularly opportunities for growth and recognition. As Respondent 12 reflected:

"I'm thinking trainings, conferences... I think that's what's most important. Of course, yes, even links to available postings... trainings, jobs, conferences, I think it's very important to have dialogues between practitioners, because that is missing in the country right now"

This highlights that the database must move beyond being a static repository, instead becoming a dynamic platform for professional development and networking. Another dimension of trust comes from clarity about how data will be used, stored, and shared. Several respondents noted that transparency is vital, not only to meet POPIA obligations but to reassure practitioners that their information will not be misused.

"Yes, of course... it should be done in such a way that it sort of restricts access to certain information, sensitive information." (Respondent 3)

Taken together, these reflections provide a roadmap for the future. They emphasise perseverance, standardisation, user-centred design, and sustainability as the pillars on which SALPC should build its practitioner database. The underlying lesson is that success depends not just on technical architecture, but on embedding the system in a culture of trust, inclusivity, and ongoing relevance.

20.10. Conclusion

The interviews with practitioners and academics and government representatives and sectoral bodies have given a comprehensive overview of the challenges and opportunities that exist for developing the SALPC database. Their viewpoints emphasize that the database needs to become a reliable professional system which will enhance the position of language work in South Africa according to the collective feedback from all participants.

The seven themes show that respondents agree on three essential elements for the database: clear objectives, well-designed systems and user-focused development. The system needs to provide operational tools which help practitioners gain recognition and visibility and access new opportunities while fulfilling institutional needs for coordination and oversight. The stakeholders emphasized the necessity for strict yet user-friendly security measures and privacy protection systems which follow POPIA regulations and maintain transparent governance practices.

The themes of integration, sustainability and lessons learned were important. Respondents highlighted that the SALPC should use existing systems as a foundation for development because it should create a unified platform that aligns all sector entities. It was emphasized that the system needs permanent funding and continuous governance support to maintain its operational status because unstable conditions will make it obsolete. The interviewees used their knowledge of previous projects to establish three essential principles for future development: practitioner-focused approaches, inclusive practices and continuous system improvement.

The interviews demonstrate that the SALPC database has the potential to create professional standards in the field while protecting language diversity and building institutional trust with practitioners. The system needs to establish a strong foundation which includes inclusivity and long-term sustainability for its successful operation. The interviews establish both current system requirements and security threats and a roadmap to build sustainability and professional development and trust into the SALPC framework.

Section F

Implementation and Conclusion

21. Chapter 21 Implementation Plan

21.1. Steps for Data Collection and Migration

Collecting and migrating data for a database of language practitioners in South Africa requires organised steps to gather practitioner details and securely transfer the information.

Key steps include:

- Define the purpose and scope of data collection clearly to determine the required data quantity and detail level (e.g., qualifications, contact details, accreditation levels).
- Collect particulars such as full names, residential and postal addresses, email, telephone numbers, qualifications, institution names, year obtained, accreditation, referees if applicable, and other specific registration details as prescribed by the South African Language Practitioners Council regulations (Form SALPC 1). (Government Gazette, 2015)
- Use structured forms and gather data following legal frameworks such as the Language Practitioners Act and comply with POPIA for data privacy.
- Recruit respondents (language practitioners) through informed consent and verification processes to authenticate qualifications and registration eligibility.
- Train field workers or data collectors to use tools (could be digital, paper-based, or mobile app- supported) to ensure accurate and consistent recording. (de Vries, et al., 2013)
- Ensure data annotation, verification, and updating protocols are in place to maintain data quality and currency. (de Wet, Louw, & Niesler, 2006)

21.1.1. Migration

A database migration strategy outlines how to move data between platforms, considering complexities beyond simple transfer. It involves steps like auditing, cleaning, maintaining, protecting, and governing data. (Kutay, 2025)

- Plan migration strategy considering the current data sources and target database structure.
- Conduct schema conversion and prepare data mappings aligned with the language practitioners' data structure.
- Use proven migration tools or services that support validation, monitoring, and error-handling.
- Implement data validation and verification pre- and post-migration to ensure completeness and accuracy.
- Consider ongoing replication or incremental migration if continuous updating is needed.
- Maintain compliance with POPIA to protect personal information during migration.
- Perform migration in stages—prototype, pilot, then full migration—to identify and address issues (AWS, 2025)
- Monitor performance and resource usage on source and target databases, minimizing downtime and disruptions. (Qlik, 2025)

Together, these processes ensure a comprehensive and compliant approach to building and maintaining a robust, accurate database of language practitioners in South Africa.

21.2. Communication Strategy with Language Professionals

To motivate and encourage South African language practitioners to register on a central database, a strategic communication approach should be used that is clear, personal, respectful, and engaging. Key components include explaining the benefits, addressing concerns, and using targeted outreach channels. Here is a strategy outline:

- Communicate the value of registration clearly: recognition, professional credibility, access to resources, networking, and influence in language policy
- Emphasize the role of the registry in promoting and protecting their language practice in South Africa
- Compliance with legislation contained in The South African Language Practitioners' Council Act (Government Gazette, 2015)
- Address how registration supports career development and community trust
- Use culturally sensitive and inclusive language reflecting the diverse linguistic backgrounds
- Incorporate testimonials and success stories from registered practitioners
- Maintain a personal touch, whether face-to-face, virtual meetings, or personalized digital communications
- Leverage professional association networks, language organizations, and educational institutions
- Use email, social media, webinars, and workshops as outreach tools
- Partner with government bodies like the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC) and PanSALB to amplify messaging
- Provide clear instructions and support for the registration process
- Offer FAQs, helplines, or chat support to assist practitioners
- Follow up with reminders and encouragement through preferred communication channels.
- Engage key stakeholders like language boards, academic institutions, and professional councils to promote and endorse registration.
- Use these partnerships to co-host events and build trust.

This approach aligns with known effective communication strategies for professional registries and language advocacy in South Africa, highlighting personal, clear, benefit-oriented, and multi-channel engagement to drive registration among language practitioners. (PanSALB, 2025).

21.2.1. Key Messages

Key incentives that would motivate South African language practitioners to register on the central database include:

- Formal registration offers practitioners official recognition and status as qualified language professionals
- It enhances their credibility and professional identity in the language practice community and the broader public
- Registration helps protect practitioners' professional interests and promotes the value and integrity of language services in South Africa.
- The Council (SALPC) regulates professional conduct and ensures standards, which contributes to raising the profession's profile

- Registered practitioners can access job creation initiatives, funding, and opportunities especially aimed at underserved indigenous language communities
- Access to continuous professional development, training, and networking through the Council and affiliated bodies is an important incentive (Kaschula, 2004)
- The registration system supports career advancement by linking practitioners to accredited programs, and possible government and institutional contracts.
- It aligns with national policy goals encouraging multilingualism and language development, enhancing practitioners' marketability (Government Gazette, 2015)
- Being on the database increases practitioners' visibility to government departments, education institutions, and clients seeking language services.
- It facilitates participation in language policy decisions and development programs, giving practitioners a voice in shaping the profession (DSAC, 2025)

These incentives collectively motivate language practitioners by offering recognition, career opportunities, professional protection, and support aligned with broader cultural and policy objectives in South Africa.

21.2.2. Channels

The best channels to reach South African language practitioners nationwide include:

- Utilize language practitioner professional bodies such as the South African Translators' Institute
- (SATI) and the South African Association for Language Teaching (SAALT)
- These organizations maintain membership lists and communication platforms ideal for targeted outreach
- Advertise and communicate through vernacular-focused media platforms and publishers that reach Zulu, Xhosa, Venda, Tsonga, Afrikaans, and other language communities
- Networks like MotherTongue Media specialize in targeting audiences by language in South Africa
- Use social media channels widely used in South Africa alongside dedicated language learning and practitioner groups/forums online
- Podcasts and YouTube channels focused on South African languages can also help engage active language communities
- Partner with universities, colleges, and language training centres where practitioners train or work, enabling outreach through newsletters, events, and mailing lists
- Collaborate with the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture and PanSALB, which can distribute information through their communication channels including websites and newsletters.

These channels combine professional networks, cultural media, digital platforms, academic contacts, and government support to ensure broad and effective reach nationwide to language practitioners. (Beukes, Mahadave, & Kanhai, 2022)

21.2.3. Measurement and Evaluation

Key metrics to track the success of a registration campaign for South African language practitioners include:

- Total number of completed registrations and how that grows over time indicate overall campaign reach and momentum
- The registration growth rate reveals how quickly registrations are accumulating, showing effectiveness during campaign phases (A2Z Team, 2022)
- Visitor-to-registration conversion rate measures the percentage of those reached who actually register, highlighting message and process effectiveness
- Channel-specific conversion rates (email, social media, direct outreach) show which communication channels drive the most sign-ups
- The percentage of individuals who start but do not complete registration helps identify process or usability barriers. A high abandonment rate signals a need for simplification or better user support. (Sharma, 2024)
- Percentage of registrations with complete and valid information reflects the quality and usefulness of the database.
- Critical to ensure reliable professional records and compliance with data privacy
- Cost per registration (total campaign cost divided by registrations) measures financial efficiency and return on investment.
- Helps optimize resource allocation and channel spending
- Post-registration engagement such as email open rates, clicks on follow-up communications, or participation in related activities indicates ongoing interest and impact.
- Useful for retention and long-term community building

Tracking these metrics provides actionable insights to refine communication, improve processes and maximize campaign impact.

Key metrics to track the success of the registration campaign for South African language practitioners include:

- **Total registrations and growth rate** over time to measure how quickly practitioners join the database
- **Conversion rates** from outreach channels (email, social media, direct contact) to see which channels are most effective
- **Abandonment rate** of the registration process to identify barriers or difficulties causing sign-up drop-offs
- **Data accuracy and completeness** in registrations to ensure reliable professional records
- **Cost per registration** to monitor financial efficiency and return on investment
- **Post-registration engagement metrics** like email open and response rates to evaluate ongoing interaction.

These metrics help assess outreach effectiveness, registration process usability, data quality, and campaign ROI, supporting continuous improvement of the registration effort.

21.3. Rollout and Timeline

The South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC) registration officially began its operational phase after the Act came into force in August 2025. This report is one of a four-part series which will provide a detailed timeline for the SALPC registration process.

The process will include the following:

- The SALPC and related stakeholders (such as the Department of Sport, Arts, and Culture) are expected to publish official notices with precise deadlines, registration periods, and procedural details as the rollout progresses
- Registrants will be required to complete a prescribed Form SALPC 1, submit certified identity documents, relevant qualifications, academic records, references, and pay the registration and accreditation fee.
- After receipt and verification of the applications, the Council will issue a registration number and certificate to accredited language practitioners

Regulations indicate a system similar to professional councils where:

- Formal registration calls are announced
- Applicants submit required documentation within specified windows
- Confirmation letters and certification follow within weeks of registration
- Fees are non-refundable upon submission.

21.4. Conclusion

In summary, the SALPC registration started post-August 2025 and the key deadlines for submitting registration applications and accreditation requirements will be published through official government channels once the budget has been approved, the database structure designed and the institution capacitated. (Government Gazette, 2015)

22. Chapter 22 Risks and Challenges

22.1. Introduction

The main risks and challenges to the successful establishment and management of the database centre around funding and successful engagement with all stakeholders and language practitioners. The technical aspects are well understood and there are proven systems in place to manage them.

22.1.1. Funding

Funding risks for establishing the SALPC include insufficient government allocation, resistance from practitioners to pay levies, and inadequate planning for long-term financial sustainability that is not totally reliant on state funding. Risks include mismanagement of funds and poor controls leading to corruption and wasteful expenditure.

22.1.2. Timely Development and Implementation

The legislation dates to May 19, 2014, and commenced through Proclamation 282 of 2025 on 29 August, 2025. Practitioners interviewed for this study stated that the perceived delay in rollout has impacted on the credibility of the SALPC. Further delays and lack of communication on progress will further undermine the confidence of language practitioners in the value of the organisation.

22.1.3. User Adoption and Database Completeness

Well planned and executed communication campaigns are needed to ensure the SALPC meets its objective. User adoption will be affected by lack of awareness and public engagement, budgetary constraints and delays in implementation. There must be ongoing communication with all language practitioners and other stakeholders to ensure that the value of registration is realised.

The research shows that practitioners see one of the main values of database will be connecting them with potential clients. The communication programme therefore needs to include government and private institutions which make use of the services of language practitioners.

22.1.4. Data Errors and Mitigation

There is a wide range of tools available to minimise, identify and correct data errors. The design of the database will determine which of these tools are integrated into the system.

22.1.5. Design and Development Risks

Common challenges in database design include suboptimal architecture, inadequate indexing strategies, inefficient query formulation, and insufficient data redundancy. To mitigate these issues, developers should adhere to established best practices, refine query structures, implement appropriate levels of data redundancy, and prioritize data safety and security throughout the process.

Effective optimisation of hardware resources is an additional concern in database management. This involves efficiently managing memory allocation, disk space usage, and processing power. Developers can enhance performance by utilising caching and indexing methods, partitioning large tables to facilitate faster queries, and adopting optimised execution plans to maximise hardware utilisation.

Safeguarding data remains essential within database systems, especially in light of cybersecurity threats such as ransomware, data breaches, and other forms of attack that risk data loss or corruption. Addressing these risks requires implementing comprehensive backup and recovery procedures, maintaining data redundancy, and developing robust disaster recovery plans to ensure system resilience and continuity.

Enhancing overall database performance further necessitates improvements in query speed and transaction processing. Professionals can achieve this by deploying advanced indexing, caching, and query optimisation techniques, all while maintaining a high standard of data privacy in today's digital landscape (Choudhary, 2022).

22.1.6. Operation and Data Management Risks

Data risk management maintains data accuracy, integrity, and accessibility while blocking unauthorized access, ensuring regulatory compliance, and preventing costly data breaches. (Brook, 2024)

Identifying operational risks is essential in data management given remote work, cyber threats, and cloud security issues. Proactively recognizing these risks helps organizations protect data integrity and maintain business continuity.

Table 51: Identifying and managing database risks. (Carson, 2025)

Risk Identification	Risk Assessment	Risk Mitigation
Identify potential risks and vulnerabilities in data management	Evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of identified risks	Develop strategies and controls to reduce the occurrence and impact of risks
Regularly review and update risk identification processes	Consider various risk scenarios and their potential consequences	Implement robust data security measures and controls
Engage relevant stakeholders in the risk identification process	Quantify risks based on their likelihood and potential impact	Establish incident response plans and protocols

23. Chapter 23 Synthesis and Conclusion

A strategic recommendation is to explore the possibility of establishing a larger, continent-wide African Language Practitioners Council. Such a body could potentially access a wider range of funding from pan- African and international institutions, which could in turn support national councils like the SALPC.

The main findings and recommendations are summarised below.

23.1. Rationale and Policy Context for a National Database

The South African language economy, which is estimated to contribute approximately R10,3 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) and employ around 66 000 people, is characterised by significant fragmentation and poor coordination. This leads to duplicated efforts, inadequate support for practitioners, and inconsistent standards, which undermines the sector's professionalisation and economic potential. While South Africa has a strong constitutional and policy framework promoting multilingualism, its implementation is inconsistent. Indigenous languages often remaining underfunded and marginalised.

To address these challenges, the South African Language Practitioners' Council Act (Act 08 of 2014) was established. This legislation mandates the creation of the South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC) as a statutory body to regulate the profession. The SALPC is tasked with overseeing the training, accreditation, registration, and professional conduct of language practitioners, thereby promoting quality and standardisation.

The regulatory framework centres on creating a secure national database that manages practitioner information and supports professional recognition. Governed by national laws such as the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), the system ensures personal data is handled lawfully and securely for policymakers, clients, and practitioners.

23.2. Professionalisation, Governance, and Financial Sustainability

The SALPC's framework for professionalising the language sector is built on several key pillars, which are designed to establish clear standards, ensure ethical conduct, and define pathways for career development. A central component is a standardised classification system that categorises practitioners into defined levels: Level 1 (paraprofessional), Level 2 (professional), and Level 3 (expert), based on qualifications and experience.

This structure supports a formal accreditation process, which serves as the mechanism for recognising a practitioner's competence for a specific category and level. The system is designed to align with, rather than duplicate, existing credentials from credible bodies like the South African Translators' Institute (SATI).

Registration on the database is a formal procedure requiring applicants to provide proof of qualifications and experience via prescribed forms, such as Form SALPC 1. Once registered and accredited, practitioners must adhere to a statutory Code of Conduct that outlines core ethical principles, including competency, integrity, confidentiality, and impartiality. Failure to comply constitutes improper conduct and can lead to disciplinary procedures. Furthermore,

professional and expert practitioners are obligated to participate in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to maintain their skills and registration.

23.2.1. Financial Sustainability

The financial sustainability of the SALPC is a critical consideration. Benchmarking against other statutory councils such as the South African Council for Educators (SACE) and the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) suggests that a purely fees-based model is unlikely to be sufficient in the initial years. The recommended approach is a hybrid model combining transitional public support (such as government grants) with a tiered, cost-reflective fee schedule for practitioners. Potential revenue streams include registration fees, certificate issuance, examination fees, and fines, designed to be equitable across different career stages.

23.3. Database System Design, Security, and User Experience

The report provides detailed specifications for the database, emphasising that it is more than a simple list: it is a carefully designed information architecture that forms the system's backbone. The technical design prioritises security, modularity, and a user-centred approach to ensure the system is robust, scalable, and trusted by its users.

A fundamental requirement is strict compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA). The SALPC, as the "Responsible Party," must implement a comprehensive framework for lawful data processing, including purpose limitation, data minimisation, and robust security safeguards. Technical measures must include role-based access control, encryption of data both in transit and at rest, secure backups, and tamper-evident audit trails to protect sensitive practitioner information from unauthorised access or breaches. The public-facing register will only display minimal, necessary information for verification to balance transparency with privacy.

23.3.1. User Interface

The user interface (UI) and user experience (UX) are identified as critical to the system's success. The design must be intuitive, accessible, and tailored to the diverse needs of its users, including practitioners, administrators, and clients. Best practices call for role-based interfaces that display only relevant information, clear navigation, optimised data entry forms to reduce errors, and consistent visual design.

The system must be fully multilingual and accessible, supporting users with disabilities through features like screen reader compatibility and adjustable text, ensuring no one is excluded. The platform should be built with a modular architecture, allowing components like registration, CPD tracking, and a job board to be developed and updated independently, ensuring the system can adapt to future needs without a complete overhaul.

23.4. Implementation, Membership Strategies, and Communication

The successful launch and adoption of the national database depend on a carefully planned implementation strategy. The report strongly advocates for a phased roll-out rather than a single, large-scale launch. This approach prioritises practitioner groups based on readiness and public-interest risk.

Phase 1 would focus on fields with established standards, such as sworn translators and court interpreters, while subsequent phases would gradually incorporate other specialisations like general translators, editors, and eventually freelancers in informal markets.

Critically, compulsory registration for any field will only be enforced once a clear and accessible pathway — including qualification, assessment, or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) — is in place.

To encourage participation, especially during the initial phases, a combination of incentives and institutional levers is proposed. Benefits for practitioners include increased visibility to clients, access to a job board, formal recognition through verifiable credentials, and access to CPD resources. Institutional partnerships with government departments, universities, and professional bodies will be crucial for driving adoption at scale through employer-led onboarding and data-sharing agreements. While registration will eventually be compulsory for prescribed services, voluntary registration will be open from the start to build momentum and populate the database.

An effective communication strategy is essential to motivate practitioners to register. Key messages should focus on the value of professional recognition, career opportunities, and the system's role in strengthening the sector. Outreach will be conducted through multiple channels, including professional associations, academic institutions, and government bodies like PanSALB. The success of the campaign will be measured by metrics such as registration growth rate, channel-specific conversion rates, and data completeness, allowing for continuous refinement of the strategy.

23.5. Research Findings, Key Challenges, and Future Outlook

Empirical research, including an online survey and strategic interviews, confirms strong support for the database while highlighting critical concerns that must be addressed. The online survey, completed by 149 respondents, revealed that 87% of participants believe South Africa needs a centralised database.

Practitioners interviewed are willing to register, motivated by the prospects of professional recognition, improved access to jobs, and the standardisation of qualifications. However, they expressed significant concerns regarding data security and privacy (91%), the potential for high registration costs, and the need for the system to be inclusive of informal practitioners and all official languages. The survey also confirmed that current data management practices in the sector are fragmented, with many organisations relying on paper-based records or basic spreadsheets.

The strategic interviews with 16 key stakeholders reinforced these findings, framing the database as a cornerstone for professionalisation, economic development, and cultural preservation. Interviewees stressed the need for reliable verification processes to build credibility, user-friendly design to ensure adoption, and integration with existing systems to avoid duplication. A primary lesson learned from past initiatives is the danger of systems being developed without long-term maintenance plans, leading to them becoming obsolete.

23.5.1. Risks and challenges

SALPC's main challenges include securing sustained funding, implementing measures promptly to maintain credibility, achieving broad user adoption, and reducing data errors.

Delays between legislation in 2014 and its 2025 start have affected perceptions, highlighting the need for transparent communication and steady progress. Success depends on balancing professionalisation goals with building an inclusive, secure, and financially viable system that gains trust from all language practitioners.

23.6. Policy recommendations

The study recommends a fundamental shift in how language policy is approached in South Africa, with the focus on a more economically informed and evidence-based framework.

Align with National Digital and Language Policies: The database should be developed in alignment with the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture's mandate to promote language development through digital tools and support the Use of Official Languages Act.

Integrate Economics of Language (EOL): A key recommendation is to incorporate the principles of Economics of Language into national language policy and planning. The current approach is seen as overly reliant on linguistics and sociolinguistics, whereas an EOL-informed policy would provide a stronger rationale for decision-making at a macro level and better account for economic outcomes.

Promote Multilingualism for Economic Competitiveness: Policies should be designed to leverage South Africa's multilingualism as a tool for economic growth. This includes promoting language skills for international trade, improving interaction with neighbouring African countries, and recognising how proficiency in multiple languages can enhance national competitiveness.

Invest in Language Education: The document suggests that national policy should support increased investment in language education, including foreign languages, within school and university curricula to meet the demands of a globalised and digital economy.

Balance Globalisation with Local Identity: Language policy should support multilingualism and linguistic diversity in a way that nurtures and protects local linguistic specificity, which is seen as integral to identity and a precondition for fostering an inclusive environment.

Adopt a Policy of "Alignment Over Duplication": The SALPC should build on existing credible credentials from bodies like the South African Translators' Institute (SATI) instead of creating entirely new, duplicative systems. Where necessary, it should co-design targeted bridging modules to meet statutory requirements.

23.7. Future Research

The following future research needs have been identified:

Application of Economics of Language (EOL) in South Africa: There is a significant gap in the application of economic analysis to the South African language sector.

- There is a relative lack of work on the language economy and the application of an EOL approach to the specifics of the South African case
- Future research is needed to move beyond the current focus on the economic impact of English proficiency
- A more comprehensive, evidence-led, and interdisciplinary approach is required, which incorporates economic imperatives and outcomes more productively into language policy and planning.

Impact of Digitalisation on the Language Sector: Further research should consider the qualitative restructuring of local and international language sectors due to economic digitalisation. This includes understanding how new technologies, including AI, are transforming professional practices.

National Economic Competitiveness and Multilingualism: More research is needed to explore how language instruction and deployment can reinforce national economic competitiveness and improve interaction with other countries, particularly South Africa's neighbours. This includes investigating how engagement with Africa and other regions can enhance options for local beneficiation and the promotion of indigenous languages.

Patterns of Professional Organisational Development: A study by Neal & Morgan (2000) provides an "empirical resource for future researcher[s]" by detailing the different historical patterns of how professions have developed and been organised in various countries, particularly regarding the role of the state. This suggests a need for similar comparative historical research in the South African context.

Section G

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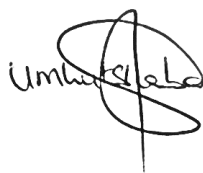
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APPROVALS FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN CULTURAL OBSERVATORY - The design, population and management of a database of language practitioners as envisaged by the legislation **September 2025**

	NAME	TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE
Approved by:	Ms Unathi Lutshaba	SACO Executive Director		30 September 2025
Approved by:	Mr Nzuzo Mkhulisi	DSAC, SACO Project Manager		
Approved by:	Ms Masana Chikeka	DSAC Acting Chief Director: Arts, Culture Promotion and Development		
Approved by:	Mr Sibusiso Tsanyane	DSAC Acting: Deputy Director-General: Arts, Culture Promotion and Development		

Appendix A: Institutions Representing Language Practitioners

Organisation	Who it serves	Member categories (examples)	Indicative annual fee	Notes you can benchmark
SATI – South African Translators’ Institute	Translators, editors, interpreters	Individual, student, corporate	R1,440; Student R720	Runs paid accreditation exams (≈R1,160 per language) → strong non-dues revenue lever. (Translators South Africa)
PEG – Professional Editors’ Guild	Text editors/proofreaders	Individual, couples, student	R720 individual; R1,090 couples; R320 student	Benefits include accreditation test, training/webinars, OUP dictionary access, vendor discounts. (Professional Editors’ Guild)
SAFREIA – Southern African Freelancers’ Association	Freelance writers, editors, creatives	Full, associate, corporate	R550 (full, annual)	Job board/directory + training/networking—classic value-for-dues model. (Safrea)
LSSA – Linguistic Society of South Africa	Linguists	Individual	R400	Straightforward dues; conferences generate additional income. (linguisticssa.org , Tshwane University of Technology)
SALALS – Southern African Linguistics & Applied Linguistics Society	Linguistics/applied linguistics	SA/Regional/Outside Africa	R385 (Rest of Africa), R880 (Outside Africa)	Tiered by geography; members get reduced conference rates. (salals.org.za)
SAALT – SA Association for Language Teaching	Language educators	Teacher, school, student, academic/institution	R250 (teacher), R500 (school/academic), R200 (postgrad)	Journal add-on priced separately—nice modular pricing. (saalt.org.za)
EASA – English Academy of Southern Africa	English language & literature community	Full, joint, concessionary, corporate, institutional	R420 full; R5,600 corporate (2023/24)	Offers journal + awards; shows scope for institutional tiers. (englishacademy.co.za)
SAGE – SA Guild of Editors (film/TV)	Screen editors (post-production)	Full, associate/affiliate, student	R500 (full/associate/affiliate); R200 student; registered students free	Screening/credit requirements; demonstrates tiering by experience. (editorsguildsa.org , editorsguildsa.org)
PASA – Publishers’ Association of SA	Book & journal publishers	Ordinary, associate, honorary	Fees set by General Assembly (not public on site)	Industry body with member services & advocacy; institutional dues model. (publishsa.co.za , Parliament of South Africa)
AIP – Association of Independent Publishers	Community/independent publishers	Org membership	Fees by application	Institutional membership fits well as a SALPC “supporter” tier analogue. (aip.org.za)
SABA – SA Booksellers Association	Booksellers	Bookseller categories	Fees on request	Trade-association model; benefits tied to advocacy & industry info. (sabooksellers.com)
ATKV – Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging	Afrikaans language & culture supporters	Individual	R1,460/yr (or R135/month)	Large cultural membership with partner perks—good example of public “friends of” model. (ATKV)

SASLHA – SA Speech-Language-Hearing Association	Speech therapists & audiologists	Professional, Premium, Essential, Pensioner, International, Affiliate, Student, Comm Serve	R1,500–R2,650.50 (tiered; students & comm-serve free)	Clear tiering + CPD/CEU benefits; membership helps subsidise journal APCs. (Ymaws, sajcd.org.za)
NeXLA – Network for Experimental Linguistics in SA	Linguistics researchers	Student, ordinary, institutional, associate	R50–R200 (by category)	Low-cost scholarly network—useful for “associate” tiers. (nexla.org.za)
SACEE – SA Council for English Education	English educators/advocates	Individual/branch members	Individual R50, Student R25, School R250, disadvantaged school 100	Another education-oriented dues model. (sacee.org.za)

Appendix B: The Language Practitioner Ecosystem

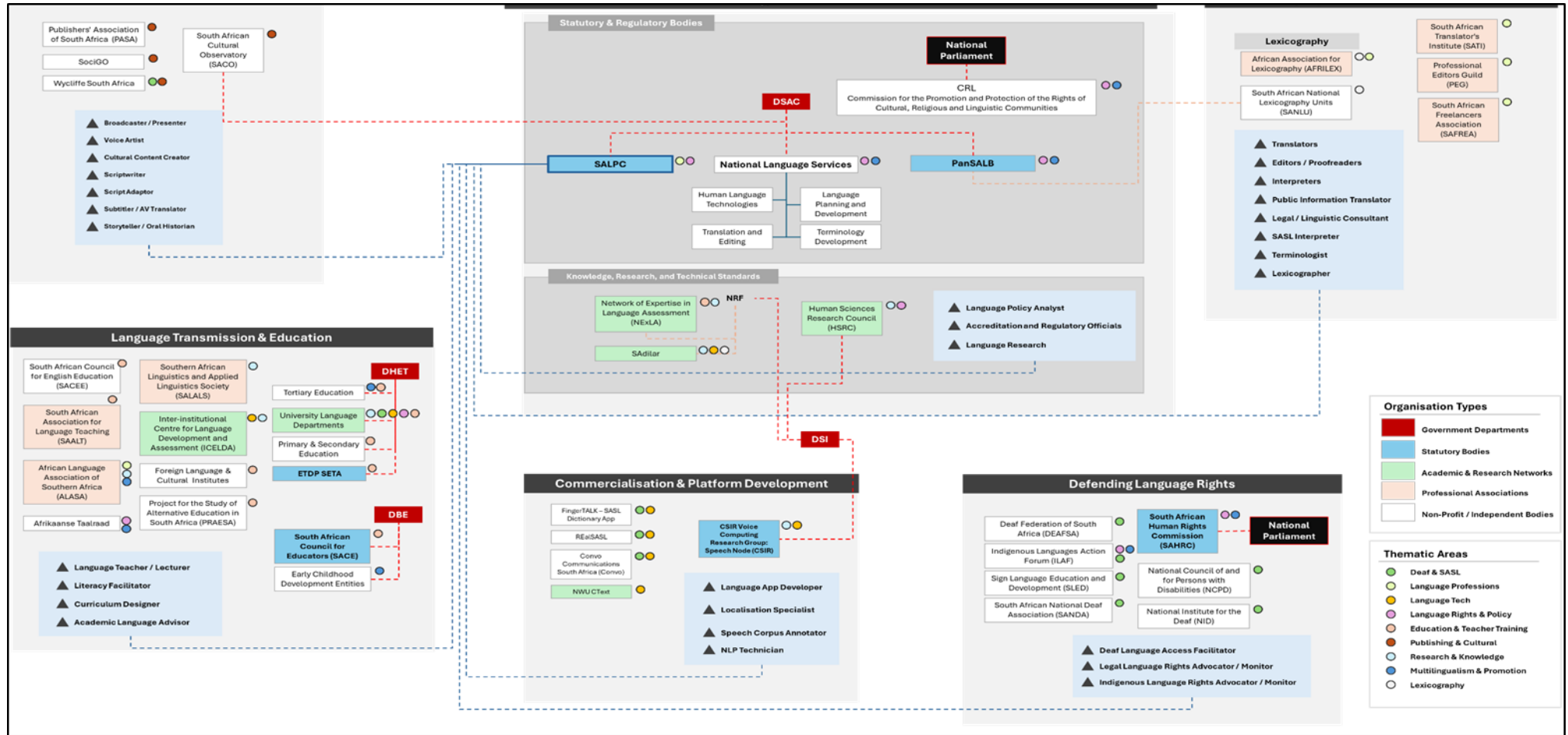


Figure 9: The language practitioner ecosystem.

Appendix C: Schedule of Semi-Structured Interviews

Date	Type	Venue	Designation	Title
2025/07/30	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 1	National Government Agency
2025/07/30	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 2	National Government Agency
2025/08/01	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 3	National Government Department
2025/08/01	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 4	Private Sector / Publishing Organisation
2025/08/04	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 5	Academic Institution / Research Centre
2025/08/15	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 6	Academic Institution / University
2025/08/20	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 7	Academic Institution / Research Centre
2025/08/20	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 8	Academic Institution / Research Centre
2025/08/25	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 9	Professional Association (Chairperson)
2025/08/26	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 10	National Museum (Regional)
2025/08/28	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 11	Academic Institution / University
2025/08/28	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 12	Academic Institution / University
	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 13	Civil Society / Advocacy Forum
	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 14	Small Business / Sectoral Association
2025/09/10	Semi-structured interview	Online Platform	Respondent 15	Academic Institution / University

ANNEXURE A

Form SALPC 1

2. Categories and subcategories

Complete the table below to indicate the categories and subcategories of language practitioners in which you wish to register and/or accredit and attach the relevant supporting documentation

Categories of language practitioners	Mark with an X	Subcategories of language practitioners	Mark with an X	Supporting documents to be submitted	Mark with an X	Office use Level:
A. Translator		1. Paraprofessional translator		• Certified copy of ID/passport		
				• References and testimonials confirming experience		
		2. Professional translator		• Certified copy of ID/passport		
				• Certified copy of relevant qualifications		
				• Certified copy of academic record from tertiary institution		
		3. Sworn translator		• Certified copy of ID/passport		
				• A copy of a certificate as a sworn translator issued by the High Court		
				• Certified copy of relevant qualifications		
3. Interpreter		1. Paraprofessional interpreter		• Certified copy of ID/passport		
				• References and testimonials confirming experience		
		2. Consecutive interpreter		• Certified copy of ID/passport		
				• Certified copy of relevant qualifications		
				• Certified copy of academic record from tertiary institution		
		3. Simultaneous interpreter		• Certified copy of ID/passport		
				• Certified copy of relevant qualifications		
				• Certified copy academic record from tertiary institution		
4. Text editor		1. Paraprofessional editor		• Certified copy of ID/passport		
				• Certified copy of any academic record, including schooling		
		2. Professional editor		• Certified copy of ID/passport		
				• Certified copy of relevant qualifications		
				• Certified copy of academic record from tertiary institution		

ANNEXURE A**Form SALPC 1****3. Language combinations**

Indicate the languages and/or language combinations in which you wish to register and/or accredit (if the table is not large enough, add a separate page with the additional information)

		Source language	Target language
1. Sworn translation	Combination 1		
	Combination 2		
	Combination 3		
	Combination 4		
	Combination 5		
2. Professional translation	Combination 1		
	Combination 2		
	Combination 3		
	Combination 4		
3. Paraprofessional translation	Combination 1		
	Combination 2		
	Combination 3		
	Combination 4		
4. Simultaneous interpreting	Combination 1		
	Combination 2		
	Combination 3		
	Combination 4		
5. Consecutive interpreting	Combination 1		
	Combination 2		
	Combination 3		
	Combination 4		
6. Paraprofessional interpreting	Combination 1		
	Combination 2		
	Combination 3		
	Combination 4		
7. Professional editor	Combination 5		
	Language 1		
	Language 2		
	Language 3		
8. Paraprofessional editor	Language 4		
	Language 5		
	Language 1		
	Language 2		
	Language 3		
	Language 4		
	Language 5		

4. Request for change/upgrade of accreditation level

If you wish to request a change/upgrade of accreditation level, complete the table below and attach the relevant documentation

Your registration number	Existing category and subcategory of language practitioner	Requested category and subcategory of language practitioner	Supporting documents/certified copy of degree/diploma	Office use Level:

ANNEXURE A

Form SALPC 1

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5. Academic qualifications

Complete table below with the details of all academic qualifications relevant to this application and attach certified copies of the qualifications and academic transcripts – list ALL RELEVANT qualifications. (Please note qualifications include degrees, diplomas or certificates).

Qualifications	Major subjects	Year qualification was completed	Institution at which qualification was obtained

Postgraduate qualifications

Please list the titles of all postgraduate (honours, masters, doctorate) dissertations, mini-dissertations, theses and/or research projects produced for the qualifications indicated in the table above – attach copies of the title page and abstract for all projects

6. Employment

Complete the tables below and attach a **comprehensive** report on **relevant** work experience

Current employment record

Name of current employer	Your position	From	To	Number of months employed	Name, telephone number, and e-mail of a superior at the employer

Previous employment record

Employer	Your position	From	To	Number of months employed	Name, telephone number, and e-mail of a superior at the employer

Self-employment record

For each of the categories in which you wish to register and accredit, list four clients for whom you do freelance work on a regular basis

Client	Service you provide	From	To	Number of months employed	Name, telephone number and e-mail of a contact at the client

ANNEXURE A**Form SALPC 1**

7. Paraprofessional references

If you are applying for registration as a paraprofessional, complete this section and attach a testimonial from each referee

Referee 1

Title, initials and surname:	
Telephone (office):	
E-mail address:	
Position held by applicant:	
Field of practice (applicant):	

Referee 2

Title, initials and surname:	
Telephone (office):	
E-mail address:	
Position held by applicant:	
Field of practice (applicant):	

Referee 3

Title, initials and surname:	
Telephone (office):	
E-mail address:	
Position held by applicant:	
Field of practice (applicant):	

Declaration

- I accept that the processing of my application will be delayed should I fail to submit the required documents/information or to submit the required testimonials or if my application form is unsigned.
- I accept that the window period for submission of outstanding information is three months and that my application will be archived should I fail to comply with this.
- I accept that after this window period I will forfeit the application fee and will need to re-apply in order for my application to be processed.
- I declare that I am the person referred in the certificate(s) included with this application.
- I undertake to abide by all the provisions of the South African Language Practitioners' Council Act, Act 8 of 2014, and the related Code of Conduct and regulations.
- I solemnly declare that, to the best of my knowledge, all the information contained herein is true and correct.

Undertaking

As a professional language practitioner I undertake –

- to abide by all provisions of the South African Language Practitioners' Council Act and regulations;
- to discharge my duties in a professional manner with due care, skill and diligence;
- only to undertake work that I am competent to perform and that is within the category and level of my accreditation and registration;
- to discharge my duties with integrity, fidelity and honesty;
- not to engage in any corrupt or dishonest activity;
- to conduct myself in a professional manner at all times;
- to treat all assignment-related information as strictly confidential;
- to maintain professional detachment, impartiality and objectivity in my work;
- to strive to maintain the highest possible quality in my work;

ANNEXURE A**Form SALPC 1**

- to accept full responsibility for my work;
- to take part in professional activities and always to conduct myself in such a way as to be a credit to my occupation, and to respect and support my fellow professionals;
- to always conduct myself in such a manner as to uphold the dignity of the profession.

Place of signature: Date:

Print your initials and surname here:

Signature:

OFFICE USE ONLY**ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION: LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION REQUIRED (Mark with an X)**

APPLICATION FORM: All fields must be filled in for data capturing.

QUALIFICATION: Diploma, Degree, Honours, Masters or PhD (A4 format).

Note: Copies should bear the original stamp and signature of a Commissioner of Oaths

TRANSCRIPTS OF ACADEMIC RECORDS: WITH OFFICIAL TERTIARY INSTITUTION STAMP

Diploma, Degree, Honours, Masters or PhD (A4 format).

Note: Computer printouts or individual result slips for each subject passed are not acceptable.

ABSTRACTS: Title and abstract of the research project (Diploma, Degree, Honours, Masters or PhD).

WORK EXPERIENCE: Complete section of relevant work experience.

JOB DESCRIPTION/PROFILE – Only expert/specialist professionals.

TESTIMONIALS: Only compulsory for recognition of prior learning and experience applicants.

APPLICATION FEE: Proof of payment must be included with application documents.

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES/OFFICIAL PROOF OF CHANGE OF SURNAME: Required if official documents are issued in another surname.

ID/PASSPORT: South African ID or, if not a South African citizen or permanent resident, certified copy of passport.

ANNEXURE B

Form SALPC 2

SALPC

SOUTH AFRICAN LANGUAGE PRACTITIONERS' COUNCIL

APPLICATION FOR REMOVAL FROM REGISTER**For Office Use:**

Date of lodgement:	Date of acceptance of removal:
--------------------	--------------------------------

1. Details of registrant to be removed

Title:	
First names of language practitioner:	
Surname of language practitioner :	
Registration No.:	
Accreditation No.:	
Residential address:	
Telephone No.:	
Email address:	
Postal address:	

2. Details of the person requesting the removal of the registrant

Title:	
First names:	
Surname:	
Residential address:	
Telephone No.:	
Email address:	
Postal address:	
Relation to registrant, if any:	

ANNEXURE B**Form SALPC 2****3. Reasons for removal (please mark with an X) and supporting documentation to be attached**

Death of registrant	Certified copy of death certificate
Absence from the Republic	Sworn affidavit setting out the details and length of the absence from the Republic
Registrant's request for own removal	Sworn affidavit setting out the reasons why the registrant is of the opinion his/her name should be removed
Registrant registered in error or through fraud	Sworn affidavit setting out the reason why the registrant has in your opinion been registered in error or through fraud
Registrant guilty of fraud	Sworn affidavit setting out the facts relating to the registrant having been found guilty of fraud and any other relevant document

Declaration

- I accept that the processing of this application will be delayed should I fail to submit the required documents/information or to sign this application.
- I accept that the window period for submission of outstanding information is three months and that my application will be archived should I fail to comply with this.
- I accept that after this window period I will need to reapply in order for my application to be processed.
- I declare that I am the person referred to in the supporting documentation included with this application.
- I solemnly declare that, to the best of my knowledge, all the information contained herein is true and correct.

Place of signature: **Date:**

Print your initials and surname here:

Signature:

ANNEXURE C

Form SALPC 3

SALPC

SOUTH AFRICAN LANGUAGE PRACTITIONERS' COUNCIL

APPLICATION FOR RESTORATION TO THE REGISTER

For Office Use

Date of lodgement:	Date of acceptance of restoration:
Application fee:	

1. Details of registrant to be restored

Title:	
First names of language practitioner:	
Surname of language practitioner:	
Registration No.:	
Accreditation No.:	
Residential address:	
Telephone No.:	
Email address:	
Postal address:	

2. Reasons for restoration (please mark with an X) and supporting documentation to be attached

In the event of the registrant having been declared mentally ill by means of a court order	Discharge notice from institution in which he/she was detained
	Sworn declaration by a registered medical doctor and a registered clinical psychologist stating that the person is fit to practise.
In the event of lapsed registration owing to non-payment of annual fees or any prescribed Council fee	Proof of payment of outstanding fees
In the event of failure to notify the Council of any details requested by the Council	Sworn affidavit giving reasons for such failure and proof of compliance

ANNEXURE C**Form SALPC 3****Declaration**

- I accept that the processing of this application will be delayed should I fail to submit the required documents/information or to sign this application.
- I accept that the window period for submission of outstanding information is three months and that my application will be archived should I fail to comply with this.
- I accept that after this window period I will need to reapply in order for my application to be processed.
- I declare that I am the person referred to in the supporting documentation included with this application.
- I solemnly declare that, to the best of my knowledge, all the information contained herein is true and correct.

Place of signature: **Date:**

Print your initials and surname here:

Signature:

ANNEXURE D

Form SALPC 4

SALPC

SOUTH AFRICAN LANGUAGE PRACTITIONERS' COUNCIL

APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF NAME AND/OR RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**For Office Use:**

Date of lodgement:	Registration No:
Date approved:	

Note: If you need to update your address and name details, complete ALL parts of this form.

Part A: Applicant's details as currently registered

Title:	
First names:	
Surname :	
Date of birth:	
Residential address:	
Telephone No.:	
Email address:	
Postal address:	

Part B: Change of name**Details of the applicant's new name**

First names:	
Surname:	

Supporting documentation for new name – please mark with an X and attach

Certified copy of marriage certificate	
Certified copy of any documentation in law proving such change of name	

ANNEXURE D

Form SALPC 4

PART C: Change of residential details

Details of the applicant's new residence

Residential address:	
Telephone No.:	
Address for correspondence (if same as above, write 'AS ABOVE')	
Email address:	

Supporting documentation for applicant's new address – please mark with an X and attach

Utility bill	
Any other proof of address (e.g. bank statement, account)	
Certified copy of identity document	

Declaration

- I accept that the processing of this application will be delayed should I fail to submit the required documents/information or to sign this application.
- I accept that the window period for submission of outstanding information is three months and that my application will be archived should I fail to comply herewith.
- I accept that after this window period I will need to reapply in order for my application to be processed.
- I declare that I am the person referred to in the supporting documentation included with this application.
- I solemnly declare that, to the best of my knowledge, all the information contained herein is true and correct.

Place of signature: Date:

Print your initials and surname here:

Signature:

Appendix E: Online Survey Questionnaire



Investigation: Language Practitioner Database System

The Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB), in collaboration with the South African Cultural Observatory (SACO), is undertaking a crucial investigation about the viability of establishing a nationally integrated database of language practitioners.

This research project seeks to address the current dispersion of practitioner data across various institutions, and the possibility of standardising qualifications, monitoring professional development, and ensuring the accessibility of qualified language professionals.

Your input would be invaluable as we work to design a structured system that supports the professionalisation and governance of language practitioners. This survey will help us understand your specific needs and define the necessary functions the database must support.

Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this research.

Thank you for your time and contribution to this vital initiative for the South African language sector.

It should take about 12-20 minutes to complete the survey.

Thank you for your time - your input is much appreciated.

Kind regards

The SACO Research Team

1. I agree to participate in this survey and acknowledge that the information will be treated confidentially.

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. My gender

☐ Female

☐ Male

3. Race (for statistical purposes)

Race	☐	☐	☐	☐
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Other (please specify)

4. My age group

☐ 20 years and younger	☐ 50 - 59
☐ 20 - 29	☐ 60 - 69
☐ 40 - 49	☐ 70 and older

5. I live in this province (primary residence)

☐ Eastern Cape	☐ Northern Cape
☐ Gauteng	☐ Limpopo
☐ Free State	☐ Western Cape
☐ KwaZulu-Natal	☐ Mpumalanga
☐ North West	

6. My highest qualification level

☐ Grade 10 (Standard 8) or lower	☐ Diploma
☐ Matric certificate	☐ Degree
☐ Apprentice training / certificate	☐ Post-graduate

Other (please specify)

African Coloured Indian / Asian White

7. How many languages do you communicate in? Please tick all that applies.

- ☐ Afrikaans
- ☐ English
- ☐ isiNdebele
- ☐ isiXhosa
- ☐ isiZulu

- ☐ Khoi
- ☐ Sepedi
- ☐ Sesotho

- ☐ Setswana
- ☐ siSwati
- ☐ Tshivenda
- ☐ Xitsonga
- ☐ San
- ☐ South African Sign Language (SASL) South African Sign Language (SASL)

Other (please specify)

8. In which sector(s) do you currently work as a language practitioner or language professional?

- ☐ Public & Government Services
- ☐ Private & Professional Services
- ☐ Media & Publishing
- ☐ Development, Research & Civil Society



Investigation: Language Practitioner Database System

Public & Government Services

9. Public & Government Services: Please indicate what work you do in this sector. Tick all that apply

☐ Basic education (e.g., schools, district offices)

☐ Higher education and academic institutions ☐

Research and policy work

☐ Language development and planning

☐ Public healthcare (e.g., hospitals, clinics, medical interpreting)

☐ Legal services (e.g., courts, police, legal interpreting, sworn translation) ☐

Security services (e.g., police, correctional services, military)

☐ Social development and welfare

☐ Editing and proofreading

☐ Translation and interpreting services (incl sign language)

☐ Municipal services (e.g., local government, public communication) ☐

Provincial or national government departments

☐ Parliament or legislative services



Investigation: Language Practitioner Database System

Private & Professional Services

10. Private & Professional Services: Please indicate what work you do in this sector. (Tick all that apply)

☐ Private education or training institutions

☐ Language teaching

☐ Private healthcare providers

☐ Translation and interpreting agencies

☐ Business and corporate sector (e.g., financial, legal, HR, internal comms)

☐ Editing and proofreading

☐ Engineering, science, and technology sectors

☐ Freelance / independent language services provider



Investigation: Language Practitioner Database System

Media & Publishing

11. Media & Publishing: Please indicate what work you do in this sector. (Tick all that apply)

☐ Print media (e.g., newspapers, magazines) ☐

Radio broadcasting, interviewing, presenting

☐ Television broadcasting, anchoring, presenting

☐ Script writing

☐ Book publishing – Author

☐ Book publishing – Editor ☐

Book publishing – Publisher ☐

Editing / proofreading

☐ Online content creation (e.g., blogs, web writing, social media) ☐

Performing arts (e.g., theatre, spoken word, storytelling)

☐ Voice artist or dubbing for audio/visual media



Investigation: Language Practitioner Database System

Development, Research & Civil Society

12. Development, Research & Civil Society: Please indicate what work you do in this sector. (Tick all that apply)

☐ NGO / non-profit / community-based organisation

☐ Language development or language rights advocacy

☐ Research institutions or think tanks

☐ Terminology or policy development

☐ Cultural heritage, arts, or oral history



Investigation: Language Practitioner Database System

13. How willing would you be to register on the South African Language Practitioner Council (SALPC) database, assuming it is secure and well-managed?

- ☐ Very willing
- ☐ Somewhat willing
- ☐ Not willing
- ☐ Unsure

14. Do you think South Africa needs a centralised national database for language practitioners?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

15. What would be your preferred language for system use. (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Afrikaans
- ☐ English
- ☐ isiNdebele
- ☐ isiXhosa
- ☐ isiZulu
- ☐ Sepedi
- ☐ Sesotho
- ☐ Setswana
- ☐ siSwati
- ☐ Tshivenda
- ☐ Xitsonga

Other (please specify)

16. What would be the most important reasons for creating such a database?

Please rate how important each of the following reasons is for creating the database. (1 = Not Important, 4 = Extremely Important)

	1 - Not Important	2	3	4 - Extremely important
Professional recognition of language practitioners	☐	☐	☐	☐
Improved access to qualified professionals	☐	☐	☐	☐
Better job and income opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐
Data for policy development and planning	☐	☐	☐	☐
Standardisation of qualifications	☐	☐	☐	☐
Collaboration and networking	☐	☐	☐	☐
Monitoring of CPD (Continuing Professional Development)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)				

17. What risks or concerns do you think need to be carefully managed in developing this kind of system?

Please rate how important each of the following concerns are. (1 = Not important, 4 = Extremely important)

	1 - Not important	2	3	4 - Extremely important
Data security and privacy	☐	☐	☐	☐
High registration costs	☐	☐	☐	☐
Exclusion of informal or community-based practitioners	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of multilingual access	☐	☐	☐	☐
Difficulty in verifying qualifications	☐	☐	☐	☐
Poor maintenance and sustainability of the system	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

18. Please select the option that best describes your current role or organisational affiliation.

- ☐ A. I am an individual language practitioner working independently or within an organisation (e.g., translator, interpreter, writer, editor, teacher, content creator, language developer, etc.)
- ☐ B. I represent a language organisation or service provider that employs, trains, or contracts language practitioners
(e.g., agency, educational institution, publishing house, NGO, research unit, corporate or government language office)
- ☐ C. I am part of a language council, professional body, or sectoral structure involved in language regulation, policy, development, or terminology
(e.g., PanSALB, SATI, provincial language committee, terminology board)
- ☐ I do not work in the language sector



19. Are you registered with any professional body?

☐ No

☐ Yes

If yes, please specify which body you are registered with:

20. Do you currently work in the public or private sector, or as a freelancer?

☐ Public sector (e.g., schools, government departments)

☐ Private sector (e.g., translation agency, media, NGO)

☐ Freelancer or self-employed

☐ Academic/Research institution

☐ Not currently working

Other (please specify)

21. How many years of professional experience do you have?

☐ 1-4 years

☐ 5-9 years years

☐ 10-14 years

☐ 15-20 years

☐ >20 years

22. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the current state of the language sector in South Africa? (Scale: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree)

1 - Strongly

5 - Strongly
agree

disagree

2

3

4

Data on qualified language practitioners is dispersed across various institutions.

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

There is a lack of standardised classification for language practitioners.

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

It is difficult for clients (government, businesses, etc.) to find verified, qualified language professionals.

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

The absence of a unified database hinders the professionalisation of the language sector

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

Other (please specify)

23. What are your biggest challenges in finding suitable work opportunities or clients as a language practitioner? (Tick all that apply)

☐ Lack of platforms to showcase my services

☐ Lack of understanding of the value of my professional qualifications

☐ Not enough paid job opportunities in my language(s)

☐ Low or unstable pay for freelance work ☐

Clients unwilling to pay professional rates ☐

Limited access to job listings or tenders

☐ Opportunities are not shared transparently or equitably

Other (please specify)

24. What are your biggest challenges in ensuring clients can easily verify your credentials and experience? (Tick all that apply)

☐ I do not have formal qualifications or certificates to show

☐ My qualifications are not recognised by official bodies

☐ I am not listed in a recognised language practitioner database ☐

There is no central place where clients can verify my credentials ☐

Accreditation processes are too complicated or unclear

☐ Clients do not understand what the credentials mean or why they matter

Other (please specify)

25. How would you describe the level of formal organisation or coordination in your field?

☐ Highly organised (e.g., formal councils, bodies, clear standards)

☐ Somewhat organised (some structure but inconsistent)

☐ Poorly organised (few formal systems or structures) ☐

Not sure

Other (please specify)

26. Do you use an online member portal or profile system?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure

If yes, please specify which portal or profile system you use.

27. What do you use the member portal or profile system for? (Tick all that apply)

☐ Updating information

☐ Finding jobs

☐ Uploading documents

☐ Not sure

☐ Tracking Continuous Professional Development

☐

☐ Other (please specify)

28. What should the South African Language Practitioners' Council (SALPC) system offer to you?

Please rate how important each of the following is. (1 = Not Important, 4 = Extremely Important)

	1 - Not important	2	3	4 - Very important
Verified professional profile that clients can access	☐	☐	☐	☐
A secure place to store and manage qualifications and certifications	☐	☐	☐	☐
Accreditation tracking and CPD (Continuing Professional Development) records	☐	☐	☐	☐
Alerts about job opportunities, tenders, and freelance work	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access to online and in-person training resources	☐	☐	☐	☐
Networking or mentorship opportunities with other practitioners	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access to terminology databases or language tools	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inclusion in national language policy and advocacy conversations	☐	☐	☐	☐
Professional recognition and credibility	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

29. What would encourage you to register and update your information?

Please rate how important each of the following are (1 = No impact on my decision, 4 = Major impact on my decision)

	1 - No impact on my decision	2	3	4 - Major impact on my decision
Free or affordable registration	☐	☐	☐	☐
Visibility to potential clients, employers, and institutions	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access to exclusive job listings or project portals	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ability to track and manage my professional development	☐	☐	☐	☐
Regular updates or newsletters about the sector	☐	☐	☐	☐
Recognition by government and formal institutions	☐	☐	☐	☐
Endorsements, ratings, or references from past clients	☐	☐	☐	☐
Assurance that my data will be protected and used ethically	☐	☐	☐	☐
Invitations to participate in sector events and conferences	☐	☐	☐	☐
Simplicity and ease of use of the platform (user-friendly system)	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

30. What are your frustrations with current systems?

Please rate how frustrated you are in terms of each of the following are (1 - Very frustrated, 4 Not frustrated at all)

	1 - Very frustrated	2	3	4 - Not frustrated at all
Lack of visibility or public recognition of my work	☐	☐	☐	☐
Outdated or incomplete data in existing directories	☐	☐	☐	☐
Difficulty accessing or updating my profile	☐	☐	☐	☐
No clear benefit to being registered	☐	☐	☐	☐
Limited or no communication from the organisations	☐	☐	☐	☐
Poor user experience (e.g., system errors, slow loading)	☐	☐	☐	☐
High fees or unclear fee structures	☐	☐	☐	☐
No support for multilingual or accessible use (e.g., mobile-friendly, voice-over)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of job or project opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐
No support for career growth or CPD	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (please specify)

31. Which features are most important to you? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Verified profiles
- ☐ Qualification uploads
- ☐ CPD tracking
- ☐ Expiry notifications
- ☐ Job board
- ☐ References
- ☐ Messaging platform
- ☐ Training access
- ☐ Multilingual
- ☐ Mobile-friendly

Other (please specify)

32. What accessibility needs would you like to see in the system (e.g., large text, voice tools)? (Tick all that apply):

- ☐ Large font / adjustable text size
- ☐ High contrast mode
- ☐ Screen reader compatibility
- ☐ Voice-to-text assistance
- ☐ Keyboard navigation (for users with limited mouse use) ☐

Mobile-friendly interface

- ☐ Multilingual audio guides
- ☐ Offline accessibility or downloadable forms

Other (please specify)

33. Please indicate what concerns you might have about data privacy? (Tick all that apply):

- ☐ Misuse or unauthorised sharing of personal data
- ☐ Unclear data protection policy
- ☐ Data being sold to third parties
- ☐ Identity theft or fraud risks
- ☐ No option to control what is public or private ☐

Insecure platform or website

- ☐ Not knowing how long data is stored

- ☐ None – I have no concerns

Other (please specify)

34. What advice would you have for the system design team? (Tick all that apply):

- ☐ Keep the system simple and easy to use
- ☐ Prioritise data security and ethical use ☐
- ☐ Include older or informal practitioners, not just formally qualified ones ☐

Ensure multilingual access

Provide regular updates and communication with users

- ☐ Allow for practitioner feedback and suggestions

- ☐ Offer both mobile and desktop access

- ☐ Ensure fair and inclusive representation across languages and regions



Investigation: Language Practitioner Database System

Organisations & Stakeholders

35. Organisation Name

36. Your position or role in the organisation?

37. What is the primary function of your organisation? (Tick all that apply):

- ☐ Professional Association
- ☐ Accreditation Body
- ☐ Government Department or Entity
- ☐ Language Services Provider
- ☐ Research Institution

Other (please specify)

38. Does your organisation manage a membership or practitioner database?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

39. What tools or systems does your organisation currently use to keep track of practitioners, stakeholder organisations, members, or related contacts? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Bespoke (custom-built) CRM/database system
- ☐ Commercial CRM software (e.g., Salesforce, Zoho, HubSpot)
- ☐ Microsoft Excel
- ☐ Google Sheets
- ☐ Microsoft Access or other database software
- ☐ Shared drive or cloud-based folder system (e.g., Google Drive, OneDrive, Dropbox) ☐

Membership management platform (e.g., Wild Apricot, Member365)

- ☐ Online survey platforms for registration and tracking (e.g., SurveyMonkey, Google Forms) ☐

Paper-based records or offline spreadsheets

- ☐ We do not currently use any formal tool
- ☐ I do not know

Other (please specify)

40. Who maintains the data?

- ☐ Dedicated IT staff
- ☐ General admin staff
- ☐ Outsourced

41. Can members update their own profiles?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Planned
- ☐ Not Applicable

42. Are there verification processes for data (e.g., qualifications)?

- ☐ Yes – Internal
- ☐ Yes – External
- ☐ No

Other (please specify)

43. Do you have data-sharing agreements with other entities?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Informal or ad hoc
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ If you answered 'yes', please specify your agreements

44. How important is a centralised database for your sector?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Not important
- ☐ Unsure

45. Would your organisation consider sharing data with SALPC under secure conditions?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Possibly – under certain conditions
- ☐ I don't know

If you replied "Possibly" please explain

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to provide an explanation. A small diagonal line is visible in the bottom right corner of the box.

46. Does your organisation have any data privacy concerns about possibly sharing data with a national database? (Tick all that apply):

- ☐ Risk of data breaches or hacking
- ☐ Lack of clarity on who can access the data
- ☐ Uncertainty around how long data will be stored
- ☐ Concerns about sharing personally identifiable information (PII)
- ☐ Need for strict compliance with POPIA (Protection of Personal Information Act) ☐

Lack of transparency about how data will be used or shared

☐ Practitioner data being accessed for commercial gain ☐

Potential misuse of sensitive or employment-related data ☐

No significant concerns

☐ I don't know at this stage

Other (please specify)

47. What benefits could a national database bring to your organisation or the sector? (Tick all that apply):

- ☐ Improved access to qualified language professionals ☐
- Streamlined recruitment or contracting of practitioners ☐
- Reliable data to inform planning, budgeting, or policy
- ☐ Greater professionalisation and credibility for the sector ☐
- Better coordination and collaboration between institutions ☐
- Easier tracking of CPD and accreditation
- ☐ More inclusive national language development initiatives ☐
- Improved monitoring and evaluation of language services

☐ Opportunities for networking, research, or partnerships

Other (please specify)

48. What challenges do you foresee for a national database of language practitioners?

(Tick all that apply):

- ☐ Ensuring sustainable funding for system maintenance
- ☐ Gaining buy-in from all relevant stakeholders
- ☐ Standardising data across multiple institutions and systems ☐

Managing system complexity and user overload

- ☐ Addressing capacity and infrastructure gaps (e.g., in rural areas)
- ☐ Avoiding duplication with existing systems
- ☐ Building trust around data handling and security
- ☐ Inclusion of informal or community-based practitioners
- ☐ Resistance to change from established organisations

Other (please specify)

49. What features do you suggest the SALPC system should have? (Tick all that apply):

- ☐ Practitioner registration and verified profiles ☐

Accreditation and qualification tracking

- ☐ CPD and training portal
- ☐ Job and opportunity board
- ☐ Advanced search and filtering tools
- ☐ Data dashboard for institutional use
- ☐ Multilingual user interface
- ☐ Secure messaging between practitioners and institutions
- ☐ Automated reminders and alerts (e.g., renewal deadlines)
- ☐ API integration with existing institutional systems
- ☐ Mobile and offline access options

Other (please specify)

50. Which of the following should be included in the SALPC system? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Practitioner registration
- ☐ Qualification verification
- ☐ CPD tracking
- ☐ Job board
- ☐ Multilingual interface
- ☐ Institutional dashboards
- ☐ Secure messaging
- ☐ API integration



Investigation: Language Practitioner Database System

Language Councils and Sectoral Bodies

51. Please provide the name of your organisation

52. What is the primary mandate/focus of your organisation? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Professional Accreditation/Certification for Language Practitioners ☐
- ☐ Professional Development/Training for Language Practitioners
- ☐ Advocacy for Language Practitioners/Language Rights ☐
- ☐ Research and Policy Development in Language
- ☐ Employer of Language Practitioners (e.g., government department, large private sector company)
- ☐ Educational Institution offering Language Qualifications

Other (please specify)

53. Which language sector(s) does your organisation primarily represent or serve? (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Core Language Services (including Translation, Interpretation, Sign Language Interpretation, Editing / Proofreading, Terminology Development)
- ☐ Media and Communication (including Writing for print media, Writing and interviewing for radio, Writing and interviewing for television, Content writing for online platforms, Broadcasting - radio or TV, Television anchoring)
- ☐ Education, Research and Development (including Language Teaching, Research and Policy Work, Language Development and Planning)

Other (please specify)

54. Does your organisation currently maintain a database or registry of language practitioners?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Partially (e.g., a list of members, but not a comprehensive database) Other

(please specify)

55. If "Yes" or "Partially" to the previous question, what type of information do you typically collect on practitioners? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Contact details
- ☐ Qualifications/Education (Degrees, diplomas, certificates, issuing institutions) ☐
- Areas of specialisation/Language pairs and proficiency levels
- ☐ Professional experience (Freelance, government, private sector, academic roles)
- ☐ Accreditations/Certifications (from your body or others)
- ☐ Professional development/CPD records (Training completed, ongoing education) ☐

Employment status (e.g., freelance, employed)

- ☐ Client feedback/testimonials

Other (please specify)

56. What is the purpose of your organisation's language practitioner database or system? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ To maintain a register of accredited or recognised language practitioners
- ☐ To support the regulation or professionalisation of the language sector ☐
- To match practitioners with job or project opportunities
- ☐ To support Continuing Professional Development (CPD) tracking
- ☐ To provide data for policy development and sector planning
- ☐ To promote visibility and public access to qualified practitioners ☐
- To facilitate communication and engagement with members
- ☐ To collect and analyse data on language use and demand
- ☐ To store terminology, research outputs, or reference materials The
- ☐ system is not currently in use / inactive

Other (please specify)

57. Who has access to your organisation's language practitioner database or system? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Internal staff only
- ☐ Registered members or practitioners
- ☐ Partner organisations (e.g., government departments, academic institutions) ☐
- Employers or clients seeking practitioners
- ☐ General public (open access)
- ☐ Access is restricted based on user roles or permissions I'm
- ☐ not sure

Other (please specify)

58. What verification processes do you have for practitioner information?

- ☐ Manual
- ☐ Institutional partnerships
- ☐ Digital credentials

Other (please specify)

59. Who maintains the backend of your database system (i.e. the system NOT the records on the system)?

- ☐ Internal team
- ☐ Outsourced
- ☐ Hybrid
- ☐ I don't know

Other (please specify)

60. Who maintains the data (records) on your database system?

- ☐ Internal team ☐ Members
- ☐ Outsourced ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Hybrid

Other (please specify)

61. What technical or operational challenges does your organisation experience in managing its database? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Limited IT support or technical capacity
- ☐ Outdated or inflexible database system
- ☐ Difficulty maintaining accurate or up-to-date practitioner information
- ☐ Lack of integration with other systems (e.g., job portals, CPD tracking, government platforms) ☐

Data entry or migration errors

- ☐ Limited user access control or role-based permissions
- ☐ Challenges ensuring data security and privacy compliance
- ☐ Insufficient training for staff managing the database
- ☐ System downtime or frequent technical failures ☐

Difficulty generating reports or analysing data

- ☐ Limited budget for system upgrades or maintenance

Other (please specify)

62. What POPIA-compliant protocols are currently in place in your organisation for managing your database? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ We have a written data protection policy in place
- ☐ Users are required to give informed consent before data is collected or shared
- ☐ Access to the database is restricted by role or permission level
- ☐ All personal information is encrypted or securely stored
- ☐ We conduct regular data audits to ensure accuracy and compliance
- ☐ We have protocols for handling data access or deletion requests from users
- ☐ Staff are trained on POPIA requirements and data privacy responsibilities ☐

We inform users how their data will be used and who will have access to it ☐ We

have a data breach response and notification procedure in place

☐ Users can update or manage their own data through a secure portal No

☐ formal POPIA protocols are currently in place

Other (please specify)

63. Can users self-update their profiles?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ With verification

Other (please specify)

64. Is there integration with government/university systems (e.g., SAQA, DHET)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ In progress

Other (please specify)

65. How is your system funded? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Membership fees
- ☐ Donor funding
- ☐ Government funding

Other (please specify)

66. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the current state of language practitioner data and the sector in South Africa?

(Scale: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

1 - Strongly disagree 2 3 4 5 - Strongly agree

Data on qualified language practitioners is dispersed across various institutions, including universities, professional bodies, and government departments, making it difficult to get a comprehensive overview.

There is a lack of standardised classification for language practitioners.

It is challenging for your organisation to verify the credentials and professional standing of language practitioners from other bodies.

The absence of a unified database hinders the effective professionalisation and regulation of the language sector.

It is difficult for clients (government, businesses, etc.) to efficiently find verified and qualified language professionals, leading to potential



quality issues.

The current fragmented data makes it difficult to monitor professional development and identify skills gaps in the sector.

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The lack of a unified system impedes efforts to standardise qualifications and industry standards across the sector.

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Current data management presents challenges such as duplicate, inconsistent, or incomplete records.

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Other (please specify)

67. How important are the following features for a national language practitioner database to your organisation?
(Scale: 1 = Not Important, 2 = Slightly Important, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Very Important)

1 - Not important

2

3

4

5 - Very important

Comprehensive practitioner profiles with verified credentials, experience, and specialisations.

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Ability for your organisation to integrate or synchronise your existing practitioner data with the national database.

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Advanced search and filtering capabilities for policymakers and clients to find practitioners by qualification, location, or specialisation.

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Real-time
verification

protocols for clients
and other bodies to

☐☐☐☐☐

confirm practitioner
credentials.

Integration with
training and
certification bodies
to track
professional
development and
CPD points.

☐☐☐☐☐

Standardised
classification
system for language

practitioners based
on roles,
qualifications, and
experience.

☐☐☐☐☐

Data analytics
capabilities to
generate reports on
industry trends,
workforce insights,
and language
service
demand/supply.

☐☐☐☐☐

A job board and
project portal for
organisations to
post language
service
opportunities.

☐☐☐☐☐

Resource libraries
with access to
industry guidelines,
research, and best
practices relevant
to all stakeholders.

☐☐☐☐☐

Portals for
collaboration and
knowledge sharing
among professional
bodies and
practitioners.

☐☐☐☐☐

Integration with
Human Language
Technology (HLT) to
facilitate innovation
in translation,
transcription, and
language
processing.

☐☐☐☐☐

A dispute
mechanism for
mediating between
client and
professional
language
practitioner.

☐☐☐☐☐

Secure member
portal that allows
practitioners to
update their

information while maintaining strict data protection protocols and full compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA).

☐☐☐☐☐

Automated notifications for industry updates, job postings, and certification renewals.

☐☐☐☐☐

Other (please specify)

68. In which areas would your organisation be willing to contribute to the success of a national database? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Sharing existing practitioner data (within legal and POPIA compliance).
- ☐ Assisting in the development of a standardised classification system for language practitioners.
- ☐ Collaborating on accreditation and certification protocols.
- ☐ Providing input on qualification requirements and continuing education frameworks.
- ☐ Promoting the database to our members/network for registration (to achieve universal membership). ☐
- Participating in user acceptance testing and feedback sessions.
- ☐ Contributing to resource libraries (e.g., industry guidelines, research, best practices).
- ☐ Assisting with the implementation of a dispute resolution mechanism.

Other (please specify)

69. What types of funding models do you think would be appropriate or sustainable for supporting the operations of the SALPC's database? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Government funding or subsidies
- ☐ Annual membership or registration fees from language practitioners
- ☐ Service fees charged to clients or employers using the database
- ☐ Corporate sponsorships or partnerships
- ☐ Project-based donor or philanthropic funding
- ☐ Paid advertising or promotional listings within the database ☐
- Consultancy or training services offered by the Council
- ☐ A blended model (combination of multiple sources)

Other (please specify)

70. In your view, how could a national database contribute to the professionalisation and standardisation of language services in South Africa? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ By formally recognising qualified and accredited language practitioners ☐
- By making it easier for clients and institutions to verify credentials
- ☐ By promoting adherence to shared standards and ethical guidelines
- ☐ By encouraging continuous professional development (CPD)
- ☐ By supporting the regulation of unqualified or informal service providers
- ☐ By enabling better coordination between different stakeholders in the sector ☐
- By providing accurate data to inform policy and planning
- ☐ By improving public access to reliable language services

Other (please specify)

71. Can you please share some key lessons for SALPC?

72. Would you be willing to join a working group or comparative study?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No



Investigation: Language Practitioner Database System

73. Please share any additional comments or suggestions you might have regarding the establishment of a national database for language practitioners, or any other aspects you believe are crucial for its success.

74. Would you be interested in attending a virtual stakeholder focus group to give further input?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe, depending on timing

75. My contact details

If you are willing for us to contact you directly

Name and surname

Email address

Cell phone

76. Do you wish to receive an electronic copy of the completed report?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

