

Highest-earning languages in South Africa in 2019

Job seekers that have command over local indigenous and far eastern languages still have the potential to earn more than those who speak only one language.

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In January 2019, [Adzuna South Africa](#) conducted research on which languages pay the most lucrative salaries. When the same analysis was done in 2018, Chinese, Japanese, Xhosa and Zulu all topped the rankings. However, in 2019, the top four paying languages are Zulu, Spanish, Russian and French while Chinese and Japanese dropped down the list a considerable amount of slots.

According to the job aggregator website, it isn't only essential to showcase bilingual language skills during the interview process on home soil; it is also beneficial for thousands of hopeful jobseekers that dream of living and working abroad. In some countries, a certain level of competence of the local language is expected for all new expatriates arriving.

Jesse Green, spokesperson for Adzuna, commented on the matter. "We have noticed that most [foreign-language jobs in South Africa](#) are for roles in call-centre and sales. However, when compared to the stats from 2018, it is interesting to note the drop in demand for local South African languages like Xhosa and Afrikaans, which corresponds with the lower advertised salaries."

Green continues: "Highlighting foreign language skills and bilingual capabilities is more important now than it has ever been. SA's current economic climate is forcing many locals to secure jobs abroad, and with a special set of language skills, it can be much easier to obtain work visas overseas."

A high demand for French, Portuguese and German was noted; with the top South African language required being Zulu. English was deemed ubiquitous for research purposes, which is why it was not included in the analysis. The language which was lowest in demand for the first

month of 2019 was Russian.

Zulu, Spanish and Russian are the three best-paying languages for 2019. In South Africa, the most in-demand foreign language is French, with 717 vacancies listed in January 2019. The demand for skilled, Afrikaans-speaking employees has dropped quite significantly, with 2,412 vacancies currently being advertised, opposed to the total of 3,300 vacancies advertised in August 2018.

With more and more business process outsourcing companies entering South Africa and an ever-growing international presence, we cannot deny that the demand for foreign language skills is set to soar even higher in the future.

Language	Job demand	Average salary
Zulu	418	R494,597
Spanish	38	R480,090
Russian	68	R414,571
French	178	R393,094
Portuguese	110	R369,156
German	75	R347,500
Chinese/Mandarin	101	R324,230
Afrikaans	2,412	R199,999
Xhosa	104	R191,706
Japanese	8	R78,000

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