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Translating the Planning Lexicon: a Systematic Review towards Localised Planning Glossaries in South Africa

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1 ABSTRACT

Planning theory has evolved towards a Post-collaborative agenda of non-tokenistic participation and reverence for perspectives from the Global South. Yet, practical implementation is complex and often falls short of participatory ideals in highly diverse and unequal contexts, such as South Africa, where formal land use management systems confront traditional leadership and customary practices in impoverished rural areas. To gain a deeper understanding and identify potential good practice examples, this paper engages with the international planning lexicons that shape participatory discourse, specifically examining whether, and to what degree, scholarly outputs, practical plans, and related documents evidence a shift towards more Post-collaborative and co-productive practices. A systematic literature review of academic and grey sources from 2000 to 2024 is conducted. From 664 potential publications, a final sample of 101 (15.22%) sources is reviewed and subjected to bibliographic and qualitative analyses to extract key themes. As an exploratory study, preliminary findings indicate that publications from the Global North continue to dominate. Scholarship maintains support for planning frameworks that more effectively engage with local conditions and incorporate indigenous knowledge, but limited practical guidance is provided. The tone of official planning documents, including their glossaries and explanatory definitions, continues to target a professional and well-educated audience through technical planning language. A small number provide direct linguistic translations, but most fail to support further understanding with contextualised discussions or examples. Locally informed planning glossaries, as participatory tools, may thus be relatively novel. Notwithstanding limited good practice examples, there is significant potential for South Africa to develop context-specific planning glossaries that enhance communication between planners and communities. To this end, this paper draws conclusions and makes related recommendations, including an example for a more localised South African planning glossary.

Keywords: Planning Glossary, South Africa, Public participation, Systematic review, Planning Lexicon

2 INTRODUCTION

Debate has surrounded the discipline of urban planning and its normative and procedural principles for decades, as theories and practices of planning have responded to significant epistemological and ontological shifts towards a more mainstream focus on equity and justice (Williams, 2020). Section 3 below explores these shifts to inform a guiding theoretical framework. The theoretical framework, with its discussion on Post-collaborative planning and the Global South, provides a segue to Section 4 to explore the historical and contemporary structural characteristics of rural South Africa, highlighting conflicting challenges in land use management (LUM) and the need for more localised approaches. This is followed by a brief exposition of the methodology enacted to complete the systematic literature review, before bibliographic and thematic results are presented in section 6. A final discussion triangulating Sections 3 and 4 with the results of the systematic review is provided. The paper concludes with Section 7, deliberating on the way forward, including an example of a more localised South African planning glossary entry.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper employs a simplified ontology of three planning movements, the Rational Comprehensive Planning Model (RCPM), Communicative and Collaborative Planning and Post-collaborative Planning, as a catchall for several later interpretations. The positivist RCPM saw the planner as technical expert and objective decision-maker relying on quantitative methods (Innes, 1998) to promote a Rostowian development pathway towards modernity (Schrijver, 2011; Lategan, 2017). With post-positivism came the realisation that singular expert knowledge and modernisation neglected those affected by planning and development decisions by disregarding diversity, power imbalances or inequality in plan-making and

execution. Collaborative and Communicative Planning, as interrelated movements, developed in response to recognise the value of consensus-building grounded in participation and deliberation (Lategan, 2017). Communicative theorists promote collective decision-making (Fischler, 2000) with Innes (1995) noting "planning is more than anything an interactive, communicative activity" and Taylor (1998) proposing that “planning can best be viewed as a process of practical deliberation involving dialogue, debate, and negotiation". Such claims echo Jurgen Habermas’s views on communicative action and democratic governance exhibiting limited self-interest within an ideal state of deliberation characterised by rational argumentation towards the common good (Purcell, 2009). Communicative and Collaborative theorists rely heavily on participation in the practice and research of planning (Frediani and Cociña, 2019). Participation remains an issue of lively debate fuelled by critiques against Communicative and Collaborative Planning and the outcomes of participatory approaches. Traditional Collaborative Planning failed to align and renegotiate power imbalances or to respond to extreme inequality (Frediani and Cociña, 2019) with the notion of spontaneous or independent consensus-building labelled unrealistic and simplistic (Fischler, 2000). The limitations of participation were already noted in the 1960s when Sherry Arnstein (1969) presented her simplified ladder of participation highlighting how degrees of participation may be enacted and legitimised as tokenistic processes of compliance. Even participatory processes motivated by intentions to learn and adapt, may produce outcomes stemming from peer pressure, coercion, self-interest or lowest denominator resolutions (Innes and Booher, 2015). Participation outcomes often disappoint professionals and leave the public unfulfilled, antagonistic or polarised (Innes and Booher, 2000). Critiques against participation further refute the likelihood or value of neutral dialog, proposing that provocative and a-political language may deliver the most effective results (Purcell, 2009). Such critiques nurtured Agonistic Planning to transcend a mere recognition of pluralism, diversity and inclusion towards the mobilisation of antagonistic distortion and the disruption of power relations to foster effective communication and extract value from exchanges laden with productive tension (ibid). Conflict thus becomes a constructive constituent of social relations and a source of innovation (Frediani and Cociña, 2019). Radical Planning emphasises productive conflict by channelling blatantly oppositional forces (Aylett, 2010; Monno and Khakee, 2012; Lategan, 2017) to support insurgency and local actions that may remake the city from below (Miraftab, 2009).

A new wave of planning theory directed from, and on, the Global South is also gaining a foothold (Frediani and Cociña, 2019). The Southern turn focuses on contexts that were long disregarded as underdeveloped and subjected to blunt theories and practices imported from the Global North. Southern theory-making questions Northern dominance and development ideals by challenging existing intellectual traditions under post-colonialism (Watson, 2009a; Lategan and Cilliers, 2017). Southern theory thus calls for the participation and validation of the marginalised and the expression of indigenous knowledge, local ingenuity and livelihood strategies to inform representative planning methods that embrace difference. In realising such approaches, the co-production concept denotes a symbiotic relationship in which expert knowledge joins local input informed by alternative systems of knowing to deliver transcendent development practices that may bridge binaries between the formal and informal, modern and traditional, the professional and the citizen (Lategan and Cilliers, 2017). The consideration of such approaches to participation in planning are particularly highlighted in Global South contexts of severe diversity and inequality. South Africa, with its twelve official languages and the title of most unequal country globally (Lategan et al., 2025), expressed in severe wealth disparities, racial tension and a strong rural-urban divide, presents fertile ground for further exploration in this regard.

4 THE CASE OF RURAL SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa’s socio-economic, cultural and physical landscape reflects its tumultuous past. The country is heading toward a 70% urbanisation rate (Lategan et al., 2025), but this still implies that a remaining 19 million people reside in rural areas, many of which are trademarked by crippling poverty and subpar service delivery following the devestation of colonialism and apartheid. Apartheid relied on the racial classification of urban and rural populations to reorder the regional and urban geography (Oldfield, 2004). The system demarcated ten rural Bantustans, or homelands, that were symptomatically underdeveloped and deprived with limited mining or agricultural promise and presented substantial isolation from economic urban nodes. Homelands were designated based on diverse ethnic and tribal affiliations (Van Wyk, 2015), but despite claims of support for autonomy and cultural sensitivity, these rural hinterlands homogenised diverse peoples that did not necessarily identify with one another owing to rich multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and regional

variations (Lategan, 2017). Still, certain groups maintained a sense of tradition. In Mpondoland, Transkei, Beinart (2012) notes that residents largely spoke their own language and displayed a certainty and self-assurance about their traditionalist beliefs. The majority were committed to customary land holding and continued to construct their traditional dwellings in impoverished, but subjectively bucolic, settings. Following many contradictions in apartheid's outcomes, the homeland system could not reconfigure African society completely. The homelands contributed to resistance and the preservation of African traditional authority by offering a platform for the reassertion of chieftaincies actively supported by the apartheid state to help suppress descent (ibid). The approach drew on colonial precedents to transform traditional leaders into malleable pawns of the administration, which bred mistrust and opposition (Koenane, 2018). This contradicted the historic reverence for accountable traditional leadership, which generally supported freedom of speech and consensus towards collective well-being (ibid). The position continues to carry great significance. As the custodians of land, traditional leaders are often regarded as direct links to the ancestors with the right to allocate land and decide its use, including the location of a homestead, crop planting, grazing or protecting sacred sites (Nel, 2016). Customary communal tenure arrangements were upheld under apartheid in the homelands, significantly supported by local chiefs. Such arrangements were increasingly bound by legislation in democratic South Africa that empowered traditional authorities with more control (Beinart, 2012). The drive to centralise this power has been criticised for discounting the participatory aspects inherent in customary decision-making processes and for compromising democracy and citizenship rights in rural South Africa (Ubink and Duda, 2021).

Control constituted a main point of contention from traditional leaders against formal LUM processes seen to usurp their authority (Reddy et al., 2006; Nel, 2016). The issue reached its peak during deliberations prior to the promulgation of the 2013 Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA). Before SPLUMA, LUM was not implemented in areas under the jurisdiction of traditional authorities, but the Act called for "wall-to-wall" schemes that would cover the entire municipal area (Reddy et al., 2006), thus including previously excluded territories like informal settlements and former homelands specifically (Van Wyk, 2015). SPLUMA mandates LUM via zoning schemes (Reddy et al., 2006). However, zoning also remains a contested construct in the South African context (Nel, 2016). Zoning, a concept of German origin that has transversed the globe, is criticised for its unsustainable and exclusionary outcomes (Reddy et al., 2006) in promoting monofunctionality and an oversimplification of land use using inflexible technical restrictions and categorisations that separate space and people (ibid). Yet, SPLUMA also allows for scheme amendments resulting from stakeholder input.

Opportunities for participation are enshrined in South Africa's development agenda to encourage contributions to technical planning schema for LUM, but also for strategic planning as part of five-yearly Integrated Development Plans and their constituent Spatial Development Frameworks (Nel, 2016; Lategan, 2017). Notwithstanding, legislative support for engagement, Van Wyk (2015) states: "Little guidance is available on the precise ambit of "participation" and …exactly where participation starts and ends. Moreover, the will to implement (appropriate and adequate) measures to ensure participation has proven to be sorely lacking in practice". The impacts of neoliberalism have often left participation restricted to formal "invited" engagements that are only rhetorically significant as checkboxes in policymaking and plan enactment, relegating citizens to spectators in decision-making (Watson, 2009a) and undermining deliberative democracy and Post-collaborative trends in engagement. When participation is attempted, it is often guided by a specialised legal-technical discourse that may require prior knowledge from stakeholders to facilitate meaningful engagement. Those without the necessary social or cultural capital are often excluded or dominated (Brandsen et al., 2018). Traditional leaders are not necessarily equipped with the technical acumen and expertise required to assess the suitability of land for specific uses, often resulting in poorly located settlements that expose residents to environmental hazards. Consistent with SPLUMA, targeted assistance is required in these rural contexts to facilitate informed decision-making and legal development practices (SALGA, 2019). However, planners have demonstrated limited capacity to engage with stakeholders presenting restricted knowledge of technical planning lexicons or to engage fully with the distinctive and culturally diverse contexts that now require LUM. There is also a potential disjuncture between such formal, Northern-derived systems of modernisation and the neo-traditionalist customs that inform life in much of rural, and peri-urban, South Africa, including traditional building practices,

agricultural activities, rites of passage, ritualistic animal sacrifice, traditional medicine and witchcraft (Beinart, 2012) that jar with modern interpretations of development.

From perspectives gained following sections 3 and 4, this paper emphasises the parameters that influence communication with marginalised communities, like the rural in South Africa, in matters of LUM. If, and the degree to which, international scholarly outputs, practical plans and related documents evidence a move from positivist approaches to more Post-collaborative practices is thus of interest. In keeping, the folowing section details the methods followed in completing a systematic literature review of such sources to deepen understanding and identify case studies of good practice to inform more locally responsive LUM instruments in South Africa. The language and tone employed in communicating planning terminology is of specific interest in the facilitation of participatory and co-productive approaches to LUM.

5 METHODS

This paper employs a three-phase, five-stage systematic literature review: identifying the research problem; developing a protocol (Table 1); searching the literature; extracting data; and reporting findings (Lategan et al., 2025).

↓ Identifying appropriate literatures ↓
The review incorporated both grey and academic literature to ensure broad coverage. Grey literature provided access to policies, plans, and cases, whilst academic sources offered theoretical insights and could help identify case studies.
↓ Deliberate on appropriate databases and basic parameters ↓
For grey literature, Google was identified, whilst, Google Scholar was selected as database for academic literature (Xiao and Watson, 2019). Open access sources were prioritised, with the institutional library of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology providing access to multiple subscriptions not available on Google Scholar. The review covered the period 2000 to 2024.
↓ Deliberate on appropriate keywords ↓
Keywords and search strings reflected simplicity, exhaustiveness, and precision (Wanden-Berghe and Sanz-Valero, 2012). Search strings for Google included: Urban planning glossary; Urban planning lexicon; and Urban planning vocabulary. These were also employed for Google Scholar, with the addition of: Urban planning AND indigenous knowledge; and translating urban planning terms AND community participation.
↓ Deliberate on appropriate codes ↓
Coding was completed following a deductive and then an inductive approach. Deductive codes were derived from the research question and aims and logically related terminology. Inductive codes were identified during the first phase of coding as new concepts and relevance emerged in the literature. Once a full code tree had been drafted, all sources were reviewed again applying the full list of codes (Hübscher, 2021).
↓ Deliberate stopping rule ↓
Initial sample identification was deemed complete after the end of the tenth search page of each database was reached (Xiao and Watson, 2019).
↓ Identify reference management software ↓
Endnote was chosen as the bibliometric platform. Folders were created for each database and further organised by search query. Additional folders were used for sources removed after screenings for relevance based on inclusion criteria (Okoli and Schabram, 2015).
↓ Search the literature ↓
Databases were searched following the steps detailed above and the protocol established.
↓ Screen for inclusion ↓
The final sample was produced following the application of inclusion criteria based on English language; Full text available; Title; Abstract and Conclusion; and Full text review.
↓ Extract data ↓
↓ Review full text ↓
An intensive review of the sample content followed.
↓ Extract bibliographic data ↓
As a first step of review, bibliographic data were extracted from the final sample to identify frequencies; world regions of origin and citation numbers (see Table 2).
↓ Code the literature ↓
Deductive and inductive coding using Atlas.ti followed. See “Deliberate on appropriate codes” above.
↓ Analyse and synthesise data ↓
↓ Apply descriptive statistics ↓
Bibliographic data were analysed with descriptive statistics. See Table 2 for results.
↓ Thematic and content analysis ↓
Codes were utilised to identify themes. Content analysis of themes was supported by memos to note commentary, connections, similarities, differences, and points of interest in the literature.

Table 1: Systematic review protocol employed.

Certain limitations in the protocol should be noted. Whilst diverse keywords and search strings were used to ensure a comprehensive literature sample, sources with alternative terminologies, non-English languages, or inaccessible formats were excluded. Only PDF formats were considered for Google sources, and publication quality was not a criterion for inclusion. Additionally, the potential influence of reviewer subjectivity and bias in selection and interpretation is acknowledged. A discussion of results follows.

6 RESULTS

6.1 Bibliographic Results

As per section 4, Table 2 below captures frequencies and basic descriptive statistics that characterise the final sample identified for review.

Database	Initial sample size	Final sample size	Global North	Global South	Global North and Global South	Citations
Google Scholar	484	45 (9.3%)	36 (80%)	7 (15.56%)	2 (4.44%)	67 808
Google	180	56 (31.1)	52 (92.86%)	4 (7.14%)	0	N/A
Total	664	101 (15.22%)	88 (87.13%)	11 (10.89%)	2 (1.98%)	N/A

Table 2: Frequencies and descriptive statistics linked to the review sample

As captured in Table 2, a combined total of 664 sources were identified in the initial scoping, with the majority (72.89%) coming from Google Scholar given the additional terms searched, and 27.11% emanating from Google. After the application of inclusion criteria, a sample of 101 (15.22%) sources remained for full review. It must be noted that 87.13% of sources in the final sample emanated from the Global North, 10.89% originated in the Global South and only 1.98% were the result of Global North-Global South collaboration. Sources in the Google Scholar sample were cited 67 808 times by February 2025. Of note, Arnstein (1969) accounted for 35 444 (52.27%) citations, underscoring the seminal nature of her contributions and the lasting alure of research on public participation. The following section discusses the thematic results delivered following the coding process.

6.2 Thematic Results

As expected, several sources identified on Google Scholar reflect on planning theory. Communicative and Collaborative Planning features prominently (Healey, 2006; Healey, 2003) echoed in Arnstein‘s (1969) simplified participation ladder, which is cited by Cornwall (2002); Sandercock (2004); Innes and Booher (2004); Cowen (2005); Rowe and Frewer (2005); and Fung (2006). Fainstein (2009) connects communicative planning with spatial justice, relating it to movements like new urbanism. Sandercock (2004) emphasises diversity and multi-culturalism, frequently cited in literature informing a Southern turn in planning theory (Friedmann, 2005; Healey, 2006; Watson; 2009a; Silva, 2015; Porter, 2016; Watson, 2016). Watson‘s (2009b) concept of “conflicting rationalities” is informed by the application of Northern theories in the Global South without local adaptation. Silva (2015) provides a historical account of planning in sub-Saharan Africa, countering generalisations and the uncritical adoption of foreign theories. Roy (2005) argues for the integration of informality into planning epistemology, drawing on Global South examples to advance justice. Zurba et al. (2022) review co-production literature and apply co-production based on a Canadian Inuit group’s indigenous knowledge. The shift towards Southern planning and diverse alternatives aligns with the decolonisation agenda, that sees Porter (2016) question indigenous inclusion in Northern-derived planning, linking this to dispossession and arguing for planning as a cultural process rather than a neutral technical exercise.

Indigenous knowledge features prominently in the review sample. Mapara (2009) reflects on Zimbabwe’s indigenous systems, emphasising traditional land management and a symbiotic human-nature relationship. Briggs and Sharp (2004) critique the limited inclusion of indigenous knowledge in development, warning of selective incorporation reinforcing Northern ideals and power imbalances. In disaster risk reduction, Mercer et al. (2010) highlight the holistic value of indigenous knowledge, proposing its integration with Northern systems through participatory learning to reduce community vulnerability. Briggs (2005) examines challenges in using indigenous knowledge in development, noting empirical biases, binary frictions with Northern science, power dynamics, romanticisation, and de-contextualisation. Corburn (2003), using New York City cases, outlines four ways local knowledge enhances (environmental) planning: expanding epistemological contributions; advancing procedural democracy; improving cost-effective policy solutions; and exposing inequitable risk divisions. The role of indigenous knowledge in pedagogy is underscored by Battiste (2005) in a Canadian First Nations context, while Semali and Kincheloe (2002) critique its marginalisation in Northern-led education and its potential to deliver more just outcomes.

A focus on context to accommodate diverse places and people is another common thread. Herbert and Murray (2015) highlight the value of ethnographic research in human geography, stressing researcher

positionality, ethics, and participant relationships. Innes and Booher (2004) critique public participation failures in the United States, advocating for inclusive, adaptive, and co-productive processes. Bratteteig and Wagner (2012) examine power imbalances in participatory design, shaping outcomes through unequal knowledge, resources, and authority. Fung (2006) and Fung (2015) provide guidelines on participant selection, distinguishing between self-selected, purposefully chosen, random, or targeted groups of lay or professional stakeholders. Magigi and Drescher (2010) shift to the Global South, discussing conflicts between customary land tenure and formal legal frameworks in Tanzania. Whereas Andrea and Coelho (2007) explore participation in post-democratic transitions, emphasising social mobilisation, agency, and the need to empower participatory institutions.

Introducing new concepts, or defining and finetuning existing interpretations for use by multiple stakeholders, is a main contribution in the literature on planning glossaries, lexicons and vocabulary form Google Scholar. Rowe and Frewer (2005) argue that the imprecise definitions and understanding of critical terms in public participation hinders research and impacts the development of efficient participatory practices. The authors thus define key concepts like public communication, public consultation, and public participation and derive four communication (e.g., public meetings); six consultation (e.g., consultative workshops); and four participation (e.g., co-production) mechanisms to improve effectiveness. Peel and Lloyd (2007) attempt to contextualise approaches to encourage civic engagement and public participation in Scotland's territorial land-use planning, proposing that a new national planning vocabulary be considered to facilitate inclusive, participatory and democratic processes. Dühr et al. (2007) examine the Europeanisation of policymaking and the new planning terminology that accompanies cross-border development. The authors note that some terms carry different meanings across context and boundary, leading to ambiguity and contestation, whilst others are new inventions. Schmid et al. (2018) lament that traditional urban studies have been moulded by Northern concepts that fail to adequately account for diversity and local variation due to oversimplification or misinterpretation. To address informal urbanisation, multi-layered urban growth and difference, the authors develop nine new concepts of urbanisation, of which four, popular urbanisation (self-organised by residents); plotting urbanism (subdivision and private development); multi-layered patchwork urbanisation (overlaps of old and new); and the incorporation of urban differences (contextual uniqueness) are discussed. Bhan (2019) focuses on urban planning terms rooted in an Indian context. Following a critique of Northern dominance in planning, a discussion of the specific concepts that describe different stages of informal urbanisation are presented to challenge the narrative of chaos and illegality. These are 'squat' (claiming space); "repair" (improving space); and "consolidate" (gaining recognition and legitimacy). Shared characteristics are discussed and the expansion of a vocabulary of Southern urban practice argued. Fernández et al. (2021) contend that the conceptual apparatus supporting engagement, with related issues of power and dominance, are embedded in a "Northern" language and that observing urban development practices in the Global South is important in the construction of Southern planning vocabularies. The authors identify three new terms. The first, "perverse incentive planning" based on experience from Colombia and the domination of legal and procedural mandates. The second, "ingraining" to capture bottom-up approaches to the conservation of pre-existing structures in Argentina. The last, "occupying" to represent land and housing occupation practices in Brazil. D'Arc (2001) studies cases in Brazil and Mexico to question the degree to which the specialised technical language used by experts, derived from international conventions, allows, or rather stifles, meaningful dialog with marginalised communities who often rely on lay language and everyday experience in their communications and may already place limited faith in the outcomes of participation. The lack of a shared vocabulary that bridges the linguistic divide by incorporating local terms and knowledge is thus recognised.

Certain authors take a more direct route by providing translations of critical concepts. Allain and Baudelle (2006) pen a comparative multi-lingual dictionary of twenty terms, mostly related to land use, for British, Belgian, German and French project partners to advance a shared comprehension by also discussing each concept in the terms and contextual understanding of each country and highlighting semantic differences. Gawryluk et al. (2020) provide a professional resource as a glossary of technical terms used commonly in planning, architecture and related disciplines in English, Polish, Spanish and Lithuanian, but without any substantiating discussions or examples. For Hong Kong, Chiaradia (2020) presents an urban design glossary that defines and translates terms from English to Mandarin. The Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning (2023) presents an English to Spanish term translation, but no definitions. In a Swiss case,

Sinatra and Kaufmann (2023) deliver a glossary of spatial planning terms in English and German, with all definitions maintained in English. Røsnes (2006) examines complexities in translating planning terminologies across different national systems into a shared language, specifically English, based on eleven Baltic countries with distinct languages and planning frameworks. A nuanced understanding of the national setting, potential interconnecting structures and civil rights issues related to each context are identified as core considerations in the delivery of meaningful cross-national translations of planning terms.

Several sources provide glossaries accompanying official planning documents like Comprehensive, General, Community and Master Plans (City of Los Altos, 2002; California Planning Round Table, 2003; Blaby District Council, 2005; City of Barre, 2010; City of Beverly Hills, 2010; City of San Diego, 2015; Queens Town Lakes District Council, 2015; Breckland Council. 2016; National Capital Planning Commission, 2016; County of Monmouth, 2016; City of Alexandria. 2017; Fairfax County, 2017; City of Kaua'I, 2018; City of Mississauga, 2021; City of Carson, 2022; Southwark Council, 2022; Palo Alto, 2023; Town of Truckee. 2023; City of Bellevue, 2024; Ealing Council, 2024). The majority are intended for use by professionals, but also public stakeholders wanting to engage with LUM issues. The language employed in almost all definitions and related substantiating discourse adopts a formal and technical tone, especially where quantitative requirements or legal issues are discussed. The vast majority originiate in Northern America, followed by the United Kingdom.

Dedicated dictionaries were also encountered. Davidson and Dolnick (2004) deliver 4,200 terms utilised by planners across the United States to eliminate ambiguity and ensure effective professional communication. The dictionary provides contextual commentary complimented by schema and photographs. Cowen (2005) defines language and concepts pertinent to urbanism, urban design, planning, architecture, regeneration, and environmental studies also supported by illustrations. Though not labelled a dictionary per se, Brooks (2022) presents a resource for understanding various urban planning and development terminologies accompanied by references to relevant literature sources. From Germany, Willinger and Schopp (2021) define key terms, methodologies, instruments, and tools relevant to urban development. Additionally, featuring supplementary essays on topics like justice, narratives, processes, and transformation. The publication establishes a shared vocabulary to bridge gaps between new and experienced professionals, experts, and laypeople, as well as theory and practice. There are also glossaries published by institutions like the World Bank (2021) and United Nations (2017) to define developmental concepts and clarify the organisation's interpretations. Other publications provide planning definitions for the sake of educational and informative purposes, but continue to rely on relatively technical wording (Committee, 2008; Kumar, 2017; Locality, 2021). Of note is the City of Dallas's (2022) "Paul the Alpaca teaches us about Urban Planning in Dallas", an illustrated guide for children that provides definitions in appropriately simple language assisted by activities. Several sources are more diversly specialised. The Mayor's Institute on City Design (2017), the Urban Design Institute of Australia (2023) and Plater-Zyberc and Company (2014) define urban design terms. TEEB (2010), TNFD (2023) and AWARD (2018) provide glossaries of biodiversity and environmental planning terms, with the last including spatial planning and South African references.

7 DISCUSSION AND WAY FORWARD

7.1 Northern theoretical support for a localised approach meets limited expression in the South

A key theme in the literature is the call for planning frameworks that reflect local conditions rather than replicating Northern models (Briggs and Sharp, 2004; Friedmann, 2005; Roy; 2005; Healey, 2006; Andrea and Coelho, 2007; Watson, 2009a; Porter, 2016; Silva, 2015; Watson, 2016; Fernández et al., 2021). This aligns with discussions on the Southern turn in post-colonial planning, mirroring power, justice, and participation as core tenets of Communicative, Collaborative and Post-collaborative planning. The Northern dominated sample, however, provides limited practical examples of how these theoretical constructs have entered planning practice, specifically in the Global South. Calls for a localised approach find a strong foothold in the South African context where colonial and apartheid legacies continue to shape socio-spatial constructs and dictate the rules of engagement between authorities and the local population. SPLUMA seeks to redress past inequalities, particularly in rural areas, but integrating customary land management into municipal planning remains contentious. Traditional leaders often resist zoning and formal mechanisms, fearing a loss of authority (Nel; 2016; Ubink and Duda, 2021). These conflicts highlight continuous tensions between Northern-derived land management concepts and informal or customary practices that reflect ways

of life in rural communities, in contradiction to the theoretical discourse. While it is imperative to acknowledge and respect traditional hierarchies, such as those within South Africa's traditional leadership structures, it is equally critical to ensure that marginalised and underrepresented groups have a voice. Planners must critically reflect on their roles as experts, with ethical responsibilities, to foster democratic processes that engage community leaders and to provide participatory platforms capable of incorporating diverse perspectives to inform co-productive planning practices.

7.2 The integration of indigenous knowledge systems in the Global South is complex and abstract

The literature underscores the value of indigenous knowledge in planning, but discussions remain largely theoretical. With 87.13% of all sources emanating from the Global North, and few case studies beyond North America, limited evidence is provided for practical guidance on how the complex gauntlet of engagement with indigenous knowledge and its incorporation is to be achieved.in the Global South. No South African cases were encountered. While South African rural communities retain strong ties to indigenous governance, traditional leadership remains contested. Some regard traditional authority as preserving cultural identity, whilst others argue that traditional leadership has been co-opted by the state to perpetuate colonial mechanisms of local control. This adds another dimension to the power dynamics to be considered in representative participation, as some leaders with limited support from their constituencies, may act as restrictive gatekeepers or autocrats. The lack of technical expertise in matters of land use planning, often exacerbating vulnerabilities, becomes a critical consideration to facilitate meaningful discourse towards more sustainable local land use practices that incorporate indigenous knowledge systems. In this, the tools and communication methods used in planning, as maps, documents, and terminology, become critical resources. The drafting of these tools must reflect, and on their part, foster, local input.

7.3 Northern language continues to dominate, and localised glossaries are novel

Effective participation, as emphasised in Communicative and Collaborative Planning, requires accessible language to move beyond tokenism (Arnstein, 1969; d'Arc, 2001; Rowe and Frewer, 2005). Technical jargon can alienate marginalised communities, limiting engagement in meaningfully decision-making (d'Arc, 2001; Rowe and Frewer, 2005). The sample includes several documents providing direct translations of key planning terms. Demonstrating the dominance of literature from, and on, the Global North, almost all examples provide translations from English to major European languages (Allain and Baudelle, 2006; Gawryluk et al., 2020; Sinatra and Kaufmann, 2023), mostly failing to deliver truly simplified explanations or any relation to local context. Fernández et al. (2021) advocate for Southern planning vocabularies reflecting local urban experiences. The dictionaries cited (Davidson and Dolnick, 2004; Cowen, 2005; Willinger Brooks, 2022) primarily target professionals. Examples of practical planning documents, for e.g., comprehensive plans, land use schemes, bylaws, regulations, guidelines or glossaries that explicitly employ a Southern vocabulary, meaning either translations to minority languages, simplified definitions, or examples and illustrations relating to a marginalised or Southern geographical context, are conspicuously absent in the sample. Whilst the direct translation of planning concepts, as demonstrated in the sample, provides a basic foundation for shared understanding, definitions and examples must also be contextually relevant and representative. Using the widely recognised term, "zoning", Table 3 illustrates how a localised planning glossary entry could be developed for an isiXhosa community in South Africa.

Term	Zoning
Technical definition	Means a defined category of land use which is shown on the zoning map of a land use scheme.
Term translation	Setyenziso mhlaba (noun); Ukusetyenziswa komhlaba (verb).
Technical definition translation	Kuthetha udidi oluchaziweyo lokusetyenziswa komhlaba oluboniswe kwimephu yezoning yeskimu solawulo lomhlaba.
Localised definition	Means that only certain buildings and activities can be built or take place on a piece of land. Normally, this would mean that land is used for a homestead, for farming such as a kraal or planting, for a place of worship, and other purposes. A map shows which buildings and activities are allowed in accordance with a land use scheme document. Zoning may be changed with permission from the local municipality.
Localised definition translation	Ithetha ukuba kuphela izakhiwo kunye nemisebenzi ethile enokuvunyelwa ukwakhiwa okanye ukwenzeka kumhlaba othile. Ngokwesiqhelo, oku kuthetha ukuba umhlaba usetyenziselwa ikhaya, ukufama njengekhraali okanye ukulima, indawo yokunqula, kunye nezinye izinto. Imaphu ibonisa ukuba zeziphi izakhiwo nemisebenzi evumelekileyo ngokwemigaqo yeskimu sokusetyenziswa komhlaba. I-Zoning ingatshintshwa ngemvume kumasipala wale ndawo.

Table 3:Example of a localised planning glossary entry in South Africa

Table 3 provides a preliminary attempt and should not be regarded as a final product. Interdisciplinary engagement with anthropologists, sociologists, and linguists together with community stakeholders is recommended to deliver more targeted and representative glossaries. The approach should not regard the rural as homogenous based on shared language but should ideally differentiate geographically and culturally within such groupings in pursuit of truly localised definitions and examples. Individual LUM schemes are not advocated here, but rather supplementary glossaries attached to existing schemes to better explain the technical terms employed. Accordingly, truly locally informed glossaries may move beyond semantics to unlock new terminologies and opportunities for future engagement.

Findings also suggest that more concerted research is required to uncover potential case studies on, and from, the Global South. Future research should expand to more databases, like Web of Science; consider expanded search terms targeting specific countries and regions; include multiple multi-lingual researchers; employ snowball sampling in discovery; and include ethnographic fieldwork to gain practical insights. The outcomes of such undertakings may provide novel substantive and procedural contributions to shape planning theory and practice in the Global South, with significant lessons for the Global North in dealing with increasingly oppositional diversity and difference in participation (Lategan and Cilliers, 2017).

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