Field and Applications of Clinical Linguistics

"Clinical Linguistics" is understood as the area of Applied Linguistics dealing specifically with the analysis of data from speakers with some sort of pathology affecting their use of language. Curiously, linguistic tradition in the second half of the 20th century rather neglected this field, concentrating instead on applied research into other topics, such as those related to teaching a second language, language policy planning or computational linguistics. Major exceptions to this generalised lack of interest were the well-known publications by Jakobson on aphasia and, decades later, the work of Ruth Lesser and David Crystal.

Currently, "Clinical Linguistics" is being discussed in international research circles. The International Clinical Phonetics and Linguistics Association has been in existence since 1991, (http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lpc/icpla.html); its official journal was founded by Martin Ball and is published on a monthly basis. There is also an Erasmus Mundus European Masters in Clinical Linguistics (EMCL) run by the Universities of Potsdam, Milan-Bicocca, Groningen and Joensuu. The annual international conference "The Science of Aphasia" (SoA) is linked to this Masters programme and is held under the auspices of the European Science Foundation (ESF).

Clinical linguistics covers the application of linguistics to the field of speech language pathology and its most direct professional manifestation is, obviously, logopedics, or speech therapy. Clinical linguistics studies have a long history in Anglo-Saxon applied linguistics, and have prompted the creation of interdisciplinary university departments, generally called "Department of Speech Disorders", "Department of Speech and Communication Disorders", "Department of the Science and Disorders of Communication". In Spain, alongside groups researching language pathology from the point of view of psychology, research that employs an approach based on linguistics is done by general linguistics research groups, such as:
- the Koiné Group at the University of Santiago de Compostela (children's language),
- the University of Barcelona group, with Faustino Diéguez-Vide, which belongs to Jordi Peña-Casanova's team,
- the University of Valencia general linguistics group (basically aphasias), which drew up the Corpus PerLA ("Perception, Language and Aphasia").

There are also a number of journals that are compulsory reading for the speech therapist, including:

**Advances in Speech Language Pathology**

**Advances in Speech Language Pathology**
Published on behalf of the The Speech Pathology Association of Australia Ltd
New to Taylor & Francis for 2004
**Editor: Elizabeth Armstrong.** Department of Linguistics, Macquarie University, Australia

**Publication Details:**
Volume 6, 2004, Quarterly
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**Augmentative & Alternative Communication**

Augmentative & Alternative Communication
The official journal of ISAAC
**Editor: Teresa Iacono, PhD, Senior Research Fellow,**
Centre for Developmental Disability Health Victoria, Australia

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Journal of Multilingual Communication Disorders

Journal of Multilingual Communication Disorders

Editor: Nicole Müller, Department of Communicative Disorders, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, USA

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Logopedics Phoniatrics Vocology

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Aphasiology

Aphasiology

Editors: C. Code, Department of Psychology, Washington Singer Laboratories, Exeter University, Perry Road, Exeter, EX4 4QG, UK
Robert Marshall, College of Health Sciences Building, Room 124-F, 900 S. Limestone, Lexington, KY 40536-0200, USA.

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Brain and Language

And, in the Hispanic field:
La Revista de Logopedía, Foniatría y Audiología, the journal of AELFA (the Spanish Association of Logopedics, Phoniatrics and Audiology):

Founded in 1981.
The series **Estudios de Lingüística Clínica**, edited by the University of Valencia:

and the **Revista de Neurología**, which devotes some specific supplements to neurolinguistics topics.

With regard to the objectives of this research, it is important to identify the **sphere of action** of linguistics in such a clearly interdisciplinary field. The linguist's task in terms of speech language pathology exclusively concerns the subject's language (in itself no mean feat):

1. firstly, the linguist's job is to **describe** these samples of distorted speech, obtained under appropriate conditions and using the correct methodology, applying their comprehensive knowledge of all the components of language.

2. Secondly, linguistic **research** acts as an essential bridge between the neuropsychologist's diagnosis and the speech therapist's rehabilitatory praxis.
3. Thirdly, the linguist's comprehensive knowledge of the language system enables them to **design** diagnostic and rehabilitation **protocols** to be used by the speech therapist.

4. Fourthly, it must be stressed that the linguist does not diagnose or rehabilitate; neither do they identify syndromes by grouping symptoms and lesions together; the linguist describes a verbal conduct and proposes linked procedures for assessment or recovery to the speech therapist.