

From Revelation to Rehabilitation: The Quran's Relevance in Clinical Linguistics

Language shapes our lives in ways we often take for granted. It is how we express love, share knowledge, and build communities. For Muslims, the Quran is not just a holy book but a living miracle of language- a text that continues to inspire awe for its beauty, depth, and power. In the world of clinical linguistics, language is examined through a scientific lens, focusing on how people acquire, lose, or struggle with speech and communication. But what happens when these two worlds meet? How might the Quran's approach to language and communication offer insights for those who work to heal and rehabilitate speech disorders today?

Anyone who has listened to a skilled recitation of the Quran can attest to its extraordinary linguistic qualities. Its verses flow with rhythm, balance, and a musicality that is both soothing and powerful. The Quran itself draws attention to the miracle of speech:

وَلِسَانًا وَشَفَتَيْنِ ٩

"And a tongue and two lips" (Quran 90:9, Khattab, 2016), a simple yet profound reminder of the gift of communication. The text's word choices, patterns, and even its pauses are deliberate, designed to capture attention and stir reflection.

In clinical linguistics, experts spend years studying the mechanics of speech, on how sounds are formed, how words are chosen, and what happens when these processes break down. The Quran's linguistic artistry, with its careful attention to sound and

meaning, mirrors the kind of detailed analysis that clinicians use when diagnosing and treating language disorders. Both traditions, in their own ways, recognise that language is as much about art as it is about science.

The Quran does not just celebrate language; it also teaches how to use it well. Time and again, believers are encouraged to speak kindly, honestly, and thoughtfully: *"And speak to them an effective word"* (Quran 4:63, Khattab, 2016), *"...speak to them a word of easy kindness"* (Quran 17:28, Khattab, 2016), and *"And speak to him with gentle speech..."* (Quran 20:44, Khattab, 2016) are just a few examples. The message is clear: words matter, and how we use them matters even more.

This ethical approach to communication is deeply relevant to clinical linguistics. Speech therapists and clinicians know that the way they speak to clients, especially those struggling with language, can make all the difference. A gentle tone, patience, and encouragement can help build confidence and trust, making therapy more effective. The Quran's guidance serves as a timeless reminder that empathy and respect should be at the heart of every interaction.

The Quran is also honest about the challenges of communication. The story of Prophet Musa (عليه السلام) is particularly moving. When Moses is called to deliver God's message, he prays:

وَآخُلُّ غُفْدَةً مِّن لِّسَانِي ٢٧

“And remove the impediment from my tongue” (Quran 20:27, Khattab, 2016), acknowledging his own difficulty with speech. He asks for his brother Harun’s (عليه السلام) help (Quran 28:34; 26:13, Khattab, 2016), showing that even the greatest among us may need support.

This narrative is powerful for anyone who has struggled with a speech disorder or worked with someone who has. It reminds us of that the difficulties with language are not a source of shame. Instead, they are part of the human experience, deserving of compassion and understanding. For clinicians, this story reinforces the importance of creating supportive environments where individuals feel safe to express themselves, no matter their challenges.

The Quran describes itself as a source of healing:

وَنُزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ٨٢

“And We send down of the Quran that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers” (Quran 17:82, Khattab, 2016). For many, the act of reciting or listening to the Quran brings comfort and peace. But there’s more to it than just spiritual solace. The rhythmic patterns, repetition, and melodic recitation can actually support language development and rehabilitation.

In speech therapy, rhythm and repetition are often used to help clients regain fluency or overcome stuttering. The communal aspect of Quranic recitation, in mosques, homes, and schools, offers a supportive setting where individuals can

practice pronunciation, intonation, and memory. For those who find confidence in faith, combining spiritual practice with language exercises can be especially powerful.

So, what lessons can clinical linguistics draw from the Quran? First, the ethical use of language, speaking with kindness and clarity, should be central to clinical practice. Second, the Quran’s use of rhythm, repetition, and meaningful content offers practical tools for therapy, especially in communities where the Quran is part of daily life. Finally, understanding the cultural and spiritual significance of the Quran can help clinicians build stronger relationships with clients, making therapy more effective and respectful.

From the revelation of the Quran to the rehabilitation of speech and language disorders, the journey of language is one of connection, healing, and hope. By drawing on the Quran’s insights- its celebration of language, its compassion for those who struggle, and its ethical guidance we can enrich the science of clinical linguistics and, ultimately, help more people find their voice.

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