Different specialists – **neuropsychologists, speech-language pathologists, neurolinguists** – are trained to work with people with aphasia (PWA) in Russia. We discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their respective training programs and try to formalize the requirements for clinical aphasiologists.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Neuropsychologists</th>
<th>Speech-language pathologists</th>
<th>Neurolinguists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **in Russia historically the first professionals to assess and treat PWA (going back to A. R. Luria).** | 5-year specialist degree in clinical psychology (currently there is a transition to 4-year BS + 2-year MS)  
Only diploma required to practice, but have to get recertified every 5-years (though specific requirements for recertification are not thoroughly specified)  
Among a number of courses on neuropsychology within the academic program two are dedicated specifically to aphasia and related neurogenic language disorders  
Only observe PWA as a part of their clinical training (no hours are set aside for assessment and treatment of PWA under supervision) | 5-year specialists degree in logopedics (speech-language pathology)  
Only diploma required to practice, but have to get recertified every 5-years (though specific requirements for recertification are not thoroughly specified)  
Academic program includes a course on neuropsychology and a course on aphasia  
Clinical training includes limited hours of assessment and treatment of PWA under supervision | 5-year specialists degree in linguistics (currently there is a transition to 4-year BS + 2-year MS)  
Not permitted to practice in the clinical setting (thus, always have to work in collaboration with a clinical specialist)  
Program includes courses on general and experimental linguistics  
No clinical training |
| **Strengths** | Strong background in general and clinical psychology, and neuropsychology  
Familiar with related disorders – traumatic-brain injury, right hemisphere damage, dementia, psychiatric disorders  
Familiar with concepts of psychometrics and standardized testing  
Academic program includes various clinical disciplines - neuroanatomy, neuropathology, neurology, psychiatry | Thorough knowledge of speech disorders  
Trained to conduct speech-language therapy  
Academic program includes general courses in linguistics  
Academic program includes basic clinical disciplines – neuroanatomy, neurology | Strong background in theoretical linguistics  
Trained to do experimental research on normative language processing  
Familiarity with modern psycho-/neurolinguistic theories of language  
Academic program includes neurophysiology  
Actively involved in language research |
| **Weaknesses** | Educated primarily within the Lurian aphasia framework  
Unfamiliar with contemporary theories of aphasia  
Lack knowledge of normative language processing  
Very limited knowledge of speech disorders  
Limited knowledge of and no practical experience providing speech-language therapy  
Overall inadequate clinical training | Poor theoretical background  
Unfamiliar with contemporary theories of aphasia and treatment approaches  
Limited knowledge of normative language processing  
Most courses in the academic program focus on child speech/language disorders  
No research methodology  
Lack practical experience in standardized testing | Limited number of courses in neurodisciplines  
Very limited knowledge of speech disorders  
No clinical disciplines apart from neuropathology in the academic program  
No clinical training and knowledge of related disorders  
Few observation hours of PWA |

**The Ultimate Clinical Aphasiologist** – a collaborative mix of the three specialties

- Should have profound knowledge of
  - Normative language processing  
  - Neurolinguistic theories  
  - Contemporary theories of aphasia  
  - Neuropsychology  
  - Psychometrics and standardized testing
- Should be familiar with
  - Clinical disciplines and related clinical disorders  
  - Different treatment approaches  
  - Basic principles of evidence-based practice  
  - Modern instrumental methods: ERP, fMRI, TMS  
  - Research methodology
- Should have experience
  - Assessing and treating PWA under supervision  
  - Conducting research with PWA