

Listening Styles and Barriers

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In class we discussed four listening styles, which are: relational, analytical, critical, and task-oriented. I do not believe that I align with relational and task-oriented styles, as I do not perceive myself as a person who is good at finding solutions and/or listening to others' emotions in a deep sense. While analytical and critical listening share many similarities, I identify more with critical listening because I am open-minded and skeptical.

To be a critical listener, it is important to be open-minded. I set aside my beliefs and thoughts on a topic for a period of time so I can view the opposing sides' views. Since I am naturally a skeptic, being open-minded helps me avoid being a close-minded skeptic that rejects everything. Back when I was in high school, I took AP Government. In class, we did debates on controversial topics, which helped me develop my listening skills to listen to arguments I may not have agreed with. This allowed me to respond to them respectfully and point out flaws in their arguments. Open-mindedness therefore made my critical thinking more effective.

On the "assess your skills" quiz, I got 24 on relational, 21 on task-oriented, 25 on critical, and 26 on analytical. I agree with the quiz overall, as I believe that I am between critical and analytical. Analytical fits me in many ways, including my tendency to want facts and my ability to comprehend complex information. I do recognize the tendencies of an analytical listener that I show. In the end, I still believe that I tend to sway more towards critical thinking rather than analytical.

Of the listening barriers discussed in class, I believe that I tend to sway towards being self-absorbed. I feel as if I have a tendency to do selective listening and try to listen in for any mistakes that a person may make. I also believe that different speech, thoughts, and rates are a problem for me. I have a problem because when people talk too fast or quietly I get

overwhelmed and can not understand the person who is speaking. I believe that if I try paraphrasing and asking questions, which are two of our listening skills, I believe I can become a better listener. I feel that if I don't interrupt people when they are speaking but ask them questions to get information and seek clarity, they will feel that I am listening to them and they will feel better about talking and confiding in me.