

Weekly Reflection #4

COMM1030, Sec. 005

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Chapter 7, Application Question 2: Floyd discussed several obstacles to effective listening. When are you most likely to engage in pseudolistening or glazing over? How can you improve your listening in these situations?

Communications scholars have identified several impediments to effective listening. Many of these are familiar such as noise and closed-mindedness. (Floyd, 2021, pp. 236-241) For example noise is defined as “...anything that distracts you from listening to what you wish to listen to.” (Floyd, 2021, p. 236) One barrier to effective listening that is increasingly common in the modern world is information overload which is “...the state of being overwhelmed by the huge amount of information one is required to take in every day.” (Floyd, 2021, p. 237) While not explicitly stated in the text, I feel this is closely related to noise. In the case of information overload the distractions are even more appealing because they at least purport to contain useful information. It is very common these days to see some one pick up their cell phone to check a notification in the middle of an in-person conversation. This example is clearly a case where information overload affects one’s ability to listen by physically removing their attention from the conversation at hand. Several years ago this behavior would have been considered rude and some may still find it so. The acceptance of this behavior may tie in with the idea of social media as co-culture. We note that “As we have discussed in this chapter, cultures and co-cultures are characterized by symbols, language, values, and norms. Consider the ways that social media has, in just a few years, evolved to create a unique co-culture, and how that culture is reflected interpersonally when we communicate online. Within that culture, we can recognize ‘the co-culture of Instagram,’ for instance, and ‘the co-culture of Twitter.’ In these and other co-cultures, words and symbols emerge—for example, hashtags, memes, and jargon—that become cultural norms among users of each platform.” (Floyd, 2021 p. 41) This is a developing area of society that certainly deserves more study.

Pseudolistening and glazing over are two other cases when an individual fails to listen effectively. Calling them “obstacles” (Floyd, 2021, p. 236) is not accurate because they are behaviors that come from within an individual and not external situations that must be dealt with. This shows poor communication ability on the part of the textbook author, making one wonder why they are writing a book about communication. Personally I engage in glazing over any time I attempt to read this textbook: the loose logic and pseudoscientific studies do not make for exciting material. Even in

classes within my discipline the material can often be dry and lectures difficult to follow for extended periods of time. One of the few benefits of moving classes online is that many lectures are now recorded so I have been able to improve my listening in these situations by playing back parts of the lecture that I did not follow. The internet has also made many lectures on these topics available from many professors with a wide variety of teaching styles, so it is often possible to find a more engaging presenter as well. Pseudolistening is often encountered when listening to stories about other peoples' experiences at work. I often find this is acceptable in these situations as people are most often just looking for support or validation when discussing work matters with those outside of their workplace.

Word Count: 546

Works Cited:

Floyd, K. (2021). *Interpersonal communication* (4th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.