The Effects of Self-Construal on Listening Styles: Comparison of Turkish and Australian University Students

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Abstract

In this study the effect of self construal on listening styles is analysed comparatively in Australia and in Turkey. Based on the cultural context, self construal is the main subject of this study affecting the listening styles. Independent and interdependent self construal and four types of listening styles, namely people oriented, content oriented, action oriented and time oriented are analysed. As a sample group university students are selected in both Turkey and Australia. The reason of conducting study in Australia and Turkey depends on the information in the literature that Australia has individualist and Turkey has collectivist culture. According to regression analysis results there is a significant difference for independent and interdependent self-construal in Australia and Turkey. Australia has higher independent self construal than Turkey. Also it is found that, people oriented listening style is significant for both Turkey and Australia. Another finding is that, there is a significant effect of independent self-construal for both content oriented and time oriented listening style in Turkey. The value of this study comes from consideration of culture and self construal together to analyse the listening styles.

Keywords: listening styles, self-construal, communication, culture

The increase in the frequency of individuals' broad and comprehensive interaction with other cultures apart from theirs, constitutes one of the characteristics of the twenty first century. In such cases, namely during the formation of extensive intercultural interaction, it is inevitable to face with difficulties. This is because people experience socialization process to adopt what is "proper and right" within relatively narrow behavioral range in their own cultures. When these individuals form interaction with people from different cultures, the behaviors that they have perceived as right and proper before are not adopted by others similarly (Brislin, Cushner, Cherrie &Yong, 1986, p. 17). The reason is that culture and cultural background not only dictate whom and what an individual will talk about and how the communication will be developed and furthered; but also help individuals to determine how they will code a message, what meaning they will infer from messages, for what terms and conditions they will transmit different messages and what they will take into consideration and interpret (Samovar, Porter & Jain, 1981, p. 24).

Through providing its members with the common belief and assumptions for right and wrong behavioral patterns, culture shapes the context in which the individual values are developed (Lustig & Koester, 2006, p. 27). During the period we live within this context, how, when, where, why and whom we are listening reflects a changing state and diversifies our perception on efficient listening. Due to the value of information, acquisition of global identity by businesses and the development of information technologies in our day, significant transformations have been experienced in the issues regarding what, whom and how we will listen and more speaking and listening activities have been created between communicators from different cultures in working environments (Bentley, 2000, p. 129) and one of the important differences in listening has been related to whom individuals listen and it has become possible to share a communication media with people who are from another country and do not speak the same local (native) language (Bentley, 2000, p. 131).

The Role of Listening in Communication

Communication is a two-way process; a listener is often needed wherever there is a speaker. Although receivers of messages draw less attention of researchers in communication process, the role of receiver is as important as the role of transmitter. An individual spends around half of the hours, during which he/she is awake, on listening (Rogers & Steinfatt, 1988: 157). The role of listeners is often overlooked during speaking. This is because the researches are more focused on message or speaker. The listener is not the storage of message or resource pool; on the contrary, he/she is common builder of meaning. Indeed the role of listener has been ignored in favour of the role communicator in interactive/operational model of communication. Therefore, the activity of listening in a conversation bears the significance expressed by a communicator (Janusik, 2004, pp. 5-6).

Establishing a healthy communication depends on occurrence of "conflict of meaning" in the minds of communication participants. Whether the meaning attributed to conversation by speaker is the same as the meaning the listeners will infer from it will affect success of communication (Işık, 2010, p. 97). When the literature on listening is analyzed, it is seen that listening fails to be accepted as a separate field of study and to achieve legitimacy within the discipline of communication. According to Janusik, it is possible to mention about three underpinning reasons for this lack of acceptance. Firstly, the studies on listening lack a theoretical framework; secondly, the researchers dealing with the studies on listening can't realize activities regarding listening structures via knowledge sharing between disciplinary limits and thirdly, the researches on listening experience considerable ambiguity in the fields of measurability (Janusik, 2004, p. 2).

In parallel with the lack of acceptance, it can't also be said that there is a consensus regarding the definition and conceptualization of listening globally although it draws more attention as a field of study and research. In line with this assertion, the definitions of listening made in literature chronologically are as follows:

Listening is in fact composed of these four interrelated activities; hearing, interpreting, evaluating and responding (Steil, Barker & Watson, 1983, p. 21). Glenn carried out a content analysis concerning 50 definitions in the field of listening and listed the following 7 concepts: perception, attention, interpretation, remembering, responding or reaction, spoken sounds and visual cues (Glenn, 1989, p. 25). In a conference organized by International Listening Association in 1994, listening was evaluated as "the active process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal message. Listening requires not only the ability of retention of knowledge but also the capability to respond to the spoken and/or non-verbal messages emphatically and/or considerately" (ILA Listening Post, 1995, p .1). From another point of view, listening is defined as "the process of receiving, attending to, and assigning meaning to aural and visual stimuli (Wolvin & Coakley, 1996, p. 69) and "acquisition, processing, and retention of information in the interpersonal context" (Bostrom, 1997, p. 247) and "hearing, understanding, remembering, interpreting, evaluating, and responding (Brownell, 2002, p. 2).

Listening Models and Listening Assessments

In order to constitute a basis for their definitions, the listening theorists used the study of early attention and memory researchers. The listening definitions using this basis resulted in listening models. Currently there are particularly two classes of models for explaining listening. The first model is called as cognitive model which explains what is going on in the listener at the moment of listening. The second model is known as behavioral model which is interested in a more global picture and addresses the interaction of the listener with the speaker and the environment and with affect. The behavioral model always includes components of the cognitive model; but, it is different from the cognitive model because it includes a reaction or response (Witkin, 1990, p. 13). In particular, many researchers conceptualized the concept of listening in various listening assessments in accordance with behavioral model. The three assessments which are most favoured among these assessments are the following:

1. The Listening Practices Feedback Report (LPFR) which was developed by utilizing multi-samples in different organizations and positions and used in the studies of listening training in especially business sector (Brandt Management Group, 1999, p. 13).

2. The Managerial Listening Survey (MLS) which was designed by Cooper and Husband in order to measure the listening competence and developed to explore the perception of the employees regarding the executives' listening behaviors (Cooper & Husband, 193, p. 6).

3. The Listening Styles Profile (LSP) which is an inventory including 16 items developed by Watson et al., (1995) in order to define an individual's primary listening preference and approaches to acquiring information. They specified that individuals have primarily four listening style preferences – people, action, content and time - while listening to other people. This listening profile was designed by using the undergraduates within their own experiences and used as both an instrument of research and education/clinic with young people (Watson et al., 1995, pp. 1-5).

The Relationship between Culture and Listening Style

There is an accepted understanding that the cultural factors affect listening process and all components of active listening. The great difficulty in establishing communication between people who don't resemble one another culturally results from the cultural factors available in listening behaviors (Rogers & Steinfatt, 1998, p. 158). Presenting the best example for this expression, Hall said that the attitude of how anyone shows attention is different in each culture (Hall, 1969, pp. 379-380). The dominant listening style of an individual often reflects the reaction based on constructed behavior (Watson et al., 1995, p. 2).

Many studies have dealt with the effects of cultural factors on the listening style based on this behavior. These studies will be presented below in respect of their historical development:

Asserting that listening is highly affected by cultural differences in the study carried out in 1997, Kiewitz et al compared the listening styles of people from Israel, Germany and the US and accordingly reached the following differences:

• The young Germans adopted action-oriented listening considerably. They approached listening with an active, inquisitive and direct style and focused on rhetorical considerations to negotiate and arbitrate in interpersonal interactions.

• The young Israelis preferred a more content-oriented style of listening which required a careful analysis of the information as a dominant aspect of the communication style.

• The young participants of the US paid importance to people-oriented listening style focusing on the social aspects of interaction; but at the same time, they emphasized the amount of time required for these interactions (Kiewitz et al., 1997, p. 242).

Kiewitz et al also mentioned that the individualism vs. collectivism cultural dimensions is the basic component which leads to intercultural wrong/improper communication (Kiewitz et al., 1997, p. 243).
In his study, Lewis explained the listening styles between the US and German cultures in the context of business communication. It was reached the conclusion that the listening expectation of the US and German participants were different. The main interest of the US communicator was be entertained and to persuade while the German communicator paid more importance to receiving detailed information especially on the context including the cost and technical details, reliability of a company and products. Lewis also came to that conclusion that the US and German participants were willing to listen for different amount of time. Namely, the US participants were willing to listen for up to 30 minutes while the Germans could listen for one hour. Also the US listeners expected comic relief somewhere in the presentation whereas the German listeners thought humor wasn't appropriate in any business communication (Lewis, 1999, p. 71).

Bentley(2000), put forward that a challenged was launched regarding what, whom and how the individuals listen due to the great developments in information technologies and business environments in the twenty first century, the significance paid to information and acquisition of more global dimension by businesses. According to him, the most difficult part of this challenge has been whom we listen. This is because the frequency we listen to a person from another culture who does not speak with the same semiotic cod with us has increased. Therefore, the ability to understand differences in these semiotic codes and communicate with colleagues, executives and customers from other cultures has become a distinctive acquisition in a global community (Bentley, 2000, pp. 129-133).

Building on the cultural dimension concept of Hofstede and the high-low cultural context of Hall, Harris explored the effect of cultural context on listening style. In such high-context cultures as the French, Japanese, and Vietnamese cultures, great value is placed on personal relationships.

Therefore, Harris reported that his research proved people in such high-context cultures preferred a more people-oriented listening style. In such low-context cultures as the German, Swiss, Scandinavian, and US cultures, people stay focused on finishing their tasks/works and they don't place much value on human relationships. Thus, Harris founded that people in such low-context cultures preferred a more action-oriented listening style (Harris, 2003, p. 4). In another study carried out, it has been stated that the perception of good and weak listening behaviors during listening are framed culturally. All of the Germans placed more value on the overt listening behaviors as well as behavior orientation and perception of attention indicators. Also the Germans showed more considerable reaction when a listener failed at the moment of establishing communication in continuous attention. The US participants perceived the continuous interest in a listener more negatively when the effort to understand wasn't available and placed more importance to adopting an overt attitude actively (Imhof, 2003, p. 362).

Harris examined the listening styles of Mexicans. According to him, listening is an integrated component of communication and hence the cultures of individuals affect their listening styles and the style how they want other people to listen them. Accordingly, it is significant to be sensitive to the differences arising from cultural values in order to improve the listening competence across different cultures. Currently, the global executives are required to know the elements preventing intercultural listening with a view to developing the listening styles which are suitable for the businesses they execute in other countries. Considering this fact, Harris recommended American executives to pay attention to some listening restraints in order to execute successful business relationship with the Mexicans. Among these restraints, Harris mentioned about the negative attitudes, refusal of cultural differences, lack of knowledge on the cultural norms of others and the assumption that their values and body signals have the same meaning around the world (Harris, 2004, pp. 3-4).

Veenstra addressed the listening styles of modern Arab people and Americans within the framework of the historical background of these two separate cultures and emphasized that it is required to understand the basic values of Arab culture in order to understand the communication patterns of Arabs. It was specified that the Arab values composed of collectivism, hospitality and honor form the cultural communication structures and hence these structures constitute the differences in the listening behaviors (Veenstra, 2004, p. 25). Imhof and Janusik carried out a study comparing US and German perceptions of what listening meant to them. The results of their study revealed great differences in the conceptualization of listening by each cultural group and showed the effects of culture on the styles of conceptualizing the process of listening itself and its significance in communication. In the example of the US, listening was conceptualized as a continuous activity which was influential for more time on the information structure and attitudes of listener. Accordingly listening was perceived as an activity beyond the real interaction. In the example of the Germans, the concept of listening was perceived as embedded into mutual environment focusing on the individual and activities on following the conversation (Imhof & Janusik, 2006, p. 91).

Macro-Cultural Dimension- Individualism vs. Collectivism

The approaches to cultural values have longer-time historical tradition within intercultural studies. Feather (1995) suggested that the values are abstract cultural structures reflecting preferred behavioral pattern for a particular culture or individual (p. 1135). In this context, it can be said that the focal point in discussions regarding the aspects of values is the differences in individualism-collectivism cultural values (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997, p. 58; Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2002, p. 144). Individualism-collectivism is one of the dimensions of cultural differences having the ability to explain and reflect the systematic similarities and differences of communication across cultures (Hofstede, 1991, p. 59; Triandis, 1995, pp. 76-77).

The researchers assert that individualism-collectivism is influential on individual listening style, value system and behaviors and cultural tendencies. Individualism- collectivism affects the norms and rules guiding the daily behaviors of individuals in their basic cultural tendencies (Gudykunst et al., 1996, pp. 513-514). Individualism is the characteristics of the culture where "the ties between individuals are loose; everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 225). In such societies, people are independent from group emotionally and although they are member to many groups, these groups aren't strongly influential on the individual's behaviors (Hofstede, 1980, p. 149). In other words, the individuals bearing individualism tendency perceive themselves/selves as independent from groups.

On the other side, collectivism means "societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive ingroups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 225). In collectivist societies, the individuals keep their groups separate from others. The relative group, clans and organizations in which the individual displays activities are distinguished. These groups take their members under protection and expect loyalty in exchange for it (Sargut, 2001, p. 187). To state briefly, people with individualistic tendency are self-oriented and they place importance on independence and individual success. People with collectivist tendency are others-oriented and pay importance to loyalty, accord and harmony.

Gudykunst et al pointed out that cultural individualism-collectivism has direct effects on behaviors. This is because culture socializes people in terms of individualist and collectivist tendencies. In addition, they explained that the individualist and collectivist tendencies can affect the individual factors and these factors mediate between cultural individualism-collectivism and communicative behaviors (Gudykunst et al., 1996, p. 515). The key individual factor mentioned here is "self-construal" or the way people perceive themselves (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, pp. 224-225). The differences in individualist and collectivist tendencies require different communication styles. The individualist cultures encourage people to speak and express themselves overtly while the collectivist cultures teach people to control their emotions and express themselves covertly (Singelis, 1994, p. 581). Therefore, assertive behaviors, self-expression and other self-improvement issues are highly favoured in the individualist culture. On the other side satisfying people, solidarity, relational issues and face/prestige protection are preferential in the collectivist culture (Dodd, 1998, p. 92).

Micro-Cultural (Individual Level) Dimensions: Independent - Interdependent Self-Construal

In recent years, the intercultural research and theory studies have addressed the explanations adopting only the cultural indicators of human behaviors. Sharing the same attitude for long years, the communication researchers put forward that both individual and cultural variables affect behaviors (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997, p. 63; Samovar & Porter, 2000, pp. 8-9). Supporting this thesis, Kim pointed out that he criticized many researchers because they used the dimension of cultural variation in wide sense. According to him, when such wide dimensions as individualism-collectivism or high-low context are used to explain cultural differences, it creates ambiguity in determining exactly how and why these differences emerge (Kim, 1995, p.149). By presenting the following reasons, Kim suggested that the use of individualism-collectivism in wide sense would be inadequate for explaining the behaviors on the individual level. The first reason is that it is not possible to test the casual explanations of behavior by building it on the explanations on the cultural level. The second is that particular sample groups don't correspond to/comply with the scores of individualism and collectivism on the cultural level (Oetzel, 1998, p. 205). To state briefly, one of the ways to address the effect of cultural individualism-collectivism on communication a human behavior is related to how people perceive themselves (Markus & Kiyatama, 1991, pp. 225-226; Triandis, 1989, p. 509).

The study of Markus and Kitayama is most commonly used to conceptualize self-construal. They framed the construal of self as "the beliefs of people regarding the relation between their selves and others and the degree to which people see themselves as separate from others or connected with others" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 226). The concept of self connected with other people is "interdependent self-construal" while the understanding that the self is separate from others means "independent self-construal". The difference between independent and interdependent self-construal was defined as the mediated variable between cultural individualism- collectivism and the communicative behavior including listening (Gudykunst et al., 1996, p. 515). The independent self-construal contains the understanding that an individual is a unique entity with particular emotions and opinions. People with predominant independent self-construal see themselves separate from other people and contexts. The conceptual elements of independent self-construal are the following: a) one's own internal ability, thoughts and feelings b) being unique and expressing oneself c) understanding the internal attributes and paying importance to individual goals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 226).

The interdependent self-construal means that individuals are connected with the people with loyalty and place value on this loyalty. Individuals with predominant interdependent self-construal are the people motivated to find a way in their relations to adapt to the people with whom he/she is connected, to realize the liabilities and to create liabilities and to be part of interpersonal relations.

The conceptual elements of interdependent self-construal are the following: a) contextual features such as status, roles, and relationships, b) being connected and adapting, c) occupying a proper place and engaging in proper interaction (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 227).

Australia: Individualist Cultural Structure

Australia is one of the significant countries known with multiculturalism on the globe (Irvin, 1996, p. 8). Multiculturalism is the view that the predominant Anglo culture of Australia exists and lives together with all minority cultures as matched. In this respect, it implies a society in which all groups can exist together and feel themselves as Australian (Irvin, 1996, p. 9). Modern Australia consists of 140 different cultural groups and this cultural diversity is reflected on whole socio-economic sector of Australia equally. The predominant Anglo culture of Australia is prevalent on the multicultural social agencies of the country – such as parliamentary democracy, judgment, education and management practices-. Among the highly informative studies on Australian culture and identity, Willcoxon's study explained Anglo cultural values and heritage of Australia in a detailed and systematic way. The key features discussed in his study are presented below (Wilcoxon, 1992, cited in Saee, 2006, pp. 39-42)

• Personal control vs. fate/destiny: Australians believe that individuals have control over their own fates and for them, the expression, "little Aussie battler" represents an admired image.

• Change vs. stability/tradition: Change and innovation is desired especially in connection with the country's economic growth.

• Equality/fairness vs. hierarchy/rank/status: Australian describe their society as classes and egalitarian.

• Individualism/independence vs. collectivism/dependence: Although Australians place value on a strong sense of society and collective efforts, it is necessary for them to develop Australian identity as separate and independent and they pay great respect to individual characteristics. Although they are group-oriented in the groups of their choice, they are in tendency to object imposed rules and groupings.

• Formality vs. informality: Australians reflect highly informal style.

• Directness/overtness vs. indirectness/ritual/prestige: Australians are proud of their directness and they have little concern about what others think or whether others like an action or not.

Turkey: Collectivist Cultural Structure

Many studies have been conducted to address the attributes describing Turkish culture (Aytaç, 2007; Baltaş, 2002; Dökmen, 1997; Erdem, 2005; Sargut, 2001; Toktamışoğlu, 2001). These studies analyzed the cultural values for Turkish culture and management culture within the framework of different fields of science. The results of these studies are summarized briefly as follows:

• Turkish-type thinking style is quite different from the western style. In Turkish culture, indirectness, being satisfied with less and being content with what you have, affective thinking, the plans to save the day, the endeavor to come to fruition via random and uncoordinated working are preferred (Toktamışoğlu, 2001, p. 76).

• The traditional authoritative culture, dominant nature of fatalistic perception and non-use of adequately overt communicative language can be considered among the prominent characteristics of Turkish culture (Aytaç, 2007, p. 153).

• According to Dökmen, it can be said that the relation of "child-mother-father" is predominant in the people of Turkish culture. In this type of society, it is forbidden for the individuals to use their own minds, question the teachings of their parents and object them. Therefore, the individualization of people is suppressed in such a society (Dökmen, 1997, pp. 269-270).

• According to the study conducted by Hofstede in 53 different countries including Turkey, Turkish society reflected considerably a collectivist structure; but this collectivist orientation wasn't situated as a cultural syndrome (Göregenli, 1995, p. 788) and also this orientation constituted the basis of townsman-ship and favoritism in Turkish culture (Sargut, 2001, p. 185).

The Turkish culture was ranked among wide-context culture from the perspective of Hall's wide-narrow context (Erdem, 2005; Erdem & Günlü, 2006, p. 189)

• As an indicator of collectivist tendency, the spirit of unity is high in Turkish culture, sharing and collective work is dominant and Turkish people hug one another when they meet and hence the use of body language in Turkish culture is different from western cultures (Baltaş, 2002, pp. 29-30).

The Differences in Communication Styles of Australian and Turkish People

Though limited, the available studies examining the differences in the communication styles used in Australia and Turkey on the basis of a separate culture put forward that the cultural differences and hence the differences in communication styles between these countries aren't minimal. According the studies;

• As members of individual-oriented culture, Australians transmit their opinions directly via verbal communication (Gudykunst et al., 1996, p.523). The Turkish people whose collectivist tendencies are more predominant than the individualist tendency use commonly the verbal communication including more ambiguous and indirect/implicit expression (Kartarı, 2006, p. 140).

• According to the perspective of "high-low context cultures" developed by Hall, the cultures of Canada, the US and Australia are known as low-context culture. Since they speak English as their native language, they use personal verbal communication dominantly (SAEE, 1998, pp. 15-17). The collectivist world view of the members of Turkish culture can be noticed in the structure of sentence; namely in Turkish, it is not necessary to use a personal pronoun in every sentence in Turkish as in English. Therefore, the contextual verbal communication which takes into consideration the roles and statuses of the interaction participants is more preferred in Turkish culture (Kartarı, 2006, pp. 152-153).

The findings obtained in the study which was conducted by Hofstede revealed the significant differences in the communication styles of the young workers in Australia and Turkey. Hofstede, for instance, founded that the Australian participants (M = 55) were placed on a quite high level in individualist scale compared to Turkish participants (M = 37) (the scores were generally between 6 and 91; and calculated as M=49, SD=18) (Hofstede, 2001, p. 215). Also the Turkish participants (M = 66) place less value on the consultative, cooperation-based management compared to Australian participants (M = 36) (the scores were generally between 11 and 104; and calculated as M = 57, SD = 22) (Hofstede, 2001, p. 87). The findings of Holfstede also put forward that the Turkish participants (M= 85) had less tendency to tolerate ambiguities and take risk during the process of decision-making in comparison with the Australian participants (M = 51) (the scores were generally between 8 and 112; and calculated as M = 65, SD = 24) (Hofstede, 2001, p. 151).

Method

The aim of this study is to analyze the effect of dependent and independent self-construal on listening styles in two different cultures, Turkey and Australia.

The sample of the study composed of 209 undergraduate students in Turkey and Australia. 126 students (60,3%) are from Suleyman Demirel University in Isparta, Turkey and 83 (39,7%) students are from different universities (RMIT, Latrobe, Victoria, Monash, Melbourne) in Victoria-Melbourne, Australia.

Each participant is requested to answer the 16 questions obtained from Listening Styles Profile of Watson and Barker (1995). Those questions are designed to analyze four types of listening namely, people-oriented, action-oriented, content-oriented and time-oriented. For each listening style 4 questions are asked. According to five point Likert scale respondents stated their opinion from "never"(1) to "always"(5).

Independent and dependent self-construal is questioned by using the scale of Gudykunst et al. (1994, 1996). Answers are composed of "totally disagree"(1) to "totally agree"(5) of five point Likert scale.

The Listening Styles Profile Measurement Instrument

Listening has been examined systematically for over 50 years. Within this period of time, numerous concepts of listening (such as listening relatedness, listening style, listening perception) have been studied and the various scales to measure the individual listening differences have been developed (Bodie & Worthington, 2010, p. 69).

Among these scales, the most commonly used and influential one is called as "Listening Styles Profile- LSP-16)". The listening Styles Profile is developed to define the habitual listening reactions and enable the individuals to think how personal traits increase the possibility of decision-making in the existing communication environments (Watson & Barker, 1995, pp.1-2). "The listening Styles Profile" developed by Watson, Barker and Weaver emphasizes that the individuals have primarily the following four listening style preferences while listening to other people: People-oriented, action-oriented, content-oriented and time-oriented.

• People-oriented listeners are known as the people who have the tendency to focus on other people and concentrate on the relational content of messages. Such listeners try to find areas of common interest with others and respond emphatically to them and have the ability to seize the content of message regarding the feelings, emotions and humor of other people (Watson et al., 1995, p. 3) and the personality trait of "overtness" (Bodie & Worthington, 2010, p. 70).

• Action-oriented listeners focus on mostly the inconsistencies and errors in the message of a speaker. They provide clear and net feedback regarding the expectations and concentrate on understanding the activity executed or to be executed by them. Such listeners expect other people to be organized and attentive. They have low energy for listening and often look for an informal environment (Watson et al., 1995, p. 5). Specifically, these listeners tend to prefer the speakers who structure organized, direct and logical presentations (Bodie & Worthington, 2010, p. 71).

• Content- oriented listeners believe that it is important to listen the message of a speaker completely before forming an opinion about a topic. Among the four listening styles, the content-oriented listeners are the most suitable people to listen the technical information and it is possible that they don't have difficulty in asking questions to speaker so that he/she can explain the assertions or provide additional evidence. In short, the content-oriented listeners are known as the people who assess what they hear carefully and analyze the knowledge they hear as if examining it in a microscope (Watson et al., 1995, p. 5).

• Time-oriented listeners focus on the interaction between time and receiving message. The behavioral reflections of this orientation include "checking time", enabling the speaker to know the restraints and parameters of listening and interfering in/interrupting the speech of others in case of time pressure (Watson et al., 1995, p. 5). Such listeners are highly direct and impatient against the people who don't place value on time and hence they are described as directors of communicative time who deal with impatient interactions (Worthington, 2010, p. 71).

It is known that the recent studies seeking solution for the problem of in what way and how culture influences the listening styles have used Listening Styles Profile (LSP) measurement instrument. The studies of Kiewitz at al. (1997), Imhof (2003), Imhof and Janusik (2006) and Dragan and Sherlbom (2008) are the examples for the use of this measurement instrument.

Results

Table 1

Demographic Variables

Country	Frequency	(%)
Turkey	126	60,3
Australia	83	39,7
Age		
18-21	130	62,2
22-+	79	28,8
Gender		
Male	102	48,8
Female	107	51,2
Class		
1-2	101	48,3
3-4	108	51,7

126 students (60,3%) are form Suleyman Demirel University in Isparta, Turkey and 83 (39,7%) students are form different universities (RMIT, Latrobe, Victoria, Monash, Melbourne) in Victoria-Melbourne, Australia.

62,2% of the students aged between 18 and 21, 28,8% of them are higher than 22. Male students represent the 48,8% of the participants whereas female students represent 51,2%. 21,1% of the students study medical science, 17,2% study science, 11,5% study engineering, 10,5% study administrative sciences, 8,1% study law, 7,7% study theology, 7,7% study health sciences, the remaining 16,2% study in various fields such as education, art and agriculture. Most of the fields have four years education. 48,3%of the students study at first and second class, 51,7% of the students study at third and fourth class.

Table 2

t-test Comparison of Self-Construal and Listening Styles Between Groups

Country	Self-Construal				Listening Styles							
	Dependent		Independent		People		Action		Content		Time	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Turkey	4.02	.59	4.26	.48	4.08	.68	3.35	.89	3.77	.77	3.66	.83
Australia	4.51	.49	4.50	.51	4.45	.58	3.71	.99	3.93	.77	3.68	.98
Comparison	*t* = -6.22		*t* =-3.31		*t* = -4.14		*t* -2.73		*t* = -1.54		*t* = -0.08	
	p < .00		*p* = .00		*p* < .00		*p* = .00		*p* = .12		*p* = .93	

Note: p value: significant at the p < .05 level.
df: Degrees of freedom for t-Test = 207

According to t-test analysis it is seen that there is statistically significant difference between two countries in dependent self-construal(p < .000), independent self-construal(p = .001), and people oriented and action oriented listening styles(p < .000; p = .007 respectively). But in content-oriented and time-oriented listening styles there is no statistically significant difference. Then, comparing means show that Australian students have higher dependent and independent self-construal than Turkish students. Also Australian students are more people oriented and action-oriented in listening than Turkish students(M = 4.45 > 4.08; 3.71 > 3.35)

Table 3

t-test Comparison of Self-Construal and Listening Styles According to Gender

Country	Self-Construal				Listening Styles							
Turkey	Dependent		Independent		People		Action		Content		Time	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Male	3.99	.65	4.24	.48	3.94	.73	3.27	.90	3.80	.82	3.76	.83
Female	4.06	.52	4.29	.49	4.22	.60	3.44	.88	3.74	.72	3.56	.84
Comparison	t = -0.64		t = -0.58		t = -2.36		t = - 1.08		t = -0.42		t = -1.35	
	p = .52		p = .55		**p = .01**		p = .28		p = .66		p = .17	
Australia												
Male	4.51	.45	4.32	.54	4.40	.62	3.75	.98	4.11	.81	4.00	.87
Female	4.52	.53	4.64	.43	4.50	.55	3.68	1.02	3.80	.72	3.42	1.01
Comparison	t = -0.09		t = -3.05		t = -0.73		p = -0.30		t = -1.81		t = -2.73	
	p = . 92		**p = .00**		p = .46		p = .76		p = .07		**p = .00**	

Note: p value: significant at the p < .05 level.
df: Degrees of freedom for t-Test = 124

In Turkey there is a difference in people-oriented listening between male and female students(p = .019) Female students have higher(M = 4.22, SD = .60) than male students. The reason of this may depend on sensitive and maternal personality of women. Also female students in Australia have higher people-oriented listening style(M = 4.50, SD = .55) The reason is the same for Turkish and Australian female students. In Australia there is a difference in independent self-construal between male and female students(p = .003) Female students have higher mean (M = 4.64, SD = .43) than male students.

In Australia there is a difference in time-oriented listening between male and female students($p = .008$) Male students have higher mean($M = 4,00$, $SD = .87$) than female students.

Table 4

Regression Analysis: People-Oriented

Country	R^2	F	p
Turkey	.22	17.48	.00
Australia	.17	8.21	.00

Turkey	ß	t	p	Australia	ß	t	p
Dependent self-construal	.21	2.56	.01	Dependent self-construal	.32	3.13	.00
Independent self-construal	.37	4.55	.00	Independent self-construal	.19	1.83	.07

Note: p value: significant at the p< .05 level.
df: Degrees of freedom for Turkey and Australia respectively = 123; 80

According to regression analysis of two countries and people-oriented listening style there is a significant model ($p < .05$).

We analysed the countries individually and ß values show that independent self-construal is the most important independent variable and there is a significant positive relationship between people-oriented listening style and independent self-construal in Turkey (ß=0.373; t = 4.55; df = 123; p = .000). Another independent variable dependent self-construal also predicts the people-oriented listening and there is a significant positive relationship between people-oriented listening style and dependent self-construal in Turkey (ß = 0.210; t = 2,56; df= 123; p = .012). In Australia, independent variable dependent self-construal predicts the people-oriented listening and there is a significant positive relationship between people-oriented listening style and dependent self-construal (ß=0.326; t = 3.13; df= 80; p = .002).

Table 5

Regression Analysis: Action-Oriented

Country	R^2	F	p
Turkey	0.02	1.36	.26
Australia	0.01	0.62	.53

Turkey	ß	t	p	Australia	ß	t	p
Dependent self-construal	-.03	-.32	.74	Dependent self-construal	.12	1,11	.26
Independent self-construal	.15	1.65	.10	Independent self-construal	-.02	-.19	.84

Note: p value: significant at the p< .05 level.
df: Degrees of freedom for Turkey and Australia respectively = 123; 80

According to regression analysis of two countries and action-oriented listening style there is no significant model.($p > .05$) Also there is no significant relationship between self-construal and action-oriented listening style.

Table 6

Regression Analysis: Content-Oriented

Country	R^2	F	p
Turkey	0.10	6.83	0.00
Australia	0.03	1.49	0.23

Turkey	ß	t	p	Australia	ß	t	p
Dependent self-construal	0.01	0.21	.83	Dependent self-construal	0.05	0.52	0.60
Independent self-construal	0.31	3.53	.00	Independent self-construal	0.16	1.49	0.13

Note: p value: significant at the p< .05 level.
df: Degrees of freedom for Turkey and Australia respectively = 123; 80

According to regression analysis of two countries and content-oriented listening style there is a significant model for Turkey.(p<0,05)

We analysed the countries individually and ß values show that independent self-construal is the most important independent variable and there is a significant positive relationship between content-oriented listening style and independent self-construal in Turkey.(ß = 0.311; t = 3.53; df = 123; p = .001)

Table 7

Regression Analysis: Time-Oriented

Country	R^2	F	p
Turkey	0.05	3.57	.03
Australia	0.06	2.79	.06

Turkey	ß	t	p	Australia	ß	t	p
Dependent self-construal	.-11	-1.22	.22	Dependent self-construal	.26	2.34	0.22
Independent self-construal	.23	2.60	.01	Independent self-construal	-.02	-.20	0.84

Note: p value: significant at the p < .05 level.
df: Degrees of freedom for Turkey and Australia respectively = 123; 80

According to regression analysis of two countries and time-oriented listening style there is a significant model for Turkey (p < .05).

We analysed the countries individually and ß values show that independent self-construal is the most important independent variable and there is a significant positive relationship between time-oriented listening style and independent self-construal in Turkey.(ß = 0.23; t = 2.60; df = 123; p = .010)
Discussion

In this study we compared the listening styles of two countries Australia and Turkey based on the self-construal perception. Since these two countries are different from each other about culture we expected listening styles will also differ. Some of our results support the literature but some of does not. Below we try to explain the reasons of the results. According to our comparison of self-construal and listening styles based on the gender it is found that in Turkey there is a significant difference between female and male students for people-oriented listening, in Australia there is a significant difference between female and male students for independent self-construal and time-oriented listening. Tekeli (1995) states that Turkey is in transition from traditional gender roles to egalitarian gender roles. Especially it is common among better-educated segments of the society. (Imamoğlu & Yaşak, 1997). According to a study conducted by Imamoğlu and Karakitapoğlu-Aygün (2004) Turkish female university students indicated more indivuated and related self construal than Turkish men university students.

Parallel to this study, in this present study female students also have higher dependent(M = 4.06, SD = .52) and independent (4.29, SD = .49) self-construal than male participants. Dragan and Sherlbom investigated the effects of cultural influence on the listening styles of Post-Soviet and US participants. The Post-Soviet participants show collectivist culture on listening style. They resulted highest score in people-oriented listening style. On the other hand US participants are less people oriented than Post Soviet participants but they stil choose the people oriented listening style significantly. So both group participants indicate a choice for people oriented listening style as their predominant listening style (Dragan & Sherlbom, 2008, pp. 186-189). Resembles this study Kiewitz et al. (1997) found that young US participants are significantly people-oriented and then emphasis the time-oriented listening style (Kiewitz et al., 1997, p. 242). In this present study it is also found that people oriented listening style is significant for both Turkey and Australia. According to regression analysis results independent and dependent self-construal predicts the people- oriented listening in Turkey, in Australia dependent self-construal predicts the people-oriented listening.

In this study it is found that there is a significant difference for independent and dependent self-construal in Australia and Turkey. Australia has higher independent self construal than Turkey. This supports the earlier findings of Hofstede (2001). According to his Individualism Index Values for 50 countries, Australia is in the second rank whereas Turkey is in the 28th rank. (Hofstede, 2001, p. 151). Also dependent self-construal is higher than Turkey in Australia. Maybe it seems an unexpected result but the sample group in Australia composed of different ethnic groups such as Chinese, Lebenese, Egyptian, Afghan, Singaporean, Indian, Sudanese, Greek which are in the collectivist culture according to Hofstede's study. (Hofstede, 2001, p. 151). According to regression results there is not a significant relationship between action-oriented listening style and self-construal for both Turkey and Australia. Harris analyzed the effect of culture on listening styles depending on the high and low context model of Hall. In high context cultures such as France, Japan, Vietnam personal relations are important. So Harris assert that high context cultures support the people oriented listening style. On the other hand in low context cultures, such as Germany, Sweden, US people are concentrated on fulfilling their works and don't value the personal relations. So Harris depict that in low-context cultures people tend to prefer action-oriented listening style. (Harris, 2003, p. 4) According to high-low context model of Hall, Turkey is in high context culture (Erdem, 2005; Erdem & Günlü, 2006, p. 189) which means people oriented listening style is important in this culture. Again based on the model of Hall, Australia is in low context culture like Canada and US (Saee, 1998, pp. 15-37). But in our study Australian students don't tend to action-oriented listening style.

Since the participants in Australia coming from different collectivist cultures as mentioned above this result may be accepted. Also depending on the regression results it is found that there is a significant effect of independent self-construal for both content oriented and time oriented listening style in Turkey. The reason of this may related with the comment of Kurtis as follows: "Turkey has been categorized primarily as a collectivistic culture in Western literatures, which in psychological terms, corresponds to an experience of self in terms of interdependence or inherent connection. Moreover, research conducted by Turkish social scientists in recent years suggests that as Turkey is going through a rapid social change, the current sociocultural context- especially as pertaining to urban settings- reflects an amalgamation of collectivist and individualistic tendencies. As a result, contemporary theories of self in the Turkish settings depict varying levels of coexisting tendencies for autonomy (i.e.,differentiation) and relatedness (i.e., integration)." (Kurtis, 2010, p. 16) In our study participants are university students who reflect the new generation of Turkey.

This study has some limitations. It is conducted in Australia and Turkey just among university students. So it can not be generalized for all population of the both countries. Australian partcipants composed of a cultural heterogenous group. Even if the main subject of this study is not cultural effect on listening styles, there may be the effects of culture for respondents while answering the questions. This study emphasized the effects of self-construal on listening styles. Further researches may be conducted for this subject among large samples in different countries.

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