

THE “TALKER,” “DOER,” “THINKER,” AND “WATCHER” *: ANALYSIS OF THE FOUR TEMPERAMENTS IN RELATION TO PUBLIC SPEAKING PERFORMANCES

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The well-established theory of the Four Temperaments: Sanguine, Choleric, Melancholic, and Phlegmatic according to the studies of Hippocrates and Galen, was analyzed in relation to public speaking performances. The “talker” which refers to sanguine, “doer” (choleric), “thinker,” (melancholic) and “watcher” (phlegmatic) are terms originally used by D.W. Ekstrand in his article entitled, *The Four Human Temperaments*. This study primarily aimed to find out how a speaker’s dominant temperament affects a public speaking performance. The following hypotheses were tested: 1. The Sanguine speaker (the “talker”), being naturally expressive, sociable, charming and friendly, easily establishes rapport with the audience and speaks in a dynamic manner. However, he/she is disorganized and can be easily distracted; 2. The Choleric speaker (the “doer”), being work-oriented and a natural leader, exhibits more confidence, strong voice, and thought organization. However, his/her perfectionistic tendencies give the impression of arrogance or over-confidence; 3. The Melancholic speaker (the “thinker”), being naturally introspective, creative, and emotionally sensitive, appears intelligent and highly analytical. However, his/her serious, contemplative appearance may show a less dynamic speech delivery; 4. The Phlegmatic speaker (the “watcher”), being naturally calm, relaxed and quiet, appears cool and collected. However, his/her easy-going attitude may appear boring to the audience; 5. Sanguine and Choleric speakers show more effective public speaking performances than Melancholic and Phlegmatic speakers. Thirty eight students from a speech communication class at the University of the Philippines Los Banos, ages 17-19, participated in the study. Eight students were asked to answer a Temperament Work Sheet to determine their dominant temperament. Four of the eight students who registered the highest scores representing each of the four temperaments were identified as the speakers. Each speaker was asked to deliver a 7-10 minute persuasive speech. Thirty of the students acted as members of the audience and were asked to evaluate each of the speakers using a Speech Evaluation Sheet. Results show that hypothesis no.1 is true, except that the Melancholic speaker scored better in “audience rapport” (80%) than the Sanguine speaker. Hypothesis no.2 was proven to be true, except that, the Melancholic speaker (the “thinker”) scored higher in terms of “content and organization” (89%) “overall presence” (81%). Hypothesis no.3 was proven true, except that the Melancholic speaker was actually perceived as dynamic. Hypothesis no.4 was also proven to be true. However, for hypothesis no.5, overall scores show the Melancholic speaker is more effective in the speech performance than the Sanguine and Choleric speakers. On “voice and pronunciation” (86%) and “body language” (80%), the Choleric speaker got the highest scores, while the Sanguine got the lowest score on “body language.” The Phlegmatic speaker did not get significantly high or low scores on any of the criteria. Overall results reveal that a speaker’s dominant temperament does affect his/her public speaking performance.

Keywords: Temperaments, Public, Speech, Performances.

*D.W. Ekstrand, *The Four Human Temperaments*

Introduction

All humans first come to earth naked and original. Although clothed by societal and cultural influences, every individual has a unique personality. Part of the individual's personality is the so-called temperament. Lahaye (1966) defines it as a combination of natural qualities or traits that affect the attitude or behavior of a person. The concept of temperament may be familiar to a lot of people but the meaning may not be very clear. The term is often associated with the emotional or behavioral characteristics of individuals. Sometimes we hear expressions like, “oh, that person is temperamental...” and we tend to think it means that the person being referred to is “strongly emotional.” Closely related to the concept of temperament are the terms associated with dimensions of personality called “extraversion” and “introversion.” Temperament is commonly perceived as a set of personality traits or characteristics unique to every individual. However, it is also interesting to know that a group of people or a particular culture also expresses a type of collective or cultural temperament. For example, according to a study by Josephine Yao (1975) from the Department of Psychology, University of the Philippines, the Filipino personality is a combination of extraversion and introversion. However, Filipinos are generally more introverted than extraverted (Enriquez, 1975). The Filipino personality may be described as “respectful,” “even-tempered,” “patient,” “not strong-willed,” “not moody,” “not quarrelsome” (Yao, 1975). These traits may be reflected also in the Filipinos' overall personality as public speakers. However, in this particular study, analysis is focused more on the individual speaker's personality and temperament.

Literature Review

Studies have been made to understand and develop the concept that behavior is dictated or related to a person's natural predispositions or temperament. Some scholars have attempted to explain human behavior by looking at outside factors such as astrology and signs symbolized by “earth, air, fire, and water” (Cocoris, 2009). The famous Greek physician Hippocrates (460-370 B.C.), the “father of medicine,” was the first to study the human behavior based on the “inside” factor, i.e., physiological basis, specifically, the body fluids or humor. These body fluids are believed to be related to the four elements of earth, air, fire and water. He believed that temperament is “determined by the presence of an excessive amount of one of the four fluids”: Yellow bile or chlor, Red bile (blood) or sangis, White bile or phlegm, and Black bile or melan (Cocoris, 2009). Furthermore, according to Hippocrates and other pioneering Greek scholars: 1. Excessive yellow bile results in a temperament observed to be warm or hot and dry, and this is called Choleric. This is associated with the element of fire; 2. Excessive red bile results in a temperament observed to be warm or hot and wet, and this is called Sanguine. This is associated with the element of air; 3. Excessive white bile results in a temperament observed to be cool or cold and wet, and this is called Phlegmatic. This is associated with the element of water; and 4. Excessive black bile results in a temperament observed to be cool or cold and dry, and this is called Melancholic. This is associated with the element of earth (Cocoris, 2009). Galen (129-203 B.C.) another Greek physician, helped popularize the concept of temperament and is credited for coining the terms Choleric, Sanguine, Melancholic and Phlegmatic.

The idea that temperament is determined by these body fluids was not popularly accepted; although the four classifications of temperament are more commonly used. Modern psychologists have developed other classifications. The more popular would be the terms extraversion and introversion. The theory of introversion-extraversion may be attributed to the early studies of Galen (129-203). According to him, temperament may also be determined through some parts of the human body (Yao, 1975). Carl Jung, a

Swiss psychologist, was the first to use the terms introversion and extraversion to describe the two dimensions of personality. According to Jung, an extravert is a person whose attention and mind are centered upon things outside of him/herself. What the person thinks and feels can be easily observed. An introvert is a person who is contemplative, passive and even-tempered. Thinking and feeling are centered within him/herself (Mischel, 1973).

The theory about temperament was expanded by Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher, and H.J. Eysenck, a psychologist (Yao, 1975). Eysenck (1968) analyzed the introvert-extravert dimension and concluded that introversion and extraversion are the results of genetic inheritance, with biological bases, neurological origins and biochemical causes.

Description of the Four Temperaments

The four temperaments are commonly described with the following key traits:

Sanguine (talker) - naturally expressive, sociable, charming and friendly, easily establishes rapport with the audience, speaks in a dynamic manner, often disorganized and easily distracted.

Choleric (doer) - work-oriented, natural leader, exhibits confidence, has strong voice, organized and perfectionist.

Melancholic (thinker) - naturally introspective, creative, emotionally sensitive, appears intelligent and highly analytical, deep-thinker, tends to show a less dynamic speech delivery. **Phlegmatic** (watcher) - naturally calm, relaxed and quiet, cool and collected, easy-going attitude may appear boring.

These four temperaments were further described by Lahaye (1966) and Hock (1934). Based on their analyses, a sanguine person is cheerful, talkative, lively, good storyteller, compassionate, emotional, restless, noisy, self-centred and undependable. The choleric person is active, optimistic, quick to anger, persistent, practical, strong-willed, ambitious, inconsiderate, and aggressive. The melancholic person is gloomy, prone to depression, unsociable, moody, perfectionistic and analytical. The phlegmatic person is dependable, efficient, passive, stubborn and lazy. The above descriptions are just some of the traits commonly associated with each temperament (Martin and Deidre Bobgan, 1992).

Sanguine and choleric are often classified as extraverted temperaments while melancholic and phlegmatic are introverted temperaments. According to Lahaye (1966), no person has only one temperament. We all have inherited temperaments and we often have a combination of all four temperaments. However, each person does exhibit a dominant temperament.

Temperament and Public Speaking

Every individual's dominant temperament affects his/her communicative behaviour. Our natural temperament influences the outcome of each type of interaction we have with other people. Even in public communication level or public speaking situations, the speaker's temperament influences the content of the message and manner of delivery. Thus, the speaker's temperament is a significant factor that affects the total outcome of a public speaking performance.

In this study, the following hypotheses were tested:

1. The sanguine speaker is naturally people-oriented, easily establishes rapport, and a dynamic, effective speaker. However, he/she is disorganized and easily distracted.
2. The choleric speaker is goal-oriented, with strong voice and good thought organization. However he/she appears over-confident.
3. The melancholic speaker is analytical and intelligent. However he/she is less dynamic in delivering speeches.
4. The phlegmatic speaker is calm, cool and collected. However he/she appears and sounds boring.
5. Sanguine and choleric speakers are more effective in public speaking performances than melancholic and phlegmatic speakers.

Methodology

Participants: Thirty eight students of Speech Communication 1 (Fundamentals of Speech Communication) from the University of the Philippines Los Banos (UPLB) participated in the study. Age range is 17-19 years old. The participants were taking up different courses from the different colleges of UPLB.

Materials: “Temperament Work Sheet” and “Speech Evaluation Sheet”

Procedure: From the participants, eight students were randomly asked to answer the Temperament Work Sheet to determine their dominant temperament. Four of the eight students who registered the highest scores representing each of the four temperaments were identified as the speakers. The chosen speakers have the following percentage combinations of the four temperaments:

1. Sanguine speaker – 30% sanguine, 24% choleric, 24% phlegmatic, and 22% melancholic
2. Choleric speaker – 29% choleric, 28% melancholic, 23% phlegmatic, and 20% sanguine
3. Melancholic speaker – 31% melancholic, 27% sanguine, 22% phlegmatic, and 20% choleric
4. Phlegmatic speaker – 29% phlegmatic, 28% melancholic, 23% choleric, and 20% sanguine.

The procedure for the public speaking performance was explained to the four speakers. They were asked to prepare a self-introductory speech and a persuasive speech on the use of Filipino language as a medium of instruction in UPLB. The speakers were given one and a half days to prepare for the speech. On the day of the speech performance, each speaker was asked to speak in front of an audience (30 students). Members of the audience were given a Speech Evaluation Sheet and how to use it was explained to them. When the audience was ready to listen, each of the speakers were called inside the lecture hall and given 7-10 minutes to deliver the prepared speech. The speakers went inside the lecture hall one at a time. The sanguine speaker was the first to speak, followed by the choleric speaker, melancholic speaker, and phlegmatic speaker. Members of the audience used the Speech Evaluation Sheet to grade each of the speakers. In addition to this, the audience was also asked to describe the good and bad characteristics of the speech performance of each speaker. Data were collected and analyzed using averaging and percentages of the individual and total scores. Descriptive method of analysis was used for the evaluative characteristics/traits of the speakers based on the audience’s observations.

Results and Discussion

Results of this study reveal that the speaker’s temperament affects his/her public speaking performance. The effects do vary according to the type of temperament.

1. Hypothesis no.1 was proven to be true, except that the melancholic speaker scored better in “audience rapport” (80%) than the sanguine speaker.
2. Hypothesis no.2 was proven to be true, but the melancholic speaker scored higher in “content and organization” (89%) and “overall presence” (81%).
3. Hypothesis no.3 was proven to be true except that the melancholic speaker was actually perceived as “dynamic.”
4. Hypothesis no.4 was also proven to be true. The phlegmatic speaker was perceived to be calm, cool and collected, and appeared “boring” to the audience.
5. Hypothesis no.5 was not proven to be true because overall scores show that the melancholic speaker was more effective in the speech performance than the sanguine and choleric speakers.
6. The phlegmatic speaker did not get significantly high or low scores on any of the criteria.
7. The person’s dominant temperament does affect his/her public speaking performance. Success or failure in public speaking, however, does not always depend upon the perceived strengths or weaknesses of a speaker.

Among the four speakers who represented the four temperaments, the speaker who was predominantly melancholic got the overall highest score in the speech evaluation (82%). The second high scorer was the choleric (78%), sanguine (74%) and phlegmatic (73%). The melancholic speaker got the highest scores based on the following criteria: “content and organization” (89%), “overall presence” (82%), and “audience rapport” (80%). However, the melancholic got the lowest score in “voice and pronunciation” (79%) while the choleric got the highest (86%). For “gestures and body movements,” choleric got the highest score (80%) while sanguine got the lowest (65%).

Good and Bad Characteristics of the Speakers According to Audience’s Perceptions

The Sanguine

Good – clear pronunciation, voice projection, good posture and overall presence. Speech content was good with clear thought organization.

Bad – facially inexpressive, no direct audience contact, not lively, audience could not relate with the speech.

The Choleric

Good - strong audience rapport, good speech organization, natural, simple and easy to understand speech, clear pronunciation with appropriate vocal quality and projection. Appeared confident, smiled a lot and looked comfortable speaking in public.

Bad – looked unprepared, had hesitations

The Melancholic

Good – good speech content; organized ideas; impressive overall delivery, appropriate facial expressions, good diction, very good audience rapport.

Bad – unclear pronunciation and soft voice projection; inconsistent eye contact.

The Phlegmatic

Good – effective bodily actions, clear and good voice projection, speech content was good with very interesting parts.

Bad – not enough audience contact, seemed to lack confidence, weak overall presence, looks unprepared.

Conclusion

Effective public speaking performance does not depend upon the good qualities of the predominant temperament of the speaker. However, it does affect the overall speech performance. Public speaking situations vary and so do the performances of public speakers whatever temperament they may have. It is important to consider the different factors that affect public communication: audience composition - such as age, gender, education, experiences, language, group affiliations (Agravante, 1987); occasion or situation; message; channel; and the speaker himself/herself. Overall, the speaker will be effective in public speaking performance if he/she will utilize the good qualities of his/her natural temperament.

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The four temperaments were originally determined by two factors; the quickness of reaction, and the sustain of emotions. In the social model, the first one became "extroversion", and the second one, "people vs task focus". These come down into the Interaction styles as I/E and "directing/informing". In Keirsey's model, you also have counterparts of the same things; with "cooperative/pragmatic" shaping the quickness of action ("do what works" [cooperative] being quicker than "do what's right" [pragmatic]), and another factor discovered by Berens, "motive vs structure", representing people vs task focus. JCF-wise, there will be two kinds of the temperament quartet: one with extroverted functions (Se Te Ne Fe), and another with introverted functions (Fi Ni Ti Si). lined in Chapter I and particularly of the relation between the sound shape and its functions in language will be given in a future publication (5), where also our analysis of the English phonemic pattern will be discussed more. explicitly. The mathematical treatment of the information carried by the distinctive features within a message and of their information capacity within a given language code is the subject of a special study being prepared in collaboration with Professor W, Hurewicz of the Department of Mathematics of M.I.T. We. are greatly indebted to Professor L. L. Beranek, Technic... In a typical test of the intelligibility of speech, an English speaking announcer pronounces isolated root words (bill put, fig, etc.), and an English speaking. Effective public speaking performance does not depend upon the good qualities of the predominant temperament of the speaker. However, it does affect the overall speech performance. Public speaking situations vary and so do the performances of public speakers whatever temperament they may have. It is important to consider the different factors that affect public communication: audience composition - such as age, gender, education, experiences, language, group affiliations (Agravante, 1987); occasion or situation; message; channel; and the speaker himself/herself. Overall, the speaker will be ef...