

Dating profile text perceived as more original may spark more attraction

October 19 2022



Profiles (a) and (b) are male profiles, and (c) and (d) are female profiles. Credit: van der Zanden et al, 2022, *PLOS ONE*, CC-BY 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

A new study involving users of online dating sites has revealed a link between the perceived originality of text in dating profiles and better impressions of attractiveness. Tess van der Zanden and colleagues at Tilburg University in The Netherlands present these findings in the open-access journal *PLOS ONE* on October 19, 2022, and reveal the features of "original" profiles.

Previous research has suggested a link between originality in texts—such as poetry and song lyrics—and the popularity of these works. However, it is less clear which features of a text contribute to perceived originality and how originality influences people's impressions of the writer. In particular, no prior studies have examined links between perceived originality and attraction in the context of [online dating](#) profiles.

To shed new light, van der Zanden and colleagues asked 1,234 users of online dating sites to evaluate the originality of text in several authentic dating profiles and rate the profile owners' personality and attractiveness. The sites included in the study mostly serve users over the age of 50. All 308 profiles used for the study were altered to preserve owners' anonymity.

Analysis of the participants' ratings showed that owners of profiles perceived as being more original tended to also score higher on perceived intelligence, sense of humor, attractiveness, and likelihood of participants wanting to date them. In general, participants showed high agreement on which profile texts they perceived as original and which they perceived as odd; odd profiles were generally not considered to be original.

In a second analysis, the researchers analyzed the 308 anonymized dating profiles to investigate text features that may contribute to perceptions of originality. They found that text perceived as being more original used original stylistic features, such as metaphors, and these profiles also disclosed more concrete personal information.

On the basis of their findings, the authors suggest that crafting effective text in a dating profile may require owners to carefully balance novelty and appropriateness. They outline several directions for future research, including analyses involving younger participants and exploration of originality of texts in other areas beyond online dating, such as job cover

letters or advertisements.

The authors add, "An online dating profile text considered original boosts personality and attractiveness evaluations."

More information: Originality in online dating profile texts: How does perceived originality affect impression formation and what makes a text original?, *PLoS ONE* (2022). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0274860](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0274860)

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