

Hi all I know there was a discussion on here a while ago textio and a cheaper alternative but can't find it.. also I recall it was English only - Any advice?

Thanks

Was it Gender Decoder?

Kat Matfield is free and IMO, better than textio as forces you to think creatively and not follow textios advice to the letter

Also check out: jobpagegrader.com Its free, from the guys at Ph Creative and does gender language analysis plus tons more

Also the algorithms behind it are better and academically based ie less chance of being biased we'll give you a life skill" (or something to that effect)

Hi all - it's been a while since we had a Textio q so here's one! Finally managed to get a demo and we're v interested but keen to understand people's experience with how it performs in UK/Europe - I know they claim the language adapts to the destination location but on the demo we have seen the InMails etc still read as very 'American' in tone. V grateful for any insight on this!

We implemented globally and in my experience I think it's a potentially useful tool. However, the biggest complaint from recruiters is the time it takes to fine tune adverts using the tool. Should ease over time once we have a bank of adverts stored. Also early days re impact of using the tool.

I can definitely see there could need to be a big time investment upfront!

And when I say globally I'm pretty sure that we only use it in English. Not sure they had much foreign language capability, although I could be mistaken

Textio! So I am not a massive fan to be honest. It's very expensive and I have not seen many real ROI examples where it has improved D&I in applications etc. There are other tools available etc and of course you can always test your adverts internally plus eArcu are building an equivalent tool into their ATS.

Plus I have been doing some homework (yes I am a geek) with a fantastic English Literary Researcher called Roxie Ablett who isn't 100% sold on their algos or method (happy to share

findings).

I've only used the free version of Grammarly so far. Looking at that list I might consider an upgrade.

Textio are claiming UK gov as a client so I wondered if you were using them, I'm def going to look into Grammarly

Our adverts jumped by 25 points just by including an equal opportunity statement. I think to be able to generate value, you need to be running a lot of different adverts through it constantly. When doing it on a free trial, I found the same recommendations coming up (don't use the word manage, use lead) which sometimes didn't make sense so for the price I'm not convinced especially as it still relies on recruiters seeing the value and using it properly. However, saying that, the value of Textio is the recommendation of alternative words because if you are struggling to get recruiters to fully engage or they are moaning with how long it's taking, they certainly won't like gender decoder where they will have to think of an alternative word to use.

Can you share this with me. We're just removing textio and looking at beapplied. Cheers

I just think it's been sold as a silver bullet that will fix all your D&I problems which it isn't. Any good recruiter should be A+Bing their adverts internally with a D&I audience and chopping/changing tone and language to suit.

We've just started using BeApplied here if it helps?

I have a textio proposal on the table - has cost been to only factor?

Yes!

Hi all - as promised a few thoughts around writing software/platforms such as Textio. As discussed my contact Roxie Ablett is a linguistics researcher (happy to intro) who has done in-depth research and studies into this and other platforms. As this is academic research it's there as a guide. Some interesting points to consider as linguistics is a massive area with lots of factors etc.

☰ Textio is built on the same theory as Kat Matfield's Gender Decoder.

☰ Kat Matfield's Gender Decoder uses a list of gender-coded words from Danielle Gaucher, Justin Friesen, and Aaron C. Kay: Evidence That Gendered Wording in Job Advertisements Exists and Sustains Gender Inequality.

☰ That study was built on a very small demographic in Canada, involving introductory psychology students using linguistics and psychology mostly from the 70s/80s/90s, therefore

not reflective in today's modern society where you have a broader gender mix. Many of the words used are very patronising. Gaucher et al.'s (2011) paper includes multiple studies. Those that included human participants involved the following people:

☞ Study Three included forty-three Canadian-born introductory psychology students participated online (28 women, 15 men; 65% White, 21% Asian, 5% Indian, and 9% other or not listed) in exchange for course credit.*

☞ Study Four included one hundred and two English-fluent introductory psychology students participated online for course credit. Six were excluded (four failed to specify their gender, and two were outliers), leaving 96 participants (63 women, 33 men; 45% White, 31% Asian, 10% Indian, and 13% other or not listed).*

☞ Study Five included one hundred and eighteen Canadian-born introductory psychology students participated online in exchange for course credit. Participants were all female (65% White, 15% Asian, 8% Indian, and 12% other or not listed).* All bullet points are taken directly from Gaucher et al.'s (2011) paper.

☞ Also unsure around the natural language processing used by Textio. No evidence of the original source/data-mining etc.

☞ The use of this foundation data is further stereotyping female job applicants in a society where we should be opening-up employment opportunities. In addition "dumbing down" job adverts can potentially increase imposter syndrome by implying female applicants do not possess skills that their male counterparts might have.

☞ Furthermore, socio-economic status (occupation, education and income), gender, and race and ethnicity all work together to influence how people perceive and produce language. It's very easy to generalise based on one factor alone.

☞ There is a need to identify gender-coded words however it is not as straightforward as creating a "list" derived from studies undertaken in the 70s and 80s; additional psychological and linguistics study is needed.

A great read (NAME) I always wondered about the list of masculine and feminine words on gender decoder and this makes a lot of sense. Thank you for sharing

It is a very bias view of a product which will limit that companies ability to grow without giving them the opportunity to be part of the conversation which I feel is unfair and goes against the purpose of the RL100 which to help improve the industry we operate in.

It's a strong view point and the opinion of someone very credible that doesn't have a commercial advantage to gain and That's why I allowed it to be posted. I'll certainly bring Textio into the conversation, but will do it once we have a collective stance. I'm waiting to see if anyone here has a counter argument against it. What we can't do is forward conversations to vendors when something negative is said about them, regardless of the relationships we have with them.

Would love to hear from some real live textio customers/users in the group. The academic analysis is an interesting and useful perspective. I hear the flaws but interested in some real life facts and figures too. One of our divisions used gender decoder to improve job advert writing

practice and achieved a 30% increase in applications from women, admittedly base was low but was progress. These tools may be imperfect but they may also help us to drive some better practice, and desirable/beneficial results and help improve TA practice whilst existing and new tools are being developed with better algorithms, coding, research etc - any Textio users out there with tangible results/benefits??

Totally agree. Looks like credible research/insight and answers some questions and doubts of my own on the subject. The reality I'm finding is that some roles we want increase gender diversity on will take decade's to change because the gender bias has been soaked in over decade's and whilst decoding words is helpful it's no exact science and only a small part of the issue.

When I trialled Textio we saw sizeable percentage shifts in diversity and hiring but same as you, the base was pretty low and when you move away from percentages to actual numbers, it was 1 hire here or a couple of different there. I haven't measured diversity impact yet but rewriting our core adverts to make them more engaging had a big impact on the average number of applications received (+66%) so I think writing attractive adverts and having a clear message about what the company is like to work for on your careers website/adverts will always have the biggest impact vs changing the word manage/manager to lead/leader.

As you can imagine, (company) have a diversity issue! We use a gender decoder, one of a number of tactical actions. We've seen a marginal increase in female applications (<1%), but a big increase in hires from 29% in Q1 to 36% in Q3. The research is fantastic, thanks for sharing. I've always been sceptical, and for some roles they're just going to be masculine-coded (senior/analytical). I've had recruiters waste time over changing language such as "delivers against ambitious targets" to "nurture a client base"...ridiculous.

It has been helpful as a catalyst to make hiring managers think differently about a job spec / advert. Talk more about career development, flexible working etc.

Catherine Hearne: Thanks for sharing. I found it helpful and really encouraged to have an open debate. Doesn't stop me wanting to trial Textio but really helpful context. Thank you!

We are looking at the use of Textio and have had many conversations with them. I think (NAME) post sharing a really helpful and important piece of objective research. From my point of view - Textio is not being considered as a silver bullet but as an element of a blended approach to help drive inclusivity and sense of belonging. Textio do mention a number of clients with improved outcomes - I believe some are members - so perhaps a deeper dive there?

Some interesting thoughts coming out of the 'Textio/Gender Decoder' debate. Especially interesting hearing that some of you have noticed an increase in female hires. Whilst it would be hard to determine, could it be possible that this increase has come about as a by-product of using 'gender neutral' wording in our comms - the very nature of using this could have an impact

(psychologically) on recruiters and hiring managers alike. causing them to pay more attention to bias' and become 'unconsciously-unbias' - Just a thought.

My gut says the same thing! I've been using the Kat Matfield one in the last 3 companies I've been in. And agree it's not a silver bullet but it has been a good way to bring up bias and show we're addressing diversity at every part of the funnel. Inclusion is always going to drive diversity and not the other way round so this is one way of getting that message across. Love the research on Textio though. Thanks for sharing!

Worth pointing out that D&I is much more than gender folks. Race, Ethnicity, Generation, Disability and so on. Having the right culture is critical, and tactical tools like textio/gender decoder will play a part of course. But if you don't have the right cultural foundations in place then I think you're in trouble.

Thanks for all the Textio insights - research and in practice - it is, of course, much more than a 'tool' discussion but a much richer diversity, culture and continually improving hiring practice debate. Would love to hear what textio have to say about this at an appropriate but also other companies driving all aspects of diverse hiring. If only there was an insightful tech insights event happening in the very near future!! :)