

# ES1103

## English for Academic Purposes

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### TUTORIAL 8 (PART A)

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Centre for English Language Communication

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# Text Analysis Presentation

## Tutorial Learning Outcomes

By the end of this tutorial, you should be better able to:

- select a suitable text for analysis
- use given criteria to conduct a simple text analysis
- prepare a text analysis presentation

## Introduction

As ES1103 is drawing to a close, it is a good time to review some of the aspects of effective academic writing that we have been considering and using throughout the course.

In addition to using effective writing techniques in your own writing, it is useful to be able to analyse the work of other academic writers to note how they use specific features and strategies to convey their ideas with clarity and cohesion.

Therefore, an effective and efficient way to review what we have covered in this module and to illustrate your understanding of what constitutes good academic writing is to undertake a simple, but detailed, analysis of a text that you have read recently.

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## Analysing the Content of a Chosen Text

It is likely that you have read many kinds of academic papers as part of your studies, and these papers have probably provided you with good examples of writing in the academic genre. You can also use these papers as a resource and models of how you should write within your discipline. Therefore, it is a useful and practical exercise to analyse one of these papers.

Conducting and presenting a text analysis are good ways for you to show that you can identify many of the features of good writing that we have focused on in this module.

**The first step is to choose a short text** from your discipline, a General Education Module or other text you prefer.

**You will then need to analyse the text** according to the following criteria.

What is the central message of the text?

Who is the intended audience?

How is the text organised? What are the main parts?

How are sources used?

- Are they used in all parts or only one?
- Are they author prominent or information prominent?
- Can you hypothesise why sources are used in this way?

Refer to the Linguistic Toolkits (Tutorial 1A) and find examples of cohesive features, noun groups and nominalisation, logical links, and evaluating and recommending language). Describe how these features are used in your selected text.

# An Illustration of How to Conduct a Text Analysis

Let’s look at an example of how one student approached the text analysis.



First, the student chose a suitable text.

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## What Trends in Chinese Social Media

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### ABSTRACT

There has been a tremendous rise in the growth of online social networks all over the world in recent times. While some networks like Twitter and Facebook have been well documented, the popular Chinese microblogging social network Sina Weibo has not been studied. In this work, we examine the key topics that trend on Sina Weibo and contrast them with our observations on Twitter. We find that there is a vast difference in the content shared in China, when compared to a global social network such as Twitter. In China, the trends are created almost entirely due to retweets of media content such as jokes, images and videos, whereas on Twitter, the trends tend to have more to do with current global events and news stories.

### Categories and Subject Descriptors

H.4 [Information Systems Applications]: Miscellaneous;  
I.7.1 [Document and Text Processing]: Document and Text Editing—languages

### General Terms

Measurement

### Keywords

social network; web structure analysis; China; social computing

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Social networks have made tremendous impact on online computing, by providing users opportunities to connect with others and generate enormous content on a daily basis. The enormous user participation in these social networks is reflected in the incessant number of discussions, images, videos, news and conversations that are constantly posted in social sites. Popular networks such as Facebook and Twitter are well-known globally and contain several hundreds of

millions of users all over the world. On the other hand, Sina Weibo is a popular microblogging network in China which contains millions of users, almost all of whom are located in China and post in the Chinese language.

In China, online social networks have become a major platform for the youth to gather information and to make friends with like-minded individuals [19]. In this regard, a major point of interest is to examine the information that is propagated and the key trend-setters for this medium. There has been a lot of prior research done on the adaptation of influence and evolution of trends in Western online social networks [2, 17, 23]. But, in contrast, Chinese social media has not been well-studied.

In this paper, we analyze the evolution of Sina Weibo and provide the first known in-depth study of trending topics on a Chinese online microblogging social network. Our goal is to discover important factors that determine popularity and influence in the context of Chinese social media. To compare, we contrast them with corresponding ones from Western social media (Twitter). We put emphasis on examining how trends are formed and what kind of sources dominate the topics of discussion in Chinese social media.

First, we identify and collect the topics that are popular on Sina Weibo over time. For each of these trending topics, we analyze the characteristics of the users and the corresponding tweets that are responsible for creating trends. We believe that this will give us a strong insight into the processes that govern social influence and adoption in China. To perform a comparison, we use similar trending topic data from Twitter.

Our key findings are as follows. We observe that there are vast differences between the content that is shared on Sina Weibo when compared to Twitter. In China, people tend to use Sina Weibo to share jokes, images and videos and a significantly large percentage of posts are retweets. The trends that are formed are almost entirely due to the repeated retweets of such media content. This is contrary to what we observe on Twitter, where the trending topics have more to do with current events and the effect of retweets is not as large. We also observe that there are more unverified accounts among the top 100 trend-setters on Sina Weibo than on Twitter and most of the unverified accounts feature discussion forums for user-contributed jokes, images and videos.

### 2. BACKGROUND AND RELATED WORK

#### 2.1 Degree Distributions

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Then, she addressed the **first two questions** in the given criteria.

What is the central message of the text?

Who is the intended audience?

### Central Message & Intended audience

**ABSTRACT**

There has been a tremendous rise in the growth of online social networks all over the world in recent times. While some networks like Twitter and Facebook have been well documented, the popular Chinese microblogging social network Sina Weibo has not been studied. In this work, we examine the key topics that trend on Sina Weibo and contrast them with our observations on Twitter. We find that there is a vast difference in the content shared in China, when compared to a global social network such as Twitter. In China, the trends are created almost entirely due to retweets of media content such as jokes, images and videos, whereas on Twitter, the trends tend to have more to do with current global events and news stories.

**Central message:**

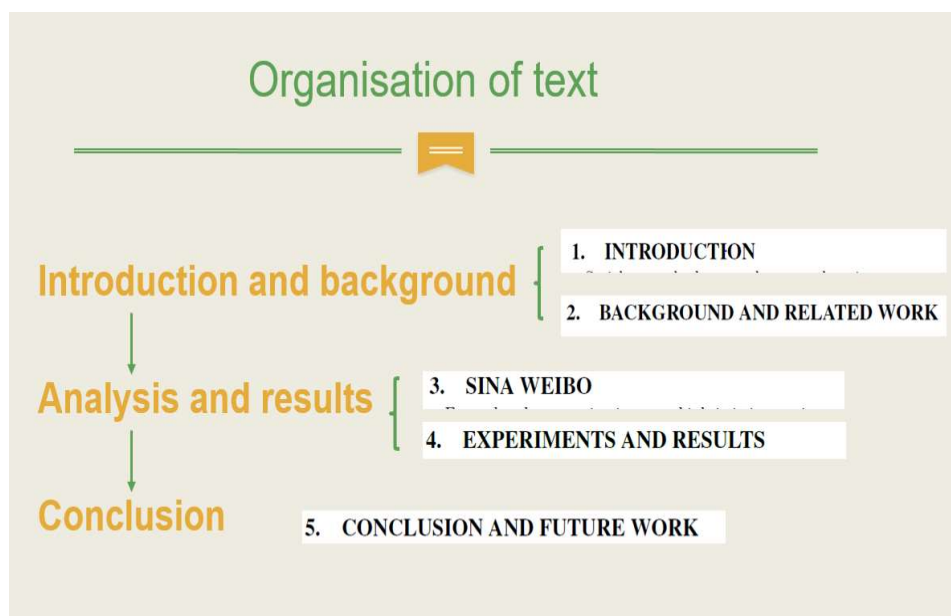
There are vast differences between the content that is shared on Chinese social media such as Sina Weibo than that of global social network such as Twitter.

**Intended Audience:**

Social media researchers and students, or those who are interested in Chinese social media.

Next, she considered **how the text was organised**.

How is the text organised? What are the main parts?





After that, she identified **how sources were used** in the text.

How are sources used?

- Are they used in all parts or only one?
- Are they author prominent or information prominent?
- Can you hypothesise why sources are used in this way?

### Use of sources

#### Intext citation

Social influence has been studied in a vast array of social networks involving various foci such as interests and personal habits [22] [13] [26]. Xu et al. [30] have looked at the adaptation of aggressive behaviors in a social network of kindergarden children in China. As a method of controlling aggression, teachers in China tend to put aggressive children in a peer group with non-aggressive children. Xu et al. [30] have found that over time friendships can be formed between aggressive children and non-aggressive children. For the aggressive children who are group members, intra-group friendships moderated their aggressive behavior.

#### End text citation

[30] Y. Xu, J. A. M. Farver, D. Schwartz, and L. Chang. Social networks and aggressive behavior in chinese children. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 28:401–410, 2004.

[31] T. Z. Xue. *The Internet in China : Cyberspace and Civil Society*. Routledge, 2006.

- Intext citation and End text citation in the text.
- Sources are mainly used in *Background and related works (part 2)*.
- Author prominent citations are used.

➡ Provide an overview of existing research related to the topic to help readers get familiar with the background at the very beginning. 'Who' made the claim also matters in the research.

This text does not use the APA citation style.

The student then referred to **the four linguistic toolkits** to identify some features in the chosen text.

Refer to the Linguistic Toolkits (Tutorial 1A) and find examples of cohesive features, noun groups and nominalisation, logical links, and evaluating and recommending language). Describe how these features are used in your selected text.

It is useful to review the four linguistic toolkits here.

## Toolkit 1 – Textual Cohesion



### Purpose

To create texts that flow logically and represent your views more persuasively

### Features

Macro theme (Thesis statement)

Hyper themes (Topic Sentences)

- General nouns (problems, causes, effect, impact, reasons, issue)
- Nominalisation (experimentation, investigation, formulation)
- Referencing pronouns and other words (shopping centres→ they→ such places)
- Conjunctions/linkers (however, as a result)

Thematic progression (information flow) ( $A \rightarrow B$   $B \rightarrow C$   $A \rightarrow B$   $A \rightarrow C$ )

Paragraph cohesion

- Lexical chains (Hong Kong→ the SAR → the territory→ the city)
- Reference and substitutions (shopping centres→ they→ such places)
- Lexical field/sets (related words) (computer components, printers, CPUs, memory chips, high tech equipment)

**This is the toolkit to produce texts that flow well.**

## Toolkit 2 – Logical Links



### Purpose

To express complex thoughts and their logical links

### Features

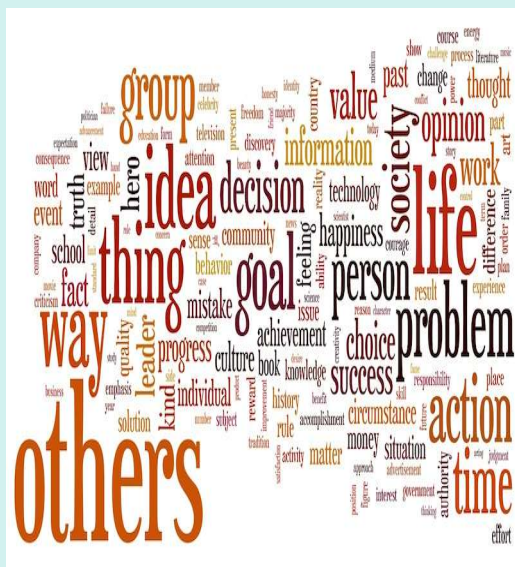
Complex sentences (with more than one clause)

- Non-defining relative clauses (who, whose, which, where)
- While, whereas
- Time (while, as, before, after, until, as soon as)
- Manner (as)
- Cause, condition, concession (because, in order that, if, unless, although)
- Projection (state, suggest, argue that, think, believe)

**This is the toolkit to indicate the logical links between concepts (cause/effect; sequence).**



## Toolkit 3 – Noun Groups



## Purpose

## To discuss abstract concepts

## Features

Noun groups use of *headnouns* (Continued *exposure* to such chemicals can lead to reduced *functioning* of the auto-immune system.)

## Modifiers

- Prepositional phrase (of the auto-immune system, in the lab, at the top)
- Adjective (difficult, complicated)
- Relative clauses (who, which, whose, that)

## Nominalisation

- Verb→noun (to formulate→formulation)
- Adjective→noun (complex→complexity)

**This is the toolkit to express the content of your discipline, including the technical words.**

## Toolkit 4 – Evaluation



### Purpose

To present views persuasively; to show caution and tentativeness when presenting arguments or discussing results; to express a critical stance on external sources used in the text

### Features

#### Hedging and Modality

- Modals (may, might, could)
- Adverbs (perhaps, probably)
- Quantifiers (some, many)
- Verbs (appear to + v, seems to + v, tend to + v)
- Other expressions (is likely to + v)

Reporting structures (The study concludes, As X argues, According to Y)

#### Endorsing and distancing

- Evaluative reporting verbs (claim, suggest, demonstrate)
- Intensifying and limiting adverbs (clearly, unambiguously, strongly/somewhat, to a certain extent)
- Concessive clauses (although, while)

**This is the toolkit to critically evaluate the concepts, to present results and discussions, and to persuade the reader.**

## Task 1

Look carefully at the following extract from the chosen text.

- Try to identify some features of **textual cohesion** from **toolkit 1**.

### 2.2 Social Influence Studies

For many years the structure of various offline social networks has been studied by sociologists (see [15] [23] [6] for surveys). Researchers have also analyzed the structure of various Chinese offline social networks [4] [25] [12] [5] [7]. In social network analysis, *social influence* refers to the concept of people modifying their behavior to bring them closer to the behavior of their friends.

Social influence has been studied in a vast array of social networks involving various foci such as interests and personal habits [22] [13] [26]. Xu et al. [30] have looked at the adaptation of aggressive behaviors in a social network of kindergarden children in China. As a method of controlling aggression, teachers in China tend to put aggressive chil-



## Task 2

Look carefully at the following extract from the chosen text.

- Try to identify some features of **logical links** from **toolkit 2**.

Sina Weibo offers a list of 50 keywords that appeared most frequently in users' tweets over the past hour. They are ranked according to the frequency of appearances. Figure 5 illustrates the list of hourly trending keywords (with translations). This is similar to Twitter, which also presents a constantly updated list of trending topics, which are keywords that are most frequently used in tweets over that period.





## Task 3

Look carefully at the following extract from the chosen text.

- Try to identify some features of **noun groups** from **toolkit 3**.

## 2.4 The Internet in China

The development of the Internet industry in China over the past decade has been impressive. According to a survey from the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), by July 2008, the number of Internet users in China has reached 253 million, surpassing the U.S. as the world's largest Internet market [9]. Furthermore, the number of Internet users in China as of 2010 was reported to be 420 million.

Despite this, the fractional Internet penetration rate in China is still low. The 2010 survey by CNNIC on the Internet development in China [10] reports that the Internet penetration rate in the rural areas of China is on average 5.1%. In contrast, the Internet penetration rate in the urban cities of China is on average 21.6%. In metropolitan cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, the Internet penetration rate has reached over 45%, with Beijing being 46.4% and Shanghai being 45.8% [10].



## Task 4

Look carefully at the following extracts from the chosen text.

- Try to identify some features of **evaluation** from **toolkit 4**.

Agarwal et al. [1] have examined the problem of identifying influential bloggers in the blogosphere. They discovered that the most influential bloggers were not necessarily the most active. Backstrom et al. [3] have examined the characteristics of *membership closure* in LiveJournal. and Crandall et al. [11], the adaptation of influences between editors of Wikipedia articles. On Twitter, Cha et al. [8] have performed a comparison of three different measures of influence - indegree, retweets and user mentions. Based on this, they hypothesized that the number of followers may not a good measure of influence. This was corroborated by Romero and others [24] who presented a novel influence measure that takes into account the passivity of the audience in the social network. They measured retweets on Twitter and found that passivity was a major factor when it came to forwarding. They also demonstrated with empirical evidence that the number of followers is a poor measure of influence.

### 2.4 The Internet in China

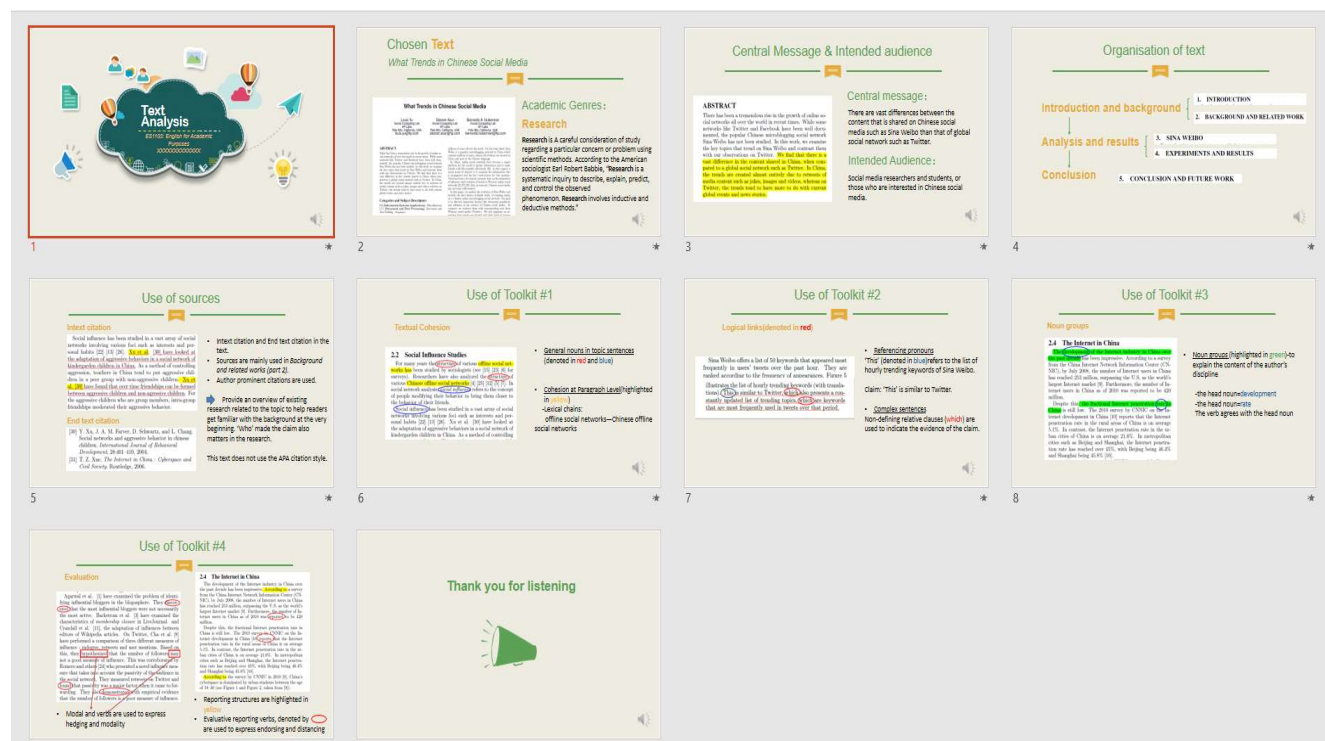
The development of the Internet industry in China over the past decade has been impressive. According to a survey from the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), by July 2008, the number of Internet users in China has reached 253 million, surpassing the U.S. as the world's largest Internet market [9]. Furthermore, the number of Internet users in China as of 2010 was reported to be 420 million.

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According to the survey by CNNIC in 2010 [9], China's cyberspace is dominated by urban students between the age of 18–30 (see Figure 1 and Figure 2, taken from [9]).

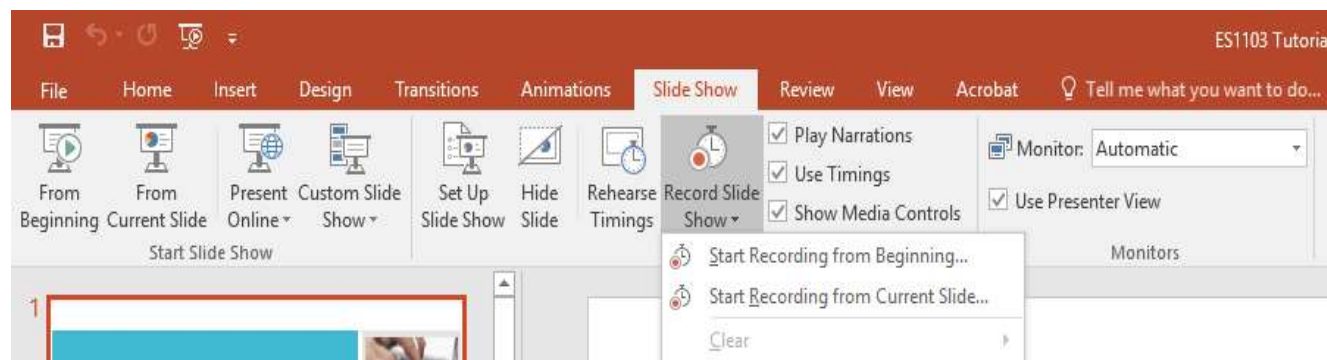


After completing her text analysis, the student prepared a presentation using PowerPoint.



Now, you can see how a simple, but effective and illustrative, text analysis can be conducted. It's over to you to **conduct your own text analysis of a text of your choice**.

When you have completed your text analysis, you will need to **prepare a PowerPoint presentation** and accompany this with an **audio recording of your comments**.



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To help you prepare your presentation, five examples of text analysis presentations are available in the Week 11 folder in Canvas. You are strongly advised to view and listen to these presentations for an idea of how you might present your text analysis.



- Select a text suitable for analysis.
- Carefully read the text and use the given criteria to conduct a text analysis.
- Prepare a PowerPoint presentation of your text analysis.
- Record your spoken comments on the PowerPoint slides.
- Submit your Text Analysis Presentation by the scheduled deadline stated on Canvas.

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In this tutorial, we have considered the importance of being able to analyse texts to note how they are constructed and to consider their features as academic papers. We have also seen that by analysing a text, we can illustrate our understanding of how good academic writing is developed. We can then use this understanding to monitor and improve our own academic writing.

In the next part of this tutorial, we will give further reflection to key aspects of this module and consider how you can transfer your improved writing skills to your academic disciplines in the future.