Discourse analysis
The two terms are in most cases interchangeable.

There is text grammar and discourse analysis.

A text/discourse may be defined as a word or series of words, either written or spoken, which makes sense, is complete and appears in a context.

A text/discourse may also consist in a single word (see STOP)
Text / context / knowledge of the world

- A text (e.g. the word STOP) makes sense in context but there is a gap to be filled before the message is complete and we fill it with our knowledge of the world and common sense. The reader is part of the context.
- In order to define a text/discourse we might substitute “a word or series of words” with “a sign or series of signs”.
- A sign is an inseparable union of signifier and signified.
- A text can also be visual. In that case the signifier is no longer a word but an image.
- Images can be icons, indexes or symbols.
Icons indexes symbols

• An icon is a literal picture of something or someone (a cat, a tree, a man.....)

• An index is a sign which points to something else because of a causal (cause/effect) relationship. E.g. smoke points to fire, expensive clothing is indexical of wealth.

• A symbol is something that stands for something else. E.g. the Statue of Liberty is a symbol of the U.S.
Ideology

- Ideological power can be exercised in discourse.
- Ideological power is the power to project one’s practices as universal and “common sense”. It is particularly significant when it is exercised in discourse.
- Ideology is most effective when it is less visible. Invisibility is achieved when ideologies are brought to discourse as background assumptions.
- Text/discourse do not exist in a vacuum. They are enacted within a social context, are determined by the social context and contribute the way in which the social context continues to exist. (Fairclugh 1998: 85; Mills 1997: 11)
Texture

- The minimal text *Stop* is complete and makes sense if it appears in context.
- If we find two or more words together they should go well together. If the sequence of words is random, then we are not dealing with a text. The words will lack texture,
- **Cohesion** is one of the elements which give the text texture. Cohesive relations can be grammatical and/or lexical
Grammatical devices

- CO-REFERENCE
- Endophoric (inside the text)/ exophoric (outside the text)
- Endophoric can be subdivided into:
  - Anaphoric co-reference (referring to something that has already been mentioned)
  - Cataphoric co-reference (referring to what is going to be mentioned)
- Ex. This (cataphoric), is the Italian anomaly: in no other big western economy has corruption become so systematic. “This” refers to “in no other big western…”
- Anaphoric co-reference is far more common.
- Ex. Silvio Berlusconi, media mogul,…… He has been convicted of bribing…. 
LEXICAL DEVICES

- Lexical cohesive devices involve ties between lexical (or content) words. There are ties between expressions which come from the same semantic field.
- We can have lexical ties based on
  - Repetition: the same word repeated
  - Synonymy: different words defining the same thing (jail, prison)
  - Antonymy: two words with opposite meaning (good, bad)
  - Hyponymy: superordinate and subordinate terms (financial crimes and giving bribes, illegal financing of parties)
  - Meronymy: part / whole relationship (tree, branch, twig, leaf)
Structural cohesion

• The fundamental structural pattern in English is that of **Theme and Rheme**
Theme and Rheme

• An example:
  • Theme Rheme
  • Money is not the only problem
    (structural analysis)
  • Subject Predicate
    Money is not the only problem
    (grammatical analysis)
Definition of theme
(Halliday 1994: 37)

• “The theme is indicated by its position in the clause. In writing English we signal that an item has thematic status by putting it first. No other signal is necessary.”

• Ex. In Italy Mr Berlusconi has become a matter of faith.
  - In Italy > theme
  - Mr Berlusconi has become a matter of faith > rhyme

• The theme does not always correspond with the grammatical subject of the sentence.
Definition of theme and rheme
(Halliday 1995: 37)

• The Theme is the element which serves as the point of departure of the message, it is that with which the clause is concerned. The rest of the message, the part in which the Theme is developed is called the Rheme.
Given VS New

• To communicate our sentences must contain some New information and it is helpful that they contain some old or Given information.

• “Structurally …an information unit consists of an obligatory New element plus an optional Given.” (Halliday 1994: 298)

• But the New information, too, is not necessarily unknown to the reader.

• Ex. The best laid plans can go awry.

• The reader might well complain that he is well aware there is always the possibility that your plans go wrong. The writer wants the reader to take note of this fact, because he is going to base the whole story on it.
Conclusion

• The English sentences start with a Theme, the first element (the given) in the sentence, which normally contains information which we somehow know about and they continue with a Rheme, which normally tells us something new about the Theme.
Marked and unmarked Themes

• **Unmarked**: When the subject is occupying the thematic position.
• Ex. Money is not the only problem
• **Marked**: When the thematic position is occupied by other parts of the clause (an adjunct, the object etc.)
• Ex.1 At no time was safety compromised.
• Ex 2. All the rest we’ll do for you.
• Ex. 2 comes from an advert from a travel agency.
Passive sentences

• Ex.1 The co-pilot was forcibly removed from the cockpit as the airplane was diverted to Shannon airport.
• Ex.2 He was restrained by the flight crew and a passenger believed to be an off-duty member of the Canadian military.
• Ex.3 His wife was said to have flown to Ireland to be by her husband’s side and a fellow pilot had been sent to “assist in whatever way is required”.
• Ex.2 could have been written as an active sentence:
  • The flight crew and a passenger … restrained him.
  The difference is very clear: in the passive sentences the writer announces he is going to talk about the co-pilot. In the active sentence he tells us we are going to learn about the flight crew and a passenger.
MODALITY
Definition

- Modality is a grammar category which is concerned with the event or situation reported in the utterance.
- According to a set of rules, wishes, beliefs, it is necessary, possible... to conclude that the main proposition is the case.
- Ex.1 John must be earning a lot of money.
- The modal base is the knowledge of the speaker
- The modal force is the necessity to conclude that "John is earning...."
- Ex. 2 John can open a beer bottle with his teeth
- The modal base is John’s abilities
- The modal force is possibility.
- It is concerned with the status of the proposition that describes the event.
- Proposition: the utterance of your beliefs
- A proposition is true if it corresponds to your beliefs
- A proposition is false if it does not correspond to your beliefs
- The truth or falsity of a proposition is the status of a proposition
Examples

- John is at home > categorical statement
- John may/must be at home > judgment
How can modality be expressed?

- modal or auxiliary verbs: will, shall, may can must would should might could ought to need dare
- Adjectives/ adverbs: certain, certainly, possible, possibly, clear, clearly, apparent, apparently, improbable, improbably…
- Other: it seems, it appears, I think, I believe, it suggests, it is shown, it indicates
- Ex.1 You should study OR you’d better study
- It might rain OR Perhaps it will rain.
Propositional modality
Event modality

- **Propositional** modality: the speaker expresses *his judgment* of evidence to the proposition
- Ex. John may be at home (it is possible that John is at home).
- John must be at home now (there are facts that let me conclude that John is at home now)
- **Event** modality: the speaker expresses *external/internal conditioning factors* to the subject of the proposition
- Ex1. John may come in now (John has got permission to come in now) ex.2 He must come in now (obligation) (external) **Deontic**
- John can solve this problem (John has the ability to solve the problem)(internal: ability, willingness) **Dynamic**
Propositional **modality:**

Epistemic

Evidential
Epistemic

• The speaker expresses his opinion about the factual status of the proposition.
• There are three types of epistemic modality:
  • **Speculative**: (John may be in the office)
    The speaker expresses uncertainty
  • **Deductive** (John must be in the office)
    The speaker makes a firm judgment.
  • **Assumptive** (John will be in the office)
    The judgment is based on what I generally know about John
Evidential

- **Reported** > evidence gathered from others
  - Ex. He is said to be extremely rich
  - (other people told me he is rich)
- **Sensory** > evidence gathered through sense perception
  - Ex. Paul must be dancing
  - (disco music is coming out of his window, loud stamping noises are heard as well)
Event modality

- Two types:
- **Deontic**: the conditioning factors are *external* to the subject of the proposition
  - Ex. John may come in now (permission)
  - Ex. John must come in now (obligation)
- **Dynamic**: the conditioning factors are internal to the subject of the proposition. They are associated with *ability and willingness*.
  - Ex. He **can** run five miles a minute
  - John **will** let you stay