

The aim of this study is to provide a unified functional description of a number of causal constructions in Dutch: the connectives *omdat*, *want*, *doordat*, the prepositions *door*, *vanwege*, *wegens*, and the auxiliaries *doen* and *laten*. Given the observation that the various causal alternatives are not in free variation in discourse, the author hypothesizes that this distribution must be constrained and that it should be possible to identify some of the constraints that play a role in the selection of these causal forms. To reach this goal, Degand proposes to make use of a multifunctional theory of language - Systemic Functional Linguistics - in combination with numerous corpus analyses. This approach to language appeared to be particularly relevant, because it enables to give an explicit account of aspects of language that fall out of the traditional scope of linguistic description, namely accounts of genre, register, discourse semantics, etc. while the corpus analyses provide a solid empirical basis for the theoretical descriptions (Peeters 2001)