

Invitation à la soutenance publique de thèse
Pour l'obtention du grade de Doctorat en Langues, lettres et traductologie
en cotutelle avec la Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)

Madame Rachel RUBIN

COMPLEXITY AT THE LEXIS-GRAMMAR INTERFACE
A QUANTITATIVE CORPUS ANALYSIS OF L2 DUTCH WRITING

Le vendredi 19 décembre 2025 à 15H00

VUB - Promotiezaal (D.2.01)
Boulevard de la Plaine 2
1050 Ixelles



Linguistic complexity has been investigated and measured at various dimensions of language (syntax, morphology, lexicon), but has not, until more recently, been considered at the linguistic interfaces. My PhD research is a response to a recent call to widen the scope of L2 complexity research to the lexis-grammar interface (Paquot 2018, 2019; Housen et al., 2019), building on Paquot (2018, 2019), who looked at the phraseological dimension of language in EFL learner writing by measuring the diversity and sophistication of lexical co-occurrence units (relational co-occurrences). To extend the cross-linguistic validity of metrics of phraseological complexity established by Paquot (2018, 2019), I explore whether phraseological complexity can also contribute to the description of L2 Dutch proficiency, performance, and development. Additionally, I incorporate phraseological units situated more closely to the interface of lexis and grammar, namely verb-argument structure units, into the linguistic complexity framework.

Through four empirical articles, I demonstrated: (i) the suitability of automatic annotation for investigating L2 Dutch phraseological complexity; (ii) the relevance of phraseological diversity and sophistication measures for indexing L2 Dutch proficiency; (iii) the complementary role of complexity measures for both lexical and lexico-grammatical co-occurrences; and (iv) the distinct patterns of longitudinal development for measures of lexical, syntactic, and phraseological complexity.

Le jury est composé de Mesdames et Messieurs les Professeur-es :

Prof. Ludovic DE CUYPERE (VUB/Ghent University), Président du jury

Prof. Alex HOUSEN (VUB), Promoteur et Secrétaire du jury

Prof. Magali PAQUOT (UCLouvain), Promotrice

Prof. Bram BULTE (VUB), Lecteur

Prof. Kristel VAN GOETHEM (UCLouvain), Lectrice

Prof. Roeland VAN HOUT (Radbout University), Lecteur extérieur

Prof. Kirstopher KYLE (University of Oregon), Lecteur extérieur

Prof. Folkert Kuiken (University of Amsterdam), Lecteur extérieur