

# Annual report 2015 of ACLC research group: Argumentation and Rhetoric Group Amsterdam (ARGA)

**Coordinator:** Francisca Snoeck Henkemans

**Web page:** [www.argumentation.nl](http://www.argumentation.nl)

## **Current external funding:**

Gerard Steen, Corina Andone, Francisca Snoeck Henkemans, Jean Wagemans were co-applicants (main applicant G.J. Steen) for the NWO project “Resistance to metaphor” in 2015. This application has been successful. As of September 2016, 3 PhD positions and one post-doc position will be subsidized.

## **Participants in 2015:**

Francisca Snoeck Henkemans (ACLC), senior researcher, coordinator

Corina Andone (ACLC) senior researcher

Eveline Feteris (ACLC), senior researcher

Bart Garssen (ACLC), senior researcher

Bert Meuffels (ACLC), senior researcher

José Plug (ACLC), senior researcher

Jean Wagemans (ACLC), senior researcher

Assimakis Tseronis (ACLC), postdoc

Roosmaryn Pilgram (ACLC), PhD candidate project: A doctor’s argument by authority: An analytical and empirical study of strategic manoeuvring in medical consultation (September 2007-September 2015).

Renske Wierda (ACLC), PhD candidate project: Experience-based authority argumentation in direct-to-consumer medical advertisements: An analytical and empirical study concerning the strategic anticipation of critical questions (September 2011-September 2015)

Eugen Popa (ACLC), PhD candidate project: Thought experiments in academic disputes: A pragma-dialectical method for reconstructing the argumentative use of imaginary scenarios (September 2012 – September 2016)

Jacky Visser (ACLC), PhD candidate (September 2012 – September 2016). Project: A dialogue game for critical discussion (to be defended November 2016)

Ingeborg van der Geest (ACLC). PhD candidate project: Argumentatie voor een keuze: Een pragma-dialectische analyse van gemotiveerde keuzes in overheidsbesluiten over m.e.r.-plichtige projecten. (defended in December 2015).

Andre Juthe (ACLC), PhD candidate (September 2012 – September 2016). Project: Argumentation by Analogy – A Systematic Analytical Study of an Argument Scheme (to be defended June 2016)

Merel Boers (ACLC), External PhD candidate project: A controversy on moral judgment: Fifteen historian-reviewers in the controversy on Hannah Arendt's book Eichmann in Jerusalem in the US, West Germany and France, 1963-1967. A historical and a pragma-dialectical perspective (to be defended June 2016)

Ahmed Omar (ACLC), External PhD candidate project: a pragma-dialectical analysis of Egyptian anti-regime columns (to be defended September 2016)

### **Description of the research group:**

The aim of this research program is to develop theoretical and practical instruments for the analysis, evaluation and production of argumentative discourse in different communicative domains. The research builds on two important developments that have taken place within the pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation in the last fifteen years. The first development concerns the integration of rhetorical insights into the standard pragma-dialectical theory of argumentation by introducing the notion of 'strategic maneuvering': the balancing act that arguers perform in their attempt to be reasonable and effective at the same time. The second and most recent development is a further contextualization of the study of argumentation by focusing on specific conventionalized argumentative practices (or 'activity types') and by investigating which argumentative patterns may be regarded as prototypical for those practices. In dealing with the following seven research themes, the research program combines qualitative and quantitative research:

Theme 1 Argumentation in the academic domain

Theme 2 Argumentation in the political domain

Theme 3 Argumentation in the legal domain

Theme 4 Argumentation in the medical domain

Theme 5 Dialectical and rhetorical analysis and evaluation of argumentative discourse

### **Research highlights in 2015:**

- 1) Roosmaryn Pilgram defended her thesis on a doctor's argument by authority on September 8, 2015.
- 2) Renske Wierda defended her thesis on Experience-based authority argumentation in direct-to-consumer medical advertisements on December 9, 2015.
- 3) Ingeborg van der Geest defended her thesis on Argumentation in environmental reports on December 15, 2016.
- 4) The project on argumentative patterns resulted in the publication of a special issue of the Journal Argumentation in which prototypical argumentative patterns in the legal, academic, political and medical domain were identified and analysed (participants:

Corina Andone, Bart Garssen, Eveline Feteris, Francisca Snoeck Henkemans, Jean Wagemans).

- 5) Jacky Visser received the Frans van Eemeren award for outstanding research at the ECA conference.

### **Valorisation**

- 1) Contact has been established with the AMC, department of medical psychology. Several options for cooperation have been discussed. Central is the idea that insights from argumentation theory and rhetoric may be instrumental in further specifying requirements for shared decision making in doctor-patient communication. In 2017, a colloquium on argumentation and shared decision making will be organized in which medical experts and argumentation theorists will participate.
- 2) Contact has been established with the RIVM (Rijksinstituut voor Volksgezondheid en milieu). A number of projects concerning the analysis of medical controversies have been planned. One project has been successfully concluded.