Understanding the misunderstandings in the argumentation to reduce learning inequalities.

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The study of argumentation in the Western world has its roots in Greece with the sophists and Aristotle, covering the fields of logic, dialectics and rhetoric. Traditional logic dealt with argumentation in natural language, but from the 19th century onwards it evolved into a mathematical branch under the influence of Frege. Since the mid-twentieth century, new approaches have emerged, such as substantial logic (Toulmin 1958), informal logic (Blair & Johnson 1980; Johnson 1996) and natural logic (Grize, 1974, 1982, 1990, 1996), which take account of the formalisation of logic and emphasise its role as an 'art of thinking' for ordinary reasoning. For their part, in *La Nouvelle Rhétorique* (1958), Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca reaffirm the existence of a specific rationality of social discourse in relation to scientific rationality.

The considerable development of theoretical questions concerning argumentation and the diversity of the disciplines involved (psychology, logic, philosophy, education sciences, language sciences, didactics, etc.) make any global definition of argumentation simplistic and potentially risky. It is more appropriate to characterise this field by highlighting all the issues that run through it and give it its structure. This is what Christian Plantin does in his *Dictionnaire de l'argumentation* (2021).

These different studies are embodied in a variety of definitions and approaches to argumentation, each of which favours a type of rationality (consensus, syllogism, critical dialogue, scientific method), certain objects or situations (e.g. syllogistic discourse, pleading or dialogue) with their own specific features and standards in terms of argumentation. This diversity of objects, situations and standards can be found at school in the syllabuses and in classroom practice (oral or written) (analysis of argumentative texts, essays, argumentative debates, the Grand Oral, etc.). Argumentation is considered to be both an object and a means of learning, a product and a process, and this in many disciplines. As we shall see, this can be a source of ambiguity for pupils, reinforced by the complexity and multifunctionality of argumentative situations in the educational context, which aim to develop social, language and cognitive skills and acquire subject knowledge, very often at the same time as and mixed with other discursive practices.

The formative effect of oral activities on pupils' ability to argue presupposes a certain number of prerequisites common to all subjects (classroom climate, debatability of content, communication skills, ethical rules for discussion, professionalism of the teacher or facilitator) but also specific (use and place of subject-specific knowledge, rules linked to critical rationality, intellectual ethics). These prerequisites are also often presented as the benefits of these practices for the pupil or the class group. Behind this product/process paradox lies an instrumental spiral effect. The introduction of oral argumentative activities in philosophy classes seems to enable students and teachers to work on

their relationships with knowledge and language (henceforth RASL) in comparison with more expository and top-down methods (Gagnon, 2015). These approaches certainly reflect an effort to reform the teaching of philosophy at lycée, which has long been practised as an ex cathedra course centred on the written word, and thus to work towards making it accessible to all. But setting up a joint activity is not enough to guarantee shared meanings[1] (Bautier, Rochex, 2004). Most of the interactions in these activities mobilise specific uses of language, unfamiliar to all pupils, which are inseparable from RASL and the school (Bautier, Rochex, 1998), and when a pupil learns within an institution, he can only be a 'good pupil' if he conforms to the relationships to knowledge that the institution defines. However, an individual belongs to several institutions (e.g. family and school) whose RASLs may differ (Chevallard, 1992). What's more, these expected uses vary depending on the level of education, the activities and the subjects, which makes it all the more complex for pupils to understand what is expected of them and what it means and implies to 'succeed' at the task required. All this is likely to lead to misunderstandings and prevent some students from learning.

This article is part of a wider study[2] currently underway into the (possibly reciprocal) links between RASLs and (the learning of) philosophical argumentation by secondary school pupils in a oral context. The aim of this research is to identify what in the students' RASLs can help or hinder their philosophical argumentation, to describe the situations that seem to favour certain types of RASLs and to understand the dynamics of the processes at work likely to produce differentiated learning within oral argumentative activities. My intention is not to advocate a nostalgic return to transmissive pedagogies. Nor is it to disqualify methods or point the finger at practices or pedagogical choices, but to highlight the conditions for their effectiveness and pedagogical equity in order to provide keys for building in pupils, rather than presupposing, the RASLs conducive to learning and practising philosophical argumentation. The aim of this article is to focus on the possible misunderstandings about argumentation that can reinforce or build RASLs in secondary school pupils that are unfavourable to learning and practising philosophical argumentation.

1. Socio-cognitive misunderstandings: co-constructed obstacles.

The notion of socio-cognitive misunderstandings[3] has been theorised and worked on in the field by the ESCOL group[4] to understand why and how the pedagogical relationship may not 'work' and why some pupils encounter difficulties (Bautier, 2013; Bautier and Rayou, 2009; Bautier and Rochex, 1997; Breux and Perret-Clermont, 2014; Kohler, 2015 and Muller Mirza, 2014). A misunderstanding is a joint construction by the teacher and the pupil. It occurs when "the different actors in the interaction, sometimes unknowingly, do not share the same understanding of the situation, and this has implications for the mobilisation of socio-cognitive resources" (Muller Mirza, 2014, p.166). It therefore refers to a discrepancy between the situations that the teacher thinks he is setting up and what the pupil interprets (instructions, task, rules, purpose, etc.). This interpretation is rooted in certain RASL contracted socially outside and inside school, which are themselves part of a relationship of meaning and value to processes (learning, memorising, etc.), products (knowledge or skills), institutional content and learning situations. These RASL have an epistemic, identity and social dimension. Patrick

Rayou[5] (2002), for example, has described the socio-cognitive misunderstandings caused by the teaching of philosophy, in particular the dissertation exercise. This is an eminently cognitive test in which a great deal (of) one's person (identity) is involved, including in the face of peers (social). Candidates are asked to "*think for themselves*[6] , in a continuous discourse for which they take full responsibility", "to develop a *personal* philosophical work informed by the knowledge acquired through the study of concepts and works".[7] So it is indeed a question of saying what one thinks and arguing, but in a way that incorporates a universal enunciator and weaves together the knowledge and texts of a general culture resulting from a multi-disciplinary and philosophical curriculum acquired in the final year of secondary school. Consequently, if the teacher makes a remark about epistemic argumentation, such as the fact that an individual experience cannot be generalised, the pupil may understand it in terms of social illegitimacy, believing that it is his social status as a pupil, his lack of authority, which prevents him from giving his 'opinion'. This misunderstanding is no doubt accentuated by the paradoxical but fairly frequent use of the argument from authority in a philosophy lesson (Charbonnier, 2019)[8] . Faced with these expectations that are not understood, students will find avoidance strategies, for example by skirting around them (by having people of a higher social standing, such as judges or doctors, speak) or by adopting a very conformist stance where teachers would like to see a certain amount of risk-taking, a certain amount of daring. We shall see that in addition to this, there are misunderstandings specific to argumentation which explain why this experiment in teaching philosophical essays was particularly disappointing for both teachers and students. The emergence of misunderstandings can be encouraged by certain exercises or instructions, but can also be due to the fact that teachers, often former good students, have difficulty understanding learning difficulties, especially in subjects where they excel (Charles and Clément, 1997). Quite often, the knowledge they have acquired and the RASLs they have built up during their studies in initial training do not help them to organise their teaching (Deauviau, 2009). Finally, teachers may have to use learning methods to which they were not exposed as students. Collective oral activities, for example, are not part of initial training, which is essentially focused on preparing for the teaching exams (CAPES and Agrégation)[9] and very little in-service training (only 4 academies in the PAF for 2021-2022). We can therefore assume that few teachers in post today have experienced collective oral activities such as debates and discussions as pupils and students. It is this 'enigmatic encounter'[10] between RASL teachers and students that we must take note of as researchers and teachers, and which Bernard Charlot describes well here:

"When a child or adult has to learn something radically new, they approach this new situation with the relationships to knowledge that they have already built up. These 'pre-existing' relationships can help them to cope with the new situation when they are the same as those required for new learning, or on the contrary, when they are different, they can constitute an obstacle and lead to epistemic or identity conflicts. Teachers and trainers are constantly coming up against this question of the difference between what 'learning' means for them and what it means for their students".[11]

If the objects of knowledge exist for individuals, they also exist for institutions. Behind the institutional prescriptions, behind the pedagogical and philosophical freedom advocated in the

programmes and instructions for the teaching of philosophy, there is in fact a certain way of considering the way in which philosophy is learned, the status of knowledge in the philosophy course and in other subjects, the status of oral expression and of students' words, the status, nature and place of argumentation and its learning. This is what Perrenoud[12] (1993) calls hidden curricula. So there are also relationships to knowledge and language that are present, distilled and imposed in the curricula.

Let's examine these possible co-constructions of misunderstandings about argumentation at different (superimposable!) levels: the institution, the teaching of philosophy and classroom activities.

2. Sources of misunderstanding about argumentation.

2.1. In institutional regulations: an apparent cross-disciplinary approach

The ability to argue seems to be THE cross-curricular skill par excellence, as evidenced by the school report for the baccalauréat exam[13] in the general stream (Première and Terminale[14]), which lists 51 occurrences of the word (with its variants "argument", "argumenter", "argumentation"). By comparison, the word 'problem' (problème, problématique, problématiser) is used 22 times. 19 lessons[15] include argumentation among the "skills required in the lessons with reference to the objectives of each lesson"[16] . Almost all of them, therefore, with the exception of Physical and Sports Education and compulsory modern language teaching (although specialised and DNL courses do mention it). In the school report for the baccalauréat exam in the technological stream[17] , there are 59 references (in addition to the common subjects mentioned above, more than 9[18] mention argumentation). A list of all these subjects shows the wide range of uses and contexts in which argumentation is used in a student's curriculum, and potentially in the same day! However, this cross-curricular nature of the skill of arguing is only apparent, because in addition to the possibility of ruling on generic standards (justification, debatability of content), there are standards specific to the disciplines. For example, in SVT[19] or Physics-Chemistry, assertions must be justified by empirical evidence and be consistent with accepted theories. In History-Geography, we talk about "Constructing a historical or geographical argument"[20] . More generally, disciplinary knowledge is supposed to be the criterion for the validity of the statements made in the argument. Depending on the context, the same subject of debate may also require different standards. If, for example, a social issue is dealt with in EMC[21] , the approach will not be the same as if it is debated in SES, where it is supposed to be based on knowledge to be constructed and enable pupils to differentiate between opinions and knowledge[22] . This complexity of argumentation can be found in the Socio-Scientific Issues, which combine different domains and therefore different systems of proof and validity of argumentation (Pallarès, 2020; Bächtold et al, 2023). The literal and undifferentiated use of the copy and paste[23] of a paragraph on the role of the practice of argumentation in the development of oral skills in the official bulletins of numerous disciplines, which are a priori very different, should not, however, lead to a univocal conception of argumentation, as attested by the official bulletin

concerning the Grand Oral[24] . The complex nature of argumentation, which contains both shared and discipline-specific standards, is a potential source of misunderstanding for students. In addition, this variety of contexts is often broken down into oral and/or written practice, which does not imply the same conditions for production, assessment and therefore learning. Depending on the conception of argumentation, there are in fact "prototypical situations" or "reference discourses"[25] (and therefore privileged pedagogical devices) associated with different objectives (learning to argue, arguing to learn, developing social skills, critical thinking, etc.). This results in the presence of several conceptions of argumentation within the different lessons and exercises. To describe them, we will use the "Map of the field of argumentation" based on the question of language taken from Christian Plantin's *Dictionnaire de l'argumentation*[26] . First of all, there is ambiguity between a definition of argumentation as a **cognitive-language activity** and a definition of argumentation as a **purely thought activity**[27] even if the first conception is predominant in teaching. Depending on the latter, teaching activities or school exercises will focus either on the **process of** evaluating and constructing arguments or on the "**finished product**", the argument, i.e. all the arguments articulated to explain, justify and/or support at least one point of view. In all cases, the concept can be considered restricted (i.e. not generalised to language or discourse), as the official texts state that not all discourse is necessarily argumentative (otherwise why specify "argumentative text or oral"). Pupils will sometimes have to produce speeches which take the form of a monologue (argumentation monographed by one speaker) or a dialogue (argumentation co-managed by the participants). For example, traditional logic (monological **monologue** sometimes studied in philosophy class) studies what ensures the validity of a discourse. This is considered independently of any audience or opponent. Nor is there any perlocutionary intention (to persuade or convince). **The dialogic monologue** is what the philosophical essay could be. A rhetoric of the right thing to say, this discourse incorporates the words of others without being addressed to them[28] . It is not structured by perlocutionary intention, and its persuasive character is basically a "secondary effect" of its truthfulness. This reasonable rational discourse corresponds to Toulmin's approach. The type of argumentation most often used is **the rhetoric of persuasion**, which corresponds to a **dialogue without an exchange structure**. This is the case when students are asked to produce a presentation. Finally, oral argumentative activities are **dialogues with an exchange structure**. Given the variety of aims, methods, standards appropriate to the contexts and ways in which enunciation is handled, it is understandable that some pupils get lost and misinterpret what is expected of them if they are not made explicit on a regular basis in each subject. What's more, ignoring the different conceptions of argumentation means running the risk of evaluating one type of argumentation according to the criteria of another (for example, correctness of language in dialogue). This could help to explain the fact that the practice of collective oral argumentation (dialogue with an exchange structure) in philosophy classes must constantly prove its legitimacy within the institution (which favours dialogical monologue), whereas the theories of informal logic and pragma-dialectics have, since the 1970s, given priority to the study of argumentation as dialogue.

This is also a reason to express some reservations about oral argumentative situations conceived as an entry point to the study of written argumentation (Delcambre, 1996). The oral/written distinction is often perceived as a simple variation in the communication situation, but as Isabelle Delcambre has shown[29] these two "media" operate according to different logics (regressive for the written word = thesis to be justified; progressive for deliberative argumentative dialogue = the conclusion is not known). This indistinction amounts to evaluating oral situations using written criteria (propositional content and dispositional relevance of the arguments) and missing out on their complexity and richness[30]

2.2. Teaching philosophy: characterising philosophical argumentation

As we can see, argumentation is far from being the prerogative of a single discipline (philosophy, for example) and, well before the final year of secondary school, pupils encounter learning situations involving argumentation in various forms. Moreover, the general recommendations concerning exercises in philosophy classes of May 2020 recognise the need to ensure "that terms used transversally by a range of disciplines

- and in particular those of 'problematisation' or 'argumentation' - are understood and implemented in the specific context of the discipline 'philosophy' and taking account of its own requirements.[31] " while proposing a list of rational operations implied by philosophical exercises[32] . In this respect, they represent a step forward compared with previous recommendations and official bulletins, which paid little attention to logic and argumentation.

However, we feel that we should go further in clarifying what *philosophical* argumentation is in order to avoid possible misunderstandings, in particular the frequent confusion of students with argumentation in the arts (reinforced no doubt by the Literary stream, which used to have the highest coefficient in philosophy, and more recently by the creation of the Humanities, Literature, Philosophy speciality). First of all, the teaching of French generally adopts a descriptive or technical point of view (understanding how an argumentative text works, knowing how to reconstruct its argumentative circuit) whereas philosophical assessment is immediately normative. The concept of argumentation in French is characterised by its intention to influence the addressee, to modify their beliefs, to provoke or increase their support. Whether the aim is to convince[33] (with rational arguments) or to persuade (by appealing to feelings), argumentation is defined by its effect on the audience, and it is effectiveness that makes a good argument, rather than its accuracy, relevance or robustness. To present argumentation solely in terms of these aims is to run the risk of reinforcing, or even building, a relativistic stance on the subject of argumentation in pupils. Indeed, by aiming to modify and influence the beliefs of the interlocutor, we tend to confine it to the realm of opinion, denying it any other epistemic value. This confirms the idea that RASLs are neither simply spontaneous nor simply constructed by the family environment, but can be the product of a school culture. It should be noted that this relativism is also reflected in the way pupils represent the different philosophers' 'answers' to the questions seen in class: "each philosopher has answered the question in his or her own way, but none/all of them is/are right or wrong".

This rhetorical conception of argumentation also presupposes that, in arguing, we seek to persuade/ convince others *of an opinion that is already clear-cut and fully constructed.* The matrix of most argumentative situations at school is in fact "for/against", "advantages/disadvantages", "thesis/ antithesis". This has several significant consequences: 1) Eristic debate and polemical eloquence are made the alpha and omega of argumentative exchange, which, from the point of view of training pupils to participate as citizens, is rather reductive 2) the heuristic, constructive (alone or with others) and dialogical[34] dimensions of argumentation (trial and error, testing hypotheses, approaching from another angle) are obliterated 3) "this representation of argumentation as an obligation to have a specific answer to a problem (....) certainly constitutes an epistemological obstacle for other argumentative activities, philosophical dissertations for example, which involve examining a problem (…) trying to establish a path around a notion[35] ". To see argumentation as a process, a journey, and not as the support or justification of theses-is, as Michel Fabre shows[36] to change the epistemological paradigm: to move from propositional knowledge to problematised and problematising knowledge. If "argumentation by itself, in the logic of debate, is rather affirmative (negation is the affirmation of rejection) than questioning, because of its conflictual nature.[37] " then to give a philosophical objective to a collective oral activity, it is necessary to argue in *order to* problematise and conceptualise[38] . "Argument here, based on objection, is less a rational destruction of a thesis in order to better found one's own, like an argumentative debate where one supports one's answer to a question, than a moment of setting up doubt, which leaves intact the search for and discovery of a more relevant definition.[39] " "In philosophy, the argumentative function is subordinate to the problematising function"[40] . 4) This takes away from argumentation what, for Duval[41] , compared with other forms of reasoning such as demonstration[42] , is "its fundamental driving force": "the confrontation and modification of the epistemic values of propositions"[43] , made possible by the plasticity of concepts (not as a persuasive technique) and the change in epistemic status (the indubitable becomes hypothetical, the general becomes particular…). 5) If you argue to convince people that your position is THE right one, then changing your mind, making concessions, being self-critical and self-correcting are seen as a defeat. But if the aim of teaching philosophy is to train critical judgement, this is not limited, in the case of argumentation, to knowing how to evaluate and construct arguments, but presupposes a particular epistemological stance: knowing oneself to be fallible[44] . This leads us once again to emphasise the strong link between RASL and argumentation.

Finally, it is the very nature of philosophical questions[45] that makes them a particular terrain for argumentation. Argumentation is by its very nature presumptive (Walton 1989, 1996) and we presume for want of a definitive demonstration (Perelman and Oltbret, 1958). This could be seen as a flaw, but it is in fact an expression of the fact that the concepts concerned (the good, the just, the beautiful, freedom, authority, etc.) cannot be decided scientifically or dogmatically. **The ambiguity and ambivalence of words** are the consequences of the indeterminacy and **uncertainty**[46] of philosophical questions. Philosophical questions are **open-ended**, which means that several answers can coexist, all reasonable depending on the meaning of the words we adopt, the values we favour or

the way we pose the problem. This openness of philosophical questions can lead students to adopt a relativistic attitude to the subject, because "it encourages the coexistence of different points of view. This cohabitation of points of view is often wrongly perceived as an equivalence of points of view.[46] " Yet "answers (or hypotheses) must be consistent with standards of coherence, relevance and appropriateness.[47] "

2.3. Oral activities in class: porosity, multi-functionality, framing and choice of subject

A first misunderstanding when a teacher sets up a collective oral activity can come from the **porosity** between a scholastic and non-scholastic use of argumentation. Unlike a number of collective tasks, when people exchange arguments, there is no social laziness. In fact, their motivation is even enhanced by the dialogical context (Mercier, Sperber, 2021). From primary to secondary school, students are usually enthusiastic about the idea of debating[48] and exchanging ideas with their classmates. But if the aim of argumentation is usually shared by all the interlocutors, young and old, in an out-of-school context (aims linked to the activity and social aims e.g. arguing that we should eat more green vegetables, that we should brush our teeth before going to bed or that we should change the rules of the UNO game), in the classroom, where the tasks are sometimes disconnected from the learning objectives, there is a greater risk of not sharing the same aims. Yet epistemic functions are supposed to be at the forefront in educational contexts. This suggests that there are what might be called different *cultures of argumentation* that are appropriate to the context. It is important for teachers to be aware of these different cultures of argumentation, so as not to presuppose familiarity among all students with the more knowledge-based and epistemically oriented practice of argumentation in educational contexts. This is all the more true as not all children grow up in social environments where opportunities to argue regularly arise (Heller, 2014; Morek, 2020; Quasthoff et al., 2021). This difficulty is compounded by the **cross-cutting nature of**[49] and the dual nature of oral language, which can make the cognitive implications of the activity opaque. André Tricot and Stéphanie Roussel[50] show that the complexity of the teacher's action stems not only from the primary (adaptive and implicit learning) and secondary (requiring explicit learning, often school-based) nature of oral knowledge, but also from the blurred boundaries between these two modes of learning, which vary according to the pupils and their socialisation. This porosity can be accentuated by setting up 'authentic' interaction situations that are unique to the social practices of reference (televised debates, trials, online clashes). The motivational and highly engaging dimension of these activities can mean that these cognitive issues are overlooked (for example, oral activities where the aim is to *win a* contest). A second misunderstanding stems from the **multifunctionality**[51] of oral argumentative activities: expressing oneself, communicating, developing (with) knowledge. For many pupils, writing and speaking in class are means of communication rather than tools for reflection. Some students have difficulty meeting school expectations and engaging in philosophical work, which requires in-depth reflection and work on and with language. Those who focus solely on their personal experience tend to favour immediate expression rather than the exploration of concepts and notions. This process of secondarisation depends not only on RASL, but also on social and subjective

processes such as permission and legitimacy to express oneself and to think. Misunderstood requirements can lead to protective attitudes, such as the use of relativism to avoid taking risks (in one's own thinking and in relation to peers) in philosophical activity. Recent research has shown that there is a strong correlation between epistemic beliefs and the aim of the debate, and hence the way in which people argue (Kuhn et al., 2016, Gagnon, 2017, de Checchi et al., 2022). The choice of learning situation and the way it is presented and regulated (instructions, support) encourage misunderstandings or help to dissolve them. For example, in "very open, loosely framed, loosely controlled situations, in which everyone can work and intervene 'at their own level[52] '" (Bautier and Rayou, 2009, p.97), where the instructions are given in conversational language[53] and where the pupils' contributions are not taken up, questioned and weaved together by the teacher, some pupils may not recognise the characteristics of the situation or fail to recognise the opportunities for cognitive and language work that it offers. They might consider that they are just doing what is asked of them by "participating", whatever the nature of that participation. It is also for this reason that teachers need to be very clear about their pedagogical intentions so that there is no confusion between the political and ethical aims and the epistemic aims of the activity.

Finally, recent research (Gagnon, 2010; de Checchi, 2021) considers that discipline (especially the epistemic value placed on one's knowledge) can have an impact on argumentation. A number of studies[54] have shown that the choice of subject matter can be an obstacle to schooling or lead either to the accumulation of ideas (factitious consensus) or to argument (when emotion is too strong) (Polo, 2020). Michel Tozzi also shows that the way questions are formulated "strongly influences the nature of the structuring of the debate and the process of its dynamics[55] ". Some formulations "immediately encourage students to take up a position and engage in cognitive confrontation", and place students in a "defensive offensive opposition logic rather than integrative listening", which can reinforce students' initial representations of the debate.

3. Conclusion

The aim of this article was to show that the possible misunderstandings that pupils may have about argumentation can be co-constructed by the school culture at different levels. These misunderstandings can lead to RASLs that prevent some pupils from engaging in the learning that takes place during argumentative activities. In particular, we have seen that it is in the interests of philosophy teaching to get rid of a 'rhetorical' conception of argumentation (arguing only in order to convince), which constitutes an epistemological obstacle to understanding what is expected in *philosophical* argumentation. This understanding of learning difficulties through misunderstandings and RASL calls for appropriate means of remediation. It would seem that it's not enough to do more argumentative exercises (it'll come to that!) or simply to reintroduce the 'method'. Helping pupils to understand that a oral argumentative activity is *first and foremost* a learning situation, a reinvestment of knowledge (and not just the completion of a task), enabling them to make links with what has been seen in class before and after, making teachers aware of the epistemic issues involved in

argumentative practices and encouraging them to cultivate relevant epistemological representations of argumentation, would seem to be reasonable solutions.

Notes

1. "If the classroom can be considered as a space for joint activity, as a community of practice or discursive community, the participation of the different pupils in this space and this community, as well as its regulation by the teacher, turns out to be highly heterogeneous and, consequently, a source of highly unequal cognitive benefits". Bautier, É. & Rochex, J. (2004). Joint activity does not mean shared meanings. In: Christiane Moro ed, *Situation éducative et significations* (pp. 197-220). Louvain-la-Neuve: De Boeck Supérieur. ↩

2. As part of a PhD in Education and Training Sciences directed by Edwige Chirouter at the CREN (Nantes University). ↩

3. For example, Bautier, E., and Rochex, J.-Y. (1997). Apprendre: des malentendus qui font la différence. In J.-P. Terrail (Ed.). *La scolarisation de la France* (pp. 105-122). Paris: La Dispute. ↩

4. The ESCOL (Education and Schooling) team is made up of teacher-researchers and associate researchers, most of whom work at the Université Paris 8 Saint-Denis or the Université Paris-est Créteil - INSPÉ de l'Académie de Créteil. **https://circeft.**fr/escol/ ↩

5. Rayou, P. (2002). *La dissert' de philo, Sociologie d'une épreuve scolaire*, coll. Le sens social, Presse Universitaire de Rennes. ↩

6. In italics. ↩

7. B.O Les exercices en classe de philosophie, p.1, Ministère de l'Éducation nationale et de la Jeunesse - Mai 2020 https://eduscol.education.fr/document/24055/download ↩

8. "Philosophy always runs the risk of falling into the very thing it claims to be fighting against, in other words, of leading students to pledge allegiance to philosophy. On the one hand, the argument from authority is said to be contested: it is false that 'if Plato said it, then it is true'; but on the other, it is taken for granted that 'if Plato said it, then it is interesting'. But that's where the problem lies: even before imposing a truth, authority says what we should be interested in and pay attention to." Charbonnier, S. (2019).Que faire de l'argument d'autorité dans le cours de philosophie ? Qui enseigne qui ? Pour une pédagogie inverse en philosophie, coord. Raphaël Künstler, coll. Didac Philo, Ed. Lambert-Lucas, p.58 ↩

9. Moreover, little attention is paid to the specific nature of the *oral exams compared to* the written exams. ↩

10. Geneviève Therriault (2017). Rapport au(x) savoir(s) de l'enseignant et de l'apprenant : Une énigmatique rencontre. Louvain-la-Neuve, ed. De Boeck Supérieur. ↵

11. *Ibid*. Charlot, B. (2017). Postface. Les problématiques de recherche sur le rapport au savoir : diversité et cohérence. ↵

12. Houssaye, J. (ed.) La pédagogie: une encyclopédie pour aujourd'hui, Paris, ESF, 1993, pp. 61-76. ↵

13. School reports for the general stream https://eduscol.education.fr/document/45376/download ↵

14. I'm limiting my analysis to the Terminal cycle in this article, even though misunderstandings and RASLs are sometimes created as early as nursery school. ↵

15. Core subjects: French, History-Geography, Science, Moral and Civic Education, the Arts, Philosophy; specialities: Geopo, HLP, LLCER, LLCA, Mathematics, NSI, Physics-Chemistry, Life and Earth Sciences, Economic and Social Sciences, DNL language sections; optional subjects: Complementary Mathematics, Expert Mathematics, DGEMC. ↵

16. *Ibid.* ↵

17. School reports for the technological stream https://eduscol.education.fr/document/45379/download ↵

18. Physics-Chemistry for Health, Biology and Physiology of Human Pathologies, ST2S, Management and Digital Sciences, Management, Law and Economics, Economics and Hotel Management, STCS. ↵

19. The Bulletin officiel du Programme de SVT de terminale générale (25 July 2019) contains 7 occurrences of the argumentation skill. This subject is a forerunner in research into argumentation on Socio-Scientific Issues and Socially Vital Issues. ↵

20. This is done by carrying out "a critical analysis of a document using a historical or geographical approach" and by using "a historical or geographical approach to carry out an analysis or construct an argument". B.O - History-geography syllabus for general final year - 25 July 2019 ↵

21. EMC = Moral and Civic Education / SES = Economic and Social Sciences ↵

22. "The social sciences are based on established facts, rigorous arguments and validated theories, not on values. The subject of economic and social science teaching is the fruit of scientific work, transposed to school learning. It should help pupils to distinguish scientific approaches and knowledge from that which comes under the heading of belief or dogma, and thus to participate

in public debate in an enlightened way; it contributes to their civic education". Official SES bulletin for general final year - 25 July 2019 ↩

23. Almost all official bulletins contain this paragraph: "Like all subjects,... (mathematics, life and science studies, HLP...) contribute to the development of oral skills, particularly through the practice of argumentation. This involves clarifying one's thinking and explaining one's reasoning in such a way as to convince. It allows students to develop their thinking, even to the point of questioning it if necessary, in order to gradually reach the truth through proof". ↩

24. For example, "Depending on the discipline or field to which the question relates, the types of argument may vary, ranging from statistical data to artistic or scientific practice. aesthetic experience: it is the relevance, arrangement and depth of the arguments chosen that are assessed in the test and enable the candidate to demonstrate his/her understanding of the issues and approaches in the field in which he/she has chosen" or "The development and answer to the question, as well as the argumentation, must contain real disciplinary markers : the experimental dimension with recourse to authentic data (experiments carried out by the pupils or published experimental results), modelling activities, programming activities and openness to the scientific, economic and industrial world (through links with working professionals).This will enable students to "develop their question". Mastery of language and expression here goes hand in hand with an awareness of how a particular disciplinary literacy works and the ability to present one's thoughts to someone from another discipline, i.e. also from another intellectual tradition". Grand Oral and specialised teaching January 2023 https://eduscol.education.fr/document/46243/download?attachment ↩

25. Ibid. Plantin. ↩

26. Free access here http://icar.cnrs.fr/dicoplantin/argumentation-2/ ↩

27. In certain disciplines, particularly philosophy, we sometimes work on bias and sophistry or fallacies (errors in reasoning), but isn't it always argumentation in a language practice that is ultimately targeted? On the limits of educational approaches to debiasing or combating fallacies, see in particular *La Synthèse sur l'Éducation à l'Esprit Critique* (2020 version) or (ÉPhiScience, forthcoming). ↩

28. This shows that talking about even a universal audience for an essay can be ambiguous. ↩

29. Delcambre, I. (1996). Quelle fonction donner au travail oral dans l'élaboration d'un écrit argumentatif ? L'argumentation en dialogue, revue n°112, *Langue française*, p.112. ↩

30. On the other hand, I think it's possible to use oral argumentation to build RASLs that are conducive to written argumentation. ↩

31. Exercises in philosophy class - May 2020 p.2 **https://eduscol.education.fr/document/2**4055/ download ↵

32. "the structure of reasoning: position of premises, sequence of propositions, establishment of conclusions, etc. the methods of reasoning: hypothetico-deductive, inductive, analogical reasoning; reasoning by the absurd, etc.; the principles of argumentation or counter-argumentation in the context of a reasoned analysis or discussion: examination of presuppositions, elucidation of possible paralogisms, etc.; the aims of reasoning: to acquire or establish knowledge, to determine an order of conduct, etc.". They specify that these operations must always be studied and worked on in context (text or question). p.3 ↵

33. to convince/ to persuade is also one of the key words in the philosophy syllabus. ↵

34. This dialogicity of philosophy is illustrated by the problems, theses and founding arguments whose discussion constitutes the very history of philosophy (nominalism vs realism vs conceptualism, dualism vs monism, materialism vs spiritualism or idealism, scepticism vs dogmatism vs criticism). ↵

35. Nonnon, E. (1996). Activités argumentatives et élaboration de connaissances nouvelles : le dialogue comme espace d'exploration, in the journal n° 112, L'argumentation en dialogue, *Langue française*, p.68. ↵

36. "To denounce the propositionalism that has underpinned theories of knowledge since Plato is to denounce the reduction of knowledge to independent, decontextualised propositions that bear no relation whatsoever to the questions they answer. Schools are entirely caught up in this movement to reify answers, and their tendency is always to teach unproblematic knowledge, as if it were obvious from all eternity that the Earth revolves around the sun or that man and the ape have common ancestors". Fabre, M. (2011). Le sens du problème. *Éduquer pour un monde problématique : La carte et la boussole* (pp. 107-134). Paris, Presses Universitaires de France. ↵

37. Tozzi, M. (1999). *L'oral argumentatif en philosophie*, coord. Michel Tozzi, Collectif Accompagner, Réseau Académique Languedoc-Roussillon, CRDP Languedoc-Roussillon, p.124 ↵

38. To be *philosophical,* argumentation cannot be studied, taught and assessed independently of problematisation and conceptualisation. This is a very important point for the training of students as well as teachers and leaders of philosophy workshops. ↵

39. Tozzi, *Ibid*, p.128 ↵

40. Cospérec, S. (2010). *La place de la logique et de l'argumentation dans l'enseignement secondaire de philosophie*, ed. Faculdades de Letras, Coimbra, p.20 ↵

41. "Duval, R. (1995), Sémiosis et pensée humaine : registres sémiotiques et apprentissages intellectuels. P. Lang, p. 266. ↩

42. For a comparison between demonstration and argumentation, see Cospérec, S. Pourquoi apprendre à raisonner en philosophie ? Coté Philo n°6 https://acireph.org/Files/Other/argumentation/Argumentation%20philo%20math%20francais%20%20COSPEREC%20CP6.pdf ↩

43. Nonnon, *Ibid.* p. 72. ↩

44. Gagnon, M. (2010). Regards sur les pratiques critiques manifestées par des élèves du secondaire dans le cadre d'une réflexion éthique menée en îlot interdisciplinaire de rationalité. McGill Journal of Education / Revue des sciences de l'éducation de McGill, 45(3), 463-494 https://doi.org/10.7202/1003573ar ↩

45. The research into the links between the nature of Socio-Scientific Questions and argumentation carried out by Manuel Bächtold, Gwen Pallarès, Kévin de Checchi and Valérie Munier is particularly stimulating. They inspired this point on the nature of philosophical questions. See Combining debates and reflective activities to develop students' argumentation on socioscientific issues, (2023), JRST, volume 60, Issue 4 **https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.21816** ↩

46. Gagnon, M., Yergeau, S. (2016), La pratique du dialogue philosophique au secondaire. Vers une dialogique entre théories et pratiques, coll. Dialoguer, Presse de l'Université Laval, p. 29. ↩

47. Gagnon, *Ibid.* p.31. ↩

48. We assume that the demands expressed by secondary school students in the 1998 consultation on knowledge have not changed. **https://www.**meirieu.com/RAPPORTSINSTITUTIONNELS/LYCEES.pdf ↩

49. "The practice of oral language cuts across all subjects and all situations, so that it is difficult to isolate teaching subjects that can be worked on. Oral language is everywhere, in and out of school, in the classroom and in the playground". (Garcia-Debanc & Delcambre, 2001, p. 4). ↩

50. André Tricot and Stéphanie Roussel, "Quelles connaissances de la langue orale est-il nécessaire d'enseigner? Une contribution évolutionniste", *Les dossiers des sciences de l'éducation*, 36 | 2016, 75-94. ↩

51. "With reference to contemporary needs and institutional recommendations, speech in the classroom is therefore produced for a variety of purposes. For the teacher, the aim is to build the classroom as a community where everyone can exist as a subject - which is not the same as building a working group - learn to speak in public, express a feeling or an opinion, comment on a document, appropriate knowledge and construct new meanings, reason verbally,

problematise, debate, explain, recount, argue, represent, etc. This plurality produces ambiguity regarding the cognitive register of the language activities and work expected, leading to its opacity, or even invisibility. Bautier, É. & Rayou, P. (2009). 3. Épreuves du savoir et malentendus, *Les inégalités d'apprentissage : Programmes, pratiques et malentendus scolaires* (pp. 93-130). Paris, Presses Universitaires de France. ↵

52. We will see that this is one of the things to watch out for when setting up collective oral activities, debates or discussions in class. ↵

53. "Statements or work instructions that come under the heading of ordinary conversation (and yet aim at cognitive work, a new elaboration) lead some pupils to an interpretation on the register of "ordinary" life or to understand open questions as coming under a simple question-answer sequence between adult and child, as school often presents them". Bautier, É. & Rayou, P. (2009) *Ibid.* ↵

54. The theme of 'work' in the ESCOL group's philosophy experiment in vocational lycées. They also see the theme of love as potentially too sensitive to be easily second-guessed. Claire Polo shows that ecological themes, for example, can be anxiety-provoking and prevent exploratory debate in *Le Débat fertile. Explorer une controverse dans l'émotion (2020) Grenoble, ed. Université Grenoble Alpes.* ↵

55. Tozzi*, Ibid*. p. 131-133. ↵