



CHAPTER 9:

An Exploration of Philosophical Literacy in the South African Context

Yolandi M. Coetser,

School of Philosophy, North West University

Jean du Toit

School of Philosophy, North West University

Abstract

The discipline of philosophy necessitates that budding philosophers learn and enact certain practices. However, while more established philosophers intuitively understand what philosophy is (and, more importantly, how it is practised), it is not always clear that such knowledge is communicated to the students in their classrooms. In this sense, engagement with philosophical disciplinarity often does not explicitly occur pedagogically, and as a result, students might be left to puzzle out the contours of the philosophical endeavour on their own. Concurrently there exists a lacuna, both in terms of philosophical reflection on philosophical disciplinarity and in terms of how such disciplinarity is taught (especially within the South African context). Such reflection is largely absent in both the philosophical and educational literature. This chapter aims to address the gap by means of the reflections of two philosophers from different philosophical traditions on their praxis and possible shortcomings in the philosophical classroom. This chapter takes an autoethnographic methodological approach as a means to share lived experiences in this regard. By engaging explicitly with philosophical disciplinarity from two (often divergent) traditions, this chapter aims to encourage philosophers to think critically about how their disciplinary praxis can and should be communicated explicitly to their students. From their autoethnographic reflections, it becomes apparent that the authors of the current study at times fall short of explicitly engaging with philosophical disciplinarity in their own classrooms, but also that certain corrective avenues

are available. By beginning a conversation, this work hopes to ignite a discussion regarding philosophical disciplinarity in South Africa through providing an initial conceptualisation of what this concept may entail.

Keywords: Philosophy; philosophical disciplinarity; philosophical literacy; autoethnography; philosophy in South Africa

Introduction and background

University lecturers implicitly engage with academic literacy whenever they enter their classrooms, but at the same time academic literacy is also a topic that lecturers rarely actively reflect upon and which is less frequently engaged with, concretely and explicitly, in the core curriculum¹⁹. Rather, many institutions, faculties and departments delegate direct engagement with academic literacy to support departments, and as a result, academic literacy is often relegated to generic courses, presented by a support department and offered to all students of a specific faculty or institution, or to something that students must access voluntarily in their spare time (in the form of a writing centre, for example). Some lecturers might provide discipline-specific writing guidelines before an assessment, but this is often where it ends. In this chapter the authors question whether this way of engaging with discipline-specific literacy is sufficient for philosophy education.

The authors, who are employed as lecturers in a representative higher education philosophy department, will investigate the phenomenon

¹⁹ University lecturers are for the most part synonymous with subject [discipline] specialists. While literacy work is just one part of a much larger higher education system, it is posited that such work forms a vital part of the academic's work in academia.

whereby the literacies (as mentioned above) are often not overtly addressed in the classroom. While there are some attempts made by professional academic philosophers to deal with philosophical pedagogy more broadly in their classrooms (as, for instance, the international journal *Teaching Philosophy* demonstrates), philosophers tend to occupy themselves with more abstract questions during contact sessions with students. This problematic situation is further intensified when one considers the nature of the philosophical discipline itself; philosophy is one of the oldest disciplines at most universities, with roots in ancient thought, and has seen its character shift repeatedly over two and a half millennia due to its close relation to broader historical shifts, such as the Middle Ages, or the rise of science. One may therefore say that what happens in contemporaneous philosophy departments, embedded in the neoliberal university, is vastly different from how philosophy would have been conducted three hundred years ago during the Enlightenment, and also would be vastly different from how philosophy was conducted in the mediaeval period.

The teaching of philosophy is therefore a complicated matter, since it is a long-established, constantly shifting, and far-reaching discipline that is related to many other fields of inquiry. In addition, there are particular philosophical styles to which philosophers adhere – such as the analytic, continental, and African traditions. Such styles or traditions are often practised in an uncommunicative manner by scholars in the broader field, generally because their methods vary in terms of specific aspects, such as the verification of arguments and the scope of inquiry. While philosophers themselves might be aware of these distinctions, and might even explicitly engage with their differences in their own philosophical practice and research, it is not clear that such differences are always explained to students in the classroom. Furthermore, the specific literacy pertaining to each of these styles is not often made explicit, and since entire departments often

fall into one of these traditions (analytic, continental, African), one finds further obfuscation of the need for an explicit engagement with the different ways philosophy can be practised. Taking such consideration seriously illustrates that philosophical literacy is a multifarious, nebulous, and challenging concept.

Following the afore-going discussion, in relating the practice of philosophy in South Africa to literacy, leads the authors to the following research questions:

- How can ‘philosophical literacy’ be understood in the institutions of higher education (HEI) in South Africa?
- How should philosophy lecturers at HEIs engage with ‘philosophical literacy’?

Subsequently, this chapter has three broad aims:

- To provide an initial exploration of ‘philosophical literacy’ in the South African context;
- To argue that professional philosophers need to explicitly engage with and reflect on philosophical literacy and its related practices; and
- To provide an example of overt engagement with philosophical literacy from the autoethnographic perspectives of two philosophers who confront their own discipline from within the framework(s) of their different traditions.

The researchers’ motivation for writing this paper together is twofold: Firstly, numerous discussions, often of an informal nature, have revealed that they position themselves in similar ways with regards to education generally, and in terms of philosophy education more specifically. Throughout, however, they have also been cognisant of how such different philosophical traditions have shaped their views in this regard. One author (Dr Yolandi Coetser) is an

analytically-trained philosopher who has been trained in a particular philosophical tradition that prioritises argumentation, logic, reason and analysis, but who has also worked a bit in the African tradition. The other author (Dr Jean du Toit) is a continental philosopher whose philosophical tradition focuses on history, politics, the self and self-consciousness, desire, freedom, and the will in relation to the human condition. Both authors are emerging scholars on an NRF rating-track, but both also function along different lines of philosophical tradition. Thus, secondly, the researchers' different backgrounds provide a space for a positive (and potentially productive) tension that fosters constructive dialogue and insights into diverse approaches.²⁰

In this chapter the researchers critically engage with the concepts of 'literacy, language and epistemological access' before discussing the topic of 'philosophy, philosophical traditions and philosophical literacy'. Thereafter, the autoethnographic methodology is unpacked before the researchers give their own autoethnographic account of how they understand student philosophical literacies. In conclusion, a discussion of what philosophical literacy might entail in South Africa is proffered.

20 In the researchers' university-specific milieu, the continental tradition is more prominent than the analytic tradition, but – taking into account the philosophers across all the campuses – a mixture between the continental, analytic, and African traditions is revealed.

Conceptual framework

Literacy, language and epistemological access

Before engaging with the philosophical context in particular, a series of definitions are offered of the concepts with which the authors will be engaging. This section begins by describing two models of literacy proffered by Brain Street (1984).

The first of these models is the ‘autonomous’ model. By the 1980s (and perhaps even to this day), many educationalists held the view that people share “basic functions of the mind, such as logical and abstract abilities” (Street, 1984:19). They assumed that literacy was ‘neutral’; literacy entailed a mere skill to be acquired (Wilmot, 2015), or it involved the simple “encoding and decoding of printed text” (Boughey & McKenna, 2016:3). Notably, this view of ‘literacy’ is based on a Western hegemonic conception that centres very particular types of knowledge and practices. Street (2003:77) explains that the “autonomous approach is simply imposing [W]estern conceptions of literacy on to other cultures or within a country those of one class or cultural group onto others. This literacy model is problematic because it assumes that literacy is “simply a technical and neutral skill.” The ‘autonomous’ model is thus representative of a particular historical-contextual conception of how ‘literacy’ may be understood (specifically in the 1980s, but also in some quarters today).

In contrast to the above view, Street (2003:77) introduces the ‘ideological view’ which “offers a more culturally sensitive view of literacy practices as they vary from one context to another”. This view sees literacy as a social practice that is “always embedded in socially constructed epistemological practices” and Street argues that reading and writing are therefore rooted in “conceptions of knowledge, identity and being” (2003:77-78). This view

suggests that ‘academic literacy’ may be defined as a “socio-cultural” event that is actualised in a multiplicity of ways (Wilmot, 2015). Literacy practices are therefore understood as socially embedded, with epistemological characterisation of literacy being necessarily embedded and constructed from within a particular worldview (Wilmot, 2015).

Although Street introduced the ‘ideological view’ almost four decades ago, ‘literacy’ (in its most basic form) is often still regarded as relating only to the ability to read or write.²¹ Even though basic literacy remains a problem for many societies, including South Africa,²² in the university context this basic form of literacy is taken for granted, since it is assumed that all students who arrive at university can read and write by virtue of having passed Grade 12. The ability to read or write does not necessarily predict whether an incoming first year student has the academic literacy required for successful completion of their studies, especially since academic literacy is defined differently than ‘basic literacy’. Indeed, “many first-year students possess inadequately-developed reading skills and poor language ability” (Zulu 2017) Following the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Khuluvhe (2021:4) defines literacy as “the ability to identify,

21 Compare also the accounts provided by the New London Group’s deliberation about the state and future of literacy pedagogy. The New London Group published a manifesto (New London Group, 1996), and Cope and Kalantzis (2000) outlined what may be called a ‘pedagogy of multiliteracies’, to suggest that a pedagogy of multi-literacies requires agency in the meaning making process, whereby students need to be active constructors of knowledge themselves.

22 According to the Department of Higher Education and Training, 12% of South Africans are illiterate – meaning that 1 in 10 people or 4.4 million adults cannot read or write (Khuluvhe, 2021: 6). Note that this is a reference to adult basic literacy, since students entering the higher education institution are expected to already be skilful readers and writers.

understand, interpret, create, communicate²³ and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts”. This definition is suggestive of the type of competencies that are needed at tertiary level. Literacy ought therefore to be understood as a much broader concept, beyond mere reading and writing. At university, literacy should be understood as taking on an even more specific character, demanding a form of literacy that is characterised differently from the functional literacy described above. The pertinent question is whether this is actually how literacy is understood in the university context. We may therefore ask whether there is really an understanding of literacy as a social practice, as is suggested by Wilmot (2015) above? Or does the autonomous model still dominate in HEIs across South Africa?

The interwovenness of language with literacy must be considered, both to further complicate the issue of literacy and to enhance one’s understanding thereof. Language is particularly contentious in South Africa, having been used as a tool of oppression during Apartheid, but also because the country has eleven official languages. This means that, for the most part, people (students and academic staff) who engage in academic activities are often doing so in their second, third, fourth or even fifth language. A study based at a South African HEI showed that first year students who spoke English (the lingua franca in the vast majority of academic spaces) and Afrikaans as a home language could be classified as ‘low risk’ students, i.e. in low or

23 The authors of this chapter suggest that even considering this aspect alone, there are a variety of competencies that would be needed from a student. Sandra Savignon and Margie Berns (1984) highlight, for example, different communicative competencies such as grammatical or linguistic competence, socio-linguistic competence, strategic competence and discourse competence that all form part of communication. This alone can be a minefield for students who are not first language English speakers.

negligible risk of failure based on a Test of Academic Literacy (Boakye, 2015:4). However the majority of those who spoke Indigenous South African Languages, however, were in the 'high risk' group (Boakye, 2015:4). While this demonstrates a correlation between home language and academic success, one must be careful to not use 'language problems' as a "convenient catch-all explanation for the racially differentiated success rates", as Boughey and McKenna (2016: 2) argue. Elizabeth Pretoriorous and Nanda Klapwijk (2016:3) argue that "poor literacy results cannot be solely attributed to second language instruction as teachers and learners are struggling with literacy in the African Languages as well as English". Rather than seeing language as neutral, one needs to understand that language is a social phenomenon embedded in, influenced and shaped by social structures such as class, gender and race (Boughey & McKenna, 2016: 3). The interwovenness of language and literacy in the South African context is complex and cannot be explored in sufficient depth here, beyond intuiting the general relation. There are, however, numerous academic works that deal with this issue (cf. Weideman, Read and du Plessis, 2020; Weideman, du Plessis and Steyn, 2017; Du Plessis, Steyn and Weideman, 2016).

One crucial point to be mentioned against this background is the pertinent concept of epistemological access. A large proportion of South Africa's population suffered from epistemological deprivation during Apartheid, meaning that "many learners in our country [were deprived] of a fair opportunity to gain access to the kind of knowledge that is supposed to be distributed in formal schooling" (Morrow, 2007: 188). Although students are no longer 'formally excluded' from HEIs, mere 'formal access' is not identical to 'epistemological access'. Morrow (1994: 40) argues that "[t]o register as a student at a university is not yet to have gained access to the knowledge that the university distributes". Students may therefore have formal access to HEIs, which may lead to acquiring knowledge, but not epistemological access,

which cannot be given; however, access to this kind of knowledge means “learning how to become a participant in an academic practice” (Morrow, 1994:40).

The afore-going discussion serves to contextualise literacy in a broader sense. However, the purpose of this paper is not to consider academic literacy as social practice generally, but rather to consider this nebulous concept from within the researcher’s own disciplinary milieu: philosophy. The following section examines the pertinent literacies in terms of philosophy.

Philosophy, philosophical traditions, and philosophical literacy

The Greek root of the word *philosophy* connotes a ‘love of wisdom’, and it can also suggest a ‘friend of wisdom’ since *philos* (φίλος) means friend in Greek, literally translated. Philosophy entails the apprehension of questions that are of determinate worth and significance for all human beings, relating to aspects such as truth, integrity, righteousness, and logic. The major sub-disciplines of philosophy reflect these questions to encompass fields such as ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, logic, aesthetics, and the philosophy of science, philosophy of law, philosophy of language, political philosophy, and philosophy of religion. Furthermore, within these broad and general fields, there is a further distinction between analytic and continental philosophy (as has been indicated in the introductory section).

The split between the analytic and continental traditions reveals the discipline of philosophy to be a varied field of inquiry that utilises different methodological approaches (Trakakis, 2008: 46-53). Most philosophers intuitively recognise the difference between the analytic and continental

distinction, but explaining this distinction to someone outside professional philosophy is not a simple task. Even more pertinently, explaining this distinction to students who might be coming to grips with the general philosophical discipline poses a further challenge – they need to be familiarised, it is often assumed, with philosophical concepts and ideas before they may be familiarised them with philosophical literacies, if at all. The distinction between analytic philosophy and continental philosophy is not superficial, however – there are relevant and significant differences in terms of how continental and analytic philosophers *practise* philosophy, so much so that entire departments²⁴, journals²⁵, and conferences²⁶ are devoted to one or the other. Indeed, the distinction between analytic and continental philosophy, which arose in the late nineteenth and early

24 For example the Department of Analytic Philosophy at the Institute for Philosophy in the Czechia (<https://dap.flu.cas.cz/en>) or the continental department at Loyola University (https://www.luc.edu/philosophy/research_continental.shtml).

25 Some examples of Analytic journals are: *Analytic Philosophy* (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/2153960x>), *Journal for the History of Analytic Philosophy* (<https://jhaponline.org/>), *European Journal of Analytic Philosophy* (<https://eujap.uniri.hr/>), *Argumenta - Journal of Analytic Philosophy* (<https://www.argumenta.org/about/>); examples of continental journals are: *Continental Philosophy Review* (<https://www.springer.com/journal/11007>), *Journal of Continental Philosophy* (<https://www.pdcnet.org/jcp/Journal-of-Continental-Philosophy>), *Comparative and Continental Philosophy* (<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/yccp20/current>), *Journal for Continental Philosophy of Religion* (<https://brill.com/view/journals/jcpr/jcpr-overview.xml>).

26 Some analytic conferences are Salzburg Conference for Young Analytic Philosophy (<https://philevents.org/event/show/96361>), 10th European Congress of Analytic Philosophy (<https://ecap10.sites.uu.nl/>), 6th Beijing Analytic Philosophy Conference (<https://philevents.org/event/show/71522>); while examples of continental conferences are Warwick Continental Philosophy Conference (<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/philosophy/research/activities/postkantian/events/wcpc/>), International Conference on Continental Philosophy (<https://waset.org/continental-philosophy-conference-in-july-2022-in-istanbul>), Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy Conference (<https://bond.edu.au/intl/ASCP2021>).

twentieth century, includes both methodological and geographical differences. Although the geographic characterisation of philosophy is not always indicative of content, the authors of this chapter do find that continental philosophy arose on the 'continent' of Europe – specifically so in the case of French and German philosophy – and that geographic considerations are not negligible. So too with analytic philosophy which is more typically encountered in the Anglophone world – the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia.

Analytic philosophy suggests a methodological approach wherein typical philosophical problems may be solved through the logical analysis of key terms, concepts, or propositions. According to Trakakis (2008: 46), analytic philosophers think of their inquiries as analogous to those pursued in scientific disciplines, with the ahistorical nature and lack of engagement with the wider cultural milieu in such forms of philosophical questioning being similarly reflective of the sciences (Trakakis, 2008: 47). As the name suggests, analytic philosophy does not focus on authors as much as on analysis – there are standard examples and thought experiments, patterns of arguments, and deliberately abstracted models. Pascal Engel also suggests that the tradition “mimics the scientific style of inquiry, which proposes hypotheses and theories, tests them in the light of data, and aims at widespread discussion and control by peers” - in many ways analytic philosophy is therefore seen as continuous with, or an extension of, the sciences (Engel, 1999: 222; Trakakis, 2008: 47).

An important feature of analytic philosophy is its tendency towards specialisation, which sees the philosopher working in a distinct subfield -

philosophy of mind, for example - with a focus on a specific issue therein - such as the mind-body problem (Soames, 2003: 463). This suggests a piecemeal or semi-independent approach to a narrow set of questions, which is reflected in the popularity of shorter journal articles in the tradition (Trakakis, 2008: 47). The writing style of analytic philosophy tends to be dry (perhaps even coldly analytical), works are written in simple English, and there is a consistent focus on rigorous argumentation. Analytic philosophy found traction at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century with thinkers like Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), Gottlob Frege (1848-1925), G.E. Moore (1873-1958), and Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951). Other significant figures include W.V.O Quine (1908-2000), Saul Kripke (1940-), and Karl Popper (1902-1994).

Continental philosophy, in contrast, represents a more geographically-defined approach, with philosophers like Jacques Derrida (1930-2004), Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), Theodor Adorno (1903-1969), Max Horkheimer (1895-1973), and Michel Foucault (1926-1984) being some of the central thinkers of this tradition. In contrast to analytic philosophy, which takes science as the basis for discourse, we find in continental philosophy a blueprint for philosophical inquiry in the arts or humanities, and particularly in literature and literary criticism, with Neil Levy suggesting that the novelty and revolution of modernist art is a model for this tradition (Levy, 1996: 80; Trakakis, 2008: 46). Continental philosophy incorporates a variety of schools of thought and methodologies, such as existentialism, phenomenology, hermeneutics, structuralism, Frankfurt School Critical Theory, postmodernism, and offshoots from psychoanalytic theory – with the vast

majority of continental philosophers being critical of the intellectual and existential implications of scientism as reductive account of science (Trakakis, 2008: 50).

Continental philosophy often points to the “transcendental” or “absolute” consciousness as a means to provide greater significance to ordinary experience, and philosophers working in this tradition see the philosophical enterprise as the creative exercise of intellectual imagination (Gutting, 2012). Instead of presenting an account of continuous progress, we find instead in the continental tradition the idea of continuous revolution: the rejection of traditional methods and styles for ones that are unforeseen or overlooked as a means to see the world anew - in other words, continental thought sees as important the destabilisation of traditional ways of thinking (Trakakis, 2008: 51). Hermeneutics play a central role in this tradition, over and above formalisation or knowledge-advancement, with cultural critique (of particularly the human condition) also being indicative of this style of philosophy. Furthermore, continental philosophy focuses on specific authors: Philosophers may often specialise in one or two authors only, and would, for instance, be known as a ‘Heideggerian’ or a ‘Deleuzian’. Continental philosophy also tends to be more interested in the phenomenological rather than in abstract rationalising, and the writing style may employ poetic and sometimes flowery language. This writing style is reflective of the continental account of philosophy which sees philosophy as a means of creation for a fresh and imaginative view of the world, with invention rather than analysis taken as central to develop a new vocabulary and a new vision of the world.

Naturally, there is a tension between these two approaches regarding philosophy – an analytic philosopher may see continental philosophy as obscurant and subjective, whereas a continental philosopher may regard analytic philosophy as superficial and overly concerned with the conceptual. Raoul Moati (2014: 1) notes that “philosophy has rarely, before the twentieth century, appeared as profoundly split into two currents as divergent and irrelevant to each other as continental philosophy and analytic philosophy”. In the 1970s, a debate between the continental thinker Jacques Derrida and the analytic thinker John Searle demonstrated the seeming irreconcilability between these two traditions. This discussion has been labelled a ‘failed’ debate since there seemed to be little understanding of the other side’s view on the part of both these thinkers. Alan G. Gross (1994: 345) explains that “[i]nstead of searching for a common ground from which they could engage in a potentially fruitful exchange between two widely divergent intellectual perspectives, instead of learning from each other, each participant merely elaborated his own position and attacked his opponent with a gusto and a venom usually reserved for siblings and ex-spouses”.

In the context of these two seemingly irreconcilable traditions, particular challenges arise regarding academic literacy (or, more specifically, philosophical literacy) in South Africa. In addition to hosting both of these traditions, South Africa (as with many other countries across Africa) is also home to a third tradition, namely African philosophy. African philosophy is in itself a varied tradition with a multitude of trends. Paulin Hountondji, for

example, defines African philosophy²⁷ as “a set of texts, specifically, the set of texts written by Africans and described as philosophical by their authors themselves” (1983: 20). Henry Odera Oruka (1990) in turn explains that there are four ‘trends’ in African philosophy: Sage, ethno, political and professional philosophies. Ikechukwu A. Kanu (2013) argues that there are, in addition to Oruka’s four trends, two more, namely the literary and hermeneutic trends. African philosophy can also be divided in the Francophone (see. Irele, 1998) and Anglophone traditions (see. Wiredu 1998).

South Africa therefore represents something of a hybrid philosophical context. Some departments tend to be more analytically inclined (like the University of Cape Town and the University of KwaZulu-Natal), whilst some are more continentally inclined (like the University of Free State and North-West University) and others tend to be hybrid departments (like the University of Johannesburg and the University of Pretoria). Other institutions (like the University of South Africa) have a strong African philosophical focus, with many others also including African philosophy in their undergraduate and postgraduate offering (such as North-West University and University of Johannesburg). Such a hybrid context necessitates varied and sometimes contradictory philosophical literacies from philosophy students who come from different, but even sometimes from within the same, institution. So, for example, a student at the University of the Witwatersrand might be required to possess specific skills in terms of logical analysis, while a student at North-

27 For a useful discussion on the evolution and history of African Philosophy see Rettová (2021).

West University might need to be more linguistically inclined. Occasionally, these distinctions align with the traditional 'Afrikaans' and 'English' distinctions, where former 'Afrikaans' universities – for instance, the former Rand Afrikaans University (now University of Johannesburg), University of Pretoria and former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (now North-West University) were more continentally oriented, whereas former 'English' universities – such as the former University of Natal (now the University of KwaZulu-Natal) and the University of Cape Town – were more analytically oriented.²⁸ This distinction seems to be fading as older professors retire and younger academics are appointed.²⁹

Additionally, there is now a strong focus on African philosophy in many of these departments, with some departments resultantly representing a mixture of continental, analytic and African philosophy. As has been suggested before, each of these three traditions (continental, analytic and African) entails different student literacies and related skills. These skills, in turn, are quite different from those posited by many philosophers introduced to students in the curriculum, such as the ancient and medieval philosophers like Socrates (470-399 BCE), Plato (428/427-348/347 BCE), Aristotle (384-322 BCE) and Augustine of Hippo (354-430), Boethius (480-524), and Thomas

²⁸ Compare, for example, how the changes at philosophy at SA institutions are discussed by Simphiwe Sesanti (SAJP, 2015. 34:3).

²⁹ The shift in historical distinctions with regard to South African philosophy provides a further impetus for our autoethnographic method. Since both researchers are emerging scholars on an NRF rating-track, they find themselves in a position of negotiation between these dynamic institutional tensions and find that they consistently need to (re)position themselves in terms of disciplinary and societal requirements and needs.

Aquinas (1225-1274) and the Renaissance and Enlightenment philosophers like René Descartes (1596-1650), Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), David Hume (1711-1776), Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804).

While the distinction between analytic and continental philosophy is still prevalent, there are also those who argue that the distinction should be collapsed, or that it is no longer an important distinction (see. Andina 2014; Thomson, 2019; Mizrahi and Dickinson, 2021). Interestingly, an empirical study by Moti Mizrahi and Mike Dickenson (2021: 677) found that their “data reveal no significant differences between the types of arguments advanced in articles published in [analytical philosophy] journals and the types of arguments advanced in articles published in [continental philosophy] journals.” The authors of this chapter suggest that, while the distinction highlights important differences in terms of methodological approach, philosophers must be wary of focusing so much on the differences between philosophical styles that the similarities are overlooked. Moreover, the professional philosopher needs to be aware that the overemphasis of this split may sometimes result from extra-philosophical reasons, such as political or administrative motivations. Between the three traditions discussed thus far (and likely others, such as Eastern philosophy), there is potential for constructive and positive points of connection that could serve to enrich philosophical discussion.

This historical discussion nevertheless illustrates that different forms of philosophical knowledge can and do compete with one another, entailing that certain approaches are seen to be more legitimate in specific contexts. This demonstrates the multifarious nature of philosophical literacy in the

South African context. A glaring omission exists in literature, however: while philosophical literacy has been explored in other parts of the world, there is no evidence of engagement with this concept in the South African context.

How have scholars from other geographical locations engaged with philosophical literacy? Relatively little is written on this topic, and what has been written is disparate and mostly unrelated to each other. One article examines the “philosophical literacy of preservice teachers” (Alemán, 2003: 35), while another reports on assessing philosophical literacy (Kelton, 1997). Another article documents the “design and implementation of a team-taught curriculum which integrated two half courses in writing and philosophy” (McCourtie & Miller, 1997: 113). A seemingly self-published book engages with very close readings of key philosophical texts, exemplifying a method of philosophical literacy known as *Talmudic* (Zaslavsky, 2016). Another text argues for promoting philosophical literacy in schools, professional education, and continuing professional development to curb the lack of ethical reasoning in professional practice (Knight, 2020: 37). In this example, philosophical literacy is equated with moral reasoning, which, although related, are two different concepts. A further article discusses the importance of teaching philosophical literacy by design rather than by accident, suggesting that “philosophical teaching is teaching that assimilates philosophical activities to a public model in which students are seen as apprentices” (Miller, 1995: 39).

In her article, Alemán holds that philosophical literacy enables students to think deliberatively and reflectively on the “exigencies of their practice” (2003: 38). Key aspects of philosophical literacy are reflection, hermeneutics

and equity. While these are central aspects of the philosophical method, such concepts remain quite abstract and do not encapsulate what the authors understand as *philosophical literacy*. The discussion further highlights the unique problems in philosophical literacy, namely that philosophical student literacy is not a single concept but is instead nebulous – it may mean different things, depending on the tradition, department and even country where a specific module is presented. Street's (1984) definition of the 'ideological view' which describes literacy as a social practice, embedded in socially constructed epistemological practices, offers a remedy for this problem, and it is useful to consider philosophical literacy through this lens.

Additional problems regarding academic literacy arise in terms of epistemological inaccessibility. While suggesting a range of approaches and prominent figures, philosophy in South Africa still skews towards European and American worldviews that inhabit the historical Westernised logic of colonialism and progress. In a sense, students often experience that philosophy speaks to a different sensibility than that of Southern Africa (particularly in terms of said historically Westernised canon). At South African universities, there is thus a renewed call to decolonise the philosophy curriculum to increase access to philosophy, while remaining true to the requirements of philosophical nuance and reasoning that reside at the discipline's core. It is against this background that the authors decided to reflect on their own understandings of philosophical literacy. In the section that follows, this particular self-reflexive methodology – *autoethnography* – is explained.

Methodological approach

It is against this multitudinous and fragmented background that the discussion in this chapter is presented. The two authors of this paper come from different traditions – one is an analytically trained philosopher who works in environmental philosophy, whereas the other is a continentally trained philosopher whose main focus is philosophy of technology. Although the researchers come from diverse traditions, they are both employed at the same institution and, as mentioned earlier, they also share common perspectives on teaching philosophy while at the same time being aware of the tension between their approaches. They are also aware that, sometimes, the distinction between analytic and continental philosophy is perhaps over-emphasised and that this emphasis leads to a communicability breakdown between said approaches – inherently, while recognising the relevance and even importance of some aspects of the split, the authors of this chapter argue that similarities between the styles of philosophy should continually be explored.

In order to address the issue of philosophical literacy and the existing tension between the two approaches described above, the autoethnographic discussion below explicates the two authors' individual experiences of thinking about philosophical literacy in South Africa. Cohen et al. (2018: 297) describe autoethnography as “a derivative of ethnography, [and] a process, method and product that seeks to describe and systematically analyse (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)”. Campbell (2015: 96) explains that “[a]utoethnography is a research method and methodology which uses the researcher's personal experience as data to describe, analyse and understand cultural experience”, and that “by its very nature, autoethnography is both process and product”.

While this method is frowned upon by some authors (Delamont, 2007; Atkinson, 2006; Madison, 2006), others feel that it is a legitimate, intriguing, and promising qualitative method. Sarah Wall (2008: 39) explains that autoethnography emerges from postmodern philosophy, “in which the dominance of traditional science and research is questioned and many ways of knowing and inquiring are legitimated, autoethnography offers a way of giving voice to personal experience to advance sociological understanding”. Different researchers use autoethnography for different reasons; and in this case, the researchers approached autoethnography as educators. In this sense, this can be seen as “a form of critical pedagogy in its commitment to transformative and emancipatory processes and the social construction of knowledge” (Cohen et al., 2018: 297). In order to write their autoethnographic accounts of philosophical literacy, the researchers reviewed “personal experience reflexively, [and] retrospectively” and, by so doing, distilled “key issues” (Cohen et al., 2018: 298). In following other autoethnographic researchers, as well as Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011), the researchers see autoethnography as facilitating the process of sharing personal, lived experience (auto) about the culture of philosophical literacy (ethno) in a systematised manner (graphy).

Since autoethnographies are often written from a first-person perspective, what follows will be written in the first-person perspective of each of the authors, documenting their perspectives on student and philosophical literacy.

Results – Autoethnographic vignettes

At the beginning of this chapter, one of the aims listed was “To provide an example of overt engagement with philosophical literacy from the autoethnographic perspectives of two philosophers who confront their

discipline from within the framework of different traditions”. In the following two vignettes, this overt autoethnographic reflection is provided. The following sections serve as an example of overt engagement with philosophical literacy by two philosophers in the South African context.

Yolandi’s shifting perspective on student literacies

I first walked into a Philosophy classroom as a wide-eyed and bushy-tailed 19-year old in 2005. I took philosophy by chance as a second major for my journalism degree – it simply ‘looked interesting’. Within weeks, I realised that this was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. Since 2005, I have pursued philosophy as a career path. I finished my degree in Journalism and Philosophy, then I completed an Honours, Masters, and finally a Doctorate in Philosophy.

I am therefore a relatively young academic, having graduated with my PhD about four years ago. I have spent many years as an ‘adjunct’ or ‘contract’ lecturer at a variety of institutions: from private to public, lecturing in both contact and distance modes. In 2022 I was appointed on a permanent basis at a university in South Africa. My teaching experience is varied – while I have taught mostly philosophy, I have also spent quite some time teaching other modules. These modules were often ‘supportive’ modules, meaning that they were either philosophy modules taught to non-philosophy students, or they were non-philosophy modules.

I have at least two pillars that underpin my own view of teaching philosophy. The first pillar is founded in a social constructivist approach, which entails seeing the student as actively participating in the epistemic process. The lecturer and student are two sides of the same coin. While the lecturer has a moral obligation to prepare, engage and take her occupation seriously, innovating and adapting as she matures, so too the philosophy student

should not be seen as a tabula rasa who waits to receive whatever the lecturer presents to her. On the contrary, there ought to be a mutual exchange of ideas, which is aided and influenced by the strengths and weaknesses of the lecturer and student. The second philosophical pillar is based on critical pedagogy – the role of philosophy is not merely to investigate the world but also to make the world a better place. While philosophy can give the student the tools to critically examine an unjust world, there ought, simultaneously, be imperative to action. In the preface to Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Richard Shaull writes,

"There's no such thing as neutral education. Education either functions as an instrument ... to bring about conformity, or it becomes the 'practice of freedom', the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world."

Taking into consideration the stark dehumanising reality of the history of our country, as well as what it meant for the education of the masses, as university educators, we should take seriously the task of education in deconstructing and decolonising the curriculum by recentering the human in the humanities. In this space, philosophy can be invaluable – it provides the tools to reflect, examine, deconstruct and reconstruct critically, and proffer the intellectual apparatuses that speak truth to power.

Regarding my own tradition, I would broadly characterise myself as 'analytically-trained'. While my undergraduate consisted of modules that were both analytic and continental, there was also a focus on ancient and medieval thinkers, as well as an engagement with some African philosophy. However, my supervisors for both my Masters and my PhD were more analytically orientated (at least in method), and this cemented my own analytic methodological approach. That being said, I do not consider myself as only an analytic philosopher. Throughout my career, I have worked with

people who have broadened my own approach - one colleague who I worked closely with emphasised the importance of philosophical historicity. Working with him, I began to consider the historical trajectory of the ideas I was working with. This meant that I was reading very widely - from pre-Socratic texts that are more than 2500 years old, to typically continental thinkers like Nietzsche and Heidegger, to medieval scholars like Thomas Aquinas. The analytic / continental distinction for me is less of a distinction in content, and is rather more a distinction of writing style - I have been taught to value clarity and logical rigour above all else, and this is why I would still consider myself more analytic than continental.

Regarding my teaching practice and engagement with literacy, I have taught entire modules on academic literacy. These were a more general, stand-alone courses and reflected an autonomous model of literacy, without any subject-specific context. Earlier in my career, I thought about philosophical literacy in a more basic way, never really considering what it was explicitly. Reflecting on my previous practices, I often equated philosophical literacy with philosophical writing – the latter being a skill I have spent the better part of the past 15 years refining. This view was then expressed in my assessment approach too: most of the assessments I gave my students were essays (with occasional short or multiple choice questions). I would, generally, spend a lecture or two per semester talking about writing more generally and also about writing philosophy more specifically. I have even created videos on philosophy reading and writing at. Reflecting now on this approach, I don't think I really went 'deep' enough. I did not reflect that deeply on my own disciplinarity (as well as being critical of my own training) and how I was conveying it to students. This is ironic since, in philosophy, reading and writing are all we do – we do not have 'external' praxis to help us (like data collection and data analysis). We only have our own thoughts and words.

After having completed a course on academic disciplinarity, I feel I have a much deeper and more useful understanding of what literacy means, and specifically, of what I should be doing as a philosophy lecturer. A paper I read during this course that resonated with me, was Russell, Littler and Chick's 'Surfacing disciplinarity: citation as a site for integrative learning' (2020). To borrow their phrase, I was not doing enough to 'make students aware of [philosophy's] distinct disciplinary [lens]' (2020: 2). They show how disciplinarity is often part of our 'expert blind spot' (2020: 5), meaning that even though disciplinarity is so fundamental to our 'professional bedrock', we unintentionally omit to tell students about it. I am definitely guilty of this omission. Russell, Littler and Chick suggest using the tool of citation to teach disciplinarity, which is an approach I did not consider using before.

Reflecting on disciplinarity inevitably leads to a reconsideration of assessment practices. I have been slowly incorporating more 'alternative' assessments in my classroom. This means moving away from 'traditional' assessment methods, i.e., writing essay after essay, towards 'alternative' assessments, like making infographics and videos, etc. I need to consider what this type of 'alternative assessment' means for philosophical literacy - how do we balance the necessity of philosophical writing with also testing other important skills, like summarising and presenting information. If I ask a student to create an infographic, 'writing' is less of a focus and instead, 'visual literacy' becomes the mode of communication. This then challenges the traditional understanding of philosophy as something communicated almost exclusively through the use of words, and rather suggests something that can be made explicit through other forms of communication as well.

The continued complexity of teaching in a pandemic has also meant a re-evaluation of my own teaching practice. Currently, we are teaching in a hybrid mode as an evolution of the online modality that was necessitated

because of the pandemic. This modality also challenges some of the bedrock of disciplinarity - with limited in-person engagement, there are foundational disciplinary teaching practices that become limited. I am thinking here specifically of, for example, the Socratic method of teaching, where debate is a central aspect of any philosophy class, which is difficult to do online.

To conclude, my knowledge and own conceptualisation of philosophical disciplinarity is still evolving. For the first time in my career, I am now actively reflecting on my own research practice, but also on how it is translated into my teaching practice.

Jean's shifting perspective on student literacies

I have been employed at my university for 10 years, and I was a student there too. I was appointed as a full-time junior lecturer in philosophy in June 2011 after finishing my MSc in Biochemistry. I am currently a senior lecturer, after the completion of my PhD in Philosophy in 2018. Since the start of my employment I have been led to consider much more closely, in both my research and critical reflection on the scholarship of teaching and learning, the question of student literacies in the attempt to improve my own ways of engaging with students more effectively. This meant not only reflecting on my own teaching and learning philosophy and practices, but also entailed researching best practices in the field. Throughout I have been cognisant of the latest research in the field of philosophy of education, curriculum development and teaching and learning, with the goal of enhancing student literacy as it relates to philosophy. I believe that shifting disciplines (moving from biochemistry to philosophy) sparked an interest into the practices of philosophical knowledge and teaching, and that coming into the field with (arguably) more inexperienced eyes – in comparison to someone who has

come up through the ranks in the same discipline – required me to conceptualise from the ground up how knowledge and teaching in philosophy *works* in practice (not just in terms of theory).

Initially I understood academic literacies mainly in terms of the ways in which students write (or, in contrast, are unable to write) philosophical essays. I thus conceptualised student literacy mainly in terms of student writing, which I considered to be a foundational skill in philosophy due to the nature of engagement with students via their assignments.³⁰ This conceptualisation of student literacy as predominantly relating to student writing (in the context of essays) was due to the tangible problems that I saw in the everyday practice of teaching philosophy – particularly as related to students' reporting and formulation of their ideas on paper.³¹ Only secondarily did I relate their problems with regard to literacy with the 'knowing' and 'doing' of the discipline itself, and often I saw problems in this regard as being built on students' somewhat lacking abilities in terms of essay-writing. I recognised problems concerning epistemological access to the content of the field, but had not yet fully conceptualised how encompassing a challenge this posed to philosophy students in the South African context.

30 I should note here that in a socio-cultural understanding of literacies it is prudent to avoid words like 'skill' which generally have very neutral connotations. Instead, I have endeavored to adopt terms like 'practice' in my continuing reflection on philosophical literacies.

31 I now recognise that, while I initially posited said problem with the student themselves, it is clear that the alien nature of the knowledge and literacy practices related to Philosophy are more crucial considerations.

After teaching philosophy for a number of years, I began to realise that this initial perspective was very limited (and limiting for my own thoughts on teaching and learning). The change in my thinking began when I started to consider the communities of practice of philosophy itself. I attended a short course, *Writing in the University: Ways of knowing, ways of doing* that reflected on disciplinarity, presented by Kirstin Wilmot and Carol Thomson, which further challenged my initial thinking on philosophical disciplinarity. I read Russell, Littler and Chick (2020), who argue that the recognition and foregrounded explication of discipline-specific literacies in teaching is crucial for integrative learning by students (such teaching also relates to engagement with discipline-specific citation styles). While it is often assumed that students are aware of the academic divisions and structures that underlie such literacies, the authors argue for reconsideration of such a pedagogical assumption (an aspect that I had not considered in detail before the course). Indeed, I now recognise that consideration of contrasting disciplinary practices is crucial for allowing students (and faculty) to navigate multi-disciplinary general education programmes. I could not return to old ways of thinking about disciplinarity in my field of study. In this regard I found particularly interesting and useful the handout developed by Russell, Littler and Chick (2020) (for the humanities, sciences, expressive arts and social sciences) with the purpose of providing insight into teaching and learning disciplinarity, demystifying discipline-specific writing conventions, and to allow for more effective redesign of assignments, courses, and curriculums.

I thus found the idea of engaging with disciplinarity in an overt manner as part of one's teaching and learning to be crucial. I recognised my lack of attention in this regard as being a serious oversight. Indeed, some personal

reflection reveals the issue of disciplinary literacy to be an obvious and key element that needed to be incorporated into my own teaching and learning strategy. Bringing such disciplinary issues to the forefront in philosophy is advantageous for the developing student – allowing them to develop their broader academic voice and to orientate themselves within their discipline and in the multidisciplinary higher education context. The incorporation of discipline-specific literacies into the classroom allows the student to establish a context beyond their studies, advancing and broadening their engagement with their subject matter in productive ways.

Thus, I reconsidered my initial assumptions and looked to incorporate overt disciplinary positioning into my own teaching. In this regard, and in my own context, I have found discussing the varied academic literacies in philosophy important (for example, discussing the split between continental and analytic philosophy that is at issue in this chapter). Often, what is needed is for philosophy students is to be able to map themselves with regard to the debates in their field and broader academic debates. I foresee that further incorporation of these ideas into my teaching-learning strategy would be a crucial step for my own development as a lecturer, and that such a shift will be beneficial for the students whom I teach (particularly, again, in making disciplinary literacies explicit). I also found that, after taking disciplinarity positioning seriously, one could begin to create a socially just environment that is supportive of epistemological access in a broader sense.

Findings and discussion

Autoethnography as a method has limitations. The sample is usually very small (in this case, it represents the perspective of two emerging academics).

Furthermore, it exposes the researcher's inner feelings and thoughts, which requires honesty and self-disclosure (Méndez 2013: 282). This also entails that the ethical questions may be very difficult to answer (Méndez 2013: 282). The ethical questions related to this approach revolve around the "emphasis on the self" (Méndez 2013: 282). There are also issues of consent, especially where an autoethnography focuses on sensitive issues involving people around the researcher (Méndez 2013: 283). In this study, however, no sensitive issues or information were identified. This autoethnography focuses on the researchers' professional experience and therefore avoids specific ethical issues pertaining to the consent of others.

What should be evident from the preceding discussion, over and above the fact that the Russell, Littler and Chick (2020) article opened the researchers' eyes to the importance of discipline-specific literacies, is that even in their own praxis there exist vast differences in terms of what would be considered 'philosophical literacy'. Still, the researchers have attempted to find some defining characteristics of what would constitute philosophical literacy. One of the aims of this chapter was to "provide an initial exploration of 'philosophical literacy' in the South African context". While this has been described in the conceptual framework, an appropriate definition of this concept is still lacking. In addition to the above autoethnographic reflections, this paper hopes to contribute a working definition of this concept to address a dearth in the literature. Upon reflection, the authors conceptualised the following key aspects of philosophical literacy as a way to proffer a working definition of philosophical literacy.

Towards philosophical disciplinarity in the South African context

Philosophical literacy as activity

Philosophical literacy must firstly be understood as an event, or a series of events, embedded in a particular socially constructed setting. This follows Wilmot's (2015) description of literacies as socio-cultural events. This socially constructed setting usually relates to academic philosophy as taught in universities, but this does not mean that philosophical literacy is only constructed in one way – rather, it can be actualised in a multiplicity of ways.

Engagement in philosophical activities would be considered evidence of philosophical literacy. These activities are multifarious but usually contain elements of debate, reflection, criticality and the communication of ideas via (mostly) the written word. Involvement in philosophical activities reiterates the idea of philosophical literacy as an activity or event – one learns how to practice philosophy by *practising* philosophy.

Philosophical literacy as understanding the evolution of philosophy

The second aspect of philosophical literacy is understanding the evolution of the 'activity' of philosophy. The activity of philosophy has seen several different iterations over the past two and a half millennia. Philosophers engage with papers and ideas (sometimes many centuries old) that look quite different from what is the norm today. Philosophy must thus be understood as a dynamic activity – not a static one. Indeed, even the analytic/continental divide is a relatively recent occurrence in the field, having only really emerged in the last century or so, and one that may also be in a state of evolution itself.

Philosophical literacy as pluralist

Furthermore, philosophical literacy necessitates understanding the plurality of philosophy – there are many ways in which philosophy can be practised. By embracing the plurality of philosophy, one can make room for African, analytic, and continental literacies to be brought into conversation with one another. Acknowledging and embracing the plurality of philosophy entails the understanding that these literacies might mean different things – there is not only one way of practising philosophy. There is also an element of social justice in this respect – embracing plurality amongst others entails acknowledging and rejecting the sexism and racism that was present in the field for most part of its history. Only through engaging critically with the disciplinarity that is inherently part of the field, can such sexism and racism be countered.

Philosophy as accessible

Philosophical literacy should also aim for epistemological accessibility. Thinking about epistemological access is not only a practical issue, but also a moral one. South Africa is a country with many socio-economic contradictions, and hence epistemological access means different things to different students. There are several reasons why epistemological access takes on a unique iteration in the South African context, which might look different from the issues facing students in the Global North. In order to therefore unpack the issue of epistemological access, one needs to understand the issues facing our students. Thus, understanding the living world of the student becomes a necessary first step before engaging with the student's academic and philosophical literacy.

Philosophical literacy as decolonial

Another rendition of epistemological access is the alienation from the curriculum. Even if students manage to overcome the many practical challenges they face, they might still be confronted with content that is inherently foreign to them. Sadly, it is the case that much of the dominant philosophy curriculum is learning about ‘dead white guys’. While a crude typification, the reality is that European or Anglophone thinkers and ideas largely dominate the philosophical curriculum.

It is this exact concern that the #feesmustfall (October 2015) and #rhodesmustfall (March 2015) movements eventually brought to light and which cast the imperative to decolonise the curriculum was cast into the mainstream. It is therefore the case that we must also decolonise the philosophy curriculum. While there is still a long way to go, there are strides being made in this regard - in the authors’ own modules, they have made a pertinent effort to foreground the works of African scholars as well as women in their curriculum. In one co-taught module they have endeavoured to demonstrate to students how the Western epistemological project often sets up dualisms (which some thinkers refer to as value dualisms or conceptual oppressive frameworks (see Warren 2000)) and how such thinking can be countered with other epistemes – the module presents decolonisation-in-action.

According to Shay (2016), we must not only hear students’ voices but also understand that certain worldviews dominate the curriculum. This means that while the content might be understandable, it is not necessarily accessible. There might be little real-world relevance for students when we

talk about philosophical theories that emanate from 18th Century Europe. Accessibility, therefore, is different from understandability – one can understand a philosophical concept, without being able to access it on a deeper level.

Such issues must be considered carefully and should inform the ways in which philosophy lecturers practise teaching in the classroom. More closely formulated, the problems related to epistemological access must direct our educational paradigms, and must shape the ways in which lecturers integrate the development and support of literacies in the classrooms of our discipline.

Philosophy as embodied

The view of a qualified constructivist teaching philosophy is that students learn best when they are actively engaged in the learning process and in the process integrate new theoretical knowledge with their existing lived and embodied knowledge. We must therefore be aware that our students' embodiment is the manner in which they stand in "a direct and primitive contact with the world", which speaks to the fact that our students are embodied and contextual beings – they arise in specific living conditions with specific cultural and socio-economic backgrounds of which we must be aware (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: vii). The concept of embodiment as a framework for learning means that we understand learning as an active process of constructing knowledge rather than passively receiving it, from the embodied and embedded basis of the student, and that the student enters into this process with a range of presuppositions and ways of understanding things that are based in their lived experience, i.e., impacted by their socio-economic contexts, gender, and race.

A major problem concerning the integration of literacies development and support in the classroom itself is that students have not yet engaged with the broader disciplinary aspects of the field. They generally do not enter the classroom with discipline-specific knowledge, but with their own life-worlds and the knowledge associated with that. Discipline-specific knowledge as a rule is not part of their experiential framework and it is not an aspect of their everyday lives. Indeed, some aspects of philosophical literacies only become important at a more advanced level (in terms of positioning oneself as scholar during one's postgraduate years, for example). The lecturer thus needs to be aware of this gap in the students' experience, and needs to sketch the broader disciplinary aspects for the students to allow a basis upon which they may build further knowledge in relation to philosophical literacy.

From the above, we can proffer the following working definition: *Philosophical literacy is an embodied activity that aims for epistemological accessibility by advancing a plurality of ideas and approaches. Through this epistemological plurality, philosophical literacy addresses social injustices, thereby contributing to the continued evolution of a field that is over two and half thousand years old.*

Recommendations and conclusion

It is crucially important to achieve an understanding of what philosophical literacy is, and how it figures in South African higher education. First and foremost, it relates to initial conceptualisations of literacy as being based in language and the fundamentals of writing (with a number of corresponding challenges and expectations that relate to referencing and plagiarism). However, philosophical literacy extends beyond merely these aspects; it

relates also to the 'knowing' and 'doing' of the discipline of philosophy, which includes discipline-specific standards of argumentation, clarity, and precision (in both the analytic and continental traditions). Baggin and Fosl (2020: 1) summarise the importance of argumentation in philosophy as follows:

"Philosophy addresses some of the most important questions human beings ask themselves. The reason philosophers are nit-pickers is that they are concerned with the way in which beliefs we have about the world either are or are not supported by rational argument."

To remain true to the requirements of philosophical literacy means that these standards should remain central, but also entails that the lecturer should induct the student into the specific knowledge community of philosophy and that the lecturer should strive to construct a socially just environment to support epistemological access (as we have mentioned in our critique sections). Several questions remain unanswered, and open for future reflection: Is a philosophical literacy grounded upon (or based in) a specific epistemology? Does philosophical literacy, or a specific epistemology, come first? And is a plurality of epistemologies (that integrate the analytic, continental, and African) tenable?

Even though the researchers come from different traditions in the discipline of philosophy (and even though it is acknowledged that epistemological access continues to remain a salient problem and that philosophical literacy poses a challenge to their educational paradigms), they find agreement in the fact that the development of literacies and disciplinarity should be of the utmost importance in higher education and that it should be an aspect under continual consideration for the contemporary philosophy lecturer.

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