

Editorial

Is quiet the new loud? The sounds and silences of information literacy

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I've been thinking a lot about noiselessness recently, questioning what makes a silence feel either awkward or companionable to me, and my sense of comfort within these situations. As an educator, I have often found quiet classrooms particularly excruciating, something that has led me to fill this space with the buzz of activity. This feeling is perhaps not uncommon in library-land if the growth of literature into active learning (Hicks & Sinkinson, 2021) and groupwork based social constructivist approaches to teaching (Wang et al., 2011) is anything to go by. Yet, noise also brings its own problems, with literature also warning of the dangers of edutainment and performativity (Polkinghorne, 2015).

In fact, closer inspection reveals that IL teaching has a particularly tempestuous relationship with noise. While the various models of IL all typically call for a focus on reflection, an activity that is often associated with quietness, research demonstrates that far more space is often turned over to the management of noise, including compliance with regulations and the evaluation of overwhelming streams of information (Hicks & Lloyd, 2023). This doesn't seem entirely surprising given the simultaneous embracing (or enforcement) of time and speed within our work (Nicholson, 2019): a quest for immediacy (Kornbluh, 2024) doesn't always lend itself to soundlessness. It also speaks to how disability and neurodiversity, two conditions in which sound can play a vital role in the constraining (and enabling) of knowing, continue to be marginalised in our field.

IL research has its own struggles with silence, too. As Annemaree Lloyd (2014) points out, it is far easier to capture normative or explicit forms of information rather than more subtle elements of practice. A focus on quietness raises a range of underexplored questions, however, including how the absence of sound might inform or be informative to us. We might also interrogate noise in our research traditions, too. I've been reflecting on how we're currently in a bit of a still period in relation to IL scholarship where the initial panic to react to the growth of AI seems to have eased and there hasn't yet been a coalescing of interest in anything new. For me, these periods of fallowness are important, particularly in a field that has been criticised for chasing after the shiny new things. Sadly, this perspective isn't shared by the editors of Web of Science, who

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recently rejected our application to become part of their core collection over concerns about our volume of publication. It seems that, in this case, silence is a problem to be fixed rather than something that can also be celebrated for the insights it brings.

Back at JIL Towers, our quiet autumn belies a hive of activity - the end of the summer tends to make a busy submission period for us, while we are also, excitingly, in the process of recruiting for the Associate Editor team. Our call for papers in our special issue on censorship is still open, and we continue to encourage submission (or enquiries about submission) related to any topic on information literacy (IL) research and practice. My thanks, as ever, to the management and production team, whose work behind the scenes make all this continued work possible.

And now, let's make some noise for this issue's papers!

First up we have last year's Ross Todd award winner, Dijana Sobota, who examines the core connections (and discontinuities) between literature into workplace and critical IL. Carrying out a reflexive thematic analysis of peer-reviewed literature in each body of literature, Sobota's work to identify shared and divergent elements of CIL and WIL across five main themes provides an excellent basis for the much-needed future work in this area. Have at 'em, future researchers- Dijana continues to innovate in this exciting new area of IL research. This paper is copyedited by Andrea Brooks.

Next up, Ana Mae Cantel and Eun Youp Rha present a case study of a service-learning IL module within the Philippines. Connecting IL teaching more concretely with broader educational goals of community-based learning, the authors also neatly highlight the gaps in literature exploring this approach to higher education. Presenting details of the changes they made to the IL module in question, this research article also critically examines the impact on students, including related to social responsibility and civic engagement alongside academic learning. This research article is copyedited by Waseem Farooq.

Lastly, Ivana Martinovic presents findings from research exploring IL competencies and teaching approaches used by Croatian school librarians. Employing a Delphi study method, which is a technique that is still underused within IL research, the paper lays the groundwork for establishing a national approach to IL within Croatia, as well as reflecting on ongoing (and familiar!) challenges to putting this work into practice. This research article is copyedited by Amber Edwards.

After a period of project report drought, I am also delighted that we have five exciting new reports from the field for you in this issue! In the first, authors Natalia Kapacinskas, Erica Lopez, Mea Warren and Veronica Arellano Douglas come the closest to making me regret the decision to move into academia than anyone ever has in their report exploring how they embed reflective practice in both their teacher and student assessment processes. This report, which is copyedited by Batul Alsaraji, is a beautiful examination of how we foreground the work (and expertise) that lies behind those simple assessment statistics. In the second report, Daniel Williford goes back to the Oz-with-a-tin-man to present an incredible account of how the use of cultural artefacts can support teaching for critical IL, including related to authority, bias, and power structures within information systems. This report is copyedited by Nimisha Bhat.

Project report number three jumps us back to young people, where established author Andrew Shenton thinks about the information needs of primary school aged children (4–11) and the

impact on IL instruction. This report is also copyedited by Nimisha Bhat. In contrast, our fourth project report, which is written by Nihar Patra and Panorea Gaitanou, compares IL within India and Greece, with a particular focus on everyday information needs and how we teach outside traditional settings. This report, which is copyedited by Lynsey Blandford, provides inspirational and poignant insight into the impact that the work of librarians can have on disadvantaged communities. Finally, Paul Cooke finishes off this issue by providing an account of a recent curriculum mapping initiative at the IL powerhouse of the University of Cambridge. This report, which is copyedited by Tasha Cooper, provides insight into the innovative use of a heatmap to explore how to manage IL assessment and planning across multiple libraries.

We are also pleased to publish a final report into LILAC 2025 by Ileana Thomson, alongside book reviews by Helen Bond and Joanna Blair. Enjoy!

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