2. Integrating Critical Teaching Practices into the One-Shot Library Classroom. Darren Flynn.

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Introduction

One of the challenges I have found in exploring critical pedagogy as a librarian is finding a way to incorporate a critical philosophy into the everyday teaching I deliver. Library-specific texts on critical pedagogy often give examples of individual, niche topics or lessons which incorporate critical approaches, such as exploring representation in the literary canon, or challenging traditional conceptions of authority and trust in research. While fascinating, sessions on these topics would only ever make up a small minority of my teaching, which is focused much more on the 'nuts-and-bolts' of information literacy and academic skills. More general texts on critical pedagogy give advice on creating egalitarian power structures in the classroom, but assume a set of teaching contexts (control over assessment, extended contact with students etc.) that I don't enjoy as a librarian.

Thus, I began writing this chapter with the intention of providing a list of simple, flexible techniques that the reader could integrate into their practice, inspired by the theory and practice of critical pedagogy. Initially, this was easy: I knew I had some tips and tricks that I could talk about and expand upon. What became clear the more I wrote, however, was that critical practice in my library teaching is not just about the classroom activities I use. As important are the different behaviours I have adopted as a critical teacher outside of the classroom. The end result of this realisation is a chapter that is less a simple 'how-to' list of teaching tips that I originally planned, and more a reflection on the times I find myself with an option to be critical, and how I try to do so in those moments. I've structured the chapter in three sections: planning teaching, being critical in the classroom, and evaluating teaching critically. They need not be read in order, however, so feel free to skip to the section that either most interests you or might be most useful in your particular circumstances.

I've written in the first person, not because I think myself an expert in critical pedagogy or critical library practice; I am as much on a journey in this area as you are by reading this book. Rather, I wanted to avoid imposing my thoughts and experiences on you as the reader by using

declarative statements and instead be transparent about the fact that everything that follows is based on my own values, experiences and opinions as a teacher, and so are free for you to borrow, challenge, or reject however you see fit.

Planning Teaching

Accepting and Refusing Teaching

It's tempting as a teacher-librarian to agree to any request for input requested by academic colleagues and accept prima facie the conditions suggested. Vocational awe and its culture of sublimating personal desire and critical thought in service of a 'greater' institution can lead you to feel that accepting every request for library input is akin to a moral duty (Ettarh, 2018). Imposter syndrome, so commonly reported by library and information workers (Faulkner, 2015; Lacey & Parlette-Stewart, 2017; Barr-Walker et al., 2019), can make refusal or negotiation of librarian teaching problematic. Externally, departmental targets might focus solely on quantified measures of engagement (e.g. number of sessions delivered) at the expense of measuring the quality of those interventions. All of these factors may be intensified by hegemonic institutional power structures and precarious working conditions that compromise the ability to express dissenting opinions or protect your interests and integrity as a teacher. Early in my career, perhaps because I was a first generation university student and never felt fully comfortable as a student, I often felt overawed by academic colleagues and deferred almost automatically to their judgement on any issue and thus gratefully accepted any teaching, in any circumstances, that was offered. So often feeling like an outsider, as a university worker from a working class background, I worried how perceptions of me were formed, and if I challenged a member of academic staff that I might be forever labelled as "difficult to work with" or "not a team player".

Many UK academic librarians I've spoken to describe a common situation where we're asked to deliver "the library session," which might be a half hour tacked onto the end of a lecture (in practice often less) and are asked to cover a library induction, literature searching, plagiarism, referencing and, and, and… We know from instinct or experience that such a session is likely to be educationally ineffective and intellectually disengaging, that there is too much content to cover and that students are likely to struggle to apply any new knowledge or skills in a practical setting. But we want to

show we are willing, build links with the academic department, and hope that if we perform well we might successfully lobby for better next time around.

I often accepted this situation as a given even though I felt delivering teaching in such a prescribed scenario conflicted with my beliefs about learning, devalued my subject area, and disadvantaged students who might struggle to process a deluge of rushed, incoherent information. I researched ways of improving the lecture format, trying to find ways to make it more 'interactive' (give them a quiz!) or looking for 'innovative' hooks that might make it more engaging (play a video!), but overall I found the experience stressful to plan and deeply demotivating to deliver. I often felt like a failure because the students hadn't learned much, and a fraud because I wasn't being true to what I believed as a teacher.

In time, as I grew in confidence as a teacher, I began to treat requests for my input from academic colleagues as a negotiation, with give and take on both sides—I could and would do this, but I couldn't and wouldn't do that. The most impactful phrase I learned was, "No, but…" Now, I lay out what I can feasibly cover in a given time frame, setting, and class size. If the session is to be a half hour, large-scale lecture, I can conceivably introduce myself to the students and outline what sort of services the library offers. If they want me to recite how plagiarism is defined by the university, a lecture might work, but if they want students to learn how to cite and reference, then a longer seminar format is required. If the students need to learn how to perform a literature search, I need smaller groups, more time, and an understanding of their assignment. Inevitably, this means that due to time or space restraints some elements of information literacy cannot be covered through face-to-face teaching and instead I have to signpost other resources. My position in negotiating teaching input went from "this is what you want, how will I facilitate it?" to "if that's what you want, this is what I need".

I should acknowledge here that I am the beneficiary of a significant level of privilege; while Queer, I am a white, cis-man with a permanent contract of employment. Asserting myself, therefore, and having that respected in a society that encourages and values white male privilege, is far easier for me than for many others. With that acknowledged, my experience has been that my input is valued more highly when I negotiate in this way, and in teaching on my own terms, I feel vastly more authentic as a teacher. Inappropriate requests for input declined and positive engagement increased. While not directly related to critical pedagogy, this was in many

respects the foundation for my practice given I can rarely incorporate any elements of critical practice if I cannot teach in a suitable setting with an appropriate amount of time.

When might I plan to deliver teaching?

Planning when to deliver information literacy teaching and discussing this with academics can be problematic, because the temptation on both sides is often to front load this content early in the term. For the academic, it may seem convenient to timetable any 'extra-curricular' content (information literacy, academic skills, writing etc.) at the start of a scheme of work before moving onto the meaty, curriculum content. For the librarian, we know information literacy is essential to student success and that can lead to us wanting students to begin developing these skills as early as possible. If we believed that the Banking Model of Education (Friere 1996) is effective, then when we choose to teach students a particular topic or skill is almost immaterial; the 'knowledge deposit', say how to search a database, can be made at any point and students simply regurgitate this later as required. In practice, research and experience tells us this is not the case (Walton & Archer, 2004; Just, 2012; Chiarella et al., 2014). Skills and concepts in information literacy are not always 'sticky' and students often do not display a high degree of competence or confidence applying past learning about information literacy in new contexts.

When I discuss the timing for information literacy teaching with academics, what I look for is the point of need for students. If students are given their essay in week three, week four might be a good time to discuss finding sources, week five might be good for discussing source evaluation, week six for discussing source integration etc. The temptation, again, can be to roll these all together into a single long session, imagining students will attend this one session and be equipped for the entire assignment, but in my experience matching session learning outcomes to students' workflow is far more effective. It may be a rare academic who can accommodate multiple short sessions within a scheme of work like this, but in discussing this approach we can agree to what level of input is possible and develop alternative strategies to cover other points.

Given the diverse mix of working patterns students use, finding a single point of need for a learning intervention can be problematic. We might imagine a workflow where students begin planning an assignment in weeks 3-4, researching the topic in weeks 5-6, writing and referencing sources in

weeks 7-8, and making final edits in weeks 9-10. However, this generally imagines the traditional full-time, campus-based student with the freedom to devote their sole attention to academic issues during term-time—and a high degree of discipline and self-motivation besides. Insomuch as this idealised and often-imposed work pattern exists for any students, the reality for increasing numbers in higher education is a precarious balancing act between their studies and caring, personal, and professional responsibilities. For students who sit outside this imagined model of a sequential scheme of work, I advertise additional services such as one-on-one appointments or student-arranged study groups that suit their work pattern. Increasingly, I now involve students in the decision-making process by having them decide when a particular topic is most suitable (N.B. Personally, I look for feedback directly from the cohort, in my experience student representatives are often a *representative (noun)* but are rarely *representative (adjective)*). Voting—either within class or via the virtual learning environment—lets students tell me when they want to learn about a particular topic and this can then be arranged more appropriately.

The final point I consider is that of my own workload and needs. In the desire to please and meet the perceived needs of your students, it can be all too easy to overload yourself. Recognising and challenging vocational awe means subjecting the library's practices and underlying philosophies to the same critical rigour we would apply to other institutions, and refusing to participate in the martyrdom mind-set it sometimes demands (Ettarh, 2018). Even in the absence of vocational awe, librarianship is often an emotionally, creatively and, for many, physically taxing profession. Becoming a critical educator therefore means at times turning that critical gaze inwards, reflecting on your own performance, needs and capacities and employing strategies of radical self-care in order to maintain your wellbeing (Accardi, 2015). The work of dismantling oppressive systems and practices is undermined should you find yourself subjugated by that work: liberation work is hard, but should be joyful (hooks, 1994). More subtle but consistent acts of resistance are often more sustainable over time. In my career, this has meant recognising that I have periods of growth where I am receptive to new ideas and practices, periods of harvest when I can gather and share the fruits of my labour, but as important as either of these are fallow periods when I need to reflect, recuperate and recover. Approaching or experiencing burnout is not only intellectually, physically and emotionally destructive, but is often the death knell for critical practices. I cannot be a thoughtful, conscientious, and critical teacher when I feel overwhelmed and stressed. The ability to recognise the

warning signs of overwork and overcommitment, and the self-awareness to reflect, react and respond to these, is as crucial a skill in critical practice as anything else I have to say in this chapter.

Writing inclusive and empowering learning objectives

Writing learning objectives for a given lesson can be problematic for the teacher-librarian interested in becoming a critical educator. At heart, learning objectives are a useful tool, giving focus and structure to a lesson in both planning and delivery. Content and activities can be assessed against the learning outcomes to allow the teacher-librarian to decide if they contribute, detract, or distract from fulfilment of the objective. Without critical consideration though, learning objectives can take the first step towards an authoritarian approach to teaching and learning. At a macro level, learning objectives required by or derived from an external agent (the institution, published frameworks, professional standards etc.) can express a culture of monitoring, auditing and control (Bennett & Brady, 2014). When that external agent, whether an institution, professional body or standards authority, operates within a culture of traditional, hierarchical power structures there is a risk that in adopting their learning outcomes we replicate and reinforce hegemonic practices (Accardi, 2010). On the micro level, the setting of learning objectives can be the imposition of teacher authority and power within the classroom, as teacher-set learning objectives demonstrate what is worth teaching and thus worth knowing on a particular topic. In hegemonic learning objectives, knowledge is organised into discrete commodified units and exploration or understanding of the broader context is unnecessary (Kopp & Olsen-Kopp, 2010). The broader contexts, the diverse perspectives and the critical debates are absent in neo-liberal curricula and its learning outcomes, and thus perpetuate oppressive power structures. Furthermore, uncritically constructed learning objectives tell learners how to think (learners will understand…), how to behave (learners will demonstrate…) and how to feel (learners will be more confident in…). Finally, in their selection of learning objectives the teacher is at risk of presenting their own experience, perceptions, and opinions as the only valid perspective on a topic. Success against those objectives therefore becomes the extent to which learners conform to the expectations placed upon them by the teacher and operates as a pass/fail dichotomy (Hussey & Smith, 2012; Gardner & Halpern, 2010). Used in this way learning objectives fall into authoritarian and banking models of education; students arrive empty, they receive the learning objectives selected for them, and leave the classroom

having ticked them off (Accardi, 2010). Prior knowledge, additional skill, or additional support requirements are not acknowledged by undifferentiated learning objectives which fail to adequately support or stretch the majority of the class.

A first step towards making learning objectives more inclusive and equitable might be to address the language used. Take for example a common information literacy skill: being able to perform a simple search in a given database. I've frequently seen (and in the past written) a learning outcome along the lines of, "By the end of this session, students will be able to perform a simple search in xyz database." The skill itself is not necessarily problematic, but how it is expressed in the learning outcome demonstrates the shortcomings outlined above; it treats knowledge and skill as a binary construct, rather than existing on a spectrum, is undifferentiated, and expresses a banking model. It also assumes that there is only a single legitimate way to perform the task (the way demonstrated by the librarian), rather than acknowledging that there may be a range of approaches to database searching that may be appropriate in different contexts. We could consider rewriting this outcome as "This lesson should help students to develop their skills in searching the xyz database." Worded in this way, the learning outcome allows a range of students with differing existing skill levels to gain from the class, whether they are going from low>medium or medium>high through a range of differentiated activities. The emphasis is also shifted from being teacher-centred ("I will show you how to perform this task") to learner-centred ("You will develop your skills") and therefore recognises that there may be a range of situationally-appropriate means of fulfilling the objective. Finally, the rewritten objective lessens the binary pass/fail element. Whereas previously students had to progress to a teacher-defined point before the session could be considered 'successful', in the rewritten objective success is a student-defined increase in skill in the topic area, however small or large.

There is a risk that simply rewording a learning objective could result in only a superficial, semantic change if the philosophy of the change is not expressed in the lesson itself. If a learning objective recognises a range of pre-existing skills levels and experiences, the lesson will require a range of differentiated activities. If the learning objective is devoid of a pass/fail dichotomy, then a multiple-choice quiz as an assessment is inappropriate. There is, I believe, a strong argument to shift our thinking about objectives altogether from learning objectives (where the responsibility for success is placed on the learner) to teaching objectives (where responsibility for

success rests with the teacher). In this way, instead of focusing on what students have or have not learned, we might focus on what we hope to teach.

Recognising the Human Element in Teaching

In writing objectives and applying complex frameworks and models for information literacy development, it can be easy to forget that at heart teaching and learning is a human interaction between the teacher, the student and the content. The focus of much literature and discussion in information literacy centres around the relationship between learner and content where the role of the teacher is to facilitate this in an engaging and understandable way. Success in information literacy teaching is often measured against these criteria; if students appeared engaged in the learning activity throughout and if the lesson has had a demonstrable and objective impact on their skills, knowledge or confidence (Grabowsky, 2020; Bruff & Harrison, 2018; Erlinger, 2018). Adherents of Kuhlthau's (1991) Information Search Process have long recognised the affective domain as a key aspect of research activity, thus published research or shared practice on managing the emotional experience of information literacy teaching is conspicuous by its (relative) scarcity. If we are to view the student as a whole person, not simply a consumer of lesson output, we should consider their emotional reaction to the content we discuss in the classroom.

Compared to other highly-emotive, sometimes traumatising, topics a student may experience during a course of study, it can be easy to assume that the typical information literacy session is fairly low-impact on an emotional level. But consider as an example the experience of a student attending a typical source evaluation or critical appraisal session. A fundamental message of their early studies in higher education will likely have been the importance of scholarly literature, its higher quality and reliability. This knowledge has influenced their behaviour and despite the additional labour involved in finding and using journal articles and scholarly monographs, they have come to integrate these into their practice. They then attend a session with their librarian, a relative stranger, who cautions them on the need to show criticality and rigorous scepticism of all their sources, including previously-lauded scholarly material. Learning to critique, pick apart, and reject sources might appear, to the teacher-librarian attempting to employ critical pedagogy, a valuable and logical progression in developing information literacy. For the student though,

this may feel like a betrayal. It contradicts what they have been told previously, it demands additional labour and they feel unqualified to critique authors that have previously been described in unimpeachable terms. This is not an argument to remove critical reading from information literacy curriculum, but for teaching-librarians to demonstrate emotional intelligence while handling content and to investigate, signpost and validate the feelings students may experience during a lesson.

Similarly, the experience of a session on literature searching may be profoundly emotionally destabilising for many students. This could be the case if past methods of finding reading material are held up as unsatisfactory, or if they are introduced to complex library search tools and academic databases that are difficult on both a practical and conceptual level, in which small errors or inconsistencies in approach can foul up the entire process. During this type of lesson, the teacher-librarian might act with a breezy confidence borne of high levels of familiarity with the database and (often) a fully-scripted, meticulously-prepared search query. The emotional response of students to this might range from confidence and competence in some to confusion, frustration and feelings of inadequacy in others.

In my experience, librarians rarely talk at length about the emotional impact information literacy teaching has on students. We do sometimes collect quantitative data on emotional responses in the form of evaluation forms for example "How confident do you feel before/after attending this session?" Often though, while we're asking about an emotional response, this is simply used as a proxy for evaluating how effectively learning transfer has taken place. We might ask how students *feel* after the session, but this is used to judge how 'successful' the lesson has been. Further to this, such data collected is usually aggregated to form an overall metric (X% of students report feeling more confident in task Y after a library session), actions flowing from such metrics focus on the what and the how of the session (*what* is taught and *how* it is delivered), rather than a more in-depth analysis of the emotions of the students attending the session. Ultimately, in this scenario confidence (or lack thereof) is the only emotion acknowledged or explored and the only desirable outcome is an increase in confidence.

Recent work on threshold concepts in information literacy (Townsend et al. 2015) does acknowledge that information literacy teaching can provoke an emotional response in students. The threshold concept model of information literacy posits that certain concepts are inherently and

irrevocably transformative (Godbey, Wainscott and Goodman 2017). Realisation of the truths within these concepts is acknowledged as emotionally disruptive through the idea of 'troublesome knowledge' (Meyer and Land 2003), in that it destabilizes and disrupts the student's understanding of a subject and can provoke feelings of confusion, frustration and even antagonism. In this, a wider range of emotional reactions are acknowledged, but I find it problematic that an emotional reaction is legitimised only as a means of moving the student forward to a new understanding.

In my practice, I want to respect and acknowledge all emotional reactions to the learning content, both positive and negative. At the start of a session and after reviewing the learning objectives, I talk to students about how what we're going to cover might make them feel. I talk about how learning new skills can be both empowering and frustrating, that confusion when trying something new for the first time is a natural reaction, and that the advantage of face-to-face teaching is that they have the opportunity to express these emotions and ask questions. In doing this I hope to both emotionally prepare students for learning, but also to lend legitimacy to their feelings following the session, whether they are positive or negative.

Being Critical in the Classroom

In trying to be a critical teaching librarian, I have focused a large proportion of the work in how I plan and structure the sessions that I offer. If a questioning and student-centred mindset is maintained, I believe, the in-class result will almost inevitably lean towards a greater level of critical practice. There is, however, a range of behaviours I've seen and adopted, and others that I stumbled upon by chance and incorporated into my teaching practice, that I believe have increased the level of criticality in what I do. Some of these would likely not qualify as critical pedagogy in a classical sense, and some are only tangentially associated or come from other teaching traditions. However, the cyclical process of reflection and action is a core component of critical practice and thus drawing from and using elements from multiple learning theories forms a significant part of my critical pedagogy.

Authority and Authoritarianism

Traditional didactic methods of instruction rely on a high level of authoritarianism in the classroom. The instructor effectively holds court in the classroom, setting the agenda in both content and activities, and acts as

the sole authority and source of all knowledge and answers. Such approaches are essentially behaviourist in nature, with the teacher providing a stimulus (via recitation, required reading, assessment activities) and the learner providing response (via repetition and response) (Aubrey & Riley, 2018). Learning is cycled through repetition, repeat assessment, positive and negative reinforcement (via praise, correction and feedback), with academic success measured as the degree of alignment between the student response and the teacher's original contribution. The teacher thus retains a high degree of authority as knowledge source and authoritarianism in agenda-setting. In contrast, teaching approaches based on constructivist pedagogies such as project-based learning, experiential learning or cooperative learning shift the focus from teacher-centred to learner-centred practices (Schunk, 2011). Constructivist teaching approaches relocate knowledge-making to the student while the teacher acts primarily as a facilitator creating the conditions, providing the resources and developing the skills for independent learning. Thus in the constructivist classroom, the teacher rejects both authoritarianism *and* authority.

Inasmuch as critical pedagogy can be encapsulated into a set of principles both unique to the field and consistently expressed by multiple theorists, a key concern of critical pedagogy is to challenge the authoritarianism apparent in the traditional teacher-student relationship (Kincheloe, 2004). Critical pedagogy in practice is about deconstructing this power dynamic and creating an equitable environment where students are active participants in the learning process (Shor, 1996). This challenge to teacher authoritarianism can at first appear to place critical pedagogy firmly within a broad constructivist paradigm. However, sharing classroom power and authority should not be misinterpreted as a diminution of the teacher's role in a critical classroom; they remain an indispensable agent in the learning process (Shor, 1987). Rejection of the former (behaviourism) does not necessarily imply complete alignment with the latter (constructivism). I share the concern of other critical librarians in delineating constructivist and critical approaches, particularly in the role and authority of the teacher (Critten & Stanfield, 2016; Beatty, 2015). The critical educator explains concepts and shares their expertise, but also recognises that students bring with them their own experiences, perceptions and needs, and uses these to enrich the lesson. The critical educator invites questions, comments and critiques from students—not simply to check comprehension, but to draw out their perspectives and develop their critical consciousness (Hinchey, 2004). The critical educator sets activities, but these are grounded in the

lived experiences and realities of their learners (Aubrey & Riley, 2018). The critical educator maintains an ordered classroom environment—not simply for the convenience of more easily reciting content or maintaining discipline, but to ensure an equal and safe space where all learners can thrive (Kinchelow, 2004). In didactic educational models, the teacher has responsibility *for* the learners: the progress of the learners is dependent upon the actions of the teacher. In critical pedagogy, the teacher has responsibilities *to* the learners: a duty to provide safe, inclusive and equal spaces, and to respect their inputs and experiences. The distinctions I make here might appear subtle, even pedantic, but I raise them to reaffirm the central role of the teacher in the critical classroom, their authority as a subject expert and their duties to the class. It is thus distinct both from the autocrat in behaviourist models and the facilitator in constructivist models (Beatty, 2015). Their authority and duties remain even as they perform the work of eschewing themselves of authoritarian behaviours. What remains, however, even as authoritarianism is challenged, is the authority of the teacher as subject expert and principal agent within the classroom (Friere quoted in Macedo, 1995: 378-379; Beatty, 2015).

In the context of library and information literacy skills teaching, the practical application of critical pedagogy is often challenging, especially where library teaching is delivered on a 'one-shot' basis (Accardi, 2010; Keer, 2016).Time is limited and content extensive. The lack of ongoing contact with the class means the librarian is unaware of the underlying dynamics and personalities in the group making the raising of 'challenging' concepts feel risky. What contact is available is generally at the discretion of academic faculty. Finally, students' awareness of the subjects to be covered may be limited and learner autonomy difficult to develop due to a lack of metacognition on the part of students (knowing what they know, what they don't know, and what they need to know). These factors can conspire to push even the most critically-inclined of us towards authoritarian teaching models: get in, cover as much content as possible, as quickly as possible, with as few deviations as possible, and leave hoping something has 'stuck'. If we do so, we use our authority within an authoritarian student-teacher relationship.

In my practice, I try to consciously avoid authoritarianism whilst maintaining authority. In an educational context, I am generally comfortable with the concept and practice of teacher authority, though I acknowledge that as a white, cis-gender male this is unsuprising given a lifetime of conditioning that assumes both that authority is justified and that if authority is to exist, I deserve it. Fundamentally, like Friere (quoted

in Kincheloe 2008: 17) I believe that teacher authority is undeniable, inevitable and, I believe, in most cases desirable. As discussed already, I draw a clear distinction between authoritarianism and authority. An authoritarian has power by virtue of their position and acts without accountability; in a classroom context this is the teacher who sets the agenda and runs through prescribed content on their own terms. It may at times and with some students be effective to take this approach, but reduces students to passive recipients of information rather than active agents in their learning. By contrast, an authority can derive power through their position, but may also attain their status by other means (their subject knowledge, empathy, communication skills, etc.) An authority might not have any formal power over others, but relies on the strength of their personality or the extent of their knowledge and skills to effect change. Most significantly, while the authoritarian's power is absolute, an authority's power is limited and contextual.

Balancing these two competing dichotomies in the classroom—being an authority but avoiding authoritarianism—is at the heart of how I engage with critical pedagogy as an educator. Were I a full-time teacher with extended week-by-week contact with students, this would be easier as I could build this into a consistent classroom culture. As a teacher-librarian generally teaching atomised, one-shot sessions, this is more problematic. The compromise I have reached is to incorporate democratic principles into the philosophy and practice of my teaching with the aim of reducing authoritarianism and legitimising authority. Integrating democracy into education has long been a key concern of critical theories (Kincheloe 2004). While the work of many critical theorists such as bell hooks (2004) and Ira Shaw (1987) has often centred on education reform at the macro level (e.g. institutional structures, syllabus and curriculum), the context and limitations of my practice as a teacher-librarian generally means a focus on the micro (i.e. classroom) level.

Consent

In a Western context, power and authority have generally been legitimised by the idea of the social contract: power is granted to an authority in exchange for stability and safety (Bertram 2013: 74). Over time, this evolved further to form the liberal democratic tradition: power ultimately resides with the people, and authority gains its power with the consent of the governed through voting and elections (Sabine 1973). A fair electoral process and the democratic consent this conveys is thus a fundamental

hallmark of legitimate authority. As a teacher, I have tried to harness consent similarly in order to legitimise the authority I wield in the classroom. At the highest level, it would be a fairly pointless and impractical endeavor to hold an 'election' for who will act as teacher in a one-shot information literacy session, but at a content level, voting can be used in order to gain the consent of the taught in the class that follows.

Many of the sessions I teach take place outside of the students' regular timetable and are instead incorporated into individual study time. In the past, in order to schedule these sessions the academic and I would sit with diaries open and select (what we thought) were the most appropriate times based on our assumptions of student preferences (09.00 - 10.00=bad, 16.00 - 17.00=worse), and what was convenient for ourselves. Issues with attendance at some booked sessions suggested our judgement in this area was less than perfect. From talking to students, what became apparent was that what appeared to us as 'gaps' in students' timetables were anything but. Rather, these are times students used in a variety of ways, including pre-arranged meetings with tutors and placement coordinators, accessing student services, study groups, sports participation, and completing the surprising amount of administrative tasks that are now required of students. Early mornings were unpopular not necessarily because of stereotypical views on students sleeping in late, but because public transport was often slower, more crowded, and more expensive earlier in the morning. In contrast, for students who commuted by car earlier sessions were often preferable as they often had to arrive on campus earlier in order to secure limited parking spaces. Key individual working times were often in the late afternoon to early evening for most students. For some students, their timetable was often quite precarious; an hour later finishing time could result in several additional hours in commuting due to traffic. The overall finding was that there were few set times that were particularly good or bad for most students; their diaries were as complex and individualised as our own, if not more so, and varied on a weekly basis. This was particularly the case for students who didn't fit the mould of a 'traditional' student—those with caring or work responsibilities, older students, first-generation students, commuting students, etc. Making assumptions on timing risked further disadvantaging already marginalised students.

Now, when scheduling sessions I turn much of the choice over to students by using online voting and scheduling tools. I then select the most popular time slots to deliver the session. Initially, I would pre-select a range and have students vote for these limited options, but when talking further to

students this highlighted that students were often selecting a "least-worst" option rather than "best-fit." So, after this I allowed students to both indicate that a selection was "ok but not ideal" and to request additional time slots be added to the poll. Finally, once a time slot had been agreed upon, I allowed students to vote on whether a session should be face-to-face or synchronous online teaching, and thus I gained consent from the students for both the time for their class and the location in which it would take place.

I have also incorporated consent via voting into what happens during my sessions. In most sessions I teach there are a range of topics and techniques I can choose to cover, and in the past I would use my best judgement to decide which of these to include. In trying to incorporate more democratic consent into my teaching practice, however, I now often have students vote on what content I will cover. For example, a session on resource discovery might have options that include using the library catalogue, database searching with keywords, database searching using a controlled vocabulary, Boolean logic, finding grey literature, or citation searching. I give students a brief description of each technique and its strengths and weaknesses, and then they vote on which topics they want me to cover. This creates little additional work on my part, as the content consists primarily of live demonstrations of techniques and aiding students in practicing them. I have sometimes taken this further using a carousel teaching strategy. In this, I provide a number of stations in the room with instructional resources for different topics/techniques. Students then self-select which they wish to complete in the session and for how long while I am available to facilitate, answer questions, observe, and demonstrate as needed.

At times a completely a la carte approach to session content might be inappropriate. For example, some content might be sequential and require foundational knowledge be covered first, or there might be specific learning points that must be covered in order to complete an assignment. In these cases, I might offer a "should, could, would" session: essential content I've selected in 'should', student-selected content in 'could,' and content students would like to cover if we had the time in 'would' (for which I can provide either an additional session or takeaway resources).

In addition to giving students a voice in what content I cover, I can also gain consent in the methods used to convey information. There are, in my experience, many different ways in which to convey a particular piece of library knowledge or skills teaching: demonstrations, activities (that might

be individual, paired, or grouped), discussions and debates, question and answer sessions, workbooks, etc. In a traditional teaching paradigm, the teacher selects which method to use based on their own experiences, preferences, and assumptions about the group. In trying to be more democratic, I often now discuss with students the differing options possible for delivering content, and then facilitate a vote. This can require additional planning to ensure I am prepared enough to use a range of activities during the session, and it requires flexibility on my part to dispense with a rigid, minute-by-minute lesson plan. Conceptually, however, I am more comfortable with the idea of adapting to the learning preferences of the students in front of me than I am to having them adapt to my teaching preference.

A key aspect of using this approach (for me) is to be honest and transparent with students about the relative strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to teaching. Fundamentally, consent is only valid when it is informed consent, and just as any fair election requires a citizenry that understands the policies and implications thereof of their potential representative, the student voting on a lesson activity should have a basic understanding of what a particular choice could mean for that session and their learning. Much library teaching and learning literature focuses on participatory, active-learning approaches—what I would characterise as high-intensity learning activities—over techniques characterised as 'passive' (lectures and demonstrations) (Detlor, Booker, Serenko, & Julien, 2012; Khailova, 2017; Maybee, Doan, & Flierl, 2016; Walsh, 2020). Higher-intensity activities tend to be more engaging and memorable, but also take longer and generally mean less content overall can be covered in the session. By contrast, 'chalk-and-talk' methods (i.e. lecturing) are more 'efficient' in covering content, but might inhibit knowledge retention. In my experience, given a choice most groups opt for a high-intensity approach, but when time and access to librarian teaching is limited it has surprised me how often a group opts for a lecture format. Whatever their choice, I take time to set out my strategies to mitigate the potential limitations of a particular choice. If a high-intensity approach is selected, I signpost where students can find information on the topics I won't have time to cover. If 'chalk-and-talk' is selected, I emphasise the need for active listening, provide guided note-taking resources, and make liberal use of recordings and lecture-capture.

In ceding power in the classroom, it is essential that the critical teacher remains acutely aware of unintended consequences. As early as 1859 John Stuart Mill described the apparent risk of the 'tyranny of the majority' in

democratic societies (Mill 1859/2003). The concern described is a scenario in which a majority of citizens vote for leaders and policies that have a deleterious impact on individual and minority rights whilst having the apparent justification of democratic consent. This is not an archaic or esoteric anxiety as evidenced by the contemporary rise of populist politics and consequent deterioration of minority rights around the world. In an educational context it is essential to consider that once the teacher recedes from a position of power it is not automatic that an equal and equitable classroom culture will unfold organically; hegemonic and exclusionary power structures can emerge. The critical teacher must make a concerted effort to consistently and systematically challenge hegemonic power structures and lift up the voices of oppressed groups. In practice, this means a close consideration of the needs and concerns of present and absent minorities when planning and delivering teaching. In planning teaching I ask myself a number of questions, including: Is the content, method of delivery or activities I use accessible or is there potential that they make full participation by some students difficult or impossible? Is the language I use socially, racially, ethnically, and linguistically inclusive? How will this relate to keywords when demonstrating searches? Do I need to consider how those keywords are structured into a search strategy? Are there any topics that could cause distress to already underrepresented or marginalised groups? Are these essential content, and if so how will I warn students, provide a safe space or refuge? How will I seek responses from underrepresented or marginalised individuals? How will I manage group or paired activities where hegemonic behaviours may emerge? Reflection, planning, and active classroom management is therefore essential to ensure that power can be shared equitably within the classroom.

Transparency

Democracy is often defined as a form of government in which consent is conveyed via voting in either direct or representative systems. While this is a key and necessary feature, a more encompassing definition should include further characteristics common to democratic cultures, namely transparency and accountability. In an autocratic/authoritarian system decisions are taken behind closed doors by an elite group, information is restricted, and processes and actions may be arbitrary. In contrast, in a well-functioning democracy decision-making, information, and processes are transparent. Decisions are made through known, established processes and involve consultation with relevant stakeholders. Policies are disseminated to those affected and are applied consistently and equally.

Law-makers' interests are declared. Finally, there are processes to both request and publicise information on policy-making available to both the media and citizens. The governed are therefore able to hold authority accountable. Alongside seeking consent, integrating democratic transparency into teaching can help reduce the extent of authoritarianism in the classroom.

In lesson planning, the teacher is required to make a number of decisions: what content, what activities, etc. As outlined already, the teacher can use voting to gain consent for these decisions, but in some circumstances practical concerns, such as group size, timing, room layout, or facilities (or lack thereof), may preclude this and may limit the options available. Additionally, your professional judgement may persuade you that specific topics must be covered. In situations where I am unable to facilitate consent through choice, I can at least be transparent about what choices I have made and the reasoning behind those choices. This need not be a drawn out process-a short statement after the learning outcomes about what I plan to cover, how I will cover it, and why I have chosen to do it this way will generally suffice. I also do this to transparently describe the reasons I have chosen to deliver a session in a particular manner if I am unable to provide a vote on this. For example, I might state at the outset that given the amount of content I have to cover in the limited time I have opted for a fairly non-participatory session in order to get through everything. Alternatively, I might describe how for this session I have opted to include discussion-based activities because I feel it is particularly important for this topic that students share their ideas and opinions rather than simply hear mine. I feel that transparency about teaching methods is particularly important when I am either trying something new ("I saw this method at a conference recently and wanted to try it") or when I am using a non-traditional approach to teaching students might not be used to. For example, in one referencing session I take a playful approach using picture books. Without context this could potentially feel patronising to students, but (I hope) when I explain that the activity has worked well with other groups and allows them to use a real 'source' for referencing quickly, that danger is minimised. Transparency in teaching choices shows respect for my students, and also acknowledges that the lesson is about them as learners, not me as the teacher.

In a similar vein, I have found it useful to tell students about the content I have opted to leave out of a session. In nearly every session, time and resourcing pressure means there are some topics I cannot cover. I believe the benefits of transparency around this are threefold. First, it emphasises

the importance of the topics or aspect of skill development I *have* chosen to include in the session. Second, it demonstrates that I value their time and that I take care to think about how I can best use it. Finally, and most importantly for me as a teaching librarian, it highlights the multifaceted nature of library and information skills teaching and draws links between different topics. Highlighting content not being covered might seem counterintuitive, but I have often found it serves a useful purpose in terms of information literacy advocacy. If, for example, in a resource discovery section I state that due to time I cannot cover referencing, I then suggest that students either request additional timetabled sessions from the instructor, or that we independently organise an additional session outside of the timetable either as a large group or in smaller study groups. Around a quarter of the sessions I now deliver to students come from these conversations.

In addition to being transparent in teaching on a topic and activity level, I try to ensure that I am transparent about where my authority as a teacher comes from. It is easy as a teacher to take your authority for granted without explaining why you should be considered authoritative on a particular topic. Being transparent about this topic is particularly important for teacher-librarians because, unlike for other academic staff whose credentials may be more self-evident, many students might have had little to no past interactions with librarians, and might not be familiar with what they do. Therefore, I find it useful to talk about how helping students with research activities is a fundamental part of my role, and something that I am experienced in and qualified to do. This does not mean reading through my CV, but rather talking openly about how I have become familiar with common pinch-points that students experience when undertaking research, and how I have gained expertise using these tools/skills through practice both as a student and a teacher. My aim in doing this is to shift the classroom culture from 'you'll listen to me because I'm the teacher' towards 'it's worth your time listening to me because I've been here lots of times before and helped other students through this'.

In a broader view, critical pedagogy requires that the teacher take time to explore their own positionality in relation to their students, subject area, and institution. Positionality (sometimes termed 'social location') refers to the construction of an individual's identity in terms of race, social class, gender, sexuality, age, level of disability etc. (and the intersection of these characteristics) and how these relate both to others and to your outlook on an issue (Coghlan and Brydon-Miller 2014). The literature on this topic advocates reflection and recognition of one's positionality as a means of

preparing for and facilitating classroom discussions on power, privilege, and social justice (hooks 1994; Leistyna, Woodrum and Sherblom 1996; Bell et al. 1997). In my teaching context, I use reflections on my positionality (white, cis-gender male, Queer, working class) to critique and inform my approach to information literacy teaching. Again, this does not mean beginning a session on searching strategy with an awkward recitation of all my personal characteristics. Rather, I integrate it where appropriate. For example, I often talk to students during induction sessions about how as a first-generation student I found the library space intimidating, the services opaque, the staff unapproachable and discuss how I came to manage this. I have also talked during sessions on citation and writing style about how finding your 'academic voice' can feel dislocating if you are not of the culture that sets the stylistic rules. I acknowledge during sessions on reference management software that I have grown up using software to complete tasks and thus find it easier to learn new systems, but that for some present it could be an additional source of frustration. For those with a different lived experience, I suggest that manual reference writing may prove preferable.

In addition to being transparent about the source of any authority I may have, I also try to be transparent with my language in the classroom. Traditional, non-critical teaching (which most of us will have experienced as learners) places students in a passive state requiring unconditional acceptance of whatever the teacher presents. When I reflected on this for my own practice I came to realise the extent to which my sessions were based on my opinions presented as facts. In trying to be more critical as a teacher, I now try to clearly delineate in my sessions which points are objective, provable facts, and which are my opinion (however informed that may be). When writing, language markers tend to make this more obvious ("it is" vs. "in my opinion"), but these are often absent in speaking. I have tried to consciously incorporate verbal markers indicating opinion into my teaching style. On some occasions, I have taken this further by coding individual slides with colour or text to indicate whether the content is an objective fact or subjective opinion. For example: "You'll be expected to use scholarly sources in university work" (fact), vs. "Scholarly sources are more rigorous than other sources" (opinion). In being transparent in this way, students are more empowered to choose the extent to which they are persuaded by my point of view and thus are more active participants in their own learning.

My final point on transparency centres on acknowledging difficulty and signposting complexity. Many librarians, including myself and others I

have observed teaching, have a habit, whether through accident or design, of underplaying the complexity of the topics and skills that we teach. The root of this, I think, is a desire to appear confident and competent with the subject matter, the concern of intimidating students with the difficulties inherent in developing information literacy, and a fear that if we acknowledge that library resources are complicated to use, students will abandon them in favour of more intuitive tools such as Google Scholar. The result is often a presenting style characterised by a breezy confidence and the use of prepared, successful searches and various checklists. There is, I think, an inherent risk to this approach, however. By presenting content as though everything were straightforward and easy, we risk that students who do not find the task easy will become deeply demotivated by the experience.

Instead of doing this, I acknowledge at the outset that a particular skill (e.g. literature searching in health) is a complex task requiring training and practice to complete. I emphasise that it is likely they will get their search wrong the first couple of times and that I do not expect them to leave the class fully confident. I state that they will need to practice and possibly seek further support. I flag any particularly complex parts of the session (e.g. using controlled vocabulary), often giving students the time reference if the session is being recorded so they can note it down to find it easily again later. I tend to avoid using prepared, scripted searches that I know will be successful, and instead use example topics or questions from students in the class, as I feel this better reflects the experience of the students. If I get too few or too many results, I then talk about strategies to address this, and if I have made any errors in my search I acknowledge those and demonstrate correcting them. When I do use a prepared search query for any reason, I explicitly state that it is prepared, and talk to students about the time and energy invested out-of-class to do so in order for them to understand that a complex query requires a substantial time investment. I hope that by being open and transparent in my practice that students will gain an understanding of the complexity involved in information literacy tasks.

It is possible that by emphasising the complexity in information literacy tasks some students may feel intimidated or demotivated. However, I would rather my students be cognitively and emotionally prepared at the outset of a research task. This means that realisation of difficulty hopefully occurs when I am in the room to support them, rather than after class when students become frustrated that the research process does not appear to be as easy as I had made it look.

Integrating transparency in the ways I've explained in this section has been one of the most powerful changes I have made in my teaching practice. When I reflect back on how I used to teach, I imagine myself as acting like a stage magician—withholding information and preparatory work in order to (attempt to) achieve a "wow" moment of realisation and wonder on the part of the students in how cleverly I had constructed my lesson. While this was personally gratifying, and in some circumstances can be effective, I think the focus was very much on my experience as a teacher as opposed to the learning experience of the students. In contrast, now I characterise my teaching style as that of a television chef: I take students through step-by-step, letting them know what I'm doing, what I've prepared in advance, and how they might adapt my 'recipe' when they try it at home. This, I believe, is a much more student-centred approach having the benefit both of empowering students and facilitating better student outcomes.

Accountability

The final element of democratic principles I try to incorporate into my teaching practice is accountability. Accountability is an often nebulous concept, its meaning determined as much by the intentions of the speaker as any consistent definition (Mulgan, 2000). A politician is at once accountable to their constituents (must justify their actions to voters), is held to account by the media, opposition politicians, the judiciary etc. (can be questioned and challenged) and holds to account their officials and political inferiors (can hire, fire and promote them based on performance). Further it can encompass elements of financial probity, effectiveness, moral character, and trustworthiness amongst many other things (Behn, 2001). At a basic level, in functioning liberal democracies, consent of the governed is provided for by elections, actions are transparent and can therefore be scrutinised, and if a government is found wanting—either through negligence, maleficence, or unpopularity—it is held accountable and can be chastised and ultimately removed from office. Thus ideas of accountability are intrinsically embedded within a democratic framework as power is derived from the people and is thus answerable to the people (Lindbery, 2009). The democrat (much as they may dislike it) is accountable to many, the autocrat sees themselves as accountable to none (with the possible exception of a deity).

In a teaching context, removal of an individual teacher from their position is obviously not an option-students who are dissatisfied with their teacher cannot vote in a replacement. There are some existing, passive ways in

which teaching authorities are held accountable. For example, teachers may be accountable through performance management and student evaluations, and in the medium-to-long term by students choosing which courses to take and which to avoid. In the case of teacher-librarians, students can, and often do, vote with their feet-if they do not feel a library intervention adds value they may choose not to attend or may choose not to apply any of the knowledge or techniques taught to them and instead use alternative tools or methods. In addition to these existing, passive methods, I have tried to think creatively about how accountability can be actively integrated into my practice in various ways.

The first step towards thinking about accountability in my teaching was less about a change in practice than a change in perception. Before, when a session had gone poorly, I would sometimes describe students as having simply "not gotten it." Both conceptually and in my language ("*they* hadn't gotten it") I was placing the blame with the students for not learning as effectively as they could have, rather than on me for not teaching them effectively as I could have. While there are certainly occasions when an individual student/s doesn't engage with or learn during the session for one reason or another, when the majority of the class doesn't appear to have understood the content, there is clearly something at fault with the lesson itself. In shifting my perception in this way, I was not trying to create a self-blaming mindset, but rather to critically examine my practice and identify areas in which I could improve. Once I took greater responsibility for how my sessions went, I found ways to become more accountable to my students and in doing so learned more about the impact of my teaching practices on students.

One way I have developed to increase the accountability of my teaching is to offer a range of follow-up services if the classroom format I initially used was not effective for an individual student. Rather than replace personnel if students are dissatisfied, I offer a replacement of the educational intervention. Such alternatives include one-on-one appointments delivered in person or online, small group teaching with study groups, repeat sessions, or recorded lessons. In advertising these services I explicitly link them to how effective the session has been for students personally, emphasising that this type of teaching format might not work for everyone, that this is fine, and that these alternatives exist. Alongside students who might have difficulty with the session's content, I aim to meet the needs of those students who might wish to extend their studies beyond what was covered in the session. At the end of the session, I might reiterate those elements of the topic or search techniques that I

chose not to cover and offer students who want further stretch, the opportunity and means of doing so. These two elements together help ensure all students are supported-both those who need extra help and those who could stretch to additional skills.

I have also tried to make myself accountable to students by giving space for students to disagree and challenge my authority, opinions, and conclusions within the classroom. I have done this on an individual student level via questioning. In this, it is key to understand the level of bravery required on the student's part to voice dissent from the teacher's point of view. Most students educated within a non-critical paradigm will generally try to give the 'correct', teacher-approved answer and when I reflected on my own practice in terms of questioning, I realised that most of the time I had a 'right' answer in mind whenever I asked a question. I would ask for responses or opinions, but in truth I was fishing for a single 'correct' answer. To improve questioning, I first spent more time planning when and how I would use questions and adopting a range of different approaches.

As we learn to teach, we're often advised to avoid closed questions in favour of open questions. Closed questions (requiring only single word response or yes/no answer) are perceived as poorer quality and if at all useful, only for answers requiring lower-order thinking (Blachett et al, 2012; Gallagher, 2015). A critical approach might support this: closed questions invite students to confirm the information delivered has been 'banked' and fail to promote dialogue or reflection on the part of the student. I doubt I am alone though in the experience of asking a well-crafted open question to a group to be met with a cold, oppressive silence. I wait the recommended time (Rowe, 1986), students shift uncomfortably while we all will somebody (anybody!) to say something (anything!) to break the tense silence. When I've reflected on this, centring the students' experience, I'm not surprised by their reluctance. The most embedded librarian is often still a relative stranger, in the one-shot session they are a tourist in their classroom and as open as they may present themselves, a trust relationship has not yet developed. The response to that open, critical question has high cognitive demands. Considering this I now use graduated approaches in questioning beginning with more simple closed questions to build trust and begin dialogue, building to more reflective and/or evaluative open questions. A question matrix is a useful tool for formulating questions at different levels, beginning with more basic 'what is' questions and working up to more complex 'how might' questions (hainezee, 2013). Worley (2015) expands on the open/closed question

dichotomy by drawing a distinction between questions that are grammatically open/closed compared to those that are conceptually open/closed. The grammatical element simply describes the number of words required to answer the question (one or more) while the conceptual element describes the level of thinking, openness to divergent opinions and reflection required in a response. Questions that are grammatically open but conceptually closed might require multi-word answers, but require limited cognitive work. Whereas a grammatically closed-conceptually open question may be answered yes/no, but demands reflection and/or justification.

	Grammatically closed	**Grammatically open**
Conceptually closed	1. Is this source reliable?	3. What features make this a reliable source?
Conceptually open	4. Is subject expertise the same as authority?	2. What do we mean by authority?

(adapted from Worley, 2015)

In beginning discussions, grammatically-closed but conceptually-open questions (4) can be a useful starting point as they require a high level of thought, but an initially low level of articulation. From an initial survey of responses to break the ice, further prompts and probes can be used to create a dialogue.

In addition to using individual question techniques, I often also use think, pair, share exercises to allow students a greater amount of time to form their own opinion, rather than being put on the spot by me asking them an individual question (National STEM Learning Centre, 2020a). This allows for both additional time to reflect and form responses and emphasises that the teacher is not the only source of knowledge in my classroom. If I am asking for an opinion from students, I often display a range of different viewpoints on the board beforehand and ask students which they identify most with and to expand on this to give students more room for points of view that might disagree with my own. Finally, in questioning I use the bounce technique. In this technique, an answer from one student is 'bounced' to another student to respond to or build upon and this can be

repeated several times over (National STEM Learning Centre, 2020b). This provides some distance between myself and the students' responses, allowing them, I hope, to feel more free with their opinions.

In addition to thinking how I formulate questions and what techniques I use to elicit responses, I also consider my broader behaviours during questioning. When undertaking a questioning exercise, I preface it by outlining that I want to ask *some* questions so that a student answering an initial question is less likely to feel interrogated by surprise supplementary questions. In line with teacher transparency, I share the intentions I have in using questioning so that students understand the purpose and reasoning behind the questions I ask (e.g. "Now I'd like to ask some questions to check your understanding/get your perspectives/begin a conversation about…"). Finally, if I'm using questions to check comprehension I try to move the focus from the student's performance to my own. "Does that make sense to you?" as a question to check understanding of a concept or instruction implies a negative response is the fault of the learner. In contrast, "Have I explained that well enough?" asks for the same information, but focuses on my responsibility as the teacher to convey information effectively.

I have also begun to question the structure and purpose of a lot more of my in-class activities. A classic group work activity, for example, might have students working together in a particular format (say a poster or mini presentation), which they then present back to me and the group. Looking at this critically, I first questioned the exercise format. In many cases the group element was relatively arbitrary and often a convenience for me. Unless I explicitly needed a number of students to share opinions it could just as easily be an individual or paired activity as a group so students have the option to work as they felt most comfortable. I then reflected on the presentation element. By asking students to present findings back to me, I was essentially asking them to perform a desired set of behaviours and opinions for me which might influence how they approach the task. Instead, if I want students to share their conclusions, I am now more likely to do this within the groups, rather than in front of the whole class. This way they feel less that they are required to tell me what they think I want to hear.

Thinking critically about how I can make myself accountable to students in my classroom has led me to question my role and my relationship with my students. While I am still undeniably the authority figure within my classroom, practices of accountability mean that I try to use that power

more responsibly and thoughtfully, and it closes the distance between teacher and student.

Assessing and Evaluating Teaching Critically

I want to end this chapter by talking about how the emerging critical teacher might evaluate their practice and assess student learning. Reflection and transformative change (praxis) is fundamental in critical pedagogy and helps us grow in skill and confidence as critical teachers (Darder 2018). I don't attempt in this section to present a definitive plan for how assessment and evaluation of teaching and learning can be undertaken within critical library practice: it is beyond my knowledge and skill to do so. Rather, I hope to describe how my views on this topic have been informed by assuming a critical lens.

In writing this, I first wish to draw a distinction between assessment and evaluation in the context of information literacy instruction. For my purposes, I'm defining assessment as the objective measurement of student learning and/or performance in relation to learning outcomes, and evaluation as subjective data measuring student opinions and/or perspectives on a service or intervention. The former measures outputs from the teaching intervention (completed work, behavioural change, confidence levels etc.) while the latter primarily measures inputs (teacher performance, level of content etc.) I make this distinction because many teaching-librarians collect both assessment and evaluation data simultaneously via feedback forms which ask students to report both on educational impacts of the session alongside evaluations of the teacher and classroom environment (Coles & Perris, 2018; Cardiff University, 2016). Both assessment and evaluation exercises have implications for developing critical practices.

It would be remiss of me to discuss assessment and critical pedagogy without first acknowledging the problematic relationship critical educators often have with assessment—both as a concept and as a practice. Conceptually, for many critical educators assessment perpetuates a neo-liberal paradigm which commodifies education and rewards acquiescence to hegemonic capitalist values (Gardner & Halpern, 2016; Accardi, 2009). At a practice level, typical assessment methodologies are seen as failing to adequately describe or reflect the complexity of students' learning experiences (Gardner & Halpern, 2016). Assessment is fundamentally challenging for those academic librarians who do not teach their own

credit-bearing courses and are often instead reliant on one-shot sessions. Where the teacher-librarian has continued and consistent contact with students (through a credit-bearing course/module), assessment can be tailored to align to both information literacy objectives and critical concerns. Further, student-centred assessment formats such as reflective journals or portfolios can be used, which allow the student to present a broader array of evidenced learning in an individual manner (Accardi, 2010). For the librarian teaching in a 'one-shot' model this is rarely, if ever, possible due to time and resource constraints. Added to this is the complexity of information literacy as a field that includes skills, knowledge and behaviours that are context-specific and transferable. Opportunities for assessment in one-shot information literacy are thus generally limited to those that can either be completed within the timeframe of a single information literacy intervention (quizzes, self-reported confidence, observations), rely on students opting into post-intervention assessment (observations, portfolios, simulations) or infer learning-gain without student input (analysis of bibliographies, essay analysis, final grades, learner analytics) (Walsh, 2009). Arguably the first two options fall within a banking model and primarily test the ability to recall teacher-approved behaviours and strategies within an artificial environment. Use of externally-created rubrics and frameworks for information literacy assessment have the dual-problem of applicability to the unique circumstances and content of an individual lesson, and the risk perpetuating hegemonic power structures when those bodies advocating for their use are themselves uncritical (Accardi, 2010). Inference from other student-completed work may show, at best, a correlation between variables, but risks inaccuracy due to the difficulty in definitively demonstrating that any knowledge/skill exhibited is derived exclusively from the intervention.

In light of these considerations, when contemplating information literacy assessment I find myself cycling between two conclusions. On the one-hand I am minded to resist attempts to quantify the impact of my teaching. Philosophically, it stands in conflict to critical practices. Practically, it is too simplistic and prone to error. If a means does not exist that respects complexity in critical information literacy skills development, is student-centred and implementable within the confines of my practice, so be it. The nearest, best-fit option, for me, still feels insufficient; if you want to drive a screw into a wall but only have a hammer, you'd be better not attempting it. On the other hand, I recognise the inflexibility in my initial position. As Gardner and Halpern (2016, p.47) conclude "assessment

cannot be ignored," and it would be reductive to reject assessment altogether for the lack of a perfect means to implement it. The nearest workable compromise I have found is to use a range of assessment methods: summative self-reported confidence formative assessment questions, student and tutor feedback, and qualitative feedback. In discussions about assessment and impact I reiterate the issues and limitations inherent in collecting and interpreting this data. My mantra, both to myself and to my management, is that my contribution and my students' learning has value whether or not that is quantified.

I have on the whole fewer reservations with regards to integrating student evaluation into my critical practice. By its nature it feels more student-centred than most assessment practices and gives the opportunity to gain valuable implementable insight into both the classroom environment and teacher behaviours. My main concern with student evaluation practice centres on its relationship with the neoliberal agendas of commodification of education, students as consumers and control regimes posing as accountability measures (Sanders-McDonagh & Davis, 2018). Resisting these agendas whilst recognising the value of student voice can thus be a complex and contested balancing act. In attempting a critical use of student feedback, I focus less on the issue of whether or not to collect it and instead on the purpose and the nature of the data gathered. Feedback forms that require simple checkbox or Likert scale answers don't do justice to the complexity of learning as an endeavour. Questions which evaluate a lesson in terms of utility (e.g. "How useful did you find this library session?") present education as a commodity for which the learner should expect some 'return-on-investment'. Finally, evaluation form statistics, when used for 'accountability' rather than developmental functions such as annual appraisals or library impact reports, co-opt student voices to impose authoritarian control on education professionals.

In order to apply a critical lens, we should collect data that allows us to interrogate the lived experience of our teaching, inform and challenge our practice, and reduce inequality and marginalisation of different student groups (Accardi, 2010). We can explore ways to evaluate teaching more holistically. Rather than collect simple, easily-analysed quantitative data, we could seek to research the emotional response of students who have received library teaching. Do students feel more confident, less frustrated, have their values and preconceptions of the topic been challenged? Fundamentally has our teaching empowered them as learners? The purpose of data collection here is not to provide a set of headline statistics for an internal report, but rather to provide the rich data necessary to

reflect on our practices and content. This might necessitate a change in the means we use to collect data, eschewing breadth for greater depth.

Similarly, we should acknowledge that feedback at the end of an individual session shows only a snapshot of students' feelings at that moment. To gain a full picture of how students have responded to a session we need to look more broadly at student behaviours. Counterintuitively, an uptick in enquiries, appointments, or teaching requests from students who have attended a lesson should not necessarily be regarded negatively. Deep learning should prompt students to have further questions, so repeat contact demonstrates both that students recognise the value of the topic and that they feel comfortable enough to request additional input. Again, there is value in looking at the wider patterns of student behaviours in order to reflect on the impact of our teaching.

Finally, in order to either assess or evaluate critically, I would advocate the use of disaggregated data—collecting anonymised personal data such as gender, disability, ethnic and social backgrounds and other data points as relevant. Both research and analysis of outcomes have demonstrated that different groups of students have radically divergent experiences of education (Cole 2010). Analysis of aggregated data (where data from a whole cohort is analysed as a whole) has the potential to minimise differences between groups of students using (or not using) library services and teaching. We cannot, I believe, assume that library teaching and learning activities are uniquely immune from the wider structural inequalities of educational experiences present in our institutions. In contrast, where data has been disaggregated, the experience and outcomes of marginalised and/or minority groups can be explored in greater depth and strategies developed to address unequal treatment and outcomes.

Such analysis relies on the willingness of teacher-librarians to use and/or request data on personal characteristics when evaluating teaching activities, something that, in my experience, tends to make many librarians fairly uncomfortable. Traditionally our professional values have emphasised equality of access rather than equality of outcome (Koehler 2003). Thus, activities are designed and evaluated with universality in mind, but because of the make-up and experiences of the majority of librarians (i.e. mostly white, economically advantaged, cis-women) this tends to result in services that reflect the needs and priorities of the hegemonic culture at the expense of marginalised groups. The noted lack of diversity in the profession (CILIP/ARA 2015) may compound this by providing too few different lived experiences of higher education. That, as a profession, we

hold privacy as a core value (Foster and McMenemy 2012), might dissuade some librarians from collecting learner data that potentially impinges on the privacy of service users (including those attending library teaching). However, I would argue that collection of personal data to achieve just and equitable educational experiences (with proper safeguards) is warranted.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed a wide range of critical pedagogy practices I have tried to integrate into my daily teaching experiences. This list might seem extreme and like it leaves little room for actual library or information literacy content, but I do not intend this as a list of 'must-dos.' Rather, I hope to show a range of behaviours and practices as a selection of options for you to consider. To me, critical pedagogy is not about crafting the perfect critical session, but rather it is a process of using reflection and changing practice incrementally in order to challenge the dominant power hierarchies in education. It is a journey rather than a destination, and any advice I offer here is simply a snapshot of where I am and what I do as a teacher at this moment.

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