



## The Teaching-Research Nexus

A guide for academics and policy-makers  
in higher education

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### Examples from Australian universities

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#### **Enhancing Pre-Service Teacher Effectiveness by Incorporating Academic Staff Research Results into Course Content**

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**Broad discipline area:**

Education

- Applied Linguistics: Second Language Teacher Education

**Year level:**

- Undergraduate

**TRN strategy:**

- Drawing on your own research in designing and teaching courses

**Teaching and learning context:**

- Large group lectures

**Brief description of the initiative:**

This academic enhances student learning by referring to her own research when teaching in the Bachelor of Education (Secondary) pre-service teacher education program.

For example, when teaching modules in *Language in Use* with typical enrolment numbers of 80-100 students, this academic refers to her research on how to improve Samoan primary students' literacy and how to bridge the gap between the home and the school. This course aims to introduce students to critical social theories of language and literacy, the central issue being the construction of cultural diversity through language.

Incorporating this research into the curriculum has a beneficial flow-on effect for the academic, her students, and for the Samoan students with whom the future teachers will work in schools. The research findings enhance the academic's knowledge and expertise, and she passes this on in order to develop her teacher education students' intercultural sensitivity and knowledge about the Samoan culture. Through this strategy this academic raises the awareness of her teacher trainees about some

culturally and linguistically determined specific literacy learning difficulties that Samoan students might encounter in their future classrooms. As a result, the teachers will provide more effective learning opportunities for Samoan students in schools.

**References:**

Kearney, J., Dobrenov-Major, M., & Birch, G. ( July 6-9, 2005). Local responses to the needs of Samoan students: Implications for pre-service programs. Paper presented at the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of the Australian Association of Teacher Educators (ATEA): *Teacher Education: Local and global*. Gold Coast, Queensland.

Dobrenov-Major, M., Kearney, J., Birch, G. & T. Cowley (December 3-5, 2004) Bridging the Gap between Home and School: The Samoan Bilingual Cultural Maintenance Program. Paper presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual International Conference on Cognition, Language and Special Education Research: *Educating: Weaving Research into Practice* held at the Crowne Plaza Surfers Paradise, Australia.

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