



## The Teaching-Research Nexus

A guide for academics and policy-makers  
in higher education

[www.trnexus.edu.au](http://www.trnexus.edu.au)

### Examples from Australian universities

---

#### **Second Language Teachers' Reflective Research on their own Professional Performance**

Senior Lecturer Maria Dobrenov-Major  
Griffith University

**Broad discipline area:**

Education

- Applied Linguistics: Second Language Teacher Education

**Year level:**

- Postgraduate

**TRN strategy:**

- Building a small-scale research activity into assignments
- Infusing teaching with the values of researchers

NOTE: This is a good example of pedagogic research that is also discipline-based research in the field of Education.

**Teaching and learning context:**

- Assessment item

**Brief description of the initiative:**

Students undertake two research tasks in the elective course *Pedagogic Grammar*, offered in the Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics program. The students, typically an enrolment of 25-40, are usually already practising teachers who are undertaking a specialization in second language teaching (ESL or LOTE). In the first task, students report on their thinking and pedagogic intentions in relation to lesson design. In the second, students reflect on classroom implementation and effectiveness of the developed pedagogic model. The tasks' purpose is for students to learn how to reflect on the effectiveness of their pedagogic decisions and practice. These tasks align with the course aims of developing reflective teachers who are able to critically evaluate and flexibly change not only their pedagogic approach, but also their planning and course design, in order to meet diverse student needs across a range of learning and teaching contexts.

### Reflective Case Study: Assessment Task 1 (2,500)

- Identify a language learning problem (e.g. ESL students' reticence to talk, language learning anxiety, problems with tenses).
- Undertake a needs survey of the target group in order to establish the students' learning style and preferred learning strategies.
- Conduct library research that will assist in enhancing your knowledge and skills in developing a suitable pedagogic approach.
- Develop a specific pedagogic approach to meet the needs of the target group of learners experiencing the identified problem.
- Design a lesson - clearly specify the lesson objectives and show that all the components of the lesson work towards achieving the objectives.
- Provide a rationale for pedagogic decisions - explain the theoretical underpinnings of your lesson plan identified through research.
- Reflect on the thinking behind the lesson design and reveal your pedagogic beliefs and expectations in the light of relevant language acquisition and language teaching theories.

### Assessment Criteria

Criteria	%
Clear description of the learners for whom you designed your model and the context of your teaching	10
Clear description of your model and of your pedagogic philosophy and beliefs	20
Justification of your pedagogic choices in the light of the relevant linguistic, language teaching and learning literature	20
Demonstration of the coherence of this lesson with its larger context	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>60 %</b>

### Reflection on Classroom Implementation and Outcomes: Assessment Task 2 (2,500)

In this task students reflect on classroom implementation and effectiveness of the developed pedagogic model. They conduct a diary to evaluate their classroom experiences and construct an attitudinal questionnaire to evaluate the students' learning experiences.

Criteria	%
Reflect on the effectiveness of your lesson implementation	8
Reflect on how your lesson promoted and motivated learning	8
Reflect on students' perception on your lesson and on their learning	8
Reflect on how well your lesson met the set objectives	8
Reflect on possible changes/and improvement strategies	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>40%</b>

**For further details:**

Maria Dobrenov-Major

Griffith University

[m.dobrenov-major@griffith.edu.au](mailto:m.dobrenov-major@griffith.edu.au)