University educators from around Australia have been introduced to ACU National research into the ways in which primary students interact with new technologies, and how learning outcomes have been enhanced for all concerned.

ACU National Mathematics and Literacy Education Research Flagship researcher and School of Education (NSW) lecturer Associate Professor Maureen Walsh, pictured left, was one of only three academics selected to present at the Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Forum on the Teaching/Research Nexus, held recently in Adelaide.

Her presentation, on *Potentials for the teaching/research nexus in literacy teacher education*, showed how the research process enriches the experiences of primary school students, practising teachers, undergraduate and postgraduate education students and academics alike.

The benefits continue to flow out to the wider community through the adoption of innovative lesson plans devised during the research, through continuing research by participants, and in myriad other ways.

Dr Walsh was awarded a 2006 Carrick Citation for “a creative and sustained contribution to the field of literacy teacher education for university students and for the wider educational community”.

As the research continues, examples of theories of multimodal literacy, e-texts and classroom practice, including video exemplars, are being presented within several undergraduate English curriculum units and postgraduate literacy education units at the Strathfield Campus.

Having been introduced to research on multimodality, several Master’s of Education students have completed research projects on visual literacy, on the impact of interactive whiteboards, on the influence of technology on boys’ literacy, and more.

A PhD student is investigating how the incorporation of technology can enhance the reading of non-achieving adolescent students, and a number of teachers from the research project are enrolling in ACU National’s postgraduate courses.

A seminar was presented to ACU National students, staff and others by recent graduate Lisa McCallum, pictured above with students from St Therese’s Primary School, Mascot. “Lisa’s kindergarten students demonstrated how curriculum was integrated with the use of a Smart Board,” Professor Walsh said. “Lisa and her students are current finalists in a SMART World Teachers Day Video Contest.”

Reporting of the project’s findings to fellow University staff has increased awareness of pedagogical change, with investment in new technology such as interactive whiteboards, podcasting and video editing within teacher education units.

Communication of the research within the University’s Mathematics and Literacy Education Research Flagship has enabled results to be disseminated to students nationally in literacy education units, and has led to a collaborative research project and a planned publication between ACU National academics in Victoria and NSW, while School of Education (Victoria) senior lecturer Dr Josephine Ryan and lecturer Dr Anne Scott are involved in similar research.

“Further results will be communicated to teacher education students through the Catholic Education Office of Sydney’s intranet and through teachers presenting at conferences,” Professor Walsh said. “Collaborating partners have requested that similar research continue.”