Technology is transforming the very definition of what it means to be literate person in an information age. As we look to the future, teachers must prepare students not only to read and write, but also to become effective multimedia readers and writers. Integrating computer and Internet technologies into reading instruction provides the foundation for continued learning of both conventional and digital literacies as children proceed through school (Teale, Leu, Labbo, Kinzer, 2002).

Teacher educators have an important, but challenging charge to help pave the way to help prepare learners to not only to read and write, but also to become effective multimedia readers and writers. There is a scarcity of technologically-rich field placement experiences with role models who integrate literacy and technology to enhance and support the teaching of reading and writing. Universities can prepare students to learn how to integrate technology in ways that are integral to the literacy curriculum, but preservice teachers very often do not have the support in the development and implementation of their lessons for real children. Cooperating classroom teachers may not have a vision as to how technology can support their work, and even if they do, they are sometimes at a loss as to how to support preservice teachers in this new area.

Thus, the goal of this pilot project was to support the incorporation of technology into pre-service field experiences in a scaffolded way that builds on the strengths of all of the stakeholders involved in order to support the use of technology among cooperating teachers to reduce the digital divide (Goal two, PT3 grant). Presevice teachers developed cyber guided reading lessons drawing both on the expertise of the classroom teacher with intensive support from the university professor via email during the course of the development of the project.

More specifically the objectives of the program were:

1. To provide a vision to teachers and teacher educators as to how technology can transform instruction in ways that support and enhance research-based strategies and methods frameworks for effective literacy instruction using children’s literature.

2. To encourage integration of technology in field placements in a way that builds on the expertise of classroom teachers and provides scaffolded experiences for preservice teachers in the development and implementation of cyber guided reading lessons in their field placement sites.

The research questions addressed in the paper are:

1) In what ways did the development of cyberlessons impact preservice student learning outcomes in literacy and the integration of technology?
2) In what ways did the development of cyberlessons impact classroom teachers understanding and attitudes of how technology can be integrated into their literacy curriculum?

3) What were the strengths and weaknesses of the project in supporting the preservice teachers learning outcomes, and the development of literacy rich field placements?

The data sources made use of in the paper are 1) electronic transcripts between professor and preservice students in the development of projects, 2) students’ written reflections on their implementation of projects, 3) Think Sheets and Classroom Teacher Review Forms, 4) cooperating teachers response to projects. A content analysis will be conducted across data sources in which the range of responses will be described in light of each of the research questions.

The paper will provide a rich description of how preservice teachers enrolled in introductory comprehensive literacy instruction course worked in collaboration with preservice teachers and served as change agents in helping them to develop a vision for how technology can be used to enhance tried and true literacy instructional strategies. The paper will chronicle the development of sample lessons from the beginning to the final implementation and evaluation of them. Finding will be presented to evaluate and inform the further refinement of this project.

REFERENCES