



## Technology: a Tool Supporting Teacher Change in the Context of the Targeted Reading Intervention

Jeanne Gunther<sup>1</sup>, Marnie Ginsberg<sup>2</sup>, Lynne Vernon-Feagans<sup>2</sup>

Francis Marion University<sup>1</sup>, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill<sup>2</sup> (United States of America)  
[gunther@fmarion.edu](mailto:gunther@fmarion.edu), [marnie.ginsberg@unc.edu](mailto:marnie.ginsberg@unc.edu), [lynnevf@email.unc.edu](mailto:lynnevf@email.unc.edu)

### Abstract

The Targeted Reading Intervention (TRI) is a technologically-mediated professional development program and early reading intervention for teachers in rural areas (Ginsberg, Amendum, Mayer, Fedora, & Vernon-Feagans, 2006). Technology is central to the design of the program as it facilitates distance delivery of literacy coaching from a university-based reading specialist to the classroom of a participating teacher as she instructs one struggling reader at a time. The design of the program assumes technology to be supportive of change as it mediates university/teacher interactions. Indeed the successful use of technology in providing effective webcam-based literacy coaching to TRI teachers has been well documented (Amendum, Vernon-Feagans & Ginsberg, 2011; Ginsberg, Vernon-Feagans & Amendum, 2010; Vernon-Feagans & Ginsberg, 2010; Vernon-Feagans et al., 2011; Vernon-Feagans et al., 2012; Vernon-Feagans, Kainz, Hedrick, Ginsberg & Amendum (in press)). The present study demonstrates technology offers more support than a means to implementation in the TRI. This study describes the unanticipated ways technology came to support important teacher-belief changes while also facilitating the greater program.

A collective case study design (Merriam, 1998) was employed. The participants were an exemplary first grade teacher and five of her students during their participation in the TRI. Data for this study were collected for one school year and archived for a larger investigation. The data include video-recorded iChat interactions, emails, instant messages, phone interviews and a survey.

Results of this study indicate the participating teacher made important changes in her beliefs that positively impacted her experiences at work and her effective teaching of reading to her first grade students. These changes include teacher beliefs concerning: acceptance in the workplace, self-efficacy and identity. Technology was flexible in its support to the teacher in these changes.

This study demonstrates that in the context of a content-driven, student-focused intervention, the technology may support a teacher's professional growth in ways leading to improvements in students' reading abilities. Implications for program designers conclude this work.

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