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Recommended Citation

Mango, Oraib, "Oraib Mango TSSA Fall 2011" (2013). *Teaching Skills Study Awards (TSSA) Reports*. 80. <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/trc-tssa/80>

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FALL 2011 Teaching Skills Study Award (TSSA) Report

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Name of Conference Attended: American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) 2011, Denver, Colorado.

Teaching Strategy Studied: While, I attended many sessions that focused on innovative strategies for the teaching of foreign languages, I was mostly interested on the use of technology in the language classroom. I have learnt of new tools to use in the classroom as well as new ways to apply tools that I knew of.

Impact: As a result of this conference, I have started integrating these technology tools in the classroom. I re-examined my class objectives and explored ways that I can use technology to help students achieve higher levels of proficiency. I designed different online learning activities for students using wikis and blogs for increasing writing proficiency and cultural knowledge. The wikis offered students a chance to work collaboratively and offer scaffolding to each other. Blogs offered students space to post their writings in chronological order, add visuals and links to them and then share them with others. I designed Voicethread activities that aimed at improving students' speaking and listening skills. Voicethreads offered students online forums to practice speaking, and listening. They can listen to each other's responses and learn from them. I have used comics in Phonetics classes and students used them creatively. Students enjoyed them so much that they even opted to do more comics than I required for the class!

The ACTFL conference has left a huge impact on my teaching. In addition to what I mentioned above, I had the chance to meet and exchange ideas with professionals and leaders in the field of foreign language teaching.

It is opportunities like this that help us here at CSUSB to stay abreast of the latest in the field while also allowing us to take part in shaping that field.

It is thanks in large part to this grant, which allowed me to attend the ACTFL 2011 conference, that I myself will be presenting at the same conference in 2012, sharing with others the use of technology in the Arabic Language classroom.

Thank you for the opportunity and support.