This addition to the *New Ways* series from TESOL offers dozens of short articles, both conceptual and practical, on the teaching of culture in an ESL/EFL context. The book begins with the premise that “language and culture are dimensions of each other, interrelated and inseparable” (p. 4). Fantini goes on to equate communicative competence with language itself, which is a much more tenuous position. However, this equation lends only an underpinning to the material that follows.

In Part 1 (Introductory Articles–Conceptual Background for Activities), these premises are more fully explored in six different articles. These articles generally focus on the idea of intercultural competence, its definitions and justifications. The approach is clearly a sociolinguistic one—one that seeks to develop a general understanding of culture rather than a particular English-speaking culture. While this is probably the most practical approach, it leaves a gap for teachers who are perhaps not culturally fluent in a given English-speaking culture. Further examples of this weakness and its impact are discussed...
Parts 2-5 feature individual activities that develop competence in different areas: language-culture exploration, sociolinguistic exploration, culture exploration, and intercultural exploration. Within these chapters, teachers will find activities “submitted by contributors from around the world” (p. xii). These activities range from exploring cultural values in U.S. families, to simulations that investigate the general notion of culture.

Most instructors will no doubt find something of use within these chapters. However, the teacher in a non-native teaching environment may have difficulty implementing, or even understanding, a great number of the activities, as they seem to take cultural fluency (particularly with U.S. culture) as a given.

For example, in “Everyday Tasks (Operations)” by Fantini (p. 124), the activity says to “prepare a peanut butter and jelly sandwich” and “describe some of its cultural context.” In “Guess Who’s Coming to Visit?” (Conzett, p. 135), the instructor is asked to “explain the recent history of the U.S. civil rights movement.”

Other activities seem to presume a U.S.-based ESL situation. In “Exploring Cultural Values” (Seifer, p. 142), the introduction to the activity states that it is intended for ESL students in the U.S. in multicultural classrooms only. “Every Picture is Worth 10,000 Words” (Holder, p. 148) asks the instructor to “briefly explain the custom of 25th, 50th, and 75th wedding anniversaries in the United States” and to “show pictures.”

Of course, any of these activities could be adapted or edited to suit a particular teaching situation. However, less experienced teachers may not be as confident doing so. And, even for more experienced teachers, the reworking of the activities would take considerable time and effort, since the instructions are generally detailed and specific.

Part V of the book has the most substantial activities, that is, activities that encourage students to look at specific practices and compare different cultures. “Comparing Cultural Events” (Fitzgerald, p. 174) asks students to compare cultural celebrations, beginning with watching a film that illustrates such a celebration in the target culture. There are also activities that ask students to explore their own experiences with culture shock and miscommunication.

The final part of the book is a 17-page selected and annotated bibliography on works about language and culture. The references are wide-ranging and up-to-date. It would be helpful if they included a section on culture textbooks that might be used with students as well.

This book is primarily useful for experienced teachers who are in the U.S., or who are very fluent with U.S. culture. It will also be useful and interesting to teachers who want to explore the notion of culture and its dimensions with their students.

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New ways in teaching culture, a surety is a cycle.