

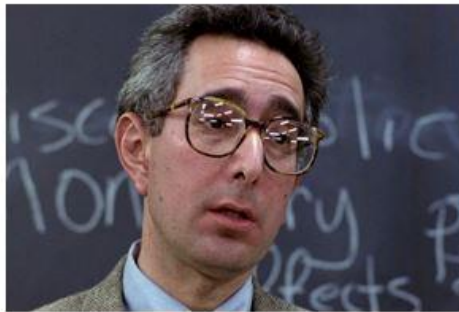
FACULTY COLLOQUIUM

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UC 222

12-12:50pm

Building “Stages for Sages” or Training “Guides on the Side”? Pedagogical Metaphors of the SoTL Literature



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The social science's linguistic turn highlights the constitutive power of metaphor in policy-making and scholarship. Metaphor's role in teaching gets far less attention. Yet we all use metaphor in our classrooms, both reflexively and subconsciously. Metaphor also frames our teaching philosophies, as in Alison King's conception of teacher-centered instruction as a "sage on the stage." This paper links conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) to international studies pedagogy. CMT posits the existence of a universal, naturalized, and largely subconscious set of "sticky" metaphors that structures human language and cognition. The "conduit" metaphor for communication is "sticky" in this sense. The "conduit" metaphor frames teaching as the "transmission" of information from teacher to student. It therefore supports an objectivist, teacher-centered paradigm while undermining learner-centered models in which students "construct" knowledge collaboratively. This raises some interesting questions: Is the "conduit" metaphor as widespread in the international studies SoTL as CMT would predict? If so, what challenges might this pose to proponents of learner-centered instruction? What alternative metaphors structure this discourse, and how do they cohere with teacher and student-centered paradigms? The paper addresses these questions with a discourse analysis of SoTL articles published in *International Studies Perspectives*.

Please come with your lunch; bring your colleagues and students too!