NCIEC

National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers

Critiquing &Deconstructing Metaphors: A Normative Ethical Framework for Community Interpreters

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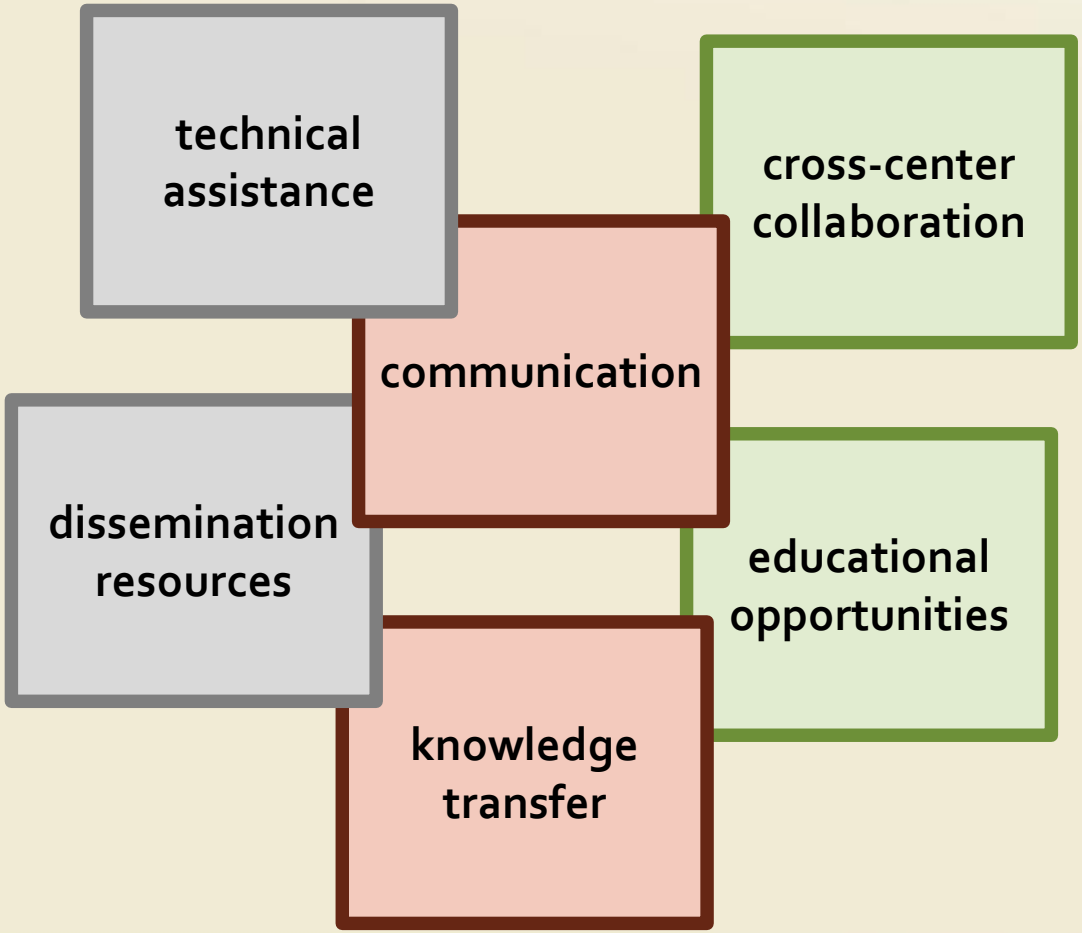
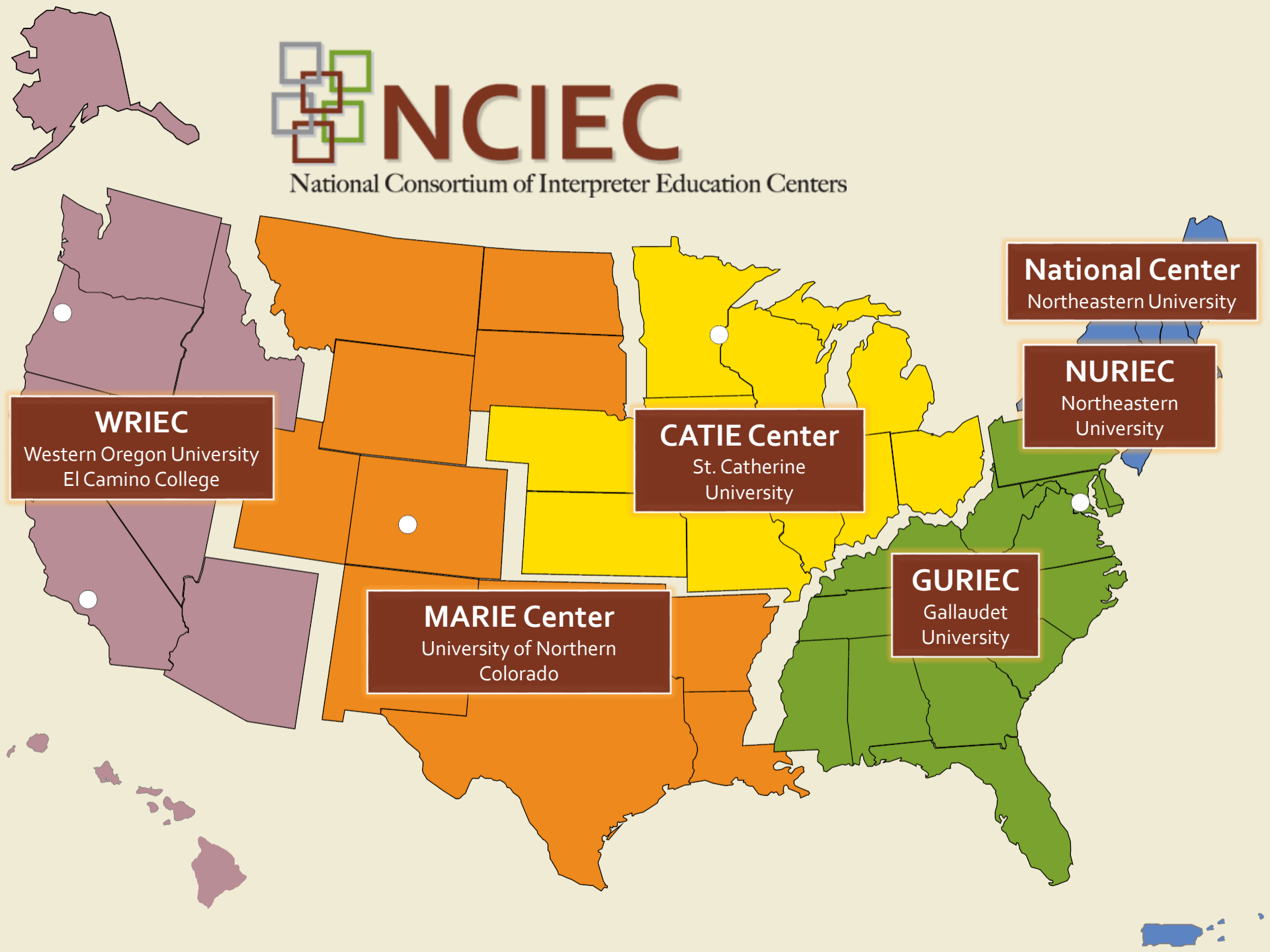
Consortium Mission

to connect and collaborate with diverse stakeholders in order to create excellence in interpreting




NCIEC
National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers
National Center
Northeastern University
NURIEC
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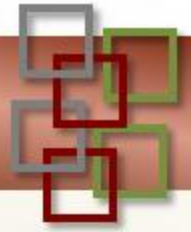
WRIEC
Western Oregon University
El Camino College
CATIE Center
St. Catherine University
GURIEC
Gallaudet University
MARIE Center
University of Northern Colorado

Normative vs. Descriptive Ethics



Normative Ethics

- What is the right action, what is the good behavior, what should people be doing?

Descriptive ethics

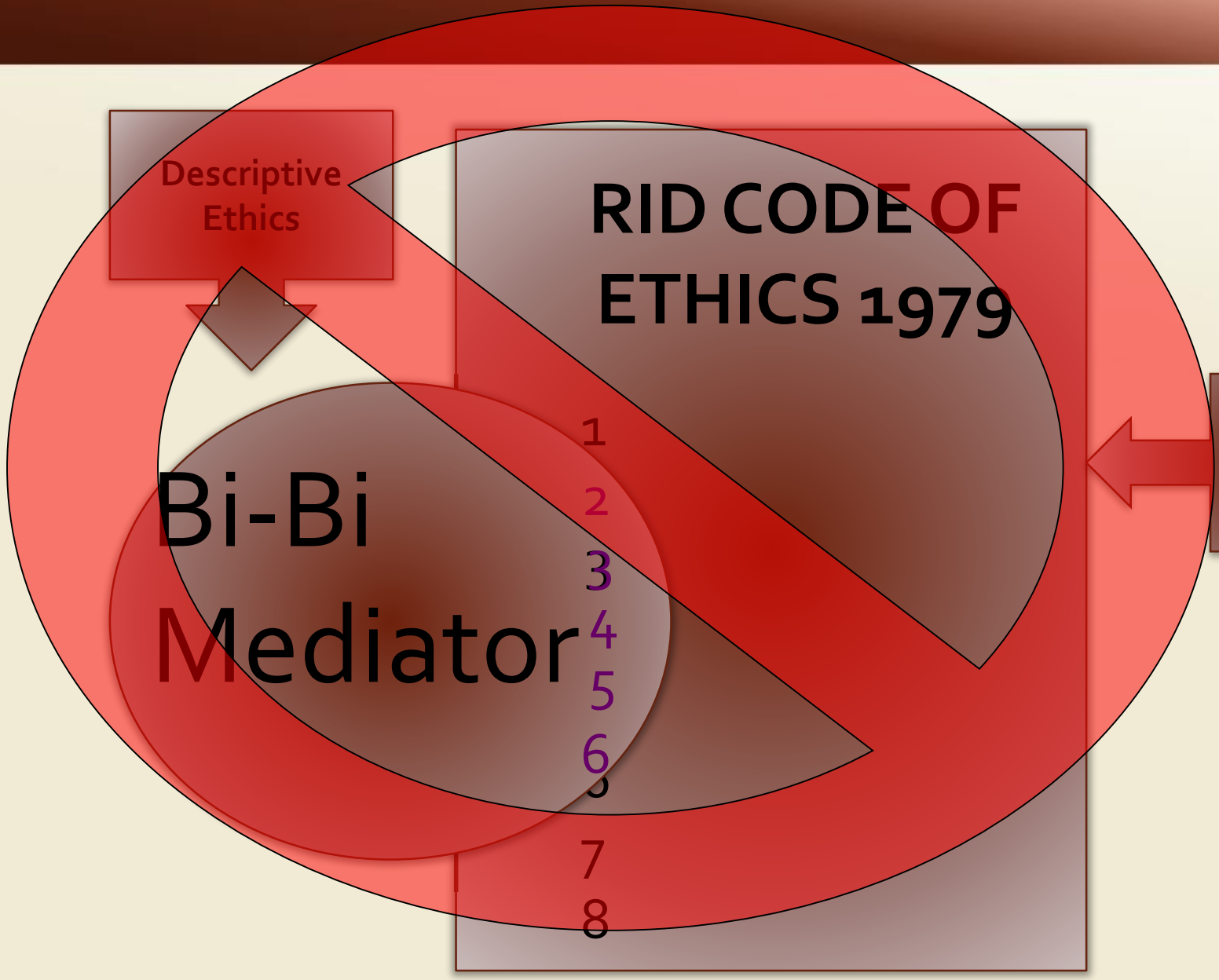
- What is the action, what is the behavior, what are people doing?

No mention of right, good, or should

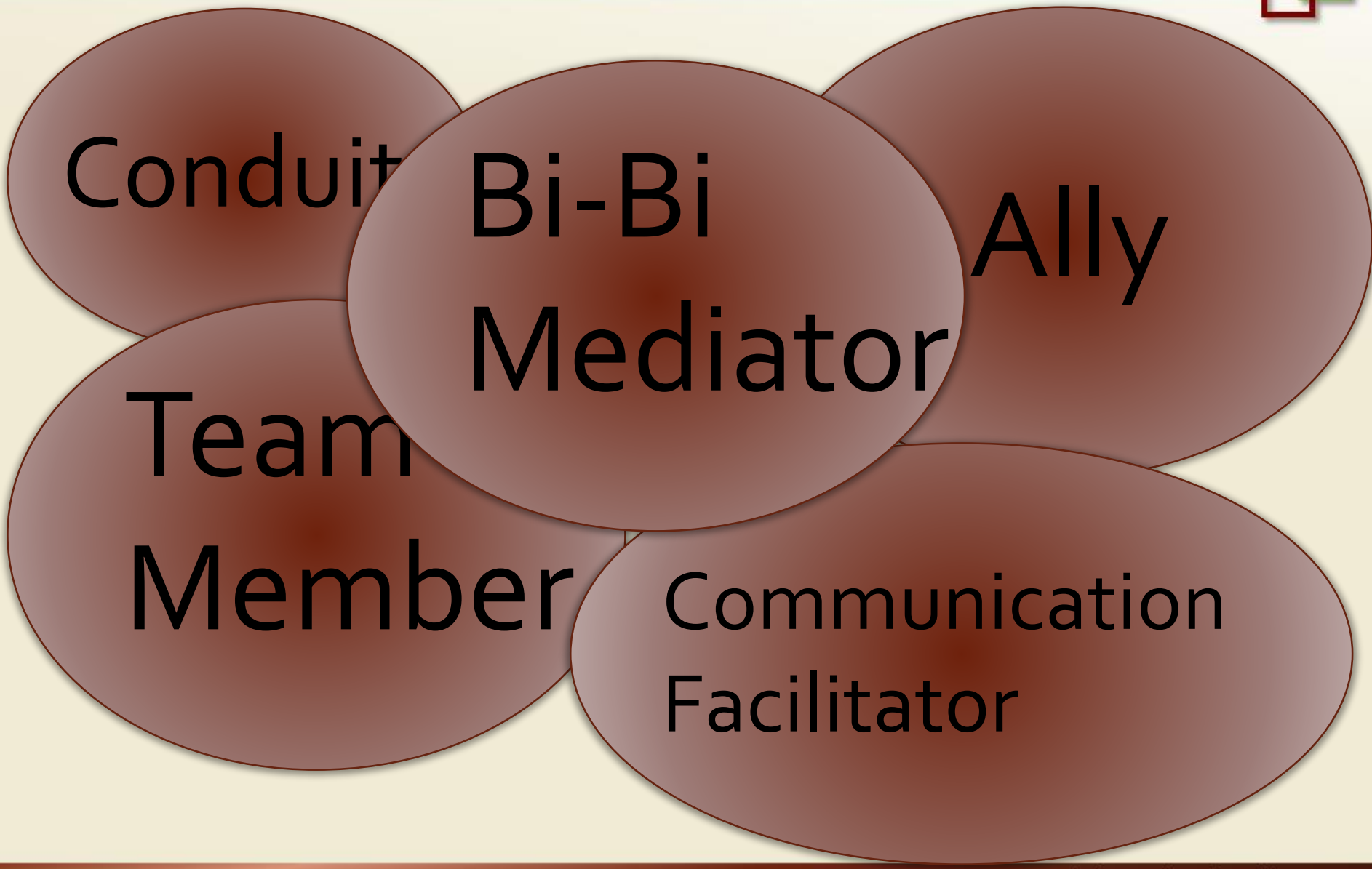
In other words…

Descriptive ethics *discovers* and *explains* behavior (metaphor is a typical tool)

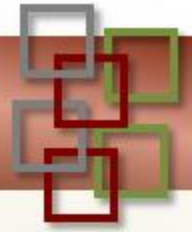
Normative ethics *evaluates* behavior (weighing consequences is a typical tool)


Descriptive Ethics
RID CODE OF ETHICS 1979
Normative Ethics
Bi-Bi Mediator
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

These are not constructs of evaluation



Evaluation in normative ethics



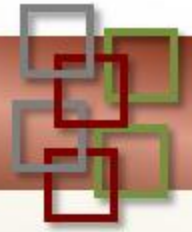
- Rules
- Values & principles
- Consequences
- Responsibility
- Incommensurable values
- Decision-making models

Require thinking to evaluate the behavior with consideration of…

Decision-making Models

- Define the problem / issue
- List the **options** for action
- Visualize the **consequences** of each option?
- Act accordingly
- **Evaluate** the decision

Frequently cited values from T&I



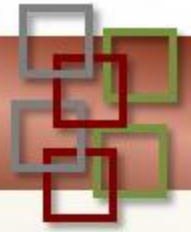
- Accuracy
- Neutrality
- Confidentiality
- Fidelity (Truthfulness)
- Respect for consumers & colleagues
- Professionalism

Is that all?

Metaphors belong in the bin?

Recycling Metaphors

Deriving values from metaphors



Metaphors

- Conduit
- Team member
- Cultural mediator

Values

- Autonomy / agency
- Self-determinacy
- Values of the setting
- Transparency
- Attending to unrecognized components of communication unique to individual or group

What do these metaphors mean?

- You need to know your place!
- Where are the boundaries?
- But I'm a human first!

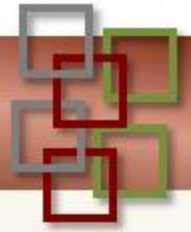
Examples of Allyship? Baker-Shenk

- Acknowledge the deaf person first
- Ask logistic questions to the deaf person(s)
- Stand/sit in body position that gives power to deaf person(s)
- Use culturally appropriate turn-taking behaviors (e.g., ways to interrupt)
- Share prior knowledge you have about how the system works (the context and expectations about what will happen) (Baker-Shenk 1991: 135 – 136)

Ally: Your examples?

Examples of Ally

Ally v. Adversary

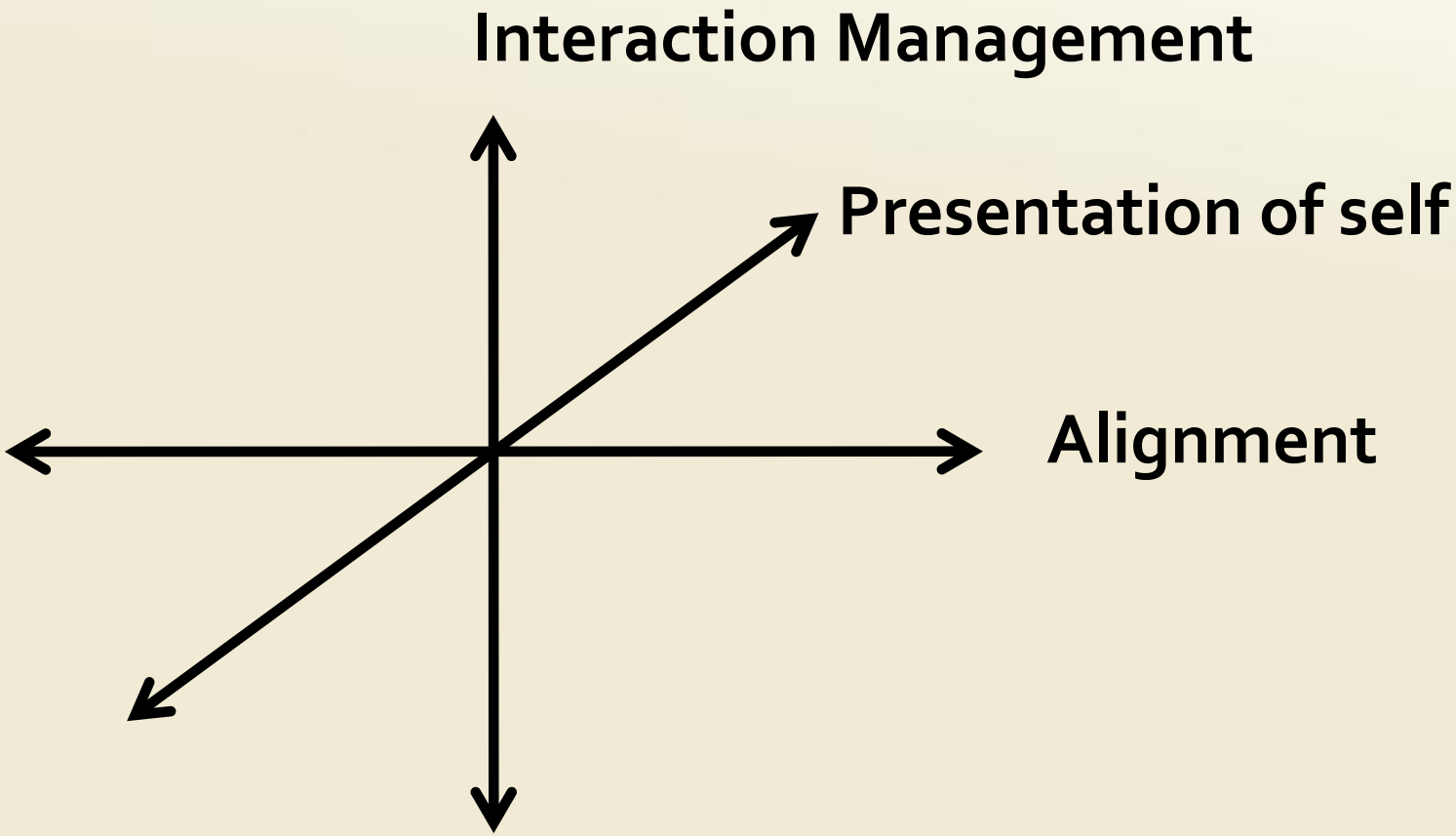


Member of the Team

Common values in healthcare

- Non-maleficence and beneficence
  - Do no harm & do good
- Rationing limited resources
- Patient partnership, education, and compliance
- Informed consent
- Not practicing outside of one's area of expertise

Role Space: Llewelyn-Jones & Lee

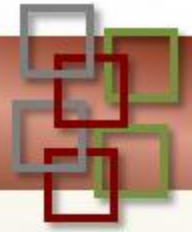


All of these terms come from **descriptive ethics**

Misuse of Role Space/ Correction

- **Should** I align myself with the clinician?
  - Sociologist: The interpreter aligned herself with the clinician when she _____[behavior]_____.
  - Ethicist: The interpreter prioritized _____[value]__.
- **Should** I present myself in ways that are more visible?
  - Sociologist: The interpreter presented herself in the interaction when she _____[behavior]_____.
  - Ethicist: The interpreter prioritized _____[value]__.
- **Should** I manage communication more actively?
  - Sociologist: The interpreter managed the flow of communication when she _____[behavior]_____.
  - Ethicist: The interpreter prioritized _____[value]__.

Misuse of Alignment



- ~~**Should** I align myself with the clinician?~~
  - Sociologist: The interpreter aligned herself with the clinician when she _____[behavior]_____.
  - Ethicist: The interpreter prioritized _____[value]__in her decision and forfeited the value of _____[value]__.

Consider this situation…

A deaf person is a member in group therapy. On this particular day the group is learning about a relaxation technique called progressive relaxation. The therapist instructs everyone to lie down, close their eyes and begin to focus on their toes. The deaf person started to lie down when the interpreter asked to speak to the therapist before she started…

How would a sociologist explain it?

Behavior: The interpreter suggested that the deaf person get the instructions first in order to do the alternating tensing and relaxing exercise. That way she could open or close her eyes as she wished.

Sociologist: The interpreter **aligned** herself with the clinician.

- *Stepped out of role*
- *Acted as a member of the team*
- *Crossed boundaries*

How would an ethicist evaluate it?

Ethicist: The interpreter prioritized:

- Equalizing participation experiences between deaf and hearing members
- Furthered the goal of the event: for members to experience and learn about relaxation technique

Ethicist: The interpreter forfeited:

- What value do you think?

Misuse of Presentation of Self

- ~~**Should** I present myself in ways that are more visible~~?
  - Sociologist: The interpreter presented herself in the interaction when she _____[behavior]_____.
  - Ethicist: The interpreter prioritized _____[value]__and forfeited _____[value]__ .

Consider what happens next…

After the relaxation exercise, the group along with the interpreter left the group room. In the stairwell, one of the hearing members of the group says to the interpreter, "My aunt is an ASL interpreter; she lives in Toronto…" The deaf person is ahead and is not paying attention to the conversation.

How would a sociologist explain it?

Behavior: The interpreter responded to a hearing group member's comment about his aunt by asking how many years she's been working as an interpreter?

Sociologist: The interpreter had a high level of presentation of self.

- *Stepped out of role*
- *Acted as a member of the team*
- *Oppressed the deaf person*

How an ethicist would evaluate it?

Ethicist: The interpreter prioritized:

- Responded in kind to a group member's attempt and engagement
- Advanced (or at least didn't hinder) the sense of rapport, trust and safety amongst herself and the group members

Ethicist: The interpreter forfeited?

Misuse Communication Management

- ~~**Should** I manage communication more actively?~~
  - Sociologist: The interpreter managed the flow of communication when she _____[behavior]_____.
  - Ethicist: The interpreter prioritized _____[value]__.

Consider what happens next…

As the interpreter is ready to leave, the therapist asks to set up the next appointment for individual therapy. As the deaf person is writing the time / date in her book the therapist starts talking and explains the logistics. The deaf person looks up and in the middle of explaining about booking interpreters but the interpreter is behind. The deaf person interrupts to ask about interpreters. The interpreter signs *just a moment* as she finishes the interpretation.

How would a sociologist explain it?

Behavior: The interpreter signs "just a moment" to the deaf person as she continues her interpretation that has already been answered but is delayed because of time lag.

Sociologist: The interpreter managed the flow of communication.

- *Oppressed the deaf person*
- *Took advantage of her hearing privilege*
- *Crossed boundaries*

How would an ethicist evaluate it?

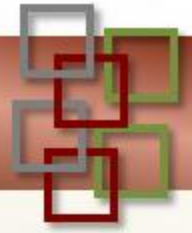
Ethicist: The interpreter prioritized:

- Accuracy and completeness of information
- Reveals the original communicative intention of the hearing person
- Addressed the impact of her time-lag

Ethicist: The interpreter forfeited?

Evaluating Through Values?

Frequently cited values from T&I



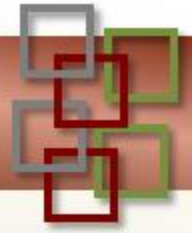
- Accuracy
- Neutrality
- Confidentiality
- Fidelity (Truthfulness)
- Respect for consumers & colleagues
- Professionalism

Is that all?

Four Core Principles of Service Professions

- Autonomy
- Non-maleficence
- Beneficence
- Justice (usually of a utilitarian type: The greatest good for the greatest number of people)

The Theme of Cooperation



- Anthony Pym: From T&I studies
- James Rest / Kohlberg: From moral philosophy
- RID: As evidenced in standard practice papers

Cooperation T&I Literature

- Pym: the translator's goal should be to, "promote long-term cooperation between cultures" (2000: 181).
- Pym: Translating is by nature a cooperative act" (2000: 182). In light of that, "defection [from the professional aim of cooperation] is definitely not a professionally correct move" (2000: 185).
- Pym: "The translator is there to facilitate the search for cooperation, not to negotiate on behalf of one or other of the parties"
- Chesterman: Often, the ethics of being in service to the other conflicts with being in service to codes of ethics

Justice-Reasoning

- James Rest and Lawrence Kohlberg: Cooperation is the ethically most advanced and justifiable in reasoning.

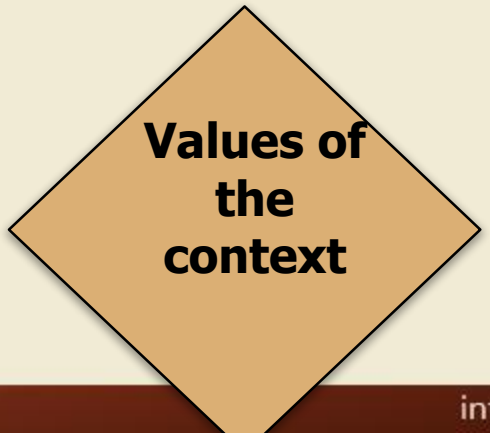
Barriers to Collaboration

- Assumptions that any engagement ("interpreter agency") by hearing or deaf people is automatically problematic
  - Dean, 2014
- Biasing normative messages that say to interpreters, "It's not your job to worry about _____; or "it doesn't matter"
  - Dean, 2014
- Hearing people as 'adversary' (to create allies)
  - Dean, 2015

Cokley, 2000: Exploring Ethics

Community Interpreting Values: Prototype

- Accuracy of the message
- Neutrality
- Confidentiality
- Fidelity (Truthfulness)
- Respect for consumers & colleagues
- Professionalism
- Autonomy / agency
- Self-determinacy
- Laissez faire / non-interference
- Transparency (not invisibility)
- Service-based values (beneficence, etc.)



Comments & Questions

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