

Possibility of Testable Explanations in Conflictology

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Abstract: *The analysis of various approaches to conflict management as an objective scientific interdisciplinary direction is given. The way of bringing conflictology to obtaining objectivity results of conflict resolution is proposed. The possibility of conflict investigation using vibraimage technology is shown.*

Keywords: *conflict, conflictology, mediation, vibraimage technology, objectivity.*

Understand the question: “What is modern conflictology?” — not easy enough. Today there is no single answer to this question. Some consider it a separate, independent science at the intersection of psychology, sociology, political science and other sciences, while others consider conflictology only as a complex scientific discipline. Still others rightly believe that conflictology is an interdisciplinary field, within the conflict is studied by a whole range of sciences, each of which has its own subject of research and formalizes its ideas into private theories, for example: conflict psychology, conflict sociology, political conflict management, etc. Those who have confirmed themselves in the opinion that today conflictology is “a system of more or less interconnected scientific paradigms, each of which explains certain sides or types of conflicts” (Reshetnikova, 2009) are also right. The lack of unity ideas about the place of conflict management in the traditional system of sciences (philosophical, mathematical, natural and technical, social) did not become an obstacle to the development in Russia of the practical activities of specialists. Conflictologist provides mediation services to those people (and organizations) who believe that their interests are infringed upon, but they themselves cannot find a way out of a difficult problem situation.

The purpose of this work is to study the possibility of objectifying the results in conflict management using vibraimage technology.

Conflictology as a Practical Activity (Negotiations, Arbitration, Mediation, etc.)

In conflictology, reasoning about conflicts has always been much more popular than empirical studies of real conflict situations (Antsupov & Shipilov, 2006). However, the tasks of conflict management are not only cognitive-theoretical, but also utilitarian-practical: to help people understand what to do with conflicts (Karmin, 2000). In 1993, the first in Russia Conflict Resolution Center (CRC) was opened in St. Petersburg, and in 1997 the Conflict Resolution Club was created, uniting

professional conflict resolution mediators (Kurbatov, 2005). Over the five years of CRC existence (from 1993 to 1998), about 5 000 people turned to it for help, and the number of certified conflict resolution mediators (trained in a 300-hour international program) reached 30 people (Karmin, 2000). An increase in interest in mediation as a practical procedure for resolving conflicts with the help of a mediator (mediator) was facilitated by the adoption by the Russian state in 2010 of the Law on Mediation (FZ-193 of 26.07.2010). The role of the judiciary in the spread of mediation has grown. In recent years, the demand for training in mediation has increased, spreading not only to psychologists, but also to lawyers (advocates).

Conflictology in the Education System (Conflictology Education)

Practice (discussed above) shows that attempts to resolve conflicts based on common sense and life experience often fail (Banykina & Stepanov, 2006). The need for knowledge of conflict management has matured and is recognized in many countries of the world. In Russia, the formation of an educational program in conflict management took place in 1992 on the basis of the Faculty of Philosophy of SPBU (originally under the heading Specialization of Political Science). In 1999, the first State Educational Standard for Higher Professional Education (SES VPO) was developed and approved, and already in 2008, training of conflict experts was conducted in 17 universities of the country (Strebkov, 2008). Today in Russia there are already 34 universities preparing specialists in the specialty 37.03.02. "Conflictology". By order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation dated February 14, 2011, No. 187, the Program for the Training of Mediators was approved, which is an additional educational program for professional retraining. Mediation methods are increasingly being used in Russian schools, creating School Reconciliation Services, which help to resolve conflicts that arise within the school, with the involvement of students who lead conciliation meetings.

Conflictology Crisis as a Methodological Problem

The fact of institutionalization of conflictology in science, practice and education does not mean that, at a fundamental level, the differences in understanding the essence of the conflict have been overcome. "Theories of conflict today represent a certain mixture of various views, hypotheses, typologies, attempts to conceptualize the subject of research (more or less successful), generalization of the results of empirical research and a number of more or less successful attempts to model this phenomenon" (Svetlov & Semenov, 2011). Analyzing the problems of the formation of the conflictological paradigm, Semenov points out that within the framework of the so-called "imprecise sciences" (meaning the sciences of the humanities) "...the study of the conflict is carried

out, as a rule, with the help of a language not marked with the proper logical rigor” (Semenov, 2008).

However, the point is not only in the language of “imprecise sciences”, but also in the very complex, multi-dimensional socio-psychological nature of the conflict, which requires non-disciplinary reason for a holistic understanding of its essence (thinking limited by the framework of just one discipline: either sociology or psychology, or rights, etc.), but synthesizing or creating (Gardner, 2006). Assuming that such types of mind are characteristic of the best representatives of philosophy (logic) who study conflicts, and the most successful practitioners of conflict management, let us demonstrate their capabilities in theoretical understanding of the conflict with the following three examples. Taken together, they most vividly illustrate what the crisis of conflict management is at the methodological level.

Example 1. Dr. Baturin in the chapter “Philosophy of Conflict” states: “So, the conflict is an integral, complex and dynamically developing attribute of any society, representing the unity of its rational and irrational content aspects. In terms of its rational content, the conflict is fundamentally cognizable by scientific means and instruments. In terms of its irrational content, the conflict is fundamentally unknowable by scientific means and tools and emphasizes that in a conflict, integral unity is ensured by both objective and subjective factors, without which it is impossible to either understand or manage the conflict in a definite way (Ratnikov, 2011).

Example 2. A specialist in the field of logic and methodology of science, Dr. Svetlov developed on the basis of a systematic approach, supplemented by elements of graph theory and probability theory, dynamic analysis and game theory, several theoretical models of conflict. Combining them into a Unified Theory of Conflict, however, “the level of formalization of procedures requiring the use of mathematical and logical apparatus” was an obstacle to its use theory in practice.

It is important to note that Svetlov considering the evolutionary function of the conflict, in contrast to Baturin, who concluded that the conflict in terms of its irrational content is “fundamentally unknowable by scientific means and tools”, believes that the conflict is cognizable: it is impossible. Any conflict has a special internal logic of origin and resolution, which allows it to be successfully modeled and analyzed (Semenov & Svetlov, 2011).

Example 3. German expert practitioner with 30 years of experience in conflict management Dr. Gerhard Schwarz says that when he is asked at lectures and seminars to define the concept of conflict, he answers as follows. “Of course, something similar exists, but definitions within the framework of a logical system — and only those who can define this or that concept as a whole — is insufficient to reflect all facets of the conflict” and replaces the question of the definition and causes of conflicts with the question of the meaning of conflicts (Schwarz, 2006). It is interesting to note that Schwartz further argues that it is impossible to find out the meaning of conflicts based on European logic. “In order to understand the meaning of conflicts, we must leave the sphere of European logic that is so familiar to us and recognize the contradictions . . . , . . . we must recognize the contradictory to a friend, the dimensions of conflicts are equally significant” (Schwarz, 2006).

The Problem of the Development Lack of the “Deneral Theory of Conflict” and How It can be Overcome

1. First of all, practitioners-mediators and teachers of conflictology accept as a fact that the time has come when a person’s emotions and his behavioral characteristics can be measured as standard physical quantities, and the accumulated empirical results of these measurements can theoretically comprehend and on this basis create new conceptual models of various conflicts that are in demand in practice. (or check the provisions of old concepts and conflictological theories of the middle level).

2. Formulate a hypothesis that there is a connection between conflictology and computer technologies based on vibraimage, which are developed for the quantitative measurement of psychophysiological parameters of a person, similar to the one that in any natural science connects its subject and method.

3. In this hypothesis, we should talk about the connection between the conditionally negative emotions of the subjects, participants in real conflicts (part of the subject of conflict resolution) and the vestibular-emotional reflex, on which vibraimage technology is based.

4. According to practicing mediator Elena Ivanova (Associate Professor of the Department of Conflictology, SPBU) testing at various stages of conflict management of the participants in the dispute, quarrel or conflict (opponents who have given their consent) using vibraimage technology open up the opportunity for conflict management to effectively use this technology to solve the following tasks:

- in the field of practical conflict management: improving the quality of conflictological counseling for participants in school, family, organizational conflicts and other conflicts; increasing the likelihood of successful negotiations with a cooperative attitude. Expanding the possibilities of conflictological expertise; objective determination of the media ability at the entrance to mediation in order to exclude its conduct with persons who have an unacceptably high level of emotional intensity (see the test on the website of the Arbitration Court of the Republic of Tatarstan <https://tatarstan.arbitr.ru/process/test>);
- improving the accuracy of predicting the violation of the mediation agreement and preventing breakdown; objective determination of the level of professional burnout of representatives of extreme professions participating in conflicts (police officers, employees of the Federal Penitentiary Service, firefighters, pilots, etc.);
- in the field of conflictological education: conducting longitudinal research with testing “at the entrance and at the exit” of university students who studied for 2 years on the master’s program “Conflictology”, in order to objectively assess the nature of changes (competencies) and improve the quality of the educational process. Creation for bachelor students enrolled in the “Conflictology” program, a methodology for choosing an individual trajectory of training based on determining the area of his maximum abilities and taking into account the characteristics of personal characteristics. Reduce intrapersonal conflict, conducting vocational guidance tests of mediators, orienting them towards creating effective relations with the employer (a person in his place);

- in the field of research in conflict management: solving research problems aimed at managing conflicts in organizations with increased social tension (police departments, primary medical care, FSIN institutions, etc.). Development on the basis of vibraimage technology of new scientifically grounded methods of teaching mediation in order to improve the quality of teaching, for example, the ability to empathy; development of new technical devices operating on the principle of biological feedback (self-regulation), and much more, the consideration of which is beyond the scope of this article.

Materials and Methods

Vibraimage technology (Minkin, 2017; 2020) has shown its effectiveness in solving practical problems of objectifying results in the field of psychology (PsyAccent, 2020), multiple intelligences and human abilities (Minkin & Nikolaenko, 2017), medicine (HealthTest, 2020) and security (Minkin & Tseluiko, 2014). To use the vibraimage technology in the field of conflict management, it is necessary to develop a special program tailored for the problem of conflict management, but to create such a program, it is first necessary to develop objective principles of the conflict resolution methodology. It seems to me that such a problem can be solved, since the reproducible test results (Minkin, 2020) showed the possibility of measuring the characteristics of consciousness and the unconscious using vibraimage technology.

Discussion

All methods in the sciences are divided into only two types: theoretical and empirical. Any scientific article is: dominance of theory, dominance of empiricism or their synthesis. An excellent prototype of my article was written in the field of empirical knowledge (Kolyuchkin et al., 2014), it deals with methods and techniques, in particular, psychological testing, the results of which, for a number of reasons, do not meet the scientific criterion — intersubjectivity (violation of the requirement of reproducibility). Revealed the need to “create more perfect systems that contribute to the objectification of the results of psychological testing.” Said article was written on the basis of an analysis of a large number of publications by researchers of psychologists who solve practical problems. If these works did not exist, then it would be impossible for the authors to write such an article, there would be nothing to analyze. The second point is related to the first, but already concerns my situation. When I try to write an article on the topic “Possibilities of objectifying results in conflict management”, I am faced with the problem of a real absence in conflictological sources (articles, monographs and textbooks) of publications about empirical studies of conflicts. For example, about the results obtained by testing participants in an interpersonal conflict (for example, their assessment of the dynamics of stress at the stages of pre-conflict, during the period of escalation and in the process of mediated reconciliation, etc.). In such a situation, it is inevitable that in order to avoid

popularization and maintain the level of scientificity, one has to disclose one's topic at a theoretical level (the latest version is already an attempt at a methodological level). This means that even if I put all my reasoning into logic, I will not get very close to the prototype and will not solve the problem. Since logic will lead me to the recognition of conflict management not as a science, but as a complex interdisciplinary discipline (based on such social and humanitarian sciences as sociology, psychology and political science). Why it is important in this case?

In science is important to obtain not just results, but results that are objective data on the subject of research. For complex disciplines, i.e. on conflict management, this requirement cannot be extended. Since complex disciplines do not produce their own new (especially empirical) knowledge, they receive new knowledge by combining the knowledge of other sciences. Today, conflicts are studied by individual sciences (psychology, sociology, political science, cultural studies, etc.) within the framework of their subjects, and in practice mediators (mediators) who have nothing to do with conflict management (they are psychologists) are engaged in resolving their individual types.

Anatoly Antsupov (Antsupov & Shipilov, 2006) consistently develops conflictology as an independent objective science. However, it will not become an independent science until it overcomes fragmentation. Its "sociological wing" falls into the group of social sciences, and its "psychological wing" falls into the group of the humanities. As a result, there is no integrity. But integrity is possible! For example, if testing participants in an interpersonal conflict will provide such objective information about their behavioral characteristics (Minkin, 2020), which will be correlated with some indicators, criteria and indicators for assessing the conflict (Antsupov & Baklanovsky, 2009). Or, if we test team members (30–50 people) with a vibraimage and diagnose the ripening of a conflict in a given organization on the basis that the number of employees who have an increase in the "danger" indicator is simultaneously increasing. The integrity of conflictology is possible if we add cybernetic psychology (Minkin, 2020) to the traditional psychophysiology, lost in the subjects of psychology and physiology and forgotten by everyone, and turn it into modern psychophysiology, which has the integrity that the traditional one never dreamed.

The only difference here is that without this integrity, conflict management cannot be considered an independent science, because without this integrity, a unified theory of conflict is not created (there is no objective knowledge, i.e., empirically (measured) data on human behavior in different types of conflict).

Conclusion

The results obtained by vibraimage technology (Minkin, 2017; 2020; Minkin & Nikolaenko, 2017) in the field of other sciences suggest the possibility of obtaining objective results in conflict resolution. Most likely, for this it is necessary to go through the standard way of performing exploratory research, applied research and standard R&D. The approximate time required for the practical obtaining of an objective result in conflict management in this case will be 4–5 years. If a society is interested in an objective resolution of conflicts, then there are technical possibilities for this.

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