

Gratefulness as a Life Principle: Essence and Diagnostics

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this paper is to present the results of the study detailing the essence of the "gratefulness" phenomenon as a quintessence of morality in the context of today's world and its values. The methods of the research were theoretical analysis of the works of philosophers, psychologists, philologists, and pedagogues on the structure and essence of the notion "gratefulness" as well as the method of diagnostic experiment. A review of various treatments of gratefulness is suggested, ranging from the "feeling", "capacity", "attitude", "concept" to "indicator", "prerequisite", "limiter", "virtue", "duty", "obligation" and so on. An attempt is made to characterize "gratefulness" through description of its components and indices of its formation and a portrait of an adolescent having a high level of its formation is given. A complex of author's diagnostic techniques (in the forms of questionnaire, ranking, essay) worked out on the basis of the theoretical analysis and the current condition of gratefulness formation in adolescents from various types of schools is described. A comparative analysis of gratefulness formation in those schoolchildren who have development disorders and in normally developing ones is given.

KEYWORDS

Gratefulness, value, principle, duty, morality

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Introduction

The authors' addressing the phenomenon denoted by the term "gratefulness" is associated with searching for and detailing the characteristics of a morally brought up subject of education (a preschooler, a schoolchildren, a student) (Berdnikova, 2005). The authors believe the ability to be grateful is included in the characteristics of "aristocratism" adopted by E.A. Yamburg (2007) as a criterion of good manners of a modern person, despite its seeming paradoxicality and untimeliness. So what is understood by gratefulness? Why is it necessary to form one? To whom must and can it be addressed? Within a pedagogical study, the question is also important to what extent this quality (value) is formed in a present-day schoolchild, in a person with disabilities and

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in one having a normal development. To what of the above categories of learners is the quality peculiar to a greater or smaller extent?

In line with the subject of the authors' scientific interest, they have paid attention to the fact that in the works of a modern researcher (Volodina, 2011), within the considered system of the Russian family's traditional spiritual and moral values of upbringing, it is such moral value as "appreciation and *gratefulness* (italicized by the authors – E.S.) to the ancestors" that had occupied the key place up to the second half of the XIXth century, with the ancestors meaning the nearest and further relatives, members (representatives) of the family. As for the analysis of the text of "Development strategy of upbringing in the Russian Federation until 2025" (2015), it has shown that the accent is placed on the necessary upbringing in children of a feeling of respect for father, mother, teachers, older generation, peers, other people in the section "Upgrade of the upbringing process with the modern achievements of science taken into account and based on the Russian traditions". However, such value as gratefulness is not mentioned there directly.

Appeal to contemporary foreign sources (Douglas, 2000; Durkheim, 2011; Emmons, 2013; Emmons, 2016; Foskett & Lumby, 2003; Kincheloe, 2002; Neckerman, 2007; Peterson, 1992; Emmons, 2016) also showed a considerable interest of researchers and global education community to the issues related to the new framework of educational policy; the causes of school destruction, including moral education in metropolitan areas, as well as theoretical and applied aspects of the "new science of gratitude". Meanwhile, today's social situation lies the way that a person's world is characterized by his increasingly more egoistic and far not moral manifestations (Benjamin, 2012). The capacity for gratitude is more and more often expressed only in emoticons sent to each other via social networks or in a material reward for help or a service. Notably also, as the authors' analysis has shown, that the pedagogical studies pay not enough attention to the research of the phenomenon of gratefulness as a human quality and methods of its upbringing. Moreover, within therapeutic education, it would be interesting to check the supposition about the fact that learners with health limitations (HL) must have more developed gratefulness rather than normally developing children. The reason behind this is that a larger quantity of people from their surrounding perform actions-benefits towards them based on their needs and the necessity of a permanently higher care about this category of children.

Literature Review

Theoretical analysis of the notion "gratefulness" given in different dictionaries, has shown it is determined via such categories as "feeling", "capacity", "attitude", "indicator", "prerequisite", "limiter", "virtue", "duty", "obligation" and others (Efremova, 2000; Ozhegov & Shvedova, 2015; Dictionary in ethics, 1983)

For instance, the Definition dictionary (Ozhegov & Shvedova, 2015) treats it as "a feeling of gratitude to somebody for a good deed, attention, service rendered". The "Philosophical encyclopedia" says it is a "feeling of obligation, respect and love for another person (in particular, ones expressed in the appropriate actions) for a benefit paid by the person". The authors consider it quite fair that the psychologists stress the moral basis of this feeling: they view



the capacity for gratitude rooted in the babyhood experience as one of the primary indicators of moral sensitivity (responsiveness), as a prerequisite for more complicated moral feelings and capacities – trust, empathy, benevolence. A developed capacity for gratitude holds a person back from such destructive feelings as greed, jealousy, and envy (Klein, 1997).

Turning to the etymology of the word "gratefulness", its Russian counterpart (literally, similar to "good gift giving") also highlights the specific action of gift giving as a dowry, offering, handing over. Gratitude as a special kind of gift giving is understood gradually, with its understanding as mere mutuality characterizing the functional, pecuniary relations always remaining. Meanwhile, the philosopher had for a long time stressed the elevated, actually ethical meaning of gratefulness. The addressee of a true and complete gratefulness must be God, and its subject – all God's creations.

The analysis of sayings of thinkers of various times and peoples (Seneca, 1977; Klyuchevsky, 1968) has helped the authors considerably in determining the essence and functions of gratefulness. The contemplation about interconnection of duty and gratefulness is interesting. For instance, L.A. Seneca (1977) pointed out the voluntary character of gratefulness as a response gift up to one's will and mentioned that the value of gratefulness was not only practical (in creating a turnover of gifts and support) but first of all moral. In his view, the understanding of gratefulness is more valuable than the gift received as gratefulness being a virtue raises the soul (Seneca, 1977). Obligation to be grateful may turn into the benefit becoming a burden because it dooms the receiver to gratitude. M.T. Cicero (1985) pointed that not a single quality he would not like to have in such a degree as the ability to be grateful. For it is not only the greatest virtue, but the mother of all other virtues. V.O. Klyuchevsky (1968) wrote that he who does not like to ask does not like to be obliged, i.e. he fears to be grateful. Gratefulness is a positive feeling; when feeling gratitude a person stops focusing on oneself, pays attention to other people and establishes relationships with others easier.

The analysis of works of the Russian and foreign philosophers has enabled the researchers to use their following conclusions on the essence of the notion "gratefulness" (Apresyan, 1995; Kant, 1994; Seneca, 1977). In I. Kant's (1994) theory, the concept of gratefulness as a duty got elaboration. Gratefulness is a "sacred duty" of man: the motive of benefit is confirmed by it, however, no-one can pay back the accepted benefit, as "merit of being the first to do a benefit cannot be taken away" from the giver. I. Kant (1994) distinguished "mere gratitude" consisting in a cordial benevolence, or appreciation of the benefactor, and "active gratefulness" expressed in practical actions confirming the feeling of appreciation. The notion of appreciation as an obligation, evidently, needs conceptual elaboration in a broader context of the ethics of charity including the notion of benefit too. If gratefulness is a duty, then it is a fairly particular duty – not implying any right with the benefactor to get one (which however does not free the benefit receiver from being obliged to be grateful). This is why, in I. Kant's (1994) opinion, an accepted benefit can be perceived as a burden: together with the benefit, man is as if doomed to gratefulness. Hence a psychological particularity of perceiving gratefulness at large as a duty proves to be the situation when any certain duty towards a person can be felt as a sense of gratitude towards the person, being essentially groundless.

For making the essence of the phenomenon "gratefulness" more precise, the authors also turned to the research in philology. In particular, description of results of studying the etiquette and speech genres of the Russian speech, "gratitude" among them, was considered, as well as studying gratefulness as a concept using the material of the English, German, Kalmyk and Russian languages, which was of help in determining the phenomenon under study.

The comparative analysis of the common and different aspects in demonstration of gratefulness in different linguistic cultures – English, Kalmyk and Russian – performed by N.A. Kataeva (2012) enabled the authors to detail its essence and content. First of all, gratefulness is viewed as one of the paramount categories of life of the society, similar to such concepts as "love", "friendship", "destiny" and belongs to key concepts of culture because the people's idea about gratefulness was formed for centuries and manifested itself in the norms of interpersonal communication in various linguistic cultures. All this confirms the idea about the correlation of the concept "gratefulness" with the inner moral space of man once again.

Gratefulness in the Russian language is expressed by the verb *to thank*, and nouns *gratefulness*, *appreciation*, particle *thanks*, adjectives *grateful*, *appreciative*, and the short participle form *obliged*. The verb *to thank* is one of the most widespread ways of gratefulness with causer objects being either material or intangible things. In business and personal correspondence, the closure *thanks in advance* means the anticipatory gratitude for a future service in connection with an earlier request for an action or information (Kataeva, 2012).

The authors used the results of the above study which discovers both similarity and some significant differences in expression of gratefulness in the linguistic cultures considered. In the three linguistic cultures, the semantics of the gratefulness field overlaps with that of the duty field and positive emotions field, joy in particular (Kalmyk *bair* – Russian joy, English *joy*, *delight*). In Russian, gratefulness has got the following attributes: *sincere*, *cordial*, *soul (with all one's soul)*; quick characteristics: *hot*, *warm*; as well as spatial and temporal characteristics: *eternal (to the grave)*, *boundless*, *endless*, *late*.

Gratefulness as an emotional phenomenon is accompanied by paralinguistic means. In Kalmyk communication behavior, it is expressed by such actions as "looking with tender eyes", "putting both palms together", "bowing", "kissing"; in the Russian one – *bow*, *nod*, *kiss*, *handshake*, *a grateful look*, *a clap on a shoulder*, as well as *tears of joy and appreciation*.

Thus, unlike the English and the Russians, the Kalmyks thank less frequently, in a shorter time, less expressively and with some docility. In the Russian linguistic culture gratitude is expressed more emotionally and expressively and in the cases when it is really necessary. However, in the recent time the trend of ritualized use of words *thanks* and *thank you* has been observed which (just like *thank you* in English) have gained the meaning of politeness and courtesy on the part of the interlocutor (Kataeva, 2012).

Studying the essence of the notion, the authors paid attention to the treatment of it by a well-known Russian sociologist who determines



gratefulness as "the attitude of a person to an individual (or group, organization) who has earlier done a benefit to the person which is expressed in a special feeling of readiness to respond by a mutual benefit and in the relevant practical actions" (Kon, 1984). The authors believe that here it is especially important that the accent is placed on the active behavior of the grateful one unlike the ritualized or formal use of the word "thank you".

Research Methods

The research methods were theoretical analysis and synthesis, as well as diagnosing experiment including a closed type questionnaire form, "Ranking" method and an essay to the topic "What I think about gratefulness". The diagnosing tools for determining the formation level of gratefulness described below are the authors' development.

Questionnaire form

Objective: to reveal understanding the essence of gratefulness and the extent of its expression in behavior of schoolchildren.

Assignment: please mark the answer to the questions suggested which corresponds to your opinion. Several answer options are possible in questions 1 and 5.

What is gratefulness as you understand it?

- a) the feeling of appreciation of something good done for you by somebody;
- b) the feeling of appreciation of the attention paid;
- c) the feeling of appreciation of a service rendered;
- d) a bribe;
- e) evil;
- f) something else (please specify).

2. Must one be grateful?

- a) Yes, one must; b) No, one must not; c) I have never thought about it.

3. Is gratefulness an obligation, a duty for a person?

- a) Yes, it is; b) No, it is not; c) I have never thought about it.

4. Do you often feel grateful to somebody?

- a) Yes, I do; b) No, I do not; c) I have never thought about it.

5. In your opinion, who deserves gratefulness most of all?

- a) Mother, b) father, c) grandmother, d) grandfather, e) other relatives, f) teachers, g) the world, the Universe, h) somebody else.

6. Can a greedy person be grateful?

- a) Yes, the person can; b) No, the person can't; c) I do not know.

7. How do you express gratitude most often?

- a) By words (verbally),
- b) By mimics and gestures.

8. Do you find it difficult to express gratitude to a real person?

- a) Yes, I do; b) No, I do not.

9. What is the reason for you to express gratitude, as a rule?

- a) The reason is I want it with my soul,
- b) The reason is it is a custom.

Processing of the questionnaire survey results.

The answers to questions 1, 3 and 6 give an idea about the formation of the knowledge-related component of the feeling of gratefulness.

The answers to question 2 give an idea about the formation of the motivational and need-related component of the feeling of gratefulness.

The answers to questions 4 and 5 give an idea about the formation of the emotional component of the feeling of gratefulness.

The answers to questions 7, 8 and 9 give an idea about the formation of the activity-related and behavioral component of the feeling of gratefulness.

"Ranking" diagnosing technique

Objective: to reveal the personal importance of the said feeling among other feelings and emotions experienced by the respondent; to determine the place of such moral value as gratefulness in the system of moral values in schoolchildren.

Assignment: please put the items in the order of importance or frequency of your experiencing the feelings and emotions listed below; or put the feelings below in the order of their significance for you.

Worry Helplessness Gratefulness Inspiration Anger Pride
Benevolence

Trust Greed Envy Interest Hope Offense Appreciation Joy
Irritation Jealousy Liking Empathy

Processing of the diagnostics results: the researcher has to describe what place gratefulness occupies of the 20 possible ones in the perception of adolescents. When analyzing the results, special attention must be paid to frequency of selection of such categories as trust, empathy, benevolence, because gratefulness is a prejudice of these more complicated moral feelings and capacities, so the selection of the former will give evidence about the existence of the ability under study. For conclusions, it should be borne in mind that frequent selection of such destructive feelings as greed, jealousy, envy speaks about underdeveloped capacity for gratitude.

Essay "What I think about gratefulness"

Objective: to find out who is the addressee of gratitude for schoolchildren for the most part, as well as what is the subject of thanking; to determine to what extent the feeling of gratefulness is developed in adolescents.

Assignment: please remember a situation when you felt a special gratefulness and describe (say) to whom and for what you felt gratitude, what it was expressed by – give several sentences speaking your mind on the topic.

Processing of the diagnostics results is performed by the content analysis method in the following items: 1. Do the respondents realize the feeling of gratefulness? 2. Do they evaluate and understand the source of gratefulness in a relevant way? 3. Who as a rule is the addressee of gratitude? 4. Mostly for what are the diagnosed ones grateful to others, i.e. what is valuable for them?

Results and Discussion



Based on the theoretical analysis, the authors have determined the structural components and indices of formation of gratefulness as a human life principle (Durkheim, 2011). So, such index as the awareness about the essence, content of the "gratefulness" phenomenon corresponds to the knowledge-related component. The existence of a motive, wish, need of having a developed feeling of gratefulness matches the motivational and need-related component. The capacity for experiencing the said feeling corresponds to the emotional component, and the experience of showing/expressing one's gratitude towards others – to the activity-related and behavioral one.

The analysis conducted has also enabled the authors to word their own definition of gratefulness as a phenomenon which characterizes the human life principle consisting in the subject's need and possibility of expressing his positive attitude to certain people, their communities and impersonal beings directly or indirectly, verbally or non-verbally, for a benefit done by them for the subject. The capacity for being grateful is the quintessence of morality reflecting the inner moral space of man and the human moral sensitivity towards others. The diversity of facets of the gratefulness phenomenon consists in the opportunity to define it via such categories as "principle", "feeling", "capacity", "attitude", "indicator", "prerequisite", "limiter", "virtue", "duty", "obligation", "habit" and so on.

Proceeding from the worded structure and content of the phenomenon under study, an attempt was made to describe a portrait of an adolescent having a high formation level of gratefulness. Such an adolescent is characterized by the following aspects:

1) the adolescent has information (or knowledge, which is not quite the same) about the fact that gratitude is a sense of appreciation for a benefit, good done, attention or service rendered. There is understanding of gratefulness being feelings of obligation, respect and love for another person for the benefit done by the person, as well as the understanding of an elevated, basically ethic meaning of gratefulness. The adolescent finds his bearings in such characteristics of gratefulness as direct and indirect gratitude, ritual (etiquette) and emotional (personally important) one, motivated and unmotivated, verbal and non-verbal one, gratitude to a real addressee and to the supreme forces. The adolescent knows that it is not only certain people that can be the addressee of gratitude but also communities of people (e.g. ancestors) and impersonal beings (the world, God);

2) the adolescent has got a conscious motive and need of possessing such characteristics as an ability to be grateful – as the primary indicator of the moral sensitivity (responsiveness) of personality. There is a wish to possess such moral feelings and capacities as empathy, trust, benevolence, with gratefulness in particular being their prerequisite. Gratefulness is recognized by the education subject to be a moral value, and the life principle "never turn into pieces of clay those who seek to help you, however futile their attempts may be" (Osho, 2016) makes up one of the facets of the personality's life standpoint;

3) feeling gratitude as a feeling of a sacred duty, "burden" is also characteristic, as a benefit can be perceived as a burden, an obligation to be grateful; gratefulness should elevate the soul, and there should be no fear of being grateful;

4) the adolescent's behavior has no such destructive feelings as greed, jealousy, envy; mere gratefulness as a "cordial goodwill" turns into the "active gratitude" expressed in practical actions; gratefulness is voluntary as a response gift upon one's will.

Now, some results of the diagnosing research will be presented that was conducted on the basis of comprehensive school No. 86 of Volgograd, state public comprehensive institution "Volgograd residential school No. 6" and state public comprehensive institution "Volgograd residential school No. 3" where children having speech and intellect disorders are taught in April – September 2016. The total of 57 adolescents took part in the research. The main task was to find out the actual formation level of gratefulness as a life principle in the said groups of learners and to conduct a comparative analysis of the normally developing adolescents and the ones having development disorders.

The procedure and results of the empirical study are described below. Taking into account the fact that the diagnostician had not known any of the learners before, an introductory talk was given when diagnosing in order to create a comfortable setting. An integral part of the talk was reciting a parable by R. Osho (2016) "On knowing how to be grateful". Notably, judging by the remarks and other responses of the adolescents, the topic of gratefulness proved to be interesting and personally significant for the majority of learners. It is no mere chance that the phenomenon under study belongs to the basic existential feelings and is determined as gratefulness to life and destiny.

Here are the results of the diagnosing research conducted in grade 8 "A" of the comprehensive school No. 86 among the adolescents aged 13-14 in April 2016. Processing of the "Ranking" diagnostics results has shown that ten people of the twenty three questioned ones named gratefulness among the five feelings that are important for them, which makes 45% of the pupils of normal development. Around 41% of the pupils marked such qualities as benevolence, trust, and empathy as important for them – and gratefulness is the basis for emergence and development of these qualities. The authors believe that this qualitative coincidence (41% and 45%) gives evidence of the validity of the research results obtained, as the presence of benevolence, trust and empathy feelings is an indirect indicator of the formed ability to be grateful. As for such destructive feelings as greed, envy, jealousy that psychologists believe to characterize an underformed feeling of gratefulness, in most adolescents (62%) they occupy the last five places in the list of feelings and capacities experienced. Only two of them made their choice for destructive feelings, which makes three percent of all the diagnosed ones. Sixteen people of the twenty three (70%) demonstrated the significance of their experiencing joy as a feeling adjacent to gratefulness, which also confirms the trend for the normally developing schoolchildren to express gratefulness.

The processing of results of the essay "My feeling of gratefulness" conducted on the same basis has allowed identifying the addressees of gratitude. It has been found out that slightly more than a half of the questioned ones are grateful first of all to their parents, with a part of the diagnosed ones mentioning their grandmothers, aunts, godparents and other relatives, only 13% being grateful to their friends and even less – to their teachers, this is some 9% of the questioned ones. What exactly are the adolescents thankful for? Some contemplations worded in their essays are cited below. So, the adolescents are grateful to their



friends for the fact that "you can always rely on them", to their parents for that "they have pardoned me and started to believe again", "they sometimes understand me, they can help or laugh together" (Sophia Z., aged 13), "they gave me what I wanted so much as a birthday present" (Roman Z., 14 years old), "they gave me a good life, a happy and well provided for one" (Daria K., aged 13), "they got me in school" (Elizaveta F., aged 13), "they help me and support me" (Nastya K., 14 years old); to their relatives for "just loving and appreciating me" (Dima B., 14 years old). The gratitude to teachers is associated with the fact that a teacher of mathematics "permitted to do some tasks for correcting a bad mark" (Aleksey B., aged 13, and Danil P., aged 14).

Here are the results of the research conducted on the basis of state public comprehensive institution "Volgograd residential school No. 3" (teaching children who have intellect disorders) in May 2016. As the "Ranking" technique conducted among 19 people has shown, 50% of the adolescents surveyed aged 13-15 placed gratefulness to the first place among the twenty feelings and emotions offered. To 38% of intellect disorder adolescents, trust, benevolence and empathy implying acceptance of the world are peculiar, and no adolescent considered destructive feelings important for him (her). With regard to this, 75% of the surveyed ones experience the feeling of joy. As for joy, in particular, the researcher N.A. Kataeva (2012) speaks about it that "gratefulness is closely connected to the notion of joy...". Moreover, she believes the feeling of joy always precedes that of gratefulness.

As the text of essays has shown, the addressees of gratitude are other (unknown) people, relatives and friends (25% of choices in each category), with mothers and teachers getting 12,5% each. In particular, no-one used the words "father", "parents", "relatives" while mentioning "uncles", "aunts", "a boy I do not know", "neighbors". So what are this category of adolescents thankful for? They are grateful to neighbors ("they give me a lift to school in their car", Misha M., aged 13), to the teacher ("she supports me in a difficult moment, she has done for me very much in life" Elena K., 15 years old), to friends ("but for my friends, I would have been run down by a car", Dasha S., aged 15), to a friend ("he saved me – pulled me out of water", Danil R., 15 years old), to an uncle ("he has helped me with my homework", Ivan M., aged 14) etc. Some answers are very confused and obscure because the learners have difficulty expressing their thoughts logically. Meanwhile, some of them managed to mark the form of expression of their gratitude: "by words and gestures", "by friendship, mutual relationship, appreciation", "I shook his hand and said thank you".

The results of the September 2016 research conducted on the basis of state public comprehensive institution "Volgograd residential school No. 6" teaching children who have speech disorders are given below. 15 people (aged 14-15) participated in diagnosing. The various contemplations of adolescents who wrote essays (mainly boys – they prevail among children having speech disorders and in spite of the authors' requests they called themselves by surname and not by name) are as follows. "I feel gratitude to my friend. He has helped me by money" (Sergey Yu., aged 14). "I am grateful to my mother for having taken me from the shelter" (Sasha K., aged 14). "I am grateful to my mother for having given birth to me and for the fact that I have got so great acquaintances"; "I am thankful to my father's friend for taking me to hospital" (Denis P., 14 years old). "I thank my grandmother for giving me some cake", "I am grateful to my grandmother for

helping me study well" (Yura F., aged 14). "I am grateful to my grandmother and aunt for their helping us" (Ksenia M., aged 14). "I am thankful to my mother for buying a schoolbag for me", "to my father and grandmother for their upbringing me" (Tanya D., 15 years old). There were no answers to the question "In what form do you express gratefulness?" in the essays, except two cases. One adolescent said "this is expressed in love" and another one – "kindness is the main thing in one's life". The addressees of gratitude were mothers (36%), parents (7%), relatives (42,8%), a friend (14,3%), and the other (unknown) people (14,3 %) – with no-one remembering either teachers or educators.

Table 1. Comparative analysis of the adolescents' expressing gratitude to various addressees

No.	Addressee of gratitude	Learners having anormal development (in %)	Learners having speech disorders (in %)	Learners having intellect disorders (in %)
1.	Mother	70	36	12,5
2.	Parents	54	7	-
3.	Relatives	33	42,8	25
4.	Friend	13	14,3	25
5.	Teachers	8, 9	-	12,5
6.	Other (unknown) people	-	14,3	25

Source: compiled by Elena M. Safronova.

The picture framed up in figures confirms the sad reality concerning the children having development disorders. Here the children's gratefulness is aimed as a rule at their mothers (12,5% and 36%) but very seldom at the parents as a whole (7% of learners having speech disorders and 0% of ones having intellect disorders) – not because the children being basically ungrateful, but because the institution of family has suffered considerably in the cases. Meanwhile, these adolescents are grateful to their relatives (42,8 and 25%, respectively), especially the children from the residential school for ones having speech disorders. Strange as it may seem, gratitude towards teachers is widespread little, which confirms once again the already known by pedagogics idea about the educational organizations occupying not so important a place in the children's life, even in a situation of trouble family or lack of one. In such cases, grandmothers, aunts and other relatives come to the foreground, which was confirmed once again by the results of the authors' studies. The normally developing schoolchildren who are not staying in the residential school conditions and who have a more comfortable life situation clearly perceive their parents as an integrity (this was pointed out by 55% of learners). As for the adolescents having intellect disorders, no-one even used the words "father" or "parents" or "relatives" when writing their essays. The authors consider it an alarming fact that the adolescents' gratefulness is mainly very precise and material in content and ritualized and formal in their form ("it is the accepted way!"). Yet the pedagogical task has to be upbringing of a feeling of gratitude to life as a whole and not "for the bicycle" or "schoolbag" given by somebody as a gift.

Conclusion



The results of the research presented above may be of use for various specialists of the education sphere. In particular, 1. researchers working on the strategy of development of education can use the results for including the necessity of pedagogues and parents' forming such quality as a capacity for being grateful into the targets of upbringing for normally developing and HL children. 2. The researcher teachers can apply the results in creating the technologies of forming the gratefulness based on the structure and content of the "gratefulness" phenomenon described by the authors. 3. The results can be used by practicing teachers for determining the formation level of gratefulness by means of the diagnosing tools created by the authors and for working with parents. 4. Heads of the educational organizations for preschoolers and schoolchildren can employ the above for elaborating the conceptual ideas of the school / kindergarten development program and for designing the content of methodical work with the personnel.

The special importance of materials of the paper is related to the opportunity to "trigger" with its help the process of pedagogical thinking development in special education teachers and other specialists working with HL children (speech and language therapists, teachers of hearing impaired persons, visual impairment specialists, special psychologists) while engaging them into discussion of this problem. So, for instance, the authors conduct this work within the international scientific and methodical seminar "Special and integrated education: organization, content, technologies" at plenary and section meetings that has been arranged by Volgograd regional social organization "Support of the professional rise of special education teachers" for six years already.

It should be noted, however, that detailing research works associated with studying the opinions of pedagogues, parents and other adults on the formation in the pupils of the feeling and ability to be grateful are necessary. Moreover, bearing in mind that each person has to develop a capacity for accepting (of gifts, services, benefits, one's problems), and so has a HL adolescent, due to his or her life circumstances in particular, the authors believe that in today's pedagogics the continuation of studying the ways for diagnosing and technologies for upbringing this human characteristics makes sense. When accepting, man gains calmness and strength that are essential for the moral health of personality.

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Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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