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REPRESENTATION OF THE RULES FOR LIVING IN PERSONAL NARRATIVES OF ADOLESCENTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

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Abstract. The article is focused on the study of personal narratives of adolescents with hearing impairments. The aim of the study was to determine narrative indicators of respondents' rules for living. To achieve this goal, there were analysed personal narratives of adolescents with hearing impairments. Besides, there were identified specific categories that reflect their rules for living. In addition, there was studied the level of subjective well-being of respondents and the relationship between the presentation of certain rules for living in personal narratives and the level of subjective satisfaction with life. The research methods were content analysis of personal narratives and subjective scaling. Statistical data processing was performed with the help of recursive division trees method. The results of the study show that rules for living typical for adolescents with hearing impairments are reflected in their narratives and can be divided into three groups. The first group includes self-focusing rules, the second - focusing on others, and the third focusing on the out-world. Each of these groups is divided into two subgroups, and each subgroup includes the behaviour of supercompensation or avoidance. The most common among adolescents with hearing impairments are rules for living related to the focusing on others and self-focusing both by the type of avoidance. At the same time, the highest level of subjective satisfaction with life is connected with self-focusing rules for living by type of supercompensation. The obtained data allow us to conclude that the analysis of personal narratives of adolescents with hearing impairments allows to determine their rules for living. On the other hand, typical rules for living determine the level of person's subjective well-being. Prospects for further researches in this area are to study the representation in adolescents' narratives not only separate rules for living, but also core beliefs, the existence of which is ensured by these rules.

Keywords: personal narrative, content analysis, rules for living, core beliefs, adolescence, hearing impairments.

Литвиненко Олена. Представленість правил життя в персональних наративах підлітків, які мають порушення слуху.

Анотація. Статтю присвячено вивченню особливостей персональних наративів підлітків, які мають порушення слуху. Мета дослідження полягала у визначенні наративних індикаторів типових правил життя респондентів. Для досягнення мети було проаналізовано персональні наративи підлітків та виокремлено специфічні категорії, що відображають притаманні їм правила життя. Крім того було досліджено рівень суб'єктивного благополуччя респондентів і визначено взаємозв'язок, між презентацією певних правил життя в персональних наративах та суб'єктивним відчуттям задоволеності життям. У якості дослідницьких методів використовувався контент-аналіз персональних наративів та суб'єктивне шкалювання. Статистична обробка даних здійснювалась з використанням методу дерев ракурсивного ділення. Результати проведеного дослідження свідчать, що

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правила життя, якими керуються підлітки з порушеннями слуху можна розділити на три групи, перша з яких передбачає орієнтацію на себе, друга – орієнтацію на інших, а третя – орієнтацію на навколишній світ. Кожна з зазначених груп розподіляється на дві підгрупи, які або передбачають поведінку типом гіперкомпенсації, уникання. за Найбільш розповсюдженими серед зазначеної категорії респондентів є правила життя, пов'язані з орієнтацією на інших за типом уникання та з орієнтацією на себе за аналогічним типом. Водночас, з найвищим рівнем суб'єктивного задоволення життям пов'язані правила життя, що передбачають орієнтацію на себе за типом гіперкомпенсації. Отримані дані дозволяють зробити висновок, що, аналіз персональних наративів підлітків, які мають порушення слуху дозволяє визначити притаманні їм правила життя. Своєю чергою, типові правила життя рівень суб'єктивного благополуччя особи. Перспективи подальших детермінують досліджень у цій сфері полягають у дослідженні представленості в наративах підлітків не лише окремих правил життя, але й глибинних переконань, існування яких і забезпечується цими правилами.

Ключові слова: персональний наратив, контент-аналіз, правила життя, глибинні переконання, підлітковий вік, порушення слуху.

Introduction

Narrative is a concept of postmodern psychology that includes the procedural self-realization of a person as a way of creating an author's text (Van Dijk, 2008). Representatives of the narrative approach pay attention to the author's relationship with his personal text – the narrative (Harre, 2002). In his scientific research, Sarbin (1986) reveals the working concept of personal narrative, which is typical for every person and is at the same time unstable and constantly updated. The basic narrative, according to the scientist's point of view, is the essence that circumscribes the spatial coordinates and time perspective in which a person lives.

Narratives are clearly structured and have their own modality and system of functions. The main functions of personal narratives are the following: organization of experience; self-making; replaying the internal conflicts; self-transformation (Bauer & McAdams, 2010).

In modern psycholinguistics, numerous works are devoted to the study of the mechanisms of reflecting the individual experience in the texts. Thus, researchers talk about the role of narratives in the process of socialization and personal development of the subject (Shymko, 2019), about the narrative as a mean of self-presentation (De Fina, 2020) and the result of social interaction (Yuryeva, 2018). Furthermore, there are researched models of speech generation and the formation of personal texts (Frank & Christiansen, 2018), as well as applied aspects of the cognitive schemas formation (Kazantseva, 2018).

Particularly, Chepeleva and Yakovenko (2013) study the peculiarities of personal texts production. They consider narrative psychology as one that should be based on understanding personality as self-narration and, accordingly, personal experience as a result of organizing life events into narrative texts. Scientists suggest that the narrative of life and living the life is essentially the same phenomenon. Thus, the narrative is a transformation of disordered life events in a certain sequence, based on the general life concept of the narrator, or his personal myth, which determines the

internal logic of the generated text. The consequence of this is the creation of one's own inner personal world, which is a reality built as a unique creation on the background of the author's attitude to the surrounding reality and to his own personal identity.

The logical conclusion from the above concepts can be the thesis that a personal narrative is a specific text, different from all others, which has its own structure and provides a unique relationship between the author and the text. The text in this case acts primarily as a psychotherapeutic tool that allows its creator to delve into the process of self-knowledge and embark on the path of self-development.

Creating his own texts, a person invests in them his own experience, worldview and conceptual constructs. Some structural elements of personal narratives can serve as the indicators of the traumatic experience that a person has experienced and should be taken into account in the process of formation of the overall strategy of psychotherapeutic work a person (Vasyliuk, 2014). This concept is the basis of narrative therapy, which is the one of the modern methods of purposeful psychological influence. In the broadest sense, narrative therapy is a conversation in which individuals retell different stories of their lives. For narrative therapists narratives are events that are combined in certain sequences over a period of time and thus brought into a state endowed with meaningful plot (Zhornyak, 2005). The story of each person consists of many narratives. The nature and specificity of these narratives determine the events a person pays the most attention to, their interrelations and personal meaning. According to the results of our previous research, the choice of events reflected in personal narrative and the general style of their presentation are determined by the individual psychological characteristics of the author (Lytvynenko, 2014).

In his narratives a person systematizes his own experience, outlines the range of claims, finds his identity and actualizes it. Thus, the narrative is a form of individual's "self-text", or his textual self-presentation. Masienko (2006) speaks about the possibility of studying personal manifestations of subjective narrative by the means of "self-text". From the researcher's point of view, "self-text" includes some discursive manifestations aimed at the embodiment or expression of person's self. This duality of "self-text" characterizes its main features that are incompleteness and cumulativeness. Besides, it determines its dynamic nature, because "self-text" is always in the process of formation (Masienko, 2006). The analysis of "self-texts" may be appropriate in the context of a comprehensive psychological diagnosis of person, as well as in the scientific researches aimed at studying his individual manifestations and characteristics.

Narrative psychology and related with it narrative psychotherapy are important areas of psychological theory and practice that study a person as a text creator, a subject who generates textual information about himself and through this information improves his own self-perception. However, mostly such studies cover the ontogenetic aspect of this problem. Thus questions of a dysontogenesis of formation of the textual personality in modern psychology are covered rather fragmentarily. Particularly, the studies of the linguistic development of people with hearing impairments traditionally cover the problems of developmental delay and the possibility of its compensation, as well as ways to establish effective interpersonal interaction despite audio deprivation (Reagan et al., 2021). The results of studies of the personal formation of people with hearing impairments indicate that the development of deaf children's personalities occurs at the same stages as their healthy peers, but the transition from one stage to another takes place two to three years later (Vernon & Andrews, 2010). The other studies in this area showed that a child born deaf or whose hearing was impaired during the first two years of life is in a fundamentally different position in comparison with other people. The lack of verbal interaction, and consequently the violation of self-awareness and other personal constructs. Children with hearing impairments undergo a process of separation from other and understanding their own qualities and traits later than their peers (Mitchell & Braham, 2011).

At the same time, the issues of reflecting the personal qualities of people who have hearing impairments in their texts are left out of consideration. That is why the aim of this research was to study personal narratives of adolescents with hearing impairments and to determine the narrative indicators of rules for living typical for them. Achieving the aim became possible due to the implementation of the following tasks: 1) to analyze the personal narratives of adolescents with hearing impairments; 2) to identify specific narrative categories that reflect the rules for living; 3) to study the level of subjective well-being of respondents and to determine the relationship between the presentation of certain rules in personal narratives and the subjective feeling of life satisfaction.

The concept of rules for living is considered within the cognitive-behavioural approach. Such rules are formed on the basis of core beliefs, which are generalized ideas of a person about himself and the world around him (Westbrook, Kennerley, & Kirk, 2007). In contrast to core beliefs, the rules for living can be verbalized. It allows to suggest that they are reflected in personal narratives.

With the help of the rules for living core beliefs are realized in everyday human activities. Core beliefs and related to them rules for living are formed in early childhood, in the process of adaptation to certain circumstances. As a result, there are formed and assimilated certain conclusions the degree of accuracy and fundamentality of which may be different. If a person's core beliefs are maladaptive, the person may have such rules for living that allow him to cope with the unpleasant core beliefs (Beck, 2011). All the rules for living can be divided into two groups: rules that lead to avoidance and rules that provide supercompensation. The rules of avoidance include giving up activities determined with the fear of failure and the desire to avoid risk and to maintain psycho-emotional balance. On the other hand, the rules of supercompensation are associated with the increase of behavioural activation and the desire to do the things that are opposite of core beliefs. Rules for living are activated due to the realization of core beliefs and maladaptive cognitive schemes (Arntz, 2020). The fundamental importance of the rules for living in the structure of

individual's personal experience suggests that they will be reflected in his personal narratives. This assumption became the hypothesis of our empirical study

Methods

An empirical study of narrative indicators of the rules for living of adolescents with hearing impairment was conducted on the basis of special boarding schools in Kyiv. Before the current study, we have received approval from Borys Grinchenko University of Kyiv Ethical Committee. The total number of respondents was 125. The age of the respondents was 14–16 years. The research methods were subjective scaling and content analysis of personal narratives. Statistical processing was performed using the method of recursive division trees.

The research procedure involved not only a psychologist, but also a sign language interpreter, who ensured effective interaction between the researcher and respondents. At the first stage, the respondents were asked to write a text about themselves – to create their own personal narrative. According to the instructions, respondents had to describe certain event of their lives that strongly impressed them. The modality of the remembrance (positive or negative) was not of fundamental importance. The only requirement was the personal orientation of the text. At this stage of the study, we relied on the classic thesis of narrative psychology that states that a person reveals fundamentally significant psychological characteristics while creating his own texts (narratives) (Sarbin, 1986).

The texts created by the respondents were analysed with the help of content analysis, which is a formalized and systematized method of studying textual and graphical information. It allows to transform the information into quantitative indicators and to precede them statistically (Wooffitt, 2015). Before the direct analysis of the text, it was necessary to determine the categories of this analysis, which are the key concepts (semantic units) presented in the text and correspondent to the definitions and their empirical indicators that are recorded in the research program. To analyse respondents' personal narratives there were identified four main categories that correspond to the typical rules of life: 1) self- focusing, 2) focusing on others, 3) focusing on the out-world. Each category was divided into two subcategories: avoidance and supercompensation.

The next stage of the research was the subjective assessment of respondents' satisfaction with their own lives at the time of described events. It was conducted with the help of a scale from 1 to 100. This method was chosen taking into account hearing impairments of the respondents that caused an inability to use standardized scales and questionnaires. The design of this study did not involve the adaptation of classical psychodiagnostic tools for the work with adolescents with hearing impairments. That is why it was decided to use non-specific search methods. As a result of subjective scaling, there were identified four levels of life satisfaction: 1) extremely low; 2) low; 3) medium and 4) high.

Thus, during the further analysis of the obtained data, we operated with four levels of subjective well-being and six subcategories of content analysis. As it was noted, the statistical data processing was made with the help of the method of recursive division trees (Hothorn et al., 2006). This method was chosen because the categories of content analysis are nominative values that cannot be ordered on a ordinal scale more or less, and indicators of subjective life satisfaction, in this case, are numerical. The combination of nominative and quantitative scales made it impossible to use the classical technique of regression analysis. That is why we chose the method of recursive division trees. As is known, the result of using this method under the condition of a numerical initial variable is the average value and the confidence interval for it. On the other hand, in the case of qualitative initial variable the result is the probability of its manifestation under the identified conditions. In our case, the numerical variable was predicted, so we could predict the level of subjective well-being taking into account certain rule for living.

Results and Discussion

Personal narratives of adolescents with hearing impairments differ due to a very specific semantic and structural organization. Typical features of them are lexical simplification, the absence of complex patterns. Among the parts of speech the most common in the narratives of this category of people are verbs (29%), pronouns (25%) and nouns (21%) less represented are adjectives (14%) yet all other parts of speech in their texts are presented quite fragmentary (11%). Another feature of the narratives of deaf adolescents is the ignoring of grammatical structures, particularly, the inconsistency of parts of speech. All this makes their texts quite specific, difficult to analyse and different from the narratives of their peers. However, our task was to analyse the content of narratives, so we will leave their structural analysis as a perspective for further researches.

The results of content analysis of personal narratives of adolescents with hearing impairment s showed that their texts represent all 6 types of rules for living, but the distribution of this representation is quite uneven.

The most common rules were focusing on others (avoidance type) -28% of the total distribution. Their verbal expression took the following forms:

"I do not go to the birthday, girl quarrel" ("я не йти день народження дівчата сваритись"¹), "I will not be friends, he talks another girl" ("я не буду він дружить, він говорить інша дівчина").

Guided by the presented rules, adolescents consider situations of interpersonal relationships as the most significant. At the same time, they suffer from possible failures in social interaction and to prevent them, refuse to take any behavioural activation.

¹ Here and below there are original Ukrainian fragments of the texts due to their value for understanding and the impossibility to translate the entire linguistic structure and specifics.

The second most frequently represented rules (22%) were the rules for living, which are also characterized by an avoidance strategy, but in this case it is related to self-focusing. They were verbalized as follows.

"I never play volleyball like girls, so I leave the team"

("я ніколи не грати волейбол так, як дівчата, тому я покидати команду"),

"I don't become a photographer, there are no deaf photographers, it's nonsense"

("я не стати фотограф, нема глухих фотограф, це дурниця").

Accordingly, the activation of such a rule leads to the refusal of certain activities aimed at achieving. The reasons for refusal may be conditional self-esteem, insecurity and self-sufficiency, core beliefs about some defects.

It is interesting that both of the most typical rules for adolescents with hearing impairments are related to behavioural strategy "avoidance". This suggests that avoidance generally is a typical behaviour for such adolescents, which allows them to protect themselves from unpleasant experiences and maintain the stability of their psycho-emotional state.

The third group of rules for living includes the rules of focusing on by type of supercompensation (16%). In personal narratives of adolescents with hearing impairments the following text units represented this rule:

"I lots of friends, we're always together" ("я купа друзів, ми завжди разом"), "I dated Olya, then Sonya, until Olya knew" ("я зустрічався Оля, потім ще Соня, поки Оля не знала").

Guided by such rules for living, adolescents choose patterns of behaviour that are the opposite to their core beliefs. In that way feeling social anxiety and self-doubt, they try to expand the range of their interpersonal interactions. Such behaviour gives them a sense of self-confidence and for some time reduces the feeling of anxiety.

The fourth group of rules includes the rules of focusing on the out-world by type of avoidance (13%). In the texts created by respondents, these rules are reflected with the help of following phrases:

"There is always trouble when I go somewhere", ("завжди стається біда, коли я кудись іду"), "I do not go anywhere, because otherwise I get sick" ("я нікуди не ходити, бо інакше я захворіти").

It is obviously that such rules are primarily related to the expectation of a catastrophe and the fear of possible future dangers. To eliminate the harmful effects of these dangers on their lives, adolescents prefer to avoid any activities and stay away from even those events that are important to them.

The fifth group of rules includes rules of self-focusing by type of supercompensation (11%). The following phrases are presented in such narratives of adolescents:

"I need first place so that everyone knows how cool I am" ("я повинен перше місце, щоб всі знали, який я крутий"), "I always study well, that's the way it should be" ("я завжди навчаюсь відмінно, так треба").

Focusing on such rules, adolescents try to compensate deep insecurity in themselves and their abilities of succeeding in various activities. This approach, on the one hand, gives a sense of self-worth for a while, but on the other hand, it is very exhausting, as it requires constant activation of internal resources.

The sixth group of rules for living includes rules related to focusing on the outworld by type of supercompensation (10%). Verbal implementation of these rules occurs in the following statements:

"I check my heart rate 4 times a day so that my heart is not bad" ("я 4 рази за день перевіряю пульс, щоб не було погано серце"), "I call him because I'm afraid something will happen" ("я йому звоню, бо боюсь, щось станеться").

Such rules for living are based on the deep intolerance of uncertainty and high level of anxiety about possible future dangers. To alleviate this anxiety, adolescents tend to perform certain actions and rituals that under certain conditions can turn into obsessive compulsions.

Thus in the first stage of the study it was found that personal narratives of adolescents with hearing impairments do contain all six types of rules for living. However, the distribution of these rules representation is quite uneven and exactly half of all texts contain rules belonging to two groups: focusing on others by the type of avoidance and self-focusing by a similar type.

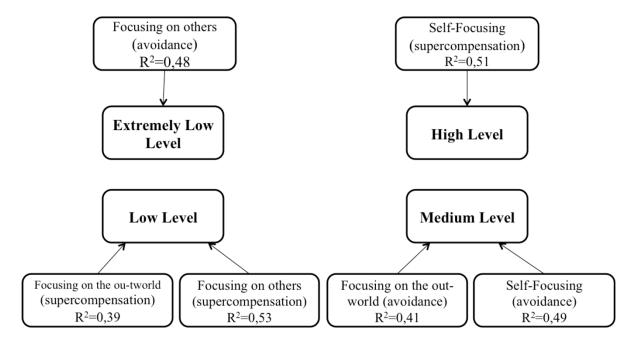
On the next stage of the study there was compared the results of content analysis and the data obtained from subjective scaling. As it was mentioned, the respondents were asked not only to create a text about a certain event in their lives that impressed them, but also to assess the level of life satisfaction in the time of the event on a scale from 1 to 100. This allowed us to obtain information about the levels of subjective satisfaction with the life, which could be very low, low, medium and high.

The hypothesis of this stage of the study was that the activation of different rules for living determines different experiences of adolescents and, accordingly, is assessed differently.

Our goal was to find such trends and determine the rules for living that are associated with the strongest positive and negative experiences.

To achieve this goal there was conducted statistical data processing with the help of the method of recursive division trees. Using this method allowed us to predict the probability of manifestation of one phenomenon in the presence of another. Thus, we tried to predict the probability of a particular level of life satisfaction depending on the leading rules for living and their representation in the personal narratives of adolescents. The results of statistical data processing are shown in Fig. 1.

Figure 1



Narrative Indicators of the Levels of Adolescents' Subjective Well-Being

It is obviously that the manifestation of a high level of life satisfaction is possible in the case of activation of those rules for living, which are responsible for self-focusing by the type of supercompensation (R^2 =.51). So, when in critical situations adolescents show a tendency to active behavioural, a desire to act and a willingness to do something to achieve a goal, they are most satisfied with their lives and have a high the level of subjective well being. This may be explained with the fact that the refusal to avoid activities forms a sense of control over the situation and the belief that they everything possible is done to achieve the goal. It is important that the relevant rules are clearly traced in the personal narratives of adolescents with hearing impairments. Accordingly, the study of texts allows not only to determine the rules for living, but also to predict the level of life satisfaction. This conclusion is important for psychological counselling and psychotherapy, as it expands the range of means of collecting primary information about clients, including those with hearing impairments.

The rules for living, the use of which causes the lowest level of subjective life satisfaction, are those of focusing on others by the type of avoidance (R^2 =.48). In that way, the unhappiest are adolescents with hearing impairments, who tend to worry about the opinions of others in important life situations and refuse to act and achieve goals because of the fear of being condemned and devalued by others. High social anxiety, which is the basis for the formation of such rules for living, determines the manifestation of self-doubt, fear of social failure and the desire to stay away from large companies and turbulent events. All this forms a leading behavioural strategy, which is "avoidance". This strategy leads to the refusal from important events and activities, which causes sense of guilt, sadness and frustration. All this leads to a very low assessment of the level of subjective well-being. It is noteworthy that in the

narratives of adolescents with hearing impairments, the frequency of such rules for living was the highest. Accordingly, almost a third of such adolescents (28%) in difficult situations prefer to give up for fear of conviction. At the same time, they experience significant distress and a very low level of subjective well-being. Such trends open a wide field for practical work of psychologists and psychotherapists. This work should be aimed at testing the rules for living, which are obviously maladaptive, finding new rules and their implementation in the daily lives of adolescents with hearing impairments. Such work should increase the level of life satisfaction and be reflected in personal narratives.

Low levels of life satisfaction is also typical for adolescents, who tend to use the rules for living associated with focusing on others (R^2 =.53) and the out-world (R^2 =0.39) by type of supercompensation. Focusing on others here means that in important situations adolescents not only care about the opinions of others, but also try to do their best to earn approval and positive evaluation. Focusing on the out-world has a slightly different specificity and suggests that over-worrying about possible dangers and the general uncertainty of the future. Adolescents with hearing impairments take active measures to protect themselves from these dangers, or to insure against them in some way. However, each of these two types of rules for living is not subjectively comfortable, and its representation in the respondents' narratives has a stable connection with a low level of life satisfaction.

Worth noting is the fact that compensatory behaviour in the rules related to selffocusing is evaluated very positively. Accordingly, purposeful activities are subjectively enjoyable for adolescents when it is aimed at compensation of selfdoubt, increasing self-esteem and strengthening self-confidence. When such activities are based on anxiety about other subjects and objects it causes noticeable discomfort and low level of life satisfaction.

The average level of life satisfaction is typical for respondents whose narratives contain the rules for living related to self-focusing (R^2 =.49) and focusing on the outworld (R^2 =.41) by the type of avoidance. In that way the refusal to be active, associated with feelings about one's incompetence and imperfection of the world is generally neutral and does not cause strong feelings. Thus, practicing avoidance, they do not get any achievements, but also do not face disappointments. This determines the presence of an average level of life satisfaction.

Conclusions and Recommendations

A study of personal narratives of adolescents with hearing impairment allowed us to draw a number of conclusions.

Firstly, the narratives of this category of persons, as well as any other texts created by them, differ in specific lexical and structural organization. They are characterized by grammatical inconsistency of parts of a sentence, lexical simplification, lack of complex grammatical constructions, predominance of nouns, pronouns and verbs among all parts of speech. Thus linguistic analysis of texts created by adolescents with hearing impairments should be the subject of a separate

study. However, within this scientific research, it was not included in the list of our goals, so there was only a superficial review of this issue.

Secondly, the narratives of hearing-impaired adolescents do reflect their own rules for living. Creating their own texts and structuring their history in it, adolescents demonstrate what rules they are guided by and what behavioural strategies these rules are implemented in.

Thirdly, the analysis of respondents' narratives allowed us to determine which rules for living are most typical for the sample and which are the least common. Thus, the most common among adolescents with hearing impairments are the rules for living related to focusing on others by the type of avoidance and self-focusing by a similar type (together it is 50% of total sample). This allows us to conclude that the behavioural strategy of avoidance is the most typical for such adolescents. Accordingly, in difficult life situations and conditions of uncertainty they tend to give up any activities to avoid distress and unpleasant experiences associated with it.

Lastly, there is a strong relationship between the rules for living presented in adolescents' narratives and the assessment of subjective well-being level at the time of implementation of these rules. The highest level of well-being is assessed by adolescents with hearing impairments, who use self-focusing rule for living by the type of supercompensation. Thus, being active in situations of increased responsibility, they feel the control of their own lives, which reduces the level of uncertainty about the future and has a positive effect on life satisfaction. At the same time, the lowest estimates of subjective well-being giving up activities, adolescents face negative feelings about their own unrealized opportunities and feel dissatisfied with life. A high representation of such a rule among the respondents indicates the dominance of low assessment of the quality of their own lives.

The obtained empirical data suggest that working with the rules for living of adolescents with hearing impairment will affect their psycho-emotional well-being and increase life satisfaction. However, testing this assumption requires further researches. In addition, the prospect of researches may be to find ways to work with this category of people using the method of narrative psychotherapy. In the context of such work, the personal experience of the individual is structured and his own history reflected in personal narratives is formed. Thus, working with the narratives of adolescents who have hearing impairments, it is possible to achieve the goals presented earlier, in particular, to expand the repertoire of behavioural strategies and patterns. Another important area of researches is the study of representation in adolescents' narratives not only separate rules for living, but also core beliefs, the existence of which is ensured by these rules. Relevant researches will deepen the general knowledge about cognitive organization of adolescents with hearing impairments and develop algorithms for practical work with them, aimed at maintaining their psychological well-being.

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