

Implementation of media education and media literacy courses in secondary schools of Ukraine

Report on the results of a complex study

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According to the experts, media education is crucial for the development and growth of modern individuals. Those who take part in the experiment think that upon its completion recommendations should developed and submitted to Ministry of Education to include the concept of media education into the overall state strategy on education. Majority of experts see further prospects for the development of media education through its integration into various school subjects. Experts think that media education is necessary not only to high school students, but pupils of all grades.

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Research goal, objectives and methodology

The goal of the research is to assess the effectiveness and implementation of media education in secondary schools in various regions of Ukraine.

Research objectives:

- Review of methods and means of media education implementation;
- Study available and necessary resources;
- Determine and analyze difficulties that secondary schools face in teaching the course.

Research design

- Telephone interviews media education course teachers, N=100
- In-depth interviews with school administrators (directors, depute directors), N=6
- Focus group discussions with pupils who study media education, N=6

Quantitative stage research methodology

In order to study the effectiveness and quality of media education/media literacy course implementation, research team conducted phone interviews with teachers that implement media education in their respective schools (100).

To conduct phone interviews, researchers developed a two language questionnaire (Ukrainian and Russian languages) consisting of two parts: personal experience in teaching the course and organization of media education/media literacy courses in schools. The questionnaire consisted of 26 questions and interviews were designed to last no more than 10 minutes (see Attachment 1). To maintain consistency with the first phase of the study that was conducted in summer of 2014 among Oblast Institutes for Postgraduate Education (OIPE), researchers included questions about personal experience of teaching the course and organization of media education courses.

Forming respondent database

Database included teachers who completed Academy of Ukrainian Press (AUP) and OIPE's courses on media literacy. The database consisted of : (1) AUP's summer and winter media literacy school participants; (2) a list of schools that take part in the experiment on implementation of media culture (developed and curated by the Institute for Social and Political Psychology NAPS); (3) participants of conferences on ME/ML and other events; (4) contacts of teachers provided by curators of the experiment in the regions; (5) contacts of teachers provided by school directors that implement ME/ML; (6) contacts of teachers provided by their colleagues.

The primary list included 147 contacts, 115 persons were surveyed (see Attachment 2). The database was noticeably updated since last year, since in certain schools teachers who initially taught the courses dropped out of the experiment for various reasons, passed the course to their colleagues etc.; certain schools that are a part of the experiment do not teach ME/ML courses, while in certain schools enthusiasts started teaching the course on their own.

Respondents' portrait

Surveyed teachers live and work in southern and central oblasts of Ukraine, as well as Lviv oblast. ARC was excluded from the survey, since it was impossible to establish contact with teachers in Crimea. Teachers either do not pick up their phones or reply to ERA's e-mails. Kyiv

was also excluded from the survey as no schools implement ME courses, according to information from L.A. Naydionova¹.

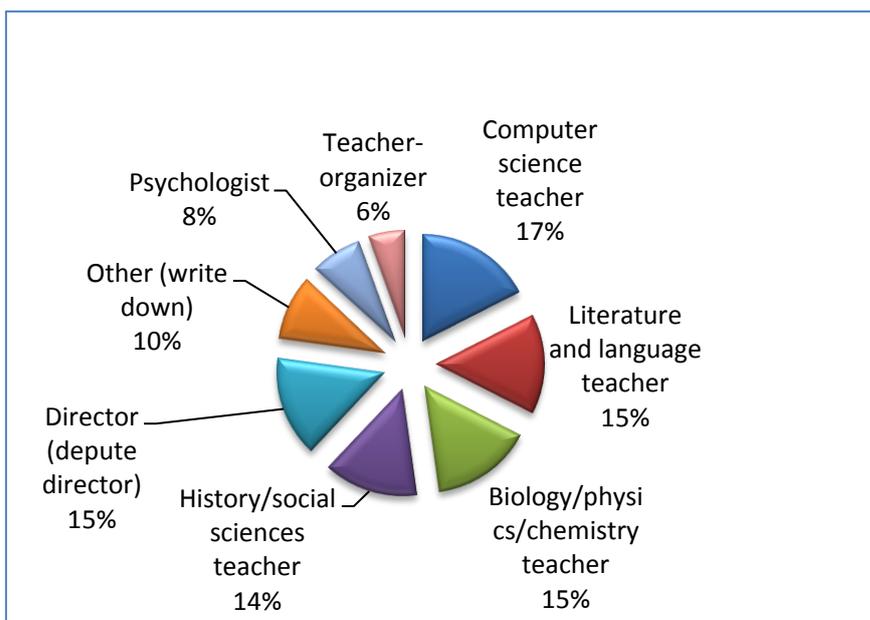
Questionnaire contained two questions on whether ME/ML courses were being taught in schools. Research findings show that at least in 13 schools out of 115 ME/ML is not taught due to the lack of academic hours. Only one teacher noted that ME/ML is not being taught due the lack of interest among students.

The second question concerned teachers' personal experience in teaching ML to students. Among surveyed, 12 teachers do not personally teach ME/ML for various reasons, several provided contacts for their substitutes (who were contacted by the research team). In certain instances, directors and depute directors of schools that take part in the experiment provided contacts of teachers involved in ME/ML in their respective schools. As a result, the database contains information on at least 90 teachers who teach ME/ML.

Survey found that teachers specializing in various subjects (humanities, hard sciences etc.) teach the course. Their shares in the sample are almost identical. Humanities teachers (i.e. literature and language, history and social sciences teachers) constitute the largest group (29%).

Diagram 1. Position of the respondents

Q.7 What subject do you teach? N=90

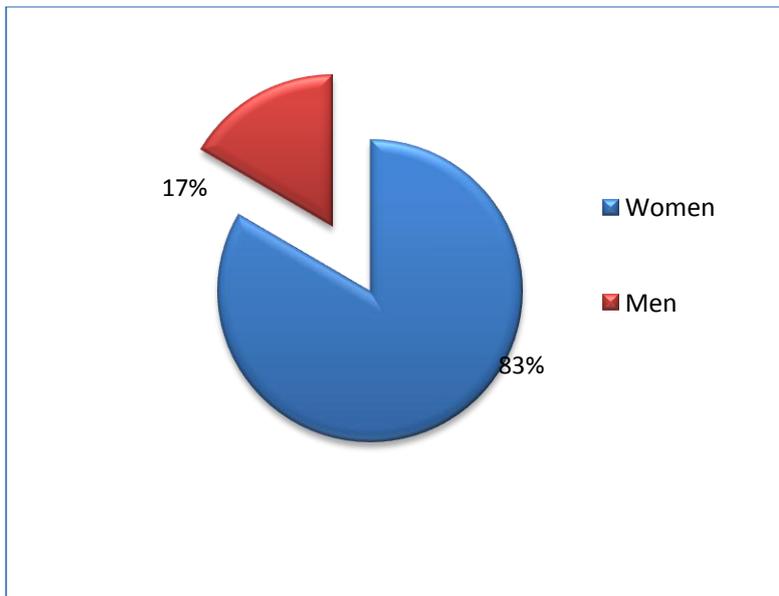


Computer science teachers constitute 18% of the sample. Directors and depute directs also teach the course (15%). Psychologists and teachers-organizers constitute 13% of those involved in ME/ML in schools. Primary school teachers, club administrators and journalists accounted for 10% of respondents.

As far as gender distribution goes, 83% of surveyed teachers were women.

Diagram 2. Gender distribution of respondents

¹ *Direct interview quotes are presented in cursive, word choice and syntax are not altered.*



Methodology for qualitative stage

To organize focus groups and in-depth interviews during the second stage of the survey, researcher team developed distinct scenarios aimed at specific of target groups (See Attachments 3-4).

Schools for focus group discussion were selected using the following criteria:

- Regional reach – 50% of oblasts where experiment was implemented. Schools from Zaporizka, Kyivska, Cherkaska, Kharkivska, and Chernihivska oblasts were included.
- Schools that have various forms of media education implementation—mandatory or elective courses, clubs etc.
- Schools were recommended by OIPE curators and ISPP experts.

In-depth interviews were conducted with school directors and depute directors, who personally either teach media education or coordinate education courses. Regional aspect was also take into consideration. In-depth interviews were conducted in Dnipropetrovska, Poltavsk, Mykolayivska, Cherkaska, Zaporizka, and Kharkivska oblasts.

CONCLUSIONS

- Media education in secondary schools is implemented through successful combination of efforts of Academy of Ukrainian Press that trained OIPE coordinators/teachers at its schools and the Institute for Social and Political Psychology of National Academy for Pedagogical Sciences that developed the national experiment for schools of 10 oblasts of Ukraine.
- Independent implementation of ME (from the national and regional experiments) in a number of schools is indicative of a proliferation beyond the initial experiment. However, to ensure a full transition from the experimental stage to wide implementation, ME courses should be included into university curricula of pedagogical colleges and universities.
- 84% of surveyed teachers, who themselves teach media literacy, went through trainings for trainers, while 16% started teaching independently. Every fourth respondent out of 90 took part in AUP media literacy schools; another 28% took part in OIPE seminars. Thus, the twofold approach of OIPE courses and AUP schools proved to be quite effective.
- Secondary schools use different approaches to ME implementation: some focus on psychological aspects of ME i.e. critical thinking, while others focus on its practical aspects—production of media content. Surveyed teachers see future development of ME though its integration into official curricula and other existing disciplines.
- In accordance to the concept and curriculum, 10th graders constitute the largest group among ME students. Students from other grades are involved in clubs and optional courses. One of the most interesting experiences --integration of ME elements into various subjects throughout all school grades, involvement of older pupils in mentoring younger ones.
- During classes, teachers focus on the development of critical and creative thinking, cyber security is secondary.
- Teachers use existing textbooks creatively, select topics of interest/accessible to students that can be presented depending on available technical resources and teacher's specialization.
- 83 out of 90 surveyed teachers (92%) use AUP's site resources. Most popular are: presentations and model lessons. Further development of the database of model lessons, updates of video library can become a useful resource to ME teachers.
- Pupils studying ME education as a part of mandatory courses and media clubs, view ME's objectives and practical usefulness differently. Pupils studying ME in mandatory classes and elective courses see the value in critical approach to processing and assessment of information. Pupils studying ME in clubs, see the latter as means to widening their network of friends, socializing, and gaining tech knowledge in media production. It is important to preserve the balance between the two existing approaches and emphasize main principles of ME— critical thinking, ability to discern bias etc. into the work of media clubs.
- Some pupils do not know whether media education helped them to view documentaries and movies critically. Researchers deduce that theoretical knowledge is not always transferrable into practical skills. ME courses should focus more on developing pupils' skills for critical viewing of documentaries and films.

- Media education is necessary for parents as well. Pupils think poorly of their parents' level of media literacy and try to "educate" their parents with knowledge from media literacy courses. Moreover, schools started using various approaches towards parent "enlightenment" as well.

Teacher needs

- Teachers need intensive experience sharing opportunities with their colleagues from different regions. In experts' opinion, such professional experience sharing is lacking.
- Majority of experts envision further media education development via its incorporation into various disciplines. Experts agree that primary and middle school pupils need media education on par with high school pupils.
- Teachers specializing in various subjects became involved in ME course implementation, thus it may be possible to develop teaching materials on ME that will be integrated into various disciplines/school subjects.
- There is a need for teachers' manuals on practical assignments and media library. There is a lack of available tests and instruments to assess gained knowledge.
- It is important to encourage creativity of teachers who develop own programs and conduct further research into strengthening of practical aspects of ME and improve ME course materials. Their efforts will result in an improved accessibility of the course to pupils.

Section 1. Media education in secondary schools (SC): quantitative indicators

1. 1. Status of the experiment on implementation of media education in secondary schools

Interviews with V.P. Melezhyk (Head of teacher training sector at the Institute of Innovative technologies and content of education of Ministry of Education and Sciences of Ukraine) and L.A. Naydionova (Head of the experiment at the Institute for Social and Political Psychology, National Academy for Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine) helped to collect data on the status of the experiment and main avenues of ME/ML implementation in secondary schools.

Institute of Innovative technologies focused on the development of curricula and training materials on ME/ML for different school grades. With the assistance of AUP, several winter and summer schools were held to train secondary school teachers and OIPE lecturers in ME/ML. OIPE later included components on ME/ML into its teacher training courses.

Survey findings show that teachers trained by the AUP became the core of ME/ML implementation in their respective school, as well as a part of the national and regional experiments' framework. Unfortunately, Institute of Innovative technologies does not collect data on the number of secondary school teachers implementing ME/ML courses, number of trainees who took part in ME/ML lectures and/or organized further practical trainings on ME/ML.

Laboratory for psychology of mass communications and media education of the Institute for Social and Political Psychology (ISPP) under the leadership of L.A.Naydionova develop the concept and implementation plan for the experiment on media culture, developed training materials for the ME course aimed at 10th graders.

According to Ms. Naydionova close to 135 schools in Dnipropetrovska, Zaporizka, Kyivska, Lvivska, Luhanska, Mykolayivska, Poltavska, Cherkaska, Kharkivska, Khersonsk oblasts and ARC are taking part in the national experiment. According to her estimates, overall more than 250 Ukrainian schools are involved in implementation of ME/ML courses: some are focusing on developing media creativity of students through participation in clubs and elective courses, while other schools are developing psychological and pedagogical components of ME/ML.

The national experiment created a push for schools in the regions to implement ME/ML independently. First and foremost, at the onset of the experiment Institute for Social and Political Psychology involved teachers and OIPE instructors who were trained at AUP's schools for media education (U-Media, Vidrodzhennia Fund).

1.2. Organization of media education in secondary schools

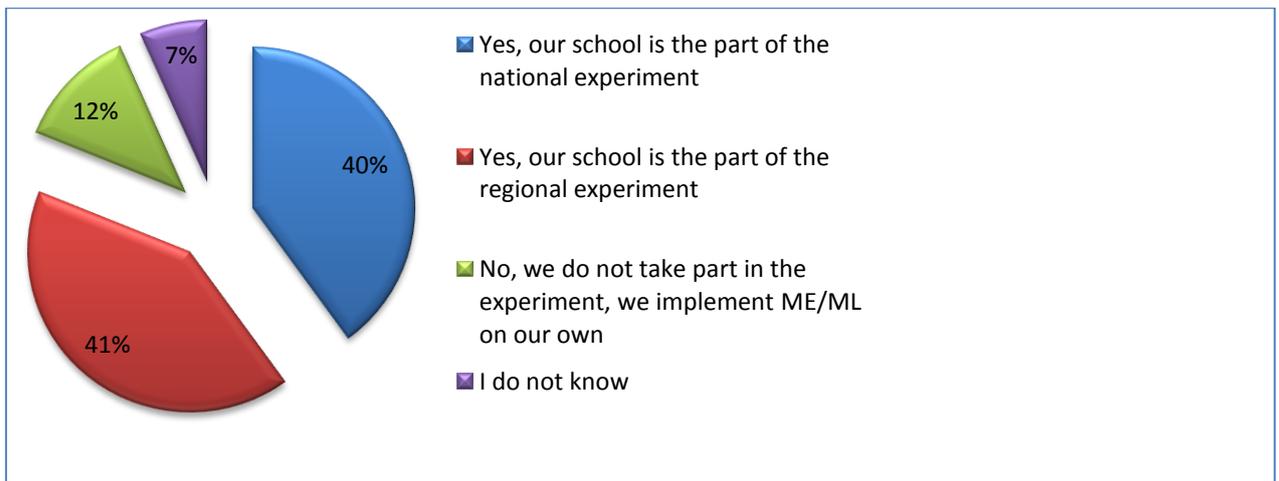
Participation in the experiment

Schools present ME/ML in various forms. As to the status of schools, 40% respondents replied that their schools were a part of the national experiment, while 41% said that their schools were a part of regional experiments.

12% schools implement ME/ML independently. Several respondents could not answer the question. It is very likely that their schools are not a part of the experiment.

Diagram 1.1. Participation on the experiment

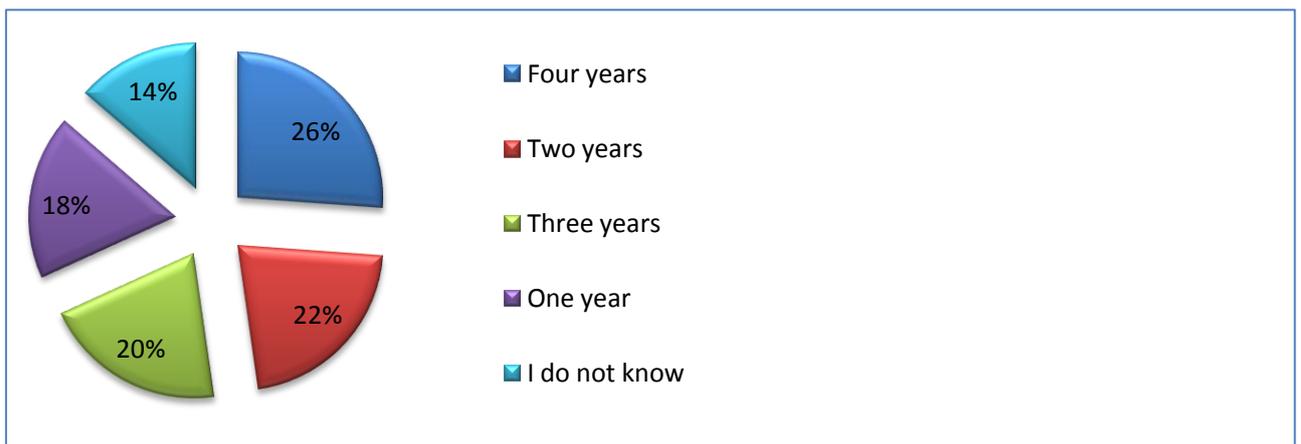
(Q 14 Is your school a part of the experiment on the implementation of media education? N=90)



Among surveyed teachers, every fourth teacher has been involved with media education for at least four years, 22% and 20% have been teaching the course for two and three years respectively (Diagram 1.2).

Diagram 1.2. Number of years as a part of the experiment

(Q 15 For how many years has ME/ML been taught in your school? N=90)



18% of teachers only recently started teaching ME/ML. There are also teachers who started teaching ME/ML instead of their colleagues, thus they do not know how many years ago ME/ML had been introduced in their school (14%).

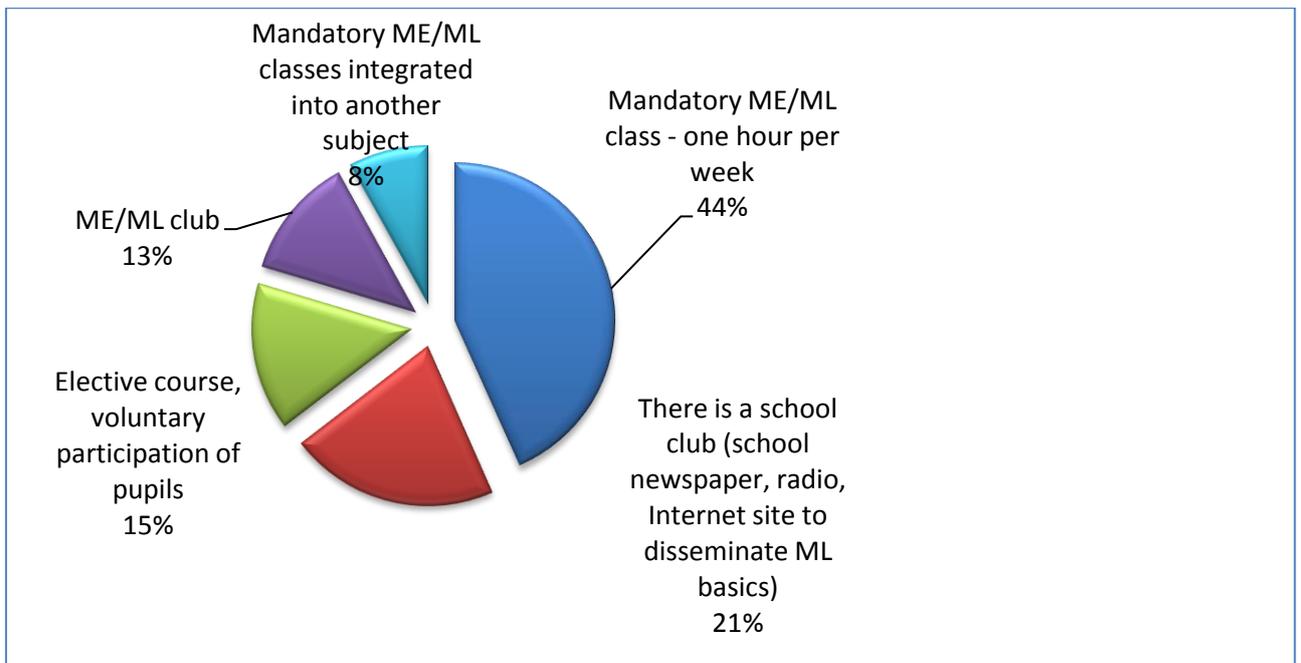
Forms of ME/ML implementation

Schools chose to present ME/ML differently. 44% of schools made the course mandatory (1 hr per week). 21% of schools have teachers-enthusiasts who support school media – newspapers, radio, and website. They stimulate creativity in their pupils, teach them how to create own media products, and develop their media literacy in parallel.

In 13% and 15% schools ME/ML are taught as club activities or elective courses respectively. Hence, all teachers mention the same problem – lack of academic hours. 8% of schools solve this problem by incorporating ME/ML into other subjects.

Diagram 1.3. Forms of ME/ML implementation

(Q 17 How is teaching of ME/ML organized in your school? N=90)

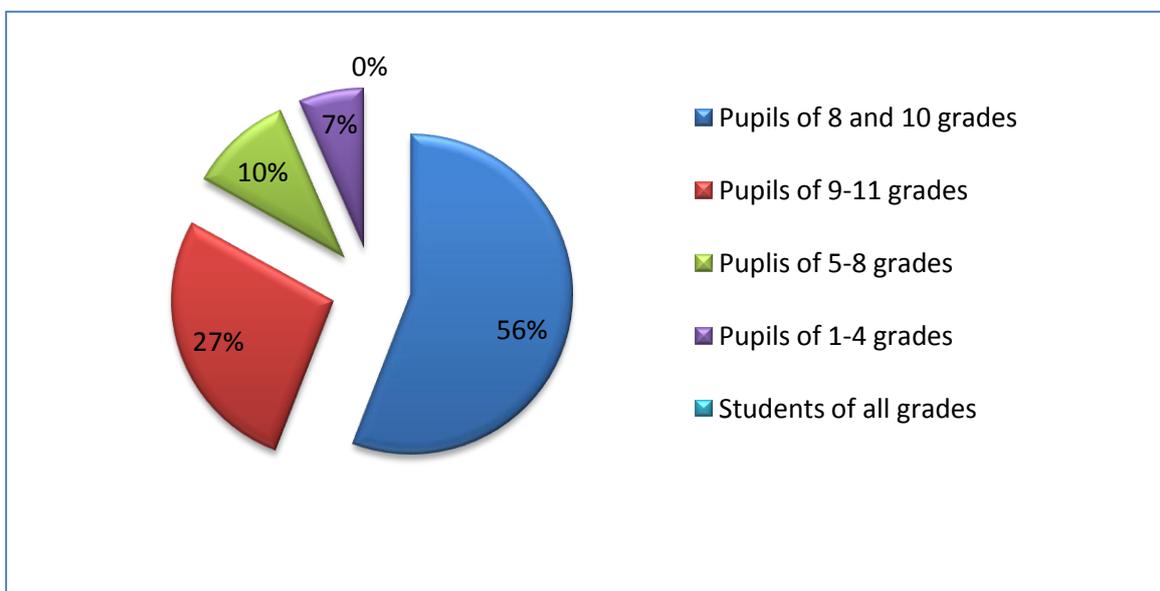


Schools that teach ME/ML courses vary in size of their student body (from 1200 to 94 pupils), depending on the size and location of their respective towns. It is understandable that gymnasiums and schools in Kharkiv, Lviv, Zaporizhizha or Berdiansk would have higher enrollment than small town schools. Overall, surveyed schools totaled 40,158 pupils.

As one can see from Diagram 1.4., ME/ML is predominantly taught in higher grades (56% - 8 and 10 grades) or in 9-11 grades (27%). These statistics fit within the experiment’s framework, as the Institute for Social and Political Psychology developed the course for tenth graders.

Diagram 1.4. Grades during which students are taught ME/ML

(Q 18 Pupils of which grades are taught ME/ML in your school? Multiple answers, N=90)



Among students from higher grades, there are those who attend clubs or elective courses. Little by little, students from middle school are being involved into ME/ML. Their shares are 10% and 7% respectively. Notably, zero respondents replied “Pupils of all classes.” In the future, ME/ML implementers should focus on comprehensive ME for pupils of all ages.

Research team asked respondents to calculate the number of students who took part in ME/ML courses in their schools over the entire duration of the experiment. So far the numbers are quite modest – 7063 pupils attended ME/ML courses i.e. 18% of the entire student body of surveyed

schools. However, the percentage would be definitely higher if taking into consideration pupils from higher grades. However, it is impossible to make such a calculation as data on the number of pupils of higher grades is unavailable.

Course name and topics studied

At least a half of surveyed teachers, said that the course were teaching is titled *Media Culture* (49 persons) or *Basics of Media Culture* (7 teachers). There are other course names e.g. *Basics of Media Literacy*, *Elements of media literacy* or *Media literacy* (7 teachers), *Media Psychology* (2) and other more specific— *Basics of multimedia technologies*, *Visual Media Culture*. 14 teachers titled their course as *Integrated Media Education Course* or *Media Education*. Clubs are called—Media education club, Media literacy club, Media technologies club, Journalism club, Psychological media theater club or Socio-psychological animations.

Topics studied within the course are divided into three modules:

1. Humans in the information world. History of media (photo, films, TV, newspapers, magazines, Internet) and analysis of texts/materials/other media products (for example, TV shows)
2. Visual media culture. Development of media products: storylines, reports, films and photo stories.
3. Basics of information security. Psychological impact of media and countering manipulative effects of media products.

Abovementioned topics were presented to teachers at OIPE courses for teacher training/AUP schools as evidenced by surveys conducted earlier. Unsurprisingly, teachers transfer gained knowledge to pupils.

Textbooks

Predominant majority of teachers (89%) use courses and textbooks developed by the Institute for Social and Political Psychology, for example: Naydionova L.A and O.T. Baryshpolets. *Media culture of an individual: socio-psychological approach*; Cherepovska N.I. *Media education and media culture of secondary school pupils: visual media culture*; Naydionova L.A and O.T. Baryshpolets. *Practical media culture* etc. Respondents with Internet access use Media psychology/Media education site materials.

At the same teachers note that AUP's site materials, particularly V.Ivanov's *Practical media education: model lessons* is most helpful to those teachers who want to study materials, make them practical and more interesting to pupils (*"Naydionova's materials are boring, academic and dry, uninteresting to children", I add a bit more practical and psychological elements"*; *"I use the site, talk to colleagues, share information with them", We adapt the course's outline for preschoolers on our own"*)².

A small number of teachers use their own materials, since what they are provided with is quite old-school and needs to be modernized.

While searching for materials and textbooks, teachers turn to Internet as well. 11 teachers mentioned O.V. Fedorov's vocabulary and handbook (Russia) as one of the resources they use.

Some teachers from Lviv oblast, who only recently started teaching ME/ML, are not yet familiar with certain program and textbooks; yet, often turn to their curators-mentors for help (*"We meet once per month at the Catholic University. There Natalia Pastushenko, our lead, helps us..."*, *"At the moment I use what I am given"*).

² Herein and further direct speech of respondents is italicized. Respondents' speech patterns, word choice and syntax were not altered.

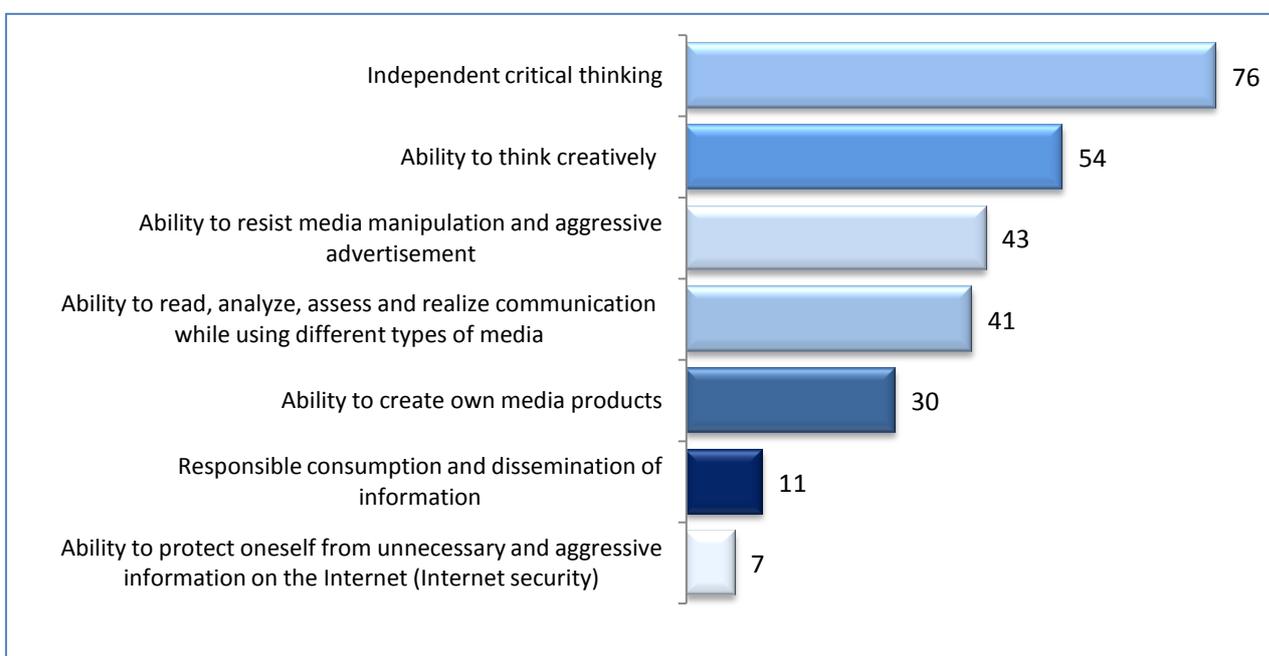
Student/pupil interest

According to teachers, students are most interested in creation of their own media products where and when possible. In schools, where there are no own media (newspapers, radio), teachers focus on critical analysis of media stories that are also of interest to pupils.

Quantitative analysis of collected data on the main focus of ME/ML shows that development of critical thinking skills is indeed a priority to ME/ML teachers (76 respondents). Ability to think creatively and ability to resist manipulation and aggressive advertisement took second and third places as most popular replies. As a part of the survey, teachers were asked to name three most important skills/habits that they were striving to develop in their ME/ML pupils.

Diagram 1.5. Main skills

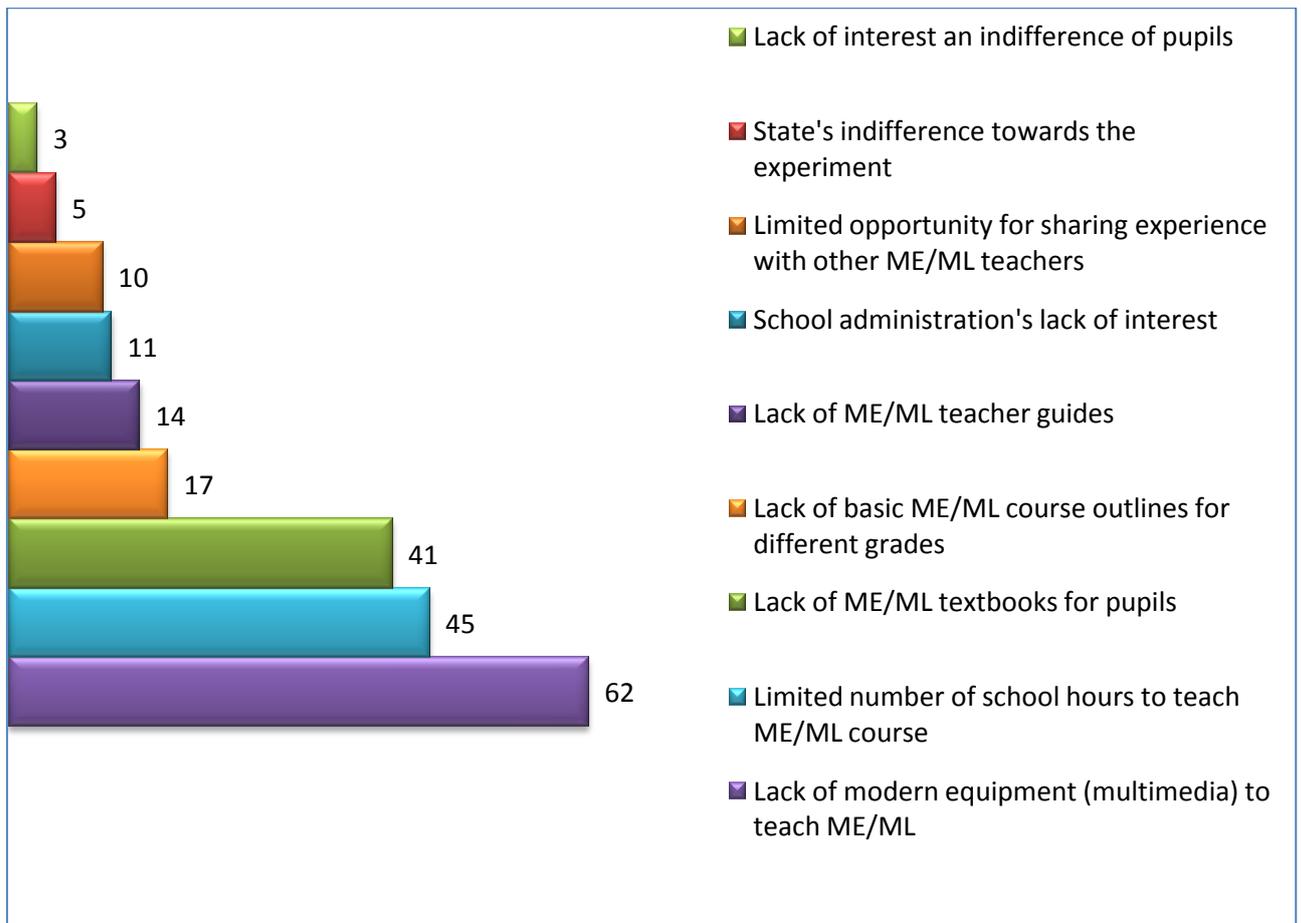
(Q 23 What habits/skills are you trying to develop in your ME/ML pupils? Select up to 3 options. N=90)



During previous survey stages, OIPE lecturers were asked to name barriers in the way of ME/ML implementation. Firstly, secondary school teachers mentioned lack of modern equipment, followed by lack of hours and textbooks on ME/ML for pupils.

Diagram 1.6. Teachers' views on the main problems in development of course content and organization of ME/ML courses in secondary schools

(Q 24 What problems in organization of ME/ML courses and development of course content do you currently face? N=90)



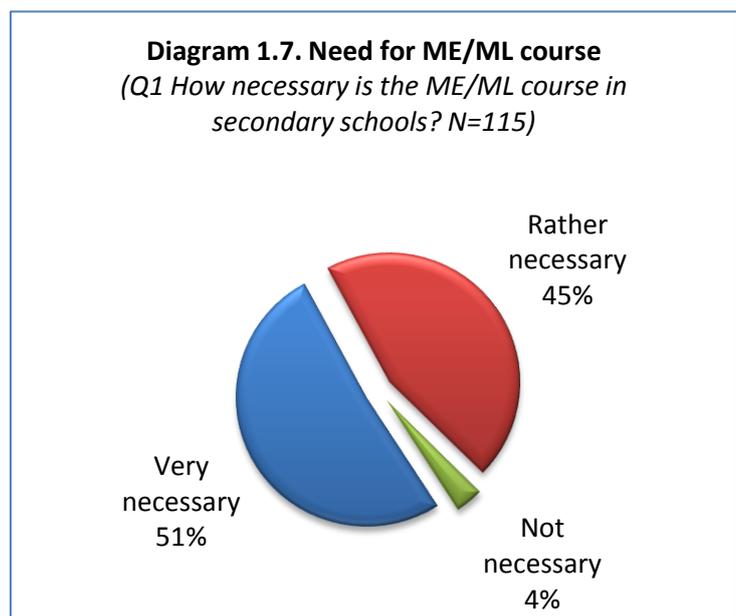
Survey of OIPE instructors identified lack of teacher guides and academic hours as one of the main hurdles for successful ME/ML implementation. School teachers, who took part in the current survey, seem to hold the same opinion.

1.3. Personal experience of teachers

Teachers' views on the need for ME/ML course

Half of respondents consider ME "very necessary" (51%). 45% replied that the course was "rather necessary," 4% said that it was "not needed." Hence, undoubtedly there is a need for such a course.

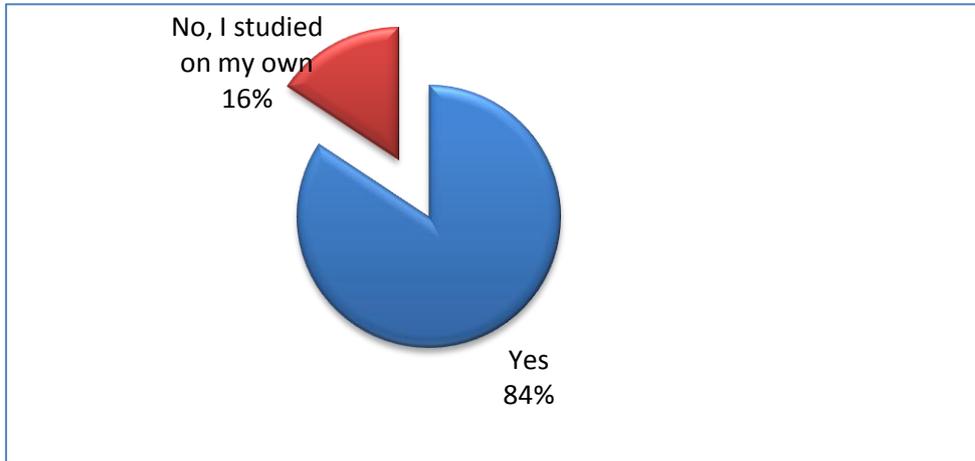
Majority of respondents (84%) went through the "training for trainers" on ME/ML teaching techniques, 16% studied the subject on their own (Diagram 1.8). The latter are ME/ML teachers who took over the course from their colleagues and Lviv city and oblast teachers who got involved into ME/ML quite recently. These teachers demonstrate sincere interest in the subject and would like to take part in future AUP's schools. Currently, teachers from Lviv oblast regularly gather to discuss teaching methods and



materials, and get recommendations from Natalia Pastushenko (curator) before teaching new topics.

Diagram 1.8. Training teachers to teach ME/ML

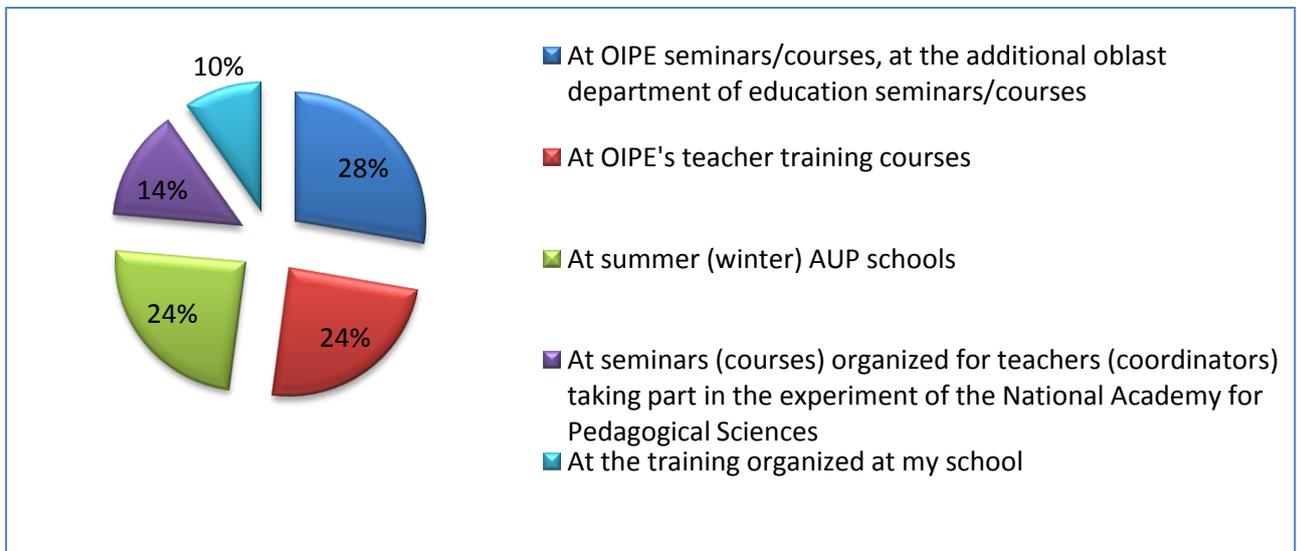
(Q1 Have you attended specialized training for trainers on ME/ML? N=115)



It seems that AUP’s strategy to involve teachers in ME/ML through OIPE courses (Diagram 1.9) is paying off. 24% of teachers got involved in ME/ML through OIPE teacher training courses, 28% took part in OIPE seminars. Every fourth (24%) respondent took part in AUP’s winter/summer schools. A small number of respondents were trained at the courses organized for the participants of the experiment (14%); 10% were trained at their own schools.

Diagram 1.9. ME/ML forms of training for teachers

(Q 3 Where were you trained in ME/ML teaching techniques? N=97)

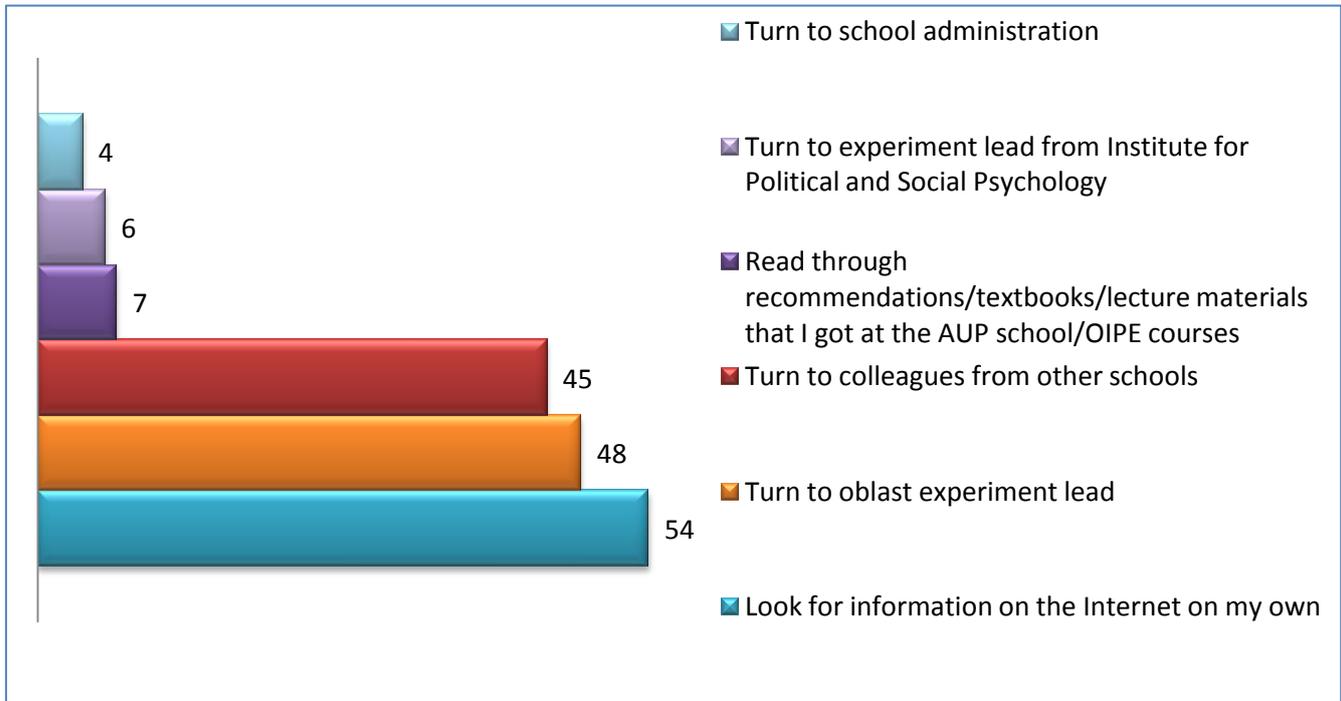


During survey interviews, teachers informally mentioned that they lack knowledge on the subject and would like to exchange experience with their colleagues more. In cases when teachers feel that their competencies are lacking, they try to solve the problem on their own and look for information on the Internet (54 persons). Local experiment lead and colleagues from other schools are also a valuable source of support (48 and 45 respondents respectively).

Unfortunately, not many respondents turn for help to school administration or experiment leads at the Institute for Social and Political Psychology.

Diagram 1.10. Assistance requests from teachers

(Q12 If you feel like your knowledge is lacking or you are unsure about teaching methods, who do you turn to for advice? N=90)

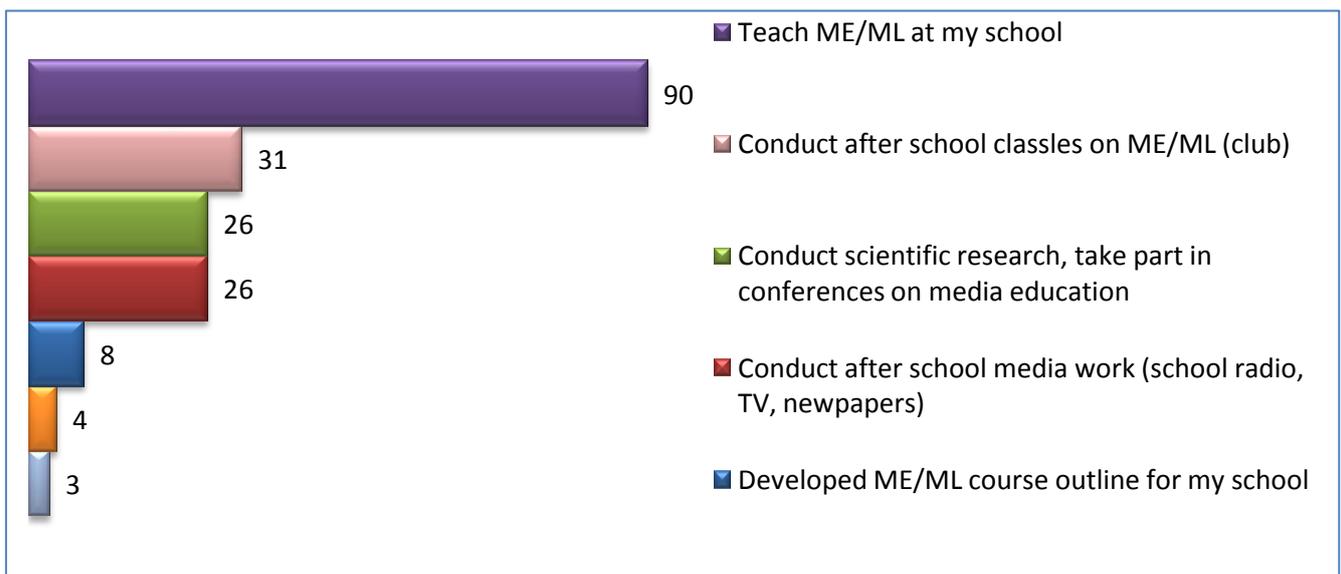


Teaching media literacy during afterschool hours

Surveyed teachers turned out to be quite creative. They not only teach ME/ML in their respective schools (90 persons), yet a third also teaches ME/ML as an extracurricular activity. 26 teachers do their own scientific research on the topic, 26 develop and work in school media. Several teachers began to develop own course outline and became heads of clubs.

Diagram 1.11. Using gained knowledge for afterschool activities with students

(Q 8 How did you use gained knowledge during afterschool media education activities? N=90)



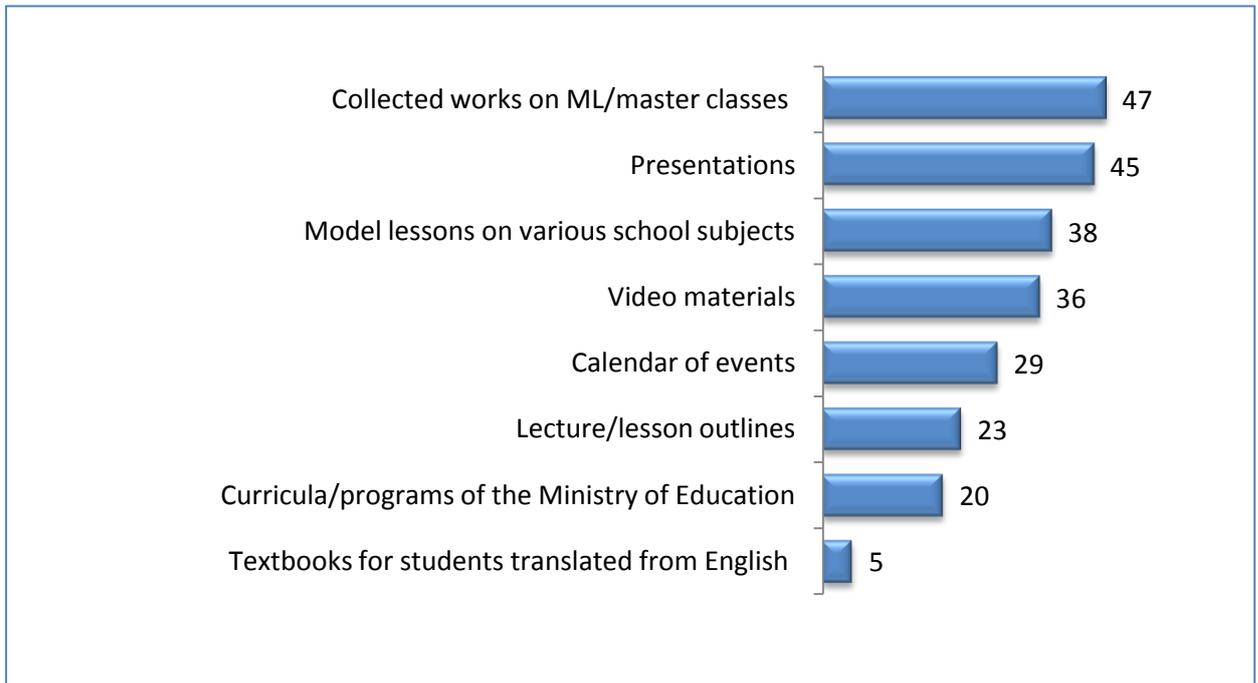
Using AUP's resources

88 respondents know about AUP's portal, 83 use site materials. Two respondents did not know about the portal's existence, three more knew about the site, but failed to use site materials.

Diagram 1.12. shows that collected works/publications, presentations and model lessons on various subjects are most popular understandably so; further in the rating are video materials; followed by the calendar of events, lectures and lessons. Unfortunately, translations of original English textbooks are the least popular.

Diagram 1.12. Popularity rating of AUP's site materials

(Q 9 What materials posted at the portal do you use to teach media literacy course? N=90)



Section 2. In-depth interviews with school administrators

In accordance with survey design, six interviews with school administrators were conducted. Administrators represent school that are a part of the experiment and offer ME/ML to their pupils. Research team interviewed representatives from schools of Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, Mykolayiv, Dnipropetrovska, Poltavska and Cherkaska oblasts.

2.1. Decisive factors behind the choice to participate in the experiment

Representatives of school administrations who agreed to take part in the survey demonstrate high motivation and drive. They easily agree to take part in the experimental programs offered by the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, Ministry of Education and its subdivisions – OIPE etc. Their schools apart from media education implementation participate in other similar initiatives (*"I liked the idea. Given that before our school has taken part in a leadership project"* (gymnasium, Kharkiv), *"In parallel we are already a part of the experiment on economy education (lyceum, Mykolayiv), "We were offered [to start implementing ME/ML] and readily agreed. Since the school has been ready for such a thing for a long while"* (school, Talne, Cherkaska oblast).

Eagerness of school administrators to partake in new educational programs, understanding of the importance and the pressing need for media education, and participation in experimental programs became the groundwork for the implementation of such initiatives as media education.

Effectiveness and successful implementation of any project largely depends on personal qualities, readiness of administrators and teachers alike to improve their qualification and skills (*"I realized how I lack knowledge of psychology and humanities in order to teach media literacy. It is not simply and ability to work with media, but also development of critical thinking and analytical skills"* (Computer science teacher, Dnipropetrovska oblast), *"I take on the hardest task myself, and work with colleagues further down the road ..."* (Talne, Cherkaska oblast).

When teaching a new subject, teachers try to develop and improve suggested course outlines; initiate implementation of media education as both separate subject and an integrated component of other school subjects; involve colleagues at their own schools, as well as spread knowledge among colleagues elsewhere (*"Currently, we organize seminars for teachers of the city and oblast"* (Mykolayiv), *"We decided to involve the entire school, develop media literacy of all"* (Dnipropetrovska oblast).

Describing decisive factors behind the choice to take part in the experiment on media literacy implementation, respondents mention the pressing need for media education (*"Over the past two years life showed us the critical need for such a discipline "*, *"in our time, when the information war is at hand"* (Dnipropetrovska oblast), as well as the need to mold individuals able *"not to get lost in huge information streams,"* form own opinions, and think critically.

Experiment participants themselves describe evolution of their personal views on media education. Initially, they saw media education as a tool for gaining greater computer proficiency, while later came to view it as being crucial for development of ability to think critically. They try to impart their newfound philosophy to colleagues and children: *"It is easier to teach children to work with software, while interpreting of information is another thing"* (Dnipropetrovska oblast), *"Media education does not end at learning how to use technology (movie club), but rather teachers to think critically"* (Mykolayiv).

Overall, the decision to implement ME/ML and take part in the experiment is viewed as a positive thing on a personal level, as well as necessary for improving education experience: *"Two years, no regrets, we are very much interested"* (Kharkiv). Stories of success of both schoolchildren and teachers are another reason for such positive outlook (*"Our kids won contests many times", "They [pupils] actively appear on television", "Our teacher came second in the teacher of the year contest in Russia"* (Mykolayiv).

In school administrators' opinion, enthusiasts are needed to implement media education successfully. Enthusiasts will be able to interest and involve other people, so that media education does not simply become another school subject, but become integral to the overall education experience: "2-3 persons on the frontlines and others will follow" (Mykolayiv).

2.2. Effectiveness of teacher training

Respondents praise OIPE courses and AUP's schools. Some respondents view them as a way to structure independently gained knowledge ("*Schools gave us a lot, in a monumental way. We knew bits and pieces, but now there is structure, there is more clarity*" (Kharkiv), for some they are a way to self-improvement ("*I became inspired, because I realized how interesting this subject is*" (Dnipropetrovska oblast), "*there is no such thing as too much studying*" (Poltavksa oblast). Most importantly, respondents demonstrate openness and readiness to improve their competencies and qualification, as well as transfer gained knowledge to pupils.

While noting the importance and the need for such schools and courses, respondents point out the areas where improvements can be made. Most important areas for improvement are:

- ▶ **Lack of teacher guides and literary sources:**
 - Sources with practical and case examples
 - Tests and quizzes
 - Textbooks and workbooks for pupils
 - Clarification of technical and organizational aspects for media product development
- ▶ **Teachers lack opportunities to take part in training and seminars**
 - Invite not only administrators, but also teachers to take part in seminars
 - Exchange experience with teachers with practical experience of ME/ML implementation, especially teachers with different specialization.

Representative of all six schools organize staff meetings to discuss media education implementation. Some administrators provide informal mentoring and consulting to their colleagues-teachers. In Poltavska oblast, high school pupils who study ME/ML present during student body assemblies (school body is comprised of 65 pupils), presentations are taped and analyzed to improve public speaking abilities of presenters.

Respondents note that further development and implementation of media education in schools is possible not only through centralized organization of seminars and schools (long-term programs, which are important and necessary), but also through sharing of success stories with schools in the regions. For example, Mykolayiv lyceum organizes seminars for teachers of Mykolayiv and oblast, which in turn results in the involvement of other schools in the experiment. Kharkiv teachers are also positive about such exchange of experience: "*We organize seminars with our teachers, regular teacher councils, we will organize a seminar for teachers and deputies of other schools of the city. We are preparing a paper.*"

At the same time, proactive in their own schools teachers oftentimes do not know whether and how media education is implemented at other schools.

School administrators expect the support from city administrations and Ministry of Education, and consider their support crucial for further development of media literacy.

Some respondents think that educational work does not end with teachers and pupils, but is necessary for the parents as well. Experts note that some parents demonstrate alarmingly low level of media culture and need instruction and training on media literacy. Respondents think that education of parents is one of the ways of further development of media literacy programs.

2.3 Teaching media education courses

Peculiarities of teaching

In depth interview respondents said that the subject they were teaching was generally called Media culture or Basics of media culture, Individual media culture or some such similar term. Generally this course is taught in high school: in Dnipropetrovksa, Poltavksa, Cherkaska oblast the course is taught to 10th graders, in Kharkiv and Mykolayiv – 8-10th graders, during one academic hour weekly. Since school curricular does not include extracurricular lessons, media education is taught as an elective discipline (Mykolayiv) or in clubs (Zaporizhzhia, Poltavksa oblast).

School administrators are receptive to the idea of teaching media education to pupils of all ages, including primary school pupils. In one of schools of Dnipropetrovska oblast media education is integrated into natural science lessons, while after class activities involve the use of media resources (so that students learn to work with media). At the same time, experts – school directors and deputes, emphasize the lack of academic hours for media education; yet, they also do not wish to cut “pedagogic hour” as recommended by some City Departments of Education.

Thus, **integration of media education into other disciplines/subjects** is viewed most positively: practically all respondents think such an integration is important and necessary. In Kharkiv, Mykolayiv and Dnipropetrovsk schools such integration is already underway.

Teacher guides

All experts are familiar with literary sources e.g. L.A.Naydionova’s textbooks, as well as O.T.Boryspolets, and N.I.Cherepovska’s, Fedorov’s books. Although respondents mention that these resources are not enough to teach well, they need to be adapted, which is what teachers do in preparation for lessons.

“We lack textbooks. Textbook provides the basics, but we have to demonstrate practical examples, thus teachers select and develop their own materials”

Secondary school, Mykolayiv town

Teachers also adapt textbooks commissioned by the Institute for Social and Political Psychology when necessary, for example: to teach the course in a few academic hours (“*The course is very compressed*” (Kharkiv), as well as due to school specialization (“*Naydionova’s curriculum was adapted to fit the school’s specialization*” (Mykolayiv).

When teacher guides are lacking, teachers look for information on the Internet and translate foreign editions on their own: “*We translate on our own. There are a lot of good specialists in Russia*” (Kharkiv).

In clubs (Zaporizhzhia) teachers focus on the practical aspects of media education, try to interest students and foster creative atmosphere (rather than teach by the textbook). For heads of clubs, creative side is more important than course outline: “*Our main goal is to take kids off the streets, teach them some professional skills and create interest.*”

Respondents think that there is no such thing as an ideal teacher guide or a textbook, since any source material needs to be adapted for the needs of a particular target audience and teaching situation. However, all experts understand that textbooks are necessary for the process of education. Such a textbook **should be written for pupils**, should be interesting to pupils, and result in active rather than passive learning.

Experts think that scientists and practitioners should collaborate on the textbook: “*We need the collaboration of scientists, journalists, media workers, and pedagogues. We lack professional knowledge, a lot of information we get on our own, but it isn’t enough*” (Kharkiv).

Assessment of gained knowledge

Majority of experts assess gained knowledge through either tests or through tasking students with creative projects.

Teachers develop tests on their own ("*[We] developed tests with practical exercises (similar to external independent testing)*") (Dnipropetrovska oblast) or use additional sources ("*We use the tests from various sources. There is a Russian magazine*") (Mykolayiv). At the same time teachers note that available testing materials are a poor indicator of pupil's knowledge: "we lack professionally done testing materials" (Poltavska oblast), "We develop tests on our with psychologist's assistance" (Cherkaska oblast).

According to all survey respondents, **creative projects and exercises** are one of the most popular and valuable assessment tools: "*It is important to foster creativity, so they [pupils] could create and analyze on their own*" (Mykolayiv). In expert opinion, media education is all the more interesting and appealing for such projects.

2.4. Interest of pupils

All interview participants say that pupils' interest is piqued by media education. Active involvement in creative activities is what students find so interesting. Some schools develop own media products: run newspapers (Dnipropetrovska oblast), film videos and produce photography (Poltavska, Cherkaska oblast), produce programs for local TV (Zaporizhzhia).

School administrators are very proud of their pupils' achievements – some were invited to and chose journalism schools ("*Many of our graduates are in the media now, 10 became famous and successful journalists*") (Zaporizhzhia).

Representatives of Kharkiv preschool, where elements of media education are also developed, speak about the importance of media product development: "*It is important for the child to see results of their work, create their own product*".

In expert opinion, cooperation with higher education institutions is quite beneficial. For example, Mykolayiv schools partner with the College for Press and Television; the latter invites pupils to participate in various programs. Some experts love the idea of comprehensive media education from preschool to primary, secondary, high school to higher education ("*Teachers should graduate from college or university and be able to incorporate media education into their subject*") (Dnipropetrovska oblasti).

2.5. Barriers to implementation of media education and ways to overcome them

Experts note a number of barriers to implementation of media education:

1. Lack of academic hours

Media education is considered to be an elective course; therefore, the number of academic hours devoted to it is limited.

Solution:

Ideally, media education should be a mandatory discipline

In practice, media education is considered an elective course or a club that cuts into pedagogical hours, other clubs and electives etc.

2. Lack of teacher guides

Existing teacher guides and curricula need to be adapted for secondary school students, as well as include practical exercises and tests.

Solution:

Teachers with different specialization and ME experience ought to develop teacher guides, organize seminars, conferences, master classes, in particular integrated courses.

3. Lack of teachers with necessary qualifications/training

Few schools take part in the experiment and lack trained teachers

Solution:

Regular organization of seminars and schools for media education teachers; involve a larger number of schools.

Introduction of ME/ML courses into the curricula of teacher college and university students.

4. Lack of resources and equipment

Need for resources and equipment to organize media lessons.

Solution: Attract sponsors to procure equipment for media lessons.

5. Insufficient support from the state

There is a lack of financing and state support for the experiment.

Solution: Include media education programs in the overall school education development strategy of Ministry of Education.

2.6. Prospects for media education development

According to the experts, media education is crucial for the development and growth of modern individuals. Those who take part in the experiment think that upon its completion recommendations should be developed and submitted to Ministry of Education to include the concept of media education into the overall state strategy on education. Majority of experts see further prospects for the development of media education through its integration into various school subjects. Experts think that media education is necessary not only to high school students, but pupils of all grades.

Some experts think that parents should be also proactively introduced to media education.

It is also important to study the experience of other states where media education was implemented.

At the same time experts think that successful implementation of any project largely depends on the involvement of enthusiastic, proactive, and creative personalities that are able to overcome barriers and set conventions.

In respondents' opinion, Ministry of Education should not only support those who already began implementing media education, but also actively encourage involvement of a larger number of educational institutions.

Section 3. Focus group discussions with pupils from various grades studying media education

Focus group discussions were conducted with secondary school pupils who study ME and take part in the national/regional experiment. Interviews were organized in six cities: Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia (2), Bila Tserkva (Kyivska obl.), Talne (Cherkaska obl.), and Chernihiv.

In Kharkiv (gymnasium №172) media education is taught in eighth, ninth and tenth grades. ME elements are integrated into different subjects: computer science, literature, language, history and even PE. Teachers actively promote ME: organize trainings and master classes for representatives of other schools, try to interest other teachers. Teachers also work with parents, measure media-dependence of pupils and inform their parents about the results. 10 pupils took part in focus group discussion (two from eighth and ninth grades, six from tenth grade).

In Bila Tserkva (school №5) ME is an elective/after school course for 10-11 graders. Few pupils attend such classes as they are not mandatory. Pupils from 11th grade have a far better

understanding of ME. Tenth graders are focused on learning presenting skills and elocution. All pupils demonstrate understanding of basic safety rules for the Internet and social networks' use.

In Chernihiv (lyceum №16) ME is an elective course for tenth graders. There is a course outline; media resources and technology are used frequently. Ten students from tenth grade took part in the focus group.

In Zaporizhzhia (secondary school №16) ME was introduced six years ago, later school became a part of the experiment. 7 teachers took part in different training programs and summer schools. Media education is taught from the sixth grade, mainly during class hours, one time per week. For tenth graders ME is taught while using the curriculum supplied by the experiment. The school has plenty media equipment 8 projectors, more than 20 computers, video cameras etc. Media education is integrated in other subjects – literature, language, history. Focus group was conducted among tenth graders.

Zaporizhzhia Grani Center was founded 30 years ago. Close to 200 students take part in media clubs (more than 5). The Center has own studio and newspaper, pupils focus on developing own media products. Pupils of different ages took part in the focus group: one from third and seventh grades, two from eighth and tenth grades, and three college freshmen.

In Talne, Cherkaska oblast (gymnasium №1) teachers of Ukrainian language and literature teach ME (psychologist was also involved at a certain point). Thus, ME's focus is on language, text, rules for dissemination and perception of information, rather than media technology. Nine pupils from tenth grade took part in the focus group discussion. They have ME lessons once a week.

3.1. Perception of ME terms and concepts

Spontaneous reactions of pupils are indicative of set in associative patterns and lack of knowledge (for example, cyberbullying)³. Media education is associated with school, studying and ME teachers. Media technology is associated with modern media. Information can be obtained not only through gadgets, but books and parents as well. Internet is simultaneously associated with information and garbage. Communication is first and foremost associated with friends –real and virtual, social networks. Cyberbullying remains a mystery; however, initial assumptions about the meaning of the term are more or less right. Specifically:

- ▶ **Media education** is associated with school, studying, media, presentation, institute, teacher (many times!), TV, Gogol, science, interesting facts.
- ▶ **Cyberbullying** is not associated with anything; many pupils are not familiar with the term. Assumptions are made: computer, monster, cyber-attack, modern bowling, robots, transformers, games, program, human, machine, contest, ML, technology, helplessness.
- ▶ **Media technology** is associated with television, camera, radio, telephone, Internet, tablet, generally main channels of communication in the teenager's information field.
- ▶ **Information** is associated with newspaper, TV, book, learning, message, news, text, computer graphics, people, and parents. For modern pupils, books and parents remain a valuable source of information.
- ▶ **Internet** is associated with network, vkontakte, filth, search, information, Wikipedia, browsers, social networks and communication.
- ▶ **Communication** is associated with friends, family, world, knowledge, conversation, dialogue. .

³ "Cyberbullying is a new form of aggression, realized through the use communication and information tools "(L.A. Naydionova)

- ▶ **Network** - web, Internet, fish, google, connection, press, satellites, wires i.e. purely as technical support. However, unexpectedly fish and fishing net came up among pupils' answers.

Thus, the spontaneous reaction towards ME terms and concepts, demonstrates that pupils understand specifics of modern communication, spread of information via modern technology. At the same time books, family, and friends remain a valuable source of information. Media education is associated with lessons, learning, teachers i.e. theory that slowly transforms into practice.

3.2. Pupils' understanding of the goal and objectives of media education

Pupils studying media education in media clubs and during academic lessons view their goals, interests and benefits of gained knowledge differently. Those who study ME as a school subject wish to learn how to work with and perceive information, correctly assess information (*"Differentiate and assess information, filter information"* (Kharkiv), *"Protect oneself from negative information"* (Chernihiv).

Media club members view ME as a way towards greater network of contacts, better socialization, character building etc.: *"I come here to talk to people face to face and not through the screen. I learned how to make quality videos, express my thoughts eloquently and to the point"* (Zaporizhzhia).

Media club goers are more focused and career oriented. This becomes all the more clear even during simple association exercises: pupils use specific media terms, assess media product quality.

Generally, pupils are not into intricacies of media content production; for them it is important to form opinions about media and information, get applicable skills and advantages (*"This is necessary, this information about how to perceive information. This is the kind of knowledge that we will need in the future and put into good use"* (Kharkiv).

Media club members are not pushed to view media critically or assess media agendas. They study media from within, as employees would, to produce media content. At the same time those who study ME during academic lessons view information as consumers.

For pupils that are media club member, it is important to learn technical aspects of professional and quality media production (*"Media literacy is the right presentation of information. It is a new sort of education. We are learning how to use information correctly, make site, videos, media products"* (Zaporizhzhia).

Pupils are interested in media education mostly due to accessible and unconventional teaching methods and lack of control/testing, as well as opportunities to learn practical skills: *"We learned to make presentations and can now structure information..."* (Bila Tserkva); *"I became involved in photography. Photography is also a sort of information. I now see how easy it is to deceive..."* (Talne).

Media education offers them numerous opportunities for creative self-expressions, brings about understanding of the necessity of such knowledge for people nowadays: *"this is something news, different from other subject, necessary, modern and most importantly practical"* (Zaporizhzhia). Media education course evokes interest in all pupils: *"This is exciting, everyone likes it. Only those who do not like anything, don't like ME"* (Kharkiv).

In short, for pupils media education means:

- ▶ *Learning, because it is interesting*
- ▶ *Differentiation and evaluation of information, filtering manipulative messages*
- ▶ *Protecting oneself from negative information*

- ▶ *Preparing oneself for adulthood*
- ▶ *Assessing media information critically.*

3.3. Media education experience

Learning formats

All students learned about media education either from their teachers or club leaders. Only two pupils remembered that their parents talked to them about media bias.

Pupils are enthusiastic about ME lessons, yet admit that there are few such lessons (one hour per week). In schools where media culture is an elective/afterschool course and attendance is not taken, pupils note their interest in the subject itself: *"We have one afterschool hour weekly, but almost entire class attends"* (Chernihiv). At the same time afterschool classes are not a part of the official curriculum, so classes can be postponed or cancelled (*«not everyone goes, due to lack of time and understanding of the importance [of ME] ..."*) (Bila Tserkva).

Focus group participants also think that younger students (5-6 graders) should be able to start learning ME as well. Such classes would be interesting and useful for middle schoolers, also high schools students could get involved: *"Better to start in 5-6th grades to teach them Internet safety, so they would not go on bad sites"* (Kharkiv), *"I can tell them (younger pupils) a lot, just need to pick the right and simpler form"* (Bila Tserkva).

Presentation forms

In schools, ME lessons are conducted as discussions, presentations, also as exercises on film, newspaper, and advertisement analysis. Teachers oftentimes use photos and films during lessons (*"Teachers told us to bring old photos. This is going to be an interesting lesson; we will talk about the kind of information one get about people and their time from photographs..."*) (Talne). Pupils are asked to create and present own research and projects (*"We organized a poll about the kind of music young people listen to, later we presented poll results"*, *"We created ads, came up with a logo and brand mark"*, *"We created video clips"*) (Kharkiv), develop and present a topic (*"I like doing presentations, learning to speak publicly"*) (Bila Tserkva).

In media clubs, students for the most part are keen on creating own media products. Since children of different ages participate in club activities, younger pupils can exchange experience with older ones. The focus though is always on team work and collaboration: *"we work together to create a program, newspaper or a story. We get our assignment and get on with music and video footage, younger students learn from older ones"* (Zaporizhzhia).

Textbooks

One of the important questions of media education implementation is supplying pupils with textbooks. Pupils admit that there are not enough textbooks. Teachers replace textbooks with Xeroxed copies or note print outs: *"Our school has xerox machine so we get copies of handouts every time. But working like this isn't very comfortable. Workbook would help. We need textbooks as teachers cannot teach everything"* (Kharkiv), *"We take the textbook off the Internet, and in addition to that we have notes..."* (Talne). At the same time, the Internet feels the need for additional information. (*"And sometimes—find this information on the Internet..."*) (Bila Tserkva).

At the same time the club members say they don't need textbooks. They are interested in the practice, not in the theory: *"In the club we're learning everything live, using examples. We should have tablets instead of textbooks"* (Zaporizhzhia).

Interesting topics

The biggest area of interest is manipulation: *“The most interesting topic is about manipulations, to not fall a victim of manipulation, before studying this, I had no idea how massive the impact on human consciousness is”* (Chernihiv) and influencing through the mass media: *“Interesting topic about the fears, phobias, panic, what people are frightened of, what is forced on them, the theme of cyberspace....”* (Chernihiv).

All pupils mention advertisement: *“We studied how advertisement is made, and how it is crafted to influence consumers”* (Kharkiv) . *“We were told about the 25th frame, about harmful advertisement. We had such a lesson...”* (Zaporizhzhia).

Pupils are interested in the evolution of photo and film equipment: *“We saw how old cameras work. It seems like such a miracle ...”* (Talne).

Worth noting that modern trainees consider the radio an outdated and uninteresting thing: *“You can remove the topic of the radio—it is outdated, it is interesting as history, but no more than that.”* (Kharkiv).

To feel themselves as journalists, to take an interview, to write about the event—the pupils liked this: *“The most interesting lesson—was about the interviews—we learned to conduct an interview, had a role play...”* (Kharkiv).

The common theme that united those who had media studies as part of their school lessons, and the clubs—interest towards development and creation of media-products: *“We tried to be cameramen and this turned out to be really hard work”* (Kharkiv), *“we create TV programs, newspaper, PSAs”* (Zaporizhzhia).

Testing

Gained knowledge is assessed through creative tasks, which works better to motivate students: *“Out projects are rated, we are not given exams”* (Kharkiv). In certain instances testing is not done at all: *“No, we are not given test. What is the point? Teachers assess our projects and leniently so. We take part in contests”* (Chernihiv). In some schools teachers do organize testing; during afterschool classes, pupils discuss video and photo materials and presentations.

3.4. Understanding benefits of ME/ML

Pupils see benefits of ME with its goal i.e. forming certain ideas, knowledge and skills, general level of personal development and erudition. At the same time, those who study ME in clubs see its benefits differently from those studying ME during regular school lessons.

Those who study ME during school hours, focus develop critical thinking and understand that information can be manipulative: *“I understand that interviews can be staged. I see that people can say one thing, while their words are later edited to create different context. I now see how TV shows are made”* (Kharkiv). Pupils, whose parents worked in Libya, referenced the impact of polarized reporting over the past year: *“Information was so distorted parents called us and urged us to run away [from Ukraine]. While we wondered, if they were alive at all. Now I see everybody lies.”* (Bila Tserkvan).

Interestingly, pupils understand that biased reporting did not come up yesterday (*“They write for the king”*). It’s just nowadays media impact is so ubiquitous.

Pupils admit that knowledge they gained makes them very skeptical and suspicious (*“Yes, we become skeptical, but this is a sort of inoculation”* (Bila Tserkva), but such skepticism helps to protect oneself from an avalanche of false information (*“Everything of the utmost importance should be double and triple checked”* (Talne).

Pupils see benefits of ME clearly, when their family (brothers or sisters) need help with Internet addiction: *“We teach them to use Internet correctly, not to become too dependent. Limit advertisement exposure. Distinguish news. I helped my brother overcome his media addiction”* (Chernihiv).

Media club members' skills are more practical, can become of use in creating PSAs or information materials: *"I can create a PSA about harmful effects of drugs or smoking and upload it on the Internet. This PSA can save someone's life. Information affects us, but we can help others ..."* (Zaporizhzhia).

3.5. Interest in disseminating information about media education

Pupils were very willing to pass on their knowledge from media education to younger pupils and to their parents: *"There are many lies on TV—it's possible to get confused. We used our knowledge to do lessons with the youngsters, taught them as well. We are learning to rely less on our hearts and feelings, and are trying to use our minds, to analyze."* (Kharkiv)

Those who study media in their clubs are concentrating on practical skills of using and processing information with modern technology and equipment: *"To be able to use a computer and other equipment, to be able to find the necessary information, to be able to process it"* (Zaporizhzhia).

Pupils from Chernihiv told about their experience of being "educated" by their relatives who live abroad: *"We don't know about many things, but understand that we should be learning about them. It makes sense. Our relatives in Russia are watching and believing this nonsense, although we live here and see everything. For example, our relatives live in Latvia and they say that everything is destroyed here, everyone is starving. It is surprising."*

Pupils who attend additional classes are sure that their colleagues are missing out by not attending these classes, but don't know how to involve them (*"They never have the time"*)

Media education and fictional/documentary films

The question of whether media education helps to watch films and documentaries was difficult for pupils. This means that the accent of the need for critical processing of information was not transferred to films and documentaries: *"Never thought about it... Just watched films ..."* (Chernihiv).

Pupils who worked on creating media products were concentrated on the process of creating films, and not on their meaning: *"I watch the film and understand how it was made, and notice mistakes, started to watch what I write and how. But I think that seeing mistakes interferes with my ability to watch the film"* (Zaporizhzhia).

Only pupils from Kharkiv more or less answered the question about films in the context of critical analysis, filtration. Interesting, that Kharkiv pupils didn't respond right away, but were thinking, considering, remembering, which seemed strange, given their focus on ethics. It seemed like they were declaring the aim of media education, but didn't understand it in practice, as it wasn't about the information which they were used to analyzing.

Pupils took a while to answer the question as well: *"Documentaries can present false information as facts, I guess movies as well..."* (Talne), *"If the hero is kind, you trust him, which is not always right. There is also product placement, obviously somebody benefits from it. In movies you can see ads and negative ads"* (Bila Tserkva).

Class participants had difficulties answering the question, which means that they do not fully comprehend what ME is.

Conclusion follows that theory and practice do not always correspond. From tasks for further introduction of media studies—transfer of critical approach not only to information, but also to documentary and non-documentary film.

Media education and parents

For the most part parents are interested in media literacy when their children are studying. In some instances they get information about ME/ML from class teachers or at parent-teacher

nights, sometimes pupils act as a sort of *mentors* for their parents (“*We present for them [parents] during parent-teacher nights...*” (Kharkiv); “*I talked to my parents about disinformation, I convinced them how disinformation can be purposeful and manipulative*” (Chernihiv).

Pupils consider their parents’ level of media literacy as quite low “*I would evaluate their media literacy as low, but we are helping them. They are interested in what we are learning during those lessons (Talne),*” because “*when our parents went to school they did not have such a class. That’s why we are teaching them*” (Bila Tserkva).

At the same time pupils understand their parents have life experience that’s valuable: “*Our parents think critically, while we are still learning*” (Bila Tserkva).