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Integrity and Artificial Intelligence in Musical Stage Direction for Children

Abstract:
The article examines the role of artificial intelligence in musical stage direction for children within the broader framework of holistic and integrative education. The study is based on the idea that contemporary education should not remain within fragmented subject boundaries, but should create conditions for the child to perceive knowledge as an interconnected system. In this context, musical stage direction is interpreted not only as an extracurricular artistic activity, but also as a pedagogical model that combines music, literature, theatre, visual imagery, emotional experience and digital technologies in a unified educational process. The purpose of the article is to present and theoretically justify a practice-oriented model for using artificial intelligence in art education, particularly in the preparation of a musical lecture-concert for primary school pupils. The research focuses on the university discipline "Musical and Stage Directing for Children", in which future music teachers develop the ability to create performances, celebrations, thematic concerts and educational stage forms outside the traditional classroom format. The study emphasises that such work prepares student teachers to act not only as instructors, but also as organisers, interpreters, directors and creators of an emotionally meaningful educational environment. The methodological framework combines theoretical analysis and synthesis, pedagogical modelling, case-study analysis, dramaturgical analysis, musical and timbral analysis, leitmotif modelling, AI-assisted creative experimentation and pedagogical interpretation. The practical model is based on Charles Perrault's fairy tale "Little Red Riding Hood", selected because of its clear dramatic structure, recognisable characters and suitability for primary school pupils. The fairy tale is transformed into a musical lecture-concert in which each character and key situation receive a musical characterisation. The model uses the principle of leitmotif technique: Little Red Riding Hood is associated with the flute, the Mother with the clarinet, the Wolf with the bassoon, the Grandmother with the oboe and the Hunter with the trumpet. The forest path is also given its own lyrical musical theme. Artificial intelligence is introduced as an auxiliary creative tool rather than as a substitute for human imagination and pedagogical judgement. The SUNO application is used to generate musical material according to selected parameters, including character, instrument, duration and expressive function. The article argues that AI can support the search for musical themes, sound images and artistic solutions, but the final educational and aesthetic decisions remain dependent on the teacher-director's interpretation, methodological competence and understanding of children's perception. The proposed model demonstrates that musical stage direction develops professional flexibility, imagination and methodological independence in future teachers. For children, it awakens interest in music and literature, supports emotional perception of timbre, helps them understand musical-expressive means and encourages creative participation. The study concludes that artificial intelligence can become a productive element of

art education when it is integrated into a holistic pedagogical concept. In this form, AI does not destroy the integrity of musical and theatrical education, but enriches it by expanding the possibilities for artistic interpretation, interdisciplinary connection and child-centred creative experience.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, musical stage direction, children's art education, musical lecture-concert, holistic education, integrative pedagogy, leitmotif technique, timbral perception, Little Red Riding Hood, creative pedagogy, music education, AI-assisted creativity.

> "In the 20th century, much was said about the psychology of creativity. One of the components of a genius personality is the so-called ease of idea generation, or the ability to abandon an idea which, however good it may be, no longer brings anything new."
> M. Kazinik [1]

Introduction

The time in which we live is a time of profound and rapid changes in all aspects of life. Our children are born with knowledge and interests that parents and educators need to catch up with in order to respond adequately to the aspirations and searches of the new generations. This presupposes flexibility and a willingness on the part of educators to engage in continuous learning, as well as the necessary respect for and acceptance of what is new and unfamiliar. Over the last decade, and even over the last year, technologies have made an enormous leap in their development, and in this respect young people and children orient themselves much faster than those from whom they are separated by even a single generation.

Contemporary education is faced with the need to reform itself by turning to the primordial essence of the child—their wholeness and connection with the world, which inevitably leads to the search for the holistic development of the child's personality. It is necessary to develop all aspects of this personality by creating an appropriate environment for unfolding potential, revealing and expressing abilities, so that full professional, social and personal realisation can be achieved. This can be accomplished through a holistic educational and formative foundation at school, which creates conditions for the child to look at a subject or phenomenon in the way that is inherent to them—artistically or logically and mathematically. Thus, different ways of discovering knowledge will provide knowledge in its entirety, with all its observable aspects; in other words, a comprehensive or holistic view of the world will be formed.

The concept of holism, from the Greek ὅλος, meaning whole or complete, and the English word whole, is associated with the perception of sets of elements as a single whole that reacts and interacts in a unique way. Holism is a philosophical concept that has been advocated by a number of well-known figures since Antiquity, including Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Leibniz, Schelling and Hegel, but as a term it appeared at the beginning of the twentieth century with *Holism and Evolution* by the South African philosopher Jan Christiaan Smuts. He considers the whole as composed of parts, but states that "the whole is more than the sum of its parts" (*Gradinarov, 2018*). According to the holistic concept, objects and phenomena are elements of the whole, but what is essential are the connections and relations between them, which form and define it as a unified structure. The

connections between the elements have a "law-like" character and determine the place of each part within the system. Holistic systems are dynamic structures that change over time, with a tendency towards change in the direction of strengthening wholeness.

However, before organisational change is undertaken, the idea of the integration of knowledge must mature in the consciousness of society. Such a change should not be formal, so as not to distort its essence. In other words, if we change the system, we must first change our own understanding of the fact that the world is an integral system and that its elements interact. In this way, everything that is learned finds its place and application, and its role in culture and civilisation becomes visible.

In order for upbringing and education to be effective, and in order for the child's potential to manifest itself and develop, it is necessary:

- To teach children to know, to orient themselves in the global flow of information, to discover the connections and dependencies between processes and phenomena, and to perceive the world and knowledge as a holistic, dynamic and developing system; to learn to study in a concentrated way with the help of memory and thinking; and to strive for lifelong learning and development.
- To teach children to act, to develop skills for applying acquired knowledge, skills and personal experience in solving new similar problems and in practice, and to possess competences that make them constructive and guarantee their professional success.
- To teach children how we can live together in harmony; to be understanding, tolerant and empathetic; and to cooperate.
- To teach children to know themselves, to be independent, critically thinking and creative, to be able to accurately assess the different situations in which life places them, to make the best decisions and to assume their responsibilities (*Delors, 1999*).

Today, ways are being sought to coordinate efforts among specialists in different fields of knowledge. The easiest way is to broaden learners' perspective within the existing system beyond their narrow specialisation and the individual academic discipline. Ana Borisova also seeks and applies such integrative approaches in her scientific and pedagogical work: "Concerned about the needs of children, but also sensing the pulse of the technological age, it is imperative to use creative approaches that will make our folk song interesting and desirable for them. These two reasons have motivated the development of a scientific project that will attempt to build an integrative approach to the study of Bulgarian folk song in kindergarten, in the third and preparatory groups" (*Borisova, 2025*).

Here, one such attempt is considered in the methodological sphere of music in kindergarten and primary school, one that is close both to children and to students—the so-called thematic lessons.

Thematic lessons are a group of lesson situations subordinated to a specific theme. It is self-evident that this theme cannot be connected solely and exclusively with the material of a particular subject, but also requires a number of research tasks. In this way, the theme, through its stages, unfolds more fully and clearly. Thematic lessons are a challenge both for the teacher, in this case the students, and for the children. They require going beyond the framework of the curriculum, conversations, discussions on the topic, investigation of the material, the search for different solutions, as well as unexpected discoveries. This investigation can become a starting point for

further searching not only on this topic, but also when it becomes necessary to resolve an educational or other type of case. In other words, it goes beyond the cause-and-effect model and moves further—towards lateral thinking.

Divergent thinking, also called lateral thinking, refers to the generation of multiple creative solutions to the same problem. It is a spontaneous, fluid and nonlinear approach to thinking, based on curiosity and free-mindedness. It is very often found in children, since joy, imagination and an innovative perspective make their reasoning freer (*Framar, n.d.*). Convergent thinking, that is, the logical use of past experience and knowledge to find a solution, is useful and necessary in many cases. Nevertheless, the real problem is that we have been "trained" to think only in this way, neglecting spontaneity, wit and captivating freedom (*Framar, n.d.*).

Divergent thinking is the ability to find connections between ideas, concepts and processes that at first glance have no point of intersection.

George Bernard Shaw: "Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine and at last you create what you will." (*Teach for Bulgaria, n.d.*).

Artificial intelligence is the object of different opinions that represent two extremes of evaluation. We have no right to deny the new that comes to replace what has existed and has already completed its path. The denial of a technology will not stop its rise simply because what we are used to is more convenient and familiar. Instead, it is necessary to build upon the ideas already existing in consciousness, upon available knowledge and skills, which makes it possible to solve a given task more quickly and effectively and to find new paths that often lead to new knowledge. This is the path of searching for and discovering the new, and, accordingly, the path towards broadening the horizon not only in the field of academic disciplines, but much more deeply—towards awareness of the interconnections between the individual parts of the whole called Life. In other words, AI is a tool in today's world for solving a given task or case more quickly and flexibly, something that cannot happen without human creativity.

In scientific literature, popular science literature and various fields of knowledge alike, ideas about the connectedness between different domains increasingly emerge. Medicine no longer pays attention only to a specific physical suffering and its treatment, but begins to search for causes beyond the physical; it turns to the psyche and communicates with psychology in order to discover the root cause. In most cases, this root cause goes beyond the boundaries of the purely bodily into spheres that until recently were considered mystical—thinking, experience, ancestral connections in the past, and so on. In turn, scientists who observe reactions and external manifestations in animals and plants increasingly arrive at conclusions related to the attitude and behaviour of people towards the environment. This small example is intended to show that the human being is a link in an integral system in which the parts are interconnected, and the disruption of one element creates disorder in the whole system.

To a very large extent, this also applies to education and upbringing. "In Bulgaria, learning takes place in fragments, in a fragmented and partial manner, and instead of acquiring the idea that nature speaks in terms of processes, pupils possess isolated facts, the connection between which they are unable to trace" (*Karo, 2020*).

Today's child, like any other child who grew up in a previous era, relies, on the one hand, on the information and knowledge received from adults in the home and educational environment and, on the other hand, on certain givens called talents and inclinations, which could hardly be

defined solely by means of conventional sciences. Purely hypothetically, this suggests that for certain characteristics to manifest themselves so assertively in one generation, a previous stage must already have been passed. The next generation steps onto this stage to build upon it and acquire something new. In this case, this is the "explosion" in our still materialistic age and the technology represented by artificial intelligence.

Methods

The study is based on a qualitative, practice-oriented pedagogical design. Its methodological logic corresponds to the integrative nature of the research problem: the connection between holistic education, musical-stage direction, children's artistic perception and the use of artificial intelligence as a creative auxiliary tool. The research does not aim to measure isolated quantitative indicators, but to construct and analyse a pedagogical model in which music, literature, theatrical action, visual imagery and AI-generated material are combined within a single educational process.

The methodological basis of the study is the principle of holism. In this context, the educational situation is examined not as a mechanical combination of separate subjects, but as an interconnected artistic and pedagogical system. Music, word, movement, image, stage action and digital technology are interpreted as mutually dependent elements that jointly form the child's experience. This approach makes it possible to analyse musical stage direction as a means of overcoming fragmented subject teaching and of creating conditions for the integral development of the child's personality.

The method of theoretical analysis and synthesis was used to examine the concepts of holistic education, divergent thinking, arts integration, theatrical play, suggestopedic learning and the pedagogical use of artificial intelligence. This method made it possible to define the conceptual framework of the study and to justify the need for an integrative model in which AI is not treated as a substitute for human creativity, but as a tool supporting imagination, artistic choice and the search for expressive solutions.

The method of pedagogical modelling was applied in the design of a musical lecture-concert as an educational format. The model was developed within the university discipline "Musical and Stage Directing for Children", studied by students in the final year of the bachelor's degree programme in Music Education Pedagogy. The modelling process included the selection of a literary source, the definition of an age group, the construction of a dramatic and musical plan, the selection of expressive means and the integration of AI-generated musical material into the future educational event.

The case-study method was used through the analysis of a concrete pedagogical project based on Charles Perrault's fairy tale "Little Red Riding Hood". The fairy tale was selected because of its clear dramatic structure, recognisable characters, moral conflict and suitability for primary school pupils. The case makes it possible to trace how a literary text can be transformed into a musical-stage educational event through characterisation, timbre, leitmotif and theatrical action.

The method of dramaturgical analysis was applied to identify the main structural stages of the fairy tale: introduction, presentation of the main characters, conflict, climax, resolution and ending. These stages were considered not only as elements of the literary plot, but also as possible musical and theatrical units. This made it possible to connect the development of the fairy-tale action with

the principles of musical form, including the analogy with exposition, development and recapitulation.

The method of musical and timbral analysis was used to determine the sound characteristics of the main characters and situations. Each character was associated with a specific musical instrument: Little Red Riding Hood with the flute, the Mother with the clarinet, the Wolf with the bassoon, the Grandmother with the oboe and the Hunter with the trumpet. The forest path was also given its own musical theme. This method allowed the fairy-tale images to be translated into musical-expressive means and enabled pupils to perceive characters and events through timbre, sound colour and emotional association.

The method of leitmotif modelling was applied in order to create stable musical identifiers for the characters and key situations. The use of leitmotifs makes it possible for children to recognise a character or emotional state not only through verbal explanation, but also through recurring musical material. In this way, music becomes an active participant in the construction of the artistic image and supports the child's memory, imagination and emotional involvement.

The method of AI-assisted creative experimentation was used in the process of searching for and generating musical themes. The SUNO application was used as an auxiliary digital tool for generating musical material according to selected parameters, such as character, instrument, duration of the motif and expressive function. The use of AI in the study was limited to supporting the creative and organisational work of the future teacher-director. The final pedagogical and artistic decisions remained dependent on human selection, interpretation and methodological judgement.

The project-based method was applied in the organisation of the students' work. Students worked in small groups and passed through several stages: choosing a theme and an idea for the performance, defining the target age group, determining the format of the lecture-concert, studying the relevant primary school curricula in music, literature and visual arts, preparing a scenario and presentation framework, selecting musical and visual means, and planning the participation of children. This method was chosen because it develops students' professional independence, imagination, methodological flexibility and readiness to organise extracurricular artistic forms.

The method of pedagogical interpretation was used to analyse the educational value of the model for two groups of participants: student teachers and children. For student teachers, the model was assessed in terms of professional formation, development of imagination, ability to connect methodology with practice, and readiness to organise artistic events. For children, the model was interpreted in terms of interest in music and literature, emotional perception of timbre, understanding of musical-expressive means, creative use of AI and participation in an emotionally rich artistic activity.

The study therefore combines theoretical, interpretive, design-based and project-based methods. This methodological combination corresponds to the object of research itself: musical stage direction for children is not a single technique, but an integrative pedagogical process. The selected methods make it possible to examine how artificial intelligence can be included in this process without destroying its human, artistic and educational integrity.

Literature Review

The problem of integrity and artificial intelligence in musical stage direction for children is situated at the intersection of holistic education, arts integration, creative pedagogy, theatrical play and contemporary digital technologies. The reviewed sources make it possible to construct a theoretical framework in which musical and stage activity is understood not merely as an extracurricular artistic form, but as an integrative educational environment where music, literature, drama, visual imagery, movement and digital tools function as interconnected elements of a single pedagogical system.

The philosophical basis of the study is connected with the concept of holism. Gradinarov (*2018*) examines the essence of holism and its applicability to social theory, emphasising the idea that the whole cannot be reduced to a mechanical sum of isolated parts. In an educational context, this principle is especially important because the child's development cannot be adequately understood through separate disciplinary fragments alone. The musical-stage project, therefore, is interpreted as a holistic structure: a literary plot, musical characterisation, theatrical action, scenography and children's emotional response are not independent components, but mutually reinforcing elements. This approach supports the central idea of the article that education in the arts should develop the child as a whole personality rather than as a recipient of fragmented subject knowledge.

The same orientation towards wholeness is present in Delors' educational model, according to which education in the 21st century should be built around the pillars of learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be (*Delors, 1999*). These principles are directly relevant to musical stage direction for children. In the process of preparing and realising a musical lecture-concert or theatricalised educational project, children acquire knowledge about literature, music and artistic expression; they act by participating in performance, listening, interpreting and creating; they learn to cooperate with peers and teachers; and they gradually develop self-awareness, confidence and creative identity. Thus, the musical-stage format embodies the multidimensional nature of education described by Delors, because it combines cognitive, practical, social and personal development.

The creative dimension of the study is supported by Kazinik's reflections on the psychology of creativity. His idea that one of the qualities of a gifted personality is the ability to generate ideas freely and abandon even a good idea when it no longer produces anything new (*Kazinik, 2010*) is particularly relevant to pedagogical work in the arts. Musical stage direction requires constant selection, transformation and renewal of artistic material. A future teacher-director must be able not only to reproduce known scenarios, but also to search for new forms of presenting them to children. This is why creativity in the analysed context is not limited to inspiration; it becomes a professional pedagogical competence that includes flexibility, associative thinking, sensitivity to children's perception and the ability to transform familiar material into a new educational event.

The issue of divergent thinking expands this theoretical perspective. The source devoted to divergent thinking emphasises the ability to generate multiple solutions to the same problem and to find connections between concepts that initially appear unrelated (*Framar, n.d.*). This idea is central to musical and stage work with children. A fairy tale such as "Little Red Riding Hood" may be approached not only as a literary text, but also as a sequence of musical images, a dramatic structure, a visual composition, a moral situation and a field for children's interpretation. Such work moves beyond a linear cause-and-effect model of teaching and activates lateral thinking. It

encourages both student teachers and pupils to search for different artistic means, alternative interpretations and unexpected connections between word, sound, colour, gesture and stage action.

The literature on arts integration provides a practical pedagogical basis for this approach. Borisova and co-authors study parental attitudes towards the use of integrative links between the arts in the process of learning Bulgarian folk songs in preschool education (*Borisova, 2025*). Although the source focuses on folk song and preschool education, its methodological relevance is broader. It confirms the importance of connecting different artistic languages in early education and demonstrates that music can function as a core around which speech, movement, visual imagery and cultural knowledge are organised. This supports the idea that musical stage direction for children is an effective integrative form, because it does not isolate music from other arts, but places it within a broader artistic and educational whole.

A similar practical orientation is found in the Teach for Bulgaria source, which presents ideas for teaching more engagingly through art (*Teach for Bulgaria, n.d.*). The emphasis on art as a means of increasing learner involvement is important for the present study because musical-stage projects operate precisely through emotional participation and active experience. In contrast to purely verbal explanation, artistic action enables children to understand educational content through perception, imagination and embodied engagement. This confirms the pedagogical value of performance-based and art-based learning formats, especially when the aim is not only to transmit knowledge, but also to awaken curiosity, empathy, confidence and expressive freedom.

The educational relevance of suggestopedia is also significant. Karo's work on suggestopedia for parents and teachers, particularly the part devoted to letters, emphasises the importance of emotional atmosphere, imagination and non-coercive learning in the educational process (*Karo, 2020*). Although suggestopedia and musical stage direction are different methodological systems, they share several essential principles: learning should be emotionally safe, aesthetically rich and connected with the child's inner world. In musical-stage work, music, story, image and performance reduce the rigidity of formal instruction and create conditions in which children can perceive, remember and express knowledge more naturally. This is especially important in primary education, where emotional experience often precedes abstract conceptual understanding.

The literary basis of the analysed pedagogical model is provided by Perrault's fairy tale "Little Red Riding Hood" (*Perrault, 2010*). The fairy tale is pedagogically productive because it has a clear plot structure, recognisable characters and a moral conflict that can be translated into different artistic languages. In the context of musical stage direction, each character may receive a specific timbral or melodic characteristic, while the development of the plot may be presented through changes in musical mood, rhythm, instrumental colour and dramatic action. In this way, literature becomes not only a narrative source, but also a structural framework for musical and theatrical interpretation.

The importance of theatrical play is substantiated by Penchev and Aleksieva, who examine children's theatricalised play as a form of creative activity (*Penchev & Aleksieva, 1980*). Their approach supports the idea that dramatisation is one of the most natural and widely used forms of children's creativity. Through theatrical play, children do not merely reproduce literary material; they appropriate it, transform it, interpret situations and construct meanings through action. This is essential for the present study because musical stage direction is not limited to preparing a final

performance. It is also a process of educational discovery in which children learn to understand characters, motives, conflicts and emotional states through music and stage embodiment.

The broader understanding of theatre as a complex art is reinforced by the KidsArts source, which presents theatre as a synthetic form including literature, music, painting, dance, architecture and design (*KidsArts, n.d.*). This understanding is fundamental for justifying musical stage direction as an integrative educational practice. Theatre brings together various artistic codes and allows children to experience knowledge as a living whole. It develops figurative thinking, aesthetic sensitivity, imagination and value orientation. For future art teachers, this means that the preparation of a theatrical or musical-stage event is also a form of professional formation: the teacher learns to coordinate artistic means, understand children's perception and organise a meaningful educational experience.

Artificial intelligence introduces a new dimension into this framework. In the context of musical stage direction, AI should not be understood as a replacement for human creativity, but as a tool that expands the range of possible artistic and pedagogical solutions. When used to generate musical motifs, visual materials, scenographic ideas or sound images, AI can support the teacher-director and student teachers in transforming a literary plot into a multisensory educational event. However, the reviewed theoretical framework shows that the effectiveness of AI depends on its integration into a holistic pedagogical concept. Technology becomes educationally meaningful only when it serves the child's perception, imagination, emotional involvement and creative participation.

Thus, the analysed literature confirms that musical stage direction for children may be understood as a holistic educational practice in which literature, music, theatre, visual art and digital technology interact within one pedagogical space. The sources collectively justify the need to move beyond fragmented subject teaching and towards integrative forms of education that develop children's cognitive, emotional, social and creative potential. Within this framework, artificial intelligence appears not as an autonomous pedagogical force, but as an instrument that can enrich artistic interpretation, stimulate divergent thinking and support the creation of emotionally engaging educational projects. The research gap addressed by the present article lies precisely in the connection between holistic pedagogy, musical-stage directing and AI-assisted creative work with children.

Results

Every new discovery or phenomenon always appears when its time has come. In order to be "born", there is a reason for it; that is, its manifestation is a consequence. The question is not whether it should be praised or rejected, but how to find the best ways to introduce it into our everyday life so that it can serve and help us.

The following pages present one possible way of using AI in art lessons, and more specifically in extracurricular formats, as well as how students majoring in Music Education Pedagogy see its use from an educational perspective. This is also a way of integrating the different aspects of art—music, word, colour and form—on the basis of, and with the help of, the existing knowledge of primary school pupils.

1. Musical and Stage Directing for Children

According to a number of studies, experiencing knowledge is the most successful way for it to be remembered and understood. Therefore, the arts, in their full splendour and in their combination through the tools of theatre and drama, are widely used in education.

Art is always associated with experience and emotion, and for this reason it is also useful in the acquisition of social-emotional skills.

The integration of art in its various forms into lessons helps develop pupils' social skills in group tasks. It can also be used for the creative expression of strong emotions when specific situations arise in the classroom or in the experiences of a particular pupil (*Teach for Bulgaria, n.d.*).

The university discipline in which students demonstrate their creativity and imagination is elective and is called "Musical and Stage Directing for Children". It is studied in the final year of the bachelor's degree programme, and through its students, on the threshold of entering professional life as teachers, see another aspect of pedagogical work, namely the opportunity and necessity to be creators and organisers of performances, celebrations and productions outside direct classroom teaching.

Every music teacher faces the fact that, in addition to preparing and conducting lessons at school or activities in kindergarten, it is also necessary to organise and create extracurricular forms related to various occasions. In these forms, a young teacher needs to possess a particularly broad general culture and to have not only school and university knowledge, but also familiarity with artists and their works from different spheres of art, as well as the ability to know and connect this knowledge with historical epochs, geographical location and so on.

This general culture supports the selection of a theme for the relevant performance, activates imagination and flexible thinking in the choice of means. Knowledge of the characters and psychology of the children with whom and for whom the performance will be presented is a necessary starting point for its good and rapid realisation.

Such preliminary work develops the students' imagination, shows their suitability for this kind of work, as well as their future attitude towards the pedagogical sphere. The future teacher becomes a director both of art lessons and of the children's public performance. The director's task is to skillfully realise their idea for a production so that it sounds and looks in a new way. The realisation of the idea is the work of everyone. The task of the teacher-director is to unite them around a single idea, to make them understand it deeply and give all their strength, to put their soul into the performance.

The preparation of a "performance" includes several stages:

- forming groups—students are grouped according to their interests into groups of two or three;
- choosing a theme for the work and a children's audience before whom and with whom the students will present it;
- planning the work from an organisational perspective—whether it will be a performance, a celebration, a thematic concert, or a lecture-concert designed to help expand children's knowledge;
- choosing a team with whom the "music teacher" will communicate and from whom they will receive assistance—both practical assistance and support in terms of implementation;
- selecting pupils to join the team;

- creating a script;
- working on the text, music, dramatic action, mise-en-scène and so on;
- using various forms of AI to create scenery, to create music for the characters, including leitmotifs, and to visualise instruments and instrumental groups or orchestra.

This sequence, as well as its content, is conditional. Depending on the theme and idea of the performance, as well as on the teams formed, it may be expanded or synthesised, with the expectation that the teams will distribute their tasks for greater efficiency and speed of implementation.

2. Educational Directing—Integration and Erudition

Students are creative personalities and seek different possibilities for creating an idea. In this case, the difficulty lies not only in the emergence of the idea for such a performance, but also in engaging the students' imagination with regard to the path towards achieving it—the most effective work on the theme, the most interesting and developmental theme both for the children participating and for the children in the audience. On the other hand, there is also the question of the place and role of music in the preparation and realisation of the event.

Lecture-concerts are "lessons in a concert hall". In them, in an informal setting outside the classroom, several interconnected processes are realised simultaneously:

- An opportunity for pupils to be creators—to propose a theme, choose means and contribute to the occurrence of the event;
- The curiosity of the child spectators, for whom this art lesson is held in a different place, in a new environment, and is cared for simultaneously by their classmates and teachers;
- Alongside the work of creating the lecture-concert, educational and formative tasks are solved at its different stages;
- Last but not least, the proudly topical AI enters into action here as a fully-fledged participant: on the one hand, it relies on the existing knowledge and skills of pupils, and on the other, it provokes their curiosity, search, flexibility and desire for discovery, as well as competitiveness in solving a specific task.

Work on a theatrical project is an integrative process. In it, alongside the fairy-tale plot and the development of the action from introduction through climax to resolution, the knowledge of the participants is sought; in the process of work, this knowledge is enriched, connections are found between the arts that participate in the future performance, concepts are revised and understood, the place and role of the fairy tale as an educational tool are seen, and conclusions are drawn. Knowledge reaches the child's consciousness through emotion and action.

In cases of active communication between teachers in one school, the process of creating such a project is neither an end in itself nor an isolated phenomenon. It becomes an active teaching factor precisely because it breaks the stereotype of formal work—the class-and-lesson principle. This type of work, on the one hand, helps create good relationships and trust between pupils and teachers, thereby stimulating subject-subject interaction, and, on the other hand, points towards breaking the stereotypes that the pupil is the learner and the teacher is the instructor.

This is also a way for a good teacher to become a "psychologist", an initiator of the formation and development of the child's latent qualities, to stimulate and encourage the manifestation of what is specific and to awaken the creative principle. By using the means of music and the other

arts, the teacher opens the child's consciousness, which in this way orients itself more easily and accessibly in the world, lowers its emotional and psychological barriers and, in some cases, sees itself and its future place in society.

Musical and stage directing helps children and the teacher or teachers to look at the lesson and the knowledge provided in it according to the curriculum as knowledge that "works", that does not "hang in space", but can be used and can serve a purpose. On the other hand, music becomes a factor in perceiving and understanding the deeds and actions of a character; that is, music helps the word make the artistic image deeper and more fully developed.

3. Little Red Riding Hood and AI

What is proposed in the following lines is a variant of a musical lecture-concert, that is, an educational lesson in a concert hall.

The lecture-concert is a format in which music is listened to and explained; that is, the leader or presenter in the process of what is happening explains and helps the audience understand and become aware of the action and the means by which it is "painted". In other words, in the lecture-concert, together with the story, the musical-expressive means that help the image acquire a clearer and fuller appearance are explained and connected with it.

For the creation of a musical lecture-concert based on a well-known children's fairy tale, the students propose "Little Red Riding Hood". The script is based on the characteristics of the characters—Little Red Riding Hood, the Mother, the Wolf, the Grandmother and the Hunter—as well as on the fairy-tale story and the conclusions drawn from it (*Perrault, 2010*).

The musical-educational effect sought is generally connected with the development of timbre hearing in primary school pupils. For this purpose, it is necessary:

- to trace the development of the fairy tale;
- to identify individual moments in which the relevant character appears or when two or more characters come into conflict with one another;
- to characterise the place or places of action;
- to determine the main moments—introduction to the story, acquaintance with the main characters, the conflict, the resolution and the ending.

These stages of the fairy tale are stages in general, in any life situation. Likewise, they are also stages of every musical work. They also underlie large forms, including the basis of sonata form: the three sections—exposition, development and recapitulation—are analogous both to the development of the fairy-tale action and to the path of any event.

It is necessary for each of the indicated characters and each moment of the fairy tale to be expressed and represented through music. This is required not only from an aesthetic and formal point of view, but above all because of the aspiration to connect word, namely the fairy tale, and music, in this case the sound characterisation of each character and each scene.

In searching for the best options for characterising characters, places and conflicts, the students focus on the timbral characteristics of instruments suitable for the case. This is also a way of connecting fairy-tale characters and situations with the expressive means of music and, of course, of making them easier and more emotional to remember and recognise.

In addition to relying on timbre, the students working on this project propose giving each character and place its own sound; that is, using the principle of leitmotif technique. Subsequently,

a verse can be created for each melody, and the whole can be turned into the character's song and learned by the children.

AI comes to assist in the search for and discovery of instruments and themes. The SUNO application is used mainly, generating, according to specified parameters, the corresponding theme—the characterisation of a character, the chosen instrument, the duration of the motif and so on.

In this case, the characters are represented by the following instruments:

- Little Red Riding Hood—flute;
- The Mother—clarinet;
- The Wolf—bassoon;
- The Grandmother—oboe;
- The Hunter—trumpet.
- The forest path also has its own theme.

It is perceived as a lyrical digression through musical means and possesses the descriptive character that should direct the children's thoughts towards a pastoral idyll.

In order to explain their working path, their choice of means and their search for a suitable application for the musical design, the student group working on this project goes through several stages:

- Selection of a theme and idea for the performance;
- Choice of the age group with whom and before whom the lecture-concert will be presented;
- Format of the performance;
- Familiarisation of the students with the curricula in music, visual arts and literature.

This is necessary so that they can orient themselves regarding the children's knowledge of the fairy tale and its structure, expressive means and programme music, the musical forms known to the children, and musical fairy tales and fairy tales with music that they have listened to or watched in animated or live-action versions;

Creation of a work plan based on a presentation principle — each slide represents a kind of "skeleton" or framework that is gradually filled in.

The student group sets itself the task of checking the extent to which children know and respond to the different timbres of musical instruments, how the children themselves "see" each of the characters, whether they can assess what the character of each theme might be, and how the transitions should be sounded—Little Red Riding Hood's walk through the forest; the anxiety in front of the grandmother's house; the resolution at the end. In the process of work, other intermediate moments may also be added to supplement the action.

The lecture-concert is intended to be implemented in two third-grade primary school classes that have been introduced to the fairy tale in advance. The fairy tale itself has been recalled in literature class, the characters have been characterised, their qualities have been identified, and the pupils have reached a conclusion about its moral lesson.

Discussion

The results of the study allow the problem of artificial intelligence in children's art education to be discussed not as a question of technological replacement, but as a question of pedagogical

integrity. The proposed model demonstrates that AI becomes educationally meaningful only when it is included in a broader system of artistic, methodological and developmental purposes. In this sense, artificial intelligence does not function as an autonomous creator of educational content, but as an auxiliary instrument that expands the teacher-director's range of expressive possibilities. Its pedagogical value depends on the ability of the future music teacher to select, interpret, adapt and subordinate AI-generated material to the age, emotional perception and creative needs of children.

This interpretation is especially important in the context of holistic education. The musical lecture-concert based on *Little Red Riding Hood* shows that music, literature, theatre, visual imagery, emotional experience and digital technologies can be organised as interdependent elements of one educational situation. Such organisation corresponds to the holistic understanding of education, according to which the child does not perceive knowledge as a mechanical set of isolated fragments, but as a living system of relations. The fairy tale becomes not only a literary source, and music becomes not only an illustrative background. Together, they form a unified artistic-pedagogical space in which the child can listen, recognise, imagine, compare, participate and interpret.

The use of leitmotif technique in the proposed model confirms the importance of stable musical identifiers for children's perception. By associating each character with a specific instrument and sound image, the model transforms abstract musical-expressive means into concrete emotional and imaginative experience. The flute, clarinet, bassoon, oboe and trumpet do not merely represent timbral differences; they become pedagogical signs through which children can recognise characters, situations and emotional states. In this respect, the model supports the development of timbral hearing, musical memory and associative thinking. It also demonstrates that musical form and fairy-tale dramaturgy may be meaningfully connected: exposition, conflict, development, resolution and ending can be perceived both as literary and musical structures.

The role of AI in this process is ambivalent and therefore requires careful pedagogical mediation. On the one hand, AI applications such as SUNO can accelerate the search for musical themes, offer unexpected sound solutions and stimulate students' creative experimentation. On the other hand, the availability of automatically generated material may create the illusion that artistic and pedagogical decisions can be delegated to technology. The study shows the opposite: the more accessible AI-generated material becomes, the more significant the teacher's interpretive responsibility is. The future teacher-director must decide whether a generated motif corresponds to the character, whether its timbre and mood are appropriate for primary school pupils, whether it supports the dramaturgical logic of the lecture-concert, and whether it enriches rather than overloads the child's perception.

This finding is directly connected with the problem of integrity in the title of the article. Integrity in AI-assisted musical stage direction means preserving the unity of artistic idea, educational purpose and child-centred perception. AI can enrich the educational process only when it remains subordinated to this unity. If technology is used mechanically, without dramaturgical, musical and pedagogical selection, it may fragment the experience and reduce the artistic process to a set of attractive digital effects. If, however, AI is used within a consciously designed pedagogical model, it can help future teachers search for expressive solutions, compare alternatives, refine musical images and involve children in a more vivid experience of music and literature.

The study also has implications for the professional preparation of future music teachers. Musical and stage directing requires competencies that go beyond the traditional lesson format. The teacher must be able to think as a musician, director, organiser, interpreter and mediator of children's creative experience. The analysed model develops precisely these qualities: imagination, methodological flexibility, erudition, teamwork, understanding of curricula, sensitivity to children's age characteristics and readiness to organise extracurricular artistic forms. AI does not remove these requirements; rather, it makes them more visible. In order to use AI productively, the future teacher must possess a clear artistic idea, a pedagogical criterion for selection and an understanding of how children perceive sound, image, word and stage action.

For children, the model opens possibilities for a more emotionally rich and participatory form of learning. The lecture-concert format allows them to encounter music outside the ordinary classroom situation and to understand that musical-expressive means are not abstract theoretical concepts, but active participants in the creation of meaning. Through the connection between fairy-tale characters and musical timbres, children can experience how music "paints" a character, marks a conflict, creates tension, expresses movement or supports resolution. This is particularly significant in primary school, where concrete imagery, emotional response and play remain essential mechanisms of understanding.

The proposed model also contributes to the development of divergent thinking. A familiar fairy tale is reinterpreted as a musical, theatrical and digital project. The same narrative material becomes a field for multiple artistic solutions: a dramatic structure, a system of leitmotifs, a timbral map, a visual scenario, a concert lesson and a space for children's participation. Such work encourages both students and pupils to search for connections between domains that are often separated in school practice. In this sense, AI may become not only a tool for producing musical material, but also a stimulus for asking new questions: how can a character sound, how can a forest path be expressed musically, how can fear or safety be conveyed through timbre, rhythm or melodic contour?

At the same time, the limitations of the study should be clearly recognised. The research is qualitative, theoretical and practice-oriented; it constructs and interprets a pedagogical model rather than measuring its effects through quantitative indicators. Therefore, the conclusions should not be understood as evidence of universal effectiveness in all primary school contexts. Further research may include direct implementation of the lecture-concert with pupils, observation of children's responses, analysis of their ability to recognise timbres and leitmotifs, interviews with student teachers, and comparison between AI-assisted and non-AI-assisted preparation of similar musical-stage projects. Such empirical work would make it possible to evaluate more precisely how AI influences children's musical perception, creative involvement and understanding of artistic connections.

Another important direction for further research concerns ethical and methodological criteria for the use of AI in children's art education. Since AI-generated material can be produced quickly and in large quantities, future teachers need clear principles for selection, adaptation and responsible use. These principles should include age appropriateness, artistic quality, emotional safety, transparency of AI use, respect for authorship, and the preservation of human creative agency. In art education, the central question is not how much technology can generate, but how meaningfully the teacher can transform technological output into an educational experience.

Thus, the discussion confirms that artificial intelligence can be productively integrated into musical stage direction for children when it is placed within a holistic pedagogical framework. The value of the model lies not in the technological novelty itself, but in the way AI is connected with literature, music, theatre, timbre, leitmotif, children's imagination and the professional formation of future teachers. Properly mediated, AI does not destroy the integrity of musical and theatrical education. On the contrary, it can support artistic interpretation, stimulate methodological creativity and help create emotionally significant educational situations in which children perceive knowledge as interconnected, meaningful and alive.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares that there is no conflict of interests that could have influenced the objectivity of the study, the interpretation of the results, or the presentation of the conclusions. The article was prepared independently, without external funding, institutional pressure or the involvement of organisations or individuals with a direct financial, commercial or personal interest in the outcomes of the research.

The study is based on theoretical analysis, pedagogical modelling, case-study interpretation and practice-oriented reflection within the field of music education, children's musical and stage directing, holistic pedagogy and AI-assisted creative experimentation. The use of artificial intelligence in the article is considered exclusively from a pedagogical, methodological and artistic perspective. AI is analysed as an auxiliary creative tool that can support the search for musical themes, sound images and expressive solutions, but it is not presented as a substitute for the teacher's professional judgement, artistic interpretation or responsibility for the educational process.

The SUNO application is mentioned in the article only as an example of a digital tool used for generating musical material according to selected pedagogical and artistic parameters, such as character, instrument, motif duration and expressive function. The author declares that there is no financial, commercial, advertising or institutional relationship with the developers, owners or distributors of this application. Its inclusion in the study is determined solely by the research aim: to demonstrate one possible model of integrating AI-generated musical material into a holistic musical lecture-concert for primary school pupils.

The author confirms that the reference to this AI tool did not affect the independence of the analysis, the selection of methodological approaches or the formulation of the conclusions. All pedagogical interpretations presented in the article are the result of independent theoretical reflection, artistic-pedagogical modelling and professional evaluation of the role of AI in musical and stage directing for children.

The study does not promote any specific commercial product, platform or technological solution. The discussion of AI is subordinated to broader educational questions: the development of children's musical perception, the integration of literature, music and theatre, the formation of timbral hearing, the use of leitmotif technique, and the professional preparation of future music teachers. Therefore, the technological component is interpreted only as one element within a wider pedagogical system.

Thus, the declaration confirms compliance with the principles of academic integrity, transparency of scholarly publication, independence of research interpretation and ethical

standards of academic work in the field of music education, art pedagogy and the pedagogical use of artificial intelligence.

Conclusion

Work on creating a project that connects music and literature has a multifaceted effect on the participants.

I. For student teachers

1. It awakens imagination in relation to the search for a theme and idea, as well as for a format of implementation.
2. It directs students towards the search for an appropriate text which, on the one hand, is connected with the child and their current intellectual level and, on the other hand, requires familiarity with the primary school curricula in music, literature and visual arts.
3. It develops observation skills—the ability to understand what the child of this age and generation is looking for, what they are interested in, what their inclinations are, whether they receive support from their parents, whether they read books other than school literature, whether they imagine what happens in a fairy tale, and whether and how they can depict it through the means of visual art, and so on.
4. It enables them to connect their own knowledge of music methodology with practice, not only in regular lessons, but also in a free form—an extracurricular form of learning in the concert hall.
5. They find like-minded students from the speciality "Pedagogy of Visual Arts" who can help with the scenery and with elements of costumes and masks.

II. For children

1. It awakens interest in music and the other arts.
2. They understand that music "paints" characters and events and makes them recognisable through expressive means and through the timbres of musical instruments.
3. They emotionally perceive timbres and other expressive means, connecting them with the concrete, which is fundamental to thinking in this age group.
4. In the practical implementation of a lecture-concert in a concert hall, interest in music and the spoken word is awakened, and the fairy tale acquires a different form in the children's consciousness.
5. They understand that AI can be used creatively and directs them towards the search for models for their own ideas.
6. Alongside verbal creativity, dramatisation is the most frequent and widely used type of children's creativity. Children compose, improvise and stage ready-made literary material themselves. Skillfully formulated questions from the teacher during preparation for the game encourage children to think, to analyse quite complex situations, and to draw conclusions and generalisations (*Penchev & Aleksieva, 1980*).
7. It creates joy and confidence in the child that they can participate in an emotionally rich activity in which music is the main means of expression.
8. The child understands and becomes aware of musical-expressive means as active participants not only in the process of creating and perceiving music, but also as part of musically enriched life itself.

Theatre is a complex art in which literature, music, painting, dance, architecture and design are present. Precisely because of this specificity, contact with theatrical art contributes to the spiritual growth of children, forms a sense of beauty, and enriches their value system, artistic outlook, figurative thinking and imagination (*KidsArts, n.d.*).

Musical and stage directing is not only a means of practically creating a performance, but also a form of psychological preparation for future art teachers, helping them understand the rich world of the child's soul and serving as a path towards awareness of wholeness in the educational process.

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