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AUTHOR'S ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION ON THE TOPIC:
“SPECIFICS OF WORKING WITH CHILDREN'S MUSICALS IN
PRESCHOOL GROUPS IN KINDERGARTEN”

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INTRODUCTION

This work is the result of my interest and creative explorations in the field of children's musicals and the possibilities for their staging in preschool groups in kindergarten. My personal pedagogical experience serves as both a motivation and a foundation for this research.

The aim of the dissertation is to summarize methodological conclusions based on practical results that have been analyzed and synthesized, necessary for scientific research.

The objectives of the dissertation are: to present a historical panorama of the development of the musical as a genre; to trace the evolution of the children's musical from its inception to the present day; to systematize existing Bulgarian stage productions – archetypes and genres resembling children's musicals; to create a classification of genres suitable for transformation into a kindergarten musical (original musical fairy tale and digital audio fairy tale); to outline the stages of working with a kindergarten musical; to analyze existing classifications and methodologies for playing children's musical instruments; to present non-traditional children's musical instruments (dizi, pan flute, recorder, hulusi, bawu, suona, soprano clarinet) with applications in kindergarten musicals.

The subject of the dissertation is the work with kindergarten musicals, tailored to the age-specific characteristics, the emotional world of the children, and the organization of the day in kindergarten.

The object of the scientific research is the introduction of the children's musical as an element of work in the repertoire of preschool-aged children.

The working hypothesis of the dissertation is: if a methodological model for staging children's musicals in preschool groups of kindergartens is developed through the transformation of other genres, a new genre – kindergarten musical – is created. This genre enhances the development of musical abilities, auditory perceptions, and creative realization on stage. Thus, it facilitates a more comprehensive assimilation of educational content in the field of Music and increases children's motivation for engaging with music.

First Chapter presents a **historical overview of the development of the musical genre**, the presence of children's musicals on the global and Bulgarian stages, musical-theatrical patterns – prototypes of children's musicals in Bulgaria, and titles of children's musicals that have been present in Bulgarian vocal-theatrical formations and kindergartens in recent years. The specifics of the musical created for performance in kindergartens are outlined, as well as the characteristics of genres that can be transformed into this type of children's musical. The process of genre transformation is detailed.

Second Chapter exposes the stages of working in a kindergarten musical that are delineated after transforming suitable genres. Challenges arising during the rehearsal process at each stage of work are systematized, and alternatives for overcoming them are proposed.

Third Chapter contains classifications of existing traditional children's musical instruments known in Bulgarian literature and practice. It identifies the need for children's musical instruments with different timbres and more visually appealing designs suitable for the goals of kindergarten musicals. The introduction of non-traditional children's musical instruments (DTMI) is justified, considering their specificities. Ways of supplying children's musical instruments, costumes, and stage decorations from kindergarten musicals are discussed, along with best practices in creating programs and posters.

Fourth Chapter outlines the main parameters of the experimental study organized in three phases. The results of the experiment are discussed and presented in tabular form. Based on the results of the experiment, a methodological model for working with kindergarten musicals is presented.

The results of the experiment support the scientific hypothesis that if a methodological model for staging children's musicals with preschool groups in kindergartens is developed through the transformation of other genres, a kindergarten musical is created. This genre enhances the development of musical abilities, musical-auditory perceptions, facilitates better assimilation of educational content in the field of Music, and increases children's motivation for engaging with music.

ABBREVIATIONS USED:

KGA - pre-school age (kindergarten age)

PSA - primary school age

CMI - children's musical instruments

CM - children's musical

KG - kindergarten

PKG - private kindergarten

FDK - full-day kindergarten

PG - preparatory group

VBAL - very below average level

BAL - below average level

AL - average level

AAL - above average level

MAAL - much above average level

AFDOED - annual full-day organization of educational activities

HS - high school

MDT - musical-dramatic theater

DT - drama theater

CYTG - children's-youth theatrical group

EM - Ministry of Education

MEPAE - enterprise to manage environmental protection activities

SEN - special educational needs

AES - additional educational services

BLL - educational direction "Bulgarian language and literature"

SW - educational direction "Surrounding world"

CT - educational direction "Construction and technology"

PE - educational direction "Physical education"

CHAPTER ONE

MUSICAL, CHILDREN'S MUSICAL, AND KINDERGARTEN MUSICAL - HISTORY AND PRACTICE

1.1. The musical as a genre - historical panorama and manifestations

The entertainment character with which the musical is identified is found in other well-known musical-theatrical genres that preceded it. This similarity defines operetta, vaudeville, revue, minstrel shows, and burlesque as its precursors.

The musical, as a theatrical show, sometimes has introductory parts, and individual numbers are complete songs grouped into small cycles.

The increase in audience interest, as well as cultural changes, urbanization, and technological advancements, are reasons for the evolution of musical theater.

The transition to television musicals in the mid-20th century can be seen as a natural evolution of the genre, as television became a popular entertainment medium.

Due to objective reasons, the first musical examples were absent from the Bulgarian stage. Different data exists regarding later Broadway masterpieces and film musicals, which Bulgarian audiences had the opportunity to see both on stage and on screen.

Some of the songs and dances from these examples gained wide popularity in Bulgaria and attained the status of independent musical numbers, performed as striking accents in concert programs, soundtracks for videos, and included in the repertoire of singers, musical ensembles, and piano bars.

1.1.1. The film musical on the Bulgarian musical scene

The productions of theatrical director Svetozar Donev (both Bulgarian and foreign examples) contributed to the popularization of these works.

One of the factors influencing interest in musicals is their promotion.

If the way of global film musicals transitioned from open-air venues to television screens, returned to the stage (with a social, entertainment, and musical-aesthetic function), and transformed into Disney's grand film productions, the fate of the first Bulgarian children's musical examples contrasts—both in function and in the level of societal reactions.

1.2. Bulgarian children's musicals – prototypes and “cultural billboard” from the last decade of the 20th century to the second decade of the 21st century

Bulgarian children's musicals possess a wealth of plots drawn from popular global and Bulgarian literary examples. Composers turning towards the youngest audiences create the basis for defining certain genres as prototypes of children's musicals in Bulgaria. The Bulgarian musical scene includes children's operas, operettas, and ballets. Some of the plots from these musical-theatrical works are familiar to 5-6-year-old children from books, from Bulgarian language and literature classes in KG's PG, and from animated films.

In connection with the historical review of Bulgarian children's musicals and their prototypes, the names of Maestro Georgi Atanasov, Parashkev Hadzhiev, Alexander Yosifov, and Andrei Drenikov are mentioned.

Children's operettas, operas, and ballets are performed on the Bulgarian stage, but there are no audio recordings to popularize them.

For the purposes of this dissertation, a comparison is made with English-language examples called children's musicals, created from foreign folk tales, which have successfully

been popularized among young audiences worldwide and have been translated into various languages, including Bulgarian.

When announcing Bulgarian children's musical-theatrical performances on the internet the term “children's musical” is identified as inappropriately used.

1.2.1. Children's Musical in the Practice of Bulgarian Theatrical and Vocal Ensembles from the Last Decade of the 20th to the Second Decade of the 21st Century

In most theatrical and vocal ensembles, music and acting are studied for general cultural development. This fact can be explained by the significance of parental sponsorship and support for initiatives.

An interesting parallel can be drawn with the level of professionalism seen in global children's vocal-theatrical ensembles, such as “*Musical Theater for Children*” in Russia.

The improvement in productivity and quality of musical-theatrical productions in private ensembles can be attributed to replacing leaders practicing “cultural amateurism” with professionals who possess greater skills and demand more effort from the children.

Conditions in private vocal-theatrical formations are conducive to working on children's musicals, as they lack hourly routine moments (educational situations, meals, sleep, play) and do not have regulated educational content in music, controlled by the Ministry of Education.

Kindergartens do not provide the musical director with the opportunity for long, multi-component rehearsals. Despite this fact, with flexibility and ambition, children's musicals find a place in the practice of Bulgarian kindergartens.

1.2.2. Children's Musical in the Practice of Bulgarian Kindergartens from the Last Decade of the 20th to the Second Decade of the 21st Century

The scripts of children's musicals used in vocal-theatrical formations most often borrow from foreign language sources and are presented on stage in translated versions, with characters from their plots not identical to those from Bulgarian national epics. Most children do not have the opportunity to participate in this type of musical-theatrical productions due to the overlap of rehearsal hours in private formations with the mandatory time range for 5-6-year-old children's stay in kindergartens. This situation necessitates the inclusion of children's musicals in the musical-theatrical repertoire of kindergartens, but it cannot always be introduced in its existing format. Thus, the idea emerges to create a new genre that carries the stylistic features of children's musicals but is adapted to the organization of the kindergarten day, close to the knowledge and sensory perception of 5-6-year-old children, and dealing with themes from studied literary works, natural phenomena, and national rituals.

Upon reviewing English-language children's musicals, it is noted that there is no practice of staging children's musicals in kindergartens. Productions are found that are adaptations of well-known film musicals intended performance by children in the early stages of primary education.

In a study of Russian-language children's musicals created for performance in kindergartens, several titles are found that are genre-wise similar to children's musicals.

The only Bulgarian example, written for children in pre-school groups of a kindergarten based on the libretto of Dimitar Tochev, is the children's musical “*Happy Childhood*” by Yordan Kolev.

As a music teacher with experience in private pre-school institutions, I can share the challenges in my own efforts to conduct rehearsals for a children's musical with the children at PKG (private kindergarten). The listed factors in the dissertation work are reasons for rejecting my idea of realizing a children's musical with children in pre-school age of PKG

and dictate my opinion that conducting a multi-component rehearsal process for a children's musical under these circumstances is not possible.

1.2.3. The genre of musical for kindergarten - challenges in working with pre-school groups

The children's musical, designed for performance in kindergarten, is a musical-theatrical genre with an original or borrowed script from another work. The librettos can include fairy-tale or fantasy plots, be related to the emotional world of the child, or to Bulgarian holidays and customs.

The songs from the kindergarten musical have high artistic value - they have distinctive melodies, "artistic" breaths, melodic leaps, fragmented tonal durations, sharp dynamic amplitudes, changes in tempo and meter, presence of two-voice and polyphonic; they characterize heroes and states, interpret, explain moments of the plot development and often take on the function of "narrator" unlike the film musical, in which there is no narrator.

The musical for kindergarten offers wide opportunities for participation of children's musical instruments - solo, in ensemble formations, as part of musical design, as sound effects or props. The *mise-en-scène* is characterized by intense and diverse movements, dances, use of space around the stage, changing costumes and decors "in motion".

The main challenge for the music teacher is to conduct rehearsals for a children's musical without using a theoretical source that clarifies the methodology of working in the genre given the existing organization of the school day in Bulgarian kindergartens. Other challenges for the music teacher include: conducting rehearsals for a children's musical under the existing organization of the school day in kindergartens; mastering the specifics of children's behavior in pre-school age, raising the level of self-control; stepping out of the established form of the rehearsal process from smaller stage appearances, which are familiar to children; provoking children's desire for future activities with music at results of working with musicals.

Several key challenges are noted for the children: distributing attention over more than one task at the same time (singing - playing a children's musical instrument, changing crowns - changing props, dancing - accompanying musical instruments); developing stage endurance skills; maintaining constant stage activity; performing songs with higher artistic value.

In my practice with children's musicals, I overcome the listed challenges by creating and following a written work plan.

Creating a written work plan for a kindergarten musical is particularly necessary when the musical-theatrical work is created through the transformation of other genres.

1.3. Essence and reasons for transformation of other genres into a musical for kindergarten

The kindergarten musical is a children's musical-theatrical genre created in my practice as a pre-school and music teacher in kindergarten. It is formed as a result of the need to introduce children's musicals (from professional vocal-theatrical formations) into the repertoire of kindergartens.

The studied Bulgarian folk tales, human emotions, characteristics of animals, Bulgarian holidays and customs create the need for scripts for children's musicals in Bulgarian that include the studied themes.

In my pedagogical practice, I overcome the lack of adequate scripts for children's musicals by adapting Bulgarian scripts from other genres, whose literary message corresponds to the age characteristics of the children and the distribution of activities in the kindergarten. This results in a process of transforming the genre, in which the original script from another genre is transformed into a musical script for kindergarten.

Genre transformation involves changing the genre, which allows for the preservation of the literary text and the addition of features of children's musicals - musical-theatrical elements, formative principles, but on a smaller scale for kindergarten musicals.

There are two popular genres with diverse scripts that can successfully be used for the purposes of pre-school music education and according to the possibilities of children in preparatory groups - "musical fairy tale" and "listening fairy tale". Due to the reasons highlighted in the dissertation, they are terminologically refined as an **author's musical fairy tale and a digital audio fairy tale**.

1.3.1. Author's musical fairy tale

The author's musical fairy tale is a children's musical-theatrical genre with an author's Songs, plot, and libretto are written on paper or digital media.

Transforming an Author's Musical Fairy Tale into a musical for kindergarten is achieved through pedagogical intervention at several levels: text, songs, musical arrangement. The transformation process is clarified in the dissertation.

1.3.2. Digital Audio Fairy Tale

The digital audio fairy tale is a symphonic audio tale with a more passive function - for listening. The libretto is almost never in rhyme, and the lyrics and musical arrangement are most often by a single author - often based on Bulgarian and foreign folk tales, but there are also original plots. The scenarios are not written on paper or in another format because they are not created for stage interpretation. The genre is characterized by the presence of a "narrator".

Transforming a digital audio fairy tale into a musical for kindergarten poses many challenges for the music educator, related to the following components - text, songs, and musical arrangement. The transformation process is clarified in the dissertation.

1.4. Suitable Instruments for Performing Musical Arrangement for a Kindergarten Musical

The accordion is still frequently used by music educators in kindergartens, but its typical sound does not correspond to the genre characteristics of the musical. The accordion lacks technical and tonal capabilities to create a grandiose sound picture, and it is difficult to perform episodes where singing is not involved.

The acoustic guitar is easily portable and does not require installation space during musical-theatrical performances. Despite these advantages, the instrument's mobility does not make it suitable for use in a children's musical because the "dense" texture of piano songs in transforming an author's musical fairy tale is difficult to play on guitar, and extracting from a symphonic score in transformation from a digital audio fairy tale is almost impractical with it.

The acoustic piano easily plays a keyboard extraction of orchestral sound, but educators who can play the piano face difficulties. Usually, the piano is located in one of the corners of the hall adapted for events in kindergartens, and often a common hall is used for stage performances in which situations of PE are held. In this way, the piano teacher is turned away from the children and finds it difficult to monitor stage action.

My personal practice shows that the synthesizer is the most suitable instrument for performing musical arrangements for a kindergarten musical. The reasons for this choice are the small size of the 5-octave instrument, the presence of timbres and sound effects, the ability to connect additional speakers to it, and the advantage of Easily Dealing with Problematic Situations with Metric Time in Terms of Acceleration, Deceleration, Skipping. The sound when using children's musical instruments can easily be adjusted to be heard clearly enough, since despite numerous rehearsals, the sound intensity from the playing children is not always consistent.

The synthesizer is placed directly on stage among the children. The reason for this non-standard vision is the need for constant visual, manual, and sometimes verbal contact with the children, given their age-specific characteristics.

1.4.1. Pedagogical Recommendations for Performing a Kindergarten Musical, Created by Transforming Other Genres

The musicals I have staged in kindergarten are constructed by transforming the two presented genres. This pedagogical experience of staging musicals with 5–6-year-old children in kindergarten allows me to systematize some conclusions and recommendations. For teachers who do not have enough practice with staging a musical for kindergarten, the genre of digital audio fairy tale is more suitable for transformation. The author's musical fairy tale can be transformed more easily into a musical for kindergarten by teachers who have experience in transforming elements from solo songs into choral ones, creating a complete musical arrangement based on certain parameters, with sufficient instrumental experience to perform the author's piano scores.

With the addition of staging, instrumental episodes, repetitions in the songs, vocal exercises during dialogues that do not convey the meaning of recitatives, the duration of the performance is naturally extended, necessitating control over its excessive length. In my practice, I overcome excessive duration by incorporating additional rhythmic structures during spoken dialogues, which serve as a cue for the children for “beginning and end”.

When including children's musical instruments in the songs, a new score is written, which also includes the piano part of the music teacher. The children's musical instruments are grouped (a rule in score construction).

When incorporating the non-traditional children's musical instruments described in Chapter Three—suona, mini saxophone, bawu, pan flute, recorder, and the hulusi and dizi flutes—notation in C tuning is recommended.

If conducting with hand gestures is not possible due to a complex piano part, other agreed-upon gestures can be used, such as nodding, raising a finger, or other prearranged signals with the children—consistent each time.

The recognition, differentiation, and popularization of the two genres (author's musical fairy tale and digital audio fairy tale) among preschool teachers can be considered a starting point for developing the idea of working on a musical for kindergarten with preparatory groups and for its more frequent staging in Bulgarian kindergartens.

1.4.2. Predicted Working Period for a Kindergarten Musical

The period of work on a children's musical with children from preparatory groups includes the preliminary preparation of the teacher and rehearsals with the children. Elements of the teacher's preparation include: initial allocation of roles, provision of most children's musical instruments, costumes, and decorations.

Despite the multi-component work with children and the diverse nature of rehearsals, the overall period of work on a children's musical can be forecasted (not less than 3–4 months). It is directly dependent on the number of children in the group; the presence of children with special educational needs, the type of their needs, opportunities for their contribution and satisfaction; the overall pace of work based on the teacher's experience with the respective group; upcoming children's performances – participation in festivals, open situations, presentations of extra-curricular activities.

1.4.3. Reasons for Changes in the Previously Predicted Work Period

These can include: interruption of the work process due to illness, pandemic situation, inability to use the hall, absence of a key participant.

The final allocation of roles is another factor that can lead to an extension of the predicted work period for the musical. The decisions of the music teacher change due to the challenges that inspire the various stages of work on the musical.

1.5. Need for Work Stages in a Kindergarten Musical

For convenience, the stages during the different rehearsals are named as initial, substantive, and final, each of which develops in several sub-stages. **The need for the teacher** includes: providing opportunities for long-term planning, creating a schematic view of completed and upcoming work, facilitating easier coordination of preliminary ideas and achieved results, specifying specific tasks, keeping additional notes for specific child actions and mannerisms. **The need for the children** includes: clarity about the upcoming work provokes understanding and acceptance of the duration of the process, providing opportunities to express preferences for certain types of song rehearsals, with children's musical instruments or with a stage, to increase motivation for work. **The need for parents** includes: written exposition of the work stages of the children's musical, along with signing informed consent for participation and parental meeting, serving as an additional means of informing and involving in the work process, reminding the need for daily presence of the children.

In connection with increasing motivation for work and developing auditory perceptions and musical abilities when working on a children's musical, arise the questions “How will their musical abilities continue to develop when the children move to the first grade?” and “Can the work on children's musicals continue in the early grades?”

1.6. Children's musical in the early grades of primary school - a way to demonstrate additional skills

The early grades in school represent an age period where children are mature enough to memorize longer texts in poetry and prose. This developmental progress creates an opportunity for more skillful incorporation of additional abilities into the musical, which can enhance the performance and make it more effective.

Most children participate in extracurricular activities at school or through community/private organizations. Skills such as dancing and others can add realism to “mass scenes”; playing a musical instrument helps in building a musical image during “ensemble scenes,” as well as in depicting individual character traits.

Despite the children's enhanced general and musical abilities at a young age, rehearsals for children's musicals are hindered by various factors. A primary reason for these

challenges is the inadequate organization of the school day for activities outside the statutory curriculum.

1.6.1. Opportunities for working on children's musicals within the modules of the Annual Full-Day Organization of Educational Activity (AFDOEA)

During the first half of the full-day stay, various types of lessons are scheduled for different subjects (acquisition of new knowledge, exercises, summaries, discussions, assessments, and corrections of tests).

After 12:10 PM, the children remaining in the classroom are those enrolled in the AFDOEA group. Reasons for their attendance include full-day work commitments of parents, lack of relatives to pick up the children from school, completion of homework, socialization during lessons and breaks.

In the module “Organized Leisure and Physical Activity”, time is allocated for lunch and outdoor play at the schoolyard. These two periods provide daily opportunities for rehearsals of the children's musical, with a short break for lunch.

The “Self-preparation” educational module also spans two lessons. It is intended for mastering educational material and completing homework, making it unsuitable for rehearsals.

The third afternoon module, “Activities by Interests”, can be utilized for work on the children's musical, as during these two hours the teacher offers activities based on the children's preferences.

Despite the convenience that these time slots provide for implementing children's musicals, teachers face various challenges.

1.6.2. Challenges in working on children's musicals in primary school

Despite the promising prospects for working on children's musicals in the modules “Organized Leisure and Physical Activity” and “Activities by Interests”, difficulties are observed when teachers from the extracurricular club attempt to conduct rehearsals for children's musicals. These challenges arise from the specific organization of the school day, as well as from external factors. These include difficulty in coordinating with the music teacher, absence of some children from the AFDOEA group, lack of consent from the homeroom teacher, disagreement from teachers conducting additional pedagogical activities with the class, and parental disagreement regarding their children's participation in children's musicals.

The dissertation explores the reasons for these difficulties and suggests alternatives for overcoming them.

CHAPTER TWO

STAGES OF WORK IN A MUSICAL FOR KINDERGARTEN

2.1. Initial stage

The structure of the rehearsal process for a children's musical is formed by conditionally distributing the work into stages. Each stage of work is divided into several

sub-stages. These are created for the teacher's convenience and as a guide, without limiting the possibilities for changes at each stage of the work.

2.1.1. Selection of a work with an appropriate scenario for the creation of a musical for kindergarten

Meetings with more literary works and a larger repertoire of songs with diverse characters lead to the accumulation of experience, which allows for work on more extensive forms. This fact determines **the experience of the children** as a leading factor in the selection of a scenario for a children's musical. The children's experience with other musical-theatrical works can be analyzed in two aspects—general achievements of the group and the impressions formed while working with each child.

Another factor that speeds up the teacher when choosing a work is **the expected results**, which the Ministry of Education determines for the exemplary annual distribution for each age group in the kindergarten.

Another way to include educational content from the music program in a children's musical is to use synthesizer timbres (e.g., violin) from the curriculum, against which the stage action unfolds, but without adding a scene for their inclusion.

2.1.2. Listening to the Piece

Listening to the musical piece is done by setting tasks during the listening session, either for the group collectively or tailored differently for each child.

Positive emotional attitude contributes to certain positives, which affect children during their first experience listening to the work: increase in concentration, “active listening”, group participation.

The concentration of 5-6-year-old children easily declines, and there is a need to change activities frequently. One effective method is to suddenly stop the playing music without prior volume reduction. The result is a sharp silence that quickly refocuses the children's attention.

2.1.3. Discussions on the Content

Discussions on the content of the musical aim to facilitate the memorization of key plot points from the literary model and their understanding and interpretation. Since similar discussions are conducted in Bulgarian Language and Literature classes with the same objectives, their model is suitable for conducting discussions on the content of the musical.

In my opinion, conducting two discussions after listening to the work is a good approach. The first discussion involves an oral retelling of the content by as many children as possible.

In the second discussion, key moments of the plot development are noted, followed by their analysis.

At this stage of work, the songs from the musical are not subject to interpretation. A brief review of the information perceived by the children from the songs can be summarized, and the end of the discussion can turn into an observation – examining the musical instruments that will be used, demonstrating sound extraction from them, but without attempts at their technical implementation.

Practice shows that demonstrating personal pedagogical attitude towards the upcoming work can help increase children's enthusiasm during rehearsals at a later stage. For this purpose, showing part of the props that will be used in the children's musical is appropriate. This positively affects the attitude that children have towards their roles.

2.1.4. Casting Roles in a Kindergarten Musical

Casting roles for a musical performed in kindergarten is a lengthy process accompanied by changes in the decisions of the educator, influenced by various factors: past experience with the group – based on overall achievements of the group and individual impressions from the children's stage performances; level of musical development – determines the assessment for assigning solo songs, for maintaining a voice that does not carry the melody in the song, and the possibility of combining songs with dances or dance movements.

The level of musical development in children is diagnosed by the music teacher and depends on their knowledge of types of musical abilities and types of musical hearing. Familiarity with types of musical hearing and their theoretical definitions can support the teacher's assessment for role distribution (soloist, supporting, doubling); **individual attendance of children in the group** – guides the distribution of roles in the musical to prevent role changes at a later stage (a different factor from the average monthly attendance, reflecting the attendance of the entire group); **individual endurance and stage behavior** – factors in role distribution that differ from endurance during instructional situations. This distinction is clarified in the dissertation; motivation and desires of the children – not primary factors in role distribution in the kindergarten musical, but usually evident from the first audition of the piece. Some children exhibit reduced motivation for performing their own role. **Individual motivation for work in children** is more a product of the teacher's personal motivation, which they demonstrate during rehearsals. General practice shows that for 5–6-year-old children, motivation is linked to approval from teachers, parents, and other children. Another means of enhancing motivation to work with children in kindergarten is subject awards, but we add that it should not be the primary incentive for developing children.

The children's desires to get specific roles are part of their personal motivation to work. These desires are always linked to the characteristics of the characters. Observations by preschool teachers show that positive characters are preferred, and conflicts often arise during distribution; **parents' desires** – a delicate factor in role distribution. Compliance with it can be avoided by applying the “equally” principle – participation in mass scenes, performing sound effects with children's musical instruments, “artistic” change of scenery when the child is not involved in a major role.

2.1.5. Informed Consent and Parent Meeting

In my personal practice as a preschool and music educator, I establish that written consent from parents is required for every instance of children participating in events and activities not included in the regular school day schedule, even in cases where oral consent has been given. For this reason, I provide informed consent forms for parents to sign regarding their children's participation in the musical.

The informed consent form is prepared in various formats – Word, Excel, PowerPoint, handwritten. A standard template is used, which parents sign in the morning.

In addition to informed consent for involvement in the children's musical, the teacher can organize another practice – a parent meeting on the topic of “children's participation in the musical”. During this meeting, the rehearsal schedules are communicated along with any unforeseen circumstances that may arise during the performance. To preempt questions related to photographic material, it is mentioned that a video operator will be available for the production.

2.2. Main Stage

The guidelines for conducting this phase of rehearsals pertain to the pedagogical activities that the teacher undertakes, delving into details of working with children and encompassing all decisions related to rehearsals and their specifics across all types of rehearsals.

2.2.1. Mise-en-scène

The term “Mise-en-scène” is associated with the arrangement of actors on stage at various moments during the performance. Mise-en-scène provides a unique characteristic to each production and bears the marks of directorial strategies.

In the kindergarten musical, the mise-en-scène involves the arrangement of sets and actors in a manner that reflects the emotional world of children (in preschool age) through their characteristic movements and dances, as well as combinations thereof. The kindergarten musical's mise-en-scène includes the presentation of temporal and spatial elements due to the absence of technical assistants during its staging.

In the context of a kindergarten musical's mise-en-scène, all its components are present - verbal, physical, musical, noise, color, and light.

Two issues arise in the work with children's musicals that concern the links between individual scenes in the musical. When using a script from an original musical fairy tale, it is necessary to add text and music or a song between the individual stage actions. The other issue is related to chaos in the children's stage behavior when the action field is too large. To avoid this manifestation of uncoordination, locations of children and objects on the stage can be marked (using different colors and signs).

Children with more developed musical abilities and impressive acting inclinations can turn them into skills and realize them as achievements. Despite this pleasant situation, allowing improvisation in mise-en-scène is not desirable. Problems related to movement on the stage in different children's musicals do not stem from unnecessary, incorrect, or untimely movements but rather from a lack of control over the stage space.

Unsuccessful directorial decisions in mise-en-scène stand out during the premiere, rather than during rehearsals.

2.2.1.1. Entering and Exiting the Apron Stage

The apron stage is the visible front part of the stage for the audience. In musical-theatrical productions in kindergarten, its division into “sectors” is of crucial importance. There is an established model for positioning the participating children in the sectors of the apron stage, which is applied in kindergarten musicals and other musical-theatrical productions.

For the “cleanliness” of the video recording, reminders of unwanted behaviors during the production are necessary. In cases where special assistance is needed, responsibilities can

be assigned to an assistant teacher from the respective group who knows all the children, their reactions, inclinations, and typical behaviors.

Parental assistance in this situation is not recommended due to the likelihood of distraction.

2.2.1.2. Exchange of Microphones, Crowns, Rearranging of Objects

The use of microphones in the children's musical requires competent advice from the educator, depending on the following factors: rehearsal time for microphone technique, potential obstruction of movements and dances, financial considerations. The intensive and constant movement on stage necessitates the use of wireless, dynamic microphones.

In a dynamic plot with many dancing episodes, the use of microphones is not successful.

For the children's musical in the kindergarten PG, no more than 4-5 microphones on stage are sufficient. Situations arise where microphones are handed over from one participant to another. Exceptions to the traditional passing of the microphone "behind the child" are observed in practice.

Similarly (to microphones), head crowns are also exchanged in the musical for kindergarten children. In cases where movements on stage hinder access to crowns, the challenge can be turned into an effect through a "demonstrative" handing over of crowns by a child. Cardboard head crowns are not a typical part of the props usually used in musicals but are an integral part of stage performances in kindergarten. Their use is necessitated by the limited ability to purchase sufficiently realistic costumes for the roles and by the prospect of involving children in making the crowns. In my practice, I assign an additional function to the stage decor - it serves as a "holder" for the crowns.

Directorial approaches in children's musicals also extend to rearranging objects on stage during performances to provide a new factual, spatial, and temporal environment - changing the scenery, introducing a new character, or starting the next scene.

The need to "act out" operational actions before the audience brings it closer to theatrical production while simultaneously differentiating it due to the methods and means used for their execution. This operational independence of the children turns the rearrangement of props "in motion" into one of the greatest advantages of the kindergarten musical.

2.2.1.3. Changing Entire Stage Decor and Costumes During Performance

In addition to changing the entire stage decor during a children's musical, there is also a need for full or partial costume changes. Effective techniques include: "Living Wall", "Swinging Cloak", and the "Announcer Effect" (named by me) - used for partial decor changes.

2.2.2. Working with Text "in Motion"

Unfolding the loosely defined first part of the script, the educator introduces children to the present genre components - moments with solo performances, dialogues, songs, and characteristic parts of the musical composition. Foundations can be laid for correct intonation, although at this stage of working on a children's musical, speech technique is not yet emphasized. Specific gestures, facial expressions, and speech effects are gradually "cleared up" as they undergo changes to establish the most suitable solutions.

The approach to learning lines corresponds to the imitation approach used in learning texts in Bulgarian language and literature in PG. A seated position of the teacher with "feeding" lines is considered impractical because it creates a habit for children to look in one

direction and expect the first syllable of the next word audibly. Once the children have “grasped” the text of the entire loosely defined first part of the children's musical script, work begins on the main problem observed as a result of combining text and acting - the appearance of unnecessary movements.

Based on the reason provoking them, unnecessary movements can be divided into three categories: movements that are tic-based; movements retained from infancy; movements arising from stage performance - the commonly accepted theory that these manifestations are provoked by discomfort during stage performance, by the fact that the child is observed and analyzed, is not proven in my practice. My personal hypothesis about the appearance of this category of unnecessary movements specifies them as a result of prolonged concentration and intensity of the working process. This category of unnecessary movements arises from a supreme desire for satisfaction for the teacher and the audience in moments of heightened concentration and represents a reflex of the body that relieves tension. They are successfully and completely corrected through systematic praises and increased participation in stage performances, competitions, and contests. “Clearing” all types of unnecessary movements in the conditions of stage play is based not on their removal, but on their replacement.

Another frequently encountered problem at this stage of work on a kindergarten musical is the difficult pronunciation of certain words (complex words - formed from two others or long words with syllabic forms). A faster way to eliminate pronunciation issues is to replace these words with synonyms or introduce an imperative form in speech.

2.2.3. Working with Text “on Table”

This sub-stage follows immediately after rehearsals with text “in motion” but could also develop in parallel with it. The mizanscene is not included in the work, so the children are in a seated position.

The editing of the texts used is adapted to the need for more frequent intake of air, but this is not enough to overcome “superficial breathing”. Its natural appearance hinders correct intonation when speaking the text. Individual exercises are necessary to transform breathing into low-rib/diaphragmatic (also necessary for singing). Due to the age of the children, three exercises lead to positive results.

Correct pronunciation is acquired on the principle of developing reading skills (pronouncing “open syllables” accented, mirror, quietly, loudly, with doubling - by 2). Transition is made from smaller to larger speech units (syllable, word, sentence, text). Details in this process require a lot of time, but it is not enough to develop the text for all children. For this reason, another alternative method is proposed to optimize the process - dividing the children into small groups of 3-4 children with similar speech skills.

The final component of speech technique - voice placement - relates to intonation in speech (different from voice placement in singing).

2.2.4. Working with Songs “on Table”

The sub-stages of working with songs are carried out in reverse order compared to working with text. While seated, details in pronunciation of song lyrics are “cleared up”, eliminating rushing, slowing down, “choppy singing”; “chain breathing” is practiced, highlighting dual (polyphonic) vocals, and working on layering individual melodic lines. Despite their seated position during this sub-stage, the piano is involved in rehearsals.

There are effective practices for overcoming rushing and slowing down while singing; “choppy singing”; problems with chain breathing.

The most challenging task in working with songs in a musical for 5–6-year-old children is achieving polyphony. While different voices in a professional vocal formation “support” each other, children in kindergarten lack professional musical orientation and typically learn the first voice, which does not contain the melody (the so-called “second” voice or “alto”, using choir score terminology). It should be clarified that such a working principle is applied if the song is not polyphonic. My observations show that maintaining dual vocals for more than a minute is a difficult task for children. Therefore, alternating it with solo singing or choir unison is necessary.

The educator must respond to a wide range of situations. Texts often involve fragmented tonal durations.

2.2.5. Working with Songs “in Motion”

The most important tasks when singing with a mizanscene involve refining tempo and dynamics, using vocal effects, and developing the ability to maintain proper eye positioning despite movements.

When introducing acting together with singing, children tend to slow down the tempo and replace dynamics with quieter ones. This unconscious reaction requires slower tempos than in the previous sub-stage of work. Increased attention is needed for connecting moments between episodes. These often form minimal interruptions in singing and stage action, which are eliminated through conducting and gesturing by the teacher.

Sound effects in musical songs are more prevalent than in other musical-theatrical genres. In kindergarten, they are limited to tapping, clapping, chirping, whistling, if possible. Applying them often causes delays in the next metric moment while singing.

Proper eye positioning is one of the most challenging tasks for children while singing in mizanscene conditions.

Various symbolic indications can be introduced that partially replace the conductor's function (due to the teacher's involvement with the piano).

2.3. Final Stage

This stage is realized through several sub-stages not related to technical work on singing and acting, but rehearsals at the “Final Stage” level are directly dependent on the successful realization of the previous stages. The last phase introduced covers general rehearsals and their recordings, inclusion of children playing musical instruments, types of bows, leaving the stage, and preparing programs and posters.

2.3.1. Inclusion of Children Playing Instruments in a Kindergarten Musical and Types of Rehearsals with Them

The description and use of popular children's musical instruments in kindergarten are presented in the methodological guide by Yordan Kolev, “*Creative Musical Development of Children from Preschool and Early School Age*”.

There are 10 different ways for children's musical instruments (CMI) to perform in kindergarten musicals: solo and ensemble performances with the same instruments; ensemble playing in combinations of different CMI; inclusion in song accompaniments (all types of accompaniment except “from score”); presence in musical arrangements; as sound and noise effects (sound-image moments); during set and costume changes; as part of props.

These ways of using CMI distinguish between their two functions in kindergarten musicals - sounding and decorative.

According to the needs in the process of integrating instruments into kindergarten musicals, rehearsals with them need to be differentiated: with or without accompanying musical arrangements (synthesizer); with or without a mizanscene; individual or group.

In performances involving polyphony with CMI, where a melodic musical instrument is included, other CMI should ideally not have a defined pitch or function as supporting harmony instruments. This approach ensures prevention against mismatches in metric times during ensemble playing.

The use of CMI prompts moments of emotional applause, contributes to the most positive reviews, and provides striking photographic material. Playing CMI and the entire musical leave lasting traces in the creative musical development of children, often being their first step towards professional orientation.

2.3.2. General Rehearsals

The definition of a general rehearsal in a kindergarten musical is identical to that in other musical-theatrical productions – it is the final rehearsal before the premiere, where the entire production is performed. Unlike larger stage musicals, kindergarten musicals require 5–6 general rehearsals. This practice is necessary due to unforeseen circumstances such as children's absences, limited time availability for salon use, and the children's age-specific needs. The need for 5–6 general rehearsals sets the first one no later than ten days before the performance. Costumes, scenery, and all musical instruments (CMI) are used for this rehearsal. General rehearsals are divided into pairs, with each first rehearsal involving a complete performance of the musical, and each second general rehearsal used for correction activities. This pairing is done for two reasons: due to uncertainty about the origin of errors (“accidental” errors or “unfinished” elements) and to maintain the emotional state of the children – each first general rehearsal shows the objective state of the production, and problematic elements are “worked out” in each second rehearsal, without it appearing as a consequence of their presentation in the first rehearsal.

To partially recreate the feeling of singing and stage performance before an audience, spectators such as a teacher from another group or administrative personnel from the kindergarten may be invited to the first general rehearsal, but not the group's teacher.

The synthesizer is placed during general rehearsals as it will be positioned at the premiere.

2.3.3. Pros and Cons of Recording General Rehearsals

Partial or complete recording of general rehearsals (audio or video) provides material for competent pedagogical assessment, summarizing the positives and negatives resulting from the children watching or listening to the recording.

Visualizing mistakes significantly shortens the path to their correction. Watching and listening to their own performances fosters professionalism and critical thinking and provides an opportunity for conscious self-correction. Interesting or comedic parts from the recordings of general rehearsals are added to the video recording of the premiere. Spontaneous moments from such scenes create wonderful memories for families and allow parents into the working process.

Concerns during recording of general rehearsals are most often related to insufficient time for corrections and teachers' concerns that last-minute changes may seem “tacked on”. The presence of a recording is often seen as the final stage of work, which can lead to a decrease in the children's concentration and potentially affect the premiere of the musical unfavorably.

It is advisable for the recording of general rehearsals to be conducted by someone other than the teacher working with the children on the musical.

2.3.4. Bowing and Exiting the Stage

The group bow requires a pedagogical approach where the positioning of the children during the final song aligns with the upcoming bow.

The group bow serves a dual function – it allows for a large amount of photographic material and presents the participants one last time in their stage roles. There is a need to maintain the children in a specific position for a prolonged period without detracting from the effect of the bow movements. The group bow is carried out in three phases and is directed by the teacher-pianist.

In kindergarten musicals, a second group bow is avoided due to the children reaching their endurance limit.

Due to the continuous applause after the group bow, individual bows are performed.

Individual bows are done in groups of 3–4 children, who bow with CMI, also using a prop characteristic of their stage character.

Exiting the stage is done in groups in a pre-regulated order. When using a venue outside the kindergarten and conditions involve children withdrawing behind the stage, a technical staff member is necessary to assist them.

2.4. Programs and Posters

Programs and posters for the kindergarten musical serve three functions: informational – containing roles and names of children performing the roles; evidential – affirming the efforts made by the teacher and the children for the overall appearance of the production; decorative – providing a memento of the production (alongside the video recording). Programs typed in Word in A4 landscape format are suitable due to the need to fold them in the middle. The front page contains basic information about the production, arranged from larger to smaller administrative units. Two color options are suitable: black and white on white paper and black and white on colored paper in lighter shades. An equal number of programs in 4–5 colors are sufficient. Musical posters are prepared in a larger format and duplicate the information from the front page of the programs.

CHAPTER THREE

CHILDREN'S MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, COSTUMES, AND STAGE SETS IN A MUSICAL FOR A KINDERGARTEN – SPECIFIC FUNCTION

3.1. Musical and auditory perceptions and creative development of children in preparatory groups

Accumulated musical and auditory perceptions create a predisposition for the perception of a richer, more complete artistic image. Considering their development in relation to the use of children's musical instruments (CMI) realizes the context of this subchapter, which is the subject of musical psychology. The development of musical and auditory abilities is highlighted in the dissertation as a necessary foundation to support successful work with musicals for kindergartens and to promote creative development in preschool children.

The use of CMI as an element in a kindergarten musical expands the artistic and creative amplitude of children through various musical-theatrical etudes that accompany rehearsals. They resemble theatrical etudes, which represent improvisation of stage behavior

according to a given plot. Similarly, musical-theatrical etudes are performed. Parts of the script are rehearsed with *mise-en-scène*. CMI are added to the stage action, selected by the educator, with general guidelines for their use in the *mise-en-scène*. My personal observations of kindergarten children show that children with greater musical talent perform tasks best.

3.1.1. Classification of Bulgarian folk musical toys and possibilities for inclusion in a kindergarten musical

In global music-pedagogical practice, systems for the musical education of children in kindergartens created by Carl Orff and Natalia Vetlugina are known, in which CMI are used for the formation and development of musical abilities.

The contribution to the categorization of Bulgarian national musical toys and instruments is a result of the creative searches of I. Kachulev, M. Todorov, V. Atanasov, D. Paliev, and others. Their scientific contribution to the study and preservation of the folk instrumental tradition is systematized in the monograph by Emiliya Nikolova “*Methodology of musical education for preschool age*”.

The presented **percussion sound toys and CMI** are attractive to children due to the materials from which they are made and their characteristic sound. Research on musicals staged in kindergartens in our country shows that Bulgarian folk musical toys are not used in musical-theatrical works. The lack of their popularity on the children's stage prompts a search for their application in a musical for kindergartens.

Clappers are presented as **CMI with an undefined pitch height**. Clappers can be introduced into a kindergarten musical as a signaling instrument and upon the appearance of a specific character, similar to a gong that announces the appearance of characters in Eastern plots. With this function, forged and cast metal bells can be used, identified as **percussion instruments with a specific pitch height**. **Bulgarian folk wind musical toys** can be introduced into pastoral scenes of the kindergarten musical, but in combination with popular CMI. Due to the uncomplicated sound extraction, **stringed folk musical toys** are suitable for use by more children in scenes with a folkloric character.

3.1.2. Classification of CMI in methodological literature

Application of traditional CMI in a kindergarten musical In their practice, the music teacher in a kindergarten uses popular children's musical instruments. Sounded and unsounded CMI are known. Sounded ones are divided into four groups: with a fixed pitch height, with an unfixed pitch height, with tuning of one or several tones, with fixed melodies. The most commonly used in Bulgarian kindergartens are tambourine, *daira*, maracas, cymbals, triangle, wooden horse, diatonic metallophone, most often in the Lydian mode.

Unsounded musical toys are props, depict musical instruments, and are intended to familiarize children with the external appearance of the instruments.

Sounded CMI are divided into four groups depending on their sound: instruments with an unfixed pitch height, toys tuned to one or several tones, toys with fixed melodies, musical instruments with a specific pitch height, Bulgarian folk instruments (percussion, string, wind).

Musical toys and instruments in music-pedagogical literature are classified in another way – into groups according to the method of sound extraction (stringed – zither, guitar,

balalaika, gadulka; wind – flute, viola, harmonica; percussion-keyboard – piano, harpsichord; percussion – drum, triangle, metallophone).

There are different classifications of CMI depending on various factors. When working with children's musicals, it is not necessary to comply with this popular classification since there is no need to form an orchestra of CMI. A different categorization is the division of CMI into Bulgarian and foreign ones. The Bulgarian ones are the aforementioned national musical instruments, while as foreign ones, children's cymbals, wooden horse, tambourine, tarambuka, maracas, triangle, metallophone, electronic organ, piano, harpsichord, glass (porcelain) cups are determined.

The different classifications of CMI in Bulgarian literature help music educators familiarize kindergarten children with the external appearance and sound extraction of the instruments, but there is no methodology for their application in musical-theatrical genres specifying the specific use of the instruments in stage action.

3.1.3. Reasons for using non-traditional CMI in a kindergarten musical

Perhaps the lack of an established methodological model for the use of popular CMI in various genres is due to the fact that their technical capabilities do not allow for the interpretation of every melody due to the absence of semitones in them.

In the traditional musical instrumentarium of kindergartens, there are also no timbral similarities to standard musical instruments from different groups – string, wooden, and brass wind. For this reason, traditional children's musical instruments can hardly support the recreation of a musical image placed in a narrative development. There is a need for more specific and attractive timbres that, together with the components of the *mise-en-scène*, favor the aesthetic perception and reaction of the audience.

These observations direct the professional reflex of the educator towards seeking diversity in the stage practice of the kindergarten and using children's musical instruments that are not popular in Bulgaria. For these reasons, I conditionally introduce the term non-traditional. These non-traditional musical instruments distinguish between two groups – *European and Far Eastern*. In turn, European non-traditional children's musical instruments are divided into two subgroups – wind (viola, pan flute, recorder, reed flute – dizi) and percussion (two-row chromatic metallophone), while Far Eastern ones – resemble only wind instruments (suona, mini saxophone, bawu, hulusi). Non-traditional musical instruments are not categorized in pedagogical literature as children's, but we can call them non-traditional children's musical instruments because full-scale use of their technical and sound capabilities is not required in kindergarten.

3.1.3.1. Non-traditional European Children's Musical Instruments - Types and Specifics

As mentioned above, non-traditional *European* children's musical instruments can be categorized into wind and percussion groups. **The Triola** represents a distinct wind instrument group. It is a plastic musical instrument that started its spread from West Germany. **The Panflute** is a wooden wind musical instrument that thrives in traditional musical practice, but its children's variety is made of plastic. **The Blockflute** belongs to the traditional and popular wooden musical instruments, but it is also considered non-traditional due to its absence in Bulgarian kindergarten music-theatrical performances. The children's models are made of plastic or a mixture of wood and plastic. **The Bamboo flute (dizi)** is a wind instrument that is popular in both European and East Asian worlds. Its geographic use affects some technical details - the European flute does not have a vibrating membrane on the resonator hole. **The two-row chromatic metallophone** is a percussive instrument with good resonance and a chromatic scale due to the presence of semitones. In it, the plates are placed

on a thicker and better-insulated stable wooden base than in traditional diatonic metallophones.

3.1.3.2. Far Eastern Non-Traditional Children's Musical Instruments - Types and Specifics

In the proposed categorization of children's musical instruments, instruments from the *Far East* also belong to the group of non-traditional instruments. In this group, wind instruments dominate. **The bamboo flute (dizi)** is again present in this category. It is a traditional Chinese wind instrument. **The Suona** is a Chinese folk musical instrument with a wooden body and a metal expansion. Plastic versions are more suitable for working with children due to the absence of special storage and preparation requirements (additional thinning or soaking in water or alcohol). Among Chinese wooden musical instruments, **the Bawu** stands out, possessing a tone similar to the English horn. Children can easily replicate individual tones from melodies without the need for combinations by blocking holes or maintaining a drone sound, which requires a large amount of air. **The Hulusi** is a type of Chinese wind instrument with a sound similar to the Bawu. An important part of its sound production is the freely vibrating plate attached to the mouthpiece. What makes it exotic is the vertical mouthpiece placed in a small elongated gourd. This unique Chinese flute allows successful emulation of wind gusts, thus replacing the so-called “wind machine” that has been absent from children's music instrumentarium for years. **The mini saxophone** is a wooden wind instrument with a flat mouthpiece. Its place is secured in music-theatrical productions due to the absence of children's musical instruments with a similar timbre.

3.1.3.3. Non-Traditional Children's Musical Instruments in Kindergarten Musicals

My experimental pedagogical research shows that the use of non-traditional children's musical instruments in kindergarten has a multifaceted pedagogical effect - cognitive (enriching knowledge), educational (developing teamwork skills), communicative (creating a bond between teacher-child-parent), and therapeutic (impacting physical and emotional well-being of children). Innovative approaches in selecting and applying non-traditional children's musical instruments do not eliminate or contradict the standard practices outlined in regulations for music education in kindergartens (*Ordinance No. 5 of June 3, 2016, Annex No. 5 to Article 28, para. 2, item 5, Education Act “Music”*).

The specific use of these instruments in kindergarten is illustrated through my work on **several kindergarten musicals** such as “*The Antics of Billy Goat Bots*” (based on the eponymous audiobook by Kiril Vasilev, music by Kiril Tsibulka and Stefan Ribarov, lyrics by Lozan Takev), “*The Vanished Martenitsa*” (text by Chavdar Aladjov, lyrics by Petar Volgin, music by Petar Stupel), and the original musical “*Gosho in First Grade - A Tale about School, Smiles, and Something More*” (2020). These include musical fairy tales, musical dramatizations, and theatrical presentations of educational materials in kindergarten educational directions.

3.1.3.4. Non-Traditional Children's Musical Instruments - Recommendations for Use in Kindergarten

Non-traditional children's musical instruments possess significant advantages in artistic expression over traditional ones, but their introduction is not without challenges. The first challenge relates to instrumental training for children who need to learn to play them. Existing YouTube videos demonstrating how to play these instruments by musicians can be

utilized. Additionally, consultation with experienced instrumental pedagogues, as previously mentioned, can be introduced to aid in this process.

The second problematic situation is associated with their purchase, delivery, and maintenance. Finding non-traditional musical instruments in the commercial network can be achieved through Bulgarian music stores, websites for used items, and international trading platforms. In cases where new models of certain instruments are unavailable, old and used ones can be used after thorough disinfection and renovation by the teacher.

Due to the age-specific characteristics of 5-6-year-old children and the difficulty in producing sound with some modifications of non-traditional children's musical instruments, the following models are not recommended for use in kindergarten: custom-made bamboo or reed panpipes with a range of a fifteenth – these instruments require difficult maintenance and storage; suona with mechanical “keys” (similar mechanisms to clarinets) – these mechanisms create complex tone production and sound extraction; mini saxophone with a plastic reed instead of a reed – it produces piercing and squeaky sounds; metal Hulusi with plastic tubes – these produce aggressive resonance when vibrating against the metal casing.

3.1.4. Storage Conditions for Non-Traditional Children's Musical Instruments During Rehearsals for Kindergarten Musicals

The intensity of movement on stage and the age of the children in kindergarten’s PG create conditions that predispose to incidents. For this reason, every removal of a musical instrument from its case considers the location of children, decor, and props, with specific actions performed before, during, and after its use.

It is essential for children to learn to remove instruments without the help of the teacher, fostering a sense of responsibility and respect towards the instrument. The intensity of stage action does not allow for pedestals for musical instruments. Children's musical instruments are placed behind the participants regardless of their roles because they are not used throughout the entire performance. This placement is justified by two factors: the need to prevent children from stepping on them during stage play and to preserve the effect of their appearance if they are not visible to the audience all the time. In my practice with musical-theatrical works involving children's musical instruments, their positions are marked with colored isolation tape on the floor – for as many rehearsals as necessary to “automate” the process of placing and retrieving the instruments.

After use, placing the musical instruments in their designated spots requires bending down or leaning forward. These technical movements are not always suitable at the respective moment of the stage action. In cases of a complicated *mise-en-scène* and impossibility of placing instruments independently on the ground, a “triumphant” gathering of instruments as part of the stage action is practiced – a child with a basket (or multiple children) collects them with a demonstrative placing of the instruments inside.

Often, the same participant plays multiple instruments. Their interchange is done by another child, always behind the actors.

It is recommended to disinfect instruments before and after use, especially those where sound extraction occurs through direct contact with the mouth. Instruments that are played only with hands can be cleaned periodically with the participation of children.

The storage of musical instruments outside rehearsal times is managed by the music educator. Cases or boxes are provided, including for percussion instruments.

3.1.5. Supplying Non-Traditional Children's Musical Instruments Used in Kindergarten Musicals

Introducing non-traditional musical instruments (CMI) into kindergarten musicals requires a larger quantity of all types of instruments, and therefore their supply can be phased. The purchase of CMIs can be planned or spontaneous. Supplying CMIs is carried out through physical store locations and online shops.

3.2. Costumes in Kindergarten Musical – An Important Element of Stage Realization

In most Bulgarian kindergartens, costumes are typically provided just before premieres, with only one rehearsal conducted with them. The reason for this is a characteristic shortage of stage costumes in most Bulgarian kindergartens. National costumes and animal costumes predominantly prevail in them.

The lack of costumes often leads to underestimation of the actors' performances and lowers their self-confidence, affecting their overall stage behavior. Insufficient numbers of costumes are also grounds for criticism directed towards the music teacher.

Kindergarten musicals as a genre demand attractive costumes that are determined by the specific plots. The best solution lies in the personal commitment of the music director in selecting stage costumes.

3.2.1. Costumes - Connecting Element Between Era and Style Through Stage Role

Kindergarten musicals require the use of attractive costumes for all participants and diverse props with a wealth of colors, shades, fabrics, and shapes. Musical-theatrical productions necessitate a combination of costumes with appropriate props that correspond to the era's characteristics.

The history of stage costumes is linked to various civilizations and stages in human development.

For stage attire for 5-6-year-old children, lightweight and stretchy fabrics are used, comfortable for jumping, dancing, running, squatting, and stretching. They must be adapted for quick dressing and undressing due to two situations: unforeseen frequent physical needs of the children and the necessity of changing costumes using various methods on stage due to the lack of technical assistants in the kindergarten.

An important accessory in kindergarten musical costumes are the hats. Together with the shoes, they also reflect the style and era.

3.2.2. Supplying Costumes Used in Kindergarten Musical

Providing stage costumes can be accomplished in three ways - sewing, making from other materials, purchasing, and a combination of these methods.

3.3. Specifics of Stage Sets in Kindergarten Musical

The absence of technical assistants necessitates adapting the stage sets used in kindergarten musicals to the physical dimensions of preschool-aged children. There is a need for lighter and less voluminous sets, different from those found on theatrical and opera stages. Stage sets for kindergarten musicals have reduced density and include attached elements that allow for easy movement on stage.

The connection between individual scenes is created by using characters from the previous scene to conceal the technical actions of actors from the next scene.

3.3.1. Types of Stage Sets in Kindergarten Musical

Stage sets can be divided into two main groups *based on how they are provided and the duration of their stage use*. The first group includes *purchased and adapted sets*, while the second group consists of *permanent and temporary sets*.

The stage space can be framed by placing pots with flowers. This practice arises from the lack of a dedicated stage in most kindergartens.

3.3.2. Supplying Stage Sets and Props for Kindergarten Musicals

Similar to children's musical instruments and costumes, stage sets and props are also provided through several primary sources - personal items, stores, bookstores, online platforms.

CHAPTER FOUR PRESENTATION OF THE MUSICAL “THE LOST MARTENITSA” – SUBJECT OF A PEDAGOGICAL EXPERIMENT IN PRE-SCHOOL GROUPS OF THE KINDERGARTEN

INTRODUCTION

In connection with the working hypothesis outlined in the introduction of the dissertation, a pedagogical experiment was designed and conducted in a kindergarten’s preschool group. It was planned and executed with all attributes of experimental scientific research. The experiment unfolds in three phases using a specific musical-theatrical model – the musical for kindergarten “*The Lost Martenitsa*” (text by Chavdar Aladzhov, song lyrics by Petar Volgin, music by Petar Stupel) and the necessary diagnostic toolkit. The specific approach in this case involves a deliberate attempt by the experiment author to align the content of the educational diagnostics with the content of the experimental research diagnostics.

The research methods partially overlap with pedagogical approaches for educational situations in KG, given the age range of the children involved – dialogue, observation, analysis and synthesis of diagnostic procedure results, conclusions, and digital work using the educational platform software N Vision.

4.1. Experiment Organization

The pedagogical experiment took place in KG 72 “*Endless Fairytale*” – Sofia, with two groups of children: the experimental group – 24 children from the fourth preschool group “*Golden Fish*” and the control group – 25 children from the fourth preschool group “*Little Ones*”.

The diagnostic toolkit includes the following elements: pedagogical observations, picture cards, a parent questionnaire, and a picture test.

ORGANIZATION OF THE EXPERIMENT	
FIRST PHASE: Assessing Children's Readiness to Participate in the Kindergarten Musical	02.01. - 19.01.2018
1. Working with the musical 'The Lost Martenitsa' throughout the entire period (for the experimental group)	
2. Working with songs from the musical "The Disappeared Martenitsa" throughout the period (for the control group)	
3. Pedagogical assessment on card game - 19.01.2018 (for experimental and control groups)	
SECOND PHASE: Assessing children's motivation for musical work and prospects for future musical engagements	22.01. - 09.02.2018
1. Working with the musical 'The Lost Martenitsa' throughout the entire period (for the experimental group)	
2. Working with songs from the musical "The Disappeared Martenitsa" throughout the period (for the control group)	
3. Pedagogical assessment based on a survey - 09.02.2018 (for experimental and control groups)	
THIRD PHASE: Determining the development of musical abilities and acquisition of educational content in music	12.02. - 01.03.2018
1. Working with the musical 'The Lost Martenitsa' throughout the entire period	
2. Working with songs from the musical "The Disappeared Martenitsa" throughout the period (for the control group)	
3. Pictorial test on a topic from the music curriculum for Group III in two situations - 27.02.2018 (for the experimental group)	
4. Pictorial test on a topic from the music curriculum for Group III in two situations - 27.02.2018 (for the control group)	
5. Pictorial test on a topic from the music curriculum for Group IV in two situations - 28.02.2018 (for the experimental group)	
6. Pictorial test on a topic from the music curriculum for Group IV in two situations - 28.02.2018 (for the control group)	
7. Presentation of the musical "The Lost Martenitsa" - 01.03.2018 (for the experimental group)	
8. Presentation of songs from the musical "The Lost Martenitsa" - 01.03.2018 (for the control group)	

4.2. PHASES OF THE EXPERIMENT

4.2.1. Phase One of the Experiment – Content and Results

Phase one of the experiment begins concurrently with the start of work on the musical for kindergarten “*The Lost Martenitsa*” and concludes with an instructional session involving a discussion on Chavdar Aladzhov's libretto and a diagnostic procedure called “game with cards”. This phase aims to assess the children's readiness to engage with the musical, which is crucial for the successful implementation of the next two phases of the experiment.

The discussion follows the familiar format used in Bulgarian Language and Literature (BLL) classes for children, consisting of an introduction, main discussion, and conclusion. During this, their knowledge related to the plot is assessed, lessons are identified, and their personal expressions regarding the plot events are encouraged, particularly towards the resolution. The children's readiness to work with the musical is gauged through picture cards across four parameters: attention and understanding of the task, memory and musical memory, emotional engagement with the plot events, and personal stance and its reflection.

EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUP - SCORING AFTER THE "READINESS TO PARTICIPATE" TEST												EG	CG
QUESTION 1	QUESTION 2	QUESTION 3	QUESTION 4	QUESTION 5	QUESTION 6	QUESTION 1	QUESTION 2	QUESTION 3	QUESTION 4	QUESTION 5	QUESTION 6	SCORES	SCORES
EG Kid 1	●	EG Kid 1	●	EG Kid 1	●	EG Kid 1	●	EG Kid 1	●	EG Kid 1	●	K.1-6-sc.	K.1-2-sc.
EG Kid 2	●	EG Kid 2	●	EG Kid 2	●	EG Kid 2	●	EG Kid 2	●	EG Kid 2	●	K.2-6-sc.	K.2-6-sc.
EG Kid 3	●	EG Kid 3	●	EG Kid 3	●	EG Kid 3	●	EG Kid 3	●	EG Kid 3	●	K.3-6-sc.	K.3-6-sc.
EG Kid 4	●	EG Kid 4	●	EG Kid 4	●	EG Kid 4	●	EG Kid 4	●	EG Kid 4	●	K.4-6-sc.	K.4-2-sc.
EG Kid 5	●	EG Kid 5	●	EG Kid 5	●	EG Kid 5	●	EG Kid 5	●	EG Kid 5	●	K.5-3-sc.	K.5-6-sc.
EG Kid 6	●	EG Kid 6	●	EG Kid 6	●	EG Kid 6	●	EG Kid 6	●	EG Kid 6	●	K.6-6-sc.	K.6-4-sc.
EG Kid 7	●	EG Kid 7	●	EG Kid 7	●	EG Kid 7	●	EG Kid 7	●	EG Kid 7	●	K.7-6-sc.	K.7-6-sc.
EG Kid 8	●	EG Kid 8	●	EG Kid 8	●	EG Kid 8	●	EG Kid 8	●	EG Kid 8	●	K.8-6-sc.	K.8-1-sc.
EG Kid 9	●	EG Kid 9	●	EG Kid 9	●	EG Kid 9	●	EG Kid 9	●	EG Kid 9	●	K.9-6-sc.	K.9-6-sc.
EG Kid 10	●	EG Kid 10	●	EG Kid 10	●	EG Kid 10	●	EG Kid 10	●	EG Kid 10	●	K.10-5sc.	K.10-6sc.
EG Kid 11	●	EG Kid 11	●	EG Kid 11	●	EG Kid 11	●	EG Kid 11	●	EG Kid 11	●	K.11-2sc.	K.11-5sc.
EG Kid 12	●	EG Kid 12	●	EG Kid 12	●	EG Kid 12	●	EG Kid 12	●	EG Kid 12	●	K.12-6sc.	K.11-5sc.
EG Kid 13	●	EG Kid 13	●	EG Kid 13	●	EG Kid 13	●	EG Kid 13	●	EG Kid 13	●	K.13-6sc.	K.11-5sc.
EG Kid 14	●	EG Kid 14	●	EG Kid 14	●	EG Kid 14	●	EG Kid 14	●	EG Kid 14	●	K.14-6sc.	K.11-5sc.
EG Kid 15	●	EG Kid 15	●	EG Kid 15	●	EG Kid 15	●	EG Kid 15	●	EG Kid 15	●	K.15-6sc.	K.11-5sc.
EG Kid 16	●	EG Kid 16	●	EG Kid 16	●	EG Kid 16	●	EG Kid 16	●	EG Kid 16	●	K.16-6sc.	K.11-5sc.
EG Kid 17	●	EG Kid 17	●	EG Kid 17	●	EG Kid 17	●	EG Kid 17	●	EG Kid 17	●	K.17-6sc.	K.11-5sc.
EG Kid 18	●	EG Kid 18	●	EG Kid 18	●	EG Kid 18	●	EG Kid 18	●	EG Kid 18	●	K.18-6sc.	K.11-5sc.
EG Kid 19	●	EG Kid 19	●	EG Kid 19	●	EG Kid 19	●	EG Kid 19	●	EG Kid 19	●	K.19-3sc.	K.11-5sc.
EG Kid 20	●	EG Kid 20	●	EG Kid 20	●	EG Kid 20	●	EG Kid 20	●	EG Kid 20	●	K.20-6sc.	K.11-5sc.
EG Kid 21	●	EG Kid 21	●	EG Kid 21	●	EG Kid 21	●	EG Kid 21	●	EG Kid 21	●	K.21-6sc.	K.11-5sc.
EG Kid 22	●	EG Kid 22	●	EG Kid 22	●	EG Kid 22	●	EG Kid 22	●	EG Kid 22	●	K.22-6sc.	K.11-5sc.
EG Kid 23	●	EG Kid 23	●	EG Kid 23	●	EG Kid 23	●	EG Kid 23	●	EG Kid 23	●	K.23-6sc.	K.11-5sc.
EG Kid 24	●	EG Kid 24	●	EG Kid 24	●	EG Kid 24	●	EG Kid 24	●	EG Kid 24	●	K.24-6sc.	K.11-5sc.
						CG Kid 25	●	CG Kid 25	●	CG Kid 25	●	133 sc.	K.11-5sc.
													K.11-5sc.

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP		EXPERIMENTAL GROUP - RESULTS ON QUESTIONS	CONTROL GROUP - RESULTS ON QUESTIONS
ATTENTION AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE ASSIGNED TASK		ATTENTION AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE ASSIGNED TASK		First question: Point for 21 out of 24 children	First question: Point for 18 out of 25 children
The criterion is covered by 21 children		The criterion is covered by 18 children		Second question: Point for 20 out of 24 children	Second question: Point for 19 out of 25 children
MEMORY AND MUSICAL MEMORY		MEMORY AND MUSICAL MEMORY		Third question: Point for 24 out of 24 children	Third question: Point for 25 out of 25 children
MEMORY	MUSICAL MEMORY	MEMORY	MUSICAL MEMORY	Fourth question: Point for 23 out of 24 children	Fourth question: Point for 21 out of 25 children
The criterion is covered by 19 children	The criterion is covered by 23 children	The criterion is covered by 19 children	The criterion is covered by 17 children	Fifth question: Point for 23 out of 24 children	Fifth question: Point for 17 out of 25 children
EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PLOT EVENTS		EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PLOT EVENTS		Sixth question: Point for 22 out of 24 children	Sixth question: Point for 15 out of 25 children
The criterion is covered by 24 children (Only one child receives one point instead of two, as the criterion is determined by two questions)		The criterion is covered by 25 children Six children receiving one point instead of two, as the criterion is determined by two questions)		TOTAL RESULTS OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	TOTAL RESULTS OF THE CONTROL GROUP
PERSONAL POSITION AND REFLECTION OF THE POSITION		PERSONAL POSITION AND REFLECTION OF THE POSITION		VBAL: 0 kids	VBAL: 3 kids
The criterion is covered by 22 children		The criterion is covered by 15 children		BAL: 3 kids	BAL: 4 kids
				AL: 0 kids	AL: 1 child
				AAL: 1 child	AAL: 3 kids
				MAAL: 20 kids	MAAL: 14 kids

The overall conclusion from this stage of the pedagogical experiment is that working with a musical in a kindergarten’s PG is feasible even with the busy schedule typical of kindergartens. This is illustrated through the interpretation of the results from the “Readiness to Participate” test, which indicates that children in the experimental group have a better understanding of the sequence of plot events, express clearer personal attitudes towards the characters' traits, remember songs and their lyrics better, and exhibit higher emotional reactions. This finding is crucial for the subsequent phases of the pedagogical experiment.

4.2.2. Phase Two of the Experiment – Content and Results

Phase two of the experiment takes place at the end of the main stage of working with the musical for kindergarten, “*The Lost Martenitsa*”. Parents are provided with a questionnaire to assess whether there has been an increased motivation among the children to engage with musical activities and what the prospects are for their future involvement with music:

Results from the second phase of the experiment:

The comparative analysis indicates that the impact of rehearsals on children's motivation for music activities is significantly higher in the experimental group.

4.2.3. Third Phase of the Experiment – Content and Results

The third phase of the experiment aims to enhance the musical abilities of children in the kindergarten's PG and to facilitate a more quality assimilation of the curriculum content in music education. The study is conducted in two distinct situations. The first situation is divided into two parts: educational content from a selected scenario for the third group in the “Wonderful World” series and an assessment of the acquired knowledge. The second educational situation is similarly divided into two parts: educational content from a selected scenario for the fourth group in the “Wonderful World” series and an assessment of the acquired knowledge. **The theme of the scenario for the third group is “Autumn”**. The educational content is presented using the educational platform software N Vision. The assessment of acquired knowledge is conducted through 10 questions. The same educational software, known to both groups of children, is used.

Results from the first situation / third phase of the experiment (educational content for the third group):

EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUP																									EXPERIMENTAL GROUP			CONTROL GROUP			
Kid	K.1	K.2	K.3	K.4	K.5	K.6	K.7	K.8	K.9	K.10	K.11	K.12	K.13	K.14	K.15	K.16	K.17	K.18	K.19	K.20	K.21	K.22	K.23	K.24	K.25	K.1-14	K.11-15	K.21-15	K.1-15	K.11-15	K.21-15
Q-n.1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	K.1-14	K.11-15	K.21-15	K.1-15	K.11-15	K.21-15
Q-n.2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	K.2-15	K.12-15	K.22-15	K.2-15	K.12-7	K.22-14
Q-n.3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	K.3-15	K.13-15	K.23-15	K.3-15	K.13-15	K.23-14
Q-n.4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	K.4-15	K.14-15	K.24-15	K.4-11	K.14-15	K.24-10
Q-n.5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	K.5-15	K.15-15		K.5-13	K.15-15	K.25-12
Q-n.6	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	K.6-13	K.16-15	Total:	K.6-15	K.16-13	
Q-n.7	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	K.7-15	K.17-15	354	K.7-14	K.17-11	Total:
Q-n.8	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	K.8-15	K.18-12		K.8-15	K.18-15	340
Q-n.9	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	K.9-15	K.19-15		K.9-15	K.19-13	
Q-n.10	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	K.10-15	K.20-15		K.10-15	K.20-13	
Q-n.1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	EG VERY BELOW AVERAGE LEVEL			0 kids	more than 1	
Q-n.2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	EG BELOW AVERAGE LEVEL			0 kids	more than 4	
Q-n.3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	EG AVERAGE LEVEL			0 kids	more than 7	
Q-n.4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	EG ABOVE AVERAGE LEVEL			1 child	more than 10	
Q-n.5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	EG MUCH ABOVE AVERAGE LEVEL			23 kids	more than 13	
Q-n.6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	KG VERY BELOW AVERAGE LEVEL			0 kids	more than 1	
Q-n.7	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	KG BELOW AVERAGE LEVEL			0 kids	more than 4	
Q-n.8	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	KG AVERAGE LEVEL			1 child	more than 7	
Q-n.9	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	KG ABOVE AVERAGE LEVEL			4 kids	more than 10	
Q-n.10	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	KG MUCH ABOVE AVERAGE LEVEL			20 kids	more than 13	

The theme of the scenario for the fourth group in the music education curriculum is “Swan Lake Station” from the “Wonderful World” series. The educational content and assessment of acquired knowledge (10 questions) are implemented using the educational platform software N Vision.

Results from the second situation / third phase of the experiment (educational content for the fourth group):

EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUP																									EXPERIMENTAL GROUP			CONTROL GROUP			
Kid	K.1	K.2	K.3	K.4	K.5	K.6	K.7	K.8	K.9	K.10	K.11	K.12	K.13	K.14	K.15	K.16	K.17	K.18	K.19	K.20	K.21	K.22	K.23	K.24	K.25	K.1-14	K.11-15	K.21-15	K.1-15	K.11-15	K.21-15
Q-n.1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	K.1-14	K.11-15	K.21-15	K.1-15	K.11-15	K.21-15
Q-n.2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	K.2-15	K.12-15	K.22-15	K.2-14	K.12-6	K.22-14
Q-n.3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	K.3-15	K.13-15	K.23-15	K.3-14	K.13-15	K.23-14
Q-n.4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	K.4-15	K.14-15	K.24-15	K.4-12	K.14-15	K.24-13
Q-n.5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	K.5-15	K.15-15		K.5-14	K.15-15	K.25-12
Q-n.6	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	K.6-14	K.16-15	Total:	K.6-15	K.16-13	
Q-n.7	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	K.7-15	K.17-15	354	K.7-14	K.17-11	Total:
Q-n.8	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	K.8-15	K.18-11		K.8-14	K.18-15	339
Q-n.9	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	K.9-15	K.19-15		K.9-15	K.19-12	
Q-n.10	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	K.10-15	K.20-15		K.10-15	K.20-13	
Q-n.1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	EG VERY BELOW AVERAGE LEVEL			0 kids	more than 1	
Q-n.2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	EG BELOW AVERAGE LEVEL			0 kids	more than 4	
Q-n.3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	EG AVERAGE LEVEL			0 kids	more than 7	
Q-n.4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	EG ABOVE AVERAGE LEVEL			1 child	more than 10	
Q-n.5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	EG MUCH ABOVE AVERAGE LEVEL			23 kids	more than 13	
Q-n.6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	KG VERY BELOW AVERAGE LEVEL			0 kids	more than 1	
Q-n.7	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	KG BELOW AVERAGE LEVEL			1 child	more than 4	
Q-n.8	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	KG AVERAGE LEVEL			0 kids	more than 7	
Q-n.9	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	KG ABOVE AVERAGE LEVEL			4 kids	more than 10	
Q-n.10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	KG MUCH ABOVE AVERAGE LEVEL			20 kids	more than 13	

Comparing the results of the diagnostic procedures for the third and fourth groups reveals striking similarities. The experimental group received the same score of 354 points for the educational content of both the third and fourth groups. In contrast, the control group's score decreased by one point, from 340 to 339. Individualized analysis of each child's results indicates that the same children made errors in questions regarding both the third and fourth groups. Furthermore, two children in the control group who initially scored lower in questions related to the third group showed improved results in questions related to the fourth group.

Based on these observations and the results presented in tabular form, the following **conclusions** are drawn: the experimental group demonstrates greater readiness to work with kindergarten musicals, as evidenced by their discussion on plot development, the lyrics of the songs from the musical “*The Lost Martenitsa*”, their attitudes towards character types, and their individual characteristics. The experimental group shows stronger motivation for music activities, driven by rehearsals of “*The Lost Martenitsa*” musical and a desire for future musical engagements. Additionally, the experimental group exhibits higher results in terms of mastering music curriculum content for kindergarten’s PG and successfully applying foundational knowledge aimed at digital competencies.

The summarized results at the end of the pedagogical experiment show an increase in knowledge and skills across all educational areas due to the integrative connection with them, present in the content of the music questions; following the presented conclusions, I would like to share some personal impressions of the children's work during the experiment and recommendations to facilitate working with N Vision for children in the preparatory group. The complete list is presented in the dissertation.

4.2.4. Summary Observations and Findings from the Pedagogical Experiment

This subchapter includes observations and findings made during the three diagnostic procedures – card game, survey, picture test. The complete list is available in the dissertation.

4.2.5. Overall Results from the Pedagogical Experiment

• Overall Results for the Experimental Group

Results from the first phase of the experiment show 133 points (out of a maximum of 144); from the second phase – 334 stars, and from the third phase (total of diagnostic procedures on educational content for the third and fourth groups) – 708 points. Based on these data, a cumulative value of 1175 units is calculated for the experimental group “*Golden Fish*”.

• Overall Results for the Control Group

Results from the first phase of the experiment show 114 points (out of a maximum of 150); from the second phase – 214 stars, and from the third phase (total of diagnostic procedures on educational content for the third and fourth groups) – 679 points. Based on these data, a cumulative value of 1007 units is calculated for the control group “*Little Ones*”.

• Conclusion

From the overall results of the two groups participating in the pedagogical experiment, it is evident that the achievement statistics for the experimental group show 168 units more than those recorded for the control group. The percentage difference between the two results is 14.30% higher for the experimental group. The synthesis of these data is presented in the following tabular representation:

GENERAL RESULTS OF THE EXPERIMENT		
	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	CONTROL GROUP
FIRST PHASE	133 points	114 points
SECOND PHASE	334 stars	214 stars
THIRD PHASE	708 ladybugs	679 ladybugs
	Total: 1175 units	Total: 1007 units
168 units - 14.30% more for the experimental group		

Overall, the results of the experiment demonstrate that the experimental group “*Golden Fish*” has achieved dominant success across each phase of the pedagogical experiment as well as in total units. These specific values substantiate the working hypothesis of the dissertation.

4.3. Methodological Model for Working with Musicals in Kindergarten

The conducted pedagogical experiment, along with my consolidated observations from a decade of experience with children's musicals, provides a basis for developing a **methodological model for working with musicals in kindergarten**. This model is aimed at preschool educators who are interested in similar repertoire but lack specialized training in working with it.

METODOLOGICAL MODEL FOR WORKING WITH KINDERGARTEN MUSICALS	
1	Study of Musical-Theatrical Literary Pieces
2	Selection of a Piece - Transforming it into a Kindergarten Musical
3	Conducting Discussions on the Content
4	Assigning Roles
5	Preparing Informed Consent and Holding a Parent Meeting
6	Working on Components of the Mise-en-scène
	* Entering and Exiting the Apron Stage
	* Exchanging microphones, crowns, rearranging objects
	* Changing the entire stage decor and costumes during the performance
7	Working with the text "on the move"
8	Working with the text "on the table"
9	Working with the songs "on the table"
10	Working with the songs "on the move"
11	Involvement of children playing musical instruments
12	Conducting General rehearsals and recording them
13	Rehearsing different types of bows and stage exits
14	Creating programs and posters

The presented procedural framework in the pedagogical experiment is integrated into the methodological model, which comprises two main components: educator preparation and preparation of children and their engagement.

1. Educator Preparation: The educator needs to possess competence regarding the historical development of the musical genre, including publications, film, and theatrical stage adaptations. Knowledge of the crystallization of children's musicals as a genre and its prevalence on the Bulgarian stage is essential.

2. Preparation of Children and Their Engagement: Accumulating auditory impressions through appropriate music and activities forms the basis for developing children's musical abilities and enriching their auditory-musical perceptions. Their preparation for encountering children's musicals depends on the professional skill and

competence of their educator. The essence of the work involves introducing children to the new musical-theatrical genre using familiar approaches. All activities related to preparing for musicals in kindergarten are selected and carried out to evoke positive emotional responses from the children. These reactions are among the most significant indicators guiding the musical educator, driven by their higher goal of fostering a love for musical arts.

CONCLUSION

My interest and creative pursuits in the field of children's musicals and their potential implementation in preparatory groups of kindergartens explain the choice of the dissertation topic, “*Specifics of Working with Children's Musical in Pre-school Groups of Kindergartens*”.

My personal pedagogical experience allows for the systematic formulation of conclusions and findings that can support fellow educators in successfully implementing musicals in kindergartens with 5-6-year-old children.

The conclusion of the dissertation contains a formulation of its goals and objectives, as well as diagnostic procedures and tools used in the experimental pedagogical research. Conclusions drawn from the analysis of the experiment are also included.

CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE DISSERTATION

The contributions in the dissertation can be summarized as follows:

- Tracing the historical experience with the genre of musicals, including children's musicals, which are examined for the first time from a new perspective – as a basis for the emergence of a new genre through possible transformations.
- Introduction of new concepts such as “*kindergarten musical*”, “*author's musical fairy tale*” and “*digital audio fairy tale*” with their terminological characteristics and specific content.
- Introduction of a methodological model for working with musicals in kindergartens for the first time in pedagogical practice.
- In connection with the experimental work and the development of the methodological model, the first classification of non-traditional children's musical instruments is presented.
- The scientific-research work has a practical-applied message, which envisages the final stage of publishing a “*Methodological Guide for Working with Children's Musical with Preschool Children in Kindergartens*”.

APPENDIX I

TITLES OF MUSICALS AND VARIOUS CATEGORIZATIONS AND OF CHILDREN'S MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

This appendix contains: an expanded list of titles of famous musicals, specialists associated with the development of musicals, links, and various categorizations of children's musical instruments.

APPENDIX II

This appendix includes: classification of non-traditional children's musical instruments as well as photographic material of children's musical instruments and programs from musicals for kindergartens used by me.

APPENDIX III

This appendix contains an author's script of a musical for kindergarten, written in 2020 as an original musical fairy tale. Included are: the script, piano excerpts of the songs and their lyrics, and an excerpt of orchestration from one of the songs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The bibliography contains methodological literature used in the preparation of the dissertation. Websites and electronic platforms are also included.