

## DEVELOPING INSTRUMENTALISTS' INTERPRETIVE FREEDOM THROUGH PEDAGOGICAL SUPPORT IN THEIR PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

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**SUMMARY.** The relevance of the study is determined by the need to develop creative thinking and an individual performance style in view of the dynamics of the academic musical space. The aim of the study is to identify effective pedagogical means of developing instrumentalists' interpretive freedom in the course of their professional musical studies. The research employed the methods of a pedagogical experiment, expert evaluation, survey, and comparative analysis. Pedagogical approaches that contribute to the development of interpretive freedom were identified, in particular, performance analysis, improvisational practices, dialogic forms of learning, problem-based creative tasks, master classes, analysis of performance versions, and reflection. The effectiveness of an innovative model of the interpretive freedom development, which systematically takes into account the interaction of technical, pedagogical, and individual factors, was substantiated. The study showed that the initial level of interpretive freedom in the control group (CG) and

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experimental group (EG) was similar. After 12 months of applying pedagogical strategies, the EG increased interpretive freedom by 34%, while the CG showed minor changes. Pedagogical support is a key factor in the development of interpretative freedom, especially in the context of active concert and performance practice, participation in performance competitions, forums, festivals, and interdisciplinary creative platforms.

**Keywords:** musical performance; interpretation of a musical work; performing interpretation; variational potential of a musical work; performing practice; education of a student instrumentalist

## 1. Introduction

The paradigm of art education is increasingly focused on the formation of the performer's creative autonomy, which includes not only technical perfection, but also the ability to independent interpretive thinking. The task of developing instrumentalists' interpretive freedom is becoming particularly relevant in view of rapid transformation of the cultural space and the growing number of new compositional strategies. The performers' interpretive freedom is a key manifestation of their creative individuality, which is realized in the ability to independently artistically comprehend a musical work and its performing interpretation. Such freedom is based on the free and conscious use of performing technique, an analytical approach to musical material, the ability to express the author's idea through the prism of personal vision and emotional experience, as well as the ability to convey it to the listening audience. Pedagogical support is an important factor in this process, which should be based on the principles of interaction, openness to experiment and the development of an individual vision of a musical work.<sup>6</sup>

An important resource for the development of interpretative freedom is the students' participation in modern concert festival projects, performance competitions, and multidisciplinary academic and creative platforms. Several powerful initiatives of this direction stand out among the numerous national and international projects that have defined the musical profile of Ukraine over the past ten years in the educational and artistic environment. They include such projects as Modern Music Workshop, Kyiv Flute Days, Dynasty (at the Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Academy of Music), the Educational Laboratory of Performing Arts (at the Faculty of Musical Art and Choreography

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<sup>6</sup> Fujimoto, Marie, Uesaka, Yuri. "Autonomous or Controlled Interpreters? A Model of Werktreue Internalization for Classical Musicians." In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15, 2024, article 1401278. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1401278>

of the Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University <sup>7</sup>. Each of these projects represents an original multi-genre panorama of events that are crucial in the preparation of young instrumentalists and are an effective mechanism for acquiring concert practice, experience, and knowledge.

The complex of activities within the scope of these bright creative projects, which are unique in genre, provides live contact with contemporary composers' work, stimulates reflection on performance strategies and contributes to the integration of young musicians into the professional environment. Participation in such projects opens up new opportunities for the development of interpretative flexibility and critical thinking about one's own performance position.<sup>8</sup>

Theoretical understanding of the concept of interpretive freedom requires an interdisciplinary approach that combines musicological, psychological, pedagogical and cultural approaches. Interpretive freedom is not arbitrariness or

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<sup>7</sup> The concert academic and creative project Modern Music Workshop was created in 2012 as an artistic platform for professional communication and performing practice of young musicians in learning the composer's achievements of modern art. In addition to concert events and master classes, the performing creative component of the project includes a competition, a research-to-practice conference, author's lectures and workshops. The main thematic areas of the project's work include anniversary and memorable musical dates of the year, concert performances and premiere demonstrations of works of the musical avant-garde, understanding of musical culture in modern performing discourse. The International Flute Music Festival — Kyiv Flute Days — founded in 2021 is another influential and recognized platform for the realization of creative ideas of young musicians and experienced professionals — performers, teachers, researchers, composers, musicologists from Ukraine and other countries. In addition to the performance component (concerts, competition of young performers), the festival is necessarily complemented by academic events (conferences, academic round tables). Every year, the festival programmes were enriched by premiere performances of new works by Ukrainian composers. The International Festival — Dynasty — was founded in 2012. Its main goal is to preserve the traditions of inheritance in musical education and piano performance. The main idea of the festival is to involve the widest range of participants (schoolchildren, students, their teachers, and experienced professionals) in co-creation. The second task of the festival is to popularize and promote the studies of Ukrainian composers. An important segment of the festival is the performance competition Uke-Piano, which was integrated in 2021. In 2025, the competition gathered more than 150 participants in 10 nominations. The project The Art of Playing with an Orchestra, starting in 2025, also became part of Uke-Piano. The activities of the Educational Laboratory of Performing Arts are aimed at training highly professional specialists who have the skills of concert-performing, organizational, and managerial activities in the field of musical and performing arts. The laboratory is a base for concert performing practice and is characterized by holding concert events with the students' participation, in particular weekly Musical Interludes, which have a diverse thematic colour and creative collaboration with other types of art (vocal, choreographic, acting), creative projects in museums, libraries, and concert locations of the city.

<sup>8</sup> Johansson, Mats. "Improvisation in Traditional Music: Teaching Practices and Principles." In *Music Education Research*, 24(1), 2021, pp. 41–69.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2021.2007229>

a departure from the author's will. On the contrary, it is based on a deep understanding of the text, style, context and allows the performer to embody his or her own artistic concept in a responsible musical dialogue. Therefore, pedagogical support should provide not only knowledge and skills, but also conditions for the development of interpretive independence - through dialogue, analysis, and joint discussion. In their study, Besada et al. concluded that musical creativity is not only the result of momentary inspiration, but also a complex process that requires purposeful management of time and attention.<sup>9</sup> The article emphasizes the importance of an interdisciplinary approach that combines musicology, the psychology of creativity, and cognitive science for a deeper understanding of the creative process.

The problem of developing instrumentalists' interpretive freedom in professional training is complex. It can be solved only with thorough pedagogical support, which takes into account not only students' technical and intellectual development, but also their personal, emotional, and creative potential. The relevance of the conducted research is considered in this context, which is aimed at identifying effective pedagogical means of developing interpretive freedom of young performers in the modern artistic space. The aim of the research was to find effective methods of pedagogical influence that ensure the development of creative interpretive freedom in future instrumentalists during their professional training. Research objectives:

1. Determine the initial level of interpretive freedom of student instrumentalists by conducting initial listening and surveying in order to identify the features of their interpretive thinking and emotional expressiveness.
2. Create and implement a pedagogical support system focused on the development of interpretive freedom, which includes the stages of repertoire selection and performance analysis; improvisational practices, dialogic forms of learning, problem-based creative tasks, master classes, and performances in various concert and competition events, analysis of performance versions, reflection in the educational process of the EG.
3. Assess changes in the level of interpretive freedom in the CG and EG after the application of the experimental methods by expert listening to performances and analysing self-assessment questionnaires.
4. Compare the results of the CG and EG to identify the effectiveness of pedagogical support as a means of forming interpretive freedom.

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<sup>9</sup> Besada, Jose L., Barthel-Calvet, Anne-Sylvie, Pagán Cánovas, Cristobal. "Time Allocation to Musical Creativity: A Conceptual Integration and Material Grounding in Lannis Xenakis' Psappha." In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 2021, Article 611316.  
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.611316>

## 2. Literature Review

Expressive performance is not an exclusively intuitive or innate process but can be purposefully shaped through pedagogical methods that take into account conscious reflection, motivational factors, and contextual understanding of a musical work. Prokopchuk reached similar conclusions in his study.<sup>10</sup> The author pointed out the importance of integrating interdisciplinary approaches and developing students' creative competencies in the field of music and noted that modern challenges place new demands on the format of learning, in particular the need to adapt educational programmes to international standards and technological changes. Zhen and Leung, emphasized the need to update pedagogical approaches.<sup>11</sup> Bonastre and Timmers also focused on the influence of educational and cultural context on music pedagogy and the need to adapt teaching methods to a specific environment.<sup>12</sup> The authors found that, for example, British students tend to be more constructivist in their approach, while Spanish students rely more on teacher's directive instructions.

Antonini Philippe et al. studied the phenomenon of "flow" in the context of musical performance, comparing the experiences of professional musicians and students.<sup>13</sup> The results showed that the state of flow is associated with deep concentration, a sense of control, loss of self-consciousness, and a sense of enjoyment of the process. Similarly, Loepthien and Leipold, showed that the experience of flow positively correlates with subjective well-being, emphasizing the importance of this psychological state for the musicians' emotional health.<sup>14</sup> The latest technologies in the field of musical performance open up new opportunities for expanding the creative potential of musicians, in particular through the use of virtual reality (VR), artificial intelligence (AI),

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<sup>10</sup> Prokopchuk, Victoria I. "Musical and Pedagogical Education in the Context of Globalization and Civilizational Changes." In *Collection of Scientific Papers ΛΟΓΟΣ*, 2020, pp. 107-109. <https://doi.org/10.36074/13.03.2020.v2.37>

<sup>11</sup> Zhen, Yuan, Leung, Bo-Wah. "Cultivating Creative Abilities of Student Musicians in Piano Performance: A Multiple-Case Study in China." In *Research Studies in Music Education*, 23(5), 2021, pp. 594–608. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2021.1977787>

<sup>12</sup> Bonastre, Carolina, Timmers, Renee. "Comparison of Beliefs about Teaching and Learning of Emotional Expression in Music Performance between Spanish and English HE Students of Music." In *Psychology of Music*, 49(1), 2021, pp. 108–123. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735619842366>

<sup>13</sup> Antonini Philippe, Roberta, Kosirnik, Celine, Ortuño, Esther, Biasutti, Michele. "Flow and Music Performance: Professional Musicians and Music Students' Views." In *Psychology of Music*, 50(4), 2021, pp. 1023–1038. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03057356211030987>

<sup>14</sup> Loepthien, Tim, Leipold, Bernhard. "Flow in Music Performance and Music-Listening: Differences in Intensity, Predictors, and the Relationship between Flow and Subjective Well-Being." In *Psychology of Music*, 50(1), 2021, pp. 111–126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735620982056>

and digital tools for analysing and improving performance skills. Bylica and Bauman also considered the challenges faced by music education in crisis situations, in particular the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>15</sup> The authors described various innovative strategies and methods that help to maintain student motivation and ensure the quality of music education in a distance format.

Ppali et al. studied the potential of VR to support creative musical practice.<sup>16</sup> The results showed that VR technologies can expand the capabilities of musicians, stimulate creativity, and help in the development of new musical ideas, creating an innovative environment for experiments. Bontempi et al. and Wei et al. reached similar conclusions.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Lerch et al. emphasized that an integrated approach allows for more accurate modelling, evaluation and reproduction of performance, which contributes to the development of both theoretical and practical aspects of music pedagogy and technology.<sup>18</sup> Travasso came to a similar conclusion about the performer's transformation from a traditional interpreter to a co-creator who actively uses digital technologies and interactive media to expand the possibilities of musical expression.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, Kachur et al. emphasized that digital platforms and the latest technologies in the field of musical performance open up new opportunities for the development of creative, pedagogical and methodological

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<sup>15</sup> Bylica, Kelly, Bauman, Betty. "Pedagogical Activity in Crisis Conditions: Pedagogical Creativity in Music Education." In *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 231, 2022, pp. 7–24. <https://doi.org/10.5406/21627223.231.01>

<sup>16</sup> Ppali, Sophia, Lalioti, Vali, Branch, Boyd, Ang, Chee S., Thomas, Andrew J., Wohl, Bea S., & Covaci, Alexandra. "Keep the VRhythm Going: A Musician-Centred Study Investigating How Virtual Reality Can Support Creative Musical Practice." In: *Proceedings of the 2022 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '22)*, Association for Computing Machinery, article 220, 2022, pp. 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3491102.3501922>

<sup>17</sup> Bontempi, Pierluigi, Canazza, Sergio, Carnovalini, Filippo, Rodà, Antonio "Research in Computational Expressive Music Performance and Popular Music Production: A Potential Application Area?" In *Multimodal Technologies and Interaction*, 7(2), 2023, 15. <https://doi.org/10.3390/mti7020015>; Wei, Jing, Karuppiiah, Marimuthu, Pratik, A. "Music Education and Teaching in College Based on Artificial Intelligence Methods." In *Computers and Electrical Engineering*, 100, 2022, article 107851. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compeleceng.2022.107851>

<sup>18</sup> Lerch, Alexander, Arthur, Claire, Pati, Ashis, Gururani, Siddharth. "An Interdisciplinary Review of Music Performance Analysis." In *Transactions of the International Society for Music Information Retrieval*, 3(1), 2020, pp. 221–245. <https://doi.org/10.5334/tismir.53>

<sup>19</sup> Travasso, Rui. "Is the New Media Art Capable to Shape the Instrumentalist's Role? – From Interpreter to (Co)Creator." In *Rotura – Revista De Comunicação, Cultura E Artes*, 5(1), 2025, pp. 153-159. <https://doi.org/10.34623/6nk2-1v87>

competencies of future music teachers, and also contribute to the development of independence and creativity in teaching.<sup>20</sup>

In his study, Sternberg, concluded that musical intelligence is a key factor in the formation of musicians and should be more widely recognized in the psychology of music.<sup>21</sup> Navarro and Chacón-López reached similar conclusions in their study.<sup>22</sup> The authors found that improvisation stimulates various aspects of creativity, including the ability to think original, flexibility in approaches to solving problems, and the speed of generating new ideas. Meisner et al. reached similar conclusions.<sup>23</sup> The authors found that young musicians often have difficulty balancing between sheet music accuracy and personal musical expression.

Research into motivation and practice in teaching musical performance is becoming increasingly relevant in the context of modern music pedagogy. Oliveira et al. emphasized that student motivation is not simply a homogeneous phenomenon, but consists of various internal and external factors, which interact and influence the effectiveness of learning.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, How et al. emphasized the diversity of approaches and research methods, as well as the need for a deeper understanding of the processes of self-learning and motivation of musicians.<sup>25</sup>

Recent studies confirm that expressiveness in musical performance is formed not only intuitively, but also under the influence of purposeful pedagogical strategies that take into account cognitive, emotional, and contextual factors. The development of performer's reflection, motivation, autonomy, as well as consideration of the cultural environment and the influence of psychological state are important.

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<sup>20</sup> Kachur, Myroslava M., Dykun, Iryna A., Zhishkovych, Myroslava A., Stepanova, Liudmyla P., Synevych, Inna S. "Digital Educational Space in the Professional Training of Music Teachers." In *Revista de la Universidad del Zulia*, 12(Extra 35), 2021, pp. 160–180. <http://dx.doi.org/10.46925/rdluz.35.10>

<sup>21</sup> Sternberg, Ribert J. "Toward a Theory of Musical Intelligence." In *Psychology of Music*, 49(6), 2020, pp. 1775–1785. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305734120963765>

<sup>22</sup> Navarro Ramón, Laura, Chacón-López, Helena. "The Impact of Musical Improvisation on Children's Creative Thinking." In *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 40, 2021, 100839. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2021.100839>

<sup>23</sup> Meisner, Henrique, Timmers, Renee, Pitts, Stephanie E. "'Just Notes': Young Musicians' Perspectives on Learning Expressive Performance." In *Research Studies in Music Education*, 43(3), 2020, pp. 451–464. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1321103X19899171>

<sup>24</sup> Oliveira, Antonio, Ribeiro, Fabiana S., Ribeiro, Luisa M., McPherson, Gary, Oliveira-Silva, Patricia. "Disentangling Motivation in Instrumental Music Learning: A Systematic Review." In *Research Studies in Music Education*, 23(1), 2021, pp. 105–122. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2020.1866517>

<sup>25</sup> How, Ee Ran, Tan, Leonard, Miksza, Peter. "A PRISMA Review of Research on Music Practice." In *Musicae Scientiae*, 26(3), 2021, pp. 675–697. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10298649211005531>

### **3. Methodology**

#### *3.1. Research design*

The effectiveness of pedagogical means of developing students' interpretive freedom as a factor of their performing self-realization was tested through an experiment consisting of three stages: summative, formative, and control. At the first – summative - stage, the EG and CG were formed from among junior students of several art higher education institutions (HEIs) majoring in Piano, Bayan/Accordion, and Flute. The initial level of interpretive freedom was determined through an initial listening of works of similar complexity. The assessment was carried out according to the following criteria: intonational thinking, individuality of approach, variability of tempo-rhythmic, dynamic and articulatory decisions, general emotional and artistic impact, performing expressiveness, performing stability, etc.

The second - formative - stage involved the introduction of a specially developed pedagogical support system aimed at the development of interpretative freedom into the educational process of the EG. It included creative and analytical tasks, improvisational practices, dialogic methods, master classes, analysis of performance versions, reflection, and comparison of alternative interpretations. The CG studied using traditional methods without targeted influence.

At the control stage, students performed a programme equivalent to the initial one. Assessment was carried out following a similar procedure. Comparative analysis of the results revealed the dynamics of changes in the level of interpretative freedom and the effectiveness of pedagogical support.

#### *3.2. Methods*

Pedagogical experiment was used as the leading research method to verify the effectiveness of implementing targeted pedagogical support in the professional training of instrumentalists. Comparative analysis of the results gave grounds to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of pedagogical influence and verifying the author's hypothetical model.

Expert assessment was used to identify the level of interpretive freedom in the performance of musical works by participants of both groups after the experimental exposure. A survey was conducted in order to understand the psychological state of students during the learning process. It contained 20 questions (17 closed and 3 open), aimed at identifying the level of interpretive freedom, the degree of fear of mistakes during experimental



performance, as well as the general emotional background while working on a piece of music. The survey covered 82 students of performing specializations, the results were used to identify key psychological barriers in the development of interpretive freedom.

### *3.3. Sample*

To conduct the study, a sample was formed from the number of students of 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> years of study of several art HEIs majoring in Piano, Bayan/Accordion, Flute. The selection was carried out from a total of about 100 students of the relevant departments. The main criteria for inclusion in the sample were: 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> years of full-time undergraduate studies, obtaining education according to the specialization with the chosen instruments, and at least four public performances during the last academic year.

In order to maintain the veracity and clarity of the experiment, the respondents were divided into CG and EG by major, while maintaining comparability according to the following parameters: major and concert activities. The groups were formed by the method of purposeful selection. Participation in the study was voluntary. The respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and the anonymity of the results.

### *3.4. Instruments*

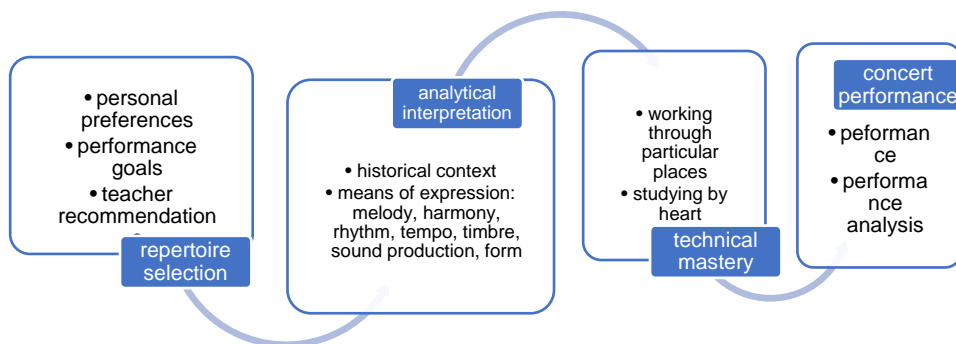
The study used a set of tools that provided both qualitative and quantitative analysis of the experimental results. An analytical interpretative map was developed for expert assessment of the level of interpretative freedom. It contained scales for such parameters as: the level of performing initiative, flexibility of musical thinking, justification of interpretative decisions, ability to creatively transform musical text, emotional expressiveness, and artistic integrity.

## **4. Results**

### *4.1. Interpretative freedom of a musician: The specifics of the phenomenon*

The study identified the key components of a musician's interpretive freedom: repertoire choice, analytical interpretation, technical mastery of the musical text, and concert performance (Figure 1).

**Figure 1**



**Interpretative freedom of a musician at different stages of work  
on a piece of music**

***Source: developed by the author***

Repertoire selection is the first stage at which a musician determines the works to be subject of his or her creative activity. At this stage, the conditions for the realization of interpretive freedom are laid, as different works offer different opportunities for expressing the performer's individuality. The choice of a piece of music is often determined by both personal preferences and performance goals, as well as pedagogical recommendations. An important factor in the development of an instrumentalist's interpretive freedom is the encouragement of independent selection of the performing repertoire.

Such an approach contributes to the formation of a conscious attitude towards musical material, activates analytical thinking, and develops responsibility for artistic decisions. This, in turn, stimulates the manifestation of an individual performing style. The repertoire should include works of different styles, eras and genres, which will contribute to the formation of a worldview and the acquisition of performing experience. It is also important that the selected repertoire includes a range of performing tasks - technical, dramatic, stylistic, which would stimulate the student's professional growth.

Analytical interpretation of a musical work is a stage that involves a deep study of the musical text: its structure, harmony, style, and historical context. Analytical work on the piece of music allows the performer to understand the structure of the work, reveal the logic of its construction, explore stylistic features, genre markers, and semantics of musical language. Understanding intonation relationships, thematic development, vertical and horizontal lines of the musical fabric contribute to an individual approach to studying the work, its creative comprehension. As a result of analytical

interpretation, the students form his or her own interpretative vision, which characterizes his or her performing individuality.

Technical mastery of musical text is a stage that involves mastering the instrument in such a way as to most accurately and expressively embody the idea of interpretation. The work on a musical texture includes detailed work on a sheet music, articulation and dynamic notations, fingering solutions, and phrasing. An important ability is the ability to integrate existing technical skills into the overall artistic concept of the work, because technical freedom is a key factor in interpretative freedom.

Concert performance is the final stage, where interpretative freedom is manifested to the fullest extent, as the interpretation may undergo additional transformations under the influence of a live audience, the performer's emotional state, and other factors.

#### *4.2. Determining the initial level of interpretative freedom*

The summative stage of the study involved a diagnostic of the initial level of interpretative freedom of the experiment participants. The following tools were used for this purpose: expert evaluation of the performance of musical works (with the participation of three teachers of the Department of Special Piano, Folk Instruments, and Wind Instruments), and individual survey of students about their attitude to interpretative freedom (Table 1).

**Table 1**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Expert evaluation</b>	<b>Survey</b>
CG (n=41)	5.8	6.1
EG (n=41)	5.6	6.3

**Level of interpretative freedom before the experiment  
(averaged scores on a 10-point scale)**

***Source: developed by the author***

The average scores in both groups were close. Expert evaluation showed a slightly lower level in the EG (5.6 versus 5.8). The initial situation indicated no statistically significant differences between the groups, which provided the correct conditions for the subsequent formative experiment.

#### *4.3. Instrumental specifics of interpretative freedom: Technological, performance, and pedagogical aspects*

Modern instrumental performance presents a complex relationship between the technical capabilities of the instrument, the musician's performing skills, and pedagogical strategies for developing interpretative freedom.

The piano, as an instrument with a fixed pitch, requires the performer to master the tone, dynamics, articulation, agogics, and pedalling to reproduce a multifaceted texture. Certain limitations on interpretive freedom are associated with the need for a balanced proportion between knowledge of the “laws” and “canons” of stylistically justified intonation and a sense of proportion in creating the personal sound of a musical text. The expansion of the musician’s interpretive potential and freedom in the repertoire of different eras varies within its limits and is stimulated through pedagogical dialogue, which emphasizes the variability of phrasing, timbre palette, etc.

Accordionists have unique performing opportunities to create individual concepts due to the constructive potential of the instruments. At the same time, academic performance on these instruments’ dates back to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which may raise questions about performance traditions. At the same time, the following facts can be counterarguments to this thesis - the rapid improvement of instrument design, the academic performance schools, and a wide repertoire palette - from translations of classical works to original compositions.

The flute, like other wind instruments, has a significant resource of expressive possibilities, which to a significant, sometimes decisive extent depends on the performer’s physiology. While playing, the instrument is under the direct influence of the performer’s breathing, which interacts with the mobility of the labial muscle complex (embossure). It is the specific performing breathing that provides the ability to reproduce the timbre and dynamic palette, the variability of phrasing, and has an impact on the formation of articulation and pitch intonation. However, physiological limitations (for example, the amount of respiratory reserve, the condition of the embouchure) can narrow the interpretative space.

Pedagogical support in this case should be aimed at developing technical flexibility, analysing alternative editions of works (Table 2).

**Table 2**

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Key parameters of interpretive freedom</b>	<b>Typical limitations in performance</b>	<b>Optimal pedagogical approaches</b>
Piano	Variability of pedalling, convex agogics, technical timbre expressiveness	Strong canonical traditions; expectations of the “correct” sound; limitations in performance means of expression	Analytical work with interpretations of musicians from different performing schools; Achieving performing freedom through stage practice;

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Instrument	Key parameters of interpretive freedom	Typical limitations in performance	Optimal pedagogical approaches
			Development of individual performing manner through repertoire selection
Flute	Timbre and dynamic palette, variability of phrasing, articulatory flexibility, microtimbre effects (flagellation, whistle tones, noise effects)	Breathing limit; dependence on physiological state; stability of intonation patterns	Use of modern techniques (multiphonics, microchromatics); endurance training
Bayan / accordion	Wide technical possibilities in the context of various textures; articulatory, timbral, dynamic palette; flexibility of sound intonation.	Difficulty in implementing textural solutions, acquiring skills in high-quality technique of mezzo-soprano, patterned approach to stylistic expression.	Problem-based creative assignments for solving textural and stylistic tasks, improving the mezzo-soprano technique; performing analysis of interpretive versions of works; dialogic forms in the search for interpretive solutions; improvisational practices.

**Comparative analysis of the interpretive capabilities of the instruments**

*Source: developed by the author*

The issue of the degree of interpretative freedom of different instrumentalists requires consideration of technological, historical, and cultural factors. For example, pianists do indeed face more rigid academic frameworks, especially in the interpretation of classical works, where the cult of “authenticity” traditionally prevails. However, these very limitations can become a catalyst for creativity: modern performers are increasingly experimenting with pedalling, tempos, or even creating instrumental transcriptions, rethinking canonical texts.

Flutists, on the contrary, deal with physiological limitations (breathing, embouchure position), but their interpretative freedom is often greater due to the absence of a rigid attachment to the tempered scale. This allows performers of contemporary works and interpreters of music created in experimental compositional techniques, among other things, to explore microchromatic and microtimbre effects close to electroacoustics.

Effective pedagogical support in the professional musical training should be focused on creating conditions that contribute to the development of technical independence, the development of artistic thinking, and the formation of an individual performing style. In this regard, the stimulation of the student's creativity is of particular importance, as well as the development of his or her reflective attitude to his or her own performing activity, which is the key to a conscious interpretation of a musical work.

The table below summarizes the main methods and their effectiveness in the context of the development of interpretative freedom (Table 3).

**Table 3**

<b>Pedagogical approach</b>	<b>Frequency of use</b>	<b>Main characteristics of influence</b>	<b>Effectiveness rate</b>
Performance Analysis	Every lesson (from 7 minutes)	Develops awareness of the structural elements of the work, promotes reasoned artistic choices	High (78-85%)
Improvisational Practices	Several times a month (from 30 minutes per class)	Forms flexibility of thinking, spontaneity in artistic decisions	Very high (87-93%)
Dialogic forms of learning	Every lesson (from 5 minutes)	Develops critical thinking through discussion of interpretative options	Moderately high (65-72%)
Problem-based creative tasks	Almost every class (10 minutes or more)	Stimulates non-standard approaches to the interpretation of musical material	High (75-82%)
Master classes	Once a month (1 academic hour)	Provides professional feedback and broadens the interpretive horizons	Moderate (58-67%)
Analysis of the performance versions	Several times a month (10 minutes or more per class)	Forms a comparative approach to interpretation, develops auditory culture	High (80-86%)

Pedagogical approach	Frequency of use	Main characteristics of influence	Effectiveness rate
Reflection	Every class (5 minutes or more)	Promotes awareness of one's own performance decisions and their artistic value	Moderately high (68-74%)

**The effectiveness of pedagogical approaches in the development of interpretative freedom**

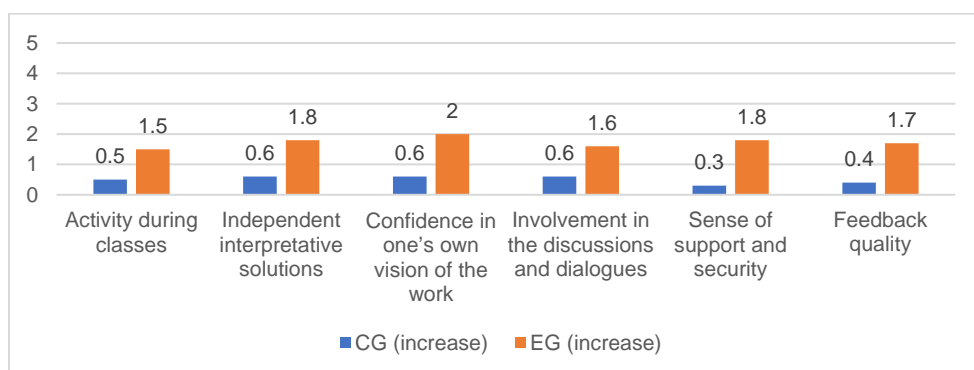
*Source: developed by the author*

The most effective pedagogical strategies in developing interpretive freedom were improvisational practices (87–93%) and analysis of performance versions (80–86%), which ensure the development of flexible thinking, spontaneity, and auditory reflection. Performance analysis (78–85%) and problem-solving tasks (75–82%) also present high efficiency, as they form a structural understanding of the work and stimulate non-standard approaches to interpretation.

**4.4. Comparative analysis of the results of the CG and EG.**

The results were visualized in a chart of the growth of indicators for the EG and CG, presenting a significantly higher level of improvement in the EG. The charts illustrate the dynamics of changes in key components of interpretive freedom, in particular in independent decision-making, active participation in discussions, and a sense of support (Figure 2).

**Figure 2**



**Increase (in points) in the CG and EG**

*Source: developed by the author*

The results indicate a significant improvement in the main components of interpretive freedom in the EG, in particular: increased activity in classes, more frequent adoption of independent interpretive decisions, increased confidence in one's own vision of the work, as well as increased involvement in discussions and dialogical forms of learning. The increase in the sense of support and security is particularly noticeable, which correlates with pedagogical support aimed at the development of creativity. Analysis of Figure 5 emphasizes the importance of pedagogical support in the professional training of instrumentalists, as it is aimed at creating such conditions that ensure not only the development of technical independence, but also the formation of deep artistic thinking necessary for the conscious interpretation of a musical work.

#### *4.5. A conceptual model of interpretive freedom in professional music education*

The author's hypothetical model defines interpretive freedom as a dynamic function that integrates three key variables: instrumental factors, pedagogical approach, and performance experience. This dependence can be expressed by the formula:

**IF = f(I, P, E), where IF - level of interpretative freedom,  
I - technological and technical parameters of the instrument, P - teacher  
support style, E - individual performance experience.**

The instrumental factor determines the objective limits of interpretative freedom through technical parameters and physiological adaptation. Technical parameters include timbre capabilities and dynamic range, while physiological adaptation includes the instrument's ergonomics and the performer's endurance.

The pedagogical factor influences the disclosure of the potential of interpretive freedom through methodological strategies and forms of interaction. The most effective means of developing the instrumentalists' interpretive freedom were pedagogical strategies that promote the development of creative thinking and auditory sensitivity. Performance analysis and problem-based creative tasks that deepen the structural understanding of a musical work and encourage a non-standard approach to interpretation also showed high efficiency.

Performance experience influences the subjective realization of interpretive freedom through learning curves and professional socialization. Participation in professional projects such as Modern Music Workshop, Kyiv Flute Days, and Dynasty festivals, as well as projects of the Educational



Laboratory of Performing Arts, contributes to an additional increase in interpretive freedom by familiarizing with the interpretive principles of historically informed performance, deepening ideas about the possibilities of expressive means in works written in the latest compositional techniques, ensemble music making, expanding concert and stage practice, etc. (Table 4).

**Table 4**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Expert evaluation</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Total increase</b>
CG (n=41)	6.1 (+0.3)	6.4 (+0.3)	+5%
EG (n=41)	7.8 (+2.2)	8.2 (+1.9)	+34%

**Level of interpretive freedom after the experiment  
(averaged scores on a 10-point scale)**

***Source: developed by the author***

Practical testing of the author's model within the scope of an experiment among instrumentalists revealed a significant increase in interpretive freedom by 34% within 12 months of one year of training, which confirms its effectiveness as a tool for predicting and managing interpretive freedom.

## **5. Discussion**

The results of the study emphasized the key role of interpretation skills in the development of creative musical subjectivity of musicians, which is confirmed by the study of Oleksiuk, who considered instrumental performance not only as a technical process, but also as a means of developing the spiritual potential of students of art educational institutions.<sup>26</sup> We agree with the author that performing activities contribute to the formation of a holistic personality, activate internal resources, and stimulate self-development through deep emotional and intellectual immersion in the work. At the same time, our study complements this idea, showing the significance of pedagogical support in the context of the development of interpretative freedom. Similar conclusions were drawn by Gaunt et al., who emphasized the importance of forming socially responsible and creatively active personalities in professional music education.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Oleksiuk, Olha. "Instrumental Performance as a Means of Developing Students' Spiritual Potential." In *Visnyk of Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts. Series: Art Studies*, 51(51), 2024, pp. 27–33. <https://doi.org/10.31866/2410-1176.51.2024.318348>

<sup>27</sup> Gaunt, Helena, Duffy, Celia, Coric, Ana, González Delgado, Isabel R., Messas, Linda, Pryimenko, Oleksandr, Sveidahl, Henrik. "Musicians as "Creators of Society": A Conceptual Foundation for Contemporary Professional Higher Music Education." In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.713648>

We support their emphasis on integrating sociocultural aspects, but our study further emphasizes the role of individualizing pedagogical approaches to unlocking the unique creative potential of each student.

The study by Bylica and Bauman on pedagogical flexibility in times of crisis confirms the need for innovative and adaptive teaching methods. We agree with their opinion on the importance of teacher creativity.<sup>28</sup> The analysis of signature pedagogy by Creech et al. has something in common with our approach, emphasizing the importance of active student participation in the learning process for the development of creative and reflective skills.<sup>29</sup> However, our study extends this concept by focusing on pedagogical support methods that purposefully stimulate interpretive freedom. The competency-based approach proposed by Moyanov is reflected in our results, especially in the context of the development of key creative competencies.<sup>30</sup>

Creative pedagogy described by Schiavio et al. during the pandemic illustrates the importance of innovative technologies for maintaining students' creative activity.<sup>31</sup> We share this approach and add that such pedagogical support should be continuous and personalized in order to reveal the individual characteristics of each musician to the maximum possible extent. Similar trends in personalization and adaptability of the educational process are noted by Okhmanyuk et al., Casas-Mas and Lopez-Iñiguez, and Smith.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Bylica, Kelly, Bauman, Betty. "Pedagogical Activity in Crisis Conditions: Pedagogical Creativity in Music Education." In *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 231, 2022, pp. 7–24. <https://doi.org/10.5406/21627223.231.01>

<sup>29</sup> Creech, Andrea, Zhukov, Katie, Barrett, Margaret S. "Participatory Pedagogy in Collaborative Creative Learning in Advanced Music Education, Training, and Professional Development: A Meta-Synthesis." In *Frontiers in Education*, 7, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.929421>

<sup>30</sup> Moyanov, Iqilasbay D. "Competency-Based Approach in Higher Music Professional Education." In *ACADEMICA: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 12(4), 2022, pp. 42–47. <https://doi.org/10.5958/2249-7137.2022.00235.X>

<sup>31</sup> Schiavio, Andrea, Biasutti, Michele, Antonini Philippe, Roberta. "Creative Pedagogy in Pandemic Times: A Case Study with Conservatory Students." In *Research Studies in Music Education*, 23(2), 2021, pp. 167–178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2021.1881054>

<sup>32</sup> Okhmanyuk, Vitalii, Kosynets, Ivan, Chernetska, Nataliia, Hontar, Oleg, & Tseyko, Nataliya. "Musical Art and Music Pedagogy in Higher Arts Education: Instrumental and Vocal Directions." In *Cadernos de educação Tecnologia e Sociedade*, 18(se1), 2025, pp. 282–290. <https://doi.org/10.14571/brajets.v18.nse1.282-290>; Casas-Mas, Amalia, Lopez-Iñiguez, Guandalupe. "Teacher Preparation for Instrumentalists: Promoting the Transition to Student-Centered Practices in the 21st Century." In: Pozo, H.I., Perez Echeverria, M.P., Lopez-Iñiguez, G., Torrado, H.A. (eds.), *Teaching and Learning in the Music Studio. Landscapes: Art, Aesthetics and Education*, Springer, 2022, vol. 31, pp. 247–265. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-0634-3\\_17](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-0634-3_17); Smith, Tawnya D. "Music Education for Survival and Flourishing: Cultivating Childhood Wonder, Sensibilities, Emotional Well-Being, and Wildness as a Means of Discovering and Fulfilling One's Life Purpose." In *Frontiers in Education*, 6, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2021.648799>

Our results coincide with their findings but emphasize the practical implementation of these principles through pedagogical approaches that develop interpretive freedom. The study of Cantarelli Vita and Campbell on world music pedagogy is common with our idea of the development of global musical thinking as a component of the creative personality.<sup>33</sup> In turn, the conclusions of Han and Abdrahim on the strategic importance of teachers' creativity coincide with our position on the need for teachers' professional development to support students' interpretive freedom.<sup>34</sup>

### *5.1. Limitations*

The limitations of the study included a small sample size, which may have influenced the overall results. Besides, the study focused on only three performance majors, which limits the applicability of the findings to other musical contexts.

### *5.2. Recommendations*

Recommendations for further research include expanding the sample by age and performing skill level. It is also appropriate to study the impact of pedagogical support and innovative teaching methods on the development of musicians' creative subjectivity.

## **6. Conclusions**

The results of the study emphasized the multidimensionality and dynamic nature of a musician's interpretative freedom, which manifests itself at different stages of working with a musical work. The study showed that it is the phased process - from repertoire selection to concert performance - that creates the conditions for the realization of the performer's individual creativity, taking into account his technical capabilities, analytical training, and emotional state.

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<sup>33</sup> Cantarelli Vita, Juliana, Campbell, Patricia S. "World Music Pedagogy: Gateway to Global Citizenship and Children's Creative Impulses." In *Malaysian Journal of Music*, 10(1), 2021, pp. 45–53. <https://doi.org/10.37134/mjm.vol10.2.4.2021>

<sup>34</sup> Han, Weijing, Abdrahim, Nur A. "The Role of Teacher Creativity in Higher Education: A Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Directions." In *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 48, 2023, 101302. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2023.101302>

The conducted experimental study confirmed the effectiveness of the proposed model  $IF = f(I, P, E)$  and the developed methodology for the development of interpretive freedom in students of a music educational institution. The results of the study showed that the implementation of the experimental methodology, which was based on the active students' involvement in performance analysis, creative experimentation and teacher support, contributed to a significant increase in the level of interpretive freedom. In particular, a significant improvement was observed for all parameters (activity in classes, independence of interpretive decisions, confidence in one's own vision, involvement in discussions, a sense of support and quality of feedback), which is confirmed by both students' subjective assessments and objective expert analysis.

The average expert assessment score in the EG significantly increased from 5.6 to 7.8 points, which indicates the development of performance courage, creativity and the ability to meaningfully interpret musical works. The changes in indicators were minimal in the CG, which studied according to the traditional curriculum without additional pedagogical interventions. This indicates the stability of the traditional educational process, but also reveals the limited potential for the development of interpretive freedom without specialized support.

A comparative analysis of the results of the CG and EG confirmed the significant effectiveness of the proposed methodology aimed at developing interpretative freedom. The study emphasized the key teacher's role as a mentor in this process, as he or she stimulates creative search and supports students' reflective attitude to their own performance practice. In turn, this contributes to sustainable professional development and the formation of a creative personality.

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