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Teaching Folk Art in Modern Greek Literature Through the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

Panagiotis Alexopoulos[1], George Katsadoros[1], Maria Kladaki[1], Konstantinos Mastrothanasis[2]

pred23008@aegean.gr, katsadoros@aegean.gr, mkladaki@aegean.gr, konstantinos.mastrothanasis@ouc.ac.cy

[1]Department of Primary Education, University of the Aegean
[2]School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Open University of Cyprus

Abstract

Teaching folk literature in secondary education is essential for developing students' cultural awareness. The purpose of this research is to explore philologists' perceptions of the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications in teaching folk literature, such as folk tales and folk songs. The mixed-methods research, employing an embedded design, was conducted with the participation of 182 philologists who teach folk literature and have experience with AI applications, through an online questionnaire based on the Technology Acceptance Model. The results revealed teachers' positive perceptions, highlighting the benefits of augmenting lessons with multimedia materials, promoting innovation, and personalizing learning. However, barriers were also identified, such as a lack of training and technological equipment. Finally, it is suggested that systematic training and technological support for teachers be provided in order to enable the effective use of AI in the teaching of folk literature.

Keywords: folk art, folk literature, Generative Artificial Intelligence, modern Greek literature

Introduction

The term "folk culture" includes the factors that shape the tradition of peoples and become established in their consciousness over time (Meraklis, 2011). Dundes (1980) defines "folk" as any group sharing at least one common trait and a sense of identity. Accordingly, Doulaveras (2020) describes folk culture as a broad term including customs, songs, tales, riddles, rhymes, and slogans—essentially all forms of folk expression and art. In the digital era, folk culture is evolving, with online expressions like memes now studied under digital folklore. In education, teaching folk culture—especially folk literature—promotes cultural awareness and creativity. Through narratives, myths, and songs, students explore values, social norms, and historical lifestyles while enhancing critical thinking and cultural reflection (Antonaki & Katsadoros, 2022; Doulaveras, 2020; Kakampoura et al., 2017; Katsadoros, 2019; Mastrothanasis & Papakosta, 2017; Meraklis, 1988, 2001). Engagement with the arts has been linked to skills like cooperation, empathy, language, and creative expression (Geladari & Mastrothanasis, 2014; Kladaki et al., 2025; Mastrothanasis et al., 2024, 2025). In Modern Greek Literature classes, folk tales and songs support language development, creative writing, and cultural continuity. While folk art is not taught as a standalone subject in Greece, it is integrated across various educational domains (Kakampoura & Kassaveti, 2018; Kakampoura et al., 2017; Kapaniaris, 2020; Katsadoros & Fokides, 2022; Katsadoros, 2022; Meraklis, 1988).

The digital transformation of education is reshaping literature teaching, with generative AI applications offering new tools to enhance instruction. These tools, such as ChatGPT, enable the creation of multimedia content—text, images, video, and audio—for teaching folk songs and tales. Benefits include learning enhancement, administrative support (Ahmad et al., 2022), performance prediction, personalization (Chen et al., 2020; Guan et al., 2020), and individualized support for students with special educational needs (Drossinou et al., 2023,

2024). Additionally, these apps facilitate collaborative learning, assessment, and distance education. However, risks include reduced authenticity and the possible decline of students' skills due to reliance on ready-made answers (Dimeli & Kostas, 2025; Fokides & Peristeraki, 2024).

Recent empirical studies have focused on teachers' perceptions of integrating Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) into arts education. Teachers appear to recognize both the opportunities and challenges associated with the use of GenAI tools, such as ChatGPT (Arkoumanis et al., 2025). According to Chen et al. (2025), teachers of arts subjects such as literature and creative writing acknowledge key benefits of GenAI, including support for idea generation, assistance in overcoming creative barriers, and opportunities for experimentation in expression. However, they also express serious concerns about authenticity, the risk of bypassing genuine creative effort, and the implications for educational integrity. Similarly, Bergdahl and Sjöberg (2025) found that arts teachers in Sweden appreciate the value of GenAI in lesson planning but emphasize the risks related to originality and the erosion of human and emotional interaction - key elements of arts education.

A consistent theme across these studies is the need for professional development to help teachers better understand the potential and limitations of GenAI in the arts. Many teachers report low self-efficacy in using AI and call for clear guidelines to ensure that AI functions as a creative aid rather than a substitute for student creativity. While there is optimism about its potential to stimulate interest, concerns are also raised about the long-term impact on students' critical thinking and creative autonomy (Bergdahl & Sjöberg, 2025; Chen et al., 2025; Iqbal et al., 2023; Sáez-Velasco et al., 2024). On the one hand, teachers acknowledge that GenAI tools can promote differentiated and innovative teaching, on the other hand, they raise important questions about the evolving nature of learning and the need to safeguard the creative core of the educational experience (Chen et al., 2025; Dimeli & Kostas, 2025). Taking these findings into account, the present study explores teachers' perceptions of using AI in teaching folk art, a field that remains largely unexplored in the literature.

Research methodology

Purpose and research questions

The present study aims to investigate philologists' perceptions regarding the use of generative AI applications in the teaching of folk literature. In particular, the research aims to highlight the factors that influence teachers' acceptance of AI, perceived usefulness, ease of use, as well as their intention toward the use of generative AI in teaching artistic folk literature, such as folk songs and tales. Specifically, the research questions are stated as follows: 1) What are literature teachers' perceptions regarding the usefulness of generative AI in the teaching of folk literature? 2) What are literature teachers' perceptions regarding the ease of use of generative AI applications in the teaching of folk literature? 3) What is literature teachers' intention to use generative AI applications in teaching folk literature?

Data collection and analysis

An online questionnaire (via Google Forms) was used to explore teachers' perceptions of generative AI in teaching folk literature (Mastrothanasis & Alexopoulos, 2025). The instrument consisted of 13 questions (10 open-ended, 3 closed), organized into three themes: a) perceived usefulness, b) ease of use, and c) intention to use, attitudes, and suggestions. This structure was informed by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which provides a clear

framework for understanding technology acceptance (Davis & Granić, 2024; Natasia et al., 2022). The development process of the questionnaire involved the careful formulation of questions based on a thorough review of the existing literature as well as the specific research questions guiding the study. Particular attention was paid to aligning the content of the questions with the core principles and constructs of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), in order to ensure both the conceptual validity and the precision of the items. This approach was adopted to enhance the overall validity of the instrument and to ensure that each question accurately reflected the theoretical framework and the dimensions under investigation. To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, a preliminary pilot study was conducted with a sample of 20 teachers. This initial testing aimed to identify potential weaknesses or ambiguities in the wording of the questions and to implement necessary revisions before the main data collection. The reliability and validity of the closed-ended questions were further confirmed through an assessment of internal consistency. Specifically, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated, yielding a satisfactory value of $\alpha = .81$, which indicates a high level of internal reliability among the items. The first theme explored teachers' views on AI's usefulness in teaching folk literature, including content enhancement, effectiveness, skill development, and integration ideas. The second examined ease of use, required skills, barriers, and support needs. The third focused on teachers' intentions and suggested AI applications. Demographic questions followed. The final questionnaire was distributed online to in-service secondary literature school teachers who have experience teaching folk literature modules. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, informed consent was obtained at the start of the form.

Data analysis followed a mixed-methods design, combining qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative analysis used thematic analysis with phenomenological principles, categorizing responses by theme and coding them to identify key patterns and representative examples. Coding was performed independently by two researchers, inter-coder agreement on major categories reached 90%, ensuring trustworthiness and transparency in qualitative findings. Quantitative results were presented with descriptive statistics (means, frequencies, percentages), using Jamovi (v. 2.3.17), to summarize closed-item responses and demographic characteristics.

Research sample

A total of 182 Greek literature teachers ("philologists") participated in the study. All taught folk art (folk tales, folk songs) as part of the Modern Greek Literature curriculum in secondary education during the current school year and had used at least one generative AI tool. Thus, homogeneous purposive sampling was applied to target this specific group. Most participants were female (91.76%), with 73.67% teaching in public and 26.37% in private schools. Teaching experience varied: 34.62% had 1-5 years, 23.63% had 6-15, 29.12% had 16-25, and 12.64% over 25 years. Most held a master's degree (71.43%), while others had their bachelor's only (18.13%), a doctorate (6.59%), or a second bachelor's (3.84%).

Results

Perceived usefulness (RQ1)

The analysis showed mixed views on using generative AI in teaching folk art. While 52.20% (N = 95) found it very useful and 27.47% (N = 50) probably useful, 12.63% (N = 23) saw it as slightly useful and 6.59% (N = 12) as not useful. An open-ended question on its impact

revealed both benefits and challenges, with 455 responses categorized into 8 codes (Table 1). Specifically, most of the teachers' reports (*N* = 126, 27.69%) focused on enhancing the lesson with multimedia content generated by AI (e.g. participant 4: "AI can help in teaching folk tales by generating images, videos and even songs. This multimedia content that we can generate supports the teaching of folk art and offers new possibilities for us as teachers. Even in folk songs, we can create images and videos"). Several reports (*N* = 95, 20.88%) emphasized the role of generative AI in promoting innovation and increasing students' interest in folk discourse. For instance, participant 12 noted that such applications "impress students," especially when teaching folk songs, as they bring "freshness" to the lesson. Similarly, teachers referred (*N* = 77, 16.92%) to skill development, with participant 48 stating that using tools like ChatGPT can enhance students' writing and collaboration skills, offering "new ways and opportunities" to support learning.

Teachers reported (*N* = 65, 14.29%) that AI is useful for creating personalized materials tailored to students' needs (e.g., participant 106: "It helps in preparing scenarios or exercises adapted to the class"). They also mentioned (*N* = 43, 9.45%) its value in creative writing, supporting students in rewriting folk tales and songs to enhance creativity. Fewer responses referred to risks. Teachers expressed concerns about loss of authenticity (N = 24, 5.27%, e.g., participant 89: "Folk art is human; combining it with technology may erase its authenticity"), decline in student skills (*N* = 14, 3.08%, e.g., participant 52: "Creativity may fade with ready-made answers"), and reduced human interaction (*N* = 11, 2.42%, e.g., participant 43: "AI can't replace human contact").

Table 1. Factors of perceived usefulness

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Enhancing the lesson with multimedia content	126	27.69
Promoting innovation - students' interest	95	20.88
Enhancing students' skills	77	16.92
Generating personalized material	65	14.29
Enhancing creative writing - creativity	43	9.45
Loss of authenticity	24	5.27
Reducing students' skills (e.g. creativity)	14	3.08
Reducing human interaction	11	2.42
Total	**455**	**100**

Teachers were then asked to suggest ways AI could be used in teaching folk art in Modern Greek Literature. A total of 410 reports were coded into five categories. Most responses (*N* = 125, 30.49%) highlighted using generative AI to support multimedia elements like images, video, and sound (e.g., participant 2: "Students can visualize scenes, such as the bridge of Arta"). Nearly as many reports (*N* = 123, 30.00%) focused on teacher support through innovative activities and personalized materials (e.g., participant 61: "Teachers can receive targeted content and exercises"). In addition, participants considered (*N* = 68, 16.59%) that AI could help students in analyzing and interpreting folk songs and folk tales (e.g. participant 120: "Students can be supported in understanding meanings in folk songs… explaining character attitudes"). Finally, fewer mentions were made about creating customized folk tales (*N* = 55, 13.41%, e.g. participant 111: "Students can create their own folk tales with the help of ChatGPT") and folk songs (*N* = 39, 9.51%, e.g. participant 20: "Students can engage in creative writing exercises and create a poem based on a folk song").

Table 2. Suggestions for possible use

Code	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Multimedia support (e.g. illustration of a folk tale)	125	30.49
Providing innovative activities and pedagogical material	123	30.00
Analyzing and explaining folk songs and folk tales	68	16.59
Creating adapted folk tales	55	13.41
Creating adapted "folk songs"	39	9.51
Total	**410**	**100**

Perceived ease of use (RQ2)

The research then, in order to answer the second research question, proceeded to investigate teachers' perceptions regarding the ease of using AI in teaching folk literature. When asked about the degree of difficulty, most participants described it as "moderate" (N = 121, N66.48%) and "very easy" (N = 34, 18.68%). On the other hand, 9.89% (N = 18) of the teachers described the difficulty level as "rather difficult", and 4.40% (N = 8) as "not easy at all." Then, through an open-ended question, teachers were asked to respond regarding the skills that they felt a philologist needed to possess in order to effectively utilize AI in teaching folk literature. A total of 721 references were identified, which were divided into five codes (Table 3). As shown in the results, the most frequently reported skill (N = 242, 33.56%) was familiarity with and the ability to use AI applications.

Several responses (N = 215, 29.82%) stressed the importance of not just using AI, but using it appropriately in education (e.g., participant 1: "This is the most important skill"). Others (N = 107, 14.84%) focused on integrating AI into the educational system in a human-centered way, combining tradition with modern methods (e.g., participant 14: "It's a challenge to integrate AI without disrupting the teacher's role"). Fewer responses (N = 93, 12.90%) highlighted the need for teachers to guide students in AI use, while some (N = 64, 8.88%) mentioned the importance of managing technical issues (e.g., participant 99: "We philologists are not specialized in this area").

Table 3. Required skills

Code	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Familiarity with Artificial Intelligence	242	33.56
Skills for using AI in education properly	215	29.82
Skills in combining tradition and innovative teaching approaches	107	14.84
Skills to guide students in using AI	93	12.90
Skills for handling technical issues	64	8.88
Total	**721**	**100**

Participants answered an open-ended question about barriers to using AI in teaching folk literature. A total of 583 responses were categorized into seven codes. The main barrier was lack of training and institutional support (N = 226, 38.77%, e.g., participant 82: "There is no institutional support"). Other barriers included inadequate equipment (N = 121, 20.75%, e.g., participant 93: "We barely have projectors or internet") and lack of time for preparation and classroom implementation (N = 107, 18.35%, e.g., participant 33: "By the time you start, the lesson is over").

Furthermore, personal concerns appeared to be important obstacles (*N* = 65, 11.15%) regarding the effectiveness of AI in education (e.g., participant 61: "I am not yet convinced that AI can help in teaching folk songs and folk tales…"), as well as resistance from the educational community (*N* = 32, 5.49%), colleagues and management (e.g., participant 40: "I believe that the educational community will be an obstacle. Maybe colleagues who are against AI will react"), and parents (*N* = 26, 4.46%; e.g., participant 88: "I think parents will react"). Finally, 6 responses (1.03%) referred to resistance from the students themselves (e.g., participant 12: "Maybe students themselves will react. Probably they will be happy at first, but then they will lose interest").

Table 4. Potential obstacles

Code	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lack of training and institutional support	226	38.77
Lack of technological equipment	121	20.75
Lack of time	107	18.35
Personal considerations about the benefits	65	11.15
Resistance from the educational community	32	5.49
Resistance from the parents	26	4.46
Resistance from the students	6	1.03
Total	**583**	**100**

Finally, teachers were asked about the support they expect when using AI in teaching folk literature. In total, 456 responses were grouped into 4 codes (Table 5). Most expected support through training and teaching materials (*N* = 280, 61.40%, e.g., participant 100: "I definitely need training and institutional support... suggestions on how to use AI properly"). Others mentioned the need for equipment and tech support (*N* = 114, 25.00%). Fewer responses referred to support from colleagues (*N* = 44, 9.65%, e.g., participant 72: "I think my colleagues will support us") and from students (*N* = 18, 3.95%, e.g., participant 11: "Students love technology and will support us").

Table 5. Potential support

Code	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Training with supporting material	280	61.40
Technological equipment	114	25.00
Support from the educational community	44	9.65
Support from the students	18	3.95
Total	**456**	**100**

Intention, attitudes and implications (RQ3)

In order to answer the third research question, teachers were asked to answer whether they are willing to use generative AI applications in teaching folk songs and folk tales in the context of Modern Greek Literature lessons. Specifically, 130 teachers (71.73%) stated that "yes, they are willing", 46 teachers (25.27%) stated that "maybe", while 6 (3.30%) stated that "no", as they do not find it useful to use AI in teaching folk literature.

Afterwards, teachers' attitudes toward applications useful for teaching folk literature were examined. A total of 601 references (Table 6) were grouped into six categories. Video-generating applications were considered most useful (*N* = 105, 17.74%, e.g., participant 109: "I

used Lumen5 to create a short folk tale video, and students were highly engaged"), followed closely by image-generating apps (N = 105, 17.47%, e.g., participant 103: "Bing Image Creator helped visualize scenes from the Bridge of Arta, prompting enthusiasm"). Educational apps offering multiple tools were also noted (N = 103, 17.14%, e.g., Magic School), along with text generators (N = 100, 16.64%, e.g., ChatGPT) and lesson-plan or presentation creators (N = 98, 16.31%). Finally, music-generating apps were cited (N = 90, 14.98%, e.g., SUNO AI for composing folk songs).

Table 6. Perceived beneficial applications

Code	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Apps for generating videos	105	17.47
Apps for generating images	105	17.47
Educational apps with multiple features	103	17.14
Apps for generating text	100	16.64
Apps for teaching scenarios and presentations	98	16.31
Apps for generating music	90	14.98
Total	**601**	**100**

Finally, teachers were asked to respond regarding the applications they intend to use in the context of teaching folk literature, with emphasis on their features. A total of 384 references were identified and categorized into 5 codes (Table 7). As it was revealed in the results, Greek literature teachers intend (N = 180, 46.88%) to use AI applications in order to engage students in creative writing of folk tales and folk songs (e.g. participant 99: "Applications such as Gemini can be used for students to create their own folk tales. Such apps I am willing to use"), and to generate multimedia content for multimodal texts (N = 121, 31.51, e.g. participant 87: "I am willing to use apps that generate sound, image and video to support the folk song teaching").

Furthermore, there were 103 references (26.82%) identified for generating games and assessment activities (e.g. participant 80: "I am willing to use apps that create games and quizzes about folk tales, making folk literature more attractive to children"). Fewer references (N = 81, 21.10%) were identified for apps that generate teaching scenarios and presentations (e.g. Participant 9: "I already use the Gamma app to create presentations, so I would be willing to use it for teaching folk literature"). Finally, 69 references (17.97%) were detected for apps that can be used in analyzing, and identifying patterns in folk songs (e.g., Participant 114: "I am willing to use apps … interpretive analysis of folk songs").

Table 7. Intention to use AI applications

Code	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Applications for creative writing of folk tales and folk songs	180	46.88
Applications for generating multimedia content	121	31.51
Applications with quizzes and games for folk songs and folk tales	103	26.82
Applications for teaching scenarios and presentations	81	21.10
Applications for analysis and pattern detection	69	17.97
Total	**384**	**100**

Discussion

The purpose of the present research was to investigate philologists' perceptions regarding the use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in teaching folk literature, using the Technology Acceptance Model. As it was shown by the results, regarding the perceptions of usefulness, philologists positively evaluated the usefulness of AI in teaching folk art, emphasizing mainly the possibility of enriching the course with multimedia material. This means that they consider that AI applications can create images, videos and music that support folk culture texts, promoting innovation, personalization and stimulating students' interest. The above expectations for AI are also reflected in the literature (Dumitru et al., 2025), which refers to enhancing educational content, increasing participation and strengthening creative writing and critical thinking skills. However, teachers also expressed concerns regarding the possible loss of authenticity of folk art and the reduction of students' creativity through prepared answers, concerns that are also reflected in the literature (Dimeli & Kostas, 2025). In particular, in the research of Drossinou and Alexopoulos (2024), similar concerns about the risk of copying answers and the reduction of students' skills were expressed by candidate teachers - philologists.

Regarding ease of use, most philologists found AI in teaching folk literature relatively easy, stressing the need for handling and utilization skills (Natasia et al., 2022). Main barriers included lack of training, inadequate equipment, and limited time. Overall, despite optimism, teachers emphasized the need for targeted training in Modern Greek Literature. Most teachers expressed willingness to use AI, particularly for creating multimedia content, creative writing, and teaching scenarios. This reflects their recognition of AI's potential to enrich the teaching of folk songs and tales. However, their reservations—mainly due to limited training and lack of institutional support—underscore the need for systematic, targeted teacher training to enable effective pedagogical use of AI.

Conclusions

The study highlights the importance of generative AI in teaching folk literature. Philologists noted benefits such as multimedia enrichment, innovation, student engagement, and personalized learning, alongside concerns about authenticity, creativity, and human interaction. Key barriers were lack of training, equipment, time, and resistance from the educational community. Teachers stressed the need for targeted training and suggested uses in creative writing, multimedia, and text analysis, confirming the importance of well-designed integration programs. Clearly, the sample limitation and qualitative approach support future research to build on this initial mapping and lead to more reliable conclusions. In addition, a further limitation is that the study explored only teachers' perceptions of using such tools in teaching folk art. Future research could usefully investigate real-life applications and examples of generative AI use in practice, providing detailed accounts of the process, student responses, and learning outcomes.

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