

# Self-Development of Adult Spectators' Cultural Awareness Through Theatre Art

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## Abstract

*This paper provides an analysis theories lead to the interpretation of the adult spectator as an adult learner; thus, providing justification of adult spectator's cultural awareness self-development through the theatre art. Also presents the findings and interpretations of empirical research. The respondents' attitude to cultural awareness competences is presented, relations between cultural awareness and other competences are discussed as well as importance of cultural awareness, ways and measures of cultural awareness development, barriers to cultural awareness self-development and assessment of skills.*

**Keywords:** Drama theatre art, Cultural awareness competence, Person's cultural competence, Self-Development

## 1. Introduction

Culture and education are undoubtedly some of the major factors which determine both the societal developmental level and human's well-round social life in contemporary society. It is often the case when the level of societal development is measured taking into account the results of these areas. Culture and education serve for reproduction of various forms of work, accumulate and transform various culture forms, create an essentially new potential of the subject, whose aim is transition to a higher societal culture and social life level. The growth of society also depends on the quality of culture and education, whereas the perspective of individual's life is determined by opportunities created for person's participation in cultural life and education system.

A particularly important role of culture (in its broadest sense) emerges in lifelong learning context where adult education receives a priority attention. It is continuous adult learning, development of personal and professional knowledge and competences that provide exceptional importance to culture in person's and societal life. Some authors (Andriekienė, Anužienė, 2006 and others) assert that not all education and training processes are obvious and visible; hidden or tacit formation of personality also happens in the processes of education and training, i.e. various tastes, behavior assessment, speaking style and manners are also formed and shaped by incidental factors, experienced impressions, cultural events, aroused emotions, and etc., which do not belong to direct functions of adult education, but perform the function of "life school". This idea is particularly relevant for an adult person who has considerable amount of life experience, knowledge and is able to choose ways and methods of self-development himself /herself. Such a way of self-development for each person is an individual process which manifests itself, first, by self-integration or reintegration (socialization) to the society; this leads to expansion of one's opportunities in personal life and professional activity. For a society to survive and prosper, it has to possess culture transmission from generation to generation guarantees, a mechanism, and at the same time foster to sustain learning autonomy of each member of the society (Jatkauskienė et al., 2010; Andriekienė, Anužienė, 2006). In 2014, under the contract with The Republic of Lithuania Culture Ministry, a research (Research in participation of inhabitants in culture and their satisfaction with culture services, 2014) was performed, and relations of participation in cultural activities and consuming culture with expected factors of impact of culture (public spirit, pride in one's identity (citizenship), happiness, physical and spiritual health and trust in other people) were analyzed leading to emergence of two aspects. First, consistent patterns observed in other societies were observed in Lithuania as well, thus, inhabitants who participate in cultural activities and those who consume culture are obviously more society oriented, happy, feel healthier, more self-confident, and etc. Second, among those who participate in cultural activities this relation is stronger than among consumers of culture. Discussing the factors of culture impact, not only the confirmation of relation between participation / consuming and inhabitant sociability is important but also causality, i.e. if participation in culture and its consumption determine higher sociality and stronger identity or on the contrary. Almost one third of the research respondents think that participating in cultural activities they become more creative and patriotic themselves. On the other hand, absolute majority of those who do not participate in such activities consider that participating can strengthen their identity and creativity. Thus question remains unanswered, and intermediate preliminary conclusion can be that participation in culture and its consumption is a necessary but insufficient condition of sociality and civic development. *These assumptions presupposed the research problem of article: what relations exist between theatre art and cultural awareness self-development?*

## 2. Theoretical dispositions

*Historical-cultural conception of constructivism* (Vygotsky, 1978), its premises allow stating that higher cognitive processes are the product of social development. In order to justify his conception Vygotsky states that there exists a sensitive zone of nervous centers aroused by stimuli which he calls “proximal” zone. It is responsible for differences between what an individual can realize intellectually himself/herself and what he/she can realize with mediation of another individual, for instance, actor. It is particularly important speaking about self-development through drama theatre. If the actor is able to convey feelings, emotions, situations he/she lived through in a professional way, the adult spectator believes in him/her and this leads to self-development of cultural awareness during a performance.

*Interactional constructivist learning conception* (Bruner, 1998), the premises of this theory allow thinking that social and cultural practice creates pre-conditions to change a human psychic. Bruner’s works presuppose that adult learner, living in a certain cultural medium, acquires certain cultural elements and traditions. According to him, culture is both, the process of cognition and its expression. Thus it can be assumed that self-development through drama theatre presupposes the spectator’s self-awareness and self-development which is a necessary pre-condition for personal and professional development.

The discussed theories are important as they allow revealing the versatility and multi-layeredness of adult learning; the foundations of these adult learning theories were laid by philosophical and psychological theories; therefore, in this context, adult learning and self-development of adult spectators’ cultural awareness through drama theatre art can be understood as a coherent and scientifically grounded statement.

*Statistical data analysis methods* were used aiming at processing the obtained empirical research data. Questionnaire data were statistically processed using program softwares IBM SPSS Statistics and Mplus. Performing the quantitative research, descriptive and multivariate statistic methods were applied: factor, cluster, correlation and disperse analyses, structural modeling of equations.

## 3. Aspects of theatre art and adult self-development

In the scientific context the researchers (Trakšėlys, 2013; Kuncaitis, 2009; Gedvilienė, 2008; Andriekienė, Anužienė, 2006; Beresnevičienė, 2000; Longworth, 2000 and others), analyzing theoretical assumptions of adult learning, distinguish the following theories which are important for the analysis of cultural awareness self-development: empiricism, existentialism, social constructivism, experiential learning.

The representatives of *empiricism* (Locke 1632-1704; Berkeley (1685-1753); Hume 1711-1776; Comte, 1798-1857 and others) raise a question how knowledge and conceptions are formed and what relationship exists between experience and thought structure. According to R. Landy (2007), “empiricism is a hardy perennial in the history of philosophy. It was extensively discussed in antiquity, often with considerable hostility. <...> Empiricism also had its advocates in the medieval period” (p. 4481). R. Kuncaitis (2009) states that the traits of empiricism can be found as far back as the philosophy by Aristotle, and later - in the philosophy of T. Aquinas. One of the most influential empiricists John Locke (1992) defined this philosophy apparently in the best way, discerning its most characteristic traits: the basis of cognition is sensory experience rather than innate ideas; true are only things and phenomena (the mind is used only for combining and abstracting); knowledge is acquired, only our natural abilities or inclinations are innate. Locke (1992) is more known as a political theoretician who created the theory of liberalism, which is also rather vivid in his experiential cognition system, assuring that even a baby is born with a potential cognition mechanism. Thus, it is possible to state that empiricists were among the first who spoke about the relationship between potency and act, possibility and reality, which is an assumption of continuous

human activity and desire for new experiences. All this can be traced in adult education, forms its foundation and has been particularly highlighted in education policy recently with regard to lifelong learning and its importance.

Researchers (Jatkauskienė, Tolutienė, 2012, and others) note that philosophy of empiricism is based on the following postulates: epistemological, methodological, and anthropological. The advocates of empiricism are convinced that sensory experience is the only source of foundation of knowledge. Empiricists claim that at birth the human mind is blank, “tabula rasa”; they discard the idea of a stable subject who structures cognition: knowledge is gained through direct experience which is generalized inductively. Proponents of the opposing theory, i.e. rationalism, give preference to mental powers as sensory experience, according to rationalists, often deceives us and is, consequently, unreliable. Following the theory of empiricism, which claims that cognition is based on our experience and observation therefore all knowledge is acquired rather than innate, it is possible to state that watching a performance the spectator is led by his/her senses (hearing, seeing), assesses the observed events on the basis of his/her experience, reacts by expressing emotions, and etc. Thus it can be assumed that drama theatre art can convey various images to spectators, develop their imagination, expand knowledge and world outlook; the spectators are also created conditions to self-develop their internal cultural awareness.

As some authors (Jatkauskienė, Tolutienė, 2012 and others) state, empiricism influenced the emergence of positivism. The representatives of empiricism proposed the *associative learning theory*, which is important for the object of the dissertation, as this theory was applied in analyzing relations between things and ideas as well as exploring interrelations of ideas. It is also worth noting that representatives of empiricism also based their theory on reflection, as abundance of ideas lie in our memory, which can be retrieved, compared; we can draw conclusions and find associations with other ideas. Therefore, reflection is the only mechanism which influences the activity of thinking, particularly, if the senses are active.

The philosophical theory of existentialism. Existentialism, according to a number of authors (Tatarkiewicz, 2001 and others), emerged as a reaction to rationalism of the epoch of enlightenment and classical German philosophy and also to the positivist philosophy of I. Kant, which spread out at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Classical rationalistic philosophy started by R. Descartes and completed by G. Hegel, reflected a deep belief in absolute mind which pursues knowledge about the world objectively in an autonomous way. This *Mind* was oriented not only to science based cognition but to the practical restructurization of the world. It is this materialization that existential thinking rebelled against.

The rudiments of existentialism can be found as back as “The Pensées” by B. Paskal (1997), where he states that without God human life would be meaningless and woeful. People would only raise problems and solve them to avoid boredom. Our successes are undoubtedly worthless as we will die nonetheless. This is a sufficient condition not to become godless. These ideas were reflected in the theories by J. P. Sartre and A. Camus. However, it is S. Kierkegaard and F. Nietzsche who are considered to be the first existentialist philosophers. They also analyzed the issues of evading meaninglessness of life and boredom. The basis of S. Kirkegor’s “The Present Age” (1846) is *irony*, which serves as an ontological opposition to the world. It is an inevitable necessity and a human as no free choice – to use irony or not (as he/she cannot choose to be or not to be).

The roots of existentialism lie in the phenomenology of E. Husserl (it was mentioned briefly in the overview on empiricism), which limits itself to rather abstract and impersonal issues of cognition theory, aiming at identifying the so called universal truth (Moran, 2005). M. Heidegger (1954, 1975) applied the method of phenomenology to discussing the issue of Being, the human being which was referred to by the notion of ‘Dasein’ or ‘being-there, in the world’. This way M. Heidegger speaks that we are immersed in the world, “thrown” into the world: it is most important for the person to understand what to do with

himself/herself, what is important in general what is relevant in a particular moment of life. J. P. Sartre, following M. Heidegger, stresses that every person has to provide importance to himself/herself – you can be born black or Jewish, French or lame but matters only what the person creates out of himself or herself (Charmé, 1984). All this can be considered to be a certain philosophical premise of a continuous, uninterrupted personal self-education aiming at cultural self-development.

One of the weakest aspects of existentialism philosophy is its radical nature, in certain cases – opposing everything, even itself, disregarding the social character of education and significance of collectivism in general: it is what presupposed only discrete spread of the ideas of existentialism rather than significance and relevance of the entire theory; however, it underlies the fact that adult education has to be oriented to a concrete individual and his/her needs (Kuncaitis, 2009).

According to G. Pineau (1995), existential nature of self-directed learning means knowledge acquisition based on life experience of those who surround you. The author indicates that existential self-directed learning is important for a person as it allows searching for his/her form of activity. Self-directed learning corresponds to a twofold reflective process or double life curve which is explained by P. Galvani (Andriekienė, Anužienė, 2006) as a self-perception through teaching provided by others and impact by the surrounding environment; acquisition of a learning possibility and application of this possibility to oneself. Thus, according to G. Pineau, self-directed learning means the action during which the subject becomes aware of the importance of the learning process and acts upon it. Therefore, according to this theory, self-directed learning can be understood as acquisition of a twofold possibility: first, you have to become a teaching subject out of the object and, second, apply this possibility to yourself and become your own learning object.

Analyzing the most important aspects of self-directed or independent learning process B. Jatkauskienė and G. Tolutienė (2012) discern interaction and reciprocal relation. Thus it can be assumed that at the theatre the relation between the actor and spectator is of utmost importance as it creates a new existential unit. While a professional actor renders his/her thoughts and ideas, he/she starts a reciprocal relationship with the spectator, and it is this relationship which enables the spectator to participate in the performance, intercept the feelings being expressed, perceive the content, thus, self-develop himself/herself as a conscious spectator, who is not a passive viewer of the event, but a participant who observes, interprets, expresses emotions and feelings, acquires experience, knowledge, and etc.

*Social constructivism* theoreticians (Piaget, 1972, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978 and others) state that we construct our understanding and knowledge about the world on the basis of the acquired experience, reflecting about it. We actively create our knowledge by asking questions, exploring and evaluating what we already know.

Discussing social constructivism several authors (Kuncaitis, 2009 and others) state that it is closely related to social psychology and culture sociology. According to constructivists, in social movement processes, the role of values, norms, culture is important as well as used discourses, collective subconsciousness, rituals, symbols and ideas. They are concerned with construction of understanding of various situations and actions. A certain social fact is real to the extent how much the individual who interprets it considers it to be real. One of the most important concepts in this sense is individual, collective and public identity and its dissemination in social movements (Paulauskas, 2004). Next to learner active participation, peculiar to all trends of constructivism, social constructivism emphasizes the role of social processes (Martišauskienė, 2008, p. 15). P. L. Berger, T. Luckman (1999) claim that to live means to belong to a certain society, whereas to be in the society is to be at the crossroads of certain social powers. An individual is directly dependent on the society, its norms, customs and accepted legal basis; however, it does not necessarily mean that this will form the basis of his/her life.

The assumptions based on this theory allow claiming that participating in an art event, drama theatre performance, the adult is often impacted and affected by certain thoughts, norms, hidden ideas and interpretations. On the other hand, the spectator himself/herself interprets the content of the performance on the basis of his/her values, knowledge, life style and current experience. This enables mutual cooperation (between the actor and spectator) and also learning process to happen, trying to understand the content, interpret it and often, after the event has ended, to evaluate it, reflect, generalize, and etc. All these elements are characteristic of a learning process. Therefore, this theory presupposes a conclusion that theatre by all means contributes to the self-development of the adult spectator's cultural awareness.

*Experiential learning* as a philosophy and issue of education practice states that without experience there is neither life nor learning. It means that we have to ask ourselves: how is it possible to differentiate between experiential learning from any other learning? Experiential learning theory is grounded in the situational cognition and enactivism, stresses the role of cultural action and its analysis and criticizes those who attempt to dissociate the concept of experience from its social historical roots.

*Experiential learning philosophy*, according to some authors (Fenwick, 2001 and others), has adult learners at its focus, learners who have acquired various formal and non-formal education and personal (cultural) context and are adults with long life experience. This theory grounds experience-based, professional and democratic education. Such education is focused on learner needs and interests, gives priority to problem solving methods, importance of experience, pragmatic and utilitarian goals and the idea of social responsibility.

D. Kolb (1984) states that *experiential learning* is a cyclical process of tension and conflicts; he is the founder of the "*experiential learning cycle*" model which consists of four stages explaining the learning process. In active experimentation, new knowledge and skills emerge contradicting concrete experience, reflective observation and abstract conceptualization. He also showed how four different learning styles are related with these stages. Experiential learning cycle stages or steps are as follows:

- *The first:* learner goes through a concrete experience which can be either a modeled learning situation or a real life experience.
- *The second:* time is necessary to observe this experience reflectively, asking such questions as: "What has happened?" and "What did I know?", "What is the meaning of this?" and etc.
- *The third:* learner generalizes knowledge or insights gained from reflection by asking "What does the experience and (or) different situation tell about me?", "How could it be different?"
- *The fourth:* learner adapts new knowledge or insights by experimenting actively in similar or different situations, reviews newly learnt things on the basis of his/her own world image. D. Kolb notes that mere experience cannot teach everything, for experience to become meaningful and educational it has to be reflected upon and mentally processed. According to D. Kolb (1984), experiential learning cycle is most probably the most widely used experiential learning model, particularly in those cases when we try to work systematically and apply the acquired experience and learn from its lessons.

The main goal of artistic education is to develop every person's intellectual, creative, emotional and physical powers in an efficient and balanced way, to train his/her verbal and non-verbal expression skills and the system of value dispositions. *The Provisions of artistic education development* (2002) set a relevant aim – to pursue balanced artistic education. It is stated that "orientation only to knowledge or, on the opposite, to the practical expression and skills is harmful and downgrades the final results of education" (p. 4). Therefore, all applied methods of adult education are directed to efficient development of theatrical and aesthetic skills, knowledge, interests and formation of value dispositions which is particularly important in the modern life. During theatrical expression, the main value dispositions are developed which correspond to

the specificity of artistic education: aesthetical attitude to art works, nature, created environment and arrangement of living and work place, human interaction and communication; respect to one's own and others' artistic creativity and its results, individuality of expression, peculiarity, originality; need to experience artistic and aesthetic trials, survive and perceive the art of work as an aesthetical value; disposition to overtake national, traditional ethical and aesthetical ideals and those of the present day Europe and world culture, be open to the undergoing changes, critical and resistant to destructive mass culture events, intention to view art as a testimony of general human values and source of person's overall self-education; disposition to choose meaningful works of art which enrich spiritual human life, develop authentic and non-conformist aesthetical taste, form grounded criteria to evaluate artistic and aesthetic culture; creativity and renewal should be the basic dispositions of a person who lives in today's multicultural information society (Kazragytė, 1999 and others). Responsibility, honesty, attention to another person, respect, love, tolerance, understanding, rightness, pursuit of development are humanistic values, which are formed during the whole process of self-development. They form the basics of becoming a mature personality. At the top of the pyramid of these values there is spirituality, which can be understood as a way of human life complying to certain principles. Spirituality is related to value domain. V. Kazragytė (1999) affirms that ethical values and their manifestation create the core of theatre. According to the researcher, art is important for a person not only as the area of self-expression and self-realization but as a possibility to overtake spiritual and artistic values, created and matured by the mankind and develop one's individual culture. It is possible to state that the main purpose of theatrical art is to stipulate overall personal and sociocultural growth of the adult person, i.e. his/her spiritual growth. K. S. Stanislavski, a Russian theatre director and thinker, wrote as follows: "the longest and most interesting journey is the journey to the 33<sup>rd</sup> inner world of a person". Therefore, theatre enhances setting philosophical questions about the human being: What is a human being? How and what do you live for? What do the human life value, meaning and beauty consist of? Theatrical creativity, without doubt, can help finding responses to these existential questions.. According to V. Kazragytė (1999), "Theatre inspires moral relations with another person on various topics, researches moral decisions made by the individual, their dependence on human will. Creative openness on the stage strengthens person's self-confidence, skills of meaningful behavior. Acting realizes one of the most wonderful human needs and abilities – to become another: another person or animal, plant, thing, fantastic creature, generalized concept. A child, a young man adapting this "other" with his/her own entity, personifies, humanizes and spiritualizes external reality, creates new forms of being, the system of new aesthetic values" (Kazragytė, 1999, p. 5). From the point of view of cognitive psychology, art teacher is the creator of possibilities who allows such interaction with the environment (people, places, things, ideas) that children themselves become aware of new models of relations, i.e. children learn by themselves through discovery. This is particularly relevant in cases when the maturing personality who is in search for his/her identity has a possibility to experience both reality and the world due to stage reincarnation. A number of authors (Kazragytė, 1999 and others) consider a young actor's work preparing his/her role to be a particularly efficient value formation means in the theatrical activity/expression. While preparing the role, all intellectual functions are invoked – perception, memory, differentiation, analysis, decision making and others. V. Kazragytė (1999) one of the most famous followers of K. S. Stanislavski's system, distinguishes the following stages of preparing for a role: studying reality; fantasizing about the role, clarification and perception of overtones and implications; external character of the role, sketches on the basis of the role material. Broad educational opportunities open from the very first step preparing for the role – from the identification of the actor's objective, i.e. answering the question "Why am I going to play this role in a concrete performance? What value does my role carry for me?" It is not possible to create any forcible role which would convince the spectator if reality, where the personage lives, and events he/she participates in is

alien and incomprehensible to the actor. Each personage reflects the spirit of certain times (epoch, decade), world outlook of a particular social layer people, their customs, political and economic atmosphere. Theatre does not only bring the spectator closer to the living environment of the personage, but also broadens his/her world outlook. All this adds layer by layer in the human memory and becomes his/her memory storage, experience, attitudes which underlie the person's behavior and motives. B. Zachava (1973) claims that a spectator, the same as each artist, must have the following skills: first – to observe life; second – to generalize the observed life phenomena (be able to draw conclusions). All this enhances fantasy.

While interpreting the performance, the spectator checks his/her own truths and values, as art, according to K. Trakšelys (2013) “not only reflects the concrete world, stimulates imagination and unites different cultural elements of the society and the epoch, but also presents models of imitation or rejection, visions or aspirations which have an insensible impact upon our critical reaction”. Butkienė G., Kepalaitė A. (2006) states that values, discovered or chosen by the person himself/herself, become a system which helps a person to make decisions while choosing and discussing various possibilities, allow seeking for complete identity and internal harmony. It is possible to related this to 11 “active discovery” and personal integration or integrity criteria discerned by M. C. Beardsley (2000, p. 48-49) in his aesthetic experience theory. The “formative power of art” is considered by the scholar to be the basis of the integrity. M. Green, speaking about moral education and value creation, also stresses the importance of aesthetic relationship, which emerges when artistic creativity, imagination training, story-telling, interpretation of creative works are used in educational practice. Comparing their experience with that of the personages, the spectators will inevitably encounter the necessity for value contemplation and their personal hierarchy in any case. They will choose themselves trying to catch on something, reaching the roots which are invisible at the first sight. This will be the foundation for their moral decision-making (Duoblienė, 2002).

It is necessary to stress that a number of theatrical expression forms and methods create favorable conditions for moral spectator's self-determination and internationalization of spiritual values. As stated by Owens & Barber (2006), “Improvisation, dramatization, forum theatre, psychodrama, process drama – these are the major theatre methods, which reveal the internal and external human conflict with the world, satisfy the need to communication, intention to act creatively, enhance spontaneous expression of one's feelings”. Scientific literature sources (Owens, Barber, 2006 and others) single out the following main values of theatrical education: practical reasons (it enhances learning motivation); accumulated experience (it helps to reach higher awareness, train interpersonal and social relationships); drama process can empower a person (fosters person-oriented learning culture). According to the above mentioned authors, qualitative teaching is conveying of complicated ideas, fostering activity, critical thinking and discussions. E. Martišauskienė (2007) claims that participating in a theatrical activity people develop their spirituality, learn to evaluate certain situations from a moral point of view, learn to distinguish priorities and see their inner world. Value-based theatrical activity aspect is also emphasized by A. Damašauskienė (2008, p. 81). Having tried various forms of creative activity, through creative self-expression the spectators acquire self-reflection skills and value clarity, they can overcome their problems and adapt in the social environment more easily, and etc.

#### **4. Research methods**

*Theoretical analysis methods: scientific literature and document analysis*, applying a comparative analysis method, systemic analysis and synthesis. This analysis is of interdisciplinary nature as it analyzes scientific articles, research studies, monographs, research reports from the fields of education science, professional, work and education sociology, psychology, human resource development and education economics, skill training political economics and other sciences.

*Empirical research* was performed implementing the project dotation by Lithuanian Research Council "Platform of adult's core competence training and development" No. VP1-3.1-ŠMM-07-K-03-073. On the basis of findings of this research, guidelines of adults' core competence training and development and core competence training modules will be designed. The scientific research into adult's core competence training and development consists of some major stages: 1) theoretical research into adult's core competence training process and its context, based on scientific literature and document source analysis and aimed at preparing theoretical models and conceptions of core competence training and development and 2) empirical research, which is comprised of quantitative survey of three adult groups (employed, job-seekers and seniors) in municipalities in Lithuania, using a semi-structured questionnaire survey.

593 adults of different age participated in the survey into cultural awareness (or erudition) competences. Almost all research respondents were adult educated people having acquired higher education 48.8 perc. (N=230) or secondary, vocational, upper secondary educational background 44.6 perc. (N=210). Only a small part of the respondents had no secondary education: 6.6 perc. (N=31).

### ***Methods of statistical data statistics***

Data of quantitative research were analyzed applying various statistical methods, i.e. from simple descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentage, means, standard deviations) to complex contemporary statistical models (structural equation modeling, confirmatory factor analysis).

## **5. Data Analysis**

Participants of the research into cultural awareness evaluated the barriers to develop cultural erudition. The majority of the respondents (55.6 perc.) admit facing no barriers. Others list barriers, however, none of them seems to be clearly dominating or very important: 24.1 perc. mention lack of time; 20.6 perc. - lack of determination; 11.5 perc. name lack of events; and 11.1 perc. admit they are lazy and cannot force themselves. Other barriers were mentioned only in some cases. Only 4.7 perc. of the respondents state they do not see the value of self-education.

During the research into cultural awareness competences, the respondents also assessed how well they had developed their personal skills related to this competence. Skills and their assessment are presented in Table 1. All skills were assessed as acquired more than on average.

**Table 1** Assessment of skills related with cultural awareness self-education (perc.)

<b>Skill</b>	<b>Well acquired</b>	<b>Not so well</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Worse than average</b>	<b>Badly acquired</b>
To formulate goals and ideas for myself	43.1	29.5	24.3	2.9	0.2
To solve personal internal problems	37.6	31.4	25.8	3.9	1.2
To convince others that I can be as I am	34.7	33.4	27.1	3.5	1.3
To meet challenges and new possibilities for self-expression	31.7	32.6	30.1	4.9	0.7
To assume responsibility for my actions	56.8	26.6	14.7	1.6	0.2
To take advantage of opportunities to express myself	34.5	36.0	26.0	2.5	0.9
To express opinion among specialists of the same area	30.6	35.8	27.6	4.5	1.5
To organize my activity according to my hobbies	36.1	33.7	25.4	4.4	0.4
To implement my goals and ideas	33.0	35.4	25.3	5.5	0.7
To plan my time taking into account cultural events	27.4	33.0	33.0	5.6	1.1
To plan and perform my work creatively	33.1	33.5	27.7	4.5	1.1
To act independently	43.3	35.1	18.7	1.6	1.3
To communicate and cooperate with people of other cultures	35.0	31.0	26.7	6.3	1.0
To think in an original way	35.9	31.8	27.7	4.3	0.4

The analysis of correlations shows that the correlations between the skills assessed by the respondents are statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), positive and considerably strong: the majority's Kendall tau coefficient is 0.4 and higher; therefore, it was purposeful to analyze them by factor analysis which yielded two obtained factors. Relations of factors with skills are presented in Table 2.

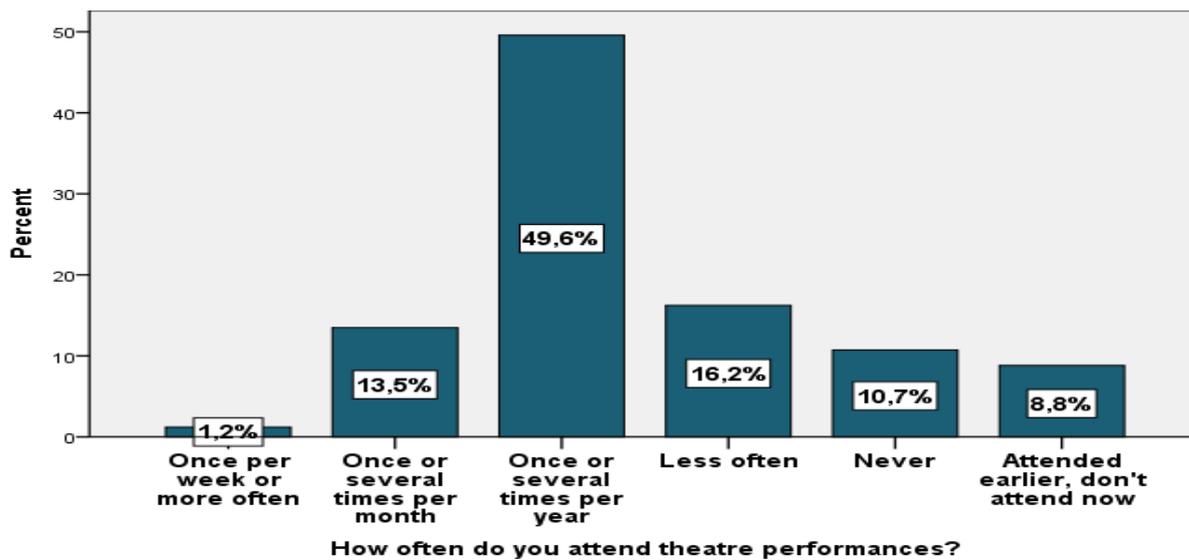
**Table 2 Factors of cultural awareness skills**

How do you assess your skill:	Factor	
	1.	2.
to plan and perform your work creatively?	0.888	-0.113
to plan your time taking into account cultural events?	0.804	
to communicate and cooperate with people of other cultures?	0.798	
to act independently?	0.747	
to think in an original way?	0.706	
to express your opinion among the specialist of the same area?	0.676	
to take advantage of the emerged opportunities to express yourself?	0.651	0.164
to implement your goals and ideas?	0.603	0.255
to organize your activity according to your hobbies?	0.596	0.188
to assume responsibility for your actions?	0.433	0.289
to solve personal internal problems?		0.876
to formulate your goals and ideas?		0.771
to convince others that you can be as you are?	0.192	0.604
to face challenges and new opportunities for self-expression?	0.291	0.519

These factors have strong mutual correlations ( $r = 0.70^{***}$ ). Before rotating, the second factor explained only about 5.4 perc. of the dispersion. The factors are difficult to interpret as it is not obvious what is common among the questions that fell into the same factor. This can be explained by the fact that there are no small correlations among the skills, all are at least 0.33. It can be assumed that it was too difficult for the respondents to assess each of the skills rather precisely; therefore, they often assessed them “in block”, equally. Only the first factor is used for further analysis as a generalized assessment of respondents’ skills. No statistically significant differences were found between skill assessment provided by different gender groups. There is also a weak dependence on age:  $\rho = -0.12^*$ , with age the assessment of skills decreases slightly. There is no statistically significant relation with the acquired education level, but skill assessment decreases slightly with the decreasing of number of residents in the respondent’s place of residence:  $\rho = -0.10^*$ . The highest assessment of skills was received from the city dwellers and the lowest from respondents living in rural places. Skill assessment positively correlates with the evaluation of the importance of cultural awareness:  $\tau_b = 0.19^{***}$ . The frequency of attending a theatre has also a positive correlation with skill assessment:  $\tau_b = 0.15^{***}$ .

### Theatre art which develops cultural awareness

Analyzing the impact of adult spectators’ cultural awareness self-education through drama art, the question “*How often do you attend theatrical performances?*” is particularly important. The responses to this question are generalized in Figure 1.



**Fig. 1** Frequency of attending theatrical performances

The obtained research findings indicate that the majority of the respondents attend theatrical performances “once or some times per year”, only 7 respondents attend theatre very often and 19.5 perc. do not attend theatrical performances.

Further we wanted to find out “*Why people attend drama theatre performances?*”. Eight reasons were suggested; the respondents could also add their own reasons. The results are presented in Table 3. It is evident that the most often mentioned reasons are related with theatre art, enhancement of thoughts and feelings, leisure time and communication.

**Table 3** Reasons for attending theatrical performances

Reasons	Frequencies (N)	Percent (perc.)
I like theatre art	233	39.3
It is my leisure time pursuit	164	27.7
I perceive theatre art	90	15.2
Performance enhances my thoughts and feelings leading to acquiring better knowledge about the surroundings	199	33.6
Performance fosters my creative self-expression	116	19.6
Performance is an opportunity for me to learn about my weaknesses and strengths	95	16.0
Performance for me is communication	136	22.9
I cannot refuse invitations from other people to attend a performance	78	13.2

The results obtained while analyzing the reasons why people do not attend theatrical performances are presented in Table 4. The results show that the respondents are more active while recording the reasons enhancing attending a theatrical performance than while noting reasons for not attending the theatre. No single reason can be discerned except for the reason that theatre tickets are too expensive, but this reason is noted only slightly more often than others. Only 6 perc. of the respondents claim that theatrical performances are outside the area of their interests. These and the previous results show the universality of theatre art which is understandable by practically all adults, but they also show that theatre is a special event,

not an everyday affair: the majority of the respondents choose this event approximately some times per year, not more often.

**Table 4 Reasons for not attending drama theatre performances**

Reasons	Frequencies (N)	Percent (perc.)
Too expensive tickets	79	13.3
Lack of theatres nearby	57	9.6
Lack of interest in drama theatre performances	36	6.1
Lack of drama theatre performances brought to the place where I live	29	4.9
Rare drama theatre tours	22	3.7
Genres of offered performances not suitable (comedy, tragedy, drama)	17	2.9
Physical difficulties (age, disability)	16	2.7
Level not suitable (too low)	10	1.7
Level not suitable (too high)	2	0.3

Table 5 illustrates data of relationship between the assessment of importance of cultural awareness competence and the reasons of attending theatrical performances. Only statistically significant relationships are presented.

**Table 5 Relationship between importance of cultural awareness and reasons for attending a theatrical performance applying Kendall tau-c coefficient**

Reason of attendance	$\tau_c$	p
I like theatre art	0.20	< 0.001
It fosters my creative self-expression	0.19	< 0.001
It enhances my thoughts and feelings leading to acquiring better knowledge about the surroundings	0.17	< 0.001
It is my leisure time pursuit	0.12	0.005
I cannot refuse invitations from other people to attend a performance	0.09	0.004
I perceive theatre art	0.09	0.011
It is an opportunity for me to learn about my strengths and weaknesses	0.08	0.022

Further it was analyzed how attending a theatrical performance, reasons that enhance people to attend a theatrical performances as well as reasons for not attending a theatrical performance are related with the respondents' gender, age, educational background and place of residence. No distinct gender differences were found ( $p < 0.01$ ); with the increase in age, there is increase in attending a theatrical performance more often ( $\tau_b = 0.14^{***}$ ), respondents admit more often that they like theatrical art ( $\tau_b = 0.18^{***}$ ), that it is a form of communication ( $\tau_b = 0.18^{***}$ ) and a leisure time pursuit ( $\tau_b = 0.11^{**}$ ). On the other hand, with the increase in age, the percentage of respondents who state that performances do not interest them ( $\tau_b =$

-0.14\*\*\*) and that theatrical performances are not brought to the respondent places of residence ( $\tau_b = -0.11^{**}$ ) declined.

Educational background is more clearly related to the frequency of attending a theatrical performance ( $\tau_b = 0.23^{***}$ ) as well as to some other reasons for attending: people like theatre art ( $\tau_b = 0.24^{***}$ ), consider it to be a leisure time pursuit ( $\tau_b = 0.19^{**}$ ), a form of communication ( $\tau_b = 0.19^{***}$ ), performance enhances their thoughts and feelings leading to acquiring better knowledge about the surroundings ( $\tau_b = 0.15^{***}$ ), they understand theatre art ( $\tau_b = 0.14^{***}$ ).

The type of place of residence is related at 0.01 level of statistical significance only to the understandable reasons for not attending a theatrical performance: lack of theatres nearby ( $\tau_b = 0.20^{***}$ ) and lack of theatrical performances brought to the respondent's location ( $\tau_b = 0.11^{**}$ ).

Summarizing the research findings, a rank regression analysis was performed with the frequency of attending a theatrical performance as a dependable variant and demographic variables as well as assessment of the importance of other generic competences as independent variables (predictors). The results of this analysis are presented in Table 6. Aiming at a more equal distribution of attending theatrical performance categories, the category "once a week or more often" was merged with the category "once or sometimes per month".

**Table 6 Relationship between frequency of theatre attendance with demographic indicators and importance of cultural awareness**

Predictor	Coefficient	p.
Age	-.013	.011
Importance of competence: cultural awareness and self-expression	.241	.026
Importance of competence: initiative and entrepreneurship	.217	.030
Level of education: lower secondary	.727	.024
Level of education: secondary, vocational, upper secondary	.398	.003

*Notes. Only statistically significant results ( $p < 0.05$ ) are presented. While interpreting the results it is necessary to take into account that in theatre attendance higher frequency is expressed by a smaller figure.*

As seen in Table 6, two generic competences out of the total list are statistically significantly related with attending theatre: cultural awareness and, quite unexpectedly, initiative and entrepreneurship. Higher education level and senior age also enhance more frequent theatre attendance.

## 6. Conclusion

Summarizing the overview of the theories it can be assumed that, according to the premises of the analyzed theories, in various life situations an adult learner continues to study, constructs knowledge and interprets phenomena on the basis of this knowledge. The conclusions of these theories allow to state that an adult person, participating (actively or passively) in a cultural event or watching a performance at the theatre educates himself/herself culturally, and the main goal of this continuous learning process is the development of consciousness which occurs with the help of reflection. It is possible to state that during theatrical activity/expression, acquiring their aesthetic experience adult spectators have a real opportunity to

discover and choose their moral values, thus contributing to one of the most important goals – spiritual development of a personality, increase of cultural literacy, and etc.

Having revealed to adult's attitude to cultural awareness and self-education through theatre arts, it emerged that: In all cases leisure pursuits have positive correlations with each other which leads to the assumption that all the analyzed pursuits are more or less related to cultural awareness in such a way that the increase in the pursuit and increase in cultural awareness happen in parallel and do not contradict each other. Almost all respondents admitted enhancing their cultural erudition, i.e. they marked at least one way of cultural development. The results also show that cultural erudition development is statistically significantly related to theatre arts: watching performances at the theatre, recreation centres or via means of telecommunication.

Cultural awareness exerts a positive impact upon the attitude to theatre arts: the more relevant cultural awareness is for the respondents, the better their attitude to theatre arts is; it was confirmed by the obtained positive regression coefficient. The better the respondents' attitude to theatre arts is, the more they tend to educate themselves through theatre arts.

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