THESIS

ELEMENTS OF A SUBJECT-CENTERED EDUCATION MODEL IN OCCUPATIONAL

THERAPY EDUCATION

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

ELEMENTS OF A SUBJECT-CENTERED EDUCATION MODEL IN OCCUPATIONAL

THERAPY EDUCATION

For two decades, scholars have urged the occupational therapy profession to prioritize placing occupation at the center of curricular designs and educational activities in order to advance occupational science and therapy (e.g., Yerxa, 1998; Whiteford & Wilcock, 2001). Subject-centered education has been proposed as one model for occupational therapy education (Hooper, 2006, 2010). However, the elements of the model and their transactions required further empirical development. Elements included the *subject* of occupation, other *topics*, and a *community of knowers* (Palmer, 1998). Video data were collected from U.S. occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant programs as part of a larger study by Hooper, Krishnagiri, Price, Bilics, Taff, and Mitcham (in press) and secondarily analyzed. The thematic analysis identified which elements of a subject-centered model were present and described the interactions between elements. A reconstructed narrative of each program's video helped to illustrate the major findings. All elements of the subject-centered model seemed to be present, however interactions were more prevalent than individual elements. For instance, occupation was most often taught in relation to topics and people. Perhaps because of its complexity, occupation was rarely taught on its own and seemed a challenge to teach. The model of subject-centered education provided a valuable conceptual framework for identifying how occupation was taught and learned in the classroom.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Introduction

The occupational therapy profession was founded upon a paradigm of occupation, that is, the person was viewed holistically, with mind and body inextricably linked and health linked to being occupied (Kielhofner, 1992). Then, in the 1940s and 50s, occupational therapy was influenced by a mechanistic paradigm, a reductionist view of humans, and a medical model of health and disease. Since, then occupational therapy has reembraced holism and a paradigm of occupation that champions many of its foundational principles and values, such as the nature of humans as occupational beings and occupation as a valued therapeutic agent. In occupational therapy, the subject of occupation is understood as a person's meaningful and purposeful use of time and the engagement in the active process of living that is strongly linked to health and well-being (Dickie, 2009; Fisher, 2009; Royeen, 2002a). In short, occupation is "the process of doing with meaning" (Royeen, 2002a, p. 116). A paradigm of occupation is important in shaping future occupational therapy practice, research, and education. (Kielhofner, 1992).

For nearly two decades, occupational therapy scholars have urged the profession to prioritize placing occupation at the center of its curricular designs and educational activities (Nielson, 1998; Yerxa, 1998; Whiteford & Wilcock, 2001; Royeen, 2002a). Yet little is known about how occupation is taught and learned in occupational therapy classrooms even though several scholars have suggested there is a great need to teach occupation in order to advance the occupational therapy profession (Nielson, 1998; Yerxa, 1998; Whiteford & Wilcock, 2001; Royeen, 2002a). Therefore, more descriptive research is needed if occupation is to become the explicit central subject of occupational therapy education. This study examined video records of occupation being addressed in occupational therapy classrooms. Studying how occupation is commonly addressed in American occupational therapy programs can provide a means for

occupational therapy educators to identify what their courses and curricula are teaching about occupation and to develop strategies to clarify and centralize occupation. Strengthening the subject of occupation in occupational therapy education will advance the profession's vision for the future. My primary research aim was to examine the elements of subject-centered education as well as the interactions between elements through three research questions: (1) Which elements of a subject-centered education model were present when occupational therapy educators addressed occupation in the classroom? (2) How did the central subject of occupation interact with relevant topics? (3) How did the central subject of occupation interact with the community of knowers? After exploring the presence of these elements and interactions, I was able to say more about how a model of subject-centered education could explicate how the subject of occupation is being taught to occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant students.

Conceptual Framework and Rationale

Since occupation is considered to be a central or core subject of occupational therapy, I used Palmer's (1998) model of subject-centered education as a conceptual framework for studying occupation-centered education.

Subject-Centered Education

The elements of Palmer's (1998) model of subject-centered education are the *subject*, a *community of knowers*, and surrounding course *topics* (Figure 1). Palmer referred to the *subject* as "the great thing" and wrote "by *great things,* I mean the subjects around which the circle of seekers has always gathered" and "that call us together… to know, to teach, to learn" (Palmer, 1998, p. 107). For the purposes of this study, I named *occupation* as the great thing: the central subject around which the profession of occupational therapy is gathered. In a subject-centered

paradigm of teaching and learning, knowledge about the subject is not viewed as an objective

constant, but neither is it viewed as entirely relative. Instead, a community is called together to

actively engage with a central subject that is not fully knowable but possesses a "transcendent

dimension of truth" (Palmer, 1998, p. 104).

A *knower* was any member of the community of truth that had gathered around to study

and understand the central subject. In a subject-centered classroom, students and teachers as well

as the scholars who have come before them are part of a *community of knowers* who all directly

connect to the subject (Palmer, 1998) (Figure 1). In this way, members of the community of

knowers interact with the subject to learn and to know it. Palmer (1998) contrasted this with an

expert-centered model, since knowledge of the central subject should not be limited to what one

expert knows and says about the subject to a learner. A community of knowers, past and present,

virtual and local, exists to discover "truth" about a subject; truth is recognized as "the passionate

and disciplined process of inquiry and dialogue itself, as the dynamic conversation of a

community that keeps testing old conclusions and coming into new ones" about a subject

(Palmer, 1998, p. 104).

Palmer (1998) often referred to community of knowers as encompassing a whole

discipline creating knowledge about its core subject. In occupational therapy education, students

and teachers belong to a community of knowers that includes occupational therapists, recipients

of occupational therapy services, occupational scientists, and contributors from related

disciplines (Hooper, 2010). Occupational therapy education has previously acknowledged the

importance of a program's faculty forming a dedicated community of scholars to study

occupation and to design curricula that place occupation at the center of learning (Nielson, 1998;

Wood, Nielson, Humphry, Coppola, Baranek & Rourk, 2000; Yerxa, 1998). Since truth about the

subject is found in the community's discourse and standards of inquiry, this study looked at

video records of classroom sessions to capture the whole-class dialogue when students and

teachers addressed occupation explicitly (Derry et al., 2010; Jennings & Mills, 2009; Pierce,

2005).
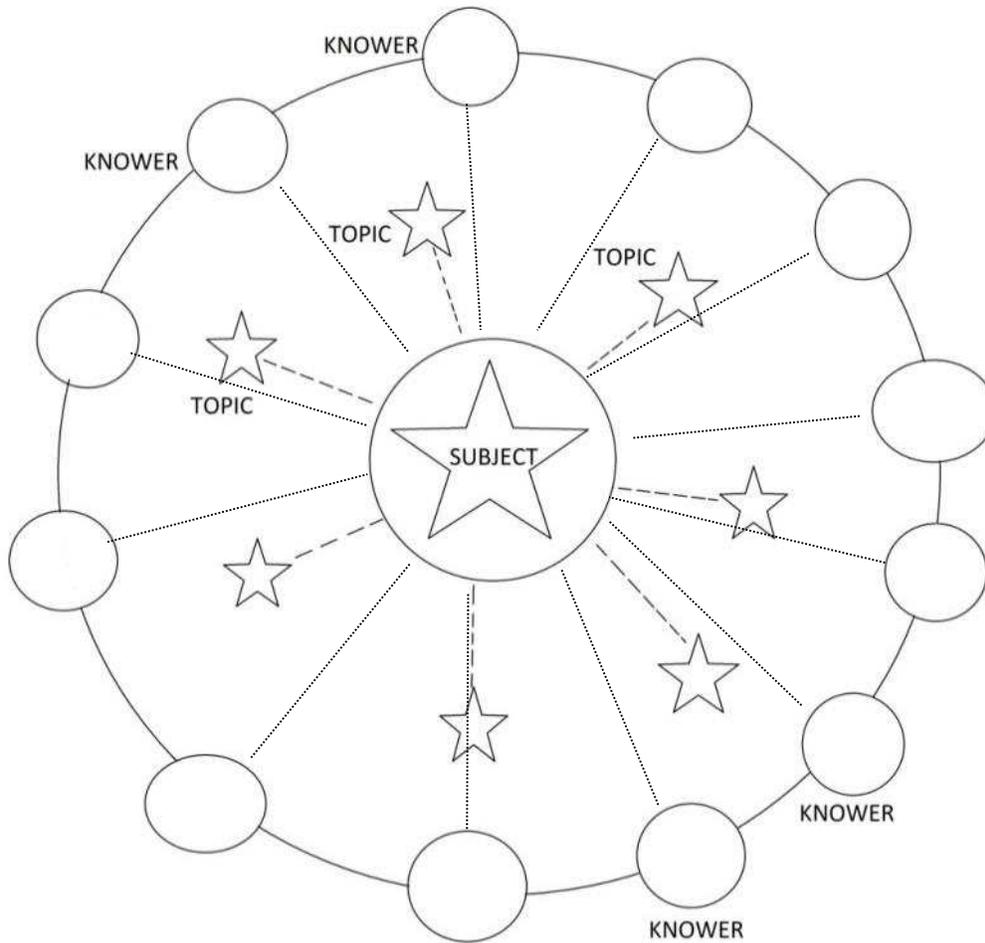
Figure 1. Subject-centered education. The community of knowers, for example faculty,

students, and other scholars in the field, is gathered around the central subject and its

surrounding course topics. Course topics are taught in direct relation to the subject (Adapted

from Palmer, 1998; see also Hooper, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2013; Hooper, Krishnagiri, Price, Bilics, Taff, & Mitcham, 2014).

As seen in Figure 1, the community of knowers is not the only element encircling the subject. Outside the central subject, there are many other topics that are taught and learned (Figure 1). I drew from Hooper (2006) to define *topic* as "content under immediate attention" (p. 555). Hooper (2006) identified Palmer's (1998) subject-centered education as a valuable model to occupational therapy education and empirically identified two tiers of content, "the immediate topic" and the subject just behind it (p. 558). To help distinguish topic from subject, Hooper (2006) pointed out that Palmer's (1998) "core subject is related to but exists apart from the theories that explain it, the texts that talk about it, the courses one takes to learn it, and even apart from the discipline that studies it" (2006, p. 552). It is essential for occupational therapy education to address occupation as a central subject, therefore essential to recognize a conceptual delineation between topics and the central subject. The course topics help to explain the central subject, but may also threaten to obscure the central subject (Hooper, 2010; Palmer, 1998). For instance, in this study, I found that in the middle of learning how to do occupational analysis, a specific topic like visual neglect threatened to obscure the subject of occupation present in the class dialogue.

The model of subject-centered education also depicted the links or interactions between elements. My primary research aim was to examine the elements of subject-centered education including the interactions between elements. That is, I sought to understand both how the elements of the model were addressed individually and also how classroom processes linked the elements. Previous occupational therapy educational research has observed subject, topics, knowers, and teaching practices, yet interactions have only been minimally studied (Hooper,

2006, 2008). After exploring the presence of these elements and interactions, I was able to say more about a model of subject-centered education and how the subject of occupation is being taught to occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant students.

Subject-Centered Education in Occupational Therapy

   Challenges of curricular-level occupation-centered education. Making the subject of occupation more explicit and visible to students echoes previously mentioned calls for reform and published curriculum revisions in occupational therapy education (Royeen, 2002a; Yerxa, 1998; Whiteford & Wilcock, 2001). The challenges are that occupation is found in multiple places in a curriculum and the tiers and themes of teaching and learning occupation that have been previously presented by scholars suggested that this complex subject is taught in diverse and complex ways. For example, occupation is centralized in curricula through core curriculum themes such as "*the human as an occupational being*" or "at the most basic level… 'talking occupation'" (Whiteford & Wilcock, 2001, p. 84; Wood et al., 2000, p. 590). Occupation is taught both conceptually and practically in the places where students learn about occupational therapy philosophy, occupational science, occupation-based practice, their own experiences of occupations, and the experiences of disability and occupation (Pierce, 1999; Whiteford & Wilcock, 2001). Another major challenge is that occupation as a concept is difficult to express; therefore the full power and meaning of occupation often remains hidden in the minds of students and therapists (Hasselkus, 2006; Hooper, 2010; Pierce, 1999; Royeen, 2002a; Wilding & Whiteford, 2007).

   Curricular strategies for occupation-centered education. In an attempt to address the possible obscurity of occupation, there have been calls for reform and subsequent changes at the curricular level of occupational therapy education. In 1998, an early occupational scientist called

for a "curricular-renaissance by using occupation as the central organizing idea" as a "source of power for an integrated, autonomous profession" (Yerxa, 1998, pp. 369-370). Wood, Nielson, Humphry, Coppola, Baranek & Rourk (2000) provided occupational therapy education with a rich description of the curricular renaissance that their faculty built around a foundation of occupation and occupational science. Early on in the curriculum planning process, the faculty immersed themselves in relevant literature and engaged as a community of scholars in deep discourse to develop its "philosophical views of occupation, the occupational human, and occupational therapy" (Wood et al., 2000, p. 588). These developed into "three curricular themes that center around the defining philosophical traditions of occupational therapy and that are supported by occupational science: *occupation, the human as an occupational being*, and *occupation as a medium of change"* (Wood et al., 2000, p. 590). The curriculum's themes connected the learning outcomes, content areas, and courses, thus serving to center learning on the subject of occupation. Yerxa (1998) and Wood et al. (2000) valued an occupational therapy curriculum that was strongly integrated, such that "themes are woven together to form a fabric of understanding" (Yerxa, 1998, p. 366). These examples of strategies to center learning on the subject of occupation illustrate that integrating occupation in occupational therapy curricula is a priority. Therefore, in this study, the application of subject-centered education to occupational therapy education can provide educators with explicit strategies by which to centralize occupation and integrate knowledge of occupation in their courses and curricula.

Pedagogy in occupational therapy education. Palmer's (1998) subject-centered education is not limited to any particular pedagogy, and since it entails active forms of inquiry, it may appear similar to models of active learning, student-centered learning, or social learning. Royeen (2002b) asserted that "active learning has always been a tenet of occupational therapy"

and therefore is "easily generalizable to occupational therapy education" (Royeen, 2002b, p. 211). I suspect the same may be true of subject-centered education in that occupation has always been a core tenet of occupational therapy and may be taken for granted in its educational programs. I believe, like Pierce (1999), "Our culture carries forward what we know but do not clearly express. Every occupational therapy curriculum is about occupation, however you define it" (p. 2). Therefore, further action is needed to classify the breadth and depth with which knowledge about occupation is constructed in the classroom and to make its role in occupational therapy education more explicit.

Rationale and aim of this study. Given occupation as the central subject of occupational therapy and given scholars' urgings that it also become the center of education and the challenges in making it so, my research aim was to identify any elements of subject-centered education that appeared when occupational therapy educators explicitly addressed occupation in their classrooms. Previous literature has applied subject-centered education to occupational therapy education, but focused on the instructional practices that educators used to link topics to the central subject (Hooper, 2006). In a case study of an exemplary occupation-centered program, occupational therapy educators perceived that the course topics helped explain the subject of occupation (Hooper, 2006). Therefore, my research questions for the proposed study were: (1) Which elements of a subject-centered education model were present when occupational therapy educators addressed occupation in the classroom? (2) How did the central subject of occupation interact with relevant topics? (3) How did the central subject of occupation interact with the community of knowers?

Methodology

Overall Research Design

  Over the course of planning and performing this research, the working research design has journeyed from a preliminary case study design, to a grounded theory approach in the proposal, to thematic analysis in practice (Boyatzis, 1998; Gibson & Brown, 2009; Merriam, 1998). Each of these approaches contributed to the research process and researcher perspectives over time, however, theory-driven thematic analysis was ultimately chosen for having the best fit with the conceptual framework, the research questions, and the qualitative analysis skills of the primary researcher/author.

  Thematic analysis describes a process for encoding information and assisting the researcher's insight that is often used in other types of qualitative methods. It is not seen as set apart or self-contained method in the same way that grounded theory is (Boyatzis, 1998). A *theme* is an identified pattern in the data that describes, organizes, and interprets observations. Themes can initially be generated inductively and deductively. *Theory-driven thematic analysis* means that the thematic codes are developed from a theory and the resulting interpretations are often confirming, refuting, modifying, or otherwise commenting on the theory (Boyatzis, 1998). A theory-driven approach is appropriate for hypothesis testing or for applying a model or framework to a set of data in order to gain insight.

  The original purpose and rationale for this study, the conceptual framework, and the type of data used to address the research questions remained principally the same throughout the research process.

Participants and Sampling

The data for this study were collected as part of a multiphase study by Hooper, Krishnagiri, Price, Bilics, Taff, and Mitcham (in press) to answer the question: "How is occupation being addressed and taught in occupational therapy education?" Approval for the study was obtained by the Colorado State University institutional review board. Programs were invited to participate by an email to the program director, followed by a telephone call to schedule an interview with the key informant. The key informant interviewed was either the program director or another member of the faculty who was knowledgeable about the program's entire curriculum.

I selected five of the participating programs to include in this analysis in order to answer the research question, "Which elements of a subject-centered education model were present when occupational therapy educators addressed occupation in the classroom?" The selected programs represented a range of institution types according to the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, however they were largely selected to parallel the initial programs being analyzed in the large study (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). The selection was influenced by which programs sent video data first.

Program 1 was an occupational therapy assistant program at a Carnegie Classification (2010) Baccalaureate/Associate's College. Program 2 was a master's level occupational therapy program at a large Master's College and University (2010). Program 3 was a master's level occupational therapy program at a large Master's College and University (2010). Program 4 was an occupational therapy program at a large Research University with high research activity (2010). Program 5 was an occupational therapy program at a small Doctoral/Research University (2010). All five of the aforementioned programs were located in the Eastern region of the U.S.

Efforts have been made to protect the anonymity of the programs, educators, and students who participated in this research. Names and other identifying features were omitted or changed.

Data Collection Methods

The multiphase study by Hooper, Krishnagiri, Price, Bilics, Taff, and Mitcham (in press) collected three types of data. For the first type of data, the research team for the larger project conducted semi-structured interviews with one or more key informants from each program in the sample. Program directors and the individual educators who were recorded were aware of the purpose of the study. In the consent form and at the close of the interview they were instructed to select artifacts and record class sessions to submit that represented how occupation is addressed by their program. Artifacts were the second type of data and included course syllabi, class assignments, assignment rubrics, lecture materials, and handouts for lab activities. Some participants submitted additional documents that explicitly explained or illustrated the design of the curriculum. The third type of data that was collected was video data of educators during classroom sessions. Participating programs were instructed to submit one to three hours of any course or courses that demonstrated how occupation is addressed by that program. The instructions were to record the educator while students could remain off-camera. At the time of my study, video data had been received from eight occupational therapy and five occupational therapy assistant programs. The videos that were submitted often included sessions from the first day of the program or from introduction to occupational therapy courses, but also included courses or sessions that occurred later in the semester or curriculum. The class sessions that were submitted did not necessarily show the first time that occupation was taught and occupation did not have to be the principle topic. I became involved in this project after the small pilot study was completed and after the procedures for sampling and data collection were already

established. My role in the research began with managing the data records: audio records and transcripts of interviews, digital and hard copies of artifacts, and digital video records.

My study used the video data collected from the large study. The use of video data is frequently used in anthropology and other disciplines and was chosen for this study for its ability to capture the complex contexts, temporal sequences, and social interactions that characterize the phenomenon of teaching occupation (Pierce, 2005). Since my research was exploring the application of subject-centered education to occupational therapy education, I intended to approach the entire data set of videos as a complete case. Namely, occupational therapy education was the case rather than individual occupational therapy programs or individual educators. However, it became clear during the analytic process that the best way to understand my findings was within the temporal context of each individual class session. I could present richer and more illuminating narratives about the data if I distinguished each unique program as a defined case. Therefore, that was how I presented my findings, along with a complementary discussion of the key interactions and themes. Even so, the aim of this study was not to evaluate or compare the quality of the participating programs.

The specific research questions for my study were determined through observation of the one hour video from the pilot study and from my review of occupational therapy, occupational science, and education literature. These led me to ask: (1) Which elements of a subject-centered education model are present when occupational therapy educators address occupation in the classroom? (2) How does the central subject of occupation interact with relevant topics? (3) How does the central subject of occupation interact with the community of knowers?

Data Analysis Procedures

      Preparation of the video data. I began my analysis by watching several of the videos and taking notes that helped refine my research questions and my plans for analysis. In the context of a qualitative research course, I completed a pilot study that informed my final procedures for analysis. These and other steps of my analysis procedures are illustrated in Appendix A. From the stratified sample of participating programs in the large study, I selected five in order to answer the research questions. The videos submitted from these five programs were diverse in institution type and in regards to the length, content, and context of each class session (see Table 1).

Table 1
Amount of Video Data from OT/OTA Programs

| | Program | | | | |
Length of video	1	2	3	4	5
Submitted	155 minutes	66 min	21 min	50 min	54 min
Thematically analyzed	3 min 55 sec	15 min 7 sec	3 min 25 sec	2 min 11 sec	5 min 57 sec

      Creation of an event map. The next step in preparing my data for analysis was to create an event map of each video in order to develop a descriptive index or map of classroom events as they occurred over time (Gibson & Brown, 2009; Jennings & Mills, 2009; see Appendix B for a sample event map from my study). An *event* is a distinct unit of content or shift in focus in the classroom. An event map is a sequential collection of events as they occur in the video. For instance, the first event in a video was often an introduction to the class content for that day, after which the educator would transition into teaching that content. I also delineated notable shifts in focus from one topic to another. This entire step of the process required multiple viewings of the videos as I continuously refined the event maps, for example demarcating sub-events as

necessary, until I was satisfied that each event map could serve as an outline for the entire video and as a functional index for the next stages of my data analysis.

Identification of events that address occupation. My next step in analysis was to assign an *occupation prioritization category* to each event, which was recorded onto the event maps (see Appendices A and B and Table 2). These categories resulted from an identified need for a screening tool to prioritize events in each video that addressed occupation and transcribe those for further analysis, rather than transcribe and analyze events that did not address occupation and therefore would not contribute to my research questions. This screening procedure was necessary due to the fact that I had up to three hours of data from each program case. An intensity sample was chosen over other sampling methods, such as random selection of video segments, for its ability to best help answer my research questions.

I developed a decision tree in an effort to standardize how I delineated the data into the five categories (see Appendix C). I also wrote memos to justify why I perceived an event as Category I, II, III, IV or V, which enabled me to monitor my justification and inform any outside reader of the process. These categories were effective in narrowing the body of data into a meaningful dense sample of events explicitly focused on occupation. As part of intensity sampling, I decided to transcribe all Category I and II events and used those transcripts for the next step of coding and thematic analysis. Category I was assigned to instances when the word "occupation" was used explicitly and occupation was the main idea in the event or sub-event. Category II events also stated "occupation" explicitly, however it was addressed briefly in the event. Events labeled as Category III, IV, and V were excluded from further analysis, other than the ways they informed my holistic understanding of the entire class session through previous experiences watching the videos.

Table 2

Definitions of Occupation Prioritization Categories

Category	Definition
I	*Occupation* is stated explicitly; Occupation is the main idea in the event/sub-event
II	*Occupation* is stated explicitly; Occupation is addressed only briefly
III	*Occupation* is mentioned, yet only in the context of an occupational-named topic, e.g. "occupational profile"
IV	Recognizable as occupation, yet it is not explicitly mentioned; Occupation is described or referenced without being named as *occupation*, e.g. discussions about meaningfulness or activities of daily living
V	*Occupation* is not explicitly mentioned; Occupation is significantly absent

This stratification of the sample was consistent with a theory-driven approach to thematic analysis since at every step of data collection and sampling, procedures were directed towards answering the research questions based on the theoretical and conceptual model of subject-centered education (Boyatzis, 1998). For example, the procedural steps of event mapping, screening by category, and transcribing were informed by my research questions and were theory driven. These procedures helped prepare the original video data for thematic analysis (Gibson & Brown, 2009). As such, the maps and transcripts remained close to the data yet while they were being produced I was already reflecting on what I observed and analyzing which key events were most relevant to my research questions. My research interest was the subject at the center of occupational therapy education, namely occupation, which therefore justified my methods to screen for wherever occupation was clearest to find and justified my a priori codes derived from subject-centered education according to a theory-driven approach to thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998).

Procedures of thematic analysis. After I had selected all Category I and II events to include from the five videos, I proceeded with thematic analysis, including the following steps: management of transcribed data, development of codes, application of codes, analysis of coding, generation of themes, and construction of narratives to present findings.

Management of transcribed data. Prior to coding, I transcribed all Category I and II events from each video. I organized and stored all Category I events together and all category II events together, which had two major functions for my analysis process: (1) this organization enabled me to examine how the codes I used differed quantitatively or qualitatively between the two categories, and (2) removed key events from their context and from the surrounding events. This second function was significant to my analytic process in that it helped me to keep my interpretations closer to the data and pay attention to what the educator had actually said.

Development of codes from conceptual framework. Boyatzis (1998) listed three steps for a theory-driven approach to code development: "(a) generating a code" from the theory and previous research findings, "(b) reviewing and revising the code in context of the nature of the raw information, and (c) determining the reliability of the coders and therefore the code" (pp. 35-36). As the first step, I created a priori codes for each element and type of interaction in the model of subject-centered education. I wrote names, definitions, descriptions, and examples of each code into a code book informed by my conceptual framework, Palmer (1998), Hooper (2006), and my initial experiences with the data. The code book was important to all three steps of developing a good and useful code (Boyatzis, 1998). Memo writing and peer debriefing with co-author were methods used to continuously review the applicability of the codes to the data and to track any issues that questioned the reliability of the code.

Application of a priori codes. I preferred to perform some of the coding initially onto hard paper copies of transcripts, especially as I was still reviewing the applicability of the theory-based codes for this data. I also used the qualitative analysis software Atlas.ti for final coding and to sort coded data in preparation for further thematic analysis. Gibson and Brown (2009) noted that a priori codes are useful as preliminary categories for exploration of data, and that part

of that process "may reveal that some ... are not relevant, not particular revealing, hard to gather data on, or simply not interesting" (p. 133). I kept a research journal throughout the entire research process, and much of the memoing that I did while I was actively coding was related to these issues. For example, the subject was often hard to gather data on, due to its relative infrequency and intangibility compared to topics and knowers. Another typical memo might address my experiences coding for the community of knowers since in some cases their presence was very interesting and revealing, yet an educator might identify or address students as knowers in some way many times in the video and not every use of a personal pronoun seemed likely to reveal new insight into the knowers.

Validation and interpretation of codes. According to Boyatzis (1998), when thematic analysis research uses theory-driven codes, "the researcher started with the theory, so once the observations are made about the presence or absence (or degree of presence or absence) of the themes in the raw information, the interpretation is a direct commentary on the theory" (pp. 36-37). Therefore, after completing the process of applying a priori codes to the transcripts, I interpreted the codes and answered my first research question: which elements of a subject-centered education model were present when occupational therapy educators addressed occupation in the classroom?

Generation of themes and findings. To address my remaining research questions and deepen my understanding of how a subject-centered education model could apply to occupational therapy education, I explored the coded data to generate categories and themes about each element and interaction. I ultimately used code families to do much of this broader and deeper analysis of the elements. Code families included an individual element code, such as topic, as well as all possible interactions involving this element, such as topic in interaction with

community of knowers and topic in interaction with subject. This enabled me to consider t

prevalence, patterns, and themes that were observable about topic or about any other elements

whether they were alone or in interaction with other elements. Memo writing was also

instrumental in this step of analysis.

Construction of narratives in order to present findings. In order to present findings from

the above processes, I reconstructed the data into narratives that illustrated the major interactions

and themes found in each program's video. After organizing quotations by codes, code families,

and themes, I selected "telling cases" of how each educator addressed the subject of occupation

and how the subject interacted with topics and interacted with the community of knowers in the

temporal and social context of each of the videos (Mitchell, 1984). Telling cases are not intended

to be representative of the entire data set, but are theoretically sampled events that show the

practices and constructs relevant to the research questions. Therefore, the findings sections of

this paper contains both transcribed data and my thematic findings.

Role of the Researcher

The interviews and all other direct participant contact were performed by members of the

research team other than the author. I managed the data records as they were collected and

coded. For the purposes of the large study, the other members of the research team maintained a

codebook and assigned codes to the artifact data and interview transcripts. I regularly interacted

with the team, their coded data, and the shared code book; these factors and the large ongoing

study influenced my own engagement with the data. My research questions were unique but

interdependent with the research purposes of the large study.

The focus of this study was on the educators and the content they present, however, due

to the use of classroom video data and the researcher's own position as a master's level

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occupational therapy student, the data analysis largely reflected what was observable from the vantage point of a student rather than the true intentions of the educators. Additionally, my theoretical understanding of occupation as a construct and of occupation applied to practice was informed by the extent of my training as an occupational therapist in an entry-level master's program, rather than in an occupational therapy assistant or doctorate program or as an experienced practitioner. Schwandt (2000) describes philosophical hermeneutics, which is related to other interpretivist philosophies but allows me to value and engage my biases to produce an understanding of the actions and meanings that I study. Any knowledge that I produce is a negotiation between myself, the data records, and the individual educators who created the data records. Prior to transcribing and isolating specific events from the videos, I questioned whether the observations and connections that I made about occupation while watching the lecture videos were the same as what were intended by educators and received by their students. I viewed the data from my perspective as an occupational therapy student, yet one who was looking for occupation and looking for links to occupation. With the transcripts, I still had to interpret some of what the educator meant, but relied less on my ability to fill in occupation where it was implied.

Trustworthiness

I endeavored to provide an adequate description of my research methods in order to help establish the trustworthiness of this study and its findings. As a validation strategy, I engaged in peer review with my advisor throughout the process. Additionally, I solicited several external audits from: (a) the team of researchers involved in the large multiphase study, (b) attendants of the 2014 International Conference in Occupational Science, and (c) members of my thesis committee. These auditors (a) indirectly triangulated my findings from the video data with the

findings of the large study, (b) provided constructive feedback around my conceptualization of subject and topic, and (c) played a part in refining my research methods.

Findings

Overall, I found that all individual elements of the subject-centered education model were present, but interactions between the elements were more prominent in the data than individual elements. To present these findings, I will first define and present the overall findings about the interaction between subject and topic and the interaction between subject and the community of knowers. Then, I will illustrate these findings through narratives of key events from each program individually.

Interaction Between Subject and Topic

The interactions between subject and topic present in the subject-centered education model were evident in the data, but the nature of the interaction between subject and topics varied amongst and within the programs. In some class events, I perceived that topic and subject interacted to *centralize occupation in students' thinking*. That is, educators and students held an occupational perspective that guided their thinking even when the topic at hand was not exclusively occupation-focused. In other events, the subject more explicitly served as an organizing concept that *brought together related topics*. In some cases, while teaching a topic, the subject slipped in and out of prominence. That is, the subject was almost like a *momentary detour* from the topic at hand. On the brief detour, an educator added to student's understanding of the subject. The detour also elaborated on the topic's significance to the subject or to members of the community of knowers.

Generally the interaction between subject and topic seemed to be a consequence of the educator going the extra step to link the subject of occupation to topics which realistically could

be taught disconnected from the subject. Sometimes the interaction between subject and topics was strongly integrated while establishing and maintaining clear conceptual delineation of subject and topic. However, sometimes the interaction between subject and topics seemed to represent a confusing intermingling of subject and topic. These interactions are illustrated through vignettes from each program.

Interaction Between Subject and Community of Knowers

Interaction between subject and the knower meant that occupation was being understood, taught, or learned through its personal relationship to the knower or the knower's experiences. In this study, educators made links to the subject by teaching about various members of the community of knowers, meaning that educators constantly related the subject of occupation to people's experiences of it, or how it plays out in people's lives. Additionally, members of the occupational therapy profession, from scholars to students to individual practitioners, are responsible for constructing the meaning of and maintaining connection to the greater subject of occupation. I found that the key types of knowers were: students, educators, clients, people in general, occupational therapists, other people in the health care system, and scholars.

Students. In every program, the occupational therapy students were key knowers who interacted with the subject through their personal occupational experiences and by discussing occupation in the classroom. Educators constructed learning activities that required students to analyze and understand their own everyday occupations as a foundation for understanding occupations of clients. Several educators explicitly identified students as the "stewards of the profession" with responsibilities related to defining occupation, the occupational therapy profession, and its professional jurisdiction, which conveyed an interaction between the subject, both current and future, and student members of the community of knowers.

Educators. Educators seemed to perceive their own role and responsibility as knowers to teach the subject of occupation. Specifically, they expressed their responsibility to teach occupational therapy students what it means to think like an occupational therapist and how to exemplify occupation in their future practice. This demonstrated interactions between knowers (e.g. educators, students, and occupational therapists) as well as interactions between subject and the community of knowers.

Clients. Occupational therapy educators consistently involved clients in their discussion of occupation, which signified that clients were also an important part of the community of knowers. Educators taught that clients have various occupations that they perform, and that each client perceives the significance and importance of an occupation differently. In this way, they demonstrated an interaction between subject and client members of the community of knowers. Educators reinforced that clients with specific characteristics, for example a spinal cord injury, have occupations and "still have roles they want to maintain." Conditions like spinal cord injury were explained in light of how they impact clients' occupations, such as the emotional and psychosocial aspects of clients' experiences performing their occupations. At the same time, the subject was taught in light of how occupation was impacted by a health condition. The overall effect seemed to be that educators were building a contextual holistic view of clients as occupational beings so that the occupational therapy students as knowers looked at a client's occupational performance instead of going "straight for the client factors… those parts that are broken in her." When they named specific client populations, educators seemed to become increasingly practice-driven, giving examples of assessments, like the FIM, and occupation-based interventions to address specific client needs.

People. Educators also linked the subject of occupation to people in general. Most definitions and discussions of the subject of occupation taught that occupations have meaning and significance for all people. For example, educators taught that all people organize their lives around occupation, and when people can't organize themselves that way, that is where occupational therapy can help. The term *people* was more general than the term *clients* and tended to be used in less occupational therapy, practice-driven discussions. In some instances, people referred to a generic population outside of the occupational therapy profession, so that educators could teach students to anticipate how an outsider's perspective on occupation and occupational therapy compared with the views of occupation held within the occupational therapy professional community. In these cases, people outside the occupational therapy profession and those within the profession, including students, interacted with each other as knowers and interacted with the subject of occupation differently.

Occupational therapists. A noteworthy finding was that educators also made a clear point to discuss occupational therapists and the occupational therapy community. For example, while people in general might "interchange occupations and activities," occupational therapists have also had internal discussions about the difference between the terms *activity* and *occupation*. Yet educators claimed there were things that were generally agreed upon regarding how occupational therapists as knowers have previously established and currently think about the subject of occupation. There were also comments trying to capture the mantra of occupational therapy, the things that occupational therapists do, and the kinds of contributions that occupational therapists make in clients' lives that all stood out as ways that educators used the interactions between the subject and the community of knowers to teach occupation.

Health care system. There was also some comparison to what occupational therapy is not, or mention of ideas/forces that limit the power/prestige of occupational therapy. For example, reimbursement in the health care system may make more sense as a topic, but I included it in the community because of the way one educator talked about "they", i.e. the payers, to whom occupational therapists are accountable. These represented members of the community that interact with occupational therapy practitioners and interact with clients receiving occupational therapy services, therefore influence occupational therapy practice. Educators also discussed "they" in the interest of explaining how students as knowers were responsible for maintaining their professional identity in connection to the subject of occupation and how topics such as documentation interacted with occupational therapists and others in the health care system.

Scholars. Scholars were another member of the community of knowers that occupational therapy educators often referenced while teaching the subject of occupation. In two of the videos that featured the educator explicitly defining occupation for students, they included definitions from several scholars who each defined or described occupation in the literature. Because students were placed into a dialogue with scholars of occupation, this was another example of the interaction between subject and community of knowers.

Narrative Illustration of Interaction between Subject and Topic and Interaction between Subject and Community of Knowers within the Data

The interaction between subject and topic was present in all five programs included in this explorative study, yet in several different ways. Program by program, I have illustrated the findings about the interaction between subject and topic using key events from each class session. Often, the same events were also able to illustrate the various interactions between the

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subject and the community of knowers present in the five programs. Therefore, I illustrated both sets of findings for each program, continued below. After I present the data in the form of transcribed event, I offer some discussion of the key findings and themes that I culled together from the data, which I previously summarized above.

Program 1

Program 1 provided a 155 minute video that featured an educational activity in which one educator played a client who had recently experience a cerebral vascular accident (CVA), one educator played the client's spouse, and a student played the role of the occupational therapist in a therapy session in a rehabilitation setting. The purpose of this class session was to practice observation and documentation skills. Students seemed to have previous learning experiences with the clinical skills used in the role play and with writing an occupational profile, although it may have been their first time writing service documentation.

Interaction between subject and topic. The video from Program 1 was unique in that it began with a lengthy role play, which lasted 34 minutes. The student was supposed to teach the client and spouse upper body dressing, passive range of motion, and a transfer. After the role play ended, the main educator led the class through documentation of the client, whom I've renamed as 'Silva Smith.'

> "Remember, my template for your documentation is going to be, first, in the note, you're going to write about client factors and performance skills, and we can do that first and discuss that first if you'd like, and maybe that would take you through the pattern, but this format is written with areas of occupation first. And the reason I set the format up that way is that I always want an OT to think about occupation first.

In the olden days, and even now as we know, a client comes into your clinic and we go straight for the client factors. Straight to "Silva's got poor balance." Straight to "Silva can't scan past midline." Straight to all those parts that are broken in her and we start treating those, just like the old days of uniform terminology.

When we're trying to have you think like an OT, think through the framework, you really need to look at Who is Silva? What does she need to do?

What is her profile, and then what is in the way of her being able to accomplish that? … What you want in each of these categories are things that are going to be pertinent information to either a subjective observation or an objective observation, your S or your O. Things that I say, you know, maybe my lability that I demonstrated several times through this casing, that's the kind of information. Maybe things that I said about "When I go home, everything will be okay." That's pretty subjective quote there and doesn't that tell you volumes about this case. My denial, and Mr. Smith's denial, is very evident in that quote. So instead of just saying "I make peach pie," who cares! Okay, but "when I get home everything is going to be okay" is a very significant subjective thing. So you might want to incorporate something like that, in what you're going to have that will then be transposed to your note, okay.

Observations are observations, we're going to know what those are, okay, we're going to actually see what we've done here. Also, you want to think about, "what's the big picture here?" What information do you need to establish your assessment of this case. You can't just talk about, um, well for example, if you just talked about my max assist of dressing and my max of transfers and my horrible spasticity and can't come to midline, and you make an assessment of the case "She's a good rehab candidate that will go home

independently." Or "will go home with assistance." Is that the story here? What do you

think, let's kind of work backwards, what do you think the story is here? What's going to

happen to this couple when they go home when she goes home in two weeks?"

During the above event, documentation of a therapy session was the primary topic that

was taught and learned. Documentation is a therapeutic skill that is taught in many other

professions. Therefore, it was the link between the subject of occupation and the topic of

documentation that characterized this topic as instrumental to occupational therapy education. In

the subject-centered education model, the above quote could be illustrated as below in Figure 2.
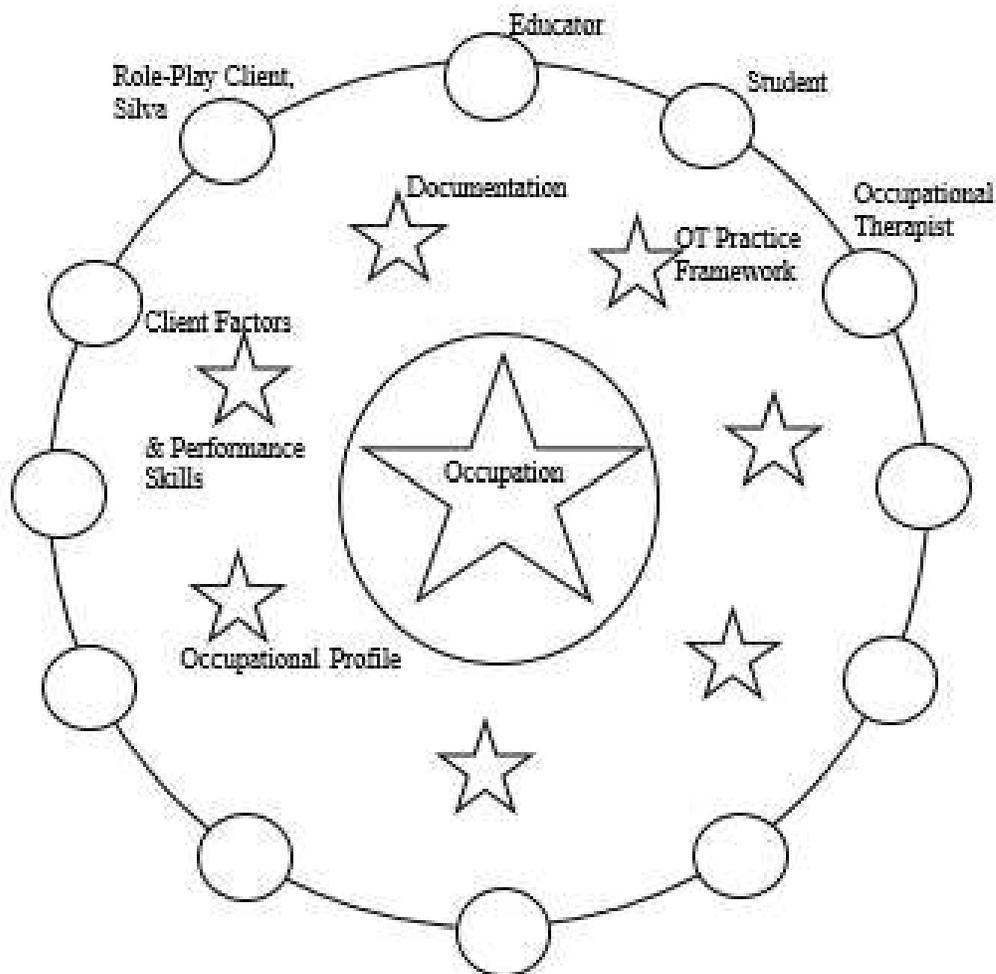
Figure 2. Program 1. The community of knowers included the educator, students, client from the role play (Silva Smith), and occupational therapists. Course topics included documentation and client factors. Interactions between these elements were present but not illustrated here.

The interaction between subject and topic became clearer when the educator stated, "but this format is written with areas of occupation first. And the reason I set the format up that way is that I always want an OT to think about occupation first." The students and educator could have gone over the documentation template and written about areas of occupation without this extra remark. Yet this strong statement served to centralize occupation in students' thinking, despite the fact that the majority of the classroom activity was focused on and driven by other topics, such as documentation and client factors. In the role play and discussion preceding this moment, it seemed as if students and educator were focused on topics, such as the therapeutic skills and client factors observed in the role play. The students observed the Silva's performance with upper body dressing, specific impairments (e.g. visual and motor impairments), and emotional lability first-hand. At times it seems as if the student who was acting as the therapist was preoccupied with therapeutic skills such as range of motion and teaching hemi-dressing techniques. Meanwhile, the two educators role played side conversations that filled in a rich profile of the client and who she was as a wife and occupational being. This performance-based and client-centered role play seemed to connect the subject of occupation to specific observations about the client and context. When the educator led the class through the process and topic of documentation, she directed students to take an occupational perspective and think about Silva as an occupational being by asking, "Who is Silva? What does she need to do? What is her profile, and then what is in the way of her being able to accomplish that. So that's the way that we're going to go through this" and contrasted this to going "straight for the client factors."

"In the olden days, and even now as we know, a client comes into your clinic and we go straight for the client factors. Straight to "Silva's got poor balance." Straight to "Silva can't scan past midline." Straight to all those parts that are broken in her and we start treating those, just like the old days of uniform terminology."

After this event, the students and educator did spend a lot of time documenting the client factors and performance skills. During these events, the subject of occupation slipped from prominence. As aforementioned, the educator set up the class activity by stating an occupational therapist should think about the subject of occupation first, nonetheless, significant time was spent discussing topics such as left visual neglect. Occupation slipped back in before the end of class, 85 minutes later, when the educator spoke again about the interaction between the subject of occupation and the topic of quality documentation.

"And how many of you saw notes when you were out in the clinic that said "Silva dresses with maximum assistance." And that was the end of that. How do you write a goal on that? How does anyone else understand that, anyone that's reading the note. And more importantly, where is the medical necessity of that note. Now I know, you all saw notes like that, and they're all getting paid out there, but I'm telling you, there's going to come a time in our history with all the hullabaloo in health care right now, that if you don't have this kind of stuff in your note, there's no medical necessity for you maximally assisting Silva. Because a nurse can do that. And they're not going to pay an OT to be there. Okay? If you're only going to look at motor stuff, without any implication to occupation, the PT can do that better than you can. Okay? So, you know, do as I say not as you see, okay? We are promoting occupation, the reason Colorado State University is doing this research study is because they recognize too along with the rest of the world,

that we don't have enough occupation infused in our practice and it all starts in academia. It starts here. You are the ones that are going to start changing the world. For the better. You're the ones who are going to keep us getting reimbursed, with all the changes in health care, okay. That's why I'm putting you through all this torture (student laugh), okay. So, did I leave anything else out?"

The immediate topic was how and how not to write documentation that demonstrates the value of and need for occupational therapy services, and the subject of occupation was part of that reasoning. The educator suggested that occupation in practice was the thing that sets occupational therapists apart from others. Her other point was that occupation in academia is where it starts, both in academic occupational therapy research and in programs for occupational therapy education. This illustrated awareness that occupational therapy researchers, occupational therapy educators, and occupational therapy students were all part of a community of knowers that has claimed occupation as subject of primary interest, and that it is necessary for these knowers to connect the subject to topics such as documentation of occupational therapy services.

Community of Knowers. The obvious members of the community of knowers were the educator and students. In the classroom, they were directly engaged in dialogue around the subject of occupation and other related course topics. Additionally, the subject and some topics also brought in other types of knowers, such as occupational therapy researchers and health professionals outside of occupational therapy.

Clients were also part of the community of knowers. In videos from other programs, the clients who receive occupational therapy services were discussed in the teaching and learning of occupation and thereby included as part of the comprehensive community of knowers gathered around and contributing to the understanding of occupational therapy's core subject, occupation.

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Yet, these clients were not directly present in the classroom in the same way as Program 1. In the video, "Silva Smith," the imaginary client role played by the educator, had a very active and real presence in the classroom. Students directly observed Silva's performance skills as well as the subjective emotions she expressed during the role play. Even after the educator had stopped acting and was leading the students through the documentation template, Silva had a lasting presence in the teaching and learning of occupation.

Program 2

Program 2 provided a 66 minute video of the first day of a course. The course was described as a "foundational class" that occurred in the first semester of the master's level occupational therapy program. The major content and purposes of the class session consisted of an introduction to the course and a lecture on the history of occupational therapy. The educator also appeared motivated to get to know the students by asking about what they did over the summer, which she later related to occupation and occupational therapy during the lecture.

Interaction between subject and topic. A unique quality of the video provided by program 2 was that it was the first session of the course. This gave valuable insight into how the educator framed her course to students as a foundational course in the larger context of the program.

> We put this together as a way to introduce you to the field of occupational therapy so that's why it's a foundational class. We learn a lot about occupation and how OTs view occupation and participation, you get an overview of the historical perspectives and philosophy of the people who started this profession many many years ago and things that continue on to today. Because we hope that you can exemplify this in your profession as you go out and practice once you finish the program so that you are

stewards of the profession, you're grounded in the roots of occupational therapy and then you can see what kinds of contributions that occupational therapists can make in people's lives that might be different from other types of health professionals. So really kind of set that groundwork, alrighty, and looking at the tasks of a therapist, things that OTs do in general, doing a task analysis you're going to be focusing mostly on that in your labs, so you'll be spending a lot of time in your labs and the one lab you met last Thursday so the Monday lab will meet this afternoon, but we'll go over the activity analysis piece of our practice so that you are really grounded in that. So that hopefully you'll come out of this class to be able to go forward in the rest of the program with this kind of foundation of the background and philosophy of OT.

In this event, the educator explained that "occupation and how OTs view occupation" are major themes of the course and part of the roots and grounding of the occupational therapy profession. She also included activity analysis as one of the essential tasks of an occupational therapist and part of the groundwork necessary for students to learn in order to practice in the profession. Figure 3 shows how this event could be illustrated with the subject-centered education model.
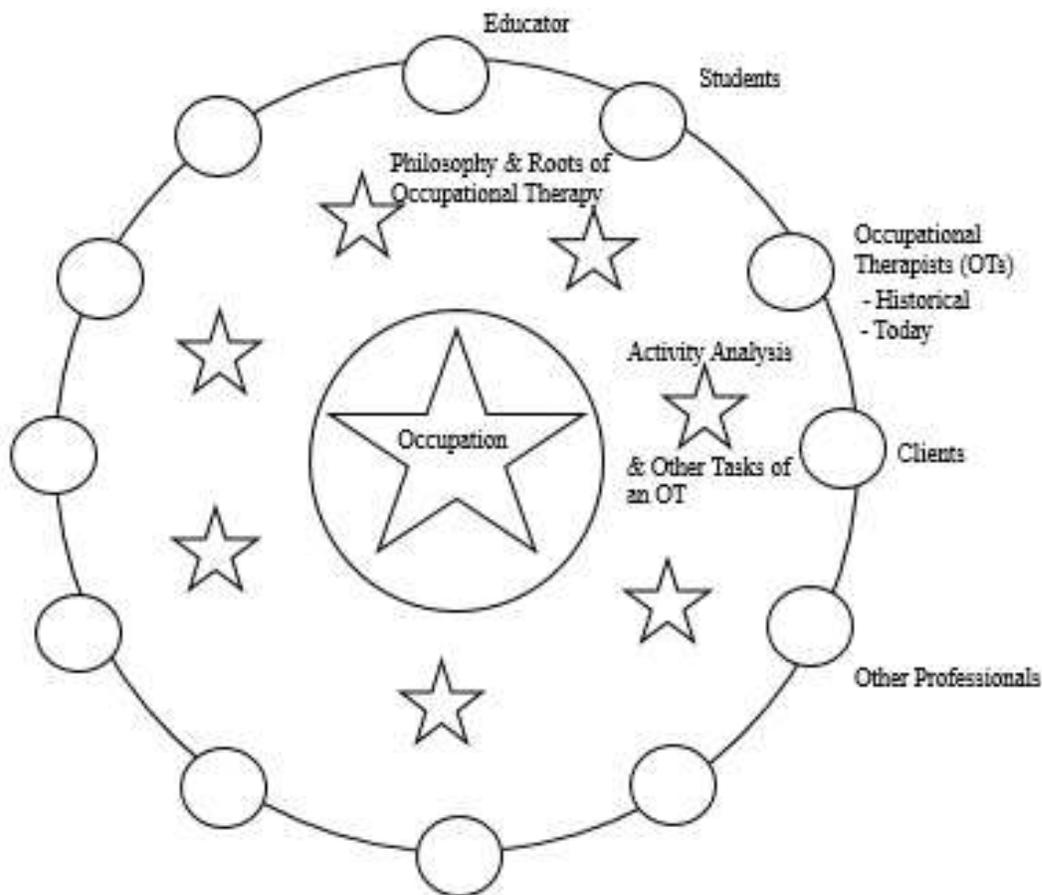
Figure 3. Program 2. The community of knowers included the educator, students, occupational

therapists past and present, clients, and other health professionals. Course topics included the

philosophy and roots of occupational therapy, activity analysis, and other tasks of an

occupational therapist. Interactions between these elements were present but not illustrated here.

Next, as might be expected for the first day of class, the educator spent a large chunk of

time discussing topics that oriented students to the structure and content of the course, such as

the required occupational therapy textbooks and future assignments. Despite the immediate topic

being a particular lab assignment such as completing an occupational profile or sewing a

universal cuff, the educator often slipped in detours that elaborated on occupation. For example,

while explaining an occupational profile assignment, she discussed the meaning that occupations have for individuals.

So one of the things that you are going to learn in the occupational profile which is part of the analysis process is that you are going to be getting information from your clients, and we're going to talk some more about that later, but you'll get that kind of information to help frame your case, so you don't just see a person's name and a diagnosis on a piece of paper and think "ok this is what I'm going to do." That might be a start, but you have to go in and get a lot more information to then be able to develop your interventions. Because occupations do have a lot of meaning for people, and that's our point, is you want to get people back to doing things that they find meaningful to do every day whether they are work occupations or leisure occupations, um, okay, self-care occupations.

While the initial topic in the event was the assignment that involved an occupational profile and activity analysis, the educator also explained why the subject of occupation was important in the occupational profile and important to clients. Teaching students how to do activity analysis and an occupational profile are topics and therapeutic skills that are not equivalent to teaching the subject of occupation. However, as the educator connects these topics to how occupational therapists understand and use occupation and how people experience occupation, both in the initial course introduction and this event, she drew a connecting line between the topics and the subject of occupation.

In the last 20 minutes of the class, the educator presented a lecture, aided by a powerpoint, in which she addressed what occupational therapy is:

One of the things is that sometimes, you know, people talk about occupational therapy, um, as, um, it's more complicated than it seems, put it that way. So um some of the things that we take for granted, like you know putting your shoes on in the morning. Once you've learned that as a child it become a rote type of activity that you just do, or brushing your teeth some of those types of things. So they are very simple kinds of things or it could be very complicated kinds of things too. But that um, engage people in doing all those kinds of things. We want to know that even for the very simple types of activities or occupations that they're very complex. What it takes to be able to do those things can be very involved. You know there's lots of thinking that's involved even for the routine types of things. Um, there's motions and motor activity that's involved, there is an emotional or psychological component to doing it.

In this event, the educator mentioned occupation explicitly. However, more often, she repeats the phrases "activity" and "types of things," allowing occupation to slip slightly from the foreground. It wasn't until later in the lecture that she taught the difference between the terms occupation and activity, but at this point there was less clarity about the conceptual distinction. Throughout this event, the subject of occupation was definitely in the mind of the educator, but what came across as the main idea was the activity analysis process that occupational therapists do and what they need to know about their clients. The educator spoke about the simplicity, complexity, value, and significance of things that people engage in, therefore it was recognizable as occupation, at least according to my own foundational understanding of occupation. It was also interesting to observe how a conversation about occupational therapy quickly slipped into a discussion of occupations as complex. The idea that occupational therapists as knowers view the

subject of occupation as deeply personal and complex rose to prominence again when the educator provided definitions for occupation and activity.

"Alright, I'm going to kind of go through these pretty quickly. Definitely, there's been discussion in the profession, sometimes activity, sometimes occupation, you know, what's the difference between them, um, when we look at activity analysis, we actually call it activity analysis, we could call it occupation analysis too, there was a time when we were really big on you know people think occupational therapists help people get jobs, and um one of the things that hopefully when you come out of this course, you'll have your own little definition of occupational therapy because people still think that OTs get people jobs. So you want to be able to go and explain to your clients, you know "I'm not here to help you get a job," Unless that's what you want to do, unless that's meaningful to you, then we can work on that and that can definitely be a component of what we do, but really how we think about occupations is that, um, it's a thing that occupies people's time, that give them meaning, has significance for them, mkay? And so, um, activities, um, you know, can be a similar type of thing. We look at the term occupation being a richer type of description of the things that people do every day, whereas activities is more of a smaller chunk of what people do every day. So um, so we'll get at that in a little bit. But um know that sometimes people interchange activities and occupations. But occupation really, and we'll see some definitions in a little while, has a lot more, um, deeper definition in terms of the meaning significance it has for people. … So that's kind of how we can look at some differences between the term activity versus occupation, but know that you're probably going to see them both used um sometimes interchangeably, but occupation definitely has a deeper type of meaning."

In this event, the educator was more explicit about describing the meaning and significance that occupation has for people, which had been mentioned previously in context of teaching other topics. This supported my interpretation of earlier events as interactions between subject and topic. Terminology, including the definition of occupation, was a topic within this class session, and the way the educator presented the term above, as a source of discussion in the profession and as part of defining personal professional jurisdiction, demonstrated the interaction between this topic and the transcendent subject of occupation that has called the community of knowers together to know, to teach, and to learn. This particular event also reinforced that the educator understood the topic of activity analysis as closely related to the subject of occupation. Activity analysis was an important topic taught in other programs' videos as well, however no one else quite stated, "we could call it occupation analysis too." This was certainly the extra step needed to explicitly connect the immediate topic to the subject of occupation.

Community of knowers. The events presented above were also infused with references to a community of knowers, which included educator, students, clients, scholars, and other people who may belong outside of the occupational therapy profession. The educator reported on the discussion within the profession, how "other people" often viewed occupation and occupational therapy, and the responsibility students have to explain occupational therapy to clients, which conveyed an awareness of the community of knowers who are accountable to a not fully knowable subject, as described by Palmer (1998). The educator did not present one stand-alone definition of occupation, instead she gave statements such as "sometimes people look at occupation as…" or "generally agreed upon…" and presented several definitions of occupation written by various occupation therapy scholars, as shown in the following event.

"So, sometimes people look at occupation as groupings of activities that humans choose to engage in. Definitely they're self-directed, intentional. Um, typically extend over time. Um, some different definitions, Hagedorn, wrote that, "Occupation is a purposeful form of human endeavor having a name associated role title. It provides a longitudinal organization of time and effort in a person's life." Um, Zemke with Zemke describes it as "units of activity which are named in the lexicon of the culture." So, certain occupations that are done within the context of a culture. Um, Kielhofner says that "occupations are dominant activity of human beings that includes serious productive pursuits, playful and creative behaviors." Umm, Christiansen and Baum, "They're ordinary and familiar things that people do every day."

Alright, so lots of different definitions of occupation, right? So, but you can see in all these different um examples the kind of the depth that people um, have around what occupations mean for people, okay.

Um, in the OT practice framework, "activities um of every er, they're activities of everyday life named and organized and given value and meaning by individuals in the culture. Occupation is everything people do to occupy themselves, including looking after themselves, enjoying life, and contributing to the social and economic fabric of their communities." So that's a lot there! I kind of like that one. So you can pick which one you like the best.

So generally agreed upon, we definitely think that occupation is essential to health and well-being. It's named, it's complex, definitely meaningful and purposeful, can be productive, um. Consists of interlocking chunks, so like the grooming, it's brushing your

teeth, your hair, washing your face. Has organizing function with time, so you do that in the morning, these are my morning occupations, these are my nighttime occupations."

As seen in this event, there was a great amount of variety and depth to the definitions chosen and presented by the educator, which illustrated the great amount of variety and depth that occupational scholars as knowers have to the subject of occupation. In addition, this event demonstrated the interactions between different knowers, for example, between occupational therapy students and the scholars who have studied the subject before them.

Throughout the video, the educator framed statements about occupation with clients and people in general, but also directed examples and definitions to students and their personal experiences as occupational beings. Occupational therapy clients, knowers directly relevant to the study of the subject, yet the occupational therapy students were knowers who were directly present in the classroom and thus physically gathered around to know and to learn the subject of occupation and its surrounding course topics. In the events above and below, as well as throughout the video, the educator recognized students and herself as knowers with personal connections to the subject and whose professional identities are connected to the subject. The educator explicated the subject of occupation through these interactions between subject and the community of knowers. The following event occurred near the very end of the class session, but the educator had been linking student experiences to the subject of occupation since the beginning of the class.

"Well obviously you can see some of the different aspects just from [student 2 and 3] and some of the other and excitement that other people said and the things they've done over the summer that it has importance for people and just kind of their balance in life you know to be able to do some of these things to have that opportunity to do that. And so

people that don't always have that kind of balance, that's when they can fall victim to um,

illness, you know, injury, things like that, maybe they are spending a lot of time in certain

types occupations and not enough time in other types of occupations. So we want to look

as OTs kind of see that balance, see the significance that it has for people and everybody

has their own significance so whether or not you think it is significant or not doesn't

really matter, it's what your client perceives as significance is. So that's what you have to

be able to tap into, you know "How is this for you? How is it that you need to do this?"

And once you kind of get the idea then you can move forward."

In the subject-centered model, I illustrated this quote as Figure 4.
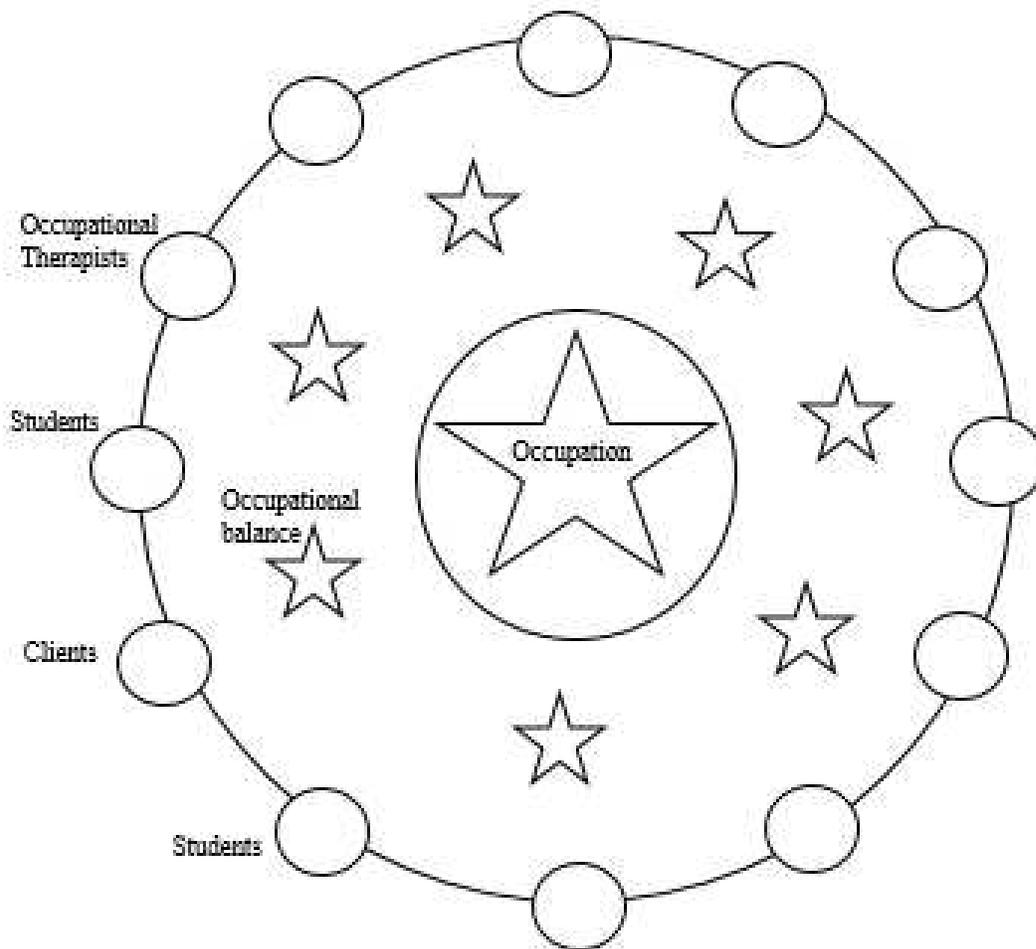
Figure 4. Program 2. The community of knowers included the students, occupational therapists, and clients. Course topics included occupational balance. Interactions between these knowers, topics, and the subject of occupation were also present, however not illustrated here.

The educator told multiple stories, based on imaginary clients, friends, herself, and students that addressed the meaning and significance of occupations in people's lives. Therefore, she created opportunities for students to see how they and other members of the community of knowers interacted with the subject of occupation.

Both programs 1 and 2 addressed students as knowers and the "stewards of the profession" with responsibilities related to professional definitions and jurisdiction. Also,

educators seemed to perceive their own role and responsibility as knowers to teach occupational therapy students what it means to think like an occupational therapist and how to exemplify occupation in their future practice.

Program 3

Program 3 provided a 21 minute video that seemed to occur in the middle of a course. The purpose of the class session was for students to actively participate in class discussion and apply their knowledge to the occupational performance of clients receiving occupational therapy services, especially knowledge about self-care routines and interventions. The class discussion was structured around a therapy goal that was written on the blackboard.

Interaction between subject and topic. The educator at Program 3 introduced the day's class discussion to students as a list of previously learned topics being pulled together in order to apply them to occupational performance. These topics were diverse and practice-oriented, yet the educator introduced occupation as a centralizing and organizing subject for the class. There was little that inherently and securely linked topics about therapeutics skills, such as wheelchair positioning or the transferring of patients, to the subject of occupation until the educator spoke directly to the interaction between these topics and the occupational performance of the patient or clients, as seen in the following interchange.

> "Evaluation of ADL, with wheelchair positioning and fit, transferring of patients, adaptive equipment, feeding and swallowing and cognition involving speech therapy and occupational therapy. We're going to pull all that together so that we can apply how it all fits in, um, how our patients may perform their various occupations.

So just looking at this goal that we have on the board: "The patient will perform ADL routine independently to increase caring for self in 3 months." [This goal is already written on the blackboard behind educator, using common abbreviations.]

So. What does this goal mean as far as occupation goes? Give me some things that, um, what are some aspects that are involved to get to this goal?

This is the measurable portion. [Educator draws parentheses around "ADL routine independently"] What are some aspects involved with the patient?

The students responded with: bathing, dressing, toileting, eating, and bowel and bladder. The educator continued, "Okay, all of that self-care stuff we talked about on the FIM. All of that is kind of, self-care, right? What are some other aspects?" Students added transfers and functional mobility. Then the educator asked, "What about mobility? What's functional mobility?" and "As far as functional mobility, you're talking about walking to do something, like what?" Several students answered: "walking to the sink to brush your teeth" and "it doesn't have to be walking, you use your wheelchair to get into the grocery store." The educator continued:

"Okay, could be wheelchair, could be walking, using other assistive devices of some kind, right? So whatever the function is, how are they getting there? Right? It could be in a nursing home, it could be going from their bedroom to the dining room. In the hospital it could be going, leaving their room to go get discharged at the front desk, right? Or the front of the place. So functional mobility. What else is involved in ADL routine, as stated in this goal?"

Given the way she introduced the class as pulling topics together and applying them to how people perform occupations, I recognized that the educator was thinking about occupation during this event and throughout the class session despite the fact that the term *occupation* was

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used infrequently. Instead, the educator and students collaboratively discussed function, purpose and meaning, which I recognized as part of the subject of occupation, based on my own working definition of occupation as a person's meaningful and purposeful use of time and the engagement in the active process of living that is strongly linked to health and well-being (Dickie, 2009; Fisher, 2009; Royeen, 2002a). Since this event was a dialogue rather than long period of lecture, the class discussion largely proceeded through examples (i.e. examples of functional mobility) and collaborative reasoning out loud. However, I was not confident that the subject of occupation was addressed explicitly or that students gained an understanding of the subject of occupation based on this event. There was an intermingling of subject and topic yet without a clear conceptual delineation.

The next time the educator explicitly mentioned occupation was at the end of the class session. Like the interchange above, it began with examples of functional mobility, for example the educator asked, "what's functional about walking?" and students responded with "getting out of bed," "walking to the cafeteria," and "make sure that their home is accessible for them to be able to get around." One student mentioned doing a home evaluation, which the educator elaborated on and brought the discussion back to the goal on the blackboard and the other topics discussed earlier in the class session.

"So you would have them walking to the bathroom and maybe you're doing a home evaluation and you're going to be looking at all these different aspects. You're going to look to see is it a safety concern because there's throw rugs on the floor, is the vision aspect of it, is that a problem. So functional mobility, are they able to get down the hallway with the walker or with the limp that they have if they're not using a walker. Whatever the problem might be. So you're going to want to look at all those different

things. What do they want to do? So the link to ADL routine and occupation, it just

depends, like you say. Different things. Any other comments or questions?

Does this make sense? Is this helpful to kind of draw it all together?

Do you see how it's like, the big picture now. Where it's not, you guys are not so stuck in

just, one thing [small laugh and touches part of the list on the board]. You know, see the

big picture and knowing what the long term goal is and how you can get your short term

goals based on those deficit areas you found in the evaluation. And then drawing it all

back to, client-centered like you said. Okay? Alright. You guys can go now. We're all

done.

As noted, the educator used the subject of occupation to organize this class session and

she perceived the subject of occupation as central to the class discussion. In the subject-centered

education model, this event could be illustrated as Figure 5. Yet I was left without a clear

understanding of the interaction between subject and topic, because of statements such as, "So

the link to ADL routine and occupation, it just depends, like you say. Different things." As

knowers, the students and educator were having an important conversation about "the big

picture" and client-centeredness, and I recognized that this was likely informed by way that

occupational therapists as knowers understand the subject of occupation, however, this was the

final moment of the video and it lacked a clear conceptualization of occupation and the

significance it has to occupational therapy and to clients who receive occupational therapy

services.

Educator

Clients

Students

Client Factors, Deficit Areas,
"Different Aspects"

Occupational
Therapist

Functional
Mobility

Home
evaluation

"ADL Routine
& Occupation"
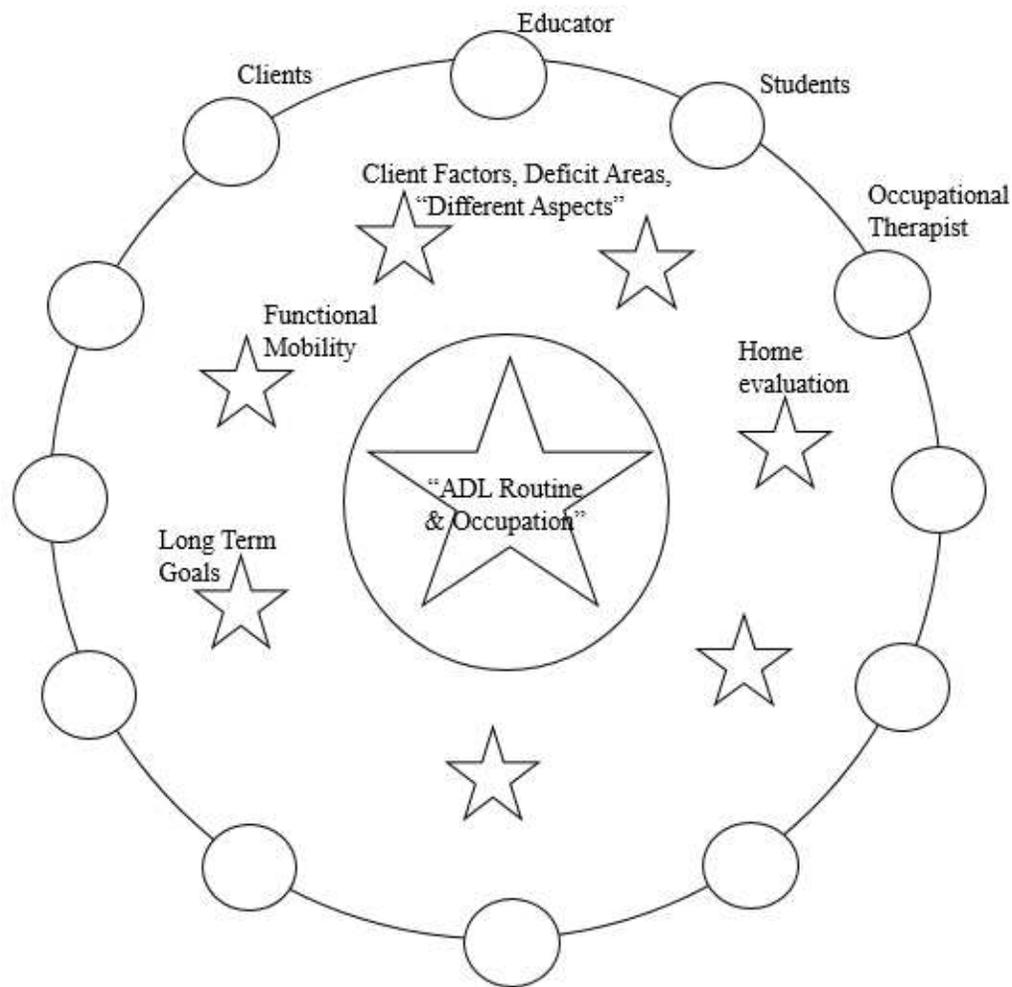
Long Term
Goals

Figure 5. Program 3. The community of knowers included the educator, students, occupational

therapists, and clients. Course topics included functional mobility, client factors, client deficit

areas, home evaluation, and long term goals. Interactions between these elements were present

but not illustrated here.

Community of knowers. In the Program 3 video, the educator mentions members of the

community of knowers relevant to occupational therapy practice, for instance, "transferring of

patients, … feeding and swallowing and cognition involving speech therapy and occupational

therapy." Speech therapy and other disciplines as well as patients are outside of the actual

physical classroom yet are types of knowers who contribute to an understanding of the

occupational therapy profession's core subject. In this stand-alone event, there wasn't much elaboration on the knowers, yet the mention is enough to indicate strong emphasis on knowledge and therapeutics skills for practice. It also draws attention to the interaction between occupational therapists and patients receiving occupational therapy services and the interactions between occupation therapists and other professionals, like speech therapists.

The statement, "We're going to pull all that together so that we can apply how it all fits in, um, how our patients may perform their various occupations" also illustrated the roles of students and educators as members of a community of knowers to collaboratively gather knowledge and therapeutic skills and apply these topics to the central subject.

Program 4

Program 4 provided a 50 minute video of a course that seemed to teach neurological functions, structures, conditions, and injuries relevant to occupational therapy practice. The stated purpose of this particular lecture was to review the "occupational piece" of spinal cord injury, then transition into a lecture on structures of the brainstem.

Interaction between subject and topic. The video from Program 4 addressed spinal cord injury and the brain. With the use of my screening tool, I identified two events from this video that included occupation explicitly. The first event was a brief mention of occupation that occurred in the very first minute of the lecture.

> "Alright. So, on Monday, we went through the neurological basis of spinal cord injury. I
> wanted to review again the, occupational piece, of spinal cord injury and introduce you to
> some evaluation or measurement tools as well as introduce some intervention strategies
> with this population. Um, you're familiar by now with the Functional Independence
> Measure, the FIM, which can be used with this population as well."

It didn't take long and if you happened to blink your ears you might have missed it, but with the magic of digital video recording and powers of qualitative research we were able to see the intention with which the educator linked occupation to previous course topics such as "the neurological basis of spinal cord injury." In Figure 6, I illustrated how this quote could fit onto a subject-centered model.
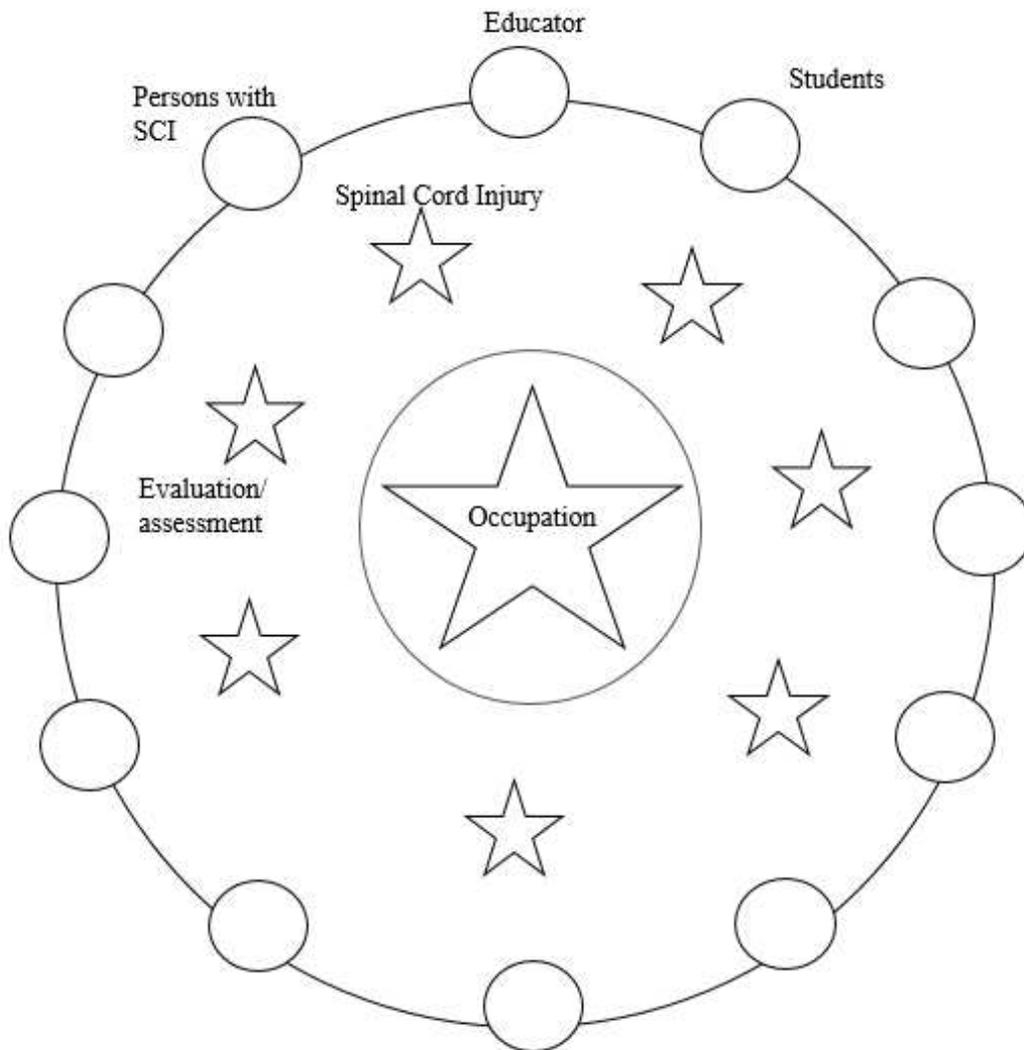

Figure 6. Program 4. The community of knowers included the educator, students, and people with spinal cord injury. Course topics included neurological basis of spinal cord injury, occupational therapy practice framework, and evaluation/assessment tools.

Similar to the video from program 3, in which the educator introduced the class by stating, "We're going to pull all that together so that we can apply how it all fits in, um, how our patients may perform their various occupations," thereby preparing students to take an occupational perspective and think about the interactions between subject and topics, the educator in program 4 introduced the day's organizing concept and focus as the "occupational piece of spinal cord injury" with additional related topics, such as functional assessments.

After this introductory statement, the educator traversed a series of *topics* relevant to persons with spinal cord injury, such as common assessments, classification systems for spinal cord injury, the FIM, adaptive equipment for spinal cord injury, example treatments for spinal cord injury from American Occupational Therapy Association practice guidelines, social aspects of wheelchair use, active-assist technology for mobility, pressure sores, seat cushioning systems, hand splints, and universal cuffs. Many of these topics were linked to function, functional ability, specific activities of daily living, or social participation, so I considered many of these topics and events as recognizable as occupation without being explicitly named as occupation, therefore Category IV in my screening tool. However, in this video there seemed to be a potential for topics to overshadow the subject, since the next time the term *occupation* was explicitly used at all was almost half way through the video.

> "So think about the occupations, of somebody with spinal cord injury. As we identified the prevalence and etiology of spinal cord injury, it's typically acquired. So imagine being fully independent, and then [snaps fingers], not. So there's a lot of psychosocial issues that can arise with spinal cord injury. People still have roles they want to maintain. Employment. Being a parent. Being a spouse. How could the injury potentially impact those roles? And so how could you, as occupational therapist, help maintain

independence in those roles. So in your spinal cord injury assignment, you'll review some of the case studies, and I think on one of the assignments I ask you to think about their roles and independence and occupations with one level of spinal cord injury, but just two levels up, how much more impact does that have on those occupations? So again a lot of basic neuro, but you have to put on that OT hat and bring in your practice framework concepts into the discussion, okay?"

The occupations of persons with spinal cord injury was presented explicitly as the organizing concept and main idea of this event. The educator explicitly guided students to focus on occupation in their thinking. The educator had already set up in students' minds all of the ways that they as occupational therapists might assess, intervene, and understand clients with spinal cord injury. In the above event, the educator returned to discuss the occupational piece. Through slower and repeated viewings of this entire class session, I became confident that the educator had occupation in his mind as a central subject underlying the entire lecture; however there was also a sense of substituting other important topics or concepts for occupation. The educator discussed functional ability, psychosocial issues, roles, and independence as a way to teach topics closer to the central subject of the occupation than topics such as neurophysiology would be. The educator also brought in language and concepts from the occupational therapy practice framework, which were probably taught elsewhere in the curriculum. However, it was just assumed that the link from topics such as roles or independence to the subject of occupation was already clear in the minds of students, therefore it appeared to present a confusing intermingling of subject and related topics.

Despite finding a sense of substitution or implicitness, the educator seemed to use the term *occupation* consistently, distinctly, and conscientiously during this particular event. I found

that interactions between subject and topics were present and instrumental in the lecture, yet the subject on its own was not. For instance, the educator discussed the impact of spinal cord injury on independence, without doing much to teach the subject of occupation itself, which includes many more dimensions than simply independence and dependence. Rather than teaching the central subject, the aim of this particular class session appeared to be the teaching and learning of surrounding course topics and the interaction between subject and topic.

I could have learned more about how occupation was represented, addressed, taught, and learned in this program if I had explored Categories III and IV events that were screened out of my deeper analysis. Even so, I would likely come away from this lecture having learned more about spinal cord injury than about occupation. The immediate topics were consistently related to spinal cord injury, and the subject of occupation was subtly or implicitly integrated into the lecture and course assignments.

Community of knowers. The interaction between subject and topics was a large piece of those particular events from program 4's video. However, the community of knowers was also a key element of subject-centered education model and could help us understand what students and educator are learning when they are learning about the "occupational piece, of spinal cord injury." In this case, spinal cord injury is not necessarily a topic, but rather it is a population of clients who receive occupational therapy services. This population of clients with specific characteristics was introduced in the very first minute of the lecture.

"Alright. So, on Monday, we went through the neurological basis of spinal cord injury. I wanted to review again the, occupational piece, of spinal cord injury and introduce you to some evaluation or measurement tools as well as introduce some intervention strategies

with this population. Um, you're familiar by now with the Functional Independence

Measure, the FIM, which can be used with this population as well."

As noted in the previous section, I found less mention of the subject of occupation on its

own than I found data showing the interactions between subject and topics. Similarly, the

interaction between subject and community of knowers was present and instrumental within this

lecture. If I were a student in this class, this particular lecture would not have contributed much

to my understanding of the subject of occupation, but I would have learned a great deal about

people with spinal cord injuries, as well as their occupational needs and needs as clients

receiving occupational therapy services. In program 1, the educator prompted students to think

about occupation first, but in this case, the prompt was, "So think about the occupations, of

somebody with spinal cord injury." The educator also made statements that linked students as

knowers with this particular client population, for example, "it's typically acquired. So imagine

being fully independent, and then [snaps fingers]," The educator also made the link between

students and their unique professional perspectives as members of the occupational therapy

profession, a community of knowers, when he stated, "So again a lot of basic neuro, but you

have to put on that OT hat and bring in your practice framework concepts into the discussion,

okay?" It isn't entirely clear what was meant by "OT hat" and "practice framework concepts,"

though occupation was implicit and given some of its due value to counterbalance the frequent

focus on "basic neuro" topics.

In the selected events from this class session, there were diverse types of interactions

between subject and community of knowers, including students, clients, and occupational

therapists. These were practice-driven, in contrast to being about introducing students to

concepts, which I found more of in program 2 which was explicitly an introduction to

foundations of occupation. Perhaps there are conclusions to be made about how each program interpreted the prompt for submitting videos that showed how they addressed occupation in their curriculum, and how their submissions might reveal something about their values and philosophy as a program. For example, Program 2 illustrated that they highly value students' understanding of the roots of occupational therapy and ability to define occupation. Alternatively, Program 4 seemed to highly value students' ability to hold up an occupational lens on diverse topics relevant to occupational therapy practice.

Program 5

Program 5 provided a 51 minute video of a class session near the end of a course. The purpose of the class session was for students to give a final presentation and demonstration of an occupation that they learned over the previous weeks of the course. Afterward, the educator led a class reflection on students' experiences with the assignment and a discussion of its relevance to occupational therapy practice. Program 5 also provided two short videos of students engaged in an assigned occupation, however since these did not explicitly mention "occupation" they were screened out. The purpose or educational context of the assigned occupation was not explained in the videos.

Interaction between subject, topic, and community of knowers. The first 38 minutes of the video from Program 5 featured student presentations. Out of 17 student presentations, two students explicitly mentioned occupation, so according to my screening tool, I only transcribed those events. However, these were not the only students who contributed to the class through discussion of their transformative experiences learning a new occupation and connections to previous course topics. Seeing and hearing the individual students talk about their learning experiences was incredibly engaging, but it wasn't until after I observed the class discussion that

I was able to understand how the educator and students, as knowers, had gained a greater understanding of the subject of occupation, of their personal experiences with the subject, and of the interaction between the subject and topics through this assignment. The actual engagement in doing was an integral part of the assignment, but during presentations and the discussion that followed, the educator and students also reflected deeply together on the experience of doing this assignment.

> "Well, everybody's done their occupational demonstrations. And I want us to take some time about, to think about, you know, what we've learned from it, what was the purpose of doing this activity, um, how could you use this thing with clients, um, I know we've talked a lot during class how important it is to bring in things that are important to people and how to use occupation as treatment, so, you know, I'm just thinking, [student] was a good example of tattoos that you were doing, I think that maybe, I think that would be really interesting as a therapist to know about, you really enjoy that right, and maybe that's something you can coordinate your therapy around, [student] with his juggling, uh, [student] with her hoop! And so on, and just all those kind of things. So, give me some feedback, what, what did you like about the assignment, how did it grab you, and what, what did you learn from it, how could you use it."

In this event, the educator encouraged the student knowers to reflect and share what they learned from the assignment, while also suggesting how it related to previous course topics and class discussions that had led up to that point, such as how to use occupations that are important to clients as part of therapeutic intervention. Later in the discussion, the students also made connections to topics such as emotional regulation, balance of work and leisure, the learning process, identities, roles, and social relationships. Earlier in their presentations, students had

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described the meaning and purpose that they found in their occupation as they explained why they chose to learn that occupation and what they learned about themselves.

"Okay. Why I chose to learn this occupation? I like to run, I like to bike, I like to use the elliptical, and I wanted to learn how to swim. So it's just an alternate way of exercise for me now. Before I took lessons, I basically just froggied on top of the water, and I could keep myself alive but I couldn't swim any type of distance or use the proper techniques. So um, let's see, what I learned about myself, wait a minute, why I chose, what I learned about myself, I learned that… I have to be in the mood to swim, it's not like throwing your shoes on, stretching, and running out the front door. You have to gather all your supplies at home, your towel, drive to the YMCA, go through the locker room, shower, down to the pool to sit and wait if it, if there's a lot of people there, for lanes. It's not that I didn't enjoy it, but there were days when I just didn't feel like swimming, so doing all of that just to be able to swim was, I didn't get ten minutes into and say, 'Hey, I'm glad I came to swim.' "

Similarly to other students, this student described her past occupational self (e.g. "I like to run … I basically just froggied on top of the water"), explained what the occupation means to her now ("an alternate way of exercise for me now"), and revealed challenges to learning the occupation ("there were days when I just didn't feel like swimming"). In this next excerpt, a second student goes farther into her personal background to explain why she wanted to learn how to make her own laundry detergent and to describe the significance of the occupation to her past and current self.

"Why I decided on this occupation, well, first of all because I'm a cheap college student, and I'm always looking for ways to save money. So perfect opportunity. This was very

easy and cheap to make and it will actually save a lot of money in the long run. Um, I thought it might be fun for gift making ideas in the future. Probably not, but I don't know, if you decorate it up and make it look real cute it might be a good idea. But I actually got the idea from um a mission that I, my church is involved in. And this is my little church group that went. And what [name of organization] is, is that it's just a ministry that helps those that are in need and who might be unemployed or not able to work due to disability, because there are a lot of them there that are not able to work. And so the goal for [name of organization] is to teach these people to manage their finances and like make the most of what they have, and so this was just some ideas that they had in order to enhance their financial stability."

This student also mentioned ways she might use this in the future, such as making a gift for someone else. In general, student presentations and the class discussion revealed ways that learning a new occupation in the context of this assignment had transformed them in some way. This was a major point that the educator seemed to be trying to teach about the subject of occupation and about the interaction between the subject and community of knowers, including students, clients, and himself as knowers.

"How about, early on, we talked about you know, um how occupation is something that can transform you. And I remember early on when I showed you my juggling actually and how it transformed me into being a juggler. Anyone want to share how they feel they have been transformed as, in terms of the abilities that they learned and the process of becoming. Doing is becoming, you know, and the mantra of OT. How have, how has, how have you been changed as a person by what you've done for the last six weeks?"

One student stated, "In tai chi one of the first truths is do not be concerned with your form. And with growing up as a dancer and becoming a yoga teacher, you're always focused on, how your body looks, are you positioning everything correctly, so it was wonderful to kind of see yourself as invisible and let the movement just come from within. And it showed me that I'm not as patient as I thought I was and that as a teacher I think a lot of times I go too fast and that really mastering something very slow and skillfully can be more beneficial and probably make people feel like they're moving forward, in a better way."

The educator responded, "I think it's good to remember as an OT the learning curve that your clients and patients are on, just taking yourself through that process also and realizing that oftentimes they might struggle."

Another student also shared her experiences, "I think with the yoga and even with the reflection we did about slowing down and being in the moment sort of thing, I think that helped me because I'm a very fast person, I talk fast, I do things fast, I don't really think about things before I do them, I just kind of, go. So I think it was really nice to have the reflection and have the yoga class because even in there they like talk slow, your movements are slow, your breathing is slow, just like, to actually slow down and see how much you do, like, remember about things and you can absorb everything. It was just kind of nice because we don't really slow down especially in this country, we're not a very slow-going people, so I think it was kind of fun, so hopefully that continues.

In this event, the student and educator discuss the topic of "the learning curve" or process of learning that students experienced as part of this assignment, as well as how this experience and topic relate to future clients. At this point in the video, the educator still facilitated students

to reflect on their own experiences with the subject of occupation and with certain topics, however he also helped students to connect both the subject and topics to client knowers and to occupational therapy practice. When he stated "Doing is becoming, you know, and the mantra of OT" the educator was probably referencing a previous class discussion, but more importantly, I perceived that he reminded students of the interaction between the subject and themselves as knowers, and the interaction between the subject and the community of knowers that is occupational therapy and an occupational perspective. In the subject-centered education model, this quote could be illustrated as Figure 7.
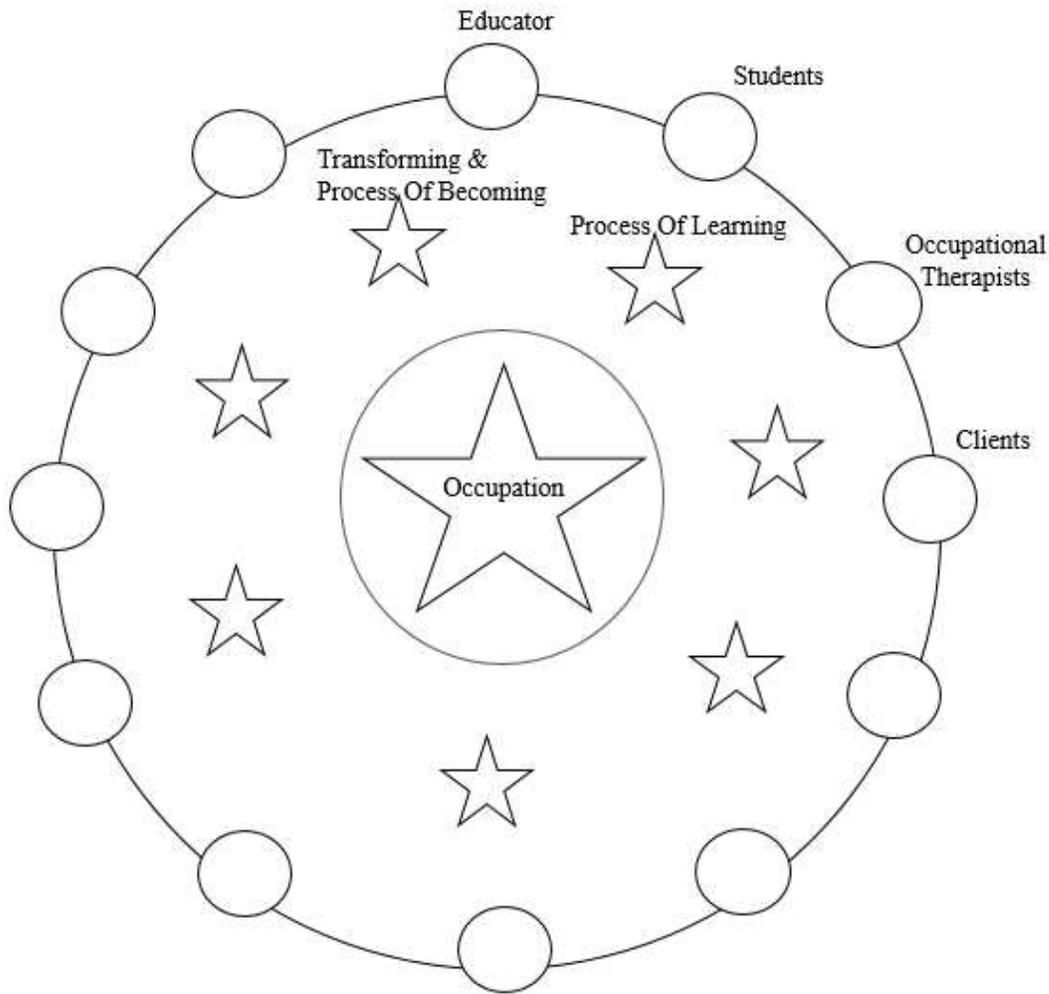
Figure 7. Program 5. The community of knowers included the educator, students, occupational

therapists, and clients. Course topics included transforming, the process of becoming, and the

process of learning. Interactions between these elements were present but not illustrated here.

Discussion

This study contributed empirical findings regarding the use of a subject-centered model

to describe the occupation-centeredness of occupational therapy education. Based on this model

and this sample of data, I perceived occupation as both extraordinarily complex and

interconnected to everything, and yet often invisible or unnoticed in occupational therapy

education. Therefore, I found subject-centered education to be a valuable model for explicating

occupational therapy education as it exists today. Furthermore, subject-centered education seems to embody the type of exemplary occupational therapy education that occupational scholars have called for (Nielson, 1998; Yerxa, 1998; Whiteford & Wilcock, 2001; Royeen, 2002a). Beyond findings that the individual elements of the subject-centered education model were present in occupational therapy education, the greatest findings were about the interactions between subject and topic and between subject and community of knowers.

The Complexity of the Subject

Occupational therapists and occupational scientists have espoused the complexity of occupation since the field's inception and have often sought how best to convey that complexity to students (Clark, Parham, Carlson, Frank, Jackson, Pierce, Wolfe, and Zemke, 1991; Pierce, 1999; Pierce, 1999, citing Reilly 1974; Royeen, 2002a; Yerxa, 1998). From this study, I perceived that the culture within the occupational therapy classrooms communicated the complexity of the subject to the students, yet largely implicitly. For example, at times it was challenging for an educator to say much more than "um, it's more complicated than it seems, put it that way," as said in the video from Program 2.

According to Wilding and Whiteford (2007), "The complexity, difficulty, and challenge of elegant occupational therapy practice are hidden in the mind of the occupational therapist," meaning that an OT practitioner needs to make a concerted effort to convey the meaning and value of occupation and occupational therapy to others (p. 191, citing Yerxa, 2000). In this study, the subject of occupation was often hidden, at least partially, in the minds of occupational therapy educators as well. For example, all of the videos included discussions that seemed to be recognizably related to the subject of occupation, however were not explicit and thus screened out of the analysis. Even within the intensity sample, directives such as "think like an OT, think

through the framework" or "put on that OT hat and bring in your practice framework concepts" were cues to access the knowledge of occupation already hidden within the minds of educators and students.

At the same time, I also found that most educators intermittently went the extra step to link the subject of occupation to topics and to teach students to centralize occupation in their thinking. Through their outwardly off-the-cuff remarks, educators took detours that elaborated on the subject of occupation. This method of teaching cannot be fully explicated by curricular designs or instructional strategies alone, therefore a subject-centered education model could explain how occupation is being taught in occupational therapy classrooms.

The Interaction Between the Subject and Topics

From the findings, it was also apparent that teaching and learning occupation alongside other course topics is challenging. For example, educators needed to convey interactions between subject and topics while maintaining the conceptual delineation between them. Educators already knew how topics like neuroscience, transfer training, documentation of services and so on related to the subject of occupation, however students did not yet have this same understanding of the subject. Therefore, educators must teach these topics and explicitly teach how the topics connect to the central subject, which would otherwise be hidden or implicit. Recognition of a subject-centered model for occupational therapy education could help do what occupational science also aims to achieve: make occupation "more visible and better understood," with the upshot of enhancing the professional image and identity of occupational therapy (Clark et al., 1991, p. 308). Based on Hooper's work (2006) and the findings of this study, a subject-centered model is theoretically and empirically a strong fit for occupation therapy education, and has potential as a tool in the hands of educators to clarify how the central subject of occupation connects to

everything else to form the knowledge and professional identity of OT/OTA students and practitioners.

One of the challenges in teaching and learning occupation alongside other course topics could be attributed to what Whiteford and Wilcock (2001) noted as a problem in occupational therapy education: the reification of borrowed knowledge and the need for integration of knowledge into occupationally-focused practice. Many of the topics I identified in the data could be considered to be borrowed knowledge. For example, neuroscience and documentation of services were not original to occupational therapy. Neither could occupational therapy claim client-centeredness all to itself. However, the interaction between subject and topic came when educators integrated these borrowed topics into an understanding of occupation.

These findings suggested that educators' language reflected 'talking occupation,' which regardless of depth and brevity, was a basic level of being occupation-centered and occupation-focused (Whiteford & Wilcock, 2001). However, it was similar to Henry James's (2011) *The Turn of the Screw,* because even at the end you weren't sure whether the ghost (i.e. the subject) was faintly present but hardly seen, or if the horrifying alternative was true and the governess (or researcher) has only imagined it. Both possibilities have unsettling implications for occupational therapy education.

Taxonomy of Terms: Occupation-Centered, -Based, and –Focused

Fisher (2013) proposed an occupation-related taxonomy of key terminology that defined what occupational therapists do and how they do it. This taxonomy clarified the similarities and differentiation between the terms *occupation-centered*, *occupation-based*, and *occupation-focuse*d, and had implications for framing this study's findings. These terms are not mutually

exclusive by definition nor in the classroom video data, but I have selected a few key events that seem to be predominately one or the other.

Drawing on Wood (1998), Yerxa (1998), Wicks (2012), and Hooper (2006), Fisher (2013) defined *occupation-centered* as a perspective in which we "must adopt an occupational lens, base our reasoning on the core theoretical tenets of the profession, and explicitly link what we do to that core," and she continued that "those tenets pertain to our understanding of people as occupational beings, the impact of occupational challenges on their lives, and the power of occupation as a change agent" (p. 164).

Occupation-based means that occupation is the foundation of what we do and "we make use of a person's engagement in occupation as the method of our evaluation and interventions" (p. 164). The educator from Program 3 taught occupation-based practice when she explained that observing a client walk to the bathroom in their home while evaluating how their vision impacts their performance is an example of "What would we do in therapy?" to address functional mobility. Fisher (2013) proclaimed that the power of occupation-based methods rests in the ecological validity and client-centeredness of these methods. There is also power and benefits to occupational therapists due to the political message that occupation-based methods make about their unique professional perspective. For instance, this is expressed within the video from Program 1, which taught why occupational therapists need to be aware of how they document and represent their services to others.

Program 1 was also occupation-focused. *Occupation-focused* means occupation is the immediate or proximal focus of evaluations or interventions (2013). The educator from Program 1 taught students to be occupation-focused in evaluation and intervention. For example, she stated that to "think like an OT" students should "look at 'Who is Silva? What does she need to

do?'." The role-play of a therapy session focused on the occupation of getting Silva dressed by teaching her and her spouse hemi-dressing techniques. This example was also occupation-centered, since the phrase "think like an OT" specified the unique professional perspective and explicitly linked the classroom focus to the profession's core tenets such as understanding humans as occupational beings.

Fisher (2013) focused on explaining how this occupation-related taxonomy applied to occupational therapy practice, but did not elaborate on how it would look in occupational therapy education or research. Based on findings from this study, this is a potentially useful taxonomy for further explication of the how educators address the subject of occupation and its explicit links to what occupational therapists do, and reinforced my conclusion that occupation-centered is appropriate language to describe occupational therapy education. By that I mean it is not necessary for curricula and classrooms to be relentlessly occupation-focused, however it would be apt for students and educators to continually practice reasoning that is based on core tenets of the profession and to make explicit connections to the core subject of occupation.

Subject and Community of Knowers

The community of knowers and its interaction with the subject became the most interesting element of the subject-centered model and also the most prominent in the data. As part of interaction between the subject and the community of knowers, educators were teaching an occupation-centered perspective to students by teaching a view of people, especially clients and students themselves, as occupational beings. There is frequent mention in the literature of "the human as occupational being" as a central and distinct belief of occupational therapy that represents an occupational perspective or philosophy (Whiteford & Wilcock, 2001; Wood et al., 2000, p. 586). Scholars have said that the central aim of occupational science is to study the

human as occupational being, implying a connection between occupation- and client-centered ideologies the likes of which I also found in this study (Clark et al., 1991).

Contribution of Occupational Science

While occupational therapy was founded upon a holistic view of the person and their occupations, the interaction between subject and community of knowers explicitly found in the data is also attributable to the more recent contributions and influence of occupational science. Scholars who have called for and described reform in occupational therapy education to centralize occupation included occupational science as a foundational science, though not the only place, for teaching occupation (Pierce, 1999; Wood et al., 2000; Whiteford & Wilcock, 2001). Occupational science, while not explicitly mentioned in the videos, seemed to help educators more clearly articulate the subject of occupation. For example, educator 2 taught occupation through the concept of occupational balance, which has been an important concept in the science. Occupational science endeavors to be a basic science for understanding people as occupational beings (Yerxa, 1990; Clark et al., 1991). In this study, interactions between subject of occupation and client knowers or student knowers were well represented in the data and included understanding people as occupational beings outside of a clinical population and setting. For instance, students in Program 5 learned how occupation was meaningful and transformative in their own lives.

Occupational science can inform and support occupational therapy practice, although occupational scientists have been very clear in describing the science that studies humans as occupational beings as involving multiple disciplines (Clark et al., 1991). Occupational science's interactions with occupational therapy and other disciplines in order to study a core subject is compatible with the general nature of a community of knowers in educational settings. For

example, the community of educators, students, and scholars who are called together "to know, to teach, to learn" about the subject of occupation interact with each other, with the subject, and with topics (Palmer, 1998, p. 107). The video from Program 2 showed this clearly when the educator introduced students to several definitions of occupation, even naming the particular scholars who wrote them, and summarized the "generally agreed upon" points before telling students to find their own definitions of occupation and occupational therapy as informed by these scholars and that foundational course. In this way, the educator implied that knowledge of the subject comes from amongst the community of knowers and transcends what any one person says about it, which fits Palmer's (1998) subject-centered education model.

Social Learning and Community of Knowers

Conversations about social learning in occupational therapy literature are also relevant to my findings on the community of knowers and the interaction between subject and community of knowers. Occupational therapists are not wholly unfamiliar with social learning theory, but learning theories are not at the top of the list for preparing occupational therapy students for practice, even though occupational therapy practice is often about teaching and learning, such as educating clients. Social cognitive theory, as described by Bandura (1986), considers the learner to be an active participant in the learning process, which is constructivist, transformational, and occurs within a social context. Communities of practice, as described by Wenger and colleagues (1991, 1998, 2002), are "groups of people who share a concern, set of problems and passion about a topic and who deepen their knowledge and expertise by interacting on an ongoing basis" (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002, p.4). Amini (2010) recommended that occupational therapy education prepare students to establish communities of practice that are supportive of reflexive and occupation-based practice, therefore this study's ability to explicate the presence of

a community of knowers in occupational therapy education may support awareness of communities of practice in occupational therapy practice. Additionally, Wenger and colleagues (1991, 1998, 2002) recognize different levels of community of practice, from core members to outsiders who are transactional participants in the community. Similar to my interest in explicating levels of the subject, there may be benefit in explicating levels within the community of knowers as well.

Conversations on Pedagogy in Occupational Therapy Education

Subject-centered education is compatible with conversations that have already been happening in occupational therapy education. For example, my findings on the interaction between subject and community of knowers showed that the subject of occupation was often taught through its relation to knowers such as clients and occupational therapy students. In terms of curricular strategies, several of the themes chosen by Wood and colleagues (2000) to define their occupation-centered, graduate, occupational therapy program also taught occupation as related to client knowers and student knowers. In particular, the themes "the human as occupational being" and "occupational therapists as scholars and change agents in systems" (p. 586), as reflected in "occupation is something that can transform you … how have you been changed as person by what you've done ..." (Program 5) and "we don't have enough occupation infused in our practice and … it starts here. You are the ones that are going to start changing the world" (Program 1). In terms of pedagogy and instructional strategies, Royeen (2002b) described a shift in occupational therapy education from teaching to learning. Royeen (2002b) highlighted the shift to learner-centered in occupational therapy education as parallel to a shift to client-centered language in occupational therapy practice. The findings of this study suggested another parallel between occupation-centeredness in education and the rise in occupation-centered,

-focused, and -based language in occupational therapy practice. Just as the active process of learning through doing has been part of occupational therapy philosophy and methods since Dewey (1915/1944), occupation has underpinned occupational therapy since the profession's founding.

Competition for the Central Subject

Since occupational science principally studies the human as an occupational being and occupational therapy practice frequently touts client-centered practice, I continued to wonder if *person-centered* predominates *occupation-centered* in contemporary occupational therapy education. In this study, occupation was taught through frequent and significant interactions between occupation and people, especially student knowers and client knowers. Occupational therapy shares its idea of client-centeredness and a holistic perspective with other professions, therefore "person" could not be the center, but *the person as occupational being* is tenable as a central focus of occupational therapy education and practice. This invites further research into what really shines through as central in occupational therapy education. At the conclusion of this study, it was still apparent that the elements of the subject-centered education model were present and the interactions between elements showed the complexity and person-centeredness of occupational therapy.

Limitations of This Study

I have presented data and findings from U.S. occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant programs from a range of institution types, however, the sample is not comprehensive of all programs, all educators, or even the diverse ways that one educator is capable of teaching. The video data were limited by when the study occurred, e.g. classes that were taught at that time of year. Participants submitted videos that demonstrated a range of classroom activities, such as lectures, student presentations, small group work, and experiential

learning. However, this study was mostly reliant on lecture, because those events met my sampling criteria and were easier to thematically analyze. The prompt given was, "How is occupation addressed by your program?" Programs may have interpreted this differently. The credibility of my interpretations and conclusions are limited by the lack of member checking. Without additional interviews of educators, it is difficult to conclude how educators intended or perceived their teaching of occupation.

Conclusion

Overview of Findings

The model of subject-centered education provided a valuable conceptual framework for identifying how occupation was taught and learned in the classroom. The key interactions between *topics* and *subject* and between *subject* and *community of knowers* seemed to be key to teaching, learning, and understanding an occupation-centered perspective in the context of the classroom.

Throughout this research, I considered occupation to be the central subject of occupational therapy education, however the findings raised additional questions regarding whether or not this is ostensibly true. If so, there are questions of how explicit it is as the central subject, or if occupation is taught primarily through implicit interactions with topics and people.

If occupation is not the central subject, there are questions about the state of occupational therapy education and what other subject really is central in the classroom. I observed that educators and students frequently talked about the client or person as the big picture or framework for practice. It appeared that educators taught client-centeredness easier than occupation-centeredness, perhaps due to the complexity of occupation and its many interactions with related topics. Client-centeredness is an important value in occupational therapy practice,

therefore it is beneficial to observe how this is taught in the classroom and taught in close association with occupation. However, occupational scholars have spoken about the unique power of occupation and I am concerned about what occupational therapists could lose from their education and practice if the central subject is not occupation.

Implications for the Conceptual Model of Subject-Centered Education

This study of occupation-centered education contributed findings that inform the model of subject-centered education. Findings suggested that teaching the interactions between subject and topics and between subject and the knowers were important, which was not emphasized in the original model. The model also presented challenges to the researcher and consumers of this research, due to the fact that the model did not consistently explain what could be called the subject and what should be considered proximal topics surrounding the subject. By that I mean, occupation and closely related topics, such as occupational balance, are complex and could spur debate over the division of subject from topic.

During this study, I encountered Fisher's (2013) definition of *occupation-centered* and found it to be compatible with the subject-centered education model as applied to occupational therapy. Therefore, I believe that the subject-centered education model has more utility in the hands of scholars and educators who adopt Fisher's taxonomy of terms.

Interactions between the subject and knowers were significant to the teaching of occupation, especially the personal experiences of students and the understanding of clients as occupational beings. Several educators also inserted comments about occupation as central to occupational therapists' professional identity. At this time, I cannot propose any changes to the model, however there is potential value in recognizing different levels of the community of knowers, like Wenger and colleagues (1991, 1998, 2002) have recognized different levels of

community of practice. There is also an opportunity to clarify the role of clients as knowers, since they masqueraded as topics (e.g. client factors or the occupational profile of a client) and subject (e.g. person as an occupational being) at times. Within the classroom, discussions about clients provided insight into occupation and many practice-related topics, which means they played an important role in teaching occupation, but eluded categorization as strictly knower.

Relation of Findings to Occupational Therapy Practice

Understanding how occupation is taught and learned in occupational therapy education is imperative in order to answer calls for programs to centralize occupation in curricular designs and educational activities and to shape the future of the profession under a paradigm of occupation. In the videos, many topics were practice-oriented, and students were described as stewards of the profession, responsible for being client- and occupation-centered in practice. Based on the findings in the data, I have suggested that client-centered seemed to outweigh occupation-centered in occupational therapy education, therefore this is also a question to ask about occupational therapy practice. There is the risk of losing value as a profession if occupational therapists hold client-centeredness rather than occupation-centeredness as the key to their professional identity.

Future Research Directions

This study's use of event mapping of classroom videos is an example of qualitative methods for future research in occupational therapy education. Additionally, the combination of thematic, narrative, and visual presentation of how the data fits the subject-centered model is a foundation for continued exploration of this model and of occupational therapy education. Future applications of subject-centered education require increased clarity to teach occupational therapy educators to identify the subject of occupation and to confirm conceptual agreement between

observer-researchers, occupational therapy educators, and students regarding when and how the subject is present in the classroom. Possible next steps in this research are to explore the data that were excluded due to lack of explicit use of the term *occupation* or to use the subject-centered model to identify and describe exemplars of occupation-centered teaching practices. Additional research could also help settle what I perceived as competition for the central subject between occupation-centeredness and client-centeredness. Further research may find that these perspectives are ideally complementary. Alternatively, if occupation lies outside of center, it may become necessary for me to reimagine what is best for occupational therapy education and explore the nature of client-centered education.

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Appendix A: Data Management and Analysis Process Map

Data Management and Qualitative Analysis Process Map

Pilot study. Forming RQ. | Stage I- Sampling and design decisions | Later stages of analysis

Preparation of Video Data

Watch videos in entirety.

Decision to include 5 videos initially analyzed in AOTF-SSO Large Study.

Construct an index of major events (event map) for each video. 2-3 viewings of each video.

Decide key events, in which "occupation" happens, in some form or another.

Develop transcript of key events in each video, rather than transcribe entire video. Requires additional viewings. Modify or clarify event map as needed.

Import transcripts of key events into qualitative analysis software (Atlas.ti).

Coding and Analysis

Literature review, learning about subject-centered education model, applying SCE to OT Education

Define criteria for "key event" : how do I know when the data is suggesting that "occupation" is happening?

Prioritize analysis of events that address occupation explicitly (Category I, see next page)

Thematic analysis of key occupational events using qualitative analysis software (Atlas.ti).

Pilot study, domain analysis.

Memoing

Memoing

Appendix B: Sample Event Map of Video from Program 3

Time Index	Event Title & Paraphrase of what Generally Happened	Occupational Prioritization Category
0:00 to 0:21	Introduction to the evaluation of ADL and client factors in occupation. State intention for class to synthesize how clients perform occupations	I
0:21 to 0:41	Turning to a goal written on blackboard and asking what aspects are involved.	II
0:41 to 1:06	Self-care	IV
1:06 to 2:06	Functional mobility, specific examples and contexts	IV
2:06 to 9:40	Continuing to list aspects involved in ADL routine	IV
2:25 to 2:30	Student says "Is memory involved in ADLs?"	IV
2:30 to 3:10	Asks class why client would need memory for ADL routine. Students describe routine, sequencing, and self-care examples.	IV
3:10 to 4:34	Student says "Activity tolerance." Students and educator elaborate on activity tolerance, stability, and balance.	V
4:34 to 5:26	Asks class why client would need things like dynamic sitting balance for ADL routine, students list self-care examples	IV
5:26 to 5:45	Asks class why client would need standing activity tolerance, students list self-care occupations	II
5:45 to 6:10	Asks how long it takes students to get ready in the morning	IV
6:10 to 7:15	Fine motor, what do you need, what's involved	IV
7:16 to 8:40	Student says "Range of motion."	IV
8:00 to 8:40	Listing activities people use ROM to do	IV
8:40 to 9:40	Student says "safety" and "awareness" Always looking at "doing safely" with cognition and "doing independently," as written in goal on the board	IV
9:40 to 19:58	Educator asks students what are you going to do in therapy?	V
10:01 to 10:20	Students say "it depends on the approach" and "work on transfers first"	V
10:20 to 10:56	Student says "work on transfer tub bench" and educator asks class if they all use a tub bench.	V
10:56 to 19:58	Students say what they would do in therapy for aspects on board	V
11:30 to 12:15	Short term goals based on things that make up "ADL routine"	IV
12:44 to 17:00	Using functional activities other than self-care in therapy	IV
13:15 to 13:40	Student brings up using "client-centered" activities in therapy	IV

13:40 to 14:55	Activities in therapy for fine motor	IV
14:55 to 17:00	What are you going to do to work on ROM	IV
15:54 to 16:30	Laughing about "guy" activities to work on ROM, and educator gives a brief personal example	IV
17:10 to 18:45	Discussing sexual activity, review hip precautions and list alternative sexual positions	IV
18:45 to 19:58	Functional mobility in therapy. The link to ADL routine and occupation	II
19:58 to 20:32	Concluding statement about helping students to see the big picture, develop short term goals based on deficits, and be client-centered.	IV

Appendix C: Procedures for Assigning Occupational Prioritization Categories to Events

A preliminary decision tree for classifying how explicitly occupation is addressed in each moment/event in the video data:

Occupational Prioritization Categories

Decide key events, in which "occupation" happens, in some form or another.

Occupation is main idea
Mentioned only

Occupation on its own
Occupational-named things

Presence of the term "occupation"
No explicit mention of occupation

For example, "occupational profile" without mention of "occupation" as a construct itself

I. Occupation is the main idea in the event

II. Occupation is addressed briefly in the event

III. Substitution for occupation

Is recognizeable as occupation

For example, uses a personal example or client story that illustrates occupation. Uses "ADL," "activity," or "participation" instead of occupation. Describes meaningfulness, areas of occupation, etc but without explicit link to "occupation"

Occupation is described or referenced without being named as occupation
Absence of occupation

IV. Recognizeable as occupation

V. Occupation is absent