Performance Analyses in an Assistive Technology Service Delivery Process

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Aim
The aim is to describe a part of a seven-semester curriculum teaching occupational therapy students at the 5th semester in the occupational therapy program and professional reasoning by using The Occupational Therapy Intervention Process Model (OTIPM)¹ and observation-based performance analyses in the delivery process of assistive technology services.

In Danish municipalities, occupational therapists (OTs) are responsible for the delivery of assistive technology services. The aim in the curriculum is to teach students a systematic approach when they cooperate with the client to find the best solution to the client’s problem.

Objectives
The teaching is divided into five steps (Figure a), where the students are taught in a full class with 38 students, split classes with 19 students and in groups of 3-5 students. Learning outcomes are focused on methods and principles used in the first part of the process of delivering assistive technology services.

The OTIPM is a clinical practice model outlining the therapy process, emphasizing a top-down, client-centred, and occupation-based approach. This model is used to assist the students in planning and working systematically with self-reporting/interviewing, observing and documenting, in the evaluation and goal setting phase in the OTIPM (Figure b).

The OT students contact an adult with disabilities and plan a visit in their home. The students interview and observe the adult with disabilities doing a meaningful and relevant Activity of Daily Living (ADL) task, as a part of this person’s daily life. Based on the observation of the ADL task performance, the students evaluate its quality using an informal, nonstandardized performance analyses.

They evaluate 16 ADL motor and 20 process actions (skill items) and use a nonstandardized scale (e.g., no problem, mild problem, moderate problem and severe problem) to rate the observed quality of each performance skill².

The students make a list of all the ineffective performance skills and a list of the effective performance skills. Next, they make clusters of interrelated performance skills and write a summary statement of their observations.

Pedagogy / Educational Approach

Figure a: Fifth Year of The Study: Case-study, Full Class Lectures 38 Stud., Split Class Lessons 19 Stud. and Case Based Group Work 3-5 Stud.

- **Step 1**: Performance Analysis and Documentation (9 lessons - Full Class)
  - The teacher teaches in motor and process skills, video/teach, rating quality, defining effective/reflective actions, summary statements.
- **Step 2**: Visiting an Adult with Disabilities in Their Home (2 lessons - Group 3-5 Stud.)
  - The students interview and observe the adult doing a meaningful and relevant ADL task, which is a part of the person’s daily life.
- **Step 3**: Assessing the Skills and writing a summary of the Observation(s) (4 lessons - Group 3-5 Stud.)
  - The students rate quality, defining the actions of performance that were effective/reflective, identifying clusters of interrelated skills and write a summary statement.
- **Step 4**: Presentation of Implementing a Performance Analysis (2 lessons - Split Class Lessons)
  - The groups communicate their process and results implementing the performance analysis, feedback from the students, and the teacher.
- **Step 5**: Visiting the Adult with Disabilities in Their Home (2 lessons - Group 3-5 Stud.)
  - The students use the summary statement, discovering his/her perspective of the performance, and go further on to goal setting and assessing the environment.

**Assistive Technology**

“Any item, piece of equipment or product system whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities”³ p.89

The students visit the adult again and the summary is the basis for a dialogue to discover his/her perspective.

**Topic**

In this practice the students work activity-based by observing the person doing an activity and using tools and materials in their surroundings.

The students practice their skills for structuring a workflow and observing ADL task performance.

They train their professional basic language to describe and document the quality of a person’s occupational performance.

The students validate the summary statement in a dialogue with the person and create a solid foundation for further examination of the environment.

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