

Interprofessional Collaboration between Occupational Therapists and Speech Language Pathologists with Children who have Sensory Processing Deficits

Katie Kruszynski, BS, OTS, Jackie Leeseberg, BS, OTS, Tommy Loranger, BA, OTS, Courtney O’Keeffe, BA, OTS, Haley Pfafman, BA, OTS, Advisor: Elizabeth Wanka, DrOT
 Elmhurst College Master of Occupational Therapy Program, Elmhurst, Illinois



Introduction

Background: Occupational therapists (OT) and speech-language pathologists (SLP) are unique within their skills. Both professions work closely together in a collaborative manner to improve child and family outcomes.

Purpose: The aim of this study is to develop evidence based interprofessional educational modules to improve outcomes between occupational therapists and speech-language pathologists when working with a child who demonstrates sensory processing disorder.

Aim of the study:
 1. Understand the impact of interprofessional collaboration OTs and SLPs when working with a child with sensory processing deficits
 2. Understand the influence of educating SLPs on sensory processing
 3. Demonstrate the clinical use of evidence educational modules interdisciplinary practice

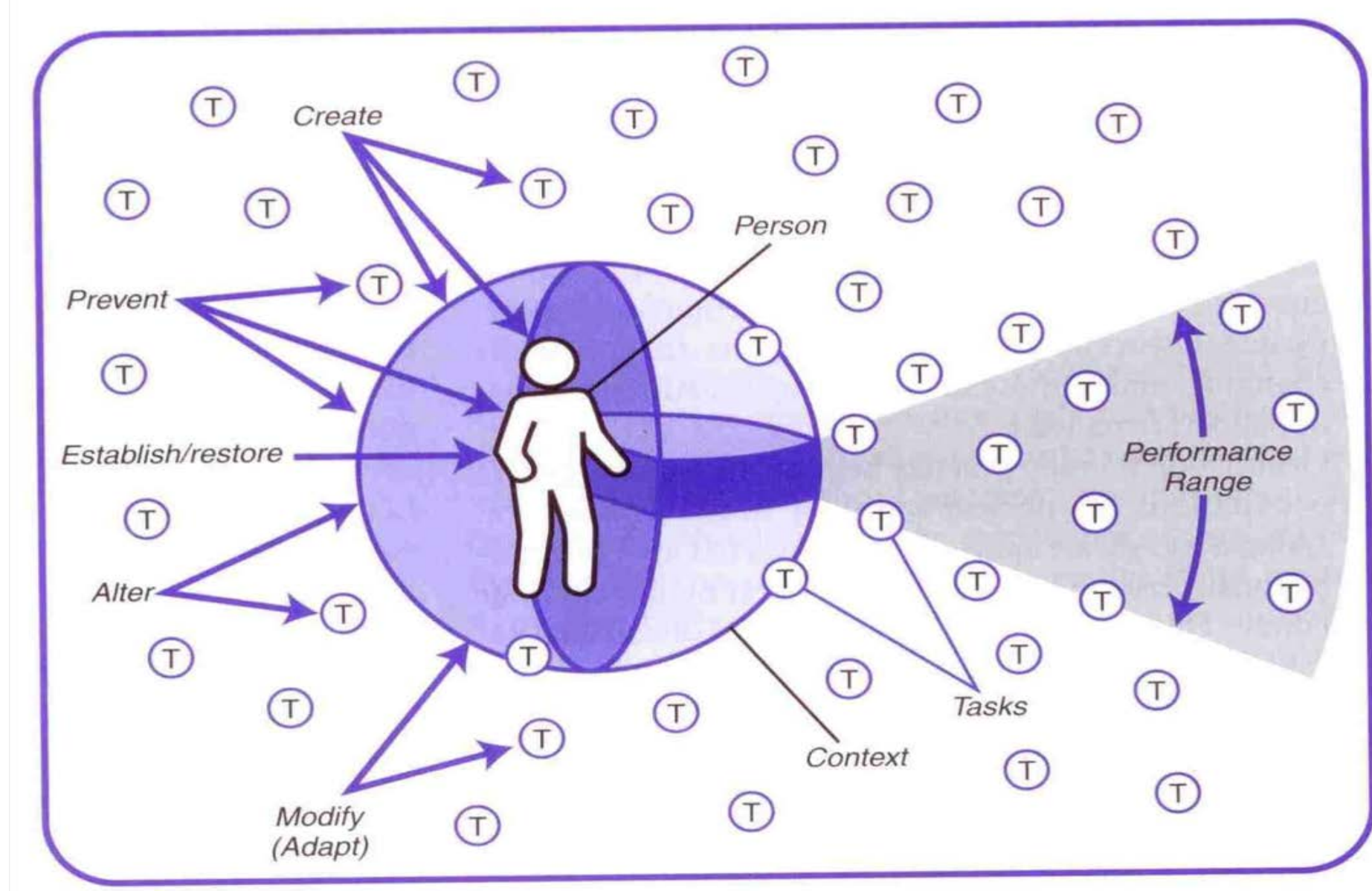
Literature Review

There are few studies published which address inter-professional collaboration to improve child outcomes related to sensory processing disorders (Imperatore Blanche, Chang, Gutierrez, and Hunter, 2016).

Research by Ogletree (2017) supports that interdisciplinary care is highly effective and allows each discipline to address core problems for positive outcomes. However, the collaboration may not be readily utilized and compromise the integrity of holistic medical care (Molden, Brown, Griffith, and Leaver, 2006). Therefore, occupational therapists can form an alliance with speech pathologists if both professions can work together to find solutions for a child with a sensory processing disorder.

For example, a child presents with complex developmental issues due to sensory processing deficits and as a result communication with others may be compromised (Schooling, Coleman, & Cannon, 2012).

Guiding Model: Ecology of Human Performance (Dunn, 1994)

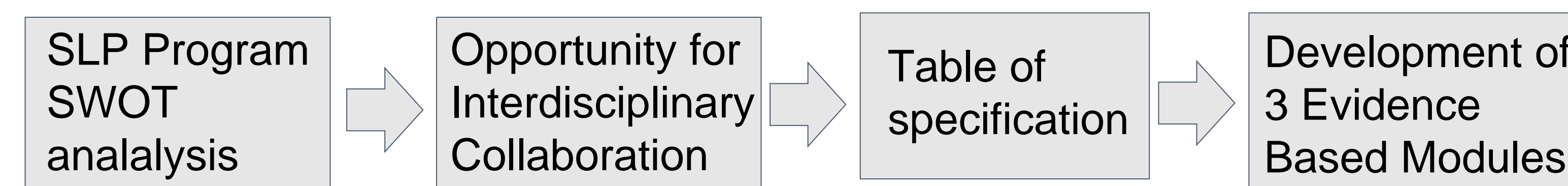


Methodology

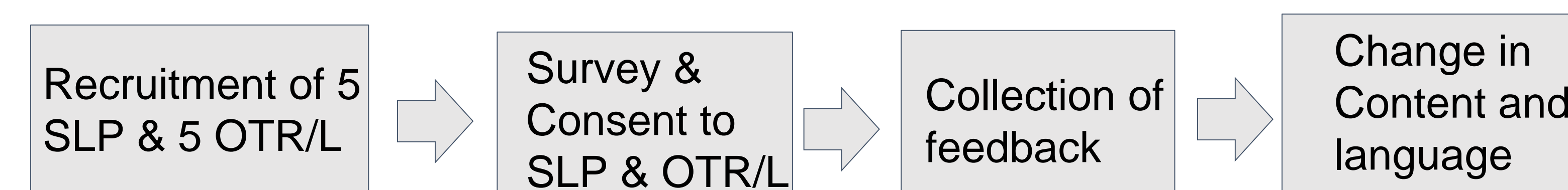
Research Design: Mixed Methods Study using Pre-test Post-test and Qualitative Method

Initial stage of study: 5 Speech Language Pathologists to determine Face Validity and 5 Occupational Therapists to determine Content Validity.

Phase 1: DEVELOPMENT OF MODULES



Phase 2: FACE & CONTENT VALIDITY



Phase 3: PRE-TEST POST-TEST

Data Analysis: Scores from pre-tests and post-tests will be compared to determine if the modules increased knowledge on sensory processing.

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Results

Phase 1: Complete

Phase 2: Recruitment is to begin September 2018

Phase 3: Recruitment to begin Spring 2019

Conclusions

Conclusion to be determined upon Phase 2 Completion

Limitations

The lack of random assignment can reduce generalizability of results to a larger population, reduce internal validity, and make conclusions less definitive due to issues with causality. It may also be difficult to produce statistically powerful results with just one control group and one dependent variable, which is level of perceived knowledge of sensory processing related concepts.

The small sample size, may not generalize to the general public.

Implications for Practice

In this study, we have sought to demonstrate the value of interprofessional collaboration between occupational therapy and speech therapy graduate students treating sensory processing issues in pediatric clients. There is a growing body of research emphasizing sensory processing as an important component of human behavior, affecting health care practices and increasing among children in the United States (Dunn, 2007). Individuals with sensory processing challenges, mostly children, can experience disruptions to their daily routines, decreased participation at home and school, and attention issues that cause challenges during speech therapy sessions and that may hinder treatment outcomes.

Our study has aimed to increase the body of knowledge pertaining to sensory processing challenges in relation to speech therapy specifically, such as ways that speech therapists can identify sensory processing challenges among their pediatric clients and make necessary referrals for occupational therapy services to increase therapy outcomes, as well as to demonstrate effective collaboration and interprofessional education practices between occupational therapists and speech therapists to be furthered by future research.

References

References available upon request.