



artevelde university college ghent

MEMBER OF GHENT UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION

Do masters in OT serve the Occupational Therapy profession?

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OT Education in Belgium

- Bachelor program
 - 180 ECTS
 - 3 years of education
- 8 Schools in Flemish speaking part of Belgium
- 7 schools in French speaking part of Belgium
- Advantages – disadvantages.
- Cooperation

Brief overview of the in Belgium

master program

- Interassociative Master of Science in OT



Brief overview of the master program

- Interassociative Master of Science in OT
- Advantages
 - Efficiency – effectiveness
 - No Rivalry or competition
 - ...
- Disadvantages:
 - Different Locations (Leuven – Gent)
 - Organization of the Courses – Course leaders
 - Financial Agreements
 - ...

Do masters serve the profession of OT?

- Honestly?
 - Changing health paradigm
 - New employment possibilities
 - Changes in the legislation
 - ...
- New knowledge must be generated
- Tacit knowledge must be grounded in empirical results.
- More and more: proof of what we do is asked.

Statement 1

‘Unless one is capable to assure and to prove that the clients’ health or wellbeing improves and has profit of the OT intervention, our profession has no legitimacy at all’

To force an open door?

- Sure, masters do serve the profession of OT
 - Research and research results should be implemented in the daily practice.
 - To show our efficiency
 - To show our effectiveness
 - To show that 'being' active is good for ones health.
 -

But more questions emerge from this answer.

- Does it mean that masters in OT serve the profession, or does that mean that research serves the profession?
- And if yes, who should do that research?
- Do we need a master in our own profession?
- Where is the difference with other health care professionals with regard to research?
- Does that mean that a bachelor doesn't have to work Evidence Based?
- Does that mean that the Master OT is a better OT?

What is the difference...

- The only aspect that seems to differ from other masters?
 - The concept of occupation?
 - In depth knowledge about the concept.
 - Characteristics of occupation
 - The process of occupation
 - The relation with other phenomena in health care such as health, well-being, participation, identity,....
 - How do we differ than from a master in OS?

Statement 2

*‘Occupational Science equals
fundamental research and
researching OT interventions
equals applied science’*

Pragmatism?

- This is a fair classification, but does it give enough ground to put OS into a master and even bachelor curriculum?

Questions that arise from this perspective

- If someone researches f.e. the possible 'meaning' attributed to a specific activity, how does it relate to OT?
 - Theory – yes of course because 'being' active is good for ones health....
- But how does it relate to actual OT Practice?
- Lack of translation?

Solution?

- A lot of work to do in that area
 - Bridging the gap between OS and OT
 - Bridging the gap between 'our tacit knowledge' (that becomes researched knowledge) to OT practice.
 - Translational research

Statement 3 – 4 – 5...

- Master education is only a step on the academic ladder towards PhD, who are the actual academics who are allowed to do research.
- Masters always think they know it better?
- We do not need master, we have done it already so long, and we heard never complaining?
- Only masters are skilled to give OT training and education,
- ...



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A first analysis

Identity crisis – power trial

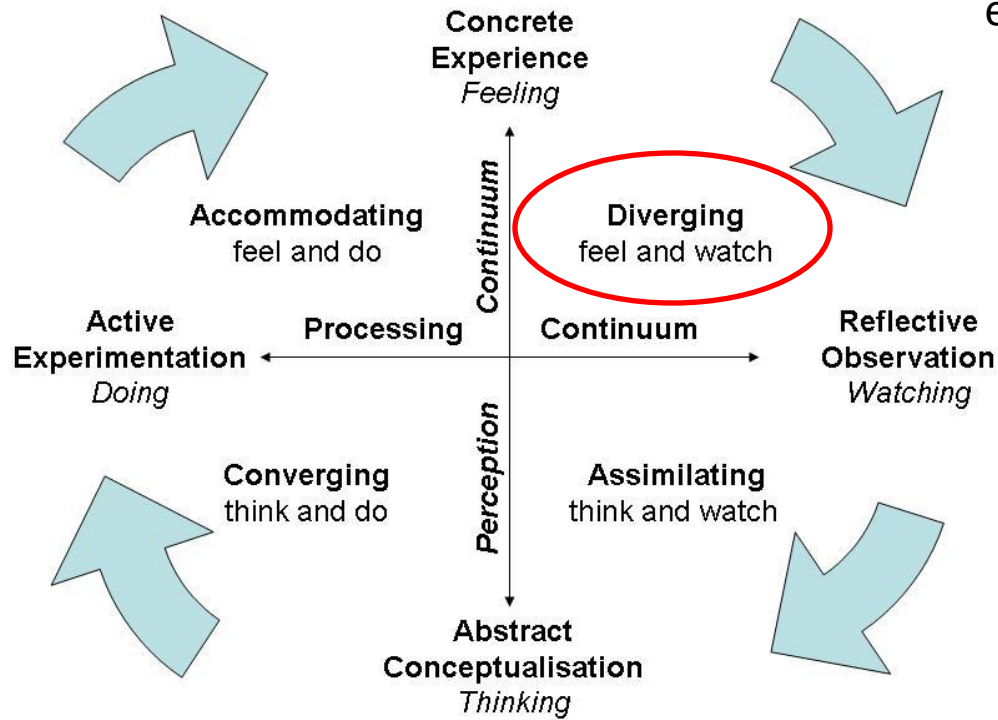
- What is the professional identity of the bachelor?
- What is the professional identity of the master?
 - Schein (1978) states that professional identity is concerned with group interactions within the workplace, relating to how people compare and differentiate themselves from others.

Research on this topic?

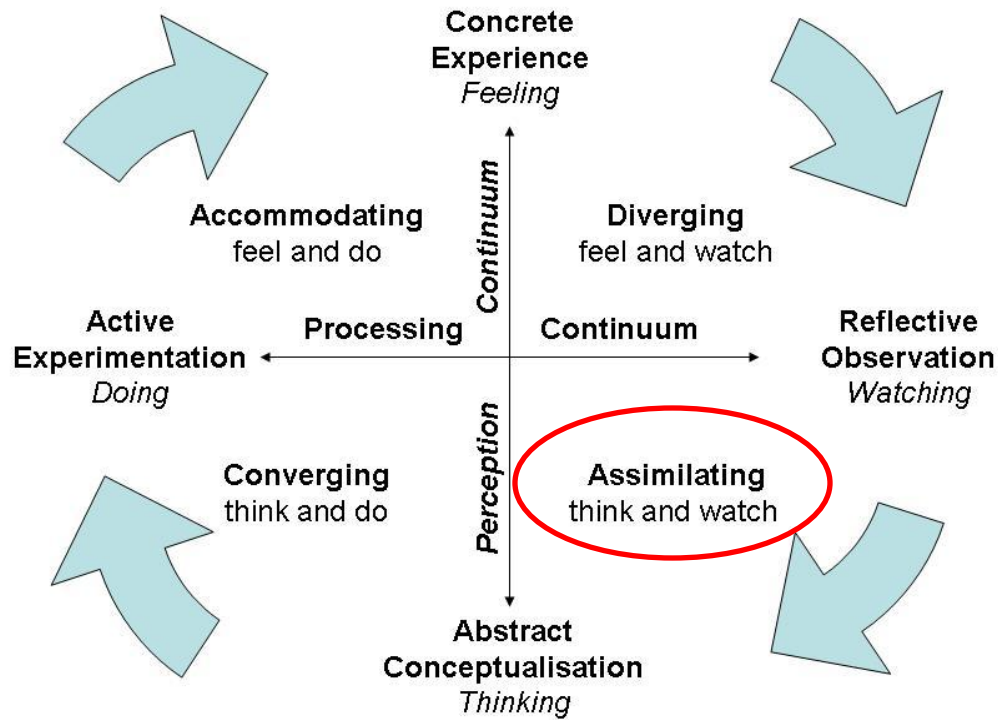
- There is dissonance in identities (Jung, 2010),
- In developing a new master degree, individuals will experience a power trial (Evetts, 2006)
- Time is needed when developing a new identity (Fageberg, 2001)

Learning styles? KOLB

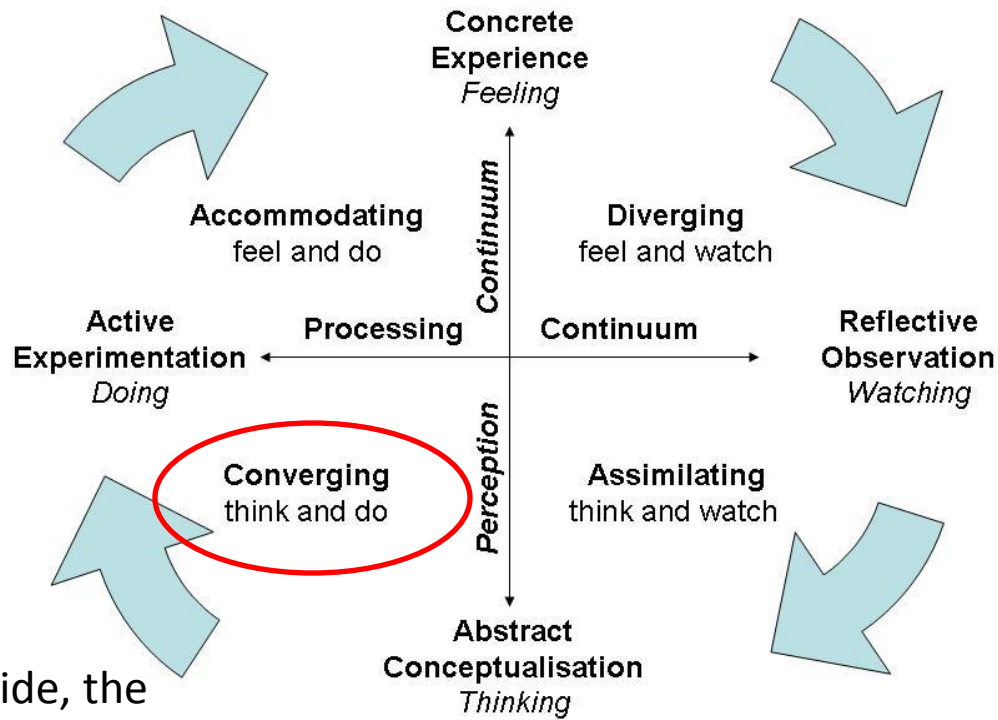
The dreamer, the explorer,...



Learning styles? KOLB



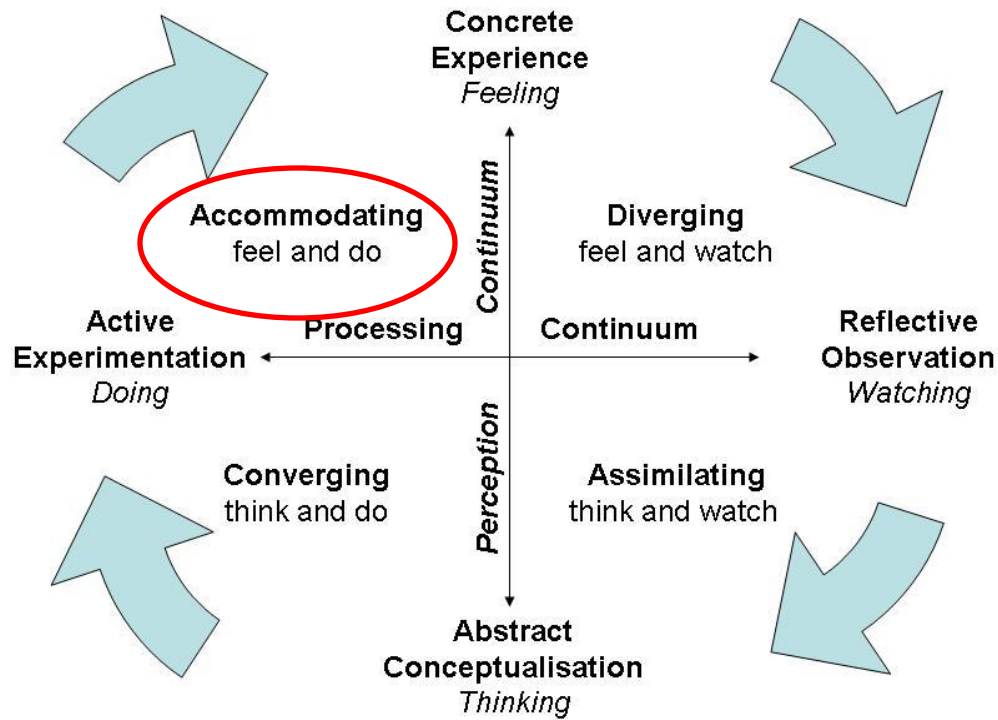
Learning styles? KOLB



The one to decide, the pragmatist,...

Learning styles? KOLB

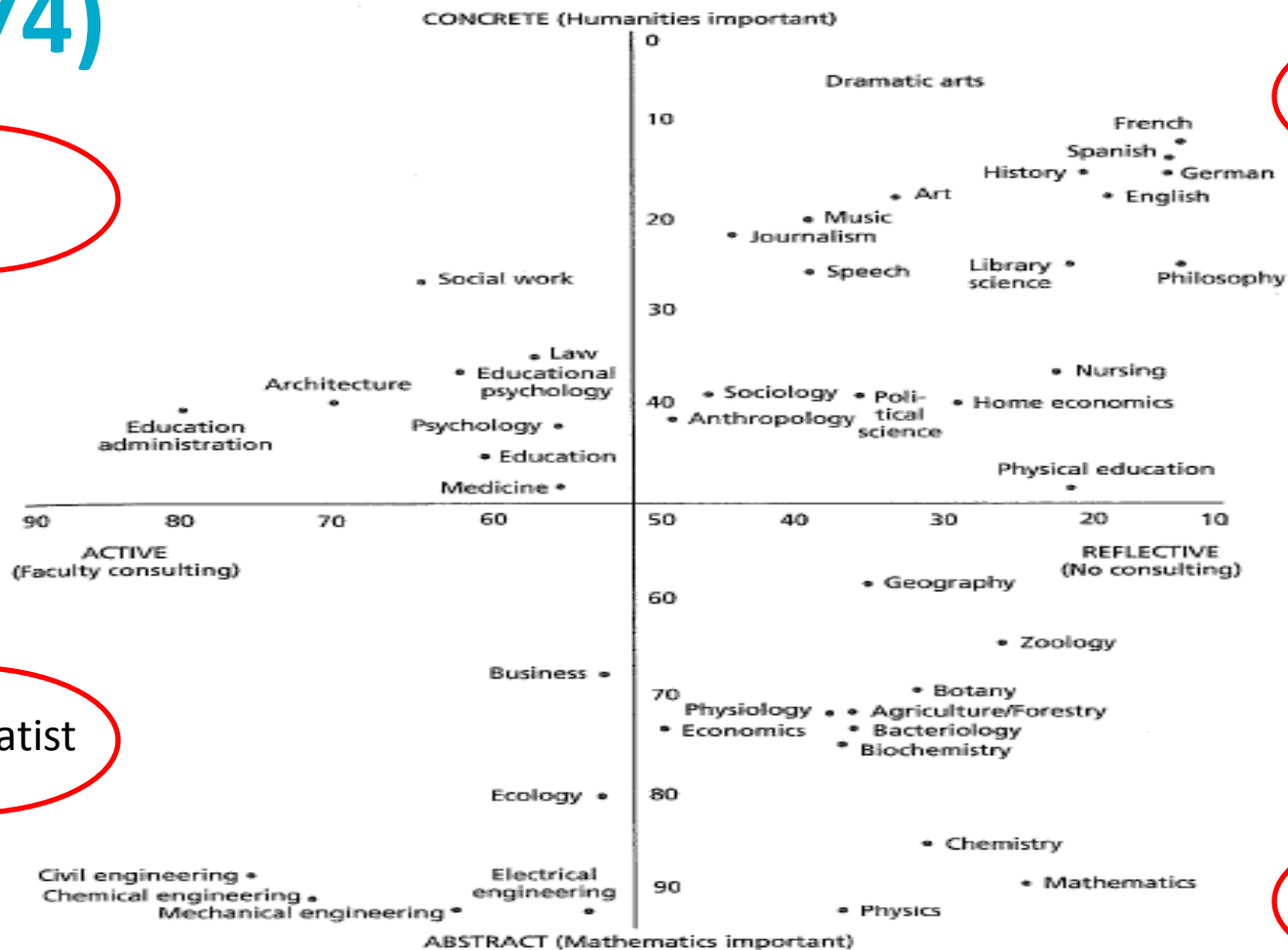
The actor,



Orientations of Academic Fields (Kolb, 1974)

Actor

Dreamer



Pragmatist

Thinker



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A second analysis

A Critical Look at the Competences

- A short overview:
 - The Enothe clusters of competences:
 - Generic competences
 - Knowledge of occupational therapy
 - Occupational process and occupational reasoning
 - Professional relationship and partnerships
 - Professional autonomy and accountability
 - Research and development in OT/OS Management and promotion of OT

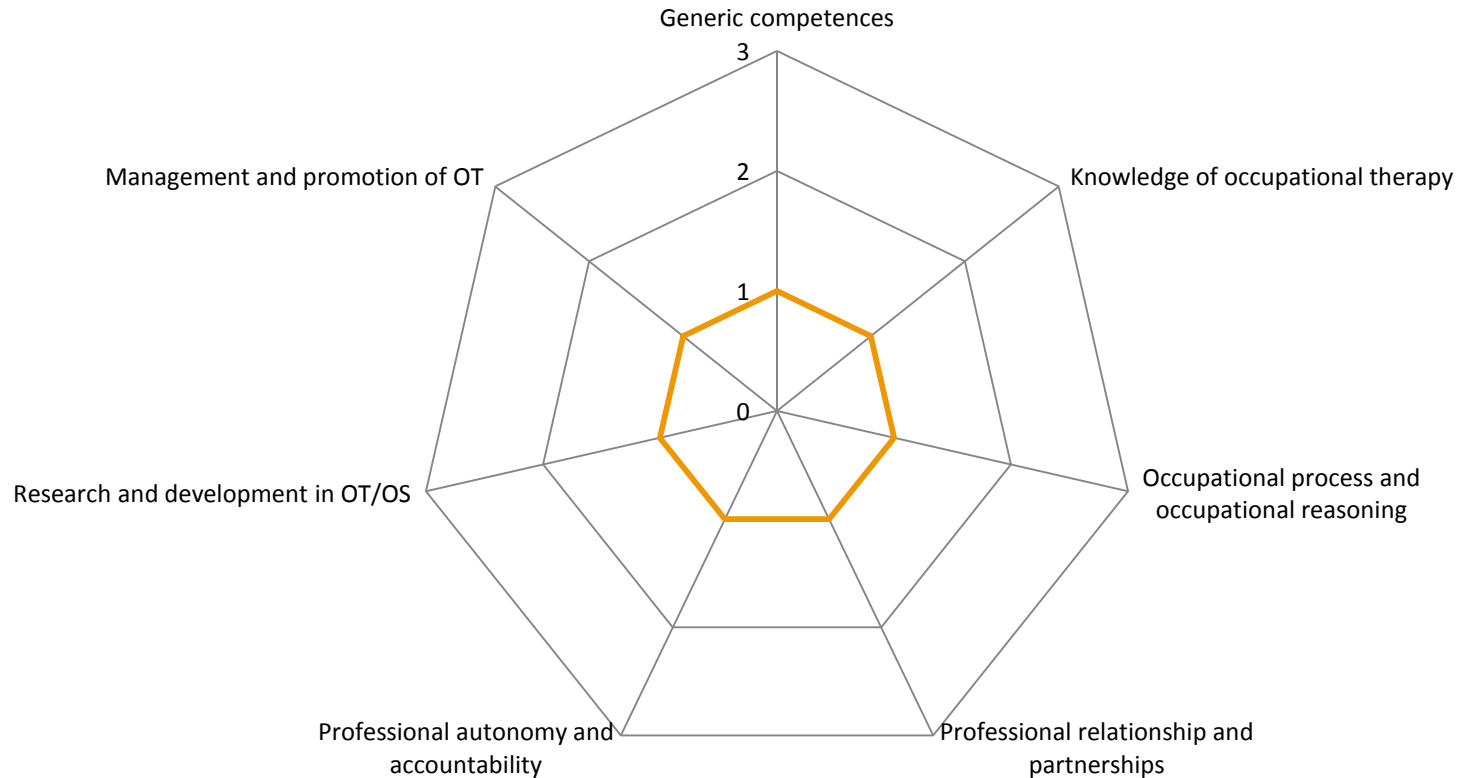
Cycle Level descriptors – Learning outcomes of the competences

- First Cycle level descriptors - Bachelor
- Second Cycle level descriptors – Master
- Third Cycle level descriptors – Phd.

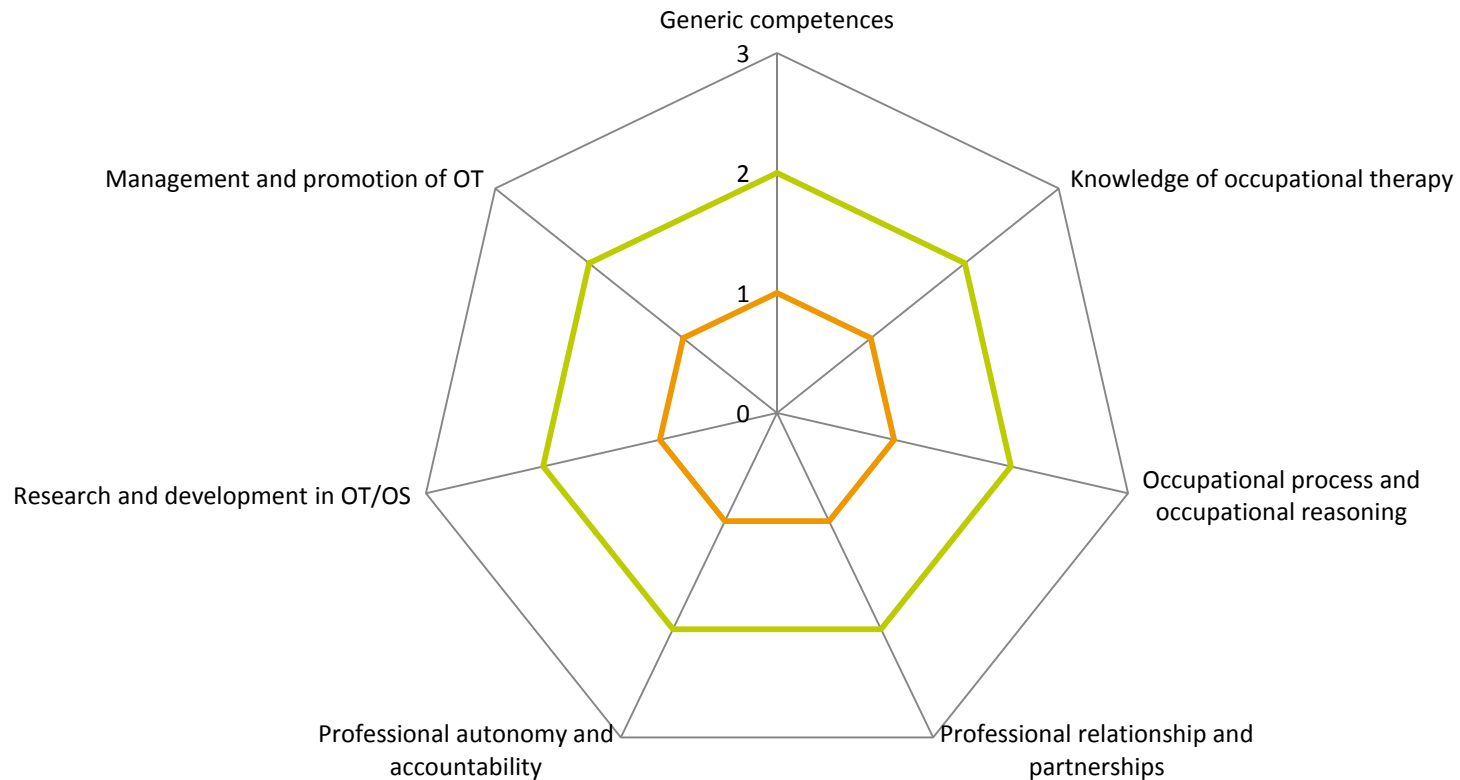
One example – Occupational Therapy Process and Professional Reasoning

- First cycle:
 - integrates professional reasoning with the occupational narrative of the client...
- Second cycle:
 - Critically appraises emerging theories and practice developments...
- Third cycle:
 - is pro-active in developing new procedures and protocols for practice

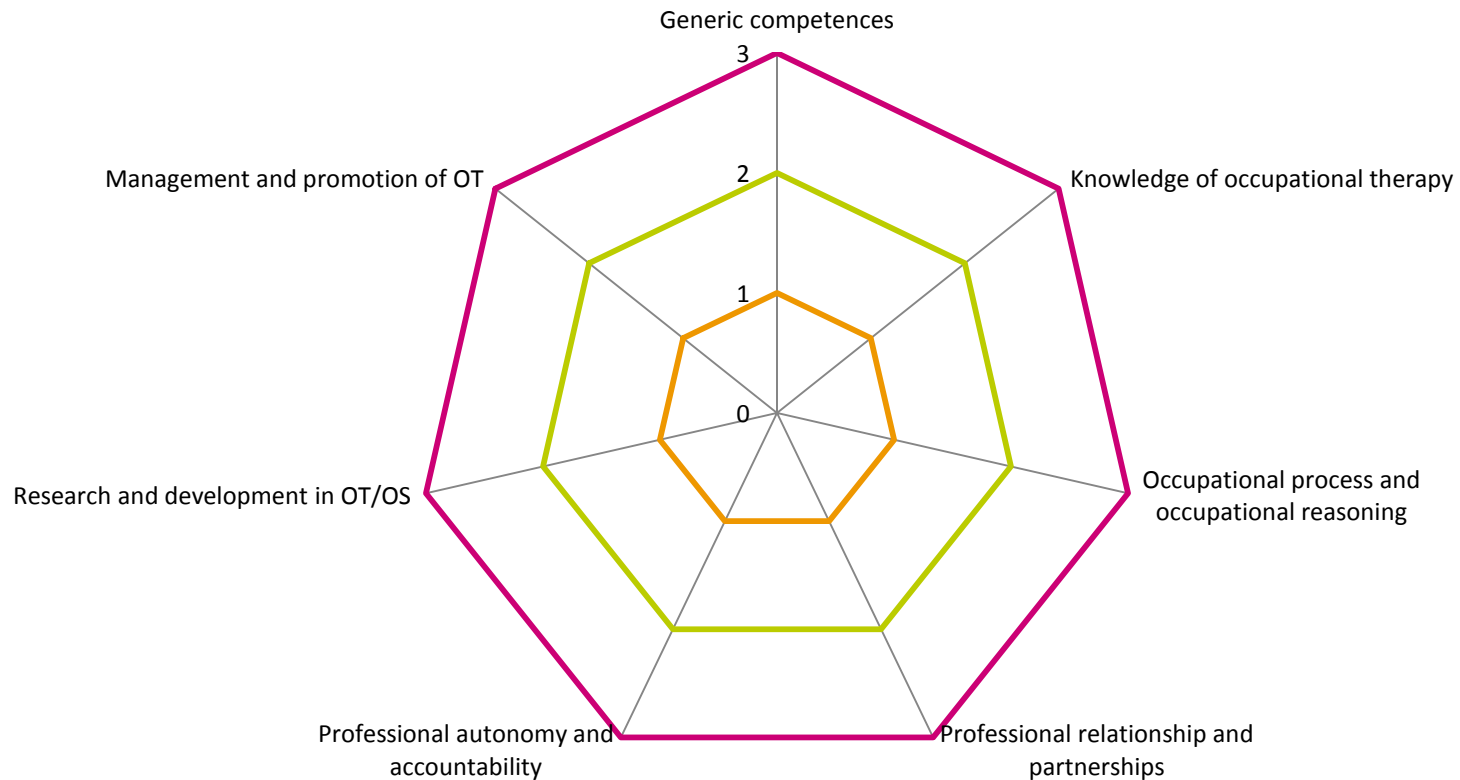
First Cycle Level Descriptors



Second Cycle Level Descriptors



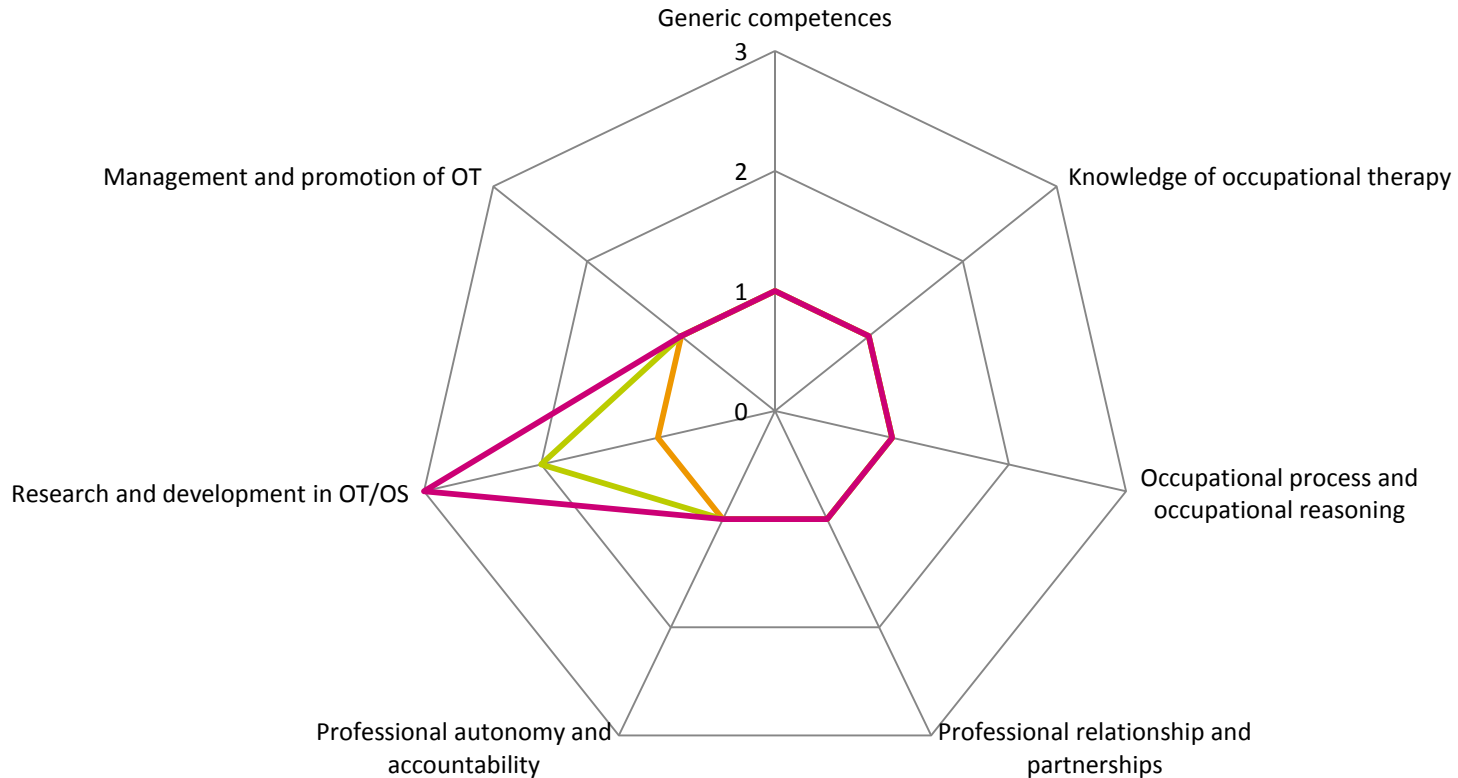
Third Cycle Level Descriptors



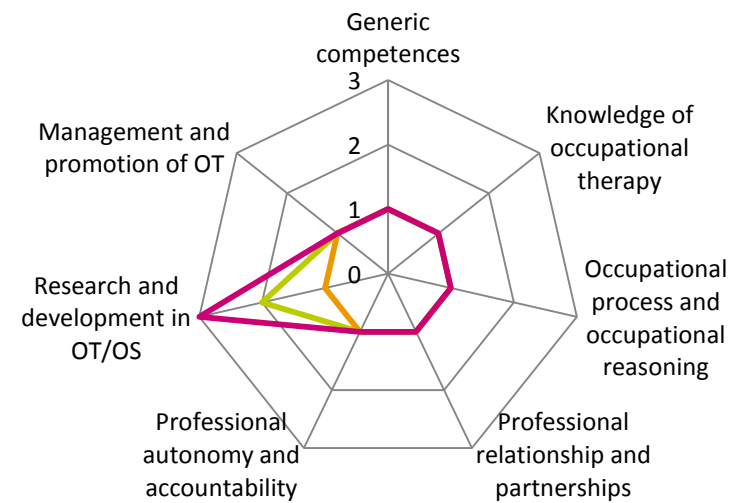
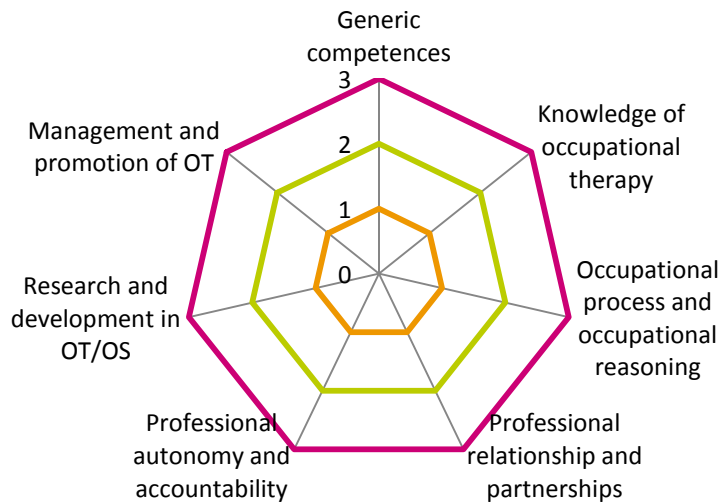
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Totally different image of the same descriptors



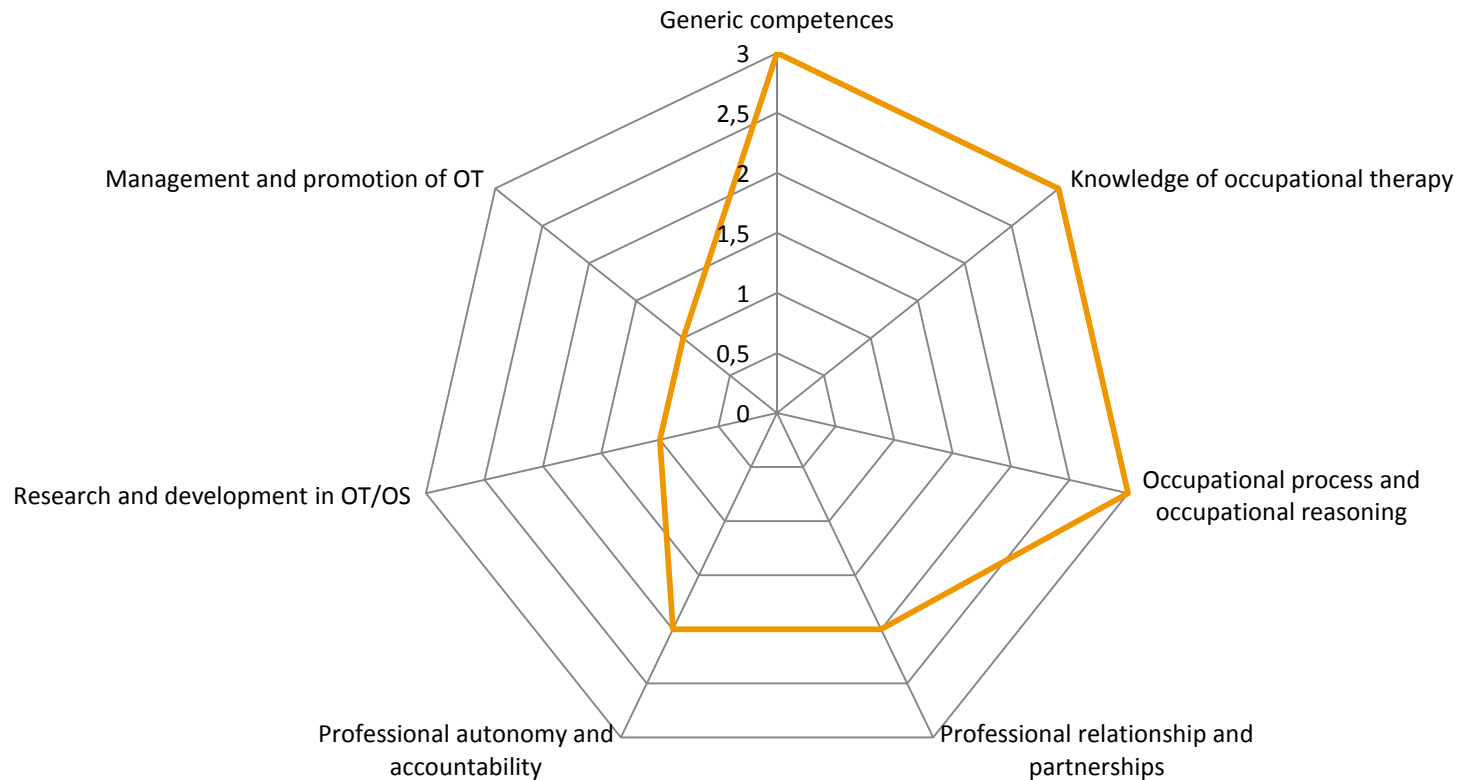
Next to each other



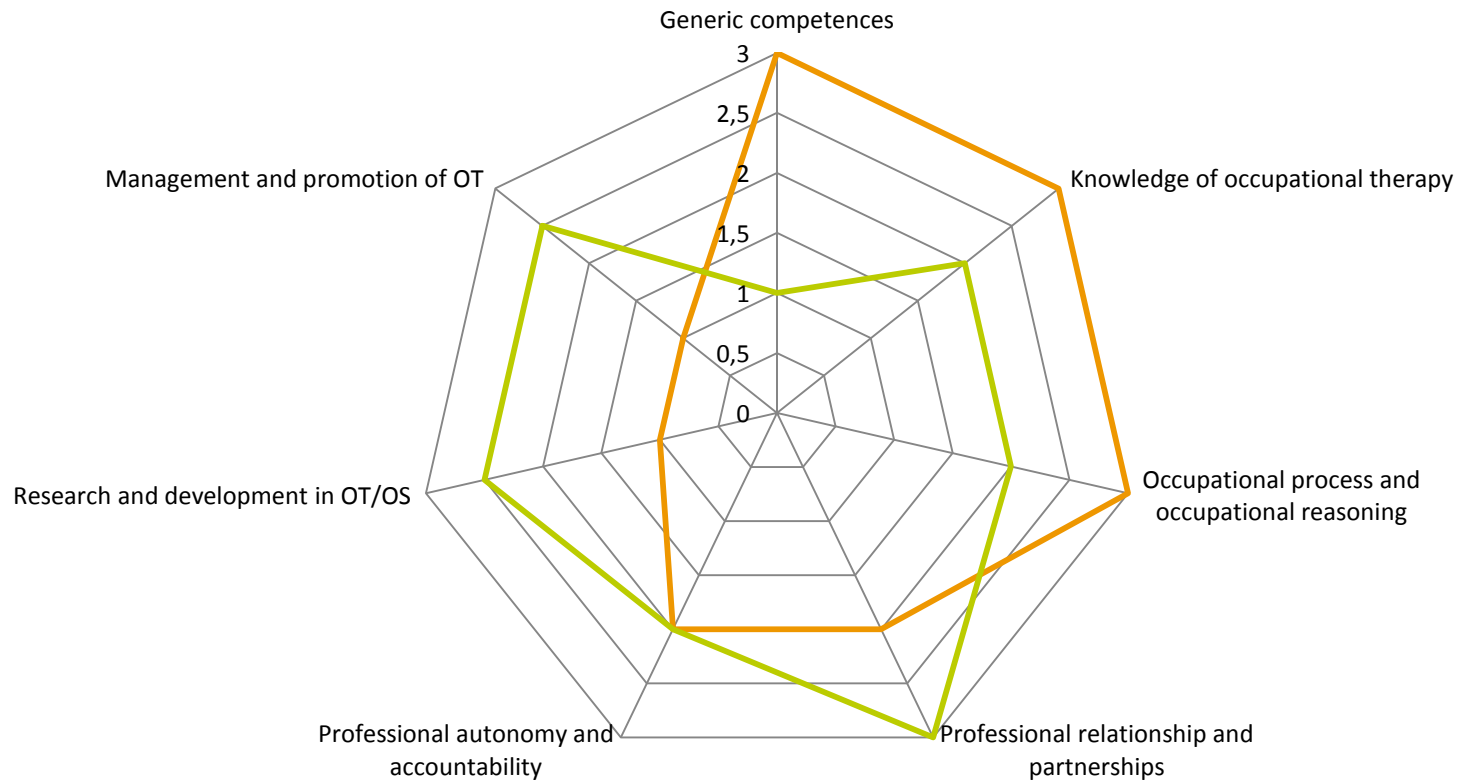
Further analysis

- Same competences, other specifications
- A bachelor is better at specific competences, where as a master is better at other competences.
- Same for phd

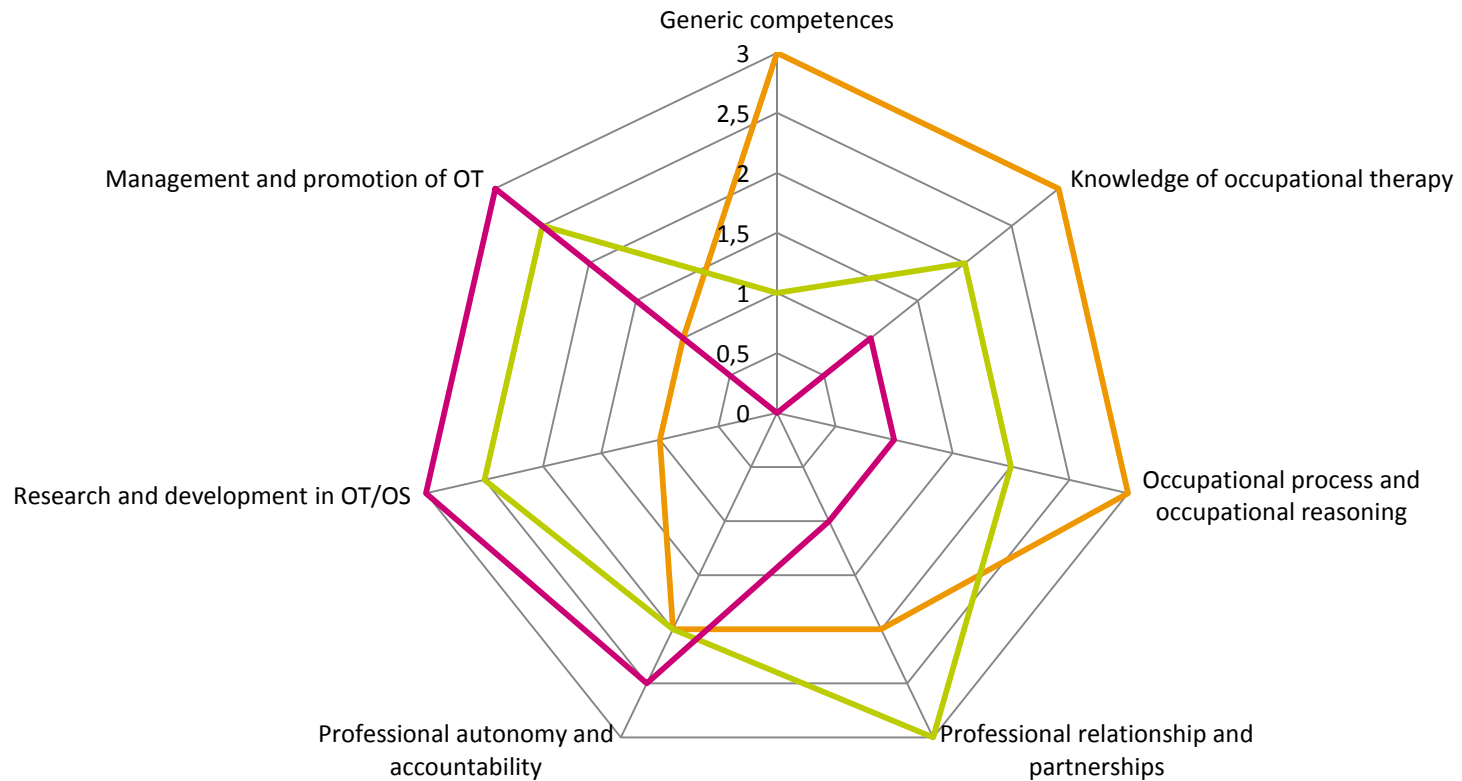
Bachelor



Master



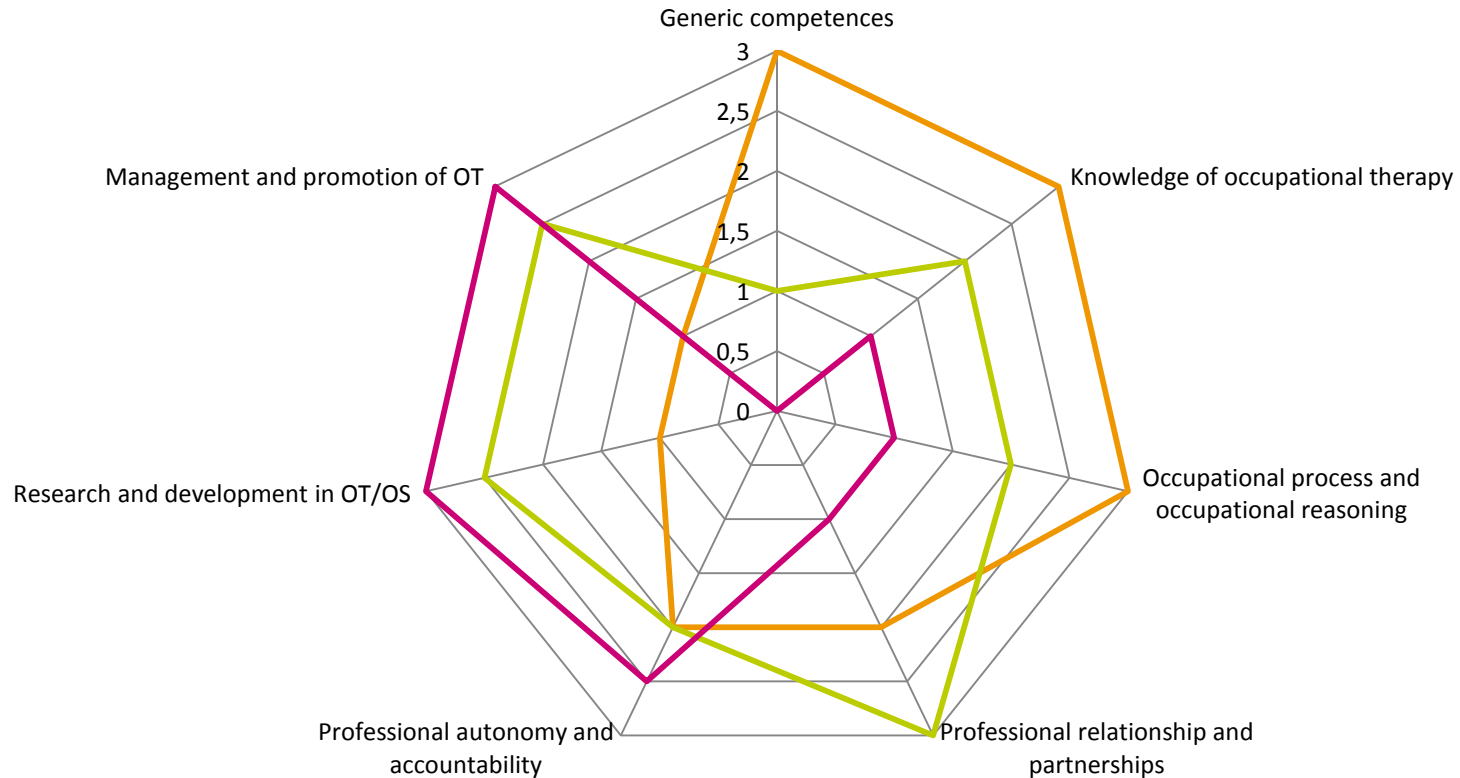
Phd



Conclusion – Do masters serve the profession of OT?

- Yes, but only if every individual appreciates the others' professional identity.
- Still a lot of work to do in defining this identity (or finding the identity)
 - Power sharing
 - Reciprocal trust
 - Mutual acceptance of one's competences and
 - Learn from each-other
- They do serve the profession if they could help bridging the gap between OS and OT.

Thank you for listening



References short list

- Kolb, D. A. and Fry, R. (1975) Toward an applied theory of experiential learning. in C. Cooper (ed.) *Theories of Group Process*, London: John Wiley
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- Fagerberg, I., & Kihlgren, M. (2001). Experiencing a nurse identity: The meaning of identity to Swedish registered nurses 2 years after graduation. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 34, 137-145.
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