

# Professional Reasoning in Play-Based OT: A Pilot Study of Professional Reasoning and Reflection on Observation: An Organizational Framework (PROOF)

Lisa M. Porter, PhD, OTD, OTR/L, Cara Sheekey, MOT, Emma Brady, MAOccTherPrac, & Breanne E. Kearney, MRes, MS OTR/L

## BACKGROUND

- Limited tools currently exist to guide occupational therapists (OTs) in structuring their professional reasoning to support the dynamic needs of clients within a play-based intervention context.
- PROOF (*Professional Reasoning and Reflection on Observation: an Organizational Framework*) has been developed to guide OTs in organizing their professional reasoning, reflection and clinical observations to provide individualized, sensory-motor focused, play-based interventions for clients.
- The framework aims to support advanced professional reasoning for the design of individualized interventions informed by structured observations and detailed analysis of a child's individual differences.

## RESEARCH AIM

To investigate the perceptions of OTs on the clinical utility of PROOF, and to gain insight for further development of the tool.

## METHODOLOGY

**Design:** Descriptive survey

**Participants:** 14 OTs with advanced training in sensory-based, child-directed interventions

**Instrumentation:**

- Pilot version of the PROOF Record and Reflection Form
- Pilot version of the PROOF manual

**Procedures:**

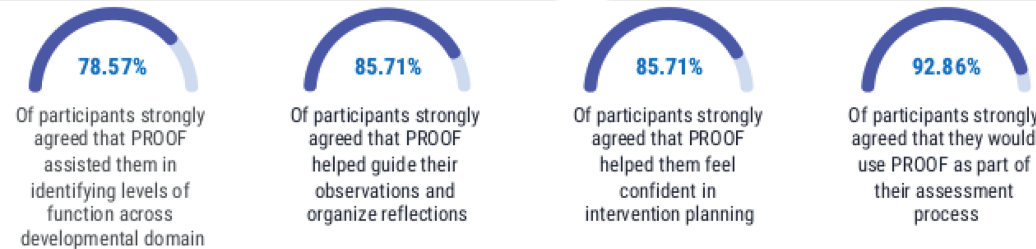
- Participants recruited via the researchers' professional networks using purposive and snowball sampling methods
- Participants attended a webinar (approximately 1-hour duration) providing an overview of the theoretical background/foundations, development, and clinical applications of PROOF
- Participants were asked to review the documentation in their own time and use the tool with one or more clients over three to four weeks
- Participants completed a short online survey about their perceptions of PROOF, rating the extent they agreed with statements about PROOF on a five-point Likert scale

**Analysis:** Quantitative and Qualitative data

## RESULTS

A majority of participants strongly agreed that they would use PROOF as a teaching tool, a component of assessment, and in their clinical practice with children.

### QUANTITATIVE RESULTS



### QUALITATIVE RESULTS



## PROOF

PROOF is a structured observation framework aimed at supporting advanced professional reasoning for the design of individualized, occupation-based interventions focused on the embodiment of sensory-motor experiences.

The pilot version of PROOF consists of a two-page Record and Reflection Form, drawing from the works of Drs. Antoine Bailliard, Stanley Greenspan and Serena Weider, Erna Blanche and Diane Parham, and Shelley Mannell.

**Embodied Play Observations:** Embodied Symbolic Play, Embodied Representational Play, Sensory Motor Creativity/Variation of Actions, Sensory Motor Goal Directed Action, Sensory Motor Object & Other Exploration, Sensory Motor Body Exploration

**Domain Observations:** Praxis (Planning in unfamiliar environments, Planning in familiar space & time, Organizing through visual space, Exploring environment within reach, Exploring body boundaries of self), Posture (Planning/Refinement with Sensory Demands, Planning with anticipation & rhythmicity, Organizing Core Stability with Movement, Exploring Rotation, Exploring Stability, Exploring Relationship with Gravity), FEDCs (Building Logical Bridges, Symbolic Thinking/Meaningful Ideas, Social Problem Solving, Two Way Purposeful Communication, Engagement & Relatedness, Regulation & Shared Attention)

**Clients Strengths and Interests**

**Sensory Presentation**

**Clinical Reflection-on-Action**

**Self-Reflection**

**Follow-Up Questions**

## DISCUSSION & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- It is well-documented that there is a need for further research and tools supporting the development of professional reasoning and reflection in OT.
- Our findings indicate that PROOF is useful in the professional reasoning process for pediatric OTs.
- PROOF shows significant promise as a structured observation tool for OTs to support professional reasoning when working in a sensory-motor, play-based intervention model.
- The current version of PROOF requires a high level of clinician knowledge and experience to implement.
- Future PROOF research will focus on:
  - Improved accessibility, requiring less training and experience
  - Use across the lifespan
- It is hoped that PROOF will provide a platform for studying the process of conceptualizing and teaching professional reasoning to OT students and clinicians and positively influence the direction of the OT profession.