

Abstracts

(in alphabetical order of last names)

Please note: the following pages contain the abstract of all the theses of the students who are graduating, but not all the theses will be presented in the seminar. Time of presentation is indicated for the ones which will be presented

den Boer Saskia

(October 2025)

Presentation at 14.50

*The Occupation of Drag Performance: Exploring Freedom through Empowerment, Transformation, and Community.
A Qualitative Photo Elicitation Study Using a Socio-Constructivist Approach*

Background: Drag is a unique, performative “LGBTQ occupation” embedded in personal identity, comedy, and society. Occupational science seeks to understand how people do meaningful activities and how this intersects with their gender and sexual identity. Yet research on LGBTQ occupations is limited, especially occupations like drag. This study explores what “drag” is as an occupation, based on French LGBTQ drag performers’ experiences and perceptions.

Method: Using a socio-constructivist paradigm and an interpretivist lens, qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews and photo-elicitation with six drag performers.

Findings: Reflexive thematic analysis revealed three major themes: (1) Drag as a Space for Identity Exploration and Personal Expression, (2) Drag as Political Stance and Social Critique, and (3) The Contradictions of the Drag Community. The findings illustrate that drag facilitates occupational transformation through doing, being, becoming, and belonging, contributing to individual well-being and collective resistance.

Conclusions: These insights emphasize the importance of advocating for diversity in an ever-changing society. This study promotes knowledge creation of a specific LGBTQ occupation to understand how sexual and gender identity intersect in occupational science. The study urges more recognition of non-traditional occupations in occupational science, particularly those supporting minority identities. Further research is recommended across diverse cultural and geographic contexts.

Keywords: LGBTQ, drag, occupational science, transformative occupation

Gex Zélie (October 2025) Presentation at 14.15

Older Women Living Alone in a Rural Territory: A Critical Occupational Perspective

Background: The literature in occupation sciences calls for a broader understanding of the concept of territory, particularly beyond its theoretical roots in Latin America. From this critical perspective, this study explores the rural territory of a side valley in Switzerland through the experience of community mobility among older women living alone.

Aim: The aim is to highlight issues that are often taken for granted but which play a fundamental role in building links between people within a territory.

Method: A short-term critical ethnography was conducted to capture the complexity of the interactions between territory, social situation, and occupation. To this end, several complementary data collection methods were used: an initial interview with each participant in their home, a second mobile interview conducted in a meaningful place of their choice, systematic field notes, and photographs documenting the spaces explored. This accumulation of data highlighted the material, social, and symbolic dimensions of the territory, as well as how they influence and are influenced by the experience of community mobility.

Findings: The results reveal a dynamic relationship between territory, occupation, and social position, where inhabiting the territory, engaging in occupations, and community mobility are shaped by the intersection of rurality, gender, and aging. Care appears as a cross-cutting element, invested in by women due to their social situation, and provided by the territory, with its specific characteristics of rurality.

Keywords: rural territory, older women, mobility community, critical theory

Hehli Renia

(October 2025)

'Stay with it!' Programme in Practice: Experiences of Older Adults (65+) in the Outpatient Occupational Therapy Setting. A qualitative descriptive study

Background: As the Swiss population ages, how to maintain and sustain independence among older adults becomes increasingly important. Physical inactivity is a major risk factor for loss of independence, and the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends promoting personalised, low-barrier programmes to support physical activity in older adults. The “Stay with it!” (“Bliib dra!”) programme was developed to help integrate physical activity into daily routines following rehabilitation. This study aimed to explore how older adults experience the “Stay with it!” in the outpatient occupational therapy setting.

Methods: The qualitative descriptive approach was used. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six participants aged 65 or older who had completed the programme. Data were analysed using content analysis, following an inductive coding process.

Results: Three themes were identified: (1) Positive Experiences and Teaching Aid, (2) Negative Aspects and Challenges, (3) Role of Therapeutic Support and Suitability. The programme fostered motivation, self-reflection, and an understanding of physical activity; however, only if it was tailored to the participant's needs and implemented in a client-centred manner by the therapist. Flaws in the content, visual formatting, and extent of the programme were experienced as burdensome.

Conclusion: The study revealed that older adults experienced the programme differently: it was supportive when well explained, adapted, and seamlessly incorporated into daily routines, but felt burdensome when unclear or lacking adequate support. Success hinges on client-centred, context-aware delivery. The findings inform programme refinement and highlight the need for further feasibility testing before assessing effectiveness and broader implementation.

Keywords: older adults, programme evaluation, client-centred care, occupational therapy, physical activity, qualitative descriptive research

Burnout Among Swiss Occupational Therapists: A Survey on Prevalence and Associated Demographic and Work-Related Factors

Background/Aim: Burnout is a growing concern in healthcare professions, including occupational therapy. It impacts not only individual health, well-being and job performance but also has broader implications that extend beyond the individual context. This study aimed to assess the levels and prevalence of burnout among German-speaking Swiss occupational therapists and to explore the relationship between burnout symptoms and selected demographic and work-related factors.

Method: The study employed a cross-sectional survey design and included questions on demographic variables (age, gender) and work-related factors (years of experience, employment percentage, area of practice, treatment setting). The German version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory measured burnout symptoms. The questionnaire was distributed online over a four-week period. Statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics, multiple linear regression, and ordinal logistic regression examined burnout levels among participants and associations between burnout symptoms and demographic and work-related variables.

Results: Among 340 participants, 4% reported burnout and 17% were at high risk, with high levels of emotional exhaustion (24%), depersonalisation (11%), and reduced personal accomplishment (36%). Professional experience was protective across all burnout dimensions, predicting lower emotional exhaustion, lower depersonalisation, higher personal accomplishment, and lower overall burnout (all $p \leq .006$). Greater working hours were linked to higher personal accomplishment and lower overall burnout (both $p \leq .001$). Working in paediatrics was associated with lower depersonalisation ($p = .047$). Other specialty areas, gender, and treatment settings showed no consistent associations.

Conclusion: This study provides initial insight into burnout among Swiss occupational therapists, highlighting a considerable proportion with moderate or emerging symptoms. The results underline the importance of early-career support, more differentiated diagnostic tools, and the development of holistic, personalised prevention strategies informed by occupational science.

Keywords: Mental health, Burnout, Occupational Therapists, Maslach Burnout Inventory

Liefferinge Gaëlle van (January 2026)

Presentation at 15.30

Fear of Falling Post-Stroke: Exploring the Feasibility of Immersive Technology in Occupational Therapy

Objective: This study aims to investigate the feasibility of Virtual Reality and Mixed Reality in reducing non-functional fear of falling post-stroke, to inform the optimisation of client-centred occupational therapy interventions.

Methods: A mixed-methods feasibility study was conducted, using a crossover research design and a qualitative descriptive design, among a sample of 10 participants from the rehabilitation centre of Ghent University Hospital, Belgium. Quantitative data were collected using the Falls Efficacy Scale (FES-I) and System Usability Scale (SUS) and analysed in SPSS using the Wilcoxon test. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and analysed through direct content analysis.

Results: The FES-I indicated an average concern regarding falling ($M = 22.90$, $SD = 5.3$). No significant difference in usability was observed between the MR ($M = 82$, $SD = 16.44$, $Mdn = 82.5$) and VR sub-intervention ($M = 80$, $SD = 10.4$, $Mdn = 80$). However, the interviews revealed a preference for VR due to a higher level of engagement and intrinsic motivation.

Conclusion: Both MR and VR are feasible for addressing FoF in people post-stroke, although the choice of technology depends on individual factors such as stimulus processing ability, physical and cognitive capacities, and preferences.

Keywords: Virtual reality, Mixed reality, Fear of falling, post-stroke

Schiwek Tim

(October 2025)

Presentation at 14.50

Let us fight dragons together! An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Adult's Experiences of Community in Tabletop Role-Playing Games

Background and objectives: Playing a Tabletop Role-Playing Game (TTRPG) engages adults in collaborative storytelling within a structured yet imaginative role-play setting. While play is recognized as a meaningful occupation in children, adult play remains underexplored by occupational science (OS). Existing research highlights the potential of TTRPGs to enhance creativity, personal growth and social connectedness, yet adult play has not been sufficiently examined from an OS perspective. The objective of this study was to explore adult's experience and sense-making of a community through playing a TTRPG, from an occupational science perspective.

Research Design and Methods: An interpretative phenomenological design was utilized to gain insight into adult's lived experience of community through playing TTRPGs. Semi-Structured Interviews were conducted with six participants who regularly engaged into playing TTRPGs.

Results: Interpretative phenomenological analysis revealed three overarching themes: belonging and social connection, empowerment through community play, and being creative together.

Conclusion: Playing a TTRPG plays a meaningful role in adult life, offering more than leisure. Participants experienced community through emotional bonds, shared role-play stories, and identity exploration, while supporting each other in developing communication and coping skills.

Keywords: Adult Play, TTRPG, Community, interpretative phenomenological analysis

Tschimben, Nadia (January 2026)

Presentation at 15.30

Exploring the relationship between participation in health-promoting activities and resilience: A scoping review

Background: The concept of resilience, understood as an individual's ability to respond to adversity and achieve well-being, is connected to and underpins many aspects of occupational therapy practice and research. Occupational therapists work with clients who are often confronted with challenging life-situations and use participation in activities to enhance quality of life.

Aim: This scoping review explores the empirical literature to develop an understanding of the relationship between participation in health-promoting activities and resilience from an occupational perspective.

Methods: The literature search was conducted across three databases and ten occupational therapy and occupational science journals using the terms "resilienc*" and "activit*", guided by Arksey and O'Malley's scoping review framework. The data were first analysed descriptively, followed by a thematic analysis of the content to identify and map emerging concepts.

Results: 15 studies were identified and reviewed. The relationship between participation in health-promoting activities and resilience was exposed. Three themes emerged: (1) Promoting resilience through diverse activities, (2) Building resilience through psychological, social and emotional mechanisms from participation in activities and (3) Enhancing resilience through meaning mediated by occupational adaptation.

Conclusion: The findings emphasise the positive influence of individuals participation in activities on their own resilience. Additionally, paying attention to clients' subjective experience and the personal meaning they attach to participating in activities, in order to enhance resilience, is necessary.

Keywords: Resilience; activities; participation