



Emancipatory Social Occupational Therapy in a forced displacement context: collaboration between Brazil and Cyprus



Aline Godoy-Vieira², Ioulia Louta¹, Constantina Christodoulou¹,
Pavlina Psychouli¹, Ana Paula Serrata Malfitano²

¹European University Cyprus, Department of Health Sciences, Cyprus

²Federal University of São Carlos, Department of Occupational Therapy, Brazil

Introduction

Emancipatory Social Occupational Therapy (ESOT) is a theoretical–methodological framework grounded in **historical and dialectical materialism** that understands occupational therapy practice, education and research as socially situated work oriented towards **social transformation**. It is informed by theoretical and methodological frameworks developed in the **Global South**, particularly Latin American Collective Health and Social Occupational Therapy (Godoy-Vieira & Malfitano, 2025).

ESOT defines the **object of the working process as the human activity in everyday life (*cotidiano*)**, and the **intended product as the radical participation in everyday life (*cotidiano*)** defined as the conscious, collective appropriation of human activity oriented towards transforming oppressive living conditions. The **purpose is to achieve an emancipatory praxis**, understood as the dialectical unity of theory and action that intentionally transforms both everyday life and people involved, contributing to the collective overcoming of capitalist forms of oppression.

This project is the result of collaborations between universities and international services, based on previous research (Godoy-Vieira, 2021; Godoy-Vieira et al., 2024).

Objective

To implement an **ESOT framework** as **theoretical-methodological support** for OT practice and education in an OT project with **displaced persons** in a **refugee reception center in Cyprus**.

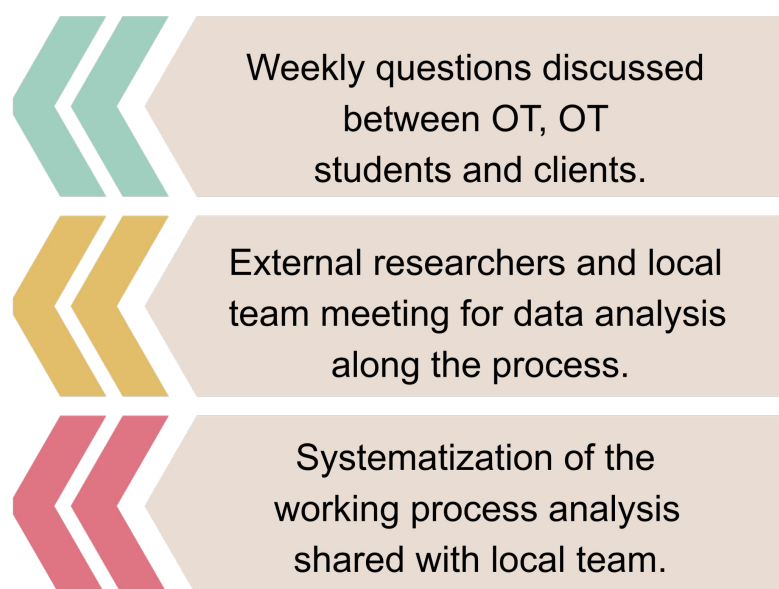
Methods

Two-phase emancipatory action research project (Cordeiro et al., 2017). Phase one developed in a three months cycle of dialogical working process analysis based on core questions discussed among local **individuals: OT, OT students and clients together**.

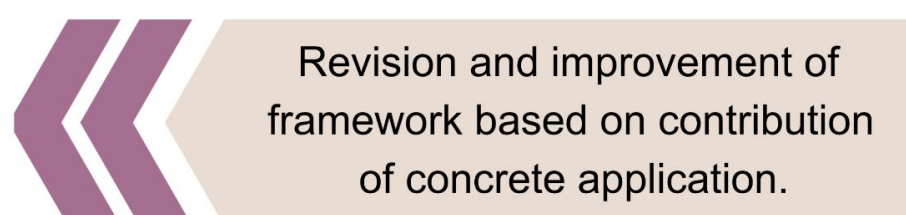
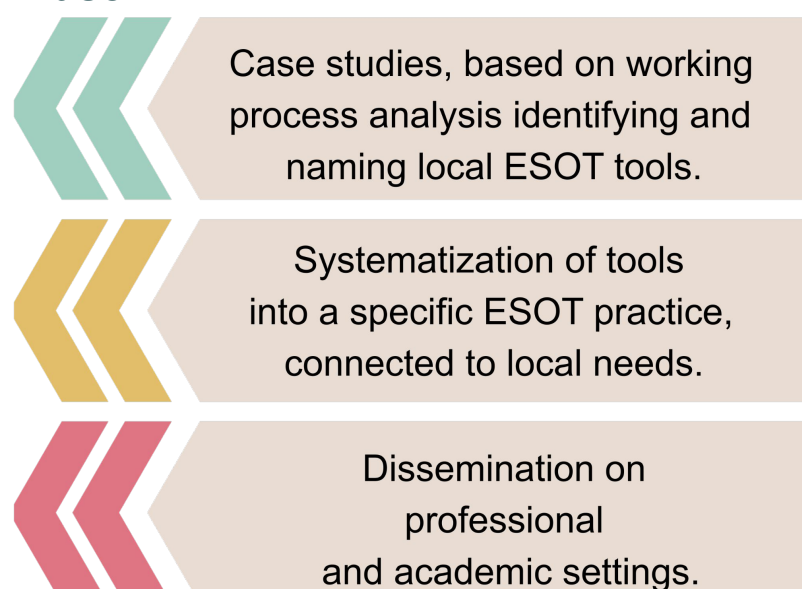
Phase two planned as systematization of local specific practice development, and framework enhancement based in evidence of implementation.

Core questions orienting dialogical working process analysis
How are OT and the institution understood by us?
How are expectations and contributions experienced by us?
How is the OT process initiated?
How is change recognized?
What are the concrete specific actions OTs do in practice?

Phase 1



Phase 2



Corresponding author: Dr Aline Godoy-Vieira,
godoyvieira.aline@gmail.com

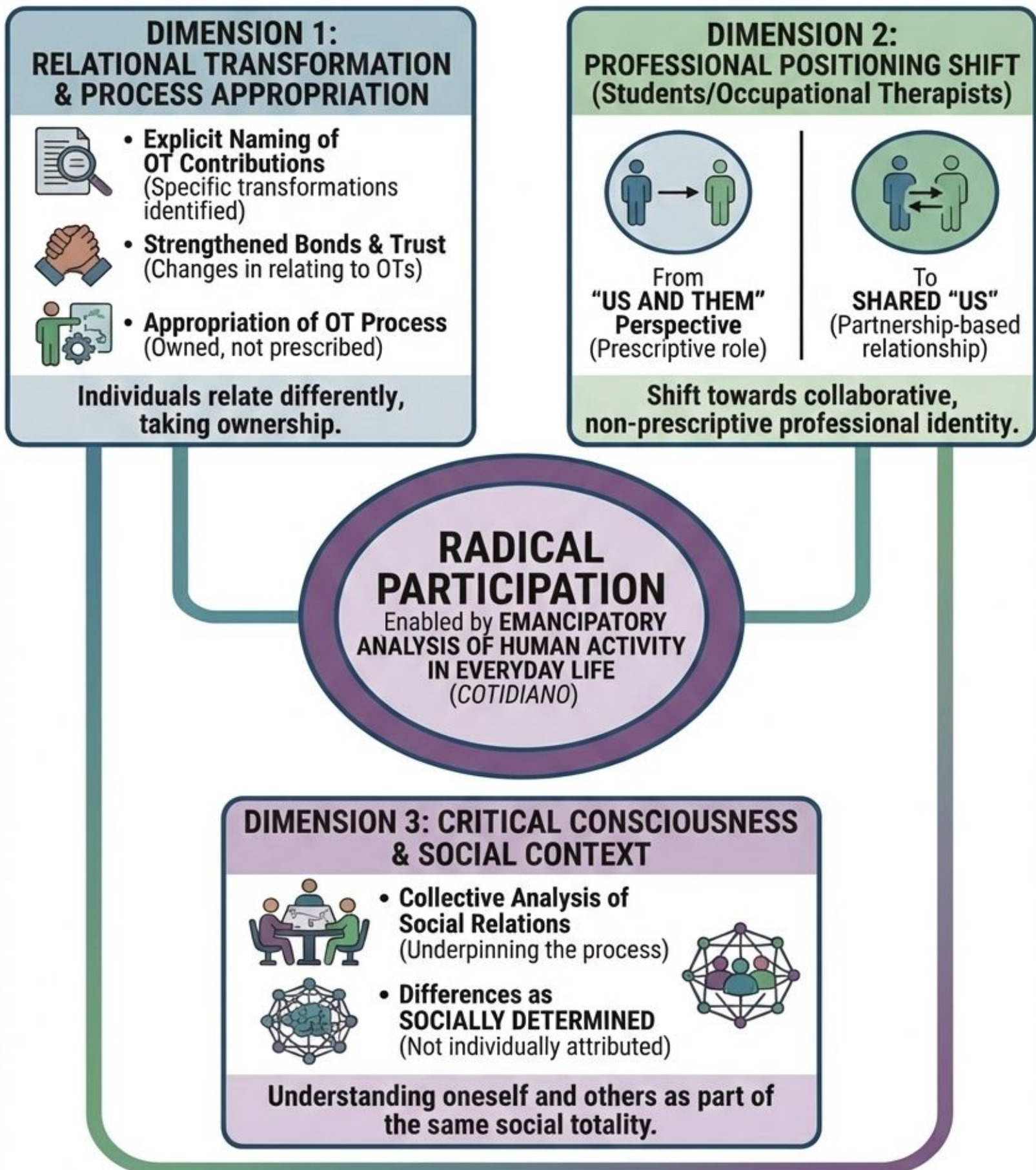
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Results and Discussion

Results of phase one are presented and discussed. Oriented by an emancipatory praxis purpose (Godoy-Vieira et al., 2026), the implementation process produced a process of de-alienation through three interconnected dimensions of radical participation.

The radical dialogical methodology sustains the differences in the roles as OT, educator, student, client, while allowing clarity about the contributions of each individual to the collective emancipatory praxis.

DE-ALIENATION IN EMANCIPATORY SOCIAL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY: THREE INTERCONNECTED DIMENSIONS OF RADICAL PARTICIPATION



CONCLUSION: Collective ownership does not alter roles but brings **GREATER CONSCIOUSNESS & INTENTIONALITY** to actors' involvement within the process.

Implications for Occupational Therapy

Ongoing analysis suggests that ESOT can meaningfully inform OT practice, education and research by foregrounding the profession's potential, and limits, for social transformation.

Clients contribute to the development of more relevant OT practices, responsive to their needs, priorities and lived realities, based on a radical participation in everyday life proposition, with an emancipatory potential.

Resources:

Download the **Emancipatory Social Occupational Therapy framework** e-book: access bit.ly/godoyvieiraemalfitano or use the QR code.

References available at: bit.ly/WFOT2026-ESOTreferences

Bridging Occupational Gaps website: <https://bridgingotgaps.euc.ac.cy/en/home/>

Corresponding author: Dr Aline Godoy-Vieira, godoyvieira.aline@gmail.com

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