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“LANGUAGE, THE BASIS OF EVERYTHING”

AN EXPLORATIVE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ABOUT THE WAY PROFESSIONALS EXPERIENCE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES AND SELF-CONCEPT IN 10-12-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN.

This master thesis has been performed by Wilke Olthuis, conducted at Wageningen University from May 2019 – February 2020.

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PREFACE

Dear reader,

This thesis is part of my graduation for the master specialization Health and Society at Wageningen University.

In May 2019, I started working on this thesis, which started with choosing a topic. This was quite a challenge before I found my final topic. It started with health literacy and toddlers, but after extensive research and many changes, the final topic of language competencies and self-concept emerged.

I learned a lot from the process of writing this thesis. From specifying the topic to getting words on paper, but also staying motivated when things seemed to be endless. I especially enjoyed the practical part of this thesis; the interviewing. This led me to a better view of what I seek for in my job after I graduate. It was very interesting to talk to different professionals and listen to their perspectives on this subject. This was very insightful.

Nevertheless, I have not done this research without the help of others. Therefore, I would like to thank some people. First, my supervisor Marleen Bekker. Thank you for all your support, constructive feedback and helping me get direction in my research. I would also like to thank the professionals for finding the time to talk with me and for the information they were willing to share. Finally, I would like to thank my friends and family for the support they gave me, helping me gain an overview of all the gathered information and all the coffee breaks to gain motivation to start working again.

I hope you enjoy reading this thesis.

Wilke Olthuis

Wageningen, 22 January 2020

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION | Nowadays, in society performance pressure is increasing. In primary education, the pressure to achieve good results is also notable. Children experience a lot of stress due to performance pressure. This increasing performance pressure could lead to a low self-concept. Self-concept is an important concept in diverse settings, such as child development, education, and social services. One of the explaining factors for a low self-concept in children might be the low ability of language competencies. Language competencies have a high correlation with academic achievement which is one component of self-concept.

RESEARCH PROBLEM | Language competencies play an important role in the development of self-concept. This is widely researched for adults. However, for children, this research has not been done this extensive. Additionally, there is little knowledge about the way professionals observe, experience and guide the influence of language competencies on the self-concept of the child.

OBJECTIVES | Investigating the interaction of language competencies and the self-concept of 10-12-year-old children to better understand the role of the social context of children with low language competencies. Additionally, it will contribute to the scientific literature by providing research about this topic.

METHODS | An explorative, descriptive study with a cross-sectional design with different methods, such as literature review, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis are used. Nine professionals (pedagogue, teacher, remedial teacher, education advisors, and psychologists) were used as a by proxy for 10-12-year-old children and were interviewed about their experiences with the relationship between language competencies and self-concept in children.

RESULTS | The relationship between language competencies and self-concept might be a two-way relationship. This relationship is influenced by different factors such as language competencies, home, and school environment. Additionally, the personality of the child and the attention it receives is also of importance. Furthermore, a good self-concept might have a positive influence on the development of language competencies and good language competencies in turn positively influence self-concept. However, low language competencies seem to be associated with low self-concept, but high language competencies seem to be much less associated with a high self-concept.

CONCLUSION | The literature states that the relationship between language competencies and self-concept in 10-12-year-old children might be found to have mainly a positive relationship. However, the professionals claim that low language competencies might have a negative influence on self-concept, whereas high language competencies not necessarily have a positive influence on self-concept. Additionally, the contextual factors, such as the home and school environment and performance pressure, might have a great influence on language competencies as well as self-concept. It also seems that the influence of language competencies on self-concept and vice versa is mediated by the contextual factors, such as the role of the parents and peers, school environment and performance pressure, and is not a direct relationship.

DISCUSSION | The results that stood out are that the professionals barely mention the competence of writing is barely mentioned and that the professionals mentioned many more contextual factors that could influence the relationship than the literature did. Additionally, the relationship between language competencies and self-concept, according to the professionals, seem to be mediated by the contextual factors. Recommendations for further research are more ethically approved direct research in the child's experiences and research to explore the influence of contextual factors. One of the practical recommendations is investing extra time in children with low language competencies and low self-concept and the creation of a safe and language-rich environment.

KEYWORDS | LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES, SELF-CONCEPT, PROFESSIONALS, CHILDREN

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1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis will research the relationship between language competencies and self-concept in children from 10 to 12 years old. In the following section, the specific research components, self-concept and language competencies will be discussed, followed by the research problem and objective. This will entail the knowledge gap, the main research question and the sub-questions of this thesis.

1.1 SELF-CONCEPT IN CHILDREN

Self-concept in children influences the health of the child (Möller, Pohlmann, Köller, & Marsh, 2009). Self-concept is an important concept in diverse settings, such as child development, education and social services (Möller et al., 2009). Self-concept is defined as a person's self-perceptions that are created through experiences with and interpretations of their environment (Marsh, Martin, Yeung, & Craven, 2017). There is almost no difference between self-esteem and self-concept (Butler & Gasson, 2005). For the sake of consistency, the term self-concept will be used in this research. Self-concept is seen as a multidimensional, hierarchical construct (Möller et al., 2009). The general self-concept is divided into two main categories: Academic self-concept and non-academic self-concept (Figure 1) (Marsh, 1990). Academic self-concept is divided into different educational subjects, such as History, Mathematics, and Science. Non-academic self-concept is divided into three areas: social self-concept, emotional self-concept, and physical self-concept. Social self-concept is divided into relations with peers and relations with significant others. Emotional self-concept entails the emotional states of the person. Physical self-concept is divided into physical ability and physical appearance (Marsh, 1990). Self-concept has different influences on a person. People are likely to accomplish more if they feel competent in what they do, are self-confident and feel positive about themselves (Möller et al., 2009). Self-concept also plays a central role in mediating the effects of other desirable educational outcomes (Möller et al., 2009). One of the explaining factors for low self-concept in children might be a low level of literacy (Bosacki & Wilde Astington, 1999).

1.2 LITERACY

Literacy is an important and complex concept (Nutbeam, 2009). The reason why literacy is important is that the basic literacy skills enable people to better develop their knowledge and improve the potential to achieve goals and participate more fully in society, both economically and socially (Nutbeam, 2009). Literacy is seen as an ongoing process (Gordon, Barry, Dunn, & King, 2011), which needs to be acquired and developed during life (Martin & Chen, 2014; Sørensen et al., 2012; Zarcadoolas, Pleasant, & Greer, 2005). Children are part of a marginalized group that can be empowered to be more engaged, productive and healthier (Broder et al., 2017). The learned language competences will be taken with them to adult life, therefore low literacy could have consequences in life. These will be described in the next section.

1.3 EFFECTS OF LOW LITERACY

Low literacy has negative consequences for an adult person's life (Miles & Stipek, 2006). Low literate adults are doing less volunteer work, they do not trust their fellow man and they have the feeling they are not able to influence politics. Low literate adults often have a lower salary and are often below the poverty line. They often live in neighbourhoods with low social-economic status and perceive their health as worse (Christoffels, Groot, Clement, & Lam, 2017).

As mentioned before, the relationship between literacy and a person's health consists of broad concepts with many definitions. Since there is not a uniform, measurable definition for child literacy and children's health, the concept of self-concept and language competences will be used as a proxy. These concepts have a clearer definition, are better measurable, and are part of the broader concepts. This way the broader concepts will be researched through concepts that are part of the bigger picture but

are understandable and less abstract to work with. Self-concept is described in the section above, and the following section will describe language competencies in further detail.

1.4 LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES

Language competencies are divided into three different domains: Oral competencies, reading and writing (Expertisecentrum Nederlands, 2010) The different domains influence each other, vocabulary is needed to speak and the right use of language is needed for an effective conversation. Children whose reading and writing skills have not developed enough are likely to experience frustration, anxiety, and difficulty in self-regulation emotions. This will sustain the reading difficulties because they start to avoid literacy tasks (Hartas, 2012). What do the different domains of language competencies entail?

1.4.1 ORAL COMPETENCIES

Oral competencies are necessary to participate in society (Expertisecentrum Nederlands, 2010). Listening to others, conversating, giving opinions, stating arguments and asking specific questions are vital competencies to gain in life. Additionally, oral competencies form the basis of the written language. The goal of language education is that children learn to effectively and socially communicate with each other. Oral competencies are divided into three subdivisions: conversations, listening and speaking.

1.4.2 READING

Reading is a competence that is needed to participate in society. It is present in every part of life, at school and on the road. Reading entails a lot of different aspects such as vocabulary, technical reading, reading with a certain goal, strategic reading, and recreational reading. Learning methods are crucial in gaining reading competencies (Leerlijnen, 2008). However, the reading environment and peer interaction are important for the improvement of reading competencies.

1.4.3 WRITING

Writing is a key component in communicating in daily life (Expertisecentrum Nederlands, 2010). It does not only entail writing messages on paper, but also digital messages and grammar and spelling rules. Writing is also an expressive way for children to have fun. Knowledge about language is an overarching norm in language competencies. Basic language terms like comma, word, page are necessary to understand language. Additionally, grammar, spelling and punctuation rules are needed to correctly use language. Reflection on the use of language is necessary because that way children can correct themselves, which will support the development of the other domains (Leerlijnen, 2008). There is also a downside to language competencies, these will be described below.

1.4.4 CONSEQUENCES OF LOW LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES

In primary education, the pressure to achieve good results is increasing. Children experience a lot of stress due to performance pressure. This pressure is not only present in school life but expanded to other parts of their lives as well (Glorieux, 2006). This increasing performance pressure can lead to negative emotions and eventually depression (Schönherr, 2017). Language competencies have a high correlation with academic achievement (Kastner, May, & Hildman, 2001).

The consequences for children with low reading skills and behavioural problems are documented. For example, in a study in England, poor readers who had behavioural problems were more likely to drop out of school, have low job skills and a higher chance of delinquent behaviour, than children with either low literacy or behavioural problems (Miles & Stipek, 2006). There is a negative relationship between low literacy and participation in society (Christoffels et al., 2017). Children with emotional difficulties may show a lower ability to learn language competencies from their peers (Snowling, Bishop, Stothard, Chipchase, & Kaplan, 2006). As children become older, their language becomes a tool to help them negotiate situations, express empathy and successfully collaborate on projects. When their language

competencies develop, children are more likely to show task-focused behaviour and engage with others in class (Morgan, Farkas, Tufis, & Sperling, 2008).

1.5 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Language competencies play an important role in the development of self-concept. This is widely researched for adults (Broder et al., 2017; Christoffels et al., 2017; Miles & Stipek, 2006) and is described in chapter 1.3. However, for children, this research has not been done this extensive. It is important to research if language competencies also influence the self-concept of children between the age of 10-12 years old. Part of the difficulty in researching both language competencies and self-concept is that these concepts are gradually developing in periods of growth and pause. Nevertheless, qualitative evidence of perceptions of this relationship will help to better understand and support children who display these symptoms. Additionally, there is little knowledge about the way professionals observe, experience and guide the influence of language competencies on the self-concept of the child.

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The research objective of this thesis will be to investigate the interaction of language competencies and the self-concept of 10-12-year-old children to better understand the social context 10-12-year-old children live in. This research will contribute to the knowledge gap about the interaction of language competencies and the self-concept of 10-12-year-old children. This information could also provide a base for future interventions to better assess children with low language competencies, and gain a better understanding of the social situation of children with low language competencies. Additionally, it will contribute to the scientific literature by providing more research about this topic.

1.6.1 RESEARCH QUESTION

This leads to the following research question: “What is the relationship between language competencies and self-concept in 10-12-year-old children, and how may this be influenced to be a positively reinforcing relationship?” The following sub-questions are formulated:

1. What is self-concept in children?
2. What do language competencies entail?
3. What is known in the literature about the relationship between language competencies and self-concept?
4. What is known about the way this relationship could be influenced by professionals in education and care?
5. What perception do professionals in education and care have about the relationship between language competencies and self-concept in children they treat?
6. What are the needs of a professional to influence this relationship as positive as possible?

In chapter 2 the theoretical framework will be described, and a new model will be developed. This section will answer the sub-questions one until four. Thereafter, chapter 3 will describe the methods and the data analysis used to conduct this research. Each method will be described separately, and lastly, the credibility and transferability of this research will be discussed. Next, chapter 4 will entail the results of the interviews and the analysis of them. With these results, sub-questions five and six will be answered. Chapter 5 will discuss the strengths and limitations of this research and provide ideas for further research. Then, chapter 6 will answer the research question based on the results in the form of a conclusion.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

For this research, the Multidimensional self-concept scale (MSCS) will be used to provide a theoretical background and gain better insight into self-concept. This section will describe in detail what this theory entails and why it is used. On top of that, the language competencies will be described. Additionally, a framework will be developed to analyse the results.

2.1 WHAT IS SELF-CONCEPT IN CHILDREN?

In measuring self-concept there are different principles adopted to ensure validity (Butler & Gasson, 2005). The first principle is self-report. This is the most used method in studying the self. However, self-report require verbal competences, self-awareness. Another principle is to conceptualize the self as hierarchical. Actions and behaviour are considered to be the base. These are linked to psychological constructs and above this, the general self-concept construct. Since self-concept is a personal construction, the variability of self-perception will vary. The last principle is that self-concept is quantifiable and deduced through evaluations across attributes of self or personality (Butler & Gasson, 2005).

As stated before, self-concept is a hierarchical concept. It is divided into academic self-concept and non-academic self-concept (Figure 1). This research will focus on both academic self-concept and non-academic self-concept. Since academic self-concept is widely researched (Brunner et al., 2010; Chapman, Tunmer, & Prochnow, 2000; De Fraine, Van Damme, & Onghena, 2007; Fin & Ishak, 2014; Möller et al., 2009) the relationship between academic self-concept and language competencies will not be the main focus of this research. However, this concept is needed because I hypothesize that

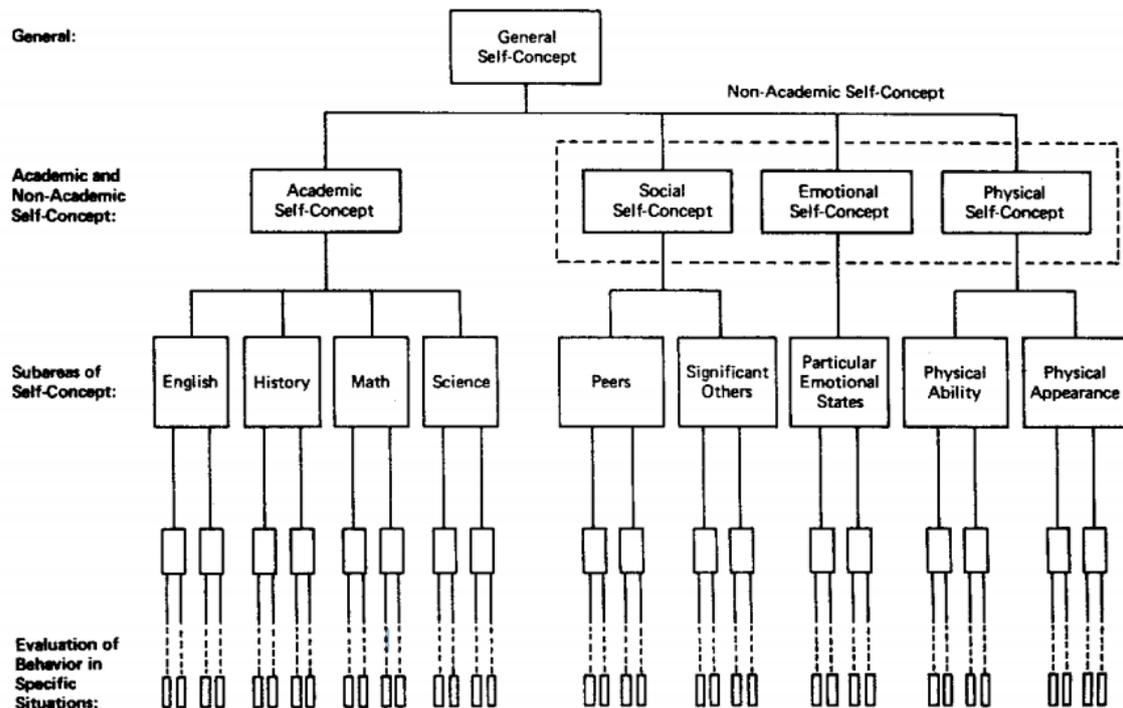


FIGURE 1. REPRESENTATION OF HIERARCHICAL ORGANIZATION OF SELF-CONCEPT (MARSH, 1990).

language competencies are also related to non-academic self-concept through academic self-concept. This means that language competencies influence academic results and this relates to non-academic self-concept. This is visualized in section 2.2.4. Non-academic self-concept consists of three different types of self-concept: Social self-concept, emotional self-concept and physical self-concept (Marsh, 1990).

2.1.1 MULTIDIMENSIONAL SELF-CONCEPT SCALE

The multidimensional self-concept scale reflects a content dependent, multidimensional model of self-concept. It divided self-concept into six domains: Social, Competence, Affect, Academic, Family and physical (Bracken, Bunch, Keith, & Keith, 2000; Fin & Ishak, 2014). These six domains together form global self-concept (Figure 2). Although these domains are specific to a certain context, they are moderately interrelated and overlap to represent the global self-concept (Bracken et al., 2000).

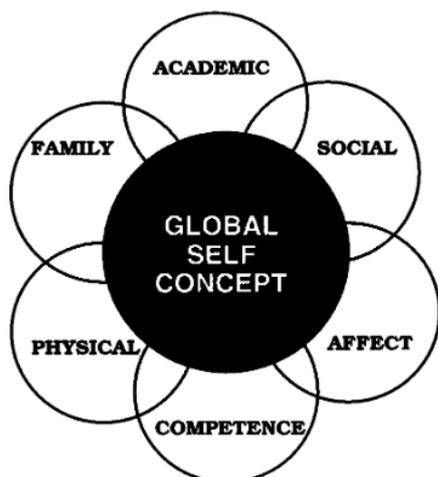


FIGURE 2. MULTIDIMENSIONAL SELF-CONCEPT (BRACKEN ET AL., 2000).

The *social domain* of self-concept provides a measure of the child's evaluation of their ability to interact socially with others in different settings (Whitcomb, 2013). This domain focusses mainly on the social interaction of the child with peers, teachers, parents, and strangers.

The *competence domain* evaluates the child's perception of their success and failure in their attempts to solve problems, achieve goals, bring about the desired outcomes and function effectively within their environments (Whitcomb, 2013). This domain focuses on the child's perception and reflection on their actions.

The *affect domain* focusses on the reaction of the child to their affective behavioural patterns (Whitcomb, 2013). This domain focusses mainly on the emotional states of the child and the behaviour this causes.

The *academic domain* focusses on the actual achievements of children and other experiences in the school setting (Whitcomb, 2013). It does not only focus on academic achievements like good grades, but also other school-related experiences such as excursions.

The *family domain* focusses on the child's perceptions regarding individuals defined as family. People on whom the child is dependent on care, security, and nurturance (Whitcomb, 2013). The main focus is on the relationship with their family or significant others.

The *physical domain* focusses on the child's perception toward their physical body including aspects such as attractiveness, physical condition, health and dress (Whitcomb, 2013). This domain focusses on more than just the athletic competences, but the perception of the body.

Since it is not clear in what way the competence domain differs from the other domains. It has overlap with the academic and social domain (Bracken et al., 2000), for the sake of clarity this domain will be

excluded from this research. The following domains of the MSCS will be included: Social, Academic, Affect, Family and Physical.

2.1.2 NON-ACADEMIC SELF-CONCEPT

Friends are an important source of reference for the evaluation of non-academic competencies. These competencies are defined and valued within the peer network itself (Tarrant, MacKenzie, & Hewitt, 2006). Competencies that are not valued within the peer network, have more important sources of comparison such as family. When a child finds itself competent in their behaviour, that belief may influence their schoolwork and ability to study. This could result in fewer mental health problems (Ogle, Frazier, Nichols-Lopez, & Cappella, 2016). A change in the way a child thinks about itself in one domain may lead to an improvement in other domains. Once a child believes it can behave well, they might start to believe they can learn as well (Ogle et al., 2016). Non-academic self-concept can provide information for improving a student’s skills, character, social, behaviour and academic achievements (Fin & Ishak, 2014).

Three factors influence the self-concept of children. The degree of integration with other children, the different domains of self-concept and the method that is used to evaluate their self-concept (Kaukiainen et al., 2002). To achieve this, communication is crucial. Successful communication entails language competencies, cognitive operations and the social perception of non-verbal cues (Kaukiainen et al., 2002). The following part will describe the different aspects of language competencies on self-concept.

2.2 WHAT DO LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES ENTAIL?

There are a lot of language competencies a child has to learn (Expertisecentrum Nederlands, 2010). However, a lot of these skills are language technical, which is not the scope of this research. As can be seen below (Figure 3) certain language skills are chosen, because these have according to the literature influence on the self-concept of the child (Leerlijnen, 2008). These skills are oral competencies, reading, and writing. In the following part, these skills will be described in further detail and can be found in Table 1.

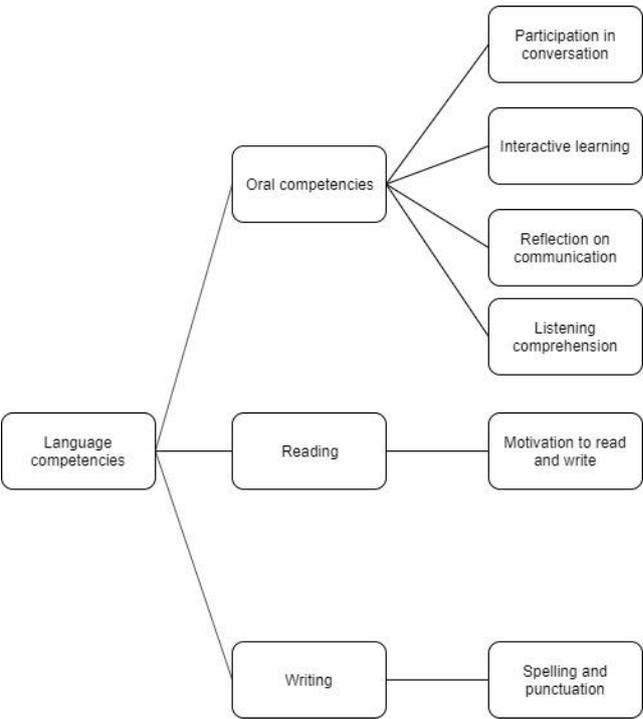


FIGURE 3. ELEMENTS OF LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES

2.2.1 ORAL COMPETENCIES

The first skill of oral competencies is participation in conversation. This skill entails the ability to lead a conversation, take care of a change of subject and intervene when a conversation blocks. The second skill is interactive learning. This entails the ability to construct new knowledge, transfer knowledge to others and to state the certainty of their statement. The third skill is reflection on communication. This entails the ability to know the differences between formal and informal, figuratively and literal speaking and between dialects and standard language. Additionally, it entails the knowledge that languages differ from each other. The last skill is listening comprehension. This entails the ability to critically listen to information and know how to distinguish between facts and opinions (Leerlijnen, 2008).

2.2.2 READING

The skill of reading is the motivation to read and write. This entails the attitude towards language and the understanding of the importance of literacy for personal and societal gains (Expertisecentrum Nederlands, 2010; Leerlijnen, 2008).

2.2.3 WRITING

The skill of writing is spelling and punctuation. This entails the ability to correctly spell and use the grammar of the language. With that comes the ability to recognize and correct grammar, spelling and punctuation mistakes and the development of a positive attitude towards correct language use (Leerlijnen, 2008).

TABLE 1. LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES OF 10-12-YEAR-OLD IN DETAIL (EXPERTISECENTRUM NEDERLANDS, 2010)

Oral competencies	Participation in conversations	Are able to lead a conversation
		Take care of a change of subject
		Intervene in a correct way when conversation blocks
	Interactive learning	Construct new knowledge in collaboration with others
		Are able to transfer knowledge to others
	Reflection on communication	Are able to state the certainty of their statement
		Are able to communicate the difference between formal and informal language use
Are able to communicate the difference between literal and figure of speech-language use		
Are able to communicate the difference between dialects and standard language		
Listening comprehension	Know that there are differences between languages	
	Are able to listen critically to oral information	
	Are able to distinguish between facts and opinions	
Reading	Read- and write motivation	Have a positive attitude towards the use of written language
		Recognize personal and societal importance of literacy
Writing	Spelling and punctuation	Are able to use the grammar, spelling and punctuation rules
		Are able to recognize and correct grammar, spelling and punctuation mistakes
		Develop an attitude towards correct written language

2.2.4 THEORY OF LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES AND SELF-CONCEPT

To answer the research question, the aforementioned theories were combined. This way, the relationship between language competencies and self-concept can be better described and researched. As can be seen in 2.1, I hypothesize that language competencies has a relation with non-academic self-concept as well as academic self-concept. Additionally, language competencies have a relationship with non-academic self-concepts through academic self-concept. This because academic self-concept influences non-academic self-concept (Peralta Sánchez & Sánchez Roda, 2003) and language competencies influence academic self-concept (Chapman et al., 2000; Tunmer & Chapman, 2002). Additionally, these

concepts take place in a certain context, namely the life of the child. Within this context, some factors influence self-concept as well. These are identified as performance pressure, home, and school environment.

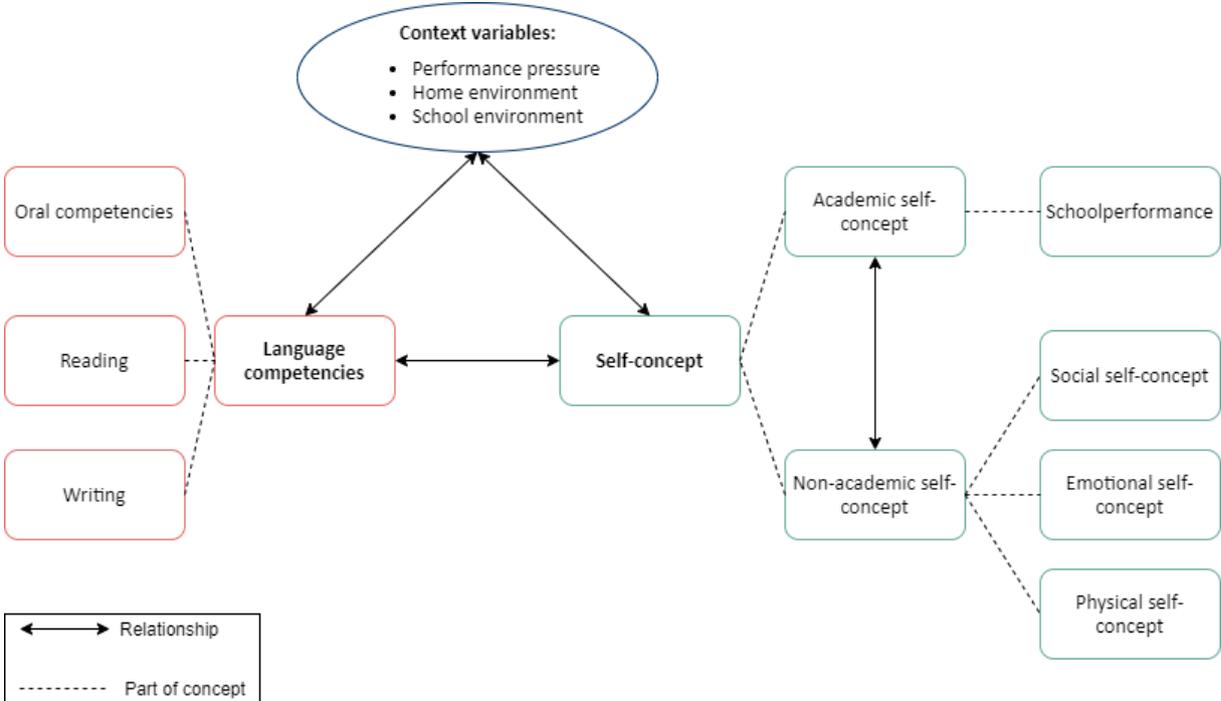


FIGURE 4. MODEL OF THIS THESIS; RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES AND SELF-CONCEPT

As can be seen in the model above (Figure 4), language competencies consist of three different aspects. These are identified as oral competencies, reading, and writing. Language competencies influence self-concept and context variables. Self-concept consists of two main aspects: Academic self-concept and non-academic self-concept. These aspects are defined as school performance, social, emotional and physical self-concept. Additionally, academic and non-academic self-concept influence each other as well. Furthermore, there are different context variables, performance pressure, home, and school environment, which also have an influence on language competencies as well as self-concept. Based on this model, hypotheses are formulated, which can be found in the following section.

2.2.4.1 HYPOTHESES

The first hypothesis derived from this theory is: “Language competencies have a promotional effect on self-concept”.

The second hypothesis derived from this theory is: “Academic self-concept is an indicator between language competencies and non-academic self-concept”.

The third hypothesis derived from this theory is: “Context variables, such as performance pressure, home, and school environment are related to self-concept”.

The next section will first describe what is already known about these different aspects by answering sub-questions one to four. These sub-questions were answered with a conducted literature review.

3. METHODS

The design that is used for this research is an in-depth qualitative research design. This research explored the relationship between language competencies and self-concept in children. Because it is a descriptive study and the results represent what happened at one moment in time, a cross-sectional design was used (Levin, 2006; Olsen & St George, 2004). To answer the research question, different methods were used, such as literature review, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. These methods will be described in more detail below.

3.1 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Semi-structured interviews were conducted. An interview guide with a topic list was made, so there was a clear direction for the conversation, but deepening questions were used if necessary.

3.1.1 DATA COLLECTION

To conduct the semi-structured interviews, data needed to be collected. This was done by searching for the right respondents. This process will be described in more detail in the following part.

3.1.2 RESPONDENTS

Respondents for the semi-structured interviews were professionals in the field of children with a low self-concept. Children who have the diagnosis of dyslexia or psychological hindrances, such as ADHD are excluded from this research because this research is focussed on children with a normal development but with a language deficiency. Children who have the aforementioned diagnoses have an 'abnormal' development and this is beyond the scope of this research. The respondents were searched on the internet and via personal network. I emailed different national institutes that work with children who have low language competencies, such as Nederlands Jeugdinstituut (NJI), de bblthk, EDventure, Tel mee met taal, Stichting voorleesexpress. Some of the respondents were acquired through these institutes. EDventure gave a website, www.onderwijsexpertise.nl, where the contact information of all their working experts is available. I contacted the relevant people from this website as well. The respondents were selected based on their expertise. Different types of expertise, such as child psychologists, remedial teachers, pedagogues, teachers, and education advisors were included. For child psychologists, the interview was about the children with low self-concept who are in treatment but without a diagnosis. These different professionals have a different angle on the subject and are part of different aspects of the life of the child. All these perspectives together provided a more complete picture of the relationship between language competencies and the child's self-concept. In total, nine professionals were interviewed from the different aforementioned fields of expertise.

3.1.3 INTERVIEW GUIDE

The topics from the semi-structured interviews were about the perception of professionals on the relationship between low self-concept and language competencies, their way of handling when they notice a deficiency in language competencies or self-concept, their needs to identify and improve the child's aforementioned deficiencies, the relation with language competencies and self-concept in relation to the growing performance pressure, the children's home, and school environment. Lastly, the interview was about the relationship between academic self-concept on non-academic self-concept and language competencies. A more detailed topic list can be found in Appendix I: Interview guide. These topics were based on the developed framework that can be found in chapter 2.2.4. Questions were formulated to be open questions and are based on the information found in the literature. The semi-structured interviews were held in an office-like space where the respondent feels comfortable. This generates a homogenous environment for all respondents.

3.1.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The interviews were recorded and the collected data was transcribed. To ensure anonymity the interviews were given a number. A content analysis was done to analyse the data. This entails that first categories for the data are identified. For each of these categories, objective criteria are defined. The results will be coded according to these criteria (Singleton & Straits, 2010). The transcribed data were coded with the help of the program Atlas.ti. The codes consist of inductive and deductive codes. The deductive codes are based on the literature research and determined before the interviewing. The inductive codes are induced from the interviews and are an addition to the deductive codes. This way the interview results can be compared with the literature and strengthen the research. After that, these results were applied to the theoretical framework, which is the base of the research. This way, the analysed data was used to draw conclusions from.

3.2 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

A document analysis was conducted to obtain triangulation. These documents take a variety of forms. They include agendas, minutes of meetings, background papers and so on (Bowen, 2009). These types of documents are found in libraries, newspaper archives, and institutional and organisational files. This data could provide insights or information that are a valuable addition to the already obtained data.

3.2.1 DATA COLLECTION

The documents were collected through the experts that are interviewed. The respondents were asked if they have documents from their personal or professional databases that they were willing to share and could be of use for this research. Also, the websites of literacy institutions and the ministry of education were consulted. The documents that are relevant for this study are research reports, policy and evaluation documents, and treatment guidelines.

3.2.2 DATA ANALYSIS

The obtained documents were skimmed, read and interpreted. This was a mix of content analysis and thematic analysis. The codes used from the semi-structured interviews are used to analyse these documents as well. The data was critically looked at for usefulness and relevance.

3.3 TRUSTWORTHINESS

The basic issue concerning trustworthiness is simple. It is about the way a researcher can persuade his audience that his results are worth paying attention to. Is the truth of the findings captured, is it applicable in different contexts, is it possible to replicate the findings and how could the objectivity of the research be guaranteed. These aspects will be discussed in the following section.

3.3.1 CREDIBILITY

Credibility entails that the results adequately represent the multiple constructions of reality and that the reconstructions are credible to the constructor of the original multiple constructions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To implement the credibility criterion of a research two tasks need to be done. First, the research methods need to be in such a way that the possibility of credible findings is enhanced. Second, to demonstrate the credibility of the findings by having them approved by the constructors. A way to increase credibility is triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this research, I will use the triangulation via different methods, for using different investigators is not feasible, to strengthen the credibility.

3.3.2 TRANSFERABILITY

Transferability entails knowing that the research sample is a representative of the population in which the generalization is applied to (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The generalization applies to all contexts within the same population. However, the researcher cannot know the sites to which the results can be transferred to. The best way to increase transferability is to generate empirical evidence about similarities in the contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this research, the transferability is guaranteed through the

different professionals. These professionals all come from a different context. By gathering data from the different contexts similarities can be found and thus the transferability might be guaranteed.

3.3.3 DEPENDABILITY

Dependability seeks means for taking both factors of instability and factors of phenomenal or design induced change into account (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). One way to ensure dependability is to use a research audit. This person will examine the process, in determining its acceptability will attest to the dependability. After that, the product will be examined. The data, findings, and interpretations will be examined. When the research audit concludes that it is supported by data, it establishes the dependability and conformability.

3.3.4 CONFIRMABILITY

Confirmability refers to objectivity as conformable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As mentioned before conformability could be strengthened through an audit. It can also be strengthened through triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This research uses an audit and triangulation to strengthen the confirmability.

The next section will describe the results of the methods that are described above. The results of the literature research, document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and the data analysis will be discussed. The section will be closed with a broad preliminary conclusion of the results.

4. RESULTS

The results of the literature research, document analysis, and the semi-structured interviews will be described on the basis of the sub research questions in this chapter. Nine interviews have been done with professionals in education and care. These professionals were teachers, remedial teachers, pedagogues, health psychologists, and education advisors and remedial educationalists. They were all specialized in children at elementary school. The interviews were conducted in Dutch, so the quotes in this chapter are translated into English by the author of this thesis. On top of that the interview guide, informed consent and the code tree from Atlas.ti in the appendices are in Dutch. First, sub-questions 3 and 4 will be answered with literature research and document analysis. Next, sub-questions 5 and 6 will be answered with the results of the interviews. On top of that, these results will be analysed on account of the theoretical framework. This analysis will be described in chapter 4.5. Lastly, the hypotheses derived from the theoretical framework will be tested.

4.1 WHAT IS KNOWN IN THE LITERATURE ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES AND SELF-CONCEPT?

The following chapter will describe what is known about the relationship between language competencies and self-concept. All the different language competencies, oral competencies, reading and writing will be separately discussed as well as their relationship to self-concept.

4.1.1 ORAL COMPETENCIES AND SELF-CONCEPT

Oral competencies are important for the development of the child. Children need to be exposed to linguistic inputs such as interactions, experiences and other sources to acquire language (Altun, Tantekin Erden, & Snow, 2018). A child needs to be stimulated to use language, this can be done by the parents through answering questions the child has, giving an explanation, encouraging repetition and expanding conversations. Parent-child interaction is an important factor. (Marjanovič Umek, Podlesek, & Fekonja, 2005). About the relationship between oral competencies and self-concept is little found in the literature.

4.1.2 INFLUENCE OF READING ON SELF-CONCEPT

The ability to read is the most used criterion of the beginning of academic achievement, and this is the basis for a successful academic path (Chapman & Tunmer, 2003). Reading has three main functions. The first function is aiming at the person's development, which relates to the value placed on reading. The second is being utilitarian, which relates to the value placed on the role of reading to have success in managing one's life. The third is focussing on the person's enjoyment, which refers to the pleasure derived from reading (Lewis & Teale, 1980). One of the first priorities of a teacher in teaching reading is the student's interest in reading and their motivation to read, which includes reading-related self-perceptions. Children with reading difficulties often have a low motivation for reading (Polychroni, Koukoura, & Anagnostou, 2006). They attribute failures to unstable, internal causes, such as being not smart enough and successes to stable external causes, such as easy tasks. The decision to read is largely determined by the attitude towards reading (Polychroni et al., 2006). The ability to read is associated with mental health. Poor readers have a higher risk of both internal and external problems. Internal problems consist of anxiety, depression or socio-emotional problems (Boyes, Tebbutt, Preece, & Badcock, 2018). Externalizing problems consist mostly of behavioural problems. Reading ability is also negatively associated with the child's self-concept (Boyes et al., 2018). There are studies that reported that children with reading difficulty have a lower general self-concept (Alexander-Passe, 2006; Humphrey & Mullins, 2002). However, there are also studies that did not find any relationship between reading difficulty and self-concept (Frederickson & Jacobs, 2001; Terras, Thompson, & Minnis, 2009).

4.1.3 ATTITUDE TOWARDS READING

There are many factors that influence the child's attitude towards reading. Factors that contribute to a positive attitude are the beliefs of the child about others' expectations, their reading outcome and the type of prior reading experience (Polychroni et al., 2006). The attitude towards reading influences reading self-concept and the perception of competence in doing reading tasks and activities. It also influences the perception that these tasks are generally easy or difficult. From the age of eight years, children are able to make social comparisons, which results in that their evaluations are also increasingly comparative (S Harter, Mussen, & Hetherington, 1983). Negative self-concepts may imply that they consider themselves less able in different domains. A study uncovered that reading and spelling ability were more likely to influence global self-concept in higher-achieving students than in lower-achieving students (Charlton, Newton, & Humphrey, 2004). Children may reorganize their domain-specific self-evaluations, which could lead to a reduction in the areas that threaten their self-concept and an increase in other domains that could be more rewarding (Susan Harter, 1999). Children who rate reading to be easier, are tended to have a higher verbal ability and word reading skills (Katzir, Lesaux, & Kim, 2009). Additionally, children's motivation for reading is associated with the parent's identification with pleasure are a reason for reading (Katzir et al., 2009)

4.1.4 WRITING AND SELF-CONCEPT

Spelling is crucial for communicating in a literate society (Varnhagen, 2000). Incorrect spelling may obscure the message and slow down communication. Additionally, poor spellers have a stigma of being sloppy, lazy and stupid (Varnhagen, 2000). Additionally, a person's level of literacy is based on the ability to spell in everyday communications, such as letters, notes, reports and application forms (Westwood, 2018). The physical aspect of writing, fine motor skills, has an influence on self-concept (Vinck, 2007). Low fine motor skills could cause frustration and the feeling of not being able to do something (Vinck, 2007). This could lead to the lowering of self-concept of the child (Chapman & Tunmer, 2003).

4.1.5 IMPORTANCE OF WRITING

The ability to adequately read and write are associated with important life consequences, such as better employment rates and a higher socioeconomic status (Archambault, Eccles, & Vida, 2010). Children who do not acquire the reading and writing competencies could become alienated from school which could lead to disengagement and eventually to drop out (Archambault et al., 2010). So, it is necessary to value reading and writing and use them in a meaningful way (Mata, 2011).

In order to write, children have to spell single words. The ability to spell is a milestone in children's literacy development. They need to draw upon and use different kinds of literacy skills. Spelling is therefore considered a good reflection of the understanding and learning of the alphabetic principle and a predictor of their reading skills. Therefore writing plays an important role in the development of spelling (Puranik, Lonigan, & Kim, 2011). Additionally, writing attributes to the development of fine motor skills, which are important for feeling good in their own bodies, which is reflected in their self-concept (Vinck, 2007).

4.1.6 MOTIVATION TO WRITE

The underlying aspects of the motivation to write are comparable with the aspects of the motivation to read. These aspects are the understanding of the use, the value of literacy, enthusiasm for learning and expectations of successful learning (Verhoeven & Snow, 2001). All these aspects are important, however, research indicated that the most important one is the value and importance of writing (Mata, 2011). Younger children tend to have a higher motivation for writing because they have not experienced the failure or frustration due to their writing performance (Gambrell & Gillis, 2007).

The place of literacy in the social structure of families, peers, and schools may influence the value that a child attributes to reading and writing, thus their own literacy motivation (Mata, 2011). Parents prefer to develop reading practices at home more frequently, and in a diverse way than writing practices. Writing practices often were limited to learning the alphabet and writing their own names (Lynch, 2008). The scarcity of writing practices in daily lives results in a more difficult appropriation for writing development and the motivation for writing tends to be lower than for reading (Mata, 2011). To motivate children to write, there needs to be a “word rich” environment, with both words they know and words they do not know, so that they will be more acquainted and empowered to use them in their writing. Additionally, writing goals at school and at home will help them develop positive perceptions of themselves and at the same time develop confidence in their writing abilities (Bruning & Horn, 2000; Mata, 2011). This will create the opportunities to understand, value and apply writing (Mata, 2011).

4.1.7 EFFECTS OF WRITING

Skilled writers are more self-regulated than developing writers. The self-regulation strategies that children use to improve their writing performance consist of goal setting, planning, seeking information self-monitoring and self-evaluating (Graham & R. Harris, 2000). Additionally, writing well has an influence on how a person is perceived by others and might leave a good impression when writing a job application (Miles & Stipek, 2006).

Teaching spelling is a sensitive topic. It needs to be taught correctly, however too much attention on the accuracy might demotivate the child to engage in writing. Self-concept and confidence can be reduced due to early criticism of their work (Westwood, 2018). The attitude of children towards spelling is specific to this domain and is not generalized to other academic or the non-academic domains of self-concept (Varnhagen, 2000). However, teachers and children may behave in a more negative way towards children who are poor spellers. This may have a huge impact on the poor spellers' ability to succeed in a literate society. It could limit opportunities for poor spellers or decrease their self-concept (Varnhagen, 2000).

This section answered what is known about the relationship between language competencies and self-concept. However, in this thesis, this relationship will be tested indirectly, through a by proxy. This by proxy is the professionals in education and care. The next chapter will discuss the knowledge about the way professionals could influence this relationship.

4.2 WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT THE WAY THIS RELATIONSHIP COULD BE INFLUENCED BY PROFESSIONALS IN EDUCATION AND CARE?

This section will describe what is known about the way professionals could influence the relationship between language competencies and self-concept.

4.2.1 INFLUENCING FACTORS OF LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES AND SELF-CONCEPT

The success of a learner is determined by three factors: self-concept, regulation, and self-efficacy. Higher levels of self-concept, regulation, and evaluation resulted in a higher achievement (Tan, 2019). Language self-concept is an important factor in language achievement. This is referred to as a language-specific element of the self. Self-concept is related to language learning strategies (Muhammad, 2017). Additionally, self-efficacy and self-concept are predictors of language learning (Chao, McInerney, & Bai, 2019). Language self-concept is associated with the individual's language competencies. It could be the motivator in the language learning process (Tan, 2019). Another factor that is important in language learning is the learning strategies and the ability to reflect on their own learning (Isarin, 2017; Muhammad, 2017). Good learners are aware of the processes underlying their learning and are looking for the right learning strategies to control and influence their own learning. Learners

who emphasize the importance of learning used strategies that helped them understand and remember (Muhammad, 2017). These identified factors could help to positively influence the relationship between language competencies and self-concept.

According to Centrum voor Jeugd en Gezin (n.d.), parents are an important factor that has an influence on self-concept. By advising and supporting parents, professionals could influence this relationship as well. According to ECLG expertisecentrum leren & gedrag (2018), a low self-concept means that a person does not live up to their expectations and are afraid to take risks.

4.2.2 USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology is being used more and more in a person's daily life (Yeung, Chen, & Li, 2015). Even in academic life technology is used increasingly. However, there are weaknesses in the teacher's pedagogical practices. Technology can be attractive and motivational in learning, but it could also distract students from important, valuable goals, such as learning how to write. Pedagogy and technology should be combined that they complement each other in the learning process (Yeung et al., 2015).

There is little information found about the way professionals could influence the relationship between language competencies and self-concept. The information available was about the factors that support the child in learning. This raises the questions about how professionals perceive the relationship between language competencies and self-concept in the first place and which factors, according to the professionals, could influence the relationship between language competencies and self-concept as positively as possible. To gain insight into the way professionals could influence the relationship, and which factors could have an influence on this relationship, interviews will be conducted with professionals to gain their perspective on this relationship

4.3 WHAT PERCEPTION DO PROFESSIONALS IN EDUCATION AND CARE HAVE ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES AND SELF-CONCEPT IN CHILDREN THEY TREAT?

To explore the perception of professionals in education and care about the relationship between language competencies and self-concept, it is important to know in what way they define self-concept and language competencies in itself. So, first, their definition of self-concept will be discussed, and after that the definition of language competencies. After that, the way low self-concept and low language competencies could be reflected in the child is described. Next, possible factors influencing self-concept and language competencies will be discussed. After that, the relationship between the two will be described. Lastly, the contextual factors influencing the relationship will be discussed.

4.3.1 DEFINITION SELF-CONCEPT

First, the respondents were asked to define self-concept. Nine of the respondents claimed self-concept to be the self-perception of the child. The way they experience themselves and how they judge themselves. Additionally, emotional and social aspects were mentioned by seven of the respondents. The emotional aspect was mainly about the fear of failing and self-confidence in all the different aspects of life. The social aspect was according to the respondents the interaction and relationships with other persons. The emotional and social aspects were often linked together by the respondents. Often, the link with self-confidence and reaching out to others, family, peers, etc are named together by the respondents. This is nicely illustrated with the following quotation.

“He stayed in his own world and did not say a word, He played but always alone and was afraid to make contact with others” – Pedagogue, (20 November 2019)

Self-concept on a physical level and academic level were rarely mentioned by the respondents. Only two of the respondents mentioned these aspects. Self-concept on academic level was mentioned as a reference to peers (Remedial educationalist & health psychologist, personal communication, 11-21-2019). The way you perform on academic level in comparison to your peers forms a part of your self-concept according to the respondents. The same with the physical aspect of self-concept. The way you look is part of self-concept but mainly determined by peers of the child (Educational advisor, personal communication, 11-21-2019).

In conclusion, the definition according to the respondents of self-concept is the way a child sees themselves in different areas of their life. These areas are social, emotional, physical and academic. This definition could help indicate if a child has a low self-concept. The way to indicate a low self-concept is described in the following section.

4.3.2 LOW SELF-CONCEPT

The respondents were asked to describe the way they could identify a low self-concept in children. All of the respondents stated that emotional, physical and social behaviour are strong indicators for a low self-concept in children. Emotional behaviour refers to the children getting introvert and insecure (Coordinator, personal communication, 11-15-2019). According to the respondents, this could result in a fear of failure. Additionally, they stop talking because they are afraid to do it wrong (Educational advisor & psychologist, 12-5-2019). According to respondents, children need to have confidence in their competencies, when this is lacking, they have a low self-concept. The other type of behavioural change could be physical. According to the respondents, some of the children could become more aggressive and start shouting and asking for attention in a negative way. When children are making themselves small, are walking with their shoulders hanging or isolating themselves from peers and activities, the respondents state that this is a sign of low self-concept in children. They also stated that this could have an effect on the social behaviour of a child. The child will have less interaction with peers (Educational advisor, 11-20-2019).

Five out of the nine respondents claimed that a low self-concept showed in the academic performances of a child. They often lack the confidence to start tasks and often say they are dumb. All these indicators could be shown all together or separately, this differs per child. The following quote illustrates different of these indicators displaying in the behaviour of one child.

“... a student who was plodding through the hallway and his academic performances were not going well and his attitude showed this.” – Remedial teacher (19 December 2019)

One of the respondents also stated that a low self-concept is shown in the language the child uses. He stated that when a child has a lower self-concept, it has the tendency to use clause sentences like ‘I may be stupid for saying this, but’, or ‘maybe I am wrong, but’, followed by the statement they are about to make (Educational advisor, 11-21-2019).

In short, the respondents stated that indicators of a low self-concept are the changes in emotional, physical and social behaviour. Additionally, academic performances and clause sentences could indicate a lower self-concept. However, these indicators do not cover the factors that influence self-concept. This topic will be covered in the next section.

4.3.3 FACTORS INFLUENCING SELF-CONCEPT

There are different factors that influence self-concept. The main factor mentioned by all the respondents is the parents. Parents are the most important persons for a child and the way they talk, act and respond are vital for the development of a child’s self-concept. Since the parents are an environmental

factor this will be discussed in more detail in section 4.3.7. The same goes for the school environment. This was also a frequently mentioned factor of influence by the respondents. Other factors frequently mentioned are attention, genetic disposition, and accomplishments followed by having a relationship with teachers, peers, and expectations.

Paying attention to the child is stated by six of the respondents to be a factor of influence on self-concept. With paying attention, the respondents meant the way a child is talked to, is this in a positive way and stimulating the child to undertake activities. This promotes self-concept (Remedial educationalist & health psychologist, personal communication, 11-21-2019). But, is there time to read with the child and is it taken care of. Additionally, paying compliments to the child and giving them the feeling that they are doing well is also a part of paying attention. This factor is nicely illustrated in the following quote.

“But a child with a low self-concept, what they need is that you go to them a few times per day. That you sit with them and pay them a compliment, tell them they are doing well. ... but only because it will make them feel good, because that is what children need, a bit of confirmation they are doing well, even when it is levels lower than expected. ... The most important thing is that they will grow, and not at which level they are.” - Teacher, (6 December 2019)

Furthermore, many of the professionals use genetic disposition as a factor that influences self-concept. The personality of the child can be genetically determined. One child is shyer than the other which makes it harder to make friends (Coordinator, personal communication, 11-15-2019). According to the respondents, intelligence has a role in the self-concept, the ability to understand others and context. This is for one person harder than for the other and this could be a disadvantage in developing self-concept (Teacher, personal communication, 12-6-2019). Adding to this, the respondents mentioned that the mindset of a child has an influence on their self-concept. They mean the way a child tackles a problem or handles successes. This is illustrated in the following quote.

“... in what way do you attribute as a child. Do you write your successes to your own effort or to dependence like ‘the exam was too easy that is why my mark was good’ or ‘no I just worked very hard for it’ – Remedial educationalist & health psychologist, (21 November 2019)

Besides the aforementioned factors, the respondents found that it is important for the child to obtain positive experiences. For instance, the successes a child has, the experiences of meeting the expectations, but also experiences of solving their own problems. According to two of the respondents, curling parents, parents who always pave the way for their children, are not attributing to the development of self-concept of their child (Educational advisor & psychologist, personal communication, 12-5-2019). They stated that children need the experiences of failing to solve a problem so they can develop good problem-solving abilities. According to the respondents the experiences a child has, has a lot of influence on the self-concept of a child, positively as well as negatively. This is illustrated in the following quote.

“The more positive experiences one obtains, the more self-confidence one gets” -Remedial educationalist & health psychologist, (21 November 2019)

So, the child can obtain as many positive achievements as possible and this will positively influence their self-concept. Furthermore, paying attention to the child and genetic disposition are factors according to the respondents that influence self-concept. Nevertheless, language competencies are briefly mentioned by the respondents. The following section will discuss them in more detail.

4.3.4 DEFINITION LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES

Language competencies were asked to be defined by the respondents. Notably, they thought of language competencies as mainly being oral competencies. They marked this as the most important aspect of language competencies in comparison to reading and writing. Oral competencies are the base of every language according to the respondents (Remedial educationalist & health psychologist, 11-21-2019). Additionally, reading and writing are found to be important. The respondents stated that a person should be able to read, write and understand letters and documents. Three of the respondents mentioned the construction of sentences and the use of language as part of language competencies.

“The ability to express your thoughts and feelings” – Remedial educationalist & health psychologist, (21 November 2019)

According to the respondents, the aforementioned quote is the most important aspect of language competencies. Since language competencies are found to be important for the development of a person, the effects of low language competencies on the lives of a person are described in the following section.

4.3.5 EFFECTS LOW LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES

There are different effects when a child has low language competencies. Seven of the respondents mention a change in behaviour. This differs per age and person. The respondents stated that younger children are more likely to show more aggressive, physical behaviour like portraying what they want with their hands and feet, or pushing others, while the older children show more internal behaviour, they become more passive and are afraid to talk and participate in activities.

“... when you do not have a proper language stock and vocabulary, a good language content, you will have problems on all aspects.” – Education advisor, (21 November 2019)

Children with low language competencies often have difficulty gaining vocabulary, they find it hard to find the right words for different things. Without a good vocabulary, it is very hard to properly learn and follow instructions in school (Educational advisor, personal communication, 11-20-2019). The respondents mentioned that a low vocabulary could cause problems in all aspects where language is used. This is illustrated in the aforementioned quote. With a good vocabulary, it is easier to read, write, communicate and understand what other people say according to the respondents.

One of the aspects that show a professional if a child has low language competencies, is the achievements of a child. Seven of the respondents claimed that the academic performances are the first to have an effect due to low language competencies. They say when a child is lacking achievements, they start to investigate language competencies and observe the child for other effects. This is illustrated in the following quote.

“You [the professional] will find out through doing exams. The first time insufficient you think ‘okay, that could happen’, but when the same aspect keeps lacking, then you think ‘hey, there is a bigger problem underneath’ and you start looking for the real cause.” - Teacher, (6 December 2019)

Another effect of low language competency mentioned by the respondents is language comprehension. This can be recognised when children have difficulty to find the words they are thinking and have a hard time participating in conversations. One of the respondents claimed that children with low language competencies have difficulty to follow the learning materials, simply because it becomes too complex or abstract (Remedial educationalist & health psychologist, personal communication, 11-20-2019).

There are different effects mentioned by the respondents that are a result of low language competencies. These are a change in physical behaviour, difficulty gaining vocabulary and low language comprehension. However, there are many other factors in a child's life that influence the development of language competencies. The other factors identified by the respondents are described in the following section.

4.3.6 FACTORS INFLUENCING LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES

There are different factors that influence language competencies according to the respondents. The factor that is mentioned by all of the respondents is the amount of language available for the child. This is the language that a child comes into contact with, in their environment as well at home as at school. Aspects of a rich language environment are reading to the child in a fun way, talk about everything that happens, doing activities together, explore new things together. The most important aspect of this is the interaction between parent and child, the stimulation of using language as illustrated in the following quote.

“But I think that the most important aspect is if a child comes a lot into contact with language, that there is spoken a lot, thus yes, the base is oral competencies, reading to, naming objects when we are outside riding a bike of what we see all around us, so a lot of language, language, language.” – Remedial educationalist & health psychologist, (21 November 2019)

Another factor that influences language competencies, is the feeling that the child thinks he or she is competent. Children can feel not competent enough to use language which leads to blockage so the child is not able to use language anymore (Teacher, personal communication, 12-6-2019). They feel they are not understood which causes frustration and they might not speak up anymore. So, the development of their language competencies stagnates. Individual attention is key in preventing this stated by six of the respondents. When the used language is tailored to the needs of the child, it will be more confident in their own competencies and they will be more open to learning and developing their language competences. This is illustrated in the following quote.

“Every child is unique and has a strength. On the one hand figuring out what are the needs of this child to as positively as possible stimulate the language development, fitting to this child.” – Remedial educationalist & health psychologist, (21 November 2019)

Peers are also a factor that influences language competencies of a child. It is important in communicating when playing. Understanding what it is the other wants and communicating what you want. Peers are also important in expanding vocabulary and developing social skills (Educational advisor, personal communication, 11-20-2019). Three of the respondents mentioned social pressure as a factor influencing language competencies. This is connected to the development of social skills. Also, a respondent stated that feelings of shame are a factor that influences language development (Remedial educationalist & health psychologist, 11-21-2019). When a person is ashamed, they will avoid the tasks

that are related to language, so their development will stagnate. This relates to not feeling competent enough and being afraid to use language.

The last factor mentioned by the respondents is the use of technology. This factor is mentioned by two of the respondents. They claimed that technology has a positive, as well as a negative effect on the language competencies of a child. The stated positive effect is the reading aloud and magnifying function. There are two negative effects mentioned, these are the fact that people want to live up to the 'perfect' lives that are shown on social media and that the use of iPad and phones take away the opportunity to talk to each other and communicate in real life (Remedial educationalist & health psychologist, personal communication, 11-21-2019). This results according to the respondents in an impoverishment of language competencies. This is illustrated in the following quote.

“Nowadays, you see a mom walking behind the stroller with her mobile phone, that is what draws her attention, while she is not talking anymore with the child.” – Remedial educationalist & health psychologist, (21 November 2019)

In conclusion, the factors mentioned by the respondents to influence language competencies are language availability, feeling of competence, interaction with peers, feelings of shame and the use of technology. However, there are also contextual factors that influence language competencies as well as the aforementioned self-concept. These contextual factors will be described in detail in the following section.

4.3.7 CONTEXTUAL FACTORS INFLUENCING SELF-CONCEPT AND LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES

The respondents were asked about the influence of contextual factors on the relationship between language competencies and self-concept. The main factors that they mentioned were the home environment, so the family and culture, the school environment, a safe environment, motivation, stress and performance pressure.

The home environment is seen by the respondents as one of the most important factors that influence self-concept. They influence the child on many different aspects of their life. The expectations they have could be too high, which gives the child the feeling it never does anything right or well enough (Pedagogue, personal communication, 11-20-2019). This has a negative influence on self-concept. Additionally, the nurturing, are the parents supportive, open and stimulating. This has a positive influence on self-concept. The involvement of parents is very important just like the way they treat their child. The following quote illustrates the way that parents are of influence on children in just little things.

“Do not say ‘no look, you cannot do that yet, well I will do it for you’. Then you’ll knock down the child. He will not develop a positive self-concept like ‘hey, I am able to learn things’.” – Pedagogue, (20 November 2019)

Often the parents mean well, they usually want to help the child, but it could have a huge impact on the self-concept of the child. The impact of the home environment on language development is also huge. A lot of obtaining language competencies starts at an early age in which the children's main interaction is with the family (Remedial teacher, personal communication, 12-19-2019). So, the language the parents provide for their child reflects the level of language competencies the child will gain before going to school. Home is seen as the base for a child to develop language competencies as well as the foundation for self-concept.

Furthermore, respondents stated that culture plays a role in the relationship between language competencies and self-concept as well. Different cultures have different attitudes towards learning, language, schools, and development, which is illustrated in the following quote. Additionally, the influence of the approach and communication of the parents is illustrated in the following quote.

“There was this boy from Somalia. He spoke his own language, Arabic, but he had difficulty with that as well. Turned out his parents were low literate, so the available language was very low. The home environment was very warm. The child was comfortable at kindergarten. ... But the child had a distinct deficiency that he could not function at elementary school. ... This was discussed with the parents, however, their culture has a different view about the requirements to go to school. ... They assume that language will be taught mainly at school, so the child needs the best school and the child needs to go to school. Before school, they do not invest time in learning the child things, because that happens at school. ... After the conversation, the parents were shocked and they only heard that their child was not allowed to go to school, so they panicked because that is where the child learns the important things and that is where everything will become all right. So, at home they started to rehearse with the child, like ‘what is this, say it’ and ‘What is this called, you knew this at home’. The child started peeing in his pants again, started to cry quickly and felt very stressful when arriving because the parents wanted to show what he had learned. But the way how was too much focussed on performance.” - Coordinator, (12 December 2019)

Furthermore, the new technology and social media have an influence through the parents. They look via social media at all the perfect families and they reflect this perfect image onto the child. However, this is not a realistic image, and this will influence the self-concept of the child. One of the most important aspects of the family is the feeling of safety. Do the children have the feeling that they can be who they are, are they accepted, do they have the feeling that it is okay to fail and be different.

The feeling of safety is not only applicable in the home environment with family, but also in the school environment. When the environment is not safe, the children are not open to developing themselves. The relationship with the teacher is important in this, according to the respondents. Does the teacher have individual attention for the child, does the teacher know about the difficulties a child is having and will they tailor the approach to the needs of the child. The respondents claim that the interaction with the teacher help to develop the language competencies, but also influences the self-concept of the child through achievements. The teacher is important in that process as illustrated in the following quote.

“... bound to the teacher. When I say to a child that he has to make calculation exercises until number 10, but he can count to two. Then he will obtain only a negative experience. Those children need positive achievements.” - Teacher, (6 December 2019)

Additionally, the school environment is important in the development of language competencies. The support and guidance of the teacher could have an influence, especially when the child has language difficulties. The way the teacher guides the child could stimulate language development or not (Teacher, personal communication, 12-6-2019). That way the child can perform at the level they are capable of and will experience less pressure and stress.

The respondents state that peers at school also have an influence on the self-concept of the child. Which children are the ones they look up to, what are the experiences the child has with peers, are they positive or negative? Is the child invited to parties or playdates (Remedial educationalist & health psychologist, personal communication, 11-21-2019)? These are all aspects that influence the self-concept of a child.

Another aspect of the school environment mentioned by the respondents is the learning environment. Does the school provide enough challenges for the child to develop and learn new things? For developing language competencies, is according to a respondent, the natural setting very important. This is a setting where children can play and interact with each other, without an educational agenda (Coordinator, personal communication, 12-12-2019). Additionally, another aspect of the learning environment is the acceptance to make mistakes and observing the needs of the child.

The last contextual factor mentioned by the respondents is pressure. This consists of expectations from the parents, as well as the teacher. Also, the growing performance pressure of society influences the children as well as their parents (Pedagogue, 11-20-2019). Since pressure is applicable in all the contextual factors this factor is described in the section above in more detail.

“...in society, the expectations keep getting higher. You have to perform, parents, as well as the children, have to.” – Pedagogue, (20 November 2019)

To conclude, the contextual factors identified by the respondents are mainly the home environment, the school environment and social pressure for performance. Other identified factors are a safe environment and peers. These factors are of influence according to the respondents. This in combination with their thoughts about self-concept and language competencies will be summarised in the following section 4.3.8.

4.3.8 CONCLUSION

According to the professionals in education and care, the relationship between language competencies and self-concept is a two-way relationship. This relationship is influenced by different factors such as language, home, and school environment. Additionally, the personality of the child and the attention it receives. Furthermore, a good self-concept might have a positive influence on the development of language competencies and good language competencies in their turn positively influence self-concept. However, the effect of low language competencies on self-concept seems to be more visible and seem to have a greater influence than higher language competencies.

4.4 WHAT ARE THE NEEDS OF A PROFESSIONAL TO INFLUENCE THIS RELATIONSHIP AS POSITIVE AS POSSIBLE?

The perception of the relationship between language competencies and self-concept of the professionals has been described in the aforementioned section. Furthermore, this section will explore the needs of a professional and in what way they could influence this relationship as positive as possible. Three needs were mentioned most of all. These are stimulation of self-concept, collaboration and being educated. Derived from the results, the needs are divided into needs of a professional, which focusses on the personal needs of a professional, and needs to influence the relationship, which focusses on aspects the professional can provide to create a stimulating environment for the child to develop as well as possible.

4.4.1 NEEDS OF A PROFESSIONAL

From the results derived, there are different needs of a professional to influence the relationship between language competencies and self-concept as positively as possible. Five of the respondents mentioned the importance of education for the professional. If the professionals are well educated, they are able to find a fitting solution to the problem as quickly as possible. This is illustrated in the following quote. The importance of being educated is that the problem can be identified quickly, so the solution will also be found in a shorter time. This way it has the least impact on the child's language development and self-concept.

“That is what you [the professional] need to figure out as quickly as possible. And then knowing what you are able to do. Otherwise, you lose a lot of time to solve the problem” – Teacher, (6 December 2019)

Additionally, knowledge of language and methods is important. That way the professional knows which aspect of their development is lacking and could provide a tailored solution. Furthermore, the professionals need to be trained to recognize symptoms children could be displaying (Educational advisor, personal communication, 11-20-2019). Recognizing the symptoms will result in early detection of language problems or low self-concept and a deficiency could be prevented.

As briefly mentioned before, the stimulation of self-concept is an important aspect for professionals. This could be done in different ways. For instance, giving the child personal attention. Show them you understand their feelings and struggles (Remedial teacher, personal communication, 12-19-2019). When the children feel they are understood, they are more likely to open up and provide the professional with a more tailored approach. This might be giving them compliments and make sure they feel good about their performances no matter what. Additionally, approaching the children from a positive perspective and communicating like this as well is seen as one of the most important skills a professional could have (Teacher, personal communication, 12-6-2019). This connects with giving compliments. It is important to formulate how well the child has done, instead of what could have done better.

All these needs have one trait in common, and that is patience. Mentoring children and supporting their developments, and always doing this with a positive perspective takes a lot of patience. This is a skill that is therefore important for a professional to have (Teacher, personal communication, 12-6-2019). However, this is sometimes not easy since they are also people and are not always patient.

The main needs of a professional are being educated, positivity, personal attention for the children individually and eventually, a lot of patience.

4.4.2 INFLUENCING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES AND SELF-CONCEPT

The personal needs of the professional are described in the previous section. This section will describe the needs to influence the relationship between language competencies and self-concept. The respondents mentioned mainly 5 elements: create a safe environment, collaboration, stimulate interaction, observe and research and create a rich language environment. These elements will be discussed in further detail below.

Four of the respondents mentioned a safe environment as an important need for the professional as well as the child to have. A safe environment goes hand in hand with trust and time. It takes time for a child to feel that it is safe and that he can trust the professional. When a safe environment is present, the child will open up and progression can be made (Coordinator, personal communication, 11-15-

2019). One of the respondents had an example to illustrate the effects of a safe environment. This is described in the following quote.

“There was a girl in my class, and she was a girl, she looked pretty, a beautiful girl, she looked very normal, ... people asked too much of her, they thought she was a pretty, sweet, social girl. And she was, but the level people spoke to her was too hard. She found it hard to understand. She also had the problem of a very limited vocabulary and pronunciation was hard for her. She was so insecure that she did not talk at all. She was afraid to do that or she was not able anymore. Her self-concept was that pretty, sweet, social girl and she acted like that. Meanwhile, she was masking the insecurities beneath. Together with the speech therapist, we thought about increasing the self-confidence of that girl. So, what we did. We gave her a colourful, pretty address book, ..., she could put in her pocket. Every word she learned was written in the book and categorised. She always had it on her and was able to use it. That way other could see that she had a hard time with words. In practice, she barely did that and she started talking very well. We did not know the exact reason why, but we hypothesized that the fact she had it in her pocket, provided enough support and confidence to be able to talk.” – Education advisor, (21 November 2019)

“That girl, she felt safe because she felt seen in the aspect that she found difficult. That people did not ask too much of her anymore and she got a handle, then she was able to further develop herself.” – Education advisor, (21 November 2019)

The only thing this girl needed, was the feeling she was in a safe environment and that had a huge effect on her self-concept and language competencies. Nonetheless, the creation of a safe environment takes more than solely the professional. The home environment also plays an important role in the safety feeling of children (Educational advisor, personal communication, 11-21-2019). Therefore, it is important to collaborate with other professionals, but also with the parents or guardians of the child. A child spends time in the home environment and the school environment. This calls for a safe environment, in all the different situations a child finds himself in. A collaboration between these environments is therefore of importance. When there is a collaboration between school and home, the child will feel safe at both places and develop more naturally and it will feel safer and understood more. This is illustrated in the following quote.

“Parents are actually the most important persons for a child. When they experience that they say the same things as at school, and play the same games as at school. Yes, that will give the child a good feeling.” – Coordinator, (12 December 2019)

The collaboration between the home and school environment will help to create a safe environment for the child. This, in turn, could stimulate self-concept as well as the development of language competencies. The collaboration does not only stimulate a safe environment, but it also could provide the child with a rich language environment. When the parents closely work together with the professional and respond to the subject matters at school, it stimulates the child to remember and learn better. This is also illustrated in the aforementioned quote. A rich language environment stimulates the language development of the child and it will have a greater vocabulary and will be able to better express

their thoughts and feelings (Educational advisor & psychologist, personal communication, 12-5-2019). This will prevent feelings of frustration and not being understood.

Another mentioned need to influence the relationship between language competencies and self-concept is the stimulation of interaction with peers and adults. When children talk to each other and help each other they will learn social skills and words that their peers use which will increase their vocabulary. By stimulation interaction, language development will be stimulated. Additionally, it could improve their self-concept since children often compare themselves with their peers. Since children compare themselves with peers, this could stimulate or block the development of a more positive self-concept (Educational advisor, personal communication, 11-21-2019). Therefore, the professional needs to observe the interaction of children (Educational advisor & psychologist, personal communication, 12-5-2019). Especially the ones who are more at risk. Since behaviour is seen as the main indicator of low language competencies and self-concept it is important to keep tabs on every child and closely monitor them.

4.4.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the needs to influence the relationship between language competencies and self-concept can be divided into two categories. The personal needs of the professional, and the needs to influence the relationship between language competencies and self-concept. The personal needs are for the professional to be educated, patient, have a positive approach and attention for the children individually. The needs to influence the relationship as positive as possible, are to create a safe environment for the children, collaboration with the different environments of a child's life, stimulating interaction, observe the children closely and create a rich language environment. The availability of these aspects could influence the relationship between language competencies and self-concept in a positive way.

4.5 ANALYSIS

This section of the results will describe the analysis of the findings described in the previous part of this chapter. These findings will be compared to the findings from the literature research. First, the definitions of self-concept and language competencies will be described. This is followed by an analysis of the theoretical framework. Lastly, the formulated hypotheses will be tested based on the analysis.

4.5.1 DEFINITION ANALYSIS

The definitions of self-concept and language competencies found in the literature will be compared with the definitions given by the respondents. Differences and similarities will be discussed. First, the definition of self-concept will be covered and after that, the definition of language competencies.

4.5.1.1 SELF-CONCEPT DEFINITION

As found in the literature, self-concept is defined as a person's self-perceptions that are created through experiences with and interpretations of their environment. Additionally, self-concept is seen as a multidimensional, hierarchical construct (Möller et al., 2009). The general self-concept is divided into two main categories: Academic self-concept and non-academic self-concept (Marsh, 1990). Non-academic self-concept is divided into three aspects: social self-concept, emotional self-concept, and physical self-concept. The multidimensional self-concept scale reflects a content dependent, multidimensional model of self-concept. It divided self-concept into six domains: Social, Competence, Affect, Academic, Family and physical (Bracken, Bunch, Keith, & Keith, 2000; Fin & Ishak, 2014).

The respondents also formed a definition of self-concept during the interviews. They stated that self-concept is the way a child sees themselves in different areas of their life. These areas are social, emotional, physical and academic.

There are similarities and differences between these two self-concept definitions. The most obvious similarity is the part about self-perception, formulated from the literature. The respondents formulated this mostly as the way a child sees themselves. Also, the respondents mentioned the social and emotional aspects of self-concept very often. These aspects are also described in the definition found in the literature. However, the other aspects mentioned in the literature, academic and physical, are barely mentioned by the respondents. This is striking because according to the theory, the academic self-concept takes up a huge part of the general self-concept in comparison with emotional, social and physical. This might be because the respondents are all working in education and therefore focus more on the emotional and social aspect of self-concept. Additionally, the respondents mentioned the experiences of the child frequently, while these are briefly mentioned in the literature. The experiences are an overarching aspect of all the dimensions of self-concept. Positive or negative experiences in every domain separately and together form the base of general self-concept. The respondents might be more focussed on the practical part of self-concept, so the experiences take up a big part of their job and expertise.

4.5.1.2 LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES DEFINITION

The definition found in the literature for language competencies entails three different domains, namely: oral competencies, reading and writing (Expertisecentrum Nederlands, 2010). The different domains consist of different subdomains, which can be seen in Table 1. The domains influence each other, for instance, vocabulary is needed to speak, and the right use of language is needed for an effective conversation.

The respondents defined language competencies as mainly being oral competencies. They marked this as the most important aspect of language competencies in comparison to reading and writing. Oral competencies are the base of every language according to the respondents. Additionally, reading and writing are found to be important. The respondents stated that a person should be able to read, write and understand letters and documents. Three of the respondents mentioned the construction of sentences and the use of language as part of language competencies (Education advisor & psychologist, personal communication, 12-5-2019). However, the core of language competencies is the ability to express your thoughts and feelings.

When comparing these two definitions, the identified domains of language competencies are similar, namely; oral competencies, reading, and writing. However, the importance of these domains differs between the literature's definition and de respondent's definition. The literature does not make a distinction between the importance of the different language competencies domains, whereas the respondents clearly stated that the oral competencies the most important are. They state that verbally learning the language forms the basis of writing and reading, therefore the oral competencies are more important. Additionally, vocabulary and construction of sentences were often separately mentioned while in the literature these are seen as a part of a competence instead of a competence of their own.

In conclusion, the definition of language competencies found in the literature and from the respondents are more or less similar. The biggest difference is found in the importance of the different domains, whereas the domains are the same. The respondents added specific competencies like the vocabulary to the definition, while the literature uses the overarching domains to share them under. The relationship between these two definitions and aspects influencing this, will be discussed in the following section.

4.5.2 THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

The results found in the literature provided a theoretical framework. This section will, through the theoretical framework, analyse the results from this thesis. First, the relationship between language

competencies and self-concept will be discussed. Second, the relationship between academic self-concept and non-academic self-concept will be covered. Third, the relationship of context variables and language competencies will be described. Lastly, the relationship between the context variables and self-concept will be analysed. These results will help to answer the main research question in chapter 5.

4.5.2.1 RELATIONSHIP LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES AND SELF-CONCEPT

As can be seen in the aforementioned results, there is some overlap between the factors influencing language competencies and self-concept. These factors will be described in the following section.

INFLUENCE ORAL COMPETENCIES ON SELF-CONCEPT

One of the factors influencing self-concept is the emotional factor. A child could become silent, more a wallflower because of low language competencies. Low language competencies could cause frustration in expressing oneself, this lowers the self-concept of a child (Teacher, personal communication, 12-6-2019). The respondents stated that a child with lower language competencies could have feelings of insecurity, have lower self-confidence and experience more pressure. Children might also have more difficulty to perform at the right level in school. This could lead to feelings of not belonging, I am not as good as the others. It also works the other way around. Children with a higher self-concept are more motivated and confident to learn so their language competencies will also improve. The emotional effect of low language competencies is not extensively mentioned in the literature. The literature did mention the effects of low reading ability on self-concept (Marjanovič Umek et al., 2005), discussed in further detail in the next section, however, the emotions resulted from low language competencies, mainly the oral competencies are not largely covered in the literature.

Social skills are also an important factor that influences the relationship between language competencies and self-concept. Not only in school, but during your whole life. Low language competencies could lead to communication errors. They also help to create a distance between yourself and your behaviour. It enables self-reflection of your position towards others and the ability to change that. Peers in school are an important aspect to stimulate this.

Social skills are little mentioned in the literature as an influence on self-concept. When looking at the definition of oral competencies, some aspects related to social skills, like being able to lead a conversation, however, the interaction with others and the way to interact are not included in the oral competencies defined in this thesis. According to the respondents, social skills play a great role in influencing self-concept since oral competencies are found to be the most important part of the language competencies.

Summarizing, the respondents claim that oral competencies, like social skills, have an influence on self-concept while this is not extensively mentioned in the literature. Reading abilities, however, are mentioned extensively in the literature, and this aspect will be discussed in the next part.

INFLUENCE OF READING ABILITY ON SELF-CONCEPT

Reading also has an influence on the relationship between language competencies and self-concept, according to the respondents. When a child has learned that reading is fun, it will be easier to learn and read at a later age. This will prevent feelings of frustration and positively influence self-concept (Coordinator, personal communication, 11-15-2019). The literature states that children with reading difficulties often have a low motivation for reading (Polychroni et al., 2006). This is the other side of the coin as stated by the respondents. Additionally, the feelings that low reading ability invokes, frustration, anxiety, is mentioned in the literature (Polychroni et al., 2006) as well as by the respondents. As mentioned before the motivation to read, e.g. making reading fun, has according to the respondents a huge impact on the child's reading ability. This is also reflected in the literature. Additionally, the

literature states that reading ability is negatively associated with self-concept (Boyes et al., 2018). This is also reflected in the results from the interviews, but less extensive since the respondents focussed mainly on the oral competencies. However one of the respondents claimed that a reading and writing difficulty influences a child's self-concept (Teacher, personal communication, 12-6-2019).

Both the literature and the respondents claim that reading has an influence on self-concept. The literature claims it to be more of an influence than the respondents, but an influence nonetheless. The last aspect of language competencies, writing, will be discussed in the following section.

INFLUENCE OF WRITING ON SELF-CONCEPT

The literature states that spelling is important for participating in a literate society (Varnhagen, 2000). Additionally, they state that good writing competencies could lead to better employment and a higher socioeconomic status (Archambault et al., 2010). These aspects could lead to a higher self-concept. One of the respondents mentioned the ability to spell as a competence you need to obtain a job, but overall the respondents did not mention writing. Remarkably, during coding the results there was one code that did not have any results. This was the code about writing and self-concept. On top of that, the physical aspect of writing, the fine motor skills, is barely mentioned by the respondents as well as the literature. This could mean that either writing is not important enough to have an influence on self-concept or this relationship might not have been researched and therefore not mentioned.

RELATIONSHIP LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES AND SELF-CONCEPT

Many of the respondents stated that language is the basis of everything. Language is needed in school, not only for the language course but to understand instructions, for example in mathematics and physical education. There is nothing in this society that does not need language. So, almost unanimously the respondents answered yes to the question if language competencies have an influence on self-concept. However, there are more factors to influence self-concept than just language competencies. The respondents stated mainly that low language competencies have a negative influence on self-concept, however, high language competencies do not necessarily result in a positive self-concept. Therefore, the factors influencing self-concept are too complex (Education advisor, personal communication, 11-20-2019).

In conclusion, language competencies do have an influence on self-concept and self-concept has an influence on language competencies. Mainly, oral and reading competencies are found to have the greatest influence according to the literature and the respondents. Writing was not mentioned enough to base a sound conclusion on. Self-concept in its turn influences the language competencies as well, this happens mainly in a positive way, whereas language competencies have a more negative influence on self-concept.

4.5.2.2 RELATIONSHIP ACADEMIC SELF-CONCEPT AND NON-ACADEMIC SELF CONCEPT

The literature made a distinction between academic self-concept and non-academic self-concept. This relationship has been extensively researched in the literature. However, the respondents stated that the academic performances do not have that big of an influence on non-academic self-concept. Some of the respondents claimed that academic measures like marks or level could affect the self-concept of a child but mainly the social and emotional aspects make up the biggest part. Therefore, no conclusion can be made about the relationship between academic self-concept and non-academic self-concept.

4.5.2.3 *INFLUENCE CONTEXT FACTORS ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES AND SELF-CONCEPT*

The identified contextual factors from the literature are performance pressure, home environment and school environment (Glorieux, 2006; Schönherr, 2017). The respondents were asked to what extent they thought these factors are of influence on the relationship between language competencies and self-concept. The factor that is of the most influence, according to the respondents, is the home environment. From an early age on, the parents and family influence the language development as well as the development of self-concept in a positive way, by stimulating the children to learn, but also in a negative way, by acting negatively towards the children. The following factor was the school environment. Many of the professionals stated that school has an influence on the relationship between language competencies and self-concept. However, the school environment consists of many different aspects like peers, teachers, the educational methods the school is working with and so on. These factors could all have an influence on the relationship. Lastly, performance pressure is a factor that has growing influence. This does not limit itself to peer pressure but also pressure from the parents and the expectance of good grades. This is not the end, society itself keeps increasing the performance pressure on the parents as well as the children. One of the respondents stated that due to technology and growing pressure parents validate their performances through their children, often giving the children the feeling of not living up to the expectations resulting in a lower self-concept. According to the respondents, this results in language development and is reflected in the self-concept of the children.

While coding the interviews it turned out there are additional factors that have an influence on the relationship, than the ones identified from the literature. Expectation, culture, peers, emotion, expectation, playtime and a safe environment were added to factors that could positively or negatively influence language competencies or self-concept. Over expecting was one of the most mentioned factors to negatively influence the relationship between language competencies and self-concept. Too much was asked from the children and they are not able to live up to these expectations resulting in a blockage to learning language because of a low self-concept, thinking they are not able to do the task.

Some factors apply to only language competencies or only self-concept. For language competencies, interaction with peers is found to have an influence and the pronunciation as well as the use of technology. For self-concept, genetic disposition was frequently mentioned and the experiences a child has had in their life. Additionally, the first couple of years are found to be important as well, these years form the basis of everything one has to learn in school and especially the basis of learning language. When a child at a young age already has a language deficiency that stays undetected, the child will likely have learning difficulties and develop a low self-concept.

4.5.3 *HYPOTHESES*

Based on the model in section 2.2, three hypotheses were formulated. Since this thesis is a qualitative explorative research, the testing hypotheses is not scientifically sound. Therefore suggestions will be made for the hypotheses to be accepted or declined.

The first hypothesis derived from the theory is: “Language competencies have a promotional effect on self-concept”. Based on the aforementioned results, it might possible to carefully decline this hypothesis. All the respondents stated that they thought that language competencies affect self-concept, however, this effect is largely seen as an obstructing effect. This is not in line with the results from the literature research, where the effect is seen as promotional and obstructing. However, this is a qualitative exploring research, which means that these results could point to the indication that the hypothesis might be declined.

The second hypothesis derived from the theory is: "Academic self-concept is an indicator between language competencies and non-academic self-concept". This hypothesis was added because of the assumption related to the growing performance pressure in society. Since performance pressure is growing, one would assume that academic performance will become more important and therefore the academic self-concept will account for a larger part in self-concept than the non-academic self-concept. However, according to the interviewed professionals, academic self-concept is less of an indicator for self-concept but is often used as an indicator to measure the level of language competencies. On top of that, there were very few results about the relationship between academic self-concept and non-academic self-concept found in the literature, as well as from the interviews. Therefore, a suggestion cannot be made, to possibly accept or decline this hypothesis.

The third hypothesis derived from the theory is: "Context variables, such as performance pressure, home, and school environment are related to self-concept". The respondents unanimously answered that the external factors such as home and school environment play a huge role in the development of self-concept. Some respondents stated that the growing pressure of society has an influence on self-concept in terms of increasing expectations that are too high and increased stress levels of the children. However, other respondents claimed that performance pressure has little influence. These results in the literature about the influence of these variables were little researched. So, it is hard to state that this hypothesis might be accepted since more research needs to be done to be certain.

5. DISCUSSION

This thesis is about the relationship between language competencies and self-concept. This relationship appears not to be linear. Low language competencies seem to have a greater influence on low self-concept than high language competencies have on high self-concept. The following results stood out. The competence of writing is barely mentioned. This could point to the unimportance of this competence. However, I find this unlikely because some of the professionals and the literature mentioned the fact that poor writing affects job finding. It is also possible that writing is not a competence people think of when talking about language competencies, therefore this part might be overlooked or not thought through. This is an important finding, it raises awareness of the aspect of writing in this relationship. When asked about writing, the respondents often answered that they did not think about it and did not know if there was a relationship. In the literature, the importance of writing is crucial in life, for instance, for employment and communication (Archambault et al., 2010; Varnhagen, 2000). Writing is seen as an indicator of the reading skills (Puranik et al., 2011) and incorrect spelling may come across as lazy, sloppy and stupid (Varnhagen, 2000). This difference in importance could be a result of the fact that the professionals are mainly focused on the social aspect of language competencies, such as the interaction, whereas the literature mainly focusses on the measurable aspects of language competencies such as reading and writing. Therefore, it could be that in practice writing is found to be less important.

On top of that, the professionals mentioned many more contextual factors that could influence the relationship than in the literature did, such as the role of the parents and peers, language-rich environment and positive attitude towards the children. Additionally, the contextual factors seem to be the most important factors which influence the relationship between language competencies and self-concept according to the professionals. The literature mentions these factors more along the sidelines. The contextual factors are seen as a way to influence language competencies and self-concept as positively as possible.

The interaction with the parents and schools and creating a safe environment for the child are seen as important influencers. Additionally, the influence of performance pressure is divided amongst the professionals and the literature. About half of the professionals claim that the performance pressure has not changed in comparison to the past, whereas the literature and the other professionals claim that the performance pressure is increasing and leaving the children to experiencing higher levels of stress and lowering self-concept.

The literature states that self-concept is an important factor in language development (Tan, 2019). This means that the relationship between language competencies is not a one-way relationship, rather to work both ways. The way this is working in practice, and a more detailed description, in theory, is needed to explore this further.

5.1 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

This thesis has strengths and limitations. One of the strengths is the use of triangulation. With the use of three different sources of information, literature, documents, and interviews, the credibility of this research is strengthened. This means that the results adequately represent the multiple constructions of reality. On top of that, the literature research led to the conceptual model used in this research. This model formed the basis for the whole research. It helped to formulate the hypotheses and the research question. Therefore the literature research is also a strength of this thesis.

Another strength of this thesis is the use of the different types of professionals, namely the pedagogues, teachers, remedial teachers, educational advisors, and psychologists. All these professionals have a different angle on the matter from their fields of work. This created a more complete image of

the way professionals experience the relationship between language competencies and self-concept in children. The professionals have working experiences varying from four to more than 25 years. An overview of this can be found in Appendix IV: Years of Experience Professionals. Unfortunately, some of the professionals did not clearly state their years of experience, but during the interview, they hinted that they had a lot of experience. Based on the extensive years of experience, the information gathered through the interviews gained trustworthiness. Some of the transcribed results were fed back to the professional to check if their information was described in the right way. This strengthens the credibility of this research because the constructors checked the information and confirmed them for the second time.

On the other hand, this thesis also has limitations. Some of the interviews were conducted by phone. This led to the retrieval of less information compared to the interviews that were conducted in person. Additionally, the specific age group was hard for the respondents to distinguish from the other children. So, a lot of information was about children of another age, but still relevant. Also, the codes created for the analysis had some overlap in them due to the similarity of the questions. This made it harder to analyse the results. On top of that, there was no other coder available to create intercoder-reliability. This lack of interrater reliability might lead to researcher bias in the results. Additionally, the lack of intercoder-reliability weakens the conformability and the dependability because the research audit was not used.

Lastly, the professionals were interviewed as a by proxy. The questions about the children were asked to professionals in the lives of the children. The professionals were used as a by proxy, so the retrieved data might be biased information. This causes the information to be less credible. Furthermore, when the same questions asked to the professionals were asked to the children themselves, it might be that the answers could be different. This has consequences for the transferability of this research. The research sample is not generalizable to the rest of the population because they are a by proxy. The information is generalizable to the experiences of other professionals since there were various kinds of professionals interviewed with all a different specialisation and perspective on the relationship between language competencies and self-concept.

Methodologically speaking, when redoing this research, there are a few things that I would do differently. First, a more extensive document analysis would be helpful and asking the professionals for these documents would have been a great help. Additionally, the selected age group was rather obstructing than supporting the data collection. The ages of 10-12 were too specific for the professionals to focus on. When doing research with children themselves, the age group would be a great addition, because with younger children the language competencies and self-concept are still in development. With 10-12-year-old children, this is more settled and less fluid, so the influence is better visible. For this research, a lot of information was about all the children at elementary school. When asking professionals in the future, this aspect needs to be thought of better. On top of that, the aspect of academic self-concept was hard to distinguish from self-concept and language competencies in this qualitative research. Therefore, this aspect is excluded from the analysis. To research this better, quantitative research is needed.

Overall, more research needs to be done to accept or decline the hypotheses and to answer the research in a scientifically sound way. Recommendations for further research and practice will be made in the following section.

5.2 MODEL OF THIS THESIS; THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES AND SELF-CONCEPT

Based on the theories of language competencies and self-concept, a model with both these aspects was missing in the literature, so one was composed for this thesis. This model can be found in 2.2.4. This model formed the theoretical framework of this thesis and the formulated hypotheses are based on this. However, based on the aforementioned results, this model helped to visualize the different aspects related to the topic and it made the research objectives clearer. Additionally, for this research, the model was important in formulating the hypotheses and summarizing the literature about the topic.

However, based on this thesis, notes need to be made to this model. First, the contextual variables should be placed between language competencies and self-concept, because the effect of language competencies might work through the context of self-concept. Additionally, the relationship between academic self-concept and non-academic self-concept should be removed since these are part of the general self-concept and no evidence is found for this relationship in the literature as well as the interviews. Lastly, physical self-concept is barely mentioned in the literature research as well as the document analysis and the interviews, concluding this might have less influence than emotional and social self-concept. However, this could also be the result of professional bias. The professionals were mainly focused on the social and mental well-being of the child and were not specialised in the physical aspect. Therefore, this aspect could not have been mentioned.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section will describe the recommendations based on this thesis. First, recommendations for further research will be made and after that practical recommendations will be made.

5.3.1 FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the results, there are indications for further research. First, an ethically approved research among children's experiences needs to be done, so the data can be collected from the primary source of information; the children. This could be done with mixed-method research design, so the children can talk about their experiences in combination with quantitative research to strengthen the results. This way the hypotheses can be tested with statistical analysis. This also calls for more respondents and another recruitment strategy, a recruitment company could be used to find respondents. Additionally, the social aspect of language competencies and self-concept is barely covered in the literature. Researching this would be a start to better understanding this relationship. Also, the influence of contextual factors needs to be researched further. The identification of the factors that mainly influence the relationship could help the professionals to better tailor the approach in supporting the children. Professionals can better identify the needs of the child by for instance a program with guidelines that help identify the problems that children experience in a simple understandable way for the children as well as the professional. Lastly, further research needs to be done to investigate the way performance pressure influences language competencies and self-concept. This seems to be an important factor in society that might have an influence on self-concept and language competencies. The extent of the influence of this factor is little researched and needs to be investigated to provide a better image of this factor. When this is known, solutions to decrease this influence could be created. Lastly, the aspect of physical self-concept and writing needs to be further researched. These aspects were barely mentioned but might have an influence. Since this is barely researched, but could be of influence, there is a need to explore this further.

5.3.2 PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the recommendations would be investing extra time in children with low language competencies and low self-concept. By giving the children special attention or more time to finish assignments, their needs become clear and an approach fitting for the child can be developed. However, teachers often do not have time for this, so there is a need for other professionals to support them. Additionally, there is a need for paying more attention to the environment of the child. It is key, that at home as well as at school, the environment is safe but also enriched with varied language. This way the child has a better opportunity to develop language competencies and a better self-concept. This can be done with different themes now and then and stimulate the children to interact and playfully learn new words, which will establish a positive environment. The creation of a positive environment is preferably done in collaboration with the professionals and the home environment so the effect would be as optimal as possible. For example, the family could be involved in the themes and subjects at school, so the children keep learning about that at home. Additionally, there could be courses given, which are specialized in the fields of language development and self-concept. This way the professionals have more specific knowledge and are able to better identify in which area the child might need extra support. Because of the better-identified areas, the children can be supported in a more specific way and they get the feeling they are improving, which will result in positive achievements. Lastly, since the professionals found it difficult to talk about the specific age group of 10-12, the approach of younger and older children could be different, since they are in a different phase of their lives. It might be that the different age groups require different approaches, which will better support the children.

6. CONCLUSION

This section will answer the main research question of this thesis. The results described in chapter 4 will be the basis of the answer to the research question. The formulated hypotheses will be discussed as well. The main research question is: "What is the relationship between language competencies and self-concept in 10-12-year-old children, and how may this be influenced to be a positively reinforcing relationship?" The first part of the question will be answered separately from the second part of the question. Since direct research in children's experiences is ethically sensitive and has to go through an ethics committee formal approval, this thesis focuses on research data collection on professionals working with children as a proxy.

6.1.1 INFLUENCE OF LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES ON SELF-CONCEPT

According to the literature, language competencies might have an influence on self-concept. The professionals claim that oral competencies might have the greatest effect on self-concept, compared to reading and writing. Additionally, vocabulary and understanding of the context of the language were found as factors, by the professionals, that may have an influence.

Concluding from the results of this thesis, the literature states that the relationship between language competencies and self-concept in 10-12-year-old children might be found to have mainly a positive relationship. However, the professionals claim that low language competencies might have a negative influence on self-concept, whereas high language competencies not necessarily have a positive influence on self-concept. As for the components of language competencies, oral competencies might have the greatest influence on self-concept in comparison to reading and writing. According to the professionals, oral competences may have a great influence on social self-concept and emotional self-concept. Reading may have the greatest influence on academic self-concept and writing is barely mentioned in the literature, documents, and interviews. Besides, the social aspect of language, such as interaction and social skills could have an influence on self-concept according to the professionals.

However, this relationship is little researched in the literature and further research on this needs to be done.

6.1.2 INFLUENCE OF SELF-CONCEPT ON LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES

Self-concept is divided into academic self-concept and non-academic self-concept as is formulated in the theoretical framework (see 2.1). Academic self-concept includes the perceptions a child has about solely his academic performances, such as grades for courses. Non-academic self-concept consists of social self-concept, emotional self-concept and physical self-concept (Marsh, 1990).

At first, academic self-concept was assumed to be an indicator between language competencies and non-academic self-concept. Based on the results it might be concluded that this may not be the case. Academic self-concept lies very close to language competencies and self-concept, therefore it is hard to distinguish these concepts and conclusions cannot be drawn. According to the results, the relationship between academic self-concept and non-academic self-concept might be not that clear since they are both parts of the general self-concept. Therefore, this is not the right research to test this.

On top of that, social self-concept and emotional self-concept might have a greater influence on language competencies. These concepts entail both the interaction with family and peers, as well as the feelings a person has due to language competencies or lack thereof and the effects of interaction. The literature and professionals stated that these parts of self-concept might have an influence on language competencies. This could be seen in the motivation to participate and learn and the feelings of frustration a person might experience due to unsuccessful actions. The physical self-concept is briefly mentioned in the literature and one of the professionals mentioned this aspect. This aspect seems to be less important because there is no focus on this in the literature as well as in practice. Further research needs to be done to find out the relationship between physical self-concept and language competencies.

Summarising, the relationship between language competencies and self-concept is not found to be linear. The effects of low language competencies on self-concept seem to be more visible and seem to have a greater influence than higher language competencies on a high self-concept.

6.1.3 INFLUENCE OF CONTEXTUAL FACTORS ON SELF-CONCEPT AND LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES

The relationship between language competencies and self-concept is located within a certain context. This context seems to be a mediator of this relationship. Three different contextual factors were identified with the help of the literature. These are performance pressure, home environment, and school environment. The influence of these contextual factors is questioned with the used methods. The literature stated that performance pressure leads to negative emotions and depression (Schönherr, 2017). Other great influences in the lives of children are the home environment and the school environment. These factors entail the attitude of the parents, the role the parents have, but also the role of the teacher and peers and an environment that offers rich language. Therefore, these factors were researched in this thesis. The professionals claim that the contextual factors might play a huge role in the relationship between language competencies and self-concept, especially the factors home and school environment. Parents are seen as the most important and persons of influence in a child's life. Having parents and professionals working together may be a way to influence the relationship as positive as possible.

On top of that, performance pressure seems to be experienced differently by the professionals. The majority states that performance pressure is almost the same as 20 years back and that children often

do not experience the consequences of this. However, pressure from the parents to meet expectations is present according to all of the professionals. Furthermore, two of the professionals state that performance pressure is indeed growing and is causing stress and a lower self-concept. It is not possible to conclude a valid statement from these results with the current data. Further research needs to be done to investigate the way performance pressure influences language competencies and self-concept.

Additionally, needs for the professional were mentioned by the professionals. These are described in the following part. First, a tailored approach is needed. With a tailored approach each child will receive the support they need to develop as positively as possible and the possibility to develop low language competencies and low self-concept. For instance, support classes for students who have difficulty with language development. Also, strong and weaker students could be paired up, so the strong could help the weak. On top of that, the child with low language competencies could help another child with something they are good at. This way they will gain positive achievements. However, the needs differ per child, so it is key to involve the child in the process of finding a fitting approach. Second, a positive attitude towards the child is key to influence the relationship as positive as possible. This way the children will believe that they are able to perform the tasks. Children need the feeling that they are safe and accepted for the way they are. This feeling will provide a safe environment in which the child is more likely to positively develop their competencies. A positive attitude will stimulate this feeling. On top of the safe environment, a rich language environment is needed. This entails reading, practising and talking. This way the child comes in contact with various types of language which positively influences the relationship. Thus, a tailored approach, a positive attitude, a safe environment, and a rich language environment are ways to positively influence the relationship between language competencies and self-concept.

In summary, contextual factors, such as the home and school environment and performance pressure, might have a great influence on language competencies as well as self-concept. It also seems that the influence of language competencies on self-concept and vice versa is mediated by the contextual factors, such as the role of the parents and peers, school environment and performance pressure, and is not a direct relationship.

6.1.4 HYPOTHESES

As can be read in 4.5.3, the first hypothesis: “Language competencies have a promotional effect on self-concept”, is suggested to be declined based on the results in chapter 4, because the results suggested that language competencies do not seem to have a linear effect on self-concept. While low language competencies seem to reinforce low self-concept. High language competencies do not seem to be related in a linear way to high self-concept. The second hypothesis: “Academic self-concept is an indicator between language competencies and non-academic self-concept”, is suggested to be declined since academic self-concept is possibly found to be more of an indicator of language competencies instead of non-academic self-concept. The third hypothesis: “Context variables, such as performance pressure, home, and school environment are related to self-concept”, seems to have indications of relevance as possible mediators of the relationships between language competencies and self-concept that require further research.

The formulation of these hypotheses was valuable to this thesis because this helped to shape the direction of this research. They were formulated based on the theoretical model and because of the hypotheses, it was clearer which search terms could be used and which interview questions could be asked. However, since this thesis is a qualitative research and the actual testing of these hypotheses is beyond the scope of this research, it could be possible to test these hypotheses in further research.

Since the hypotheses were valuable to this thesis, based on the results, new hypotheses could be formulated that might be interested in further research. First, there could be hypothesized that the competence of writing, the spelling and the physical ability to write, has a promotional influence on self-concept. Additionally, there could be hypothesized that physical self-concept is of influence on language competencies. On top of that, there could be hypothesized that performance pressure has an obstructing effect on self-concept as well as language competencies. Last, there could be hypothesized that the role of the parents has a promotional effect on the development of language competencies and self-concept of children. These hypotheses are important because language is the basis of everything and what is learned in the cradle is carried to the tomb.

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APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW GUIDE

THEMA: Taalvaardigheden en zelfconcept.

SPECIFIEK ONDERWERP: De relatie tussen taalvaardigheden en zelfconcept bij 10-12 jaar oude kinderen volgens professionals.

ONDERZOEKSHYPOTHESES:

- Taalvaardigheden hebben een bevorderend effect op niet academisch zelfconcept
- Academisch zelfconcept is een mediator tussen niet academisch zelfconcept en taalvaardigheden
- Contextuele factoren, zoals prestatiedruk en de thuis en school omgeving zijn gerelateerd aan niet-academisch zelfconcept.

INTRODUCTIE:

Mijn naam is Wilke, master student Gezondheid en Maatschappij aan Wageningen Universiteit. Mijn onderzoek gaat over de relatie tussen taalvaardigheid en zelfconcept bij kinderen van 10 tot 12 jaar oud. Het onderzoek zal bijdragen aan het kennisgat in de literatuur. Daarnaast kunnen de resultaten bijdragen aan toekomstige interventies om kinderen met verminderde taalvaardigheden beter te kunnen identificeren en eventueel behandelen. Daarbij zal er inzicht worden verkregen in de sociale situatie van kinderen met verminderde taalvaardigheden. De interviewvragen zullen bij dit onderwerp aansluiten.

Als u interesse heeft zou ik een samenvatting mijn thesis naar u kunnen opsturen als deze afgerond is.

--> *Schrijf emailadres op indien dit gewenst is.*

Het interview duurt 45-60 minuten. Vind u het goed als ik het interview opneem? Ik zal zorgvuldig met uw antwoorden omgaan en indien gewenst blijft u volledig anoniem.

Self-concept is defined as a person's self-perceptions that are created through experiences with and interpretations of their environment (Marsh et al., 2017)

ALGEMEEN

Interview vraag: **Wie bent u?**

Interview vraag: **Waarom heeft u voor deze baan gekozen?**

Interview vraag: **Wat vindt u leuk aan deze baan?**

ZELFVERTROUWEN/ZELFBEELD

Onderzoeksvraag: Wat verstaat de professional onder het zelfbeeld van het kind en op welke manier identificeert hij dit?

Doel 1: Erachter komen wat de professional weet over zelfbeeld bij kinderen

TOPIC: Kennis zelfbeeld – interviewvraag: **Wat verstaat u onder zelfbeeld bij kinderen?**

Aspect 1: Sociaal

Aspect 2: Academisch

Aspect 3: Emotioneel

Aspect 4: Fysiek

Doel 2: Erachter komen wanneer er sprake is van een laag zelfbeeld

TOPIC: Laag zelfbeeld – Interviewvraag: **Wanneer is er sprake van een laag zelfbeeld bij kinderen en op welke manier is dit te zien?**

Aspect 1: Sociaal

Aspect 2: Academisch (prestaties)

Aspect 3: Emotioneel (faalangst)

Aspect 4: Fysiek

Doel 3: Erachter komen wat oorzaken kunnen zijn voor laag zelfbeeld

TOPIC: Invloeden op zelfbeeld – Interviewvraag: **Welke factoren spelen een rol bij het ontwikkelen van een laag zelfbeeld bij kinderen?**

Aspect 1: Leeftijdsgenoten

Aspect 2: Familie

Aspect 3: Omgang met leraar

Aspect 4: Eigen prestaties

Aspect 5: Taalvaardigheden

Aspect 6: sociale vaardigheden

TAALVAARDIGHEDEN

Onderzoeksvraag: Wat verstaat de professional onder taalvaardigheden en hoe herkent hij dit in kinderen?

Doel 1: Erachter komen wat de professional weet over de taalvaardigheid bij kinderen

TOPIC: kennis taalvaardigheid – interviewvraag: **Wat verstaat u onder taalvaardigheid onder kinderen?**

Aspect 1: Lezen

Aspect 2 Schrijven

Aspect 3: Spreken

Aspect 4: Overige vaardigheden?

Doel 2: Erachter komen wanneer een kind verminderde taalvaardigheden bezit

TOPIC: verminderde taalvaardigheden – interviewvraag: **Wanneer heeft volgens u een kind verminderde taalvaardigheden en hoe uit dit zich?**

Aspect 1: Schoolprestaties

- Aspect 2: leerproblemen
- Aspect 3: Gedrag (mentaal, fysiek)

Doel 3: Erachter komen wat oorzaken kunnen zijn voor verminderde taalvaardigheden

TOPIC: Invloeden op taalvaardigheden – interviewvraag: **Wat zijn de factoren die volgens u invloed hebben op de ontwikkeling van taalvaardigheden bij kinderen?**

- Aspect 1: Schoolomgeving
- Aspect 2: Thuisomgeving
- Aspect 3: Sociale druk
- Aspect 4: Prestatiedruk

RELATIE TAALVAARDIGHEDEN EN ZELFVERTROUWEN/ZELFBEELD

Onderzoeksvraag: Wat is volgens professionals de relatie tussen taalvaardigheden en zelfbeeld?

Doel 1: Erachter komen of de professional een relatie tussen de twee factoren vindt

TOPIC: Relatie taalvaardigheden en zelfbeeld – Interviewvraag: **In hoeverre hebben taalvaardigheden invloed op het zelfbeeld van het kind?**

- Aspect 1: Lezen
- Aspect 2: Schrijven
- Aspect 3: Sociale omgang
- Aspect 4: Leerprestaties
- Aspect 5: Emotioneel

Doel 2: Erachter komen op welke manier deze relatie zich uit volgens de professional

TOPIC: gevolgen relatie taalvaardigheden en zelfbeeld – Interviewvraag: **Op welke manier uit deze relatie zich?**

- Aspect 1: Lezen
- Aspect 2: Schrijven
- Aspect 3: Sociale omgang
- Aspect 4: Leerprestaties
- Aspect 5: Emotioneel

Doel 3: Erachter komen hoe de professional problemen identificeert in deze relatie

TOPIC: identificatie negatieve bijwerkingen relatie – Interviewvraag: **Op welke manier komt u erachter dat een kind negatieve gevolgen ervaart van de relatie tussen taalvaardigheden en zelfbeeld?**

- Aspect 1: Gedrag
- Aspect 2: Onzekerheid
- Aspect 3: Faalangst
- Aspect 4: Leerprestaties
- Aspect 5: Motivatie lezen en schrijven

CONTEXT VARIABELEN

Onderzoeksvraag: Welke contextvariabelen zijn van invloed op de relatie tussen taalvaardigheden en zelfvertrouwen/zelfbeeld?

Doel 1: Erachter komen wat de invloed is van de context op de relatie volgens de professional

TOPIC: Invloed context – Interviewvraag: **Op welke manier denkt u dat factoren zoals de groeiende prestatiedruk en school en thuis milieu invloed hebben op de relatie tussen taalvaardigheden en zelfbeeld?**

- Aspect 1: Stress
- Aspect 2: Motivatie

- Aspect 3: leeromgeving
- Aspect 4: Familie
- Aspect 5: Leraar
- Aspect 6: Cijfers
- Aspect 7: Groepsdruk

Doel 2: Erachter komen wat de behoeftes zijn voor de professional om deze relatie zo positief mogelijk te beïnvloeden

TOPIC: behoeftes professional beïnvloeden relatie – Interviewvraag: **Wat zijn behoeftes voor u als professional om deze relatie zo positief mogelijk te beïnvloeden?**

- Aspect 1: Lezen
- Aspect 2: Schrijven
- Aspect 3: Spreken
- Aspect 4: Leerprestaties
- Aspect 5: Emotionele ontwikkeling
- Aspect 6: vergroten zelfbeeld
- Aspect 7: Herkennen van symptomen
- Aspect 8: Verantwoordelijke

Bedanken voor tijd en moeite.

Oral competencies	Participation in conversations	Are able to lead a conversation
		Take care of a change of subject
	Interactive learning	Intervene in a correct way when conversation blocks
		Construct new knowledge in collaboration with others
Reflection on communication	Are able to transfer knowledge to others	Are able to state the certainty of their statement
		Are able to communicate the difference between formal and informal language use
	Are able to communicate the difference between literal and figure of speech language use	Are able to communicate the difference between dialects and standard language
		Know that there are differences between languages
Listening comprehension	Are able to listen critically to oral information	
	Are able to distinguish between facts and opinions	
Reading	Read- and write motivation	Have a positive attitude towards the use of written language
Writing	Spelling and punctuation	Recognize personal and societal importance of literacy
		Are able to use the grammar, spelling and punctuation rules
	Are able to recognize and correct grammar, spelling and punctuation mistakes	
		Develop an attitude towards correct written language

APPENDIX II: INFORMED CONSENT

Toestemmingsformulier deelname onderzoek "Relatie tussen taalvaardigheden en zelfconcept bij kinderen"

Datum:

Beste heer/mevrouw,

Bij deze nodig ik u uit om deel te nemen aan mijn afstudeeronderzoek over de relatie tussen taalvaardigheden en zelfconcept bij kinderen. De studie wordt uitgevoerd voor de onderzoeksgroep Gezondheid en Maatschappij (HSO) van de Wageningen Universiteit. Het doel van het onderzoek is om inzicht te verkrijgen in de sociale situatie van kinderen met een laag zelfbeeld en de interactie met taalvaardigheden. Daarnaast heeft het als doel om een basis te creëren voor interventies zodat kinderen sneller extra hulp krijgen bij het verbeteren van hun taalvaardigheden.

De interviewer zal vragen stellen over uw ervaringen met kinderen met een laag zelfbeeld en de relatie met taalvaardigheden hiervan. De interviews zullen in het Nederlands gehouden worden en zullen maximaal een uur duren. De interviews zullen worden opgenomen. Deze opnames worden niet verspreid. De resultaten zullen vertrouwelijk worden behandeld. Alleen de onderzoeker en haar begeleider zullen toegang hebben tot de resultaten. Daarbij worden uw gegevens geanonimiseerd. Uw informatie zal alleen gebruikt worden voor het onderzoeksproject en zal alléén gepubliceerd worden met uw toestemming. Uw naam zal niet verschijnen in een rapport of publicatie van dit onderzoek, echter met uw toestemming kunnen anonieme uitspraken worden gebruikt. Resultaten van dit project worden bewaard op een computer die alleen toegankelijk is voor de onderzoeker.

Als u klachten of vragen heeft over het onderzoeksproject, het interview of uw deelname, dan kunt u mij bereiken per telefoon (06 118 201 32) of per e-mail: wilke.olthuis@wur.nl.

Wanneer u besluit om mee te doen aan dit onderzoek, dan wordt u gevraagd om dit formulier te ondertekenen. Door dit formulier te ondertekenen, bevestigt u dat u:

- Begrijpt wat u hebt gelezen;
- Toestemming geeft om deel te nemen aan dit onderzoek;
- Toestemming geeft voor het gebruik van persoonlijke informatie zoals boven beschreven.

Kruist u alstublieft het juiste vakje aan:

- Ik wil niet dat uitspraken van het interview worden gebruikt in publicaties die voortkomen uit dit onderzoek.
- Ik geef toestemming voor het gebruik van anonieme uitspraken in publicaties die voortkomen uit dit onderzoek.

U zult een kopie van dit toestemmingsformulier ontvangen om te bewaren.

Handtekeningen:

Naam deelnemer:

Datum:

Handtekening:

Naam onderzoeker:

Datum:

Handtekening:

APPENDIX III: CODETREE

Code Report – Grouped by: Code Groups – Atlas.ti

Deductive codes

Inductive codes

Selected codes (118)

GROUPLESS - 4 Codes:

- *Verwachting*
- *Voorbeeld*
- *Individuele Begeleiding*
- *Zelfbeeld Vergroten*

BENODIGDHEDEN PROFESSIONAL - 17 Codes:

- *Geduld*
- **Herkennen Van Symptomen**
- *Tijd*
- *Interactie Stimuleren*
- *Onderzoeken*
- *Samenwerken*
- *Geschoold*
- *Voldoende Leerkracht*
- *Vertrouwen*
- *Facilitair*
- **Verantwoordelijke**
- **Lezen**
- **Leerprestaties**
- **Vergroten Zelfbeeld**
- **Spreken**
- **Schrijven**
- **Emotionele Ontwikkeling**

BEROEP - 8 Codes:

- *Coordinator Vve*
- *Onderwijsadviseur*
- *Docent*
- *Leerlingzorgcoördinator*
- *Gz Psycholoog*
- *Orthopedagoog*
- *Intern Begeleider*
- *Pedagoog*

CONTEXT TAAL ZELFBEELD - 13 Codes:

- *Leeftijdsgenootjes*
- *Cultuur*
- *Emotie*
- *Verwachtingen*
- *Speeltijd*
- **Leeromgeving**
- **Familie6**
- **Leraar**

- **Cijfers**
- **Motivatie**
- **Stress**
- **Groepsdruk**
- *Veiligheid*

FACTOREN LAAG ZELFBEELD - 15 Codes:

- *Veiligheid*
- *Opgedane Ervaringen*
- *Balans*
- **Omgang Met Docent**
- *Mindset*
- *Aandacht*
- *Aanleg*
- *Eerste Levensjaren*
- **Taalvaardigheden**
- **Sociale Vaardigheden**
- *Overvragen*
- **Familie**
- **Leeftijdsgenoten**
- **Eigen Prestaties**
- *Schoolomgeving*

FACTOREN VERMINDERD TAALVAARDIGHEID - 12 Codes:

- **Schoolomgeving**
- *Technologie*
- *Individuele Aandacht*
- *Aanbod Taal*
- **Thuisomgeving**
- **Sociale Druk**
- **Prestatiedruk**
- *Gevoel*
- *Interactie Leeftijdsgenoten*
- *Aanleg*
- *Uitspreken*
- *Angst*

INVLOED TAAL OP ZELFBEELD - 5 Codes:

- **Schrijven**
- **Sociale Omgang**
- **Lezen**
- **Leerprestaties**
- **Emotioneel**

LAAGZELFBEELD - 7 Codes:

- **Sociaal**
- **Academisch (Prestaties)**
- **Fysiek**
- **Emotioneel**
- *Uitbeelden*
- *Bijzinnetjes*
- *Cognitief Minder Ontwikkelen*

TAALVAARDIGHEDEN DEFINITIE - 6 Codes:

- *Reflectie Op Communicatie*
- *Woordenschat*
- **Lezen**
- **Spreken**
- **Overig**
- **Schrijven**

UITING RELATIE TAAL EN ZELFBEELD - 9 Codes:

- **Schrijven**
- **Emotioneel**
- *Fysieke Klachten*
- **Leerprestaties**
- **Lezen**
- *Verbaal*
- *Zelfvertrouwen*
- *Maskeren*
- **Sociale Omgang**

UITVINDEN GEVOLGEN RELATIE - 10 Codes:

- *Welbevinden*
- *Rekenproblemen*
- **Onzekerheid**
- *Goed Observeren*
- *Ouders*
- **Gedrag**
- *Maatschappelijke Relevantie*
- **Faalangst**
- **Leerprestaties**
- **Motivatie Lezen En Schrijven**

VERMINDERDE TAALVAARDIGHEDEN - 8 Codes:

- **Gedrag**
- *Dialect*
- *Mentaal*
- **Schoolprestaties**
- *Taalbegrip*
- *Woordenschat*
- *Niet Norm Halen*
- **Leerproblemen**

ZELFBEELD DEFINITIE - 6 Codes:

- *Zelfperceptie*
- *Ervaringen*
- **Fysiek**
- **Emotioneel**
- **Academisch**
- **Sociaal**

APPENDIX IV: YEARS OF EXPERIENCE PROFESSIONALS

<i>Professional</i>	<i>Years of experience</i>
Pedagogue	>25
Coordinator	not mentioned
Coordinator	not mentioned
Education advisor	>20
Education advisor, psychologist	>15
Remedial educationalist, health psychologist	21
Teacher	4
Remedial teacher	12
education advisor	not mentioned