Chapter-4

Self-Reflective Practices, Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Writing
1. Introduction

An example of a good reflective writing would be a text that provides rich explanations and which is more likely to criticize rather than praise, one’s own learning process (Reidsema and Mort, 2009). The study by Reidsema and Mort (2009) presented views on assessing a reflective writing through peer review. The study explored how reflective writing which is a critical account of one’s learning receives good peer reviews than the reflective writing which praises their learning.

Reflective writing is a powerful way to critique and create knowledge. Reflective writing can best be put to use in an academic situation, where one gets exposed to many new and different experiences and challenges. In academics, we encounter people with different backgrounds, encounter different methods of course delivery and course materials of a more challenging nature. One gets to cope with varying expectations like what and how much one will successfully achieve. This becomes a challenge for EFL learners who are studying and managing in a foreign country. In India, the rate of foreign students has increased for they come from the different parts of the world. In A.M.U (Aligarh Muslim University) this rate has also increased. There are learners coming from various backgrounds and cultures and have different languages as their native tongue. The EFL learners in AMU get enrollment in graduation, post-graduation and research. Therefore, self-reflection for EFL learners plays an important role, because they have to manage to study in a foreign environment. In such an environment, not only is the language is different but also the culture. A learner can be required to read and interpret various course materials, which they critically evaluate and synthesize into a coherent story and effectively communicate ideas and their understanding by using the appropriate formats and language specific to one’s discipline. In such cases, one requires writing reflectively, in order to follow the learning pattern and understand the subject. Most of the learners stay busy preparing notes and they do so, in order to attain clarity over the topic and the subject. They gather information first, then take notes from the class lectures and after all this, they sit down and write for themselves by reflecting over each aspect that they have gone through, simplify it and reflect on each aspect which they understand. In these way learners implement self-reflective practices in their learning and writing. In addition, self-reflective practices in writing would require learners to
be more efficient and competent in self-questioning their ideas, writing strategies, writing skill, task performance etc. Self-reflection is a continuous process of self-evaluation and self-assessment which requires one to be critical towards his/her writing performance and skill. Self-reflective practices in writing can be compared to critical practices in writing. The study explores the level of self-reflective practices in writing among the ESL and EFL learners.

Self-efficacy is an individual’s beliefs about their capability to perform designated tasks (Bandura 1997; Usher and Pajares 2008a, 2008b; Bembenutty, White, and Velez, 2015). “The level of self-efficacy influences the degree of effort, for a specific task” (Bembenutty, 2015, p.14). According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy drives a person to set challenging goals for them. Having self-efficacy means an individual is capable of successful attainment of goals and has a high sense of self-perception of their capabilities which makes them develop a control of the process and outcomes of setting goals in reaching these goals. Having self-belief of one’s capabilities also directs one to control their learning environment and manage social interactions (Bembenutty, 2015). “A learner with low self-efficacy would easily become distracted and readily divert his attention from completing the task, whereas, a learner with high self-efficacy would delay gratification by remaining focused on the task by completing the task successfully” (Bembenutty, 2015, p. 14). For e.g. a learner who is not motivated and inhibited about a task allotted to him, would face difficulties in completing that task successfully, because the level of self-efficacy influences the degree of effort one puts for doing a specific task. The investigation into self-efficacy defines three dimensions; magnitude, strength, and generality (Pajares, 1996). Magnitude is the level that defines the difficulty of a task. For example, when students are given an assignment and they judges the assignment as highly challenging, they have assessed the magnitude of the assignment’s difficulty. Strength stands for the degree of self-efficacy for specific tasks e.g. students might have a high level of self-efficacy for an English assignment than for any other particular subject, because of their past experiences with that subject. Generality, involves the degree to which the capability to engage in a task can be extended into a different content or a different situation e.g. if students self-beliefs are not generalized to mathematics, they might believe that he can complete the algebra task successfully but not the trigonometry assignment. “Students can perceive themselves as self-efficacious in activities or within one domain of functioning” (Bembenutty, 2015,
p.14). Even with the teacher candidates, the self-efficacy factor drives their teaching expertise. A teacher, would, generally choose an area of expertise for a learner in which his or her self-efficacy is high. “The low level of self-confidence can lead to poor performance” (Bembenutty, 2015, p.15).

4.2. Self-Reflective Practices

Reflective practices in writing can further be described as a practice where you give a response to experiences, opinions, events and new information to thoughts and feelings. This is a way of thinking to explore one’s learning. It is an opportunity to gain self-knowledge and it is a way to achieve clarity and a better understanding of what one is learning. It gives a chance to develop and reinforce the writing skills of a learner. It is a way of meaning making out of what one has studied and how one has performed.

Reflective writing is not just conveying information, instruction, and arguments. It is concerned with one’s thoughts. Reflective writing is mostly subjective. Therefore, in addition to being reflective and logical, one can get personal, hypothetical, critical and creative with one’s writing style. One can include his/her comments based on one’s experiences, rather than limiting one to just academic evidence. Reflective writing includes a description (What, When, Who) and analysis (How, Why, What, If). Reflective writing is an explorative tool which should result in more questions than answers. A reflective writing task may allow one to use different modes of writing and language. These modes comprise of different modes of writing like description, where one outlines what something is or how something was done. Another is the explanatory mode, which is used to explain why or how it is like that. The expressive mode, explains what he/she thinks, feels, and believes.

When we add ‘self’ to reflection, it becomes a more personal account, where one is only centered on his/her own performance. Self-reflection or self-reflective practices accounts for reflecting upon ‘self’ as the term suggests, ‘reflection’ of ‘self’. Self-reflection of writing means reflecting upon one’s writing. This may include criticizing one’s written drafts for various purposes, like evaluation, assessment, clarification, improvement and so on. Literature recognizes reflective writing as an effective learning tool. The study by Reidsema (2009), views it as ‘soft’ assessment lacking objective or quantitative measurement criteria. The issue is with the large
classroom management as reflective assessment tasks are provided with training and
detailed assessment rubrics, whose evaluation is considered quite tedious when
compared to calculation type assessments.

“Reflective writing has been described as a representation of the reflective
process and it is argued that practicing this representation can result in greater
understanding for the writer” (Moon, 2006, 2004; Reidsema and Mort, 2009, p. 118).
The literature on reflective writing provides advice on assignment design,
implementation and assessment. According to Moon (2004), reflection contains
recognition of the frame of reference with which an event is viewed and how it can
change the recognition of multiple perspectives and differing views of personal
behavior.

Reflective practices involve an in-depth reflection and description of an event,
which a learner writes with a critical mind, where the writers engage into self-
questioning and criticizing their own thoughts and ideas. According to Moon (2004),
reflective writers must have ‘critical awareness’ and do ‘self-questioning’

Figure: 4
The Phases of Self-reflective practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justify actions, solve problems, Deeper meaning, Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions, Attitudes, Values, Beliefs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revisit experiences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self</td>
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The best way to learn and practice self-reflection in writing is through the analysis of written autobiographical materials such as, ‘learning journals’ and ‘diaries’. The individual who has practice in maintaining journals or diaries would possess a high efficiency in self-reflection, “self-reflective practices are strengthened when learners get consciously involved in language processing and begin to develop individual strategies in their journey towards achieving independence in their learning” (Sidhu, Kaur & Fook, 2010, p. 127). Similarly, the self-reflective practices in writing can be developed through getting consciously involved in writing practices which requires high level of language processing and implementation of multiple writing strategies on the part of the learner. High level of language processing in writing would deal with brainstorming ideas and structuring them cohesively and coherently in a written discourse. Figure 4, describes the stages and steps required in implementing self-reflective practices in writing. Justifying actions means to state effectively why one has stated a particular opinion and what relevance does it has in this particular context. Solving problems means to be capable of strategizing in order to achieve an effective outcome. Deeper meaning means to self-question each and every action that one has taken in the writing task and justify its relevance to the context in which it has been used. Changes mean to implement self-assessment (revision/editing) and critical practices (self-questioning/drawing out pros and cons) in writing in order to improve the task outcome. Self-reflective practices in writing would require stating one’s assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs on a topic, event or experience. Self-reflective practices in writing require recapturing, brainstorming and analyzing ones past experiences and stored knowledge. Self-reflective practices in writing require ‘self-independence’ to implement all the above efficiently.

4.2.1. Types of Self-reflective Genre Practice
Learning journals, logs and reflective diaries are the terms that have been used quite often to indicate practice in reflection. Such practices are discussed by many studies which reveal that they are a good aid for giving practice in reflective writing by developing the self-reflective practices. Learners who engage in such cognitive activities indicate some form of reflective learning. These practices are related to one another. Journals, logs and reflective diaries are commonly a record of events that take place and give an effect of reflection on them. Many studies have tested the effect which these practices (journals, logs, reflective diaries) put on the efficiency
level of one’s reflection. The individuals who engage in such practices, quite often showcase a higher level of competence in implementing self-reflective practices in writing.

This has been noted by various studies where individuals engage in such practices and it often showcases a higher efficacy to self-reflective practices. These are techniques through which the power to self-critique and self-evaluate strengthens. “Such types of practices are used in many learning contexts, such as documentation is used as a means of facilitating for assessing learning” (Sidhu et.al, 2010, p.127).

Moon (2006) stated that reflective journal writing is highly structured and a free practice, which is recognized to be helpful in improving student learning in almost every subject area. Reflective writing personalizes and deepens the quality of learning and helps to integrate the materials of learning. Learning through reflection accentuates favorable conditions for learning, which is applicable to all disciplines. Reflection is a process which accumulates for over a period of time with an intention to learn and respond to what one has done all this time.

Self-reflection helps in building the capability to evaluate one’s performance in order to look back on how one has performed. It empowers one’s cognition to self-critique over one’s writing. The higher the cognition, the higher will be the efficiency in one’s writing. “Researchers contest that written material such as diaries and learning journals are some excellent tools for taking and giving practices in self-reflection, as these are simple while conducting and promoting the development of reflective teaching and learning” (Sidhu et.al, 2010, p.127).

Maintaining regular journals accumulates the capacity to self-regulate one’s learning. The individual responds to his learning in order to look back for any improvements, corrections, assessment etc. Such practices build the capacity to utilize the strategies that are important for growing as an efficient writer. Self-regulated learning and self-reflective practices in writing explain the capability of a writer to write an effective draft. Self-reflective practices show that deliberate efforts are put by the writer to improve his/her draft and performance and the writer consciously takes control of the learning. The learner is aware of every detail and knows where the learning is going and the expected outcome. The learners move according to their set goals towards the outcome they have set for themselves. At this level, learners show the highest level of efficiency in their performance as the writer. Self-regulation in
writing shows, how the learner takes charge of his/her writing. The learner set goals, becomes self-motivated and does planning at each level of the task.

Self-reflection is a step further towards efficient writing. Self-reflection explains how much conscious the learner is about his performance. Self-reflective practices, in writing, means that a writer self-assesses, self-critiques and self-edits. These practices describe the efforts put in developing a fine piece of the draft. This also shows that the learner is confident and conscious of the learning and can handle it well. The learner becomes his own critique, which is the higher level of efficiency of a writer. Diaries and learning journals are described as an excellent tool for developing self-reflective practices. “This is a form of self-report which allows learners to record personal thoughts, feelings, achievements, problems and the impressions of teachers and peers” (Sidhu et.al, 2010, p.127). Journal writing and diaries have been proved to be the effective measures which a teacher and a learner could take to encourage self-reflective practices in writing. However, there are some shortcomings of these two learning tools. As pointed out by some researchers, “journal entries can sometimes be altered to accommodate the perceived expectations of the reader by passing the writers’ perspectives and goals” (Hatton & Smith, 1995; Sidhu et.al, 2010, p.128). Furthermore, “diaries have a disadvantage of containing more information than is needed for a straight forward analysis” (Sidhu, 2010, p.128). These shortcomings can be addressed by giving learners guidelines or directions to write, which can explain the criteria under which learners have to compose by not neglecting the context and by not losing the authenticity of one’s perspective. Writing journals and diaries can enhance reflective thinking which could develop:

- The power to record and learn from experiences.
- The power to develop critical thinking and development of a questioning attitude.
- The power to enhance problem-solving skills and reflective practice.
- To empower personal development and self-empowerment.
- To enhance creativity and to improve writing.
- To improve self-expression.

A reflective journal is used in many ESL contexts, as said by (Sidhu, 2010) that teachers use reflective journals in order to give time to their students to think about what they are learning, how they will learn, how they will describe personal
thoughts and feelings at the time of learning, how they will write about their entire learning experiences, as well as, their future explorations and learning. This becomes more apparent that “learners could be taught self-monitoring skills to manage their own language learning experiences” (Sidhu et.al, 2010, p.128) and tools like reflective journals and diaries can be very useful sources of insightful data. The finding of the study developed by (Sidhu, Kaur & Fook, 2010) that encountered six learners and investigated their reflective practices through journal writing indicated that reflective writing practices have a positive impact on students self-monitoring skills. Furthermore, the study shows the stages of learners writing and self-editing their journals. Individual differences were found among them, but they were all self-reflective towards their written drafts and were observed to make corrections at the level of grammars, spellings and punctuations. They self-monitored their writing task. The learners were observed to identify errors and correct them. Good monitoring abilities among the learners were discovered by the researchers in this study. The study also showed that learners’ ability and self-reflective practices vary from one another but, performing reflective writing tasks helps in developing self-reflective practices, raises consciousness and encourages critical thinking among the learners (Sidhu et al, 2010).

4.2.2. Classifying Types of Reflective Writing
A list of reflective writing has been presented by Hanrahan (1998), in a significant study; he reclassified the types of reflective writing and their genres into a smaller group of types of writing. These were goal oriented reflection, personal examination of conscience, critical notes while reading personal cognitive behavior analysis, observation, and interpretations, memos, poetry writing, letters and emails to mentors, occasional letters and emails. These were the types of activities which were used to enhance practice in reflective writing. These genres were further distributed into journal writing for formal academic purposes and outside personal journal for informal and were more exclusive to one’s thoughts and ideas.

According to Hanrahan (1998), the academic or formal journal writing includes:
2. Critical notes while reading.
3. Personal examination of conscience.
5. Taking stock.
7. Critical incident analysis.

1. The researcher used this type of writing in his reflective journal, where he puts a daily and weekly assessment of the progress related to his course and study matters to find out the ways to improve upon the education system and procedure, to find out researchable topics and issues, questions to find out answers for and so on. This technique was used to critique the course materials and to discover the theoretical and political implications of what the researcher was learning. Such a practice helped the researcher to self-engage deeply in the work and progress that the learner was making. This was a way of analyzing it and critiquing it for implementing it into the actual practice of what the researcher was learning, e.g. whether or not what he was doing is the effective way or not for achieving the desired outcome (Hanrahan, 1998).

2. This type of metacognitive activity where it activates the cognition while the learner reads and comprehends the text. After comprehending the recollected materials, the learner translates and simplifies it all that into his own understanding. The learner keeps a journal in which he records about all that he has gone through and whatever he has derived out of all that and to check how related it is to learners’ understanding. A Learner’s meta-cognition gets activated where he critically combines and breaks the comprehended text into his own words. The researchers are often engaged in such metacognitive activities, where they reflect on the academic literature which they read for their research. It is more like taking notes and transforming and comprehending the whole into simpler or complex units for further study and research.

3. It is a more personal practice, where the writer is only aware of what he is recording or writing. At this level, he needs nobody to criticize his work or point out the errors. “It is a learner’s personal space, where he can try new ideas without fear of being criticized about their relevance, suitability, the degree of conformity with currently acceptable ways of expressing ideas, or their moral property” (Hanrahan, 1998, p.9). “This also means that it could be a place for the writer to critically
examine his own conduct, without anyone else pointing to any mistakes or errors or to the decision he might take” (Hanrahan, 1998, p.9).

4. As stated by Hanrahan (1998), cognitive behavior therapy means to become meta-cognitive about one’s own effective and conative states and do psychological activities like talk therapy with oneself. Hanrahan (1998) practiced cognitive behavior therapy on himself while he began his research. According to him, cognitive behavior therapy helped him to lift his confusions and doubts that had kept on occurring from time to time. This practice re-energizes an individual in the times when he feels discouraged. This practice evolved into an informal written dialogue with oneself about an irrational cognitive behavior which could be obstructing the progress of the learner. This practice is self-reflection which motivates and encourages the learner to work, solve his problems, and clears his path whenever he is faced with doubts and irrational thoughts.

5. It is like going back to every event and reflecting over to that. Hanrahan (1998), states that when he kept a record of a classroom research through this while writing he remembered much more than he thought he would. For him, it was a cumulative recall which helped him to draw connections between his observations in the classroom and happening. It helped him in producing associations with other incidents which the researcher might not have seen earlier. Self-reflection over the research experiences or in the other cases might become the recount of the learning experiences which one had gone into. Through this, learners could draw out their recount of each experience, associations and where it might lead, what they have learned, and how far and better they can go what will be the next step from here.

6. It is taking the derived thoughts and explanations which a learner recollects through self-reflection to the level where it can be practiced or implemented. The process includes brainstorming. All the brainstormed information is laid down as it is without any changes. The changes are made afterwards, some of the ideas are rejected and others more relevant and related ones are forwarded into practice. The chosen ideas are then analyzed further to check their practical implications. The question is how they appear when they are practically implemented? Based on the chosen ideas, various strategies are created and adapted, and from that, an exercise is developed.
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The writer jots down these aspects and creates activities for classroom implementation. “This is a continuous state of self-reflection and the process of either discarding one or the other ideas or finding a way of expressing both ideas so that they more make sense” (Hanrahan, 1998, p.14).

7. ‘Critical incidents’ by Hanrahan (1998) prove helpful in revealing the gap between “espoused beliefs” (adopted beliefs) and “action beliefs”. “It is a technique of capturing critical incidents and recapturing them by making reflections and observations” (Hanrahan, 1998, p. 17).

4.2.3. Explicit Teaching of Reflective Skills
Reflective skills are defined as the source of improving learners’ overall learning and professional education and practice in higher education (Rogers, 2001; Ryan, 2011). Self-reflection is considered to be the most critical of all skills, which needs an explicit and systematic education and training to be mastered. Halliday’s (1978) systemic functional semantic approach to language given by Eggins (2004) can be used to develop explicit knowledge to teach and assess reflective writing in higher education (Ryan, 2011). Eggins’ (2004) functional semantic approach to language is derived from and based on Halliday’s (1978) systemic functional linguistics. Eggins (2004) described it to be useful in developing reflective writing through training and assessment of it at the higher educational level. The social semiotic model can be greatly helpful in explicitly improving the reflective writing skill.

Reflective skills need a constant and a systematic process to develop. One of the major characteristics of a good reflective writing is that it is linguistically richer in description and explanation (Ryan, 2011).

The explicit teaching of self-reflection as a writing skill includes the transfer of the knowledge of the textual structure, grammar and vocabulary of academic reflective writing. The learners and teachers need education in skill development. This is the way of effective teaching and assessment of reflective writing (Ryan, 2011). Halliday’s (1978) systemic functional linguistics can be used to give such an effective and constant practice in reflective writing.
4.3. Critical Practices and Reflective practices

Critical reflection is directly proportional to social change as stated by Leonardo (2004). A critical thought can lead to some definite changes in the social setting. That is why critical reflection in itself is socially grounded. Society brings changes in individual thinking and understanding. To give practice in self-reflection, the researchers and educators incorporate and implement various effective strategies and tasks. These tasks and strategies directly scaffold the focused skill. Researchers believed that there are hierarchical levels of reflection. Some suggested that there could be four different levels of reflection (Grossman, 2008). These levels were described as descriptive accounts, mental processing, transformative and intensive reflection. These four levels of reflection are just roughly stated tasks which could be implemented for giving training in self-reflective practices in writing. Researchers further suggest that these tasks could be further manipulated or can scaffold learners at each level to produce more productive reflections (Grossman, 2008).

Ryan (2011) suggests different levels of reflections with a “5Rs framework of Reporting, Responding, Relating, Reasoning and Reconstructing” (Ryan, 2011, p. 3). These levels move from simple to complex. They usually start from the level where the task is to give written description of self or a personal account. The next level includes a description and/or personal response to a situation, event or an issue. The next level becomes more complex where the writer reflects and adapts the theory. The writer reflects to study what the theories suggest. The researcher explains, interrogates and transforms their practice (Ryan, 2011, p. 3).

Academic reflection involves a conscious and stated purpose that needs to show evidence of learning (Ryan, 2011). This type of reflection is purposeful and should be an account of one’s development in studies. Such a level of reflection occurs at the higher level, which is generally, the aim in higher educational courses. Such reflective process of one’s learning is the transformative approach to learning, which shows the pedagogical processes of the educational environment and how it transforms the knowledge and transmits it (Ryan, 2011). Critical Social Theory has a liberal ideology which sets to emancipate the learners to encourage them to become an active learner and critique of their own learning process. It works to encourage the language efficiency of the learners, by cultivating and reconstructing their own practices (Ryan, 2011). “When learners are provided with such opportunities to
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examine and reflect upon their beliefs, philosophical practices and to deconstruct prevailing ideologies, then develop as active change agents and lifelong learners within their professions” (Ryan, 2011, p. 4).

A study suggests that if the learners are given explicit instructions or teaching in the key structural elements and linguistics realizations using a “social semiotic approach”, the learners become more critically reflective towards their professional or learning context and reconstruct more ideas, thoughts and thinking. This would help learners to produce new discourses, practices and theories (Ryan, 2011).

Ryan (2011) states,

critical/transformative reflective writing as a form of academic writing which is difficult for students to master. It is not intuitive and it requires more than descriptions of events and feelings which are the features of personal reflections that students may have experienced through diary or journal writing at school and in their life-worlds (Ryan, 2011, p. 5).

This can be related to what Sidhu (2010) came up with in his study where the researcher suggested that to enhance critical thinking one should practice reflective writing often along with diary entry or/and journal writing. Such reflective writing practices strengthen the power of self-critiquing and self-evaluation.

Journals, logs and reflective diaries are highly structured free practices which accentuates favorable conditions for learning, and which is applicable to every discipline. These are all more complex processes with high rhetorical demands and linguistically demanding features of the genre, it requires explicit teaching and scaffold development over time for students to achieve success (Ryan, 2011). This is related to what Hanrahan (1998) mentioned in the study to implement practices and tasks that are used to scaffold and encourage learners into practicing self-reflection skills. Social context plays a definite role in cultivating a language and its linguistic structure. Social context is considered to be a social system which contributes to language and change. According to Halliday (1978), the exchange of meaning is dependent upon the social context and the purpose of the exchange. In this approach
of SFL, language has been described through what people do with it and how language is structured as a text for various uses in the various social contexts (Ryan, 2011). Language is socially constructed, and therefore, people and culture moulds the language which they use in different social situations. These differences are the different language structures which people learn by their use in the actual context. All these differences should be clear in the mind of the language user.

4.3a. Developing Self-Reflective Practices through raising Critical Thinking

Critical thinking means to evaluate and analyse any given or stated opinion, view, idea or information. Critical thinking requires a person to be always in a state of scepticism. Being a critical thinker require to build an attitude of always questioning information and to not accept things as they are said or presented. Criticality towards an idea, thought or information needs to build effective arguments and search evidences which could support the stated idea. Moreover, the evidences and arguments should be clear and convincing. Being critical does not only mean to negate each and every thing, but it also means to support an idea by providing additional perspectives and views in support of it. University of Reading (2016) conveys that while critically analysing a writer should avoid redundancy and irrelevant details.

Learning Enhancement and Development, University of London states that critical thinking is to evaluate and explain our stance with regard to an idea, provide evidence to support your stance, explain why the evidence is convincing or unconvincing. In addition, critical analysis of a text would also mean to look for any bias. If someone is trying to critically analyse a study or research for its objectivity, relevance and vigour, then one might use some steps. Following are the questions given by LEaD which a person must think and answer while critically evaluating a research paper/study:

Q1. “Is the methodology sound? (E.g. was there a sufficient sample size? How was the sample selected?)” (LEaD).
Q2. Do evidences provided by the writer support their claims, opinions, views etc?
Q3. Are the evidences effective, robust and unbiased?
Q4. Do the evidences successfully build conclusion, claim and findings/results?
Q5. What hypothesis, objectives and rhetorical questions writer has raised? Are they relevant and reasonable enough?
Q6. Is there any bias? If yes, how far is it acceptable and credible?
Q7. Does writer had stated points which maybe showing contradiction or disagreement?
Q8. Is there any point, sentence or word which is unclear or undefined?
Q9. Is the work peer reviewed?

4.3b. Self-Reflective Practices in Writing and Critical Writing

Western university expect their students to be competent critical writers who could generate arguments by evaluating and analysing the concepts. Critical thinking and writing is the power to question and present arguments which are expected to bring a better outcome. Moreover, critical writing ensures one’s reasoning and comprehension level.

Critical thinking is being described as the most rational way of thinking. Many researchers have given different definitions. It has been perceived as a cognitive skill that pertains to rational judgement. Critical thinking is a cognate of rationality, reflexive scepticism and critical self-reflection (Vyncke, 2012). Criticality is the art of developing logical argumentation and it can be taught as stated by Davies (2008) through practicing Syllogisms. A syllogism “is a formal argument in logic that is formed by two statements and a conclusion which must be true if the two statements are true” (Merriam Webster, 2018). However, some questioned Davies’ views. But there is a unanimous view in literature which says that critical thinking is developed through “students’ abilities to identify issues and assumptions, through recognising important relationships among them, through making accurate inferences, through evaluating evidences and finally through deducing conclusions” (Vyncke, 2012, p. 10).

There has been misleading explanations to what exactly argumentation in critical writing/thinking means. Many believe that argument is one’s personal views and opinions, others believe that argumentation is to criticise works/opinions of scholars and researchers. However, in actuality argumentation presented in academic writings as the product of critical thinking is “to engage with other point of views, evaluate and analyse each point and to incorporate those views/claims which are nearest to one’s own opinions and beliefs” (Vyncke, 2012. P.11). Furthermore, this kind of augmentation would be referred to as ‘self-reflective practices’ in writing. The aim towards practicing self-reflection in writing is to be able to compare, comprehend, question one’s opinions along with others’ and, incorporate those arguments which
seem justifies to the existing context of discourse. Self-reflecting one’s own writing would mean to engage with one’s stated views, evaluating and analysing every move and finally, incorporating those points which comprehensively defines one’s stance. In order to inculcate critical thinking and self-reflective in writing among learners, the pedagogic measures shall be effective and implement the core properties of criticality and argumentation in writing. Educators must incorporate effective training in these aspects by providing regular and timely feedback on students’ academic writings for criticality, argumentation and self-reflective practices. Furthermore, the pedagogical measures should be affective, in order to, give learners better understanding in writing argumentatively. Three-core steps strategy training could foster one’s critical writing skill. The first step would be to evaluate interpret and analyse the available literature and resources related to the context of discourse of argument the writer is making. Another step would be to establish a stance and a point of view which states the writer’s argument and builds it. Finally, the third step would be to logically structure all the information which displays point of views and those views which correlates with writer’s argument, in order to, substantiate and support writer’s argument. All this would bring an outcome which will argue writer’s stance; question how solid and logical is it? How strongly it has been supported with evidences and reasoning? Furthermore, all the above discussions pertains critical thinking and self-reflective practices in writing as “a process by which a text transforms other texts, thereby, not merely reproducing knowledge, but reconstructing knowledge” (Vyncke, 2012. P.12). In addition, there is a pedagogical responsibility to generate an importance of critical thinking self-reflective practices in writing in students. It is important that learners realise its effectiveness in order to grow academically. Unless students are not persuaded or encouraged correctly, they will not be bothered about incorporating criticality and self-reflective practices in academic writing and even outside of their academic pursuits. Furthermore, learners’ sense of criticality and argumentation would delimit only to their academic writing tasks, they will not be able to grow outside its boundaries. It is important to inculcate among students that being critical and self-reflective is not only to score well in academics but it is important in nurturing learners’ ‘self’ and their development overall as independent learners who could own and control their learning processes. In addition, having to understand this, the learners would not only prosper academically, but also to gain most benefit out of every learning context/situation throughout their life. Therefore, critical thinking and
self-reflective practices would nurture a learner in every phase of their learning experiences along with their academic engagements. It helps groom learners’ competency, effectiveness, Self-Motivation, Self-Efficacy and cognition to perform a task and in excavating new information on challenging subjects and areas of information. In addition, it would make students confident who would be never hesitant to take or participate in any learning task or context.

4.3.1. Social and Cognitive Genres of Academic Reflective Writing

“Academic writing is assessed as evidence of achievement of learning outcomes of a course of work” (Ryan, 2011, p.7). A genre-based approach to writing is the best initiative that a teacher can adapt to give learners the knowledge of social purposes and its structures with the linguistic resources which are used in a particular social purpose. This is, basically, important in teaching and learning the different academic form of writing. ‘Social Genres’ a term given by Bruce (2008) which refers to socially recognized structures, which describe texts and overall social purposes which they reflect and use. The example of such social genres are- academic articles, personal letters, and film reviews. ‘Cognitive Genre’ is part of ‘social genres’ are classified according to their ‘rhetorical purpose’. This classification includes modes of description, recount and explanation. Bruce (2008), suggests through his categorization that any ‘social genre’ is capable of embodying a number of ‘cognitive genres’, in order to, achieve its social purpose. ‘Academic reflection’ is also a ‘social genre’ that is, capable of incorporating a number of ‘cognitive genres’. Therefore, it becomes important to master this social genre along with its cognitive genres. Academic reflection holds a social purpose of transforming every practice in some way. Academic reflection hybridizes different cognitive genres, in order to, achieve its social purpose of transforming the practice. Academic reflection hybridizes the cognitive genres of the recount, description, explanation and discussion most often and specifically (Ryan, 2011). Every social genre possesses its distinct linguistic structure of various ‘cognitive genres’. This is the means of recognizing a specific social /cognitive genre. Academic reflection follows its own distinctive ‘cognitive genre’ and linguistic structures, in order to fulfill the rhetorical purposes which it possesses. These are some specific kinds of linguistic resources which help to attain high rhetorical demands and complex purposes of the academic reflection.
4.3.2. Using Models to Improve Self-Reflective Practices in Academic Writing

Modeling has been described as the most effective technique for teaching and learning any specific skill. Ryan (2011) used this technique by handing over the examples and excerpts of reflective writing to students. The students analyzed and annotated that piece of writing. The students assessed the piece of writing by scrutinizing its linguistic features and structures. This strategy is a great tool to make the learners aware of the structural and linguistic feature of a piece of the writing of a particular social and cognitive genre.

Academic reflection being a complex form of writing has its social genre which includes four types of cognitive genres. Ryan (2011) in his study created models which could be used in guiding a particular academically reflective writing. The models gave explicit instructions and guidelines by asking learners about a specific example of an academic reflective. The questions lead to an explanation of the piece of writing. It goes into assessment by the learner who is assessing a piece of writing by finding answers to the question which the model asks them. Students are guided through the process with explicit questions. The student first assesses the modeled text which is used as reference to identify its key linguistics features and then the learner assesses his own written texts based on the similar assessment criteria used for the model text. The learner assesses and compares the model text, as well as, his own text. Learners then report, respond, relate reasons and reconstruct the text. The questions fulfill the purpose of breaking down the written text into simpler and comprehensive form. Some of the questions from the models that Ryan (2011) developed are:

1. How does the writer indicate that they are reporting, responding to something that they were involved in or have observed? (Use of personal pronoun ‘I’, use of thinking and sensing verbs)
2. What does the first paragraph do? (Identifies an issue and states why it is important).
3. How does the writer reason and explain why it happened the way it did? (Use of causal language, adverbs and adverbial groups to explain when, where or how things happen)
The crucial, yet challenging work, which remains is when the learners are asked to annotate or assess their own reflective piece on the similar guidelines which the model presents. This way they self-assesses and self-reflect to outline what they can improve and self-critique their ideas and thoughts which they have written. “Self-assessment and reflection on the linguistics intricacies of one’s writing is an effective way to improve writing knowledge and skills” (Ryan, 2011, p. 13).

Ryan (2011) suggests that reflective writing is a way towards developing efficient writers who can do academic higher level writing, self-assessment of writing, self-reflection of writing and so on. Social semiotic approach paves the path for reflective writing skill development, and therefore, these skills should be focused on and strategies are implemented in order to aid these skills in the learners. The education system, the university classes should give priority to the development of these skills. A systematic approach is needed to be implemented in order to successfully teach and assess the reflective writing.

4.3.3. Journal writing as an effective genre of self-reflection

Out of many social and cognitive genres, journal writing has been most discussed. The importance of journal keeping and writing has been emphasized by many researchers to be an effective technique in developing higher academic writing skills. Learners who keep journals are likely to be good in self-reflection and self-regulation in their tasks.

Orem (2001) discussed the role of journal writing in the development of adult ESL learners. Orem (2001) called journal writing as a reflective writing which is a higher order techniques, can lead to improvement in adult writing skills. In the study, Orem (2001), studied the impact of practice in reflective writing on the journal writing skill of adult ESL learners. The reflective writing practices are only limited to the learners, but many studies has discussed the importance of practice in reflective writing, both for the learners, as well as, for the teachers. Practicing reflective writing benefits language development and efficiency of an educated and the learners. Gebhard and Oprandi (1999) Richards and Lockhart (1994) supported a program of ESL teacher development through reflective practice. The program focused on reflective writing making the teachers writes journals in the classroom. The journal was supposed to be a record of the teachers’ teaching-learning transactions of how they teach, what they teach, the ways and techniques of teaching, how they instruct
their language, their observation of class and learners, their responses to events that occur in the teaching-learning transaction. Keeping reflective teaching journal is a challenging task because a teacher should be ready to dedicate honest opinion on his/her teaching practices. Reflecting upon one’s teaching, self-evaluating, self-assessing and self-critiquing is a lot of dedicated work to do. Such kind of reflective journal works as a self-diagnostic tool. Through this, a teacher can find solutions to problems that occur during their teaching session. A teacher through reflection can make an assumption and can clarify them. Teachers can analyze what worked for one class and what did not go effectively.

Teachers can analyze what students need, where teaching techniques worked for students, the level of students’ understanding, individual differences, what teaching strategies can meet their level of understanding, where the focus is most needed and so on. Through this method, teachers can possibly discover a solution for a problem which they are facing or have faced earlier this is also another practice of reflective teaching journal writing, which is turned as ‘collaborative journal writing’. A group of teachers works together with a range of topics which they select from the teaching practices they do in the classroom. These topics might be specific teacher behavior, students’ response, student-teacher introductions (Orem, 2001). In the study by Orem (2001), the use of the internet and web-boards has been discussed. The researcher suggests that through the internet teachers, who are distant, can be kept in touch. Through the internet, teachers all over the world can keep in touch with each others’ teaching practices and can share their reflection on their teaching. Through the internet, teachers can record his/her reflection at any time. The reflective journal helps teachers to gain practice in asking questions about their actions through which they come to understand their own actions better and use their reflective journals as a tool to engage, in their own research, into the practice of teaching (Orem 2001).

“Journal writing can be found in any classroom, but the goal varies dramatically depending upon whether the focus is on language structure, language for communication or language for improvement” (Orem, 2001, p.73). Second language teaching incorporates training in basic in mechanics of language. Journal writing can help in improving these language mechanics e.g., spelling, grammar and punctuation, in order to practice and learn correct language forms (Orem, 2001). Reflection improves the skills of error correction. Through the scripts of the learners and teachers can assess and study grammar propriety and writing communication efficiency of
the learners. Journal writing is described as the most effective reflective practice, which positively affects the language competence of the learners. Teachers, by incorporating journal writing in the classroom, would be able to make learners equipped and academically skilled writers.

There are different forms of journals that can be used, accordingly, for giving effective practice in writing. There is dialogue journal which is used in the communicative classroom. The purpose of this kind of journal is to write a conversational reflection of one’s learning and performance through the dialogic format. Its purpose is to write for communication. It is an authentic exchange between the writer and the reader outside the formal classroom. A teacher should be genuine and careful in terms of the feedback which they provide to the return text. The correction of feedback should be made in a way that it should not dampen the enthusiasm of the learner.

The final aim of the journal writing is to empower the learners to come face to face with their problem areas and to find out possible solutions for them through a participatory and conversation practice. This way, teachers empower learners to take charge of their learning and guide their actions, accordingly. A communicative classroom stresses the purpose and focusses on the audience. It makes an individual ask questions to himself, like, why am I writing this? Who will read this? The learner is conscious of his writing and the purpose of writing which it has to fulfill. The study states “Journal writing can provide a vehicle for reflective practices that will lead to more effective practice” (Orem, 2001, p. 77).

4.3.4. Knowledge of the Structure of Discourse
Halliday and Hasan (1985) described three language features which describe how the language is structured. These features are ‘field’ of discourse, ‘tenor’ of discourse and ‘mode’ of discourse. ‘Field’ refers to what happens in a text and what is it about. ‘Tenor’ refers to the participants in the text and context and to roles and relationships they play and ‘mode’ refers to the role of the language which it is playing in the text. The role of the language includes its functions, which are, persuasion, exposition, description. All these functions define the meaning that language holds in a particular text (discourse).

Competence in discourse is highly important for the learners. Especially for them those who want to acquire skills in the academic form of writing or more
professional and high-level academic writing. Understanding of the discourse makes us understand the use of language in different social contexts. The language use differs from one context to another and from one discourse to another. Understanding different social purposes and contexts is a huge step towards developing a shared language to learn and teach academic genres to learners. Through this knowledge, the learners’ concepts start to get clear. They discover the suitable language structure according to the purpose, academic, and mode. A teacher can familiarize her learners with appropriate structures through scaffold tasks and activities. This will also include teaching how to make the appropriate choices of grammar and vocabulary and other language choices which can go according to the contextual factors of each writing task (Ryan, 2011). Another important part of writing in high level is being aware of the ideational meanings of the texts which are related to various disciplines. Every discipline has its own language structure which includes differing vocabulary and language use. It is important to be aware of these technical vocabulary related to a particular discipline, for which we are aiming to write. It is important for effective higher level academic writer to be aware of its audience and write to reach them comprehensively. The knowledge of these technical language structures, vocabulary use is the ‘ideational knowledge’ of a particular text and its discipline. “Learners who master knowledge structure (ideational meaning) of the discipline, along with the expressive resources to represent meanings, are much more likely to be successful in higher education than those who master one or the other” (Ryan, 2011, p. 7).

The knowledge of these structures should be given by the teacher to the learners. Only then they could grow to the level of being able to do high academic level writing.

4.4. Importance of Self-Reflective Practices in Writing
Wolfe (2012) identified the importance of self-reflection and how self-reflection could foster learning among learners. Wolfe (2012) suggested that self-reflection of one’s performance could lead to “foster experimental psychological growth in people, it can offer opportunities to see what are their limitations, possibilities, and progressions in their academics (academic context), it can prompt a reconceptualization of one’s role as a student/learner” (Wolfe, 2012, p. 1).
Wolfe (2012) in his study created a composition process, through which he gave practice in composition writing and self-reflection. He called this an SRE composition process. This process includes general directions for composing after the students write their composition. The process includes:

- Receiving protocol by the teacher to the learners.
- Submission of teacher review of the students’ SREs.
- Discussions and conferences between teacher and student.
- Conferring with at least one peer for discussing their answer and drafts.
- Writing the SREs.

This two-way process revolves among learners, teachers and their peers. Through such guidance, the quality of self-reflective writing gets positively affected.

### 4.4.1. Importance of Reflective Practices

Reflective practices, or adapting and revising pedagogical styles to accommodate students, might be the most effective and important tool which a teacher can use. Through thoughtful reflection, experimentation and evaluation a teacher can better create meaningful learning experiences for their students (Gibson, Hauf, & Long, 2011). Reflective practices enable teachers to investigate the possible reasons that explain the effectiveness of a given strategy in the classroom (Zumbrunn, Tadlock, & Roberts, 2011). On the other hand, self-regulated learning strategies prove to be helpful and efficient in making learners grow as skilled learners. It is challenging to incorporate and implement such SRL practices and training inside the classroom. The real difficult task is for the teacher who has to decide which particular strategies, out of many, should be incorporated and which particular ones will prove to be beneficial for the learners. Most importantly, classroom curriculum and accompanying assessment systems must be organized in ways that support and value autonomous inquiry and strategic problem-solving (Patrick, 2007).

Factors which are out of teachers control can also create major impact on the development of a student’s ability to self-regulate. For example, how students choose to approach and monitor their learning is usually consistent with their preferred or desired social identity (Cleary & Chen, 2009), which have little to do with teacher’s instruction. But this might not be the case with every learner as learners differ in their needs and choices. Students who only believe in getting good grades will not put much effort in such extra instructions and implementations in the class, rather they
will focus more on their homework, notes, preparing for exams. Such students may disregard effective SRL strategies such as doing homework efficiently (Ommundsin, 2005; Elizabeth, Tadlock, & Zumbrunn, 2011). Motivation, engagement and self-regulation are the primary determinants of students’ learning outcomes. Furthermore, “by teaching students to be more self-regulated, teachers may experience greater success in promoting academic achievement, motivation, and life-long learning” (Roberts, Tadlock, & Zumbrunn, 2011, p.18).

Murray Gibson, Petra Hauf, Brad Long, and Gina Sampson (2011) worked on promoting the integration of reflective learning within a broader service learning pedagogy at the undergraduate university level. It illustrates ways in which reflective learning can be used to enhance service learning pedagogy. Gibson (2011) believes that service learning promotes and extends the academic learning of students and allows for personal and societal learning to occur, not simply as a result of having a service experience but by spending the time ‘reflecting’ on it. Its practical implications are particular to the students who help to clarify an individual student’s values and vocational interests. Socially, it implicates the students’ social consciousness, appreciation of diversity, and their own capacities to contribute. Gibson (2011) links reflective learning to service learning and best practices, to highlight the particular role of reflection in the production of multi-dimensional learning.

Jill D. Jenson (2011) promoted self-regulation and critical reflection through students’ use of electronic portfolio. Study showed that “the use of student survey and focused in-class discussion in conjunction with consistent e portfolio assignments not only increased the length of reflection statements but also the depth of thinking as shown in those statements” (Jenson D. Jill, 2011, p. 49). Jenson (2011) explored the role of reflection in the learning process in a digital environment, by making his subjects to self-regulate their learning behaviours and write more critically reflective statements when using e portfolios (Jenson D. Jill, 2011).

Jenson (2011) defines critical reflection as a deeper level of learning, a level which allows the student to apply learning to practice.
4.4.2. Impact of Reflecting on Teaching

Stephen Brookfield (1995), worked on critical reflective teaching. Stephen (1995) analyzed the importance of critically reflective teaching and the benefits and improvements which it could lead to in the teaching practice. A teacher may reflect on his own teaching practices in order to analyze his approach and effectiveness of teaching.

Shanon Zumbrunn (2010) advocated her study in order to nurture young students’ writing knowledge, self-regulation attitudes and self-efficacy through a SRSD (Self-Regulated Strategy Developmental Model). The study was a detailed dissertation project that elaborated on the use of SRSD model and its effects in nurturing writing knowledge, self-regulation practices and self-efficacy among the sixth grade students. Each student was trained in SRSD story writing strategy, as well as, self-regulation strategies. “All the students wrote stories in response to the picture prompts during the baseline, instruction, independent performance and maintenance phases. Stories were assessed for essential story components, length, and overall quality” (Zumbrunn, 2010, p.3). “All the participants also completed a writing attitude scale, a writing self-efficacy scale and participated in brief interviews during the baseline and independent performance phases” (Zumbrunn, 2010, p.3). The study showed that the students performed better after receiving training and instructions in SRSD and they were able to compose a good quality story which contained essential elements with a richer and longer draft. It was also noted that students’ self-efficacy level improved after receiving SRSD instructions (Zumbrunn, 2010). The study takes the views presented by Flower and Hayes (1980a, 1980b) that composition process can pose a significant challenge for young writers as it requires a significant amount of skill development which is underdeveloped especially among the young learners attempting to write.

Harris K, Graham S, Mason L and Saddler B (2002) worked together on their study, “Developing Self-regulated Writers”, where they studied the effects of strategy instructions on the writing of the learners. The focus was laid on the SRSD model which was used to self-regulate the learners by instructing them and giving them training in the strategy use. The study states that it becomes important to evaluate the effects of strategy instructions during and after by both students and teachers. In this ongoing evaluation, students’ sense of ownership and achievement could foster. “It reinforces learners’ self-monitoring of their progress and reduces responsibility for
evaluation, which is normally the task of a teacher” (Harris, Graham, Mason and Saddler, 2002, p.114). This study states that both students, as well as, teachers need to self-regulate and self-assess their learning and teaching practices as both influences each other. Teachers need to practice such activities in classroom which could encourage learners to learn and adapt self-regulated learning and self-assessment/self-evaluation/self-reflective practices. Teachers should self-evaluate their strategy instructions and classroom practices. Teachers must self-reflect the effectiveness of their classroom practices and how far is it beneficial in learners’ interest. In addition, “teachers should attend to learners’ varying needs, strategy use, task-performance and perspective regarding the effectiveness and utility of the strategies used by them” (Harris, Graham, Mason and Saddler, 2002, p.114).

4.5. Self-Efficacy and Writing

Bandura (1997b) defines “self-efficacy as one’s perceived capabilities for learning or performing an action at designated levels” (Gilman, Huebner & Furlong, 2014, p.115). Self-efficacy is defined by psychologists as a belief about oneself and one’s capabilities for a particular task. The capability, with which, they can perform a particular task. Researchers have suggested the positive attributes of self-efficacy which aims to examine the learning capabilities, motivation and self-regulation of an individual. The higher the self-efficacy, the higher will be the learning outcome. Self-efficacy has its roots in the social cognitive theory of psychology.

Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory, affirms the reciprocal relationship between the three sets of influence that affect one another. These are personal influence (which consists of cognition, beliefs and skills), behavioral influence and social/environmental influence. Self-efficacy has an effect on all these reciprocal sets of influences. An individual’s self-efficacy would affect his/her behavior towards a particular task like the choice of task, his efforts, his tenacity for endurance and the use of effective learning strategies. When learners engage in a task, their tendency to attempt it and complete it by applying and implementing strategies and skills, enhances their level of self-efficacy. Learners’ capabilities and efforts to finish a task will define their self-efficacy behavior. Furthermore, there is a reciprocal relationship between cognition-self-efficacy-behavior-environment, therefore, self-efficacy level
affects all the learning and behavioral aspects. Similarly, the level of self-regulated learning, self-reflective practices and self-efficacy reciprocally affect each other.

4.5.1. Factors Influencing Self-efficacy

Social and environmental factors influence learners’ learning. Similarly, in an educational setting, a teacher directs the action of the learners. For learners, teacher is their environmental influence in that particular learning context. Teachers’ actions and practices greatly affect self-efficacy of learners. These are social and environmental factors that affect the level of self-efficacy among the learners and the output of their performance. “Social cognitive theory reflects a positive psychological view of human agency in which individuals seek to exert a large degree of control over the outcomes of their actions” (Gilman et al, 2014, p.116).

As stated, self-efficacy works for the well being of an individual, and therefore, as Gilman (2014) has suggested that those factors that work for or influence the well being of an individual affects the emotional, cognitive and motivational processes by “increasing behavioral competencies and by improving aspects of one’s environment and social setting” (Gilman et al, 2014, p.116). Teachers, to a large extent, are responsible for the classroom learning and academic behaviors of their students. A teacher could be the complete in charge of how the learning would take place in the classroom. The teacher holds the power to practice, mould and implement techniques, approaches, strategies and adapt theories of teaching and learning. Successful implementation of Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997a), could improve learners’ emotional state and correct their faulty beliefs and thinking. This practice could be beneficial in raising the academic skills and self-regulatory behaviors. It holds the power to transform the classroom setting and social interactions. All these aspects are the part of reciprocal cycle of influences, (the personal, the behavioral and the social/environmental factors) that greatly influence the success of learners’ performance and learning outcomes. All these factors influence and get influenced by self-efficacy. Learners who have high level of self-efficacy would develop a strong reciprocal relationship between their personal, behavioral and social/environmental factors.
4.5.2. Factors Influenced by Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy motivates to learn and engage in self-regulated learning. For example, learners who self-regulate their learning know how to “set appropriate goals, use effective learning strategies, monitor their comprehension and evaluate their goal progresses” (Gilman et al, 2014, p. 117).

Self-efficacy also promotes the efficiency of a learner to create an effective learning environment by eliminating or minimizing distractions. It directs one to find effective study partners and resources. Self-efficacy also influences the behavioral aspects of an individual. It can get influenced by the outcomes of behaviors, such as, goal progress and achievement. It effectively collects inputs from environment, such as, the feedback given by teachers and peers (Gilman, 2014). Moreover, it compares the learning outcome of peers from the learner’s outcome.

Bandura (1997b) states, that individual’s self-efficacy can be guessed through the level of his capabilities. Capabilities of an individual can be realized through various social factors, like, by comparing one’s performance or knowledge with others’. When we compare our performance or capabilities with other individual, we try to compare and evaluate our level of performance and knowledge with others’. By doing this, a learner is actually raising his self-efficacy level by motivating himself, that, if others are capable of doing a particular task then why he cannot. Observing others’ success influence our actions, it could raise one’s self-efficacy level and motivating oneself to gather encouragement for doing a particular task. This boosts up the level of self-efficacy in the individual and raises the competence to attain success. Another way to realize one’s capabilities is by the persuasion of others. When other people who are capable in one’s opinion, persuades one to do a task and motivates one telling oneself “I can do this”.

A positive feedback from a peer or the teacher can raise the self-efficacy level of an individual. Student/learner competency level also matters for giving a competent performance. If a person lacks the skills then that person would certainly won’t be able to succeed no matter how much self-efficacy is been raised, if the learner has no capabilities like, student values (“perceptions of importance and utility of learning”), the outcomes expectancy (“beliefs about the anticipated outcomes of actions”) (Bandura, 1997; Gilman et al, 2014, p. 118). Learners perform well in the fields in which they highly believe that they can do well and will achieve a positive outcome.
This defines the self-efficacy of a learner that how well and skillfully he/she can transfer their self-efficacy to attain positive outcomes.

“Self-efficacy can control the choices learners make and the actions which they pursue, individuals tend to select tasks and activities in which they feel competent and avoid those in which they do not” (Gilman et al, 2014, p. 118). Level of self-efficacy helps in deciding and making this choice of selecting the desired task/activity which will lead to positive outcomes. Although learners with high self-efficacy consider challenging their capabilities, they consider taking up challenging tasks to conquer them. Facing challenging goals determines the higher level of self-efficacy, and this determines that how much effort student put and how long student persist when confronting obstacles and also how much at ease the student is at the time of adversity.

4.5.3. Self-efficacy and Self-regulated Learning

“Self-efficacy has been applied extensively to self-regulated learning, which refers to learning that results from students’ self-generated thoughts, feelings and behaviors that are systematically oriented toward the attainment of their learning goals” (Zimmerman, 2000; Gilman et al, 2014, p. 119). To self-regulate one’s learning it takes to self-monitor actions/learning/behavior. It requires setting specific task-oriented goals, planning accordingly and self-reinforcing. Learners work according to task demands. They apply effective strategies that help in completing the task efficiently. Self-efficacy also monitors the contextual preferences. It helps in selecting a suitable work environment and to self-assess and track one’s learning progress (Gilman et al, 2014). All these factors serve as good secondary sources of self-efficacy information.

Modeling is another popular technique which also includes the development of self-efficacy. When a learner is influenced by observing an effective and competent learning model, he gets assistance in how to do that particular task with efficiency as reflected in the model. The model works as self-reinforcement for learners. By observing model’s positive outcome, learners’ self-efficacy strengthens and the level of their self-efficacy defines the level of their self-regulated learning and self-reflective practices. Continuous observation of competent models, leads to internalization of models’ effective techniques and skills. Moreover, this would help them to self-assess and adapt effective techniques of performing the task (Gilman et
Self-regulated learning develops independency among learners by making them efficient performers. Self-regulated learners perform task systematically by adapting to the different contexts of social, environmental and personal conditions. At this level, their self-efficacy is affected which helps in raising the motivational level of the learners to work efficiently. Moreover, the learners adapt and implement learning strategies, make behavioral adjustments based on situational needs and self-assess their performances consciously. Learners become self-reliant as they could control their learning and performance.

The three phases of self-regulation as defined by Zimmerman (2000), the forethought phase, the performance phase and the reflection phase. When learners engage in these cyclical phases their level of self-efficacy is strengthened. (Gilman et al, 2014).

4.5.4. Assessing Teachers’ Self-efficacy

“Self-efficacy for teachers would be their capability to help their students in the learning process. It is teachers’ belief about their capability to help students learn” (Gilman et al, 2014, p.121). Self-efficacy defines how efficient and capable teachers are in teaching and providing the best learning environment and practices in the classroom. Self-efficacy displays the endurance level of the teacher towards challenging situations and needs of different learners. Self-efficacy is teachers’ efforts in the teaching process and the tasks implemented by them. How far the teacher could engage learners in classroom tasks and how far would he be able to tackle challenges which comes throughout the teaching-learning exchange. In addition, self-efficacy is the enthusiasm and positive attitude which a teacher brings with him to the classroom and continues to maintain it throughout. All such aspects could define a teacher’s self-efficacy level. Teachers with high level of self-efficacy would never hesitate to plan for every class, implement activities and tasks. Attending and tackling the learning needs of the learners is of great interest to the teachers who are self-motivated. They act persistently to solve the needs and difficulties of the learner. Teachers with high self-efficacy would develop challenging tasks and activities and introduce effective techniques, approaches and methods through it.

A teacher with high self-efficacy will be successful in creating an effective classroom environment where students actively participate. High level of teacher self-efficacy is associated with an aspect of teacher’s use of praise for student’s
performances, individual attention to learner’s needs and monitoring of student’s learning (Gilman, 2014). There is another type of teacher self-efficacy which requires a group of teachers to come together and work collaboratively. It aims to tackle educational needs of the learner and fulfill them. In this collaboration, the teacher contributes different ideas and offers a solution to the problem areas. In this process, teachers learn from one another. They serve as role models for each other. In this collective initiative, the level of self-efficacy is raised and collective efforts results into effective outcomes. This individual and collective efforts raise the self-efficacy level of the teachers who are also engaged in self-regulating their teaching practices.

Self-efficacy developed as a psychological aspect. Clinical psychologists have developed various studies and researches on this. This concept was transferred and adapted by various disciplines and its relevance was studied in various fields and in the diverse contexts. With its inclusion in various fields, self-efficacy has been assessed through various conceptual and methodological issues. With this, the researches developed on self-efficacy were acknowledged. The researchers focused their study to explore the impact of self-efficacy on various aspects of human behavior. This gave birth to questionable aspects that are researched and studied since. Researches and studies on self-efficacy raised its importance in the psychological and educational fields. Bandura, Adams, & Beyer (1977) and Schunk (1981) performed many micro-analytical tests on the learners to assess their level of self-efficacy in various psychological and educational contexts. Micro analytical method of an assessment follows the techniques of assessment while the subject is performing or is engaged in a specific task. Micro analysis follows the question-answer format where the subject has to answer according to his/her own beliefs. For example, how sure he/ she are about the task that is given and about performing it. The answer of the subject to this will define the level of his/her self-efficacy to complete the task. Schunk (1981) in his study gave math problems to the children with low mathematical skills self-efficacy for assessing self-efficacy. Children were given tasks in pairs. The two problems within each pair were comparable in form and difficulty. For each pair they judged how certain they were that they could solve problems of that type. For the skill test children attempted to solve problem that corresponded in form and difficulty to those on the self-efficacy test.

Zimmerman and Cleary (2001) assess the self-efficacy of the basket ball players; he attempted to assess the difference between novice and non-novice high
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school basketball players. Zimmerman and Cleary (2001) focused on the aspects of goal setting, strategy choice, motivational beliefs, self-efficacy, intrinsic interest, outcome expectancy, self-control, self-observation, self-evaluation and self-satisfaction (which they obtained from their performance). Questioning could be another method adapted to assess self-efficacy of the learners. For example, by questioning “how well can you get teachers to help you when you get stuck on school work?” and “how well can you study when there are other interesting things to do?” (Gilman, 2014, p. 123). Another type of self-efficacy assessment involves ‘calibration’ which is related to movement and adjustment of how well does a learner’s self-efficacy relates to his actual performance on the corresponding tasks. “People who are well calibrated their self-efficacy accurately predicts their performances” (Gilman et al, 2014, p. 124). People who judge themselves to be capable of doing a task and perform it, similarly, when they judge themselves to be incapable of doing a particular task and cannot perform it. This type of ‘calibration’ is a positive calibration. However, in a negative calibration learners would do the opposite of how they judge themselves for performing a particular task. The present research has adapted the questionnaire method to assess the level of self-efficacy and other two aspects of the study; self-regulation and self-reflection.

4.5.5. Development of self-efficacy
Self-efficacy starts its development from the very early stage of infancy. Self-efficacy is related to a person’s social and economic background. Social and economic background includes family income, assets, educational qualifications of parents, social connections they have and maintain etc. The present study incorporates the educational qualifications of parents in order to draw the relationship between the socio-economic background and self-efficacy level, self-regulated learning and self-reflective practices in writing of the learners.

It is noted, that, “children are motivated to learn when their home is rich in activities and materials that arouse their curiosity and offer challenges” (Gilman et al, 2014, p. 125). Family environment contributes a lot in the academic upbringing of a child. If the parents are educated and have wide social contacts then they would encourage their children to receive good efficiency in academics. Such parents would push their children into setting big goals and working hard for achieving them. Children who grow up in such environment where they watch their parents doing well
academically and socially would tend to make them as their role models. This is a generalized adapted notion gathered from various studies on social and economic relevance in the academic achievements of the learners/children. Educated parents would know the importance of education and so they will provide an educationally sound environment for their children to foster their self-efficacy and learning achievements. Children coming from such socio-economical background are usually found very confident and achievement oriented, they want to explore more and aim for higher goals. Children become more efficacious when they have parents who are always there to empower them and encourage them by becoming role models for their children. Children who grow up in such environment most likely become competent and learn to face and accept challenging situations. Such children are confident in setting and planning their aims and objectives by solving every difficulty arising in the process. In the present study, there were no significant differences were found at the level of socio-economic aspect.

Another socially relevant impact on self-efficacy of the learners is made by the peers/group with which an individual make interaction and compare his/her achievements with their peers’ achievements, when learners observe their peers succeeding at a task they are likely to become encouraged about performing that particular task and to succeed in it (Gilman et al, 2014, p. 125).

When learners observe their equivalent peers to succeed in a task, they automatically start to relate themselves with them. They feel efficacious by observing them succeed in a task, a sense of competency and self-belief rises among the learners and they judge themselves as competent to succeed in the similar way as their peers did. Learners observe and compare their efficiencies. They self-motivate themselves to work harder. They feel that if their peers can succeed in a particular task then why can’t they. This self-belief boosts their self-efficacy level. In the present research, peers’ assistance in writing tasks is quite extensively sought after.

An individual’s schooling also influences his/her academic behavior, skill development and self-efficacy level. Situations that students face in school affect their self-efficacy as learners. “With higher classes the competition increases and
inculcates more norm-referenced grading, less teacher attention to learners’ progress and problems associated with school and grade level transitions” (Gilman et al, 2014, p. 126). These practices would have a negative impact on individual's self-efficacy.

4.5.6. L2 Writing and Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy has an important role in developing writing skill, as emphasized by many studies that the level of someone’s self-efficacy towards his/her writing would define their interest and competency level to achieve an effective outcome. Writing is defined as a complex skill to learn. It requires a high mental process in context, an organization of thoughts and structure and the use of appropriate grammar and mechanics. Writing is considered effective when it is a product of an active critical thinking process (Kirmizi & Kirmizi, 2015). Critical thinking ability demands a person to have a high level of self-efficacy and self-reliance. Being able to monitor one’s thinking and processing, requires a confidence in oneself and in one’s capabilities to efficiently complete a particular task, which is challenging and which requires a person to have good self-efficacy beliefs.

Writing is yet another very complex task to perform with efficiency. Therefore, a person with low self-efficacy would show less interest and would feel hesitant to perform a writing task. The learner would face difficulty and problems during his/her writing process, such problems that a learner could find them incapable of solving. Therefore, a person’s self-efficacy towards something defines learner’s level of competency in that. Self-efficacy of a person motivates him/her to work with full dedication. To become competent and independent writer one needs to work on his/her self-efficacy to improve and perform challenging writing tasks extensively.

Bembenutty and White (2013) examined the association between the self-efficacy beliefs of the college students with their academic achievement. They researched “the association between the homework practices of college students, self-efficacy, self-regulation of learning and their final course grades” (Bembenutty, White, Velez, 2015). Students with high self-efficacy beliefs are those who show intrinsic motivation and are engaged in help-seeking (Bembenutty, White, and Velez, 2015). Self-efficacy is related to the students’ and teachers’ use of help-seeking strategies, adaptive self-regulatory strategies and willingness to delay contentment. Learners and their educators, as well as, the aspiring educators, need to have a sense of self-efficacy. The levels of self-efficacy delineate their motivation and self-belief
for fulfilling and carrying out a learning or teaching task. “Teacher’s self-efficacy beliefs influence teacher’s attitudes towards helping their students, their level of satisfaction and their desire to motivate their students” (Bembenutty, 2015, p.16). There is a close association between self-efficacy belief and the use of self-regulatory learning strategies (Bembenutty, 2010). The present study draws association of self-efficacy belief with the self-regulated learning and self-reflective practices in writing. Bembenutty (2010) has drawn correlation between the self-efficacy and self-regulated learning behaviour. His findings state that the high or low level of self-efficacy would positively or negatively affect the level of self-regulated learning. More the level of self-efficacy beliefs more will be the use of regulation learning strategies. Therefore, self-efficacy is essential for learners and teachers to have a high level of self-efficacy beliefs so that both can receive a proper outcome for their practices. A teacher who has a good level of self-efficacy would try and adapt ways to train and educate his or her learners to generate self-efficacy beliefs and be motivated to take up challenging tasks. “Self-efficacy is essential for teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs and use of self-regulatory strategies” (Bembenutty, White, and Velez, 2015, p.16).

Conclusion
A self-reflective account of someone’s writing incorporates his/her ability to look something critically and analytically. When ‘self’ is added to reflection then it becomes a personal account and its assessment where the writer becomes his/her own critique and evaluator. To be able to do this and to acquire such academic abilities to self-reflect, a learner needs to acquire the knowledge of some particular sets of abilities because self-reflection is a higher order academic skill. These abilities are developed among the learners through practicing the various cognitive activities, like a journal, diaries, logs etc. Journal writing out of many is considered as the most sought-after activity which helps on developing self-reflective practices in writing. Social semiotic approach and systemic functional approach can be adopted by the teacher to provide training in self-reflection. The teacher should incorporate such activities and approaches to give learners training in self-reflection and to develop their self-reflection skill. Hanrahan (1998), reclassified types of reflective writing and their genres in order to distribute the genres, through which reflective writing practice can be enhanced. A teacher’s responsibility is to incorporate these practices in the
classroom to develop learners’ self-reflective practices. A teacher needs to provide explicit instructions and practice in self-reflection as it is a higher order skill which is said to enhance learner’s overall learning and professional educational practices in higher education.

Systemic functional linguistics and its approaches developed by Eggins’ (2004) and Halliday’ (1978), can be used to develop explicit knowledge of teaching and assessing reflective writing in higher education. Reflective writing has so many genres. Therefore, it is important to note that which social and cognitive genres is practiced in writing. Self-reflective practices needs a constant and a systematic process to develop. The explicit teaching of reflection as a writing skill includes the transfer of the knowledge of the textual structure, grammar and vocabulary of academic reflective writing. Academic reflection includes the reflection of regular learning outcome of the learner. This is a higher order skill which requires rigorous practice and systematic training to develop and master. It is like being critical towards one’s performance and writing a critical account of one’s development that a learner makes in his/her academics. Reflection is defined as a conscious stated purpose that requires cognitive activation to bring out the critical understanding of the discourse, in a way that one can consciously state and analyze one’s performance. It is important to develop such skills which emancipates learners’ learning and progress and makes them an independent learner. It is also dependent on the role that a teacher plays in the classroom to uplift students’ position as self-dependent learners. Teachers should motivate and encourage learners to develop skills and strategies by making them encounter challenging tasks and activities, which will enhance their level of cognition and independent learning. Such teaching is mostly witnessed at the higher academic level. The explicit teaching and implementation of self-reflection practices develop the criticality of the learners. The learners require such skills to monitor, assess, evaluate, edit and develop their performance. When we talk with respect to writing, then this skill is most critical of all, and therefore, it requires self-reflective practices and self-regulated learning to produce efficient writing and writing skill. The higher academic level demands higher order skills to perform tasks and activities. The competency level of learners’ self-reflective practices in writing would define their cognitive thinking, efficiency as writers, comprehension, monitoring skill and critical learning. Self-reflection is a higher order skill, which is highly cognitive in nature, it
requires rigorous and continuous practice to master. A learner who has good self-
reflection skills in writing would manage writing well and would deliver effective
outcomes out of that.

Self-efficacy is an aspect that influences various factors related to individual’s
psychology. It defines the personality, ability, capacity, and tendency to do something
or to perform any task in various social settings. Self-efficacy defines the motivation
level of an individual towards a particular task/activity. It is said that self-efficacy
motivates to learn and engage a person in learning new and challenging things. Self-
efficacy also empowers one’s ability to self-regulate, in a way that the level of self-
efficacy is proportionate to the level of one’s self-regulation. Therefore, if an
individual has a low self-efficacy level then he will have a poor self-regulation and
self-reflection level. Low self-efficacy results into lower motivation towards learning
and skill efficiency. A learner who wants to become efficient in his learning should
need to get motivated and encouraged to work hard and also to work under
challenging situations. It is important to raise self-efficacy level of the learners in the
learning environment, teachers should work on to raise the self-efficacy level of
learners in order to make them focus on their learning and development. Higher the
self-efficacy higher will be the learning outcome, performance level, and student
participation. If a learner does not feel motivated about a task, then it is a possibility
that his/her performance in that will suffer. Various factors can raise the self-efficacy
of the learners, by improving their learning efficiency. To develop higher order skills
like self-regulation and self-reflection, an individual should have a high motivation
(self-efficacy) level to incorporate and practice them with utmost dedication and
labour.