

Research Article

A Systematic Educational-Based Review of Stories and Poems: Seeking the Voice of Young Women in Charlotte Smith's and Anna Barbauld's Major Works—Are There Any Implications for Educational Context?

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Many researchers with an interest in the field of teaching have attempted to implement story reading and storytelling strategies in teaching oral language skills to EFL/ESL language learners as a means of extending the positive effects of storytelling and poetry on first language acquisition to second language acquisition. Numerous studies have looked at how narrative and poetry affect language abilities, but few have tried to find educational applications in well-known works of literature. To address the gap, this study was carried out to seek the voice of young women in Charlotte Smith's and Anna Barbauld's major works and tried to extract implications for the educational context. Charlotte Smith and Anna Barbauld, two eighteenth-century women authors, found themselves working within a literary tradition that saw Milton and Shakespeare and the poet as masculine traditions and which portrayed women as a muse for male poets. They published their works during the start of the influential Romantic Movement, which demanded an independent personality and many volumes of poetry and affected both the leading male and female writers of the day. Smith and Barbauld developed an authoritative persona to help them negotiate between societal expectations of women and those of a writer during a time when women writers were persecuted for expressing any ideas that might upset the status quo. In doing so, they challenged preconceived notions about what constitutes an authoritative voice and developed feminine poetics. This paper examines how the two poets explore the female voice, studies the challenges and problems they faced as women writers, and ponders on their influence on English literature. Additionally, this study explores how the novels of Charlotte Smith and Anna Barbauld were modified to more organically reflect aesthetic political concerns on the other side of the English Channel. This study has multiple pedagogical implications for educational environments.

1. Introduction

It has been observed that teaching and learning English in Iranian classrooms have undergone a wide spectrum of methodological, technological, and theoretical attempts. Learner-centered methods have become more popular and have been shown to be more effective in the teaching/learning of English. Since English is a foreign language for us, the traditional approach of acquiring one's native tongue will not be useful for learning English. The majority of Iranians do not utilize it as a language for casual

conversation; for instance, we do not speak English at home. The fundamental approach to learning a language may be used to learn a second language; however, it is not the best way to learn English. This fundamental paradigm states that learning a language should be done in the following order: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The first two abilities are natural, but the other two skills must be learned in a formal setting and are thus artificial skills (classroom). According to the classroom structure, this sequence may shift when studying English as a second or foreign language; for instance, in our schools, the artificial skills proceed in

parallel. It is possible for these abilities to be used in any sequence, including listening, reading, writing, and speaking, or even simultaneously.

When it comes to the process of teaching and studying the English language, English literature has a huge scope and an enormous amount of relevance. Reading classic works of English literature is one of the most time-tested methods for acquiring language skills. When teaching English via literature, several theoretical paradigm changes take place. The curriculum and syllabus of almost all of Iran's universities and colleges are based on various works of the literary canon. It is possible to teach and/or learn English via the use of literature as an efficient tool. The process of learning English via literature is the primary focus of this particular piece of writing, and it attempts to reframe the process of learning English through the medium of literature. A well-known approach to teaching and learning that can be employed in this setting is called the Vikram-Vetal model. Vetal should be regarded as the teacher, with King Vikramaditya serving as the learner (master). The connection between the instructor and the learners, as well as the teaching and learning process, is extremely evident in this example. The teacher poses questions, to which the learner is required to provide answers, not for any other reason (getting a job) than the need to survive. The goal of the instructor is to provide challenges for the learners and then force them to figure out solutions on their own. It is the role of the instructor to aid the learners in answering the questions, not to respond to the questions themselves. The instructor has to motivate the learners to learn in a more open-ended manner and to take part in each activity that takes place in the classroom. Because it is the text itself that piques the attention of the learners, the choice of literature or text assumes an extremely vital role in the educational process [1].

It is plausible and more beneficial for the text to "remain with learners" for an extended length of time and for them to recall it as one of their favorite poems, plays, or novels. The instructor, for whom the text also serves as a personal favorite, will be striving for sharing enthusiasm with the students, with the potential for extra long-term advantages in terms of the vocabulary and language skills learned. This very seldom occurs in an instant. The pursuit of an immediate payoff may cause an overly comprehensive explanation, which may conceal the longer process by which a difficult work is recalled and loved long after the student has completed his or her literary lessons.

2. The Importance of Poetry in Learning

Poetry and learning are interconnected. The development of essential language and literacy abilities may be aided by reading and composing poetry. Students are allowed to have a better understanding of the numerous ways in which language may be used to form expression and construct meaning. Poetry, on the other hand, often violates the conventions of grammar and punctuation, making it suitable for those learning English as a foreign language [2]. Poetry provides students with the ability to explore language without being constrained by

conventional grammar and structures, even though their vocabulary may initially be restricted. Students have the chance to read and comprehend a variety of writing styles from a large number of writers when they read poetry. This change is similar to what reading provides. As an instructor, you will be astounded to hear how quickly your students' language develops. In addition, students have the opportunity to represent themselves and their personalities via metaphor, imagery, and symbolism through the medium of poetry, which gives them the liberty of expression [3]. Learners will be better equipped to get fresh views on life and everyday experiences if they can freely utilize language in this manner. Poetry will often investigate a diverse range of feelings, and teaching children to recognize these feelings can assist them in developing a higher level of emotional intelligence. They will also be able to acquire a stronger sense of self-awareness as a result of it, which is something that will stay with them throughout their lives. Learners could find it simpler to communicate and express their thoughts via the medium of poetry, which makes it a genuinely liberating experience for them in this regard [4].

Poetry offers more opportunities to strengthen one's speaking abilities than any other literary form, since literature encompasses a wide variety of subgenres, including drama, novels, and others. Linguists were opposed to the notion of including literature on the language learning curricula; hence, the curriculum was never changed. They did not pay attention to literature since it was not pertinent to language courses and because it created the image of being too imaginative and whimsical [5]. Unfortunately, literature has been removed from the school's curriculum for learning the language. Later on, the same linguists concluded that literature could serve as a resource for boosting language learners' abilities in using literature to expand their discourse knowledge and that literature is an essential component of language curricula. Progressively, these linguists began to see the value and utility of literature. It has been discovered that literature is a legitimate discourse that can be taught in the language classroom at any moment and in many different ways; nonetheless, it does not replace techniques such as "functional" and "structural" ones [6]. After some time, literature established itself inside the language curriculum not as an independent or elective component but rather as an essential component. The following are some of the reasons why literature should be included in language instruction [7, 8]: (1) Because it has a wealth of different sources of materials, literature is an excellent medium for providing sufficient examples, which makes it the perfect medium for building awareness of language learning. (2) Reading literature provides learners with cognitive, emotional, and practical variables that inspire them to speak the language they are learning. (3) Reading literature is an effective method for teaching students about different cultural norms. (4) It assists in the development of the confidence necessary to engage in conversations with other people. (5) It improves a person's communication abilities, which is a factor that might boost the likelihood of having successful partnerships [9].

The literary genre known as poetry is characterized by its emphasis on aesthetics, forceful rhythms of sound, words, and linguistic features. It is deeply intertwined with the lives depicted in each kind of literary work. The rhythm, rhyme scheme, and musicality of poetry provide enjoyment to the learners who are learning it in a school setting. An instructor may build a sense of self-assurance in their learners and push them to improve their English language skills by teaching them poetry. Learners' ability to communicate properly verbally may be significantly improved if poetry is taught to them. The worried instructor will be able to determine what the children are interested in. If the students get disinterested in the method of instruction being used, the instructor will need to employ straightforward language to assist the learners in easily absorbing the material being presented. By learning poetry, one may enhance their language skills in several different ways, including the following [10, 11]:

(1) Poetry is an essential component of any literary canon. (2) It promotes the students' creative abilities to the fullest extent. (3) It provides enjoyment for those who read it. (4) It boosts the potential for creative expression. (5) It conveys the ideas, feelings, and emotions that are being experienced. (6) It helps students cultivate an appreciation for beauty and art. Therefore, poetry offers a variety of perspectives about language and teaches learners the laws of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary.

3. Advantages of Learning Poetry

Following the findings of Furman [12], the following are some of the benefits of poetry: (1) The visual form of poetry is distinct from the form of prose. It most often takes the form of a string of phrases separated by paragraphs. (2) It is dependent on the tone of the language that is being spoken. (3) It makes extensive use of illustrative language. (4) It may narrate an event, convey sentiments, tell a story, explain an item or circumstance, or explain an object or situation. Poetry is defined by linguistic characteristics that go beyond ordinary sentence structure, and this is true regardless of the content of the statements or the eventual message that is being conveyed. (5) Above all else, poetry contains linguistic components that appeal to and are transmitted via sound and light.

Overall, the study of poetry as an art form may serve as the foundation for all literary research. It is beneficial even for teaching students in elementary schools. It can serve as the foundation for instruction ranging from kindergarten up to university level in English literature. Poetry teaches us the significance of expressing a lot in a few words. So much of what we do in school is about reaching a word count or a goal. Additionally, it motivates us to examine the unique effect of every word that we put into our writing [13, 14]. Reading poetry may help youngsters grasp the influence that using short-form language can have, which is especially important in this day and age when a single tweet or Facebook post can be condemned, spread like wildfire, and even damage a young person's reputation. Understanding the subtleties of language is an essential part of gaining knowledge through poetry. This understanding may support

learners in recognizing when they are being influenced to act via the use of language in areas such as politics, the media, and advertising. A straightforward poem may not seem to be all that significant; yet, if it can impart this knowledge, it will prepare children for life [15, 16].

Poetry is another tool that may be used to better comprehend contrasting viewpoints. Learners may get a greater appreciation for and comprehension of the perspectives held by individuals from all over the world through the study and instruction of poetry. This educational endeavor is of the utmost significance in an era marked by rising levels of polarization [17]. But, maybe most crucially, the mental health of learners can improve as a result of reading and writing poetry. Even now, it continues to be a problem, which has compelled the government to take some action for 2019. The act of writing poetry has been shown to have a beneficial effect on mental health. Adults and learners alike can exercise emotional control while doing so, regardless of whether the expression takes the form of spoken or written language. It also has the potential to assist young people in genuinely finding their voice [18, 19].

4. The Importance of Stories in Learning

Teachers use stories to spark learners' attention, to root theory in concrete, and to provide a framework for new ideas. Participants use stories to incorporate new concepts and to make logical sense of their own experiences [20]. Using stories to mark our experiences, make sense of what we already know, and provide consistency, we may more effectively convey concepts. We acquire knowledge through "listening" and "telling tales," as well as by exercising them.

Hearing a story. Students learn more deeply and retain information longer when concepts are placed in a larger context. We recall information in context; we forget isolated facts. When teachers use tales, they make a meaningful connection between theory (what they want students to understand) and application (how the theory works) [21].

Telling a story. Learning requires us to link ideas and combine what we already know with new information. Learners will be able to comprehend fundamental concepts, start to build a system of connections between those concepts, and finally master the capacity to describe both distinct concepts and how those concepts are related [22].

One of the most popular and effective forms of communication is storytelling. It transcends countries and groups; in fact, many of our early educational experiences were probably centered on tales, some of which were told to us directly, others were read to us, and yet others were acted out in front of us. We learned to make sense of our environment via tales even before we were able to express what we knew, felt, and thought. Though storytelling has always been utilized in education, until recently it was not thought of as a crucial component of learning and teaching activities [23, 24]. Some people had the impression that storytelling was a weak, ineffective learning method. Because of this,

tales often had a specific focus and were commonly used to relate experiences, amuse audiences, and connect people [25].

The art of storytelling is an excellent teaching and learning technique because it places a significant emphasis on the necessity for learners to produce their own culturally relevant ways to make sense of the world through the lens of their own experiences [26]. Storytelling can not only support and improve the interaction between learners developing new information and learning from others, but also support and enrich the relationship between learners learning from one another. In addition, having students share their experiences and analyze them via reflective writing allows them to create genuine connections with their classmates [27].

Stories have a unique and important position and value in the EFL and ESL classroom. Students have the opportunity to learn English by mimicking the way native speakers learned their first language by listening to the tones and rhythms of the language. Students can recognize words and idioms that they have studied or that they hear daily and see them used in context. They may be able to acquire new terms and phrases with the appropriate emotional resonance if you tell them often enough. Participatory storytelling incorporates experiential learning by asking questions about what is happening to the characters and what they should do next. Alternatively, it allows a student to assume the role of a character in the story and hear or say their words in the context of the story [28].

Young learners can enjoy learning the language in a lively, sometimes stylistic, and enjoyable manner when it is presented in the form of a story because of the method in which it is told and the atmosphere it generates. A sense of rhythm and organization may be developed by active participation by employing important terminology and phrases [29]. Being in such an environment where one is free to play and express oneself artistically makes one more eager. Many learners who have relished classroom storytelling have asked for more, and those who have been inspired to tell, act out, or draw their narratives have gone on to do so. Furthermore, learners of all extroversion levels and introversion thresholds may find a manner to engage in the storytelling activity that they find enjoyable. Everything from being a silent spectator to being a full-fledged performer falls within this category [30].

The natural sounding expressions and phrases, as well as the interaction between native speakers, are all aspects of the language that learners may learn to appreciate and become more aware of via storytelling. They provide older YLs with the chance to recount, paraphrase, act out, and summarize what they have heard, as well as rework the narrative or come up with their version. Furthermore, stories may serve as a bridge between the home and school environment [31]. Learners may have access to the same books at home, with the help of a parent or family member, in their native language, which allows them to learn new words and phrases in English. Parents may also read basic stories in English to their children at home. To further enhance the students' experience, numerous stories can also be learned through

books, YouTube videos, animations, or films. Each person may take part in the pleasure of language and the thrill of learning new things, both about themselves and the world around them, via stories [32–34].

Good stories have additional effects beyond only fostering empathy. They help the audience feel at ease, which in turn makes them more receptive to the information being presented. Since a good story may have more than one interpretation, it can be remarkably cost-effective in its ability to explain a difficult concept [35]. Whenever someone tells a narrative, they are typically aiming to get a point across to their listeners. Using stories effectively is a great skill. It is useful for laying forth norms, building morale, and instilling proper conduct in the workplace. It is simpler for an audience to relate to and retain knowledge when it is presented in the form of a narrative. The only certain way to know whether something works is to give it a try and see what happens [36].

5. Charlotte Smith's and Anna Barbauld's Major Works

The voice of women has always been regarded as the major concept concerning feminist writers throughout history. Feminists argue for not the voices of specific women, but the collective voice of women who have been oppressed and suppressed by masculine power.

The examination of whether our knowledge bears a male bias is one of the latest tendencies in feminist epistemology that Alice Cary critically investigates in "A Question of Silence: Feminist Theory and Women's Voices." As a result, many feminist theories start as reactions to women's worries about gender bias before concluding by making broad epistemological assertions about how a male bias must permeate our current theoretical discourse.

The marginalization of women authors by the conventional literary canon and other less overt kinds of marginalization are also of interest to feminist critique. There is a tendency to underrepresent the work of women authors "unless the analytical or historical point of view is feminist."

Romanticism, which is a form of contemporary social theory, affirms emotions and highlights the past. Romantics appeal to some feminists due to shared beliefs and assumptions. Some feminists focus on women's sentiments and their superiority rather than emphasizing the rational equality between men and women and the importance of women's movements. According to Madiha in the abstract of the essay entitled "Feminism and Romanticism," "feminists believe in the existence of matriarchy in the golden age as an assumption and try to revitalize it. It seems that even though romanticism could be considered as a reaction to the problems arising from rationality and modern development, it is not a solution for the new world, as it is even true for feminism" (Women's Research 5-27).

"What we now more commonly refer to as gender studies have benefited much from feminist literary critique" (Janowitz, Preface). Emotion, feeling, creative creativity, fascination with nature, and the individual was present in

all forms of art, including literature, throughout the Romantic Period, which lasted from 1785 to 1832 and began quite correctly with Wordsworth's "Lyrik Ballads." The French Revolution's impact and the commencement of the Industrial Revolution also left their traces as the revolt against reason took place. Language use and subject matter, including poetry, were altered. Fixed guidelines and expectations mostly prevented people from expressing their true selves. The Romantic Era was a period of transformation and has little to do with how most people now think of "romance."

Women writers had the freedom to transcend their restrictions and enter the realm of poetry during the Romantic Era, which lasted from the 1790s to the 1840s. It should be noted that significant occurrences like the French Revolution, British political and social unrest, growth of female readers, and public coteries all had a significant impact on the extent of women poets' development and reach. Romantic poetry by men and women developed in two opposing currents with divergent viewpoints on a wide range of topics. But, in the meanwhile, Romantic painters created pieces that endorsed societal changes. Women began to write as a result, slowly achieving fame and financial success. Among these accomplished poets, Charlotte Smith and Anna Barbauld were authentic Romantic representatives.

These poets are held in high regard because they came of age at an unusually repressive period. Virginia Woolf stated years later, even in the 20th century, that the era of the "Private House" was particularly onerous, with all of its restrictions and unhappiness. Women were given the role of "the angel of the home," which, in later years, served as a source of inspiration and was the impetus for some of the most creative works produced by the feminine mind.

The appearance of circulating libraries or the development of the "bluestockings," which led to a literate female public; the subsequent growth of the woman's sense of self and individual approach to poetical works; and the Napoleonic Wars are some of the most significant historical events that influenced the rise of a literary landscape that was dominated by women intellectuals. Other influential historical events include the political unrest, riots, and famine that occurred during this period [37].

Women poets, such as Charlotte Smith and Anna Barbauld, are highly crucial in this era because they could defend their position on the use of the language of men [38], while they could make their voices heard through their major works, which made them prominent as the poets of their time. These poets wrote sentimental poems and could express personal occasions such as the birth of a child which were forbidden subjects being pointed out by the female writers of the time. Therefore, these writers by arguing about the daily occurrences of life could swim against the current of the era. Moreover, these female poets brought attention to some of the most significant issues that arose as a result of the entire turbulent period. These were issues that concerned society as a whole, but they focused primarily on the state in

which women were compelled to change their minds or positions [39].

As Wollstonecraft [40] argues in "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman," women were not to be observed only as passive objects of literary works. This is due to the fact that every woman is capable of thinking for herself and writing what she thinks. Wollstonecraft's argument concludes with a call for an increase in the education level of women. She stressed how important it was for women to have an education in the same schools that men received an education in, and for the same reasons, to be able to lawfully participate in the betterment of the country. Many women authors persisted in the maternal role that their male contemporaries had assigned to them at a far younger age. They argued that women were more equipped to lead the country than males because of their natural tendencies to protect and care for their families. In this manner, women began to employ the sexual ideology of the moment for their individual or communal ends; this was a real "act of emancipation through, rather than from, femininity" [41].

Aside from that, the vision of nature that women poets receive is significantly different from the one that male poets gain. While men view nature as the origin of divine creative power, the power of God (or the universe), and the source of a "spontaneous overflow of feelings," which he speaks for and understands, women poets denounce this concept of the sublime, the mental empowerment, and see her as Mother Nature, a female friend who provides support but needs to be cultivated. "Women who vigorously competed with males" in the literary marketplace "were attacked as though they supported themselves by prostitution," as Rogers [42] demonstrates. During the latter part of the eighteenth century, there was a surge in the number of female authors working in the literary market. At the end of the eighteenth century, the most significant male authors produced relatively few poems, with Goldsmith and Johnson each penning just two. However, female poets were generating large volumes of poetry throughout this time.

6. The Relationship between Teaching Stories, Teaching Poetry, and Language Learning Process

Humans' ability to think and talk effectively relies heavily on the sharing of narratives. Telling a narrative is much more than merely rehashing a series of events; it is a way for us to connect with one another. We gravitate toward narratives because we recognize ourselves in the characters and situations. According to Barzaq [43], "visual storytelling is a technique of presenting tales via visuals," and stories provide a "natural relationship between events and thoughts." She saw tales as the foundation of knowledge because of the way they connect individuals to their history, present, and future [43]. According to Khodabandeh [44], students of foreign languages and those learning English as a second language may benefit from using narrative to study and practice the language. As a bonus, it has been argued that storytelling may help students of a foreign language become more

confident in their oral and written expression [45]. In a similar vein, Wallace [46] contends that the act of sharing stories has become a universal language that enables deep conversation. No matter how different our cultural roots may be, via storytelling, language learners can hear and comprehend the tales.

According to Sanchez's [45] research, students of a second or foreign language acquire their native tongue at a similar rate as students of the first language. Vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and suprasegmental elements may all be better understood in context via stories. Additionally, it improves both the visual memory and writing abilities of language learners [47, 48]. Miller and Pennycuff [49] agree that instructors of foreign languages may benefit from using narrative as a method of instruction. It is an effective method of teaching a new language [50]. It may also strengthen the speaking accuracy of language students and boost their general knowledge [51, 52].

The teaching of poetry has been very effective in language classrooms due to the perception that it is esoteric, elitist, or effete [53]. The misconception that the study of poetry is "boring and fruitless" is kept alive by the reluctance of students to the subject [2]. Poetry is often connected with a dangerous experience that is assigned to it owing to the difficulty that it has; hence, language instructors choose to postpone the introduction of poetry for beginning and intermediate learners. Due to the esoteric nature of its vocabulary and the maze-like nature of its format, poetry is often taught only at more advanced levels of language courses. However, poetry, which Coleridge [54] describes as "the greatest words in the best order," is a crucial pedagogical aspect of language instruction in its own right and ought to be put at the center of language classrooms to recover the creative potential of the language learning experience [3]. Poetry has been given what is being called a "univocal position" in the classroom for language learning and teaching according to the current school of thought in language learning and teaching, which emphasizes the importance of poetry to the significant progress in language acquisition. The incorporation of poetry into language education provides an opportunity for students of all levels to improve their language skills and understanding. Poetry is a resource for language that is densely packed with meaning and requires learners to engage both their imagination and their emotions. The use of poetry as a vehicle for imparting intensive education in language skills such as vocabulary and grammar may serve as a launchpad for the process of language acquisition [55]. In their article "A Persuasive Case for the Study of Poetry in the Language Curriculum," Hadaway et al. [56] establish a convincing argument in favor of the study of poetry within the language curriculum and point out that poetry functions as a secondary to the act of spoken language. Comeaux [57] acknowledges the value of poetry as a suitable component of a language education curriculum due to its contribution to the development of language skills. In his article "Thinking Critically," Frederick Douglass [4] discusses the benefits of poetry for the cultivation of critical thinking abilities, creativity, and interpretation. Kramsch and Mueller [58] highlight the benefits

of utilizing poetry in language instruction to perfect the pronunciation and intonation of language learners. This is possible due to the fact that language learners develop their ability for the new language by bringing sound structures and rhythms into the focus of their attention. According to Hu [59], there is no room for doubt in the assertion that poetry exemplifies extensive use of language and unequivocally makes the process of learning a language more creative. Poems provide realistic examples for the standards of language usage, and they appeal to the imagination and emotions of language learners. As a consequence, poems offer triggers for oral conversation as a result of engagement with texts [60]. Poetry can catalyze language growth by engaging learners in methods of thinking, feeling, and behaving that are favorable to language learning. This is accomplished via the potential of poems [60].

7. Discussion

Poets Charlotte Smith and Anna Barbauld considered their publishers as their bankers because they felt so integrated into the publishing industry that they did not think anything of utilizing their publishers as a source of credit and relying on them as guarantors for loans and drafts. Their letters criticized the publishers for disappointing them, painting them as ungentlemanly and untrustworthy, and then quickly reversing course to win back their trust and business, even if the publishers did not necessarily share the readers' view that this was appropriate conduct. What emerges from the letters is Smith's and Barbauld's shared and unwavering self-identification as poets, which interestingly resonates with their readers' shared and unified identification of them as authors. What and how Smith and Barbauld wrote bind them together into the people they were.

These major writers are considered novelists, poets, playwrights, letter writers, and literary icons, gaining and then losing a posthumous identity through how others wrote about them. Perhaps this is because of how they have been recovered through time, from marginal novelists and pre-Romantic poets to proto-feminists, personal political cases, and key poets of the 1790s. The eighteenth century was the age when literary theories began to thrive and which provided a chance for women writers to begin writing and influencing literary canon, therefore opening up the stage for more female writers to reach high ranks in society.

Smith [61] is a Romantic poet who uses a variety of rhetorical stances. Her status as a prominent female author has been affirmed by both editors and reviewers. Importantly, Smith recreates herself following the genre, a process that readers will recognize and complicate. Think of the arguments that went on over novels and romances in the late 1700s.

By the time of her death, Charlotte Smith had already earned a name for herself as a sensitive poet and writer. Many readers in the 1790s admired her semi-Gothic stories with more realistic themes, and toward the end of her life, her poetry progressed from defining the Romantic genre to questioning its form and structure. Smith uses the genre's potential in the same manner as she does in her books, but

for a different purpose. Smith can more fully articulate her gendered experiences because she writes in a variety of genres, and the act of reading her works adds complexity to her knowledge of who she is.

Editors of Romantic-Era novels often highlight Smith's methods and developments since the novel during the Romantic period is undergoing an extraordinary amount of change and innovation. Smith sees the many themes and narratives of Romantic poetry as ultimately reducible to and being manifested from her own life, and she sees them as intertwined with her explorations of selfhood and subjectivity, memory, and a personalized past reflective of a personalized state of mind, of "woman" experience. In portraying selfhood, Smith finds her way to extend her biography into the metaphorical life of literature. In other words, Smith transforms the poetry of complaint into a poetics of plaintiveness. Ultimately, Smith mingles the old and the new by including her autobiography, by which she could succeed in the emergence of the Romantic voice.

A crucial aspect of Smith's work is how she negotiates autobiography, presenting it as territory to be explored and a hint to something that extends beyond itself. Her "obsessive dialogue with other literature" provides us with a window into her thoughts and conclusions regarding her contemporaries as well as her ancestors. It also exemplifies her "engagement in establishing the nature of a foundational authority for her voice displaying her learning as a female accomplishment." Smith constructs a kind of bridge between her works and those she references, which ultimately works to assert her literary status and to remind us, once again, how intensely Smith valued her identity as an author. In the process of creating a pantheon through quotations of Charlotte Smith in British Romanticism and allusion, Smith also creates a kind of bridge between her works and those she references.

In the preface that Smith wrote for William Cowper, she states that her heart "had learned, possibly through its trials, to feel with sensitive, though unavailing sympathy, the tragedy of others". This is not the self-seeking attitude that Smith is being criticized for by the critical review; rather, the poet contends that her gifts should enable her to make a case for emigrants. Some of Smith's detractors have had her motivations all wrong. Given how Smith has always interacted with her audience, it should not come as a surprise that the reader is invited to focus on the pains experienced by the lyrical voices in this work. It is in some ways the lyrical incarnation of Smith's prefatory claim that because of her personal, genuine sorrows, she can successfully argue for emigrants. The fact that the lyrical voice can transition from their suffering to her own and back again helps to indicate that only a fellow sufferer is capable of articulating the feelings that emigrants are going through.

Likewise, Anna Barbauld is considered among the major feminist Romantic poets who argue for the voice of the young women of her time. Lucy Aikin stated the following in the memoirs that were dedicated to Anna Laetitia Barbauld (1743-1825): "that swiftness of perception by which she [Barbauld] was finely characterized, exhibited itself from her earliest childhood" [62]. Barbauld was one of the numerous

female poets who fought for social change, and she is remembered as having one of the most important contributions to Romantic poetry. Anna Barbauld published her "Epistle to William Wilberforce on the evils of Slave Trade" under her name, sympathizing with the abolitionist movement. However, she published some political orations anonymously with such a strong command that it seemed incredible to everyone when they realized that it was written by a woman. Her work was published both under her real name and under a pseudonym. Even though she was limited to the realm of women from an early age, Barbauld was able to exploit her gender to her advantage and achieve freedom. "If a woman's place is in the house, or the schoolroom as in the instance of Anna Barbauld, or the garden, then the particulars of those constrained confines are given the impetus for the lyric," observes Curran [63].

Barbauld used ordinary life matters as the driving force for her literary works, which are represented in the titles of three of her poems: "Verses Written in an Alcove" (1773), "An Inventory of the Furniture in Dr. Priestley's Study" (1825), and "The First Fire, October 1st, 1815" (1825). Barbauld was a staunch Dissenting author who enthusiastically advocated the role of Dissenters (English Christians who for one reason or another separated from the Church of England) in the future of Britain. In other words, Barbauld had a faith in education and unceasing progress. Moreover, she relied on the circle of cultural "bluestockings," introduced in her *Poems* of 1773. Therefore, she was embraced as an articulate representative of their values.

Barbauld attacked Romantic critics for highlighting the relationship between a woman's life and her writing as a means of reinforcing modern ideals of femininity. These reviewers did this as a strategy to reinforce contemporary notions of femininity. The following lines are taken from her poem "On a Lady's Writing": "Her even lines reflect her steady temper; neat as her apparel; strong as her judgment; easy as her air; correct though free; regular though pretty; and the same charms o'er her pen reign; that shape her manners and her walks lead." (*Poems*, 1773). Barbauld intentionally projects in the mind of readers the image of a perfect lady, this way insisting on the difficulties a female poet encounters. Her characters are far from the supposed caretakers and good-mannered female characters of a male-dominated society.

Charlotte Smith and Anna Barbauld share similarities in the way that they compelled the revival of the sonnet; they avoided other forms of writing by mostly writing sonnets, ballads, or lyrics. Therefore, they could express their personal feelings and arouse the sympathy of their readers. Like Barbauld, Charlotte Smith evoked the vernacular, ordinary language and quotidian values, which could be pointed out in her wonderful world depicted in "Flora" (*Beachy Head and Other Poems*, 1807): "The vision comes. . ./Flora descends, to dress the expecting Earth/Awake the germs, and call the buds to birth;/Bid each hybernacle its cell unfold/ And open silken leaves, and eyes of gold" (*The Poems of Charlotte Smith*, ed.) [64].

Besides highlighting everyday life issues, Smith also uses the poetry of vision. For Smith, this vision is depicted as an

actual vision in the form of a garden. In her major works, Smith repeatedly demonstrates her maternal devotion, especially in her *Elegiac Sonnets*. In "Flora," which was written by Smith in 1993, the Roman Goddess of flowers and springtime, Flora, is portrayed as a woman. Flora is described as a "vision" that comes from the mind of a very beautiful woman who works like a mother: she dresses the Earth and wakes up the germs like a mother would dress and wake up her children in the morning. Furthermore, Flora is seen as a symbol of fertility. The Goddess, who is shown as a woman giving birth to buds, brings to mind life and the cycle of life. Hence, Flora could be pointed out as the role of reproduction which highlights specific female characteristics. For Smith, her major characters portray the role and position of women in a male-dominated society; in such a society, women are the means of production and reproduction. It could be argued that Smith by highlighting her major characters intends to open the mind to the society her readers are encountered with. Her poems could somehow open the eyes of knowledge, independence, respect, and awareness.

Smith's major counterpart, Barbauld, as a devotee of the cult of sensibility, struggled hard in her own time by making her readers realize that women of her time, women poets at the core of intention, could gain certain authority by accepting their femininity, as a distinguishing virtue. In her poem "The Mouse's Petition Found in the Trap Where He Had Been Confined All Night" (Poems, 1773), Barbauld thinks about herself, the human relationships, the natural world, and the animals that live there. Barbauld wrote the poem in response to the scientific experiments that Joseph Priestley did on animals, especially on a mouse that was caught in a trap the night that Barbauld went to see him. Some critics say that the poem was found "twisted among the wires of the mouse's cage when it was brought in after breakfast the next day" [65].

"The Mouse's Petition" is comparable to the poem "To a Mouse, on Turning Her Up in Her Nest, with the Plough" (1786) written by Robert Burns. In his poem, Burns introduces to his readers the knowledge of agriculture and farming, by which he intends to project the feeling of sympathy by portraying the everyday life of a simple farmer and the way he encounters the natural environment: "I'm truly sorry Man's dominion/Has broken Nature's social union" (Burns). This whole idea is also highlighted by Barbauld; therefore, it is not surprising that Burns used some of Barbauld's words such as "beastie," though Barbauld refused to use any particular gender, except in the last lines, where she makes her readers sympathize with the animal and nature.

As the name clarifies, in *The Rights of Women*, Barbauld's poems argue for the rights of women. Generally, her poems express the poet's lifelong feelings toward womanhood. Barbauld is highly praised for her firm tenacity in revolting against the rules that held back the women of England as well as of the whole of Europe. In addition, Smith's main concern was her female characters. Smith used the sexual ideology of the time for her benefit as a female writer; she used her suffering, her concern for her children,

and also the humiliation she felt in her society and portrayed them in her papers intentionally. In a letter to Cadell [66], Smith [67] writes, "I cannot but murmur at my fate, which seems the hardest that ever was endured and the most irremediable" [68].

Furthermore, In Sonnet XXXII, "To Melancholy," Charlotte Smith digs into the limits of tragic emotion. She further discusses pity and highlights sadness. The speaker of the poem has a somber pensive mood which is reflected in the haunted landscape, which represents the melancholic atmosphere of the time as well as the sensitive feelings of the poet. It could be argued that Smith presents the quality of sensibility, which is at the center of attention for all women poets at the time. Sensibility for these writers provides a persona whom they can identify with. At the end of the sonnet, Smith shocks her readers with her positive perspective on her negative experiences and emotions: "Oh Melancholy! such thy magic power/That to the soul these dreams are often sweet/And soothe the pensive visionary mind!" (Sonnet XXXII).

Despite her insistence on highlighting sensible and vulnerable emotions, Smith draws upon her representation as a mother. Nevertheless, her mother characters are not depicted as the later commercialized "moral mothers" of the nineteenth century, but as young mothers that are concerned with the systematic subjugation of women. Moreover, Smith displays sympathy toward the liberation of the French people, which earned her a good reputation and reception among the British living in Paris which is mainly represented in her poem "The Emigrants." In this poem, Smith has depicted a relational self, creating her own identity by highlighting the French exiles undergoing loss, injustice, and despair: "Still, as Men misled By early prejudice (so hard to break)/I mourn your sorrows; for I too have known/Involuntary exile" (Smith, "The Emigrants").

Similarly, Barbauld is concerned with women's rights. She mostly argues for the issue of self and identity of her young female characters who have experienced suppression and oppression in a male-dominated society. She writes, "Let Nature's commoners enjoy/The common gifts of Heaven" ("The Mouse's Petition"). In this poem, Barbauld speaks for any detained and oppressed human and, generally, for the liberty which is required for every human being. Therefore, Barbauld argues against imprisonment and focuses on the human urge to subdue nature: "The well-taught philosophic mind/To all compassion gives;/Casts round the world an equal eye/And feels for all that lives" ("The Mouse's Petition").

It could be argued that women have been at the center of all of Smith's poems as well as Barbauld's. In Smith's poems, women express their inner thoughts and feelings, especially in her *Elegiac Sonnets*. Smith portrays women as major figures who are capable of emotional complexity. Her "Nightingale Series" is regarded as a semi-autobiographical account of Smith's sufferings. The poem is comprised of three poems within *Elegiac Sonnets*, "To A Nightingale," "On the Departure of the Nightingale," and "The Return of the Nightingale." Smith portrays Nightingale as the symbol of her poetic self-reference. In Sonnet III, "To A Nightingale,"

this self-reference becomes very evident. The poem opens as follows: “Poor melancholy bird/that all night long Tell’st to the Moon thy tale of tender woe;/From what sad cause can such sweet sorrow flow,/And whence this mournful melody of song?” Here, there is a parallel between the bird and Smith.

The Nightingale is desperate and therefore spends the whole night expressing such grief which is portrayed as sweet and melodic. Smith wrote this poem because she felt imprisoned as a bird while living with her husband. The connection between the bird and Smith is apparent as the poem continues. This poem projects Smith’s pain into the bird: “Say—hast thou felt from friends some cruel wrong, Or died’st thou—martyr of disastrous love?” This highlights Smith’s desperate life; she has been forced into marriage with a man that caused her imprisonment. In her Nightingale poems, Smith focuses mainly on the trend of the muse of women and the rejection of patriarchal norms.

In *Sonnet Written in the Middleton Churchyard in Sussex*, the speaker thinks about the power of the ocean as it wears away at a cliff where a graveyard is located. The sea breaks up the graveyard, and the bones of the dead end up on the beach, where they are mixed in with shells and sand by the tide. This picture shows how important women are in society. It is also a symbol of how nature and culture work together. In the first line of the poem, “Pressed by the moon, mute arbitress of tides,” nature is given a feminine quality. The moon which highlights femininity is muted, which represents the silenced and suppressed position of women in society. However, this silence does not stop it from exerting its power as it controls the tides and their destruction of the cliff.

Barbauld likewise highlights nature in her poems by which she intends to refer to the feminine and, of more importance, the liberty of women. In “Corsica,” which she wrote in 1769, she talks about how much she likes the island and how it is shown to be independent. In the poem, the islands are described as “swelling mountains, brown with the solemn shade of various trees, that wave their giant arms o’er the rough sons of freedom.” The setting of the poem draws attention to “Liberty, the mountain Goddess,” who “loves to roam at large amid such scenes.” Barbauld insists on freedom, “the freedom of the mind,” which lies “beyond the proud oppressor’s cruel grasp, seated secure, uninjured, undestroyed, worthy of Gods.” It could be argued that Barbauld seeks freedom of nature which is representative of the feminine through the cult of oppressive forces.

Finally, Smith’s and Barbauld’s poems are replete with rebellious voices of young female characters which point out the personal indignation that characterize their writings throughout their lives. Their characters are struggling with the suppressive power that is depicted in culture and therefore they seek their independence.

8. Conclusion

As women are suppressed in male-dominated societies, they have always been reduced to properties that could be consumed by dominant forces and power. This paper

focused on Smith and Barbauld as two major poets who struggled to make feminine voices heard. Barbauld and Smith intended to go against the dominant male force by crying out their objection through their poems. These writers were also in line with major events such as the French Revolution, political and social turbulence in Britain, rising female reading audiences, and the Blue-stocking Society by which they could argue for their rights as women as well as representing their powers as female writers. Smith and Barbauld are highly praised for their firm tenacity in confronting the increasing hostility on the part of the male Romantic writers and artists. Therefore, they were effective in the progression of contrasting currents within male and female Romantic poetry, ranging from slightly to extremely opposite ideas of the poetic language and the political and social implications of revolutionary uprisings. Smith and Barbauld could produce works of approval regarding social reforms. They could swim against the current of the time through their writings filled with feminine voices struggling for their independence. Moreover, these poets could express their inner feelings and sensations that were banned by the cultural norms. Therefore, both poets gained great acknowledgment and success by their readers as well as their counterparts. Charlotte Smith and Anna Barbauld could be placed among true Romantic models to emulate; they are the role models for female imagination because of their devotion to the independent feminine world.

9. Implications and Recommendations

The development of literacy is being significantly aided by the art of storytelling, which also plays an essential part in the growth of language. Reading comprehension and the ability to analyze critically are essential skills for students studying any subject, notably English as a foreign language students. A person needs to think in English to make progress in their English language learning, and thinking skills may be strengthened via the use of storytelling strategies. Learners are encouraged to engage in critical thinking and increased understanding when they read stories that feature aspects such as inferences, suspense, exploring themes, genres, symbols, and literary words. Consequently, thinking about these aspects will improve critical thinking. It is possible to enhance one’s language and presenting abilities via the practice of critical thinking. The ability to think clearly and methodically may help us improve how we articulate our thoughts. It teaches us how to analyze the logic behind the construction of texts, and via critical thinking, an individual may improve their ability to comprehend what they are reading. A person who is capable of critical thinking can distinguish between sensible opinions and meticulous expression because they have the self-awareness and logic to do so. Poetry is an additional excellent technique for making money. Because poetry may provide language students with an atmosphere that is particularly conducive to the acquisition, it must be included as a vital component of language instruction. Poetry

instruction encourages students to make development in their linguistic awareness and offers a channel for achieving a comfortable level of written and spoken fluency. Poetry's potential as a teaching tool may make it a vital part of a program that encourages students to recognize linguistic elements, participate in knowledge building, create meaning, and express their interpretations, all of which will help them improve their language output. Following the purpose of this research, we can conclude that instructors of English as a foreign language (EFL) should keep in mind that approaches involving telling and reading stories can be beneficial for the instruction of the language, and they should make use of these approaches to cultivate the ability of language learners to think more creatively and express their comprehension clearly in a variety of different ways. Storytelling may encourage learning in a context more meaningfully, organically, and interactively by inspiring language learners and generating chances for them to utilize the English language in the classroom. This can be accomplished by telling stories. In the first place, storytelling has a good effect on the confidence of students studying English as a foreign language to take on learning problems and bring their creativity and inner imagination to the forefront of the relevant issues (González, 2010). To be more precise, EFL instructors may supplement the learners' education with additional teaching resources like tales that are tailored to the students' current levels of language ability. In addition, they may employ tales as intelligible input to encourage learner autonomy in language students. Reading and sharing tales outside of the classroom are two ways that may enhance language learners' exposure to real language. This is something that may not happen in traditional classroom settings.

However, more research needs to be done on the function that storytelling plays in the process of establishing L2 acquisition. The existing body of research does not include any study on whether or not storytelling may have a detrimental influence on language learning. For instance, research findings do not investigate whether the sort of story, the format of the story, or how storytelling activities are developed in the classroom affect the students' performance in L2 and the growth of their language skills, even though all three factors are likely to have an impact. In addition, studies do not investigate whether or not the use of storytelling in the classroom has any negative effects on language instructors or the content of the L2 syllabus because it requires a significant amount of preparation time and financial investment in the training of instructors to make proper use of and investigate various storytelling techniques. To provide a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the part that storytelling plays in the acquisition of L2 skills, research that investigates the possible drawbacks associated with the use of storytelling would undoubtedly be of great benefit to language instructors as well as the literature in general.

Data Availability

The data that support the findings of this study can be obtained from the author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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