

A Comparative Stylistic Analysis of Marianne Moore's 'The Fish' and Elizabeth Bishop's 'The Fish'

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Abstract

Stylistics – nowadays, is considered one of the most important fundamentals of objective interpretation of literary text and that is due to its great concern with the poet's writing style. This paper presents a comparative stylistic study to Marianne Moore's poem 'The Fish' and Elizabeth poem 'The Fish'. It tries to investigate the salient stylistic devices in the poems under question and their aesthetic impact in understanding them. The paper adopts the stylistic analysis approach for data collection and analysis. The study finds out that simile, metaphor, imagery and personification are the dominant literary devices in the poems under study. Moreover, it also reveals that both Moore and Bishop embellish their poems with musical devices such as alliteration, consonance, and assonance. Furthermore, the paper shows that the above mentioned stylistic devices are more frequent in Bishop's poem. Besides, their recurrent employment in both poems has helped readers to grasp the poetesses' intended meaning.

Keywords: salient, embellish, review, interpretation

1. INTRODUCTION

Using figures of speech is one of the techniques that poets resort to in order to help readers to grasp the meaning of their works. The most striking poetic devices are the ones that constitute the meaning of the poem and helps crystalizing its themes and clarifying its subject

matter. This set of literary devices includes simile, metaphor, personification, oxymoron and others. Moreover, the aesthetic dimension that the aforementioned devices might add to a particular literary text and the frequency of using them lie among the features that mark a poet's style. This paper explores the use of such stylistic devices in Marianne Moore's '*The Fish*' and Elizabeth Bishop's '*The Fish*'. In other words, it provides a comparative stylistic analysis to Moore's and Bishop's poetic style in their selected poems.

The paper tries to achieve a number of objectives. Firstly, it aims at comparing Marianne Moore's and Elizabeth Bishop's poetic style. Secondly, it seeks to bring Moore's and Bishop's poetry into Sudanese research domain. Lastly, the paper also aims to find out a clear connection between a poet's writing style and his/her intended meaning. To achieve these goals, the researcher poses questions about the salient stylistic devices in Moore's and Bishop's poems under investigation.

Furthermore, the paper applies a close reading approach to identify and gather its data. Then, the researcher subjects the collected data to stylistic analysis techniques for data analysis and interpretation. Later, statistical analysis is implemented to compare the frequency of employing the detected stylistic devices in the poems under study.

2. THE NOTION OF STYLE

The word '*style*' is basically originated from Latin language – stylus – which means "anything to write". Scholars seem to agree on the fact that '*style*' as an abstract term could hardly be defined. The term was traditionally viewed as a method of persuasion i.e. it highlights the techniques that writers or speakers use in their discourse to positively or negatively influence their readers/listeners. However, Wimsatt (1967) relates style with the notion of meaning. He argues that it is hard to separate the writers' style from their texts since style concerns the selection and organization of words in an utterance, and that words are considered units of meaning. Literally, style is a way of doing something, especially, one which is typical to a person, place, group, or period. Despite the frequent use of the term style in both literary and linguistic fields, Wales (2014) remarks that the word is very difficult to be defined. She highlights different comprehensive

areas in which it is used asserting the fact that “style pervades all aspects of our life and culture” (ibid. 397). Wales further points out that “style refers to the perceived distinctive manner of expression in writing or speaking” (ibid). On this score, Uzoma (2012) believes that writers/speakers always follow particular style through selecting a variety of lexical and syntactic options. He adds that the chosen linguistic items usually match the purpose of the writers’ communication. This view is strengthened by Abrams and Harpham (2009: 349 cited in ibid) who opine that “style is the manner of linguistic expression in prose and verse – as how speakers or writers say whatever it is that they say”.

A parallel definition is cited in Freeman’s book ‘*Style*’ in which he states that style is “the manner of expression characteristic of a particular writer (hence of an orator), or of a literary group or period; a writer's mode of expression [is] considered in regard to clearness, effectiveness, beauty, and the like” (1996: 2). In this respect, Khan, Raffique, and Siddique, in introducing their paper ‘Stylistic Analysis of the Poem ‘The Onset’ by Robert Frost’, define style as “the way in which the writer uses language, his choice of words, arrangements and form of sentences, use of poetic devices to present his thought to the reader” (2014: 121). From all the definitions above, one can deduce that style is what differentiates X from Y. As it is stated earlier, the word style defies comprehensive definition. However, a writer’s style varies according to the linguistic variants he/she uses in his/her work. On this score, Carter (1996 cited in Ali, Bhatti, and Shah 2016: 18) emphasizes that “every text and writing style is different to others due to ‘linguistics levels’”. In other words, style is the variety of ways, diction, and forms that a writer or speaker enjoys from broader linguistic choices.

3. STYLISTICS

Leech and Short (2007) demonstrate that the linguistic study of a person’s writing has paved the paths for the emergence of stylistics. That is, stylistics –as a discipline, is developed from the process of closely addressing the linguistic features of the text with the purpose of deciphering the verbal clues that it yields. The term was historically related to the word ‘rhetoric’ which is a Greek originated word –‘*rhetoric*’, and it is “concerned with the use of public speaking

as a means of persuasion” (Bradford, 2005: 2). Moreover, stylistics –as simply described by Turner (1973:7), Leech and Short (2007: 11), and Wales (2014: 399) – “is the study of style”. It concerns with the writer’s or speaker’s diction, sentence structure, and other linguistic features in his/her text or utterance. In many respects, stylistics is the sphere in which linguistics and literature harmoniously mingle. Wales (2014 cited in Ali, Bhatti and Shah 2016) has clarified that stylistics does not only concentrate on the linguistic features of the text but also goes further to embrace its interpretation. Furthermore, according to Leech and Short the term stylistics is concerned with the analysis of the language of literary texts (2007). In such sense, Uzoma (2012) asserts that stylisticians –through their intensive focus on the writers’ linguistic choices, seek to replace the subjective interpretation of literary texts with more objective and standardized one. Thus, “stylistics is concerned with the examination of the grammar, lexis, semantics as well as phonological properties and discursive devices” (ibid). Mills (2005) also labels stylistics as a discipline concerned with the analysis of the language of literature assuming that writers’ linguistic variants would make the interpretation of their literary products more reliable and objective. In this, Carter (1995 cited in Tarrayo 2014: 100) assents Mills’ perspective by describing stylistics as “a process of literary text analysis which starts from a basic assumption that the primary interpretative procedures used in the reading of a literary text are linguistic procedures”. Some advocates believe that having stylistically analyzing a literary text would reflect its aesthetic dimension strikingly better than the traditional way (literary) of it.

In a paper entitled “*Stylistics: A Contact between Linguistics and Literary Criticism*”, Hejal (2006) describe stylistics as a means of studying literary discourse from a linguistic standpoint. He is apparently agreeing with Turner (1975 cited in ibid) in the view that stylistics is one of the branches of linguistics which focuses on the language use and variation in literary texts. Additionally, Hejal concludes that a stylistic study “involves both literary criticism and linguistics” (2). Thus, realizing that stylistics cannot be defined a way from both linguistics and literature, one can concede that; the newly-born field always shows its gratitude to “its parent disciplines” (Leech, 2013: 1).

4. Stylistic Analysis of Moore's 'The Fish' and Bishop's 'The Fish'

Moore's and Bishop's poems under are enriched with various illustrations of figures of speech and sounds. The section below provides a detailed stylistic analysis to the employment of these devices in their poems that bear the same title: 'The Fish'.

4.1 Figures of Speech

Wales (2014, 161), in her book "A Dictionary of Stylistics" states that figures of speech –in language, mainly refer to the devices "by which images are evoked through comparison of one 'object' with another". Moreover, they mark the author deviation from the conventional norm of the language to achieve to achieve aesthetic and emotional qualities. Marianne Moore and Elizabeth Bishop of course are very talented in the use of such devices in their works. Their poems under study in fact, are embellished with numerous illustration of simile, metaphor, personification, etc.

4.1.1 Simile

Moore employs simile in 'The Fish' to describes the fish's difficulties in grasping its breath. In the line: "it opening and shutting itself **like** an injured fan" (MCP, 32), the fish attempt to breathe in an out is strikingly compared to an injured fan as both experience quite pitiful state. Correspondingly, Bishop's 'The Fish' also contains conspicuous examples of simile. By putting the poem's story between two main incidents; "I caught a tremendous fish" (CP, 42) and "I let the fish go" (CP, 44), for example, Bishop arouses numerous feelings – ranging from sympathy to ultimate respect, into her reader. Thus, she employs simile in the poem to help him/her understand the act of letting the fish go after that effort exerted in catching it. Moreover, another example of simile is shown in the lines below;

*his brown skin hung in strips
like ancient wallpaper,
and its pattern of darker brown
was **like** wallpaper:
shapes **like** full-blown roses
stained and lost through age.*
(CP, 42)

In the lines above, Bishop uses simile to compare the fish's skin by using the preposition (like) to 'ancient wallpaper'. By doing so, the reader is able to recognize that the fish is being depicted as old and prized. Similarly, the fish's pattern or shape also looks like 'wallpaper' and 'full-blown roses'. The idea of portraying the fish as old as ancient objects indicates that it is a symbol of wisdom which is socially associated with elderly people. Moreover, Bishop uses more examples of simile in the lines;

*I thought of the coarse white flesh
packed in **like** feathers,
the big bones and the little bones,
the dramatic reds and blacks
of his shiny entrails,
and the pink swim-bladder
like a big peony.*

(CP, 42)

The speaker in the lines above must have thought about the fish as something more than a piece of food – meat. It has been described as beautiful as white and soft birds' feathers. The simile is significantly arresting as it marks a change in the speaker's attitude towards the caught fish. Bishop utilizes another example of simile in lines (32-3) "the pink swim-bladder/like a big peony" (CP, 42). In these lines, she compares the fish bladders to beautiful flowers; have red, pink and white colors. Elizabeth Bishop moves on to liken the fish's shifting eyes to tilting object. In other words, the fish is metaphorically compared to a reluctant person who is diffidently unable to exchange stare.

*They shifted a little, but not
to return my stare.
It was more **like** the tipping
of an object toward the light.*

(CP, 43)

Furthermore, Bishop, in the lines below, describes the fish's fins as old medals with shabby ribbons.

***Like** medals with their ribbons
frayed and wavering,
a five-haired beard of wisdom
trailing from his aching jaw.*

(CP, 43)

4.1.2 Metaphor and Imagery

Metaphor is known as an implicit comparison between two unlike things without using comparative words. Wales (2014) suggests that the term refers to the figure of speech in which a similarity between two objects is directly stated. More specifically, Leech (1969: 151) associates metaphor with "a particular rule of transference" which he called "Metaphoric Rule" (ibid). Moreover, he presents a formula under which metaphor works. For example, (L) is (X) because of (F). In other words, (L) is the target; (X) is the source; while (F) is the ground. Due to the strong connection between metaphor and imagery, the section analyzes them together. As a poetic style, Marianne Moore makes use of a considerable number of mental images to form implicit comparisons through metaphorical expressions in 'The Fish'. The opening of the poem for example is an illustration:

The Fish
wade
through black jade.
Of the crow-blue mussel-shells
(MCP, 32)

In these lines, Moore, by using the phrasal verb 'wade through' – which suggests an exertion of effort doing something difficult or rather boring – metaphorically likens the fish to a person who is trying to achieve something. The visual image of the fish's movement towards the 'black jade' strengthens the probability that the fish is struggling to survive. She also uses metaphor to describe the power of wave against the cliffs.

the
turquoise sea
of bodies. The water drives a wedge
of iron through the iron edge
of the cliff; whereupon the stars,
(MCP, 32)

In these lines the water is being described as an iron that strongly hits the cliffs. Again, Moore has drawn a vivid picture in the readers' minds to help them visualize the waves (visual image) and hear their breaking against the shore (auditory image). The image of the barnacles "illuminating the turquoise sea of bodies" is also another example of imagery (ibid). The speaker vividly portrays plants and sea creatures in more breathtaking use of imagery like "the stars, pink

rice-grains, / ink-bespattered jelly fish, /crabs like green lilies" and others. Moreover, the stillness of the chasm in the same poem is metaphorically likened to a dead person who cannot move a muscle; *'the chasm-side /is dead'* (MCP, 33).

In contrast, Elizabeth Bishop's *'The Fish'* reveals significant utilization of metaphoric expressions by which readers is able to visualize the events and sympathize with the fish. In other words, Bishop – through her skillful use of metaphor and imagery manages to create emotional bond between the fish and her readers. At first, readers are surprisingly stunned with the image of the fish. That is to say, the fish is pictured as *"tremendous"*, *"homely"*, and *"venerable"*. Moreover, the reader is enabled to visualize the speakers' hook fastened in the fish's mouth.

*I caught a tremendous fish
and held him beside the boat
half out of water, with my hook
fast in a corner of his mouth.*

(CP, 42)

Bishop's highly use of descriptive words like *"speckled"* and *"infested"* help in creating a clear mental image to the fish's scales. The poet goes on generating images in the readers' minds: *"and underneath two or three/rags of green weed hung down"* (Cp. 42). The fusion of metaphor with imagery in the lines below clearly explains Bishop descriptive talent.

*While his gills were breathing in
the terrible oxygen
- the frightening gills,
fresh and crisp with blood*

(CP, 42)

The opening and shutting of the fish's gills while breathing in creates both olfactory and visual images in the readers' minds. However, because it is uncommon for the fish to stay out of the water, the oxygen has been metaphorically portrayed as a terrifying creature so the fish's gills get frightened accordingly. Another example of mental pictures is created in the lines; *"and then I saw/that from his lower lip/- if you could call it a lip/grim, wet, and weapon-like"* (CP. 43). The reader in these lines is able to visualize the fish's lip which is pictured as *"grim, wet, and weapon-like"* (CP, 43). Again, the descriptive expression in Elizabeth Bishop's helps the readers to

create a complete mental picture to the event, object, and scene being described. The speaker keeps examining the fish with a piercing eye while it hangs "half of the water". Her intense examination resulted in comparing the fish's fins to "medals with their ribbons". This simile creates a mental picture of a hero winning various fights and competitions. Therefore, having the speaker piercing this puzzle: the fish's mysterious life, Bishop opines that "victory filled up the little rented boat" (CP, 43).

4.1.3 Personification

Moore uses a striking personification example in the last line of 'The Fish' declaring that "the sea grows old" (CMP, 33). Getting old is an exclusive living beings' characteristic however by ascribing it to the sea, Moore gives reason to the difficulties that the fish has faced in the opening lines. In comparison, the exploration of Elizabeth Bishop selected poems has shown a number of personification examples. As an illustration, the speaker in 'The Fish' uses third person masculine pronoun (HE) throughout the poem to refer to the antecedent; fish which is grammatically referred to it by the personal pronoun (IT). In the same manner, the speaker personifies the fish when she metaphorically gives it a human quality of being "battered and venerable and homely" (CP, 42). One more example occurs when the speaker changes her attitude from a fisherwoman to an admirer: in this, she personifies the fish by talking about '(his) sullen face' instead of (its). Besides, 'sullen' as an adjective is only used to modify a person who can experience anger or calmness.

4.2 Figures of Sounds

Figures of sound refer to the musical devices that poems use to reinforce meaning in their works. Moreover, in addition to make the poem more memorable they also add pleasurable sound effect to it. One of the dominant musical devices in Moore's and Bishop's poems under investigation is alliteration. Norgaard, Montoro, and Busse (2010) and Wales (2014) among others, demonstrate that alliteration is a stylistic device which traces the repetition of similar consonant sounds in nearby words' initial positions. Consider as an example the repetition of /k/ sound in 'the crow-blue mussel-shells, one keeps' (3). The line identifies the employment of alliteration in two words and it dexterously draws an image of difficulty in the reader's mind. That is

to say, repeating such cacophonous sound at the opening lines of the poems produces an unpleasant feeling. In a different, the occurrence of /w/ sound in line (13): 'of *bodies*. The water drives a wedge' lessens to some extent the implied harshness in the example provided above. In other words, the gentleness associated with the sound's pronunciation – /w/, is significantly matched with the process of driving the 'iron wedge'. Furthermore, the repetition of /f/ sound in 'physical' and 'features': line (34) also function as alliteration.

In the same connection, Bishop's 'The Fish' is also embellished with numerous examples of alliteration. To cite a few, consider the repetition of the glottal fricative consonant /h/. The sound produces an unpleasant effect in the reader as it is repeated alliteratively in five lines (see the appendixes). Moreover, Bishop also employs alliteration through the occurrence of /b/ sound in 'the big bones and the little bones'. The presence of the voiced bilabial stop consonant in this context produces a harsh rhyming effect. Another illustration of alliteration in Bishop's 'The Fish' is her repetition of the sound /s/ at the beginning of nearby words in 'still crimped from the strain and snap'. However, Elizabeth Bishop has also employed alliteration by repeating euphonic sounds like /w/ in her poem under study. An example of such utilization occurs in line (3), (13), and (50) (see the appendixes).

In a similar connection, Marianne Moore and Elizabeth Bishop have cleverly enriched their poems under investigation with excessive illustrations of consonance. Consonance according to Wales (2014) and others – see Norgaard, Montoro, and Busse (2010) 'Key Terms in stylistics' and Geoffrey Leech (1969) 'A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry' – is the recurrence of similar consonant sounds at the middle or/and final position in nearby words. Norgaard, Montoro, and Busse (2010, 257) point out that consonance also plays a significant role in the text. They add, it "can be employed for emphasis and mnemonic effects and is frequently used as a means of foregrounding in poetry, advertising, newspaper headlines, and political slogans". The repetition of /l/ sound in Moore's poem Line (3): 'Of the crow-blue mussel-shells, one keeps' functions as consonance. Besides, the reappearance of /s/ in 'glass' and 'witness' in line (30) is another illustration. Furthermore, the occurrence of /r/ sound in 'bespattered jelly fish, crabs like green' marks the employment of consonance and creates a pleasant auditory image in the context in which it is used.

Similarly, Bishop's employment of consonance in her poem 'The Fish' is undoubtedly remarkable. Consider as analogy the presence of the consonant cluster /kt/ in 'the irises **backed** and **packed**'. It presents a striking auditory image readers' mind. Additionally, the frequent occurrence of /t/ sound in 'They **shifted** a **little**, **but** **not**' and 'to **return my **stare**' provides another example for consonance in the poem. Moreover, line (10): 'his **brown skin hung in **strips**' lights the utilization of consonance in two words.****

The last figure of sound investigated in this review is assonance. Unlike alliteration, Norgaard, Montoro, and Busse (ibid, 49) describe assonance as a "repetition of vowel sounds in nearby words, usually in stressed syllables". They add, in highlighting the identical vowels in these words, assonance plays an effective cohesive role in tying up words together and eventually shaping their meanings. In such sense, Short (2013: 11) opines that "assonance, like alliteration, connects important words together and help readers notice meaning-connection between them". Marianne Moore does not employ a lot of examples assonance in her poem 'The Fish'. That is to say, the exploration of the poem reveals a very few illustration of the device. The poetic verse 'in and out, **illuminating' for instance, identifies the presence of /i/ sound four times and it function as assonance. Moreover, the repetition of 'iron' in line (14) creates a sort of internal rhyme as it marks the occurrence of the triphthong /aɪə/ twice. Additionally, /əʊ/ sound in the poem's last line: 'its youth. The sea **grows old in it'** also function as assonance.**

Elizabeth Bishop in contrast, uses many examples of assonance in her poem 'The Fish'. Consider as illustration the presence of /aɪ/ in lines (17): '**fine rosettes of **lime**' and (19) '**with tiny white sea-**lice**'. These lines demonstrate the occurrence of /aɪ/ five times creating pleasant rhyming effect. Moreover, the poetic lines '**stained and lost through **age**' and '**frayed and wavering'** also shows the employment of assonance in four words. Besides, the poem's examination has also revealed numerous occurrences of assonance through repeating vowel sounds such as /i/, /ɔ:/, .i:/ etc. (see the appendixes).******

As it is mentioned before, there are very few examples of alliteration, consonance and assonance in Marianne Moore's 'The Fish' in comparison to Elizabeth Bishop's. Nonetheless, she employs other phonological parallelism to keep the poem's musicality. That is,

despite the disturbing graphological deviation that characterizes her poem, Moore to embellish it with numerous rhyming patterns. The first and the second line for example are dexterously rhyming: 'wade/jade'. Moreover, the word 'keeps' in line (3) rhymes with 'heaps' in line (4). This rhyming patterns – (see the appendices) are spread throughout the poem.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Going through Marianne Moore's and Elizabeth Bishop's poems under investigation one finds a lot of examples of stylistic devices. In fact, both poetesses embellish their poems with excessive examples of figures of speech and sounds. However, inspecting figure (1) shows a remarkable discrepancy in the frequency of using these figures. The figure shows that there is a high degree in the use of simile in Bishop's poem in comparison to Moore's. In other words, Bishop uses simile in her poem 'The Fish' more frequently than Moore does (87.5% and 12.5% respectively). Moreover, the figure also reveals that metaphor and imagery are more frequent in Bishop's poem – by (963%) while their frequency in Moore's poem is represented by only (37%). Furthermore, the recurrence of personification in Moore's and Bishop's poems is correspondingly by (85.5% to 14.3%). This means that Bishop poetic style depends mainly on creating mental images in her readers' minds. She help them to absorb her intended meaning through her skillful utilization of stylistic devices.

In addition, figure (2) also presents another variation in the use of figures of sound in Moore's and Bishop's poems under study. That is to say, the examination of the table shows that Bishop uses alliteration in her poem 'The Fish' by (75.0 %) while Moore uses it by (25.0%). This means the consonant sounds are repeated in successive words in Bishop's poem more than in Moore's. Moreover, the figures inspection also portrays a high frequency in the use of consonance in Bishop's poem. It is found that Bishop uses consonance by (85.0%) whereas Moore utilizes consonance by (15.0%). However, the frequency of using assonance is quite different from the previous illustration. In other words, assonance is shown by the percent of (58.8%) in Bishop's poem and (41.2%) in Moore's. This variation indicates that Marianne Moore is less interested in highlighting the music of her poem.

6. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This comparative study is concerned with the use of stylistic devices in Marianne Moore's poem –'The Fish' and Elizabeth Bishop's –'*The Fish*'. It investigates the salient stylistic devices in the poems under study with an attempt to highlight the poetesses' poetic style as well as the salient devices in them. It is found out that Bishop – on the one hand, employs many literary devices to portray the fish sufferings and quest for survival. In other words, she manages –through her skillful utilization of devices like simile, metaphor, personification, etc., to crystalizes her sympathy with animals –'the fish' and invites her readers to do the same. Moreover, Bishop's employment of such devices presents her poem as a facsimile of a daily life. That is, the poem's events echo a real human experience. On the other hand, the paper reaches to the fact that Marianne Moore has also utilized stylistic devices in her poem –'The Fish' that her use of these devices has a great role in shaping the readers understanding of the poem. Though she less frequently employs figurative language in her poem – compared to Elizabeth Bishop, Moore manages to reflect her thoughts about the relationship between human being and nature. That is to say, she presents different mental images for the human hostility against natural phenomena and other living beings.

Additionally, the study also shows that there is a noticeable discrepancy in the use of musical devices in Moore's and Bishop's poems under investigation. Moreover, it concludes that Bishop's poem is more pleasant than Moore's since the former uses more euphonic sounds to employ both alliteration and consonance. Furthermore, it is also found that assonance is less employed by Moore. Finally, as it is illustrated, the stylistic examination of any literary text can unveil its hidden points and foreground its aesthetic values.

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APPENDICES

The Fish

By: Elizabeth Bishop

I caught a tremendous fish
and held him beside the boat
half out of water, with my hook
fast in a corner of his mouth.
He didn't fight.
He hadn't fought at all.
He hung a grunting weight,
battered and venerable
and homely. Here and there
his brown skin hung in strips
like ancient wallpaper,
and its pattern of darker brown
was like wallpaper:
shapes like full-blown roses
stained and lost through age.
He was speckled with barnacles,
fine rosettes of lime,
and infested
with tiny white sea-lice,
and underneath two or three
rags of green weed hung down.
While his gills were breathing in
the terrible oxygen
- the frightening gills,
fresh and crisp with blood,
that can cut so badly-
I thought of the coarse white flesh
packed in like feathers,
the big bones and the little bones,
the dramatic reds and blacks
of his shiny entrails,
and the pink swim-bladder
like a big peony.
I looked into his eyes
which were far larger than mine
but shallower, and yellowed,
the irises backed and packed
with tarnished tinfoil
seen through the lenses
of old scratched isinglass.
They shifted a little, but not
to return my stare.
It was more like the tipping

of an object toward the light.
I admired his sullen face,
the mechanism of his jaw,
and then I saw
that from his lower lip
- if you could call it a lip
grim, wet, and weaapon-like,
hung five old pieces of fish-line,
or four and a wire leader
with the swivel still attached,
with all their five big hooks
grown firmly in his mouth.
A green line, frayed at the end
where he broke it, two heavier lines,
and a fine black thread
still crimped from the strain and snap
when it broke and he got away.
Like medals with their ribbons
frayed and wavering,
a five-haired beard of wisdom
trailing from his aching jaw.
I stared and stared
and victory filled up
the little rented boat,
from the pool of bilge
where oil had spread a rainbow
around the rusted engine
to the bailer rusted orange,
the sun-cracked thwarts,
the oarlocks on their strings,
the gunnels- until everything
was rainbow, rainbow, rainbow!
And I let the fish go.

The Fish

By: Marianne Moore

wade
through black jade.
Of the crow-blue mussel-shells, one keeps
adjusting the ash-heaps;
 opening and shutting itself like
an
injured fan.
The barnacles which encrust the side
of the wave, cannot hide
 there for the submerged shafts of the
sun,

split like spun

glass, move themselves with spotlight swiftness

into the crevices—

in and out, illuminating

the

turquoise sea

of bodies. The water drives a wedge

of iron through the iron edge

of the cliff; whereupon the stars,

pink

rice-grains, ink-

bespattered jelly fish, crabs like green

lilies, and submarine

toadstools, slide each on the other.

All

external

marks of abuse are present on this

defiant edifice—

all the physical features of

ac-

cident—lack

of cornice, dynamite grooves, burns, and

hatchet strokes, these things stand

out on it; the chasm-side is

dead.

Repeated

evidence has proved that it can live

on what can not revive

its youth. The sea grows old in it.

FIGURES

Figure (1) The Distribution of Figures of Speech in Moore's 'The Fish' and Bishop's 'The Fish'

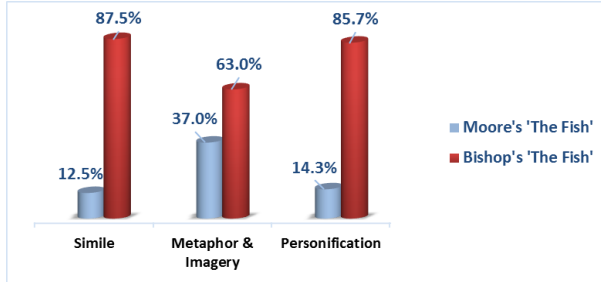


Figure (2) The Distribution of Figures of Sounds in Moore's 'The Fish' and Bishop's 'The Fish'

