

The Manifestations of The Sophistication of The Indication in Al-Shafi'i's Al-Umm Book

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Abstract

This research is an attempt to bridge the connection between language and juristic heritage by examining the elements of semantic refinement in Al-Umm, authored by Al-Shafi'i (d. 204 AH). The study leverages insights from modern linguistic research to identify and analyze the distinguishing features of semantic refinement within Al-Umm. Additionally, it explores interpretations and perspectives provided by various interpreters and lexicographers on these features. The findings reveal that Al-Umm encompasses a wide range of refined semantic aspects, touching on themes such as verses, the Quran, the Prophet, and Paradise. This research sheds light on the sophisticated use of language in Al-Umm, showcasing Al-Shafi'i's contributions to both jurisprudence and the richness of Arabic language. By integrating the perspectives of interpreters and lexicographers, the study underscores the importance of semantic nuances in Al-Umm, offering a comprehensive understanding of how Al-Shafi'i employed refined semantics to convey complex juristic concepts and themes.

Keywords: Semantic refinement, Al-Umm, Al-Shafi'i.

Preface:

Praise be to Allah, whose essence is sacred and whose attributes are exalted, and peace and blessings be upon our master Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets and Messengers, and upon his noble family and companions. As for what follows, language is a sign of Allah, the Exalted, and a miracle of His miracles that indicates His power. He, the Almighty, said: "And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors" (Quran 30:22). He also said: "And We did not send any messenger except with the tongue of his people to make clear for them" (Quran 14:4). The Arabic language is a universal language rich in its roots and clear methodologies. It is distinguished from others by several characteristics and advantages, perhaps the most prominent of which are the diversity of its uses, the vastness of its fields, the depth of its meanings, its adaptability to change, and its lack of stagnation.

Language, as a living entity, is subject to change; it undergoes the same processes of growth and development as a living being. It is a social phenomenon that evolves with society, rising in stature as society progresses and declining as society deteriorates. There are words whose original meanings are narrow or weak, but through usage, they transform into higher and stronger meanings. Words in language ascend to loftier connotations, a process known as "semantic elevation" or "elevation of meaning." This refers to the semantic change that affects words originally denoting weak or ordinary meanings, which then come to signify more esteemed meanings in society. This transformation is linked to social values. Based on the above, the researchers aimed to study the manifestations of semantic elevation in Al-Shafi'i's book "Al-Umm" (d. 204 AH).

Research aims :

1- Presenting a definition of the elevation of meaning and its causes in modern linguistic studies.

3- Benefiting from the data of modern linguistic studies in uncovering the aspects of the sophistication of meaning, and the implications of this sophistication in Al-Shafi'i's book "Al-Umm."

4- Monitoring the stance of some interpreters and lexicographers on this phenomenon, and the references found in dictionaries, commentaries, and contemporary studies, and utilizing what has been found in the research.

Research Methodology:

The researchers in this study rely on the descriptive method, which is based on description, induction, analysis, and interpretation, by observing the manifestations of the elevation of meaning in the book "Al-Umm" by Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Idris Al-Shafi'i (d. 204 AH), and explaining the semantic impact of this elevation, with the assistance of what is found in the books of interpretation, language, Quranic sciences, and the heritage books of jurisprudence and principles, among others.

The research was divided into two sections followed by the conclusion and the index of references.

The Prelude

A- Al-Shafi'i

(1)- His name and lineage: He is Imam Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Idris ibn Abbas ibn Uthman ibn Shafi' ibn Sa'ib ibn Ubayd ibn Abd Yazid ibn Hashim ibn Al-Muttalib ibn Abd Manaf, whose lineage connects with that of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, through Abd Manaf.

(2)- His birth and upbringing: There are different accounts regarding the birthplace of Al-Shafi'i. Some narrations suggest he was born in Gaza, while others state he was born in Yemen, and some say he was born in Gaza Ascalon. As for the date of his birth, the narrations are consistent. Al-Bayhaqi stated that Abu Abdullah Al-Hafiz said, "I do not know any disagreement among his companions that he was born in the year 150 AH, the same year in which Abu Hanifa died." When he was two years old, his mother took him to Hijaz and settled among her people, who were from Yemen. When he reached the age of ten, fearing that his noble lineage might be forgotten, she moved him to Mecca.

(3)- His pursuit of knowledge: At first, Al-Shafi'i pursued knowledge of poetry and Arab history until he excelled in them. He roamed the deserts of the Hudhayl tribe, learning language and poetry from its Bedouins, becoming one of the eloquent speakers. He then turned his attention to studying Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh). Al-Shafi'i put all his effort into seeking knowledge and reached a high level in it. He grew up poor and fatherless, memorizing the Quran by the age of seven. He then focused on memorizing the Hadiths of the Prophet, peace be upon him, often recording them by listening and writing them on pottery and leather. Al-Shafi'i traveled to Yemen and worked for its governor, Hamad al-Barbari, gaining prominence while also mastering the science of physiognomy. Returning to Mecca, he began teaching in the Holy Mosque and developed a new jurisprudence that integrated the knowledge of the scholars from Medina with that of Iraq.

(4)- His writings: Al-Shafi'i, the founder of the science of Usul al-Fiqh (principles of Islamic jurisprudence), authored several books, including: Kitab al-Risala, Kitab Ikhtilaf al-Hadith, Kitab

B- Introduction to Al-Umm by Al-Shafi'i: Al-Shafi'i's book

"Al-Umm" is one of the most significant works authored by Al-Shafi'i, regarded as a substantial and beneficial piece in the realm of Islamic jurisprudence. The book serves as an encyclopedia of Islamic law, encapsulating Al-Shafi'i's jurisprudential rulings derived from his experiences in Hijaz and Iraq, and later in Egypt, where it was finalized. The book, as narrated by his student Al-Rabi' ibn Sulayman, represents his "new doctrine." "Al-Umm" encompasses several topics:

1. Jurisprudential branches, which dominate the book.
2. Fundamentals such as Al-Risala, Ikhtilaf al-Hadith, and Jam' al-Ilm.
3. Comparative jurisprudence, including debates between Al-Shafi'i, Malik, Abu Hanifa, and Ibn Abi Layla.
4. Quranic verses and their interpretations used as evidence for the rulings.
5. Hadiths and their interpretations, presented as proofs for the rulings.

C. Al-Shafi'i's Methodology in Al-Umm

Al-Shafi'i's approach in "Al-Umm" includes:

- Structuring chapters with relevant Quranic verses, followed by detailed explanations and interpretations.
- Utilizing hadiths similarly, with linguistic analysis for better understanding.
- Presenting opinions of previous scholars and their interpretations, and applying analogical reasoning.
- Engaging in objective and respectful discussions, citing various juristic opinions and addressing controversial issues comprehensively.

D. Features of Al-Umm by Al-Shafi'i

"Al-Umm" stands out in Islamic jurisprudence and particularly in the Shafi'i school for several reasons:

1. Authored by Al-Shafi'i himself, it is one of the earliest comprehensive works in Islamic jurisprudence, containing many texts, hadiths, and scholarly debates.
2. The use of Arabic language for understanding and interpreting texts.
3. Demonstrating Al-Shafi'i's method of deriving and reasoning, blending jurisprudence with its principles.
4. Preserving the opinions of contemporaneous scholars like Ibn Abi Layla and Al-Awza'i, and renowned companions like Abu Bakr, Umar, and Ali.
5. Representing Al-Shafi'i's "new doctrine," it reflects his final years of scholarly efforts in Egypt.
6. Serving as a valuable resource for students of Islamic law, with extensive scientific discussions and debates.

The First Section: The Elevation of Signification; The Concept and the Term

Words in a language can change and evolve, and their meanings can rise from the low and vulgar to something stronger and higher, elevating according to time, place, circumstances, and context. This aspect of semantic change is called "elevation of meaning," also referred to as "sublime change." Words with low connotations can transform into elevated meanings. This section will address the definition of elevation of meaning in both the dictionary and terminology, followed by an explanation of the reasons for the elevation of meaning.

Definition of meliorative change:

The definition of "elevation" in the dictionary and terminology will be addressed here.

A- Definition of "elevation" in the dictionary.

In language, "rising" indicates ascent, elevation, and nobility. Al-Khalil ibn Ahmad (d. 170 AH) says: "Raqa yarqā ruqyā: ascended and elevated." (Al-Farahidi, 2003) Ibn Faris (d. 395 AH) mentions in the "Maqayis al-Lugha" dictionary: "(Raqa) the letters ر, ق, and the weak letter have three distinct roots: one of them is ascent, hence your saying: I ascended the stairs, I ascended." And from the saying of Allah Almighty: "Or you ascend into the sky, and we will never believe in your ascension." The Arabs say: "Arqa 'ala dhal'ika," meaning "ascend." To the extent that you can bear it (Ibn Fares, 2008) the linguistic meaning of "rising" in dictionaries is elevation and ascent. It is clear from the above that the linguistic meaning of "elevation" revolves around the ascent, nobility, and elevation of something, including speech.

B- The concept of the elevation of meaning in the terminology of linguistics:

It is called elevation of meaning or escalation of meaning (elevation), which means that the meaning of the word improves over time, and it is contrasted with degradation of meaning (Al-Khuli, 1982). It is also referred to as transcendent change (Abu Sharifa et al, 1989). Elevation of meaning means that the original meaning of the word is narrow or weak, and then it transforms through usage into a higher or stronger meaning. This type of semantic change is also applied to those words whose meanings were once trivial or weak, but then transformed into strong or noble meanings. (Anis, 1984) It also refers to the change in the meaning of a word that is considered by the community to have a low or relatively weak meaning, or one that is deemed inappropriate to mention, or that is unpleasant to hear, transforming into a more refined and elevated meaning, gaining significance and status, shedding its previous triviality. This is often associated with class differences and social levels. (Arar, 2003a) It is also called the elevation of meaning, which means that "the meaning of a word in the Arabic language can rise, giving it a new meaning that elevates it from triviality and weakness," meaning that the meaning of the word can be low or weak (Al-Dabbas, 2012), then its meaning becomes stronger and rises, transforming from worse to better and from lower to higher.

One of the most significant reasons that lead to the elevation and nobility of meaning is the development of social life. If the thing itself develops, its value will rise, and thus its meaning will also elevate and become more noble. If people's perception of something changes, it will reflect on its semantic value. For example, the meanings of the word "house" have elevated because of this development. Moreover, the advancement of social life has created a vast gap between the old house and the new house, and between the old fabric and the new fabric. (Arar, 2002b)

And among the examples of elevated connotation as well:

The word "sufra" originally referred to the food of a traveler, but now it has evolved to semantically connect with what decorates dining and reception halls with delicious food and drink. An example of this is the word (excellence), which originally meant merely the separation between two things, "the people distinguished and excelled, they became in a separate category," (Ibn Manzur, 2008) then its meaning was elevated and it came to signify superiority.

An example of this in languages other than Arabic is the French word "marshal," which originally meant "stable boy or groom" and has since elevated in meaning to refer to a field marshal, (Ullmann, 1990) a high and prestigious military rank. And similarly, the word "knight," which expressed a prestigious position in medieval chivalry, originally descended from the meaning "boy servant" (Anis, 1993), meaning a boy or servant, and then became noble and elevated in meaning, referring to a knight.

It is clear from the above that the elevation of meaning is a manifestation of semantic change, and what is meant by the elevation of meaning is that the word initially has a weak or negative connotation, and then it acquires a stronger connotation than the previous one, meaning it evolves from negative to positive or from lower to better.

Section Two: Aspects of the Sophistication of Meaning in Al-Shafi's Al mm

This type - the elevation of meaning - refers to the transformation that affects the meanings of some words, moving them from a modest semantic origin to a state of greater nobility and honor. The elevation of meaning has appeared in Al-Shafi'i's book "Al-Umm" in many places, including:

A- The sophistication of the meaning in the use of the word "ayah":

The term "ayah" appears in Al-Shafi'i's book "Al-Um" several times, including: Allah's saying: "We do not abrogate a verse or cause it to be forgotten except that We bring forth one better than it or one like it" (Ibn Manzur, 2008), and Allah's saying: "And when We substitute a verse in place of a verse, and Allah knows best what He sends down" (Anis, 1993). Among them is what was narrated by Aisha, who said: "We were with the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, on one of his journeys when my necklace broke."

So the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, stayed there looking for it, and they had no water with them, so the verse of Tayammum was revealed. (Anis, 1993)

The author of "Al-Ayn" (170 AH) said: "The verse: the sign, and the verse: one of the signs of God, and the plural: the verses. Its estimation: a *فعللة*." (Abu Shahba, 2003) Ibn Durayd (d. 321 AH) said: "The verse: the sign, and the plural of verse: verses and signs. The verse in the Noble Quran is as if it is a sign of something, then it moves from it to another." (Al-Farahidi, 2003) Al-Jahiz (d. 393 AH) said: "The verse: the sign, and the original is *أَوِيَّةٌ* with a vowel. The plural of verse: *آيات*, *آي*, and *آيات*. The verse of a man: his person, and the people left with their verses, meaning with their group, leaving nothing behind them. The meaning of the verse from the Book of God Almighty is a group of letters." (Ibn Durayd, 2019) Ibn Manzur (d. 711 AH) said: "And *آيَا آيَةٍ*: he placed a sign. And the people left with their verses, meaning with their group, leaving nothing behind them. Burj ibn Musher Al-Tai said from (Al-Bahr Al-Tawil):"

We emerged from the two abysses, no one like us, With our verses, we drive the wandering steeds. (Al-Jawhari, 1998) And the verse: from the revelation and from the verses of the glorious Quran; Abu Bakr said: The verse of the Quran is called a verse because it is a sign indicating the end of one speech and the beginning of another. It is also said: The verse is called a verse because it is a collection of letters of the Quran. And the verses of Allah: His wonders. Ibn Hamza said: The verse of the Quran is like a sign that leads from one thing to another, like the road signs set up for guidance. The verse: the sign, the verse: the lesson, and its plural is "Ayat." (Ibn Manzur, 2008)

And the verse is "a part of the surah that has a beginning and an end, and its end is called a pause, and it is said: a section of the Quran that is disconnected from what precedes it and what follows it" (Makram, 1996), and Muhammad Dawood said: The word verse was used in the speech of the Arabs before Islam to mean a sign, but the meaning of the word elevated to a better degree when the Quran used it to mean a sentence of speech (Abu Shahba, 2003). It is clear from the above that the Quranic verse is an Islamic term, and its meaning is the collection of the blessed letters from the Book of Allah the Almighty. (Dawood, 2001)

Perhaps the reason for the name is that it signifies a linguistic and scientific achievement, or because the verse calls for contemplation and reflection on the meanings and implications of the verses. Its significance has elevated and ascended, and it is commonly understood in the Arab regions that the intended meaning of the verse is the well-known noble Quranic verse. Thus, it continues to maintain its elevated significance and nobility as it is a sentence from the Holy Quran, the miraculous one that constitutes the Quranic chapters.

B- The elevated connotation in the use of the word "Quran":

The term "Quran" appears several times in Al-Shafi'i's book "Al-Um," including: His saying, "Indeed, your Lord knows that you stand in prayer nearly two-thirds of the night and half of it and a third of it, and a party of those with you. And Allah determines the night and the day. He knows that you will not be able to do it, and He has turned to you in mercy. So recite what is easy of the Quran" and His saying, "And when you recite the Quran, seek refuge in Allah from the accursed devil", and what was narrated by Jabir ibn Abdullah: "The Prophet (peace be upon him) performed four takbirs for the deceased and recited Al-Fatiha after the first takbir" (Al-Shafi'i, 2001a).

The Quran is the word of God revealed to His Messenger Muhammad, peace be upon him, written in the manuscripts. Ibn al-Athir stated that the origin of the Quran is "Qara'a" (to read), "Iqtarā" (to recite), "Qārī" (reader), and "Quran." The original meaning of this term is plurality, and everything you gather, you have read. The Quran is called the Quran because it gathers stories, commands and prohibitions, promises and threats, verses and chapters, some of which are connected to others. It can also refer to prayer because it involves recitation, naming something. With some of it, and on the reading itself.(Ibn al-Athir, 2017)

And the Quran: "It is the one revealed to the Messenger, written in the manuscripts, transmitted from him with a continuous chain without doubt, and the Quran, according to the people of truth, is the comprehensive divine knowledge that encompasses all truths" (Al-Jurjani, 2004), and the Holy Quran has many names, the most famous of which are: "Al-Furqan: It is called that because it distinguishes between truth and falsehood, and the Book, and the Reminder, and the Revelation" (Zaqzouq, 2003).

It is clear from the above that the meaning of the word has changed, elevating and raising its significance to the words of Allah, the Exalted. The Quran is an Islamic word, referring to the words of Allah, the Exalted, which is free from error and miraculous in its words and meanings. It was revealed to our master Muhammad, peace be upon him, and it is called the Quran either because it is read frequently or because it encompasses the chapters, verses, and the rules of customs and acts of worship that bring us closer to Allah, the Exalted. Its significance has elevated and risen.

C- The elevated connotation in the use of the word "messenger":

The term "the Messenger" appears several times in Al-Shafi'i's Book of the Mother, including: His saying, "O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you" , and His saying, "Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find written in what they have of the Torah and the Gospel" .

Resurrection, extension, and sending. This is what was understood from the words of Ibn Faris (d. 395 AH) where he said: "The letters ra, sin, and lam are one root, consistent, and analogous, indicating resurrection and extension" (Ibn Faris, 2008). What also makes the matter clearer is the words of al-Zamakhshari (d. 538 AH): "He wrote to him about such-and-such, and there was correspondence and correspondence between them, and they corresponded, and I sent him with a letter and a messenger, and I sent to him to do such-and-such, and God sent messengers to the nations" (Al-Zamakhshari, 1998). It carries the meaning of message and sending, and it is said: "The messenger: in the sense of the message, it is feminine and masculine, and it is said: She is your messenger. The people corresponded: some of them sent to others, and the messenger: the message and the sender, and the messenger: its meaning in the language is the one who follows up on the news of the one who sent him, taken from their saying "The camels came in messengers" meaning in succession (Ibn Manzur, 2008). What is meant here is that the messenger means the message, and the sender is the person who conveys the news, as it carries the meaning of succession.

News and messages, their significance has risen and become lofty, and they have come to carry a new meaning, which is the bearer of the divine message. Al-Shafi'i said, commenting on Almighty's saying: {Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. And if you dispute over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger} : "And it is said: It was revealed regarding the commanders of the raids, and they were ordered, if they disputed over something, that they should refer it to the judgment of Allah, the Almighty, then the judgment of the Messenger. So, the judgment of Allah, then His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was that the prayer should be performed at the time and in a manner that would suffice." (Al-Shafi'I, 2001a) He also said after the Almighty's saying: {And whatever He has

given you {The Messenger, so take him, and what he forbids you, refrain from} : “God Almighty has made it clear that the Messenger may legislate and God has imposed on people obedience to him” (Al-Shafi’I, 2001a), so the Messenger, according to Al-Shafi’i, came to mean the Messenger, the bearer of the heavenly message.

The word "messenger" used to refer to anyone carrying a message or anyone sent by the ruler, but then it became specialized, elevated, and exalted to refer to the messenger of the divine message.

D- The elevated connotation in the use of the word "paradise":

The term "Paradise" appears several times in Al-Shafi'i's book "Al-Um," including: the saying of Allah, "And Paradise will be brought near to the righteous" , and the saying of Allah, "Indeed, Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties, for theirs is Paradise" , and what was narrated by Ubadah ibn al-Samit from the Prophet, who said: "Five prayers have been prescribed by Allah upon His creation. Whoever fulfills them without neglecting any of them out of disdain for their rights, he has a covenant with Allah that He will admit him to Paradise" (Al-Shafi'I, 2018). The elegance and nobility of the term "paradise" come from its linguistic roots, as the word "paradise" in Arabic is generally used to refer to a garden. Ibn Manzur said: "Paradise: the garden, and from it, the gardens. The Arabs call palm trees 'paradise'; Zuhair bin Abi Sulma from (Al-Bahr Al-Basit):

As if my eyes were in the west, slaughtered by the dew, watering a garden of crushed dreams. (Abi Sulma, 2008) And Paradise: the garden with trees and palms, and its plural is "gardens." There is a specification in it. Abu Ali said in "Al-Tadhkira": "Paradise in the speech of the Arabs is only that which has palms and grapes. If it does not have these and is merely a garden with trees, then it is a garden and not Paradise." Paradise is the abode of bliss in the Hereafter, from "jann," which means covering, due to the density of its trees and the shading provided by the intertwining of its branches. (Ibn Manzur, 2008) Thus, Paradise is the orchard, the palm trees, and the garden with trees and palms.

There is a semantic change in the word "paradise," which originally referred to a garden in general, then became specific to gardens with palm trees and grapes; otherwise, it would not be called paradise. Some even used this term exclusively for palm trees. With the advent of Islam, the semantic concept of the word "paradise" changed and elevated, becoming a term of greater nobility and exaltation, referring to the abode of bliss in the hereafter. Al-Shafi'i said: "Hadiths have come about the children of Muslims entering paradise, and the evidence for this is from the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him." (Al-Shafi'I, 2001) He also said: "Whoever leaves the religion of Islam for another religion has left falsehood for falsehood, and he is not killed for leaving falsehood; he is killed for leaving the truth because he was not on the religion that Allah, the Exalted, made obligatory for him to enter paradise and the opposite of which is hellfire." (Al-Shafi'I, 2001) He also said:

"It is recommended that when the worshiper finishes the prayer, he should say the Talbiyah three times, and it is recommended that after completing the Talbiyah, he should follow it with prayers upon the Prophet, peace be upon him, and ask Allah, the Exalted, for His pleasure, Paradise, and seek refuge from the Fire." (Al-Shafi'I, 2001) In Al-Shafi'i's words, Paradise refers to the abode of bliss that Allah, the Exalted, has prepared for His servants in the Hereafter.

Paradise is the abode that God has prepared for the righteous, in which no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no heart has imagined. (Hamad, 2017) Paradise is the garden, the palm trees, and the garden with trees and palms. Then it underwent a semantic change, its meanings elevated and exalted, and it became the abode of reward and the abode of bliss. Paradise is the abode of happiness that God has promised to the believers.

The conclusion

Through the previous presentation of the study on the aspects of the refinement of meaning in Al-Shafi'i's book "Al-Um," the research reached the following conclusions:

- 1- Words in language may change and evolve, and their meanings can rise from the lowly and trivial to something stronger and more elevated, according to time, place, circumstances, and context.
- 2- The lexical meaning of "elevation" revolves around the ascent, nobility, and height of something, including speech.
- 3- Several terms are used to refer to the elevation of meaning, including "enhancement of meaning, escalation of meaning, transcendent change, and transcendence of meaning."
- 4- The elevation of meaning is a manifestation of semantic change, and this type of semantic change is applied to those words whose meanings were once trivial, weak, or considered inappropriate to mention, but then transformed into strong or noble meanings.
- 5- The elevation of meaning means that the original meaning of the word is narrow or weak, then it transforms through usage into a higher or stronger meaning.
- 6- One of the most significant reasons that lead to the elevation of meaning is the development of social life. If the thing itself develops, its value will rise, and consequently, its meaning will also elevate.
- 7- The terms and legal terminology found in Al-Shafi'i's book "Al-Um" have varied and their meanings have evolved towards sophistication. Among these manifestations are the terms {verse – Quran – messenger – paradise}.

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