



The Invocative Approach and the Rhetorical Impact of Exemplification in Ibn Malik's Alfiyya

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Abstract:

This research addresses the scientific phenomenon of blending the invocative spirit with educational objectives and teaching methods. It explores the potential benefits of this innovative approach in reinvigorating the moral essence of educational examples during the developmental stages of youth, classifying selected exemplifications based on their invocative purpose and rhetorical effect.

Keywords: *invocation, rhetorical impact, exemplification, citation.*

L'approche invoquante et l'impact rhétorique de l'exemplification dans l'Alfiyya d'Ibn Malik

Résumé :

Cette recherche aborde le phénomène scientifique consistant à associer l'esprit d'invocation à des objectifs éducatifs et à des méthodes pédagogiques. Elle explore les avantages potentiels de cette approche innovante pour redynamiser l'essence morale des exemples éducatifs pendant les étapes de développement de la jeunesse, en classant une sélection d'exemplifications en fonction de leur objectif d'invocation et de leur effet rhétorique.

Mots-clés : *invocation, impact rhétorique, exemplification, citation.*

Introduction:

Ibn Malik's *Alfiya* is famous for clear, objective, scientific, historical, subjective and faith-based reasons. Due to its scientific, grammatical nature, this blessed system is filled with crafted examples intended to explain, clarify, complete and perfect established grammatical rules.

This article aims to shed light on an apparent yet overlooked phenomenon within this text: the selective use of educational examples that are directed and purposeful, and undoubtedly intended to educate and invite people to God and virtuous morals. This research substantiates this by thoroughly and accurately examining certain sections and verses using examples and samples to achieve the desired goal efficiently and effectively.

The study also seeks to answer a fundamental question: What are the prospects of benefiting from Ibn Malik's approach in encouraging young people to serve their countries, whether they are aware of it or not? Can this approach be replicated to develop noble goals that serve society by instilling values in young people in a smooth and indirect manner?

Undoubtedly, the efforts of those responsible for developing educational programmes and curricula since independence have yielded evident successes and fruitful outcomes in this field. However, it is essential to define these goals and methods of implementation, especially at a time when the pace of public relations and communication has accelerated and major values have undergone significant changes, some of which are radical.

Ibn Malik was a well-known figure in his field during his lifetime and beyond. His fame through this system is even



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more widespread. Reading his biography reveals the sincerity of his intentions and his expertise in his field of specialisation, which is why his system is so highly regarded, much like the blessings found in Al-Busiri's two poems, Al-Burdah and Al-Hamziyyah, which praise the best of creation, peace be upon him. For the sake of brevity and the man's well-known status, we will bypass a detailed presentation of his biography or what is relevant to us, focusing instead on his Alfiya.

Ibn Malik himself expressed the essence of the idea on which this article is based in the chapter on 'hal' (circumstantial clauses), stating, for example:

'Like hitting the servant who is misbehaving (and my clarification of the truth is tied to wisdom).'

This indicates that he strives to elucidate the truth in the most complete and perfect way possible, using wisdom to aid comprehensive explanation. The term 'truth' encompasses 'knowledge' in general, including grammar and its principles and branches.

In this research, we focus on examples consisting of complete sentences and structures with independent grammatical meaning. Exemplifications concerning morphological or grammatical issues consisting of a single word without conjugation are not relevant to our study due to the nature of the research and its subject matter.

The article is structured as follows:

- **Section 1:** Definition and Types of Exemplification.
- **Section 2:** The invocative and educational objectives of exemplification.
- **Section 3:** The scientific methods used by Ibn Malik in exemplification.

- **Section 4:** Rhetorical Impact and Discourse Analysis.
- **Section 5:** Applications of exemplification in contemporary invocative and educational contexts.

To the best of my knowledge, no research has been conducted to present and discuss an idea of this nature. Therefore, this paper seeks to present practical ideas that can enhance and rejuvenate certain aspects of educational curricula for young people in Arab countries that have become stagnant. God is the ultimate intention behind this endeavour.

1. Definition and Types of Exemplification

It is well known that arguments become clearer through the use of examples. Grammatical writings have structured their chapters around the use of examples to explain grammatical concepts¹. According to most scholars, exemplification is defined as ‘describing something absent by providing a representation that allows one to understand the meaning of the absent subject’. Thus, it is synonymous with citation and argumentation.

In linguistic jurisprudence, Ibn Faris defined argumentation as follows: ‘The language of the Arabs is used as evidence in matters of dispute when the contention involves a name, attribute, or something the Arabs utilise in their customs, whether literally or metaphorically.’² The difference between this and comparison is that ‘comparison with “like” serves to liken attributes to one another, while “similar” serves to liken entities to one another’. For

¹- Mohammad bin Ali al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi, Proverbs from the Book and the Sunnah, edited by: Al-Sayyid al-Jumaili, Dar Ibn Zaydun, Beirut, 1st Edition, 1985, p. 74.

²- Ibn Faris, The Companion in the Jurisprudence of Language, p. 10.



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instance, one might say, 'He is not like Zayd as a man,' meaning in some of his attributes, since everyone is similar to him in essence.³

However, Dr Fadil Al-Samarrai criticised Abu Hilal's statement for its lack of precision, remarking that 'it seems that Abu Hilal's statement is inaccurate; comparison with "like" can refer to both essence and attributes. For example, one could say, 'No poet is like Al-Mutanabbi,' and yet all poets are undoubtedly similar to him in essence.⁴

For grammarians, an exemplification is evidence that a grammatical rule is correct, as inferred from the speech of Arabs. The author of *Alfiya* used a variety of tools in his exemplifications, the most important of which are the comparative particle *kaf*, the word *naw* (meaning 'like'), and the terms *mithl* and *ka-mithl* in that order. Abu Hilal al-Askari stated that 'there is nothing in speech suitable for comparison except *kaf* and *mithl*'⁵.

In truth, the word 'naw' fulfils the condition stipulated by Al-Askari for using the terminology of comparison and exemplification, which is why grammarians frequently used it in their writings. It appears a total of 77 times in the *Alfiya*, whereas 'kaf' is used even more frequently.

Exemplifications can be categorised into four types: as evidence, reinforcement, illustration or completion of a rule or condition. I have compiled three of these, which are explained in the following verses:

And the witness of grammatical issues,

³- Abu Hilal al-Askari, *Linguistic Differences*, p. 444.

⁴- Prof. Dr. Fadel al-Samarrai, *Meanings of Grammar*, Dar al-Fikr, Amman, 2nd Edition, 2002, 3/53.

⁵- *Ibid.*, p. 294.

Through it, you argue, O brother of humanity.
Reinforce if you sense the hidden.
With a witness you mentioned, acknowledging.
Illustrate and clarify with what appears;
From the example, and make it a guide.

Fourth type: The Rule-Completing Example

This type appears to be uniquely associated with adept grammarians such as Ibn Malik. I have termed it the 'foundational example' due to its role in establishing rules.

1.1. The exemplificatory example

This type can be divided into two categories:

- 1) As a grammatical or linguistic witness: this type serves as an example of grammar, morphology or linguistics that the author presents and which is drawn from a Quranic verse, a transmitted saying, a common proverb or memorised poetry.
- 2) As a rule-establishing example: this type involves the example cited supporting a specific rule or condition, which may or may not have been intended by the author.

Examples of the first type in the *Alfiya*:

- In the section on relative pronouns, Ibn Malik states:

"Likewise, the deletion of what is described as being in the genitive case.

As in 'You are a judge' after a command from 'the one who judges'."

Here, he refers to the verse: 'So judge what you are commanded' [Taha/72]. He structured it this way to maintain the metre of the verse. Al-Muradi commented: 'The genitive noun can be governed either by a possessive or by a particle. If it is governed by a possessive and the possessor is



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a descriptive agent, its deletion is permissible, as in the verse “So judge what you are judging”⁶, meaning “what you are judging”.’ He emphasises that the author explicitly refers to this verse.

Another example is his opening line:

‘Our speech is a meaningful term, like “be upright”.’

This is the first example in the *Alfiya*, taken from the Quranic verses in Surah Hud and Surah Ash-Shura. Allah says: ‘Be upright as you are commanded, and whoever repents with you’ [Hud/11:2], and ‘Be upright as you have been commanded, and do not follow their desires’ [Ash-Shura/42:15]. The meaning is derived from the context, as will be elaborated upon later.

Additionally, he states:

“Rarely does the absolute noun accompany the definite article.

The opposite is true for its companions.’

He cites the line:

‘I will not let cowardice prevent me from battle,
Even if the ranks of foes increase.’

This line, from an unknown poet, was used by Ibn Malik in the section on ‘the purpose of the action’⁷ to illustrate the permissibility of using the definite article. The author mentions this line because he could not find it in the Quran or Hadith; therefore, he turned to Arab poetry to provide

⁶- Al-Muradi (Ibn Umm Qasim), *Clarification of Purposes and Paths with Commentary on the Alfiyyat of Ibn Malik*, explanation and commentary by: Abd al-Rahman Ali Suleiman, Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, 1st Edition, 2008, 1/457. See also: Ibn al-Nazim Badr al-Din bin Muhammad bin Malik, *Commentary of Ibn al-Nazim*, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, Beirut, p. 67.

⁷- Ibn al-Nazim, *Commentary of Ibn al-Nazim* (previous source), p. 199.

evidence and support for the established rule. This form of composition is known as 'inclusion', and is considered commendable by rhetoricians, provided the included speech is well-known, as it becomes a distinctive mark recognised by the listener upon hearing it.

Grammarians such as Sibawayh, Al-Farra and Al-Akhfash had a tradition of citing the words of unknown poets and common folk. They found reassurance in belonging to a circle of argumentation that remained consistent across time and space.

Examples of the second type:

This type refers to examples that affirm a rule or similar concept using wording or expressions found in the Quran.

Ibn Malik states the following in the section on the absolute noun:

“And for detailing, like ‘either from us,’

Its agent is deleted where we are.’

This is in reference to the verse: *(So either a favour after or a ransom)* [Muhammad/4]. He presents it concisely because ‘either’ appears twice in the verse, yet its meaning is well known⁸. Essentially, it means: ‘Either you grant a favour or you provide a ransom.’ Thus, the agent is deleted, and this deletion is necessary.

An example of the second category is:

‘As God is generous and the bounties testify.’

This can be said to be derived from the verse: ‘So Allah conferred upon us and protected us from the torment of the scorching wind; indeed, we used to invoke Him before, for He is the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful’ [At-Tur/28].

⁸- See: Ibn al-Nazim, Commentary of Ibn al-Nazim (previous source), p. 195.



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Both phrases imply that Allah is generous and abundant in goodness and bestows continuous blessings, a notion supported by His many favours. This aligns perfectly with the meaning expressed in the noble verse.

Here, we can rely on the theory of reception, which suggests that the speaker's intention (in this case, the author's) is obscured, allowing the words to be open to all acceptable interpretations. This theory emphasises the significance of the recipient's role, affirming that they occupy a position that is parallel to that of both the author and the literary work; they are not merely passive consumers of creativity⁹. Thus, the couplet offers a new and valuable perspective.

Additional examples:

One of the examples he provides is:

'If it means Him, then it suffices.

Like my saying, 'God is sufficient for me, and He is enough.'"

This alludes to the following verses: 'God is sufficient for you and for those who follow you of the believers' [Al-Anfal 64], 'For your Lord is sufficient' [Al-Anfal 68], and 'And they said, "God is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs"' [Al-Imran 73].

Another example is:

"And the accusative after addition is necessary.

If it is like the weight of the earth in gold.'

⁹- Dr. Belkacem Jettari and Researcher: Fatima Abdul Razzaq Karmastaji, Reception Theory Publishing and Information Services Division, June 2022 Edition, p. 7.

This relies on the verse: 'So no ransom will be accepted from any of them, even if he offers the weight of the earth in gold' [Al-Imran/91]. Ibn Aqil clarified that the author intends to cite this verse, stating: 'If a noun is added to a quantity without differentiation, the differentiation must be in the accusative, as in "in the heavens is the measure of a handful of clouds".' He also mentioned the verse: 'So no ransom will be accepted from any of them, even if he offers the weight of the earth in gold'¹⁰. Although Ibn Malik does not explicitly cite this verse, his words clearly imply a reference to it.

He also cites a prophetic tradition:

- > "The news of the restricted is always presented first,
- > Like 'We have no choice but to follow Muhammad.'"

This is derived from the saying of the Messenger of God, peace be upon him: *(If Moses were alive, he would have no choice but to follow me)¹¹*. The meaning of the hadith is clearly embedded within the line, reflecting Ibn Malik's methodology considering the nature of poetry, which must adhere to known constraints of meter and rhyme.

Ibn Malik is among the few scholars who invoked hadith to establish grammatical rules, and he authored a book titled *الصحيح الجامع لمشكل التوضيح شواهد*. He was a scholar of jurisprudence and hadith before he became known for grammar and language. His extensive knowledge of hadith was remarkable, as he often cited the Quran; if there was no relevant verse, he would turn to hadith, and if neither was available, he would refer to the poetry of the Arabs.

¹⁰- Commentary of Ibn Aqil', 2/289.

¹¹- Al-Bayhaqi, Branches of Faith, edited by: Abu Hajar Muhammad al-Saeed bin Basyouni Zaghoul (Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st edition, 2000), 1/347.



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In his التصحيح و شواهد التوضيح *, Ibn Malik stated:

> “The occurrence of an indefinite noun after ‘if’ of surprise... as in the saying of Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her: ‘The Messenger of Allah entered while a pot was on the fire...’ I say: it is not prohibited to begin with an indefinite noun in all cases, but if beginning with it does not yield benefit, such as ‘a man spoke and a woman menstruated...¹²’ Among the indicators that provide benefit is reliance on ‘if’ of surprise, as in ‘I set out, and if there was a lion on the road.¹³”

This text suggests that Ibn Malik provided another justification for beginning with an indefinite noun through the hadith, which he summarised briefly in the *Alfiya* with the phrase, ‘And let what was not said be measured.’

Examples of his more liberated prose, free from the constraints of metre and rhyme, also demonstrate that they are value-laden. For instance, he illustrates this with:

‘I set out, and there was a lion on the road.’

This points to bravery and manliness.

In conclusion, citing the Quran, hadith or poetry that is relevant to the time and place of citation is the strongest form of evidence or argumentation. In such poetic compositions, the text may be quoted verbatim, the author may convey its meaning alongside some of its words, or he may extract its meaning and embed it in his verse, indicating

¹²- Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, *The Aspirations of Seekers in the Classes of Linguists and Grammarians*, edited by: Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim, al-Maktaba al-Asriyya, Saida, Lebanon, 1/134.

¹³- *Evidences of Clarification and Correction for the Problems of the Comprehensive Authentic*, edited by: Dr Taha Mohsen, Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Reviving Islamic Heritage, Iraq, 1985, p. 98.

his intention with a reference. However, when applying the theory of reception, we disregard the author's intention and open the text up to interpretation, as demonstrated by the first and second examples.

1.2. The exemplificatory or reinforcing example.

This is what follows the witness, whether it is used for argumentation or not. An example of this can be seen in the previous line:

'The news is the part that completes the benefit.

Like God is generous and the bounties are a witness.'

In this case, a sentence was provided and then reinforced with another, emphasising that they are identical in meaning. Both are nominal sentences in which the predicate complements the subject to deliver the benefit.

Another example is:

'It is permissible to prioritise it, like the one who is hastening,

Zayd, who calls with sincerity.'

Here, he illustrated the first example with 'the one who is hastening', then reinforced it with 'Zayd, who calls with sincerity' for emphasis and reassurance. The intention may be to emphasise that the state occurs prior to the nominal agent 'the one hastening' or the verbal agent 'who calls'.

Additionally, he states:

'If Zayd is a scholar, then I am too.

But his son is of the tribe.'

This serves to illustrate the entry of 'if' or one of its counterparts into the sentence, providing two examples that reinforce each other.

This notion of reinforced exemplification is akin to the verse:



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'And when they commit an immorality, they say, "We found our forefathers upon it, and Allah has commanded us to do it"' [Al-A'raf/28].

They anticipated a weakness in their initial argument and reinforced it with a second example.

All three examples fall under the categories of reinforcement and illustration, since neither is cited for argumentation purposes; both are crafted examples.

Third: the foundational example.

This refers to the example that the author uses to illustrate conditions, situations or definitions. This method is unique and rarely seen among authors and poets. An example of this is:

"Our speech is a meaningful term, such as 'be upright'.

And it consists of a noun, a verb and then a letter.'

When discussing the definition of speech according to grammarians and its components and qualifications, the author limited himself to two: meaning and usefulness. He then added the other two components: structure and placement. Grammarians define speech as 'a term indicating a singular meaning through placement'¹⁴. 'Structure' implies more than one term; in this example, there are two terms: one is explicitly mentioned ('be upright'), while the other is implicitly understood ('you'). This is a matter of placement, not strength.

From after negation or its equivalent, as in:

'No person should seek ease from another.'

¹⁴. Al-Zamakhshari (Abu al-Qasim Mahmoud bin Omar Jar Allah), The Detailed Art of Parsing, edited by: Dr Ali Bou Melhem, Dar al-Hilal, Beirut, 1st edition, 1993, p. 28.

He finished by giving an example and explaining part of his phrase, 'its equivalent', referring to prohibition. This is akin to the saying of Al-Tirmidhi:

'No one should hesitate on the day of battle,
Out of fear of death.¹⁵

Similarly, in the section on 'if' and its derivatives, he states:

"Observe this arrangement except in the case of [...]
Like 'I wish there were no rude ones in it.'"

This refers to cases where the predicate of the sentence from these negations is either a prepositional phrase or a genitive construction¹⁶.

In the section on the conditions for beginning with an indefinite noun, he states:

'It is not permissible to begin with an indefinite noun.
Unless it is beneficial, such as 'There is a tiger with Zayd.'
And is there a youth among you? For we have none.
And a nobleman is with us.'

He mentions the general condition for beginning with an indefinite noun being beneficial, and then gives examples of conditions achieved through benefit, namely predicates that are prepositional phrases or genitive constructions. He introduces this with the example¹⁷, "There is a tiger with Zayd."

¹⁵- See: Ibn al-Nazim, 'Commentary of Ibn al-Nazim' (previous source), p. 234.

¹⁶- See: Ibn al-Nazim, 'Commentary of Ibn al-Nazim' (previous source), p. 80.

¹⁷- See: Al-Muradi Ibn Umm Qasim, Clarification of Purposes and Paths (previous source), 2/728.



The second condition is based on negation or interrogation and is defined as follows:

‘Is there a youth among you? For we have none,’
and ‘Is there a nobleman among us?’

He proceeds in this manner.

Similarly, in the section on differentiation, he states:

‘A noun meaning “from” that clarifies an indefinite noun.

It is designated as a differentiation by what has been explained:

Like ‘a span of land’ and ‘a measure of barley,’

And ‘two measures of honey’ and ‘two measures of dates’.”

The singular noun clarified by the differentiation could be a measure, such as ‘a span of land’, while he uses ‘a measure of barley’ and ‘two measures of honey and dates’ as examples of the measured items. He mentions some conditions for its designation as a differentiation and illustrates these with the cited examples.

2. Invocation and Education through Exemplification

We assert that, while selecting examples to clarify grammatical issues, the author does not overlook noble objectives, some of which we will mention.

2.1. Invocation to God

From his position as a scholar within the community, at a pivotal point no less significant than jihad and defence in the way of God, we observe his frequent invocation of virtuous qualities and moral excellence in many verses. For example, he states:

“It is permissible to prioritise it, like the one who is hastening,

Zayd, who calls with sincerity.’

This implies that inviting others to follow God among Muslims – represented here by ‘Zayd’ – is a commendable and beloved act, and that sincerity is equally important. Remembering God is an invocation to Him. When a servant remembers their Lord in a gathering, God remembers them better than they remember Him, as mentioned in the famous hadith.

In this sense, Ibn Malik illustrates this idea with:

‘Raise with a dative and denote with a nominative,

Like remembering God delights the servant.’

This reflects things that please God and people.

2.2. Reinforcement of good character:

He further emphasises values in the section on relative pronouns, stating:

“In a connected return, if it is accusative,

With a verb or description, like the one we hope grants.’

Here, he reminds us that God is the one we hope for and the giver of blessings. It is as if he is inviting us to reflect on these divine names when we pray.

2.3. Accountability for Actions

In the section on the subject and predicate, he mentions:

‘After “and” designates a concept,

Like every craftsman and what he has made.’

This example illustrates the permissibility of omitting the predicate. The underlying invocative meaning reminds us of the verse: ‘Every soul is tied to what it has earned’ [Al-Muddathir/38], as well as: ‘If you disbelieve, indeed Allah is



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free of need of you, and He does not approve of disbelief in His servants; and if you are grateful, He approves of you' [Az-Zumar/7]. Everyone is accountable for their actions – if good, then good; if evil, then evil – and will be rewarded accordingly by the All-Knowing.

2.4. The Rewards of Striving

Likewise, he states:

“And strip the verb if it is assigned

To two or a group, like the martyrs have won.’

This reinforces the idea that those who strive on God’s path are indeed winners. This aligns perfectly with the verse: ‘Indeed, those who have believed, emigrated and fought in the cause of Allah with their property and their lives are on a level with their Lord, and they are the successful ones’ [At-Tawbah/20]. A more explicit statement is found in: ‘Indeed, Allah has purchased the lives and properties of the believers; for that, they will have Paradise’ [At-Tawbah/112]. Here, the terms ‘martyr’ and ‘winning’ are mentioned, emphasising the reward for those who sacrifice for their faith.

2.5. Contribution to cultivating public taste

Public etiquette is the responsibility of the community, as well as scholars, virtuous individuals and leaders. Among these, Ibn Malik stands out. He recognises his responsibility to contribute to cultivating taste and building civilisation, particularly within his beautiful Andalusian surroundings, in terms of both nature and geography. This is evident in the numerous phrases, expressions and examples he provides in this area. We will highlight some of these phrases and

expressions, along with their significance in shaping the collective cultural conscience.

2.5.1. *Praising the Righteous*

In the section on the subject and predicate, Ibn Malik states:

‘As with the negation question,

It is permissible, like ‘Winners are those of sound judgement.’”

Here, he praises those who possess wisdom and good management skills. The profound implication is: ‘Be like those who are rightly guided, and you will be a winner.’ This is a valuable contribution to developing the shared values of nations and communities.

2.5.2. *The Value of Good Conduct*

In the section on the absolute noun (source), he writes:

“As an affirmation or type that clarifies or counts,

Like ‘I walked two journeys, the journey of the wise.’”

He combines two examples in one phrase. The intended meaning is: ‘I walked two journeys, and I walked the journey of the wise.’ This combination provides an additional benefit: the commendable person always walks on a good, wise path, following in the footsteps of the righteous. It invites a spiritual journey towards God and His paths leading to Him. This contrasts sharply with Pharaoh, who said: ‘I guide you only to the path of right guidance’ [Ghafir/29], while God informs us that he will lead his people to Hell on the Day of Judgement – a wretched destination [Hud/98].



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2.5.3. *Encouragement of seriousness*

In the same section, he mentions:

‘What is indicated can be replaced by it.

Like the utmost seriousness, rejoice with joy.’

This is a call to adopt earnestness and abandon superficiality and triviality.

2.5.4. *Avoidance of Harm*

In the section on the subject (doer), he states:

“The feminine ‘taa’ follows the past if it

Is for a female, like ‘Hind refrains from harm.’”

This is a call to avoid causing harm, which may refer to offending people or engaging in immorality, particularly in this context. ‘Hind’ is the name of a chaste and pure woman who refrains from immorality, temptation, and vice.

2.5.5. *The Importance of Politeness*

In the section on ‘if’ and its derivatives, he notes:

“Observe this arrangement, except in the case of [...]

Like ‘I wish for someone with refined speech.’”

This implies a desire for someone who speaks politely and chooses their words carefully. Being clean from filth necessitates the absence of rudeness and vile language. God commands: ‘Speak good words to people’ [Al-Baqarah/83]. This is essential in cultivating good taste in public places such as streets, squares and clubs.

2.6. Invitation to Noble Morals

An Invitation to Noble Morals

Ibn Malik explicitly uses the term ‘noble morals’ in his verse:

“And he named notable names, such as the chosen one and the one who ascends to noble deeds.”

These ‘noble deeds’ are good, elevated actions through which a person is honoured and holds a high status among others. This is achieved by striving for virtuous ethics. When we consider the combination of ‘the chosen one’, one of the well-known names or attributes of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), with the ascent to high moral standards, it becomes evident that Ibn Malik is intent on cultivating refined tastes and nurturing them in the youth.

In the section on the subject and predicate, he states:

‘Subject: Zayd and ‘Aather is the predicate.

If you say, ‘Zayd is an advocate for the one who apologises.’”

This implies that if someone named Zayd is approached by a person who has wronged him and he considers himself noble and honourable, he has no choice but to accept the apology and absolve the apologiser from the consequences of their actions. We understand this from the phrase ‘Zayd is an advocate for the one who apologises’, meaning he will undoubtedly advocate for them. This is because, according to grammarians, the active participle implies an expectation that the action will occur, just as in the verse: *(Indeed, you will return)* [Ad-Dukhan/15].

In the section on the subject (doer), he mentions:

‘Observe this arrangement, except in the case of [...]

Like ‘I wish for someone who is not rude.’”

As mentioned in the verse, the ‘rude’ person is impudent and has bad character, while the opposite is a person of good character with pleasant speech and a good reputation.

He also states:

“If it is preceded by [...]



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‘Give as long as you are right in giving a dirham.’”

It seems he draws inspiration from the verse: ‘And spend from what He has made you successors in it’ [Al-Hadid/7].

In the phrase:

“If Zayd is a scholar, then I am too.

But his son is resentful.’

In these examples, he directly or indirectly encourages adopting good morals, such as avoiding rudeness and vulgarity in speech. Such types of people should not be present in our place of residence. He encourages abandoning hatred and animosity and cultivating their opposites.

He advocates offering sincere advice, as in his line:

“Similarly, the one who brings what is connected brings,

Like ‘Command what I have passed, for he is good.’”

This means: ‘Command what I have passed by, for I have found it to be noble.’ Thus, you will succeed as I have succeeded. I call people to goodness and advise them sincerely. The Messenger of God (peace be upon him) said: ‘Religion is sincerity.’¹⁸

The call to noble morals and elevated virtues is clear throughout the *Alfiya* and its issues; hardly a section is devoid of it.

3. Scientific Methods Used by Ibn Malik in Exemplification

Ibn Malik employed several methods to achieve his objectives, including:

¹⁸- Al-Bayhaqi, *Branches of Faith*, 4/323. Hadith number: 5265.

3.1. Islamic Culture

He leveraged the Islamic culture held by himself and the broader audience engaged in knowledge, especially in religious sciences. He utilized their faith and fear of their Lord to deepen this in their hearts and to immortalize it in the books of knowledge.

3.2. His Talent and Intelligence

Ibn Malik used his intelligence to exploit the openness of examples as a means to promote the spirit of inviting to God, cultivating taste, and contributing to the construction of a sound collective conscience for the Muslim community.

3.3. Profound Sufi References

He incorporated a wealth of profound Sufi references throughout the *Alfiya*, either intentionally or unintentionally. The abundance and variety of these references, along with their 'openness', allow for rich interpretations.

For example, he states:

“Raise with a ‘waaw’ and ‘baa’, and draw and denote,
Like the plural sound of the male and the sinner.’

Here, he is talking about the plural sound for males¹⁹, suggesting that the ‘one who flourishes’ is the opposite of ‘the sinner’. The sinner is desolate and empty, while the obedient heart flourishes. Thus, considering this meaning, the ‘waaw’ is akin to ‘or’.

3.4. Use of Examples with Moral Significance

He also mentions

¹⁹- See: Ibn Aqil, 'Commentary of Ibn Aqil', 2/89.



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“Omission with separation by ‘illa’ is preferred.

Like ‘there is no merit for the daughter of Al-‘Ala’.”

This indicates that, if the subject and its feminine agent are separated by ‘illa’, the ‘taa’ should not be retained according to the majority view. Here, he uses the proper name ‘Al-‘Ala’, which signifies superiority and elevation. This girl is noble in character and pure because she lives in a home of excellence that has been passed down through generations.

3.5. The Importance of Time and Place

In the section on the adverbial noun, he states:

“The adverb is time or place, included,

‘In’ consistently, like ‘here, stay a while.’”

There is no doubt that ‘here’ is one of the best places, and the author, who is known for his noble character, suggests staying there. Let us assume that it is the Sacred House of God. Spending a considerable amount of time there is advantageous. The honour of time and place, when combined – as in the pilgrimage during its sacred months – is among the most highly regarded matters.

3.6. The Call for Justice

In the section on prepositions, he states:

‘Zayd’ is in denial, so it is a noun.

Like ‘there is no safety for the oppressor.’”

This implies a command similar to the verse: ‘Whoever enters it is safe’ [Al-Imran/97]. Taking action against the oppressor and seeking justice for the oppressed is of great importance in achieving balance in society and advancing intellectual and cultural development. The implication here

is that the oppressor should not escape punishment and should be dealt with accordingly.

These references are profound and eloquent, suggesting that the author intended them, or at least some of them. However, modern linguistic theories often overlook the speaker's intent, focusing instead on the text and studying its linguistic and rhetorical possibilities.

4. Rhetorical Impact and Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is a linguistic and meta-linguistic research area used to understand and build upon creative texts, developing skills among future generations in the process.

Interestingly, the methodologies and perspectives of those who attempted to dissect the *Alfiya* or incorporate some of its verses or meanings varied greatly, with some even using a style known among rhetoricians as 'the art of indulgence'. This indicates the richness and diversity of its meanings and the ideas presented within it.

- ✓ The abundance of examples.
- ✓ Their variety.
- ✓ Their careful selection and refinement.
- ✓ Their alignment with grammatical, scientific and educational objectives.

A thoughtful observer recognises the extent to which the collection of examples contributes to the construction of a cultural and intellectual edifice, capitalising on the opportunities presented by the language's breadth. This reflects the appropriateness of the examples to the selector's intended purpose, drawing on his knowledge, culture, talents and skills, as well as his stable psychological state



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and exemplary character. Al-Suyuti noted that Ibn Malik was an imam in the village of Al-'Adliyya²⁰.

The rhetorical impact of presenting scientific examples in a constructive and inviting manner towards desired values can be understood by examining the nature and classification of the examples themselves. They can be categorised concisely as follows:

- Be like this and not like that.
- Be like this and not like that.
- The state of society should be like this and like that.
- How beautiful it is to be this way and that way.
- It is eloquent to say, 'Be like this, and do not be like that.'

Many of the representations in the *Alfiya* reflect these references and calls to action. For example, consider the following four lines:

'And Zayd in denial and its like, so it is a noun,
Like 'there is no safety for the oppressor'.
And omitting it for certainty and accusative is its mark,
Like 'You should not aim for injustice.'
Raising and placing make it an inflection.
For nouns and verbs, as in 'I will not fear'.
Is there a youth among you, for we have none?
And a man of honour among us?"

- It is as if Ibn Malik is saying the following in order:
- Do not oppress or be unjust, for the oppressor will face dire consequences.
- You should not aim for injustice, for that is the very definition of oppression.

²⁰- Al-Suyuti, *The Aspirations of Seekers* (previous source), 1/134.

- Do not be timid; be courageous, noble and proud.

Be the young man your people look to for protection and defence of their lineage. Be a man of honour when you visit; do not be a burden to your host.

This type of invocative appeal is supported by the words of Allah:

“Do not be like those who left their homes in arrogance, seeking only to be seen by others, and who hinder others from the path of Allah. Allah encompasses all that they do.’ [Al-Anfal/47].

After recounting what happened to the three who were left behind but spoke the truth, Allah said:

‘O you who have believed, fear Allah and be with the truthful.’ [At-Tawbah/119].

This means being like the three truthful individuals mentioned.

Analysing discourse involves understanding the speaker’s intentions behind all their words, whether original statements, quoted arguments or crafted examples for representation or affirmation. Therefore, although Ibn Malik’s words were initially intended to persuade through grammatical rules, they ultimately sought to establish values and contribute to the benefit of the community, aiming for what Allah has promised on the Day of Judgement.

When we apply the principles of discourse analysis to Ibn Malik’s work, we find that they are almost entirely applicable. In the book on style and stylistics, it is noted that those who pioneered the science of style believed that language serves life because it is a living function imbued with human relationships and intertwined with human struggle. This is an accepted fact, as language is one of the



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most prominent components of humanity²¹, particularly in our role as social beings.

Ibn Malik's exemplification of grammatical issues is a commendable form of rhetorical elaboration recognised by rhetoricians as valid under certain conditions. He provides examples from Quranic texts and eloquent speech. Al-Jahiz referred to this as seizing the opportunity, a hallmark of eloquence. In "Al-Bayan wa al-Tabayin", he stated that:

"When asked about eloquence, he said: 'Clarity of indication, seizing the opportunity, and good signalling.'²²

He considered seizing and taking advantage of opportunities to be a significant part of the essence of eloquence and its success, reflecting the speaker's talent and capability.

5. Contemporary Applications

We live in an increasingly complex reality due to tremendous technological developments and a significant decline in values and etiquette. Ibn Malik's work can have an impact on educational curricula in Islamic countries today by enriching educational programmes with examples that promote general values, as mentioned in previous sections. This will help to steer some of these programmes away from being mired in material examples and representations of tangible or physical concepts, while avoiding abstractions completely.

²¹- Graham Hough, *Style and Stylistics*, translated by: Kadhim Saad al-Din, Dar Afaq Arabiya, Baghdad, Iraq, 1985, p. 37.

²²- Al-Jahiz, *Eloquence and Exposition*, Dar Sa'ab, Beirut, 1st edition, 1968, 1/61.

The focus on material examples, such as ‘So-and-so ate the apple’ or ‘So-and-so went to the park’, arose from acceptable, objective reasons relating to the times and environments in which societies lived. However, in an era where environments have completely changed, including human, intellectual and social components, along with shifting beliefs and drastic changes in community habits and lifestyles, it is appropriate to direct our efforts towards other approaches. These objective reasons include:

- The abundance of moral values in society outside the classroom.
- Limited creative aspirations and industrial thinking, as life is closer to a primitive existence.
- The trend that educational programmes have adopted should gradually be reassessed for several reasons:
 - A near-complete change in the means of acquiring knowledge.
 - A near-complete shift in the nature of domestic life.
 - The contraction of familial and communal relationships.

Therefore, in light of the significant changes occurring at multiple levels, it is crucial to adopt a methodology akin to that of Ibn Malik (the Old Renewed) to ensure that one of the most accessible means of acquiring knowledge and education — exemplification — actively contributes to inspiring positive values and high moral standards, thereby addressing the substantial rift caused by relentless technological advances in human intellectual depth. This should be done while acknowledging the beneficial role of technology in fostering understanding and perception.

This is evident in Ibn Malik’s own work. For instance, in the section on transitive and intransitive verbs, he said:



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'Assign an object to it if it does not imply a subject.

Like: 'I contemplated the books.'"

He did not say 'I read the books' or 'I received the books', which would have been grammatically and metrically acceptable. This demonstrates his intention and desire in selecting words and meanings. Contemplating books, especially in our time, is more beneficial and rewarding than merely scrolling through Facebook, even if the shared content includes valuable cultural information from a specialist or non-specialist, since books are well-crafted and reliable sources of information.

In conclusion, it would be beneficial to replace commands such as 'Eat', 'Go', 'Stand' and 'Sit' with 'Listen', 'Reflect', 'Strive', 'Guide', 'Perceive', 'Forgive', 'Shake Hands', 'Pardon' and 'Contemplate', among others. At a sentence level, there is even more potential to disseminate values and signals more broadly and accessibly.

Conclusion:

Benefitting from a text in ways other than the author's intention is a frequently overlooked endeavour by researchers, yet it is highly beneficial. At the same time, it is a practical application of a linguistic theory known as reception theory, in which the author and their intentions are disregarded, leaving the text open to reinterpretation by critics.

Key findings of the research:

It is possible to use discourse analysis and reception theory to engage with ancient texts, creating a new approach

that supports the educational system, particularly in the area of exemplification.

- There are significant benefits to applying reception theory to obscure or amplify the speaker's intent, thereby opening up the text for greater utility and contribution.
- Ethics and values can be cultivated and embedded through the careful selection of examples.

The research revealed that effective use of rhetorical devices, talents and linguistic knowledge can significantly enhance the desired rhetorical impact, yielding substantial benefits for scientific and methodological output when updating educational programmes for young people.

Recommendations:

It is advisable to pursue similar studies in order to benefit from the methodologies of scholars in the field of education, particularly Al-Shatibi's work on readings and related topics.

Curriculum developers should bear in mind the new variables when updating programmes, steering the texts towards fostering thought and emphasising inclusive human moral values.

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