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Irbid- Jordan

Ostensible Invitations in Jordanian Arabic:
A Sociopragmatic Study

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Ostensible Invitations in Jordanian Arabic: A Sociopragmatic Study

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Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan

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## List of Phonetic Symbols

The following phonetic symbols are used in this study

### Consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Consonants</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ء</td>
<td>ء</td>
<td>Voiceless glottal stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ب</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>Voiced bilabial stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ت</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>Voiceless dento-alveolar stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ث</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>Voiceless inter-dental fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ج</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>Voiced post-alveolar affricate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ح</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>Voiceless pharyngeal fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>خ</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Voiceless uvular fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>د</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>Voiced dento-alveolar stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ن</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>Voiced alveolar fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ر</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>Voiced alveo-palatal trill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ز</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>Voiced alveolar fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>س</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>Voiceless alveolar fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ش</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>Voiceless alveo-palatal fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ص</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Voiceless alveolar emphatic fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ض</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>Voiced alveolar emphatic stop</td>
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<tr>
<td>ط</td>
<td>t</td>
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<td>ظ</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>Voiced alveolar emphatic fricative</td>
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<td>ع</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Voiced pharyngeal fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غ</td>
<td>Ý</td>
<td>Voiced uvular fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ق</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>Voiceless labio-dental fricative</td>
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άραβες γιαλίκες

Α) Κοντάς γιαλίκες

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Επικεφαλής Σημασία</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Α</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>Front, nearly half-open, low unrounded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Β</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>Back, nearly close, high rounded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Γ</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>Front, open, high unrounded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Β) Μακριές γιαλίκες

Long vowels are indicated by the double vowels. They are as follows:

aa, uu and ii
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Ostensible Invitations in Jordanian Arabic: A Sociopragmatic Study

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Abstract

The present study investigates the speech act of ostensible invitations in Jordanian Arabic from a sociopragmatic point of view. The corpus of the study is built upon one hundred and twenty observed and recalled instances of genuine and ostensible invitations extended in Irbid City, Jordan. The data has been analyzed from three interconnected perspectives: the sociolinguistic functions of ostensible invitations, the tactics of encoding invitations to be realized as ostensible and the ways of decoding these invitations to be understood for what they are meant to be. The results show that ostensible invitations in Jordanian Arabic are joint actions of two layers; at the top layer these invitations look like genuine invitations. In such a layer, the inviter and the invitee pretend that the extended invitation is genuine and act as if it were to be taken seriously. At the bottom layer, they mutually recognize that the extended invitation is not to be taken seriously as it serves other functions. The study shows that ostensible invitations in Jordanian culture can be utilized as mitigating devices in various face threatening
situations, persuasive devices and provocative ones. To engineer their invitations as
ostensible, Jordanians make use of the seven tactics proposed by Isaacs and Clark (1990).
However, the study shows that the tactics are not enough by themselves to set ostensible
and genuine invitations apart; they should be interpreted in light of the communicators’
shared beliefs, shared suppositions and shared knowledge (i.e., common ground) to float
the ostensibility behind invitations. The study shows that the main ingredient behind the
realization of ostensibility is the contrast between the demonstrated situation and the real
purpose of it. The study, therefore, concludes that the driving force of ostensibility in the
Jordanian culture is the two sides of the notion of common ground: the personal and
communal sides.

Ostensible invitations are only part of a large category of ostensible communicative acts
(e.g., ostensible lies, ostensible compliments, ostensible apologies and others). One
promising line of research would be investigating such communicative acts in the
Jordanian culture within the framework of Action Theory, Relevance Theory or other
theories that focus solely on analyzing the role of body language on ostensibility.

**Key words:** Pretense, Joint Action, Common Ground, (Joint) Commitment, Politeness,
Collusion, and Layering