Jordanian EFL Teachers' Perceptions of the Utility MoE-Enforced Online-Based Instruction during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the utility of online-based instruction from Jordanian EFL teachers' perceptions on "Darsak Platform" during the COVID-19 pandemic on five domains: the logistic and technical support, the content, the teaching and assessment strategies, and the utility of the online instruction for both students and parents. The study followed the quantitative descriptive design, using a 44-item Likert scale questionnaire which was administered to 213 Jordanian EFL teachers. First, the findings revealed that there are some challenges related to the unavailability of Internet connection, poor financial conditions of parents and the lack of basic skills of teachers and learners on how to deal with technology. Second, the findings showed that content needs to be developed to allow teachers to add supplementary materials, tests, and feedback to learners. Finally, the findings revealed that online instruction and the tragic lock down of schools which led to the lack of the appropriate space at homes to receive lessons and the lack of backup from parents who usually work online in the same home, activated students' laziness, and negatively affected their progress.

Keywords: *Darsak Platform; online learning; COVID-19; Pandemic*

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The coronavirus (COVID-19) was declared a global pandemic on 12 March 2020 and social distancing was adopted in many countries to contain the problem. The Jordanian Ministry of Education is doing its best, but many educators are still worried about the pedagogy and the content of online learning. As a result of the worldwide spread of COVID-19, educational institutions around the world cancelled face-to-face instruction and moved to online learning and teaching. UNESCO declares that 300 million students have left school activities because of the temporary school lockdowns as a result of COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of online education was carried out in bulk (Sun, Tang, & Zuo, 2020). In Jordan, despite the adoption of online learning, as a strategic choice, to ensure the continuity of education following the closure of schools, students are likely to experience a learning loss during the lockdown since quarantined students tend to spend less time on learning compared to when schools are open. "Darsak Platform" which was immediately launched by the Jordanian Ministry of Education following the sad closure of schools offers free video lessons to Jordanian students based on the conventional curricula. Unlike "Darsak Platform", other platforms charge fees for their services like; "Modoo'a","Wattad","Aram", "Intel Academy" and "Jo Academy".

While some believe that the unplanned and hasty move to online learning with no training and little preparation may result in a poor user experience that is unhelpful to ongoing growth, others believe that a novel hybrid model of education may emerge, with significant gains. One reason why there is so much debate around online learning is that there are many claimed gains and uses of online learning. Some of these gains are: its value in instructing students, its benefits as a professional development tool, its low cost, and the accessibility of education to anyone with a broadband connection (Bartley & Golek, 2004; Bowen, 2013; De la Varre, Keane, & Irvin, 2011; Gratton-Lavoie & Stanley, 2009; Jung & Rha, 2000; Koller & Ng, 2013; Lorenzetti, 2013 Tucker, 2007). Digital technology has emerged as a considerable pedagogical tool that essentially affects all student environment areas (Bond, M., Buntins, Bedenlier, Zawacki-Richter, & Kerres ,2020).

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Navarro and Shoemaker (2000) concluded that student learning outcomes for online learners were as good as or better than traditional learners despite their background features and that the students were significantly content with online learning. Rovai and Jordan (2004), investigated the connection of the sense of community between the traditional classroom and the blended format, and they found that students in the blended format had a stronger sense of community than students in the traditional format. The varying nature of both the student and existing technologies have made academics change their approaches to teaching to obtain better learning outcomes (Hativa & Goodyear, 2001). Blended learning is "the use of two or more distinct methods of training" (Masie, E. 2002, p.59). Many educators believe that the move from face-to-face to blended and online teaching is very challenging. The nature of teaching roles and workload distribution changes as teachers teach in blended and/or online courses (Coppola, Hiltz, & Rotter, 2002; Young, 2002). Bonk & Dennen (2003) stated that redefining professional identity and teaching practices takes time; without training many teachers try to replicate existing syllabi and pedagogical practices when they move from face-to-face teaching to blended or online teaching. A major challenge, stated by Yang and Cornelious (2005), when teachers move from a teacher directed face-to-face environment to an online environment, is to redesign learning towards a constructivist approach which also needs a change in roles and responsibilities.

The shift to online teaching and learning from a traditional in-person approach challenges the expectations and roles of both teachers and learners. For some teachers, when they change the place of teaching, they feel that their identities are under threat. Many teachers see their professional identity being restricted to their past face-to-face teaching where they had a high level of expertise (Meloncon, 2007). Many skilled face-to-face teachers find themselves as novices when first teaching online. In some cases, it could result in an opposition towards online teaching (McQuiggan, 2007). Overall, there is solid evidence that online learning is at least as effective as the traditional mode of learning, but the evidence is, by no means, conclusive.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The current study investigates Jordanian EFL teachers' perceptions of the appropriateness of online learning offered by the Jordanian Ministry of Education through Darsak Platform during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the study will try to answer the following specific questions:

a) How appropriate is the logistic and the technical support presented on "Darsak Platform" for teachers and learners?
b) How appropriate is the content presented on "Darsak Platform" for teachers and learners?
c) How appropriate are the teaching strategies presented on "Darsak Platform" for teachers and learners?
d) How appropriate are the assessment strategies presented on "Darsak Platform" for teachers and learners?
e) How appropriate is "Darsak Platform" for students and parents?

DEFINITION OF TERMS

a) **Darsak Platform:** an educational free platform lunched by the Jordanian Ministry of Education after the lock down of schools to offer students an online learning through a scheduled recorded video lessons based on the Jordanian curricula.
b) **COVID-19:** According to the WHO, coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like

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cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

c) **Pandemic:** an epidemic occurring worldwide, or over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a huge number of people.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As a result of the spread of the COVID-19 virus and the tragic lockdown of schools, the normal place in which learning should take place, it was a must for the Jordanian Ministry of Education to move to online instruction, which essentially means transferring knowledge to learners through computers, laptops, or smartphones through the Internet. The accelerating pace of knowledge growth and change, as well as increasing pressures on the field of teaching and learning, force researchers to look for novel approaches to complement the conventional way of teaching. Learning should not stop at the end of class. On the other hand, Rosenberg (2006) claims that the classroom will remain to serve a crucial purpose in any learning strategy. It provides a place where students and teachers can cooperate, investigate, interact, and create. Hopefully, this study will provide, insights, information, and clues to policy makers about how they managed and developed online teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PARTICIPANTS

The study was conducted at the beginning of the second semester of the academic year 2020-2021 and involved 335 EFL teachers from the Northeastern Badia Directorate of Education/Jordan. In total, 213 EFL teachers responded to the study items.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is meant to provide, from the teachers' point of view, relevant information regarding the way the educational process took place in the Jordanian governmental schools in the context of the pandemic, information according to which the online teaching-learning process can be improved. However, the study is limited to the Jordanian EFL teachers in the Northeastern Badia Directorate of Education in the second semester of the academic year 2020/2021. A larger sample may provide better data.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF INSTRUMENTATION

To create a scale consistent with the study's purpose, related literature was examined including instructional theories and strategies, current practices, problems and perceptions of "Darsak Platform" users. To obtain the scale's validity, it was distributed to a group of EFL teachers, EFL supervisors and University instructors who are considered experts in the field of education. Obtaining EFL experts' opinions on the scale items shaped its final version as revisions were made based on these opinions. This step was vital to achieve a comprehensible and relevant scale in terms of face and content validity. Thus, the scale included 44 items related to teachers' perceptions on "Darsak Platform" on four domains; logistic and technical support; content; teaching strategies, assessment strategies and students and parents. To ensure the scale's internal consistency Cronbach's Alpha was administrated into a random sample of 30 EFL teachers.

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Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Consistency Coefficient of the Scale

No	Domain	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
1.	Logistic and technological support	0.65
2.	Content	0.74
3.	Teaching Strategies	0.77
4.	Assessment Strategies	0.72
5.	Students and Parents	0.55

The data in Table1 shows that the values of the five domains ranged between 0.77 – 0.55 and 0.86 for the scale as a whole, which is considered a high degree of consistency.

DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The current study adopts the quantitative descriptive design, in which, information is gathered and analyzed to describe situations, events or existing phenomena. The aim of this method was to interpret the participants' understanding of the issue in hand. To avoid subjectivity, participants were not asked to expose their identities and their responses were kept anonymous. A Likert scale was constructed for the current study to gather data from participants in respect to their experiences with online learning through Darsak Platform.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

213 male and female EFL teachers out of 335 EFL teachers who teach English as a Foreign Language in the Northeastern Badia Directorate of Education responded to the scale either on Facebook or WhatsApp. In the data analysis process, descriptive statistical analysis was employed to make sense of the data collected. Means, standard deviations, percentages, ranks and extent were calculated for each item on all of the domains of the scale.

FINDINGS

a) **EFL Teachers' Perceptions of the Logistic and the Technical Support Provided by Darsak Platform:** This section presents findings related to the first research question: "How appropriate is the logistic and the technical support provided by "Darsak Platform" for teachers and learners?"

The data in Table 2 shows that item 6 *"I own the appropriate gadgets to deal with Darsak platform like; a smartphone, a laptop and an internet connection"* has the highest rank with a mean of 3.29, standard deviation of 1.09 and a percentage of 65.82. On the other hand, item 5 *"I received the appropriate training on how to use Darsak Platform before I use it with the students"* has the lowest rank with a mean of 2.84 and standard deviation of 1.15 and a percentage of 56.81 with a moderate extent. The total mean of the domain *"logistic and technical support"* is 3.10, the standard deviation is 0.76 and the total percentage is 62.03 with a moderate extent.

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Table 2: Means, standard deviations and percentages for the Logistic and technological support provided by "Darsak Platform"

no	Item	Mean	Std. Dev.	Percent	Rank	Extent
1.	Darsak Platform allows me to use videos related to teaching English as a foreign language for all levels.	3.05	1.18	61.03	4	Moderate
2.	I receive appropriate professional and technical support from my school management.	3.15	1.05	63.00	3	Moderate
3.	I can use visuals presented in Darsak platform easily and smoothly.	3.24	1.03	64.88	2	Moderate
4.	I receive technical support from the directorate of Education.	3.03	1.04	60.66	5	Moderate
5.	I received the appropriate training on how to use Darsak Platform before I use it with the students.	2.84	1.15	56.81	6	Moderate
6.	I own the appropriate gadgets to deal with Darsak platform like a smartphone, a laptop and an internet connection.	3.29	1.09	65.82	1	Moderate
	Logistic and technical support	3.10	0.76	62.03		Moderate

b) **EFL teachers' Perceptions of the content presented by "Darsak Platform":** This section presents findings related to the second research question: "How appropriate is the content presented by Darsak Platform for teachers and learners?"

The data in Table 3 shows the means, standard deviations, percentages, ranks and extent of the items related to the second domain of the scale; the content provided by "Darsak Platform". The findings show that item 11 *" The electronic content contains pictures, videos, audios, texts and power point presentations."* has the highest rank with a mean of 3.33 and standard deviation of 0.98 and a percentage of 66.57 with a moderate extent. Item *14 " Darsak Platform allows students to download videos on their smartphones to revise them whenever needed."* has the lowest rank with a mean of 2.96 and standard deviation of 1.08 and a percentage of 59.25 with a moderate extent. The total mean of the domain *"content"* is 3.10, the standard deviation is 0.73 and the total percentage is 62.06 with a moderate extent.

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Table 3: Means, standard deviations and percentages for the content provided by "Darsak Platform"

No	Item	Mean	Std. Dev	Percent	Rank	Extent
7.	Darsak Platform presents a comprehensive electronic content.	2.97	1.00	59.34	8	Moderate
8.	The content presented on Darsak Platform is interesting and provokes students' motivation.	3.11	1.02	62.16	3	Moderate
9.	The electronic content on Darsak Platform approximately assembles the conventional content.	3.10	0.98	61.97	5	Moderate
10.	The electronic content helps me to execute enough activities and tasks which supports students' learning.	3.04	1.01	60.85	6	Moderate
11.	The electronic content contains pictures, videos, audios, texts and power point presentations.	3.33	0.98	66.57	1	Moderate
12.	The electronic content is available for students at any time during the semester.	3.27	1.09	65.35	2	Moderate
13.	Darsak Platform allows me to add enrichment materials to support students learning.	3.04	1.04	60.85	6	Moderate
14.	Darsak Platform allows students to download videos on their smartphones to revise them whenever needed.	2.96	1.08	59.25	9	Moderate
15.	Darsak platform accomplish the educational outcomes effectively.	3.11	1.05	62.16	3	Moderate
	Content	3.10	0.73	62.06		Moderate

c) **EFL teachers' perceptions of the teaching strategies presented on "Darsak Platform" for teachers and learners:** This section presents findings related to the third research question: "How appropriate are the teaching strategies presented by "Darsak Platform" for teachers and learners?"

The data in Table 4 shows the means, standard deviations, percentages, ranks and extent of the items related to the first domain of the scale; the teaching strategies presented on "Darsak Platform". The findings show that item 24 *"I receive help from my EFL supervisor to employ the best strategies while executing tasks and activities on Darsak Platform."* has the highest rank with a mean of 3.28 and standard deviation of 1.07 and a percentage of 65.63 with a moderate extent. On the other hand, item 18 *"Darsak Platform takes into consideration the individual differences between students."* has the lowest rank with a mean of 2.69 and standard deviation of 1.09 and a percentage of 53.90 with a moderate extent. The total mean of the domain *"teaching strategies"* is 2.89, the standard deviation is 0.82 and the total percentage is 57.88 with a moderate extent.

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Table 4: Means, standard deviations and percentages for the teaching strategies presented on "Darsak Platform"

No	Item	Mean	Std. Dev.	Percent	Rank	Extent
16.	Darsak Platform provides different teaching strategies.	2.80	1.00	55.96	7	Moderate
17.	Darsak Platform presents different learning styles that suits all patterns of learning.	2.76	0.97	55.12	8	Moderate
18.	Darsak Platform takes into consideration the individual differences between students.	2.69	1.09	53.90	9	Moderate
19.	Darsak Platform allows me to form groups to execute online tasks and activities.	2.87	1.07	57.37	5	Moderate
20.	Darsak Platform gives me the opportunity to have different types of feedback.	2.96	1.01	59.25	2	Moderate
21.	Darsak platform allows me to vary my style while executing tasks.	2.95	1.03	59.06	3	Moderate
22.	Darsak platform helps me to reinforce my students.	2.85	1.03	56.90	6	Moderate
23.	Darsak Platform allows me to add different props while executing tasks and activities.	2.89	1.06	57.75	4	Moderate
24.	I receive help from my EFL supervisor to employ the best strategies while executing tasks and activities on Darsak Platform.	3.28	1.07	65.63	1	Moderate
	Teaching Strategies	2.89	0.82	57.88		Moderate

   d) **EFL teachers' perceptions of the assessment strategies presented on "Darsak Platform":** This section presents findings related to the fourth research question: "How appropriate are the assessment strategies presented on "Darsak Platform" for teachers and learners?"

The data in Table 5 shows the means, standard deviations, percentages, ranks and extent of the items related to the first domain of the scale; the teaching strategies presented on "Darsak Platform". The findings   show that item 30 *" Most of the exams presented on Darsak Platform assess the knowledge level only."* has the highest rank with a mean of 3.38 and standard deviation of 0.97 and a percentage of 67.51 with a moderate extent. Item 32 *"The marks that the students get on Darsak Platform are real and reflect real learning."* has the lowest rank with a mean of 2.65 and standard deviation of 1.30 and a percentage of 52.96 with a moderate extent. The total mean of the domain *"assessment strategies"* is 2.87, the standard deviation is 0.76 and the total percentage is 57.45 with a moderate extent.

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Table 5: *Means, standard deviations and percentages for the assessment strategies presented on "Darsak Platform"*

No	Item	Mean	Std. D	Percent	Rank	Extent
25.	Darsak Platform provides ongoing assessment.	2.67	0.88	53.43	9	Moderate
26.	Darsak Platform provides me with different kinds of assessment strategies.	2.77	0.96	55.49	6	Moderate
27.	Assessment strategies and tools presented on Darsak Platform are appropriate to students' level.	2.72	0.98	54.37	8	Moderate
28.	Darsak Platform guarantees privacy to students to take their test without the interference of other parties.	2.76	1.03	55.12	7	Moderate
29.	Darsak Platform allows me give students immediate feedback on their exams.	2.93	1.06	58.59	3	Moderate
30.	Most of the exams presented on Darsak Platform assess the knowledge level only.	3.38	0.97	67.51	1	Moderate
31.	Students practice self-assessment on Darsak Platform.	2.91	1.03	58.12	4	Moderate
32.	The marks that the students get on Darsak Platform are real and reflect real learning.	2.65	1.30	52.96	10	Moderate
33.	Darsak Platform presents authentic assessment strategies.	2.79	1.05	55.77	5	Moderate
34	I have the appropriate help from my supervisor to use the appropriate assessment strategy on Darsak Platform.	3.15	1.00	63.10	2	Moderate
	Assessment Strategies	2.87	0.76	57.45		Moderate

e) **EFL teachers' perceptions of the appropriateness of "Darsak Platform" for students and parents:** This section presents findings related to the fifth research question: "How appropriate is Darsak "Platform" for students and parents?"

The data in Table 6 shows the means, standard deviations, percentages, ranks and extent of the items related to the first domain of the scale; the teaching strategies presented on "Darsak Platform". The findings show that item 41 *"Some Parents do the tests and the tasks instead of their kids."* has the highest rank with a mean of 3.93 and standard deviation of 1.07 and a percentage of 78.59 with a high extent. Items 35 and 38 *" Darsak Platform allows me to contact all students easily and smoothly.",* and *"Darsak Platform allows students to contact each other and exchange expertise."* have the lowest rank with a mean of 2.82 and a percentage of 56.34 with a moderate extent. The total mean of the domain *"students and parents"* is 3.54, the standard deviation is 0.68 and the total percentage is 70.84 with a moderate extent.

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Table 6: *Means, standard deviations and percentages for the appropriateness of "Darsak Platform" for students and teachers*

No	Item	Mean	Std. Dev.	Percent	Rank	Extent
35.	Darsak Platform allows me to contact all students easily and smoothly.	2.82	1.06	56.34	9	Moderate
36.	Students face difficulties and hardships concerning the availability of the appropriate gadget.	3.42	1.05	68.45	8	Moderate
37.	Students face technical problems like the availability of internet signal or services.	3.74	1.02	74.74	3	High
38.	Darsak Platform allows students to contact each other and exchange expertise.	2.82	1.19	56.34	9	Moderate
39.	Parents complain that Darsak Platform does not achieve the educational outcomes.	3.65	0.99	72.96	7	Moderate
40.	Some students do not have the basic skills of how to use Darsak Platform.	3.74	0.93	74.74	3	High
41	Some Parents do the tests and the tasks instead of their kids.	3.93	1.07	78.59	1	High
42.	Poverty deprives most of the students log in Darsak Platform.	3.72	1.00	74.46	5	High
43.	Some parents refuse the whole idea of online learning and refuse to log in Darsak Platform.	3.72	0.99	74.37	6	High
44.	Having more than 3 kids in the same family is an obstacle to use Darsak Platform.	3.87	1.06	77.37	2	High
	Students and Parents	3.54	0.68	70.84		Moderate

The data in Table 7 below shows the Means, standard deviations, percentages, ranks and extent of the all the domains presented on "Darsak Platform". The findings show that domain 5 *" students and parents"* has the highest rank with a mean of 3.54 and standard deviation of 0.68 and a percentage of 70.84 with a moderate extent. Domain 4 *"Assessment Strategies"* has the lowest rank with a mean of 2.87 and standard deviation of 0.76 and a percentage of 57.45 with a moderate extent. The total mean of all domains is 3.11, the standard deviation is 0.55 and the total percentage is 62.15 with a moderate extent.

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Table 7: Means, standard deviations and percentages for the appropriateness of "Darsak Platform" for all domains

No	Item	Mean	Std. Dev.	Percent	Rank	Extent
	Logistic and technological support	3.10	0.76	62.03	3	Moderate
	Content	3.10	0.73	62.06	2	Moderate
	Teaching Strategies	2.89	0.82	57.88	4	Moderate
	Assessment Strategies	2.87	0.76	57.45	5	Moderate
	Students and Parents	3.54	0.68	70.84	1	Moderate
	Total	3.11	0.55	62.15		Moderate

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study showed that Jordanian EFL teachers expressed moderate degree of satisfaction toward the utility of online-based instruction. Learning at home has affected parents who have more loads because they must be teachers at home, do assignments, and always guide their children alongside their own households and their jobs (Deseri & Sunitha, 2020). The process of teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) is sophisticated and it involves the auditory, visual, kinesthetic senses, cultural competence, and the strategic competence which leads into the communicative competence, eventually.

The conventional way of learning and teaching at schools is no longer available for everyone during the COVID-19 pandemic. Originally, online learning is meant for luxurious purposes for those who wish to get a degree in their leisure time or alongside their jobs. The findings of the current study show that most Jordanian EFL teachers expressed low satisfaction toward receiving the appropriate training on how to use "Darsak Platform". This is justified because "Darsak Platform" was launched in a hurry and immediately following the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ministry of Education was not well-prepared to take into consideration the idea of training teachers on how to use it or how it operates, either. Lee & Winzenried (2009) declare that "dumping" technology on teachers with much hope that it will be prosperous and improve education has proven to be a wishful thinking. Teacher training is closely related to improving learning goals (Celik, 2012; Mouzakis & Bourletidis, 2010). However, in the current study, it seems that teachers acknowledged that receiving training on using "Darsak Platform" was essential for them to exploit the potentials of online learning in teaching English as a foreign language. Fullan (2007) states that technical assistance is crucial for the fruitful employment of a new technology in schools and can be an important predictor of its adoption by teachers. Consequently, as the study shows, teachers have a relatively low satisfaction with the technical support they receive when they try to use "Darsak Platform" which may affect their overall attitudes and the adoption of the new technology.

Most of Jordanian EFL teachers agree that "Darsak Platform" presents a variety of audios, videos, power points to the learners which is considered highly effective in the EFL classroom. It seems that most Jordanian teachers believe that the content on "Darsak Platform" needs to be overviewed, developed and expanded to allow students download materials whenever they need to go for it from time to time. Overall, Jordanian EFL teachers agree that the content presented on

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"Darsak Platform" is relatively suitable and accomplishes the educational outcomes. The effective use of online materials may deliver optimistic spin-offs for learners approximately the same as if they were immersed in the language and culture while studying abroad (Paulsen, 2001). According to Tomalin (1986, p.12), "language teachers like video because it motivates learners, brings the real world into the classroom, contextualizes language naturally and enables learners to experience authentic language. Students like it because video presentations are interesting, challenging, and stimulating to watch".

Low satisfaction was expressed by teachers on the way "Darsak Platform" presents different learning styles that suits all patterns of learning and the way it takes into consideration the individual differences between students. This low satisfaction is related to the grief that teachers felt, caused by the loss of their traditional classrooms, and the fear that technology might replace them one day. Furthermore, Online/online learning will never be able to change style during podcasting the lessons to suit students' individual differences and learning patterns. The teaching style in online learning needs to be expanded, because it is reasonably different from indoor learning. In indoor learning, the teacher's body language, facial expressions and voice are critical (Purwanto, Pramono, Asbari, Santoso, Wijayanti, & Hyun, 2020).

Jordanian EFL teachers believed that tests presented on "Darsak Platform" assess the knowledge level only, and neglects the other levels of "Bloom's Taxonomy " which might be related to the lack of experience in building tests by those who participated in creating such tests. On the other hand, EFL teachers do not believe that "Darsak Platform" presents any kind of ongoing assessment for learners and the marks that students get are unreal and do not reflect actual learning, not to mention the repetitive announcement from the Ministry of Education that they know that parents interfere with their children's tests by either offering help or doing the tests instead of them. Indeed, this dilemma is a matter of integrity and there is no way that "Darsak Platform" can guarantee that students do their tests by themselves without interference from other parties. Moreover, Jordanian EFL teachers did not feel comfortable about the way "Darsak Platform" allows them to contact their students and they also believe that their students face difficulties and hardships concerning the availability of the appropriate gadget. Some students do not even have their own smartphone. It is usually caused by the financial conditions of their families and the internet coverage still become a problem in remote and rural areas. Many students and parents lack the basic knowledge of how to deal with digital gadgets and online websites. Besides this digital literacy, some students in such poor and disadvantaged areas as Northeastern Badia also have low literacy in general. They may not understand the teachers' instruction either because they are not able to read, or maybe because of their unruly behavior and laziness which affects their overall learning, eventually. Another problem, some students are not punctual in attending the online lessons as scheduled by the Ministry of Education at certain times in a week. The Ministry of Education used to broadcast schedules on Twitter, Facebook and the official TV of Jordan. Not all students and parents have smartphones or accounts in the social media and even some of them do not even have televisions. Another problem is that most of the students miss the deadline for submitting homework or tests, either due to laziness, carelessness or the weak signal of Internet coverage in their areas.

Sadly, some students and parents lack awareness about the importance of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. They carelessly assume that online learning is informal, and it is just like a holiday and they just need to relax and enjoy their time. Taking these factors into consideration, teachers find themselves helpless if they want to give personal feedback on their students' learning.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The current study shows that "Darsak Platform" can be an effective pedagogical tool during the time of COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the findings of the current study it is highly recommended that:

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a) More technical support from the Directories of Education should be offered to teachers.
b) Online platforms should develop its features to allow teachers to add supplementary materials and to allow students to download materials.
c) Individual differences and learning patterns should be taken into consideration while executing online lessons.
d) Online platforms should provide a form of ongoing assessment for students.
e) Governments should look for creative solutions for those poor students and supply them with the appropriate gadgets and the Internet connection.
f) Teachers' immediate feedback on the students' assignments should be added to online platforms.
g) Not any kind of online learning would replace face-to-face teaching and learning and the conventional in-class teaching. Online platforms may be an important aid to the teaching/learning process, and we maybe come up with a form of blended learning in the future.
h) It would be useful to broaden the sample of the study to be able to generalize results. Furthermore, it would be useful to conduct a longitudinal study that would allow us to see if and how teachers adapted (teaching style, interaction with students), and if teachers' attitude towards online learning improved.

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