Innovative Solar Pressure Cooker with Parabolic Trough Concentrator using Water Vapor InnovSoPre

* Department of Physics, Faculty of Science, Mohamed First University, Oujda, 60 000, Morocco

** Engineering Office of Energy and Environmental Technology (IBEU), Jülich, 52 428, Germany.

*** Solar-Institut Jülich (SIJ), Aachen University of Applied Sciences, Jülich, 52 428, Germany

****Association Humain and Environnement of Berkane (AHEB), Berkane, 63 300, Morocco.

(ndn.moussaoui@gmail.com, mohammed.rhiat@ump.ac.ma, ali.lamkaddem@gmail.com, rch_malek@hotmail.com, khkassmi@yahoo.fr, schwarzer@sij.fhaachen.de, chayeb@fh-aachen.de, n_bachiri@hotmail.com)

[‡]Corresponding Author; K. KASSMI, 60 000, Tel: +212 6 78 07 52 14,

Fax: +212 5 36 50 06 03, khkassmi@yahoo.fr

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Abstract- In this paper, we propose the design and operation of a concentrating parabolic trough solar cooker, working with water vapor. This cooker operation's principle is based on the concentration of solar radiation on a vacuum tube, containing two tubes, for which the cold water descends and the hot water rises towards the cooking pot (pressure cooker). The closure of the pot is ensured by a cover provided with a valve that releases the vapor of the water when the pressure in the pot reaches the value of 1.8 bar. The experimentation of the cooker, exposed to the sun, shows, for a solar irradiation intensity of 863 W/m² and an ambient temperature of 37° C, cooking temperatures which reach 104° C after 22 min, the heating power of 351.62 W, and thermal efficiency of 34.18%. Heating water or cooking 1 kg of food (potatoes, etc.), under vapor in the pot, shows a heating or cooking temperature above 100° C for 30 min. The analysis of these results compared to the conventional heating of cookers by electricity, or butane, shows comparable temperatures and cooking times, and consequently the feasibility of the solar vapor cooker, under pressure, proposed in this work. Also, we can notice an exciting improvement compared to the concentration thermal cookers of the literature, with an improvement of the efficiency of 28% and a heating time reduced by 50%.

Keywords Solar thermal energy, innovative concentrating parabolic trough solar cooker, solar water pressure cooker, water vapor cooking, efficiency and thermal power

1. Introduction

Renewable solar energy sources have a significant role to play in implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [1,2]. They represent a critical alternative to conventional fossil fuels [1,3-7], which are the causes of environmental degradation and global warming [8-12], which has increased forest burning [12,13]. These degradations and the massive exploitation of forests by man for various uses (cooking, heating,) have pushed the governments of countries and nongovernmental organizations NGOs to implement strategic projects to fight against deforestation, due to fire and human uses, using solar energy [14,15]. Among these orientations is the commitment to innovate on cooking equipment and to propose cookers working with solar energy, low cost and adaptable to the cooking needs of the users of the rural and especially urban world [10, 16-20].

Solar cooking is therefore a clean and ecological cooking technology since it uses the sun as fuel and does not produce smoke and greenhouse gases. It is current and provides attractive socio-economic and environmental benefits [21]. In the literature, there are thermal solar cookers based on flat thermal collectors [23-24], concentrator type parabolic trough [25,26], and parabolic [23,27,28]. Their operating principle is based on the concentration of solar radiation on a utensil containing food (direct cookers) [16, 27], or a fluid (thermal oil) (indirect cookers) [22, 23, 28, 29]. For direct cookers, performance is very low (temperatures below 100°C) and not adaptable to user needs [27, 30, 31]. In the case of indirect cookers, the heating is based on the use of heat transfer fluids, which makes the technique expensive and leads to additional heat losses through the piping, during the circulation of the heat to the cooking block [15,16].

In this context, the objective of our research work, within the framework of national and international cooperation, is to develop indirect solar cookers operating on concentrated solar thermal energy. This equipment is mobile, efficient, reliable, easy to use, low cost, and adaptable to the needs of the inhabitants. It allows cooking by exploiting the heat produced by a parabolic trough concentrator that reaches temperatures above 300°C [29]. These temperatures are more than enough to cook foods that require temperatures of 80-250°C. In earlier research, we proposed an indirect cooker [29], with a parabolic trough concentrator which concentrates the solar irradiation on a heat transfer fluid (oil). Through the phenomenon of heat transfer, the cooker heats a pot, immersed in the heat transfer oil, to a temperature that reaches 300°C. To make this cooker more reliable and to overcome the use of oil as a heat transfer fluid, we propose the design of an ecological cooker that works only with water , and the cooking, in the pot, is done with water vapor. In this cooker, the pot is covered with a lid with a valve to regulate a pressure of approximatively 1.8 bar inside the pot. The pot is connected to a closed circuit of two tubes: one containing cold tap water and the other (formed by two sub-small tubes) allowing the circulation of hot water, which arrives, at high pressure, in the pot. The concentration of the radiation on the tube containing the cold water, heats this water to a temperature higher than 100°C and thus the pot under the vapor at a temperature higher than 100°C. This method of cooking is equivalent to the usual cooking with pressure cookers, at high pressure, using the usual energy sources of butane or electrical energy [27, 31].

In this paper, we present the structure and the experimentation of the new parabolic trough concentration cooker working with vapor water. In particular, we experiment with the operation of the cooker in the Moroccan climate (Africa), on sunny days, by following the temperatures of the tubes and the pot of the cooker. The validation of the operation is then carried out by estimation of efficiencies and thermal powers and measurements of

temperatures by heating with a liter of water and cook 1 kg of food (Potatoes).

2. Structure and Operation of the Cooker InnovSoPre

2.1. Structure

Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 represent the synoptic diagram of the solar parabolic trough cooker InnovSoPre proposed in this work. The different blocks and characteristics (Table 1) of this cooker are:

- Dimensions of the cooker: length 204 cm, height 108 cm, and weight 35 kg.
- Parabolic trough mirror (concentrator) of length L, height h, aperture A_a , and concentration factor C. Its role is to concentrate the solar rays to a focal line of distance f, where a glass tube with a double envelope is placed. The concentrator is covered by a reflective layer, characterized by a high reflection rate, to improve the thermal performance of the cooker.
- Vacuum tube with double-walled glass, similar to a long transparent "thermos" bottle (concentric). It has a length L_g and an inner diameter $D_{i\cdot g}$ an outer diameter $D_{e\cdot g}$ and a thickness e_g . It is placed in the focal line of the mirror at a focal distance f to form a Rim Angle and Rim Radius of φ_r and r_r . This vacuum tube is used to avoid convection losses to the outside and also to trap heat inside by the greenhouse effect. This glass tube, with transmission coefficient τ_g , is considered as a barrier to the infrared radiation emitted from the interior elements. The heat absorbed by the interior is transferred to the copper tube circuits containing the cooking water.
- A copper circuitry, of conductivity λ_{ab} , is formed by hermetically sealed tubes (Fig. 2, B), of length L_{ab} . They are installed vertically or slightly inclined in the doublewalled vacuum tube. As shown in Fig. 2, these tubes are formed by a tube of diameter D_{p-ab} containing cold water, another type is formed by two sub-small tubes, with secondary outlets of diameter D_{g-ab} . These allow the hot water to rise to the pot (casserole).
- Cooking box contains a cooking vessel (casserole) with a capacity of 5 liters, a diameter of 22 cm, and a height of 17 cm. The lid of the vessel, equipped with circular vapor seals, is formed by a manual locking system and a safety valve (steam trap), to release the steam (vapor) and ensure a pressure lower than 1.8 bar and a temperature boiling point of 120°C in the container. This allows cooking and avoids overpressure in the cooker tubes.
- Two orientable wheels allowing the cooker to be moved with the sun.
- Evacuation tube, equipped with a tap, is connected to the large tube in order to clean the cooker and the tubes at the end of the cooking.



Fig. 1. The structure of the parabolic trough solar cooker InnovSoPre proposed in this work.



Table 1. Geometric and thermal specifications of the cookerin Fig. 1.

PTC model							
Paramter	Symbol	value	unit				
Rim radius	r _r	0.4	(m)				
Rim Angle	φ _r	90	(°)				
Distance focal	f	0.2	(m)				
Geometric concertation ratio	$C=A_a/A_g$	13.79	-				
Mirror							
Collector length	L	1.50	(m)				
Collector height	h	0.2	(m)				
Aperture width	а	0.84	(m)				
Aperture area	A _a	1.2	(m ²)				
Parabolica curve length	S	1.08	(m)				
Glass enveloppe							
Inner diameter	D _{i-g}	47	(mm)				
Outer diameter	D _{e-g}	58	(mm)				
Length	L_{g}	1.5	(m)				
Aperture area	A_{g}	0.087	(m ²)				
Thickness	e _g	4	(mm)				
Transmittance	$ au_{g}$	0.9	-				
Absorber tube							
Diameter of the large tube	D _{p-ab}	16	(mm)				
Diameter of the small tube	D g-ab	8	(mm)				
Length	L _{ab}	1.7	(m)				
Conductivity	ab J	380	(w.k ⁻¹ .m ⁻¹)				
Tube material	Copper						
Heat transfer working fluid	Water						
Thermal insulation	Glass wool						

2.2. Operation of the cooker and performance of the cooker InnovSoPre

The operating principle of the parabolic trough cooker InnovSoPre of Fig. 1, is as follows:

- The capture of solar energy and heating of the tubes: The parabolic trough mirror concentrates the solar rays in the double-walled glass tube.
- ✦ Heat production: As this double-walled tube is vacuumed and made of glass, the convection losses are low and the heat generated is trapped inside by the greenhouse effect. The heat is then transferred to the copper tubes inside. In the tubes, the water circulates and heats up by heat exchange, then naturally circulates from the bottom to the top of the tube, through the two small tubes (Fig. 2), which communicate with the pot. Since the temperature in the two small tubes exceeds 100°C, the pot is heated by hot water, the pressure of which is regulated by the valve.
- ♦ Heat transfer to the cooking chamber: In the cooking chamber, the rising hot water (vapor) in the two small tubes heats the cooker, and hence the food under this vapor. This water cools and releases heat (sensible heat). Then the cold water descends from the recipient through the central cold-water tube, and the cycle repeats itself to transfer heat to the cooking chamber again. During operation, the rising hot water, and the falling water, therefore, cross each other inside the tube. During operation, the thermal efficiency η, during the variation of the water temperature from ΔT in the cooker from 30 to 95°C, for a period of Δt=600s, is thus defined as a function of the solar radiation power I (W/m²) by the expression [22, 27, 28] :

$$\eta = \frac{Q}{I.A_a} \tag{1}$$

Where: A_a : Aperture area of parabolic trough concentrator (1.2 m²).

Q: Sensible heating power absorbed by the water during the temperature increase of ΔT . It is a function of the mass of water (1kg) and the specific heat capacity of water at constant pressure Cp:

$$\dot{Q} = \frac{m_w \cdot c_{p} \cdot \Delta T}{\Delta t} \tag{2}$$

Taking into account expressions 1 and 2, the efficiency is written by the form:

$$\eta = \frac{m_w \cdot c_p \cdot \Delta T}{I \cdot A.600} \tag{3}$$

3. Experimental Results

3.1. Experimental procedure

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Fig. 3 represents the solar cooker **InnovSoPre** suggested in this work. In the same figure, we have represented the circle that shows the displacement of the cooker, to capture the direct radiation, perpendicular to the parabolic trough concentrator, in the course of the sun during a sunny day. During our experimentation, we recorded, at each moment of the day, the meteorological parameters (solar irradiation intensity and ambient temperature) and thermal parameters (Temperatures of the tubes and in the pot), and the position of the cooker (Alpha parameter). The meteorological and thermal quantities are recorded using:

- A CMP6 pyranometer, accurate to ± 5%, connected to a digital multimeter (Keithley model 2700) and a computer. The set allows to measuring the solar irradiance with an accuracy of ± 30 W/m² and a resolution of 0.1 W/m².
- Temperature probes (type k), allowing the measurement of temperatures with a precision of approximately $\pm 1^{\circ}$ C. We have connected these probes in the cooker, to follow the temperature of a pressure cooker, and on the tubes, to follow the temperatures of the tubes where cold and hot water circulates. These probes are connected to the Multimeters type UNI-T U171C 5. The set allows measuring the different temperatures, in a range between -40°C and 400°C, with a resolution of 0,1°C- 1°C and precision of $\pm 1^{\circ}$ C.



Fig. 3. Photo of the vapor cooker InnovSoPre proposed in this work (Fig. 1).

3.2. Heating One Liter of water

We experimented with the cooker in Fig. 3 by heating one liter of water in the pot, then we measured the meteorological (intensity of solar irradiation, ambient temperature) and thermal quantities (temperatures of the large tube, the two small tubes, and the water in the casserole), the positioning of the cooker (the Alpha angle). The typical results obtained are shown in Fig. 4. From these results, we have reported in Table 2, between 12:00 and 13:00, the water temperatures, heat, powers, and thermal efficiency. It should be noted that at the end of the heating, we fill the cooker (Large tube) with water, adding the water inside the pot. We can thus deduce:

- The intensity of the solar irradiation and the ambient temperature vary respectively between 462 W/m² and 863 W/m², and 25°C and 38°C.
- The maximum temperatures of the small tube, the large tube, and the casserole are respectively 104°C, 100°C, and 100°C around 1 p.m., where the solar irradiation intensity and the ambient temperature are 863.07 W/ m² and 35°C.
- When the solar irradiation intensity increases (decreases) by 300 W/m², these maximum temperatures increase (decrease) by 20°C (i.e. 2°C/min), 7°C (i.e. 0.7 °C/min), 6°C (i.e. 0.6°C/min),
- The boiling time of water depends on the intensity of the solar irradiation: At 9:30 AM, when the solar irradiation is 432W/m² and the ambient temperature is 27°C, it is around 30 minutes. Around 12:30 AM, when the solar irradiation intensity is 841 W/m², and the ambient temperature is 34°C, it takes around 22 minutes. We can deduce that when the solar irradiation intensity increases by 409 W/m² and the boiling time decreases by 8 min (i.e. 26 %).
- The average orientation of the cooker is about 3.93 degrees per 10 minutes and 24 degrees per hour,
- The total orientation of the cooker, during this day of experience, is 181 degrees,
- The cooker is oriented South towards 1:15 PM (Azimuth= 0°). In this situation, the one-hour operation of the cooker requires a low orientation which is 0.8 degrees/min.
- The azimuth variations of the concentrator and that of the sun (-90° to + 90°) as well as the orientation (Alpha) (0 to 180°C) show a very good agreement and therefore good tracking of the sun during our experience.
- Efficiency and thermal power reached their maximum values of 34.18 % and 351.62 W around 12:40 (Table 2).

All the results obtained in this paragraph show cooking temperatures and efficiencies comparable to those obtained in the case of complex and expensive direct and indirect thermal cookers [26, 27, 32, 33, 34]. Also, we note a clear improvement of 50% in the heating time [26, 31, 35] and 28% in the thermal efficiency, compared to the parabolic cookers [26, 27, 33]. We can thus deduce the feasibility of heating by casserole with vapor, from the concentration of solar radiation on a tube containing only water.



Fig 4. Variations of solar irradiation intensity and ambient temperature, temperatures in the tubes and in the pressure

cooker, Azimuth angle (concentrator and sun), and orientation of the cooker during the experiment. July 2021

Table	2.	Power	and	thermal	efficiency	of	the	cooker
InnovS	oPr	е.						

Time	12:30	12:40	12:50	13:00
Hr :min				
Water	25	75,4	95	99,3
Temperature				
(°C)				
Solar	847,88	857,13	861,31	863,07
irradiation				
intensity				
(W/m^2)				
Output	1017,45	1028,55	1033,57	1035,68
Puissance				
(W)				
Sensible heat	0	210974	82045,6	17999,8
(\mathbf{J})				
Heating	0	351,62	136,74	29,99
output power				
Q.				
(W)				
Efficiency	-	34.1861	13.23	2.89
(%)				

3.3. Cooking (Steaming) of vegetables

In this paragraph, we experimented with the cooker of Fig. 3 by steaming food (1 kg of potato). As before, we recorded the temperatures of the tubes and inside the pot, and the alpha angle of the sun tracking. The typical results obtained in Fig. 5 show :

- The intensity of the solar irradiation intensity and the ambient temperature vary respectively between 649 W/m² and 812 W/m², and 30°C and 37°C.
- The maximum temperatures of the small tube, large tube, and water of the casserole are respectively 104°C, 102.5°C and 100°C. They are obtained around 12:40 p.m. when the solar irradiation intensity is stable (around 780 W/m²). During the day, from 11h to 11h50 min, the solar irradiation intensity varies from 649.33 to 754.66 W/m², and these temperatures increase from 22 to 100°C (a variation of 78°C, or 354 %).
- The average orientation of the cooker is about 2 degrees per 10 minutes and 20 degrees per hour,
- Water boiling is reached after 32 minutes of heating.
- During the cooking of the potatoes, the solar irradiation intensity varies from 754.66 to 790.56 W/m², the ambient temperature from 32.6 to 33.1°C, and the temperatures of the tubes and in the casserole remain stable respectively 101°C 100°C and 98°C. This is due to the thermal insulation (glass wool) of the cooking box and the lid of the pressure cooker, equipped with a safety valve, which maintains a constant temperature. It allows a constant pressure to be maintained in the cooker, and consequently

a cooking time of around 30 minutes. This time is comparable to cooking with conventional energy sources [26,27]: butane, electricity, etc.

• The total orientation of the cooker during this food cooking experiment is about 39 degrees.

The comparison of the cooking temperatures and yields obtained on our cooker with those obtained on direct and indirect thermal cookers, shows a clear improvement of 50%. Also, the cooking temperature (around 95° C) and the cooking time (around 30 min) are comparable to those obtained from conventional energy sources, such as butane and electricity. We can thus conclude the feasibility of our cooker, working with water vapor, for the cooking of food and meals; currently, prepared by expensive conventional cookers [35, 36] or by using fossil energy sources. The cooker proposed in this work (Fig. 1) is therefore efficient, reliable, low cost, and ecological. It is considered to be environmentally friendly and could be used by rural and urban inhabitants.





Fig. 5. Variations of solar irradiation intensity and ambient temperature, temperatures of the tubes and water in the pressure cooker, and orientation of the cooker during the experiment. July 2021;

4. Conclusion

In this paper, we have shown the feasibility of the operation of an innovative parabolic trough concentrator pressure cooker ISPCPTCWV. The heating of the cooker is based on the concentration of irradiations on a double-walled glass tube, containing two types of copper tubes that communicate with a pot, via holes. The pot is equipped with a stainless-steel lid, which is surrounded by rubber seals and incorporated a valve to regulate the temperature and pressure in the pot. The experimentation of the cooker, on sunny days, shows:

- The concentration of solar radiation on the tubes heats the cold water going down the large tube, and then the hot water rises through the two smaller tubes to the inside of the pot.
- Heating one liter of water to boiling at 12:30 AM, when the solar radiation intensity is 841 W/m² and the ambient temperature is 34°C, shows a heating time, efficiency; and thermal power of 22 minutes, 34.18 %, and 351.62 W.
- The cooking of 1 kg of potatoes at 12:40, when the solar intensity irradiation is stable (around 780 W/m²) and ambient temperature of 34°C, shows temperatures of the small tube, large tube and water casserole, respectively of 104°C, 102.5°C, and 100°C. Under these conditions, these temperatures remain stable respectively 101°C 100°C, and 98°C during the cooking time which is about 32 minutes.

The comparison of the results with those obtained on expensive thermal type cookers shows improved performance of 50 % and 28 %, in terms of heating time, to reach the boiling temperature and thermal efficiency. All of these results and performances allow us to conclude the feasibility of the parabolic trough cooker, designed and produced during this work. Its use for cooking in the rural world, and particularly urban, meets the energy needs of the inhabitants and contributes to the protection of forests and the environment.

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