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Covid19: The psycho-socioeconomic impact of lockdown

Case of Casa-Settat Region

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Abstract

The objective of our article is to identify the psycho-socioeconomic impact of the Covid19 pandemic and of the lockdown on the Moroccan population. To understand the psycho-socioeconomic impact of the Covid19 pandemic and of the lockdown on the Moroccan population, we administered a survey of 500 people living in the Casablanca-Settat region. The survey is divided into 3 axes: the 1st axis relates to the conditions of lockdown, the second axis relates to the socio-economic impact and the last axis deals with the psychological impact of Covid19 on this population.

Key words: Covid19; psycho-socioeconomic impact, Morocco,

Introduction

COVID 19 is a disease caused by the sars cov 2 virus (severe acute respiratory syndrome), a virus of the coronavirus family, first appeared in December 2019 in the city of Wuhan in China. It is distinguished by its speed of spread and virulence, this virus can cause breathing difficulties and multiple organ failure. This forced the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare the virus as a pandemic. At the end of December 31, 2020, more than 84 million are infected with Covid 19 and the death toll has climbed to 1,831,546 with a case fatality rate of 2.2%. Morocco has not escaped this health crisis, the number of infected cases continues to increase, it stands at 440,970 confirmed cases with a morbidity rate of 1.68% and a cure rate of 92.98 %.

To understand the psycho-socioeconomic impact of the Covid19 pandemic and of the lockdown on the Moroccan population, we administered a survey of 500 people living in the Casablanca-Settat region. The survey is divided into 3 axes: the 1st axis relates to the conditions of lockdown, the second axis relates to

the socio-economic impact and the last axis deals with the psychological impact of Covid19 on this population.

the objective of our research is to identify the psycho-socioeconomic impact of the Covid19 pandemic and of the lockdown on the moroccan population.

The approach taken in this case is an impact study; this involves analyzing all the changes that have been noticed and observed during the lockdown; psychological (change in behavior and habits), economic (decrease or not in income and expenditure) and social (change in sense of belonging and solidarity)

Methodology

To answer these questions, we conducted a survey of a sample of 500 individuals from the Casablanca-Settat region. We have chosen the non-probability sampling method (empirical method) which results from a reasoned choice aimed at making the sample resemble the population from which it came. In this sense, we have chosen the quota sampling method according to which the sample is constructed from the criteria and requirements of public bodies while respecting the representativeness of the mother population.

The survey began on June 8, 2020 and ended on September 15 of the same year. During the first month of the survey, we conducted a face-to-face study, but the evolution of the epidemiological situation in the Casablanca-Settat region prompted us to adopt the online collection method.

To understand the psychological and socio-economic impact of the Covid19 pandemic, we have drawn up a survey based on the recommendations of psychological health experts and of the economists and statisticians' opinions.

Axis 1: The conditions of lockdown: In this part we wanted to understand the place of confinement), the prefecture of the lockdown: type and characteristics of the accommodation (number of rooms, toilets, etc.), the presence or not of the outdoor space, the presence or absence of the family.

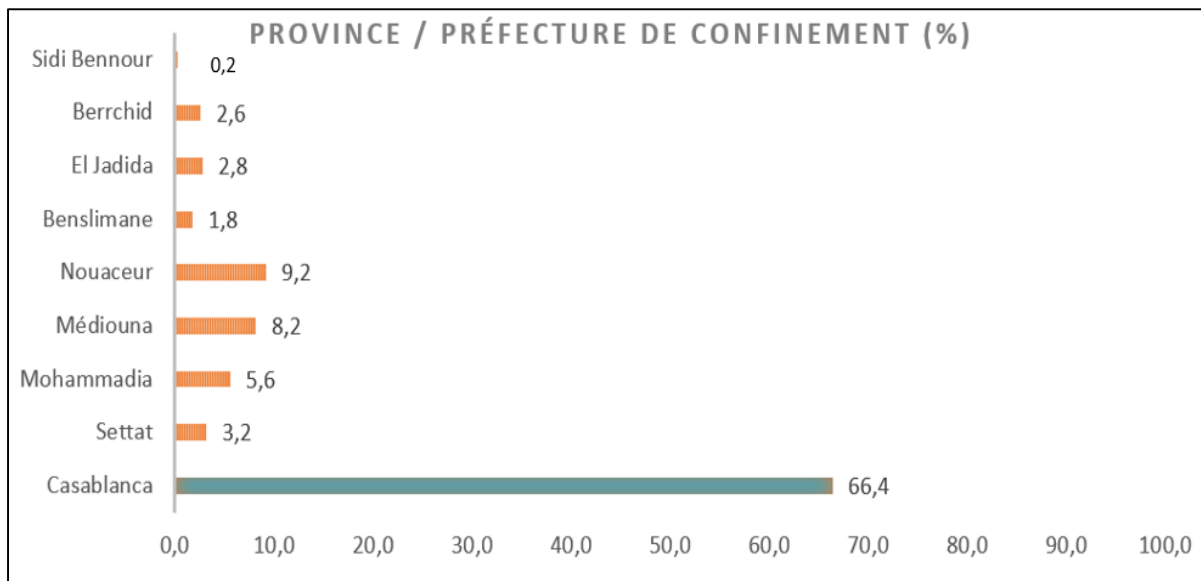
Axis 2: Conditions of employment during confinement and psycho-socioeconomic impact: This involves identifying the socio-professional category of the interviewees, the working conditions, the

modification or not of household income, the presence of financial difficulties, changes in emotions, degree of worry, compliance with confinement measures, change in habits, level of health satisfaction, feeling of security, perception of social relationships, use of networks social... etc.

Axis 3: Opinions and personal visions of Covid19: the objective is to identify the opinions of those questioned on the duration of the health crisis, its financial and social consequences, etc.

1. Sample characteristics

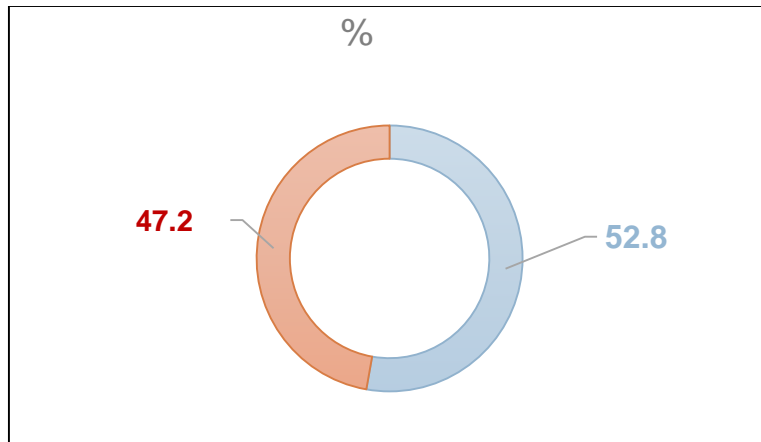
FIGURE1 : LOCKDOWN PREFECTURE



Source; authors

The above data reflects the epidemiological situation in the Casablanca-Settat region. Thus, according to the results of the survey, 66% of respondents are confined in the city of Casablanca, 9.2% in the province of Nouacer, 8% in the region of Médiouna, 5.6% in the city. of Mohammadia and only 3.2% and 2.8% respectively in the towns of Settata and El Jadida.

Figure2 : Gender of respondents

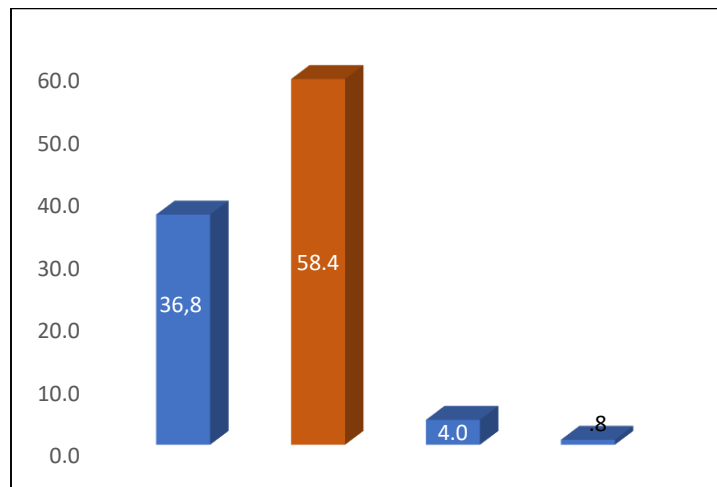


Source; authors

According to survey data, 52.8% of respondents are male and 47.2% are female.

This result allows us to conduct an analysis measuring the impact by gender during the bivariate analysis.

FIGURE3: FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES



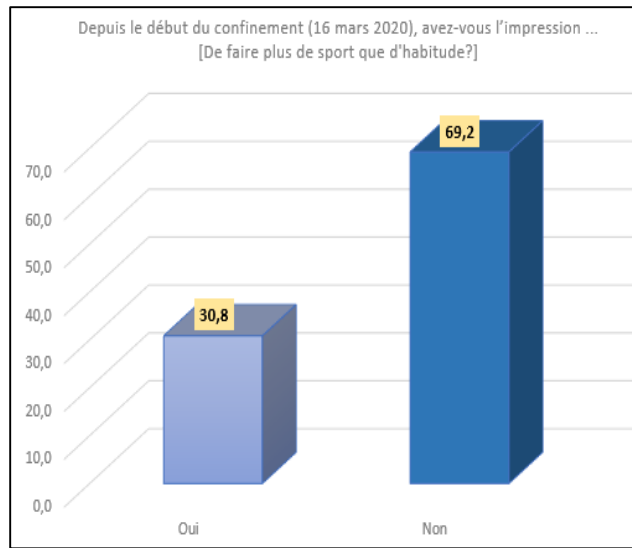
Source; Authors

In this sample, we have 58.4% of respondents who are married, 36.8% are single, 4% are divorced and only 0.8% are widowed.

We have studied all the possible cases, in order to generalize the results of the effects of the Covid-19 crisis on different households

2. Covid19 changement des comportements et impact psychologique :

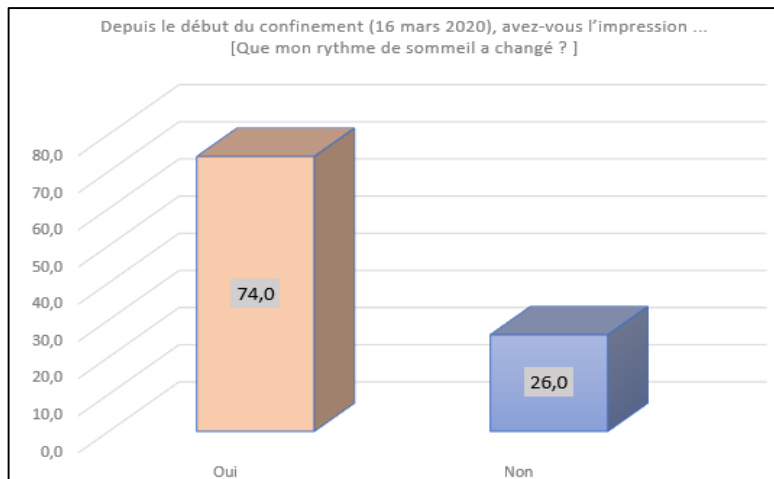
FIGURE 4. : SPORTS HABITS DURING THE LOCKDOWN



Source; Authors

Only 30.8% of respondents answered yes to the question of doing more sport than usual. This reflects the psychological situation of Moroccans who have chosen inactivity as a response to the containment measures.

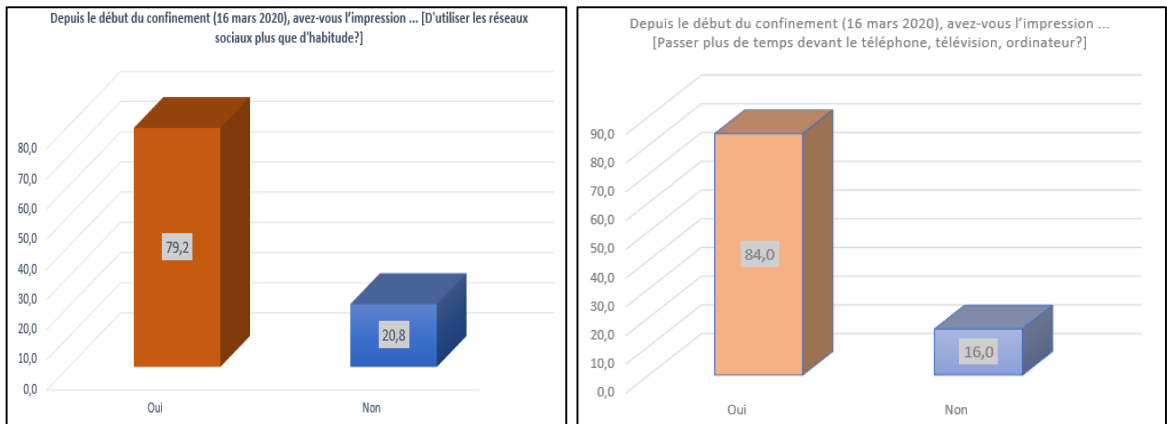
Figure 5: The rhythm of sleep during lockdown



Source; Authors

For 74% of respondents, the rhythm of sleep has changed since the start of the lockdown, thus reflecting the increase in anxiety among the population of the Casablanca-Settat region. While only 26% of those questioned said that the rhythm of sleep remained the same despite the confinement.

FIGURE 6 : USE OF SOCIAL MEDIAS, TELEPHONE / TV / COMPUTER DURING LOCKDOWN:

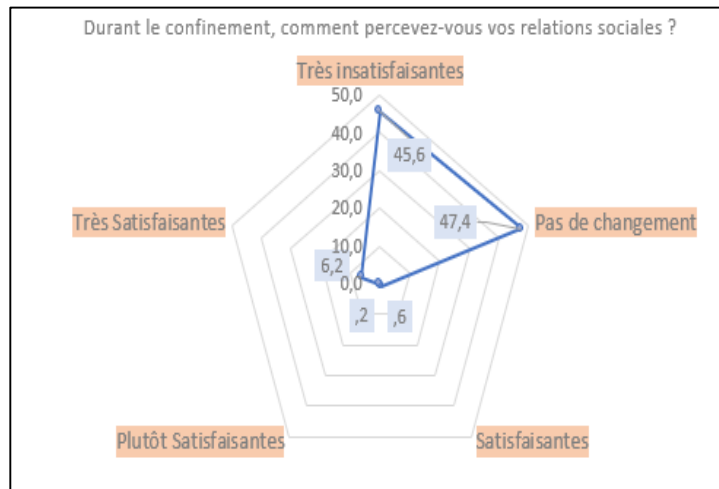


Source; Authors

The use of social networks has increased since the start of confinement according to 79.2% of those questioned. This situation may refer to a change in the behavior of Moroccans towards a digitalization of habits.

84% of respondents confirm that they spend more time in front of phones, computers and televisions. The high use of these devices can translate on the one hand into a change in the way of working and studying that has pushed Moroccans to adapt to the new context. On the other hand, this increase can be read as a flight from the "real world" with all the negative consequences of the Covid-19 crisis to "the digital world", where there are our "virtual friends".

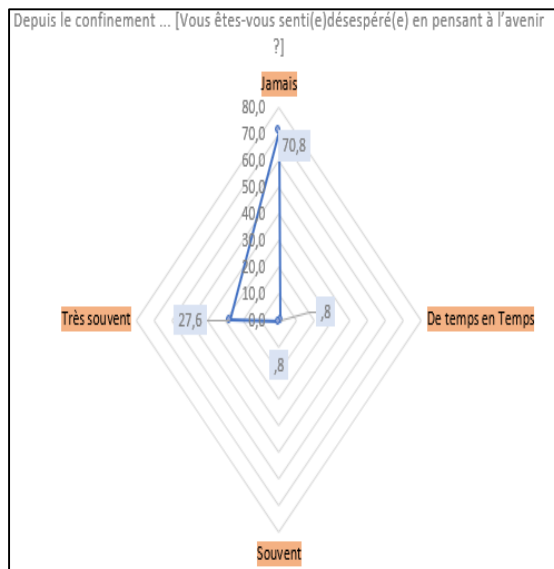
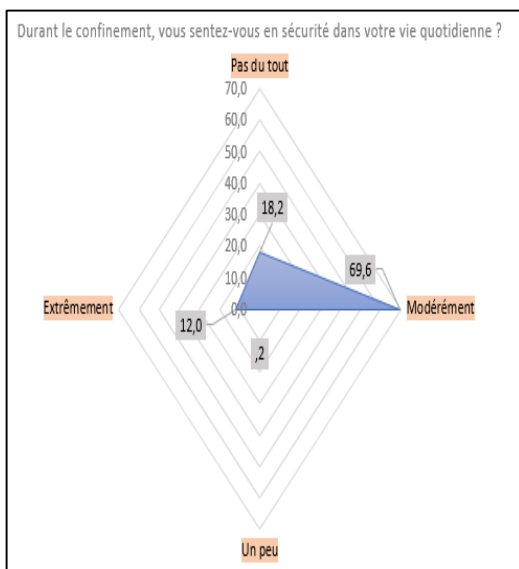
Figure 7 : Social relations during the lockdown



Source; Authors

This figure reveals that 47.4% of respondents did not notice a change in the perception of their social relationships, while 45.6% of respondents are very dissatisfied with their social relationships and only 6.2% are very satisfied. . These results confirm the previous results. Indeed, the high degree of dissatisfaction reflects, in a way, the high use of social networks and the Internet.

Figure 8 : Sense of security and disappointment



Source; Authors

More than 69% of those questioned do not feel safe during confinement. This feeling reflects, on the one hand, the fear of contamination and therefore health security. On the other hand, fear of losing the job or the source of income, ie financial security.

3. Principal component analysis

Principal component analysis is a technique used in factor analysis. the objective is to reduce the number of variables in order to facilitate perception and interpretation. The idea is to come out with factors (components) that explain the maximum amount of information about the variation.

We conducted a principal component analysis by gender to uncover the commonalities and differences between the men and women surveyed.

A. PCA : Male case

Variance totale expliquée^a

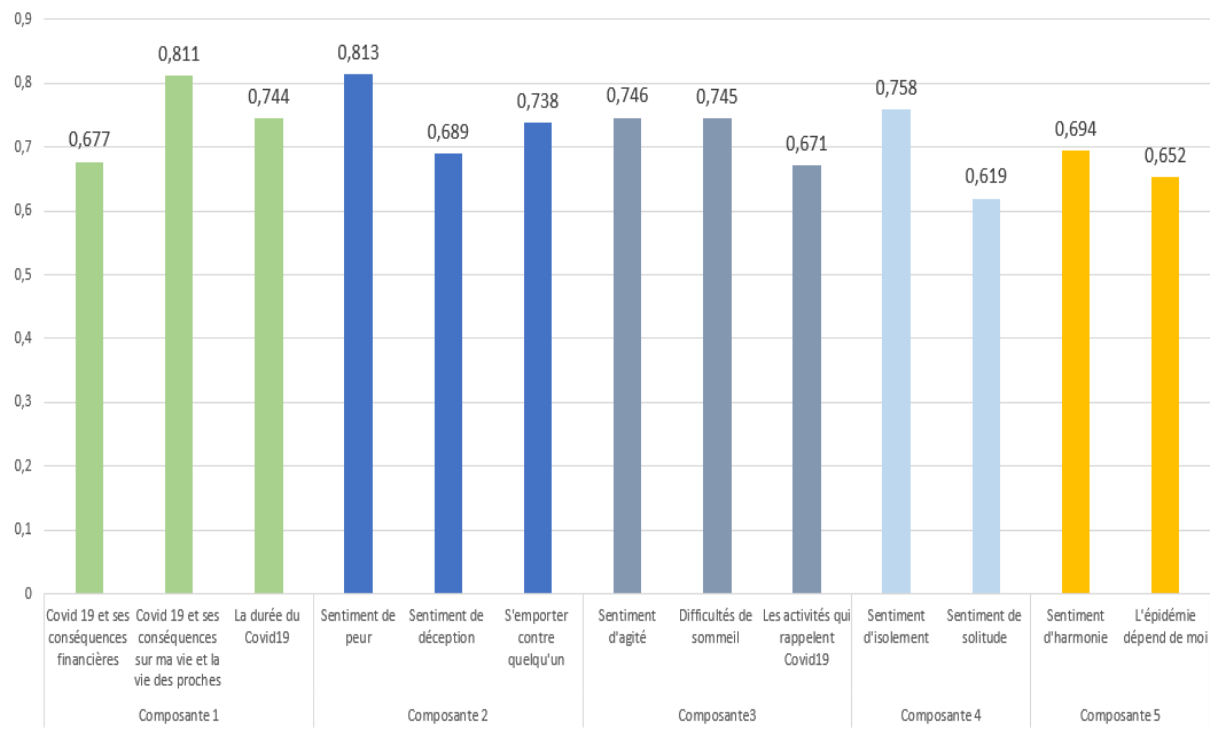
Composante	Valeurs propres initiales			Sommes extraites du carré des chargements			Sommes de rotation du carré des chargements		
	Total	% de la variance	% cumulé	Total	% de la variance	% cumulé	Total	% de la variance	% cumulé
1	2,869	20,489	20,489	2,869	20,489	20,489	2,051	14,650	14,650
2	1,984	14,173	34,662	1,984	14,173	34,662	1,986	14,188	28,838
3	1,386	9,897	44,559	1,386	9,897	44,559	1,802	12,873	41,711
4	1,162	8,303	52,863	1,162	8,303	52,863	1,444	10,311	52,022
5	1,032	7,370	60,233	1,032	7,370	60,233	1,149	8,210	60,233
6	,921	6,581	66,814						
7	,763	5,451	72,265						
8	,745	5,322	77,587						
9	,699	4,990	82,576						
10	,671	4,789	87,366						
11	,544	3,888	91,254						
12	,465	3,324	94,577						
13	,424	3,030	97,607						
14	,335	2,393	100,000						

Méthode d'extraction : Analyse en composantes principales.

a. Seules les observations pour lesquelles êtes vous? = Homme sont utilisées pendant la phase d'analyse.

At male's case, PCA allowed us to retain 5 factors to represent 14 items. The factors used explained 60.23% of the total variation, a rate that is not bad for describing the total variation. In other words, 60.23% of the total information is grouped into 5 components.

Figure 9 : Component matrix rotation: Men case



- ❖ **Component 1:** This component brings together questions relating to the duration and consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic on people's lives and their financial situations. For the Male, budgets and income come first to identify the crisis impact.
- ❖ **Component 2:** This component includes questions related to the feeling of fear and disappointment as well as the question relating to the feeling of nervousness. Through this component we understood that in men case, the feeling of disappointment and fear leads them to behave “violently” towards others.
- ❖ **Component 3:** This component includes items relating to restlessness, sleeping difficulties, and activities reminiscent of Covid-19. This is how, in men case, that any activity or information reminiscent of Covid-19 strongly influences their sleep pattern and makes them more restless
- ❖ **Component 4:** This component describes isolation and loneliness in men. These two items remain strongly and positively correlated.

- ❖ **Component 5:** This component groups together items that deal with men's feelings of harmony with others and how they view their behaviors and the evolution of the severity of the pandemic's spread.

B. PCA : Female case

Variance totale expliquée^a

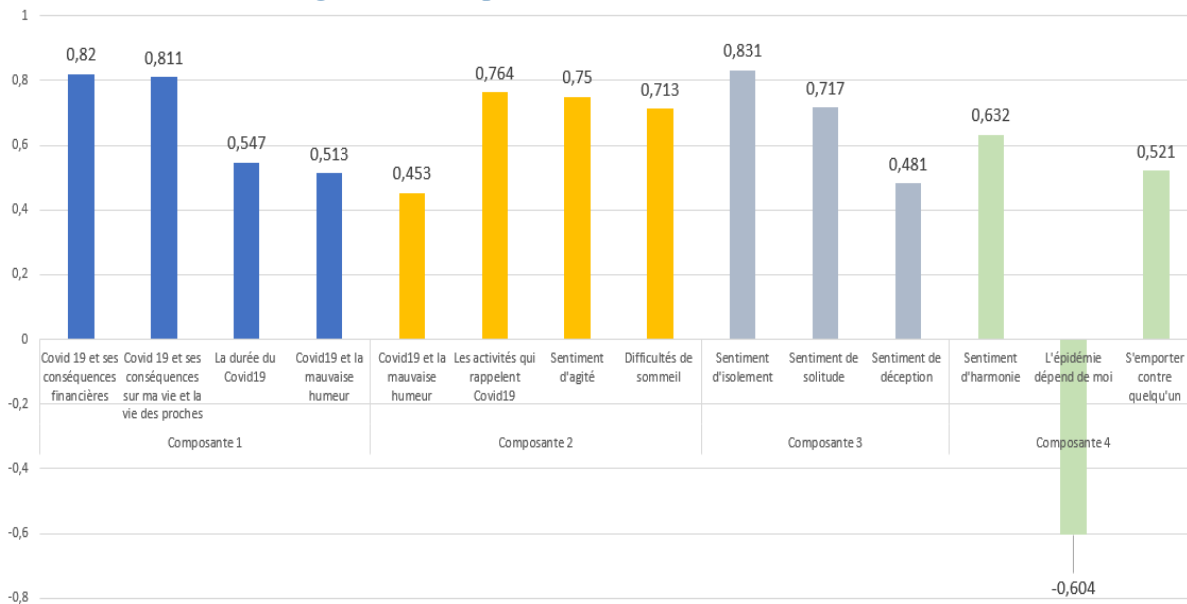
Composante	Valeurs propres initiales			Sommes extraites du carré des chargements			Sommes de rotation du carré des chargements		
	Total	% de la variance	% cumulé	Total	% de la variance	% cumulé	Total	% de la variance	% cumulé
1	3,404	24,312	24,312	3,404	24,312	24,312	2,346	16,754	16,754
2	1,842	13,158	37,469	1,842	13,158	37,469	2,229	15,924	32,678
3	1,268	9,059	46,528	1,268	9,059	46,528	1,829	13,064	45,742
4	1,159	8,281	54,809	1,159	8,281	54,809	1,269	9,066	54,809
5	,938	6,703	61,512						
6	,854	6,102	67,613						
7	,810	5,787	73,400						
8	,760	5,425	78,825						
9	,665	4,751	83,577						
10	,590	4,214	87,791						
11	,556	3,969	91,760						
12	,443	3,168	94,927						
13	,402	2,874	97,801						
14	,308	2,199	100,000						

Méthode d'extraction : Analyse en composantes principales.

a. Seules les observations pour lesquelles êtes vous? = Femme sont utilisées pendant la phase d'analyse.

In women case , PCA identified 4 components with an explained inertia of 54.8%. A share that is average and lower than that for men

F Figure 9 : Component matrix rotation: Women case



- ❖ **Component 1:** This component includes 4 items; the opinion regarding the duration of Covid-19, the consequences of the pandemic on people's lives and their financial situations and finally, the state of mood. Whereas in male case we only had 3 items in the first component. This leads us to conclude that the consequences on the life and financial situation of women make them in a bad mood and thus affect their state of mind and emotions.
- ❖ **Component 2:** This component includes 4 items; questions about the feeling of fear, the feeling of restlessness, sleep disturbances, as well as the mood. If we compare this component with that in men case, we find that mood state in women influenced these feelings. While in men we do not find a link between the items "feeling of fear, feeling restless, sleep disturbances" and their mood. But for women rather a connection between these feelings and the feeling of disappointment.
- ❖ **Component 3:** In women this component consists of items that describe loneliness, isolation and disappointment. Whereas in men's case we find the feeling of disappointment more with feelings of fear and restlessness
- ❖ **Component 4:** Groups 3 items; "The feeling of nervousness", "harmony with others" which are negatively correlated with the third item which describes the conduct of women and the spread of the virus. For women, the propagation of the virus does not depend on them, there are other factors that explain this spread propagation.

Conclusion

According to the World Bank, the social impact of the pandemic on Morocco does not bode better, these estimates indicate that poverty could worsen to reach more than 6.6% in 2020. This worsening is explained by the loss of employment following state of emergency measures which led to lockdown. This situation led to the triggering of a socio-economic crisis which materialized in the loss of income and employment.

In addition, as we discussed during the presentation of the results of the investigation, the psychological impact of the Covid-19 crisis remains significant and must be taken seriously by the public authorities in order to be able to remedy it in order to find adequate solutions to support the population that has been affected by this health crisis. Overall, our study has shown that COVID-19 has been a source of multiple stress. The people questioned did not react in the same way to this crisis, depending on the conditions of lockdown, socio-professional category and gender, between those who were forced to completely change their lifestyle, and those who have tried to adapt.

COMBINING MEDIA INFORMATION LITERACY AND ETHICAL TECHNOLOGY FOR MORE INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

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Abstract

Drawing on my experience as a university teacher, researcher in comparative linguistics, communication and media studies, active member of the UNESCO-UNAOC-UNITWIN University Network on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue (MILID), and fervent advocate of Media and Information Literacy (MIL) for All⁴, and in conjunction with the imposed lockdown due to COVID 19 pandemic, this feature article aims to show the importance for new technology to work in synergy with the humanities and to embrace MIL to set the stage for ethical inclusive technology at the service of integrated educational systems and media information literate citizens.

This article is divided into two main parts. The first part deals with three evolutionary stages of Information Technology at the service of education and the second part is devoted to the importance of MIL in the digital ecosystem. Three areas of interest will be highlighted in this regard: Critical Thinking, Ethical Inclusive Technology and Active Engagement with IT, with special focus on Algorithm Literacy.

Key Words: Media Information Literacy, Ethical Inclusive Technology, Post COVID 19 Educational Systems, Critical Thinking, Algorithm Literacy

INTRODUCTION

The ARICON International Conference on Humanities and Education 2021 takes place at a critical time in human history where we have all been facing the threats and challenges of the unprecedented COVID 19 Pandemic, which has affected all countries and all sectors of society, including primarily the

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⁴ My educational website "Media and Information Literacy for All" is accessible via the UNESCO-United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Clearing House on Media and Information Literacy:

<https://milunesco.unaoc.org/mil-organizations/media-information-literacy-for-all/>.

education sector. At no time in human history had Information Technology been so important than at the outbreak of the pandemic where the threats and challenges of the pandemic had to be turned quickly into new opportunities and new empowering openings in the educational systems worldwide.

In this context of over-dependence on Information Technology (IT) due to the rapid move of educational systems from classroom instruction to online learning, this feature article will deal with the opportunities offered by IT as well as persisting challenges, and hence the necessity to combine Media-Information Literacy (MIL) and ethical technology for more inclusive educational systems.

This article is divided into two main parts. The first one deals with three evolutionary stages of IT at the service of education: before the lockdown, management of remote instruction during the pandemic, and governance of post COVID 19 educational systems. The second part shows the importance of MIL in the digital ecosystem. Three aspects of high importance will be highlighted: critical thinking, ethical inclusive technology and active engagement with IT, with particular emphasis laid on Algorithm Literacy.

I. THREE STAGES IN THE EVOLUTION OF IT IN EDUCATION

Before tackling the three stages in the evolution of IT in education, let me first clarify the meaning and the role of IT in society and in our everyday life. What makes possible the digitization of the world, including the digitization of education, is IT. Therefore, IT-enabled information and communication is in other words Mediated Information and Communication which encompasses the use of new and emerging technology in the digital space in various forms and formats.

No doubt, then, that IT-mediated information and communication has become an integral part of our daily lives long before the COVID 19 outbreak. Yet, there are considerable technological and digital divides between developed and developing countries. Developed countries were well prepared to manage the COVID 19 crisis because they had already built knowledge societies with IT-enabled information and communication systems. Online learning was already part of their academic cycle and they were even good at making money from it by providing paid-for online courses, diplomas and degrees. The case was completely different at the other end, where both school and university instruction was mainly based on traditional in-person instruction, with little investment of online opportunities in the teaching/learning process.

Then came the pandemic, with imposed lockdown and distance education in March 2020; the same state is extended up to now at the university level in Morocco. We were faced with two big challenges at the beginning of the outbreak: how to stay safe and not to contract the virus and how to engage in sudden, unplanned shift to online learning at the mass level.

IT-enabled e-learning platforms, equipped with multi-media tools, were quickly set up to upload tutorials, videos, web-pages, etc. to interact with students in a technology-mediated form. The limitation of this swift e-learning was that teachers were not offered any training on how to use this technology, nor

on how to preserve the interactive aspect of face-to-face learning, which is one of the most important assets of in-person instruction and the big missing element in remote instruction. In the immediate stage after imposing the lockdown, the technical staff of the university was in charge of uploading learning materials with no direct contact between students and teachers, except from e-mails, which was a big challenge to the learning process. Subsequently, teachers were allowed access to the e-learning platform to get direct contact with their students, which was a better step forward.

I can share my own experience in this regard. Thanks to an online tutorial on how to use the University's e-platform, put by Moulay Ismail University at the disposal of teachers, I got initiated on how to use the e-learning platform. I have also invested social media networks to the benefit of my students, mainly Facebook and You Tube, and I have taken full advantage of my already operating and well-known website titled "Media and Information Literacy for All." And to help students improve their achievement, I set the tradition to conduct online live sessions to help students revise for exams; these sessions were recorded and made accessible to all students.

I was pleasantly surprise by a rewarding outcome of this combination of IT-facilities in e-learning. Students who were able to benefit from this combined set of IT techniques and strategies did better in exams than in traditional instruction for the following reasons:

1. The time allotted for an online lecture is much shorter: fifteen to twenty minutes instead of two hours.
2. Students can engage with this learning material at their own pace and as many times as needed. Likewise, they can deal with reading materials as they wish, with no restrictions of time and space.
3. Even those who did not have the opportunity to attend the online live session can still have access to its recording, which was put at their disposal.
4. This proved to be an ideal situation for students who work part time or full time.
5. Practice activities that students are asked to complete and send back to me, or share with their classmates, have helped to make them involved in the learning process and to stimulate them to take responsibility of their learning.

These opportunities were open to us thanks to the application of new IT in education, which has set the stage for the "new normal" where IT has become a prerequisite for educational development and where e-learning has become an integral part of this new normal. The best scenario for post COVID 19 governance of educational systems is, therefore, to opt for a hybrid system, combining both in-person and online learning. For sure, nothing can replace face-to-face instruction, yet the young generation cannot not take full advantage of the tremendous opportunities offered by new technology in education. This is why offline and online instruction should go hand-in-hand in the futures of education.

Yet, the opportunities offered by new IT in education and the brilliant prospects ahead are only the visible part of the iceberg since there are persisting challenges that should be reduced to attain inclusive educational development, as it twill shown below.

1. The COVID 19 crisis has widened both the digital and the social justice divides.

It is regrettable that the socially-disadvantaged students were left behind in this rapid shift to online learning for various reasons, namely (a) lack of proper equipments, mainly computers and laptops; (b) insufficient or no internet connection; and (c) poverty or low-income limitations.

2. Students with special needs, mainly the visually-impaired and the hearing impaired, were completely not taken care of in the COVID 19 emergency plans.
3. The shutting-down of the university campus providing accommodation for students, as well as the travel restrictions between cities, had severe negative consequences for students living in rural or remote areas, which caused disruption of their studies and incapacity to sit for exams at the Faculty.

Education strategists should have thought on how to assist these segments of society by providing them with the necessary equipment and the know-how, as well as the opportunity to be examined using online facilities or on-spot exams wherever they live, instead of leaving them to their own fate with no help at all. How can the ethics of technology help in this regard? This is what will be discussed in what follows.

II. ETHICAL TECHNOLOGY FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Technology conglomerates should not be focused on how to maximize profits, but they should also work for the good of society by taking into consideration the following measures:

1. Designing affordable technology for the socially-disadvantaged groups;
2. Helping to find out alternative offline ways to reach the excluded or marginalized segments of society;
3. Strengthening linguistic diversity in the cyber-space in order to overcome language barriers that hinder the use of technology for integrated educational development;
4. Helping to incorporate sections for students with special needs in e-learning platforms;
5. Being transparent as to how they function.

The next section on Media and Information Literacy will shed light on the importance of transparency of IT conglomerates and how to avoid being manipulated by them.

III. MEDIA INFORMATION LITERACY IN THE DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM

What is Media Information Literacy and why is it important in the digital ecosystem?

From the literature on Media Information Literacy (MIL) and my teaching experience, I have come up with the following synthesis of MIL, which can be defined as the ability to identify information needs, locate and access the needed information; understand, interpret, evaluate, store, synthesize and use effectively, ethically and creatively media and information content in a variety of forms and formats, including the efficient use of communication and information technologies and the full understanding of IT dynamics.

This entails the ability to make reasoned judgments and to take informed decisions by applying constructive scepticism, constructive argumentation, critical thinking, rational analysis and emotional

intelligence when dealing with the various media and information content as well as the platforms and technologies used to transmit this content.

Besides, the relationship between MIL, democracy, access to information, cultural diversity, social inclusion and active citizenship, including digital citizenship and digital health, is to be highlighted because MIL helps citizens to develop reflective and independent thinking, express their opinions and participate actively in the life of their society.

How can we relate all this to technology-based instruction and online access to information? The answer relies on Critical Thinking and Active Engagement with IT-Mediated Information and Communication through the three stages of verification of information, sharing of information and production of information, paying particular attention to misinformation and disinformation.

In fact, one of the first actions of the UNESCO-led International University Network on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue, of which I'm a member, was to launch global mobilization against disinformation, which broke out concurrently with the COVID 19 pandemic, in order to fight the infodemic and conspiracy theories. Information Literacy, Media Literacy, News Literacy, Social Media Literacy, IT Literacy, Digital Literacy and Digital Health have never been as important because these literacies have proved to be a matter of life and death. Knowing how to engage wisely and responsibly with the digital world in times of crisis and uncertainty, and knowing how to access reliable sources of fact-based, accurate, impartial and inclusive information can save lives and empower citizens.

In this regard, I would like to raise awareness about one under-studied aspect of Information Technology, which is IT Algorithms: These are the mathematical systems that underpin all types of Information Technology and which are NOT free from bias and manipulation.

The idea I want to highlight here is that at a time of cutting-edge technology, you should have the ability to apply critical thinking to this technology itself as a system of algorithms that determine what you see online or what you are allowed to see or made to see and how your online behaviour is computed by these same systems to make profit out of it by sharing it with third parties that are interested in the type of your online profile. What is not known is that these algorithms serve as the gatekeepers of the cyberspace and online data, which they process to you according to who you are and what *they* want to let you know.

How can this happen? From your clicks, you reveal your online identity to these mathematical systems, which are equipped with refined artificial intelligence that enables them to analyse your online behaviour, to identify your preferences and to get to know who you are and how you think. This enables them to tailor online information, content and advertisements to your online profile, applying a double-edged sword: filtering the information you are exposed to and considering you as the product to sell. Even at the level of scientific research, when you launch a key-word search, the search results will depend on which region of the world you are from and on information that algorithms have collected on you from

your online behaviour. As such, you will be exposed to information and data that converge with your preferences and anything divergent will be screened out. Such interference in search results hinders the possibility of having a comprehensive view of the question at stake. This explains why students and active citizens should always diversify their sources of information combining multi-media and both off-line and online sources of information. And this is why I consider that one of the emerging literacies in post COVID 19 education is Algorithm Literacy because it is closely intertwined with IT-based instruction and research.

While IT conglomerates claim that IT Algorithms are simple rational mathematical systems that are needed for the functioning of IT and that are impartial and free from bias, Algorithm Literacy shows that this is not true for the above mentioned reasons. In fact, IT Algorithms classify Internet users in *homogenised clusters*, depending on their likes and their dislikes. The danger of this invisible manipulation of users is multi-fold. First, it is hidden, so people do not pay attention to it. Second, it controls access to information and news by prioritizing some data, news stories, views, people, places and companies over the others. Third, it limits the choices open to students and researchers in their online search. Fourth, it impacts the way users interpret the world and data and make sense of events and protagonists. Fifth, since our decisions are based on the information that we have, it also impacts our decisions and world views. All this represents a serious threat to democracy, cultural diversity, independent thinking and human agency. This is why there should be more visibility as to how these algorithms function and their impacts on individuals and society.

As long as there are no strict regulations, no ethical standards, no visibility, we run the risk to be harbouring a technological monster that attempts to dehumanize us all and deepen all types of divides. We should instead humanize technology to the benefit of all, by making it accountable, by regulating it, and by imposing strict visibility and ethical standards.

CONCLUSION

With young people having an over-abundance of information at their fingertips, MIL education will empower them to make optimum use of such opportunity and to set the balance right between taking full advantage of new technology while at the same time preserving their independent thinking and full agency in the digital world. MIL knowledge, competencies and attitudes will also protect them from visible and invisible ways of manipulation and empower them to be productive citizens both in established and emerging democracies.

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THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SAUDI FEMALE STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO POETRY DURING THE PANDEMIC

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Abstract:

This paper examines Saudi female students' conceptualization of the Covid-19 journey through their analysis of the figurative language in William Shakespeare's "That time of year" and William Blake's "London" and "A Sick Rose." The study shows that students analogically relate the conceptual metaphors of time in Shakespeare's sonnet 73 to the transition in people's lives due to the outbreak. It then shows that students connected the bleak setting in "London" to desolate public areas as the virus prevented human interaction. Finally, the paper examines the students' comparison of Covid-19 symptoms to symbols of disease and death in "The Sick Rose." The study's significance exists in showing the students' production of new textual meanings of the poems in the context of the pandemic. The findings reveal that students drew analogies between interpretations that arose from their personal experiences and the poems they studied in poetry courses.

Keywords: Covid-19, Saudi Female Students, Poetry, Literary Responses, Analogies

Introduction

Throughout history, the world witnessed numerous devastating epidemics, such as cholera, smallpox, and influenza. The outbreaks caused by these diseases have had tremendous effects on the social and political stability of the countries affected. In a 2020 interview with *The New Yorker*, Frank Snowden, a professor emeritus of history and medicine at Yale University, said, "There's not a major area of human life that epidemic diseases haven't touched profoundly" (Chotiner, 2020). Similarly, the most recent pandemic in human history, Covid-19, has had catastrophic effects on people's lives in many ways. On the social level, people have lost many family members, friends, and acquaintances. In terms of the economy, the recession has bankrupted businesses and stock markets, leaving many unemployed people, and compelling them to change their lifestyles and daily routines to survive. Finally, to prevent the disease from claiming human lives, governments enforced compulsory lockdowns that changed human history.

One of the many areas that Covid-19 has affected on a global scale is education. As many countries imposed a partial or complete lockdown, universities and schools moved from face-to-face classrooms to online learning. According to an article in *Arab News*, UNESCO monitoring has reported that "over 120 countries have implemented nationwide school and university closures" (Draycott, 2020). On March 9th, 2020, Saudi Arabia enforced an edict of curfew and lockdown that affected its traditional modes of teaching and learning and students' perceptions of what they were studying. In the Department

European Languages and Literature at King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, literary studies experienced a drastic transition in the way the courses were being taught and studied. Instructors and students faced difficulties establishing suitable methods to approach subjects such as poetry, fiction, and drama.

Students find poetry a course that requires creative thinking to grasp the multifaceted meanings and nuances of the poems studied. Even though poetry is polysemantic, undergraduate students at KAU enjoy the challenge of breaking the code and unravelling its meanings. They rely on preconceived ideas and shared assumptions readily available in previous literary courses to assist them with reading poetry. However, studying poetry during Covid-19 quarantine changed students' usual approach towards its analysis. There was a noticeable transformation in their perceptions of poetry. They associated themes of loneliness and depression as well as negative symbols with the pandemic. Thus, students began to read poetry as analogically related to Covid-19.

However, there is a lack of research on the responses of students to poetry during Covid-19. Many studies or reviews written in 2019-2020 look at poetry as a therapeutic technique in combating isolation and helping students and patients suffering from detachment to cope with the virus outbreak. This practice is illustrated in "Storytelling and Poetry in the time of Coronavirus" (2020) and "A Look Back and a Path Forward: Poetry's Healing Power during the Pandemic" (2020). Other studies such as "Fighting Covid-19 in East Asia: The Role of Classical Chinese Poetry" (2020) and "Teaching Literary Responses to the Black Death During the Covid-19 Pandemic" (2020) look at poetry to promote intercultural relationships and examine classical literary works on pandemics, respectively.

Although these studies look at the connection between poetry and the recent pandemic, none of them explain the shifts in students' interpretation of poems due to Covid-19. As such, research on students' role in creating analogical relationships between poems and the pandemic is needed. The students' act of drawing on personal experience to contribute to literary text meanings is known as reader-response. According to Kelly J. Mays (2017), "Readers-response critics regard the work not as what is printed on the page but as what is experienced temporally through each act of reading ... The reader effectively performs the text into existence ... Readers-response critics ask not what a work means but what work does to and through a reader" (p. 1985). This definition clarifies that new meanings emerge with every reading and that the text affects the readers' interpretation. As instructors, we noticed that students had adopted unconventional perceptions in their interpretation and analysis of English poems, which is this paper's purpose.

This paper examines how students created a narrative of the Covid-19 journey through their analogical readings of William Shakespeare's "That time of year" and William Blake's "London" and "A Sick Rose." It analyses how students' responses reworked previously established interpretations of these poems by assigning new meanings to explain their understanding of the virus. Filtering through the students' responses to the figurative language portrayed in the four poems in discussion, it became clearer that when read in a specific sequence, these poems create an interesting narrative that reflects the different stages people encountered during Covid-19. In "That Time of Year," students analogically relate the conceptual metaphors of time to the transition in people's lives due to the outbreak. In "London," students find a likeness in the poem's bleak setting to desolate public areas as the virus enters a physical space after its temporal onset. Finally, in "A Sick Rose," students compare the symbols of disease and death to Coronavirus and its fatal effect on the human body.

"That time of year": A Time of Transition

As students studied Shakespeare's "That time of year" during the Covid-19 outbreak, they identified nature's transitional phases with Coronavirus and reflected on their time before and after the

pandemic. Instead of understanding the transience of nature through the images of autumn and twilight, they highlighted these metaphors of time as analogous to the transition they experienced. The changes that accompanied the virus as it entered this world's time zone and enforced lockdowns and social distancing represent the climate of transition that the poem conveys. Students perceived that the metaphorical relationship of time to mortality emphasized nature's unidirectional development and compared these images to Covid-19's irreversible movement to an inevitable end.

Students' gradual realization of the tangible representations of the virus led to a sense of change as time is not a fixed entity that occupies a physical space. To better understand the role of time in measuring change, students were introduced to Aristotle (341 B.C.) and George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's (1999) theorization of time. Aristotle explained that time is "the measure of motion" and a collection of transitory moments in a specific journey. Lakoff and Johnson (1999) noted that time is not a thing in or of itself. These theories allowed students to perceive that one must consider time in relation "to other concepts such as motion, space and events. Most of our understanding of time is a metaphorical version of our understanding of motion in space" (p. 137). It is important not to conceptualize time as an independent concept because to comprehend it, they must understand the concrete factors connected to it. Lakoff and Johnson's theory is effective in shedding light on the students' understanding of conceptual metaphors, which are present in the visual images used by Shakespeare. Conceptual metaphor, understanding one idea in terms of another, informs the students' analogical interpretation of autumn and twilight as a change in time as seen in Lakoff's (1992) interpretation that "the passing of time is motion" (p. 11). These abstract metaphors are grounded in the students' physical and mental experiences of Covid-19 because they indicate the changing nature of time.

In the first quatrain of the sonnet, Shakespeare describes the aging process using vivid, visual imagery of autumn. Students understood that autumn, unlike other seasons, is not a fixed entity of characteristics due to its unstable and changing nature. It is a temporal conduit that protects plant life's integrity from the cold weather en route to spring. They perceived this transitive season as mysterious and discreet because the changes that accompany autumn are unquantifiable, as shown in the verses, "yellow leaves, or none, or few do hang / Upon those boughs which shake against the cold." Also, they observed that the speaker indicates the presence of "leaves" then their absence ("none") but then returns to "few" to indicate the fluctuation of the development of autumn and how its onset is unstable. Students found the use of "or" as opposed to "and" serves to underscore the oscillating manifestations of autumn. The yellowing leaves are an additional sign of the apprehension of time as yellow is used for cautionary signs because it is the most visible colour in the spectrum.

Students' analogical interpretation compared the passing of time seen in the change of the leaves' colours to the transitional phase people underwent during the Covid-19 pandemic. Just like autumn, and its gradually falling leaves, the realization of Covid-19 came slowly yet unknowingly. Specifically, they related the build-up towards the lockdown as a vague time when media outlets relayed miscellaneous fragments of information about the virus. That specific time, undefined and intangible like autumn, was when people around the world could not grasp the meaning of the disease, its origin, or even its dangerous impact. Upon research, students found that scientists were unsure how the virus transitioned to humans (Bryner, 2020). In "Combatting Covid-19 misinformation," Ofcom (2021) notes that people are interested in knowing more about the virus, "But given the false claims about Covid-19 circulating online, . . . people are struggling to know who or what to believe." To the students, the extent of the virus seemed endless because of its uncertainty and unpredictability. Thus, its transition away from normalcy resembled Shakespeare's changing autumn.

Students identified twilight as another natural yet more rapid form of transition that unfolds through time. This short process is emphasized by the word "fadeth" in "As after sunset fadeth in the

west.” In this verse, sunlight represents truths and facts, while its transition to darkness represents a sense of mystery and foreboding. Students interpreted these meanings as analogous to the Covid-19 time when people were in a transitional phase trying to make sense of what was happening globally. They questioned: what were and still are the proper precautions that humans should take? And they resorted to the Internet to research information about Covid-19 that confused people: is the virus really dangerous or merely the common flu? (Abdoli, 2020). As a result of their readings, students connected the virus’s enigmatic nature and its effect on humans as similar to the apprehension felt because of the twilight - dreading something, yet unsure what it is. The students found that the precariousness and speed of twilight falling into the night resembled the dubiousness of Covid-19. The onset of this virus was something they could not understand. Students noticed that even though the discussion of “That time of year” focuses on the temporal aspect relating to Covid-19, the poem also suggests a spatial element visible in its interpretation. The development of the images connotes a sense of urgency as the virus transitioned from a global area, illustrated by the autumn season, to a regional setting as depicted in the image of twilight.

“London”: Spatial Manifestation of Covid-19

Moving from the temporal setting in Shakespeare’s sonnet, students found Blake’s “London” to metaphorically depict the Coronavirus’s progression from a vague phenomenon into a more tangible one through the poem’s spatial setting. They analogically related the presence of Covid-19 in their immediate surroundings to the sense of imprisonment in two spatial references in “London”: the streets and the Thames river. These spaces contribute to the dire atmosphere which students interpreted using sensory imagery - visual and auidal, which the speaker experiences and portrays.

Students identified the setting’s analysis as essential because of the connection between the spatial aspect of Covid-19 and the geographical context in the poem. Research by Pitkänen (2003) describes setting as “the compositional frame which defines situation and surroundings in a world depicted by the text ... and specifies the preliminary key properties of this world” (p. 39). Based on this definition, students deduced that the setting is a significant element in any literary work as it defines the location and circumstances of the text. The conventional interpretation of the poem identifies a specific time and situation in London during the 18th century when England was going through a time of social and political upheavals. However, students’ current interpretation of the poem was influenced by the spatial and social circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic. They found that the same sinister environment brings out the analogous position in the poem’s setting and the virus’s spatial presence.

The poem opens with the spatial setting of London. It depicts the British streets as “charter’d” to describe the city as bound to contracts of rules and regulations. The repetition of “charter’d” emphasizes the idea of an unnamed force oppressively besieging the metropolis. Students perceived the condition of the “charter’d” English streets as analogous to the self-isolation and lockdown enforced upon them during the pandemic. They found the article “Literature as a Reflection of Societies’ Challenges” confirms their analogy: “As we observed today, the Coronavirus that deprived all of our mobility freedom, has subordinated our life rhythm to his determined schedule of isolation” (Zubenko and Sytnykova, 2020, p. 198). People’s life plans, social, educational, and political, were put on hold and delayed till no further notice. Students also generalized “every charter’d street” to visually represent the streets in all countries. They explained that the poem’s context foreshadows London three centuries later as being the centre of Covid-19 infections, drawing attention to it and its dire condition. Because the virus badly affected the city, the UK government placed it under enhanced community quarantine and banned any entry or exit. Authorities closed London’s airport, thus stopping all communications with other countries. Hence, students saw Blake’s “charter’d” description of 18th century London depicting such restrictions.

Interestingly, students also connected 18th century London and today's global city. They explained that London, being one of the world's most important political, economic, and cultural cities, is similar to its condition when it was under the British Empire back in the 18th century. However, Blake's visual representation of London's degrading conditions due to the industrial revolution, which had struck its citizens with feelings of depression and disconnection, ironically, indicates history repeating itself. Students witnessed that London, today, suffers from different mutated variants of Covid-19, causing its people to go through an additional stern lockdown and restrictive lifestyles. On the news, they watched as several cities such as London, Essex, and parts of Hertfordshire went into the very high alert level of Tier 3 in December 2020 because of the increased Coronavirus cases and the detection of the new variant, B.1.1.7. According to James Gallagher (2020), this variant "was first detected in September. In November around a quarter of cases in London were the new variant. This reached nearly two-thirds of cases in mid-December." Students linked this deterioration as analogous to Blake's portrait of the plight of London's citizens.

Blake projects an oppressive London that denies its citizens the freedom to live safely without constraint using visual and auditory sensory representations of suffering. In the poem, the speaker repeatedly sees and hears the depression of Londoners:

And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear,
In every voice: in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear

His anaphoric use of "marks," "every," and "cry" emphasizes that a suppressive force threatens all members of society. Students compared the figurative "mind-forg'd manacles" that describe Londoners' cause of pain to Covid-19, which also caused people's suffering and subjected the world to restrictions that stripped their freedom. The virus prevented social interactions and enforced self-isolation, causing people to fall prey to depression and despair. Students also related the word "mark" to the masks that people wear today. Because of the Coronavirus, students associated masks with the stigma of being infected that "marks" people's faces. To them, before Covid-19, masks represented safety and security; they were connected to hygiene and healthcare, whereas, now, they signify protection from sickness and signal the prohibition of close physical interrelations. Students also saw that the mask was further stigmatized during the US presidential elections when the Trump administration politicized it to show the banning of opinion and freedom of speech.

Another point of comparison that students made was the correlation between the river and the Coronavirus. They explained that even though a river may be a symbol of purity and natural beauty, Blake projects it negatively. Researching the Thames River, students discovered that it was an essential source of drinking water for the people of London during the Industrial Revolution in the 1750s. However, it suffered from sewage and industrial waste spills. As a result, filth and death contaminated the river, and "many people unknowingly consumed the contaminated water and became ill" (*Foundations of Western Culture*, 2016). Drawing on this information, students explained that just as contaminated water contains bacteria that affect the gastrointestinal system, Covid-19 is a disease that affects the respiratory system, both having adverse health effects. Thus, by way of analogy, students argued that both water and air, as represented by the Thames and Covid-19, act as vehicles carrying people to their ultimate death.

“The Sick Rose”: The Coronavirus Invasion and Destruction

Students’ narrative of the Covid-19 journey continues with William Blake’s “The Sick Rose,” a poem that visually represents a foreign entity desecrating the sanctity of life. Blake’s enigmatic depiction of this lethal relationship provides students with the freedom to assign new meanings to the two main symbols of the poem: the rose and the worm. Students analogized these two objects to Covid-19’s malignant progression. The virus, embodied in the worm, changes from an abstract idea, as seen in the previous two poems, to a physical matter that infects the human body, as represented in this poem.

Students observed that the speaker begins the poem with a shocking revelation that the rose is sick. They were perplexed by the speaker’s observation since there is an absence of external signs in the stanzas of the rose’s infection. However, upon seeing Blake’s illustration of the poem, they saw a clear picture of a wilted rose fallen to the ground with a worm emerging from the flower’s centre. As such, students were able to perceive the strong connection between Blake’s poem and drawing, as seen below.



Figure 1: Blake, William. *Songs of Innocence and of Experience: The Sick Rose* (ca 1885)

Students compared the personified, withered rose in Blake’s portrait to an infected person with a pale complexion. They saw that the rose, an object that stands for “something beautiful, or desirable, or good,” symbolizes life (Perrine and Arp, 1984, p. 83). Yet, students also argued that the flower is weak because, like any other plant, it is susceptible to threats posed by tiny, sometimes microscopic, insects. Similarly, human beings, who are symbols of vitality, face the dangers of viruses, some unknown and unseen like Covid-19. Students compared the rose to the affected human body and the worm to a corrupting agent and a metonymy for death since it is commonly known to feed upon the dead in their graves. As the worm slowly moves into and through the rose’s body to destroy it, Coronavirus also steeps its way into people’s anatomies to cause their demise.

Students found other shared characteristics between the worm and the virus: invisibility; damage inflicted on prey; and widespread effects on living creatures. Their interpretation of the verses “The invisible worm, / That flies in the night” reveal that the virus’s invisibility is shrouded by the night. Blake presents the worm as stealthy and deceitful. Its movement is concealed because the action it performs occurs inside the rose and because it performs this action at night. Students drew on J. C. Cooper’s (1987) *An Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Traditional Symbols* to comprehend the symbolic meanings of night

darkness. They found that that night signifies “chaos; death; ... disintegration” (p. 112), and darkness is associated with “states of transition as in death ... and dissolution” (p. 52). Students interpreted that both night and darkness represent an evil omen and an apprehension of the rose’s ultimate death. They analysed the night as the perfect time for villainous creatures to take advantage of their vulnerable prey in the same way Covid-19 attacks the human body’s immunity system. Also, students saw that the worm, characterized by its cloak of invisibility, proves the speaker’s visual limitations because of its microscopic quality. The average human vision cannot see the worm’s damaging effect inside the rose.

Not only did students rely on their experiences of Covid-19 in their comparison to the damage inflicted by the worm, but they also referred to reports from health agencies. According to the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2021), “symptoms [of Covid-19] may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.” One of the symptoms listed is fatigue which causes a person to look pale. A study entitled “Cue of Fatigue” noted that fatigue could also cause a person’s eyes to be droopy and red (Sundelin et al., 2013). Using this information, students inferred two crucial points. First, in its early stages, Covid-19 is imperceptible yet destructive, which they similarly observed in the worm that stealthily harms the rose. The speaker, in the poem, notices the rose’s deteriorating health because of its faded pigmentation (as seen in the illustration above). Students analogized the effect of the worm to the virus’s unseen damage on internal organs. Second, the appearance of fatigue indicates that the virus has already begun its damage on humans. Students compared people’s fatigue to the rose’s wilted condition as the flower loses its turgidity and its saggy form appears. Their observation was confirmed when they discovered that certain kinds of worms “chew their way into the tightly coiled buds of flowers and slowly eat them from the inside out” (Waterworth, 2020). This ailing image of the rose is depicted in Blake’s illustration of the poem.

The last association students made between the worm and the virus is the massive effect on their victims. They found that the verse “In the howling storm” indicates a jeopardizing image of a swarm in a mass attack. Students explained that similar to the worm’s invasion and occupation of the rose’s environment, the Coronavirus outbreak in Wuhan in 2019 took over the world. The word “storm” connotes a sense of urgency and upheaval in the way the worm disrupts the natural order of life and upends the way the rose naturally grows. Similarly, Covid-19 overturned people’s lives as it dominated the air they breathed, moved across geographical locations, and spread everywhere, looking for human bodies to invade and destroy. Like the worm, Covid-19 infected masses of people and brought chaos and panic like a “howling storm.”

The students came up with several interpretations that correlate the rose’s fatal ending to people’s death in the poem’s final stanza. First, they explained the element of chance portrayed in the phrase “found out” by which the rose and the humans’ habitats were discovered and compromised by a foreign object. They associated these threatened havens with the word “bed,” a symbol of protected space. Just as the rose’s “bed” is jeopardized because of the worm, so were people’s homes invaded by the virus. Second, students also interpreted the “bed” as a symbol of vulnerability and connected this idea to their interpretation of “night” in the previous stanza. They explained that “bed” and “night” suggest defencelessness and malice, making them the perfect place and time for an attack. Third, students found the bed to be a possible symbol of a hospital bed as Covid-19 patients lie down in weakness while succumbing to the virus’s symptoms. Finally, they analogically related the rose’s “crimson joy” to the colour of human lungs. As the worm feeds upon the rose’s lifeblood for survival, so does the virus feed upon the human body to sustain its existence. The poem’s last verse, “Does thy life destroy,” is conclusive of both the rose and the human’s tragic deaths.

Conclusion

In this paper, we present how Saudi female students' interpretations of poetry were affected by their mental and emotional experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic. As discussed, their changed perceptions of traditional meanings of literary poems reflected their understanding and processing of the global virus. They drew analogies between new implications that arose from their personal lives and the difficult time they lived. Three poems were used as an example of the students' responses: Shakespeare's "That time of year" and Blake's "London" and "A Sick Rose." Students' analysis of these poems allowed room for the creation of a narrative that connected transitory moments, suffering, illness, and death. The narrative explored the temporal frame that specified a transitional time of the virus outbreak, moved on to the spa Manifestation of Covid-19, and ended with the Coronavirus invasion and destruction. The students' correlation between the figurative language of the three poems and the current 2020 outbreak shows that readers can bring new perceptions to canonized literary texts. Even though this paper attempts to elucidate the global impact of Covid-19 on students' perceptions of poetry, still further research is recommended to examine the cultural impact of the virus on different communities and the long term effects of Coronavirus.

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**THE COMPARATIVE MANDARIN CHINESE TONE SPOKEN BY
NORTHEASTERN THAI AND MALAY PATTANI THAI PEOPLE**

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze and compare the tonal features of the Mandarin Chinese language spoken by Northeastern and Malay Pattani dialects of Thai people who study Mandarin as a second or third language. The data were collected from 6 informants: 3 Northeastern and 3 Malay Pattani Thai people. This study used thirty-six words based on Mandarin Chinese initial consonants and tones, and then analyzed by Praat software.

The result revealed that the tones of Mandarin Chinese were spoken by Malay Pattani whose mother tongue is none tonal language have more similar tonal characteristics than Northeastern Thai spoken. This reason may cause by the people who speak the tonal language has studied the new tonal language by using their closest tones to replace the new one. It means that mother tongue tones does not support learning the new tonal language. Nevertheless, the people who speak none tonal language can study the tones better.

Key Words: Mandarin, Chinese tone, Northeastern Thai, Malay Pattani, Tone

INTRODUCTION

The Chinese language has a wide usage with more first language speakers than the speakers of Indo – European languages. The 1.1 billion speakers of Chinese languages constitute one of the world's largest speech community. Chinese language are divided into seven dialects. They are Mandarin, Wu, Hsiang, Kan, Hakka, Yue and Min. The largest dialect family is Mandarin family or also called Standard Chinese which consists of over 70% of all Chinese speakers. Mandarin (also called Standard Chinese) is a member of the Northern family; it is based on the pronunciation of the Beijing dialect. There are, therefore, two meanings of Mandarin Chinese, one referring to the Northern dialect family and one referring to the standard dialect.

As a result of economic, social, technological, and cultural expansion, the People's Republic of China has played a big role in Southeast Asia and other regions of the world. It can be seen from the United Nations that Mandarin Chinese is one of the five main languages of the United Nations communication. Moreover, Mandarin is currently one of the top foreign languages that are attracting language learners in many countries around the world than other major languages such as English, French, German, Spanish, or Japanese. As same as in Thailand, we can see that the Mandarin language has steadily increased in popularity over the years. Since the Mandarin language has played a role in the Thai labor market at all levels. Whether it is in the business of the tourism industry, contacting to do business, or joint ventures with Chinese businessmen from the mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, or Singapore. As a result, there was a need for personnel with knowledge of the Mandarin language to increase accordingly. As a result of the previously mentioned reasons, there is a wide range of teaching and learning Mandarin in Thailand, both central and regional. It can be seen that Mandarin is taught at all levels. From kindergarten, elementary, secondary education, and at the university level and a private language institute that offers Mandarin language teaching to people interested in general.

When we talk about Mandarin language, Mandarin syllable compose of consonants, vowels and tones. Tone is a part of Mandarin language phonology that can make speaker have a good communicate with others. Mostly problems were about tones, because tones is more important to separate and show distinguish the meaning of the words. Moreover, distorted tonal pronunciations can lead to miscommunication or misunderstanding. The problem of distorted tonal pronunciations may be caused by the influence of their mother tongue. In Thailand, there are Standard Thai and other Thai dialects which are speakers' mother tongue, and mostly Thai dialects are tonal languages that may affect the second language or may support the speakers are easy to learn the new tonal language. For exploring that the speakers' mother tongue is tonal language should support and help them to speak Mandarin tone better than the speakers whose mother tongue is none tonal language.

In this paper, we present evidence from a study aimed to analyze and compare the tonal features of the Mandarin Chinese language spoken by Northeastern Thai people and Malay Pattani Thai people who study Mandarin as a second or third language. Why this paper chose Northeastern people and Malay Pattani people. That is mostly people in the Northeastern part speak Northeastern Thai dialect which is the dialect that has tones while mostly people in the Southern part of Thailand speak Malay which is none tonal language as their mother tongue. In addition, this study hypothesized that Mandarin Chinese Tone spoken by the people who speak Northeastern Thai as their mother tongue should have more similar tonal features than the people who speak Malay Pattani as their mother tongue.

METHODOLOGY

This research was qualitative research, and the data were collected from six informants who were 3 Northeastern Thai people and 3 Malay Pattani Thai people. For the Northeastern Thai people's Mother

tongue is based on Ubon rachathani. Another one is Malay Pattani as their Mother tongue. All of them have studied Mandarin as a second or third language. There were 36 words based on Mandarin Chinese initial consonants and tones, and each informant was pronounced 3 times per a word (36 x 3 = 108 times / informant). Totally were 648 times (36 words x 3 times x 6 informants). Then the data were analyzed by using Praat software.

Mandarin words for collection were choose from the minimal pair of 4 tones in different group of the initial consonants. They are 1. Initial syllabic vowel, 2. Initial non-syllabic vowel, 3. Initial non-syllabic vowel and final nasal consonant, 4. Initial voiceless fricative, 5. Initial voiced continuant, 6. Initial aspirated stop, 7. Initial unaspirated stop, 8. Initial aspirated affricate, and 9. Initial unaspirated affricate.

THE COMPARISON OF MANDARIN CHINESE TONES, NORTHEASTERN THAI TONES AND MALAY PATTANI PHONOLOGY FEATURES

Mandarin Chinese tones have 4 distinctive tones as follow: the 1st tone is high-level, the 2nd tone is mid-rising, the 3rd tones is low-falling-rising, and the 4th tone is high-falling as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Tones of Mandarin

Tone	Description	Pitch	Mark	Example Words	
1 st Tone	High-level	55	ā	yī ‘clothes’	mā ‘mother’
2 nd Tone	Mid-rising	35	á	yí ‘to suspect’	má ‘mother’
3 rd Tone	Low-falling-rising	214	ǎ	yǐ ‘chair’	mǎ ‘mother’
4 th Tone	High-falling	51	à	yì ‘meaning’	mà ‘mother’

For Thai dialects in Thailand (Somsonge, 2000), there are 4 dialects of Thai such as Standard Thai, Southern Thai, Northeastern Thai, and Northern Thai as shown in figure 1. This research used Northeastern Thai dialect based on Ubon ratchathani province which has 6 tones (Somsonge, 2000 ; Pojanee , 2011). They are mid-level, low-level, mid-falling, high-falling, high-level and low to mid rising. Northeastern Thai dialect based on Ubon ratchathani province (Somsonge, 2000 ; Pojanee ,2011) is shown in table 2 .

Figure 1: Thai Dialects (Somsonge, 2000)

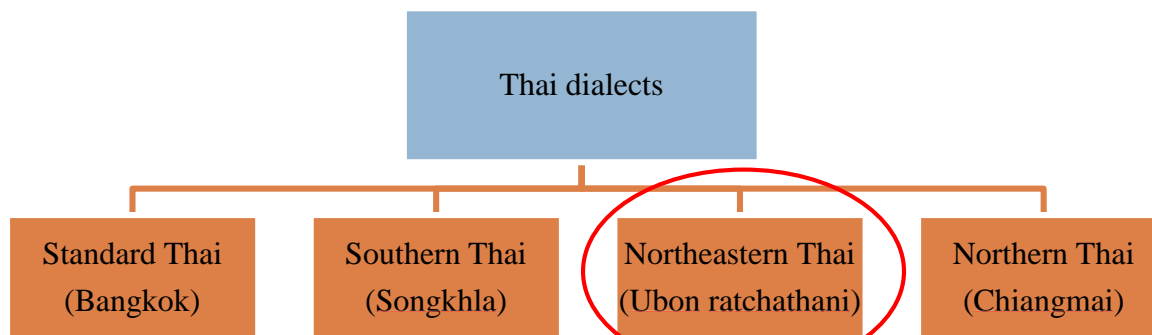


Table 2: The six tones of Northeastern Thai dialect based on Ubon ratchathani province (Somsong, 2000 ; Pojanee ,2011)

Tone	Description	Somsong, 2000	Pojanee,2011
1 st Tone	Mid – level	[33]	[34]
2 nd Tone	Low – level	[22]	[22]
3 rd Tone	Mid – falling	[42]	[32]
4 th Tone	High – falling	[53]	[53]
5 th Tone	High – level	[44]	[44]
6 th Tone	Low to Mid rising	[13]	[34]

However, Pattani Malay is one language do not have tone like English, so Pattani Malay or Malay phonology composed of consonants, vowels, and stress (Siriporn, 1986 ; Siriwan, 2007).

When we compare Mandarin Chinese Tone and Northeastern Thai Tone features, we found that both languages have high-level, mid rising, and high-falling. Just only low-falling-rising in Mandarin Chinese is not found in Northeastern Thai as shown in table 3.

Table 3: The comparison of Mandarin Chinese Tone and Northeastern Thai Tone features

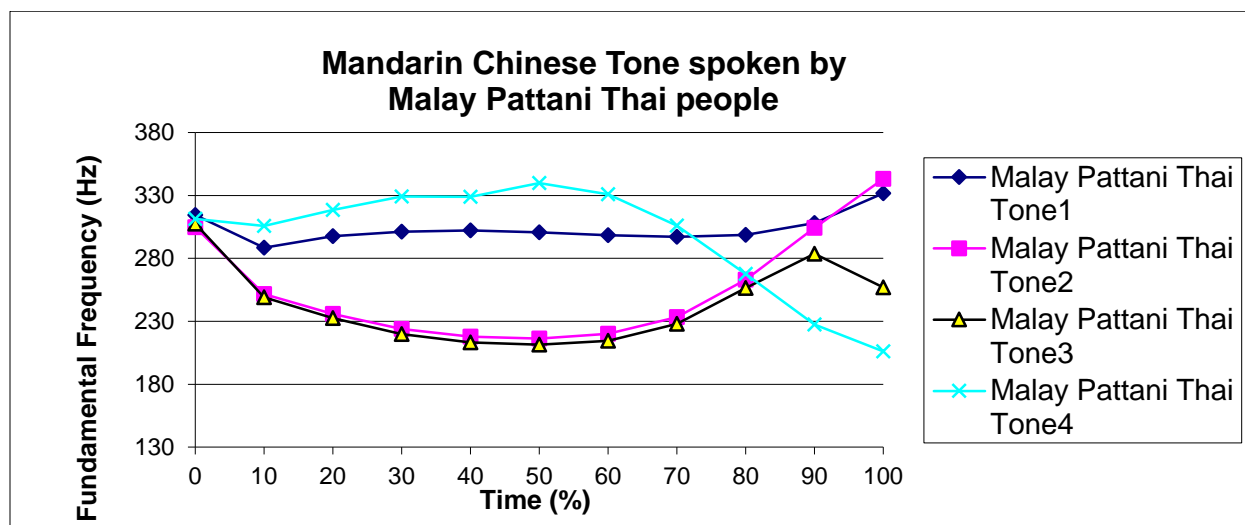
Mandarin Chinese		Northeastern Thai	
Description	Pitch	Description	Pitch
High-level	55	High-level	44
Mid-rising	35	Low to Mid rising	13 / 34

Low-falling-rising	214		
High-falling	51	High-falling	53
		Mid – level	33 / 34
		Low – level	22
		Mid – falling	42 / 32

THE RESULT OF FOUR MANDARIN CHINESE TONES SPOKEN BY MALAY PATTANI THAI PEOPLE

The Result of four Mandarin Chinese Tones spoken by Malay Pattani Thai people found that Tone 1 was high level [44], Tone2 was high falling rising [425], Tone3 was [423], and Tone 4 was high rising falling [452] or summarized as high falling. All four Mandarin Chinese Tones were shown in figure 2.

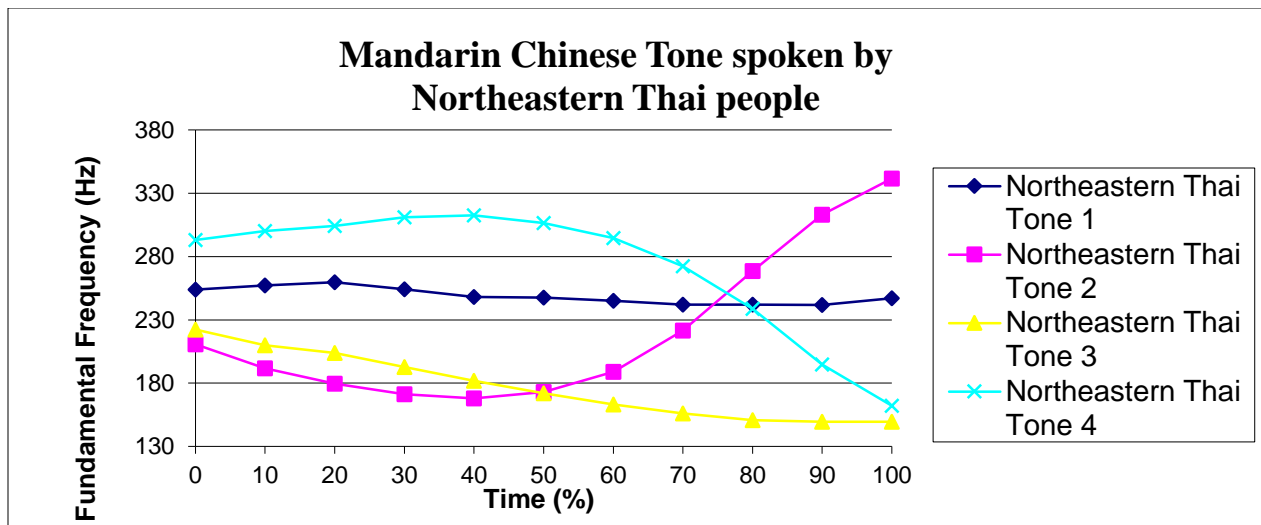
Figure 2: Result of 4 Mandarin Chinese Tones spoken by Malay Pattani Thai people



THE RESULT OF FOUR MANDARIN CHINESE TONES SPOKEN BY NORTHEASTERN THAI PEOPLE

The result of four Mandarin Chinese Tones spoken by Northeastern Thai people. Tone 1 is mid-level [33], Tone2 is low falling rising [215], Tone 3 is low falling [21] and Tone 4 is high falling [41]. All four Mandarin Chinese Tones were shown in figure 3.

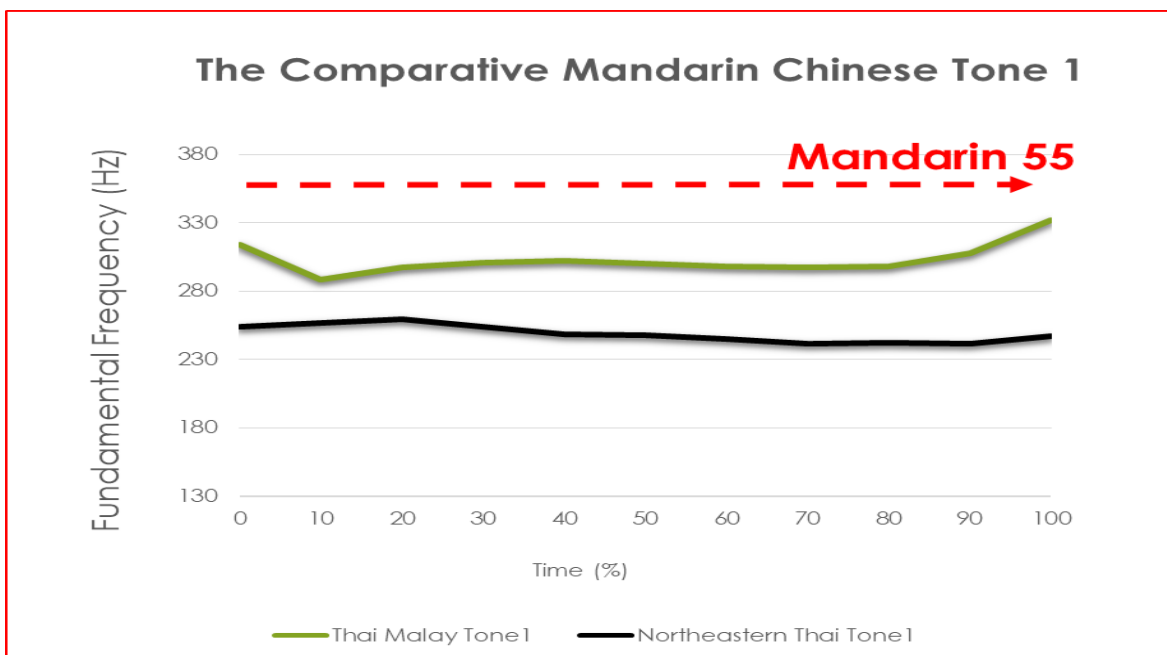
Figure 3: Result of 4 Mandarin Chinese Tones spoken by Northeastern Thai people



THE COMPARATIVE MANDARIN CHINESE TONES SPOKEN BY NORTHEASTERN THAI AND MALAY PATTANI THAI PEOPLE

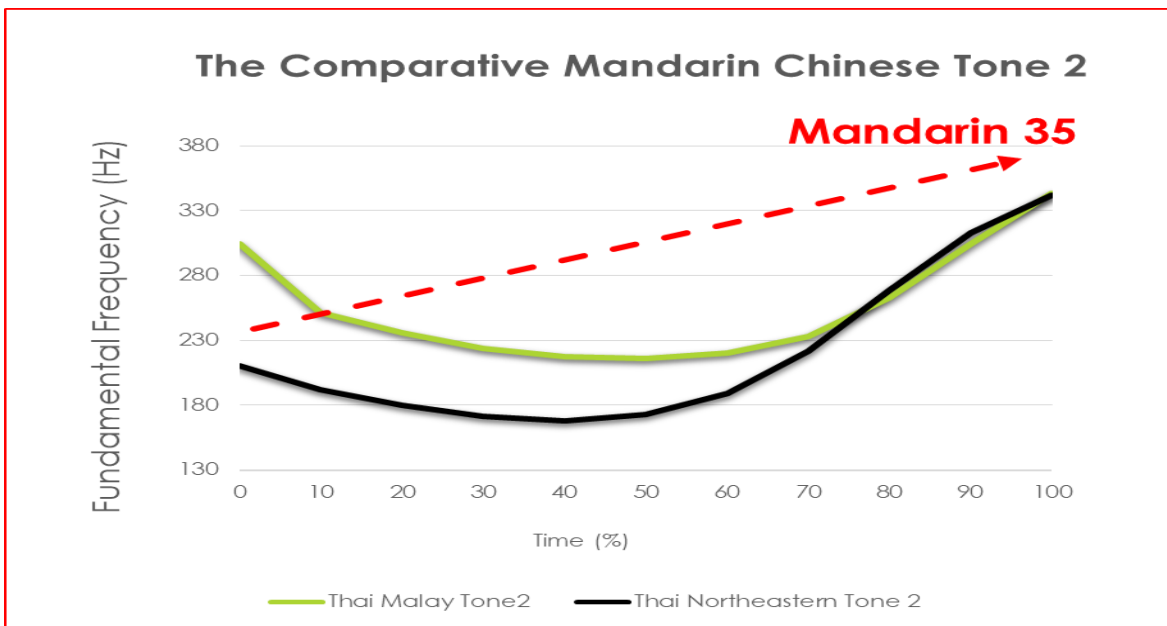
The Comparative Mandarin Chinese Tones spoken by Northeastern Thai and Malay Pattani Thai people found that Tone1 of Mandarin is high-level [55] while Tone 1 of Malay Pattani Thai is high-mid level [44], and Tone1 of Northeastern Thai is mid-level [33]. For the figure 4 shows that Malay Pattani Thai Tone 1 is closer than Northeastern Thai. Moreover, this research draw the imaginary line of 4 Mandarin tones to show the tone comparison between Mandarin, Malay Pattani Thai and Northeastern Thai.

Figure 4: The Comparative Mandarin Chinese Tone 1 spoken by Northeastern Thai and Malay Pattani Thai people



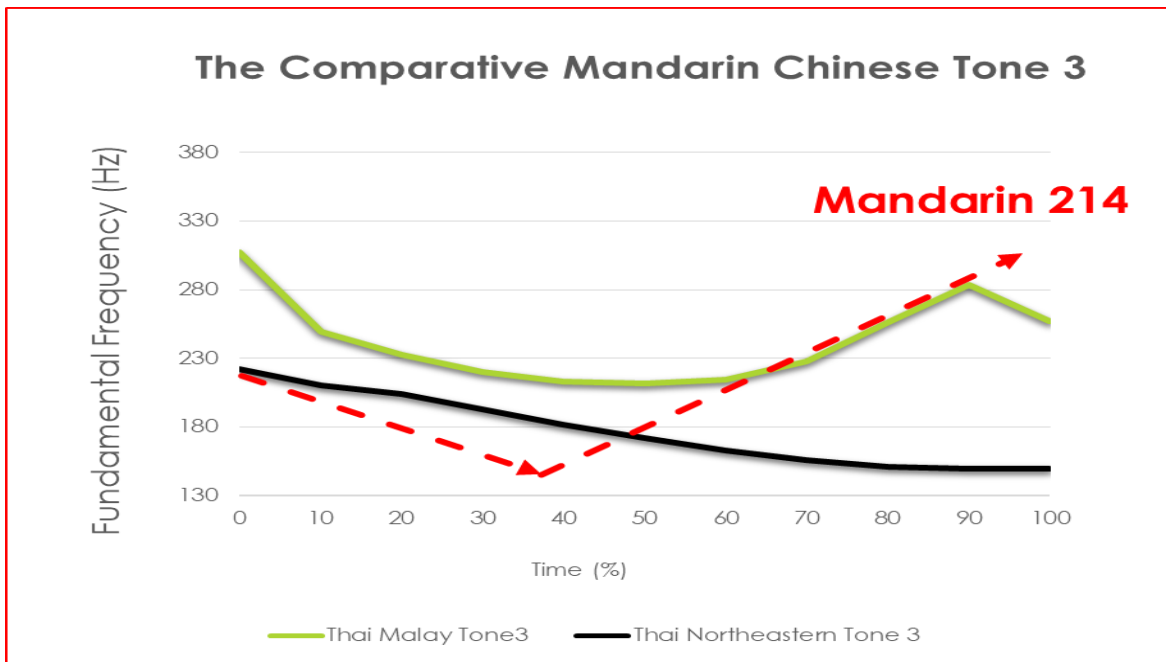
When we compare Mandarin Chinese Tone 2, we found that Tone 2 of Mandarin is mid rising [35] while Malay Pattani Thai and Northeastern Thai are high falling rising [425] and low falling rising [215], respectively. Both Malay Pattani Thai and Northeastern Thai pronounced this tone in the same way as falling rising while Mandarin pronounced as rising tone. The comparison of Mandarin Chinese Tone 2 is shown in figure 5.

Figure 5: The Comparative Mandarin Chinese Tone 2 spoken by Northeastern Thai and Malay Pattani Thai people



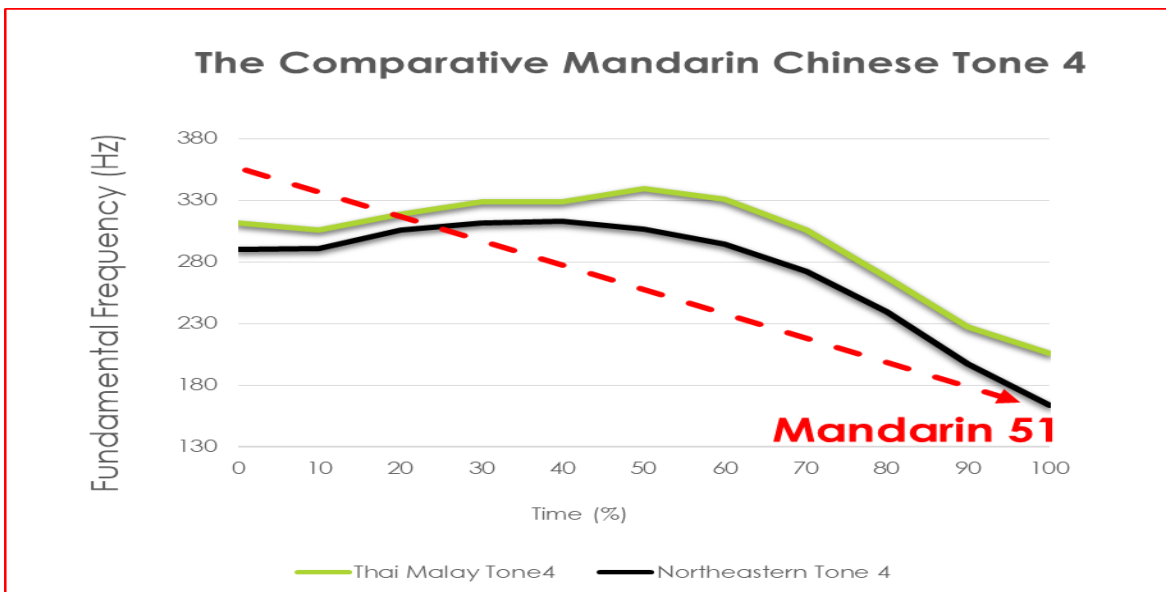
For tone 3, Tone3 of Mandarin is low falling rising [214] and Malay Pattani Thai pronounced as high falling rising [423]. The figure 6 shows that Malay Pattani Thai Tone 3 is closely similar with Mandarin although they are different in tone pitch value. On the other hand, we found that Northeastern Thai pronounced this tone as low falling [21].

Figure 6: The Comparative Mandarin Chinese Tone 3 spoken by Northeastern Thai and Malay Pattani Thai people



Tone4 of Mandarin shown in the figure 7 is high falling [51], Malay Pattani Thai and Northeastern Thai present high falling [452] and [41] respectively. Although the tone pitch values are not the same, all of them show the same direction of their Tone 4 which is to start at the high pitch and then fall to the low pitch.

Figure 7: The Comparative Mandarin Chinese Tone 4 spoken by Northeastern Thai and Malay Pattani Thai people



Moreover, when we compare with the direction of tone patterns, we found that all of four tones of Mandarin were spoken by Malay Pattani Thai are more similar than spoken by Northeastern Thai people. Although the tone pitch values are different, they may be cause of the relative value from Fundamental

Frequency or Pitch Frequency and voice range of personal tone value. Tone comparison between Mandarin, Malay Pattani Thai and Northeastern Thai were shown in the table 4 as follow:

Table 4: Tone Comparison between Mandarin, Malay Pattani Thai and Northeastern Thai

Tone	1	2	3	4
Mark	◐	◑	→	◑
Value				
Mandarin	55	35	214	51
Malay Pattani Thai	44	425	423	452
Northeastern Thai	33	215	21	41

DISCUSSION

The hypothesis that Northeastern Thai people should have more similar tonal features of Mandarin Chinese than Malay Pattani Thai people found that the people whose mother tongue which are no tonal features have more similar than the people whose mother tongue are tonal language. This reason may cause by the people whose mother tongue are tonal language have studied the new language by using their closest tone in their mother tongue to replace the new one.

On the other hand, the people who do not learn any tones can study the tonal better. This research result is contrast with Chen & Li (2016) and Dazhongba (2001) said that Thai and Mandarin languages are both tonal languages, so Thai people who are already familiar with Thai tone, it is easier to learn Mandarin tone than foreigners who do not have a tonal system in their mother tongue. However, this research result agree with Nie Jin (2017) who said that most Thai students who studied Mandarin language were able to clearly hear and distinguish the Mandarin tones, but they often pronounced the Mandarin tone as the Thai tone. This is because Thai students are often influenced by the tonal sounds in their mother tongue causing a negative effect on the Mandarin tonal pronunciation.

As the result of Tone 1 of Mandarin language was spoken by Northeastern Thai people was mid-level [33] instead of high level [55]. This one showed that Northeastern Thai people were interfered by pronouncing their mother tongue tone of mid-level [33] in Mandarin language tones. Next question why Northeastern Thai people pronounced mid-level [33] instead of high level [55] in Mandarin language while Northeastern Thai dialect also have high-level [44] too. It may be cause of the mid-level tone [33] is found in both of northeastern Thai dialect and Standard Thai, and it is easier to pronounce mid-level tone [33] than high-level tone [44]. Moreover, Thai people may be more familiar with mid-level tone than high level tone.

Table 5: Tone Comparison between Mandarin Chinese, Malay Pattani Thai, Northeastern Thai

and Northeastern Thai

Mandarin Chinese		Malay Pattani Chinese		Northeastern Thai Chinese		Northeastern Thai	
Description	Pitch	Description	Pitch	Description	Pitch	Description	Pitch
High-level	55	High-level	44	Mid - level	33	High-level	44
Mid-rising	35	High-falling-rising	425	Low-falling-rising	215	Low to Mid rising	13 / 34
Low-falling-rising	214	High-falling-rising	423	Low-falling	21		
High-falling	51	High-falling	452	High-falling	41	High-falling	53
						Mid - level	33 / 34
						Low - level	22
						Mid - falling	42 / 32

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Curricular Modernization by Implementing MOOCs Model

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♣ **Funding program:** Erasmus+, Key Action 2 - Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education, **Reference number:** 2019-1-DE01-KA203-005051

♣ **(Horizontal) priorities:**

1) Open education and innovative practices in a digital era; 2) supporting educators;

♣ **Duration:** October 1, 2019 – March 31, 2022 (30 months)

Partnership: FUM, Germany; KTU, Lithuania; IPP, Romania; AU, Turkey

Overview:

Learning via MOOCs requires from learners

Self-organization

Self-determination

Advanced digital competence

Virtual collaboration

General readiness for lifelong learning

Such competencies are often missing by today's graduates

Situation at many HEI

Compulsory attendance of classes does not stimulate self-organized learning Blended learning – still very teacher-centered. Missing skills of educators and supporting structures in order to design and deliver effective student-centered learning scenarios Thus, needs for new and innovative pedagogical approaches at HEIs that promote self-organized, student-centered learning MODE IT responds to these needs through integrating MOOCs-based instructional approaches into HEI practices MOOCs – MODE (IT approach) to raise awareness of HEI students for and improve their learning experiences through MOOCs-based approaches to develop and integrate innovative MOOCs-based instructional approaches into HEI's curriculum design & delivery to boost HEI educators' awareness and skills for MOOCs-based curriculum design and delivery techniques.

Combining Media Information Literacy and Ethical Technology for More Inclusive Educational Systems

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Abstract

Drawing on my experience as a university teacher, researcher in comparative linguistics, communication and media studies, active member of the UNESCO-UNAOC-UNITWIN-MILID Global Chair on Media and Information Literacy (MIL) and Intercultural Dialogue,⁷ and fervent advocate of Media and

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Information Literacy for All⁸, and in conjunction with the imposed lockdown due to COVID 19 Pandemic, my lecture aims to show the importance for new technology to work in synergy with the humanities and to embrace MIL to set the stage for ethical inclusive technology at the service of integrated educational systems and media information literate citizens.

The lecture is divided into three parts, which showcase three evolutionary stages of technology at the service of education: before the lockdown, management of remote instruction during the pandemic, and governance of post COVID 19 educational systems. Three areas of interest will be highlighted: critical thinking, digital health, and ethical inclusive technology.

Rethinking Dalitness

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Abstract

Dalit is not a new word in Indian socio-political realm Jyotibha Phule to modern theorist, thinkers, social-activist, reformer and intellectuals interpret this in their own words according to their own understanding. Over the time its definition also get change, for instance- in the late 1880s, Dalit word first time used by Mahatma Jyotiba Phule for the outcasts and untouchables who were oppressed in the Hindu society but he did not describe this word with particular caste centric understanding rather he formed "Satyashodak Samaj to focus on rights of depressed group and he included women also. The term Dalit was in use as a translation for the British Raj census classification of depressed classes prior to 1935. It was popularized by the social reformer B. R. Ambedkar, who included all depressed people irrespective of their caste into the definition of Dalits who were excluded from the four- fold varna system of Hinduism. Gandhi coined a word " Harijan" for dalits (untouchables), translated roughly as people of God, to identify untouchables in 1933. The name was disliked by Ambedkar as it emphasized the Dalits as belonging to the Greater

⁸My educational website "Media and Information Literacy for All" is accessible via the UNESCO-United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Clearing House on Media and Information Literacy:

<https://milunesco.unaoc.org/mil-organizations/media-information-literacy-for-all/>.

Hindu Nation rather than being an independent community like Muslims. The word became politically prominent in 1972 when the Dalit Panthers were set up. These are the superficial definition of Dalit word which emphasizes on identity of Dalit people but not on subjectivation of Dalit. Dalitness is not a simple story about Dalits (although the term of Dalit reflects lots of meaning in itself which is defined by many scholars over the time) and I am also using this term Vis-a-vis Dalits but not in simple term of 'Dalit oppression" as many scholars did in past, Because of that explanation Dalits have been become the easiest tool for gaining political power, and they have remained just a vote bank in Indian society. But Dalitness is a reflection of their experience as they accepted themselves as Dalits.

Keywords: Socio-political, outcast, Dalits



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