

Non-intrinsically negative (scalar) negation in Gallo

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As extensively known, previous investigation on *n*-words (negative words) across Romance languages has been broadly discussed and analyzed (cf. Corblin & al. 2004). However, one challenge that prevails is whether they are inherently negative expressions (Zanuttini 1991, Déprez 2003, Haegeman and Zanuttini 1991, de Swart 2002) or Negative Polarity Items (NPIs) – namely, indefinites licensed under the scope of negation (Laka 1990, Giannakidou 1997).

This study presents evidence which will contribute to the literature of *n*-words in Romance languages. To accomplish so, we examined and analyzed primary fieldwork from Gallo on negation, mainly the distribution of sentential negation (*pas*) + *aoqhun* (no one) in Gallo. Gallo is an endangered regional language of the Oïl family (like French), spoken in Upper Brittany, extending over Côtes-d'Armor, Ile-et-Vilaine, Morbihan and Northern Loire-Atlantique. I base the discussion here on the SYMILA project (*Syntactic Micro-variation in Romance languages of France*), Deriano (2005) and Robin (2010).

We adopted the view in which Gallo's counterpart *n*-word '*aucun*' (no one) in French is not its cognate '*aoqhun*' but rather '*pas aoqhun*'. I demonstrate the presence of two patterns. For Pattern I, '*pas*' occurring with an *n*-word is not only marking morphological negation, but it also provides the scalarity feature found in minimizers and NPIs. Pattern II looks, however, to perform as French, i.e. that is *aoqhun* possess a scalarity and a negative feature.

Pattern I

(1) *Y a pas aoqhun bonome de fort come li.* (Robin 2010)

There have not (no)one man of strong as he.

'No one is as strong as he is.'

Pattern II

(2) *Aoqhun garçaille ne joue dans la pièce.* (Robin 2010)

(no)one children NE play in the room

'No children play in the room.'

Our primary aim is to explore the internal nature of *pas aoqhun* using the approaches where Polarity Items (PIs) have a strong scalar feature [+σ] (Chierchia (2013), Espinal (2014)). Diachronically French *pas* ('not') was associated with motion verbs, showing minimal or no motion (Rooryck 2017). Thus, French *pas* started as a minimizer who shifted from the noun meaning 'step' to a functional operator 'not' (Garzonio&Poletto 2008). I defend the idea that Gallo *pas* still has minimizer properties. Namely, it has a scalarity feature who triggers scalar alternatives over the plain indefinite *aoqhun* and activating obligatorily its domain alternatives and creating a domain widening. The first compelling evidence to support *pas* as non-intrinsically negative comes from its presence in the scope of the antimorphic operator 'without' who checks out the [uNeg] feature of *pas aoqhun* giving rise to a Negative Concord reading (i.e., when multiple negative expressions semantically express a single negation). The second evidence that reinforces the scalarity property of *pas* comes from its presence in non-veridical contexts such as yes/no questions.

(3) *Marie coupe des grains sans pas aoqhun à l'èide.* (Becerra-Zita 2017)

Mary cut some grains without not (no)one to her.help

'Mary harvests without anyone's help.'

(4) *Y'a pas persone ?* (Becerra-Zita 2017)

There-has not (no)person

'Is anyone/someone there?'

These results support a non-intrinsically negative (scalar) *pas* that, when combined with a plain indefinite, it

forces domain widening which needs the proper negative operator to license its non-interpretable negative feature. The empirical findings in this study extend our knowledge of negation as it provides additional evidence regarding NPIs composition and licensing.

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