

Article

(Negative) Polarity Items in Catalan and Other Trans-Pyrenean Romance Languages

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Abstract: This paper identifies the set of properties that polarity items (PI), negative polarity items (NPI) and negative concord items (NCI) satisfy in Catalan, Aragonese, Benasquese and Occitan. It shows that in Catalan, *gaire* ‘much, many’ is a PI, *pas* ‘at all’ is an NPI with enriched meanings and indefinites such as *ningú* ‘anybody, n-body’ come in two sets, as both PIs and NCIs. It further shows that in the trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties studied here, a distinction must be made between indefinite pronouns such as *dengún* ‘anyone, n-one’ and scalar minimizers such as *gota* (lit. drop), which come in parallel PI and NCI sets, whereas NPIs such as *brenca* (lit. crumb) have developed an enriched meaning. This paper reveals the different status of *pas* across Catalan and other trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties either as an NPI at stage II of Jespersen’s cycle, which further constrains conventional implicatures, or as a negative operator.

Keywords: polarity items; negative polarity items; negative concord items; Catalan; Aragonese; Benasquese; Occitan



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1. Introduction

The linguistics literature has often referred to a set of phenomena sometimes labelled (negative) polarity (Ladusaw 1979; Giannakidou 1997 and others) and other times negative concord (Labov et al. 1968; Labov 1972 and others), without the difference between these two labels being clearly defined. Let us assume (following Espinal et al. 2021) that polarity sensitivity is a formal relationship between two constituents X and Y, where X c-commands Y, X is a semantically non-veridical licenser and Y is a licensee semantically sensitive to non-veridicality (Giannakidou 1997, 1998, 1999, and ff.).¹

Negative polarity is a formal relationship between two constituents X and Y, where X c-commands Y, X is a semantically anti-veridical licenser and Y is a licensee semantically sensitive to anti-veridicality. According to these definitions, negative polarity is, strictly speaking, a subtype of polarity sensitivity. By contrast, negative concord is a formal relationship between two constituents X and Y, where X c-commands Y, and both X and Y encode a syntactic formal feature [neg] that enters syntactic Agreement and composes a single negation reading.² Therefore, we assume here that a distinction must be made between semantic dependencies (Ladusaw 1980, 1996; Giannakidou 1997 and ff.) and syntactic dependencies (Zeijlstra 2004 and ff.), as recently discussed by Dočekal (2020).

In order to refine our understanding of the distinction between (negative) polarity and negative concord, the present study aims to present an overview of the set of items that behave like Polarity-Sensitive Items (PIs for short) in Catalan and other Romance varieties spoken in the Pyrenees, including Languedoc Occitan, Gascon Occitan and its Aranese variety, Benasquese and Aragonese (Llop 2020). The existing research on the varieties of this area has provided important data not only on the linguistic continuum embodied in these varieties (Bec 1968; Nagore 2001; Suils 2011; Suils et al. 2010) but also some inter-linguistic connections and intra-linguistic differences among them which would

go unnoticed if the distinction between polarity and concord were forced to conform to the (often very artificial) geographic boundaries ostensibly separating these language varieties (Bucheli and Glaser 2002; Brandner 2020). Additionally, synchronic micro-syntactic differences between and within these dialects can be taken as a mirror of diachronic patterns and diachronic changes which would otherwise go unattested due to the lack of historical evidence (Ledgeway 2013).

According to the definitions above, we also assume here that so-called negative polarity items (NPIs), licensed in a broad spectrum of non-veridical contexts (such as conditionals, questions, negation, *before*-clauses, comparatives, etc.), would be more accurately referred to as PIs and that the term NPIs should be used exclusively for PIs whose licenser must be an anti-veridical operator.³

By showing polarity sensitivity, PIs are identified by a set of properties, namely (a) the impossibility of their occurring alone as negative fragment answers, (b) the impossibility of their occurring with no c-commanding licenser, (c) the possibility of their being licensed long-distance, (d) the licensing of an existential reading when they occur in non-declarative non-negative contexts and (e) the impossibility of their contributing to a double negation reading when multiple PI indefinites combine with a c-commanding negative marker (Déprez et al. 2015; Fălăuş and Nicolae 2016; Larrivée 2021). These five properties are exemplified in (1) for the Catalan indefinite PI *gaire* ‘much, many’.⁴

- (1) a. Q: Que tens sucre?
 int part have sugar
 ‘Do you have sugar?’
 R: **Gaire*. R’: No *gaire*.
 much not much
 b. **Gaires* estudiants no han aprovat.
 many students not have passed
 b’. No *gaires* estudiants no han aprovat.
 not many students not have passed
 ‘Not many students passed.’
 c. No crec que els hospitals tinguin *gaires* llits lliures.
 not think that the hospitals have many beds available
 ‘I don’t think that hospitals have many beds available.’
 d. Si fa *gaire* fred, haurem d’engegar la calefacció.
 If makes {some, much} cold have of.turn on the heating
 ‘If it is very cold, we will have to turn on the heating.’
 e. No tinc mai *gaire* por d’anar enlloc sola.
 not have ever much fear of.go anywhere alone
 IT CANNOT MEAN: ‘I’m always very much afraid of going everywhere alone.’

The aim of this article is to present an overview of those items in Catalan and other trans-Pyrenean Romance languages that behave like *gaire*. The behaviour of the PI *gaire* ‘much, many’ contrasts with the behaviour of other indefinites that are characterized by: (a) the possibility of their occurring alone as negative fragment answers, (b) the possibility of their occurring with no c-commanding licenser in preverbal position of declarative sentences, (c) the impossibility of their being licensed long-distance, (d) the licensing of a negative reading when they occur in preverbal position in declarative negative sentences (in the absence of a negative marker in the case of Non-Strict NC structures, and in combination with a negative marker in the case of Strict NC structures⁵) and (e) the possibility of their contributing to a double negation reading when multiple negative indefinites, distributed preverbally and postverbally, combine with an overt negative marker.⁶ Those indefinites that share these properties were originally labelled *n-words* (Laka 1990). We will refer to them here as Negative Concord Items (NCIs).

Accordingly, in this study we address the following questions:

1. Are there any other items in Catalan varieties that follow the properties attributed to PIs? Answering this question will require considering a subclass of minimizers (not preceded by *ni* ‘not even’) (Tubau 2020), and a series of indefinites (e.g., *ningú*, *cap*, *res*, *gens*, *mai*, *enlloc*) that are shown to behave both as PIs and NCIs (Espinal et al. 2021).

2. Is the distinction between PI, NPI and NCI relevant in Catalan? We consider the need to distinguish between PIs licensed in non-veridical contexts (Giannakidou 1997, 1998), a reduced subset of PIs that are only licensed in anti-veridical contexts and that present collocational restrictions (Postal 2004)—here referred to as NPIs, and an independent subset of PIs that behave like NCIs and are involved in a syntactic Agreement relationship.
3. Which PIs satisfy the abovementioned criteria in other Romance varieties spoken in the Pyrenees (Llop 2017, 2020)? Do the varieties that show homophonous PI–NCI sets exhibit behaviours like those seen in Catalan?

The structure of the paper is as follows. In Section 2 we focus on the different types of polar sensitive items that can be distinguished in Catalan, namely PIs (*gaire* ‘much, many’), NPIs (*pas* ‘at all’), homophonous PIs–NCIs (*ningú* ‘anybody, n-body’, *cap* ‘any, no’, *res* ‘anything, n-thing’, *gens* ‘anything, n-thing’, *mai* ‘ever, n-ever’, *enlloc* ‘anywhere, n-where’) and minimizers (including those without *ni* ‘not even’, which behave like PIs, and those with *ni*, which behave like NCIs).

In Section 3 we argue that some PIs are strictly dependent on the sentential anti-morphic operator *no* ‘not’ (van der Wouden 1994; Zwarts 1996; Giannakidou 1998 and ff.) and therefore behave like NPIs (thus showing a diachronic change from a broad semantic dependency to a narrow semantic dependency), while other PIs show NCI-like behaviour (thus reflecting a diachronic change from a semantic to a syntactic dependency). We argue that, on close inspection, no items appear to follow the postulated ‘ordered passage from weak NPIs to strong NPIs to n-words’ (Larrivé 2021; see also Larrivé and Kallel 2020; among others), but rather either a transition from PIs to NPIs (from requiring non-veridical licensors to anti-morphic licensors), or a transition from PIs to NCIs (from a semantic licensing relationship to a syntactic Agreement dependency), thus supporting the conclusion that NPIs and NCIs are independent subspecies of PIs (Espinal et al. 2021).

In Section 4 we move to other trans-Pyrenean Romance languages and, on the basis of Llop (2020), we describe the set of items that behave either like PIs/NCIs, like scalar minimizers or like NPIs with additional pragmatic enriched meanings (Hansen 2009; Hansen and Visconti 2009, 2014; Batllori 2015; Larrivé 2010, 2020; among others).

Finally, Section 5 concludes the paper.

The sources of the data discussed in this article are examples from the authors unless otherwise stated.

2. Types of Polarity-Sensitive Items in Catalan

In Central Catalan⁷ *gaire* ‘much, many’ is the only item that behaves like a full PI, since it follows the whole set of properties illustrated in (1). This item may correspond to an indefinite determiner, in which case it shows number agreement with the plural count noun it specifies (2), or it may correspond to an adverb, in which case it is either the specifier of a second adverb (3a) or a verbal modifier (3b).

- (2) *No em queden gaires taronges.*
not me left many oranges
‘I don’t have many oranges left.’
- (3) a. *No em trobo gaire bé.*
not me feel very well
‘I’m not feeling very well.’
b. *No ha estudiat gaire.*
not has studied much
‘(S)he has not studied much.’

In this section we review the set of items that behave either partially or entirely like *gaire*. On the basis of this behaviour we will be able to conclude whether these items are PIs, NPIs or NCIs. We first consider items such as *ningú*, second minimizers and finally *pas*.

Firstly, indefinite pronouns including *ningú* ‘anyone’, *res* ‘anything’, *gens* ‘anything’, *mai* ‘ever’, *enlloc* ‘anywhere’ and indefinite determiners such as *cap* ‘any’ and *gens de* ‘anything of’ behave like PIs with respect to: (a) the impossibility of being licensed unless they appear under the scope of a non-veridical operator such as the interrogative operator (Giannakidou 1997, 1998), (b) the possibility of being licensed long-distance and (c) the licensing of an existential reading in non-declarative non-negative contexts.

See the examples in (4) to (6) with *ningú*, the only item in this group that is negative in its origin (from Latin *nec ūnu* ‘not even one’). We refer to the PI set made up of *ningú* ‘anyone’, *cap* ‘any’, *res* ‘anything’, *gens (de)* ‘anything (of)’, *mai* ‘ever’ and *enlloc* ‘anywhere’ when these indefinites behave as in examples (4) to (6). We also refer the reader to Table A1 in Appendix A for the etymology of the various PIs studied here and in the remainder of the paper.

- (4) a. Que ha trucat ningú?
that has called anybody
‘Has anybody called?’
b. *Ha trucat ningú.
has called n-body
- (5) No m’imagino que deixin ningú en llibertat.
not me.imagine that leave anybody in liberty
‘I can’t imagine they’ll let anybody go free.’
- (6) Si truca ningú, digues que no hi soc.
If calls anybody say that not here am
‘If anybody calls, tell them I’m not here.’

By contrast, we refer to the NCI set made up of *ningú* ‘n-one’, *cap* ‘no’, *res* ‘n-thing’, *gens (de)* ‘n-thing (of)’, *mai* ‘n-ever’ and *enlloc* ‘n-where’ when these indefinites show: (a) the possibility of occurring alone as negative fragment answers; and (b) the possibility of occurring with no c-commanding licenser in preverbal position in declarative negative sentences, as exemplified in (7) and (8) for *res* ‘n-thing’.⁸ As an NCI, preverbal *res* can license postverbal PIs/NCIs such as *enlloc* ‘anywhere, n-where’ in what is usually known as an NC structure. See (8), where the two items *res* and *enlloc* form a chain expressing a single negation reading.⁹

- (7) Q: Què et passa?
what you happen
‘What’s wrong?’
R: Res.
n-thing
‘Nothing.’
- (8) Des de l’atemptat res és com abans enlloc.
since the.attack n-thing is as before anywhere
‘Since the terrorist attack, nothing is as it used to be anywhere.’

Secondly, we consider the case of minimizers (Pott 1857; Wagenaar 1930; Bolinger 1972; Horn 1989; and others). These items are minimal measure-denoting expressions such as English *a word*, *a wink*, *an inch* or Catalan *un duro* (lit. a small denomination coin) ‘a penny’, *una ànima* (lit. a soul) ‘a person’, *una mosca* (lit. a fly) ‘a person’, which give rise to an *even* reading. Catalan minimizers can be optionally preceded by *ni* ‘not even’ (Tubau 2020). However, as the following examples illustrate, only when *ni* is present does the minimizer exhibit the distribution characteristic of an NCI, as exemplified in (10) and (11).

- (9) Si passés (*ni) un bri d’aire podríem respirar.
if pass not.even a shred of.air could breathe
‘If there were even the tiniest breeze, we would be able to breathe.’

- (10) Q: Et queden gaires diners?
 you left much money
 'Do you have much money left?'
 R: *(Ni) un duro.
 not.even a penny
- (11) *(Ni) una ànima no es veia enlloc, de tan fosc que era.
 not.even a soul not cl saw anywhere of as dark as was
 'So dark was it that not a soul could be seen.'

The third item we must consider in Central Catalan is *pas* (lit. step). An experimental study carried out by Tubau et al. (2018) has demonstrated that *pas* increases neither the amount of negative interpretation of *no* in the context of fear predicates that trigger expletive negation, nor the amount of double negation in the context of a preverbal NCI. This study calls into question the alleged strengthening role of Central Catalan *pas* since it does not reverse by itself the truth or falsity of a proposition. In other words, unlike its French counterpart, in Central Catalan, *pas* is unable to reverse the polarity of a sentence and hence to perform on its own the role of a sentential negation marker.¹⁰

- (12) a. En Joan *(no) menja pas carn.
 D Joan not eats pas meat
 'John doesn't eat meat.'
 b. Ningú *(no) porta pas maleta.
 n-body not carries pas suitcase
 'Nobody carries a suitcase.' (from Tubau et al. 2018, p. 125, exs. (6a) and (6c))

Example (12b) illustrates an interesting phenomenon that deserves special attention. Central Catalan has been characterized elsewhere (Espinal 2000, 2002; Espinal and Tubau 2016; and others) as a Non-Strict NC language (Giannakidou 1998) since, when a preverbal NCI is present the negative marker can be omitted, as is also the case in other Romance languages such as Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.¹¹ However, when *pas* occurs in postverbal position, its only possible licenser is an overt negative marker *no*. In other words, *pas* differs from the other PIs we have considered so far in that it requires an anti-morphic licensing operator, and from this we conclude that *pas* is an NPI. Furthermore, *pas* differs from NCIs in that in Central Catalan it can appear neither as a fragment answer nor in preverbal position.

- (13) Q: Que vindràs? A: *Pas.
 that come.fut pas
 'Are you going to come?'
- (14) *Pas ho faré.
 pas it do.fut

Finally, the licensing of *pas* in the context of a raising predicate is illustrated in (15). As we saw in (1c), this behaviour indicates that *pas* is an NPI, since its licenser is restricted to the negative marker *no*.

- (15) a. Crec que no vindrà pas.
 think that not come.fut pas
 'I think (s)he will not come.'
 b. No crec que vingui pas.
 not think that come.subj pas
 'I don't think (s)he will come.'

To sum up, in this section we have provided support for a distinction between PIs, NPIs and NCIs in Contemporary Central Catalan. *Gaire* is exclusively a PI, *pas* is exclusively an NPI, while indefinites of the sort exemplified by *ningú* and minimizers come in two sets, as PIs and as NCIs.

3. Diachronic Changes

In this section we distinguish the emergence of NPIs from the emergence of NCIs, which will in turn support the distinction between the diachronic development of the contemporary negative marker *pas* and the diachronic development of negative indefinites (Zeijlstra 2016).

The former is characterized by a diachronic change according to which a nominal item ends up strictly constrained by a semantic dependency with respect to the anti-morphic operator *no* ‘not’, while PIs in general are licensed under the scope of various non-veridical licensors.

We hypothesize (in accordance with Pérez Saldanya and Torrent 2021) that a reanalysis from the nominal expression *passu(m)* ‘step’ to the minimizer denoting the minimal distance covered by walking may be the origin of the NPI variant.¹² As illustrated in (16), a nominal *passum* ‘step’ in combination with *pedis* ‘foot’ appears under the scope of the negative marker *nec* already in Late Latin (*nec passum pedis* lit. no step of foot).

- (16) Quod autem dedit *nec passum pedis*, dicit Stephanus.
 ‘Because he did not give him a single pace, says Stephen’ (Collection Doat, vol. XXXVI, f. 120 [apud Schweighäuser 1852, p. 232])

In Old Catalan *pas* also occurs in negative sentences in indefinite DPs preceded by the indefinite quantifier *un*.

- (17) Que Curial *no* vage *un pas* sens tu.
 That Curial not goes a step without you
 ‘Let Curial not go a single step without you.’ (15th century, Curial e Güelfa: 12 [apud Batllori 2015, p. 359]) (Old Catalan)

This use alternates already in the 13th century with other uses in which there is no indefinite marker and a bare *pas* is supposed to strengthen the negative marker either from an immediate postverbal position or from a close position, but without a quantificational meaning.¹³

- (18) No perdonaria Déus *pas* lo pecad.
 not forgive God *pas* the sin
 ‘God would not forgive the sin.’ (13th century, Homilies d’Organyà, p. 122 [apud Batllori 2015, p. 359]) (Old Catalan)

However, the NPI status of *pas* is also illustrated in the 13th century when *pas* syntactically precedes the negative marker, a possibility excluded in Contemporary Central Catalan.¹⁴

- (19) Que vós *pas* *no* sabíets aquest cavalier qui era.
 that you *pas* not knew this knight who was
 ‘You did not know who this knight was.’ (13th century, Desclot, Crònica ii, p. 58 [apud Pérez Saldanya and Torrent 2021, p. 36, ex. (85b)])

The possibility of an optional *pas*, also characteristic of Old and Middle French *ne . . . (pas)* (Labelle and Espinal 2014), is the core behaviour of this item in Contemporary Central Catalan, from which we conclude that this discontinuous negative marker is at stage II of Jespersen’s (1917) cycle (Jespersen 1917; Dahl 1979; van der Auwera 2009; Larrivée and Ingham 2011), with the proviso that—unlike French—*pas* in Catalan introduces additional semantic and pragmatic constraints. Tubau et al. (2018) experimentally support an analysis of *pas* according to which it has two components: on the one hand, it is an NPI, but on the other hand it either semantically constrains the implicatures that can be drawn from an accessible discourse context (Espinal 1993, 1996), or contributes a denial of a salient discourse-old proposition (Schwenter 2006) or adds emphatic content (Batllori 2015). This enforced pragmatic meaning could be thought of as analogous to English ‘at all’.¹⁵ Note, furthermore, that *pas* in Contemporary Catalan is no longer a nominal expression (as it was

in its etymological origin), nor an indefinite one (as characteristic of most PIs), but rather an adverb (see *DIEC2*), thus indicating that NPIs are the output of both a semantic and a categorial change. This means that, whereas as a minimizer *pas* is associated with a minimal quantificational meaning, as a so-called strengthener of negation (in appropriate contextual settings) it has lost its quantificational meaning and has developed new meanings that are enriched at the time of utterance interpretation.¹⁶

Let us now consider the evolution from PIs to NCIs in Catalan. In the previous section we already noted that in Contemporary Catalan, items such as *ningú* ‘anybody, n-body’, *cap* ‘a, no’, *res* ‘anything, n-thing’, *gens (de)* ‘anything (of), n-thing (of)’, *mai* ‘ever, n-ever’ and *enlloc* ‘anywhere, n-where’ come in two sets. As suggested by the word translations just provided, these items are used both as PIs—licensed under the scope of all sorts of non-veridical semantic operators (e.g., conditionals, questions, comparatives of inequality, downward entailing operators, the negative operator, etc.)—and as NCIs—licensed by a syntactic Agree relation.¹⁷ What is constant in their diachronic evolution from PIs to NCIs is that these items have maintained their indefinite meaning; what is different is that, once these indefinites acquire a syntactic feature [neg] this feature must be checked at syntax.

Focusing on *ningú* ‘anybody, n-body’, Pérez Saldanya and Torrent (2021, Table 56.5) point out the existence in the history of Catalan of several alternative forms, namely *negú/-un* (the predominant form in written texts from the second half of the 11th century to the second half of the 15th century), together with *nengú/-un*, *degú/-un* and *dengú/un* (rarely used from the second half of the 13th century to the 16th century). *Ningú* becomes the most frequent form starting in the first half of the 16th century. However, most important for our purposes is the fact that the forms *negú/-un*, *nengú/-un*, *degú/-un* and *dengú/un*, regardless of whether they occur in preverbal or postverbal position, always coappear with a licensing overt negative marker in a scope position. Furthermore, *negú/-un*, as a PI in a non-veridical licensing context, is associated with an existential meaning.

- (20) Sempre que veen venir *neguna* vela de *neguna* part [...]
 always that see come any sail from any part
 ‘Whenever they see a (ship’s) sail coming from somewhere ... ’ (13th century, Desclot, *Crònica ii*, p. 58)

It is only in the 15th century that it becomes possible to associate a negative meaning with a preverbal *ningú* even in the absence of the negative marker *no*. Consider (21), which exemplifies an NCI use of *ningú*.¹⁸

- (21) Molts pequen parlant, mas *ningú* pecca callant.
 many sin talking but n-body sins remaining silent
 ‘Many sin by speaking, but no one sins by remaining silent.’ (15th century, *Flors de Virtut* 1497, p. 182 [apud Pérez Saldanya and Torrent 2021, p. 18, ex. (35a)])

Similarly, an NCI use of *cap* ‘no’, illustrated by a preverbal occurrence with no overt negative marker that conveys a negative meaning, is also documented for the 15th century.

- (22) Après *cap* més crit s’hoia.
 afterwards no more cry cl.heard
 ‘Afterwards, no further cry was heard.’ (15th century, *Cobles tristor* 1460 [apud DCVB])

Concerning *ningú* and *cap*, it is worth noting that the emergence of an NCI use with a plain negative meaning does not exclude a PI use. Thus, Rigau (1998, p. 66) points to sequences such as those exemplified in (23) and (24) in the Contemporary Catalan variety spoken in Ports de Morella (see also Hualde 1992, p. 160; Morant 1993, p. 127). These examples illustrate the occurrence of *cap* and *ningú* in fragment answers under the immediate scope of an overt negative marker.¹⁹

- (23) Q: On has estat? A: En *no cap* lloc.
 where have been in not any place
 ‘Where have you been?’ ‘Nowhere.’

- (24) Q: Qui ha vingut? A: No ningú.
 who has come not anybody
 'Who came?' 'Nobody.'
 (from Espinal 2002, pp. 2761–62, exs. (96c,d))

Concerning *res*, Pérez Saldanya and Torrent (2021, p. 13) point to the simultaneous existence since the 14th century of two associated meanings for the pronominal form *no res*, 'negation of any thing' and 'insignificant thing'. Example (25) illustrates one of the diachronic developments commonly manifested in natural languages, by which a nominal expression *res* 'thing' turns into a generalizer when used as a PI (Condoravdi and Kiparsky 2006).

- (25) clemència ab justícia fan ferm lo regna al príncep,
 clemency with justice make firm the kingdom to the prince
 e lo contrari lo porta a no res
 and the contrary it takes to no thing
 'Clemency with justice makes the kingdom stand firm for the Prince, while the contrary leads to nothing.' (14th century, Eiximenis, *Cartes*: 246 [apud Pérez Saldanya and Torrent 2021, p. 16, ex. (26b)])

In Contemporary Catalan, the PI *res* 'anything' licensed by the overt negative marker (i.e., *no res* lit. not thing 'nothing') is broadly used and lexicalized as a fragment answer, which alternates with the NCI *res* 'nothing' (Institut d'Estudis Catalans 2016, 35.4.1.2c).

- (26) Q: Què fas? A: No res. A': Res.
 what do not thing n-thing
 'What are you doing?' 'Nothing.' 'Nothing.'

Gens is used as a nominal specifier (27), a pronoun (28) or a verbal modifier (29). Notice that in all these examples it is licensed by an overt negative marker, and therefore these examples show the polar variant of this term.

- (27) Aquella menoritat en què no à gens de bontat virtut
 that minority in which not be much of kindness virtue
 glòria
 glory
 e fi, és pus prop a no esser que neguna altra menoritat.
 and end is more close to not being than any other minority
 'That minority in which there is no kindness, virtue, glory or determination at all is closer to non-being than any other minority.' (13th century, Lull, *Taula*, p. 405 [apud PS&T 2021, p. 19, ex. (39a)])
- (28) Prege-li que me'n donàs lo delme e dix que no me'n
 pray.him that me.cl give the tithe and said that not me.cl
 darie gens.
 give any
 'I prayed him to give me the tithe and he said he would not give me anything at all.' (a. 1242, Pujol Docs. 16 [apud DCVB])
- (29) No són gens creguts.
 not are any believed
 'They are not believed at all.' (14th century, Metge *Somni* III [apud DCVB])

In (29) the use of *gens* is close to *pas*, with the meaning 'at all, absolutely not'. In fact, it can even appear with *pas*, which it may precede (30).

- (30) Que gens pas no és raó que negú puixa ni
 that any pas not is reason that n-body could nor
 deia hauer poder ...
 must have power
 'There is no reason at all why anybody should be able to have or must have the power ...'
 (17th century, *Consolat*, c. 51 [apud DCVB])

In Contemporary Central Catalan this indefinite maintains its use both as a PI (in the context of a non-veridical operator such as the interrogative or negative operator) and as an NCI (in fragment answers, when an overt *no* is omitted). Consider (31).

- (31) Q: Que us queda gens de sucre? A: (No) gens.
 that you left any of sugar not any
 ‘Do you have any sugar left?’ ‘None.’
 (Espinal 2002, p. 2761, ex. (96b))

Mai is a temporal expression, the first written evidence of which appears in the 14th century and whose use predominates over other temporal expressions (e.g., *anc*, *jamés*, *jamai*, *nunca*, *null(s) temps*, *ne(n)gu(n) temps*) during the first half of the 16th century. It is used as an NCI already in the 14th century, as the following examples illustrate.

- (32) Cercà tot lo camp e may trobà negú.
 searched all the field and n-ever found anybody
 ‘He looked everywhere and he never found anybody.’ (14th century, Muntaner Cròn., c. 90 [from DCVB])

This use is still common in Contemporary Catalan, both in preverbal position and in fragment answers.

- (33) Q: Quan ho farà? A: Mai.
 when that do.fut n-ever
 ‘When will you do that?’ ‘Never.’

On the other hand, a PI use of *mai* is also common with an existential interpretation, as illustrated in (34).

- (34) Si mai veniu a casa, sereu ben rebuts.
 if ever come to house be.fut welcome
 ‘If you ever come to our house, you will be welcome.’

This PI use has also been documented under the scope of the negative marker *no* (Morant 1993, p. 81; Institut d’Estudis Catalans 2016, 35.4.1.2c), as illustrated in (35).

- (35) Q: Quan tornaràs? A: No mai.
 when come.back.fut not ever
 ‘When will you come back?’ ‘Never.’

Finally, we consider the locative indefinite *enlloc* (<Latin IN LOCU)—and its forms in Old Catalan, *en loch* and *enloch*. In the 14th century, the positive meaning of a modified bare nominal (36) alternates with a negative meaning in the scope of an overt negative marker (37a). The latter is at the origin of a grammaticalized PI, as exemplified in (37b).

- (36) us pregam que donets endreça que us vejats ab los
 you pray that put in order that you meet with the
 prohòmens de Morella e de Castelló en loch covinent
 important.people of Morella and of Castelló in place convenient
 ‘We pray that you arrange to meet the important people of Morella and Castelló in a convenient place.’ (14th century, Consells: 355)
- (37) a. per què yo no gosaria aparèixer en loch on ela fos
 for I not dare appear in place where she be
 ‘For I would not dare to appear where she is.’ (1388–1413, Jerusalem: 36)
- b. Et no s’aturàs enloch.
 and not cl.stop anywhere
 ‘... And not stop anywhere.’ (14th century, Muntaner, Crònica: f. 26ra)

As a PI, *enlloc* requires an overt scope marker in fragment answers already in the 14th century, as illustrated in (38), and today continues its polar use in the form of *en no cap lloc* (lit. ‘in not any place’) in the variety of Ports de Morella (see above, ex. (23a)).

- (38) E, can foren al monestir, faeren la reverència
 and when were at.the monastery made the reverence
 al sant,
 to.the saint
 lo qual lus dix aytan tost: 'En cal loc avetz menjat?'
 the who them said immediately in which place have eaten
 E éls resposeren: No enloc.
 and they replied no in.place
 'And when they reached the monastery, they made reverence to the saint, who asked
 immediately: Where have you eaten? And they replied: Nowhere.' (14th century, *Diàlegs*: 25r)

By contrast, as a preverbal NCI, *enlloc* licenses other indefinites (PIs and NCIs) in postverbal position, while conveying a single negation interpretation (39a). Furthermore, as an NCI, *enlloc* occurs alone as a fragment answer, as illustrated in (39b); see [Institut d'Estudis Catalans \(2016, 35.4.1.2\)](#).

- (39) a. *Enlloc* trobareu *res* millor.
 n-place find.fut anything/n-thing better
 'Nowhere will you find anything better.'
 b. Q: On vas?
 where go
 'Where are you going?'
 A: *Enlloc*.
 n-where
 'Nowhere.'

To sum up, in this section we have argued that, whereas *pas* in Central Catalan has evolved as an NPI, only licensed nowadays in the context of an overt negative marker, items such as *ningú* 'anybody, n-body', *cap* 'a, no', *res* 'anything, n-thing', *gens* (de) 'anything (of), n-thing (of)', *mai* 'ever, n-ever' and *enlloc* 'anywhere, n-where' come in two sets. In the PI set, the items are characterized by their dependence on a non-veridical operator (including the anti-morphic *no* 'not'); we associate the above indefinites with PIs whenever an overt negative scope marker shows up preceding any of these indefinite expressions in fragment answers, when an overt negative marker head of NegP in preverbal position licenses an indefinite expression in postverbal position, and when licensed in non-declarative non-negative contexts with an existential reading. In the NCI set, the items are characterized by the possibility of being self-licensed as negative. In other words, we associate the above indefinites with NCIs whenever these indefinites occur isolated as fragment answers, when they occur in preverbal position and may license single negation in combination with postverbal indefinites (additional PIs or NCIs) without the need for an overt negative marker and when—while in preverbal position—they co-occur with *no*, the overt Spell-Out of a [neg] feature that is copied in a scope position with respect to TP ([Espinal et al. 2021](#)). Recall that postverbal indefinites in Catalan may correspond either to PIs or to NCIs, since in this language they are not distinguished by stress.²⁰ If they are PIs, they are licensed by a c-commanding non-veridical operator. If they are NCIs, we assume that the negative feature these items have is first copied in a scope position (with respect to Tense) while the negative feature of the original NCI is deleted; furthermore, the copied feature may be instantiated as *no* at the time of lexical insertion and NCIs may still move to left-peripheral positions.

4. Types of PIs in the Trans-Pyrenean Varieties

In this section we present the set of PIs found today in the trans-Pyrenean varieties under study, and we investigate whether they behave like PIs, NPIs or NCIs.

In Section 1 we showed that in Central Catalan *gaire* 'much, many' is the only item that behaves like a full PI, according to the set of properties identified earlier, namely: (a) the impossibility of occurring alone as negative fragment answers, (b) the impossibility of occurring with no c-commanding licenser, (c) the possibility of being licensed long-distance, (d) the licensing of an existential reading in non-declarative non-negative contexts and (e) the impossibility of contributing to a double negation reading when multiple PIs combine with a c-commanding negative marker. Likewise, the item equivalent to *gaire* in all

the Pyrenean varieties under study (*guaire*) behaves like a PI, as can be seen in the following samples; replies in (40A) and (40A') illustrate properties (a) and (b), (41) illustrates property (c) and (42) exemplifies property (d).²¹

- (40) Q: Quánto hetz avanzau?
 how.much have progressed
 'How much progress have you made?'
- A: **Guaire* A': No *guaire*. (Aragonese; [Estudio de Filología Aragonesa 2021](#),
 much not 13.6.3.1)
 much
- (41) [De diners] no te pienses que teneba *guaire*.
 of money not you think that had much
 'Don't think I had much money.' (Aragonese; [Bal Palacios 2002](#))
- (42) Si pleve *guaire* no salgas de casa.
 if rain much not leave of house
 'If it rains much, don't leave the house.' (Aragonese; [Estudio de Filología Aragonesa 2021](#),
 2.5.1)

In what follows we describe the set of items available in the Romance varieties spoken in the Pyrenees on the basis of the set of these properties that characterize full PIs. In Section 4.1 we focus on a group of indefinite pronouns that can be analysed as items of two homophonous but separate PI–NCI sets; we exemplify this case with *degun/dengún* 'anybody/n-body'. In Section 4.2 we deal with a specific group of originally nominal minimizers which have been reanalysed and incorporated into the negative system of the trans-Pyrenean varieties under study as scalar minimizers ([Israel 1995](#)) and are used as PIs or NCIs; we exemplify this with *gota* (lit. drop). Finally, in Section 4.3 we investigate the properties of a group of PIs that are available as NPIs, but with some additional semantic and pragmatic constraints, similar to *pas* in Contemporary Catalan.

4.1. Indefinite Pronouns: PIs and NCIs

We here consider a set of indefinite pronouns of the trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties under study that include the indefinite *cap* (Benasque, Languedocian and Gascon Occitan), *nat / nada/nats/nades* (Languedocian and Gascon Occitan) 'any, no'; *degús* (Languedocian Occitan), *degun* (Languedocian and Gascon Occitan), *digun* (Gascon Occitan), *dengún* (Aragonese), *degú/digú* (Benasque) 'anybody, n-body'; *arrés* (Gascon Occitan) 'anybody, n-body'; *arrén* (Gascon Occitan), *res* (Languedocian Occitan), *cosa* (Aragonese) 'anything, n-thing'; *jamai/jamei* (Occitan), *mai* (Benasque), *nunca* (Aragonese) 'ever, n-ever'; and *enluòc*, *enlòc* (Languedocian and Gascon Occitan) 'anywhere, n-where' (see Table A2 in Appendix A for a summary of the distribution and meaning of these items).²² These elements behave like PIs with respect to (a) the impossibility of being licensed unless they appear under the scope of a non-veridical operator (e.g., conditionals, questions, comparatives of inequality, downward entailing operators, the negative operator, etc.), (b) the possibility of being licensed long-distance and (c) the licensing of an existential reading in non-declarative non-negative contexts.²³ See examples (43)–(45) as an illustration of the PI behaviour of *dengú* in Aragonese.

- (43) *(No) ha veniu *dengún*.
 not have come anybody
 'Nobody has come.' (Aragonese, [Estudio de Filología Aragonesa 2021](#), 2.5.1)
- (44) No parixe que aiga *denguno* que siga propio d'a redolada.
 not seem that have anybody that be typical from around
 'It seems there isn't any that is typical from around'
 (Aragonese, [Rolde Revista de Cultura Aragonesa 1986](#), p. 3)

- (45) Ha veniu *dengún* ta la fiesta?
has come anybody to the party
'Did anybody come to the party?' (Aragonese, EFA: 54)

PI items of the trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties also have homophonous NCI sets, which can occur either alone as negative fragment answers²⁴ or in subject or topic position of declarative negative sentences with no c-commanding licenser. This is exemplified in (46) and (48) for *dengún* 'nobody' in Aragonese, and in (47) and (49) for *degun* in Languedocian Occitan.

- (46) Q: Qui ye en a puerta? A: *Dengún*.
who is at the door n-body
'Who is at the door?' 'Nobody.' (Aragonese, *Estudio de Filología Aragonesa* 2021, p. 273)
- (47) Q: Qual dins aquesta paura vida, es content de son sòrt?
who in this poor life is happy of his/her fate
'Who in this poor life is happy with their fate?' 'Nobody.' (Languedocian Occitan; *BaTelOc n.d.*: Perbòsc 1924)
- A: *Degun*.
n-body
- (48) *Dengún* (*non*) ha veniu.
n-body neg have come
'Nobody has come.' (Aragonese)
- (49) *Degun* es vengut.
n-body is come
'Nobody has come.' (Languedocian Occitan)

According to the analysis presented in Section 2, the items *dengún/degun* in preverbal position in (48) and (49) are considered NCIs because they are the only items contributing a single negation reading to the sentence. In our terms, optional *non* in (48) should be considered the overt Spell-Out of a [neg] formal feature that adjoins to TP for scope reasons before *dengún* is moved to a sentence-peripheral position.

In example (50), two preverbal NCIs combine with and license a postverbal PI/NCI in an NC structure in Languedocian Occitan.

- (50) *Degun jamai* demanda *res*.
n-body n-ever asks anything/n-thing
'Nobody ever asks anything.' (Gascon Occitan; *BaTelOc n.d.*: Bodon 1964)

The reason why this example with two preverbal NCIs yields a single negation interpretation rather than a double negation reading is accounted for in the following way. Let us assume that NCIs are inherently negative (Larrivé 2021), which we interpret as encoding a syntactic [neg] formal feature. In the absence of a negative head out-scoping Tense, when a sentence contains various NCIs, at least one of them (with its [neg] feature) must move from its sentence-internal position to a position from which it takes scope over the event predicated by the verb, thus rendering the sentence negative. In (50), *jamai* is the NCI responsible for this reading, since it is the constituent that is closest to Tense. In the output configuration following this movement, any other [neg] feature—be it the one corresponding to the postverbal *res* (if it also corresponds to an NCI) or the left peripheral *degun*—has no effect on the interpretation of the sentence after an operation of Concord, and therefore does not render a double negation reading (Espinal et al. 2021).

In contrast to this example, (51) contains an instantiation of the negative operator *pas*. Recall here the difference between the anti-morphic operator *pas* in Languedocian Occitan (and Gascon Occitan) and the NPI *pas* in those Catalan varieties presented in Section 2 (as well as in Aragonese, Benasquese and Aranese Occitan, as discussed in Section 4.3). Given the fact that a sentence such as (51) conveys a single negation meaning, we postulate that *degús*, *jamai*, *res* and *enluòc* are PIs under the scope of a postverbal negative operator *pas*

that modifies the event denoted by the predicate. For this to take place, the PI *degús* must be reconstructed to a sentence-internal position at LF (Chomsky 1977).

- (51) *Degús ditz pas jamai res enluòc.*
anybody says not ever anything anywhere.
'Nobody ever says anything anywhere.' (Languedocian Occitan; Sauzet 2006)

On the PI/NCI distinction, it is of interest to point out that in the Aragonese prescriptive grammar (2021, p. 55) the possibility of using preverbal negative indefinites without a licensing overt negative marker is accepted. However, the use of indefinite pronouns with an overt marker *no* is recommended 'because this was the historically preferred option in Aragonese.' A similar situation holds for parallel items in Languedocian Occitan, where nowadays *jamai* 'ever', *res* 'anything', *degun* 'anybody', *nat/nada* or *cap* 'any' and *enlòc* 'anywhere' appear in preverbal position either with the overt licensing negative marker *pas* (which corresponds to their use as PIs) (51), or without it (which corresponds to their use as NCIs) (50).

Some data confirm the status of such elements as PIs in Old Occitan, where they could be licensed by any non-veridical operator, such as for example the conditional operator (52); see Jensen (1986, pp. 176–81), also Medina (1999).

- (52) *Se negus hom o fazia ...*
If any man that did
'If anyone did that ...' (Old Occitan; Charles 479.5 [apud Jensen 1986, p. 176])

When used in preverbal position, it was the former Occitan negative marker *no(n)* that secured the proper licensing of the PI forms, as stated by Jensen (1986, p. 168). Consider (53).

- (53) a. *Negus hom non mor.*
any man/one not die
'Nobody dies.' (Old Occitan; Uc de Saint Circ 4.12 [apud Jensen 1986, p. 176])
b. *Res no volon.*
anything not want
'They do not want anything.' (Old Occitan; G. de Montanhagol 1.44 [apud Jensen 1986, p. 179])

Interestingly, Contemporary Languedocian Occitan offers some evidence in favour of an independent negative quantifier set (parallel to French *personne, rien*), members of which hold a negative meaning in the absence of the negative marker. Thus, (54) and (55) illustrate that *cap* and *jamai* are self-licensed as negative in postverbal position, a possibility that is excluded from PIs and NCIs (see Llop 2017, p. 317).

- (54) *S'ausissia [Ø] cap de bruch.*
cl.heard none of noise
'No noise could be heard.' (Languedocian Occitan; Alibert 1976, p. 344)
(55) *La quista del grasal [...] es jamai vana.*
the quest of the Grail is never vain
'The quest for the Grail is never vain.' (Languedocian Occitan; BaTelÒc n.d.)

In contrast to Languedocian Occitan, special note should be made of the distinction between PI and NCI sets for indefinites in Gascon Occitan, a language that shows a discontinuous *ne/non ... pas* to express unmarked negation (Bernini and Ramat 1996; Romieu and Bianch 2005; Olivieri and Sauzet 2016).²⁵ In those cases in which *degun* 'n-one', *arrès* 'n-body/n-thing', *arren* 'n-thing', *jamès* 'n-ever', *cap* 'no' or *enlòc* 'n-where' are placed in preverbal position, the presence of one of the elements of the bipartite discontinuous negation (*ne/non ... pas*) is compulsory. Consider first *arren* 'n-thing' in (56), which illustrates the NCI status of this item, whereas *ne/non* is conceived as the overt

Spell-Out of a [neg] formal feature copied to an adjunct position to TP for scope reasons before *arren* reaches the final left-peripheral position.

- (56) a. *Arren non* l'interèssa. (Gascon Occitan; Romieu and Bianch 2005, p. 222)
 b. *Arren ne* l'interèssa. (Gascon Occitan; Romieu and Bianch 2005, pp. 139–40)
 n-thing neg him/her.interest
 'Nothing interests him/her.'

By contrast, example (57)—possible only in some South-Eastern Gascon varieties in contact with Languedocian Occitan—reveals a PI use of *arren* in combination with the postverbal negative marker *pas*.

- (57) *Arren t'empacharà pas de hèr coma dises.*
 anything you.stop.fut not from do as say
 'Nothing will stop you from doing as you say.' (Gascon Occitan; BaTelÒc n.d.)

To sum up, according to the analysis of Gascon discontinuous negation in Llop (2017, 2020), *ne/non* is not considered to be the sentential negative marker, whilst *pas* is. *Non/ne* is assumed to act as a marker of the scope of negation, and we therefore hold that *non/ne* is the morphological realization of a morphosyntactic [neg] feature. Thus, the examples in Gascon can be considered to be parallel to those in the other Pyrenean varieties, where the indefinite pronouns are self-licensed NCIs. However, in Gascon varieties in contact with Languedocian Occitan, where indefinite pronouns are combined with a postverbal *pas*, the head of NegP, these indefinite pronouns must be considered PIs.

4.2. Scalar Minimizers: PIs and NCIs

The second set of items in the trans-Pyrenean continuum we are studying is made up of nominal minimizers which are used as either PIs or as NCIs depending on the variety. Minimizers are items originally denoting a minimal part or amount of something. We exclude from our discussion minimizers with overt *ni* 'not even' which, as we saw for Catalan in Section 2, behave like NCIs. Instead we focus here on *bric/brica* (lit. shard/shred, broken piece), found in Gascon and Languedocian Occitan; *brenca* (lit. 'twig'), found in Aragonese, Benasque and Ribagorçan Catalan; *gota* (lit. drop), used in Aragonese, Benasque and in some Catalan varieties, namely in Northern Central Catalan varieties, as well as in North-Western, Ribagorçan and Pallarese Catalan; *molla* and *mica/miaja* (lit. crumb), used in Pallarese, Ribagorçan and North-Western Catalan; and *pon* (lit. point), used by some Aragonese and Benasque speakers. The etymological origin of these items is presented in Table A1 in the Appendix A.

The salient characteristic of minimizers is that they are scalar items, whose interpretation depends on the availability of a scalar model (Fauconnier 1975), with a set of propositions ordered so as to support inferences between them (Kay 1990). According to Israel (1995, p. 164), minimizers 'mark a phantom minimal element on the scale', which means that, in order to refer, they entail other instances within a set and encode a low quantitative value within the scalar ordering of propositions. At the same time, as emphatic items, they do not obey the default interpretation—that of a minimal element on the scale—but instead pragmatically entail an ordered set of alternatives. Given that they are restricted to scale-reversing contexts, the pragmatic inferences they trigger go from low to high values within the scalar model.²⁶ Crucially for our study, the difference between minimizers and the indefinite pronouns presented in Section 4.1 is that the latter are not inherently emphatic and, thus, do not denote the existence of an ordered scale along which alternative values are ordered, as scalar minimizers do. For Israel (1995, p. 164), instead, 'indefinites are pure phantoms encoding only an arbitrary instance randomly selected from an array of possible instances'.

We seek to determine whether scalar minimizers in trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties are PIs or NCIs. Consequently, we review how far they conform to the set of properties that identify PIs (listed in Section 1) and summarize their behaviour in the varieties under

study. A full list of these items can be seen in Table A3 of Appendix A, although for space reasons we will not be able to give full detail of the properties analysed.²⁷

Firstly, the data reveal the existence of homophonous PI–NCI sets in both Aragonese and Benasque for minimizers such as *brenca*, *gota*, *mica/miaja* and *pon*. As NCIs, these minimizers can be used as negative fragment answers (58), and can appear in the preverbal position of negative sentences (with or without a negative marker) (59). We here exemplify this behaviour with the minimizer *gota* in Aragonese and Benasque. In all these contexts the scalar nature of minimizers is inferred from the fact that, by referring to a minimal scalar degree, they trigger the expression of a maximally emphatic proposition (Israel 2001, p. 3).

- (58) Q: Pillou u qué? A: Gota.
rain or what drop
'It's raining, isn't it?' 'Not at all.' (Saura 2017) (Benasque)
- (59) Gota (no'n) churra.
drop not.cl leak
'It doesn't leak at all.' (Benasque; Saura 2000, footnote 10)

Note that the homophonous *gota* available in some of the Northern Central Catalan varieties (as well as *mica* and *molla*, used in some North-Western varieties) can occur neither as a negative fragment answer (60) nor in preverbal position in declarative negative sentences (61).

- (60) Q: En vols? A: *Gota.
cl want drop
'Do you want some?' 'No, not at all.' (Catalan)
- (61) *Gota (no) m'interessa això.
Drop not me.interests this
'This doesn't interest me at all.' (Catalan)

Crucially, the contrast between examples (58)–(59) and (60)–(61) proves the existence in Aragonese and Benasque of an NCI set for scalar minimizers. As illustrated below, the scalar minimizer NCI set coexists in Aragonese and Benasque simultaneously with a PI set. This PI use of scalar minimizers is also possible in all the other varieties studied here: all scalar minimizers in trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties contribute a single negation reading when licensed by a preverbal negative marker (62), and can be licensed both long-distance (63) and in non-declarative non-negative contexts (64)–(65). Again, we exemplify these uses with *gota* in Aragonese.

- (62) No nieva gota.
not snow drop
'It does not snow at all.' (Aragonese; Estudio de Filología Aragonesa 2021, p. 276)
- (63) No han confirmau que tenesen gota d'interés en esto.
not have confirmed that have drop of.interest in this
'They have not confirmed they have a shred of interest in this.' (Aragonese)
- (64) Queda gota vin n'a cuba?
Remain drop wine in.the barrel
'Is there any wine left in the barrel?' (Aragonese; Estudio de Filología Aragonesa 2021, p. 151)
- (65) Si en ques gota, be.
if cl want drop well
'If you want some, fine.' (Benasque; Saura 2017)

Regarding the licensing conditions of all trans-Pyrenean Romance scalar PIs, grammaticality judgements regarding an alleged hierarchy from more to less restrictive PI licensing operators (that is anti-morphic \subset anti-additive \subset downward entailing \subset non-

veridical) reveal that speakers firmly accept the use of scalar PIs in anti-veridical contexts. The licensing in interrogative and conditional sentences is accepted by the majority of speakers but not all of them. The reasons for this (non)-acceptability seem quite idiosyncratic.²⁸ Conversely, speakers adamantly deny the licensing of PIs in non-veridical contexts that used to license PIs in standard varieties—mainly comparative sentences as well as free-relative clauses—but no longer do so (see Camus 2007).

All the scalar minimizers considered in this section contribute to a single negation reading when combined with non-scalar PIs under the licensing condition of a preverbal negative marker, as illustrated in (66) again with *gota*.

- (66) *No se viyeba gota por dengún lau.*
 not cl saw drop from any place
 ‘You couldn’t see anything at all anywhere.’ (Aragonese; Satué 2001, p. 54)

To sum up, in this section we have argued that trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties display a set of scalar minimizers that require a model with ordered alternative values. This model predicts that in scale-reversing contexts (including negative contexts) inferences derived from the use of minimizers go from low to high quantitative values, because they are inherently emphatic lexical items. Herein lies the difference with those indefinites studied in Sections 2 and 4.1, which are not inherently emphatic. Crucially for our study, the difference between minimizers and the indefinite pronouns presented in the previous section is that the latter are not inherently emphatic and, thus, do not entail the scalar norm pragmatically. Additionally, even if indefinites trigger entailments over a full set of alternative propositions, they do not need a quantitative scalar ordering of them. Relevant for our purposes is the fact that only in Aragonese and Benasque are these items available as NCIs, since they can self-license a negative reading in fragment answers and in a left-peripheral position. In all trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties—Aragonese and Benasque included—scalar minimizers show the distribution of PIs.

4.3. NPIs with Enriched Meaning

In this section we focus on a set of items that behave like NPIs, since they require an anti-morphic licensing operator, similarly to what we saw for *pas* in Central Catalan. In Aragonese and Benasque this is the case for *pas* (and *brenca*, *mica* and its variants to a lesser extent). In Aranese Occitan and Pallarese and Ribagorçan Catalan this is the case for the NPI *cap* (and *pas* to a lesser extent).²⁹ In Gascon and Languedocian Occitan *bric/brica* have an NPI version, although the NPI *ges* is also available. A salient characteristic of this set of items is that, contrary to their PI–NCI homophones and to scalar minimizers, these NPIs introduce additional conventional implicatures that restrict the inferable meanings that these items have. Consider the examples in (67), where the postverbal NPIs are licensed by different negative operators: in (67a–c), for Aragonese, Benasque, Pallarese and Ribagorçan Catalan, and Aranese Gascon Occitan, the operator is the preverbal *no(n)*, whereas in (67d–e), for Gascon and Languedocian Occitan, the licenser is the postverbal negative operator *pas*.³⁰

- (67) a. *No vendré brenca/mica/pas.* (Aragonese and Benasque)
 b. *No vindré cap/pas.* (Pallarese and Ribagorçan Catalan)
 c. *Non vierè cap/bric/pas.* (Aranese Gascon Occitan)
 not come.fut NPI [+enriched meaning]
 ‘I will not come.’
 d. *Non vienerèi pas bric/ges.* (Gascon Occitan)
 not come.fut not NPI [+enriched meaning]
 e. *Vendrai pas brica/ges.* (Languedocian Occitan)
 come.fut not NPI [+enriched meaning]
 ‘I will not come at all.’

The minimizers in italics introduce a non-descriptive use of negation, according to which some contextual proposition must be accessible and some conventional implicatures must be inferred. In other words, these examples are associated with some contextually enriched meaning that is absent in the case of indefinite PIs/NCIs and in the case of scalar minimizers.

Of particular relevance to our research on the different uses of originally scalar minimizers is the fact that, as in French, the item *pas* no longer holds this enriched meaning in any of the Occitan varieties studied here (except for Aranese Gascon Occitan). Today, in Gascon Occitan *pas* is used as the expression of the logical negative operator, whereas *non/ne* remains as a marker of the scope of negation. Contemporary Languedocian Occitan (alongside Roussillonese Catalan) displays the last stage of Jespersen's cycle: postverbal *pas* is used alone as the logical negative operator (see [Olivieri and Sauzet 2016](#), p. 346 for Languedocian; and [Gómez 2011](#) for Roussillonese). By contrast, *non* was the negative operator in Old Occitan [Romieu and Bianch \(2005, p. 245\)](#). See [Schwegler \(1988, p. 163\)](#), who shows that the use of *ne* as the sentence negative operator could still be found in Languedocian texts of the 16th century (68).

- (68) *N'* anes de tous grans mots ma Princesse eichanta.
 not go of your big words my princess scare
 'Do not go frightening my princess with your big words.' (Occitan, 16th century,
 [Lafont 1970](#), p. 88)

The first occurrences of *pas* in [Paoli and Bach's \(2020\)](#) corpus of Old Occitan are from the end of the 12th century, with the 15th century being the moment when the use of *pas* (with an enriched pragmatic meaning linked to previous discourse) begins to increase exponentially, particularly in rhetorical questions ([Paoli and Bach 2020](#), pp. 119, 124; [Paoli 2020](#), p. 1022). The combination of *pas* with PI scalar minimizers is already attested in Occitan during the period between the 13th and 15th centuries ([Paoli and Bach 2020](#), p. 124; see also [Jensen 1986](#), p. 309; [Romieu and Bianch 2005](#), p. 245). These data also support that *pas* was not used as a scalar minimizer, but as an item with an enriched meaning. According to [Paoli \(2020, pp. 1039, 1043\)](#), *pas* was used in negative rhetorical questions in Old Occitan to deny a counter-expectation (changing the initial negative question to a positive assertion). This use contributed to *pas* progressively being associated with 'polarity reversing properties', first at the speech-act level (referring back to discourse-old content) and, later on, at the propositional level. According to [Paoli \(2020, p. 1043\)](#), this process would have led to the use of *pas* as the sentential negator.

[Olivieri and Sauzet \(2016, p. 346\)](#) assert that unmarked discontinuous negation emerged in Occitan varieties in the 17th century (see also [Schwegler \(1988, p. 308\)](#)). At the same time, however, instances of *pas* as a negative operator can already be found in some 17th century Languedocian Occitan texts (69).³¹

- (69) Debe *pas* ieu prendre une corde?
 Should not I take a rope
 'Shouldn't I take a rope?' (Old Occitan, 17th century; example from [Pansier 1973](#), p. 262
 [apud [Schwegler 1988](#), p. 308])

In the 19th century the use of the postverbal marker becomes widespread as the unmarked strategy for negative declaratives in Languedocian Occitan. Note, though, that the switch to a single postverbal negation does not seem to have occurred uniformly in Languedocian Occitan, given that several instances of an unmarked discontinuous negation have been identified in Languedocian texts from the 19th century ([Schwegler 1988](#), p. 308 and 19th century texts in BaTelÒc). [Paoli and Bach \(2020, p. 119, following Schwegler 1988, p. 163ff.\)](#) specify that the co-occurrence of *pas* with the preverbal negative marker was largely restricted to the written language in that variety in the 19th century.³²

Overall, despite the difficulties involved in determining a clear chronology for the evolution of sentential negation in the varieties studied here, the data suggest that in

Gascon and Languedocian Occitan the minimizer *pas* has undergone a further reanalysis process: not only does the literature on Old Gascon and Languedocian Occitan present diachronic evidence of its use as an NPI with an enriched pragmatic meaning, but we also have evidence of the use of *pas* as an anti-morphic operator capable of licensing other PIs.

5. Conclusions

In this article we have described the set of items available in Catalan and other trans-Pyrenean Romance languages, namely Aragonese, Benasque and Gascon and Languedocian Occitan, which behave like PIs, NPIs and NCIs.

With respect to the question of whether, besides *gaire*, there are other items that share the properties attributed to PIs, we have argued that in Catalan indefinite pronouns *ningú*, *cap*, *res*, *gens*, *mai* and *enlloc* actually constitute two homophonous but distinct PI–NCI sets. On the one hand, we have shown that the PI variants of such indefinites appear when they are used as fragment answers preceded by an overt negative scope marker, as well as when they occur licensed by a non-veridical operator, one possibility being an overt negative scope marker. On the other hand, the counterpart NCI set corresponds to the self-licensed negative indefinites that occur isolated as fragment answers, as well as in preverbal position in declarative negative sentences. We have shown that minimizers introduced by *ni* ‘not even’ behave like NCIs, while minimizers not preceded by *ni* behave like PIs. Moreover, *pas* has been shown to behave like an NPI, only licensed in the context of an overt negative marker.

Concerning the question of whether the distinction between PIs, NPIs and NCIs appears to be relevant at all in Catalan, we have argued—on the basis of data from Contemporary Catalan (as well as additional diachronic evidence)—that NPIs have emerged from PIs that are semantically restricted to the scope of anti-morphic operators, while NCIs have emerged from PIs by being syntactically restricted by a [neg] formal feature. We therefore conclude that the distinction between NPIs and NCIs is best conceived as referring to two different subclasses of PIs, the former semantically dependent on an anti-morphic operator, the latter syntactically constrained by an Agreement relationship.

As for which PIs are present in the other Romance varieties spoken in the Pyrenees, we have demonstrated the availability of synchronic homophonous PI–NCI sets of indefinite pronouns and specifiers. Of particular interest to our research are data from Languedocian Occitan showing that when indefinite pronouns combine in this variety with postverbal *pas*, the head of NegP, they are not NCIs but must instead be considered PIs, under the scope of an anti-morphic operator. Moreover, Contemporary Languedocian Occitan offers some evidence for the emergence of negative quantifiers that license a negative reading for the whole sentence in the absence of a preverbal negative marker or a [neg] feature.

As for the characterization of scalar minimizers in trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties, we have shown that they refer to a minimal scalar degree and trigger the expression of a maximally emphatic proposition. Scalar minimizers have also been proved to appear in homophonous PI–NCI sets in Aragonese and Benasque, but not in Catalan and Occitan varieties, where they behave like PIs. Interestingly, we have further shown that some of these PI scalar minimizers have homophonous items without degree, which have been proven to be NPIs whose meaning can be enriched depending on the context of utterance.

Concerning the diachrony of NPIs in trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties, it can be concluded that the change observed in all the varieties studied implies the transition from a broad semantic dependency to a narrow semantic dependency (i.e., items with an enriched pragmatic meaning are used in all trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties, exclusively licensed by anti-morphic operators). We have presented additional evidence to illustrate the different status of *pas* across these Romance varieties, not only as an NPI at stage II of Jespersen’s cycle that further constrains conventional implicatures, but as a negative operator that licenses the presence of PIs/NPIs/NCIs.

Beyond the languages studied here, this paper contributes to a better understanding of the distribution and meaning of PIs, NPIs and NCIs. In particular, the overview provided

here of the polar items identified in Catalan and other trans-Pyrenean Romance languages sheds considerable light on the types of PIs available in natural languages and the likely tendencies in their diachronic evolution.

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Appendix A

Table A1. The etymology of polar items in Catalan and other trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties. Aragonese; Ben = Benasquese; Cat = Catalan; GascOcc = Gascon Occitan; LangOcc = Languedocian Occitan; Occ = Occitan; PallCat = Pallaresse Catalan; RibCat = Ribagorçan Catalan.

(i) items coming from collocations in Latin	
<i>ningú</i> (Cat)/ <i>dengún</i> (Ar)/ <i>degun</i> , <i>degús</i> , <i>digun</i> (Occ)/ <i>degú</i> , <i>digú</i> (Ben)	<NEC ŪNU ('not even one')
<i>mai</i> (Cat, ben)/ <i>jamai</i> , <i>jamei</i> (Occ)	<IAM MAGIS ('any/ever more')
<i>nunca</i> (Ar)	<NE UMQUAM ('not + at any time')
<i>enlloc</i> (Cat)/ <i>enlòc</i> , <i>enluòc</i> (Occ)	<IN LOCU 'in X place'
(ii) items originating from minimizers ('nouns denoting a minimal amount or part of something')	
<i>brenca</i> (Ar, Ben, RibCat)	<*brinos 'thread' + MICA(M) 'crumb'
<i>bric/brica</i> (Occ)	<*brikan (gothic)/[*brinos + MICA(M)] 'shard, shred, broken piece'
<i>cap</i> (Ben, Cat, Occ)	<CAPU(M) (vulg. Lat.) 'head, end piece'
<i>garra</i> (Ar)	<celt. GARRA 'back of the knee'
<i>gota</i> (Ar)/ <i>got</i> (PallCat, RibCat)	<GUTTA(M) (M) 'drop'
<i>mica/miaja</i> (Ar, Ben, Cat)	<MICA(M) (M) 'crumb'
<i>molla</i> (Cat)	<MEDULLA(M) (M) 'crumb'
<i>pas</i> (Ar, Cat, Occ)	<PASSU(M) 'step'
<i>pon(t)/punt</i> (Ar, RibCat, Occ)	<PUNCTU(M) 'point'
(iii) items originating from generalizers ('nouns denoting a maximally general class') and other maximal expressions	
<i>gaire/guaire</i> (Cat, Ar, Ben, Occ)	<Frankish *waigaro 'much'
<i>gens</i> (Cat), <i>ge(s)</i> (Occ)	<GĒNŪS-ERIS 'kind'
<i>res</i> (Cat, Ben, LangOcc), <i>arrés/arrén</i> (GasOcc)	<RE(M) NATA(M) '(thing) born'
<i>nat/nada</i> (Occ)	<RE(M) NATA(M) '(thing) born'

Table A2. The distribution and meaning of indefinite pronouns and specifiers in trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties.

	Aragonese	Benasque	Ribagorçan Catalan	Pallarese Catalan	Aranese Gascon Occitan	Gascon Occitan	Languedocian Occitan
‘Anything, n-thing’							
<i>arrés/arrén</i>					PI-NCI	PI-NCI	
<i>cosa</i>	PI-NCI						
<i>res</i>		PI-NCI	PI-NCI	PI-NCI			PI-NCI
‘Any, no’							
<i>cap</i>		PI-NCI	PI-NCI	PI-NCI	PI-NCI	PI-NCI	PI-NCI
<i>garra</i>	PI-NCI						
<i>nat/nada/nats/nades</i>						PI-NCI	PI-NCI
‘Anybody, n-body’							
<i>degun/degús/digun</i>					PI-NCI	PI-NCI	PI-NCI
<i>dengún</i>	PI-NCI						
<i>degú/digú</i>		PI-NCI					
<i>ningú</i>			PI-NCI	PI-NCI			
‘Anywhere, n-where’							
<i>enlloc/</i>			PI-NCI	PI-NCI			
<i>enlòc/enluòc</i>					PI-NCI	PI-NCI	PI-NCI
<i>en garra sitio</i>	PI-NCI						
‘Ever, n-ever’							
<i>jamai/jamei</i>					PI-NCI	PI-NCI	PI-NCI
<i>mai</i>		PI-NCI	PI-NCI	PI-NCI			
<i>nunca</i>	PI-NCI						

Table A3. The distribution and meaning of scalar minimizers in trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties³³.

	Aragonese	Benasque	North-Western Catalan	Ribagorçan Catalan	Pallarese Catalan	Aranese Gascon Occitan	Gascon Occitan	Languedocian Occitan
<i>molla</i>			PI	PI	PI			
<i>gota</i>	PI-NCI	PI-NCI	PI	PI	PI			
<i>mica</i>	PI-NCI-NPI	PI-NCI-NPI	PI	PI	PI			
<i>pon</i>	PI-NCI	PI-NCI		PI				
<i>brenca</i>	PI-NCI-NPI	PI-NCI-NPI		PI-NPI				
<i>bric/a</i>						PI-NPI	PI-NPI	PI-NPI
<i>gens</i>			PI-NCI	PI-NCI	PI-NCI			PI-NCI-NPI
<i>cap</i>				NPI	NPI	NPI	NPI	
<i>pas</i>	NPI	NPI	NPI	NPI	NPI	NPI	NPI	NegOp

Notes

¹ Let us assume the notion of (non-)veridicality postulated by Zwarts (1995, p. 287):

(i) (Non)veridicality

Let O be a monadic sentential operator. O is said to be *veridical* just in case $Op \Rightarrow p$ is logically valid. If O is not veridical, then O is *non-veridical*. A non-veridical operator O is called *anti-veridical* iff $Op \Rightarrow \neg p$ is logically valid. We follow Giannakidou (1998) in substituting Zwarts’s (1995) *a-veridicality* for *anti-veridicality*, since the meaning intended is ‘opposite to veridicality’ not ‘without veridicality properties’.

² For different approaches to the notion of syntactic Agreement see Weiß (2002); Zeijlstra (2004); Haegeman and Zanuttini (1991); Watanabe (2004); Haegeman (1995); Déprez (1997, 2000); de Swart and Sag (2002); among others.

- 3 We thus use the terms PIs and NPIs instead of weak and strong NPIs (Ladusaw 1992, 1996; van der Wouden 1994).
- 4 Notice that *gaire* can occur as a fragment answer and in preverbal position in declarative sentences only if it appears in the immediate scope of a c-commanding licenser such as the negative marker *no*, as shown in (i). These examples contrast with (1aR) and (1b) in the text.
- (i) a. Q: Que tens sucre?
int part have sugar
'Do you have sugar?'
R': No *gaire*.
not much
b'. No *gaire*s estudiant no han aprovat.
not many students not have passed
'Not many students passed.'
- 5 Giannakidou (1997, 2000) postulates that NC languages are either Strict or Non-Strict, which differ with respect to the possibility of having a negative subject followed by a negative marker in a single negation reading. Strict NC languages (e.g., Greek, Russian) allow such structures. Non-Strict NC languages (e.g., Italian, Portuguese) do not. See footnote 10 for a reference to Catalan.
- 6 We acknowledge that it is unclear whether the possibility of licensing a double negation reading is a property of items participating in NC structures (as suggested for Strict NC languages such as Hungarian and Romanian; see Puskás 2012; and Fălăuş and Nicolae 2016, respectively) or rather a property of emerging negative quantifiers (as suggested for a Non-Strict NC language such as Catalan; see Déprez et al. 2015).
- 7 Central Catalan is the dialect of Catalan with greatest demographic weight, since it is spoken in the whole province of Barcelona, half of Tarragona province and most of Girona province.
- 8 See (Déprez et al. 2015) for an experimental investigation that supports the existence of an emerging negative quantifier set among Catalan university students for sequences with indefinite DPs and indefinite pronouns in subject position. These indefinites in combination with an overt negative marker lead to a non-negligible double negation reading, as one of the possible English translations suggests.
- (i) a. *Cap* dels alumnes *no* llegeix *cap* llibre.
no of.the students not reads no book
'None of the students read any books' and 'None of the students don't read any books at all' (i.e., 'All the students read at least a few books.')
- b. *Ningú* *no* neteja alguna cosa.
n-body not cleans something
'Nobody cleans something' and 'Nobody is not cleaning something' (i.e., 'Everybody is cleaning something.')
- 9 Note that two NCIs may also occur preverbally, conveying a single negation reading:
- (i) Des de l'atemptat, *mai* res serà com abans.
since the.attack n-ever n-thing be.FUT as before
'Since the terrorist attack, nothing will ever be as it used to be.'
- Since we assume that NCIs have a formal [neg] feature, without being negative quantifiers, a single [neg] feature immediately c-commanding Tense is the only item responsible for the single negation reading. All remaining potential [neg] features that may occur in a sentence are removed by means of an operation of Concord (Espinal et al. 2021). We will come back to this issue in Section 4.1.
- 10 The Catalan variety spoken in Roussillon is the only one that uses *pas* as the expression of the logical negative operator (Gómez 2011), as is also the case in Occitan (Alibèrt 1976) and French (Grevisse and Goosse 2007). See Section 4.3. Notice that for the varieties where *pas* is an NPI, we translate the sentences where it appears as sentences with a standard negation. We set aside for the moment the enriched meaning its use conveys, depending on the context of utterance, but will explore this issue in Section 4.3.
- 11 Central Catalan differs from Italian, Portuguese and Spanish in the fact that in the context of preverbal NCIs the negative marker *no* 'not' appears to be optional (Fabra 1956; Espinal 2002).
- (i) *Ningú* (*no*) porta maleta.
nobody not carries suitcase
'Nobody carries a suitcase.'
- Zeijlstra (2004 and ff.) argues for the existence of two different dialects: a Non-Strict NC one (without *no*) and a Strict one (with *no*). However, this hypothesis has been strongly argued against in the literature (Espinal and Tubau 2016; Tubau et al. 2018), given that: (a) sequences with the structure NCI + V + NCI without *no* are accepted by all speakers; (b) sequences with the structure NCI + *no* + V + NCI are also accepted by all speakers; and (c) double negation in Catalan may also arise in NCI + *no* sequences—unlike what we see in languages like Romanian, where double negation is only possible in NCI + *nu* + NCI sequences (Fălăuş 2007; Fălăuş and Nicolae 2016). In Espinal et al. (2021) it is argued that the apparent optionality of *no* in (i) is better analysed by appealing to two different analyses: one in which the pre-sentential NCI *ningú* self-licenses (Ladusaw 1992) a negative reading by c-commanding Tense, and another one in which the pre-sentential NCI *ningú* combines with *no*, which is not

the head of NegP but is merely the overt Spell-Out of a copied [neg] feature (in a scope position) in the movement of *ningú* to the left-periphery of the sentence.

12 However, as already pointed out by Larrivé (2011, p. 4) for French, Llop (2017, pp. 189–92) for Catalan and Paoli and Bach (2020, pp. 119–20) for Occitan, this hypothesis (i.e., the use of *pas* as a measure phrase and its reanalysis as an NPI) appears to be speculative for the languages studied because—as pointed out by a reviewer—that move is not unambiguously attested in the earliest textual base.

13 Although there appear not to be diachronic examples that license *pas* in non-veridical contexts beyond the anti-morphic operator (Pérez-Saldanya, p.c.), this possibility has been attested in Catalan for other minimizers such as *gota* ‘drop’. See Section 4.2.

14 It should be noted that this pre-negative distribution is characteristic of languages such as Basque and Hindi that have been described in the literature as containing only PIs (Ettxepare 2003; Ettxeberria et al. 2021; Lahiri 1998).

- | | | | | | |
|------|------------------|---------------|------------|---------------|----------|
| (i) | <i>Inork</i> | <i>ez</i> | <i>du</i> | <i>deitu.</i> | [Basque] |
| | <i>inor.erg</i> | <i>not</i> | <i>aux</i> | <i>call</i> | |
| | ‘Nobody called.’ | | | | |
| (ii) | <i>koii bhii</i> | <i>nahiiN</i> | | <i>aayaa.</i> | [Hindi] |
| | <i>anybody</i> | <i>not</i> | | <i>came</i> | |
| | ‘Nobody came.’ | | | | |

15 Given that the interpretation of utterances varies depending on the context, the translations for the examples in this section do not reflect the enriched pragmatic meaning associated with *pas*. According to the authors of this article, depending on the contextual information available, the pragmatic meaning of *pas*, in addition to rejecting a positive accessible proposition, may also consist in strengthening a negative proposition. See Espinal (1993) for details.

16 It is necessary to point out that those NPIs that are exclusively licensed by the negative marker are a very small class in natural languages and show a tendency towards idiomaticity (e.g., English *lift a finger*; Catalan *obrir boca* lit. open mouth ‘say a word’). See Sedivy (1990), Postal (2004), Sailer (2021) and others.

17 See Zeijlstra (2004, 2012, among others) for the hypothesis that NCIs carry a syntactic [uNeg] feature that probes for a goal with a matching [iNeg] feature with which to Agree. In contexts where the goal (i.e., an anti-morphic operator) is not overt, the [uNeg] feature is assumed to trigger an abstract [iNeg] negative operator as a Last Resort operation.

We follow here Espinal et al. (2021) in assuming that NCIs are inherently specified with a syntactic [neg] feature that can render the sentence negative provided it is in a relevant position scoping over TP (Acquaviva 1995; Ladusaw 1996; Zanuttini 1997; Herburger 2001; Penka 2011). According to this analysis, the presence of [neg] in fragment NCIs self-licenses a negative reading (Larrivé 2021); that is, this syntactic formal feature restricts the choice of possible non-veridical operators into a subset of them, with the addition that by being a syntactic feature it must be checked at syntax. When the NCI superficially occurs either in a postverbal or in a preverbal position, a feature-copying mechanism (Chomsky 1995, 1998; Watanabe 2004) applies by which a [neg]-chain is formed. This [neg]-chain is solved by eliminating the original [neg] feature of the NCI in sentence-internal position and keeping the highest one (in a scope position). The Vocabulary Item *no* that combines with postverbal or preverbal NCIs, under this approach, is not the head of NegP but rather the Spell-Out of a disembodied [neg] feature moved to TP for scope reasons.

18 Pérez Saldanya and Torrent (2021, footnote 24) point out that in another 15th century text, *Vita Christi*, out of 116 cases of a preposed *ningú/-un*, only three occur without an overt negative marker, again suggesting that it is not until that century that NCI uses of this form begin to emerge in written texts.

19 Although the Catalan spoken in Ports de Morella is not a variety of Central Catalan, what the examples in (23A) and (24A) show is that in Contemporary Catalan, PI readings for *cap* ‘any’ and *ningú* ‘anybody’ occur simultaneously with NCI readings, as illustrated by the well-formed answers in (iA) and (iiA), where *no* is absent.

- | | | | | | | | | |
|------|----|------------------------|------|---------|----|---------------|------------|--------------|
| (i) | Q: | On | has | estat? | A: | En | <i>cap</i> | <i>lloc.</i> |
| | | where | have | been | | in | <i>no</i> | place |
| | | ‘Where have you been?’ | | | | ‘Nowhere.’ | | |
| (ii) | Q: | Qui | ha | vingut? | A: | <i>Ningú.</i> | | |
| | | who | has | come | | n-body | | |
| | | ‘Who has come?’ | | | | ‘Nobody.’ | | |

20 Greek shows the paradigm of non-emphatic PIs side by side with emphatic NCIs. See Giannakidou (1997 and future work).

- | | | | |
|-----|----|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (i) | a. | <i>kanenas/KANENAS</i> | ‘anyone, anybody’/‘no one, n-body’ |
| | b. | <i>tipota/TIPOTA</i> | ‘anything’/‘n-thing’ |

21 For a fine-grained analysis and contrastive description of the distribution and meaning of *guaire* in Aragonese, Gascon Occitan and Catalan, see Tomás (2016, pp. 128–35).

22 We set aside for the moment the item *gens* and its equivalents in trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties since we comment on them in Section 4.2 when referring to those items derived from nominal minimizers (and generalizers) that must be considered scalar items. See Table A1 in Appendix A for the etymological origin of PIs used in Catalan and other trans-Pyrenean Romance varieties.

- 23 For the licensing of such elements in non-veridical contexts in the varieties studied, see [Medina \(1999\)](#) for Old Occitan and [Estudio de Filología Aragonesa \(2021\)](#), pp. 52–56 for Aragonese. See also [Tomás \(2016\)](#), pp. 61–141 for a comparative study of Aragonese, Gascon Occitan and Catalan.
- 24 The use of the PI *dengún* ‘anybody’ as a fragment answer and licensed by the overt negative marker *no* (i.e., *no dengún* lit. not anybody ‘nobody’) is widespread in Aragonese, side by side with the NCI *dengún* ‘n-body’ illustrated in (46). The same is possible for other homophonous PI–NCI sets of items in Aragonese, Benasquese and Occitan, such as *res* ‘anything’. Consider (i) from Languedocian Occitan.
- (i) Q: Qué vesíai? A: Pas res.
what saw not anything
‘What did I see?’ ‘Nothing.’
- 25 The second element in this discontinuous negation is *cap* in the region of Couserans and Commenge (Eastern Pyrenean Gascon in contact with Pallarese Catalan), according to [Bec \(1968\)](#), § 102.
- 26 For [Chierchia \(2006\)](#), the fact that the interpretation of the minimizer corresponds to the pragmatically strongest alternative in the context is secured by the proper licensing of a scalar semantic feature [+σ]. In [Tubau \(2015\)](#) this interpretation is attributed to the presence of a Focus *even* particle in the structure of minimizers. See also [Chierchia \(2013\)](#) for the hypothesis that non-emphatic polarity items are exhausted under silent ONLY operators, while emphatic minimizers are exhausted under silent EVEN operators.
- 27 We claim that a similar distribution to scalar minimizers (as either PIs or NCIs) has been observed for the generalizer *ge(n)s* (lit. kind), used in Catalan and Occitan (but not in Aranese or Benasquese), since this item shows similar properties to those minimizers we are discussing here. See Table A3.
Generalizers are elements denoting a maximally general type or class which contribute to a qualitative negation, ‘by extending its scope to include everything in that maximal sortal domain’ ([Condoravdi and Kiparsky 2006](#), 1.2).
- 28 Younger speakers exhibit a more restricted use of PIs in non-veridical contexts and tend instead to use their positive counterpart (see [Llop 2017](#), pp. 171–86). This tendency is in line with [Martins \(2000\)](#) hypothesis that the loss of polar versatility (i.e., PIs initially used in non-veridical contexts are progressively restricted to anti-veridical ones) is associated with diachronic change.
- 29 Here we will only be referring to *cap* as an NPI—which in Pallarese and Ribagorçan Catalan as well as in Aranese Occitan is used analogously to the element *pas* in Central Catalan (see Section 2), but whose characteristics are different from those of the PI/NCI indefinite pronoun *cap* ‘any, no’ discussed earlier.
- 30 The reader must bear in mind that the use of *pas*, *ges* and *bric(a)* as NPIs with enriched meanings is much more widespread than the use of *brenca*, *molla* and *mica*, which mainly correspond to scalar minimizers (see [Llop 2017](#), 4.2.1.1). See [Ledgeway \(2017\)](#), who distinguishes between *intensive* and *presuppositional emphatic negation* to differentiate between the scalar and non-scalar (but pragmatically enriched) reading of such items. In Central Catalan this distinction can be exemplified by the respective use of *gens* (i) (intensive emphatic negation, i.e., scalar minimizer) and *pas* (ii) (presuppositional emphatic negation, i.e., NPI with enriched meaning).
- (i) No m’agrada gens.
not me.like any
‘I don’t like it at all.’ (intensive)
- (ii) No m’agrada pas.
not me.like pas
‘I don’t like it.’ (presuppositional) [with a pragmatically enriched meaning]
- 31 As pointed out by a reviewer, example (68) is an instance of a rhetorical question, which according to [Paoli \(2020\)](#) was instrumental in *pas* establishing itself as a negative operator.
- 32 [Gómez \(2011\)](#), pp. 299–300) describes a coincident process for the emergence of *pas* as the sentential negative marker in Roussillonese Catalan, but does not specify its chronology.
- 33 The order of the items in Table A3 follows the logic by which they have been introduced in this paper according to their distribution and meaning (i.e., PI/NCI scalar minimizers, non-scalar NPIs with enriched meaning, negative operators).

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