

From *pantoute* to *pas du tout*¹

Heather Burnett^{1,2}Mireille Tremblay²Francis Corblin^{1,3}¹Institut Jean Nicod²Université de Montréal³Université Paris-Sorbonne

1 Introduction

This paper presents an empirical investigation of the negative polarity item *pantoute* in Québec French (particularly Montréal French)².

- (1) Pis les Français, des fois y te parlent pis tu sais pas ce
 And the French, some times they you speak and you know not what
 qu’y veulent dire, y ont **pas** les mêmes paroles que par icitte
 that they want say, they have not the same words that around here
pantoute.

PANTOUTE

‘And the French, sometimes they talk to you and you don’t know what they’re trying to say, they don’t have the same words as around here at all.’

Richard Levesque. (1979). *Le vieux du Bas-de-fleuve*. Castelriand inc. (p.24)

- (2) *Y ont les mêmes paroles que par icitte *pantoute*.
 They have the same words than around here PANTOUTE
 ‘*They have the same words as around here at all.’

The goal of this paper:

1. To identify a pattern of negative polarity item (NPI) distribution that, to our knowledge, has yet to be discussed in the literature.
 - We lay out the basic distribution of the adverb *pantoute* (pronounced /pã.tut/), which can be roughly translated as English *at all*, in the variety of French spoken in the province of Québec.
2. To argue that *pantoute* raises important questions for common views on the properties of NPIs and their licensing conditions in the literature:
 - **The typology of NPIs:** We argue that *pantoute* displays the licensing pattern of an ‘extra-strong’ NPI, a new kind of NPI.

¹We thank Luis Alonso-Ovalle, Vincent Homer, Yael Sharvit, Benjamin Spector, Lucia Tovina, and Hedde Zeijlstra for helpful comments and discussion. Of course, all remaining errors are our own. We also thank Anne Bertrand, David-Etienne Bouchard, Monique Dufresne, Fernande Dupuis, Anne-Frédérique Tremblay, Marie-Claude Tremblay, and Daniel Valois for their judgements on the Québec French data. This research has been supported in part by grants from the *Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)* (a postdoctoral grant (#756-2012-0045 (H.Burnett)), a doctoral grant (#752-2007-2382 (H.Burnett)), and the MCRI *Le français à la mesure d’un continent* (F. Martineau (PI))).

²The literary examples presented in this paper come from the *fichier lexical* of the *Trésor de la langue française au Québec* (<http://www.tlfq.ulaval.ca/>).

- **The NPI/N-word distinction in Romance:** We argue that *pantoute* displays the behaviour of a hybrid between an N-word and a ‘pure’ NPI.
3. To compare the licensing and interpretation of *pantoute* to two other very similar NPIs: 1) *at all* in English and 2) *du tout* in European French.
 - This comparison between similar items in closely related languages/dialects allows us to investigate the space of the microvariation in the semantics of (certain kinds of) NPIs.

1.1 Plan

1. *Pantoute* in negative contexts: an ‘extra-strong’ NPI?
 - Comparison with *at all* and *du tout*.
2. *Pantoute* in non-negative contexts: an N-word? a free-choice item?
 - Comparison with *at all* and *du tout*.
3. Conclusion and analytical directions.

2 *Pantoute* in negative contexts

Pantoute as an NPI:

- Like English *at all*, *pantoute* cannot appear in an assertion in which it is not c-commanded by an appropriate negative operator.
 - One such appropriate operator is the sentential negation marker *pas* ‘not’.
- (3)
 - a. *C’est vrai *pantoute*.
It is true PANTOUTE.
‘*It’s true at all.’
 - b. *I veut m’écouter *pantoute*!
He wants me listen PANTOUTE
‘*He wants to listen to me at all.’
 - c. *T’es grosse *pantoute*.
You’re fat PANTOUTE
‘*You’re fat at all.’
 - (4)
 - a. C’est **pas** vrai *pantoute*.
It is not true PANTOUTE
‘It’s not true at all.’
Safarir: le magazine de l’humour illustr. (1987) (p.46)
 - b. I veut **pas** m’écouter *pantoute*!
He wants not refl listen PANTOUTE
‘He doesn’t want to listen to me at all.’
Rodolphe Girard. (1904). *Marie Calumet*. La bibliothèque électronique du Québec. (p.120)

- c. T'es **pas** grosse *pantoute*... t'es juste... disons, en chair.
 You're not fat PANTOUTE... you're just... say, in flesh
 'You're not fat at all... you're just... shall we say, healthy.'
 Michel Tremblay. (1974) *Bonjour, là, bonjour*. Leméac. (p.86)

- We find a similar pattern with *du tout*.

- (5) a. *C'est vrai *du tout*.
 b. Ce n'est **pas** vrai *du tout*.

In addition to sentential negation, *pantoute* is licensed by some other negative operators. In particular, *pantoute* (like *at all* and *du tout*) can be licensed by *p(l)us* 'no more' (6), *rien* 'nothing' (7), and *sans* 'without' (8).

- (6) a. Mais le jeu est **pus** *pantoute* comme y tait.
 But the game is no more PANTOUTE as it was
 'But the game is no longer at all as it was.'
 Richard Levesque. (1979). *Le vieux du Bas-de-fleuve*. Castelriand inc. (p. 30)
- b. Mais, une fois que t'es mariée, ma fille, y'a **plus** de baisage
 But, one time that you're married, my girl, there is no more of screwing
pantoute.
 PANTOUTE
 'But, once you're married, my girl, there's no more screwing at all.'
 Mailhot, Laurent and Doris-Michel Monpetit. (1980). *Monologues québécois, 1890-1980*. (p.192)
- c. Pis quand y sont **pus** bons *pantoute*, y font comme les
 Then when they are no more good PANTOUTE, they make like the
 joueurs de hockey qui se pognent des jobs de dépisteurs: y
 players of hocky that refl get some jobs of depisteurs: they
 deviennent fonctionnaires.
 become civil servants
 'Then when they aren't good at all anymore, they act like hockey players and get themselves 'depisteur' jobs: they become civil servants.'
 Richard Levesque. (1979). *Le vieux du Bas-de-fleuve*. Castelriand inc. (p.39)
- (7) a. Ensemble, on peut tout faire, séparés on est **rien** *pantoute*.
 Together, we can everything do, separated we are nothing PANTOUTE
 'Together, we can do everything, separated we are nothing at all.'
 Janette Bertrand. (2007) *Le bien des miens*. Libre Expression. (p.131)
- b. Aie! j'y pense, je t'ai **rien** offert *pantoute*...
 Aie! I of-it think, I you have nothing offered PANTOUTE
 'Aie! Now that I think about it, I gave you nothing at all...'
 Richard Levesque. (1979). *Le vieux du Bas-de-fleuve*. Castelriand inc. (p.25)
- c. Si l'enfer ressemble au club ousque j'travail, ça m'fait **rien** *pantoute* d'aller
 passer mon éternité là, moé!
 If Hell resembles the club where I work, it doesn't bother me at all to spend
 my eternity there!
 Michel Tremblay. (1972). *Les belles-soeurs*. Leméac. (p.15)

- (8) I'mettaient leurs bateaux à l'eau **sans** y toucher *pantoute*.
 they put their boats at the water without them touching PANTOUTE
 'They put their boats in the water without touching them at all.'
 Émile Seutin. (1968). *Description grammaticale du parler de l'Île aux Coudes*.
 (p.131)
- (9) Licensing of *du tout*
- Mais le jeu n'est **plus** du tout comme il était.
 - Séparés on n'est **rien** du tout.
 - Ils mettaient leurs bateaux à l'eau **sans** les toucher *du tout*.

2.1 *Pantoute* as a strong NPI

However, this is where the similarities between *at all* and *pantoute* end.

- English *at all* can be licensed by expressions denoting downward entailing functions that are not anti-additive³, but, as shown in (11), *pantoute* cannot be licensed by these elements.
 - While *at all* is what is often called a *weak* NPI, *pantoute* appears to be a *strong* NPI, i.e. an expression that is licensed only by anti-additive denoting expressions (cf. Zwarts (1998)).
- (10) a. *T'es-tu allé à l'école *pantoute* aujourd'hui?
 You were Q gone to the school PANTOUTE today
Compare English: 'Did you go to school **at all** today?'
- b. *Si t'allais à l'école *pantoute* aujourd'hui, je serais content.
 If you went to the school PANTOUTE today, I would be happy.
Compare English: 'If you went to school **at all** today, I would be happy.'
- c. *Peu d'enfants sont allés à l'école *pantoute* aujourd'hui.
 Few of students were gone to the school PANTOUTE today
Compare English: 'Few students went to school **at all** today.'
- Du tout* patterns like *pantoute*, not like *at all*, making it a strong NPI.
- (11) a. *Es-tu allé à l'école *du tout* aujourd'hui?
 b. *Si t'allais à l'école *du tout* aujourd'hui, je serais content.
 c. *Peu d'enfants sont allés à l'école *du tout* aujourd'hui.

2.2 *Pantoute* as an 'extra-strong' NPI

However, *pantoute* shows a distribution that differs from that of classic examples of strong NPIs. To see the difference, consider the case of the expression *de la journée* 'all day'

3

- A function F is **downward entailing** iff for all properties A, B , if $A \subseteq B$, then $F(B)$ implies $F(A)$.
- A function F is **anti-additive** iff F is downward entailing and, for all properties A, B , $F(A) \wedge F(B)$ implies $F(A \vee B)$.

(lit. ‘of the day’) in European and Québec French. As discussed in Corblin et al. (2004), *de la journée* is impossible in affirmative sentences and underneath weak NPI licensors (12).

- (12) a. *J’ai mangé **de la journée**.
I have eaten of the day
‘*I have eaten all day.’
- b. *Est-ce que Jean est venu **de la journée**?
Q that Jean is come of the day
‘*Did John come all day?’

However, *de la journée* is licensed by the full range of anti-additive quantifiers, as shown in (13).

- (13) a. J’ai **pas** mangé *de la journée*.
I have not eaten of the day
‘I haven’t eaten all day’
- b. **Personne** a mangé *de la journée*.
No one has eaten of the day
‘No one has eaten all day.’
- c. J’ai **rien** mangé *de la journée*.
I have nothing eaten of the day
‘I haven’t eaten anything all day.’
- d. **Aucun** étudiant a mangé *de la journée*.
No student has eaten of the day
‘No student has eaten all day.’
- e. Je suis allé **nullepart** *de la journée*.
I was gone nowhere of the day
‘I went nowhere all day.’

In contrast, although *pantoute* is licensed by some anti-additive quantifiers (*pas* ‘not’, *p(l)us* ‘no more’, *rien* ‘nothing’, and *sans* ‘without’ cf. (4)-(8)), it is not possible under other anti-additive elements such as *personne* ‘no one’, *jamais* ‘never’, *aucun étudiant* ‘no student’, and *nullepart* ‘nowhere’, as shown in (15).

- (14) EMPIRICAL GENERALIZATION:
Pantoute is subject to stricter restrictions than other strong NPIs, making it what Burnett and Tremblay (2012) call an *extra-strong* NPI.

- (15) a. ***Personne** est venu *pantoute*.
No one is come PANTOUTE
Compare English: ‘No one came at all.’
- b. *J’y suis **jamais** allé *pantoute*.
I there am never gone PANTOUTE
Compare English: ‘I’ve never been there at all.’
- c. ***Aucun** étudiant est venu *pantoute*.
No student is come PANTOUTE
Compare English: ‘No student came at all.’
- d. *Je suis allé **nullepart** *pantoute* aujourd’hui.
I am gone nowhere PANTOUTE today
Compare English: ‘I went nowhere at all today.’

The split in the set of anti-additive quantifiers with respect to the licensing of *pantoute* is preserved in negative concord contexts.

- Québec French is a negative concord language; that is, sentences with multiple negative quantificational expressions and neutral focus are interpreted as only containing a single semantic negation ((16), cf. Vinet (1998), Corblin and Tovenà (2003), and Martineau and Déprez (2004) (among others) for a description of the Québécois negative concord system).

(16) Personne a rien vu.
 No one has nothing seen.
 ‘No one saw anything.’

- In all but the simplest sentences with multiple negative elements, a double negation reading is extremely difficult to obtain (even with the help of prosody).
- Unlike in the standard dialect, sentential negation (*pas*) participates in the negative concord system in Québec French.
- In most sentences with negative quantifiers, a *pas* can be freely added without changing the the meaning of the sentence⁴.

(17) a. J’ai rien vu. ≡ J’ai **pas** rien vu.
 I have nothing seen. I have not nothing seen.
 ‘I didn’t see anything.’
 b. Personne est venu. ≡ **Pas** personne est venu.
 No one is come Not no one is come
 ‘No one came.’
 c. Je suis allé nullepart. ≡ Je suis **pas** allé nullepart.
 I have gone nowhere I have not gone nowhere
 ‘I went nowhere.’

- Although bare *personne* cannot license *pantoute*, when this element is modified by *pas* (18), the sentence is greatly improved (although it remains less than perfect for some speakers).

(18) a. *Personne est venu pantoute.
 No one is come PANTOUTE

⁴The distribution of *pas* with other negative elements is, however, subject to certain structural restrictions that are not particularly relevant here. For example, *pas* can both c-command an N-word and appear in the scope of an other N-word (i), but it cannot appear in the scope of an N-word without also c-commanding one (ii).

(i) a. Y’est **pas** venu personne.
 There is not come no one.
 ‘No one came.’
 b. Personne a **pas** rien lu.
 No one has not nothing read
 ‘No one read anything.’

(ii) *Personne est **pas** venu.
 No one has not come

- b. **Pas** personne est venu pantoute.
 Not no one is come PANTOUTE
 ‘No one came at all.’

- European French *du tout* also shows the same licensing pattern as *pantoute*.

- (19) a. ?Personne n’est venu *du tout*.
 b. ?Je n’y suis jamais allé *du tout*.
 c. ?Aucun étudiant n’est venu *du tout*.
 d. ?Je ne suis allé nullement *du tout*.

2.3 Summary

- We find fine-grained variation in the licensing conditions of emphatic NPIs in English and French dialects.
- In the contexts that we have seen so far, *du tout* behaves like *pantoute*.

| LICENSOR | AT ALL | DE LA JOURNÉE | PANTOUTE | DU TOUT |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------------|----------|---------|
| <i>pas/not</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <i>p(l)us/no more</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <i>rien/nothing</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <i>sans/without</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <i>personne/no one</i> | ✓ | ✓ | × | × |
| <i>aucun étudiant/no student</i> | ✓ | ✓ | × | × |
| <i>jamais/never</i> | ✓ | ✓ | × | × |
| <i>nullepart/nowhere</i> | ✓ | ✓ | × | × |
| Other downward entailing expressions | ✓ | × | × | × |

Table 1: The licensing patterns of *at all*, *de la journée*, *pantoute*, and *du tout*.

3 *Pantoute* in non-negative contexts

- *Pantoute* has additional uses outside assertive contexts that are unusual for a polarity element.
- As shown in the dialogues in (20) and (21), *pantoute* can be used as an answer to a yes-no question.
- Note that, although bare *pantoute* is acceptable in these environments, the expression *pas pantoute* ‘not PANTOUTE’ is also possible.

- (20) a. **-Père:** Veux-tu me sacrer patience toé, c’est tu une honte d’aller voir un psychiatre?
-Father: *Leave me alone, will you, is it shameful to go see a psychiatrist?*
 b. **-Maurice:** *Pantoute.*
-Maurice: *Not at all.*
 Barette. (1973). *Papa*. (p.57)

- (21) Par exemple y disaient: “As-tu peur d’un mort, toi, Joseph?” J’rpondais: “*Pantoute*, moi j’ai pas peur des morts. Les morts ça n’revient pas ça.”
 ‘*For example they said: “Are you afraid of a dead man, Joseph?” I responded: “Not at all, me I’m not afraid of the dead. The dead don’t come back.”*’
 Brodeur, René and Robert Choquette. (1979). *Villages et visages de l’Ontario français*. Office de la télécommunication éducative de l’Ontario. Éditions Fides.

- *Pantoute* can be used as an exclamation to indicate that the speaker is in disagreement with their interlocutor, as shown in (22) and (23).

- (22) a. **-Père:** Moé, j’ai jamais été capable de parler, ni avant, ni pendant, ni après!
-Father: ‘*I have never been able to talk, neither before, nor during, nor after!*’
 b. **-Mère:** C’est normal ça Ernest!
-Mother: ‘*That’s normal Ernest!*’
 c. **-Père:** *Pantoute!*
-Father: ‘*Not at all!*’
 Barette. (1973). *Papa*. (p.88)
- (23) a. **-M. Ménard:** J’arrive!... J’ai gagné.
Mr. Ménard: ‘*I’m coming!... I won.*’
 b. **-M. Tremblay:** *Pantoute!* Ça fait un bon bout d’temps qu’j’ai fini.
-Mr. Tremblay: ‘*Not at all! It has been some time since I’ve finished.*’
 Marie Laberge. (1981). *Ils étaient venus pour...* VLB éditeur. (p.71)

- These uses are possible for *du tout*, but not for *at all*.

- (24) a. -Are you afraid of a dead man?
 -**At all!* (ok: *not at all*)
 b. -I won!
 -**At all!* (ok: *not at all*)
- (25) a. -As-tu peur d’un mort?
 -*Du tout!*
 b. ‘J’ai gagné!’
 -*Du tout!*

3.1 Summary

- *At all* behaves like a straightforward weak NPI.
- Both *pantoute* and *du tout* can appear outside the scope of negation in fragment answers and as correctional exclamations.

Theoretical consequences:

- *Pantoute* and *du tout* show a hybrid behaviour between simple NPIs and *N-words*.

- (26) Giannikidou (2006): An expression α is an n-word iff:

- a. α can be used in structures containing sentential negation or another α -expression yielding a reading equivalent to one logical negation; and
 - b. α can provide a negative fragment answer.
- *Pantoute/du tout* meets this definition. So we might want to say that *pantoute* is an N-word.
 - But *pantoute/du tout* cannot be used bare like other French N-words.

(27) a. J'ai pas vu personne.
b. Qui as-tu vu? Personne.

(28) Personne est venu.

Conclusion: *Pantoute/du tout* instantiate a new subclass of NPI-ish N-words.

BUT the micro-variation is even finer...

3.2 From *pantoute* to *du tout*

Differences arise between *pantoute* and *du tout* in non-negative contexts.

- *Pantoute* can be licensed (for some speakers) in disjunctions.
 - The emphatic particle *ben* ameliorates the examples, and all of the examples in our corpus of licensing by a disjunction occur with *ben*.
- (29) a. Comprends-tu un peu **ou ben** *pantoute*?
Beauchemin & Martel. *Textes libres*. (1975: 222)
- b. J'entrerais en r'tard **ou ben** *pantoute*.
Dufresne. *Cap aux sorciers*. (1969: 51)
- c. Il y en faut cinq, six **ou ben** *pantoute*...
Légaré. *Chansons*. (1972: 37)
- This is not possible for *du tout*
- (30) a. ?Comprends-tu un peu ou (bien) *du tout*?
b. *Il y en faut cinq, six ou (bien) *du tout*...
- *Pantoute* (but not *du tout*) can be licensed in opposition to a scalar term.
- (31) Il y avait des bûcherons qui se lavaient un peu, et d'autres, *pantoute*.
Corpus CLEM.
- (32) *Il y avait des bûcherons qui se lavaient un peu, et d'autres, *du tout*.

Generalization:

Pantoute has weaker licensing conditions than *du tout*, namely, it can be licensed by (certain) contexts in which (disjunctive or scalar) alternatives are salient.

4 Conclusion

We have examined four polarity sensitive items in English, European French, and Québec French.

- *Pantoute*, *du tout*, *at all*, and *de la journée*.

OBSERVATION:

Even though they are constructed from very similar morphological elements, these items all have slightly different licensing conditions.

1. *At all* is a classic weak NPI.
2. *De la journée* is a classic strong NPI.
3. *Du tout* is an ‘extra-strong’ NPI that can be licensed in fragment answers and contradiction statements.
4. *Pantoute* is an ‘extra-strong’ NPI that can be licensed in a fragment answers, contradiction statements, and certain other situations in which there are salient alternatives.

| LICENSOR | AT ALL | DE LA JOURNÉE | PANTOUTE | DU TOUT |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------------|----------|---------|
| <i>pas/not</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <i>p(l)us/no more</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <i>rien/nothing</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <i>sans/without</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <i>personne/no one</i> | ✓ | ✓ | × | × |
| <i>aucun étudiant/no student</i> | ✓ | ✓ | × | × |
| <i>jamais/never</i> | ✓ | ✓ | × | × |
| <i>nullepart/nowhere</i> | ✓ | ✓ | × | × |
| Other downward entailing expressions | ✓ | × | × | × |
| Fragment answers/contradictions | × | × | ✓ | ✓ |
| Disjunctive/scalar alternatives | × | × | ✓ | × |

Table 2: The licensing patterns of *at all*, *de la journée*, *pantoute*, and *du tout*.

4.1 Towards an analysis of Table 2

The analysis of Table 2 is a work in progress...

- We can identify a series of (difficult) puzzles:
 1. How to account for the ‘extra-strong’ licensing pattern when *pantoute/du tout* appears in the scope of a negative operator?
 - What makes *personne* different from *rien*? (maybe mass/count?)
 2. How to account for the uses of *pantoute/du tout* outside of negative contexts?

- What makes *partout/du tout* different from *de la journée*? (if *partout* is an NPI, why can it be licensed in fragment answers without overt negation (unlike *de la journée*)?)
 - What makes *partout/du tout* different from *personne*? (if *partout* is an N-word, why can't it be licensed outside the scope of negative operators?)
3. There seems to be some link between the licensing of *partout/du tout* and free choice/alternatives. What is it, exactly?
 4. How to account for the space of cross-linguistic/dialectal variation?
 - What makes English *at all* different from *partout*? (why is there such a thing as NPI 'strength'?)
 - What makes *partout* different from *du tout*? (European and North American dialects have different means of making alternatives salient?)
 - There are other similar elements that may display further microvariation (ex. *en tout* in Acadian French; *en absoluto* in Spanish...)
 5. **Related:** How to give a compositional semantics for sentences containing these elements that predicts under what conditions they will be licensed?
 - How can the differences between elements be derived from differences in their the morpho-semantic composition?

References

- Burnett, H. and Tremblay, M. (2012). And extra-strong NPI? *partout* in Québec French. In Graf, T., Paperno, D., Szabolsci, A., and Tellings, J., editors, *Theories of everything: in honor of Ed Keenan*, pages 1–8. UCLA Working papers in linguistics 17.
- Corblin, F., Déprez, V., de Swart, H., and Tovenà, L. (2004). Negative concord. In *Handbook of French Semantics*, pages 417–452. CSLI Publications.
- Corblin, F. and Tovenà, L. (2003). L'expression de la négation dans les langues romanes. In Godard, D., editor, *Les langues romanes : problèmes de la phrase simple*, pages 279–242. CNRS éditions.
- Giannikidou, A. (2006). N-words and negative concord. In Everaert, M., editor, *Blackwell companion to syntax*, pages 327–391. Blackwell.
- Martineau, F. and Déprez, V. (2004). Pas aucun/pas rien en français classique: variation dialectale et historique. *Langue française*, 143:33–47.
- Vinet, M.-T. (1998). Contrastive focus, French n-words and variation. *Revue canadienne de linguistique*, 43:121–141.
- Zwarts, F. (1998). Three types of polarity. In Hamm, F. and Hinrichs, E., editors, *Plurality and quantification*, pages 177–238. Kluwer, Dordrecht.