Pediatric Surgery
Any and no

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In the Portuguese language, there have been many doubts regarding the use of *any* instead of *no* in sentences such as: There is not *any* doubt. We do not have *any* worries regarding complications. These questions arise due to the fact that it is usual in the spoken language the use of "double negatives" to express negation. However, it is usual, in medical language, to use *any* meaning *no*, which gives it legitimacy according to the norms broadly disseminated by good linguists. Although this equivalence is very often adopted, some language professionals question its use, which might be appropriate to know about.

One of the reasons is the change in the main sense of *any*, which essentially and traditionally indicates in Portuguese positivity, existence. *Any* indicates "*any one*", or "whatever", being unspecific regarding what it refers to, according to the Dictionary of the Portuguese Language by F. Silveira Bueno[4].

In this context, one can observe the dictionary consignations as the *first* sense of *any*. Aurélio[6]: designates indeterminate thing, place or individual. Houaiss[7]: designates indeterminate person, object, place or time, being equivalent to one, a; some. Contemporary Dictionary of the Portuguese Language, *Academia das Ciências de Lisboa*[1]: the entire element of a group of persons or things, undifferentiated and undeterminably, thus being paraphrased by "it does not matter which", "this or that". Unesp Dictionary[3]: used to refer undeterminably to person or thing, when it does not matter which one. Aulete Dictionary[2]: serves to indicate an indeterminate individual, place or object and it is equivalent to one or another, this or that.

Due to reasons of clarity, but without inflexibilities or prejudices, in formal scientific or academic language, one can use, whenever possible, each word according to its grammatical class, that is, a substantive as a substantive, an adjective as an adjective, a pronoun as a pronoun, a verb as a verb and other cases, except if there is no other option.

With the same objective of clarity in mind, and also, without radicalisms, it is important to seek the use of each word in its *main* or *own* meaning, in general, disclosed in good dictionaries as the first meaning, thus avoiding figurative applications and, by extension, unnecessary slangs, regionalisms, fads, neologisms and foreign words, especially when they can cause unclearness and questionings.

In fact, the use of *any* meaning *no* in Portuguese can cause ambiguity by creating a deviation from the essential meaning of *any one*. That can produce a writing imperfection, from the point of view of academic language, according to other grammarians, as taught by Cegalla[5]: *"Ambiguity. Defect of the sentence that presents more than one meaning, more than one interpretation"*. In Portuguese, there would be a dubious meaning in *"I do not want any medication"*, for instance, which can be interpreted in a free translation to English as *"I do not want just any medication"*. We can add: "The *one* I want is *that one* the doctor prescribed." But, if one says "I do not want *no* medication", the negation becomes clear (this construction is grammatically wrong in English, but widely used in spoken Portuguese). No complementation or other interpretations can be made regarding its sense, without dubiousness. In order not to question or affect clarity, one shall not, as preferential use, choose such semantic deviation in formal, academic, scientific, normative or legal texts.

Some studies must be added about this use. Strictly speaking, there is a contrast of meaning between *any* and *no*. *No* has essentially a negative sense, means nothing in absolute: *There is no doubt about the subject. He took the medication with no objection. The postoperative period had no severe complications. Medicine shall be practiced with no discrimination, that is, no discrimination of any nature. There are no patients in the outpatient clinic. Any* means everything, anything or anyone. The proposition in mathematics that two negations result in an affirmative and, therefore, that *no...none* in Portuguese is equivalent to all, does not subsist to the elementary logic, considering that mathematics and language are different types of knowledge, as mathematics is an exact science, based on objective calculations and language, even the normative grammar, is devoid from these principles and is based on human conventions and subjectivity.

Mathematics has formulas of which meanings are the same everywhere. Language has formulas with very wide-ranging meanings. In fact, no one would think, for instance, that "I do not want no medication" means "I want all medication".

Considering all the exposed points, in propositions such as "The patient does not have *any* spleen lesion symptom", There won't be *any* complication", There is not *any* problem", the pronoun any can be adequately substituted by *no* or *some* (in Portuguese). Suggestions: "… does not have no symptoms", "There will not be no complications", "There isn't no problem".

Good linguists affirm, and rightly so, that all forms that exist in language are the patrimony of the language. In this context, it is legitimate to use *any* in a negative sense in the Portuguese language, and one cannot mention this use as being erroneous or even inadequate. However, in formal, scientific, technical and academic language, it is *preferable*, but not exclusive, to use normative grammar rules by their discipline, organization and structure, created and recommended by serious and dedicated linguists through the centuries.

Moreover, considering the existing criticism coming from language professionals and that *no* is essentially not a synonym of *any* (they even have opposite meanings), it would be best to avoid systematically or as the first choice the second to the detriment of the first.

It is common sense to avoid questionable forms, especially in the language professional setting, and choose non-questionable or less questionable constructions.

This can be possible in almost all cases.

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