

Exploring Affordable Care Practs in Nigeria's Health Insurance Discourse

Authors : Emmanuel Chinaguh, Kehinde Adeosun

Abstract : Nigerians die untimely, with 55.75 years of life expectancy, which is 17.45 below the world average of 73.2 (Worldometer, 2020). This is due, among other factors, to the country's limited access to high-quality healthcare. To increase access to good and affordable healthcare services, the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) Bill 2022 - which repealed the National Health Insurance Scheme Act 2004 - was passed into law. Applying Jacob Mey's (2001) pragmatics act (pract) theory, this study explores how NHIA seeks to actualise these healthcare goals by characterising the general situational prototype or pragmemes and pragmatic acts in institutional communications. Data was sourced from the NHIA operational guidelines, which has 147 pages and four sections, and shared posters on NHIA Nigeria Twitter Handle with 14,200 followers. Digital humanities tools, like AntConc and Voyant, were engaged in the data analysis for text encoding and data visualisation. This study identifies these discourse tokens in the data: advertisement and programmes, standards and accreditation, records and information, and offences and penalties. Advertisement and programmes pract facilitating, propagating, prospecting, advising and informing; standards and accreditation, and records and information pract stating, informing and instructing; and offences and penalties pract stating and sanctioning. These practs combined to advance the goals of affordable care and universal accessibility to quality healthcare services. The pragmatic acts were marked by these pragmatic tools: shared situational knowledge (SSK), relevance (REL), reference (REF) and inference (INF). This paper adds to the understanding of health insurance discourse in Nigeria as a mediated social practice that promotes the health of Nigerians.

Keywords : affordable care, NHIA, Nigeria's health insurance discourse, pragmatic acts.

Conference Title : ICCLP 2023 : International Conference on Corpus Linguistics and Pragmatics

Conference Location : Montreal, Canada

Conference Dates : August 03-04, 2023