

**RLMSEE-2020**  
**The Russian Language in Modern Scientific and Educational Environment**  
**CORONAVIRUS AND US: METALINGUISTIC PORTRAIT OF**  
**COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

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**Abstract**

The multidimensional nature of the language response to the global situation of the coronavirus pandemic is considered on the basis of the language reflection which highlights the pain points of the current state of affairs. The aim of the research is to describe and systematize the indicators of metalinguistic reflection that diagnose the state of anxiety in society. The analysis undertaken is based on the corpus material. The source of the material sample is the Integrum corpus (Integrum.ru). The semantic dominants of the coronavirus era are considered, lexical units *pandemic*, *crisis*, *coronavirus*, *covid*, *quarantine*, *self-isolation*, etc. The quantitative increase in the use of these units in 2020 compared to the previous 2019 is presented. It is concluded that an additional aura is inherent in the array of reflexive statements about “coronavirus” words, which conveys an attitude towards these words in the range of anxiety and danger. The metaoperator *scary word* is the most frequent evaluative unit. The dynamics of the evaluative attitude to the studied lexical units is shown: the speaker tries to free the word from negative increments; the process of axiological reorientation of the word is carried out; an attempt to provide a contextual increment of a positive character is made. The unit of the current lexicon of the coronavirus period, the lexeme *lockdown* / *self-isolation*, which is called the main word of 2020, is considered separately. The dynamics of mastering the actual word is traced according to the data of metalinguistic reflection.

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## 1. Introduction

The global situation in 2020, associated with the unfolding of the coronavirus pandemic, has changed the way of thinking of society, formed a new attitude to familiar things and painted the world in anxious colors. Against this background, the importance of the social factor in linguistic processes increases. Language, reflecting extralinguistic reality, responds to social requests with the appearance of lexical innovations (Kulikova, 2020), new means of expression (Petrenko et al., 2020) and the activation of a military metaphor (Dankov & Krekhtunova, 2020). In the language of the coronavirus time, «word-centrism inherent in Russian linguoculture is clearly manifested: creative operations with the word are activated» (Kupina, 2020, p. 34).

The multifaceted nature of the linguistic response to the instability of the situation is also manifested in the explication of linguistic reflection, which highlights the pain points of the current state of affairs and serves as an indicator of socio-psychological processes taking place in modern Russia.

Research interest in the study of everyday metalinguistic consciousness has been noted for a long time. The problem of traditional pre-scientific knowledge of the language was discussed in the work by Hoenigswald, which was discussed at a conference at the University of California, UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles, USA) in 1964. The area of interest discussed has been named “folk-linguistics” (Hoenigswald, 1966).

In modern science, ordinary consciousness becomes the object of special scientific analysis. Scientists agree that «sometimes inexperienced native speakers amaze with the accuracy of their metalinguistic comments so much that “spontaneous linguistics” is extremely close to “scientific linguistics”» (Bulygina & Shmelev, 2000, p. 14). In the research of linguists, the sociolinguistic view of ordinary consciousness prevails. So, Kartsevsky, describing the language of the revolutionary era in 1917, associated the activity of meta-statements with a «socio-political shift», «new facts of life», which determined «an exclusively emotional attitude towards them on the part of a newly differentiated society» (Kartsevsky, 2000, p. 217).

In Russian linguistics, ordinary ideas about language are primarily the subject of dialectological research (Rostova, 2000). In parallel with the research of dialectal material, linguists turn to the ordinary consciousness of an ordinary person - a “naive linguist” (Norman, 1994, p. 5), both within the framework of Russian (Kottsova, 2015) and cross-cultural metacommunication (Rassokha, 2016). A separate field is the work devoted to the individual metalinguistic consciousness (Chernyak, 2019; Shumarina, 2011), the journalists’ ordinary consciousness (Vepreva, 2005), politicians’ (Sheigal, 2000), users of Internet communities (Basalaeva & Shpilman, 2019; Bogachanova, 2020; Zilberman & Mishankina, 2017) and other social groups.

## 2. Problem Statement

The relevance of the undertaken research is due to the need for a comprehensive study of the socio-psychological climate during a pandemic as a time, the signs of which are a catastrophic type of thinking. Collective fears, being an actual reaction to what is happening in the world, are the subject of research in the works of scientists of different directions: anxiety is measured parametrically (Petzold et

al., 2000), through sociological surveys (Gallagher & Wetherell, 2020; Fedenok & Burkova, 2020), considered from the point of view of psychologists and psychiatrists (Johnstone, 2020; Vatansever et al., 2020).

Metalinguistic fixation of the tonality of the coronavirus discourse makes it possible to supplement the idea of the general socio-psychological background of time. Metalinguistic markers that respond to the coronavirus reality constitute a naturally emerging diagnostic linguistic database.

### 3. Research Questions

In our analysis, we will try to answer three questions:

- What is the estimated attitude of a native speaker to the current words of the coronavirus era?
- How is a multidirectional attitude to one and the same word formed and what ways does the reflexive rethinking of the word take?
- What is the metalinguistic portrait of the current word of the coronavirus era *self-isolation* like?

### 4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the research is to describe and systematize the indicators of metalinguistic reflection that diagnose the state of anxiety in society. The focus of our research attention is primarily on the semantic dominants of the coronavirus era, although the manifestation of linguistic reflection can be associated with any word. The metalinguistic activity of the speaking person moves in a continuous and various spectrum of modal evaluations. One of the typical signs of such reflexive statements is the heightened personal attitude of the speaker. A native speaker gives an evaluative characteristic to a word that is relevant to modern speech, and often through the characteristic of the reality that the word calls. The systematization of repetitive, typical assessments and judgments about the word provides a basis for describing the metalinguistic portrait of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### 5. Research Methods

The analysis undertaken is based on the corpus material. At present several powerful corpus resources can be used to study the modern Russian language. The largest corpus of the Russian language is the National Corpus of the Russian Language, on which scientists from the Vinogradov's Institute of the Russian Language of RAS are working. The corpus includes texts created in the period from the 19th century to the present, is open for free access on the website [www.ruscorpora.ru](http://www.ruscorpora.ru) and has a rich mark-up system.

In our research, the source of the material sample is the Integrum database (Integrum.ru), which is a giant electronic corpus of the modern Russian language (more than 300 million documents). The basic sub-corpus of Integrum, which we relied on in the empirical sample, includes over 3,5 thousand sources of federal and regional Russian-language media. In relation to the newest period of the existence of the Russian language (after 1990), the Integrum corpus can be considered as the most complete of those existing today.

The main advantage of the given corpus is the unique opportunity to study the linguistic dynamics of the current moment: to track the first fixation of a new word or a new meaning, the termination of the use of one or another word, the metalinguistic reaction to actual or new words from the first entry into the Russian language to their mass distribution, metalinguistic shifts in perception of linguistic units. Statistical analysis of any word using Integrum tools makes reasoning about its frequency reliable.

In the present research there used the methodology of corpus linguistics (quantitative and qualitative analyses). The corpus approach to identifying indicators of metalinguistic reflection will allow analyzing modern mass media, reflection and coverage of the selected unit for any period interesting for the researcher.

## 6. Findings

### 6.1. The speaker's evaluative attitude to current words in the coronavirus era

The semantic dominants of the coronavirus era are the basic lexical units that have replenished our current lexicon: *pandemic, crisis, coronavirus, covid, quarantine, lockdown*, etc.

Let us quantify the increase in the use of these units in 2020 compared to the previous 2019.

**Table 1.** Increase in the use of coronavirus lexicon units

Lexeme	2019 (quantity)	2020 (quantity)
<i>pandemic</i>	397	164,148
<i>coronavirus</i>	121	231,868
<i>covid</i>	0	120,143
<i>quarantine</i>	4,270	90,317
<i>lockdown / self-isolation</i>	140	86,941
<i>crisis</i>	3,1342	50,452

The data presented in Table 1 clearly show a sharp rise in the frequency of units of the coronavirus lexicon which confirms the status of these units as semantic dominants of the current moment.

Stylistically neutral high-frequency actual lexis in speech receives a subjective-modal increment to the objective meaning of the word. The entire array of reflexive statements about “coronavirus” words has an additional aura that conveys an attitude towards these words in the range of anxiety and danger. The most frequent evaluative unit is the metaoperator *scary word*. Other evaluative units are also included in the synonymous series of anxiety lexis: *a creepy, frightening, prickly, formidable, ominous, cold word*. Meta-comments of various types become markers of pejorative pragmatic information:

*True, the WHO did not utter that scary word “pandemic” for too long, although not only in China there was already an extreme situation, but the virus penetrated into many countries (Moskovsky Komsomolets; 03.20.2020);*

*It seems that so much water has already flowed under the bridge and so many changes have occurred since the scary word “coronavirus” burst into our lives (Vperyod (Perm region); 04.06.2020);*

Now, when the **terrible word “coronavirus”** has entered the life of the Russians, many are interested in how the pandemic began in Europe (Taganrogskaya Pravda; 04.03.2020).

And now, when the whole world shudders from the **scary word “COVID-19”** (Skopinsky Bulletin (Ryazan Region); 10.16.2020);

The Kubans, frightened by the **scary word “quarantine”**, rushed to the shops to buy groceries, despite the need to keep their distance and avoid crowded places (Moskovsky Komsomolets; 04.01.2020);

**The frightening word “quarantine”** appeared with the first confirmed cases of coronavirus infection (Vecherniy Novosibirsk; 06.16.2020);

**The prickly and cold word “quarantine”** tightly sealed the doors of the institution (October (Kaluga region); 05.14.2020);

Approximately from all corners there heard this **creepy word “lockdown / self-isolation”**, frightening with uncertainty (Nyazepetrovskie Vesti (Chelyabinsk Region); 06.26.2020);

**The anxious word “crisis”** sounds in all languages (Veteran; 10.28.2020).

A negative attitude develops towards other words of the medical lexicon:

I am already **convulsing at the words of masks, an antiseptic, gloves, a thermometer, gauze** (Komsomolskaya Pravda; 04.24.2020).

In addition to anxious signs of linguistic reflection, the coronavirus context demonstrates an ironic and critical attitude towards a number of new units that reduce the complexity of current events:

*Something is somehow jarring from the phrase “social distance” ... Me and Abramovich, me and Gref, me and Sechin – this is the social distance* (Vechernyaya Kazan; 05.07.2020);

*The phrase “Social distance” is clear to us without decoding. But if you think about it - it gives off speech redundancy. After all, one can simply say “keep your distance.” But “social” did not appear in vain. “Social” emphasizes that this distance is unnatural, send out from above, which the government requires for our safety* (Komsomolskaya Pravda; 05.21.2020).

As the use of actual words increases, the speaker tries to remove the emotional evaluation of anxiety, to free the word from negative increments. A multidirectional attitude towards the same word begins to form. Reflexive rethinking is in several ways:

1) there is a tendency towards a neutral-non-judgmental use of lexemes through the "rehabilitation" of “coronavirus” words:

*Do not be afraid of the word “pandemic”: it is just a term meaning that an infectious agent has gone beyond the borders of one country* (Vecherny Rostov; 03.24.2020);

2) the hold back technique is used; speakers exclude disturbing units from their lexicon or replaces them with euphemistic ones:

*Our family was so tired of it that the spouse came up with the idea to impose a taboo on the word “**covid**” (Republic of Tatarstan; 10.12.2020);*

*The Russian authorities and state media are trying their best to avoid the word “**crisis**”, replacing it with a more neutral one – “*turbulence*” (Delovoy Ezhenedelnik Profil; 16.03.2020);*

3) the process of axiological reorientation of the word is carried out. An attempt is made to construct a contextual increment of a positive character by referring to the internal form of a word based on other languages:

*The Chinese word for “**crisis**” is denoted by hieroglyphs for “**danger**” and “**opportunity**”. There are a lot of opportunities in quarantine: at least to study English, or knit, or carpentry (Moskovsky Komsomolets; 05.06.2020);*

*One of the translations of the word “**crisis**” from the ancient Greek is “**solution**” (Delovoy INteres (Perm); 09.17.2020).*

Critical moments in the life of society are usually characterized by an increase in the creative potential of native speakers, reflected by the carnivalization of the language (M. Bakhtin). Carnivalization is an important cultural phenomenon that marks the borderline situation. Pushing the boundaries of what is permissible, linguistic emancipation leads to ridicule of the dangerous reality with its strict regulation, with serious consequences of the disease. Laughter therapy is one way to overcome anxiety. One of the implementations of this therapy is a language play (Kharchenko, 2016). The current lexicon of the coronavirus era has been enriched with occasional units that ironically and laughably evaluate the troubling time.

For example, during the pandemic, the beloved English calque *covidiot*, which has an international character, has appeared. The period of panic buying food before the quarantine was accompanied by the words *buckwheat-hype*, *macaronovirus* and the phrase *cart of the Apocalypse*. The diminished occasional unit *vzhoperti* (cf. Russian *vzaperti*) phonetically refers to the common word lockdown and, at the same time, ironically evaluates the difficult period of lockdown. Obsessive thoughts during the pandemic are defined as *coronoia*. *Quarantikuli* (quarantine + kanikuli (vocation)) were used to designate the original regime of non-working days, which the government decided to soften with the euphemistic unit of *kanikuli*. The enumerated series of occasionalisms could be continued but the task of our research is another aspect of observations, namely, the study of the metalinguistic reaction of a native speaker to such units. The speaker's reflexive activity evaluates the facts of the language play during a pandemic as one of the ways to adapt to a psychologically difficult period in society:

*The word “**covidlo**” – some citizens imagine the COVID-19 epidemic as a bloodthirsty monster devouring people. But, as for me, “**covidlo**” rhymes with **jam** (Russian – *povidlo*), and it is not so scary (Komsomolskaya Pravda; 05.19.2020);*

One of the funny words that the lockdown regime brought into our life was the word “**naruzha**” (outside) – thanks to the cartoon about Masyanya in quarantine, filmed to the topic of the day (Rossiyskaya Gazeta; 05.01.2020);

Let's rejoice together with the **picturesque word “maskobesie”** (mask + madness), which cannot be left aside (Belgorodskie Izvestia; 03.31.2020);

The Internet brought the people the word “**vzoperti**”, and here many understood exactly how their quarantine was going on (Komsomolskaya Pravda; 05.19.2020).

## **6.2. Dynamics of mastering the actual word of coronavirus time according to the data of metalinguistic reflection**

Metalinguistic utterances allow recording the characteristics of the temporal parameters of a lexical unit, shifts in its evaluative interpretation. Reflexives can present the development of language as the life of a word. “The world of words associated with human consciousness and the objective world is represented by linguistic self-awareness as an independent world in which there is its own linguistic time, relative to which lexical units count their term” (Vepreva, 2005, p. 130).

We will trace certain stages of the life of a word in a language using the material of metalinguistic statements that characterize one of the units of the current lexicon of the coronavirus period, the lexeme *lockdown / self-isolation*.

The choice of this unit is not accidental. The given word is chosen by the State Institute of the Russian Language named after A.S. Pushkin as the main word of 2020 in terms of the frequency of use of the word compared to previous years (scientific supervisor of the project “Word of the Year” is Mikhail Osadchiy). Cf.: use rates of the word *lockdown / self-isolation* in 2019 and 2020 (according to Integrum): from 140 uses in 2019 to 87,036 in 2020.

The lexeme *lockdown* is recognized as the English word of the year close in semantics to the Russian word of 2020. The choice was made by experts from the authoritative Collins Dictionary. In connection with the Covid-19 pandemic, the use of a relatively rare term in the English-language media and the Internet has increased from four thousand in 2019 to a quarter of a million in 2020:

*To the previous explanation of the word “lockdown” (“the imposition of severe restrictions on movement, social contacts and access to public places”) Collins added a new one: “a restrictive measure imposed by governments to limit the spread of COVID-19” (Ezhednevnie Novosti Vladivostoka; 11.11.2020).*

Let's consider the metalinguistic portrait of the word *lockdown / self-isolation*.

Before analyzing the material, it is necessary to dwell on the difficulties of writing this paragraph of the article in English. The fact is that the accuracy of the presentation of the material requires the transfer of the lexeme *self-isolation* by the English word *lockdown*. But in this case, the equivalent does not correspond to the current state of affairs. Lexeme *lockdown* is new in Russian. Integrum over the past thirty years (from 1991 to 2019) has recorded only two contexts with this unit:

*The starting point for the US investigation was the December 2012 massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut. A crazy youth shot twenty small children and six adults there. After that, the security regime in American schools was once again tightened. According to the Associated Press, a new term has entered the school lexicon – “**lockdown**”, i.e., blocking educational institutions in case of emergency. Previously, it was used mainly in prisons (Rossiyskaya Gazeta; 05.02.2014);*

*Difficulties arise only when a **lockdown** is announced in the prison and prisoners are not allowed leaving their cells (Izvestia; 03.06.2019).*

In the coronavirus period, along with *self-isolation* and *quarantine* lexemes, the English equivalent of *lockdown* appears in the media, the first use of which was recorded in Integrum in March 2020 in relation to restrictive measures on coronavirus in other countries, for example:

***Lockdown Week in London** (Novaya Gazeta; 04.01.2020);*

*This is an Italian **lockdown** scenario, Donets noted (RBK; 03.19.2020).*

Later, journalists introduce a brief explanation of the new term:

*In this regard, the staff is on **lockdown (quarantine)** (Gatchina-INFO; 04.09.2020);*

*And on the night on 26-27 March, a **lockdown (quarantine)** was announced in South Africa - the entire country was completely blocked (Krasnodarskie Izvestia; 04.23.2020)*

*A two-month **lockdown**, as they say in America (**job restrictions**) will deal a serious blow to small businesses (AiF; 03.24.2020);*

*For the first time in its history, mankind has faced unprecedented anti-epidemic measures - a total **lockdown** (mass closure of institutions, industries, cancellation of events, **quarantine** and **self-isolation**) (AiF; 05.06.2020).*

Judging by the above contexts, the Russian linguistic consciousness identifies the lexeme *lockdown*, most likely, with the word *quarantine*, compulsory restrictive measures than with the word *self-isolation*, which means voluntary isolation, more often of an individual nature:

*For example, if a person arrives in the country on the same flight as a passenger with a confirmed coronavirus, then he / she receives a recommendation to switch to **self-isolation** mode for 14 days (AiF; 03.24.2020);*

*S. Sobyenin noted, “The closure of schools does not mean additional vacations but voluntary **self-isolation** at home.” (AiF; 03.18.2020).*

Despite the fact that in a number of later contexts of this year (October, November 2020) the words *lockdown* and *self-isolation* can be synonymous and replace each other, a survey of the Russians has shown that *lockdown* is a word that has not yet been mastered in the Russian language, and its meaning remains not fully understandable:



*In the survey conducted by head-hunters' service, citizens were asked to choose synonyms for the popular term "lockdown". Every fifth respondent used the word "isolation", and 15% of those surveyed recalled "quarantine". Every tenth noted that he could pick up a synonym only from profanity. In addition, 7% of Russians used the term "restriction", 5% – "self-isolation", 4% – "blocking", 25% – "ban" and "house arrest". And 3% of the respondents answered that there were no analogues to the English-language "lockdown" in the Russian language (Moskovsky Komsomolets; 11.23.2020).*

Let's summarize our reasoning about the difficulties of choosing an exact match for the Russian lexeme *self-isolation*. We have decided to focus on a compromise version: in metalinguistic statements we give the English unit *lockdown* and indicate the Russian equivalent of *self-isolation* through a slash, which in Russian partially diverged in meaning with both the word *quarantine* and the word *lockdown*.

Thus, the word *lockdown / self-isolation* is perceived by native speakers, first of all, as new, outlining the time frame of the current moment:

*The word "lockdown / self-isolation" has appeared (AiF; 05.06.2020);*

*Then the coronavirus was not yet raging, and we did not know the word "lockdown / self-isolation" (Ryazanskie vedomosti; 05.08.2020);*

*The new word "lockdown / self-isolation" appeared due to the spread of coronavirus infection, entered our life (Orsk Chronicle; 07.04.2020).*

Reflection on the actual word fixes a negative attitude towards everything that began to restrict the freedom of human life, violated the usual framework of social life:

*Just a couple of weeks ago, life was in full swing here, young people crowded at the entrance to the "Gallery", demonstratively disdaining the new word "lockdown / self-isolation" (Krasnodarskie Izvestia; 04.14.2020);*

*At the very beginning, we did not fully understand the scale of the disaster, and the very word "lockdown / self-isolation" seemed outrageous, as well as the obligatory wearing of medical masks, gloves, keeping a distance in retail outlets and public transport, working remotely (Maykop novosti; 09.08.2020 );*

*To begin with, I am stressed by the very word "lockdown / self-isolation" (Youth of Buryatia (Ulan-Ude); 04.08.2020);*

*How do you like the word "lockdown / self-isolation"? Sounds strange, right? (Narodnaya Gazeta (Ulyanovsk); 08.26.2020);*

*And now it turned out that quarantines according to medieval rules in combination with the sugary word "lockdown/self-isolation" brought the urban economy of modern civilization to the freezing point (Delovoy Petersburg; 03.27.2020);*

*But the word "lockdown / self-isolation" is completely new. Until recently, it seemed that only someone in power decides when and for how long it is necessary to lockdown criminals or patients with*

*an infectious disease from other people, and lockdown oneself is like putting oneself in prison or executing oneself, so that “I am on lockdown” can only be said as a joke (Kommersant; 04.21.2020).*

The origin of the word was attributed to officials, which reinforced the negative evaluation of the actual unit:

*The Russian **bureaucracy has invented a new word “lockdown / self-isolation”** (Sovetskaya Rossia; 07.28.2020).*

A word, having entered a period of active functioning in the language, is defined as fashionable. Interest in the word is growing, examples of its use in the past are being looked for:

*It can be called the **buzzword “lockdown / self-isolation”** (Komsomolskaya Pravda; 07.24.2020).*

*After the word “perestroika”, **the word “lockdown / self-isolation”** has become **the most popular in Russia** (Belgorodskie Izvestia; 03.31.2020);*

It has become clear that the degree of novelty of the lexeme *lockdown* is relative. It has turned out that one of the first uses of the word is associated with a letter from Alexander Blok to Andrei Bely on 5 April, 1909: *The depth and richness of a personality presupposes the depth and richness of its connections with the world, with other people; severing these ties, **lockdown / self-isolation** devastates it.*

The period of active functioning of the word coincides with its semantic assimilation:

*At the same time, the very definition of the **word “lockdown / self-isolation”** implies voluntariness based on civic conscience and responsibility, as well as non-obligation based on the recommendatory nature of the action (Za rulyom; 04.02.2020).*

At the same time, the legal ambivalence of the semantics of the word is realized: on the one hand, lockdown is a voluntary restriction of freedom of movement, on the other hand, non-compliance with the lockdown regime is punishable by fines. This multidirectional value of the unit is reflected in the reflexive activity of a native speaker:

*The published rules of the lockdown regime in the Rostov region raised many questions. The main thing caused bewilderment is the **word “lockdown / self-isolation”**: there is no such legal term (Krestyanin (Rostov-on-Don); 04.08.2020).*

A change in attitude to the current situation, the formation of a sober approach to coronavirus time leads to a reversal of the connotative semantics of the word:

Today the word **“lockdown / self-isolation”** has taken on a positive tinge. Now who isolate themselves they help the society, and do not devastate the depth of their personality (Belgorodskie Izvestia; 03.31.2020);

On the other hand, we see how **the word “lockdown / self-isolation”** is rapidly losing its negative connotation. Just a couple of weeks ago, it reminded North Korea, the Juche ideas and other unpleasant things, and now it has been accepted into a decent society. All news reports, for example, say that “Gref is on lockdown.” The phrase “I decided to lockdown myself for a couple of days” still hurts the ear a little but does not cause fear for the mental state of the person who utters it (Delovoy Petersburg; 03.23.2020);

– Yana Olegovna, don't you feel a sense of discomfort when you hear **the word “lockdown / self-isolation”**? – Personally, **I like everything. I have always dreamed of living like this:** not to leave the house without special need (Novaya Sibir (Novosibirsk); 06.05.2020).

The final awareness of the state of affairs, adaptation to the complex coronavirus reality are refracted through the language, lead to an understanding of the importance of the actualized unit, its rootedness in the language, the formation of a positive connotation:

Today, when a deadly attack is nearby, in the power of which we do not know how long we will survive, when there is no active and reliable antidote, we are thrown either a lifebuoy, or a call, or a recipe, or maybe **all together in one word – “lockdown / self-isolation”** (St. Petersburgskie Vedomosti; 05.13.2020).

## 7. Conclusion

To sum up our observations we can say the following. A vivid sign of modern speech existence, proceeding against the background of the coronavirus pandemic, is the heightened reflection of speakers, which manifests itself in the free expression of their evaluative position in the form of a metalinguistic utterance. The metalinguistic material has special unique properties: it allows documenting the emotional state of society during the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, demonstrates a changing attitude towards the current situation, shows the stages of active adaptation to changing living conditions. Analysis of the speaker's metalinguistic activity in the coronavirus era allows describing a section of real linguistic existence, bringing together vectors of multidirectional linguistic manifestations of response to what is happening against the background of the catastrophic consciousness of the citizens of Russia.

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