

**RUSSIAN MEDIA DURING THE FIRST WAVE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC:  
DIGITAL AND LINGUISTIC MARKETING DYNAMICS OF THE CORONAVIRUS  
AGENDA**

***A MÍDIA RUSSA DURANTE A PRIMEIRA ONDA DA PANDEMIA DO COVID-19: A  
DINÂMICA DO MARKETING DIGITAL E LINGUÍSTICO DA AGENDA DO  
CORONAVÍRUS***

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DINÁMICA DE MARKETING DIGITAL Y LINGÜÍSTICO DE LA AGENDA DEL  
CORONAVIRUS***

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**ABSTRACT:** The article examines changes in the Russian media system during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic: the dynamics of the coronavirus agenda, traffic, monetization features. The analysis of media content allowed us to determine the leading topics in the disclosure of the coronavirus agenda within three periods corresponding to the key moments in the development of the situation with COVID-19 in the world and in Russia during the first wave of the virus: the first mentions of the new virus, news from China, Italy and other countries where the sick appeared; a sharp increase in the number of news items directly related to coronavirus infection; along with medical topics, the problems of getting out of self-isolation. The article also describes the changes that have occurred in the editorial policy of the media: technologies for preparing journalistic texts, linguistic marketing.

**KEYWORDS:** Mass media. Agenda. Linguistic marketing. COVID-19. Pandemic.

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**RESUMO:** O artigo examina as mudanças no sistema de mídia russo durante a primeira onda da pandemia de COVID-19: a dinâmica da agenda do coronavírus, tráfego, recursos de monetização. A análise do conteúdo da mídia nos permitiu determinar os principais tópicos na divulgação da agenda do coronavírus em três períodos correspondentes aos momentos-chave no desenvolvimento da situação do COVID-19 no mundo e na Rússia durante a primeira onda do vírus : as primeiras menções ao novo vírus, notícias da China, Itália e outros países onde os doentes apareceram; um aumento acentuado no número de notícias diretamente relacionadas à infecção por coronavírus; junto com temas médicos, os problemas de sair do autoisolamento. O artigo também descreve as mudanças ocorridas na política editorial da mídia: tecnologias para elaboração de textos jornalísticos, marketing linguístico.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Mídia de massa. Agenda. Marketing linguístico. COVID-19. Pandemia.

**RESUMEN:** El artículo examina los cambios en el sistema de medios ruso durante la primera ola de la pandemia de COVID-19: la dinámica de la agenda del coronavirus, el tráfico, las características de monetización. El análisis del contenido de los medios permitió determinar los temas principales en la divulgación de la agenda del coronavirus en tres periodos correspondientes a los momentos clave en el desarrollo de la situación con el COVID-19 en el mundo y en Rusia durante la primera ola del virus. : las primeras menciones del nuevo virus, noticias de China, Italia y otros países donde aparecieron los enfermos; un fuerte aumento en el número de noticias directamente relacionadas con la infección por coronavirus; junto con temas médicos, los problemas de salir del autoaislamiento. El artículo también describe los cambios que se han producido en la política editorial de los medios: tecnologías para la elaboración de textos periodísticos, marketing lingüístico.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Medios de comunicación. Agenda. Marketing lingüístico. COVID-19. Pandemia.

## Introduction

### Relevance

The new viral disease COVID-19 has caused an unprecedented surge in press coverage. This topic has become a priority in the editorial policy of almost all media and has had a serious impact on the work of editorial teams. There have been major changes in the technologies for preparing journalistic texts, in working with sources of information and audience, in linguistic marketing provision of the content, as well as in making management decisions. Serious and dynamic transformations have also taken place in the media agenda: many topics that occupied top positions on the eve of the pandemic faded into the background, and topics related to the coronavirus and the changes caused by it in all spheres of life came to the fore in the ratings.

Analysis of the dynamics of the information agenda in the Russian media during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic is relevant for two reasons: 1) humanitarian reason — to understand how Russian society lived in the first months of the encounter with a fundamentally new problem, 2) professional journalistic reason — to assess, to what extent the Russian media gave an adequate answer to this problem.

## **Literature Analysis**

Media agenda formation is one of the key topics in modern Communication Studies. It is well-known that the founders of the theory of "agenda" are McCombs and Shaw (MCCOMBS; SHAW, 1972; MCCOMBS; STROUD, 2014). This concept has become firmly established in Russian scientific discourse due to the works of D'yakova and Trakhtenberg (1999, 2002, 2019). The works of Dzyaloshinskij and Dzyaloshinskaya (2017), Zassoursky (2001), Kazakov (2013, 2014), Kazun (2016, 2018), Kuznetsov (2005), Prokhorov (2004), Sukhoterin and Yudintsev (2007), and others.

The researches examine three types of agenda: political, media, and public. The latter, in its turn, is subdivided into personal and interpersonal. Along with the term "media agenda" ("медийная повестка дня" in Russian) synonyms "information agenda" ("информационная повестка" in Russian) and "mediagenda" («медиаповестка» in Russian) are used in the studies. A. A. Kazakov, analyzing the term definitions of "media agenda" expressed by the above authors, offers the following generalizing definition: media agenda is a range of subjects or topics that are of priority importance for the media in a certain period of time. And by 'public agenda' he understands "a range of subjects or topics that are of priority importance for society in a certain period of time" (KAZAKOV, 2014, p. 47).

It should be noted that Western Communication Studies use two concepts to denote agenda-related processes: agenda building (media agenda formation) and agenda setting (public agenda formation) (KAZAKOV, 2013, p. 56).

It has always been important for editorial teams to determine what is interesting for their target audience, how to form the agenda to meet the needs of the audience. In other words, combining the media and public agendas, which was considered the highest achievement of editorial policy, contributed to an increase in traffic and advertising.

Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that the media agenda (or information agenda) is formed by the efforts of many media outlets, this is a collective work. And editorial

offices have to make a lot of effort to determine the range of topics and plots that will be in the audience's demand.

The media agenda (or information agenda) has linguistic marketing support. Linguistic marketing is a kind of applied linguistics that studies linguistic and non-linguistic means used in the text to promote an idea or product to a specific addressee with the subsequent monetization of the results of this promotion in the digital market (BAKER, JONES, 1998; HALINA, 2014). The linguistic marketing approach to the media agenda helps to determine the level of monetization of the text offered to the audience to find out how high-quality, professional and demanded the content is in order for the consumer to want purchasing it.

**The empirical basis** of our research is the content of federal and regional Russian media for the period from January to July 2020 (the first wave of the pandemic), included in the Top 100 media according to Medialogia — the automatic media monitoring system and social networks.

**The subject** of the research is dynamics of the coronavirus agenda in the Russian media during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**The purpose** of the study is to identify the main stages of changes in the Russian media agenda during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and the key trends of each stage.

## Methodology

Due to the Medialogia system, we monitored publications for the keywords “coronavirus infection”, “COVID-19” and relevant ones (taking into account the linguistic environment without information noise). When analyzing publications, their tonality, the main / episodic role of keywords, and the influence of the media were taken into account. In the end result (top publications for each period), we took into account the qualitative indicator of Medialogia – Media Index (MI), calculated by the system according to the formula:

$$\text{MI} = \text{media influence} \times \text{positive} - \text{negative} \times \text{message visibility}$$

The influence of the media is automatically determined by Medialogia according to the number of this media citations in other ones, as well as by the social influence of the media (likes and reposts of this media publications in social networks). The category of positive-negative is influenced by the nature of the facts mentioned, the main or episodic role, direct speech, illustrations, headings. The visibility factor of the message is determined by the

strip position, the message size, the media circulation and the attendance. The Media Index scale ranges from -1000 to 1000 points.

When analyzing the reach and audience engagement into Telegram channel of Meduza news media, the Telegram Analytics service was used. It provides free statistics of any channel added to the service: the number of subscribers, the average reach of one post as well as all posts per day, and the dynamics of audience coverage.

The work also used data received from participants of the online media environment, organized by Interfax, on the topic "PR in crisis, or how to act if the news is against you today" and "State of the Media: Mass Media in a pandemic", and from participants of the International Media Bridge "Pandemic and Media", organized by AIRB-media («АИРИ-медиа» in Russian) and FOJO Media Institute (Sweden). Besides, studies by the public organization AIRB (Alliance of Independent Regional Publications, that is "АИРИ" in Russian) and by the editorial board of "Journalist" journal were used.

## **Hypothesis**

Changes in the domestic media system were considered within the boundaries of three periods corresponding to the key moments of the COVID-19 situation development in the world as well as in Russia during the first wave of the virus (December 31, 2019 - July 1, 2020):

- The first period — from December 31, 2019 (message from the authorities of the Chinese city of Wuhan about the spread of an unknown type of pneumonia) to March 11, 2020 (the official announcement of the pandemic by WHO [World Health Organization]): the first mentions of the new virus, news from China, Italy and other countries where sick people appeared;

- The second period — from March 11 to May 1, 2020 (weakening of self-isolation in connection with COVID-19 in a number of regions): a sharp increase in the number of news directly related to the coronavirus agenda;

- The third period — from May 1 to July 1, 2020 (the official opening of the holiday season): along with medical topics, the problems of getting out of self-isolation, issues of the economic and business crisis are becoming more and more important (referendum on amendments to the Constitution, holding the Victory Parade).

## Novelty

Since the object of this article is the latest transformations in the field of Russian mass media, its results are fundamentally new and are not reflected in the works of domestic and foreign researchers.

## Results

### Coronavirus on the Russian media agenda during the first period of the epidemic

The first period starts from December 31, 2019, when the Chinese authorities reported a new disease. It should be noted that in January the topic of coronavirus did not have a serious impact on the media agenda. The news releases contained information about what was happening in China, mainly statistics on the sick, recovered and deceased, as well as security measures taken by the Chinese authorities. The situation changed by the end of the month, when an order was issued on January 30 to close the Russian border with China in the Far East to prevent the spread of a new type of coronavirus that causes pneumonia.

In February, tensions increased due to the emergence of cases in Europe (Italy) and the United States, while a qualitative increase in attention to the coronavirus topic and a corresponding sharp increase in media traffic occurred in late February - early March 2020. Monitoring of TOP-100 Russian media for this period carried out with the use of the Medialogia (n.d.) system gave us only 12 publications where the topic of COVID-19 played a leading role. In the first positions there are the messages by BBC News Russian (bbc.com): "Coronavirus outbreak: schools are closed in Italy, paracetamol deficiency threatens the world" (March 4, 2020), "Coronavirus: Spanish flu lessons for those who are fighting the spread of COVID-19 today" (March 7, 2020), "How the coronavirus spreads across the planet: an updated map" (March 2, 2020), "WHO: we are in uncharted territory with the coronavirus" (March 2 2020), "Coronavirus: high alert in Moscow, St. Petersburg Economic Forum canceled" (March 5, 2020), as well as the St. Petersburg media "Fontanka": "Beglov: 'Coronavirus is not the last virus'" (February 25, 2020) and "Nearly \$ 139 billion have been lost by the world's richest people due to the coronavirus" (February 25, 2020). The most significant in terms of the number of messages in this period there were the topics of the failure of the OPEC deal to cut oil production and the fall in oil prices: "The OPEC deal to cut oil production fell through. Oil prices have collapsed" (BBC News Russian (bbc.com), Moscow, March 6, 2020), "Oil crisis: fuel prices, impact on the economy - broadcast" (IA

Regnum, Moscow, March 10, 2020), "The deal between Russia and OPEC to reduce oil production collapsed" (Dozhd TV channel (tvrain.ru), Moscow, March 6, 2020), - the materials indicate that the excess oil was formed due to the coronavirus economic consequences.

### **The state of the Russian Media During Self-Isolation and Remote Work**

The beginning of the second period can be considered March 11, 2020, when the WHO announced a pandemic. On March 16, Russia introduced distance learning in educational institutions, and on March 28 self-isolation was announced for all regions of Russia.

This period is characterized by increased audience demand for news: the number of users on Russian media sites is increasing dramatically. According to the Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Communications, in March 2020 the Internet traffic of leading Russian media increased by 65 million users. For comparison, for the entire 2019, the increase in this indicator amounted to 50 million users. Russian media got a new audience that had not previously consumed news.

According to Medialogia (n.d.), the traffic of the TASS news agency in March 2020 amounted to 88 million visits - before that the maximum was recorded in January 2020 — 46.8 million visits: messages on the topic of coronavirus gave half of the agency's views per month. Among the most widely read TASS materials were: "Another way of penetration of the coronavirus into the body has been discovered" (1.1 million), "Banks have been obliged to inform customers about the blocking of their funds and the reasons since March 28" (1 million), "Children and adolescents are least at risk of contracting coronavirus" (817 thousand), "The fine for citizens violating of quarantine will be up to 300 thousand rubles" (772 thousand). The peak traffic on the TASS website occurred on March 26, 2020 and amounted to 5.16 million. The number of users comparing with February increased by 76 percent (to 39.3 million), the number of sessions and views - by 91 percent (to 89.7 and 125 million).

TASS photos on the topic of coronavirus were downloaded more than 5,097 times in March: these statistics included only pictures of photographers and TASS correspondents, excluding the official information that the agency receives and distributes. A similar surge of interest was observed by the Federal News Agency only in 2018 in connection with the fire in shopping centre "Zimnyaya vishnya" in Kemerovo (2751 downloads) and during the

presidential elections (1809 downloads), but in March 2020 these figures increased by more than 2 times.

The increase in visits was also observed in other media. According to Ivan Makarov, the Deputy Head of the RBC editorial office of, in April the number of visitors to the RBC website increased by 7 million users (ONLINE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT, 2020).

The analysis of Telegram channels of the popular news media Medusa also allows us to visualize the jump in audience coverage and its information preferences. Since the creation of the main channel, MeduzaLive (n.d.), on April 6, 2016, the growth of its coverage has been systematic and has not had significant leaps, with the exception of the period from February 20, 2020 to March 20, 2020, with the beginning of the coronavirus wave in Europe and quarantine measures in Russia: the number of subscribers increased from 251.147 to 293.331 people, i.e., by more than 42 thousand people. From March 20 to April 20, 2020, the growth of subscribers slowed down and amounted about 15 thousand people (MEDUZALIVE, n.d.). During the same crisis period, the viewability of posts increased sharply: the peak in the number of views at the beginning of the year (January 15, 2020) was 2,978 thousand, the peak of views at the height of the coronavirus epidemic (March 25, 2020) was 4,234 thousand (MEDUZALIVE, n.d.).

Meduza Breaking (n.d.) is a news channel of the media, which differs with publishing braking news only. Throughout 2018 and early 2019 there was a decline in audience coverage from 10.4 thousand people in May 2018 to 9.3 thousand people in June 2019. However, since January 2020, the channel has again experienced an increase in the number of subscribers, which is expected to increase since the beginning of March 2020, which allowed the channel not only to return but also to surpass its previous reach (MEDUZAPRO, n.d.). At the same time, the analytics of views gives figures of a completely different order. So, the peak rate of views for 2019 (August 11) - 172,665 views. Peak of 2020 (April 4) - 322,785 views (MEDUZAPRO, n.d.): the leaders in views on this day were posts that 434 more people were found to have coronavirus in Moscow, and the number of cases exceeded three thousand people (116 thousand views), about a gas explosion in Orekhovo-Zuyevo (124 thousand views) and that "two more people with coronavirus died in Moscow. The total number of deaths in Russia is 45 people" (129 thousand views) (MEDUZAPRO, n.d.).

According to the Interfax media monitoring service SCAN, the most publications on the coronavirus topic were recorded on March 31 - 139,100, which amounted to 42% of all materials in the media. It should be noted that, according to the agency, the maximum value for the amount of news per day was recorded on March 27 – 364,444 news. In general, for the



period from March 1 to April 20, the average daily number of news in the Russian media was 265,718, with an average of 85,337 publications about the coronavirus, which is 32% of the total flow (VEBINAR..., 2020).

According to Medialogia, in general, for the period from 03/11/2020 to 05/01/2020, 375,621 messages were devoted to the COVID-19 topic in the TOP-100 Russian media at the federal and regional levels. The publications with the highest Medialogia media index included: “Strain time” (Izvestiya, Moscow, March 20, 2020: on the President's call to prepare for any development of events), “Andrey Ivaschenko: a medicine for COVID-19 may appear in Russia by May” (RIA Novosti, Moscow, April 9, 2020), “The media named the reasons for the different death rates from COVID-19 in Europe” (RIA Novosti, Moscow, April 14, 2020), “The Telemedicine Center provides psychological assistance to Muscovites suffering from coronavirus” (TASS, Moscow, April 9, 2020), “What will the world be like after coronavirus?” (TASS, Moscow, April 7, 2020), “ ‘Many do not know that they are infected’: a German woman, patient COVID-19, spoke about the disease” (RIA Novosti, Moscow, March 31, 2020), “Pharmacists' revelations about working in the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic” (RIA Novosti, Moscow, April 16, 2020), “Russia has created a medicine for the coronavirus treatment” (RIA Novosti, Moscow, March 28, 2020), “Petersburgers - about working as volunteers during the coronavirus: Call for tea after the epidemic!” (Komsomolskaya Pravda, Moscow, April 7, 2020).

The situation with the coronavirus pandemic has clearly demonstrated that the main task of journalism is, first of all, to provide the audience with relevant, timely, and useful information. The main topics are information about the virus and the peculiarities of its transmission, about methods of treating coronavirus infection and the availability of necessary medicines, about the development of drugs and vaccines, forecasts of the situation development, as well as summaries of the number of cases, recovered and deceased.

The media recorded a demand for high-quality, reliable, and scientific information. Experts – scientists and practitioners are increasingly invited to the studio in the programs “Voskresnyj vecher s Vladimirom Solov'evym” (“Sunday Evening with Vladimir Solovjov”) (Russia 1 TV channel), “Vremya pokazhet” (“Time will tell”) (Channel One), “Pravo golosa” (“The Right to Vote”), “Svoya Pravda” (“Its own Truth”) with Roman Babayan (TV Center, NTV). The format of online communication with experts is becoming popular in electronic versions of print media and online media. Thematic projects are also opening: on March 20, 2020 portal “Budushchee Rossii. Nacional'nye proekty” (OFFICIAL INFORMATION PORTAL, n.d.) launched a series of live broadcasts about the coronavirus. In the format of

online broadcasts, the main specialists of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation, representatives of the World Health Organization, doctors and other experts answered questions that worried people in the current situation. The streams have collected over seven million views.

This period is also characterized by a huge amount of false information and fake news. In order to combat fake information in Russia, the official website Стопкоронавирус.рф (“Stopcoronavirus.rf” in English) was created (STOPCORONAVIRUS.RF, 2020). The first publications on the site are dated March 28, 2020. Criminal liability was introduced for the dissemination of deliberately unreliable information under the guise of reliable information from April 1, 2020, before that there was only administrative liability. Criminal liability is established by articles 207.1 and 207.2 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation.

According to the results of the measures taken, official information began to prevail in the news: statistical data on cases by region, live broadcasts of government meetings, headquarters in the regions. Specialists become in-demand commentators in the media: virologists, epidemiologists, practitioners. Flash mobs #спасибоврачам (“thanks to doctors” in English) and #сидимдома (“staying at home” in English) are gaining popularity.

At the same time, sports news and mass events have completely disappeared from the agenda. Thus, the Match TV channel, which specializes in covering sports materials, began broadcasting matches of previous years and sports competitions from Belarus, where a self-isolation was not introduced, but matches were held in the absence of spectators, since people did not risk going to the stadium for security reasons. According to Mediascope, the ratings of the Match TV channel dropped by half in mid-March (MAMYAKO, 2020).

In April, information about the construction of hospitals in the regions and their provision with the necessary equipment, primarily ventilators (artificial lung ventilation), appears on the media agenda. The main news is the production of such devices and the shortage of medical masks. The focus of the public is on the protection of themselves, their loved ones and the safety of doctors, the agenda includes messages about additional payment to doctors and medical staff fighting against COVID-19.

During the third period, which began with the weakening of the self-isolation, the media focused on the country's exit from the period of self-isolation, the state of the economy and business. The issue of lifting restrictions and obtaining work permits is acute. In May, more attention was paid to the topic of education: the end of the school year, the final exams format and the USE (Unified State Exam). In June, political news returns to the domestic agenda: the Victory Parade on Krasnaya ploshchad' (the Red Square) in honor of the 75th

anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War, as well as a referendum on amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

As during the 2nd period, the focus is on official information about disease statistics, as well as topics related to the creation of a vaccine, the expectation of the second wave of the pandemic, the format of education in the new academic year.

For example, according to Medialogia 115165 media reports were devoted to the topic of coronavirus infection in the TOP 100 Russian media in June 2020. The top publications with the highest media index included: “Measures to combat the spread of coronavirus infection COVID-19 in Moscow” (RIA Novosti, Moscow, June 16 and 23, 2020), “Everyone to the front” (Izvestiya, Moscow, June 22, 2020: information about doctors fighting coronavirus infection in the “red zone”), “ ‘We coped with wounds and we are coping here’: how COVID-19 is treated in the DPR” (RIA Novosti, Moscow, June 15, 2020), “The bitterness of the coronavirus: what Russian brewers expect” (RIA Novosti, Moscow, June 13, 2020: coronavirus has significantly affected the Russian beer market), “France allowed a reduction in champagne sales due to COVID-19” (RIA Novosti, Moscow, June 27, 2020), “Scientists fear an increase in the incidence of COVID-19 after protests in the United States” (RIA Novosti, Moscow, June 12, 2020).

This period is characterized by the appearance of publications criticizing the actions of the authorities. Among them, there is insufficient justification on the part of the government for the introduction of such harsh measures in the fight against a new disease as self-isolation as well as the need for state support to the most affected sectors of the economy. During this period, there are materials criticizing the regional authorities, in particular Sobyenin, the mayor of Moscow, in connection with the problems of obtaining a QR code to move around the city.

In June 2020, media interest in the topic of tourism increased significantly. The issues of recreation in the summer period; obtaining work permits by enterprises of the tourism industry; recommendations for rest abroad have become relevant.

## **Discussion**

According to representatives of the media industry, media traffic on all channels increased record-breaking during the first wave of the coronavirus epidemic, a new audience that had not read the news before came to online media: the audience of 24-35 years old especially women became more active (ONLINE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT, 2020).

However, the growth of traffic did not lead to an automatic increase in profits: the number of ads remained the same. A lot of media needed to learn how to monetize the increased traffic – for example, to earn money by promoting their content on social networks (ONLINE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT, 2020).

Throughout the first wave of the epidemic, the media were searching for new formats that would conquer the audience. Short news (news-facts, not comments, became popular), infographics, videos were most in demand during this period, but long reads faded into the background. Also, the formats of text online broadcasts were revived and in demand. Of the new formats, events and podcasts were relevant.

Due to the growth of fake messages during the pandemic, the role of fact checking has increased (every information was carefully checked). Positive stories about people, their experience of fighting the coronavirus and overcoming the crisis during self-isolation have become in demand.

The period of self-isolation has become a test of strength for the media market. According to the estimates of the participants of the International Media Bridge “Pandemic and Media”, paper circulations on average fell by 16%. For example, the paper versions of Vedomosti and Izvestiya temporarily stopped publishing, Russkij reporter magazine was closed due to lack of funding – three monthly issues were published, and the last March issue was entirely devoted to the topic of coronavirus. At the same time, Vazhnye istorii (“Important Stories”), a joint brainchild of Russian investigative journalists, was launched in May (FILIPPOVA, 2020).

### **Linguistic marketing support of the Russian media agenda during the first wave of the COVID-19 epidemic**

From December 31, 2019 to July 1, 2020, six main linguistic marketing trends in the structuring of the agenda can be distinguished in the Russian media texts.

**The first trend** is the use of codified and unified medical terms and terminological combinations, which have gained particular importance during the COVID-19 epidemic.

*Epidemic* (from the Greek *epi* – on, *demos* – people) – “the occurrence of cases of illness, specific health related behavior, or other health related phenomenon with a frequency clearly exceeding the normally expected in a community or region. The region or community is identified, as well as the time period within cases of the disease occur” (JOHN, 2009, p. 256): “Genetic tests will become the third stage of testing for coronavirus [...]”. “It should be

understood that the result obtained is not only a groundwork for this epidemic that will end in one or two waves but also for the next one, because this is a universal approach,” – Durmanov emphasized, adding that this information about the immune resistance of Russians should be closed (ONLINE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT., 2020).

*Pandemic*– “an epidemic that spreads around the world or over a very large area, crossing borders between countries and usually affecting a large number of people” (JOHN, 2009, p. 160): “Bill Gates compared the coronavirus with the Spanish flu pandemic of the early 20th century”.

*Transmission of infection* – the spread of infectious agents. Any mechanism by which a pathogen spreads from a source or reservoir to a person (JOHN, 2009, p. 162). “Earlier, the Ministry of Health issued a detailed recommendation and a description of the coronavirus, which states that the main source of this infection is a sick person, including one who is in the incubation period of the disease. “*Transmission of infection* is carried out by airborne droplets, airborne dust, and contact routes. The leading way of transmission is airborne, which is taken place when coughing, sneezing, and talking at a close – less than two meters – distance”, – the message says”.

*Quarantine* – “restriction of the activity of healthy people or animals in contact with cases of an infectious disease during the period of its infectiousness (i.e. contact) in order to prevent transmission of the disease during the incubation period in the event that an infectious disease develops” (JOHN, 2009, p. 98). “Earlier it became known that *quarantine* would be introduced in Crimea from April 2, and a checkpoint would appear on the Crimean Bridge to check the health of those arriving on the peninsula”.

Herd immunity – “the immunity of a group of individuals or a community” JOHN, 2009, p. 79. “Herd immunity will lead to a reduction in the number of cases and a mitigation of symptoms [...]” (ONLINE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT, 2020).

**The second trend** is the introduction of uncodified and non-unified terms:

*Patient Zero* - “the first person in the world or in a certain country who contracted an infection” [Top 20 Coronavirus Terms Explained]: “When asked who became “*patient zero*” in Sabetta, Nechepurenko replied that the delivery was from Moscow, a contractor “Veslestroy”” (ONLINE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT, 2020).

*Social distancing* is “the tactic of limiting crowds of people. According to it they are recommended to stay at a distance of two meters from each other. This helps to avoid getting drops from the nose or mouth of an infected person on a healthy one. Social distancing includes the cancellation of education in kindergartens and schools, public events, the closure

of restaurants and other public institutions” (OB"YASNAYAEM 20 GLAVNYH TERMINOV PRO KORONAVIRUS, 2020) “Assessing the first three non-working days that were introduced by your decree, we believe that these *social distancing* measures should be extended”.

*PPE* – “personal protective equipment: masks, gloves, protective suits and other equipment that reduce the risk of contracting an infection. Doctors, nurses and hospital workers are faced with a shortage of protective equipment” (OB"YASNAYAEM 20 GLAVNYH TERMINOV PRO KORONAVIRUS, 2020): “It [the report] notes that in Russia the reform to “optimize” the health care system, coupled with low budget spending, has led to a reduction in hospitals and first-aid posts, medical staff and *personal protective equipment* (PPE), medicines” (ONLINE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT, 2020).

*Isolation* – “when infected people and people with suspected infection are separated from healthy people. This allows patients and carriers of the virus to recover without infecting anyone else. “Spring months [...]”.

**The third trend** is the production of new words using:

A) Making calques – Borrowing the structure of a foreign language element (word or phrase) with the replacement of its material embodiment by means of the native language:

‘коронавирус’ – *The lexeme is formed from the Latin word ‘coronaviridae’ and English – ‘coronavirus’ – severe acute respiratory infection caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus: “Relatives and friends of a Muscovite who has fallen ill with the COVID-19 coronavirus after arrival from Italy, have no symptoms of this disease” (INTERFAX. MARCH 2, 2020);*

‘локдаун’ – *The lexeme derived from the English word ‘lockdown’ – a mandatory order from the authorities that residents of a certain city, region or other part of the country remain in their homes in order to avoid the spread of infection: “The depth of the decline, according to Lagarde, will depend on the lockdowns duration in effect in the Eurozone states in order to limit the spread of coronavirus” (ONLINE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT, 2020);*

‘санитайзер’ – *The lexeme is derived from the English word ‘sanitizer’: “Most customers continue to wear masks and gloves in the store, and the handles of trolleys are treated with sanitizers”;*

‘карантин-шейминг’ – *The lexeme is formed from the English combination ‘quarantine shaming’ – the anger of the people around you, according to whom you incorrectly comply with the quarantine conditions: “The coronavirus pandemic makes people wary of each other — any cough and sneeze cause apprehensive glances and are able to*

instantly clear the space around a person. In addition, now for gatherings with friends during quarantine, you can incur the indignation of colleagues, acquaintances and relatives who will see you as a potential vector of the disease. *Gazeta.Ru* – about the fact how people around the world face ‘*quarantine-shaming*’.

B) universalization - Replacement of word combinations with colloquial neoplasms:

‘удалёнка (⇐ удалённая работа)’/‘*remote work, to work remotely*’ – work from home, to which many organizations have transferred employees due to the need to comply with quarantine: “How to manage knowledge in a corporation remotely”;

‘дистанционка, дистант (⇐ дистанционное обучение, образование)’ / ‘*distance learning, distance*’ – interaction of a teacher and a student at a distance using Internet technologies: “The small schools of Primorye, 103 in the region, have already begun to return to full-time studies, the rest remain on distance learning” (INTERFAX. APRIL 22, 2020); “After all, the key elements of business education are group work, communication of students, teachers and networking, working out tasks in the classroom and, most importantly, generating new knowledge and solutions. In the *distance*, this is not always feasible”;

‘коронарка (⇐ коронавирусная инфекция)’ / ‘*coronarka (⇐ coronavirus infection)*’ is the colloquial name of the disease: “Corona, *coronarka*, Covid is a coronavirus infection COVID-19 caused by a new type of coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. The name is associated with the structure of the virus, the thorny processes of which resemble the solar corona. It was first registered in the Chinese city of Wuhan at the end of 2019”.

C) Compounds – The formation of new words by adding two (or several) words, the bases of producing words with or without a connecting vowel with the truncation of one or two words:

‘инфодемия (информация + эпидемия)’ / ‘*infodemic (information + epidemic)*’ – An information epidemic, an increase in the flow of information about the epidemic, often false and exaggerated: “The problem is that, along with objective facts, fake and unconfirmed reports about the epidemic flooded the Network. The World Health Organization (WHO) started using the term ‘*infodemic*’ in February. This is how the texts that accompany the pandemic were called untrue”;

‘карантикулы (карантин + каникулы)’ / ‘*quarantikuly (quarantine + holidays)*’ – Non-working days due to quarantine measures: “A network of Yekaterinburg coffee shops has come up with a way to find money for the salaries of employees during the ‘*quarantikuly*’”;

‘ковидиот (ковид + идиот)’ / *covidiot* (covid + idiot), ‘ковигист (ковид + пофигист)’ / ‘covigist (covid + a prson who is anxiety-free)’, ‘ковидиссидент (ковид + диссидент)’ / ‘covidissident (covid + dissident)’, ‘ковидоскептик (ковид + скептик)’ / ‘covidosceptic (covid + skeptic)’ –A generalized name for those who do not adequately perceive the coronavirus pandemic:

“There are people who do not recognize the coronavirus and are not afraid “to put on the crown” or to become “crowned” (the carrier of the coronavirus) is a large group of covidissidents. We also have covidoskeptics, they are sure that everything is not so scary. They are also called covigists, and in some cases covidiotics, because everyone noticed that when we gather together for barbecues by companies, we also get sick afterwards” (BONDAREV, 2020).

‘маскобесие (маска + мракобесие)’ / ‘*mascurantism* (mask + obscurantism)’ – Unwillingness to use protective masks as a way to protect oneself from the virus: “In most Russian regions, the authorities have introduced a mask and glove mode when visiting public transport, shops, pharmacies and other crowded places [...]. Therefore, the new rules caused a huge wave of indignation, sarcasm and memes, and they came up with a name for masked obscurantism – *mascurantism*”;

‘коронавт (коронавирус + космонавт)’ / ‘*coronaut* (coronavirus + astronaut)’ – “the name of people in white protective suits, as well as those who walk the streets in masks and gloves” [How does the virus infect our language?]: “The head of the intensive care unit of the BSMU clinic, Evgeny Syrchin, undertook to keep a diary of the work of his team, for which he came up with the name “*coronauts*”. Almost like astronauts, whom doctors become like when they put on protective suits and masks and go on watch in “space”, fraught with danger in the form of coronavirus pathogens at every corner”;

‘корониалы (коронавирус + миллениалы)’ / ‘*coronials* (coronavirus + millennials)’ - 1) children who have already been born or will be born in the near future after the self-isolation period; 2) children and youth who help the older generation to learn distance learning technologies: “Doctors of St. Petersburg have come up with a name for the generation of children that will be conceived during quarantine due to the coronavirus pandemic. They called them *coronials*, by analogy with millennials, the generation born in 1980-2000”.

**The fourth trend** is the rethinking the meaning of the word ‘коронный’ / ‘corona (crown)’.



The third dictionary meaning of the word ‘коронный’ is “the one that the performer succeeds best of all, for example: ‘коронная роль (Eng.: the best part)’; ‘коронный номер (Eng.: a party trick)’” (KUZNETSOV, 1998) – it has a pronounced meliorative shade, which during the pandemic has been transformed as follows:

A) An emotionally influencing positive nuance: “*Corona fee*. Readers responded to the call to protect doctors. The Rusfond campaign continues for a week to provide the medical staff of the country's clinics with protective equipment. During the first three days, they managed to raise money for four hospitals in Kazan, Samara, Vladivostok and Rostov-on-Don”;

B) Ironically negative nuance: “‘*Corona elections*’: Croats did not expect the second wave of Covid-19. Croatia is being covered by the second wave of coronavirus infection, and the media are increasingly hearing ideas about the possible postponement of parliamentary elections from July 5 to a later date”;

C) Negative nuance: “*Corona trick*. Due to the coronavirus, theaters are being closed all over the world”.

**The fifth trend** is the transformation of precedent phenomena:

A) Transformation of precedent names:

*Quentin Quarantino* (↔ Quentin Tarantino): “Quentin Quarantino, or what films do Russians watch during the self-isolation period”;

*Las Kitchens* (↔ Las Vegas (city, USA);

*Los Balconies* (↔ Los Balcones, residential area, Spain);

*Santa Bedroom* (↔ any resort with the word “Santa” in its name: Santa Ponsa; Santa Susanna, Spain);

*Porto Bathroom* (↔ any resort with the word “Porto” in its name: Porto Cervo, Italy, Porto Carras, Greece): “Air carriers are looking forward to the opening of the summer season. Some of them have already started selling tickets to Anapa. About this today wrote “Zhivaya Kuban”. However, it is too early to say what will happen to the tourism sector due to the quarantine introduced in the Krasnodar Territory. [...] Russians have only one thing left in social networks – To joke. Summer 2020. Last minute deals! *Las Kitchens*, *Los Balconies*, *Santa Bedroom*, *Porto Bathroom* [...]”;

B) Transformation of precedent texts naming feature films:

*Quarantine Fiction* (↔ “*Pulp Fiction*”): “*Quarantine Fiction*”: a new theatrical online project has started in the Moscow region. Despite the pandemic, the Moscow Gubernsky Theater does not abandon its audience [...]. On March 27, on the International Theater Day, a

new online project “Quarantine Fiction” was launched on the MGT website. Within its framework, the audience will be presented with the bright theatricality of the tale “Turandot” by the Italian playwright Carlo Gozzi”;

*Burnt by the Coronavirus* (↔ “*Burnt by the Sun*”): “*Burnt by the Coronavirus*”: Kyrgyz citizens went on hunger strike at the Novosibirsk airport” (St. Petersburg.Ru. March 31, 2020);

*Evenings on a Farm Near Wuhanka* (↔ “*Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka*”);

*Ivan Vasilievich Loses His Profession* (↔ “*Ivan Vasilievich Changes His Profession*”);

*Lara Croft – Hospital Visitor* (↔ “*Lara Croft – Tomb Raider*”);

*I Am Not Walking Along Moscow* (↔ “*I Am Walking Along Moscow*”);

*The Taming of The Snotty* (↔ “*The Taming of The Shrew*”): “After a hearty lunch, you can revisit something from the classics [...]: “*Evenings on a Farm Near Wuhanka*”, “*Ivan Vasilievich Loses His Profession*”, [...] “*Lara Croft – Hospital Visitor*”, [...] “*I Am Not Walking Along Moscow*”, [...] “*The Taming of The Snotty*” (Strana Rosatom. April 24, 2020).

**The sixth trend** is low-frequency references to native advertising that builds “warm trusting relationships” (SULKHAEVA, 2020) with the audience during the first wave of the COVID-19 epidemic.

For example, on March 19, 2020, The Village (Russia) published an article “Is it possible to insure against coronavirus? Representatives of insurance companies answer”, which is devoted to such questions: which insurance companies pay insurance compensation in the case of a diagnosed case of COVID-19 disease and what are the features of tourist insurance.

On April 24, 2020, the publication “I gave birth to a child during the coronavirus pandemic” appeared in the publication “Burning Hut” (“Lifehacker” [Russia]), which implicitly traces the idea that the birth of a child is an important component of the life of society, and information is explicitly given about the working hours of antenatal clinics and maternity hospitals, the internal routine of the maternity hospital during an epidemic, as well as behavioral instructions for women whose relatives, being in self-isolation, cannot transfer the necessary things to the hospital.

Thus, during the first wave of the COVID-19 epidemic, six basic linguistic marketing trends were recorded in shaping the agenda of the Russian media.

## **Conclusion**

Currently, the topic of coronavirus remains at the top of the media agenda. However, if during the period of self-isolation every third news in the Russian media was devoted to the coronavirus, then by the end of the first wave of the pandemic, readers had already stopped looking for any news about the virus, and editorial offices began to select news feeds more carefully. The main conclusion reached in the editorial teams is that the audience expects reliable and useful information from them, the quality of which largely depends on the chosen linguistic marketing strategy.

During the pandemic, all media outlets noted an increase in traffic, but due to the fall in the advertising market, almost no one was able to use it for monetization. Today, editorial offices are faced with the task of retaining an audience, retaining traffic and monetizing it.

It should also be noted the popularity of the management decision to transfer a number of employees to remote work: the period of self-isolation has shown the effectiveness of this form of work. Many editorial offices say that not all employees will return to the office and are investing in the digitalization of editorial offices.

In the media sphere, they also note the fact that many speakers during the pandemic also mastered modern linguistic marketing techniques of successful communication and new technologies in order to communicate more effectively online. Therefore, such online communication formats as events and podcasts have become popular.

All of the above allows us to conclude that the period of self-isolation not only revealed the problems existing in the media industry but also showed opportunities for the further development of the media market.

Further research should be focused on monitoring and analyzing the changes taking place in the Russian media industry during the second and third waves of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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