

GEOPOLITICS AND POLITICAL STUDIES

Argumentative Speech Analysis of Zviad Gamsakhurdia's First Speech as the President of Georgia

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ABSTRACT

The article analyzes Zviad Gamsakhurdia's first speech following his victory in the presidential elections on May 26, 1991, which he delivered on June 7, 1991. Using political linguistic and corpus linguistic methods, particularly topos analysis, the speech was analyzed with the aim of gaining a deeper understanding of Gamsakhurdia's political language and argumentative strategies. The analysis of the vocabulary revealed that the most frequent lexemes and their collocations have a politically official and statesmanlike connotation. Notably, the frequent use of the modal particle *unda*, which expresses necessity, stands out. This, along with the topos analysis revealing a strong dominance of goal-oriented topoi, suggests that Gamsakhurdia's speech was a programmatic appeal for his presidency. He covers a wide variety of topics, outlining the goals of his political course while also emphasizing his legitimacy and authority as president. In this context, he refers to both the support of the people and Georgia's historical mission, as well as the protection of God.

Keywords: Corpus linguistics, political linguistics, speech analysis, Zviad Gamsakhurdia

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INTRODUCTION

The present paper focuses on Zviad Gamsakhurdia's first speech after his victory in the presidential election on May 26, 1991. The aim is to conduct an empirical analysis of the speech according to political-linguistic methodology to learn more about Gamsakhurdia's political language and to answer the following question:

What topics did Gamsakhurdia address in his first speech as Georgia's president, and what argumentative strategies did he use?

Analyzing this speech appears to be of particular relevance for research for two reasons: First, the initial appearances and speeches of presidents often have a programmatic and guiding character, making them especially significant for the subsequent legislative period; second, there is still a great need for research on Gamsakhurdia's language. In her empirical corpus analysis on Gamsakhurdia's hate speech against ethnic minorities in Abkhazia and Ossetia, Anastasia Kamarauli concludes "that there is a huge difference between what Gamsakhurdia uttered himself and what the scientific literature says about him [...] Gamsakhurdia did not systematically classify other ethnic groups or minorities as inferior and did not openly call for violence against them, at least not for the period for which the collected speeches are available." (Kamarauli, 2023, p. 164).

Zviad Gamsakhurdia, as the first president of the independent republic, is not only one of the most famous figures in modern Georgian politics but also one of the most controversially discussed. For a long time, he was active as a dissident, publicist, and writer, and with the founding of his electoral alliance "*Mrgvali magida – tavisupali sakartvelo*" (Georg. მრგვალი მაგიდა - თავისუფალი საქართველო), he became one of the most influential figures in the Georgian national movement (Suny, 1994, pp. 317–335).

In October 1990, his electoral alliance won the elections with 53.99%, making Gamsakhurdia one of the key political actors in Georgia's independence movement. In March 1991, he was elected president by the Supreme Soviet and played a leading role in the independence referendum on March 31, 1991, and the declaration of independence on April 9, 1991. Just weeks after Georgia's independence, the population was called to vote in the presidential election, in which Gamsakhurdia achieved a landslide victory with 86.5% of the votes (Iremadze, 2020, pp. 10–48). His speech on June 7, 1991, was his first official appearance after the election and marked his role as the first elected president of independent Georgia.

According to Suny, after winning the election with his political alliance, Gamsakhurdia used his power to pursue an exclusionary and authoritarian nationalism: he took control of the media, ordered the arrest of political opponents as well as leaders of ethnic minorities, and arranged for the appointment of his own prefects in the regions to consolidate his power. Even during the presidential election on May 26, Gamsakhurdia employed dishonest methods: smear campaigns, intimidation of opponents, and even physical violence (Suny, 1994, pp. 326–327). Not only does Suny describe Gamsakhurdia as increasingly dictatorial, but Jürgen Gerber also characterizes Gamsakhurdia's leadership style as totalitarian (Gerber, 1997, pp. 220–223). However, despite his authoritarian policies, Gamsakhurdia was unable to control

all parts of Georgia, and the divide with the opposition grew deeper until he was overthrown in a military coup from December 26, 1991, to January 2, 1992 (Suny, 1994, pp. 327–328).

The text of the speech, which serves as the basis for the analysis, originates from the newspaper *Sakartvelos respulika*¹, issue 114 (134) from 11. June 1991 (Sakartvelos respulika, 1991, p. 1). It is likely that the speech was edited, so it cannot be guaranteed that it fully reflects the spoken words. The analysis is based on the speech in this exact form.

METHODS

Political linguistics is a scientific discipline whose fundamental premise is that language is a central instrument of political action. Political actions are shaped through argumentation, where differing perspectives influence the representation of facts based on interests, reasoning supports one's position, and political opponents are attacked.

The question is not only about who the author of a political speech act is, but also, more importantly, how and in what way a specific target audience is addressed (Niehr, 2022, pp.1–9).

An important aspect is the pragmatic characterization of political speech acts. To examine these acts in more detail, methods such as the analysis of vocabulary, rhetorical devices, or argumentation strategies can be used. One approach to analyzing argumentation strategies is *topos* analysis, which is applied in this study.

The term *topos* (Anc. Greek τόπος, “place”; often used elliptically in the sense of κοινός τόπος, “commonplace”) not only has a conceptual history dating back to antiquity but also offers a broad scope for interpretation and holds particular significance for rhetorical analysis (Ostheeren, 2009, pp. 630–697). For this analysis, a specific definition of the term *topos*, specifically dealing with political argumentation, will be used, with Josef Klein's definition applied and outlined in the following section.

Argumentation is the central linguistic action in political rhetoric, where, at its core, there is always, even if implicitly, an open question being addressed, with arguments made for or against it, often preemptively. One specific form of argumentation is concessive construction, in which an argument from the opposing side is acknowledged as a concession while still maintaining one's own position in contrast. Within this framework, arguments can be categorized and grouped under the concept of *topos*. The following section will outline the *topoi* used in the analysis of the argumentation (Klein, 2019, 77, pp. 130–131):

- *Data topos*: Characteristic data of the starting situation are presented.
- *Valuation topos*: The data are evaluated.
- *Principle topos*: Reference to principles, norms, and values as the foundation of action.
- *Final topos*: Orientation of action towards the goal.
- *Consequence topos*: Reference to consequences.

¹ The daily newspaper was published from December 1990 as the journalistic organ of the Supreme Soviet (<http://www.nplg.gov.ge/paperge/ka/browse/000197/>)

- *Cause topos*: Specification of causes for the starting situation.
- *Exemplum topos*: Citing analogies and examples.
- *Authority topos*: Appeal to an authority, e.g., higher entities like “God.”

As a prototype for a complex topical combination in relation to speeches, Klein presents the pattern (Klein, 2019, p. 130):

[Data topos + Valuation topos + Principle topos + Final topos] -> Conclusion

This model of various argumentative topoi, in conjunction with a corpus-linguistic approach, is applied in the political-linguistic analysis.

DISCUSSION

The entire text of Gamsakhurdia’s speech consists of 2,532 words, with an average word count of 14.9 words per sentence. Initially, the text is divided into thematic segments, and their respective share of the total volume of the speech is illustrated to provide an overview of the structure and content of the speech. These segments are then summarized to gain a deeper insight into the content of the speech. Following this, the most frequent lexemes are extracted, their occurrence in the speech (according to the segments) is illustrated, and the collocations are briefly examined. This is followed by the core of the analysis, the topos analysis, where three segments have been selected to provide a representative overview of Gamsakhurdia’s argumentation structure.

The division into segments is done to outline the theme, though these are not meant to represent fixed boundaries. The segments do not claim objectivity or content coherence; rather, they serve as an orientation and structuring aid. Additionally, the proportions of the segments in the total text volume are visualized (Fig. 1).

- I. Addressing the recipients and expressing gratitude.
- II. Parliamentary elections on 28. October 1990, tasks of the new system, Georgia’s independence, and national rebirth.
- III. Georgia’s international integration, foreign affairs and Georgia’s role in the Caucasus.
- IV. Conflicts in Ačara, Abkhazia and South Ossetia.
- V. Rule of law and legislature.
- VI. Creation of a national defense.
- VII. Religion, the role of the Georgian Orthodox Church, and the relationship with the state.
- VIII. Development of the economy and transformation of the economic system.
- IX. Labor market and social security.
- X. Final appeal and closing.

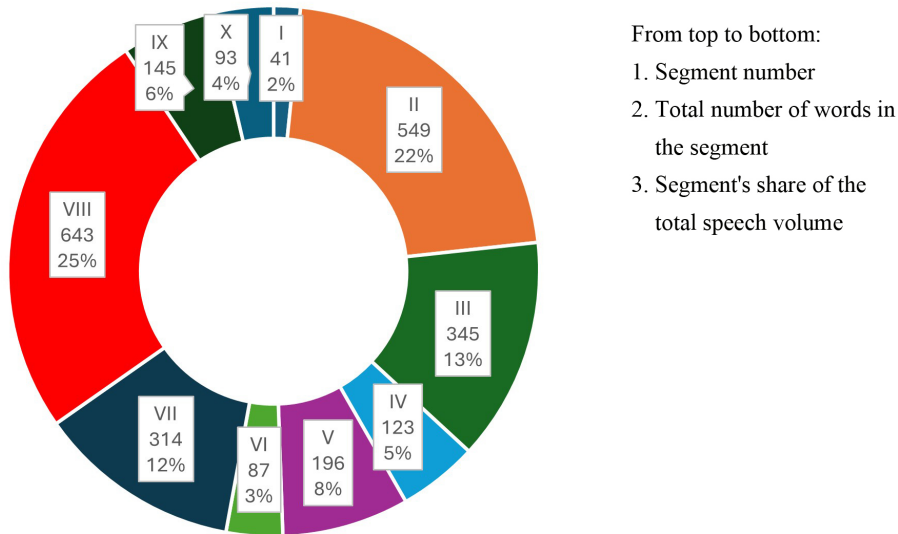


Figure 1. *The share of each segment in the text volume of Gamsakhurdia's speech from June 7, 1991*

A summary of the different segments of the speech is provided below:

- I. Gamsakhurdia addresses the recipients of the speech, making it clear that he is now speaking to them as the president of Georgia, elected by the people. Before continuing, he expresses his gratitude for the support during the election and announces that he will speak about the tense times ahead.
- II. He emphasizes the significance of the elections on October 28, stating that the path to freedom is challenging, both for the people and the elected government, especially when the initial euphoria fades. He underscores his legitimacy as president, which was previously confirmed by the parliament and now also by the Georgian people. Georgia stands at a historical crossroads, and he rejects worldly well-being in favor of the spiritual national rebirth. The elections, which were held under unprecedented anti-Georgian propaganda, not only demonstrated the population's support for the political course but also confirmed that the rights of all ethnicities are protected by internationally recognized rights. The national government established a democratic political system in the form of a presidential republic. The history of the Georgian nation, including the history of Georgian statehood, Georgian culture, and traditional values, is not only a part of the past but also a source of pride today. The Georgians are a nation that fights for freedom and democracy, a society that has revived its religious worldview and national consciousness – this is the present, the result of the struggle.
- III. The international recognition of the Republic of Georgia is a matter of international coexistence. He is confident that Georgia will find the support of democratic states. Georgia is building its relationships with the countries of the world based on the

principles of equality, respect, and mutual benefit. Georgia will join the most important agreements in all areas of peaceful coexistence among nations. The goal is also to normalize relations with the USSR, as they are of utmost importance to Georgia: on the one hand due to legal status, and on the other due to the shared border between the two states. International organizations should be involved in the further independence efforts in the rest of the USSR to ensure peace, economic stability, and democracy. He specifically mentions the Karabakh conflict and presents Georgia as a mediator, as the country has traditionally played a stabilizing role in the Caucasus when the political system has become consolidated.

- IV. He begins by calling for a resolution to the conflict in South Ossetia, emphasizing that Georgia's diplomatic recognition and its admission to the UN will help accelerate the negotiations. The state structure should enable self-governance while preserving national unity. A key foundation for this is the recognition of the political rights of the Abkhaz as an indigenous people of Georgia, alongside the revival of the traditional friendship between the two nations. The political autonomy of Abkhazia and the national rights of the Abkhaz people must be safeguarded. Finally, the future of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara should be determined by its own people.
- V. Gamsakhurdia demands that the formation of the nation-state and its system be based on the principles of the rule of law. The national legal system should be grounded in Georgian legal culture and tradition. He declares the rule of law and emphasizes the necessity of the rule of law and the adherence to the separation of powers.
- VI. It is necessary to establish a national defense system and consider the creation of a common European security system. The task of the armed forces is to protect national independence, territorial integrity, and constitutional order.
- VII. Gamsakhurdia emphasizes the importance of the Georgian Orthodox Church, particularly in the context of the state's existence in a hostile environment, and that the state should support the church in every possible way. The restoration of faith and the resulting moral revival are necessary for the revival of Georgia as a state. There is a close connection between the Georgian national movement and religious consciousness, so the movement can be described as a national-religious movement. The traditional connection between church and state must be restored, and the special function of the church must be recognized. While the church should be separate from the political system, this should not mean a separation of church and state. Church and state should not interfere in each other's affairs but enter a mutual relationship. He calls for the declaration of Orthodox Christianity as the state religion. The state must materially support the church, protect it, and restitute church property. However, the declaration of Orthodox Christianity as the state religion will not restrict the followers of other religions or atheists, as Georgia will remain true to its traditional tolerance.
- VIII. The imposed monopoly led to a disruption of the traditional Georgian economic system and the moral deformation of society. The current economic situation is extremely critical, which is why economic reforms must be carried out. The foundation

of these reforms should be rooted in national traditions and economic practices, with the state intervening in the economy only as necessary to serve the unified political and socio-economic interests of the country and foster entrepreneurial activity. The social market economy embodies the most important societal values: freedom, efficiency, and social independence. The goal is to achieve economic transformation with minimal disruption, ensuring that unemployment and inflation do not rise. It is urgent to address the land issue, as communist land policies led to the depopulation of rural areas, which is why he calls for land reform under the slogan “Return the land to the farmer.”¹

IX. Gamsakhurdia emphasizes the importance of ensuring employment for the population and providing a means of subsistence (especially for those who are unable to work for various reasons) and, in general, social protection.

X. In his concluding appeal, he emphasizes the uniqueness of the Georgian nation. Georgia’s path to independence can be compared to the martyrdom of Jesus Christ. The nation is on the path of returning to the way of the ancestors and appeals to revive a free Georgia with faith. The people are undoubtedly ready for the decisive struggle, and the government is committed to being worthy of this historical mission of Georgia. He ends his speech with the appeal: “May the will of God be fulfilled! The will of the nation! Long live free Georgia! May God protect us!”²

The segmentation of Gamsakhurdia’s speech and the superficial content analysis show that Gamsakhurdia not only consistently defines his view of things but, above all, that the speech is a diverse catalog of demands and objectives for the near or distant future.

In the frequency analysis of the lexemes of the text (i.e., excluding stop words or grammatical elements), the following result emerges (Fig. 2):

Lexeme	Number of occurrences
<i>sakartvelo</i> ‘Georgia’	49
<i>saxelmçipo</i> ‘state’	37
<i>erovnuli</i> ‘national’	33
<i>poliṭikuri</i> ‘political’	24
<i>sistēma</i> ‘system’	23
<i>eḱlesia</i> ‘church’	20
<i>xelisupleba</i> ‘(political) power’	19
<i>samartlebrivi</i> ‘judicial, legal’	17
<i>kartveli</i> ‘Georgian’	17
<i>eri</i> ‘nation’	16
<i>eḱonomikuri</i> ‘economic’	13

Figure 2. The ten most frequent lexemes and their occurrence

1 “*Miça unda daubrundeḱs glexs.*”

2 “*Dae, aḱsrulebdes neba ḡvtisa! Neba erisa! Gaumarḱos tavisupal sakartvelos! Gvparavdes ḡmert!*”

This shows that the most frequent words are related to the nation (*sakartvelo*, *erovnuli*, *kartveli*, *eri*), state power (*saxelmçipo*, *xelisupleba*), political terms (*poliṭiḱuri*, *sistēma*, *samartlebrivi*), church (*eklesia*), and economy (*ekonomiḱuri*). An overview of the distribution of the five most frequent words across segments presents the following result (Fig. 3)¹:

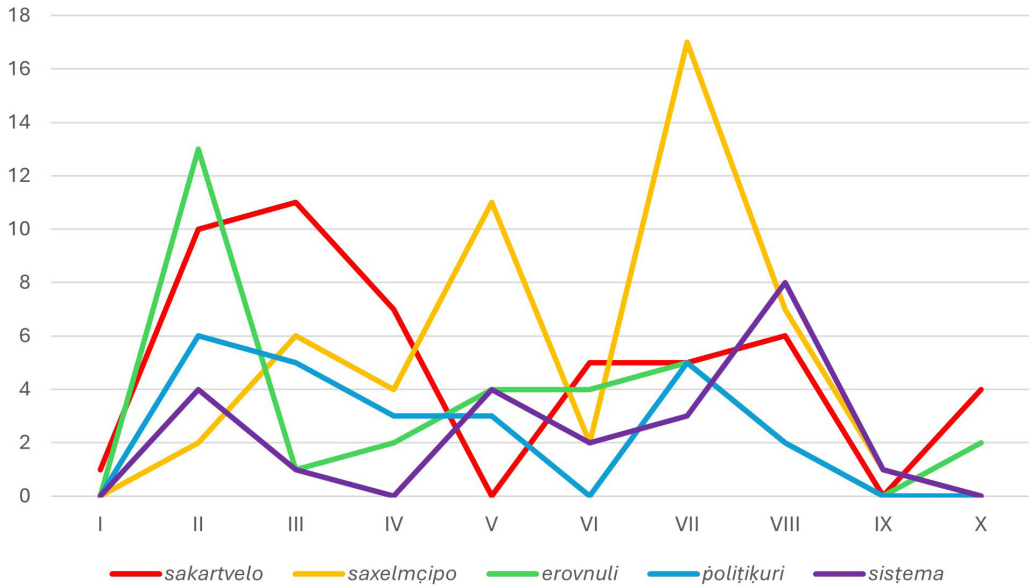


Figure 3. Illustration of the occurrence of the five most frequent lexemes according to the segments

This overview shows that the terms referring to Georgia as a nation, *sakartvelo* ‘Georgia’ and *erovnuli* ‘national’, appear particularly in the early segments of the speech. Furthermore, the term *saxelmçipo* ‘state’, which denotes state power, dominates, especially in relation to foreign policy and religious policy. The term *sistēma* ‘system’ appears particularly with regard to economic policy, and there is no significant rise in the use of *poliṭiḱuri* ‘political’.

The collocations related to the three most frequent words that appear more than once show a semantic proximity to similar political and state-related vocabulary and are summarized in the Table (1) below:

Word	Collocation and Frequency
<i>sakartvelo</i>	<i>respublikis</i> ‘republic’s’ (4), <i>ṣeiaragebuli</i> ‘armed’ (2), <i>saxelmçipos</i> ‘state’s’ (2), <i>saxelmçipoebrivi</i> ‘(adj.) state-’ (2), <i>respubliḱa</i> ‘republic’ (2), <i>damouḱideblobis</i> ‘independence’s’ (2), <i>da</i> ‘and’ (2)
<i>saxelmçipo</i>	<i>da</i> ‘and’ (4), <i>unda</i> ‘must’ (3), <i>ṣoris</i> ‘between’ (2), <i>mier</i> ‘by’ (2), <i>xelisuplebis</i> ‘power’s’ (2), <i>religiad</i> ‘as religion’ (2)
<i>erovnuli</i>	<i>xelisuplebis</i> ‘power’s’ (4), <i>xelisublebam</i> ‘power’ (3), <i>saxelmçipoebrivi</i> ‘(adj.) state-’ (3)

Table 1. Collocation of the three most frequent words

¹ It should be noted, however, that due to the varying lengths of the segments, this is not a ‘temporal’ snapshot.

The frequent use of the modal particle *unda* (36 occurrences) is also notable, which expresses necessity, according to the ratio to the volume of the text, especially in segment VII, in which he talks about religious topics (Fig. 4):

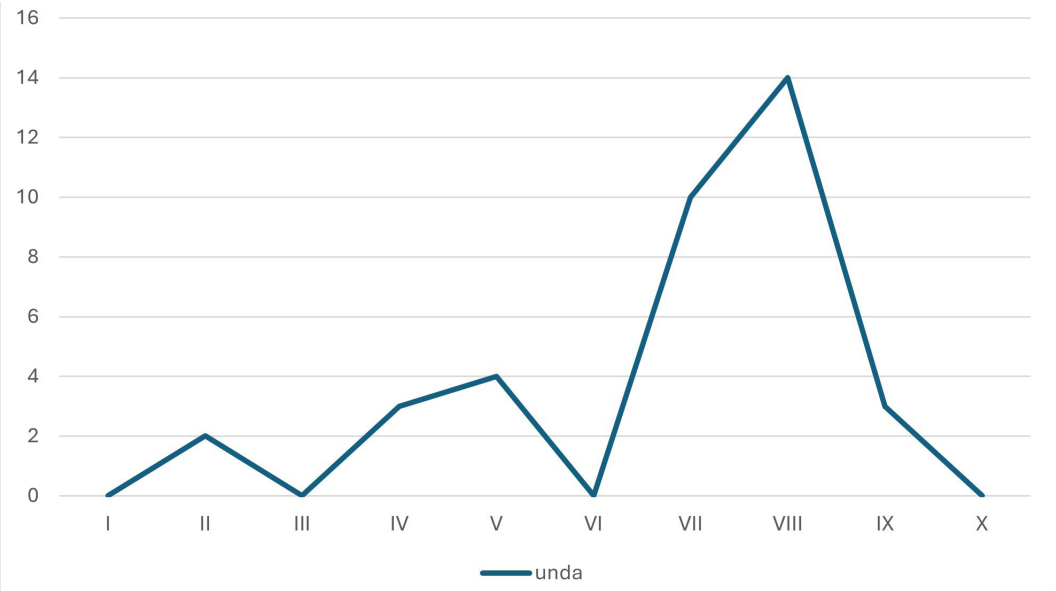


Figure 4. Occurrence of the particle *unda* after the segments

Towards the end of this segment (VII), there is a sequence of five sentences with *unda*:

Original text	Translation
<i>Saxelmçipos damoukideblobis aǵdgenastan ertad martmadidebloba saxelmçipo religiad unda ikces.</i>	“Along with the restoration of the state’s independence, Orthodoxy should become the state religion.”
<i>Am p̄nciṗebidan gamomdinare, kartulma saxelmçipom unda uzrunvelhq̄os eḳlesiis upleba iq̄os saero cxovrebi ak̄turi monaḳile.</i>	“Based on these principles, the Georgian state must ensure the right of the Church to be an active participant in secular life.”
<i>Saxelmçipom unda daicvas saeḳlesio koneba, xeli űeuḳq̄os eḳlesias ṽradiciul samonaṽstro mṽseneblobaṽi.</i>	“The state must protect church property, support the Church in traditional monastic construction.”
<i>Saxelmçipom unda izrunos, rata eḳlesiam miḳos saḳiro maṽerialuri daxmareba.</i>	“The state must ensure that the Church receives the necessary material assistance.”
<i>Saganmanatleblo sakmianobis, ṽazrebis mṽseneblobisa da űeḳetebisatvis unda aǵdges saeḳlesio saḳutreba miḳaze.</i>	“Church ownership of land must be restored for educational activities, construction, and repair of churches.”

Table 2. Five sentences from segment VII with translation

Together with *saxelmçipo* ‘state’ as a sentence-initial agent, a threefold anaphora is created that strongly emphasizes the demand for the declaration of the state religion and the support of the church.

The analysis of the speech also reveals that it contains a wide range of rhetorical devices. Gamsakhurdia’s use of language will be examined exemplarily in Segment VII, with the descriptions of the rhetorical figures based on Heinrich Plett’s introductory work on rhetorical text analysis (Plett, 2001, pp. 27-126):

Anaphora	<i>[...] kartulma saxelmçipom unda uzrunvelhqos [...]</i> <i>saxelmçipom unda daicvas [...]</i> <i>saxelmçipom unda izrunos, [...]</i>	“[...] the Georgian state must ensure [...] The state must protect [...] The state must ensure, [...]”
Through anaphora, the stated responsibilities of the state are clearly emphasized and conveyed to recipients.		

Anadiplosis + Antithesis	<i>Ekleisiis samocikulo moğvaçeobis sulieri buneba tavistavad gamoricxavs mis uşualo monaçileobas kveqnis poliṭiḱur siştemaşı, <u>magram</u> poliṭiḱuri siştemidan ekleisiis gamoqopa ar unda nişnavdes saxelmçiposa da ekleisiis urtiertgatişvas.</i>	“The spiritual nature of the church’s apostolic work itself excludes its direct participation in the political system of the country, <u>but</u> the separation of the church from the political system should not mean the separation of the state and the church.”
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The use of anadiplosis (*poliṭiḱuri siştema* ‘political system’) intensifies the contrast within the antithetical construction. In the first part of the sentence, Gamsakhurdia states that the church would not participate directly in the political system. However, introduced by *magram* ‘but’, the second part of the sentence states that the church should nevertheless participate in the state. While the first part presents a concession, the second part introduces an antithetical demand for connection.

Metaphorical Language	<i>Sulieri buneba; zneobrivi ağorżineba; cxoveli morçmuneoba</i>	“Spiritual nature; moral revival; living faith”
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Through metaphorical language, the terms are given stronger emotional weight, and the message appears more vivid and tangible to recipients.

Parallelism	<i>Ekleſia da saxelmçipo</i>	“The church and state”
This parallelism appears five times in the segment, highlighting the importance of the two concepts for Gamsakhurdia’s speech. By using parallelism, he rhetorically reinforces the connection between the two terms.		

Repetitio + Epistrophe	<i>Saxelmçipoebrivi aĝorzineba, misi damouķideblobis aĝdgena ver mo-xerxdeba kartveltatvis nišneuli cxoveli morçmuneobis aĝorzinebis gareše, zneobrivi aĝorzinebis gareše.</i>	“The revival of Georgia as a state, the restoration of its independence, will not be possible without the revival of the vital faith that is important to Georgians, without the moral revival. ”
Through the triple repetition of the term aĝorzineba (‘revival’), a clear emphasis and linkage of the concepts is established. The epistrophe strongly highlights the statement of the sentence: without a spiritual and moral revival, a national revival would not be possible.		

Rhetorical Appeals	<i>Appeals formed with the particle unda</i>	Rhetorical appeals are formulated by the multiple use of the particle <i>unda</i> ‘must’
Through the frequent use of rhetorical appeals, the speech’s appellative character becomes clear. In his address, Gamsakhurdia formulates goals and tasks, appeals to the recipients regarding politics, and clarifies his political intentions – often in connection with final topoi.		

As an example, the topos analysis will be presented for segments II, VII, and X to examine different large segments and topics (one chapter at the beginning, one from the middle, and the end).

II. Segment:

Data topos: Victory in the elections on October 28 and description of the time from then up until the moment of the speech.

Valuation topos: This is an excellent achievement for freedom.

Authority topos: Legitimization as the president elected by the Georgian people.

Consequence topos: This was necessary, as every totalitarian system is doomed to fail.

Principle topos: Breaking the chains of the empire is in the nature of the Georgian people and their historical mission.

Authority topos: Despite adverse circumstances, the elections proved the clear authority of the new government.

Cause / Authority topos: The reason for the victory lies in the support of the population for the new political course.

→ The confirmation of Gamsakhurdia as president by the people, despite adverse circumstances, and the support of the nation highlight his authority. This is also a necessity to avoid following the same false path as the former oppressor.

Cause topos: The confrontation between Georgia and the USSR led to a complicated political and socio-economic situation.

Data topos: The new government implemented radical political reforms in a very short time.

Final topos: The goal of these reforms was the restoration of an independent Georgian state.

Authority topos: The support of the people proves the correctness of his political course.

→ While the country is in a difficult situation, the government has implemented reforms (which is positively connoted) with the goal of restoring the state's independence. The correctness of this course is evidenced by public support.

Data topos: The foundation for the creation of independent security structures and the restoration of state independence has been laid.

Valuation topos: These are the greatest victories of the Georgian nation and government.

Final topos: Through the establishment of a multi-party system, the restructuring of the government, the introduction of local government institutions, and the creation of the presidency, the national government established a political system in the form of a presidential republic.

Data topos: The foundation for the creation of a Georgian defense system was laid.

Final topos: This led to the first swearing-in of soldiers of the National Guard on April 26, 1991.

→ The achievement of sovereignty, including in the area of security structures, has led to a complete transformation (clearly positively connoted) of the country.

Data topos: The restoration of independence has initiated a transitional phase.

Valuation topos: This is the prerequisite for reforms.

Authority topos: Reference to the history of the nation, the history of Georgian statehood, Georgian culture, and traditional values.

Principle topos: A nation fighting for freedom and democracy, a society that revives its religious worldview and national consciousness.

Conclusion: This is our present, the result of our struggle.

→ Based on the principles of freedom and democracy and invoking the history of the Georgian nation, one is in a phase of transformation, the goal of which is the restoration of state independence.

In principle, this is a recounting of the political events and an explanation of the “intentions”, primarily as proof of authority to validate the correctness of the course and the legitimacy of the national movement and Gamsakhurdia as president.

There are notably many concessive formulations, which serve as argumentative emphasis, e.g., “... **despite** the difficult political and socio-economic situation caused by this confrontation, the national government implemented radical domestic reform in an extremely short period of time.”¹

VII. Segment:

Data topos: Georgia is an Orthodox Christian country, where a traditional connection between church and state exists.

Valuation topos: Faith is essential for the existence of the Georgian state in a hostile environment.

Data topos: The state has always supported the church.

Final topos: The revival of the state requires the revival of faith.

Principle topos: This necessity is confirmed by both the past and the present.

→ This leads to the conclusion that the state, which has always supported the church and which, in turn, plays a state-building role, must support the church for the state’s revival.

Data topos: The national movement is closely linked with religious consciousness; it is a national-religious movement.

Final topos: Therefore, the movement is not only national-political, but also aims at a moral renewal based on Christian faith.

→ Gamsakhurdia thus closely links the national movement with the goal of renewing the Christian faith.

Final topos: The government is working on restoring the traditional unity between church and state.

Principle topos: The core of this unity is based not only on the social-political. determination of the government, but also primarily on Christian moral principles.

→ A fundamental demand for the restoration of the traditional unity between church and state is presented as a presumption, where he refers to Christian moral principles to support the argument. This general demand is then further specified through more specific requests.

Final topos: The state should recognize the supremacy of the religious-moral authority of the church and its special social function.

Data topos: The spiritual nature of the apostolic work of the church excludes its direct par-

1 “... *am konprontaciit gamocveuli mzime politikiuri da socialur-ekonomikiuri mdgomereobis miuxedavad, uağresad mokle vadaši erovnulma xelisuplebam ganaxorciela radikaluri saşinao reporma.*”

ticipation in the political system of the country.

Final topos: The separation of church and the political system should not mean a separation of church and state.

Final topos: One should not interfere with each other's affairs.

Final topos: No separation of church and state, but their natural connection.

Final topos: With the restoration of state independence, Orthodoxy should become the state religion.

Final topos: The state must guarantee the church the right to actively participate in secular life.

Final topos: The state must protect church property, assist in church construction, restore church property, and provide material support.

→ It is presented as information that the nature of the church excludes its participation in the political system. Immediately afterward, it is stated that this should not mean a separation, but rather a connection is requested. The central demand of the entire segment follows: the recognition of Orthodox Christianity as the state religion, which is argued through the emphasis on its nation-building role. Further demands follow, aiming to strengthen the position of the church.

Consequence topos: The recognition of Orthodoxy as the state religion does not imply an infringement on the integrity of adherents of other religions and atheists.

Final topos: The state guarantees freedom of belief and no restrictions for religious reasons.

Principle topos: Reference to the traditional religious tolerance of the Georgian state.

→ To ease concerns regarding the declaration of Orthodox Christianity as the state religion for followers of other religions or atheists, Gamsakhurdia assures that no negative consequences would arise, invoking the principle of traditional religious tolerance of the Georgian state.

In this segment, the importance of the Orthodox Church for the Georgian state and the national movement is strongly emphasized. The church is portrayed as a state-building and moral institution. This positive attribution logically leads to the conclusion that Orthodox Christianity should be declared the state religion, which is then further specified through detailed demands. Toward the end, it is assured that this would not have negative effects on other religious communities or atheists.

Noteworthy: Relatively few pieces of information are provided, and essentially no evaluation of these data is provided. Primarily, demands are made. This suggests that Gamsakhurdia did not see the necessity to convey a lot of information or evaluations to the audience, as the knowledge and positive connotation were presumed to be clear. What stands out most is the programmatic nature of the speech, in which he presents his intentions and demands regarding religious policy.

The topos analysis thus confirms what was already suspected regarding the use and fre-

quency of *unda*.

X. Segment

Initially, Gamsakhurdia employs a direct appeal to the audience.

Authority topos: Emphasis on the uniqueness of the Georgian nation. Land of the Virgin Mary.

Exemplum topos: Georgia's development is compared to the martyrdom of Christ.

Final topos: Return to the path of the ancestors and the revival of a free Georgia with faith.

Final topos: The nation is ready for the decisive battle.

Final topos: The government must be worthy of this greatest mission to restore Georgia's rightful place in the world community.

Closing appeal and also an authority topos: "*Dae, aḡsruldes neba ḡvtisa! neba erisa! gaumaržos tavisupal sakartvelos! gvparavdes ḡmerti!*" 'May the will of God be fulfilled! The will of the nation! Long live free Georgia! May God protect us!'

→ In the conclusion of his speech, Gamsakhurdia draws support for the mentioned political course from the nation, the people, and from God, with the central goal of his political actions being the revival of the nation.

CONCLUSION

The overview of the most frequent terms and their collocations shows that the vocabulary is strongly influenced by statesmanship, with the most frequent terms relating to the nation and the state. However, a clear distribution across thematic segments can be observed for some terms. Additionally, there is a noticeable combative tone in his language, as in his concluding appeal, where he speaks of a decisive battle, which is typical for political speech.

The overview of the segments reveals a broad range of topics and the programmatic character of Gamsakhurdia's speech, in which he presents the most relevant issues to him and the course for his presidency.

At the beginning of the speech, but also throughout, Gamsakhurdia emphasizes his authority and legitimacy as president of independent Georgia. He does this by referring to the referendum, which he considers a confirmation of his political course, as well as to Georgian history (which he even describes as the historical mission of the Georgian nation), and to God and the church. The argumentative significance of Christianity and faith is remarkable - this is in complete contrast to the previous rulers.

The exemplary analysis of rhetorical devices reveals the speech's rhetorical sophistication. It underscores both the significance Gamsakhurdia placed on this programmatic speech and his intellectual and rhetorical prowess.

In the topoi analysis, this is evident through the frequent use of principle and authority topoi. However, the most noticeable aspect is the use of final topoi, in which he outlines the goals of his political course to justify his actions and gain the support of his audience. In the sample, there are strikingly few data-topoi and almost no valuation-topoi. This can be explained by the fact that Gamsakhurdia could assume that the audience already had the necessary informational foundation, but more importantly, their judgment was already a presumption, and the main goal was to convincingly present his political course. Thus, the topos analysis, as well as the frequency of *unda*, imply the programmatic nature of this speech: In this first speech after the election, Gamsakhurdia outlined the political program he aimed for during his presidency.

At the same time, the emphasis on the principle, authority and final topoi highlights Gamsakhurdia's claims to power and authority, which he sought to legitimize through his election – something he even pursued by dishonest means. The observed topoi, the vocabulary, and the frequent use of *unda* also outline an authoritarian and nationalist agenda for his legislative term, which likewise characterizes his actual political conduct.

This proves that this speech plays an important role in analyzing Gamsakhurdia's political language as well as in examining his political practices, which should certainly be further explored in more in-depth studies of this and other speeches.

Ethics Approval and Conflict of Interest

This study was conducted in accordance with relevant ethical standards. The authors declare that there are no financial, personal, professional, or institutional conflicts of interest that could have influenced the design, conduct, interpretation, or publication of this work.

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Declaration of competing interest

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