Zviad Gamsakhurdia's Political Speeches Regarding Ethnic Minorities of Abkhazia and Ossetia

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Introduction

This study[1] deals with the question of how Zviad Gamsakhurdia, first president of the independent Republic of Georgia, spoke about the ethnic minorities against the background of the increasing territorial conflict after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The impetus for the study was the idea of empirically examining the theory – widespread in the scientific literature – that Gamsakhurdia used hate speech against ethnic minorities. The study draws on the speeches of Zviad Gamsakhurdia which have been compiled and published since a couple of years and have been incorporated into the political sub-corpus of the Georgian National Corpus. The study paves the way for a political-linguistic investigation using corpus-linguistic means. With the help of a quantitative as well as a qualitative analysis, it was possible to work out that, based on the available data (speeches of Zviad Gamsakhurdia collected during the time of his presidency) and in contradiction to the general assumption, it cannot be proven that he systematically used hate speech against ethnic minorities. However, the analysis made it possible to extract some key characteristics of Gamsakhurdia's speeches related to ethnic minorities. This results in the urgent need to examine Zviad Gamsakhurdia's political speeches more closely using empirical methods and gives reason to re-examine and re-interpret Zviad Gamsakhurdia's role in the conflict. It also raises the question of how the large discrepancy between the perception of Zviad Gamsakhurdia's political speeches and their actual content comes about. The study shows what possibilities we currently have to examine political speech in Georgian, and in which areas there is still a need for further development.

1. Language in the context of nationalism

My theory is partly based on constructivism. From this perspective the world, the thinking, and language interact in a cycle in which the world determines the way we think, this in turn determines language, and ultimately the world is grasped via language that is determined by thinking. I assume that there are different ways to influence this cycle; for example, we can change the way we speak about a certain topic, with this we change the way we see it, and eventually we can change the way we act towards it and even change it itself.

The concept of nations and nationalism is quite young. The first national movements started in the 18th century and reached their climax in the 20th century. It is often said that nations are solely constructions, which is partly true. But there are also nations that in a certain way evolved from early forms of states or state-like constructs. However, in most cases what always has to be constructed is the national narrative in which it is determined who belongs to the nation and

[1] The paper is based on the author's master's thesis submitted to Goethe University Frankfurt in 2020.

who does not. The state or persons in the positions of power act as top narrators of this type of narrative.

This immediately reveals the importance of investigations into verbal aggression and hate speech because they are means to exclude certain groups from a given national narrative and therefore form the nation itself. This may lead to denying the right of certain groups to exist within the frames and borders of the nation in question.[2]

The consolidation of a community, especially of a nation, requires an outward demarcation. Once this goal has been achieved, there should actually be no need to set oneself apart from others, because the national borders take over this task. Therefore, it is crucial that the nationalist aspirations are transformed into democratic aspirations and are aimed at consolidating the community. If this fails, for whatever reasons, it is "condemned" to turn inward and to carry the dualism that is inherent in nationalism into the given society. In multi-ethnic states like Georgia, this eventually and inevitably leads to ethnic conflicts.

It can further be stated that language is eminently important for the consolidation of a nation and therefore requires special consideration. But there is a huge obstacle to national consolidation, namely, the notorious ambiguity of language, and especially political language. With ambiguity I mean the subtext or what is not explicitly said but meant, either intentionally or unintentionally.

What is not said in political language results from its indeterminacy, in particular, from the indeterminacy of political terms. The unsaid, i.e. the subtext, is perceived intuitively; it is not tangible and thus its perception is changeable. As subtext, it acts on the one hand on feelings and moods, and on the other hand, the perception of these thoughts is dependent on these feelings and moods and is therefore subject to the general cycle of language, thinking and the world. The listeners' inner emotional constitution makes them receptive to very specific interpretations of potential subtext. This may go so far that contents can be perceived that are not intended by the speaker or even represent the opposite of what was said. This is a very complex process that must be taken into account.

1.1. Hate Speech

Hate speech is generally understood as a statement that disparages others on the basis of nationality, skin colour, sexual orientation, belief, etc. and can encourage an act of violence towards them. If the narrators use such verbal violence to exclude certain persons or entire groups of people from the national narrative, the way from verbal to physical violence is not far.[3]

The main problem with hate speech is that it can come in many forms and there is no rule of thumb to define it. Hate speech is rarely black-and-white, it is more likely to come in many shades of grey. Ultimately, it also depends on the listener whether it is perceived as hate speech or not. And when it comes to legal assessments (where it often clashes with the supposed right

[2] Llanque (2014), 7–30.
[3] Meibauer (2013), 1–17.

of free speech), it is not uncommon for it to be a matter of definition. There are certainly different categories of hate speech: hate speech that is criminally punishable, hate speech that is not criminally punishable (but is often socially condemned), and hate speech that falls under the freedom of speech (but can have an impact on the tolerance and respect for minorities).

In order to identify something as hate speech the utterance itself is not sufficient. There are different aspects that must be considered for this evaluation: the context of the utterance, the speaker and his or her intent, the content, form and extent of the speech, and its ability of inciting violent acts against its objects, i.e., the "victims". These categories are no closed set but can be extended or reduced. Therefore, this paper cannot answer the question where hate speech begins and where it ends, as this is a question of a very large scale. Instead, I shall focus here on bringing to light certain features of the political language of those in power.

The chances of influencing other people rise with the amount of power someone or something has – that is a logical conclusion. If we want to determine from a politolinguistical point of view who had influence in a given conflict, it is better to look at those with and in power – an this in most cases a person in a leading political position, e.g., a president like Zviad Gamsakhurdia.

1.2. Zviad Gamsakhurdia

Zviad Gamsakhurdia was born in 1939. He was politically active from an early age and was twice arrested and banished. In 1976 he founded the Georgian Helsinki Group, which campaigned for human rights, and by the 1980s he was actively involved in the growing national movement, soon becoming one of its leading figures. In 1990 he manged to bring together several political parties to form an alliance, the "Round Table – Free Georgia". This alliance received the majority of votes in the elections to the Supreme Council (Soviet) of Georgia on October 28, 1990. On November 14, Gamsakhurdia was elected Chairman of the Supreme Council. A referendum was held on March 31, 1991, in which 98.8% of eligible voters voted in favour of independence, which was declared on April 9 of the same year.

With 86.5% of votes, Gamsakhurdia won the presidential election on May 26, 1991. From December of the same year, the conflict between the government and the opposition escalated. On January 6, 1992, Gamsakhurdia was forced to flee, first to Azerbaijan, then to Armenia and finally to Chechnya. But by the end of September he returned to Georgia with the aim of regaining power. However, he had to retreat with his followers to Megrelia, where he died on December 31 under circumstances that are still unclear.

Despite his short term of office, the "Gamsakhurdia era" has had a significant impact on the development of modern Georgia, which now looks back at many years of a frozen conflict. The territorial conflict was not just a result of Gamsakhurdia's politics, however. The origins of the conflict lie far back and must by all means be sought in the collapse of the Soviet Union and the independence movement. Nevertheless, as the president, Gamsakhurdia was responsible for steering the country through these turbulent times. It is therefore not surprising that most scholars see him and his politics as one of the main reasons why the conflict escalated. Gamsakhurdia's policy is almost exclusively evaluated negatively, with opinions ranging from "not conductive" to "destructive"; cf., e.g.:

> *"We have observed how civil war broke out in the autonomous region of South Ossetia, in part at least as a result of Gamsakhurdia's intransigent position towards ethnic minorities."*[4]
>
> *"Gamsakhurdia's vision of the country's past – a powerful Christian state led by Georgians – underpinned his ideal of a 'herrenvolk democracy' in which the spiritually and culturally superior Georgians had privileged access to state power."*[5]
>
> *"These extraordinary events are usually explained by the destructive power of Georgian nationalism. The Gamsakhurdia era (1990–2) is viewed as nationalism's zenith. […] Gamsakhurdia believed in a semi-mythological and racially pure Georgian past."*[6]
>
> *"In 1991 the Soviet Union disintegrated. In May 1991, the one who became the first president of an independent Georgia was the ardent nationalist Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who actually pursued the policy of 'Georgia for the Georgians'*."[7]

Until now, the political language of Zviad Gamsakhurdia has not been in the focus of political science research, although its role is repeatedly referred to. For a study of Gamsakhurdia's reception, it is not irrelevant to look at which sources the political scientists and historians refer to. Dealing with language requires a different approach than only looking at events. The analysis of speeches presupposes working with original sources, as one must accept that in translations, contents may be lost or distorted. If one looks at the main publications on Gamsakhurdia and his role in the conflict, it is noticeable that they mostly do not rely on sources in the Georgian language, which on the one hand is understandable if one assumes that only a few western scholars are proficient in it; but on the other hand, it represents a factor that should not be underestimated in the evaluation and can even be seen as a methodological deficit.

In summary, the reception of Gamsakhurdia's person is predominantly negative and suggests that there is a direct connection between him or his rhetoric and the escalation of the conflict. However, a comprehensive analysis of his political speeches has so far been lacking. Therefore, an empirical analysis of his political speeches with the aim to give these claims a scientific basis and to shed light on whether this connection is also linguistically "measurable" is overdue.

1.3. The nature of the conflict

Before dealing with this question, it is important to analyse the conflict and its origin in order to contextualise it properly. First of all, it must be clear that the Georgian conflict, which is often referred to as "ethnic" or "territorial", it is not just "a" conflict but that there are different types of conflict involved. In my opinion the conflict with the ethnic minorities in Georgia was primarily of political origin, partly caused by contentions on resources. Over time it became increasingly ethnicised, either deliberately by those who benefited from the escalation, or as a logical consequence of the political conflict.

[4] Wheatley (2005), 56.
[5] Jones (2015), 59.
[6] Jones (2015), 52.
[7] https://abkhazworld.com/aw/conflict/731-the-georgian-abkhazian-conflict-chirikba (12.12.2022).

At its core, the Georgian conflict was and is about the separation of two regions, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. While the former sought independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the latter wanted to remain in the Soviet Union. In both cases this would have meant the loss of these territories for the Georgian Republic.

In the short term, this conflict is, in both its facets, a consequence of the transformation process after and during the collapse of the Soviet Union; in the longer term, it was caused by the Soviet Union's policy concerning nationalities.[8] The nationalities policy of the Soviet Union pursued two goals: on the one hand, nation-building was to "serve the social revolution and the consolidation of the new state"; on the other hand, separatist tendencies aroused by it were to be prevented so as not to endanger the unity. These basically contradictory goals were reconciled with the help of the "korenizatsiya" policy, which envisaged the targeted promotion of minorities (as potential bearers of separatist and nationalist ideas) by giving them, e.g., preferential treatment over the majority population (in education or employment) in order to integrate them into the Soviet Union. The simultaneous strengthening and the deeper integration of the minorities was thus intended to ensure their loyalty to the Communist regime.

This practice expressed itself in the organisational structure of the Soviet Union, which was divided into hierarchical territorial-administrative levels according to the "Matryoshka doll" principle (Union Republic > Autonomous Republic > Oblast > District/Okrug). This hierarchical four-way division was based on the Bolshevik definition of nation, which established a hierarchy for the respective ethnic groups by distinguishing between nations, nationalities, peoples and ethnic groupings, and autonomies were granted or not granted accordingly. Among other things, this created so-called "titular nations" (nations whose name was derived from the ethnic group residing in a given region), even in places where the ethnic group providing the name was actually a minority. The unequal treatment of nationalities and ethnic groups meant that interethnic conflicts were inevitable.

The early historical interdependence of many of those regions makes it difficult today to classify them according to categories of nationality (in the given case, Georgian or Abkhazian/Ossetian) – this is only possible if one deduces them "historically". Since the Caucasus region has always been multi-ethnic, the claim of an ethnic group to a specific territory can only be substantiated to a limited extent here.

When we talk about territorial ownership and national belonging, we apply categories that did not exist in historical times. In order to justify these attitudes, they must therefore be argued for and deduced verbally – which in turn reveals why political language is so important.

[8] For a detailed analysis of the Soviet Union's policy on nationalities see Simon (1986).

2. Material and Methods

2.1. Collected speeches of Gamsakhurdia

The study of this question was only made possible by the publication of Gamsakhurdia's collected speeches (in form of several printed books[9] and online as PDFs[10]) by the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia and by their integration into the political sub-corpus of the Georgian National Corpus. These volumes contain about 684 texts comprising interviews, speeches/addresses, announcements, letters, legislative texts, etc.; however, not all of Gamsakhurdia's speeches are included in the corpus. The published texts cover the period from the end of October 1990 to the beginning of January 1992, so less than one and a half years.

Not all of the collected texts are relevant for the analysis of Gamsakhurdia's speeches. While in principle all texts can be used for quantitative analyses, those texts that represent direct political statements by Gamsakhurdia, either written by himself or as transcripts of his speeches, are of primary relevance for such a qualitative analysis. Since legislative texts are usually written in a legal jargon that is kept neutral due to its official character, they are not suitable for examining the personal political attitude of a politician.

2.2. The Georgian National Corpus (GNC)

A (text) corpus is a digital language database that contains a collection of written or transcribed texts. Corpora that comprise large collections of texts facilitate empirical analyses and are especially used in linguistics and literature studies. Accordingly, corpus linguistics is a data-driven branch of empirical linguistics that works with inductive methods and gains its results through a combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses.

The GNC[11] is designed to document the Georgian language in all its stages of historical development and to make it available in digital form, so that questions from different scientific research areas (above all linguistics and literary studies but also other disciplines of the Humanities, cultural and social sciences, in the wider sense of Digital Humanities) can be dealt with by means of corpus linguistics methods.

The Georgian National Corpus consists of several sub-corpora. The political sub-corpus includes texts from the period of the Democratic Republic of Georgia 1918–1921, collected speeches of individual politicians since the second independence in 1991, texts of debates and dialogues as well as parliamentary sessions. For the time being, the collection of Zviad Gamsakhurdia's speeches within the political sub-subcorpus only contains the (246) texts from the first three volumes.

[9] Volume I (https://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/38332), Volume II (https://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/38333), Volume III (https://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/38334) , Volume IV (https://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/159231), Volume V (https://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/159475).
[10] https://www.nplg.gov.ge/eng/home .
[11] http://gnc.gov.ge/

The texts in the GNC are fully grammatically annotated,[12] i.e., all words are determined with regard to their morphosyntactic properties so that they can be searched for and filtered using such properties. The sub-corpus in question can be selected in the Corpus list; the texts contained in this selection are then listed in a Text list and can be viewed individually.

Under Query you can start search queries within the selected subcorpora. There are two search modes to choose from: Basic search and Advanced search. With both, it is possible to narrow down the search by selecting individual texts, filtering by authors or time periods. Under Advanced search, even more complex search queries can be made (e.g., on certain authors or on the use of certain morphological categories). In addition, the search using so-called regular expressions[13] is available for both search modes. The results of the search query submitted under Query are listed under Concordance (document locations). They can be represented as KWIC (key word in context) or in a wider context.

Since words do not just stand on their own, context analyses are required to gain a more precise understanding of their use. For this purpose, it is advisable to examine the collocations (adjacent occurrences of words) or co-occurrences (common occurrences of words) at the word level, since their analysis can reveal linguistic usage patterns and characteristic contexts. With +/-, up to six digits before or after a searched term can be displayed and listed according to their frequency.

Under Word List, the variants of the search term can as well be listed according to their frequency, which is particularly relevant for frequency analyses. The collocations can again be applied to each selected variant of a given term.

2.3. Methodology and approach of the present study

In a first step, the data was viewed – both the printed and the electronic text collection – and roughly classified according to the respective text types for a pre-selection. In this way, a first selection was achieved for further analyses. The analysis of the speeches was first carried out at the word level (quantitative analysis) and then at the text level (qualitative analysis).

A targeted search was made for the keywords relevant to the question of the study (e.g., Abkhazia, Ossetia, nation, people, etc.) in order to reveal systematical structures. The frequency analysis was followed by a context analysis based on the co-occurrence of terms.

The findings from the frequency analysis then served as the starting point for the qualitative analysis. For this purpose, close reading[14] was used to search for relevant texts or text passages.

Regarding the method of close reading, three questions stood in the foreground: *What did he say? How did he say it? And what did he mean?* In order to answer the question what Gamsakhurdia said about the minorities, direct utterances were filtered out first. In the second run, those texts were filtered out which contain a reference to ethnic minorities. For the third run, only "judgmental" passages were left which were then qualitatively analysed.

[12] Hirschmann (2019), 22f.
[13] Hirschmann (2019), 117.
[14] Dumm/Niekler in Lemke/Wiedemann (2016), 91.

2.4. The quantitative analysis and its main findings

The quantitative analysis could only be based on the digitised texts contained in the political subcorpus of the GNC. It began in each case with an advanced search for the lemmas აფხაზ.*/*apkhaz.** and ოს.*/*os.**. The combination of dot and asterisk here indicates that any number of characters (including zero) may follow after the indicated word stem. For the former lemma, there are 457 results[15] (Figure 1), for the latter 566[16] (Figure 2). Thus, the minimum number of cases in which Gamsakhurdia spoke on this topic can be determined solely on the basis of these figures. However, it should be noted that these figures alone are not meaningful, as they do not cover, e.g., the use of pronouns for referencing or indirect referencing to a given

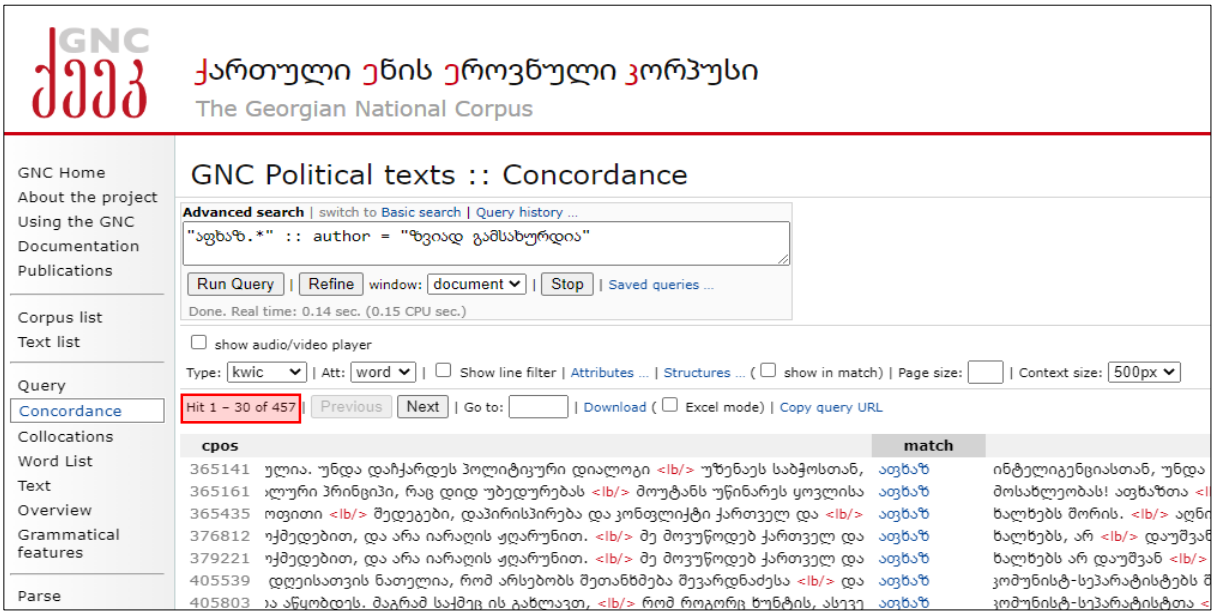

Figure 1: Concordance for აფხაზ./apkhaz.**.

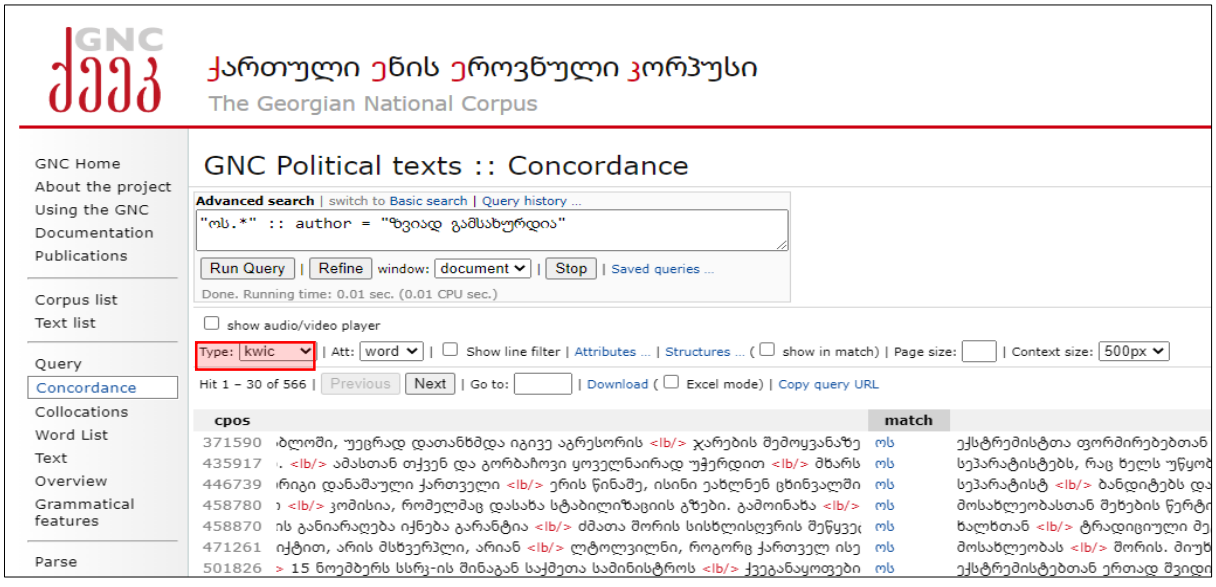

Figure 2: Concordance for ოს./os.**.

[15] Reg. ex: "აფხაზ.*" :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია"

[16] Reg. ex: "ოს.*" :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია"

subject or object without naming it. Nevertheless, in these results, the use of adjectival and nominal forms is especially interesting. When looking at the use of nominal formations, 345 evidences[17] (Figure 3) can be found for აფხაზეთი/*apkhazeti* ("Abkhazia").

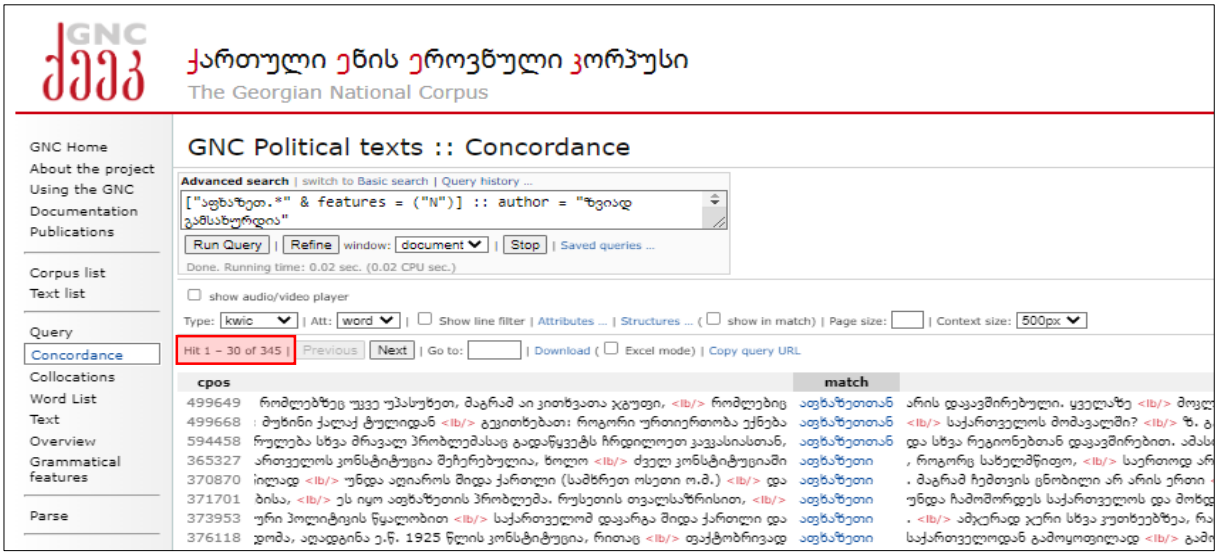

Figure 3: Concordance for აფხაზეთ./ apkhazeti.* with the grammatical feature noun.*

The collocations show that the word "Abkhazia" is most often used in the genitive case (192 times). When using this form Gamsakhurdia predominantly refers to the political or conflict level; this can be seen, e.g., in collocations with the words ასსრ (abbreviation for ავტონომიური საბჭოთა სოციალისტური რესპუბლიკა / *avtonomiuri sabchos sotsialisturi respublika* ("Abkhaz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic") or აფხაზეთის ავტონომიური რესპუბლიკა / *apkhazetis avtonomiuri Respublika* ("Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia"). We can thus conclude that he predominantly speaks of Abkhazia as a political entity.

Looking at the Wordlist for აფხაზ.*/*apkhaz.** (listed as a simplified lemma) we can see that there are 98 evidences for the use of აფხაზი/*apkhazi*, 12 evidences for აფხაზური/*apkhazuri* and one for აფხაზობა/*apkhazoba* (Figure 4). The Georgian words აფხაზი/*apkhazi* and აფხაზური/ *apkhazuri* are both adjectives, the former denoting +human and the latter –human entities. It must be added that აფხაზი / *apkhazi* can also be used as a noun.

Figure 4: Wordlist for აფხაზ./apkhaz.* as simplified lemma and sorted by frequency.*

[17] Reg. ex.: ["აფხაზეთ.*" & features = ("N")] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია"

So in at least 110 cases[18] Gamsakhurdia speaks about something that is Abkhazian or someone who is an Abkhazian, belonging to the ethnic group.

Figure 5: Wordlist for აფხაზ./apkhaz shown as grammatical feature and in alphabetic order.*

58 evidences can be found for the use of აფხაზი/*apkhazi* ("Abkhazian") as a noun[19] (Figure 5), and when we look at the context and filter it by lines, we see that Gamsakhurdia often[20] uses it in combination with "Georgians" (for example აფხაზთა და ქართველთა / *aphkhazta da kartvelta* or ქართველი და აფხაზი / *kartveli da apkhazi*) (Figure 6). This indicates that Gamsakhurdia predominantly talks about the connection between both ethnic groups or something that connects them or something that concerns both of them. In summary it can be said that based on the numbers, Abkhazia as a territory was of a significantly greater importance for Gamsakhurdia than the Abkhazian people.

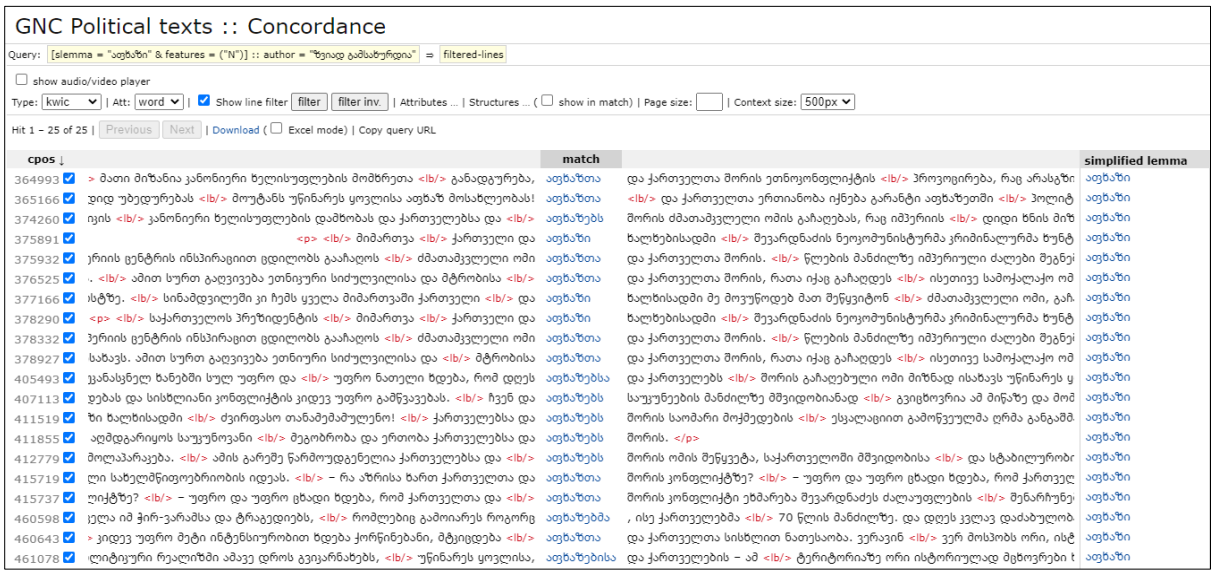

Figure 6: Evidence for the phrasing of ქართველი და აფხაზი/ kartveli da apkhazi or აფხაზი და ქართველი / apkhazi da kartveli.

Regarding the conflict with Ossetia, there are 190[21] occurrences for ოსი/*osi* as an adjective ("Ossetian", +human) or as a noun ("Ossetian", Figure 8) and ოსური/*osuri* ("Ossetian",

[18] Also retrievable with reg. ex.: ([lemma = "აფხაზური"] | [lemma = "აფხაზი"]) :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია".

[19] Also retrievable with reg. ex.: [slemma = "აფხაზი" & features = ("N")] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია"

[20] Reg. ex.: ("აფხაზ.*" "და" "ქართველ.*" | "ქართველ.*" "და" "აფხაზ.*") :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია".

[21] Reg. ex.: ([lemma = "ოს-ი"] | [lemma = "ოსურ-ი"]) :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია".

adjective, -human) altogether. Beyond this, 360[22] mentions of ოსეთი/*oseti* ("Ossetia", Figure 7) can be found – the collocations show that the majority of cases concerns South Ossetia (273 out of 360, Figure 9) – which gives us a similar result as with Abkhazia: again, Gamsakhurdia speaks significantly more often about the territory or political entity than the ethnicity.

Figure 7: Concordance for ოსეთ./ oset.**

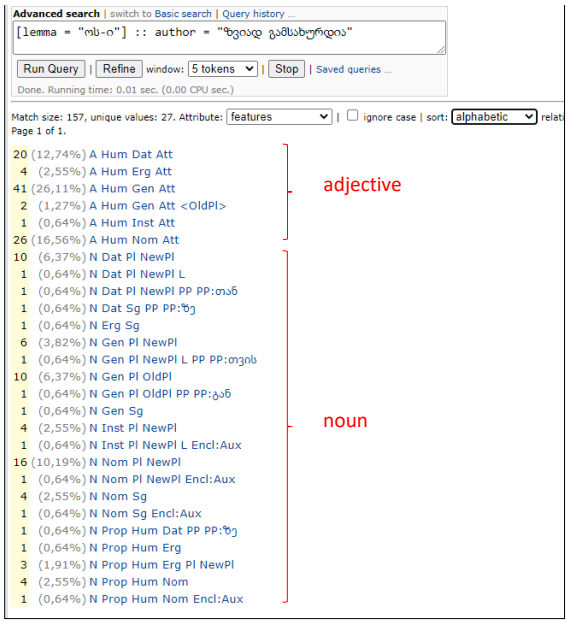

Figure 8: Wordlist for ოსი/osi shown as grammatical feature and in alphabetic order.

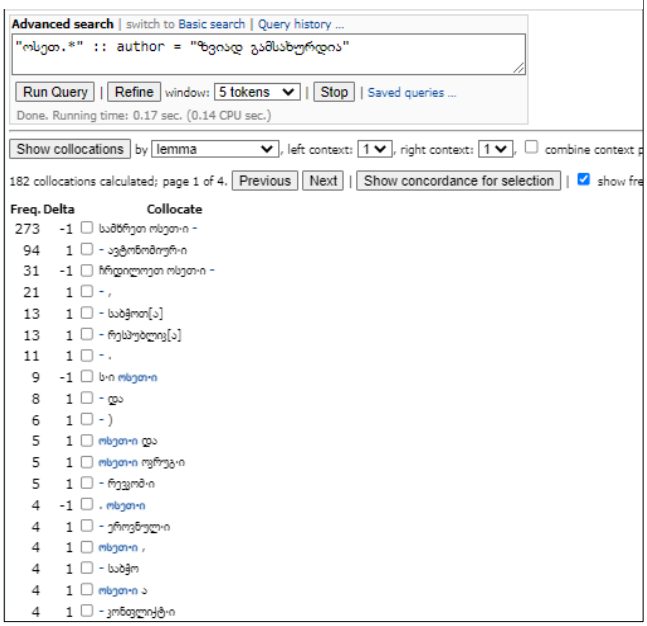

Figure 9: Collocations for ოსეთ./oset.* sorted by frequency.*

However, there is one peculiarity in the way Gamsakhurdia refers to South Ossetia: he often (at least 66 times, Figure 10) uses the phrasing "the so-called" when talking about it (ეგრეთ

[22] Reg. ex.: "ოსეთ.*" :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია".

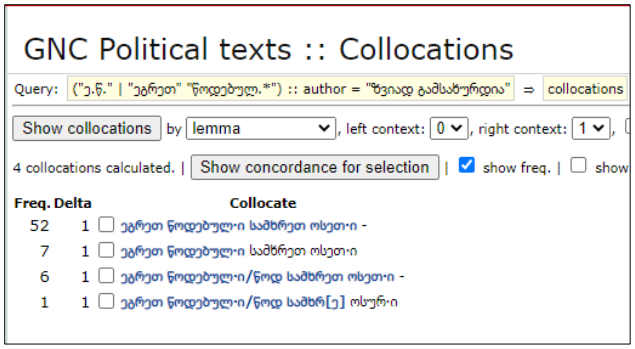

Figure 10: Collocations for ეგრეთ წოდებული / egret

წოდებული სამხრეთ ოსეთი / *egret tsodebuli samkhret oseti*).[23] It seems that he wants to express his rejection of this term because he does not recognise the legitimacy of the autonomous region, or he rejects the name "South Ossetia" because it evokes a claim of legitimacy of the Ossetian people to this territory in which they live as a minority. By speaking of "so-called" South Ossetia or a "so-called" South Ossetian Autonomous Region etc., he seems to be pursuing a delegitimisation strategy of this territorial entity and, accordingly, its demands. The same strategy was used, for example, by politicians and the media in western states in speaking about the "so-called" Islamic State. However, one must judge cautiously here because Gamsakhurdia does not consistently apply this strategy: in two-thirds of the cases he speaks of South Ossetia without using "so-called". It must also be mentioned that he does not use this strategy regarding the Ossetians as an ethnicity, so his verbal strategy of delegitimisation addresses the territorial or political entity alone and not the ethnicity.

Based on this, the usage of relevant terms such as "nation" or "people" was examined. In referring to the Abkhazians, Gamsakhurdia never speaks of an ერი/*eri*, i.e. a "nation", "people", or "ethnicity", nor of ეროვნება/*erovneba*, which can have several meanings in Georgian ("nationality" / "national origin" or "ethnicity" / "ethnic origin"). This may derive from the Bolsheviks' understanding of nationhood: ერი/*eri* and ეროვნება/*erovneba* would roughly correspond to "nation" and "nationality" in the four-layered hierarchy which was taken as the basis for either a Union Republic or an Autonomous Republic in the Soviet Union. One might interpret it as some kind of language avoidance strategy if the Abkhazians are not associated with these categories – a verbal indication that Gamsakhurdia rejected their political

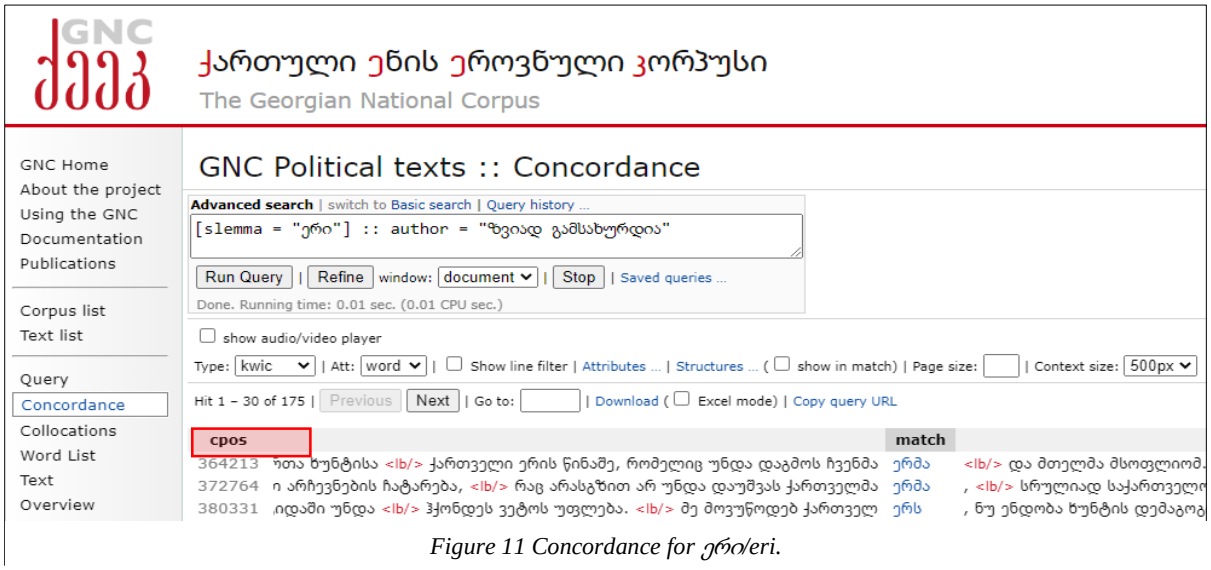

Figure 11 Concordance for ერი/eri.

[23] Reg. ex.: ("ე.წ." | "ეგრეთ" "წოდებულ.*") :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია".

and territorial autonomy. This would also explain why he uses ერი/*eri* in the context of Georgians, ქართველი ერი / *kartveli eri* (76 out of 175 examples,[24] Figures 11 and 12).

In general, Gamsakhurdia rather uses the word ხალხი/*xalxi* ("people", 758 times),[25] not ერი/*eri*, even for the Georgians themselves. So he prefers to use a neutral term when speaking about specific groups of people.

Figure 12: Collocations for ერი/eri .

This is also evident in his choice of words when talking about Ossetians: for the Ossetian people he uses the terms მოსახლეობა/*mosaxleoba* ("population", 20 times)[26] or ხალხი/*xalxi* ("people", 9 times),[27] all with a neutral connotation. As with Abkhazians, he does not use ერი/*eri*.

Even if it sounds tempting to assume that Gamsakhurdia's choice of words reflects a certain hierarchical classification of the individual ethnic groups, it is not possible to deduce this just from looking at the use of the given terms since he mostly sticks to ხალხი/*xalxi* ("people") which is neutral in its connotation.

What stands out, however, is his choice of words when talking about the actors of the independence movements. In total, there are 44[28] attestations of the nominal phrase ოსი ექსტრემისტი / *osi ekstremisti* ("Ossetian extremist"), nine[29] for ოსი სეპარატისტი / *osi separatisti* ("Ossetian separatist"), and two[30] for ოსი ბანდიტი / *osi banditi* ("Ossetian bandit"). Given that both South Ossetia and Abkhazia attempted to secede from Georgia, it is surprising that Gamsakhurdia uses the three terms significantly more often in the Ossetian context than in the Abkhazian one – in only three cases he talks about "Abkhazian separatists", and he never uses the terms "terrorist", "bandit", or "extremist". This could indicate that he might have had a distinctive attitude towards the separatist movements of the two regions.

Something else that stood out is Gamsakhurdia's application of historical terms for the respective territories such as სამურზაყანო/*samurzaqano* for Abkhazia, which he uses three times.[31] Aside from "South Ossetia", the official term for this region (273 occurrences), he often

[24] Reg. ex.: [slemma = "ერი"] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია".
[25] Reg. ex.: [slemma = "ხალხი"] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია".
[26] Reg. ex.: ([slemma = "ოსური"] | [slemma = "ოსი"]) [slemma = "მოსახლეობა"] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია".
[27] Reg. ex.: ([slemma = "ოსური"] | [slemma = "ოსი"]) [slemma = "ხალხი"] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია".
[28] Reg. ex.: [slemma = "ექსტრემისტი"] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია".
[29] Reg. ex.: [slemma = "სეპარატისტი"] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია".
[30] Reg. ex.: [slemma = "ბანდიტი"] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია".
[31] Reg. ex.: [slemma = "სამურზაყანო"] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია".

uses the historical terms სამაჩაბლო/*samachablo* (“Samachablo”, 94 occurrences[32]) and შიდა ქართლი / *shida kartli* (“Inner Kartli”, 85 occurrences,[33] Figure 13).

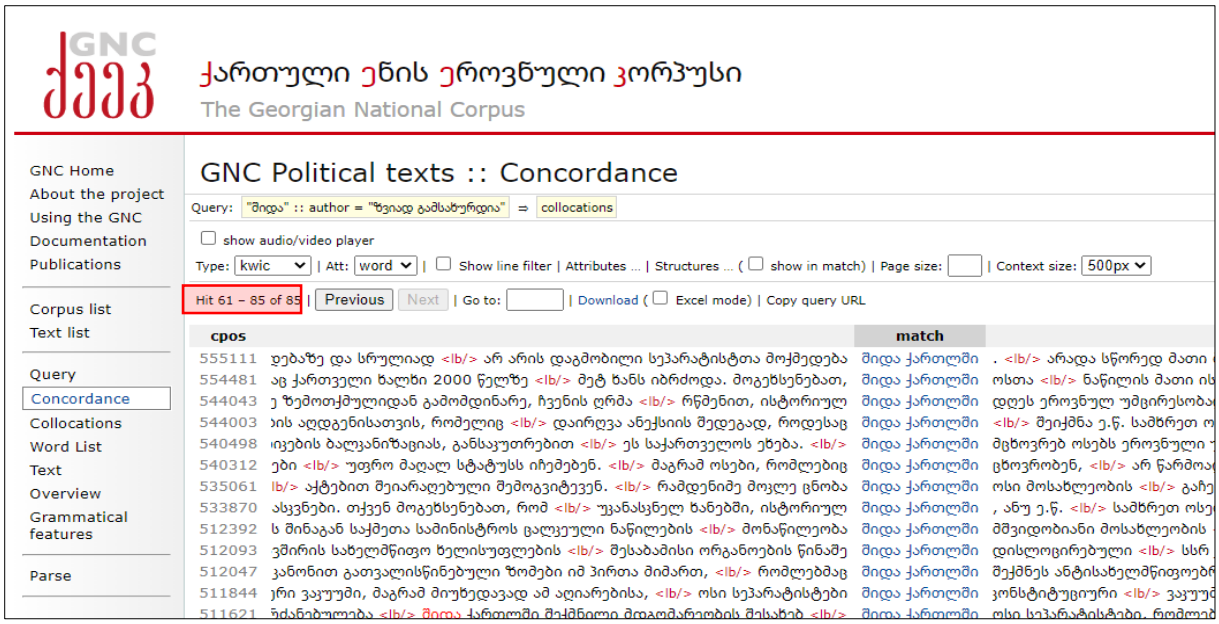

Figure 13: Concordance for შიდა ქართლი/shida kartli.

Thus, two linguistic strategies become apparent (whether used consciously or subconsciously) when Gamsakhurdia talks about Ossetia (as a territory) and the Ossetians (as an ethnicity): on the one hand, by using the historical name for this territory, he linguistically underlines the historical Georgian claim to this region; on the other hand, by referring to South Ossetia as “so-called”, he delegitimises the territorial entity of South Ossetia which was created in the course of the Soviet nationalities policy. Regarding the Ossetians, he uses negative terms only when speaking about the actors of the separatist movement, but he stays neutral when referring to the general ethnic minority of Ossetians. So there is clearly some kind of difference between his attitudes towards the conflicts in Abkhazia and in Ossetia that can already be observed on the word level.

There were some other peculiarities that were worthy of closer scrutiny. In addressing the audience and speaking about the conflicts, Gamsakhurdia often used the phrase ძმებო და დებო / *dzmebo da debo* (“brothers and sisters”, 32 times,[34] Figure 14) or the terms თანამემამულე / *tanamemamule* (“fellow-countryman”, 33 times)[35] and მამულიშვილი / *mamulishvili* (“patriot, five times”),[36] both roughly translatable as “fellow citizen” but also transferring the meaning of a common origin or a common affiliation to an area. In other cases he applied the term ძმა/*dzma* (“brother”) to characterise the conflict as a “fratricidal (civil)

[32] Reg. ex.: "შიდა" :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია"
[33] Reg. ex.: [slemma = "სამაჩაბლო"] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია"
[34] Reg. ex.: [slemma = "და" & features = ("N")] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია"
[35] Reg. ex.: [slemma = "თანამემამულე"] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია"
[36] Reg. ex.: [slemma = "მამულიშვილი"] :: author = "ზვიად გამსახურდია"

war" (ძმათამკვლელი (სამოქალაქო) ომი / *dzmatamkvleli* (*samokalako*) *omi*, 14 times, Figure 15).

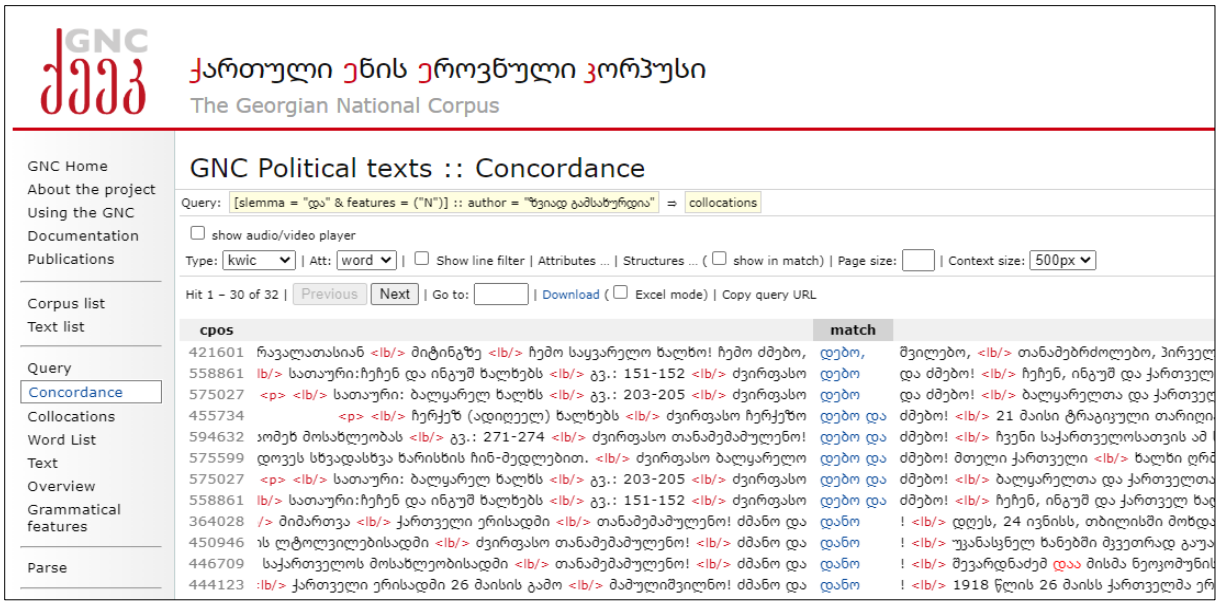

Figure 14: Concordance for the phrasing ძმები და დები/dzmebo da debo.

Figure 15: Concordance for ძმათამკვლელი (სამოქალაქო) ომი / dzmatamkvleli (samokalako).

A fratricidal war is a war between the members of one nation or people or two close nations or peoples, which implies that it is something unnatural and undesirable and also that there is as strong connection between the involved parties. What is interesting here is that Gamsakhurdia used this expression ten times in direct reference to Abkhazia, but only once with respect to Ossetia. This again suggests that he regarded the relationship or "kinship" between Georgians and Abkhazians as closer than that between Georgians and Ossetians. This can be explained in two different ways, on a personal and on a historical level. First, it seems plausible that

Gamsakhurdia felt more connected to the Abkhazian people, given that he himself originated from Megrelia which lies to the southeast of Abkhazia so that there has always been a lively exchange between these two regions and the population, in contrast to Ossetia with which the Megrelians have had less contact. Second, the Ossetians as an Iranian-speaking ethnic group settled later in Georgia than the Abkhazians, so historically and culturally Georgians and Abkhazians are closer to each other.

3. The qualitative analysis and its main findings

The focus of the qualitative analysis was on Gamsakhurdia's understanding of, and his relationship to, the concept of nation, ethnic minorities and the conflict.

During the review of his speeches, numerous passages were found in which Gamsakhurdia points out the multi-ethnic composition of the population of the Georgian state. It thus becomes clear that for him, the Georgian state was not a purely Georgian one and thus the ethnic foundation of a national state was irrelevant and impracticable in the case of Georgia. This is clear from his following statements:

> *"[…] In this regard, we announced that a law on citizenship is being prepared. If until now there was discrimination against the Georgian population in Georgia, now first of all the interests of the Georgian population must be protected, but we do not exclude the care for the rights of national minorities. Under no circumstances should anyone think that the rights of a national minority will be suppressed. Although we are often led to believe this by the central press, it is not true. Georgia is a country where representatives of different nationalities, representatives of different religions traditionally live peacefully together, and it will continue to do so.*[37] *Our attitude towards the non-Georgian population has always been friendly. We are not going to deviate from this principle. The future law on the protection of the rights of national minorities, which will be adopted by our parliament, will be the best proof of this."*[38]

He also refers again and again to the multi-ethnic composition of the Caucasus which contradicts the concept of an ethnically pure region. Moreover, he does not limit the interethnic ties between the Christian tribes but he also includes the Muslim ethnic groups:

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[37] "[…] ამასთან დაკავშირებით ჩვენ განვაცხადეთ, რომ მზადდება კანონი მოქალაქეობის შესახებ. თუ აქამდე საქართველოში ქართველი მოსახლეობის დისკრიმინაცია იყო, ამჟამად ქართველი მოსახლეობის ინტერესები უნდა იყოს დაცული უწინარეს ყოვლისა, მაგრამ ჩვენ ამით არ გამოვრიცხავთ ზრუნვას ეროვნულ უმცირესობათა უფლებებზე. არავითარ შემთხვევაში არავინ იფიქროს, რომ ეროვნული უმცირესობის უფლებები დათრგუნული იქნება. თუმცა ამას ჩვენ ხშირად გვწამებენ ცენტრალურ პრესაში, მაგრამ ეს სინამდვილეს არ შეესაბამება. საქართველო ისეთი ქვეყანაა, სადაც ტრადიციულად მშვიდობიანად ცხოვრობენ სხვადასხვა ეროვნების წარმომადგელები, სხვადასხვა რელიგიის წარმომადგენლები და ეს ასე გაგრძელდება." Volume I, 128–135. Published in საქართველოს რესპუბლიკა / *sakartwelos respublika*, No. 1 (21), 1, 01.01.1991 and in რესპუბლიკა/*respublika*, No. 1 (34), 1–2, 01.01.1991.

[38] "ჩვენი დამოკიდებულება არაქართველი მოსახლეობისადმი ყოველთვის მეგობრული იყო. ამ პრინციპიდან გადახვევას არ ვაპირებთ. მომავალი კანონი ეროვნულ უმცირესობათა უფლებების დაცვის შესახებ, რომელსაც ჩვენი პარლამენტი მიიღებს, ამის საუკეთესო დასტური იქნება." Volume I, 178–197. Published in საქართველოს რესპუბლიკა/*sakartwelos respublika*, No. 39 (59), 1–2, 27.02.1991.

"We must remember that Georgians, Chechens, Ingush, Abkhazians (Apswa), Circassians, Adyghians, Avars, Leks, and others are peoples of a common Ibero-Caucasian lineage, descendants of Proto-Iberians, inheritors of ancient civilisation and culture! We should pay particular attention to the Karachays, Balkars and other peoples of Turkic origin who live in the Caucasus. They are related to us by centuries-old ties of kinship and friendship, they are members of our common family both culturally and ethnically. In ethnology, there is a theory about the genetic connections of the Turanian tribes, the ancestors of the Turkic peoples, with the Pelasgians, the ancient Iberian population of the Balkans and the Aegean basin. So, kinship roots with the peoples of the Turkic lineage will be sought from the ethnic point of view as well."[39]

So for Gamsakhurdia, neither ethnicity nor the Christian faith were decisive for determining whether or not someone belonged to the nation or not. His focus was rather on the people's commitment to Georgia's independence, to which he also tied the question of citizenship. This again is a sign that he saw the Georgian state as a nation of citizens rather than ethnically based.

One of the central issues in the conflict was related to language, on which Gamsakhurdia made numerous statements. For him the knowledge of the Georgian language was a basic prerequisite for social and democratic participation and thus also for community and nation building. Gamsakhurdia therefore demanded that all residents or citizens of Georgia had to be proficient in the Georgian language:

"Journalist – Mr. President, a question about language skills. If I don't know the language, or if someone doesn't know the Georgian language, he can't get citizenship? Gamsakhurdia – This rule is valid for those who do not live in Georgia and is to get citizenship in the future. People of all nationalities who live in Georgia will receive citizenship regardless of their knowledge of the Georgian language. But if you come to us and want to become a citizen of Georgia, you must learn Georgian. I think it's clear, right? Journalist – And those children who now live in Georgia should learn Georgian? Gamsakhurdia – Of course they should learn it, their parents will already be ready to acknowledge the state language and teach their children Georgian. It is the state language. They must show loyalty, they must admit that they are loyal to our constitution, and if they accept the constitution, they must learn Georgian. Journalist – Will you grant citizenship to those who have gone outside of Georgia?

[39] "უნდა გვახსოვდეს, რომ ქართველები, ჩეჩნები, ინგუშები, აფხაზები (აფსუები), ჩერქეზები, ადიღები, ავარიელები, ლეკები, და სხვები საერთო იბერიულ-კავკასიური მოდგმის ხალხებია, პროტოიბერთა შთამომავალნი, უძველესი ცივილიზაციის და კულტურის მემკვიდრენი! საგანგებოდ უნდა შევჩერდეთ ყარაჩაელების, ბალყარელებისა და სხვა თურქული წარმოშობის ხალხებზე, რომლებიც კავკასიაში სახლობენ. ისინი ჩვენთან ნათესაური და მეგობრული მრავალსაუკუნოვანი კავშირებით არიან დაკავშირებულნი, ჩვენი საერთო ოჯახის წევრები არიან როგორც კულტურის სფეროში, ისე ეთნიკურად. ეთნოლოგიაში არსებობს თეორია თურქული მოდგმის ხალხთა წინაპარი თურანული ტომების გენეტიკურ კავშირებზე პელაზგებთან, ბალკანეთისა და ეგეოსის აუზის უძველეს იბერიულ მოსახლეობასთან. ასე რომ, თურქული მოდგმის ხალხებთან ნათესაური ფესვები დაიძებნება ეთნიკური თვალსაზრისითაც." Volume III, 179–183. Published in აღდგომა/*aghdgoma*, No. 26,1, 15.11.1992.

Gamsakhurdia – If they return to their homeland, we will give them citizenship. As a rule, we will not have dual citizenship."[40]

This leads us to the topic of citizenship on which Gamsakhurdia used to speak very clearly:

"Only if we show solidarity and a desire to understand each other through dialogue, we will be able to build our democratic independent Georgia. I know that some are trying to undermine the centuries-old friendship between our peoples. I also know that some men have appeared among you who interpret the opinion expressed by me in a completely distorted way. Yes, I said that those who will not participate in the referendum of March 31 are questioning their right to Georgian citizenship. This, my dear ones, is not a trade. In the whole civilized world, citizenship is accepted when there is a readiness for mutual obligations: of the potential citizen to the state and of the state to the citizen. Citizenship in all democratic countries implies respect for the country's language and sovereignty. This is the balance needed to ensure that citizenship is not formal. Equality in rights is impossible without equality in duties.[41]*We believe that all persons who are permanently registered in Georgia, have a permanent job or a legal source of income and confirm their commitment to the national sovereignty of the Republic of Georgia and its territorial integrity by signing the declaration-oath, can become citizens of the Republic of Georgia."*[42]

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[40] "კითხვა – ბატონო პრეზიდენტო, შეკითხვა ენის ცოდნის შესახებ. თუ მე ენა არ ვიცი, ან თუ ვინმემ ქართული ენა არ იცის, ის მოქალაქეობას ვერ მიიღებს? პასუხი – ეს წესი მოქმედებს მათთვის, ვინც საქართველოში არ ცხოვრობს და მომავალში უნდა მიიღოს მოქალაქეობა. ყველა ეროვნების ადამიანი, ვინც საქართველოში ცხოვრობს, მიიღებს მოქალაქეობას ქართული ენის ცოდნის მიუხედავად. მაგრამ თუკი თქვენ ჩამოხვალთ ჩვენთან და მოინდომებთ საქართველოს მოქალაქეობას, თქვენ უნდა ისწავლოთ ქართული. მე მგონი, გასაგებია არა? კითხვა – და იმათმა ბავშვებმა, ვინც ახლა საქართველოში ცხოვრობს, უნდა ისწავლონ ქართული? პასუხი – რა თქმა უნდა, უნდა ისწავლონ, მათი მშობლები უკვე მზად იქნებიან აღიარონ სახელმწიფო ენა და ბავშვებს ქართული ასწავლონ. ეს სახელმწიფო ენაა. მათ უნდა გამოხატონ ერთგულება, უნდა აღიარონ, რომ არიან ჩვენი კონსტიტუციის ერთგული და თუკი ისინი კონსტიტუციას აღიარებენ, მათ უნდა ისწავლონ ქართული. კითხვა – მისცემთ თუ არა მოქალაქეობას იმათ, ვინც საქართველოს ფარგლებს გარეთ არის წასული? პასუხი – თუ ისინი სამშობლოში დაბრუნდებიან, ჩვენ მივცემთ მათ მოქალაქეობას. ორმაგი მოქალაქეობა, როგორც წესი, არ გვექნება." Volume II, 217–239. Published in საქართველოს რესპუბლიკა / *sakartwelos respublika*, No. 135 (155), 1–2, 11.07.1991.

[41] "მხოლოდ ჩვენ, ერთად თუ გამოვავლენთ სოლიდარობას, სურვილს, გავუგოთ ერთმანეთს დიალოგის გზით, შევძლებთ ავაშენოთ ჩვენი დემოკრატიული დამოუკიდებელი საქართველო. ვიცი, რომ ზოგიერთები ცდილობენ შეარყიონ ჩვენი ხალხების მრავალსაუკუნოვანი მეგობრობა. ისიც ვიცი, რომ გამოჩნდა თქვენს შორის რამდენიმე კაცი, რომლებიც ჩემს მიერ გამოთქმულ აზრს სავსებით დამახინჯებულად განმარტავენ. დიახ, ვთქვი, რომ ის, ვინც მონაწილეობას არ მიიღებს 31 მარტის რეფერენდუმში, ამით ეჭვქვეშ აყენებს საქართველოს მოქალაქეობის უფლებას. ეს, ჩემო ძვირფასებო, ვაჭრობა როდია. მთელ ცივილიზებულ მსოფლიოში მოქალაქეობას იღებენ მაშინ, როცა არის ურთიერთვალდებულებებისადმი მზადყოფნა: პოტენციური მოქალაქისა – სახელმწიფოს წინაშე და სახელმწიფოსი – მოქალაქის წინაშე. ყველა დემოკრატიულ ქვეყანაში მოქალაქეობის მიღება გულისხმობს ქვეყნის ენისა და სუვერენიტეტისადმი პატივისცემას. ეს ის ბალანსია, რომელიც საჭიროა იმისათვის, რომ მოქალაქეობა ფორმალური არ იყოს. თანასწორობა უფლებებში შეუძლებელია მოვალეობებში თანასწორობის გარეშე." Volume I, 271–274. Published in საქართველოს რესპუბლიკა / *sakartwelos respublika*, No. 61 (81), 1, 30.03.1991.

[42] "მიგვაჩნია, რომ საქართველოს რესპუბლიკის მოქალაქედ შეიძლება გახდეს ყველა ის პირი, ვინც მუდმივად ჩაწერილია საქართველოში, აქვს მუდმივი სამუშაო ადგილი ან ლეგალური შემოსავლის

Regarding those already living in Georgia, Gamsakhurdia assured that everyone regardless of his or her ethnicity will receive citizenship:

> *"In addition, the Citizenship Law of Georgia, which will grant citizenship to all those who are permanently registered in the Republic of Georgia, is in its finalisation phase."*[43]

However, for this he chooses a surprising event as a possible key date:

> *"Z.G. - As for the draft of the law on citizenship, here, of course, there will be the same restrictions as in all civilized countries, in particular, there will be a residence permit. Only those residents, regardless of nationality, who lived in Georgia before the annexation will receive citizenship. J. – Do you mean the annexation of 1921? Z.G. – I have not yet clarified this issue, but we may even accept the year 1801."*[44]

If he chose the annexation of 1921 as the key date he would clearly show that ethnicity was not of any relevance but solely the duration of residency in Georgia – which would mean that in the case of 1921 at least two generations and in the case of 1801 even 6 generations would receive citizenship. So the aspect that seems to have been the most important for him with respect to in citizenship is the approval of Georgia's independence and loyalty to the constitution. The Georgia that Gamsakhurdia had in mind was thought to be a nation of will, based on a kind of "independence patriotism".

However, his claim is not unproblematic. By naming the commitment to independence as a prerequisite for citizenship in the 1991 referendum, he actually contradicts the principle of secret and free elections, and it seems questionable how he envisioned the implementation of that. So even if the commitment to the constitution and independence was a legitimate demand, his statement could be misunderstood by the ethnic minorities and also misused by those who were against independence and wanted to further aggravate the situation.

Given this evidence, I conclude that Gamsakhurdias understanding of nation was based on Ilia Chavchavadze definition of nation as a composition of motherland, language and faith – in exactly this order. The main aspect was territorial: it is indeed important to note that the first pillar was not blood, race or ethnicity but the "motherland" in a territorial meaning. Second comes the Georgian language, the knowledge of which Gamsakhurdia considered a prerequisite

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წყარო და დეკლარაცია-ფიცზე ხელმოწერით დაადასტურებს თავის ერთგულებას საქართველოს რესპუბლიკის სახელმწიფო სუვერენიტეტის, მისი ტერიტორიული მთლიანობის მიმართ." Volume II, 49–100. Published in საქართველოს რესპუბლიკა / *sakartwelos respublika*, No. 99–100 (120), 2–4, 22.05.1991.

[43] "გარდა ამისა, დასრულების ფაზაშია საქართველოს მოქალაქეობის კანონი, რომელიც ითვალისწინებს მოქალაქეობის მინიჭებას ყველასათვის, ვინც მუდმივად არის ჩაწერილი საქართველოს რესპუბლიკაში." Volume II, 167–169. Published in საქართველოს რესპუბლიკა / *sakartwelos respublika*, No. 116 (136), 1, 14.06.1991.

[44] "Z.G. – რაც შეეხება მოქალაქეობრიობის კანონის პროექტს, აქ, რა თქმა უნდა, ისეთივე შეზღუდვები იქნება, როგორიც ყველა ცივილიზებულ ქვეყანაშია, კერძოდ, იქნება ბინადრობის ცენზიც. მოქალაქეობრიობას ნამდვილად მხოლოდ ის მცხოვრებნი მიიღებენ, ეროვნების მიუხედავად, რომლებიც საქართველოში ანექსიამდე ცხოვრობდნენ. J. – 1921 წლის ანექსიას გულისხმობთ? Z.G. – ეს საკითხი ჯერ არ დამიზუსტებია, მაგრამ შეიძლება 1801 წელიც კი მივიღოთ." Volume I, 125–127. Published in საქართველოს რესპუბლიკა / *sakartwelos respublika*, No. 13, 1, 21.12.1990.

for democratic participation, precisely because he saw Georgia as a multi-ethnic state: in order to create a common and unified level of communication, there had to be a *lingua franca*, in this case Georgian, as the national and official language. In the case of faith, this was not seen as a religious confession but rather as a commitment to common principles such as the independence of the Georgian state and loyalty to the constitution. Gamsakhurdia does speak of the Christian culture as guiding in Georgia, but for him this is not in contradiction or a point of conflict with a multi-ethnic and thus also multi-religious community that has always existed in Georgia.

Last but not least, the slogan საქართველო ქართველებისათვის / *sakartvelo karvelebisatvis* ("Georgia for the Georgians"), often attributed to Gamsakhurdia, deserves a closer look. If we consider the generally accepted assumption in the scientific literature that this was his central political slogan, it is very surprising that there is not a single direct attestation of this phrase in his speeches. There are only two instances in which he mentions this sentence, but here, he only quotes it and, most importantly, strictly rejects it:

> *"Obviously, the situation in South Ossetia and Abkhazia is somewhat different - the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has found its reasoning ground, which it needs so much to fight with us. If we believe these reports, we might think that we are doing nothing but ruining the friendship of the peoples living in Georgia. As if we were shouting the slogan 'Georgia for the Georgians' and oppressed non-Georgians. Unfortunately, our information does not get on the pages of the central newspapers and people believe this nonsense..."*[45]

On another occasion, he again makes it clear that he never uttered this slogan:

> *"Western mass media, repeating all the lies of Soviet propaganda, created the image of a cruel dictator in Georgia – a 'Caucasian Saddam Hussein'. According to this myth, I encroached upon all political privileges, had my political opponents imprisoned, violated human rights, oppressed ethnic minorities, and shouted out the slogan 'Georgia for the Georgians'. But in fact everything was the opposite. The slogan 'Georgia for the Georgians', so foreign to my Christian and democratic ideals, was never called out by me."*[46]

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[45] "ცხადია, რამდენადმე სხვაგვარი სიტუაციაა სამხრეთ ოსეთში და აფხაზეთში - ის საბჭოთა კავშირის კომუნისტურმა პარტიამ მიაგნო საყრდენ წერტილს, რომელიც ესოდენ სჭირდება ჩვენთან საბრძოლველად. ამგვარ ცნობებს რომ ავყვეთ, ჩვენ თურმე იმის გარდა არას ვაკეთებთ, რომ საქართველოში მოსახლე ხალხების მეგობრობას ვანგრავთ. ვითომდა შევიარაღდით ლოზუნგით – საქართველო – ქართველებს" და არაქართველებს ვავიწროვებთ. სამწუხაროდ, ჩვენი ინფორმაცია ცენტრალური გაზეთების ფურცლებზე ვერ ხვდება და ხალხს სჯერა ეს სისულელე …" Volume I, 153–159. Published in საქართველოს რესპუბლიკა / *sakartwelos respublika*, No. 36 (56), 1, 22.02.1991.

[46] "დასავლეთის მასობრივმა საშუალებებმა, იმეორებნენ რა საბჭოთა პროპაგანდის ყველა ტყუილს, შექმნეს წარმოდგენა (იმიჯი) ულმობელი დიქტატორისა საქართველოში – 'კავკასიელი სადამ ჰუსეინი'. ამ მითის მიხედვით ხდებოდა ყველა პოლიტიკური პრივილეგიების ხელყოფა, პატიმრობაში აჰყავდა მისი პოლიტიკური ოპონენტები, ირღვეოდა ადამიანის უფლებები, ხდებოდა ეთნიკური უმცირესობების დაჩაგვრა და გაისმოდა მოწოდება ლოზუნგით საქართველო ქართველებისათვის. მაგრამ ფაქტიურად ყველაფერი იყო პირიქით. ლოზუნგი საქართველო ქართველებისათვის ასე უცხო ჩემი ქრისტიანული და დემოკრატიული იდეალებისათვის, არასოდეს ყოფილა მოწოდებული ჩემს მიერ." Volume III, 268–279. Published in აღდგომა/*aghdgoma*, No. 16 (48), 1–2, 12.05.1993.

4. Results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses

After the quantitative and qualitative analyses, I thus come to the conclusion that there is a huge difference between what Gamsakhurdia uttered himself and what the scientific literature says about him. Although there are a few problematic statements, neither the quantitative nor the qualitative analysis reveals any explicit and systematic use of hate speech against the ethnic minorities of Abkhazia and Ossetia; 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.

In light of this result, we must ask how such a discrepancy between Gamsakhurdia's speeches and his reception may have come about. The ambiguity of political language could be used here as an explanatory approach. In addition to the many passages in which he speaks of peaceful and equal coexistence, there are also passages in which the subtext suggests a different interpretation. Judging about subtexts is not easy, however, because it is difficult to prove whether it was intentional or unintentional and therefore the question of liability cannot be clarified in this regard.

I would like to illustrate this with the citizenship issue. On multiple occasions Gamsakhurdia linked the granting of citizenship to the vote for the referendum of independence – these statements are prime examples of the ambiguity of political language. Although the link between the referendum and the citizenship issue seems to be a logical demand from the state's point of view (e.g., loyalty to the constitution or the basic political order is in many countries a prerequisite for becoming a civil servant), it can also be read as an attempt at blackmailing: "Vote for independence, otherwise you won't get citizenship." Not getting citizenship would be associated with the fear of losing everything or at least certain rights at the end. The minorities could understand it as the state leaving them no other option at all. The same is true of the demand of loyalty to the state. This demand can be understood as a condition: "your rights are guaranteed as long as you are loyal to the state". In this sense, the meaning of the equally necessary obligation of the state towards the citizens is lost. Furthermore, "state" can also be understood as "government", or "constitution" as "law", which in turn can be arbitrary and can create the feeling of depending on the mercy of the state.

Political language is fundamentally imprecise, which results in its ambiguity and thus the possibility of alternative interpretations. In a political situation where there is an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty, a lot can be misunderstood. So it may be that Gamsakhurdia did not use hate speech but, contrary to that, he intentionally left room for misinterpretation while his political actions were violent and directed against the ethnic minorities. However, we must admit that at a certain point the listener's perception of what is being said is beyond the speaker's influence. The generally tense situation at the time and the great uncertainties may thus have led to the ethnic minorities primarily perceiving the negative subtext of his speeches.

This first empirical study on Zviad Gamsakhurdia's political speech shows that there is a great need for further research in order to clarify the question of his complicity in these conflicts; in any case, his alleged position in the scientific literature requires closer scrutiny.

5. Limits and possibilities of politolinguistic analysis

The fact that the given text collection is a compilation of printed speeches, interviews etc. of Zviad Gamsakhurdia, has some important consequences. There are two things that must be kept in mind here: first, it cannot be assumed that these volumes contain all of Gamsakhurdia's public statements and speeches. Second, in the case of the speeches and interviews that were printed in journals and magazines and served as the basis for the collection, it cannot be guaranteed that every word was recorded or reproduced faithfully. For this purpose, audio or video material would have to be available for all his speeches, which has not been the case. This means that all the conclusions we can draw from the collection are only based on these texts in their specific form. They will have to be revised as soon as more or better text material or even audio-video material becomes available.

The term of office of Zviad Gamsakhurdia was very short, which is why only a limited number of relevant materials exist that can be used for a political-linguistic analysis. In order to actually get an answer to the question of what Gamsakhurdia's attitude towards minorities was, it would therefore also be necessary to examine his statements before his term of office, for example during his time as a dissident. Even then, a quantitative analysis can never be sufficient and must always be supplemented by qualitative analyses.

In addition, the speeches of other politicians that were active during that time must also be taken into account: it is possible that the hate speech attributed to Gamsakhurdia was in fact uttered by other politicians.

Another aspect is the need to combine the analytical methods. As long as only those text passages can be found in which the searched terms are used directly, the quantitative analysis reaches its limits as soon as, e.g., personal pronouns or other reference words are used. In these cases, implications, allusions or ambiguities fall under the grid. A quantitative analysis alone can only be fruitful if there are very large data sets available.

There are also certain technical limitations to the politolinguistic analysis of these speeches. For the time being, the GNC is primarily designed for linguistic analysis and cannot use the full potential of politolinguistic analysis methods. What is currently not yet possible is:

- the analysis of argument structures
- sentiment analysis
- a systematic examination of ambiguities
- the analysis of styles of speech, the use of idioms and metaphors as well as rhetoric devices
- an analysis according to text types.

Nevertheless, even with the limited technical possibilities, more complete conclusions can be drawn when quantitative and qualitative analysis are combined. The approach of initially working out "anomalies" and "peculiarities" with the quantitative analysis and then, based on this, carrying out a qualitative analysis has certainly proven successful in the given case. But it is important for explanatory approaches in the context of qualitative analyses to include related scientific fields such as history, ethnology, sociology, and so on.

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ზვიად გამსახურდიას პოლიტიკური გამოსვლების ანალიზი აფხაზეთისა და ოსეთის ეთნიკურ უმცირესობებთან დაკავშირებით

ანასტასია ყამარაული

წინამდებარე სტატიაში წარმოდგენილი კვლევა თეორიული თვალსაზრისით ნაწილობრივ ეფუძნება კონსტრუქტივიზმს. ამ პერსპექტივიდან სამყარო, აზროვნება და ენა ურთიერთქმედებენ ციკლურ რეჟიმში, რომელშიც სამყარო განსაზღვრავს ჩვენს აზროვნებას, ის კი, თავის მხრივ - ენას. შედეგად, სამყაროს აღქმა ხორციელდება ენის მეშვეობით, რომელიც დეტერმინირებულია აზროვნებით. ჩვენი მოსაზრებით, ამ ციკლზე გავლენის სხვადასხვა საშუალება არსებობს; მაგალითად, შეგვიძლია შევცვალოთ ჩვენი მოსაზრებების ენობრივი რეალიზაცია კონკრეტულ ფაქტთან ან თემასთან მიმართებით და ამით შევცვალოთ მისი აღქმა. საბოლოოდ, ჩვენ შეგვიძლია შევცვალოთ ფაქტების/თემების მიმართ საზოგადოების დამოკიდებულება და, შესაბამისად, ჩვენი მოქმედების გზაც.

სტატიაში განხილულია დამოუკიდებელი საქართველოს პირველი პრეზიდენტის ზვიად გამსახურდიას გამოსვლები ეთნიკური უმცირესობების შესახებ საბჭოთა კავშირის დაშლის შემდეგ მზარდი ტერიტორიული კონფლიქტის ფონზე. ჩვენი ინტერესი აღნიშნული საკითხისადმი გამოწვეული იყო სურვილით, ემპირიულად შეგვესწავლა სამეცნიერო ლიტერატურაში ფართოდ გავრცელებული მოსაზრების ვალიდურობა, რომლის მიხედვითაც, ზვიად გამსახურდია სიძულვილის ენას იყენებდა საქართველოში მცხოვრები ეთნიკური უმცირესობების მიმართ. მიუხედავად იმისა, რომ ამ შეფასებას პოლიტოლოგები საერთაშორისო სამეცნიერო სივრცეში უკვე 30 წელზე მეტია იზიარებენ, ჯერ არავის შეუსწავლია აღნიშნული საკითხი ემპირიულად და არც სისტემური ანალიზი არ არსებობს ზვიად გამსახურდიას პოლიტიკური ენის შესახებ. შესაბამისად, აღნიშნული მოსაზრება ჯერჯერობით მხოლოდ ვარაუდს ეფუძნება. აქვე გვინდა აღვნიშნოთ, რომ ზვიად გამსახურდიას პოლიტიკური მეტყველების ემპირიულად დასაბუთებული და მეთოდოლოგიურად გამართული სისტემური ანალიზის არარსებობა იმითაც იყო განპირობებული, რომ ზვიად გამსახურდიას პოლიტიკური ენის მთლიანობაში შესწავლა მხოლოდ რამდენიმე წელია შესაძლებელი, მას შემდეგ, რაც ქართული ენის ეროვნულ კორპუსში შეიქმნა პოლიტიკური ტექსტების ქვეკორპუსი, რომელშიც ზვიად გამსახურდიას პოლიტიკური გამოსვლები შედარებით სრულად არის ასახული, რაც პოლიტიკოსის მეტყველების შესწავლის შესაძლებლობას გვაძლევს კორპუსლინგვისტური მეთოდების გამოყენებით.

კვლევის პროცესში რაოდენობრივი და თვისებრივი ანალიზის საშუალებით შესაძლებელი გახდა იმის დადგენა, რომ არსებული მონაცემების საფუძველზე ის ზოგადი ვარაუდი, რომლის მიხედვითაც ეთნიკური უმცირესობების მიმართ პრეზიდენტი სიძულვილის ენას სისტემატურად იყენებდა, არ დადასტურდა. თუმცა ზვიად გამსახურდიას გამოსვლების ენობრივმა ანალიზმა გამოავლინა მისივე განსხვავებული დამოკიდებულება ეთნიკურ უმცირესობებთან დაკავშირებით, რაც დაწვრილებით არის წარმოდგენილი სტატიაში.

ჩვენი კვლევის ძირითად ობიექტს წარმოადგენდა გამსახურდიას გამოსვლები, რომლებშიც საქართველოს პრეზიდენტი აფხაზეთისა და ოსეთის კონფლიქტებს ეხება. როგორც მასალის ანალიზმა გვიჩვენა, გამსახურდია თავის პოლიტიკურ გამოსვლებში უმეტესად ყურადღებას ამახვილებს კონფლიქტის პოლიტიკურ ასპექტზე, ვიდრე ეთნიკურ საკითხზე. თუმცა მის მიერ გამოყენებული ეთნიკური, ისტორიული თუ პოლიტიკური ტერმინების ანალიზი გვავარაუდებინებს, რომ მას განსხვავებული დამოკიდებულება ჰქონდა ოსეთის დამოუკიდებლობის მოძრაობის მიმართ, ვიდრე აფხაზეთში მიმდინარე პროცესების მიმართ. იგი არაიშვიათად იყენებს ფრაზას **„ე.წ. სამხრეთი ოსეთი“** ან აღნიშნული რეგიონის ისტორიულ სახელწოდებას – **შიდა ქართლი**, თუმცა ეს ლინგვისტური დელეგიტიმაციის სტრატეგია მხოლოდ პოლიტიკურ დონეზეა გამიზნული და არა ეთნიკურ დონეზე. უმეტეს შემთხვევაში ზვიად გამსახურდია იყენებს ნეიტრალურ ფორმულირებას, რაც იმაზე მიუთითებს, რომ, ზოგადად, ეთნიკური უმცირესობებისადმი მის უარყოფით დამოკიდებულებაზე აქაც არ შეიძლება საუბარი.

თუ შევადარებთ სიტყვების **ერი**, **ხალხი** და **მოსახლეობა** გამოყენების სიხშირეს, აშკარად იკვეთება ის ფაქტი, რომ ზვიად გამსახურდია თავს არიდებს კონფლიქტის კონტექსტში **ერის** გამოყენებას და აფხაზებთან, ასევე ოსებთან მიმართებით ისეთ ნეიტრალურ ტერმინებს იყენებს, როგორიც არის **ხალხი** ან **მოსახლეობა.** კონცეპტი **ერი** გამოყენებულია ქართველებთან მიმართებით, თუმცა აქაც უნდა ითქვას, რომ პოლიტიკოსი ძირითადად მაინც ნეიტრალურ ფორმულირებას ამჯობინებს და ამ შემთხვევაშიც იყენებს სიტყვას **ხალხი**.

აფხაზეთისა და ოსეთის სეპარატისტული მოძრაობის შესახებ ზვიად გამსახურდიას გამოსვლების შედარებამ ცხადყო, რომ უარყოფითი სენტიმენტის გადმომცემი სიტყვები სჭარბობს ოსთა სეპარატიზმზე საუბრისას: აქ ვხვდებით ისეთ კოლოკანტებს, როგორებიცაა **ტერორისტი, ბანდიტი, სეპარატისტი**. აფხაზებზე საუბრისას მის მეტყველებაში მხოლოდ **სეპარატისტი** დასტურდება. ჩვენ მიერ გამოყენებული ემპირიულ მონაცემთა ბაზა არ არის სრული და არ მოიცავს ზვიად გამსახურდიას ყველა გამოსვლას, მაგრამ არსებული ემპირიული მასალების ანალიზიდან გამომდინარე, შეიძლება ვივარაუდოთ, რომ

პრეზიდენტი ოსეთის სეპარატისტული მოძრაობის მიმართ მეტად უარყოფითადაა განწყობილი, ვიდრე - აფხაზეთის მიმართ.

განსხვავებით საზოგადოდ გავრცელებული ვარაუდისა, რომ გამსახურდია სიძულვილის ენას იყენებდა ეთნიკური უმცირესობების მიმართ, ემპირიული მასალის ანალიზმა სრულიად სხვა სურათი გვიჩვენა: იგი არაერთხელ ეხება მეგობრულ და ძმურ კავშირს სხვადასხვა ეთნიკურ ჯგუფებს შორის და არაერთხელ აღნიშნავს ხაზგასმით, რომ კავკასიის ხალხები ყოველთვის მშვიდობიანად ცხოვრობდნენ და თანაარსებობდნენ და რომ არსებული კონფლიქტები მხოლოდ საბჭოთა აგიტაციის შედეგია. ამასთან, გამსახურდიასთვის კონფლიქტი, უპირველეს ყოვლისა, პოლიტიკური ხასიათისაა. როგორც ემპირიული მასალის ანალიზმა გვიჩვენა, ეთნიკურ უმცირესობებთან დაკავშირებით უარყოფითად საუბრისას ეს ეხება პოლიტიკურ ასპექტს და არა - ეთნიკურს.

ზვიად გამსახურდიას გამოსვლების თვისებრივი ანალიზი გვიჩვენებს, რომ იგი **საქართველოს** განიხილავს, როგორც მრავალფეროვან ეთნიკურ სახელმწიფოს, რომელიც მიესალმება ყველას, ვინც აღიარებს საქართველოს დამოუკიდებლობას. ეს მნიშვნელოვანი პუნქტია, რადგან ცხადყოფს, რომ მისთვის ეთნიკური წარმომავლობა გადამწყვეტი არ არის, მისთვის არსებითია დამოუკიდებელი ქართველი ერისადმი ერთგულება. ამით ის მიჰყვება ილია ჭავჭავაძის შეხედულებას **ერზე**, რომელიც შედგება სამი უმნიშვნელოვანესი კონცეპტისაგან: **ენა**, **მამული** და **სარწმუნოება** და რომლისთვისაც ეთნიკური კომპონენტი შეუსაბამოა.

საინტერესოა ისიც, რომ გამონათქვამი „საქართველო – ქართველებს“, რომლის ავტორადაც არაერთხელ არის დასახელებული ზვიად გამსახურდია, ვერბალურად მის გამოსვლებში არსად არ დასტურდება. ის ორი პასაჟი, რომლებიც ზვიად გამსახურდიას პოლიტიკური მეტყველების ქვეკორპუსში იძებნება, ციტირებაა, რომლებშიც გამსახურდია ამ შესიტყვების შესახებ საუბრობს. ორივე შემთხვევაში იგი კატეგორიულად უარყოფს ამ გამონათქვამს და ხაზგასმით აღნიშნავს, რომ ეს ყველაფერი მას „მიაწერეს“. იგი არაერთხელ აცხადებს, რომ მისთვის საქართველო არის მრავალეთნიკური სახელმწიფო, რომელშიც სხვადასხვა ხალხი ყოველთვის მშვიდობიანად თანაცხოვრობდა და მისი სურვილია, რომ ასე გაგრძელდეს მომავალშიც. ემპირიული მასალის ანალიზი ცალსახად გვაძლევს იმის თქმის უფლებას, რომ ეთნიკურ უმცირესობებთან მიმართებით პოლიტიკოსის შესახებ არსებული ზოგადი მოსაზრება არ შეესაბამება სიმართლეს.

კვლევის შედეგები ცხადყოფს ზვიად გამსახურდიას პოლიტიკური გამოსვლების უფრო ღრმა და საფუძვლიანი შესწავლის აუცილებლობას თანამედროვე მეთოდების გამოყენებით და საკმაო საფუძველს გვაძლევს

იმისათვის, რომ საყოველთაოდ გაზიარებული მოსაზრება აფხაზეთისა და ოსეთის კონფლიქტში ზვიად გამსახურდიას როლის შესახებ გადაიხედოს. პარალელურად, პასუხს მოითხოვს ლოგიკური კითხვა, თუ როგორ ჩნდება ასეთი შეუსაბამობა ზვიად გამსახურდიას პოლიტიკური გამოსვლების აღქმასა და მათ რეალურ შინაარსს შორის.

სტატიაში ასევე ნაჩვენებია, თუ რა შესაძლებლობები არსებობს დღეს ქართული პოლიტიკური მეტყველების სისტემური კვლევის თვალსაზრისით ქართული ენის ეროვნული კორპუსის სახით და რომელ სფეროებში საჭიროებს იგი შემდგომ განვითარებას.