



Election Media Monitoring

September 15-29, 2012

The following are the key findings of the media monitoring for the period of September 15-29:

- The Coalition Georgian Dream is leading with the time allocated to it on all the channels except Maestro.
- The First Channel allocated the time to all the parties that were registered as election subjects for the parliamentary elections to be held in Georgia on October 1, 2012.
- According to the allocated time, the sequence of top five subjects is the same on Rustavi 2 and Imedi, though the percentage rates are different.
- The Coalition Georgian Dream has unusually high rate on the Ninth Channel (41%), which has not been a case for this channel before.
- The government has less than 22 percent of direct speech on the First Channel, Maestro, Kavkasia and the Ninth Channel.
- The share of the President's direct speech is 70 percent or more on Rustavi 2, Imedi, Maestro and Real TV.
- The distribution of direct and indirect speech of the Coalition Georgian Dream is more or less equal on all the channels.
- The President and the United National Movement were covered with a positive tone in most cases of the allocated time on Rustavi 2, Imedi and Real TV; however, the Coalition Georgian Dream was covered with a negative tone.
- The government, the United National Movement and the President were mostly covered in a negative context on the Ninth Channel.
- Positive coverage was increased for the Coalition Georgian Dream on Maestro, Kavkasia and the Ninth Channel.
- One and the same subjects were covered positively but also negatively on Maestro and Kavkasia.
- During this monitoring period, positive coverage of the subjects was increased on the First Channel.

Methodology and Analysis

Election Media Monitoring of televisions includes quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative component includes time allocated to the subject, direct and indirect speech and tone of coverage. Components of the qualitative monitoring are: balance, accuracy, fact-based coverage, manipulation with footage and music.

The quantitative data are provided in the diagrams, which are attached to the report. The time allocated to the subjects is provided in the diagrams in percentage. 100 percent equals to the time allocated to all the subjects on each channel during the particular monitoring period, which is indicated in the title of the diagram. If the diagram does not show any political party, which is a monitoring subject, this means that no time was allocated at all to this party on this channel during this period. Those parties, to which at least several seconds/minutes were allocated, are shown on the diagram (often with 0 percent of time). The category “other” on each channel represents the group of subjects (except the political parties), to which 1 percent of time or less was allocated on this channel.

It is notable that the President is always counted alone despite whether he is making statements on behalf of the National Movement or not. However, other political figures, such as, for example: Vano Merabishvili, Davit Bakradze, Gigi Ugulava, etc. when they make speeches on behalf of the party and make appeals or nominate candidates, they are considered to be the “United National Movement” and not as the “government” or the “parliament”.

Direct and indirect speech differentiates whether the subject is talking in the news-item himself or if he is being talked about by: journalists or other respondents. The direct and indirect speech is provided in the diagrams in percentage. 100 percent equals to the time allocated to every subject on this channel, which is provided along the subjects on these diagrams (in a format of hr:min:sec). Those subjects, to which less than one minute was allocated on the channel, are not represented in the diagram.

The coverage tone is assigned to the subject when somebody is talking about him indirectly and also when he is talking about himself, about other subjects or about general issues. The diagrams show three categories of tones: positive (green), neutral (yellow) and negative (red). While counting the time allocated to the subject, the tone of this allocated time is also evaluated. Attention is paid to the text of a journalist or a respondent, and also to the overall context of the news item.

Tone-based evaluation of the time allocated to the subjects is given in two ways: evaluation of total time allocated to the subjects on a given channel based on the tone, and tone of coverage/mentioning of subjects by a certain journalist. The coverage tone is given in percentage. In the first case, 100 percent equals the total time of talking about a subject on a particular channel, and also the time of talking about this subject by journalists. The subjects, to which less than 1 minute was allocated in each case, are not represented on the diagrams.

While performing the qualitative monitoring, the emphasis is laid on the balance, i.e. if there are several different opinions about the covered subject represented in the news items. The emphasis is also laid on the accuracy, and for evaluating this, the monitor observes if the journalist's conclusion and the materials used in the news items are compatible to each other (footage, comments of the respondents), or if there are any mistakes in the names, figures, identity of respondents. They also observe if the news item refers to any particular fact, and if there is any footage/comments provided in this news item to prove this fact.

The monitoring pays attention to the cases of manipulating with footage and music in the news releases. It is assumed that there was a case of manipulation with footage and music, if the footage or photos used in the news item are represented, and there is a music accompanying that footage, which creates certain disposition and results in sharply positive or negative association.

Based on these components, the results of monitoring of news releases are provided for the period of September 15-29 per channels.

It is notable that only those parties and unions were monitored during this monitoring period, which were registered as election subjects for the Parliamentary elections of Georgia on October 1, 2012, in accordance with the Central Election Commission. Other subjects, such as the government, the President, the parliament, local self-government, local and international organizations¹, CEC, Commission for Ensuring the Voters List Accuracy (SIA), observers, the State Audit Service – are unchanged.

The First Channel

During the period of September 15-29, in total 5 hours and 26 minutes were allocated to the subjects on the First Channel. The time has been allocated quite equally among the subjects. It is notable that the First Channel allocated time to all the channels, which were registered

¹ The monitoring looks at the coverage of local NGOs only in the elections context.

as election subjects for the Georgian parliamentary elections of October 1, 2012. Majority of the subjects, to which more than 10 minutes were allocated, have more share of direct speech than the share of indirect speech. The lowest share of the direct speech was reported in case of the President and the government. The coverage tone has been mostly neutral in regards to all the subjects, in case of the overall tone and in case of the journalist's tone as well. However, in both cases, almost all the subjects were also covered with the positive tone as well. The biggest share of negative tone, in case of the overall tone, was reported for the government and the President. The headlines of news items on the First Channel are of neutral and descriptive nature. There was no news release broadcasted on September 18 on the First Channel, as far as that day the airtime was dedicated to the election debates among the political parties. Correspondingly, the First Channel did not cover any information about the prisoner torture during the evening programs. However, in subsequent days, there were some stories prepared about this topic. In regards to the respondents presented in the reports, the news items are mostly balanced on the First Channel. As for providing facts for supporting the information provided by the journalist, such facts are always present on the First Channel.

Rustavi 2

During the monitoring period, the most time was allocated to the subjects on Rustavi 2, compared to all the other channels – 9 hours and 25 minutes. The biggest and equal portions of time were dedicated to the Coalition Georgian Dream and the President. According to the allocated time, the top-four subjects also included the government and the United National Movement. Top-five subjects have the same sequence in case of Rustavi 2 and Imedi, however, the percentage rates are different. In regards to the direct and indirect speech, the share of direct speech prevails in case of almost all the subjects, and this indicator is relatively lower only in case of the Coalition Georgian Dream and the government. As for the tone-based evaluation of the time allocated to the subjects, the positive coverage is eye-catching for the President, the United National Movement, the government and Christian-Democratic Movement. At the same time, the negative coverage of the Coalition Georgian Dream also attracts attention. Distribution of positive and negative tones is similar in case of the overall tone and the journalist's tone. The headlines of news items are mostly informative and neutral. The positive stories are about representatives of the authorities, and also about the authorities itself, and the negative reports are about the Coalition Georgian Dream. There appeared the reports after spreading the videos on torture of prisoners, where the negative impression was created about the authorities, however, in the reports prepared on this topic, the main emphasis is laid not on the facts of torture as such, but instead on the scheme, which was related to the Coalition

Georgian Dream, and on the reaction of the authorities as well. In addition, much time was dedicated to the news items about publishing the covert wiretapped conversations, where the certain members of the coalition were presented in a very negative way. During the period before the polling day, increased number of the news items was observed, where only one side or source was presented.

Imedi

In case of Imedi and Rustavi 2, the sequence of top-five subjects, to which the most time was allocated, is the same. However, the percentage rates are different. The Coalition Georgian Dream ranks first, but it has the lowest share of direct speech. The share of positive coverage, in case of the overall tone and the journalist's tone, prevails in case of the President, the government, the United National Movement and the Christian-Democratic Movement. As for the Coalition Georgian Dream, it is mostly covered with the negative tone. The news items often have non-neutral headlines. The positive stories are mostly about the President, the government and the United National Movement, and the negative reports are about Bidzina Ivanishvili and the Coalition Georgian Dream. During this period the negative coverage was based on the audio recording published by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Prosecutor's Office. There were stories broadcasted on Imedi about the videos of prisoners torture and the related events on September 18 and afterwards, where the emphasis is mostly laid on the criminal scheme investigated by the MIA. In regards to the presented respondents, it was observed that the comments of the representatives of the Coalition Georgian Dream and comments of official sources were lacking in some news items. In the live broadcasts during the news releases, where the political figures and experts would go live, some bias was observed in case of the journalists, as they were interrupting some guests, but on the other hand they were too strict or too loyal to the others.

Maestro

During the period of September 15-29, in total 4 hours were dedicated to the monitoring subjects on Maestro. Significantly much more time was allocated to the top-four subjects: the government, the Coalition Georgian Dream, the President and the United National Movement. The share of direct and indirect speech has been distributed differently among these subjects. The lowest share of direct speech was reported in case of the government, and the highest - in case of the President. The Coalition Georgian Dream and the United National Movement have almost equal distribution of direct and indirect speech. These 4

subjects were covered both positively and negatively during the monitoring period. However, in case of the journalist's tone, negative tone prevails in regards to three subjects: the government, the United National Movement and the President. Headlines are mostly descriptive and neutral on Maestro. However, there are also some headlines with critical and negative contents observed towards the representatives of the authorities, which leaves negative impression about these subjects, as it is the case of the story contents. Such reports became more frequent after the videos were published about the torture of prisoners on September 18. In the news items prepared about the linkage between the Georgian Dream and the thieves in law, the journalists created the context, which undermined the reliability of the published wiretapped recordings. Same kind of coverage was made in regards to the audio recordings of the Coalition members.

In respect to the presented respondents, the reports on Maestro are mostly balanced. However, we also come across with other reports, where it is felt that the comments are lacking by the criticized sides, mostly by the representatives of the National Movement, the government or law enforcement bodies.

Kavkasia

Compared to other channels, the least time was allocated to the subjects on Kavkasia - 3 hours and 50 minutes. This time was quite unevenly distributed among the subjects. The biggest portion of time was allocated to the Coalition Georgian Dream. In regards to those subjects to which more than 5 minutes were allocated on Kavkasia, the share of direct and indirect speech was distributed more or less equally. The subjects are covered positively and negatively as well, both in case of the overall tone and in regards to the journalist's tone too. It is noteworthy that the negative reports about the government, the President and the authorities became more frequent after spreading the videos about the prisoners torture on September 18. However, there are also some news items, where the Coalition Georgian Dream is presented in a negative context. In both cases, the reason was the covert wiretapped audio and video materials published during this period.

The Ninth Channel

During the period of September 15-29, the Ninth Channel allocated 4 hours and 13 minutes to the subjects in total. In regards to the allocated time, the Coalition Georgian Dream ranks first. The time allocated to it is almost twice as much as the second-ranking government. Relatively less time was allocated to the United National Movement and the President, and they are ranking third and fourth based on the allocated time. As for the

distribution of direct and indirect share, the Coalition Georgian Dream and the President have more or less equal distribution. Other subjects have quite low share of direct speech. In regards to the subject coverage tone, there is an eye-catching prevalence of negative tone in regards to the government, the United National Movement and the president on the Ninth Channel. The CEC was covered negatively too. As for the positive tone, relatively high percent of positive tone was reported only in case of two subjects: the Coalition Georgian Dream and the President. On the Ninth Channel, there are critical and negative headlines about the President, the Government and the ruling team. These subjects are mostly covered in a negative context in the stories, as the result of the respondents' comments and due to the overall context and the journalist's text as well. This tendency was even more intensified as the result of video recordings spread on September 18. As for the reports with positive impression, such reports are mostly about the Coalition Georgian Dream and Bidzina Ivanishvili. As for presenting various opinions in the reports, in this regard the news items are more or less balanced. However, it should be pointed out that in most cases the reports do not contain the comments of the representatives of the government, various government structures and the United National Movement. There are cases observed on the Ninth Channel when the opinions drawn by a journalist are not relevant to the materials used in the report, or the journalist's reference is presented as a fact.

Real TV

During this monitoring period, Real TV dedicated 7 hours and 17 minutes to the subjects. The Coalition Georgian Dream ranks first, though the difference from other subjects is quite big. As for the distribution of the direct and indirect speech, among those subjects, to which more than half an hour was dedicated, the President and the National Movement have the biggest share of direct speech. It is also eye-catching that the Georgian Dream is ranking the first based to the allocated time, but it also has a very big share of negative coverage. As it was the case of overall tone, the same three subjects were revealed in regards to the journalist's tone, which have the biggest share of positive coverage. These subjects are: the President, the Government and the National Movement. Headlines on Real TV had clearly negative and ironic contents, basically in reference to the Coalition Georgian Dream and Bidzina Ivanishvili. The overall tone tends to be clearly positive or negative in the news items. Majority of positive reports are about the President and the Government. However, the stories with negative contents are mostly dedicated to the Georgian Dream and Bidzina Ivanishvili. This trend is still valid even after the events of September 18. There are cases of manipulation with editing, frames and music.

Annex - Diagrams

Diagram - Time 1

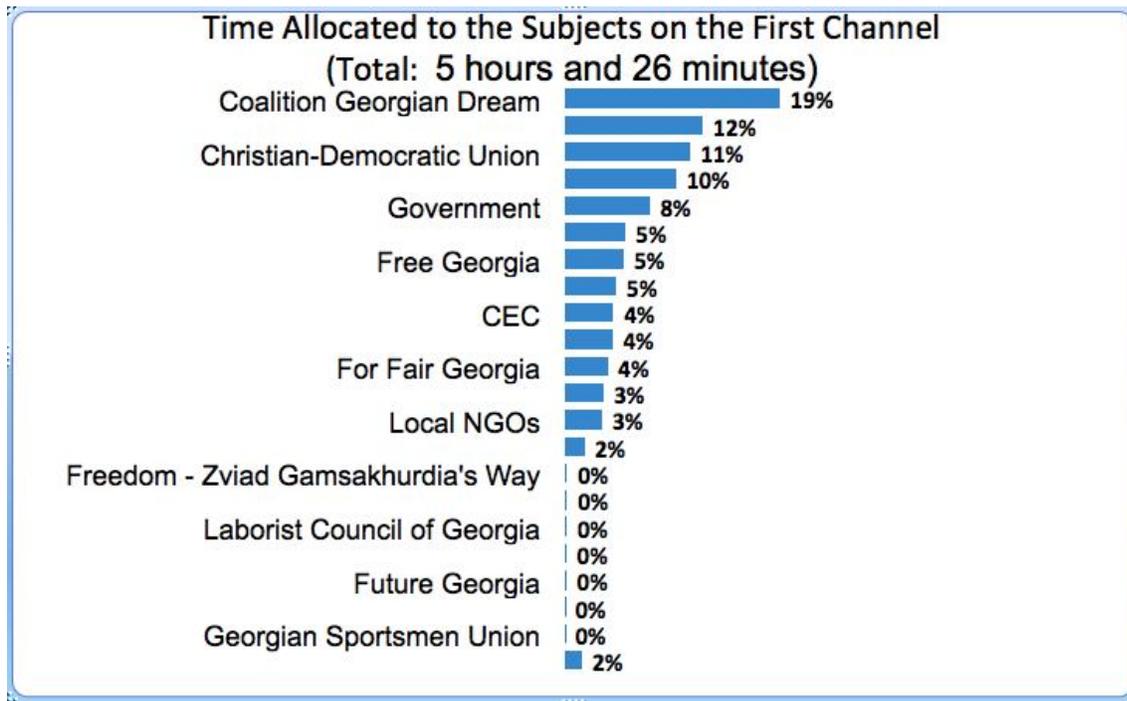


Diagram - Time 2

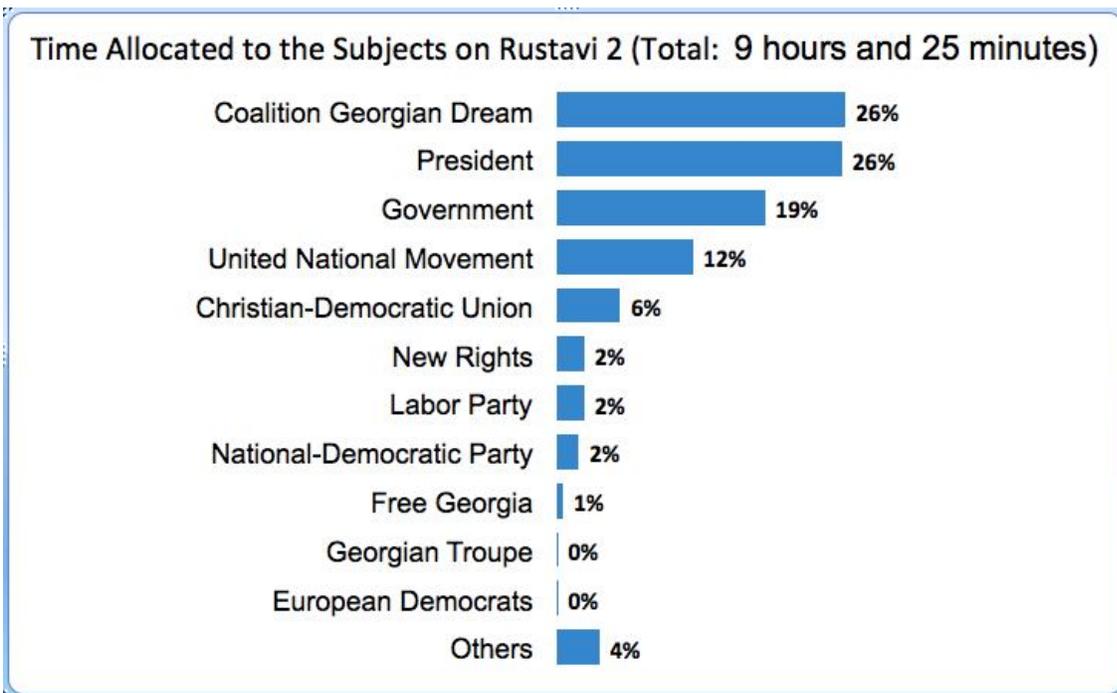


Diagram - Time 3

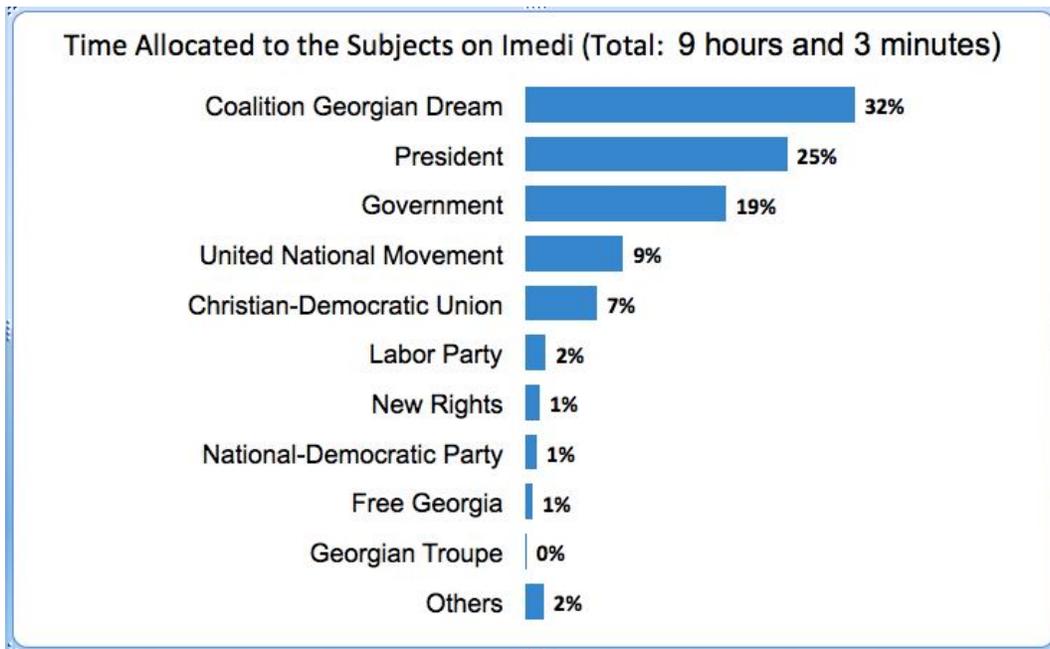


Diagram - Time 4

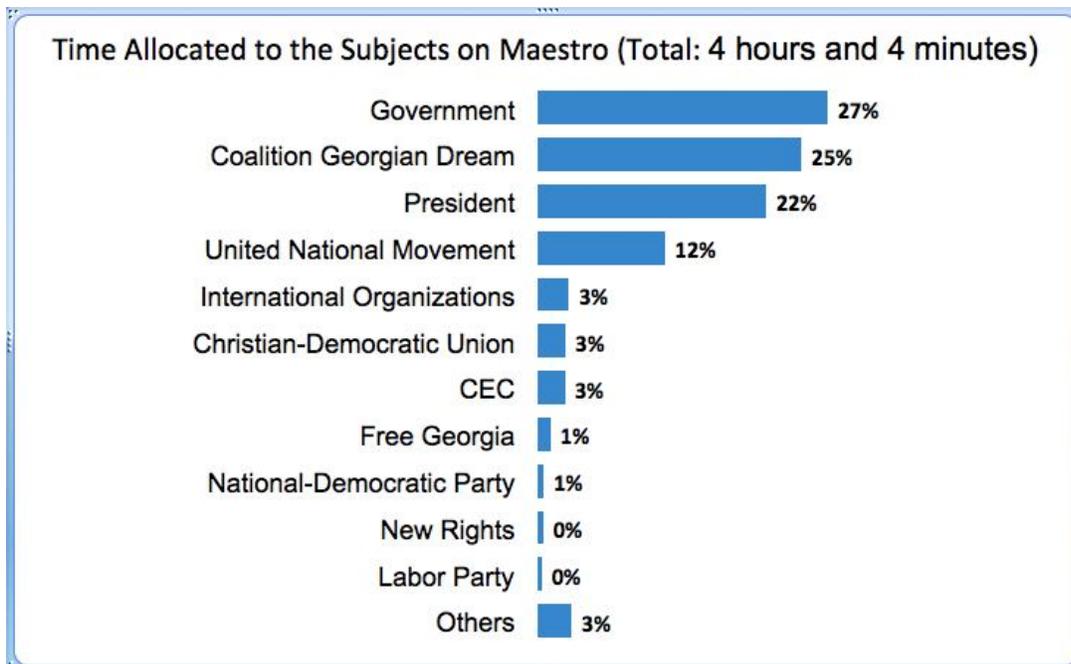


Diagram - Time 5

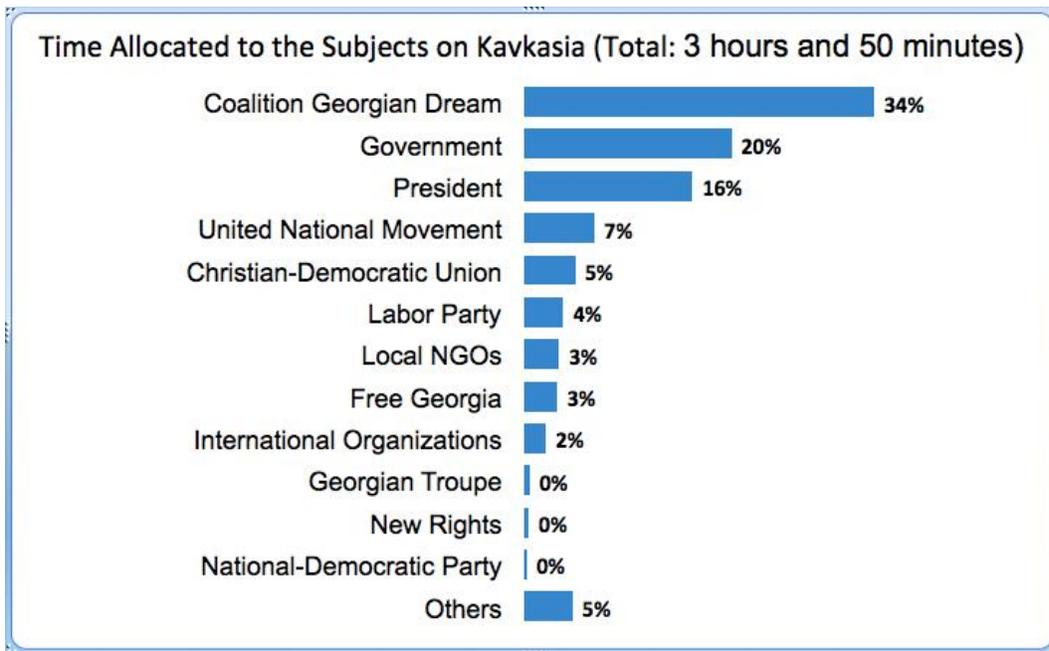


Diagram - Time 6

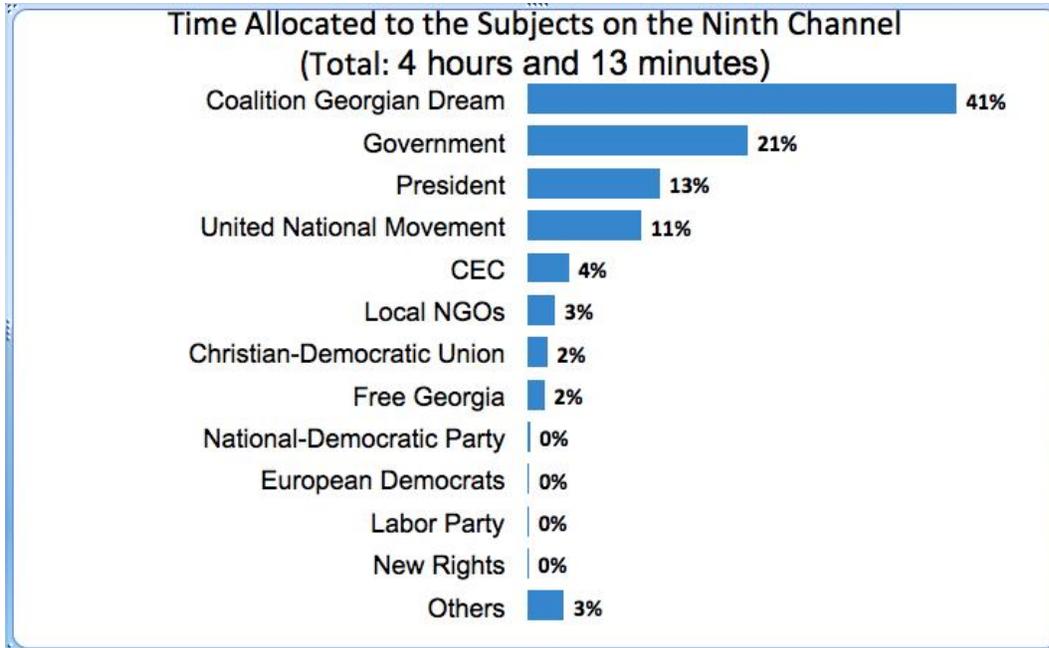


Diagram - Time 7

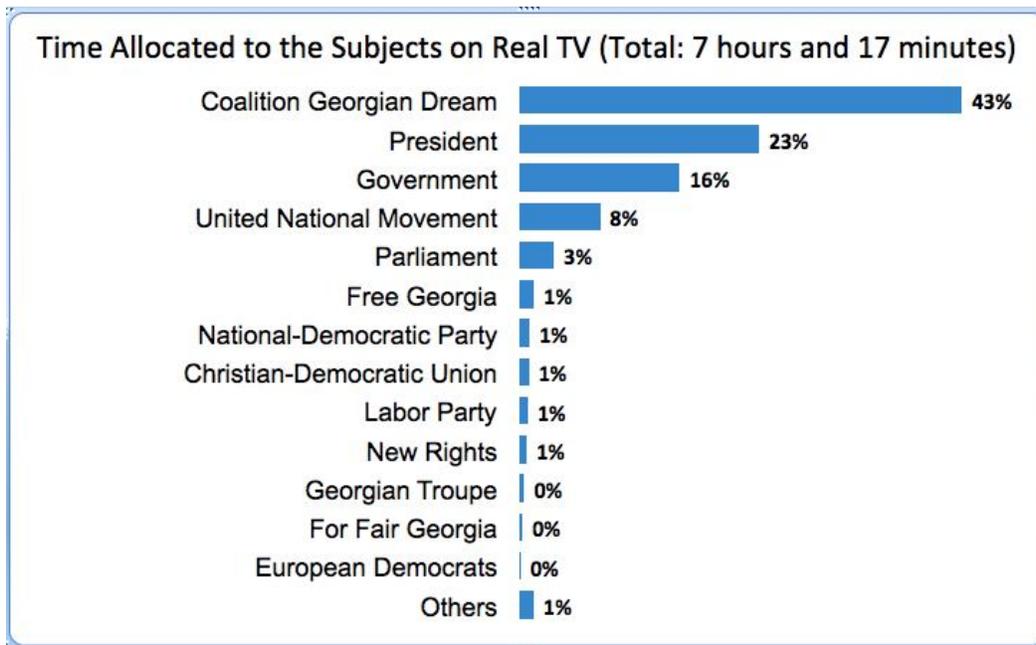


Diagram - Speech 1

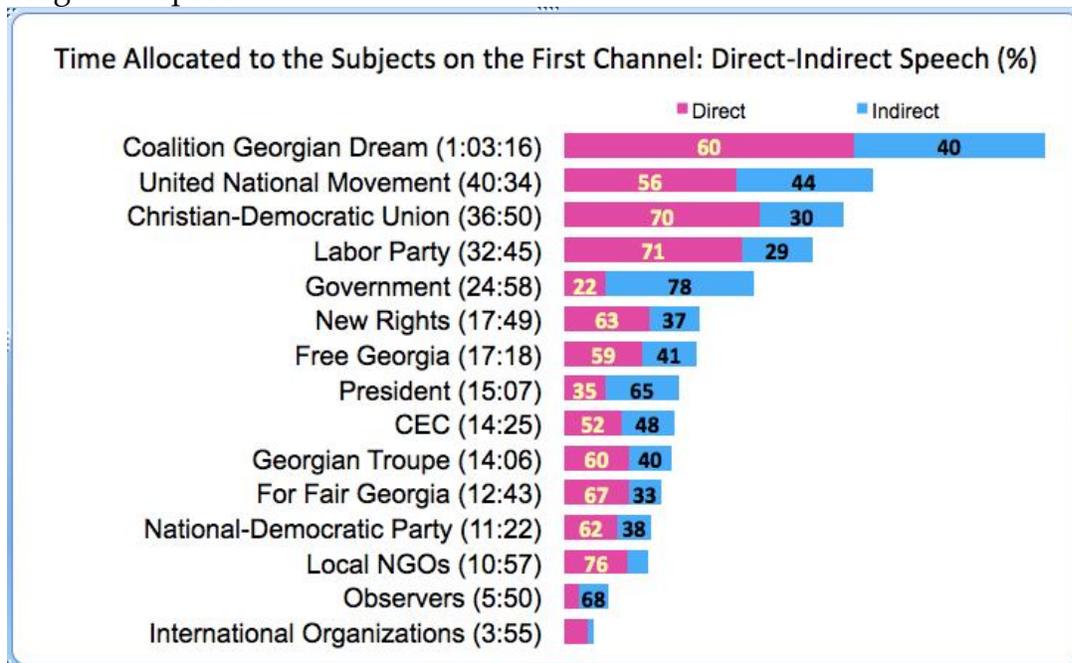


Diagram - Speech 2

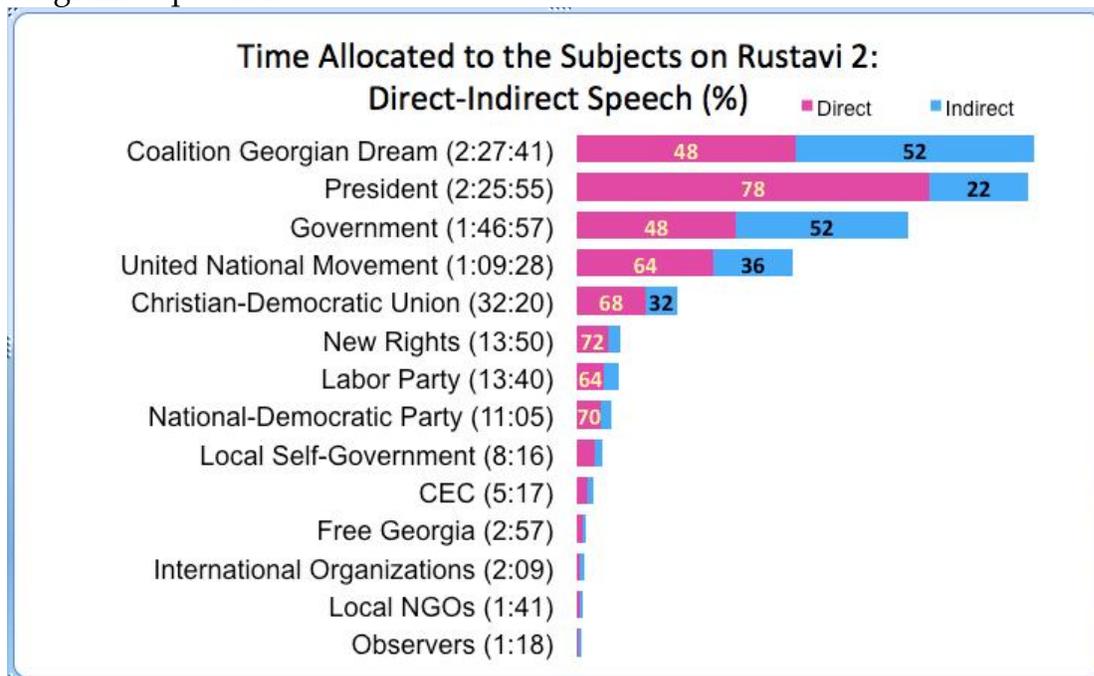


Diagram - Speech 3

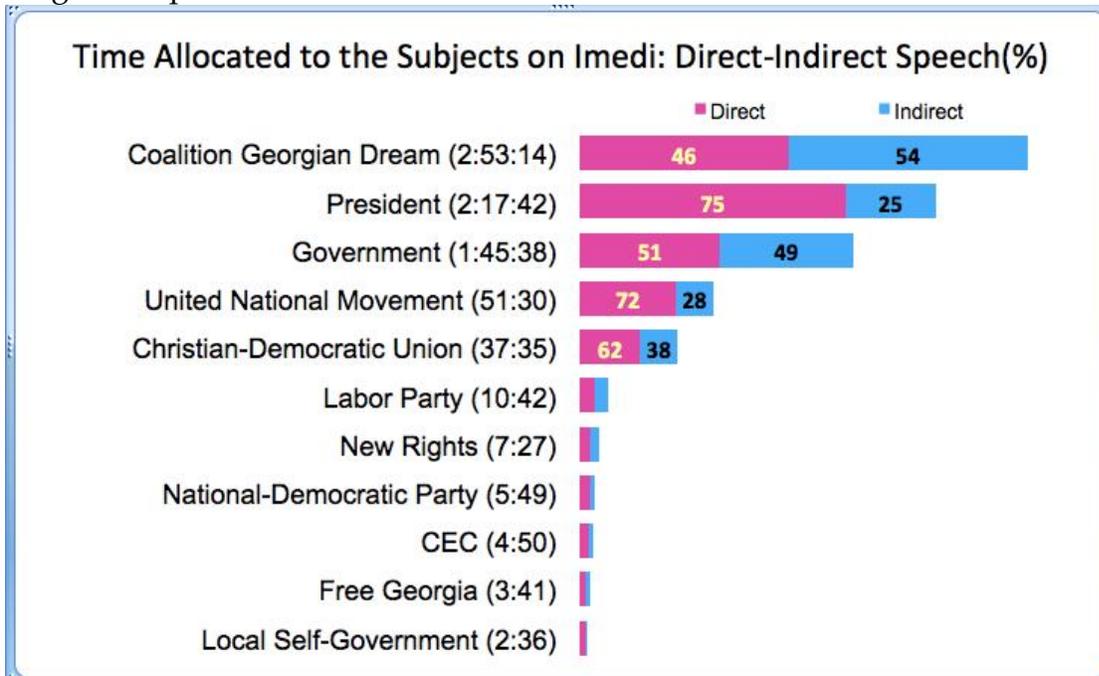


Diagram - Speech 4

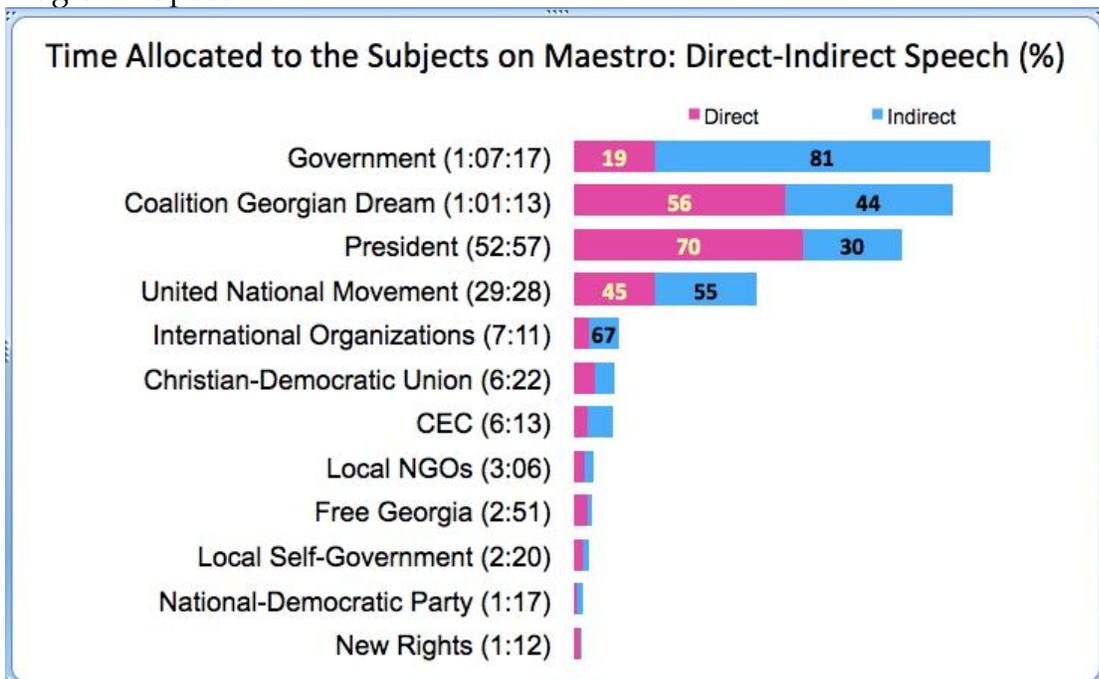


Diagram - Speech 5

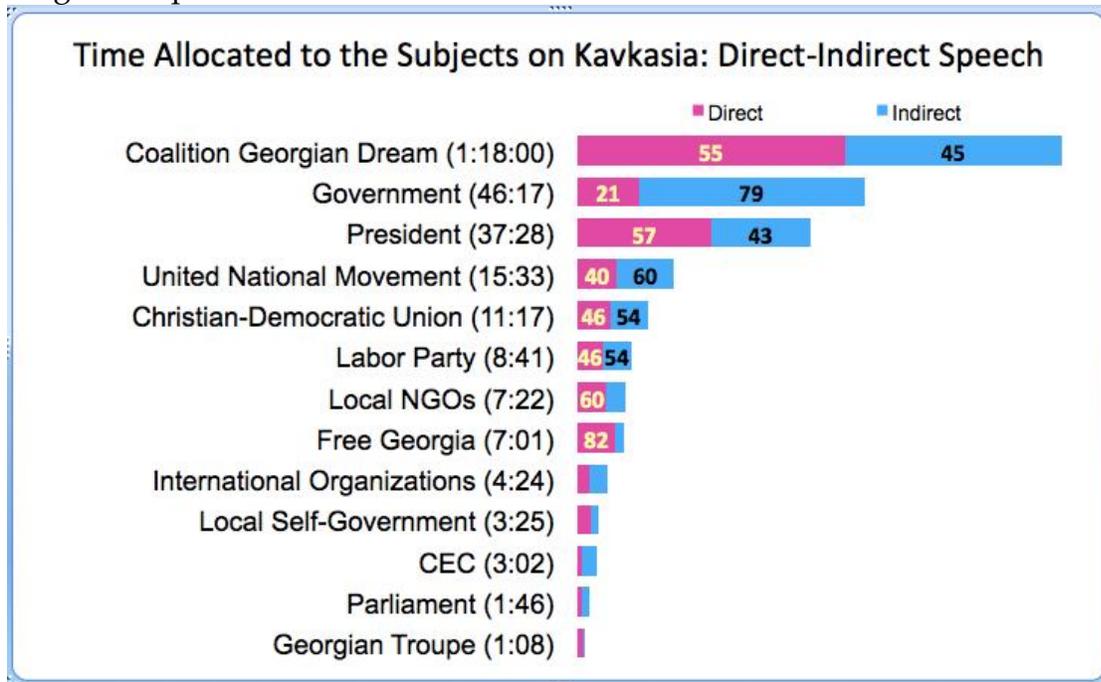


Diagram - Speech 6

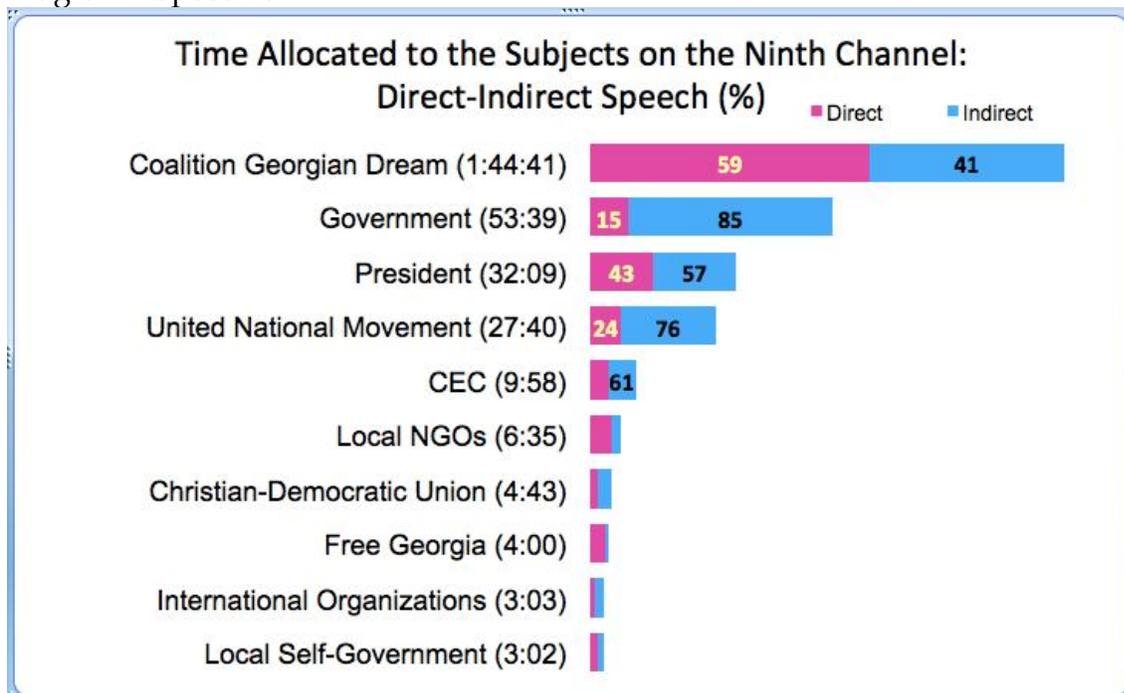


Diagram - Speech 7

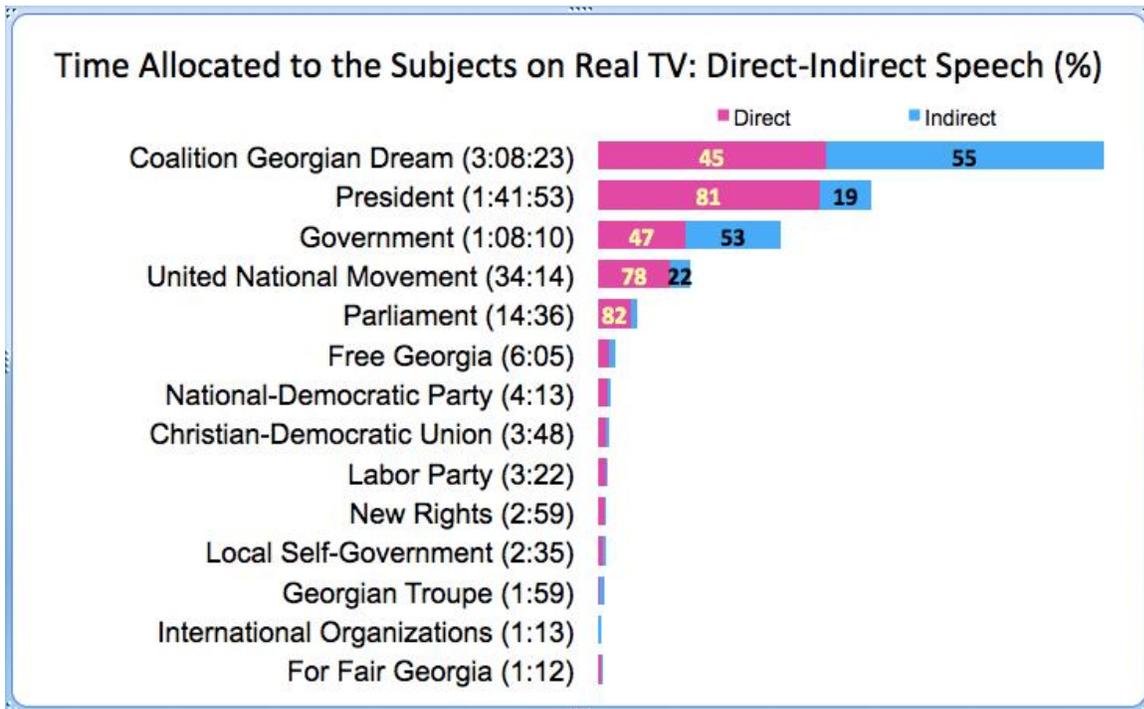


Diagram - Tone 1

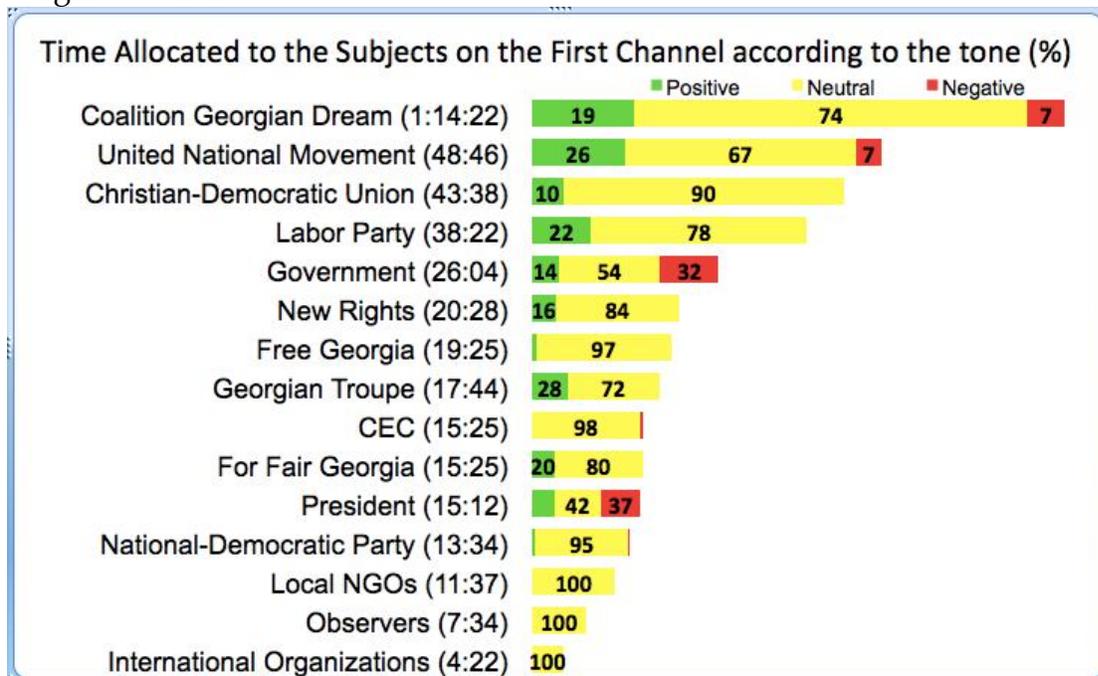


Diagram - Tone J1

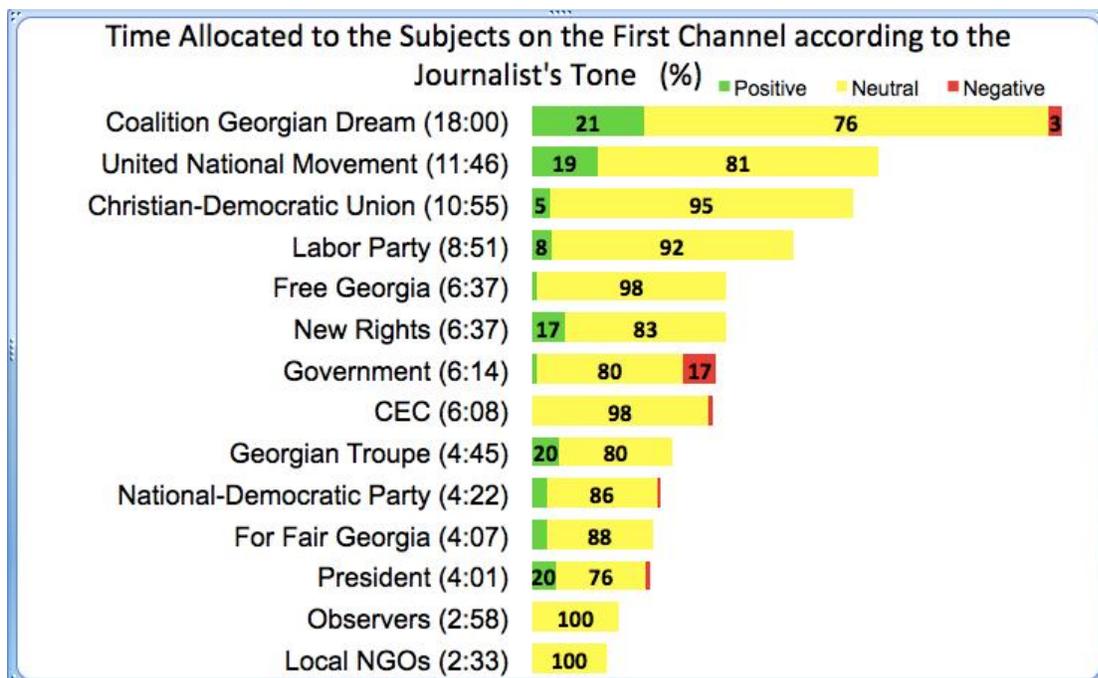


Diagram - Tone 2

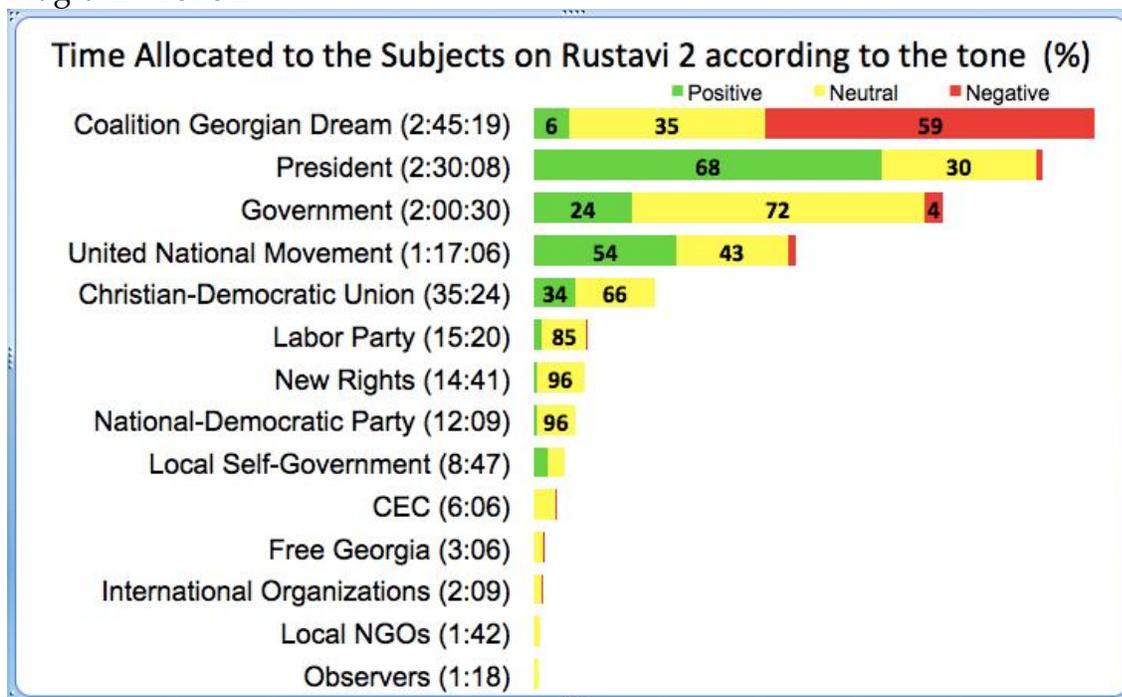


Diagram - Tone J2

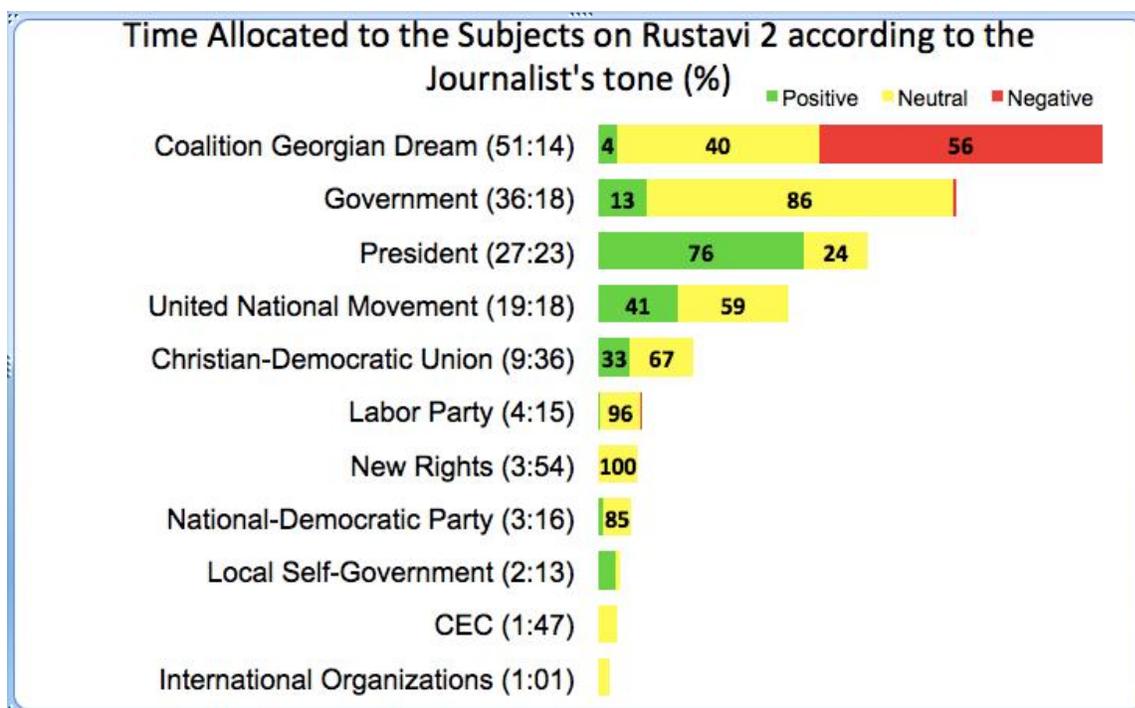


Diagram - Tone 3

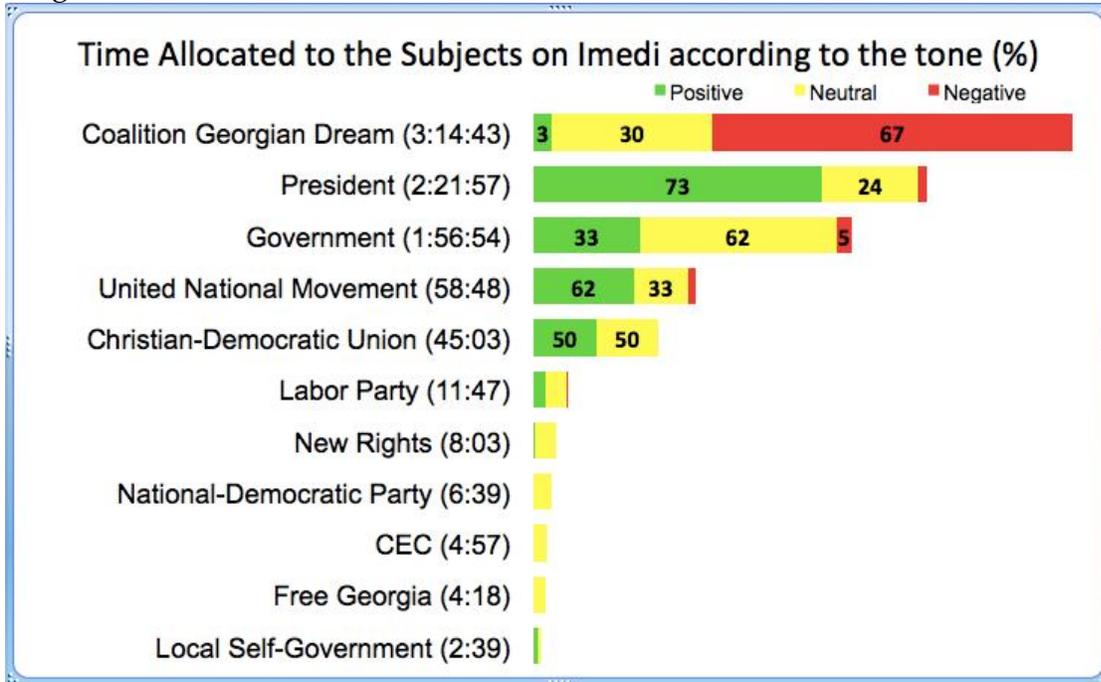


Diagram - Tone J3

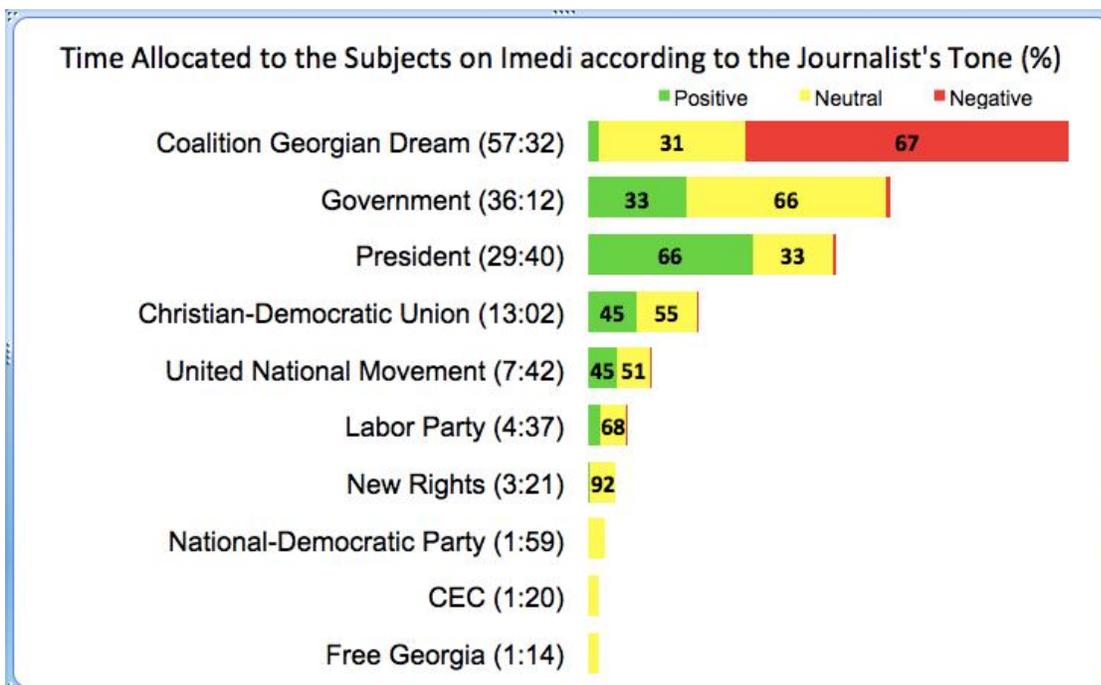


Diagram - Tone 4

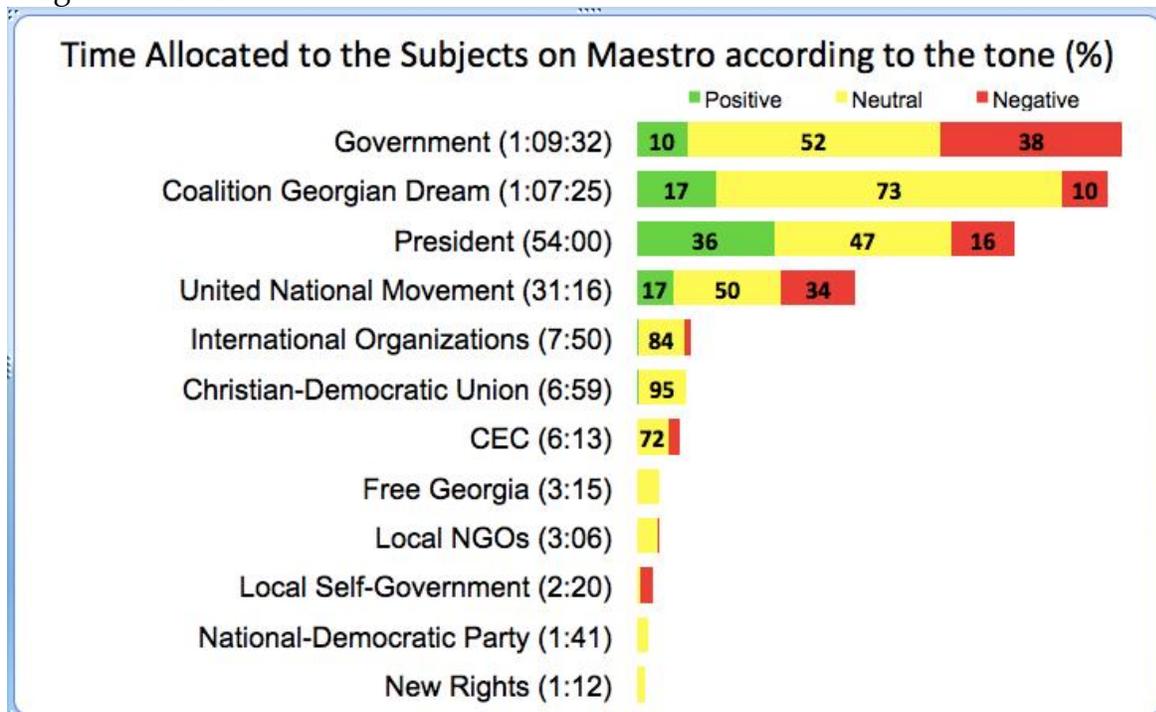


Diagram - Tone J4

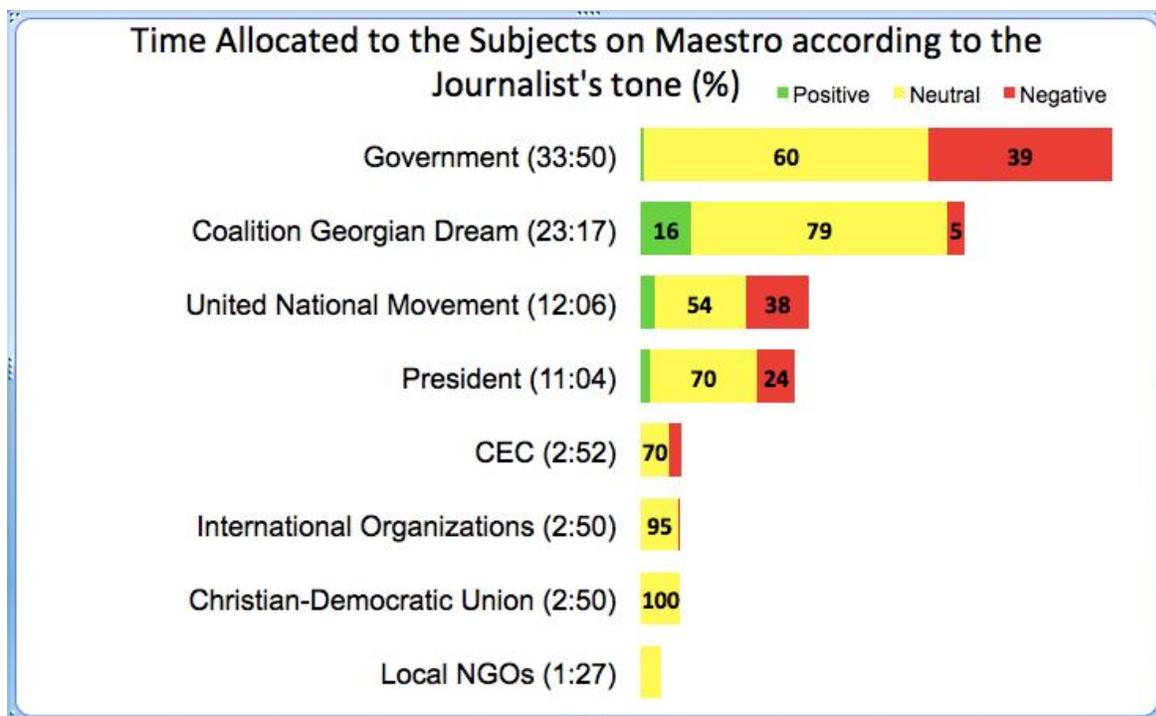


Diagram - Tone 5

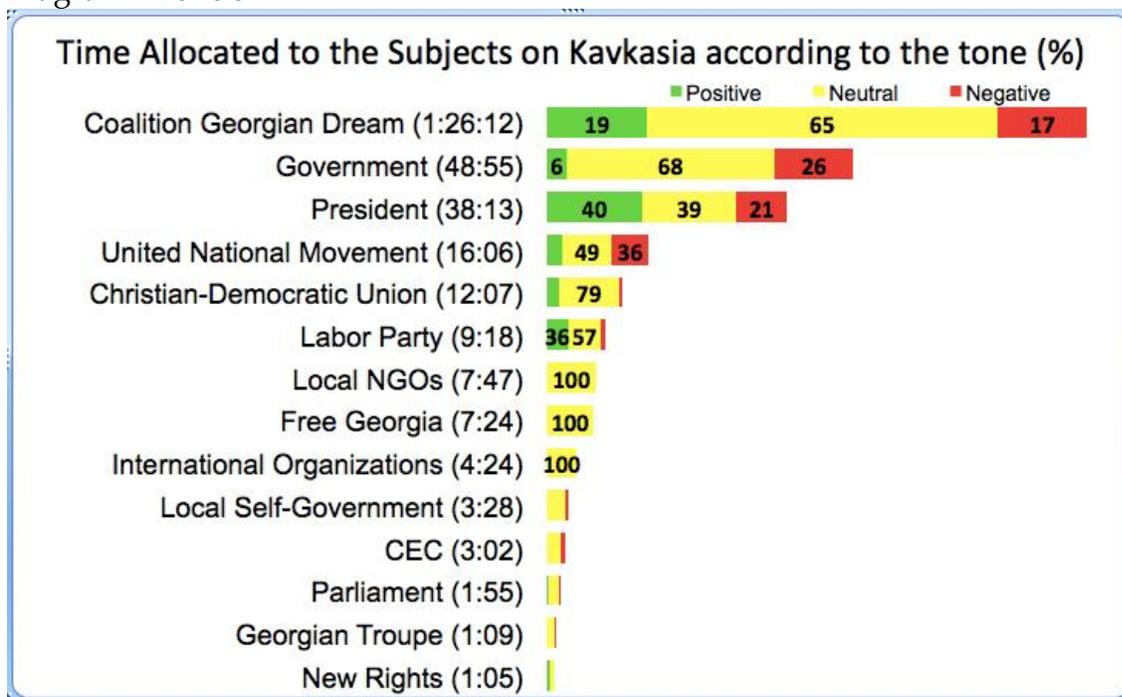


Diagram - Tone J5

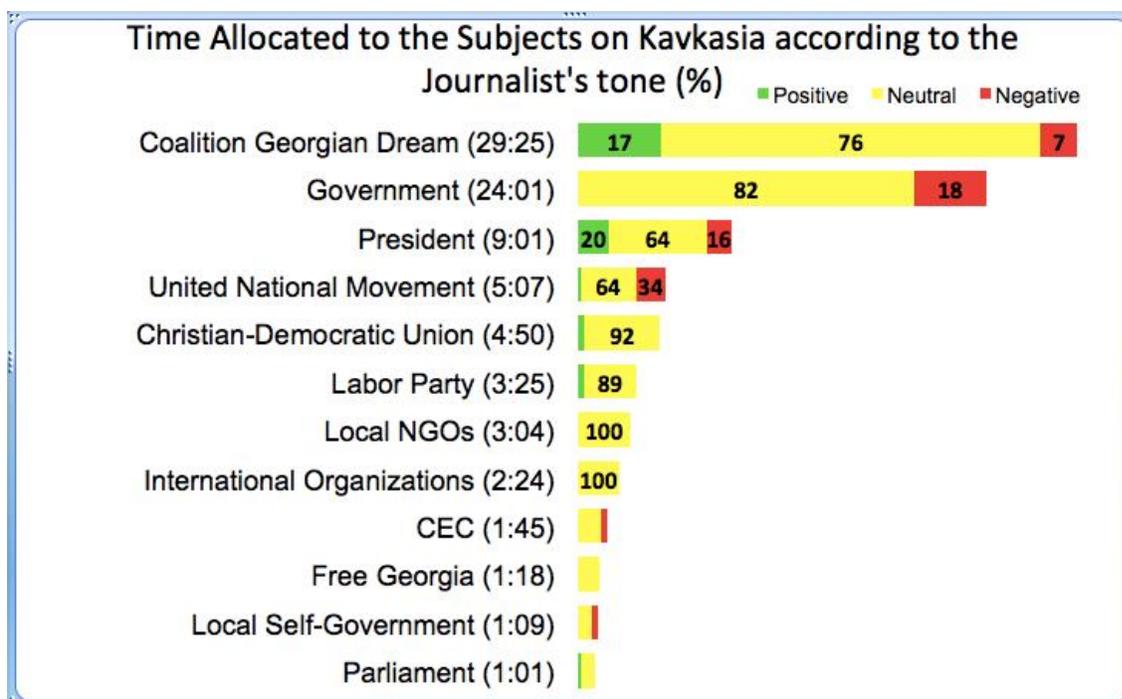


Diagram - Tone 6

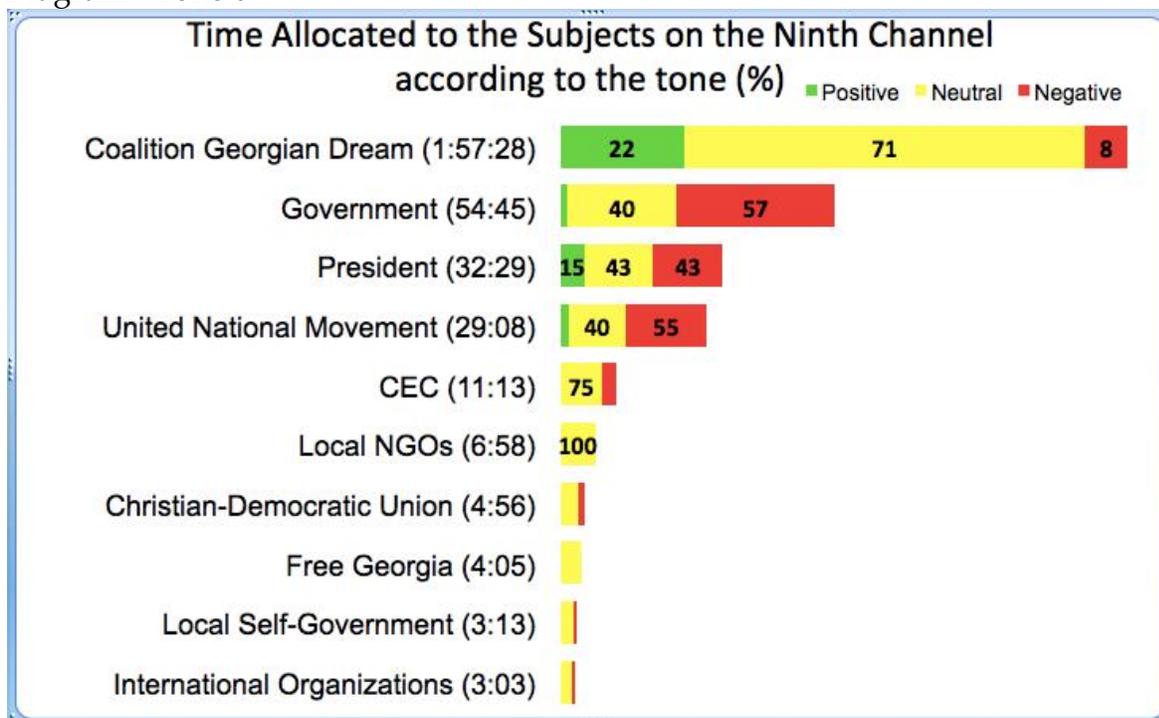


Diagram - Tone J6

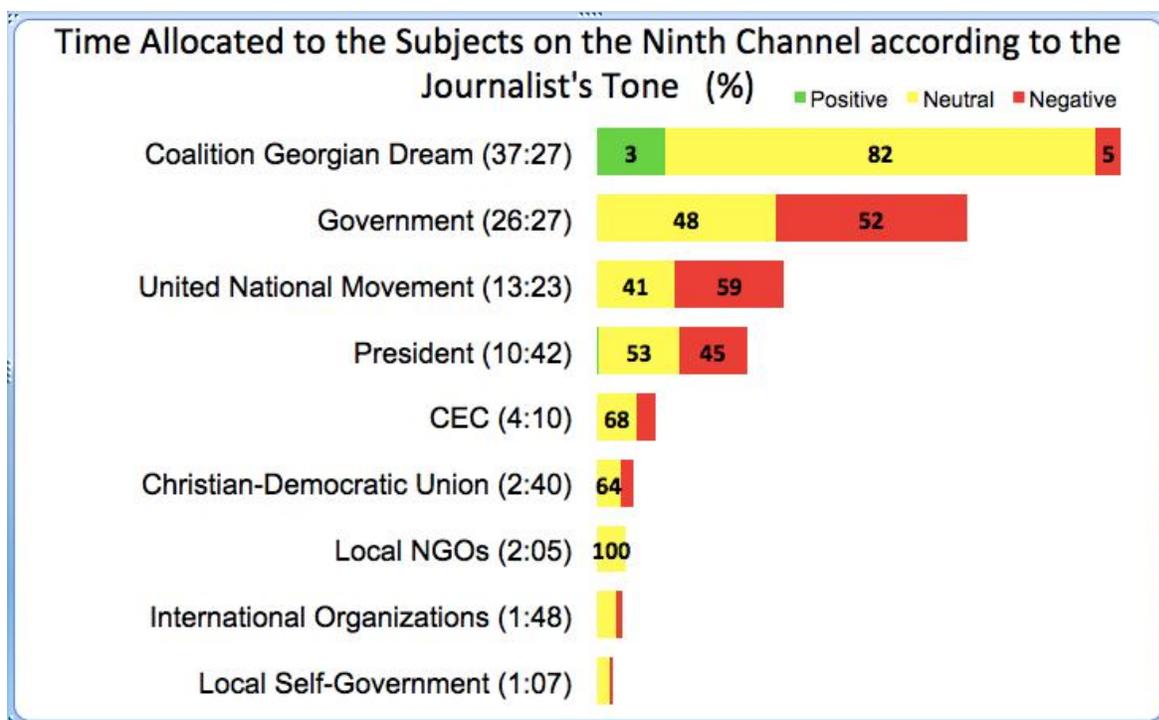


Diagram - Tone 7

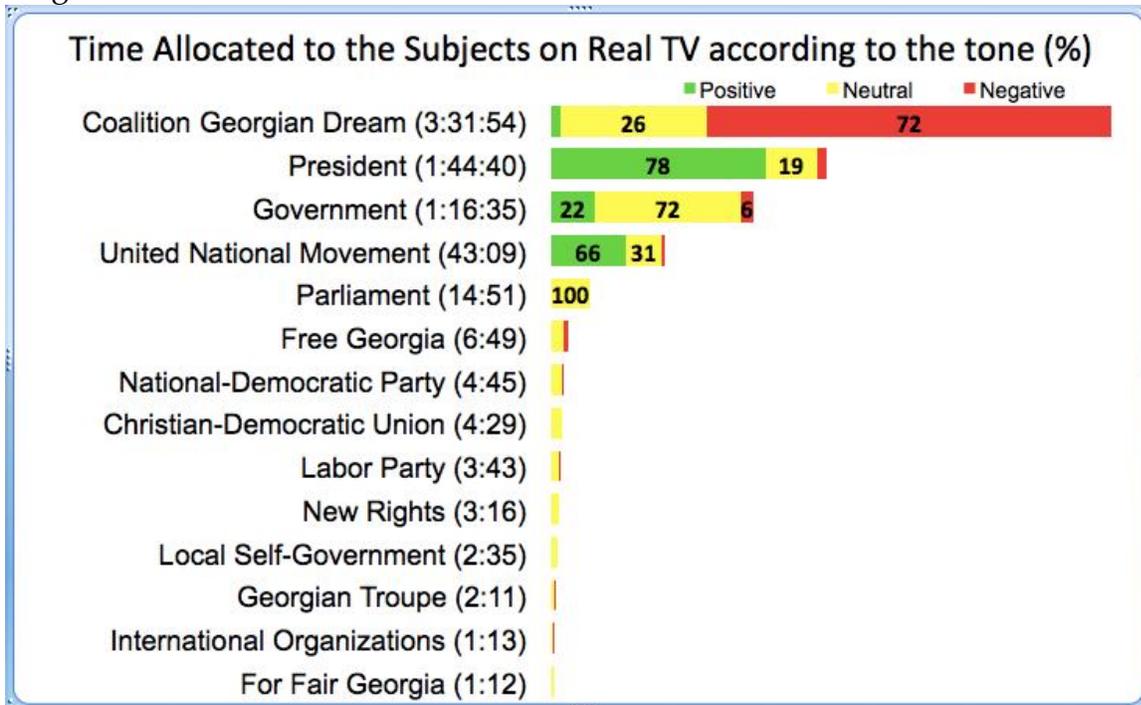


Diagram - Tone J7

