

SOPIKO CHAAVA ON THE USE OF TERM 'DIGLOSSIA'

The term 'diglossia, the use of two varieties of a language throughout a speech community, each with a distinct set of social functions has somewhat similar parallel term 'bilingual(s)' that is said of an individual or a community that regularly uses two languages. The discussion of the Georgian language situation with respect to *diglossia* is directly related to the years' long controversy that refers to the definition of the criteria and status that would allow distinguishing between the *language* and *dialect*.

One group of linguists in Georgia think that in the instance of the Kartvelian language universe we have monolingual diglossia, i.e. in the condition of diglossia we have mother tongue and the native dialect, while in case of bilingualism one is a mother tongue and the other a foreign language.

The other group of scholars maintains that based on socio-linguistic assumptions we face the language situation in which the relationship between the Kartvelian languages can be regarded as the classical form of diglossia. This group of scholars thinks that to Megrelians and Svans, whose native languages are Megrelian and Svan, correspondingly, the Georgian language presents and belongs to the category of the principal language.

The present paper analyzes the approaches expressed in the Georgian specialist literature about the application of diglossia.