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12 PM  
Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade  
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**Rieks Smeets: The domain of oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), as presented and treated under Unesco's ICH Convention**

Unesco's Intangible Heritage Convention presents in article 2 a definition of ICH, followed by a non-exhaustive enumeration of five ICH domains, the first of which is called "oral traditions and expressions including language as a vehicle of ICH". That non-exhaustive classification was meant to render more intelligible the Convention's rather abstract definition of ICH, not as an obligatory guideline for ordering inventories. The Convention's website (<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/>) does use this classifications and presents almost one third of the 288 elements that have been included so far in the two lists of the Convention as (also) falling under the first domain.

In my presentation, I intend to speak about

- considerations that have led to the formulation of that first domain;
- how classifications used in inventorying systems in certain States Parties relate to the domains identified in the Convention;
- how States Parties interpret that first domain when they present ICH elements that they want to bring to the attention of the outside world; they do so in quite different ways, without – for the time being – being challenged by the Convention's Intergovernmental Committee;
- how language as a vehicle of ICH is often seriously neglected in nomination files that seek inscription on the Convention's lists and in proposed safeguarding measures.