

# Ergative marking in Basque-Spanish and Basque-French code-switching

Irantzu Epelde (Bayonne)  
Bernard Oyharçabal (Bayonne)

**Summary:** The paper presents the case of ergative marking in code-switching (CS) in the spontaneous speech of Basque bilinguals from either side of the French-Spanish border. Here the focus will be on intrasentential CS. Basque is an ergative-absolutive language while French and Spanish are nominative-accusative languages. According to the naturalistic data collected in the Basque Country, Basque speakers, when switching intrasententially during a conversation, show some clear patterns in the use of the ergative in CS: they use the determiner as the main trigger in ergative marking, as can be clearly observed when the determiner is a French/Spanish one. When it appears on the left of the noun following the French/Spanish pattern, the subject winds up with no ergative marker and the CS is acceptable in any case.

**Keywords:** language contact, bilingual speech, code-switching, Basque-Spanish, Basque-French, ergative marking ■

