

# Using Corpora for Exploring and Assessing the Influence of English on Contemporary Spanish

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José L. Oncins-Martínez<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Introduction

Anglicisms are pervasive in most languages all over the world, and Spanish, of course, is no exception. As Pratt demonstrates in his pioneering study, the influence of English on contemporary Spanish affects all the levels of the system: orthographic, lexical, semantic, syntactic, morphological (Pratt, 1980: 229). However, it is probably at the level of lexis that this influence is greater and most noticeable. Indeed, more and more English loanwords enter Spanish every day; some of them in their native form, the so-called ‘patent’ Anglicisms (Rodríguez and Lillo, 1997) such as *airbag*, *byte*, *lifting*. Together with these, there are also semantic or content Anglicisms<sup>2</sup>, less common and far less noticeable. They occur when Spanish borrows from English not a word but part of the meaning or a sense of a paronymous form in that language, thus having its denotational range extended very often. For instance, the Spanish verb *ignorar* (=‘not to know’)<sup>3</sup> has recently extended its meaning to include a new sense, ‘not to pay attention to sb/sthg’, borrowed from English *ignore*<sup>4</sup>. These Anglicisms, also known in the specialized literature as ‘false friends’ (Prado, 2001), may often bring about changes in the collocations and colligation patterns of the Spanish host forms (e.g., Spanish *ignorar* takes now a human Object, as English *ignore*), or change their semantic or discourse prosody<sup>5</sup> (Sp. *versátil*, an adjective with negative connotations a few years ago, now has positive prosody as Eng. *versatile*).

Then, along with the aforementioned ‘univerbal’ varieties (Pratt, 1980: 37), there are also multilexical Anglicisms. They cover all the phraseological spectrum of the two languages (Oncins-Martínez, 2006), ranging from collocations, such as ‘perfil bajo’ (< ‘low profile’), ‘políticamente correcto’ (< ‘politically correct’) or ‘desarrollo sostenible’ (< ‘sustainable development’), to phrases and idioms like ‘patata caliente’ (< ‘hot potato’) or ‘vuelta de tuerca’ (< ‘turn of the screw’), quotations (‘algo huele a podrido’ (< ‘there’s something rotten’), routine and pragmatic formulae (‘déjame adivinarlo’ < ‘let me guess’ or ‘damas y caballeros’ < ‘ladies and gentlemen’) and even proverbs (‘llorar por la leche derramada’ < ‘cry over spilt milk’).

As such a pervasive phenomenon, the study of Anglicisms in Spanish has given rise to a number of studies. Worth mentioning are, e.g., Pratt (1980), Lorenzo (1996) and Rodríguez and Lillo (1997). These works represent key contributions to this area of research, each in its own way. Besides, they deserve special praise if we take into account that their authors could not enjoy the advantages of large generic corpora of Spanish, unavailable at the time these

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<sup>1</sup> Department of English, University of Extremadura  
e-mail: oncins@unex.es

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Rodríguez (2004) for a typology of Anglicisms.

<sup>3</sup> **Ignorar. 1. tr.** No saber algo, o no tener noticia de ello’ (*Diccionario de la lengua española* [1992], 21<sup>st</sup> ed.).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. **Ignorar** in *Diccionario de la lengua española* (2001, 22<sup>nd</sup> ed.): ‘**1. tr.** No saber algo, o no tener noticia de ello. **2. tr.** No hacer caso de algo o de alguien’.

<sup>5</sup> The concept of semantic prosody I am drawing on in this paper is the one proposed and explained by Sinclair (1991), Louw (1993) or Stubbs (1996; 2001), among others, and more specifically as used by Channell (2000) for the analysis of evaluative lexis. For a recent critique of the concept see Whitsitt (2005).

works were published<sup>6</sup>. Fortunately, the situation seems to have changed in the last few years, as Rodríguez (2003: 574) points out when urging lexicographers to make use of this tool:

En los últimos años, la aparición de corpus digitalizados ha sido una eficaz ayuda en esta labor hasta el punto de convertirse en una herramienta indispensable [...] La informática ha puesto a nuestra disposición corpus digitalizados y otras herramientas útiles (bases de datos, buscadores, etc.) a los que el lexicógrafo debiera acudir si lo que se pretende es recopilar el uso de la lengua sobre bases más objetivas.

Indeed, the advent of large electronic corpora of Spanish makes it possible now for linguists and lexicographers to draw firmer conclusions about some aspects of Anglicisms difficult, if not impossible, to confirm before. For instance, corpus data allows us to corroborate if Latin American Spanish really is more receptive to and abundant in Anglicisms than European or Peninsular Spanish, as has often been suggested in the specialized literature; or if the media, especially the press, is the main vehicle for the spread of Anglicisms.

## 2. Aim of this Paper

The present paper aims to show how studies of Anglicism in Spanish can benefit from the use of corpora as a main source of empirical evidence and help cast new light on some less explored aspects of these type of loanwords. In order to do this, two case studies are presented. The first one is the phrase ‘al final del día’, a calque of the English idiom ‘at the end of the day’, an informal expression very similar in meaning to *ultimately* used in English when ‘talking about what happens after a long series of events or what appears to be the case after you have considered the relevant facts’ (COBUILD). The second one is a semantic Anglicism, the adverb *dramáticamente*, which is taking on the new sense ‘radically’ under the influence of its English paronym *dramatically*.

For the analysis, use will be made of the CORDE and the CREA<sup>7</sup>, the two corpora that the Spanish Royal Academy of Language has been developing in the last decade, freely available at its website<sup>8</sup>. These two on-line corpora –the former historical (c. 950-1974), the latter contemporary (1975-today)– contain at present around 125 and 170 million words respectively.

As the two case studies will try to show, the possibility of comparing the data found in the two corpora allows us, for instance, to verify basing on its frequency whether a given Anglicism is really an Anglicism and is not simply a bad translation or an isolated occurrence of a foreign form. Moreover, since the corpora permit different search parameters (geographical, thematic, *etc.*), valuable information can be obtained not only about the distribution of Anglicisms across themes, text-types and registers and the proportion of occurrences in Peninsular Spanish in comparison with Latin American Spanish, but also about the degree of penetration or speed of spread of some forms. Finally, because the corpora give access to a reasonable amount of the co-text of the forms searched for, they also allow us to explore to what extent or in what ways Anglicisms are changing the Spanish language. This is

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<sup>6</sup> As some corpus linguists have pointed out, large generic corpora of Spanish have not been available until very recently (Davies and Face, 2006: 133). The CORDE and the CREA, the largest corpora of Spanish to date, were available to public use only a few years ago, *c.* 1997. There are other generic corpora of Spanish, if smaller, very useful for this type of research. Worth mentioning for its pioneering nature is the one developed by Prof. Sánchez-Pérez (1995) at the University of Murcia. Also freely available on-line is Davies’ 100 million-word diachronic corpus (<http://www.corpusdelespanol.org>). Likewise, there are some studies of Anglicisms in Spanish that are corpus-based, but the corpora they use are normally smaller and specific (see, e.g., Gómez Capuz 1993, 1994, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> CORDE (Corpus diacrónico del español/ Diachronic Corpus of Spanish); CREA (Corpus del español actual/ Corpus of Contemporary Spanish).

<sup>8</sup> [<http://www.rae.es>]. The Academy website offers abundant information about the characteristics of the two corpora: origin, make up, *etc.*

especially interesting with semantic Anglicisms, for the impact they have in the collocations and colligation patterns of the Spanish forms, as was said before.

### 3. Case Study 1: ‘al final del día’ < ‘at the end of the day’

Even though this phrase has not been current in the English language for too long as an idiom –the *OED* dates it from 1974–, it is extremely common. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) describes it as hackneyed: ‘**End** II. 7. d. In hackneyed phr. **at the end of the day**, eventually; when all's said and done’. Moon (1998, 276) also points out its trite nature: ‘*At the end of the day* has been condemned as cliché and ridiculed for vacuity’<sup>9</sup>. As an idiom, the phrase presents some of the characteristics of idiomatic expressions: it is fixed and figurative, although there is also a homonymous phrase ‘at the end of the day’ that can appear as a free combination in discourse functioning as a time adjunct. From a functional point of view, it is organizational, signalling a conclusion summary or opinion (Moon, 1998: 276), so it can be classified as a concessive linking adjunct of the type of ‘that said’ or ‘at any rate’ (Carter and McCarthy, 2006: 259).

#### 3.1 ‘At the end of the day’ in the BNC

Data from the BNC<sup>10</sup> confirms that this is indeed a very common expression, with 760 occurrences –practically all of them figurative–, far more than for similar phrases like ‘that said’ or ‘at any rate’. In terms of distribution across registers, the BNC also confirms that it appears mainly in spoken English: 332 tokens, nearly 50 percent of the total, are found in the spoken section of the corpus.

#### 3.2 ‘Al final del día’ in the CORDE and the CREA

The CORDE contains only three occurrences of this phrase. The three are literal usages, free combinations functioning as time adjuncts:

1	dormido serafín. Era allí la luz dudosa cual es	<b>al final del día,</b>	siempre fría la linfa en su mana
2	rdecía la luz trepidante, y yo salía de la ciudad	<b>al final del día,</b>	por la puerta del Oeste, sin fue
3	; tenía nuevas audiencias, asistía a las Juntas y	<b>al final del día</b>	despachaba otra vez con los secr

**Table 1:** ‘al final del día’ in the CORDE

However, if we search for this phrase in the contemporary corpus, we find that out of 68 occurrences of it 6 are calques of the English homonym:

30	tenemos un programa noticioso y otro, pero	<b>al final del día</b>	los contenidos son distintos.
31	juzgar, porque no tengo los detalles. Pero	<b>al final del día,</b>	Carlos Peralta es una persona
35	ando", dice. "El problema estriba en que,	<b>al final del día,</b>	resulta muy difícil reconocer
55	edad soy consciente de ello. "Lo importante	<b>al final del día</b>	es que nos queremos" Son la

<sup>9</sup> Moon (1998: 277) gives an example from spoken interaction, an excerpt from a transcribed radio programme, probably from an interview of a footballer talking to the press after a match: ‘**At the end of the day** though, the championship I think, tells you who is the best team of any one year and [um] that’s the professional’s choice I think...’. It seems to me interesting that this phrase is part of football jargon or ‘footballese’. In fact, the last time I came across this expression was from football superstar David Beckham, and it was literally rendered into Spanish as ‘al final del día’ by the translator. I am saying this for reasons that will become clearer later on.

<sup>10</sup> Use has been made of M. Davies’s BNC interface, available at [<http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/>].

56 completamos a la perfección y lo importante **al final del día** es que nos queremos. No se tr  
 60 Sin embargo, añade Wilkinson, "no creo que **al final del día** la victoria de Bush tenga un

**Table 2:** ‘al final del día’ in the CREA

Now if we look at the table below, we see that these examples, apart from allowing us to classify the phrase as a new idiomatic Anglicism given its absence from the CORDE and its presence in the CREA, also help us corroborate and substantiate with empirical data at least three characteristics of this linguistic phenomenon in Spanish that have often been suggested:

30	PRENSA	Proceso, 03/11/1996 : Salinas Pliego: presentaré una demanda	MÉXICO
31	PRENSA	Proceso, 07/07/1996 : AMIGO Y SOCIO DE RAÚL, CARLOS PERALTA	MÉXICO
35	PRENSA	El Nuevo Herald, 21/04/1997 : Red electrónica: Paraíso para	EE. UU.
55	PRENSA	Diez Minutos, nº 2729, 04/12/2003 : Victoria Adams	ESPAÑA
56	PRENSA	Diez Minutos, nº 2729, 04/12/2003 : Victoria Adams	ESPAÑA
60	PRENSA	El Mercurio, 04/11/2004 : Relaciones Europa-Estados Unidos:	CHILE

**Table 3:** ‘al final del día’ in the CREA (register and country)

Firstly, in terms of register, the information provided by the corpus indicates that indeed the press has a leading role in the spread of loanwords from English. Secondly, the corpus also reveals that Anglicisms are more frequently found in Latin American Spanish than in Peninsular Spanish. Indeed, except for 55 and 56 (which in fact come from the same quotation), the other four occurrences are from Latin American sources. As for the repeated occurrence in 55 and 56, the words do not come from a Spanish native speaker but from the translated speech of an English one, English celebrity Victoria Adams, ex-spice girl and football superstar David Beckham’s wife:

Cuando empezamos a salir juntos yo era mucho más famosa que David y, ahora mismo, yo estoy orgullosa de él. [...] Ahora mismo yo no sería tan famosa como soy si no fuera por David y creo que él, si no estuviese conmigo, tampoco sería tan famoso. Creo que los dos nos completamos a la perfección y lo importante <b>al final del día</b> es que nos queremos.	
AÑO:	2003
AUTOR:	PRENSA
TÍTULO:	Diez Minutos, nº 2729, 04/12/2003 Victoria Adams
PAÍS:	ESPAÑA
TEMA:	02. Testimonios varios
PUBLICACIÓN:	Hachette Filipacchi, S.A. (Madrid), 2003

**Table 4:** ‘al final del día’ in the CREA (55-56)

This example, and the fact that it appears as translated speech, permits us to begin to confirm a third characteristic that has often been suggested: that translation is one of the most common gates of access for Anglicisms into Spanish. In fact, 4 of the 6 occurrences come from translated speech (examples 35, 55, 56 and 60 on table 2).

#### 4. Case Study 2: ‘dramáticamente’ < ‘dramatically’

In its entry for **dramático**, the recently published *Diccionario Panhispánico de Dudas* (DPDD) warns us against the ‘incorrect’ use of this adjective and its derivative adverb:

**dramático** –ca. En español significa ‘del drama (género literario)’ y ‘que tiene caracteres de drama’. No debe usarse con el sentido de ‘drástico o espectacular’, como se hace a veces por influjo del inglés *dramatic* [...] Lo mismo cabe decir del adverbio *dramáticamente*, que no debe usarse con el sentido que corresponde a las voces españolas *drásticamente* o *espectacularmente*.

Several authors have pointed out the effects that these look-alike words may have on the borrower language. For instance, Prado (2001), in what is perhaps the most complete study on English false-friends in Spanish published to date, explains how the repeated use and influence of some English forms may end up altering the semantic prosody of their Spanish host words. Talking about adjectives, which he regards as the ‘most treacherous type of false-friend’, Prado (2001: 11) gives a few examples of processes of melioration or pejoration undergone by a few Spanish forms under the influence of their English cognates:

Sin duda los adjetivos son los falsos amigos más traicioneros debido a que muchos degradan la denotación original en una lengua, pero no en la otra; por ejemplo, **jesuit**, que traduce *intrigante*, *maquinador*, en vez de *jesuita*. Otros adjetivos ennoblecen el sentido etimológico de una lengua, causando discrepancias notables con la otra; y en esta categoría hay una serie de vocablos que han pasado al mundo comercial en inglés con versión muy positiva, como **versatile**, que traduce *talentoso*, *flexible*, frente a *versátil*, que es bastante negativo como **fickle** / **flaky** (*voluble*).

In this connection, and with regard to the problems that these pairs may pose to the translator in terms of prosody, Partington (1998: 77-8) makes the following observation:

Cognate or “look-alike” words in two related languages can have very different semantic prosodies. The adjective *impressive* in English has a favourable prosody, collocating in the English corpus with items such as *achievement*, *best*, *talent*, *dignity* and *gains*, etc. The look-alike Italian word *impressionante*, on the other hand, was found as often as not to collocate with neutral or unfavourable items (corpus examples: *series of price rises*, *assassination attempts*, amongst others). Conversely, the English verb *incite* and the related noun *incitement* almost always relates to unfavourable phenomena (*racial hatred*, *moral hazard*, *violence*, among others), whereas the Italian verb *incitare* (noun *incitamento*) often collocates favourably, with the meaning ‘to encourage’. The pitfalls for translators unaware of such prosodic differences are evident.

Partington summarizes very well what is occurring with pairs like the one under scrutiny. Both words are similar in terms of form: same root, *dram-*, and same adverb suffix, *-ly* in English, *-mente* in Spanish. However, as the DPDD warns us, the two adverbs differ substantially in their meaning. In English, *dramatically* has as its first or most frequent sense that of ‘radically’, along with the theatrical one (sense 3 in COBUILD):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Dramatic.</b> 1 A <b>dramatic</b> change or event happens suddenly and is very noticeable and surprising. EG <i>I expect to see dramatic improvements.</i> ◇   | ADJ QUALIT                             |
| <b>dramatically.</b> EG <i>The way in which information is transmitted has changed dramatically.</i>  | ↑ sudden                               |
|   | = marked                               |
|   | ◇ ADV                                  |
|   | = radically                            |
| <b>2</b> An event, situation, or thing that is <b>dramatic</b> is very exciting, interesting, and impressive. EG <i>Landing on the moon was one of the most dramatic scientific adventures of this century.</i>   | ADJ QUALIT                             |
| <b>3</b> If something that you say or do is <b>dramatic</b> , it is said or done suddenly, and in a way that is intended to impress or surprise people. EG <i>‘Look!’ she said, flinging open the lid with a dramatic gesture.</i> ◇ <b>dramatically.</b> EG <i>He paused dramatically.</i> | ADJ. QUALIT =<br>theatrical, stirring. |

On the other hand, in contemporary Spanish *dramáticamente* derives its meaning from the noun *drama*, just as English *dramatically*. Its first two senses are directly related to the literary genre: ‘**drama I m 1** Obra literaria escrita para ser representada./ **2** Obra teatral de tono serio’. However, along with these there is also a third sense that has developed as a meaning extension of the first one due to the specialization in Spanish of *drama* as a tragic play, roughly equivalent to *tragedy*: ‘**3** Suceso o situación lamentable’<sup>11</sup>. Consequently, in terms of prosody *dramáticamente* can be said to be negatively loaded when used in this third sense, roughly equivalent to ‘sadly’ or ‘regrettably’, whereas the prosody of the piece of discourse in which English *dramatically* appears will depend entirely on the verb it modifies or the participants involved in the process, not on the adverb, as will be shown in the next section with evidence from the BNC.

Even though one must agree with Partington that formal similarities like these may frequently lead to translation mistakes<sup>12</sup>, it is also very often the case, as Prado reminded us before, that false friends of this type can also end up becoming very good friends, so much so, indeed, that the Spanish host word may eventually undergo changes in its prosody due to the influence of its English ‘cousin’. And this is precisely what is happening to *dramáticamente*.

Now in order to demonstrate how the Spanish adverb is changing in terms of meaning and prosody, the collocational profile of English *dramatically* will be first explored with the BNC. After this, a comparison will be given of the findings with data extracted from the CORDE, first, and then with the CREA. In the final step of the analysis, the span covered by the CREA (1975-2004) will be split to explore the evolution of *dramáticamente* during the last three decades. For reasons of space, the survey is limited to occurrences of the adverb only in postverbal position: ‘verb + dramatically’. However, I believe that the results would not differ too much if the search was extended also to occurrences of the adverb in preverbal position, or if it included the periphrastic construction ‘in a dramatic way/form’, also registered, if rarely, in the BNC.

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<sup>11</sup> The definitions above come from Seco *et al.* (1999). Interestingly enough, this dictionary includes a sense 6 for ‘dramática –co’ which corresponds to the English one: ‘espectacular’. However, *dramáticamente* is defined ‘De manera dramática’ (‘in dramatic way’) only for senses 1, 2 and 3: ‘**dramáticamente** adv De manera dramática [1, 2 y 3]. **dramático –ca I adj 1** De (l) drama [...] **2** Que tiene carácter de drama [3]. [...] **3** Que emociona o conmueve vivamente (Seco *et al.*, 1999).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Tognini-Bonelli (2001, 33-9) for a view of synonyms as false friends, or Berber-Sardinha (2000) for a comparison of semantic prosodies in English and Portuguese.

#### 4.1 ‘Dramatically’ in the BNC

A search of the sequence ‘verb + dramatically’ in the BNC yields the following 25 most frequent collocates:

1	INCREASED	84 (number of occurrences)
2	CHANGED	73
3	IMPROVED	37
4	WAS	34
5	DROPPED	25
6	BEEN	25
7	RISEN	24
8	CHANGE	23
9	FALLEN	22
10	HAS	21
11	BE	20
12	FELL	19
13	IS	18
14	INCREASE	17
15	RISE	15
16	WILL	15
17	DECLINED	14
18	ROSE	14
19	HAVE	13
20	IMPROVE	12
21	GROWN	11
22	ARE	11
23	ALTERED	10
24	FALL	10
25	PAUSED	10

**Table 5:** 25 most frequent collocates of *dramatically*

After filtering and normalising to the base form of the different verbs, these are the collocates of *dramatically*: INCREASE, CHANGE, IMPROVE, DROP, RISE, FALL, DECLINE, GROW, ALTER and PAUSE. As can be seen, except for PAUSE, all these verbs belong to the same category of gradual completion verbs<sup>13</sup>. As for *pause*, it belongs to a different category, some members of which can also be found down on the list of collocates of *dramatically*, but far less frequently:

25	PAUSE	10 (number of occurrences)
39	POINT	5
41	SAY	5
64	ANNOUNCE	2
74	GESTURE	2
87	WHISPER	2

**Table 6:** other verbs collocating with ‘dramatically’

These verbs, unlike the ones on table 5, usually describe a speech situation. Not surprisingly almost all the quotations come from the fiction section of the BNC.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. e.g. Bertinetto and Squartini (1995) and Rodríguez Ramalle (2003).

But let's return now to the gradual completion verbs, in whose company, COBUILD says, *dramatically* is roughly equivalent to 'radically'. To begin with, in terms of prosody none of these verbs seems to be marked as either positive or negative, with the exception of *improve*. Their prosody is to be inferred from the participant that is caused to change or changes. So, among the positive things that change or increase dramatically in the BNC we have sales, life expectancy or number of employees; among the negative ones, food prices, death or mortgage rates.

#### 4.2 Dramáticamente in the CORDE and the CREA<sup>14</sup>

The search for the adverb *dramáticamente* in the CORDE yielded 70 hits<sup>15</sup>. After filtering and normalising to the base form of the verbs, here are arranged alphabetically those that collocate with *dramáticamente* (L1) in the diachronic corpus:

ACABAR ( <i>FINISH</i> )	1 (number of occurrences)
ACERCARSE ( <i>APPROACH</i> )	1
AFRENTAR ( <i>AFFRONT</i> )	1
AMENIZAR ( <i>ENTERTAIN</i> )	1
APARECER ( <i>APPEAR</i> )	1
APRETAR ( <i>PRESS</i> )	1
AVECINARSE ( <i>APPROACH</i> )	1
CALLARSE ( <i>SHUT UP</i> )	1
CANTAR ( <i>SING</i> )	1
CONFIRMAR ( <i>CONFIRM</i> )	1
CONTORSIONARSE ( <i>WRITHE</i> )	1
DESPLOMARSE ( <i>COLLAPSE</i> )	1
DECIR ( <i>SAY</i> )	1
EXCLAMAR ( <i>EXCLAIM</i> )	2
EXPRESAR ( <i>EXPRESS</i> )	1
FERTILIZAR ( <i>FERTILIZE</i> )	1
HABLAR ( <i>SPEAK</i> )	2
ILUMINAR ( <i>LIGHT UP</i> )	1
INTERRUMPIR ( <i>INTERRUPT</i> )	1
NARRAR ( <i>NARRATE</i> )	1
PROCLAMAR ( <i>PROCLAIM</i> )	1
QUEDAR ( <i>REMAIN</i> )	1
REGISTRAR ( <i>REGISTER</i> )	1
REPETIR ( <i>REPEAT</i> )	1
REVELAR ( <i>REVEAL</i> )	1
SENTIR ( <i>FEEL</i> )	1
TERMINAR ( <i>FINISH</i> )	1
VIVIR ( <i>LIVE</i> )	1

**Table 7:** Collocates of *dramáticamente* up to 1974

As can be seen, up to 1974 the adverb does not seem to collocate with gradual completion verbs as its English paronym but mainly with those related to the theatrical sense that both languages share, such as *exclamar* (*exclaim*), *expresar* (*express*), *hablar* (*speak*), *interrumpir* (*interrupt*) or *narrar* (*narrate*). However, things look quite different in the CREA. To begin

<sup>14</sup> As with *dramatically*, the search was limited to the form *dramáticamente*, ignoring the periphrastic construction 'de forma/manera dramática'; and also to occurrences of the adverb in postverbal position.

<sup>15</sup> The examples obtained from the corpus were transformed into txt format and processed with WordsSmith Tools 4.0 (WST). Since the number of hits was so low, the search was reduced to a minimum frequency of one.



with, the number of occurrences is much higher, with a total of 382 hits, so this time the search was made for patterns with a minimum frequency of 2. The table below shows the collocates arranged by frequency:

CAMBIAR ( <i>CHANGE</i> )	22 (number of occurrences)
AUMENTAR ( <i>INCREASE</i> )	10
REDUCIR ( <i>REDUCE/DECREASE</i> )	8
BAJAR ( <i>DECREASE</i> )	7
CAER ( <i>DROP/FALL</i> )	7
MEJORAR ( <i>IMPROVE</i> )	6
DESCENDER ( <i>DECREASE</i> )	5
APARECER ( <i>APPEAR</i> )	4
CRECER ( <i>GROW</i> )	4
DISMINUIR ( <i>DECREASE</i> )	4
INCREMENTAR ( <i>INCREASE</i> )	4
VER ( <i>SEE</i> )	4
ACORTAR ( <i>DECREASE/SHORTEN</i> )	3
EXPRESAR ( <i>EXPRESS</i> )	3
REFLEJAR ( <i>REFLECT</i> )	3
TERMINAR ( <i>FINISH</i> )	3
ASUMIR ( <i>ASSUME</i> )	2
DETENER ( <i>STOP</i> )	2
DIVIDIR ( <i>DIVIDE</i> )	2
ILUSTRAR ( <i>ILLUSTRATE</i> )	2
INTERRUMPIR ( <i>INTERRUPT</i> )	2
MATERIALIZAR ( <i>MATERIALIZE</i> )	2
MODIFICAR ( <i>MODIFY/CHANGE</i> )	2
REPRESENTAR ( <i>REPRESENT</i> )	2
TRANSFORMAR ( <i>TRANSFORM</i> )	2
VARIAR ( <i>VARY</i> )	2

**Table 8:** Collocates of *dramáticamente* 1975–2004

Another striking feature that the corpus reveals is that, in contemporary Spanish, the adverb collocates with several gradual completion verbs such as *cambiar* (*change*), *aumentar* (*increase*), *bajar* (*decrease*), *caer* (*drop/fall*), *reducir* and *disminuir* (*reduce/decrease*), *incrementar* (*increase*) and even *mejorar* (*improve*). The presence of this latter verb in the corpus is especially significant as far as the influence of English on Spanish is concerned. In fact, due to the negative prosody of the Spanish adverb, the collocation ‘*mejorar dramáticamente*’ (‘*improve dramatically*’) might be regarded by many speakers of Spanish as a ‘collocative clash’ (Louw, 1993: 157).

A careful reading of the data reveals some other interesting facts. The first one relates to the chronological distribution of *dramáticamente*. A steady increase of the frequency of the adverb was observed. So, in order to assess the degree of penetration and spreading speed of this Anglicism, the span covered by the CREA was split into two fifteen-year periods: 1975-1989 /1990-2004. After processing the two halves separately, some remarkable differences emerged, both quantitatively and qualitatively. From a quantitative point of view, a clear imbalance was observed between the two halves: 116 hits for the first half, 266 for the second. From a qualitative point of view, the difference has to do with the type of verb that the adverb collocates with. Thus, in the first half of the span, only *cambiar* (*change*) begins to emerge clearly in this new pattern (Table 9), accompanied by *caer* (*drop/fall*), *descender* (*decrease*), *incrementar* (*increase*) and *reducir* (*reduce*), whereas processing of the second half of the span reveals that the presence of gradual completion verbs increases dramatically (Table 10):

CAMBIAR ( <i>CHANGE</i> )	8 (number of occurrences)
CAER ( <i>DROP/FALL</i> )	3
APARECER ( <i>APPEAR</i> )	2
CRECER ( <i>GROW</i> )	2
DESCENDER ( <i>DECREASE</i> )	2
DETENER ( <i>STOP</i> )	2
EXPRESAR ( <i>EXPRESS</i> )	2
INCREMENTAR ( <i>INCREASE</i> )	2
REDUCIR ( <i>REDUCE/DECREASE</i> )	2
TERMINAR ( <i>FINISH</i> )	2
VER ( <i>SEE</i> )	2

**Table 9:** Collocates of *dramáticamente* 1975–1989

CAMBIAR ( <i>CHANGE</i> )	14 (number of occurrences)
AUMENTAR ( <i>INCREASE</i> )	10
BAJAR ( <i>DECREASE</i> )	7
REDUCIR ( <i>REDUCE/DECREASE</i> )	6
MEJORAR ( <i>IMPROVE</i> )	6
CAER ( <i>DROP/FALL</i> )	4
DISMINUIR ( <i>DECREASE</i> )	4
ACORTAR ( <i>DECREASE/SHORTEN</i> )	3
DESCENDER ( <i>DECREASE</i> )	3
REFLEJAR ( <i>REFLECT</i> )	3
APARECER ( <i>APPEAR</i> )	2
ASUMIR ( <i>ASSUME</i> )	2
CRECER ( <i>GROW</i> )	2
ILUSTRAR ( <i>ILLUSTRATE</i> )	2
INCREMENTAR ( <i>INCREASE</i> )	2
INTERRUMPIR ( <i>INTERRUPT</i> )	2
MATERIALIZAR ( <i>MATERIALIZE</i> )	2
MODIFICAR ( <i>MODIFY/CHANGE</i> )	2
REPRESENTAR ( <i>REPRESENT</i> )	2
TRANSFORMAR ( <i>TRANSFORM</i> )	2
VARIAR ( <i>VARY</i> )	2
VER ( <i>SEE</i> )	2

**Table 10:** Collocates of *dramáticamente* 1990–2004

In fact, as can be observed, the list of verbs for the span 1990-2004 is beginning to look very much like the one found for *dramatically* in the BNC (Table 5), with the ‘unexpected’ presence of a verb like *mejorar* (*improve*), positively loaded. Interestingly enough, a look at the results from a search of the sequence ‘mejor\* dramátic\*’ shows that now, in contemporary Spanish, things can also ‘improve dramatically’, like in English:

- 1 absolutos", aseguró McNamar, "se ha producido una **mejora dramática** de la economía norteamericana
- 2 erazgo de Gingrich, los chances de los demócratas **mejorarían dramáticamente**.
- 3 su espalda, hace 20 días. El receptor guayanés **“mejoró dramáticamente** de sus dolencias en las últim
- 4 que comenzaron con gran desventaja económica han **mejorado dramáticamente** sus vidas a medida que han
- 5 nizaciones que utilizan la tecnología de Internet **mejoren dramáticamente** en el proceso de negocio
- 6 Cruz Roja Internacional, nuestro entorno cotidiano **mejoró dramáticamente**, y así pudimos esperar día a
- 7 lesión que lo deja parado dos meses: La creatina **mejora dramáticamente** la recuperación del miembro

**Table 11:** ‘mejor\* dramátic\*’ in the CREA

On the other hand, the data also help us confirm our intuitions about distribution of Anglicisms across registers and on both sides of the Atlantic, as shown below in column two and four respectively:

1	PRENSA	El País, 02/02/1985	ESPAÑA
2	PRENSA	El Nuevo Herald, 28/04/1997	EE. UU.
3	PRENSA	El Nacional, 26/07/2000	VENEZUELA
4	PRENSA	Diario de las Américas, 09/04/1997	EE. UU
5	PRENSA	Excélsior, 17/09/2001	MÉXICO
6	PRENSA	Caretas, 18/12/1997	PERÚ
7	Palavecino	Norberto Edgardo	ARGENTINA

**Table 12:** ‘mejor\* dramátic\*’ in the CREA (register and country)

We again find that, out of the 7 hits, there is only one occurrence from Spain, the first one, and again it is the translated speech of an English-speaking person<sup>16</sup>.

So it seems that the pressing influence of English is contributing to the bleaching of *dramáticamente* into a less negatively loaded type of adverb and, in consequence, less evaluative also. Now, in contemporary Spanish, not all the things that ‘change dramatically’ are necessarily negative. The adverb is progressively emptying itself of any prosody, like its English paronym, and the positive or negative sign of the piece of discourse in which *dramáticamente* is found depends more and more, also like in English, on the ‘things’ that change, rather than on the adverb. A close reading of the texts that contain the sequence ‘cambi\* dramátic\*’ in the CREA shown on the Table below shows that some of those instances are indeed changes for the better<sup>17</sup> (notice the metalinguistic comment in the first occurrence ‘como dirían los anglosajones’ / ‘as the Anglosaxons would say’):

1	la inercia de nuestro propio recuerdo. El país ha	<b>cambiado dramáticamente</b> , como dirían los anglosajones
2	el lugar de vacaciones del sector popular". Fue	<b>cambiando dramáticamente</b> de aspecto, hasta llegar a
3	ón de la división sexual del trabajo y la familia	<b>cambió dramáticamente</b> con la invasión de capital y el
4	ente superados, ahora que el escenario mundial ha	<b>cambiado dramáticamente</b> , con una Unión Soviética des
5	ueron resueltos. En Argentina, aunque la sociedad	<b>cambió dramáticamente</b> mediante la inmigración, la urb
6	neral don Miguel de la Torre, la situación vino a	<b>cambiar dramáticamente</b> . Aunque de la Torre permitió
7	gún modelo organizativo anterior. Simplemente han	<b>cambiado dramáticamente</b> las circunstancias externas
8	los ratones de laboratorio, estas teorías pueden	<b>cambiar dramáticamente</b> la forma en que la medicina
9	de la Operación Guardián, sin embargo, las cosas	<b>cambiaron dramáticamente</b> . El programa, en sus fases
10	ficativos en el país", agrega que esta situación	" <b>cambió dramáticamente</b> " en enero de ese año con el
11	fortalezas requeridas para acceder al desarrollo	<b>cambiaron dramáticamente</b> en los últimos treinta años;
12	simplemente ha hecho que las rentabilidades hayan	<b>cambiado dramáticamente</b> comenta quien fuera Coor
13	curridos desde su detención la imagen de Mauss ha	<b>cambiado dramáticamente</b> , incluso en su propio país.
14	a nadie nuestra situación migratoria. Sus vidas	<b>cambiaron dramáticamente</b> en el verano de 1995, cuand
15	ntos de hasta 60 kilómetros por hora, que podrían	<b>cambiar dramáticamente</b> la situación. "La mancha podrí
16	prusiano y el de los Habsburgo. Sus fronteras han	<b>cambiado dramáticamente</b> durante el siglo XX, converti
17	general había estado dirigida a los republicanos,	<b>cambió dramáticamente</b> en 1993, después de que la Unió
18	abello. Esto se debe a que en realidad el cabello	<b>cambia dramáticamente</b> la imagen de las personas. En r
19	Lo que viene Y es que si hay un mercado que ha	<b>cambiado dramáticamente</b> en los últimos años es el de
20	y desechan las otras. Pero la vida de Dora va a	<b>cambiar dramáticamente</b> cuando, tras dictarle una nuev
21	rante el mismo período las políticas industriales	<b>cambiaron dramáticamente</b> . Desde una estrategia de des
22	ina diaria. Durante los años ochenta esta actitud	<b>cambió dramáticamente</b> . La participación en la investi
23	censo. Las condiciones demográficas de Costa Rica	<b>cambiaron dramáticamente</b> en 16 años: bajó la fecundad

<sup>16</sup> Cf. n. 1 on table 11: "En términos absolutos", aseguró McNamar, "se ha producido una **mejora dramática** de la economía norteamericana durante los pasados años y frente a la japonesa y especialmente la europea". "Mi conclusión es clara", terminó McNamar, "y es que los inversores piensan hoy que la economía norteamericana es la más atractiva del mundo".

<sup>17</sup> Here is an example: "Esto simplemente ha hecho que las rentabilidades hayan **cambiado dramáticamente**" comenta quien fuera Coordinador de Planificación de Pdvs. Si en 1993 los proyectos tenían un margen de tolerancia bajo, según Pantin "hoy en día aún con un Brent entre 13 o 14 dólares, los proyectos serían rentables".

24 nte, un hecho irrelevante en apariencia, pero que **cambiaría dramáticamente** nuestra percepción del cosmo  
 25 infructuosos de contactar a Posada. La explosión **cambió dramáticamente** la suerte de Posada. Los invest

**Table 13:** ‘cambi\* dramátic\*’ in the CREA

As for register and geographical distribution, the corpus gives us valuable information again. Most of the examples come from the press (60 percent) and from Latin American Spanish (75 percent):

1	Garrigues Walter	Una política para España	ESPAÑA
2	PRENSA	Revista Hoy, 17-23/07/1984 : MUNICIPALIDADES	CHILE
3	Ostolaza Bey, M.	Política sexual en Puerto Rico	PUERTO RICO
4	PRENSA	Diario La Prensa, 16/05/1992 : México supera el pasado	ARGENTINA
5	Fuentes, Carlos	El espejo enterrado	MÉXICO
6	Picó, Fernando	Al filo del poder: subalternos y dominantes en Puerto Rico 1	PUERTO RICO
7	García Hernández	La encrucijada sanitaria	ESPAÑA
8	PRENSA	ABC Cultural, 29/03/1996 : VUELCO A LAS TEORÍAS DE LA INMUNI	ESPAÑA
9	PRENSA	Diario de Yucatán, 01/09/1996 : Las montañas y sus riesgos s	MÉXICO
10	PRENSA	Diario de Yucatán, 01/09/1996 : México aceptaría ayuda milit	MÉXICO
11	PRENSA	El Universal, 09/10/1996 : La revolución educativa	VENEZUELA
12	PRENSA	El Universal, 15/10/1996 : Corpoven: convenios operativos en	VENEZUELA
13	PRENSA	Semana, 03-10/12/1996 : El	COLOMBIA
14	PRENSA	El Nuevo Herald, 30/06/1997 : Familia nica ve un 'rayo de es	EE. UU.
15	PRENSA	El Observador, 10/02/1997 : Grave riesgo ecológico a 20 mill	URUGUAY
16	PRENSA	El País, 08/06/1997 : Polonia o la dificultad de servir a do	ESPAÑA
17	PRENSA	La Hora, 03/05/1997 : Guerra del banano enfrenta a Estados U	GUATEMALA
18	PRENSA	Listín Diario, 19/05/1997	REP.DOMIN.
19	PRENSA	Semana, 28/01-04/02/1997 : RENTA FIJA	COLOMBIA
20	EFÍMERO	98102048. Programa impreso 1998	ESPAÑA
21	Ten Kate, A.	Desarrollo industrial y el medio ambiente en México [Economi	MÉXICO
22	Rapado, Aurelio	La salud de la mujer	ESPAÑA
23	PRENSA	Crisol, Revista de Ciencia y Tecnología, nº 9, 2003 : Repens	COSTA RICA
24	Sabadell, M.Á.	El hombre que calumnió a los monos	ESPAÑA
25	ORAL	Discurso de Fidel Castro en el acto central por el 45 aniver	CUBA

**Table 14:** ‘cambi\* dramátic\*’ in the CREA (register and country)

These findings demonstrate empirically not only the importance of the press in the spread of Anglicisms but also a far greater presence of this type of loanword in American Spanish in comparison with Peninsular Spanish. Moreover, taking into consideration that 50 percent of the data in the CREA comes from Spain (the other 50 percent is ‘shared’ by twenty American countries and the Phillipines), in absolute terms the figures for Latin American Spanish are bigger. After all, the population of Spain represents approximately 10 percent of the Spanish-speaking community in the world.

## 5. Conclusions

The first case study corroborates, with empirical evidence, some of the suggestions made in some of the major studies of Anglicisms, for instance, that the press has a leading role in the spread of Anglicisms, or that they are more abundant in Latin American Spanish than in Peninsular Spanish. It also shows that translation is a very frequent gate of access for Anglicisms into Spanish. The second case confirms the same suggestions, and also

demonstrate how the influence of an English word can contribute to the progressive bleaching, in terms of prosody and meaning, of a cognate form in Spanish.

Reasons of space have limited the number of case studies to just two, although it seems very likely that the analysis of any of the many Anglicisms found in Spanish today would have proved as illustrative for the purpose of the paper. I hope these two examples have been sufficient to show how using the CORDE and the CREA can help us deepen our knowledge of Anglicisms in contemporary Spanish; and also that lexicographers interested in this area of research should, as Rodríguez (2003: 574) strongly recommends, make use of this tool if they want to explore these or other linguistic phenomena more objectively.

The analysis has also revealed some of the limitations of these two corpora. Obviously, the better the design of a corpus, the more useful it will be for scholars with an interest in this or other related areas of research. In this sense, even though the CORDE and the CREA may not be as user friendly as standard corpora of English (e.g. the BNC), they are the largest corpora available for Spanish so far and also —or so the Spanish Royal Academy of Language claims—, the main source of information and tool for the making of the *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, the ‘official’ dictionary of the Spanish language for people on both sides of the Atlantic. Thus, the CORDE and the CREA constitute indispensable tools for linguists and lexicographers alike.

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