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Lemateca del DRAE: the life of words in the dictionaries of the Real Academia Española



Researchers from the Departament de Filologia Espanyola at the UAB have developed *Lemateca del DRAE*, a computer resource that allows to consult and compare the lexicons of the different editions of the dictionary of the Real Academia Española since the 18th century. This tool offers new ways of interpreting data for researchers of the Spanish language and digital humanities.

Lemateca del DRAE is a computer resource developed in the framework of the research project “Historia interna del *Diccionario de la lengua castellana* de la Real Academia Española en el siglo XIX (1817-1899)” (FFI2014-51904-P; PGC2018-094768- B-I00) in the Department of Spanish Philology at the UAB. It is a tool that collects and systematizes the life trajectory of >the words in the 23 printed editions of the Real Academia Española’s dictionary.

Lemateca del DRAE has been developed from the data stored during the work carried out in our research project and allows a dynamic observation of the changes experienced by the words in the different editions of the dictionary. The tool tries to overcome the problems arising from the traditional and artisanal lexicography from which the different editions of this dictionary emerged and which, naturally, generated abundant variation and heterogeneity in the evolution of the work the Real Academia Española. In this way, as *Lemateca del DRAE* is a computer resource, it allows us to approach the data in a way that was impossible until now, not only because of the volume of words that make up the corpus —approximately

72,000 forms—, but, above all, it enables the possibility of classifying, ordering, and accounting for them.

The comparison between the lexicons of the different editions of the dictionary and the philological analysis carried out by the team members have made it possible to trace the life trajectory of each word in the lexicography of the Real Academia Española to explain its biography: first appearance in the dictionary, lifespan, formal and lexicographical changes, and sometimes disappearance.

An example of the information offered by the resource can be found in figure 1. In this image the word *aljecería*, an Arabism synonymous with *yecería*; although it is registered in all editions of the academic dictionary (1726-2014), has modified its spelling during the 19th and 20th centuries, specifically in the *DRAE* 1817, 1884 and 1914 (figure 1), in line with the changes in the orthographic rules of Spanish:

Forma: **aljecería** Vigencia cronológica: **1726-2014**

Historia lexicográfica:

aljeceria	1726	
aljecería	1770-1803	
aljezeria	1817	c > z g > j
aljezeria	1822-1869	
aljecería	1884-1899	j > g z > c
aljecería	1914-2014	g > j

Figure 1. The word *aljecería* from the *Diccionario de autoridades* o the *DLE* 2014 [2021]

The creation of this computer resource acts as a bridge between lexical research, lexicography, and digital humanities, in addition to constituting a resource that offers the researcher new ways to interpret data and results, and new paths to follow based on the questions that have arisen during the research. Through the information offered by the *Lemateca del DRAE*, it has been possible to carry out a first analysis of the *DRAE* 1884 macrostructure (Clavería y Terrón 2022), one of the most important editions of academic lexicography.

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