

Notes

¹ One last important biographical contribution from Gómez Carriles as co-scriptwriter for the film is that Arenas had heard from him for the first time "Al partir," an 1887 poem by Mexican Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera. According to Arenas's good friend José Abreu, Arenas's final wishes were that his cremated ashes be scattered on Havana's malecón, after the reading of "Al partir." But only after Cuba is free.

² I quote from Arenas's works published in Spanish, indicated by page number. When an English translation is available, it is quoted with the page number indicated as "trans." All other translations are my own.

³ Dolores Koch was to become Arenas's translator into English. It was she who graciously provided this information via email, on November 10, 2008.

⁴ Quotations from letters to and from Reinaldo Arenas from the Reinaldo Arenas Collection (CO 232) in the Princeton University Library, quoted by box and folder. Box 5, folder 6.

⁵ Box 23, folder 7.

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A Gender Enigma

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1. Introduction

One of the challenges in learning Spanish as a second language is the acquisition of gender agreement. Spanish marks gender morphologically on nouns: final vowel *-o* (e.g., *gat-o* 'cat') is the canonical mark for masculine gender and final vowel *-a* (e.g., *gat-a* 'cat'), the canonical mark for feminine gender. Gender agreement is also marked overtly on nominal determinants and modifiers, as shown in (1):

- (1) a. *el gato bonito*
'the (masc) cat (masc) pretty (masc)'
the pretty cat
- b. *la gata bonita*
'the (fem) cat (fem) pretty (fem)'
the pretty cat
- c. *el lince elegante*
'the (masc) lynx elegant'
the elegant lynx

We can see in example (1a) that the masculine determiner *el* 'the' and the masculine modifier *bonito* 'pretty' agree with the masculine noun *gato* 'cat.' Similarly, in example (1b) the feminine determiner *la* 'the' and the feminine adjective *bonita* 'pretty' agree with the feminine noun *gata* 'cat.' Finally, example (1c) illustrates the masculine nominal *lince* 'lynx' and the adjective *elegante* 'elegant' that are not canonically marked for gender. In Spanish nominals and adjectives ending in *-e* or a consonant, could be either masculine or feminine, e.g., *la leche* 'the (fem) milk (fem)'. Nonetheless, the masculine determiner *el* 'the,'

example (1c), *el lince elegante*, provides the learner with cues about the gender of the nominal.

James W. Harris points out, however, that the majority of nominals in the Spanish language fall in the patterns illustrated in examples (1a) and (1b), what he calls the *inner core*, i.e., masculine nouns end in the word marker *-o* and feminine ones, in the word marker *-a* (32). Hence learners acquiring Spanish receive abundant and consistent cues in the input to acquire gender agreement. Support for this conclusion is found in Richard V. Teschner & William M. Russell's study on the gender pattern of the nominal markers *-o* and *-a*. Their inverse-dictionary study showed that 99.87% of nominals ending in *-o* were masculine, with only .13% feminine. In addition, the study revealed that 96.3% of nominals ending in *-a* were feminine and 3.7% masculine (115-116). Notice that while almost all nouns ending in *-o* are masculine with a few exceptions (e.g., *la mano* 'the (fem) hand (fem)'), 3.7% of nominals ending in *-a* are masculine. One of the most noted exception to the canonically feminine marker *-a* is the Hellenisms ending in *-ma*, such as *problema* 'problem,' *sistema* 'system,' etc. These nominals present an anomaly in the gender paradigm because they end in *-a* but are masculine. We should point out that Greek language, as Classical Latin, has three genders available: masculine, feminine and neuter. However, upon the loss of the neuter gender by Late Latin, Greek neuter lexical items adopted into this language had to be subsumed under the masculine or feminine genders. Similarly, neuter Hellenisms entering directly to Spanish at any of its historical stages, needed to adapt to a two-way gender paradigm, as in the case of Hellenisms ending in *-ma*, originally neuter in Greek. The most intuitive solution to this dilemma would have been to adopt these words into the feminine gender because they have the canonical feminine word marker *-a*. However, this was not the solution chosen by Latin and, later, Spanish for several reasons, which we will discuss later.

In contrast to Hellenisms in *-ma*, words of Latin origin ending in *-ma* are feminine in Spanish, as shown in (2):

(2) a. *cama*
'bed (fem)'

b. *flama*
'flame (fem)'

Examples in (2) illustrate how words in *-ma* with a Latin origin fit into the feminine gender paradigm of Spanish, i.e., they are all feminine.

Traditionally, first year Spanish textbooks have dealt with the gender irregularity of Hellenisms ending in *-ma* with statements such as "nominals ending in *-ma* derived from Greek are masculine." A short survey of the major publishers of First Year Spanish textbooks in the United States supports the common idea that Hellenisms ending in *-ma* are masculine in Spanish, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
First Year Spanish Textbooks Publishers
Approach to Hellenisms in *-ma*

Houghton-Mifflin, e.g., <i>Nexos</i>	Words ending in <i>-ma</i> : <i>el sistema, el problema, el tema, el programa</i> are masculine (18).
McGraw-Hill, e.g., <i>Puntos 2</i>	Many words in <i>-ma</i> are also masculine: <i>problema, programa, sistema</i> (29).
Pearson-Prentice Hall, e.g., <i>¡Arriba!</i>	Most Ns ending in <i>-ema</i> are masculine: <i>el problema, el poema</i> (22).
Thompson-Heinle, e.g., <i>Tú dirás</i>	Notable exceptions: <i>el clima, el problema, el sistema, el tema</i> (20).
Vista Higher Learning, e.g., <i>Vistas</i>	Masculine Ns ending in <i>-ma</i> : <i>el problema, el programa</i> (11).
Wiley, e.g., <i>Dicho y hecho</i>	Some Ns ending in <i>-ma</i> are actually masculine: <i>el problema, el programa</i> (40).

Table 1 shows how publishers of First Year Spanish textbooks approach this irregularity in the feminine gender paradigm, they simply

state that some, most or all nominals ending in *-ma* or *-ema* are masculine and then give a list of 3 to 4 examples.

This common generalization about the masculine gender of the Hellenisms ending in *-ma* finds its roots in traditional grammatical analyses. D. Andrés Bello explains that a great number of nominals, ending in *-ma* and of Greek origin are masculine, such as: *emblema* 'emblem,' *epigrama* 'epigram,' *síntoma* 'symptom.' He adds that there should not be any hesitation in the assignment of the masculine gender to all nominals with this particular ending and origin, like *panorama* 'panorama.' Bello accounts for the exceptions to this rule by stating that some words have acquired either ambiguous gender (e.g., *anatema* 'anathema,' *reuma* 'rheumatism') or feminine gender (e.g., *asma* 'asthma,' *broma* 'mollusk, joke,' *fantasma* 'phantom') through popular use (44). Similarly, la *Gramática de la lengua castellana* de la Real Academia states that nominals ending in *-ma* and of Greek origin are masculine because they are an exception to the rule. Also included in the discussion are three nouns classified as ambiguous: *aroma* 'aroma,' *cisma* 'schism' and *neuma* 'neume.' Words like *crisma* 'chrism,' *fantasma* 'phantom' and *tema* 'theme' can be masculine or feminine because they have two different meanings (14).

In contrast to the previous analyses, Rufino José Cuervo and Ramón Menéndez Pidal argue that Greek neuter nouns ending in *-ma* were initially taken as feminine nominals in Romance by analogy with the feminine nominals ending in *-a* belonging to Latin's first declension. In particular, Menéndez Pidal states that only erudites, who knew these nominals were neuter in Greek, were using them in the masculine gender and, because of their influence, this gender has prevailed in some of the nominals, like *anatema* 'anathema,' *reuma* 'rheumatism.' He adds that those nominals used exclusively by the learned elite are always masculine, e.g., *emblema* 'emblem' (179-180).

Two possible hypotheses seem to be available regarding the gender assignment of Hellenisms in *-ma*: the first one, states these words were originally taken by Romance as masculine and the feminine ones are the result of the popular use; the second one, argues Hellenisms in *-ma* were always feminine by analogy with the feminine ending *-a* but were changed to masculine by the learned elite. Perhaps the best answer to this puzzle is the one offered by Manuel Álvarez & Bernar Pottier. They present a more complex picture on gender assignment in Spanish, explaining that it relies on both historical causes as well as analogical

influences (45-46). Regarding the gender of the Hellenisms in *-ma*, the authors point to the fact that there has always been a contrast between the popular use and the learned use, e.g., even today we find *el reuma* 'rheumatism (masc)' vs. *la reuma* 'rheumatism (fem).' Álvarez & Pottier add that this variance has been present in the language since Latin. They give as an example the use of the neuter Greek noun *malagma* 'cataplasm' as feminine in Chirion's *Mulomedicina*, in the 4th century A.D. while in other instances this lexical item is documented as neuter (48-49).

The focus of this paper is to explore the validity of the common pedagogical generalization that all Hellenisms ending in *-ma* are masculine in Spanish and to try to account for this irregularity in the paradigm from a historical perspective. The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents a brief historical review of Greek lexical influence on the Spanish language. Section 3 provides a description of the methodology and the analysis conducted for the present study. The last section of the paper presents the conclusions.

2. Hellenisms in Spanish

This section presents a historical overview on the lexical influence of the Greek language on Spanish. From its inception Spanish has received the influence of the languages with which it has cohabited. One of the languages that have left a mark on Spanish is Greek, with the adoption of a plethora of Hellenisms into the Spanish vocabulary. Manuel Fernández Galiano presents a chronological overview on the introduction of Hellenisms to Spanish, first via the Latin language, and later directly. He argues that Romans brought the majority of Hellenisms to the Iberian Peninsula, through the Latin language. These Hellenisms cover a broad spectrum of topics, ranging from cloth (*sábana* 'bedsheet') and construction (e.g., *piedra* 'stone') to plants and animals (e.g., *comino* 'cumin,' *camaleón* 'chameleon'), among many other topics (51-53). Also important, were the Hellenisms brought to the Peninsula through Ecclesiastic Latin, and therefore, through the learned or intellectual route (Rafael Lapesa 65-66). Examples are *Cristo* 'Christ,' *evangelio* 'gospel,' *biblia* 'bible.' Also in this list, are medical terms such as *cirugía* 'surgery,' *flema* 'phlegm,' *estómago* 'stomach,' musical instruments like *cítara* 'zither,' *órgano* 'organ,' nautical terms

such as *hora* 'hour,' *ancla* 'anchor,' among many (Fernández Galiano 54-55).

According to Lapesa (62-63), Hellenisms continued to enter the Iberian Peninsula after the fall of the Roman Empire. Fernández Galiano explains that Hellenisms came through Arabic from the Byzantine Empire, e.g., *arroz* 'rice,' *acelga* 'chard.' Also during the time of the Crusades, with the constant activity in the Mediterranean Sea, other Hellenisms were adopted through languages like French (e.g., *jengibre* 'ginger') and Italian (e.g., *calma* 'calm'). In the 15th century learned writers like Marqués de Santillana, promoted the use of Hellenisms taken from Classical Greek authors, e.g., *bisonte* 'bison,' *hipoteca* 'mortgage,' *biblioteca* 'library,' etc. In the 16th century, there is a reduction in the direct influx of Hellenisms to Spanish given that the area known as Greece today was under the Ottoman Empire. Nonetheless, we find Hellenisms ending in *-ma* related to the fields of medicine and literature, e.g., *asma* 'asthma,' *edema* 'edema,' *epigrama* 'epigram.' In the 17th century the majority of Hellenisms in *-ma* received by Spanish relates to culture and abstract concepts such as *drama* 'drama,' *idioma* 'language.' In the 18th century, Spanish turned once more to Classical Greek as a source for words such as *botánica* 'botany,' *prisma* 'prism,' *anécdota* 'anecdote' and neologisms like *mónada* 'monad,' *termómetro* 'thermometer,' *pirotecnia* 'pyrotechnic,' among others. Finally, during the last two centuries, Spanish has continued to incorporate Classical Greek terminology into its vocabulary, e.g., *hípico* 'equine,' *nefritis* 'nephritis,' *esquema* 'scheme,' among others (Fernández Galiano 57-66). As we can see, Greek has had a constant presence in the history of Spanish language and its influence continues to the present time, as indicated by Lapesa (110).

3. Methodology

This section discusses the data and the analysis used in the present study. The data consist of seventy-three Hellenisms ending in *-ma*, extracted from Crisostomo Hualde Eseverri's *Diccionario etimológico de helenismos españoles*. The following criteria were used in the analysis of the Hellenisms: gender, semantics, domain of usage, and first documentation. First, Hellenisms were analyzed in terms of gender to determine whether or not they are all masculine as assumed traditionally. Martín Alonso's *Enciclopedia del idioma* was used to

determine the gender assigned to these words and this information was verified with the *Diccionario de la lengua castellana* de la Real Academia. Second, Hellenisms were analyzed in terms of their semantics, i.e., whether the meaning of a particular nominal has been influenced by the original Greek word on its gender assignment. Third, the domain of usage of the Hellenisms was taken into consideration to determine whether words related to intellectual pursuits tended to be of a particular gender in comparison to popular usage words. Finally, the first date of documentation of the Hellenisms was studied to establish whether the approximate date of introduction to Spanish had any influence in gender assignment. The results for each criterion are discussed independently.

3.1 Gender of the Hellenisms

This section examines the gender of seventy-three Hellenisms ending in *-ma* to establish whether they are all assigned the masculine gender as has been assumed traditionally. First, in terms of the original gender, the analysis shows that the majority of the Hellenisms under study kept the neuter gender in Greek, 64 (88%) out of 73 items. The remaining words were feminine, masculine or a verb, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Non-Neuter Hellenisms

Original gender in Greek	Spanish Gender
κορμός (m)	corma (f)
γλαύκος (m)	glaucoma (m)
βρώμα (f)	broma (f)
καλμα (f)	calma (f)
δραχμή (f)	dracma (amb.)
ζύμη (f)	enzima (amb.)
φωνή (f)	fonema (m)
σάρξ (f)	sarcoma (m)
αναγράφειν (*)	anagrama (m)

*Gender not applicable, verbs

We can see in Table 2, that of the two nominals that were masculine in Greek, only one kept its original gender, *glaucoma* 'glaucoma'

However, this is not very informative regarding gender assignment because *glaucoma* is a derived nominal. Interestingly, the word *corma* 'corm' changed its original masculine gender to the feminine one. A total of six nouns ending in *-ma* were originally feminine in Greek, out of which, two kept the original gender (e.g., *broma* 'sea mollusk,' *calma* 'calm') and two became ambiguous with regard to gender (e.g., *dracma* 'drachma,' *enzima* 'enzyme'). The remaining two words became masculine, *fonema* 'phoneme,' and *sarcoma* 'sarcoma.' However, these two words are derived forms from the original Greek word. The last word in the table, *anagrama* 'anagram,' was derived from a Greek verb, hence it has no gender.

For the present analysis the gender in Spanish of each lexical item was determined using la *Enciclopedia del idioma* de Alonso and then verified with the *Diccionario de la lengua española* de la Real Academia Española (See Appendix 1 for a complete list). The gender of Hellenisms was coded as: masculine, feminine, ambiguous or masculine/feminine. Hellenisms acceptable only in one gender were coded as masculine or feminine accordingly. The category of ambiguous included lexical items that are acceptable in either gender, i.e., the selection of masculine or feminine does not entail a change in meaning. Manuel Martínez de Sousa argues that there are two kinds of ambiguous words, the ones that are used indistinctively in either gender (e.g., *aneurisma* 'aneurism') and the ones that are used more in the masculine gender (e.g., *anatema* 'anathema'). Notice that this gender ambiguity is not an exclusive phenomenon of Hellenisms ending in *-ma*, e.g., *esfinge* 'sphinx' is ambiguous in gender (64). Finally, nominals that exist in both genders with different meanings were coded as "both." Table 3 summarizes the distribution of gender.

Table 3
Gender Distribution of Hellenisms

Masculine	Feminine	Ambiguous	Both	TOTAL
44 (60%)	20 (27%)	6 (8%)	3 (4%)	73

Table 3 reveals that out of a total of 73 Hellenisms included in the present study, 44 (60%) are masculine. Although the majority is masculine, we still find 20 (27%) feminine ones. These results indicate that the influence of the learned elite was not strong enough to

determine gender assignment by itself. That is, other factors such as analogical forces might serve to interpret the assignment of feminine gender to 27% of the words under study. Moreover, this table also shows that even today Spanish has nominals with ambiguous gender, i.e., nominals acceptable with either gender with no change in meaning. Furthermore the analysis of this criterion reveals that the common pedagogical generalization that all nominals ending in *-ma* and of Greek origin are masculine is not an accurate one.

3.2 Semantics and domain of usage

This section analyzes Hellenisms in terms of their semantic content to explore the relationship between meaning and gender assignment. Hellenisms were grouped in the following semantic categories: humanities, maritime, medicine and science, miscellanea and religion (See appendix 2 for complete list). In addition, this section includes a discussion of the relationship between the meaning of the Hellenism and the domain of usage, i.e., whether certain lexical items were more likely to be used just by the learned elite or the general population.

The vast majority of Hellenisms in *-ma* adopted by Spanish fall into the two semantic categories of Humanities and Medicine and science accounting for 76% of the total lexical items under study, as seen in Table 4.

Table 4
Distribution of Semantic Categories

Categories	Number of Hellenisms
Humanities	29 (40%)
Medicine/Science	26 (36%)
Religion	7 (10%)
Miscellanea	5 (7%)
Maritime	4 (5%)
Military	4 (5%)
TOTAL	75*

*The total of Hellenisms is 75 in this table because the words *aroma* and *com* were listed twice under two different categories because they have two different meanings.

The remaining categories account for only 24% of the Hellenisms under study. The distribution of the semantic categories seems to account in part for the predominantly masculine gender of the Hellenisms in *-ma*, i.e., the majority of these lexical items referred to terms that were probably not part of the popular use.

The category of humanities contains 29 lexical items referring to music, philosophy, rhetoric, theater, etc. If we assume the topics within this category pertain to refinement, hence to the learned elite, these nominals should be all masculine given the level of sophistication they entail. For example, we do not expect words like *anagrama* 'anagram,' *axioma* 'axiom,' *drama* 'drama,' *sofisma* 'sophism,' to be part of popular use. Nonetheless, we find five examples of feminine nominals within this category: *coma* 'comma,' *crema* 'diaeresis,' *erotema* 'rhetorical question,' *gama* 'scale,' and *nema* 'thread or seal.' For these examples, the hypothesis that they changed meaning through the popular use is not a valid one. In particular, *coma* and *crema* refer to orthographic punctuation signs, therefore we should not assume they were part of popular usage. An alternative interpretation for *coma* 'comma' is that it was always feminine by analogy with the feminine gender of the letters of the alphabet, e.g., *la a*, *la b*, etcetera. In the case of *crema* 'diaeresis,' perhaps it adopts the feminine gender by analogy with the Latin word *crema* 'cream,' that already existed in the language. The case of *erotema* 'rhetorical question,' could be analyzed as a case of semantic analogy with the word *pregunta* 'question.' *Gama* has the original meaning of 'musical scale,' perhaps by semantic analogy with the feminine noun *música* 'music' or *escala* 'scale,' it adopted the feminine gender. Finally, the case of *nema* 'thread or letter seal,' it is quite interesting because it is considered by Joan Corominas as a *cultismo* 'learned word' (3:508), therefore not readily accessible to the general population. The first documentation for this lexical item is from the 16th century. One possible explanation is that the domain of usage of this lexical item with the meaning of 'letter seal' included the masses not just the elite, for example, the letter carriers. In those times, the seal was proof of the validity of all documents and as a consequence was known by the people. The analysis of this first semantic category, humanities, points to the complex nature of gender assignment.

The next semantic category includes medicine and science terminology, including lexical items referring to medical terminology,

diseases, biology, etc. This constitutes the category with the high number of exceptions to the masculine rule. Out of a total of 26 words in this group, 6 were feminine (*aforisma* 'aphorism,' *asma* 'asthma,' *bizma* 'medicine plaster,' *flema* 'phlegm,' *pócima* 'potion,' and *postema* 'abscess') and 5 were ambiguous in terms of gender (*aneurisma* 'aneurysm,' *enema* 'enema,' *enzima* 'enzyme,' *esperma* 'sperm,' and *reuma* 'rheumatism'). The assignment of feminine gender to some of the items in this category seems to be accounted for mostly by semantics and the domain of usage of the terms, if we assume they were as common in everyday use as they are today. In particular, *asma* 'asthma' and *flema* 'phlegm' are very common medical terms, known by people today, hence the use of the feminine gender is not surprising. Similarly, *bizma* 'medicine plaster' and *pócima* 'potion' are terms referring to remedies that could be prepared at home. Hence, they are common in popular use. Interestingly, Corominas considers *bizma* a *semicultismo* 'semi-learned' term, derived from the word *EPITHEMA* through Latin (1:469). Notice that feminine gender assignment to this word goes against the hypothesis that learned words only belong to the masculine gender. The last two feminine items in this category, *aforisma* 'aphorism' and *postema* 'abscess,' refer to abnormal growths. *Aforisma* was perhaps a more common term since it refers to a tumor on animals, i.e., people dealing with animals could have heard the term through regular exchanges with animal doctors. The case of *postema* is not clear and goes to point out the arbitrariness of gender assignment. Finally, this category also includes the highest number of lexical items with ambiguous gender: *aneurisma* 'aneurysm,' *enema* 'enema,' *enzima* 'enzyme,' *esperma* 'sperm,' and *reuma* 'rheumatism.' The hypothesis regarding a change of gender through popular use could be invoked for three of these words: *enema*, *esperma*, and *reuma*. In the first case, the word could have been a popular treatment by doctors of the time, therefore accessible to popular language. *Esperma* could also have been part of popular use in its two meanings, 'sperm' and 'candle wax.' Finally, *reuma*, being a common ailment would have been an everyday term. For the remaining words in this group, *aneurisma* and *enzima*, popular usage does not seem to provide an appropriate explanation given the level of medical sophistication required to use these words. Examples in this semantic category are proof of the constant struggle of Hellenisms ending in *-ma* have endured to fit into Spanish two-gen-

paradigm and in doing so, offer us a window into Spanish linguistic past.

The semantic category of religion includes only seven items: *anatema* 'anathema,' *carisma* 'charisma,' *crisma* 'chrism,' *dogma* 'dogma,' *enigma* 'enigma,' *estigma* 'stigma' and *fantasma* 'phantom.' Regarding ecclesiastic or religious terms, Spanish history tends to use *cultismos* 'learned words' or to keep the "original" form intact, as pointed by Lapesa (108-109). Nonetheless, we find two lexical items of ambiguous gender: *anatema* and *crisma*. Interestingly, one refers to excommunication and the other one, to a blessing. Moreover, the first documented use for both is in the 13th century. The ambiguity of *anatema* might be a reflection of how prevalent this lexical item was in the minds of the people, perhaps as a threat if they did not follow the rules of the church. In the case of *crisma*, people could have adopted the feminine gender by semantic analogy with the feminine word *cabeza* 'head,' where the *crisma* or sacred oil was placed. Interestingly, in modern Spanish, a vulgar meaning of *crisma* is head.

The semantic categories of maritime and military are discussed together given their parallel development. In terms of domain of usage, we can safely assume that words used by soldiers or sailors were more common than the lexical items belonging to the previous categories. First, the analysis of the words in these two categories revealed that they are all feminine, e.g., maritime: *broma* (f) 'mollusk,' *calma* (f) 'sea calm;' military: *estratagema* 'stratagem,' *jalma* 'packsaddle.' However, it would be an over simplification of the complex process involving gender assignment to assume domain of usage as the only gender-determining factor. Other possible linguistic forces at work could be morphological analogy with feminine words ending in *-ma* and semantic analogy with other related words, e.g., *estratagema* versus *estrategia* 'strategy.' Notice that in other Romance languages such as Portuguese, Italian and French, *estratagema* is assigned the masculine gender, as illustrated in Appendix 3.

The last semantic category under study, miscellanea, includes a semantically diverse group of terms: *aroma* 'perfume,' *diadema* 'diadem,' *emblema* 'emblem,' *dracma* 'drachma' and *numisma* 'numism.' The first three items on the list have in common a sense of refinement. Of these three, only *diadema* is feminine. Fernández Galiano explains that *diadema* underwent a change in gender (61). Originally it referred to the ribbon placed around the head of kings as a symbol of their royalty.

Hence, the hypothesis that popular use was the cause for the gender change is not an option in this case. According to Alonso, the first documentation of the feminine gender is in the 16th century. However, its modern meaning of feminine decoration is not documented until the 19th century (2:1539). One possibility is that the gender of this term was affected by semantic analogical influences from other feminine words, such as *corona* 'crown,' or *cabeza* 'head.' Interestingly the gender of *diadema* in other Romance languages like Portuguese, French and Italian, is in fact masculine (See Appendix 3 for a complete list). The last two interesting lexical items under this category are *dracma* 'drachma' contrasted with *numisma* 'numism.' Regarding *dracma*, it has currently ambiguous gender in Spanish. This ambiguity could be the result of two forces at play. The first one pertains to the fact that *dracma* was originally feminine in Greek. As a result, this must have created some confusion on the elite speakers who knew the original gender, but were also using words in *-ma* in the masculine gender. In addition, since the meaning of *dracma* was a measuring unit, the lexical item was more readily accessible to the people involved in trade. In contrast, the word *numisma* was a learned word and continued to be so in Spanish today, hence its masculine gender.

The previous discussion on the semantics and domain of usage of the Hellenisms points to the conclusion that these two criteria of isolation cannot account for gender assignment of these lexical items. As we saw with the gender criterion, many factors confound the process.

3.3 First documentation of Hellenisms

This section analyzes the first documented evidence of each of the Hellenisms under study, using the *Diccionario etimológico* de Corominas to determine whether there is any relation between gender assignment and date of first documentation. The analysis of the Hellenisms in *-ma* reveals that the earliest documented items date from the 13th century and include terms such as *anatema* 'anathema,' *clima* 'climate,' *cornu* 'corm,' *crisma* 'chrism' *fantasma* 'phantom' and *flema* 'phlegm.' The gender distribution for these early Hellenisms is as follows: 4 feminine, 2 masculine and 1 ambiguous (See Appendix 4 for details). However, we can only state that their early introduction might be one of the factors involved on gender assignment. More relevant factors in the

case are semantics and domain of usage. For example, as discussed in the previous section, items related to religion like *anatema*, *crisma* and *fantasma* might have been popular knowledge through the influence of the church. Similarly, words like *flema*, a common medical term and *corma*, a term related to the military, could be interpreted as available to the masses. In the 14th century only five of the Hellenisms under study are introduced, 4 feminine and one masculine, e.g., *bizma* 'medicine plaster,' *calma* 'sea calm,' *cisma* 'schism' and *postema* 'abscess.' The date of introduction does not seem to have a determining influence on gender assignment; semantic analogy and domain of usage could account best for the assignment of gender in to these words. Only two words in *-ma* from the present list were adopted in the 15th century, both of them feminine: *coma* 'coma' and *diadema* 'diadem.' As discussed previously, semantic analogy seems to have been the most determining force in the assignment of the feminine gender to these two items. In contrast to the previous paucity in the introduction Hellenisms, the 16th and 17th centuries see a boom in the introduction of new lexical items, with a total of 32 (44%) out of the 73 items under study. In particular, 14 items were introduced in the 16th century: 6 masculine, 6 feminine and 2 ambiguous. Notice that gender assignment for this group is almost equally divided between masculine and feminine items, hence date of introduction does not seem to be the determining factor on gender assignment. Regarding the semantics of this group, it varies from popular words like *broma* 'sea mollusk' and *chusma* 'set of galleons,' to learned ones like *diafragma* 'diaphragm' and *plasma* 'plasma.' For this group, one is forced to conclude that no single factor was responsible for gender assignment but all of them working simultaneously. In contrast with the previous centuries, Hellenisms introduced in the 17th century are predominantly masculine, with 15 masculine items out of a total of 18. In this century, Spanish adopts Hellenisms more attuned to the elite, e.g., *axioma* 'axiom,' *carisma* 'charisma,' *emblema* 'emblem,' among others. The semantics and as a result, the domain of use of these lexical items had an important role in the gender distribution of the items adopted, with only 2 instances of feminine items and 1 instance of an ambiguous one. There is a reduction in the number of Hellenisms in *-ma* documented in the 18th century, with only 8 words adopted from the list: 4 feminine and 4 masculine. These numbers indicate that the date of introduction was not a determining factor on gender assignment. In terms of semantics, this

group contains refined items in the masculine, e.g., *prisma* 'prism,' and *sistema* 'system,' but also feminine ones such as *crema* 'diaeresis' and *gama* 'scale.' Once more, we can see that one factor can not be chosen to account for gender assignment. The introduction of new Hellenisms remains constant in the 19th century, with the addition of more sophisticated terms to the Spanish language, e.g., *adenoma* 'adenoma,' *coma* 'coma,' *erotema* 'erotema.' Gender distribution of these terms was: 6 masculine, 2 feminine, 1 both and 1 ambiguous. Once more the date of introduction does not seem to be the determining factor of gender assignment with other criteria such as analogical forces having more decisive influence on this process. Finally, the 20th century sees the introduction of 8 new terms ending in *-ma*, mostly related to medicine, e.g., *glaucoma* 'glaucoma,' *trauma* 'trauma.' Almost all terms introduced were masculine, i.e., 7 masculine and 1 ambiguous. For this last group of Hellenisms, the date of introduction might have played a role but not as the determining factor if we take into consideration that the types of lexical items introduced were refined in nature.

The previous review of the first documented date on the Hellenisms indicates that this criterion might be a determining factor when taken into consideration with the other criteria at work.

4. Conclusions

The present study explored the validity of the traditional generalization about the gender of Hellenisms ending in *-ma*. The data analysis revealed that the majority of Hellenisms in *-ma* are masculine (60%) but there are also cases of feminine (27%) and ambiguous ones (8%) that should not be ignored. These results indicate that any categorical generalization regarding these lexical items is inadequate in many respects. First, it might be the case that gender variance of Hellenisms in *-ma* escapes existing rules. Second, gender variance seems to be the result of confounding factors at play, for that reason no one particular factor should be taken to be the absolute answer to gender assignment, e.g., domain of usage, semantics, analogy, first date of documentation, etcetera. In particular, the semantics and domain of usage criteria seem to play an important role on gender assignment but are not without exceptions. Moreover, analogical forces, both morphological and semantic, also seem to have a significant effect on gender

assignment. Finally, in terms of pedagogical applications of the present study, textbooks should avoid any broad generalizations regarding the behavior of the Hellenisms ending in *-ma*, since as we have seen, they escape all generalizations. As Ángel Rosenblat has pointed out, anything is possible with respect to gender (112). Perhaps the best generalization one could make regarding these Hellenisms is, that they are best left as an enigma.

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Appendix 1

Gender of Hellenisms

GREEK	SPANISH	ENGLISH
1. αδήν (m)	adenoma (m)	adenoma
2. αφόρισμα (n)	aforisma (f)	aphorism
3. αναγράφειν (*)	anagrama (m)	anagram
4. ανάθεμα (n)	anatema (amb.)	anathema
5. ανεύρισμα (n)	aneurisma (amb.)	aneurysm
6. αγγείον (n)	angioma (m)	angioma
7. απόφθεγμα (n)	apotegma (m)	apothegm
8. άρωμα (n)	aroma (m)/ (f)	aroma
9. άσθμα (n)	asma (f)	asthma
10. αξίωμα (n)	axioma (m)	axiom
11. επίθεμα (n)	bizma (f)	(medicine plaster)
12. βρώμα (f)	broma (f)	(sea mollusk, joke)
13. κάυμα (*) > καλμα (f)	calma (f)	calm sea, calm
14. κάλυμμα (n)	calima(f)	(net)
15. χάρισμα (n)	carisma (m)	charisma
16. κόμα (n)	cima (f)	(summit)
17. σχίσμα (n)	cisma (m)	schism
18. κλίμα (n)	clima (m)	climate
19. κόμμα (n)/κώμα	coma (/f)	coma, med. coma
20. κορμός (m)	corma (f)	corm
21. κέλευσμα (n)	chusma (f)	(set of galleons, rabble)

22. τρίμα (n)	crema (f)	diaeresis
23. χρίσμα (n)	crisma (amb.)	chrism
24. διάδημα (n)	diadema (f)	diadem
25. διάφραγμα (n)	diafragma (m)	diaphragm
26. διάγραμμα (n)	diagrama (m)	diagram
27. δίλημμα (n)	dilema (m)	dilemma
28. δίπλωμα (n)	diploma (m)	diploma
29. δόγμα (n)	dogma (m)	dogma
30. δραχμή (f)	dracma (amb)	drachma
31. δράμα (n)	drama (m)	drama
32. έκζεμα (n)	eczema (m)	eczema
33. οίδημα (n)	edema (m)	edema
34. έμβλημα (n)	emblema (m)	emblem
35. ένυεμι (*)	enema (m)	enema/ topical medicine
36. αίνιγμα (n)	enigma (m)	enigma
37. ζύμη (f)	enzima (amb)	enzyme
38. ερώτημα (n)	erotema (f)	(rhetorical question)
39. σπέρμα (n)	esperma (amb.)	sperm
40. σχήμα (n)	esquema (m)	scheme
41. στίγμα (n)	estigma (m)	stigma
42. στόμα (n)	estoma (f)	stoma
43. στρατήγημα (n)	estratagema (f)	stratagem
44. φάντασμα (n)	fantasma (m)	phantom
45. φλέγμα (n)	flema (f)	phlegm
46. φωνή (f)	fonema (m)	phoneme

47. γ (γάμμα) (n)	gama (f)	(scale/gamut)
48. γλαύκος (m)	glaucoma (m)	glaucoma
49. ιδίωμα (n)	idioma (m)	(language)
50. σάγμα (n)	jalma (f)	(packsaddle)
51. λήμμα (n)	lema (m)	(motto)
52. νήμα (n)	nema (f)	(thread or letter seal)
53. πνεύμα (n)	neuma (m)	neume
54. νόμισμα (n)	numisma (m)	numism
55. πανόραμα (n)	panorama (m)	panorama
56. παράδειγμα (n)	paradigma (m)	paradigm
57. πλάσμα (n)	plasma (m)	plasma
58. απόθεμα (n)	pócima (f)	potion
59. ποίημα (n)	poema (m)	poem
60. απόστημα (n)	postema (f)	(abscess)
61. πρίσμα (n)	prisma (m)	prism
62. πρόβλημα (n)	problema (m)	problem
63. πρόγραμμα (n)	programa (m)	program
64. ρεύμα (n)	reuma (amb)	rheumatism
65. σάρξ (f)	sarcoma (m)	sarcoma
66. σύμπτωμα (n)	síntoma (m)	symptom
67. σύνταγμα (n)	sintagma (m)	syntagma
68. σύστημα (n)	sistema (m)	system
69. σόφισμα (n)	sofisma (m)	sophism
70. σώμα (n)	soma (m)	soma
71. θέμα (n)	tema (m)	theme

72. θεώρημα (n)	teorema (m)	theorem
73. τραύμα (n)	trauma (m)	trauma

*Gender not applicable, verbs.

Appendix 2

Semantics Categories of Hellenisms

Humanities	Medical/ Science	Maritime	Religion	Military	Miscellanea
anagrama (m)	adenoma (m)	broma (f)	anatema (amb.)	cima (f)	aroma (m)
apoteigma (m)	aforisma (f)	calima (f)	carisma (m)	corma (f)	diadema (f)
axioma (m)	aneurisma(amb)	calma (f)	crisma (amb.)	estratagama (f)	emblema (m)
*cisma(m)	angioma (m)	chusma (f)	dogma (m)	jalma (f)	*dracma(amb)
coma (f)	aroma (f)		enigma (m)		
crema (f)	asma (f)		estigma (m)		
diagrama (m)	bizma (f)		fantasma (m)		
dilema (m)	coma (m)				
diploma (m)	clima (m)				
drama (m)	diafragma (m)				
enigma (m)	*eczema (m)				
erotema (f)	edema (m)				
*esquema (m)	enema (both)				
fonema (m)	enzima (amb)				
gama (f)	esperma (amb)				
idioma (m)	estoma (f)				
lema (m)	flema (f)				
nema (f)	glaucoma (m)				
*neuma (m)	plasma (m)				
panorama (m)	pócima (f)				
paradigma (m)	postema (f)				
poema (m)	prisma (m)				
problema (m)	reuma (amb.)				
programa (m)	sarcoma (m)				
sintagma (m)	síntoma (m)				
sistema (m)	soma (m)				
sofisma (m)	trauma (m)				
tema(m)					
teorema (m)					

*Words have undergone a gender change since 1958.

Appendix 3

Gender of Hellenisms in Other Romance Languages

SPANISH	PORTUGUESE	ITALIAN	FRENCH
anatema (amb.)	anatema (m)	anatema (m)	anatheme (m)
aneurisma (amb.)	aneurisma (m)	aneurisma (m)	anévrisme (m)
asma (f)	asma (f)	asma (amb.)	asthme (m)
calma (f)	calma (f)	càlma (f)	calme (m)
cima (f)	cima (f)	cima (f)	cime (f)
cisma (m)	cisma (m)	scisma (m)	schisme (m)
crisma (amb.)	crisma(m / f)	crisma (m)	chreme (m)
diadema (f)	diadema (m)	diadema (m)	diademe (m)
dracma (f)	dracma (f)	dramma (f)	drachme (f)
enigma (m)	enigma (m)	enigma (m)	enigme (f)
esperma (amb.)	esperma (m)	sperma (m)	sperme (m)
estoma (f)	estoma (m)	estoma (m)	stomate (m)
estratagama (f)	estratagama (m)	stratagemma (m)	stratageme (m)
fantasma (m)	fantasma (m)	fantàsima (f)	fantasme (m)
paradigma (m)	paradigma (m)	paradigma (m)	paradigme (m)

Appendix 4

First Documentation of Hellenisms

XIII Cent.	XVI Cent.	XVII Cent.	XVIII Cent.	XIX Cent.	XX Cent.
anatema (amb.)	asma (f)	anagrama (m)	aforisma (f)	adenoma (m)	angioma (m)
clima (m)	broma (f)	apotegma (m)	calima (f)	aneurisma(amb)	*eczema (m)
corma (f)	chusma (f)	aroma (m) (f)	crema (f)	coma (m)	enzima (amb)
crisma (amb.)	diafragma (m)	axioma (m)	estigma (m)	enema (both)	fonema (m)
fantasma (m)	dilema (m)	carisma (m)	gama (f)	erotema (f)	sarcoma (m)
flema (f)	dogma (m)	diploma (m)	lema (m)	*esquema (m)	glaucoma (m)
	*dracma(amb)	drama (m)	prisma (m)	estoma (f)	soma (m) ¹
	edema (m)	emblema (m)	sistema (m)	*neuma (m)	trauma (m)
XIV Cent.	esperma (amb)	enigma (m)		numisma (m)	
	estrategema (f)	idioma (m)		programa (m)	
bizma (f)	nema (f)	jalma (f)			
calma (f)	(a)pócima (f)	panorama (m)			
cima (f)	plasma (m)	poema (m)			
*cisma(m)	tema(m)	problema (m)			
postema (f)		reuma (amb.)			
		síntoma (m)			
		sofisma (m)			
XV Cent.		teorema (m)			NOT DATED
coma (f)					diagrama (m)
diadema (f)					paradigma (m)
					sintagma (m)

*Words have undergone a gender change since 1958.

¹ *Soma* is not dated in Corominas, but *somático* appears in 1925 (4:217), hence we assume the same date for *soma*.

Building the Bridge: The Combination of Transitional Courses and the Study Abroad Experience

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Introduction

A far too common problem faced in most advanced-level foreign language classrooms is the under-prepared or ill-equipped student. This problem is often identified as language gap wherein students are incapable of reading lengthy and original texts in the upper-level courses. In addition, students complain that foreign language programs move too abruptly from classes focused on language acquisition and development of the four learning skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) to those of literature or culture where a significant amount of reading is required, and moreover, where an advanced linguistic knowledge is assumed. Furthermore, foreign language instructors often refuse to teach grammar in the more advanced content courses because they feel that grammatical knowledge should be acquired in the lower-level sequence. Based on instructor complaints and student criticisms, perhaps it is time to consider the implementation of transitional courses which are specifically designed to aid in bridging the students' gaps of knowledge from the lower-level courses to the advanced, more content-based, classes.

Transitional courses aim to advance the students' knowledge about the foreign culture and literature while implementing manageable authentic literary and cultural texts, grammar activities, and a continual recycling of the language skills. This article will address the methods I have used to develop transitional courses in conjunction with the study abroad experience. I will first discuss the problem of language gap faced by many foreign language professors. Second, I will present the program I established abroad, which includes a description of the