

Problem #2

1. Articles. The problem features words with the articles *el* (pl. *els*) and *la* (pl. *les*). Clearly these articles precede masculine and feminine nouns, respectively; this can be seen, among other things, from the words meaning ‘(male) follower’ and ‘(female) follower’.

2. Stress. We can see that the mark ` is placed over *e*, *o*, *a* and the mark ´ over *i*, *u*. Examining the words ending in *-s*, we notice that the stress marks in them are placed on the last syllable or the third one from the end. We can assume that in such words the stressed syllable is usually the penultimate, and the stress is explicitly marked when it is not. In all other words stress usually falls on the last syllable, and is marked when it does not.

3. Plural. We see that the ending *-s* mentioned in the statement of the problem is not added to words whose singular form already ends in *s*. Also, in the problem there are words with the plural ending *-os*. Let us divide all words into groups according to their gender, final consonant and plural ending:

Final consonant	Plural in <i>-s</i> (0 after <i>s</i>)		Plural in <i>-os</i>	
	masculine	feminine	masculine	feminine
-s	<i>el cactus</i> <i>el pàncrees</i>	<i>la càries</i> <i>la trencadís</i>	<i>el gimnàs</i> <i>el permís</i> <i>el vas</i>	
-x	<i>el apèndix</i> <i>el índex</i>	<i>la hèlix</i>	<i>el flux</i> <i>el suffix</i> <i>el teix</i>	
-ç		<i>la faç</i> (<i>la sequaç</i>)	<i>el contumaç</i> <i>el pedaç</i> (<i>el sequaç</i>)	

We see that feminine nouns can only have the ending *-s* (0 after *s*) in the plural, while masculine nouns get *-os* if they are stressed on the last (or only) syllable, *-s* (0 after *s*) otherwise.

Assignment 1.

<i>el bastaix</i>	<i>els bastaixos</i>
<i>el troleibús</i>	<i>els troleibusos</i>
<i>la clos</i>	<i>les clos</i>
<i>el iris</i>	<i>els iris</i>
<i>el llaç</i>	<i>els llaços</i>
<i>el ònix</i>	<i>els ònixs</i>
<i>la pelvis</i>	<i>les pelvis</i>
<i>el pis</i>	<i>els pisos</i>
<i>el sequaç</i>	<i>els sequaços</i>
<i>la sequaç</i>	<i>les sequaçs</i>
<i>el tastaolletes</i>	<i>els tastaolletes</i>
<i>la xeix</i>	<i>les xeixs</i>

Theoretically one might derive the forms **la clo* and **el tastaollete*, but those are poorly compatible with the statement of the problem, which talks of nouns ending in the letters *s*, *x* or *ç* only. The forms **el sequaços* and **la sequaçs* are also wrong, because it is hinted that the words for ‘(male) follower’ and ‘(female) follower’ are only differentiated by their articles in the singular.

Assignment 2. The marks ` and ´ are used when the stress falls on a non-default syllable.

Assignment 3. When there is no ` or ´ mark, the stress is penultimate if the word ends in *s*, otherwise it is final.

Problem and solution: *Boris Iomdin*