

(A) Malteaser (1/1) [10 Points]

The definite article is given by the following rules (in order of priority):

1. **ix** before alveolar consonants
2. **l** before vowels or silent letters
3. **li** before consonant clusters
4. **il** otherwise

Note that **j** is considered a vowel.

Out of interest, these rules apply in several Semitic languages, notably Arabic (Maltese's ancestor). The letters in group (1) are called 'sun' letters (the word for sun is *xemx*) while the other consonants are called 'moon' letters (moon is *qamar*).

A1. ktieb and **gobon**. You would expect *li ktieb*, because the noun begins with a consonant cluster, and you would expect *iġ gobon* because 'ġ' is a voiced 'ċ' and so should belong to the dental-alveolar set.

A2.

<i>ix xkora</i>	(sack)	<i>l ors</i>	(bear)
<i>iġ ġebli</i>	(stone)	<i>il missier</i>	(father)
<i>li mniher</i>	(nose)	<i>il lura</i>	(back)
<i>ix xemx</i>	(the sun)	<i>l ilma</i>	(water)
<i>il kafè</i>	(coffee)	<i>il beraq</i>	(lightning)
<i>l hena</i>	(happiness)	<i>in nar</i>	(fire)
<i>l għajn</i>	(eye)	<i>in nifs</i>	(breath)
<i>it tama</i>	(hope)	<i>id dlam</i>	(darkness)

