Question 6 Free the Friulian three Solution

(a) la nestre cjase
(b) il tagong
(c) la mê biciclete
(d) to fradi
(e) la mê sûr irlandese
(f) tô sûr
(g) i nestris cusins
(h) i nestris lavôrs
(i) lis nestres aves
(j) gno fradi

Explanation

Like in most Romance languages, Friulian nouns belong to one of two genders, masculine and feminine. The masculine nouns in the data are *tagong*, *lavôr*, *fradi* and *cusin*; the feminine nouns are *cjase*, *biciclete*, *sûr* and *ave*. As far as we can see, the plural of all nouns is formed by adding *–s*. All adjectives, articles and possessives agree in both gender and number. So these words have four forms as follows (only the forms given in the data are shown):

Word	masc sing	fem sing	masc plur	fem plur
the	*il*	*la*	*i*	*lis*
my	*gno*	*mê*	*miei*	*mês*
your	*to*	*?*		*tôs*
our	*nestri*	*nestre*	*nestris*	*?*
Irish	*irlandês*	*irlandese*		

For the answers, it was mostly a question of looking up the appropriate form in the above table. However (f) and (i) required you to "construct" the feminine singular for 'your' and the feminine plural for 'our' respectively. It is reasonable to assume that the plural is the same as the singular, but with an *–s* added, as is the case with nouns and some of the possessive pronouns. Of course that's not a hard and fast rule (cf. 'the' and 'my'), but if 'your' and 'our' were not regular, would it be fair to ask you to guess?

But there's something else going on: why do most but not all of the phrases with possessives also have an article. Let's look at the examples we have:

no article	article
	la mê cjase
	lis tôs bicicletes
	i nestris tagongs
	il gno lavôr
mê sûr	*lis mês sûrs*
nestri fradi	*la nestre ave irlandese*
to cusin	*i miei cusins*
	i nestri cusin irlandês

The rule – and don't ask why this is – is that in general the article is included, EXCEPT for a family member in the singular and not otherwise modified. So 'our aunt' would be *nestre ave*, but 'our Irish aunt', with the additional modifier 'Irish' reinstates the article *la*.