MULTIPLICITY OF ROLES:
THE PRONOUN IN THE ÀO DIALECT OF YORÚBÁ
OYE TAIWO

Introduction

The pronoun substitutes a noun in a construction. It is also employed as a nominal qualifier. However, in the Ào dialect of Yorùbá, the pronoun has some other functions apart from the two roles mentioned above. It can be used as the continuous aspect marker and as the negative marker in different constructions in Ào. The following types of pronoun have been identified in Yorùbá: long pronouns, short (subject and object) pronouns and nominal qualifiers. We shall first discuss these types of pronoun in the Ào dialect before discussing their roles.

Long Pronouns\(^1\) in Ào

The long pronoun has six forms in Ào. These forms are stated in table I below.

\(^1\) The long pronouns are also known as independent pronouns, emphatic pronouns, and pronominals in the literature (Bamgbose, (1966, 1967) Awobuluyi (1978a, 1992) among others). Short pronouns are said to be derived from their long counterparts in Yorùbá. See Awobuluyi (1992), Adetugbó (1967, 1982), Adesuyan (1991) among others. However, Awobuluyi (200a and b) propose that the long pronouns are derived from their short counterparts. Ajongoló (2005: 34 – 37) argues that long and short pronouns have their origins from the lexicon as completely formed words, fully inflected for case, number, person and negation. None is derived from the other. Our discussions in this paper follow Ajongoló (2005). Ajongoló is a former name of Oye Taiwo.
Table I: Long Pronouns in Ào

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<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Sg</th>
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<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Òmi</td>
<td>Àa</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Ùgwo</td>
<td>Ìnin</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Òun</td>
<td>Ònàn</td>
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</table>

(Ajòngolo 2005: 35)

The long pronouns above occur in the sentences below.

1. a. Òmi a zè udòn.  
   I fut. eat meat  
   i.e. ‘I will eat a piece of meat’.

   b. Àa a zè udòn rín.  
   We fut. eat meat foc.  
   i.e. ‘We are the one that will eat some meat’.

   c. Ùgwo gan-an nìí² gbò.  
   you(sg) fut.neg. hear  
   i.e. ‘You (sg) too will not hear’.

   d. Ìnin in³ gbò.  
   you(pl) past.neg. hear

² Ào does not have distinct and separate negators. Some functors such as tense markers, aspect markers, focus markers and imperative markers double as negative markers in the dialect. In (1c), nìí is both the future tense marker and the negative marker. For a detailed discussion of Negation in Ào see Ajòngolo (2005).

³ The low tone is the past tense marker in Ào. It is borne by a vowel identical to the last vowel of the subject DP as we have in (1d). This past tense marker also doubles as the negative marker.
i.e. ‘You(pl) did not hear’.

e. Òun ó tè.
   he agr arrive
i.e. ‘He arrived’.

f. Ônọn aí r’há
   they hab. run
i.e. ‘They normally run (a race)’.

From the sentences above, we observe that long pronouns can occur in affirmative sentences as in (1a – b, e – f) and in negative sentences as in (1c – d). In their occurrences in affirmative and negative sentences, they maintain the same form

Object Pronouns

Object pronouns have two forms in Ào. These forms are given in table II below.  

Table II: Object Pronouns in Ào

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Forms</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>I Sg</td>
<td>I Pl</td>
<td>II Sg</td>
<td>II Pl</td>
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<tr>
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<td>mi</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>mi</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>è</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>è</td>
<td>in</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

For a detailed discussion of object pronouns in Ào, see Oye Taiwo (2004) “Object Pronouns in the Ào dialect of Yoruba”.

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4 For a detailed discussion of object pronouns in Ào, see Oye Taiwo (2004) “Object Pronouns in the Ào dialect of Yoruba”.
Forms I: Object pronouns after high and low tone verbs

II: Object pronouns after mid tone verbs

(Ajongolo 2005:79)

The two forms of the object pronouns above occur in the sentences in (2) and (3) below.

2. a. Tayé ó mú mi.
   Taye agr choose me
   i.e. ‘Taye chose me’.

b. Tírha wa aí rí a.
   Teacher our hab. see us
   i.e. ‘Our teacher normally sees us’.

c. Òmi à gbó ẹ
   I fut hear you(sg)
   i.e. ‘I will hear you’.

d. Opé ẹ mọ in.
   Opé past neg. know you(pl)
   i.e. ‘Opé did not know you’.

e. Ijè mi ní gwé ọn.
   mother my fut.neg. wash them
   i.e. ‘My mother will not wash them’. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>high tone of the verb</th>
<th>òn</th>
<th>mid tone of the verb</th>
<th>òn</th>
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</table>
f. Ijè mi nií gwẹ.
   mother my fut.neg. wash
   i.e. ‘My mother will not wash it/him/her’.

g. Òmi a gbó.
   I fut. hear
   i.e. ‘I will hear him/her/it’.

3. a. Òpè é ra mí.
    Tope cont. rub me
    i.e. ‘Tope is rubbing me’.

b. Òmò jí ó zẹ à
    Child this agr resemble us
    i.e. ‘This child resembles us’.

c. Õrhìn ó ja è
    Knife agr tear you(sg)
    i.e. ‘The knife tore you’.

d. Òlòran o mó ín.
    God agr mould you(pl)
    i.e. ‘God moulded you’.

5 The verbs in (2f) and (2g) are transitive verbs. They however, do not have overt objects because their object is the third person singular object pronoun. This object pronoun is not morphologically realized in Ào as table II above informs us rather the tone of the verb is used to represent it. In (2f), the verb gwẹ ‘to wash’ bears a mid tone to signify that it selects the non-overt third person singular object pronoun. When the verb selects overt object pronouns it, bears a low tone as in (2e) where it selects the third person plural object pronoun. A high tone-bearing verb still maintains its tone even when it selects the non-overt third person singular object pronoun. This is why the verb gbó ‘to hear’ bears a high tone in (2g) where it has non-overt object and in (2e) where it has ë the second person singular pronoun. See Oyé Táiwò (2004) for details.
e. Tope ó rhe ón lí alé.
   i.e. ‘Tope picked them from the ground’.

f. Tope ó rhe lí alé.
   i.e. ‘Tope picked it from the ground’.

The form of the object pronoun is determined by the verb that selects it. A high or a low tone verb selects a mid tone object pronoun as in the sentences in (2a) – (2e). A mid tone verb selects a high tone object pronoun as we have in the examples in (3a) – (3e).

**Short Subject Pronouns**

Short subject pronouns have five different forms in different syntactic positions in Ào. These forms are stated in table iii below.

**Table III: Short subject pronouns in Ào**

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6 We have the same verb in (3e) and (3f). The verb is *rhe* ‘to pick’. It bears a mid tone when it selects an overt object pronoun as in (3e) but a high tone when it selects the non-overt third person singular object pronoun in (3f). See also footnote 5 above.

7 See Ajióngola (2005: 90 – 118) for a detailed and vivid discussion of the various forms of the short subject pronoun in Ào.
Person  Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sg Pl</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Mò À Mo À Mì À Mì À Mì À</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Wò Ìn Wo In Wè In We In Wè In</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Ø Ón Øn Ôn Ôn Ôn Ôn Ôn</td>
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</table>

Forms:  
I: short subject pronouns before high tone verbs.  
II: short subject pronouns before mid or low tone verbs.  
III: short subject pronouns before future tense and habitual aspect markers and as continuous aspect markers before high tone verbs.  
IV: short subject pronouns as continuous aspect markers before mid or low tone verbs.  
V: short subject pronouns in negative sentences.  
(Ajongolo 2005: 118)

We observe, from the table above, that short subject plural pronouns and the third person singular pronoun have three forms each. This is because the forms of the plural pronouns are the same in forms I and III and forms II and IV. So also, the third person singular pronoun maintains the same form for forms I, II, and forms III to V but has
another optional form for III\textsuperscript{8}. Only the first and second persons singular pronouns have five different forms. These forms are in the sentences below.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{4.} \textit{a.} Mò rì mọ̀ Táyé.  
\hspace{1cm} I see car Taye  
\hspace{1cm} i.e. ‘I saw Taye’s car’.  
\textit{b.} Wò ṛhá asọ.  
\hspace{1cm} You(sg) spread cloth  
\hspace{1cm} i.e. ‘You spread the cloth’.  
\textit{c.} Ìn yá.  
\hspace{1cm} you(pl) come  
\hspace{1cm} i.e. ‘You came’.  
\textit{d.} Ó gwó Táyó.  
\hspace{1cm} he beat Tayo  
\hspace{1cm} i.e. ‘He beat(s) Tayo’.
\end{itemize}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{5.} \textit{a.} Mo rà mọ̀ mèzìn.  
\hspace{1cm} I buy car two  
\hspace{1cm} i.e. ‘I bought two cars’.  
\textit{b.} Wo kà ụwé.  
\hspace{1cm} You(sg) read book  
\hspace{1cm} i.e. ‘You are knowledgeable’.
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{8} Awobuluyi (2001a) argues that the third person singular short subject pronoun is not morphologically realized in Yorùbá and that {o} is just a preverbal modifier. See also Adesuyan (1991) for a similar view. However, Ajongòlo (2005: 91 – 96) argues that the Ào dialect of Yorùba has the third person singular short subject pronoun. We take the forms of the third person singular pronoun in table III as those of the said third person singular pronoun following Ajongòlo (2005).
c. In  pọn  omi.
   You(pl) fetch water
   i.e. ‘You fetched some water’.

d. Ó fu eyó í ọmọ rɛ́
   he give money to child his
   i.e. ‘He gave some money to his child’.

The short subject pronouns in the sentences in (4) bear a low tone except the third person singular pronoun. These pronouns occur before high tone bearing verbs. The verbs in the sentences in (5) bear a low or mid tone. These verbs select mid tone bearing short pronouns as subject except the third person singular pronoun that still bears a high tone as in (4d). The pronouns in forms III and IV occur in the sentences in (6) and (7) respectively.

6  a. Mì á fọ  omi.
   I   hab. drink   water
   i.e. ‘I usually drink some water’.

   b. Wè a rhọ ọta.
      you(sg) fut throw stone
   i.e. ‘You will throw a stone’.

   c. Ìn ká ọrhàn.
      you(pl) pluck orange
   i.e. ‘You are plucking some oranges’.
d. E à⁹ gbó.
   he fut hear'.
i.e. ‘He will hear’.

d. É kó ulí.
   He build house
i.e. ‘He is building a house’.

7. a. Mi zé ègwa.
   I eat beans
i.e. ‘I am eating beans’.

   b. We rhùn.
      you(sg) sleep
i.e. ‘You are sleeping’.

   c. In yoù.
      you(pl) look
i.e. ‘You are looking (at something)’.

   d. É rhe èrho.
      he pick seed
i.e. ‘He is picking some seeds’.

   e. On pón omi.
      they fetch water
i.e. ‘They are fetching some water’.

The subject pronouns in the sentences in (6) bear a low tone like the ones in (4). However, there is a vowel change in the first and second

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⁹ The future tense marker has two forms in affirmative sentences. It can be either a as in (6b) or à as in (6d). See Ajongolo (2005: 119 – 121) for details.
persons singular pronouns in that these two pronouns have back vowels in (4) but front vowels in (6).

The subject pronouns in the sentences in (7) bear a mid tone on front vowels unlike those in (5) that have back vowels.

The pronouns in form V occur in the sentences below.

   I past.neg. drink water
   i.e. ‘I did not drink some water’.

   b. We ní zë udon.
   you(sg) fut.neg eat meat
   i.e. ‘You will not eat a piece of meat’.

   c. Ìn rhíí zà.
   you(pl) cont.neg. fight
   i.e. ‘You are no longer fighting/quarrelling’

   d. É ií tɛrɔ.
   he hab.neg. lie
   i.e. ‘He does not normally tell a lie’.

   e. Ón i¹⁰ tɛ.
   they pres.neg. arrive
   i.e. ‘They have not to come’.

¹⁰ The present tense negative marker i in (8e) is quite different from the past tense negative marker in (8a). The low tone is the past tense marker in (8a) but is borne by the vowel identical to that of the subject pronoun. On the other hand, the present tense marker is a lexical item that bears a low tone; it can also bear a mid tone as in (8f) below. We have discussed the semantics of the two present tense negative markers elsewhere. See Oyè Táiwò 2003).
The sentences in (8) are negative sentences. The short subject pronouns in these sentences uniformly bear a high tone.

Roles of Pronouns in Ào

The pronoun-types discussed above have various semantic and syntactic roles in the Ào dialect of Yorùbá. Semantically, the long pronouns are employed when a communicative prominence is placed on the pronoun for emphasis. The short subject pronouns are employed as continuous aspect markers in affirmative sentences and as negative markers in negative sentences. Syntactically, the pronoun substitutes a noun while the short pronouns are employed as nominal qualifiers. We shall discuss each of these roles in the sections that follow.

Semantic Roles of Long Pronouns

In a focus construction where the pronoun is the constituent focused, the long pronoun is employed. The short pronoun cannot occur as the focused constituent. Witness the examples below.
i.e. ‘I ate a piece of meat’.

b. Òmi, o₁ zẹ udòng rín.
   I trace eat meat foc.
i.e. ‘I was the one that ate a piece of meat’.

c. É è se òmi, kí ó₁ zẹ udòng.
   it neg be I foc.neg trace eat meat
i.e. ‘It is not I that ate the piece of meat’.

10. a. Ó gbò ofo won.
    he hear word them
i.e. ‘He heard their word’.

b. Ōun, o₁ gbò ofo won rín.
   he trace hear word them foc.
i.e. ‘He was the one that heard their word’.

c. É è se Ōun, kí ó₁ gbò ofo won.
   it neg be he foc.neg trace hear word their
i.e. ‘He is not the one that heard their word’.

11 a. Olóran o mọ rín.
    God agr mould you(pl)
i.e. ‘God moulded you’.

b. Ìnin, Olóran o mọ t₁ rín.

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11 In the Yorùbá language, when a constituent is moved from the subject position, a dummy pronoun is left at the extraction site. This is the situation in (9b) and (10b) where ‘o’ marks the subject position when the pronouns were moved. Ajọngbọ (1997) argues that the dummy pronoun is a trace of the moved constituent based on the properties of trace in generative grammar. We take the dummy pronoun as trace following Ajọngbọ (1997).
you(pl) God agr mould trace foc.
i.e. ‘It was you that God moulded’.

c. É è se ìninì kí Olorun o mò tì.
   it neg be you(pl) foc.neg God agr mould
   i.e. ‘It is not you that God moulded’.

12 a. Ijè mi nií g̀wè òn.
   mother my fut.neg. wash them
   i.e. ‘My mother will not wash them’.

b. Ònonì ijè mi nií g̀wè tì rìn.
   they mother my fut.neg. wash foc.
   i.e. ‘They are the one my mother will not wash’.

c. È è se ònonì kí ijè mi nií g̀wè tì.
   it neg. be they foc.neg. mother my fut. neg. wash
   i.e. ‘They are not the one my mother will not wash’.

The sentences in (9a) – (12a) above are simple declarative sentences. Those in (9b) – (12b) are focus affirmative sentences and (9c) – (12c) are their negative counterparts. In the focus sentences, the long pronouns are employed because communicative prominence is placed on these pronouns for emphasis.

The simple declarative sentences in (9a) – (12a) above can be relativized. When this is done, they become subordinate clauses. These clauses are in (13) below.

13. a. Òmì, tìí óì zè udon…
I rel.mkr trace eat meat
i.e. ‘I that ate a piece of meat…’

b. Òun tì í ó gbó ọfọ ọwọ...
   he rel.mkr trace hear word them
i.e. ‘He that heard their word…’

c. Înin tì í Oloran o mọ ti
   you(pl) rel.mkr God agr mould
i.e. ‘You that God moulded…’

d. Òno tì í ije mi nií ọg wẹ tí……
   they rel.mkr mother my fut.neg. wash
i.e. ‘Those that my mother will not wash…’

In the subordinate clauses in (13) above, the relative marker tìí
and other constituents after it are employed to qualify the long pronouns
that occur in sentence– initial positions. The examples in (13) are not full
sentences, but subordinate clauses. They are actually the subjects in
complete sentences. The subordinate clauses in (13) can have the full
sentences in (14) below.

14. a. Òmi tì í ọ zẹ udọn o rhan ra.
   i.e. ‘I that ate a piece of meat is robust’.

b. Òun tì í ó gbó ọfọ ọwọ ótẹ rán.
   i.e. ‘He that heard their word has come’.

c. Înin tì í Oloran o mọ fetí rhí mi.
i.e. ‘You that God moulded listen to me’.

d. Ònon tä ije mí nií gê nií mó sôlara.

i.e. ‘Those that my mother will not wash will not be thoroughly clean’.

In the sentences in (14), the long pronouns together with the relative clauses serve as the subject of these sentences. Note that in these relative clauses, the long pronouns function as the constituents focused and the ones relativized.

We can reduce the focus sentences in (9) – (12) above into elliptical sentences. When we do this, such an elliptical sentence will have only the long pronoun and the focus marker. This is the case with the sentences below.

15. a. Òmi rin.
   it foc.
   i.e. ‘It is I’.

   b. É è se òmi.
   it neg be I
   i.e. ‘It is not I’.

16. a. Òun rin.
    he foc
    i.e. ‘He is the one’.

   b. É è se òun.
   it neg be s/he/it
i.e. ‘He is not the one’.

17. a. Ìnin rin.
    you(pl) foc.
    i.e. ‘You are the one’.

b. É è se ìnin.
    it neg be you(pl)
    i.e. ‘You are not the one’.

18. a. Òno no rin.
    they foc.
    i.e. ‘They are the one’.

b. É è se òno.
    it neg be they
    i.e. ‘They are not the one’.

In the examples above, (15a) – (18a) are affirmative elliptical sentences while (15b) – (18b) are their negative counterparts. Note that in the negative sentences unlike what obtains in the affirmative, the negative expression, É è se ‘It is not’ occurs with the focused constituent. The negative focus marker kí is deleted along with the other constituents of the sentence.

Semantic roles of short subject pronouns

Short subject pronouns are employed as continuous aspect markers in affirmative sentences. Where the pronoun is used in this way,
such a sentence will no longer have overt continuous aspect marker. This is the case in the sentences in (19b) – (22b) below.

    Taye cont. breath
    i.e. ‘Taye is breathing’.

   b. Mì mí.
    I breath
    i.e. ‘I am breathing’.

20. a. Títí í rha aso.
    Titi cont. spread cloth
    i.e. ‘Titi is spreading the cloth’.

   b. We rha aso.
    you(sg) spread cloth
    i.e. ‘You are spreading the cloth’.

21. a. Ade é sí ulekuń.
    Ade cont. open door
    i.e. ‘Ade is opening the door’

   b. Ìn sí ulekuń.
    you(pl) open door
    i.e. ‘You are opening the door’.

22. a. Omò jì jì ká orhàn.
    child this cont. pluck orange
    i.e. ‘This child is plucking some oranges’.

   b. Ön ká orhàn.
    they pluck orange
    i.e. ‘They are plucking some oranges’.
The continuous aspect marker in an affirmative sentence is the high tone. This high tone selects a vowel identical to the last vowel of the subject to bear it as we have in the sentences in (19a) - (22a) above. However, where the subject is a short pronoun as in (19b) - (22b), the high tone continuous aspect marker is not morphologically realized. Rather, the short subject pronouns perform the semantic role of the continuous aspect marker along with that of the subject of the sentence.

The subject pronouns in (19b) - (22b) above bear a low tone. They occur as the continuous aspect markers before high tone verbs. The ones that occur before mid or low verbs bear a mid tone. They occur in the sentences in (23b) - (26b) below.

23. a. Táye é ya.
   Taye cont. come
   i.e. ‘Taye is coming’.

   b. Mi ya.
I come
i.e. ‘I am coming’.

24. a. Títí í ze ेg̈ẅ à.
    Titi cont. eat beans
    i.e. ‘Titi is eating beans’.

    b. We े ze ेg̈ẅ à.
    you(sg) eat beans
    i.e. ‘You are eating beans’.

25  a  Ade é yò.
    Ade cont. look
    i.e. ‘Ade is looking (at something)’.

    b  In  yò.
    you(pl) look
    i.e. ‘You are looking (at something)’.

26. a. Ømø yeín í rhe ेrحو.
    child those cont. pick seed
    i.e. ‘These children are picking some seeds’.

    b. Øn rhe ेrحو.
    they pick seed
    i.e. ‘They are picking some seeds’.

Each of the subject pronouns in the sentences in (19b) – (26b) has aspectual meaning incorporated in it. In other words, while these short subject pronouns perform their traditional role as being used instead of nouns, they also have the aspectual meaning as they serve as continuous aspect markers. This observation is clearly revealed when we compare the
sentences in (19a) – (26a) to the ones in (19b) – (26b). The former contain overt continuous aspect marker which informs us that the events or situations describe in these sentences are ongoing. However, in the latter, there is no overt continuous aspect marker. The sentences only contain the subject pronouns and the verb phrases. These verb phrases are the same as those in the sentences with overt continuous aspect markers. Since what makes the difference between the sentences in (19a) – (26a) and those in (19b) – (26) is the subject pronouns, we conclude that these subject pronouns also have aspectual meaning.

The negative meaning of short subject pronouns

The short subject pronoun can have negative meaning. This will be the case where the said pronoun occurs in a negative sentence. However, the short pronouns that occur in negative sentences cannot occur in affirmative sentences because they are inherently negative. The form of these pronouns (as we have in table III above) is quite different from others. Consider the sentences in (27) below.

27. a. Mí ì rí móto Tayé.
   I past neg. see car Taye
   i.e. ‘I did not see Taye’s car’.

b. Wé i^{12} rhá asø.

^{12} There is a difference between i, the present tense negative marker in (27b) and the past tense negative marker in (27a). While the present tense negative marker is a high
you(sg) pre.neg spread cloth
i.e. ‘You are yet to spread the cloth’. / ‘You have not spread the cloth’.

c. Ín ní̀OUN omí.
you(pl) fut.neg. fetch water
i.e. ‘You will not fetch some water’.

d. È rhyme fu eyó í òmò rè.
he cont.neg. give money to child his
i.e. ‘He is no longer giving some money to his child’.

e. Ón iímì rhe èrho.
they hab.neg. pick seed
i.e. ‘They don’t usually pick seeds’.

The subject pronouns in (27) select negative tense/aspect markers. We refer to them as negative pronouns because they have negative head-features. Note however, that these negative pronouns cannot negate a sentence without the occurrence of another negative marker. They must occur in a sentence that has a negative marker as we have in the sentences in (27). They are secondary negators that occur with primary negators in negative sentences.

Syntactic roles of Pronouns

front vowel with a low tone, the past tense negative marker is just a low tone. This low tone selects a vowel identical to the last vowel of the subject DP to bear it because it is a suprasegmental element. See Ajongolo (2005) for details.
The pronoun is traditionally known to substitute a noun in a sentence. In the Ào, both the long pronouns and the short ones perform this role as the examples below inform us.

28. a. Tayé à kó ulí titon.
    Taye fut. build house new
    i.e. ‘Taye will build a new house’.

b. Òun à kó ulí titon.
   he fut. build house new
   i.e. ‘He will build a new house’.

c. E à kó ulí titon.
   he fut. build house new
   i.e. ‘He will build a new house’.

29. a. Kólá rhíí nií ze èrún.
    Kola cont.neg. fut.neg. eat yam
    i.e. ‘Kola will no longer be eating yam’.

b. Òmi rhíí nií ze èrún.
   I cont.neg. fut.neg. eat yam
   i.e. ‘I will no longer be eating yam’.

c. Mí rhíí nií ze èrún.
   I cont.neg. fut.neg. eat yam
   i.e. ‘I will not longer be eating yam’

The third person singular long pronoun ‘Òun’ in (28b) and its short counterpart in (28c) are used to replace the noun Taye in (28a). In the same vein, Òmi, and Mí, in (29b) and (29c) respectively, are used to replace Kólá in (29a).
It is also possible to use the pronoun as object of the verb or the preposition. However, only the short pronouns can be so used, the long ones cannot occur as objects. Consider the examples below.

30. a. Tòpè ó rí Ayo.
   Tòpè agr see Ayo
   i.e. ‘Tòpè saw Ayo’.

   b. Tòpè ó rí on.
   Tòpè agr see them
   i.e. ‘Tòpè saw them’.

31. a. Déle ó fu eyó í Òzo.
   Déle agr give money prep. Ojo
   i.e. ‘Déle gave the money to Ojo’.

   b. Déle ó fu eyó a.
   Déle agr give money us
   i.e. ‘Déle gave us the money’.

Ayo is the object of the verb rí ‘see’ in (30a). In (30b), on ‘them’ is used instead of Ayo. Òzo ‘Ojo’ serves as the object of the preposition in (31a) but a is used to replace it in (31b)

The short pronoun can also be used as a nominal qualifier in a noun phrase. When the first or second person singular pronoun is used to qualify a noun that has a low or mid tone in its last syllable, there is a low tone syllable between the head noun and its pronoun qualifier. Other
pronoun qualifiers do not have this feature. The examples below throw more light on this observation.

32. a. Òmọ ọ mì níí Òrò.
   child Lt my fut.neg. lie
   i.e. ‘My child will not lie’.
   
   \(Lt\) = low tone

b. Ije è rẹ rhííì zẹ udọn.
   mother Lt you(sg) cont.neg. eat meat
   i.e. ‘Your mother is no longer eating a piece of meat’.

c. Ulí ì mì ó lá gan-an.
   house Lt my agr big very
   i.e. ‘My house is very big’.

d. Wè è mò ìlúù rẹ gédégédé.
   you(sg) past.neg know town Lt you(sg) at all
   i.e. ‘You did not know your town at all’.

There is a low tone syllable between the head nouns and the pronoun qualifiers in the noun phrases in the sentences in (32) above. This low tone selects a vowel identical to the last vowel of the noun head to bear it. In the sentences below, there is no such syllable between the head and its pronoun qualifier.
33. a. Ùzà mi ó rhan èg`à.
pot my agr be beauty
i.e. ‘My pot is beautiful’.

b. Uku rè ó là pa.
Stomach you (sg) agr big much
i.e. ‘Your stomach is too big’.

The pronoun qualifiers in the sentences in (33) are the same with those in the sentences in (32). However, the noun heads these pronouns qualify bear a low tone in their last syllable, hence the absence of the low tone syllable between these nouns and their pronoun qualifiers.

Other short pronouns used as nominal qualifiers in a noun phrase do not have the low tone syllable between them and the noun they qualify. Consider the sentences below.

34. a. Oмо wa ní tɛrɔ.
child our fut.neg. lie
i.e. ‘Our child will not lie’.

b. Ulí rè ó là gan-an.
house his agr big very
i.e. ‘His house is very big’.

c. Ùzà wɔ̀n ó rhan èg`à.
pot agr be beauty
i.e. ‘Their pot is beautiful’.

d. Uku wɔ̀n ó là pa.
stomach you(pl) agr big much
i.e. ‘Your stomach is too big’.

The first person plural pronoun, \textit{wa}, in (34a) is used to qualify the noun \textit{ọmọ} ‘child’, the third person singular and plural pronoun, \textit{rẹ} and \textit{wọn} respectively, are the qualifiers in (34b) and (34c). In (34d), the second person plural pronoun \textit{wọn} is the qualifier. In the subject noun phrases in the sentences in (34) where these pronouns are qualifiers, there is no low tone syllable unlike the situation in the sentences in (32).

Conclusion

We have in this paper, discussed the various roles of the pronoun in the Ào dialect of Yorùbá. The long pronoun is always employed for emphasis in a sentence. The short subject pronouns can have negative meaning when they occur in negative sentences. These pronouns, referred to as negative pronouns in this work, cannot occur in affirmative sentences but occur exclusively in negative sentences. Short subject pronouns also have aspectual meaning incorporated in them. This is the situation when they serve as continuous aspect markers in Ào sentences. We have also shown that the pronoun traditionally substitutes a noun in an utterance and it can be used as a qualifier in a noun phrase.
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