Personal pronouns*

Singular	Plural

我 [ŋɔi33] I, me   我↓ [ŋɔi21] we, us, (my, our)ˡᵐᵗ

你 [ni33] you   偌 [niak21] you, (your)ˡᵐᵗ

佢 [kui33] he/she/it, him/her/it   屐 [kiak21] they, them, (his, her, their)ˡᵐᵗ

ˡᵐᵗ limited usage

The pronouns have a single form for subject and object. For example, 我 corresponds to *I* and *me* in English:

我走 咯   [ŋɔi33 dəu55 lɔ33]   唔好吓 我 啦   [mɔu55 hak33 ŋɔi33 la55]
I leave SFP   don't scare me SFP
I am leaving. (我= subject)   Don't frighten me! (我= object)

In addition, 人偌↑ [ŋin22 ŋiak55] means *person*, and can be either singular or plural depending on the context (The equivalent in Cantonese is 人哋, and in Mandarin 人家). Sometimes shorten to 偌↑ [ŋiak55], especially when referring to oneself . A couple of examples:

(a) Meaning *other people*, referring to people other than the speaker:

人偌↑ 夹钱   送 田野 畀 你   [ŋin22 ŋiak55 gap33 tein225 łəŋ33 hein22 ŋia33 i55 ni33]
people pool-money send stuff to you
People are pitching in to buy you a gift.

你 要 写信   多谢人偌↑   [ni33 yiau33 łia55 łin335 ɔ33 dia32 ŋin22 ŋiak55]
you need write-letter thank people
You need to write to thank these people.

几解 你 为人偌↑ 付出   该 多   吔   [gi55 gai55 ni33 vi32 ŋin22 ŋiak55 fu32 tsut55 kɔi21 ɔ335 ya33]
why you for people sacrifice this much SFP
Why do you sacrifice so much for others?

(b) For special effect, i.e. humor, irony, etc.

A: 你 几解 唔 吱声   啊   [ni33 gi55 gai55 m22 dzi33 siaŋ33 a33]
    you why not utter-sound SFP
    Why don't you say something?

B: 偌↑   怕丑 啦嘛   [niak55 pa33 tsiu55 la55 ma22]
    people shy SFP
    Well, some people are shy. (i.e. I am shy)

几解 唔 请   人偌↑ 入   来   坐 啊   [gi55 gai55 m22 tiaŋ55 ŋin22 ŋiak55 yip32 lɔi22 tɔ33 a33]
why not invite people enter come sit SFP
Why don't you invite the guest in? (in a humorous way, i.e. referring to his girlfriend outside)

There are several cases for expressing possessive relations:

(a) The linking particle 个 [gɔi³³/gɔ³³/gə³³] is inserted between the pronoun and the object (usually an abstract objects or an non-specific object). In many case, the linking particle can be omitted:

我(个)头 毛 好 长　　[ŋɔi33 (gə33) həu22 mɔu22 hɔu55 tsiaŋ225]
I　LP　head hair very long
My hairs are long.

你 (个) 健康 唔系 几好　　[ni33 (gə33) gein32 hɔŋ33 mai32 gi55 hau55]
you LP　health not-be quite-good
Your health is not very well.

(b) The pronoun is followed by a classifier:

我	只	手仔		屎	个	仔		佢	尼	头毛
I	CL	finger		their	CL	son		s/he	CL	head-hair
my finger				their son				his/her hairs		
[ŋɔi33 dziak33 siu55 dɔi55]				[kiak21 gɔi33 dɔi55]				[kui33 nai55 həu22 mɔu22]		

(c) The corresponding plural pronoun can be used when the object is a kin or is closely-linked:

我↓	人		偌 老		屎	叔		偌	(个)	老师
we	grandma		you old		they	uncle		you	CL	teacher
my/our grandma			your father		his/her uncle			your teacher		
[ŋɔi21 ŋin22]			[niak21 lɔu55]		[kiak21 sək55]			[niak21 (gɔi33) lɔu55 łu33]		

我↓	村		偌 厂		屎	企		偌	(间)	学校
we	village		you factory		they	home		you	CL	school
my/our village			your factory		his/her home			your school		
[ŋɔi21 tun215]			[niak21 tsɔŋ55]		[kiak21 ki55]			[niak21 (gan33) hɔk32 hɔu325]		

The usage generally do not extend to persons of (relative) junior kinship and classifiers are needed for these cases. For example:

我	个	仔		我↓	个	女		屎	个	孙女
I	CL	son		their	CL	son		s/he	CL	grand-daughter
my son				our daughter				his/her granddaughter		
[ŋɔi33 gɔi33 dɔi55]				[ŋɔi21 gɔi33 nui55]				[kiak21 gɔi33 łun33 nui55]		

For case (c) in general:
 (1) The linking particle 个 and a classifier can not be inserted if the object is a monosyllabic person. For example:
     我↓哥 [ŋɔi21 gə55], *my older brother.*
 (2) The linking particle 个 or a classifier is optional if the object is disyllabic, or if it is not a person. For example:
     我↓村 [ŋɔi21 tun215], *my village*, can also be expressed as 我↓条村 [ŋɔi21 hiau22 tun215] with the classifier 条 or 我个村 [ŋɔi21 gə33 tun215] with the linking particle 个. 我↓村 is more intimate.
 (3) There are many exceptions. For example, no classifier or linking particle can be inserted between 我↓企 [ŋɔi21 ki33], *my home*.
 (4) The plurality of the pronoun is vague. For example, 我↓白 [ŋɔi21 bak32] could be *my great grandma* or *our great grandma*.
 (5) The linking particle 个 is also a classifier itself. So for an object that happen to use the classifier

个, it is not clear which function 个 serves. However, the meaning is so close that it really doesn't matter, i.e. 屐(个)白公 [kiak21 (gɔi33) bak32 gəŋ21], *their great grandpa*.

(d) Suffixing 个[gɔi³³] turns the corresponding pronoun into a possessive pronoun (i.e. the equivalent of *mine*, *yours*, *theirs*, etc. in English):

该 架 单车 系 我 个   [kɔi21 ga21 an33 tsia335 hai32 ŋɔi33 gɔi33]
this CL bicycle is   mine
This bicycle is mine.

Same for the other pronouns, i.e. 你个, 屐个, 人偌↑个, etc.

(e) Of the two general ways of forming possessives (case a and b), the use of a classifier is more specific than the linkage particle 个. For example:

我 个 书   我 尼 书   我 本 书
I   LP book   I   CL   book   I   CL book
my book(s)   my books   my book
[ŋɔi33 gə33 si33]   [ŋɔi33 nai55 si33]   [ŋɔi33 bɔn55 si55]

(f) Certain pronoun/classifier/object combinations have specific connotations. For example:

我↓   厂   我   间   厂
we   factory   I   CL   book
my factory (I work there)   my factory (I am the owner)
[ŋɔi21 tsɔŋ55]   [ŋɔi33 gan33 tsɔŋ55]

In Taishanese, a completion or perfective aspect markers followed by 佢 is often used in imperatives. Sentence Final Particles can be added to soften the tone and make it more suggestive:

卖 诶 佢   卖诶   佢   啦   卖诶   佢   吔
sell PFV it   Suggestion →   sell+PFV it   SFP   sell+PFV if   SFP
Sell it.   Sell it.   Sell it
[mai32 ə33 kui33] ← Command   [mai323 kui33 la55]   [mai323 kui33 ya22]

你 吃 埋 条 鱼 佢 啦   [ni33 hiak33 mɔi22 hiau22 ŋui215 kui33 la55]
you eat up CL fish it   SFP
Eat up the fish.

喊 阿英   洗   晒 尼衫   佢   啦   [ham33 a33 yein33 łai55 łai33 nai55 sam21 kui33 la55]
ask Ah-Ying wash all CL clothes it   SFP
Ask Ah Ying to wash all the clothes.

Personal Pronouns Summary and Comparison Table

The following table compares all the personal pronouns in Taishanese, Cantonese, Mandarin, and English with the exception of 人偌↑. 人偌↑has only one nominative form. It also has only one possessive form 人偌↑个. The table also excludes possessive expression case (c) discussed above.

				English	Taishanese/Toisanese		Cantonese	Mandarin
NOMINATIVE	1st person	Singular	subj	I	我	[ŋɔi33]	我	我
			obj	me				
		Plural	subj	we	我↓	[ŋɔi21]	我哋	我们
			obj	us				
	2nd person	Singular	subj	you	你	[ni33]	你	你
			obj					
		Plural	subj		偌	[niak21]	你哋	你们
			obj					
	3rd person	Singular (M)	subj	he	佢	[kui33]	佢	他
			obj	him				
		Singular (F)	subj	she				她
			obj	her				
		Plural (M, mixed)	subj	they	屐	[kiak21]	佢哋	他们
			obj	them				
		Plural (F)	subj	they				她们
			obj	them				
POSSESSIVE	1st person	Singular	subj	my	我个, 我+CL	[ŋɔi33 gɔi33]	我嘅	我的
			obj	mine	我个			
		Plural	subj	our	我↓个,我↓+CL	[ŋɔi21 gɔi33]	我哋嘅	我们的
			obj	ours	我↓个			
	2nd person	Singular	subj	your	你个	[ni33 gɔi33]	你嘅	你的
			obj	yours				
		Plural	subj	your	偌个	[niak21 gɔi33]	你哋嘅	你们的
			obj	yours				
	3rd person	Singular (M)	subj	his	佢个	[kui33 gɔi33]	佢嘅	他的
			obj					
		Singular (F)	subj	her				她的
			obj	hers				
		Plural (M, mixed)	subj	their	屐个	[kiak21 gɔi33]	佢哋嘅	他们的
			obj	theirs				
		Plural (F)	subj	their				她们的
			obj	theirs				

*Most examples adapted from M&Y Chapter 5.1