Yakima Sahaptin Verb Agreement

With any verb or sentence, the listener needs to know who did the action of the verb (the actor or subject). For now, we are working on sentences that are intransitive: only one person or group is involved in the action of the verb. Parts of the Yakima Sahaptin sentence give this information. These are agreement markers. In any sentence, there will be a marker to indicate the subject.

A. If the subject is I or you, or we, the marker that indicates the subject will be a **clitic**. Clitics attach to the end of the first word in the sentence, which is not necessarily the verb (the markers for 'he/she/it' and 'they' always attach to the verb). So far, we've only used "I" and "you."

nash, -ash, -sh 'I'
nam, -am, -m 'you' (one person)

pnúshaam	*wínashaash*
'you are sleeping'	'I am going'

Use the *–ash* and *–am* forms when the verb is first in the sentence.

Very occasionally, the marker for "I" will reduce all the way to ***–sh*:**
Kw'aɬániish wa. I'm happy.

Here are some examples where the clitic is not attached to the verb:

Mish nam mísha?	*Aw nash wínasha.*	*Chaw nash payúwisha*
'What are you doing?'	'I'm going now'	'I'm not sick'

Mish is the general question word, *Chaw* means no or not. These commonly fall at the beginning of sentences, so the full form of the clitics follows them.

B. If the subject is 'he/she/it' or 'they', this marker will be a **verb prefix**.

i- 'he, she, it'
pa- 'they'

ipnúsha	*iwínana*	*i'ayíksha*	*itkwátana*
she/he is sleeping	'she/he went'	'she/he is sitting'	'she/he ate'
papnúsha	*pawínana*	*pa'ayíksha*	*patkwátana*
'they are sleeping'	'they went'	'they are sitting'	'they ate'

For verbs beginning with a vowel, the prefix is followed by a glottal stop, as in *ayik-* 'sit.' For class, write it this way. But in fast speech preceding a vowel (especially the letters *i* or *ɨ*) the prefix *i-* (he, she, it) is sometimes dropped.

If the sentence names the person who did the action (John, Grandma, the girls), the prefixes are still used on the verb:

áyat iwínana OR *iwínana áyat* 'the woman went'