THE OBIC LANGUAGES

Introduction

Although the Obic languages have been historically influential and boast many speakers, in terms of the number of members it is a small family, so much speculation has centered on the languages' possible genetic affiliation with other families. Many whimsical hypotheses have been born of this, and at least one plausible one – a potential Temu-Obic union. Although the issue of their union is far from settled (and Temu historical linguistics is not well developed), the fact that the two families have contiguous ranges and share some significant grammatical features makes this theory the most credible. It has been difficult to identify cognates and sound correspondences, but supporters of the theory are optimistic that more will be found when the Temu languages have been studied in depth.

In the Obic languages the similarities are great enough that Arajan words can be translated morpheme for morpheme into native morphemes, which often look remarkably similar to the original Arajan morphemes.

List of Obic Languages

† = extinct
Alvorezic
Baravre
Čatuyiši†
Cirri
Classical Arajan†
Eastern Arajan
Finnä
Mazlobi
Molul
Obāresato†
Turlisi
Western Arajan†
Yöbiezi
Yobuǰego
Yopyeliči
Yovǒumu

Proto-Obic

Overall characteristics of the Proto-Obic sound-system:

- Pervasive contrast between palatalized and labialized or velarized consonants
- Three series of stop and affricate (or fricative) consonants: voiceless plain, voiced plain, and voiceless aspirated
- Few fricatives (possibly none at all)
- Six vowels, with a "weak" high or mid central vowel
- No phonemic length

“Broad” and “Slender” Consonants

Proto-Obic made a pervasive distinction between two groups of consonants, which are called “broad” and “slender.” The nature of the difference is not certain, but may have been similar to that of Irish “broad” and “slender” consonants, from which the terms “broad” and “slender” are borrowed. No modern Obic language is believed to preserve the nature of this distinction. In the Yobic and Glindesic branches PO broad consonants are usually plain and PO slender consonants are palatalized. In the Baravreic languages PO slender consonants are usually plain and PO broad consonants are labialized (velarized in the case of broad l). In Molul the distinction has been mostly neutralized. The distinction may also have been weakened or neutralized in Obaresato and Çatuyišite, although since both languages are extinct, no one can be sure. Most branches point toward a reconstruction of the broad lateral as being /ɬ/. Thus slender consonants are fairly confidently reconstructed as palatalized, while broad consonants are often reconstructed as velarized, labialized, or plain. Thus “slender t” may be reconstructed as /tʲ/, and “broad t” as /tʷ/, /tˠ/, or even simply /t/. It has also been suggested that broad consonants were merely velarized before unrounded vowels /i e a ə/, but that they were additionally rounded or labialized before round vowels /u o/. Thus, “slender t” is /tʲ/, and “broad t” is /tˠ/, but in a situation like /tˠu/ it would be realized as [tʷu]. In the current work, following Linguist A, slender consonants are defined as [+pal] (“palatalized”) and represented like so: /tʲ/. Broad consonants are simply defined as [-pal] and will be given as /t/, leaving aside the actual phonetic realization of velarized or labialized.

The distinction is perfectly symmetrical, and all consonants can be paired so that one member of the pair is broad and the other member is slender. It is supposed that in Pre-Proto-Obic, consonants became slender before front vowels and broad before back vowels. Cases in which a broad consonant precedes a front vowel occurred where an original */w/ intervened, and cases in which a slender consonant precedes a back vowel occurred where an original */j/ intervened. Before the Proto-Obic period, glides were lost when they followed another consonant. Some have proposed that the semivowels may have been the broad and slender variants of some glottal sound, so that a better reconstruction might be */ʔʷ ʔʲ/, */hʷ hʲ/, or */ɦʷ ɦʲ/. Vowels may have had allophonic variations following broad and slender consonants, but the distinction almost certainly pertained to a distinction inherent in the consonants rather than the vowels. Broad and slender consonants contrast in all positions – initial, intervocalic, and final, where there are no following vowels. There are sets of minimal or near-minimal pairs:

*kʲurnʲe	“fat, cream”
*kʲurne	“barren soil”

Also:

*sʲam	…
*sʲamʲ	…
*samʲ	…
*(-)wam	“with”

Fricatives or Affricates?

Controversy also exists as to the nature of Proto-Obic’s fricatives and affricates. The traditional view reconstructed six fricatives: /z zʲ s sʲ sʰ sʲʰ/

- Most of the languages have fricatives as the only reflexes of these proto-phonemes. Few have affricate reflexes, and none have affricate reflexes exclusively.
- The voiceless and voiced plain fricatives are allowed to form consonant clusters with

following stops, which no stops are permitted to do
- But aspirated fricatives are typologically marked

Later, some reconstructed a series of six affricates: /dz dz^j ts ts^j ts^h ts^{jh}/
- Some languages have an affricate as the reflex of the aspirated members of the group, and the general tendency of sound change is from affricate to fricative.
- It makes more sense for affricates than fricatives to pattern with stops, make a neat, symmetrical sound system
- But a language with no fricatives is typologically marked
- Stops can appear as the second member of a cluster, but the affricates cannot.

Linguist B reconstructs six affricates and four fricatives: /dz dz^j ts ts^j ts^h ts^{jh} z z^j s s^j/
- All languages have fricative reflexes when they occur before other consonants
- The fricatives occur in only one very specific context – before a stop. But this would mean they have complementary distribution with affricates.

Linguist C (whom we follow here) has proposed a compromise, with four fricatives and two affricates: /z z^j s s^j ts^h ts^{jh}/
- No unmarked affricates
- No unmarked fricatives
- Many languages have an affricate as the reflex of the aspirated sound
- Most languages have fricatives as reflexes of the unaspirated sounds
- Stops can appear as the second member of a cluster, but the affricates cannot
- However, concerning the above point, PO aspirated stops are also rarely found in clusters too
- Overall a good compromise between the fricative and affricate hypotheses
- However, less symmetrical sound system, with several gaps

Vowels

The reconstructions of five of the six vowels of Proto-Obic are a relatively unambiguous */i e a o u/, but the sixth vowel is problematic. This vowel has been reflected as a high vowel in many languages, often merging with /i/. In others, it merges with the low vowel /a/. This comparatively rare vowel is almost never found in stressed syllables. This would point to it being a reduced vowel, reconstructed as */ə/. It has probably not been preserved intact in any daughter languages, having a tendency to merge with other vowels. The general consensus favors */ə/, which we use here.

The vowels may have differed in their phonetic realization depending on the surrounding consonants. There is more agreement about the realization of flat consonants and the vowel allophones associated with them. Some of the possible allophones of vowels may have included:

Phoneme	After Broad Consonants	After Slender Consonants
/i/	[y], [ɨ], or [ɪ]	[i]
/e/	[ø]	[e]
/a/	[ɑ] or [ɒ]	[æ] or [a]

/o/	[o]	[ɵ]
/u/	[u]	[ʉ]
/ə/	[ɵ] or [ʊ]	[ɔ] or [ɜ]

Diphthongs

In Proto-Obic all diphthongs were falling diphthongs consisting of a mid vowel followed by a high back vowel or high front vowel. The low and mid-vowels /e a o/ all form the nuclei of diphthongs, with the high vowels /i u/ appearing as off-glides. Therefore there were six possibilities, /ei ai oi eu au ou/. The reduced vowel behaved differently in that it never gets involved in any diphthongs, either as a rising or falling component. If it were a typical mid or low vowel, we would expect to find diphthongs like /əi əu/, but there are none. Nor are there /eɨ aɨ oɨ/, which might be expected if it was a typical high vowel.

One reconstruction of Proto-Obic consonants:

				LAB		[COR]				DORS	
						-strid		+strid			
				-pal	+pal	-pal	+pal	-pal	+pal	-pal	+pal
+cons	-son	+voi	+nas	$m^{ɣ}$	m^{j}	$n^{ɣ}$	n^{j}				
			-nas	$b^{ɣ}$	b^{j}	$d^{ɣ}$	d^{j}	$dz^{ɣ}$	dz^{j}	g	g^{j}
		-voi	-asp	$p^{ɣ}$	p^{j}	$t^{ɣ}$	t^{j}	$ts^{ɣ}$	ts^{j}	k	k^{j}
			+asp	$p^{ɣh}$	p^{jh}	$t^{ɣh}$	t^{jh}	$ts^{ɣh}$	ts^{jh}	k^{h}	k^{jh}
	+son	+lat				$l^{ɣ}$	l^{j}				
		-lat				$ɾ^{ɣ}$	$ɾ^{j}$				
-cons										w	j

LAB: labial	pal: palatalized	nas: nasal
COR: coronal	cons: consonantal	asp: aspirated
DORS: dorsal	son: sonorant	lat: lateral
strid: strident	voi: voiced	

And Proto-Obic vowels:

		[+front]	[-front]	
		[-round]		[+round]
[-lo]	[+hi]	i		u
	[-hi]	e	ə	o
[+lo]			a	

lo=low vowel hi=high vowel

Phonological Processes

Phonological Restrictions

- Only these types of clusters were permitted:
  - /r/ or /l/ + any other consonant (but observe phonological rules below that might act on them)
  - any consonant + /r/ or /l/ (once again, take phonological rules into account)
  - a nasal + a non-aspirated stop consonant
  - a sibilant + another consonant which agree in voicing
- No three-consonant clusters were permitted.
- Members of a consonant cluster had to agree in terms of whether they were both broad or slender.
- No diphthongs were permitted in closed syllables. Dialects and daughter languages varied as to how these sequences (found primarily in the infinitive of verbs) were resolved – either by reducing the dipthong, or adding a "buffer" vowel.

Phonotactics

- Taps assimilated to laterals – the only instance of geminate or double consonants besides a few possible occurrences of /rr/ in the locative of nouns.
  $(r^{ʏ}, r^{j}) > (l^{ʏ}, l^{j}) / \{(l^{ʏ}, l^{j})\_, \_(l^{ʏ}, l^{j})\}$
- When an element beginning with a vowel was suffixed to a root or stem ending with a diphthong, then the offglide of the diphthong became a semivowel.
  i > j / V_V
  u > w / V_V
- /C + w/ > [C^{w}] or [$C^{ʏ}$]
  /C + j/ > [C^{j}]
- /$C^{j}C^{w}$/ > [$C^{w}C^{w}$]
  /$C^{w}C^{j}$/ > [$C^{j}C^{j}$]
- /ə + i/ > [i]
  /ə + u/ > [u]

Stress

Stress was apparently free and phonemic.

Proto-Obic Dialects

Linguist D has hypothesized that already within the Proto-Obic stage, an Eastern Dialect (the ancestor of the Eastern Obic languages) had replaced the aspirated stops with affricates or stops with homorganic fricative releases. E.g.,

p^{h} > p^{f}
t^{h} > t^{s}
(t)s^{h} > t^{s}
k^{h} > k^{x}

He also proposes that different proto-dialects were different in their realization of the

broad-slender distinction. In his view, the Western dialect (Proto-Baravre) realized broad consonants as labialized or labiovelarized and slender consonants as plain; the Eastern dialect realized slender consonants as palatalized and broad consonants as plain; and marginal dialects mostly preserved the original Proto-Obic sound system, without “plain” consonants, or with few of them.

Western Obic:

		Bilabial		Dental		Alveolar		Palatal	Velar	
Stop	Voiced	b^w	b	d^w	d	dz^w	dz		g^w	g
	Voiceless	p^w	p	t^w	t	ts^w	ts		k^w	k
	Aspirated	p^{hw}	p^h	t^{hw}	t^h	ts^{hw}	ts^h		k^{hw}	k^h
Nasal		m^w	m	n^w	n					
Tap				r^w	r					
Lateral				ɬ	l					
Approximant		w						j		

Eastern Obic:

		Bilabial		Dental		Alveolar		Palatal	Velar	
Stop	Voiced	b	b^j	d	d^j	z	z^j		g	g^j
	Voiceless	p	p^j	t	t^j	s	s^j		k	k^j
	Aspirated	p^f	p^{fj}	$t^θ$	$t^{θj}$	t^{sh}	t^{sj}		k^x	k^{xj}
Nasal		m	m^j	n	n^j					
Tap				r	r^j					
Lateral				l	l^j					
Approximant		w						j		

Sound Changes

Proto-Obic to Obaresato

1. De-Schwa-ification
   ə > a:
2. Monophthongization
   ei > i:, ou > u:
   eu > eo
3. Glide Deletion
   w > Ø
   j > Ø
4. Broad and Slender Merger
   [+pal] > [-pal]
5. Consonant Gemination
   C^h > C:
   a. p^h > pp. PO *wep^ha > eppa
   b. t^h > tt
   c. s^h > ss

    d. k^h > kk
6. Degemination
   C_1C_1 > C_1 / #_

Proto-Obic to Old Molul

Molul developed from a variety of Proto-Obic where broad consonants were velarized. Its history is mostly the history of contrasts in the consonants shifting to vowels. Because Molul develops a wider variety of central vowels, we introduce the feature [+/- back]. Central vowels are [-front, -back].

1. J-Deletion
   j > Ø
2. Sibilant Lenition
   [+cons, +strid, -pal, COR] > [DORS]
   PO *sor^{j}e > [xore]
3. x > h /_ {#_, V_V} (Eastern Dialects only)
4. Vowel Fronting
   [-cons, +back] > [-back] / [+cons, +pal]_
    a. a > æ
    b. o > ɵ
    c. u > ʉ
5. Vowel Backing
   [-cons, +front] > [-front] / [+cons, -pal]_
    1. i > ɨ
    2. e > ɘ
    3. a > ɑ
    4. ə > ɯ
6. Consonant Merger
   [+pal] > [-pal]
7. H-Deletion
   h > Ø / V_V
8. Dental Lenition
   t > s / _ [-cons, +high]
   d > z / _ [-cons, +high]
9. Fronting (Dialect X only)
   [-cons, -back, -front, +round] > [+front]
    a. ɵ > ø
    b. ʉ > y
10. Backing (Dialect X only)
    [-cons, -back, -front, -round] > [+back]
    a. ɘ > ɤ
    b. ɨ > ɯ (thus merging with the previous /ɯ/)

Proto-Obic to Čatuyiši

1. Vowel Mergers
   ə > a

o > u
e > i (under certain circumstances)

2. Velar Palatalization
   g^j > ɟ > j
   k^j > c > ç
   k^{jh} > c^h > $\widehat{cç}^h$
3. Sibilant Palatalization
   z^j > ʒ
   s^j > ʃ
   ts^h > $tʃ^h$
4. Dental Palatalization
   d^j > dʒ
   t^j > tʃ
   t^{jh} > $tʃ^h$
5. W-Fortification
   w > v
6. Devoicing
   [+cons, -son, +cont] > [-voi]
   dʒ > tʃ ‹č›
   ʒ > ʃ ‹š›
7. Broad and Slender Consonant Merging
   [+cons, +pal] > [-pal]

Čatuyiši to Čatuyiši Variety X

1. Great Consonant Shift
   a. [+cons, -son, +voi, -nas] > [+glottalized]
      b > $p^ʔ$
      d > $t^ʔ$
      g > $k^ʔ$
   b. [+cons, -voi, -asp] > [+voi]
      p > b
      t > d
      tʃ > dʒ
      k > g

Proto-Obic to Old Baravre

1. Changes to Broad Sonorants
   l > ɬ
   r > ɹ
2. Labialization
   [+cons, -pal] > [+labialized]
3. Depalatalization
   [+cons, +pal] > [-pal]
4. Aspirated Stop Lenition
5. p^{wh}, s^{wh} > h^w

6. W-Fortificaiton
   Ø > w / [+cons, +labialized] _ [-cons, -round]
7. Semivowel Deletion
   j > Ø
8. Monophthongization
   oi > ɵɨ > ɨ
   eu > ɘɨ > ɨ
9. Z-Fortificaiton
   z > d /_w
10. Z-Devoicing
    z > s

Old Baravre to Turlisi

1. Monophthongization
   $V_1V_2 > V_1$:
   PO *boja > *boa > [bo:] ‹bō›
   PO *braja > *bɹaa > [bɹa:] ‹bř̆ā›
   PO *breju > *bɹeu > [bɹe:] ‹bř̆ē›
2. Consonant Gemination
   $rC_1 > C_1C_1$
   PO *k^jurne > [kunnwe]

Proto-Obic to Old Finnä

1. ə, o > ɑ
2. ou > o
3. e > æ
4. ei > e
5. eu > ei
6. oi > ou
7. au > ɤ
8. C^j > C
9. C^w > Cw
10. [LAB] > Ø /_w

Producing this vowel inventory:

i u
e ɤ o
æ ɑ
a

Old Finnä to New Finnä

1. wi > y
2. (we > ø)?
3. we > wi > y
4. we > ø > y

Producing this vowel inventory:
i y u
e ʌ o
æ a ɑ

Proto-Obic to Proto-Glindesan

Proto-Glindesan emerged from a dialect of Proto-Obic in which the only contrast was between palatalized and plain, unpalatalized consonants; broad consonants were neither rounded nor velarized.

1. Schwa Coloring
    a. Schwa Assimilation
    ə > [αhigh, βlow, γfront, δround] / [-cons, αhigh, βlow, γfront, δround](C)(C)_
    (schwa assimilates completely to the vowel in the preceding syllable)
        a. ə > i / i(C)(C)_
        b. ə > e / e(C)(C)_
        c. ə > a / a(C)(C)_
        d. ə > o / o(C)(C)_
        e. ə > u / u(C)(C)_
    b. ə > i
    PO *dewə, “thrush” > Arajan [dei]
2. EU Change
    eu > eo (but, > /u:/ in some varieties)
3. Metathesis
    wo > ou / #_
4. W-Deletion
    w > Ø
5. Changes pertaining to PH
    p^hl > lw
    p^hr > rw
6. Monophthongization
    ei > i:
    ou > u:
7. Lenition / Deaspiration
    p^h > x^w
    t^h > θ
    s^h > s:
    k^h > x
8. Palatalization
    s > ɕ
    z > ʑ

Proto-Glindesan to Classical Arajan

1. Centralization
    u > ʉ

2. Diphthongal Shift
   eo > ea
3. Loss of Vowel Length
   V: > V
   Proto-Glindesan *[ɕi:] > Arajan [ɕi] “thou”
4. Fortification
   j > ʝ
   ɾʲ > rʲ
5. XW lenition
   x^w > ʍ
6. Palatalization
   a. t^j, k^j > ɕ /_i(:)
   b. ɕ, h^j > ç
   c. ʑ, g^j > ʝ
7. E-Raising
   e > i (when unstressed and non-initial)

This produces the Classical Arajan phonological inventory:
Stops: /p p^j t t^j k k^j b b^j d d^j g/
Fricatives: /θ $θ^j$ s s: ç h z ʝ/
Sonorants: /ʍ w m m^j n n^j ɾ r^j l l^j/
Vowels: /i e a o u ʉ/

Classical Arajan to West Arajan

1. e > je (^{l}(C)(C)_, / #_)
2. j > Ø /_i
3. ʝ > ʒ /(V_V, #_)
4. ~~ʉ~~ > ~~ɨ~~
5. ss > ts
6. ʍ > f

Old Arajan was very similar to Old Mazlob and was absorbed into Old Mazlob, along with the assimilation of the Glindesor into Fugyarilo society (although they disproportionately tended to enter the noble classes) after the conquest of Glindesa by Artinaih created a Glindesan diaspora. “West Arajan” was probably not a living language, but was the standard pronunciation in Fugyarilo for reading Arajan texts. It substitutes Mazlob phonemes for Classical Arajan phonemes that were not found in Old Mazlob, and applies Mazlob phonological rules to them.

Classical Arajan to East Arajan

1. ʝ > dʒ > tʃ
2. lj, rj > ʒ
3. ʍ > w
4. rw > row
5. lw > low
6. e > a / _C(C)$V_{[-FRONT]}$

7. e > i
8. ʉ > i
9. p > f
10. Front Vowel Merger
    a. i > e / in a stressed, open syllable
    b. i > e / _$C_{[+NAS]}$ {C, #}

    Thus, [e] becomes and allophone of /i/

Proto-Glindesan to Old Alvorezic

1. xw > f
2. [+cons, -son, +voi, -nas] > [+continuant] / (r, l)_V
   b > β / (r, l)_V
   d > ð / (r, l)_V
   g > ɣ / (r, l)_V
   b^j > $β^j$ / (r, l)_V
   d^j > $ð^j$ / (r, l)_V
   g^j > $ɣ^j$ / (r, l)_V
3. [+cons, -son, +voi, +continuant] > [LABIODENTAL]
   β > v
   ð > v
   ɣ > v
   $β^j$ > v^j
   $ð^j$ > v^j
   $ɣ^j$ > v^j
   PO *$kolg^je$ > [$kolv^je$]
4. eo > ea, ou > oa
5. ea, oa > ena, ona / _#
6. Postalveolarization
   s^j > ʃ, z^j > ʒ

Proto-Obic to Proto-Yobic

Like Proto-Glindesan, Proto-Yobic contrasted palatalized “slender” consonants and plain, unpalatalized consonants (and also unvelarized, unlabialized) “broad” consonants.

1. C^w > C
2. ph^j > wj
3. ph > ʍ
4. th > ts
5. sh > ts
6. kh > x
7. First Palatalization
   (k^j, g^j) > (tʃ, dʒ)

Proto-Yobic to Old Mazlobi

1. W-Deletion
   wj > j

2. Alveolization
   (tʃ, dʒ) > (s, z)
3. Second Palatalization
   tj, tsj > tʃ
   dj > dʒ
   sj > ʃ
   zj > ʒ
4. ts > s
5. o > ʌ ‹ŏ›
6. eu > ʌj ‹ŏy›
7. Monophthongization
   au, ou > o
8. e > je (in stressed syllable)
9. J-Deletion
   j > Ø /_i
10. High front and central vowel merger
    a. i > ɨ / (ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ)_
    b. C > C^{j} / _i
11. ɯ > f

Proto-Yobic to Proto-East-Yobic

1. wj > uj, oj
2. ɨ > Ø (when unstressed)
3. Vowel Lowering
   $V_{[+HIGH]}$ > $V_{[-HIGH]}$ /_$C_{[+NAS]}$ {C, #}
   **p·ɨ̇nte > p·ɨ̇ente*

To Yöbiezi

1. V > V[NAS] / _C[NAS]{C, #}
2. C[NAS] > Ø / _{C, #}
   *pinte > p^{j}ente > p^{j}ẽnte > p^{j}ẽte ‹pięte›
   *p^{j}unte > *p^{j}onte > p^{j}õnte > p^{j}õte ‹pięte›

To Various East Yobic Languages

1. Second Palatalization
   kj > ts
   gj > dz
   ts > tʃ /_i
   dz > dʒ /_i
   xj > ɧ
   x, ɧ > ʃ
2. Retroflexion
   tr > tʂ
   dr > dʐ
   r^{j} > ɽʐ / {#_, V_V}

ɻ > Ø / C_C
PO *jarʲeu > [jæɻzɻ̩eu]

3. Third Palatalization
   lʲ > ʎ
   nʲ, mʲ > ɲ
4. Palatal Frication
   ʎ, ɲ > ʑ
5. Vowel Fronting / Umlaut
   a > æ / Cʲ_
   o > ø / Cʲ_
   u > y / Cʲ_
   *pʲunte > *pʲonte > pʲønte
   *phʲebrʲe > *wjebre > ojebre; øbre ‹öbre›; øbzɻ̩ ‹öbzya›
6. De-Fronting
   $V_{[+FRONT]}$ > $V_{[-FRONT]}$ / [RET]_
   i > ɨ / [RET]_
   e > ɘ (or [ɜ] or [ɐ]) / [RET]_
   æ > a (or [ɑ] or [ɐ]) / [RET]_
   ø > o / [RET]_
   y > u / [RET]_
   jazɻ̩eu > jæzɻ̩u “arrow”
7. Epenthesis
   Ø > ɨ / z̩_#
   *lirʲ > liz̩ > liz̩ɨ

Ybj.	Yp.. Yv.	Ybz.
i ɨ e a o u	i ɨ e æ a o u	i y ɨ e ø æ a o u

In one random Obic language, */lʸ/ would become a velar semivowel [ɯ̯].
In another one, */i/ > [ɯj] / Cʸ_.

Proto-Obic Grammar

When Glindesan philologers reconstructed Proto-Obic, they applied to it the same paradigm they had used for describing Classical Arajan, itself a (grand-)daughter language. This format had little to do with word-order, but much to do with morphology and agreement. The core was a classification of all the words of the language into parts of speech, and the ennumeration of the properties of these classes. As in the case of Sanskrit, the grammatical tradition arose out of and was intricately tied to religion and philosophy, and the cosmology of Glindesa was dominated by complementary dualities. This existed not only in all-encompassing distinctions like that between flesh and spirit, but also in numerous finer, cross-cutting oppositions that extended to the atomic level. This view extended to the philosophy of language and cross-cutting oppositions were observed throughout grammar. Therefore the parts of speech were arranged into a hierarchy of binary oppositions, with the various classes coming in pairs.

In addition to words, Arajan grammars recognized the morpheme, and divided morphemes into bound and unbound. Within the bound morphemes, there were recognized to be roots and affixes, or to use the terminology adopted by the grammarians, some morphemes were *myega*, "masters, lords, kings," and some were *cobu*, "attendants, servants, slaves." This type of terminology would turn up again in other areas of grammar, where all main clauses or other dominant forms were called "lords" and all subordinate forms or constructions were called "attendants" or "servants."

Words were those units within which "The Laws of Binding" (morphophonemic rules) operated, and outside of which they did not operate. In other words, words were the maximal units that were influenced by *sandhi* phenomena.

The first level of classification distinguished inflected and uninflected words. Inflected words were also called content words and were regarded as "standing alone" – words that, "Are of such clear and independent meaning that when spoken alone they are capable of evoking in the mind of the hearer a picture, image, or moving scene, or even series of imaginable actions or images, which is how meaning is conveyed and the hearer comes to understand the thoughts of the speaker" according to The Great Grammarian. Furthermore inflected words were defined as those words that arose from the union of a master morpheme (root) and one or more slave morphemes (affixes).

Inflected words were divided into verbs and nouns. Each was further divided into two subtypes labelled in accordance with ***yin-yang*** cosmology, which correspond to what might be called in more modern earthling terminology as animate and inanimate nouns and dynamic and stative verbs.

Uninflected words were those that always consisted of a single morpheme. They were divided by whether they were seen as more closely associated with verbs or nouns, and then by whether they preceded or followed them.

This resulting list was something like this:

- Inflected
    - Verbs
        - Dynamic
        - Stative

    - Nouns
        - Free Nouns
            - Animate
            - Inanimate
        - Slave Nouns
- Uninflected
    - Verbal (associated with verbs)
        - Preverbs (Particles and Verbal Conjunctions)
        - Postverbs (Adverbs)
    - Nominal (associated with nouns)
        - Precede (Prenouns)
            - Article
            - Prepositions
            - Nominal Conjunctions
        - Follow (Postnouns)
            - Determiners

Grammarians working in Classical Arajan and other languages also distinguished free and slave *verbs*, meaning main and auxiliary verbs, but this distinction is not important for the current work, because Proto-Obic has no reconstructible auxiliary verbs.

The choice of inflections sometimes depended on whether the preceding or following syllable was broad or slender.

Verbs

Almost all verb roots end in a diphthong. Some common exceptions are:

*/ga-/	to harm or kill
*/le-/	to be
*/weratə-/	to bear or produce
*/wiyə-/	to go

Proto-Obic verbs are inherently perfective or imperfective. Perfective verbs describe actions or states that are complete, or at the very least have some endpoint, whether beginning or ending. Imperfective verbs refer to incomplete actions or states. Nearly all verbs come in pairs, where one member is perfective and the other is imperfective. The stems in each case are similar yet distinct. Although they appear to originate from the same root, there is no predictable process by which an imperfective verb can be derived from a perfective one, or vice versa. The most common pattern was for the perfective to derive from the imperfective by addition of the suffix *–le* to the stem. In another pattern, part of the stem was reduplicated (a process that works both ways). In other cases, the final vowel or diphthong may change, or the perfective may have a suffix – both processes that tend to be idiomatic. For this reason, pairs must be learned.

In addition to the idiomatic ways that verbs pair off, some of them don't pair off at all. Although rare, some verbs are both perfective and imperfective; some lack either a perfective or an imperfective counterpart; and some map to more than one perfective or imperfective partner. There are also cases of suppletion.

The perfective aspect has three subaspects, termed aorist, perfect, and inchoative. The

aorist refers to an event in its entirety, begun and completed, without any internal temporal structure. The perfect refers to an action that has been completed, resulting in a particular state, while the inchoative refers to an action having commenced. It could be said that the inchoative focuses on the beginning of the action, the perfect focuses on the end of the action, and the aorist includes both. The aorist is unmarked. The inchoative bears a prefix *dar·i̇-*, related to the preposition "out," and the perfect bears a prefix, *bu-*, related to the preposition "upon."

The imperfective aspect has three subaspects, the progressive (or durative), habitual (or iterative), and the gnomic. The progressive refers to an action which is in progress, without reference to it having begun or ending. The iterative refers to an action which recurs many times. The gnomic is used to state general truths, as in "Cows eat grass." It is assumed to hold true for the past, present, and future. Glindesan philosophers believed that the gnomic – coupled with the lack of a gnomic in other languages – accounts for the fact that Glindesa developed philosophy and other countries merely inherited it. The gnomic is unmarked but the progressive takes a suffix *–se* and the iterative takes a suffix *-ar·i̇e*.

To express the passive, *-nu* was attached to the end of the verb stem, the direct object was promoted to subject and the former subject was converted into the intrumental case, after which it could be deleted. The avalent is an affix that deletes all the arguments of the verb, reducing every verb to which it was attached to an avalent state. It indicates merely that something happened, without any indication of who did it or whom it affected. It may translated as "there was X-ing."

The gerund or participle is formed from the verb by prefixed *de-*. However, when a verb is compounded with a noun to produce a noun, the base form is used. The noun root always follows the verbal root, and is usually to be interpreted as the object of the verb. Such verbal compounds can be animate or inanimate, depending on the animacy of the noun.

Verbs:

- Finiteness
  - Finite
  - Infinite
    - Participle / Relative (Verbal Adjective)
    - Infinitive / Gerund (Verbal Noun)
- Aspect
  - Perfective
    - Aorist
    - Inchoative
    - Completed
  - Imperfective
    - Progressive/Durative
    - Habitual/Repetitive
    - Gnomic
- Voice / Valency
  - Active ("I killed him.")
  - Passive ("He was killed (by me).")
  - Antipassive ("I killed.")
  - Causative ("I made him kill her.")

    - Causative-Passive (“He was made to kill her (by me).”)
    - Avalent (“There was killing.”)
- Mood
    - Indicative
    - Imperative

Three Possibilities for the Construction of the Infinitive

(Under Construction!)

“The infinitive is formed by a suffix *-l* added to the verb. Sometimes the infinitive is preceded by *yel*, apparently related to the suffix *-l*, in addition to the infinitive suffix. In Arajan this particle has been standardized and specialized for the function of indicating purpose. However, in general the infinitive was apparently not favored to the standard subordinate clause when either could be used.”

1. Independent Origin in Glindesic from *-yel*

In Glindesan and Obiresawoto, *yel* was suffixed to the subordinate verb. In the course of time, the endings developed thus in Arajan:

dyoubyi-jil	*dyoubyiyl*
ssou-jil	*ssuil/ssoil*
lai-jil	*lail*
spau-jil	*spawil/spoil*

2. Independent Origin in Glindesic from *-l*

The “infinitive” was merely an *-l* suffixed to the verb, thus

dyoubyil	> dyubil
ssoul	> sul
lail	> lel
spaul	> spol

3. Origin in Proto-Obic from *-yel*

Phonological process monopthizing diphthongs before [l] and [r] in closed syllable.

- ei + el > ejel > e̯jel
- ai + el > ajel > a̯jel
- oi + el > ojel > o̯jel
- eu + el > ewel > eel > [el]
- au + el > awel > ael > [al] and [el]
- ou + el > owel > oel > [ol] and [el]

The process would later spread by analogy to other forms.

4. Origin in Proto-Obic from *–l*, with stem vowel alternation

Plain	Infinitive
wiyə	wiyəl
meleu	melol
dopoi	dopel
lenei	lenil
moi	moil
ga	gal

4. Origin in Proto-Obic from *–lə/ɻi* (the former perfective suffix)

Or maybe, the old "perfective" form in [lʸə]/[lʲi] could become the basis of the reworked infinitive?

- ei + lʲi > eilʲi
- ai + lʲi > ailʲi
- oi + lʲi > oilʲi
- eu + lʸə > eulʸə > euli, eul > [ol]
- au + lʸə > aulʸə > auli, aul > [ol]
- ou + lʸə > oulʸə > ouli, oul > [ul]

Nouns

Nouns

- Generally refer to names of people, things, places, events, or ideas
- Have inherent gender (animate or inanimate)
- Are inflected for various cases depending on their role in the sentence

Nouns are divided into two classes, animate and inanimate. Animate nouns:

- Generally (but not always) refer to living things.
- Have a full range of nominal declension.

Inanimate nouns:

- Always refer to non-living things
- Cannot be agents of transitive verbs. Thus they are defective in the nominative case. (Or, as in later Obic languages, the nominative case is syncretic with the accusative.) To get around this, the valency of the verb may be changed so as to move it to another argument. So a sentence like "The stone hit me" would not be allowed, but "I was hit by a stone" is fine.
- Are viewed as indefinite and uncountable mass nouns. To be counted, they usually must take some kind of classifier construction. They have no normal plural forms, but do have collectives.

Some words cross boundaries. In many cases, certain "active" natural phenomena or non-living things can be referred to by two words, sometimes unrelated ones, of which one word is animate and one is inanimate. Animate and inanimate nouns are represented by different pronouns. Many aspects of nature come in lexical pairs, one animate, one inanimate, with slight differences

of meaning, e.g. **riyə* (animate) which would be used for falling snow, and **driyin* (inanimate, fallen snow).

Conversely, there are also instances where a single root has formed the basis of two words, one animate and one inanimate, with different meanings. For example, **lʲanga* (animate) is "cattle," **lʲango* (inanimate) is "beef"; **kʰosʲi* (animate) is "voice," while **kʰosʲe* (inanimate) is merely "sound."

Number in Proto-Obic

To the Obi, whose religious cosmology placed great emphasis on complementary halves and interacting dualities – such as body and spirit, order and chaos, reason and passion – the number "two" had particular significance. In fact it is for this reason that Glindesan philologers observed binary distinctions running throughout the Obic languages (broad and slender consonants, verbs and nouns, animate and inanimate nouns), and why traditional grammar arranged the classes of words into a hierarchy of groupings of two. Thus it is not surprising that the dual is marked, and that specials words often represent pairs.

One of the most remarkable is that certain words, which occur naturally in pairs, like eyes, ears, or twins, are treated as inherently dual.Thus a word like **pʰizo* naturally means both of one's "eyes." In order to indicate only *one* item, a singular suffix must be added, making the singular the marked number. This singular affix is *–emʲ*. Thus, a single eye is *pʰizemʲo*. The plural form can be added to the singular form as well if a distributive sense is meant – i.e., one is referring to numerous eyes, but not to many *pairs* of eyes.

The regular dual form (for those words that are *not* inherently pairs) is formed with the suffix *–gu* (for animate nouns) or *–go* (for inanimate nouns). The plural form of animate nouns, applicable both to inherently singular and inherently dual nouns, is *–tʲa*. The collective form of inanimate nouns is *–tʲen* or *–wan*. As *–wan* tends to be favored in the peripheral languages (Obaresato, Čatuyišite, Molul), it may be the older form.

Cases and Case Suffixes

-lə	equative case or comparative degree of adjective
-ri	locative or prepositional case
-r(ə)	accusative case
-sʲu	ablative or partitive case
-(wa)m	comitative or instrumental case
-(w)u	dative case (in Glindesic the animate accusative as well)

Slave Nouns (Adjectives and Adjective Formation)

The most common forms of the adjective are the possessive adjective, the attributive adjective, and the participle.

-(ə)n-	marks a possessive adjective
X	marks an attributive adjective
Y	marks an adjective of similarity
Z	marks a participle

Adjectives are declined to agree with their head nouns in animacy, case, and sometimes number.

Participles can be formed from any verb stem. Therefore there are usually four participles for each verb root: the transitive perfective, transitive imperfective, intransitive perfective, and intransitive imperfective. In predicative use (after "to be"), the adjective is not declined and takes an invariable form with no animacy, case, or number endings.

Pronouns

pʰloi	it (animate)
dan	we, us (exclusive)
du	you
tsʲʰei	thou, thee
wen	you and I, you and me (1st pl. inclusive)
wi	he, she, they (only for personal nouns)
wor	one ("fourth person" pronoun)
(wə)do	it (inanimate)
ja	I, me
jotir	other, the other, another

Demonstrative Pronouns

nʲei	this, that (animate)
nʲo	this, that (inanimate)
nʲinʲ	now
nʲasi	here
nʲouti	for this, for that
nʲem	thus
pʲei	that, yon (animate)
pʲo	that, yon (inanimate)
pʲin	then
pʲasi	there, yonder
pʲouti	for that
pʲeju	for that (dative in –(w)u)
pʲem	thus

Interrogative Pronouns

tʰei	what, which (interrogative)
tʰeinʲ	when
tʰese	where
tʰouti	why
tʰem	how

Relative Pronouns

ji	which, that, who (relative, animate)
jinʲ	when, during what
jese	where, in what
jouti	why

jem	how
jo	which, what, that (relative, inanimate)
jon^{j}	when
jose	where
jouti	why
jom	how

Indefinite Pronouns (formed from compounds of determiners with the relative pronouns)

luji	everything, all
lujin^{j}	every time
lujese	everywhere
lujouti	(for) every reason
lujim	everyway
rewaji	anything, something (animate)
rewajo	anything, something (inanimate)
rewajin^{j}	anytime
rewajese	anywhere
rewajouti	(for) any reason
rewajim	anyhow, anyway

Preverbs (Particles and Verbal Conjunctions)

Aside from the issues of syntax discussed above, there were several particles that modified the meaning of verbs. The particle *ma*, indicating negation, preceded the verb. *Nou*, a different manner of negative, indicates the reversal of the action of the verb, as in "undo." The particle *geu*, "that," introduced many subordinate clauses and thereby functioned like a marker of the subjunctive mood. The particle *k^{h}a*, preceding the verb, indicates that the sentence is a yes-no question. *P^{h}le*, "again," sometimes used with the iterative aspect, emphasizes repetition of the verb's action.

Postverbs (Adverbs)

Pre-Nouns: Articles

do	inanimate definite article
li, lo	animate definite article

Many linguists have noted that the articles look like reduced versions of the pronouns (or that the pronouns look like augmented versions of the articles).

Pre-Nouns: Prepositions

b·^{j}ei	down, under
bu	up, above
dar·^{j}a	out
ga	at
gei	over, across
go	[in exchange] for, at the rate of

juti to, for
ne in
po by means of, with, through
ra below
r·ʲei in, inside, within
wala below
wam with
wo "from". Commonly found with the possessive adjective and the ablative case, it eventually replaced both in later Arajan usage.

Nominal Conjunctions

gu and
wek·ʲe or

Post-Nouns: Determiners

lu all, every
pal (an)other
rewa any, some

Syntax

According the Arajan grammarians, like most modern Obic languages, the verb came first in Proto-Obic utterances (excluding those few preverbal particles). The other elements of the sentence follow the verb in order of increasing "remoteness" from or "unrelatedness" to the verb. Usually, this works out to an arrangement like this:

1. VERB
2. Subject
3. Direct Object
4. Instrument
5. Indirect Object

…again, as in later Obic languages. Prepositional phrases that were locative or temporal could occur after these elements, or might be moved to the front of the sentence for emphasis. It is possible that for various pragmatic reasons any of the arguments of the verb might be moved to other places, given that case morphology marked syntactic roles clearly. However, the order described above was probably the most "neutral." When several nouns occupy the same position, animate nouns take precedence over inanimate ones, except where special emphasis is intended. Like the sentence overall, noun phrases are also head-first, following the "remoteness" and animacy principles. A yes-no question has no special order: it is phrased as the affirmative statement equivalent, and introduced by *kʰa*. As there are no words for "yes" or "no" in Obic languages, it must be assumed there were no such terms in Proto-Obic, and a question would be answered by repeating either the positive verb of the sentence or its negation. Unaffirmative questions which use the special interrogative pronouns are another matter. Here, the interrogative would was probably fronted, as in many modern Obic languages. Subordinate clauses have the same order as main clauses, but are introduced by *geu*.