

2.4 POSITION

2.4.1 STATIONARY POSITION

Some people in cities can list long lists of railway stations in their order. In just the same way, one old woman recited to me over a hundred names of places in their order along a section of the coast of Groote Eylandt. The whole island is a network of named places.

The importance of kinship ties and avoidance rules necessitates continual observation of the position of people. An account of past events demonstrates this precise awareness of position. The description of a school camp will probably include a detailed account of who slept next to whom.

The concept of stationary position in Anindilyakwa is expressed in various ways, including suffixing, adverbs and adjectives.

a) The suffix *-manja* 'at, in, on, by'

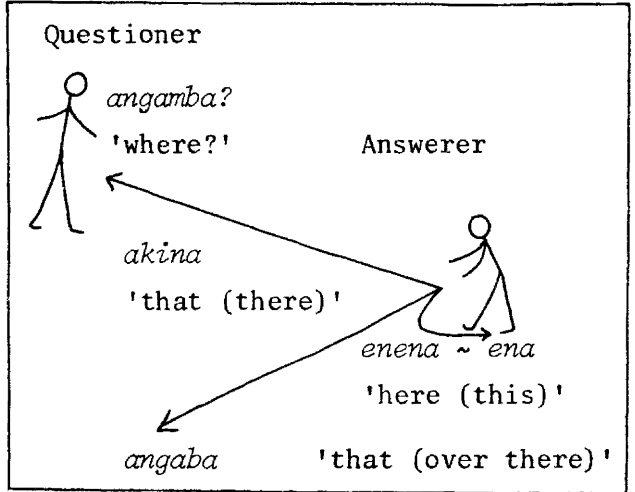
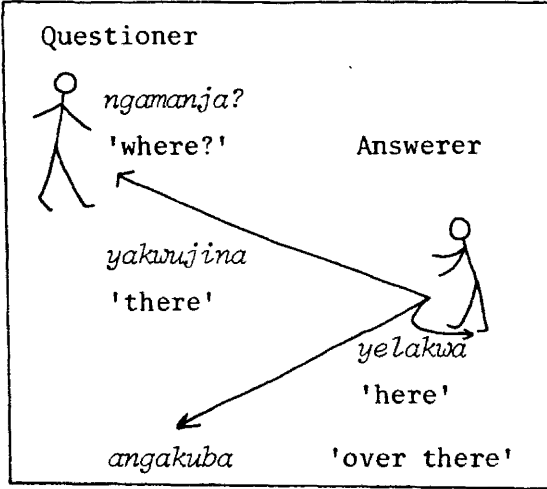
The one suffix *-manja* translates the following English prepositions: 'at', 'in', 'on' and 'by'. The exact meaning is made clear by the context.¹⁰⁰ Compare the English 'at the shop' which can mean 'in' and 'near'.

When a noun is qualified by an adjective, the suffix is attached to the adjective instead of to the noun.¹⁰¹ When a noun is qualified by a demonstrative or a numeral adjective as well as by a descriptive adjective, the suffix is attached to the demonstrative or numeral adjective which precedes the noun, or to both. When a noun is qualified by two descriptive adjectives, one precedes and takes the suffix and the other follows the noun with or without the suffix.¹⁰²

b) The combined suffixes *-murra + -manja*

Note the combination of suffixes *-murru-manja* 'statement of fact + at' occurring on verbs. This construction translates the English 'where', or 'at the place where.'¹⁰³

104 *kuwambilyama wurrakina yilyaku-murru-manja*
 they.will.stay they wild.honey-having-at
 'They'll stay where there's wild honey.'



Adverbs

Question:

nga-manja jurra ningkakumarnuma
 where-at book you.put

'Where did you put the book?'

Adjectives

Question:

angamba jurra
 where book

'Where is the book?'

The combination of suffixes *-murru-manja* occurring on nouns translates the English 'where there is', or 'at a place where there is'.¹⁰⁴ This construction has been translated 'having + at' because it parallels such possessive phrases as:

ni-jinabu-murra nakina
he-gun-having he
'He has a gun.'

c) *Nga-manja* and *angamba* 'where (in what place)?'

There are two words for asking the question 'where?'. In Anindilyakwa *nga-manja* 'where?' is adverbial and *angamba* 'where?' is adjectival. The two diagrams opposite illustrate the use of the appropriate adverbial and adjectival forms for asking and answering the question 'where?'. (The two people depicted in these diagrams are talking to each other. They are separated by some distance. The answers are explained under the diagram.)

d) Adverbs and adjectives of place

The basic words for 'here' are the adverb *yelakwa* and the demonstrative adjective *enena* ~ *ena*. The basic words for 'there' are the adverbs *yakwujina* and *angakuba* and the demonstrative adjectives *akina* and *angaba*.

In the opposite diagram the answers *yelakwa* and *enena* refer to an object close to the person answering the question 'where?'. The answers *yakwujina* and *akina* refer to an object close to the person asking the question, and the answers *angakuba* and *angaba* refer to an object at a distance from both speakers.

If two people are close together, *yakwujina* and *akina* 'there' refer to a short distance away, and *angakuba* and *angaba* 'there' refer to a distance further removed from the speakers.

The demonstrative adjectives can also be translated 'here it is' etc., in which case they can be appropriate answers to the question *ngamanja ningakumarnuma* 'Where did I put it?'.
.

105	<i>ningambilyu-manja ngayuwa</i> <i>Darwin-manja ningenirringka</i> <i>angakuba ~ yakwujina</i>	when I was in Darwin I saw him there
106	<i>angamba jurra nungkwulangwa?</i> <i>angalyu-manja angakuba-wiya</i> <i>angamba jurra nganyangwa?</i> <i>angalyu-manja yakwujinu-wiya</i>	where's your book? it's at home (I left it there) where's my book? it's at home (I saw it there)
107	<i>ababurna amurndakijika shop-manja</i> <i>awurrekerrekba</i>	there are a lot of things displayed in the shop
108	<i>alikiru-manja arrawa</i> <i>nangamba? arrawu-manja ~ arrawa</i>	inside the house where is he? inside

The adverbs *yakwujina* and *angakuba* 'there' can also refer to a position out of sight and are interchangeable in some contexts.¹⁰⁵ Note the difference of perspective, however, in the sentences containing *yakwujinu-wiya* and *angakuba-wiya*.¹⁰⁶

In answer to the question *dangamba?* 'Where is she?' the reply *dangaba-wiya ~ angakuba-wiya angalyu-manja* 'She's at home' can be given by someone who knows, having come from the same place. It means in effect 'I've left her there ~ she was there when I left'.

Arrawa means 'inside' and also 'below, down low, beneath, underneath'. The two meanings for the one word did not cause confusion when they were used in context in pre-technological days. At that time there was nothing a person could get inside as distinct from underneath, like the buildings and vehicles of today. To sit inside and underneath a shelter were one and the same. To be inside a cave meant to be underneath the overhanging rock. People sit beneath the trees but not inside them. Eggs are always found inside the nest and not beneath. People are normally inside a canoe and fish in the water below - unless the canoe is high and dry, in which case one does not expect to find either people or fish underneath! Examples could be multiplied. In other words, the context made the intended meaning plain.

The word *errekba* 'outside' is interesting because of its association with the jungle. It means in the clear area away from thick growth, and by extension today it means outside buildings etc. The adjective *awurrekerrekba* 'out in the open, on display' is used by old people referring to people and things in the plural.¹⁰⁷

Arrawa and *errekba* optionally take the suffix *-manja* 'at, in, on, by' when a noun is absent.¹⁰⁸

Karrawara ~ abalkaya can be translated as 'up high' and 'on top' as well as 'above'. 'Very high' and 'right up on top' are expressed by the words *karrakarrawara*, *karraware-ka* and *abalkaye-ka*.

- 109 *mirriku-wilyarra murungwenu-manja*
 jungle-middle jungle-in
 'in the middle of the jungle'
- 110 *eningu-wilyarra alikira* the middle house
- 111 *mambilyuma diraka marndadikena ~* two trucks side by side
marndadikakena
ngayuwa arndadikena ~ arndadikakena I was on the side of the truck
ningambilya diraku-manja
mema cup marndadikena nganyangwa, the cup on this side is mine,
makina marndadikena ngalilangwa the one on that side is hers
umba memingu-wilyarra and the one in the middle is
nungkwulangwa yours
- 112 *yaliniyalina nalikena enuwa-manja* they walked along each side of
 him
yaliniyalina miyangkidirrbura the straight sides of the canoe
malamukwa
- 113 *Emeda adadibina umba Angurrkburna* Lake Emeda is on this side and
alalubaja Lake Angurrkburna is on the
 other side (i.e. further
 away from here)
neniyuwangkwa adadibina umba the old man is on this side and
niyukwujiya alalubaja the little boy is on the
 other side (i.e. further away
 from here)

The adverb *wilyarra* 'between, in the middle' describes any position within a circle and also between two extremities, either vertical or horizontal. It also occurs with a number of prefixes which represent nouns.¹⁰⁹ (See Appendix 2 regarding noun prefixation.) An adjective is formed from the adverb by the addition of the prefix *eningu-* 'belonging'.¹¹⁰

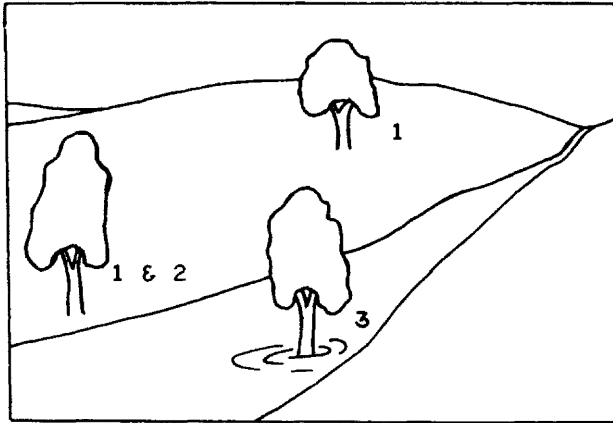
Arndadikena ~ *arndadikakena* 'side by side, at one side, on the side' is a compound word formed from *arnda* 'elbow'. It describes the position of a person in relation to an object or of one object in relation to another object but does not describe two people 'side by side'. This word is invariable when the focus is on the position of the person, but adjectival when the focus is on the object.¹¹¹

The adverb *yaliniyalina* 'on each side' describes a position with reference to people and vertical objects. By extension it refers to the two sides of a canoe or two opposite walls of a building but not to all four walls.¹¹²

The adverbs *adadibina* ~ *adibina* 'on this side' and *alalubaja* ~ *alubaja* 'on the other side' refer to positions with respect to people, things and places.¹¹³ They can occur alone in answer to questions.

114 *ayak-adibina ~ ayaki-lada*
ayak-alubaja ~ ayaku-warra

on this side of the river
 on that side of the river



1. *eka ayaku-bidjina adalyumu-manja*
tree river-beside river-at
2. *eka arndadikena adalyumu-manja*
tree at.the.side river-at
3. *eka ayaku-wilyarra adalyumu-manja*
tree river-middle river-at

(The numbers of the examples refer to the positions of the trees in the sketch.)

115 *ningumurndadina ningena*
ningangmakwulalu-baba
angwurrkidirrburu-baba edirra
malamukwa mangaba nara
angwurrkidirrbura angkayuwaya
makina umba mungwurrki-dirrbura
muwarraku-manja makina

I was cold because I was
 sitting opposite the door

the canoe over there isn't
 opposite the tamarinds but
 it's opposite the casuarina
 trees

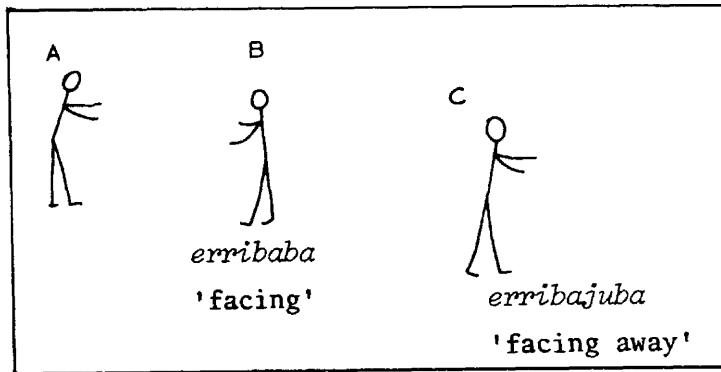
These words also refer to specific objects when prefixes are added representing nouns.¹¹⁴

The same positions can be described by the adverbial roots *-lada* 'on this side' and *-warra* 'on that side'. These can only be used with prefixes representing nouns.¹¹⁴

The root *-bidjina* ~ *-bijina* 'beside ~ near' cannot be used alone. This root and the roots *-lada* and *-warra* described above are complicated by having a number of prefixes added which represent nouns and therefore do not generally occur in the vocabulary of small children.

The opposite diagram shows how the general suffix *-manja* 'at, in, on, by' occurs supplemented with more specific expressions.

When referring to position in relation to something inanimate, 'opposite' is translated by the adjectives *angwurrki-dirrbura* and *angwurrku-wiyida*. They are formed from the adjectives *adirrbura* and *awiyida* 'straight' which are prefixed by the morpheme *-ngwurr-* representing *edirra* 'hole, mouth'.¹¹⁵ When a boat's position is opposite a particular landmark, the word 'opposite' agrees with the noun class of that landmark.



- 116 *yingangmakwulaluma yingabuluwenduma yakwujina* she sat there with her head down
wabuluwendijiya jurra (bajikala) turn over the page ~ book (tin)
mabuluwendijiya makina malamukwa tip the canoe over
- 117 *nalyilyaduma nakina eku-manja ayarrku-murra* he was hanging from the tree by his hands
yerrerra nalyilyaduma alikiru-manja the ladder was leaning against the house
- 118 *nilikena alikira-wa* he went to the house
nilikena aruma-wa alikira he went to the big house
nilikena angaba-wa alikira aruma-wa ~ aruma he went to that big house
nilikena awilyaba-wa alikira aruma-wa ~ aruma he went to one big house
nilikena enungkwurakba-wa alikira aruma-wa ~ aruma he went to a big old house

When referring to position in relation to people, 'opposite' is translated by the adverb *erribaba* as indicated by the opposite diagram. The person labelled B is facing towards a person labelled A, that is they are opposite one another. The person labelled C is facing away from the person labelled A. This position is described by *erribajuba* 'facing away'.

e) Verbs indicating position

There is a special term for people and animals facing each other, being opposite one another. This position is expressed by a verb, e.g. *yikirukwayina* 'we sat opposite each other'.

The English adverbs 'upside down' and 'head down' are rendered by a verb in Anindilyakwa. This includes any position with the head lowered, from ducking down to standing on one's head. It also translates the action of tipping or turning things over when the causative suffix *-ji-* is added, as underlined in examples 116.

The two English concepts 'hanging' and 'leaning' are translated by one verb in Anindilyakwa.¹¹⁷

2.4.2 MOTION TOWARDS

a) The suffix *-wa* 'to'

The suffix *-wa* describes motion towards objects, people and places. When a noun is qualified by an adjective, the suffix is attached to the adjective instead of to the noun, as is the case with the suffix *-manja* 'at, in, on, by' (see section 2.4.1).¹¹⁸

Sometimes *-wa* 'to' in Anindilyakwa translates the English 'from', as in the following example:

wangkirna aninga alikira-wa
 fetch food house-to
 'Fetch the food from the house.'

Sometimes *-wa* 'to' occurs on a noun as an alternative for the suffix *-yada* 'purpose' and translates the English 'for', as in the following example:

likaja erriberriba-wa mangkarrkbu-wa ~ mangkarrkbi-yada
 go bush-to plum-to plum-for
 'Go to the bush for plums.'

- 119 *ningilikena nuwambilyu-murru-wa* *wurrakina*
 I.went they.stayed-statement.of.fact-to they
 'I went to the place where they were staying.'
- 120 *nara alikanguma dingarrbiyu-murru-wa*
 not go crocodile-having-to
 'Don't go where there are crocodiles.'
- 121 *kwa ~ likaja yangkwurrangwa!* come here!
likaja angerriba! go over there!
- 122 *ngilikaja-wiya angerriba umba yibarringkinama yangkwurrangu-murru-wa*
 let.me.go-just to.there but I.will.see.you to.here-fact-to
 'Let me just go over there. I'll see you when I get back.'
- erribulena kumambarrinama Gove-manja yangkwurrangu-murru-wa*
 plane it.m.will.sit Gove-at to.here-fact-to
 'The plane will stop at Gove on the way here.'
- wulalika akina eka yiridena yangkwurrangu-murru-wa*
 it.a.leave that tree we.will.chop to.here-fact-to
 'Leave the tree. We'll chop it on the way back.'

b) The combined suffixes *-murra + -wa*

The combination of suffixes *-murru-wa* 'statement of fact + to' occurs on verbs. This construction translates the English phrase 'to where' and parallels *-murru-manja* 'where' (see section 2.4.1).¹¹⁹

The suffixes *-murru-wa* occurring on verbs of motion have the meaning 'before' (see section 2.2.2).

The combination of suffixes *-murru-wa* occurring on nouns and translated 'having-to' parallels *-murru-manja* 'having-at' (see section 2.4.1).¹²⁰

c) *Ngambu-wa* 'to where?'

The interrogative 'to where?' is *ngambu-wa?* This word is often used for the English '(at) where?' with reference to people, e.g.:

ngambu-wa nakina? 'Where is he? (To where has he gone?)'

Ngambu-wa? 'to where (are you going)?' is frequently used as a form of greeting at any time of day to initiate conversation.

d) Adverbs indicating Motion towards

The basic term for the direction 'to here' is *yangkwurrangwa* and the term for 'to there' is *angerriba*.¹²¹ *Yangkwurrangu-wiya* is a request for someone to come closer to the speaker.

Yangkwurrangwa 'to here' also occurs with the suffix combination *-murru-wa* with the sense of 'on returning to this place'.¹²² The English 'on the way back' reflects a different point of view, with the focus on the whole journey rather than the position of the speaker.

The adverbs *arrawa* 'inside, below', *errekba* 'outside' and *karrawara* ~ *abalkaya* 'above' all obligatorily take the suffix *-wa* 'to' when motion towards is intended.

123	<i>nalikenuma alikiri-langwa</i>	they came from the house
	<i>nalikenuma arumu-langwa alikira</i>	they came from the big house
	<i>nalikenuma angabu-langwa alikira</i> <i>arumu-langwa ~ aruma</i>	they came from that big house
	<i>nalikenuma awilyabu-langwa alikira</i> <i>arumu-langwa ~ aruma</i>	they came from one big house
	<i>nalikenuma enungkwurakbu-langwa</i> <i>alikira arumu-langwa ~ aruma</i>	they came from a big old house
124	<i>angambu-langwa angalya</i> <i>ningkilikarnuma</i>	what country do you come from?
	<i>karnungwambu-langwa</i>	where have you been?
125	<i>numulikajama erribaja diraka</i>	the truck is going away in the opposite direction
	<i>numulikajama angerriba alikiru-wa</i> <i>diraka</i>	the truck is going over there to the building
126	<i>Adinubawiya ningilikena Darwin-uwa</i> <i>kembirra yadikina ningilikena</i> <i>Sydney-uwa</i>	first I went to Darwin and from there I went to Sydney

2.4.3 MOTION FROM

a) The suffix *-langwa* 'from'

The suffix *-langwa* 'from' describes motion from objects, people and places. When a noun is qualified by an adjective, the suffix is attached to the adjective instead of to the noun, as is the case with the suffix *-manja* 'at, in, on, by' (see section 2.4.1).¹²³

b) *Ngambu-langwa* 'from where?'

The interrogative 'from where?' is *ngambu-langwa*. It is sometimes used to initiate conversation, but less frequently than *ngambu-wa* 'to where?' (see section 2.4.2). Adjectival and pronominal prefixes may be added to *ngambu-langwa*.¹²⁴

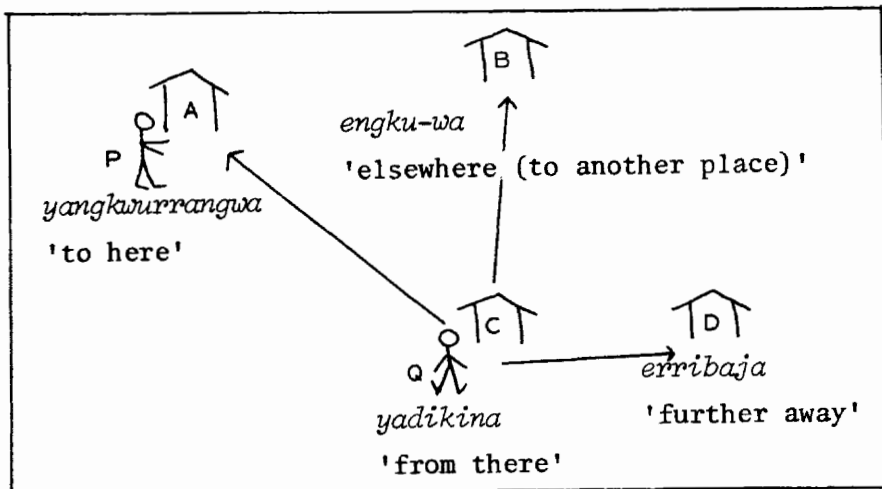
c) Adverbs indicating motion from

The adverb *erribaja* 'away' describes motion away from the speaker without reference to destination, as distinct from *angerriba* 'to there'.¹²⁵

Erribaju-wiya is used as a command to move away from the speaker.

The adverb *yadikina* 'from there' describes motion of a person or an object away from a place which is distant from the speaker. The movement can be in any direction.¹²⁶ The adjective *eningi-yadikina* 'coming from there' also occurs.

nenikaduwa nakina neningi-yadikina nungwarrka
 he.new he he.belonging-over.there father.my
 'My father had just arrived from over there.'



In the above diagram, A, B, C and D represent places. P and Q represent people.

When Q goes away from C to D, P says:

yadikina nilikajama erribaja D-wa He is going from there further away to D

When Q goes to B, P says:

yadikina nilikajama engku-wa B-wa He is going from there to B

When Q comes to A, P says:

yadikina nilikajama yangkwurrangwa He is coming here from there

The adverbs *arrawa* 'inside, below', *errekba* 'outside' and *karrawara abalkaya* 'above' all obligatorily take the suffix *-langwa* 'from' when motion from is intended.¹²⁷

The diagram opposite illustrates three types of movement as expressed in Anindilyakwa.

- 128 *nijadanga arrawu-langwa* he appeared from inside
ngambu-langwa? Karrawari-langwa where did it come from?
from above
- 129 *nilikena mamurukwu-langwiya* he went along the road
nilikena mabulali-langwiya he went through the shallow
water (sea)
numangkarrina karrawari-langwiya it (the plane) flew high in
the air
marndekirriyerra numudirrirndama the yam went down through the
mamungwunyi-langwiya mamudangkwa soft sand
ningilukwamurrkwaja aliki-langwiya I followed the footprints
- 130 *nilikena mamurukwu-langwiya* he went along the path
nilikena miyukwujiya-langwiya he went along the little
mamurukwa path
nilikena mangabu-langwiya mamurukwa he went along that little
miyukwujiya ~ miyukwujiyi-langwiya path
- 131 *kilikajama yada nara yadikina* you will go this way, not
that way
yibilyubilya nilikena yadi-langwiya the lightning came this way
ngaya memu-manja yadi-langwiya ngilikajama ningena ...
I this-on here-along let.me.go I
'Let me go along this (path), ...
nungkwaja makinu-manja mayuwarna yadikini-langwiya likaja
you.emph that-on follow.it there-along go
while you go along that one.'

2.4.4 MOTION ALONG A ROUTE

a) The suffix *-langwiya* 'along'

The suffix *-langwiya* describes motion along a route, whether that route is on the ground, through a tunnel, in the water or in the air.¹²⁸ It may be added to words which already imply motion in order to focus on the concept of 'along a route'.¹²⁹

When a noun is qualified by an adjective, the suffix *-langwiya* 'along' is attached to the adjective instead of to the noun, as is the case with the suffix *-manja* 'at, in, on, by' (see section 2.4.1).¹³⁰ The numeral adjective is unlikely to occur.

b) *Ngambu-langwiya* 'along where?'

The interrogative 'along where?' is *ngambu-langwiya*. It is not as commonly used as *ngambu-wa* 'to where?' or *ngambu-langwa* 'from where?'.

c) Adverbs indicating motion along a route

The adverb *yada* ~ *yadi-langwiya* 'this way' describes a specific route straight ahead of the speaker. *Yadada* 'this way' occurs alone in answer to a question, and in indicating direction immediately ahead in the context of searching out a convenient path. *Yadikina* (literally 'from there') and *yadikini-langwiya* both mean 'that way'.¹³¹

Yada ~ *yadi-langwiya* 'along here' and *yadikina* ~ *yadikini-langwiya* 'along there' refer to the direction 'from elsewhere to here' as well as 'away from here'. The apparent confusion is probably connected with the fact that the verb stem *-likaja* means 'coming' as well as 'going'. In practice the context always clarifies the situation.

Yadi-langwa ~ *yadi-langwu-langwa* 'from this way' can also be translated 'this way' (see section 2.4.5).

- 132 *nilikarnu-manja yangkwurrangwa (angerriba) nirringka lukwakwa*
 he.went-when to.here (to.there) he.it.y.saw on.the.way
yaraja
goanna
 'He saw a goanna on the way here (there).'
- yukwu-langwa aninga kalyubarini-yada lukwakwa* give me food to eat on the way
- 133 *likaja dirrbura ~ muwiyida* go straight ahead along
memu-langwiya mamurukwa this road
nerrikba malarra dirrbura ~ he threw the stone straight
muwiyida yaraju-wa at the goanna
kalikajama adalyuma dirrbura ~ the river goes straight a-
awiyida angerriba awuruku-wa head to the billabong
likaja dirrbura ~ ningkuwiyida go straight home!
angalyu-wa!
- 134 *numangkarrina arrawu-langwiya* it (the plane) flew very low
- 135 *likaja yangkwurrangwa ~ kwa* come here!
likaja yangkwurrangwa!
kwa likaja ngayuwa-wa! come to me!
likaja enuwa-wa ~ jaya likaja go to him!
enuwa-wa!
likaja angerriba ~ jaya likaja go over there!
angerriba!
- 136 *Perth-langwa ningkilikarnuma nungkuwa* have you ever been to
ambaka Perth?
ngambu-langwa? mijiyelyi-langwa where have you been (to)?
 I've been to the beach
- 137 *ayukwujiya angalya nuw-akwudangwu-dina*
 small place it.a -near-became
 'A small village came near, i.e. they came near a small village.'

The adverb *lukwakwa* 'on the way' refers to any direction.¹³²

The adverb *dirrbura* and the adjective *awiyida* 'straight' are used for the direction 'straight ahead'. *Dirrbura* is more common than *awiyida*. The direction is along a route but the position of the speaker is not involved and the end rather than the starting point is in focus. In English the concepts of direction and time are linked in the command, 'Go straight home', and the same connection is drawn in Anindilyakwa.¹³³

The adverbs *arrawa* 'inside, below', *errekba* 'outside' and *karrawara abalkaya* 'above' all take the suffix *-langwiya* 'along'.¹³⁴

2.4.5 'COME AND GO'

The verb root *-lik-* is a generic term meaning both 'come' and 'go'. It is connected with the noun *alika* 'foot'. Originally it must have meant 'walk'. It does not specify the direction, so this must be either added or implied from the context.

Kwa 'come' and *jaya* ~ *jayi* ~ *juyi* 'away' are used in conjunction with *-lik-*'go' and alone.¹³⁵ When *jayi* is used to conclude a conversation it may appear abrupt but is not impolite.

Sometimes *-langwa* 'from' in Anindilyakwa translates the English 'to'.¹³⁶

Another contrast between the viewpoint of English and Anindilyakwa speakers is in the use of the adverb *akwudangwa* 'near' with the verbal suffix *-dina* 'become'.¹³⁷

In a situation where a person is feeling his way from rock to rock across a stream he might ask *ngambu-langwa?* 'where from?'. An English speaker might say 'Where to next?' thinking of the direction to the opposite bank. The answer in Anindilyakwa might be *yadi-langwa* ~ *yadi-langwu-langwa* indicating the next step. In this case it would seem that the Anindilyakwa speaker is thinking of the route to be followed as coming from a certain direction rather than heading in that direction.

Do these examples illustrate an Aboriginal point of view in which paths lead towards the individual, and the world is seen as advancing towards him? Consider the situation before there were any made paths through the undergrowth. One might speculate that a

138	<i>mekbuda mada</i>	the right ear
	<i>yekalyarra ~ yekawarriya yina</i>	the left knee
	<i>mekbuda mijiyanga</i>	the starboard side of the boat, the boat on the right
	<i>mekalyarra ~ mekawarriya mijiyanga</i>	the port side of the boat, the boat on the left
139	<i>mekbudi-langwa mada</i>	on my right ear
	<i>mekbudi-langwa mijiyanga</i>	on the starboard side of the boat
140	<i>ningekalyarra ~ ningekawarriya</i>	the left side of my body
	<i>ningekbuda</i>	the right side of my body
	<i>ningkekbuda ningkakina</i>	you are right handed
	<i>ningekbudi-langwa nakina</i>	he is on my right
	<i>ningekalyarri langwa ~ ningeka warriyi-langwa nakina</i>	he is on my left
	<i>nekbudi-langwa ningena</i>	I am on his right
	<i>dekbudi-langwa ningena</i>	I am on her right
141	<i>likaja ningkekbudu-wa</i>	go to your right

person heading in a certain direction anticipates the best way forward as regards swamps, rocks and any other terrain that would impede progress. He can see the track immediately in front of him, although so ill-defined that the untrained eye may not discern it at all. He is interested in the unseen distance and the water, food or similar goal from which a track of some sort leads to himself.

2.4.6 LEFT AND RIGHT

The adjectives *ekbuda* 'right' and *ekalyarra* ~ *ekawarriya* 'left' are used with various parts of the body and also with non-human nouns and agree with the nouns they qualify.¹³⁸

These adjectives with the suffix *-langwa* describe the positions 'on the right', 'on the left', and 'on the starboard side', 'on the port side'.¹³⁹ The suffix *-manja* 'on' cannot be used here.

Pronominal prefixes are added to *ekbuda* 'right' and *ekalyarra* ~ *ekawarriya* 'left' with reference to the whole of the right and left sides of the body. A person who is right-handed is described as using the right side of the body. This concept maintains the usual connection between right-handedness and right footedness.¹⁴⁰

In English the directions 'to the right', 'to the left' are often impersonal. In Anindilyakwa they are always personal. 'Go to the right' must be translated 'Go to your right'.¹⁴¹

In addition to 'left' and 'right' there is an Anindilyakwa expression for 'one side' which refers particularly to trees, but which is associated with one side of the body. The prefix *-ngamba-* which represents the noun *yingamba* 'groin' occurs in the verb *wu-ngamba-kbijangina*, literally 'jump one side', i.e. climb up the tree, using hands and feet, and so clinging to one side of the tree.

2.4.7 FRONT AND BACK, EAST AND WEST

The term for the front of the body, *angengkuwa*, is connected with the verb stem *-ngengkuwangina* 'breathe'. The focal point of breathing is not taking air through the nose but the expansion and retraction of the chest. The expressions for the front or palm of the hand and the bottom or sole of the foot are compounds made from

142	<i>amungengkuwa ayarrka</i>	palm of the hand
	<i>amungengkuwa alika</i>	sole of the foot
	<i>amurirrba ayarrka</i>	the back of the hand
	<i>amurirrba alika</i>	the upper part of the foot
143	<i>warrijiya amarru-wa nara</i>	wind it forwards, not backwards
	<i>amudakbu-wa</i>	

angengkuwa. The expressions for the back of the hand and the upper part of the foot are compounds made from *murirrba* 'back'.¹⁴²

These words for 'front' and 'back' occur with reference to other upright things besides the human body. For example the pandanus palm leaf which is used for weaving has a distinct ridge along the back of the leaf. The back of the leaf is *mamurirrba* and the front of the leaf is *mamungengkuwa*.

'Front' and 'back' are more specific terms in Anindilyakwa than in English. The words primarily referring to the body are not applicable when describing position within a container. The position in the front of a canoe and a building is *amarra-manja* and the position in the back is *amudakbu-manja*. *Amarra* is not used alone, but *amudakbu* is literally 'tail'. 'At the back' *akaburrangarna* ~ *akaburrangarnu-manja* is used for 'west' in contrast to *alyengmulyengma* 'east' which is literally 'at the front'.

The directions east and west are much more significant to Groote Eylandters in connection with land ownership than north and south. Terms for north and south are not in common use, but wind directions may be used.

'Forwards' and 'backwards' are expressed by the terms *amarra-wa* and *amudakbu-wa*.¹⁴³

2.4.8 ORDERING OF POSITION

The ordering of place is limited to first and last. Like English, the words *ening-adinubawiya* 'first' and *enungw-arijilangwa* 'last' are adjectival. Unlike English, they are derived from adverbs of time. The middle ones, *eningu-wilyarra*, are not ordered (see section 2.2.4).

The verb *-lyeng-mena* 'lead' is used in various contexts. The literal meaning of this word is 'take the head'. The prefix representing *aringka* 'head' is *-lyang-* ~ *lyeng-* and the verb stem *-mena* is 'take'. The primary meaning of this word is to go first. When walking along a narrow path one person may say to another, *lyeng-mena nungkuwa* 'you go in front'. When various groups of people are travelling, the question may be asked, *angkaburra ka-lyeng-menama?* 'Who will go first?'. The word *-lyeng-mena* is also used as the equivalent of the English 'win' in the context of

- 144 *angkaburra na-lyeng-menama?* who is winning?
nakina ni-lyeng-manguma he won
wurrakina na-lyeng-manguma they've won
- 145 *ma-lyeng-ma-ji-na mema* put this (truck) in the front
- 146 *yimundungwa niyuwayinuma* the cypress trees were in a line
wulikaja wurriyuwayina! walk in line behind each other!
wurr-arnda-kilyangbadina! stand in line side by side!
- 147 *awilyaba-ma angalya akena angurrkw-ambilyuma*
one-emph area but enclosure-two
narri-ngurrkwarrngaruma dirranda-ma
they.it.a-enclosed wire-with
'There was one cage, but they had divided it into two enclosures
with wire netting.'
- angalya na-ngurrkwarrnga-jungwunuma* the area was enclosed with
dirranda-ma wire

competition, either individual or team.¹⁴⁴ The same verb may be used with the addition of the causative suffix *-ji-*, as when instructing a child playing with toy trucks.¹⁴⁵

There are various ways of describing things 'in a line'. For example the verb stem *-yuwayina* 'follow each other' can describe trees in a stationary position as well as people following each other. In the case of people standing in line side by side, the verb used to describe this position includes *arnda* 'elbow'.¹⁴⁶

2.5 SPEED

Before the advent of modern technology, the concept of speed related to such things as the rate of movement of human beings on foot and of canoes, spears, fire, wind and water, animals, and the rate of growth of plant life. The skill of estimating speed, taking into account the natural forces which influence it, was and still is highly developed. Some examples have already been given in section 2.1 discussing estimation.

The basic terms relating to speed are *waranja* 'quickly' and *ambakilangwa* 'slowly'. The command 'Hurry up! Quickly' is *waranja!*

Waranju-bawiya also means 'quickly' but is used adverbially and includes the meaning of the English word 'early', as discussed in section 2.2.4.

Ambakilangwa has the extended meanings 'gently, carefully, little by little'.

The idiom *mekawajiya* 'make it (e.g. a bicycle) look good' is used with the meaning 'make it go fast'.

2.6 SPACE

The noun *angwurn.dikirra* 'space' is used for an area bounded on both sides by objects of any size. It is in common use for a strait, such as the strait between Groote Eylandt and Winchelsea Island. It is also used for the space between any objects such as rocks, houses etc., and refers especially to a narrow space.

The verb stem *-ngurrrkarrnga-jungwuna* 'be enclosed' is used to describe an area bounded on all sides by objects, making a confined space.¹⁴⁷

Judith Stokes, 1982

AIATSIS Library, S 40/4

“A description of the mathematical concepts of Groote Eylandt Aborigines”

page 99 to 125

(m0022785_v_p99to125_a.pdf)

To cite this file use :

http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/lbry/dig_prgm/e_access/serial/m0022785_v_p99to125_a.pdf

© Judith Stokes