

2. APPLIED NUMBER

2.1 ESTIMATION

In a non-literate society with a food-gathering and hunting economy, absolute standards are irrelevant, and people are not accustomed to using descriptive terms out of context.

A technological economy requires absolute standards of weight and measurement. Most people rely heavily on the availability of these measures, and so the skills of estimation are not well developed. Western education forces children to think in abstract terms of measurement at an early age.

In the Aboriginal society, without indigenous arbitrary standards of measurement, the skills of estimating are very well developed. Children learn to estimate by watching adults and by trial and error in situations where they are always highly motivated, because estimation is never a theoretical exercise.

Estimation in hunting and gathering takes place as a matter of course in everyday life. A man estimates how far he can travel before night-fall. When he aims his spear he throws it at the precise angle for it to travel through the air to reach its objective. When the target is a fish under water he must take the refraction of light into account. At all times he must judge the strength of the wind very accurately.

A woman digging yams keeps on digging until, in her estimation, she has enough to feed her family. She might have to take into account the length of the homeward journey. She will weigh up the effort required to dig in hard soil against the estimated size of the yam still in the ground. When she gives her children yams or wood to carry home and carries a load on her own head, she knows just how much can be managed by each person over a certain distance without dropping any enroute.

I have been full of admiration at the way Aborigines know precisely when food is cooked. I have seen oysters cooked while still on the rocks, although I have not even tried to cook them that way myself. Pine needles are placed on top of the oysters, set alight and then doused with sea-water at the exact moment required to cook the oysters without either drying or burning the tiny molluscs. This is

51 *mabiyakarbiyu-manja mamawura*
yambilyumu-manja yimawura
yabiyarbuwu-manja yimawura

in three days time
in two months time
in four months time

a comparatively quick process, but I have observed the same precise estimation of time in longer processes such as when women cook damper. There are numerous other examples.

2.2 TIME

A large number of phrases refer to time in Anindilyakwa. Very likely one person's interpretation of a term varies from another's. In English we too have a varying sense of time. One person's idea of 'a while ago' does not always match another's idea of the same expression. It is also true that one person's idea of 'a while ago' differs according to the context. It is not always easy to pin down an exact English equivalent of the Anindilyakwa terms.

Non-Aborigines are not content to wait. They try to do several other things while waiting for something else to happen, sometimes forgetting the first task in hand. Time appears to pass so quickly when one is well occupied that one loses track of its passing. This is not so with Aborigines. They prefer to concentrate on one thing at a time and avoid the possibility of confusion from trying to do too many things at once. Waiting, in fact, is itself an integral part of the task.

Aborigines know when a damper is cooked because they are content to wait and they know how long to wait. They have a seemingly 'innate' sense of time span without clocks. They also know when it is the right time to do things. Their feeling for time is probably based on long reliance on the sun's movements and on their daily routine. It is now so inbuilt that it is still there without reference to the sun, even in cloudy weather. This sense of time is dependent on the maintenance of the traditional routine or on the firm establishment of a new one.

2.2.1 NATURAL PHENOMENA AS TIME MARKERS

Aborigines are much more aware of changes in the environment than most non-Aborigines are. They automatically observe every alteration in the sun and the moon and in the seasons of the year.

a) Sun and moon

The sun *mamawura* and moon *yimawura* are used for counting the days and months.⁵¹ In the old days hand gestures were used to describe the time of the day at which events took place. A person pointing to

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kekbadiya adinuba

larruwura akwudangwa

nalarruwuradinama arakba

kumawiyebu-manja mamawura

mumawiyebu-manja mamawura

awankilermmur.da

it will soon be light

nearly mid-afternoon

it is already mid-afternoon

when the sun sets (future)

when the sun set (past)

nearly night time (literally
'rather dark')

the sky in a certain direction would say *numiyaminuma mamawura* 'the sun was like this'. *Kumiyaminama mamawura* 'the sun will be like this' accompanied the hand gesture to describe the time of day in the future. Old and middle-aged people have retained this method today.

The word *mamawura* 'sun' with the addition of the *d* class prefix is used to describe a clock, *dumamawura*. *Dumamawura dadungwayarrka* 'a clock belonging to the hand' is used for a wrist-watch. The question *mambarrngarna mamawura?* 'How much sun?' is asked of someone with a watch or clock, when a person wants to know the time. An answer in English is expected. (*M* noun class prefixes often occur in time phrases because *mamawura* 'sun' is the noun understood.)

Both *mamawura* 'sun' and *marringa* 'sleep' are used for counting short periods of time. 'Every day' can be translated either *mababurni-langwa marringa* 'every sleep' or *mababurni-langwa mamawura* 'every sun'. Because of the influence of English the latter expression is becoming more common.

For Aborigines on Groote Eylandt day begins at sunrise and not at midnight. Therefore a patient coming to the hospital for treatment at 4 a.m. still refers to the events of the previous day as happening 'today'. We have the fixed idea that the day starts at midnight, and unless we realize that the Aborigines have an equally fixed, though different, idea, confusions can arise.

The basic terms for 'night' and 'day' are *meningalyarrngwalyilya* ~ *alyarrngwalyilya* 'at night, night-time' and *menungwulida* 'by day, day-time'. Although colour terminology is beyond the scope of this paper, it is of interest to note that *menungwulida* 'day-time' literally means 'belonging to colour' (*alida* 'colour').

There are various terms for the different parts of the day describing the sun's movements and the changes between darkness and light. Vocabulary is especially rich for periods of significant observable change. A few examples only are given.⁵²

The terms for morning and afternoon are *wurdarriyu-wiya* 'in the morning' and *larruwura* ~ *larruwuri-langwa* 'in the late afternoon'. The word *larruwura* is not exactly the same as the English word 'afternoon' because it does not refer to the early part of the afternoon. *Mamerrikuwilyarra* 'midday' includes the early afternoon.

- 53 *muwilyaba mamarika akwa yuwilyaba yinungkwura*
 one dry.season.wind and one wet.season.wind
 'one dry season and one wet season (one year)'
- 54 *mibinu-wiya mamarika* last dry season
numangkarrinu-wiya mamarika while the south east winds
 were blowing
naru-wiya mamarika before the dry season
- 55 *ebinu-wiya ~ ebini-yada Saturday* last Saturday
engku-wiya ~ engki-yada Saturday the Saturday before last
eminingku-wiya ~ eminingki-yada
Saturday the Saturday before that
enu-manja Saturday this coming Saturday
engku-manja Saturday the Saturday after next
eminingku-manja Saturday the Saturday after that
- 56 *mingku-wiya ~ mingki-yada (mamawura)* the other day (not specific)
mingku-manja (mamawura) the next day

b) Seasons

Time in longer spans than a few months can be counted by the seasons. The two main seasons in the year, the dry and the wet, are marked by the two main winds *mamarika* 'the southeast trade winds' and *yinungkwura* 'the monsoon winds'. 'One year' is the same as one dry season and one wet season.⁵³

The seasons are more frequently used for pin-pointing events than for counting periods of time. For instance, events in the past are described as taking place during the dry season or the wet season, or before or after these seasons.⁵⁴ (See sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.5 for this use of the suffix *-wiya*.)

One old woman who wanted to indicate a long period of time since a particular event took place began enumerating the names for the different wind directions. As well as four words for winds she included *kirijumija* 'Christmas', which is often used nowadays for 'year'.

2.2.2 TIME SUFFIXES

Many Anindilyakwa suffixes have different meanings in different constructions.

a) Time phrases

In most time phrases, the suffixes *-wiya* and *-yada* occur with reference to past time and *-manja* with reference to future time. The adjectives *enena* ~ *ena* 'this', *ebina* 'same', *engka* 'other', *eminingka* 'different' all occur in time phrases.⁵⁵ They occur with the *a* noun class, except when nouns of the *m* noun class such as *mamawura* 'sun' are understood.⁵⁶

Note that because the English 'on Sunday' refers to both past and future time, *-manja* is often used referring to both past and future time when suffixed to names of the days of the week.

During the narration of past events, *mingku-manja* 'the next day', normally in a future context, also refers to the next day within the past time sequence.⁵⁶

- 57 *akini-yada numangkarrinu-manja mamarika
nalikenuma angerriba* at the time when the
dry season wind was
blowing they went over
there
- kinilikaju-manja nakina yangkwurrangwa,
akini-yada ngawa akeningmudinama
ngarna* when he comes here (at
that time) we'll find
out
- 58 *ningilikenu-manja* when I went
- ningambilyu-manja erriberribu-manja* when I lived in the
bush
- kilikaju-manja* when I (will) go, if
I go
- 59 *ningilikenu-murri-langwa ~
ningilikenu-mu-langwa* after I went
- 60 *ningilikenu-murru-wa* before I went
- kilikaja-murru-wa* before I (will) go
- 61 *naru-wiya kilikena* before I went
- naru-wiya alikira* before there were houses,
while there were no
houses
- 62 *mangkarrkba muwalyuwa aduwaba* the wild plums are ripe
now

The demonstrative adjective *akina* 'that' occurs with the suffix *-yada* to indicate a particular time either in the past or in the future, 'at that time'.⁵⁷

b) Time clauses

In time clauses when the suffix *-manja* and the suffix combinations *-murri-langwa* ~ *-mu-langwa* and *-murru-wa* are added to verbs they indicate various aspects of time. The suffix *-manja* occurs with the past and future tenses meaning 'when'. In the future it also means 'if'.⁵⁸ The suffix *-murri-langwa* ~ *-mu-langwa* 'after' occurs with the past tense,⁵⁹ and the suffix *-murru-wa* 'before' occurs with the past and future tenses.⁶⁰

'Before' is also expressed in a negative construction, using *nara* 'not' and the suffix *-wiya*. In this case the suffix *-wiya* could be translated 'while' (see section 2.2.5).^{61,54}

2.2.3 TIME WORDS

The basic time words are *aduwaba* 'today', *yarrungkwa* 'yesterday' and *arnungkwaya* 'tomorrow'. However *aduwaba* has a wider area of meaning than the English word 'today'. It can include such expressions as 'now', 'nowadays' and 'at this time'.⁶² When 'today' is used in its restricted sense, it is often qualified by the time phrase *memu-manja mamawura* 'this very day'.

a) *Ngambi-yada* 'when?'

The suffix *-yada* is added to the interrogative root *ngamb-* to give the meaning 'when'. In most other time expressions *-yada* refers to past time, but in the interrogative *-yada* refers to both past and future time.

6 ³	<i>nilikenuma arakba</i>	he's gone now (in conversation)
	<i>neningaba arakba</i>	he's well now
	<i>likaja arakba!</i>	go now!
	<i>ngarrilikaja arakba!</i>	let's go now!
	<i>biya nilikena arakba</i>	and now (then) he went (in narrative discourse)
6 ⁴	<i>likaja enenu-wiya!</i>	go immediately!
	<i>ningardanga angwurra biya</i>	I called loudly and jumped up
	<i>akini-wiya numurajanga</i>	immediately
6 ⁵	<i>kabilbayina adinuba</i>	(the water) will soon boil
	<i>ngambiyada neningabaduma?</i>	when did he improve? a
	<i>adinuba</i>	little while ago
6 ⁶	<i>ningeningma arngki-darrba</i>	I nearly know, i.e. I'll soon learn it
	<i>arngki-darrba kinilyikarrburrukuma</i>	he nearly slipped
	<i>arngki-darrba kinumanguma</i>	he nearly got it
6 ⁷	<i>larruwura akwudangwa</i>	nearly mid-afternoon
	<i>akwudangwa durdurla</i>	nearly bell (time)

b) *Arakba* 'now, already'

The time word *arakba* 'now' focuses on the aspect of completion rather than time at a particular moment. It refers to actions that are already completed and states that have already changed. It is used alone in answer to questions such as 'Have you finished?' and 'Has he gone?'. It is also used with the imperative and hortatory moods to elicit an immediate response. In narrative discourse it occurs frequently and may be translated by both 'now' and 'then' in English.⁶³

Sometimes *arakba* 'already' translates the English 'after', as in a discussion about when an event took place, e.g. *wiyerrirda arakba* 'cyclone already' translates 'after the cyclone'.

c) *Enenu-wiya, akinu-wiya* 'immediately (now, past)'

The suffix *-wiya* added to the demonstrative *enena* 'this' gives the meaning 'immediately, now'. It is used less than *arakba* 'now' but unlike *arakba* it is an answer to the question 'when ...?'.⁶⁴ When 'immediately' refers to an event in the past, *akinu-wiya* literally 'that while' is used.⁶⁴

d) *Adinuba* 'soon', 'recently'

This word is used to refer to actions about to happen or having just happened and to states just changed or about to change. It has a more restricted area of meaning than the English words but is frequently used alone in answer to the question 'when...?'.⁶⁵

e) *Arngki-darrba* 'soon', 'nearly'

Another word for 'soon' is *arngki-darrba*, literally 'time short'. With reference to a past event *arngki-darrba* occurs with a verb in the subjunctive mood meaning 'nearly'.⁶⁶

f) *Akwudangwa* 'nearly'

The primary meaning of *akwudangwa* is 'near' in the spatial sense. The Anindilyakwa speaker sees a close connection between distance and time. Therefore *akwudangwa* also means 'nearly' when it is used with an adverb of time or a noun in reference to a future event or change of state. This word is also used alone in answer to the question 'when ...?' and may sometimes be interchangeable with *adinuba* 'soon'.⁶⁷

68	<i>nara kinirringka nakina umba aduwabu-manju-bu</i>	I've never seen him before until today
	<i>nara kumarringka makwiyadakina diraka umba adinubu-manju-bu</i>	I've never seen that kind of truck until recently
69	<i>ar...akba-wiya ~ arakba-wiye-ka</i>	a very long time ago (see Appendix 1)
	<i>arakba-wiya</i>	long ago
	<i>awank-arakba-wiya</i>	a rather long time ago
	<i>wilyarru-wilyarra</i>	not so long ago (literally 'middle middle')
	<i>awank-adinuba</i>	a fairly short time ago
	<i>adinuba</i>	a short time ago
	<i>adinube-ka ~ yarrungwi-yarrungkwa</i>	a very short time ago (literally 'yesterday yesterday')
	<i>adinube-ka</i>	very soon
	<i>adinuba</i>	soon
	<i>awank-adinuba</i>	fairly soon
	<i>ambaka</i>	later
	<i>ambaka amiyerra</i>	much later

g) *Aduwabu-manju-bu* 'today, for the first time'

A positive answer to such questions as 'Have you ever seen...?' is the idiomatic expression *aduwabu-manju-bu* 'today, for the first time'. This construction combines *aduwaba* 'today' with the suffixes *-manja* 'on, at' and *-bu* (emphasis). The parallel constructions *adinubu-manju-bu* 'recently for the first time' and *yarrungku-manju-bu* 'yesterday for the first time' combine *adinuba* 'recently' and *yarrungkwa* 'yesterday' with the same suffixes.⁶⁸

2.2.4 SEQUENCING AND COMPARISON OF TIME

The basic words in the sequencing of time are *arakba-wiya* 'long ago' and *adinuba* 'recently, soon' (see section 2.2.3). These words can be modified in various ways to denote different intervals of time with respect to the present.⁶⁹ When comparing one past event with another, the intensifier *angwurra* 'more' is used giving *arakba-wiya angwurra* 'a much longer time ago'. When comparing one future event with another, *amiyerra* 'continuing' is used giving *ambaka amiyerra* 'much later'.

- 70 1. *likaja nungkuwa adinuba-wiya umba ngayuwa kilikajama arijilangwa*
 go you first but I I.will.go afterwards
2. *lyengmena nungkuwa umba ngayuwa karijadinama arijilangwa*
 lead you but I I.will.go.last afterwards

Both 1 and 2 mean the same, 'You go first and I'll go last'.

- 71 *adinuba-wiya kilikajama shop-uwa,* First I will go to the shop,
kembirra arijilangwa kingangarrenama then afterwards I will visit
dakina akwa kingaminarjirrenama her and wash her clothes and
dumbala ngalilangwa akwa cook her food.
kingaminidakinama aninga

- 72 *wurrababurni-langwa wurriyukwayuwa* all the children came early
nalikenuma waranjubawiya (literally 'quickly')

yikilikaja waranjubawiya nara ambakilangwa
 you.will.come quickly not slowly

'Come quickly and not slowly!'

a) *Adinuba-wiya* 'beforehand, first'

The adverb *adinuba-wiya* means primarily 'beforehand, first'. It is a compound word, combining *adinuba* 'soon' and the suffix *-wiya* which occurs in time phrases.⁷⁰

b) *Arijilangwa* 'afterwards, last'

The adverb *arijilangwa* means primarily 'afterwards, last'. This word has the same root as *-arijidina* 'come, go last'. The suffix *-langwa* occurs on verbs meaning 'after', and *-ariji-* may have occurred alone in the past, but not today.⁷⁰

c) *Adinuba-wiya* and *arijilangwa*

Because time was not measured in the absolute sense, the concepts 'early, earlier, earliest' used to be less significant than they are today. Now because of the introduction of the clock the meaning of *adinuba-wiya* 'first' has been extended and the concept of earliness included. Similarly *arijilangwa* 'last' has been extended to include 'late, later, the latest'.

When *adinuba-wiya* 'first' and *arijilangwa* 'afterwards' describe consecutive events, only one can be *adinuba-wiya* but several following events can be *arijilangwa* 'afterwards, later'.⁷¹ This sequence corresponds with English. However, people arriving after the first arrival come *arijilangwa* 'afterwards, later' in relation to other people, even though they may still be in time for the following event.

Reference to a number of people all arriving early might seem to create a problem in Anindilyakwa. In this case an Anindilyakwa speaker would use *waranjubawiya* 'quickly' to translate the English 'early'.⁷²

A teacher frequently wants to say to the children, 'Come early and don't be late!' The concept is not lacking, but once again we need to forget our favourite word 'early' and verbalise the concept differently for effective communication, using the adverb 'quickly' or an adverbial phrase such as 'before the bell'. Children arriving late for school after the bell has rung can be reprimanded for coming *arijilangwa* 'late'.

- 73 *enungw-adinuba-wiya alawudawarra* the first story
menungw-arijilangwa mijiyanga the last boat
nenungw-arijilangwa nenungkwarba the last man
- 74 *niliraka adinakba angwura* he lit the fire (in readiness
for cooking)
- 75 *numudayinuma nenungw-amiyerra* he was paddling for a long
time
ning-enungkwurakba angbilyuwa I have been sick for a long
time
- 76 *nening-angkawura nambilyuma yelakwa* he always lived here
ngarriyekirrerra akambilyama we will be happy all the
ngarning-angkawura time

The adjectival form of *adinuba-wiya* 'first' and hence also 'earliest' is *ening-adinuba-wiya* ~ *enungw-adinuba-wiya*. Similarly the adjectival form of *arijilangwa* 'last' and hence also 'latest' is *ening-arijilangwa* ~ *enungw-arijilangwa*. Both words are formed by prefixing *ening-* ~ *enungw-* 'belonging' to the adverb.⁷³

d) *Adinakba* 'first'

The adverb *adinakba* 'first' carries the idea of preparation in readiness for a foreseeable event. In a non-future oriented society it is normally an event which is imminent.⁷⁴ Because of this specialised meaning it is not used as frequently as *adinuba-wiya* 'first'.

2.2.5 DURATION OF TIME

The suffix *-wiya* is added to *aduwaba* 'today' to give the meaning 'during the day', i.e. just for the day. The suffix *-ma* is added to *marringa* 'night ~ sleep' to give the meaning 'for the night, overnight'.

'For a little while' is expressed by the adverb *aduwaya*. 'For a long time' is normally expressed by idiomatic constructions formed by adding adjectival and pronominal prefixation to the adjectives *amiyerra* 'continuing' and *enungkwurakba* 'old'. *Ning-enungkwurakba*,⁷⁵ literally 'I old', can mean 'I have been waiting for a long time'.

A similar construction is formed using *arngkawura* ~ *angkawura* 'once' to give the meaning 'always'.⁷⁶ In answer to the question 'Will he come back?' the answer *nening-angkawura* means that he has gone for good, i.e. for the foreseeable future, although in fact this could happen to be merely for a few months.

- 77 *numungkwulingu-wiya nakina* while he slept they speared him
nenar.dirranguma
- nambilyu-wiya ~ nenibu-wiya* while he was alive
niyukwujiyu-wiya while he was small
ningeningbalu-wiya while I didn't know
- 78 *ning-alilikenu...wa*
 I-went.went (see Appendix 1 for explanation
 'I kept on going.' of *alilikenu...wa*)
- ningarikumina wurdarriyuwiyu...wa*
 he.fished morning
 'He was fishing all the morning.'
- nilikena ngawa nakinu...wa*
 he.went still he
 'He kept on going.'
- 79 *ekbarra ambaka* the headache is still there
arukwa ambaka still raw
ardirdarra ambaka still hot (i.e. still too hot, so
 not cool enough)
angemina nalyubarinama ambaka he is still being suckled
- 80 *ningkenirringka ambaka?* Have you seen him yet?
nara ambaka kinirringka I haven't seen him yet
ningkenirringkama ambaka? Have you ever seen him?
nara kinirringka I've never seen him

a) The suffix *-wiya* 'while'

The suffix *-wiya* 'while' occurs on verbs in the past tense to describe the continuing action during which a past event took place. It also occurs on adjectives describing continuing states.⁷⁷ It is not used as frequently as 'while' is used in English. Note the phrase *naru-wiya* 'before (not while)' in section 2.2.2.

b) The suffix *-wa* 'extension of time'

The suffix *-wa* is added to a verb, adverb or pronoun in sentence final position to emphasise 'extension of time'. The final vowel *a* of the word to which *-wa* is added is replaced by *u* and it is long and drawn out. This is symbolised by the insertion of three dots (see Appendix 1).⁷⁸ Partial reduplication of the verb root may co-occur with this phenomenon and is underlined in the example. The tone is high throughout the word until the last syllable, which has a sharply falling tone.

c) *Ambaka* 'later', 'still'

The aspect in focus in this time word is a state which extends from the past into the present but normally anticipates change. In answer to a question such as 'Are you ready to go?' the answer *ambaka* 'later (soon but not yet)' may be given to delay the departure, even for only a short time. The idiom *ambaka jayi*, literally 'later away', is used as a delaying tactic, the equivalent of 'wait a minute'.

When waiting for an expected change the word *ambaka* is used where English uses 'still', sometimes meaning 'still too...', according to the context.⁷⁹

Although *ambaka* can be translated 'yet' and 'ever' according to the context, the negative construction *nara ambaka* 'not yet' implies the possibility of change and thus cannot be translated 'never'.⁸⁰

d) *Ngawa* 'still, enough'

The primary meaning of *ngawa* is 'still'. It is used when a change in the current situation or state has not taken place, is not expected and in fact is not warranted or required. This word is used when the positive aspect is implied by 'still ... enough' in English.

81	<i>ardirdarra ngawa</i>	still hot (enough)
	<i>eningaba ngawa</i>	still all right
	<i>nakina ngawa</i>	he's still there ~ he's still the same
	<i>neniba ngawa</i>	he's still alive
	<i>numungkwulinga ngawa</i>	he was still sleeping, he kept on sleeping
	<i>nuwaranga ngawa</i>	he still refused
82	<i>ena ngawa</i>	this is all
	<i>akinu-bu ngawu-da</i>	that's the end
83	<i>numebum<u>e</u>binuma</i>	he used to sing, he went on singing
	<i>numudum<u>u</u>dayina</i>	he kept paddling
	<i>nara kinawiyu<u>w</u>iyeba</i>	he never used to go inside
84	<i>nara alikanguma nakina</i>	he's not going
	<i>nara kinalil<u>i</u>kaja nakina</i>	he never goes

However, when the negative aspect is implied by 'still too ...' in English, the Anindilyakwa *ambaka* is used.

Note the use of *ngawa* with reference to continuing actions, often translating the English 'keep on ...'.⁸¹

Because of the positive implication of *ngawa* it is not used with *nara* 'not'. 'Not enough', in the sense of 'not cooked enough', is expressed positively using an opposite concept.^{79,81}

Ngawa 'enough' is used alone as a normal polite answer to such questions as 'Would you like something to eat?'. It is thus the equivalent of 'No thank you' in English but it is phrased from the positive point of view of a person satisfied with his present state.

The idiom *ningena ngawa*, literally 'I (this one) enough', is another polite expression. It is used in answer to such questions as 'Are you all right, i.e. comfortable?' when no change is needed.

The idiom *ngawa arakba*, literally 'enough now', is used as a command to stop an action, equivalent to 'that's enough!'.⁸²

Several idiomatic expressions occurring as closure of a discourse all include *ngawa* 'enough'. This extends the underlying implication of satisfaction with the status quo to a sense of finality.⁸²

e) Habitual and continuous action

Habitual action and action which takes place over a long period of time are signalled by repeating part of the verb root. The part of the word that is reduplicated has been underlined.⁸³

Except for one instance the pattern of prefixing and suffixing verbs is the same whether reduplication occurs or not. However when reduplication occurs on a verb in the present tense, in the negative mood, the past negative prefix is used with the present positive suffix instead of the normal present negative affixation.⁸⁴

In English 'never' is frequently used in the negative 'I never went ~ go, I will never go'. Compare the Anindilyakwa translation of 'I have never seen him' in example 80.

85	<i>mebina ngawa!</i>	keep on singing!
	<i>wijijirena ngawa!</i>	keep on pushing it!
	<i>kinumakum<u>ak</u>ina ngawa!</i>	always tell him! keep on telling him! (you will keep telling him)
86	<i>naru-wiya kinambilya</i>	before he was (born)
	<i>nirumungkwar.dinu-wiya arakba</i>	when he was already crawling
	<i>naru-wiya wiyerrirda</i>	before the cyclone
	<i>nijerridu-manja yalyukwa</i>	when the rain finished (at the end of the wet)
	<i>nuwambilyu-manja wurrakina</i>	when ~ while they were here for the
	<i>yelakwa alukwanji-yada</i>	dancing

Commands to keep doing something habitually or continuously are translated by the future tense in Anindilyakwa unless the action to be continued is already in progress when the imperative is used, sometimes with reduplication.⁸⁵ However the verb *-likaja* 'go' never takes reduplication in the imperative.

2.2.6 INTRODUCED TIME WORDS

Names for the days of the week and the months of the year have been borrowed from English, in addition to the terms 'week' and 'Christmas' (used for 'year'). 'Sunday' is sometimes used for 'week'. All these words have been introduced into the a noun class.

Old people today differentiate between certain days of the week. The days Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday are described as *aruma*, literally 'big', but Thursday and Friday are described as *ayukwujiya*, literally 'little'. Because pension cheques arrive on Thursdays, on the previous day one can ask one of the old women the following question:

arnungkwaya ayukwujiyu-manja na?
tomorrow little-on interrogative

This question will be interpreted as 'Tomorrow is Thursday, pension cheque day, isn't it?'. When Thursday comes, the old women frequently say, '*aduwaba ena ayukwujiya*', literally 'today this little'.

2.2.7 EVENTS AS TIME MARKERS

Time is related to events and life-stages, for which the Aborigines have very keen memories. Important events are used to mark the time when events of minor significance are described. Events are also described as taking place during a certain person's life-time, before so and so was born, after so and so died, and so on.⁸⁶ My *kayuwa* 'dilly-bag', made by one of the women some years ago and still in use, is frequently commented on in the following way:

'So and so made it while her mother (now deceased) was still strong.'

(See section 2.2.2 for more examples.)

2.2.8 VERB TENSE AND MOOD

a) Present and future tenses

English speakers use the present tense with future meanings, e.g. 'I am going to Darwin next week'. English also uses the present tense in such phrases as 'he runs fast' and 'he can skip'. Anindilyakwa

- 87 *ambakilangwa nilikajama* *kinilikajama Darwin-uwa arnungkwaya*
 slowly he.goes he.will.go Darwin-to tomorrow
 'He's walking slowly.' 'He's going to Darwin tomorrow.'
- angwurra kinangkarrinama* *kinilukwayinama nakina*
 fast he.will.run he.will.dance he
 'He runs fast ~ he can run fast.' 'He will dance ~ he can dance.'
- 88 *ku-wurdenama ngayuwa angabu-manja eka*
 I.will-climb I that-in tree
 'I will climb that tree.'
- ngayembirra ku-wurdiya?*
 I.in.turn I.will-climb (near future)
 'Shall I climb now?'
- 89 *ningijerrukwa* I finished (one form only)
ningidaka I cooked (one form only)
ningiyar.da I arrived (near past)
ningiyar.danga I arrived (normal past)
- 90 *ebinu-wiya niyar. danga nakina* he arrived the other day
nara kiniyar.danga he didn't arrive
naru-maka kiniyar.danga aduwaba he should not have arrived today
Ngambiyada niyar.danga? when did he arrive?
- 91 *yarrungkwa niyar.danga ~* he arrived here yesterday
niyar.da nakina yelakwa
yarrungkwa niyar.danga nakina he arrived here on foot yesterday
yelakwa alika-ma
yarrungkwa niyar.da nakina he arrived here yesterday in
yelakwa larruwuri-langwa the afternoon
nalikena arakba adinuba wurrakina they have just gone

is more precise and normally limits the use of the present tense to events happening at the present time, using the future tense for all other situations.⁸⁷ There are two forms of future tense, one of which refers to the near future only.⁸⁸

b) Past tense

There are usually two forms of the past tense. One has been labelled the 'normal past' and the other has been labelled the 'near past'.⁸⁹ The normal past tense is more common than the near past. It always occurs in the negative and subjunctive moods, and normally in the interrogative mood.⁹⁰

The near past tense occurs describing some actions which have taken place within about the last twenty-four hours. The choice of the form of the past tense depends on whether time is in focus or not. If time is in focus, then the near past is used. In the examples, the action took place during the last twenty-four hours and in each case a time word is included. The normal past tense is used for the verb 'go' regardless of focus.⁹¹ The near past tense is underlined in each example.

- 92 *nalawurradina angalyu-wa* they went (returned) home
nardanga nakina wurruwardu-wa biya he called out to the dog and
nalawurrada aburraja enuwa-wa it came straight back to him
niyar.danga nakina mijiyelyi-langwa he arrived from the beach and
biya waranjubawiya nilika ~ went quickly to the old woman
nilikena dadiyuwangku-wa before he had anything to eat
naru-wiya kinalyubarina aninga
nangkarrina nakina mangabu-langwiya he ran to school along that path
mamurukwa school-uwa
nardanga neniyuwangkwa biya eneja the old man called out and the
niyukwujiya nangkarra child ran away
- 93 *lukwayina!* dance! (one form only)
alyubarina! eat! (one form only)
angkarrina! run!
angkarra! run immediately!
lawurradina! return!
lawurrada! return immediately!
wumena! take it!
wumiya! take it immediately! pick it up!
- 94 *ki-likaja adinuba hospital-uwa*
you.will-go soon hospital-to
'Go to the hospital soon.'
- 95 *wumiya bangkilya akwa ridiya ena* take the tomahawk and chop this
eka enu-wiya tree straight away
wumiya bangkilya akwa kiridiya take the tomahawk and chop that
angaba eka tree over there
wumiya ~ wumena ~ kumiya bangkilya take my tomahawk and (then) chop
nganyangwa biya kiniridiya that cypress over there this
yangaba yimundungwa larruwura afternoon

In a narrative the normal past is used except when the near past tense focuses on a short interval of time between consecutive actions. The use of the near past for the verb 'go' is legitimate but not favoured by young people today.⁹²

c) Imperative mood

Verbs in the imperative mood often have two forms. The difference in meaning between the two forms is that one of them anticipates a more immediate response and so is also used for peremptory commands.⁹³ In English the imperative mood, like the present tense, can refer to the future, but in Anindilyakwa the imperative mood cannot refer to the future.⁹⁴

When two commands are given, the imperative is used for both commands when an immediate response is required. When any interval of time is involved, the future tense may be used for one or both commands. The immediate imperative has been underlined in the examples.⁹⁵

- 96 *adinubawiya kijerrukwuna* *warka nungkwulangwa kembirra*
 first you.will.finish (complete) work your then
arijilangwa kilikaja erreku-wa
 afterwards you.will.go outside-to
 'Finish your work and then go outside.'
- 97 *akwudangwe-ka ~ akwu...dangwa* very near (see Appendix 1)
akwudangwa near
awank-akwudangwa not far away, quite near
wilyarra part-way
awank-engku-manja ~ awank-engku-wa rather a long way off
awanku-wilyikerra ~
awanku-wurrikalya
engku-manja ~ engku-wa far away
awilyikerra ~ awurrikalya
engku-manje-ka ~ engku-we-ka very far away
awilyikerre-ka ~ awurrikalye-ka
- 98 *wurrangamba? engku-wa wurrakina* where are they? they are a
 long way off
engku-manja nuwambilyama they live far away
murungwena akwudangwa makina the jungle is nearby
murungwena muwank-akwudangwa the jungle is quite near
murungwena muwilyikerra the jungle is far away
wurruwilyikerra warnumamalya the people are far away
- 99 *likaja engku-wa angwurra!* go further away!

The teacher who says 'Go outside when you finish writing' should not be surprised if the children jump up and go straight outside, especially as the English word 'finish' is usually interpreted as a completed action rather than an action requiring completion. An Anindilyakwa speaker would be more likely to say something such as 'Finish your work and then go outside'.⁹⁶

2.3 DISTANCE

Time and distance are closely connected, e.g. 'As far as Darwin' is only another way of saying, 'until one has reached Darwin'. A short distance means that a short time is required to cover that distance. Thus *arngridarrba* 'soon' is also used for 'near' and *akwudangwa* 'near' is also used for 'soon'. Similarly *yandi-langwa*, 'until' in a time phrase, translates 'as far as' with reference to distance. In English the underlying link between time and distance is less explicit.

The basic terms to describe positions of relative distance are the adverb *akwudangwa* 'near' and the adjectives *awurrikalya* ~ *awilyikerra* 'far away'. *Engku-manja* 'in another place' is also used for 'far away'. *Engku-wa* 'to another place' can be used for 'in another place' and thus for 'far away' in addition to its literal meaning. The adjectival prefix *awank-* 'rather' and the emphatic suffix *-ka* occur in the comparison of distance which is listed opposite.⁹⁷ Note the noun class agreement in the use of these words.⁹⁸ The intensifier *angwurra* 'more' may be used with *engku-wa* 'far away' to indicate 'further away'.⁹⁹

The English term 'half-way' is often used by Aborigines speaking English, but as this is used in the sense of 'part-way' it can be very misleading when giving directions. (See the reference to 'part of' in section 1.2.3.)

Verbs of motion have certain features added to express a great distance and thus a great length of time (see section 2.2.5).

- 100 *mijiyelyu-manja wurrakina*
 beach-at they
 'They are at the beach.'
- akwalya makardu-manja*
 fish sea-in
 'The fish is in the sea.'
- akwalya angwuru-manja*
 fish fire-on
 'The fish is on the fire.'
- angwuru-manja dakina*
 fire-by she
 'She's by the fire.'
- 101 *arumu-manja alikira nakina*
 big-in house he
 'He's in the big house.'
- 102 *angabu-manja alikira arumu-manja ~* they're in that big house
aruma wurrakina
- awilyabu-manja alikira arumu-manja ~* they're in one big house
aruma wurrakina
- enungkwurakbu-manja alikira* they're in the big old
arumu-manja ~ aruma wurrakina house
- 103 *ningiyar.danga nuwambilyu-murru-manja*
 I.arrived they.stayed-statement.of.fact-at
 'I arrived where they were staying.'
- ningambilya nuwambilyu-murru-manja*
 I.stayed they.stayed-statement.of.fact-at
 'I stayed where they were staying.'

Judith Stokes, 1982

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