

# 我舞故我在 漸層節奏教學法

## Rhythmic Understanding: A Prismatic Approach

ORIGINAL ENGLISH TEXT MANUSCRIPT BEGINS ON PAGE 7 OF THIS PDF.

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節奏是音樂活動中最重要的元素。不管學哪一種樂器，培養基礎節奏的能力是最不容忽視的。儘管我們知道節奏訓練的重要性，一般人對節奏教學的了解往往過於膚淺。到底要如何深入認識節奏訓練，進而有效地進行教學活動是音樂教育工作者常面臨的挑戰。

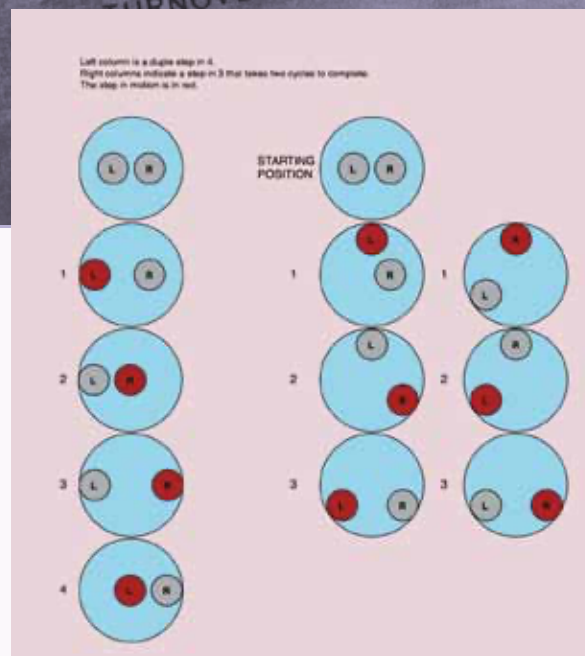
要對節奏有全面的認識，一定要兼顧認知上的學習和身體力行，學生才能掌握到精確的節奏感。一般人以為學打擊樂的人會對節奏比較敏感，其實打擊樂學生遇到的瓶頸不勝枚舉。這也是為甚麼我以教學經驗為基礎，致力於發展出一套對症下藥的節奏教學法。

我將這個教學法比喻成一種像三稜鏡般多層次、多面向、多色彩的學習環境。我鼓勵學生們儘可能地沉浸在這種環境中，從基礎開始，一層層地去認識節奏的各種表現面貌，用不同的方式來體驗其千變萬化，進而應用它們來增進演奏技巧。下面將逐項說明此教學法。



### 手舞足蹈

我常想，笛卡兒 (René Descartes, 法國, 1596-1650) 的「我思故我在」是造成西洋文化侷限在理性發展的元兇。對從事音樂工作的我們來說，節奏是一種以聲響引導的體能活動，要學好這個元素就得掌握節奏與韻律間不可分的觀念。認同達克羅茲 (Émile Jaques Dalcroze, 瑞士，



1 左邊的藍色大圖圈是以 4/4 拍為基礎的二拍舞步。  
右邊的藍色大圖圈是以 3/4 拍為基礎的三拍舞步（兩個三拍的循環）。  
大圖圈裡面紅色的小圖圈代表的是該移動的那隻腳。

1865-1950) 律動教學法的老師們一定同意這個看法。因此，我們不妨將笛卡兒的名言稍微修改成「我舞故我在」來反映節奏與身體動作之間密不可分的關係。

通常，在第一週的打擊樂基礎課裡，我只要求學生學會基本的二拍（四拍）及三拍這兩種舞步。他們要用心觀察，在日常生活中這兩種節奏出現的形式，嘗試去感受、記錄，然後再在音樂中將它們表現出來。我的原則是讓他們運用雙腳，以走或跳的方式來體驗這些不同的節奏組合，再讓他們透過樂器詮釋樂句，以達到手腳協調律動的目的。這兩組節拍看似容易，但是要既準確又很有音樂性地將它們呈現出來，並不是那麼簡單。

要避免節奏訓練淪為反覆機械式的行為，我鼓勵學生用他們的韻律感（如：舞蹈），來輔助這些節奏練習。譬如，用滑行的方式練習。在做這些舞蹈動作時，要記得要放鬆下半身各個部位的關節，尤其是從臀部、膝蓋到腳踝，要盡量形成一個動線，不要太過緊繃。等到學生可以完全放鬆，

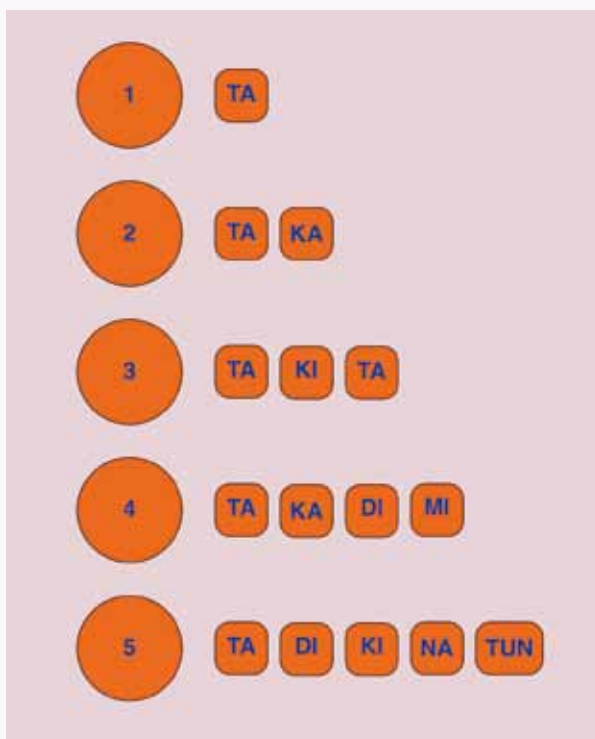
自在地舞動下半身後，再逐漸加入拍手或另一些上半身的動作來強化節奏練習。讀者可以參考圖 1 的舞步解說。

## 手口並用

這個教學法的第二個原則是手口並用，是我從印度他拉鼓（tabla）和卡踏舞（kathak）<sup>1</sup> 的學習經驗中發展出來。教我的兩位老師堅持我要先學會口訣，再進行實際操練。他們認為「如果你能精確地覆誦這些口訣，你的手或腳就能正確地跟上節奏。」

印度古典音樂的節奏系統，可說是音樂世界中的一大奇觀，其複雜的程度，令音樂家們嘆為觀止。這個系統令人驚豔的，不只是看似永無止境的節奏發展，還有他們堅持以「口耳相傳」的教學法。這種挑戰腦力（聽力）極限的學習方法，強迫學生聚精會神地聽、揣摩、分析，進而將所學節奏口訣內化，再用雙手將音樂表現出來。

這種教學法常用的基本節奏練習，就是由這個非常悠久的南印度古典音樂系統（Carnatic）發展出來的一種節奏語言，是一套在被稱為索卡土（Solkatu）的訓練口訣。這種方法可以提供另類的腦力激盪，讓學生用不同方式，學會節奏組合中節拍間複雜的關係（見圖 2）。



2 索卡土口訣

在傳統印度音樂文化中，這些口訣除了能幫助學生認識拍子與拍子之間的關係之外，還能提供他們在詮釋樂句時，做出比較有音樂性的判斷。有經驗的音樂家會利用這套口訣，精確的表演出節

奏規律的樂句，或裝飾性高、具有多層次複雜節奏的炫技性樂句。因此，我要求學生熟背這些口訣，以便隨時活用它們，以下是我為學生設計練習索卡土口訣的教學活動（見圖 3）。

這個組合練習表的功能，是為了讓讀者熟悉南印度古典音樂的索卡土節奏口訣與拍子之間的關係，以及節奏被微分為多層次小節拍結構的表現方式。從圖 3 可以看出，第一行到第四行的節奏相當單純。基本上，參考圖 2 的口訣，照著唸，就可以了。但是從第五行開始，大家就要注意我如何用「二加三」的概念來安排節拍結構。

以五連音為例，我可以用二種方式將它表現出來：

TA KA-TA KI TA (2 + 3)

TA KI TA- TA KA (3 + 2)

以六連音為例，我根據相同的原則，將它以 3 + 3 或 2 + 2 + 2 的方式重組，再以九連音為例，可能的排列組合如下：2 + 2 + 2、3 + 2 + 2、2 + 3 + 2 或 3 + 3 + 2。

這些口訣除了讓學生對樂句及節拍組合有較清楚的認識，也提供他們在細分拍子時，仍記得原始拍的長度。一個很好的例子是以 4 / 4 拍為單位，將一拍分做八個 32 分音符的口訣：

TA KA DI MI - TA KA DI MI (4 + 4)

這個方法不僅能讓學生學會精確地細分每一個 32 分音符，又可以確保他們不趕拍子。另外，這個教學活動最有意思的地方是在學生熟背這些口訣之後，老師們可以引導學生發揮他們的創意，用這些口訣自由地發展出更多樣、更複雜的排列組合。



## 樂句詮釋

我在印度學習 tabla 鼓時，印象最深刻的是跟著 Bharat Jungum 老師學新曲子的過程。在以覆誦口訣的方式，將新曲子的節奏型態熟記後，他會加上一些裝飾音發展變奏。在這個過程中，我最享受的莫過於看著他「口沫橫飛」朗誦口訣，配合生動的手勢和活潑豐富的臉部表情，以及稍後將這些節奏在 tabla 鼓上一拍一拍打出來時，身體跟著節拍律動，半頭銀髮隨之飄揚的氣宇英姿。這種具有強烈戲劇性的表演，著實感染了現場的觀眾，讓人難以忘懷。

儘管鼓樂（和多數打擊樂曲）表現出來的，主要是以節奏為主的樂句，而不是具有明顯音高的旋律。Bharat 老師在朗誦樂句時，生動地融入抑揚頓挫、強弱高低的音韻觀念，讓這些樂句聽來非常活潑。聽眾甚至可以由音階高低及力度強弱辨別出樂句的關係。通常，「問句」會從低音域出發，慢慢上揚，最後，停留在某一拍，製造出一種懸浮的張力，靜待緊接而來的「答句」減緩這種緊張的情緒，再稍微加重音量，用逐漸降低的音調來收尾。聽完後，有一氣呵成又意猶未盡之感。對我來說，這種用炫技般朗誦口訣的節奏訓練方式，既生動、活潑，能讓學生很快的熟背樂曲，又能在同時做好樂曲細節的詮釋。這種訓練方法，真的是一舉數得。

此外，我常鼓勵學生利用這些口訣，即興做音

樂對話。學生不但從這個對話過程中學會重要的節奏元素，還能學到音樂裡的各種語言表現的特質。與同儕之間的即興互動，也是另一個讓學生樂此不疲的原因。此時，老師亦能享受學生的無限創意。

## 切分音

接下來要介紹的是切分音的教學法。我在引導學生學習切分音時，喜歡從古巴或是巴西舞蹈節奏引入。如騷莎（Salsa）或森巴（Samba）這些拉丁美洲舞蹈音樂，除了悠美的旋律讓人心曠神怡，也讓人不禁翩翩起舞。這要歸功於這類樂曲中獨特的節奏運行方法，巧妙地用切分音的結構，將一連串在弱拍位置上的音符，圓滑地展現出來。這種特殊的樂句形式，有時甚至會令習慣歐洲古典音

Table of Time

3 節奏組合練習表

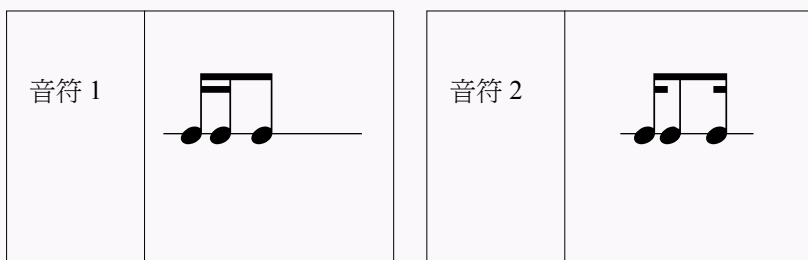
圖 5 的譜例，說明如何利用一個休止符就能將重拍轉移成弱拍的方法。

這種將重音節奏規律打散重組的概念，並不难理解，真正難處在於如何讓身體感受得到這種節奏，並将它表演出來。我提供的練習方法是，剛開始雙腳踏步，同時拍手擊掌，這也許會有一點挑戰，但是一小節一小節分開練習之後，就沒有問題。

切分音是節奏教學上老師們常遇到的問題。

要精確並有音樂性地展現出切分節奏並不容易。所以，要解決這個問題，我用另一套口訣來幫助學生。這套口訣主要是用美國的州名來幫助學生用朗誦的方式來內化節奏型態。譬如用 Illinois（伊利諾）來教 [ 音符 1 ] 、Kentucky（肯塔基）來教

[ 音符 2 ]。由於在用英文念這兩個州名時。重音位置會不同。伊利諾的重音在第一個音節「伊」，肯塔基的重音則在第二個音節「塔」。若將這兩種節奏放在一起，讓學生反覆朗誦，會形成一些有趣且具挑戰性的節奏組合（見附圖 6）。



6 伊利諾和肯塔基

如果我們一直反覆地唸圖 6 譜例中第一小節的節奏，一邊用手打出節奏的重拍，一邊用雙腳踩著行進般步伐做伴奏，其實很簡單。用同樣手腳並用的方法來伴奏第二小節，也不算難。但是，如果我們讓手的部分停止拍打第一個 32 分音符，讓口與腳繼續做同樣的任務，你會發現這個節奏型態和圖 5 譜例的第二小節是一模一樣的。我舉這個例子是要讓讀者了解用口、手、腳同時使用的方式，我們可以很巧妙地將原本位於重拍位置的第一拍強度減弱，讓它們很自然地成為弱拍，但卻又不會影響到節拍原形。

在 YouTube 上有一部很有意思的短片，可以幫助我們了解巴西森巴舞曲裡處理切分音的方法<sup>2</sup>。

影片中著名的巴西音樂家 Catenano Veloso 和他的兒子 Moreno 用舞蹈的方式來解釋里約熱內盧和桑塔·愛馬羅（Santa Amaro）的森巴舞風格的差異。即使二者都屬於巴西文化，在里約附近流行的三步風格森巴節奏，就像是圖 6 譜例第一小節。然而在桑塔·愛馬羅地區，一個到目前仍保有悠久非洲文化傳統的一個小島，同樣的三步風格舞步，卻因為它們稍稍將重音位置往後移了一下，而呈現如圖 6 譜例第二小節的節奏，也因此成為另一

種由切分音主導的森巴舞風格。

## 結語

我一直以自己能成為打擊樂演奏家與音樂教育工作者為榮。我的打擊樂生涯，不但帶領我從音樂中認識許多不同世界文化，也讓我對世界各地的節奏教學形式有更深入的認識。在這些眾多文化傳統的節奏訓練中，複雜程度最高，最千變萬化的，要算是印度與非洲音樂（有關非洲音樂教學的論述請參考本焦點其他作者文章）。我分享的這個漸層節奏學習法的目的，就是在強調這些音樂傳統中抽象的音樂與身體律動結合的特色，以手腦並用的概念，讓學生有效率地學習節奏及其他音樂元素，並全面地認識不同文化的美妙。最後，要提醒音樂老師們，在執行這種多面向的教學方法時，要顧及說、唱、拍掌、律動，同步進行，以彰顯「我舞故我在」的境界。

## ■ 注釋

- 1 譯者注：卡踏舞（Kathak）是在北印度廣為流傳的古典舞蹈，其風格與內容以敘事為主，具有相當高的戲劇性。
- 2 Caetano Veloso, Moreno e o samba, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Z\\_V2GGZ3N0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Z_V2GGZ3N0)

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Regardless of musical instrument or voice type, young musicians need to develop a solid rhythmic foundation in their musical studies. The ability to convey meaning in musical performance relies so strongly upon rhythm that students who suffer from poor rhythmic understanding will find themselves perennially frustrated at their inability to perform with their fellow musicians. However, rhythm is so fundamental, so seemingly “simple”, that it is often overlooked or assumed to be commonly understood.

What does “rhythmic understanding” really mean?

True rhythmic understanding is equal parts intellectual and physical. It must be learned with the entire body involved in the process.

It is often assumed that percussionists have the best rhythm, yet I know this assumption to be patently false. I have seen countless rhythmic deficiencies persist for my collegiate-level percussion students. What helps eradicate these issues over time is a curriculum that presents and nurtures in a group of students a multi-faceted “rhythmic culture.” In my percussion studio I teach layered rhythmic techniques that students are immediately required to use in their practice. This “culture” develops rhythmic fundamentals through a series of “lenses” that, taken together, offer a prismatic understanding of rhythm.

## **FEET FIRST**

Perhaps no one in Western cultural heritage has done more damage than René Descartes with this oft-used and infamous quote:

“I think, therefore I am.”

As all good acolytes of the Dalcroze system know, rhythm is a physical activity. In what an understanding of rhythm is concerned, it might be helpful to trope Descartes: “I dance, therefore I am.” Indeed, rhythm cannot be fully understood apart from the body in motion and in time.

In week one of my percussion studies classes, I teach my students two very simple dance patterns and ask them to cultivate these steps in their daily practice. One is a duple step, the other a triple step. See figure 1.

Figure 1. Dance steps in duple and triple patterns. **(ON PAGE 2 OF THIS PDF)**

Through regular “marching” of these simple steps while practicing all manner of vocal and stick exercises on a snare drum, students are immediately developing coordination skills using upper and lower body together.

Whether it be a brass quintet, a percussion group, or a large choir, I have seen countless students struggle with this seemingly simple set of patterns. For students who struggle, one common “cheating method” is what I have come to call the “slide.”

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Perhaps you have also seen this in your own pupils: students will effectively “glide” from point to point, without actually committing a step in a precise rhythmic location. Often, this “slide” is executed with a stiff or locked knee, so that movements are rigid and lacking grace.

What is imperative is that students master these steps as “steps” -- for this is literally what they are. They must be encouraged to make these steps feel and look as simple and as natural as walking, which means all the lower body joints, from hip to knee to ankle, must be engaged and flowing together naturally. It should “look good” as well as “feel good!”

Once these are mastered, simple counting and clapping exercises can be added to increase flow, coordination between the lower and upper body. Success with these patterns and coordination exercises, by the way, is ultimately a fun process!

### **IF YOU CAN SAY IT YOU CAN PLAY IT**

The second filter through which I present rhythmic understanding to my students comes from time I spent in India studying classical *tabla* drumming and *kathak* dance. My teachers in both of these genres were fond of saying, “if it is clear in your mouth, it will be clear in your hands/feet!”

The rhythmic system of Indian classical music is one of the musical wonders of the world - it is well developed and involves a sophisticated approach to learning by rote. Everything is taught through the oral tradition - and analysis, understanding and precision are highly prized elements of musical study in India.

The system of counting that I use in my teaching with my students comes from the South Indian (Carnatic) tradition of using a “rhythmic language” to refer to note groupings and pulse subdivisions. This language is known as *solkattu*. See figure 2.

Figure 2. Sokattu vocalizations for note groupings. **(ON PAGE 3 OF THIS PDF)**

Whether a piece of music is rhythmically constructed additively or through regular pulse and subdivision, these vocalizations for note groupings remain constant. This is a highly flexible rhythmic language system which helps musicians speak and therefore more naturally “phrase” a given musical passage with a clear understanding of rhythmic placement.

These vocalizations should be memorized quickly and put to use in a variety of contexts. One common exercise that I engage my students with immediately is what is known as the “table of time.” See figure 3.

Figure 3. “Table of time.” **(ON PAGE 4 OF THIS PDF)**



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This table represents a common pulse and a series of consecutive subdivisions of that pulse that can be easily vocalized using *solkatu*. As the exercise is written in common time, begin by taking up the 4/4 dance step in Figure 1.

Lines 1 through 4 should be straightforward. You simply use the vocalizations prescribed in Figure 2. When I arrive at line 5, however, from here on out I prefer to use a simpler vocalization than the one for 5 in Figure 2. I use groupings of twos and threes for nearly everything above 4.

So, quintuplets become:

TAKA - TAKITA                    (2+3)  
or  
TAKITA - TAKA                    (3+2)

Depending on the shape I intend to project inside the quintuplet, I employ either 2+3 or 3+2 to divide the notes into smaller, more manageable groups.

Sextuplets become:

TAKITA - TAKITA                    (3+3)  
or  
TAKA - TAKA - TAKA                (2+2+2)

In other words, one can group the six notes either as two groups of 3 or as three groups of 2, depending on the internal inflection desired.

Septuplets become:

TAKA - TAKA - TAKITA            (2+2+3)  
or  
TAKITA - TAKA - TAKA            (3+2+2)  
or (less commonly)  
TAKA - TAKITA - TAKA            (2+3+2)

32nd notes become:

TAKADIMI - TAKADIMI            (4+4)  
or  
TAKITA - TAKITA - TAKA           (3+3+2)

or any other subdivision that makes musical sense. Students are encouraged to be creative and enjoy the process of vocalizing these rhythms!

## **PHRASING**

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One of my favorite memories from my time in India was the process of learning new compositions and variations by rote from my *tabla* teacher, Bharat Jungum. A winsome middle-aged man, Jungum had a wonderful mop of silver hair that flew around when he would recite compositions and subsequently perform them on his drums. When he would recite a rhythm, it was always “performed” with joyous and wondrous emotion. Tabla compositions seemed to become great epic poems of dramatic import when Bharat brought them to life and, always, he did so with a smile of great joy on his face.

Pitch had a lot to do with his recitation technique. For example, he might start in a low voice and slowly raise both pitch and volume as he headed toward mid-phrase. It was as if he were asking a question in this rhythmic language. Then, to “answer the question”, he would take the phrase from mid-point back to the end of the cycle by steadily lowering the pitch but continuing to increase the volume and intensity as if exclaiming his point with great conviction.

With such bravura in mind, I give my students similar examples when reciting the “table of time” or similar rhythmic exercises. Why? This “speaking in rhythm” instantly conveys that *music is a language*. It is alive and dynamic. By contrast, when rhythm is treated dryly, as a static exercise, it can easily become monotonous, dry, boring, mechanical. Of course, we want music to be anything but! Bringing rhythm “to life” through exciting phrasing is a fun and natural way to get students to execute musical passages naturally and dynamically.

## **SYNCOPATION**

The final frontier of rhythmic understanding that I teach to my students is syncopation. For guidance with this facet of rhythmic study, I turn my students’s attention from India to Cuba and Brazil. Nothing is more beautiful than listening to the rhythmic phrasing of a Cuban *salsa* or Brazilian *samba* melody where a long series of offbeats is delivered so *legatissimo* that to Western classical music ears they can easily be mistakenly perceived as downbeats. See figure 4.

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Figure 4. Melody from Gilberto Gil’s “El Dorado Negro.” Lyrical translation:

Existiu um El Dorado Negro no Brasil.

(Once) there existed an African El Dorado in Brazil.

What is notable about the way that Gilberto Gil phrases measures 8-10 in figure 4 is how smoothly he conveys this legato melody. This ability to feel and convey offbeats in a relaxed and connected fashion is an intrinsic characteristic of Afro-Brazilian rhythmic sensibility.

When working with students, marching and clapping the following seemingly simple exercise can often prove unsuccessful at first. See figure 5.

Figure 5. Downbeats to offbeats.

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If measure 1 is repeated, students typically have no problem clapping this rhythm while marching the (quarter note) pulse. If measure 2 is repeated, however, the rhythm often “phases” back to something resembling measure 1. Students are often challenged by trying to move their hands and feet at different times.

### **IF YOU CAN SAY IT YOU CAN PLAY IT, REVISITED**

A method that I have developed to assist students develop a gradual approach to success with internalizing syncopated figures involves the speaking of names of American States. Because I teach at Northern Illinois University, “Illinois” is one of the states I use. The other is the state of “Kentucky.” Because the accented syllable in “**Il**-li-nois” is the first and because the accented syllable in “Ken-**tu**-cky” is the second, these two state names offer perfect musical examples with which to work. Rhythmically, these two names can be mapped as per figure 6.

Figure 6. “Illinois” and “Kentucky.” **(ON PAGE 6 OF THIS PDF)**

If a student loops and claps the figure in the first measure of Figure 6 while marching the pulse, it is very easy to say “Illinois” with the clapping. The second measure looped, clapped and spoken yields itself to “Kentucky” quite nicely.

Now, if we continue to work with the Kentucky figure and remove the clap on the downbeat, we are looking once more at the second measure of Figure 5. However, the composite rhythm of the foot and the hands *is still* “Kentucky.” If a student speaks the composite rhythm “Kentucky”, it becomes much easier to keep the offbeats “off” the beat!

A very beautiful corollary can be found in an [online video](#) of famous Brazilian musician, Caetano Veloso, and his son, Moreno, dancing samba to albums in their living room. Moreno is explaining to his father how samba is danced in the metropolitan city of Rio de Janeiro as opposed to how it is danced in Santo Amaro, an island off the coast of Bahia considered to be one of the strongest bastions of African culture in Brazil. Although the dialog is in Portuguese, if one watches closely it is easy to understand the meaning of the conversation. In Rio de Janeiro, the three step pattern of the samba is danced as per the rhythm in Figure 6, measure 1. In Santo Amaro, by contrast, the same dance step is shifted relative to the pulse and becomes Figure 6, measure 2. The steps themselves are syncopated relative to the pulse, and the dance *instantly* becomes more interesting and enjoyable to watch and to step.

And, yes, I do have my students learn to dance samba in Santo Amaro fashion!

### **A RHYTHMIC PRISM**

I have often considered my profession as a percussionist and teacher to be a great gift. The art of percussion has afforded me some incredible opportunities to experience various cultures of the world in depth through the filter of music and specifically of

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rhythm. This prismatic approach to rhythmic study, then, is indebted to the world's great musical cultures, especially those like India and Africa where rhythm is held in high regard. This approach is multi-cultural as well as multi-faceted. It involves both intellectual and physical understanding. Mind and body, through rhythmic meditation, become one. It involves dance, speech and clapping/playing. And at the pinnacle of the approach, all these elements are executed simultaneously.

Remember, "I dance, therefore I am."