








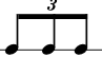
❖ Language/Voice: “If you can say it, you can play it”

What to say: “All over the world, wherever rhythm is taught, a language is attached to the teaching. Rhythm is an extension of our language; when we use our words we all learn rhythms more quickly, and we remember them for longer.”

Here are three types of rhythm languages that I have found most helpful in improv: Galin-Paris-Cheve, Language of the Drum, and Mnemonics.

Galín-Paris-Cheve

Now popularised by Kodály and Orff, this system is designed to represent the note values. This is the recommended language for improv because it allows students to say the words while changing the tone, texture, and dynamic of each note. It also allows students to entrain with the same rhythm while they make a variety of other musical selections.

too	ta	ti ti	tika tika	syn co pa	tum ti	tim ka	tr- ip- let
							
Half	Quarter	Eighth	Sixteenth	Eighth-Quarter-Eighth	Dotted Quarter to Eighth	Dotted Eighth to Sixteenth	Triplet

Language of the Drum (LOTD)

Babatunde Olatunji’s “Language of the Drum” represents the three notes played on West African djembe. In improv we want a mix of low, mid, and high notes. We also want to use language as our guide.

Level	Word	Note	Hand
All	Go (“go”)	Tone	Both (Level 1/2) Prominent hand (Level 3)
3	Do (“doe”)	Tone	Non-prominent hand
All	Pa (“pah”)	Slap	Both (Level 1/2) Prominent hand (Level 3)
3	Ta (“tah”)	Slap	Non-prominent hand
All	Gun (“guhñ”)	Bass	Both (Level 1/2) Prominent hand (Level 3)
3	Dun (“duhñ”)	Bass	Non-prominent hand