"…the teaching of eurythmics should certainly vary according to the temperament and character of the children…" (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921, p. 196).

Christoph Falschlunger, Vienna 2023

RhythmicsMM: a basic approach for inclusive pedagogy

Translated by: Hannes Taljaard

Inclusive education has become an important term in educational science discourse. While integration focuses on the incorporation of a small 'special' group into a larger one, inclusive groups take the requirements of a heterogeneous and diverse group into account from the very beginning. The educational environment is designed accordingly to allow for equal participation of all.

Appropriate methodological-didactic tools are needed for teaching in inclusive groups, large or small, tools which promote the *individual* and *social* competences of all participants in specific ways. Individual competences refer here, for example, to the promotion of the personality through self-activity in an environment that stimulates development. Social competences mean, for example, contact with each other and communicative exchange among group members.

RhythmicsMM[1] offers, among other things, creative ways of working with inclusive groups, ways that support development, and ways in which all participants can learn together with and from each other. In the courses offered as part of the specialisation *Rhythmics in Inclusive and Special Education,* rhythmics students receive in-depth theoretical and methodological-didactic foundations for teaching in this special subject area. In addition, they are given sufficient opportunities to gain practical experience with heterogeneous, diverse and inclusive groups in educational and therapeutic institutions. This article gives an insight into the foundations of RhythmicsMM pedagogy in inclusive education and focuses specifically on working in inclusive groups consisting of people with and without disabilities.

Diversity as path and goal

As a rhythmics practitioner in special schools, in inclusive classes and in multi-grade classes in primary school, and also as a supervisor of students in their rhythmics lessons with children and young people with disabilities as well as with senior citizens with dementia, I experience time and again that heterogeneity and diversity shape every group in unique ways. When working with inclusive groups, in which people with and without disabilities participate equally, this diversity offers opportunities for encountering others and for social learning. This is possible when activities are chosen in such a way that all participants can take part actively. It is certainly a special challenge for group leaders. In pedagogical processes group leaders play an important role, especially with regard to community, acceptance and tolerance. Their

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[1] RhythmicsMM = Rhythmics (Eurhythmics) / **M**usic and **M**ovement

personal concern for the potential of the group as well as the potential of each person and different competences is decisive.

The expansion of individual and social competences – in the sense of the personal development of participants – is a major concern of inclusive pedagogy. The prerequisite for this is the creation of space for individuality and time for the development of personal abilities and skills in a developmentally stimulating environment and social setting. RhythmicsMM offers a variety of methodological approaches through the creative use of music, movement, voice/speech and materials. These approaches enable us to plan and teach group lessons in such a way that individual learning, as well as social learning, is promoted to a high degree. The aspect of RhythmicsMM that relates to inclusive pedagogy is this: the creation of an environment that fosters the conditions for equal participation of all. At the same time, diversity (heterogeneity) should be given space in the processes of rhythmics lessons and used as an opportunity for shaping diverse learning offerings.

In what follows, it will be explained how learning offerings for inclusive groups can be designed according to the basic approach RhythmicsMM in such a way that holistic development, action-based learning and creative development in community become possible.

The demands on inclusive pedagogy cannot be considered without the background and the approaches of special education. Therefore, in the following section, aspects of inclusion are examined from the perspective of special education with the aim of distilling methodological approaches for inclusive education.

From special education to inclusive education

Since the beginnings of special education (German: Heilpädagogik) about 400 years ago (Biewer, 2010, p. 13), different terms have characterised this field of educational science. In German-speaking countries, besides Heilpädagogik, other terms are also used: special education, rehabilitation education or education for the disabled. Specific terms were and are used as sub-terms in individual disciplines. Terms such as education for the physically disabled, education for the learning disabled, education for the mentally handicapped, etc. are also found in the literature (Bleidick, 2006, p. 77). In the second half of the twentieth century, changes in terminology were initiated with the aim of counteracting as far as possible the stigmatisation of people with disabilities. Thus, since the end of the last century, the term integrative pedagogy and, subsequently (starting from the Salamanca Declaration in 1994), inclusive pedagogy has characterised the discourse in educational science until today (Biewer, 2010, p. 151).

The entire field of special education is still undergoing conceptual change. Current tendencies aim to dissolve special education as a special pedagogy and to integrate its tasks into regular educational practice. However, Biewer identifies a danger here: unique concerns and problems could be neglected due to the diversity of tasks (Biewer, 2010, p. 195f). Therefore, the inclusive approach must be in line with the demand to strengthen the rights of people with disabilities. For inclusive pedagogy, this implies the anchoring of problems that arise in the context of teaching children with disabilities in general pedagogy (Biewer, 2010, p. 152). Ensuring pedagogical quality by means of research from the perspective of special education, and also from the perspective of inclusive education or general education, is essential.

With regard to inclusive education, Biewer stresses the necessity of always seeing inclusive education in a historical and socio-political context. Thus, topics, contents, questions and problems of special education must also be brought into focus and discussed in terms of inclusive education in order to allow us to point to resulting approaches for action (Biewer, 2010, p. 7f). There is certainly still a lot of need for action here, because – as Dederich writes – the term inclusion is still anything but clear (Dederich, 2013, p. 34).

The term inclusive pedagogy as pedagogy of diversity

Feuser (2001) describes the term integration (note that the term inclusion could also be used here) as the idea of maintaining or restoring common fields of living and learning for disabled and non-disabled people with the aim of expanding developmental opportunities for all. From a pedagogical point of view, integration (inclusion) thus means that all children and pupils play, learn and work on a 'common topic' in cooperation with each other, at their respective developmental level, and according to their current perceptual, thinking and action competences *(Feuser, 2001)*. All of these statements also apply to inclusive education, which anchors the rights of people with disabilities, and diversity and its potential, in its basic principles.

Diversity can be described as difference or variety. However, it nowadays refers not only to diversity due to disabilities, but also to diversity due to cultural, ethnic and social background. In the context of inclusive education, diversity has become a central concept and this shows how broad the discussion in this field has become (Biewer, 2010, p. 151f). This is also reflected in the definition by Biewer in which he sees inclusive pedagogy as theories of education, upbringing and development that reject labels and classifications, take as their starting point the rights of vulnerable and marginalised people, advocate for their participation in all areas of life, and aim for structural change in mainstream institutions to accommodate the diversity of conditions and needs of all users (Biewer, 2010, p. 193).

Even though the theories of integration and inclusion are very similarly treated in Biewer's writing, major differences from the perspective of current educational practice (in schools) exist. In inclusive practice the starting point in all cases is that all learners participate in a common school and learn individually and together (Hinz, 2002). Boban and Hinz write that inclusion is about minimising **all** barriers in education and upbringing for **all** learners and creating the conditions in the (learning) environment for equal participation of all learners from the very beginning – with appropriate support if necessary (Boban, Hinz, 2003, p. 11).

Inclusion pedagogy can therefore also be called the pedagogy of diversity, as trends in the field show. Particularly from the point of view of a 'pedagogy for all', the basis of pedagogical action must be oriented towards observation and be designed in a developmental and process-oriented way (Neira Zugasti, 2006a, p. 129). Feuser understands his General (integrative) Pedagogy in the same way, because it builds on didactics that are logical in terms of development. For Feuser adding the term integrative serves only to support understanding. For him, a General Pedagogy`, as developed by him, cancels out integration in itself, because it is fundamentally neither educationally reductionist nor socially selective and segregating (2006, p. 45). Inclusion thus is the foundation of a General Pedagogy that is basic in a somatic sense, also child-centred and thus general. It can be all of this, because it enables us to teach

all children and young people of all developmental levels with their individual perceptual, thinking and action competences without social exclusion (Feuser 2001, p. 2f).

For Neira Zugasti (2006, p. 129) it is especially RhythmicsMM as a basic approach that contains this holistic pedagogical approach, and that aims to develop the personality to its highest maturity, to autonomy in the community. According to her, this is precisely what should actually be of fundamental importance in the entire field of pedagogy.

The rights of people with disabilities as a basis

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities offers hope and a foundation for the broader implementation of inclusive education and, subsequently, for a society in which people treat each other with mutual respect. It was incorporated into the Federal Law Gazette for the Republic of Austria in 2008 and was to be implemented by 2020 by means of the National Action Plan (NAP).

With regard to education (Article 24), the following demands on inclusive education can be highlighted under the aspects of *personality development* and *strengthening of social competences,* because they can largely also be found in the objectives of special education:

> *1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right **without discrimination** and on the **basis of equal opportunity**, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and **lifelong learning** directed to:*
> *(a) The **full development** of human potential and **sense of dignity and self-worth**, and the strengthening **of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms** and **human diversity;***
> *(b) The development by persons with disabilities of their **personality, talents** and **creativity**, as well as their **mental and physical abilities**, (…)*
> *2. (…)*
> *3. States Parties shall enable persons with disabilities to learn **life and social development skills** to facilitate their **full and equal participation in education** and as **members of the community**.*
> (UN-DRPD 2006, p. 16f)
> (https://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf, 14.01.2023)

These demands imply that special didactics is important and necessary with regard to individualising offerings in an inclusive context. For its implementation, an inclusive pedagogy is needed that includes all children and young people with their abilities and skills in such a way that individual and social learning is possible in the context of a heterogeneous group.

Aspects of special education as a basis for inclusive pedagogy

Three aspects of special education are highlighted below. These are fundamental for inclusive pedagogy, because they correspond to the demands of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in relation to inclusive education. At the same time, they also apply to RhythmicsMM pedagogy with its specific didactic and methodological approaches. These include:
- respect for and appreciation of the human being on the basis of a dialogical attitude,
- personality development and the experience of social relationships as pedagogical goals, and
- methodological principles for heterogeneous groups based on elementary and basic somatic principles.

Respect for and appreciation of the human being on the basis of a dialogical attitude

Many people judge the world of people with disabilities as more limited, one-dimensional and narrow – as dis-abled. However, this assessment and our ideas of the world of people with disabilities can only be very vague and even completely wrong, because we can only start to understand others from our own world and our own experiences. With growing knowledge of the individuality of each person, it should be our endeavour in every respect to understand the behaviour of other people and, where this is not yet possible, to accept it (Sautter, 2004, p. 65f).

Bundschuh also sees this anthropological aspect (understanding behaviour) as an important principle. He is concerned with turning towards the perception of possibilities and strengths, also in the areas of intellectual performance, towards the consideration of emotional and social competences, as well as the inclusion of social-ecological areas and everyday conditions and contexts (Bundschuh, 2008, p. 185).

This is particularly evident in a changed perspective which is two-fold. On the one hand, the perspective distances itself from deficit-oriented approaches as the primary representation of disability and, on the other hand, the perspective focuses on areas such as development, learning, perception, communication and emotionality with their orientation on resources, competences and action (Bundschuh, 2008, p. 184). Bundschuh writes about a perspective founded on strengths, one that is based on an appreciation of positive attributes and human capabilities and on ways in which individual and social resources can be developed and supported. He argues that all people have a variety of talents, abilities, capacities, skills and also aspirations and that continuous growth comes from recognising, valuing and developing strengths. He further argues that people do not grow through a focus on their problems – on the contrary, such a focus weakens confidence in their own ability to develop in a self-reflective way (Weick, 1989, in Theunissen, Stichling, 2004, p. 149).

The following table illustrates the view away from a deficit-based attitude towards a dialogue-based orientation, which presupposes and demands respect and appreciation of the human being. This should be fundamental for inclusive education.

An Attitude focused on Defects	A Dialogic Attitude
Disability as a state; to be (and to remain) disabled	Disability as a process; to become disabled (and to develop accordingly)
Organic defect, lack and deficits in development	Inner and outer conditions that interact; a development that is based on this interaction
Ticks, stereotypes	Meaningful and logical actions and reactions
Oriented towards deficits, working on problems	Oriented towards competences, support of development
Person as object	Person as an autonomous and dependent subject
To know what is best for the person	Observe, and 'surfing' with the person
Pedagogical aggression	Pedagogical accompaniment
To learn only from specialists, the principle of making small steps; professional rules and regulations; the theory of difference	To be open for common situations and experiences; individual measures; dialectics of equality and diversity

Fig. 17.1: From defect to dialogue – polarity model according to Boban /Hinz 1993 (Klampfl, 2008, p. 17; minor conceptual changes in the model were made by the author)

Personality development and the experience of social relationships as pedagogical goals

Every pedagogical action should start with the persons themselves, with their particularities, and support them in their abilities and competences. According to Schuppener (2007, p. 122) the *development of the personality* and *social integration* are the two most important, overriding pedagogical objectives, especially when accompanying people with cognitive disabilities. Getting to know the '*I*' and dealing with one's own person, as well as the relationship to the '*you'(singular)* and consequently to the '*we*' are therefore fundamental skills that need to be consolidated and expanded. These competences contribute to ensuring the participation of people with disabilities in society as a whole and can be described in the following sub-areas.
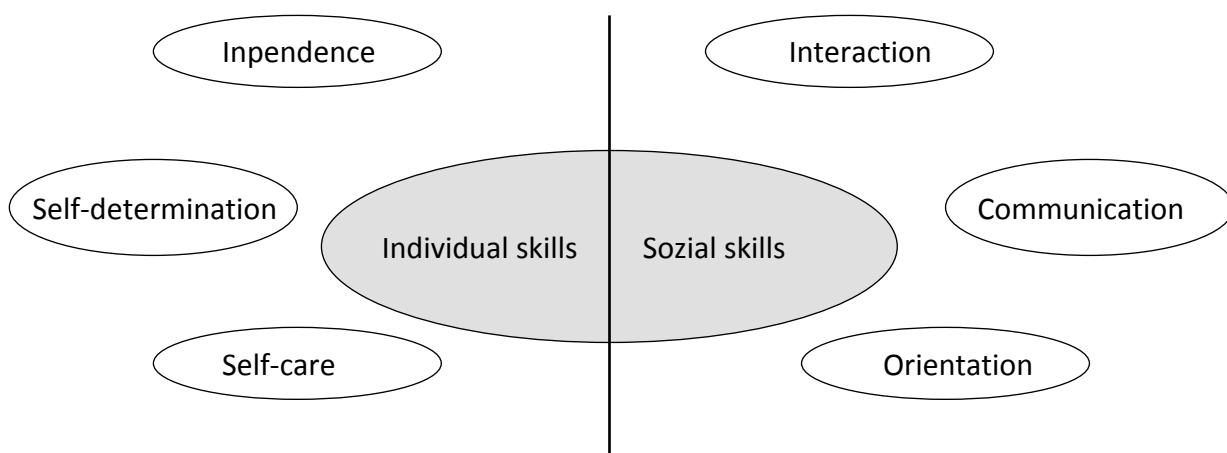

Fig. 17.2: Draft of a two-level competence model in the field of people with intellectual disabilities according to Schuppener 2005c (Schuppener, 2007, p. 123)

Independence is a core competence and shows itself in self-determined action. It leads to a high degree of self-responsibility. *Self-determination* refers to the competence underlying decision-making ability and is relevant in almost all areas of life. *Self-care* includes the area of practical life skills such as eating, dressing, personal hygiene.
Interaction is the competence that shapes almost all forms of social and emotional behaviour. These include, for example, making and shaping relationships and friendships, playing together, empathy, perceiving and expressing emotions, and showing interest. The competence area of *communication* includes all verbal and also non-verbal forms of expression. Communication can take place through both symbolic (words, writing, ...) and non-symbolic (facial expressions, gestures, touch, ...) forms of expression. *Orientation* is necessary to cope with everyday life. It is important in the most diverse areas of life and situations in order to be able to master familiar, but also new difficulties in family, school, work, leisure or road traffic (Schuppener, 2007, p. 123f).

Methodological principles for heterogeneous groups based on elementary and basic somatic principles

In the field of music education, one can find special methodological principles for working with people with limited competences. Principles can be found among others in Probst/Schuchhardt/Steinmann (2006) and in a similar form also in Wagner (2002). Principles

are and should be not only 'disability-oriented' or 'special education-oriented', but oriented towards general education. These include:

- involving as many senses as possible
- practical doing, trying and participating (self-activity)
- from the concrete to the abstract (structure of functional systems)
- from the known to the unknown
- from the simple to the complex or from the easy to the difficult
- simplifying to essential features
- matching to individual possibilities (differentiation)
- working in small steps
- isolating difficulties
- alternation of activities and forms of organisation or alternation of phases of tension and relaxation
- repetition and practice (consolidation) (Probst, Schuchhardt, Steinmann, 2006, p. 16)

- choosing an appropriate social form
- verbalising action where possible
- not too much content in one (task) instruction (Wagner, 2002, p. 39f)

The special feature of these principles is that basic and elementary actions and (learning) experiences form the basis, experiences such as using the senses, acting/experimenting on one's own, being able to build on what is already known, working in small steps, balancing and experiencing tension, starting from concrete experiences, and so on.
Special education thus shows essential aspects that are also fundamental for inclusive education. The approaches of special education should therefore not be neglected in the current discussion. In the development of education practice, principles of inclusive education can also permeate general education, which will thus become a 'pedagogy for all' as described, for instance, by Feuser (see above).

Some parallels can be drawn with RhythmicsMM as a basis for inclusive education in terms of the three aspects of special education described above.

- As an artistic-pedagogical approach, RhythmicsMM creates many differentiated learning offerings that enable individual learning in and through collective action that is based on elemental experiences. This potential of RhythmicsMM is also described by Danuser-Zogg in her book *Musik und Bewegung. Struktur und Dynamik der Unterrichtsgestaltung* (Danuser-Zogg, 2002) and Neira Zugasti and Garnitschnig with their table of psychological functions (Garnitschnig, Neira Zugasti, 2008). These authors offer know-how for planning and analysing rhythmics lessons with differentiated offerings and for targeted observation.
- By means of music, movement, voice/speech and materials, RhythmicsMM offers many possibilities to build on the strengths and individual expressive possibilities of the participants and to continue developing these strengths and possibilities in the process. The dialogic attitude (see Fig. 17.1) also reflects a pedagogical approach of RhythmicsMM which has always been an approach oriented on resources, competences and action (to use Bundschuh's words). Scheiblauer, for example, showed this in a remarkable way as

early as 1966 in her work with children with severe, multiple disabilities and in her sensitive verbal explanations in the film *Ursula oder das unwerte Leben* [Ursula or the worthless life] (Mertens, Marti, 1966).

- With regard to personal development through offerings that strengthen individual as well as social competences, RhythmicsMM offers many possibilities through active participation. Independence, self-determination, interaction and communication, as well as orientation are required and promoted.

The following rhythmics lesson shows how differentiated offerings for individual and social learning (an expansion of competences) can be incorporated into the teaching of inclusive groups on the basis of elementary and basic experiences. In my presentation of the rhythmics lesson, the special education approaches, as well as the requirements for an inclusive pedagogy based on the UN Convention on Human Rights, remain essential.

In addition to the content of the session, methodological notes and possibilities for differentiation are presented. My conclusion (in connection with the rhythmics lesson) is a description of important approaches of RhythmicsMM pedagogy, approaches that are relevant for working with inclusive groups.

Rhythmics lesson with hand drums (for children from 6 years old)

The children sit in a circle either on chairs or on the floor, depending on the particular group and the children. The lesson is designed for working with different inclusive groups. Children with physical disabilities (some also sitting in wheelchairs) are included as well as children with learning disabilities, and other disabilities.
Observing the children's activities and reactions during the course of the lesson is important and particularly helpful for the design of the lesson. In all cases, RhythmicsMM can be employed to provide specific impulses for the individual development of the participants in a social environment.

1.Arrival / Attunement
a) The welcome song 'Hello children, watch out now!' is sung together. Gestures support the song:
"Hello children watch out now. It is rhythmics time today" => wave.
"We can play our bodies too" => stroke the body from head to feet.
"Ev'ryone is joining in => trace a circle with the index finger pointing at all the children.
b) The children are asked to suggest possible body sounds, preferably with the hands (clapping, patting, tapping on the head, rubbing/wiping hands, etc.). These sounds are taken up and incorporated in a second part of the song: *"We are clapping with our hands: clap, clap, clap ...".*
c) The first four (or more) body sounds are repeated and played to the following chant:
"Clap, clap, clap, stop. Stamp, stamp stamp, stop" etc*.* The sequence is repeated several times and, if necessary, also without speech or counting from 1-8. The number of actions can be halved, if necessary: *"Clap, clap; stamp, stamp"* and so on. The sequence can be played to improvised music (piano, guitar) or to recorded music.

Methodological comments / differentiation possibilities:

This song is a welcome song that can be signed, for example, for hearing-impaired children.

The three parts of the song (see section a – above) can be played on the guitar, for example, using three different accompaniment patterns (bass & chord; stroking over strings; tapping on the instrument's body) to clearly structure the form of the song through music. While playing the guitar a child can also feel along the instrument's body, if necessary.

The song offers the opportunity to take up the children's ideas and continue them in the song. The body as a sound instrument is experienced and activated.

The sound ideas should be chosen so that all children in the group can participate. If only the hands are used, the song offers a motivating opportunity to differentiate hand motor skills and to try out or consolidate new movements. Based on the song, the movement possibilities of the group are first taken up, repeated in the song and consolidated in the rhythmic sequence to the music. Serial thinking (sequences) is actively challenged and encouraged.

Hello children, watch out now!

Fig. 17.3 Welcome song: Christoph Falschlunger

2. Movement phase / reaction
a) A part of the group walks around the circle of seated children and is accompanied by the group leader on an instrument. The children take over various musical offerings via the instrument in movement (running, walking, sneaking, crawling, tiptoeing) or the children find their own idea of how the group can move.

When the command 'Stop!' sounds, everyone stops and raises their arms, stands on one leg, etc. The children in the circle accompany the group that is moving with clapping (= running), brushing over parts of the body with the hands (= sneaking, walking backwards), etc.

b) From the first small group of moving children (question to the children: Who can remember who was in that group?) the children, in pairs, are given one hand drum to hold with both hands as a connection between them.

One child moves forwards and one backwards. Quiet music from the group leader accompanies the movement. When the command 'Stop!' sounds, the direction is changed. Movement accompaniment for e.g. 'dancing/turning' can also be incorporated.

Change of small groups: the drums are passed on to the next group/pairs. (Question to the children: Which children were in the second group?)

Methodological comments / differentiation possibilities:
The movement phase is based on the children's basic need for movement. Children with motor impairments can, for example, run or walk slowly while the musical accompaniment adapts to their movements. Alternatively, children can also walk in pairs holding hands. Children in wheelchairs can move themselves or be pushed.

At 'Stop!' everyone stops. Children in wheelchairs think of a sign for Stop! (e.g. holding up their arms, putting their hands together, ...).

During the task with the hand drums, the children independently find possibilities for how to hold the drum as a connection. There are different possibilities for this, also according to the individual skills or hand-motor development.

The music has the character of a signal in these activities and acts as a motivating 'companion' during movement phases. The group leader can support, stimulate and accompany movements through live music, so that coordinated action and reaction can be possible.

Specific questions about group/pair formation encourage the children to reflect and remember.

3. Introduction/playing with the drum
a) The teacher walks in a circle from one child to the next with a drum in hand, so that each child can beat the drum once. The tempo is varied: walking slowly, walking faster, holding high, holding low, changing direction, etc.

b) The drum is passed from one child to the next in a circle. Activities can be supported through speech and this can be important here, e.g. 'from me – to you', or 'hold – give', etc.

c) The drum is passed around the circle and each child beats the drum once.

d) The drum is passed around the circle and each child is allowed to play the drum briefly before it is passed on.

Methodological comments / differentiation possibilities:
After the movement phase, a concentration phase with the children in the circle is now introduced. The whole phase is based on the spatial orientation in the circle as well as awareness of a neighbouring child.

Tapping/slapping as a basic expression of movement is given room in the activities. The task is repeated, extended and differentiated in a series of variations on the task.

Giving time for individual action is now important. In order to provide support during task d), the teacher can hold the drum, interact briefly with the child by playing the drum or flute, or drum together with the child, etc.

The children can already discuss at this point how the drum can be played in various ways and what possibilities exist for sound production.

4. Dialogue with the drum

Two children hold a drum and stand/sit opposite each other. One child starts to 'speak' with the drum. Once this child 'has spoken', the other child 'speaks'. Only one child plays at a time! The drums are passed on to two other children. Finally, the drums are placed on the floor. (Questions to the children: What did you see? And what did you hear? How was the drum played?)

Methodological comments / differentiation possibilities:

In order to give more support during the activities, the teacher or other participants from the group can hold the drum(s) or even offer only one drum. The child with the drum 'speaks'. Afterwards, the drum is given to the other child and they alternate until the 'drum conversation' is over.

The children can observe each other in action. Afterwards, the drum dialogues can be discussed: what was 'spoken'? How did the children speak on the drum? etc. Observation and reflection with the children can support and benefit for the further course of the lesson if the children are given the opportunity to be critical.

5. Rhythmic drumming / drumming chant

a) The teacher suggests different movements with the hands/arms (e.g. stretching the arms upwards, tapping the head with the fingers, brushing on the thighs, etc.). The group imitates the movements. The children can also suggest movements.

b) The teacher introduces the following sequence (p<ff) with the fingers/hands only: *"Quiet, quiet; louder and louder, louder and louder; stop!"* The sequence is accompanied by speech. They discuss how 'softly' and 'louder and louder' can be played with the hands.

c) Several drums are handed out so that every second/third child has a drum. The children with drums now play together to the improvised music of the guitar/piano. The group leader plays on the instrument in such a way that the group has the opportunity to play along. The tempo, the volume and the use of stops should be varied every time. The ending is a common drum roll (p<ff), if necessary, with spoken accompaniment: *"Quiet, quiet; louder and louder, louder and louder; stop! The drum is with me, but now I give it to you."* A few repetitions of the activity follow, using speech and music in differentiated and varied ways. After a few repetitions, speech should/could be left out: only the music 'speaks'!

Methodological comments / differentiation possibilities:

Based on offerings that support movement differentiation with the hands and fingers, sound experiences are made and named in the chant.

Dynamics (here: getting louder) always exerts a strong fascination on children and encourages them to join in. Depending on their development and motor skills, children either only participate in the opposite poles (here: quiet–loud; movement–stop), or they already succeed

in performing the more differentiated movement that create the dynamics (here: getting louder).

Speech and musical activities enable differentiated motoric experiences. Rhythmic speaking and playing demand and encourage reactions in movement. Variations and differentiations are important because they bring motivation and allow the teacher to adapt to the pace of the group.

Formal structuring through language and music has an important function, as it shapes time and divides it into (recognisable) parts. Formal arrangements are extremely important in order to maintain structures, especially for people with disabilities. Repetitions with variations are useful here.

6. Massage with drums

Each child who has a drum stands behind a seated child and lightly strokes this child's back with the membrane of the drum. Quiet music can support this phase. After the music ends, the seated child stands up, takes the drum and massages the back of the other child.

Methodological comments / differentiation possibilities:

The aim here is to create a balance in the course of the lesson, after the active and movement phases in the large group. Active relaxation with and via material in a quiet atmosphere offers a clear counter pole and creates awareness of tranquillity.

The children are given the opportunity to make indirect contact through material. Touching and being touched is often easier through material and better accepted than direct physical contact.

The drum offers different possibilities for one person at a time to hold it, with one or both hands, or if necessary, in pairs (for support). In this way, all children can actively take part themselves.

7. Play song with drums

a) In a circle: The teacher takes two drums and walks around the inside of the circle singing the drum song. At "*Let two children play for us right now*" the two drums are held out to two children, who play freely on the drums that are held by the teacher. After a short time, the teacher instructs: *"Quietly, quietly; louder and louder; stop! The drum is with me, but now I'm giving it to you."*

The drum is given to the children who have just played the drums and they are now allowed to walk to the song. After each walking and drumming phase, the drum is passed on to the next pair of children and the song starts again.

b) In the room: Half of the group (if possible, otherwise fewer children) gets a drum. They move to the song and play the drum. The children without a drum are spread out in the room (if necessary, they stand in a hoop or sit on a chair). The sequence of the play song is now carried out as above, but in the expanded space.

Methodological comments / differentiation possibilities:

In this play song, parts from the rhythmics lesson are offered as a song through repetition, consolidation and variation. The song provides a formal design that is repeated.

All children can participate according to their own personal action skills: in addition to certain focused tasks, there are also many parts that can be shaped freely and individually (e.g. walking in a circle, holding the drum).

Parts of the play song and basic sequences for the play song were already offered earlier in the course of the session in isolation and with short free phases. Since participants with very different competences work together in inclusive groups, it is particularly important to offer opportunities for getting to know each other in activities so that everyone can act and react together, for example in a play song, in a way that is satisfactory for all.

The play song can be offered at the end of the session, but also in a later session. It can be performed with actions in a circle or in the room, depending on the group and its participants.

Drum song

Fig. 17.4 Drum song: Christoph Falschlunger

8. Conclusion/Reflection

a) The drums are placed in the middle of the room. All the children make a circle around the drums (standing or sitting). The children can close their eyes and the teacher touches each child's back with the membrane of a drum.

b) The child that is touched by the drum reflects on an aspect of the lesson (verbally, gesturally, via communication board, ...). Alternatively, the drum is passed around as a 'speaking drum'. Whoever has the drum 'speaks' in his or her own way.

c) A closing chant is spoken, together if applicable, while holding hands.

Methodological comments / differentiation possibilities:

The closing of a session is an essential part of rhythmics lessons. It is good educational practice to establish familiar rituals: here it is the circle with personal touch, the opportunity for (short) reflection and the closing chant.

RhythmicsMM and aspects of inclusive education

To summarise, it can be said that RhythmicsMM as a holistic, development-oriented and general, basic approach has its application and can show its effect in a general and inclusive pedagogical way, not solely in regard to working with people with different action competences, possible impairments and disabilities.

RhythmicsMM is especially valuable in inclusive education, as fundamental aspects of learning in community can be experienced in an active environment. In rhythmic lessons, topics and contents are offered creatively and developed in a differentiated way. Strategies that support active participation are created by means of music, movement, voice/speech and different materials.

RhythmicsMM starts with the basic and elementary competences of the participants, differentiating, expanding and including them, and then continues in a process-oriented and goal-oriented way. Therefore, we can consider it as a basic approach.

In connection with the practical lesson above, six aspects are focused on, aspects that underline the potential of RhythmicsMM as a basic approach for inclusive pedagogy.
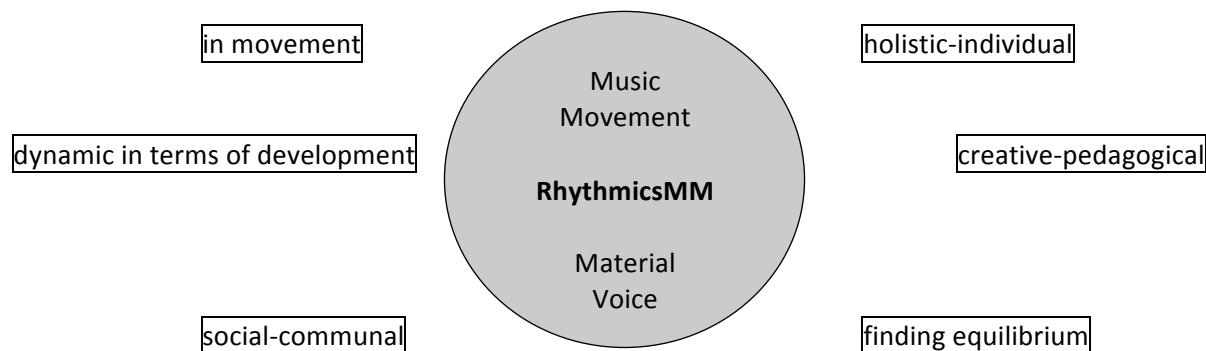
in movement		holistic-individual
dynamic in terms of development	Music Movement **RhythmicsMM** Material Voice	creative-pedagogical
social-communal		finding equilibrium

Fig. 17.5: Christoph Falschlunger: Inclusive pedagogical aspects of RhythmicsMM

RhythmicsMM is...

...holistic-individual
RhythmicsMM creates a holistic learning environment through the reciprocal use of the means and the methodically differentiated structure of the lesson, because *moving; sensing, perceiving; thinking; speaking, communicating; feeling, social-emotional acting; intenting[2]; intuiting; remembering, memorising* (Garnitschnig, Neira Zugasti, 2008) are stimulated in every self-determined action. The participants are supported in the expression of their individual abilities and skills in a variety of ways.

...in movement
Within RhythmicsMM, movement is on the one hand a *means* that can be beneficial in many ways through materials and in interaction with music and voice/speech. Through movement, relationships can be experienced, learning can take place, development can be stimulated, and so on.

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[2] See Chapter 16.

On the other hand, movement is also a *goal* when, for example, motor skills are needed to solve tasks or when new movement repertoire is discovered and consolidated while working with materials.

In the rhythmics lesson presented in this chapter, music, speech and material (the hand drum) encourage differentiated and specific movements, and relationships are experienced in movement. If necessary, new motor patterns are also formed, practised and consolidated.

Movement as an important component of self-activity and autonomy is not only the starting point for observations but also for the reactions of the group leader during a rhythmics lessons.

…dynamic in terms of development

In the course of the lesson, developmental offerings are made several times, thus stimulating development in different areas. The tasks are designed in such a way that more complex steps follow the simpler ones. The simple tasks have their starting point in fundamental skills and abilities, such as holding the drum, making sounds, experimenting with sounds, tapping, clapping, perceiving the others, etc.

'Dynamic' means that the participants are encouraged in their activities in terms of what is individually possible by offering, repeating and varying what they know. Building on this, new and further activities are offered in order to stimulate development. This creates a dynamic interaction: the participants can always continue with what they know, but at the same time they can try out something new, according to their individual and current abilities and skills.

…social-communal

One aim of rhythmics lessons is to create a common foundation on which all members can actively participate in terms of their personal abilities and skills. It is important to select, compile and offer tasks in such a way that none of the participants will be excluded. Observation in advance and reacting in the moment are important pedagogical skills for teachers. In particular, RhythmicsMM makes it possible to experience community, as the content can be created collectively despite differentiated offerings.

…creative-pedagogical

Planning and teaching a rhythmics lesson require pedagogical knowledge and skills in terms of acting and reacting creatively via and through the interplay of four means: music, movement, voice/language and materials. In RhythmicsMM, creative potential is released through these four means. In self-directed actions with materials, in music and/or in movement, the participants have a variety of possibilities for expression at their disposal, which include not only verbal aspects, but also many non-verbal aspects. This diversity is particularly valuable for inclusive groups: in a heterogeneous group all participants can act according to their own personal possibilities of action, while at the same time consolidating and expanding their competences.

The methodological comments and differentiation possibilities given in the lesson plan provide insights into this.

…finding equilibrium through the rhythmic principle

The course of the lesson is based on elements of rhythm as a phenomenon. This phenomenon can be seen in its shaping of methodical approaches to the planning and implementation of rhythmic units. Rhythm as the basis of elementary approaches was already described by

Jaques-Dalcroze, founder of RhythmicsMM, in 1919.

Jaques-Dalcroze described rhythm as an irrational principle that has its source in the most elementary feeling of life, and that is characterised by continuity and repetition (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921/1977, p. 199, German edition). He argued that every temporally isolated movement has something expressive, extraordinary, momentary about it, but that it loses this character as soon as it repeats itself and thus becomes part of a continuous whole that develops in space and time at the same time (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921/1977, p. 199, German edition).

Rhythm is elementary, inherent in every human being and becomes visible through action. If these individual activities are given space in the course of the lesson and are taken up, repeated, continued, varied and developed in the group as a whole, situations arise that can be beneficial for all participants.

Based on the phenomenon of rhythm, important methodological steps can be pointed out, because rhythm, in addition to *repetition*, *continuity* and *activity orientation* described above, also has the following characteristics: *synchronisation, holism, polarity, order, interdependence, variation, subject-relatedness, goal-orientation, irreversibility* and *periodicity* (Garnitschnig, Neira Zugasti, 2008). The rhythmics practitioner Neira Zugasti relates the characteristics of the phenomenon of rhythm to a developmentally appropriate pedagogy and accordingly states that the design of the artistic-pedagogical approach RhythmicsMM which is based on rhythm is valuable in many ways (Neira Zugasti, 2006b, p. 86f). These conditions and characteristics are guiding principles for child-oriented and developmentally appropriate pedagogical work.

In the course of this rhythmics lesson with hand drums, rhythm is present when, for example, there is repetition and variation, when activity is required, when the course of the lesson is structured in a cumulative, goal-oriented and orderly way, when there is room for synchronisation in the large group or in tasks in pairs, and when tension is resolved. These aspects become even more important when working with people with (learning) disabilities, as structures can provide support and promote a common togetherness.

In conclusion, RhythmicsMM offers important methodological approaches within inclusive pedagogy, especially as a basic experience for the planning of group lessons, which are beneficial for the development of the personality of all participants in their *individuality* as well as in their *sociability*. This potential is demonstrated time and again in practical work with a wide variety of groups.

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