AP Music Theory: Unit 6

From Simple Studies, https://simplestudies.edublogs.org & @simplestudiesinc on Instagram

Harmony and Voice Leading III: Embellishments, Motives, and Melodic Devices

Passing Tones

- Tones that are approached by step and followed by step

Neighboring Tones

- Tones that are approached by step and followed by step, but instead of passing on to the next tone, they return to the starting notes


Embellishing Tones

- A musical piece consisting of mostly quarter notes can be embellished with eighth notes either as unaccented passing and/or neighbor tones.
- Effective embellishing tones with the soprano:
    - complement a stationary soprano
    - move in parallel thirds or sixths with the soprano
    - engage in voice exchange with the soprano

Other Nonharmonic Tones

- <u>Anticipation</u>: a note that comes too early
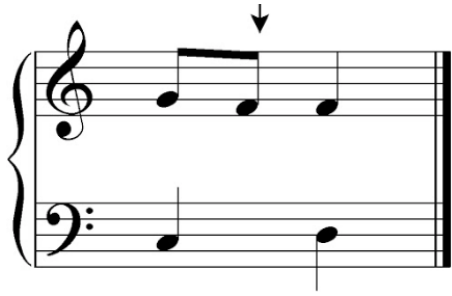
(anticipation note indicated with arrow)

- <u>Escape Tone</u>: incomplete neighbor tone that is unaccented, preceded by step, and followed by leap

(escape tone circled)

- <u>Appoggiatura</u>: incomplete neighbor tone that is accented, preceded by skip and followed by step

(appoggiatura circled)

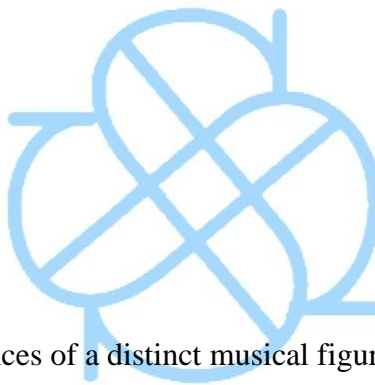- <u>Pedal Point</u>: sustained tone (usually in the bass)

(pedal point is in bass clef)

Suspensions

- Approached by the same note and resolved by step

- Retardation
    - Suspension that resolves up
   - Reserved for the end/final chord

Motivic Transformation

Alterations, repetitions, or sequences of a distinct musical figure

- Some examples:
    - Augmentation → Durations are increased
    - Diminution → Durations are decreased
- Fragmentation → A fragment of the motive is repeated to make it longer
- Imitation → Same motive but different voices
- Interpolation → Same intervals but in different directions

Melodic Sequence

- Tonal Sequence: the interval quality between notes are changed, but the interval size stays the same
    - Example from musictheoryacademy.com:
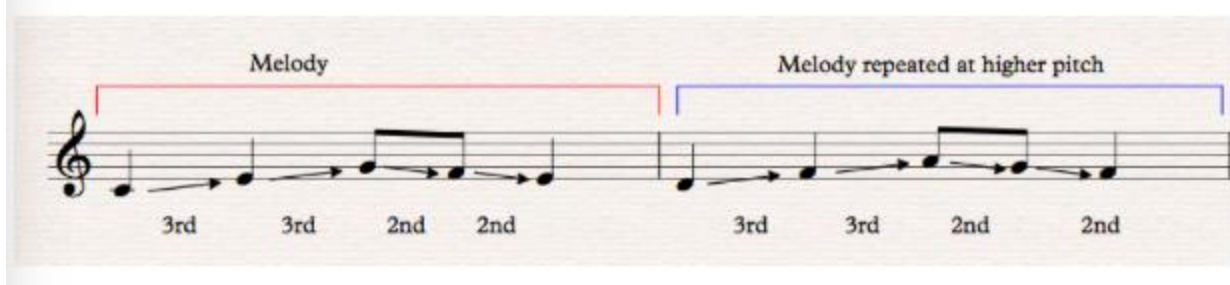
- Real Sequence: no change in interval size or quality
  - Example from musictheoryacademy.com:
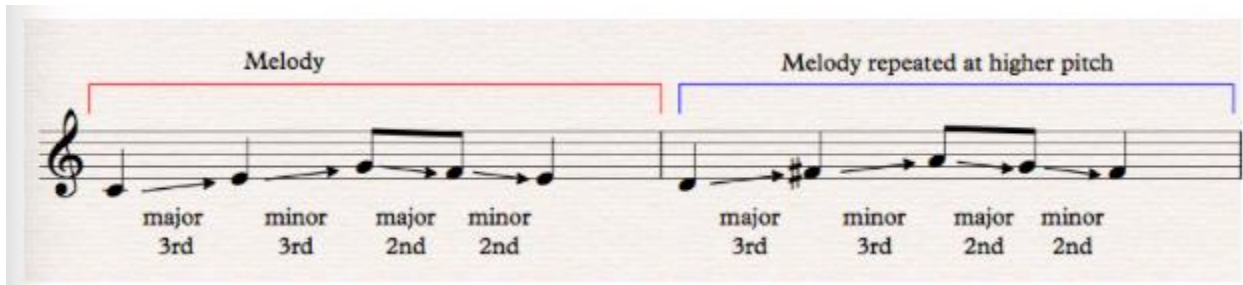
- Mixed Sequence: has several repetitions (some tonal and some real)
  - Example from musictheoryacademy.com:

- ** Note how the first 2 measures are real sequences, and the last 2 measures are tonal sequences.

Harmonic Sequences
- Descending Harmonic Sequences
  - *Descending Circle-of-Fifths Sequence*: each chord's root note is a fifth lower than the previous chord

- ○ *Ascending Circle-of-Fifths Sequence*: each chord's root note is a fifth higher than the previous chord

- ○ *Descending Thirds Sequence*: the chords move down a third each repetition

Images sources: musictheoryacademy.org and openmusictheory.net