

## Schenkerian Terminology

**polyphonic melody (or compound melody)** – a melody that suggests an interplay between two or more voices through leaping motions.

**prolongation** – the process of embellishing a structurally important harmony and melodic tone by various contrapuntal procedures.

**linear progression** – a stepwise motion in one direction at a level of musical structure beyond the musical surface.

**linear intervallic pattern** – a repeated interval pattern between a pair of voices, often accompanying a harmonic sequence.

**structural level (*Schicht*)** – a grouping of pitches and harmonies in a Schenkerian graph that all receive roughly the same melodic and harmonic emphasis through prolongation. The piece as heard, note for note, is called the *musical surface*, while the first level of structure that groups together all pitches that are prolonged on the musical surface is called the *foreground*. The highest structural level, representing only those pitches and harmonies that are the most essential to the composition, is called the *Ursatz*. The levels in between the foreground and the *Ursatz* are called *middleground levels*, and their number depends upon the piece and what the analyst wishes to show.

**Ursatz (“fundamental structure”)** – the highest structural level, representing only those pitches and harmonies that are the most essential to the composition.

**Urlinie (“fundamental line”)** – the melodic structure of the *Ursatz*.

**Kopfton (“primary tone”)** – the initial tone of the *Urlinie*.

**Bassbrechung (“bass arpeggiation”)** – the harmonic structure of the *Ursatz*.

**obligatory register (*obligate Lage*)** – the fundamental octave in which the *Urlinie* occurs. The *Ursatz* and deep middleground graphs should always show the descent in this range, even if the actual notes occur in different registers.

**interruption (*Unterbrechung*)** – the interruption of the *Urlinie* descent after reaching scale-degree 2 and dominant harmony, after which the *Ursatz* starts over with tonic harmony and the return of the *Kopfton* and the second time completes the *Urlinie* descent and reaches the final tonic harmony.

**Teiler (“divider”)** – the dominant chord that ends the first half of an interrupted structure.

## Types of Melodic Prolongation

**initial ascent** (*Anstieg*) – a stepwise ascent to the *Kopftone* at the beginning of a piece or movement (Example 6.1).

**arpeggiated ascent** – an arpeggiation up to the *Kopftone* at the beginning of a piece or movement (Examples 6.2 and 6.3).

**unfolding** (*Ausfaltung*) – an alternation between tones from the top voice and tones from an inner voice within a single melody; unfolding is characteristic of polyphonic melodies (Examples 6.4 and 6.5).

**motion into an inner voice/motion from an inner voice** – a motion from a top-voice note to a note in an inner voice, often filled in by stepwise motion (Example 6.6), or a motion to a top-voice note from a note in an inner voice, often filled in by stepwise motion (Example 6.7).

**voice exchange** – an exchange of tones between two voices, the most characteristic type being a motion from a tenth to a sixth or vice versa, in a prolongation of a single harmony (Examples 6.8 and 6.9).

**registral transfer** – a change of register that is accomplished by an ascent or a descent through an octave or a seventh, either through arpeggiation, stepwise motion, or some combination (Examples 6.10 and 6.11).

**coupling** (*Koppelung*) – an association between two registers connected via registral transfer that takes on motivic significance (Example 6.12).

**superposition** – a shift of an inner voice tone above the top voice (Example 6.13).

**cover tone** (*Deckton*) – an inner voice tone superposed above the top voice that remains for a long period of time, as a kind of discant tone (Example 6.16).

**reaching over** (*Übergreifen*) – a decoration of an underlying ascent with surface or foreground-level descending motions (Examples 6.13-6.16).

**substitution** – the substitution of an unexpected tone for an expected one, such as the substitution of scale-degree 7 for scale-degree 2 in a descending *Urlinie* (Examples 6.17 and 6.18).

**chromatic inflection** – a chromatic inflection of a tone in the top voice (Examples 6.19 and 6.20).