

Voice-Leading Schemata and Sentences in Opera Buffa: Rising Lines in Paisiello's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*

JOHN A. RICE

This is a much expanded version of a paper, entitled "The Schematic World of Mozart's Figaro," that I gave at EuroMac Strasbourg on 30 June 2017, as part of the session "Analyzing Mozart's Operas," organized and chaired by Nathan Martin. This revision posted on Academia.edu on 15 November 2018

Mozart's operas are noticeably absent from the musical examples in Robert O. Gjerdingen's *Music in the Galant Style*, and from the passages he discusses in applications of his analytical framework. Although his repertory of earlier galant music—the music of the 1730s through the 1760s—includes several arias from *opera seria*, the music of the 1770s and 1780s is for Gjerdingen mostly instrumental, even when he considers such predominantly operatic composers as Salieri and Cimarosa.¹ His work has had important repercussions in the analysis of Mozart's instrumental music, but few attempts have been made to apply schema theory to Mozart's operas.²

Some of Mozart's operatic music—for example, "Andrò ramingo e solo," the famous quartet in *Idomeneo*—falls comfortably within the conceptual space opened up by *Music in the Galant Style*.³ But Mozart's later *opere buffe*, generally speaking, seem less amenable to schema theory. Simply put, many passages in the comic operas do not constitute manifestations of Gjerdingen's principal schemata (I mean those with separate entries in his Appendix A, "Schema Prototypes").

During the decade since the publication of Gjerdingen's book, scholars whose work has been inspired, in part, by his have enlarged the schematicon, with schemata that include some found often in Mozart's operas.⁴ This paper builds on that work by

¹ Robert O. Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style* (New York, 2007), 502, 507.

² Applications of schema theory to Mozart's operas include Paul Sherrill and Matthew Boyle, "Galant Recitative Schemas," *Journal of Music Theory* 59 (2015), 1–61; and Olga Sánchez-Kisielewska, "Interactions between Topics and Schemata: The Case of the Sacred Romanesca," in *Theory and Practice* 41 (2016), 47–80.

³ John A. Rice, "Mozart's Use of Galant Voice-Leading Schemata (with an Analysis of the Quartet from *Idomeneo*, 'Andrò ramingo e solo')," paper given at the conference "Aktuelle Fragen der Mozart-Forschung," Prague, 16–17 April 2016; handout at https://www.academia.edu/24564986/Mozarts_Use_of_Galant_Voice-Leading_Schemata_with_an_analysis_of_the_quartet_from_Idomeneo_Andrò_ramingo_e_solo

⁴ Vasili Byros, "Foundations of Tonality as Situated Cognition, 1730–1830: An Enquiry into the Culture and Cognition of Eighteenth-Century Tonality with Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony as a Case Study," PhD dissertation, Yale University, 2009; Vasili Byros, "Trazom's Wit: Communicative Strategies in a 'Popular' yet 'Difficult' Sonata," *Eighteenth-Century Music* 10 (2013), 213–52; Vasili Byros, "Topics and Harmonic Schemata: A Case from Beethoven," *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York, 2014), 381–414; William E.

considering Mozart's use of schemata in a single opera, *Le nozze di Figaro*, and the relation between its schematic content and that of another opera buffa of the 1780s to which it served as a sequel, Giovanni Paisiello's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Saint Petersburg, 1782). I will not attempt here a comprehensive study of these operas' use of voice-leading schemata, which would require a book; instead I will focus on a relatively small number of schemata used to generate rising lines.

In one of Mozart's earliest references to opera buffa, in a letter written in 1772, he called it "nährische Opera": "crazy opera" ("der fischietti wird wohl bald anfangen an seiner opera buffa |: auf Teütsch :| an seiner nährischen opera zu arbeiten").⁵ The term is appropriate. Opera buffa of the second half of the eighteenth century is characterized by a level of energy and excitement that borders on the manic. Yes, there are moments of lyric beauty, tenderness, and sublimity; but excitement predominates, as it does in the overtures that anticipate the character of the dramas that follow. At the beginning of Paisiello's overture, a crescendo rising quickly through two octaves exemplifies an obsession with rising lines that dominates the music of opera buffa as thoroughly as energy and excitement dominate the genre's emotional landscape (Ex. 1).⁶

The ubiquity of rising lines in opera buffa could potentially cause difficulties in the application of schema theory, because Gjerdingen's principal schemata are dominated by falling lines (Prinner, Sol-Fa-Mi, Fonte) and lines that rise and fall (Romanesca, Quiescenza, Meyer, Fenaroli).⁷ Most of the patterns that have been added to the schematicon during the last decade (such as Vasili Byros's Le-Sol-Fi-Sol, Nathaniel

Caplin, "Topics and Formal Functions: The Case of the Lament," *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, 415–52; David Lodewyckx, "Marpurg's Galant Cadence in Mozart: Theoretical Perspectives, Formal Implications and Voice Leading," *Res musica* 7 (2015), 116–127; Nathaniel Mitchell, "The Volta: A Galant Gesture of Culmination," forthcoming; John A. Rice, "The Hertz: A Galant Schema from Corelli to Mozart," *Music Theory Spectrum* 36 (2014), 315–32; John A. Rice, "The Morte: A Galant Voice-Leading Schema as Emblem of Lament and Compositional Building-Block," *Eighteenth-Century Music* 12 (2015), 157–81; John A. Rice, "Adding to the Galant Schematicon: The Lully," *Mozart-Jahrbuch* 2014, 205–25; prepublication version online at

https://www.academia.edu/7783771/Adding_to_the_Galant_Schematicon_The_Lully;

Sánchez-Kisielewska, "Interactions between Topics and Schemata"; Sherrill and Boyle, "Galant Recitative Schemas"; Giorgio Sanguinetti, *The Art of Partimento: History, Theory, and Practice* (New York, 2012); W. Dean Sutcliffe, "Topics in Chamber Music," *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, 118–40.

⁵ Mozart to Nannerl, 5 December 1772; *Mozart: Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, ed. Wilhelm A. Bauer, Otto Erich Deutsch, and Joseph Heinz Eibl, expanded edition, ed. Ulrich Konrad (Kassel, 2005), vol. 1, 466.

⁶ This passage exemplifies the Mozartian Loop, as defined in James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory* (New York, 2006), 80, in which a phrase ending with cadence is repeated, the beginning of the repetition coinciding with the end of the first statement. The repetition here is varied: an octave higher and one measure longer.

⁷ Here I differentiate schemata characterized primarily by a melody (such as the Sol-Fa-Mi, Quiescenza, and the Meyer), those characterized primarily by a bass (such as the Romanesca), and those characterized by both melody and bass (such as the Prinner, the Fonte, and the Fenaroli). For example, I include the Sol-Fa-Mi among the schemata dominated by falling lines because its most salient feature is its descending treble line.

Mitchell's Volta, David Lodewyckx's Marpurg Cadence, and my Heartz, Lully, and Morte⁸) also feature a mixture of rising and falling intervals. Only two of Gjerdingen's principal schemata involve mostly rising lines: the Do-Re-Mi and the Monte. A study of the schemata that generate rising lines will require me to go beyond the Monte and the Do-Re-Mi, to schemata unmentioned by Gjerdingen or mentioned by him only in passing.

Ex. 1. Giovanni Paisiello, *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (St. Petersburg, 1782), overture, mm. 1–8.
Performance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ukTMCwW7NP8>

The musical score for measures 1-8 of the overture to *Il barbiere di Siviglia* is presented in two systems. The first system contains measures 1-4, and the second system contains measures 5-8. The tempo is marked 'Allegro presto'. The dynamics are *p* (piano) in measure 1, *cresc.* (crescendo) in measure 3, *f* (forte) in measure 5, and *ff* (fortissimo) in measure 7. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests. The bass line is a steady eighth-note pattern.

Schemata and Sentences: the Do-Re-Mi

A great many movements in *Il barbiere* and *Figaro*—arias, ensembles, and movements within ensembles—begin with, or contain, sentences, a type of theme that is extremely common in late eighteenth-century music. William Caplin emphasized the sentence's importance in the instrumental music of Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven; more recently Nathan Martin and Michael Cherlin have explored the crucial role that sentences play in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and *Figaro*.⁹ The prototypical sentence consists of two four-measure phrases. The first phrase (the "presentation phrase") consists of two statements of a basic idea; the second phrase (the "continuation phrase") ends with a cadence. In many presentation phrases tonic and dominant harmony alternate: I-V-I (or I-V, followed

⁸ See note 4 above.

⁹ William E. Caplin, *A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York, 1998); Nathan Martin, "Formenlehre Goes to the Opera: Examples from *Don Giovanni*," in *Mozart in Prague: Essays on Performance, Patronage, Sources, and Reception*, ed. Kathryn L. Libin (Prague, 2016), 371–402; Michael Cherlin, *Varieties of Musical Irony: From Mozart to Mahler* (Cambridge, 2017), 104–166. In reference to Wye Jameson Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart: Le nozze di Figaro and Don Giovanni* (Chicago, 1983), Cherlin writes (p. 165): "A major drawback of Allanbrook's analyses . . . is her apparent lack of awareness of the musical sentence as a phrase-shape prototype."

by I at the beginning of the continuation phrase). Several of the schemata introduced by Gjerdingen, including the Meyer, the Aprile, the Do-Re-Mi, the Sol-Fa-Mi, and the Jupiter, can (and often do) involve this same harmonic plan. So it is not surprising that many presentation phrases use these schemata. Usually the first half of the schema is realized in the first basic idea, and the second half of the schema in the second basic idea; occasionally the presentation phrase consists of two statements of a schema.¹⁰

Although many of the sentences in *Il barbiere* and *Figaro* diverge in one way or another from the norm (especially in the number of the measures they contain) their presentation phrases do conform, for the most part, to the tonic-dominant-tonic plan characteristic of the sentence in instrumental music. Paisiello and Mozart used a wide variety of schemata in these presentation phrases, including those with predominantly falling lines (such as the Sol-Fa-Mi at the beginning of Mozart's "Non più andrai") and those with lines that rise and fall (such as the Meyer in the opening Allegro of the finale of act 3 of *Il barbiere* and Aprile in main theme of Mozart's "Porgi amor"). But working in a genre that encouraged rising lines, Paisiello and Mozart favored a schema in which a rising line and I-V-I harmony could be combined: the Do-Re-Mi.

In Paisiello's duet "Non dubitar, o Figaro," Figaro uses a Do-Re-Mi to declaim the Latin motto on the sign outside his barbershop (Ex. 2). The schema here serves as

Ex. 2. Paisiello, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, "Non dubitar, o Figaro," mm. 42–44. Translation: "Consilio manueque" [Latin: 'With scholarship and dexterity']. I will be there." Performance: <https://youtu.be/zl6blyggwuQ?t=56>

The musical score for Ex. 2 is in G major and 2/4 time, marked "Allegro presto". It features a vocal line for Figaro and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a "Presentation Phrase" (Basic Idea 1) consisting of three measures: "Con - si - lio" (measure 1), "ma - nu-que." (measure 2), and "Io lò, io là sa - rò." (measure 3). This is followed by a "Continuation Phrase". The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support, with dynamics ranging from piano (p) to forte (f). The score is labeled with "DO-RE-MI" above the first three measures of the vocal line.

¹⁰ Well before the sentence and the voice-leading schema became central topics of music-theoretical discourse, Leonard Meyer showed that certain schemata interact with sentences in characteristic and predictable ways: for example, that the "archetype" that Gjerdingen would later call the Meyer serves ordinarily as what Caplin would later call the presentation phrase of a sentence; see Leonard B. Meyer, "Exploring Limits: Creation, Archetypes, and Style Change," *Daedalus* 109 (1980), No. 2, 177–205. More recently the interaction of sentences and schemata has been mainly the concern of what we might call public music theory. The website "Open Music Theory" classifies Gjerdingen's schemata as "presentation schemata" (e. g. the Do-Re-Mi and the Meyer) and "continuation schemata" (e. g. the Prinner), showing that the former are typically used in the presentation phrases and the latter in the continuation phrases, and emphasizing the usefulness of this insight in the improvisation of sentences. See Kris Shaffer, *et al.*, "Improvising a Sentence with Galant Schemata": <http://openmusictheory.com/schemata-improv.html>

audible Italics, or a pair of quotation marks. Paisiello called attention to it by using it as an odd presentation phrase (only three measures long, with the two-measure basic ideas elided) within an otherwise normal sentence.

If the passage in Example 2 illustrates the brevity with which the Do-Re-Mi can unfold in a presentation phrase, Mozart's use of the same schema at the beginning of the terzetto "Susanna, or via sortite," shows him working on a completely different scale. In act 2, scenes 3–6, Cherubino hides in a closet off the countess's bedroom. The count, hearing a noise in the closet, asks the countess who is there; she tells him it is Susanna. The terzetto begins with a fourteen-measure sentence that clearly differentiates the aggressive count from the countess and Susanna (Ex. 3). In the eight-measure presentation

Ex. 3. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, "Susanna, or via sortite," mm. 1–14. Translation: "Susanna, come out now. I demand it." "Stop. Listen. She cannot come out." "What argument is this? Where did the page go?" Performance: <https://youtu.be/2iQZHW2pX4g>

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

Allegro spiritoso

DO-RE-MI *Il conte* DO-RE-MI

Su - san - na or via sor - ti - te, sor-

Basic Idea 2

Continuation Phrase
QUIESCENZA x 2

Susanna Cos' è co - de - sta li - te,
La contessa ti - te co - sì vo'! Fer - ma - te-vi... sen - ti - te... sor-

11 *CLAUSULA VERA HC*

il pag - gio do - ve an - dò, il pag - gio do - ve an - dò?

ti - - - re el - la non può, sor - ti - - - re el - la non può.

phrase, the count angrily commands Susanna to come out of the closet. The Do-Re-Mi, played by the orchestra, serves here as an unusually long basic idea; we hear it twice, the second time an octave higher. (Alternatively, one could say that this sentence begins with two four-measure presentation phrases.) The two women respond in the continuation phrase, in which a Quiescenza nicely expresses the countess's fear as she pleads with her husband and Susanna's hesitancy as she hides by the door.

Tonic-dominant-tonic progressions are not limited to the presentation phrase of sentences, of course, and neither is the Do-Re-Mi. When the Count confronts Figaro in the finale of Mozart's act 2, he does so with the first phrase of a period—a melody in which a four-measure antecedent phrase is answered by a four-measure consequent phrase (Figaro's answer; Ex. 4)

Ex. 4. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, act 2 finale, mm. 398–402. Translation: “Do you know, Signor Figaro, who wrote this note?” Performance: <https://youtu.be/v912J5fkVvs?t=462>

Antecedent Phrase
Basic Idea

Contrasting Idea

Andante Conte DO-RE-MI HC

Co- no - sce - te, si - gnor Fi- ga - ro, que- sto fo - glio chi ver - gò?

Consequent Phrase

403 Figaro

Nol co - no - sco... nol co - no - sco...

Occasionally a composer of opera buffa harmonized the Do-Re-Mi more elaborately, even within the context of a presentation phrase. Stephen Storace, in *Gli equivoci* (first performed in Vienna in the same year as *Figaro*), gave a sentential Do-Re-

Mi a charmingly antique sound by accompanying it with a walking bass and harmonizing Re with ii6/5-V (Ex. 5).

Ex. 5. Stephen Storace, *Gli equivoci* (Vienna, 1786), act 2, finale, mm. 135–36. Translation: “I have found you, unfaithful woman. Pay the price of your mistakes.” “Restrain him, stop him.” “Stop, Eufemio, what do you want?” “If he is not my son, heavens, what will happen?” “Avenge the violated rights of an unfortunate husband.” Performance (in English translation): <https://youtu.be/IJJtgvQFac?t=8875>

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1
DO-RE-MI

Basic Idea 2
DO-RE-MI

Continuation Phrase

Andante e staccato
Eufemio di Efeso

Sofronia, Sostrata

Pur ti tro-vo, o don-na in - fi-da: pa-ga il fio de' fal-li__ tuo-i. Trat-te-ne-te-lo, ar-re-

Solino

Egeone

sta - te-lo! Fer-ma, Eu-fe-mio! di che vuo - i. (Se co - stui non è mio__

Basic Idea 2
DO-RE-MI

Continuation Phrase
Eufemio di Efeso

fi - glio, giu-sto ciel, e qual sa - rà?) Ah d'un mi - se-ro con - sor-te ven-di-ca-te i drit-ti in - fran-ti

The Do-Re-Mi in a presentation phrase sometimes generates impetus for a continuation beyond the third scale degree in the second phrase of the sentence. Figaro's "Non più andrai" contains a concise example of what we might call an Extended Do-Re-Mi. The orchestra's ascent in the two-measure presentation phrase (very much like Paisiello's presentation phrase for the same character, and in the same key, in Example 2) gives Figaro the momentum to resume the rise at the beginning of the two-measure continuation phrase (Ex. 6).

Ex. 6. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, "Non più andrai," mm. 14–17. Translation: "You will no longer have these beautiful plumes." Performance: <https://youtu.be/yz8n2tVyGwc?t=29>

The musical score for "Non più andrai" from Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* (measures 14–17) is presented. The score is in 3/4 time and features a vocal line for Figaro and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with the words "DO-RE-MI..." and continues with "Non più a - vrai que-sti bei pen-nac - chi - ni". The piano accompaniment consists of a two-measure presentation phrase followed by a two-measure continuation phrase. The continuation phrase is marked "extended" and includes a "PAC" (Phrase Accent) mark. The tempo is indicated as "Vivace".

The same principle seems to be at work in the more complicated hybrid phrase structure of Cherubino's "Voi che sapete," where the opening antecedent phrase is followed not by its consequent but by the first of two continuation phrases. The Do-Re-Mi, after a temporary dip, continues up to Sol (Ex. 7). Notice that in both examples of the Extended Do-Re-Mi the extension rises at twice the rate of the initial Do-Re-Mi. This acceleration is characteristic of the beginning of continuation phrases in general.

Ex. 7. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, “Voi che sapete,” 9–16. Translation: “You who know what love is, see, women, if I have it in my heart.” Performance: https://youtu.be/o7y3_SZqNi4?t=44

Antecedent Phrase
Basic Idea

Contrasting Idea

DO-RE-MI (Adeste fideles variant) . . .

[Andante]

1 VOI che sa - pe - te che co - sa è a - mor, HC

13 don - ne ve - de - te s'io l'ho nel cor,

17 don - ne ve - de - te s'io l'ho nel cor. PAC

The Triadic Ascent

Another pattern that Paisiello and Mozart used to generate rising lines is what Gjerdingen calls the Triadic Ascent. He applies this term to a passage in a keyboard sonata by Johann Christian Bach,¹¹ without however discussing it in detail or granting it a place in his Appendix A; it has consequently not yet been fully integrated into the schematicon. The Triadic Ascent is a musical idea presented at two or more successive stages of a rising triad. Like the Do-Re-Mi, it often serves as a rising line in the presentation phrase of

¹¹ Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style*, 269 (analysis of J. C. Bach's Op. 12, No. 6, Andante).

sentences, with Basic Idea 1 based on scale degree 1 and Basic Idea 2 based on scale degree 3.

One of the ancestors of the Triadic Ascent is the military and ceremonial trumpet fanfare, which often involves a line rising through the trumpet's harmonic series. Triadic fanfares were already being incorporated into many kinds of music, including opera, in the seventeenth century; a well known example is Giuseppe Torelli's *Sinfonia* in C, G. 33 (Ex. 8). Antonio Caldara used fanfares at the beginning of his operatic overtures as tributes to Emperor Charles VI, in whose honor and at whose expense the operas were performed at the court theater in Vienna.¹² In the overture to *Ornospade* (1727), Caldara's four clarino parts unfold in imitation (Ex. 9). As we will see, imitative texture was to remain a typical feature of the Triadic Ascent, even when other fanfare-like elements were absent. As late as 1791, Mozart used a canonic trumpet fanfare to convey imperial pomp in his coronation opera *La clemenza di Tito* (a seven-measure sentence, Ex. 10).

Ex. 8. Giuseppe Torelli, *Sinfonia* in C (G. 33) for trumpets, trombone, oboes (omitted here), bassoons, trombone, timpani, strings (omitted here), and basso continuo, mm. 1–4. Performance: <https://youtu.be/buh6XVN1pRM>

Trumpets

Trombone, Timpani, Basso

Ex. 9. Antonio Caldara, *Ornospade* (Vienna, 1727), overture, mm. 1–2, as quoted in Brown, “The Trumpet Overture” (see note 12), 25

Allegro assai

Clarini

Trombone, Timpani

¹² A. Peter Brown, “The Trumpet Overture and Sinfonia in Vienna (1715–1822): Rise, Decline and Reformulation,” *Music in Eighteenth-Century Austria*, ed. David Wyn Jones (Cambridge, 1996), 13–69.

Ex. 10. Mozart, *La clemenza di Tito*, act 1, march in E flat, mm. 1–7. Performance:

<https://youtu.be/Pjw2e71FHQg>

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

Basic Idea 2

Maestoso

TRIADIC ASCENT

① ③

Trumpets

Timpani

5 Continuation Phrase

Full Orchestra

Eighteenth-century composers of opera often used fanfares and fanfare-like passages, even without trumpets, as in the music that accompanies the raising of glasses in the drinking song in Georg Benda's Singspiel *Der Dorfmarkt* (1775, Ex. 11). I suspect that the Triadic Ascent in general, even when not so explicitly identified with the trumpet fanfare as it is in this passage by Benda, conveyed to eighteenth-century audiences something of the festivity, splendor, and majesty associated with the trumpet fanfare.

Ex. 11. Georg Benda, *Der Dorfmarkt* (Gotha, 1775), “Trinkt, trinkt, trinkt!” mm 37–48.

Performance: https://youtu.be/I7f_1Lx16ko?t=64

Allegro

Hier sprechen sie

Hoch alle, hoch!

TRIADIC ASCENT

① ③ ①

Strings

+ Flutes, Bassoons, Horns

43

Paisiello presents a huge Triadic Ascent in the finale of act 3 (Ex. 12). At another extremity is the concision with which Mozart realized the schema in Figaro's "Non più andrai," where the Triadic Ascent serves the unusual function of initiating the continuation phrase of a sentence (Ex. 13). The presentation phrase of the opening melody of Rosina's aria "Già riede primavera" is based on the same schema (Ex. 14). So is a presentation phrase sung by the same character (the countess) in Mozart's opera, as if Mozart wanted to remind his Viennese audience that this was still Paisiello's heroine, now married and a few years older and wiser (Ex. 15).

Ex. 12. Paisiello, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, finale of act 3. Translation: "What is the lawyer doing?" "Be done with the lawyer." "What are you saying about the lawyer?" "What is this lawyer?"
Performance: <https://youtu.be/Rlg4EsAExTM?t=3m6s>

TRIADIC ASCENT

Allegro

Bartolo ③ *Figaro* ⑤ *Basilio* ①

E co - sì che fa il cu - ria - le? Via, fi - ni - te col cu - ria - le. Co - sa di - te del cu -

p *cresc.*

130 *Conte* ③ *Rosina* ⑤

ria - le? Voi par - la - ste col cu - ria - le? Ma co - s'è que - sto cu - ria - le?

f *ff*

Ex. 13. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, "Non più andrai," mm. 6–9. Orchestra in unison and octaves.
Translation: "disturbing women's peace of mind"

TRIADIC ASCENT

Vivace

⑤ ① ③

del - le bel - le tur-ban - do il ri - po - so

Ex. 14. Paisiello, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, “Già riede primavera,” mm. 39–42. Translation: “Already spring returns with its flowering appearance.” Performance: <https://youtu.be/1nVBKUVsGIY?t=1m37s>

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

TRIADIC ASCENT

Basic Idea 2

Andante con moto
Rosina

Già rie - de pri - ma - ve - ra col suo fio - ri - to as - pet - to

Ex. 15. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, “Dove sono,” mm. 1–4. Translation: “Where are the beautiful moments.” Performance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s6RL0xoP9I0>

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

TRIADIC ASCENT

Basic Idea 2

Andante
Contessa

Do - ve so - no i bei mo - men - ti di

Although the first stage of the Triadic Ascent is usually built on the first scale degree, that does not mean that this first stage has to begin, melodically, on the first scale degree. The opening theme of the drinking song in Benda’s *Der Dorfmarkt* begins on 3 (Ex. 16), as does the Triadic Ascent near the beginning of the overture to Mozart’s *Figaro* (Ex. 17). In other respects these are both normal four-measure presentation phrases.

Ex. 16. Benda, *Der Dorfmarkt*, “Trinkt, trinkt, trinkt,” mm. 11–18. Translation: “Drink, drink drink! For in your glass a drop still sparkles.” Performance: https://youtu.be/l7f_1Lx16ko

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

Basic Idea 2

Allegro

TRIADIC ASCENT

Trinkt, trinkt, trinkt! Trinkt, trinkt, trinkt!

Continuation Phrase

15 weil in eu - rer Fla - sche noch ein Trop - fen blinkt

Ex. 17. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, overture, mm. 8–12. Performance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4hmC4KhWoo>

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

Basic Idea 2

Continuation Phrase
(beginning)

Presto

TRIADIC ASCENT

p *ff*

The Do-Re-Mi often serves as the material repeated in a Triad Ascent: an effective way of generating a rising line from 1 to 5. Composers were already using this strategy before Mozart’s birth. In the overture to Gioacchino Cocchi’s *Li matti per amore* (1754) the second violins play 1 – 2 – 3 as the first violins play 3 – 4 – 5, producing the canon so typical of the Triadic Ascent (Ex. 18). Another example of the extension of the Do-Re-Mi by means of a Triadic Ascent with a canon is in Figaro’s “Scorsi già molti paesi” in *Il barbiere*, an eight-measure presentation phrase (Ex. 19).

Ex. 18. Gioacchino Cocchi, *Li matti per amore* (Venice, 1754), overture, mm. 7–12

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

TRIADIC ASCENT (canonic)
DO-RE-MI x 2

Basic Idea 2

Allegro molto

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Continuation Phrase

5

Ex. 19. Paisiello, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, “Scorsi già molti paesi,” mm. 89–96. Translation: “With only a razor, without cash.” Performance: <https://youtu.be/5lHadziM-2g?t=2m27s>

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

TRIADIC ASCENT (canonic)
DO-RE-MI

Basic Idea 2

Andantino

Figaro ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Col sol ra - so - io, sen - za con - tan - ti, col sol ra - so - io, sen - za con - tan - ti

In the second-act finale of Mozart’s opera, Marcellina announces that she has a contract in which Figaro promised to marry her (Ex. 20). Her statement initiates a sentence that, oddly, contains two pairs of basic ideas arranged in two presentation phrases. Marcellina begins formally, with a presentation phrase consisting of a plain Do-Re-Mi in gavotte rhythm, sung twice. But instead of a continuation phrase in what follows, Marcellina stays with the Do-Re-Mi, which serves as the basis of a second presentation phrase; only this time, unable to contain her excitement, she shifts to more energetic patter. The orchestra then repeats the Do-Re-Mi up a third, taking the line up to 5. The Triadic Ascent amplifies the effect of Marcellina’s shocking announcement, as Susanna, Figaro, and the Countess respond with their exclamation, “Come, come?” This sixteen-measure sentence reaches its continuation phrase only with the Count’s call for silence (“Olà, silenzio”)

Ex. 20. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, act 2 finale, mm. 730–37. Translation: “He concluded a matrimonial contract with me, and I expect him to fulfill the contract.” “What?” “Attention! Silence! I am here to render judgment.” Performance:

<https://youtu.be/Uwg3FeoSNhY?t=42m40s>

Allegro assai

*Presentation Phrase 1
Basic Idea 1*
DO-RE-MI ① ② ③

Basic Idea 2
DO-RE-MI ① ② ③

*Presentation Phrase 2
Basic Idea 1*
DO-RE-MI ①

TRIADIC ASCENT (canonic)

Un im - pe-gno nu - zi - a - le ha co - stui con me con - trat - to, e pre - ten - do che il con -

734 *Basic Idea 2* *Susanna, Countess
(Figaro omitted)* *Continuation Phrase*
② ③ ④

trat-to de-va me-co ef-fet-tu - ar. Co - me, co-me! O - là, si -

739
len - zio, si - len - zio, si - len - zio, io son quì per giu - di - car.

Mozart plays amusingly with the conventions of the sentence and the Triadic Ascent with canonic imitation in the trio “Cosa sento” (Ex. 21). Basilio and the count sing a Do-Re-Mi, extended by a Triadic Ascent. Together these constitute a normal presentation phrase (to be followed by no less than three continuation phrases) except that the count “should” enter after two measures; that is where the imitation begins in the violins. But the count actually enters a measure earlier, in order to be able to repeat all of Basilio’s words. If the great baritone Stefano Mandini (who created the role of Count Almaviva) fell into Mozart’s trap here during rehearsals, entering a measure too late, the composer probably enjoyed a laugh at the singer’s expense.

Ex. 21. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, “Cosa sento,” mm. 43–50. Translation: “The poor girl is fainting; how her heart beats.” Performance: <https://youtu.be/43Tyq4JEkWQ?t=45s>

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

Basic Idea 2

TRIADIC ASCENT (canonic)

Allegro assai
Basilio ① DO-RE-MI

Ah già svien la po - ve - ri - na,
Il conte Ah già svien la po - ve - ri - na,
co - me, oh Di - o, le bat - te il cor

Continuation Phrase 1

47

co - me, oh Di - o, le bat - te il cor

The Overture Schema

The passage in “Cosa sento” is one of many in these operas that feature an ascending scale or scale segment over a pedal. For Dean Sutcliffe such passages, which often involve a crescendo, are manifestations of a schema for which he has suggested the name Overture.¹³ With this name he presumably had in mind music like Paisiello’s overture (which, as you can see in Ex. 1, exemplifies this schema). So does Mozart’s overture, which contains three passages based on the Overture schema. Two are in the movement’s tonic, D major: first in the exposition (Ex. 22), then in coda (Ex. 23). In both of these passages Mozart fleetingly tonicizes the subdominant by introducing the flat seventh degree. The progression, over a tonic pedal, is related to the Quiescenza, but differs from many examples of that schema in its high energy and climactic function.¹⁴

Another passage in Mozart’s overture starts in the dominant, A major, and likewise veers to the local subdominant (D), but without subsequently cancelling the flat seventh; the passage serves as a leadback to the tonic, or retransition, with the pedal (A)

¹³ W. Dean Sutcliffe, “Topics in Chamber Music,” *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (New York, 2014), 118–40

¹⁴ My thanks to Nathan Martin for pointing out the Quiescenza-like features of these passages. Following Nathaniel Mitchell’s use of the adjective “quiescent” in reference to a schema that contains features of the Quiescenza (“The Volta: A Galant Gesture of Culmination,” forthcoming), I suggest that we refer to the passages in Exx. 22 and 23 as examples of the “Quiescent Overture.”

serving first as the local tonic, and then as the local dominant (Ex. 24). What I call the Retransitional Overture is common in *Barbiere* and *Figaro*. A concise example is in the Countess's opening cavatina, "Porgi amor": the prima parte ends in the dominant, B flat, and the Retransitional Overture leads back to the tonic E flat (Ex. 25).

Ex. 22. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, overture, mm. 35–45. Performance:

<https://youtu.be/q4hmC4KhWoo?t=28s>

OVERTURE

Presto DO-RE-MI

OVERTURE continued

40

Ex. 23. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, overture, mm. 236–44. Performance:

<https://youtu.be/q4hmC4KhWoo?t=3m19s>

OVERTURE

Presto TRIADIC ASCENT DO-RE-MI

OVERTURE continued

242

cresc.

OVERTURE continued

247

f

Ex. 24. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, overture, mm. 123–35. Performance:

<https://youtu.be/q4hmC4KhWoo?t=1m41s>

RETRANSITIONAL OVERTURE

Presto

DO-RE-MI

127

DO-RE-MI

1 in D

5 in D

131

Ex. 25. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, “Porgi amor,” mm. 32–36. Translation: “Or let me at least die.” Performance: <https://youtu.be/Uwg3FeoSNhY?t=1m45s>

[Larghetto]

La contessa

RETRANSITIONAL OVERTURE

o mi la - scia al - men mo - rir, o mi la - scia al - men mo - rir

1 2 3 4 5 6

4 in E flat

5 in E flat

1 in B flat

But it is the non-modulating Overture that truly pervades the genre—especially in the characterization of the basso buffo. Examples include Paisiello’s iconic “La calunnia,” in which the Overture illustrates the slow and insidious spreading of a malicious rumor (Ex. 26). In Mozart’s “Aprite un po’ quegl’occhi,” the Overture

combines with triplet patter to show Figaro's being driven to distraction in the belief that Susanna is about to be unfaithful (Ex. 27).

Ex. 26. Paisiello, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, "La calunnia," mm. 9–24. Translation: "It begins close to the ground, very quietly, and the vast crowd of commoners collects it and strengthens it; it passes from mouth to mouth, and the devil carries it to every ear; and so it goes." Performance:

<https://youtu.be/tepGV06LqFg?t=20s>

Allegro

OVERTURE

Que - sta qui ra - den - do il suo - lo in - co - min - cia pia - no pia - no e del

① ②

p *sottovoce*

Strings ① + Horns + Bassoons

13

vol - go il va - sto stuo - lo la rac - co - glie e rin - for - zan - do pas - sa

③ ④

+ Oboes + Flutes

17

poi di boc - ca in boc - ca, ed il dia - vo - lo al - l'o -

⑤ *cresc.*

20

CLAUSULA VERA HALF CADENCE

rec - chie ve la por - ta e co - sì è ve la por - ta e co - sì è.

⑥ ⑦ ① ④ ⑤

ff

⑥ ⑤

Ex. 27. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, “Aprite un po’ quegl’occhi,” mm. 59–64. Translation: “Maglign mistresses of deception, friends of suffering, who pretend, lie, and feel no love, no pity.” Performance: <https://youtu.be/Nls9jWOmSJk?t=16m31s>

OVERTURE

ma - li - gne, ma - e - stre d'in-gan-ni, a - mi-che d'af - fan-ni, che fin-go-no, men-to-no, a-mo-re non

63

sen - ton, non sen - ton pie - tà

p

cresc.

Despite the macho quality of these passages, the Overture by no means excludes women. They participate fully in a passage in the finale of Mozart’s act 2, where a musical crescendo conveys an emotional one: Susanna and the Countess try repeatedly, with increasing urgency, to get Figaro to retract his earlier answer while the Count encourages him to confirm it (Ex. 28; the Overture culminates in a Clausula Vera Half Cadence, exactly as in Paisiello’s “La calunnia”).

Although the Overture can sometimes serve as the presentation phrase of a sentence, it seems to do so only in combination with the Triadic Ascent (as in Exx. 18 and 21). By itself, the overture tends to unfold without any regular phrase structure, and is thus of little use in sentences or periods.

The Do-Re-Mi, the Triadic Ascent, and the Overture often overlap. Composers used them alone or together, in many combinations (Table 1). They provided Paisiello and Mozart with essential tools for the construction of the rising lines that are such a characteristic part of both *Barbiere* and *Figaro*. But the operas differ in their use of other rising sequential patterns, which are more plentiful and varied in Mozart’s opera.

Ex. 28. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, finale of act 2, mm. 398–403. Translation: “I don’t know...”
 “You don’t know?” “No!” Performance: Performance: <https://youtu.be/v912J5fkVvs?t=462>

Andante
Figaro **OVERTURE** *Susanna* *Figaro* *La contessa*

Nol co - no - sco... Nol co - no - sci? No! Nol co -

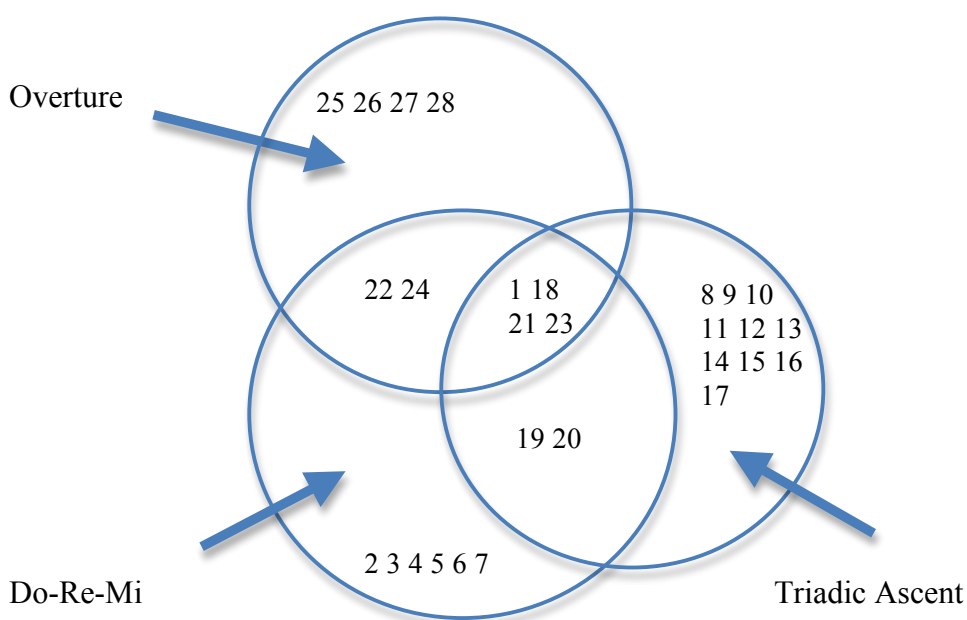
①

Susanna, La contessa, Il conte **CLAUSULA VERA HALF-CADENCE** *Figaro*

no - sci? No! Nol co - no - sci? No! Nol co - no - sci? No, no, no!

cresc. *f*

Table 1. The overlapping domains of the Do-Re-Mi, the Triadic Ascent, and the Overture. The numbers refer to the examples in this paper



Other Kinds of Rising Lines

Among the few passages in Paisiello's opera in which rising lines are generated by means other than the Do-Re-Mi, the Triadic Ascent, and the Overture, are those that involve a pattern that I call Ascending Parallel Thirds. The bass rises by step; the melody rises in parallel thirds above the bass. Examples include Figaro's "Scorsi già molti paesi," (Ex. 29) and the terzetto "Ma dov'eri tu stordido" (Ex. 30). Giorgio Sanguinetti calls the Ascending 5–6 Sequence "the simplest way to accompany an ascending scale" in the bass;¹⁵ Paisiello here demonstrates an even simpler way. The passage from "Ma dov'eri tu stordito" can be heard as a bizarre sentence, with a five-measure presentation phrase (four overlapping basic ideas) and a three-measure continuation; it contributes to the comedy of this hilarious ensemble.

Ex. 29. Paisiello, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, "Scorsi già molti paesi," mm. 26–30. Translation: "I wrote an opera and it flopped; and with a knapsack on my back I have traveled far and wide." Performance: <https://youtu.be/E6WqxC4xfUg?t=22>

Allegro
COMMA

ASCENDING PARALLEL THIRDS

Figaro

fe - ci un' o - pe - ra e ca - sca - i, e col mio ba - ga - glio ad - dos - so me ne cor - si a più non

⑦ ① ②

28

⑤ ⑥

PONTE

pos - so, e col mio ba - ga - glio ad - dos - so me ne cor - si a più non pos - so

③ ④ ⑤

¹⁵ Sanguinetti, *The Art of Partimento*, 136.

Ex. 30. Paisiello, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, “Ma dov’eri tu stordito,” mm. 38–44. Translation: “I’m losing my patience.” “You’ve found me in such a bad state that I feel sick.” Performance:

<https://youtu.be/NEp6CZz1Lpk?t=60>

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

Basic Idea 2

Basic Idea 3

ASCENDING
PARALLEL THIRDS

Svegliato
Co - sì ma - le m'ha tro - va - to,

Bartolo

Moderato

Bartolo

La pa - zien - za io per - do già, la pa - zien - za io per - do

① ② ③

Basic Idea 4

Continuation Phrase

Svegliato che mi sen - to sì am - ma - la - to.

Bartolo

41

già, la pa - zien - za, la pa - zien - za io per - do già.

④ ⑤

Mozart also used patterns involving a bass that rises by step, but with more variety and contrapuntal interest. He loved the Ascending 7–6 Sequence, which he used often in his instrumental music, especially in the 1770s, to enhance the magnificence of grand orchestral passages.¹⁶ Examples include the closing material of the slow movement of the Piano Concerto in E flat K. 271; the exposition of the finale of the Haffner Serenade, K. 250, and the closing material of the first movement of the Symphonie Concertante, K. 365.

In all three of those passages Mozart used the Ascending 7–6 to set up an Indugio, which leads in two of the passages to a Converging Half Cadence. Mozart used the Ascending 7–6 in the same harmonic context in *Figaro*, but more concisely. A passage in the sestetto “Riconosci in questo amplesso” that uses the Ascending 7–6 is a regular eight-measure sentence in which the sequence initiates the continuation phrase. Indulging in none of the orchestral exuberance of the instrumental examples cited above, Mozart

¹⁶ On the Ascending 7–6 Sequence see Sanguinetti, *The Art of Partimento*, 137–38.

entirely omitted the Indugio and went directly from the Ascending 7-6 to a Converging Half Cadence (Ex. 31). The same brevity that Mozart achieved here characterizes the Ascending 7-6 in a grand orchestral tutti that he composed shortly after *Figaro*, in the first movement of the Piano Concerto in C, K. 503. In Examples 31 and 32 the concatenation of the Ascending 7-6 and Converging Half-Cadence unwinds in exactly the same number of measures.

Ex. 31. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, “Riconosci in questo amplesso,” mm. 25–33. Translation: “Stop, signor Count. A thousand doubloons are ready here, which I’m coming to pay for Figaro, to purchase his freedom.” Performance: <https://youtu.be/Y2eNFZnnIao?t=13m34s>

Andante

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

Susanna

Al-to, al-to, si-gnor Con-te, mil-le dop-pie son qui

Continuation Phrase
ASCENDING 7-6 SEQUENCE

29

① ① suspended ② ② suspended ③ ③ suspended ⑦

pron-te, a pa-gar ven-go per Fi-ga-ro, ed a por-lo in li-ber

① ② ③ ④ #④ ⑤

CONVERGING HC

Detailed description: This musical score for Example 31 from Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* (Act II, scene 1) features Susanna's aria 'Riconosci in questo amplesso'. The score is in G major, 3/4 time, and marked 'Andante'. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a 'Presentation Phrase' (Basic Idea 1) in measures 25-28, followed by a 'Continuation Phrase' (ASCENDING 7-6 SEQUENCE) in measures 29-33. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support, with a 'CONVERGING HC' (Converging Half Cadence) in measures 32-33. The score includes lyrics in Italian and English, and numerical annotations (1, 2, 3, 7) indicating specific harmonic points or fingerings.

Ex. 32. Mozart, Piano Concerto in C, K. 503, I, mm. 32–36. Performance: <https://youtu.be/5HMPXOBc7WY?t=50>

ASCENDING 7-6 SEQUENCE

① ① suspended ② ② suspended ③ ③ suspended

① ② ③ ④ #④ ⑤

CONVERGING HALF CADENCE

Detailed description: This musical score for Example 32 from Mozart's Piano Concerto in C, K. 503, first movement, shows the piano and harpsichord parts in measures 32-36. The score is in C major, 4/4 time, and marked 'Allegro'. The piano part features a 'CONVERGING HALF CADENCE' in measures 32-33, followed by an 'ASCENDING 7-6 SEQUENCE' in measures 34-36. The harpsichord part provides harmonic support. The score includes numerical annotations (1, 2, 3, 7) indicating specific harmonic points or fingerings.

The passage in Ex. 32 is preceded by one in which the ascending scale is in the treble and the suspended notes are in the bass. Using the vocabulary of figured bass we might call this an Ascending 2–3 Sequence; but we can also hear it as an Ascending 7–6 with the treble and bass inverted (Ex. 33). Mozart used this same pattern in *Figaro* as well, in the opening duet. We hear it first in the orchestral introduction; when it returns later, Susanna contributes an ascending scale that helps clarify the voice-leading and makes it easy to identify this as a sentence (Ex. 34). Hers is the line that, in a normal Ascending 7–6, would serve as the bass. By accelerating the rate at which the sequence unfolds at m. 41, Mozart conveys Susanna’s growing impatience as she waits for Figaro to admire her hat—and also identifies this as the beginning of the sentence’s continuation phrase. With this charming duet as the opera’s first vocal number, Mozart served notice that *Figaro* would feature a splendid array of rising passages, varying in complexity but all derived from his creative manipulation of voice-leading schemata and phrase structures familiar to his audience.

Ex. 33. Mozart, Piano Concerto in C, K. 503, I, mm. 26–32. Performance:

<https://youtu.be/5HMPXOBc7WY?t=42>

ASCENDING 2–3 SEQUENCE (ASCENDING 7–6 SEQUENCE with treble and bass inverted)

Allegro maestoso

① ② ③

① ② ③

① suspended ② ② suspended ③

CONVERGING HALF CADENCE

29 ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

③ suspended ④ ④ suspended ⑤ ⑤ suspended #④ ⑤

Ex. 34. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, “Cinque . . . dieci . . .”, mm. 36–44. Translation: “Five . . . ten . . . twenty . . . thirty . . . thirty-six” “Take a look, dear Figaro. Look now at my hat”
 Performance: <https://youtu.be/q4hmC4KhWoo?t=5m13s>

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1 *Basic Idea 2*

ASCENDING 2-3 SEQUENCE
 DO-RE-MI

Allegro

me. Guar-da un po', mio ca - ro Fi - ga - ro, guar - da un
 Cin - que... die - ci...

Continuation Phrase

po', mio ca - ro Fi - ga - ro, guar - da un po', guar - da un
 ven - ti... tren - ta...

CONVERGING HALF CADENCE

po', guar - da a - des - so il mio cap - pel - lo, guar - da...
 tren - ta - sei - i...

Another ascending sequence with which Mozart enhanced the variety of rising passages is what Gjerdingen calls the Monte Principale, characterized by a bass that rises a fourth and falls a third.¹⁷ Mozart seems to have associated this schema with Susanna, who participates in several of the ensembles in which it occurs, including the sextetto “Riconosci in questo amplesso” (Ex. 35) and the finale of act 4 (Ex. 36).

Ex. 35. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, “Riconosci in questo amplesso,” mm. 80–84. Translation: “His mother?” Performance: <https://youtu.be/Y2eNFZnnlao?t=15m19s>

MONTE PRINCIPALE

Andante

Susanna Bartolo Susanna Conte

Sua ma - dre? Sua ma - dre! Sua ma - dre? Sua

① ④ ② ⑤ ③ ⑥ ④

82

Susanna Don Curzio Susanna Marcellina

ma - dre! Sua ma - dre? Sua ma - dre! Sua ma - dre? Sua ma - dre

⑦ ⑤ ① ⑤ ①

In a more complicated passage in the duettino “Aprite, presto aprite” (Ex. 37), an up-a-fourth, down-a-third bass encourages us to hear it as a Monte Principale, but unlike typical manifestations of the schema, the music is tonally unstable. By tonizing several keys, both minor and major, in quick succession, this passage conveys the excitement and anxiety felt by Cherubino and Susanna as they wait in the locked room for the return of the count, armed with a key.

¹⁷ Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style*, 98; Sanguinetti, *The Art of Partimento*, 153.

Ex. 36. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, Finale of act 4, mm. 204–208. Translation: “What madness, what rage.” Performance: <https://youtu.be/Nls9jWomSJk?t=32m15s>

MONTE PRINCIPALE

Allegro di molto

Susanna
f Che sma - - - nia, che _____ fu - ror, _____ che sma - - - nia

Figaro
f Che _____ sma - nia, che _____ ca - lor, _____ che sma - nia

f ① ④ ② ⑤ ③ ⑥ ④ ⑦

Ex. 37. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, “Aprite, presto aprite,” mm. 31–37. Translation: “Let’s look outside. It looks out on the garden.” “Stop, Cherubino, stop for pity’s sake.” Performance: <https://youtu.be/Uwg3FeoSNhY?t=24m40s>

Allegro assai

Cherubino MONTE PRINCIPALE (modulating)
 Veg- gia-mo un po' qui fuo-ri, da pro-prio nel giar -

E minor G major

Susanna
 di - no. Fer - ma - te Che - ru - bi - no, fer - ma - te, fer - ma - te, per pie - tà.

A minor C major

① ⑤ ① ④ ⑦ ⑤ ①

“Se vuol venire nella mia scuola, il partimento le insegnerò”

I conclude with an aria by Mozart that, in about two minutes and forty seconds, manages to include almost all the schemata for the generation of rising lines that we have discussed. In “Se vuol ballare” (Ex. 38) Figaro addresses the absent count, offering to give him a dancing lesson. Mozart’s setting seems to allude to a musical analogy to a dancing lesson, namely a lesson in composition. Figaro plays the maestro, not only in the number and variety of schemata that he presents, but also in the repetitiveness and the textural simplicity with which he presents them. Beginning at m. 21 he repeatedly sings the Prinner’s characteristic bass 4-3-2-1, as if inviting a student to sing the corresponding treble 6-5-4-3. He then shows how the Prinner can be used to modulate to the dominant, again making sure, through repetition and simplicity of texture, that his student understands.

“Se vuol ballare” begins with the same combination of musical elements as the passage in *Il barbiere* quoted in Ex. 19: moderate tempo, triple meter, a Do-Re-Mi extended by means of a Triadic Ascent, all within a sentence. Mozart thus identified Figaro as the character his Viennese audience was familiar with from Paisiello’s opera, just as he was later to identify his Countess with Paisiello’s Rosina. After the modulation to the dominant and a series of cadences, a Retransitional Overture (m. 42) brings the music back to the tonic—or at least we think this is where we’re going, before the dominant of F is replaced with the dominant of D (m. 51), leading to an unexpected detour to D minor, with the Prinner transformed into a Lament.

The delayed return of F major coincides with another surprise: a shift of meter and tempo that allows us to hear the opening Do-Re-Mi and Triadic Ascent in a completely new context (except that here again the schemata mark the beginning of a sentence). At m. 88 we find a rare instance of Mozart using the Ascending Parallel Thirds, a pattern more typical of Paisiello, again in association with a melody reminiscent of one sung by the same character in *Il barbiere*.¹⁸ As if dissatisfied with this schema, Mozart quickly transforms it, at m. 96, into his favorite Ascending 7-6 Sequence, using it precisely as he used it the passage quoted in Ex. 31: as the beginning of a continuation phrase. He used Ascending 7-6 once again, almost like a signature, at the very end of the aria, this time without the rest of the sentence of which it was originally a part.

The schematic world of Paisiello’s *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and Mozart’s *Le nozze di Figaro* differs significantly from that of Gjerdingen’s Appendix A. That, however, does not lessen the value of schema theory for the analysis of eighteenth-century comic opera. On the contrary: in encouraging us to view the schematicon as subject to change and to think about how conventional voice-leading patterns interact with the equally conventional phrase structure of late eighteenth-century music, opera buffa reminds us that schema theory—like all our efforts to understand the music of Mozart and his contemporaries—will always be a work in progress.

¹⁸ At the words “La mia bottega è a quattro passi” in the duet “Non dubitar o Figaro”; see Daniel Hertz, *Mozart’s Operas* (Berkeley, 1990), 142–43.

Ex. 38. Mozart, *Le nozze di Figaro*, “Se vuol ballare, signor contino,” complete. Translation: “If you want to dance, my dear count, I will play the guitar. If you want to come to my school, I will teach you the capriole. I will... I will... but take it easy. Better to dissimulate, to reveal each secret at its proper time. Skilfully fencing, skilfully manipulating, jabbing here, deceiving there, I will upset all your plans.” Performance: <https://youtu.be/LLxtGPhnbc>

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

TRIADIC ASCENT
DO-RE-MI

Basic Idea 2

Allegretto

① ② ③ ③ ④ ⑤

Se vuol bal - la - re, si - gnor con - ti - no, se vuol bal - la - re, si - gnor con - ti - no,

pizz.

Continuation Phrase

SOL-FA-MI / ROMANESCA

⑤ ④ ③ HALF-CADENCE

CADENCE ... evaded ...

il chi - tar - ri - no le suo - ne - rò, il chi - tar - ri - no le suo - ne - rò, sì, le suo - ne -

① ⑤ ⑥ ④ ⑤ ⑤ ① ⑤

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

18 evaded ... completed

PRINNER x 3

arco

Se vuol ve - ni - re

① ⑤ ① ④ ③ ② ① ④ ③ ② ①

25 *Basic Idea 2* *Continuation Phrase*
MODULATING PRINNER x 2

nel - la mia scuo - la, la ca - pri - o - la le in - se - gne -

30 *CADENCE ...* *evaded ...* *evaded ...*

rò, se vuol ve - ni - re nel - la mia scuo - la, la ca - pri - o - la le in - se - gne -

38 *RETRANSITIONAL OVERTURE*

rò, si, le in - se - gne - rò, si, le in - se - gne - rò. Sa -

44

prò... sa - prò... sa - prò... sa -

③ = ⑦ in F

① = ⑤ in F

49

DIGRESSION TO D MINOR

prò... sa - prò... ma pia - no, pia-no, pia-no,

④ = ⑥ in D minor

⑦ in D minor

54

CONVERGING HALF CADENCE PONTE LAMENT x 4

pia-no, pia-no, pia-no, pia - no, me - glio o gni ar -

④ ④ ⑤ ① ⑦ ⑥ ⑤ ① ⑦ ⑥

59

ca - no dis - si - mu - lan - do sco - pir po - trò!

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1

Presto DO-RE-MI...

Basic Idea 2
extended

L'ar - te scher - men - do, l'ar - te a-do - bran - do, di quà pun - gen - do, di là scher - zan - do,

Continuation Phrase
HALF-CADENCE

PONTE

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1
FONTE:
G minor...

tut - te le mac-chi-ne, ro - ve - sci - rò, ro - ve - scie - rò, l'ar - te scher-

81

Basic Idea 2

F major

Continuation Phrase 1
ASCENDING PARALLEL THIRDS

men-do, l'ar-te a-do-pran-do, di quà pun-gen-do, di là scher-zan-do, tut-te le mac-chi-ne

⑤ ① ⑤ ① ① ②

90

Continuation Phrase 2
ASCENDING 7-6 SEQUENCE

ro-ve-scie-rò, tut-te le mac-chi-ne ro-ve-scie-rò, tut-te le mac-chi-ne

CADENCE

③ ④ ⑤ ① ① ②

98

Presentation Phrase
Basic Idea 1
TRIADIC ASCENT
DO-RE-MI

ro-ve-scie-rò, ro-ve-scie-rò, ro-ve-scie-rò. Se vuol bal-la-re, si-gnor con-

FALLING THIRDS

HALF-CADENCE

③ ④ ④ ② ⑦ ⑤ ① ②

107

Basic Idea 2

Continuation Phrase
SOL-FA-MI / ROMANESCA

HALF-CADENCE

ti - no, se vuol bal - la - re, si - gnor con - ti - no, il chi - tar - ri - no le suo - ne -

③ ③ ④ ⑤ ⑤ ④ ③

① ⑤ ⑥ ④

115

CADENCE ... evaded ... evaded ... completed

rò, il chi - tar - ri - no le suo - ne - rò, sì, le suo - ne - rò, sì, le suo - ne -

⑤ ⑤ ① ⑤ ① ⑤

123

Presto

Continuation Phrase
ASCENDING 7-6 SEQUENCE

CADENCE

rò.

① ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ①