

MTO 14.2 Examples: Väisälä, Rhetoric and Justification in Analysis

(Note: audio, video, and other interactive examples are only available online)

<http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.08.14.2/mto.08.14.2.vaisala.php>

Example 1. Brahms, Piano Quartet No. 3, mm. 1–27, three conceptions of bass line hierarchy

Bass-line hierarchy

- After Wen:
- After Ng:
- My suggestion:

15 *p* *espress.* *dim. sempre* *pp*

20 *espress.* *dim. sempre* *pp*

25 *espress.* *dim. sempre* *pp*

f *dim.* *pp*

Ped. *pp* *Ped.*

Wen: (B \flat)
 Ng: (B \flat)
 Väisälä: (B \flat)

A)

F	G
---	---

 (F F#) G

F (G G \flat)

F	G
---	---

(F) G \flat)

F	G
---	---

Example 2. Brahms, Piano Quartet No. 3, three readings of harmonic structure

(a) Wen's reading:

(b) reading based on Ng's bass-line hierarchy:

(c) My suggestion:

The image displays three musical staves, each representing a different harmonic analysis of a passage from Brahms' Piano Quartet No. 3. Each staff is in G major and features a treble clef and a bass line. Above each staff, five measure numbers are circled: 11, 20, 21, 25, and 27. The harmonic structures are labeled as follows: (a) I, IV₇, v₇; (b) I, IV₇, v₇; and (c) I, IV₇, v₇. The analysis in (a) uses a dashed line to group measures 11-20 and 21-27. The analysis in (b) uses a solid line to group measures 11-20 and 21-27. The analysis in (c) uses solid lines to group measures 11-20 and 21-27.

Example 3. Brahms, Piano Quartet No. 3, mm. 1–32, voice-leading sketch

(brackets indicate $D\sharp-D\flat$ relationships)

(c: $IV\sharp^7 V?$)

$b\flat$: I $\overset{\text{---}}{\text{---}}$ $bVII^6$ $\overset{\text{---}}{\text{---}}$ $V^7 \sharp VI$ bVI V

c: I $\overset{\text{---}}{\text{---}}$ V $bVII\flat$ $\overset{\text{---}}{\text{---}}$ $IV\sharp \sharp IV\flat$ V $\overset{\text{---}}{\text{---}}$ $-^7$ I

("It.")

Example 4. Brahms, Piano Quartet No. 3, rhythmic treatment of “parallelistic” progressions

(a)
Wens' reading
showing a parallelism
(brackets)

3 9 13 17 20 21

5 (6) 5 6

6 6 6 6 6 6

I ${}^b\text{VII}^b$ IV^6 IV_4^7 V_4

(b) The correspondence of this parallelism with the music

meter: 1 2 3 1 1 2 3

As if to compensate

8 18 20 25

=E b =C b

Pf.

1 2 3 1 1 2 3 1