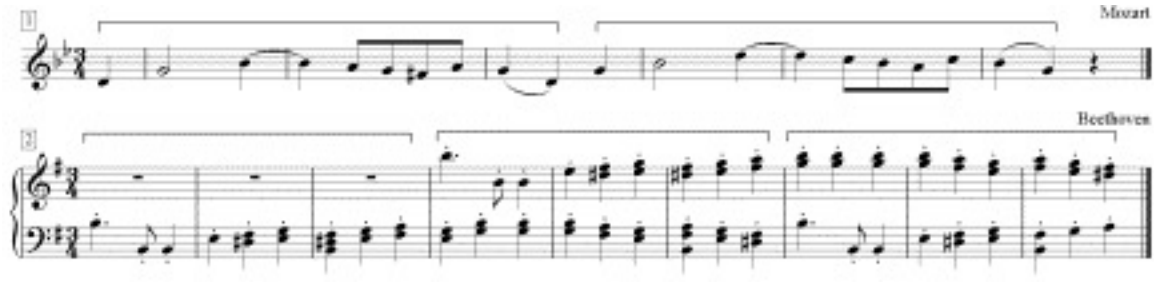
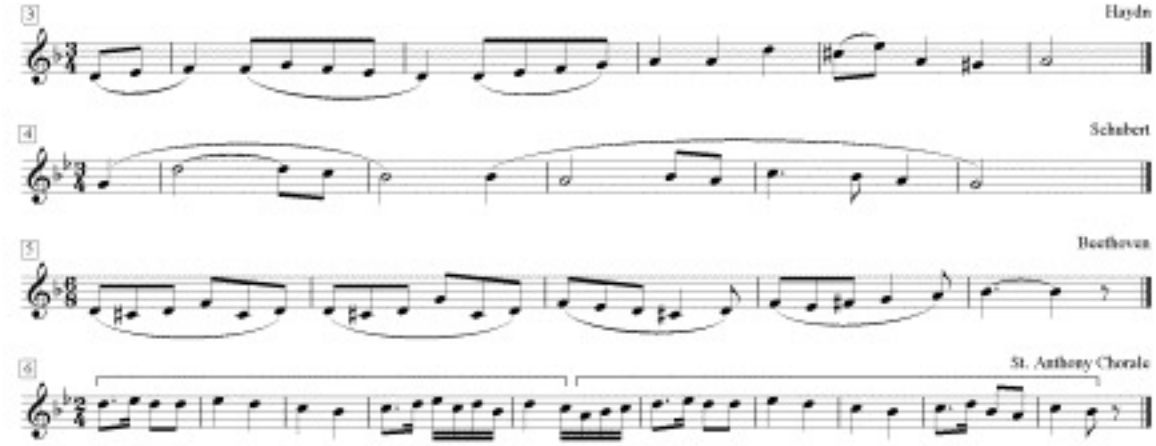
I. Inherently Irregular Phrases

Irregularity in phrases results either from reaching the cadence a bit too soon, or by an unequal association of melodic members (i.e., 2-measure group plus 3-measure group resulting in a 5-measure phrase.)

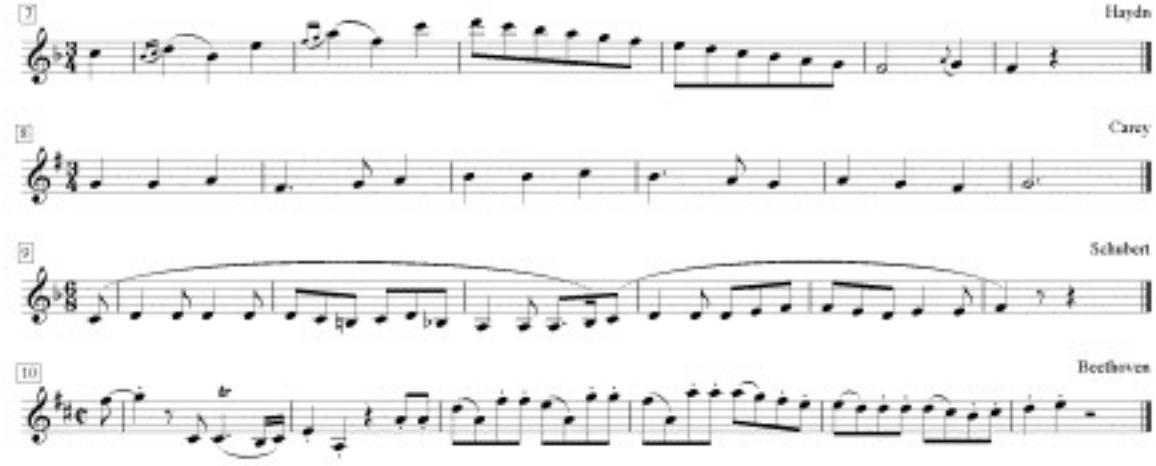
A. Three-Measure Phrases



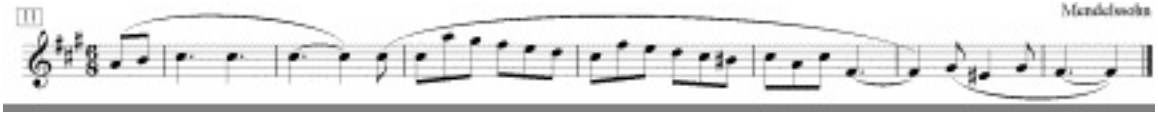
B. Five-Measure Phrases



C. Six-Measure Phrases



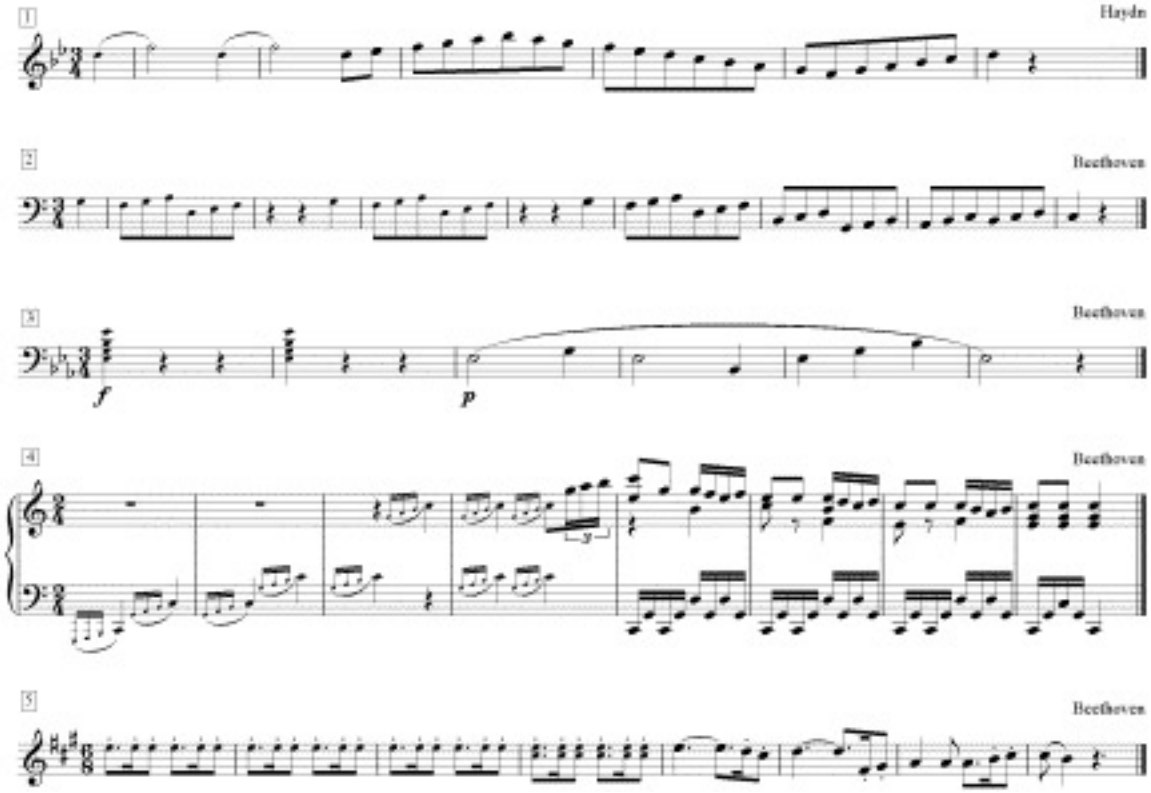
D. Seven-Measure Phrase



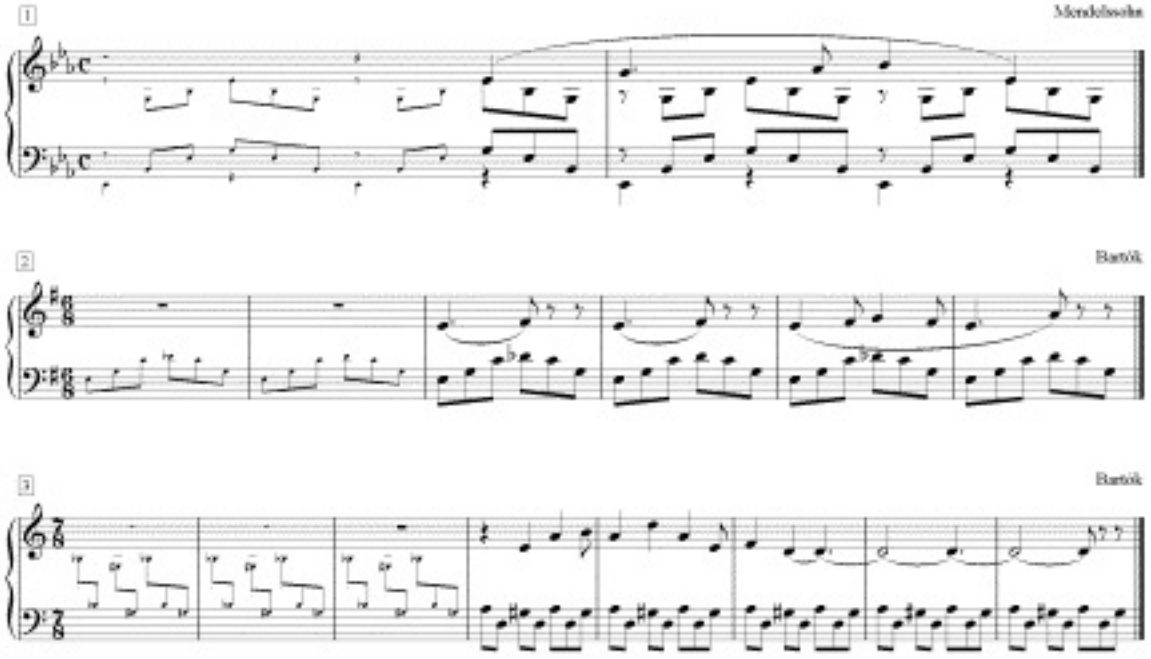
II. Irregular Phrases: Extensions at the Beginning

Extensions at the beginning of the phrase: an extension which occurs before the phrase proper has begun but is part of the phrase rather than independent of it. Generally, careful listening will reveal where the phrase proper actually begins.

A. Anticipation of the melody (smaller notes indicate the anticipations)



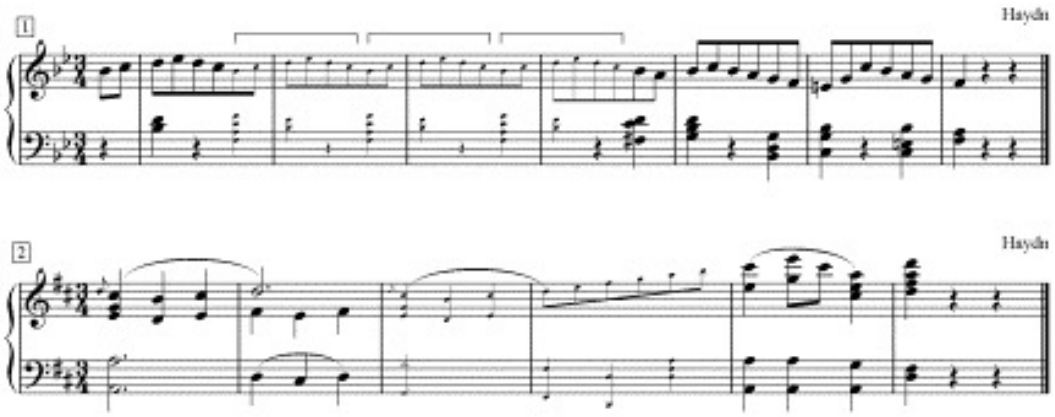
B. Establishment of the accompaniment pattern (Small notes indicate the introduction)



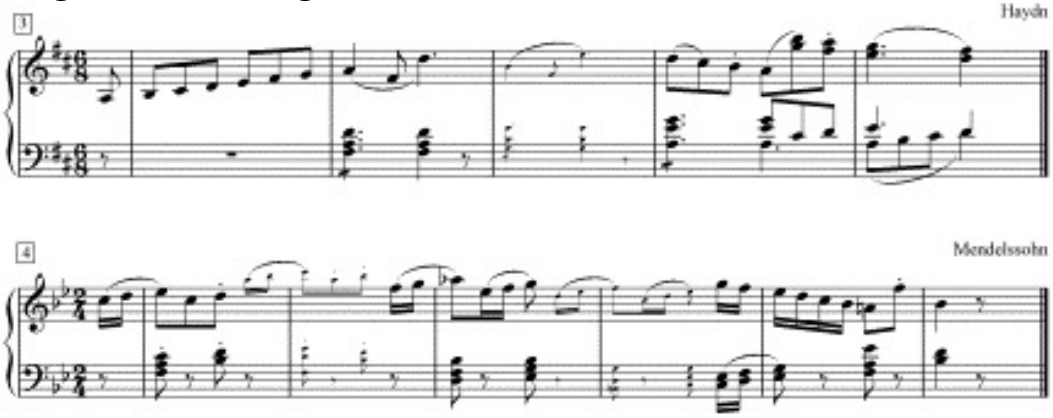
III: Irregular Phrases: Extensions in the Middle

Extensions within a phrase: these can be confusing, unless the 'regular' design of the phrase is carefully examined. At any inserted extension, the phrase may be (figuratively speaking) pried apart to admit the insertion. Therefore, a litmus test of such an extension is to hear the phrase *without the extension* and ensure that it still makes sense (allowing for octave transpositions that may take place during the extension.)

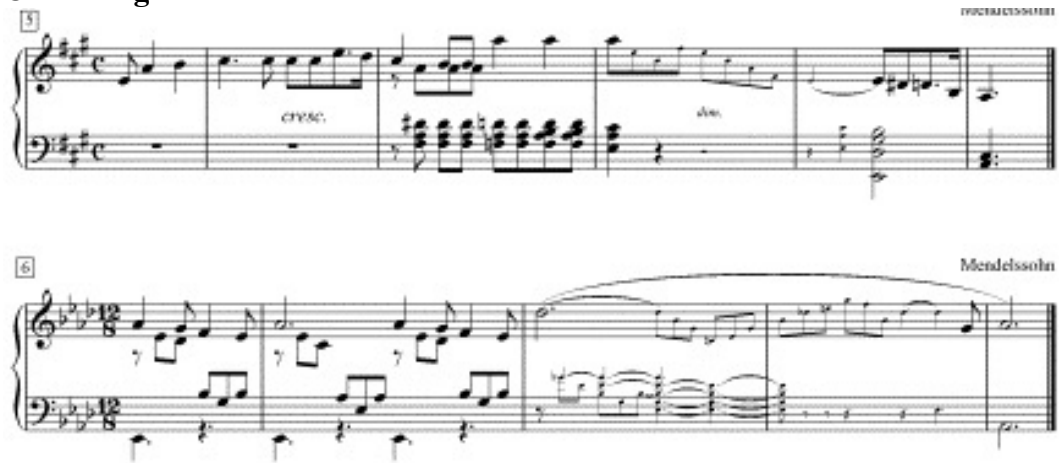
A. Exact (or slightly modified) repetition of a figure—either a single measure, or more or less than a measure



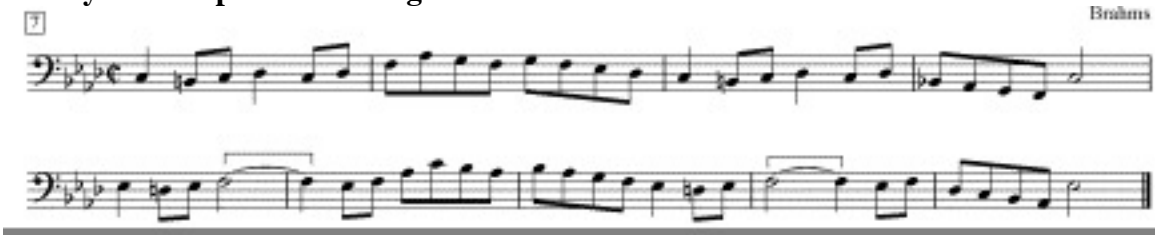
B. Sequence of a figure—either a single measure, or more or less than a measure.



C. Prolongation of a tone or chord



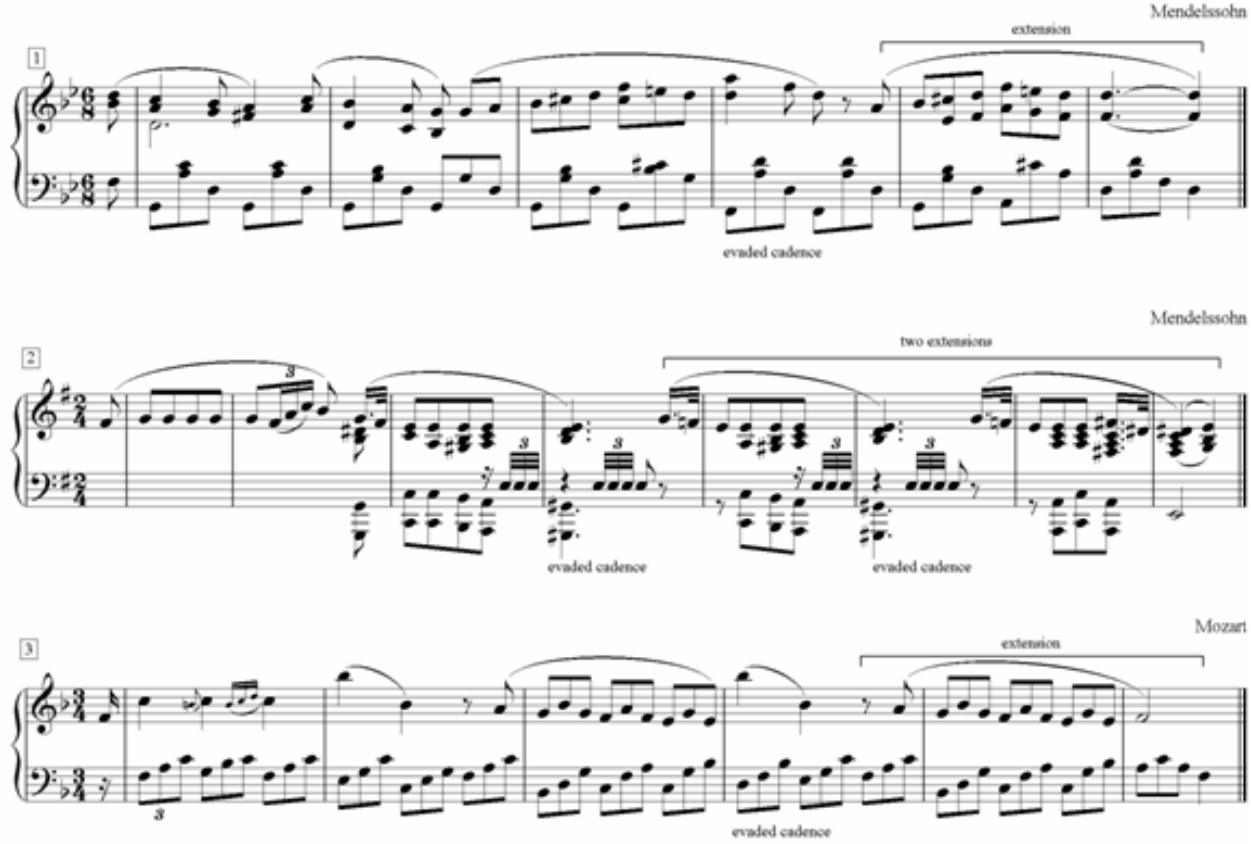
D. Rhythmic expansion of a figure



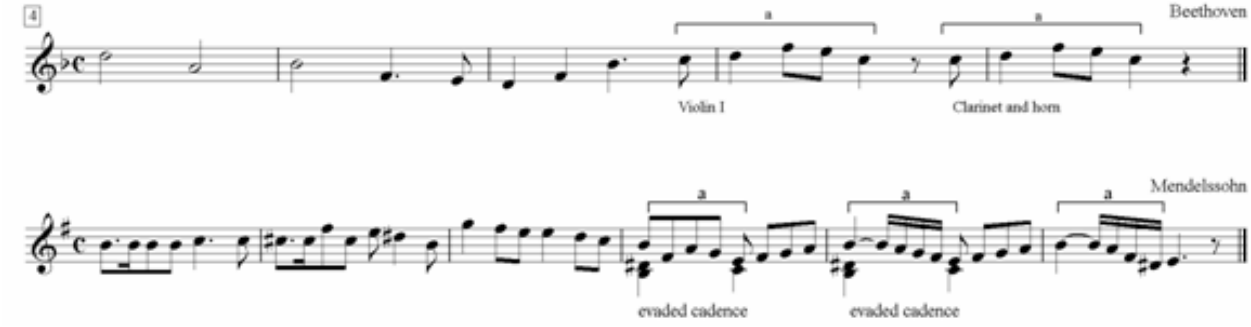
IV. Irregular Phrases: Extensions at the End of the Phrase

It is sometimes difficult to differentiate between extensions at the end and those within a phrase. It will prove helpful to remember that in most instances the extensions at the end occur *after* the actual or expected cadence. Since every extension at the end is terminated by a cadence, it may seem that where the extension occurs after the actual cadence there may be two cadences to the phrase. This, of course, is impossible since each phrase has only one cadence.

A. Repetition of the last half of the phrase

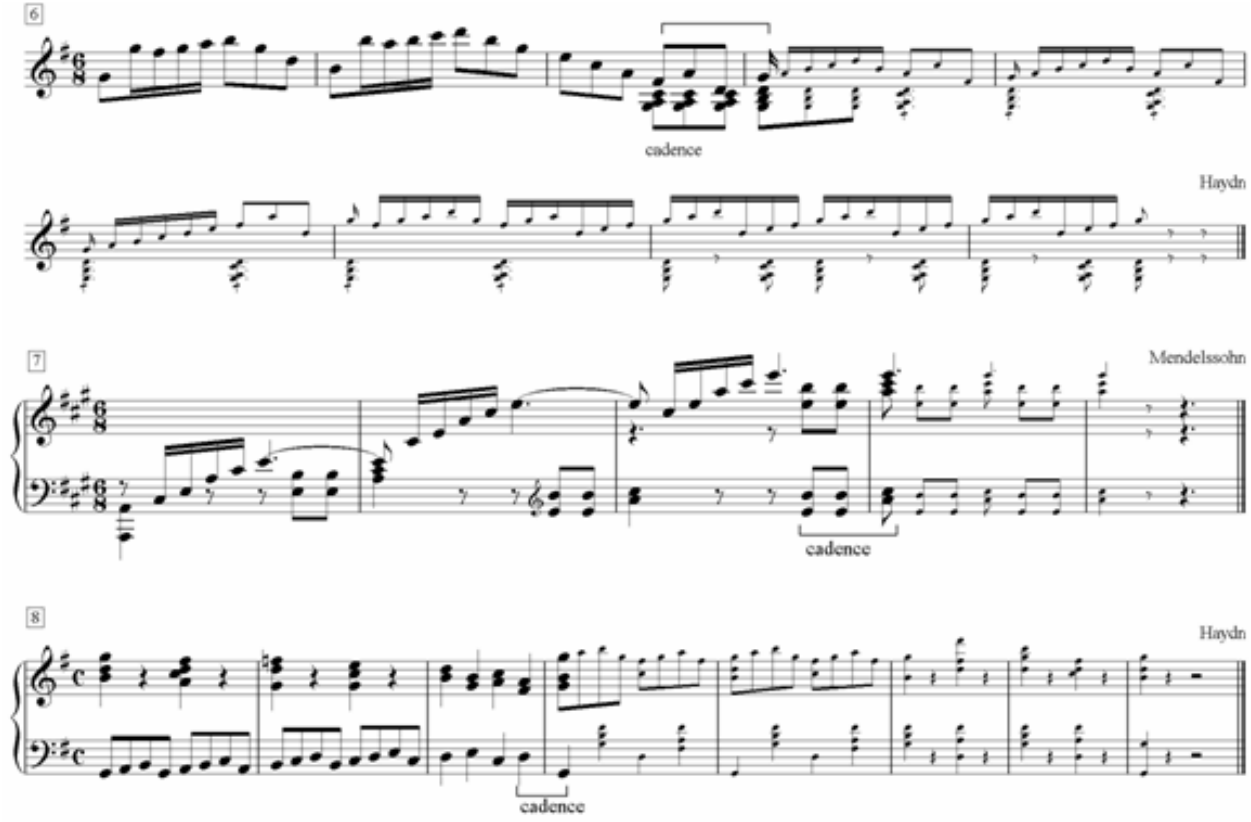
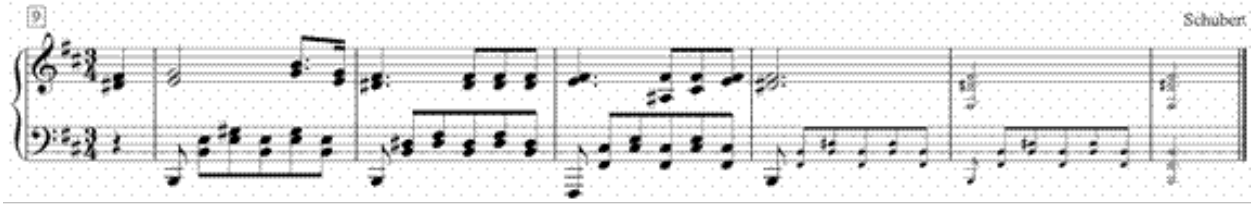


B. Repetition of the last member of the phrase



C. Sequence of the last half of the phrase (fairly rare)

D. Repetition of the cadence group (exact, or with rhythmic or melodic modifications)



E. Lengthening of the final chord.