

**Phrase structure and formal functions in the  
opening themes of Tchaikovsky's *Seasons op. 37*:  
Departures from formal archetypes**

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## Chapter One

# Introduction

### 1.1 Brief historical background of the work

In November 1875, Nikolay Bernard, the editor of the St. Petersburg periodical *Nouvelliste*, commissioned Tchaikovsky to compose a piano cycle of twelve solo piano pieces following titles that described each individual month of the year. Bernard himself then added an epigraph for each piece before the work was published as a monthly highlight in the popular Russian music magazine.<sup>1</sup> This set of piano divertimentos, written between December 1875 and May 1876, is now known as *The Seasons op. 37b*.<sup>2</sup>

The instructions from the publisher to Tchaikovsky (now lost) could be restored with the composer's reply in a letter dated in late November 1875:

I've received your letter, and am most obliged to you for your kind willingness to pay me so large a fee. I will make an effort... to carry the thing off to your satisfaction. I will be sending you the first piece soon, and perhaps even two or three at once. Unless something intervenes, the thing will go off quickly... I've kept all your titles.<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, Tchaikovsky kept his promise in sending in his compositions quickly. Correspondence with Bernard and records from the original autographs show that the first two pieces were sent in December 1875 with pieces no. 3 to 5

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<sup>1</sup> Brown 1992, 122.

<sup>2</sup> Landrum 1997, 8. *The Seasons* first bore the title of *Twelve Little Character Pictures for Piano* in its first publication in 1876 under original publisher, *Nouvelliste*. Subsequently, the title was changed to *The Seasons. Twelve character pieces for piano* in 1885, with addition of the opus number 37b, under the publishing rights of Pytor Jurgenson.

<sup>3</sup> Korabelnikova and Vajdman 1998, v.

written ahead of each respective month and the last seven pieces in quick successions before he left aboard in May 1876.<sup>4</sup> This seems to effectively refute the former recounts of Nikolay Pushkin on how the composer had to be reminded by his valor Aleksay Sofronov to sit down and write a single piece each month throughout the year.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, the strong monetary stimulus underlying the completion of these pieces and considerations of the work as salon music, worked against the acceptance of this music as a serious work in Romantic repertory. Inevitably, it came under a barrage of criticism and mixed opinions by scholars representing much important literature on Tchaikovsky's composition and life in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup> Many of such criticisms arose from three aspects of the music – form, melodic and motivic content and value of the work as a salon or concert repertoire. The first two aspects will be addressed in greater detail alongside other important analytical aspects in this paper whilst the latter was well addressed in a performance-led analysis paper by Michael Landrum who sought pedagogical ideas on how the piece could be taught and performed.<sup>7</sup> Further analytical progress of the work was attempted in Katharine Boyes' dissertation paper that entailed a detailed discussion of compositional devices including a comprehensive table of recurring compositional elements in *The Seasons*.<sup>8</sup> Besides the unique approach taken by each author, both papers provided a comprehensive and clear analytical discourse on the work in addition to useful insights on the cultural environment in which the pieces were composed. It is beyond the purpose of this paper to resolve every issue that has been raised as a

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<sup>4</sup> Brown 1992, 122.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid; 122.

<sup>6</sup> See (1) Garden 1993, 54. (2) Brown 1992, 122. (3) Dickinson 1946, 118.

<sup>7</sup> Landrum 1997.

<sup>8</sup> Boyes juxtaposed this piano cycle with other works that are similarly associated with events within a calendar year. See Boyes 1998.

criticism against *The Seasons*; but rather, by looking closer at aspects of form and its interaction with melodic-motivic and harmonic content, I aim to provide a more substantial and reliable perspective on the musical value of the work.

## 1.2 Methodology of this Analytical thesis

The following quotation by Boris Assafyev instigates the motivation for this paper:

The convincing nature of Tchaikovsky's melody is not dependent on the scale of the composition and its form, although the quality and character of the melodic material determines the form to a great extent. This is what makes any of the piano pieces from the famous "Four seasons" cycle just as striking and titanic in scope as the First Piano Concerto.<sup>9</sup>

Here, Assafyev aptly refutes a pervasive misconception on the work - that individual small-scale formal structures and repetitive figurations obstruct the creation and development of melodic ideas in a piece.<sup>10</sup> In this paper, I would like to conduct an analysis of each theme that examines how components of the theme constitutes functions that formulate a specific formal type and structure; that is I will study grouping structures and their relationship to its underlying harmony, formal boundaries (cadence) and *formal functions*.

To begin, I would like to establish my analytical parameters with the comprehensive theory of musical syntax borrowed from William Caplin's *Theory of Formal Functions*.<sup>11</sup> Caplin's idea concentrates on engaging the temporal experience of the listener to the form of the work. The idea of musical temporality derives from his claim on one's ability to detect a sense of being in

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<sup>9</sup> Assafyev 1947, 6. The author refers "Four Seasons cycle" to *The Seasons op. 37b*.

<sup>10</sup> Korabelnikova and Vajdman 1998, 54.

<sup>11</sup> Caplin 1998.

the beginning, middle and reaching the end.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the notion behind formal function is essentially temporal functions involving a three-point process – initiating, middle and concluding function, operating on multiple structural levels of a work.<sup>13</sup>

For our study of opening theme and theme types, it is pertinent we study formal functions within the thematic level, which consists of smaller phrase units. These types of lower-level functions, or what Caplin termed as *intrathematic functions*, are ‘linked together in a specific order and establish a kind of “syntax” of formal organization.’<sup>14</sup> Subsequently, the survey of functional constituents of individual themes can be better understood through different musical parameters. The following section draws a list of such important musical parameters (relating to formal function), that underlie two basic archetypal theme types, periods and sentences.

### **1.3 Identifying important musical parameters with their intrathematic functions from Caplinian archetypal sentence and period theme types**

At lower levels, the primary criterion [for defining formal functions] is the kind of harmonic progression supporting the passage, in particular whether the harmony is prolongational, sequential, or cadential.<sup>15</sup>

The study of relationship between functional harmony<sup>16</sup> and form is encapsulated throughout Caplin’s analyses as a fundamental step towards finding formal functions.<sup>17</sup> To exemplify the musical parameters essential to our

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<sup>12</sup> Caplin 2010, 23.

<sup>13</sup> This fundamental idea of ‘function’ will be revisited on its close relationship with harmonic progressions.

<sup>14</sup> Caplin 1998, 17.

<sup>15</sup> Caplin 2010, 34.

<sup>16</sup> See Caplin 1998, 23 – 31 for more on *harmonic functions* and *fundamental progressions of harmony*.

<sup>17</sup> Caplin 1998, 4.

present study, we will employ two examples of the most common archetypal theme types namely - the sentence and period.<sup>18</sup>

**Example 1.1** Beethoven, Piano Sonata no. 1 in F Minor, Op.2/I, 1-8 (from Caplin, 1998, 10)

Example 1.1 represents an unequivocal archetypal sentential theme type taken from the opening theme of Beethoven *op. 2 no. 1*. The grouping structure of this formal type is such that the eight measures of thematic idea represents a *presentation* and *continuation phrase*, in which each phrase constitutes a set of smaller formal units comprising of formal processes and functional harmonic progressions. Further subdivision into smaller units of measurements reveals two measure basic ideas as the ‘fundamental building block of themes’.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, the initial phrase of the theme resembles that of a statement-response repetition, which the basic idea, supported first by the tonic, is repeated with a different harmony.<sup>20</sup>

Up to this point, the detailed formal analyses of the first 4 measures of music resembles notion of traditional *Formenlehre*; that is the demarcation of grouping boundaries and labeling of its underlying harmonies. Caplin took this a step further by considering the two basic ideas as an initiating idea, fulfilling the

<sup>18</sup> The term sentence originated from Arnold Schoenberg. Schoenberg 1967, 20-21, 58.

<sup>19</sup> Caplin 1998, 9 - 11.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid; 19: the statement of a basic idea receives a response when an original version supported primarily by tonic harmony is answered by a repeated version supported by dominant harmony.

role of an initiating function during the course of what he coined as the *presentation phrase*.<sup>21</sup> The 'initiating function' in this phrase is emphasized by both a tonic prolongation as the underlying harmonic function, and the notion of an initiating gesture formed by the basic idea and its repetition<sup>22</sup>. Then, the ensuing phrase embraces continuation and cadential functions.<sup>23</sup> It begins with the process of *fragmentation* – in which motivic ideas from the basic idea break down into smaller units. Underlying the process of fragmentation is an increased harmonic rhythm on the surface harmonies in m. 5 – 6; signified by the shift from the tonic prolongation in the initiating basic idea towards an area of increased harmonic instability.<sup>24</sup> Subsequently, the *closure* of the phrase becomes eminent at the onset of a *cadential progression* that finally leads to a *cadential arrival* with a half cadence in m. 8.

At this point, further elaboration on the terms 'cadence' and 'closure' must be made for 'cadence creates musical closure, but not all closures are cadential'; in other words, closure could take place without a cadence.<sup>25</sup> Throughout his analytical discourse<sup>26</sup>, Caplin sought to downplay the similarities of the terms 'cadence and closure' by considering the specific set of conditions necessary to evoke formal closure (closure with cadences) to his analytical models of theme types. The following section attempts to encapsulate Caplin's

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid; 10.

<sup>22</sup> Therefore, one could accentuate the strong presence of an initiating function within the presentation phrase.

<sup>23</sup> This is closely related to the concept mentioned earlier regarding an initiating, middle and closing function. In this case, continuation is related to the middle while cadential is to the closing function.

<sup>24</sup> The formal function of the presentation phrase establishes a tonic prolongational progression that provides the requisite harmonic stability. Whereas fragmentation is the process of shortening the units, harmonic acceleration is the rate in which the supporting harmonies increase. See Caplin, 1998, 35-47.

<sup>25</sup> Caplin 2004, 56.

<sup>26</sup> I refer the many assertions on the cadence in Caplin 2004.

understanding of cadence and cadential closures, which will be imperative also for our analytical study of *The Seasons* later in this paper.

In analyses, Caplin considers the role of the cadence as a closure for formal units at thematic level.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, he differentiated cadential roles with the role of closures by stating that ‘closures associated with individual musical parameters are, in themselves, insufficient to create cadence unless a sense of formal closure is present as well’.<sup>28</sup> Central to his campaign against imprudent application of the term cadence, is a careful corresponding study of harmonic progressions as an articulating factor in defining cadential functions:

At all times however, a definite harmonic process is closed, since the harmonies associated with the cadence always bring to some degree of completion a broader harmonic progression beginning prior to the onset of the cadence.<sup>29</sup>

At this point, it will be useful to revisit the sentential theme type exemplar presented above. Let us now consider the sense of closure in this theme. The grouping structure, with its supporting harmonic progression, seems to suggest the possibility of a closing gesture at both the end of the presentation phrase in m. 4 and continuation phrase in m. 8. Since the latter measure is considered by many to be an unequivocal cadence, I’ll start with highlighting why the reading of a thematic closure after the presentation phrase is inappropriate in the sentential theme type.

First, the harmonic support for a cadence is inadequate to suggest a cadential progression; for cadential function to take place, it incorporates a

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<sup>27</sup> Caplin 2004, 58.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid; 57.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid; 56.

cadential progression towards its cadential arrival, which has to be in the root position dominant in the case of a half cadence. Secondly, the establishment of the basic idea with its repetition, alongside the tonic prolongation, intensifies the sense of initiation in the presentation phrase. Therefore, it becomes illogical and unnatural to interpret a formal closure at this point; this is correspondingly observed on the experiential level when a strong ongoing quality, created by the repetition of basic ideas, anticipates the ensuing continuation phrase.<sup>30</sup>

Conversely, the effective cadential closure of the Beethoven theme in m. 8 is supported by a succession of harmonies highlighting a cadential progression as seen from the onset of measure 7.<sup>31</sup> Subsequently, with a sentential grouping structure of two symmetrical phrase pair, the presence of a cadence only as the last event of the entire grouping structure logically represents a formal closure for the opening theme.<sup>32</sup>

**Example 1.2** Mozart, *Piano Sonata in A, K. 331*, i, 1-8. (from Caplin, *Classical Form*, 52)

The grouping structure of the period is similar to that of the sentence with two parallel four measure units forming an eight-measure tight knit theme

<sup>30</sup> Caplin 2004, 59-60.

<sup>31</sup> The use of root position dominant here represents a 'tenet in my (Caplin's) concept of cadence.' See *Ibid*; 70.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*; 57.

type.<sup>33</sup> Like the presentation phrase of a sentence, the period begins with a two-measure basic idea; as such, it is quite impossible to decide whether an initial phrase constitutes a presentation or antecedent function based on only a two-measure basic idea. However, unlike the 'forward-striving' aspects of a sentence, where the sense of closure between both presentation and continuation phrase is nullified, the individual phrase unit of the period is more self-contained and 'formally complete' in some sense. This is first motivated by the appearance of a contrasting idea following the basic idea. In general, the idea of contrast is achieved by means of (1) melodic-motivic content and (2) harmonic organization underlying the basic and contrasting ideas.<sup>34</sup> The latter consists of a tonic prolongation over the basic idea and a cadential progression that ends with a half cadence (HC).

In his case of Mozart's theme, the contrasting idea features two additional processes: 1) a similar fragmentation process affecting the size of the grouping units within the contrasting idea and 2) increased harmonic rhythm and harmonic sequence.<sup>35</sup> Subsequently, the cadential arrival in m. 4 marks the closure of the antecedent phrase. Besides being a proper cadential closure as only part of a component of the theme, it also represents a partial closure of the whole theme; thus, motivating for the return of the basic idea in the second phrase. The function of the consequent phrase becomes defined first by the motivated return of the basic idea and then by an authentic cadence, through 'alteration of the antecedent phrase so as to achieve greater closure by means of a stronger cadence', at the end of the consequent phrase.<sup>36</sup> In this case, the cadential function is similarly highlighted by a harmonic progression although

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<sup>33</sup> Refer to definitions of tight knit and loose organization in Caplin 1998, 17.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 49.

<sup>35</sup> All of which are characteristics of a typical continuation passage. See Caplin 1998, 51.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid; 53

the perfect authentic cadence used here sufficiently closes the harmonic progression and melodic process opened by the antecedent phrase.

By looking through important music parameters, these formal types described by Caplin become effective concepts for understanding classical form and yet flexible enough, relating musical parameters with functional constituents, as yardstick for our consideration of what contributes towards a *tight-knit* or *loosely organized* theme type.<sup>37</sup> I consider the following factors that contributed towards a tight knit formal expression: (1) harmonic progressions are clear and establishes tonal function supporting the functional constituents within the theme, (2) symmetrical phrase groupings and unity of melodic-motivic materials within each group (3) clear cadential closure which demarcates boundaries of the theme (4) formal processes that supports the reading of clear intrathematic functions within a formal type functional expression. On the other hand, a loosely organized theme type would possess relatively opposite qualities of formal expression. In our study of the themes in *The Seasons*, we can readily observe themes that belong closer to being tight knit or loosely organized based on a variety of factors that tend to weaken the syntactic intrathematic functions within a theme. Therefore, inasmuch as the roles of cadences, grouping structures and harmonic progressions are imperative in the theory of formal functions, so will the same parameters be for our study on these themes; how respective musical parameters within the theme

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<sup>37</sup> According to Caplin in *ibid*; 17, theme types vary in their degree of formal expression in which under different musical factors could contribute towards either a tight knit or loose knit organization.

types of *The Seasons* depart from those found in standard archetypal theme-types defined by the Classical tradition.<sup>38</sup>

The next section focuses on placing formal functions into analytical perspective; how this theory has been exercised as a methodology applied to works belonging to the 19<sup>th</sup> century repertory and beyond; the points of departure in my analytical text with these works; and the objective of this analytical paper.

#### **1.4 Formal functions in analytical perspectives**

Although Caplin's theories have not yet been applied to the analysis of *The Seasons*, application of Caplin's theories of formal functions in Classical as well as non-Classical repertory is well preceded. There are generally two types of approaches in using Caplinian theories as a starting point to highlight departures in different musical repertory. The first approach revisits Caplin's theories, involving modifications and broadening of the theory for analyzing repertoire not belonging to the Classical period.<sup>39</sup> The second approach is based primarily on *fundamental concepts* (discussed previously) that formulate Caplin's theory of formal functions. Since the purpose of this paper revolves around highlighting *departures from archetypes*, more interesting observations on departures can be discovered with a more vigorous survey of Caplin's own principles. As such, the theoretical work on selected Tchaikovsky's themes will be based on the latter

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<sup>38</sup> Caplin also described non-cadential types like the evaded, abandoned and deceptive cadences. These will be brought up again at a later stage of the analysis alongside with other types of departures. See Caplin 1998, 106-7.

<sup>39</sup> As an example, refer to Horton 2015, 77-119. Horton's analytical text concentrates on using broadened and modified Caplinian theories to capture syntactical shifts in the musical syntax of some early nineteenth century piano concertos by John Field, Jan Dussek and Johann Hummel. Most of the modifications revolves around the distinction between grouping, function and type.

approach and a few notable analytical texts with similar methodology for their assertions became important secondary sources for this analytical paper.

Avo Somer's work, in studying the phrase structure and formal functions as part of Debussy's musical syntax, is central to the analytical structure of this paper.<sup>40</sup> As a starting point, he refers to Caplinian formal types as a model for departure in which Debussy first adapts and later "transforms without interrupting their [formal functions of classical syntax] essential purpose".<sup>41</sup> Somer's emphasis on musical syntax in Debussy's sonatas is focused on the composer's treatment of new harmonies, different formal types and grouping structure, of which he considers as a striking resemblance of the characteristics of what Caplin defines as a loose organized formal expression. In a similar way, we shall explore the musical syntax in Tchaikovsky's *Seasons* and find multiple instances of characteristic departures from phrase-structural archetypes that suggest a loosening of formal expression. Such passages of deviation 'contribute vitally to a composition's expressive effects'<sup>42</sup> as exemplified in the text by L. Poundie Burstein on formal "dissonances" – a given function that is placed differently from its expressed temporal position<sup>43</sup> - that associates deviating formal functions with beginning, medial and end sections.<sup>44</sup> In particular, two of Burstein's assertions prove to be particularly useful for our topic here.<sup>45</sup> Firstly, the observation of deviating beginning as main themes lacking an initiating function reiterate similar instances of weakening of initiating function presented

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<sup>40</sup> Somer 2005, 67-96.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid; 92.

<sup>42</sup> Burstein 2015, 12.

<sup>43</sup> Caplin discusses ideas on displacement of functions with its temporal positions as additional loosening techniques in subordinate themes. See Caplin 1998, 111.

<sup>44</sup> Burstein 2015, 11 – 32.

<sup>45</sup> Although his analytical assertions revolve around the works of J. Haydn, his methodological approach with Caplinian concepts are succinct and applicable for similar employment in the study of Tchaikovsky's musical syntax.

in selected themes of *The Seasons*. Second, the notion of these formal departures “resolving” at a later part of the work serves as an appropriate starting point in the third chapter of this paper, where themes exemplifying more radical departures will be discussed.

In the second chapter of this paper, Caplinian archetypal phrase-structural types will be frequently referred to. A similar way of using such formal types as a starting point for analyses is employed in the study of Liszt’s *symphonic poems* by Steven Vande Moortele.<sup>46</sup> The author begins by considering the intrathematic functions of sentential units as a ‘common syntactical pattern’ that provided the framework for discussing interthematic functions of the work in latter part of the paper.

The notion of using specific musical parameters, such as grouping and cadences, as starting points of analysis were highlighted in the following texts: (1) Per F Broman’s analytical work on discussing concepts of form in the instrumental music of Béla Bartók is primarily based on studying departures from Caplinian formal idealtypes in terms of the compositions’ grouping structure.<sup>47</sup> (2) Brian Black’s use of cadences as a specific parameter to underline departures from Classical types of cadences in Franz Schubert’s transitions motivates an alternative reading of ‘deflected cadence’ strategies as an extension of Caplinian theories.<sup>48</sup>

The extent to which Caplinian theories have been applied into formal analyses of both Classical and non-Classical repertoire reflect the flexibility of the formal function theory to accommodate also non-Classical deviations and unconventional theme types. As far as applying Caplin’s theory is concerned, I

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<sup>46</sup> Vande Moortele 2011, 121-155.

<sup>47</sup> Broman 2007, 113-131.

<sup>48</sup> Black 2015, 165 – 193.

would focus on a few musical parameters that in my opinion appeal to our analysis in *The Seasons*.<sup>49</sup> The analysis begins with themes following Classical normatives, with little or no departures. This is followed by analysis of non-conventional theme types that deviate in varied extent from Classical theme types; aspects of departures are considered from the view point of three musical parameters: grouping, harmony and cadence. The intention here is not to present a complete study of all the opening themes of *The Seasons* but rather, to present a study of how Classical normatives related to formal function can be observed in Tchaikovsky's work on one hand and study of the extend of its departures on the other. My hypothesis is that such departures, when understood in context of how grouping structures, harmonic progression and cadence affect formal functions, highlight idiosyncratic moments of functional incongruence between basic formal types and their respective intrathematic functions.

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<sup>49</sup> Part of the departures reflects obvious limitation of Caplin's concept (developed upon Classical repertory) in non-Classical repertory. However, as Caplin's theories are mainly grounded on formal syntax in which strict theoretical application is never the centre of his theories, it becomes possible then to use the theory as a reference point upon which syntactic shifts can be successfully captured and evaluated. In cases of departures, references to other papers with similar application of Caplin's theories on non-Classical repertory will be useful and necessary.

## Chapter Two

# Associating theme types of *The Seasons* with Caplinian formal archetypes

This chapter will be devoted towards analyses of themes related with the three archetypal formal theme types developed by Caplin namely - the sentential, periodic and hybrid theme types. Each analysis will begin with an examination of how intrathematic functions are formed and reinforcing their respective theme types. Subsequently, aspects of departures within each formal type will be highlighted and studied in association with musical parameters as discussed in the introduction chapter.

## 2.1 Sentential theme types

### 2.1.1 No. 3 - March

Example 2.1: The opening two-measure basic idea in mm. 3 – 4, establishing firmly the tonic harmony, is repeated in mm. 5 – 6; the shift to the bass registers for the latter measures enriches the harmonic support with a neighboring dominant in m. 5.<sup>50</sup> Throughout the initial phrase, a tonic prolongation supporting the basic idea and its exact repetition establishes an area of harmonic stability and strong initiating function, suggesting a presentation phrase.<sup>51</sup> The

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<sup>50</sup> Throughout the analytical text, decimal places in measure numbers will be used to indicate the main beats of which I refer to within a measure. This will also depend largely on whether a simple or compound meter is referred to. For example, a 6/8 meter will have “1.1 or 1.2” indication while a 3/4 meter will read “1.1, 1.2 or 1.3”.

<sup>51</sup> The lack of cadential closure with a repeated open-ended basic idea yields an unclosed structure. Caplin 1998, 49.

function of a presentation phrase is confirmed with a lack of cadential closure that anticipates an ensuing continuation phrase.

Subsequently, a symmetrical four-measure phrase unit begins the expected continuation phrase although the appearance of exact melodic motivic content of the basic idea seems to suggest otherwise. A closer look into the harmonic progression underlying this passage will help to clarify this matter. Compared with mm. 3 – 4, the underlying harmonic progression in mm. 7 – 8 no longer supports only a single tonic harmony but rather, a quickening of supporting harmonies can be observed; the acceleration of harmonic rhythm on the same level of the basic idea is exemplified with a series of passing chords led by a descending bass line towards the inverted tonic Bb2 in measure 8.1. From the perspective of harmonic progression, the reappearance of the tonic inversion marks both the ending of an important tonic prolongation from the presentation phrase and an indicator for a foreboding cadential progression beginning in m. 9. Consequently, a perfect authentic cadence (PAC) in m. 10 closes the continuation phrase and at the same time affects the formal closure of the sentential theme.

Overall, the intrathematic functions here support the formal articulation of an archetypal sentential theme type. However, certain aspect of departure in the thematic aspect of grouping structure weakens a tight knit formal expression. The passage in question takes place in the beginning of the continuation phrase in mm. 7 and 8. The exact repetition of melodic - motivic content from the basic idea in the beginning of the continuation phrase weakens the continuation function that was anticipated by a clear presentation phrase although a sense of continuation is nevertheless projected by the increase in harmonic rhythm.<sup>52</sup> Instead of considering this deviation as an insignificant

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<sup>52</sup> See Caplin 2004, 56-7. The continuation in mm. 7-8 is characterized by an increased harmonic rhythm, with no fragmentation; presenting a continuation function that is only indicated by the

detail, I would like to propose that the repetition of basic idea in this theme is intentional; suggesting an effective way of emphasizing distinct melodic profiles through progressive repetition whilst supporting the overall constituting functions.

The stability of the opening theme is established by a symmetrical grouping structure of 4 + 4 measures consisting of clearly unified melodic and motivic content. If we take a closer look at the melodic profile of the basic idea, we could identify three basic motives. (See fig. 2.1b) These motives are then repeated, with increasing emphasis, with the exact intervals and order which formulates an extended or prolonged initial melodic idea in the following order: (1) the thematic introduction preceding the main theme creates an anticipation for the initial appearance of the distinctive melodic profile of the basic idea<sup>53</sup>, (2) the theme is emphasized through a change in registers; an exact repetition leads to the repeat of both melodic content and supporting harmonies and (3) the third appearance of the opening idea is highlighted over a harmonic acceleration in mm. 7-8 bringing forth therefore an emphasis of the initiating idea over continuation features.

Actual downplay of the initial motive occurs only in the cadential passage in mm. 9 -10 where fragmentation, which was absent earlier at the onset of the continuation phrase, now takes place.<sup>54</sup>

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harmony, and not by thematic material. On the surface, this is not quite archetypal considering one of the main aspects of continuation is not present. However, from a Schenkerian voice-leading perspective, a linear descent from scale degree 5 to 1 delineates the cadential material from mm. 8 to 11. The voice leading descent thus represents a sense of what Caplin defines as 'closing down' a melodic process.

<sup>53</sup> See Introductions in Caplin 1998, 15.

<sup>54</sup> I'm keenly aware of examples in the Classical repertory which fragmentation occurs after the continuation phrase has begun and that the continuation begins with an idea resembling that of the basic idea. However, the example here departs even further by importing basic idea materials into the continuation phrase. See examples in Caplin 1998, 38-41.

**Introduction** **Presentation**

b.i.

Andante  
espressivo

I ----- I  
(tonic prolonged)

---

5

I V<sub>5</sub><sup>6</sup> I -----

**Continuation**

7

I<sub>4</sub><sup>6</sup> V<sub>2</sub><sup>4</sup> I<sup>6</sup> V<sub>5</sub><sup>6</sup> /

(tonic prolonged from presentation phrase)

9

IV V<sub>4</sub><sup>6</sup> V7 I PAC

*poco piu f*

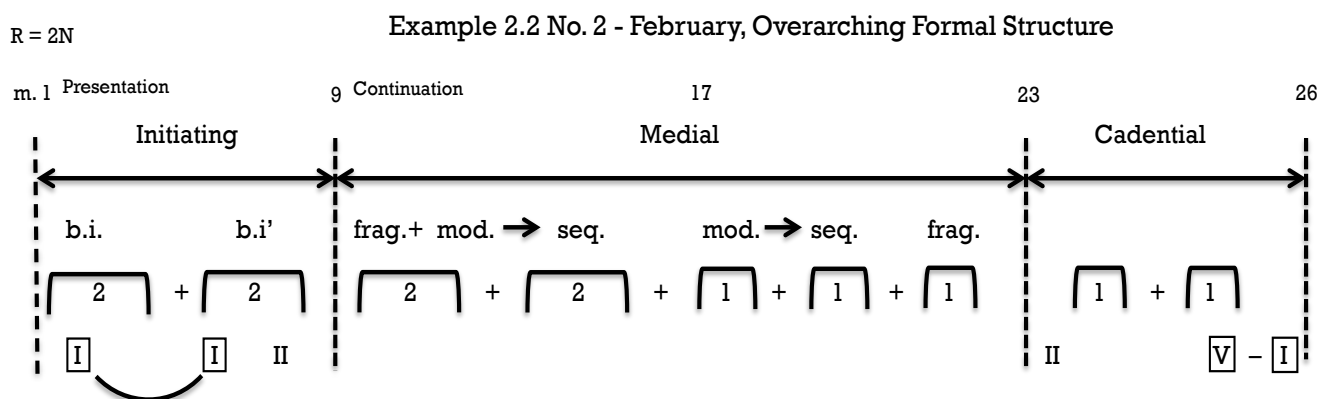
Figure 2.1b - Three basic motives of basic idea

a b c

## 2.1.2 No. 2 - February

Due to the complexity of the formal structure in this theme, an overview of the entire opening theme is provided and will be discussed before proceeding to individual components and their constituting functions.

Example 2.2: The overarching structure in this theme comprises of three phrases namely, beginning, middle and ending; they represent simultaneously the kind of intrathematic functions similar to formal expressions of initiating, medial and cadential of archetypal theme types. Before proceeding further, it is necessary to clarify that the concept of measures within the analyses of this theme is based on  $R = 2N$  where every 2 notated measures is equivalent to a real experiential measure.<sup>55</sup> The foremost parameter that is pertinent to our understanding of this tripartite process within a theme type is its harmonic progression.



<sup>55</sup> The main reason behind a circumscribed reading of measures in this case is directed towards a faster tempo that motivates, on an experiential level, the hearing of larger grouping of note values in each quarter beat rather than the actual reading of two quarter beats per measure. For further reading on the issue of distinguishing between real experiential measure and notated measures, refer to Caplin 1998, 35.

Example 2.3: The clearly established basic idea and its repetition over a tonic prolongation progression resemble a presentation phrase and constitute a strong initiating function. At first glance, the strong articulation of the repeated basic idea might suggest a reading of a periodic type consisting of a 4+4 (notated measures) grouping structure of antecedent and consequent functions or that of a basic and contrasting idea constituting a compound basic idea. However, considerations to the underlying harmonic progression throughout the first eight notated measures suggests instead of a typical (2+2) real measure grouping structure of a presentation phrase.

Example 2.3 No. 2 - February, Beginning phrase, 1-8

**Beginning phrase**

Presentation phrase

b.i.

D: *f*

I ——— (II  $\frac{4}{2}$ )  $V \frac{4}{2} / IV$   $II \frac{4}{3}$   $V \frac{6}{4}$

/:

5

I ———  $V \frac{4}{2} / IV$   $II \frac{4}{3}$   $II_6$   
(no cad.)

Example 2.4: The opening basic idea is supported by an alteration between the tonic and a neighboring II, highlighting an important local 5 – b6 voice leading motion over the two alternating chords in the first two measures. Then, an embellishing secondary dominant in m. 3 leads towards a seemingly cadential progression of II – V. However, the arrival of root position dominant only in last beat of m. 4 diminishes the possibility of a real cadence at this point. The lack of harmonic closure here motivates instead an exact repetition of the basic idea although another potential closure in m. 8 was similarly left unfulfilled with the cadential idea replaced by an extended II. Thus, instead of considering a tonal motion from the tonic towards the dominant (both of which ended up with abandoned cadences), it is more plausible if we consider the whole initial phrase as an enlargement of the local 5 – b6 linear motion in m. 1. There are two apparent reasons for this reading. (1) Without cadential closures, the most stable harmonic idea in the first eight measures rests on the tonic harmony underlying both the basic idea and its repetition, thus highlighting a tonic prolongation; (2) the tonic pedals in mm. 1-2 and 5-6 are very much unchallenged with the lack of bass notes throughout the other measures of the initial phrase. Thus, the arrival of Bb3 in mm. 4.1 and 8.1, with respect to the underlining articulated tonic pedals beginning each part of the phrase, suggests twice occurrence of this 5 – b6 voice-leading motion.

Example 2.4 No. 2 - February, Harmonic Reduction, 1-8

Presentation Phrase

D: 5 - b6  $V_2^4$  /IV  $II_3^4$   $V_4^6$  (no cad.)

I

heard as tonic ped. -----  
lowest D note

D: 5 - b6  $V_2^4$  /IV  $II_3^4$   $II_5^6$

I

heard as tonic ped. -----  
lowest D note

Example 2.5: Following an abrupt closing gesture of the presentation phrase (further exemplified by the eighth note rest in m. 8), an ensuing continuation phrase is strongly anticipated. The continuation phrase represents a medial function within the entire opening theme. We shall now examine how mm. 9 to 22 encompass typical characteristics of a continuation function. From the grouping perspective, model sequence repetitions are introduced throughout the medial phrase by a seemingly progressive process of diminutive fragmentation.

The first set, of sequences in mm. 9 to 12, consists of 4 notated measures of model materials that are then repeated as a melodic sequence in mm. 13 to 16. Subsequently, a fragmentation process shortened the initial model unit to only motif *b*, which becomes the second model for its sequential repetition in mm. 17 to 20. The last two measures consist of a short repetition based only on a transposed version of motif *c*.

**Middle phrase**

Continuation phrase

9

frag. model

*p* *cresc. poco a poco*

13

sequence

17

mod. seq. frag.

**Ending phrase**

23

cad.

*ff*

II  $\frac{6}{5}$  ..... II  $\frac{6}{5}$  4-3 V<sup>7</sup> I PAC

Example 2.6: A similar notion follows in the harmonic structure of the continuation phrase. From m. 9 onwards, an ascending 6 – 5 sequence, occurring on each main beat of the chromatic ascending bass line, with 6's expressed as inverted position applied dominant,<sup>56</sup> is active as a constant tonal motion constituting the entire medial phrase. The octave chromatic bass ascent from G2 to G3 confirms the lack of cadential closure in this phrase while fulfilling the tonal instability of a continuation phrase. Thus, the use of *progressive fragmentation* on the model sequential repetition units, with an overarching harmonic sequence and asymmetrical phrase structure, renders the attributes of a continuation function within this medial phrase of the theme.

Example 2.6 No. 2 - February, Harmonic Reduction, 9-25

Continuation Phrase

Stepwise ascending bass line -----

Harmonic Sequence: Ascending 5 - 6

Cadential

----- II<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub> V<sup>7</sup> I

PAC

<sup>56</sup> A sequential variant of the ascending 5 – 6 model. Refer to Aldwell and Schachter 1979, 326.

In the last phrase, a strong sense of closure can be observed on two levels. The first level concerns the closure of the melodic process within a regular two-measure grouping structure of a cadential passage. From mm. 23-24, the melodic content resembles strongly part of the basic idea (mm. 7-8) although it is now exemplified on the surface level as a rapid descending passage, suggesting instead a continuity of the passage that was left open previously towards a potential closure. From the perspective of harmony and cadence, a formal level of closure is likewise achieved. The decisive pre-dominant (inverted II) supports the rapid descending passage leading towards a cadential passage and an unequivocal cadential arrival on a PAC in m. 26.

There is no evident departure in terms of the functions of individual formal components in this theme. However, in terms of individual musical parameters that support the intrathematic functions within the theme, clear ways of departures were carried out to ultimately create a functionally clear sentential theme type over considerably extended measures. In summary, the grouping structure of an archetypal sentential type is largely modified to consist of an oversized continuation phrase. Instead of the usual cadential function that is embedded within a four-measure continuation phrase, the enlarged continuation function motivates a separate phrase for the cadential function, which in this case is of regular length. Alongside a departure of grouping structure in the medial phrase, the extended continuation phrase produces an asymmetrical structure that suggests a looser formal expression.

## 2.2 Periodic theme type

### 2.2.1 No. 6 – June

Example 2.7: The theme is constructed in a 4 + 6 measure asymmetrical grouping structure. Nevertheless, the basic idea, being first strongly established at mm. 2-3 and subsequently beginning the second phrase group in m. 6 create a grouping structure similar to a period theme type. First, let us consider the usual features that constitute the intrathematic functions within a periodic theme type. The basic idea beginning the antecedent phrase is supported entirely by the tonic, from its root position to its inversion in m. 4.1. In the same measure, a contrasting idea, essentially fragmented with an increased harmonic rhythm, ensues and proceeds towards a short cadential passage in m. 5. Thereafter, a repeat of basic idea initiates the consequent phrase, which is followed by a contrasting idea now modified as a modal and sequential repetition from mm. 7 to 9, which leads subsequently to a cadential passage and its closure in m. 10. However, this is by no means a straightforward archetypal periodic theme type, let us now look at how some deviations, based on cadential and grouping structure, challenge respective intrathematic functions of a periodic formal type.

The first deviation can be observed when the cadential passage leads directly to a tonic arrival, suggesting a PAC instead of the usual half cadence at the end of the antecedent phrase in m. 6.1.<sup>57</sup> If we consider Caplin's definitions of formal functions within a periodic framework, it is highly unusual that a strong

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<sup>57</sup> The cadence in measure 7.1 is unusually strong as it closes both the harmonic and melodic processes started by the basic idea in m. 2. In typical cases of an archetypal antecedent phrase, a basic and contrasting idea leads to a weak cadential closure that function to motivate the return of the basic idea in a consequent phrase, which subsequently function to close the entire period with an authentic cadence.

cadential closure should be present at the end of the antecedent phrase since the ensuing consequent functions to create a stronger closure of the antecedent.<sup>58</sup>

Therefore, if one applies strictly the functional normative of a periodic formal type, the initial phrase is not likely to be considered as antecedent. However, because of the fact we do hear strong recurring elements of the basic idea in the latter phrase, I propose an alternative reading to this functionally unclear situation. The cadential closure with a perfect authentic cadence is uncommon but it is not uncalled for. As such, I would like to suggest that an *early closure* has occurred; where a relatively 'strong cadential closure' in replacement of a 'weak half cadence' motivates an even 'stronger cadential closure' as a formal closure for the theme in m. 12.

By measuring the 'strength' of a cadential closure, I mean by the anticipation and built up of tension exemplified by the process of reaching the cadence. In the consequent phrase, the repetition of the basic idea begins exactly the same way as its antecedent pair, but altered slightly to fit the changing harmonic support in m. 7.4. From a harmonic perspective, the tonic harmony beginning the basic idea is not prolonged but progressed into a descending 5<sup>th</sup> sequence starting from m. 7.4 to m. 10.1. From the perspective of grouping structure, the three 1-bar sequential units are the result of a fragmentation process of the basic idea. The contrasting idea of the consequent phrase thus contains new melodic motivic content of a model and sequential pattern which functions as a driving tonal motion towards the cadential passage in m. 10. 3.

Another deviation that might contribute to the abnormal cadential situation in this periodic theme type is the two measures of introduction before the antecedent phrase in mm. 1 and 2. The framing function of the introduction

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<sup>58</sup> See also how some Classical themes create deviations in antecedent phrases. Caplin 1998, 57.

builds up the tension leading to the initial sounding of the basic idea that in Caplin's words, 'form the rhythmic point of view described as an upbeat to the structural beginning of the theme'<sup>59</sup>. Although the introduction is not part of the grouping structure with the periodic theme, the function created by the introduction form an important retrospective emphasis of the basic idea and thus in a certain extent strengthen the intrathematic functions within the asymmetrical periodic phrases. In this theme type, the conflict in intrathematic function of the antecedent phrase, indicated by the unusual early closure (PAC), is 'resolved' by the expansion of the consequent phrase through a sequence that emphasizes anticipation of a stronger cadential closure in m. 12.

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<sup>59</sup> Caplin 1998, 15.

Example 2.7 No. 6 - June, Opening theme, 1 - 12

**Antecedent (modified)**

Andante cantabile

g: *p*

Intro. — emphasizes →

b.i.

I ————— I<sup>6</sup> II<sub>5</sub><sup>6</sup>

**Consequent**

[b.i => model. + c.i. (seq.)]

c.i.

b.i.

model

seq.

5

V<sub>4</sub><sup>6</sup> V<sup>7</sup> I [PAC] V VII<sup>7</sup> III

(Early closure) Descending 5th seq. -----

(c.i. + seq.)

seq.

cad.

9

II<sup>6</sup> V<sub>4</sub><sup>6</sup> V<sup>9</sup> I [PAC]

## 2.3 Hybrid theme types

### 2.3.1 No. 10 – October

Example 2.9: The opening theme of *October* is demarcated by a nine-measure phrase consisting of a 4+5 grouping structure<sup>60</sup>; of which each pair of phrases are unified in their melodic and motivic content respectively. The initial phrase consists of a basic idea supported with a tonic prolongation until m. 2 when the seemingly repeating basic idea starts on a chord IV leading to a V harmony. Although the melodic-motivic content of the first 4 measures are similar, one has to take into account the underlying harmonic progression to decide whether the second group of ideas prolongs the tonic or is supported by different harmonies leading to a cadence. In this case, although the chord that supports the repeating basic idea begins on the IV, a strong harmonic motion to the dominant (at the same time motivating some contrast in the melodic content) seems to suggest that the phrase ends with a half cadence and the latter group of ideas functioning as a contrasting idea to the preceding basic idea. At this point, it seems appropriate to address the conflict within the first four-measure phrase; on the highlight and investigation of musical parameters suggesting features of both the presentation and antecedent.

Even though one recognizes a contrasting idea with the help of supporting harmonies that distinguishes it from having a prolongation function of a presentation idea, the issue on cadence needs to be addressed. A typical antecedent phrase consists of an important harmonic motion towards a weak cadential closure, which motivates the return of the basic idea in the consequent phrase. However, although the cadential progression here suggests a weak

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<sup>60</sup> The arrival of the tonic in m. 9 suggests that the latter phrase in this theme is slightly expanded to 9 measures.

closure on a dominant half cadence, a dominant with a dissonant seventh note as a half cadence seems to directly confront Caplin's notion of a stable half cadential closure.<sup>61</sup>

The decision of whether such a dominant is applicable towards the reading of half cadence is less straightforward. Before we decide, it is pertinent to first ask the question of whether we perceive a harmonic goal or cadential closure at the end of the m. 4? If we do, then the stability of a fully consonant dominant must be taken into consideration and a seventh degree on a dominant at this point does not serve to support the function of a half cadential closure. In this case, the attempt to reach a cadential closure is present, as we genuinely perceive a process of reaching a harmonic goal at the end of m. 4. However, in view of the unstable harmonic content of the cadential dominant, we shall call this a failed cadence.<sup>62</sup> At this point, I propose an alternative reading of the dominant seventh in m. 4; that the strong notion of an interpretation of a half cadence at this part of the theme is part of a manifestation of an enlarged dominant between two thematic phrases. Therefore, there is not a 'real cadence' per se but a temporal local closure motivated by closing thematic gestures<sup>63</sup>, which instead exemplifies a more important underlying harmonic motion.

From a harmonic perspective, the preparation of the seventh degree dominant is motivated first by a common tone from the preceding pre-dominant chord IV<sup>6</sup>. The leading of common tone G of the whole of m. 4 as an anticipation for its resolution, which ultimately is resolved only in m. 6.3, and the alteration of

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<sup>61</sup> According to Caplin, the role of the cadence is to confirm tonal centre, thus the dominant must be introduced in its most stable form; in this case, the dominant is the goal harmony and must remain a stable fully consonant triad. See Caplin 2004, 70.

<sup>62</sup> In his text, Caplin talks about other types of false cadences although none of which fits the harmonic situation here. See Caplin 1998, 101-7.

<sup>63</sup> Here, the temporal local closure can be derived from the thematic perspective of the basic and contrasting ideas. The altering contents of the contrasting idea underline an important tonal motion towards the dominant that is not resolved immediately in the ensuing phrase until m. 6.3.

melodic motivic content to highlight the harmonic progression of IV – V7, creates the sense of suspense and incompleteness similar to that of a half cadence.

Therefore, the emphasized and ultimately prolonged dominant motivates a new formal function – a *compound basic idea*,<sup>64</sup> which consists of grouping structure of an antecedent without a cadential closure. This supports our study of closure and cadence, which was differentiated before the onset of the analyses; that it is possible we identify a sense of closure only in terms of melodic motivic content in the absence of a cadential closure. Moreover, as we looked further towards the ensuing phrase, we see a retrospective view of how the dominant was emphasized through a prolongation towards the actual cadential passage that closes the entire opening theme.

The continuation phrase begins with a new melodic-motivic material organized into one-measure units over a descending progression as seen in mm. 5-6. The increase in harmonic rhythm consists of more unstable local harmonies in part of a tonal motion towards the cadential progression of the continuation phrase. Subsequently, the altered tonic in m. 6.3 marks the end of the prolonged dominant from the presentation phrase; at the same time also serving to intensify the motion towards the important pre-dominant IV in m. 7. From then onwards, an expanded cadential idea can be outlined; driven by a chromatic ascend in the bass towards through an embellishing dominant, which ultimately leads towards a cadential arrival in m. 9. Working together with the cadential passage is a fragmentation process, which reduces the new melodic idea to triplet figures in mm. 7-8, before the cadential arrival on a perfect authentic cadence (PAC) in m. 9.

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<sup>64</sup> Caplin 1998, 61.

A few important analytical observations can be drawn from the analyses of this hybrid theme consisting of a compound basic idea and a continuation phrase. The musical parameters defining the intrathematic functions within type of hybrid theme type follows closely with a sentential theme type, except that the basic idea is not repeated (although in this case, it resembled closely in terms of melodic-motivic content). While the point of departure lies in the slightly ambiguous moment between the symmetrical phrases in m. 4.3, it could also be understood as Tchaikovsky's intentions to bring in characteristics of the periodic formal type into this hybrid theme type. In the process of doing so, we discover a less conventional harmonic detail of a dominant enlargement; prolonged through the abandoned half cadence and subsequently leading through a sequential passage towards the extended cadential passage and cadential arrival.

Example 2.8 No. 10 - October, opening theme, m. 1 - 9

**Compound Basic Idea**

Andante doloroso  
e molto cantabile

b.i. c.i.

I  $I^6$   $V_5^6 / IV$   $IV^6$   $II_3^4$   $V_5^6$  (no cad.)

**Continuation phrase**

frag. frag. ext. cad.

poco cresc.

5

$V_2^4$   $I^6$   $I^7$   $II^6$   $VII^7 / V_4^6$

(enlargement of dominant ends here)

cad.

(Liquidation of fragmented idea)

8

$V_4^6$   $V^7$   $I$  PAC

### 2.3.2 No. 1 – January

Example 2.10: The initial phrase is made up of a 2+2 grouping structure with a basic and a contrasting idea. Despite the thematic resemblance between the two group of ideas, functions of the underlying harmonies with each idea is clearly different; the basic idea supports a delayed but nevertheless tonic prolongation while the ensuing group of ideas, supported by a chord II harmony leads towards a dominant intensified by a secondary dominant in m. 4. Features of fragmentation of the basic idea can also be observed in the contrasting idea that closes the initial phrase.

The closure of the initial phrase in m. 4 reveals a somewhat similar obscure cadential situation as encountered previously in the theme from *October*. Once again, the dominant seventh in the cadential formulae obstructs the reading of a real half cadence at the end of the initial phrase. Without a proper cadential closure, it is appropriate to consider the grouping structure of the first phrase with its underlying harmonies as a constituting the function of a compound basic idea instead of the usual antecedent phrase.

In the following phrase, the basic idea is repeated exactly, following a contrasting idea that is extended by two measures that leads to modulation to the dominant with a cadential closure on a PAC in m. 10. Therefore, the second phrase consists of features of the consequent phrase, motivated by the pronounced half cadential like rhetoric gesture in m. 4. This gesture could be better considered as a 'distinct *dynamic* process that involves the systematic growing or diminishing of tension and excitement created by a variety of

means'.<sup>65</sup> In this case, it is represented by a repeating harmonic rhythm pattern starting from m. 3.2 and followed exactly in m. 4.2.

At this point, it might be useful to consider how the opening theme here contains characteristics that contribute to a more loosely organized formal expression. Firstly, exemplified from a harmonic perspective is a late tonic establishment in the basic idea of the initial phrase; the structural tonic arrives at the last beat of m. 2. There are two ways in which tonic is introduced and related to its harmonic function in the theme; the first is to create tonal stability at the onset of the basic idea (supporting the reading of a presentation phrase or a basic idea of the antecedent or compound basic idea phrase) while the next way is through a cadential closure that reinforces the home key. In this theme, Tchaikovsky seems to intentionally avoid a strong tonic establishment. Besides having a late tonic establishment in the basic idea, a lack confirming cadence of the home key at the end of the initial phrase, the cadential closure is of a modulating nature towards the dominant key. The effect of a weak tonic establishment throughout the theme underlines the first characteristic of a looser formal expression.

Next, an extension of grouping structure in the consequent phrase creates yet another loosening of formal expression. As we can see, the contrasting idea in the consequent phrase has been extended by two measures (mm. 8-9) that expressed a cadential function. The effect of a cadential expansion involves a building up of tension and anticipation of the cadential arrival; an intention which Tchaikovsky used to his advantage with the lack of cadential closure in the compound basic idea phrase. From the perspective of grouping structure, the extension renders the entire theme to be 10 measures long in an asymmetrical

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<sup>65</sup> Caplin 1998, 15

grouping of 4+6 measures, highlighting an important characteristic of a loose formal expression.

Example 2.9 No. 1 - January, opening theme, 1-10

**Compound Basic idea**

Moderato, semplice, ma espressivo

A:

*p*

b.i. c.i.

$V_2^4$   $I^6$   $V^6$   $I$   $V^6 / II$   $V^9 / V^7$

(no cad.)

**Consequent**

(b.i. + c.i. => ext.cad.)

5

*p*

b.i. c.i. => ext. cad.

$V_2^4$   $I^6$   $V^6$   $I$   $V_4^6$   $V$

*poco rit f*

8

c.i. => ext. cad.

$V_4^6$   $V$   $I$

PAC

## Chapter Three

### Non-classical formal departures and their implications

#### **3.1 Non-conventional theme types and issues of closures beyond Classical normative**

Whereas previous examples resonate characteristics of archetypal theme types and occasional departures, the following themes examined in this chapter are less straightforward and consist of evident departures from Classical conventions. One of the most significant departures revolves around how different musical parameters activate a sense of closure within a theme. The implications that these informal closures have on the functional constituents within the theme will be further examined in this chapter. In Classical normative theme types, we observe mainly two types of closures – half or authentic cadence - both of which are formal or cadential, and define the formal structure and functional constituents within the theme. A clear manifestation of these types of formal closures is represented by themes that have been analyzed thus far in this paper. Conversely, when a non-conventional theme type expresses a shift in how closures are made within the theme, it combines different levels of closure, producing closures of *different strength* led by a theme's grouping structure, harmonic and cadential parameters.<sup>66</sup> As such, I would like to highlight cases of *progressive closures* within the following themes; how a seemingly non-cadential closure work towards one that defines formal structure.

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<sup>66</sup> What I consider as closures of different strength does not weaken the distinction between formal and non-formal closures. I continue to follow Caplin's theory in terms of cadential closures as being the only form defining closure of a theme. Closures that do not meet cadential conditions are non formal closures and will be discussed in subsequent departing theme types as part of a closing process called progressive closure.

### 3.1.1 No. 4 – April

Example 3.1: The formal structure of the opening theme (mm. 1 to 24) consists of three main phrase groups (initiating, middle and ending) that resemble three sentential structures; each phrase group comprises of eight measures and has a symmetrical phrase structure resembling a presentation and continuation phrase.<sup>67</sup> However, only the ending or last phrase group consists of intrathematic functions that exemplify a real and closed sentential theme type. In other words, the theme begins for three consecutive times and reached only a successful formal closure indicated by a proper cadence at the end of the third time. Even though the preceding parts did not reach a formal closure, a definite sense of closure is achieved on the experiential level<sup>68</sup>; the thrice-recurring closing gestures suggest progressive closures of which only the last closure is a formal one. Let us now look at how the closures for these individual parts are achieved and their implications to the functional constituents within each part.

The presentation phrase in mm. 1 to 4 consists of a two measure basic idea and its sequential repetition underlined by a descending bass motion away from the tonic to an inverted II harmony. The clear establishment of the basic idea on tonic harmony and its repetition that leads away from the tonic creates a strong anticipation of an ensuing continuation phrase. However, the ensuing phrase was far from one's expectation of a typical continuation phrase. From a harmonic perspective, the ensuing phrase begins with a chromatically altered 4<sup>th</sup> scale degree in m. 5.1 instead of 'continuing' the basic idea through confirming a

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<sup>67</sup> An earlier, less complicated tripartite structure can be found in theme of *February*.

<sup>68</sup> Kofi Agawu, in *Music as Discourse* considers a 'sense of closure' with lack of real closing function as a *locational ending*. Refer to Agawu 2008, 51 – 61, for more information on differentiating between location and function in analyses of formal structure.

tonic prolongation that will eventually lead towards a cadential passage and cadential closure.

This effectively leads to a tonicized III with tonal motion V - I emphasizing a new tonal area in d minor. The harmonic shift towards minor III in relationship to the framing phrases will be discussed in greater detail later. In the perspective to the current phrase, if the tonicized III was confirmed by a cadence that supposedly ends an expected continuation phrase, the second phrase would have been clearly a modulating continuation. With the lack of cadential confirmation, the ending on a non-cadential 'I' chord can be termed a 'tonic arrival'.<sup>69</sup> However, the possibility of a modulating continuation is undermined by the lack of cadential dominant in root position from mm. 5 to 8. Therefore, if formal closure is denied, what other parameters contributed to the sense of closure at the end of m. 8?

The first parameter derives from the grouping structure where symmetrical phrase lengths motivate a demarcation of phrase with an ending gesture in m. 8. Moreover, the pair of basic units in the presentation phrase is answered by a fragmented motif taken from the basic idea. Subsequently, the three repetitions of this sighing motif motivate a sense of *rhythmic stop*<sup>70</sup> when the supporting harmony reached the tonic of the new tonicized key area.

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<sup>69</sup> The term 'tonic arrival' was first coined by Bergé and D'hoë which was later employed in Mark Richards's text. See Richards, 2010, 33.

<sup>70</sup> Caplin 1998, 51.

Example 3.1 No. 4 - April, opening theme, 1-24

**Beginning Phrase**  
Presentation

Allegretto con moto e un poco rubato

*dolce* *poco cresc.* *b.i.* *∕*

Bb: *p*

I II <sup>6</sup>/<sub>4</sub>

Continuation (Failed)

*frag.*

5 *mf* *p*

d:  $V_2^4$   $V_3^4$  I (no cad.)

**Middle Phrase**  
Presentation

9 *marc. la melodia* *poco cresc.*

*p*

$V_3^4$  I  $V_3^4 / II$

Continuation (incomplete)

12 *piu f* (increased harmonic rhythm) + (cad.?)

$II$   $VII_5^6 / V$   $V_4^6$   $V^7 + 6$   $V^6 / VI$  VI (deceptive cad.)

## Ending Phrase

### Presentation

17 *poco cresc.*  $V_3^4$  I  $V_3^4 / II$

Detailed description: This musical notation shows three measures in bass clef. Measure 17 starts with a half note G2 and a quarter note G3, followed by a half note G3 and a quarter note A3. Measure 18 starts with a half note A3 and a quarter note B3, followed by a half note B3 and a quarter note C4. Measure 19 starts with a half note C4 and a quarter note D4, followed by a half note D4 and a quarter note E4. The bass line descends chromatically from G2 to D4. Roman numerals  $V_3^4$ , I, and  $V_3^4 / II$  are placed below the notes. The instruction *poco cresc.* is written below the first measure.

### Continuation

20 *piu f* II VII  $\frac{6}{5} / V$

Detailed description: This musical notation shows two measures in bass clef. Measure 20 starts with a half note D4 and a quarter note E4, followed by a half note E4 and a quarter note F4. Measure 21 starts with a half note F4 and a quarter note G4, followed by a half note G4 and a quarter note A4. The bass line continues its chromatic descent from D4 to A4. Roman numerals II, VII, and  $\frac{6}{5} / V$  are placed below the notes. The instruction *piu f* is written below the first measure.

22 *p*  $V_4^6$   $V^7 +6$  I cad.

Detailed description: This musical notation shows three measures, with the first two in bass clef and the third in treble clef. Measure 22 starts with a half note A4 and a quarter note B4, followed by a half note B4 and a quarter note C5. Measure 23 starts with a half note C5 and a quarter note D5, followed by a half note D5 and a quarter note E5. Measure 24 starts with a half note E5 and a quarter note F5, followed by a half note F5 and a quarter note G5. The bass line continues its chromatic descent from A4 to G5. Roman numerals  $V_4^6$ ,  $V^7 +6$ , and I are placed below the notes. The instruction *p* is written below the first measure. A bracket labeled 'cad.' spans measures 23 and 24.

Example 3.2: As we can see from the harmonic reduction, the gradual descending chromatic bass line outlines a shift of tonal motion from Bb3 – the tonic of the home key, towards D3 – the tonic of the newly tonicized key. However, since the tonic arrival in D minor was not preceded by a cadential dominant, it does not qualify as a cadential arrival. The closure that can be detected (from an experiential level) at this point is thus created by the symmetry of the phrase units and secondary harmonies outlining a descending bass line.

Example 3.2 No. 4 - April, harmonic reduction, 1-24

Bb: I  $V_5^6$  common tone dim. 7th  $VII_2^4/II$  II d:  $V_2^4$   $I^6$

-----  
Descending chromatic bass line towards III

7

d:  $V_3^4$  III (no cad.) Bb:  $V_3^4$  towards I  $I$   $V_3^4/II$  II

-----  
tonal motion towards V

13 17 23

$VII_5^6/II$   $V_4^6$   $V^7$   $V^6/VI$  VI (deceptive cad.)  $V^{7+6}$  I

PAC

The function of the potential continuation ‘fails’ from the harmonic perspective; instead of a tonic prolongation and tonal confirmation with a cadence, it continues the harmonic instability that was already in effect during the presentation phrase. Thus, the lack of tonic prolongation and cadential confirmation of the tonicized III, makes it highly unstable from the perspective of the whole theme, anticipating a return of the basic idea to re-establish both

harmonic and motivic stability. Indeed, the prospect of the harmonic return is suggested by the continued descend of the bass line (D3 in m. 8) towards Bb3 again in m. 10.

The middle phrase group begins in m. 9 with an altered basic idea followed by its sequential repetition in a 4+4 grouping structure. The melodic sequence is now supported with a stronger tonal motion from chord I – II on root positioned harmonies. A clear statement of the basic idea with harmonic stability outlines the repeat of a presentation function in this phrase. Subsequently, a continuation cadential phrase, underlined by strong cadential expression at the onset of the phrase begins in m. 13. The arrival of cadential dominant in m. 14 completes a harmonic motion I – II – V from m. 10 (refer to example 3.2) although the cadence was once again left unfulfilled when a VI chord was reached instead to form a *deceptive cadence*.<sup>71</sup>

In the light of yet another unconventional closure in measure 16, it becomes necessary to understand how this closure functions within this middle pair of phrases and how it relates to its preceding closure in m. 8. Firstly, the appearance of a deceptive cadence functions to alter the potential formal closure in m. 16 to a non-cadential closure; since Caplin's definition of cadential closure in these types limit only to three types.<sup>72</sup> As such, much expectancy is set for a repeat of material in the ensuing phrase towards a cadential closure. Next, the absence of an expected cadential arrival does not diminish the fact that various musical parameters within the phrase do exemplify intrathematic functions that culminates towards a cadential progression from m. 14 onwards.

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<sup>71</sup> See Caplin 1998, 43.

<sup>72</sup> Namely perfect authentic, imperfect authentic and half cadences. See Caplin 1998, 43

Therefore, from the perspective of harmonic content within both phrase groups, the tonal motion I – II – V underlining the second phrase group of phrases motivates a stronger sense of closure compared to the chromatic descending bass line that supports the closure of the first group in m. 8.

The ending group begins with an exact repetition of the middle phrase group until m. 23 where the cadential progression leads to a cadential dominant in m. 23.2, which eventually closes with an unequivocal perfect authentic cadence in m. 24.2. Besides the PAC that suggests a formal closure, a few other parameters contribute to the strong sense of closure associated with this last phrase group. (1) From a phrase level grouping structure, the thrice repetition of the basic idea and its sequential response, highlights the initiating idea, which at the same time underlines the lack of closures in the preceding phrases. (2) The three attempts to reach formal closures in mm. 8, 16 and 24 outline a process that closures can be achieved progressively.

### 3.1.2 No. 5 – May

In the previous example, we have discussed how non-cadential closures may function as part of a larger closure strategy such as a progressive closure. Moreover, a non-cadential closure could also function both as a *locational end*<sup>73</sup> as well as a leading gesture to the next phrase group. In this theme, a ‘failed’ consequent leads to a harmonically distant middle phrase that functions as a link back to the opening idea in the last phrase.

Example 3.3: The formal structure presented in this theme resembles a loosely organized periodic theme type. It consists of 19 measures which can be subdivided into three phrase groups; the first is a 4+5 grouping resembling a periodic phrase pair with a slightly extended consequent phrase, the second is a 2+2 grouping consisting of new melodic motivic content while the third repeats consequent ideas from the first phrase group with slight extension to usher in a cadential closure. Besides the middle phrase, the basic and contrasting idea perpetuates the rest of the phrases by undergoing a tripartite repetition similar to that of the previous theme from April.<sup>74</sup> As formal closure takes place only at the ending phrase, let us first consider the types of deviations within a periodic theme type that expanded the opening theme to a 19-measure phrase. Then, it would be appropriate to consider how these departures exemplify moments of functional incongruence between a periodic theme type and their expected intrathematic functions. Subsequently, as an attempt to return to conventional formal structure, we shall see how intrathematic functions are restored to resolve the functional conflict occurred in the deviating phrase.

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<sup>73</sup> Agawu 2009, 52

<sup>74</sup> Compared with the progressive closures in April: the process of closure here is not hierarchical in strength although the last cadential closure situated as the last grouping event of the theme, in measure 19, confirms the theme’s formal closure.

Example 3.3 No. 5 - May, opening theme, 1-19

**Beginning Phrase**

Antecedent

b.i. c.i. => cad. progression

Andantino

V 6 I 6 VII<sup>7</sup> / V VI V<sup>6</sup>/<sub>5</sub> / V

HC

Consequent (Failed)

b.i. mod. seq. seq. c.i.

5

V 6 I 6 V<sup>6</sup>  
(no cad.)

**Middle Phrase**

"Transition - retransition passage"

ext. 8va

9

bIII<sup>6</sup>/<sub>4</sub>

**Ending Phrase**

Consequent

b.i.

12

V<sup>6</sup> VI I 6

c.i. => extended cad. progression

16

VII<sup>7</sup> / V VI V I

IAC

Example 3.4: An interesting possibility of reconstructing the grouping structure of the beginning phrase group is illustrated with a notated and real meter.<sup>75</sup> This is similar to the issue of real and notated measure in terms of defining formal units based on actual musical experience. In this case, an issue of metrical dissonance, or an alternate metric reading perceived as a *shadow meter*, is in question.<sup>76</sup> (Refer ahead to example 3.5) The basic idea in the opening two measures is phrased in a manner to be heard as three groups of basic units on the experiential level. The 'shadow meter' extends to the following two measures that encapsulate a contrasting idea. From the perspective of grouping structure, the two notated measures of contrasting idea are reconstructed into three grouping units representing a fragmentation process that lead to a half cadence

m. 4.3. The grouping of local harmonies, with metrically strong positions of secondary dominants, throughout mm. 1 to 4 reinforces the sense of metrical dissonance throughout the antecedent phrase.

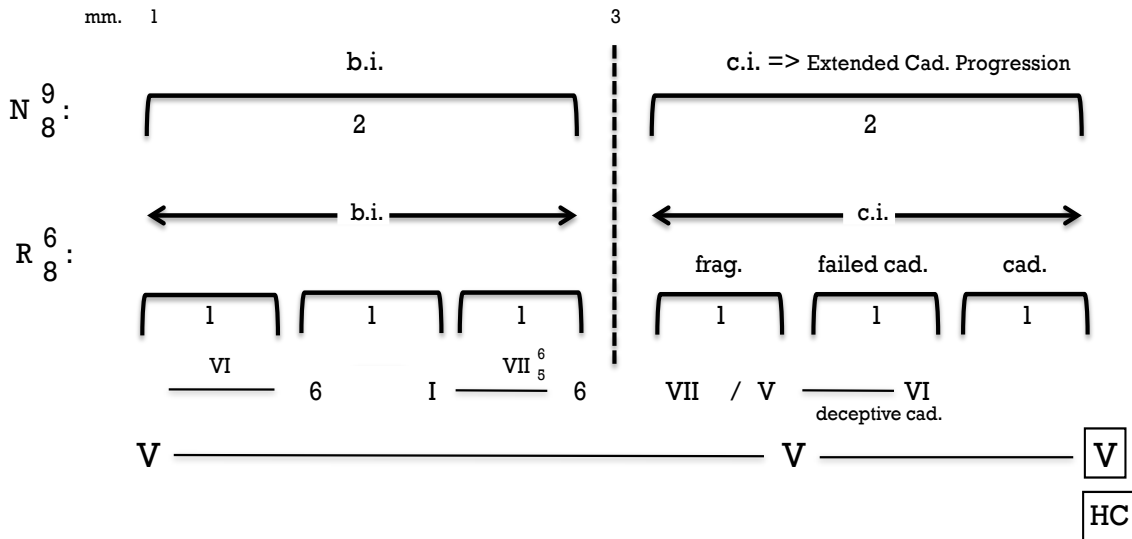
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<sup>75</sup> Previously, the analyses have dealt with issues of notated and real measures.

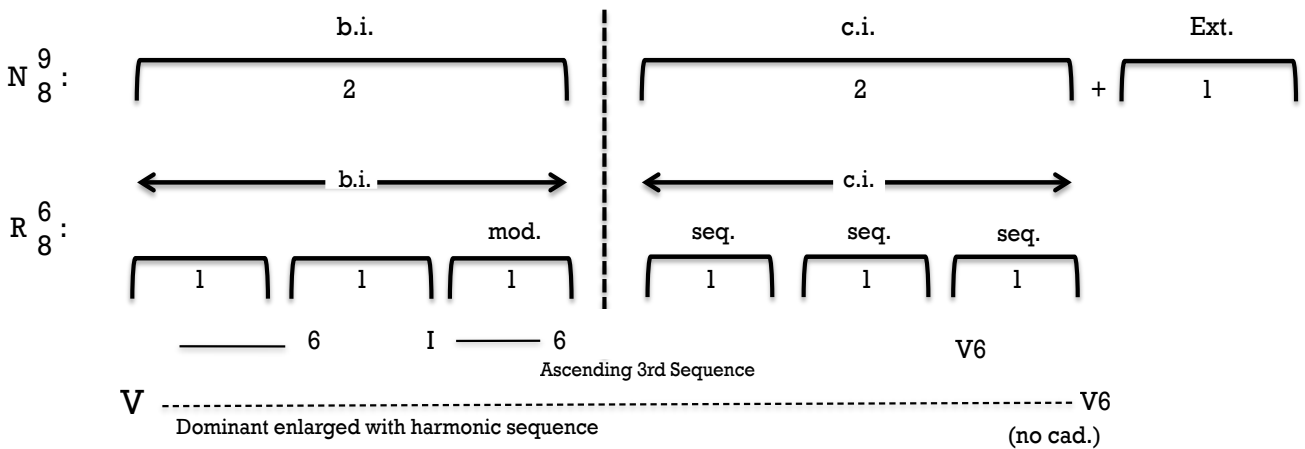
<sup>76</sup> The term shadow meter originated from Frank Samarotto and suggests in Samarotto's own words: "the main meter, the meter as written, casts a shadow, as it were, on a subsidiary displaced meter, which we are drawn to hear as real until it dissolves." Samarotto 1999, 235.

Example 3.4 No. 5 – May, grouping structure, 1 – 8

**“Real Antecedent”** (With hemiola effect)



**“Real Consequent”** (With hemiola effect)



Example 3.5: The harmonic reduction of the beginning phrase group reveals a dominant prolongation from mm. 1 to 9. The sense of dominant prolongation is further exemplified on local dominant harmonies on metrically strong positions such as mm. 1.1 and 2.1. Conversely, the tonic harmonies within the basic idea served a harmonic function of passing chords that enlarges the strong opening dominant. The ensuing phrase repeats the basic idea with the same harmonic content before leading towards a stepwise ascending sequence through a model

sequential repetition.<sup>77</sup> A strong continuation-like function arose from the sequential passage leading towards a tonicized dominant that never materialized with the lack of cadential progression or cadential function to confirm both the home and tonicized dominant keys. A departure in terms of cadential parameters is evident in this open consequent phrase. Nevertheless, a sense of closure, though non-cadential, is present and in this case, it is highlighted by the extended m. 9 that repeats harmonic content of the dominant. The sense of closure is established by three factors: (1) surface rhetorical features including the *poco riten.* in m. 8.3, the *fermatas* in m. 9.3 and the last eighth note rest in the same measure, (2) the repeated melodic gesture with harmonic notes of the dominant in m. 9 and (3) the use of *dominant arrival* as a replacement for cadential arrival, although the arrival does not form part of a formal closure.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> This is a variant of an ascending 5 – 6 sequence.

<sup>78</sup> Caplin uses the term *dominant arrival* to represent non-cadential dominants that are inverted or feature a dissonance seventh note at supposedly cadential arrival points of formal types such as contrasting middle of small ternary forms and transitions between main and subordinate themes. Although we are dealing with opening theme types which usually exemplify more tight knit expressions, this term is to be understood similarly as a locational, non-functional and gestural ending. (Caplin 1998, 79-80 and 133-5).

Example 3.5 No. 5 - May, harmonic reduction reconstructed in 'real meter', 1 - 9

**Beginning Phrase**  
Antecedent

Andantino

G: strong weak weak  
V VI I VII<sup>6</sup>/<sub>5</sub> / I<sup>6</sup> VII<sup>7</sup> / V VI V<sup>6</sup>/<sub>5</sub> / V

HC

Failed Consequent

mod. seq. seq.

strong weak weak  
V VI I VII<sup>6</sup>/<sub>5</sub> / I<sup>6</sup> ascending 3rd harmonic sequence V<sup>6</sup>

dominant enlarged with sequence (dominant arrival - no cad.)

Example 3.6: The next phrase group brings a refreshing moment reminiscing the familiar harmonic motion towards bIII,<sup>79</sup> creating an extraordinary moment that on one hand leads the music away from the primarily tonic centre in the initiating phrase, and on the other bridges the preceding incomplete consequent phrase with an ensuing complete consequent phrase. Besides being harmonically contrasting with the initial phrase group, the metrical experience in mm. 10 to 13 agrees for the first time with the notated meter. The highly contrasting four-measure phrase seems to be out of place in certain aspects to say the least. From

<sup>79</sup> Refer to mm. 5 - 8 of theme from April.

the perspective of the whole tripartite opening theme, I consider the following two options: (1) that the phrase, although short, represents an important function as a transition within the theme and (2) the fact that the location of these ideas are still within the boundaries of the opening theme, a 'transiting' intrathematic function of this phrase group arises from its harmonic structure. Within the middle phrase itself, the apparent dominant quality and the omission of any resolution creates the impression that functional expectations aren't fulfilled. However, from the perspective of harmony and voice leading, the tonal motion from preceding inverted dominant on F# in m. 9 towards the inverted Bb major chord with an incomplete neighbor note on a lowered 7<sup>th</sup> note (of G major) in m. 10 and back to the inverted dominant on F# in m. 14 resembles a chromatic neighbor embellishment of a dominant prolongation. Thus, the entire motion towards bIII encapsulates a function of a *chromatic neighbor chord* between the preceding and proceeding dominants. The harmonic function of this passage from the perspective of its intrathematic function between the preceding and proceeding phrase, will now be further examined.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> The fact that these measures exemplify intrathematic functions diminishes their roles as *interpolating materials*, which according to Caplin, can be removed easily to restore symmetrical phrase structure. See Caplin 1998, 55-57.

Example 3.6 No. 5 - May, harmonic reduction, 9-15

**Middle Phrase** **Ending Phrase**  
Consequent

$V^6$  ———  $bIII^6_4$  ———  $V^6$   $VI$   $I$   
 (dominant arrival) (no cad.)

\* Real meter

Firstly, a retrospective emphasis on the tonal instability of the abandoned cadential event in m. 9 is formed since the current passage of music with its preceding phrase is of a chromatic neighbor relationship. Next, the harmonic instability of mm. 10 to 13, with its 2+2 statement and repetition grouping structure, creates an anticipation for an ensuing phrase that suggests resolution to a tonicized  $bIII$  or the tonic home key. Subsequently, the process of returning to the main key, now embellished by the inverted dominant harmony in m. 14.1, abolishes retrospectively the sense of tonicization in the dominant arrival earlier in m. 9.<sup>81</sup> Instead, a new tonal motion from  $V^6$  towards  $I$  in m. 15.1 is established.

<sup>81</sup> This is quite similar to the effect of the reinterpreted half cadence where a sense of modulation, created by the tonicized dominant ending an antecedent phrase, is cancelled with the home key reinstated at the beginning of the consequent phrase. (Caplin 1998, 57) However, the term is not quite applicable here since the preceding phrase (mm. 5-9) does not count as an antecedent phrase and moreover did not end with a proper cadence.

The closing phrase entails similar melodic and harmonic content of the antecedent phrase in the beginning phrase group. It functions to restore the formal deviation of the antecedent phrase by closing the harmonic and melodic materials that were left open with the half cadence in m. 4 and the abandoned cadence in m. 8 of the failed consequent. The extended cadential passage from m. 16, motivated partly by the deceptive cadence in m. 17 that intensifies the cadential dominant in the following measure, leads to a soft but unequivocal cadential closure on an imperfect authentic cadence in m. 19.

In this theme, the lack of tonic establishment and prolongation reflects a departure from a harmonic perspective within the antecedent phrase whilst an additional middle phrase suggests a departure from a symmetrical grouping structure of a tight knit periodic type. As shown in the analyses, departures within each phrase group seem to suggest momentarily contradictions between intrathematic functions supporting a periodic theme type and actual form defining functions observed in the music. Thus, a sense of deviation in function within the antecedent phrase was first experienced with the lack of cadential closure in m. 8. Subsequently, as part of the process of 'restoring' the formal function of a periodic theme type, a 4-measure phrase consisting of transition and re-transition functions, leads the tonal motion back to the opening basic idea and formal closure is confirmed in m. 19.

### 3.1.3 No. 8 – August

The next theme type consists of a similar tripartite grouping structure and highlights another instance of *formal dissonance*<sup>82</sup> followed by a ‘resolution’; where a deviating initial phrase is only ‘resolved’ at the concluding phrase. Let us now look at the implication of this departure to the intrathematic functions in the theme and how, a progressive fragmentation takes place in the middle phrase that leads back to the opening idea, indicates an overall process of progressive closures in this theme.

Example 3.7: The opening theme begins with 2 real measures of basic idea (R = 2N) followed by another 2 measures of contrasting idea that ends with a half cadence in m. 8.1. A tonic prolongation establishes tonal stability of the basic idea followed by a contrasting idea that is supported by both new melodic content and harmonic organization. The contrasting idea begins on a predominant, creating a strong tonal motion towards a V harmony, which materializes into a half cadence after its second repetition. The notion of a half cadence at this point in m. 8 is less self-evident and needs further addressing.

In m. 6.2, we can see that a similar situation where the dominant chord V seems to resolve to the following tonic chord. However, the fact that the harmony is emphasized consistently on the metrically strong beat of each measure starting from mm. 5 to 8 underlines the tonal motion from an augmented VI (Ger<sup>6</sup>) chord to chord V. Moreover, in both mm. 6 and 8, the metrically weak position of the tonic and the register of the tonic bass note being

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<sup>82</sup> ‘If a given function is actually placed differently from its expressed temporal position – a kind of formal ‘dissonance’ will result’ Caplin discusses examples of formal ‘dissonances’ in Caplin 1998, 111 – 117. Burstein also refers to formal dissonance in his discussion on deviating beginning, middle and ends I Haydn’s symphonies. See Burstein 2015.

higher than the dominant that precedes it evoke the B2 note as rising out of the F#2 and suggesting a reading of V  $_{6/4}$  chord instead of a structural tonic.

Subsequently, the weak cadential closure of the initial antecedent phrase motivates a consequent phrase that begins with an exact repetition of the basic idea. The contrasting idea however, does not culminate towards a usual formal closure – that is a perfect authentic cadence. Instead, a departure with respect to cadential parameters can be observed in m. 16. The expectation of arriving on the tonic, after an intensification of the dominant by the augmented 6<sup>th</sup> chord in mm. 13-14, lead surprisingly once more towards a tonicized dominant that follows through an extended secondary dominant harmony before closing on a half cadence. At this point, I would like to address further the implications of having two half cadences within this opening theme.

In Caplin's definition of an archetypal consequent phrase, he mentioned that the consequent 'repeats and alters the antecedent so as to achieve greater *closure* by means of stronger cadence'. The closure in terms of completion of 'harmonic and melodic processes of the theme' can only be achieved, 'with few exceptions through a perfect authentic cadence'<sup>83</sup>. Therefore, we can be sure that the theme with a consequent ending on a half cadence, has not reached a closure both harmonically and melodically, and more appropriately understood as a *failed* or *open* consequent.

In this case, I consider the moment of departure in the cadential situation of the consequent here, as an example of formal dissonance between a basic formal type and its intrathematic function. From the perspective of grouping structure, a periodic formal type is clear; phrase structure made up by a

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<sup>83</sup> Caplin 1998, 53.

symmetrical pair of antecedent and consequent, and clear contrasts in melodic motivic content between the basic and contrasting idea.

In terms of harmonic structure, the contrasting idea of the ensuing consequent phrase consists of harmonic acceleration (mm. 15-16) that prepares the listener for a cadential passage that will ultimately lead to the tonic. The various musical parameters that culminates towards the expectation of a cadential arrival on the tonic, creates both a formal function that underlines the theme like a powerful steering force that causes the listener to strongly anticipate a proper structural closure.

Therefore, the failure to reach the closure, both harmonically and melodically, due to a lack of proper cadential type, seems to momentarily throw the listener in to a retrospective re-questioning of the function in the preceding phrases. Moreover, the two half cadential closure indicates harmonic instability (lack of tonic confirmation) and yields an open structure that leads to a strong anticipation of a continuation phrase. Thus, both functions of an incomplete periodic formal type and sentential type seem to be in conflict at this point. The lack of tonal confirmation motivates an ensuing middle phrase where formal closure is anticipated.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Although the middle phrase supports the harmonic structure (that begins and ends with the dominant harmony) of a *contrasting middle* belonging to a small ternary, two observations suggests that it actually belongs to a continuation of a preceding phrase and part of the overall opening theme. Firstly, the preceding section does not end with an authentic cadence, which suggest that the phrase is complete. Secondly, the middle phrase consists of strong motivic-melodic content with the opening basic ideas and this is highly unusual for a contrasting middle section. See Caplin 1998, 72-84, for more information on small ternary theme type.

Example 3.7 No. 8 - August, Opening theme, 1 - 16

**Beginning Phrase**

Antecedent

basic idea + contrasting idea

R = 2N

Allegro vivace

b: *p*

b.i.

I (tonic pedal)

c.i.

cad.

4

Ger<sup>6</sup> → V (I) Ger<sup>6</sup>

**Consequent (Failed?)**

basic idea + contrasting idea (open)

b.i.

8

V 7 (I<sup>4</sup><sub>6</sub>) I

HC (tonic pedal)

c.i.

cad.

13

Ger<sup>6</sup> V Ger<sup>6</sup> V<sup>4</sup><sub>3</sub> V 7 V

HC (tonic pedal)

Example 3.8: The theme continues into the middle phrase that begins with similar melodic-motivic content of the basic idea. However, the expectation of the full return of the basic idea is cut short when m. 19 deviates from the opening material into a sequential passage. Subsequently, two sequential passages and fragmentation of melodic-motivic content, both of which highlight strong continuation functions, lead to a clear half cadential arrival in m. 35. From the perspective of grouping structure, the middle phrase, made up of 20 measures can be further classified into two main parts.

The first main part (mm. 16 – 24) consists of a descending 5<sup>th</sup> sequence exemplified by melodic- motivic content similar to the opening idea. Although the sequence suggests harmonic instability, the underlying symmetrical 4 + 4 (notated) measures seem to restore some stability in terms of grouping structure. However, it becomes evident in the ensuing part of the phrase that the preceding symmetrical phrase pair is not an independent unit but part of a larger fragmentation process. From mm. 24 to 36, a second and larger sequence takes place with a progressive shortening of thematic units. The process of fragmentation begins with the new phrase pair of 2+2 (notated) measures from m. 24 – 26. This is followed by further fragmentation indicated by 1+1 (notated) measures throughout mm. 26 – 36.

From a harmonic perspective, an enlargement of the dominant by sequences underlines the entire middle phrase. A weak dominant beginning in m. 17 is part of the prolongation of the strong half cadential dominant from the preceding failed consequent phrase. On the surface harmonic activity, the dominant gives way to a descending 5<sup>th</sup> and ascending 3<sup>rd</sup> sequence. The latter

sequence, characterized by progressive fragmentation, builds up the intensity and anticipation of the return of the dominant in m. 35.

Thus, the seamless transition between the two phrases and strong framing dominants ending both beginning and middle phrase motivates the presence of an enlarged dominant through sequences in the middle phrase. Moreover, from the perspective of cadential closure, the third appearance of a half cadence in m. 35 carry a retrospective emphasis on the other half cadential closures in m. 8 and m. 16. As such, a gradual increase of strength with the half cadential closures is at least suggested; the half cadence in m. 8 being the weakest, followed by a half cadence intensified by a tonicized dominant in m. 16 and subsequently, an even stronger half cadence in m. 35 is achieved through the ascending 3<sup>rd</sup> sequence.

**Middle Phrase**

R = 2N

Two phrases with continuation like features + progressive fragmentation

cad.  $2N + 2N$  sequential idea (deviates from b.i.)

*mf* *p*

V  $V^7$  / V  $II^7/IV$

HC

20  $V^7/IV$  Descending 5th sequence a:  $II^7$

24 1N + 1N seq. idea a:  $V^7$  I *cresc.* Ascending 3rd sequence

28 frag. a:  $I^6$  *f* #5

33 #6  $V^4_3$   $V^7$   $V^7$  *p*

Example 3.9: Although different intensities of half closures were experienced up to this point, none of them functions as a formal closure for the theme. The ending phrase (from m. 36) fulfills the function of closing the theme and 'restoring' formal dissonance that was created by the failed consequent in m. 16. A repetition of basic and contrasting idea, fulfilling the function of an antecedent phrase, returns in m. 36. Subsequently a four-measure idea, featuring a short sequence, leads to an expanded cadential passage from m. 48 onwards. The long-awaited moment of cadential arrival on a PAC in m. 58 marks the proper formal closure of the opening theme.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> The ensuing measures (mm. 58 – 67) represents a *closing section* containing *codettas*. See more on *framing functions* in Caplin 1998, 16.

**Ending Phrase**

Antecedent

basic idea + contrasting idea

R = 2N

b.i.

b: *p*

I (tonic pedal)

**Continuation**

c.i.

cad.

40

*poco cresc.*

HC

seq.

45

*f*

49

IV 5 6

Extended cadential passage

52

*ff*

$V_4^6$

Extended cadential passage

Codettas

55

*mf*

$V^7$  I

PAC

## Chapter 4

### Conclusion

In this paper, I have employed Caplinian theories of formal function as an analytical tool for discussing selected themes from Tchaikovsky's piano cycle *The Seasons* that exemplify similar syntax of formal functions. The process of studying these themes, from the perspective of juxtaposing intrathematic functions between the selected themes and Caplinian formal theme types, led to a few interesting conclusions.

To begin, my hypothesis that Caplin's theories can be useful to highlight departures from archetypal form-functional formal types from these opening themes has brought together an array of interesting departures and non-departures. More importantly, a retrospective interpretation can be deduced from the analytical outcome; that departures in Tchaikovsky's theme types fall within the scope of Classical style and formal syntax. In other words, despite deviations in parameters that motivated the loosening of intrathematic functions, underlying functions of analyzed themes suggest clear references to Classical models of formal syntax. The notion behind Tchaikovsky's integration of harmonic and melodic ideas into Classical formal types can be further considered in terms of its analytical perspectives and aesthetic implications to the work.

#### 4.1 Analytical perspectives from the analyses

A summary of analytical observations of the themes in terms of their departures and non-departures with Caplin's archetypal types is outlined in table 4.1. The observations are categorized based on three musical parameters: grouping structure, harmonic and cadential functions. Using the clear tabulated results of the analyses, there are a couple of notable observations that can be made. Firstly, a consistent relationship between departing and non-departing musical parameters can be traced. In the events of clear formal types, take for example the continuation phrase of *March* and consequent phrase of *June*, departures in grouping structure is balanced with non-departures in harmonic and cadential functions. These examples and others illustrate one way in which Tchaikovsky create loosening of formal expression within clear intrathematic functions of non-departing formal types.

Next, analytical observations show that the implication of departing formal types involves mainly parameters of departing grouping and cadential functions. All the 5 themes examined under the conventional theme types involve a consistently departing grouping structure in the latter group of each formal type. Similarly, the grouping structures of the beginning phrase groups do not depart in any of the themes. Among these, two of the departed grouping structures represent specific formal processes that suggest both deviating and returning functions.

The first type involves *progressive repetition* - repetition of melodic-motivic content as illustrated in opening theme of *March*. Although the repeat of melodic content in the continuation phrase suggest loosening of formal

expression of an archetypal sentential type, the increasingly emphasized melodic ideas function simultaneously to anticipate formal closure.<sup>86</sup> Next, exemplified in the opening theme of *February*, *progressive fragmentation* emphasizes continuation features by gradual shortening of fragmented units and expanding the grouping structure of the entire phrase group. Whereas departures in grouping structure are associated with conventional theme types, cadential departures are more commonly associated with non-conventional types that represent highly loosened formal expression of formal theme types.<sup>87</sup> Subsequently, these cadential departures effect grouping deviations to intensify the moments of departing functions. Such are the cases of the tripartite thematic structures of *April*, *May* and *August*. The theme from *April* represents repeated deviations of cadential functions that suggest retrospectively a process of *progressive closure*.<sup>88</sup> In the opening theme from *May*, the departure of cadential function in the initial phrase led to a failed consequent that motivates a stronger return of a real consequent phrase. Subsequently, the repeated half cadences without cadential closure suggest a slight *formal dissonance* within the beginning phrase of *August*; the expectation of a periodic function in the beginning phrase is denied and a sense of initiation (like a presentation phrase) is suggested instead.

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<sup>86</sup> Here, the process of anticipating closure is similar to the 'dynamic process' that Caplin refers to in Caplin 1998, 15 or *progressive dynamics* (Berry 1976, 7) quoted in Caplin's text. *Progressive repetition* form part of a process of building up of tension (by motivic repetition) towards a cadential closure. (opening theme from March)

<sup>87</sup> A case of cadential departure can be found in June, belonging to conventional theme type although the cadential departure in the antecedent phrase was resolved easily with an expanded cadential progression that highlights stronger closure in the consequent phrase.

<sup>88</sup> This is created first by a failed continuation in m. 8 followed by an incomplete continuation phrase in m. 16 before formal closure in m. 24.

Subsequently, it is also possible to outline a process in terms of how departures are formed within musical parameters. The various instances where deviation of cadential function is jointly supported by non-departing harmonic or grouping functions<sup>89</sup> suggest retrospectively that the latter parameters motivate the cadential departures. For example, in the opening theme from *April*, a weak tonic establishment (m. 1 to 4) in the initial phrase was retrospectively emphasized with the subsequent lack of cadential closure (m.8) to confirm the tonic at the end of the phrase. This is followed by a repeat of the opening theme, now harmonically altered to suggest tonal motion towards V that was once again given a cadential twist to end on a deceptive cadence instead in m. 16.

Finally, having considered the process in which departure is formed within each theme, it is likewise important that one considers the process of *return* – in which intrathematic functions are restored to exemplify overall formal functions. In these theme types, the process of restoring functions to seemingly departed formal processes involved cadential parameters. It can be further classified into two categories of theme types. In conventional theme types, departures, resulting from deviation in grouping, harmonic or cadential functions, can be restored with a form-defining cadence. Similarly, in non-conventional theme types, such cases of departures are restored by proper formal closures. In other words, a concluding cadence is reached even when preceding phrases had avoided formal closure. However, since the themes are much more extended, certain non-cadential closures are prompted during the end of a phrase within the theme. Such cases, exemplified in the themes from *April* and *August*, highlight the process of *progressive closure*; the theme in *April*

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<sup>89</sup> Instance where harmonic and grouping function supports deviating cadence can be found in beginning and middle phrase of *April* and beginning phrase of *May* respectively.

is outlined by a hierarchy of closures leading to a cadential arrival while in *August*, a retrospective progressive closure is supported by a hierarchy of multiple half cadences that increasingly anticipates formal closure.

The restoration of functional constituents with the overarching progressive closures throughout the expanded tripartite opening themes of *April* and *August* highlight an important compositional aspect of the composer. It successfully created seamless transition between formal units that evade formal closures to form characteristics of loose formal expressions in thematic level on one hand and tight knit characteristics within a phrase level on the other.

Table 4.1: Departures/ Non-Departures with Caplin's Archetypes of Formal Functions in *Seasons op.37*

### Sentential theme types

(Refer to Example 2.1)

Title	Formal Functions	Departures	Non - Departures
March	Presentation	None	<u>Grouping structure</u> + <u>harmonic function</u>
	Continuation	<u>Grouping Structure</u> : Emphasis on melodic profile through <i>progressive repetition</i> - repetition of melodic-motivic content of basic idea	<u>Harmonic function</u> : increased harmonic rhythm <u>Cadential function</u> : Perfect authentic cadence

(Refer to Example 2.2 - 2.6)

Title	Formal Functions	Departures	Non - Departures
February	Presentation (Initiating phrase)	None	<u>Grouping structure</u> : b.i. + repetition <u>Harmonic function</u> : 5 - b6 voice leading motion over I - II6 tonal motion
	Continuation (Medial + Cadential phrase)	<u>Grouping Structure</u> : Expanded medial function through <i>progressive fragmentation</i> : fragmented units became increasingly shortened; asymmetrical phrase structure with the presentation phrase.	<u>Harmonic function</u> : sequences and fragmentation <u>Cadential function</u> : regular 2-measure (real) cadential passage + perfect authentic cadence

### Periodic theme types

(Refer to Example 2.7)

Title	Formal Functions	Departures	Non - Departures
June	Antecedent (modified)	<u>Cadential function</u> : PAC at end of antecedent phrase suggests <i>early closure</i> - motivates expansion of the consequent phrase to anticipate a 'stronger' cadence.	<u>Grouping structure</u> : clear b.i. + c.i. <u>Harmonic function</u> : increased harmonic rhythm in contrasting idea
	Consequent	<u>Grouping structure</u> : Contrasting idea expanded with new sequential melodic-motivic content	<u>Harmonic function</u> : sequential, Increased harmonic rhythm. <u>Cadential function</u> : regular 2-measure cadential passage + perfect authentic cadence

### Hybrid theme types

(Refer to Example 2.8)

Title	Formal Functions	Departures	Non - Departures
October	Compound basic idea	None	<u>Grouping structure</u> + <u>harmonic function</u>
	Continuation	<u>Grouping structure</u> + <u>Cadential Idea</u> : extended cadential idea motivated by the lack of cadential closure of the c.b.i.	<u>Harmonic function</u> : increased harmonic rhythm, fragmentation and liquidation of frag. Ideas.

(Refer to Example 2.9)

Title	Formal Functions	Departures	Non - Departures
January	Compound basic idea	<u>Harmonic function</u> : late tonic establishment leading to weak establishment of home tonic (with modulating consequent)	<u>Grouping structure</u> : regular 4-measure c.b.i.
	Consequent	<u>Grouping structure</u> : extended consequent featuring a cadential expansion towards a modulating cadential arrival; asymmetrical phrase structure	<u>Cadential function</u> : perfect authentic cadence in dominant key.

## Non-conventional theme types

(Refer to Example 3.1 - 3.2)

Title	Phrases	Formal Functions	Departures	Non - Departures
April	Beginning	Presentation	None	<u>Grouping structure</u> + <u>harmonic function</u>
		Continuation (Failed)	<u>Harmonic function</u> : lack of tonic prolongation from presentation phrase, harmonically unstable motivating return of b.i. to re-establish stability. <u>Cadential function</u> : suggests <i>tonic arrival</i> - arrival at new 'tonic' without cadential closure. First 'failed' closure signals beginning of <i>progressive closure</i> .	<u>Grouping structure</u> : symmetrical phrase grouping with presentation phrase
	Middle	Presentation	None	<u>Grouping structure</u> + <u>harmonic function</u>
		Continuation (Incomplete)	<u>Harmonic function</u> : lack of tonic prolongation from presentation phrase, suggest tonal motion from I - V instead. <u>Cadential function</u> : Extended cadential continuation anticipates formal closure but ends with a deceptive cadence. Second 'failed' closure within process of <i>progressive closure</i> .	<u>Grouping structure</u> : symmetrical phrase grouping presentation phrase
	End	Presentation	None	<u>Grouping structure</u> + <u>harmonic function</u>
		Continuation	<u>Harmonic function</u> : lack of tonic prolongation from presentation phrase, suggest tonal motion from I - V instead.	<u>Cadential function</u> : regular 2-measure cadential passage + perfect authentic cadence. Formal closure marks the end of <i>progressive closure</i>

(Refer to Example 3.3 - 3.6)

Title	Phrases	Formal Functions	Departures	Non - Departures
May	Beginning	Antecedent	<u>Harmonic function</u> : weak tonic establishment, dominant prolongation	<u>Grouping structure</u> : b.i. + repetition
		Consequent (Failed)	<u>Grouping structure</u> : extended contrasting idea creates asymmetrical phrase structure <u>Cadential function</u> : abandoned cadence suggests a dominant arrival without a cadential closure; failed consequent with weak tonic establishment in antecedent suggests a <i>deviated beginning</i> .	<u>Harmonic function</u> : modal and sequential passage underlines a dominant prolongation
	Middle	'Transition-like gesture'	<u>Grouping structure</u> : symmetrical pair <u>Harmonic function</u> : chromatic neighbour relationship with the framing dominant phrases	
	End	Consequent	<u>Grouping structure</u> : extended consequent featuring an cadential progression in the contrasting idea <u>Harmonic function</u> : suggests dominant prolongation like the antecedent phrase	<u>Cadential function</u> : An imperfect authentic cadence is reached (formal closure) through an extended cadential progression; formal closure and less erratic consequent phrase 'resolves' deviated phrase in the beginning.

(Refer to Example 3.7 - 3.10)

Title	Phrases	Formal Functions	Departures	Non - Departures
August	Beginning	Antecedent	None	<u>Grouping structure</u> + <u>harmonic function</u>
		Consequent (failed)	<u>Cadential closure</u> : Expectation of proper formal closure interrupted by repeat of half cadence suggests momentarily <i>functional dissonance</i> in the consequent phrase.	<u>Grouping structure</u> : symmetrical b.i. + c.i. phrase <u>Harmonic function</u> : slight increase in harmonic rhythm near the end of the contrasting idea.
	Middle	Presentation	<u>Harmonic function</u> : the statement response entails an underlying descending 5th sequence	<u>Grouping structure</u> : consists of altered b.i. + transposed repetition (IV)
		Continuation	<u>Grouping Structure</u> : Slightly expanded cadential progression motivated by harmonic sequence	<u>Harmonic function</u> : consists of strong continuation like features such as fragmentation and ascending 3rd sequence <u>Cadential function</u> : closes in half cadence
	End	Antecedent	None	<u>Grouping structure</u> + <u>harmonic function</u>
		Continuation	<u>Grouping structure</u> : Expanded cadential passage to highlight strong anticipation of formal closure	<u>Harmonic function</u> : lead towards a cadential passage. <u>Cadential function</u> : Closes with PAC

## 4.2 Aesthetic implications of the analyses

The analyses have provided us with an array of analytical perspective as treated in the preceding text. Beyond enhancing analytical insights on the *Seasons*, these perspectives stipulate a supportive reading of the aesthetic value of the work. In the introductory chapter, we have briefly noted how the pace of which these ‘little piano pieces’ were crafted and published, with the compliant tone concealed within Tchaikovsky’s reply to the Nikolay Bernard, underlined monetary stimulus from the composer’s part. Although this might be true to a certain extent, I would like to propose a complementary reading based on the analytical results; that is Tchaikovsky’s choice of building his characteristic themes upon conventional formal types reveals a genuine concern in dealing with compositions of this scale; through a process of stretching the limitations of conventional formal types.

Keeping this analytical perspective in mind, the same conversation Tchaikovsky had with the editor at the beginning of their correspondence in the *Seasons* starts to shed new light upon the actual aesthetic values of the work.

*I will make an effort not to fall on my face in the mud and to carry the thing off to your satisfaction. I will be sending you the first piece soon, and perhaps even two or three at once. Unless something intervenes, the thing will go off quickly; I take great delight in writing little piano pieces at the moment.*<sup>90</sup> (Italics by me)

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<sup>90</sup> Korabelnikova and Frühjahr 1998, v.

The composer's slight reservation towards embarking his ideas on these themes, knowing they would be miniatures meant for publishing in a music magazine, was evident from the opening statement of his letter. In my opinion, I consider this as a motivation for Tchaikovsky to integrate Classical formal syntax into his themes. In other words, the conventional formal functions of Classical theme types became part of the compositional layout for the composer to express his own harmonic and melodic language. Subsequently, departures that were observed within the opening themes represented the retrospective effect of Tchaikovsky's 'reservations'; that he had found ways (while adapting Classical models) to instill flexibility and creativity into conventional models.

In conclusion, Tchaikovsky adheres occasionally to Classical formal types (non-departures) and at times evokes both conventional and non-conventional departures in his themes. Subsequently, the creative process of returning from such departures revealed novelty in the composer's effort to keep within Classical normative; perhaps an unassuming way of trying 'not to fall on (his) face in the mud'.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Korabelnikova and Frühjahr 1998, v.

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