

The gestures for moving up a tone or semitone without modulation

Modulation has been introduced to the practice of Harmony Signing principally through signs that initiate movement round the circle of fifths, one chord replacing the 'old' tonic through the confirmatory power of the 'tonicising sign' (see ['Tonicising' and the circle of fifths], [Modulation], [Dominant sevenths], [Access to the circle of fifths] and [Short cuts to alternative modulatory pathways]). Two signs in particular played a part in these processes, respectively indicating a leaning in a flatwards and a sharpwards direction. Both require the left arm to move outwards horizontally to the left: one completed by the hand adopting the Kodály hand-sign for *Ta* and introducing the chord of the flattened 7th (VII^b); the other signing the sharpened 4th, *Fi*, and introducing the Major chord on the supertonic, chord II.

For a variety of reasons, it proved useful to devise a sign that departed from the conventions of Harmony Signing introduced thus far, which in most respects are defined by a relationship with the positions for representing the three Primary Triads. The new sign makes it possible to move the tonality (i.e., the interpretation of the pitch represented by the sign for chord I) directly up or down a tone or semitone.

The sign requires the use of both hands – it needed to be unique and convincing in order to avoid confusion with any other sign. The index fingers of both hands are pointed directly upwards the shoulders' width apart in front of the face. To raise the pitch, both hands move slightly outwards and then inwards and upwards in unison to represent the interval of a semitone. Reversing this gesture bring the pitch back to where it started.

In order to raise the pitch by a whole tone, both hands start in the position in which the index fingers are pointed upwards in front of the face, but the circular movement outwards is twice as pronounced, and the fingers, once raised, move back towards another in a position above where they started.

The initial value of introducing this move in a class or choir is to develop the tuning sensitivity that it exercises: can everyone move up the semitone smoothly while retaining the harmonic integrity of the overall sound? This can prove a valuable exercise in itself for both singers and instrumentalists.

Once this has been mastered, the two moves open up possibilities in musical styles that cannot easily be accessed in any other way. Two particular examples are: the tuning system of Zulu musical bow performance; and Flamenco.

Zulu bow music (see [Southern African influences on Harmony Signing and their potential]) is performed with the wood of the bow placed against the jaw-bone so that resonances from striking or stroking the bowstring can be amplified selectively in harmonic series response. The Zulu tuning system places the stopping finger of the hand holding the bow at a point close to the nut, producing a pitch a semitone higher than the open string. This is what provides Zulu music with its distinctive sound in comparison to Xhosa.

To represent this employing the new 'up a semitone' sign (♩♩), one needs first to establish a stable chord I, and then raise both hands in unison upwards through a small circular arc. This should result in everyone moving up a semitone in unison. The performers can be brought back to the original chord I by reversing the procedure (↓♩♩↓).

Flamenco uniquely and endearingly covers both the semitone (♭♭) and whole tone moves. This relates to its origin in the Phrygian mode and its traditional performance in parallel motion on the guitar, accessible through barre chord technique. The new sign for the second move of a whole tone moves the hands further outwards and upwards to convey a step that is clearly larger than (♭♭). It might be represented as (↑♭←→♭↑).

Employing these two signs for moving everyone up and down the parallel harmonisation of the Phrygian mode that will yield the Flamenco style can be set out as follows. Performers should vocalise these to a rhythmically driven scat text as indicated. Of course, this can later be replaced by instrumental performance as a basis for Flamenco improvisation.

Vocals	Dum -diddle-iddle-iddle-um-diddle-um- Dum Dum -diddle-iddle-iddle-iddle-iddle - Dum - Dum :
H.S.	I _____ ♭♭ _____ ↑♭←→♭↑↓♭←→♭↓:
Bass	1 _____ ↓5 _____ 1 _____ ↓5_ 2 ♭ ____ 2 ♭ _____ ↓6 ♭ _____ 2 ♭ _____ 3 ♭ ____ 2 ♭ ____ :
(alt.)	Mi _____ Fa ____ Fa _____ Soh ____ Fa ____ :