

Exploring the Landscape and Prospects of Schenkerian Studies in Japan: Research Themes Analysis and Case Studies

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Abstract of Dissertation

This dissertation examines Schenkerian studies in Japan from three aspects: 1) its chronological development, 2) the present state of research, and 3) future directions.

Schenkerian studies, a wide-ranging field exploring Heinrich Schenker's theoretical framework, encompasses analytical methods, pedagogical applications, historical contexts, and related areas. Originating in German-speaking countries in the early 20th century, the field gained prominence in the United States through the work of European émigré scholars and later expanded globally, broadening its research scope and influence. Although its development in English-speaking academia, particularly in North America, is well-documented, its global expansion—especially its reception and adaptation in non-Western contexts like Japan—remains underexplored. Despite its decades-long presence in Japan, existing literature lacks comprehensive documentation and in-depth analysis of its trajectory, highlighting the need for further research into its development. The limited existing scholarship on this topic motivates this study.

Understanding the landscape and prospects of Schenkerian studies in Japan—its reception, current research status, and future directions—not only sheds light on its unique adaptation in this context but also contributes to broader discussions on the global transmission of theoretical frameworks across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

This dissertation examines Schenkerian studies in Japan through a multi-faceted approach combining literature analysis and empirical research.

Chapters 1 to 3 focus on literature analysis, employing both general and systematic literature reviews to investigate the development of the field in Japan. Chapter 1 traces the chronological development of Schenkerian studies in Japan through a general literature review. By surveying translated works, academic publications, institutional documents, and periodicals, it documents key figures, institutions, and major stages in the field's evolution from its introduction to the present. Chapter 2 examines the field's current development through a systematic literature review (SLR) of 45 key scholarly publications. The analysis reveals a hierarchical distribution of research themes—dominant, secondary, limited, and absent—and traces their evolution over time. Building on these findings, Chapter 3 identifies opportunities to expand Schenkerian studies within the Japanese context by addressing underexplored and unexplored research areas.

Chapters 4 to 6 focus on empirical research, presenting case studies that explore potential future directions for research and application in the field. Case Studies A and B, presented in Chapters 4 and 5, explore the relationship between Schenkerian theory and musical perception

and cognition, pioneering previously unexplored areas in Japan. Case Study A investigates how listeners perceive and process Schenkerian hierarchical structures. Case Study B analyzes specific musical factors—such as harmony, rhythm, and melodic progression—that influence this perception. Case Study C, presented in Chapter 6, explores the pedagogical applications of Schenkerian analysis, expanding upon existing but underexplored research in Japan. It investigates how Schenkerian graphs can be effectively used to teach non-music theory majors about musical structure.

This research opens several future directions: 1) deepening investigations within Japanese academia to examine specific aspects of the field's historical development; 2) conducting comparative studies with other cultural contexts to broaden perspectives and identify the unique characteristics of Japanese Schenkerian scholarship; and 3) expanding empirical approaches to further advance the field.