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MAJOR CLASS AND MANNER FEATURES

1 *Introduction: manner and major class in feature geometry*

Many current proposals in the area of the geometry of phonological features fail to express the relationships which apparently hold between what are traditionally referred to as MAJOR CLASS FEATURES, such as [sonorant] and [consonantal], and MANNER FEATURES, such as [continuant] and perhaps [voice]. For example, consider two distinct proposals made by Clements (1987), the first concerning major class features and the second feature geometry.

Clements proposes the major class features in (1):

(1)

	O	N	L	G	V
[syllabic]	–	–	–	–	+
[vocoid]	–	–	–	+	+
[approximant]	–	–	+	+	+
[sonorant]	–	+	+	+	+

Notice, crucially for the purposes of this paper, that the particular formulation in (1) is designed to allow the SONORITY SCALE to be defined in terms of what Clements calls 'independently-motivated binary features'. Thus degree of sonority can be associated in a straightforward way with the number of '+' specifications for the segment-type in question.

Clements proposes the feature geometry in (2):