

# 1. Introduction

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## 1. Goals

This volume presents the results of a three-year project of the Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, investigating – primarily on the basis of Hungarian material – the syntactic and semantic properties of adverbs and adverbial adjuncts.

The aim of the project has been twofold. The category ‘adverb’ and the function ‘adverbial’ belong to the most controversial notions of grammatical theory. Such basic issues as whether or not adverb is a primitive syntactic category constrained by X’ theory, and whether so-called adverbial adjuncts are targets of adjunction or occupy specifier positions, where they participate in feature-checking, represent open questions. The answers to them should be based, at least partially, on empirical evidence; however, adverbs and adverbial adjuncts are typically ignored, or mentioned only in passing in the generative grammars of particular languages, among them the generative grammars of Hungarian. Our goal has been to contribute to the clarification of issues of the grammar of adverbs and adverbial adjuncts on the basis of extensive and detailed empirical analyses of various types of adverbs and adverbial adjuncts of Hungarian.

More generally, adverbial modification appears to represent an ideal testing ground for the examination of the interaction of the syntactic, semantic, and prosodic components of grammar. In the Minimalist framework of generative theory, syntactic operations can be factored into general computational mechanisms, and into operations satisfying interface requirements. The studies of the present volume examine the division of labor among these components in the grammar of adverbials, separating purely syntactic constraints from requirements imposed upon syntax by semantic and prosodic demands.

## 2. Questions and answers

### 2.1. The category ‘adverb’

The category ‘adverb’ has an uncertain status in the set of lexical categories. If lexical categories are those characterized by either one or both of the features [+V] and [+N] (cf. Chomsky 1981: 48), then they clearly do not include the category ‘adverb’ – despite the fact that adverbs are also open-class items with