**Curriculum Vitae (project fundamenteel onderzoek)  
Benedikt Szmrecsanyi**

**Research Statement: a narrative on your scientific career in past, present and future**

**Short CV**

Benedikt Szmrecsanyi (°1976) is professor of linguistics (*hoogleraar*) at KU Leuven. From 1996 to 2002, he studied English philology, political science, and economics at the University of Freiburg (Germany) and at Georgetown University (Washington D.C.). He holds MA (2002), PhD (2005), and Habilitation (2011) degrees from the University of Freiburg (Germany). From 2012 to 2013, he was a tenured Lecturer in English Linguistics at the University of Manchester (UK). In 2013, he was appointed at KU Leuven, initially as a research professor (*BOFZAP*) with an Odysseus grant from the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO). He has so far supervised 11 successfully defended PhD dissertations (8 as main supervisor, 3 as co-supervisor), and is currently supervising another 4 on-going PhD projects (3 as main supervisor, 1 as co-supervisor). He has been mentoring to date 5 postdocs: Jason Grafmiller (now University of Birmingham), Malte Rosemeyer (now FU Berlin & recently minted ERC grant holder), Laura Rosseel (now Vrije Universiteit Brussel), Matt Hunt Gardner (now Oxford University), and Thomas Van Hoey (current appointment in Szmrecsanyi's Leuven lab). He has published >40 papers in international, peer-revied journals, has served as elected Secretary of the International Society of the Linguistics of English (ISLE) from 2016-2019, is member of >5 editorial boards, and is currently serving as an associate editor of the top-journal *Cognitive Linguistics*. See [www.benszm.net](http://www.benszm.net) for more details.

**Career path**

Szmrecsanyi's preferred theoretical framework is usage-based/experience-based linguistics. His research interests all broadly fall within the remit of variationist linguistics and variation studies, including their interfaces with typology, geolinguistics, and psycholinguistics. He views linguistic variation as a window into the hidden structure of human language and the nature of linguistic knowledge. His research interests specifically include:

* variation studies (synchronic & diachronic)
* probabilistic grammar
* sociolinguistics and register analysis
* geolinguistics, dialectology & dialectometry, and dialect typology
* learner language
* language complexity

Szmrecsanyi is currently particularly interested in the intersection between language variation and language complexity, synthesizing two lines of analysis in language/dialect typology and variation studies that should be allied but that are in practice surprisingly disjoint. The proposed project, along with ongoing project work in Szmrecsanyi’s Leuven lab, is hoped to pave the way for a large(r)-scale ERC grant.

Szmrecsanyi has ample experience with directing research projects (see <https://sites.google.com/site/bszmrecsanyi/research>) and supervising PhD students, so the project will be in safe hands.

**Career breaks**

none

**Five main publications and/or achievements in the past 5 years**

1. **Google Scholar: 5,080 citations, h-index 40, i10-index 71  
   Web Of Science: 913 Times Cited Total, 750 Times Cited Without self-citations, H Index 17**  
   (as of 19/02/2024)
2. **Szmrecsanyi, B., Grafmiller, J. (2023). *Comparative variation analysis: grammatical alternations in world Englishes*. (Studies in language variation and change). Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 1108491561. doi: 10.1017/9781108863742**   
     
   Lead author – this monograph is the summary of my FWO-Odysseus-project awarded in 2013.
3. **Szmrecsanyi, B., Engel, A. (2023). A variationist perspective on the comparative complexity of four registers at the intersection of mode and formality. *CORPUS LINGUISTICS AND LINGUISTIC THEORY*, 19 (1), 79-113. doi: 10.1515/cllt-2022-0031 (citations: 0) (Impact factor: 1.60)**

Lead author – this paper nicely exemplifies how I’ve previously tried to combine the study of language complexity with the study of language variation.

1. **Gardner, M., Uffing, E., Van Vaeck, N., Szmrecsanyi, B. (2021). Variation isn’t that hard: Morphosyntactic choice does not predict production difficulty. *Plos One*, Art.No. e0252602, 1-39. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0252602 (citations: 2) (Impact factor: 3.70)**

Last-named author, responsible for funding, motivating, and inspiring the author authors (Gardner was a postdoc of mine at the time, Uffing and Van Vaeck were MA students who wrote their MA-thesis on the topic). This is the key publication that takes center stage.

1. **Szmrecsanyi, B., Grafmiller, J., Rosseel, L. (2019). Variation-Based Distance and Similarity Modeling: a case study in World Englishes. Frontiers in Artificial Intelligence and Applications, 2, Art.No. 23, 1-14. doi: 10.3389/frai.2019.00023 (citations: 6) (VABB-1)**

Lead author. Another important output of my FWO-Odysseus-project awarded in 2013.

**Other scientific output and impact**

As to esteem indicators not mentioned yet in this document, I list below plenaries & keynotes I have delivered at major conferences:

* 2022. "In drei Alternationen um die Welt, oder: wie viele probabilistische Grammatiken man braucht, um internationale Varietäten des Englischen zu modellieren". Plenary lecture presented at the 7. Kongress der Internationalen Gesellschaft für Dialektologie des Deutschen (IGDD), Salzburg (Austria), July.
* 2021. "What corpora can tell us about the link between grammatical variation and language complexity". Plenary lecture presented at ICAME 42, Dortmund (Germany), August.
* 2020. "How difficult is grammatical variation, really?". Keynote lecture presented at Grammar and Corpora 8, Cracow (Poland), November.
* 2019. "Exploring probabilistic grammar(s) in varieties of English". Plenary lecture presented at the 8th Biennial International Conference on the Linguistics of Contemporary English (BICLCE), Bamberg (Germany), September.
* 2019. "Variation squared". Plenary lecture presented at the 10th International Conference on Language Variation in Europe (ICLaVE 10), Leeuwarden (Netherlands), June
* 2015. "About corpus linguistics, variation, and the variationist method". Plenary lecture presented at New Ways of Analyzing Variation (NWAV 44), Toronto (Canada), October 23.
* 2015. "Prescriptivism versus colloquialization: the rise of relative that". Plenary lecture presented at the UK Language Variation and Change conference (UKLVC 10), York (UK), September 1.
* 2014. "Recent advances in the corpus-based study of linguistic complexity". Plenary lecture presented at the AACL 2014, Flagstaff, Arizona (USA), September 27.
* 2013. "Diachronic Probabilistic Grammar". Plenary lecture presented at the 2013 International Conference on English Linguistics, Seoul (Korea), July 5.

**List the representative and substantial fellowships, projects and any other kind of research grants you obtained within the five years preceding the submission date of this project application.**

* **Relatively complex or relatively simple? Toward new ways of analyzing language variation**  
  Applicant and PI  
  Funded by a C1 grant awarded by the KU Leuven Research Council (grant # 3H220293, budget: €233,000)

2022-2026

* **How much does meaning matter? A fresh look at grammatical alternations**  
  Applicant and PI, with Hubert Cuyckens, Stefania Marzo & Dirk Speelman (Co-PIs)

Funded by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) (grant # G044721N, budget: €224,000)

2021-2025

* **Dialectsyntaxis herbekeken**

Co-PI, with Dirk Speelman, Stefan Grondelaers & Antal van den Bosch

Funded by a "Letteren, Nijmegen en Leuven" (LN&L) grant (grant # 3H200064, budget: € 62,500)

2020-2024