

REVIEW

By Prof. Sevdzhihan Ahmedova Eyubova PhD,

Professor in The Field of Higher Education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences,
Professional Direction 3.2. Psychology (Child and Adolescent Developmental Psychology)
Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen

on scientific works for participation in a competition for the academic position of professor,
in The Field of Higher Education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences,
Professional Direction 3.2. Psychology, announced in the State Gazette, No. 87 / 17.10.2023,

with candidate Associate Professor Elena Petrova Andonova PhD, New Bulgarian University



The competition for the occupation of the academic position "professor", in the Field of Higher Education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences, Professional Direction 3.2. Psychology was announced by the New Bulgarian University, in the State Gazette No. 87 / 17.10.2023.

The review process was initiated by a decision of the Scientific Jury, as stipulated in Order No. 3-ПК-50/30.11.2023 issued by the Rector of the NBU.

The sole candidate in this competition is Associate Professor Elena Petrova Andonova Ph.D. from the New Bulgarian University. The documents submitted by the candidate fulfill the requirements outlined in the Regulations for Application of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act for the appointment to the academic position of "professor."

Information about the candidate

Associate Professor Elena Petrova Andonova Ph.D. graduated from Sofia University with a degree in English Philology and later defended her Ph.D. in Linguistics at the University of Cardiff, Wales in 1999. From 1990 to 1994, she was a lecturer at Atlantic College, Great Britain, after which started working in the Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology at NBU. Between 2005 and 2010, she worked at the University of Bremen, Germany, where she led disciplines such as Psycholinguistics, Social Psychology of Language, Introduction to Sociolinguistics, Bilingual Consciousness, etc. In 2013, she qualified as an associate professor in Professional Direction 3.2. Psychology at NBU. Her main scientific interests and contributions are in three research directions – psycholinguistics, including cross-linguistic comparisons of linguistic information processing; spatial cognition and communication; and language acquisition in childhood. The educational profile and accumulated professional experience of Associate Professor Elena Petrova Andonova PhD in the system of higher education as a lecturer, manager, and member in research projects are in harmony with the requirements for the academic position "professor" in Professional Direction 3.2. Psychology, according to the Regulations for Application of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act. The scientific works presented in the competition do not repeat the works indicated for the occupation of the academic position "associate professor".

I. Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University

The reference for the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements by the candidate Associate Professor Elena Petrova Andonova Ph.D., shows the following presented evidences:

Group 1 (A). Associate Professor Elena Andonova has PhD in the professional direction: 2.1. Philology.

Group 3 (B). Indicator 3. The candidate presents a habilitation thesis/ monograph: Andonova, E. (2022) Early language development. Grammar. Sofia: NBU Publishing House. ISBN - 978-619-233-205-1; COBISS.BG-ID – 54248968.

Group 4 (Г). The candidate has submitted for review 30 scientific publications, including: 10 articles and reports published, referenced, and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information - eight of which are co-authored;



19 articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes – ten of which are co-authored

1 study (co-authored) published in a scientific publication that is referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information.

The evidence provided by the applicant in this group of indicators exceeds the minimum points required.

Group 5 (D). Associate Professor Elena Andonova presents 37 citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes. The evidence presented by the applicant in this group of indicators exceeds the minimum points required.

Group 6 (E). In this group of indicators, the candidate presents evidence of leadership of successfully defended doctoral students, participation in national and international scientific and educational projects, as well as management of 2 national and 6 international and scientific and educational projects.

According to **the indicators in the three last groups (Ж, З, И)**, Associate Professor Elena Andonova meets the requirements according to Appendix No. 2 to the Ordinance on the Development of the Academic Staff of the NBU.

There is definite compliance with the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University for holding the academic position of professor in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences, Professional Direction 3.2. Psychology.

II. Research activity and results

1. *Evaluation of the monographic work, including evaluation of the scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the author.*

The author's monograph titled "Early Language Development: Grammar," published in 2022 by Sofia: NBU Publishing House, ISBN - 978-619-233-205-1; COBISS.BG-ID – 54248968, meets all the criteria for scholarly work following the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. This monograph offers a comprehensive exploration of the acquisition of grammar in early childhood, drawing from a substantial sample of 512 children. The research presented in this monograph constitutes an original contribution to the field of psycholinguistic studies in Bulgaria, particularly focusing on the development of grammar. Structured into nine chapters, the monograph provides an in-depth examination of theoretical frameworks underpinning the research, as well as various methodologies employed in the study of early language development. Notably, the empirical investigation establishes the developmental trajectory of grammatical acquisition, including the utilization of grammatical morphemes (such as word endings for gender, number, and tense) and the emergence of language skills essential for constructing syntactically complex sentences during early childhood. This scientific inquiry stands out due to its extensive sample size, and its exploration of socio-demographic factors (including socio-economic status, gender disparities, and birth order) influencing both early language development and overall child development. Furthermore, a significant contribution lies in the adaptation of the VERBA tool - Questionnaires for Language Development, tailored for Bulgarian, facilitating further research endeavors in the field and



enabling comparative analyses with data derived from studies utilizing the MBCDI in diverse linguistic and cultural contexts.

2. *Evaluation of the contributions in the other attached publications made after the appointment of the academic position "associate professor".*

Thirty publications (30) in peer-reviewed publications are presented, 10 of which – are articles and reports, published in scientific publications, referenced, and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information. The publications show the methodological competence and consistency of Associate Professor Elena Andonova in using various experimental methods suitable for studying language development and cognitive mental processes. A large part of the presented publications are co-authored with other scientists, which shows the ability to collaborate and work in a team, which is an important condition for the successful implementation of research projects in interdisciplinary fields such as developmental psychology and psycholinguistics. The applicant's claimed contributions in the fields of early childhood development - developmental psycholinguistics, spatial communication, and cognition fully correspond to the content of the presented publications.

3. *Citation by other authors.*

37 citations are presented, all of them in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned scientific information databases or monographs and collective volumes.

4. *Evaluation of the results of participation in research and creative projects and application of the obtained results in practice.*

The professional applied skills of the candidate have been proven through work on socially significant project assignments in the following areas:

- Early language development - the creation of a language scale widely used in the ODZ network of the Ministry of Education and Culture Screening-test for 3-year-old children.
- Early language development - a creation of a language scale for 4-5-year-old children to assess the impact of an educational program for children from the Roma community.
- Creation of instruments for measuring the motivation to learn widely applied in the network of schools of the "Zaedno v chas" Foundation and other schools, and their partners.
- Creation of tools to measure motivation and attitudes towards learning mathematics, used in the training network of the Institute for Progressive Education.

III. Teaching and lecturing activities

1. *Auditory and non-auditory employment, work in the electronic training module "MOODLE - NBU", provision of student practices and internships, work with students and doctoral students.*

The teaching activity of Associate Professor Elena Petrova Andonova PhD is realized in the bachelor's program in "Psychology", incl. English language training and the master's programs in "Cognitive Science", "Developmental Psychology" and "Translation Technologies". She leads disciplines such as Spatial Cognition and Communication, Psycholinguistics, Language, Thinking, Culture, Foundations of Cognitive Science, Language Development in Childhood, Seminar: Empirical Studies of Early Childhood Development, Life Cycle Psychology, etc. There are authored materials for courses designed for learning in an electronic environment and



uploaded to Moodle NBU: PSYB708, PSYE104, PSYE315, PSYE405, PSYE114, COGM101, COGM016, COGM019, COGM911, DEVM203, DEVM110, DEVM228, and ITTM016. She supports the participation of undergraduate and graduate students in research projects, as well as encourages their participation in scientific forums and the preparation of publications. Associate Professor Elena Petrova Andonova PhD is the scientific supervisor for the development of bachelor's and master's theses and is also the scientific supervisor of successfully defended doctoral students. She periodically participates in state examination commissions.

2. *Work with Erasmus students.*

Associate Professor Elena Petrova Andonova PhD has experience as a coordinator of Erasmus projects at the Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology of the NBU.

3. *Student survey ratings.*

The average grade from student surveys for the last ten semesters is a very good 4.36 (max 5.00), according to the Center for Quality and Assessment at the NBU.

IV. Administrative and public activity

1. *Participation in NBU management structures.*

Associate Professor Elena Petrova Andonova PhD, demonstrates administrative and management commitment in the activities of the New Bulgarian University. Since 1995, she has held leading positions in the Research Center for Cognitive Science, in the Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology, in the Laboratory of Experimental Psychology, and she is a member of the NBU Academic Council, the Faculty Council, and the accreditation and self-assessment commissions.

2. *Public activity.*

Associate Professor Elena Andonova PhD has given public lectures on behalf of the NBU and at the invitation of universities or prestigious national/international organizations:

(2013) Zentrum Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft (Institute for General Linguistics), City of Berlin, Germany

(2013) CEEPUS visitor, University of Vienna, Austria

(2014) "Spatial Language Modules" Symposium, Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg, Delmenhorst, Germany, participation as an invited speaker

(2014) University of Lyon, France, at the invitation of the University of Lyon and the Max-Planck Institute Nijmegen

(2018) Invited plenary lecture at the speech therapy conference, Erasmus visitor, Trento, Italy

(2022) Public lecture at NBU on "Early language development in a family and social context"

In 2022, by order of the Minister of Education and Science, Associate Professor Elena Andonova PhD participated in an inter-institutional working group for a universal approach to assessing child development.

From October 2023, she joined the permanent interdepartmental working group for planning and coordinating policies for early childhood development under the Council of Ministers.



3. *Attracting students to the program.*

- Associate Professor Elena Andonova PhD actively participates in the development of courses for the bachelor's program and master's programs in Psychology and participated in the creation and administration of a new bachelor's program that attracts foreign students to the university. She teaches courses in English.
- Created a research area based on modern technologies with measurement of reaction time in psycholinguistics, incl. the creation of the first experimental laboratory in our country and the training of personnel. In this area, financial resources and equipment have been attracted to the NBU through a series of projects.
- She introduced a new methodology for the study of early language development, unique for Bulgaria, with the support of the Scientific Board (Advisory Board) of MBCDI.
- She introduced a new research area for Bulgaria - Spatial knowledge and communication.
- Thanks to these innovations, Associate Professor Elena Andonova PhD has supported the development of scientific personnel through a series of externally funded projects, such as joint research activities and internships, and as a scientific supervisor of students and PhD students.

V. **Personal impressions of the candidate**

I have no direct impressions of the candidate's work, but the information provided by the university is indicative of the fact that Associate Professor Elena Andonova PhD is a respected lecturer among NBU students. She supports them both in their academic activities and their participation in various scientific forums and work on research projects. I am convinced that New Bulgarian University would benefit from the activity of Associate Professor Elena Petrova Andonova PhD in the academic position of "professor".

VI. **Opinions, recommendations, and notes on the applicant's work and achievements**

Given the review provided earlier, I have reached the following conclusions and recommendation:

1. Associate Professor Elena Petrova Andonova PhD meets the minimum national requirements for the academic position of "professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences, professional direction 3.2. Psychology, as outlined in The Regulations for Application of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act.
2. She has professional experience as a lecturer and scientific supervisor in the field of higher education, as well as as an expert, trainer, and researcher in scientific projects in the subject area of the competition.
3. The candidate offers for review scientific production with significant scientific and practical-applied contributions
4. She is recognizable as a scientist and lecturer in Bulgaria and abroad.



Based on the achievements of Associate Professor Elena Andonova PhD, I give a positive assessment of her application for the academic position of "professor".

In this regard, I recommend that the Scientific Jury should propose, according to the procedure adopted at the New Bulgarian University that Associate Professor Elena Petrova Andonova to be appointed to the academic position of "Professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences, professional direction 3.2. Psychology.

10/02/2024

Signed by

Prof. Sevdzhihan Eyubova, PhD