

**REVIEW FOR PUBLIC DEFENSE**  
of PhD dissertation

External reviewer's review for public defense of Alisa Kasianova's PhD dissertation "*Car Advertising across Cultures: Semiotic Approach*"

In accordance with the review for Alisa Kasianova's pre-defense in May 2025, we hereby confirm that the dissertation "*Car Advertising across Cultures: Semiotic Approach*" is an exquisite and highly valuable work with the following major noteworthy positive features:

1. Firstly, the *semiotic approach* for comparing online automotive advertisements of international brands in Germany, Italy, and Hungary proved to be a wise choice.
2. Secondly, the *multi-dimensional perspective* that combines different cultures together; investigates the two major international car brands Volkswagen and Fiat; and applies a multidisciplinary standpoint (linguistics, marketing-communication, cultural studies, semiotics) properly helps to answer the research questions.
3. Further to the above, the author adequately applied *multiple models and theories* for her research, including Hofstede's cultural dimensions and Kozinetz's concept of Netnography.
4. Opting for a *mixed research methodology* is another sagacious decision from the author, enabling her to synergically combine qualitative and quantitative research methods, including 247 questionnaires, 13 in-depth interviews, the word association experiment, and the semiotic analysis of Facebook posts.
5. A valuable outcome of the research is the identification of *similar semiotic approaches* cross-culturally: some Hofstede dimensions (Masculinity, Long-Term Orientation, and Indulgence) display a stronger utilisation while others appear less frequently (Femininity, Collectivism, High Uncertainty Avoidance, and Low Power Distance). In parallel with the application of the Hofstede model, the author wisely takes into account the limitations of the approach.
6. Regarding *cultural dissimilarities*, the author correctly pinpoints that Volkswagen's Facebook activity is more adapted to the target culture, while Fiat often applies uniform, standardized posts with translated captions and consistent visuals.
7. Finally, the author adequately draws the attention to *celebrity endorsement, green advertising, user-generated content*, and the application of interactive marketing strategies such as *emojis* and *hashtags*.

All in all, the dissertation is a unique, novel, and high-quality work.

Even so, the Conclusions chapter of the dissertation could have been complemented by the systematic reiteration of both culturally similar and dissimilar signs, as very adequately pinpointed in the author's reply to the pre-defense review.

Similarly, the applicability of the results for the automotive industry could have been mentioned in the Conclusion part. The five major groups of recommendations as properly worded in the reply to the first review, would undoubtedly help industry stakeholders to shape future practices.

As a last, minor point, we note that references might have been made to another theoretical framework for investigating cross-cultural differences, the lacuna theory (Markovina 1983), particularly taking into account Grodzki's comparative analysis of the German and the American automotive industries (2003) and Denisova-Schmidt et al.'s conclusions on the complementary character of the Hofstede model and the lacuna theory (2020).

Overall, the dissertation is a novel, highly pragmatic, and applicable work with a strong theoretical and methodological background, that sets the ground not only for future studies in this theme but also for concrete, useful recommendations for industry stakeholders.

External reviewer:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lenart', written in a cursive style.

signature

Lenart Istvan; PhD; Associate Professor; docent; Institute of Foreign Languages for Professional Purposes, Sechenov First Moscow State Medical University

*Lima, 15 August 2025*