



OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Nikolay Mihaylov, Sofia University, Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication

on the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor/PhD" in the professional field

3.5. Public Communications and Information Sciences (Media and Communications - Integrated Marketing Communications)

with a dissertation on the topic: **"Personal Selling as a Communicative Competence - Semiotic and Contextual Aspects"**, presented by Kiril Grigorov Yanev, a full-time doctoral student in the Department of Communication, Public Relations and Advertising of the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication

with scientific supervisor: Prof. DSc. Hristo Kaftandzhiev

I. Assessment of the qualities of the dissertation text

The topic of the presented completed dissertation text is an attempt to comprehensively study personal selling and the communicative tools for its implementation in the context of communicative competence and, more generally, of semiotics and the problem of context. The dissertation work is 308 pages long and consists of an Introduction, an exposition in three chapters, a conclusion, author's scientific publications - 6 issues, a bibliography and 10 appendices, including a specialized terminological dictionary in Bulgarian and English. The main text contains 41 figures. The bibliography includes 151 titles, of which 45 are in Bulgarian and 106 in English. Today, in the academic and communication field in which the doctoral student works, there is a need to study and discover more complex ways to study the semiotic and contextual aspects of communicative competences. The author of the dissertation considers personal selling as a process in which philosophical, psychological and ideological factors play a key role in effective communication and interaction between a seller and a buyer. In this sense, the dissertation research is fully relevant to the doctoral program in which it was developed, as well as to the overall academic plan and result, a clear testimony to the successful joint work of the scientific supervisor and the doctoral student. The methodological apparatus of the entire study has been extremely successfully built and described, as well as the dissertatable thesis and hypotheses have been formulated: the principles, approaches and tools of personal selling



as an established method of commercial activity can be successfully applied to activities of an indirect commercial nature in order to work on increasing their effectiveness.

The entire text contains, in my opinion, all the necessary elements of an independent and original study, formed and arranged logically and consistently, with the use of appropriate methods for studying the topic, something that makes a strong positive impression of the research erudition of the doctoral student Kiril Yanev. I would like to note that he has successfully taken into account some justified remarks on the previous version of the text, which I am also familiar with. The abstract is detailed, follows the thesis statement and fully meets the requirements for referencing a scientific work and its content, relevantly conveying its main positions, themes and summaries.

The author has proposed six publications on the topic (one in print), which confirm my impressions of him as a researcher with a sustained interest in the topic and the research problem, but also meets and exceeds the minimum national requirements for acquiring the educational and scientific degree of "doctor". In my opinion, all the requirements of a formal, legal and substantive nature for assessing the dissertation work have been met.

II. Contributions of the dissertation research.

The doctoral student Kiril Yanev skillfully describes and analyzes the content characteristics of the studied communication and marketing phenomena, while also indicating their specificities in various aspects, as well as their influence on sales management, integrated marketing communications, branding and many others. The first chapter examines the "philosophy of personal selling" and in it the doctoral student demonstrates, in addition to high bibliographic awareness, also a proven desire to successfully clarify and define the basic concepts on which he will build and develop his research. The serious theoretical depth of the exposition in the chapter makes an excellent impression, as well as the skillful connections between the various lines of research – sales, communication, semiotic aspects ("semioticization"), contextuality, marketing strategies, etc. The second chapter is dedicated to the psychology of personal selling. According to the author, one of the main characteristics of this phenomenon is the ability to persuade. Which is quite justified as an approach and method of research, because persuasion



in all its aspects occupies a key place in today's public communication, especially in modern marketing, advertising, information influence, online communication, communication through social networks, etc. The chapter is a skillful and detailed presentation of the various communication tools of influence for the purpose of sales, refracted through the psychological mechanisms of influence on the consumer. The dissertation author has devoted special attention to "integrative negotiations", the purpose of which, he argues, is to satisfy both parties, achieving an effect in which the communicators feel simultaneously satisfied with the result of the exchange of values. The important ethical aspect of this type of communication is emphasized here. The third chapter examines the modern ideology of selling as a system of rules, norms and tools for interaction between a seller and a potential buyer. According to K. Yanev's arguments, it includes direct ("face to face") or online communication. Here is the place and presentation of an argumentative presentation of semiotics as part of the science of communication. The doctoral candidate once again demonstrates skills for analysis and independent generalizations that are relevant to the scientific tasks set and support the stated thesis and hypotheses of the development. The presentation is detailed and with attention to the different theories and models of impact - visual communication, performance, multimedia communicative competence, advertising in a digital environment, etc.

The author has formulated four main contributing moments of his research. I can divide them into theoretical and scientific-applied. The conducted study for objective measurement and evaluation of the personal brand of Hristo Stoichkov in the social network platforms LinkedIn and Facebook is rather the implementation of a research task, but also demonstrates the skills of doctoral student Yanev to independently conduct scientific research and analyze and systematize their results. The proposed author's methodology, implemented as an Internet application, however, is undoubtedly an important practical contribution and an original independent result in the field of the research topic.

III. Notes and recommendations

I have no notes, but I recommend that doctoral student Kiril Yanev continue to work with commitment and research ambition in the field of sales theory, the various methods and



practical steps of their implementation, the in-depth explanation of complex phenomena in the field of semiotics, communication, interaction models, the marketing mix and ultimately - communication as a basis for building effective and sustainable human relationships in a social, moral and psychological sense. The report on the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements is not completely filled out correctly, but the necessary points are present and this is a technical inaccuracy.

IV. Publications and participation in scientific forums

I also have personal observations of my colleague's participation in scientific forums, international and national. I can confirm the sustained scientific and research interest in the topic on the part of doctoral student Yanev, his continuous efforts to monitor new trends in its development, as well as to approve the achieved results before the scientific community, which I have witnessed. The colleague has always presented important and current topics related to his research, doing so in an original and even fascinating way. The publications on the dissertation meet the requirements, and I would especially like to point out the authorship of a chapter in a collective monograph, a serious achievement for a doctoral student.

V. Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to note that in the presented dissertation text, doctoral student Kiril Yanev proves his in-depth knowledge in the field of personal selling, multimedia presentation competence, marketing communications, but with an extremely important emphasis on the ethical dimensions of the problem, as well as its psychological and ideological trajectories. The presentation is in-depth, with an original approach, with extremely appropriate examples, with detailed analysis. The author's arguments are logically coherent and show excellent knowledge of authors, concepts, theories.

Based on the presented complete text of the dissertation, its relevance to the topic and the research task, the undisputed skills of the doctoral student as a researcher and independent author, the undisputed theoretical and practical-applied contributions of the doctoral student, I



propose to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to accept the dissertation of doctoral student Kiril Yanev "Personal Selling as a Communicative Competence - Semiotic and Contextual Aspects" as successfully completed and, based on his proven scientific and research qualities, **to confer on him the educational and scientific degree** "Doctor/PhD" in the professional field 3.5. Public Communications and Information Sciences (Media and Communications - Integrated Marketing Communications).

As a member of the jury, **I vote with conviction "YES"**.

Date: 23.04.2025

Prepared by Jury member: Prof. Dr. Nikolay Mihaylov