ẢNH HƯỞNG CỦA NGƯỜI CÓ SỨC ẢNH HƯỞNG TRÊN NỀN TẢNG ONLINE ĐẾN LỰA CHỌN KHÓA HỌC NGOẠI NGỮ CỦA SINH VIÊN TP. HỒ CHÍ MINH

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Tóm tắt

Trong tình hình hiện nay, nhu cầu học ngoại ngữ của các sinh viên đang tăng cao, đặc biệt là khi các sinh viên đang cân nhắc việc thông thạo một ngoại ngữ là một lợi thế trong tìm việc làm sau khi tốt nghiệp. Đồng thời, sự thịnh hành của các nền tảng mạng xã hội và sự nổi lên của những người có sức ảnh hưởng (KOL- Key opinion leader) đã có những ảnh hưởng sâu sắc lên cách các sinh viên thu thập thông tin về các khóa học ngoại ngữ. Mục tiêu của bài nghiên cứu này cụ thể sẽ tìm hiểu về sức ảnh hưởng của những KOL lên quyết định đăng ký khóa học ngoại ngữ của các sinh viên đại học. Để đạt được mục tiêu này, một mô hình nghiên cứu đã được xây dựng dựa trên mô hình Lựa chọn thông tin (IAM), nhằm giải thích mối quan hệ của 6 biến độc lập bao gồm: Nhu cầu thông tin, Chất lượng thông tin, Tính hữu dụng nhận thấy của thông tin, Mức tiếp nhận thông tin và Quyết định đăng ký. Dữ liệu cho bài nghiên cứu này đã được thu thập từ 191 sinh viên đại học đã có tiếp xúc nhất định với các KOL trên các nền tảng mạng xã hội. Sau khi ứng dụng mô hình cấu trúc tuyến tính (SEM), mô hình nghiên cứu đã xác nhận các biến Nhu cầu thông tin và Chất lượng thông tin đã có ảnh hưởng tích cực lên Tính hữu dụng nhận thấy của thông tin, trong khi biến này ảnh hưởng đến Mức tiếp nhận thông tin. Vì thế, ta có thể thấy Mức độ tiếp thu thông tin có ảnh hưởng đến Quyết định đăng ký khóa học của sinh viên. Bài nghiên cứu cũng bao gồm các kết luận và các đề xuất liên quan.

Từ khóa: Khóa học ngoại ngữ, KOL, trực tuyến, sinh viên.

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ONLINE KEY OPINION LEADERS' INFLUENCE ON HCMC UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' CHOICES OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE COURSES

Abstract

The need to enroll in language courses has been on the rise, especially among university students who consider language ability an advantage for their job-seeking after graduation. At the same time, the prevalence of social networking sites with the emergence of Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs), in particular, has significantly impacted the way university students adopt information about language courses. This research aims to investigate the influence of KOLs on university students' purchase intention of language courses. For this purpose, a conceptual model is developed based on IAM, explaining the relationship among 6 variables namely Needs of Information, Perceived Message Quality, Perceived Usefulness of Information, Information Adoption, and Purchase Intention. The data is collected from 191 university students who are exposed to the presence of KOLs on social platforms. After applying SEM, the model is validated, confirming that Needs of Information and Perceived Message Quality together contribute to the Perceived Usefulness of Information which positively affects Information Adoption. Consequently, the extent to which information is adopted affects the purchase intention of university students. Finally, implications and recommendations from the reach results are also included.

Keywords: Foreign language courses, KOLs, online, university student.

1. Introduction

Languages, for the most part, have been paid much attention to their impacts on human lives. It can be said that a person is fluent in a language when he or she can communicate with aboriginals using that language (Fromkin, V. et al., 2018). Language is one of the most important means of communication. Without languages, people cannot understand each other, hence nothing can be done or invented.

Recently, the tendency of globalization has pushed the limits of personal growth, allowing oneself to be exposed to different economic and cultural contexts. During this journey to fulfill one's potential, the very first mission would be removing the difficulties arising from differences in languages. In other words, it is to learn foreign languages. However, languages vary greatly in a lot of aspects: pronunciation, writing, grammar, and so on. In these aspects, different languages will have different rules, depending on culture and time. Hence, learning a language while not being a native speaker is extremely difficult.

Thriving on everyone's desire to learn another language, many foreign language courses have been developed and introduced to help students overcome obstacles on his or her journey to study a foreign language. However, the appearance of multiple courses leads to the confusion of the students regarding the courses' quality, purposes, pace, knowledge, etc. The 21st century has witnessed a powerful transformation to the technology era. A similar phenomenon has also happened in Vietnam. The introduction of the Internet, which led to the creation of many websites, has given way to both offline and online language courses. The most significant advantage of these websites is being a platform to communicate and advertise foreign language

courses to prospective learners. As a result, the decision-making process, such as the choice of courses, is affected by many factors, especially social media-related ones.

With the rapid development of the Internet and social media, the KOLs (short for Key Opinion Leaders) appear as people with the ability to influence followers. When it comes to the matter of choosing foreign language courses, KOLs also have significant impacts on the students. Subsequently, studying how KOLs influence language learners' choice of courses will give insight into their demands, assumptions, prejudice, etc. However, currently in Vietnam, KOLs have not been utilized to their fullest to promote the foreign language courses, as there have been many attempts, but mostly for the KOLs' personal courses or their media platforms. As a result, conducting this research can help us devise a suitable starting point for language centers to start developing marketing campaigns that involve KOLs and the advantages they can bring to the promotion of the foreign language courses.

Overall, the availability of various languages, the demand to approach foreign language courses, the powerful appearance of KOLs and the lack of research into this topic in Vietnam have contributed to the necessity to investigate how KOLs influence HCMC University Students' Choices of Foreign Language Courses via Online Channel. Furthermore, from the findings, the author attempts to propose suitable solutions for the educators to improve the reach of their courses to the students via the KOLs' channel of information.

1.1 Research's goal

The overall goal of this study is to identify and assess the degree to which each factor related to KOLs influences, via online channels, the choices of foreign language courses in HCMC. After that, some recommendations are made to increase the attractiveness of foreign language courses.

The specific goals are as follows:

- A theoretical overview of KOLs influences via online channels in HCMC choices of language courses.
- Proposing a model to analyze the factors related to KOLs affecting choices of language courses.
- Raising some recommendations to make foreign language courses more attractive to improve the number of learners.

1.2 Object of research

The object of the research is KOLs' Influence via Online Channel on HCMC University Students' Choices of Foreign Language Course. The target of the research is university students above 18 years old.

The reason for choosing this segment is because they have complete knowledge and necessary experience in choosing foreign language courses themselves. Additionally, compared with other groups of ages, this group of people pays much attention to learning, especially foreign languages.

1.3 The practical application of the research

Firstly, although the number of research about foreign language courses is various across many countries, they mainly focus on the matter of determining factors affecting the quality of these courses and related topics. In terms of what leads students to choose the course, however, not many researchers pay attention to it. Consequently, this is a topic that needs to be studied. Once figuring out these factors, the knowledge can be applied in developing foreign language courses with higher quality and stimulating students to join them.

Secondly, studies about the impacts of KOLs in the Vietnamese making choices' process, regardless of field, are extremely rare. With the rapid development of the Internet and e-commerce platforms, KOLs have become extremely influential with individuals and play vital roles as advisors. Hence, it would be a considerable disadvantage if there is no available study about KOLs in Vietnam.

Thirdly, the results of the research can become the reference for the process of improving the quality of advertisement of courses to students, not only in the field of a foreign language but also in other subjects.

2. Theoretical framework and literature review
2.1. Theoretical framework

In 1975, Ajzen and Fishbein proposed the Theory of Reasoned Action, with its root in social psychology. Attempting to explain the connection between human attitude and behavior, this model has been used in its original form such as in Gefen & Straub (2000) or conjunction with other variables based on the context of the research, for example, Vijayasarathy (2002), Van, Verhagen, & Creemers (2003), Zhu (2005). Visual representation of this model is as follow:
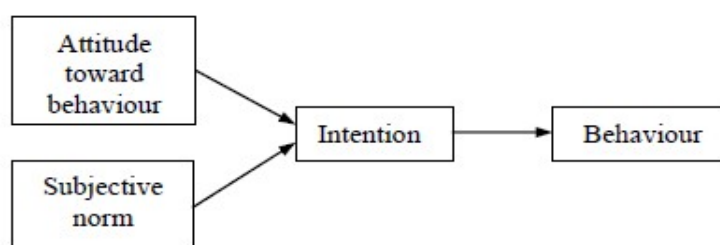
**Figure 1.** Theory of Reasoned Action.

Source: Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975.

As the model suggested, Human Behavior is influenced by Intention. Intention, in turn, is influenced by Human's Attitude toward behavior and subjective norms. In addition, this model also proves that attitude and subjective norms cannot have a direct influence on behavior. However, they can indirectly affect it through the means of Intention.

Consequently, this model is utilized to predict human behavior based on their attitude toward said behavior and subjective norms.

2.2 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

This model is proposed by Davis (1989) as an extension of the TRA with additional elements. The TAM model is as depicted in the following graph:
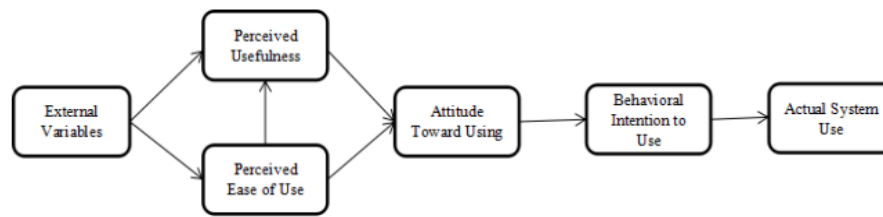
Figure 2. Technology Acceptance Model.

Source: Davis, 1989.

In this model, Davis (1986) added Perceived usefulness and Perceived ease of use as the factors that result from External Variables and affect Attitude towards using. Perceived usefulness is defined as "the prospective user's subjective probability that using a specific application system will increase his or her job performance within an organizational context", while Perceived ease of use is "the degree to which the prospective user expected the target system to be free of effort."

This model is used to describe how the user's acceptance of information systems and technology can be determined by his or her intention, attitude toward using, and other external factors.

2.3 Information adoption model (IAM)

Devised in 2003 by Sussman et al., the IAM model is a further extension of the TAM along with the dual-process model of information influence such as the ELM (Elaboration Likelihood Model).

ELM, developed in 1982 by Petty and Cacioppo, can be used to explain how users react to the reception of information via two routes, the central route, in which the users have careful consideration of the information, and the peripheral route, in which they have little consideration. The model is as follows:
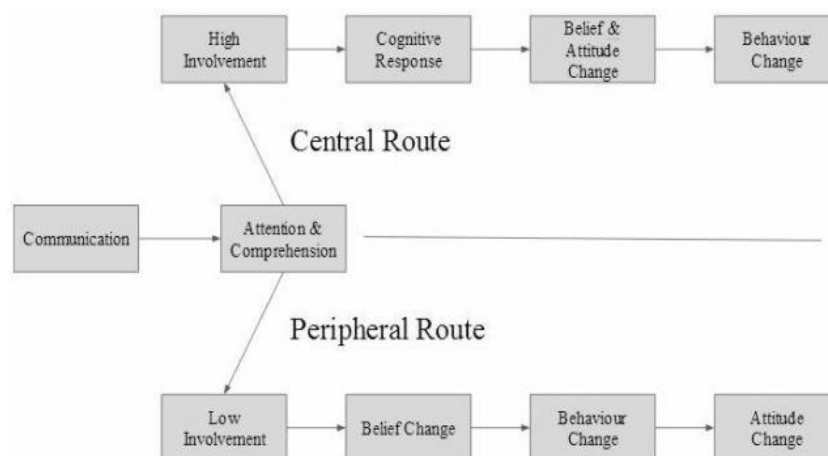
Figure 3. Elaboration Likelihood Model.

Source: Petty & Cacioppo (1982).

Integrating both of these models, Sussman et al. (2003) created the IAM model, with the Argument Quality as the central route and Source Credibility as the peripheral route, along with the perceived usefulness of information as a mediator to their effects on Information adoption. The IAM model can explain how each individual adopts information, which in turn affects their behaviors and intentions in the current days with advanced computers and technology as the main communication system. The model is visually depicted as below:
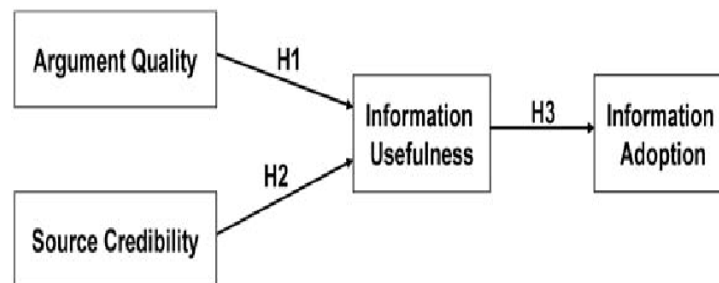
Figure 4. Information Adoption Model.

Source: Sussman et al, 2003.

Various empirical research adopted the IAM model into studying the contributors of eWOM's influence on consumer behavior. Despite all originating from the IAM model, some researchers can use *the original model as* Christy, Matthew & Neil (2008). This study uses IAM to examine factors influencing the online consumer reviews acceptance and adoption of information seekers in online communities. In this study, Argument Quality was measured by four dimensions including Relevance, Timeliness, Accuracy, and Comprehensiveness. Meanwhile, Source Credibility was composed of two dimensions, namely Source Expertise and Source Trustworthiness. From the results from 154 responses, the study concluded that comprehensiveness and relevance were key determinants of information adoption as they were the two most effective components of argument quality.
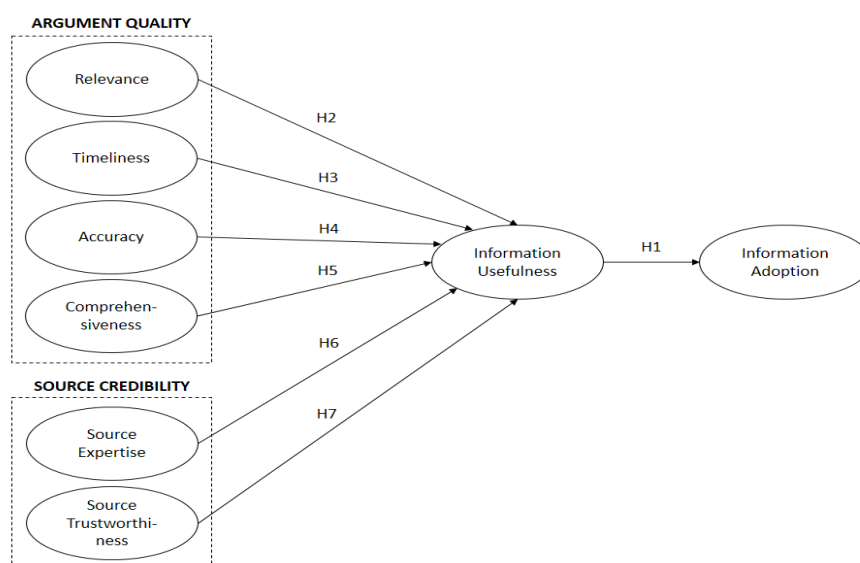
Figure 5. Christy, Matthew & Neil's research model

Source: Christy, Matthew & Neil (2008)

3. Methodology

3.1. Research model

Through the reference to previous studies, it was found that many researchers have used TAM and IAM to study consumer purchase intention. However, instead of applying the IAM to study eWOM communication due to its limited explanatory power, the authors opted to use the IAM model as it is more applicable.

Initially, although TAM is a widely accepted theory, it was criticized for its limitation in informational studies of eWOM. One of the limitations of TAM regards the behavior of clients, which needs to be considered in terms of subjective measures, such as behavioral intention and personal influence. Nevertheless, social influence as the subjective norm is interpreted to mean when a person is influenced by words of mouth. Meanwhile, TAM mainly focuses on how intentions towards using a system are formed but neglects the social processes (Riffai, Grant, and Edgar, 2012; Sussman & Siegal, 2003). However, eWOM communication is the process by which information is transmitted from the sender of the information to the receiver (Bansal & Voyer, 2000). Generally, the interaction from information senders to receivers is necessary. Hence, the explanatory power of TAM to study eWOM communication is inadequate.

On the other hand, IAM explains how individuals perceive appropriate information and thus change their intentions and behaviors in computer-mediated communication platforms. Also, IAM is based on both TAM and the dual-process model of informational influence. With the rapid development of social media, especially online communities, researchers concentrated on the process of receiving information. Since IAM is relatively new, its significance makes itself worthy of researchers' attention. Many of them applied it to study information communication (Jin et al., 2009; Tseng & Wang, 2016), especially eWOM communication (C.-W. Chen et al., 2011; M. Y. Cheung, Luo, Sia, & Chen, 2009). This study aims to investigate the influential factors of opinion leaders on consumer purchase intention through eWOM communication, so IAM is more applicable.

Therefore, this study used the IAM model as a theoretical basis to build and develop a research model to examine the related factors. The authors build the model based on the study of C.-W. Chen et al., (2011). However, the research retained an element of "Information Adoption" and proposed to add an element called "Purchase Intention" because the goal of the study was not only to research the level of the customer's information adoption but also their decision for choosing a product/service. To be more specific, the content of this research is to predict the decision of learners in choosing a foreign language course thanks to the impact of this. Purchase intention refers to "an individual's conscious plan to make an effort to purchase a brand" (Spears &Singh, 2004). This factor is considered to have sufficient influence on the consumers' purchase behavior, which is the probability that these consumers would buy a certain product and service. As a result, Morwitz (2014) proposed that a consumer's purchase intention can be utilized to predict his or her decision whether to purchase goods and services. To fit the context of this research, purchase intention will be defined as the online platform users' intentions to sign up for the foreign language courses promoted by the KOLs.

Specifically, the model absorbed the independent variables that C.-W. Chen et al., (2011) research illustrated: Perceived Message Quality, Source Credibility, Message Credibility, and Perceived Usefulness of Information. The authors made some adjustments to maximize the results of the research. In detail, compared to the C.-W. Chen et al. (2011) model, the author dropped Recommendation Consistency and Confirmation of Prior Belief and added one variable: Needs of information.

Based on Erkan & Evans (2016) which brought out the results of hypothesis testing, the authors chose the supplemental variable which is needs of information. The test of Erkan & Evans (2016) was found significant as the p-value is below 0,05. It was stated that consumers who need eWOM information on social media tend to find it useful and adaptable. Eventually, it is found to be one of the determinants of eWOM information on social media which influences consumers' purchase intentions.

3.2 Needs of Information - NI

It was emphasized by Flynn et al. (1996) that consumers with high needs of information are likely to search for information from others before purchasing. Furthermore, it was indicated that people who seek information on social media tend to find such information useful for their decision-making (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Therefore, this research includes Needs of Information as one of the determinants and hypothesizes that it is positively correlated to the perceived usefulness of the information.

3.3 Source Credibility - SC

In this research, the authors decided that three factors directly affect source credibility, which were expertise, trustworthiness, and product involvement. Trustworthiness and expertise, through the process which makes customers feel more confident and takes fewer risks in their decision, can undoubtedly contribute to the credibility of opinion leaders (Lord & Putrevu, 2009).

3.4 Message Credibility - MC

At first glance, some people may think message credibility can be determined easily by its content solely. Message credibility can be affected by expertise, liking, trustworthiness, and similarity (Bo Feng & MacGeorge, 2010) again stating the importance of non-content factors to message credibility.

3.5 Perceived Message Quality - PMQ

Message quality, or strength of the message, in other words, plays an important and irreplaceable role in customers' decision-making. Petty, Cacioppo & Goldman (1981) stated that while strongly logical statements direct receivers to desirable reactions, people perceive weak and moderate ones as unbelievable and doubtful. Normally, people will judge the quality of a message based on the combination of many factors such as content, format, accuracy, timeliness, etc. (Doll & Torkzadeh, 1988).

3.6 Perceived Usefulness of Information – PU

Perceived message usefulness is defined based on people's subjective feelings about the usefulness of a message or information (C. M. Cheung et al.,2008). It is the core estimator for the process of adopting information (Davis, 1989; Sussman & Siegal, 2003) and supporting purchase decisions (Lee & Koo,2015; K.-T. Lee & Koo, 2015).

3.7 Information Adoption - IA

Information adoption is defined as how people accept the information or content after evaluating its credibility (Wei Zhang & Watts 2008). Based on other research utilizing IAM, the information adoption can have a positive effect on the purchase intention of consumers on social media (Erkan & & Evans, 2016; Gunawan & Huarng, 2015)

3.8 Purchase Intention - PI

This factor is considered to have sufficient influence on the consumers' purchase behavior, which is the probability that these consumers would buy a certain product and service. As a result, Morwitz (2014) proposed that a consumer's purchase intention can be utilized to predict his or her decision whether to purchase goods and services.

To fit the context of this research, purchase intention will be defined as the online platform users' intentions to sign up for the foreign language courses promoted by the KOLs.
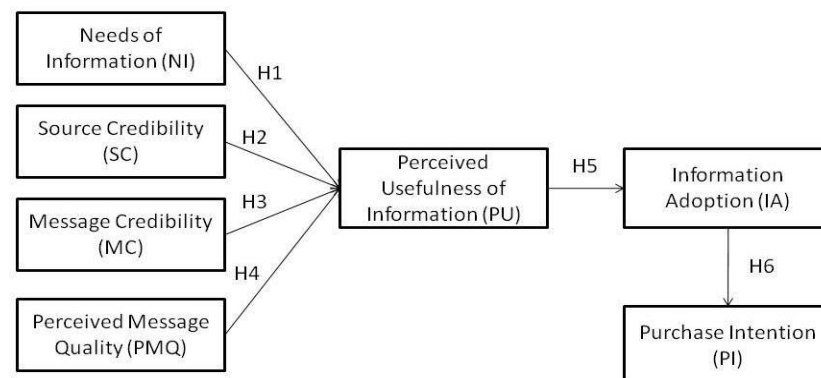
Figure 6. This research's model

Source: Compiled by the authors (2021)

3.9 Research Hypotheses

H1: On online platforms, needs of information affect the Perceived Usefulness of Information positively.

H2: On online platforms, the Source Credibility of consumers affects the Perceived Usefulness of Information positively.

H3: On online platforms, Message Credibility affects the Perceived Usefulness of Information positively.

H4: On online platforms, the Perceived message Quality of KOLs affects the Perceived usefulness of Information positively.

H5: On online platforms, the Perceived Usefulness of Information affects Information Adoption positively.

H6: On online platforms, Information Adoption affects the purchase intention positively.

4. Results
4.1 Data analysis

For this study, Ho Chi Minh city is selected to collect samples. The first reason why the team chose HCMC is that it is among the ranks of top cities in Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh City is the largest economy in Vietnam, with its GDP, accounting for nearly one-fourth of the nation. It is also the place that attracts the most proportion of FDI (Trang tin Điện tử Đảng bộ thành phố Hồ Chí Minh, 2021). Secondly, citizens in HCMC get used to accessing the Internet and social media in their daily lives for various purposes such as searching for information, entertaining, learning, etc. Hence, the term KOLs is more familiar to HCM's residents. Lastly, the number of university students in HCMC is 520.981 in 2019, according to the General Statistic Office of Vietnam, which means that it ranks second on the list of university students in Vietnam.

In case the study uses Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), the ratio between the number of samples and measurement variables would be 5:1 (Dinh, 2014). Applying this to the situation of the study, the sample size must be 180. Hence, there are at least 180 responses that must be collected via the Google form.

The survey was opened from August 18th 2021 to September 10th 2021 by a direct link to our Google Form interface. Due to Covid-19, it was difficult for authors to communicate with students whose school is located outside of Binh Thanh district. We had asked for help from our friends to diversify our responses as much as possible. After nearly two months, we received a total of 415 raw forms.

4.1.1 Scale reliability analysis

This research applied the approach of Nunnally (1978), Peterson (1994), and Slater (1995), which deemed that the acceptable Cronbach's alpha for the overall measurements and individual Corrected item - Total correlation are 0,6 and 0,3 respectively. According to the aforementioned criteria, all measurements are qualified.

Table 1. Scale reliability test results.

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No, of Items
Needs Of Information (NI)	0,887	4
Perceived Message Quality (PMQ)	0,827	3
Source Credibility (SC)	0,786	4
Message Credibility (MC)	0,889	3
Perceived Usefulness Of Information (PU)	0,868	4
Information Adoption (IA)	0,886	4

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No, of Items
Purchase Intention (PI)	0,781	4

Source: Compiled by authors (2021)

4.1.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis

The two commonly used methods of rotation are Varimax & Promax, the former of which is applied in this research. According to Finch (2006), regardless of the correlations among factors, two approaches show equal effectiveness in identifying the underlying factor structure, hence, researchers can choose the rotation method that they deemed suitable. The conditions for measurements to be kept are:

(1) Factor loading is greater than 0,5. If an observed variable appears simultaneously in two groups in the component matrix with an absolute difference in loading factors higher than 0,3, then it is retained, otherwise eliminated;

(2) Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin or KMO is between 0,5 and 1;

(3) Bartlett test is significant;

(4) Percentage of variance is over 50%;

(5) Only factors whose Eigenvalue is higher than 1 would be retained.

The EFA is applied separately to independent factors (NI, PMQ, SC, and MC) and dependent factors (PU, IA, and PI), totaling 5 times. In terms of independent factors:

(1) Only SC4 is omitted as its loading factor is lower than 0,5.

(2) KMO is 0,913 with a significance value of 0,00.

(3) Two factors having Eigenvalue are higher than 1, explaining more than 64,072% of the variability in the original observed variables (Appendix B Table B.8).

(4) Regarding dependent factors, none of the observed variables are eliminated (Appendix B Tables 9 to 11).

The final remaining variables are presented in table 3.8 and restructured (table 3.9).

Table 2. Rotated component matrix.

	Component				
Variable	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
SC2	0,807				
SC1	0,775				
MC1	0,761				

	Component			
MC2	0,753			
PMQ3	0,740			
PMQ2	0,731			
MC3	0,639			
PMQ1	0,584			
SC3	0,523			
NI2		0,896		
NI4		0,794		
NI3		0,775		
NI1		0,766		
PU3			0,876	
PU1			0,840	
PU2			0,835	
PU4			0,835	
IA3				0,910
IA2				0,879
IA4				0,870
IA1				0,794
PI4					0,841
PI2					0,827

|	Component
PI1	0,759
PI3	0,675

Source: Compiled by authors (2021)

Table 3. Revised factors after Cronbach's Alpha test and EFA.

FACTOR	OBSERVED VARIABLES	EXPLANATION
PMQ	SC2, SC1, MC1, MC2, PMQ3, PMQ2, MC3, PMQ1, SC3	Perceived Message Quality
NI	NI1, NI2, NI3, NI4	Needs of Information
PU	PU1, PU2, PU3, PU4	Perceived Usefulness Of Information
IA	IA1, IA2, IA3, IA4	Information Adoption
PI	PI1, PI2, PI3, PI4	Purchase Intention

Source: Compiled by authors on SPSS, 2021.

Thus, after performing EFA, Figure 3.1 would be the new model for the following result.
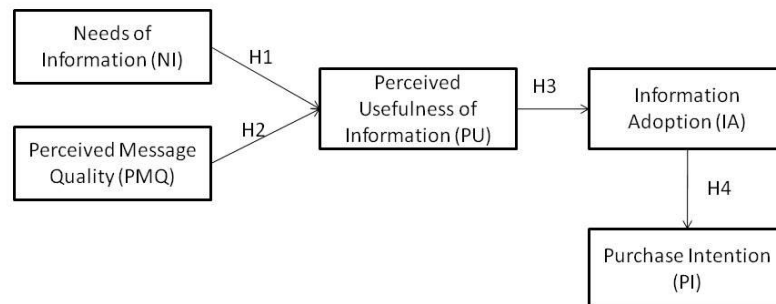
Figure 7. New model.

Source: Compiled by the authors (2021)

Furthermore, the hypotheses for this research will be as follows:

H1: On online platforms, needs of information (NI) affects Perceived Usefulness of Information (PU) positively.

H2: On online platforms, Perceived Message Quality (PMQ) affects Perceived Usefulness of Information (PU) positively.

H3: On online platforms, Perceived Usefulness of Information (PU) affects Information Adoption (IA) positively.

H4: On online platforms, Information Adoption (IA) affects Purchase Intention (PI) positively.

4.1.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

After the EFA, the authors used the resulting manifest variables to perform the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Five goodness-of-fit measures are utilized in this study to test the structural model, including the ratio of chi-square value to degrees of freedom, goodness of fit index (GFI), comparative fit index (CFI) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index).

Furthermore, to improve the model fit, variables that have the highest standardized correlations would be removed from the model.

The CFA model and results are as follow:
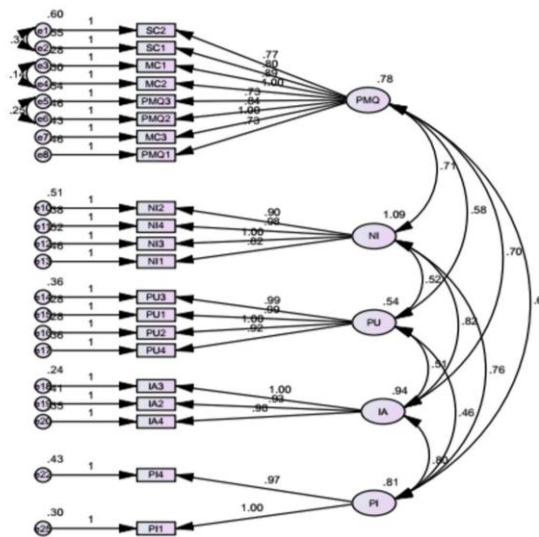
Figure 8. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) model.

Source: Compiled by authors on AMOS (2021)

**Table 4**. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) result.

Chi-square/df	GFI	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
2,19	0,842	0,933	0,920	0,079

Source: Compiled by authors on AMOS (2021)

According to Hair et Al (2010), our model has a good Model fit. Specifically, Chi-square/df = 2,19 <5; CFI = 0,933 > 0,9; TLI = 0,92 > 0,9; RMSEA= 0,079 < 0,08. However, due to the limitation of our sample size, it is difficult for this research's GFI to be larger than 0,9. According to Baumgarner and Homburg (1995) and Doll, XIa, & Torkzadeh (1994), if such a case occurs, GFI that is larger than 0,8 would also be acceptable. Consequently, our model's GFI is acceptable as it is 0,842.

4.1.4 Structural equation modeling

After we have the CFA model, the authors perform the Structural Equation Model (SEM) to have the final estimates of the structural relationship between the variables and latent constructs. SEM is a combination of both factor analysis and multiple regression analysis. The alpha level is set at 0,05, thus any hypothesis with p-value larger than alpha level (0,05) would be eliminated. The model and result are as follow when calculated on AMOS 20:
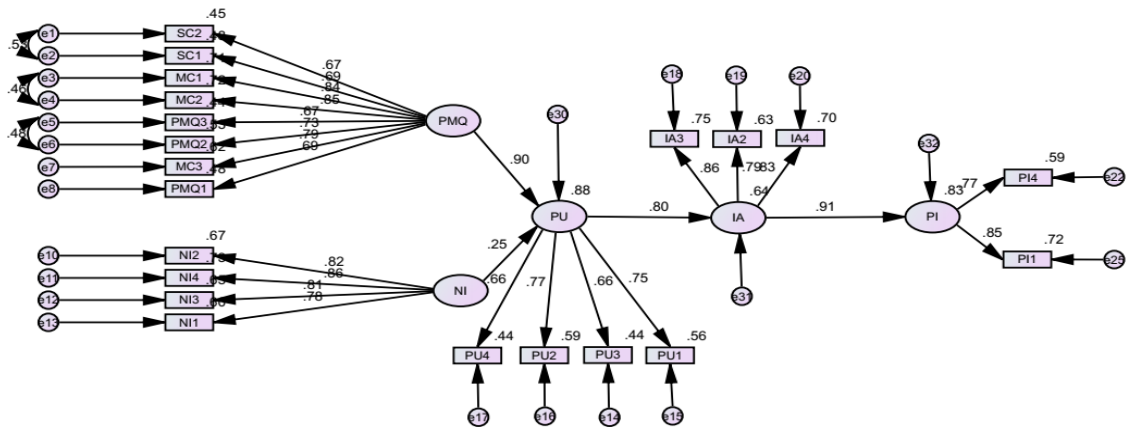
Figure 8. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) model.

Source: Compiled by authors on AMOS (2021)

Table 5. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) result.

			Standardized Estimates	Unstan-dardized Estimates	Stan-dard Error	T-values	R-squared	Result
PU	<--	PMQ	0,903***	0,662	0,059	11,269		Supported
PU	<--	NI	0,255***	0,160	0,033	4,915	0,88	Supported
IA	<--	PU	0,8***	1,091	0,110	9,931	0,64	Supported
PI	<--	IA	0,911***	0,881	0,07	12,669	0,83	Supported

***: p < 0,001

Source: Compiled by authors on AMOS (2021)

The table above indicates that all four hypotheses are significant as their P values are all less than 0,05.

4.1.5 Testing hypotheses

H1: On online platforms, needs of information (NI) affects the Perceived Usefulness of Information (PU) positively.

According to the table, the R-squared between NI and PU is 0,88, which means 88% of the variability of PU can be explained by PMQ. Meanwhile, the standardized estimate is 0,255 with t value = 4,915 and p-value < 0,0001, so NI has a positive impact on PU. Thus. H1 is supported.

H2: On online platforms, Perceived Message Quality (PMQ) affects Perceived Usefulness of Information positively.

According to the table, the R-squared between PMQ and PU is 0,88, which means 88% of the variability of PU can be explained by PMQ. Meanwhile, the standardized estimate is 0,903 with t value = 11,269 and p-value < 0,0001, so PMQ has a significant positive impact on PU. Thus, H2 is supported.

H3: On online platforms, Perceived Usefulness of Information (PU) affects Information Adoption (IA) positively.

According to the table, the R-squared between PU and IA is 0,64, which means 64% of the variability of PU can be explained by IA. Meanwhile, the standardized estimate is 0,8 with t value = 9,931 and p-value < 0,0001, so PU has a significant positive impact on IA. Thus, H3 is supported.

H4: On online platforms, Information Adoption (IA) affects Purchase Intention (PI) positively.

According to the table, the R-squared between IA and PI is 0,83, which means 83% of the variability of PI can be explained by IA. Meanwhile, the standardized estimate is 0,911 with t value = 12,669 and p-value < 0,0001, so IA has a significant positive impact on PI. Thus, H4 is supported.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation
5.1 Conclusion

The result from EFA was that six independent variables were reduced and restructured, resulting in the final four explanatory factors namely Perceived Message Quality (PMQ), Needs of information (NI), Perceived Usefulness of Information (PU), and Information Adoption (IA).

This final model was confirmed to be able to explain the mechanism of how KOLs affect the choice of foreign language courses of university students in HCMC. The results are illustrated as follows:

(1) Perceived Usefulness of Information (PU) is significantly influenced by Needs of information (NI) and Perceived Message Quality (PMQ). To be specific, both NI and PMQ affect PU positively, which correlates with the expected signs.

(2) Information Adoption (IA) is positively affected by Perceived Usefulness of Information (PU), which correlates with the expected signs.

(3) Purchase Intention (PI) is positively affected by Information Adoption (IA), which correlates with the expected signs.

In conclusion, this research's findings are as follows:

(1) Needs of information (NI), Perceived Message Quality (PMQ), Perceived Usefulness of Information (PU), and Information Adoption (IA) are the determinants of KOLs' impacts on consumers' choice of foreign language courses.

(2) The results show that the influence of information from KOLs not only depends on the characteristics of the information itself but also consumers' needs for information. They both have an indirectly important role in purchase intention; they, therefore, should be evaluated together while considering the influence of KOLs on consumers' choice of courses.

These findings align with results from previous literature. In particular, perceived message quality positively correlates with perceived usefulness of information as suggested by C.-W. Chen et al. (2011). In addition, our research proves that needs of information are a significant determinant of perceived usefulness of information, which is in line with Chu & Kim (2011) and Erkan & Evans (2016). Moreover, the positive relationship between perceived usefulness and information adoption is confirmed, sharing the same result with Christy, Matthew & Neil (2008). That information adoption positively impacts the purchase intention of consumers was earlier demonstrated in Wang (2015) and Erkan & Evans (2016). However, unlike previous research, constructs of source credibility and message credibility in this result after EFA are combined with those of perceived message quality. One possible explanation is that the number of responses is not large enough to produce a significant distinction among factors, leading to the grouping of three explanatory factors mentioned above.

5.2 Recommendation

With the rapid development of the internet, online communities where topics related to online shoppings are widely discussed are emerging. With the overwhelming amount of information, it is not always an easy task for individuals to differentiate between falsified and correct information. Thus, the role of KOLs as a source of public information is becoming more and more critical as a great number of customers are inclined to believe messages from KOLs. Realizing that trend, many companies develop an interest in using the image of KOLs as a cost-effective marketing method besides the traditional tactics.

Under this circumstance, the authors provide some practical suggestions for educational companies offering foreign languages courses illustrated as follows.

According to the result of this study which shows that KOLs have a positive influence on university students' purchase intention, we suggest that educational businesses consider KOLs an alternative marketing tactic besides the traditional methods such as online advertisements. Firstly, educational businesses can promote their teachers to work as KOLs to promote their courses. Secondly, the budget is more generous, educational businesses can consider collaborating with available language KOLs.

Although the results of this study reveal reliable determinants affecting university students' choice of foreign language courses, they are not universally applicable for every case. This stems from the fact that this study only focuses on university students (normal aging from 18 to 22 years old) in HCMC. Customers' variety in terms of ages, locations may contribute remarkable changes to the determinants of their foreign language courses' selection. Therefore, the educational companies should take these differences into account to develop attractive

courses satisfying the demands of target customers effectively and efficiently. Furthermore, the educational companies can conduct research to determine which factors impact their target customers' choice of courses if possible. A better understanding of customers enhances the likelihood to become successful.

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