

A GENRE ANALYSIS OF LAPTOP AND COMPUTER  
PRESS RELEASES

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**A GENRE ANALYSIS OF LAPTOP AND COMPUTER  
PRESS RELEASES**

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## **A GENRE ANALYSIS OF LAPTOP AND COMPUTER PRESS RELEASES**

### **ABSTRACT**

Press Release (PR) is an important medium in carrying information about new products, services and policies. This study investigates the communicative purposes of PRs and its evolution from merely informational to include promotional element as well. Online laptop and computer PRs from Lenovo, Dell and HP are analysed to determine the move structure. For this purpose, the framework of Catenaccio (2008) is adopted as it is closely related to online product PRs. To further the investigation, the linguistic structures of the PR are also examined. Linguistic features like adjectives, nominal and binominal expressions are used to realise the communicative purposes in the PRs. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are employed in carrying out this research. The study shows that more than one communicative purpose is present in online product PRs; information, promotion and persuasion. However, they are subjected to some limitations as focus is given to the written structure and not the images or videos that are added in the website.

# **ANALISIS GENRE SIARAN AKHBAR DALAM TALIAN UNTUK KOMPUTER RIBA DAN KOMPUTER**

## **ABSTRAK**

Siaran Akhbar merupakan medium penting dalam membawa maklumat mengenai produk, perkhidmatan dan dasar-dasar baru. Kajian ini menyelidik tujuan komunikasi siaran akhbar secara keseluruhan dan juga perkembangannya daripada teks berbentuk pemakluman kepada teks yang juga menggabungkan elemen promosi. Siaran akhbar atas talian daripada Lenovo, Dell dan HP dianalisa untuk mengenalpasti “move structure” penulisan yang digunakan. Untuk tujuan ini, rangka kerja Catenaccio, P (2008) digunakan kerana ia merupakan rangka kerja yang paling hampir dari segi data yang dikaji, iaitu siaran akhbar atas talian. Untuk tujuan penyelidikan yang lebih mendalam, struktur linguistik yang digunakan dalam penulisan siaran akhbar atas talian juga dikaji dengan terperinci. Adjektif, kata keterangan, ungkapan nominal dan binominal telah dikaji secara terperinci untuk mengenal pasti bagaimanakah ia digunakan untuk merealisasikan elemen promosi di dalam siaran akhbar atas talian. Kajian ini dibuat dengan menggunakan kedua-dua kaedah analisa kajian; kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Kajian ini membuktikan bahawa siaran akhbar atas talian sememangnya mempunyai tujuan komunikasi yang tersirat; iaitu sebagai makluman, promosi dan memujuk.

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The main purpose of the current study is to analyse online computer and laptop press releases (PRs) by using the genre analysis approach. Though originated as purely informational, now with the dawn of the internet era, one could not veer away from the promotional element in PRs especially if they are online PRs. This is because online PRs have a wider reach among clients and customers. Instead of waiting for the middleman (journalists) to write about a particular news, online PRs enable the news to reach the end users immediately. Thus, companies and big organizations make use of the circulation size for promotional intent either directly or indirectly. This study aims to determine how PRs are written nowadays by analysing the communicative purposes, rhetorical structures and linguistic features of online computer and laptop PRs. The researcher also explains the reason why online computer and laptop PRs were selected and why genre analysis as an approach is used in this study. This chapter also includes the purpose of the study, the research questions, the significance and limitation of the study.

### **1.2 Background of the Study**

The traditional definition of the PR still holds value today, although the forms and channels of distribution have changed. A PR (also known as a news release, media release or a press statement) is a written communication directed at the members of the media to announce a newsworthy event – be it a product launch, service, company news, policies and others. In other words, PRs are penned by the experts in the public relations field and are sent to the media to disseminate information to the public.

Historically, traditional PRs targeted reporters at newspapers, magazines, televisions stations and radio stations. Designed with a goal of capturing a reporter's attention, traditional PRs were often short and followed a specific template that only provided members of the media with the basic details about the newsworthy information. All other details like images, management quotes and other relevant reports, were collected in a "press kit", which was often only offered to the reporter on demand.

The first ever PR was written by Ivy Lee, a young man, following a train wreck on 28 October 1906, in Atlantic City, which left more than 50 people dead. In this situation Ivy Lee issued a statement on behalf of Pennsylvania Railroad who was his client (Catenaccio, 2008). In doing so, he set in motion a practice for companies to address issues important to them, or in this case to offer explanation about what had transpired. What Lee created is widely believed to be the first PR (e-releases, 2018). He established an invaluable truth that a PR provides opportunity for you to share your take on why a product is special or responding to claims or give explanation when needed. After more than 100 years of Lee's innovation, PRs remain an important tool for attracting the attention of the news media to a newsworthy item of information.

Though the times and technology have changed since then, the crux of the PR still seem to remain the same; to quickly and effectively disseminate correct and accurate information. However, PRs now live in a public domain, which means all readers and existing as well as prospective customers can see them.

Thus, instead of functioning as a ticket to earning news coverage, public relations representatives have come to look at it as a valuable piece of marketing content. Bhatia (2004) states that “PRs are among those public and professional genres which tend to be persuasive though not in the sense of marketing”, pointing out that despite being designed to serve informative purposes, they invariably focus on only positive aspects and incorporate persuasive and sometimes even promotional elements”.

With the advent of the internet, the traditional media is no longer segregated from the World Wide Web.– the PRs target online publications as well. Naturally, business owners focus their marketing efforts on this new environment, pushing conventional PRs to journalists and consumers via email, website publications and other distribution methods. The purpose is dual; publicizing the news and gaining SEO (search engine optimization).

Foremski, (2006), an ex-Financial Times journalists, in his article titled *Die, Press Release. Die! Die!* which was published in the Silicon Valley Watcher, said that the new online media enabled an array of information to be included in it such as; quotes from the CEO, quotes from customers, financial information and relevant links to other news stories or reference sources.

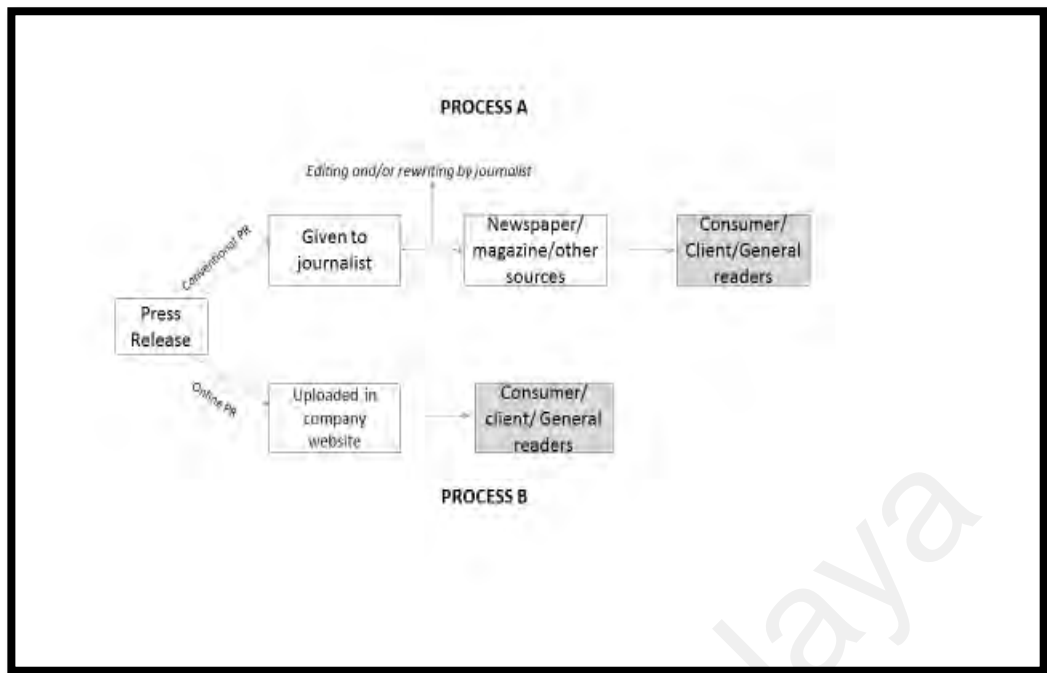


Figure 1.1: The Flow of the Press Release

Figure 1.1 shows the flow of a PR, both conventional and web-based from the moment it is written for publishing until it reaches the general public. Process A indicates the flow of a conventional PR. A PR is given to a journalist or media representative together with a press kit; also known as a media kit – a pre-packaged set of promotional materials that provide information about a person, company, organization or cause and is distributed to members of the media. The journalist or media representative then edits or rewrites the news according to his or her suitability before publishing it in newspapers or magazines for general public. Thus, the journalist or media representative has total control over the way the news appear in a newspaper or magazine. Bell (1991, pp.33-38) found that newspaper editors, journalists and media representatives rework copy written by PR writers or PRs coming from news agencies.

On the other hand, in Process B, which is a web-based media, the PR is uploaded in the company website and immediately they are available for the general public to read. In Process B, the news that gets published is controlled by the people who originally wrote the PR - the public relation personnel of the organization. This shift from conventional to online PR clearly gives the authority to the organization that wishes to publish the PR and at the same time letting them decide on the focus or main purpose of their release; be it merely to inform or to promote their new product.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

The confusion, or rather the problem in PR writing exists because of how it is viewed. Is it an informational piece of writing or is it intended as a promotional write-up? In his article titled “PR and the Media: A Collaborative Relationship?”, Larsson (2009) wrote that the public relations agencies often claim that they succeed in planting their promotional ideas in newspapers and programmes. Whereas the media, mostly denies such claims. Wolfe (2018), a PR writer, wrote that, PR is not a guaranteed marketing tool. This claim, however, could be true at one point of time when PR writers were dependent on media to bring their news to public. But now that online news are beginning to gain momentum, PRs can be effectively used as a direct-to-consumer communication tool. Thus, how PRs are written has also evolved along the years.

Both Bhatia (2004) and Catenaccio (2008) have looked into the overlapping of communicative purposes of PRs; informative and promotional and have identified the move structure for writing PRs. However, they are not exclusive to product PRs. Their study comprised general PRs, which covers products as well as services. Bhatia’s move structure refers more to the textual features of advertising. It does not address

the peripheral information of an online PR like logo and boilerplate description. Catenaccio's 11-move structure (2008) addresses these peripheral aspects which indirectly contributes to the promotional element in a product PR, which is an important aspect of my study. However, her study was not exclusively confined to online product PRs. They included launching of products, crisis responses and releases covering aspects of corporate activity which are both conventional as well as online. My study involves only product PRs which are web-based.

Traditionally, PR writing is viewed as belonging to informative genre only. As explained earlier in Figure 1, the conventional PRs are picked up by journalist, when they consider it a newsworthy information. This also gives credibility to the news as third-party (journalists) endorsement is regarded as the best way to promote a company's image and reputation. In a study conducted in the USA in relation to covering events, a majority of 50% US adults rejected the idea of adding interpretation or promotion in news and PRs. (Barthel, M. & Gottfried, J. 2016). However, this preferred single communicative purpose in PRs is difficult to achieve when product launches are involved. The phrase "PR is not a guaranteed marketing tool" (Wolfe, 2018) is true but one cannot deny that it does help to market a product. With the intended shift in the primary readership, the question arises if the communicative purposes of PRs are still confined to informational intent?

In 2007, Maat P.H. opined that promotional elements may clash with the informational purposes. Hence, writers of PRs are commonly advised to avoid promotional languages:

*Avoid excessive use of adjectives.*

(Press Release Writing: 10 Essential Tips to Ensure Your Release Makes the News, 1998)

*Provide the facts . . . no fluff, no puff, no superlatives.*

(Marken, 1994, p. 11)

*Keep the lead devoid of superlatives, and eschew self-promotion.*

(Williams, 1994, p. 5)

However, these opinions were written in the 1990s, before the internet revolution took over the field of public relations. Are these opinions still relevant today?

This study aims to address the problems mentioned above; Firstly, the conflicting communicative purpose of product PRs and the linguistic features used in writing the online product PRs.

Thus, in this research, Catenaccio's framework has been adopted to analyse the rhetorical structure of online product PRs – in this case, of laptops and computers. PRs for laptops and computers were chosen as it is a product that is close to people's heart in this information technology era.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

This study aims to examine the communicative purpose of online product PRs. Are they confined to only one communicative purpose or if mixed communicative purposes are involved. Keeping in mind the importance of laptop and computer in society nowadays, I would like to explore how their PRs are written to give information about the product and if they are written to influence people to buy it. If there are more than one communicative purpose, then how are they achieved in terms of the rhetorical structure and the use of linguistic features. This study also aims to shed some light into the evolving way of PR writing, be it for students in the field of public relations associated to education or current PR writers.

#### **1.5. Research Questions**

This research has online laptop and computer PRs as its research subject and attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the communicative purposes of online laptop and computer PRs?
2. What is the rhetorical structure of online laptop and computer PRs?
3. How are the common linguistic features used to realise the moves which shapes the communicative purpose of online laptop and computer PRs?

## 1.6 Significance of the Study

The study provides a detailed description of the PR genre, which offers the common rhetorical structure and linguistics features used by the discourse community to achieve their communicative purposes.

It helps resolve the gap in the study of online PRs. Catanaccio's study in which this research is built, examined a corpus of 70 PRs collected from various sources. However, they were not all online PRs. Catanaccio's PRs were both print and web-based and they were obtained from numerous types of business releases which included announcing new products or services, crisis responses and corporate activity not directly linked to product promotion. On the other hand, this research examines online product PRs exclusively.

From the pedagogical perspective, this study will provide some insights into the teaching and learning of PR writing. Students of English or Media Studies can utilize this study to enhance English communicative abilities and improve their English writing skills in a particular social context.

It is also hoped that this study will help the teachers of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to train novices in the field of public relations in writing effective product PR. For an ESP teacher/practitioner, the move patterns which is employed in this study is useful in syllabus planning related to PR writing.

## **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

It should be noted that there are some limitations for the study. The number of samples chosen in the study is not large enough to represent the whole laptop and computer brands worldwide. Though all laptop and computer PRs were selected to be examined, it only covered two years' corpus – 2016 and 2017. There are more laptop and computer brands which if included, the study would be more detailed, comprehensive and inclusive.

Also, this study focuses on the textual content of PRs. The multimodal features were not analysed as they are not significant and are limited. Only some PRs feature pictures and visuals while most of the PRs did not have them.

## **1.8 Structure of the Dissertation**

Chapter One sets the background for this study, addresses the problem statements and the objectives of the study. It also puts forth the research questions the researcher will attempt to answer and the significance as well as the limitations encountered in this study.

Chapter Two reviews the genre theory and the various definitions and perspectives of researchers on the genre topic. It discusses the concept of “hybrid genre” and other researchers' take on it. Bhatia's and Swales' theory are largely discussed. Bhatia's promotional genre is studied in detail. This chapter also examines the existence of promotional elements in Press Releases. The notion of move analysis is studied as this is an important method employed in examining the PRs. The two

frameworks adopted by P. Catenaccio (2008) and Biber, Connor & Upton (2007) is discussed in this chapter.

The linguistic features and promotional elements are examined; especially promotional elements according to Pander Maat (2007) whose classification of the promotional element and language is adopted in this study as well as Bhatia's binominal/multinominal and nominal expressions in analysing the linguistic features of the current data. Finally, past studies related to PRs are also looked at.

Chapter Three discusses the methods adopted in this study and its justification. The research design, general methodology, data collection methods and the background of the corpus studied are discussed. A detailed account of the analysis of data, which involves the move analysis as well as analysis of linguistic features are presented here. Finally, the criteria of the framework adopted is presented in detail.

Chapter Four discusses the analysis of data. The PRs presented under each brand is tagged manually for identification of moves according to Catenaccio's (2008) 11- move structure and is tabulated. These numbers are also calculated for frequencies. This step enables the analyst to distinguish between obligatory, conventional and optional moves. To further analyse the rhetorical structure of the online PRs, the move sequences are also examined in detail, in the peripheral and core segment of the PR. The move sequences enable the analyst to see how one move type typically relates to another. The linguistic features used to realize the moves are also studied and some examples are tabulated. In the discussion section, the findings are discussed in detail

and compared with related past studies on a similar subject. In this section also, analyst will answer the research questions presented in Chapter One.

Chapter Five, being the concluding chapter of this dissertation, summarizes the analysis and attempts to relate them to theoretical and pedagogical implications.

## **1.9 Conclusion**

This chapter has proposed the background of the study and explained the evolution of PRs in current public relations field. The problem statement has been addressed, the objectives and significance of the study have also been clarified. The limitations of the study is acknowledged by the analyst. An overview of the structure of the dissertation is also included in this chapter.

## **CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a brief review of the definitions of genre by various researchers of the field as well as discusses the different genre theories. This study employs the genre approach in examining online laptop and computer PRs. It also discusses the hybridity of PRs and the notion of overlapping communicative purpose. The methods and framework employed in this study is also discussed in this chapter: move analysis and Catenaccio's 11-move structure (2008). The online PRs are also analysed for their promotional intent. Bhatia's promotional colonies and promotional elements according to Pander Maat (2007) is also reviewed to determine the linguistic features that will be examined in the study. Finally, related studies involving PRs are looked at to determine the similarity and differences that exist between them and my research. Some interesting similarities like self-referencing, quotations and the use of adjectives could be identified.

### **2.2 The Definition of Genre and Genre Theory**

Genre has been defined in various ways by theorists. Today genre is used to refer to a distinctive category of discourse of any type, spoken, or written, with or without literary aspirations (Swales, 1990). Ben Amos (1969) considers genre as a classificatory category just like a story may be classified as a myth, legend or tale. Hastings (2002, pg. 174) defines genre as a "type or category into which literary works can be grouped according to form, technique or purpose. According to Todorov & Berrong (1976), a new genre always transforms from one or more old genres, through different processes such as inversion, displacement or combination. For Hymes (in

Swales, 1990), genres are often associated with speech events, which are activities that are directly governed by rules or norms for the use of speech. However, these two entities must be treated as independent as a genre may occur in different events. Seville-Troiike (2000), uses genre to refer to the type of communicative events such as jokes, stories, lectures, greetings and conversations.

Martin (1985) defines genre as a staged, goal oriented, purposeful activity, in which speakers engage as members of our culture. He goes on to explain that speakers generally apply language to fulfil goal-oriented tasks from cultural perspective and in doing so must use genres. Kress and Threadgold (1988) defines genre as “the socially ratified text-types in a community, which make meaning possible by contextualizing in a meta-grammatical way the actual linguistic or semantic patterns that constitute the lexico-grammar of texts”.

Richards (2002 p.224) defines genre as a “type of discourse that occurs in a particular setting, that has distinctive and recognizable patterns and norms of organization and structure, and that has particular and distinctive communicative functions”. He goes on to explain that business reports, news broadcasts, speeches, letters, advertisements, etc. are different types of genre. Each genre is governed by a set of features conventionally associated to the particular genre. Writers of each genre must employ features associated to such genre while writing texts of that genre. Similarly, while reading a text of a particular genre, the readers expect a certain features of the text based on the genre to which the text belong. Thompson (2004), sees the genre as a combination of register and purpose. He explains that genre “includes the more general idea of what the people who interact are doing through

language, and how they organize the language event, typically in recognizable stages, in order to achieve that purpose”. (Thompson, 2004, pgs. 42-43)

Celce-Murcia and Larson-Freeman (1999) explains that genre is closely related as both refer to linguistic variation. However, in genre, the variation is due to the communicative purposes to which the language is put (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999). Different genres differ from each other in their patterns of words, structures and voice.

Genre as propositioned by Swales (1990) has started to become important in linguistics. Swales (1990) defines genre as a recognizable communicative event with a set of communicative purpose(s) which is identified and commonly understood by a group of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs. Bhatia (1993) has further expanded on Swales’ theory to say that genres are recognizable communicative events, and is primarily characterized by the communicative purpose(s) it is intended to fulfil. Though genres serve typical socially recognized communicative purposes, yet we often find them being exploited to convey private intentions (Bhatia, 1993; 1997).

He includes PRs among those public and professional genres “which tend to be persuasive though not in the sense of marketing”, pointing out that despite being “designed to serve informative purposes, they invariably focus on only positive aspects and incorporate persuasive and sometimes even promotional elements” (Bhatia, 2004). Bhatia’s definition is closer to home, as in this study, researcher attempts to examine

the possible existence of more than one communicative purpose in corporate product PRs.

In understanding the genre theory better, Bhatia has categorized it in four different perspectives; the real-world perspective, the writer's socio-cognitive perspective, the discourse analyst's perspective and the pedagogical perspective. He likens the real-world perspective to the galaxy which is chaotic yet with systematic patterns. According to Bhatia, the genre exists in colonies just like the stars in the galaxy (1995, 1997). The colonies of genres are the constellation of closely related and overlapping genres sometimes within but often across discourse communities like promotional genres, reporting genres and introductory genres. Although in much of genre analysis, we identify textual artefacts in terms of pure genres, in practice however, we often find them in a mixed or embedded form. This can be due to the fact that they are designed to realize a mixed communicative purpose or to communicate "private intentions" within the socially recognized communicative purposes (Bhatia, 1995, 1997; Fairclough, 1995). For example, company annual reports which are often written to inform company performance can now be seen as subtly incorporating promotional elements.

Bhatia's socio-cognitive perspective (2002), discusses about the incorporation of promotional element by expert genre writers in traditionally non-promotional or informational genre. The essential forms of promotional genres have often been regarded as advertisements, and sales promotion letters. However, we do find a number of appropriated and mixed forms like job applications and project proposals (Bhatia, 2002). These mixed forms or also known as hybrid forms often serve a

mixture of two or more communicative purposes through the same generic form like company brochures and leaflets. This is more so, especially with the invasion of new media and electronic modes of communication in public life.

PR is a typical example of one such document or text that can be characterized under the genre mixing especially with the increasing popularity of internet. A typical promotional genre like an advertisement is used to disseminate information and its purposes are to sell goods or services, to obtain political support, to advocate certain careers and so on (Crystal, 2002). The advertisement utilizes a variety of promotional tools to convey information and attract viewers and listeners/readers. An advertisement should be paid by advertisers to the media. An online product PR on the other hand, differ from this in the sense that it appears in the organization's website and the writers are also employed by them. Thus, using the online product PR for mixed purposes is unavoidable.

Bhatia's analytical perspective deals with the analysis of discourse as genre using various methods like corpus studies, textual analysis and critical and ethnographic analysis while the pedagogical perspective considers pedagogical practises and procedures, which is often sensitised and prepare students to meet the communicative demands of disciplinary communication, provide necessary understanding of the concerns that determine the nature of discourse and genre analyses. Insights from such analyses of pedagogical practices and procedures, especially in the context of application, on the one hand, and help integrate analytical findings with language learning procedures, on the other.

Analysing discourse as genre has always been an interest to discourse analyst given the constantly increasing role of language in various fields such as scientific, business, technology and communication. Thus, there is a need for a deeper understanding of the structural description and function of specific genres.

Genre analysis is descriptive rather than prescriptive as it attempts to find out the strategies of PR writing or the way they are structured. Based on these structures, a pattern or model for a PR is presented.

### **2.3 Bhatia's Promotional Genre Colonies**

The term “genre colony” was used and highlighted by Bhatia (2004). They can be regarded as “a grouping of closely related genres” serving broadly similar communicative purposes, but not necessarily all the communicative purposes in cases where they serve more than one (Bhatia, 2004). Promotional discourse, is enacted through its genre colony; “a constellation of several closely related genres with an overlapping communicative purpose of promoting a product or service to a potential customer (p.60). Some of the common examples of promotional genres may include advertisements, promotional letters and book blurbs, which can be placed close to these, although they are different in terms of the specificity of the product they promote. For example books; the difference could be in terms of the selection and size of the market or audience they target and also the nature of the strategies and hence lexico-grammatical resources they employ, depending upon the subject discipline of the book. Thus, there exist a large degree of overlap in the communicative purposes they tend to serve and that is the main reason why they are seen as forming a closely-related discourse colony serving more or less a common promotional purpose, in spite

of the fact that some of them, more than others, may also display subtle differences in their realizations.

Going beyond these primary members of this colony, one may find a number of other genres, which may not appear to be exactly advertisements but nevertheless have a strong promotional concern. PR is one such genre. Other examples include travel brochures, grant proposals and public campaigns.

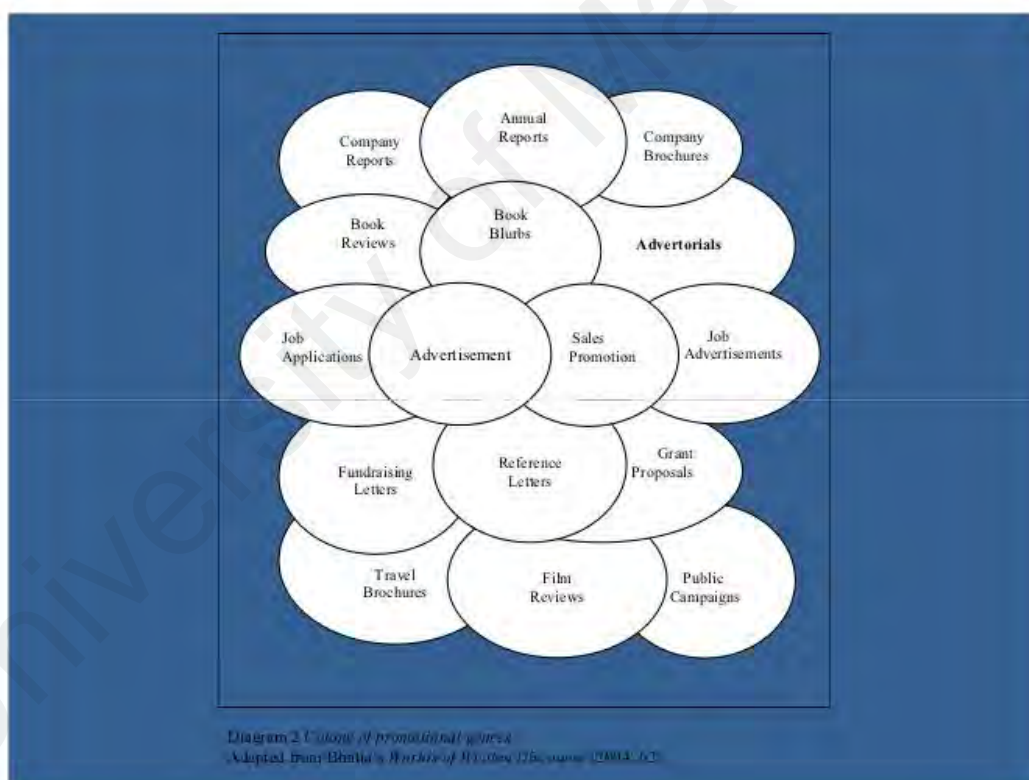


Figure 2.1: Bhatia's Promotional Genre Colonies

Figure 2.1 shows the colony of promotional genres by Bhatia. As one can see, the colony has a variety of occupants, some of them having overlapping territorial claims, whereas others are somewhat more distinct from one another.

## 2.4 Press Release as a Hybrid Genre

The primary aim of PRs are to communicate newsworthy information to the media community and to the general public (being done directly by making PRs available through company websites). While they are generally regarded as being informational, PRs also carry an implicitly self-promotional purpose. This has become more prominent with the dawn of world wide web that has radically changed the framework of many traditional genres (Garzone, 2007), including the PR. Thanks to the electronic distribution of the PR and the creation of the virtual newsrooms accessible to general public, they get to enjoy a much greater visibility than it ever had in the past. With the recent shifting of the primary readership from just journalists to general public, one can realise the typical mix of informative and promotion which makes them a prime example of what had been called a 'hybrid genre' (Bhatia, 2004; Fairclough, 1992). They are genres which are the result of the blurring of the boundaries between discourses.

In pointing out the hybrid nature of PRs, Jacobs in his 1999 study has mentioned the fact "the unpaid publicity" that PRs are said to be geared at, seems to keep the middle ground between advertising and news reporting (1997). According to Jacobs, such hybridisation could be related to the general trend towards what Fairclough (1992, 1994) calls the "commodification" of discourse; the tendency of one type of discourse to colonize other types of discourse, a phenomenon extensively studied by Bhatia in his investigation of genre mixing for the purpose of promotionalization (Bhatia 1999, 2000, 2004).

McLaren and Gurau (2005), in their paper titled “Characterising the Genre of the Corporate Press Release”, have clearly categorised PRs as business and corporate genre. What they have in common with other genres is that they are typified rhetorical action in the context of socially defined recurrent situations. This is similar to laptop and computer PRs where there is a recurrent need to give information about a new product. The communicative purposes of a genre is not noted in a single individual’s motive for communicating, but in a purpose that is constructed, recognised and reinforced within a community. The example given is the report of an annual shareholder’s meeting. The commonly recognised purpose is to “report on the company’s past accomplishment and presenting the future look”. The company PR will also report on similar purposes as well as concentrate on presenting the company in a positive light in public domain.

Studying the online laptop and computer PRs, one cannot deny that they share similar purpose with McLaren and Gurau’s (2005) analysis of shareholder’s meeting report. These online PRs seek to inform the launch of a new product, promote the product to the readers; clients, shareholders, journalists or general public and persuade them to buy it. This clearly contributes towards the hybridity status of the text.

## **2.5 Promotional Elements in Press Releases**

The objectivity of a PR is thinly masked by the underlying promotional intent. The success of the PR as media communication strategy relies on the mutual understanding of PR writers and members of the press that promotional intentions are very much prominent (Bhatia, 2004). Journalists expect a degree of promotional language (Shoemaker, 1991; Pander Maat, 2007) and are aware that PR writing involves a process which is not only informative but also promotional. According to Bhatia (1999), professional genres rarely serve a single socially recognized communicative purpose, but very often combine communicative purposes with “an immediate single purpose” (p.25). Cook (2001), states that a piece of discourse may be classified under several genres at the same time. Jacobs (2005), who is perhaps responsible for most researches involving corporate PRs have identified how the advent of internet seems to be playing a substantial role in ‘commodifying’ a news.

Based on a study by Strobe and Jacobs (2005), which involved a 1995 American online PR distribution services – The American Internet News Bureau (INB), they found that when PRs are uploaded in the company websites, they provide direct contact with potential customers. Thus, these PRs or e-releases indirectly initiate sales effort through their PR writing. Most of these PRs are commercial stories advertising the launch of a new product that can be bought online by means of a simple click on the hyperlinked email addresses and URLs mentioned at the end of the e-release.

Online PRs examined in this study also has hyperlinked email addresses and contact information about the product. This action by the PR writer comes a great deal closer to being regarded as the true “publicity” than the traditional hard copy PRs which used to be sent to journalists only. The primary reasons for this is because of the widening readership circle; from only the journalists and media representatives to the general public. Another fact that should be noted is that, the general public reading the online laptop and computer PRs are people who are genuinely interested in such products. It is highly unlikely for a person who do not deal or involve himself / herself with laptops and computers to actually visit these organization’s websites and check out their new product releases. Thus, knowing the fact that they are potential buyers the promotional element in these PRs are a necessity.

## 2.6 Theoretical Framework

This study adopts Paola Catenaccio's (2008) framework. The moves and steps of her framework are presented in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Catenaccio's Framework (2008)

<b>Move 1</b>	Press/news release (frame)
<b>Move 2</b>	Headline
<b>Move 3</b>	Summary of main points (optional – can be conflated with Move 2)
<b>Move 4</b>	“FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE” formula (optional)
<b>Move 5</b>	Lead: Announcing newsworthy information. (s1) Launching a new product/service (s2) Announcing results and other company internal information (s3) Describing other types of company activity.
<b>Move 6</b>	Justifying the product/service or simply the newsworthiness of the information. (s1) Indicating the need for the product/service etc. (s2) Referring to the advantages for potential beneficiaries. (s3) Qualifying the result as positive.
<b>Move 7</b>	Detailing product/service/company/other event which is the object of the release.
<b>Move 8</b>	Explicit promotional component: Attributed to the company officials, or standard users. (s1) Emphasizing positive results. (s2) Indicating reliability of company/product (s3) Independently endorsing company results (s4) Independent expert opinion.
<b>Move 9</b>	Boilerplate description(s) / establishing credentials.
<b>Move 10</b>	Contact details.
<b>Move 11</b>	Company logo.

Catenaccio's (2008) study is an extension of Bhatia's (2004) research on advertisements. Her study included a corpus of PRs downloaded from company websites to examine both news reports and advertisements in one. This study led to the 11-move structure, which includes the peripheral and core elements of PRs which refers to the promotional aspects as well.

## 2.7 Move Analysis

Wales (1989) defines that a 'move' is the smallest significant unit of discourse. It was taken from the discourse analysis model developed by Sinclair et al. (1975) built on work by Bellack et al. (1966). In the subject of genre, the notion of move is an important scope. The move analysis is a useful tool to examine the communicative purpose and linguistic boundaries of each portion of a text that is being studied. This is significant in a genre based study as clarified by scholars like Miller (1984); Swales (1990); and Bhatia (1993), that the concept of communicative purposes capture a special place in most genre-based approaches to language. Bhatia in his studies in 1997 points out that the complexities of communicative realities are made clearer through these move structures.

Catenaccio's (2008) move structure is conceived in light of these realities; a mixed nature in communicative purposes; informative and promotional, which will be examined in this study. Bhatia (1993), describes move as a unit which has particular communicative functions: "each move helps to complete a small portions of a particular communicative intention, then all moves add up to serve overall communicative purpose of the genre.

Biber, Connor and Upton (2007), refers to move as a section of a text that performs a specific communicative function. Each move not only has its own purpose but also contributes to the overall communicative purposes of the genre. The generic structure of a genre consists of obligatory and optional moves and steps. Some move types occur more frequently than others in a genre and can be described as conventional, whereas other moves occurring not as frequently can be described as

optional. Moves that occur almost all the time is described as obligatory (Biber, Connor & Upton, 2007). The categorization of moves by Biber, Connor and Upton (2007) is adopted in this study.

According to Bhatia, each move contributes to a part of the overall purpose, while each step designed as a strategy to achieve the intention of each move. The concept of moves and steps adopted in this research is mainly practised by Swales (1990) and defined by Bhatia (1993). It is also used by Catenaccio in her paper *Press Releases as a Hybrid Genre: Addressing the Informative/Promotional Conundrum* (2008).

A number of researchers have applied the move analysis to describe patterns in genre texts. For example, Mitchell (2004) has talked about shop transactions and Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988) in their studies of the discussion section of natural science and matter of science dissertations. Bhatia (1993) used 'move' in the study of product and self-advertising through sales promotion letters and job application letters and has produced a rhetorical structure for each of these seemingly different but closely related genres. Kathapalia (1992) used 'move' in the study of straight-sell advertisements and has developed a nine-move structure for these advertisements. Others used 'move' to analyse other genres such as academic articles and reports. For example, Krishnasamy (1999) uses 'move' to analyse a legal text on constitutional and administrative law, Christianity (1996) uses 'move' to analyse letters of complaints and adjustment in the context of Indonesia and Chin (1993) uses 'move' to analyse research article introductions in particle physics.

## 2.8 Linguistic Features of Press Releases

In genre analysis, while identifying the moves of a genre, it is also important to analyse the realization of each move because genres are realized through language. Texts of different genres consist of different words and structures according to the different purposes that they want to achieve. Besides, each genre is made up of stages which are joined together based on their functions. Different stages may reveal different lexicogrammatical choices. Lexicogrammatical features which are deemed suitable for a particular move are used to convey the meaning of the move. Crystal (1987, p.390) claims that promotional moves are “generally laudatory, unreserved, and emphasizing the uniqueness of the product. The vocabulary tends to be vivid and concrete.”

Bhatia (1993) sees that adjectives are important to help in the description of the product or service being advertised precisely. He says, “In advertising, one often finds an above-average use of complex nominal because the writer’s main concern is to find as many syntactic slots as possible for adjectival insertions. This facilitates suitably precise, desirably positive and effective description of the product or service being advertised.

In an online laptop and computer PR, the launching of a new laptop or computer is also meant to promote the product; thus, advertising and promotional languages are features the writers cannot do without. In the findings of his 1993 study on legal documents, Bhatia explains that “binominal and multinominal expressions are an effective linguistics device which allows these legal documents to be precise and all-inclusive.

The use of nominal expressions are also frequent as they provide sufficient slots for the insertion of adjectives. The use of binominal, multinominal and nominal expressions in an online product PR, also plays a similar role. PR not being a full-length article, these expressions help to highlight the benefits and positive qualities of the products being launched.

The study of Pander Maat (2007) on the other hand, poses two requirements for an element of text to be counted as promotional: Firstly, the promotional element needs to “intensify a statement in a direction favourable to the sender” and secondly, it can either be left out without affecting the grammaticality and the interpretation of the sentence or it can be replaced by a weaker element. He claims that the proportion of promotional language in a PR depends on the topic it deals with; PR announcing new products or services contains significantly more promotional elements than other PRs for example PRs announcing financial results or handling of a crisis.

Leech (1966) explains that one of the defining features of advertising and promotional language is the frequent use of adjectives. Dyer (2008), agrees with Leech when she writes that adjectives and adverbs are the key words of promotional language.

In this study, both Bhatia’s (1993) promotional element of binominal/multinominal and nominal expressions as well as Maat’s (2007) approach to promotional languages have been adopted to analyse linguistic features of online laptop and computer PRs.

### 2.8.1 Promotional Elements according to Pander Maat (2007)

In his paper titled *How Promotional Language in Press Release is Dealt with by Journalists: Genre Mixing or Genre Conflict* (2007), he examines a corpus of 39 PRs issued by airlines (e.g. Lufthansa, KLM, Ryanair) and the Dutch airport Schiphol. All the PRs contained at least one promotional element. More than half the PRs announced new products or services; others were on announcing financial results, positive events of the company and the buying of new and better airplanes. Some ground rules were established to classify these promotional elements. Firstly, a promotional element had to intensify a statement in a direction favourable to the sender. For example, ‘very’ in “the weather is very nice” further intensifies the sentence.

Secondly, a promotional element can be left out without affecting the grammaticality and the interpretation of the sentence or they can also be easily replaced by a weaker promotional element.

Maat’s (2007) coding scheme eventually distinguished the promotional elements and grouped them into: premodifiers, adjectives and adverbial elements. The classification of Maat’s promotional language is shown in Table 2.2 (pg. 30):

Table 2.2: Kinds of Promotional Elements according to Pander Maat (2007)

Category	Subcategory	Examples
Premodifiers		Amplifying prefixes indicating extreme degrees of positively evaluated properties, such as, <i>Ultramodern</i> , <i>brand</i> new and nominal premodifiers indicating exceptional quality such as <i>NO.1</i> low fares airlines and <i>top-class</i> athlete.
Adjectives	Intensifying adjective	Adjectives intensifying the interpretation of the noun, such as <i>important</i> , <i>large</i> , <i>strong</i> , and <i>extensive</i> .
	Evaluative adjective	These adjectives refer to positive evaluations without specifying the property. Examples: <i>terrific</i> , <i>good</i> , <i>special</i> , <i>leading</i> , <i>unique</i> and <i>excellent</i> .
	Property specifying adjective	These adjectives evoke a positive attitude in general such as; <i>reliable</i> , <i>clear</i> , <i>efficient</i> and <i>practical</i> .
	Intensifying quantifiers	This category includes: Quantifiers preceding plural noun phrase such as <i>all</i> , <i>various</i> , <i>several</i> , <i>millions</i> and <i>many</i> . Elements indicating quantities beyond some expectations; primarily <i>extra</i> .
	Comparative & Superlative degree.	Superlatives were counted as promotional when they could easily be replaced by a weaker alternative expression. For instance: <i>Brussels airlines will offer an extensive shuttle service between Brussels and the two most important business destinations in Spain</i> . In this sentence, <i>two most important</i> can easily be replaced by <i>two important</i> .

Table 2.2 continued

Category	Subcategory	Examples
Adverb elements	Intensifying adverbs.	This category includes items such as tremendously, considerably, well and strongly.
	Place	This category includes items such as <i>internationally</i> and <i>throughout the world</i> . Example: <i>Our network has the highest reputation throughout the world.</i>
	Intensifiers of Numerals	Intensifiers of numerals were counted when indicating positively evaluated qualities. This includes; <i>almost</i> and <i>over</i> . Example: <i>Air One expects almost 2 million passengers this year. Almost 2 million is stronger than 1.98 million.</i>

The results of the study of Pander Maat (2008) indicate that the proportion of promotional language in a PR depends on the topic it deals with: PRs announcing new products or services, like laptops and computers, contain significantly more promotional elements.

## 2.8.2 Bhatia's Binominal / Multinominal and Nominal Expressions

### 2.8.2.1 Binominal / Multinominal Expressions

Binominal/multinominal expressions are words or phrases from the same category and occurs in a sequence. Bhatia (1993) explains binominal or multinominal expression as a sequence of two or more words or phrases belonging to the same grammatical category having some semantic relationship and joined by some syntactic device such as 'and' or 'or'. Binominal or multinominal expressions are a prominent feature found in legal documents as they are effective to make the legal documents precise as well as all-inclusive. An example is presented in the excerpt below:

The new Inspiron 15 & 17 5000 Series will come in seven *brilliant* and *beautiful* colours.

#### **2.8.2.2 Nominal Expressions**

Nominal expressions are simple and precise (Bhatia 1993). It expresses the truth and facts of the object (Bhatia, 1994). It is an important device to promote a product and indirectly persuades the readers to buy it. The major types of nominal expressions are the complex nominal phrases, the nominal compounds and nominalizations.

Complex nominal are generally used because the writer's main concern is to find as many syntactic lots as possible for adjectival insertion. This facilitates suitably precise, desirably positive and effective description of the product or service being advertised. Compound nominal phrases refers to concepts that are either created as the discourse proceeds or to refer to further-refined and often repeated scientific concepts, in which case the use of compound nominal phrase is a convenient linguistic device to create and refer to technical terms. Nominalization is used when the writer needs to condense his longish description in somewhat more precise, unambiguous and all-inclusive statements by incorporating all information that is needed to be said.

## 2.9 Related Studies

Mc Laren and Gurau's study (2005) involving 50 corporate PRs of Biotechnology companies in the UK from 2000 – 2002 established a 5-move structure. They are; announcement, elaboration, comments (CEO), contact details and editor's note. The findings also showed that clear promotional elements existed in these PRs in Move 3 (comments by CEO). Jacobs (1993), also refers to the same issue, claiming that quotes are indeed the place in PRs where openly promotional statements can be made.

A study by Strobe and Jacobs (2005), which involved a 1995 American online PR distribution services – The American Internet Bureau (INB), found that when PRs are uploaded in the company websites, they provide direct contact with potential customers. Though Jacobs (2005) who has possibly done the most researches on PRs do not focus explicitly on issues of format or structure in this research, he does consider the textual and linguistic conventions and identifies the “metapragmatics” of PRs (1999). Under this heading, Jacobs (1999) examines the phenomenon of self-reference and self-quotation, all of which he describes as “standard features of PRs (Jacobs, 1999a: 79).

The online PRs examined in this current study contains both self-referencing as well as self-quotation. According to Jacobs (1999b :220), it seems to be the characteristic feature of the production of PRs that the self-referencing is almost exclusively realised in the third-person, in particular the organization's proper name. Some examples of self-referencing from the current data are:

(i) *Dell expands industry-leading monitor portfolio with its first OLED monitor, the world's first InfinityEdge monitors, and new wireless monitors and* (ii) *Dell is celebrating all of the inventive and innovative work our customers do using Dell technology.*

What can be seen through the use of self-referencing in this instant is that through third-person self-reference, the PR writers switch out of their own perspective and move some way towards that of the journalist's, who are expected to copy the PRs into their news reporting. This way, the PR writer is able to give information about the product and promote it without appearing to be blatant about it.

In his examination of self-quotation, Jacobs (1999a) agrees with what Bell (1991) terms as "pseudo-direct-speech" – the words are not almost certainly verbalised by the named source, but are written by a PR writer and merely approved by the source. As Jacobs (1993) himself mentioned, "quotes are instances where openly promotional statements can be made."

This concept is also seen in the online PRs examined for this research. Some quotations like;

*“Our Think Pad X1 Tablet is brilliantly adaptable with super-thin and ultra-light premium designs and helps professionals to embrace cloud computing, mobility and security to build the companies of tomorrow”*

(Dilip Bhatia, Vice President, Worldwide Marketing &  
User Experience, Lenovo)

This structure of PR writing lends an air of reliability to the report.

Jiang Wei and Gamper (2014), studied a corpus of online smartphone Press Releases for their move patterns. This study investigated the move structure of the online smartphone PRs and the fixed expressions or prefabricated adjective and verb collocations that occur in it. The findings indicated that while being informative, they also carry a self-promotional purpose. The promotional purposes are realised through its linguistic features, particularly adjectives. The researchers have categorized the adjectives as fact and opinion adjectives. The findings suggest that fact adjectives represent informative points while opinion adjectives tend to promote the products. Thus, online smartphone PRs not only give product-related information to readers but also promote the product.

Similar to this study, the current study also uses adjectives to analyse the promotional intent of online laptop and computer PRs. However, it involves the categorization of promotional language by P. Maat (2007), as opposed to the analysis of prefabricated adjectives and verb collocation as in the study of Jiang Wei and Gamper (2004).

Bhatia's research (2004), on the other hand, involved a small corpus of advertisements, both printed and web-based, and covered various types of issues, not just product launches. Bhatia employed his moves, with reference to advertisements;

1. Headline
2. Targeting the market
3. Justifying the product (which has two steps; i. by indicating the importance or need of the product or service, ii. By establishing a niche)
4. Detailing the product or service (which has three steps; i. by identifying the product or service, ii. By describing the product or service and iii. By indicating the value of the product or service)
5. Establishing credentials
6. Celebrity or typical user endorsement
7. Offering incentives
8. Using pressure tactics
9. Soliciting information.

His findings acknowledge the existence of peripheral features in PRs like "Press Release" title and contact details, though he claims that PRs does not attempt to outwardly promote a product or service. Bhatia's concept may be true if one only looks at the conventional PRs. Journalists in general do not accede too much promotional elements in PRs. Some journalists even go to the extent of not running a story if the PR contains obvious marketing elements as they are considered more as an advertisement than a PR. Journalists general take on this issue is, if it is written like an advertisement, then the organization will have to pay for it.

However, we need to have a closer look at the concept of what qualifies as “promotional” in online PRs, may have to be interpreted in a broader sense than it is customary in advertising. Every PR has promotional intent, but, product PRs are more promotional than other types of PRs.

The theoretical framework in which my study is based on, is by Paola Catenaccio (2008). Her research involved a corpus of PRs, downloaded from company websites to examine both news reports and advertisement in one. Her study led to the 11-move structure used in this research (Detailed explanation of the move structure found in Chapter 3). Her move structure fill in the gap left by Bhatia’s study, which is the inclusion of peripheral and core elements of PRs as well as the promotional aspect of a PR. This study comes closest to the study of the researcher on online laptop and computer PRs.

## **2.10 Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed the concept of genre, genre theories and genre analysis on PRs. It provides a general methodology used in genre analysis and corpus-based move analysis used in similar studies on PRs. The structure of this chapter has been to present various researchers’ take on PRs as a promotional document. This chapter also discusses that though various researches involving PRs were done before, none were focused exclusively on online product PRs. This showed the gap that exists, and thus, I will provide an analysis on online product PRs. In Chapter Three, I will discuss the methodology employed in the present study in greater detail.

## **CHAPTER 3: DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the method adopted for the study and its justification. In describing the method used in the study, this chapter is organised into two parts. The first part of this chapter discusses the research design and the general methodology of the study. It also puts forth explanations and discussions of the corpus used and its background, methods of data collection as well as the data analysis procedures. In the second part of the chapter, a detailed description of the criteria of the framework employed is given.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Both qualitative and quantitative methods are used in this research. The first part of the analysis is done qualitatively. PRs are studied and the moves are tagged manually based on Catenaccio's framework. Each move recorded in each PR will be noted in a table. The second part of the research incorporates the quantitative method. Promotional elements/languages identified through the work of P. Maat (2007) and Bhatia (1994) are picked from the PRs and tagged under their sub-category; intensifying adjectives, evaluative adjectives, nominal expressions and more. Then, they are calculated against the number of sentences in a PR to see the means of promotional element/language used and their frequency. This will help determine the extent of the promotional element in online laptop and computer PRs.

### 3.3 Background of Corpus

The data studied in this research is based on very specific criteria. Only online laptop and computer PRs are collected and studied. The PRs are collected from Lenovo, Dell and HP official websites. Though many online PRs are available on their websites, the pivotal criteria for this study are examining PRs of laptop and computer only. These brands were chosen based on the PRs and statements issued by Gartner, Inc. USA which has stated Lenovo, Dell and HP as the top three laptop and computer vendors worldwide for the year 2016. They are also the world's prominent research and advisory company in the field of information technology. To ensure that the data being analysed are recent, all laptop and computer PRs from the years 2016 and 2017 are analysed. A thorough search into these three websites show that there are a total of 31 laptop and computer PRs for the two years. Since the PRs are readily available for public view in their website, obtaining consent to study the PRs will not be necessary.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The analysis of data for this study follows Upton and Cohen's (2009) BCU approach to move analysis. They state that,

*In order to identify the move categories of a genre, it is necessary to get a "big picture" understanding of the overall rhetorical purpose of the text in the genre (1). Once the overall rhetorical purpose is understood, it is then necessary to look at the function of each text segment and evaluate what its local purpose is. (2). This can be rather difficult. Move types need to be distinctive. Multiple readings and reflections on the text are needed before clear move types, with their defining function(s), emerge. During this process, one needs to look for any common functional and/ or semantic themes (3) represented by the various text segments that have been identified, especially those that are in relative proximity to each other or often occur in approximately the same location in various texts representing the genre.*

(Upton & Cohen, 2009, p. 591)

The text samples were then skimmed for the titles and the sub-headings. The first stage of coding was done on 19 PRs as the basis of setting preliminary coding criteria. At this stage, looking at 19 PRs were sufficient as it covered more than 60% of the total sample. The first coding scheme used Catenaccio's (2008) model as starting point. Since the identification of the communicative units or moves and their constituent element of steps in the first coding involved subjective judgements, a second or further coding might increase the validity of the results. One practical solution to the problem of achieving accuracy of text analysis is the use of the inter-rater reliability technique, using field specialists as independent raters. According to Bhatia (1993), since field specialists are active members of a particular discourse community, they are more aware of the generic features in a particular discipline than people outside the community. However, Swales (1990) claims that working with field specialists can be very time-consuming and that it raises uncertainty when comparing data from different disciplines. He notes that although they might seem to offer a solution for the potential subjectivity of the text analysis by the genre analyst, discussions with the field specialists are also "...subject to all subjective features of personality, allegiance, status and so on that this repertoire exhibits". He also reminds us that relying too much on field specialists may also posit a danger. They may know about the content, but unlike a genre analyst, they might be clueless as to how the information should be organised.

In this study, a panel of two co-raters were used to identify the validity of coding. The first co-rater is a field expert and a genre analyst whose expertise is methodological approach in coding. The second co-rater is an English Language lecturer who has done research in the field employing the approach of analysis of move structure in her postgraduate degree in English as Second Language.

Both of the co-raters had an English language and genre analysis background, and they were familiar with most of the topical research of the text samples. We coded the text manually since “coders are seeking to understand the functional semantic purposes of text segments” (Biber, Connor, & Upton, 2007, p. 33).

After that, I expected that the results should be confirmed with a sufficiently high level of agreement. However, problems occurred in the initial coding in classifying certain statements into moves and steps. This happened when agreement amongst the raters, expressed in a percentage, was low. Agreement was calculated using the following formula:

$\frac{\text{No. of agreements}}{\text{No. of agreements} + \text{no. of differences}} \times 100 = \text{percentage of agreements}$
--

In the first inter-reliability test, agreement was found to be 43%. This means that the coding of the texts by the raters was not consistent. In a subsequent meeting, several problematic issues were acknowledged and discussed. New coding criteria were set up in order to refine the definition of moves and validate the analysis, particularly where there were several statements with two (or more) or embedded meanings.

### 3.4.1 Analysis of Move

For the first part of the research, the move analysis is done qualitatively. PRs are studied and moves are tagged manually based on Catenaccio's (2008) framework to identify the structure in which the online PRs are written. Each move recorded in each PR will be documented in a table.

Categorization of moves were done according to the framework of Biber, Connor and Upton (2007). Moves are categorized as obligatory, conventional and optional. Moves that occur 90% and more in every PR is considered as an obligatory move. Conventional moves are moves with frequency between 50% and 89%. Moves with less than 50% frequency will be categorized as optional moves. All 31 online laptop and computer PRs from Lenovo, Dell and HP have been analysed. The frequency of moves in PRs are calculated as follows:

$\frac{\text{Number of PR which contain a particular move} \times 100\%}{31 \text{ (Total PRs)}}$
---

After the move analysis, the sequence of moves were listed to examine the pattern of the moves used.

### 3.4.2 Linguistic Analysis of Promotional Element

In many instances, informative genres may incorporate promotional elements without giving rise to functional tension (Bhatia 2002, 2004). Bhatia also clarifies that, “many of these genres were not considered as informative in the first place”. For example, in job application letters, even before the promotionalization of this genre, it was unusual to include any negative information in such letters. Similarly, in online product PRs, though the main focus is to inform the readers about the new product in the market, it is understandable that the information will definitely incorporate positive information to promote the new product among the readers, especially now more than before considering the end users are able to read the online PRs first hand compared to reading from the journalists’ perspective. When the promotional overtones in such genres become more explicit, this seems a gradual difference.

In analysing the promotional language in online laptop and computer PRs, the framework of Maat H.P (2007) has been adopted. Each PR will be analysed on the promotional language which will be recorded and later categorized according to Maat’s categorization – premodifiers, intensifying adjectives, evaluative adjectives, property specifying adjectives, intensifying quantifiers, comparative and superlative adjectives, intensifying adverbs, adverb element for Place and intensifiers of numerals. After that, the frequency of the promotional element/language in PRs will be calculated against the number of sentences in each PR as follows.

$\frac{\text{Number of promotional language}}{\text{Sentences analysed}}$	$=$	$\frac{\text{Mean of promotional element in}}{\text{each sentence.}}$
---	-----	---

### 3.4.3 Interview with the Field Experts

Recent works has increasingly extended analyses beyond the page to the sites, where relationship, and the rules which order them, can facilitate and constrain composing (Gollin, 1999) and to the communities in which texts will be used and judged (Hyland, 2000). Thus, in this research, the approach to interview with insider informants (Hyland, 2000) has been adopted with the notion that such an approach will infuse text analyses with greater validity and to offer richer understandings about the production and use of genres in different contexts. There are four technology and product PR writers who were interviewed for more information in this field. They are categorized as Writer A, B, C and D.

The description of the writers are as follow: Writer A, is a Tech, Feature and Special Editor with the reputable NSTP Group; Writer B is an Editor with Bots (Technology); Writer C is a correspondent for Tech in Asia Regional Portal as well as the ex-editor for PC.com magazine; and Writer D is attached to the tech-section of Bernama News Portal. They answered questions and gave their opinions about product PRs being informational and promotional, consciously including (or overly including) promotional languages in product PRs and any specific structure used in writing an online product PR.

### **3.5 Basic Unit of Analysis**

Since the study is derived from Swales's perspective on genre, the unit of analysis should realise the communicative purpose of the text. Therefore, the study is flexible in regard to the unit of analysis, initially proposing the sentence as its smallest unit of analysis.

### **3.6 Inter-rater Reliability**

In order to eliminate analyst bias and to establish inter-coder agreement and make the result of the study more reliable, 30% of the data were randomly selected for analysis and verification of the occurrence of moves by two different coders. The first coder is a field specialist. She is a genre analyst whose expertise is methodological approach in coding. The second coder is a genre specialist, who has done research in the field, employing the approach of analysis of move structure.

### **3.7 Coding Criteria**

The theoretical framework used in this study is the 11-move structure by Paola Catenaccio (2008). It comes closest to describing the structure of online product PRs as it clearly addresses the peripheral aspects which indirectly contribute to the promotional element in online corporate product PRs which is an important aspect of my study.

#### **3.7.1 Move 1: Press/news release caption (frame)**

A peripheral feature in PRs. It usually features information like “PRESS RELEASE”, “NEWS RELEASE” or “MEDIA RELEASE”. Can be found on top of the PR.

#### **3.7.2 Move 2: Headline**

The headline is where the writer highlights the main news; short and to the point. It is also the first chance to grab readers’ attention and inspire them to keep reading.

Example headline:

- Lenovo Unveils Pioneering Modular ThinkPad X1 Tablet.
- Gamers Ask and Dell Responds with New Gaming Products.

### 3.7.3 Move 3: Summary of Main Points

This move comes after the headline. Also known as “deck” or sub-header. It allows the writer to put all important information under this section even though the expanded version is also available in the PR. This move is highly useful when a PR is written to introduce more than one product to the market.

Example:

(Headline)

Dell Extends Leadership in Thin Client Innovation with Broadest Set of New Desktop Virtualization Solutions.

(Summary):

- Top-of-the-line Dell Wyse 7040 thin client specifically designed with the highest levels of security and performance.
- Cost-effective Dell Wyse 3030 LT thin client offers security, manageability and a great virtual desktop user experience based on Wyse ThinOS or ThinLinux technology.
- New Wyse ThinLinux software optimized for think clients provides additional OS option for Dell customers.

### 3.7.4 Move 4: [“FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE” formula]

This section specifically indicates how soon a PR should be released or made available to the readers. This section should either say, “FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE” or “FOR RELEASE ON [date] AT [time]”. This move is featured on top corners (right or left) or at the end of a PR.

### **3.7.5 Move 5: Lead: Announcing newsworthy information**

This segment covers the main news of the PR and aims to answer as many of the five W's as possible (who, what, when, where and why/how). This part should act as a short summary that gives the reader a general idea of what the whole story is about. There are three steps which realizes this move.

#### **3.7.5.1 Step 1: Launching a new product/service**

To inform readers about the new product that is being launched.

Example:

LAS VEGAS, January 3, 2016 – Lenovo today unveiled its newly expanded and highly innovative X1 portfolio, designed for forward thinkers, which includes new additions such as the brilliantly adaptable ThinkPad X1 Tablet with its unique modular design.

### **3.7.5.2 Step 2: Announcing results and other company internal information**

This opportunity is also taken to publicise other information pertaining to the company. It may not be the object of release but still an achievement for the company.

Example:

Dell is thrilled to announce multiple products selected as 2016 CES Innovation Award Honourees. Dell products taking home CES Innovation Awards, an annual competition honouring outstanding design and engineering in technology products:

- Latitude 13 7000 series laptop (Computer Hardware Category)
- Latitude 12 7000 series 2-in-1 (Tablets & E-readers Category)
- Latitude 12 Rugged Tablet (Tablets & E-readers Category)
- Precision 5510 Notebook ( Computer Hardware Category)

### **3.7.5.3 Step 3: Describing other types of company activities**

This step explains other company activities. It needs to necessarily be related to the product that is being launched.

Example:

HP also announced it will host a live tournament at the official TwitchCon After Party on October 1, featuring the dynamic and wildly popular online game, “Heroes of the Storm” by Blizzard.

### **3.7.6 Move 6: Justifying the product or service or simply the newsworthiness of the information**

This move serves to complete the story that the writer has introduced. The three steps that realizes the move are:

#### **3.7.6.1 Step 1: Indicating the need for the product**

This step answers the question “why the reader should get the product?”

Example:

Builders and modders can purchase an empty OMEN X chassis as a standalone option for a completely immersive do-it-yourself (DIY) PC experience.

This PC is exactly what is needed for true enthusiastic gamers who like to build it themselves.

#### **3.7.6.2 Step 2: Referring to the advantages for potential beneficiaries**

This step answers the question, “what can the reader obtain by getting this product?”

Example:

HP engineered superior thermal management allows customers to stay cool under pressure and get the highest possible performance and full potential of the hardware.

### **3.7.6.3 Step 3: Qualifying the results as positive**

This step explains the measures taken in producing the product as being positive.

Example:

The inventive integration of new materials such as anodized aluminium, magnesium alloy, steel reinforcement and copper add form and function to this new design. Adding copper to the unique thermal solution improves cooling capabilities across both CPU and GPU; combined with new hinge-forward design, notebook ventilation can increase performance as most thermal dissipation flows up and out of the rear.

### **3.7.7 Move 7: Detailing product/service/company/other event which is the object of the release**

In this move, a detailed description of the product is given. Product specifications and technical description of the product is included in Move 7.

Example:

- The fullsize ThinkPad keyboard with the iconic Track Point has three adjustable typing angles.
- Table and keyboard together weigh just 2.4 pounds for an ultra-light laptop experience.
- ThinkPad X1 Yoga is incredibly thin at just 0.66 inches and light at only 2.8 pounds.

### **3.7.8 Move 8: Explicit promotional component: Attributed to the company officials, or standard users**

#### **3.7.8.1 Step 1: Emphasising positive results**

This step highlights the positive results obtained because of the make and the use of the products.

#### **3.7.8.2 Step 2: Indicating reliability of company results**

This step explains the company dependability in terms of time frame as well as the trustworthiness of the company.

Example:

- Innovative engineering that focuses on gamers first is a hallmark of Alienware's two-decade success in the industry.
- Alienware's 20 years gaming excellence and pioneering specialty high-performance gaming PCs are unrivalled in their engineering and innovation. Alienware has grown into a leading gaming brand worldwide and brings industry-first innovations and uncompromised designs.

#### **3.7.8.3 Step 3: Independently endorsing company results**

This step explains the endorsement which comes from top management or experts from the company in the form of quotes.

Example:

- "Gaming is in a time of renaissance right now; awesome games and development, amazing resolutions and technology, plus the pure excitement around VR experiences – it's an incredible driving force and it feels similar to the energy that started Alienware 20 years ago" said Frank Azor, general manager of Alienware and XPS, Dell.

- “ThinkPad has a heritage of engineering for the future, with an instantly recognizable design that has endured” says Dilip Bhatia, Vice President, Worldwide Marketing and User Experiences, PC & Enterprise Business Group, Lenovo.

#### **3.7.8.4 Step 4: Independent expert opinion**

In this step, an independent expert (not related to the company) gives opinion about the product. This step will enable to boost the image of the product and the company in the readers' eyes.

Example:

“When it comes to protecting company and customer data, especially in the healthcare, public sector and finance industries, there must be a no compromise approach”, said Patrick Moorhead, president & principal analyst, Moor Insights & Strategy. “A solution like HPSureView offers companies a new layer of data protection that can be easily deployed by employees, allowing them to work confidently in more places, thus increasing their productivity and efficiency.

### 3.7.9 Move 9: Boilerplate description(s) / establishing credentials

In this move the writer presents information about the company and what it does. This is a factual description and is used repeatedly in different PRs.

Example:

- HP Inc. creates technology that makes life better for everyone, everywhere. Through our portfolio of printers, PCs, mobile devices, solutions and services, we engineer experiences that amaze. More information about HP Inc. is available at <http://www.hp.com>.
- Lenovo (HKSE:992)(ADR: LNVGY) is a \$46 billion global Fortune 500 company and a leader in providing innovative consumer, commercial and enterprise technology. Our portfolio of high-quality, secure products and services covers PCs (including the legendary Think and multimode Yoga brands), workstations, servers, storage, smart TVs and a family of mobile products like smartphones (including Motorola brand), tablets and apps. Join us on LinkedIn, follow us on Facebook on Twitter (@Lenovo) or visit us at [www.lenovo.com](http://www.lenovo.com).

### 3.7.10 Move 10: Contact details

This move involves address, contact information like phone number and email addresses as well as Facebook and Instagram pages of the company and/or the writers of the PR.

For example:

- *Media Contacts: Jenni Balthrop, HP, [jenni.balthrop@hp.com](mailto:jenni.balthrop@hp.com)*
- *Media contact: Steve Howard, Dell, (512) 728 8188, [steve\\_howard@dell.com](mailto:steve_howard@dell.com)*
- *Press Contacts: Global PC Group, Wendy Fung, +1212 458 1645, [wfung@lenovo.com](mailto:wfung@lenovo.com)*

### 3.7.11 Move 11: Company logo

The logo generally can be found at the top part of the PR page.

## 3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the analytical framework and methodology used in collecting and analysing the data of the study. Analysis of the data collected is discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the data presented under each move for each chosen laptop and computer brand. The number of moves are obtained by frequency counts and are tabulated, the sequence of moves for online laptop and computer PRs as well as linguistic features used to realise the moves are discussed.

### 4.2 Findings and Discussions of Overall Move-Step Analysis

This section distinguishes and summarises the common usage of moves and steps in the text samples. I first examined the presence of each move and its constituent step in all PRs. The moves were tagged manually as indicated in the sample below.

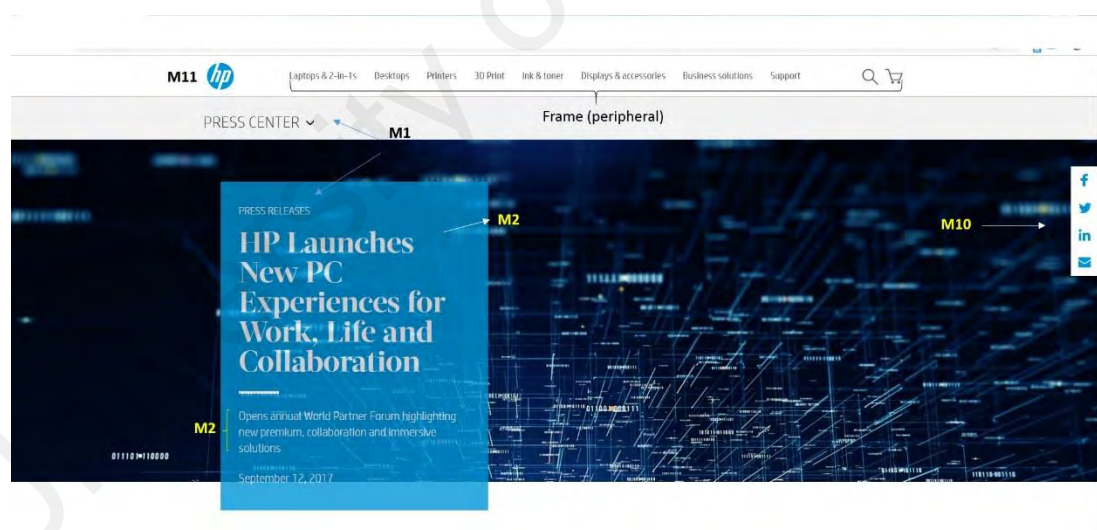


Figure 4.1: Sample Analysis of Online PR by HP, page 1

Figure 4.1 shows a sample of online PR by HP as appears in their website. The frame or peripheral section of the online PR includes all the tabs for other product related information for the brand. The logo is placed at top left hand corner (Move 11) and contact details in social media is on the right side (Move 10). There are two headlines. The first and main headline is “HP Launches New PC Experiences for Work, Life and

Collaboration” and a sub-headline under the main headline which reads, “Opens annual World Partner Forum highlighting new premium, collaboration and immersive solutions”.

#### News highlights:

- HP builds out premium commercial PC portfolio with world's thinnest and lightest business convertible, most powerful ultrabook 14" business notebook, and first all-in-one purpose built for collaboration
- New portfolio of displays along with docks and wireless collaboration keyboard enable productivity on-the-go and at the desk when paired with the new EliteBook 1000 Series
- Expanded collaboration solutions including Sprout Pro by HP, HP ShareBoard, HP Elite Presenter Mouse, and conferencing displays – enhance how people co-create and collaborate around the office
- Strategic relationship with Microsoft Corp. to enhance Skype for Business® conferencing experiences across the portfolio

Chicago, IL, September 12, 2017 — Today at HP Reinvent, HP Inc.'s largest global partner conference, the company outlined its vision to design solutions for the way people work and live, with the introduction of new premium commercial notebooks and all-in-one (AIO), along with innovative displays and accessories. As people change where and how they work, the new HP Elite 1000 Series and collaboration solutions are designed to enable greater productivity, inspiration, and exchange of ideas beyond the traditional four walls of the office.

The idea of how and where work happens is evolving rapidly, with 54 percent of work being done outside of the cube or office<sup>1</sup> and home office hours are expected to increase by 150 percent in two years<sup>2</sup>. This evolution is driven by an increasingly millennial workforce, with 85 percent of this group expecting work and life integration of their technology<sup>3</sup>. This same group expects technology to improve their productivity and processes – yet certain areas like collaboration are not up to par, with 59 percent of millennials dissatisfied with current solutions.<sup>4</sup> And with this increase in technology usage comes increased security concerns: endpoint attacks have more than doubled over the last six years<sup>5</sup>. With these insights in mind, HP is focused on enabling the next generation of the workforce to be productive and collaborative – and secure – no matter where they are throughout the day.

“As traditional boundaries between work and life go away, HP is focused on designing customer experiences that allow users to seamlessly transition between the two,” said Alex Crocice, president and general manager, Commercial PCs, HP Inc. “With new collaboration solutions and the latest Elite 1000 series, devices are engineered to deliver breakthrough thin and light design, best-in-class performance, industry-leading security and manageability, and experiences for improved collaboration that adapts to the work style and lifestyle of each user.”

Recognizing that work increasingly takes place outside of the traditional office, the HP Elite 1000 Series is engineered for work and play with thin and light designs, phenomenal performance, includes the industry's brightest displays, and is designed to pass MIL-STD testing<sup>6</sup> for the harshest environments. The Elite 1000 Series is optimized for collaboration and connectivity with: built-in collaboration keys to easily manage calls at the touch of a button, Skype for Business certifications, Audio by Bang & Olufsen, HP Audio Boost, and HP Noise Cancellation for optimized audio and video calls. In addition, The Elite 1000 Series will come with HP PhoneWise, the world's only Windows® solution to text and call from the PC across iOS and Android™ devices<sup>7</sup> for easier transitions between devices. Part of HP's most secure and manageable PCs<sup>8</sup>, these devices feature HP Sure View – the industry's only integrated privacy screen<sup>9</sup> – along

Figure 4.2: Sample Analysis of Online PR by HP, page 2

Figure 4.2 shows the core part of the online PR. The social media contact details (Move 10), appears on all pages. The beginning of the PR starts with the summary (Move 3), indicating the news highlights. After that, the body starts with the conventional format, which is by indicating the place and date.

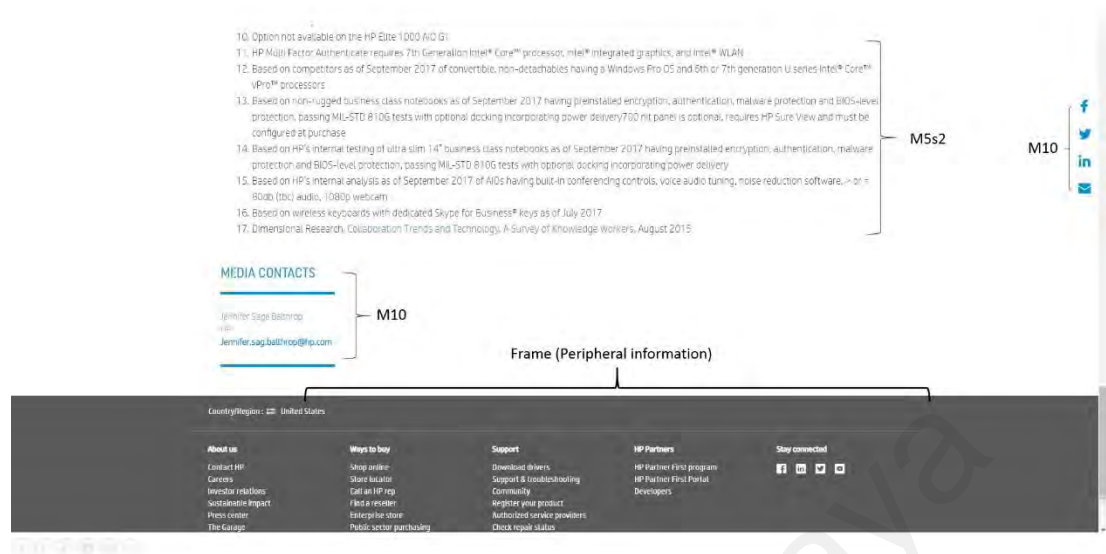


Figure 4.3: Sample Analysis of Online PR by HP, page 3

Figure 4.3 shows the last page of the online PR. The contact details of the public relations personnel or agency is given after the body of the PR. At the bottom of the page is the frame, which consists of tabs that give information about everything related to HP.

Table 4.1 displays the detailed presence of the moves and steps.

Table 4.1 Detailed Presence of Moves and Steps

<b>Move 1</b>	Press/news release caption (frame)
<b>Move 2</b>	Headline
<b>Move 3**</b>	Summary of main points (optional – can be conflated with Move 2)
<b>Move 4</b>	“FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE” formula (optional)
<b>Move 5</b>	Lead: Announcing newsworthy information. (s1) Launching a new product/service (s2) Announcing results and other company internal information** (s3) Describing other types of company activity. *
<b>Move 6</b>	Justifying the product/service or simply the newsworthiness of the information. (s1) Indicating the need for the product/service etc. * (s2) Referring to the advantages for potential beneficiaries. ** (s3) Qualifying the result as positive. *
<b>Move 7</b>	Detailing product/service/company/other event which is the object of the release.
<b>Move 8</b>	Explicit promotional component: Attributed to the company officials, or standard users. (s1) Emphasizing positive results. * (s2) Indicating reliability of company/product* (s3) Independently endorsing company results** (s4) Independent expert opinion. *
<b>Move 9**</b>	Boilerplate description(s) / establishing credentials.
<b>Move 10</b>	Contact details.
<b>Move 11</b>	Company logo.

\*Moves and Steps that are optional

\*\*Moves and Steps that are conventional

Table 4.1 shows a total of 11 moves and 10 steps. Moves 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 are obligatory moves in online PRs. Move 3 and steps M5S1, M6S2 and M8S3 are conventional move steps with between 50% - 89% frequency. On the other hand, M5S3, M6S1, M6S3, M8S1, M8S2 and M8S4 are optional steps. However, it should be noted that move 4 did not exist in any online PRs examined.

## 4.2.1 Analysis of Frequency and Sequence of Moves and Steps

### 4.2.1.1 Frequency of Moves and Steps

The frequency of appearance of each move and step in the data collected is shown in Table 4.2

Table 4.2: Frequency of Moves and Steps in Online Laptop and Computer Press Releases

<b>Brand</b> <b>Move</b>	<b>Dell</b> <b>(15)</b>	<b>Lenovo</b> <b>(7)</b>	<b>HP</b> <b>(9)</b>	<b>Number of</b> <b>PRs</b>	<b>Percentage</b> <b>(%)</b>
Move 1	15	7	9	31	100
Move 2	15	7	9	31	100
Move 3	12	3	4	19	61.3
Move 4	-	-	-	-	-
Move 5	15	7	9	31	100
Move 5 (S1)	15	7	9	31	100
Move 5 (S2)	9	3	9	21	67.7
Move 5 (S3)	12	2	2	14	45.2
Move 6	15	7	9	31	100
Move 6 (S1)	5	2	8	15	48.4
Move 6 (S2)	11	7	6	24	77.4
Move 6 (S3)	5	-	4	9	29
Move 7	15	7	9	31	100
Move 8	15	7	9	31	100
Move 8 (S1)	-	1	-	1	3.2
Move 8 (S2)	5	3	-	8	25.8
Move 8 (S3)	11	6	9	26	83.9
Move 8 (S4)	-	-	2	2	6.5
Move 9	15	7	7	29	93.5
Move 10	15	7	9	31	100
Move 11	15	7	9	31	100

Following the framework of Biber, Connor and Upton (1984), the moves have been categorized as obligatory, conventional and optional. Moves and steps that occur with 90% frequency and more are categorized as obligatory moves. From the analysis, it can be clearly seen that the obligatory moves and steps for online laptop and computer PRs are M1, M2, M5, M5S1, M6, M7, M8, M9, M10 and M11. These ten moves and steps are found in all 31 online PRs. M1, M9, M10 and M11 are peripheral

moves. It frames the PR as they are also part of a PR format or “explicit indicators of the PR as professional practice (Catenaccio, 2008). On the other hand, M2, M5, M5S1, M6, M7 and M8 appear in the core of a PR. This is in line with Catenaccio’s divisions of the move structure of corporate PRs into peripheral and core features based on their typical location in the release and their function in the text.

M1 usually appears either at the top of the PR or as the main clicking button. Once the reader clicks on “PRESS RELEASE” at the homepage, all PRs appear according to their dates of release. The M2 and M5S1 (from the core) also usually appear at the same spot. Beginning with headlines, followed by the lead (introducing the new product). Other moves and steps in the core such as justifying the product (M6), detailing the products (M7) and the use of explicit promotional component (M8) may vary in their positioning.

The conventional moves and steps which occurred in the range of 50% to 89% of the PRs are M3, M5S2, M5S3, M6S2 and M8S3. The move for writing the summary of product was mainly employed by Dell. This is also because Dell’s PR introduced more than one product in the same PR and it is easier to write about them in the summary to give readers a head start on what to expect.

The optional moves which occurred in less than 50% were M6S1, M6S3, M8S2 and M8S4. Instead of indicating the needs of the product (M6S1), most PRs preferred writing the advantages of owning the product for potential beneficiaries (M6S2). This in turn also functioned as a positive promotion for the product. In terms of promoting

the product explicitly (M8) in a PR, the writers preferred doing this through quotations of higher management or experts in the field in order to give the product more credibility.

Though M6S1, M6S3, M8S2 and M8S4 are qualified as optional steps, the move itself is not an optional move. Move 6 and Move 8 are also realised by their other conventional steps which are M6S2 and M8S3. Thus, move 6 and move 8 are considered as conventional instead of optional. Similarly, move 5 is an obligatory move as the purpose of the move is also realized through M5S1 with 100% frequency. Move 9, on the other hand, has a frequency of 93.5%.

Both Move 10 and Move 11 are obligatory moves with 100% appearances. They are contact details (Move 10) and Company Logo (Move 11) respectively. All online PRs end with the contact details of the PR writer, company contact information and other social media contacts like Facebook and Twitter. This is a form of encouragement for further communication for end customers as well as investors or media who would like to run the news. Company Logo (Move 11) is a brand and it is a permanent fixture in the website no matter which button the user clicks. If the PR is three pages long, then the logo appears in all three pages.

M4 is none existent in all 31 PRs. This is because of the nature of the PRs studied, which are online laptop and computer PRs. "For Immediate Release" formula is not used for online PRs as they are ready for public eye as soon as they are uploaded in their website. As for M8s1, most of the PRs (83.9%) examined were more focused

on endorsing the product to show the positivity instead of merely stating the positive sides of the product.

A clear view is given in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: The Obligatory, Conventional and Optional Moves and Steps in Online Laptop and Computer Press Releases

Move	Step	Status
Move 1		Obligatory
Move 2		Obligatory
Move 3		Conventional
Move 4	Non-existent	
Move 5	Obligatory	
	Step 1	Obligatory
	Step 2	Conventional
	Step 3	Optional
Move 6	Obligatory	
	Step 1	Optional
	Step 2	Conventional
	Step 3	Optional
Move 7	Obligatory	
Move 8	Obligatory	
	Step 1	Optional
	Step 2	Optional
	Step 3	Conventional
	Step 4	Optional
Move 9		Obligatory
Move 10		Obligatory
Move 11		Obligatory

Table 4.3 clearly shows the obligatory, conventional and optional moves and steps used in online laptop and computer PRs. While the obligatory moves are popularly used in most of the online PRs, the optional moves can be selectively used in accordance with the specific situation.

#### 4.2.1.2 Move Sequence of Online Laptop and Computer Press Releases

Move sequences were listed out as further examination into the move analysis.

The sequence of online laptop and computer PRs are presented in Table 4.4, Table 4.5 and Table 4.6.

Table 4.4: Sequence of Moves/Steps for Dell Press Releases

PR	Sequence
D1	M10, M11, M1, M2, M3, M5, M8, M2, M6, M7, M6, M2, M3, M6, M7, M2, M5, M2, M5, M2, M5, M2, M5, M7, M5, M9, M5, M10.
D2	M10, M11, M1, M2, M3, M5, M2, M6, M7, M2, M7, M2, M5, M8, M9, M10, M5.
D3	M10, M11, M1, M2, M3, M5, M2, M6, M7, M2, M7, M6, M7, M2, M6, M7, M6, M2, M7, M6, M7, M5, M7, M9, M10, M5S3.
D4	M10, M11, M1, M2, M3, M5S1, M8S3, M2, M7, M6S2, M2, M7, M2, M7, M2, M7, M6S2, M5S1, M9, M10, M9, M10, M10, M5S3.
D5	M10, M11, M1, M2, M2, M5S1, M2, M6S1, M2, M7, M2, M7, M2, M6S1, M2, M7, M2, M7, M2, M5S1, M2, M6S2, M7. M2, M7, M6S2, M6S2, M6S2, M6S2, M9, M10, M5S2, M10, M10, M5S3.
D6	M10, M11, M1, M2, M3, M5S1, M8S3, M2, M8S2, M6S3, M2, M7, M6S2, M2, M6S1, M7, M2, M7, M2, M7, M7, M9, M10, M10, M10, M5S3.
D7	M10, M11, M1, M2, M5S1, M8S3, M2, M7, M7, M2, M6S2, M7, M8S2, M6S2, M7, M9, M10, M5S2, M10, M5S3.
D8	M10, M11, M1, M2, M3, M5S1, M7, M7, M2, M8S2, M7, M2, M6S2, M2, M6S2, M17, M9, M10, M5S2, M10, M5S3.
D9	M10, M11, M1, M2, M3, M5S1, M8S2, M8S3, M2, M5S2, M2, M5S1, M2, M7, M2, M5S2, M2, M5S3, M5S3, M8S3, M7, M5S3, M9, M10, M10, M10, M5S3.

Table 4.4 continued

D10	M10, M11, M1, M2, M3, M5S1, M6S2, M6S2, M6S2, M8S3, M2, M7, M7, M2, M8S3, M8S3, M7, M2, M6S2, M6S2, M7, M2, M7, M8S2, M2, M7, M7, M6S2, M2, M5S3, M7, M5S3, M9, M10, M9, M7, M10, M10, M5S2.
D11	M10, M11, M1, M2, M3, M5S1, M6S3, M6S2, M8S1, M8S3, M2, M8S2, M8S1, M6S2, M7, M7, M2, M7, M2, 6S2, M6S2, M7, M2, M5S2, M2, M5S3, M9 M10, M10, M7 M10, M5S3.
D12	M10, M11, M1, M2, M3, M5S1, M7, M6S1, M9, M2, M6S1, M7, M8S2, M8S3, M6S1, M6S1, M6S2, M2, M7, M6S1, M7, M7, M2, M8S2, M7, M2, M8S3, M7, M6S1, M6S3, M7, M2, M10, M10, M9, M10, M5S3, M5S2.
D13	M10, M11, M1, M2, M3, M8S3, M6S3, M6S1, M2, M7, M6S2, M7, M7, M2, M6S3, M7, M2, M7, M2, M7, 2, M6S2, M6S1, M6S1, M6S3, M6S2, M2, M10, M9, M10, M10, M5S3, M10, M5S2.
D14	M10, M11, M1, M2, M5S1, M7, M6S1, M6S2. M2, M6S2, M6S1, M2, M6S3, M7, M2, M7, M2, M8S2, M6S2. M5S2, M9, M10, M10, M5S2.
D15	M10, M11, M1, M2, M3, M5S1, M2, M6S2, M6S2, M7, M7, M2, M7, M6S2, M7, M2, M6S1, M6S2, M7, M2, M7, M6S2, M7, M5S2, M9, M10, M10, M5S2.

Table 4.5: Sequence of Moves/Steps for Lenovo Press Releases

PR	Sequence
L1	M11-M1- M10- M2- M3- M5- M8- M6- M7- M7- M7- M7- M7- M7- M7- M8- M7- M9.
L2	M11-M1- M10- M2- M2- M3- M5- M6- M2, M6- M7- M2- M6- M2- M6- M2- M5- M6- M2- M6- M2- M7- M2- M7- M8- M7- M5- M5- M9- M10.
L3	M11-M1- M10- M2- M3- M5- M2- M7- M6- M2- M7- M6- M7- M2- M6- M7- M6- M8- M8- M7- M5- M9- M10- M9.
L4	M11- M1- M10- M2- M5- M6- M7- M6- M6- M7- M8- M7- M10- M9.
L5	M11- M1- M10- M2- M5- M8- M2- M7- M6- M2- M7- M2- M7- M6- M7- M7- M2- M7- M6- M7- M7- M11- M10- M5- M9- M5.
L6	M11- M1- M10- M2- M5- M5- M6- M7- M8- M7- M9.
L7	M11- M1- M10- M2- M5- M2- M5- M8- M8- M8- M8- M8- M8- M8- M8- M7- M9- M10.

Table 4.6: Sequence of moves for HP press releases.

PR	Sequence
HP1	M11 - M1 - M10 - M2 - M3 - M5 - M8 - M6 - M2, M7, M6 -M7 - M6 -M2, M7, M6 - M7, M6 - M2, M6 - M2, M7, M6 - M2, M5 - M7, M5 - M10 - M11-M1-M10-M2-M3-M5-M8-M6
HP2	M11 -M1 - M10 - M2 - M5 - M8 - M6 - M8 - M6 - M6 - M8 - M7, M5 - M9 - M5 - M10.
HP3	M11 - M1 - M10 - M2 - M5 - M7 - M8 - M6 - M7 - M5 - M10.
HP4	M11 - M1 - M10 - M2 - M5 - M6 - M8 - M2 - M6 - M7 - M2 - M7 - M2 - M6 - M7 - M7 - M5 - M9 - M10.
HP5	M11 - M1 - M10 - M2 - M5 - M6 - M8 - M2 - M7 - M2 - M7 - M9 - M10 - M5 - M9.
HP6	M11 - M1 - M10 - M2 - M3- M6- M5- M6 - M8- M7- M6- M7- M6- M8- M7- M10- M5- M10.
HP7	M11-M1- M10- M2- M3- M6- M5- M6- M5- M7- M7- M9- M5- M10.
HP8	M11-M1- M10- M2- M2- M3- M6- M5- M6- M8- M7- M6- M7- M6- M8- M7- M7- M10- M5- M9- M10.
HP9	M11-M1- M10- M2- M3- M5- M7- M2- M5-M6- M2- M6- M7- M9- M10.

All PRs started with peripheral information. The most popular linear move sequencing is Move 11 - Move 1 - Move 10 - Move 2 with 52 % frequency in all 31 PRs analysed. If we focus on the core of the PRs, 87% PRs start the write-up with Move 5 and 71% of them end the PR with Move 5 as well. This is because Move 5 is where the writer introduces the product as well as gives the details of other company activities at the end, which is a format for PR writing. Most PRs, besides writing about the main product that is being launched, will also cover other activities of the company at the end of the write-up.

### **4.3 Detailed description of moves and steps**

#### **4.3.1 Press/news release caption (frame) – M1**

This move appears in all 31 PRs that were studied. This is a peripheral move that frames the PR. In some PRs it is labelled as “Press Release”, while in others it is called “News release” or “Media release”.

For Lenovo, the term “News Release” is used, while HP and Dell use the term “Press Release”. They appear at the top left hand corner for all three brands. Bearing in mind that the subject of my study is online PRs, the phrase “Press Release” or “News Release” also appears as a tab in the company website. At one click, all PRs can be accessed according to their dates of release.

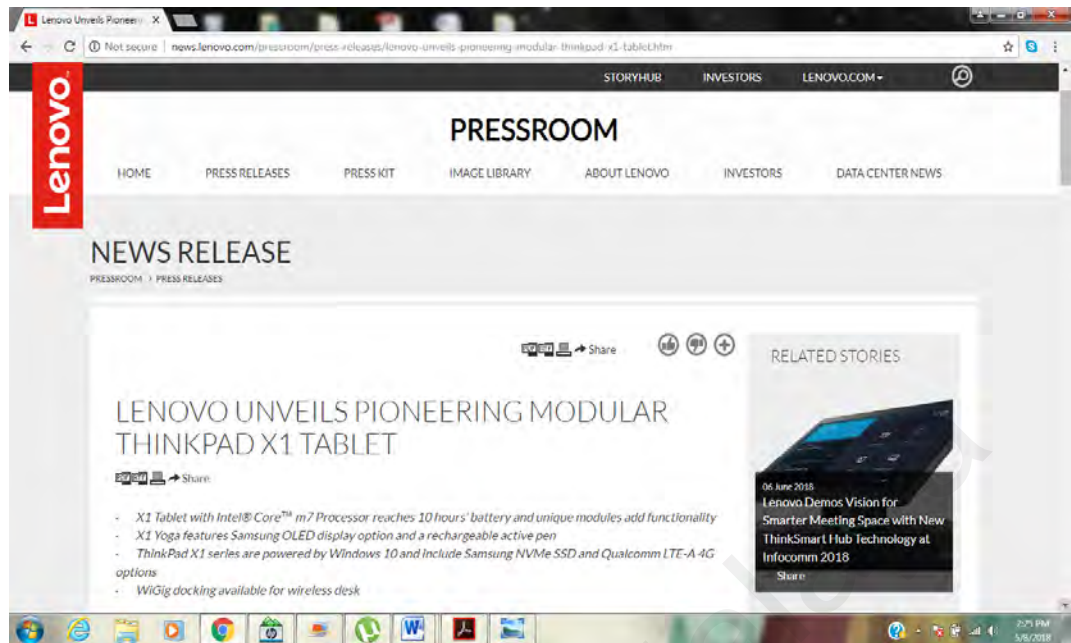


Figure 4.4: Lenovo Press Release as Appears on Website

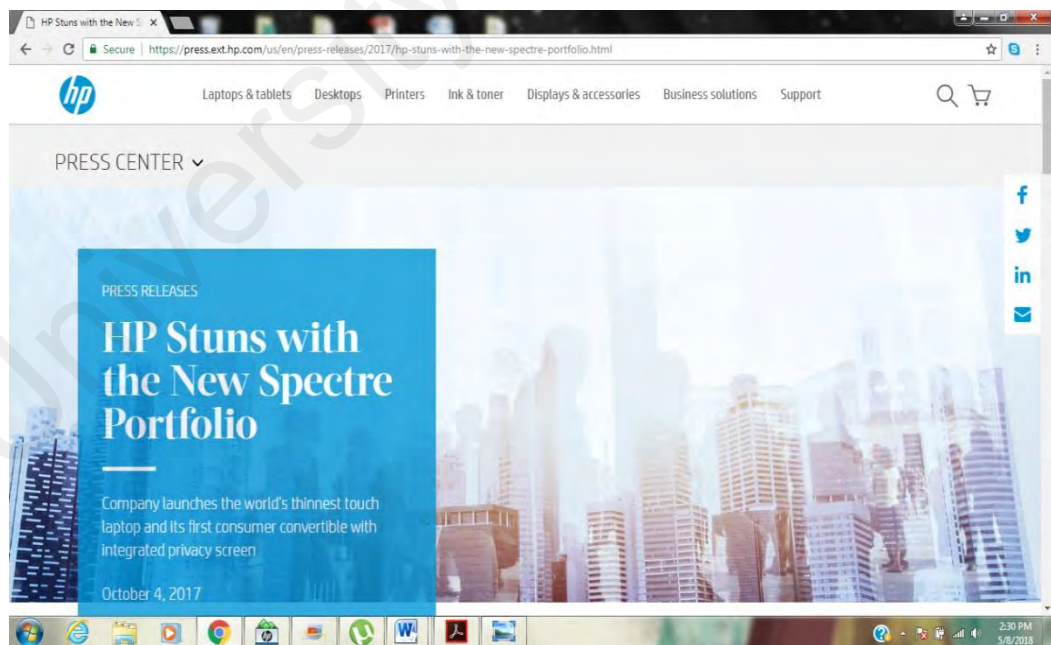


Figure 4.5: HP Press Release as Appears on Website

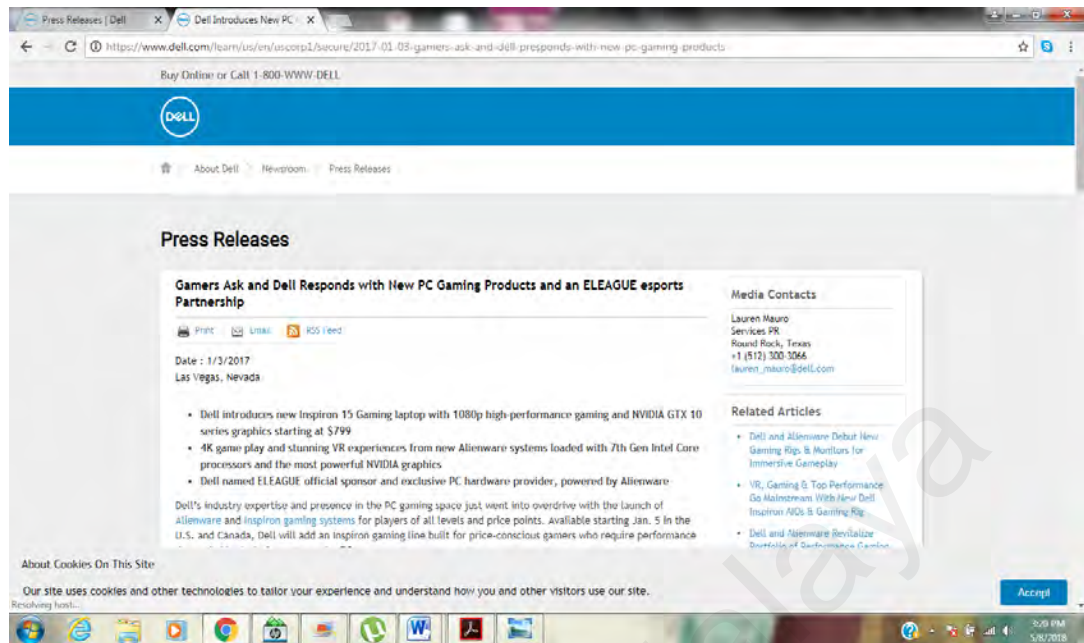


Figure 4.6: Dell Press Release as Appears on Website

#### 4.3.2 Headline (M2)

This move appears in 100% PRs analysed. The function of the move is to attract and capture the readers' attention with the intention that the readers will be interested to read the core part or the body of the PR. The headline is usually short and compact and this is where the writer highlights the main news. A headline, be it for an advertisement or a PR is an important section. A good headline captivates the reader's attention and leads him/her directly into the body of the ad... (Diggs, 1990)

All three brands in their PRs had more than one headline. This is due to the fact that each PR covered more than one product launches. Table 4.7 below shows some of the headlines used in Lenovo, HP and Dell online PRs. The structure used was one main headline (M2) followed by sub-headlines in the same PRs. This is a new move

which is not found in Catenaccio's (2008) 11-move structure. Thus, researcher has labelled it as M2S1.

Table 4.7: Example Headlines (M2) and Sub-Headlines (M2S1) in Online Laptop and Computer Press Releases

Brand	Headlines
Lenovo	<p>(L1) Lenovo Unveils Pioneering Modular ThinkPad X1 Tablet. (M2) (L2) Lenovo Launches YOGA 900S as World's Thinnest Convertible Laptop. (M2) World's Thinnest Convertible Laptop 1 – YOGA 900S (M2S1) Lenovo Y Series Gaming Levels Up with ideapad Y900 (M2S1) ideacentre Y900 RE (Razor Edition) and Lenovo's First Y27g Curved Gaming Monitor.(M2S1) ideacentre 610S: The Compact Home PC with Projector. (M2S1) The Powerfully Built ideapad 700 (M2S1) The Light and Speedy ideapad 710S (M2S1) (L3) Lenovo launches New Travel-ready Windows10 Tablet and YOGA laptops. (M2) Incredibly compact YOGA 710 gets work done on the go. (M2S1) YOGA 510 offers freedom from the power outlet hunt (M2S1) Work and Play on the go with the affordable ideapad MIIX 310 (M2S1)</p>
Dell	<p>(D1) CIOs Meet Your New Best Friend: Dell's new latitude family gives employees everything they want in a laptop and 2-in-1 with the security, manageability and reliability IT demands. (M2) Latitude 13 7000, Latitude 12 7000, Latitude 11 5000: Beautiful design and features that impress. (M2S1) Dell's first OLED monitor and the world's first InfinityEdge monitors; expands Dell's industry-leading monitor portfolio (M2S1) Dell Dock and Dell Thunderbolt Dock: connecting the computing ecosystem. (M2S1) World Class Support (M2S1)</p>
HP	<p>(HP1) HP Inc. Unleashes Domination level Gaming with Omen X. (M2) Delivers extreme performance and unprecedented PC customization for gamers who crave the best. (M2S1) Desktop performance to dominate decisively. (M2S1) Omen 17.3 inch diagonal notebook powered by new NVIDIA Graphics (M2S1) Omen X by HP curved display – Be immersed. (M2S1) Omen by HP with SteelSeries – victory is at hand (M2S1) HP Omen Challenge at TwitchCon 2016 (M2S1)</p>

L1 PR is a clear cut PR which was written for the launch of one product – a ThinkPad X1 tablet. It had one catchy M2 to attract readers' attention. L2 and L3 had more than one product that was being launched. Each product description began with different headlines. I have labelled them as M2S1 to indicate that they are the sub-headlines for the same PR.

D1 also covered more than one product. However, there was also another pattern that can be seen in D1 and HP1. Some of their sub-headlines were used not to launch a product but to promote the main product instead. *“Dell's first OLED monitor and the world's first InfinityEdge monitors; expands Dell's industry-leading monitor portfolio”* and *“World Class Support”* in D1 and *“Delivers extreme performance and unprecedented PC customization for gamers who crave the best”* and *“Omen by HP with SteelSeries – victory is at hand”* in HP1 is clearly is used to promote the product mentioned in the PR.

Headlines are also one of the places for inserting keywords in order to help search engine optimization, and thus, to draw traffic to the release once it is online (Master Black, 2012; Donnelly, 2010). Hence, a carefully constructed headline can help the company gain publicity for its PR. It is clear that M2 is used for two reasons in online laptop and computer PRs; The first, to introduce a new product that is being launched by the brand and secondly, to promote the same product.

### 4.3.3 Summary of Main Points (M3)

This move that is written after the headline is often called as the “deck” or “sub-header” and gives the writer the liberty to put all important information under this section. The information from the “deck” will later be expanded in the body copy of the PR. It had 61.3% appearance in all the 31 PRs studied. Lenovo employed this move in all their PRs. After the main headline (M2), the summary (M3) is written before the writer moves on to the body copy. They summarize the main selling point for all the products in the PR. For example, for a Lenovo PR (L3), with the headline *Lenovo Launches New Travel-ready Windows 10 Tablet and YOGA Laptops*, its M3 (summary) were:

- *New YOGA 710 and 510 convertible laptops boost high performance and long battery life so mobile multitaskers can leave their cords at home for long.*
- *Affordable ideapad MIIX 310 designed for on-the-go webaholics with up to 10 hours of battery life, a detachable keyboard and optional 4G LTE at under €269.*

The PR opens with the dateline after the summary above. It is clear to see that two products are being launched and the main selling point for these products is the long battery life. Then the PR writer goes on to explain in detail about the product. The primary selling point is mentioned in M3 as a promotional element. It is the key point used to market the two products. Though not all PRs employed this move, it was the sixth most important move in PR writing.

#### 4.3.4 “For Immediate Release” formula (M4)

M4 is a non-existent move as far as online laptop and computer PRs are concerned. This is because the urgency of a release date and time is not applicable for an online PR. As soon as a PR is uploaded in the website, it is open for everyone to see. Media people do not have the pressure to pick a PR and write them for the general public before a certain timeframe. All 31 PRs from Lenovo, HP and Dell did not employ this move. This clearly indicates an important distinction between conventional and online PRs.

#### 4.3.5 Lead: Announcing newsworthy information (M5)

This is where the crux of the matter lies. The product (laptop or computer) that is being launched is introduced in this move. There are three steps that help realize M5. M5S1; launching a new product, M5S2; announcing results and other company-related information and M5S3; describing other types of company activity. As these PRs are information on new online laptop and computer products, the M5S1 step appeared in all 31 PRs analysed (100%). The positioning of the move is also the same in all PRs. It appears at the top of the PR after the summary (M3). This move mostly starts with the dateline and explains about the launch of the product itself. For example, in a HP PR (HP1), the M5S1 step is presented this way:

*Palo Alto, Calif., August 16, 2016 – HP Inc. today launched a new class of gaming products designed specifically for those who demand the ultimate immersive gaming experience. HP’s new high-end gaming products – the OMEN X Desktop, OMEN 17.3 diagonal Notebook, OMEN X Curved Display and OMEN with SteelSeries accessories.*

This PR was written to introduce four different products that were launched. The step M5S1 is generally employed to give information about the HP gaming product.

M5S2 is the fifth most important step in online laptop and computer PRs with 67.7%. It is used to show the announcement of results and other company-internal information. While M5S1 usually appears in the beginning of a PR, the M5S2 on the other hand usually appears somewhere at the end of the PR. All three brands employed this move though it didn't appear in every PR. For example, in the Dell PR (D1), M5S2 is used to flaunt their success in clinching the innovation award. In line *Dell is thrilled to announce multiple products selected as 2016 CES Innovation Award Honorees. Dell products taking home CES Innovation Awards, an annual competition honouring outstanding design and engineering in technology*, this move besides announcing results also functions as establishing credentials (M9).

M5S3, describing other types of company activity, also positioned under announcing newsworthy information (M5). PR writers tend to use this platform to also include other company activities. For example:

*At CES, Dell is celebrating all of the inventive and innovative work our customers do using Dell technology. Themed "We Love Your Word", Dell is hosting an interactive gallery at the Yardbird Southern Table & Bar at the Venetian to highlight the diversity of different work in unique and eye-catching exhibits.*

This M5S3 step is employed in Dell PR (D1) where the launch of latitude family laptops and computers are featured. Here, other company related activity is also discussed though it appears only at the end of the PR.

#### **4.3.6 Justifying the product/service or simply the newsworthiness of the information (M6)**

This move which is realized through three steps, is used to rationalize a product that is being launched. The three steps are; M6S1, for indicating the need for the product/service, M6S2, for referring to the advantages for potential buyers and M6S3 for qualifying results as positive. M6S1 existed in about 48.4% of the PRs studied. Some examples of the M6S1 step are:

- *More than 100 million commercial desktops still in use are greater than four years old, leaving businesses vulnerable to the 200 percent rise in breaches targeting endpoint devices and lack the performance and energy savings of today's devices.*

*(HP 3)*

- *Busy with class, athletics, internship and more, students need devices like Dell Inspiron 2-in-1 to fit their multidimensional needs. (D5)*

These examples of the M6S1 step clearly indicates the need for the product. In HP 3 to be up-to-date with current technology for safety purposes and in D5 to accommodate the lifestyle of student.

M6S2 on the other hand justifies the product with reference to its advantages to potential beneficiary. M6S2 is a very important step with the presence of 77.4% of the 31 PRs. Justifying why a buyer should get a product and referring to its advantages go hand in hand. Some of the lines denoting this move are:

- *Windows 10 offers the familiarity of Windows 7 with the touch-friendly features of Windows 8.1, so new devices such as 2-in-1s will provide a better user experience. (D1)*
- *The modular design of the ThinkPad X1 Tablet offers something no other tablet can – adding functionality through simple clip-on modules. (L1)*

M6S3 qualifies results as positive. In PR D6, the line *“This ground-up approach to design has helped address the stunning performance of cutting edge components and has even enabled these new notebooks to be thinner than their predecessors”* shows that the positive result is the effect of the company’s venture in using innovative engineering skills.

All of the examples of justification move (M6) presented aims to promote a positive image of the product and the company. Thus, elements of promotion is unavoidable.

#### 4.3.7 Detailing product/service/company/other event which is the object of the release (M7)

M7 is part of the obligatory moves. It exists in all 31 PRs studied for this research (100%). A detailed description of the laptop or computer is given under this move. Some examples of the M7 move are:

- *The new Alienware 17 is the **ultimate** gaming notebook with an emphasis on screen size, gaming performance and overall immersion. (D6)*
- *With more power in a thinner frame, it comes with **great** graphics options from AMD and NVIDIA. (D6)*
- *Refined **Iconic** Design; The sculpted CNC machine aluminium body with angular lines is offered in Natural Silver and Dark Ash Silver with Copper accents. (HP 5)*

In M7, the information given in headline (M2) and lead (M5) is elaborated in more detail. These details typically include specifications of the product. Promotional languages (in bold) are also used to further enhance the description.

#### **4.3.8 Explicit promotional component: Attributed to the company officials or standard users (M8)**

M8 is explicitly used to promote the product. This move contains four steps. M8S1; emphasizing positive results, M8S2; indicating reliability of company/product, M8S3; independently endorsing company results and M8S4; independent expert opinion. M8S1 was only found in one PR (L7) in the main part of the release studied. In L7 PR, the sentence *“In the space of a couple of months, it won more than three hundred awards and became a status symbol for presidents and CEO’s”* clearly shows the emphasis on the positive results from the product. However, in all other PRs the results are either not indicated clearly as much as the advantages or they are kept at the peripheral part of the PR.

Most of the M8 moves were written using quotes. Previous studies of corporate PRs have indicated that sentences containing quotes are typically more openly promotional than the rest of the text. (McLaren & Gurau 2005; Pander Maat 2007; Catenaccio 2008). In the examples below, it is quite clear that quotes indeed contain more explicit promotional elements.

Table 4.8: Examples of Move 8 Employed in Online Laptop and Computer Press Releases

PR	Move/Step employed	Example
Lenovo L4	M8S2	“We have seen tremendous acceptance of our N-series products by K-12 institutions due to their rugged designs and outstanding value,” ...
Dell D9		This move complements what Dell already offers with Alienware’s 20 years of gaming excellence, pioneering speciality high-performance gaming PCs unrivalled in their engineering and innovation.
Lenovo L3	M8S3	“Technology advancements inspire s to live more vibrant and active lifestyles. Today people are connected wherever and whenever they want across devices”.
Dell D2	M8S4	“The combination of Citrix XenApp and XenDesktop with Dell thin clients continues to fuel innovative solutions providing secure application and data delivery to meet the needs of our joint customers.”

M8S2 and M8S3 are promoting the product; however, they are being promoted by the internal people who belong in the organization, who are professionals in their respective fields. On the other hand, M8S4 is opinion by outsiders who are also independently endorsing the product.

#### 4.3.9 Boilerplate Description(s) / Establishing Credentials (M9)

All three brands have employed this move (93.5%) which is part of the PR format. This move which gives more details about the brand or the company is also indirectly used as a promotional element for the brand name. They appear repetitively in most of the PRs.

Table 4.9: Examples of Move 9 Employed in Online Laptop and Computer Press Releases

Lenovo	Lenovo (HKSE: 992) (ADR: LNVGY) is a \$46 billion global Fortune 500 company and a leader in providing innovative consumer, commercial and enterprise technology. Our portfolio of high-quality, secure products and services covers PCs (including the legendary Think and multimode YOGA brands), workstations, servers, storage, smart TVs and a family of mobile products like smartphones (including the Motorola brand), tablets and apps.
HP	HP Inc. creates technology that makes life better for everyone, everywhere. Through our portfolio of printers, PCs, mobile devices, solutions and services, we engineer experiences that amaze.
Dell	Dell Inc. listens to customers and delivers innovative technology and services that give them the power to do more.

These M9 moves promote the brand, talks about their reliability and other available products and services under the brand name. It is a method to show the brand or company in a positive light and draw attention to their other activities. This is undeniably a subtle promotion for the brand name.

#### 4.3.10 Contact Details (M10)

This move exist in all 31 PRs and is an obligatory move that can be found in the periphery of a PR. This moves is repeated more than once in the PRs. Firstly, the name and contact details of the PR writer is given. For example in HP6;

##### MEDIA CONTACTS

Conor Driscoll

HP Inc.

Conor.driscoll@hp.com

Another way of giving contact detail is through the images of social media link of the website like Facebook and Twitter.



(a)



(b)

Figure 4.7: Social Media Images

In a refined way, M10 actually urges readers to contact them for more information especially if they are undecided. It can also be construed as promotion if the reader is a potential buyer and merely giving out contact details for any queries if the reader is a media personnel who may reproduce the news.

#### **4.3.11 Company Logo (M11)**

M11 is another peripheral move that exist in all 31 PRs (100%). It is a framing move for online product PRs.

### **4.4 Linguistic Features of Online Laptop and Computer Press Releases**

Most online laptop and computer PRs use language which is laudatory, positive and emphasizing the uniqueness or the greatness of the product that is being launched. Most of these linguistic features can be found in the body copy and not at the peripheral section. The framing part of the online PR is very clear and specific. The body copy of the PR uses various linguistic features to realize different moves. As mentioned in Chapter 3, these features are analysed as below.

#### **4.4.1 Promotional Elements in Online Laptop and Computer Press Releases**

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the framework for promotional elements by Pander H. Maat (2007) was adopted to examine the online laptop and computer PRs. Some examples sentences from the PRs with the use of promotional elements are as in Table 4.10 (pg. 84).

Table.4.10: Example of Promotional Elements Extracted from Press Releases

Category	Sub-category	Example in PR
Premodifiers		Carbon fiber helps make YOGA 900S... thinnest <b>ultraportable</b> ... (L2) The Wyse 3030LT ... <b>ultra-secure</b> technology ... (D2)
Adjectives	Intensifying	Windows10 is the most <b>powerful</b> and ... (L3)
	Evaluative	The Latitude 700 Series has been completely refreshed ... <b>excellent</b> efficiency with powerful processing options. (D1) CES2016 ... with the <b>stunning</b> design ... (D1) ... <b>brilliant</b> display in sleeker ... (HP5)
	Property Specifying	
	Comparative & Superlative	... one of the <b>lightest</b> 12.5 inch ... offers <b>greater</b> adjustment flexibility ... (D1) One of the <b>most refined</b> notebook ... (L1)
Adverbs	Intensifying	... works more <b>confidently</b> ... (HP2) ... <b>thoroughly</b> modern laptop ... (L7)
	Place	This design concept ... ThinkPad fans and loyalists from <b>around the world</b> ... (L7)
	Intensifiers of numerals	... more than 50 percent improvement in battery life ... (L3) In the space of a couple of months ... won <b>more than</b> three hundred awards ... (L7)

The frequencies for the promotional languages in each PR are listed in Table 4.10.

Table 4.11: Frequency for Different Types of Promotional Language Used in Online Laptop and Computer Press Releases

PR	Sentences	PM	IA	EA	PSA	IQ	C&S	I.Adv	P	IN	Total
D1	57	37	11	13			7		1		69
D2	54	5	7	13			2	2			29
D3	46	6	12	21			2	1	1		43
D4	35	6	9	21			5	2	2		45
D5	47	7	6	22	1		9	2	1		48
D6	38	4	12	22	2		9				49
D7	32	3	8	23	2		11		1		48
D8	30	2	3	20	1		14	1	4	1	46
D9	36	13	5	29	1		9		3	3	63
D10	46	5	4	35	13		10		5	2	74
D11	41	4	5	20	10		7		2		48
D12	47	9	12	21			2		1		45
D13	50	7	11	20			5				43
D14	39	5	9	22	2		7	1			46
D15	40	6	10	15			3	1	1		36

Table 4.11 continued

PR	Sentences	PM	IA	EA	PSA	IQ	C&S	I.Adv	P	IN	Total
HP1	34	6	7	36	9		14				72
HP2	19	1		12	1			3	3	3	23
HP3	15	8	6	12	4		5	3	5	2	45
HP4	28	3	14	16	5		6				44
HP5	23	2	9	24	9		8		3		55
HP6	30	3	12	15	2		3		3		38
HP7	31	6	10	17	2		1		1		37
HP8	30	4	11	16	1		2		2		36
HP9	39	5	15	20	5		7	3	2		57
L1	46	17	4	29	4		9	2	5	1	71
L2	49	9	12	30	10		9	5	3	1	79
L3	33	3	13	25	7		13	3		7	71
L4	10		3	6	3		1	1			14
L5	40	17	1	27	12		8	4	3		72
L6	35	3	20	25	5		9	4	3	5	74
L7	38	15	9	17	7		9	5	2	4	68
Total frequency for each PE (Dell, HP & Lenovo)		221	270	644	118	0	206	43	57	29	1588

Note: PR = Press Release

Sentences = Number of sentences in a PR.

PM = Premodifiers

C&S = Comparative & superlative

degree

IA = Intensifying adjectives

I.Adv = Intensifying adverbs

EA = Evaluative adjectives

P = Place

PSA = Property specifying adjectives

IN = Intensifiers of numerals

IQ = Intensifying quantifiers

Based on this tabulated data, researcher will be able to calculate the frequencies of promotional elements in online laptop and computer PRs per sentence.

Table 4.12: Frequency for Promotional Elements Used in Online Laptop and Computer Press Releases by Brand Name

Brand name	No. of PRs	Sentences analysed	No. of promotional elements (PEs)	Mean number of PEs per sentence.
Dell	15	638	732	1.2
HP	9	249	407	1.6
Lenovo	7	251	449	1.8
	31	1138	1588	1.4

Based on the frequencies from Table 11 and Table 12, it is quite clear to see that all PRs analysed employ the use of promotional elements / languages. There are between one to two promotional elements per sentence in an online laptop and computer PR.

These promotional elements are used to show that their products are of the best quality. The top three promotional elements used in these PRs are: evaluative adjectives (644), intensifying adjectives (270) and premodifiers (221). As the most frequently used promotional element, evaluative adjective, is the prototypical exponent of evaluation (Swales & Burke, 2003); and it has the tendency to be extensively used in promotional genres to accomplish the writer's promotional and persuasive aims at the same time.

The second most used promotional element is the intensifying adjectives, which account for 17% of the promotional element/language used in the PRs. It helps to intensify the interpretation of the noun such as 'important' and 'strong'. Premodifiers, the third most important promotional language used, "suggest that the product has a special feature it alone possesses" (Dyer, 2008). This is why premodifiers is a relevant feature in promotional writing or advertising.

#### **4.4.2 The Use of Binominal and Multinomial Expressions**

As mentioned in Chapter 2, binominal or multinomial expression is a sequence of two or more words and they belong to the same grammatical category. According to Bhatia (1993), Binominal and Multinomial expression is an effective linguistic device which allows the legal document to be precise and all-inclusive. In the 31 PRs analysed it is significantly notable that all 31 PRs had these expressions. Bearing in mind that these online PRs are not a very long piece of article, the binominal and multinomial expressions play an important role in defining and describing the product in a crisp manner.

Table 4.13: Examples for the Use of Binominal and Multinominal Expressions in Online Laptop and Computer Press Releases

Linguistic Feature	Examples
Binominal and multinominal expressions.	<p>Wyse Device Manager 5.7 offers <b>new, simplified and easy-to-use</b> cloud deployment options.</p> <p>... so clinicians can <b>quickly and securely</b> access patient data ...</p> <p>We have seen tremendous acceptance of our N-Series products due to their <b>rugged and outstanding</b> designs ...</p>

#### 4.4.3 The Use of Nominal Expressions

As discussed in Chapter 2, the most commonly used nominal expression in the study of online laptop and computer PRs is complex nominal phrase; just like Bhatia's (1993) statement, that the complex nominal phrases is largely used in advertisements. They consist of a noun head and a series of adjectives linearly arranged in the pre-modifying position. A complex nominal phrase allows detailed and striking description of the product being launched and they provide sufficient slots for the insertion of adjectives. Besides the complex nominal expression, the compound phrases are also used in the online PRs, though not as many as the complex phrase.

Table 4.14: Examples for the Use of Nominal Expressions in Online Laptop and Computer Press Releases

Linguistic feature	Examples
Nominals	<p>YOGA 900S ... world's <b>thinnest ultraportable laptop</b>...</p> <p>Samsung OLED ... reproduces <b>beautiful rich colours</b> ...</p> <p>... a <b>thin convertible laptop</b> ...</p>

The use of the right promotional element indirectly helps potential customers – who also read the online PRs, to establish an affirmative attitude towards the product. This indicates the existence of promotional intent throughout the PR, be it subtle or explicit.

## **4.5 Discussion**

As a genre-based study, this research examined the rhetorical structures of online laptop and computer PRs that realise their communicative purposes. The analyst attempted to answer three research questions, as presented in Chapter One. They are, firstly, to identify the communicative purpose(s) of online laptop and computer PRs, to determine the rhetorical structures of online laptop and computer PRs and finally, to examine how the common linguistic features are used in these online laptop and computer PRs to realize the communicative purpose(s). In this discussion section, analyst will answer each research question based on the research findings.

### **4.5.1 Research Questions**

#### **4.5.1.1 What are the Communicative Purposes of Online Laptop and Computer PRs?**

The main purpose of using the genre approach in this analysis is to clearly identify the communicative purpose(s). The principal feature that turns a collection of communicative events into a genre is some shared set of communicative purposes. To determine the communicative purposes, it is important to note that the business and corporate genres such as online PRs are responses to organizational communicative needs. Online product PRs are an organization's way of communicating with the existing clients, investors as well as the prospective ones. The informational purpose is obviously something one cannot run away from in a product PR, be it online or conventional. With the aim of launching a new product, the organization will have to provide ample information about the new product in their PR. This study of 31 online laptop and computer PRs revealed a clear informational purpose by giving out product information about the laptop or computer being launched as well as detailed

descriptions and specifications of the laptop or computer. Move 5 (announcing newsworthy information) and Move 7 (detailing product which is the object of release) are all moves that contain product information. All these moves contribute to the informational purpose of the PR. They are recorded as obligatory moves, though some of their steps are categorized as conventional and optional.

As Garzone (2007) claims, the world wide web has radically changed the framework of many traditional genre, including PRs. Being freely accessible to the general public, the process of writing a PR has also undergone tremendous changes. Writing a product PR to give information is nothing new. However, as Bhatia (2004) aptly puts, a genre can also serve more than one communicative purpose(s). This in reality is evident in this study of online laptop and computer PRs. The fact that PR is regarded as a hybrid genre is clearly revealed with the ‘private intention’ (Bhatia, 1995, 1997) of the PR, which evidently is a promotional purpose.

Based on the analysis, following Catenaccio’s (2008) move structure, the very idea of promotion begins from the start of the PR. The headline at the top of the PRs is cleverly used to attract the readers to keep reading. As Diggs (1990) points out, “A good headline captivates the reader’s attention and leads him/her directly into the body of the ad...”, in this case, the PR. Instead of writing a headline like “XYZ Software Company Announces Newest Version of XYZ Pro”, a PR with promotional intent will look like “Almost Human, XYZ Pro Takes thinking Out of Doing: New Update adds human-response feature to interface” which is a more creative and engaging title.

A headline like “*Lenovo Unveils Pioneering Modular ThinkPad X1 Tablet*” gives readers the notion of “first-of-its-kind” and “nobody owns it”. This will prompt them to read further. The promotional element is then further enhanced in other moves as you read through the PR, such as, justifying the products by indicating the need and explaining its benefits and advantages.

Throughout the PR, the writer subtly tries to promote the product. From the catchy headline (Move 2, 100% obligatory), justifying the products through their advantages (M6S2, 76% conventional) to giving out contact details to prompt further action (M10, 100% obligatory), the promotional element exist throughout the PR. Peripheral information like email links, contact information, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook page logos and details are also subtle promotional moves that encourages further action from the reader.

The 5-move structure established by McLaren and Gurau (2005) in their study of 50 corporate PRs of a biotechnology company in the UK, clearly indicated the presence of promotional purpose and they existed in the move “comment by CEO”. This is indeed similar to my studies, as the quote section is deliberately used to promote a product and the analysis also shows that 83.9% frequency for this step (M8S3 – independently endorsing company results).

Previous studies have suggested that elements of promotion exist in all business and corporate genres. While ostensibly informative, press releases carry an implicitly self-promotional purpose. Thus, the hybridisation of the genre is evident. Thus, besides being informational, another communicative purpose of ‘promotion’ is quite palpably seen.

#### **4.5.1.2 What is the rhetorical structure of online laptop and computer PRs?**

The rhetorical structure of online laptop and computer PRs is revealed through the move analysis. Moves 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11 were all obligatory moves. They form the general structure of a PR. Move 3 (summary of main points) is a conventional move with 61.3% frequency in the PRs. Conventional steps are: M5S2, M6S2 and M8S3. There were no optional moves detected, however, there were several optional steps, which are: M5S3, M6S1, M6S3, M8S1, M8S2 and M8S4.

However, Move 4 was non-existent in all 31 PRs. This is due to the nature of the PR, which is web-based. Thus, an “Immediate Release” formula is not needed. Once the PR is uploaded on the company website, it is immediately available for the general public.

Compared with Catenaccio’s (2008) 11-move framework, this study found 10 move types for online laptop and computer PRs. Move 4, which is the “For Immediate Release” formula, that was categorized as optional in her framework, is non-existent in an online PR. Catenaccio’s work, as opposed to this study, include online and

conventional hardcopy PRs. Thus, the differences exist because of the types of data studied; conventional and online.

On the other hand, another new move emerged from the analysis. Sub-headlines for online PRs existed in all 31 PRs analysed. This is because, firstly, for some PR, more than one product launch was covered and secondly, the product details were divided and written separately under different headlines. In the analysis in chapter 4, the researcher has categorized the sub-headlines as M2S2.

The rhetorical structure of the PR was further made clear with the analysis of the move sequence. 100% PRs started with peripheral information, either Move 10 (contact details) or Move 11 (company logo). This is a distinct feature of an online PR and what differentiates the move structures of other researchers to Catenaccio. More than 80% of online PRs' core starts with Move 5 (Lead: announcing newsworthy information). This is a classic move that goes hand in hand with informational purpose.

Another evident structure is the framing of the online PR by peripheral information. It starts with Move 10 (contact details) and Move 11 (company logo) and ends with Move 9 (Boilerplate description/establishing credentials) and Move 10 (contact details). The framing of the PR is consistent with the online PR writing format.

Accordingly, the recommended version of the 10-move structure is given in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Recommended Framework for Online Laptop and Computer  
Press Releases

<b>Move 1</b>	Press/news release (frame)
<b>Move 2</b>	Headline (S1) Sub-headline
<b>Move 3</b>	Summary of main points (optional – can be conflated with Move 2)
<b>Move 4</b>	Lead: Announcing newsworthy information. (S1) Launching a new product/service (S2) Announcing results and other company internal information (S3) Describing other types of company activity.
<b>Move 5</b>	Justifying the product/service or simply the newsworthiness of the information. (S1) Indicating the need for the product/service etc. (S2) Referring to the advantages for potential beneficiaries. (S3) Qualifying the result as positive.
<b>Move 6</b>	Detailing product/service/company/other event which is the object of the release.
<b>Move 7</b>	Explicit promotional component: Attributed to the company officials, or standard users. (S1) Emphasizing positive results. (S2) Indicating reliability of company/product (S3) Independently endorsing company results (S4) Independent expert opinion.
<b>Move 8</b>	Boilerplate description(s) / establishing credentials.
<b>Move 9</b>	Contact details.
<b>Move 10</b>	Company logo.

#### **4.5.1.3 How are the common linguistic features used to realise the moves which shape the communicative purposes and moves of online laptop and computer PRs?**

The main instrument to achieve the aim of this communicative event is language. Thus, the linguistic features are also studied. “In most cases, it is the visual content and design that makes an initial impact in any advertisements and causes us to take note of it. But in order to get people to identify the product, remember its name (or at least make them feel that it is familiar), and persuade them that it is worth buying, advertisements rely mostly on the use of language. Both elements, psychological and linguistic are essential; they combine to produce a single ‘brand image’ of a product” (Crystal, 1987, p.390). In this case, the same applies to product PRs.

As far as the use of linguistic features to realise the promotional purpose of a PR is concerned, this study has identified the promotional elements such as premodifiers, adjectives, adverbs, binominal / multinominal and nominal expressions. The use of these linguistic devices were clearly discussed in Chapter 4. This is similar to the study of Jiang Wei & Gampper (2014) who have listed adjectives and verb collocation as important linguistic tools to help realise the promotional intent of online smartphone PRs.

However, Jiang Wei and Gampper have categorized the adjectives according to their functional purposes, i.e. fact adjective and opinion adjective. While this study, has listed the promotional element according to their types (Premodifiers, adjectives, adverbs, etc.). However, the purpose it strives to achieve is still the same; which is to promote the product.

The moves are realized through these linguistic features. In this analysis, Moves 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 are categorized as obligatory moves. Framing of online PR is regarded as promotional (Catenaccio, 2008). Move 1, Move 9, Move 10 and Move 11 which exist in the peripherals with 100% frequency (except Move 9 = 93.5%) frames the online laptop and computer PRs.

On the other hand, Moves 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8 belong in the body of a PR. The use of these linguistic features in realizing their communicative purpose is clearly evident in the examples below.

Move 2 (headline) has a classic promotional intend. For example, in the headline for HP2, “HP introduces World’s Only Notebooks with Integrated Privacy Screens”, the term “World’s only” is an adverbial element (Maat, 2007). Besides giving information that the notebook comes with integrated privacy screen, which is an important information, the adverbial element “World’s Only” adds the promotional/marketing intend of the writer.

In the same PR, the sub-headline (M2S2) reads, “Innovative HP Sure View Technology helps combat visual hacking, extends company’s leadership in security”. In this case, the term “innovative” used to describe the technology is an evaluative adjective (Maat, 2007) – the most used adjective type in this study. It refers to the positive evaluation without going into greater detail. This evaluation indirectly promotes the product – giving way to the promotional purpose.

Another obligatory move – Move 5, in Lenovo PR (L1), shows that “Designed for forward thinkers, the series include new additions such as brilliantly adaptable ThinkPad X1 Tablet with its unique modular design”. In this line, the writer intends to introduce the ThinkPad X1 Tablet. While talking about the adaptability, he includes “forward”, “adaptable”, “brilliantly” and “unique”. Categorizing under Maat’s (2007) linguistic features, both “unique” and “brilliant” are evaluative adjectives, “forward” in this context is intensifying adjective and “adaptable” is property specifying adjective. Besides giving information about the product launch, the linguistic features help realize the promotional communicative purpose. An example for each move is presented in the Table 4.16 in page 100.

Table 4.16: Examples of Linguistic Features Used in Each Move

Moves & Steps / Types	Line	Linguistic Feature
Move 1: Obligatory	Appears in the periphery of a PR.	
Move 2: Obligatory	<i>Innovative</i> HP Sure View Technology helps combat visual hacking, extends company's leadership in security.	Evaluative adj.
Move 3: Conventional	X1 Text with intel Core M7 processor reaches 10 hours' battery and <i>unique</i> modules add functionality.	Evaluative adj.
Move 5: Obligatory	Lenovo today announced two new N-series, designed with <i>ruggedized</i> features <i>reinforced</i> ports and <i>stronger</i> hinges.	Property specifying adj. Intensifying Adj.
Move 6: Obligatory	Users who take the Yoga Book with them on day trips have the option to work anywhere – on a busy commute or a packed waiting room, thanks to the <i>thin</i> and <i>light</i> design.	Binominal expressions
Move 7: Obligatory	With two panels that open up like an <i>ultra-thin</i> notebook, the Yoga Book is <i>unconventionally</i> slender and the <i>world's thinnest</i> 2-in-1 available on the market.	Premodifiers Evaluative adj. Adverbial element Comparative & superlative
Move 8: Obligatory	"The Yoga Book introduces keyboard and handwriting input capability in an <i>elegantly simple</i> , <i>unconventionally thin</i> and <i>slender</i> design" said Jeff Meredith, Vice President and General Manager.	Evaluative adj.
Move 9: Obligatory	Appears in the periphery of a PR.	
Move 10: Obligatory	Appears in the periphery of a PR.	
Move 11: Obligatory	Appears in the periphery of a PR.	

Table 4.16 clearly shows examples of linguistic feature for each move in online laptop and computer PRs. These linguistic features helps realise the communicative purposes of the steps which in turn help realize the bigger communicative purpose PR which is promotional.

In terms of linguistic features, promotional language are frequently used because as Leech (1966) describes, they can be used to create a “glowing, attractive description”. The promotional element and language used create the concept of interestedness, which refers to the extent a reader may recognize a genre as being used to promote to him or her to do something, in benefit of the writer – in this case, to buy the product of the company

Although readers, clients and potential customers are aware of the conventions of promotional genres and of their tendency towards exaggeration to a certain extent, it is undeniable that almost everybody’s inner cognitive processes would be more attracted by the description “the powerfully built ideapad 700” than the plain use of “the ideapad 700”.

It is also true, however, that a product PR should not only be promotional. It should combine both objectively stated important information on factual data with promotional languages used to promote the product to potential customers.

The linguistic features discussed: premodifiers, adjectives, adverbial elements, binominal/multinominal and nominal expressions are words in charge which function to condense the description into a single word/phrase and bring it out in the PRs.

Following the framework of Pander, H. Maat (2007) and Bhatia (1993), this study clearly shows the promotional elements used are especially regarded as important to help in the description of a product or service (Bhatia, 1993). The analysis

of promotional language, based on Maat's framework (2007) in Chapter 4, also show the extensive use of promotional language in online laptop and computer PRs. On average, there is about one to two promotional language / words used in a sentence in these PRs.

#### **4.5.2 Interview with the Field Experts**

The outcome of the interview with the field experts, is also consistent with the findings of this study; both informational and promotional purposes play an important role in an online product PR. All writers felt that the readers of online PRs consist more of the clients and investors of the organization or prospective customer or investor. The general public may read the online PR, as they are placed in the organization's website, but they are generally not concerned with the title i.e. Press release or News release. This gives way to the point of including a promotional element in an online PR. For general readers, the 'preformulation' of a PR is not important, but only the content. Thus, writers try to freely promote their product.

Writers B, C and D said that an online PR should be both informational and promotional though one should keep it mild. Writer C says "a little bit of hype is acceptable", while Writer B explains that, "It can be both informational and promotional. Having too much superlatives may make the product sound too good".

Another reason for including promotional elements in an online PR is because locally, according to Writer D, "Malaysian consumers love promotion". In terms of the structure of an online PR, though all four writers follow the general conventions of PR writing, they emphasize that, one should keep in mind the objective of the PR, which

is to make the product look good for the people. Thus, the use of comparatives and superlatives are frequently used.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

This chapter provided an explanation of online laptop and computer PRs by thoroughly analysing their communicative purposes, move structures and linguistic features. The conclusion will be given in the next chapter.

University of Malaya

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

### **5.1. Introduction**

In this final chapter, I will summarize the important conclusion of the analysis. Then, I will relate them to some theoretical and pedagogical implications.

### **5.2 Overview of the Study**

The goal of the present study was to contribute to our understanding of the genre of the online PRs in general and online laptop and computer PRs specifically, their communicative purposes, rhetorical structure and linguistics features used in writing them. This study is done based on the genre analysis approach and the framework of Paola Catenaccio (2008) was adopted in analysing the rhetorical structure. The most important past study on PRs that was examined is Catenaccio's research on 70 PRs – hard copy as well as web-based PRs.

This present study consists of a collection of the corpus texts, analysis of the moves as well as the linguistic features of the corpus.

Collecting the corpus texts was not a difficult task as the data to be examined could be found in the respective company websites. All online laptop and computer PRs from Lenovo, HP and Dell were chosen for the study.

In examining the rhetorical structure of the PR, it is evident that the promotional element in a PR is not confined to only the linguistic features used. Moves were also examined for occurrences of promotional element. This was done to find out to what extent the promotional aspect of online laptop and computer PRs is manifested through openly promotional language. It is clear from this study that although Move 8 is an obvious promotional move, the elements of promotion starts even before that.

From attractive headlines like “*HP introduces world’s only Notebooks with Integrated Privacy Screens*”, “*HP Inc. Gives Offices a Powerful Makeover with New Desktops and AiOs*” and “*Dell Introduces New Lineup of Laptops with Stunning Visual Experiences*”, summary of the main points (Move 3), justifying the products (Move 6) to establishing credentials (Move 9), promotional elements can be found in most of the moves though it is subtly done. In fact the explicit promotional moves only has one conventional step (M8S3) with 83.9% occurrences. However, the percentage is very closely bordering to being obligatory step as well ( $\geq 90\%$ ), while M8S1, M8S2 and M8S4 are optional steps.

This brings into light the communicative purposes of an online PR for laptop and computer. Clearly three purposes are identified; to inform media representatives and end-users (buyers), to promote the products and to persuade people to purchase it (both for end-users). Thus, a clear mixed purpose is evident and this posits the online PR as a hybrid genre.

The linguistic features have contributed to bring forth and clearly demonstrate the communicative purpose. The use of linguistic features like adjectives, adverbs, comparatives, superlatives, binominal/multinomial expressions and nominal expressions, have played a vital role in the positive description of the product which indirectly contributed to the promotion of the product.

We can undoubtedly see that the writers have employed their knowledge of human psychology to accomplish their goal of informing media sector and the general crowd about the launch of a new product, while at the same time, managed to subtly promote the product as well.

### 5.3 Implications and Suggestions

For the PR writers, novice or otherwise, the move analysis provides an opportunity to improve their online product PR writing. Though the conventional methods of writing a PR clashes with the informational purposes (Maat, 2007), one needs to see that this may not be the case at present times. This research has clearly revealed that online PRs are a hybrid genre and promotional elements in an online product PR exists throughout. Thus, keeping in mind the immediate reach of an online PR and the shift in the readership, which now includes possible investors, product agents, end-users and general public, these changes are definitely a welcoming positive move.

For the pedagogy of ESP (English for Specific Purposes), language teachers should take the genre-based approach in teaching writing, especially for students of public relations course, where writing PRs are part of the job. Exposure to the genre (PR) for these students, provide them with an understanding of why a communication style is the way it is through a reflection of its social context and its purpose. This will enable ESP instructors to draw students' attention to the purpose of the text, the intended readership, the generic structure and the general language features of the text. For material developers and text book writers, the drafting of a training module or book can be done with the inclusion of a well-informed list of linguistic features.

This study intended to look at the communicative purposes, rhetorical structure and the promotional elements used in an online laptop and computer PR. The study involved data from three companies – Dell, Lenovo and HP. It will be interesting to analyse the online product PRs of more tech-companies like Apple, Asus and Acer. Inclusion of more companies in this study may give a clearer picture of the communicative purposes and the rhetorical structures employed. Future study can also include images and videos. The results obtain could yield more interesting analyses and findings.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

In conclusion, it can be said that most of the moves from the 11-move structure as presented in Catenaccio's (2008) framework were applicable to the online laptop and computer PRs. Only the "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE" formula (Move 4) was not found in any PRs. This is because for an online PR, it is easily accessible to the public as soon as the PR is uploaded. However, a new step was discovered during the analysis, which is Move 2 Step 1 – subheading. This step was employed to introduce more than one product in each PRs. The framework by Pander Maat (2007) and Biber, Connor and Upton (2007) were also relevant in identifying the communicative purposes and linguistic elements used by the online PR writers.

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