Complement Subordinate Clause Analysis in Complex Sentence Found in CNN Business Online News Article

Dita Nur Rahma[1], Putu Devi Maharani[2]
English Study Program Faculty of Foreign Languages, Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar
Jl. Kamboja No. 11 A Denpasar – Bali, 80233
Correspondence Email: dnurrahma6@gmail.com [1], devi.maharani@unmas.ac.id [2]

Abstract
This study focuses on analysing complement subordinate clauses in complex sentences observed in CNN Business online articles. The aim is to explore how these clauses contribute to sentence structure and meaning in journalistic text. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method. The data were collected from five CNN Business articles published in May 2025 that discuss about tariffs issue involving Donald Trump. Sentence were selected based on the presence of complement subordinate clauses, which were then analysed using Miller's (2002) theory and illustrated through tree diagrams by Brown and Miller (1991). The findings show a total 18 complement clauses with the highest number of occurrences is 7 data. Most of complement clauses are introduced by complementizer "that" though in some cases it is omitted. The result shows that complement clauses has important role in completing the meaning of the verbs and in forming grammatically coherent complex sentences in writing.

Keywords*: complement clause, complex sentence, syntax, CNN, tree diagram*

Abstrak
Penelitian ini berfokus pada analisis klausa subordinat komplemen dalam kalimat kompleks yang ditemukan dalam artikel daring *CNN Business*. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana klausa tersebut berkontribusi terhadap struktur dan makna kalimat dalam teks jurnalistik. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan dari lima artikel *CNN Business* yang diterbitkan pada bulan Mei 2025 dan membahas isu tarif perdagangan berdasarkan keputusan yang dibuat oleh presiden Amerika Donald Trump. Kalimat yang dipilih untuk studi ini diambil berdasarkan keberadaan klausa subordinat komplemen, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan teori Miller (2002) dan divisualisasikan melalui diagram pohon dari Brown dan Miller (1991). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat total 18 klausa komplemen, dengan jumlah kemunculan terbanyak sebanyak 7 data. Sebagian besar klausa komplemen diawali oleh komplemen *"that,"* meskipun dalam beberapa kasus dihilangkan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa klausa komplemen memiliki peran penting dalam melengkapi makna verba serta membentuk kalimat kompleks yang koheren secara gramatikal dalam penulisan.

Kata kunci*: klausa komplemen, kalimat kompleks, sintaksis, CNN, diagram pohon*

Introduction

Language plays a crucial role as a fundamental tool of human comunication. It makes possibilities for people to communicate, shares idea, and comperhend one another. The study of language as a systematic perspective is known as linguistics. According to Brinton (200:10), linguistics are devided into several components based on its purpose, including phonology, morphology, semantics, pragmatics, and syntax. Among these, syntax focuses on the sentence structure. According to Quirk et al. (1985), a sentences is the main part of grammar that expressed a complete idea. A sentence is formes by arranging words into phrases, phrases into clauses, and then clauses into full sentences. Each sentence should have a subject and a predicate. Structually, there are four classifications of sentence which are simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex.

A complex sentence is characterized by the presence of one independent clause and one or more subordinate clauses (Quirk et al. 1985). According to Miller (2002), subordinate clauses often begin with words like because, when, that, and others that help to add an extra information to the main clause. these clauses provide important aditional information that helps in understanding the overall meaning of the sentences. Miller (2002) also identifies three types of subordinate clauses: complement clauses, which complete the meaning of a verb or noun in the main clause, relative clauses, which give additional information about a noun, and adverbial clauses, which provide information about time, reason, condition, and manner related to the main clause. In addition Brown and Miller (1991) explain how sentence structure can be shown using tree diagrams, which are useful tools for analysing how each part of the sentence is related.

Many studies have explored subordinate clauses in various context. For instance, Indriyani and aryaningsih (2021) analysed subordinate clauses in short story "The Boscombe Valley" and found that relative clauses were the most commonly used. Similarly, Prabawati et al. (2020), focused on complex sentences in the China Daily newspaper and discovered that relative clauses aprreared more frequently than complement and adverbial clauses. Bestwari et al. (2021) examined "Gulliver's Travels" and also found out that relatove clauses were used more often than other types. Furthermore, Putriani et al. (2021) studied adverbial clauses in Bali Travel News and identified time adverbial clauses as the most common. Lastly, Candrasius and Maharani (2024) analysed subordinate clauses functioning as adjuncts in CNN online news and highlighting various types of adverbial clauses.

Despite the many studies on subordinate clauses, most of the previous research has focused on relative and adverbial clauses. There is still lack of research that focuses specifically on complement subordinate clauses, especially in online news articles such as those from CNN Business. This leave a gap in understanding how complement clauses are used and how they help in conveying the meaning in complex sentences that found in journalistic writing. The main theory used in this study is from Miller (2002), which would be used to identify complement subordinate clauses in complex sentences. To support the analysis, this study also applies hierarchical tree diagram from Brown and Miller (1991), which is a useful tool for showing how each part of the sentence is related in structure.

This study focuses only on complement clause, which is used to complete the meaning of the main verb and also complete the noun. These clauses are often used in news writing to report speech, thought, or facts. The main objective of this study is to explore the occurence of complement subordinate clauses in the complex sentences used in CNN Business online news. This study will describe the function of complement subordinate clauses and observe the pattern where they appear in sentence structures. This study is intended to deliver a clearer comprehension of how complement subordinate clauses work within complex sentences in the articles of online CNN Business by focusing on this spesific types of subordinate clause. this study also expected to contributes to the broader field of syntactic studies and helps strengthen the understanding of grammar in online news writting. Based on this background, the problem of this study is centered on understanding how complement subordinate clauses function within complex sentence in CNN Business online news articles and in identifying the steuctural patterns of complement subordinate clauses that appear in those sentences.

Method

This study applied a descriptive qualitative approach to analyse complement subordinate clauses in complex sentences from online news texts. Creswell (2012) explains that qualitative methods enable researchers to explore patterns and meanings in written data, whereas the descriptive method is used to present the findings clearly in written form. The data were taken from five *CNN Business* articles published in May 2025 about tariffs and trade wars. These articles were selected because their topics went viral and contained numerous complex sentence structures relevant to the study, and all articles were obtained from the official CNN website. The titles of the articles include "Trump says he will lower tariffs on China 'at some point'" (DS1), "Trump, in a major concession, says the tariff on China should be 80% — but will leave it up to Bessent" (DS2), "Trump says the clock is ticking for 150 countries to make a deal or face higher tariffs" (DS3), and "7 million new jobs will evaporate this year because of trade war, UN predicts" (DS4). The data collection process involved observation and note-taking. The articles were read closely to identify complex sentences containing subordinate clauses. Sentences that met the criteria were highlighted and compiled to analyse the complement subordinate clauses using Miller's (2002) theory. Then, Brown and Miller's (1991) tree diagram model was used to illustrate the sentence structures and show how the clauses function within the syntax. The results were presented using both formal and informal approaches. Tables are provided to show how often complement subordinate clauses appear and how they are distributed in the selected articles, and are supported by descriptive explanations to help explain the patterns and roles of the clauses within complex sentences.

Result and Discussion

The result of this study demonstrate the use of complement clauses as a type of subordinate clause in online news articles from CNN Business Edition. This research specifically focuses on complement clauses, and the analysis results are displayed in the following table.

Table 1. Complement subordinate clause found in online CNN business news article in May 2025.

Complement Clause in CNN Business News Article	Number of Accuracy	Percentage
DS1	3	17%
DS2	6	33%
DS3	7	39%
DS4		
	2	11%
Total	18	100%

Table above shows the number and percentage of complement subordinate clauses found in CNN Business online news articles from May 2025. All of the articles are focused on Trump's decisions and statements of tariffs. The articles that have the highest number of complement clauses is from data source 3 (DS3) entitled *"Trump says the clock is ticking for 150 countries to make a deal or face higher tariffs,"* which has 7 clauses or 39% of the total. The second highest is the article *"Trump, in a major concession, says the tariff on China should be 80% — but will leave it up to Bessent,"* (DS2) which has 6 clauses or 33%. Another article is *"Trump says he will lower tariffs on China 'at some point'"* (DS1) that contained 3 complement subordinate clause with percentage 17%. Lastly, the article *"7 million new jobs will evaporate this year because of trade war, UN predicts"* (DS4) that includes 2 complement subordinate clauses with percentage of 11%. In total, there are 18 complement subordinate clauses that found in the four selected articles. In the next section, four examples taken from each article will be explained more deeply through tree diagrams.
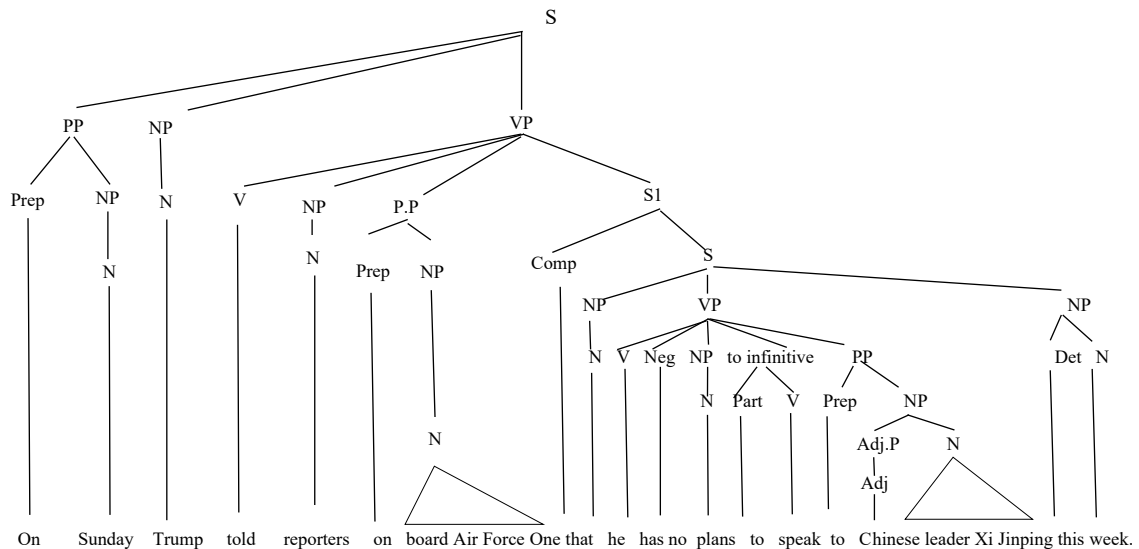
Datum 1:
"On Sunday, Trump told reporters on board Air Force One **that he has no plans to speak to Chinese leader Xi Jinping this week.**"
(Source: CNN article - Trump says he will lower tariffs on China 'at some point')

The previously mentioned data is considered as a complex sentence since it consist of one main clause along with a subordinate clause. The clause "On Sunday, Trump told reporters on board Air Force One*"* refers to main clause, which contains the subject *Trump* and the verb "told". The part "that he has no plans to speak to Chinese leader Xi Jinping this week" is the suborinate clause refers to complement

subordinate clause because it complete the meaning of the verb "told" in main clause. Without this clause, the sentence would feel incomplete. To help explain the structure clearly, the tree diagram would be presented bellow.

As shown in the preceding hierarchical tree diagram that the symbol (S) serves as the root node encompasing the entire structure of the sentence, which consist of (NP) "Trump" and (VP) "told reporters on board Air Force one that he has no plans to speak to Chinese leader Xi jinping this week." The subordinate clause "that he has no plans to speak to Chinese leader Xi jinping this week" is marked as (S1) under the (VP) and it is introduce by the subordinator "that". The subordinate clause (S1) is cassified as a comlement subordinate clause because it is introduce by the subordinator "that" and completes sentence's arrangement. In the tree diagram, the complement subordinate clause appears at the same level as the other constituent under the (VP) which it is showing that it is part of the compelete sentence structure.
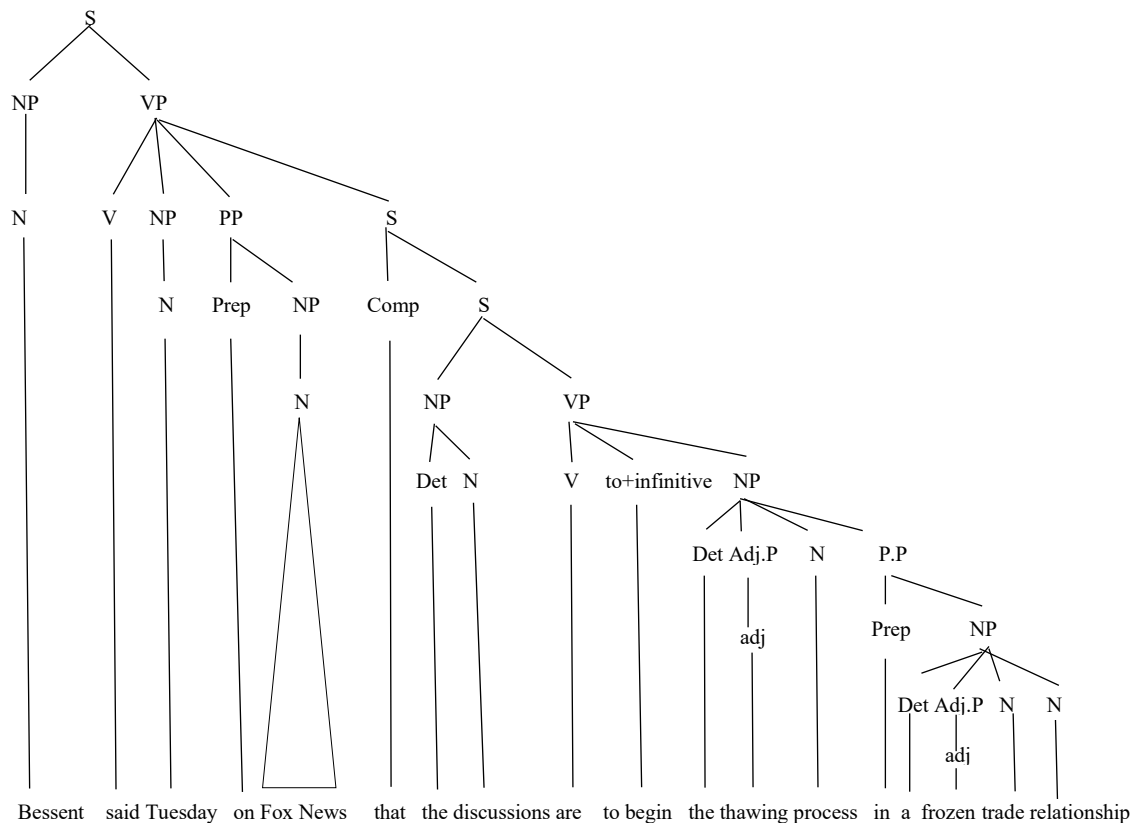
Datum 2:

"Bessent said Tuesday on Fox News **that the discussions are to begin the thawing process in a frozen trade relationship.**"
(Source: CNN article - Trump, in a major concession, says the tariff on China should be 80% — but will leave it up to Bessent)

The previously mentioned data is considered as a complex sentence due to the presence of one main clause and a single subordinate clause. The main clause is "Bessent said Tuesday on Fox News", which includes the subject "Bessent" and the verb "said". The element "Tuesday" and "on fox news" are the adverbial phrases that modifyed the verb "said" and it is provided the information about time and location of the event. It also followed by a subordinate clause "that the discussions are to begin

the thawing process in a frozen trade relationship", which had a functions as a complement subordinate clause because it completes the meaning of the verb. Tree diagram would be presented below to give the better understanding of the structure.

The preceding hierarchical tree diagram indicates that the symbol (S) serves as the root node encompasing the entire structure of the sentence, which consist of main clause and the subordinate clause. the main clause consists of the noun phrase (NP) "Bessent" as the subject and a verb phrase (VP) headed by "said." Whithin this VP, the noun phrase "Tuesday" is catgorized as the noun phrase that functioning as the adverb of time and the prepositional phrase (PP) "on fox news" is representing as the adverb of place which showing the location of the sentence event.following the main clause. there is the complement subordinate clause, which is labeled as (S1) and introduced by the complementizer "that" and this clause is modifying the verb "said" in the main clause.

The subordinate clause is consist of noun phrase "the discussions", the verb phrase "are to begin the thawing process" this VP includes the auxiliari verb "are" and to infinitive "to begin", and the noun phrase that consist of determiner (Det) "the," adjective phrase (Adj.P) "thawing," and a noun "process." Other than that the NP also modified by the prepositional phrase (PP) "in a frozen trade relationship." This final PP contains a noun phrase "a frozen trade relation ship," where the "frozen" is an adjective that modifying "relationship". The complement clause provides the content of what Bessent said, and it is grammatically required to complete the meaning of the
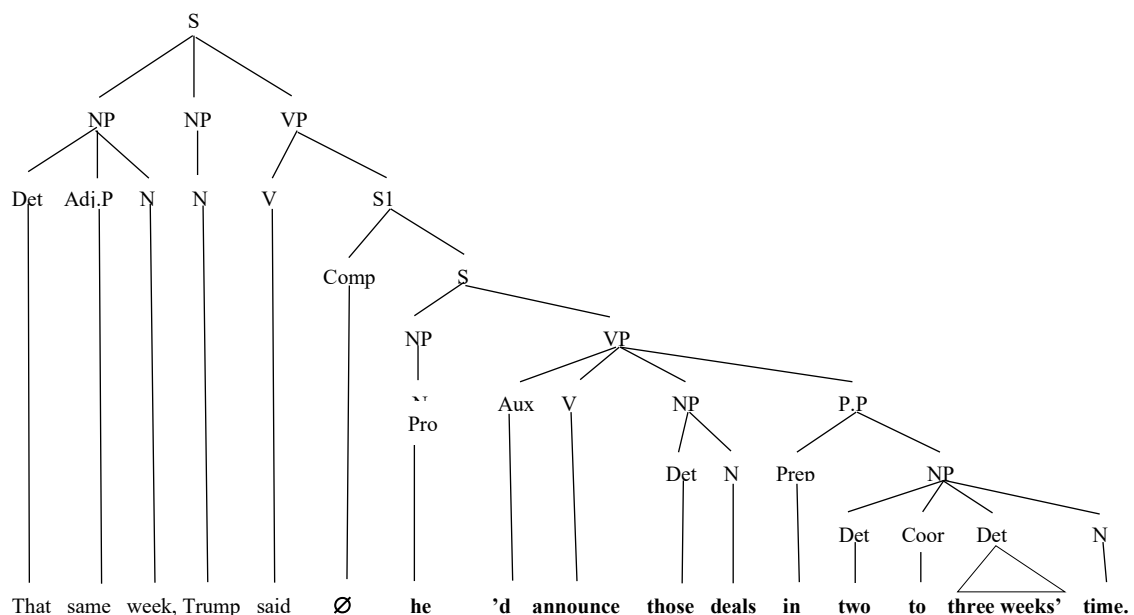
verb. Its position under the VP in the tree diagram demonstrated its status as a subordinate structure within the overall sentence

Datum 3:
"That same week, Trump said **he'd announce those deals in two to three weeks' time**."
(Source: CNN article - Trump says the clock is ticking for 150 countries to make a deal or face higher tariffs)

The previously mentioned data is considered as a complex sentence due to the presence of one main clause and one subordinate clause in the sentences. The main clause "That same week, Trump said" is contains the subject "Trump" and verb "said," and also contains a noun phrase before it "that same week" that functioning as the adverbial which shows the temporal context for the action. The subordinate clause "he'd announce those deals in two to three weeks' time" follows the verb "said" and it serves as the complement subordinate clause. The following tree diagram represents the hierarchical arrangement of the sentence.

In the preceding hierarchical tree diagram, the full sentence is represented by (S) as the mother node. The main clause contains two main components, which are noun phrase (NP) "Trump" and the verb phrase (VP) "said." Preceding the subject is another noun phrase "that same week," that functioning as the adverbial which modifying the verb "said" and its indicating when the event took place. This noun phrase is not part of the subject but it is placed as a separate adverbial modifier within the main clause structure.

The subordinate clause is represented as (S1) under the VP which is identified as a complement subordinate clause that provided the reported content of the verb "said." Unlike the previous sentence in data 1 or data 2, where the complement clause

is introduced by the explicit complementizer "that." The clause in this data omits the subordinator but still retained its role as a complement clause. This is a common feature in journalistic writing where complementizer like "that" may be dropped when the meaning remains clear.
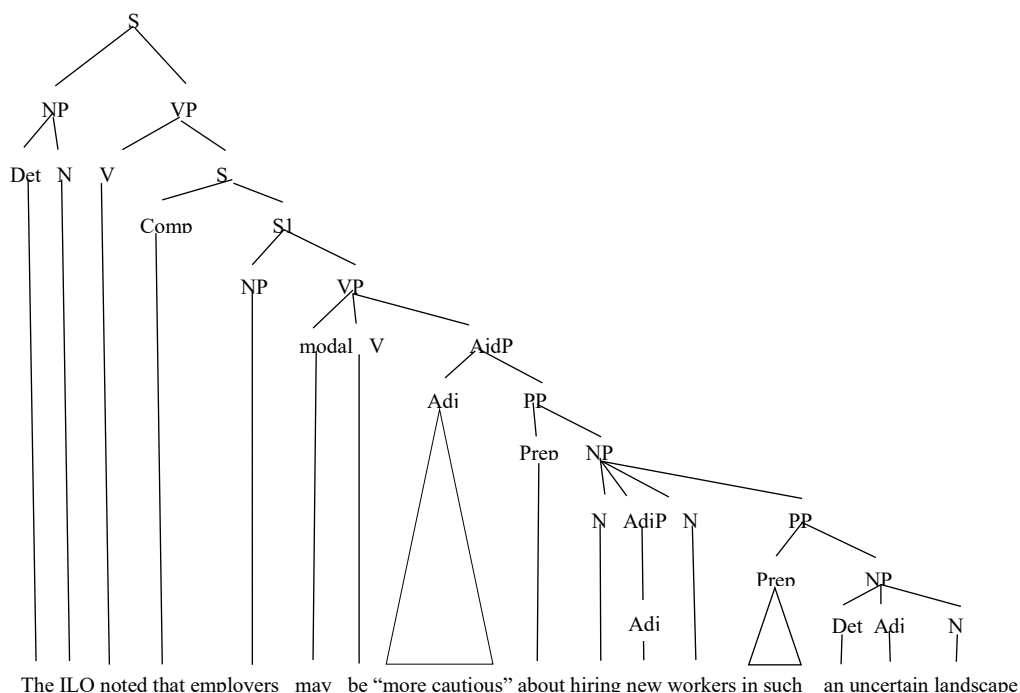
The complement clause in this data includes the NP as the subject "he" which is categorized as a pronoun and followed by the modal auxiliary "'d" (contracted form of "would") and the main verb "announce." The object of this verb is the noun phrase "those deals" that consist of determiner "that" and a noun "deals." The sentence ends with the prepositional phrase (PP) "in two to three weeks' time," which modified the verb "announce" by providing temporal information about when the announcement would occur. The phrase "two to three weeks' time" is a complex noun phrase that includes a coordination structure (two-to-three) that modifying the head noun "weeks' time."

Datum 4:
"The ILO noted **that employers may be "more cautious" about hiring new workers in such an uncertain landscape.**"
(Source: CNN article - 7 million new jobs will evaporate this year because of trade war, UN predicts)

The previously mentioned data is considered as a complex sentence due to the presence of one main clause and a single subordinate clause in the sentences. The main clause is "The ILO noted," which includes NP "The ILO" as the subject and the VP "noted" as the predicate. This followed by a complement subordinate clause that begin with the complementizer "that," which had a function as the direct object of the reporting verb "noted." The arrangement of syntactic elements in this sentence would be illustrated in the tree diagram below.

The ILO noted that employers   may   be "more cautious" about hiring new workers in such   an uncertain landscape

In the tree diagram above, the mother node is marked by (S) that representing the whole sentence. The main clause contains the noun phrase (NP) "The ILO," where "the" is a determiner and "ILO" is the head noun. The verb phrase (VP) contains the verb "noted" and followed by the subordinate clause. the complement subordinate clause, labeled as (S1) and it is begin with complementizer "that"and continued by NP "employers" as the subject and VP " more cautios" as the predicate included verb, Adjective phrase that consist of adjective and prepositional phrase "about hiring new workers in such an uncertain langscape," which modifies "more cautious."Whithin this prepositional phrase, the object of this prepositional phrase is the gerund "hiring" and its combined with another noun phrase "new workers". The noun "workers" is modified by the adjective "new."another prepositional phrase, "in such an uncertain landscape" appears at the end of the sentence. Inside this PP "in" is the preposition, and the NP "such an uncertain landscape" includes two determiners "such an", the adjective "uncertain," and the head noun "landscape".

Conclusion

Referring to the explaination presented in the previous chapter, this research uncovered a total of 18 complement subordinate clauses in complex sentence structure found in CNN Business articles published in May 2025. The article entitled "Trump says the clock is ticking for 150 countries to make a deal or face higher tariffs" contained the greatest number of complement clauses with 7 instances or 31% of the total findings. From the structural analysis of the clauses, it can be concluded that sentences with complement subordinate clauses generally consist of three key constituents, which are a noun phrase (NP), a verb phrase (VP) in the main clause, and a subordinate clauses (S1) as a complement clause. a complement clause tipically consist of NP and VP and introduced by complementizer "That", although in some cases the complementizer is omitted in news writing but it is not affecting the syntactic role of the clause. the use of tree diagram illustrates how these clauses are embedded within the verb phrase and it is representing the complete meaning of the sentences. Overall, this analysis shows that complement subordinate clauses had a crucial grammatical tole in sentence contruction and meaning, especially in the context of formal and factual language used in business journalism.

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