

SUBORDINATE CLAUSES FOUND IN TECHRADAR ARTICLES

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Abstract

This study analyzes the subordinate clauses found within selected articles from TechRadar, both of which are about the recent surge in RAM pricing due to the current push by manufacturers for AI technology. This study is motivated by the desire to understand how writers of news articles in the field of information and technology specifically choose to structure their sentences, especially due to the recent AI boom which requires more and more unfamiliar tech terminology to be explained to the lay public, and how these writers utilize complex sentences to achieve their communicative goal of informing laypeople. This article was done using a descriptive-qualitative method, and the data were collected using documentation methods as well as reading techniques. The results indicate that relative clauses are the most common type of subordinate clause in these complex sentences, accounting for 76.92% of all subordinate clauses. Nominal and adverbial clauses were found to be much less frequent, representing only 15.38% and 7.6% of all subordinate clauses, respectively.

Keywords – *complex sentence, subordinate clause, AI technology*

Introduction

The field of linguistics, which is the field of study concerned with languages, also concerns itself with the plethora of rules that govern language, rules that denigrate everything from how words must be uttered and the order in which they occur. Syntax is one of the micro-linguistic fields of study concerned with such rules of order. Theories of syntax have stretched back to the time of Aristotle, one theory being that a sentence is a unit of language that consists of words, making up the bulk of communication. Numerous linguists over the centuries have come up with their own more conclusive definitions of syntax; Miller & Miller (2002) have defined it as the investigation of units and how they are able to combine into larger units, from words, to phrases, to sentences. Saeed (1997) uses a similar definition, in which syntax is the study of how words are combined into sentences. Linguists like Aarts (2001) are more concerned with the principles of organization that govern the formation of sentences. As codified by Bloomfield (1933), a sentence is a unit of language that specifically consists of at least one clause, which in turn contains at least a subject and a verb. Depending on the amount of clauses and their relation to one another, sentences can be further sorted into simple, compound, and complex sentences, the latter two being able to combine into compound-complex sentences.

Complex sentences are a category of sentences that consist of at least one independent clause and one subordinate clause (Brown & Miller, 2013). Subordinate clauses, in turn, can be

divided into three different types based on the word class they substitute (Brown & Miller, 1991) noun or nominal clauses which function as nouns, adjective clauses which function as adjectives, and adverb clauses which function as adverbs. Structurally, a subordinate clause consists of, at minimum: a subject, a verb, and a subordinating conjunction or complementizer. This study aims to classify the subordinating clauses found in articles about the recent RAM price surge published on [Techradar.com](https://www.techradar.com), as well as analyze their structure.

Several previous studies have examined issues related to subordinate clauses in complex sentences. Candrasius & Maharani (2024) investigated subordinate clauses functioning as adjuncts in complex sentences, using online newspaper texts as both the data source and learning material. Their research highlights how adjunct subordinate clauses are employed in journalistic writing. In addition, Salvianto & Sulhan (2022) analyzed prepositional phrases and subordinate clauses in *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens. Their findings reveal that the subordinating conjunction *when*, which functions as an adjunct clause, was the most frequently occurring form, appearing eleven times. Conversely, the subordinating conjunction *where* functioning as a complement clause, along with *since*, *as*, and *unless* functioning as adjunct clauses, were the least frequently used, each occurring only once. Furthermore, Rahma & Maharani (2025) examined complement subordinate clauses predominantly to complete verb meanings and contribute significantly to the grammatical coherence of complex sentences in written discourse. The article titled "The Fashion of Syntax: Exploring the Function of Subordinate Clauses as Adjuncts in Vogue Magazine" by Mulyana & Maharani (2025) examines how subordinate clauses function as adjuncts in complex sentences found in the Living section of Vogue magazine. This study aims to understand how these subordinate clauses work, contributing to the meaning and descriptive richness in media texts related to fashion. Using descriptive qualitative methods, the researchers analysed 48 complex sentences taken from Vogue articles published on February 5–6, 2025. This analysis was based on Aarts' (2001) syntactic theory, with additional structural illustrations using tree diagrams proposed by Brown and Miller (1991). The results showed that 21 subordinate clauses function as adjuncts, categorised into four types: time, reason, condition, and conception adjuncts. Among these, condition adjuncts appear most frequently (38%), followed by time adjuncts (29%), conception adjuncts (19%), and reason adjuncts (14%). The dominance of conditional clauses indicates that Vogue often uses hypothetical or situational frameworks to enrich its descriptive style. This research concludes that subordinate clauses functioning as adjuncts play an important role in enhancing clarity, nuance, and reader engagement in magazine writing. It also emphasises the pedagogical value of syntactic analysis for students and educators interested in grammar and media discourse. Nazara (2024) explores the use of subordinate clauses in the short story *The Story of an Hour*, which is closely related to the focus of the present study. The research identifies three main types of subordinate clauses, namely complement clauses, relative clauses, and adverbial clauses, and examines how each type functions within complex sentence structures. By analyzing the grammatical roles and structural patterns of these subordinate clauses, the study demonstrates how subordinate clauses contribute to meaning construction in literary texts. This focus on the classification and function of subordinate clauses aligns directly with the theme of the current research, which also investigates subordinate clauses as a key element in syntactic analysis. Indriyani, Putra, and Aryaningsih (2021) examine the use of subordinate clauses in *The Boscombe Valley* short story with a focus on identifying their types and syntactic structures. The study analyzes various kinds of subordinate clauses, including relative clauses, complement clauses, and adverbial clauses, which are frequently found in complex sentences throughout the text. By investigating both the frequency and structural patterns of these subordinate clauses, the

researchers demonstrate how subordinate clauses function to expand and clarify meaning within literary discourse. This study is relevant to the present research because it addresses the same grammatical theme, namely subordinate clauses, and provides a structural framework that can be used as a comparative reference in analyzing subordinate clauses in other types of texts. Previous studies on subordinate clauses have mostly focused on their structural classification and specific grammatical functions, particularly as adjuncts, in limited genres such as lifestyle magazines, literary texts, and general news articles. Although these studies provide valuable insights into the syntactic role of subordinate clauses, their analysis tends to be limited to sentence structure and does not examine the broader communicative functions of subordinate clauses used in specialised digital media. Furthermore, little attention has been paid to technology-focused online journalism, such as TechRadar articles, where subordinate clauses play a crucial role in explaining technical features, expressing conditions, and evaluating products. As a result, there is still a lack of research investigating the types and functions of subordinate clauses in complex sentences in technology journalism, highlighting the need for further study in this area.

Articles from [techradar.com](https://www.techradar.com) were selected as objects for the study due to relevance and recency, as well as due to the length and complexity of the source material to increase the odds of finding decently long complex sentences. This article aims to explore a recent topic, which is about the current surge in RAM pricing due to the AI boom.

Methodology

The data source of this study consists of two selected articles from the website TechRadar “Why is RAM so expensive right now? It's way more complicated than you think” on Techradar, written by Wayne Williams, posted on December 12 2025, and “The PC component crisis just got worse, as major RAM maker gives up on consumers and CPU price hikes are rumored” on Techradar, written by Darren Allan, posted on December 5 2025. The data were collected using a documentation method and reading techniques. Complex sentences containing subordinate clauses were identified and extracted from the selected articles. Independent clauses and certain optional constituents attached to compound-complex sentences were omitted, as this paper focuses only on the formation of subordinate clauses. Only declarative sentences were included to maintain consistency. The data were analyzed using a qualitative descriptive method. Each subordinate clause was classified based on its type (noun, adjective, or adverbial) and its syntactic function within the sentence as defined by Brown & Miller. Selected complex sentences, one from each type found within the data, were illustrated in the article in the form of tree diagrams.

Finding and Discussion

In this part, 11 complex sentences were selected between the two articles from Techradar, displaying 13 subordinate clauses. Types of subordinate clauses in the text produces 13 subordinate clauses. The distribution can be shown in table 1.

Table 1. Types of Subordinate Clauses in Techradar Articles

No	Clause type	Quantity	Percentage
1	Nominal Clause	2	15.38%

2	Adjective/Relative Clause	10	76.92%
3	Adverbial Clause	1	7.6%
	Total	13	100%

Based on the findings shown in table 1 above, relative clauses are the most frequent type of subordinate clause found in these complex sentences, making up 76.92% of all subordinate clauses found in the data. These relative clauses are often clarifying proper nouns, such as “Trendforce”, and technical terms, such as “High Bandwidth Memory”, especially in the article written by Williams. Meanwhile, relative clauses in the article written by Allan tend to give additional context to terms rather than clarifying them outright. The quantity of nominal and adverbial clauses are significantly lower, making up 15.38% and 7.6% of the total amount of subordinate clauses respectively.

From these results, several things can be concluded; the high frequency of relative clauses suggests the authors frequently use subordinating clauses for the purpose of condensing high amounts of information into sentences. This condensation of information is useful in informational or technical writing, as their purpose is to convey as much information as they need to the reader. This frequency also suggests that the authors assume that the readers possess an uneven amount of familiarity with the subject, the parties involved, and the terminology. Meanwhile, the comparatively low number of nominal and adverbial clauses, which function as substitution of nouns and adverbs respectively, suggest that clauses that stand for processes, stances, reasoning, and circumstances are less needed in technical and informational writing. This indicates a higher preference for describing over arguing or narrative sequencing, which aligns with the purpose of these tech articles to inform or describe current events in the world of technology.

The following part display tree diagrams illustrating examples of subordinate clauses found within the complex sentences.

Data: Graphics cards rely on GDDR memory, which comes from the same manufacture

Figure 1. Showing Relative/Adjective Clause in complex sentence

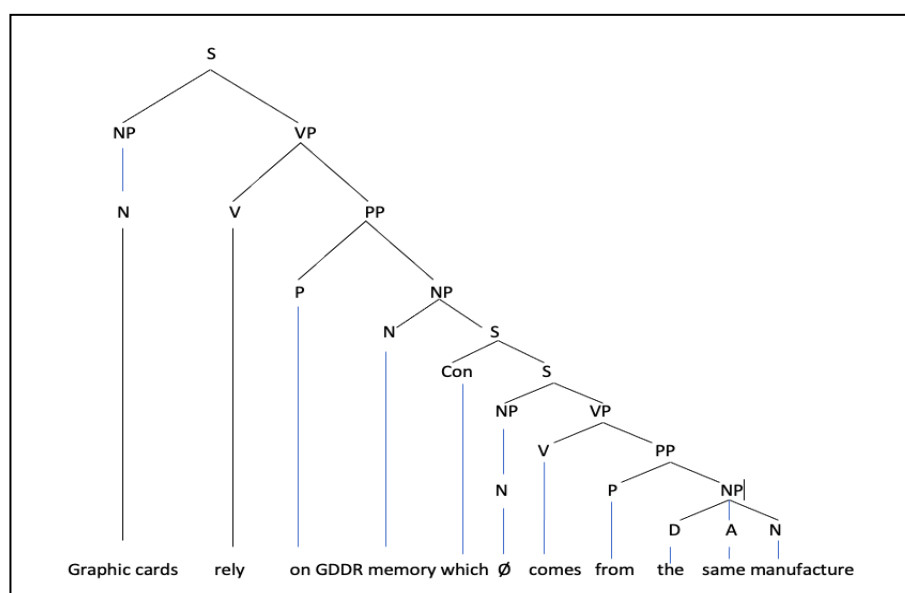


Figure 1 displays a tree diagram illustrating a complex sentence that contains one relative clause as its subordinate clause. As is visible in the diagram, the subordinate clause, marked

by “S” considered a constituent part of the noun phrase marked by “NP” (*GDDR memory which comes from the same manufacture*). It is marked by conjunction *which* modifies “N” (*GDDR memory*). This indicates that it is a relative or adjective clause, i.e. functioning as an adjective. Moreover, its subject is ellipped and marked by Ø symbol.

Data: Why CPU prices might rise is another question

Figure 2. Showing a Nominal clause in complex sentence

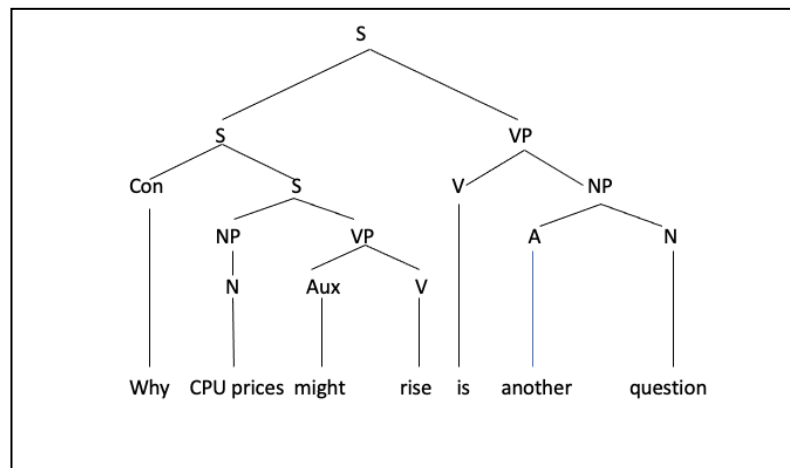


Figure 2 displays a complex sentence using a nominal clause, marked by “S” (*Why CPU prices might rise*). The inclusion of the question word “why” introduces the nominal clause. The clause *Why CPU prices might rise* in this sentence is clearly functioning as the subject paired with the verb phrase “is another question” to create one complete complex sentence.

Data: Although most people call it RAM, nearly all modern system memory is RAM

Figure 3. Showing an Adverbial clause in complex sentence

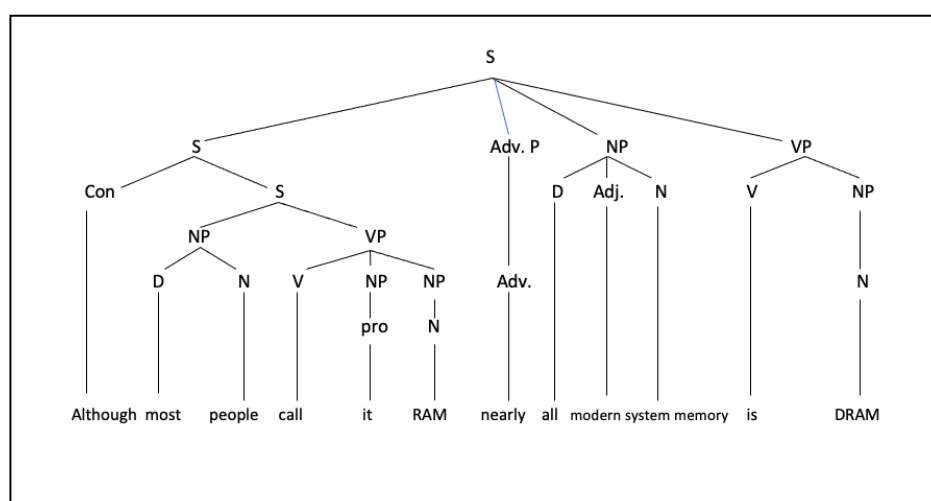


Figure 3 illustrates the only adverbial clause found within the data. The sentence consists of two clauses that appear to possess the same “rank” in the hierarchical structure,

but as “although” is considered a subordinating conjunction, the clause it introduces is not able to stand on its own, thus the clause is not considered to be an independent clause. Therefore, the clause starting with “although” functions as an adverbial clause that modifies all the information in the second clause, “nearly all modern system memory is DRAM”.

The previous studies mentioned in the literature review largely focus on the classification, functions, and syntactic roles of subordinate clauses across different text types, including literary works, newspapers, and magazines. Many of them emphasize how subordinate clauses function within complex sentences to enrich meaning, provide clarification, or support narrative and descriptive purposes. Several studies, such as those by Nazara (2024), Indriyani et al. (2021), examine subordinate clauses in literary texts, identifying relative, complement, and adverbial clauses as dominant structures. These studies highlight how subordinate clauses expand meaning, clarify references, and maintain syntactic coherence. Their findings align with the present study in recognizing the importance of relative clauses, particularly in clarifying nouns and adding descriptive detail.

However, other studies, especially Candrasius & Maharani (2024) and Mulyana & Maharani (2025), narrow their focus specifically to subordinate clauses functioning as adjuncts, such as time, condition, reason, and conception clauses. These studies emphasize adverbial subordinate clauses and their stylistic roles in journalistic and magazine writing. In contrast, the present study does not focus on adjunct functions but instead highlights relative clauses as the most dominant type, accounting for 76.92% of all subordinate clauses found. This shows a clear difference in emphasis: while earlier studies often foreground adjunct or adverbial clauses, the current study demonstrates that relative clauses play a more central role in the analyzed texts.

Furthermore, the present study’s finding that relative clauses frequently clarify proper nouns and technical terms (e.g., “*Trendforce*” and “*High Bandwidth Memory*”) extends prior research by showing how subordinate clauses function in informational and technical discourse, rather than primarily literary or fashion-oriented contexts. This differs from studies like Salvianto & Sulhan (2022) and Mulyana & Maharani (2025), where subordinate clauses often serve narrative or descriptive purposes rather than terminological clarification.

Conclusions

To summarize the findings, relative clauses constitute the majority of subordinate clauses identified in the complex sentences within the two TechRadar articles, accounting for 76.92% of the total occurrences. This overwhelming dominance suggests that relative clauses play a crucial role in the construction of informational sentences within technology-focused news writing. Nominal and adverbial clauses, by contrast, occur far less frequently, representing only 15.38% and 7.6% of the subordinate clauses, respectively. The relatively low presence of these clause types indicates that the authors rarely employ sentence structures that express argumentation, which is typically associated with persuasive or analytical discourse.

The distribution of subordinate clauses, particularly the high frequency of relative clauses, indicates that the two TechRadar authors share a similar writing style that prioritizes informational density and clarity. Relative clauses allow writers to embed additional pieces

of information directly within noun phrases, making them especially effective for introducing and clarifying technical terms without interrupting the overall flow of the text. This stylistic choice is particularly relevant in articles addressing complex technological developments, such as the surge in RAM pricing driven by advancements in AI, where readers may require frequent clarification to fully understand unfamiliar concept.

The limited use of nominal and adverbial clauses suggests a deliberate avoidance of argumentative or persuasive strategies. Instead of focusing on expressing opinions, justifications, or causal relationships, the authors appear to emphasize the presentation of factual information and contextual details. This preference reflects an informative rather than persuasive communicative intent, which is well suited to reporting on market trends and technological developments. By minimizing argumentative structures, the authors are able to maintain an objective tone that aligns with the expectations of readers seeking reliable and accessible information about current technology-related issues.

While previous studies have collectively established subordinate clauses as essential syntactic elements across various genres of writing, the present study contributes new insights by highlighting the dominance of relative clauses and their primary explanatory function within technical and informational texts. This finding emphasizes the importance of genre and text type in shaping syntactic choices, as different communicative goals demand different clause distributions and functions. Consequently, this study expands the scope of existing syntactic research by demonstrating how informational technology journalism relies heavily on relative clauses to achieve clarity, precision, and accessibility for a general readership.

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