

## Innovation in relativization: the new Spanish possessive relative *el cual su N*\*

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### 1. Introduction

In modern Spanish there are several options to express possession in a relative clause. First, we find the rather literary possessive relative *cuyo* (whose), as in *cuya madre* (whose mother). A second construction is *el N del cual* (lit. ‘the N of which/whom’), as in *la madre del cual* (the mother of whom) where the relative *el cual* is introduced by the genitive preposition *de* (of). In spite of this, in current colloquial Spanish speakers tend to use an alternative construction: *que su N* (lit. ‘that his/her/its/their N’), consisting of the complementizer *que* (that) and the resumptive possessive determiner *su* (his/her/its/their), as in *el chico que su madre* (lit. ‘the boy that his mother’) (Suñer 1998).

In this paper I study a fourth innovative alternative which, to the best of my knowledge, has not been acknowledged in the literature so far: *el cual su N* (lit. ‘the which/who his/her/its/their N’). This construction shares some properties with *que su N* and, particularly, with *el N del cual*. On the one hand, like *que su N*, it includes a resumptive possessive, but, unlike the invariant *que*, *el cual*<sup>1</sup> can only be analyzed as a relative pronoun, and not as a complementizer, because it must overtly agree with its antecedent in gender and number, as the following examples show:

- (1) a. Carlos García, *el cual* ganó el año pasado, no jugó en esta ocasión.  
Carlos García, who won the year past, not played in this occasion.  
Carlos García, who won last year, didn’t play this time.
- b. La semana pasada vino al departamento María Pérez, *la cual* estudió en Nueva York.  
The week past came to-the department María Pérez, who studied in New York  
Last week María Pérez, who studied in New York, came to the department.
- c. Los manuscritos del siglo XIII, *los cuales* están protegidos por seguridad privada,  
The manuscripts of-the century 13th, which are protected by security private,  
llegaron al museo anoche.  
arrived to-the museum last-night.  
The 13<sup>th</sup> c. manuscripts, which are protected by private security, arrived in the museum last night.
- d. Las campanas de la iglesia, *las cuales* datan del siglo XVII, son muy grandes.  
The bells of the church, which date from-the century 17th, are very big.  
The bells of the church, which go back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, are very large.

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\* I would like to thank Dieter Wanner, Janice Aski, Peter Culicover, and Edith Hernández for their comments and suggestions at different times during the development of this paper. I am responsible for any remaining errors.

<sup>1</sup> For ease of exposition, I will refer to this construction using the masculine singular form of the relative and the singular form of the possessive: *el cual su N*. However, as the examples below will show, this relative agrees in gender and number with its antecedent: *el cual* (which/who masculine singular), *la cual* (which/who feminine singular), *los cuales* (which/who masculine plural), and *las cuales* (which/who feminine plural). On the other hand, the possessive *su* is singular when the owned entity is singular. The plural form, *sus*, is used when the owned entity is plural as well. This applies to *el N del cual* as well.

On the other hand, it involves the same relative as *el N del cual*, and no intervention between *el cual* and *su N* is allowed, as happens between *el N* and *del cual*, but the order is different and the genitive preposition *de* (of) is absent.

Building on the study of Dutch possessive relatives in de Vries (2002), based on Kayne (1994), I argue that *el cual su N* derives from the prepositionless construction *el N Ø el cual*. With the absence of the preposition, the relative moves to the left of the clause on its own, leaving behind the rest of the DP. Possession is expressed by the resumptive possessive *su*. This analysis explains why *el cual* and *su N* must be adjacent. It also predicts the non-occurrence of other outcomes such as *del cual su N* (lit. ‘of which/whom his/her/its/their N’). In addition, it preserves a similar base analysis for *el cual su N* and *el N del cual*, a desirable result since these relative constructions convey the same meaning and include the same relative.

In the final section, I discuss other constructions involving the relative *el cual* in which prepositions have been omitted and determine that they are syntactically different from that of *el cual su N*.

## 1. *El cual su N*

### 1.1. Description and examples

Traditionally, *el cual* has been considered a (not very common) relative that can only appear after a preposition in both restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses or as the syntactic subject only in non-restrictive relative clauses. Spanish linguists, Brucart (1999: 498-501) for example, deny any other possibilities. However, Spanish speakers seem to have gone beyond traditional boundaries, as the following data<sup>2</sup> demonstrate:

#### A. Restrictive relative clauses:

- (2) a. Sin embargo aquí he leído chicas *las cuales sus bebés* miden mucho más,  
However, here have read young-women who their babies measure much more,  
pero todo depende de la fecha de fecundación.  
but all depends of the date of fertilization.  
However, here I have read young women whose babies are much longer, but all depends on the fertilization date.  
<foro.enfemenino.com/forum/Matern1/\_f50445\_Matern1-Mamis-de-diciembre-medidas-de-vuestros-bebes.html> (10-9-05)
- b. En la contraportada del libro decía que era la biografía de una *mujer la cual su vida*  
In the back cover of-the book said that was the biography of a woman who her life  
nadie llegó a entender jamás.  
no one arrived to to-understand never  
In the back cover of the book one could read that it was the biography of a woman whose life no one could ever understand.  
<www4.los cuentos.net/cuentos/link/172/1726/print> (10-4-07)

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<sup>2</sup> Data collected from Google.

- c. Para un niño/estudiante el cual su idioma principal es otro aparte del Inglés,  
For a boy /student who his/her language main is other apart from-the English,  
determine si la adquisición limitada del Inglés es la causa por la cual el  
determine whether the acquisition limited of-the English is the cause for which the  
niño/estudiante tiene problemas de aprendizaje.  
the kid/student has problems of learning  
For a boy/student whose main language is other apart from English, determine whether  
the acquisition of English is the cause behind the kid's/student's learning problems.  
<[www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/download/pdf/IEP 2001-2002 Forms/8aSpa.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/download/pdf/IEP%202001-2002%20Forms/8aSpa.pdf)> (10-9-05)

B. Non-restrictive relative clauses:

- (3) a. En Somalia, cierto Doctor fue invitado para llevar a cabo un estudio acerca de la  
In Somalia, certain doctor was invited to to-develop a study about of the  
epidemia que estaba pasando *aquel país el cual su gente*, incluyendo niños y adultos,  
epidemic that was passing that country, which its people, including kids and adults,  
estaban muriendo día con día.  
were dying day by day.  
In Somalia, a certain doctor was invited to develop a study about the epidemic that  
country was suffering from, a country whose people, including kids and adults, were  
dying day by day.  
<<http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=59514&ContributorID=10080>>  
(10-12-05)
- b. y por último *el Communicative Method, el cual su principal función* es comunicar...  
and for last the Communicative Method, which its main function is to-communicate  
and finally the Communicative Method, whose main function is to communicate...  
<[www.astrolabio.net/educacion/articulos/105140980254840.html](http://www.astrolabio.net/educacion/articulos/105140980254840.html)> (10-12-05)
- c. aquí solo con *mi linda esposa la cual su familia* esta en España.  
Here alone with my lovely wife, who her family is in Spain.  
Here I am alone with my lovely wife, whose family is in Spain.  
<<http://www.elrincondejulieta.com/foro/viewtopic.php?t=2455&start=0&postdays=0&postorder=asc&highlight>> (10-12-05)
- d. finalmente apareció *Guillermo, el cual su nombre artístico* es Topillo.  
Finally appeared Guillermo, who his name artistic is Topillo.  
And last appeared Guillermo, whose stage name is Topillo  
<<http://groups.msn.com/chaRLYSoNICAS/nlt.msnw>> (10-12-05)

An examination of the data presented so far let us extract the following general characteristics about the construction *el cual su N*:

1. In all these cases, *el cual su* is equivalent to normative *cuyo/a/os/as* (*whose*).
2. The antecedent can be human or non-human.
3. The antecedent can be masculine or feminine, as the agreement of the relative shows. It can also be singular or plural.

4. As expected, the possessive determiner agrees with the possessum in number. The possessive determiner matches also with the relative-antecedent in that it is in the third person.
5. The DP headed by the possessive determiner is obligatorily the syntactic subject of the clause it introduces.
6. The double indication of possession is disallowed: \**del cual su nombre* (of who/which his/her/its/their name).
7. Different types of relationships may be expressed in these possessive constructions: animate or inanimate possessor, kinship, ownership, activity, etc., meaning that this new construction is not restricted to specific meanings or relations.

Another characteristic is that the relationship between the relative and the DP headed by the possessive is local. Intervention between the relative and the DP is unacceptable:

- (4) a. Fernando, *el cual su deseo* es tener un coche, fue ayer al concesionario.  
 Fernando, who his wish is to-have a car, went yesterday to-the dealer.  
 Fernando, whose wish is to own a car, went to the dealer yesterday.
- b. ?? Fernando, *el cual, y esto nadie lo duda, su deseo* es tener un coche, fue ayer  
 Fernando, who, and this no-one it doubts, his wish is to-have a car, went yesterday  
 al concesionario.  
 to-the dealer.  
 Fernando, who, and no one doubts about this, his wish is to own a car, went to the dealer  
 yesterday
- c. ??/\* Fernando, *el cual, como todos sabemos ya por habérselo oído decir*  
 Fernando, who, as all know already for to-have-it-from him heard to-say  
 miles de veces, *su deseo* es tener un coche, fue ayer al concesionario.  
 thousands of times, his wish is to-have a car, went yesterday to-the dealer.  
 Fernando, who, as we all know because he has mentioned it thousands of times, his wish  
 is to have a car, went to the dealer yesterday.

The relevance of this test can be seen in that intervention is not relevant with other relatives such as *quien* (who):

- (5) a. Fernando, *quien* desea tener un coche, fue ayer al concesionario.  
 Fernando, who wishes to-have a car, went yesterday to-the dealer .  
 Fernando, who wishes to own a car, went to the dealer yesterday.
- b. Fernando, *quien, como todos sabemos ya por habérselo oído decir*  
 Fernando, who, as all know already for to-have-it-from him heard to-say  
 miles de veces, desea tener un coche, fue ayer al concesionario.  
 thousands of times, wishes to-have a car, went yesterday to-the dealer.  
 Fernando, who, as we all know because he has mentioned it thousands of times, wishes  
 to have a car, went to the dealer yesterday.

## 1. 2. Preposed possession: cross-linguistic evidence

Spanish *el cual su N* is no *rara avis* in offering a preposed possessor construction. As Alexiadou et al. (2007) show, several languages show a “(prepositionless) pronominal possessor DP [that] is doubled by a matching and coreferential pronominal possessive pronoun” (Alexiadou et al. 2007: 594). For instance, the following Romance languages (Alexiadou et al. 2007: 595):

- (6) a. li serf sum pedre    Old French  
      the serf his father
- b. Peter sua filho    Malayo-Portuguese  
      Peter    his son

A language in particular proves most informative in order to understand the structure of *el cual su N*: Dutch. De Vries (2002) discusses the syntax of Dutch possessive relatives. Interestingly, Dutch has the following pattern (de Vries 2002: 314):

- (7) a. de jongen wiens/\*diens vader ik ken  
      the boy whose father I know
- b. de jongen wie zijn/\*die zijn vader ik ken  
      the boy whom his father I know

Example b. is very similar to *el cual su N*.

## 2. Syntactic analysis of *el cual su N*

### 2.1. Possessive relatives in Spanish and *el cual su N*

A first approximation to the syntactic structure of *el cual su N* reveals that, when compared to other equivalent possessive relative constructions, there appears to be a preposition missing. Consider the following examples:

- (8) a. Juan, *cuyo* sueño es ser piloto, quiere estudiar en OSU.  
      John, whose dream is to-be pilot, wants to-study in OSU.  
      John, whose dream is to be a pilot, wants to study at OSU.
- b. Juan, *el* sueño *del* cual es ser piloto, quiere estudiar en OSU.  
      John, the dream of whom is to-be pilot, wants to-study in OSU.  
      John, whose dream is to be a pilot, wants to study at OSU
- c. Juan, *el cual su* sueño es ser piloto, quiere estudiar en OSU.  
      John, who his dream is to-be pilot, wants to-study in OSU.  
      John, whose dream is to be a pilot, wants to study at OSU.

While (8b) shows *el cual* with a preposition *-de* (of)- to mark possession, in (8c) possession is now represented thanks to the resumptive possessive determiner *su*, and, as pointed out before, there is no preposition *de*. Intuitively, those are the only differences, since both (8b) and (8c) share the same meaning.

## 2.2. Dutch preposed possessives: de Vries (2002)

As mentioned above, Spanish *el cual su N* resembles a particular relative construction in Dutch. Recall the examples on (7) above, repeated here as (9) (de Vries 2002: 314):

- (9) a. de jongen wiens/\*diens vader ik ken  
       the boy whose father I know  
       b. de jongen wie zijn/\*die zijn vader ik ken  
       the boy whom his father I know

De Vries (2002) claims that all possessive structures have the same syntactic structure: they are all complements. The possessive P may be present or not, but the underlying structure is always the same, be it possession with an overt P, prenominal possession, or those cases with no P. In agreement with Generative Grammar assumptions, de Vries links the relation of possession to a feature (de Vries 2002: 315):

It seems reasonable to assume that all projections that represent a generalized possessive relation bear a generalized possessive feature. Thus, a lexical possessive preposition P<sub>poss</sub> (*van* ‘of’), a genitive P<sub>gen</sub> (possibly  $\emptyset$ ), and a genitive DP<sub>gen</sub> (e.g. ‘s mans [the<sub>gen</sub> man<sub>gen</sub>]) contain possessive features by definition.

In (9b), we find that the relative *die* has changed to *wie*, which is expected if the relative is introduced by a P. However, there is no overt P. The grammaticality of *wie* allows de Vries to maintain that there is an empty P. The next necessary step is to explain why the presence of the possessive determiner *zijn*. In this case, de Vries assumes that, in cases like, for instance, *the man his honor = de man zijn eer*, the DP *his honor* has more structure than it might seem (de Vries 2002: 318):

The possessive pronoun *zijn* is the result of incorporating a possessive preposition into the determiner of *eer*.

The syntactic representation would be the following (according to de Vries (2002: 318):

- (10) the man his honor  $[\text{DP DP} \quad \text{P}_{\text{poss}} + \text{D}_{\text{poss}} \quad [\text{N} [\text{PP} \text{t}_P \text{t}_{\text{DP}}]]]$   
           The man           his                   honor

What we find in (10) is the result of two movements: the first one of the DP *the man* from its initial position as the complement of the possessive P to the left edge of the phrase, and the second one the incorporation of the P into the D, which creates the possessive *his*. In the next section I will review de Vries’ extension of this analysis to possessive relatives and, building on it but simplifying it as well, I will present the syntactic analysis of *el cual su N*.

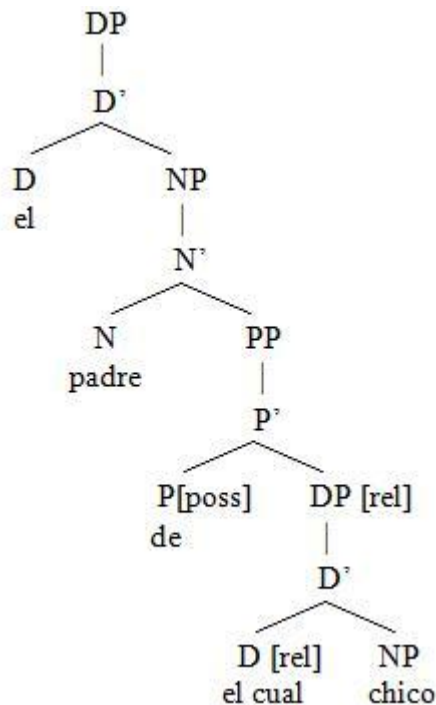
### 2.3. The syntax of *el cual su N*. Preposed possessive relatives, missing prepositions, and diverging Numerations

De Vries (2002) offers a solid foundation for the analysis of Spanish *el cual su N*. Adopting a Kaynean view of relative clauses<sup>3,4</sup>, de Vries considers relative sentences are CPs complement of a DP. For instance, an example like *el chico el padre del cual* (the boy whose father...) would have the following structure (following de Vries 2002: 323-326):

- (11) [DP<sub>EI</sub> [CP [chico el cual su padre]  
The [boy who his father]

Since de Vries argues that all possessive relations share the same analysis as complements, the corresponding underlying structure of *el chico el cual su padre* must be *el padre del cual chico* (the father of which boy), as follows<sup>5</sup>:

- (12)



Obviously, the previous tree must be modified in order to obtain a preposed relative. Following de Vries (2002), we find that the NP *chico* (boy) moves to the Spec of DP [rel] to check agreement (Spec-head configuration) and DP [rel] moves to the Spec of the main DP so

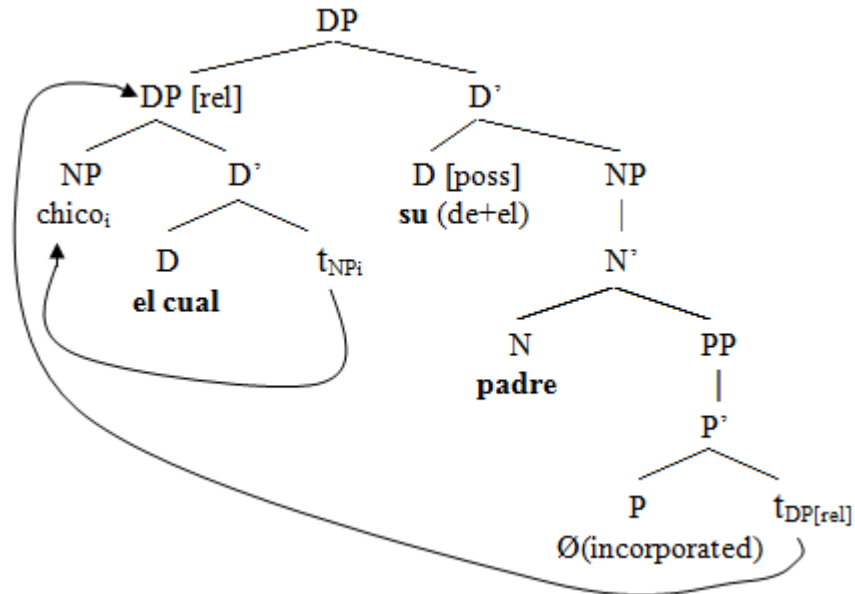
<sup>3</sup> This is the promotion analysis of relative clauses (cf. Kayne (1994), Bianchi (2002a, 2002b) or Alexiadou et al. (2000: 1-34), among others).

<sup>4</sup> As will become clearer below, the promotion analysis allows us to capture the lack of intervention between *el cual* and *su N*. In principle, a more traditional wh-movement analysis of relatives could render the same results in terms of left movement. However, it would be necessary to explain why intervention is impossible.

<sup>5</sup> Notice that de Vries' account captures the fact that the NP *chico* and the D *el cual* show Spec-head agreement, which explains why we have gender and number agreement, for example, *el cual + chico, las cuales + mujeres*, etc.

that the NP *chico* can connect with the outer determiner (*el* = the) (to eventually get [DP<sub>El</sub> [CP [*chico* = order *el* + *chico*]). Finally the whole DP moves to the Spec of the CP because it contains a relative:

(13)



In addition, the appearance of the resumptive possessive *su* (his) is explained as the result of the incorporation of the P *de* into the D *el*. Notice that an analysis à la de Vries let us rule out both *\*del cual su N* (lit. 'of who/which his/her/its/their N') and *\*su N del cual* (lit. 'his/her/its/their of who/which'), given that it predicts the impossibility of the co-presence of a resumptive possessive and an overt P. An analysis in these lines also captures the local relationship between *el cual* and *su N*, as indicated in (4).

Even though de Vries' (2002) analysis remains the foundation for my analysis of *el cual su N*, one could nevertheless wonder whether it should be directly applied to Spanish *el cual su N* without any further adaptations. I believe not.

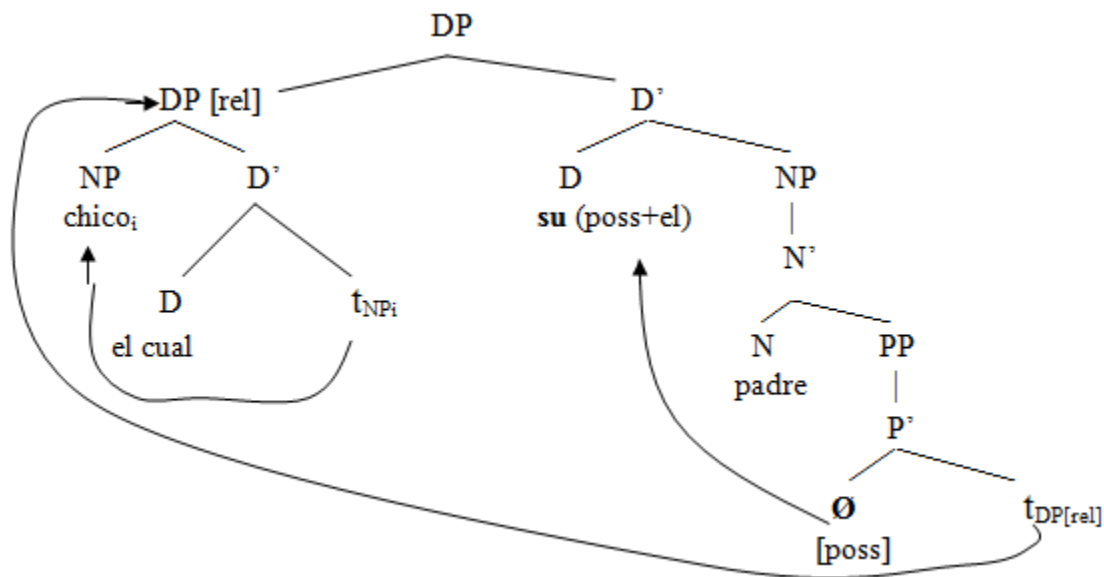
First of all, even though it is an elegant description of the derivation for preposed possessives, I find that there is no clear explanation--or justification for that matter--for the incorporation of the preposition in Spanish. On the one hand, while in Dutch there is morphological evidence of the presence of a P, the same is not the case in Spanish. On the other hand, de Vries assumes a basic complement analysis for all types of possessive constructions. Nevertheless, the remaining question is not so much what types of possessive constructions we find but what exactly motivates this precise one. In other words, what forces the preposed possessive relative to appear? In addition, it is important to highlight that, as opposed to Dutch, Spanish does not have a productive paradigm of preposed possessives, which means that *el cual su N* is a challenging--and for that reason interesting--construction in the system. These reasons call for a simpler analysis of *el cual su N*.

As mentioned above, one of the main intuitions is that *el cual su N* and *el N del cual* are the same construction with one main difference: in *el cual su N* there is a preposition missing. In de Vries' terms there is no way to capture this idea. To solve this problem and thus reach an answer



to the syntactic nature of this construction, I propose a simpler/more economical--and, therefore, better--analysis for Spanish *el cual su N* by arguing that, in actuality, there is no preposition *de* at all in the Numeration and, therefore, there is no theoretical need or justification to speak of preposition incorporation. Consider the following reformulation of the syntactic tree in (13):

- (14) chico el cual su padre ... Numeration: {el cual (+F<sub>rel</sub>), chico, F<sub>poss</sub>, el, padre, ...}



The absence of the P leaves the relative standing alone. The relative moves to the left edge specifier position to check its [rel] feature<sup>6</sup>. However, since there is no P, it does not pied-pipe the whole DP as usual. Since the possession relationship cannot be established in its canonical way, a last resort operation must enter into play. In keeping with de Vries' idea, I assume a possessive feature moves up to D (in a sort of percolation of the possessive feature into the D as a last resort) and, in combination with the article, is spelled-out as a possessive determiner, in a recognizable case of resumption<sup>7,8</sup>. Notice that this way we find a clear motivation for this innovative preposed construction: it is the absence of the P which motivates this innovative construction.

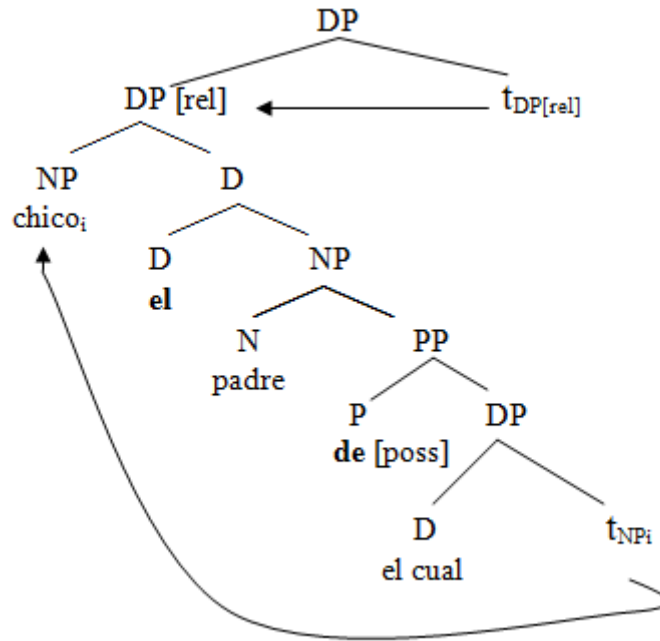
The tree in (14) can be compared to the syntactic structure of *el N del cual*. In this case, the P is present and, therefore, the whole DP moves to the specifier position:

<sup>6</sup> A feature checking motivation for the movement of the relative is also found in Suñer (1998: 11).

<sup>7</sup> Recent studies exploit the possibility of feature materialization. For instance, Den Dikken and Singhapreecha (2004) argue for the materialization of the P *of* during the derivation in Predicate Inversion constructions. Also, Roberts and Roussou's (2003) formal grammaticalization study relies on the idea that change is located in the phonetic materialization, or lack thereof, of certain features. In the case of *el cual su N*, I assume that the possessive feature is part of the Numeration but is materialized in combination with a determiner.

<sup>8</sup> Another alternative would be Suñer (1998), where resumptives are inserted in PF. However, this would imply that there is no D *el* in the Numeration and it would be impossible to maintain that *el cual su N* and *el N del cual* share the same basic analysis except for the absence of the P in the former, and undesirable result since both possessive constructions convey the same meaning.

(15) chico el padre del cual... Numeration: {chico, el, padre, **de**, el cual (+F<sub>rel</sub>), ...



With the reformulation in (14), we keep the explanatory power of de Vries' analysis, but the analysis is better in several crucial ways. First, now we can also capture the exact relationship between *el cual su N* and *el N del cual*. They share a common basic analysis, which is expected since there is no extra connotation or any semantic difference, but we find the reason why they are syntactically different: they result from slightly different Numerations. In addition, the only difference is the presence or absence of the P, which allows us to express in technical terms the intuition mentioned above.

Furthermore, by assuming no P, we also rule out the possibility of a resumptive pronoun entering as the complement of the P, as in *\*el cual la madre de él* (lit. 'who the mother of him'), which is ungrammatical. In addition, we also eliminate the theoretical problem of assuming a step of preposition stranding in the derivation, a positive result since, as is well known, and as opposed to Dutch and other languages, Spanish allows no preposition stranding in any context.

To summarize, the analysis of *el cual su N* exposed above provides an excellent account of the data:

1. A similar basic analysis for both *el N del cual* and *el cual su N* is maintained.
2. A clear motivation for the movement of the relative is provided.
3. The fact that intervention is disallowed finds an appropriate justification, in that *el cual su N* is a syntactic unit, a very appealing finding since it reinforces the syntactic difference between *que su N* and *el cual su N*. While *que* and *su N* do not form a constituent, *el cual su N* is a constituent.
4. Several ungrammatical options are ruled out.

### 3. *El cual su N* in other contexts: the same or not?

So far only *el cual su N* in subject position (henceforth, possessive *el cual su N*) has been discussed. However, it is legitimate to ask whether the construction *el cual su N* appears in other contexts. Consider the following examples:

- (16) a. apoyar a esas personas las cuales su pareja le ha dejado.  
to-support to those people who their couple them has left.  
To support those people whose partners have left them  
<[www.doctoramor.com/foro/showthread/t-16456.html](http://www.doctoramor.com/foro/showthread/t-16456.html)> (11-5-05)
- b. estas son personas las cuales su poder adquisitivo no les permite gastar 3000 dolares  
these are people who their power purchasing not them allows to-spend 3000 dollars  
en un viaje a Cuba para ver a sus familiares  
in a trip to Cuba for to- see to their relatives.  
These are people whose purchasing power does not allow them to spend 3,000 dollars on  
a trip to Cuba to see their relatives.  
<[foro.univision.com/univision/board/message?board.id=politica\\_cuba&message.id=13812&page=6](http://foro.univision.com/univision/board/message?board.id=politica_cuba&message.id=13812&page=6)> (11-5-05)
- c. son unas personas las cuales sus familias los internan y pocos son visitados por sus  
are some persons who their families them intern and few are visited by their  
familiares.  
relatives.  
They are people whose families intern them; few are visited by their relatives.  
<<http://www.nicaragua.com/forums/showthread.php3?threadid=3859>> (11-5-05)
- d. Piense en su perro como si fuera un niño el cual sus padres han dejado en casa con una  
Think in your dog as if were a kid who his parents have left in home with a  
niñera.  
baby-sitter.  
Think of your dog as if it were a child whose parents have left it at home with a baby-  
sitter.  
<[zoodata.com/files/noticias/noticias3.html](http://zoodata.com/files/noticias/noticias3.html)> (11-5-05)
- e. Amaranta Ursula y Aurelio no pudieron reprimir mas su amor y de ese amor  
Amaranta Ursula and Aurelio not could to-repress more their love and of that love  
nació un niño el cual su madre quería llamarlo Rodrigo y su padre  
was-born a boy who his mother wanted to-name-him Rodrigo and his father  
Aureliano  
Aureliano  
Amaranta Ursula and Aurelio couldn't control their love any more and from that love was  
born a child the mother of whom wanted him to be called Rodrigo and his father,  
Aureliano.  
<[html.rincondelvago.com/cine-anos-de-soledad\\_gabriel-garcia-marquez.html](http://html.rincondelvago.com/cine-anos-de-soledad_gabriel-garcia-marquez.html)> (11-5-05)
- f. Se trata de oscar, un niño el cual su mama lo maltrataba tanto físicamente como  
Refl deals of Oscar, a boy who his mom him mistreated both physically and  
moralmente.  
morally

It is about Óscar, a child whose mother mistreated him both physically and psychologically.

<[http://tepache.redescolar.ilce.edu.mx/cache/926/1\\_28.html](http://tepache.redescolar.ilce.edu.mx/cache/926/1_28.html)> (11-5-05)

- g. No es amargarle La Vida A un niño el cual su propia madre lo deja  
 Not is to-bitter-him the life to a child who his own mother him leaves  
 nada mas nacer abandonado en un contenedor de basura por Que No es un niño  
 nothing more to-be-born abandoned in a container of trash because not is a kid  
 deseado?  
 desired?

Isn't it to destroy a child's life when his own mother leaves him inside a container right after being born because he is not a wanted child?

<[www.foroedonkey.com/vb/printthread.php?t=43969&page=2&pp=40](http://www.foroedonkey.com/vb/printthread.php?t=43969&page=2&pp=40)> (11-5-05)

- h. También estaba Diego Mac Lennan, el cual su madre le había hecho la camisa pero  
 Also was Diego Mac Lennan, who his mother him had made the shirt but  
 no sabía como tenía que disponer la combinación de los colores.  
 not knew how had to to-organize the combination of the colors  
 Also present was Diego Mac Lennan, whose mother had made the shirt for him, but she  
 didn't know how the combination of colors should be.

<<http://superfutbol.com.ar/Club/ArgentinaTalleresRE.htm>> (11-5-05)

A native speaker of Spanish will immediately notice that all of the previous examples can be paraphrased using *cuyo*. Therefore, we could conclude that the data in (16) are just more examples of possessive *el cual su N*. However, this test is misleading.

As shown above, possessive *el cual su N* can be easily paraphrased using *cuyo*, but crucially no other relative is allowed. If the examples in (16) were really possessive *el cual su N*, substitution by any other relative should be impossible. Let's see what happens<sup>9</sup>:

- (17) a. a esas personas las cuales su pareja las ha dejado =  
 a esas personas a quienes/a las cuales/a las que su pareja las ha dejado.  
 To those people to whom their couple them has left.  
 b. personas las cuales su poder adquisitivo no les permite gastarse 3000 dólares =  
 personas a quienes/a las cuales/a las que su poder adquisitivo...  
 People to whom their power purchasing...  
 c. unas personas las cuales sus familias los internan =  
 unas personas a quienes/a las cuales/a las que sus familias los internan.  
 Some people to whom their families them intern.  
 d. un niño el cual sus padres han dejado en casa =  
 un niño al quien/al cual/al que sus padres han dejado en casa  
 A boy to whom their parents have left at home.  
 e. un niño el cual su madre quería llamarlo Rodrigo =  
 un niño a quien/al cual/al que su madre quería llamarlo Rodrigo  
 A boy to whom his mother wanted to-name-him Rodrigo.  
 f. un niño el cual su mamá lo maltrataba =  
 un niño a quien/al cual/al que su mamá lo maltrataba

<sup>9</sup> The alternate examples in (17) require the same English translations as their counterparts in (16). However, since their syntax is different, I include only their glosses in English to highlight such difference.

- A boy to whom his mother him mistreated.  
 g. un niño el cual su propia madre lo deja =  
 un niño *a quien/al cual/al que* su propia madre lo deja  
 A boy to whom his own mother him leaves.  
 h. También estaba Diego Mac Lennan, el cual su madre le había hecho la camisa =  
 ...*a quien/al cual/al que su madre* le había hecho la camisa  
 ...for whom his mother him had made the shirt

As it turns out, all of the examples in (16) can be paraphrased using *al cual* (P *a* + relative *el cual*) or other equivalent relatives such as *al que* or *a quien*, that is, as *whom* or *to/for whom*.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the answer is that *el cual su N* in (16) is not a unit and, therefore, not equivalent to *el N del cual*. In other words, the examples in (16) are not possessive relatives with a preposed possessor, but relatives which must have moved from non-subject positions. These relatives are DOs and IOs. In fact, the co-occurrence of *el cual* and *su N* is just incidental, since any other type of DP could be the subject in (16), as the following modification of (16c) proves:

- (18) son *unas personas* las cuales *los médicos* los internan...  
 Are some persons who the doctors them intern...  
 They are people interned by the doctors...

Notice that in this new version of (16c) there is no possessive at all, just the article *los* (the), an impossible outcome for possessive *el cual su N* (cf. ungrammatical \**el cual la madre...*, lit. ‘who the mother...’). Hence, even though we find *el cual* (in this case, *las cuales*), (18) and (16) are syntactically different from possessive *el cual su N*.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that there seems to be another case of missing preposition. The next step is to examine the nature of this missing preposition process to discover whether it is the same as the one in possessive *el cual su N*.

Herrmann (2002/03) studies cases of dialectal usage of *which* in current varieties of English where there is preposition elision. Interestingly, she cites examples like the following (adapted from Herrmann 2002/03: 170, ex. 7):

- (19) And, er, you had a great big chap up in between the hoovers. *Which* the cow did go crippled [*from/by*: elided]// [*From/by*: elided] which the cow did go crippled.

Herrmann also mentions the possibility of resumptive pronouns when a preposition is elided (Herrmann 2002/03: 172), although in (20) there is none. Going back to Spanish, in (17) we find that there are some possibly resumptive pronouns but crucially their presence is not obligatory, as in example (17d). On the other hand, even potential resumptives such as the reduplicate pronoun *le-les* (IO pronoun for 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular), as in examples (17b) and (17h), is always obligatory in Spanish, which means it does not qualify as a really special resumptive strategy<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Obviously, the cases in (2) and (3) do not admit the *al cual* paraphrases because *al cual*, being introduced by a P, cannot be a subject, which reinforces the idea that possessive *el cual su N* cannot be found in contexts other than in subject position.

<sup>11</sup> Interestingly, Suñer (1998: 339) points out that the complementizer *que* (that) may also be used in contexts similar to those in (16) above. However, as opposed to *el cual* (cf. 16d), the reduplicate pronoun *le-les* must always be

More importantly, the following paraphrases of some of the examples in (17) prove that clitic reduplication may even co-occur with a preposition, as opposed to possessive *el cual su N*, which questions again the true resumptive nature of these pronouns:

(20) P + relative *plus* pronoun reduplication:

- a. a esas personas *a las cuales* su pareja *las* ha dejado.  
to those people to whom their couple them has left
- c. unas personas *a las cuales* sus familias *los* internan.  
some persons to whom their families them intern
- d. un niño *al cual* sus padres *lo* han dejado en casa.  
a boy to whom his parents him have left in home
- e. un niño *al cual* su madre quería llamarlo Rodrigo.  
a boy to whom his mother wanted to-name-him Rodrigo
- f. un niño *al cual* su mamá *lo* maltrataba.  
a boy to whom his mother him mistreated
- g. un niño *al cual* su propia madre *lo* deja.  
a boy to whom his own mother him leaves

Therefore, the examples in (16) are clearly just preposition elisions but without obligatory resumption, contrary to what happens with possessive *el cual su N*.

In conclusion, the examples in (16) are syntactically different from possessive *el cual su N*. However, a final note is in need here: Could speakers have established a connection between both constructions? That is to say, the same as *el cual su N* and *el N del cual* share a similar basic structure, (2)-(3) and (16) do share “structure” but on the surface, since in both groups of examples there is an initial *el cual su N*, even if they are syntactically different. I will not address this issue here, but this opens the door to future research, particularly in the area of sociolinguistics and pragmatics.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this paper I have provided a syntactic account for the innovative Spanish possessive relative *el cual su N*. This colloquial alternate to formal *cuyo* is special in that, as opposed to the other colloquial alternate *que su N*, *el cual su N* includes a relative, not a complementizer.

Building on the de Vries’ work on Dutch preposed possessive relatives, I have proved that *el cual su N* is a syntactic unit formed by the relative component moving to the left. Contrary to de Vries’ preposition incorporation, I have provided a simpler analysis for Spanish *el cual su N* by arguing that the motivation behind this movement –and therefore, the construction as such– is the absence of the preposition *de* in the Numeration. This way, it is possible to capture the fact that *el cual su N* and *el N del cual* share a similar basic analysis, a positive consequence given that both constructions convey the exact same meaning. In addition, the analysis presented provides the necessary argumentation to understand why several different outcomes are in fact ungrammatical.

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present with *que*, meaning that it is a resumptive pronoun. This highlights another difference between the syntax of *que* and *el cual* in colloquial contexts.

Furthermore, I have shown that possessive *el cual su* is restricted to subjects. The comparison with other superficially similar cases revealed that possessive *el cual su N* is restricted to subjects. However, the similarities found between them open a path for future research.

By using this construction, Spanish speakers have broken the boundaries of prescriptive grammar. In the end, *el cual su N* evidences, once again, the fact that language--speakers, one should say--is creative.

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