

# How to Agree to Disagree: Agreement in Relative Clauses with Coordinated Heads

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## Goals:

- to contribute to the growing body of literature on agreement with conjoined subjects and the role linear order plays in determining possible agreement patterns.
- to examine agreement in relative clauses with conjoined heads ('hydras' in Link 1984) with an eye towards answering the following questions:
  - what do such relative clauses tell us about the nature of agreement (First Conjunct vs. Resolved Agreement)?
  - what do the available (and unavailable) agreement patterns tell us about the nature and derivation of relative clauses? (head promotion vs. external head vs. matching analysis)

## 1. Background on Agreement with Coordinated Subjects in Polish (Citko 2018)

Polish allows first conjunct agreement with postverbal coordinated subjects (see, among many, many others, Kallas 1974, 1993; Corbett 1983; 1991; Zbróg 2003; Bošković 2009a; Ruda 2010; Willim 2012; Franks & Willer-Gold 2014; Marušič, Nevins & Badecker 2015)<sup>1,2</sup>

- (1) a. Na wykład **przyszły** nowa studentka i jej koleżanka.  
for lecture arrived.F.PL new student.F.SG and her friend.F.SG  
'For/To the lecture arrived a new student and her friend.'
- b. Na wykład **przyszła** nowa studentka i jej koleżanka.  
for lecture arrived.F.SG new student.F.SG and her friend.F.SG  
'For/To the lecture arrived a new student and her friend.'

Coordinated subject can also be 'sandwiched' between an agreeing complementizer and the verb:

(2) COMP<sub>AGR?</sub> [DP<sub>1</sub> and DP<sub>2</sub>] VERB<sub>AGR?</sub>

(3) a. COMP<sub>PL</sub> [DP<sub>1</sub> and DP<sub>2</sub>] VERB<sub>PL</sub>  
**żebyśmy** *ja i* mąż **wytrwali**  
that.COND.1PL I and husband persevered.M.PL

([http://www.smbf.pl/index.php?option=com\\_vitabook&limitstart=525](http://www.smbf.pl/index.php?option=com_vitabook&limitstart=525))

<sup>1</sup> Polish judgments are mine unless otherwise noted.

<sup>2</sup> Polish has two genders in the plural, one for masculine personal nouns and the other one for all other nouns. This distinction is referred to in the literature as *virile* vs. *nonvirile* distinction. Here, I simplify things, and gloss it as masculine vs. feminine, respectively.

- b. COMP<sub>SG</sub> [DP<sub>1</sub> and DP<sub>2</sub>] VERB<sub>PL</sub>  
**żebym** *ja i moje* dziecko **miały**  
 that.COND.1SG I and my child.N.SG had.F.PL  
 zabezpieczoną przyszłość  
 secured future  
 (<https://slubowisko.pl/topic/37589/?page=5>)
- c. COMP<sub>PL</sub> [DP<sub>1</sub> and DP<sub>2</sub>] VERB<sub>SG</sub>  
**żebyśmy** *my i nasza* praca **była** traktowana  
 that.COND.1PL we and our work was.F.SG treated  
 z szacunkiem  
 with respect (www.eesc.europa.eu/.../alina-badowska-polish-care-worker-workin...)

### TODAY:

- **What happens when the coordinated subject is postverbal (which means First Conjoint Agreement is in principle an option), and it is modified by a relative clause?**

There are multiple potential agreement 'bearers': the matrix verb (AGR<sub>1</sub>), the relative pronoun (AGR<sub>2</sub>), and the relative clause internal predicate (AGR<sub>3</sub>).

- (4) VERB<sub>AGR1</sub> [DP [DP<sub>1</sub> and DP<sub>2</sub>] [CP REL<sub>AGR2</sub> VERB<sub>AGR3</sub> ] ]

If there is a single D scoping over/modifying two NPs, even more possibilities arise:

- (5) VERB<sub>AGR1</sub> [DP [DP D<sub>AGR4</sub> NP<sub>1</sub> and NP<sub>2</sub>] [CP REL<sub>AGR2</sub> VERB<sub>AGR3</sub> ] ]

What we find is:

- (6) VERB<sub>SG/PL</sub> [DP [DP D<sub>SG/\*PL</sub> NP<sub>1</sub> and NP<sub>2</sub>] [CP REL<sub>PL/\*SG</sub> VERB<sub>PL/\*SG</sub> ] ]

- **a derivation of relative clauses with coordinated heads (hydras) that allows reconstruction: HEAD PROMOTION**

- (7) a. [α Conj [β Z W] ]  
 b. [γ Z [α Conj [β Z̄ W] ] ] (Chomsky 2013: 46)

- **a derivation of relative clauses with coordinated heads that allows a single determiner to have singular agreement and not plural agreement: PARALLEL MERGE OF D WITH TWO NPs**
- **a derivation of relative clauses with coordinated heads that allows both singular and plural agreement on the matrix verb: AGREE CLOSEST vs. MULTIPLE AGREE**

## 2. Types of Relative Clauses in Polish

There are three types of relative clauses in Polish (Fisiak, Lipińska-Grzegorek & Zabrocki 1978, Pesetsky 1998, Broihier 1995, Hladnik 2015, Guz 2017, among many, many others):

- (8) a. ten samochód, **który** Janek widział wczoraj RELATIVE PRONOUN  
 this car.M.SG which.M.SG Janek saw yesterday
- b. ten samochód, **co** Janek widział wczoraj COMP  
 this car COMP Janek saw yesterday
- c. ten samochód, **co go** Janek widział wczoraj COMP + RESUMPTIVE PRONOUN  
 this car COMP RP Janek saw yesterday
- (b and c examples from Hladnik 2015: 67)

Here, I focus mostly on *który* ‘which’ relatives, since the relative pronoun *który* shows agreement with the relative clause head.

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### An Aside on Resumptive Pronouns:

Resumptive pronouns can be dropped *only* under specific circumstances (Bondaruk 1995, Broihier 1995, Pesetsky 1998, Guz 2017 on Polish, Hladnik 2015 on Slovenian and Polish, Gračanin-Yuksek 2013 on Croatian, Bošković 2009b on Serbo-Croatian, among others), with some of the factors being implicated involving animacy, case (inherent vs. structural), etc.

- (9) *Morphological Case Matching* (Gračanin-Yuksek 2013: 30)  
 In a *što*-RC, an RP may be omitted if the head of the RC bears the same morphological case that it would bear if it were case marked by the element that case-marks the RP.

- (10) a. samochód  
 car.M.NOM/ACC

- (11) a. mężczyzna  
 man.M.NOM

- b. mężczyznę  
 man.M.ACC

- (12) a. ten samochód, **co (go)** Janek widział wczoraj  
 this car.NOM C RP.ACC John saw yesterday  
 ‘the car that John saw yesterday’

- b. ten mężczyzna, **co \*(go)** Janek widział wczoraj  
 this man.nom C John RP.ACC Janek saw yesterday  
 ‘the man that John saw yesterday.’

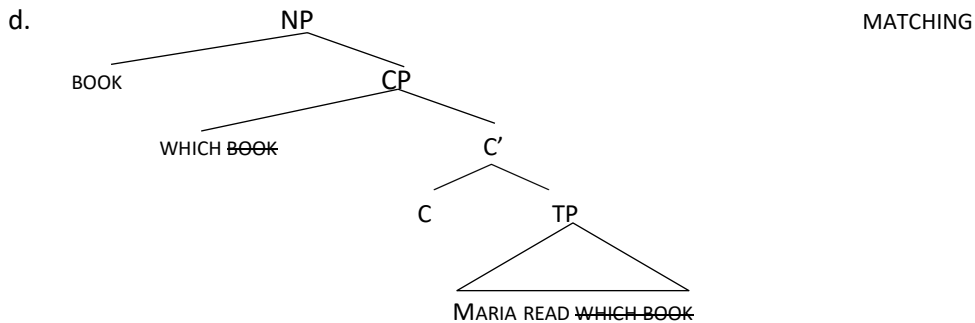
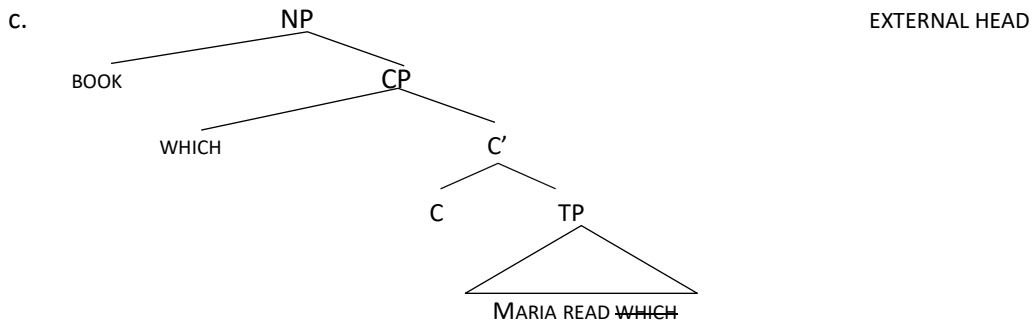
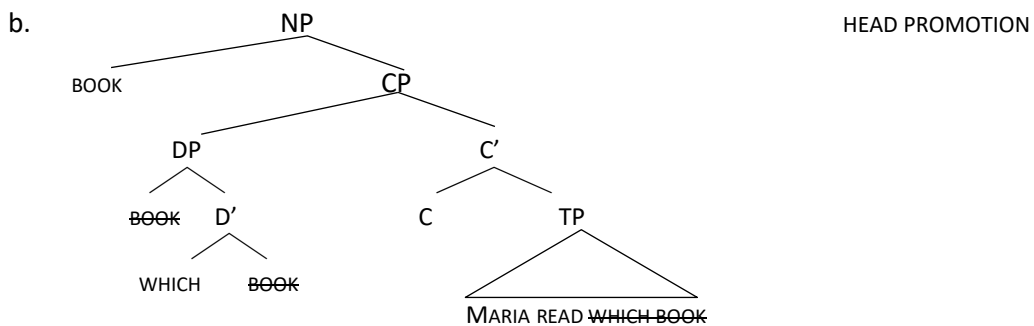
(Hladnik 2015: 67)

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### 3. Reconstruction in Polish Relative Clauses

The Head Promotion vs. External Head vs. Matching structure differ with respect to their predictions with respect to reconstruction effects (Vergnaud 1974, Kayne 1994, Bhatt 2000, Bianchi 1999, 2000, Hladnik 2015, De Vries 2002, Hulsey and Sauerland 2006, Cinque 2013, Citko 2001, among many many others)

- (13) a. książka, którą Maria przeczytała  
 book which Maria read  
 'the/a book which Maria read'



The views in literature regarding reconstruction in Polish relative clauses differ.

Szczegielniak 2004 on Polish: *co*-relatives allow reconstruction, *który*-relatives do not

- *idiom interpretation*

*rzucić słowa na wiatr/throw words to the wind/make empty promises*

- (14) a. słów **co** on nie rzucał na wiatr  
words that he not throw on wind  
'empty promises that he did not make'
- b. ??słów **których** on nie rzucał na wiatr  
words which he not throw on wind  
'empty promises that he did not make' (Szczegielniak 2004: 24)

Hladnik 2015 on Polish, Slovenian (among other Slavic languages): All three types of relatives involve movement: only *co*-relatives involve promotion.

- (15) a. Zdjęcie siebie (samego) **co** Jan kupił leży na stole.  
picture self alone C Jan bought lies on table  
'The picture of himself that John bought is lying on the table.'
- b. ?Zdjęcie siebie (samego) **które** Jan kupił leży na stole.  
picture self alone which Jan bought lies on table  
'The picture of himself which John bought is lying on the table.' (Hladnik 2015)

Giltner 2018 on Russian: *čto* vs. *kotoryj* relatives in Russian; reconstruction behavior not consistent with promotion vs. matching derivation.

Gračanin Yuksek 2013 on Croatian: some *što*-relatives are derived by movement and others not: *što*-relatives with no resumption involve a matching derivation.

➤ **Both *co* and *który*-relatives allow reconstruction**

- *variable binding*

- (16) a. Te zdjęcia swoich dzieci, **które** każdy rodzic trzyma na biurku, podnoszą go na duchu.  
these pictures self's children which every parent keeps on desk lift him on spirit
- b. Te zdjęcia swoich dzieci, **co** każdy rodzic trzyma na biurku, podnoszą go na duchu.  
these pictures self's children COMP every parent keeps on desk lift him on spirit  
'These pictures of his children that every parent keeps on their desk always lift their spirits.'

- *Principle A reconstruction*

- (17) a. Ten blog o swoich podróżach, **który** Jan zaczął dwa lata temu, zrobił się bardzo popularny.  
this blog about self's travels which Jan started two years ago became self very popularny.

- popular
- b. Ten blog o swoich podróżach, **co** Jan zaczął dwa lata temu, zrobił się bardzo popularny.  
 this blog about self's travels COMP Jan started two years ago became sefl very popular  
 'This blog about his travels that/which Jan started two years ago, became very popular.'

- Principle B reconstruction

- (18) a. \*?Ten blog o jego<sub>i</sub> podróżach, **który** Jan<sub>i</sub> zaczął dwa lata temu, zrobił się bardzo popularny.  
 this blog about his travels which Jan started two years ago became sefl very popularny.
- b. \*?Ten blog o jego<sub>i</sub> podróżach, **co** Jan<sub>i</sub> zaczął dwa lata temu, zrobił się bardzo popularny.  
 this blog about his travels which Jan started two years ago became sefl very popular  
 'This blog about his travels that/which Jan started two years ago, became very popular.'

- idiom interpretation

- (19) a. Żałosne są tylko puste **słowa które rzucasz na wiatr!!!**  
 pityful are only empty words which throw on wind  
 'Empty promises you make are pitiful.'
- b. Znów **słowa, które rzucasz na wiatr**  
 again words which throw on wind  
 'Again empty promises you make'
- c. Słowa i znów **słowa, które rzucasz na wiatr**  
 words and again words which throw on wind  
 'Empty promises and again empty promises you make' (Google search)

*mieć węża w kieszeni/lit. to have a snake in a pocket/to be very stingy*

- (20) Był do tego stopnia skąpy, że zamorzył głodem węża, **którego** miał w kieszeni.  
 was to this degree stingy that starved snake which had in pocket  
 Lit. 'He was so stingy that he starved a snake in his pocket.' (Google search)

*ręka rękę myje/lit. a hand washes a hand/you scratch my back and I scratch yours*

- (21) Państwo nie dostarczyło im żadnych narzędzi, więc posłużyli się tym, co mieli: instynktem  
 state not provided them any tools so used refl this C had: instinct  
 przetrwania, twardą dupą i **ręką, która rękę myje.**  
 survival, hard ass and hand which hand washes  
 'The state provided them with no tools so they used what they had: survival instinct, badass (attitude) and mutual favors' (Google search)

- Coordination of relative heads is allowed in both *co* and *który* relatives and does not affect reconstruction:

- variable binding

- (22) a. To zdjęcie swojej żony i list od swoich dzieci, **które** każdy żołnierz trzymał  
this picture self wife and letter from self's children, which every soldier kept  
w kieszeni munduru, na nic mu się nie przydały.  
in pocket uniform for nothing him refl not were.useful  
'This picture of his wife and letter from his wife, which every soldier kept in his uniform  
pocket were good for nothing.'
- b. To zdjęcie swojej żony i list od swoich dzieci, **co** każdy żołnierz trzymał  
this picture self wife and letter from self's children COMP every soldier kept  
w kieszeni munduru, na nic mu się nie przydały.  
in pocket uniform for nothing him refl not were.useful  
'This picture of his wife and letter from his wife, which every soldier kept in his uniform  
pocket were good for nothing.'

- Principle A reconstruction

- (23) a. Ten blog o swoich podróżach i album swoich zdjęć, **które** Jan opublikował dwa lata  
this blog about self's travels and album self's pictures which Jan published two years  
temu, zrobiły się bardzo popularne.  
ago made refl very popular
- b. Ten blog o swoich podróżach i album swoich zdjęć, **co** Jan opublikował dwa lata  
this blog about self's travels and album self's pictures COMP Jan published two years  
temu, zrobiły się bardzo popularne.  
ago made refl very popular  
'This blog about his travels and album of his photos that Jan published two years ago  
became very popular.'

#### 4. Agreement in Relative Clauses

A.  $VERB_{AGR1}$  [DP [DP<sub>1</sub> and DP<sub>2</sub>] [CP REL<sub>PL</sub> VERB<sub>PL</sub> ] ]

- (24) a. Na konferencje przyjechała [doktorantka z Warszawy i studentka z Krakowa],  
for conference arrived.F.SG PhD candidate from Warsaw and student from Cracow,  
**które spotkały** się na lotnisku].  
which.F.PL met.F.PL refl at airport  
'A PhD candidate from Warsaw and a student from Cracow, who met at the airport,  
arrived at the conference.'
- b. \*Na konferencje przyjechała [doktorantka z Warszawy i [studentka z Krakowa, **która**  
for conference arrived.F.SG PhD candidate from W and student from Cracow, which.F.SG  
**spotkała się** na lotnisku].  
met.F.SG refl at airport

- c. Na konferencje przyjechała doktorantka z Warszawy i [studentka z Krakowa, **która** for conference arrived.F.SG PhD candidate from W and student from Cracow, which.F.SG **spóźniła** się na samolot] was.late.F.SG refl for plane 'A PhD candidate from Warsaw and a student from Cracow, who was late for the plane, arrived at the conference.'

**B.** VERB<sub>PL/SG</sub> [DP [DP<sub>1</sub> and DP<sub>2</sub>] [CP REL<sub>PL</sub> VERB<sub>PL</sub>]]<sup>3</sup>

- (25) a. Na konferencje **przyjechały** doktorantka z Warszawy i studentka z Krakowa, for conference arrived.F.PL PhD.candidate from Warsaw and student from Cracow, które spotkały się na lotnisku. which met refl at airport  
b. Na konferencje **przyjechała** doktorantka z Warszawy i studentka z Krakowa, for conference arrived.F.SG PhD candidate from Warsaw and student from Cracow, które spotkały się na lotnisku. which met refl at airport 'A PhD candidate from Warsaw and a student from Cracow, who met at the airport, arrived at the conference.'
- (26) a. Do banku **weszły** wysoka kobieta i mała dziewczynka, które trzymały się za rece. to bank arrived.F.PL tall woman and small girl which held refl by hands  
b. Do banku **weszła** wysoka kobieta i mała dziewczynka, które trzymały się za rece. to bank arrived.F.SG tall woman and small girl which held refl by hands 'Into the bank arrived a tall man and a small girl who held each other's hands.'
- (27) a. Na weselu **były** ciocia Zosia i kuzynka Asia, które siedziały przy tym samym stole. at wedding were aunt Zosia and cousin Asia which sat at the same table  
b. Na weselu **była** ciocia Zosia i kuzynka Asia, które siedziały przy tym samym stole. at wedding was aunt Zosia and cousin Asia which sat at the same table 'At the wedding were aunt Zosia and cousin Asia, who were sitting at the same table.'

**C.** VERB<sub>AGR1</sub> [DP D<sub>SG/\*PL</sub> [NP<sub>1</sub> and NP<sub>2</sub>] [CP REL<sub>AGR2</sub> VERB<sub>AGR3</sub>]]

- (28) a. Na stole leżała **ta** książka i gazeta, które Maria przeczytała. on table lay.F.SG this.F.SG book.F.SG and paper.F.SG which.F.PL Maria read  
b. Na stole leżały **ta** książka i gazeta, które Maria przeczytała. on table lay.F.PL this.F.SG book.F.SG and paper.F.SG which.F.PL Maria read

<sup>3</sup> The availability of both agreement patterns were confirmed by an informal FB poll.



- c. \*Na stole leżała **te** książka i gazeta, które Maria przeczytała.  
on table lay.F.SG these.F.PL book.F.SG and paper.F.SG which.F.PL Maria read
- d. \*Na stole leżały **te** książka i gazeta, które Maria przeczytała.  
on table lay.F.PL these.F.PL book.F.SG and paper.F.SG which.F.PL Maria read

(29) Przed nami **były** tamten brzeg, rzeka i – most.  
before us were that bank, river and bridge  
'Before us were that riverbank, river and bridge.' (Kallas 1993: 63, citing Pruszynski 186)

## 5. DP Internal Agreement

A single prenominal modifier applying to coordinate NPs is *typically* singular (Kallas 1993, Willim 2012, Zbróg 2003: 128, among others)

- (30) a. gorąca/\*gorące kawa i herbata  
hot.F.SG/\*F.PL coffee.F.SG and tea.F.SG  
'hot coffee and tea'
- b. ten/\*ci pan i pani  
this.M.SG/\*these.M.PL man and woman  
'this man and woman'
- c. czyja/\*czyje koszula i krawat  
whose.F.SG/\*PL shirt.F.SG and tie.M.SG  
'whose shirt and tie' (Willim 2012: 233-234)

While adjectives allow plural modifiers *under certain circumstances* ('when the coordinated nouns form a tight conceptual unit' or 'when the modifier is participial or is an adjective with complex argument structure'), determiners have to be singular (Zbróg 2003).

- (31) a. sympatyczni dziewczyna i chłopak (Zbróg 2003: 116)  
nice.M.PL girl and boy
- b. ganiające się/\*ganiający się kot i mysz  
chasing.PL REFL chasing.M.SG REFL cat and mouse
- c. mili/\*miły dla siebie mężczyzna i dziadek  
nice.M.PL/nice.M.SG for self guy.SG and old.man.SG

Determiners have to be singular:

- (32) a. Ten/\*ci Marek i Jan idą.  
this.M.SG/\*M.PL Marek and Jan walk.PL  
'This Marek and Jan are walking.'

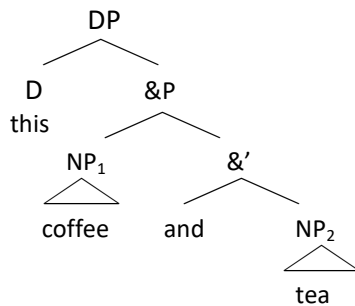


Determiner ellipsis (sharing) is quite restricted (McCawley 1993, Johnson 2000, Lin 2000, Citko 2006)

- (38) a. This man and ~~this~~ woman are in love.  
 b. \*This man drinks coffee and ~~this~~ woman ~~drinks~~ tea.  
 c. Few men drink coffee and ~~few~~ women ~~drink~~ tea.  
 d. Few men drink coffee and ~~few~~ women drink tea.

• Single D above the coordination level

- (39) a. this coffee and tea

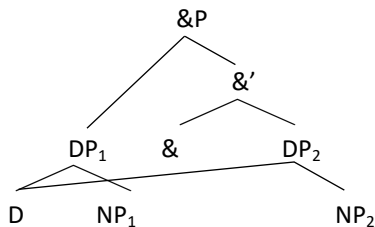


Seem plausible for joint readings, less so for split readings

Not clear how to exclude plural determiners (why cannot D agree with &P or both conjuncts?)

• D sharing (Parallel Merge of D with two NPs)

- (40) a. this coffee and tea  
 b.



The presence of two DPs more intuitively captures split readings (two DPs → two individuals)

D sharing does *not* give rise to plural agreement (see also Shen 2019)<sup>4</sup>

This pattern (i.e. (41a)) is different from the pattern Shen (2019) focuses on, schematized in (41b) and illustrated in (42) (see though Shen 2018 for some discussion of the pattern in (41a)).

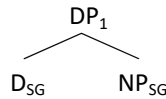
<sup>4</sup> Shen is interested in the difference between nominal agreement (which is singular in cases of nominal right node raising (D and D N configurations) and clausal agreement (which can be plural in cases of verbal right node raising of the kind studied by Grosz (2015)). For him the difference between singular and plural agreement follows from the distinction between morphological agreement and semantic agreement: morphological agreement with two singular Goals yields singular agreement, whereas semantic agreement yields (resolved) plural agreement.

- (41) a. [DP D<sub>AGR</sub> NP<sub>1</sub> and NP<sub>2</sub>]  
 b. [DP D<sub>1</sub> and D<sub>2</sub> NP<sub>AGR</sub> ]

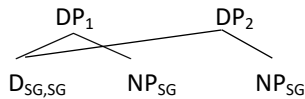
(42) This tall and that short student/\*students are a couple. (Shen 2019: 2)

But why should D agreeing with two NPs yield singular agreement?  
 -Maybe because it never agrees with two NPs (simultaneously)?

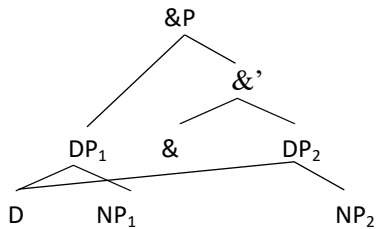
- (43) a. D first merges with one NP, and undergoes Agree with it → singular agreement



- b. D next parallel merges with the other NP *in a separate derivation* (Citko and Gračanin-Yuksek 2021) and undergoes Agree with it → singular agreement



- c. The two DPs do not become part of a single derivation till they merge with a conjunction phrase.



## 6. Back to Relative Clauses/Putting it All Together

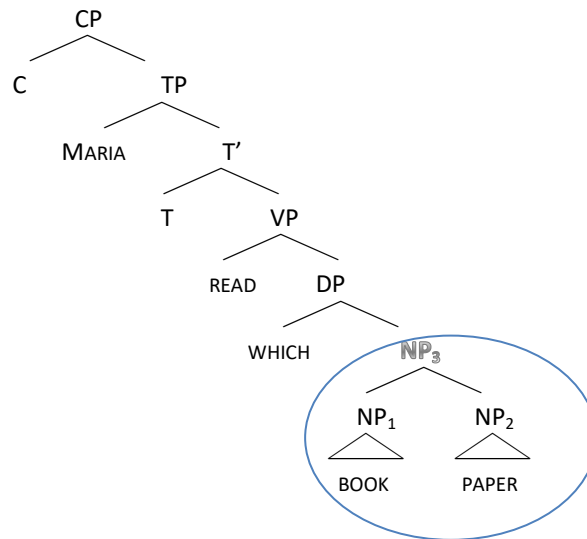
- (44) VERB<sub>SG/PL</sub> [DP [DP D<sub>SG/\*PL</sub> NP<sub>1</sub> and NP<sub>2</sub>] [CP REL<sub>PL/SG</sub> VERB<sub>PL/SG</sub> ] ]

- **a derivation of relative clauses with coordinated DPs/NPs (hydras) that allows reconstruction: HEAD PROMOTION**
- **a derivation of relative clauses with coordinated DPs/NPs that allows a single determiner with singular agreement and disallows plural agreement: PARALLEL MERGE OF D WITH TWO NPs**
- **a derivation of relative clauses that allows both singular and plural agreement on the matrix verb: AGREE CLOSEST vs. MULTIPLE AGREE**

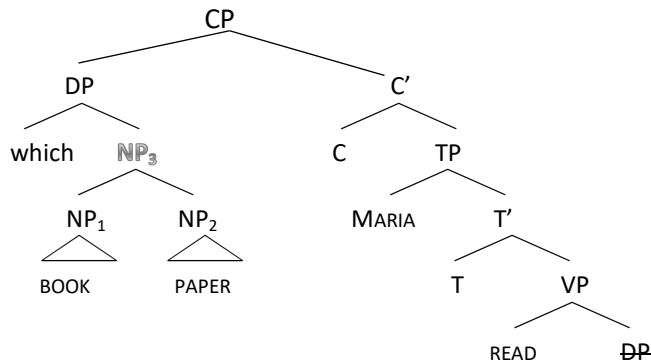
(45) Na stole leżała/leżały ta/\*te książka i gazeta, które/\*którą Maria przeczytała.  
 on table lay.F.SG/F.PL this.F.SG/\*F.PL book.F.SG and paper.F.SG which.F.PL/\*F.SG Maria read  
 'On the table lay this book and paper which Maria read.'

(46) a. ta książka i gazeta, które Maria przeczytała  
 this.F.SG book.F.SG and paper.F.SG which.F.PL Maria read  
 'this book and paper which Maria read'

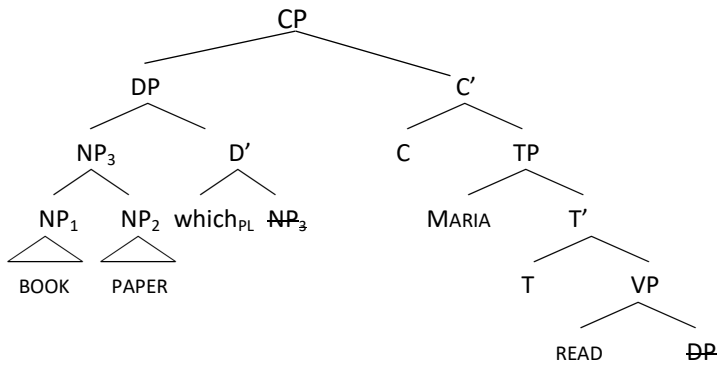
b. [<sub>DP</sub> which [<sub>NP</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> book] [<sub>NP</sub> paper] ] starts inside the relative CP; [<sub>NP</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> book] [<sub>NP</sub> paper] starts as an unstable/unlinearizable constituent



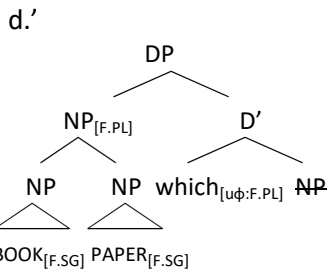
c. [<sub>DP</sub> which [<sub>NP</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> book] [<sub>NP</sub> newspaper] ] moves to Spec, CP



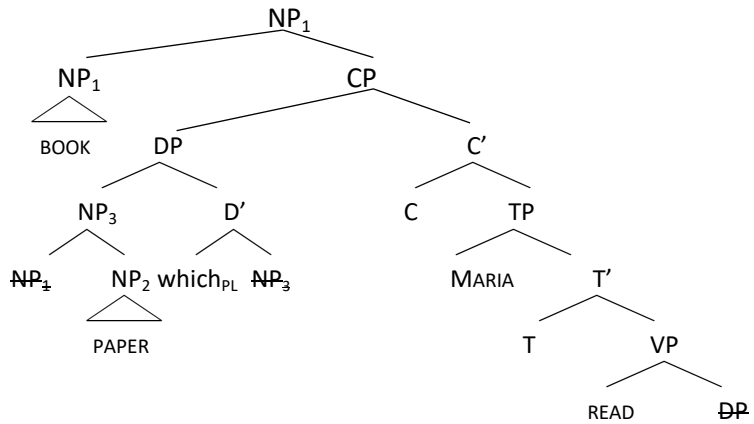
d. [<sub>NP</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> book] [<sub>NP</sub> newspaper] ] moves to Spec, DP



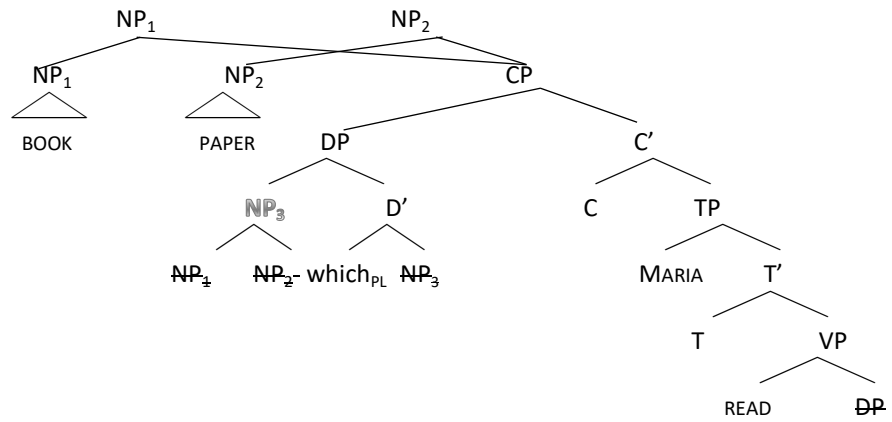
This step sheds light on why the relative pronoun has to be plural (Spec-head agreement, Upward Agree/Downward valuation of Bjorkman and Zeijlstra 2019). First conjunct agreement would require Downward Agree/Upward Valuation.



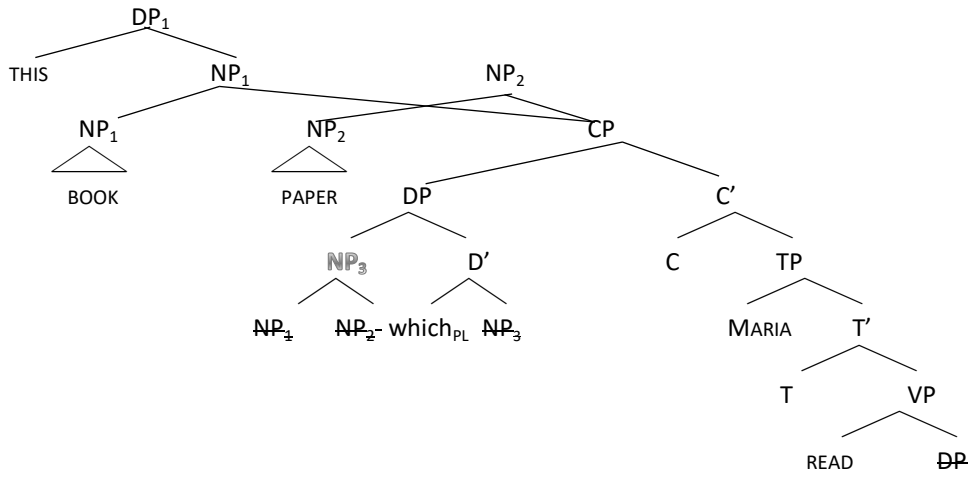
e. NP<sub>1</sub> moves and projects



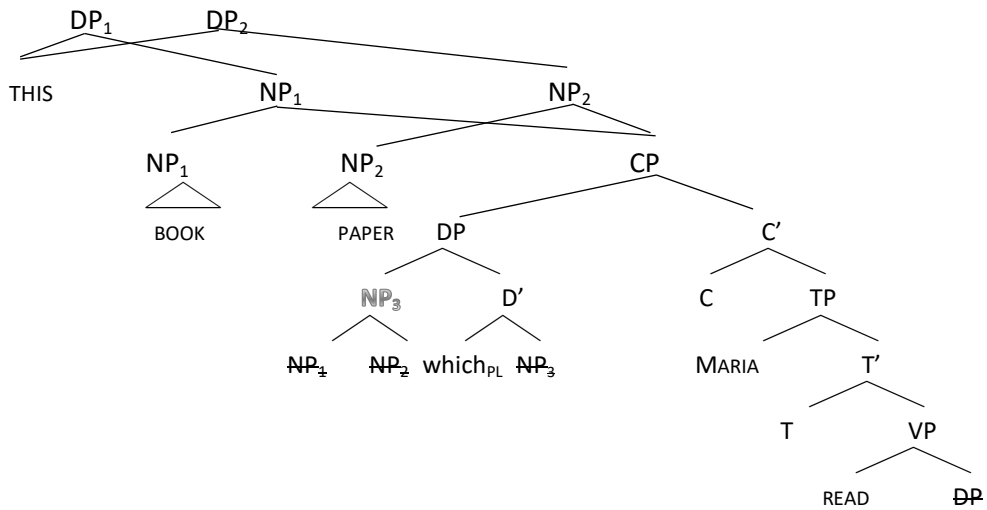
e. NP<sub>2</sub> moves and projects



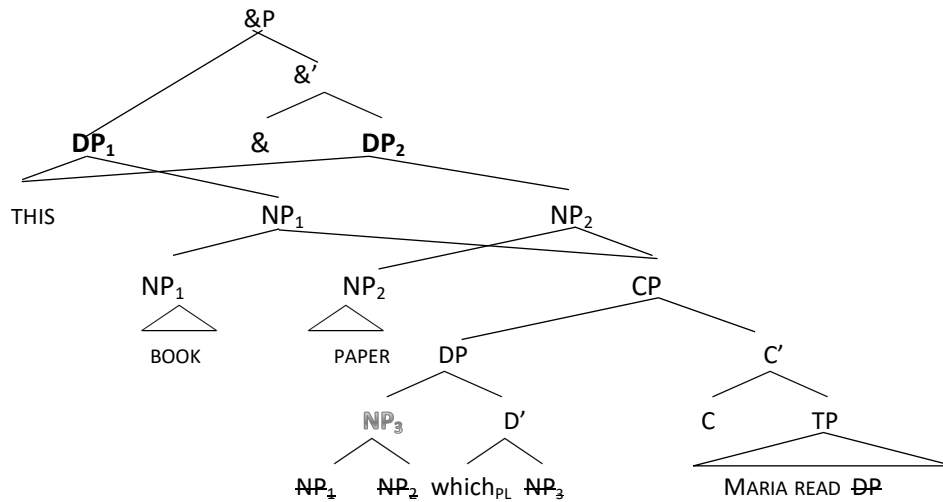
f. D 'this' merges with NP<sub>1</sub>



g. D parallel merges with NP<sub>2</sub>



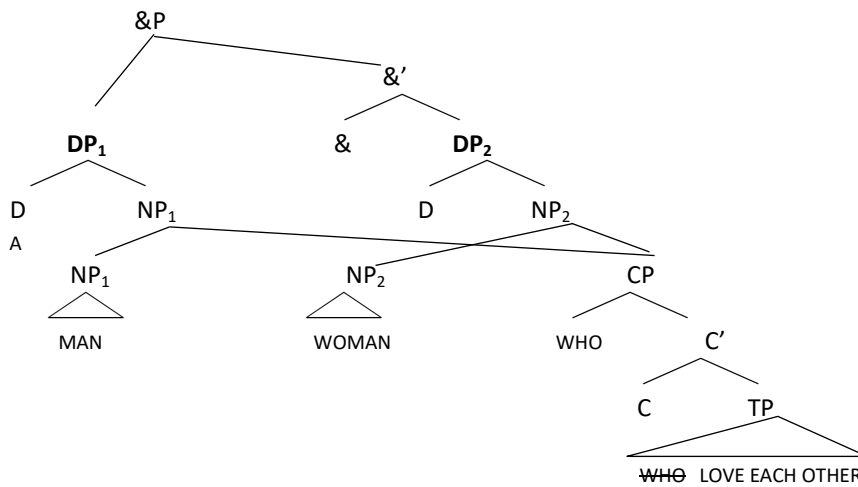
h. DP<sub>1</sub> and DP<sub>2</sub> merge with a conjunction



The idea that relative clauses with coordinated heads/hydras involve multidominance is not new (see Conrod and Woo 2018, Fox and Johnson 2016, McKinney-Bock 2013; also Zheng's 2007 sideward movement analysis). These accounts seem to differ in that they involve matching or head external structures.

(47) a. a man and a woman who love each other  
b.

(Conrod and Woo 2018)

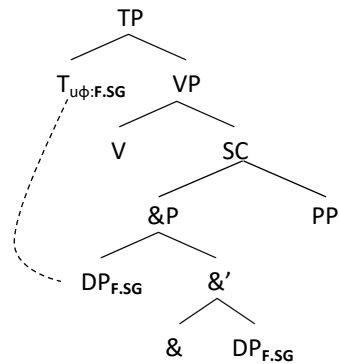


The last thing to explain is how it is possible to get both Singular (First Conjunct) and Plural (Resolved) agreement on the matrix verb. Nothing new needs to be said here. T can either Agree with both conjuncts or the Closest/Highest one.





c.



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