Cataphora

Edit Doron (to appear in the Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics)

Cataphora is the term used for backward anaphora (→ anaphora): coreference between a referential expression and a pronoun which precedes it, as illustrated in (1).

(1a) ka’ašer hu yošev mul ha-maxšev, dani me’ušar

‘When he sits in front of the computer, Dani is happy.’

(1b) ha-sefer še-hu katav hiqna le-dani pirsum rav

‘The book he wrote brought to Dani a lot of publicity.’

(1c) ha-šstudentim še-lomdim ’iti ’irgenu le-dani mesibat hafta’a

‘The students who study with him organized for Dani a surprise party.’

(1d) ha-xašadot negdo me’od pag’u be-dani

‘The suspicions against him were very hurtful to Dani.’

(1e) ha-tmuna šelo ba-’iton mil’a ’et dani be-ga’ava

‘His picture in the newspaper filled Dani with pride.’

In all the sentences in (1), the pronoun corefers with the referential expression dani, though preceding it. In these examples, it would be possible to replace cataphora with anaphora, by reversing the order, so that the pronoun follows dani. Irrespective of word-order, the referential expression is called the antecedent of the coreferring pronoun.

(2a) ķ新 חנ וינש מונ הם המחבר, חנ מואשים
ka’ašer dani yošev mul ha-maxšev, hu me’ušar

‘When Dani sits in front of the computer, he is happy.’

(2b) ha-sefer še-dani katav hiqna lo pirsum rav

‘The book Dani wrote brought him a lot of publicity.’

(2c) ha-studentim še-lomdim ‘im dani ‘irgenu lo mesibat hafta’a

‘The students who study with Dani organized him a surprise party.’

(2d) ha-xašadot neged dani me’od pag’u bo

‘The suspicions against Dani were very hurtful to him.’

(2e) ha-tmuna šel dani ba-’iton mil’a ’oto be-ga’ava

‘Dani’s picture in the newspaper filled him with pride.’

The converse certainly does not hold, as it is usually impossible to replace a given case of anaphora with the corresponding cataphora. In the examples of anaphora in (3) below, when the antecedent–pronoun order is reversed, as in (4), coreference is no longer possible. In (3), the pronoun is anaphoric to the preceding antecedent dani, but when the order is reversed in (4), the pronoun can only be interpreted as disjoint in reference from dani:

(3a) dani me’ušar ka’ašer hu yošev mul ha-maxšev

‘Dani is happy when he sits in front of the computer.’

(3b) et ha-pirsum ha-rav hiqna le-dani ha-sefer še-hu katav
‘The great publicity was brought to Dani by the book he wrote.’

(3c) את תסריט החופשת ארון לֵבָּה הפוסטים שלדומיה האון
‘et mesibat ha-hafta’a ʿirgenu le-dani ha-šṭudentim še-lomdim ʿīto
‘The surprise party was organized for Dani by the students who study with him.’

(3d) אף על פי בן ההשכורת שלו
meʿod pagʿu be-dani ha-xašadot neged
‘What was very hurtful to Dani were the suspicions against him.’

(3e) ואוהב רוחו מהאהב אָת דִב לעならない התמונות שלדומיה בועות
gaʿava raba milʿa ʿet dani le-marʿe ha-tmuna šelo ba-ʿiton
‘A lot of pride filled Dani at the sight of his picture in the newspaper.’

(4a) הוא מואהיר כלשך ביניו וישב מול המחשב
hu meʿlušar kaʿašer dani yošev mul ha-mayšev
‘He is happy when Dani sits in front of the computer.’

(4b) והпеיסום הרבד הקשה ל’nכ חצוב
‘et ha-pirus ha-rav hiqna lq ha-sefer še-dani katav
‘The big publicity was brought to him by the book that Dani wrote.’

(4c) את תסריט החופשת ארון לֵבָּה הפוסטים שלדומיה האון
‘et mesibat ha-hafta’a ʿirgenu lq ha-šṭudentim še-lomdim ʿim dani
‘The surprise party was organized for him by the students who study with Dani.’

(4d) אף על פי בן ההשכורת שלו
meʿod pagʿu bq ha-xašadot neged dani
‘What was very hurtful to him were the suspicions against Dani.’

(4e) ואוהב רוחו מהאהב אָת דִב לעならない התמונות שלדומיה בועות
‘A lot of pride filled him at the sight of Dani’s picture in the newspaper.’

The examples so far may seem to imply that cataphora is a phenomenon more restrictive than anaphora: wherever cataphora is allowed, then so is anaphora, whereas there are constructions where anaphora is allowed but cataphora is not. Yet this would be a premature conclusion. There exist examples where cataphora is allowed but anaphora is not. In the examples of cataphora in (5), the pronoun is coreferential with the antecedent dani, but when the order is reversed in (6), where dani precedes the pronoun, anaphora becomes impossible and disjointness ensues:

(5a) 
מל המחשב שלDani ישב שעון

mul ha-maxšev šelo dani yošev ša’ot

‘In front of his computer Dani sits for hours.’

(5b) 
המחשבות הרבות שלDani מקשו השיש

me-ha-pīrsum ha-rav šelo dani me’od xašaš

‘Of his big publicity Dani was very wary.’

(5c) 
את המפסבים שלDani ארנגי ברגנט והאוקרי

’et ha-mesiba šelo dani ’irgen ba-rega‘ ha-’axaron

‘His party Dani organized at the last moment.’

(5d) 
להשדות גנאי אלו היה רע

la-xašadot negdo dani lo haya ‘er

‘Of the suspicions against him Dani was not aware.’

(5e) 
את המסרבים שלDani בעיתונות דני ראם י ../../

’et ha-sipurim ‘alay ba-‘iton dani ra’a raq le-moxorat

‘The stories about him in the newspaper Dani saw only the following day.’
In front of Dani’s computer he sits for hours.

Of Dani’s big publicity he was very wary.

‘Dani’s party he organized at the last moment.’

‘Of the suspicions against Dani he was not aware.’

The stories about Dani in the newspaper he only saw the following day.’

Early on in the development of theoretical linguistics, facts such as these, reproducible in other languages as well, led to the conclusion that the crucial considerations in determining coreference are not the distinctions between anaphora and cataphora, i.e., considerations of word-order, but rather considerations of hierarchical constituent structure and the structural relationship of constituent-command, which, roughly, is the relationship between a constituent and all the parts of its immediately adjacent constituents. Reinhart (1983) showed that c-command restricts coreference: a pronoun may not be coreferential with an antecedent it c-commands, irrespective of whether the antecedent precedes or follows it. Since a pronoun attached to a verb c-commands all the sub-constituents of the verb’s complement, none of these sub-constituents can be antecedent of the pronoun. For
example, the pronouns in (4a) and in all the sentences in (6) are attached to the respective verbs as subjects, in (4b–d) as indirect objects, and in (4e) as direct object. In all these cases they cannot have an antecedent within the verb’s complement, irrespective of word-order. In the parallel examples in (2), the antecedent is not part of the verb’s complement, but of an adjunct in (2a) and subject in (2b–d); coreference is accordingly possible. In (1), (3), and (5) the pronoun is not attached to the main verb, and thus does not c-command the antecedent; this allows coreference irrespective of word-order.

To conclude, a note of terminological clarification: examples of agreement between possessor and possessee, such as in (7) below, have often been called cataphora in the literature on earlier stages of Hebrew, since the pronoun-like element attached to the possessee agrees in person, gender, and number with the possessor that follows it.

(7) נְתַנָּה שֶלֶשֶׁלמּו (Cant. 3.7)
miṭṭātō šellēšlōmō
‘the bed of Solomon’ (literally ‘bed-his of Solomon’)

Yet (7) is an example of agreement (Engelhardt 2000, or ‘clitic-doubling’ in the terminology of Borer 1983), which is orthogonal to the issue of coreferentiality at stake in cataphora and anaphora. While coreferentiality is an optional interpretive process, agreement is an obligatorily requirement of syntax: in examples (1)–(6) above, the pronoun may freely refer to someone other than Dani in each one of the examples, but in (7) it must refer to Solomon. Thus cataphora is unrelated to agreement, and, similarly, also to apposition and dislocation.
References


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