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# Practices of indexing discrepant assumptions with German *ich dachte* ('I thought') in talk-in-interaction

**Abstract:** This paper studies practices of indexing discrepant assumptions accomplished by turn-constructural units with *ich dachte* ('I thought') in German talk-in-interaction. Building on the analysis of 141 instances from the corpus FOLK, we identify three sequential environments in which *ich dachte* is used to index that an assumption which a speaker (has) held contrasts with some other, contextually salient assumption. We show that practices which have been studied for English *I thought* are also routinely used in German: *ich dachte* is a means to manage epistemic incongruencies and to contrast an incorrect with a correct assumption in narratives. In addition, *ich dachte* is also used to account for the speaker's own prior actions which may have looked problematic because they built on misunderstandings which the speaker only discovered later. Moreover, *ich dachte*-practices may also be used to create comic effects by reporting an earlier, absurd assumption. The practices are discussed with regard to their role in regaining common ground, in managing relationships, in maintaining the identity of a rational actor, and in terms of their exploitation for other conversational interests. Special attention is paid to how co-occurring linguistic features, and sequential and pragmatic factors, account for local interpretations of *ich dachte*.

## 1. Introduction

Research in conversation analysis and discourse functional linguistics over the last decade has shown that epistemic stance-taking plays a key role for the organization of discourse (Du Bois 2007; Heritage 2012a, b, 2013a, b; Heritage & Raymond 2005). Epistemic stance is the degree of certainty or commitment a speaker expresses towards an object of knowledge (Biber & Finegan 1989; Englebretson 2007; Kärkkäinen 2003, 2006). In doing so, speakers position themselves not only in relation to the stance object but also in relation to the stances

that co-participants take (Du Bois 2007). Mental verb constructions are a major resource for epistemic stance-taking. Complement-taking predicates like English *know*, *think*, *guess*, *remember*, and *hope* provide routine resources for expressing epistemic and sometimes also evaluative or emotional stance. Some such constructions have (at least in part) become grammaticalized from matrix clause predicates to epistemic stance markers (Brinton 2008; Thompson 2002; Thompson & Mulac 1991). English *I think* (Aijmer 1997; Fetzer 2008, 2014; Fetzer & Johansson 2010; Kärkkäinen 2003, 2006; Thompson & Mulac 1991; van Bogaert 2010, 2011), *I don't know/I dunno* (Potter 1997; Scheibman 2000; Weatherall 2011), *I mean* (Erman 1987; Fox Tree & Schrock 2002; Imo 2005), and *you know* (Erman 1987, 2001; Fox Tree & Schrock 2002; Östman 1981) are prime examples. Constructions of this kind exist in other languages as well, such as the Estonian *mai tea* ('I don't know'; Keevallik 2011), Finnish *tietää* ('to know') and *muistaa* ('to remember'; Laury & Helasvuo 2016), Swedish *jag vet inte* ('I don't know'; Lindström & Karlsson 2016), French *je sais pas* ('I don't know'; Pekarek Doehler 2016), German *ich mein* ('I mean'; Imo 2007: 190–198), and German *ich weiß nicht* ('I don't know'; Helmer *et al.* 2016).

A particularly interesting case is English *I thought*. In contrast to other constructions, it is not a present tense, but a past tense variant. Kärkkäinen (2009, 2012) shows that *I thought* is used to express evaluative or affective stance when prefacing evaluative statements, interjections, or tellings. Alternatively, *I thought* can index 'suspended factuality', which may implicate counterfactuality (Declerck & Reed 2005; see also Kärkkäinen 2012; van Bogaert 2010, 2011). Smith (2013) speaks of the display of a "discrepancy of knowledge" in these cases. He shows that turns beginning with *I thought* are sequentially occasioned by a prior action in which an interlocutor states that or lets it be inferred that some state of affairs is true, which contrasts with what the *I thought*-speaker had held to be true up to that point. If the prior speaker's first-hand knowledge is superior to the second-hand knowledge of the *I thought*-speaker, the turn containing *I thought* not only indexes that the speaker considers their assumption to be invalidated, but it also projects that the prior speaker has to account for their discrepant knowledge, because they are held to be responsible for keeping relevant interactional partners up to date. Sacks (1992, Vol. 1: 787–788), Jefferson (2004), and Wooffitt (1991) have shown that *I thought* may also be used in stories in order to index an invalidated, earlier state of knowledge which has later been transformed into discrepant knowledge that the teller now holds to be true.

Different uses of *I thought* will be referred to as 'practices' in this paper. The term 'practice' as used here refers to linguistic (and other multimodal) forms of conduct with a systematic interactional use in specific contexts (Deppermann *et al.* 2016; Heritage 2010). A linguistic practice is defined both by its (lexical, syntactic,

prosodic, and possibly also multimodal) composition, and by its position, i.e. its place within the turn and interactional sequence, thus being organized according to a “positionally sensitive grammar” (Schegloff 1996a). Composition and position together account for the functional, action-relevant properties of a practice (cf. Clift 2016). In addition, aspects of the larger context (like genre or interactional domain, such as institutions or sectors of society), and pragmatic and social factors of participants, such as their (‘shared’) knowledge, may also matter to a practice.

Using data from talk-in-interaction in German, this paper studies the practices of epistemic stance display accomplished by turn-constructional units (henceforth TCUs) with German *ich dachte* (‘I thought’).<sup>1</sup> Our analysis follows conversation analysis and interactional linguistics, taking into account sequential position, grammatical form, and co-occurring linguistic features within the *ich dachte*-TUC, interactional consequences of its use, and contextual factors. Drawing on the exhaustive analysis of all instances of *ich dachte* in a large conversational corpus, we provide evidence that practices similar to those that have been identified for English are also routinely used in German. In addition, we show that there are still other practices in German which have not been discovered in prior research on English.

We will begin with an overview of the data we used, the grammatical variants of *ich dachte*, and a short summary of the range of practices with *ich dachte* (Section 2). The main body of the paper (Section 3) focuses on the most frequent practice, stating a discrepant assumption. In these cases, *ich dachte* indexes that the propositional content within its scope was believed to be true by the speaker at a previous point in time, but is now recognized to be wrong. We first discuss sequential patterns in which a discrepancy in the interlocutors’ assumptions becomes apparent by virtue of what another speaker does or says within the current interaction (Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2). This is followed by a discussion of uses of *ich dachte* in narratives in which the change of an assumption over time is reported (Section 3.1.3). In addition to sequential and functional properties, we focus on the ways in which co-occurring linguistic features, together with sequential and pragmatic factors, support the local interpretation of *ich dachte*.

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1. We will refer to all occurrences of *ich dachte* and the utterance in its scope in our data with the term *ich dachte*-TUC, although they can be produced in several TCUs. The alternative use of ‘turn’ would not suffice since the turns containing *ich dachte* often comprise more than *ich dachte* and the utterance in its scope.

## 2. Overview the of data and grammatical and functional variants

Our study deals with the first-person singular past tense variants of *denken*. The data are drawn from the German conversational corpus FOLK (Forschungs- und Lehrkorpus Gesprochenes Deutsch, hosted at the Leibniz-Institut für Deutsche Sprache, cf. Deppermann & Schmidt 2014), which is publicly accessible under <http://dgd.ids-mannheim.de>. Our study rests on the FOLK release 2014, comprising 101 hours of talk from various types of interaction, such as conversation among friends and family members, couples talk, meetings, oral university exams, as well as game and classroom interaction. The corpus was exhaustively searched for all first-person singular and plural past tense variants of *denken*. This yielded  $N=297$  instances (287 in the first-person singular and 10 in the first-person plural),<sup>2</sup> among them 130 instances of the simple past (*ich dachte*), 153 instances in perfect tense (*ich hab(e) gedacht*), 13 instances in past perfect (*ich hatte gedacht*), and one instance in a specific Southern German variant, the so-called ‘double past perfect’ (*ich hatte gedacht gehabt*). 26 instances were reflexive (*ich dachte mir*) and 11 instances were in perfect tense subjunctive mood (*ich hätte gedacht*). Since these forms do not exhibit any difference with respect to the practices discussed in this paper, we use *ich dachte* generically to refer to all variants, unless we are analyzing individual occurrences.<sup>3</sup> All instances were coded according to numerous grammatical categories (cf. Zeschel 2017),<sup>4</sup> and they have all been subjected to detailed sequential and pragmatic analysis, and subsequent coding of interactional and pragmatic properties by both authors.

*Ich dachte* occurs in several syntactic patterns:<sup>5</sup>

- a. *ich dachte* + subordinated complement clause ( $n=18$ : complementizer *dass*  $n=16$ ; *damit* and *ob*  $n=1$  each),
- b. *ich dachte* + non-subordinated clause (main clauses, interrogatives, imperatives, exclamatives,  $n=212$ ),
- c. *ich dachte* + interjection/response cry ( $n=63$ , 48 of which are followed by a non-subordinated clause ( $n=46$ ) or an ellipsis ( $n=2$ )),

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2. Another 58 instances were excluded from the analysis because of cut-offs, adjacent self-repetition of *ich dachte* or inaudible segments.

3. In contrast to English past tenses, simple past and past tense have no aspectual differences and are used interchangeably in German spoken language.

4. We especially thank Arne Zeschel for devising the grammatical coding scheme and supervising the coding process and Nadine Proske for advice concerning the choice of codes. Thanks also go to Sabrina Brunckhorst, Elena De Angelis, Roxana Müller, and Martina Seidler for helping to code the data.

5. In some cases, two of these patterns are realized together.

- d. *ich dachte* + PRO ( $n=19$ : *das*  $n=13$ ; *es*  $n=3$ ; *was, so etwas, wie*  $n=1$  each; in 2 of them PRO is followed by a complement clause (“*das dachte ich, dass*”)),
- e. *ich dachte* + ellipsis representing at least one proposition, including *ich dachte schon/doch/aber/eher nicht* ( $n=24$ ),
- f. *ich dachte* as ellipsis (these are elliptical and not intransitive usages;  $n=10$ ),
- g. *ich dachte* + prepositional object ( $n=1$ )

All of these patterns express a propositional attitude towards some content which is represented by the complement. In contrast to some of the mental verb constructions mentioned in Section 1, grammaticalization does not play a role: we did not observe any differences in semantics, turn-position, sequential position, or interactional function between the different variants. In contrast to other framing devices in discourse (see e.g. Günthner & Hopper 2010; Pekarek Doehler 2011), the scope of *ich dachte* is always restricted to the next or prior adjacent phrase or clause. In the latter case we find an inverted variant (*dachte ich/habe ich gedacht*). Especially in fast delivery, it is often reduced to *ich dacht* and *ich hab gedacht* (*e*-apocope; Berend 2005), which also does not make any functional difference.

In our data we could identify six different practices in which *ich dachte* is used to index epistemic stance, and one practice indexing evaluative/affective stance:

- Stating a discrepant assumption ( $n=141$ , 47.5%),
- Displaying an evaluative/affective stance ( $n=53$ , 17.8%),
- Providing intentions or reasons for a prior action ( $n=50$ , 16.8%),
- Claiming prior knowledge ( $n=21$ , 7.1%),
- Not claiming secure knowledge ( $n=20$ , 6.7%),
- Making an alternative proposal ( $n=12$ , 4%).

In almost half of the cases, *ich dachte* is used to ‘state a discrepant assumption’. In this article, we will focus on this both numerically and pragmatically most distinctive practice and its variants. Analyses and examples for all practices can be found in Deppermann & Reineke (2017).

### 3. Stating a discrepant assumption

In  $n=141/297$  (47.5%) of the instances analyzed, *ich dachte* indexes that the propositional content within its scope was once believed to be true by the speaker, but has since been recognized to be wrong, invalidated by intervening events, improbable, or contested by another person (mainly the prior speaker), who in most cases inhabits a superior epistemic status regarding the proposition at hand. When *ich dachte* is used to state a discrepant assumption, it is predominantly realized with non-subordinated clauses ( $n=112/141$ , 79.4%); it may

also combine with interjections ( $n=17/141$ , 12.1%), elliptic fragments of complement clauses ( $n=12/141$ , 8.5%), subordinated clauses ( $n=8/141$ , 5.7%; *dass*  $n=7$ , *ob*  $n=1$ ), or pronominal direct objects ( $n=5/141$ , 3.5%; *das*  $n=4$ , *es*  $n=1$ ), or it may occur as an ellipsis ( $n=1/141$ , 0.7%).<sup>6</sup>

The assumption in the scope of *ich dachte* may be taken as already invalidated or as still under dispute. Its relationship to the current speaker, the prior speaker, and the past self may also vary. In all cases of the practice, however, an incompatibility of two propositions is at issue. We refer to this practice as ‘*ich dachte*-DA’ (= discrepant assumption). Our analysis focuses on the following aspects of *ich dachte*-DA:

- its interactive functions and patterns of sequential organization,
- participants’ responsibilities in communicating knowledge and their relevance for the management of social relationships and personal identity,
- linguistic and discursive means supporting the ‘discrepant assumption’ meaning.

### 3.1 Patterns of sequential organization and interactive functions

The interactive functions of *ich dachte*-DA are directly tied to its sequential position. In our data, we could distinguish three patterns:

- uses in second position: making a discrepant assumption public ( $n=43/141$ , 30.5%),
- uses in fourth position: accounting for an inadequate action by a discrepant assumption ( $n=59/141$ , 41.8%),
- uses within a narrative multi-unit turn: indexing an incorrect assumption which is contrasted with a correct assumption about some event or object ( $n=39/141$ , 27.7%).

In terms of interactional organization, there is a difference between the first two patterns and the third one. In the first two patterns, *ich dachte*-DA is always prompted by or refers to a valid assumption X that became apparent within the current interaction (either due to another speaker having just expressed the X assumption or due to a ‘private’ change-of-state of the *ich dachte*-speaker). In the narrative cases, the same speaker produces both the invalidated assumption Y and the valid assumption X.<sup>7</sup> Still, all three patterns of *ich dachte*-DA have in common

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6. In 14 of these cases two patterns were combined (interjection + non-subordinated clause  $n=13$ ; interjection + elliptic fragment of a complement clause  $n=1$ ).

7. In the remainder of our paper we will refer to the assumption that is valid at the current moment of talk as X; the discrepant assumption that was held to be true beforehand will be referred to as Y.

that they are used to express that an assumption that was held to be true at some other time has since been realized to not hold true (anymore). We first discuss the first two patterns in non-narrative contexts (Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2). A discussion of the narrative uses follows in Section 3.1.3.

### 3.1.1 Making a discrepant assumption public

The first use of *ich dachte*-DA occurs in the context of the following sequential pattern:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (1) Speaker 1 (S <sub>1</sub> )  | Performs an action which shows that they consider an assumption X to be valid.   |
| (2) Speaker 2 (S <sub>2</sub> )  | Expresses with an <i>ich dachte</i> -framed formulation (= <i>ich dachte</i> -DA) that they had held a discrepant assumption Y to be valid until S <sub>1</sub> produced their previous action |
| (3) Speaker 1 (or another person responsible for the validity of assumption X) | Accounts for why Y is not valid (anymore) and how X came into existence.   |

In (1), three friends talk about an evening they had initially spent together. When LK asks AM what time AM and her boyfriend went to a party later that same evening (lines 01–05), LP states that AM did not tell her about the party (line 07); instead, LP declares that she thought that AM and her boyfriend went to a theater performance (line 09).

#### (1) FOLK\_E\_00042\_SE\_01\_T\_01\_co892<sup>8</sup>

- |      |    |  |  |
|------|----|--|--|
| 01   | LK | wann SEID ihr denn da noch (.) dahIn?                  |  |
|      |    | when did you go there then                             |  |
| 02   |    | (0.5)  |  |
| 03   | LK | nachDEM ihr da,  |  |
|      |    | after you were   |  |
| 04   |    | (0.3)  |  |
| 05   | LK | in der HAUPTstraße saßt o[der was-]                    |  |
|      |    | sitting there on main street or what                   |  |
| 06   | AM | [JA; ]   |  |
|      |    | Yes  |  |
| 07   | LP | [j ]a du hasch mir gar nich geSAGT dass ihr da (seid), |  |
|      |    | well you didn't tell me at all that you were there     |  |
| 08   | LP | =sonst wären wir AUCH gekOmmen;                        |  |
|      |    | or we would have come as well                          |  |
| → 09 | LP | <i>ich hab gedacht ihr seid im theAter;</i>            |  |
|      |    | I have.AUX.1SG think.PTCP you are in.the theater       |  |
|      |    | <i>I thought you were at the theater</i>               |  |
| 10   |    | (0.7)  |  |
| 11   | AM | ich wUsste nich dass dass du daHIN willst,=lena        |  |
|      |    | I didn't know that that you wanted to go there Lena    |  |

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8. All transcripts and aligned audio files are publicly available via [dgd.ids-mannheim.de](http://dgd.ids-mannheim.de) (“FOLK\_E\_00042\_SE\_01” specifies the audio file, “T\_01” the transcript, and “co892” the contribution no. of the first line of the extract). The transcriptions follow GAT2-conventions (Couper-Kuhlen & Barth-Weingarten, 2011; Selting *et al.* 2009; cf. Appendix).

- 12 (0.5)  
 13 AM ja URsprünglich war ja geplAnt dass der philipp und ich=  
 well originally y'know what was planned was that Philipp and I  
 14 =wir wollten in des theAter ähm-  
 we wanted to go to this play  
 15 GEhen in dem; \*hh  
 in this  
 16 (.) ins IMprotheater;  
 to the improv theatre  
 17 (0.5)  
 18 LK hm\_hm,  
 hm\_hm  
 19 AM und dAnn waren wir aber zu spät DRAN, (. )  
 and then however we were running late  
 20 und dann ham wir gedacht okAY wir gehen zur party.  
 and then have.AUX we think.PTCP okay we go to.the party  
 and then we thought okay we are going to the party

Prior to this excerpt, AM has told her friends about a party that she and her boyfriend went to on the evening discussed here. This forms the first position of this sequential pattern of the use of *ich dachte*-DA: AM (as S<sub>1</sub>) performs an action which shows that she considers an assumption X (here: AM and her boyfriend went to a party on the evening they are discussing) to be valid. This makes LP discover that what she had previously believed about what AM and her boyfriend did that evening after the friends parted was wrong. LK, who also met AM and her boyfriend before they went to the party, asks AM if they went there after they had met LK (line 01). Competing with AM as next speaker (line 06), LP (as S<sub>2</sub> in the second position of this sequential pattern) states that AM had not informed her that AM and her boyfriend were going to go to a party (“ja du hasch mir gar nich geSAGT dass ihr da (seid),” ‘well you didn’t tell me at all that you were there’; line 07) and claims that she and her boyfriend would have joined them had they known this (line 08). Prefacing it with *ich dachte*, LP then formulates her previous discrepant assumption Y (= 2nd position of the *ich dachte*-DA-practice) that AM and her boyfriend were at a theater performance (“ich hab gedacht ihr seid im theAter;” ‘I thought you were at the theater’; line 09). *Ich dachte* thus displays that this assumption has now been revealed to be outdated.

LP’s description in lines 07–09 is built to reproach AM that she had not updated LP about her changed plans for the rest of the evening. LP makes clear that this led to her being misinformed, which precluded her from coordinating her own activities with AM’s activities that evening. LP thus indexes that she feels entitled to know about AM’s plans and activities and that she assigns to AM the responsibility of keeping LP updated about changes in a timely manner, so that LP will be able to coordinate her actions with those of AM.

AM does not reject LP’s claim to be entitled to know about (changes to) AM’s plans. In third position, AM responds to LP’s reproach with a justification and an account of how LP’s assumption became outdated (lines 11–20): AM first states that she did not know that LP intended to join them (line 11), thereby suggesting



that, if she had known that, she would have informed LP about her change of plans. Then AM confirms that LP's assumption that AM and her boyfriend were going to go to the theater was originally correct (lines 13–16), but that they were delayed and therefore changed their plans (lines 19–20). AM's provision of an immediate account of the reason why she did not inform LP, together with her detailed description of the circumstances under which LP's former state of knowledge became outdated, is produced to repair the rupture of intersubjectivity indexed by LP's *ich dachte*-TCU. AM's account is designed to discard any suspicion that she did not update LP out of neglect or on purpose. Instead, AM attributes the failure to update LP to unintentional factors. With this extensive account AM displays that she shares LP's expectations concerning the duties of maintaining an intersubjectivity of knowledge.

Both LP and AM index that failing to communicate changes of states of knowledge on which (possibilities for) joint activities depend is treated as a violation of normative expectations of sustaining intersubjectivity, which are tied to the interpersonal relationship between the participants (cf. Smith 2013). With their in situ management of emerged epistemic asymmetry, participants display that (close) social relationships normatively require timely synchronization of participants' states of knowledge (cf. Smith 2013). The relevance of maintaining epistemic symmetry in the relationship has both a pragmatic and an emotional side. First, the establishment of informational common ground is the prerequisite for the coordination of joint activities.<sup>9</sup> Second, the communication of subjective knowledge is a display of interpersonal affiliation and solidarity (Enfield 2006, 2008): interpersonal attachment is expected to be attested by communicating relevant subjective knowledge firsthand to others with whom the speaker has a close relationship.

Mostly, "I thought"-turns formulate events that are for the prior speaker firsthand knowledge" (Smith 2013: 321), i.e. events and bits of knowledge within the realm of S1's expertise (i.e. their subjective states, intentions, biographic experiences, areas of professional expertise; cf. Heritage 2012a; Pomerantz 1980). Therefore, S2's (the *ich dachte*-speaker's) assumption is not just a discrepant assumption, but S1's turn in the first position of this sequential pattern is taken to have revealed that it is an incorrect assumption. If an *ich dachte*-DA is followed by an account by S1 in the third position of this sequential pattern, this indexes that it does not simply display an imbalance of knowledge or expectations between participants. The "account for the discrepancy suggests that the 'I thought' speaker is

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9. This is why informational updating is not only crucial for close interpersonal relationships, but also for all task-oriented, role relationships in which the exchange of knowledge is relevant to the coordination of joint activities.

recognized as already having been informed on the topic prior to the ‘I thought’ recipient’s just previous informing” (Smith 2013: 321), i.e. S<sub>1</sub> orients to the fact that S<sub>2</sub>’s assumption was valid, and had maybe even been conveyed by S<sub>1</sub> or at least rationally motivated at some earlier time.

In about half of the cases of S<sub>2</sub> making a discrepant assumption public with an *ich dachte*-DA ( $n=21/43$ ), S<sub>1</sub>, however, does not produce an account for why S<sub>2</sub>’s assumption does not hold (anymore). The lack of account, and no demand for an account by S<sub>2</sub>, indexes that the discrepancy in plans, opinions, or knowledge has little influence on S<sub>2</sub>’s plans and knowledge and thus does not touch on commonalities which are constitutive of the participants’ relationship. In such cases, the simple assertion that S<sub>2</sub>’s assumption does not hold might be enough, as in (2). PB and AM are planning a journey to Thailand. PB is preparing to update AM on the research he did on hotels. AM responds that she expected him to deal with her holiday packing list first. However, previously in the same interaction, AM had asked PB what they would do next. PB proposed to first have a look at the hotels and then at AM’s holiday list, which she did not oppose.

(2) FOLK\_E\_00030\_SE\_01\_T\_01\_C109

- 01 PB ä:h[m- ]  
u:hm
- 02 AM [°h ja aaber]  
yeah but
- 03 AM *ich dachte* du wolltst dir erst meine  
I think.PST.1SG you wanted PRO.REFL first my  
*URLaubsliste* angucken.  
holiday.packing.list look.at  
I thought you wanted to look at my holiday packing list first
- 04 PB nee des mach\_mer GLEICH;  
no we’ll do that in a minute
- 05 AM oKAY.  
okay

PB (line 04), as S<sub>1</sub>, does not account for why AM’s assumption (line 03) does not hold, and neither does AM, as S<sub>2</sub>, orient to an account being relevant. These both seem to be due to the fact that it is AM (as S<sub>2</sub>) who deviates from the original plan with her *ich dachte*-DA. Therefore, PB is not responsible for why AM’s assumption does not hold. This is different from cases like (1) in two respects: The invalidation of the assumption Y does not fall into the realm of the first speaker’s responsibilities, and the point in time at which the new information X is relevant for the next action coincides with the point in time at which it becomes available. This provides *ich dachte*-speakers (here: AM) with the opportunity to adjust their actions to the new state of knowledge.

In the pattern we discussed in this section, S<sub>2</sub>’s *ich dachte*-DA almost always indexes a coordination problem: S<sub>2</sub> states that, or lets it be inferred that, by virtue of expecting Y to be true, they would have acted (or will act) differently than what is adequate given that X is true.

### 3.1.2 Accounting for an inadequate action with a discrepant assumption

A different use of *ich dachte*-DA occurs in fourth position relative to some second-positioned prior action of the same speaker. Speakers use *ich dachte*-TCUs in this environment to account for some prior action which might have looked or has overtly been treated as improper by a conversational partner. They do so by revealing that that action was built upon a misunderstanding of a prior turn or action of an interlocutor. With the *ich dachte*-TCU in fourth position, S<sub>2</sub> expresses some assumption which accounts for their second-positioned response to S<sub>1</sub>, but which was revealed to be invalid by S<sub>1</sub>'s third-positioned action. The *ich dachte*-account is used to restore the intelligibility or moral acceptability of the action in the second position, which otherwise would seem to be normatively inadequate in some way or another (irrational, stupid, impolite, premature, etc.). The sequential pattern is:

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(1)	Speaker 1 (S <sub>1</sub> )	Produces some action.
(2)	Speaker 2 (S <sub>2</sub> )	Responds to S <sub>1</sub> 's action in (1).
(3)	Speaker 1	Responds to (2) in a way which displays that or lets S <sub>2</sub> infer that S <sub>2</sub> 's response was not normatively adequate.
(4)	Speaker 2	Explicitly produces an <i>ich dachte</i> -DA, formulating the incorrect assumption Y which, had it been correct, would have provided for the acceptability of S <sub>2</sub> 's action in second position.
(5)	Speaker 1	Confirms the incorrectness of Y.

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Simple cases of this use of *ich dachte* in fourth position involve misunderstandings of references in the co-participant's prior talk. An example is (3): PB and AM are in the kitchen and talking about food:

#### (3) FOLK\_E\_00027\_SE\_01\_T\_01\_C0051

01	PB	*hh was (.) Süßes selbstgebacke[nes;] something sweet home-baked	
02	AM		[WIRK]lich? really?
03	PB	JA_A. ye_es	
04		(0.3)	
05	AM	ja oKAY; yea okay	
06		(1.8)	
07	PB	werd_s jetzt ma WEGschmeißen, I'm going to throw it away now	
08	AM	un waRUM denn? but why?	
09		(0.7)	
10	PB	den MÜLL. the garbage	
11		(0.4)	

→ 12	AM	ach ich dachte	du SCHMEIßT=
		PTCL I think.PST.1SG	you throw
		oh I thought you were throwing	
13		des süße STÜCKchen weg.	
		the sweet piece.DIM away	
		away the pastry	
14	PB	°h NEE- hh°	
		no_o	

In line 01, PB mentions ‘something sweet home-baked’. In line 07, PB (as S<sub>1</sub>) announces that he will throw something (‘it’) away.<sup>10</sup> AM (as S<sub>2</sub>) reacts to this announcement with a *why*-question, which is a conventional way of reproaching (Günthner 1996). In his response, PB does not address the reproach but orients to it as a repair initiator: with the NP “den müll” (‘the garbage’, line 10), PB repairs his pronominal reference in line 07. The reproach seemed to presuppose that PB wanted to throw away the pastry. In line 12, AM produces the change-of-state token “ach” (Golato & Betz 2008), displaying that she now understands the correct reference. She adds an *ich dachte*-framed formulation, which confirms PB’s analysis that AM’s reproach rested on a referential misunderstanding. With this, she accounts for her prior reproach and cancels it at the same time. PB finally confirms that AM’s *ich dachte*-DA was wrong: “nee” (line 14).<sup>11</sup>

In terms of securing mutual understanding, fourth-positioned *ich dachte*-DA like in (3) are unnecessary. The understanding problem is already intersubjectively settled when AM produces the change-of-state token “ach” (line 12). For the purpose of accomplishing understanding in interaction, it may seem uneconomical and even puzzling to make an assumption explicit *post hoc*, after it has just been intersubjectively invalidated. However, in order to maintain a harmonious relationship and the identity of a competent and rational actor, it is important for AM to overtly account for her prior reproach by expressing that it rested on an incorrect assumption. She justifies her action as a reproach that would have been legitimate if this assumption had applied. By implication, the account also works to publicly withdraw the reproach. AM’s actions of both pragmatically retracting the prior action and accounting for it as an action which was rational under subjectively assumed, but factually incorrect, assumptions display that she is concerned with the public restoration of both the intelligibility and the normative acceptability of her action, which otherwise would have seemed unmotivated.

10. Since PB does not indicate a topic shift and uses pronominal reference in line 07, which may be taken to be co-referential with “süßes selbstgebackenes” in 01, the linguistic design of his turn invites referential misunderstanding (which, however, might have been excluded by visual monitoring of his embodied action).

11. Confirmations of the invalidity of the *ich dachte*-DA in this pattern are always produced with negative tokens. The negation thus does not negate the proposition expressed by the prior turn (i.e. that S<sub>2</sub> thought that Y be the case), but only the embedded assumption Y.

In contrast to AM in (1), PB, who has first-hand knowledge about the reference he intended in line 07, does not account for the fact that his knowledge is discrepant from what AM assumes. In most of the instances of *ich dachte*-DA used as accounts for prior inadequate actions of the *ich dachte*-speaker, the recipient (S<sub>1</sub> in this pattern) does not give an account for why X does not hold. An account only seems to be produced by S<sub>1</sub> if, as in (1), there was a prior occasion on which the assumption Y, which was later invalidated, was communicated by S<sub>1</sub>, or at least could count as intersubjectively valid. If, however, S<sub>1</sub> has not previously taken a stance that could be understood as subscribing to the assumption Y which S<sub>1</sub> later invalidated, then no account for the invalidating assumption X is delivered. This applies *a fortiori*, if, like in most cases of referential misunderstandings, no account is needed to understand why X is valid and if the understanding of X does not hinge on knowing how the state of affairs Y came to be changed into X.

Misunderstandings leading to inadequate responses which are later accounted for with *ich dachte*-DA may also concern aspects of conversational meaning other than reference. In (4), AM starts to tell her roommate US about an MRI examination she underwent that same day. Responding to AM's story announcement, US asks about the (medical) reason for the examination.

(4) FOLK\_E\_00055\_SE\_01\_T\_03\_c384

01 AM ja mein VAtter der hat;  
my father  
02 \*h geFRAGT, ähm;  
asked me  
03 wie\_s mir GEHT,=  
how I'm doing  
04 =weil ich heute (.) ähm ne KERNspintographie hatte,  
because I had an MRI today  
05 (.) \*hh (.) äh wegen meinem RÜCKen.  
because of my back  
06 [UND;]  
and  
07 US [was ] IS da?  
what is (wrong) there?  
08 (0.2)  
09 AM weil-  
because  
10 me:in (.) orthoPÄde.  
my orthopedist  
11 weil ich (.) ich hatte so RÜCKenschmerzen,  
because I (.) I had so much back pain  
12 er hat halt gemeINT-  
he suggested  
13 [an dem EInen, ]  
on one of the  
14 US [\*h ach SO ]was;  
oh something like this  
→ 15 ach **ich hab** **DACHT**-=  
PTCL I have.AUX.1SG think.PTCP  
oh I thought  
16 =jetz schon irgendwas was SCH[LIMmes;=weil du ]  
it was something serious because you  
17 AM [ach QUATSCH quatsch;]  
oh no not that

```

18             [<<all>NEIN nein nein nein nein;]
                no no no no no
19 US             [(xxx)(kernspintomographie) ]
                (MRI)
20 AM  °h NICHTS schlimmes;
                nothing serious

```

AM responds to US's query (07) that she had been suffering from back pain (lines 09–13). After a change-of-state token indicating that she had made an incorrect assumption (line 14), US continues her turn by stating that she had thought AM suffered from a serious medical problem (lines 15–16). US's *ich dachte*-DA accounts for her prior query (line 07) as having been motivated by an empathetic concern for the friend's state of health. AM confirms the incorrectness of the *ich dachte*-DA: "ach quatsch quatsch nein nein nein nein nein" ('oh no not that, no no no no no'; lines 17–20).

Retrospective accounting for incorrect assumptions, however, does not necessarily require that S2 has produced an overt action which has been revealed to be inadequate. There are also cases in which S2 states an *ich dachte*-DA concerning inadequate interpretations of S1's action without thereby accounting for some own prior action. In our data, such disclosures of inadequate interpretation serve purposes of entertainment, exhibiting conceivable, but not factual, funny hearings and interpretations of partners' actions. In Extract (5), four students sharing an apartment are having dinner together. AM pours wine into NH's glass. US teases AM with an *ich dachte*-DA (line 04), asserting that she thought that AM would pour the wine into NH's other glass which is filled with salad dressing.

#### (5) FOLK\_E\_00055\_SE\_01\_T\_05\_c252

```

01 AM ((pours wine into NH's glass))
02 AM dann ma[ch_ma_s (leer)]
        then we will make it (=the bottle of wine) empty
03 NH [ja aber nich MEHR weil ich en größeres-
        well but not more (for me) because I (have) a larger one (=glass) ]
→ 04 US [ich hab          grAd schon eben gedacht  du stEUerst auf]
        I have.AUX.1SG just PTCL before think.PTCP you head to
        I just thought you were heading for the glass
        des GLAS zu;=
        the glass PTCL
05 AM =!NEI::[:N!
        no_o
06 US      [°h ich wollt schon] (so) SCHREIN,
        I already wanted to kind of scream
07 US [<<h> !HA:::LT-!>] ((lacht))
        stop
08 NH [des is meine re ]stliche saLATsoße;
        this is my remaining salad dressing
09 NH bitte NICHT; ((laughs))
        please don't
10 LM ((laughs))
11 AM NEI:N ach QUATSCH.
        no nonsense

```

Before her *ich dachte*-initiated TCU (line 04), US did not produce any display of her mistaken assumption about AM's action, namely, that she would pour

the wine into the glass containing the salad dressing. US accounts for an action which she did not perform, i.e. asking AM to stop her action (line 06–07). The incorrect assumption did not become obvious in US's prior behavior, nor did her *ich dachte*-DA project an account from AM for why she did not pour the wine into the glass with the salad dressing. The (purported) rupture of intersubjectivity here serves as a means to create entertainment by imagining an incongruent action which is obviously not factual. Stating an obvious untruth here is used not to index and repair an intersubjectivity problem, but to tease the addressee, AM, who responds with a serious, "po-faced" rejection (Drew 1987) of its truth in lines 05 and 11. Although in both serious and unserious cases of accounting with an *ich dachte*-DA it is probably almost always clear to participants upon the production of the *ich dachte*-DA that S2's assumption Y is not valid (anymore), S1 almost always responds by negating Y in our data. Obviously, it is important for speakers to ensure that the partner's discrepant assumption be excluded from common ground and that, instead, their own assumption is intersubjectively accepted as being valid.

As mentioned in Section 2, *ich dachte*-TCUs may also be used to provide intentions or reasons for actions, however, without indexing that they are invalidated or contested in some way.<sup>12</sup> The uses of *ich dachte*-DA discussed in Section 3.1.2 also provide intentions or reasons for actions. Both practices serve to express that the *ich dachte*-speaker is a rational actor whose actions and thoughts are based on prior reflection. However, there is an important distinction: in the cases of *ich dachte*-DA, the rational basis for the action provided has turned out to be wrong and it is only by virtue of this property that the assumption is stated at all. The *ich dachte*-DA is locally occasioned by the prior sequence: either the incorrectness of the assumption has led to an inadequate action within the sequence, and thus demands an account, or the revelation of an inadequate interpretation provides an entertaining frame for prior actions.

Before we turn to the discussion of the narrative practice of *ich dachte*-DA, we want to discuss co-occurring linguistic, interactional, and pragmatic properties of the two non-narrative *ich dachte*-DA practices. There are different functions of using *ich dachte*-DA; for speakers, therefore, the task is to constrain its local meaning, whereas hearers have to identify the relevant meaning. It must be noted that there is no necessary property which uniformly applies to all instances of *ich dachte*-DA that does not occur with any other of the *ich dachte*-practices

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12. These uses are similar to what Couper-Kuhlen (2007: 110) found for the use of reported thoughts to account for actions: "Accounts which involve quoting thoughts are useful because they reveal the accountable action to have been a deliberate decision, undertaken (or not) for a reason."

mentioned in Section 2. However, we found several properties which co-occur in some instances of *ich dachte*-DA, but which were not used with any of the other *ich dachte*-practices. The following properties are thus sufficient and optional, but not necessary, conditions for the practice of ‘stating a discrepant assumption’ in non-narrative uses:<sup>13</sup>

1. The correct assumption has been established by another speaker with first-hand or superior knowledge (k+, cf. Goodwin 1981: 149–166), while the *ich dachte*-speaker has only second-hand or less knowledge (k-). S1’s action either includes an explicit statement X or is itself an action which contradicts the assumption Y formulated in the *ich dachte*-framed formulation (Extracts (4) and (5)), or the validity of X could be inferred from S1’s action which rules out that the assumption Y expressed in the *ich dachte*-TCU is valid (Extracts (1) and (3)).
2. *Ich dachte* or the clause which is framed by *ich dachte* is in subjunctive mood. In  $n=28/102$  instances in the non-narrative uses (27.5%), *ich dachte* ( $n=8$ ) or the clause which is framed by *ich dachte* is in subjunctive mood ( $n=20$ ). As is typical for spoken German, speakers in our data never use subjunctive I, but always subjunctive II, the restrictive subjunctive (Weinrich 1993: 253–254). This codes that the state of affairs reported is not factual and expresses that a proposition may be true under certain conditions which do not hold. Subjunctive mood indexes that S2 is willing to give up their belief that Y is true (or has already given it up). This is the case in the following extract from a maptask experiment. HAN2 accounts for an incorrect action that he has taken before, based on the assumption that he was supposed to draw a line ‘above’ a picture of caravans instead of ‘below’ them. Prior to Extract (6), this misunderstanding was already resolved.<sup>14</sup> HAN1’s account with *ich dachte* and the subjunctive is given (line o6) after he has drawn the correct line.<sup>15</sup>

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13. The same applies to the (partially similar) co-occurring features of the narrative uses, which will be discussed at the end of Section 4.1.3.

14. While the maptask experiment elicits coordination problems arising from different states of knowledge by giving the participants two maps that differ in some pictures, the coordination problem here is due to a misunderstanding arising from the interaction itself.

15. HAN2’s confirmation request “then it is below them, right?” is not referring to whether the line is supposed to end there, but to whether it has ended up there after HAN1 follows her instructions.



## (6) FOLK\_E\_00101\_SE\_01\_T01\_c329

01	HAN2	und dann GEHst du-;= and then you go
02		=n wenn du DANN-= if you then [=ne grAde linie nach RECHTS,] (draw) a straight line to the right
03	HAN1	[UNter denen vorbei.=ne? ] below past them, right?
04	HAN2	dann i[sses] doch UNter denen;=RICH[tig?] then it is below them, right?
05	HAN1	[ja- ] [ *h ] yes
- 06	HAN1	ja <i>ich dachte</i> ich <i>müsst</i> über den_n yes I think.PST.1SG I must.SBJV.PST over them vor[bei.=oKAY;] past okay yes I thought I would have to go above past them okay
05	HAN2	[nee; ] UNter den_n. no below them

3. Temporal adverbials like “grad” (‘just’) in Extract (5) or “für einen moment” provide additional information about the speaker having overcome the assumption Y. As the role of temporal adverbials is also important to their projecting function within the narrative uses, we will deal with them in more detail in Section 4.1.3.
4. Pre-positioned news-receipts and change-of-state tokens. If S<sub>2</sub> begins their *ich dachte*-TCU with a news receipt concerning S<sub>1</sub>'s turn ( $n=32/102$ , 31.4% of the non-narrative uses of *ich dachte*-DA) and, more specifically, with one of the change-of-state tokens *ach* (Extract (3), line 12), *ahso*, *achso* (Extract (4), line 15), *ahja*, or *tatsächlich* (see Betz & Golato 2008; Golato 2010; Golato & Betz 2008; Imo 2009;  $n=19/102$ , 18.6% of the non-narrative uses of *ich dachte*-DA), this is an unambiguous display that the following assumption prefaced by *ich dachte* is invalidated. With the change-of-state token, the speaker claims that some state of affairs which was not known before is now known or that some turn which was misunderstood or not understood is now understood correctly (Heritage 1984, 2006, 2010). Since displaying a change of state is a responsive activity, it is tied to the interactive uses discussed in Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2. *Ich dachte* here works like a contrasting connective (like *aber* ‘but’) with respect to the preceding change-of-state token.

### 3.1.3 *Contrasting an invalidated assumption with a corrected assumption within a narrative context*

The uses of *ich dachte* discussed in Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 are interactionally occasioned by an interlocutor's prior action. In narratives, *ich dachte*-DA is used to report an assumption Y about some event which turned out to be wrong, because it was later invalidated by a correct assumption X (see Jefferson 2004; Sacks 1992, Vol. 1: 787–788; Wooffitt 1991). In contrast to the interactive cases discussed so far,

both assumptions Y and X are reported within one multi-unit turn and they are ascribed to the same person, the told self, as an invalidated past assumption vs. a valid current assumption. The *ich dachte*-part is constitutive of the narrative climax (Labov & Waletzky 1967), because in this kind of narrative, it is not the chain of (unexpected) actions (see Quasthoff 1980: breach of plan) but the change of the epistemic state of the self that accounts for the tellability of the story. Canonically, the narrative contrast between the invalidated assumption Y and its correction X is ordered chronologically in the same way in the telling sequence as in the story-world. The order thus is '*ich dachte*-DA Y – correct assumption X'.

This is the case in (7). LP describes her visit to a gay club. First, she points out that she thought she did not have a problem “with it” (=Y), but during her visit she realized that it was “too much” and she wanted to leave (=X).

(7) FOLK\_E\_00042\_SE\_01\_T\_02\_c488

- 01 LP ähm (.) also ich war mal in so ner SCHWULendisko.=ja,  
uhm well I was at a gay club once, right?
- 02 (0.3)
- 03 LP und LESbendisko;  
and lesbian club
- ((...))
- 08 LP ((unintelligible)) und weil ich hab halt\_n (.) schwulen  
FREUND?  
and because I have a gay friend
- 09 (0.3)
- 10 LP aus meiner äh (.) alten KLASse,  
from my old class
- 11 und ähm-  
and uhm
- 12 ((clears throat)) *da hab ich gedacht*  
PTCL have.AUX.1SG I think.PTCL  
*ich hab kein problem damit?*  
I have no problem with.it  
I thought I didn't have a problem with it
- 13 ((clears throat)) ich GEH dahin.  
I'm going to go there
- 14 LK (.) hast du doch aber SCHON.  
but you do have (a problem with it)
- 15 (1.3)
- 16 LP und ähm; (.)  
and uhm
- 17 LEUT des war-  
guys it was
- 18 (.) es war halt schon (.) KRASS,=  
it was wicked
- ((...))
- 22 LP also sehr viele [JUGendlich;]  
so a lot of juveniles
- 23 AM [hm- ]  
hm
- 24 (0.3)
- 25 LP JÜNGere jungs==  
younger guys
- 26 =und-  
and
- 27 (0.4)
- 28 LP es is halt einfach schon was ANderes.=  
it just makes a difference
- 29 =wenn du halt zwei normAle JUNGS siehst,  
if you see two normal guys

30 also du merkst ihnen nicht AN dass sie schwUL sind;  
 I mean you don't notice that they're gay  
 31 sie sind nicht TUNtig=  
 they're not swishy  
 32 =sie sind RIChtige jUngs,  
 they're real guys  
 33 (0.2)  
 34 LP und sie beGRABschen sich und [KÜSsen sich.]  
 and they are fondling and kissing each other  
 35 AM [hm; ]  
 hm  
 36 (0.2)  
 37 LP ich muss sAgen irgendwann war\_s mir dann geNUG,=  
 I have to admit that eventually I had enough  
 38 =und (.) dann woLLt ich auch  
 and then I wanted  
 39 (0.3)  
 40 [WEG.=]  
 to leave  
 41 LK [zu ] [VIEL. ]  
 too much  
 42 LP [=weil\_s] s war einfach zu VIEL.  
 because it just was too much  
 43 ja.  
 yes

Just as Jefferson (2004) and Wooffitt (1991) found in their data, the assumption Y serves to index that the teller is a rational person with moral integrity, in this case, that LP is not prejudiced against gay people and that she was not prepared to perceive them the way she ultimately did (lines 12–13). Against this backdrop, the discrepant negative evaluative stance against homosexuality that she takes in the following story is framed as being warranted by her experience. The *ich dachte*-DA thus serves to enhance the credibility of the reported feelings and to rule out possible unfavorable motivational attributions of her negative feelings to a prior attitudinal bias. The fact that *ich dachte* projects the formulation of an assumption which will turn out to be invalidated later in the story is clearly displayed by LK's response to the *ich dachte*-framed TCU in line 14: “but you do have (a problem with it).”

Unlike what is common for the temporal and epistemic dynamics of stories, it is sometimes not the correct second assumption X but rather the first assumption Y, which was later invalidated, which makes for the punchline of the story. In (8), AM talks about her recent radiologic examination. While she makes clear from the outset of her story that she indeed visited a radiology office (= X), the point of her story is that she first thought she had been sent to a veterinarian (= Y) when entering the doctor's office.

#### (8) FOLK\_E\_00055\_SE\_01\_T\_08\_c634

01 AM \*h wo ich HEUTE in dem \*h ((dental click)) ähm;  
 when I was at this uhm  
 02 \*h ((dental click)) in dieser (.) PRAxis war,  
 at this (medical) practice  
 03 für die (.) KERNspin,  
 for the MRI

→ 04        °h *dacht*            *ich* *erst*        *es wär\_n*                             *TIERarzt*;  
            think.PST.1SG I    at.first it be.SBJV.PST\_a vet  
            at first I thought it was a vet  
05        weil da w waren [UNten?]  
            because there were at the bottom  
06        NH     [h°        ]  
07        AM °h an den SCHEIben=  
            on the windows  
08        =Überall solche Pöster gehangen;  
            kind of posters hanging all over the place  
09        so von wegen °h stoppt *TIER*versuche;  
            like    stop animal testing  
10        und hAltet die ARten aufrecht und so;  
            and keep the species alive and stuff  
            und unseren (.) schützt unseren Urwald vom we we EF und so;  
            and our    save our rain forest by the world wildlife fund and stuff,  
            ja?  
            right?  
12        °h ä[hm (.) all]les VOLLgepostert;  
            uhm    everything cluttered up with posters  
13        NH     [m\_KAY;    ]  
            mkay  
14        AM <<all<dann hAb                                    *ich* *geDACHT*;=  
            then have.AUX.1SG I    think.PTCP  
            then I thought  
15        =okay (*ment*) (.) *bin* *ich* *vielleicht* *bin* *ich* *FALSCH?*>  
            okay (wait a minute) am I maybe am I at the wrong place  
16        °h aber [ich war dann doch RICHTig;=]  
            but in the end I was at the right place  
17        NH     [((laughs))        ]  
18        AM =und dann kam ich REIN?  
            and then I was called in

By using the temporal qualification *erst* ('at first') and the subjunctive *wär* ('was') together with *ich dachte* in line 04, AM projects that her reported thought that she had ended up at a veterinarian was to be invalidated later. AM provides a wealth of situational details — various posters with slogans advertising the protection of animals and nature — as reasons which made her believe that she had ended up at a veterinarian. The point of the story is this unexpected, situationally inappropriate assumption the told self is reported to have made at first (i.e. having been sent to a veterinarian), before finally learning that the normal, expectable definition of the situation (i.e. having been sent to a radiologist) indeed applies. The narrative contrast between the invalidated assumption and the correct one thus is different from what Jefferson (2004) and Wooffitt (1991) found in their data. The tellability of the story is not based on improbable but correct knowledge about the state of affairs that the teller reports to have acquired only later, whereas the teller's first thoughts are framed as normal assumptions, which anyone would have made. The story is therefore not — as in Jefferson's and Wooffitt's cases — about the factuality of some unlikely event (which threatens the credibility of the teller and requires proof that the teller was strongly disposed to perceive the scene as a normal person); it is a story about the funniness of some unlikely and eventually invalidated assumption, which, given the initial appearances, nevertheless looked like it could have been true. This, in turn, could also be understood as a (mild) moral criticism

of the circumstances (here: the decoration of the office) which led the speaker to arrive at the wrong assumption. Still, similar to findings by Jefferson (2004) and Wooffitt (1991), the teller takes care to display her rational perception of the situation: narrative details are presented as evidence that everyone would have concluded as she did that she had been sent to a veterinarian, given the way the medical office looked.

There are several co-occurring turn-constructural devices and pragmatic properties which index that *ich dachte* in a narrative context is used to project an assumption to be invalidated later:

1. The discrepant correct assumption is part of the common ground. In narratives, tellers often produce the story including the *ich dachte*-DA only after it has been settled beforehand that the *ich dachte*-framed assumption Y does not hold true ( $n=13/39$ , 33.3%). In these cases, by producing some statement which is incompatible with the truth of the representation of the state of affairs in the *ich dachte* TCU, the speaker makes it clear in the prior interaction or early in the narrative itself (i.e. in the abstract or the orientation of the narrative (Labov & Waletzky 1967)) that Y does not hold true (like in Extract (8), lines 01–03). Even if re-staging (Goffman 1974: ch13) some earlier, naïve, and erroneous state of mind with an *ich dachte*-DA-turn makes for the punchline of the story, this is seldom done in an unsafeguarded manner (i.e. without an account for the plausibility of Y at a previous point in time). This suggests that tellers' orientation to securing the identity of a rational and trustworthy person is most important, even though pre-informing the hearer that the *ich dachte*-DA will be invalidated runs the risk of spoiling the effect of the story. While in these cases common ground is built up during the current interaction, there are other cases in which participants can take it to be an intersubjectively settled fact that the assumption Y, framed by the *ich dachte*-DA, is not true, because some contradicting assumption X has already been part of their common ground prior to the current interaction. This may be the case because participants have shared an experience, have independent but equal access to the state of affairs in questions, or have talked about the issue earlier.<sup>16</sup> In (9), the participants talk about a person who all of those present know to be Laura's (LS) former boyfriend.

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16. In total, in more than half of the instances of *ich dachte*-DA ( $n=87/141$ , 61.7%), prior to the production of the *ich dachte*-TCU, the correctness of the discrepant assumption has already been established as common ground by virtue of an explicit statement of X, prior actions which presuppose X, or (presumably) shared prior knowledge that X is true.

## (9) FOLK\_E\_00042\_SE\_01\_T\_02\_c306

01 LS der hat halt ECHT so(.)Annei[gungen, ]  
 he really has like tendencies

02 LP [zum BEIsp]iel als ich die (.) laura  
 for example when I Laura

03 als ich den frEUnd noch nicht KANNte,  
 when I did not know her boyfriend yet

→ 04 **hab** **ich** **IMmer** **gedAcht** er wär schwul;  
 have.AUX.1SG I always think.PTCP he be.SBJV.PST gay  
 I always thought he was gay  
 I always thought he was gay

05 AM ((laughs))

06 LP ja ich kANnte den irgendwie von der Uni,  
 I knew him from university (.)

07 LS (.) hm\_hm-  
 uhuh

→ 08 LP **und hab** **IMmer** **gedAcht** **der** wär schwul-  
 and have.AUX.1SG always think.PTCP he be.SBJV.PST gay  
 and always thought he was gay

09 (0.8)

10 LP [UND ähm- ]  
 and uhm

→ 11 LS [**ich dacht** AUCH dass er] schwul is=-  
 I think.PST.1SG also that he gay is  
 I also thought that he was gay

12 LS [=beVOR ich ]mit ihm ((laughs)) zusAmmen [gekommen bin?]  
 before we became a couple

13 LP [dann HAB ich]  
 then I have

14 AM [a ha ] ha?

ahaha

In this case, it is the contrast between the shared knowledge that Laura's boyfriend is not gay and the fact that LP and even Laura (LS) herself had initially considered him to be gay which makes for the tellability of the story.

2. *Ich dachte* or the clause which is framed by *ich dachte* is in subjunctive mood. In Extracts (8) and (9), the use of the subjunctive mood is additionally projecting the fact that the told assumption Y turned out not to be true. Speakers in our corpus used subjunctive mood in 7 of 39 of the narrative cases (17.9%), six of them within the complement clause (as in Extracts (8) and (9)) and one within the *ich dachte*-phrase itself (“so extrem hätte ich es nicht gedacht”).
3. Temporal adverbials like *erst* (‘first’) in (Extract (8), line 04) also project the epistemic change of the speaker. This and other temporal adverbials, such as *am Anfang* (‘in the beginning’), *(zu)erst* (‘(at) first’; cf. Jefferson 2004), *damals* (‘previously’), and *einen Moment* (‘one moment’), or temporal adverbial clauses like *als ich den freund noch nicht kannte* (‘when I did not know the friend’; Extract (8), line 03), index that an assumption was taken to be valid for some past period of time, implicating that it is no longer believed to be true at present. As mentioned above, this also applies to the temporal qualifications used in the non-narrative practices described in Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2. Still, there is no routine temporal qualification used to index ‘stating a discrepant assumption’ — none of the past adverbials occurs in more than

three instances in our data. Moreover, *jetzt* ('now',  $n=2$ ) and *immer* ('always',  $n=4$ ) are also used for a temporal qualification of *ich dachte*-DA. In these cases the semantics of the temporal adverbials is altered, with *jetzt* meaning 'a moment ago' (cf. Imo 2010: 35–36), while *immer* is used as an extreme case formulation (Pomerantz 1986) which contextualizes the subjective certainty of the invalidated belief in the past.

As Extracts (8) and (9) show, several properties of turn-construction and pragmatic context may work together to support the interpretation of *ich dachte* as indexing an invalidated assumption. In 29 of the 39 narrative cases, one of the above-mentioned linguistic or discursive means is used. However, in one fourth of the cases ( $n=10$ ), none of these features applies. Instead, in such cases, the X is formulated only after the *ich dachte*-framed assumption Y. An example is (10). The participants collectively remember that one of the family's children once ate a large amount of the sugar peas growing in the family garden.

(10) FOLK\_E\_00161\_SE\_01\_T\_02\_c130

01 AU ich weiß nich wie viele KIlo- (.)  
I don't know how many kilos  
02 FK [ha, ]  
ha  
03 TU [!TON!][nen; ]  
tons  
04 AU [zUckerer]bsen  
[die dIEses jahr in sich rEIngestopft] hat-  
of sugar peas she wolfed down this year  
05 FK [°h ha ha ha °h ]  
hahaha  
→ 06 FK °h *ich dachte* die kriegt BLähungen oder BAUCHschmerzen-  
I think.PST.1sg she gets gas or bellyache  
I thought she would get gas or a bellyache  
07 aber NIX,  
but nothing  
08 is ja GUT gegangen; (.)  
(it) went well.

FK asserts an *ich dachte*-framed expectation about the effect of eating so many sugar peas (line 06), which is then invalidated by the telling of what actually happened (lines 07–08). Thus, the stance the speaker is taking towards the truth of Y may be unclear to the recipient while listening to the story or may be in need of later reassessment, because its truth-value is constrained only afterwards by the contrasting assumption X.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on a large corpus of talk-in-interaction, we have identified six practices of displaying epistemic stance using *ich dachte* in German talk-in-interaction. Most

frequently, *ich dachte* is used to index an assumption which contrasts with some other, contextually salient assumption. We have identified three sub-practices of indexing a discrepant assumption with *ich dachte*, which occur in three different sequential environments: (i) in response to a partner's action which states or lets it be inferred that an assumption X holds which is at odds with what the *ich dachte*-speaker has held to be true; (ii) as an account for some prior action of the *ich dachte*-speaker which turned out to be inapposite because it rested on a misunderstanding which is made explicit by the *ich dachte*-TCU; (iii) in the context of a narrative report of some assumption which became invalidated in the face of later events.

We have identified contextual grammatical practices, lexical co-occurrences, sequential positions, and turn-internal positions of *ich dachte* (related to narrative structure) which, together with participants' common ground established in prior discourse or by virtue of shared background knowledge, account for the meaning which applies in individual instances of *ich dachte*. However, we did not find any single property to be a necessary condition for the definition of one of the practices of *ich dachte*-DA discussed in a strict, i.e. all-or-nothing, sense.<sup>17</sup>

The findings reported in this paper show that the interactional properties of the practices associated with English *I thought* described by Jefferson (2004), Kärkkäinen (2009, 2012), Smith (2013), and Wooffitt (1991) also hold for German *ich dachte*. In addition, we have shown that speakers also use *ich dachte* to retrospectively normalize prior own actions that may have looked problematic because they built on misunderstandings which the speaker discovered only after the action was produced. Another new finding is the use of *ich dachte*-TCUs to create comic effects by reporting an absurd assumption which later turned out to be invalidated (or was known to be untrue even from the start). A practice which is used for managing epistemic incongruencies that emerge in interactions thus can be exploited for the creation of counter-factual, fictional scenarios made for entertainment and possibly for self-presentation as a funny co-participant and gifted story-teller.

The findings contribute to the study of epistemics in interaction in showing how intersubjective grounding and mutual agreement on shared assumptions and expectations is inevitable for the coordination of action, both in interaction and in terms of the plans of individual actors, insofar as they depend on what other people do and take to be true. *Ich dachte*-TCUs play an important role in indexing and repairing breaches of intersubjectivity because they formulate the speaker's epistemic position and initiate explications and negotiations of par-

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17. The same applies to the other practices with *ich dachte*.



ticipants' assumptions about the world, and expectations about their actions by which common ground is regained.

However, securing common epistemic ground for mutual (future) coordination is not all that matters. First, even if the epistemic causes have been identified and repaired, evidence for, and suspicions of, disagreement, neglecting to inform, and not closely attending to the partner, and other ways of acting improperly, may all jeopardize the quality of an interpersonal relationship and may make inferences about negative attitudes and unwanted expectations available. Therefore, once an epistemic discrepancy has become public, participants often invest much more discursive work in elaborating on the nature, the origins, and the incorrectness of invalidated assumptions than would be needed if it were only epistemic common ground concerning valid assumptions that had to be achieved. Second, invalidated assumptions may become an object of intrinsic conversational interest in their own right. Invalidated assumptions may be starting points for locally emerging comic moments in an interaction. They serve as material and points of departure for teasing and for entertainment based on what has been discovered to be absurd or incongruous, and for collaborative fictionalizing. In our data, extended sequences of deployment and treatment of assumptions found to be invalidated are limited to everyday conversations. Whenever participants are oriented to the progressivity of dealing with some institutional task, the restitution of epistemic common ground almost always closes the sequence.

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## Appendix. Selected GAT2-conventions

Sources: Selting et al. (2009), Couper-Kuhlen and Barth-Weingarten (2011)

[ ]	overlap and simultaneous talk
[ ]	
=	fast, immediate continuation with a new turn or segment (latching)
°h, °hh, °hhh	inbreath, according to duration
h°, hh°, hhh°	outbreath, according to duration

(.)	micropause (shorter than 0.2 sec)
(2.85)	measured pause
geht_s	assimilation of words
:, ::, :::	segmental lengthening, according to duration
haha hehe hihi	syllabic laughter
((laughs))	description of laughter
akZENT	strong, primary stress
akzEnt	weaker, secondary stress
ak!ZENT!	extra strong stress
?	pitch rising to high at end of intonation phrase
,	pitch rising to mid at end of intonation phrase
-	level pitch at end of intonation phrase
;	pitch falling to mid at end of intonation phrase
.	pitch falling to low at end of intonation phrase
<<all> >	allegro, fast
<<h> >	higher pitch register
((coughs))	non-verbal vocal actions and events
(xxx), (xxx xxx)	one or two unintelligible syllables
(solche)	assumed wording
((unintelligible, appr. 3 sec))	unintelligible passage with indication of duration
((...))	omission in transcript

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