Content

1	Introduction	1
2	Shared background—necessary presumptions and structural impossibilities	7
2.1	Lewis on conventions and common knowledge	9
2.1.1	The structure of common knowledge and its implications	10
2.1.2	Some further considerations concerning common knowledge	15
2.1.3	David Lewis and the study of shared background	21
2.2	Shared background from the point of view of cognitive psychology	21
2.2.1	The infinity of shared background: logical structure vs. empirical requirements	22
2.2.2	Common knowledge: cognitive benefits vs. processing costs	27
2.2.3	Mutual cognitive environments vs. shared background	30
2.2.4	Are mutual cognitive environments mutually shared?	34
2.2.5	Empirical studies on common knowledge	37
2.2.6	Conclusions on shared background in cognitive psychology	39
2.3	Shared background and the indeterminacy of interpretation	40
2.3.1	Background assumptions at the basis of Davidson's truth functionalism	42
2.3.2	Davidson on radical interpretation	44
2.3.3	Indeterminacy of interpretation and its limits	51
2.4	The concept of shared background and its empirical implications	59

3	Methods and data	62
3.1	Shared background in conversation— conversational repair as negative evidence	62
3.1.1	On conversation analysis as a method and the investigation of conversational repair	64
3.1.2	Repair from the point of view of its sequential organization	67
3.1.3	Repair sequences as interactive problem treatments	71
3.1.4.1	From the linguistic system to interactants' interpretations and problems: a shift in perspectives	71
3.1.4.2	Repair sequences as interactive trouble treatments	74
3.1.4	What makes shared background repair activities special	83
3.1.4.1	An ideal case of shared background treatment	85
3.1.4.2	Treating background without treating shared background: fourth position repair and similar cases	90
3.1.5	Repair sequences as structural evidence for the relevance of certain mental states to interactants	97
3.2	The data and their representation	98
3.2.1	The data-base	99
3.2.2	The Transcripts	102
3.2.3	Repair activities as interactive evidence	111
4	Shared background treatments in natural conversation: an empirical investigation	113
4.1	Shared background activities from a Gricean perspective	115
4.2	 Troublesome presuppositions and lack of background knowledge (i) The treatment of form-based trouble (ii) The treatment of referential trouble (iii) The treatment of expectational/inferential trouble 	 117 118 120 130

	(iv) The treatment of problematic sequential implicativeness	139
	(v) The treatment of trouble concerning the fundamental premis interaction	tes of 152
4.3	Troublesome redundancy and overexplicitness	162
	(i) The treatment of form-based trouble	163
	(ii) The treatment of referential trouble	165
	(iii) The treatment of expectational/inferential trouble	168
	(iv) The treatment of problematic sequential implicativeness	171
	(v) The treatment of fundamental trouble concerning the premis interaction	es of 176
4.4	The anticipation of trouble	177
4.5	Shared background, repair, and quantity expectations	181
5	Conclusions on shared background and repair in German conversation	184
Refer	References	