

What are the most common Modal Particles in German? the analysis of the occurrence of MPs in an authentic corpus based on contemporary discourses

Quais são as Partículas Modais mais usadas em alemão? Uma análise da ocorrência das PMs em um corpus autêntico baseado em discursos atuais

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Abstract

This article aims to investigate the frequency of occurrence of Modal Particles (MPs) in an authorial corpus composed of authentic texts from current genres such as comics, series, music, and social media posts. The corpus is part of teaching material developed for the instruction and learning of MPs in the Brazilian context, utilizing a description of the pragmatic function of these elements based on the minimalist approach (Weydt, 1969; Diewald, 2013; Aquino, 2024a). Although representing a well-defined class of words in the German language, there are still some divergences regarding their classification, especially concerning which elements can be considered MPs and which are more frequent in oral and written communication. Furthermore, the analysis of the occurrence of MPs has stagnated in recent years, which justifies the relevance of studies investigating their occurrence in diverse and contemporary genres. The results of this study represent a significant tool for both a more concrete understanding of the use of MPs and for exploring their didactic possibilities in teaching the German language.

Keywords: Authorial corpus and teaching material; authentic texts; teaching German modal particles.

Resumo

Este artigo tem como objetivo investigar a frequência de ocorrência das Partículas Modais (PMs) em um corpus autoral composto por textos autênticos de discursos atuais dos gêneros quadrinhos, séries, músicas e postagens em redes sociais. O corpus integra um material didático desenvolvido para o ensino e aprendizagem das PMs no contexto brasileiro, que utiliza a descrição da função pragmática destes elementos baseada na abordagem minimalista (Weydt, 1983; Diewald, 2013; Aquino, 2024a). Mesmo representando uma classe de palavras bem definida em língua alemã, ainda se encontram algumas divergências com relação a sua classificação, especialmente no que tange a quais elementos podem ser considerados PMs e quais são mais frequentes na comunicação oral e escrita. Além de serem prioritariamente baseadas em corpus escritos, a análise da ocorrência das PMs permaneceu estagnada nos últimos anos, o que justifica,



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portanto, a relevância de estudos que investiguem a sua ocorrência em gêneros diversificados e atuais. Os resultados deste estudo representam um instrumento relevante tanto para uma compreensão mais concreta do uso das PMs quanto para explorar suas possibilidades didáticas no ensino de língua alemã.

Palavras-chave: Corpus e material didático autoral; textos autênticos; ensino das partículas modais alemãs.

1. Introduction

Words such as *doch*, *mal*, *denn*, *aber*, *halt*, and *wohl* are linguistic elements belonging to the class of Modal Particles (MPs), which exhibit unique characteristics that distinguish them from their non-modal counterparts, such as conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositions. MPs have emerged from a diachronic process of grammaticalization that has led to a loss of semantic content but an increase in pragmatic complexity (Abraham, 1991). This transformation makes them essential tools for interpersonal cohesion, enabling speakers to convey their propositional attitudes and illocutionary information that can be inferred from the communicative context (Diewald, 2013).

Moreover, the selection of a particular MP depends on the interlocutors' metarepresentations regarding shared (or unshared) information within their cognitive environment (Gutt, 2005). According to Abraham and Leiss (2012), the identification and negotiation of such inferences can be understood as a complex process of double displacement between speakers. Given the reduced semantic meaning of MPs and their contextual dependence, as well as their intricate pragmatic nature, translating and teaching these elements presents some challenges.

In the realm of education, several difficulties arose due to the lack of appropriate teaching materials that provide a solid theoretical and practical foundation for a semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic description of the modal particle class (Aquino, 2020). Neglecting the teaching of these elements not only omits relevant content for discursive and sociocultural participation (Schröder, 2023) but can also lead to frustration and demotivation among students and teachers, especially since these elements frequently appear early in the process of learning German as an Additional Language (GFL).

Considering this context and the need for a teaching and learning proposal that meets the demands and interests of the academic environment for GFL in Brazil, a research group focused

on MPs was established in 2018, concentrating on three key areas: (i) studies on pragmatic function and linguistic description (syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic); (ii) contrastive analysis and translation, particularly, though not exclusively, in the Portuguese-German language pair; (iii) strategies and materials for teaching. All three objectives are interrelated, with the pedagogical perspective focusing on exploring concrete teaching proposals based on authentic examples and explanations of the functions of MPs through a minimalist approach (Weydt, 1983; Diwald, 2013; Aquino, 2024a).

The examples presented in this paper are drawn from a corpus created by the research group, which is available through the website. This corpus includes occurrences of MPs across various genres, such as comics, videos, series, films, Instagram and Twitter posts, music, and literary texts. The corpus sample has been collected over several years (2019-2024) by the project's researchers, along with feedback from users of the materials (either through the website or courses).

In addition to providing online teaching resources, the corpus also offers key characteristics that are essential for the study of MPs: high frequency of occurrences, authentic and accessible language, contextualized examples (both verbal and non-verbal), and themes that resonate with the interests and experiences of adult university students, including humor, politics, social media content, Netflix series, and literary texts. Its adaptability for the classroom is enhanced by both the language used and the variety of samples. In this sense, this corpus differs from those typically used in MP studies, which often rely on written texts (often journalistic) or transcriptions of oral exchanges, neglecting current usage in other discourses.

Therefore, this paper aims to investigate the occurrences and usages of MPs based on an authorial corpus with authentic examples extracted from a general archive of examples for 18 MPs (which includes comics, videos, Instagram posts and advertising), a series and a music sample. We intend to analyze the occurrences in these genres, which not only provide accessible language for comprehension and pedagogical adaptation across various proficiency levels but also allow for an authentic audiovisual experience of modal usage in the German language. Thus, this article presents an analysis of the most frequently occurring MPs in this corpus and their relevance for daily communication in German.

In the following sections, we provide an overview of MPs, including their classification and functions through the minimalist approach, followed by an introduction to the corpus and a reflection on the results of MP occurrences in our study sample. The final section will present the main conclusions of the work.

2. Modal Particles: Classification, Function, and Use

MPs are essential pragmatic-discursive elements for interpersonal cohesion (indicating the type of social act performed), as they function as tools for sharing and negotiating inferential meanings. According to Aquino (2020), words in this category can be described as:

- non-inflectable;
- cannot be negated (*kein, nein*) or intensified (*mehr, viel*);
- do not form sentences by themselves and do not answer questions;
- can be removed from the sentence without grammatical loss but at the expense of pragmatic meaning;
- are syntactically positioned in the central field (*Mittelfeld*);
- have scope over the entire sentence (relating the whole sentence to the communicative context and not to specific linguistic elements);
- occur in specific types of sentences (e.g., MP *denn* in questions and *doch* in exclamatory and imperative sentences);
- can be combined with other MPs (e.g., *doch mal; eigentlich nur*);
- have non-modal homonyms in other word classes;
- possess inferential meaning, i.e., context-dependent;
- exhibit a unique core communicative function (minimalist approach).

As discussed in the previous section, the complexity of using and understanding MPs stems from various determinants, such as their contextual dependence, inferential meaning, and the negotiation of the cognitive environment between interlocutors, among others. Additionally, as MPs result from a diachronic grammaticalization process derived from other word classes, they have non-modal homonyms, with the most common being adverbs (e.g., *schon, auch*), conjunctions (e.g., *aber, doch*), discourse markers (e.g., *ja, doch*), adjectives (e.g., *eben, bloß*), and

verbs (e.g., *halt*). Even though they share some semantic traits, over time MPs have developed distinct syntactic and pragmatic features, setting them apart from the lexemes from which they evolved, establishing their own word class (DUDEN, 2016; HENTSCHEL; WEYDT, 2013). In regard to the meaning of MPs, we work with a minimalist approach that considers each particle as having a specific communicative function, which consists in anchoring the utterance in a dialogic setting in a unique way (Aquino, 2024a), e.g., concessive for *doch*, adversative for *aber*, affirmative for *ja*, interrogative for *denn*.

According to Abraham (1991), identifying these words with a modal function requires a reconstruction process that involves a referential reading of the homonymous lexical element, considering its use in context. Therefore, distinguishing MPs from their non-modal homonyms requires a juxtaposition test of functions, meanings, and sentence placements. This relationship offers a highly relevant methodology for understanding, teaching, and translating these words. Hentschel and Weydt (2013) present a comparative analysis between the MP and the conjunction *aber*, identifying that the conjunction serves to connect two elements, x and y, where x can vary to a sequence z that is not true. In contrast, MPs, besides not presenting such a connective function, are positioned in the central field, have a specific pragmatic function, and their meaning is context-dependent. The following examples illustrate this contrast in German and Portuguese:

- (a) Ellen ist klein, aber stark (Hentschel; Weydt, 2013)
- (b) Ellen é pequena, mas forte (Aquino; Arantes, 2020)
- (c) Ellen is small but strong
- (d) Ihr seid aber groß geworden! (Hentschel; Weydt, 2013)
- (e) Mas como vocês cresceram! (Aquino; Arantes, 2020)
- (f) But how you have grown!

In the first examples, *aber*, *mas* and *but* are conjunctions, usually separated by commas, indicating a contrast or opposition between two (or more) pieces of information at the sentence level, in this case between "small" and "strong" (Aquino; Arantes, 2020). In the following examples, these words can be identified as MPs due to their scope over the entire sentence, connecting its content to the communicative context and being removable without syntactic loss.

Despite different positions (in German, the MP is in the central field, and in Portuguese, at the beginning of the sentence), these words are not separated by commas and carry a contextual meaning. Unlike their homonym, MPs exhibit a more complex relationship that goes beyond sentence content. The MPs *aber*, *mas* and *but* indicate a break in expectation regarding the quantity or quality of something, in this case, marking the speaker's admiration for the interlocutors' size.

MPs in German are characterized by distinct syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic characteristics as they homonym, and these characteristics developed diachronically by a grammaticization process through a systematic bleaching of the semantic content. The Grammaticization process describes a linguistic unit which moves from a lexical function to a grammatical one involving at least one of the following aspects: (i) increase of the morphosyntactic range; (ii) shift from lexical to grammatical status; (iii) loss of semantic or pragmatic complexity; (iv) loss of syntactic freedom or phonetic substance (ABRAHAM, 1991, p. 337). The MPs grammaticalization follows, at least partially, phenomena (iii) and (iv), as they are subject to severe constraints of syntactic mobility and the information they meaning is bleached in comparison to that of their correlative lexemes.

Abraham (1991) points out that the emergence of MPs can be observed since the Old High German (OHG; dating from 750 to 1050 A.D.), which had not yet developed a systemic Middlefield (Mittelfeld), which began to emerge during the new High German (NHG; from 1450 onwards). The author analyzes the occurrence of *doch* and *ja*, indicating that both MPs can be traced back to their use in Gothic, where they served as meta-commentary elements. As these words transitioned into MPs, they not only lost semantic strength, gained scope over the entire sentence, and settled into the middle field, but they also came to be identified as having an essential illocutionary function, which accounts for their increased pragmatic power. Identifying MPs requires recognition of their specific distributional behavior with respect to clause types and how their characteristic and illocutionary force comes about. Therefore, it is essential to identify the synthetic positioning and its communicative function, both of which differentiate it from the homonym. For many authors and materials in the German field, the most common PMs are the following:

- Abraham (2000): *doch*, *denn* *bloß*, *ja*, *schon*, *auch*, *vielleicht*, *aber*.
- Thurmair (2010): *aber*, *auch* *bloß*, *denn*, *doch*, *eben*, *eigentlich*, *einfach*, *etwa*, *halt*, *ja*, *mal*, *nur*, *ruhig*, *schon*, *vielleicht*, *wohl*.

- Bross (2012): *aber, auch, bloß, denn, doch, halt, eigentlich, ja, mal, ruhig, schon, wohl.*
- Duden (2016): *aber, auch, eben, mal, bloß, eigentlich, doch, ja, schon, denn, nur, etwa, halt, vielleicht, wohl.*

The most recurrent MPs, that is, mentioned by all sources are (in alphabetical order): *aber, auch, bloß, denn, doch, ja, schon*. However, many of these studies do not present a corpus base, but the occurrence of the most investigated MPs in the process of grammaticalization and use. In this article we intend to investigate which of these MPs are also recurrent and which deserve a new look in our corpus with authentic texts collected between 2019 and 2024. The corpus is organized in Google Drive folders with MPs divided by genre, which includes series, films, literature, music, videos, among others. This allows for the investigation of MPs in contemporary use, as well as serving as a reference material for GAL. The words included in the corpus were carefully analyzed to ensure they are MPs and not homonyms. Furthermore, all occurrences are labeled in the title with the sentence or sentences containing one or more MPs, and in the 'details' section, a more comprehensive description of the occurrence, source, and genre is provided. Therefore, this original corpus offers multiple benefits for research on the occurrence of MPs across these genres, as well as a variety of applications for teaching. In the next section, we present a detailed description of the corpus structure.

3. The Corpus

According to Berber Sardinha (2004), Corpus Linguistics is concerned with the collection and exploration of a set of linguistic textual data that has been carefully gathered with the primary purpose of researching a language or linguistic variety. Access to a corpus typically allows for the analysis of the usage and occurrence of contextualized words and expressions through lists of synonyms, frequency, collocations, and, especially, their meaning in different usage situations. In this sense, working with corpus tools offers an authentic and relevant perspective for the study and teaching of a language, as it enables the observation of usage in real-life situations, both formal and informal, written and spoken. With this resource, researchers and language learners can investigate the forms, combinations, frequencies, and contexts of language usage. Therefore, we consider that developing and consulting various corpora provides new insights into the structure and use of a language in authentic situations (Aquino et al. 2025).

The use of corpora to investigate the frequency of occurrences of a particular element in a given language in real-world use is of great importance for both linguistic research and language teaching. A corpus offers access to vast sets of authentic data, extracted from a variety of discursive genres, such as informal conversations, academic texts, journalistic materials, and others. This diversity is essential for the contextualized recognition of linguistic elements, such as modality, idiomatic expressions, and grammatical structures, which play crucial roles in daily communication but are often not adequately addressed in teaching materials (Aquino et al. 2025). For teaching purposes, corpus analysis provides valuable insights into the frequency and distribution of linguistic elements in real interaction contexts, helping in the creation of didactic materials that reflect the authentic use of the language. By incorporating materials based on corpus data and varied textual genres, language instruction promotes a deeper and more accurate understanding of the language, enabling students to use it more naturally and efficiently in different communicative situations.

In relation to the teaching of MPs in GAL, Manoel (1998) explores the use of corpora to present their pragmatic, semantic, and syntactic functions, offering alternatives to address the learning difficulties associated with these elements. Aquino (2019) proposes a teaching approach for the MPs *doch*, *denn*, *wohl*, and *halt* using the *Wortschatz corpus*, investigating their frequency, co-occurrence with other words, as well as their use within specific contexts. In both studies, as in many others, data were drawn from recurring samples of written examples, often from journalistic texts sourced from the internet, which tend to show fewer and more specific occurrences of MPs, limited to certain themes, contexts, and language styles.

Given the lack of accessible corpus of MP occurrences across different genres, contexts, and media, we created a project corpus that includes examples drawn from: comic, series, films, music, social media posts, videos, advertisement and literary texts. The corpus is divided into three folders: occurrences by MPs, with a total of 18 folders; a genre-specific folder with transcripts of MP occurrences in series, films, music and literary texts. The corpus was designed as a teaching and learning resource for MPs, aimed primarily at teachers but also at university-level students. The material includes explanations based on linguistic categorizations and the minimalist approach, which describes the core communicative functions of each MP. This material, available on a website, also includes exercise proposals, which use examples from the corpus.

The corpus data was collected from 2019 to 2024, representing a current resource for identifying MP usage. Furthermore, the breath and diversity of the corpus make it suitable for use in GAL classes from basic to advanced levels. We believe that the authenticity and contemporaneity of these examples, drawn from a variety of genres, can be essential for student motivation and engagement in German, fostering a more conscious reflection on language use and possibilities. Moreover, for our study, the authenticity and recency of the examples are key to understanding which MPs are most frequently used, not only in written corpus studies but in a plurality of contexts and discourses. In this article, we will present the occurrence of MPs across all sections and genres of the corpus, providing a clear overview of the most recurrent MPs. For the most frequent MPs, we will present concrete examples from the corpus to facilitate a better understanding of their use. In the next section, we present these data, along with a discussion of the results.

4. Analysis and Discussion

In this section, we present an analysis of the frequency of the most recurrent modal particles (MPs) across three tables, each organizing the data into three genre groups: the archive of examples for 18 MPs (including comics, Instagram posts, advertisement), occurrences in eight Netflix series, and occurrences in 30 songs. In addition to the occurrences, we provide a comparison of the frequency of usage across different modes (written and spoken language).

Table 1: Occurrence in the Archive of 18 MPs

Archive by MP		
	MP	Occurrence
1	doch	275 - 29,44%
2	ja	182 - 19,49%
3	mal	121 - 12,96%

4	denn	91 - 9,74%
5	wohl	79 - 8,46%
6	halt	39 - 4,18%
7	eigentlich	32 - 3,43%
8	aber	28 - 3,00%
9	einfach	27 - 2,89%
10	bloss	21 - 2,25%
11	schon	16 - 1,71%
12	übrigens	8 - 0,86%
13	ruhig	7 - 0,75%
14 - 16	eben, nur, auch	5 - 0,54%
17, 18	überhaupt, vielleicht	3 - 0,32%
Total occurrence		934

Source: the author

In the Drive, files are organized by folders for each MP occurrence. It becomes clear that *doch* not only represents the MP with most data but accounts for 29.44% of total occurrences. The second and third most frequent MPs were *ja* (19.49%) and *mal* (12.96%). Together, these three MPs comprise 61.89% of the occurrences in this section of the corpus, which includes examples from both written and spoken texts: comics, Instagram posts, advertisements, videos, and others. Next, we present the data on the occurrence of MPs in eight Netflix series, where the segments containing these modal elements were documented in a table that includes the moment of occurrence, the speaker, and the transcription of the sentence with the MP. In some cases, such as in *How to Sell Drugs Online*, the transcription of both subtitles and dubbing is included as part of research on modal usage in Portuguese (Aquino, 2024b).

Table 2: Occurrence in the Series Sample

Occurrence in Netflix series						
Series	Total ¹	Freq 1	Freq 2	Freq 3	Freq 4	Freq 1 - 4 ²
How to sell Drugs Online	642	doch (206)	ja (156)	denn (74)	mal (69)	505 78.6%
Dark	366	doch (116)	mal (66)	denn (59)	ja (53)	294 80%
Queer Eye	364	mal (128)	ja (71)	halt (57)	denn (46)	302 82%
Too hot to handle Germany	341	halt (94)	ja (70)	doch (62)	denn (26)	252 73,9%
Biohackers	178	doch (75)	denn (36)	ja (25)	mal (23)	159 89,4%
Liebeskind	142	doch (51)	denn (33)	ja (24)	mal (21)	129 90%
Zeit der Geheimnisse	114	doch (42)	denn (19)	ja (18)	mal (10)	89 78%
Das Signal	89	denn (28)	doch (27)	mal (12)	ja (10)	77 86,5%
Total Total of the five most frequent PMs					1.836 1.807	

Source: the author

As shown in the table above, the five most frequent MPs in the sample of eight series are: *doch* (579 occurrences - 32.1%), *ja* (427 occurrences - 23.6%), **denn** (364 occurrences - 20.1%), *mal*

¹ Total occurrence of all MPs.² Total occurrences of the four more frequent MPs.

(329 occurrences - 18.2%), and *halt* (151 occurrences - 8.3%). These five words account for an average of 73.7% of the total occurrences in the corpus. Similar to the previous sample, *doch* and *ja* remain the most frequent particles, with *denn* taking the third position, which may be related to the inherently oral nature of the sample. Next, we present the occurrences from the sample of thirty songs:

Table 3: Occurrence in the Music Sample

Songs		
	PMs	Ocorrência
1	doch	16 - 42,1%
2	mal	11 - 28,9%
3	ja	8 - 21,1%
4	wohl	2 - 5,3%
5 - 7	auch, einfach, schon	1 - 2,6%
Total occurrences		38

Source: the author

The sample of Music indicates that the most frequent MPs remains *doch* (16 occurrences - 42.1%) in first place, with *mal* (11 occurrences - 28.9%) occupying the second position and *ja* (8 occurrences - 21.1%) in third. The occurrence of these three MP represents an average of 92.1% of the sample. In summary, we can identify the following elements as most recurrent across all genres:

- (1) *doch* (28.8% - MP archive; 32,1% - series; 42,1% - music)
- (2) *ja* (19,1% - MP archive; 23,6% - series; 21,1% - music)
- (3) *mal* (12.7% - MP archive; 18,2% - series; 28,9% - music)

Thus, the research project's corpus indicates that the most frequent modal particles (PMs) across these genres are *doch*, *ja*, and *mal*. In this sense, we found little to no occurrence of the MPs cited as most frequent in the studies referenced in the previous section, namely: *auch*, *etwa*, *nur*, *eben*, *vielleicht* (Thurmair, 2010; Abraham, 2000; Bross, 2012; Duden, 2016). Other MPs that were not listed by the authors but showed significant occurrences in the corpus include *übrigens* and *überhaupt*. Additionally, we observed that instead of *eben* and *nur*, the most commonly found MPs with similar functions were *halt* and *bloß*, respectively. These results may suggest a shift in language use, particularly in MPs, at least concerning the examples within this corpus, which focuses less on formal written language.

The data highlights the most frequent MPs in a contemporary, original corpus collected between 2019 and 2024, covering genres within everyday language, especially spoken. This input is valuable for understanding the role of MPs in contemporary language and serves as a relevant educational resource for GAL. By presenting accessible language and recognizable contexts, these materials provide a rich representation that encourages student interaction with both the language and culture, facilitating engaged and contextualized learning. Next, we present an analysis of examples from the corpus of the three most recurrent PMs in each genre, highlighting their communicative functions within specific usage contexts.

MP *doch* in the sample of the archives of various genres - Instagram Post

According to the minimal approach, all MPs have a nuclear function, which in the case of *doch* is to indicate a contradiction. With this particle the speaker indicates an adversity, that the interlocutor should recognize or remember something: *I say this because I want to advise/instruct you to realize or do something* (Aquino, 2024a). With the following two *Instagram* posts, the teacher can support the definition of the nuclear function of *doch* and discuss the pragmatic meaning within the context.

Image 1: Buzzfeedgermany post with MP *doch*



Source: @buzzfeedgermany

In the example above, "Wir sind *doch* nur übers Wochenende weg"³ the use of *doch* represents its usual function of contradiction, the adversity can be understood by the relation between the sentence and the context presented by the image (Aquino et al. 2025). Therefore, the PM is chosen to suggest a contradiction between the pragmatic pretext (the image with a woman with a pile of suitcases) and the situation presented in the utterance (they are going for a weekend trip, it will not take that long). Thus, the speaker shows to his/hers interlocutor the need to notice this contradiction and probably to give an explanation.

MP *ja* in the series sample - How to sell Drugs online

Season 1, Episode 1: -26:30: Moritz: Man kann *ja* im Internet so tun, als hätte man das aufregendste Leben der Welt.

Portuguese dubbing: Já que na net você pode fingir que a sua vida é a mais perfeita do mundo.

English Dubbing: Because online you can pretend that your life is really exciting.

³ But we're only gone for the weekend!

Season 1, Episode 2: - 6:03: Polizist: Dich will **ja** hier keiner einsperren. Wir wollen **doch** an die dicken Fische ran.

Portuguese dubbing: Ninguém aqui tá querendo te prender. A gente tá atrás de peixe grande.

English Dubbing: No One here wants to lock you up. We are after the big Fish.

The MP *ja* has a crucial function in indicating common or shared knowledge between interlocutors. In these two dialogues from the first season of the series *How to Sell Drugs Online*, the MP plays an important role in the communication exchanges. In the first episode, Moritz states: "Man kann *ja* im Internet so tun, als hätte man das aufregendste Leben der Welt," suggesting that he believes this idea (that one can create a better life online than in reality) is recognized and accepted by his interlocutor (the audience watching the series). In the second episode, the police officer says: "Dich will *ja* hier keiner einsperren," using the MP to convince Daniel of the fact that the police do not want to keep him imprisoned for drug possession; rather, they seek information about more dangerous individuals, such as the dealer who sold him the drugs, which is why he needs to tell the truth.

Regarding the PM *mal* in the Music sample - Vincent van Gogh, ok.danke.tschüss

Bin wieder mal nur ich die Blamage

Komm ma', komm ma', komm ma' runter von deinem hohen Ross

Ich fahr' dich auf dem Fahrrad zu Meckes

Komm ma', komm ma', komm ma' runter von deinem Egotrip

Ich sag' dir, ganz unten, da schmeckt es

The chorus of the song "Vincent van Gogh" by ok.danke.tschüss reflects a critique of selfishness and self-sufficiency. By urging the other person to "get off their high horse," it suggests that they need to be more humble and realistic. The mention of "riding a bike to Meckes" (a reference to McDonald's) symbolizes a return to simplicity and everyday life, contrasting with the notion of being above others. The phrase "down below, everything has its flavor" implies that humble and genuine experiences are valuable, and that being at the top can cause one to lose

sight of what truly matters in life. The MP *mal* relates the crucial function of indicating a request and/or need for persuasion to an immediate action. The speaker seeks to ask for something specific at that moment (Aquino, Arantes, 2020). Therefore, *mal* is used in the song to convince the interlocutor that the action (getting off the horse, lowering one's ego) is important and must be carried out at that moment.

We hope that the examples presented above can complement and illustrate the approach of the corpus, as well as the teaching material developed by the research group. In addition to indicating the occurrence and use of MPs in these contexts, such examples can be applied in various GAL teaching environments, providing authentic texts with contextualized uses of MPs. Finally, we suggest that the minimalist approach, along with concrete examples from the corpus, can be a relevant way to recognize and utilize the important communicative function of MPs in everyday discourse in the German language.

Conclusion

This study has provided valuable insights into the prominent role that MPs play in contemporary German discourse, as evidenced by their frequency and contextual use across various authentic genres such as comics, music, and social media. Our analysis indicates that the most commonly used MPs are *doch*, *ja*, and *mal*, which constitute a significant percentage of total occurrences, together accounting for over 60% of the MPs identified in our corpus. This highlights not only their frequency but also their functional importance in everyday communication.

The authorial Corpus represents a crucial resource for understanding the pragmatic functions of MPs, showcasing their dynamic nature in authentic contexts. The diversity of genres included in our corpus - ranging from social media posts to scripted dialogues in series - reflects a shift towards more informal and conversational language. This observation underscores the need for updated pedagogical approaches that resonate with contemporary language practices and that adequately address the challenges learners face when engaging with these linguistic elements. Furthermore, our findings suggest that the use of MPs may be evolving, with less emphasis on formal written contexts and a stronger presence in spoken and informal communication. This shift calls for educators to integrate more authentic materials into their teaching practices, allowing students to encounter and utilize MPs in real-life contexts.

Additionally, the insights gained from our analysis can be instrumental in developing teaching materials tailored to different proficiency levels. The accessible language and relatable themes present in our corpus can motivate learners and enhance their understanding of the subtleties of communication in German. This engagement is crucial for fostering a deeper connection with the language and culture, ultimately leading to more effective language acquisition. Looking ahead, future research could explore the implications of our findings for language teaching methodologies, focusing on how to best incorporate MPs into curricula. It would also be beneficial to investigate the evolving nature of MPs in different contexts and among diverse speaker groups, enriching our understanding of their role in modern German discourse.

Informações complementares:

a) Declaração de contribuição das autoras e dos autores:

O planejamento e a escrita foram feitos pela autora.

b) Disponibilidade de dados de pesquisa e outros materiais:

O corpus utilizado para a análise dos resultados deste artigo - What are the most commonly used Modal Particles in German? - estão disponíveis em:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1leaeHtONopfcJYfd9fNKv1bEeLUMSeLy>

c) Declaração de conflito de interesse:

A autora declara não ter filiação ou envolvimento com instituições que possam ter interesses financeiros ou não financeiros com o assunto discutido no artigo.

d) Avaliação por pares:

✓ **Avaliador 1:** Poliana Coeli Costa Arantes (aceitar)

O artigo é de grande relevância para a área de Língua Alemã, sobretudo porque os resultados apresentam contextualização regional, ou seja, o uso das PMs no Brasil, o que agrega muito aos estudos comparativos com Língua Portuguesa, que são muito raros na área. Trata-se de contribuição coerente com o escopo da Revista e que tem muito a contribuir para a divulgação dos trabalhos realizados no Brasil a esse respeito, sobretudo porque o artigo, escrito em inglês, pode ser lido por diversas comunidades de falantes de inglês e, desse modo, o alcance dos resultados tendem a ser maiores. O estudo foi desenvolvido com muito cuidado, respeitando-se validade, replicabilidade e os passos metodológicos estão muito bem descritos. A abordagem utilizada para a análise foi a minimalista e está muito bem descrita. Desse modo, o estudo contribui, não só quantitativamente para a área, como também qualitativamente. Trata-se de estudo de impacto para a área de Alemão no Brasil, pois pode impulsionar a produção de material didático sensível à temática. Por este motivo, indico o artigo para publicação, sem restrições.

✓ **Avaliador 2:** Gisela Sequini Favaro (aceitar)

Após leitura e análise detalhada do artigo, concluo que o trabalho apresenta uma contribuição relevante para a área de estudos sobre partículas modais, abordando aspectos importantes de sua aplicação, função e significado no contexto linguístico. O artigo demonstra domínio teórico consistente, com revisão bibliográfica atualizada e pertinente ao tema. A metodologia adotada está adequada para os objetivos propostos, e a análise realizada é clara e bem fundamentada. Os resultados são apresentados de forma organizada, permitindo a compreensão do papel das partículas modais na construção do sentido e na interação comunicativa. Além disso, o artigo possui boa redação, com uso correto da norma culta da língua e estrutura coerente. Dessa forma, recomendo a aprovação do artigo para publicação, com sugestões de pequenas correções marcadas no arquivo da revisão.

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