

WEEK 8; LECTURE 4

Extra Lecture on Modal Verbs

Time : 00:10

Instructor : Hallo ! Guten Tag !

Wir lernen heute, ein Grammatisches element. Das hiesst Modalverben. ... (circles the word on the slide) ... Ja, Modalverben. Just a little bit in English, what are Modalverben. Modal verbs in English are basically additional verbs, or auxiliary verbs that describe, or that express Ability, Potential, or Possibility. Or if something is imperative, that kind of necessity...

So, for example we have words in English like ... (writes on the whiteboard)... can, must, shall, etc. I think all of us will realize what we mean by 'Modalverben', and we know that these are auxiliary verbs. For example, if I say "I am playing chess." I am playing chess is a sentence that expresses something that is going on, right now, it is reality. But if I say "I can play chess." Then we can see the difference between the two sentences, I am playing chess is indicative, it indicates reality, and I can play chess it indicates or expresses a potential. It expresses an ability that I have. I might not be playing chess right now, I might never play chess in my life, but I can play chess.

Ok, so can is one of the most ubiquitous, most frequently used modal verbs, and we will very quickly and in a nutshell try and learn how modal verbs work in German, which are the most frequently used modal verbs. We will begin with three or four, and later on, as we go along our course, towards the end we will learn a few more. But right now, we will try and see how modal verbs function in German. And which are the most frequently used ones, what are their conjugations, what do they mean. Ok.

So, in order to introduce modal verbs, as you can see, if I go to our slide Modalverben, you can already see that there are three verbs that are given in this slide. Muessen, Koennen, Wollen. (2) I am sure that if you look at just the conjugations like, ich muss, ich kann and ich will, you will have a fair idea of what these verbs mean. Or which modal verbs they correspond to.

So, before we go into these three modal verbs, and their conjugations, I would like to go back to one verb which we have learnt very early in the course. We have learnt for example to use the word ... (writes on the whiteboard) ... 'moechte'. I hope that you remember that we have learnt to use the word moechte, and in fact the word moechte can also be used like a modal verb. Ok, It is the derivative of another verb, it is not a verb in itself, moechte. But you can use the verb moechte and its various forms, its conjugations almost like a modal verb.

And as we know, 'moechte' means ? Ein **wissen** lauter.

[**Student : would like to**]

Instructor : Ja, 'moechte' is would like to. So, the sentences we have learnt are, ... (writes on the whiteboard) ... Ich moechte, ... and then you can finish this sentence with ... Ich moechte Tee, Ich moechte Milch, Ich moechte Saft, Ich moechte Cola, oder Ich moechte Wasser. So, you

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can have the sentence Ich moechte and you can finish the sentence the predicate can simply be the Object. What it is that I would like. I would like this, that, etc.

Another way we have learnt to use moechte ... (writes on the whiteboard) ... you can also say 'Ich moechte etwas essen.' Ich habe Hunger. We have learnt the expression Ich habe Hunger, or the other expression we have learnt is, If I am thirsty ?

[Student : Ich habe Durst]

Instructor : ... (writes on the whiteboard)... Ich habe Durst, Ich moechte ein Glas Limonade trinken. So ich habe Hunger, Ich moechte etwas essen. (Marks the words – Hunger, moechte and essen). I have hunger, I am hungry, I would like to eat something.(2) I want to eat something. Or I must eat something. I am very hungry, I must eat something.

So the basic construction ... (connects moechte and essen in the sentence)... of moechte with another verb, is that moechte gets conjugated, the other verb remains in its infinitive form. So for example, if we have, if you are asking your friend "Hast du Hunger ?"; "Moechtest du etwas essen ?" For 'du' we conjugate moechte as moechtest, and for ich as moechte. But, the word essen in both the sentences, will remain the same, essen will not get conjugated. What we conjugate is moechte. Ich moechte etwas essen, Moechtest du etwas essen, Hast du Durst, Was moechtest du trinken ?

Ja, zum beispiel, ... (writes on the whiteboard)... Hast du Durst ? Was moechtest du trinken ? (marks the words) ... moechtest, du, but the trinken we will not conjugate. Trinken will remain in its infinitive form without getting conjugated, at the end of the sentence. So, we have what we would call die Satzklammer or the sentence bracket. For example you have moechte - trinken. Moechte in the second place, conjugated and trinken in the last place, unconjugated, in its infinitive form. This is our basic sentence bracket for using 'moechte'.

And I am going back to moechte because it's a verb that we know. And this sentence construction with moechte, it is the same sentence construction that we will find in modal verbs as well. So, we will begin with, if you have understood and remembered what we learnt with the verb moechte, and how to use moechte with another verb. For example, I would like to eat something, or I would like to drink something, a glass of lemonade, or would you like to eat something, or would you like to drink etc. The way we use moechte with other verbs, that is the way we use modal verbs or 'Modalverben' also in German.

So with this bit of explanation I will just take a pause, if there are any doubts about what we have revised about moechte, If you have any questions right now about what we revised with moechte. ... (Scrolls the whiteboard screen from top to bottom) ...

[Student : Sir the conjugation for first person and the third person is same in moechte ?]

Instructor : A bit lauder.

[Student : First person singular and third person singular, moechte is the conjugation same ?]

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Instructor : Ja, Ja ! That is in fact very good that you asked that question. One thing that we have learnt with moechte is that when we did the verb moechte earlier in the course, moechte we said basically meant, ‘would like’. And it’s conjugation is slightly different from the normal verbs - ich moechte, du moechtest, but er / sie / es moechte.

So, as you rightly asked, that is correct, in fact it’s good that you pointed out that the first person singular ich and the third person singular, er/sie/es, these two have the same conjugation in moechte. And then of course, we have the plural side of this, ich moechte, wir moechten, du moechtest is Ihr moechtet and sie moechten and the big Sie in all cases, also moechten.

So, this is the conjugation table roughly for ‘moechte’, and the thing to note is that ich and er/sie/es have the same conjugation as moechte, moechte. This pattern will be repeated in the modal verbs. The Modalverben if you look at, go back to the slide on Modalverben, you can see it is, ich muss, er muss, ich kann, er kann, ich will, er will. Ich and er will have the same conjugation just like we had with the Modalverben, ich moechte, er/sie/es moechte.

So, that is one thing that we will keep in mind that the first person singular and the third person singular, conjugations are the same. Any other doubt you have or any other thing with moechte that you would like to point out ? ... (Scrolls the whiteboard screen) ...

[Student : with moechte, we can have just a noun at the end, with other Modalverben also, can we have just a noun at the end ?]

Instructor : With some Modalverben we can have just a noun, but the verb is actually implied. For example in German if you want to say, “I can speak German.” or “I know German.” You can simply say, “Ich kann Deutsch.” Ok, you don’t need to say Ich kann Deutsch sprechen or verstehen etc. But, we can go into that. In that sense, we cannot really say that moechte and the Modalverben are the same if they can take only the noun. But that we can take later.

We can now probably with this basic understanding of moechte, and its sentence construction, we can go and look at a text from a lesson that we have done in the course, which is Lesson no.5 and we can look at a text from lesson no.5, which is :

Die Verabredung.(3) Stress ! Lesen Sie die E-mail, Markieren Sie die Modalverben - koennen, müssen, wollen. Unterstreichen Sie dann die anderen Verben. Kannst du sehen ?

an : Jo_Schmidt@gxm.de, Betreff : Treffen !

Hallo Johanna, (2) Wir koennen uns leider diese Woche nicht treffen.(2) Im Moment ist es total stressing. Ich muss fast jeden Tag arbeiten und Hannes ist in Hamburg! Ich muss also am Abend noch einkaufen und kochen. Die Kinder koennen auch nicht helfen, sie muessen gerade so viel fuer die Schule lernen. Am Samstag muss ich auch arbeiten! Am Sonntagnachmittag habe ich frei, da wollen wir in die Berge fahren. Koennen wir uns naechste Woche Mittwoch treffen ? Oder musst du am Mittwoch arbeiten ? Liebe Gruesse, Mara.

Generally the meaning of the text is clear ? Any verbs that ... Treffen (2) is ‘to meet’. (marks the verb in the sentence), Wir koennen uns leider diese Woche nicht treffen. Stressig, ist klar ?

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Viel stress. Jeden tag arbeiten und Hannes ist in Hamburg ! Am Abend noch einkaufen, einkaufen ? It's a verb we have learnt, it's a separable verb, ein trennbaren verb, 'to Shop'. Und Kochen ? 'to cook'. Die Kinder koennen nicht helfen, (underlines the words) so viel fuer die Schule lernen, ist klar ? Am Samstag muss ich auch arbeiten am Sonntagnchmittag habe ich frei, da wollen wir in die Berge fahren. In die Berge fahren ? Is "to go to the hills" for a break, "to go to the mountains". Der Berg, die Berge, is a mountain. Naechste Woche, uns naechste Woche Mittwoch treffen ? Oder muss du am Mittwoch arbeiten ? Liebe Gruesse, Mara.

Ja ! ... (highlights the activity)... Markieren Sie die Modalverben koennen, muessen und wollen. Moechtest du den text einmal lesen und mit in Jeden satz, das Modalverb, identifitien, Hallo Johanna !

[Student : **(Reads the E-mail and identifies Modalverben)** koennen, und ich muss]

Instructor : Dann du kann sien ganzen text lesen !

[Student : **Im Moment ist es total stessig. Ich muss fast jeden Tag arbeiten, muss,** (Instructor marks on screen, muss ist Modalverb), **arbeiten** (ist Hauptverb), **und Hannes ist in Hamburg ! Ich muss also am Abend einkaufen und kochen. muss,** (muss, once again, noch einmal muss als Modalverb), (einkaufen und kochen als ?) **Die Kinder koennen auch nicht helfen, sie muessen gerade so viel fuer die Schule lernen.** (Ja, koennen- Modalverb, helfen das ist Hauptverb, und Sie muessen- Modalverb lernen- Hauptverb) **Am Samstag muss ich auch arbeiten. muss,** (moch einmal muss ist ein Modalverb, und arbeiten ist Hauptverb). **Am Sonntagnachmittag habe ich frei, da wollen wir in die Berge fahren. wollen,** (Ja, wollen- Modalverb, und fahren- Hauptverb). **Koennen wir uns naechste Woche Mittwoch treffen?** (Koennen- Modalverb, und treffen- Hauptverb). **Oder muss du am Mittwoch arbeiten ? muss,** (muss- Modalverb, **arbeiten- Hauptverb**).

Instructor : Ja ! Danke ! So, the basic aim of the exercise is to mark the Modalverben, koennen, muessen, wollen, in diese texte and see how they are conjugated and where the other verbs are, how they are used etc. So if you just read the first sentence - wir koennen uns leider diese Woche nicht treffen. So we have koennen in the second place and treffen at the end. That is what if we go back to our ...(puts on the whiteboard screen)... small revision with moechte, then we had here the sentence bracket where moechte is in the second place and trinken at the end. Similarly, Ich moechte ein Glas Limonade trinken. Moechte in the second place, ich moechte, for ich normally it will be - ich trinke, if we conjugate 'trinken'. But because of moechte, we don't conjugate trinken, it stays in it's infinitive form at the end of the sentence. And the position of the two verbs is non - negotiable.

Ok, the two verbs have to be in their place and that will form the 'Sentence bracket' or the 'sentence skeleton'. And around that we can have, we can weave the sentence in a couple of different ways. For example, in this sentence itself, I can begin the sentence with 'ein Glas Limonade' and I can say, "Ein Glas Limonade moechte ich trinken." That is fine, Ok, but moechte and trinken will remain the second and the last units of the sentence. So, similarly if we go back to our text, ...(changes slide)... then we find, Wir koennen uns leider diese Woche nicht

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treffen. Koennen and treffen will remain where they are. The sentence can be which means basically we cannot meet, unfortunately, we cannot meet this week. Now, we can identify for example, ... (writes on the whiteboard)... Wir koennen uns diese Woche nicht treffen. (circles the words), So we have 'wir', then we have 'koennen' and 'treffen', two verbs. 'Uns' as the reflexive of wir, 'diese Woche' is time and "nicht treffen", nicht as the negation.

So, I can for example begin the sentence with 'diese Woche'. We keep koennen here and treffen at the end somewhere here. And I can say, "Diese Woche koennen wir uns nicht treffen." So, koennen and treffen will remain where they are, I can begin the sentence with diese Woche and comes wir, uns, etc. So there are couple of different ways in which we can umformulieren the sentence but, the position of the two verbs will remain unchanged.

Instructor : If we go back to the text we have, ... (changes to earlier slide) ... Im Moment ist es total stessig. Ich muss fast jeden Tag arbeiten, (2) once we have 'ich muss' then we don't have to conjugate arbeiten. Ich muss fast jeden Tag arbeiten und Hannes ist in Hamburg ! Hannes is probably her husband. Ich muss also am Abend noch einkaufen, (2) und kochen. (2) Die Kinder koennen auch nicht helfen, (2) sie muessen gerade so viel fuer die Schule lernen. (2) Am Samstag muss ich nicht arbeiten. (2) We can take the sentence "Am Samstag muss ich nicht arbeiten." as another example of ... (writes the sentence on the whiteboard) ... Ja, what are the different elements in this sentence ?

[**Student** : Time information in 'am Samstag' (Am Samstag is time, on Saturday), Subject is 'ich' (ich is Subject, and our verbs ?) as verbs we have muss as Modalverb and infinitive verb is arbeiten.]

Instructor : Muss – arbeiten, Ok, and auch is a filler. Auch is a filler, which means I also have to work on Sundays. So, as long as we keep muss and arbeiten where they are, how can they umformulieren in the sentence ?

[**Student** : We can put the Subject in the first place. Ich muss auch am Samstag arbeiten.]

Instructor : But our 'muss' and 'arbeiten' will not change. That will constitute our sentence bracket and they will remain where they are.

If we go back to our text ... (changes slide) ...