

TEACHING GERMAN MODAL PARTICLES: A CORPUS-BASED APPROACH

Martina Möllering

Macquarie University, Sydney

ABSTRACT

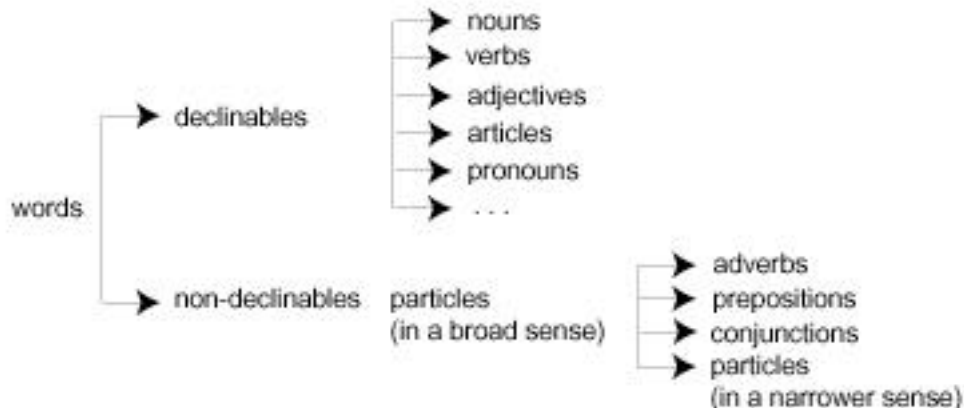
The comprehension and correct use of German modal particles poses manifold problems for learners of German as a foreign language since the meaning of these particles is complex and highly dependent on contextual features which can be linguistic as well as situational. Following the premise that German modal particles occur with greater frequency in the spoken language, the article presents an analysis which is based on corpora representing spoken German. The concept "spoken language" is discussed critically with regard to the corpora chosen for analysis and narrowed down in relation to the use of modal particles. The analysis is based on the following corpora: Freiburger Korpus, Dialogstrukturenkorpus, and Pfeffer-Korpus. In addition, a collection of telephone conversations (Brons-Albert, 1984) was scanned into computer-readable files and analysed using MicroConcord (Scott & Johns, 1993). A quantitative analysis was carried out on all corpora. The qualitative analysis was limited to the telephone conversations and looks at the constraints on and functions of the different occurrences of the form *eben*.

INTRODUCTION

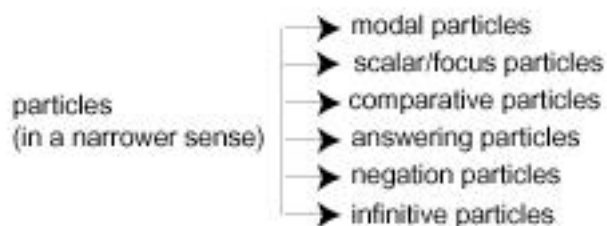
Discourse particles occur in a variety of languages and have been analysed in great detail for the English language by Schiffrin (1987). Particles of the modal particle type are prevalent in West-Germanic languages: Dutch, Frisian, and German (e.g., de Vriendt, Vandeweghe, & Van de Craen, 1991; Abraham, 1991a for the link between German, Frisian, and Dutch; Aijmer, 1997, for Swedish). Research interest in German modal particles arose in the late 1960s with the advent of a more pragmatically oriented approach to linguistics. They started to shed their image as superfluous, stylistically dubious "fillers" that had to be avoided in "proper German" (Busse, 1992). Since Kriwonossow's (1963, first published in 1977) and Weydt's (1969) seminal studies on German modal particles, a large body of work on the subject has emerged. In those publications, different terms are used for the words that are here described as "modal particles." Thus, we find for example, "flavouring words" [Würzwörter] (Paneth, 1981), "intentional particles" [Intentionale Partikeln] (Rall, 1981), "pragmatic particles" (Held, 1983), "discourse particles" (Abraham, 1991b) and "toning particles" [Abtönungspartikeln] (Helbig, 1994), the term which together with the German "Modalpartikel" (Thurmair, 1989) is the most commonly used. In a number of publications (Dalmas, 1990, 1992; Rudolph, 1991), however, the word *particle* is used without further specification.

The term *particle* stems from a structural approach to categorising the various parts of speech into word classes based on the inflexional properties of words. In accordance with this morphological criterion, the term *particle* is often used to refer to "non-declinables," that is, in German, the large group of words that cannot be considered as part of the word classes *noun*, *adjective*, *verb*, *article*, or *pronoun*. In this sense, particles may be adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions, interjections (Helbig, 1994), sentence adverbs (Thurmair, 1989), and particles in a narrower sense:

Particles as Word Class



A word like *aber*, for example, which is a particle in the broader sense as it cannot be inflected, can be categorised as a member of the word class *conjunction* as well as of the class *particles in a narrower sense*, specifically, as modal particle (e.g., Bublitz, 1977) depending on the linguistic context in which it occurs. Thus, in a word class definition, the words considered as modal particles all have at least one homonym in another class or subclass, depending on the model of categorisation (for a critical discussion see, e.g., Helbig, 1989). In the research literature the term *particle* is commonly used in its narrower sense, excluding the other groups of non-declinables. The word class *particle* in the narrower sense is then seen to include subcategories, *modal particles* being one of them. The following subcategories have been described (Helbig, 1994, p.31):



A plethora of publications within different theoretical frameworks have dealt with the pragmatic and discursive functions fulfilled by modal particles. These functions are described, for example, in terms of the management of interaction (Franck, 1979), as constituting consensus (Lütten, 1979), as a guidance for the hearer (Rehbein, 1979) and as playing a part in establishing text coherence (Rudolph, 1989). There is agreement, though, on the fact that the function of German modal particles is illocutionary and interpersonal rather than propositional. In very general terms, modal particles indicate the speaker's attitude towards the utterance as well as the intended perception on the part of the hearer. Modal particles may point to the interlocutors' common knowledge, to the speaker's or listener's suppositions and expectations, and they may create cohesion with previous utterances or mark the speaker's evaluation of the importance of an utterance (e.g., Abraham, 1991a, 1991b; Helbig, 1994; Thurmair, 1989). However, foreign language learners of German do not properly understand modal particles and rarely use them (Möllering & Nunan, 1995). This reflects a lack of sensitivity to an important feature of German communication, which might lead to misunderstandings and/or misinterpretations.

Modal Particles in Second Language Acquisition

Research findings (Husso, 1981; Rall, 1981; Steinmüller, 1981; Weydt, 1981) provide an ambiguous picture of the relationship between language acquisition in general and the acquisition of modal particles,

but there is agreement on a much lower frequency of use by non-native speakers. Learners who received instruction in German as a foreign language did not perceive the communicative value of particles as very high (Harden & Rösler, 1981; Möllering & Nunan, 1995). Research findings on the acquisition of modal particles in uninstructed contexts (Kutsch, 1985; Cheon-Kostrzewa & Kostrzewa, 1997a, 1997b) have shown that the acquisition process is influenced by the fact that each particle is used in a variety of functions. Particle functions are acquired in an accumulative manner over a long period of time. The distinction between modal particles and their homonyms is therefore a major teaching objective (see also Busse, 1992). Research findings on the teaching of pragmatic language features in general (see Kasper, 2000, for an overview) have provided promising results which allow for the hypothesis that explicit instruction of different particle functions could accelerate and enhance the acquisition process. The approach to teaching modal particles I would like to propose here is concerned with learners' comprehension of modal particle meanings in context. Research in interlanguage pragmatics has shown that teaching pragmatic features of language is facilitative and necessary when input is lacking or less salient and that explicit instruction is particularly effective in the area of consciousness raising (Kasper & Rose, 1999, p. 96-97). The concept of "consciousness-raising" (e.g., Rutherford, 1986) refers to the refinement of learners' metacommunicative awareness, that is, their ability to judge the relationship between a form and its meaning in context. It is this type of awareness that needs to be honed for a learner to comprehend the intricacies of particle meanings. With McCarthy and Carter (1994), I would like to argue that language awareness is not necessarily best taught by direct input language teaching:

That is to say the normal *presentation-practise-production* cycles should not be seen as binding for all features of discourse, and in the case of [discourse] markers, these would seem to be a feature best handled by other types of activity: language-observation activities, problem-solving, perhaps cross-linguistic comparisons. (p. 68)

The approach I would like to propose is based on authentic language data as collected in a number of corpora of spoken German. Rather than providing the learner with a list of grammatical particle functions supplemented by examples on the sentence level (e.g., Helbig & Helbig, 1995), an analysis of such corpora yields examples of particles in context. With the use of concordancing procedures, patterns of collocation can be established and made salient for learners of German.

Non-native speakers might perceive German speech acts such as "request" or "voicing of opinion" as very direct (Rall, 1981) if they merely look at the syntactic mode of the encoding of a particular speech act without perceiving the modifications brought about by the use of modal particles (House & Kasper, 1981). The following example might illustrate this:

- a) Es ist nicht einfach, dieses Problem zu lösen.
[It is not easy this problem to solve]
This problem is not easily solved.
- a) Es ist **ja** nicht einfach, dieses Problem zu lösen.
[It is (**ja**) not easy this problem to solve]
This problem is not easily solved (as you know).
- a) Es ist **doch** nicht einfach, dieses Problem zu lösen.
[It is (**doch**) not easy this problem to solve]
(But you will agree that) this problem is not easily solved.

Whereas native speakers might perceive (a) as a turn in a discussion to be quite abrupt, (b) and (c) involve the hearer's anticipated point of view. In (b), a shared opinion is assumed, while (c) expresses the wish to overcome a perceived difference of opinion. (Weydt 1983). Modal particles create "conversational cohesion" (Schiffrin, 1987), in the case of *doch* and *ja* by reference to shared knowledge.

One reason why the comprehension of modal particles is difficult for non-native speakers is the fact that all modal particles have at least one homonym. As many particles occur in a variety of functions, criteria such as position within the sentence play a role in determining whether a particle occurs as modal particle, as connective, adverb of time, and so forth. The following sample of natural language data, which is an excerpt from a discussion between secondary students and a well known German author, illustrates the point. It provides an example of particles in use in authentic spoken German.¹ Amongst others, the particle *aber* occurs frequently:

A: Ich nehm' Ihnen das ehrlich gesagt gar nich' ab. Ich hab' den Verdacht, ich meine, natürlich werd' ich mich wahrscheinlich sogar irren, **ABER** (1) daß Sie die Sache so geschrieben haben, daß Sie eben sagen "na schön," dann haben Sie sich das überlegt, und dann haben Sie die Stelle gelesen und haben sich gesagt "na Donnerwetter, das wird **ABER** (2) ziehen, die werden **ABER** (3) staunen, was ich mich so, was ich mir so alles traue..."

B: ja ja, . . .

(students laughing)

wenn für mich als Autor der Begriff 'lieber Gott' etwas genau so Banales und Liebenswertes und Unbestimmtes ist wie der Begriff 'Mädchen' (...) dann kann ich das ohne weiteres in einer Reihe nennen. **ABER** (4) daß sie den lieben Gott für so leicht zu beleidigen halten, also das wundert mich.

In (1) and (4) *aber* is used as a connective. It connects the clause it appears in to the preceding one and thus creates cohesion (Halliday & Hasan, 1976) on the textual level of the text. This function can be realised in English by using the conjunction "but".

ABER (1) ABER daß Sie die Sache so geschrieben haben
BUT [the fact] that you've written it in that particular way...

ABER (4) ABER daß Sie den lieben Gott für so leicht zu beleidigen halten...
BUT [the fact] that you think our Lord could be insulted as easily as that...

As a connective, *aber* occurs mainly at the beginning of a clause. Its reference is anaphoric; it expresses contrast in its immediate context, that is, to the preceding proposition or propositions.

In (2) and (3) *aber* appears as a modal particle. Here, it is not as easily translated into English.

ABER (2) ... das wird ABER ziehen...
that will [ABER] be a success

ABER (3) ...die werden ABER staunen...
they will [ABER] be surprised

In these instances, *aber* expresses surprise and an approximation would be the following translations:

ABER (2) ... das wird ABER ziehen...
boy, what a success that is going to be → boy, that'll / will that ever go down well

ABER (3) ...die werden ABER staunen...
they're going to be surprised, I can tell you → they're gonna be absolutely baffled/astonished

Language learners are regularly faced with the task of distinguishing between the different meanings of a particle like *aber*. It is the contention of this paper that they may be aided in this by an analysis of real-language data which unveils structures, patterns, and predictable features regarding a particle's different usages. The exploitation of language corpora is proposed here in order to arrive at authentic teaching

materials which facilitate the comprehension of German modal particles. The association patterns which were of particular interest in this investigation are linguistic features in terms of lexical and grammatical associations (Biber, Conrad, & Reppen, 1998, p. 6). Non-linguistic associations like the distribution of modal particles across registers have been dealt with to some degree through the selection of corpora for the analysis, while distribution across dialects or across time periods was not examined.

Occurrences of Modal Particles in Different Text Types

Following the definition that a text is "either spoken or written discourse, so that for example the words used in a conversation (or their written transcription) constitute a text" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 4), modal particles occur more frequently in spoken than in written texts. Rudolph (1991) found that in conversation, particles and conjunctions are used almost three times as frequently as in journalistic and literary texts, but she does not provide a specific analysis of words in modal particle function, as her definition of particles is a very wide one. She classified text types according to the supposed dichotomies of oral/written and fictional/non-fictional and investigated the text types *everyday conversations* (oral/non-fictional), *newspaper articles* (written/non-fictional), and (sections from) *narrative texts* (written/fictional) for the occurrence of particles.

The assumption of a distinction between spoken and written texts as a dichotomy has been challenged. Biber (1988), for instance, proposes no such dichotomy of dimensions across texts, no clear cut distinction between spoken and written texts, but multidimensional distinctions. McCarthy (1993) uses the terminology "spoken and written medium" but also describes complexities and mixing. He proposes as a useful distinction the terminology of *medium* which "is concerned with how the message is transmitted to its receivers" and *mode* which "is concerned with how it is composed stylistically, that is, with reference to sociolinguistically grounded norms of archetypical speech and archetypical writing. These norms are norms of appropriacy, culturally conditioned on a cline of 'writtenness' and 'spokenness'." (McCarthy, 1993, p. 171)

Following this distinction, the database chosen for this study consists of four corpora of spoken German in the sense of "medium: spoken." Three of the corpora are held at the German Language Institute ([Institut für Deutsche Sprache, IDS](#)), namely the "Freiburger Korpus (FKO)," "Dialogstrukturenkorpus (DSK)," and "PFEFFER-Korpus (PFE)." The fourth corpus consists of a collection of telephone conversations published by Brons-Albert (1984).

Freiburger Korpus (FKO). The corpus consists of 224 texts with a total of 700,000 words. It was compiled mainly between 1966 and 1972 as part of a project at the IDS that aimed at describing "grammatical and stylistic" features of spoken German. Audiorecordings from radio and television broadcasts as well as other recordings of private and public speech events were collected. Speakers were either not aware of being recorded or recording was a natural part of the speech event (as in the radio and television broadcasts), and they did not know that their productions were to be linguistically analysed. The recordings have been transcribed and categorised into *discussions, interviews, talks, reports, and narrations*.

Dialogstrukturenkorpus (DSK). This corpus contains 72 texts with about 200,000 words. It was compiled by a group of researchers of the German department at Freiburg University in conjunction with the IDS in the periods 1968 - 1972 and 1974 - 1977 in order to further analyse the organisation of natural conversation (see [FKO](#)). It consists mainly of interviews (radio and television broadcasts) and discussions.

Pfeffer-Korpus: (PFE). Compiled by A. Pfeffer and W. Lohnes at Stanford University, California, in the early 1960s, the corpus comprises 398 texts with a total of 650,000 words. Recordings were made in 56 different areas of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland with a total of 400 different speakers. Each recording is about 12 minutes in length (about 1500 words) on 1 of 25 topics. The subjects (with a spread

of age, sex, education, and profession following a statistical analysis) were interviewed on those topics in 397 of the texts; text 398 is a group discussion between four speakers.

All three corpora can be accessed via a data retrieval system, **COSMAS** (Institut für Deutsche Sprache, 1999), developed at the IDS. It allows an analysis of the data through frequency counts and concordancing procedures which makes it possible to search all three corpora of transcribed spoken German -- with a total of about 1.5 million words -- for occurrences of particles in context. An update of the PFEFFER-Korpus (Jones, 1997) was not yet accessible (personal communication with Jones) at the time of data analysis.

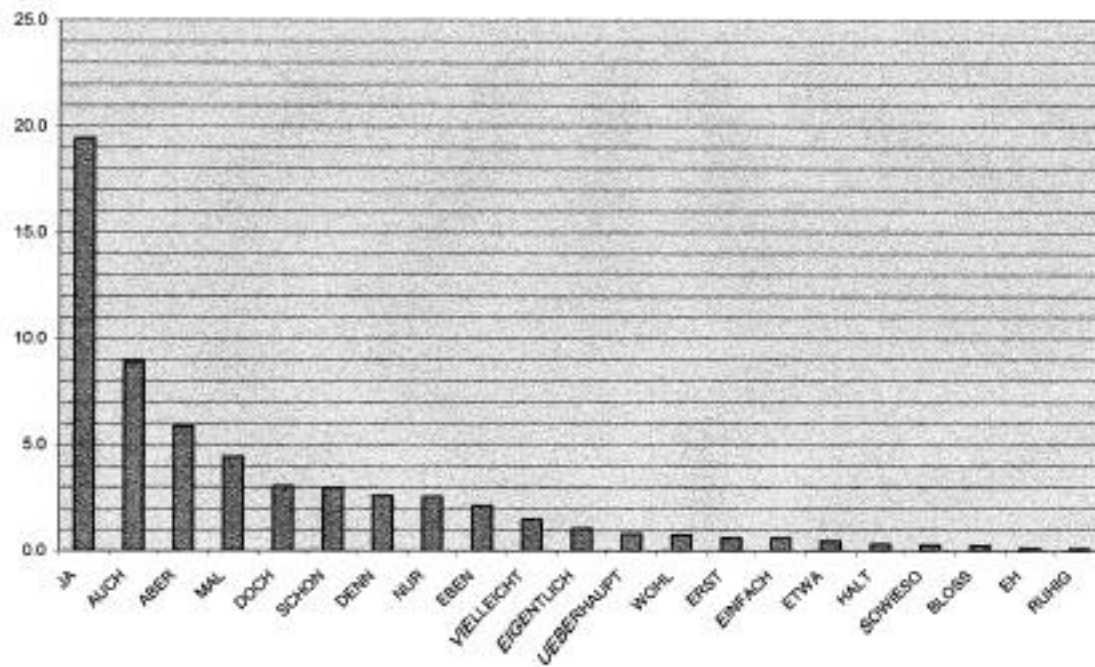
Telephone conversations (BRO; Brons-Albert, 1984). This collection is made up of 35 texts and includes a total of about 44,000 words. The data were arrived at by recording telephone conversations which the researcher, Brons-Albert, had on her private phone over a period of 10 months. Callers were unaware of being recorded. With permission of the individual speakers, a selection of conversations were transcribed and published. For each dialogue, information on the speakers' age, profession and/or education, dialect, and the relationship between the speakers is provided. For the purpose of the present study, the printed texts were scanned into computer-readable files to make them accessible for concordancing.

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The first step in the process of data analysis was to establish the frequency of particles which could potentially function as modal particles² in the four corpora. Frequency of occurrence has been advanced as one grading criterion (Busse, 1992; Vorderwülbecke, 1981) for the teaching of modal particles. Taking into account the multifunctionality of particles and learners' difficulties with distinguishing different particle functions, the term *particle frequency* can be seen as ambivalent. The term *frequency* might, on the one hand, refer to the occurrence of a word in modal particle function, or it might refer to all occurrences of a word, of which only some might be occurrences in modal particle function. In the present study, particle frequency is addressed in two steps: first, the overall frequency of particles in the corpora of spoken German is established in order to determine how salient each particle would be for a learner of German. A subset of the occurrences of the particle *eben* is then analysed qualitatively. The qualitative analysis provides a distinction between frequency of occurrences in modal particle function and other functions.

The three corpora held at the IDS (DSK, FKO, PFE) were searched with the help of **COSMAS** (Institut für deutsche Sprache, 1999); the fourth corpus (BRO) was searched using Microconcord (Scott & Johns, 1993). The total number of occurrences of each word in each of the corpora was established. As the different corpora vary considerably in size, raw counts of frequency were normalised to make counts comparable. Frequency per 1,000 words of text was chosen as a basis of comparison.³ The following table provides an overview of particle frequency in all four corpora, that is, over a total of nearly 1,600,000 words:

Table 1. Frequency of Word Occurrence per 1,000 Words in the Four Corpora



Most striking is the frequency of *ja* with 19.5 occurrences per 1,000 words overall, which is more than double the frequency of the next word in line *auch* with 8.9 occurrences, followed by *aber* with 5.9 occurrences per 1,000 words. Then follow *mal* with 4.4 occurrences down to *eben* with 2.1. More than half the particles analysed occur with an average frequency of less than 2 (*vielleicht* 1.5, down to *eh* and *ruhig* with 0.1).

The following table presents the frequency of occurrence per 1,000 words in the four different corpora:

Table 2. Frequency per 1,000 Words, All

Both tables show clearly that *ja*, *auch*, and *aber* are the most salient, followed by a second group made up of *mal*, *doch*, *schon*, *denn*, *nur*, and *eben*. Again *ja* provides the most striking pattern with an enormous variation of frequency between the four corpora. It is most frequent in the BRO corpus with 33.7 occurrences per 1,000 words, followed by 19.8 in DSK, 13.4 in FKO, and 10.9 in PFE. The most frequently occurring words with a potential for modal particle function (*ja* down to *denn*) occur with a particularly high frequency in BRO.

The existing corpora of spoken German are relatively small in comparison to the corpora available for spoken English, for example, the British National Corpus with a spoken component of about 10 million words (see, Berglund, 1999). The composition of the different corpora indicates that although they can be broadly classified as "spoken German," there are significant differences with regard to "mode" (McCarthy, 1993). German modal particles have been found to occur most frequently in texts which are informal, personal, associative, and with a high level of familiarity (Hentschel, 1986). In particular, the level of informality and familiarity of speakers with one another varies considerably between the four corpora. The predefined corpus text categories provided in the description of the corpora held at the IDS are rather broad. Although all the corpora comprise dialogues, the nature of these dialogues in FKO and DSK is rarely personal. The dialogues in PFE are determined by the method of data collection: an interviewer talking to a person s/he is not familiar with. The ensuing dialogues are in fact largely monologic as the interviewer's brief questions prompt long stretches of narrative on the part of the person interviewed. The highest level of informality and familiarity between speakers can be found in the compilation of texts by Brons-Albert (1984) which, for this study, led to the decision to concentrate on those texts in the qualitative analysis of the data (for a discussion of text categories with regard to formality, see Sigley, 1997).

Qualitative Data Analysis: EBEN

The second stage of the analysis investigated modal particles in context in order to establish patterns of collocation in terms of lexical co-occurrence as well as co-occurrence with certain grammatical choices (Sinclair, 1991). To this end KWIC (Key Word In Context) concordances were compiled of the BRO data using the concordancing software package MicroConcord (Scott & Johns, 1993).

The concordancing software used in analysing the corpus data lists the occurrences of the word under investigation in context, but is not able to distinguish between different functions of the word in question. "Tagging," where researchers have marked words in a corpus as belonging to categories like verb, noun, subjunctive (for a more detailed discussion of tagging see Biber, Conrad, & Reppen, 1998, p. 261f) is not available for particle functions (Jones in Wichmann, Fligelstone, McEnery, & Knowles, 1997, p. 152) and a qualitative analysis was necessary to distinguish between modal particle function and others.

The BRO corpus was searched for the word in question and the ensuing concordances were categorised by making use of the program's classification feature. Moving the cursor to the concordance line to be categorised and entering a number allows subsequent sorting of lines according to categories (Witton, 1994). The categorization of occurrences was in the first instance based on native speaker intuition. It had to be carried out in many instances by looking at larger stretches of the text, as the information provided in the KWIC concordance was often not sufficient to distinguish between different usages of the word under investigation. In order to distinguish use in modal particle function from other possible functions of the words in question, it was necessary to manually disambiguate each occurrence of the word to establish patterns which language learners could be made aware of to help them distinguish modal particle functions from others.

As one example of the qualitative analysis, an investigation of the concordance data on *eben* is detailed below. *Eben* was chosen as it belongs to the group of more frequently occurring particles (see [Quantitative Analysis](#)) without yielding too many occurrences for the scope of this article.

The particle *eben* occurs in 20 different texts in BRO, in the functions of modal particle, answering particle and adverb of time.⁴

Answering Particle

As an answering particle (27 occurrences), *eben* is easily recognised within the concordance data, as it can be found in the initial position of an utterance. In some instances, it appears as a complete utterance and its representation is capitalised. This is, of course, a channel-specific measure by which the orthographic realisation in the transcription tries to interpret the intonation patterns of the original spoken text:⁵

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | höne Bücher, die man lesen kann. A: | Eben! | B: und so viele schöne Sachen, di |
| 2 | kann man so nie wissen. B: (lacht) | Eben! | C: Ja, aber hättsde das direkt ge |
| 3 | sen müssen, was wer noch kaufen. A: | Eben. | B: Würd ich sagen, dann geh ich d |

It can function as the opening of an utterance, but separate from the following proposition:

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|
| 4 | Doppelte als die ganze Zeit, ne. B: | Eben. | Is auch schön. A: Undie Arbeit ma |
| 5 | ja nichts Schlimmes! A: Ja, ne? B: | Eben. | Solang se sich dabei wohlfühlt, si |
| 6 | alles, wozu man jetzt nich kommt! B: | Eben. | Du, meine Mutter, die hatte ne gan |
| 7 | n die elf Kilo abgenommen hätte! D: | Eben, | ich denk, die is doch gar ni mehr |
| 8 | er Frau auch Frau Doktor Sounso. B: | Eben, | dann bisde ooch Herr Dokta! A: Ri |
| 9 | ort "werden" nich, anscheinend . B: | Eben, | siehsde, un, stimmt auch wirklich, |

It also occurs in combination with a second answering particle "ja" (yes), "nein" (here pronounced and transcribed as "nee"; no) or "hm":

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| 11 | , ich helf ihr, soweit's geht B: ja, | eben | A: und son bißchen Telefongespräch |
| 12 | uns ja nun wieder auch nich B: Nee, | eben | () Hast du mal deinen Pullover aus |
| 13 | m Telefon merkt es ja keiner. B: Ja, | eben! | A: Und dann kriegt der hinterher |
| 14 | .. Hauptsache, es klappt! B: Och ja, | eben, | wenn et so janz jut weiterläuft, s |
| 15 | ann alles, wenn ich will, ne. D: Ja, | eben, | eben. Versteh ich. B: Naja! Zwei |
| 16 | h kann Sie nur beglückwünschen. Nee, | eben, | das war, wie C, ich war der Meinun |
| 17 | tung, das Rauchen einstellen! D: Ja, | eben, | nee / B: Das versucht manch einer |
| 18 | der Effekt ja oh ni mehr da! A: Ja, | eben, | genau! Vor allen Dingen, es geht j |
| 19 | eder mal die Eßbremse ziehen. D: Ja, | eben, | kann ich verstehn, dat kann ich ve |
| 20 | alle 8 Tage da . losjehn, ne. A: Ja, | eben. | B: Das geht nich. Könn Se noch ma |
| 21 | einer allein schuld is, ne. B: Ja, | eben. | A: Irgendwie en ganz kleinen Grun |
| 22 | irekt am 31. feiern, abends. B: Ja, | eben. | dass ja wirklich Klasse! A: Hm. J |
| 23 | les, wenn ich will, ne. D: Ja, eben, | eben. | Versteh ich. B: Naja! Zwei Kilo n |
| 24 | jetz niet, wann se kommt. A: Jaja, | eben. | So lange dauert die Fahrt ja nich. |
| 25 | esigen Vertrag beim Notar ab. B: Hm, | eben. | Nee, ganz davon abgesehen, nem. I |
| 26 | , ne? A: Jo, is ja ejal, ne. B: Ja, | eben. | (lacht) A: (lacht) B: Bis ja noc |
| 27 | uern zu sparen, zu heiraten. B: Jo, | eben. | klar, und außerdem ist das total |
| 28 | wann un wie oft er Lust hat, ne? A: | Eben, | ja. B: Paar Würste dazu oder irge |

In all these occurrences it serves to confirm the previous speaker's contribution.

Adverb of Time

In its occurrences as an adverb of time (13), *eben* is a short form of *soeben* (just, a moment ago). In this particular use it is harder to distinguish from modal particle function as its position within the clause is similar to that of modal particles.

1	ja B: Telefon so anders. Em, ich hab	eben	mit der Frau X von der Verwaltung
2	C: C A: Guten Tag, Herr C, ich hab	eben	mit einem Kollegen von Ihnen gespr
3	Ja, hörma, wat sachsde dazu, was ich	eben.	der A erzählt hab? B: Nee, was
4	n dann? . Meine Mutter hat dich zwar	eben	schon den ganzen Quark gefragt, abe
5	u, ich wollt dir nur sagen, der Z war	eben	hier, die Schreibmaschine is also
6	a, ich hab der A eben gesacht, daß se	eben	vorbeigebracht wurde B: Ach so! C:
7	. den Abend ruhig gestalten, die war	eben	einkaufen und mußte sich danach hi
8	onsequent wär, ich war zwar sachtich	eben	noch zu C, ich bin jetz noch stolz,
9	hen das über'n DeAEs, und der meinte	eben,	ja, ich solle auf jeden Fall nen
10	ppelt belegt hat, ich seh nämlich da	eben,	Fenelon, Lettres a l'Academie hab
11	erzählt hab? B: Nee, was hasde denn	eben,	ich . hab das nich / C: Ja, von w
12	a, der X hat sich gewundert, weil ihr	eben,	als ihr ihn aus demAuto ließt, g
13	acht? Mit der A? C: Ja, ich hab der A	eben	gesacht, daß se eben vorbeigebracht

A contextual clue, however, is its collocation with one of the German tenses expressing reference to the past: Simple Past, Present Perfect, Past Perfect. Investigating a larger stretch of the dialogue reveals that this is the case in nearly all occurrences:

line 1:	hab...gesprochen	(Perfekt "hab" = habe)
line 2:	hab...gesprochen	(Perfekt)
line 3:	hab...erzählt	(Perfekt)
line 4:	hat...gefragt	(Perfekt)
line 5:	war	(Imperfekt)
line 6:	wurde...vorbeigebracht	(Imperfekt, passive voice)
line 7:	war (einkaufen)	(Imperfekt)
line 8:	sachtich	(sagte ich, Imperfekt)
line 9:	meinte	(Imperfekt)
line 11:	hasde...	(Perfekt: hast du ...ellipsis of past participle)
line 12:	habt gesagt	(Perfekt)
line 13:	hab...gesacht	(habe gesagt; Perfekt)

What can be established from the evidence is a strong correlation between *eben* in its function as *soeben* (just, a moment ago) and verb forms expressing the past. For a native speaker familiar with all the functions of *eben* this is quite obvious but for a learner of German recognizing this collocational pattern is helpful in distinguishing the different meanings of the word.

A particular meaning of *eben* in its temporal function comes about when it collocates with *mal* (12 occurrences):

1	eben / B: Ja, Augenblick, ich hör	ma eben,	Frau A: Hm. B: Ja? ((Stimme im Hin
2	onntag oder bis Montag, Momentchen	ma eben,	ja? ((20s)) Ne, das is bis zum 9. A
3	rade, das könnt nich sein, Moment	ma eben!	(lacht) Ich gebn dir ma. D: Ja, Mom
4	r Messe! A: Ah! 69 B: Da müßtich	ma eben	nachgucken, das is entweder nur bis
5	ame) C: (Straßenname)? Da muß ich	ma eben	nachguggen, nech. A: ja. ((59s)) C:
6	her ein Bier getrunken/ B: Moment	ma eben!	(zu ihrer Mutter) Ja, ich komm gleic
7	Ich mein, wenn der schon	mal eben	. dieses Knöllchen da ausgestellt ha
8	kommen? B: Ja, kommen Se morgen	mal eben,	ja? A: Is gut. Hm, danke. B: Ne? B
9	llt mir grade ein, kannst du mir	mal eben	mit kurzen Worten sagen, wie man ein
10	orz. B: Warte mal, kann ich noch	mal eben	sehen? Das is Porz, ja achthundertz
11	Sie vielleicht freundlicherweise	mal eben	so durchrufen, wann der Herr U da Fr
12	ng an / einschalten, daß er dann	mal eben	so tickt, das hat ja nicht zu sagen,

In these instances, *eben* does not refer to the past, but together with *ma(l)* functions to point to the short duration of an event. This is particularly apparent in lines 2, 3, and 6:

2	onntag oder bis Montag,	Momentchen ma eben,	ja? ((20s)) Ne, das is bis zum 9. A
3	erade, das könnt nich sein,	Moment ma eben!	(lacht) Ich gebn dir ma. D: Ja, Mom
6	her ein Bier getrunken/ B:	Moment ma eben!	(zu ihrer Mutter) Ja, ich komm gleich

The collocation with "Moment" and especially with its diminutive form "Momentchen" (just a moment/wait a minute) stresses the temporal aspect as well as the short duration of the wait.

In a number of instances there is a further aspect to the combination of *mal* and *eben*:

1	eben / B: Ja, Augenblick, ich hör	ma eben,	Frau A: Hm. B: Ja? ((Stimme im Hin
4	r Messe! A: Ah! 69 B: Da müßtich	ma eben	nachgucken, das is entweder nur bis
5	ame) C: (Straßename)? Da muß ich	ma eben	nachguggen, nech. A: ja. ((59s)) C:
8	kommen? B: Ja, kommen Se morgen	mal eben,	ja? A: Is gut. Hm, danke. B: Ne? B
9	llt mir grade ein, kannst du mir	mal eben	mit kurzen Worten sagen, wie man ein
10	orz. B: Warte mal, kann ich noch	mal eben	sehen? Das is Porz, ja achthundertzw
11	Sie vielleicht freundlicherweise	mal eben	so durchrufen, wann der Herr U da Fr

Here, the temporal aspect "it doesn't take long" also has a pragmatic function: If something does not take long to do, then it is not much of an imposition to ask for it to be done. In lines 1, 4, and 5 the speaker wants to assure his/her interlocutor that what is being done for him/her is not too much of an inconvenience:

1	ich hör ma eben, Frau
	[I'll quickly find out]
4	Da müßt ich ma eben nachgucken
	[I would have to have a quick look]
5	Da muß ich ma eben nachguggen
	[I'll have to have a quick look]

In 8, 9, 10, and 11 the interlocutor is being assured that the imposition posed on him/her is minor:

8	kommen Se morgen mal eben, ja
	[why don't you quickly come by tomorrow -> why don't you drop round tomorrow]
9	kannst du mir mal eben mit kurzen Worten sagen
	[could you quickly tell me in a few words]
10	kann ich noch mal eben sehen?
	[could I have another quick look]
11	könnten}Sie vielleicht freundlicherweise mal eben so durchrufen
	[would you be so kind to give us a quick call]

Modal Particle

In the following 32 occurrences *eben* functions as a modal particle:

1	agst, wie das gewesen wär, du hättest	eben	damals die Bankgeschichte nicht wei
2	ich. Und . da muß ich jetzt am Montag	eben	. meinen Widerspruch begründen. A:
3	ne, bloß / bloß B: ah! A: muß sie	eben	für die Doktorarbeit muß sie das Ga
4	und so weiter um alles dafür. Und da	eben	möglichst, öh, viel von, ne, damit
5	zwanzig, jo. A: Aber montags geht	eben	/ B: Ja, Augenblick, ich hör ma ebe
6	schicken will, dann schicke ich sie	eben	nich. A: Doch, schick sie ruhig! I
7	dagegen Widerspruch eingelegt und muß	eben	jetzt vor's Amtsgericht. A: Ja, un
8	A: Ich mein, sie hat	eben	bloß bessere Chancen, da weiterzu
9	möglichst, öh, viel von, ne, damit sie	eben	auch sagen kann, das sind nicht blo
10	jetzt von der Schule bringen, weil er	eben	zu autoritär ist, ne, auf der Schule
11	Verrücktheit und so. Aber als Eine ist	eben	doch keine Geschichte, die e
12	an der Stelle abtreten und inoffiziell	eben	nur keine Viertel. B: nur keine Viertel!
13	er du tust Milch und Zucker rein, muß	eben	auch wieder Süßstoff nehmen und au
14	es möglichst sein, ja, weil 8.000 Mark	eben	viel Geld sind, dann, em, müßten w
15	kommen auch zu uns kommen, A: Ihr könnt	eben	. einfach man nur so vorbei / brauch
16	es nicht damit gerechnet, daß die Bank	eben	so'n Mist macht oder die . entsprec
17	machen. A: Jaja, klar. B: Das ist ja	eben	das Doofe. ((Räuspern)) A: Sicher.
18	ein, mit/mit Ananas drin, so un/ muß	eben	Süßstoff nehmen, darfs kein/ keine
19	Wanzen kommen? A: Ja, das weiß ich	eben	auch nicht! B: Meistens sitzen die
20	es aus B: mal alles aus, weil wer ja	eben	wissen müssen, was wer noch kaufen
21	groß Parteien A: hmhm B: un wenn da	eben	größere, öh, Reparaturen notwendig
22	besichtigt, und so, ne. Bloß, es ist	eben	/ du kannst schlecht ein Fenster aufm
23	? A: An un für sich, ja, bloß, es ist	eben,	. daß ich doch schon bißchen / also
24	B: un Schulen, und, em, na, Bücherei	eben,	die Ärzte befinden sich alle in d
25	individuelle . Vergütung und ä, das wird	eben	dadurch erleichtert, daß es nur hal
26	geben werden hinterher aufgegeben, weil	eben,	ö, sie mit ihrem Bekannten dann.
27	Ah so! B: da ist eine Kiesgrube und	eben,	ö, A: ja B: sonst nix, ne.. Un b
28	Na, ich ja im Grunde auch. Da hat wer	eben/	C: Ja, ich hab da bestimmt ein un
29	es nicht, ich hatte aber . grad zu der Zeit	eben	keine Zeit, öh, "lernschwache Milli
30	Vielleicht wollt ich mir auch selbst	eben	bloß beweisen, ich kann alles, wen
31	das nur sagen. B: Hm C: Die wurde mir	eben	als etwas . unterkühlt vorbeigebrac
32	es nicht, verzichten müssen. Nein, ich hatte	eben	gedacht, ö, daß . er . offiziell .

In the vast majority of occurrences in modal particle function (26 of 32), *eben* collocates with a verb in the present tense, as can be seen from the concordance data provided here. The verb forms which are not included in the concordance lines shown here have been established by investigating larger stretches of the respective dialogue.

In two instances, line 1 and line 5, there is a subjunctive form and only in four instances (lines 29 to 32) *eben* in its modal particle function collocates with a verb form indicating past. The concordance data show that *eben* as a modal particle occurs only in statements, there are no occurrences in interrogatives or imperatives. This is in line with its meaning.

As a modal particle *eben* expresses "unavoidability," "irrevocable fact" as a detailed analysis of the following instances will show. The most obvious examples of stating a "given fact" are those where *eben* appears as part of an existential clause (e.g., Halliday, 1994), that is, where the main verb is "sein" (to be):

- 22 besichtigt, und so, ne. Bloß, es is **eben** / du kanns schlecht en Fenster aufm
 23 ? A: An un für sich, ja, bloß, es is **eben**, . daß ich doch son bißchen / also

Eben functions interpersonally, expressing that a fact is evident and undeniable.

There are two instances of relational clauses (Halliday, 1994) with *sein* occurring as dependent clauses introduced by *weil*:

- 10 jetzt von der Schule bringen, **weil** er **eben** zu autoritär is, ne, auf der Schule
 14 ht möglich sein, ja, **weil** 8.000 Mark **eben** viel Geld sind, dann, em, müßten w

Here, *eben* works in conjunction with *weil* to create the impression of uttering an irrevocable fact: The relational clause is posited as a valid argument introduced by *weil*.

The following two excerpts exemplify this in the context of larger stretches of text:

Context: line 10

- B: ..., un wenn se frech waren, oder irgendwie was nich richtig gemacht ham, mußten die vor die Klasse, oder aus der Klasse un in der Ecke stehn, un so, under muß so ungefähr ., öh, der hatte also sein erstes Referendarjahr , alson ganz junger noch, ne.
 [...and when they were cheeky or somehow did something wrong, they had to stand in front of the class, or leave the classroom and stand in a corner, and the like, and he must roughly. , er, he was doing his first year of teaching, so one of the really young ones still, you know.]
- A: Das gibt's gar nich!
 [You don't say!]
- B: Hm, und . da . ham sich aber die ganzen, öh, öh, Eltern wahnsinnig beschwert, un wollen den jetzt von der Schule bringen, weil er **eben** zu autoritär is, ne, auf der Schule jedenfalls.
 [Hm, and . then . all the, er, er, parents complained like mad, and now they want to get him out of the school, because he is **simply** too authoritarian, you know, at school at least]
- A: Ah so!
 [I see!]
- B: Das is also völlig unnormal, daß sich da einer so benehmen würde, erzählte die Y mir/
 [It's really not normal for somebody to behave like that, Y told me]

By using *eben*, speaker B stresses the unavoidability of the parents' actions: they had to act like they did, because the teacher's behaviour lay outside of what is considered normal behaviour, an argument which is expressed again explicitly in B's next turn.

Context: line 14

- B: Ja, die Garage hat uns damals 8.000 Mark extra gekostet und sehr viel drunter wollten wer se auch nich verkaufen, ne.
 [Yes, the garage cost us an extra 8000 Mark then and we didn't want to sell it for much less, you know]
- A: Ja. Is ja unverschämt, was die für Einstellplätze nehmen!
 [Yes. It's outrageous how much they charge for car spaces]

B: Ja, leider. Aber wir warn damals laut Vertrag an den . Kauf der Garage gebunden und müssen auch laut Vertrag die Garage auch mit verkaufen, wenn wer die Wohnung verkaufen. Ich mein, sollte das um alles in der Welt nicht möglich sein, ja, weil 8.000 Mark **eben** viel Geld sind, dann, em, müBten wer uns versuchen, da ne andere Lösung einfallen zu lassen

[Yes, unfortunately. But at the time we were bound by the contract to buy the garage and according to the contract we also have to sell it when we sell the apartment. I mean, if that's not at all possible, yes, because 8000 Mark **simply** IS a lot of money, then, er, we would have to try to find some other solution]

Using *eben*, speaker B presents the proposition "8000 Mark simply is a lot of money" as an irrevocable fact, common knowledge that is generally agreed upon. Within the larger argument "the garage may be difficult to sell" the phrase containing *eben* is a supportive move, *eben* providing the necessary emphasis.

In a fairly large proportion of occurrences, *eben* as a modal particle collocates with modal verbs, namely *müssen* (have to, lines 2, 3, 7, 13, 18); *können* (be able to; lines 9, 155), and *wollen* (want to; lines 26, 30):

2	ich. Und . da muß ich jetzt am Montag	eben	. meinen Widerspruch begründen. A:
3	ne, bloß / bloß B: ah! A: muß sie	eben	für die Doktorarbeit muß sie das Ga
7	dagegen Widerspruch eingelegt und muß	eben	jetz vor's Amtsgericht. A: Ja, un
13	du tust Milch und Zucker rein, mußt	eben	auch wieder Süßstoff nehmen und au
18	en, mit/mit Ananas drin, so un/ mußt	eben	Süßstoff nehmen, darfs kein/ keine
9	möglichst, öh, viel von, ne, damit se	eben	auch sagen kann , das sind nich blo
15	n auch zu uns kommen, A. Ihr könnt .	eben	. einfach ma nur so vorbei / brauch
26	ätten wer hinterher aufgegeben, weil	eben ,	öh, sie mit ihrem Bekannten dann ⁶
30	Vielleicht wollt ich mir auch selbst	eben	bloß beweisen, ich kann alles, wen

In collocation with a form of *müssen*, *eben* lends emphasis to the obligation of carrying out a particular act. In these clauses, *eben* serves to express the unavoidability of the obligation as the following example shows in more detail.

Context: line 3

A: Gut, wenn das dann alles ma fertig ist, les ich's dir ma vor!
Wie sich das anhört. Die schreibt nämlich auch Dialekt un sowas genau wortwörtlich ab, da.

[Right, when it's all ready at some stage, I'll read it to you. The way it sounds. You see, she also copies out the dialect and things like that word for word.]

B: Ja?
[Does she?]

A: Ja, in ihrer Examensarbeit hatte se sowas ähnliches gemacht,
ne, bloß / bloß
[Yes, in her dissertation she did something similar, you know, but]

B: ah!

A: **muß** sie **eben** für die Doktorarbeit muß sie das Ganze en
bißchen ausweiten, noch
[for her doctoral thesis **she'll simply have to expand** the whole thing a bit, still]

B: Hmhm

A: un noch / noch mehr bringen, ne.
[and produce some more, you know.]

The English "simply" could here be expressed as "it's as simple as that," that is, no discussion about it is necessary.

The results of the qualitative analysis carried out on *eben* can be summarised as follows:

Table 3. Summary of Results: *EBEN*

position in clause	grammatical co-occurrence	lexical collocation	category	meaning
initial			answering particle	"exactly"
	indication of past		adverb of time	"just" / "a moment ago"
central/final		<i>mal</i>	adverb of time	"quickly"
central/final	tendency for present tense	form of <i>sein</i>	modal particle	"simply" (irrevocable fact)
central/final		form of <i>müssen</i>	modal particle	"simply" (unavoidability of action)

Application of the Corpus-Based Analysis to Language Teaching

Over the past decade, corpus-based research has had an increasing influence on language teaching pedagogy, with regard to linguistic content as well as to teaching methodology (Kennedy, 1998). While the majority of studies reporting on corpus-based teaching approaches refer to English (e.g., Biber, Conrad, & Reppen, 1994; Conrad, 2000; Fligelstone, 1993; Wichmann et al, 1997) a number of studies have discussed German (Dodd, 1997, 2000; Jones, 1997). In general terms, Leech (1997) distinguishes between the direct use of corpora in teaching and the use of corpora indirectly applied to teaching. Teaching about corpora, teaching the exploitation of corpora and exploiting corpora to teach are said to represent a direct use of corpora, whereas reference publishing, materials development and language testing are indirect applications (Leech, 1997, p 6-7). Thus, the approach proposed here is direct in that it exploits the corpora of spoken German described above to arrive at relevant data. The approach is indirect, though, in the sense that the concordance data are not compiled by the language learners themselves but developed into work sheets that confront the learner with the task of distinguishing particle meanings in context.

The adaptation of concordances for language teaching is described informatively and clearly by Tribble and Jones (1990) for English in general and by Thurston and Candlin (1997) for academic English. The concordance-based creation of teaching materials presented here follows approaches outlined in those publications. Concordance data are used to assist learners deduce the meaning of words in context (Tribble & Jones, 1990, p. 35ff). How those teaching materials will be structured and what type of activities they will encourage will obviously depend on the learners' proficiency, learning styles, and so forth, but the sample worksheet contained in the [Appendix](#) illustrates how the topic investigated here could be approached. For less advanced learners samples of larger stretches of dialogue could be provided to aid understanding.

CONCLUSION

The limited ranges of speech events which learners are exposed to in classroom discourse do not provide enough input on modal particles to lead to an understanding of their meaning. An important factor in teaching modal particles is therefore the exposure of learners to particles in various contexts and the focussing of learners' attention on their meaning in those contexts. Corpus examples are extremely effective as they expose learners to the type of language they will encounter in real communicative situations (McEnery & Wilson, 1996, p. 120). Collocations, involving both grammar and lexis, have an

important place in language pedagogy as they can be identified empirically by the methodologies developed in corpus analysis (Kennedy, 1998, p. 289). The quantitative analysis of the German corpora described above has shown which particles occur most frequently in spoken German and are therefore most salient for a learner of German. A manual disambiguation of particle meaning was carried out on concordance data for the particle *eben*. Its meaning in modal particle function was differentiated from its meanings in other functions, namely as answering particle and as adverb of time. The analysis of real-language data unveiled structures, patterns and predictable features relating to the various usages of *eben* and formed the basis for a sample worksheet for learners of German. Similar worksheets aimed at intermediate to advanced learners of German will be developed for the more frequently occurring particles *ja*, *auch*, *aber*, *mal*, *doch*, *schon*, *denn*, and *nur*. It is hoped that they will provide a useful extension to the existing teaching materials on modal particles.

APPENDIX

SAMPLE WORK SHEET: *EBEN*

1. The word *EBEN* has different meanings which depend on the context of use. Can you find out by looking at the following groups of examples which of the translations given below best reflects the meaning of *EBEN* in each group?

simply	a moment ago/just	exactly	quickly
--------	-------------------	---------	---------

group 1 _____

group 2 _____

group 3 _____

group 4 _____

GROUP 1

1	schöne Bücher, die man lesen kann. A: Eben! B: und so viele schöne Sachen, die
2	doppelte als die ganze Zeit, ne. B: Eben. Is auch schön. A: Und die Arbeit ma
3	alles, wozu man jetzt nich kommt! B: Eben. Du, meine Mutter, die hatte ne gan
4	n die elf Kilo abgenommen hätte! D: Eben, ich denk, die is doch gar ni mehr
5	er Frau auch Frau Doktor Sounso. B: Eben, dann bisde ooch Herr Dokta! A: Ri
6	ort "werden" nich, anscheinend . B: Eben, siehstde, un, stimmt auch wirklich,
7	der Effekt ja oh ni mehr da! A: Ja, eben, genau! Vor allen Dingen, es geht j
8	, ich helf ihr, soweit's geht B: ja, eben A: und son bißchen Telefongespräch
9	uns ja nun wieder auch nich B: Nee, eben () Hast du mal deinen Pullover aus
10	h kann Sie nur beglückwünschen. Nee, eben, das war, wie C, ich war der Meinun

GROUP 2

1 Ja, hörma, wat sachsde dazu, was ich **eben** . der A erzählt hab? B: Nee, was
 2 n dann? . Meine Mutter hat dich zwar **eben** schon den ganzen Quark gefragt, abe
 3 u, ich wollt dir nur sagen, der Z war **eben** hier, die Schreibmaschine is also
 4 a, ich hab der A eben gesacht, daß se **eben** vorbeigebracht wurde B: Ach so! C:
 5 . den Abend ruhig gestalten, die war **eben** einkaufen und mußte sich danach hi
 6 onsequent wär, ich war zwar sachtich **eben** noch zu C, ich bin jetz noch stolz,
 7 hen das über'n DeAEs, und der meinte **eben**, ja, ich solle auf jeden Fall nen
 8 a, der X hat sich gewundert, weil ihr **eben**, als ihr ihn aus dem Auto ließt, g
 9 acht? Mit der A? C: Ja, ich hab der A **eben** gesacht, daß se eben vorbeigebracht

GROUP 3

1 eben / B: Ja, Augenblick, ich hör ma **eben**, Frau A: Hm. B: Ja? ((Stimme im Hin
 2 onntag oder bis Montag, Momentchen ma **eben**, ja? ((20s)) Ne, das is bis zum 9. A
 3 rade, das könnt nich sein, Moment ma **eben**! (lacht) Ich gebn dir ma. D: Ja, Mom
 4 r Messe! A: Ah! B: Da müßtich ma **eben** nachgucken, das is entweder nur bis
 5 ame) C: (Straßenname)? Da muß ich ma **eben** nachguggen, nech. A: ja. ((59s)) C:
 6 her ein Bier getrunken/ B: Moment ma **eben**! (zu ihrer Mutter) Ja, ich komm gleic
 7 Ich mein, wenn der schon mal **eben** . dieses Knöllchen da ausgestellt ha
 8 kommen? B: Ja, kommen Se morgen mal **eben**, ja? A: Is gut. Hm, danke. B: Ne? B
 9 illt mir grade ein, kannst du mir mal **eben** mit kurzen Worten sagen, wie man ein
 10 orz. B: Warte mal, kann ich noch mal **eben** sehen? Das is Porz, ja achthundertzw
 11 Sie vielleicht freundlicherweise mal **eben** so durchrufen, wann der Herr U da Fr
 12 ng an / einschalten, daß er dann mal **eben** so tickt, das hat ja nicht zu sagen,

GROUP 4

1 besichtigt, und so, ne. Bloß, es is **eben** / du kanns schlecht en Fenster aufm
 2 A: An un für sich, ja, bloß, es is **eben**, . daß ich doch son bißchen / also
 3 jetz von der Schule bringen, weil er **eben** zu autoritär is, ne, auf der Schule
 4 ht möglich sein, ja, weil 8.000 Mark **eben** viel Geld sind, dann, em, müBten w
 5 ich. Und . da muß ich jetz am Montag **eben** . meinen Widerspruch begründen. A:
 6 ne, bloß / bloß B: ah! A: muß sie **eben** für die Doktorarbeit muß sie das Ga
 7 dagegen Widerspruch eingelegt und muß **eben** jetz vor's Amtsgericht. A: Ja, un
 8 du tust Milch und Zucker rein, muß **eben** auch wieder Süßstoff nehmen und au
 9 en, mit/mit Ananas drin, so un/ muß **eben** Süßstoff nehmen, darfs kein/ keine

2. Where is the position of *EBEN* in the clause? Please circle the correct answer.

group 1	initial positon	middle/end position
group 2	initial positon	middle/end position
group 3	initial positon	middle/end position
group 4	initial positon	middle/end position

3. Now look at group 2 again and identify the verb forms in the clauses with *EBEN*. Write down the verb forms and their tenses.

line 1 _____ line 2 _____
 line 3 _____ line 4 _____
 line 5 _____ line 6 _____
 line 7 _____ line 8 _____
 line 9 _____

4. Which word appears in front of *EBEN* in group 3? _____

5. Examine group 4 again. Write down the verb forms.

line 1 _____ line 2 _____
 line 3 _____ line 4 _____
 line 5 _____ line 6 _____
 line 7 _____ line 8 _____
 line 9 _____

Which two verbs do you find in these clauses?

verb 1: _____ verb 2: _____

Which tense is used in these clauses? _____

6. Please supply the appropriate translation for *EBEN*.

<i>Position in clause</i>	<i>Reference to time</i>	<i>Collocation</i>	<i>Type of word</i>	<i>Translation</i>
initial			answering particle	
	Past		adverb of time	
central/final		MAL	adverb of time	
central/final	Present	form of "sein"	modal particle	
central/final		form of "müssen"	modal particle	

NOTES

- Freiburger Korpus, Schulklassengespräch mit Günter Grass (FKO/XAM.00000); transcription has been modified to facilitate reading comprehension.
- The list represents the core particles considered to occur in modal particle function and is based on an evaluation of a substantial part of the literature on modal particles (Helbig, 1994; Thurmair 1989; Weydt, 1979, 1981, 1983, 1989).
- DSK: 200,000 words; 70 texts; average length of text, 2857 words
 FKO: 700,000 words; 220 texts; average length of text, 3182 words
 PFE: 650,000 words; 386 texts; average length of text, 1684 words
 BRO: 44,000 words; 35 texts; average length of text, 1257 words

4. These categories are based on an evaluation of the literature on *eben* in different function categories (Hartmann, 1979; Helbig, 1994; Hentschel, 1986; Lütten, 1979; Thurmair, 1989; Trömel-Plötz 1979).
5. The analysis presented here is based on transcripts of spoken language and therefore does not refer to phonological features of the data.
6. The text continues as follows: "...schon auf die Bekanntgabe der Ergebnisse warten wollte."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Nic Witton and three anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on a previous draft of this article.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Martina Möllering is Head of German Studies in the Department of European Languages at Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. She is involved in language teaching and teacher training in German as a Foreign Language. Her research interests include the application of computers in language teaching, particularly the use of corpora and on-line communication facilities.

E-mail: martina.mollering@mq.edu.au

REFERENCES

- Abraham, W. (1991a). Discourse particles in German: How does their illocutionary force come about? In W. Abraham (Ed.), *Discourse Particles*. Amsterdam: Benjamin.
- Abraham, W. (1991b). Modal particle research. The state of the art. *Multilingua*, 10, 1-2.
- Aijmer, K. (1997). I think - an English modal particle. In T. Swan & O. Westvik (Eds.), *Modality in Germanic languages* (pp. 1-47). Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Berglund, Y. (1999). Exploiting a large spoken corpus: an end-user's way to the BNC. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 4(1), 29-52.
- Biber, D. (1988). *Variation across speech and writing*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Reppen, R. (1994). Corpus-based approaches to issues in applied linguistics. *Applied Linguistics* 15, 169-189
- Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Reppen, R. (1998). *Corpus linguistics. Investigating language structure and use*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press
- Brons-Albert, R. (1984). *Gesprochenes Standarddeutsch: Telefondialoge [Spoken standard German: Telephone conversations]*. Tübingen, Germany: Günter Narr.
- Bublitz, W. (1978). *Ausdrucksweisen der Sprechereinstellung [Ways of expressing speaker attitude]*. Tübingen, Germany: Niemeyer.
- Busse, D. (1992). Partikeln im Unterricht Deutsch als Fremdsprache [Particles in teaching German as a foreign language]. *Muttersprache*, 102(1), 37-59.
- Cheon-Kostrzewska, B. J., & Kostrzewska, F. (1997a). Der Erwerb der deutschen Modalpartikeln. Ergebnisse aus einer Longitudinalstudie (I) [The acquisition of German modal particles. Results from a longitudinal study]. *Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, 2, 86-92.
- Cheon-Kostrzewska, B. J., & Kostrzewska, F. (1997b). Der Erwerb der deutschen Modalpartikeln. Ergebnisse aus einer Longitudinalstudie (II). *Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, 3, 150-155.

- Conrad, S. (2000). Will corpus linguistics revolutionize grammar teaching in the 21 century? *TESOL Quarterly*, 3, 548-560.
- Dalmas, M. (1990). Partikelforschung "konkret" [Research into particles: "concrete"]. *Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, 27(5), 285-289.
- de Vriendt, S., Vandeweghe, W., & Van de Craen, P. (1991). Combinatorial aspects of modal particles in Dutch. *Multilingua*, 10(1/2), 43-59.
- Dodd, B. (Ed.). (2000). *Working with German corpora*. Birmingham, UK: Birmingham University Press
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis*. New York: Longman
- Fligelstone, S. (1993). Some reflections on the question of teaching, from a corpus linguistics perspective. *ICAME Journal*, 17, 97-109.
- Franck, D. (1979). Abtönungspartikel und Interaktionsmanagement [Toning particles and the management of an interaction]. In H. Weydt, (Ed.), *Die Partikeln der deutschen Sprache* [The particles of the German language] (pp. 3-13). Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1994). *An introduction to functional grammar* (2nd ed.). New York: Arnold.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.
- Harden, T., & Rösler, D. (1981). Partikeln und Emotionen - zwei vernachlässigte Aspekte des gesteuerten Fremdsprachenerwerbs [Particles and emotions - two areas neglected in foreign language instruction]. In H. Weydt (Ed.), *Partikeln und Deutschunterricht* [The particles of the German language] (pp. 67-80). Heidelberg, Germany: Groos.
- Hartmann, D. (1979). Syntaktische Funktionen der Partikeln *eben, eigentlich, einfach, nämlich, ruhig, vielleicht* und *wohl* [Syntactic functions of the particles "eben," "eigentlich," "einfach," "nämlich," "ruhig," "vielleicht" and "wohl"]. Zur Grundlegung einer diachronischen Untersuchung von Satzpartikeln im Deutschen. In H. Weydt (Ed.), *Die Partikeln der deutschen Sprache* [The particles of the German language] (pp. 121-138). Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Helbig, G. (1989). Die Partikeln - keine Wortklasse, eine Wortklasse oder mehrere Wortklassen? [The particles - no word class, one word class or several word classes]. *Germanistisches Jahrbuch DDR-UVR*, 8, 194-209.
- Helbig, G. (1994). *Lexikon deutscher Partikeln* (2nd ed.). Berlin: Langenscheidt.
- Helbig, G. & Helbig, A. (1995). *Deutsche Partikeln - richtig gebraucht?* [German particles – used correctly?]. Berlin: Langenscheidt.
- Held, G. (1983). "Kommen Sie *doch*" oder "Venga *pure*." Bemerkungen zu den pragmatischen Partikeln im Deutschen und Italienischen am Beispiel auffordernder Sprechakte ["Kommen Sie doch" or "Venga pure". Remarks on pragmatic particles in requests in German and Italian.]. In M. Dardano, W. V. Dressler, & G. Held (Eds.), *Parallela* (pp. 316-336). Tübingen, Germany: Narr.
- Hentschel, E. (1986). *Funktion und Geschichte deutscher Partikeln. Ja, doch, halt und eben* [The function and history of German particles."Ja," "doch," "halt" and "eben"]. Tübingen, Germany: Niemeyer.
- House, J., & Kasper, G. (1981). Politeness markers in English and German. In: F. Coulmas (Ed.), *Conversational routine: Explorations in standardized communication situations and prepatterned speech* (pp. 157-186). New York: Mouton.
- Husso, A. (1981). Zum Gebrauch von Abtönungspartikeln bei Ausländern [On the use of toning particles by non-native speakers]. In H. Weydt (Ed.), *Partikeln und Deutschunterricht* [Particles and the teaching of German] (pp. 81-99). Heidelberg, Germany: Groos.

Institut für deutsche Sprache. (1999). *COSMAS*.

Jones, R. (1997). Creating and using a corpus of spoken German. In A. Wichmann, S. Fligelstone, T. McEnery, & G. Knowles (Eds.), *Teaching and language corpora* (pp. 146-156). New York: Longman.

Kasper, G. (2000, March). *Four perspectives on L2 pragmatic development*. Revised version of a plenary given at the annual AAAL conference, Vancouver.

Kasper, G., & Rose, K. (1999). Pragmatics and SLA. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 19, 81-104.

Kennedy, G. (1998). *An introduction to corpus linguistics*. New York: Longman.

Kriwonossow, A. (1977). *Die modalen Partikeln in der deutschen Gegenwartssprache* [Modal particles in contemporary German]. Göppingen, Germany: Kümmerle.

Kutsch, S. (1985). Zur Entwicklung des deutschen Partikelsystems im ungesteuerten Zweitspracherwerb ausländischer Kinder [On the development of the German particle system in children's uninstructed second language acquisition]. *Deutsche Sprache*, 3, 230-257.

Leech, G. (1997). Teaching and language corpora - a convergence. In A. Wichmann, S. Fligelstone, T. McEnery, & G. Knowles (Eds.), *Teaching and language corpora* (pp. 1-23). New York: Longman.

Lütten, J. (1979). Die Rolle der Partikeln *doch*, *eben* und *ja* als Konsensus-Konstitutiva in gesprochener Sprache [The role of the particles "doch," "eben" and "ja" in creating consensus in spoken language]. In H. Weydt (Ed.), *Die Partikeln der deutschen Sprache* [The particles of the German language] (pp. 30-38). Berlin: de Gruyter.

McCarthy, M. (1993). Spoken discourse markers in written text. In J. Sinclair, M. Hoey, & G. Fox (Eds.), *Techniques of description. Spoken and written discourse* (pp. 170-182). New York: Routledge.

McCarthy, M., & Carter, R. (1994). *Language as discourse*. New York: Longman.

McEnery, T. & Wilson, A. (1996). *Corpus linguistics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

Möllering, M., & Nunan, D. (1995). Pragmatics in interlanguage: German modal particles. *Applied Language Learning*, 6(1/2), 41-64.

Paneth, E. (1981). Partikeln im Unterricht - Erfahrungen mit englischen Studenten [Particles in teaching - experiences with English students]. In H. Weydt (Ed.), *Partikeln und Deutschunterricht* [Particles and the teaching of German] (pp. 101-110). Heidelberg, Germany: Groos.

Rall, M. (1981). "¿Se puede enseñar la necesidad de emplear partículas intencionales?" Ein Experiment mit spanischen Studenten [Is it possible to teach the necessity of using intentional particles? An experiment with Spanish students]. In H. Weydt (Ed.), *Partikeln und Deutschunterricht* [Particles and the teaching of German] (pp. 123-136). Heidelberg, Germany: Groos.

Rehbein, J. (1979). Sprechhandlungsaugmente. Zur Organisation der Hörersteuerung [Speech act enhancers. On the organisation of hearer guidance]. In H. Weydt (Ed.), *Die Partikeln der deutschen Sprache* [The particles of the German language] (pp. 58-74). Berlin: de Gruyter.

Rudolph, E. (1989). Partikeln in der Textorganisation [Particles in the organisation of a text]. In H. Weydt (Ed.), *Sprechen mit Partikeln* [Particles in talk] (pp. 498-510). Berlin: de Gruyter.

Rudolph, E. (1991). Relationships between particle occurrence and text types. *Multilingua*, 10(1/2), 203-223.

Rutherford, W. (1987). *Second language grammar: Learning and teaching*. New York: Longman.

Schiffrin, D. (1987). *Discourse markers*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

- Scott, M., & Johns, T. (1993). *MicroConcord*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Sigley, R. (1997). Text categories and where you can stick them: A crude formality index. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 2(2), 199-237.
- Sinclair, J. (1991). *Corpus, concordance, collocation*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press
- Steinmüller, U. (1981): Akzeptabilität und Verständlichkeit - Zum Partikelgebrauch von Ausländern. In H.Weydt(ed): *Partikeln und Deutschunterricht* (pp.137-148). Heidelberg: Groos.
- Thurmair, M. (1989). *Modalpartikeln und ihre Kombinationen* [Modal particles and their combinations]. Tübingen, Germany: Niemeyer.
- Thurstun, J., & Candlin, C. N. (1997). *Exploring academic English: A workbook for student essay writing*. Sydney: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research.
- Tribble, C., & Jones, G. (1989). *Concordances in the classroom*. Harlow, UK: Longman
- Trömel-Plötz, S. (1979). "Männer sind eben so": Eine linguistische Beschreibung von Modalpartikeln aufgezeigt an der Analyse von dt. *eben* und engl. *just* ["Männer sind eben so": A linguistic description of modal particles featuring the analysis of German "eben" and English "just"]. In H. Weydt, (Ed.), *Die Partikeln der deutschen Sprache* [The particles of the German language] (pp. 318-334). Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Vorderwülbecke, K. (1981). Progression, Semantisierung und Übungsformen der Abtönungspartikeln im Unterricht Deutsch als Fremdsprache [Progression, semanticization and exercise forms for teaching toning particles in German as a foreign language]. In H. Weydt (Ed.), *Partikeln und Deutschunterricht* [*Particles in teaching German*] (pp. 149-160). Heidelberg: Groos.
- Weydt, H. (1969). *Abtönungspartikel. Die deutschen Modalwörter und ihre französischen Entsprechungen* [Toning particles. The German modal words and their French equivalents]. Bad Homburg, Germany: Gehlen.
- Weydt, H. (Ed.). (1979). *Die Partikeln der deutschen Sprache* [*The particles of the German language*]. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Weydt, H. (Ed.). (1981). *Partikeln und Deutschunterricht* [Particles and the teaching of German]. Heidelberg, Germany: Groos.
- Weydt, H. (Ed.). (1983). *Partikeln und Interaktion* [Particles and interaction]. Tübingen, Germany: Niemeyer.
- Weydt, H. (Ed.). (1989). *Sprechen mit Partikeln* [Particles in talk]. Berlin: de Gruyter
- Wichmann, A., Fligelstone, S., McEnery, T., & Knowles, G. (Eds.). (1997). *Teaching and language Corpora*. New York: Longman.
- Witton, N. (1994). Micro-Concord presented, reviewed and compared with the Mini-Concordancer. *On-Call*, 8(2), 33-40.