Episode 034 – Grammar

1. Connecting main clauses with "denn"

A main clause usually contains a subject and a conjugated verb. Coordinating conjunctions can be used to connect two main clauses. Both clauses are independent and equal. The word order in each one doesn't change.

The conjunction "denn" is a coordinating conjunction that joins two main clauses. The second part provides more information about the first part.

Unlike the conjunctions "und" and "oder", there is always a comma before "denn"!

Without conjunction:  Wir brauchen einen Staubsauger.  Der Teppich hat Flecken.
With conjunction:  Wir brauchen einen Staubsauger,  denn  der Teppich hat Flecken.

With conjunction:  Du bist ein Säufer,  denn  du hast alles getrunken.
A subtle difference
"denn" has the same meaning as "weil". Both words introduce a reason. Grammatically, however, they differ.
"denn" is a coordinating conjunction, connecting one main clause to another. That's why the word order of the second clause doesn't change.
"weil" is a subordinating conjunction that introduces a subordinate clause to a main clause. The conjugated verb moves to the end of the subordinate clause.

Examples:
Wir brauchen einen Staubsauger, denn der Teppich hat Flecken.
Wir brauchen einen Staubsauger, weil der Teppich Flecken hat.