

Episode 071 – Grammar

Incomplete sentences

Sentences are complete grammatical units of language that assert a meaning. They can stand on their own or appear alongside other sentences to create a body of text or form parts of dialog.

A German sentence usually has at least one conjugated verb and a subject in the nominative case. The verb may also require or permit other sentence elements, such as objects.

But in some instances, sentences can be shortened if their meaning remains clear from the context. That's often the case in conversations.

Example:

Arbeiter: *Was wollen Sie?*

Harry: **Reden!** *Reden!*

"Reden!" isn't really a complete sentence. It's short for "Ich will mit Ihnen reden!", in response to the question "Was wollen Sie?". But the meaning is still clear from the context.

Incomplete sentences can take the place of declarative sentences, questions and imperative sentences.

- Declarative sentence:

Example:

Harry: *Wir müssen mit Ihnen reden!*

Arbeiter: **Jetzt nicht.** *Ich muss arbeiten. (= I can't talk to you right now.)*

Harry – gefangen in der Zeit

Begleitmaterialien

- Imperative sentence:

Example:

Arbeiter: *Können Sie mir helfen? **Den Schraubenzieher, bitte.*** (= Please hand me the screwdriver.)

- Questions:

Examples:

*Da ist ein Mann. – **Wo?*** (= Where is there a man?)

*Kommen Sie hoch! – **Was?*** (= What did you say?/What are we supposed to do?)

Die Leiter? (= Where is there a ladder?)

You are already familiar with dialog particles that can serve as replies or interjections in a conversation.

Examples:

*Wir haben keine Zeit. – **Genau!***

*Das ist nur ein kleiner Fehler. – **Ja, klar.***

*Siehst du den Mann? – **Nein.***

*Ich möchte mit Ihnen sprechen. – **Gerne.***