

# Language through Culture: Developing an Integrative Curriculum for First-Year Czech

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My BLC project concerns creating a culture-based curriculum for teaching an elementary language class in Czech, a Less Commonly Taught Language with a relatively small number of speakers and for which we are rarely able to offer more than two years of instruction. Rick Kern, in addressing “literacy and issues in language education,” argues, regarding the “(s)chism between ‘language’ and ‘literature’ studies,” that “The view that ‘language’ teaching is nothing more than a remedial (and somewhat dull) stage of preparation for the more rigorous (and interesting) study of literature can affect both students and faculty adversely. A literacy-based approach ... can help break down lines of division and assure intellectual stimulation even at the beginning stages of language learning” (Kern, p. 8). In this spirit, I applied for the Berkeley Language Center fellowship to develop the fundamental structure and concepts for a coherent reader/workbook for elementary Czech which would incorporate teaching basic language skills into a cultural framework. As I exchanged ideas with the other Fellows and the core BLC academic personnel<sup>1</sup> and began finding additional source material, I recognized that setting up the standards and typical content for one chapter would be a major undertaking for a single semester.<sup>2</sup> Here I will be presenting excerpts from a single chapter, the chapter which deals culturally with food and drink and grammatically with the accusative case.<sup>3</sup>

The project, originally intended to lead to a printed text which would coordinate with external cultural materials in the form of film clips, songs, and authentic written texts, has turned into the beginning of an

integrated language teaching system for first-year instruction, to be based on the internet but set up as a series of printable pages in pdf format, some of which students will turn in as homework.<sup>4</sup> Cultural material forms its basis but the text emphasizes linguistic competence as a component of cultural competence.

Basing the material on the internet has many advantages. Among them are improved layout options; ability to provide easy links to external sites and to site-internal reference materials, charts, and explanations; ease of updating materials and replacing cultural content with more current material; and the ability to use color and other graphic devices to highlight grammatical forms when they are the current object of study. Significantly, it also frees instructors from the constraints placed by publishers and the print medium itself: one can create uncluttered pages (if one can restrain oneself from putting too much on a page, but that is an issue each must struggle with) and use as much space as needed to present accompanying graphics. In addition, one can create more generous page layouts, with ample space between lines, wide margins, and a central text area narrow enough for easy reading. I stress this point because the text I currently use (Kresin et al, 2000), though it has many virtues, is printed across the entire width of letter-sized paper, a format which causes problems for some students.

### **Language and Culture**

Culture is in every facet of language, not only in the ideas, objects, and cultural norms to which we refer through language. It is in the shape of our handwriting and our printed characters, the layout of our computer keyboard, our instantaneous association of certain letter shapes to known sounds, our assumption that the subject will precede the verb and any objects will follow it. It drives our idiomatic usage and our fascination with or confusion about the idioms of other languages. Even awareness of grammar as an object of study is culturally driven – witness the growing lack thereof in the US and the much stronger awareness in certain other cultures, among them Czech. The goal of my work is encourage students' adult cultural awareness and curiosity to contribute to rather than constrain development of language skills in the L2. Working from the L1 language culture means recognizing its assumptions, including linguistic cultural bias. For the most sophisticated learners it may be a very subtle bias, such as the deeply rooted bias toward parsing all utterances based on SVO word order rather than morphological case marking. For students with little foreign language

background, it may take the form of consternation when a word for word translation fails to achieve the desired meaning or outright panic at the complexity of the case system.

### **Why Focus on Culture in the Elementary Classroom?**

The Czech word for *infant* is *nemluvně*, essentially, a being who cannot speak (the verb *mluvit* means to speak, prefix *ne-* means *not*), a derivation similar to the Latin *in-fans*. College students in an elementary language class often experience a sense of such *infantilization*, as they are unable to speak about normal activities, feelings, and thoughts and thus deprived of adult means of expression. In Czech, whose lexicon and complex grammar differ greatly from those of English, the problem is acute. Our methods of teaching can help to shorten the period of linguistic infancy or unwittingly prolong it. How long the period of overt discomfort lasts depends in part on how different the L2 and its language culture are from the student's L1 or from another that the student knows well, not to mention how open the student's mind is to accepting the differences. Using authentic cultural materials provides opportunities for students to interact with the full range of grammatical forms and a moderately extensive vocabulary, gaining experience with the L2 language culture at a higher level, allowing them to engage with the material as adults. The task of the instructor or textbook writer is to provide interesting material while at the same time setting realistic goals for what students should expect to learn for active use, defining clearly a pace for acquisition of grammatical skills, providing adequate but not intrusive support, and setting forth discussion topics, grammar and vocabulary drills, and review sections suited to beginning learners. For reference, some of the complexities of Czech are described in the dense handout included as Appendix I, which also discusses the largely structural ways I deal with them, some of which may be adaptable to other languages. The experience of where the language culture of the L1 more or less coincides with that of the L2 and where it diverges significantly can help students overcome the tendency to map directly from one language to another. And students' adult competency and life experience allow them to relate to cultural phenomena such as film on a level well above that of their beginning language skills.

I began the main portion of my talk with a film clip from the BLC film clip library<sup>5</sup> and here discuss some of its uses. The clip itself serves essentially as a trailer for a chapter whose cultural content addresses habits and norms around eating and drinking: the importance of beer, soup, potatoes, and *knedlíky* (Czech

dumplings), cafe culture, pub culture, the changes wrought by globalization, and the differences between idealized Czech culture and contemporary reality. Linguistically, the chapter provides students with a basic set of functional vocabulary and an introduction to the accusative case for active use. It makes use of a variety of authentic texts: menus, excerpts from articles about Czech eating habits, recipes, songs, and classic Czech children's literature on the theme of food. Prior to this point in the course, students have learned for active use only nominative and vocative case and basic verb conjugation, though all tenses and both aspects have been introduced. However, all cases have been discussed in the general introduction, which provides an overview, in English with Czech examples, of the range and usage of Czech cases. This introductory section also includes a series of charts with entire phrases shown in the various cases in all three genders and both numbers.<sup>6</sup> Within the chapter there are multiple, layered opportunities for both drill and conversation. The authentic texts employ verbs in both imperfective and perfective aspects, noun phrases in all cases, and more extensive vocabulary than that which students are expected to use actively. Toward the end of this article, I will discuss some of the formats I have developed to support vocabulary learning and review (the specific grammar drill sections are not *an sich* innovative, so I note them only in passing), but I will concentrate here on how elements from the broader culture serve to motivate language acquisition and active use.

The clip, which shows a scene in an upscale Czech pub, is from the 2007 film *I Served the King of England*<sup>7</sup> by famed Czech director Jiří Menzel, whose early film, *Closely Watched Trains*, won an Oscar in 1966. These, like many of his films, are based on novels by the noted Czech author Bohumil Hrabal. As a pre-exercise, students have a homework assignment introducing some basic vocabulary relating to the pub scene., reproduced here.

**Téma:**  
**Příprava k filmu**  
 Druhá lekce  
 První část

**Domácí úkol:**

Vyberte správnou  
 odpověď pomocí  
 internetu.

Choose the correct answer with  
 the help of the internet.



Co je to?

- a) sklenice na víno
- b) sklenice na pivo
- c) láhev vína
- d) láhev piva



Co je to?

- a) láhev piva
- b) stará hospoda na venkově
- c) pivní soudek
- d) šachovnice

Co je to?



- a) obraz Venkovská hospoda v Braniborsku od Maxe Liebermanna
- b) obraz Piják absintu od Pabla Picassa
- c) obraz Piják absintu v Kavárně Slávie od Viktora Olivy
- d) linořez V hospodě od Josefa Čapka

Co je to?



- a) pivní tácek
- b) jídelní lístek
- c) vyčepní pult
- d) šachové figury

Co je to?



- a) Tradiční Penzion Česká hospoda na jihočeském venkově
- b) Hospoda u sedmi švábů
- c) Kavárna Slávie v Praze
- d) Francouzská restaurace v Obecním domě v Praze

Víte, jaký je rozdíl mezi



a



?

To je sklenice na pivo. ➤

To je sklenice piva. ▲

**Nová slova:**

sklenice  
 víno  
 pivo  
 láhev  
 hospoda  
 pivní  
 soudek  
 kavárna  
 restaurace  
 pivní  
 jídelní lístek

**Další nová slova:**

šachovnice *chessboard*  
 šváb *cockroach*  
 obecní *municipal*  
 piják *drinker*  
 absint  
 linořez *linocut*  
 tácek *tray*  
 vyčepní pult *see*  
*image*  
 šachový *pertaining to*  
*chess*

**Slova, která už znáte**

dům  
 obraz  
 jaký  
 rozdíl

🔄 Toggle [here](#) for a  
 version of this page  
 with case and phrase  
 demarcations.

This exercise illustrates one of the formats I created for introducing vocabulary and phrase structure: students are given a set of multiple choice questions with pictures (the question here is “What is this?”). Each answer is a valid Czech phrase, and students can determine the correct answer by putting the phrase into an internet search and finding the appropriate image. They work with entire phrases, not just single words, and the phrases are well-formed. To take two examples from this exercise, the first picture has possible answers *a beer glass, a glass of beer, a bottle of wine, a bottle of beer*. In answers a and b, use of the preposition *na* plus the accusative indicates that the glass is FOR wine and FOR beer, but neither liquid need be present. In the next to the last *What is this?* question, the image is in fact a linoleum block print called *In the pub*, by noted Czech artist Josef Čapek.<sup>8</sup> The last item on the page, in an alternate format, reviews the concept presented in the first question, asking students to recognize that a *sklenice piva* actually contains beer where a *sklenice na pivo* is content neutral. Both correct and incorrect answers are grammatically sound and provide cultural input, large and small C and linguistic.

An alternative version of this entire page, to be available by toggling, indicates the cases of the nouns, using the Czech system which denotes a case by its number in the order of appearance in standard language textbooks. Phrases in the accusative case are shown in bold, with a subscript numeral four in parentheses (4). Prepositions governing such phrases, when present, are both bold and underscored. Phrases not in the nominative or accusative case are shown in green type, again with appropriate case number indicated in parens in subscript, and a governing preposition, if any, shown in green but also underscored. The use of the subscript case numbers also serves to break up groups of phrases, which helps some students.

**Téma:**  
**Příprava k filmu**  
 Druhá lekce  
 První část

**Domácí úkol:**

Vyberte správnou  
 odpověď pomocí  
 internetu.

Choose the correct answer with  
 the help of the internet.



Co je to?

- a) sklenice na víno(4)
- b) sklenice na pivo(4)
- c) láhev vína(2)
- d) láhev piva(2)



Co je to?

- a) láhev piva(2)
- b) stará hospoda na venkově(6)
- c) pivní soudek
- d) šachovnice

Co je to?



- a) obraz Venkovská hospoda v  
Braniborsku(6) od Maxe Liebermanna(2)
- b) obraz Piják absintu(2) od Pabla Picassa(2)
- c) obraz Piják absintu(2) v Kavárně Slávie(6)  
od Viktora Olivy(2)
- d) linořez V hospodě(6) od Josefa Čapka(2)

Co je to?



- a) pivní tácek
- b) jídelní lístek
- c) vyčepní pult
- d) šachové figury

Co je to?



- a) Tradiční Penzion Česká hospoda na  
jihocheském venkově(6)
- b) Hospoda u sedmi švábů(2)
- c) Kavárna Slavie v Praze(6)
- d) Francouzská restaurace v Obecním  
domě(6) v Praze(6)

Víte, jaký je rozdíl mezi



a



?

Odpověď:

To je sklenice na pivo. ➤

To je sklenice piva. ▲

**Nová slova:**

sklenice  
 víno  
 pivo  
 láhev  
 hospoda  
 pivní  
 soudek  
 kavárna  
 restaurace  
 pivní  
 jídelní lístek

**Další nová slova:**

šachovnice *chessboard*  
 šváb *cockroach*  
 obecní *municipal*  
 piják *drinker*  
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 linořez *linocut*  
 tácek *tray*  
 vyčepní pult *see*  
*image*  
 šachový *pertaining to*  
*chess*

**Slova, která už znáte**

dům  
 obraz  
 jaký  
 rozdíl

🔄 Toggle [here](#) for a  
 version of this page  
 without sidebars.

The toggled version allow students to choose when and whether to pay attention to all the case relationships. Students with a strong background in another Slavic language may choose to use either this information-dense version or another which has minimal additional information.



**Téma:**  
**Příprava k filmu**  
Druhá lekce  
První část

**Domácí úkol:**  
Vyberte správnou  
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Co je to?

- a) sklenice na víno
- b) sklenice na pivo
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- d) láhev piva



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Co je to?



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- b) Hospoda u sedmi švábů
- c) Kavárna Slávie v Praze
- d) Francouzská restaurace v Obecním domě v Praze

Víte, jaký je rozdíl mezi



a



?

To je sklenice na pivo. ➤

To je sklenice piva. ▲

Students are to view the clip first in class without sound and write down in Czech words, phrases, and sentences which could be used to describe the scene based on their current active vocabulary and individual level of confidence. The format for this is *Vaše poznámky* (Your Notes).

**Téma:****Film**

Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále

Write what you can about the film clip you watched in class in the notes section here. This can be in the form of individual words or phrases, but if you can write whole sentences, do so.

## Vaše poznámky

**Nová slova**

obsluhovat/obsloužit  
to serve, attend to  
král *king* (soft  
stem)

**Slova, která  
už znáte**

## Jak se řekne česky ...?

Use the space to the right here to note, in English, words or concepts you would like to be able to express in Czech. Think about words which might describe character, appearance, or actions as well as objects.

Then they are asked to write at home a list of additional words they would like to know in Czech to be able to describe the action, the staging, and the protagonist, in both physical and moral terms--to take ownership of vocabulary--if they can picture wanting to say something, they may retain the words to do so. The instructor gives feedback in the form of suitable Czech vocabulary, with notes on usage. This also allows scope for more confident students, with either another Slavic language behind them or a Czech heritage, to create a more ambitious list in Czech, with the help of friends, family members, or dictionaries. At home, they then watch the clip with sound via bSpace, with a list of vocabulary words shown in dictionary form. They are to listen carefully and fill in a few words left blank in a transcript of the scene as a printable exercise.

The clip shows the narrator first as an older man, then as a very young one, transitioning through the LENS of the beer glass (the two pictures are juxtaposed here) he holds as, looking both out the window and at the glass, he reminisces about his early career working in a pub.



The metaphor of the lens is repeated, as his younger self views the pub patrons through the distorting lens of a beer glass:



The series of distorted images is disturbingly reminiscent of Georg Grosz caricatures of wealthy men in interwar Germany playing cards while ignoring starving children, the unemployed, and injured veterans<sup>9</sup>. Students may also note that the images are clearly distorted, calling into question the validity of all that follows: is memory –or the specific narrator--credible? As the scene progresses, the extreme agility and brash self-confidence the young waiter demonstrate tend to diminish the viewer's faith in his integrity as a witness. The viewer sees him move nimbly through the scene, snatching a tip meant for the head waiter, throwing change on the floor to watch the well-to-do clientele scramble for it, and advising a wealthy patron on a winning chess move. The patrons, meanwhile, spend their time discussing Czech beer, debating arcane bits of local history, playing games, and, as the narrator notes, wasting whole afternoons in idleness. Sometimes the narrator describes what they say, sometimes they speak in their own voices. The entire scene serves to create and then undermine an image of "the good old days."

Nostalgia is itself a significant and enduring theme in Czech culture and history: even the codification of archaic forms of Czech declension are based on the determination of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century scholars to return to older, purer forms of the language from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, before Austrian domination lead to the near demise of the Czech language.

Beginning students can comment, if briefly, on general questions more readily than they can describe the action in a scene. A workbook page poses questions about the film sequence itself and what one might think about the character of the protagonist.

## Téma: Film

Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále

Words in bold are in the accusative case (čtvrtý pád, i.e., fourth case).

Prepositions calling for use of accusative are in bold AND underlined.

Click [here](#) for the grammatical notes about the role of this case.

🔄 Toggle [here](#) for a version of this page with case and phrase demarcation.

# Obsluhoval jsem **anglického krále**

## Otázky:

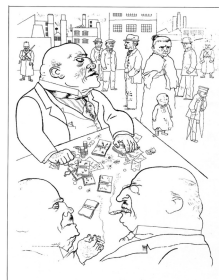
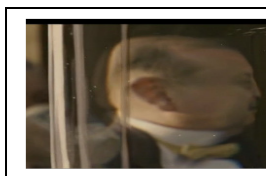
Víte, kdo natočil **ten film**?

Proč je tam sklenice **na pivo**? A okno?

Který smysl je důležitější tam, sluch nebo zrak?

Kdo je ten mladý číšník?

Tady je karikatura od George Grosze. ➤



◀ Tady je snímek z našeho filmu.

Podobají **se** ti muži?

Kde **se** ta scéna vyhrává?

Je to moderní hospoda?

Jsou tady ženy?

Podle vašeho názoru, ve které době se odehrává ta scéna?

- a) ve dvacátých letech dvacátého století
- b) ve třicátých letech dvacátého století
- c) v sedmdesátých letech dvacátého století
- d) v devadesátých letech devatenáctého století

Kdo je vypravěč?

Slyšíme, **co** říkají ostatní lidé nebo jen **co** říká vypravěč?

Myslíte, že ten mladý číšník je v skutečnosti tak chytrý?

Podle vašeho názoru, je to čestný člověk?

**Nová slova**  
obsluhovat/obsloužit  
to serve, attend to  
král *king* (soft stem)  
hospoda  
doba *era, time period*

## Slova, která už znáte

anglický  
proč  
sklenice  
pivo  
okno  
který  
tam  
nebo  
karikatura  
muž  
kde  
scéna  
žena  
říkat

### Další slova:

obsluhovat/obsloužit	to serve, attend to	snímek	<i>still picture</i>
král	<i>king</i> (soft stem)	podobat se	<i>to resemble (each other)</i>
smysl	<i>sense</i>	vypravěč	<i>narrator</i>
důležitější	<i>more important</i>	ostatní	<i>remaining, other</i>
sluch	<i>hearing</i>	v skutečnosti	<i>in reality</i>
zrak	<i>sight</i>	podle vašeho názoru	<i>in your opinion</i>
odehrávat se	<i>to play out, be set</i>	čestný	<i>honest</i>

The questions raised on this page are *Do you know who created this film? Why is there a beer glass? and a window? Which sense is more important here, hearing or sight? Who is this young waiter? Here is a caricature by George Grosz. Here is a still from our film. Do these men resemble one another? Where does this scene take place? Is this a modern pub? Are there women there? In your opinion, in what era does this scene play out (choice of various decades given). Who is the narrator? Do we hear what the other people are saying or only that which the narrator says? Do you think that the young waiter is really that clever? In your opinion, is he an honest person?*

Vocabulary is presented in three formats. In the right hand column, always reserved for vocabulary, the first section presents New Words (*Nová slova*). If the student can extrapolate the meaning from context or previous experience, no definition is given. Otherwise, an English definition is provided in italics. Below that is a section of Words You Already Know (*Slova, která už znáte*). This section allows students to check themselves to be sure that they have retained vocabulary they are expected to learn for active use. The third form of vocabulary presentation, Additional Words (*Další slova*), isolates words necessary for understanding the material on a given page but which students need not commit to memory at this point. This feature is most important when applied to authentic texts, of which more below.

Following the film clip, students work with two songs presented in the workbook, one extolling the virtues of beer and beer brewing, the projecting the singer's recovery from a failed romance. The first song is of the type sung nostalgically in pubs by older Czechs, ironically by younger ones. It is shown here.



Téma:  
pítí (drinking)

# Naše nová píseň<sup>1</sup> se jmenuje...

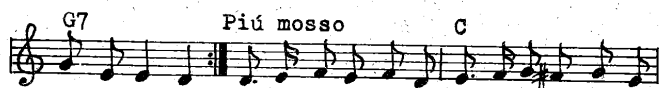
KDE JE SLÁDEK

Moderato

Česká



Kde je slá-dek, tam je mlá-dek, tam je taky pivo,



pi-vová-rek. Kde se pivo vaří, tam se dobře daří,



kde se pivo pije, tam se dobře žije. Pojďme tam a



pijme ho, pijme ho, až do rána bí-lé-ho.

## Další slova:

sládek *brewer*

mládek *brewery assistant*

dařit se/podařit se *to succeed, go well*

(Jak se vám daří? How are you doing?)

pojďme *let us go (imperative)*

pijme *let us drink (imperative)*

note: imperative

do *until*

## Nová slova

pivo *beer*

pivovár(ek) *beer*

*brewery*

vařit/uvařit

vařit se/uvařit se

dařit se/podařit se

*to succeed, go*

*well*

pít/vypít *to drink*

piju (piji)

piješ

pije

pijeme

pijete

pijou (piji)

žit *to live*

(jako pít: žiju,

žiješ, žije, žijeme,

žijete, žijou)

ho *pronoun which*

*stands for*

*masculine and*

*neuter nouns in*

*accusative case*

až *until*

**Slova, která už znáte**

kde

taky (také)

tam

dobře

ráno

bílý

Zkuste najít tuto píseň na internetu. Try to find this song on the internet.

\*Referencing only your experience of other Czech verbs, try to fill in the rest of the present tense forms. Think about the basic types dělat, mluvit, umět, studovat, číst, a psát. Where might you need more information to be sure of the ending(s)? Here you are asked to conjugate the imperfective forms in nonreflexive use. The perfective infinitives are shown in the word list in the right-hand column.

## Nové sloveso: pít (se)

(já) \_\_\_\_\_

(my) \_\_\_\_\_

(ty) \_\_\_\_\_

(vy) \_\_\_\_\_

(on, ona, ono) **pije**

(oni, ony, ona) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Tip: The third person singular does NOT end in -á or -í. This makes it like which type of verb?

## Nové sloveso: vařit (se)

(já) \_\_\_\_\_

(my) \_\_\_\_\_

(ty) \_\_\_\_\_

(vy) \_\_\_\_\_

(on, ona, ono) **vaří**

(oni, ony, ona) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Tip: The third person singular DOES end in -í. This makes it like which type of verb?

Pijou vaši rodiče pivo?

Můžete ho pít i vy? (Je vám už 21 let?)

Víte, jak se pivo vaří?

Víte, kde se v Berkeley vaří pivo?

Advanced listening/practice:  
[http://www.impuls.cz/danek/kde-se-pivo-vari-tam-se-dobre-dari/222836?poll\\_article-id=1755&do=poll\\_article-vote](http://www.impuls.cz/danek/kde-se-pivo-vari-tam-se-dobre-dari/222836?poll_article-id=1755&do=poll_article-vote)

<sup>1</sup> Bytel, Antonín and Josef Baierl, *Druhý výběr z lidových písní*. Praha: Univerzita Karlova, 1990, p. 63.

This page introduces two important verbs: *vařit*, to cook, and *pít*, to drink, both here used reflexively with the particle *se* (where beer gets itself brewed, where beer gets itself drunk). Students are asked to extrapolate from earlier knowledge of typical verb conjugations how these verbs are conjugated. A link in the left margin, an area reserved for commentary, assignments, and links, leads interested students to an article about an old Czech brewery on a site which provides both a written text and an audio version, but its use is optional. (Material in the left margin appears in either Czech or English, with increased use of Czech as the course progresses. Ideally, it will be possible for students to toggle away all or most of the material in both the left and right margins.)

The second song is included here because of its significance for Czech language culture as well as popular culture. It presents a song by the iconic Czech crooner Karel Gott entitled *Kávu si osladím*. The song is readily findable on the internet, and students are to find and watch a video clip. The song text, which is complex for beginning learners, is valuable because it repeatedly, and in Gott's renditions enthusiastically, uses the accusative case of feminine singular in the first position in its (*Hlavu níž neskloním, ... Kávu si osladím*). For speakers of English, deviations from standard English SVO word order often do not register: the evidence of morphological endings tends to be ignored in favor of the ingrained habit of interpreting the first noun encountered as the subject.<sup>10</sup> Early introduction of a memorable, singable example of an accusative in first position emphasizes the significance of both morphological ending and sentence position. The version of the song page presented here is the standard, untoggled version, without case numbers.

**Téma:**  
**pítí (drinking)**

# Naše nová píseň<sup>1</sup> **se** jmenuje...

## **Kávu** si osladím

**Hlavu** níž nesklopím,  
nezmizím v hlubinách,  
uvidíš, **co** udělám,  
až pochopím, že chceš mi sbohem dát.

**Kávu** si osladím o **trochu** víc  
**svý\* bendžo** naladím, a jinak nic.  
Oslavím sám **Vánoční svátky**  
a na jaře si **vrásky** spočítám.

**Kávu** si osladím o **trochu** víc,  
v duchu **tě** pohladím, a jinak nic.  
Pustím **svůj žal** zadními vrátky  
a půjdu zase klidně o **dům** dál.

Neskonám v obavách,  
**barvu svou** neztratím,  
už **to** mám, **co** udělám  
v těch hodinách, až budu zase sám.

### Další slova:

hlava <i>head</i>	duch <i>spirit</i>
níž <i>lower</i>	hladit/pohladit <i>to stroke, caress</i>
sklopit <i>to tilt, hang (down)</i>	pouštět/pustit <i>to release, dismiss, let go of</i>
smizet <i>to vanish, skulk away</i>	zadní vrátky <i>the back gate (instr. of path)</i>
hlubiny <i>the depths</i>	půjdu ... o dům dál <i>I shall go ... to the next house</i>
chápat/pochopit <i>to understand, grasp</i>	klidně <i>calmly, peacefully</i>
oslavovat/oslavit <i>to celebrate</i>	skonat v obavách <i>to die in fear</i>
Vánoční svátky <i>the Xmas holidays</i>	barva <i>color</i>
na jaře <i>in the summer</i>	ztrácet/ztratit <i>to lose</i>
vráska <i>wrinkle</i>	hodina <i>hour</i>
počítat si/spočítat si <i>to count</i>	sám <i>alone</i>

### Nová slova

vidět/uvidět *to see*  
chtít *to want (irreg)*  
chci *chceme*  
chceš *chcete*  
chce *chtějí*  
past: *chtěl ...*  
sladit/osladit *to sweeten*  
ladit/naladit *to tune*  
jinak *otherwise*  
víc *more*  
tě *accusative case form of ty (you, informal)*  
zase *again*  
mít *to have*

### Slova, která už znáte

co  
dělat/udělat  
trochu  
bendžo

taky (také)  
tam  
dobře  
ráno  
bílý  
až (*used with future, when*)

Zkuste najít tuto píseň na internetu. Try to find this song on the internet.

Notice the position of the nouns and noun phrases in the accusative (fourth) case. Where are they in relation to the verb?

\*Referencing only your experience of other Czech verbs, try to fill in the rest of the present tense forms. Think about the basic types dělat, mluvit, umět, studovat, číst, a psát. Where might you need more information to be sure of the ending(s)?

Review the conjugation of this verb. You have seen it previously used with *se* in mít se (dobře, špatně).

### Nové sloveso: dát

(já) \_\_\_\_\_ (my) \_\_\_\_\_  
(ty) \_\_\_\_\_ (vy) \_\_\_\_\_  
(on, ona, ono) \_\_\_\_\_ (oni, ony, ona) **dají**

\*Tip: The third person singular DOES end in -á. This makes it like which type of verb?

### Nové sloveso: osladit

(já) **osladím** (my) \_\_\_\_\_  
(ty) \_\_\_\_\_ (vy) \_\_\_\_\_  
(on, ona, ono) \_\_\_\_\_ (oni, ony, ona) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Tip: The first person singular ends in -ím. This makes it like which type of verb?

### Něco starého: mít

(já) \_\_\_\_\_ (my) \_\_\_\_\_  
(ty) \_\_\_\_\_ (vy) \_\_\_\_\_  
(on, ona, ono) \_\_\_\_\_ (oni, ony, ona) **mají**

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.karaoketexty.cz/texty-pisni/gott-karel/kavu-si-osladim-23801> \*spoken Czech form. Svě or svoje in literary Czech.

The film clip and the songs serve as the general introduction to the chapter, rather in the way that dialogs might in another text. However, unlike carefully crafted dialogs designed to showcase specific usage, they are authentic texts, with the benefits and drawbacks that entails. They are chosen, but not modified. Appendix I, consisting of the handout which accompanied my BLC presentation, presents an overview of the pedagogical issues involved in teaching Czech and a summary of some of the methods I use in this system to deal with these issues. In the materials I have developed, as much as possible, I have attempted to incorporate some aspect of the broader Czech culture into each page, since for some learners, the forms of language become more memorable when linked to new cultural understandings<sup>11</sup>.

### **Formatting**

Some discussion of the formatting has already appeared above. I will now show a few more pages from a section which concentrates on vocabulary acquisition, conversation, and grammar drill in cultural context. The rest of the chapter is structured around the themes of Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner. This allows introduction of basic food vocabulary in a gradual manner, since more foods are added with each meal, and breakfast is usually the least complicated to prepare. The pages I will now show are from the Breakfast section of the chapter, by far the most elaborated at this point. Each meal-related section will follow the same basic pattern, although the lunch and dinner sections will incorporate more on eating in public places and on cooking (including recipes). Breaking the chapter up in this way allows me to layer the introduction of new vocabulary and cultural contexts with grammar drills which, as students progress through the material, become grammar review drills. The more public settings of lunch and dinner and the foods consumed lend themselves also to a structured introduction of the animate masculine accusative very slightly later than the other accusative forms are introduced. (One sees waiters and friends and eats trout.)<sup>12</sup>

The page reproduced below serves to introduce vocabulary suitable for a discussion of eating breakfast. Instructions for the first block of words ask students to prepare before class by looking at a picture gallery on bSpace in which there are images of the various foods and drinks listed. They then fill in the definitions themselves in the *Nová slova* section in the right margin. The central section poses questions about what Czechs, Americans, and the students themselves eat for breakfast. In the page shown, words in the

accusative case have been made bold face, to encourage students to notice when the forms are identical to the nominative case and when they differ.

**Téma:**  
**Snídaně**  
První den

Note on usage:  
the verb snídat can be used  
both as the general verb to  
have breakfast and also to state  
that one eats or drinks specific  
things for breakfast to have X  
for breakfast. No preposition is  
used in this meaning.

**Domácí úkol:** 📄

**Before class:** Look in the  
picture gallery on bSpace  
for images of the words  
to the right here. ➤

# Co obvykle snídají Češi?

Co jedí Češi k snídani?

Co pijou Češi k snídani?

Více než tři čtvrtiny (>3/4) Čechů obvykle snídají.

Jak myslíte, obvykle snídají Američané? Obvykle  
snídají američtí studenti?

K snídani jsou:

vločky (ž.p.)	lupínky	můsli (n.)	pečivo
rohlík	croissant	chléb	kaše (ž.)
houška	koláčky (m.p.)	bábovka	sýr
džem	máslo	slanina	šunka
káva	čaj	kakao	voda
mléko	džus	šťáva	nektar

Co jedí k snídani Češi?

Jedí **vločky**, **houšku** s máslem nebo sýrem, **džem**, a **jogurt**.



K snídani jedí Američané **cornflakes (kukuřičné lupínky)**.

Co jíte k snídani vy?

Jím **jogurt**.

Jím **houšku**.

Jím **kaši**.

Jím **vejce**.

Jím **vločky**.

Jím **lupínky**.

Vůbec nesnídám.

Co pijou Češi k snídani? (**Co pijí?**)

Pijou **kávu**.

Pijou **džus**.

Pijou **kakao**.

Pijou **šťávu**.

Pijou **čaj**.

Pijou **mléko**.

Snídám **houšku** a **čaj**.

Snídám **jogurt** a **kávu**.

Snídám **vejce**, **chléb**, a **džus**.

## Nová slova

snídat *to eat*  
*breakfast* (jako dělat)  
also *to have*  
(something) *for*  
*breakfast*

obvykle = usually

jíst *to eat* (irregular)

jím jíme

jíš jíte

ji jedí

snídaně *breakfast*

jíst k snídani

*to eat for brkfst*

pít *to drink*

piju/piji pijeme

piješ pijete

pije pijou/piji

pít k snídani *to*

*drink for brkfst*

jídlo *food, dish*

vločky *rolled flakes*

lupínky *flakes, chips*

pečivo *baked goods*

rohlík \_\_\_\_\_

kaše *porridge*

džem \_\_\_\_\_

houška \_\_\_\_\_

máslo *butter*

káva \_\_\_\_\_

čaj \_\_\_\_\_

mléko \_\_\_\_\_

džus \_\_\_\_\_


jogurt \_\_\_\_\_

Grammar drills specifically dealing with correct formation of the accusative singular begin in a section devoted to typical breakfast drinks, as shown on the page below. A number of such drinks are listed in the nominative case, most modified by adjectives, two by prepositional phrases<sup>13</sup>. Students are asked to create accusative phrases following models for each of the three genders and then practice with a mix of noun phrases of different genders. On this page, the *Nová slova* consist primarily of adjectives, the *Slova, která už znáte* are mainly the nouns introduced on the earlier page, thus providing almost instant vocabulary review.<sup>14</sup> The discussion questions encourage students to find out what their classmates drink for breakfast and say what their family members drink. The left margin assignment asks them to view a commercial for a coffeemaker, in which they may learn some additional vocabulary and note the significance of weighing rather than measuring in Czech cooking.

**Téma:**  
**Snídaně**  
První den  
**Nápoje**



You can probably determine the correct case forms here by following the models. See the charts at the beginning of the unit to determine correct case forms of nouns and adjectives if you become confused.

Domácí úkol: 

Watch the coffee maker commercial at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLeDq2rNKiw> and fill in the words you pick up from them. To whom do you think these ads are aimed? Can you find similar ads here in the US? What is the significance of the scale in the ad?

## Nápoje

bílá káva  
černá káva  
káva s cukrem  
silná káva  
čistá voda  
ovocná šťáva  
horká čokoláda

černý čaj  
zelený čaj  
ovocný čaj  
bylinkový čaj  
čaj s medem  
ovocný nektar  
ovocný džus

polotučné mléko  
plnotučné mléko  
sušené mléko  
kakao  
preso =  
espresso

### Cvičení (practice forming accusative noun phrases):

Obvykle piju (piji)

feminine sing.

černou kávu.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

masculine sing.

černý čaj.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

neuter sing.

polotučné mléko.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

mixed genders

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

← černá káva  
bílá káva  
silná káva  
káva s cukrem  
čistá voda  
teplá voda s citrónem  
káva s mlékem  
horká čokoláda  
← černý čaj s mlékem  
zelený čaj  
ovocný čaj s medem  
bylinkový čaj  
ovocný džus  
polotučné mléko  
plnotučné mléko  
sušené mléko  
instantní kakao

sladké kakao  
káva bez kofeínu  
horký čaj  
ovocná šťáva

#### Další slova (k cvičení)

polotučný = 50 percent fat      plnotučný = full fat


sušený = dried (in this context, powdered)

#### Další slova (k reklamě):

mlýnek \_\_\_\_\_ váha \_\_\_\_\_

## Nová slova

nápoj (m.) \_\_\_\_\_

ovocný *fruit* 

bylinkový *herbal*  
(also bylinný)

silný *strong*

horký *hot*

teplý *warm*

silný *strong*

čistý *clean*

sladký *sweet*

citron *lemon*

cukr *sugar*

med *honey*

### Slova, která už znáte:

bílý = \_\_\_\_\_

černý = \_\_\_\_\_

čistý = \_\_\_\_\_

zelený = \_\_\_\_\_

káva = \_\_\_\_\_

čaj = \_\_\_\_\_

džus = \_\_\_\_\_

mléko = \_\_\_\_\_

kakao = \_\_\_\_\_

Co pijete k snídani vy?

Co pije k snídani váš soused/vaše sousedka?

(Musíte se [ho/jí] na to zeptat. = You have to ask [him/her] about that.)

Co pijou k snídani vaši rodiče?

Jak myslíte, obvykle snídají Američané kávu?

Obvykle snídají kávu američtí studenti?



This is followed by a similar page based on breakfast foods, which allows both vocabulary review and expansion and additional practice forming the accusative with a different set of modified nouns. For vocabulary review, I insert a short excerpt from one Josef Čapek's stories for children, *Snídaně* (Čapek, p. 16). There is little use of the accusative in this reading, but it is an engaging piece and one Czech children are likely to have encountered. It also serves to introduce the important verb *dát si*, literally *to give oneself*, but typically used in the sense of the English *I'll have* (*toast, tea, fruit salad, ...*).

Téma:  
Snídaně

## Něco z dětské literatury

Josef Čapek  
z knížky *Povídejme si děti*

### Snídaně

A, panečku, káva, to je dobrá věc! A kakao, to je také dobrá věc! A rohlík nebo houska, a copak teprve vánočka, to je také dobrá věc, a chleba **s máslem**<sup>(7)</sup> taky, a jakpak teprve, když je **k tomu**<sup>(3)</sup> ještě zavařenina, to je ještě lepší věc. Sem **s tou snídaní**<sup>(7)</sup>, sem **s ní**<sup>(7)</sup>, **to** si dáme! Kdo se pořádně nenasnídá, kdo se v tom šťárá a nípe, nedojí a nedopije, nechá stát **v hrníčku**<sup>(6)</sup>, ten **ničemu**<sup>(3)</sup> nerozumí, ten je hloupý. ...

Další slova		
paneček <i>little sir</i>	chleba = chléb	šťárat <i>to pick at</i>
copak <i>for sure</i>	k tomu <i>to go with that</i>	nípat <i>to poke at</i>
teprve <i>only</i>		dojíst <i>to finish eating</i>
vánočka <i>braided Xmas cake</i>	zavařenina <i>jam</i>	dopít <i>to finish drinking</i>
	sem <i>here (hither)</i>	nechat <i>to leave</i>
jakpak <i>how about</i>	pořádně <i>properly</i>	hrníček <i>small pot</i>

Jak myslíte, co si dá dítě?

To dítě snídá doma. To je normálně.

Kde snídají lidé?

v restauraci	v restauracích
v hospodě	v hospodách
v hotelu	v hotelech
v kavárně	v kavárnách

a samozřejmě doma

Kde obvykle snídáte vy? A váš soused/vaše sousedka?

### Nová slova:

věc *thing*  
lepší *better*  
dát si *(literally, to give oneself, thus to have to eat, drink), meaning is future*  
nasnídat se *to have breakfast*  
*(perfective)*  
hloupý *stupid*

### Slova, která už znáte

snídaně  
káva  
dobrý  
kakao  
také  
rohlík  
houska  
chleba / chléb  
máslo  
když  
ještě  
kdo  
ten

Find the bSpace file Kde snídáme? and choose appropriate answers to the questions.

The expression *dát si* becomes the focus on the following page, when students are given a short breakfast menu from an internet site. A query in the left margin asks them to determine the approximate cost of a breakfast at this Brno restaurant, using a Czech currency conversion site. In the central section, they are first asked to read the menu out loud (in order to recognize that the Czech *hemenex* sounds like *ham and eggs*), then to picture themselves in this restaurant ordering a meal, find out what their fellow students would have, and formulate complaints (*too bad they do not have...*).

## Téma: Snídaně

Read the breakfast menu from the Aurum-caffe in Brno here at the right. ➤  
Underscore a dish you might choose.



Víte kolik stojí ta jídla v amerických dolarech?  
Najdete směnný kurs tady  
<http://www.penize.cz/kurzy-men/6591-americky-dolar>

**I když Češi obvykle snídají doma, cizinci často snídají v restauracích.** Mladší Češi také někdy v nich snídají.

Text z internetu: <http://www.lunchtime.cz/snidane/brno/>

### Aurum-caffe (v Brně)

Míchaná vajíčka na cibulce (3 vejce, cibulka, pečivo)	39 Kč
Hemenex (3 vejce, šunka, pečivo)	45 Kč
Vaječná omeleta (3 vejce, sýr, kukuřice, šunka, pečivo)	59 Kč
Kontinentální snídaně (šunka, sýr, máslo, džem, pečivo)	55 Kč
Rozpečený croissant (2ks)	39 Kč

➤ Jedno slovo tady je skoro jako v angličtině. Které? Přečtěte menu nahlas (aloud)!

Další slova (more words, for reading the menu):  
míchaný *mixed*, therefore here = *scrambled*  
vajíčko = vejce  
cibulka = cibule *onion*  
as diminutive of cibule, also *shallot*  
vaječný *adjective meaning egg*  
omeleta = \_\_\_\_\_  
rozpečený = baked to tenderness, crispness  
ks is an *abbreviation of kus piece*

Představte si, že jste v té restauraci.

**Co** si dáte?

Co si dá váš spolužák/vaše spolužačka?  
Vytvořte krátký dialog.

In class exercise:

Suppose the restaurant does not have a food or drink you want:

Škoda, že nemají ....

**Nová slova**  
i když *even though*  
často *often* mladší  
*younger*  
někdy *sometimes*  
kukuřice *corn*

### Slova, která už znáte

snídat  
obvykle  
cizinec  
vejce  
cibule  
pečivo  
sýr  
šunka  
snídaně  
máslo  
džem

This is followed by a simple menu from a Prague restaurant, which is both pricier and contains more international words. Later in the section, there are excerpts from articles on Czech and international eating habits, recipes, and the like.

## Conclusion

This project is still very much a work in progress. Here, I have aimed to demonstrate both the desirability and the possibility of teaching even such a complex language as Czech through the medium of more general culture. The page shown were among those discussed in the Fellows meetings and some have also been given to students for their feedback. Significant work remains to be done not only in completing the materials but also in determining the best way to post the workbook/reader on the internet, given the desirability of internal links and pages which can have sections removed by toggling as well as the need to restrict access to conform to fair use guidelines. When completed, the project will result in significant savings to students, as well as creating a work which can be readily updated and expanded. If it functions as I expect, it will also encourage cultural exploration and further independent learning on the part of students.

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- Menzel, Jiří. *Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále (I Served the King of England)*. 2007.

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<sup>1</sup> I gratefully acknowledge the input, constructive criticism, and overall support provided by BLC Director Rick Kern, Assistant Director Mark Kaiser, and Coordinator of Academic Outreach, Anna Maria Bellezza, without whose comments this work would not have evolved so far. In addition, both the work and the comments of my fellow Fellows, Juan Caballero and Marco Purpura, enriched my own understandings of the possibilities and opportunities of the use of film and video in the classroom.

<sup>2</sup> I plan to have at least a beta-test version of the work for use in Fall 2013.

<sup>3</sup> The order of introduction of cases is typically a serious consideration in teaching most Slavic languages. I choose to combine a general overview of the case system, in English with Czech examples, in the Introduction with a case by case presentation in individual chapters. In combining the presentation of the accusative case with the introduction of the vocabulary for eating, drinking and food preparation, I am following the lead of Kresin et al (2001), although I am expanding the scope of both cultural material and vocabulary covered and employing different modes of working with vocabulary and grammar.

<sup>4</sup> Logistical problems remain with enabling toggling between formatted pages.

<sup>5</sup> For those with access to the BLC Film Clip Database, the clip is entitled "Working in a Pub as a Youth," in Jiří Menzel's film *I Served the King of England*.

<sup>6</sup> Many students find charts confusing when they appear as part of a running text, particularly if they break grammatical content down into minute segments. I follow the practice of Lída Holá in presenting charts which show the case forms of nouns of different genders *with accompanying adjectives* in all cases (Holá, 2006). However, I expand on this concept to show a greater variety of adjectival forms at the introductory level, something she does only for intermediate/advanced (included in Holá and Bořilová, 2009). In her works, the charts appear on a handy laminated card. In the internet format I am developing, they will be available to students by clicking a link.

<sup>7</sup> Clips from several Menzel films will be included in the curriculum, as well as clips from a number of films by other noteworthy Czech directors.

<sup>8</sup> Although Josef Čapek, Karel Čapek's older brother, died in 1945 in a concentration camp shortly before it was liberated, his children's stories remain staples of Czech childhood. Students will also read several of his short stories about the doggie and the kitty during the year.

<sup>9</sup> Several such images are readily available on the internet. One is cited in the reference list.

<sup>10</sup> For more on this, see Kern, p. 77.

<sup>11</sup> One primary advantage of basing a printable text on the internet is that it allows for instructor to update cultural material. In this era of rapid changes in small c culture and in the economic and political landscape in Europe and around the globe, static materials can become rapidly outdated.

<sup>12</sup> Animate masculine nouns in the accusative singular take different morphological endings from those of inanimate masculine singular nouns. While the concept is introduced with the lunch vocabulary, it is evident already in the title of the Menzel film (*anglického krále* is the accusative singular of *anglický král*).

<sup>13</sup> These phrases are set in smaller type to indicate that they will remain unchanged, even if the noun they modify changes its case.

<sup>14</sup> I hope that some of the strategies I have used, particularly the recursive approach to vocabulary building, will also prove useful to instructors in other languages.

## APPENDIX I. Handout

# Language through Culture: Developing an Integrative Curriculum for First-year Czech

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## I. An overview of issues in teaching Czech to English-speaking students

- ☐ The lexicon is very different from that of English.
- ☐ Even international words are usually adapted to Czech declensional and conjugational patterns.
- ☐ Czech has a complex case morphology with
  - Seven cases
  - Three genders plus an animacy category marked for masculines (human and animal, with a few inanimates thrown in)
  - Two numbers, plus a few old dual forms
  - Case/number/gender distinction applies to nouns, pronouns, and adjectives of several types
  - Nouns of all genders have several different subcategories of declensional types with more or less distinctive case endings
  - Case governed either by grammatical role, by standard usage with a particular verb, or by case required after a particular preposition in a particular meaning
  - Many prepositions potentially govern more than one case, with differing meanings.
  - Certain personal pronouns have special forms for use after prepositions.
- ☐ By virtue of complex case grammar of Czech, word order is significantly freer than that of English.
  - Word order is key to understanding grammatical role in English but not in Czech. Standard English SVO word order is not required, since the distinction between subject and object is almost always shown through morphological endings.
  - New information is typically presented at the end of the sentence
  - There is a canonical hierarchy for the forms of the past tense helping verb and short forms of pronouns, all of which seek placement as the second unit (but not necessarily second word) in their clause.
- ☐ Verb conjugations mark person and number with little ambiguity (only third singular and plural can be confused with one another)
  - Subject pronouns are typically omitted in Czech, whereas they serve a vital function in English. Using them inappropriately in Czech places undue emphasis on the subject, since the usual context for their inclusion is to contrast two or more actors (*I* think this, but you think that).
- ☐ Aspect. While the modern Czech verbal system usually relies on only three tenses, past present and future, the verbal system is complicated by an aspectual system takes into account whether an action is viewed from the perspective of its completion or its process.
- ☐ Alphabet. While Czech does not use a different writing system from that of English as does, say Sanskrit or Russian, it has an expanded form of the Roman alphabet and uses some letters and particularly letter combinations differently from English. The familiar becomes strange.

## II. Issues addressed using cultural materials and formatting

### ☐ Types of materials and assignments used in chapter

- “What is this?” homework assignments, in which pictures from the internet are paired with a series of grammatically well-formed answers. Students search for the phrases on the internet until they locate a matching picture. Suitable for introducing vocabulary relating to a general theme. Especially useful for helping students to notice subtle distinctions (as in the difference between a *beer glass* and a *glass of beer*).
- Students see words in context but emphasized graphically. They are asked to search the internet for pictures of objects (in this chapter, food) to bring to class and share.
- Students watch advertising video clip, in this chapter for a coffeemaker, which also introduces the cultural concept that ingredients are weighed rather than measured.
- Students read a recipe, paying special attention to the ingredient list.
- Students read an excerpt from children’s literature in praise of breakfast.
- Students read excerpts from internet news stories about Czech eating habits
- Vocabulary:
  - **ISSUE:** Using real texts, film clips, etc., presents students with a much wider range of vocabulary than they can be expected to learn in the first year. **SOLUTION:** List vocabulary to be learned for active use separately from vocabulary for passive knowledge. I do this by placing vocabulary students are expected to retain in a NEW WORDS column at the right side of the page. Unless the word is an obvious cognate, its definition is given in italics. **SOLUTION:** Select materials so essential vocabulary repeats in a variety of contexts.
  - **ISSUE:** Given how different the vocabulary is from English, students often forget words within a few days. **SOLUTION:** Below the NEW WORDS section of the vocabulary column, I put a WORDS YOU ALREADY KNOW list. No definitions are given here, so it functions as a self-test for students, who can prepare to read the page by making sure they understand the „old“ words.

### ☐ complexities of case forms and usage

- **ISSUE:** A textbook can fail either by introducing case too slowly, so students are bored, or too quickly, so students are overwhelmed.
  - **Solutions:** ① Provide an introductory overview of the case system, making students aware of both the functions and contexts of case as well as the range of case endings. Provide charts with sample phrases (demonstrative adjective, possessive adjective, hard stem regular adjective, soft stem regular adjective, noun) in all seven cases in singular and plural. Show also *can be replaced by* appropriate pronoun. ② Have students explore a relatively simple text very early, purely from the perspective of observing the variety of forms a noun can take and which forms can serve as the subject of a verb. (This happens in the first week of classes and is not part of this presentation.)
- **ISSUE:** Using real texts, film clips, songs, etc., means students deal at least passively with the full range of case forms. Since in some instances the same morphological ending serves different purposes depending on case and gender, this can lead to serious confusion. Two examples: *Petra* can be either the nominative case of a woman’s name or the accusative or genitive case of the male name *Petr*. *Dobrou* can be either the accusative or instrumental singular of the adjective meaning good. Use of graphic devices (color, italics, underscore, subscripts, and the like) may help some students differentiate members of one phrase from those of another. However, they may distract or annoy other learners. **Solutions:** ① Place links to the basic charts of case endings strategically throughout the pages. ② Though readings of authentic texts are presented initially without additional help, students can toggle to reach a version with phrase demarcation and subscript numbers denoting case. ③ By making the more grammatically supportive text secondary, students who would find the business of that page distracting do not need to use it. [A point of cultural interest: Czech grammars present and Czech elementary school students learn case forms not by name (nominative, genitive, etc.) but by number.



- Complexity of pronominal forms: there are many such forms. Some are used to represent one or more cases or gender. Moreover, a few forms actually look like or sound like quite common verbs.
  - **Solutions:** ① Case charts denote „can be replaced by.“ ② Drills using authentic texts ask students to replace pronouns with the nouns or noun phrases to which they refer. (Not shown in presentation, but valuable for classroom use.)

#### ☐ Aspect

- Introduction of aspect in first-year textbooks is typically heavy-handed and awkward.
  - **Solutions:** ① Address aspect conceptually in introductory materials, preparing students to encounter verbs as paired entities. Discussion should include basic discussion of formation of past and future. ② Authentic materials should be chosen to demonstrate in a simple way the difference between imperfective and perfective aspects.