

### 3.3 The accusative singular

In this lesson you will learn the case which is called the accusative. In order to better understand how to use this case, compare the following sentences which you know from the restaurant dialogue in the textbook.

**Ten černý čaj je dobrý.** × **Dám si černý čaj.**

**Ta černá káva je dobrá.** × **Dám si černou kávu.**

**To černé pivo je dobré.** × **Dám si černé pivo.**

In the sentences on the left, dobrý čaj, dobrá káva and dobré pivo are the subject. The subject is the person or thing that performs an action or possesses a quality or is in a certain state. In Czech the subject is expressed by the nominative. In the sentences on the right the same words are the direct object (the direct object is the person or thing to which the action is done or which is affected by the action). In Czech the direct object is expressed by the accusative. In the accusative singular only the feminine endings change, e. g.: černá káva × černou kávu (and also the masculine animate endings, which you will meet later).

In the following table you can see an overview of the accusative singular. Notice that the nouns are divided into the 3 declension groups, which should help you find your way better in the system of case endings and gradually master them. In this phase of your studies you will mainly practice the endings for group I.

Accusative singular					
Gender	Pronoun ten	-ý a -í adjective	Nouns		
			Group I Nominative sg. ending in: -consonant, -a, -o	Group II Nominative sg. ending in: -e/-ě, -v (=a hook), -c, -j, -tel, -el, -ev	Group III Nouns with a special declension.
Ma	toho	dobrého <sup>1</sup> kvalitního	studenta <sup>2</sup>	muže <sup>2</sup>	kolegu <sup>2</sup>
Mi	ten	dobrého <sup>1</sup> kvalitní	banán	čaj	---
F	tu	dobrou kvalitní	kávu	restauraci, kancelář	místnost
N	to	dobré <sup>1</sup> kvalitní	auto	moře	kuře, nádraží

<sup>1</sup> In colloquial Czech you may also hear these accusative singular forms: dobrého studenta, dobrej banán, dobrý auto.

<sup>2</sup> In this lesson you won't learn the accusative forms of the masculine animate. You'll meet them only in lesson 4, when you'll say, for example, Mám bratra a sestru. (I have a brother and sister.) Mám psa a kočku. (I have a dog and cat.)

How do we know when to use the accusative?

You should learn the verbs (and later prepositions too) after which the accusative is used, e.g. dělat (to do), mít (to have), hledat (to look for), si (to take), mít rád (to like), jíst (to eat), pít (to drink). We call these verbs transitive. N.B.: After some verbs (we call them intransitive) you do not use a direct object in the accusative. They are, for example: být (to be), pracovat (to work), spát (to sleep). To help you understand the difference between transitive and intransitive verbs you should notice that, like in English, you cannot say, for example, "I sleep something" (the verb is intransitive), but you can say "I drink something" (the verb to drink is transitive).

Memorise this model sentence, which will help you to learn the accusative endings. **Dám si černý čaj, černou kávu a černé pivo.**

### 3.4 The verb dát si

The verb dát si literally means "to give to oneself", but in a restaurant we translate it with the expression "to have/take." This verb is reflexive, which means that it always goes together with the reflexive pronoun si<sup>1</sup> (dám si, dáš si, dá si...). The reflexive pronoun si can't go at the beginning of a sentence but takes the second logical position in the sentence (see page 37 paragraph 6.4 for more.) Compare:

Co	si	dáte?
Dám	si	pomerančový džus.

"What yourself do you give?" What'll you have?

"I'll give myself orange juice" I'll have an orange juice.

<sup>1</sup> In Czech there are two reflexive pronouns: si (to oneself) and se (oneself), see page 26 paragraph 4.1.

### 3.5 Counting

Counting in Czech is quite complex.<sup>1</sup> When you order food in a restaurant or buy things in a shop<sup>2</sup>, you can avoid unknown case endings by using the expressions **jednou** once, **dvakrát** twice, **tříkrát** three times... + the accusative singular or plural. For example:

Dám si **jednou** kávu. I'll have one coffee.

Dáme si **dvakrát** čaj. We'll have two coffees.