

LESSON NOTES

Beginner S1 #1

Talking About Your Skills in Czech

CONTENTS

- Dialogue - Czech
 - Main
 - English
- Vocabulary
- Sample sentences
- Vocabulary phrase usage
- Grammar
- Cultural insight

#1

DIALOGUE - CZECH

MAIN

1. Helena : Matěji, máš kolečkový brusle?
2. Matěj : Jo, jezdím asi dva roky.
3. Helena : A jezdíš už dobře?
4. Matěj : Jde to. Ještě neumím moc dobře brzdit.
5. Helena : Aha. To je dobrý. Já neumím jezdit vůbec.
6. Matěj : Můžu tě to naučit, jestli chceš?
7. Helena : Jo, to bych ráda. Můžem jezdit spolu.

ENGLISH

1. Helena : Matěj, you have roller-skates?
2. Matěj : Yeah, I've been roller-skating for about two years.
3. Helena : And can you do it well?
4. Matěj : Could be better. I can't brake very well yet.
5. Helena : I see. That's all right. I can't roller-skate at all.
6. Matěj : I can teach you, if you want?
7. Helena : Yeah, I'd love to. We can roller-skate together.

VOCABULARY

Czech	English	Class
spolu	together	adverb
brzdit	to brake	verb
jezdit	to go by something, to ride, to cycle	verb
kolečkové brusle	roller-skates	noun
mít	to have	modal verb
dobře	well	adjective
ještě	yet	adverb
mocht	can	verb
umět	to know (how to do something)	verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

Můžem tam jít spolu. "We can go there together."	Brzdi, nebo narazíš! "Brake, or else you'll crash!"
Tady se nemůže jezdit na kole. "Cycling is not allowed here."	Chci si koupit kolečkové brusle. "I want to buy roller-skates."
Máme ještě stůl pro dva. "We still have a table for two."	Ano, máme stůl pro dvě osoby. "Yes, we do have a table for two people."
Mají v zahradě spoustu odpadků. "They have too much garbage in their garden."	Mám dva bratry a sestru. "I have two brothers and one sister."
Mějte se tu dobře. "Keep well here."	Jde ti to dobře. "You are doing very well."
Ještě jednou. "Once more."	Může se tady kouřit? "Is smoking allowed here?"
Umíš se taky zlobit? "Can you also get angry?"	

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

umět

"can do (st)," "to be able to do (st)," "to be good at (st)"

The word *umět* is used with skills, abilities, language etc. Related words in the Czech language with the same root word *umě* are: *umění* ("art"), *umělec* ("artist male"), *umělkyně* ("artist female"), *umělecký* ("artistic").

It's used in examples like this: (*já*) *umím vařit, plavat, lyžovat* ("I can"/ "know how to cook, swim, ski")..or... (*já*) *umím něměcky, česky, anglicky* ("I can"/ "know how to speak German, Czech, English").

Here's how to conjugate *umět*: *já umím* ("I know"), *ty umíš* ("you know"), *on/ona umí* ("he/she knows"), *my umíme* ("we know"), *vy umíte* ("you know," used both formally and informally), *oni umí* ("they know").

For example:

1. *On si umí poradit.*

"He knows how to help himself. "

jezdit na něčem/ jezdit někam

"to ride (on something)," "to go (somewhere)"

Jezdit ("to go," "ride") is an imperfective verb and although it is a similar word to *jet* ("to go," "to ride"), the difference is that *jezdit* contains a sense of regularity.

Use *jezdit* to say, for example, *do práce jezdím vlakem* ("I go to work by train"), meaning "Whenever I go to work I take the train.!" Compare this to *ježu vlakem* ("I'm going by train"), meaning "Right now I'm going by train." The meaning of regular action can be used for other situations and sentences such as *jezdím na koni* ("I ride a horse"), or *ježu na koni* ("I'm riding a horse"), or *jezdit na dovolenou* ("to go on holidays") meaning every year, on a regular basis, as opposed to *jet na dovolenou*, meaning just now or just once.

When it comes to transportation, such as vehicles where one needs to get inside, *jezdit* is usually not used with the preposition *na* ("onto"). Instead, you conjugate the noun. I.e. *jezdit autem* ("go by car"), *jezdit metrem* ("go by metro"), *jezdit autobusem* ("go by bus"), *jezdit tramvají* ("go by tram"). However, with a mode of transport where one needs to get up onto something in order to ride it, such as a bike or horse, the preposition *na* is needed. I.e. *jezdit na koni* ("ride a horse"), *jezdit na kole* ("ride a bike"), *jezdit na motorce* ("ride a motorbike"), *jezdit na bruslích* ("to roller-skate").

For example:

1. *Jezdíme na dovolenou do Itálie.*

"We (usually) go on holiday to Italy. "

GRAMMAR

The Focus Of This Lesson Is Using the Present Tense and Imperfective Verbs to Talk About One's Own Skills.

Jo, jezdím asi dva roky.

"Yeah, I've been roller-skating for about two years. "

1. The modal verb *mocet*

Mocet translates as "can, be able, could, is possible" and can be very useful when you want to talk about what you can or can't do.

When used formally, *mocet* can also be written as *moci*, meaning "to be able, can." In the formal form, the verb is slightly irregular in conjugation.

The modal verb *mocet* has no meaning on its own and is used to modify the main verb.

A modal verb is usually followed by a verb in its infinitive form.

I.e.

Můžu řídit "I can drive."

Furthermore, the verb can be followed by an object in its accusative form.

I.e.

Můžu řídit motorku. "I can drive a motorcycle."

How *mocht / moci* conjugates according to the person:

(já)	<i>můžu / mohu</i>	"I can, I'm able"
(ty)	<i>můžeš</i>	"you can"
(on/ ona)	<i>může</i>	"he/ she can"
(my)	<i>můžem</i>	"we can"
(vy)	<i>můžete</i>	"you can (also formal speech)"
(oni)	<i>můžou / mohou</i>	"they can"

For example:

Můžu tě naučit bruslit. "I can teach you roller-skating."

Můžem jít do parku bruslit. "We can go roller-skating to a park."

Tady se bruslit **může**. "It is possible to roller-skate here."

Já už **můžu** bruslit. "I'm already able to roller-skate."

Mocht should not be confused with *umět* ("to know how").

Umět ("to know," "how to," "can") is used with skills, abilities, and languages

I.e.

Umím bruslit, lyžovat, zpívat ("I can roller-skate," "I can ski," "I can sing.")

Umím anglicky, německy, japonsky ("I can speak English, German, and Japanese.")

How to distinguish between *mocht* and *umět*:

umí bruslit "She can roller-skate," or "She knows how to roller-skate."

může bruslit "She is able to roller-skate," or "She is allowed to roller-skate."

2. Imperfective verbs - introduction

Unlike English, Czech language has only three basic tenses-present, past, and future. But this simplicity in tenses is compensated for by aspects.

The aspects of the Czech verbs are:

1. Perfective
2. Imperfective

The perfective aspect and verbs can be used to talk about present, completed actions, and completed actions in the future. The imperfective aspect and verbs are used to talk about general and ongoing activity, or ongoing activity and states in the future. Only imperfective verbs have a present tense referring to something that is happening now.

E.g.

Look at the imperfective aspects of *brzdit*, *jezdit* "to brake/slow down" and "to ride/drive."

(Já) brzím. "I'm slowing down."

(Já) jezdím na kole. "I'm riding a bike." / "I'm on bike."

Most of the time Czech verbs are in pairs, and one is perfective, the other imperfective. From an English perspective, both verbs have the same meaning, but the difference is in their aspect. That means they differ in the sense of completion or incompleteness of an action.

Imperfective aspect and verbs

This indicates incomplete, ongoing, habitual, reversed, or repeated actions without a reference to their completion.

Perfective aspect and verbs

This indicates actions or a set of actions that have been finished completely.

Most basic verbs without a prefix are imperfective.

To make such a verb perfective, we just need to add the prefix.

There is more than one prefix, such as, *na-*, *o-*, *po-*, *u-*, *vy-*, *s-*, *z-*, *za-*.

In this lesson we will deal with the **imperfective verbs**.

They are used to express:

*In the following section, let's have a look at the imperfective verb *jezdit* ("to ride/ drive")

An action that we repeat on a regular basis:

For example:

1. *Jezdím na kole každé ráno.* "I ride a bike every morning."

An action that is in progress:

For example:

1. *Teď jezdím na kole.* "Now I'm riding a bike."

The duration of an action:

For example:

Past continuous

1. *Jezdil jsem na kole celé ráno.* "I was riding a bike the whole morning."

Present continuous

1. *Jezdím na kole už celé ráno.* "I've been riding a bike all morning."

An action that has a very general character:

For example:

1. *Rád jezdím na kole.* "I like to ride a bike."
2. *Příští rok budu jezdit víc na kole.* "Next year I will ride more on the bike."

In the above examples, we don't really have too many specifics as to whether the riding, was, or will be completed, hence the use of the imperfective verb *jezdit* ("to ride"). Imperfective verbs can form present, past, and the compound future tenses.

Some Czech verbs only appear in the imperfective form.

For example:

<i>Czech</i>	"English"
<i>být</i>	"to be"
<i>moc</i>	"to be able"
<i>muset</i>	"have to/ must"
<i>vědět</i>	"to know"
<i>chtít</i>	"to want"
<i>ležet</i>	"to lie"
<i>sedět</i>	"to sit"

Examples from the dialogue:

A jezdíš už dobře?
"And can you do it well?"

Jde to. Ještě neumím moc dobře brzdit.

"Could be better. I can't brake very well yet. "

Sample Sentences

Obě mé děti umí bruslit.

"Both of my children can ice skate."

Už umím řídit motorku.

"I can ride a motorcycle now. "

Sestra umí jezdit na koni.

"My sister can ride a horse."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Outdoor activities

Roller-skating is very popular in the Czech Republic. Many new tracks have been designed not only within cities, but also across the country going from town to town, or around lakes and national parks. The most popular one is in Šumava National Park (<http://www.npsumava.cz/en/>). Depending on the season, some of other popular activities are mushroom picking in forests in the autumn, or blueberry picking in summer. Less common, but labelled as a renaissance of the use of medical herbs, is picking healing herbs in nature, especially for common illnesses such as colds, sore throats etc. In recent years Czechs have become more interested in exploring their own country and original culture, which is resulting in more people visiting Czech heritage sites, such as castles, manors, or other historical sites. Some of the most visited places are castles in Český Krumlov and Hluboká.

Useful expression:

stezka pro in-line bruslení
"a track for in-line skating (roller-skating)"