Episode 021 – Grammar

1.   Personal pronouns in the accusative case

Any noun can be replaced by a pronoun. Personal pronouns refer to living beings, things or contexts.

All German pronouns can be expressed not only in the nominative, but in all the other grammatical cases, too (accusative, dative and genitive). In other words, they can be inflected. Personal pronouns in the accusative are listed here:

		Nominative	Accusative
Singular	1st person:	**ich**	**mich**
	2nd person:	**du**	**dich**
	3rd person:	**er/sie/es**	**ihn/sie/es**
Plural	1st person:	**wir**	**uns**
	2nd person:	**ihr**	**euch**
	3rd person:	**sie**	**sie**

Personal pronouns in the accusative answer the question "Wen?" (whom):

Examples:
Ich liebe dich!
Wen** liebe ich? – Ich liebe **dich.
Ich vermisse dich!
***Wen** vermisse ich? – Ich vermisse **dich**.*

2. Diminutives

Many German nouns can be turned into diminutives by adding a suffix to the end: "chen" or "lein".

Examples:
*Bär – Bär**chen***
*Harry – Harry**lein***

Diminutives denote people, animals and things that are cute or small (e.g. "Bröt**chen**", the German word for roll; it literally means "small bread"). Diminutive forms can also be used as terms of endearment (e.g. "Harry**lein**")

Forming the diminutive often means a change to the stem vowel.

Examples:
*Sch**a**tz – Sch**ä**tzchen*
*Br**o**t – Br**ö**tchen*

Regardless of the gender of the original word, the diminutive form always turns it into the neuter form.

Examples:
***der** Bär - **das** Bärchen*
***der** Schatz - **das** Schätzchen*
***der** Harry - **das** Harrylein*

Pet names for people

Usually, the use of diminutives as pet names for people is meant as a sign of affection and tenderness. Sometimes the person's name itself is turned into a diminutive ("Harrylein"). But it's more common to use the diminutive form of animals or objects.

*Bär**chen***
*Schätz**chen***