

A32 Susanne / Germany / Romance Studies

Interaction partner(s): Portuguese female student
Moment of enquiry: WS 09/10
Experience of difference: Social conduct among students

Susanne, who studies Romance Languages & Literature, is taking a Spanish language course at her university. Next to her in the seminar sits Maria, a Portuguese exchange student, who is new in the class. When the lecturer asks the students to open their books, Maria grabs Susanne's book without asking her and opens it on the page indicated. Then she pushes the book to the middle of the desk between Susanne and herself. The German student is annoyed: Why would the Portuguese student just grab her book without asking her first?

1. Which behaviour convention was violated in the German student's opinion, and what is this convention based on?
2. What would explain the Portuguese student's behaviour?