

C10 Irina / Russia / Course of studies unknown

Interaction partner(s): German students
Moment of enquiry: SS 09
Experience of difference: Division of labour and planning in project groups

Irina, a Russian student, is spending a semester in Germany to gather experience abroad. The first weeks at the German university are exciting, and Irina realises that her German language skills are not quite up to par where her studies are concerned. What she finds the hardest is working in project groups, if, for example, a presentation is to be prepared in groups. In these cases, she usually feels excluded and has a hard time understanding the methods of planning and division of labour. Usually, the different tasks are distributed quickly, as each German student states at the beginning which tasks s/he would like to take on. Irina finds this inconsiderate. Also, to her it seems that everyone is trying to get the easiest tasks, leaving only the most difficult tasks at the end. Irina's impression is that everyone is in it for themselves without regard for the needs of others. And all the while she had hoped that the project work would help her make friends with Germans. Irina is sorely disappointed.

1. What expectations did Irina have of the project work?
2. What function does project work have within the framework of seminars, and how can the German students' behaviour be explained?