

**C18** Ana / Columbia / German Studies

Interaction partner(s): German student  
Moment of enquiry: WS 08/09  
Experience of difference: Contact rituals and proxemics when working with a partner

The Colombian student Ana is spending a year in Germany to studying German. In one of her seminars, she has to give a presentation together with a German student. When the students meet for the first time to discuss and plan their work, the situation results in a considerable amount of irritation. Ana notices that the German student is always trying to put more physical distance between them, backing away every time Ana moves closer to her during the conversation. Her impression is that the German student has something against her and becomes increasingly confused. But she is afraid to bring up the topic and is glad when the meeting is over.

1. What is it about the German student's behaviour that irritates Ana, and how does she interpret it?
2. What might explain the German student's behaviour? Why is she backing away?