

Mary Louise Pratt's, "Arts of the Contact Zone" depicts the interaction between different groups of people using various terms and ideas. The contact zone, defined by Pratt as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other" (Pratt 519) is not only used to describe these interactions but is also developed in her essay. She employs her own terms and ideas in creating a contact zone in her essay and encompasses the concept of autoethnography and transculturation in doing so. **By incorporating the contact zone and transculturation, Pratt is able to show the relationship and interaction of various groups while drawing upon these examples herself.**

Comment [BB1]: Here's a clear statement of argument that addresses the assignment. It sets up a good organization, too—first, this writer will show how Pratt herself uses the contact zone and then how Pratt uses transculturation.

Pratt's employment of a contact zone shows the diversity and interaction of human nature. **Contact zones, "social places where cultures meet, clash, and grapple" (Pratt 519)** can be used to describe a variety of different interactions. Contact zones can be the interactions between any culturally, linguistically, nationally, or educationally separated group. The social places that these cultures meet include malls, churches, classroom where there is often an asymmetrical power, one group often dominating over the other. This asymmetrical power can be found in many examples across history, "such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths" (Pratt 519). As Pratt describes, "Guaman Poma exemplified the sociocultural complexities produced by conquest and empire" (Pratt 519). **Just as a contact zone incorporates two separate groups, in this example, Guaman Poma, an indigenous Andean adopted Christianity while taking on a position as a Spanish colonial administrator.** The Spaniards came to the Incan land in pursuit of conquering, and in turn, formed a contact zone between each other.

Comment [BB2]: The term is introduced and then defined with quotation

Comment [BB3]: The author also provides an example of the term from Pratt's text.

In this same way, Pratt creates a contact zone in her writing. She brings history and ancient writings and meets them with the newer education system. She uses both examples from the past, and her current educational situation to represent a contact zone in which all are used to portray her ideas and views of education.

Comment [BB4]: This is a key moment. The writer turns from Pratt's example of a contact zone to argue how Pratt herself is also an example of a contact zone.

These “crossroads [that are] the best site for learning,” (Pratt 529) are the bridge that brings “the ideas, interests, histories, and attitudes of others” (Pratt 529) and meets them with our current education system.

Furthermore, autoethnography, “a text in which people undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them” (Pratt 519) is described by Pratt not only in her writing, but is an example of her writing. Autoethnography is writing your own story of your own culture even though others have already made a clear representation of the culture. The autoethnographic text includes a “collaboration with and appropriation of idioms of the metropolis or the conqueror” (Pratt 520) often shown by the Chicanos in “the form of folkloric manners and customs sketches written in English and published in English-language newspapers or folklore magazines” (Pratt 520). Autoethnographic texts can be found across history; it has been used in various cultures and parts of the world, and has been a major form of a group of people being able to identify themselves. The collaborations between people to form autoethnographic texts can be found in many different times in history, the “ex-slaves and abolitionist intellectuals, or between Guaman Poma and the Inca elders who were his informants” (Pratt 520-1).

Comment [BB5]: Same pattern: introduce term, define it through quotation, give an example from Pratt's text.

The “Arts of the Contact Zone” is an example of an autoethnographic text as well. Not only does it describe and explain autoethnography, but Pratt creates one herself in her writing. She uses other writers, such as Guaman Poma in order to create her own concepts of the contact zone through her writing. She goes on to further describe her own cultures nature and the “shifts [that] are being lived out by everyone working in education today” (Pratt 528). Pratt is able to use what history says about language and culture, and incorporates it into her beliefs and the American views of the “debate over the ideas of national patrimony, cultural citizenship, and imagined community” transforming the American community to

Comment [BB6]: And, again, then show how Pratt, too, is an example of the term.

make a course of Cultures, Ideas, Values (Pratt 528), much of which is previewed through Pratt's writing. She envelopes a variety of different backgrounds and cultures in her writing in order to develop her own views and thoughts of American society.

Transculturation, "the processes whereby members of subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted by a dominant or metropolitan culture" (Pratt 523) is another example of how Pratt uses another concept in her own writing that she uses to describe the interaction of groups. Transculturation can be described as the interaction between two different cultures, in which one culture often enhances its own lives by taking from the more dominant culture, by not losing its own identity. For example, the Cubans in Miami, Florida have not lost any of their own heritage but have only adapted and made their own lives better. They take from the American society the things that will benefit their own well being and integrate one with the other. In the same way, "Guaman Poma constructs his text by appropriating and adapting pieces of the representational repertoire of the invaders" (Pratt 523). While still keeping his own culture, he takes such tools as writing from the Spaniards in order to better his own society and customs.

Comment [BB7]: Same process.

Similarly, Pratt incorporates the ideas and beliefs of various other cultures and societies in order to develop her own writing. She takes from these groups and uses them to describe her own classroom behavior and teachings. She explains how we incorporate the ideas from ancient civilizations, that of the importance of education and heritage in our own society. Therefore, transculturation shows a good sense of community in today's world.

Comment [BB8]: Again, show Pratt as an example.

As a result of Pratt's use of various terms and concepts, the interaction of many groups and societies through linguistic, cultural, national, or even educational can be greatly portrayed. The importance of such a connection between these

various cultures through concepts such as contact zone, autoethnography, and transculturation helps bring such an ethnically diverse world closer together, allowing them to be able to identify to some similar ideas and beliefs. Pratt goes on to show examples of these terms in her own writing, creating a contact zone of her own which incorporates the autoethnographic text and transculturation.

Here are the key moves of this paper, the ones you want to pay attention to:

- *The introduction has a clear argument that takes a position on whether or not Pratt's own essay and her own writings use the arts of the contact zone. This writer argues she does; you might argue she doesn't. You might also argue that she does in places and doesn't in other places. You might argue that she does but argue it in a different way. The key is *have an argument addressing the assignment.**
- *All terms are defined through quotation. Moreover, each term is supported with an example from Pratt's text, so the reader can understand just what the term means.*
- *CRUCIAL: the term is then applied to Pratt herself.*

Those are the things you want to do in your paper, too.