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SELF-TAUGHT STUDIES AND ATTITUDE OF THE FRANCISCAN FRIARS TOWARDS THE CHALLENGES OF EDUCATION AND EVANGELIZATION OF THE AUTOCHTHONOUS GROUPS IN THE AMERICAS

Abstract. This article presents the results of a historical-pedagogical research, which objective was to know, what the self-taught studies and the attitude of the Franciscan friars before the challenges of education and evangelization of the autochthonous groups in the Americas were. Authors establish that Franciscan friars found ways to approach and communicate with the Indians using learning method of linguistic immersion and close coexistence with the cultures of the target languages. They created religious and didactic texts in local languages (Nagual, Otomi, Zapotec, etc.), contributing to the preservation of these cultures, many of which are already extinct today.

The study suggests that missionary activity consisted not only of evangelizing Indian children, youth, and adults, but also of transmitting the traditions and customs of Spanish (European, Catholic) culture, and teaching Spanish and Latin. The missionaries founded the first medieval European-type educational institutions in America; they taught indigenous peoples how to grow plants unknown in the New World before then, how to irrigate cultivated land, how to care for livestock, how to build churches, civil buildings, and hydraulic structures using European technologies; how to make new textiles, furniture, utensils, food, etc.

In contrast to the position of the viceroyalty authorities and the higher church leadership, the Franciscans' attitude toward Indian languages and their study was very positive: "these are incredibly beautiful cultures and languages and it is necessary for everyone in the colonies to learn and use them." The friars themselves studied local languages and cultures, many of them were fascinated by the traditions of ancient New World civilizations, they opposed the forced

Spanishization of the indigenous people, and sought to protect the “pure souls of the Indians” from the influence of Europeans and the “perverted customs of the old world.”

Keywords: education of the autochthonous groups in the Americas; 16th century; self-taught studies and attitude of the Franciscan friars; linguistic immersion and close coexistence with the cultures of the target languages.

Introduction. In the early years of the Spanish conquest of the American continent (on October 12, 1492, Christopher Columbus landed on the island of Guanahani in the Bahamas; in 1519, Hernán Cortés landed in Veracruz and in 1521, he conquered the capital of the Aztec Empire Tenochtitlán (Mexico)), Catholic missionaries have done the unthinkable work of converting indigenous people to Christianity, settling in villages, learning local languages and cultures, and teaching Spanish and catechism to the natives. Undoubtedly, we can speak of a reciprocal, horizontal and participatory education: both the conquerors (teachers) and the conquered (students) learned.

It is worth mentioning that at first, the educational attempts of the friars failed, since the local groups continued with their pagan religious traditions and customs. To understand what they were wrong about and why the Indians did not understand them, they decided to learn the native languages. This task was not easy, since the Christian and indigenous worldviews turned out to be very different (in many ways, opposite). Thus, according to indigenous logic, religion is inseparable from social life: the rituals were carried out in markets; the notions of sin, God, marriage did not match. Hence, when trying to interpret Christian sacred texts in local languages, the missionaries made many mistakes.

Understanding the indigenous languages and being able to make themselves understood, even in an elementary way, required a lot of time and was not easy for the missionaries. In general, how was it possible to do without a teacher? What was the attitude of the Franciscan friars before the challenges of education and evangelization of the autochthonous groups in the Americas?

In general, to the Franciscan mission in the Americas and the education of the Indians dedicated their works Borges and Morales, 1993; Breva-Claramonte, 2008; Caro-Rivera, 2010; Flores-Farfán, 2013; Gonzalbo-Aizpuru, 1990; Guzmán-Betancourt, 2001; Hernández-de-León-Portilla and León-Portilla, 2014; Kobayashi, 1974; Merino-Abad, 1993; Murillo-Gallegos, 2009; 2009; 2010; Palomera, 1962; Richard, 1995; Tanck, 2010; Wright-Carr, 2007, among others.

Thus, examining texts of Motolonía, Gante, Mendieta, Zumárraga, among others, Kobayashi (1974) found that “[...] a first official manifestation of the educational purpose of the missionaries in New Spain is that in which, when the twelve Franciscans met with the *Mexica* principals and priests, the former communicated to the latter their desire that they hand over their children for their instruction” (Kobayashi, 1974, p. 164).

The first education ordinance in New Spain was carried out by Cortés, who “[...] commanded that all the children of the lords and principalities come to Mexico to San Francisco to learn the law of God and to teach the Christian doctrine [...] and that education expenses –including food and clothing- are covered by the *encomenderos*” (Kobayashi, 1974, p. 169). Likewise, Richard (1995) reveals in his work that it took about half a year for the first twelve missionaries to understand the indigenous people. They learned their language by playing with the children, and the Indians were amazed by the ability and mastery of strangers with which they communicated in their language (Richard, 1995, p. 84).

The objective of this work was to know, what the self-taught studies and the attitude of the Franciscan friars before the challenges of education and evangelization of the autochthonous groups in the Americas in conditions of a world and cultures totally unknown to them were. The study was carried out following the documentary-bibliographic method.

Developing. First of all, it is important to know, who the Franciscan friars arrived in the New World were. The study carried out revealed that the friars who traveled to the American missions undoubtedly belonged to the educated elite of

the time. Candidates had to be intellectually prepared and experienced in missionary practice with infidels, which represented “[...] the most sublime work and there had to be no excuse for ignorance of the language or fear of dangers. There should only be great love and trust in God and great courage to face sacrifice and even death” (Merino-Abad, 1993, p. 84). As Sahagún stated, “[...] a missionary must know the language, religion, superstitions and customs of the country he is to evangelize” (Sahagún, 2003, pp. 49–53).

The missionaries obtained their academic training in the theological schools of medieval Europe. Future ecclesiastical servants acquired humanistic and philosophical-theological knowledge through liberal arts studies: *trivium* (grammar, dialectic and rhetoric) and *quadrivium* (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music). With regard to linguistic training, the missionaries learned Latin grammar because it was the language of culture, science and the Church. Likewise, knowledge of Latin was essential for the study of grammar, rhetoric and logic. Some also studied Greek and Hebrew. As a manual for learning Latin, the “*Introductiones latinae*” (1481) by Antonio de Nebrija (1444–1532) were used, which focused on the formation of a sentence and its accidents, also emphasizing the study of formal elements. In general, in the words of Breva-Claramonte,

The missionaries were children of their own epistemological environment in which the notional, the intelligible had preponderance over the observable form or sensible knowledge, and of their own practical teaching needs, which turned Latin and European languages into the contrastive medium more effective for the rapid learning by the friars of the indigenous languages. It would have been utopian for them to work with other theoretical models (they followed the traditional Aristotelian model on which scholastic grammar is based). (Breva-Claramonte, 2008, p. 48).

The educational model of the European schools passed to the New World with the arrival of the first Franciscans. Already in 1536, they founded the Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco, the most important educational center in New Spain designed for the nobles. In it, Latin grammar, morphology, syntax and rhetoric were taught. The rhetoric course included general knowledge of geography, history, classical literature, and literary perception. The Franciscans endowed the College with a good library. All the texts were in Latin, so the students had to know this language well, the same as they learned with Nebrija's grammar. One of the teachers of this famous school was Andrés de Olmos who, without a doubt, was in close contact with his Nahua, Otomi, Zapotec, Totonac students, among others, learning their languages. This famous professor from New Spain was the author of the first Nahuatl grammar.

The documents studied attest that between the 16th and 18th centuries, 7,250 priests, 287 students, and 287 Franciscan laymen came to New Spain. The first to arrive in 1523 were the three Flemish friars: Pedro de Gante, Juan de Tecto and Juan de Ahora; then came the twelve Franciscans led by Fray Martín de Valencia, known as the "twelve apostles" (Borges, Morales, 1993, pp. 131-133). This is how Motolonía describes their coming:

In 1524, 12 friars came to this land called Anahuac. Their coming and arrival were directed by the Holy Spirit, and this seems to confirm the effects that have occurred from happiness in life, about which, with the help of divine grace, we will say later, and that this mission was apostolic to this new world, and in the likeness of the twelve apostles, pillars and foundation of the universal church, there should be no doubt that the proper and universal name of this land, which is Anahuac, which means "large land fenced and surrounded by water". [...] So, Jesus Christ sent his twelve to preach throughout the world, and everywhere the word of them

was heard and went out, after which example Saint Francisco sent his friars to preach the world, whose news was published or divulged throughout the world, of which until our times there was news, both of faithful and of infidels. Now that our God discovered this other world, new to us, because he had in his mind elected the apostolic Francisco as lieutenant and captain of this spiritual conquest, as will be said later, he inspired his vicar the supreme pontiff and Francisco himself our father the general, who is also his vicar, send the aforementioned religious, whose sound and voice in all the roundness of this new world has gone out and has sounded to the ends of it, or most of it. (Motolinía, 1985, pp. 19–20).

A few days after their arrival, the Franciscans decided to erect the new foundation in custody, with the name of Santo Evangelio, and divided the group to distribute it into four convents, which would serve the most densely populated regions of the central valleys: Mexico, Texcoco, Tlaxcala and Huejotzingo (Gonzalbo-Aizpuru, 1990, p. 26).

However, in order to fulfill their main task-evangelization of local groups- they should have a thorough knowledge of the Amerindian languages; achieve propitious communication not only on a daily basis, but also economically, politically, legally and religiously. Nevertheless, they were not linguists, but religious, whose main task in the New World was to evangelize the native peoples, “to save their souls”. Hence, their dedication to fulfilling the mission and their ingenious spirit led them to seek solutions to this communication problem: playing with the Indian children, they wrote down the words and phrases they heard, and later they deduced about its meaning.

Thus, working closely with the representatives of different ethnic groups, especially with those of the pre-Hispanic imperious groups: Nahuas, Zapotecs,

Mixtecs, etc., these friars (Pedro de Gante, who came in 1523, Francisco Jiménez and Alonso Rengel, who arrived in 1524, Juan de las Casas, who indoors in 1531, among others) learned their languages, adapted the Latin alphabet to represent their phonemes, composed vocabularies and grammars, and translated sacred texts.

Likewise, the need for a deeper learning of vernacular American languages conjectured to deepen the study of their structures. In this way, the missionaries undertook a scrupulous job analyzing the phonetic, morphemic, and syntactic systems of these languages, tracing the lexicon, looking for closer equivalents in Latin and Spanish, explaining the grammar. So that since the beginning of the 16th century, several Amerindian languages were the object of exhaustive study, from which the grammars of some of them were created.

Results. Thus, how missionaries unknown languages without teacher or grammar manuals learn and create texts in them? The study carried out showed that upon arriving in the New World, the Franciscan friars saw their purpose very clearly: to evangelize the infidels. Consequently, they began their mission by teaching catechism and masses in Latin. However, for obvious reasons the Indians did not understand them, the teachings did not give results. Fray Gerónimo de Mendieta in Chapter XVI titled “The work that these fathers went through for not knowing the language of the Indians, until they learned it” of Book III of his “Indian ecclesiastical history” (*Historia ecclesiástica indiana*) written at the end of the 16th century, describes this process:

The religious were in charge of teaching the children, so that the adults also began to take the first rudiments of Christianity as a choir. They did it in the patios of their houses. They said the prayers in Latin, responding to those who taught them, who were sometimes the friars themselves, and sometimes the children, the disciples, who later learned them very easily, like quick wits and skilful in whatever they could show them. This doctrine

was of very little fruit, since neither the Indians understood what was said in Latin, nor did they cease their idolatries, nor could the friars reprimand them, nor use the appropriate means to remove them, because they did not know their language. And this made them very disconsolate and afflicted in those beginnings, and they did not know what to do, because although they wanted and tried to learn the language, there was no one to teach it to them. And the Indians, with the great reverence they had for them, did not dare to speak a word to them. In this need they turned to the source of goodness and mercy, Our Lord God, increasing their prayers and interposing fasting and suffrages, invoking the intercession of the Holy Virgin Mother of God and of the holy Angels, whose very devout they were, and that of the blessed father Saint Francisco. (Mendieta, 1997, p. 365).

Desperate at first, the religious decide to change their tactics, stop preaching in Latin and learn the local languages. They mingle with the children, listening to their conversations to get used to the sounds, copying the words they thought they understood, writing them down and interpreting their meaning. Thus, Mendieta narrates that:

And the Lord put it in their hearts that with the children they had as disciples they should also become children like them to participate in their language, and with it work the conversion of those infant people in sincerity and simplicity of children. And so it was that, leaving the seriousness of their people at times, they began to play with them with straws or small stones for the time they were on strike, to take away their

embarrassment with communication. And they always had paper and ink in their hands, and upon hearing the words from the Indians, they wrote it down, and for the purpose they gave it. And in the afternoon the religious got together and communicated their writings to each other, and to the best of their ability they conformed to those words the Romance that seemed most appropriate to them. And it happened to them that what they thought they had understood today, tomorrow it seemed not to be so. (Mendieta, 1997, p. 366).

In these self-taught studies by the friars, both the children and the adult Indians gladly helped them, even a woman lent her son, who understood the indigenous language, as an interpreter. Undoubtedly, the support of the Indians was essential. Getting the collaboration of the natives, a year after their arrival the missionaries preached in their language:

And since they were tested for a few days in this work, Our Lord wanted to comfort their servants in two ways. The one, that some of the older children came to understand well what they were saying; and as they saw the desire that the friars had to learn their language, they not only corrected what they were wrong, but also asked them many questions that were extremely happy for them. The second remedy that the Lord gave them was that a Spanish woman and widow had two small children, who, while dealing with the Indians, had learned their language and spoke it well. And knowing this, the religious asked the governor Don Fernando Cortés to make them give one of those children and through him that honorable lady was pleased to give with all her will one of her children called Alonsito.

This was the first who, serving as an interpreter for the friars, made the Indians understand the mysteries of our faith, and he was a teacher of the preachers of the Gospel, because he taught them the language, taking it from one town to another where the religious lived, because everyone participated in his help. (Mendieta, 1997, p. 367).

In the process of their autonomous learning, the friars were increasingly drawn to the languages of the New World. The Franciscans were fascinated with Nahuatl, they considered that “[...] it is a most elegant language, as many as there are in the world” and “[...] there is art [grammar] made and vocabulary and many things of the Sacred Scripture turned into it and many sermonaries and there are friars with very large languages”; hence, in his opinion, it is necessary to “[...] order that everyone learn the Mexican language, because there is no longer a town that does not have many Indians who do not know it and learn it without any work, but rather in use, and many are they confess in it” (Cruz, 1550, pp. 155–161).

On the other hand, it is important to point out that the task of the missionaries was aggravated by the multiplicity of Amerindian languages and dialects. However, the Franciscans not only learned the general language that was Nahuatl, but also taught this language to speakers of other languages in disagreement with the provisions of King Carlos V on the teaching of Spanish to natives (Wright-Carr, 2007, p. 9):

They have worked, due to the great diversity of languages that exist in this land, to teach a language, which is Mexican and more general, so that in it they understand Christian doctrine, and in it they confess in general, outside the Tarascan language, which is a province; and this Mexican language has been taught and continues to be taught by the Religious in

their convents to those who do not know it. (García-Icazbalceta, 1889, p. 168).

Since the 16th century in the convents, schools and seminaries of the different religious orders settled in New Spain, the teaching of the general languages, Nahuatl and Otomí, as well as other languages of this nature in other regions (Yucatán, Oaxaca, Michoacan) was performed. These centers remained active for the next century, producing many valuable linguistic and philological studies (Guzmán-Betancourt, 2001, pp. 33–70). Unlike the colonial authorities, the religious understood the meaning of Nahuatl as the most common means of verbal communication in New Spain. Therefore, Mendieta was of the opinion that:

This Mexican language is the general one that runs through all the provinces of this New Spain, since in it there are many and different particular languages of each province, and in parts of each town, because they are innumerable. But everywhere there are interpreters who understand and speak Mexican, because this is the one that runs everywhere, like Latin throughout all the kingdoms of Europe (Mendieta, 1997, pp. 239–240).

Once their “studies” were completed, the religious, with the help of their indigenous disciples, wrote catechisms, confessionals, sermons and other didactic texts in Nahuatl and other Amerindian languages to teach Christian doctrine to the indigenous people. In this process, Catholic texts, and with them Catholic philosophy, were translated (or rather, interpreted) into indigenous languages. However, since many concepts used in Christianity had to be “adapted” to be understood by local ethnic groups, they necessarily obtained the connotation of indigenous cultures (philosophies).

Also, since the mid-16th century, various vocabularies and grammars of the local languages were composed. One of the most complete grammars was that of Nahuatl, the language spoken by the Mexicas or Aztecs, and which was also used for communication between the representatives of other indigenous peoples (it served as the general language and lingua franca in the New World).

Already in 1547 the first grammar of Nahuatl by Fray Andrés de Olmos called *Art of the Mexican language (Arte de la lengua mexicana)* was created. Then in 1560, saw light the *Grammar or Art of the general language of the Peru Kingdom (Gramática o Arte de la lengua general de los Reynos del Peru)* by Domingo de Santo Thomas; in 1571, the *Art of the Mexican and Castilian language (Arte de la lengua mexicana y castellana)* and the *Vocabulary of the Castilian-Mexican and Mexican-Castilian language (Vocabulario de la lengua castellana-mexicana mexicana-castellana)* by Fray Alonso de Molina; in 1578, the *Vocabulary in the Çapotec language (Vocabulario en lengua çapoteca)* by Fray Juan de Córdoba; in 1595, *Mexican Art (Arte Mexicana)* by Padre Antonio de Rincón of the Jesus company; in 1611, the *Manual Vocabulary of the Castilian and Mexican languages (Vocabulario manual de las lenguas castellana y Mexicana)* by Pedro de Arenas; and in 1640, the *Grammar in the General Language of the New Kingdom, called Mosca (Gramática en la lengua General del Nuevo Reyno, llamada Mosca)* by Bernardo de Lugo (Caro-Rivera, 2010, p. 5).

These grammars were the first of their kind. Before them, grammars of Amerindian languages that name or at least systematize the rules that were implicit in speech and on which the grammar focused on studying, had not been written (Caro-Rivera, 2010, p. 14). The linguistic analysis carried out by the missionaries, a gradual better knowledge of sounds, morphological structures, syntax, semantics, and sociolinguistic features, made researchers see that languages possessed independent dynamics with their own systems and

subsystems that were sometimes shared by other languages (Breva-Claramonte, 2008, p. 50).

The aforementioned linguistic work made by the friars, which implied reflection, negotiation and accommodation exercises, represent a source of information on various sociolinguistic and sociocultural processes in the history of Nahuatl-Spanish contact. They include examples of the vast lexicon used to describe objects belonging to the receiving culture, as well as lexical variations that responded to new cultural objects and the need to create ecclesiastical terminology (they include archaisms, loans, circumlocutions, calques, neosemanticisms, neologisms).

In addition, in the words of the representative of missionary linguistics Flores-Farfán, the evangelizing needs generated hitherto unpublished grammatical and lexical forms, creating the *missionary variety of Nahuatl* with a collateral effect of imposition of the hegemonic language (Spanish) and adaptation and profound transformation of minority language and its uses (Náhuatl) (Flores-Farfán, 2013, p. 5).

It is important to clarify that the missionary variety of Nahuatl (also called the induced variety, the most prestigious variety, the Alta variety), is characterized by “forms derived from the Nebrija’s methodology, although not limited to it” (Flores-Farfán, 2013, p. 20), which demonstrates its ability to adapt to

[...] to approach the Amerindian languages and develop a descriptive arsenal more attached to the nature of the languages considered “exotic”

[...] As part of a denotative need for the elements introduced by the invading culture, another of the virtues of the work of the Franciscan lies in a high tolerance to borrowing (e.g. hybrids, calques) that neutralize purism, favoring the production of descriptive circumlocutions, a lexicographical solution that is valid today in contexts of the recovery of endangered

languages [...] It also includes items to understand the different phases of Nahuatl-Spanish contact, dialectal and, above all, sociolectal differences, without forgetting archaisms [...] neo-lexicon (neologisms, neosemanticisms) characteristic of the variety consecrated by the Franciscan [...] many of the neologisms and refined definitions They emerged in the cross-cultural effort to build a variety that also responded to pedagogical and communication needs that we now call intercultural (Flores-Farfán, 2013, p. 22).

On the other hand, the study carried out showed that the purpose of organizing the grammars of vulgar languages was not only to structure the language, but also contained political and social motives. Political were used to dominate a certain territory and impose an elegant language, and social, to teach that language from one generation to another (to the friars). Therefore, in the case of the Spanish colonies in the Americas, the “grammatization” of local languages began, as mentioned above, from the first decades of the 16th century. In fact, by 1531, the two general languages, Nahuatl and Otomi, already had their vocabularies, grammars, and some ecclesiastical texts produced in them. The foregoing is explained by the rush of the colonial authorities to convert the conquered peoples into their religion, make them faithful subjects of the Spanish crown, contributors to the prosperity of the empire.

In the opinion of some researchers (Murillo-Gallegos, 2009, 2010; Polanco, 2007; Guzmán and Cervantes-Guzmán, 2012; León-Azcárate, 2015, among others), although the missionaries made a great effort to adapt to the Nahuas expressions in order to evangelize, and even though some Nahuas words are fully adopted and identified with Christian notions in evangelization texts, this does not necessarily mean that the Indian, the recipient of such texts, has understood the

Christian concepts in his Nahuatl words (Murillo-Gallegos, 2010, pp. 297-316). This is due, among other things, to the fact that interlinguistic problems are not only semantic, nor are they only reduced to translation issues, but have to do with the way in which the friars learned and used Nahuatl for their purposes, in the asymmetry of Nahuatl with European languages.

The friars transcribed the words from Nahuatl into Latin by ear and made attempts to write the texts of Christian doctrine in Nahuatl. Apparently, these transcriptions and translations of what was written were carried out in a hasty and superficial manner, without a good and thorough understanding of the concepts that this or that word designated. In addition, when they began to evangelize the children of the Mexica nobles, at first they only had contact with them and wrote down the meanings of the words heard, interpreting them in the circumstances of childhood or youth behavior. At the same time, the friars learned indigenous languages “in their own way” (from their worldview), often misinterpreting the concepts:

The missionaries [...] have encountered peoples whose linguistic diversity has made it difficult to transmit the evangelical message; an example of this is the Franciscan religious who worked in America during the 16th century. In these lands, they sought to indoctrinate the Indians in their own languages, so the missionaries studied the native languages, prepared grammars and vocabularies, and composed doctrines and other texts to support their work. The indoctrination in the American languages gave rise to specific problems and solutions for the translation of Christian doctrine and its understanding by the indigenous people (Murillo-Gallegos, 2009, p. 98).

This process of “deciphering” the Amerindian languages and “giving them order”, although it resembled the procedure for creating the grammars of the vernacular languages in Europe in the XV-XVII centuries, at the same time went through very different operations. The translations of the texts from Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic into the European vernacular languages were based on the similarity of things in each other and revolved around the four figures of *emulation*, *sympathy*, *convenience* and *analogy* given the affinity relations due to the relative closeness of these peoples over the centuries. In turn, the work with indigenous languages often represented the need to create neologisms or leave the words “untranslatable” (especially those typical of Christian doctrine: God, Good Friday, the Virgin, sin, confess, etc.), in Latin, for not having an equivalent in the Nahuatl language.

In general, it is important to specify that current linguists recognize

[...] the work of the missionaries of the 16th and 17th centuries, who with their grammars and dictionaries gradually began to show European readers the formal dynamics of languages from different places and geographical regions with their corresponding parallel semantic structures at the level of the particular that were susceptible to systematization and generalization [...]. The very analysis of the missionaries, a better gradual knowledge of the sounds, of the morphological structures, of the syntax, of the semantics, of the sociolinguistic features made the researchers see that the languages they had independent dynamics with their own systems and subsystems that were sometimes shared by other languages. That is to say, that the missionaries were one of the necessary links in a chain that favored the development of subsequent linguistics [...]. The modern linguistic typology

and the well-founded general linguistics, very interested in the linguistic and ethnological work of the missionaries, would have been unthinkable without the previous work of these first missionaries (Breva-Claramonte, 2008, p. 50).

Likewise, in the opinion of Flores-Farfán, “[...] the Franciscan project, a far-reaching humanistic project, prefigured not only the modern processes of linguistic documentation, but also the ethnographic science of our time. By carrying it out, it took them far beyond the lexicographical work of his time” (Flores-Farfán, 2013, p. 23).

Conclusions. Summarizing, it can be stated that at the time of the colonization of the American continent by the Spanish, the Franciscan friars who followed the conquerors with the mission of evangelizing and educating the indigenous groups, despite the fact that they were in conditions of a world and cultures totally unknown to them, they did not give up, they found ways to approach and communicate with the Indians. The learning method that gave very fruitful results was that of linguistic immersion and close coexistence with the cultures of the target languages. Furthermore, they created religious and didactic texts in local languages, contributing in a certain way to the preservation of these cultures, many of which are already extinct today.

Unlike the position of the viceroyalty authorities and the position of high ecclesiastical commands, the attitude of the Franciscan friars towards Amerindian languages and their learning was very clear and persistent: they are very fine cultures and languages, and it is necessary that everyone in the colonies studied and used them. The friars learned the indigenous languages and cultures, many of them were fascinated by the ancient traditions of the New World civilizations, they opposed the forced spanishization of the natives, they aspired to defend “the pure souls of the Indians” from the influence of the perverse customs of the “old world”.

The missionary activity consisted not only in the evangelization of Indian children, youth and adults, but also in the transmission of traditions, customs of the Spanish (European Catholic) culture, teaching of Spanish and Latin. The missionaries founded in the Americas the first educational institutions of the medieval European type, they taught the native peoples to cultivate the plants unknown until that moment in the New World, to irrigate the cultivated lands, to take care of the cattle, to construct buildings, temples, hydraulic works using European technology, to develop new textile products, furniture, utensils, food products, dishes. However, one of their most important contributions consists in creating texts in indigenous languages, in particular, elaborating the first grammars, dictionaries, manuals of Nahuatl, Otomi, Zapotec and other Amerindian languages, some of which are still used today.

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**САМОНАВЧАННЯ (АВТОНОМНЕ НАВЧАННЯ) ТА СТАВЛЕННЯ
ФРАНЦИСКАНСЬКИХ МІСІОНЕРІВ ДО ВИКЛИКІВ ОСВІТИ ТА
ЄВАНГЕЛІЗАЦІЇ АВТОХТОННИХ ГРУП В АМЕРИЦІ**

Анотація. У статті представлені результати історико-педагогічного дослідження, метою якого було з'ясувати, у чому полягала самоосвіта францисканських монахів, що виявилася необхідною для виконання євангелізаційних та просвітницьких завдань щодо корінного населення Америки. Авторами встановлено, що францисканські ченці знайшли способи наблизитися до індіанців і спілкуватися з ними, використовуючи метод лінгвістичного занурення й тісного співіснування з культурами цільових мов. Вони також створювали релігійні та дидактичні тексти місцевими мовами (нагуатль, отомі, сапотекко та ін.), сприяючи збереженню цих культур. Проведене дослідження дає підстави стверджувати, що місіонерська діяльність полягала не тільки в євангелізації індіанських дітей, молоді та дорослих, а й у передачі традицій, звичаїв іспанської (європейської, католицької) культури, навчанні іспанської мови та латини. Місіонери заснували в Америці перші навчальні заклади середньовічного європейського типу, вони навчили корінні народи вирощувати рослини, невідомі до того моменту в Новому Світі, зрошувати оброблені землі, доглядати за худобою, будувати храми, цивільні будівлі, гідротехнічні споруди за європейськими технологіями; виготовляти нові текстильні вироби, меблі, посуд, продукти харчування тощо.

На відміну від позиції влади віце-королівства та вищого церковного керівництва ставлення францисканців до індіанських мов та їхнього вивчення було дуже позитивним: «це неймовірно гарні культури і мови й необхідно, щоб усі в колоніях вивчали та використовували їх». Самі ченці вивчали місцеві мови та культури, багато з них були захоплені традиціями давніх цивілізацій Нового Світу, вони виступали проти насильницької іспанізації корінних жителів, прагнули захистити «чисті душі індіанців» від впливу європейців, «збочених звичаїв старого світу».

Ключові слова: освіта корінного населення Америки; XVI століття; самоосвіта францисканських монахів; лінгвістичне занурення та тісне співіснування з культурами цільових мов.